

Sunapee Old Town Hall & Village Master Plan Design Charrette



June 22 & 23, 2007

PLANNH

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A special Thank You to Kevin Rickard, Chairman Old Town Hall Committee and Donna Nashawaty, Town Manager who put in many extra hours of support leading up to and during the charrette!

Another special Thank You to Sandra Rowse who hosted the two-day charrette at the Knowlton House. The accommodations were perfect and right in the heart of the study!

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Sunapee Old Town Hall and Village Master Plan Charrette

SUNAPEE OLD
TOWN HALL

June 22 & 23, 2007

Plan NH Charrette

Sunapee Old Town Hall and Village Master Plan

Who is Plan NH?

Plan NH, founded in 1989, is a professional association established to create a forum to bring together those focused on the built environment and interested in community development. Plan NH members include architects, planners, engineers, landscape architects, bankers, contractors, historic preservationists, and others. A principle aspect of Plan NH's mission is to make a positive contribution to New Hampshire communities. One way in which Plan NH is doing this is by offering design assistance each year to New Hampshire communities with demonstrated needs.

What is a Design Charrette?

Simply stated, a design charrette is a brainstorming session where lots of ideas are brought forth by both professional designers and local citizens in an attempt to resolve a problem of local interest. Because of the compressed timeframe, the recommendations reached are usually conceptual. Recommendations present the relationship of different plan elements, as opposed to the details of how a particular building or site would actually be constructed. The charrette process blends the broad experience of design professionals with local citizens' detailed knowledge of their community to produce a plan of action to address a particular development issue within the community. The charrette provides an overall framework in which final solutions can be developed and gives a direction against which future decisions can be measured. The Plan NH charrettes are typically two-day workshops that produce a number of design ideas and possible solutions, which are documented in booklets and presented to the town to be used as a starting point in their design process.

Why did Plan NH come to Sunapee?

Each year Plan NH invites communities to submit proposals outlining a community design opportunity. The proposals are examined and two or three are chosen for a weekend charrette consisting of volunteer professionals to brainstorm and develop creative ideas addressing a problem of local interest. Plan NH assesses the proposals on the basis of: importance of the project to the host community, interest in the design problem, and probability of the project actually being implemented. Communities that are organized, have done some early work on a project, thought out its needs and how it would implement the recommendations are favored by the selection committee.



The Charrette Process

The Plan NH charrette process includes one day of our design team listening to members of the community and town officials as well as making site observations. The second day involves an intense brainstorming of ideas culminating in the generation of sketches, concepts, and implementation strategies

On Friday June 22, 2007 the Plan NH Charrette Team members met with Town of Sunapee Officials, the French Livery / Old Town Hall Committee, The Sunapee Harbor Riverway, Lake Sunapee Protective Association, and a small group of residents and property owners from within the Village District. The morning meeting refined the charrette objectives, expanded upon the town's application, and began the brainstorming effort to generate ideas to redevelop the Old Town Hall and enhance the Village. An overview of the project goals and opportunities was presented along with an outline of past and present town initiatives.

The team members, residents, and town officials walked the Village including Main Street, River Street, Lake Avenue and the Ben Mere and Old Town Hall Properties. The Sugar River and Sunapee Harbor are the key natural resources within the project area. The vast opportunities and constraints were evident to all. The design team had an opportunity to view the project area, experience the vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns, view existing buildings and land uses, and observe the Sugar River as it flows behind the Old Town Hall.

The group then toured all levels of the Old Town Hall and the site on which it sits. Extra time was spent in the lowest level to view the foundation and column supports of the Old Town hall.

Two “listening sessions” were held on Friday at the Knowlton House in the heart of the study area – one in the afternoon and another in the evening. This process is essential to the development of the project vision, the formulation of ideas and recommendations, and community consensus building for the future implementation. Many citizens took advantage of this opportunity to voice their opinions, share ideas, and impart local knowledge regarding the many issues included in the re-use of the Old Town Hall and enhancement to the Village. During these sessions the primary objective of the design team was to listen and record the comments and ideas expressed.

On Saturday the design team began to formulate ideas, concepts, and graphics based on the input provided at the two listening sessions. A brief presentation of the material developed was presented to the community that afternoon. This booklet provides a summary of the Sunapee Old Town and Village Master Plan Charrette.



The Sunapee Proposal

“This moment presents itself as a tipping point of development in the town. Completing this planning process, and implementing its results, will set a precedent that is critical to revitalizing the town village.”

Sunapee Old Town Hall and Village Master Plan

The proposal submitted to Plan NH by the Town of Sunapee and the Old Town Hall Committee requested assistance with the development of a master plan for the village district. The core of the district and planning effort is the Old Town Hall (French Livery Building). The re-use and rehabilitation of the Old Town Hall is a key element to the revitalization of the village. The proposal outlined several specific, yet interrelated areas and issues to be considered including:

- Re-use and rehabilitation alternatives of the Old Town Hall;
- Parking and traffic management (particularly in light of new uses in OTH);
- Pedestrian accommodations and integration of the Sugar River Walk;
- Landscape/streetscape enhancements to connect the elements of the village; and
- A suggested implementation strategy



Main Street and Old Town Hall



Sugar River and back of Old Town Hall



River Street at dam



Sunapee Harbor

The focus of the charrette was to center around the Old Town Hall and the core area of the village. The study area included Main Street from High Street to Lake Avenue, River Street, and the old Ben Mere property off Burkehaven Hill Road. The area is an integral part of the village and includes private and municipal buildings and parking areas. The Sunapee Harbor Riverway Corporation, Historical Society and Lake Sunapee Protective Association are also key stakeholders and partners in the revitalization of this town jewel.

The charrette process would identify alternative, mixed-use redevelopment alternatives of the Old Town Hall and consider parking and traffic solutions to support this redevelopment and enhance the character and mobility of this quaint New England waterfront village. The planning effort would seek to build off the considerable assets of Lake Sunapee and the Sugar River, while preserving the rich history of this harbor village.

The following was a very passionate statement made during one of the meetings on Friday:

“Route 11 has divided the community. What common vision can be developed for the village that can bring the whole community together?”

The Old Town Hall and Sunapee Harbor have been the topic of several studies dating back to 1958, and as recent as the 1998 Master Plan. In fact the town is just kicking off a master plan update making this an opportune time to bring the community together to consider options for this landmark building.

The following is an excerpt from the 1985 Sunapee Master Plan;

Rehabilitate the old town Hall—The Sunapee Town Hall is a large, highly visible and underused building in the village. Rehabilitation of the structure will have a dramatic positive impact on the character of the village and provide space for future commercial/town government expansion.

The 1998 Sunapee Master Plan lists this building as a community cornerstone. In 2000, the town of Sunapee adopted its first use zoning districts and the Village District is patterned after the typical New England town centers—characterized by higher densities and mixed uses associated with village centers.

A brief History of the Old Town Hall

This landmark building located between Main Street and the Sugar River was built in the late 1880's. An early photo shows a different looking building with a sign on it that says; M.F. Knowlton Livery and Feed Stable.

In 1920, the building, then owned by Bert Sawyer, was deeded to the Town of Sunapee. In 1926, Moses Knowlton purchased and donated the Town Clock to top off the building.

The interior consists of three floors above ground level. On ground level, wagons could drive under the building, in one side and out the other. While parked under the building, manure from the horse stalls on the first floor could be shoveled through hatches in the floor.

