

York Village Study Committee Report: Designing York Village for the Next Century

11 October 2012

Introduction

It has been nearly eighteen months since the Village Study Committee (VSC) started meeting on a regular basis. The VSC filed its initial report with the Board of Selectmen in January 2012. Since making that first report, the committee has held a series of stakeholder meetings: with business owners (on January 17), with residents (on March 20), and with public safety and infrastructure agencies (on May 18). Notes from these meetings are in Appendix A, B and C of this report. The Committee also has received input from citizens via letter, e-mail, telephone and face-to-face communication.

A number of common themes emerged from stakeholders and correspondents alike. Principal among these were concerns about policing traffic or otherwise slowing the speed of vehicles through the village, pedestrian and bicycle safety, the inadequacy of available parking, discontinuities in village sidewalks, the need for general beautification in the Village, and the presence of unsightly utility poles and overhead wires. The Village Study Committee has tried to respond to these important issues in this report.

Readers of the January report will recall that for planning purposes, the VSC adopted a model of concentric rings to define York Village. Using the Civil War monument as a central point of reference, we identified three villages defined by how long it might take a pedestrian to walk from the center to the periphery of each zone. Thus, we defined: the 2-minute Village (extending roughly one-eighth of a mile from the monument), the 5-minute Village (extending roughly one-quarter of a mile from the monument), and the 10-minute Village (extending roughly one-half a mile from the monument). The current report is focused exclusively on improvements within the 2-minute Village.

Recommendations

In its first report (2 January 2012), the VSC made three recommendations. As recorded on page 4 of that report, these initial recommendations were:

- **Recommendation #1: The six acres of Town owned property adjacent to Coventry Hall should be retained by the Town for possible development as a parking facility.** The committee continues to believe that this site owned by the Town since 2006 has potential for a variety of uses including a parking garden within the 2-minute Village.
- **Recommendation #2: The Town should commit to preliminary engineering studies addressing the size, configuration, access, costs and phasing of a parking facility to be constructed on land referred to in Recommendation #1.** We do not know at this point how much of this land might be required to meet future parking needs or even if it is the right place for a parking garden. These issues have yet to be addressed.
- **Recommendation #3: A visioning session should be scheduled with targeted stakeholders so that consensus might be developed concerning long-term**

planning for the Village. The three stakeholder meetings sponsored by the Village Study Committee were meant to address this recommendation.

In the current report, the Committee offers a number of further recommendations organized into eight different areas of interest: parking, sidewalks, traffic, streetscaping, planning, zoning, properties (both public and private) and visual identity. Our additional recommendations are as follows:

PARKING¹

- **Recommendation #4: Additional parking spaces should be provided within the 2-minute Village. If a valid inventory of available parking does not exist, one should be conducted as part of a general parking study.** There is significant support for off-street parking, especially with reduced on-street parking called for in other recommendations that follow (See Recommendations #6, 8a, and 9 below). The shared evening and weekend parking discussed with York Hospital (See Recommendation #5 below) is most welcome. There are other possibilities for off-street parking, such as the narrow hospital lot (257 York Street) between the Ott House and the Village Fire Station. This might add as many as ten new parking spaces. The Town-owned parcel behind Coventry Hall (See Recommendations #1 and #2 above) also has great potential, especially for business owner and retail parking, as well as parking for those willing to walk.
- **Recommendation #5: A formal agreement should be negotiated with York Hospital to confirm the Hospital Drive parking lot for free public parking from 5:00 p.m. Friday through 10:00 p.m. Sunday.** Any agreement will have to include a liability waiver for the Hospital. This free parking should be posted on a sign suspended from a pole installed at the base of Hospital Drive. Members of the York Village Business Association should be asked to place and remove the sign on Fridays and Sundays. This project might be begun on a temporary basis (for one year) to see how the lot affects on-street parking. The sign should conform to current safety standards while at the same time reflecting the historic character of York Village.
- **Recommendation #6: A plan should be developed for turning over parking spaces in the Village with greater frequency as well as for providing necessary additional off-street parking for employees, customers of local businesses and residents.** The Committee believes that parking for customers, guests and visitors would be less of a problem if existing on-street parking were more available to them.

SIDEWALKS

- **Recommendation #7: A system of continuous sidewalks should be constructed on both sides of the streets throughout the 2-minute Village.**

¹ As a general principle, the VSC believes that any reduction in the number of on-street parking spaces as required by some of the recommendations in this report must be offset by an equal number (or more) of additional off-street parking spaces within the 2-minute Village.

