

# CAT Update to City Council

# CAT charge

The team is committed to engaging in productive, civil discussions to:

- (1) understand the community's values as they pertain to the character of the City and development,
- (2) understand the City's challenges and communicate obligations to the community, and
- (3) after understanding these situations and values, advocate to the City Council for plans that address these challenges and align with the community's values.

Today's presentation focuses on points 1 and 3. As to point 2, at our meetings, we have had presentations on affordable housing, redevelopment plans, municipal finances, and environmental characteristics of the police station site.

# CAT phases

- First phase (where we are now): mixed-income housing on police station site
- Second phase: facilities

# Affordable housing background

- 2019 – the City sought an amendment to the settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center
- Lambertville was issued a “Conditional Judgment of Compliance and Repose” - available [here](#) (May, 2020)
  - Adopt a Redevelopment Plan for the Police Station site by December 31, 2020
  - Select a Redeveloper and execute a Redevelopment Agreement for the Police Station site by May 15, 2021
- Council designated the police station site as an Area in Need of Redevelopment which allows for the City and community to have a strong role in defining what the future building can look like (July, 2020)
  - City commitment to securing permanent home for police prior to moving them

# Role of the CAT

- While settlement agreement and council's actions mean that the police station site will be used to provide affordable housing in a mixed-income building (*not all housing in this bldg. will be "affordable" housing*), the community/city can have input on what this building looks like
  - Important – the CAT is not charged with considering whether site should be developed, but what it should look like.
- We have this input because the site has been designated as an Area in Need of Redevelopment
- **This input will inform the Redevelopment Plan for this site**

# Activities that CAT undertook to get community input

- Survey
- Office hours
- *This input is part of what will go into the CAT's recommendations to Council for the Redevelopment Plan*
  - We will also be gathering input from the public during the design vetting meeting on 9/26.

# Survey methods

- Members of the CAT drafted questions based on guidance from the City's planner regarding what could be included in a redevelopment plan
- We had several modes of outreach to get respondents: community-wide mailer, city emails, city FB page posts, on website
  - Advertised and written in both English and Spanish
- We had 313 unique respondents
- Survey was open from 7/24 through 8/19

# Data analysis

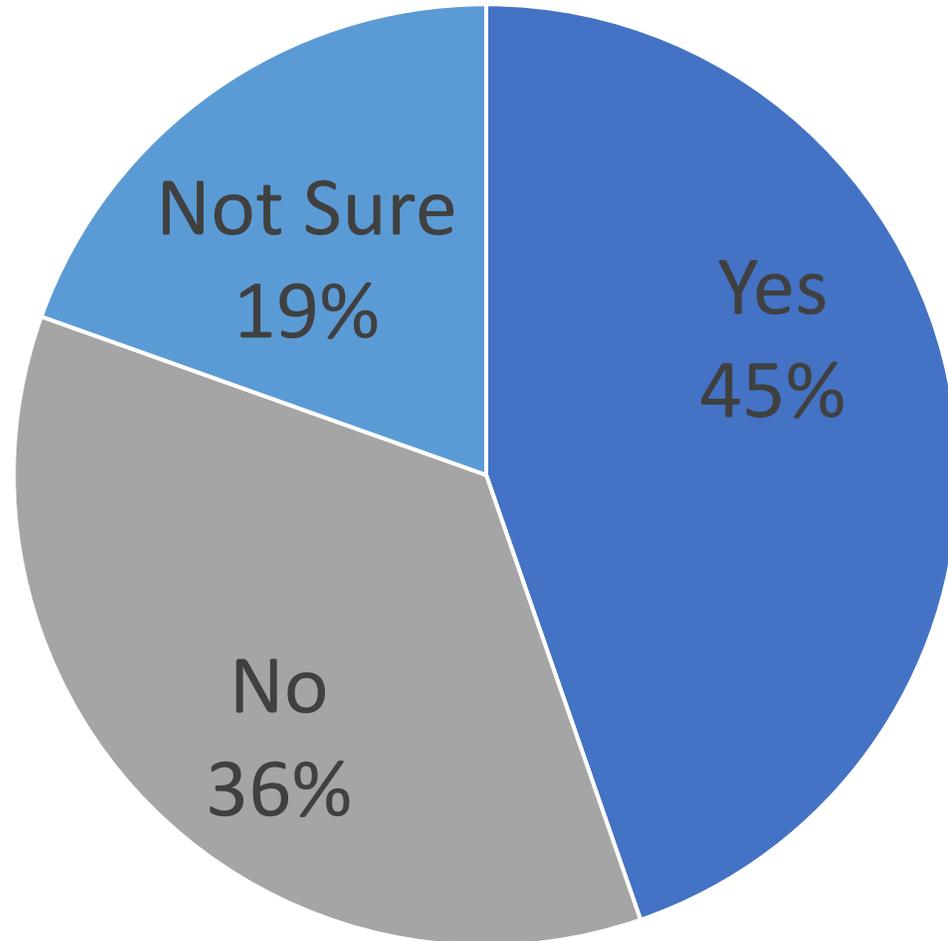
- Surveys submitted by email were entered into google forms
- Sorted survey responses by names and addresses to delete duplicate submissions; we kept the most recent submission for these individuals
- Because we sought input from residents and business owners only, we removed submissions from individuals who did not provide their addresses (6)
- Created charts for multiple choice questions
- Had two readers for each open-ended question. Each reader independently coded the responses. Readers then discussed their findings for inter-rater reliability

