

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Master Plan for Gorham Village concentrates primarily on the core commercial section of Main Street and its adjoining streets. This area of focus was deemed by the Committee to warrant the most attention in terms of improvements to traffic and streetscape issues. Also, improvements to the core of the Village will inevitably affect the surrounding Village environs. The intent is to impact the entire Village positively, in terms of its visual identity, function and aesthetic appeal.

The master plan involves a series of interrelated steps, which, if implemented in their proposed order, over a period of time, will enable the Village to achieve long-range goals. The goals addressed in this plan are those articulated by the Village Improvement Committee and the public through several years of discussion. The belief is that the master plan and its associated 'tools' for implementing changes will serve as a useful guide.

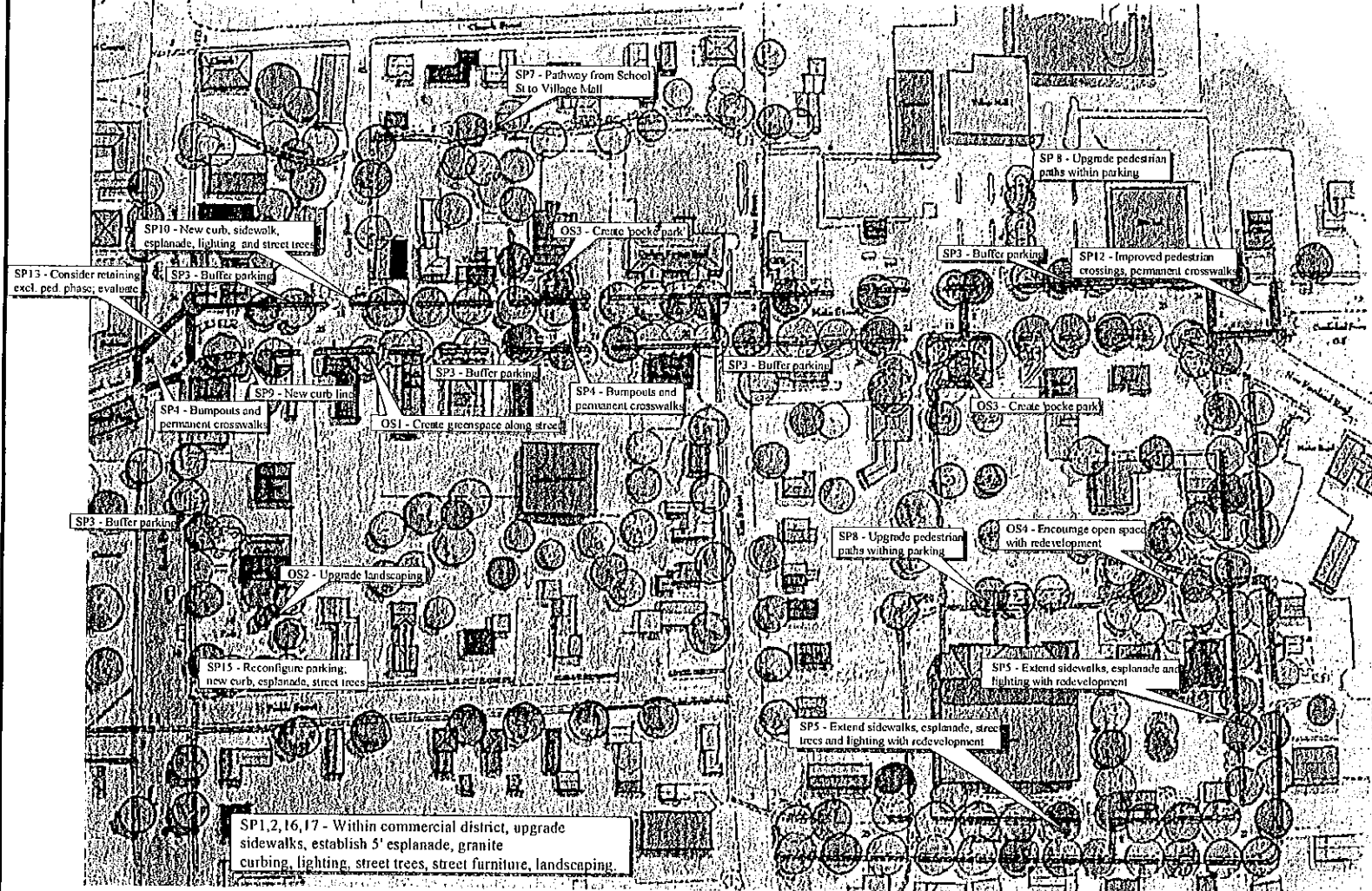
There are two categories of recommendations: design and programmatic. The design recommendations identify improvements to be made to the streetscape, roadways, parking areas and buildings. Programmatic recommendations include actions to be taken by organizations, businesses and the Town to implement policies and ordinances to guide and manage change.

*A major assumption of the longer term recommendations is that the southwesterly relief route is constructed.* It is crucial that project momentum be maintained. This new roadway connection and other planned improvements is expected to reduce the growth in commuter traffic and remove a significant portion of through-truck traffic from the commercial district. It is expected that the relief route will fundamentally change the character (if not the volume) of future traffic through the village. Traffic should be less dominated by through-traffic, providing better access to those that want to come to the downtown but now shy away from there during the peak traffic hours.

Monitoring of changes in traffic occurs through several Town processes that currently exist such as Site Plan Review. Traffic associated with development must be mitigated or managed appropriately. It is important that issues raised through this process not be “lost” but reviewed and studied at the appropriate level of detail.

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# GORHAM MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN



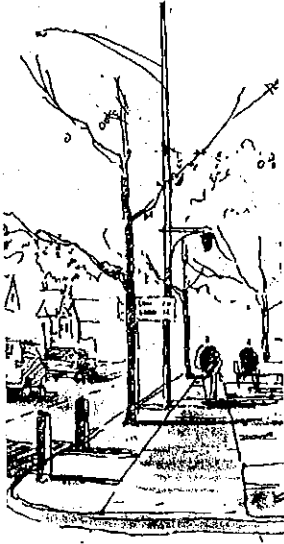
## Phase I Pedestrian/Streetscape & Open Space Recommendations

Source: Richardson & Assoc.  
Wilbur Smith Assoc.

The proposed streetscape improvements will have maintenance implications for the Town. The proposed bumpouts or crosswalk neckdowns in the downtown will require additional care when plowing snow. Trees in the esplanades in the public right-of-way will require Town care for the trees. Species have been recommended that are well suited to an urban environment, minimize interference with utility wires and produce minimum litter. Maintenance considerations were weighed. It was decided that *maintenance considerations should inform, but not drive, design decisions*. Improvements should also be coordinated with any planned utility work such as replacement of water or sewer lines that is proposed for the downtown. Opportunities for burying overhead utilities in the downtown commercial district should be identified as upgrades to systems are being planned.

