

SHERBORN TOWN CENTER: AT A CROSSROADS

INTRODUCTION

A Town Center generally serves as the heart of a community. Ideally, it serves several functions. It is a marketplace where goods and services can be obtained. It serves as the center of government, housing both administrative and functional activities. It provides both passive and active recreational opportunities. It serves as an institutional center with places of worship and/or other gathering places for civic or fraternal organizations. Traditionally, housing is also a component of a Town Center, either above commercial space or adjacent to it. And finally, these functions are integrated in a manner that facilitates social interaction.

Sherborn Town Center has been the focus of improvement efforts for at least 50 years, beginning with the 1958 Master Plan. There have numerous efforts since then, including the 1971 Town Center Study, the 1975 Master Plan, the 1981 Zoning Study Committee report, the 1989 Town Center Master Plan, the 2001 Livability Charrette, the 2001 General Plan, the 2004 Community Development Plan, and the 2007 Final Report of the Town Center Water District Workgroup.

There have also been several initiatives (2001 and 2006) to develop a mixed use project under provisions of the Planned Unit Development¹ (PUD) bylaw in the Town Center, but none have moved beyond the preliminary stages. These proposals have generated considerable discussion about the future of the Town Center, the provisions of the PUD and the Zoning Bylaw in general.

In response to these discussions, the Planning Board initiated this study. The objective of the study is to generate data and establish principles that can provide for decisions that will impact the future of the Town Center. In addition, this study will serve as a precursor to and component of an update of the General Plan.

This report includes the following sections:

- Previous Town Center Improvement Efforts, including the major zoning changes, proposed road reconstruction plans and previous studies including the 1958, 1975 and 2001 Master Plans, the 1971 Town Center Study, the 1981 Zoning Study Committee report, the 1989 Town Center Master Plan, and the 2001 Livability Charrette, the 2001 General Plan, the 2004 Community Development Plan and the 2007 Final Report of the Town Center Water District Workgroup
- Documentation of Existing Conditions, including existing lot areas, building space, parking spaces and other information regarding the Primary Commercial Area and other areas within the Town Center
- Resident Survey and Citizen Input, including the results of a citizens survey conducted in 2008, and input from a set of public forums conducted in June and October of 2008
- Estimates of Future Development, based on alternative assumptions and visions

¹ A PUD allows consideration for development of a property under certain special provisions. See the discussion on Page 4 for an explanation of Sherborn's PUD objectives and requirements.

- An Evaluation of the Impacts of Alternatives, including fiscal impacts
- *Recommendations for Future Actions.* [To be added]

PREVIOUS TOWN CENTER IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

Introduction

Efforts to improve the Town Center have been ongoing for many years. These efforts have included various zoning changes that have changed the boundaries of the business districts, road reconstruction proposals and several previous studies that have made recommendations for changes. The previous studies include the 1958 master plan, the 1971 Town Center study, the 1975 master plan, the 1981 Zoning Study Committee report, the 1989 Town Center Master Plan, the 2001 Livability Charrette, the 2001 General Plan and the 2004 Community Development Plan. These efforts are summarized below.

Zoning Changes

The first Zoning Bylaw in Sherborn was adopted at a Special Town Meeting on June 7, 1937. It established two classes of districts – one for Residences and one for Businesses. It required a minimum of 1 acre in the Residence district and at least ½ acre in the Business districts. Efforts to locate the 1937 Zoning Map have been unsuccessful.

A major change in the Zoning Bylaw was adopted on December 13, 1954. That Bylaw put in place the major features that remain the essence of the Zoning Bylaw to this day. It established three residential districts requiring minimum lot sizes of one, two and three acres, respectively.

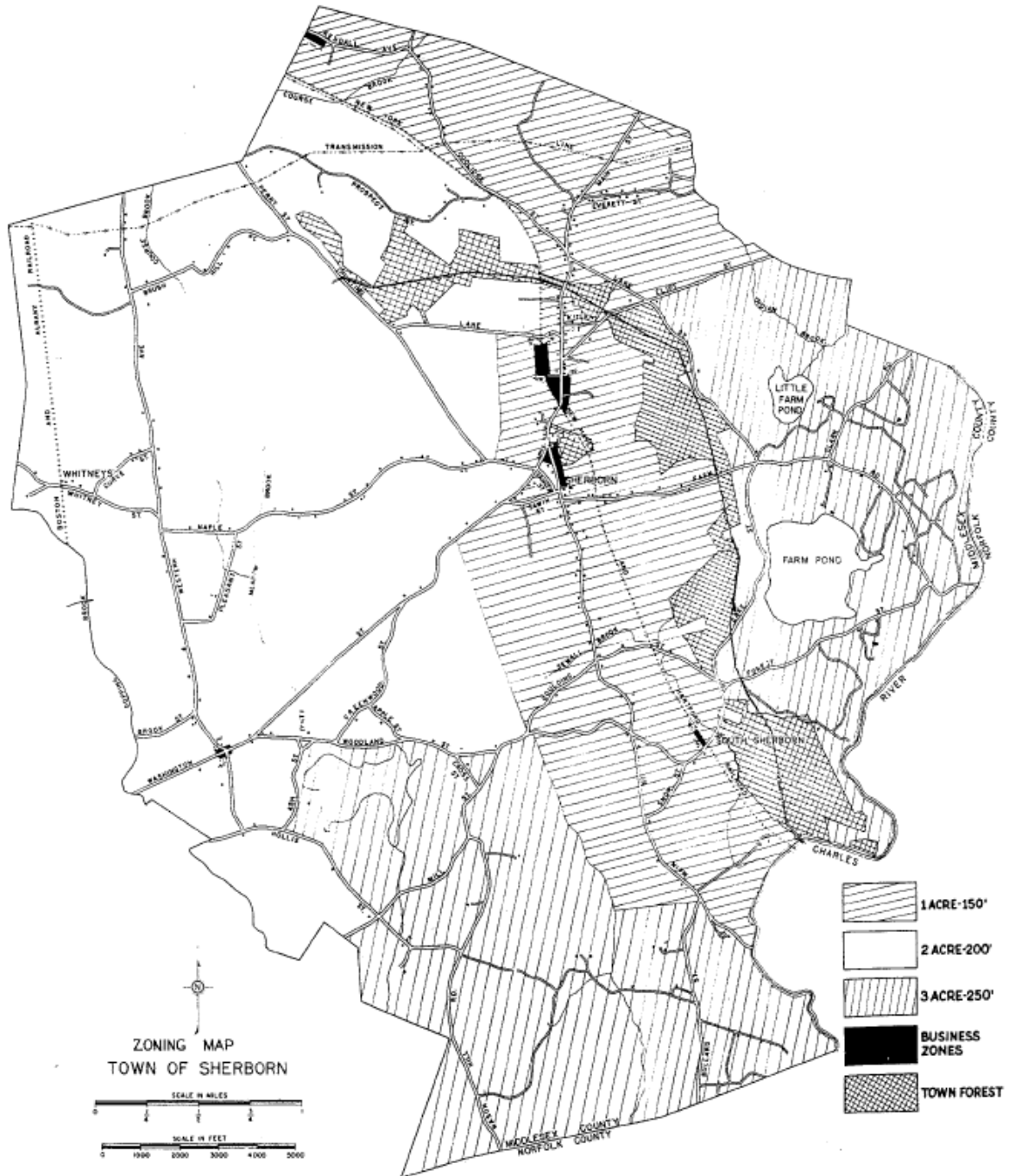
There was a single type of Business district, but there were five separate locations to which it applied (See Figure 1). One of those locations was essentially what is now the Business-General (B-G) district along North Main Street, with the exception that the Sherborn Inn property was not yet a part of it. Also, what is now the Business-General district along Washington and South Main Streets also existed except that the portion on the east side of South Main Street extended from the Split down to the Pilgrim Church property. This district has since been reduced.

There was also a district on the south side of Kendall Avenue. Except for the portion of this district that was rezoned to EA in 2001 (resulting in the development of the Sherborn Meadows age-restricted housing development), this district still exists. The other districts, which have since been repealed, include the 4 corners at the intersection of Western Avenue and Washington Streets, and a strip along the railroad tracks just north of Forest Street.

The next significant zoning change impacting the Town Center occurred in 1983 when the Business-Professional (B-P) district was adopted for an area on the east side of North Main Street. This change allowed the construction of the office building known as 20 North Main Street in the mid-1980's. Since that rezoning also included the Clark House, it also led to the eventual restoration of that property and its adaptive reuse as an office building. Another significant change occurred in April 1984, when Town Meeting voted to extend the Business-

General district across Powderhouse Lane. This allowed the construction of the Sherborn Inn in the late 1980's.

FIGURE 1



Source: 1958 Master Plan

At the 1998 Annual Town Meeting in April, the Town adopted the Planned Unit Development (PUD) provision of the Zoning Bylaw. This bylaw did not make any changes in the business district boundaries. However, it does allow for business development to occur on parcels with at least 25% of its area within the B-G or B-P districts, by special permit. The PUD bylaw allows more flexibility than the B-G or B-P with regard to setbacks and other provisions, but it also requires significant public amenities and provides for greater Town control than the B-G and B-P districts require. The PUD bylaw limits the size of any retail outlet to 2500 square feet, exclusive of any kitchen, storage or mechanical space.

The purposes of the PUD bylaw are to provide for greater integration of land uses, preserve historic buildings by providing economically viable uses for them, relieve congestion by providing linked access and parking, perpetuate and enhance the appearance of Sherborn's traditional small town New England center and promote better building location and overall site planning than is possible under traditional zoning.

No development has taken place under the PUD bylaw, in part because of the opposition to the proposals and because of some of the limitations in the PUD bylaw. In 2008 and 2009, the Planning Board proposed amendments to the PUD bylaw to allow a single retail outlet to exceed the 2500 square foot limit and to allow residences as part of a PUD. These proposals received strong majority support but fell short of the necessary 2/3 vote needed for approval.

At the 2000 Annual Town Meeting, the B-G district was extended slightly on the east side of North Main Street to encompass the entirety of the parcel on which Rose Automotive is located. For the rest of the east side of North Main Street, the B-G district extends only 150 feet back from North Main Street. As a result, Rose Automotive has recently completed an expansion that added more than 4200 square feet to the building.

North Main Street Reconstruction

A number of studies have recommended changes in the layouts of the roads within the Town Center. Most of these will be discussed as part of the summaries of those studies. This section will briefly summarize the effort to reconstruct North Main Street within its existing right-of-way beginning in the early 1990's.

In the early 1990's, a redesign of North Main Street and a part of Washington Street was proposed to be done using state funds. The initial design called for a 34 foot pavement width (two 12-foot lanes plus 5-foot shoulders on each side), installation of traffic lights at the Maple-Sanger-Washington Streets intersection, improvements to the existing sidewalk on the west side of North Main Street, a major change to the South Main/North Main/Washington Streets split that would provide a southbound left-turn and permit right turns from Washington onto South Main, and major impacts on trees and wetlands north of Eliot Street.

There was significant resistance to this design and a Town Meeting article for the acquisition of needed right-of-way takings was withdrawn without a vote at a special Town Meeting in late 1994. In response, a new North Main Street Committee was established and it worked with MassHighway, and the Conservation Law Foundation and the Town's traffic engineering consulting firm to develop a "traffic calming" alternative, which was presented in 1996. The

alternative proposed a 28-foot pavement width, a roundabout at the Maple-Sanger-Washington Streets intersection, sidewalks on both sides of Washington and North Main Streets, the same changes to the South Main/North Main/Washington Streets split, deferral of work north of Eliot Street, addition of 6 on-street parking spaces on North Main Street, a tighter turning radius for the right-turn from North Main onto Eliot Street, and 3 mid-block crosswalks on North Main Street. This proposal also was not implemented, as the Town and State could not agree on the design.

In 2002, a proposed design with a traffic light at the South Main/North Main/Washington Streets split was rejected at Town Meeting. Also, a group of residents formed an “Ad Hoc Road Committee” (AHRC) to further consider the design of North Main and Washington Streets. In 2003, the Governor’s Office announced a “Community First” policy that would result in more flexible road designs that would take into account a community’s character and not simply apply highway design standards regardless of context. Part of that initiative was the “footprint roads” program which allowed road designs that essentially retained the existing footprints but with some improvements to increase safety. The AHRC decided to draft a design in the spirit of the Community First policy and “footprints road” program. It submitted its design in 2003, but it was rejected by MassHighway. Negotiations with MassHighway resulted in agreement on a 28-foot pavement width and a roundabout at the Maple-Sanger-Washington Street intersection. However, MassHighway insisted on a southbound left turn lane and traffic signal at the South Main/North Main/Washington Streets split so no agreement was reached.

Finally, in 2006, the Town used Chapter 90 funds to reconstruct North Main Street with a pavement width of 28 feet. It also used donated funds to plant additional trees within the grass strip between the street pavement and sidewalk on the west side of North Main Street.

