

DEERFIELD, NH

Design Charrette



October 13-14, 2000

PLAN NH

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Thanks go out to all of the town members who came and shared their thoughts and views:

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We would also like to acknowledge and thank all of the residents in Deerfield for their hospitality, enthusiasm, and great food!

* Special Thanks goes out to Nellie Robbins for allowing a few of her wonderful historic photographs to be used in this report.

...and to any others who attended and helped with the charrette, but whose names we may have missed,

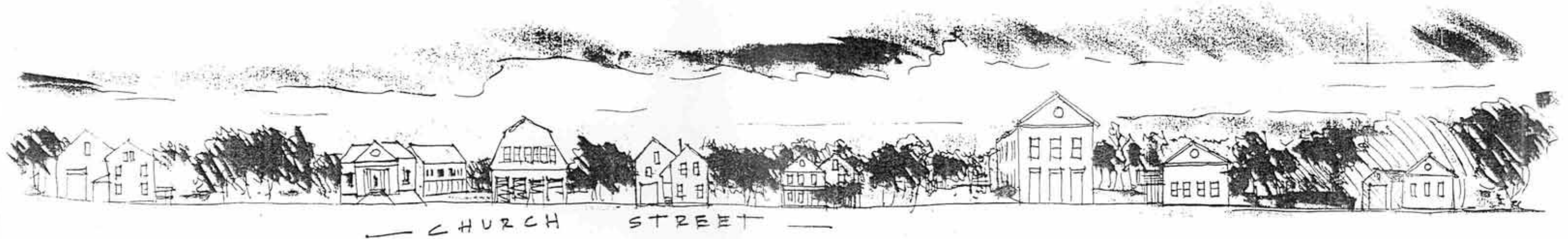
Thank You!!!

Deerfield, NH Design Charrette

Sponsored by:

The Town of Deerfield & the Board
of Selectmen

October 13 & 14, 2000



Deerfield Charrette

October 13 & 14, 2000

Who is Plan NH?

Plan NH is a professional association for those working in the *built environment*. The organization includes architects, planners, engineers, bankers, contractors, historic preservationists, and others who concern themselves with buildings and communities. It was established to create a forum for bringing together these different professional groups, and as a catalyst to spur 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 NH does 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. Conclusions present the relationship of different plan elements, 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 issues 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 against which future decisions can be measured.

How Did Deerfield End Up With A Charrette?

Each winter, 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. This past year 30 communities submitted proposals. Deerfield was one of 3 communities selected to host a charrette.

The Proposal

Deerfield's proposal included an interesting mix of needs and resources and quickly caught the eye of Plan NH members. The town's proposal asked for recommendations for new municipal offices, a new safety services complex, an expanded library and an enlarged teen center and senior center. It offered a nice town center with a good mix of residential, governmental and institutional uses as the slate. Adding to this, the town recently acquired 5 acres of open space in the heart of its village center. The town had a lot of needs to fulfill and a lot of space in which to make it all happen. The basic need was to help focus their direction and provide suggestions for making it all fit together.

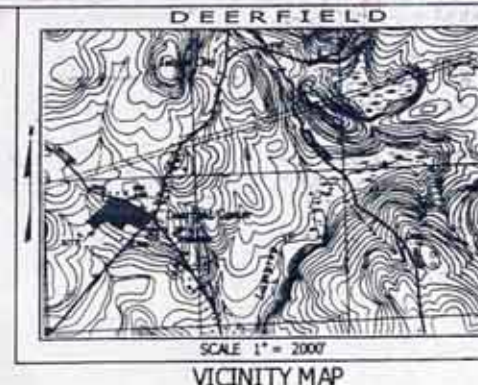
Even without the 5 newly acquired acres, the Town owns a great deal of real estate on Old Center Road (Church Street). The Library, Fire Station, Town Hall, and Public Works Garage properties are all located here and all owned by the Town. Intermixed with this is a nice collection of residential homes and church property, together giving the town center a warm and comfortable feel.

We went into Deerfield with the thought of:

- Making use of the 5 acres of open space acquired behind the fire station and library.
- Looking at options for new Town Office space.
- Deciding where to construct the new Safety Complex. Plans have already been drawn, but no specific location has been agreed upon.
- Examining the existing town-owned buildings in Deerfield's center and creating better space for the library, a museum, a senior center, and a youth center.



Deerfield's Center



NOTES:

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN IS TO EFFECT TWO BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE PROPERTIES OF THE TOWN OF DEERFIELD. MAP 210 LOT 1-1 WILL BE REDUCED FROM 5.6 +/- AC. TO 4.5 +/- AC. WITH THE REMAINDER, 1.1 +/- AC. DESIGNATED AS A NEW LOT, MAP 210 LOT 1-2. MAP 210 LOT 6-1 WILL BE REDUCED FROM 4.3 +/- AC. TO 3.2 +/- AC. WITH THE REMAINDER, 1.1 +/- AC. DESIGNATED AS A NEW LOT, MAP 210 LOT 6-2.
2. ANY HOME CONSTRUCTED ON THE PROPOSED LOT(S) SHALL BE SUBJECT TO AN IMPACT FEE FROM THE TOWN OF DEERFIELD. SAID FEE SHALL BE CALCULATED AT THE POINT OF BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION AND SHALL BE DUE AT THE ISSUANCE OF THE CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY.

APPROVED
DEERFIELD PLANNING BOARD

DATE _____
CHAIRMAN _____

3

DAVID W. SIDMORE L.L.S., #447 198 NORTH ROAD DEERFIELD, NH (603) 463-7472

LEGEND

- ▲ IRON ROD SET
- ▲ IRON ROD FIND
- DRILLED HOLE SET
- DRILLED HOLE FIND
- STONE WALL
- N/F NOW OR FORMERLY
- STONE BOUND FIND
- POINT

PLAN of LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT of LAND for
TOWN OF DEERFIELD

DEERFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
9.9 +/- ACRES SCALE 1" = 37'
REF. R.C.R.D. BOOK 3424 - PAGE 2947 & BOOK 3476 - PAGE 0775
MAP 210 - LOT 1 & LOT 6



JULY, 2000

The Process

Community members and about a dozen design professionals met at the Deerfield Community Center on a wonderfully warm and sunny autumn weekend to talk about downtown Deerfield, its strengths, weaknesses and visions for Deerfield's future. Professionals at the meeting included architects, planners, landscape architects, community development professionals, and a cost estimator.

The professional expertise of this group was far-reaching, but did lack one crucial piece of information that only town members could provide. Local residents are the town experts and the design team relies on resident input and knowledge to develop viable suggestions and proposals. With that in mind, the design team and residents joined forces and the town experts talked with the design experts about their community: The Town of Deerfield.

The design team and town leaders gathered at the Community Center Friday morning to talk about the town and the project at hand. Knowing that there is no replacement for first hand information and experience, town members took the design team on a site walk to explore Deerfield's downtown and become familiarized with the project area.

In the early afternoon, the design team and a couple dozen residents gathered together for the first of two listening sessions. Another 25 attended Friday night's meeting. During the course of the weekend, the design team listened to Deerfield residents talk about the Church Street area at two public meetings on Friday afternoon and evening, while walking around town, at breaks and at dinner. Residents had a lot to say, and gave direction to the thoughts and perceptions of the design team members.



Scene from Friday's Listening Session

What We Heard/What We Saw

The public meetings provided town members with a chance to voice their opinions and discuss some of the strengths and weaknesses of Deerfield.

Most of the discussion focused on the following points:

- **Deerfield's Center Has Character.** There is a nice feel downtown; classic architecture, historic buildings, and a nice streetscape.
- **The Center is the Town's Gathering Place.** This is where people from town come to talk about issues, go to the library, go to vote, etc. This area around Church Street is the town's living room.
- **There is a Good Mix of Uses.** The center of town has residential, public and commercial uses. They all work well together and gives the town center character.
- **This is a Place Where People Feel Safe and Secure.** Families feel safe here.
- **At Times Parking is a Problem.** More shared spaces are needed that could serve the library, town hall, community center and churches.
- **Thru Traffic Conflicts with Some Uses.** There is too much thru-traffic on Church Street and it goes too fast.
- **It's Church Street!** There was strong local sentiment in one listening session that the road through the town center should not be called Old Center Road.

The Center of Deerfield is a great place. The Center of Deerfield is a beautiful spot with a lot of character. It is a good place for families and has many different municipal uses. It is most importantly a wonderful gathering place. It is different from the rest of Deerfield, in that the town hall, churches and the library are all here. As the town looks to expand the library, create a historical museum, create new town offices, a senior center and teen center, it should keep in mind the wonderful traditional architecture that dominates the streetscape. New construction or improvements to existing structures should serve to enhance this traditional streetscape, not compete with it.



