



BRADFORD

N.H.

design
charrette

MAY 8 & 9, 1998

PLAN NH

The Foundation for Shaping the Built Environment

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... and to all others who attended and helped with the Charrette but whose name we may have missed.

Thank You!

Bradford, New Hampshire Design Charrette

May 8 - 9, 1998

Sponsored by:
PLAN NH,
Residents of Bradford



Bradford, New Hampshire Design Charrette

May 8 - 9, 1998

Who is *Plan NH*?

Plan NH is a professional association for those working in the *built environment* (architects, planners, engineers, bankers, contractors, historic preservationists, etc.). It was established to create a forum for bringing together these different professional groups and as a catalyst for spurring interest in community development. Part of *Plan NH's* mission is to make a positive contribution to New Hampshire communities. One way in which *Plan* is doing this is through the offer of free design assistance to communities with demonstrated needs.

So What is a *Design Charrette*, anyway?

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 time frame, the conclusions reached are usually conceptual. They discuss how different plan elements should relate to each other, as opposed to the details of how a particular building would actually be constructed.

At their best, charrettes blend the broad experience of design professionals with local citizens' detailed knowledge of their community to produce a plan of action to deal with a particular issue of concern to that community. The charrette provides an overall framework within which final solutions can be developed. It sets a tone and gives a direction for future decisions to be measured against.

How did the *Plan NH* charrette come to Bradford?

Each year *Plan NH* invites communities to enter proposals into a competition for a weekend of donated design services to be used in solving a problem of local interest. *Plan NH* looks for projects that are important to the host community, projects that present an interesting design problem, and projects which seem to have a high probability of actually being implemented. A community that is organized and has done some early work on a project scores well. A proposal from a community that has not really thought out its needs or how it would implement the recommendations from the charrette does not fair as well.

The Proposal

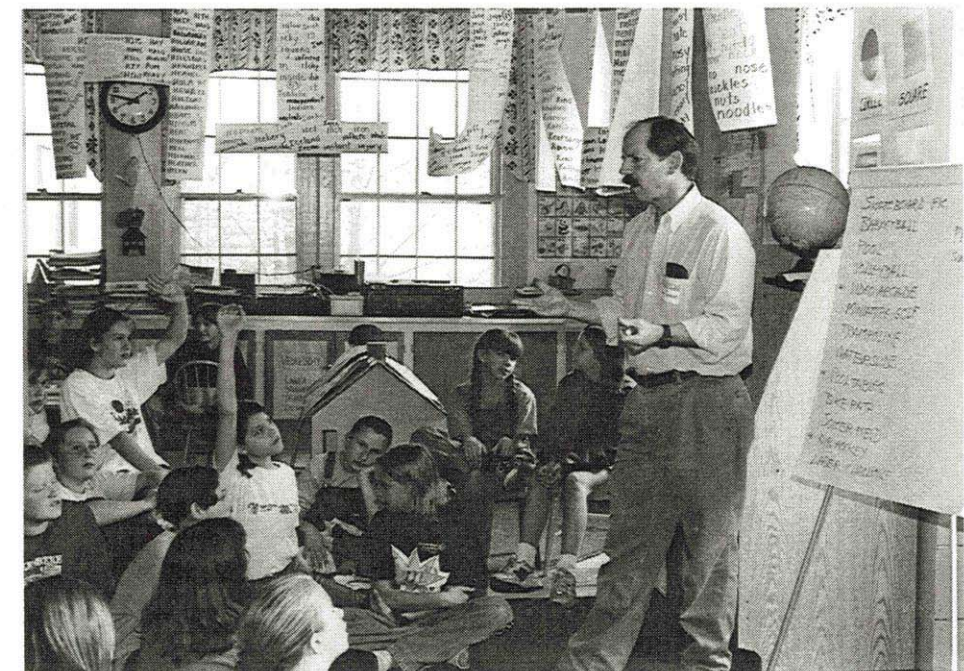
In early 1998 the Bradford submitted a proposal seeking advice on how to proceed with the development of The Bradford Green. This was seen as an important step in improving several aspects of Bradford Village as a whole. *Plan NH* was impressed with the amount of thought that had gone into the proposal, and the degree to which the new effort was an extension of several previous projects, such as the Community Center and the Water and Sewer Study. Accordingly, from the twenty five proposals submitted, Bradford was one of two that was selected for a charrette, and the village of Bradford as a whole.

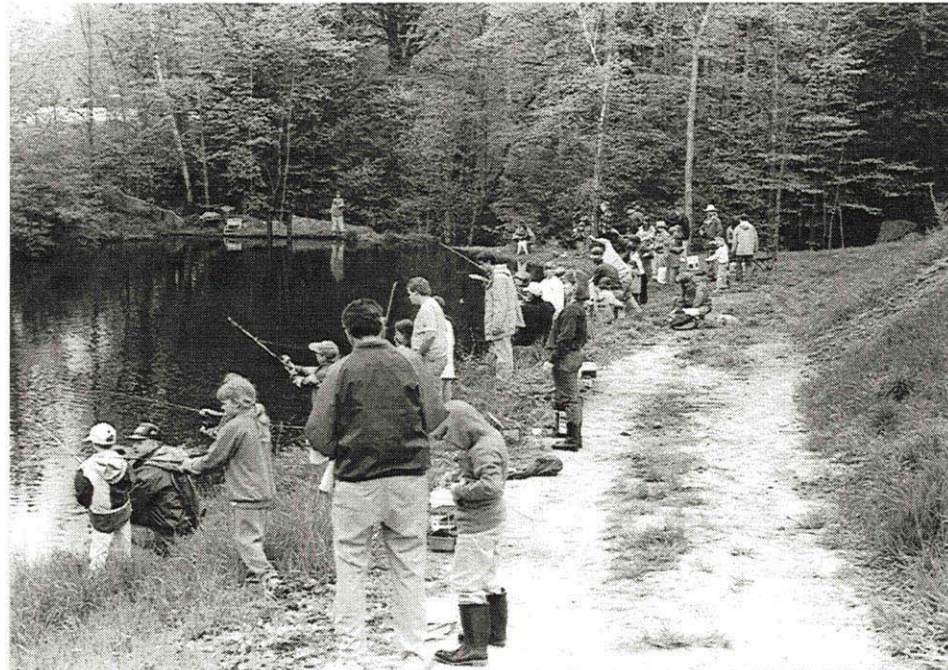
The Process

A typical design team brings together ten to twelve professionals who have experience and training in the areas that seem appropriate for the type of problem that the town has identified. In Bradford's case that included architects, planners, engineers, landscape architects, and real estate developers and management.

The professional expertise of this group was extensive, and, as we explained to the Town of Bradford, it was also lacking in one important area: it didn't know Bradford, and couldn't hope to know Bradford in the way that local citizens do. And, that knowledge of the local community is critical to making the charrette work. So, we joined forces, and asked the experts from Bradford to talk to us about their community.

Do Bradford residents have opinions about their community? You had better bet that they do!! And do they like to share them? Yes, right again!! So we listened, we listened a lot. In formal sessions on Friday afternoon and evening, we listened to a total of nearly 100 people tell us what they liked and disliked about their community. Informally we listened to local officials and others as we walked through town. We listened over coffee. We listened next to the fishing pond. We listened to long time residents and new comers alike. We listened to older folks, and, on Friday afternoon, we listened to some fifty fifth graders from the Bradford Elementary School.