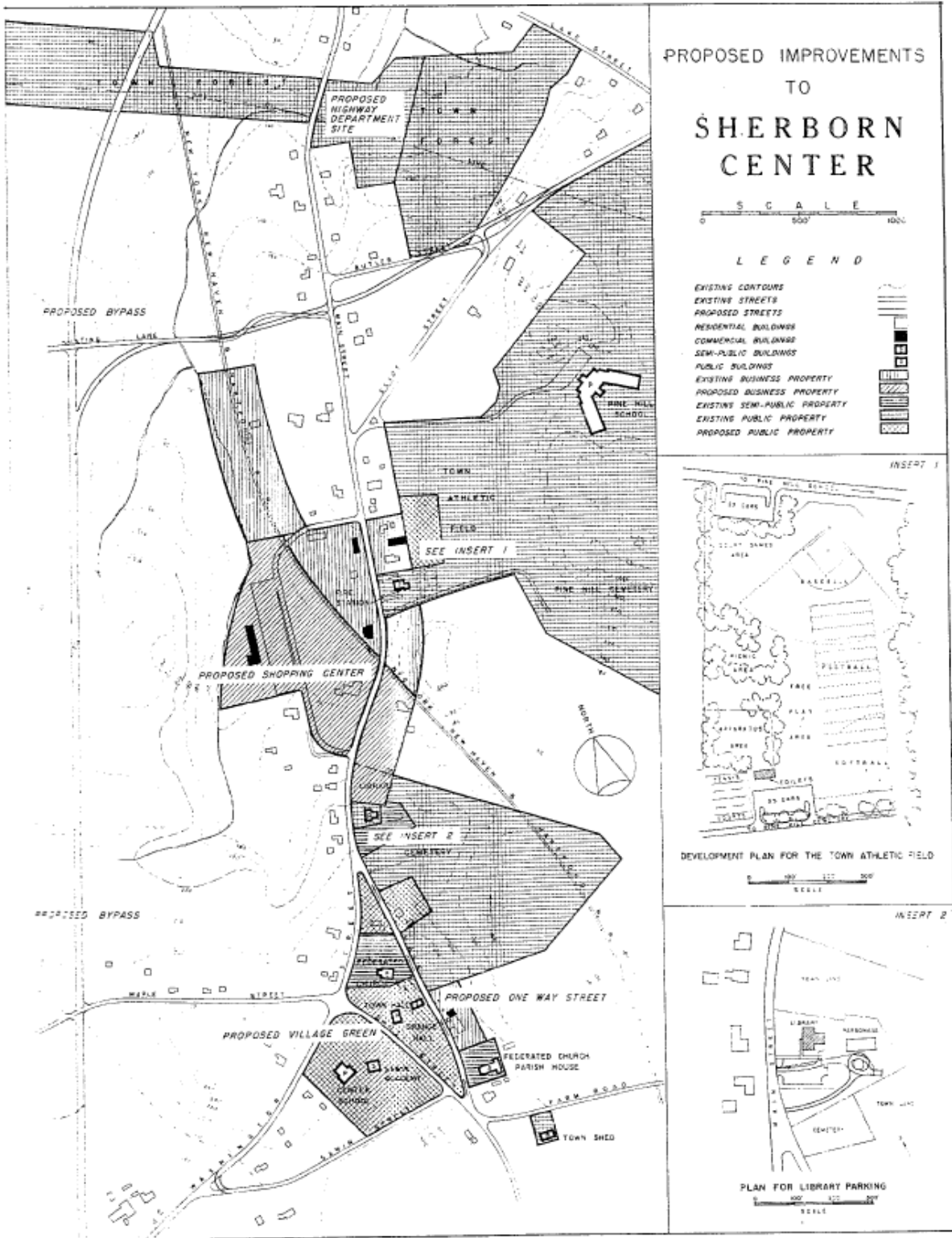
Previous Studies That Addressed the Town Center

The following is a brief summary of previous plans and studies that addressed the Town Center. A somewhat more detailed summary of each is included in the Appendix.

1958 Master Plan – This plan proposed some bold changes to the Town Center. First, it proposed that Routes 16 and 27 bypass the center of Town. (See Figure 2). The bypasses were intended to relieve North Main Street of traffic congestion and to facilitate the concentration of growth and allow expansion of commercial, governmental and recreational facilities in the Town Center. As shown on Figure 2, a new road was also proposed from Zion’s Lane to Powderhouse Lane in order to expand developable area (apparently without regard to wetlands).

Interestingly, a survey of residents was taken as part of this plan. More than half of respondents “want some form of shopping facilities in the Town and the rest are satisfied to shop in Framingham, Natick or elsewhere.” This is similar to results from the survey conducted in 2008. The report recommended that Sherborn “confine commercial development to the present town center with the intent of developing a single, well integrated shopping center to serve the entire town.” It also recommended that governmental and recreation facilities be located in the center.

FIGURE 2



Source: 1958 Master Plan.

1971 Sherborn Center Study – The Sherborn Center Study noted that “Because of the existence of so much commercial activity within easy driving distance and the present and projected low residential densities in Sherborn, there seems to be little need for expansion of the existing business district.” The plan was therefore based on the assumption that the Center would continue to provide “a comparable scope of goods and services with some provision for gradual physical expansion.”

The recommendations **included:**

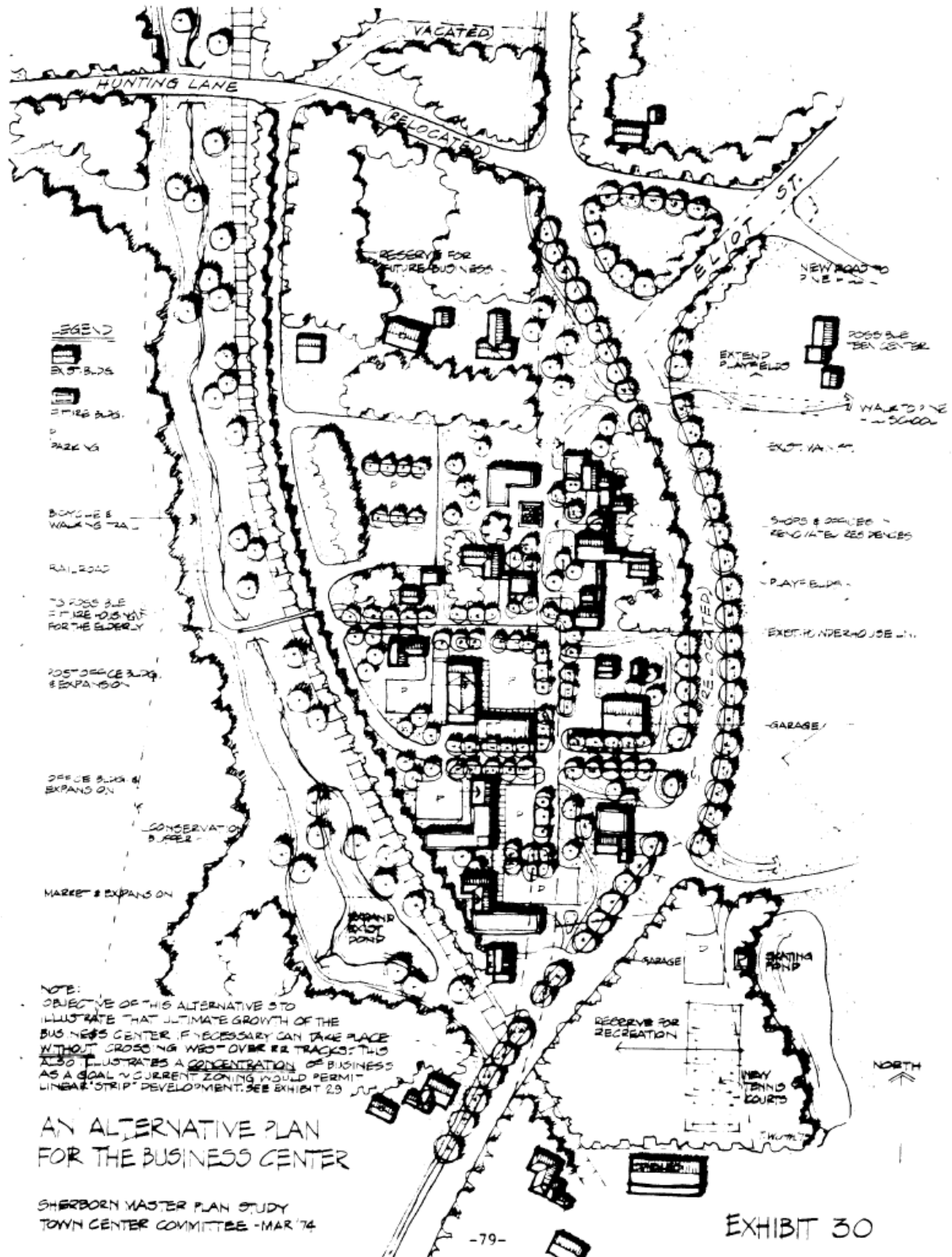
- Reducing the business zones on the east side of North Main Street and south of the Washington/North Main Streets intersection
- Relocating Town Hall (from what is now the Community Center) to a new facility on the east side of North Main Street
- Building a new Police Station on the east side of North Main Street; and
- Establishing an “Architectural Advisory Board”

1975 Master Plan – While both the 1958 Master Plan and 1971 Sherborn Center Study touched on the two distinct areas of the Town Center, the 1975 Master Plan clearly identified and labeled them as the Business Center and Institutional Center. It also summarized residents’ viewpoints as consisting of three positions: (1) those who want the Town Center to remain essentially as is; (2) those who want it to remain as is but with provisions for future growth; and (3) those who would like to see an expansion of available goods and services in the Town Center to reduce the need to travel elsewhere. However, it was stated that there was a consensus that new goods and services should be those that primarily serve local residents and do not attract regional traffic to Town.

The Master Plan Committee’s primary recommendation concerning the Town Center was that its linear nature poses a threat and should be eliminated. It stated that “Commercial development should be concentrated in a well-defined unit configuration – more like a “village-in-the-round” rather than a “commercial ribbon.” It identified the area north of Powderhouse Lane to Hunting Lane as a “near perfect opportunity for future business development if and when desired or needed.”

The Master Plan Committee also believed that maintaining adequate design control was important. The plan went on to mention several areas for improvement such as improved street edges, linked parking, moving utilities underground and development of a Town Green in the Institutional Center. However, the major recommendation is illustrated in Figure 3. The plan suggested that if there is a need or desire to expand the Business Center beyond what the area between Powderhouse Lane and Hunting Lane would provide, then North Main Street should be rerouted behind the businesses on the east side from the railroad tracks to Eliot Street in order to create an integrated village as mentioned above.

FIGURE 3



Source: 1975 Master Plan

1981 Zoning Study Committee – In 1981, a Zoning Study Committee was appointed by the Planning Board in June and submitted its report in December. Its mandate was to study the Town Center and make recommendations regarding zoning. Its recommendations included dividing what was then a single Business district into 4 separate, nearly single-use districts.

The Committee agreed with previous studies that suggested that the land on the west side of North Main Street and north of Powderhouse Lane should be considered for rezoning to Business in the future, though it did not believe that there was a need to do so in 1981. The Committee also proposed rezoning the east side of North Main Street to Residence A from Business.

1989 Sherborn Town Center Master Plan – This plan resulted in the preparation of three plans that identified the positive and negative features of the Town Center and proposed some modest changes. The proposed improvements included adding a small office building to the Fire Station site and replacing Rose's with another office building. Parking would be to the rear of the buildings and there would be attractive landscaping in front.

On the west side of North Main Street, improvements consisted of replacing Klein's Garage, MacArthur's Market and Paul Insurance with three new buildings hosting a market, drug store and a restaurant with offices in the rear. Again the buildings would be closer to the street with parking in the rear. Cemetery Lane would be extended across North Main Street to provide access to an integrated parking area serving all the buildings up to Powderhouse Lane. They also proposed removing C & L Frosty and building an "ell" onto the Post Office/Bank/Cleaners/Liquor Store building and creating a courtyard between that "ell" and the existing driveway. The "ell" would be the site of the Post Office and the bank would be in that portion of the existing building facing the courtyard.

2001 Livability Charrette – In 2001, the Town was selected to participate in a charrette sponsored by the Boston Society of Architects and held at Northeastern University. The charrette participants included architects and urban designers as well as Town officials from Sherborn and other participating towns.

The goals presented at the charrette by Sherborn officials included (1) preserve and enhance the atmosphere of a small New England village; (2) achieve a balance between vehicle, pedestrian, and bike traffic; (3) assure good water quality for businesses and proper wastewater systems; and (4) encourage sustainable development principles in both new development and redevelopment.

The recommendations included (1) rebuilding the road connecting the two elements of the Town Center with a design that unifies them and is pedestrian-friendly with narrow pavement and sidewalks on both sides with a treed grass strip and period lighting; (2) developing outward on both sides of North Main Street to create a village center rather than a strip; (3) developing higher-density elderly and/or affordable housing close to the Town Center to add vitality to the center and provide convenience for the residents.

2001 General Plan – The 2001 General Plan was a three-year effort that began in 1998. The Goals and Policies Statement, which was approved unanimously at Town Meeting, identifies several “guiding principles” that pertain to the document as a whole. Maintaining the Town’s rural heritage is the key guiding principle of the General Plan, while other guiding principles that pertain more particularly to the Town Center include “Retain the Town Center’s small village character while improving its appearance and access,” and “Use existing bylaw provisions to keep local businesses healthy and allow growth in the business districts.”

In addition, several of the specific elements of the General Plan, including the Town Center, Economic Development, Circulation, Housing and Public Facilities and Services elements have goals, objectives and recommendations that directly pertain to the Town Center. These are included in the Appendix. The goals related to the Town Center from each of these elements are as follows:

Town Center Goals

- Preserve and enhance the atmosphere of a small New England village
- Achieve a balance between vehicle, pedestrian, and bike traffic
- Assure good water quality and proper wastewater systems for businesses
- Encourage sustainable development principles in new and redevelopment projects

Economic Development Goals

- Use the Planned Unit Development Bylaw to ensure limited business expansion in the business districts that keeps local businesses healthy
- Develop a plan to help the Town determine its economic future

Circulation Goals

- Keep North Main Street road design on a small village scale
- Improve safety and access for pedestrians and bicycles
- Ensure safe pedestrian street crossings in order to achieve a pedestrian-friendly Town Center

Public Facilities and Services Goals

- Provide modern, efficient, well-managed, and well-maintained public facilities that meet the Town’s current and future needs, with minimum cost and staff
- Maintain and upgrade existing public facilities to meet new regulations, support new technologies, or support new community needs
- Support the development of the Town Center with public facilities/utilities that support appropriate growth

2004 Community Development Plan – The Community Development Plan was a state-funded initiative designed to address housing, open space and transportation. Our plan included a

detailed examination, including a pro forma, of a possible Woodhaven-like project on North Main Street just north of the Town Center. The transportation element also produced a context-sensitive design for rebuilding North Main Street through the Town Center that served as part of an application to MassHighway for funding to construct the design. The application was not approved by MassHighway.