Looking Back at Historic Deerfield

Downtown is full of important public spaces and buildings. The Library, Town Hall and Community Center are very important town resources. It is important that the town make full use of these existing buildings before constructing new ones. Work to maintain and enhance the activities within the town core. The town is also lucky to possess a 5 acre open space in the town center. This is a resource most towns could only dream of. Make sure this space retains its integrity and serves as common open space for residents.



Deerfield's Historic Town Hall

Traffic is a problem . Traffic at the intersection of Route 107, Candia Road and Church Street (Old Center Road) is a problem both for cars and pedestrians. This intersection should be examined to see if there may be design options that could improve this intersection. Thru-traffic on Church Street is also a problem. Some use this as a short cut to get to the other side of town. Traffic goes too fast and efforts should be explored to get people to slow down.



Route 107, Candia Road and Church Street Intersection

The town needs more central parking in its downtown area. This becomes especially as the town looks to expand public uses in the area. Remember that parking should fit into the character of the area without detracting too much from the streetscape. Look to areas behind the Town Hall that might serve as common spaces for a number of buildings within the town center instead of creating parking spaces to serve every building individually.



Existing Parking at Peak Times

The main road is called Church Street not Old Center Road. The main street through the center of Deerfield has been named Old Center Road for quite some time. However, it became clear to us in the listening sessions that a few longstanding residents say that Deerfield's center runs along a road called Church Street NOT Old Center Road. They said it was historically named Church Street (rightly so given the beautiful churches lining its shoulders) and should be again. We're convinced! As far as this report goes, Church Street it is.

An important theme sustained throughout the discussions at the charrette centered on the importance of building upon the qualities and resources already found in the town center. A key to enhancing Deerfield's center is to always keep in mind its qualities as a small, rural town, with traditional architecture. Its charm and character is in its simplicity.



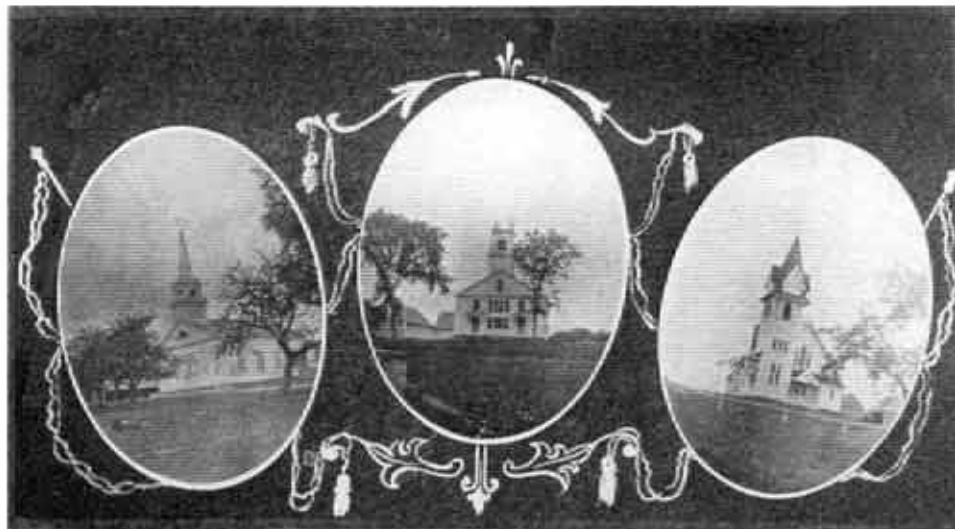
Scene From Friday's Listening Session

Deerfield in the Future

Design Principles

Deerfield's center is without a doubt the heart of the community. This area represents its history, its character and is as important to residents today as it was in the past. Design work and enhancement efforts should be completed with the following principles in mind.

- **Counteract forces that are drawing activity out of the town center.** Remember that every move out of this area will diminish its function as the core of the community. Deerfield's town center has a lot of basic qualities that make up a solid community center, including public open spaces and public buildings and the small businesses found in the G.B. White Building. Build upon this foundation and improve the connections that draw these resources in together.
- **Draw activities into the town center that make sense.** While encouraging activity into the town center should be always a main goal, make sure that what is encouraged makes sense. Deerfield has a quiet, slow-paced feel to it. Keep out activities that counter this trend. Move the public works garage out of the town center. Find a spot for the safety complex that is close to the activity centers but where it will not interfere with families and pedestrians.
- **Vehicles and pedestrians need to co-exist** Some areas of the town center do provide access for pedestrians. However, this access lacks cohesiveness. Make sure that vehicles do not dominate Church Street and look for ways to encourage people to make full use of the open spaces in Deerfield's center. Also look to slow down traffic on Church Street and improve upon the pedestrian links between Raymond Road and Church Street.
- **Vacant and underutilized space work against the town center's role as a core.** A town center is the hub of the community. Any vacant or underutilized commercial space detracts from its ability to serve as a hub. The current vacancy rate is quite low. However, the G.B. White Building could be enhanced to improve upon its commercial use.



Deerfield's Historic Churches

Charrette's Focus

Before addressing specific issues raised by town members, the design team first needed to pinpoint the project area that could really encapsulate all of ideas brought forward during the public session. Certainly a main focus remained on Church Street (Old Center Road). This street is the historic and cultural center of town. However, the town core expands farther than this. In our view the town core includes the George B. White Building. It also includes Bicentennial Park and the Post Office. It certainly includes the major intersection of Church Street, Candia Road, Route 107 and Raymond Road. The intersection is key to much of the activity in this area. The look and functionality of this intersection should fit in with the other aspects of the town core.

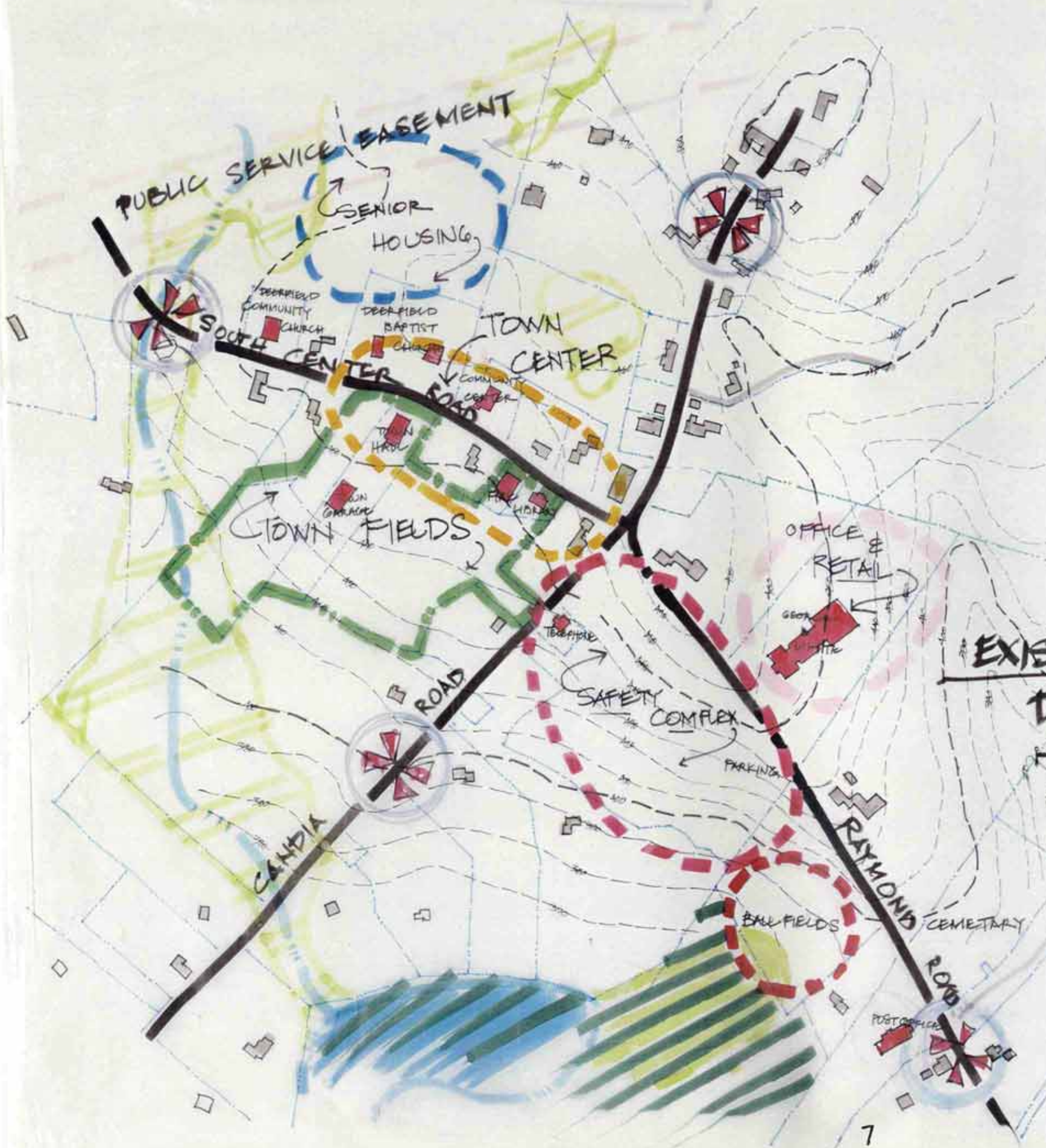
The following recommendations and suggestions look at this entire area. Some recommendations focus specifically on Church Street. However, since there is more to Deerfield's center than just this one street. Other focus areas include the intersection, a new location for the public works garage and suggestions for improving the facade of the G.B. White Building.