The first floor still contains the horse stalls with names on the horses tacked above the stalls. There is a spiral wooden ramp to lead horses from this floor to the second floor (street level). This ramp was obviously used quite a bit and is somewhat unique. After WWII, this floor was used for storage by the town.

The street level or second level was used to keep the buggies and tack. About the time that gasoline vehicles became popular, the building became used as a town fire station and a fire truck was kept in this garage area. The third floor was used as a meeting room, but as with the rest of the structure, was not insulated, and had no heat or plumbing.

Since 1920 the building had been used as a town office, it housed the Municipal Court, was home to the Sunapee Water and Sewer Department, has provided storage for the recreation committee, housed the Police Department, and is currently the home of the Sunapee Thrift Shop.

Text provided by Ron Garceau, President, Sunapee Historical



"The Old Town Hall is often described as one of the most photographed and artistically painted in the region. Its unique history, horse ramp, clock tower, and riverside location serve as one the few remaining links to Sunapee's heritage."

Summary of Comments at Listening Sessions

The town of Sunapee has a strong history of planning and community involvement as showcased by the 1988 and 1998 Master Plan, currently undergoing an update, and the various Sunapee Village and Old Town Hall planning efforts. The Vision for Sunapee, kicking-off the 2007 Master Plan Update, incorporates a collection of vision statements including: “...to help people connect with one another to build a stronger and more positive sense of community in Sunapee. Sunapee is a fine community. It is hoped that through this planning effort, it can be made an even better place to live, work, and recreate for people of a variety of interests and income levels.”

As noted earlier, the charrette process is based upon a group of professionals responding to local knowledge, ideas, and suggestions imparted by the citizens of a community. The design team collected an enormous amount of local information from town officials, a variety of organizations, property owners within the village, and the citizens of Sunapee during the listening sessions and site walks.

Much of the discussion and comments focused on the importance of maintaining the unique Sunapee history while creating a vibrant, year round community destination. Lake Sunapee, and the Sugar River are two significant natural resources that anchor the village as a destination for residents and visitors alike. The Old Town Hall remains as one of the significant buildings that lined Main Street and Sunapee Harbor. There was overwhelming support to preserve and rehabilitate the Old Town Hall. In addition, there was an overwhelming preference to create year round public use in all or part of the building. Retaining the unique history of Sunapee while stimulating activity in the village for all ages is considered paramount to any re-use plan for the building and revitalization plan for the village. In the same vein, attracting residents to the village and harbor area — to live, work, and play — in this unique setting of natural and man-made resources is essential.

The Charrette Team heard several comments relating to traffic and parking—both as an issue and that it’s okay as it is. The overriding questions stem from the demand for parking, mobility, and pedestrian amenities that come from a higher and better use of the Old Town Hall. There is a desire to strike a balance that creates a vibrant and lively village, yet one that is not focused on the automobile. Parking to serve the harbor businesses, the boat ramp, and a redeveloped Old Town Hall must not dominate the village, rather it should serve the needs in a variety of locations and management types. Lastly, all of these elements can be connected in an overall plan for roadway and pedestrian circulation in the village.

Many suggestions for re-use and redevelopment of the Old Town Hall and the parking, traffic circulation and pedestrian needs of the Village were offered. The comments were lumped into two groups—The Old Town Hall and Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian issues and suggestions. A summary of the residents’ comments is provided below.

WHAT WE HEARD

Old Town Hall Suggestions

- An overwhelming sense of creating a year round, public use
- Create a gathering place that’s multi-age and multi-generational
- Retain the significant features—horse ramp, clock tower, and horse stalls
- Create a year round anchor
- Do not burden the tax rate with renovation costs
- Focus first on town needs for the building (serve the community)
- Some suggested re-use ideas:
 - Auditorium
 - Museum (historical, children’s, etc)
 - Town Library
 - Combination of uses
 - Gallery (art, NH league of Craftsman, etc)
 - Teaching venue
 - Gathering place for teens and adults
 - Sports / recreation activity
 - Community Center / Senior Center
 - Expand or move historical society into building
 - Move existing businesses into Old Town Hall
 - Seek public / private partnerships to share costs

WHAT WE HEARD (cont.)

- Sell property to Riverway
- Town meeting space
- Maintain visual landscape
- Find a home for the thrift shop

Parking, Traffic and Pedestrian Suggestions

- Parking is an issue—parking isn't an issue
- Be creative with parking solutions
- Use River Road for Old Town Hall parking
- Trailer parking takes up a lot of space
- Maintain trailer circulation—works well
- Do not use Riverway property for parking
- Trailer parking along River Street is a waste of riverfront
- The old Ben Mere property was intended to be used for recreation
- One-way traffic pattern will enhance sidewalks
- Turn some of the surface parking lots back into green space
- Encourage more bicycling
- Parking is only an issue 3-4 weekends in summer
- State should build another boat ramp to alleviate volume
- Create gateways
- Consider shared parking for uses in village

In addition to input received during the charrette, the town had developed questionnaires, distributed weeks before the charrette. The Master Plan Update also included questions pertaining to the Old Town Hall and village area. Over 400 responses were received and many of these written suggestions echo what raised at the two meetings.

At the conclusion of the evening session the design team left for the night with a wealth of information pertaining to the needs, opportunities, and constraints surrounding the historic village area.



Charrette Team Recommendations

Sunapee has a unique opportunity to re-create and reinvent its village. The opportunities to redevelop the Old Town Hall/Livery Building, weave the Sugar River Walk through the area and capitalize on the charm and character of Sunapee Harbor to create a vibrant village reminiscent of times past, seem endless. The village also enjoys a perfect pedestrian scale and readily benefits from recreation, business, and residents all within a compact walk-able area.

On Friday, we had the fortune of hearing preliminary findings and thoughts on the area demographics and economic framework which would help guide the team in developing alternatives. The town of Sunapee has a population of a 3,300 reflecting growth consistent with Sullivan County as a whole. Between 2000 and 2005 the town has seen an average of 29 new home permits per year.

The village area is very much a seasonal destination with businesses heavily dependent on the late spring, summer and early fall seasons. The suggestions from our real estate and economic specialist included building upon the successful year round businesses in place and considering relocating some of these to create opportunities for higher and better uses within the village, especially in light of a redeveloped Old Town Hall. The Lower Village on the waterfront represents the most desirable location for a variety of use and businesses, while the Old Town Hall provides a good of amount floor space and location for town or community based uses.

There was an overwhelming desire to create a vibrant, year round village for the residents of Sunapee and visitors to the area. A strong base of year round attractions or businesses is needed and it was suggested that the first effort should be the evaluation and consideration of the locations and uses that exist and how those can be expanded upon, followed by efforts to lure new businesses into the village.

In an effort to help ensure that the buildings within the village are put to their best and highest use, reflect the historic nature of the village and serve the needs of the community, the team considered a range of uses and improvements that support the intent of the Village District Zone.

Although the Village District is important for defining allowed uses, there are other considerations and negotiations that can help achieve the desired vision including:

- Shared parking based on uses;
- Cost sharing incentives for streetscape enhancements;
- Community space and recreation;
- Environmentally responsible design.

The Charrette Team gathered on Saturday morning ready to tackle the issues presented the day before. The group broke out into a few sub-teams focused on some of the key issues;

- Re-use and redevelopment of the Old Town Hall/Livery Building;
- Traffic management, parking, and Streetscape/gateways; and
- Implementation strategies and cost considerations.