What we heard was:

- That Bradford has a good small town atmosphere;
- That Bradford is a community of helpers, a good family town that is very concerned with its kids;
- That Bradford people are proud of and pleased with the local school. Some would like to extend the school beyond the fifth grade to keep kids in town longer;
- That some people have come to Bradford for business opportunities, but many wish that there were more of these opportunities in town; and
- That Bradford had a good sense of community, but some wished it were even stronger.

All in all, it sounded like a pretty nice place to live.

With respect to areas in which to focus new energy, people expressed concern:

- That Bradford work hard to strengthen its economy, and needs to find new economic and social gathering points to replace the IGA that has closed;
- That Bradford needs a more vibrant Main Street, perhaps with some new trees, flowers, and other improvements to make it more attractive.
- That Bradford needs to examine to see if it is doing all that it can to support existing businesses, and that this examination should focus on both large and small businesses including the very small, home-based ones.
- About the need for new facilities in Bradford, from a library to elderly housing, from a sledding hill and skating rink to a community theater.

Throughout all of this was the admonition that any recommendations be realistic and reflect the modest ability which Bradford residents have to pay for new development. Furthermore, cost estimates need to be accurate, and they need to focus on operational expenses as well as initial costs.

The Goal

After all of this discussion, it was agreed that the overall focus of the charrette should be:

To re-energize downtown Bradford by creating a stronger economy, by providing more opportunities for social interaction, by improving its physical appearance, and by adding additional opportunities for recreation.

The geographic focus was to be both Main Street and the Naughton/Marshall properties. And throughout the entire discussion, the underlying concern was to find a way to pay for any recommended improvements that would not further burden the Bradford taxpayers.



Public/Community Bldgs Village Limit/Outer Influences Downtown Core

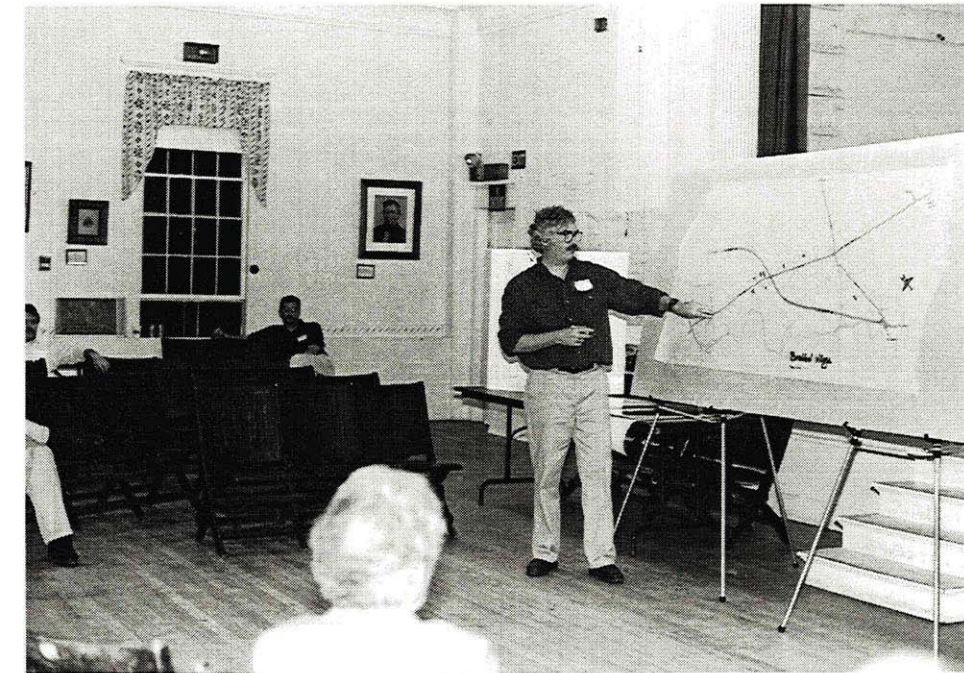
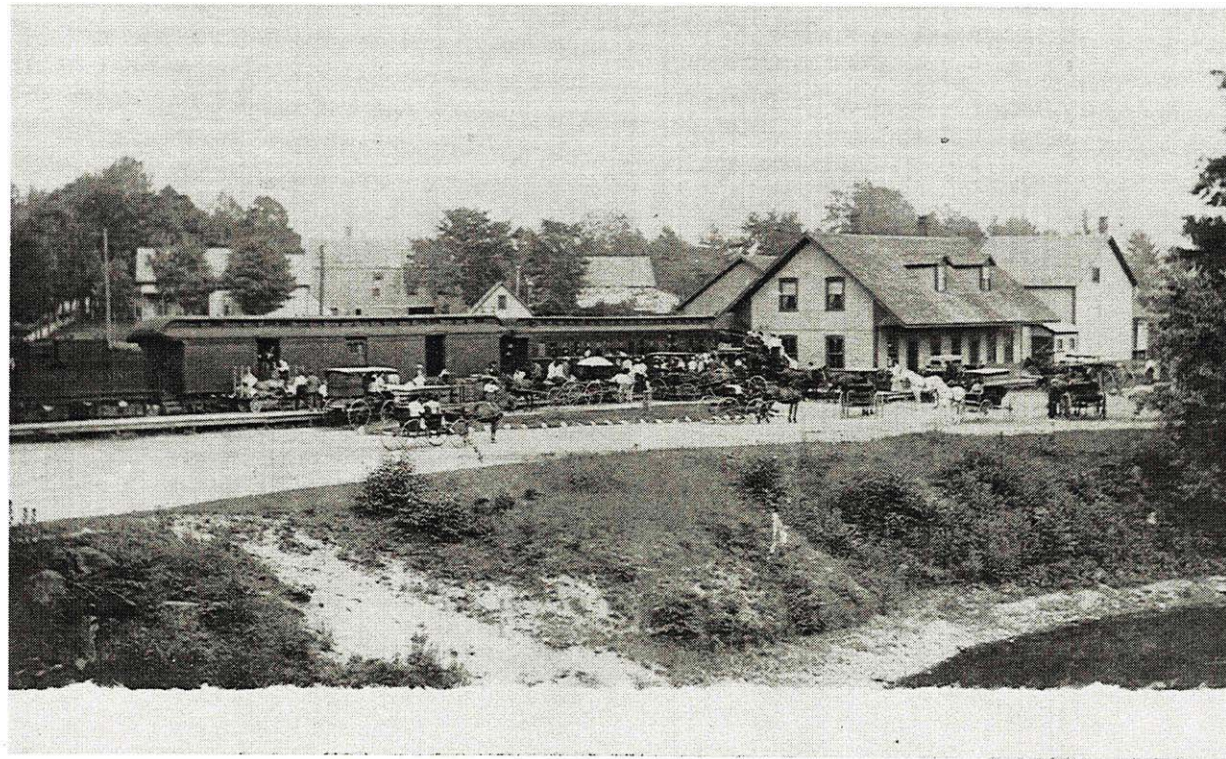
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Influences on the Village

In this era of the global economy, no community, large or small, can exist independently. It is influenced by many forces both externally and internally. In order to make progress, it is important to understand those forces, to distinguish between those that can be managed and changed, and those which cannot.

Like many small New Hampshire towns, Bradford is no longer the trading center that it once was. We are a mobile society. We drive long distances to work. Our kids ride long distances on school busses to get educated. We shop by mail, or over the phone, or over the Internet. Our produce comes from California. Our clothes come great distances. Our automobiles, and their fuel, frequently comes from different continents.