2007 Final Report of the Town Center Water District Workgroup – This project was initiated by interested residents and business owners, but did receive financial support from the Town. The report, with assistance from a consulting engineer, documented that a water supply of about 36,000 gallons per day would be required to serve an area that is roughly equivalent to the North and South Villages as defined in this report (See below). It also estimated the cost of implementing a system at about \$2 million since existing piping for the existing dry hydrant system could be used to serve about half of the district.

As a follow-up to the report, testing was done at Price Woodlands, a property acquired in 1997 for conservation purposes but also for the purpose of serving as a future water supply because it overlapped a major aquifer. A letter from the consulting engineers stated that the estimated capacity could likely be achieved, but that that iron and manganese exceeded the threshold levels. The report noted that a prolonged pumping test was necessary to better evaluate the water quality. A subsequent test reported in a June 12, 2008 letter from the consulting engineer that “the water at the site is of very high quality.” It found that pH, and manganese were slightly above the secondary standards for aesthetics and sodium was also slightly above the standard. The pH and manganese can be easily treated.

DOCUMENTATION OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

For purposes of this report, the Town Center is divided into two sections: North Village and South Village. These generally correspond with what the 1975 Master Plan termed the “Business Center” and “Institutional Center.” North Village includes the area along North Main Street between Eliot Street and the CSX railroad tracks plus 18 North Main Street on the other side of the tracks. Figure 4 presents an overview of this area.

South Village includes the area south of the railroad tracks including North Main Street, South Main Street to St. Theresa’s Church, and Washington Street through the Town Campus area. Figure 5 presents an overview of this area.

Table 1 presents an inventory of existing conditions in the North Village of the Town Center. It includes the land area of each parcel, the gross and finished building area on each parcel, and both the existing and required number of parking spaces. It also includes scenarios for additional development potential with and without the constraints of no water and sewer services. With a few exceptions, residential uses within this area are excluded from Table 1.

FIGURE 4
OVERVIEW OF NORTH VILLAGE



Source: Pictometry International Corporation

FIGURE 5
OVERVIEW OF SOUTH VILLAGE



Source: Pictometry International Corporation

TABLE 1

NORTH VILLAGE EXPANSION POTENTIAL UNDER EXISTING CONDITIONS AND WITHOUT WATER/SEWER CONSTRAINTS														
		Existing Development							Potential Additional Development Under Existing Conditions			Potential Additional Development With No Water and Sewer Constraints		
North Village		Parcel/Description	Land Area ¹ (acres)	Gross Building Area ¹ (ft ²)	Finished Building Area ¹ (ft ²)	Footprint Area (ft ²)	Parking Spaces ²	Spaces Required ³	Additional Footprint Area (ft ²)	Additional Finished Area (ft ²)	Additional Spaces Required ³	Additional Footprint Area (ft ²)	Additional Finished Area (ft ²)	Additional Spaces Required ³
Business	1	6 Powderhouse	1.31	2,118	2,016	2,118	28	[28]	9,000	20,000	60	9,000	20,000	60
	2	28 N Main (Wiese)	0.5	2,436	1,516	2,436	14	10	0	0	0	2,600	6,500	22
	3	26 N Main (Rose)	1.06	8,568	7,968	8,131	50	[50]	0	0	NA	1000	10,000	31
	4	24 N Main (Day Spa)	0.32	4,860	2,400	1,600	16	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	20 N. Main (Office)	3.01	16,834	12,747	5,800	45	51	0	0	0	3,000	6000	24
	6	18 N. Main	4.3	8,276	4,013	3,685	22	17	1000	2000	17	1,000	2,000	8
	7	19-23 N. Main (Apothecary)	0.67	16,811	11,002	5,320	47	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
	8	27 N. Main (Paul Ins)	0.5	4,959	3,159	1,612	18	18	0	0	0	1,900	4,000	13
	9	31 N. Main (C&L/PO)	1.37	8,748	8,748	8,748	58	51	0	0	0	0	8,748	29
	10	5 Powderhouse	0.583	4,046	3,472	1,700	18	14	0	0	0	2,500	5,000	21
	11	Sherborn Inn	2.63	20,048	10,603	7,596	70	46	0	0	0	0	0	0
		<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>16.25</i>	<i>97,704</i>	<i>67,644</i>	<i>48,746</i>	<i>382</i>	<i>347</i>	<i>10,000</i>	<i>22,000</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>21,000</i>	<i>66,448</i>	<i>208</i>
Municipal	12	Fire Station	0.25	11,458	4,095	3,313	20	[20]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-Total		Primary Commercial Area	16.50	109,162	71,739	52,059	402	367	15,000	22,000	77	21,000	62,248	208
PUD Possible	13	41 N. Main	5.86	12,389	7,572	8,523	NA	NA	11,500 ⁴	32,500 ⁴	120 ^{5,6}	11,500 ⁴	32,500 ⁴	120 ^{5,6}
TOTAL		North Village	24.24	121,551	79,311	60,582	402	367	12,500	34,500	197	23,500	74,748	328

¹From Sherborn Assessor's Records ²In some cases, number of spaces is an approximation ³Based on Sherborn Zoning Requirements. Numbers in brackets represent actual spaces for uses with no parking requirement.

⁴Includes 6 Powderhouse for a net increase of 2500 (footprint) and 12,500 (total) square feet. ⁵Based on 50% retail and 50% office of entire 40,000 ft² project since current spaces are unknown.

⁶Plus 60 spaces from 6 Powderhouse already noted above.

Table 2 presents existing conditions in the South Village. The total land area of the Town Center is 56.81 acres. This includes the primary commercial area on North Main Street as well as the mixed municipal/institutional/commercial area south of the tracks along North and South Main and Washington Streets. It also includes 4 parcels north of the railroad tracks that are mostly or totally outside the Business General district but, due to their close proximity to and relationship with the Business General district, are included in this report.

North Village

The North Village area includes the primary commercial area plus the residential properties that abut and are across the street from the Business General district. The primary commercial area is defined as those properties that lie within the Business General and Business Professional districts, except for that portion of the Business General district that is on the 41 North Main Street property.

Primary Commercial Area

The primary commercial area, consists of 12 parcels of land totaling 16.50 acres. Figure 6 identifies the 12 commercial parcels (including the fire station site) plus an additional 4 parcels that are closely related to them. The gross building area (including unfinished space like basements) is 109,162 square feet and the total finished area is 71,739 square feet. This represents a total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for the area of about .10. That is, the amount of finished floor area equals about 10% of the total land area in the 12 lots that make up the primary commercial area. This is fairly typical of automobile-oriented, suburban commercial areas, but is far below that of a typical New England Town Center, where FAR's can range from .20 to .50.

The total footprint area of the buildings on the 12 existing lots is 47,859 square feet. This represents only 6.7% of the land area in the district. While the parking areas of each parcel have not been calculated [**estimate to be added**], it is clear from Figure 4 that the predominant land use in the primary commercial area is parking cars.

All of the parcels (like all areas of Sherborn) depend on private wells and septic systems to handle their domestic water supply and wastewater needs. In general, the developed properties within the primary commercial area have septic systems that meet their current needs. Expansion of building space or uses on any of the properties is difficult to ascertain without soil test data. However, it is assumed that the developed properties are at or close to their maximum septic capacity and that any expansion is not likely without an alternative means of accommodating domestic water and/or wastewater needs. Figure 7 illustrates the relationship between the septic systems and wells in the Primary Commercial Area.

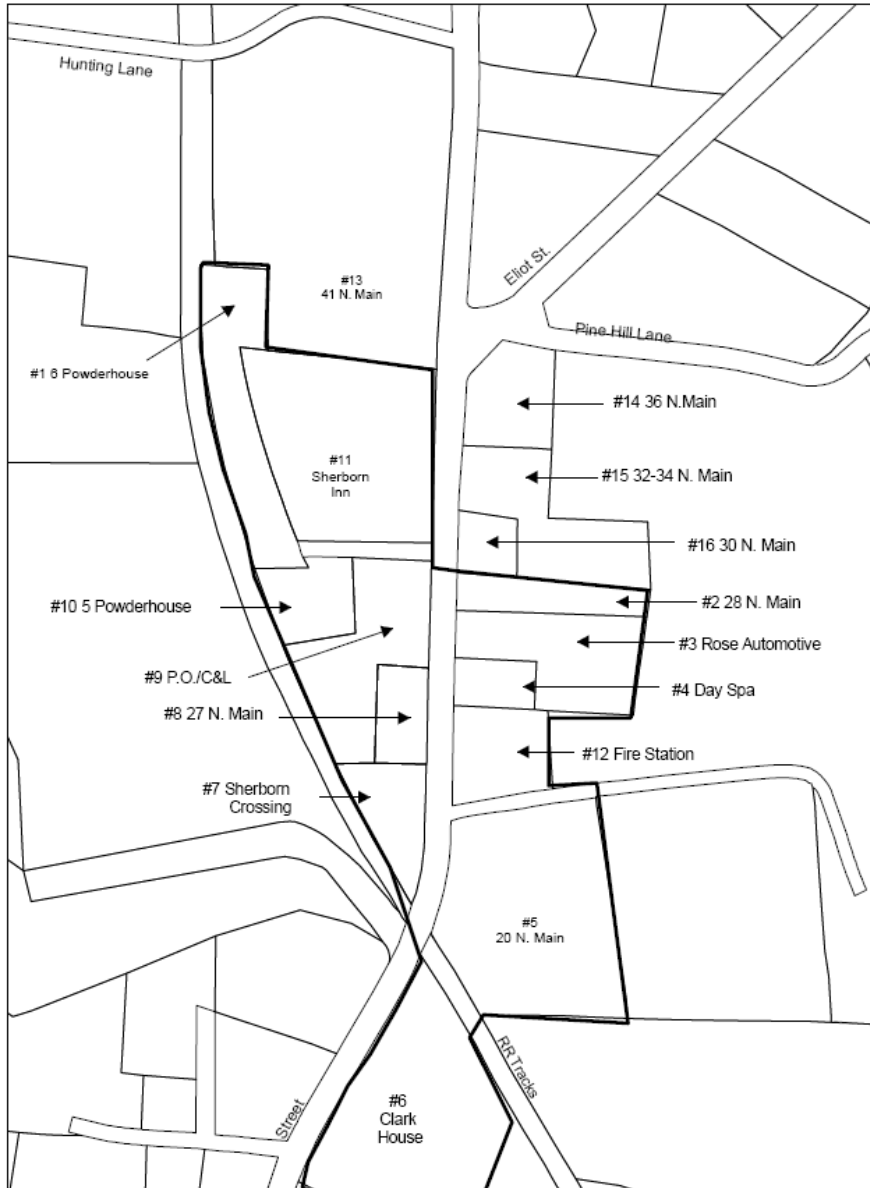
TABLE 2

SOUTH VILLAGE PARCEL AND BUILDING AREAS								
South Village		Parcel/Owner	Land Area ¹	Gross Building Area ¹	Finished Building Area ¹	Year Built	Parking Spaces ²	Spaces Required ³
Business	17	11 S. Main	0.6	5,961	5,081	1965	25	25
	18	21 S. Main (Citgo)	3.8	3,697	3,697	1950	29	37
	19	5 Washington	0.5	3,870	2,545	1878	20	15
		<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>4.9</i>	<i>13,528</i>	<i>11,323</i>		<i>74</i>	<i>77</i>
Institutional	20	Life Exp. School	0.37	6,174	2,768	1913		10
	21	Peace Abbey	1.06	6,746	3,538	1917		10
	22	Pilgrim Church	0.75	12,360	12,304	1830		10
	23	First Parish Church	2.5	17,332	14,931	1863		10
		<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>4.68</i>	<i>42,612</i>	<i>33,541</i>			<i>40</i>
Residential	24	Woodhaven	14.04	24,516	24,021	1983	36	36
	25	Leland Farms	0	3,389	1,925	1999	39	26
	26	1 Farm Road	1.37	5,757	3,483	1815	NA	NA
		<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>15.41</i>	<i>33,662</i>	<i>29,429</i>		<i>75</i>	<i>62</i>
Municipal	27	Town Campus (Town Hall, Library, Police Station)	4.91	49,976	38,024	1910 1970 2000	36 8 31	49 NA ⁴ 32
	28	Town Campus Extension	2.17	3,956	2,223	1894	NA	NA
	29	Community Center	0.5	11,200	5,600	1858	0	NA ⁵
		<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>7.58</i>	<i>65,132</i>	<i>45,847</i>		<i>75</i>	<i>81</i>
TOTAL		South Village	32.57	154,934	120,140		224?	260
GRAND TOTAL			56.81	288,697	202,715		626?	

¹From Sherborn Assessor's Records²In some cases, number of spaces is an approximation³Based on Sherborn Zoning Requirements. Numbers in parentheses represent retail parking based on 1 space per 200 square feet instead of Sherborn requirement of 1 space per 100 square feet.⁴Sherborn has no parking standard for libraries. The Town Hall and Police Station figures are based on 1 space per 250 square feet.⁵Sherborn has no parking standard for a community center, and the Community Center shares parking with the First Parish Church.