Classic New England Village Center

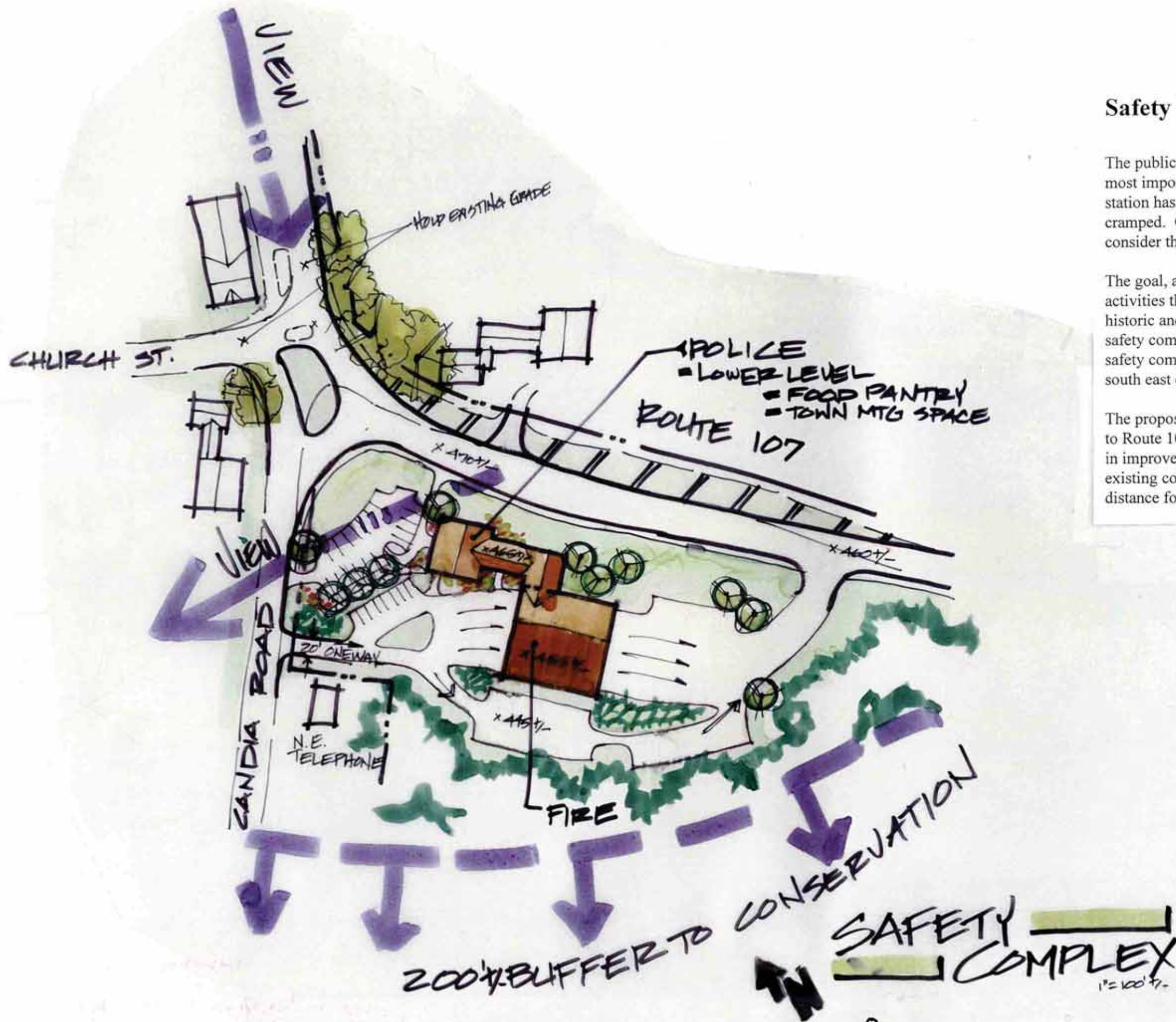
Recommendations for Deerfield's Town Center

- Improve the Intersection of Candia Road, Church Street, and Route 107.
- Keep Church Street a quiet, historic street full of public spaces. Look for alternative sites for activities which do not fit in with this vision of Church Street.
- Move the Public Works Building out of the Center.
- Construct the Safety Complex somewhere other than Church Street to diminish conflicts with its pedestrian use, ease traffic circulation, and reduce noise.
- Keep the town fields as low-key public open space.
- Make sure plans for new buildings and improvements to existing buildings are designed in a manner that will keep Church Street's streetscape in tact.
- Make sure existing buildings (i.e. Library, Fire Station, Community Center) are fully utilized before new buildings go up.
- Make physical connections between office and retail space on Raymond Road and the Town Center on Church Street.
- Enhance the G.B. White Building as an office and retail space.



EXISTING CONDITIONS
DEERFIELD





Safety Complex - Primary Proposal

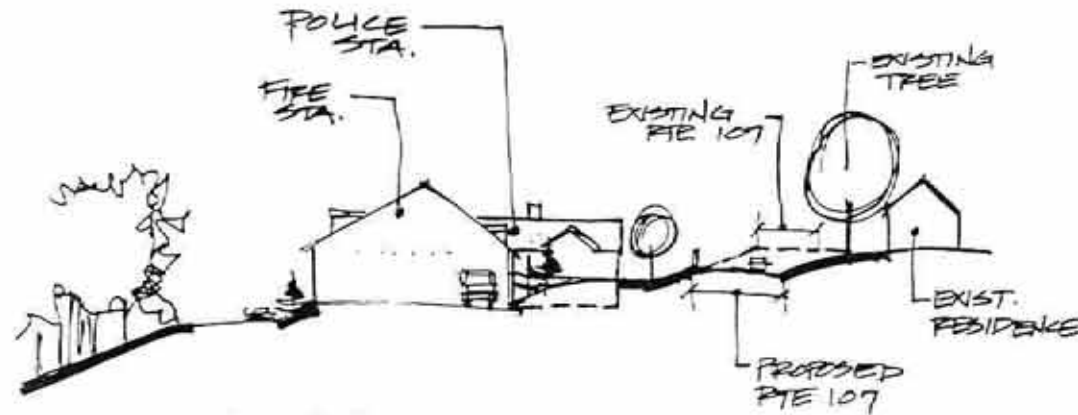
The public safety complex is one of the highest and most important priorities for the town. The existing fire station has proven inadequate and quarters are too cramped. Given its importance, Deerfield should consider this facility to be one of its short term goals.

The goal, as touched upon before, should be to remove activities that detract from Church Street's role as a historic and cultural center of town. This includes the safety complex. This proposal constructs the new safety complex within the 9 acre lot that borders the south east corner of the Intersection.

The proposed location would make use of easy access to Route 107 and would provide an opportunity to work in improvements into the intersection itself. The existing corner would be softened to allow greater site distance for vehicular traffic.



The Intersection Today



- Lower Route 107 as it turns the corner to soften the grade and move the main intersection farther to the south.
- Increase the size of the island to better direct traffic turning to and from Church Street and Candia Road.
- Set the new Safety Complex into the slope of the hill. The Police Station would be clearly visible and accessible from Route 107.
- The Fire Station would take up the lower level and the surrounding area would provide adequate space for trucks to safely exit and enter the station.
- Leave a substantial green buffer for the conservation land to the south.
- Consider including other serves such as the food pantry and town meeting space into the complex as well.

* Road improvement projects of this scale are usually not funded (or funded quickly) through the State's 10 Year Transportation Plan. However, there are other DOT funds available to help towns complete these smaller projects.

Contact: Bob Barry, State Aid Reconstruction, NH Department of Transportation, Concord, NH (271-2107).

