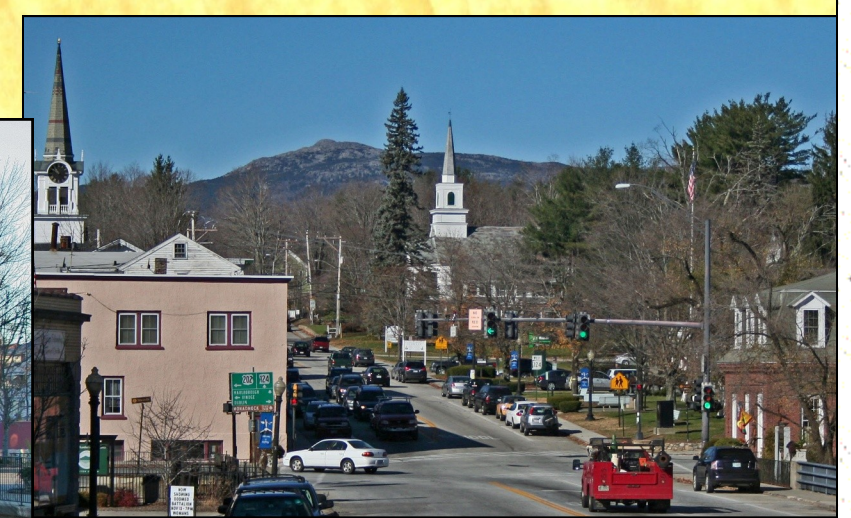
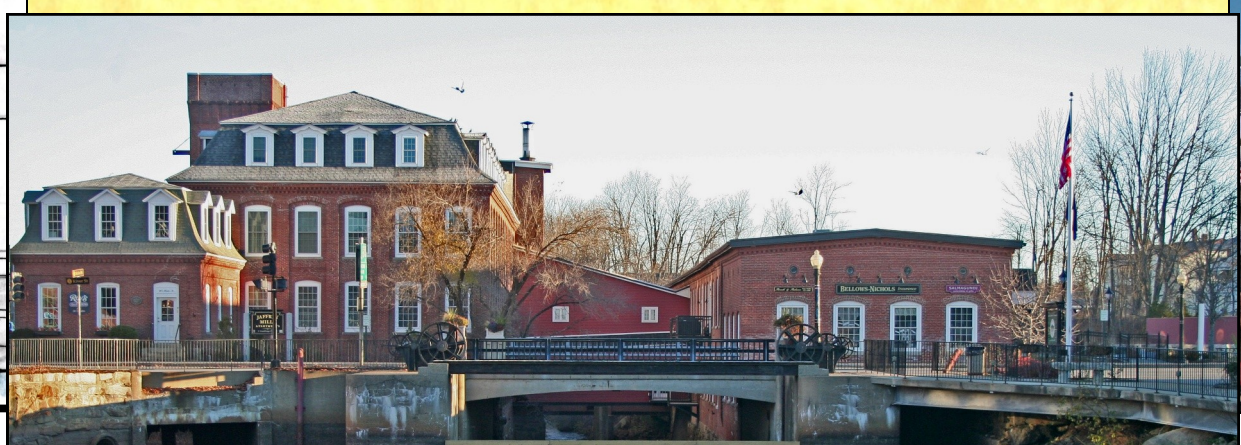
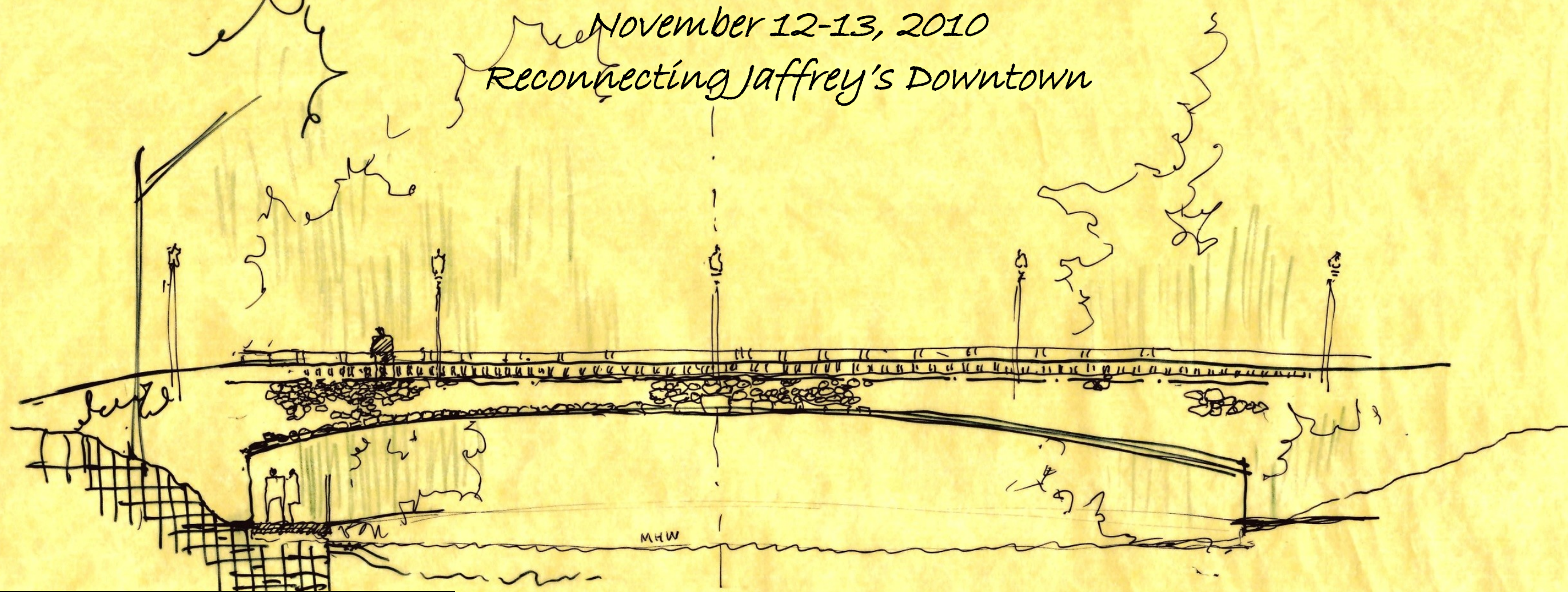


Jaffrey, New Hampshire Charrette

November 12-13, 2010

Reconnecting Jaffrey's Downtown



PLAN NH *The Foundation for Shaping the Built Environment*
Visioning for Sustainable Communities

Jaffrey Charrette Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks go to those individuals who donated their professional and personal time to make this charrette a success. Also, many thanks to the citizens, businesses and town officials who shared their time, services, thoughts and knowledge with us.



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The Jaffrey Team

Without the support and participation of all of the following individuals, organizations and businesses this charrette would not have been possible

Kathy Batchelder - Executive Director of TEAM Jaffrey, Chair of the Economic Development Council, Selectman
Lee Bruder, President, Jaffrey Chamber of Commerce
Nora Bryant - Women's Club
James Dumont, Economic Development Committee
William Graf - Conservation Commission Chair
Jeanne LaBrie, Selectman
Norman Langevin, Economic Development Committee
Susan Leach - Community Center Committee Chair
Donald MacIsaac, Selectman and Economic Development Council member
Ed Merrell - Planning Board Chair
Becky Newton, Executive Director, Jaffrey Chamber of Commerce
Tom Rothermel - Facilities Committee Chair
William Schofield, Economic Development Committee
Robert Stephenson
Steven Walker, Economic Development Committee

The following town staff members also participated: **Dave Chamberlain**, Fire Chief; **William Oswalt**, Police Chief; **Randall Heglin**, Director of Public Works; **Joan Knight**, Library Director; **Michael Hartman**, Town Manager and **Jo Anne Carr**, Planning & Economic Development Director.

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Plan NH Comes to Jaffrey, NH

November 12-13, 2010

Who is Plan NH?

