



**Village Study
Committee**

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TO: Members of the Town of York Board of Selectmen
FROM: Ron McAllister, Chair of the York Village Study Committee
VIA: Steve Burns, Town Manager
DATE: 19 March 2015
RE: Village Master Plan Phase I: Progress Report #3

This memorandum provides an update on the Village Study Committee's activities since we made our last progress report on December 4, 2014. Below is a summary of what has been achieved during the period from December through February.

- **Workshop #3:** The big event this quarter was the third public design workshop held on February 7. More than 100 people attended the event and, as with previous workshops, there was active participation in small groups followed by an all participants summary session. Total attendance at the three workshops was about 240.
- **York St/Long Sands Rd Intersection Design:** At the time of our last report, we were still working with three alternatives for changing traffic patterns at the intersection of York Street and Long Sands Road. People attending the February workshop were strongly disposed to one of these — the York Street Tee which brings traffic coming down Long Sands Road to a +/- 90 degree connection with York Street. Computer modeling of the alternatives also supported this option as the best for minimizing traffic back-ups in the Village. In addition to improved traffic flow, the audience were also enthused about the sense of open space and it's potential as a great place for people.
- **East End York Street Segment:** The workshop also brought attention to the narrowest and most challenging portion of York Street — the area between the Berger and the Ciampa buildings. Sketches for various roadway design options were presented and people were asked to assess their value. As of now, the preferred design would allow sidewalks and parallel parking on both sides of the street, shared bike/auto travel lanes, street trees and lighting.
- **ADA Accessibility:** Both the VSC and TDRC are supportive of maximizing opportunities for handicapped access in all aspects of the Master Plan. This is consistent with our focus on a “complete streets” philosophy. However, the irregularities of the current street and sidewalk contours and the need to address

some areas that can only be altered with private property owner involvement make it difficult to adequately address ADA compliance at this point.

- **Public-Private Partnership for Parking:** TDRC has been focused on the public realm. Discussion at the workshop highlighted the opportunity that would be presented if private parking lot(s) behind the Ciampa and Karoutis properties could be utilized. There was a great deal of encouragement from attendees to create a partnership there wherein the Town of York and the owners might reach an accord to combine and rationalize the parking areas in this location.
- **Two Controversial Issues:** There are persistent controversies regarding two prominent properties — the Village Fire Station and Cumberland Farms.
 - **Cumberland Farms:** Some may recall that in its October 2012, the VSC detailed its understanding of conditions under which Cumberland Farms might be willing to move out of the Village. It is safe to assume that while few people are thrilled with the design of the building, many see the business as important to the economic vitality of the Village. We have had subsequent contact with representatives of the company. They are aware of community concerns about the aesthetic fit of the building and the awkward logistics which the property creates for drivers and pedestrians in and around their building. We hope Cumberland Farms will be willing to work with the Town as the Master Plan project moves forward.
 - **The Fire Station:** The Town’s Comprehensive Plan calls for relocating the Village Fire Station to Route 1. We found that many people support this idea because the existing property offers an opportunity for new and convenient parking. At the same time, many others (including Fire Department members) do not like the idea. The investment which the Town has made in recent years to expand and improve the station suggests a further ambivalence about the best location for this facility.
- **Continuing Outreach:** We have continued to reach out to important interest groups. Meetings were held at the end of January with representatives of the Village and Beach Fire Departments as well as the Ambulance Association. In addition, representatives from the American Legion and the VFW met with TDRC and members of the VSC. The focus of that discussion was the Monument and how it might be protected and honored.
- **Other Street Segments:** Proposed improvements to two additional segments of village roadways are anticipated — the West End of York Street to a point beyond the Remick Barn and Long Sands Road beyond Woodbridge Road toward Long Sands Plaza.
- **The Planning Board:** In addition to our extensive public outreach, the VSC has been working in close cooperation with the Planning Board. This collaboration is expected to result in a set of recommended changes to the Comprehensive Plan and to Village

Zoning. We are hopeful that changes in these areas will be ready for consideration by the voters in November 2015.

- **Next Steps:** As of early March, a first draft of the Master Plan was about 50% complete. The plan is to have a full and final draft ready for the Board of Selectmen by April 20. TDRC has proposed making a formal presentation to the Board during its regularly scheduled meeting on April 27. Pending acceptance of the Master Plan, we expect to recommend moving forward with the final two phases of the planning process: Schematic Design and Construction Documents.

The committee has been greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm and momentum that the master planning process has generated so far. We remain grateful for the Board's support. Thank you.

cc: Village Study Committee
Denis Lachman, TDRC