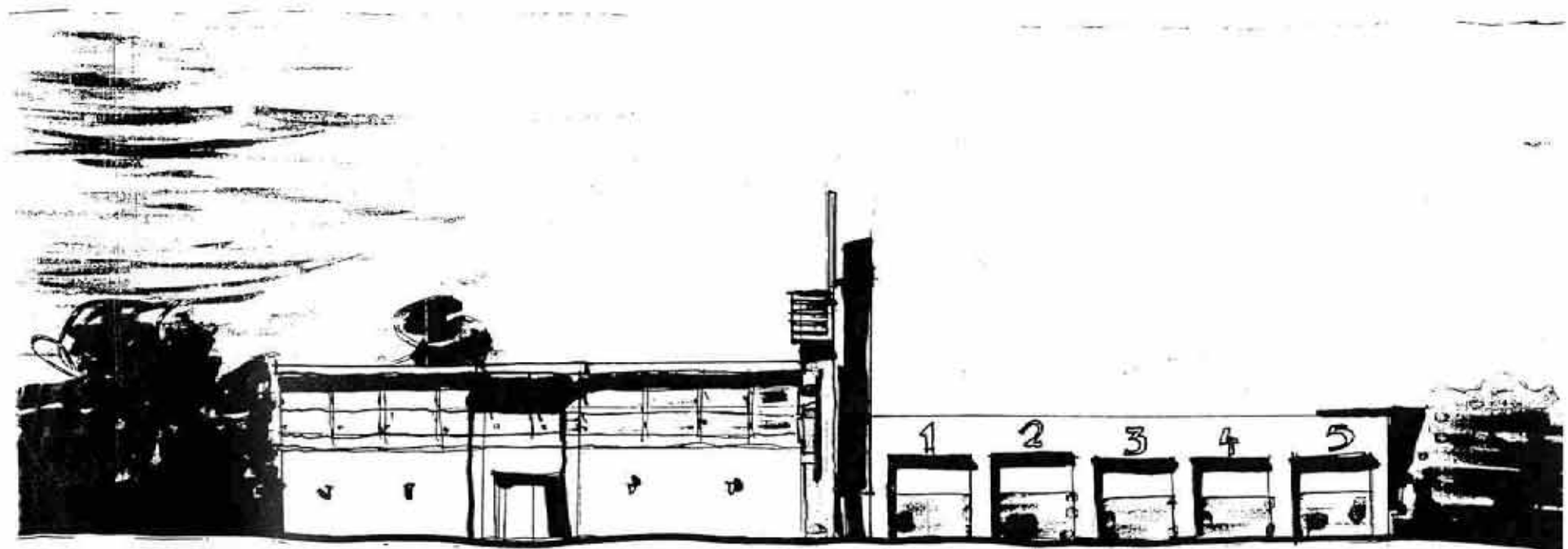
Safety Complex in G.B. White Building - An Alternate View

One option mentioned by town members was to redevelop the existing G.B. White Building into the town's new safety complex. This option has some appeal. Many people feel that the G.B. White Building could be better used for other purposes. Added to that, most agree that it needs a face lift or at least some time and attention to update its appearance.

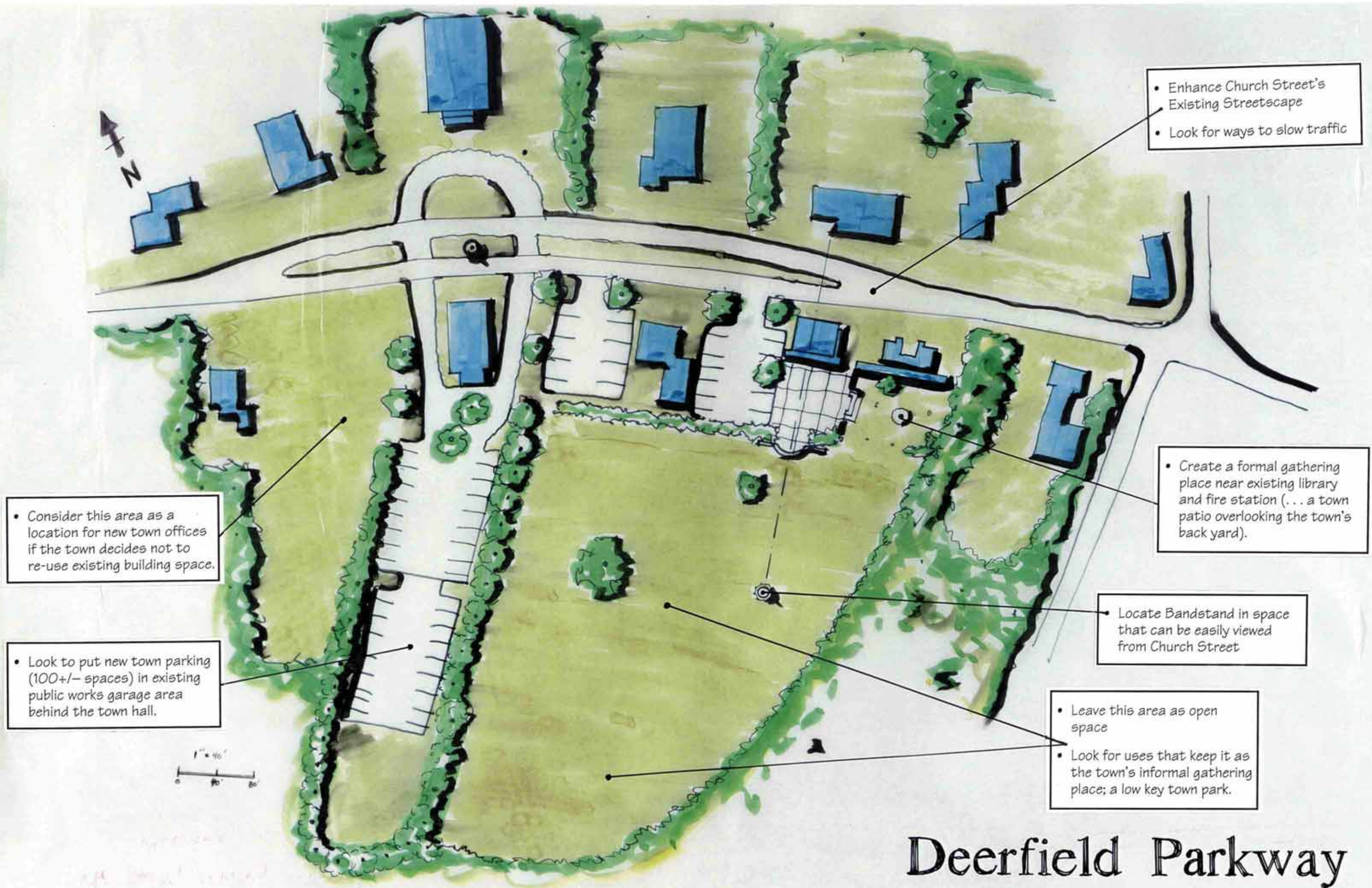
Another plus is that the town already owns this land and it has already been developed. It makes sense to use this space for a new public safety building before using up additional undeveloped land. Moreover it would provide clear access for safety vehicles along Route 107 and would keep fire trucks off of Church Street.

In many ways this seems to be a logical option.. However, there is a possible downside to re-using the G.B. White building for this use. For one, the town has very little available commercial and retail space available near the town center and even less that is vacant. The vacancy rate in the White Building is very low.

Clearly, Deerfield needs a mix of residential, commercial and public spaces in the center of town. Deerfield should not redevelop one of its only existing retail/commercial spaces unless it has created new space to house its existing businesses. Remember that one of the most important town center functions is to provide retail opportunities and give reasons for people to come down town. Diminishing this already small sector in town would hurt this goal.



Safety Complex - Alternate View



Deerfield's Parkway

The Town's Newest Park

The design team spent a lot of time on both Friday and Saturday to take a good look at the 5 acres of open space behind the library and fire station. There was some discussion originally of using the area as the location for the new fire station. Other discussion focused on using this area for ball fields. The town needs both of these, but it seems as though this particular area might not be the best location.

After a great deal of discussion, the design team and the audience agreed that this land would best serve the town by leaving it as open space, creating low-key town park. Open space in a town center can act as the town's back yard. Town members talked again and again about their wish to put up a bandstand in town. This field would provide the perfect space for a bandstand, and other low-impact uses. Walking paths would help bring people into the area and would provide a wonderful back drop for a reading room in a expanded library.

Also consider turning the space behind both the library and fire station area into a more formal gathering space. One analogy would be to build a patio on to the town's back yard. Make it a place where people might like to gather for a picnic or just to read a book or people watch. Incorporate this concept when the town considers re-use strategies for the fire station and expansion possibilities for the library.

Parking and Public Works Garage

The town needs central parking. The public works garage is too small and does not fit well with the existing town center. It makes sense to take care of both of these issues by creating a parking area behind the Town Hall. Once the public works garage is housed in a new location, where ever that ends up being, seriously consider the removing the garage and adding in new parking. The goal is to add in 100+ spaces in an area that could serve many different community needs including the Town Hall, Community Center, Library and the town's "new" park.

Maintain Streetscape and Slow Traffic

Church Street has a wonderful feel. The town should consider pruning or cutting a few trees to expand the view down the entire streetscape. If the view is improved, it will only serve to enhance the attractiveness and invitingness of the street.