Plan NH is an association of professionals who work and care about *sustainability and the built environment* in New Hampshire. The organization includes architects, planners, engineers, bankers, builders, construction managers, historic preservationists, and others who are concerned about lessening our environmental footprint and building more socially connected communities in the granite state. It was established to create a forum for bringing together these different professional groups and serve as a catalyst for spurring interest in participatory 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 by providing design assistance to communities with a demonstrated commitment and need.

What is a Design Charrette?

Simply stated, a Design Charrette is a brainstorming session where lots of ideas are brought forth by both local citizens and professional designers in an attempt to find solutions to a defined local problem in a short timeframe. 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, for example, a particular building would actually be constructed.

At their best, Charrettes blend the broad experience of design professionals with local citizen's knowledge of their community to produce a plan of action that deals 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 provides a direction against which future decisions may be measured.



Why did the Plan NH Charrette come to Jaffrey?

In March of 2010, the Town of Jaffrey submitted a proposal to **Plan NH** for design assistance. Of the proposals submitted, Jaffrey was one of six communities selected for a Charrette in 2010.

Plan NH is interested in providing design assistance to communities that seem ready to move forward with a project, where there appears to be a strong community commitment, organizational expertise and where there is the ability to move forward with recommendations that surface in the course of the charrette event. **Plan NH** also seeks to address community problems and issues that may have transferability to other communities.



The Charrette Process & Overview

Jaffrey Town Officials and residents gathered with the **Plan NH** Charrette team on Friday, November 12, 2010 to discuss the details of the town's proposal with the Plan NH team. Design professionals on the team included two architects, two landscape architects, three planners, three engineers, a surveyor, a geologist and a professional facilitator. The critical piece that the Charrette Team lacked, which only the local residents could provide, was the intimate knowledge of the Town of Jaffrey and the vision for its future. The charrette team was also briefed on the 2008 Downtown Traffic Study and the 2009 Downtown Plan.

Local residents are the experts on the community — what makes sense, what history has brought forth, what will pass at the local board meetings — the design team relies on resident input and knowledge to develop viable suggestions and proposals.

After an introductory meeting with town officials to orient the team to the issues and concerns of the project, the team took a walking tour of the project area, lead by the town's Planning Director. We explored the area around the proposed Route 202 re-alignment and roundabout, the town recreation areas, the rail trail, the school and how the downtown is connected on both sides of the river, to the schools, the neighborhoods, churches and other community facilities. We also observed the physical layout and setting of the town, its traffic, parking, land uses and buildings. Our initial observation was that the existing heavy traffic on Route 202 already creates a barrier to non-motorized traffic and tends to separate the core of the downtown with the end of Main Street on the east side of the river. Even though there is commercial activity east of the river, it does not relate well to the business and civic area to the west.

Two public "listening sessions" were held on Friday afternoon and evening. The purpose of these sessions was to explain the challenge that the town had set out for the charrette team and receive comments from the community regarding issues and concerns that they have about the Route 202 bypass, roundabout, bridge and the proposed community center. The public comments are presented on pages 7 & 8 of this report serve as an important foundation for the concepts and designs that the charrette team completed on Saturday. The charrette teams observations and findings are included on page 9 & 10. The remainder of the report presents the team's detailed recommendations. The report concludes with sections on implementation and resources that may be useful to Jaffrey in achieving their long term objectives.

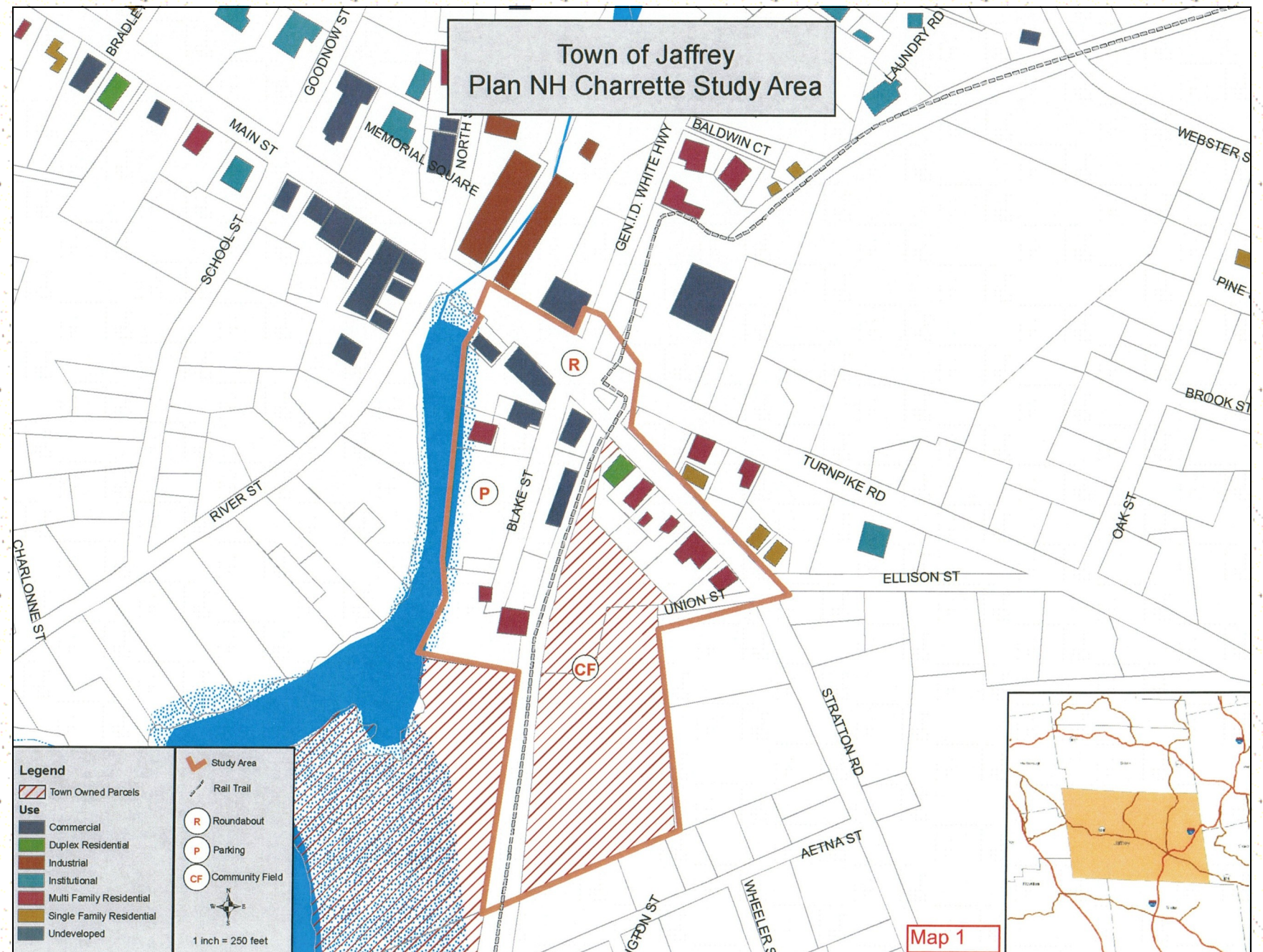
Overview

Jaffrey needs to expend considerable effort in preparation for the design and construction of the proposed Route 202 bypass, bridge and roundabout. The project has the potential to create major positive changes in how the downtown looks, feels and functions. The town needs to think about pedestrian and bicycle connectivity through the downtown, how it wants landscaping, streetscape, parking and business activity to function with the prospect of more manageable (lower) traffic volumes on Main and River Streets. The town also needs to make some important decisions regarding the location and appearance of new buildings that will be developed in future years. This applies particularly to the design and construction of a new community center that might include new town offices. Many residents spoke very positively about keeping the small town feel of Jaffrey and maintaining the traditional architectural qualities that make downtown Jaffrey what it is today. The charrette team hopes that the ideas and designs that we have developed will serve as a springboard for more community discussion and decision making as the town moves forward on both the community center and their work with the NH Department of Transportation on the Route 202 bypass.