It is important that we recognize these forces, adapt to them when we can, and look for alternative means of achieving a desired end when it is no longer available through traditional means. We spent a lot of time talking about closing of the IGA during the charrette. Clearly its loss is still felt deeply for this community. Some felt the loss of employment. Others felt the loss of a handy retail outlet. Others still spoke of the IGA as a social gathering point for the community. Some spoke with a trace of bitterness, feeling that if residents of the community had shopped there with greater frequency, the store would still be open.

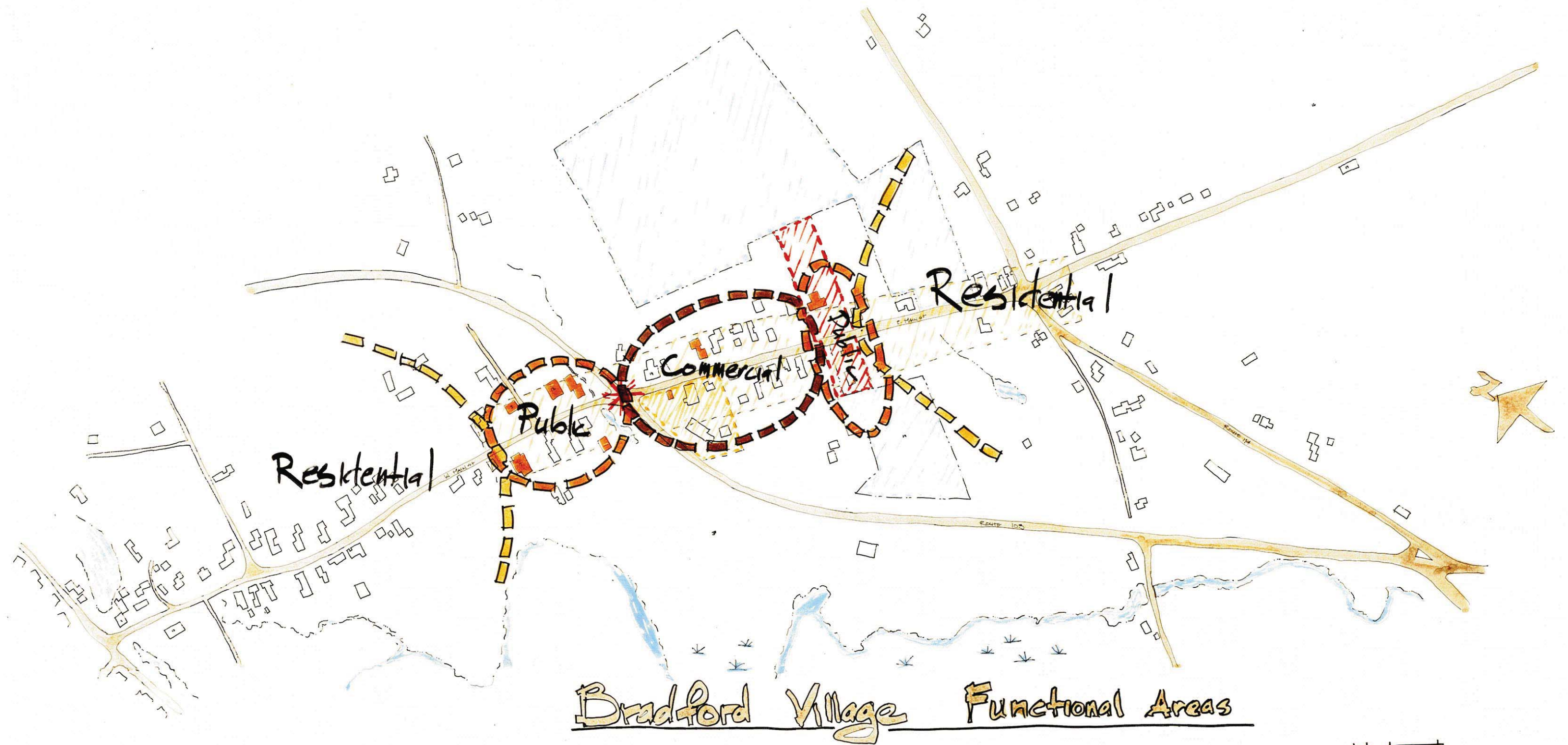


Clearly a retail store depends on sales to remain in operation, and more sales undoubtedly would have helped the IGA. But it is important to understand and appreciate the many forces operating on small, retail groceries. These stores are having a difficult time all across the country, as major retailers continue to dominate the market, and to offer a variety of goods and services that smaller stores can never hope to replicate.

So what are the forces operating on Bradford? Clearly it is a commuting community, with major employment centers lying twenty miles to the east in Concord and twenty miles to the west in Claremont/Newport. Other individuals travel even further to Lebanon, Manchester, and beyond. Somewhat nearer by, retail and employment centers in Henniker and New London compete for Bradford dollars, lying some ten miles to the south and north respectively.

Much of the traffic to and from these areas passes through Bradford along Routes 103 and 114. The two key elements of Bradford's economic development strategy, especially for its downtown center are, first, to keep as many Bradford retail dollars in town as possible, and, second, to attract as many patrons from Routes 103 and 114 off of the highway as possible.

To downtown businesses, the intersection of Routes 103 and 114 and the intersection of Route 103 and Main Street are critical. These are the gateways, the front doors to downtown Bradford. They are the welcome mat. They need to be clean, attractive, and informative. They set the tone for downtown Bradford. They need to entice people off the highway and into the downtown area. As will be shown below, this is where some initial modest investment could yield substantial returns.



Bradford Village: How does it work?

Villages are interesting areas. They perform many functions. They are where many uses and functions come together. They are the trading and social gathering place in a community. To an outsider, they are frequently the community's identity. When people think of the town, they often think of the view of the village's main street. Villages frequently represent a unity, a unity of scale, of intensity of development, and of design. To function well, they need to accommodate a variety of often conflicting uses in close proximity to each other: pedestrians and vehicles, businesses and homes, public and private spaces. When they work well, there is balance between these uses.

The public discussion sessions in Bradford spent a considerable amount of time exploring where Bradford Village is, attempting to find where the edges and center are located. Some thought that the whole town was the village. Others felt that it could be defined as narrowly as the soda fountain at Bernie Lamach's General Store at the intersection of Route 103 and Main Street. Generally it was agreed that Bradford Village stretched from the intersection of West Main Street and High Street some 4000 feet easterly to the Sutton Road, and southerly to the Route 114/103 traffic lights. The core of the village was seen as the 2000 feet of Main Street lying between the General Store and the Sutton Road.

Even though it is relatively small, the charrette team did not see Bradford Village as being uniform, but rather saw some distinct functional areas, areas which new plans and activities should try to respect and reinforce. With an interest in limiting the amount of public investment that may be necessary to bring about some improvements in the Village, it is important to concentrate those investments so that each dollar invested reinforces the previous ones. A few trees or flowers concentrated at one location are noticed. A few spread out over a great distance seldom have the desired impact.

In the eyes of the charrette team, there were five distinct zones of activity along Main Street, each with its own particular function. To the extent that new investment can reinforce these areas, it will benefit from the activity that is already there and help to strengthen it. The zones are actually like rings surrounding each other.

At the center is the **commercial core**, running some 1000 feet from the Route 103 intersection easterly to the community center. Business generates more business. This is the business core of Bradford Village. The traffic attracted to one business will benefit other businesses in this area. Efforts should be made to encourage as much business traffic in this area, and to concentrate new business activity here. The first infrastructure improvements would best be made here.