Many town members clearly felt that traffic moves too fast on Church Street. Other communities are trying design measures that make it easier for pedestrians and cars to co-exist. There is no one right method for doing this. One inexpensive and low-tech option would be to put in cross walks and put Pedestrian Crossing signs in the street. These new signs are available for a small cost through the NH Department of Transportation and might provide a short term solution. Other more drastic approaches might include splitting Church Street into two narrow one-way sections. Narrower roads help to slow traffic.

Town Offices

Town leaders have indicated that there is not enough space in the G.B. White Building for the town offices and that the town would like to move these services to another building. Beyond this, it is clear that the town would like to get out of the landlord business and is considering putting the G.B. White Building up for sale. If this building is sold, obviously the town offices would need a new home. The question remains whether to construct new offices or renovate an existing building to serve this function. There are a number of possible locations for new town offices. In two days at the charrette alone the Community Center and Fire Station were mentioned as options. One additional option mentioned would be to use a small area of town-owned open space just to the west of the Town Hall to construct a new building. However, keep in mind a design principle about the importance of filling its existing vacant space before creating new space.

Under this concept, the proposed town offices would have a similar facade to the existing town hall and would be designed in a way that would accentuate the traditional New England feel of the Church Street streetscape. The benefit would be that it would be directly adjacent to the town hall and could be designed to easily fit the needed space requirements.



Deerfield's Philbrick-James Library

The existing library has served the town well over the last century. But times change and it is clear that the town has outgrown its limited space.

The current building fits well within the streetscape of Church Street and it would be a shame to see it replaced with an entirely new structure. Consider adding onto the library. One possibility is to connect the fire station to the library to create space for a museum, public meeting rooms, reading rooms, a historical society, etc. The fire station could also serve as a good senior center or teen center or maybe even town offices

Librarian Evelyn Cronyn provided about a dozen suggestions that she had heard over the years about what the town needs in a new or expanded facility. Many of these points relate directly to the library structure itself and should be considered as the town moves forwards with design plans.

- Handicapped accessibility (2 floors)
- Reading room with good lighting and comfortable chairs
- 2nd Floor window seat with comfortable seating overlooking a garden
- Separate meeting room to accommodate 100 people; also available to split room into smaller session rooms.
- Children's room
- Online catalog and circulation records
- Study carrels; some equipped with computers that would available for different purposes (Internet, word processing)
- Additional book storage
- Parking Lot for 100+ cars for town-wide use
- Outdoor garden/Café area
- Programming for all ages
- Room for literacy tutoring



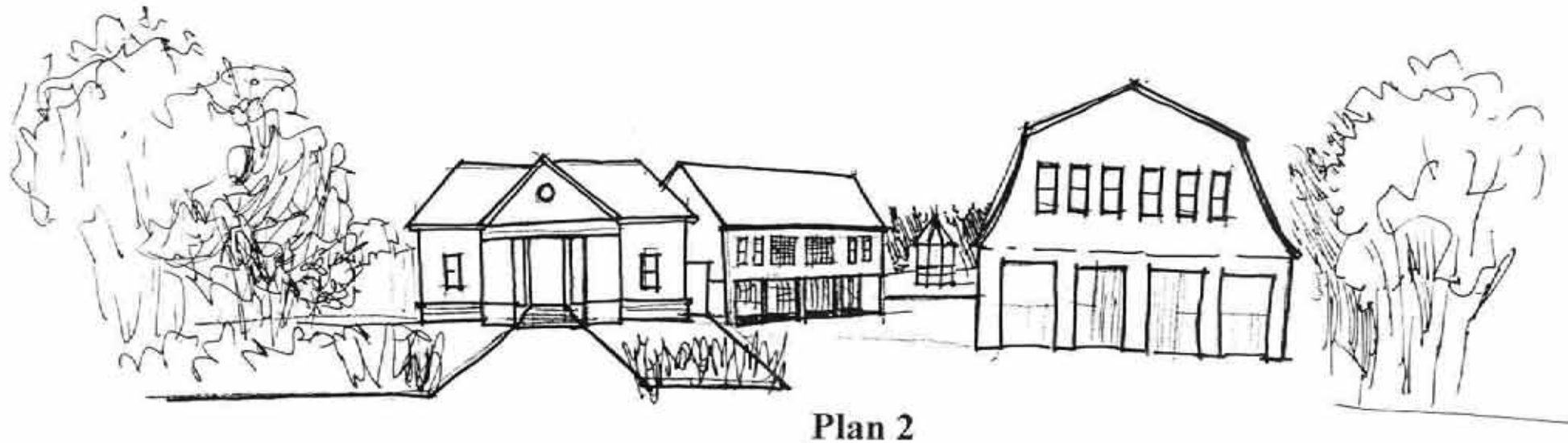
Plan 1

* Both plans discussed here (Plan 1 and Plan 2) provide conceptual plans that incorporate many of the design aspects mentioned above, and include a few other suggestions the town might want to consider. Think of these plans as starting points and use them to hone in on a more detailed vision for the library.

Plan 1

This proposal above retains much of the library's traditional facade. Three sides of library keep their basic form. An new addition on the back provides room for more stacks, reading space, etc. Any additional space in the original library might be well used as space for the historical society, as a museum or as reading rooms.

The addition would include glass and steel construction finely detailed so as to blend well with the historic look of the traditional library. The fire station would be updated to add large windows onto the face of the building to make it more open and 'friendly'. This plan divides the fire station space into rooms suitable for town office space.



Plan 2

This plan is slightly different in that it retains the open space between the library and the fire station. However, improvements would visually connect the two buildings, creating a "learning campus" in the center. The view between the two buildings would provide a visual link to the open space behind the library and fire station and invite people to head out to a new town gazebo and town fields.

As one enters the library, the historic look of the original library could serve as a good location for a new town museum. Artifacts currently stored in the town hall could be moved to these rooms for a more permanent display. Providing the historical society with designated space would also cement connections between the museum and library functions the 'new' building could provide. The bulk of the library activities would be in the back extension, with plenty of windows and reading space.

One suggestion is to transform the fire station into a senior center. Under both plans only the front section of the station would be used. The back of the existing fire station is in poor condition and may be torn down. Similar to the other plan, this scenario adds large windows to the front to mimic the look of the existing bays. The downstairs could be made into a large meeting space with kitchen facilities. The upstairs could be made into craft rooms or meeting rooms.

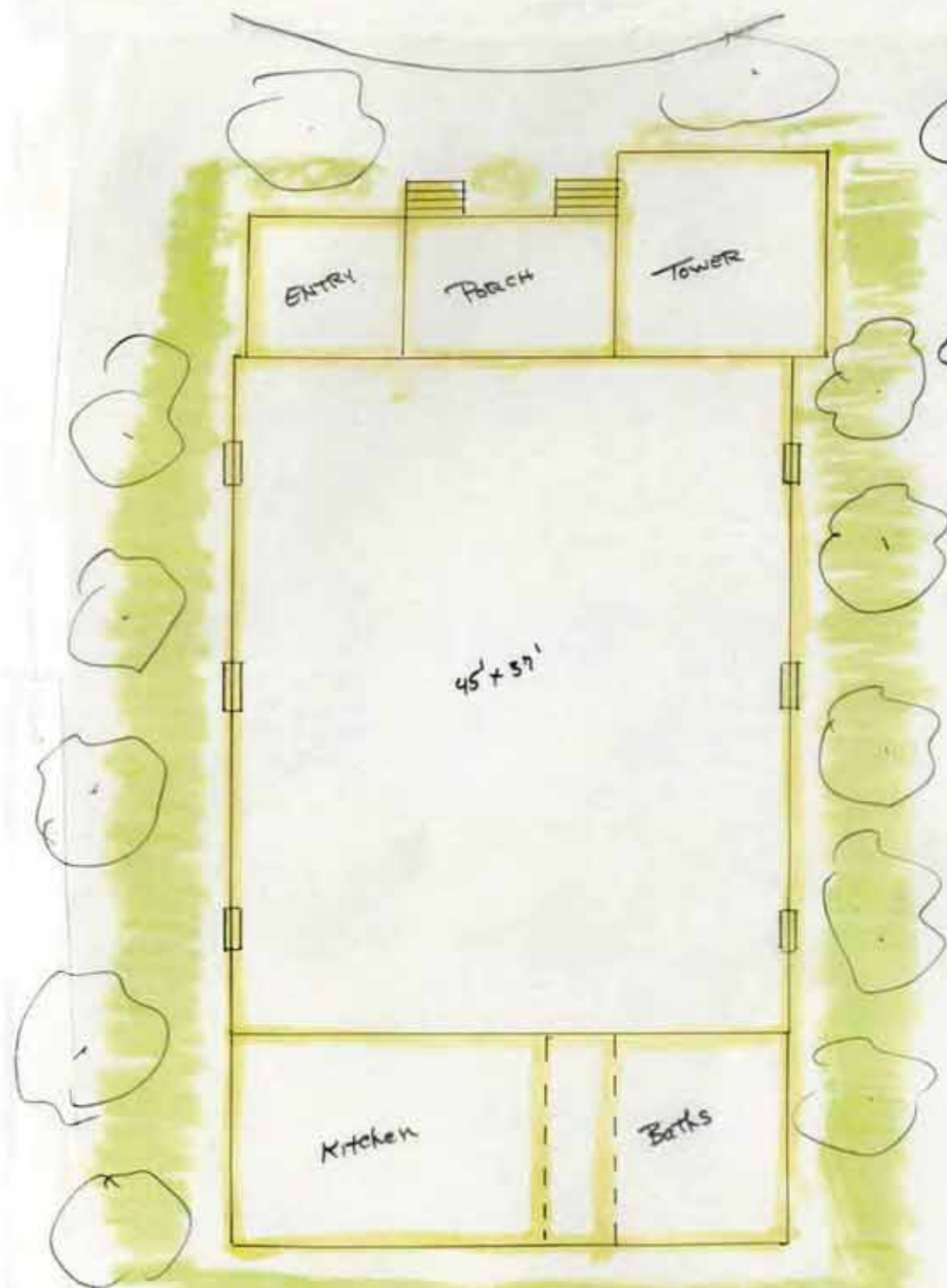
Another option is to turn the fire station into a teen center. The entire first floor (which now houses the fire trucks) could be left open as a climbing gym, indoor basketball court or other "energy expending" activity area. The upper floor could be used as a tv room and activity area, maintaining the kitchen as is.