Jaffrey's Proposal and Challenge to Plan NH

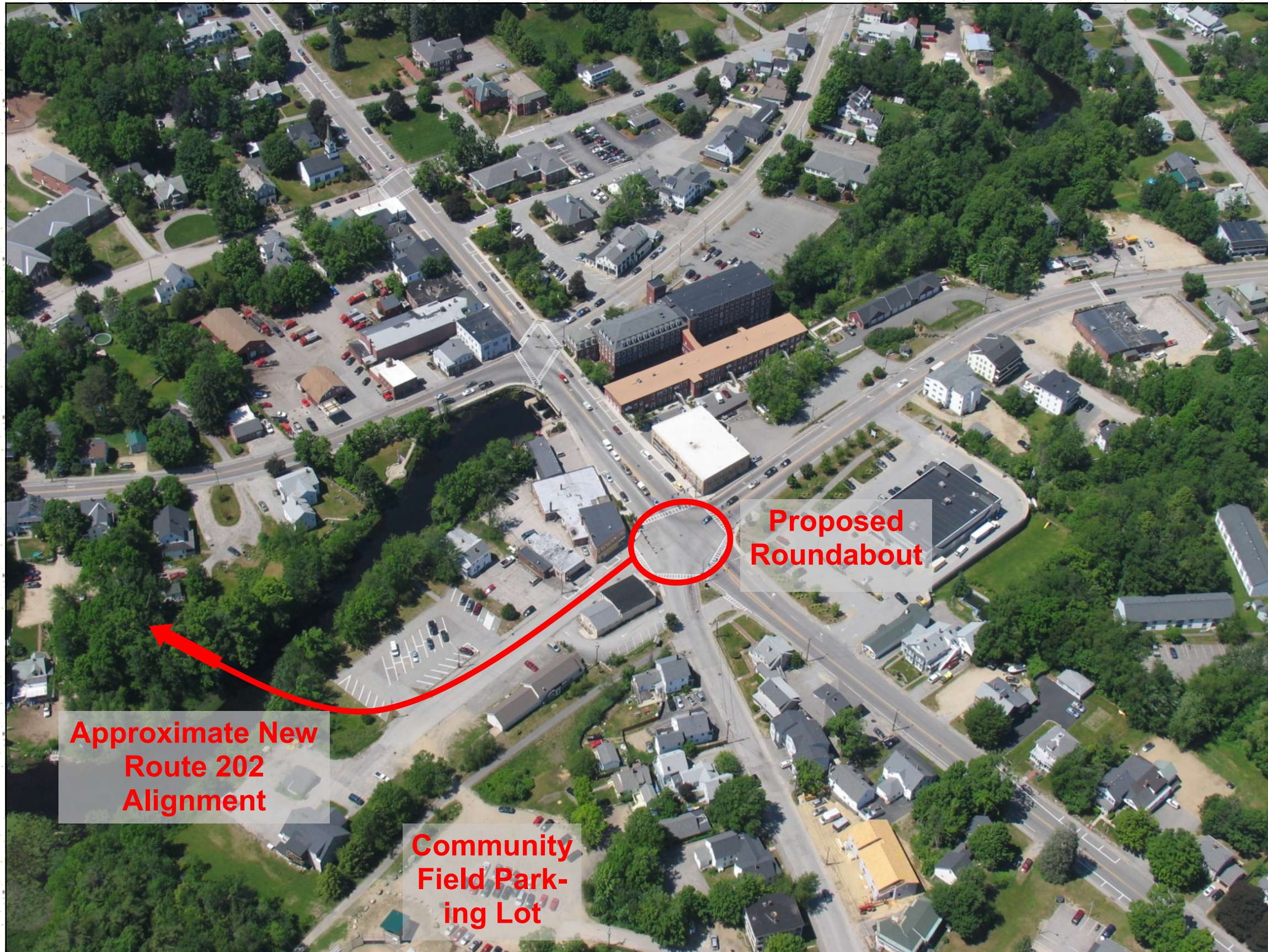
In the Town's proposal to PlanNH, they asked the charrette team to explore the development opportunities in the vicinity of Stratton Road, Union Street and Blake Street. Two high priority projects need to be integrated into the thinking for the project area. The development of a multi-purpose community center has been proposed for the community field property located between Blake and Union Streets. The recent downtown traffic study recommended that the Route 202 dogleg, that zig-zags across Main Street and the river, be modified by moving the Route 202 river crossing further south. Design consideration also needs to be given to making the current five-way intersection of Blake Street, Route 202, Turnpike Road and Stratton Road into a roundabout.

The town recognized that they need an overall design strategy to integrate these objectives into one cohesive plan that addresses through and local traffic needs, safe pedestrian circulation while integrating the east and west sides of the downtown into a cohesive plan that is conducive to smart growth and a vibrant downtown commercial and residential area.



"We can begin by doing things at the local level, like planting community gardens or looking out for our neighbors. That is how change takes place in living systems, not from above but from within, from many local actions occurring simultaneously."

Grace Lee Boggs



This air photo shows the charrette study area. The challenges for the charrette team were to examine how to integrate the downtown on both sides of the river, keep the proposed Route 202 realignment and roundabout from creating a barrier between the east and west sides of the river, how to site a community center into the community field property, and how to integrate the entire design so that it becomes an integral part of the downtown.

What the Town Residents Told Us

Two public listening sessions were held during the afternoon and evening of November 12. The purpose of the sessions was to share their ideas with the charrette team about what they saw as the top issues and challenges and develop an idea of what it should look like in the future.

Top Issues & Challenges

- **Traffic:**
 - Size/location of roundabout
 - Traffic flow
 - Expeditious
 - Stratton Road
 - Safety concerns with no traffic lights at either intersection (with roundabout)
 - Need to retain thru traffic in downtown – get cars to stop and shop (however: currently the wait at the intersection has generated business activity)
 - Noise and pollution of traffic, particularly trucks (can't have conversations outside, open windows)
 - Traffic pattern fragments downtown
- **Pedestrians/Bicycles**
 - Pedestrian crossing
 - Pedestrian safety
 - Roundabout
 - Sidewalks
 - Crossings
 - Timing of lights
 - Pedestrian traffic from one end to other of Main Street and particularly 5-way intersection including handicapped accessibility
 - Pedestrian crossings
 - School children
 - Interaction with traffic
 - Pedestrian routes need improvement
 - Overpass/underpass for pedestrian and student safety getting across Rt. 202 traffic?
 - Concern for pedestrian traffic, safe crossing – will a roundabout be safe for pedestrians to cross?
 - Roundabout would be safer, taking traffic from downtown would be safer for school kids
- Not pedestrian friendly town: lights long; school children; seniors; disjointed-traffic divides
- Have a bike friendly/accessible downtown:
 - Rail trail disconnected – needs improved connections
 - Bike route through downtown
 - Bike facilities
- **Parking:**
 - Would rather have Main Street parking back
 - More parking is needed
 - Signs directing to parking
 - Parking in front of businesses/retail (Mill-northwest of roundabout)
 - Downtown parking in front of businesses – currently parking alignment is not efficient, parking is limited, parking is unsafe
 - Lost spaces due to parallel vs. diagonal parking
 - Parking should not drive the issue
- **Architecture/Aesthetics:**
 - Maintaining architectural integrity of depot and buildings across Blake St.
 - Need for aesthetic improvements – buried utilities, improved lighting, etc. Signage, greenery, improved landscapes
- Concern about the aesthetics of a new bridge close to downtown
 - Bridge aesthetics - Details to fit town (new and existing bridges)
- Protect riverfront view! Wetlands & wood turtles
- Aesthetics- streetscape; programs; team Jaffrey; upgrade housing stock
- Impact of roundabout on historic building at intersection
- Provide views of Mt. Monadnock from downtown
- **Economics & Land Use:**
 - Economic Vitality
 - Parking needed to support business activity
 - Mixed-use downtown
 - Increase pedestrian population
 - Classic downtown diner
 - Can crossing further from town add to tax base?
 - Traffic solution must be good for business
 - Impact of roundabout on downtown businesses, pedestrian traffic
- **Community Input**
 - More consultation with downtown business needed
 - Committee needs to speak with all downtown businesses – get their input
 - Downtown divided between social, cultural uses and strip development, other business uses
- **Community Center/Recreation:**
 - Community Center – does it fit?
 - Community Center that works with school and community
 - Community center is not critical to downtown improvements
 - Basketball Court with good seating
 - Water access – small boat launch (liability ?)
 - A community center that is centrally located and easily accessible to downtown