# Opposition to Site

- In open-ended items, about 50 respondents out of the 313 expressed their opposition to moving the police and developing the police station site
- While this was outside the scope of what the CAT is providing recommendations on for the site, we are conveying these concerns to Council

# What we learned from community input

# Should this site be a gateway to the City?



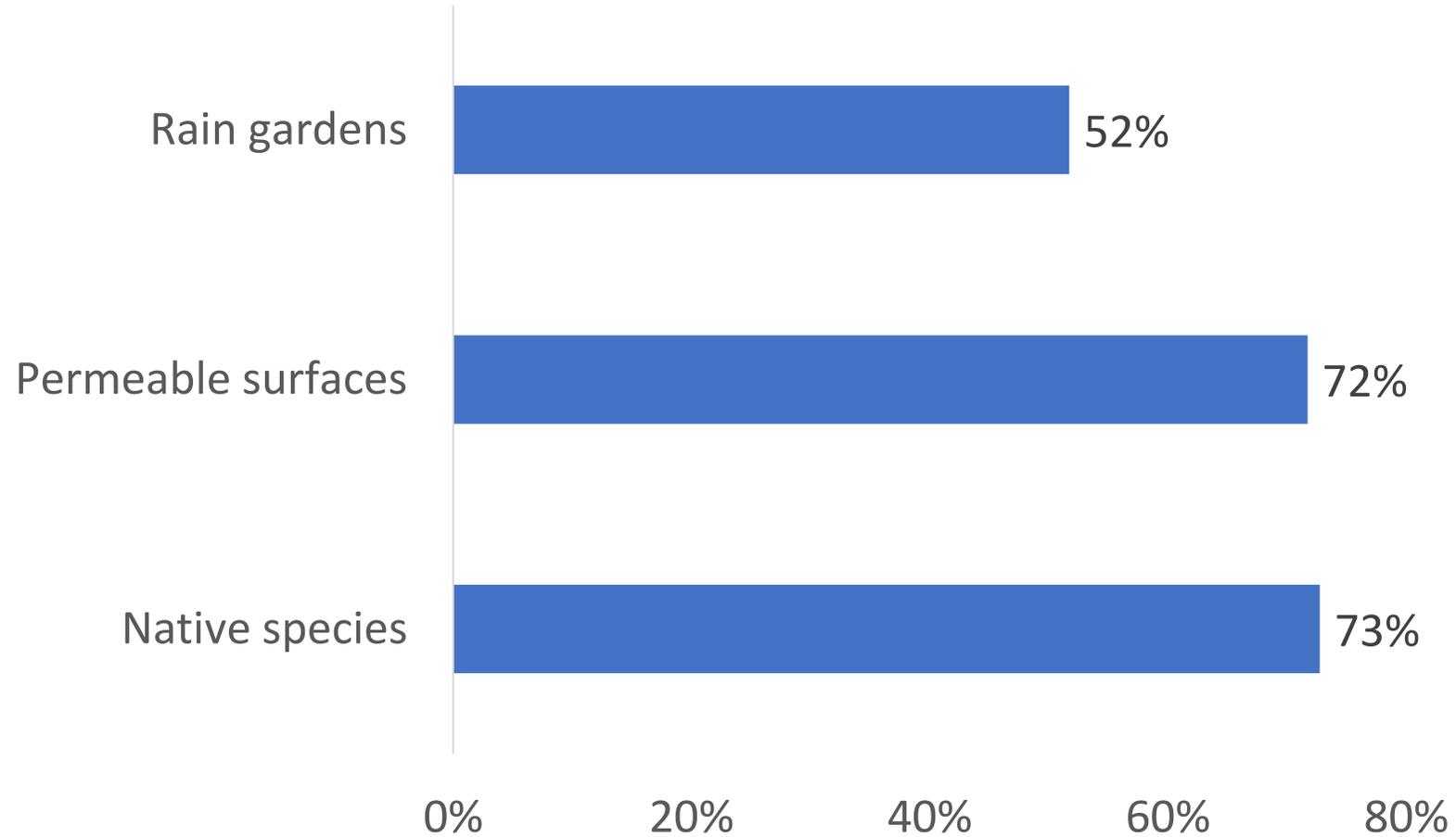
# Preferred gateway characteristics

- Was asked of people who answered “yes” to this site being a gateway
- Signage was most commonly preferred
  - The majority prefer simple signage welcoming people to Lambertville
  - Some specific suggestions: promoting the City as walkable, historic, welcoming to all; have local artists design the sign; use the water tower on Rago’s property for signage/artwork