#### *Streetscape & Pedestrian Recommendations*

- \* (SP 1) Upgrade of sidewalks and curbing in the commercial district -- sidewalks should use brushed concrete with brick edging; curb is to be granite.
- \* (SP 2) Establishment of a standard 5 foot esplanade with street trees along Main Street between New Portland Road and South Street (street trees to be selected for adaptation to urban environment, medium height to avoid conflicts with utilities and low maintenance).
- \* (SP 3) Buffering of parking areas in the front of buildings at Cook's Hardware, Subway, video store, Christy's (in conjunction with new curb), Village Mall Shopping Center and Amato's. Buffering can include landscaping, berms or fences.
- \* (SP 4) Install crosswalks of different material and several bumpouts at identified locations to shorten crossing distance and define parking areas on Main Street in the commercial district and on South Street at Preble Street/Green Street intersection. Bumpouts should allow safe passage of bicyclists.
- \* (SP 5) Extend sidewalks and esplanade along Mechanic Street and Railroad Avenue (with development/redevelopment).
- \* (SP 6) Provide street furniture and amenities such as benches and trash receptacles at designated locations.
- \* (SP 7) Develop pathway from School Street to the Village Mall Shopping Center to strengthen linkage from USM to downtown.
- \* (SP 8) Upgrade pedestrian ways within parking lots at Village Mall and Shop N Save.



Sidewalk cross-section includes  
esplanade, street trees and  
lighting

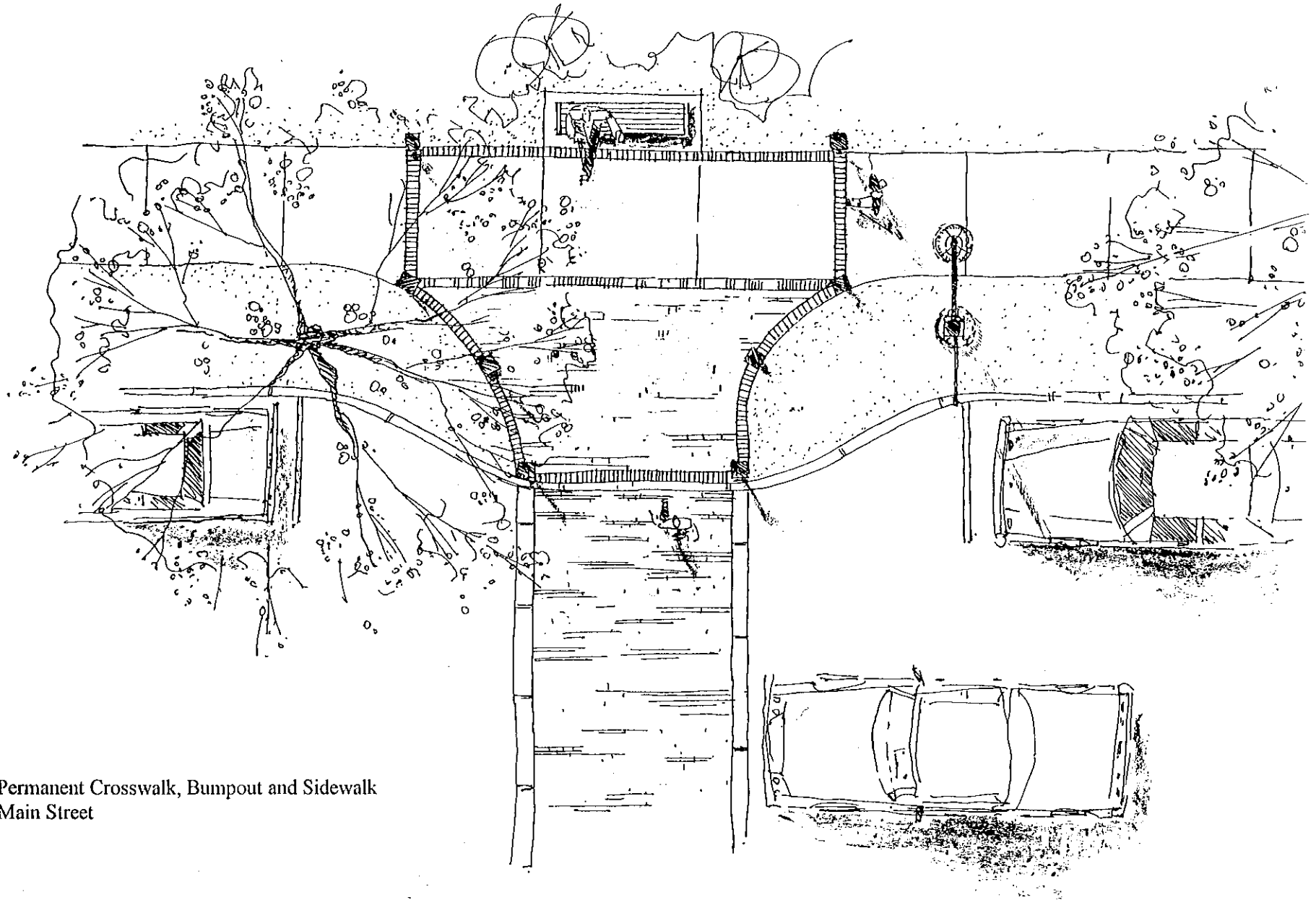
- \* (SP 9) Install new curb line in front of Amato's (Main Street side) to increase sidewalk space and enforce no parking area.
- \* (SP 10) Install curb on Cross Street in front of Christy's and on side of 36 Main Street, install sidewalk from joint parking area behind 36/42 Main Street to Main Street (right-of-way restrictions will need to be further researched).
- \* (SP 11) Install pedestrian scale lighting on Main Street in commercial district and extend down Mechanic Street and Railroad Avenue in conjunction with new development – attachments to utility poles and new posts where utility poles do not exist.
- \* (SP 12) Reconfigure Main Street/New Portland Road intersection to reduce crossing distance along Main Street and to provide crosswalk across Main Street.
- \* (SP 13) Consider retention of exclusive pedestrian phase at Main/South Street intersection during design and installation of new traffic signals – reevaluate after installation in six months if continues to aggravate congestion at current level.
- \* (SP 14) Install new pedestrian signs and pavement markings at Gorham Square.
- \* (SP 15) Reconfigure parking at Robie Community Center to parallel and off street parking.
- \* (SP 16) Install benches and other street furniture at desired locations.
- \* (SP 17) Improve/upgrade landscaping around village buildings.