Future Vision—Top Priorities

- **Traffic**
 - Straight roads
 - Avoid roundabout?
- **Pedestrians**
 - Pedestrian-friendly
 - Better-defined cross walks
 - Close off Main Street to automobile traffic – open it to pedestrians, active street life to enhance business opportunities
 - Students able to safely access community center
 - Volume of kids would probably increase
 - Pedestrian: safe; overpass?; underpass?; crossing signals
- **Parking**
 - More parking – diagonal parking, municipal parking
 - A downtown with parking that is easily accessible to downtown



- business – should be near or in front of businesses
- Enhanced parking in downtown – on/off street, awareness for appearance of parking areas – improved parking facilities off street
- More parking – non-parallel, with good signs
- **Architecture/aesthetics**
 - Improve streetscape
 - River crossing to south
 - Maintain “small town” character
 - Aesthetic
 - Architecture
 - Landscape
 - Unification
 - Park theater
 - Upgrade architecture of any new construction in downtown
 - Blending of streetscape – maintain unique personality of Jaffrey
 - An aesthetically appealing street front and river front – improve and enhance greenery, more trees and flowers

- Improved streetscape
- Do things to draw people to downtown
- Improve aesthetics of downtown streetscape
- Introduce solar powered streetlights, trees, greenery, patterned sidewalks, etc.
- Bridge: better looking rails and existing bridge
- More and wider sidewalks and seating
- Welcoming entrance: sidewalks; rails to trails; sidewalk seating; add parking; water access – park; children’s woods & green space
- **Economics/Land Use**
 - Small business focus unified across Main Street and Peterborough Street
 - Introduce elder housing within walking distance of downtown services (potentially on Stratham)
 - Develop downtown as core area with mixed uses
 - Revitalize Main Street
 - Perception of the town:
 - Esthetic- stay-play
 - Economic health – shop & stop
 - Diverse small businesses
- **Community center**
 - Community center for all: student, adult, senior, etc.
 - Combine with town offices?
- **Environment/Recreation**
 - Improve access to the river and riverfront amenities
 - Green space along river
 - Develop river walk and boat ramp
 - More green space and seating
 - Better access to river
 - River walk extended

Other Ideas for the Future

- **Traffic**
 - No thru trucks – relocate 202 entirely
 - Concern that public & residents of Jaffrey will not support improvements for safety
 - Traffic flow at 5 way intersection is confusing and dangerous
 - Concern for the scale/size of rotary to improve traffic flow or impede flow
 - Knock out chamber of commerce and build bridge there
 - Truck noise
 - Traffic thru private parking lots and drive too fast
 - Traffic lights may create angry aggressive drivers
- **Pedestrians**
 - Pedestrian underpass

- **Parking**
 - Make it easy to transition from car to business
- **Architecture/aesthetics**
 - Strong connection linkage between community center and downtown
 - Like it the way it is
 - Unified across Main Street
 - Enhanced townscape
 - Services, shops, restaurants, in downtown utilize aesthetic aspects of downtown
 - Views of mountain from community center
 - River access – beauty of river under-utilized
 - The common area needs to be the center of town
- **Economics**
 - Small businesses focus
 - Park theater to have positive impact on downtown
 - Promote Jaffrey history as old mill town
- **Community center**
 - Needed
 - Full court
 - Town offices?
- **Environment/Recreation**
 - A dog-friendly downtown – ie dog parks, facilities to accommodate pet owners
 - Improved river-front/river walk
 - Boat access/river park/fishing
 - Expand river walk to cross under new bridge
 - Wetlands & wood turtles
- **Social/Cultural**
 - Increased diversity – more cultural diversity and inclusion



Charrette Team Observations and Recommendations

We heard the opinions and concerns of the residents. We have walked, studied, and observed the physical character and working dynamics of the town center and have observed the conditions that need to be addressed with a comprehensive proposal. Following are our findings and recommendations to address the Jaffrey challenge.

What We Heard-

Our Recommendations-

<p>1. Community Center: <i>Can a new community center be located on the community field site? Is it large enough to accommodate space for new town offices? Can it be made to contribute to the “gateway” character with a new Route 202 bypass running down Blake Street?</i></p>	<p>The charrette team has developed two different site layout concepts for a new community center or a combined community center and town office building in the vicinity of the current community field. The town will need to think carefully about the site design trade-offs for this location as well as a building design that contributes to the architectural character of Jaffrey’s downtown.</p>
<p>2. Roundabout: <i>Can a modern roundabout handle the volume of traffic and size of trucks that need to go through town?</i></p>	<p>The preliminary design developed by VHB as part of the 2008 Downtown Traffic Study is sized so that it can handle both the volume of traffic and full sized trucks that currently use Route 202 into and through the downtown. When the state undertakes detailed design, they will study both a signalized intersection and a roundabout. With the growing experience of NH communities with roundabouts, the charrette team believes it is the best solution to meet Jaffrey’s needs.</p>
<p>3. Bridge Design: <i>The design and aesthetics of a new bridge and the views of it from Main Street need to contribute positively to the visual quality of Jaffrey</i></p>	<p>The charrette team put considerable time and effort exploring the new bridge location and how it should be designed to contribute to the visual quality of the downtown. The plans that have been developed should help guide the community in discussions with the State Department of Transportation once the project design begins.</p>
<p>4. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety: <i>Can a roundabout and the proposed new Route 202 bridge crossing and bypass be designed in such a way that they improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility to schools and throughout the downtown area?</i></p>	<p>Modern roundabout design features include pedestrian crosswalk features that actually improve pedestrian safety by reducing the travel distance and number of vehicular travel lanes that need to be crossed at any one time. The charrette team was also able to develop a safe pedestrian and bike route from the west side of the river to the community field site and the high school.</p>
<p>5. Parking: <i>Can the Route 202 bypass and roundabout improve the accessibility and quantity of parking along Main Street?</i></p>	<p>One of the primary objectives of a Route 202 bypass, and the elimination of the current “dogleg” is to draw through traffic away from the center of the downtown. Properly designed, the roundabout, bypass and new bridge will enable the existing Main Street bridge area to be reconfigured with fewer vehicular travel lanes, better pedestrian and bicycle circulation and improved parking opportunities.</p>

Charrette Team Observations and Recommendations *(continued)*

What We Heard

Our Recommendations

6. Streetscape & Open Space: *The landscaping, sidewalks, benches and other street furniture, signage and downtown open spaces need to have a coherent theme and be systematically enhanced.*

Downtown Jaffrey has already established a series of public open spaces in the downtown—from the gazebo and green in front of the Police Station and Library to the Memorial Park, River Walk and the Rail Trail. The integrated solution to the bypass and community center design needs to build on the established open space system. Streetscape features need to be coordinated and upgraded throughout the downtown area. These design details need to be established and incorporated into the Route 202 bypass project, and ultimately installed throughout the downtown.

7. Land Use Mix: *Encourage a mix of land uses throughout the downtown that enhances the tax base and contributes to the vitality of the downtown*

The charrette team believes that the proposed Route 202 bypass alignment offers a number of excellent redevelopment opportunities, particularly along Blake Street, that can provide additional tax base and the potential for mixed use projects that combine retail, office and residential uses and expand the vitality of the downtown.

8. Architectural Character: *There is a need to maintain the architectural integrity and character of downtown Jaffrey—and retain its small town feel.*

The re-alignment of Route 202 and the opportunities it provides for new infill development along Blake Street combined with a new community center along this road will provide opportunities for the town to design buildings that reinforce the architectural characteristics found in the core of downtown Jaffrey. The town should pay special attention to new and remodeled buildings as they are proposed along the new Route 202 bypass to ensure that they achieve the character and quality that the town expects.

9. Mt. Monadnock: *We need to preserve and enhance the views from the downtown to Mt. Monadnock*



One of the better views of Mt. Monadnock from downtown Jaffrey can be found at the five-way intersection where a roundabout is proposed. During the design development of the roundabout, special attention should be given to preserving and enhancing the view from the Stratton Road - Turnpike Road corner of the intersection looking westerly down Main Street.

