

Written Q&A from Final Willard Study Presentation

11/13/23

- Should a “master developer” be selected to redevelop the campus, what oversights will there be to ensure community needs are promoted and met?
 - The towns could use land use regulations to set standards to guide and enforce the type and standard of development allowed. The negotiation process could potentially be used to establish a common understanding.
- What will happen to the cemetery?
 - The Willard State Hospital Cemetery lies beyond the northern edge of the campus boundaries examined in the Highest and Best Use Study. It was not included in reuse plans and will remain a cemetery to respect those who were laid to rest there. Our current understanding is that New York State will retain ownership and continue to maintain that portion of the property.
- Will simply abandoning the campus and letting areas become overgrown create more of a problem for the community?
 - Abandoning the campus is certainly not the ideal scenario. Foregoing vegetation management and ongoing inspection and repair would lead to deterioration of the remaining buildings over the course of time. This would in turn make future redevelopment and building rehabilitation less feasible. That being said, if a developer is not identified, the cost of upkeep would be unsustainable for a small community. Hard decisions would need to be made about how to move forward.
- Can the site be developed into a waterpark?
 - Much to the dismay of two very involved, young community members, the use of the site as a waterpark is not one of the highest and best uses. However, there are provisions for more public waterfront access, so water activities will certainly be encouraged.
- Can materials, like brick, be salvaged from buildings that are structurally unsound to be used in the redeveloped property?
 - Yes, that is very much a possibility, but would depend on certain environmental factors. If reusable materials could be reliably and safely separated from any hazardous building materials (like asbestos), deconstruction could be an option, if desired, by the selected developer or another interested party.
- Has there been communication between the Willard DTC reuse team and those who are engaged in a similar effort at the Hudson Valley Psychiatric Center in Poughkeepsie?
 - No, the Willard DTC reuse team has not coordinated with that particular project. However, they have been in communication with other similar prison reuse projects throughout the State.