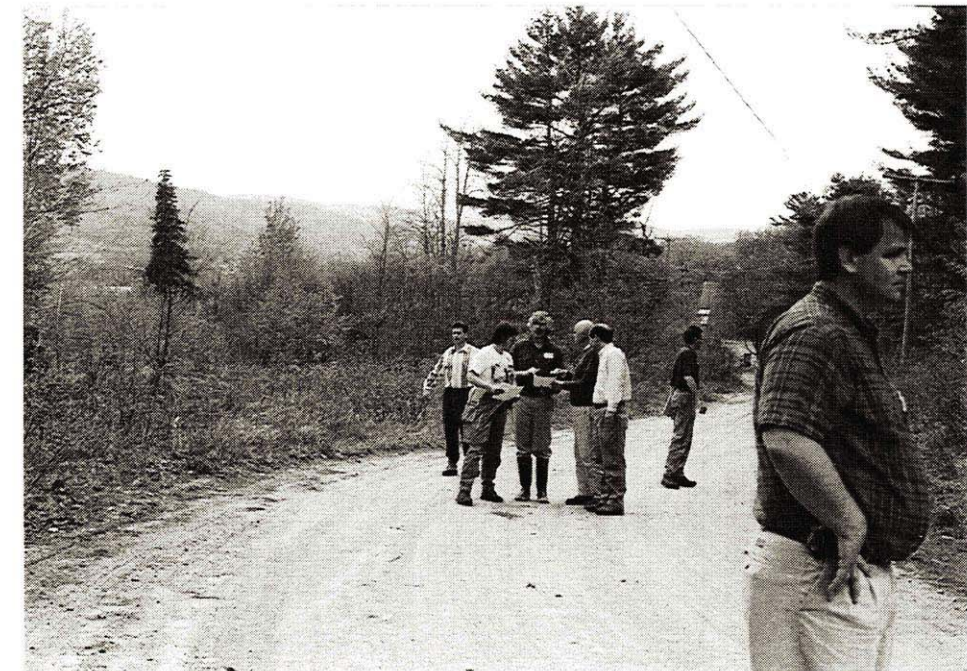
Adjacent to the commercial core, are two **public areas**, places where governmental and institutional activities are located. To the west of Route 103 are the Town Hall, the Fire Station, the Library, and the Baptist Church. To the east of the commercial core are the community center and Brown Shattuck Park, the Public Works Facility, and Bradford Green. Again these areas of public and institutional use should be reinforced as possible.

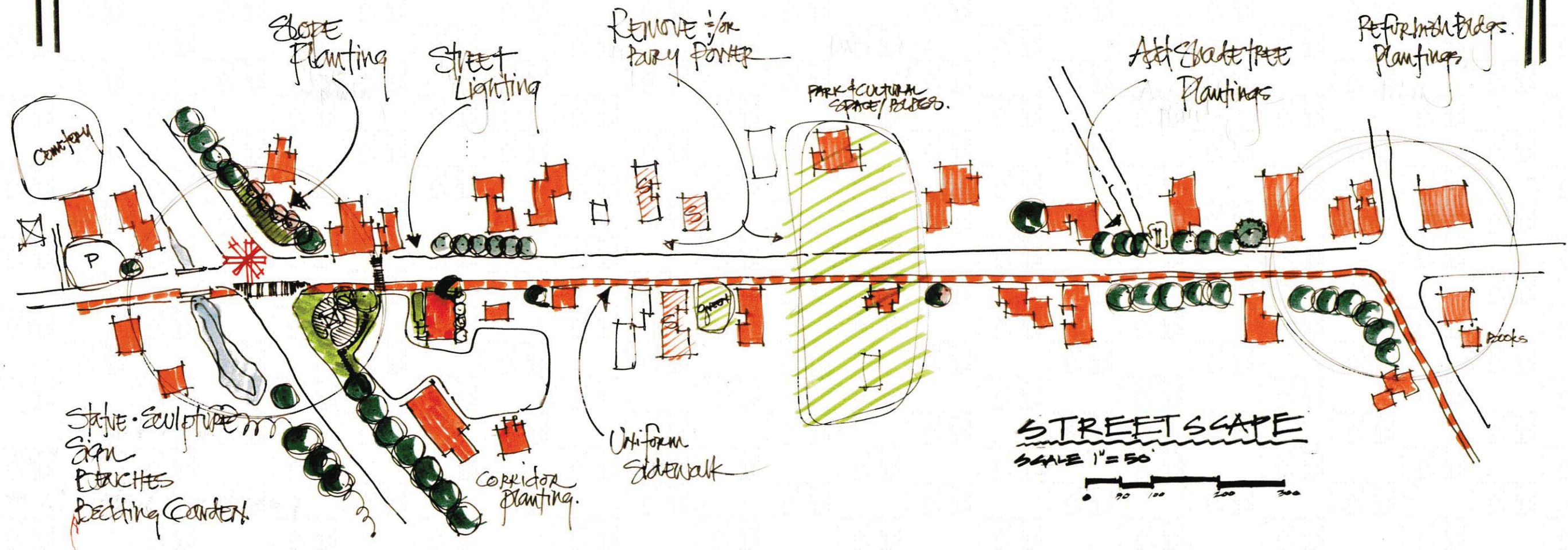
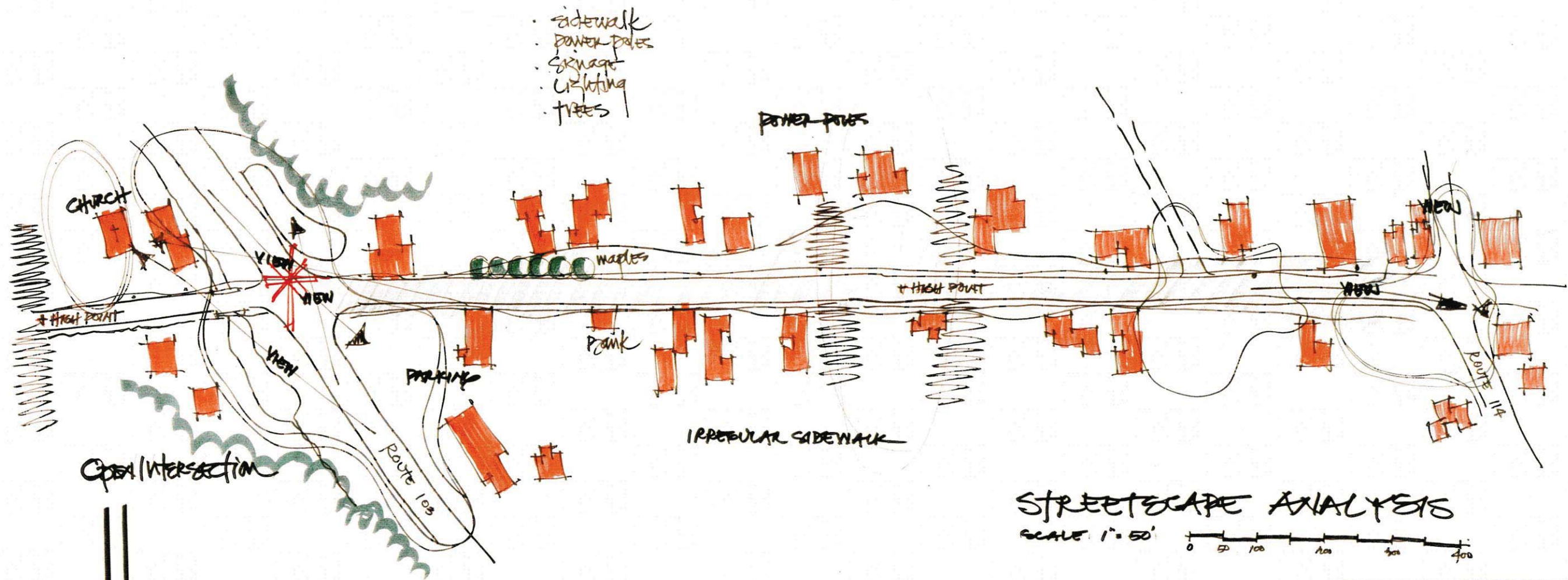
The outlying rings on both ends of Main Street are the **residential areas**. While there are some small businesses and other commercial operations tucked into these areas, residential activity tends to dominate and should be respected.