Community Center Site Layout and Design Scheme 1

Two alternatives were developed for a community center, with or without the addition of town offices. The first concept envisions an 11,000 square foot community center located along the left-field line of the baseball diamond. The community center would include a half basketball court with a glass entry lobby with views through to the baseball diamond. Bleachers could be located on the top level or roof to observe baseball games. The second floor would contain 9,000 square feet of space for the town

offices. Initial site layout suggests that approximately 67 parking spaces could be accommodated on the site with the combined community center and town office functions. It should be noted that this amount of parking is likely inadequate to meet the needs of the community center, town offices and the ballfield activities, even if it assumed that all three functions are not operating at the same time.

Vehicular access to the site would be provided from the new Route 202 bypass extension of Blake Street, and Union Street. With the development of the bypass, concern was raised about introducing a major driveway entrance and exit right at the curve where the bypass would turn westerly to cross the river. Roadway geometry and turning movements will need to be evaluated during the bypass design. A one-way traffic pattern should be explored that would allow entry from Blake Street with egress via Union Street.

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the ballfield, community center and town offices, along with a shortcut connection to the high school is also envisioned. Extension of the existing river walk along the east bank of the river with a pedestrian underpass under the new Route 202 bridge would enable pedestrians and bicyclists to safely avoid the busy Route 202 traffic. Pedestrians and bicyclists would then be able to travel to the community center or continue easterly to the high school via Union Street. Sidewalks and an adequate bike lane or paved shoulder through the community center parking lot site would be needed to provide safe travel. The pedestrian underpass is discussed further in the bridge and pedestrian circulation section of this report.

This pedestrian-bicycle circulation plan also offers the added advantage of providing a safe crossing of Route 202 that is linked directly to the Rail Trail.



Community Center Layout and site Design *Scheme 2*

The second community center site layout envisions the acquisition of the multi-family apartment building at the southerly end of Blake Street and the construction of the community center and town offices on that site. This concept has the advantage over scheme 1 in that more parking can be created and better organized on the existing community ballfield site and it provides capacity for additional building space needs over time.

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation would be provided in the same manner as envisioned for the scheme 1 layout but with the added benefit of having greater design flexibility for the entire site.

Acquisition of the apartment building site also enables the town to acquire, manage and utilize an important segment of the riverfront and begin to create a hub of community activities that connect the rail trail, river walk, expanded river access, ballfield, town offices and downtown pedestrian circulation.

Locating a community center and town offices on this site provides the town with an outstanding opportunity to design an important public structure at a prominent visual focal point where the Route 202 bypass curves and crosses the river. Since the town would be in control of the design, they could reinforce the architectural character that the citizens value highly in downtown Jaffrey. This location would contribute to a significantly improved gateway visual quality into Jaffrey that was commented on a number of times in our public listening sessions. Location of an important community building on this site may also serve as a stimulus to additional redevelopment along Blake Street.



Roundabout Design and Safety

The roundabout design proposed in the 2008 Downtown Traffic Study was used as a base concept for the charrette team's work. The new traffic lanes, landscaped areas and sidewalks are highlighted in the concept sketch (see figure 4 at right). A growing number of communities around the state have begun to install roundabouts as a very effective way of slowing traffic down, metering the flow of traffic, managing vehicular movements and improving both vehicular and pedestrian safety. Locally, Keene has installed several roundabouts and the community response has been very favorable.

Pedestrian safety is enhanced and managed (yellow highlighted crosswalks) by forcing vehicles to approach the roundabout at very slow speeds and pedestrians having to only pay attention to one lane of traffic at a time. Crosswalks are placed so that the first vehicle waiting to enter the roundabout has already past the crosswalk, enabling pedestrians to safely walk behind the vehicle. The pedestrian crosses the lane of traffic approaching the roundabout, enters onto a protected landscaped island that separates the entering and exiting traffic movements. The pedestrian then waits for a vehicle exiting the roundabout to yield, then crosses the final lane of traffic.

Traffic Circulation is managed very effectively in a roundabout since vehicles have clearly defined places where they can make turning movements. The outside diameter of the roundabout is designed to accommodate large trucks and their ability to have the truck's rear wheels ride over the slightly raised "truck apron" in the center of the roundabout (crosshatched circle in the sketch).

As a central feature of a roundabout, the center island provides the opportunity to install an attractive landscaped focal point to enhance the aesthetic quality of downtown Jaffrey.

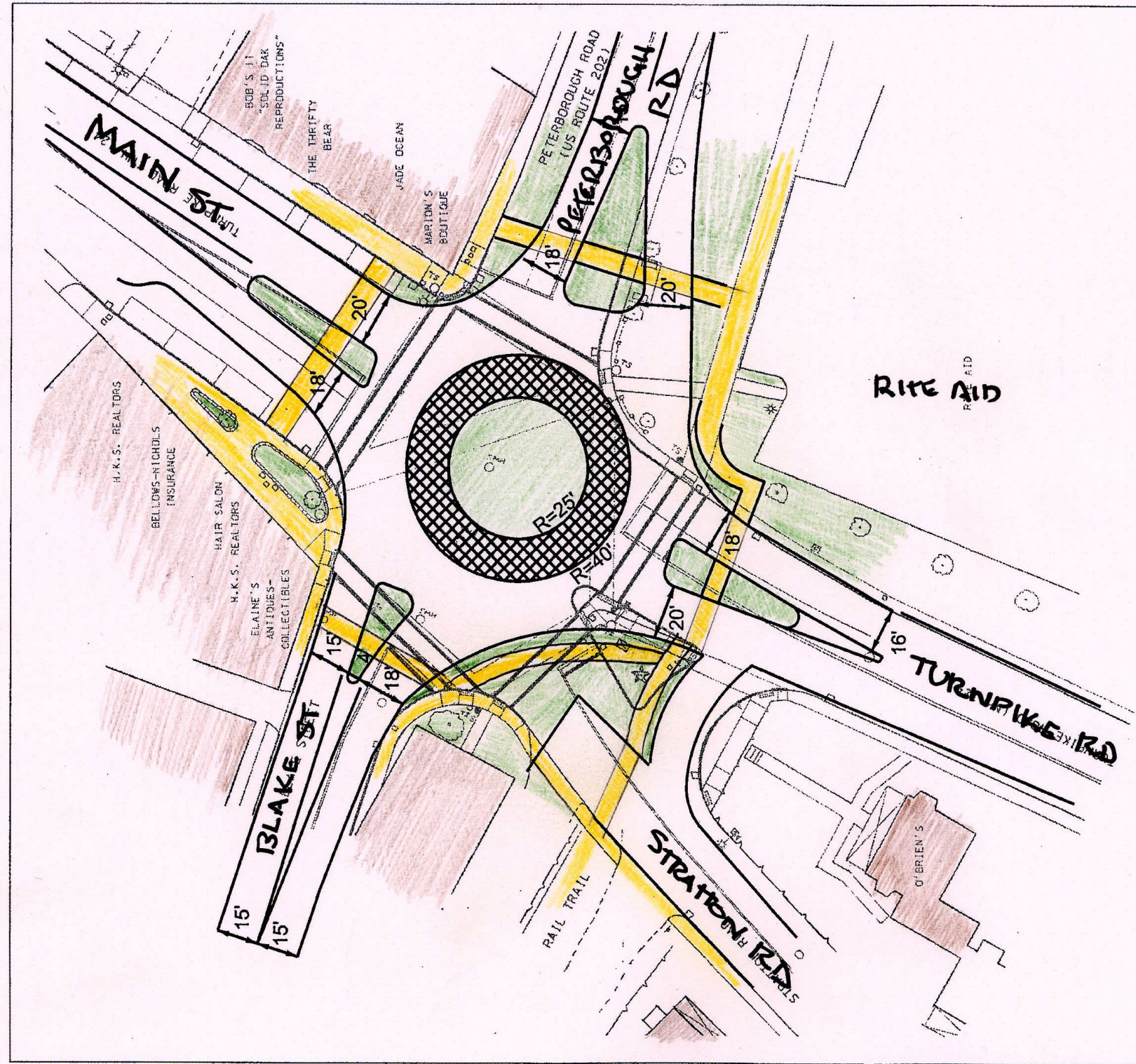
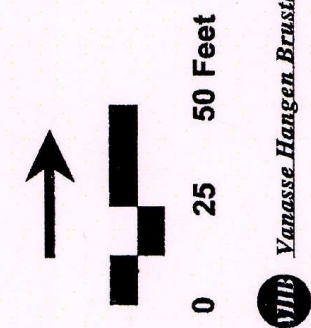


Figure 4
Conceptual
Roundabout

Jaffrey, New Hampshire

Source:
Yanase Hangen Brustlin, Inc.