These "broad walks" as the Village Study Committee envisions them are proposed for the entire 2-Minute Village. Specifically:

- a. On the South side from Parsons Center at Old York to Fellows Lane, beyond the Village Fire Station.
- b. On the Northwest side from the Old Library at First Parish Church to Coventry Hall.
- c. On the Northeast side from Woodbridge Road to beyond the Bagel Basket.

TRAFFIC

- **Recommendation #8: Traffic flowing through the Village should be calmed by whatever means possible.** This can be accomplished by various means including increased police presence², although some of what the VSC heard from stakeholder groups may not be feasible (e.g., rumble strips, traffic tables, and lower speed limits). The VSC believes that the best way to reduce the speed of traffic is to narrow the travel lanes while at the same time creating broadwalks with additional pedestrian space at crosswalks. Parallel parking would be encouraged between most crosswalks. Specifically, the following steps should be taken:
 - a. Eliminate all perpendicular and diagonal parking spaces and replace them with some parallel parking and off street parking.
 - b. Narrow lane widths to clarify travel routes.
 - c. Merge bike lanes with vehicular travel lanes in the central area.
 - d. Realign curbs to reflect the above elements and construct appropriate pedestrian safety zones.
 - e. Create broad, well-delineated cross walks with ADA-compliant curb ramps.
 - f. Consider using different paving materials and/or textures to distinguish York Village.
 - g. Improve drainage in conjunction with other recommended traffic improvements.
 - h. Include "period style" signage and state-of-the-art street lighting.

- **Recommendation #9: Traffic in the area around the Civil War monument should be improved through a realignment of traffic flow and on-site parking. This should only be done after an external urban design study of at least three alternatives has been undertaken** ³. The Village Study Committee has identified four alternative approaches and has prepared sketches of each option.⁴ It should be apparent that each of the following options has particular

² Policing remains an issue for some business owners who would like to see a greater police presence in the Village as part of the normal rotation of officers during peak periods.

³ See supplementary materials prepared for the BOS for sketches of the alternatives described in Recommendation #9.

⁴ Options in Recommendation #9 are consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan which calls for a realignment of the York Street-Long Sands Road intersection to create a different traffic

strengths and weaknesses.⁵ These must be made clear to all parties, a task which will be greatly facilitated by widespread public conversation about the alternatives. (See Recommendation #11 below).

- a. **Minimum Change Option:** Leave the traffic pattern and parking as they are with only minor striping and cosmetic improvements to curb realignments, signage, lighting and foliage. The VSC recommends against this option because the current pattern simply does not work adequately.
 - b. **York Delta Option:** Enlarge Monument Park, replacing perpendicular parking with parallel parking, eliminating the Southeast bound travel lane onto York Street.⁶ Underground utilities should be considered as part of this option.
 - c. **Town Common Option:** Substantially enlarge the Monument area, eliminating all parking and the roadway behind the Monument.⁷ This would create a grand Town Common, a place for Village events, outdoor cafes, a visual symbol of York's commitment to creating a place for people. Utilities should be placed underground.
 - c. **Roundabout Option:** Explore the option of a 100-foot traffic circle with the Monument in the middle of the space and utilities placed underground.
- **Recommendation #10: Improvements should be undertaken that make it safer for bicyclists to travel through the Village.** There is significant support for bicycle access, safety, and parking. Designated bike lanes outside the 2-minute Village on both sides of York Street and Long Sands Road should be encouraged. However, due to the planned density of York Village as detailed in other recommendations, bicycles should be required to share with traffic in the central 2-minute-Village. This would further contribute to improved traffic calming. In this case, support signage will be essential for the safety of cyclists, the pedestrians, and motorists. Bike racks should be provided within the Village as part of this bicycle improvement plan.
 - **Recommendation #11: A workshop involving the VSC and the Board of Selectmen focused on Recommendation #9 should be held as soon as it can be convened.** In addition to this workshop, an open workshop with stakeholder groups, with the general public invited to participate, should be held as a useful means for the Town to better understand the options presented in this report as well as to discover other possible options.

pattern in the next 3 years. (*York Comprehensive Plan Update Volume I amended 8 November 2011, page 19 paragraph 2.4.3*).

⁵ See Appendix D for a list of the major strengths and weaknesses useful for evaluating the four options.