Its clear from these two scenarios that the options are endless. There is no one perfect or optimal solution to present. Rather, there are a host of possibilities and options that the town can pursue.

The main message is to consider these two buildings as cornerstones and be sure to make full use of these resources and build on to these in ways that will further their use as public spaces. Tie in the buildings with the open space behind them. The 5 acres of fields are the town's back yard and people should be invited to use and enjoy it. Whether the fire station is used as a teen center, senior center, town office space or another use will depend on the town's needs, preferences and available funds.



Historic Photo of Deerfield's Library



COMMUNITY CENTER

Option 1:

Convert to Town Offices

- Need more space
- Need elevator

Option 2:

Convert to Senior Center

Add Food Pantry



Community Center as it Exists Today

Conversion of Community Center

Town Offices. As with the library and fire station, there are a number of possible options for re-using the Community Center more fully. The existing Community Center is somewhat small and would require a new addition to adequately house new town offices. Town offices would also require a new elevator to make both floors fully accessible. While the building would require a fair amount of rehabilitation and expansion it would also make full use of a community resource right in the heart of the town center.

Senior Center. Another possible option is to convert this space into a senior center and food pantry. This too would require some renovation but it would be less exhaustive (and expensive) than the town offices option. Where ever it is housed, a main goal should be to connect the senior center with other key town center activities (library, historical society, etc.). It would also be good to house the senior center in the same general location as the teen center. Linking different uses and different age groups will help build community and will provide another outlet for seniors in town.

Other Uses???

* No matter what you decide to do with the Community Center, think about replacing the spire. This is a wonderful old New England building. It would not only improve the integrity of the building, but would add to the street scape as well!



Senior Housing

Town members indicated one problem in town is the lack of senior housing. Clearly, small towns are at a disadvantage when it comes to providing affordable and manageable housing for its senior citizens. There are few rentals available and services are often few and far between.

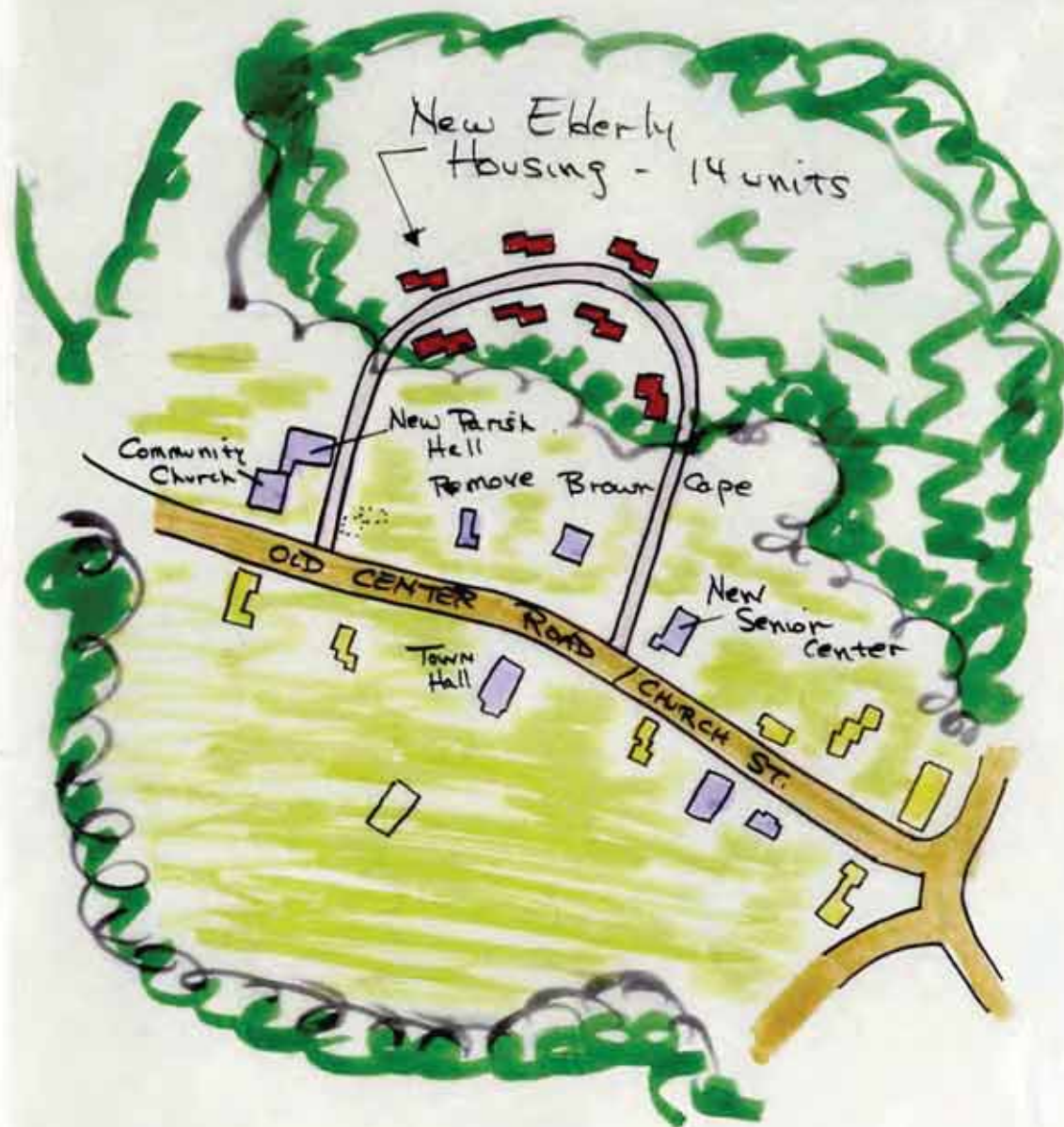
Towns lose a great resource when they lose their senior citizens. Many seniors have lived a majority of their lives in town and know the history and character of the community like few other do. They are also some of the town's best volunteers. Losing these long standing residents isn't an inevitability however, especially for Deerfield.

Deerfield is lucky to have a good deal of open space near the center of town. There are 45+ acres behind the Community Church and Community Center. This area would provide adequate space for housing and a loop road linking the housing with the Community Center (possibly the new Senior Center).

This particular proposal consists of 7 duplex units providing 14 units of senior housing. This number is based on the size of Deerfield and work done in similarly sized communities across the state. Our vision is that each unit would be about 1000 square feet in size and would contain 2 bedrooms, 1 3/4 baths and an attached garage. These are industry standards and is a reasonable starting point for discussion here. The complex design might want to incorporate many New England cape features including a steep pitched roof, single story construction, smaller windows and varied roof lines. The goal would be to fit in with the surrounding buildings in the town's center.

The new complex would be close enough to the town center that many residents could walk to the library, town hall or senior center. It would also be constructed in a wooded area, providing a private, pleasant setting. In short, a place most people wouldn't mind living! The brown cape next to the Community Church would need to be removed to make room for a loop road that would service the housing complex. The other exit entry point would be located between the Community Center and the Baptist Church.

This type of plan may not be something the town can fund in the short term given its pressing need for a safety complex and public works building, etc., but perhaps it could (and is?) being pursued by others. Remembering the systems that need to interact well in a functioning village, it is important that all of these pieces fit well with each other. This plan requires land acquisition and a large investment and this is done in part. In any case, keep the importance of this undertaking in mind and find a way to include a senior housing project into the town's long term vision.