FIGURE 6

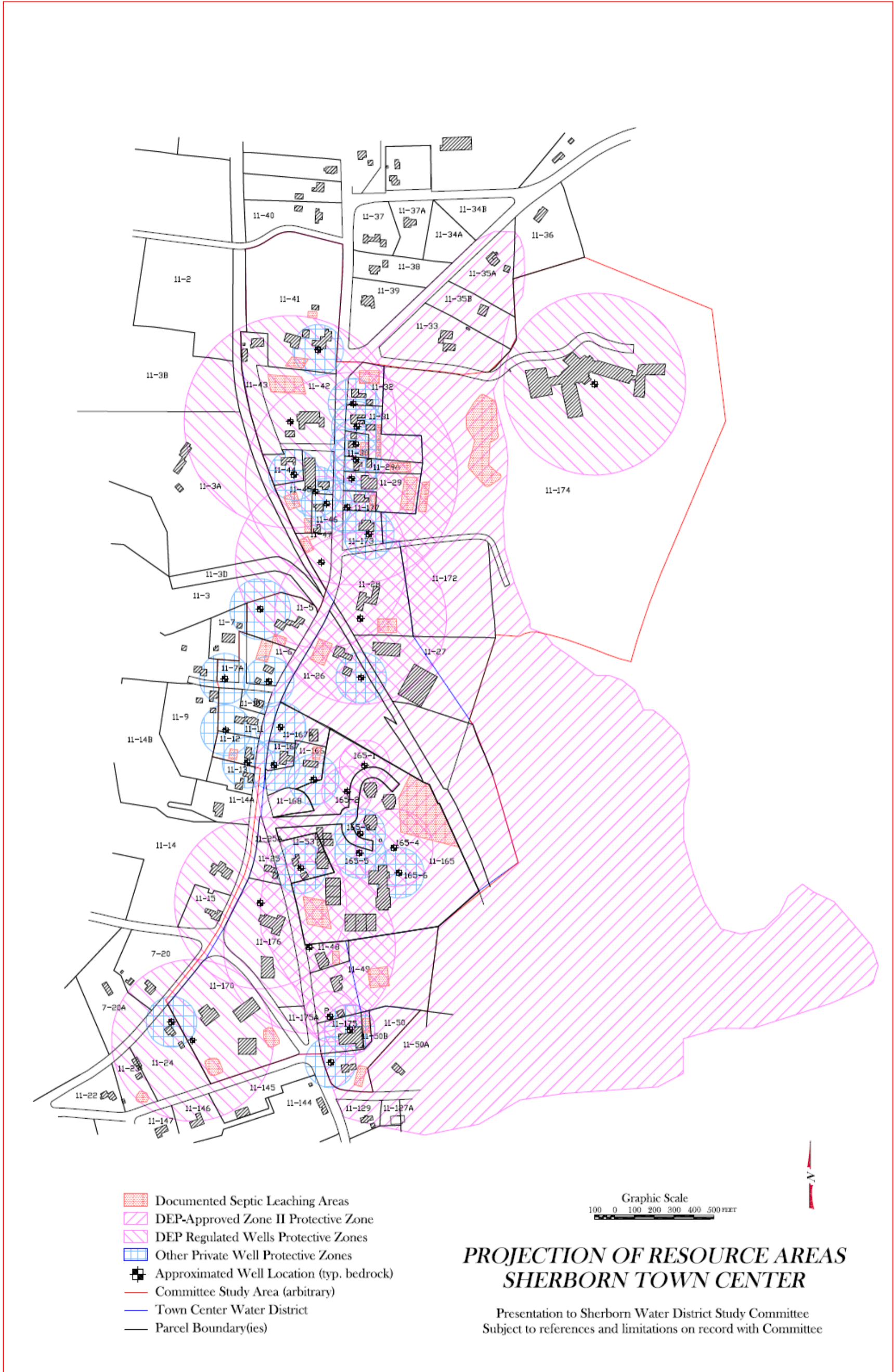
NORTH VILLAGE



Source: Created by Town Planner, 2-4-09

FIGURE 7

PROTECTED ZONES AROUND WELLS AND SEPTIC SYSTEMS



Other Parcels of Interest

As mentioned above, there are 4 parcels between Eliot Street and the railroad tracks that are all or mostly outside of the Business General district. These include 30, 32-34, 36 and 41 North Main Street. These are discussed below.

The property at 41 North Main Street currently includes five apartments. In the recent past, it has also housed an insurance office. This property has been the subject of discussion over the years as several development concepts for that property have come forth. It should be noted that this parcel is under the same ownership and/or control as 6 Powderhouse Lane. Furthermore, approximately an acre of this property (43,550 square feet) is within the Business General district. This Business General portion of the lot is approximately the same size as the Rose Automotive site at 26 North Main Street, and is larger than 5 of the 11 commercial parcels that are within the district. When combined with 6 Powderhouse Lane, it would be the third largest business parcel in the district after 20 North Main Street and the abutting Sherborn Inn. However, since the business zoned area is off North Main Street and to the rear of the property, it is less desirable as a business location than property that fronts on North Main Street.

Since the Business General portion of the lot has no access to a road in the Business General district except through 6 Powderhouse Lane, it was not included in the list of 12 parcels within the Business General district. Instead, it has been treated separately since its most likely development scenario would be as a Planned Unit Development.

Under current zoning (limiting lot coverage to one-third of the lot area), the Business General portion of the site could accommodate a business building with a footprint of about 14,000 square feet. This would require adequate well and septic capacity, but that would not necessarily need to be located within the Business General portion of the site, but could be anywhere on the site with acceptable soils. Similarly, The Zoning Bylaw has a provision by special permit for parking cars in a residential district abutting a business district, so parking could possibly also be provided outside the Business-General zoned portion of the site.

On the east side of North Main Street, there are three residential properties between Eliot Street and the edge of the Business General district. The property at 36 North Main is currently a three family building constructed in 1840. The house at 32-34 North Main is a two-family constructed in 1798. At 30 North Main is a single family residence constructed in 1783. These properties lie directly across the street from the Business General district since the Business General district extends further north on the west side of North Main Street than it does on the east side.

Traffic Counts

MassHighway lists traffic counts taken in Sherborn at various locations between 1998 and 2006. Counts were taken on North Main Street north of Zion's Lane in 1998, twice in 2001 and most recently in 2004. The total average daily traffic (ADT) at this location was 24,200 vehicles in 1998. The 2001 readings differed somewhat in that one reading was 24,300 while the other was 26,300.

The specific date of each count is not available. The 2004 count also showed an average daily traffic of 26,300 vehicles.

By means of comparison, traffic counts taken on Route 9 in Natick and Framingham in 2005 indicated an ADT of 53,600 west of Speen Street, and 59,500 east of Route 27. In Framingham, ADT was 53,900 west of Route 30, 52,700 west of Route 126 and 52,000 east of the Massachusetts Turnpike. Thus, the traffic on North Main Street is almost half that of Route 9 IN Natick and Framingham.

A 2006 count **east of Brook Street** on Route 109 in Medfield indicated an ADT of 17,300. However, a 2001 count east of Route 27 totaled 28,500. A 2006 count on Routes 16 and 126, east of Summer Street in Holliston found an ADT of 19,800, and a 2005 count on Route 109 in Millis east of Route 115 totaled 15,900. Clearly, North Main Street is one of the most heavily-traveled streets in the area.

Of course, high traffic counts can have both negative and positive consequences. They can result in congestion that inhibits both through traffic and access to businesses in the Town Center. On the other hand, high traffic counts are attractive to most retail businesses because they increase both visibility and the pool of potential customers.

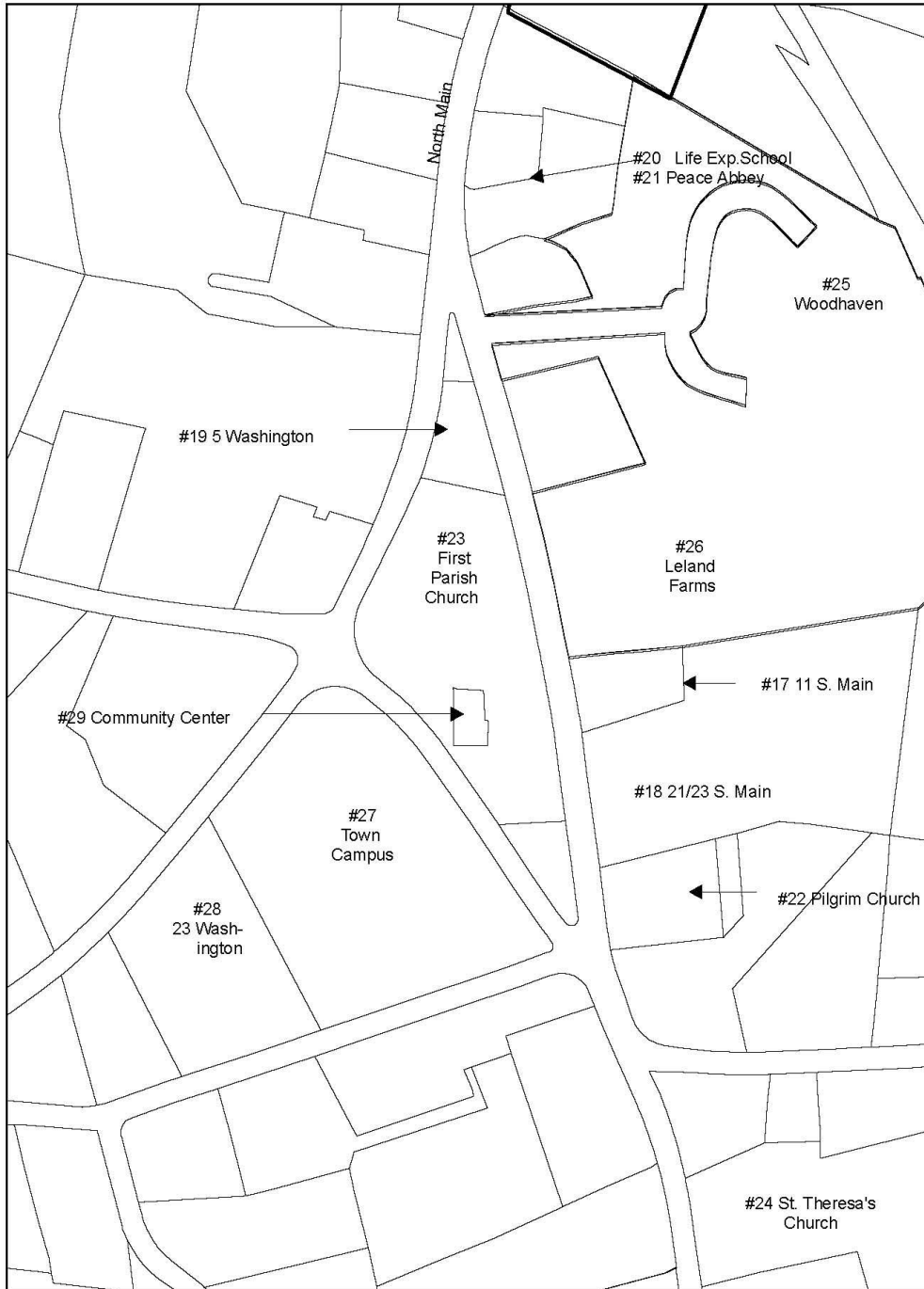
South Village

The South Village area has some commercial uses but consists mostly of governmental and institutional uses along with residential uses. It is much larger and more spread out than North Village (See Figure 8).

One notable feature is that it is almost entirely coterminous with the Sherborn Center Local Historic District. The exceptions are the residential properties between the Split and the railroad tracks, the properties south of Farm Road, Woodhaven and Leland Farms. Also, the Clark House at 18 North Main Street is within the historic district but has been considered as part of North Village for the purposes of this report. This is the only historic district in Sherborn in which the appearance of the buildings is subject to regulation by the Historic District Commission.

FIGURE 8

SOUTH VILLAGE



Source: Created by Town Planner, 2-4-09

South Village hosts most of Sherborn's governmental administration. The Town Campus of 4.91 acres houses Town Hall, the Police Station and Library. The purchase of 23 Washington Street adds 2.17 acres to the campus and provides the opportunity for additional activities. In addition, the Community Center shares space with the First Parish Church. Woodhaven, a Town-owned 24-unit apartment complex for senior citizens, is here, along with Leland Farms, a 17-unit condominium complex with 10 affordable units. Finally, a town cemetery is located here along with a small parcel with a monument at the Route 16/27 split.

In addition to First Parish Church, both Pilgrim Church and St. Theresa's Church are in South Village. The Life Experience School and Peace Abbey complete the institutional facilities in the village.

There are three small commercial facilities as well. There is an office building at 5 Washington Street of about 2500 square feet. There are two adjacent properties at 11 and 21 South Main that each house multiple retail and food businesses, including a gas station.

With the exception of the possible expansion of the library and the incorporation of the 2.91 acres (acquired in 2008) into the Town Campus there is little potential for change in South Village. Therefore, the main focus of this report is North Village, and especially the primary commercial area.

RESIDENT SURVEY AND CITIZEN INPUT

In this section, the results of a survey of residents conducted in 2008 are summarized, and a set of two public forums, held in 2008, that focused on design issues are discussed.

2008 Survey Of Residents

As part of the Planning Board's study of development issues in the Town Center, a survey was sent out to all residents in January of 2008. Due to the cooperation of the Town Clerk, the survey form was provided to residents along with the annual Town Census. The survey drew more than 800 responses.