⁶ This is similar to CLD's "Interim T improvements" plan dated July 30, 2010.

⁷ This is similar to CLD's "Ultimate T Improvements" plan dated July 30, 2010.

STREETSCAPING

- **Recommendation #12: Utility poles within the 2-minute Village should be removed from view.** The VSC is aware that this could be an expensive proposition but the committee also believes that funding from beyond the Town of York can be obtained. (See the Conclusion of this report.)
- **Recommendation #13: Efforts should be made to soften the appearance of the Village.** In years past, stately elm trees lined York Street. In the long run, the Committee believes that a landscaping plan should be created. We believe that a tree donation program could help restore the Village to its former glory. In the meantime, a series of flower pots and/or flags suspended from poles should be placed at regular intervals beginning with the 2-minute Village
- **Recommendation #14: A detailed Streetscape Design Plan should be conducted.** In this design plan, consideration should be given to the appearance of bike racks, benches, bollards, street lights and fixtures, drinking fountains, street trees (American Elm is recommended), tree guards, tree grates, transformer locations, color, fire hydrants, trash receptacles, flower pots, graphics (informational, directional, and regulatory), holiday elements, outlets for events, and paving types. Recommendations pertaining to parking, traffic, and sidewalks should be addressed before the development of the Streetscape Design Plan.⁸

PLANNING

- **Recommendation #15: A complete infrastructure survey should be conducted throughout the 2-Minute Village.** This survey of underground utilities should include water and sewer lines, drainage and storm water conduits, electricity lines, telephone, fiberoptic cables and any other elements that are discoverable. The goal of this survey should be to identify the location of every element of Village infrastructure.
- **Recommendation #16: A Master Plan for the Village should be commissioned to professionals in the areas of urban design and land use, traffic planning, historic preservation and economic development.** Ideally, this work would pull together all the contributing elements within the 2-minute Village.⁹
- **Recommendation #17: A physical model of the recommended design plan for the 2-Minute Village should be built.** The VSC is looking into the costs of this sort of design tool which should be computer designed but manufactured in scale

⁸ See supplementary materials prepared for the BOS for examples of tree, bench, bike rack, and lighting elements which will illustrate aspects of the proposed Streetscape Design Plan.

⁹ The Town of Kennebunk recently engaged in a master planning project for its downtown. Members of the VSC met with personnel from Kennebunk and are aware of their willingness to meet further with officials from York.

model and put on display for public viewing before any significant changes are proposed or effected on the ground.

ZONING

- **Recommendation #18: The Town’s Comprehensive Plan should be revised to create a York Village Zone in order to promote the vitality and beauty of York Village as a dynamic, safe, and sustainable town center reflecting and preserving the history of a community that is both welcoming to visitors and supportive of local businesses.** This recommendation is derived from the mission statement of the Village Study Committee.
- **Recommendation #19: As part of the revision of the Comprehensive Plan, the York Village Zone (what the current document refers to as the 2-minute Village) should establish new ordinances that describe acceptable land uses including ground floor uses and design standards as well as dimensions, density and building heights in that zone.** At this point, virtually all buildings in the Village are non-conforming because current standards regarding minimum land area, frontage, lot depth, front and rear setbacks and maximum coverage and allowable building heights are unsuitable to a vibrant town center. New and more realistic ordinances reflecting what exists and what the Town wants for its Village Center should be developed and applied to all future construction in the York Village Zone.¹⁰
- **Recommendation #20: Design standards should be developed affecting all new construction within the Village Zone.** These standards should be form-based, dealing with the same issues detailed in the York Beach Design Standards document, specifically regarding transparency, window awnings, doorways, orientation to sidewalks, etc.¹¹

PROPERTIES

- **Recommendation #21: The Civil War Monument should remain at the center of the York Street-Long Sands Road intersection as the principal focal point of York Village.**¹² The Monument is a focal point for everything that happens in or travels through the Village and should always remain so even if it turns out that the monument must be moved in the slightest. It is a revered space and must be treated with respect and care.
- **Recommendation #22: Leave the Town Hall in its current location with additional space provided either by an extension at the back of the building or through acquisition of a nearby annex to Town Hall.** Members of the VSC believe that Town Hall should always be used for municipal offices and that --

¹⁰ See Recommendation #16 above.

¹¹ The Village Center Local Historic District has its own standards which may need to be considered with regard to this recommendation.