It was the charrette team's feeling that, while there may be some conflicts within these areas (such as the mixture of public works vehicles and kids at the ballfields), in general this arrangement provides a logical pattern of development for Bradford Village, and that any new activities or investments should attempt to reinforce this pattern.

Gateways and *core areas* were terms that came up frequently in the charrette team's presentation. The success of any retail operation in Bradford Village relates directly to supplementing normal village traffic with tourist and commuter traffic off of Route 103. The entrances to the Village, the *gateways* to the Village, must be clean, attractive, and easily recognizable by the traveling public. Fortunately this type of thing can be accomplished with relatively modest investment. Plantings and simple signage at the Route 103/Main Street intersection, and at the Route 114 traffic lights would help significantly in this direction.

The *core area* the charrette team recommends for any public improvements are discussed in detail further in the report, but essentially they encourage investment be made first in the commercial and public areas. These could be modest, a few plantings or some improved sidewalks, but by concentrating the investment in this area, it would improve the attractiveness of the entire Village area.



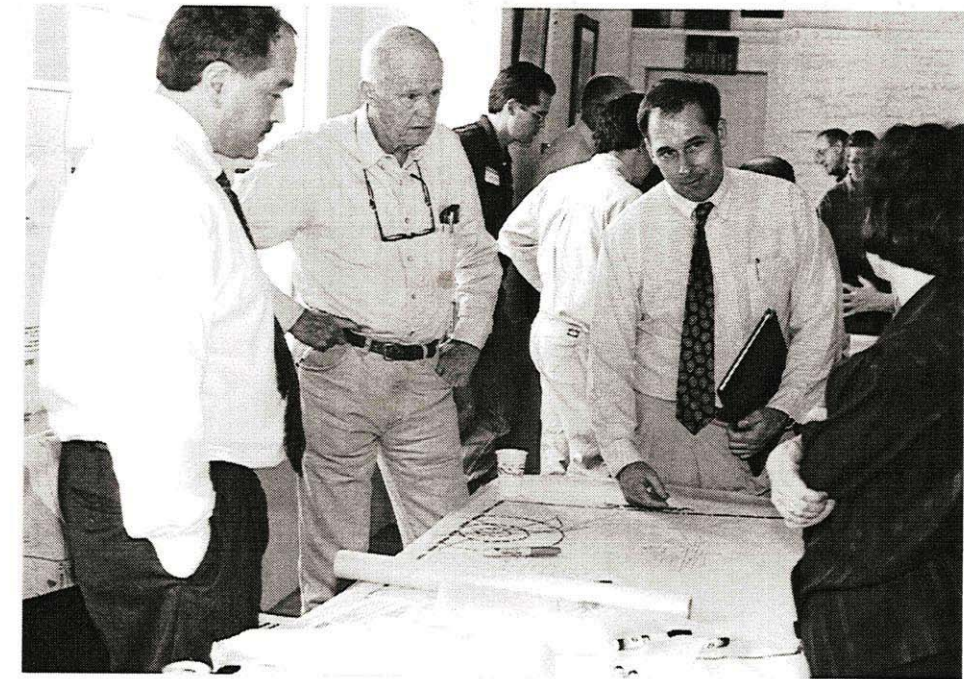


Streetscape

In the same way that we need to modify, replace, and repair certain elements of our homes over time, the public areas along our streets and highways need periodic attention as well. Main Street in Bradford is in better shape than comparable areas in many towns. There is a nice tree canopy in many sections, and lots of green grass visible. There is still a common rhythm and scale to the buildings. There are some nice views. As shown on the preceding page, our landscape architects took a walk down Main Street and recorded their thoughts. The upper drawing shows what they saw. The lower one shows what might be considered in the future.

The notes reinforce some of the points raised earlier: the viewing of Main Street in distinctive zones. Main Street may almost be viewed as a very shallow bowl. The commercial core, at the center of Main Street, occupies the lowest section, the bottom of the bowl. Just as the sides of the bowl rise, so does Main Street, rising to and through the public areas at Town Hall and the Community Center, and then dropping in grade beyond the edge of the bowl into the residential areas. So, not only are the different sections of the Village defined functionally, but they are also defined by topography as well.

In viewing Main Street, the charrette team noted the need for a refined gateway at the entrance to the commercial core from Route 103. There is adequate space to soften this entrance with plantings, and it would make a considerable improvement to the entrance, drawing some of the traffic that is currently passing Main Street by into the retail core.



As traffic increases in village areas that were once dominated by horses, wagons, and pedestrians, the automobile frequently controls space that was formerly shared by all types of transportation. This sharing may have been acceptable when no one was traveling at high speeds, but pedestrians and automobiles need defined spaces in this day and age. Sidewalks are very important for all of us, especially for kids and older citizens. There are sidewalks along parts of Main Street, but they are not consistent in their width, presence, or condition. A sidewalk improvement program might be considered, starting in the commercial core, and working out to the public zones. Pick one side of the road to start, but try to get started early on. Safely linking the public areas of Main Street to the retail area will allow kids on bikes, mothers with strollers, and others to move back and forth between these areas with ease.