#### Open Space

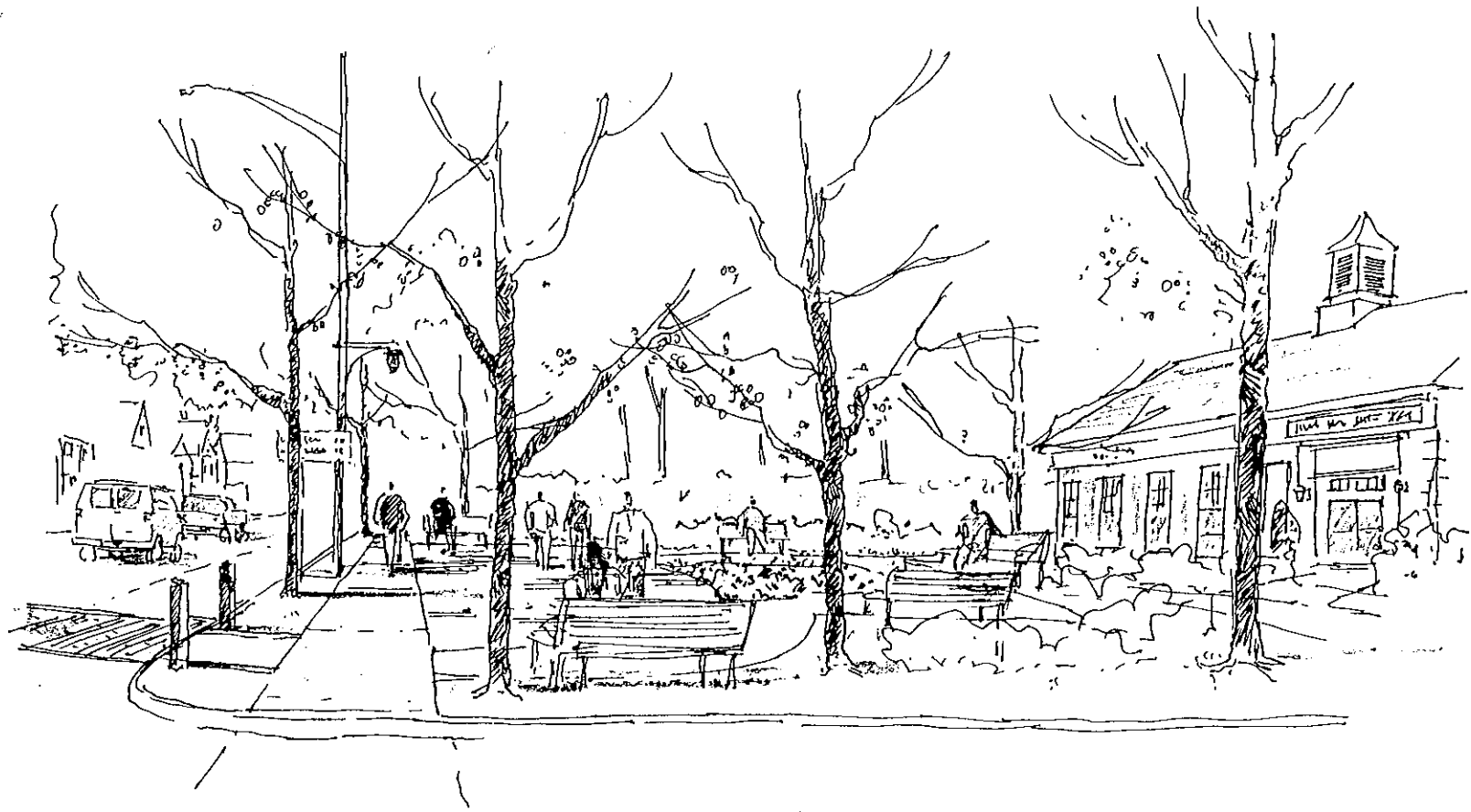
*Implementation considerations:* Recommendations for open space include a number of enhancements to public spaces such as Robie Community Center and to privately owned parcels. The recommendations for privately owned land are intended as spurs to thought and creativity. They are meant to show how small changes cumulatively can contribute greatly to an enhanced downtown experience.

#### *Open Space Recommendations:*

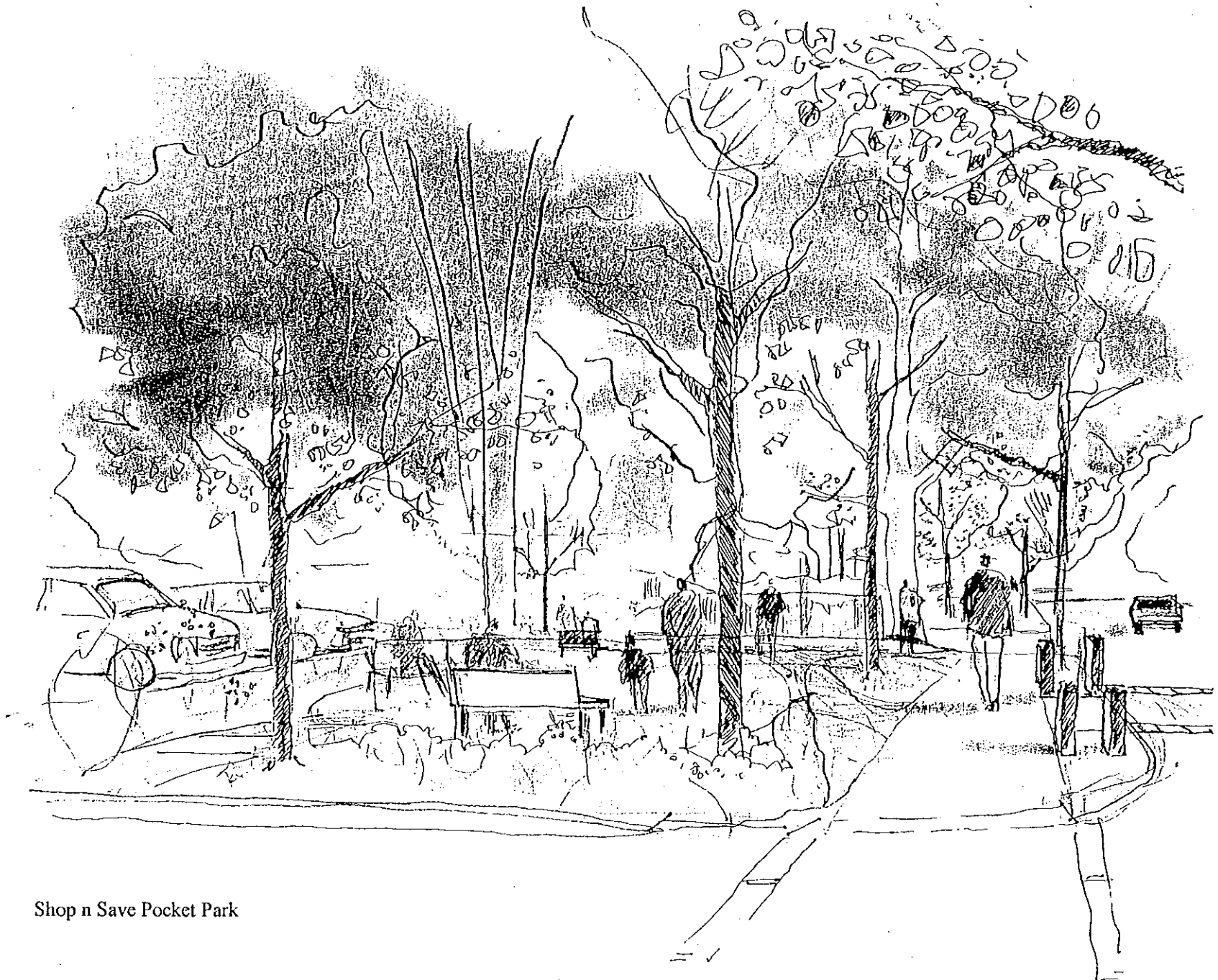
- \* (OS 1) Create more greenspace by establishing uniform sidewalk, landscaping and esplanade along Main Street in commercial district
- \* (OS 2) Upgrade open space adjacent to Robie Community Center to encourage planned community activities