¹² A historic look at visible changes to the Monument area over time is included in the VSC presentation to the Board of Selectmen. See supplementary materials prepared for the BOS.

consistent with the Comprehensive Plan -- the current location is the best location for this purpose. Keeping it in its current location will help preserve the character of the Village. Additionally, Town Hall should always be a magnet for people walking through the Village, adding vitality to the area. Any expansion of Town Hall must not compromise the architectural integrity of the existing building. Any proposed addition, of course, would require the consent and cooperation of First Parish Church which owns the land the Town Hall occupies. This should be formally pursued with the First Parish Board of Assessors. There also will be a need to consult with the Historic District Commission as our Town Hall is a historic structure.

- **Recommendation #23: The mutual interests of the Town of York and Cumberland Farms should continue to be explored.** Members of the VSC have met two times with personnel from Cumberland Farms. The company's continuing interest in a York location is apparent. Whether this will always be in the current location is not altogether clear at this point. What is clear, however, is that the company is very interested in improving their property in line with the VSC's goals of revitalizing the Village. The representatives with whom we met are prepared to make the following improvements: replacement of the building's old cedar shingles with new designer asphalt shingles, painting the building's bricks red instead of grey, "toning down" the gas island and applying for a variance to enclose the dumpster at the side of the building. A variety of other changes also might be possible (e.g., awnings on the building, landscaping and changes to the canopy -- although any significant changes to the canopy such as structural modifications or fascia redesign would be unlikely in the short term). Company representatives also informed the VSC that they had already received approval from Town Hall to change the current sign and lighting.

In terms of relocating Cumberland Farms, the company might be interested if certain provisions could be assured: finding a site of at least one acre in a high traffic area without direct competition within one mile in a location with good residential density nearby. The VSC wondered if it might be feasible to propose Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for the current Cumberland Farm site if an alternative site for it could be found thus making redevelopment of the existing site possible.

- **Recommendation #24: Eventually, the Village Fire Station should be moved in line with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.** The Plan (*Volume I: adopted May 22, 1999 and amended through May 21, 2011*) calls for the Village Fire Station to be abandoned and relocated to Route One, somewhere between Route 91 and Nason Road. The VSC sees this as something that should be accomplished within the next ten to fifteen years. We note the potential of this site as a future development parcel for parking or other suitable uses. (See Recommendation #4 above.)

VISUAL IDENTITY

- **Recommendation #25: A Visual Identity Committee should be charged with determining appropriate standards for signage, street lighting and other visual elements within the Village.**¹³ In the minds of the VSC members, the important thing is to begin to restore the historic feel of the Village which goes beyond sign ordinances that describe regulatory, directional and informational signs and deal with lighting, visual clutter, street furniture and other aspects of the Village's appearance and style.

Conclusion

Most of the work of the Committee over the last nine months has focused on the 2-minute Village because that is the commercial and the symbolic heart of York. Most of the recommendations in this report implicitly address the area defined as the 2-minute Village. There are a number of other priorities which the Committee believes should be addressed within the 5-minute Village and the 10-minute Village but these have not been the focus of the committee's efforts to date. We believe that implementation of the recommendations contained in this report should take precedence over planning for additional work within the 5-Minute and 10-Minute Village.

In addition, the initial report defined our work in terms of temporal priorities. The January report spoke about short-term (1-2 years), medium term (2-10 years) and long-term (10-20 years) objectives. With the exception of Recommendation #24, the current report does not comment on the proper time frame for accomplishing the recommendation in the report. We believe it is the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen to decide which recommendations to tackle immediately and which due to fiscal constraints, must be can be delayed. We have focused on what we see as doable recommendations without regard to cost. Some of what we recommend here is likely to be seen by the public as major changes. We are aware that it could take many years to fully develop these recommendations. The most important next step would be for the joint workshop described in Recommendation #11 to be scheduled as soon as possible.

At each stage of the process going forward direct input from York's citizens will be essential to the project's overall success. The Committee notes that a \$500,000 action grant was awarded recently to one of Maine's more forward thinking towns because they had a plan not unlike ours for improving and preserving their downtown.¹⁴ We note again that Kennebunk's town manager and staff have offered to visit York so they can discuss how they financed their recent improvements. The VSC has come to believe that York can succeed with Village improvements if we have a coherent vision and believe in the importance of change ultimately proposed to voters.

Respectfully submitted,

The Village Study Committee:
Mary Andrews
Stu Dawson

¹³ Some images of sample signs consistent with the historic feel of the 2-minute Village may be found in the supplementary materials prepared for the BOS.