After a morning of brainstorming, sketching, and sharing ideas, the team presented their recommendations.



Existing Conditions and Opportunities

Lake Sunapee and the Sugar River are the dominant natural resources within the village. They are nicely complimented by the town green and gazebo on the Ben Mere property, Hames Park at High and Main Streets, and the Sugar River Walk. It's a beautiful setting with great potential.

The municipal/government services presence in the area is provided by the Sunapee Town Hall, Old Town Hall, Post Office, Sunapee Historical Society, and Safety Services Building. These play a key role in communities as gathering places. There is also a handful of small businesses knitted throughout the area, and the harbor, boat ramp and tour boats provide additional attractions. The Sunapee Harbor Riverway has restored many of the key buildings and they are occupied by strong businesses supporting the local economy and the community. There is an abundance of parking provided in several locations throughout the village.



The Old Town Hall (Livery Building)

The Livery Building is a cornerstone building in the village, well known for its clock tower and horse ramp. It also falls in the center of the study area. With overwhelming support to restore and redevelop the Livery Building, several members of the of team spent their time determining the structural requirements to solidify the building and consider alternative re-use plans.

First the exterior. Based on old photographs it is evident that additions have been constructed onto the original building. A possible addition to the front extends to the back of the sidewalk on Main Street and another one story addition is located on the southeast side of the building. In order to recreate a more vibrant Main Street image, the front addition and overhang are suggested to be removed and replaced with a welcoming entrance. The side addition is also suggested to be removed. Almost any re-use plan for the Livery Building will require a second set of stairs. It is suggested that these be added to the southeast side of the building. The sketch on this page shows a possible image of Livery Building after such alterations.



The Livery Building is in urgent need of structural repair. The front foundation is migrating inward and several foundation stones are loose and/or out of place. Removing the front addition will aid in making the necessary foundation repairs in this area. In the lowest level the interior foundations are also showing signs of movement and failure. Several of the interior columns need to be replaced. On the upper level the tie rods that suspend the floor from the rafters need attention. Lateral bracing is lacking and should be added within the structural framing. And lastly, the existing roof should be removed and replaced to provide a weather tight structure.



Old Town Hall Re-use Possibilities

With the structural issues identified and the ancillary additions removed, the team had a shell with three and a half floors of space. Each full floor will provide approximately 2020 square feet plus the new stair tower. For the purposes of this planning effort, we have identified the floor at grade with Main Street as the Main Level. There is a level above and a full level below, and then a partial level at grade with the Sugar River Trail. The concept considered by the team maintains the clock tower, horse ramp and horse stalls.

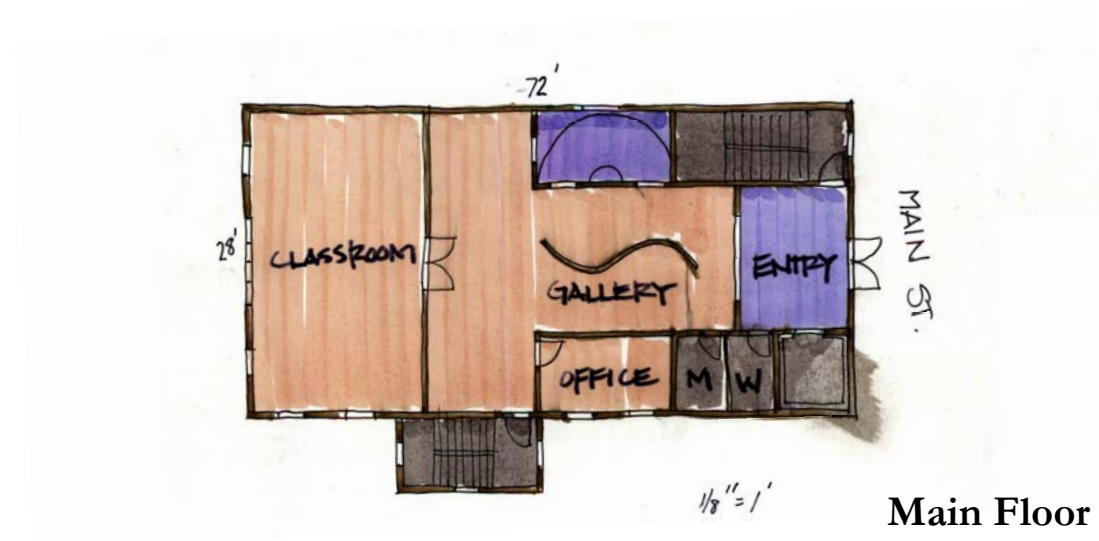
The floor plans shown on the following page identify how some of the uses suggested by the community can be supported. Specifically, this alternative suggests that a portion of the building provide community space, while some of it is utilized as a gallery, perhaps leased by the NH League of Craftsman.

An art and/or crafts gallery can occupy the main level. The horse ramp can be maintained in its current state and become a unique observation area on this main level. A classroom can be constructed on the rear portion of this level with an abundance of natural light coming from the row of windows facing the Sugar River. Restrooms and an office would round out the first level. An alternate floor plan was developed showing more of the Main Level as open classroom or gallery space.

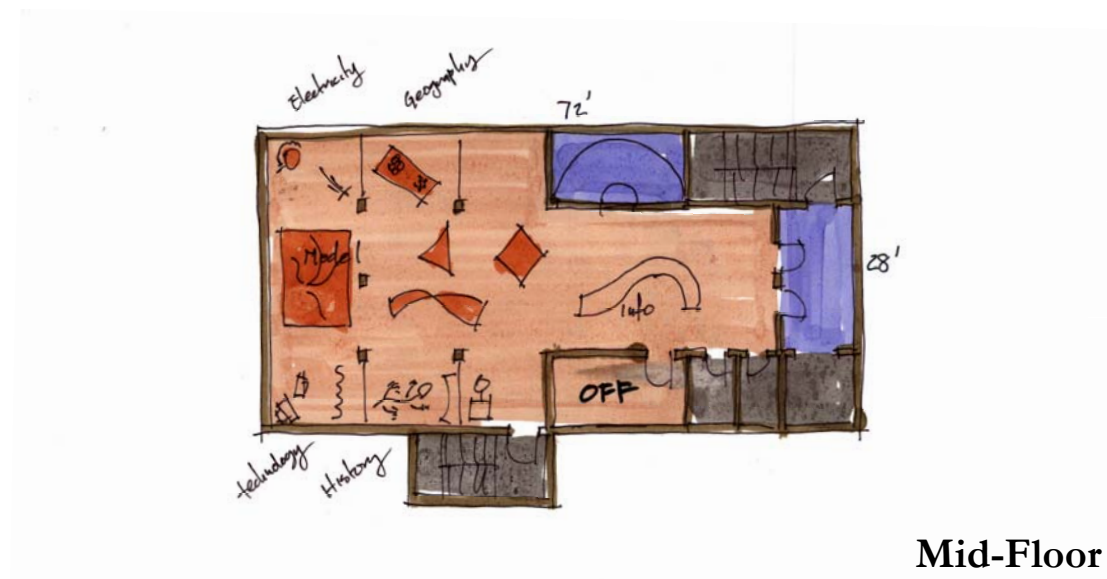
The floor above or the top level provides a great meeting or gathering space. The ceiling, open to the roof rafters, can be retained and the clock tower access can again be preserved as a unique observation area for those in this room .