Yanase Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Bridge Design

There were a number of differing opinions expressed about the recommended Route 202 bypass bridge. Some felt that the bridge should be located well to the south and away from the downtown. Others felt that it should be closer to the downtown provided that the bridge design contributed to the visual character of downtown Jaffrey.

The 2008 Downtown Traffic Study, undertaken by VHB, Inc. for the town, suggested three general road and bridge alignments. Two share the same bridge crossing with different connection locations to River Street (white and yellow alignments on the adjacent air

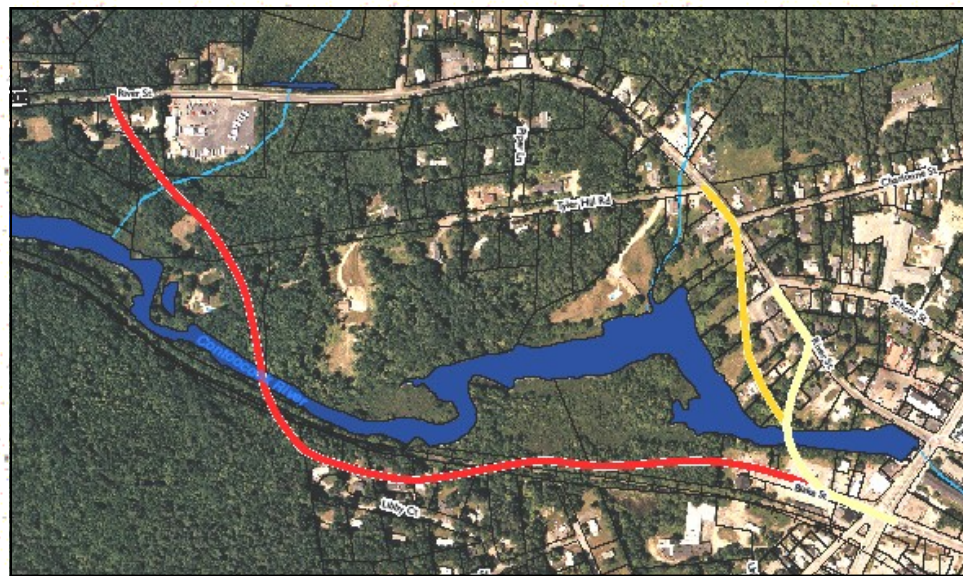


photo), and a much longer route that crosses the river and connects with River Street considerably south of the downtown area (red alignment in the air photo).

After considering several alternatives, the charrette team felt that a well designed bridge located within the downtown area would provide the best balance between reducing environmental impacts, project cost, downtown economic benefit and contribution to the quality of life in the downtown.

The following concept design for a new Route 202 bridge draws design inspiration from the existing Main Street Bridge in its simplicity. The introduction of an arched structural support, natural stone abutments and classical railings and lighting offers an understated ele-

gance to the structure. Compared to a modern DOT highway bridge design, the suggested design would offer a cost competitive and visually more context sensitive solution that would serve as a visual asset to Jaffrey.

This design envisions pedestrian and bicycle accessibility on the bridge deck as well as via a bridge underpass to enable pedestrians

and bicyclists to cross the busy Route 202 traffic safely (note the lower walkway adjacent to the left bridge abutment in the sketch). This underpass would be accessible from the extended river walk and potentially a separate pedestrian/bicycle bridge discussed in the following section on pedestrian safety.



The New Route 202 Bridge Design Concept

Pedestrian/Bicycle Connectivity & Safety

One of the primary objectives of the Jaffrey Charrette was to explore design alternatives that would re-connect the east and west sides of the river and the proposed Route 202 bypass. This would enable Peterborough Road, Turnpike Road, Stratton Road, Blake Street, the community center and high school become accessible to and part of the downtown.

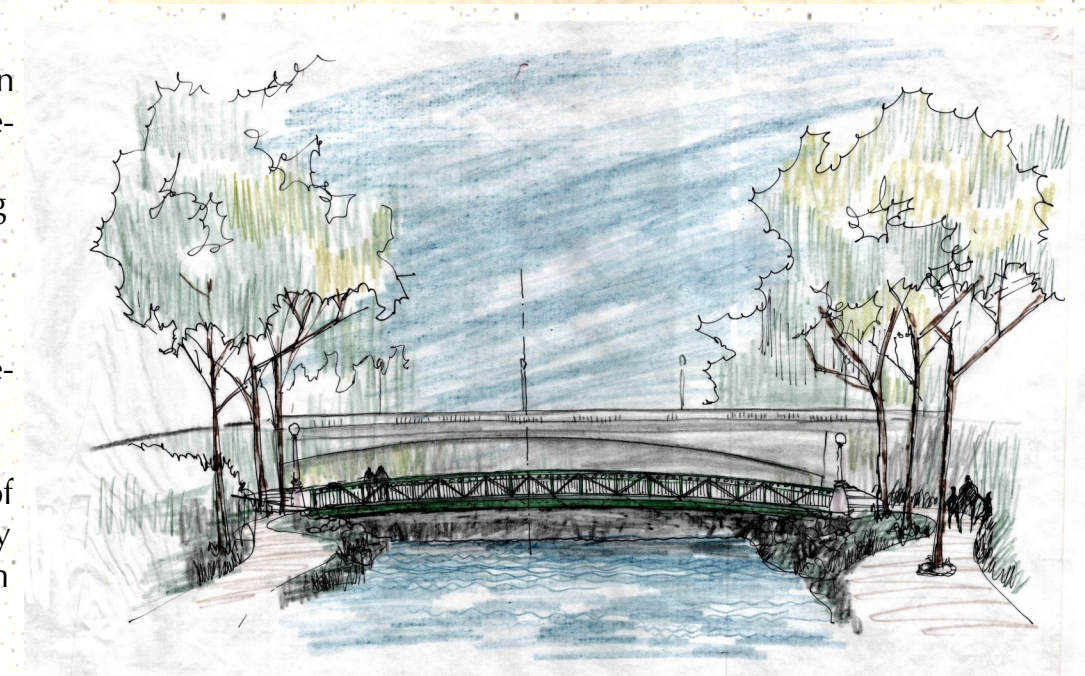
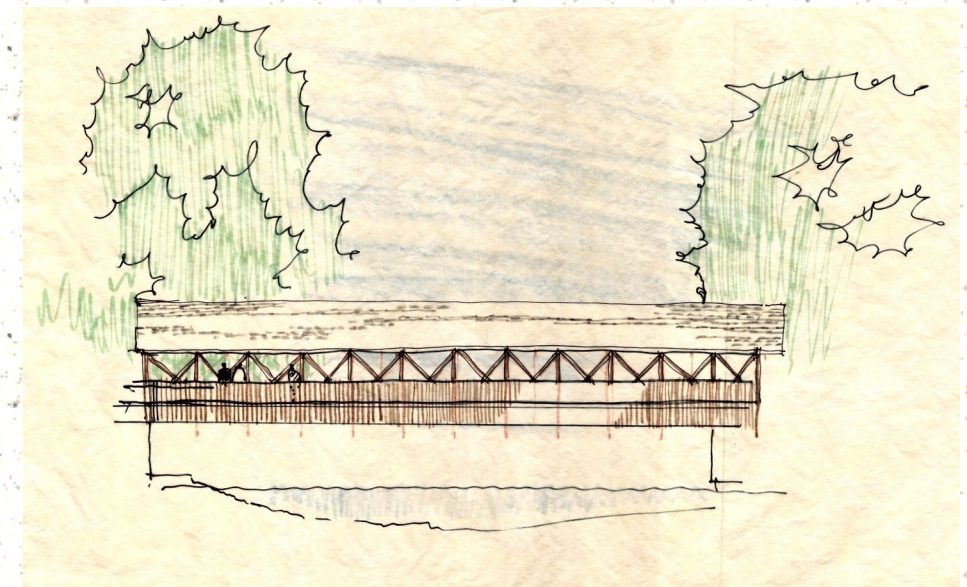
The recommended approach to this challenge is shown in the following plan. The blue dashed lines highlight the new non-motorized connections that should be pursued in connection with the Route 202 bypass project. There are four options that



the charrette team has developed.