New
Senior Housing
7 duplex units



Public Works Facility

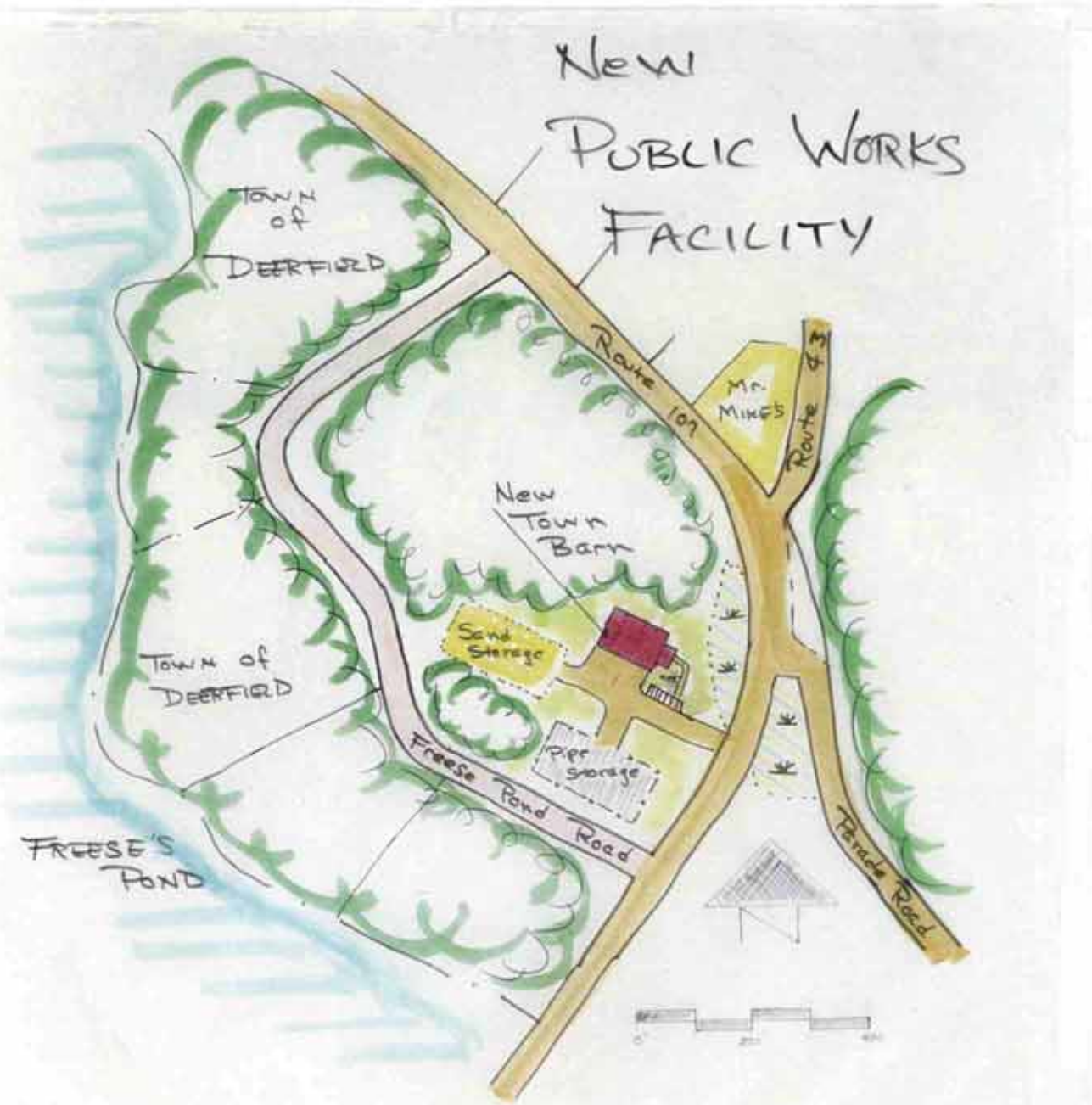
It became clear from first glance that the existing public works garage is not in the best of locations. The garage, trucks, sand piles and salt piles all detract from the quaint small town New England feel of Deerfield's center. To make matters worse, the building is too small and needs to be expanded. That's the down side.

The upside, of course, is that because the existing building is inadequate, there is now a golden opportunity to take this service out of the town center and build a new and improved facility in an area that is easily accessible to major public roads.

The design team took this opportunity find an alternative site that would be more suitable for such a use. The team ultimately recommended that the public works facility be moved northward near the junction of Route 107 and Route 43. Just to the west of this intersection, the town owns about 15 acres of wetland and woodland. This area has enough flat, dry land to construct a new facility, including a barn, sand storage and pipe storage, and would be largely screened from the road by existing trees and vegetation. Best of all it would provide extremely easy entry and exit for plows and maintenance trucks and would 'fit in' with other uses in the area.

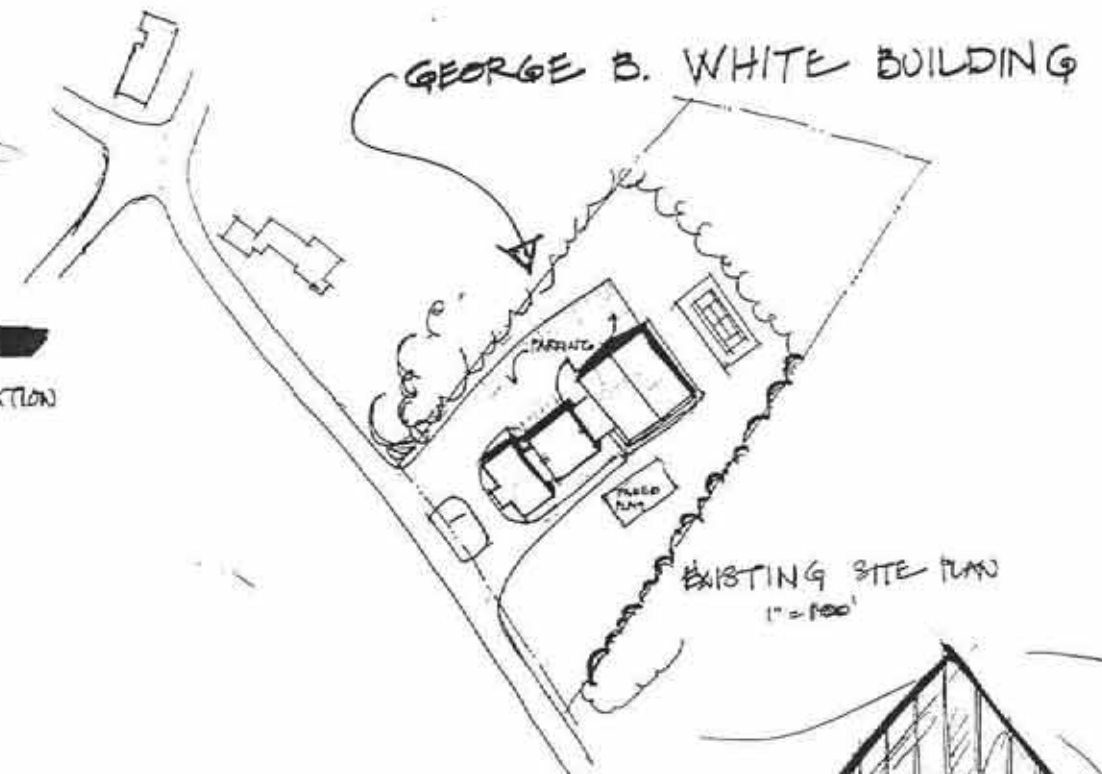
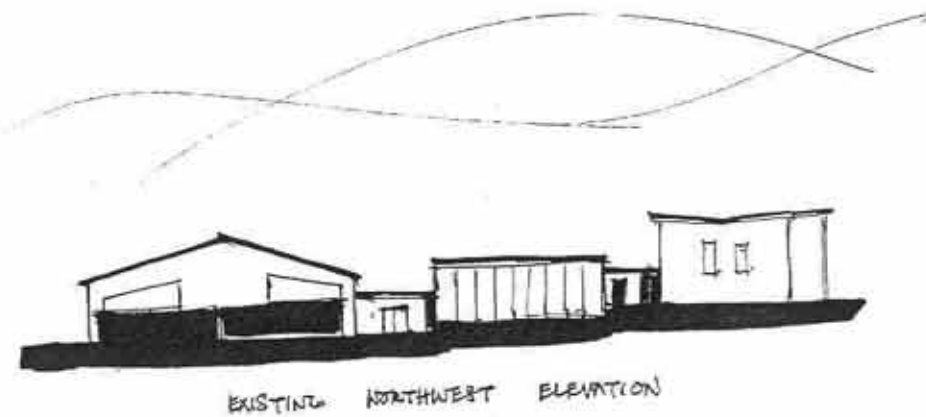