¹⁴ An April 2012, Bath became Maine's first community to receive a Great American Main Street award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Antonia DeSoto
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Supplementary Materials

Appendices Included with the Report

- A. Notes from the business owners stakeholder meeting (January 17, 2012)
- B. Notes from the residents stakeholder meeting (March 20, 2012)
- C. Notes from the public safety and infrastructure agencies meeting (May 18, 2012).
- D. Strengths and Weaknesses of each option in Recommendation #9

Images Included in the Presentation to the BOS

- E. Graphic images of the four options in Recommendation #9
- F. Examples of tree, bench, bike rack and lighting elements of a Streetscape Design
- G. A historic look at changes to the Monument area over time
- H. Examples of sample signs consistent with the historic feel of the 2-minute Village.

Appendix A:
Ideas from Business Stakeholders meeting JANUARY 17, 2012

- **Focal Points**
 - Signage (approaching from Route 1)
 - Historical area ahead
 - Signs are not always pretty (but they should be)
 - Consider cost of signs (a waste?)
 - Flower pots strategically placed
 - Hanging plants on poles to save valuable street-level space
 - Lighting
 - Victorian lamp posts
 - Electrical outlets on poles for holidays, etc.
 - Former Methodist Church
 - York Hospital plans new uses
 - Can public uses be incorporated?
 - Cumberland Farms building can (and should) be altered
- **Traffic and Pedestrian**
 - Difficulty of moving around the village
 - Traffic enforcement
 - Police presence
 - Roving police presence in the village
 - Crow's Nest (kiosk) at Monument for police officer
 - Dangers of walking through the village
 - Lower speed of cars through the village
 - 25 mph should be enforced
 - Rumble strips from all directions (Route 201 in Jackman)
 - Quieting traffic
 - Caution about noise of rumble strips
 - Residents would object to noise
 - Possibility of quieter equivalent, such as brick or other textured pavement
 - STOP signs are an improvement
 - Narrow the roadway for cars
 - Might allow for bike lane and sidewalks
 - Parking
 - Limit time cars can be parked on street
 - Removal or relocation of parking spaces that block crosswalks or site lines.
 - Parking problems are cyclical throughout the day (and seasonally)
 - Some on-street parking obscures views of businesses
 - Same amount of parking now as in 1934
 - Leave parking space in front of their shops for paying customers

- Need for off-street parking
 - Remote parking should be an immediate goal
 - Coventry Hall has potential for parking area
 - Fire station land for parking lot
- Sidewalks
 - Get people walking more
 - Area needs continuity of sidewalks
 - From First Parish to at least as far as Bagel Basket (both sides of street)
 - Sidewalks are needed on both sides of York Street
 - Sidewalks and any public or restaurant seating need to be elevated above roadway
- Crosswalks
 - Not hashed and not safe
 - Bricked crosswalks would define pedestrian safety zones
- Bike Lanes (and trails)
 - Parsons Company land
 - Moulton Lane area
 - Old trolley right of way
- Fire Station should be moved out of village
- **Land Use**
 - Businesses
 - Opportunities for eating outside
 - Picnic tables
 - More activity in the village benefits everyone
 - Activity is cyclical (daytime v. night time)
 - A more varied mix of businesses would be welcome
 - Colorful awnings & umbrellas are signals of life and activity: attract people
 - What is missing from the village?
 - Gathering places
 - Playground (for young families)
 - Types of businesses
 - Restaurant, bar, cafe, dessert place, bookstore
 - Multi-use facilities
 - Theatre or performance center
 - An outdoor facility on Town land (next to Coventry Hall) was suggested
 - Night life
 - Coherent thematic elements
 - Zoning changes needed (no one is in compliance now)
 - Review and revise lot coverage standards.
 - Require less parking on-site for businesses.
 - Change setback requirements
 - Lot coverage standards

- **Other Ideas**

- We need a coherent vision for York Village
- More interaction needed among business owners
- Business begets business
- A study of zoning changes was done some years ago: where is it?
- Is there funding for major improvements?
- Need for greater cooperation among Town, Water and Sewer districts
- Public restrooms

Appendix B:
Ideas from Residents Stakeholders meeting MARCH 20, 2012

- **Focal Points**
 - Lighting
 - Old fashioned lamp posts (e.g., Ogunquit and Block Island) on York Street as you approach the village (not just in the center) to indicate arrival
 - Flags, flowers, etc.
 - Cumberland Farms building needs to fit better