1. Main Street: With the Route 202 bypass constructed, traffic on Main Street will be significantly reduced, potentially enabling the elimination of traffic signals at the current Main Street/River Road/Rt. 137 intersection, reducing the number of vehicular travel lanes, widening sidewalks and shortening the pedestrian crosswalk distances by installing wider sidewalks at the intersection ("bumpouts") that make it safer and more accommodating to pedestrians.
2. New Roundabout at Route 202/Main Street: As previously discussed, the introduction of a roundabout at this intersection would greatly improve vehicular and pedestrian safety. Modern roundabout design features provide much improved traffic management and safer, less confusing pedestrian crossing movements.
3. Riverwalk-Memorial Park Loop: The present riverwalk extends southerly from the east side of the Main Street bridge and connects with the state owned parking lot on Blake Street. With the construction of a new Route 202 bridge, it would be highly beneficial to extend the riverwalk to the new bridge and allow pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the river on the new bridge and cross under the new bridge to access the community ball field, new community center, Rail Trail and the high school via Union Street. The extension of the river walk through the Memorial Park to the new bypass and bridge, with a connection across the bridge, would create a very exciting Riverwalk Loop Park along both sides of the river and across both the existing Main Street Bridge and the new Route 202 bridge.
4. New Pedestrian Bridge: To create an even stronger pedestrian/bike link between the east and west sides of the river, a separate non-vehicular bridge could be constructed. This bridge would be located northerly of the Route 202 bridge and have the advantage of totally separating the heavy through traffic on Route 202 from the pedestrian/bike traffic in the downtown area. The bridge would connect the loop driveway to the house

just south of Memorial Park with the southerly end of the state parking lot on Blake Street. The following two sketches were developed to explore different design options. One is a covered bridge and the second is a simple arched pedestrian bridge with the Route 202 bridge as a backdrop (looking from Main Street in a southerly direction).



Land Use Mix & Parking

Creation of the Route 202 bypass opens up many possibilities for re-thinking the way Main Street and River Street properties are used. Many new infill development opportunities are created on both sides of the river for more intensive, downtown mixed use activity.

The current off-street parking located in front of the Chamber of Commerce could be moved to on-street parking in front of the building enabling the construction of additional building area—possibly extending to the edge of the Riverwalk to create a “Riverwalk Restaurant” with views of the river, its fountain and the Memorial Park.

New building opportunities become more economically viable directly behind (south) of the Chamber of Commerce building and along Blake Street. If the Route 202 bypass is designed with an urban context in mind, on-street parking should be provided along existing Blake Street to support the added activity that will inevitably occur.

Taking the redevelopment concept a step further, the current state parking lot on Blake Street could be considered for partial or full redevelopment once the bypass is constructed. The added parking provided for the community center and town offices (discussed previously) could serve as public parking for this new business activity. If the community center/town office building is located on the current community ball field site, the apartment building currently at the south end of Blake Street should be considered for redevelopment for retail, office and residential uses that are more suited to its new location on a major arterial street.

The reduction in traffic created by the bypass will allow the town to pursue wider, adequately sized sidewalks on



both streets and the introduction of additional parking on the Main Street bridge and on River Street. Depending on where the bypass re-connects with River Street, some additional redevelopment potential may present itself. The concept plan at left suggests that new, downtown oriented infill development might be viable if the bypass is connected to River Street fairly close to the current downtown core.

In the longer term, as downtown Jaffrey gains additional business activity, Red's Heating Oil Company may find it more attractive to relocate out of the downtown core, opening up the potential for more intensive use of that property, including a future public parking lot.

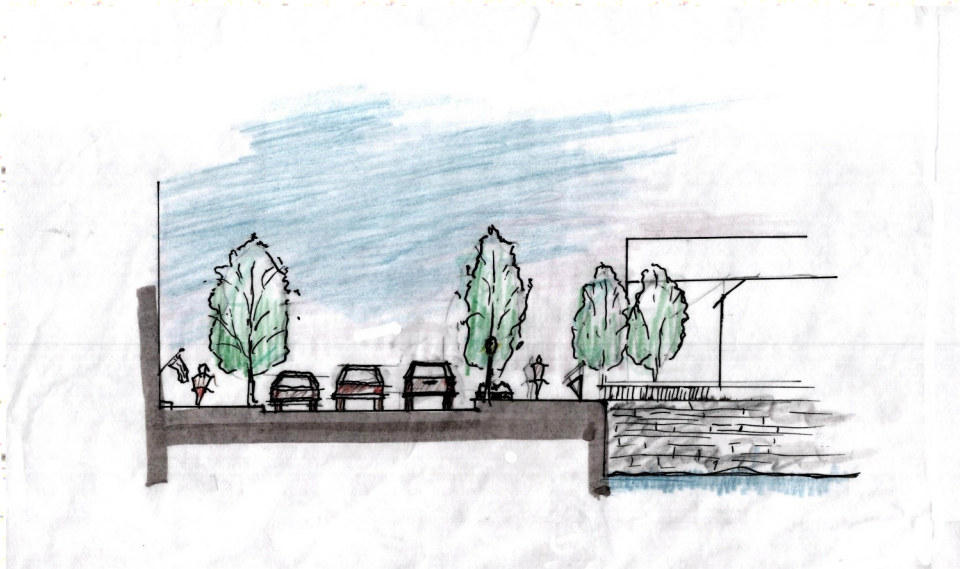
Streetscape & Open Space

Jaffrey has a well developed and maintained set of public infrastructure features in its downtown. It has capitalized on the river as an important natural and scenic resource. It has created the Riverwalk, Memorial Park and fountain, features that should be expanded with the design and construction of the Route 202 bypass and bridge.

There will be significant opportunities to do more with sidewalk amenities and landscaping when Route 202 through traffic is relocated off of Main Street. The town needs to begin planning for the installation of additional landscaping, seating, street lighting, public signage and other "street furniture" that will be needed with the reduction in vehicular travel on Main Street and River Street.



The following sketch shows how fewer travel lanes on the Main Street bridge could be reapportioned to provide more on-street parking, wider sidewalks and better pedestrian amenities.



Improvements to River Street will also need to be addressed. As with Main Street, the reduction in travel lanes that will be possible after the bypass is built will enable the widening of sidewalks and bike lanes for non-motorized travel on River Street. The connection of the Riverwalk to the new bridge and an extended walk from Memorial Park should provide the needed impetus for an additional pedestrian link across River Street.



to the neighborhood immediately to the west. This connection will improve the safety of walking students to both the elementary school and the high school.

The town needs to establish a "design vocabulary" for all of its downtown sidewalk amenities. This would entail setting standards for the specific types of street furniture that the town wants to install throughout the downtown area. As the NHDOT roundabout and bypass plans become more defined, the town will be able to provide NHDOT with their design standards so that they can be incorporated into the state's plan.



Once a streetscape design vocabulary is defined, a long term implementation strategy should be formulated to create a unified plan for the entire downtown area. The plan should include all of the primary downtown streets as well as all approaches into the downtown area. Some of the improvements should be included in the DOT bypass plan but others will need to rely on the town's budget and commitment to see a comprehensive plan implemented.



Architectural Character

In the listening sessions for this charrette, Jaffrey residents expressed a strong interest in retaining the small town architectural character that currently exists in the downtown. In order to preserve and enhance this character over time, the town needs to explore alternative tools to positively direct the visual quality of new development, as well as the redevelopment of existing buildings. If formalized procedures are not put in place, incremental changes that occur one building at a time will influence the quality and character of Jaffrey's downtown.