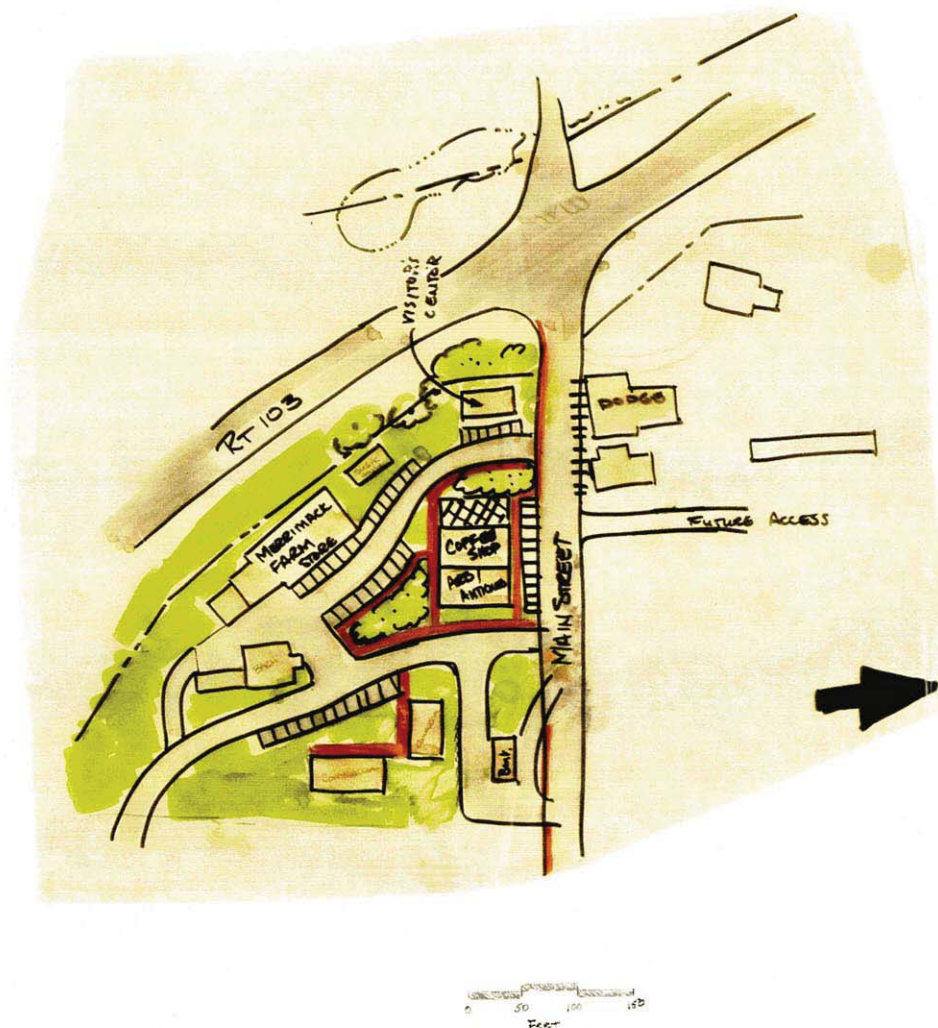
Consider signage consistency and other plantings in the commercial areas. As some homes begin to convert to commercial uses, try to retain the green lawns in the front of the buildings. It lends a lot to the comfortable small town feel of Bradford. Look for ways to put parking at the side or backs of existing buildings. Retain as much of the existing greenery and gardens as possible. Look to help create gathering points. Remember the reasons people miss the IGA. Part of that was the retail shopping. Much of it was the social interaction. Look for ways to rekindle that. Sidewalks and benches lead to evening walks. Evening walks lead to chance encounters, the kind of informal connectedness that the IGA created.

Look for ways to assist the businesses and homes in the area in financing any needed improvements. There are some public grant programs that may be of assistance here. The banks in the area may be of assistance. Some towns establish matching programs for tree plantings, painting and other exterior, visible improvements on private property. Ask around. You might be surprised by some of the answers. The key issue here is to take stock of what you have, which is considerable, to retain the small scale intimate character of Main Street, and to build on it and reinforce it wherever you can.

OPTIONS for the RETAIL CORE



#1



#2



#3

Options for the Retail Core

There were a variety of options suggested for the retail core, as shown on the facing page. In reality, they are all variations on the same theme, the theme that was stressed throughout the charrette weekend:

Future investment in Bradford Village is dependent upon upgrading this retail area immediately adjacent to the Main Street/Route 103 intersection.

This area has easy access and good visibility. As it is improved and upgraded, as the intersection functions more and more as a gateway, retail traffic will come here and add to local traffic. Together these two groups of shoppers will serve to strengthen the economic viability of the Village. The public services that can be added to Main Street will reinforce this traffic as well.

All of the options seek to make this area a stronger entrance. They emphasize this as an area in which to concentrate retail development. They lay out orderly and understandable traffic patterns. They add greenery and sidewalks where the existing facilities and treatments might be improved upon. They recommend the addition of facilities that bring people together, facilities that can be anchor tenants. If the post office can be drawn into this location in the future, make every effort to do so. If there is support for establishing an information center, do it here. Use whatever means you can to draw activity and shoppers off of Route 103 and into the village. Seek out a bakery or coffee shop. Remember the social aspect of the IGA. Try to create those spots where people go just because they might bump into their neighbors, or find out what happened at the community center, or planning board, or library last night.

The major variable in the options shown has to do with traffic circulation. In all cases, it is clearly defined, but in some instances it serves individual businesses and others there are more shared driveways and common parking areas. That is a matter of choice for the businesses and landowners involved. The important thing is to see that the space is available and easily understood by those attempting to use it. All of the options show future access to the Bradford Green as it is developed. Some of them show a rear access to the Brown-Shattuck Park. The key theme here is to make it easy for people to get to the retail core, whether they are on foot, in cars, on bicycles, or pushing carriages.

A lot of what has been discussed here are cosmetic improvements, things which will make Bradford Village a more attractive location. Although there may be considerable discussion about some aspects of the recommendations, they are all relatively easy to accomplish, and relatively inexpensive. There are some deeper seeded issues in the Village.

There are sewage and water distribution issues in the Village that must be addressed. These have been the focus of an extensive study by independent consultants. Plans have been outlined for the creation of major water and sewer systems. Those plans have been very thorough. They call, over time, for the installation of a complete water distribution and sewer collection system, to include not only the Village, but a potential industrial park at the Route 114 traffic light as well. The price tag for these systems will be considerable: perhaps as much as some \$5.7 million to build, and \$50,000 for annual operation. It may be that grant funds can be secured for some of this work, so that those numbers would not rest solely on the local population of 1400 people.

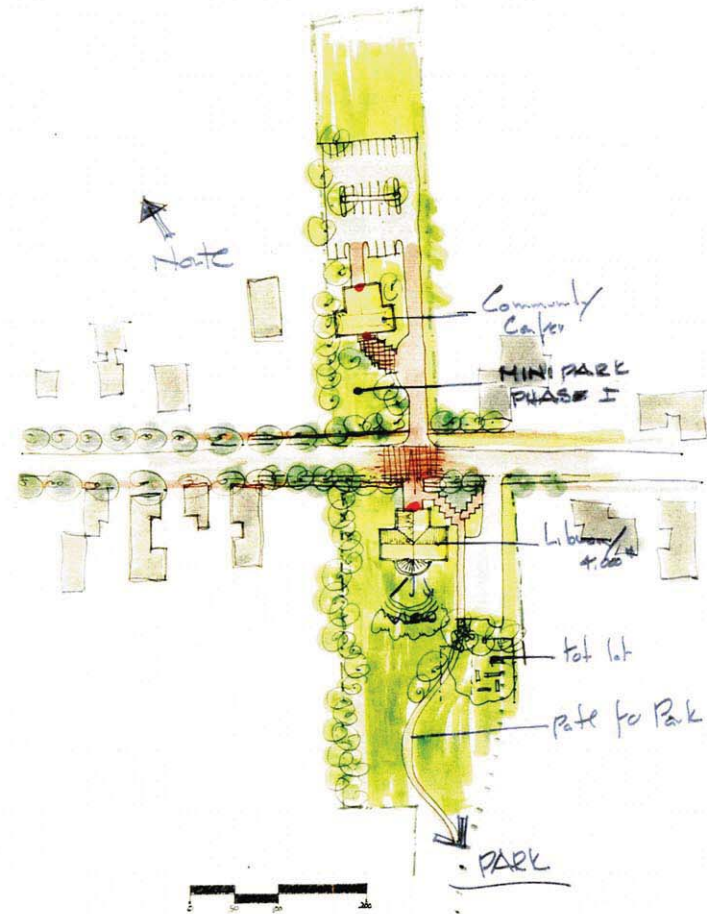
If funds can be secured to proceed with these systems in their entirety, then the charrette team urges the town to do so. The presence of sewer and water problems is certainly a major detraction for any investor who might be considering purchasing property in the Village. If funds cannot be secured to undertake these projects as a whole, the design team's general recommendation of investing in the core where that investment will generate the greatest return would seem to be applicable here.