- **Traffic and Pedestrian**
 - Traffic enforcement
 - Police presence makes a difference
 - Lower speed of cars through the village
 - Narrow the roadway for cars to slow them down as they enter
 - Bump outs for traffic calming and greater visibility of pedestrians
 - Parking
 - Need for off-street parking
 - Shuttle service to and from parking (like the hospital does)
 - Town property abutting Coventry Hall has potential for parking
 - Use Fire station land for parking lot, but not necessarily the front part of the lot, which might be better served by a retail shop or restaurant
 - Hospital parking garage would help
 - Sidewalks
 - Make it easier to walk around
 - Parsons Company land connects Woodbridge to Village
 - Woodbridge Road as a secondary commercial zone
 - Moulton Lane area is part of the Village
 - Fire Station should be moved out of village

- **Land Use**
 - Businesses
 - Types of businesses needed
 - Restaurants, boutiques, bistros, etc. Less ground floor office space, more diversity and vitality in retail mix. Village used to have grocery, hardware, etc.
 - Is there a way to gauge what sort of businesses would like to be there, and then design for them?
 - Relax zoning standards
 - Require less parking on-site for businesses.
 - Make lot coverage (and other dimensional standards) less restrictive

- **Other Ideas**

- Place utilities underground
- No traffic lights
- No parking meters
- Foster the Village
 - Nurture businesses (e.g., Kittery)
 - Beautification program needed throughout the Village
 - Clean up the YPL retention pond
- Town needs an arborist to maintain old trees
 - More trees needed in the Village
- Need for funding of major improvements
 - Grant money
 - Tax credits for refurbishment
 - Economic development conference (Gov. LePage and Sen. Collins)

Appendix C:

Ideas from Public Safety & Infrastructure Stakeholders meeting MAY 18, 2012

Introduction: Representatives from six Town services (Police, Public Works, Sewer, Water, Fire Department and the Ambulance Service) were invited to meet with the Committee. However, only Kevin LeConte (Police), Dean Lessard (Public Works) and Tim Haskell (Sewer) were represented. Still, it was a lively and informative discussion with information about most of the six areas of concern being offered by those who were able to meet.

Underground Utilities: The maze that is the network of underground utilities in the Village was made clear to the committee. People don't see the assortment of water pipes, sewer pipes, drainage pipes, and fiberoptic cable conduits that lie at various depths below the surface. There are standards for keeping these utilities separate from one another. Work on the roadways is further complicated by the fact that the exact location of older utilities is not known with any degree of precision. We are fortunate that the below surface infrastructure through the 2-minute Village is relatively new, dating from 2000-01.

- **Sewer:** The Sewer District owns the mains that run under the streets in town. Private property owners have responsibility for connector pipes connecting their buildings to the mains. The age and condition of these connectors is unknown. The entire village (up to and beyond the perimeter of the 10-minute Village) is on sewer with the exception of two homes still on private septic systems.
- **Water:** The Water District was not represented at the meeting so there was no in depth discussion to reveal their point of view. We did learn, however, that the water mains belong to the Water District and that the District is responsible as well for the connector pipes up to the private property lines. Beyond the property lines the water pipes are the responsibility of the property owners. The condition of these lines is unknown.
- **Fiberoptic Cable:** Encased in pipes below the surface is an extensive network of fiber optic cables. These cables, running through the heart of the Village, connect service between Portland and Boston. Disruption of this service would have serious impact on a very large number of households and businesses.

Overhead Utilities: In addition to the utilities people cannot see are several they can see. These are the utilities belonging to Central Maine Power (CMP), Fairpoint Communication (Verizon), Time Warner, as well as some private service for such institutions as the York Public Schools and York Hospital. Moving the poles on which lines are supported even for a short distance would be very expensive. The pole at Organon Road is being relocated eighteen inches and in order to accomplish this between

3,000 and 5,000 paired wires have to be spliced one-at-a-time in order to maintain connection. Moving overhead utilities in the Village would be very costly.