On the issue of establishing a public water supply primarily for the Town Center businesses and Town buildings, 54% of respondents supported the idea while 28% were opposed (the rest being neutral). The younger the respondent the more supportive the response – 71% of those under 40 were in favor versus 47% for those 60 and over. When potential town-wide financial support for such a system, i.e. debt service, was included, the responses overall flipped, with 26% in favor and 53% opposed. Those unsupportive numbers were virtually unchanged if residential properties along the water line were included. The lack of information about costs, how they might be shared and the uncertain location of the well may well have been factors contributing to significant opposition.

There was strong support (70%) for expanding business development within existing business district boundaries while only 31% were in favor of expansion beyond the boundaries. Similarly, respondents also indicated a significant interest (63%) in having an “anchor” outlet up to 7,500 sq. ft. while only 28% were interested in having a store as large as 10,000 sq. ft. Desires for retail establishments included a market similar to the Dover Market, a coffee shop, general store and specialty shops.

The idea of additional residential development in or near the Town Center attracted only 25% support and only 36% were in favor if housing was age restricted to persons 55 and older. The idea of having affordable housing in or near the Town Center mustered a less than enthusiastic 33% support.

Copies of the survey results are on the Planning Board web site (<http://planning.sherbornma.org>) and attached in the appendix of this report.

Public Forums Conducted by MAPC

On June 11, 2008 the Planning Board hosted a public forum to discuss a future vision for the Town Center. The forum was facilitated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC). It included a visual preference survey in which slides of building images and scenes from other locations were shown and audience members were asked their reaction to the photos.

The 22 images shown were ranked according to how many members of the audience indicated a favorable response. Five of the images garnered at least 15 votes.

On October 22, 2008, the Planning Board hosted a follow-up public forum, also facilitated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission. In this case, two of the top three images selected at the June forum were superimposed onto images of the existing Sherborn Town Center in accordance with a plan prepared by the Town Planner. The images and the plan were well-received. The images are also available on the Planning Board web site (<http://planning.sherbornma.org>).

The forums complemented the survey results by indicating a desire for additional development that is well-designed, with parking generally in the rear of the building and oriented to facilitate social interaction. Design appears to be a major concern along with traffic and water-and-sewer-related issues.

DRAFT

ESTIMATES OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

As stated in the Existing Conditions section, the potential for change in the South Village is limited, especially with regard to commercial development. Most of it is within the Sherborn Center Local Historic District so a primary goal of the Town is to preserve this area.

With the 2008 purchase of adjacent property, there is potential to expand the Town Campus onto that property, and a Municipal Campus Extension Committee is currently exploring ideas for such expansion. Already, some landscaping has been completed and some of the brush and overgrown shrubs between the properties has been removed opening up views of the added land from the Town Hall and Police Station site.

With added infrastructure, it may be possible to expand Woodhaven and/or Leland Farms. Similarly, there may be potential to expand the Life Experience School/Peace Abbey. Two of the three commercial properties are, for all practical purposes, built out since, even with added infrastructure, there is no land left for the additional parking that would be required for expanded uses. The third, at 5 Washington Street does have some expansion potential.

Therefore, this discussion focuses on North Village. It considers visions of future development both under existing conditions and under the assumption that water supply and wastewater treatment are not constraints on development.

North Village Development Potential Under Existing Conditions

With regard to additional development potential in North Village. Table 1 presents what is likely a maximum possible increase under both existing conditions and without the constraints of no municipal water and sewer service. The most promising potential for increased development of business space is on 6 Powderhouse Lane. This is based primarily on physical capacity. It is estimated that a building with a footprint of about 11,000 square feet could be developed on the site. If a second story is included, it could total 22,000 square feet. This assumes that septic capacity can be found on the property or on the abutting parcel under common ownership at 41 North Main Street. Due to its location, it is assumed that all of this space would be for offices and not retail.

Past development proposals at 41 North Main Street have suggested that about 40,000 square feet so could be accommodated. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, it is assumed that septic capacity to support this is available. Given that there is already about 8,500 square feet of space on the property, it was estimated that an additional 32,500 square feet could be developed. It should be noted however, that the development proposal for 41 North Main Street incorporated the 6 Powderhouse Lane property as well. Thus, the development potential of these parcels cannot be added. If 22,000 square feet is developed at Powderhouse Lane, it would likely eliminate or severely limit any additional development at 41 North Main Street. The Table reflects this by not counting both potential developments in the totals.

Also, the owner of the property at 26 North Main Street (Rose Automotive) requested and had approved a zoning change to include the entire site within the Business General district. This was in anticipation of an expansion. That expansion has taken place as the building was expanded by 4240 square feet.

If desired, future expansion is possible at 18 North Main Street. As expressed by the owner, this would not be new construction, but use of an existing barn for commercial use. The barn has a footprint of about 1000 square feet and would total 2000 square feet if a full second floor were used. Septic capacity for this use is available. This property does have additional development capacity, both commercial and residential, subject to water and sewer constraints.

Thus, in North Village, a maximum of about 34,500 additional square feet is theoretically possible under existing conditions. Even this estimate is based on the assumption that sufficient septic capacity is available. Also, all but 2000 square feet of this additional space would either be (1) on a single site that is located at Powderhouse Lane and adjacent to the railroad tracks or (2) part of a Planned Unit Development² that involves 41 North Main Street and 6 Powderhouse Lane. It is assumed that adequate septic capacity would be available on site.

Under this scenario, there would be a need for between 77 and 197 additional parking spaces. Again, almost all of these (60 to 180) would be part of a development at 41 North Main and/or 6 Powderhouse Lane.

North Village Development Potential Without Water and Sewer Constraints

Of course, if the need to locate a well and septic system on the lots within the Town Center were eliminated, the development potential would increase substantially. Table 3 presents an estimate of the development potential of each of the parcels in the North Village area. Table 3 is formatted a little differently than Table 1 in that the total development potential of each parcel is shown in the far right columns rather than just additional development. The estimates are based generally on compliance with the existing Zoning Bylaw.

Table 3 presents the development potential of the 11 parcels that are within the Business General and Business Professional districts and have frontage on North Main Street or Powderhouse Lane. It also presents a potential development at 41 North Main Street through a Planned Unit Development. As stated in the Existing Conditions section, the portion of 41 North Main Street that is within the Business General district represents the 5th largest parcel in the B-G district and 3rd largest when combined with 6 Powderhouse Lane. In the scenario presented in Table 3, the development proposed for 6 Powderhouse Lane would block access to Powderhouse Lane from 41 North Main. Therefore, the proposed development space at 6 Powderhouse Lane is subtracted from the total for the PUD at 41 North Main to obtain a net increase.

² A Planned Unit Development allows commercial development on a residentially-zoned parcel if at least 25% of the parcel is within the Business general or Business Professional district.

TABLE 3

TOWN CENTER EXPANSION POTENTIAL WITH NO WATER/SEWER CONSTRAINTS											
			Existing					Potential Totals			
North Village		Parcel/Owner	Land Area¹	Gross Building Area¹	Finished Building Area¹	Footprint Area	Parking Spaces²	Spaces Required³	Footprint Area	Finished Building Area	Spaces Required³
Business	1	6 Powderhouse	1.31	2,118	2,016	2,118	28	NA [28]	11,000	22,000	88
	2	28 N Main (Wiese)	0.5	2,436	1,516	2,436	14	10	4,000	8,000	36
	3	26 N Main (Rose)	1.06	8,568	7,968	8,131	50	NA [50]	9,000	18,000	81
	4	24 N Main (Day Spa)	0.32	4,860	2,400	1,600	16	24	1,600	2,400	12
	5	20 N. Main (Office)	3.01	16,834	12,747	5,800	45	51	8,800	18,747	75
	6	18 N. Main	4.3	8,276	4,013	3,685	22	17	4,635	6,013	25
	7	19-23 N. Main (Apothecary)	0.67	16,811	11,002	5,320	47	70	5,320	11,002	47
	8	27 N. Main (Paul Ins)	0.5	4,959	3,159	1,612	18	18	3,500	7,000	32
	9	29 N. Main (C&L/PO)	1.37	8,748	8,748	8,748	58	51	8,748	17,400	79
	10	5 Powderhouse	0.583	4,046	3,472	1,700	18	14	4,200	8,400	39
	11	Sherborn Inn	2.63	20,048	10,603	7,596	70	46	7,596	10,603	70
		<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>16.25</i>	<i>97,704</i>	<i>67,644</i>	<i>4,746</i>	<i>386</i>	<i>379</i>	<i>68,399</i>	<i>129,565</i>	<i>584</i>
Municipal	12	Fire Station	0.25	11,458	4,095	3,313	20	NA [20]	3,313	4,095	20
Sub-Total		Primary Commercial Area	16.50	109,162	71,739	52,059	406	399	71,112	133,660	604
PUD Possible	13	41 N. Main	5.86	12,389	7,572	8523	NA	NA	20,000 ⁴	40,000 ⁴	92 ⁶
TOTAL		North Village	24.24	121,551	79,311	60,582	406	399	80,112	151,660	696

¹From Sherborn Assessor's Records ²In some cases, number of spaces is an approximation ³Based on Sherborn Zoning Requirements. Numbers in brackets represent actual spaces for uses with no parking requirement. ⁴Includes 6 Powderhouse for a net increase of 9000 (footprint) and 18,000 (total) square feet.

⁵Assumes 50% retail and 50% office. ⁶Plus 88 spaces from 6 Powderhouse noted above.

The Fire Station parcel is presented for information purposes only and no development potential is attributed to that site. Any potential development would require that the Fire Station be moved to another site.

As Table 3 illustrates, the total development potential for the 11 primary parcels in the two business districts is 129,565 square feet of finished space. This is an increase of 66,121 square feet from the existing quantity (63,444) of finished space. Of this amount, about 36,368 square feet is estimated to be first floor retail space. About 93,197 square feet is estimated to be office and other space (including restaurant, inn, car repair and spa).

The footprint of buildings under this scenario would increase from approximately 44,500 to 68,400, an increase of more than 50%. The building coverage would rise to 9.7% -- less than a third of what the Zoning Bylaw allows. The Floor Area Ratio (FAR)³ would rise to 0.18. In other words, this means that if all the finished space were spread out as a single story, it would occupy 18% of the total land area of the lot.

With the addition of 41 North Main Street (assumed to be the same 40,000 total square feet that has been proposed in the past) and the Fire Station, the total footprint increases to 80,112 square feet.

As shown on Table 3, the number of existing parking spaces on the 11 primary business parcels is approximately 386. This equals 1 space per 166 square feet. This is about 7 spaces more than required under our Zoning Bylaw parking requirements. The existing ratio reflects the current mix of uses in the business districts, which includes about 14,000 square feet of retail space while the rest is office, restaurant, and other uses.

The potential development scenario presented in Table 3 indicates 129,565 of total finished space. The Zoning Bylaw would require 584 spaces, which averages to 1 space per 222 square feet. The change in parking requirements adopted at the 2011 Annual Town Meeting has resulted in businesses that did not previously comply with the requirement do now comply. It also reduces the requirement for this development scenario from more than 700 spaces. This results in considerably less impervious surface devoted to parking and more land available for either landscaping, expanded building or other useful purposes.

As Figure 7 illustrates, the existing system of private wells and septic systems is already squeezed into a smaller area than would be allowed if current regulations for new construction had to be met. The existing level of development would not be possible, let alone this expanded level. It would only be possible if the private wells and septic systems were eliminated and replaced by a municipal or private common system for water supply and wastewater treatment..

³ FAR is a measure of total finished building space in relation to lot area. For example, a 10,000 square foot building on a lot with 40,000 square feet would have an FAR of 0.25. Whether it was a single story building, a 2 story building with 5000 square feet on each floor, or a 4-story building with 2500 square feet on each floor makes no difference. They would all have an FAR of 0.25.

AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVES

Introduction

This section presents estimates of the impacts of the two scenarios discussed in the previous section, Estimates of Future Development. Fiscal and traffic impacts can be quantified. In addition, aesthetic impacts, which are difficult or impossible to quantify, will also be discussed for each scenario.

Impacts of North Village Development Potential Under Existing Conditions

Scenario 1 envisions just two projects. These include using the existing barn at 18 North Main Street, with a footprint of 1110 square feet as retail space and replacing the small older buildings at 6 Powderhouse Lane with an office building of 22,000 square feet. As noted in the previous section, these two projects were selected based on past expressions of interests by the owners of those properties that were similar to those evaluated here along with the assumption that those expressions of interest indicate that water and septic capacity is available to support the projects.

Fiscal Impacts

The buildings at 6 Powderhouse Lane have an FY2012 assessment of \$60,700. The Assessor's Office estimates that newly-developed commercial space in the Town Center would be assessed at \$125-\$150 per square foot. For purposes of simplicity, a mid-point of \$137.50 per square foot was used for the calculations in Table 4. Therefore, a new office building of 22,000 square feet would be assessed at \$3,025,000. This represents an increase of \$2,971,800.

The existing barn on the premises at 18 North Main Street measures 30' x 37' for a total of 1110 square feet. There is also potential for a second floor, which could bring its finished area to approximately 2000 square feet. Its FY2012 assessed value is \$8300. There is existing septic capacity on the premises to handle development of this building. If it were to be renovated into retail or office space, its assessed value would increase to \$275,000.

Therefore, as presented in Table 4, under this scenario, the estimated fiscal impact would be to generate an additional \$57,253 in property taxes. The cost of additional services required has not been estimated but it is highly likely that the marginal cost of such additional services would be minimal.