Existing Facility Does Not Mesh with "Town Center" Concept

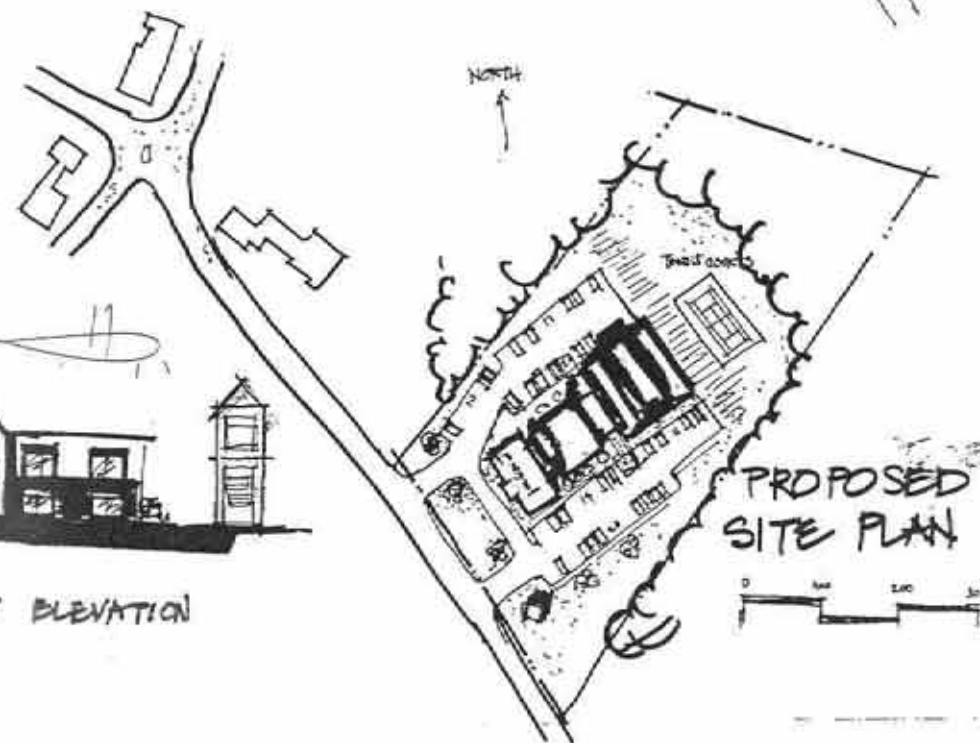


Highway Access To Proposed Public Works Facility

The G.B. White Building Facelift...



The existing commercial center of Deerfield could be made much more visually appealing for businesses and customers alike. The basic goal should be to make it look like a marketplace instead of a school! The town leaders mentioned several times that they would like to get out of the real estate business. Making the building look more like a commercial center may help tremendously in this effort.



- Add pitched roof to the building. This will provide more space and will add tremendously to its appearance.
- Take out the 'schoolroom' windows and install standard windows in the front and sides of the building.
- Put up different siding.
- Construct a new "market place" sign that is more visually appealing, replacing the existing sign.
- Keep an open mind!

Recommendations and Resources

Where do you start? There are a lot of ideas presented here and, as always, only a limited amount of money available at any one time. The most important thing is to start with something small; say something the town can get done in a few months. Many of the other projects will need to be prioritized based on the town's needs and the town's financial resources.

Deerfield residents are the only ones really suited to make decisions about what will work and what won't work in their community. We hope that this charrette has sprouted a few new thoughts and built upon ideas that the town has already considered. Clearly there is a great amount of interest and enthusiasm in town and it is clear that town leaders are in a great position to get started.

It is important to keep in mind that the options discussed at the charrette and in this report are only points for discussion and are not set in stone. The most important thing to understand is the basic design principles behind any strategy the town pursues. As the town decides how to move forward, it might be helpful to restate some of the principles that have guided the design team.

The cheapest short term solution may not be the cheapest in the long run.

Remember that the cheapest solution for any one project or any one town 'need' may not be the least expensive overall solution, and may not fit well into the broader vision or plan for Deerfield's center. All of these improvements need to fit together and they need to make sense. For instance it might be cheaper to reuse the GB White Building as a safety complex instead of constructing an entirely new complex. However, such a plan would take Deerfield's main commercial building out of commercial use. Where would these businesses go? Would the town need to construct a new commercial center first? Where would such a building be located? Think long term and think of stages.

With only limited funds available, it is crucial to invest them where you'll get the biggest return on your investment.

Simple improvements are sometimes overlooked but can have lasting impacts on a community. If you start with a \$2 million project, it may take years to complete. In the meantime some of the energy may fizzle and some of the smaller projects might never get done. Look for improvements that will elicit pride among residents and spark interest in what's going on in the town center.

Respect the existing structure and integrity of Deerfield's center.

This is your living room. Make it livable and comfortable. Make it an inviting place for residents to gather and for visitors to appreciate. Focus on improvements that will maintain or improve upon the character of the existing streetscape, and will invite people into the area.

Connect the pieces of Deerfield's center.

The stronger the connection between the parts of Deerfield's center, the closer all will appear to be in the heart of downtown. Tie these town resources together. Improvements can be made in stages. Even a small improvement will show the whole community that there is a plan and a serious commitment to make these improvements happen.

Respect the qualities of the built environment already there.

Reinforce the characteristics already present in Deerfield's center. Building setbacks, building height and massing should reflect existing development. Keep the character of this small town center intact. Also revisit zoning regulations to make sure that the zoning language reflects the town's goals for the future. Remember that zoning regulations should reflect what the town *wants* to see so that, if the situation ever arises, buildings can be rebuilt as they exist today.

Get Started!

We keep harping on this point but it really is important! Build off of the energy and enthusiasm displayed at the charrette. People care about Deerfield's center and would be willing to help make small changes happen right off the bat. If the process is set in motion now, it will make some of these larger projects seem more feasible and it will be clearer how these projects all fit into a larger plan. Start with the gazebo. Coordinate volunteer labor to cut down on dollars needed. This has the double benefit of being cheaper, and more importantly, getting people involved and invested in the idea.

A Suggested Approach:

1. Commit to a strategy. Who is going where? What's the game plan?
2. Start small, but start soon: Build a gazebo.
3. Commit to move forward with the Safety Complex. Start with site design at the corner lot. Next meet with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to discuss the road.
4. Figure out who will go into the old Fire Station
5. Figure out who goes in the Community Center
6. Build the Library Addition
7. Move the Public Works Facility.

Saturday Morning's Design Session



Cost Estimates and Plans

These cost estimates below describe preliminary estimates for several different plans and projects presented in this report. These are estimates and will change based on the actual plans developed.

A. Bandstand

- Bandstand and site improvements

Budget Cost: \$30,000 - \$50,000

If Volunteer Labor and Materials Are Used : Only \$10,000 - 15,000

TOTAL: \$15,000

B. Library/Museum Addition

- Site Improvements/Play Area
Budget Cost: \$170,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$56.67
- Library/Museum Addition Costs
Budget Cost: \$400,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$130.00

TOTAL: \$570,000

C. New Public Works Building

- 4000 s.f. Town Barn
Budget Cost: \$137,520
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$34.38
- 800 s.f. Office Space
Budget Cost: \$50,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$62.50
- Site Improvements
Budget Cost: \$100,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$12.50

TOTAL: \$287,520

D. Church Street Reconstruction

- Reconstruction: including walks, lighting, street scape
Budget Cost: \$200,000
Cost Per Linear Foot of Street Work: \$250.00

TOTAL: \$200,000

E. New Parking at Old Town Garage Site

- 400 New Parking Spaces
Budget Cost: \$80,000
Cost Per Parking Space: \$200.00

TOTAL: \$80,000

F. New Town Office Building

- Building Construction Costs
Budget Cost: \$250,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$62.50
- Site Improvements
Budget Cost: \$100,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$25.00

TOTAL: \$350,000

G. Rte 170/43 Intersection Improvements

- Lighting, Curbing, Paving
Budget Cost: \$250,000
Cost Per Linear Foot: \$300.00
- Retaining Walls
Budget Cost: \$125,000
Cost Per Linear Foot: \$140.00
- Sidewalks
Budget Cost: \$100,000
Cost Per Linear Foot: \$100.00

TOTAL: \$475,000

H. Safety Complex

- Site Improvements
Budget Cost: \$750,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$33.48
- Building Construction Costs
Budget Cost: \$1,300,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$58.04

TOTAL: \$2,050,000

I. Senior Housing

- Site Improvements (7 Acres)
Budget Cost: \$427,000
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$24.00
- Building Construction Costs (14 Duplexes w/ garage, 1027 square ft. per unit)
Budget Cost: \$1,771,500
Cost Per Sq. Ft: \$100.00

TOTAL: \$2,198,500

Good Luck & Thanks for Having Us!!

...The Design Team

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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

The Authority provides financial and technical assistance to community development corporations, worker cooperatives, and certain municipal entities.



Scenes from the Charrette