The level below the Main Level is somewhat unique given current building codes and dimensional requirements in that the ceiling height is relatively low. That said, the space would be ideal as a children's interactive museum. The horse ramp would become one of the interesting items for the children to observe and learn about. Several of the horse stalls can also be retained to add character and an educational piece. The rear of the floor area can be set aside to create interactive play and learning areas.

Finally the lowest level of the structure sets up well to be used as storage and mechanical space, as well as recreational space at the back or river end of the building. In fact, with the River Trail passing through this level, this area can become one of the much needed nodes of interest or activity for those walking along the trail. Interpretive signs can be placed here along with small seating areas.



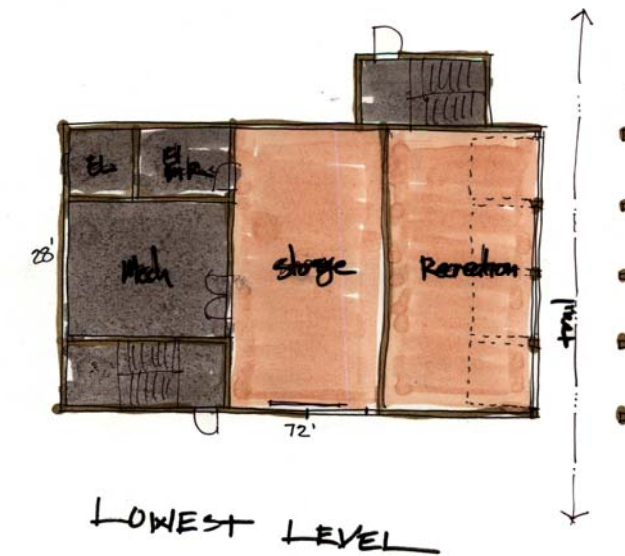
Main Floor



Mid-Floor

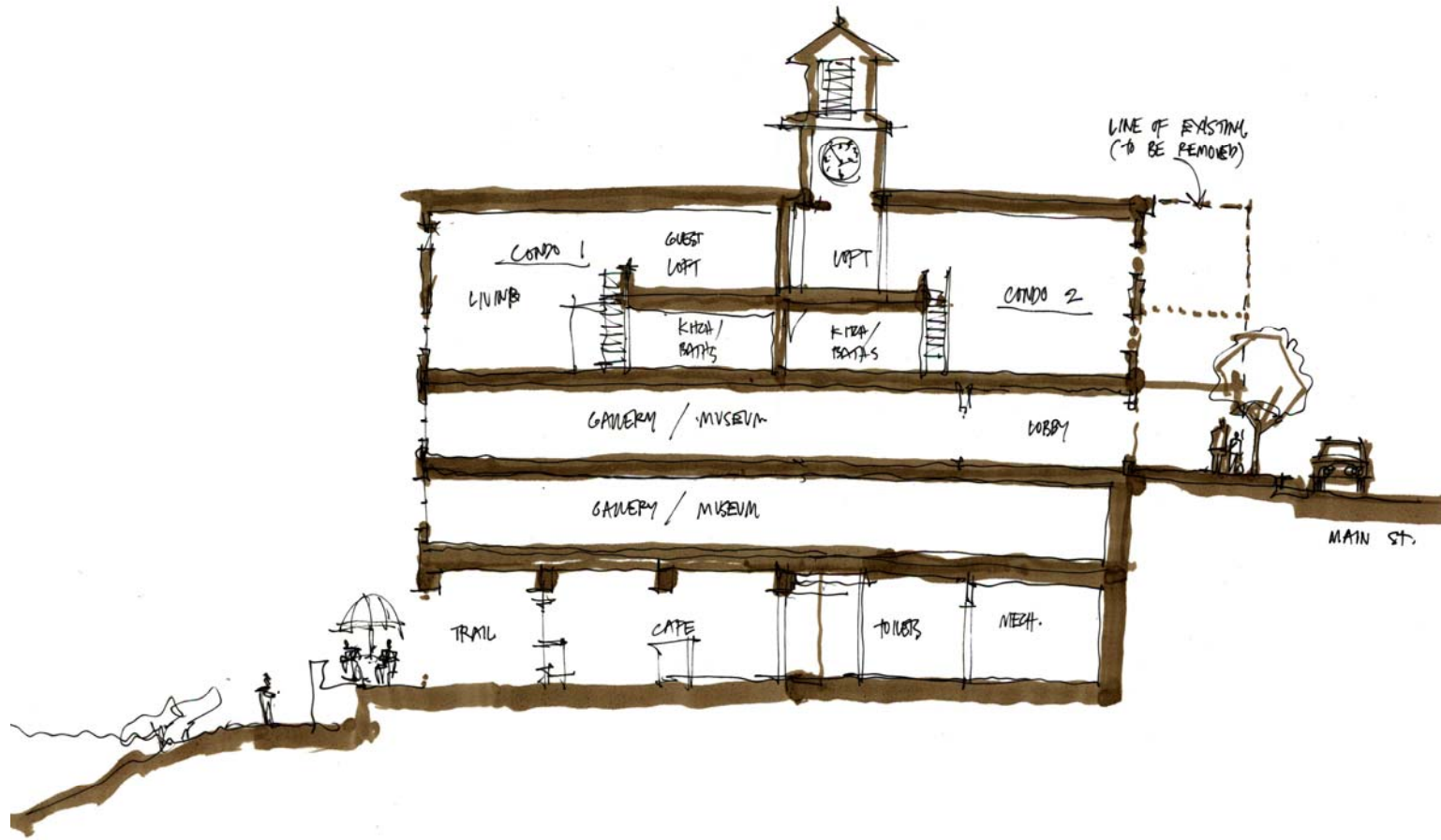


Top Floor



Re-use Possibilities (cont.)

Although there was a strong desire within the community to redevelop the Livery Building as mixed use with significant community space, there also were some who favored selling the building to a private developer, specifically if the costs to restore it becomes too prohibitive for the town. The conceptual floor plan and building cross section shown on the following page depicts a residential re-use for the upper two floors. Two one-bedroom apartments or condominiums could be created on the top floor. The main floor and one level below could then be used for small businesses, retail, or gallery/museum space. The ground level could be utilized as a node along the river walk, a café and as ancillary building support space.