- Respondents also suggested plantings (preferably native, indigenous)

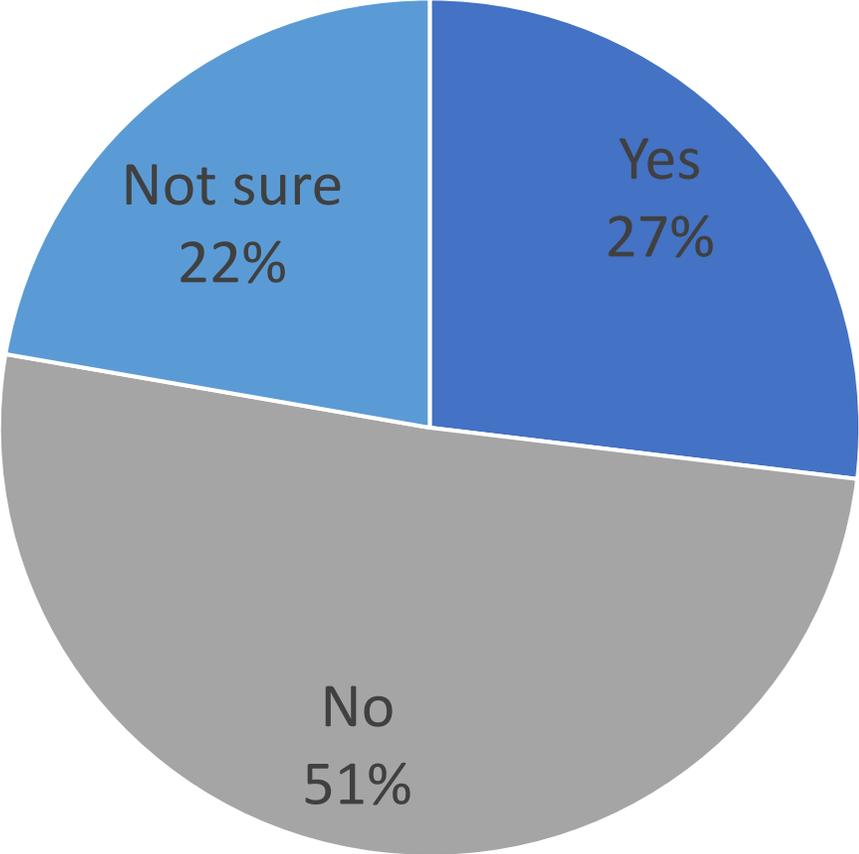
# Design of the building

- Majority of respondents preferred either an industrial look and feel or one that aligns more with our historical downtown buildings
- Similar numbers for both of these categories
- Among proponents of an industrial look (similar to Ragos), several cited this would better align with the look of buildings in that area of town and the southern entrance to town (Laceworks building, River Walk)
- Of those who preferred a look more in style with historical downtown buildings or residential buildings in the historic downtown, City Hall was most often cited as inspiration