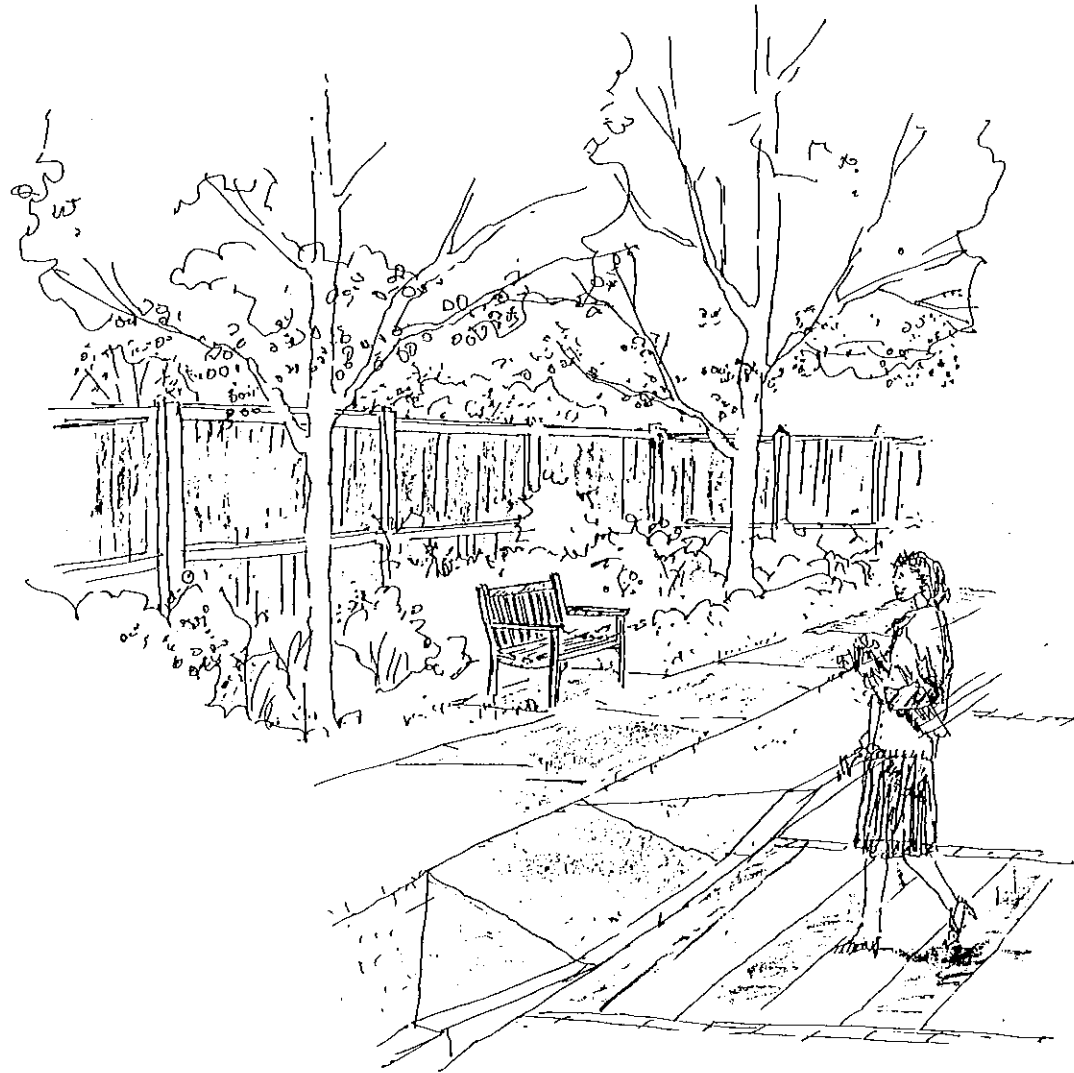
Permanent Crosswalk, Bumpout and Sidewalk  
Main Street



'Post Office' Pocket Park



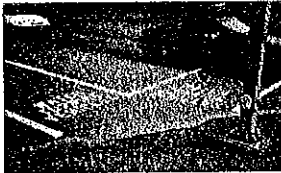
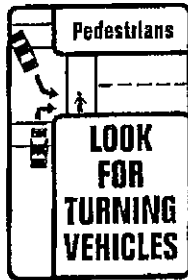
Shop n Save Pocket Park



Off Street Path  
School Street to Village Mall Shopping Center



- \* (OS 3) Transform greenspaces outside of current Post Office and at entrance to Shop N Save into pocket parks.
- \* (OS 4) Express desire for open space component in the development and redevelopment along Mechanic Street and Railroad Avenue.



#### Traffic and Roadway

*Implementation considerations:* The most significant traffic and roadway recommendations are access management measures. Access management is the local control of driveways, vehicle movements and intersections to maintain highway safety and traffic carrying capacity. The number of curb cuts along a roadway is directly related to the number of accidents. Other benefits include reclaiming space devoted to driveways for sidewalks and esplanades and increase pedestrian safety due to reduced number of potential vehicle/pedestrian conflict points.

There are important considerations when planning and implementing an access management program. No reasonable access will be denied to any parcel when looking to consolidate driveways. The key is to look for long term opportunities to implement changes -- not to impose unreasonable burdens on existing owners of costs to implement changes. Changes should be implemented in conjunction with other measures such as roadway reconstruction, downtown revitalization, parcel redevelopment, change of ownership and type of use. Conditions (delay exiting and accidents) at the Village Shopping Mall and Shop n Save driveways should be monitored to assess the need for a traffic signal. This is not desirable due to close proximity to the New Portland Rd. intersection but may be required. The University will also be constructing a new access road to the campus off of Rt. 25 between South St. and Narragansett St.

#### Phase I Access Management Goals

- \* correct deficient situations such as excessively wide or redundant driveways;
- \* identify things that can be/should be done in the short term;
- \* accomplish some driveway consolidation;
- \* provide more definition to streetscape, reclaiming streetscape for pedestrians and greenspace; and,
- \* eliminate some uncontrolled access points to Main Street.

*Traffic and Roadway  
Recommendations*

- \* (TR 1) Define new street/curb lines on Cross Street, Main Street at Christy's and 36 Main Street, in front of Robie Community Center, in front of Amato's on Main Street (to enforce no parking zone) and at GSB employee parking driveway entrance on Main Street.
- \* (TR 2) Reconfigure Main Street/New Portland Road intersection to reduce crossing distances and provide crosswalk across Main Street on west side of intersection.
- \* (TR 3) Retain Mechanic Street entrance to/from Main Street (short term, reevaluate in conjunction with development proposals on Mechanic Street and Railroad Avenue).
- \* (TR 4) Provide protected left turn phases at Main/South Street intersection on School Street and South Street approaches.
- \* (TR 5) Install speed limit sign and low level traffic calming measures (street trees and other landscaping to visually reduce width of street) on Preble Street to reduce speeds -- evaluate need for further action (see Appendix for menu of other potential actions).
- \* (TR 6) Encourage extension of Railroad Avenue to New Portland Road in conjunction with redevelopment of Mechanic Street/Railroad Avenue area.
- \* (TR 7) Delineate on-street parking spaces by notching parking spaces to eliminate encroachment on intersections.
- \* (TR 8) Evaluate sight distance problem at intersection of Church Street and School Street (see Appendix A for preliminary evaluation).
- \* (TR 9) Reconfigure intersection of State Street and Narragansett Street to better channelize intersection (see Appendix for preliminary evaluation).
- \* (TR 10) Establish commercial district gateways to include permanent crosswalks, signage and distinctive landscaping treatments.
- \* (TR 11) Continue practice of requesting set-side of rights of way for potential relief route north of Gorham Village (this was done in conjunction with Gorham Savings Bank processing center approval process).