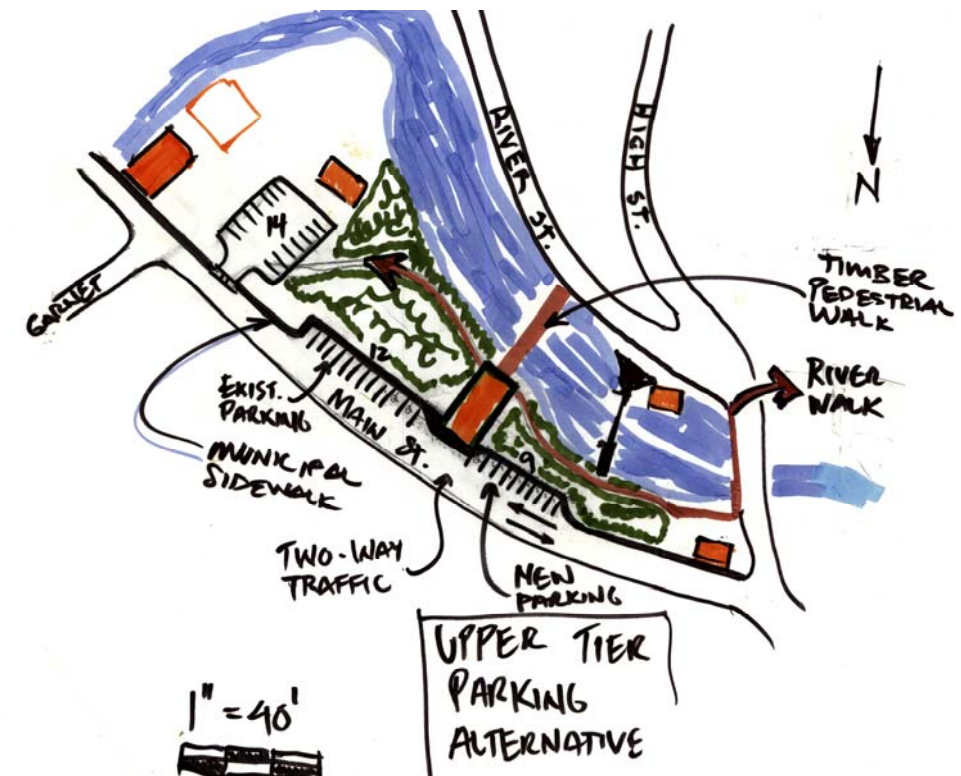
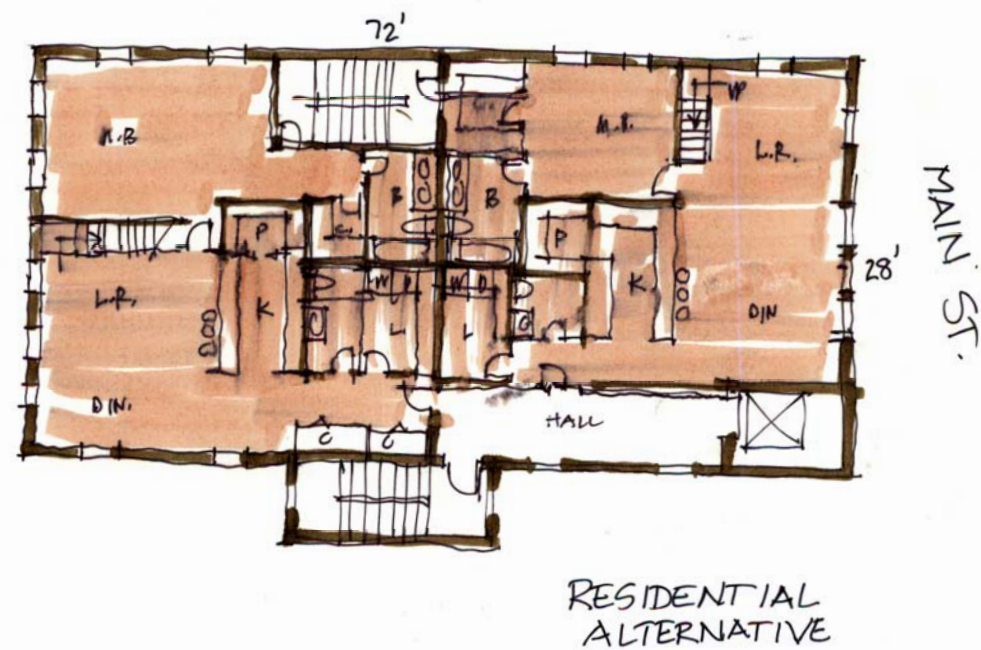


Site Planning

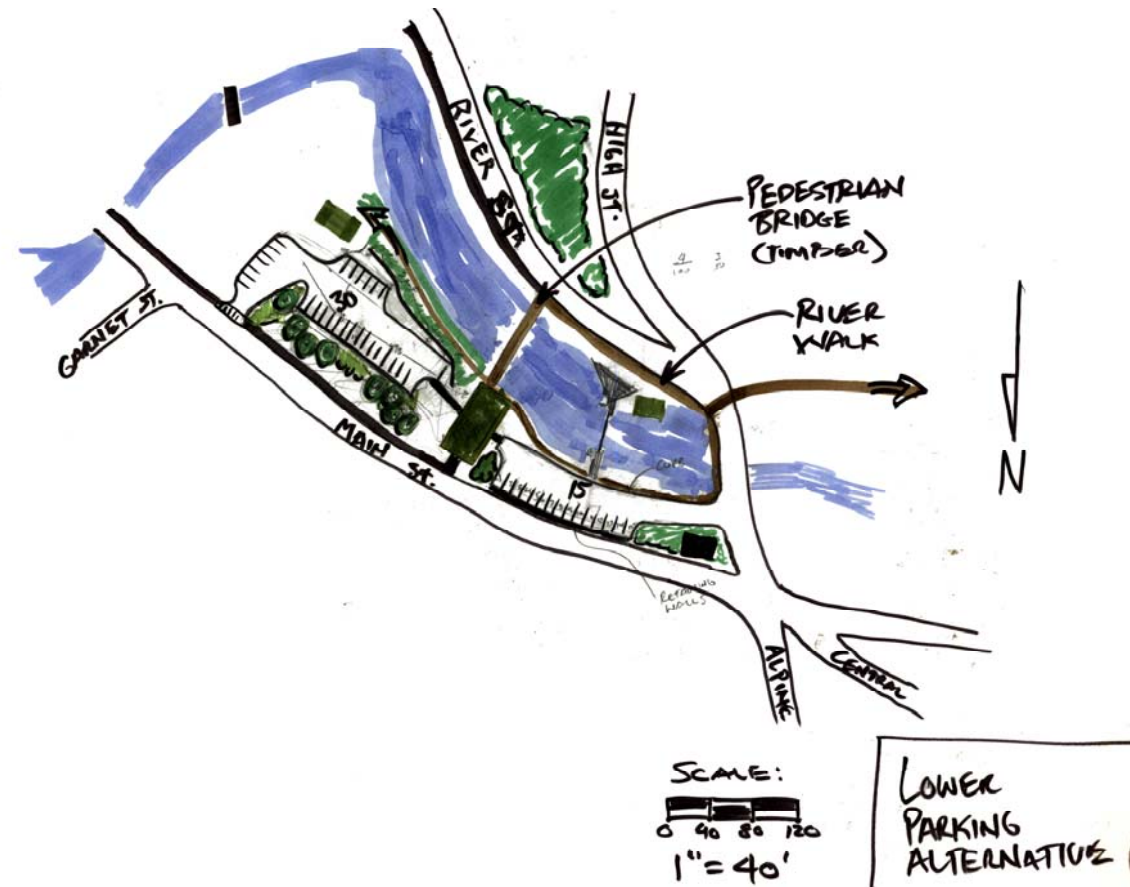
The Livery Building sits on a large piece of land between Main Street and the Sugar River. In addition the Harbor Riverway Corporation owns the adjacent parcel of land. Combined there is a significant area of open space or developable land in the heart of the village. This may represent one of the most significant opportunities for development in the area. As such the listening sessions and the design team focused some attention here.