Traffic Impacts

Table 5 illustrates the estimated traffic impacts of this scenario. Due to the minimal amount of new development under this scenario, the traffic impacts are also minimal. According to the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE), general office space generates about 3.32 trips per employee. Assuming one employee per 450 square feet, the 22,000 square foot office building at

TABLE 4**ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT OF SCENARIO 1**

Address	Current Value¹	New Development (square feet)	New Value²	Net New Value	Estimated New Tax Revenue³
18 N. Main (Clark House barn)	\$8,300	2000 ⁴	\$275,000	\$266,700	\$4,726
6 Powderhouse (area behind Inn)	\$60,700	22,000	\$3,025,000	\$2,964,300	\$52,527
TOTALS	\$150,000	25,000	\$3,519,204	\$3,231,000	\$57,253

¹2012 assessment for building only

²Based on \$137.50 per square foot

³Based on FY12 property tax rate of \$17.72 per \$1000

⁴Renovation, not new construction

Source: Sherborn Assessor's Data

TABLE 5**ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT OF SCENARIO 1**

	AM Peak	PM Peak	Average Daily Traffic
CTPS Study for 2002	2145	2270	26,300*
CTPS Study for 2020 (.5% annual growth plus 30,000 ft² more retail/office space)	2380	2520	28,485#
Increase from this Scenario	31	NA	208
18 North Main Street	7	NA	45
6 Powderhouse Lane	24	NA	163

*MassHighway count from 2004. #Represents 2004 total increased by .5% annually to 2020.

NA = Not Available, but assumed to be comparable to AM peak

Sources: Central Transportation Planning Staff, 2002

Computed by authors based on ITE traffic generation rates

6 Powderhouse Lane would host 49 employees and generate average daily traffic (ADT) of 163 trips. Peak hour (AM) generation is estimated as .48 trips per employee, or in this case, 24 trips. ITE estimates that “specialty retail” generates 40.67 trips per day and 6.41 AM peak trips per 1000 square feet. At 1110 ft², the barn at 18 North Main Street would add 45 total trips and 7 trips during the AM peak.

A 2002 study of the area conducted by the Central Transportation Planning Staff counted peak hour volumes on North Main Street between Eliot Street and Cemetery Lane. It found that 1580 vehicles traveled north bound and 565 traveled southbound during the morning peak (7-9AM) for a total of 2145 vehicles. The afternoon peak had 1485 vehicles heading southbound and 785 northbound for a total of 2270. It should be noted that the study also found that the Powderhouse Lane intersection with North Main Street operates at Level of Service (LOS) F during both the AM and PM peaks. It found that queue lengths on Powderhouse Lane exceeded 6 vehicles 95% of the time during peak hours and it took more than 3 minutes to exit that road.

The study also projected traffic to 2020 assuming a growth rate of .5% per year as well as 30,000 square feet of additional retail and office space. Under this scenario, it projected AM peak traffic of 1740 vehicles northbound and 640 southbound for a total of 2380. During the PM peak, the projection was for 1650 southbound and 870 northbound for a total of 2520. Total average daily traffic was projected to increase to 28,485 trips. Since this projection included an additional 30,000 square feet of retail and office space, the traffic impacts of Scenario 1 is likely to be somewhat less.

It should also be noted that some of the additional traffic generated by new development would be partially offset by reducing the number of trips that would be made to neighboring towns. Also, designing for more walkability could also result in offsetting trips within the Town Center.

Aesthetic Impacts

Aesthetic impacts are difficult to determine in advance. Figure 8 illustrates the footprints of the new buildings anticipated under this scenario. The actual building designs, site layouts, parking arrangement, landscaping, lighting, signage etc. would be subject to site plan review by the Planning Board.

Since the development under this scenario is minor, there are few aesthetic impacts. The renovation of the barn at 18 North Main Street would primarily impact the interior. Since it is within the local historic district, any exterior change would require approval from the Historic District Commission.

The most significant impact would be from a new building at 6 Powderhouse Lane. While it would be a large building (at 2 stories totaling 22,000 square feet, it would be the largest building in the Town Center), it would not be seen from North Main Street. Its parking would also be located behind the Sherborn Inn and adjacent to the railroad tracks. As mentioned above, the building and site designs would be subject to site plan review by the Planning Board.

Furthermore, potential adoption of a “form-based code” is could potentially help mitigate potential aesthetic impacts. The site has generally been used for landscaping-type business with storage of materials as well as some limited used car sales.

FIGURE 8

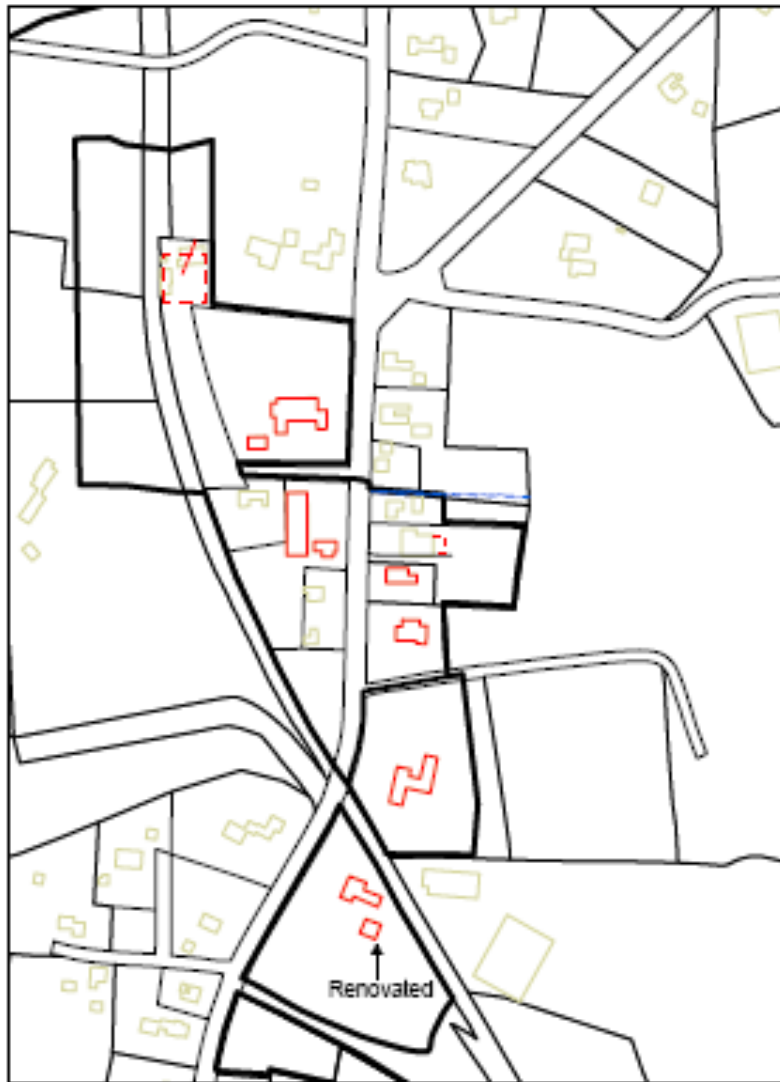





Figure A

-  Existing Building in Business District to Remain
-  Existing Building in Business District to be Razed
-  Proposed New Building in Business District

Impacts of North Village Development Potential Without Water and Sewer Constraints

As indicated in Table 3 of the Estimates of Future Development section, if the availability of water supply and sewer service were not constraints, the development potential of the Primary Commercial Area could result in an estimated total of 133,660 square feet of finished building space, an increase of 66,121 square feet over the 67,539 square feet that exists currently. In effect, the space could double within the existing business zoning districts, based primarily on what the Zoning Bylaw allows, including parking requirements.

It is important to note that this analysis provides an estimate of the increased tax revenue based on current conditions such as zoning and property/business use. However, the introduction of water and sewer may change the current paradigm. For example, zoning requirements such as set back and lot size may be re-evaluated with the introduction of these utilities and possibly allow for increased business development. Also, public utilities may promote different business uses. Certain uses such as restaurants are greatly restricted under DEP regulations that govern septic systems. If a public sewer system is available, businesses such as restaurants will be able to develop with minimal restrictions. Therefore such changes may affect overall property values within Sherborn's business district and correspondently affect tax revenue. Nonetheless, this is difficult to predict and the detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this report.

Fiscal Impacts

The estimated growth of this scenario includes the same development at 6 Powderhouse Lane and 18 North Main Street as in the previous scenario. However, this scenario includes replacing the existing building at 26 North Main Street with a new mixed use building of 18,000 square feet. In addition, it estimates replacement of the buildings at 28 North Main with a new building of 8000 square feet, an addition of 3000 square feet at 20 North Main Street, replacement of the building at 27 North Main Street with a new 7000 square foot building, replacement of the building at 5 Powderhouse Lane with a new building of 8400 square feet, and doubling the space at 29 North Main Street to 17,400 square feet. In general

Table 6 presents the estimated increase in property tax revenue per property where additional development is projected to occur. The total additional revenue is estimated to be approximately \$170,000.

As in the first scenario, the largest impact, \$52,527, is projected to come from a 22,000 square foot office building at 6 Powderhouse Lane. This is followed closely by an 18,000 square foot mixed use building replacing the auto repair shop at 26 North Main Street that would generate an additional \$42,090. The renovation of the barn at 18 North Main would generate \$4726. The remainder of the developments are projected to increase revenues in the range of \$12,551 to \$23,110 each.

A slight variation to this scenario would be that a Planned Unit Development occurred at 41 North Main Street that replaced the projected development at 6 Powderhouse Lane. That would

TABLE 6

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT OF SCENARIO 2

Address	Current Value ¹	New Development (square feet)	New Value ²	Net New Value	Estimated New Tax Revenue ³
5 Powderhouse (office bldg)	\$130,800	8,400	\$1,155,000	\$1,024,200	\$18,149
6 Powderhouse (behind Inn)	\$60,700	22,000	\$3,025,000	\$2,964,300	\$52,527
18 N. Main (Clark House barn)	\$8,300	2,000 ⁴	\$275,000	\$266,700	\$4,726
26 N. Main (Rose Automotive)	\$99,700	18,000	\$2,475,000	\$2,375,300	\$42,090
27 N. Main (Paul Insurance)	\$254,200	7,000	\$962,500	\$708,300	\$12,551
28 N. Main (Wiese)	\$178,300	8,000	\$1,100,000	\$921,700	\$16,333
31 N. Main (P.O., C&L, etc.)	\$1,088,300	17,400	\$2,392,500	\$1,304,200	\$23,110
TOTALS	\$1,820,300	\$100,804	\$11,385,000	\$9,564,700	\$169,486

¹2012 assessment for building only

²Based on \$137.50 per square foot

³Based on FY12 property tax rate of \$17.72 per \$1000

⁴Renovation, not new construction

Source: Sherborn Assessor's Data

result in a total project of about 40,000 square feet instead of 22,000. The 40,000 would include renovation of the 7572 square feet of the existing historic house and barn at 41 North Main Street.

At \$137.50 per square foot, this would result in a new value of \$5,500,000. Subtracting the existing assessed value at 6 Powderhouse Lane of \$60,700 plus the existing assessed value at 41 North Main Street of \$721,700 results in a net additional value of \$4,717,600. At the FY2012 rate of \$17.72, this would produce property tax revenue of \$83,596. This represents an increase over the 6 Powderhouse Lane development of \$31,069 which would bring the total additional property tax revenue under this scenario to about \$201,000.

Traffic Impacts

Table 7 presents the estimated traffic impact of this scenario. Since the amount of development under this scenario is substantially greater than that of the previous scenario, the traffic impact is also significantly greater.

The same traffic generation rates from the Institute of Traffic Engineers as was used in the previous scenario (3.32 trips per day per employee and .48 trips per employee during AM peak, and 40.67 daily trips and 6.41 trips during AM peak per 1000 square feet of “specialty retail” space) were used to produce Table 7.

As Table 7 indicates, if development took place as estimated in this scenario, the Average Daily Traffic would increase by 1270. This represents 4.5% of the total ADT projected to 2020. The AM peak hour traffic would increase by 195, or 8.2% of the projected AM traffic in 2020.

In both cases, this totals are somewhat exaggerated since the 2020 projections already include 30,000 square feet of new commercial space. If this space were subtracted from the 66,121 square feet estimated in this scenario, the traffic impacts would be nearly cut in half. However, the 30,000 square feet was not subtracted in order to result in a conservative analysis. Also, additional development in the Town Center may help offset projected traffic increases by intercepting trips that would have otherwise gone to neighboring towns.

result in a total project of about 40,000 square feet instead of 22,000. The 40,000 would include renovation of the 7572 square feet of the existing historic house and barn at 41 North Main Street.

At \$137.50 per square foot, this would result in a new value of \$5,500,000. Subtracting the existing assessed value at 6 Powderhouse Lane of \$60,700 plus the existing assessed value at 41 North Main Street of \$721,700 results in a net additional value of \$4,717,600. At the FY2012 rate of \$17.72, this would produce property tax revenue of \$83,596. This represents an increase over the 6 Powderhouse Lane development of \$31,069 which would bring the total additional property tax revenue under this scenario to about \$201,000.

TABLE 7**ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT OF SCENARIO 2**

	AM Peak	PM Peak	Average Daily Traffic
CTPS Study for 2002	2145	2270	26,300*
CTPS Study for 2020 (.5% annual growth plus 30,000 ft² more retail/office space)	2380	2520	28,485#
Increase from this Scenario			
5 Powderhouse Lane	30	NA	193
6 Powderhouse Lane	24	NA	163
18 North Main Street	7	NA	48
26 North Main Street	68	NA	432
27 North Main Street	26	NA	168
28 North Main Street	31	NA	202
31 North Main Street	9	NA	64
TOTALS	195	NA	1270

*MassHighway count from 2004. #Represents 2004 total increased by .5% annually to 2020.

