**There is an enormous amount of trash in and around this site. It appears that Route 18 is the primary source of this garbage and it blows over the area. In the slower moving parts of the shoreline this garbage is accumulating. A shantytown exists in the woods of this site. On the side of the canal opposite the Raritan a small band of homeless have erected tents and are currently living on the site.**

**Before the construction started a park was already on the site. There are several remnants of the site such as a line of concrete trash lighting along the canal and a stand of planted shade trees and three plaques explaining the role of the Raritan river in New Brunswicks development. A childrens playground was even constructed on the site. It looks like it was never used and is currently in a state of complete abandonment.**

**Rutgers boathouse is on the edge of the site. It is the only facility built on the area that is still in use. The Rutgers crew team can be regularly seen practicing on the Raritan.**

**The Raritan river is an enormous aspect of this site. It is both visually stunning and historically significant.**

**The entire site is currently under massive construction. All the land from Route 18 to the Raritan is being developed into a new public park.**

**A dock was built on the northern edge of the area. It appears to be part of the old redesign that was never finished. The rear gate of the dock has an inscription above it saying “North Brunswick Landing”. Posts were buried in the water for either tying up docks or expanding the dock.**

**Once in Highland Park it is apparent that the views across the Raritan are valued and maintained by the few residences lucky enough to have them.**

**Donaldson Park is a huge and widely used public facility in Highland Park. It is right on the edge of the Raritan and has many stunning views of the site.**

**How Do People Get Here?**

**This site is at the heart of our roads system. It is practically right next to the Turnpike, literally on top of Route 18, and a short distance from the Parkway. The Raritan River site is in a perfect position to accommodate major traffic.**

**The steep slope of the hill down from Route 18 really restricts the views down into the site. There are several high rise residential buildings however that peer down the slope and can view the area perfectly. Also the current construction on the site appears to contain alot of regrading which could provide promising views in the near future.**

**Data From USGS**
History On The Raritan

The Revolutionary War

The Raritan River had an enormous impact on the outcome of the revolutionary War. At one point in the war General George Washington retreated into New Brunswick. With the British in pursuit he hoped to take up a defensive position in the city and fend them off with help from the local militia. Once he discovered the militia to be largely disbanded General Washington retreated across the Raritan River and destroyed the only bridge across, delaying the British five days. The retreat across the Raritan provided Washington with valuable time to regroup and in all likelihood saved him from being either killed or captured by the British. The Raritan River not only served as a defensive position during the revolutionary war. Washington discovered that the British were sending a fleet of ships up the Raritan River to try and create a foothold in the city of New Brunswick. To halt their advance General Washington set up a battery of six cannons on the shore below New Brunswick the night before their expected arrival. Once in range the American troops opened fire on the British boats, sinking five of them and more importantly halting their advance. Without the strategic advantage the Raritan River provided the revolutionary war could have very well ended with our defeat.

The Water

The Raritan had always been a source of both income and leisure for New Brunswick residents. Water carnivals as well as swim meets entertained people for miles around. Boat owners, clubs, shell crews, and swimmers from all over the country would compete for trophies. The bridge and river bank would be lined with thousands of people to watch these great matches of strength and precision. Fishermen have long reaped the benefits of the Raritan. Herring used to be abundant in the river as well as Blue back Long Claw Crabs and Roe Shad. One fisherman was heard to proclaim “The water in Raritan river was so clear you could almost see the fish fooling around the bait”.

The Ships

Prior to 1830 the banks of the Raritan in New Brunswick functioned as a river port that accommodated local river transportation and local ocean going vessels. When the canal was opened in 1834, New Brunswick became part of a regional transportation network that created an inside passage between New York and Philadelphia as well as between New England and the southern states. The width depth and unlimited clearance of the main canal encouraged ships of all sizes to dock.

The Towpath

The towpath about ten feet wide was where the mules walked to tow the boats. The Delaware and Lehigh canals typically used two mules. The Raritan had a team of four mules. Normally the paths consisted of an earthen embankment topped with a walking surface dressed in crushed stone or shale and sloped towards the river. In New Brunswick however, the path was unique. Timber boxes were constructed from the river bottom to the canal water level. They were then filled with stone and topped with dirt above the water line.
The Banks Of The Raritan

How many People Live Around Here?

The area around our site is the most densely populated section in New Brunswick. Anything built on this site is sure to bring in some of this large group of people. It is heavily congested and there are very few places to park publicly.

How Do Vehicles Get Around The Site?

Route 27 and Route 18 are the two main transportation axes of this site. A steady flow of traffic can be expected at all times of day from both directions.

What Does The Slope Look Like?

The percent slope of the current site reveals much. The slope is such that it suggests the river was once much wider and very well could have completely covered our site. There is a steep inclination once you get on the border of Route 18 which could prove a large problem for accessibility later.

Where Does It Flood?

The entire site is prone to flooding. In times of heavy precipitation the banks of the Raritan fill with water.

Can We Build Here?

If you own a floodplain and want to build on it, you must consult with a qualified engineer and meet with the regional building department. Floodplain lots such as this site have been identified by FEMA as buildable but must meet different standards from those of other lots. Generally there are two solutions when dealing with building on an active floodplain. You can either build up the lot itself with heavily compacted fill dirt, or you can build the house atop stilts. When filling the site with dirt its important to dampen and compact the soil to support the structure and raise it high enough to be above the floodplain level using a concrete base. Erecting a series of stilts under a house is a unique response for flood defense. The main considerations for building stilts are stilts length, stilts material, and stilts integrity. Utilizing stilts drastically changes the architecture of the building.

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