Based on our site walks and comments raised by many residents, it was determined that this land was far too valuable to be used as a parking lot. Additionally, it is situated in an environmentally sensitive area immediately adjacent to the Sugar River. That said, almost any redevelopment of the Livery Building will require additional parking spaces to be added to the supply in the village. Two quick conceptual site plans were developed showing how some of this parking supply may be achieved on site and on the adjacent site.

The first concept (below) shows how 21 parking spaces can be constructed off Main Street. These spaces would be constructed at the same grade as Main Street, requiring a retaining wall to avoid disturbance or slope limits that extend through the site towards the Sugar River. These spaces are somewhat undesirable in that they utilize Main Street as the maneuvering aisle, and require backing into the Main Street.



The other option considers parking at the lower floor levels or at the grade of the Sugar River. Parking can be created on both sides of the building resulting in 45 new parking spaces. Here again, a retaining wall would be required between Main Street and the parking areas. This option also had features that were undesirable. The new parking areas not only occupy most of the natural green space and buffer to the river, but also seem to not achieve the highest and best use for this valuable real estate.

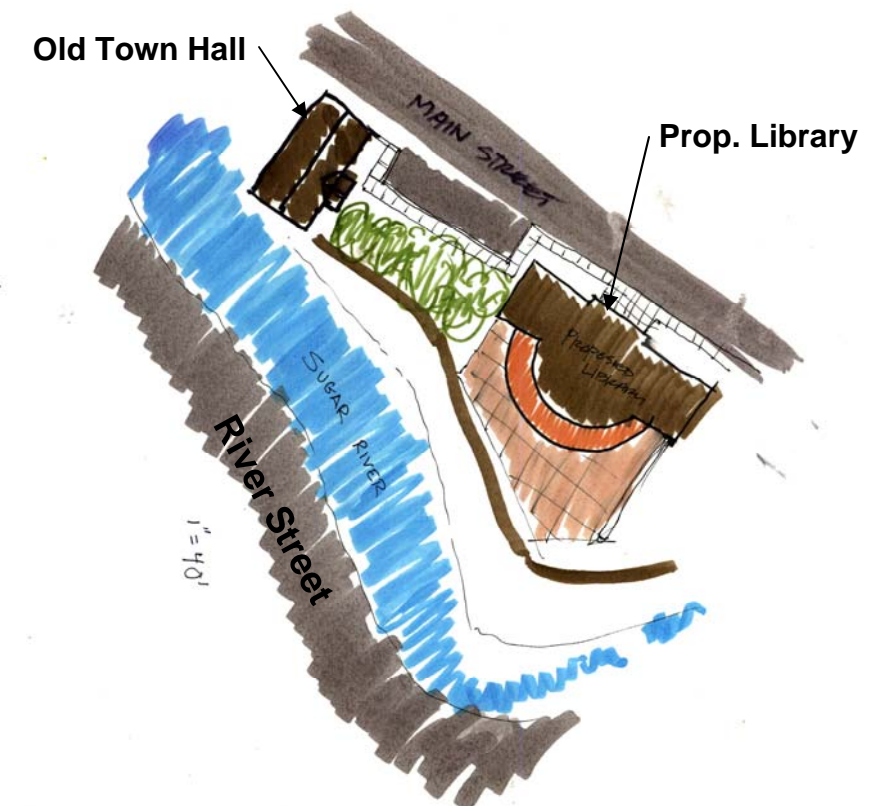
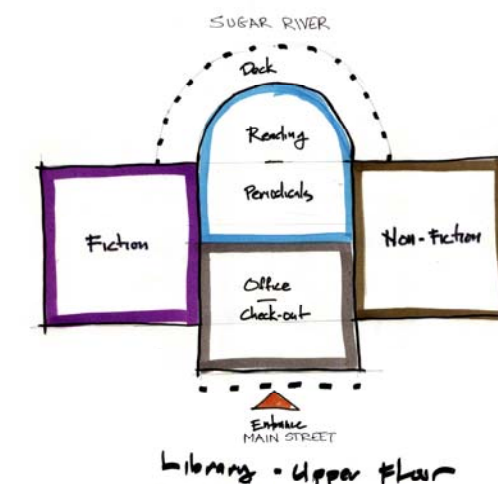
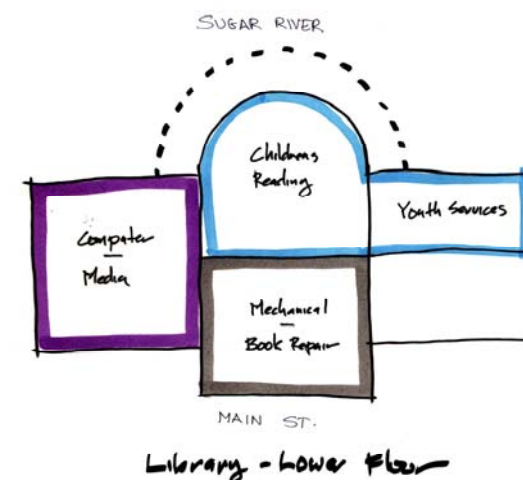


Site Planning and Other Uses

It was brought to our attention that the Town of Sunapee needs a new library. We understand that the debate surrounding a location for this new town building was very difficult, and in fact, the Livery Building was once a candidate for this new library. Given this important need in the town, and the overwhelming desire to make the best use of not only the Livery Building, but also the adjacent Sunapee Harbor Riverway property, a last minute concept was developed.

The concept seeks to retain the identity of the Livery Building as a stand alone, and significantly important town building, while constructing a new building adjacent to it. In this instance a new town library can be constructed partially on the Livery Building land and partially on the Riverway land. Although not shown on the adjacent sketch, the building could be connected at the new stair tower, which would retain the identity and character of the Livery Building. The library can be much smaller than originally anticipated by the town because much of the meeting and ancillary space would be provided in the Livery Building. This concept also allows the town to pool funds from a variety of sources towards one project that can achieve many of the town's needs.

Of course this concept is one that would require the greatest number of new parking spaces, a negotiation between the land owners, and cooperation amongst a few key town interests. From our initial observations, however, this concept seems to warrant additional study and refinement.



Old Town Hall with New Town Library

Vision for the Village

The Old Town Hall/Livery Building is a significant feature within the village, but there are a number of other issues and elements that must be considered and addressed to achieve the vision for the village. As important, almost any re-use of the Old Town Hall will have a domino effect on the rest of the village. It may be the catalyst to further development and interest in the village. Immediate needs would include parking and access.

The village area is the center of a number of activities and the vision is to expand on these activities creating a destination and gathering place for both young and old alike. There is a fair amount of vehicular traffic coming and going from the area as well as passing through, a lot of pedestrian activity centered around the businesses, waterfront, and recreation, and boat and trailer traffic generated by the boat ramp. These all appear to work well and coincide with little or no problems except for a few busy weekends in the summer, but as the desired development and activity grows in the village, the circulation and parking may become problematic. It is far easier and usually less costly to be proactive and create the infrastructure to support the planned and desired growth, rather than to react after it occurs.

The first issue seems to be meeting the parking demand of the redeveloped Old Town Hall. As we looked at parking it readily overlapped with roadways and sidewalks, green space and recreation opportunities. The Harbor Loop Plan on the following page provides one suggestion that seems to address all of those issues. Of course it will require further, more detailed planning, community input, and design.