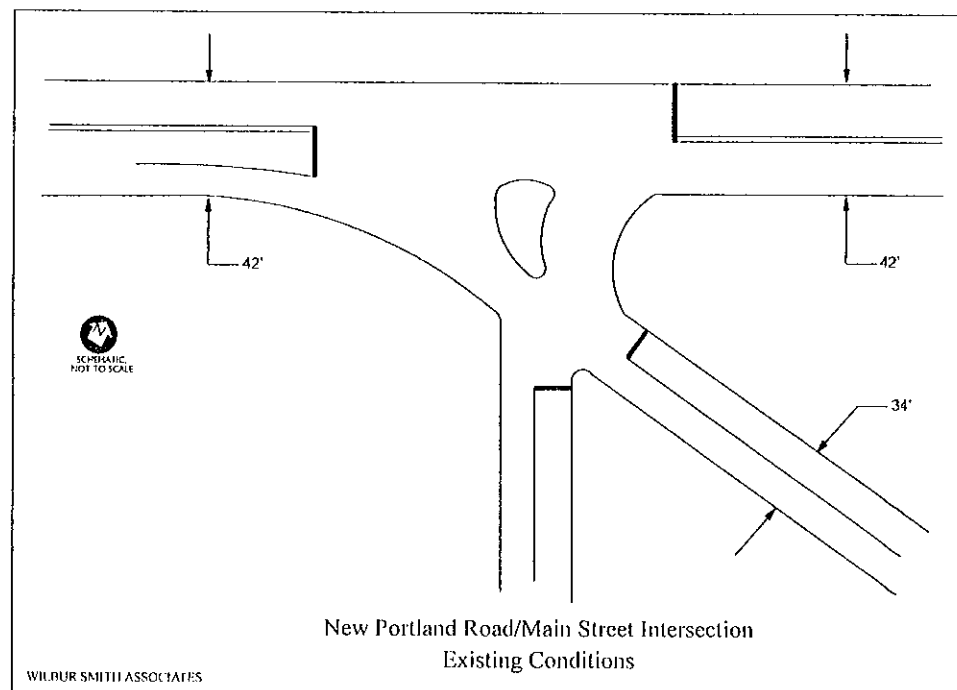
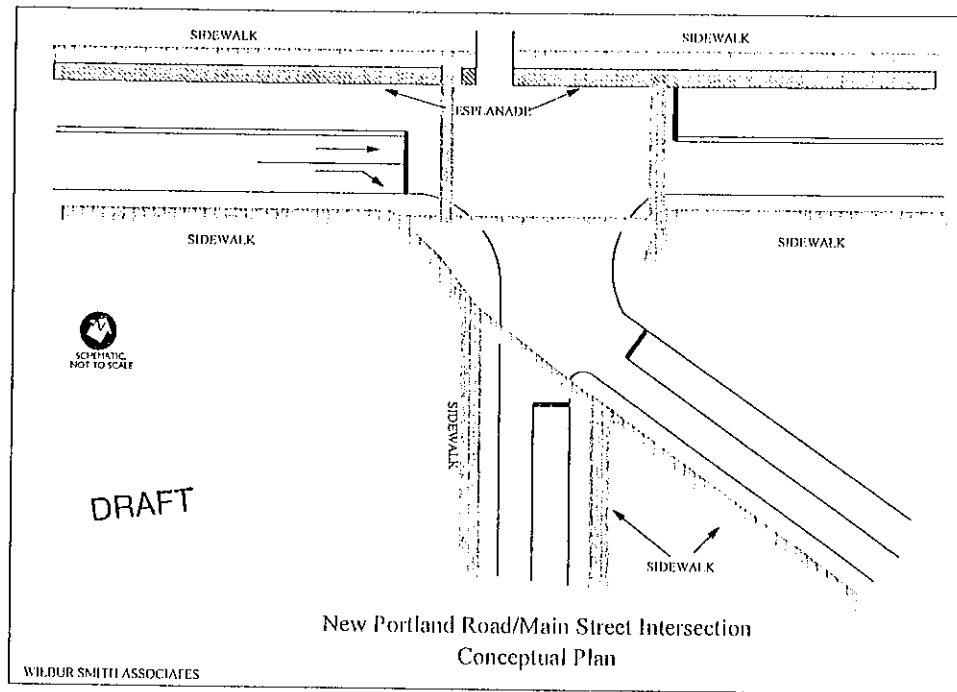
Parking

*Implementation considerations:* Phase I parking recommendations relate to reconfiguring access to parking and relocation of some parking. Most Robie Community Center parking is recommended to be relocated to the side in the joint parking area with Discount Mattress and Amato's (8 spaces) and in on-street parallel parking (8 spaces). The off-street spots would be

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Revised Access Plan  
Cross Street Intersection



signed for parking for the Robie Center only. This is recommended due to the unsafe configuration of the current parking and its impact on the streetscape in front of the Center. The parallel parking spaces created could also be signed for Robie use only. It is anticipated that at least the same number of parking spaces will be provided.

#### *Parking Recommendations*

- \* (PK 1) Reconfigure/relocate perpendicular parking in front of Robie Community Center to parallel parking and to side yard creating the same number or more spaces
- \* (PK 2) Create interconnected parking for 36 and 42 Main Street shops/offices, Gorham Savings Bank employee parking and Village Mall, Shop N Save and new development on adjacent lot on Mechanic Street,
- \* (PK 3) Create parallel on street parking on the side of 36 Main Street, in front of 36 Main Street and Christy's.

#### *Bicycle Network Recommendations*

- \* (BK 1) Install "Share the Road" signs at village and commercial gateway locations.
- \* (BK 2) Review concept for conversion of Sanford and Eastern RR right-of-way to a multi-use pathway
- \* (BK 3) Provide bicycle racks at activity centers (libraries, etc.) and designated locations.