NA = Not Available, but assumed to be comparable to AM peak.

Sources: Central Transportation Planning Staff, 2002

Computed by authors based on ITE traffic generation rates

Aesthetic Impacts

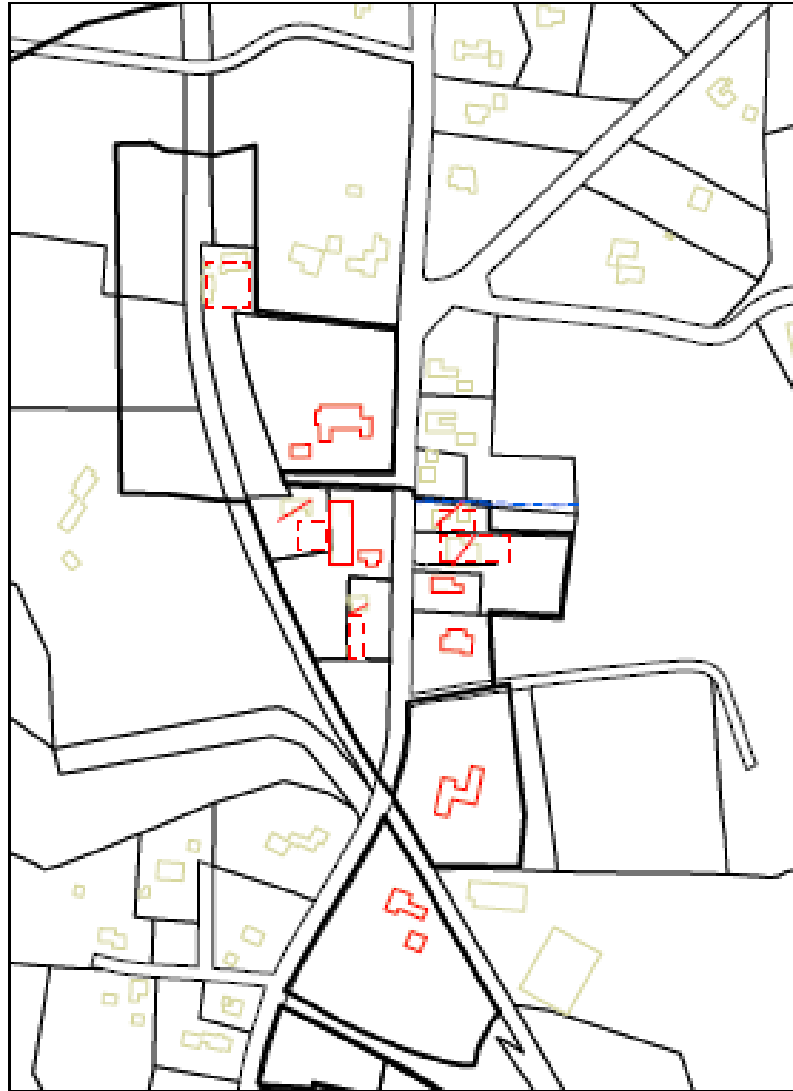
Again, since the development estimated under this scenario is far more significant than under the first scenario, the aesthetic impacts will also be far greater. Still, much of the impact will be determined by the designs proposed by property and business owners and the results of site plan review by the Planning Board.

Figure 9 presents the impact on building footprints. As the figure shows, at least four of the existing buildings in the Town Center (5 Powderhouse Lane, 26, 27 and 28 North Main Street) would be razed and replaced with new buildings. In addition, the building at 29-31 North Main Street (Post Office, bank, liquor store, cleaners) would have a second floor added. This could either be added to the existing building or the existing building could be replaced with a new 2-story building. Thus, the aesthetic impact would be substantial. Whether the impact is positive or negative would be determined by the final designs of the new buildings and their sites.

In 2008, the Planning Board sponsored two workshops on aesthetic preferences for the Town Center. Figure 10 presents a sample of the type of building design that was well-received by Sherborn residents who participated in the workshops. Figure 11 is a sketch illustrating a plan view of the photo simulation presented in Figure 10 (and on which Figure 10 was based). It presents a possible redevelopment of a portion of the Town Center.

One potential method of mitigating aesthetic impacts would be the adoption of a “form-based code.” In this type of zoning, the form of buildings and sites takes precedence over uses. In this way, the desired built environment gets built, and what takes place inside the buildings is secondary to the “form” that the building takes.

FIGURE 9




-  Existing Building in Business District to Remain
-  Existing Building in Business District to be Razed
-  Proposed New Building in Business District

FIGURE 10



FIGURE 11

APPENDIX

SUMMARIES OF PREVIOUS STUDIES APPLICABLE TO TOWN CENTER

The following is a more detailed summary of the studies that were discussed in the Previous Town Center Improvement Efforts section of this report.

1958 Master Plan – This plan was completed for the Planning Board with the assistance of a planning consulting firm Shurcliff and Merrill. It is an interesting document of 42 pages that identifies some issues that are still being discussed today. The plan proposed some bold changes to the Town Center.

First, it proposed that Routes 16 and 27 bypass the center of Town. Route 16 from Holliston would veer behind Grout's Farm to cross Maple Street near Green Lane and follow a path about 1500 feet west of North Main Street to Hunting Lane. Hunting Lane would be straightened somewhat between the new road and North Main Street and Butler Street would be relocated to meet Hunting Lane and then connect in a straight line to the existing Eliot Street (See Figure 2).

Route 27 would be rerouted just south of Goulding Street to meet the rerouted Route 16. At Hunting Lane it would continue northward parallel to North Main Street crossing Coolidge Street and rejoining the existing Route 27 at Plain Cemetery.

The bypasses were intended to relieve North Main Street of traffic congestion and to facilitate the concentration of growth and allow expansion of commercial, governmental and recreational facilities in the Town Center.

Interestingly, a survey of residents was taken as part of this plan. More than half of respondents "want some form of shopping facilities in the Town and the rest are satisfied to shop in Framingham, Natick or elsewhere." This is similar to results from the survey conducted in 2008.

The report recommended that Sherborn "confine commercial development to the present town center with the intent of developing a single, well integrated shopping center to serve the entire town." It also recommended that governmental and recreation facilities be located in the center. As shown on Figure 2, a new road was also proposed from Zion's Lane to Powderhouse Lane in order to expand developable area (apparently without regard to wetlands).

It should be noted that the 1958 Master Plan was also concerned with "distant future development." Because of that concern, it suggested that the Town eventually be divided into three neighborhood units of "West Sherborn" (north of Washington Street and west of Green Lane), "South Sherborn" (south of Washington Street, Sewall Brook and Town Forest) and the remainder of Town. It called for the eventual establishment of additional neighborhood centers by acquiring land for municipal facilities and by zoning for small neighborhood shopping centers in each of the three areas.

1971 Sherborn Center Study – In 1971, with the assistance of planning consultant Charles E. Downe, the Planning Board again considered the Town Center. The 1971 study references the findings of the 1958 Master Plan. The Sherborn Center Study noted that “Because of the existence of so much commercial activity within easy driving distance and the present and projected low residential densities in Sherborn, there seems to be little need for expansion of the existing business district. At the time of the traffic count, vacant retail or office space was available within the business district.”

The report also referred to “a League of Women Voters Survey in November 1969 as well as in subsequent contacts with residents of the Town” and in concluding that local opinion was to retain “Sherborn Center as a convenience shopping area with continued dependence on other shopping centers and business districts outside the Town for most major purchases and services.” The plan therefore concluded that the Center would continue to provide “a comparable scope of goods and services with some provision for gradual physical expansion.”

Interestingly, the 1971 Sherborn Center Study states that the Massachusetts Department of Public Works had a plan for a circumferential highway about midway between Route 128 and I-495. One of the routes for that road would have crossed the southwestern part of Town.

The primary recommendations of this plan included the following:

- Eliminate the business zones south of the Washington/North Main Streets intersection (with existing businesses continuing as nonconforming uses)
- Eliminate the business zone on the east side of North Main Street (the single business there at the time to continue as a nonconforming use)
- Eliminate the business zone west of the railroad tracks
- Extend the business zone on the west side of North Main Street northerly to Hunting Lane
- Relocate Town Hall (then located in what is now the Community Center or 1858 Town House) to the east side of North Main Street. It also called for a new Police Station in this location and for the Town to acquire the land on the east side of North Main Street from the railroad tracks to Pine Hill Lane
- Establish an “Architectural Advisory Board”

It should be noted that during the course of the 1971 study, expansion of the business district to the west, with a new road from Maple Street to Hunting Lane, was considered but was not among the final recommendations. The plan also made a number of other recommendations including relocating Sawin Street so that it would be directly opposite South Main Street from Farm Road. It also recommended that businessmen form an association to coordinate parking, improve property conditions and to promote business, and to join in agreements to maintain properties. to improve the aesthetics of the private properties with the Town Center.

1975 Master Plan – In November, 1975, the Planning Board presented the 1975 Master Plan by noting that it includes some controversial recommendations and by stating that it “neither approves nor disapproves the conclusions therein and wishes to clarify our position by stating that it should only be used as a guide for the future.” The plan was completed by a Master Plan Study Committee with the help of planning consultant Philip B. Herr of Philip B. Herr & Associates.

While both the 1958 Master Plan and 1971 Sherborn Center Study touched on the two distinct areas of the Town Center, the 1975 Master Plan clearly identified and labeled them as the Business Center and Institutional Center. It also summarized residents’ viewpoints as consisting of three positions: (1) those who want the Town Center to remain essentially as is; (2) those who want it to remain as is but with provisions for future growth; and (3) those who would like to see an expansion of available goods and services in the Town Center to reduce the need to travel elsewhere. However, it was stated that there was a consensus that new goods and services should be those that primarily serve local residents and do not attract regional traffic to Town.

The Master Plan Committee’s primary recommendation concerning the Town Center was that its linear nature poses a threat and should be eliminated. It stated that “Commercial development should be concentrated in a well-defined unit configuration – more like a “village-in-the-round” rather than a “commercial ribbon.” It identified the area north of Powderhouse Lane to Hunting Lane as a “near perfect opportunity for future business development if and when desired or needed.”

The Master Plan Committee also believed that maintaining adequate design control was important. It sponsored a warrant article to create a Historic District Study Committee. Its intent was to have the entire Town Center included within an historic district in order “to provide for review of plans and stipulate general guidelines for quality development.” It specifically stated the purpose of guaranteeing preservation of the two historic homes north of the business district in the event that area was rezoned to business.

The plan went on to mention several areas for improvement such as improved street edges, linked parking, moving utilities underground and development of a Town Green in the Institutional Center. However, the major recommendation is illustrated in Figure 3. The plan suggested that if there is a need or desire to expand the Business Center beyond what the area between Powderhouse Lane and Hunting Lane would provide, then North Main Street should be rerouted behind the businesses on the east side from the railroad tracks to Eliot Street in order to create an integrated village as mentioned above.

1981 Zoning Study Committee – In 1981, a Zoning Study Committee was appointed by the Planning Board in June and submitted its report in December. Its mandate was to study the Town Center and make recommendations regarding zoning. Its recommendations included dividing what was then a single Business district into 4 separate districts.

The Business A zone would be for automotive uses. It was recommended that the two automotive uses (a car dealership and gas station at that time) on South Main Street be rezoned to this district.

A Business M district would allow retail uses, banks, real estate offices and personal service establishments. The area west of North Main Street and south of Powderhouse Lane and east of the railroad tracks was recommended for this zone. A Business P zone was recommended for an existing real estate office at Washington Street and South Main Street.

The Zoning Study Committee recommended that the existing Business district on Kendall Avenue be reconfigured and rezoned to Business R for restaurants. It suggested that the area of the pond be rezoned to Residence A and that the Business R district include the remaining business frontage on Kendall Avenue but that its depth be doubled from 150 feet to 300 feet.

The Committee also recommended that two new districts be established. A Municipal/Institutional district would include municipal government operations facilities as well as schools, places of worship, libraries and cultural centers. An Open Space district would include land permanently dedicated as open space including cemeteries, playing fields, ponds, beaches, rinks, conservation lands, landfills, town forest and lands held by non-profit organizations and reserved for recreation or conservation purposes.

The Committee agreed with previous studies that suggested that the land on the west side of North Main Street and north of Powderhouse Lane should be considered for rezoning to Business in the future, though it did not believe that there was a need to do so in 1981. In fact, it proposed rezoning the area along the tracks that was already zoned Business to Residential A. Also, a proposal had already been suggested to develop the Sherborn Inn, but the Committee specifically opposed such rezoning. Similarly, there had been proposals for a retail facility at 20 North Main Street, and a proposal to convert the Italianate house at 18 North Main Street to allow professional offices and both of these were opposed by the Committee. The Committee also proposed rezoning the east side of North Main Street to Residence A from Business.

The Committee also made some non-zoning proposals. It proposed adding a turning lane on North Main Street, rerouting Route 27 to the east from the vicinity of what is now the Citgo Station across the railroad tracks on a bridge, and then pas west of Pine Hill Cemetery before traversing the playing fields and rejoining Eliot Street at the traffic light.

1989 Sherborn Town Center Master Plan – In 1989, Donham and Sweeney Architects of Boston prepared three drawings of the Town Center along North Main Street between the railroad tracks and Eliot Street. One identified the positive features, another identified the negative features and the third was a proposal for some modest changes.

The positive features included the strip of “shade trees and brick sidewalks” along the west side, the “attractive and well-defined open space” north of the Sherborn Inn, the “strong, tight building line” of the houses from 28 through 36 North Main Street and the “strong entrance feature” that is the circle at the North Main/Eliot Streets intersection.