- **Utility Poles:** It is possible to put overhead wires underground but the cost of doing this may be prohibitive. The different utilities mentioned above must be kept at a prescribed distance from one another and, as noted, the exact location of any given service is not always known. Placing underground the wires that run through the Village would require removing at least seventeen poles and burying the wires these poles now carry.
- **Expense:** The cost of such an infrastructure project is unknown and probably unknowable until it is attempted. Safe to say, it will require serious money. As an example, the cost of burying utilities along Railroad Avenue has been estimated at \$1 million. The distance of that project would be less than 1,200 feet. Further, the service on Railroad Avenue is single-phase power. The cost of burying power lines between the Union Bluff and Main Street/Railroad Avenue has come in at \$130,000 but this is for relatively inexpensive single-phase power. By contrast, because of the institutional users along York Street in the 2-minute Village require more power than typical households, the power requirements dictate 3-phase power lines. There would be a need for several transformers along York Street and the cost of the project would be much higher than at York Beach.

An argument can be made that there would be a savings in terms of repair from storms, outages, and tree maintenance if utilities were to be buried. At the same time, while buried lines would be more stable (and more aesthetically pleasing), they also would be much more expensive to repair in the event that repairs were necessary. There also are safety issues with people working in manholes as well. Ledge is another problem we would likely face as we attempt to bury power lines. There is no easy solution. Safe to say, burying utility lines would require financial support from beyond the Town of York.

The issue of future technologies was raised. Many households are abandoning their landline phones for cellular technology. Will the next twenty years see the advent of wireless telecommunications for businesses as well? Many felt that businesses would always require land lines so we would always need utility lines whether above or below ground.

Streets and Traffic: The discussion next turned to traffic and ways to address speeding through the Village. Police studies show that traffic is not really as fast as people claim; below the speed limit, in fact. The validity of the claim that traffic needs to be regulated by a greater police presence was discussed. It was pointed out that putting a police officer in the Village throughout the day would be both costly and unnecessary. Rather than policing to control traffic, it was suggested that roads need to be constructed so that people feel uncomfortable driving above the posted limit. This is best accomplished by narrowing roadways. Developments at Organug Road and York Street suggest what could happen within the 2-Minute Village. The travel lane is being narrowed to eleven

feet on either side of the median. Beyond that will be a five foot paved shoulder for bicycles, a curb and paved sidewalk for pedestrians.

In the Village a more appropriate separation would be two to three foot shoulders and a ten foot travel lane. Paved sidewalks on both sides of the street are possible. The kind of bump-outs (also referred to as PSZs or pedestrian safety zones) being built at York Beach would be appropriate for the Village as well though there is some concern about the difficulty of plowing these areas in winter and the threat of damage as cars encounter the curbing at the PSZs.

- **Parking:** We talked about meters -- “pay and display” and about the possibility of a parking garden at Coventry Hall. The bottom line is that parking management systems can be configured any way the Town wants. The goal of discouraging employee on-street parking was affirmed as something to be pursued.
- **Shared Roadways:** Where paved shoulders are not wide enough to support formal bikes lanes, “sharrows” will be painted (on York Street) to indicate the shared roadways. It was widely agreed that sharing roads requires education and courtesy from cyclists and drivers alike.

Village Fire Station: We learned that news from our first stakeholders meeting (January 2012) may have been understood to mean that the VSC is recommending closure of the Village Fire Station. While we have talked about this in the past, we have made no recommendation about it. It was noted, however, that the Comprehensive Plan calls for moving the fire station to Route 1 but the time line on this is not specified. It well might be on the 10-20 year horizon. The VSC may want to reach out to Chief Balentine to clarify these points.

Conclusion: The Committee needs to decide whether it is necessary to meet with the agencies unable to attend today’s meeting. We may have to schedule something outside our normal meeting times if we are to accommodate the calendars of Fire, Water and Ambulance. Alternatively, representatives from the VSC could be charged with meeting these agencies. Notes from this meeting will be sent to those who attended as well as to Chris Balentine (Fire), Don Neumann (Water), and Karen Tucker (Ambulance) who were unable to attend.

**Appendix D:
Strengths and Weaknesses of Each Option in Recommendation #9**

Strengths & Weaknesses

Principal effects	Min. Change	York Delta	Town Common	Roundabout
	1 = major weakness, 2 = weakness, 3 = neutral 4 = strength, 5 = major strength			
Economic Development	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Pedestrian Safety	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Pedestrian Enjoyment	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Bicycle Safety	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Visitor Appeal	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Off-street Parking	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
On-street Parking	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Traffic Calming	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Aesthetic Appeal	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
York Village Character	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
External Funding	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Disruption during Cons.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Infrastructure Improve	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Project Cost	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5