The heart of the plan centers around the creation of a one-way roadway system between River Street and Main Street. They set up well for River Road to be one-way eastbound and Main Street one-way westbound. In this manner, traffic movements at each intersection can be readily addressed as the movements are right turns with limited conflicts. In addition, gateway nodes can be created in the new found green spaces at each end of Main Street.

The one-way traffic pattern alleviates the narrow roadway conditions on Main Street and allows for wider sidewalks and parallel parking. Trailer parking can be removed from River Street and additional parallel parking can be provided opposite the Sugar River. This also opens the riverfront up for a pedestrian walkway that can link to the Riverwalk and the businesses along Main Street.

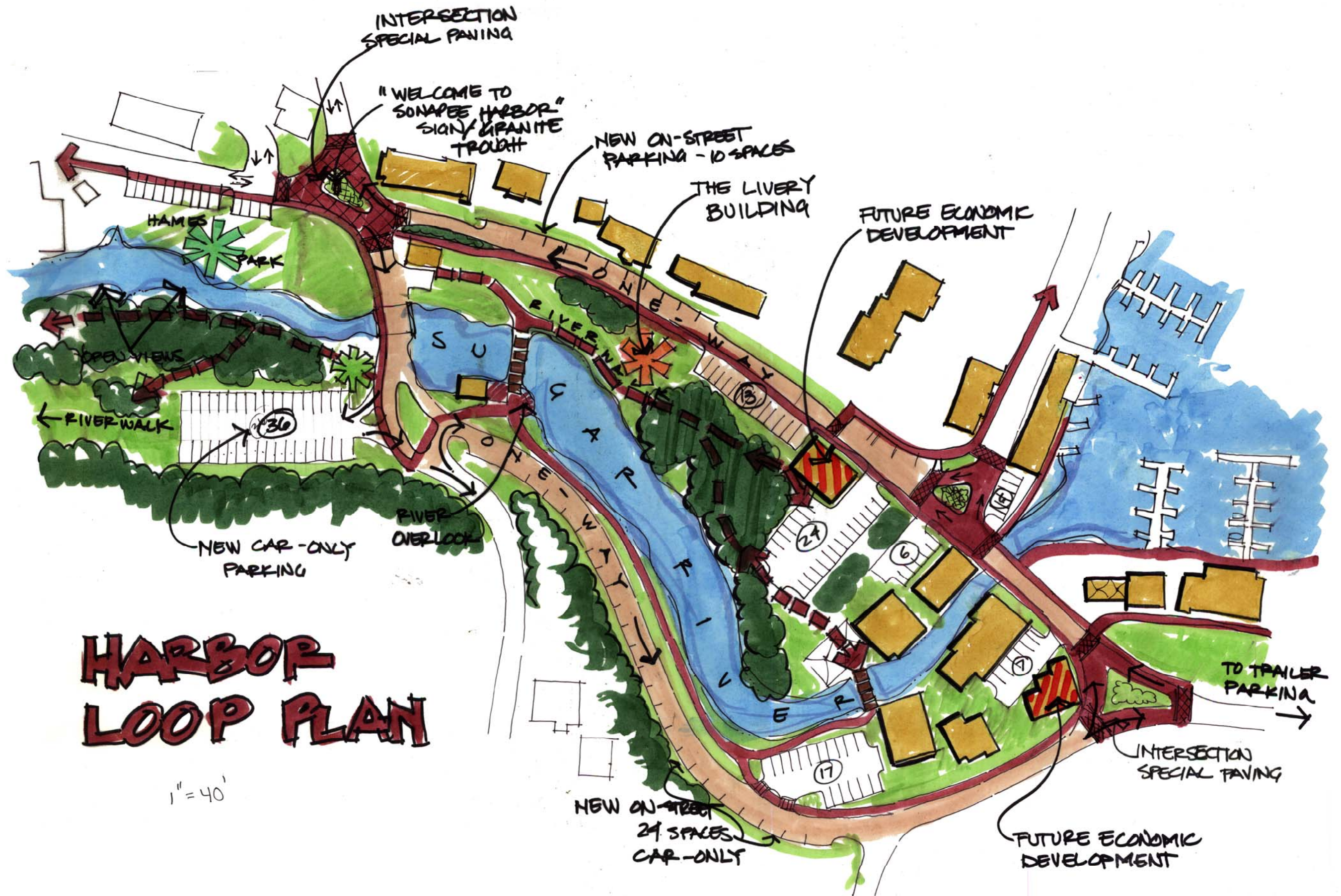
In addition to the new parallel parking spaces on Main and River Streets, the High Street parking lot can be expanded or better managed to provide a good number of parking spaces. The already cleared and graded area within the Harbor Riverway property could also provide parking as it does today, depending upon the building plan considered in conjunction with the Old Town Hall. The challenge is to replace and/or provide parking for boat trailers.



Gateway at High / Main Street



Gateway at River / Garnet Street



Vision for the Village (cont.)

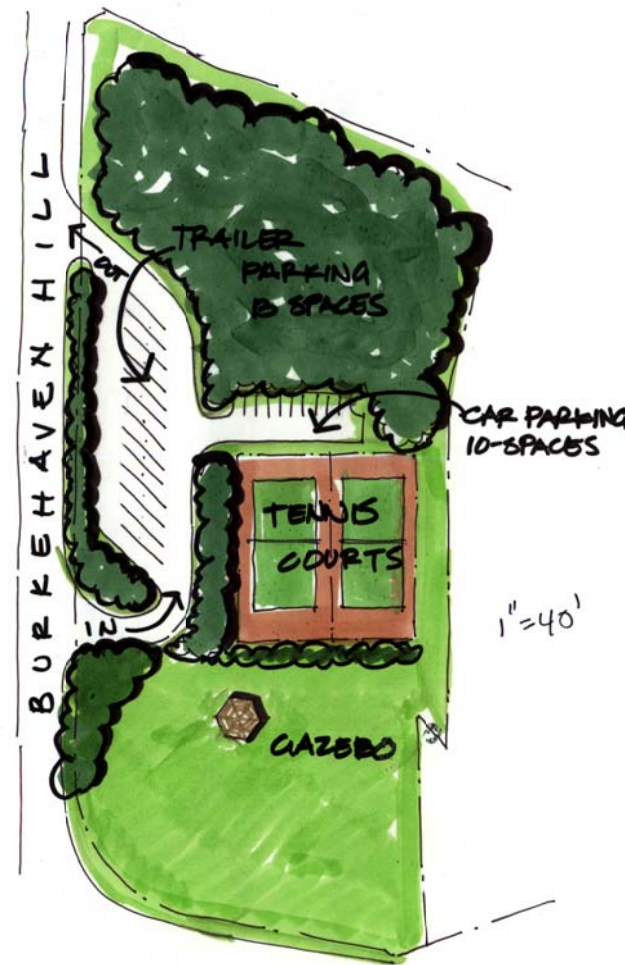
The Harbor Loop Plan suggests that the Burkehaven Hill Road parking area become the primary boat trailer parking area. This is only to be considered in connection with a few other changes. The lowest level of parking, closest to the gazebo, should be reconstructed as a recreational area with basketball and/or tennis courts. A modest amount of clearing and grading of the area to the south would replace some of the vehicle parking that would be displaced by the courts. And finally, the area closest to Burkehaven Hill Road would provide boat trailer parking. The sketch on this page shows the area in question. A few key details are missing from this sketch, but further study and design could finalize a viable plan.