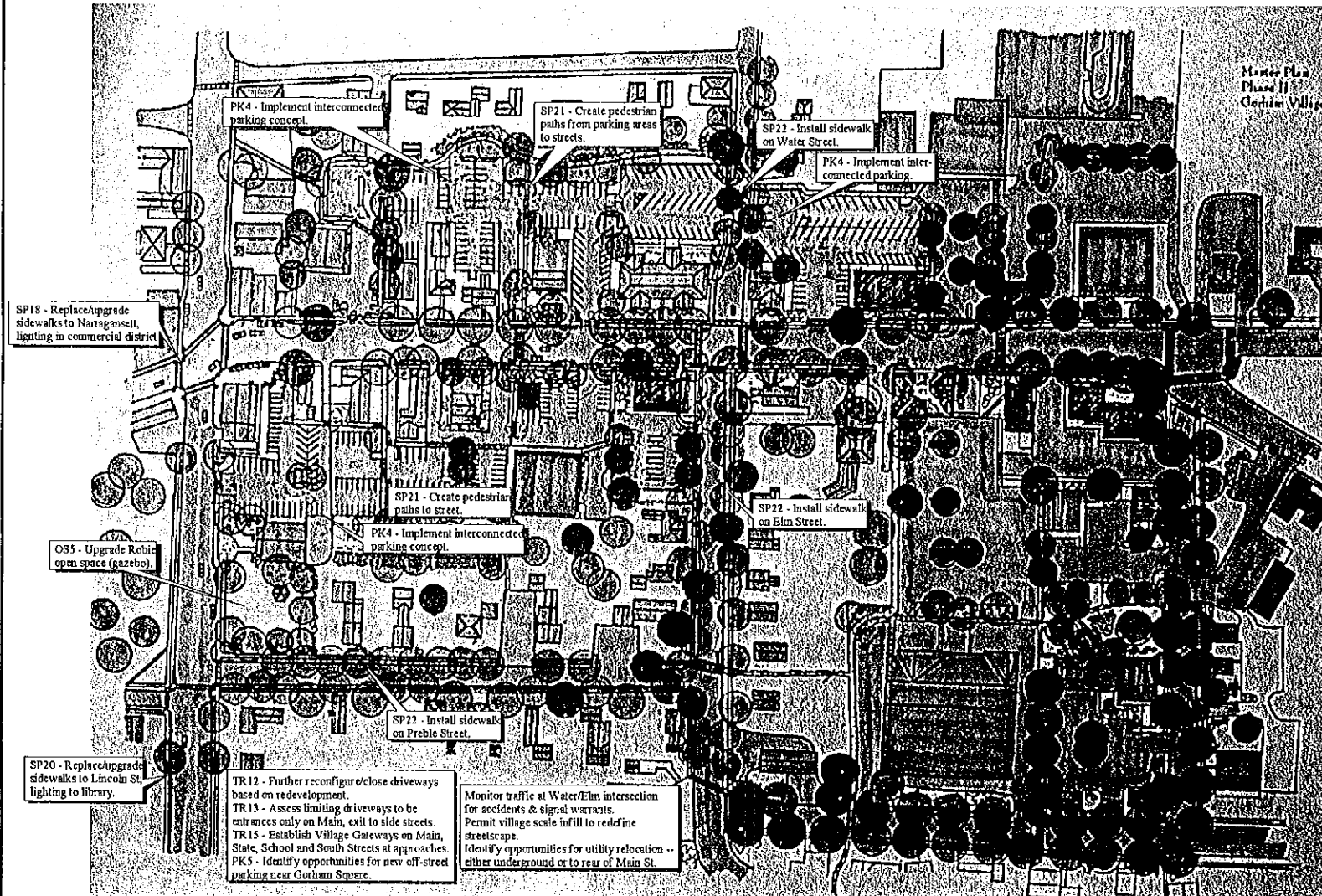
## **B. PHASE II DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS**

The Phase II Improvement Plan generally identifies longer term opportunities, some of which, in many ways, are more speculative in nature. Phase II also includes more actions outside of the commercial district to include improvements to sidewalks and the streetscape leading to the commercial district. Many depend on the southwest relief route being in place.

A higher percentage of the Phase II recommendations rely on private actions. The recommendations depicted are intended not necessarily as site-specific items that should occur but as guidelines for changes as they occur. For instance, several new buildings are shown in the Plan. These are intended to highlight building orientation and massing that should be encouraged to occur within the village. Key features are to reinforce building location requirements that are currently required in the Village Center zoning district. It is recommended that the Urban Commercial zone be combined with the Village Center into a new zoning district.

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GORHAM MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN



Phase II Design Recommendations

Source: Richardson & Assoc. (concepts and rendering); Wilbur Smith Associates.

### Parking

*Implementation Considerations:* Phase II parking recommendations concentrate on creating interconnected parking areas in the rear of buildings abutting Main Street. The main purpose is to reduce the number of traffic turning movements on Main Street. In combination with improvements to the streetscape, it should be more desirable to park once and complete all errands without the need to drive from one isolated parking lot to another. This will require high levels of cooperation between downtown businesses to address management and maintenance issues. The series of interconnected parking areas shown in the Phase II plan does slightly increase the amount of parking available in areas of the downtown.

It is also desirable from a traffic safety standpoint to reduce the number of conflict points for vehicles turning out onto Main Street from driveways. The interconnected parking areas will allow for incremental changes to parking lot egress. The idea is to get vehicles to enter via an individual businesses driveway but exit via a connected side street. This is discussed above in the Phase II Traffic and Roadway implementation considerations.

Important considerations when implementing the parking recommendations include improvement costs and management and maintenance of the lots. Improvement costs are intended to be borne when properties are upgraded for existing uses or transfer of ownership and change of uses occur. It is intended that these changes occur over time. The interconnecting of parking lots, coupled with the proposed changes in access to lots ("In" via Main Street, "Out" via side streets), will likely increase the burden on side streets for exiting traffic. This needs to be monitored closely. It is assumed that the construction of the westerly relief route will ease traffic demands on the downtown.

Changes in conditions from interconnected parking with outlets on to side streets needs to be monitored closely. These streets include Cross Street, Elm Street and Water Street. Also, if an exit from interconnected parking is made from South Street, this will also require monitoring. There will be additional checks as properties change uses or redevelop -- there will need to be Planning Board Site Plan Review of proposed changes. Implications of changes will be thoroughly reviewed.

**Traffic monitoring actions:**

- \* monitor accident rates along Main Street, South Street, School Street
- \* monitor accident levels for traffic entering parking areas at driveways and at side streets
- \* monitor accident levels for traffic exiting from driveways and from side streets
- \* monitor delays for exiting traffic from driveways and side streets to determine whether signal warrants are being met (mitigation of delays through signalization can be a requirement for site plan approval).

Opportunities to strategically increase parking should be kept in mind for areas near Gorham Square. This area has little off-street parking available. Should the Christy's location become available, the Town should consider purchasing this parcel for a municipal parking lot and possibly with an infill building or open space component adjacent to Main Street. Other potential sites include a vacant parcel on Elm Street behind Subway and the 'overflow' parking area for Shop n Save abutting Railroad Avenue.

*Parking Recommendations*

- \* (PK 4) Implement interconnected parking concept on each side of Main Street within the Commercial district
- \* (PK 5) Identify opportunities for municipal parking areas near Gorham Square.

*Open Space Recommendations*

- \* (OS 5) Provide amenities in open spaces to include gazebo/band stand at Robie Community Center and benches and trash receptacles at all open spaces.



*Streetscape & Pedestrian  
Recommendations*

- \* (SP 18) Replace/upgrade sidewalks along State Street from Main to Narragansett Street
- \* (SP 19) Replace/upgrade sidewalks along School Street
- \* (SP 20) Replace/upgrade sidewalks along South Street
- \* (SP 21) Create pedestrian paths from interconnected parking areas to streets
- \* (SP 22) Install sidewalks on Elm, Water and Preble Streets

Traffic & Roadway

*Implementation considerations:* Phase II access management recommendations include assessing driveway access in conjunction with the gradual interconnection of parking areas. One strategy is to make most driveways to rear parking areas as entrances only, prohibiting exiting traffic. Traffic would exit via side streets, making these movements more controlled at intersections rather than driveways. As stated above in the parking section above, this will require monitoring each proposed change to ensure that side streets are not over-loaded.

Truck traffic will continue to be problematic in the village center for the foreseeable future. No improvements were identified specifically to deal with the increasing truck traffic. The southwest relief route will re-route traffic that currently uses South Street north and south bound. Traffic that traverses the village due to Route 204/4 traffic will continue to traverse the commercial district along Main Street. A northerly relief route would be needed to remove these through-trucks and automobiles from the village traffic stream.