One alternative would be to create a set of design criteria for inclusion in the zoning ordinance. This approach has the advantage of providing an explicit set of standards that would be required of any new development. The downside of including design standards in the zoning ordinance is that it would give the town or a developer less flexibility to develop a design that best fits the site, the intended use and be within the context of adjacent buildings. Adopting the standards would also require formal amendments to the zoning ordinance. Any changes that might result from use of the design standards over time would also require a formal zoning amendment.

Including design standards in the Planning Board's site plan regulations provides greater flexibility in the adoption and amendment process as well as putting the design approval under the control of the Planning Board which is already charged with reviewing site plans. The Town's 2009 Downtown Plan also recommended that architectural design guidelines be developed and incorporated into the Planning Board's Site Plan regulations. Design guidelines provide the town with the authority to review building designs based on general design concepts, not hard and fast requirements.

In order for design guidelines to be successful, design criteria need to be developed that provide the general framework for what the Planning Board is seeking to accomplish. One approach that is being used increasingly is to develop a pattern book. A pattern book is essentially a collection of photographs or sketches of buildings, preferably located within the design review district, that are annotated to provide guidance on design features that are both desirable and undesirable. The photographs should include both individual buildings as well as rows of buildings so that the scale and tempo of entire blocks can be analyzed.



Implementation

Jaffrey has a very attractive and functional downtown that will only be enhanced by the addition of a community center and the removal of thru traffic from the core of the downtown. The following steps are proposed to begin implementation of the recommendations outlined in this charrette document:

1. Community Center: Pursue more detailed design of the community center concept on one of the two sites discussed. The town has already hired an architect (Rick Monahan, who was on the charrette team) to begin this process—see the more highly developed plans at the end of this report. The town has clearly made this a high priority and should continue to pursue its completion.
2. Roundabout and Bridge design: The town has been successful in getting this project on the State's 10 year highway plan—a very important first step. The town and its representatives in Concord need to continue to advocate for the project to make sure that this issue continues to be worked on and reaches the top of the 10 year plan list in a reasonable time frame. The town should promote bridge and roundabout design details that are consistent with the concepts developed through this charrette process.
3. Pedestrian & Bicycle Accessibility & Safety: As part of the Route 202 bypass project, Jaffrey needs to advocate for full pedestrian and bicycle accessibility when the state undertakes design work on the project. The ped/bike underpass of the new river bridge and the concept of a separate pedestrian/bike bridge just north of the new Rt. 202 bridge need to be fully explored. The ultimate goal for the bypass project should be multiple, safe pedestrian and bicycle links along and across the bypass project so that the bypass does not inhibit pedestrian and bicycle movement through the downtown and across the river and Rt. 202.
4. Tax Base Expansion: The charrette process brought to light several new development and redevelopment opportunities that will become economically viable with the construction of the Route 202 bypass. The town needs to carefully examine its zoning in the Main Street, Blake Street, and River

Street area to ensure that the zoning and regulatory process encourage appropriate downtown development density, a mix of land use opportunities, and site design that places buildings near the street with façade designs that are compatible with and strengthen the architectural quality that downtown Jaffrey highly values.

5. Parking: This charrette process sought to begin a comprehensive look at the location and adequacy of parking in the downtown. As the Route 202 bypass design advances and new development occurs, the town should seek to provide ample on-street parking and strategically located off-street parking lots to meet the growing needs of downtown business and residential activity.
6. Streetscape: The significant reduction in traffic on Main Street and River Street that will result from the completion of the Route 202 bypass will present a unique opportunity for Jaffrey. It will enable the town to reconfigure these important streets so that they provide adequate parking, landscaping, open space, benches, sidewalks, lighting and way-finding signage. The town should develop a design vocabulary and a specific long range plan for streetscape improvements in the downtown and advocate for their inclusion in the Route 202 bypass project funding wherever appropriate.
7. Mt. Monadnock: Part of the scenic quality of Jaffrey is tied to the views of Mt. Monadnock. All of the plans and improvements pursued to enhance the downtown need to maintain and enhance the Monadnock vistas.

Tools for Implementation

There are a wealth of sources of funding and expertise to explore. When applying for grants and foundation monies, many of the funders require plans or a detailed program to be in place as an assurance that projects will be completed in order to qualify for funds. This charrette plan is an important document that can be used to advance Jaffrey's plans and funding.

Expertise:

NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP)
NH Office of Travel & Tourism
Division of Economic Development (within DRED)
NH Department of Environmental Services (DES)
NH Division of Historical Resources
NH Council on the Arts
U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
NH Preservation Alliance
NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT)
Southwest Regional Planning Commission
USDA Rural Development

Funding

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
Economic Development Administration
NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT)
Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-E)
Conservation License Plate Funds
Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)
Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA)
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
Special Assessment Districts
Town Trust Funds

Other Foundations and Private Funding Sources:

Wal-Mart Good Works – www.walmartfoundation.org

The Home Depot – Community Impact Grants,
corporate.homedepot.com/wps/portal/!ut/p/.cmd/cs/.ce/70A/s/70121/s.70A/70121

The Timberland Company – Community Involvement Program, www.timberland.com/corp/index.jsp?page=communityInvolvement

The Ford Foundation, www.fordfound.org/

PSNH – Community Giving program, www.psnh.com/Community/Support/corp_giving.asp

The Allstate Foundation - www.allstate.com/Community/PageRender.asp?Page=foundation.html

Merck Family Fund - www.merckff.org/index.html

The Madeline G. von Weber Trust - Funds projects in community development, neighborhood development, human services and the performing arts. Contact: Madeline G. von Weber Trust, c/o James D. Dow, 95 Market St., Manchester, NH 03101.

New England Grassroots Environment Fund - www.grassrootsfund.org/

Waste Management Charitable Giving Program - Support for Environment, Education, and Community Impact Programs - www.wm.com/WM/community/Giving.asp

Enterprise Community Partners - www.enterprisecommunity.org/

Orton Family Foundation, www.orton.org **Heart & Soul Community Planning**

The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, www.nhpreservation.org

Other Public Resources

NH Department of Transportation NH Department of Transportation

New Hampshire Department of Transportation is a source of public funding for state road improvements, as well as safety and sidewalk improvements.

Mr. George Campbell, Commissioner; Ms. Nancy Mayville, Planning and Community Assistance Bureau, NHDOT, Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03301

Transportation Enhancement Act Program - Project categories include: facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians; safety and educational activities for bicyclists and pedestrians; acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites; scenic or historic highway programs; landscaping and other scenic beautification; historic preservation; rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings; structures or facilities; preservation of abandoned railway corridors; control and removal of outdoor advertising; archaeological planning and research; environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highways or vehicles; and establishing transportation museums.—
<http://www.nh.gov/dot/municipalhighways/tecmaq/index.htm>

Rural Development Administration provides low interest loans and grants for municipal projects as well as financing for some private development.

Mr. Steve Epstein, U.S. Rural Development Administration, Suite 218, 10 Ferry Street, Concord, NH 03301

NH Division of Historic Resources may be used as a source for historic property advice and expertise, any use of historic tax credits must be approved by this agency.

Mr. Jim Garvin, State Architectural Historian, NH Division of Historic Resources, 19 Pillsbury Street, Concord, NH 03001

NH Business Finance Authority is a source for tax-exempt bonding and other subsidies for private and non-profit investment.

Mr., Jack Donovan, NH Business Finance Authority, 2 Pillsbury St., Suite 201, Concord, NH 03301

NH Community Development Finance Authority is a source for tax credits for publicly supported projects and Community Development Block Grant funds.

Ms. Kathy Bogle-Shields, NH Community Development Finance Authority, 14 Dixon Avenue, Suite 102, Concord, NH 03301

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

Ms. Sheila St Germain, NH Municipal Bond Bank, 25 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 102, Concord, NH 03301

We also suggest the town consider enacting RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Incentives as part of the village center initiatives. Signed into law in 2006, this statute makes it possible for property owners wanting to substantially rehabilitate buildings in a downtown or village center to apply to the local governing body for a period of temporary tax relief.

Community Center Design Development - Addendum

Subsequent to the completion of the PlanNH Charrette, Richard Monahan, AIA was hired by the town to further develop the concept of a joint community center/town office building on the community ballfield site. The town is now considering funding for this proposal.