The negative features included the “poorly defined entrance to Town Center” on the west side of North Main Street at the railroad tracks; the “undistinguished 1-story buildings” that consisted of the former Klein’s Garage and MacArthur’s Market (now the 2-story Sherborn Crossing), the little building on the Paul Insurance site and the Post Office/Bank/Cleaners/Liquor Store building; the “excessive asphalt in front of buildings” (which pointed only to the Klein’s Garage site but is actually applicable to much of Town Center); the “many curb cuts” with the especially wide ones in front of Rose’s Automotive, Klein’s Garage and the Fire Station (prior to reconstruction) highlighted; the “planting barriers” on both sides of the Paul Insurance site; the “Post Office hidden from view” and the “heavy and fast-moving traffic.”

Their proposed “Master Plan” of improvements were relatively modest. On the east side of North Main Street, it was proposed to add a small office building to the Fire Station site and replace Rose’s with another office building. In both cases, parking would be to the rear of the buildings and there would be attractive landscaping in front.

The west side improvements consisted of replacing Klein’s Garage, MacArthur’s Market and Paul Insurance with three new buildings hosting a market, drug store and a restaurant with offices in the rear. Again the buildings would be closer to the street with parking in the rear. The triangle between the tracks and North Main Street would host a small parking lot but would be heavily landscaped in the front to create an attractive entrance to the Town Center. Cemetery Lane would be extended across North Main Street to provide access to an integrated parking area serving all the buildings up to Powderhouse Lane. They also proposed removing C & L Frosty and building an “ell” onto the Post Office/Bank/Cleaners/Liquor Store building and creating a courtyard between that “ell” and the existing driveway. The “ell” would be the site of the Post Office and the bank would be in that portion of the existing building facing the courtyard.

2001 Livability Charrette – In 2001, the Town was fortunate to be selected to participate in a charrette sponsored by the Boston Society of Architects and held at Northeastern University. The charrette participants included architects and urban designers as well as Town officials from Sherborn and other participating towns.

The goals presented at the charrette by Sherborn officials included (1) Preserve and enhance the atmosphere of a small New England village; (2) Achieve a balance between vehicle, pedestrian, and bike traffic; (3) Assure good water quality for businesses and proper wastewater systems; and (4) Encourage sustainable development principles in both new development and redevelopment.

The resulting recommendations were:

- Rebuild the road connecting the two elements of the Town Center with a design that unifies them. The design should be pedestrian-friendly with narrow pavement, sidewalks on both sides with a grass strip, current trees saved to the extent possible and new trees planted where needed, utilities moved underground, and period street lights added along the route.
- Develop outward on both sides of North Main Street to create a village center rather than a strip.
- Develop higher-density elderly and/or affordable housing close to the Town Center to add vitality to the center and provide convenience for the residents.

2001 General Plan – The 2001 General Plan was a three-year effort that began in 1998. It consisted of a survey of residents, three subcommittees (Land Use, Built Environment and Fiscal and Economic), two planning consulting firms (Planners Collaborative, Inc. assisted with the survey and Thomas Planning Services, Inc. assisted with the main document), two public forums, and numerous special meetings of the Planning Board. The Goals and Policies Statement was approved at the 2001 Annual Town Meeting and the completed document was adopted by the Planning Board on October 3, 2001.

The Goals and Policies Statement identifies several “guiding principles” that pertain to the document as a whole. Maintaining the Town’s rural heritage is the key guiding principle of the General Plan, while other guiding principles that pertain more particularly to the Town Center include “Retain[ing] the Town Center’s small village character while improving its appearance and access,” and “Us[ing] existing bylaw provisions to keep local businesses healthy and allow growth in the business districts.”

In addition, several of the specific elements of the General Plan, including the Town Center, Economic Development, Circulation, Housing, and Public Facilities and Services have recommendations that directly pertain to the Town Center.

The Town Center element includes the following goals and recommendations:

Goals of the Town Center Element

1. Preserve and enhance the atmosphere of a small New England village
 - Protect Town Center character by limiting expansion, adopting design standards, limiting road width and maintaining/adding street trees
 - Improve visual quality of the Town Center by placing overhead wires underground, limiting curb cuts and paved areas, encouraging more extensive use of natural materials and by creating signage standards.
 - Create a visual signature for the Town Center to enhance a sense of place or identity

2. Achieve a balance between vehicle, pedestrian, and bike traffic
 - Support additional sidewalks and bike paths
 - Encourage non-vehicular links (trails and sidewalks)
 - Support traffic-calming road design
3. Assure good water quality and proper wastewater systems for businesses
 - Determine Town Center water supply and wastewater needs
 - Encourage private sector solutions and public/private partnerships
 - Provide public services if necessary
4. Encourage sustainable development principles in new and redevelopment projects

Recommendations of the Town Center Element

1. Improve Town Center appearance through landscape improvements and design guidelines for new development/renovations
2. Install sidewalks on both sides of N. Main Street from Eliot Street to Village Way
3. Install higher visibility street crossings at Eliot Street and Cemetery Lane
4. Move overhead wires underground
5. Maintain business zone where presently located at its present size
6. Study parking needs for Town Center recreation area on east side of North Main Street
7. Support/encourage linked parking on the west side of North Main Street along the railroad tracks from Powderhouse Lane to 19 North Main Street
8. Ensure that travel lanes on North Main Street are no greater than 11' with 3' shoulders in order to maintain village character

Of the 8 recommendations, #5 and #8 have been achieved so far. An attempt to establish a Design Review Committee to achieve #1 was proposed but withdrawn prior to Town Meeting due to opposition at hearings. The Disabilities Commission continues to promote #2 and #3. Private landowner cooperation is needed to accomplish #7. The Planning Board has continued to engage the landowners on a variety of issues, including this one.

The Economic Development element includes the following goals and recommendations that specifically or generally pertain to the Town Center:

Goals of the Economic Development Element

- Use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) bylaw to ensure limited business expansion in the business districts that keeps local businesses healthy
- Develop a plan to help the Town determine its economic future

Recommendations of the Economic Development Element

- Support limited expansion within the existing business districts that enhances the visual appearance, village character and pedestrian orientation while generating additional tax revenues for the Town
- Prepare an economic development plan

Attempts to amend the PUD bylaw to encourage limited expansion under the PUD rules that require enhanced visual appearance, village character and pedestrian orientation have not been successful. No economic development plan has been prepared.

The Circulation element includes the following goals and recommendations that specifically or generally pertain to the Town Center:

Goals of the Circulation Element

- Keep North Main Street road design on a small village scale
- Improve safety and access for pedestrians and bicycles
- Ensure safe pedestrian street crossings in order to achieve a pedestrian-friendly Town Center

Recommendations of the Circulation Element

- Support a North Main Street roadway design that is compatible with Sherborn's own standards and that maintains and enhances the village character
- Emphasize pedestrian amenities, especially sidewalks, within the Town Center and where they will provide access to key facilities

As mentioned above, the first bulleted recommendation was achieved when the Town decided to repave the road at 28' (and other improvements) without state funding. and the second is being considered now.

The Housing element does not include a specific goal that pertains to the Town Center. However, it does include the following recommendation:

- Support both affordable and market rate elderly housing. The preferred locations for affordable and elderly housing are within the Residence A district and within one mile of the Town Center or within a business district. Other locations should be jointly considered on a case-by-case basis by the Land Acquisition Committee, Planning Board and Housing Partnership.

An effort to include housing as part of the PUD bylaw was not successful at town Meeting. No elderly or affordable housing proposals within or near the Town Center have been proposed since the General Plan was adopted. The Affordable Housing Committee continues to explore possibilities.

The Public Facilities and Services element includes the following goals that specifically or generally pertain to the Town Center:

Goals of the Public Facilities and Services Element

- Provide modern, efficient, well-managed, well-maintained public facilities that meet the Town's current and future needs, with minimum cost and staff
- Maintain and upgrade existing public facilities to meet new regulations, support new technologies, or support new community needs
- Support the development of the Town Center with public facilities/utilities that support appropriate growth

There are no corresponding recommendations addressing public utilities in the Town Center. However, in its "Issues" section, the Public Facilities and Services element does include a discussion of the 19__ Lycott ____ study which determined that there was not a sufficient supply for a Town-wide water system. The General Plan noted that there was significant opposition to a Town-wide system but there was support for a limited system where there are problems, presumably in the Town Center.

The Town's Water Commission has studied the water and sewer needs of the Town Center. This work is a follow-up to work done by a previous committee that tested the quantity and quality of water from an aquifer under Price Woodlands. Those preliminary tests indicated that the quantity and quality of water would be sufficient for a Town Center system. The Final Report of the Town Center Water District Workgroup submitted to the Board of Selectmen on October 11, 2007 had studied a system that would serve the area along North Main Street from the Eliot Street intersection south to the municipal campus on Washington Street and to the Pilgrim Church on South Main Street.

PLANNING BOARD 2008 SURVEY OF RESIDENTS

As part of the Planning Board's study of development issues in the Town Center, a survey was sent out to all residents in January of 2008. The survey drew over 800 responses. The Planning Board appreciates the efforts of those who took the time to answer the questions and, for many, to provide written comments – some of which were refreshingly out of the box.

On the issue of establishing a public water supply primarily for the Town Center businesses and Town buildings, 54% of respondents supported the idea, slightly less than support indicated on last year's ballot question, while 28% were opposed (the rest being neutral). The younger the respondent, incidentally, the more supportive the response – the under 40 crowd running at 71% versus 47% for those 60 and over. Assuming town-wide financial support for such a system, i.e. debt service, the responses overall flipped, with 26% in favor and 53% opposed. Those unresponsive numbers were virtually unchanged if residential properties along the water line were included. The lack of information about costs, how they might be shared and the uncertain location of the well may well have been factors contributing to significant opposition.

There was strong support (70%) for expanding business development within existing business district boundaries while only 31% were in favor of expansion beyond the boundaries. Similarly, respondents also indicated a significant interest (63%) in having an "anchor" outlet up to 7,500 sq. ft. while only 28% were interested in having a store as large as 10,000 sq. ft. Desires for retail establishments included a market similar to the Dover Market, a coffee shop, general store and specialty shops.

Somewhat surprising to us, the idea of additional residential development in or near the Town Center attracted only 25% support and only 36% were in favor if housing was age restricted to 55 and older. The idea of having affordable housing in or near the Town Center mustered a less than enthusiastic 33% support. We speculate that respondents felt that too much housing of any kind would compete with space that could otherwise be used for desirable retail outlets.

As a demographic footnote readers might be interested in knowing that according to the 2000 census 20% fell into the 25-39 year age group, 55% in the 40-59 year range and 25% were 60 and over. Relative to those numbers and the 2010 census projection, the younger group showed a substantial under-response to the survey while 60 and over were overrepresented by the same percentage point margin.

Copies of the survey results are on the next page as well as on the Planning Board web site (<http://planning.sherbornma.org>).

SHERBORN RESIDENTS SURVEY
All numbers represent percentages

1. What Town Center Water Policies Do You Favor? <i>Please circle the number that best reflects your opinion</i>	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Favor	Strongly Favor
<i>Continue existing condition of private wells and septic systems for each property?</i>	12.0	14.3	24.8	16.3	32.6
<i>Establish a public water supply primarily for Town Center businesses and Town buildings?</i>	20.4	7.8	17.2	29.2	25.3
<i>Would you favor it if it required Town-wide financial support (e.g. debt service on a bond issue) beyond its proportionate share for water use at Town Hall, the Community Center, Fire and Police Stations and Library?</i>	35.3	18.1	20.7	17.5	8.4
<i>Would you favor it if it included residential properties along the water line route (up to 30 -35 homes), but no others?</i>	33.3	16.0	25.1	16.9	8.7

2. What Town Center business development policies do you favor? <i>Please circle the number that best reflects your opinion</i>	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Favor	Strongly Favor
<i>No further development</i>	27.6	22.7	21.3	9.9	18.4
<i>Expansion within the existing business district boundaries</i>	9.4	5.2	15.4	43.7	26.2
<i>Expansion of the existing business district boundaries</i>	27.4	18.7	17.9	20.4	15.6

3. Would you favor adding the following types/sizes of businesses to the Town Center?	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Favor	Strongly Favor
<i>An anchor store: up to 10,000 square feet?</i>	38.8	19.5	13.5	15.3	12.9
<i>Smaller retail outlets up to 7500 square feet?</i>	15.7	6.9	14.5	38.5	24.3
<i>Additional office space?</i>	15.2	8.7	33.9	28.0	14.2

4. What Town Center Policy Changes Do You Favor?	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Favor	Strongly Favor
<i>Additional residential development, such as condominiums or apartments in or near the Town Center: Unrestricted as to age?</i>	31.1	20.5	23.2	17.6	7.6
<i>Restricted to people over 55 years old?</i>	18.1	15.7	29.9	23.4	12.9
<i>Additional affordable housing in or near the Town Center</i>	22.2	17.9	26.9	22.7	10.3

5. What Town Center improvements do you favor?	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Favor	Strongly Favor
<i>Connect parking areas in the Town Center</i>	10.2	9.5	32.9	31.9	15.5
<i>Add a sidewalk to the east side of North Main Street</i>	13.5	12.6	27.0	30.0	16.9
<i>Bury existing Town Center utility lines underground</i>	13.6	14.3	31.0	23.6	17.5
<i>Would you be willing to pay up to 5% more on your utility bill to bury utility lines in the Town Center</i>	39.9	24.5	14.0	13.3	8.3

What is your age? (Please check appropriate box)	Under 40: 8.6	40-59: 55.6	Over 60: 35.8
2000 Census	25-39: 19.99	40-59: 55.43	60+: 24.58
2010 Projection	25-39: 14.03	40-59: 56.83	60+: 29.14