*Traffic and Roadway  
Recommendations:*

- \* (TR 12) Further reconfigure/close driveways in conjunction with redevelopment of sites
- \* (TR 13) Assess limiting driveways along Main Street to be entrances only with exits via side streets (Water, Elm and Cross Streets).
- \* (TR 14) Implement changes to Church Street/School Street intersection
- \* (TR 15) Establish four village gateways through signage and landscaping treatments

Parking

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*Open Space Recommendations*

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## C. POLICY/PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy and programmatic recommendations differ from the 'design' recommendations in that they are concerned with processes that affect change. It is crucial that the regulatory, administrative and organizational structures be in place to support the 'brick and mortar' parts of this plan.

### Municipal/Civic/Government Functions

It is important for historic town centers to retain a core of civic and government functions. These functions may include town offices, post offices, libraries and schools. These activities add *the* indispensable ingredient for a healthy downtown -- people. Children walking to school, office workers shopping during lunch breaks and trips to the post office create a needed vitality. Pressures for more space are real and must be addressed through creative long range planning. Many of these issues are currently under debate within Gorham.

- \* **Maintain civic uses within the village centers.**

### Directing Growth

The Town has several ways to direct compatible growth to specific areas. These include infrastructure investments and developer incentives. Many of these measures are addressed in other programmatic recommendations.

**Infrastructure Investments:** The Town can spur development by the private sector by targeting its investments. Improvements in the streetscape and pedestrian facilities will signal to developers that the Town is serious about retention and attracting new village businesses. It is important for it to be an explicit policy of the Town to make infrastructure improvements in village centers a priority.

- \* **Make village centers priorities for public investment in infrastructure.**

**Developer Incentives.** These incentives may include waiving or reducing parking requirements for upper floor residential uses in the Village Center and Urban Commercial district (or their successors) or making gap financing available.

- \* **Provide incentives for quality, mixed use development in village centers.**

### Downtown Management & Marketing

Establish an organization responsible for downtown marketing and promotion. This may be a new organization or a unit of an established entity. The purpose is to focus on new business development and retention, promote and implement the Main Street Master Plan and develop programming in the Village Center. Programming may include festivals, concerts, sidewalk sales, parades, and other events. These events should highlight Gorham's history and vitality to bring people back to the Village. The recently renovated Robie Community Center and an upgraded greenspace should be used. Programs should be jointly developed and marketed by the Town and USM. Several organizations with a town or region-wide focus currently exist. The Recreation Department should be integrally involved in downtown programming.

The Economic Development Corporation or Planning Department should oversee a marketing study. Such a study could be conducted as a class project by USM students. The study would identify the types of businesses that should be attracted to the Village Center. It could also serve the dual purpose of integrating students and faculty into the Town/village. The students would be ideal researchers to identify strengths and weaknesses in gaining more business by USM staff, faculty and students.

Special consideration should be placed on attracting compatible non-retail uses within the Village Center and Urban Commercial districts (or their successor district). These may include more office/professional/service uses and residences. Office/professional/service uses add critical mass to the number of shoppers and users of services in the downtown during the day. Apartments above shops add a night time presence in the downtown.

Special attention needs to be paid to the issue of parking. Implementation of the interconnected parking concept will raise numerous issues regarding lot management and maintenance. A consensus will need to be formed that it is in the best interest of the village businesses. There are implications for lot usage – shoppers may park in 'your lot' and visit your business but then go to another business without moving the car. This type of usage should be encouraged and does already occur to some extent.

- \* **Establish a formal organization focused on Gorham Village to lead business attraction/ retention and promotion activities.**
- \* **Conduct a marketing study to identify businesses to attract to the village.**

- \* Create a parking subcommittee to guide parking policy in the Village and oversee implementation of the recommended parking concept.**

#### USM Coordination

The presence of the university is a relatively untapped resource with regard to the economic and cultural impact on the Village Center. Improved coordination and integration with the University should occur at different levels, on formal and informal bases. The University is undertaking a program to strengthen the Gorham campus as a residential campus. It has taken several steps toward this goal. These steps include offering enhanced academic offerings at the Gorham campus and extracurricular activities. Major new facilities constructed on campus include a new field house and ice arena.

- \* Institute a Town/USM committee to address issues. Sub-committees should be formed to address specific topics such as transportation and cultural programming.**

#### Transportation

Currently, there is no public bus transportation available to Gorham residents. The USM provides bus service open to students, faculty and staff between the Gorham and Portland campuses. Limited service is also provided to the Maine Mall. The Greater Portland Council of Governments has coordinated a planning effort to plan for bus service that would be open to the public and serve the university. The service would operate at half hour intervals and connect Gorham to the Maine Mall area and to downtown Portland. Plans call for this service to be implemented in 2001. The Town, through its participation with PACTS, should aggressively pursue this project. Funding of the local share (likely 20%) would be through cost sharing between participating municipalities and the USM. This service is recommended in the Gorham-Portland Corridor Study.

- \* Work to implement new transit services by 2001 in conjunction with USM.**

#### Class schedules

Classes that begin or end near the peak hour traffic periods can exacerbate traffic congestion. Fall 1997 classroom enrollment figures show significant student enrollment in classes beginning and ending between 4 PM and 6 PM. Typical enrollment is between 400 and 500 students on Monday through Thursdays for classes beginning during these three hours.

- \* **Work with USM to examine transportation implications of class schedules.**
- \* **Coordinate traffic management measures with USM (new traffic signals and flexible signal equipment that can adjust to peak demands).**

#### Community programs

Coordinate a program of events open to the public to encourage more interaction between the Gorham and USM communities. These include arts events (gallery shows, plays, concerts, coffee houses), seminars and forums, sports events, and trade and business shows. The University is hosting a Gorham business trade show this Spring.

- \* **Develop a series of joint programs to be held on campus and in the village center to attract groups**

## D. IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

#### Facade Grants

- \* **Create a facade grants program.** This program provides financial incentives to property owners to improve the facades and landscaping of buildings within the village centers. This should be targeted to commercial buildings. This may be in the form of grants or low interest loans. Require matching funds from the business or property owner. This is also a recommendation of the South Windham/Little Falls Revitalization Plan. Make the program available to all village centers.

#### Parking regulations

- \* **Revise parking requirements** to tailor them to normal use, not peak usage. Encourage interconnected parking areas through interparcel connections. Allow and encourage the interconnection of parking areas where feasible.
- \* **Shift approval of shared parking from Zoning Board of Appeals to Planning Board.**

#### Signage Ordinance

- \* **Revise sign ordinance.** The Town is currently reviewing its sign ordinance. The enacted ordinance should clearly distinguish the types of signs that are compatible in the village commercial district. The intent is to ensure the visual compatibility with the scale and character of the surrounding architecture. Signs shall be designed to be read by pedestrians and slow moving cars. Internally illuminated signs should be prohibited in the commercial district. Signs that do not meet these standards should be made non-conforming signs.

#### Quality, Unifying Landscaping

- \* **Require quality landscaping materials** and design around buildings and within parking areas as part of site plan review and design review,. The design should relate strongly to and complement other properties. The design guidelines should clearly illustrate desired design parameters including types of materials (native species and climate resistant) and preferred placement and massings. The intent is not to make every property look the same but to provide some coherence of design throughout the commercial district. Minimum buffering of parking and buildings with landscaping should be specified and illustrated. Minimum numbers of trees per parking space should be required. Incentives can be provided to offset impacts on parking. Landscape requirements may be waived when they can not reasonably be met.