# Environmental features

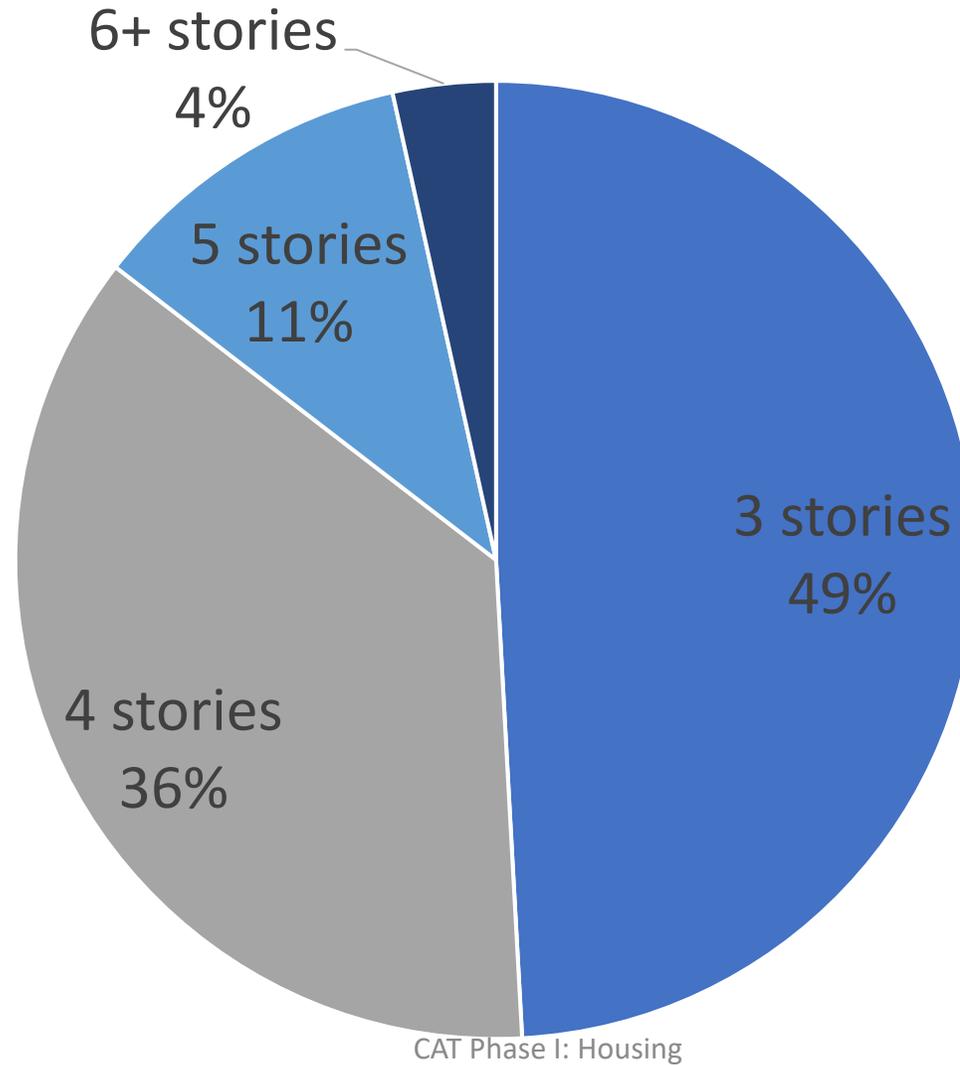


# Willingness to have a larger building to pay for more environmental features?



CAT Phase I: Housing

# Maximum height of the building



# Building footprint

- Many people wrote about the concerns that drive their preferences on the size of the building footprint
  - Environmental impact, aesthetic and architectural questions, landscaping, zoning, and an overall attention to the site as a representation of Lambertville's history and character
  - Respondents also wanted to ensure there would be adequate parking on the site
- People fell into 4 categories: as small as possible, same as current, could be larger, and not sure/no preference
  - The percent of people in each category was similar

# Additional comments

- There were about 180 additional comments
- Financial concerns ranged from concerns regarding relocating the police (both temporarily and permanently), costs for environmental clean-up, tax breaks given to developers, getting the best possible price for the site, costs to maintain the site and building once built, etc.
- About 25 respondents wanted smallest possible building
- People also noted environmental concerns (e.g., soil contamination) and a desire to have adequate stormwater management & use natural plantings

# In sum

- Preference for a shorter building (vast majority of respondents selected 3 or 4 stories above parking)
- Preference for a footprint that is the same size as existing or as small as possible
- Design to draw on City's roots (industrial, historical)
- Natural and green features

# Office Hours

- CAT undertook 12 office hours
  - Each staffed by at least 2 CAT members
  - Advertised through city-wide mailer, on website, and the City's Facebook page
- 5 participants (4 of whom also took the CAT survey)
- Focus of conversations was that building should reflect the City's historic buildings, desire for building to be as short as possible, concerns about moving the police, and environmental concerns about the site
  - As with the survey, we also heard some opposition to the site and are conveying that to the Council now though it is outside the scope of the CAT's charge

# The CAT's process from here

- September – will vote on whether to recommend City conduct an environmental assessment on the police station site
- September/early October: CAT will be working with Clarke Caton Hintz on the redevelopment plan for this site
- 9/26 – public design vetting meeting (9am-12pm)
  - Goals: deeper dive into features of the building and site plan
- 10/6 and 10/7 CAT to share findings with planning board and council
- Phase II – facility needs

# Goals for engagement in Phase II

- More engagement with Spanish-speakers
- Increased outreach to people without internet/computers via hard mail
- Engage as many residents and business owners as possible
  - Increase participation in CAT activities (such as future surveys and office hours)
- Ongoing multimedia communications with the public

# Contact info

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