If partial or interim solutions to the sewer and water issues need to be explored, the retail core should be given the highest priority. In a two day charrette there was insufficient time to offer complete solutions, but frequently community septic systems that provide collection systems to multiple properties, or shared wells that function the same way, can provide interim relief to the most critical areas while a longer term solution is being pursued. Clearly, these interim solutions work best when they can be developed as initial phases of longer term, more complete solutions.

This water and sewer problem is critical to the long term viability of Bradford Village, and the team recommends that action be taken in the near term to work on it. If that can be the final solution, then so be it. If not, then it is recommended that an interim solution be pursued, and that servicing the retail core be given the highest priority in that effort.

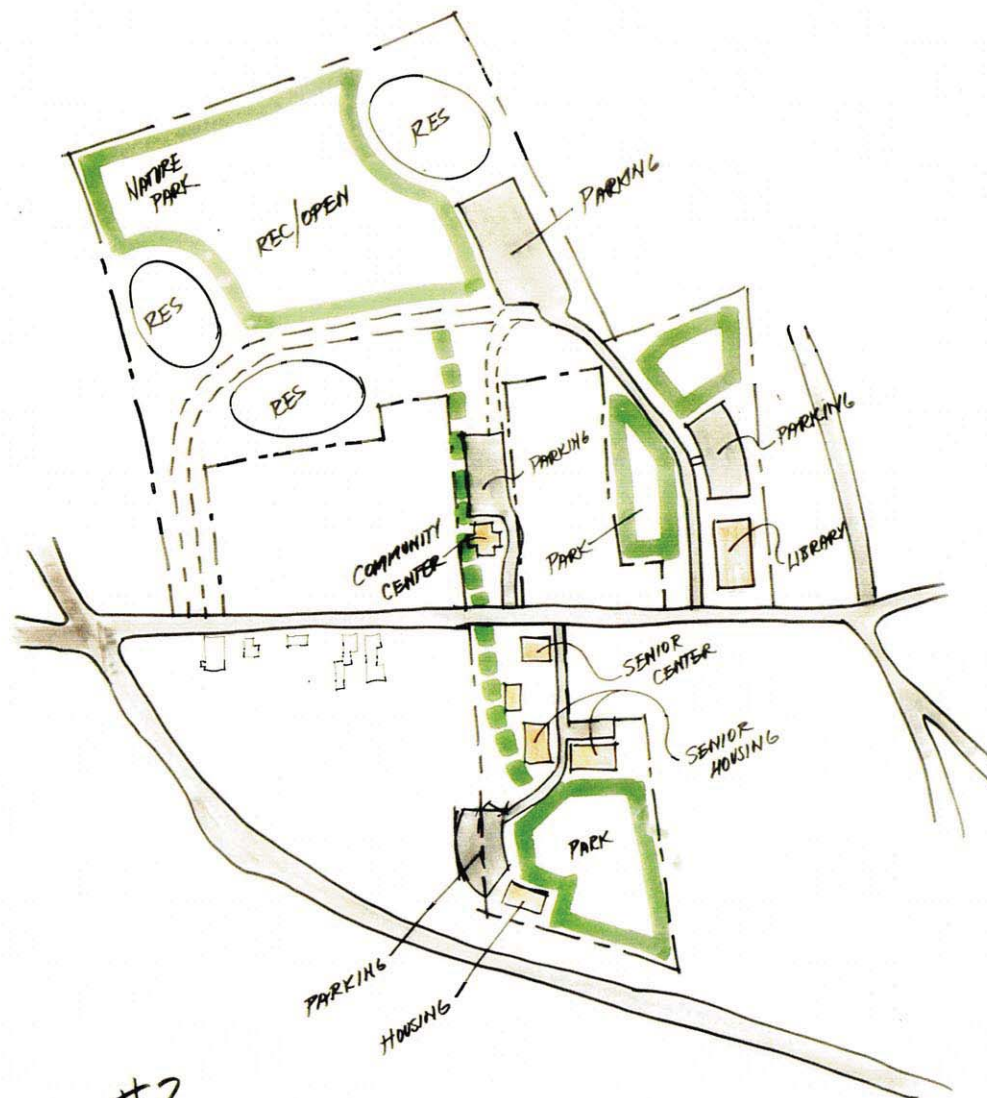


DOWNTOWN OPTIONS



#1

- Library opposite Community Center
- New access to B/S Park



#2

- Senior Housing opposite Community Center
- Library at Marshall Property
- Bradford Green for recreation & future housing



#3

- Library opposite Community Center
- Housing on Marshall Property
- Bradford Green for recreation & future housing

Downtown Options

The title to this section is important. The topics in this section were, and remain, of critical concern to many citizens of Bradford. There were lots of opinions expressed, lots of questions raised. Many people seem to be looking to the design team for specific, absolute answers. What should the Bradford Green be used for? Where should the library go? Is this parcel better than that one as a development site?

Much of the course of the discussion over the weekend involved the design team listening to local needs, trying to sort those out into combinations that made sense, looking at the town, and attempting to provide recommendations or options that made sense. It is important to remember that there may be many options that make sense. The siting of a facility is not an exact science. It involves balancing many factors. The following comments are observations about the needs we heard, the land we saw, and our best thoughts on how the two might be integrated. There are certainly other options. The important thing is that the principles involved in the recommendations be understood as future discussion occurs.

The Needs

- There was lots of discussion about the need to find more social contact points, areas and facilities where the whole town might come together as a whole, not just small groups or segments of the town, but as a community. Ideas ranged from more park space to community rooms in a library to a skating rink and sliding hill for the winter.
- The school kids had lots of active suggestions! They wanted a waterslide, trampolines, and a field for laser challenge. Pool tables, a video arcade, and an arts and science center also made their list.
- Elderly housing, so that residents didn't have to leave town to receive medical and other support services, was important. Additional development sites for taxable property clearly made the list.

The Land

This section of the report deals with one of the public zones on Main Street, including the Bradford Green, the community center, and Brown Shattuck Park. These are important public assets that need to be closely woven together, utilizing the same principles of reinforcement that have been stressed elsewhere. Some thoughts on the parcels:

- Bradford Green**
This is a wonderful community asset. It is so large it should be dedicated to a variety of uses. There is more space than any single use can consume. Think of recreation and housing. Think of the long term opportunity to connect this parcel to Main Street at both its eastern and western edges. There are some nice views of wooded hills to the west of Route 103. The existing structure on the property does not seem to have long term value, and should likely be removed. Try to connect this parcel to the community center in some way: paths, walkways, shared parking, etc.
- Marshall Property**
The front end of Bradford Green. Utilize this section in a manner that supports, and does not disrupt, Bradford Green activities. Housing, either public or private, would be consistent with this. A public building, such as a library would be consistent. Commercial or retail activity should probably be discouraged, and redirected to the commercial core of Main Street. Any new structures should be placed close to the street to replicate the typical building set back along Main Street. Any required parking should be placed at the rear or side of the building, and not immediately adjacent to Main Street.
- Brown Shattuck**
This is a tremendous asset. To have ball fields in the heart of town is a great opportunity. To build traffic for the retail stores from Park local residents, they need multiple reasons to be downtown: coffee, groceries, a library book, dropping the kids for a baseball game or just to goof off in the park. These all work. The park can be a key part of this.