#### Open Space Easements

- \* **Create incentives for developers** to create open space within new developments. These spaces do not have to be significant in size to make a large contribution to the livability of the downtown. Three locations identified in this plan for enhanced pocket parks include in front of the current Post Office, at the entrance to Shop N Save and on currently vacant lot on Mechanic Street. Encourage the developer to grant an open space easement for public access. This can also reduce the liability for the property owner by granting this access formally. These incentives may include a reduction in parking requirements where the reduction can be shown to not have a negative effect.

#### Zoning Districts within Gorham Village

- \* **Combine the Village Center and Urban Commercial districts into a unified district.** The following changes would allow a single district to apply to land areas now subject to the VC and UC Districts. Several minor regulatory distinctions are recommended to be



retained within the new zoning district to recognize existing development and ownership patterns.

- ◆ *Permitted Uses.* Establish a relationship between gross floor area and building footprint. Establish a maximum individual retail store building footprint. Reduce permitted gross floor area. Allow larger gross floor areas for multiple story retail stores. This would encourage multiple story buildings subject to current height restriction (35 feet).
- ◆ *Single District.* Retain Village Center District, delete the Urban Commercial district, and extend the Village Center District to the geographic areas formally covered by the UC District. This would make the areas currently in the UC District subject to the requirements of the VC District.
- ◆ *Drive-Through Service.* Continue to allow a drive-through when accessory to a financial institution. This would affect areas currently in the UC District. A drive-through would no longer be allowed for any permitted use, but would be allowed only for financial institutions.
- ◆ *Building Setbacks.* Require that the setback be the average of the existing setbacks in the block in which the building is located for that portion of Main Street lying between South and Elm Streets. Require a maximum 25-foot setback be established in all other areas. This provision would retain the regulatory distinction which currently exists between VC and UC. Allow the Planning Board to permit lower setbacks when multiple buildings are being developed as part of the same site and adequate provisions are made for emergency access and other public safety considerations.
- ◆ *Side and Rear Yards.* Retain the 10-foot setback. This would change the setback in areas currently zoned UC from 20 to 10 feet.
- ◆ *Minimum Open Space.* Require 25% of the lot area in the areas currently zoned UC to remain open space. This would not be a requirement in the current VC District (due to parcel orientation). Waivers should be available when not feasible.
- ◆ *Parking in Front.* Continue to require that no portion of the lot in front of the front building line may be used for off-street parking, service or loading, but add language allowing the Planning Board to waive this requirement when there is no practical alternative.
- ◆ *Off-Street Parking Waiver.* Retain the provision which states that the Planning Board can waive or reduce off-street parking requirements when an existing building is being converted to another permitted use, or when adequate off-street parking

exists within 300 feet of the site. This will allow the Planning Board to waive the parking requirement in areas currently subject to the UC District (no such waiver currently exists). Reduce by half the parking requirements for residential uses above first floor retail/office uses. Allow the Planning Board to waive all parking requirements for residential uses above first floor retail/office use if shared parking can adequately meet parking demand and increase allowable distance for parking provided off-site for upstairs residential uses. (See “Shared Parking” in Tools and Strategies section.)

- ◆ *Combining Entrances.* Add a provision stating that the Planning Board may require that entrances be combined to the maximum extent possible. This will be a new requirement in areas currently zoned VC.
- ◆ *Parking Location.* Continue requirement for rear or side yard parking, with none permitted in required front yard.

- \* **Create an Office Residential Zone.** This new zoning district would provide a more compatible transition between the commercial district and the adjacent residential neighborhood.
  - ◆ Create a new, transitional zone on both sides of Preble Street.
  - ◆ Encourage home-occupation, adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Encourage reuse for service and professional businesses subject to impact review.
  - ◆ Provides zoning more compatible with the likely increased use of Preble Street as the Railroad Avenue/Mechanic Street area redevelops and Main Street traffic increases prior to relief route construction. Retain apartment uses as a conforming use.

#### Contract Zoning

- \* **Revise the current contract zoning provisions** to allow residential uses to be part of a contract zone within Village Center zoning districts. This use would be restricted to the upper floors of ground floor retail/office uses. This would further the goal of developing a critical mass of people to support village businesses.

#### Access Management Bylaw

- \* **Amend the access management related portions of the Parking, Loading and Traffic requirements** (Chapter II, Section II).

- ◆ *Number of Entrances.* Amend regulations to Village Center and Urban Commercial (or their successors) to permit only one access to each property. Allow the Planning Board to permit a second access, or a separate entrance and a separate exit, when such second access or separate entrance and exit points, would facilitate traffic flow, accommodate an odd-shaped lot, or enhance shared driveways, shared parking or parking to the rear of buildings.
- ◆ *Access Limits to Main Street.* Amend the Village Center district (or its successor) by adding a performance standard that would permit the Planning Board to further restrict access to Main Street where alternative access is available. This standard currently applies to the Urban Commercial district.
- ◆ *Parking, Loading and Traffic Standard.* Amend these requirements (Chapter II, Section II) to include provisions for the following, in the Village Center and Urban Commercial districts (or their successors):
  - ⇒ minimum corner clearances;
  - ⇒ minimum and maximum driveway widths (by uses);
  - ⇒ parking lot interconnections wherever possible during site development or redevelopment;
  - ⇒ sufficient throat length to prevent traffic back-ups onto Main Street;
  - ⇒ minimum curb radii;
  - ⇒ maximum lighting pole height; and
  - ⇒ parking lot landscaping requirements (may be part of design review as well).

#### Encourage Infill Development

- \* **Amend the Special Exceptions** within the Village Center and Urban Commercial districts (or their successor) to allow accessory structures. These accessory structures may house non-automobile oriented uses (e.g., no drive through uses) such as small scale retail or mixed use where it can be demonstrated that any reduced parking will not have negative impacts on surrounding uses or that displaced parking can be satisfactorily be offset by off-site parking or relocated.

#### Adaptive reuse

- \* **Encourage adaptive reuse** of existing buildings that contribute positively to the streetscape, adding variety and visual interest to the street.

#### Design Review Guidelines

- \* **Implement design review as part of site plan review.** The planning board should review as part of its site plan review process the oversight of design guidelines. It is not recommended that a separate design review board be established due to the added administrative burden and costs on the Town and developers. A key element of this is that architectural design shall be compatible with smaller scale commercial, village uses. Large buildings should be broken into smaller massing of connected buildings to reduce their appearance. Variation in detail, form and siting shall be used to provide visual interest and avoid monotony.

The developed design guidelines should cover the following areas: architecture style including facades, windows, roof lines, building height; building materials including siding, roof ; building orientation and setbacks; landscaping including types of materials and their massing around buildings and within parking areas; and, signs, including placement, materials, illumination, height and size

- \* **Develop a Design Guidelines Handbook** for Gorham. The Handbook should include a clear statement of purpose, clear requirements for submissions as part of the site plan review process, clear definitions for each element covered, clear procedures for approval, disapproval and appeal, and illustrate clearly the design elements covered by the guidelines.

#### Pre-application conference/workshop

- \* **Require a pre-application conference.** The developer, prior to submitting a formal application to the Town, shall schedule a pre-application meeting with the Town's assigned development review staff. This includes the Planning Director, Town Engineer, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Public Works Director. At the meeting, applicable site plan review procedures and design guidelines would be discussed.