Coupled with the one-way roadways suggested earlier, this parking plan would maintain the existing boat launch route up and around the parking, onto Burkehaven Hill where vehicles with trailers can queue for the boat launch. Returning to a Burkehaven Hill parking lot would keep this traffic off of Main Street and the more populated area of the Village.

The Harbor Loop Plan also suggests a stronger presence of the Riverwalk from the harbor, through the village and to points beyond. A pedestrian bridge could be constructed over the Sugar River to provide a pedestrian link to parking along River Street and High Street with the Old Town Hall and other uses on Main Street.

The plan identifies two areas for potential future economic development at a scale that compliments the buildings that exist today. Additional parking may be needed to support these new uses, or perhaps shuttle service to larger parking areas outside the village could be considered during the peak summer months.

Lastly, the Harbor Loop Plan concept of one-way streets provides great opportunities to create gateways at each



end of Main Street. Sketches for these were shown on earlier pages to provide an example of what these may look like and the message(s) they can send. Special paving, raised or textured side-walks, landscape areas, and welcoming signage can be provided to let motorists and pedestrians alike know that they are entering Sunapee Village.

Historical Designation and Considerations

Research and evaluation allow us to understand a property's use and evolution over time as well as its historical /architectural significance and values. The Sunapee Historical Society has done a tremendous job of gathering old photographs and articles on the Old Town Hall / Livery Building, and further research may unlock more information on this important building. Historical designation, which may result from further research, can be helpful in the preservation and continued use of a community resource.

The National Register of Historic Places can best be described as the national list of cultural resources considered worthy of preservation. These can be buildings, structures, sites, objects, or districts significant in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture on a local, state, or national level. This is an identification and planning tool rather than a land use mechanism. National Register listing does not limit or restrict the use of designated properties.

National Register listing has a number of benefits. The primary one is recognition. Listing calls attention to and promotes knowledge of a resource, allowing us to take these properties and their values into consideration in planning and other decision making. Code alternatives are available for listed or eligible properties under all prevailing codes, allowing the historic / architectural character of existing buildings to be preserved in the course of reuse and avoiding costly replacement of historic fabric. Rehabilitation tax credits are available for substantial rehabilitation of some income producing historic buildings on the National Register. Designation can help position properties for grant funds from a range of sources.

The New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places was established to recognize properties which may not meet the National Register criteria but possess local historical importance. The program is based upon the National Register with somewhat more flexible eligibility and documentation requirements. Benefits are largely the same with the exception

Cost Considerations

Given the participation of the community and breadth of the Plan NH Design Team, we covered a lot of ground in the two days. There are a number of elements of the Harbor Loop Plan that can be further explored, designed, and ultimately implemented in some form. Of course, many of these items require significant investment either by the town, private entities, or a partnership of public/private ventures.

A priority that evolved over the two days includes stabilizing and investing in the Old Town Hall / Livery Building. It's an important, historic building that should remain as a cornerstone of the village. Our structural engineers and contractors devoted their time to first determining the minimum effort required to make the building structurally sound and weather tight, and then to estimating the costs to further rehabilitate the building.

It is estimated that \$1.1 million be invested to make the building structurally sound and weather tight. This would include demolition of the ancillary additions, minor site work, temporary shoring, new foundation, adding structural elements, new roof and insulation, new stair tower, and an elevator. Another \$1.1 million would cover further restoration, such as new siding, insulated walls, rough carpentry of flooring and some interior walls, rough plumbing, a floor slab, and a basic heating system. Lastly, to fit out the space as shown on the earlier sketches — gallery, classroom, children's museum, meeting space, and recreational features — would cost on the order of \$1.5 million.

The Charrette Team, based on many of the comments raised, recommends an investment of \$1.1 million to save the Old Town Hall from further deterioration, and if possible the \$2.2 million investment to make the structure as attractive as possible to future investors, and/or partners with the Town.



Horse Ramp

Next Steps

Consensus amongst town officials, committees, private stakeholders and the community on a few difficult, yet important decisions, will be needed to achieve the community vision for the village (potentially as visualized in this booklet). Sorting out what should and could be done first is a critical step towards implementation. Beyond that, often it is the small improvements that are the catalyst for bigger changes. Continued open public involvement is also a key to success. The following list developed by the charrette team, includes action items which could be accomplished in the near future, as well as suggested continued discussion, planning and design that engages the community towards achieving their vision for the village.

1. The charrette process uncovered a clear choice as the first step—invest in the Old Town Hall / Livery Building. It is a key element in the future of the village and the town of Sunapee as a whole.
2. Continued collaboration amongst the town, Sunapee Harbor Riverway, LSPA, and the Old Town Hall Committee.
3. Invest in foundation, structural improvements, and the roof of Old Town Hall.
4. Initiate use and space planning for Sunapee's best use of the Old Town Hall, and focus on maintaining a year round presence in at least some of the building.
5. Continue planning, and discussion to refine traffic circulation and parking allocation within the village.
6. Enhance village area signage, including welcome signs, directional signs, and information.
7. Continue investments in the Sugar River Trail network.
8. Expand on the town's success in bringing residents and visitors to the Harbor village area with fairs, concerts, sporting events, and other events that bring young and old together.

Based upon the response, collaboration and enthusiasm exhibited by the numerous town boards and committees, private organizations, and the residents of Sunapee throughout the charrette, one can confidently state that a few small steps will provide the catalyst to, over time, achieve the community's vision.

Resources

The concepts and ideas outlined in this booklet will set the framework to re-establish the village as the center of activity. It can become the most desired place to live, work and play in Sunapee. Of course, many of the concepts suggested require a significant financial investment in infrastructure and site development, probably beyond the means of any one entity. The revitalization of the Old Town Hall and the infrastructure within the village will require partnerships that can combine public and private investment toward a common vision. The following is a list of the resources available to the Town of Sunapee and its partners.

- **NH Department of Transportation** — a source of public funding for road improvements, and bicycle/pedestrian enhancements

Ms. Nancy Mayville, Project Manager Municipal Highways
Mr. Ram Maddali TE/CMAQ Coordinator
Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

- **(USDA) Rural Development Administration** provides low interest loans and grants for municipal projects

Ferry Street
Concord, NH 03301

- **NH Division of Historic Resources** may be used as a source for historic property advice and expertise

Ms. Christine Fonda Rankie
NH Division of Historic Resources
19 Pillsbury Street
Concord, NH 03001

- **Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)** is a source for municipalities and non-profits for economic revitalization of historic buildings.
- **NH Business Finance Authority** is a source for tax-exempt bonding and other subsidies for private and non-profit investment

NH Business Finance Authority
14 Dixon Avenue
Concord, NH 03301

- **NH Community Development Finance Authority** is a source for tax credits for publicly supported projects and administers:

Community Development Investment Program (CDIP) - tax credits for community development projects including housing
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - federal funds to be used for infrastructure in NH

14 Dixon Avenue
Concord, NH 03301

- **NH Municipal Bond Bank** provides low interest funds for publicly bonded projects

NH Municipal Bond Bank
10 Park Street
Concord, NH 03301

- **Conservation License Plate Funds (Moose Plates)**
- **Rehabilitation Tax Credits**

Seek areas to make continued incremental steps towards the vision of a vibrant, pedestrian focused village that serves the residents of Sunapee with unique businesses, shops, housing and recreational opportunities.