Not that the park doesn't present some challenges. The access road is a challenge. The lack of visibility of the entire park presents some vandalism problems. The public works equipment really needs another home besides right field. Some expressed concern about kids running across Route 103 from the back of the park. This seems a legitimate safety concern, and should be discouraged.

It appears there may be an opportunity to add underutilized parcels to the Park. The design team supports this idea. The Park offers a real opportunity to reinforce this public area on Main Street, to make it a generator of traffic, to give people yet another reason to be in Bradford Village.

The Options

There were many. Three that incorporated the principles outlined above are presented for the Town's consideration. They represent an array of thoughts, and are not in any priority order.

Option 1 This option would likely require the cooperation of a willing private property owner. The proposal envisions acquiring the lot across the street from the community center and developing it as the new town library site.

This option would link the new library to the community center with landscaping on the front lawn of each facility, creating an important public space at this point on Main Street. It would link each facility to adjacent recreation land at the rear of each building, with access and parking for Bradford Green and Brown Shattuck Park. The access to the park would be relocated, and the public works facility would be moved to a new spot.

Option 2 This proposal also redevelops Brown Shattuck Park and acquires private property on Main Street. The access to the park is improved, and the public works garage is removed. Adjacent to Brown Shattuck Park there are sites for elderly housing proposed.

Across the way, parking is provided at the rear of the community center and the lawn is enhanced with additional plantings. The Marshall Property is developed with a new library. The Bradford Green becomes a major recreational area, with sites reserved for future housing as demand warrants. Through traffic from Bradford Green back to the retail core is planned for.



Option 3 Like Option 1, this proposal places the library on what is now private land opposite the community center. It improves access to Brown Shattuck Park, expanding the park somewhat by removing the public works garage. It envisions the addition of a skating rink for community activity in the winter.

Across the street, the Marshall Property is developed as housing. Bradford Green is used for recreation in the short term, with housing sites reserved for the future. As above, traffic circulation back to the retail core is provided across the Bradford Green.

There are many options beside these, but there are themes shown here that tie these proposals together, themes that should be considered whatever options are pursued. This is one of the public zones on Main Street. The idea of the public investments working collectively to reinforce that is key. There are critical public assets that already exist in this section of Main Street: the community center, Brown Shattuck Park, Bradford Green, and the Marshall property. They all impact each other. Investments in this area should be orchestrated in a coordinated fashion, so that each dollar takes advantage of those previously put in place.



Cost Estimates - Public Improvements

Gateway Improvements at Route 103/Main Street and Route 114 Traffic Lights

Wooden sign	\$ 500
Flowers	500
Shrubs (allowance)	<u>1000</u>
\$ 2000 each location	<u>x2</u>
	\$ 4000 Total
Enhanced plaza/entry at 103/Main Street	\$15,000 allowance

Main Street Improvements

Phase 1: Route 103 Intersection to Community Center (1000' each side of street)

4' bituminous sidewalk with bituminous curb 2000 lineal feet @ \$10/lineal foot	\$20,000
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Note: For granite curb add \$22,000

4" dia. maple trees on 50' centers 40 @ \$450 each	<u>18,000</u>
	\$38,000

Phase 2: Community Center to Sutton Road (1000" each side of street)

Same as above:	\$38,000
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Bradford Green

Grade/Loam/Seed 2 acres for public gathering area and recreation fields	\$ 6,000
Demolish existing building	<u>12,000</u>
	\$18,000

Contacts and Resources

Bill Konrad
Rural Development Administration
223-6045

The Rural Development Administration is a good source of grants and low interest loans for rural communities.

Rita Potter
Economic Development Administration
225-1624

The Economic Development Administration may be able to help with funds for projects that will create jobs.

Lee Komornick
Central NH Regional Planning Commission
753-9374

The regional planning commission is a good source for technical assistance on planning and zoning issues. They may be able to assist with grant preparation.

Niel Cannon
Capitol Regional Development Council
228-1872

The regional development council has low interest loans funds, and can help with the preparation of applications for economic development projects.

George Zoukee, Executive Director
Municipal Bond Bank
271-2595

The Municipal Bond Bank packages small town bond issues into aggregate proposals so as to secure lower interest rates.

Christopher Miller
NH Housing Finance Authority
472-8623

The Housing Finance Authority is the source for both planning and development funds for projects that create housing for low income groups and the elderly.

Pat Herlihy, Community Development Block
Grant Program
Office of State Planning
271-2155

The Office of State Planning distributes funding for projects which can demonstrate an ability to meet the needs of low and moderate income individuals.

Conclusions

Bradford is a hard working town that has given a lot of thought and energy to considering its future. The charrette team feels privileged to have worked with the citizens of Bradford. We hope that the suggestions we have made have stimulated some good thinking. There are some cost estimates for the work proposed, and some suggestions about sources of funding and other assistance in the appendices.

It is important for all involved to realize that the options outlined above are merely that: options. More important than picking an option is understanding the principles that underlie them. Bradford's goal, as stated in the beginning of this report was to re-energize downtown. People wanted a stronger economy. They wanted more social interaction. They wanted more recreation and they wanted to improve the physical appearance of downtown. As a small community with a limited tax base, there was the ever present question of how to pay for the improvements.

As Bradford considers how to move forward from here, it might be worth re-iterating some of the principles that have guided the design team.

With limited dollars, invest them where there will be the most return on the investment.

Think seriously about simple gateway improvements: Signs, plantings, an attractive garden. All are things that say that say Bradford Village is an interesting place to visit.

There are several places where public investments in sidewalks, new curbing, and a few street trees might be of value, but start in the retail core. If Bradford were a house, the retail core is your living room. Put your new furniture there. Note the concentration of new investment that is recommended around the community center and parks. These reinforce each other as well.

Respect the existing structure of Main Street.

Keep retail activity in the retail area. Reinforce the public areas with additional public investment. Require new structures to be in keeping with the scale and location of existing structures. Bradford Village has small buildings with lawns. Get new-comers (including the library and community center) to follow suit! Keep the lawns out front and the asphalt out back. Make new buildings follow the existing scale and setbacks: two story structures close to the street reinforce the existing pattern of development. Single story buildings with parking in front do not.

Start to work on the infrastructure.

There is a sewer and water problem here that is impacting the whole Village. Do the whole project if you can, but don't wait to get started on at least some of it. Ask your consultants about some interim solutions if you cannot get the funding you need to tackle the whole project at once.

Come together!

Bradford is a community of limited resources. It is certainly not unique in that respect. Every community has limited money, volunteer time, energy, and other critical resources. There is never enough to go around.

Decide what is key, and start to work on it. The community as a whole told the charrette team that they wanted to revitalize downtown. If that is truly the desired end, then focus on that. There are many ways of getting there. Some will work better than others, but many will work.

The sad thing is to see unnecessary energy and other critical resources depleted arguing about the method of getting there. If people are collectively committed to reaching the goal of re-energizing the Village, there may need to be some concessions reached on individual steps necessary to there. What's important, the method or the end? If several routes will get you to the desired end, pick one and move on.

Get started!!

There's lots to do, and you have some resources already in hand. The longer the Village waits to move forward with some of its plans, the more gradual erosion will have occurred in the Village. The time to start is now!

Good Luck!

The Food was Great! Thanks for having us!!

The Bradford Charrette Team