

**York Village Study Committee:**  
**Progress Report #4**  
26 March 2014

**Introduction**

This report is intended to update the Board of Selectmen on progress made since the Committee appeared before the Board on August 29, 2013 in a workshop involving the BOS and the VSC as well as members of the Historic District Commission and the Planning Board. At that time, we discussed our outreach strategy which consisted of several initiatives designed to inform people about the work of the committee and to gather input on two major aspects of our work.

**The Three Options**

**Narrowing.** During the summer, the VSC narrowed its array of options for improving traffic flow around the Monument and through the 2-Minute Village. Configurations involving a traffic circle (roundabout) and a series of one-way streets were eliminated because of concerns about negative impacts on the historic character of the Village and/or on the business community. The remaining choices have evolved into three options: 1) the Monument Garden, 2) the Village Park, and 3) the Town Common.

**Public Presentations.** Our outreach efforts focused on gathering input about which options were favored by those from whom we gathered information. We had a table at MarketFest over the October 18-19 weekend. At the recommendation of the BOS, we set up a table at the High School during the Town Meeting Referendum on November 5<sup>th</sup>. We also made presentations to the Village Business Association (November 7<sup>th</sup>), to the Rotary Club (November 15<sup>th</sup>) and to the Library Board of Trustees (January 9<sup>th</sup>). In addition, we developed a VSC website ([www.yorkvillage.org](http://www.yorkvillage.org)) where additional input has been received.

**Results.** Responses from these venues favor the Town Common option. The numerical results of our polling (as of January 9, 2014) and involving 260 respondents are as follows:

Option I (Monument Garden):	28	(10.7%)
Option II (Village Park):	14	(5.3%)
Option III (Town Common):	218	(84%)

## The Elements

Another thing we asked people was their opinion of change “elements” proposed for the public space throughout the 2-Minute Village. This poll asked respondents to rate each element from 1 – 5 with 5 being “strongly favor” and 1 being “strongly oppose.” We have arranged these evaluations in terms of the most and least popular elements.

Results of this polling were as follows:	<u>Rating</u>
Better placement of crosswalks .....	4.6
Less asphalt with more pedestrian and green space.....	4.6
Sidewalks (minimum five feet wide) .....	4.5
More off-street parking.....	4.5
Deciduous street trees .....	4.5
Places to sit.....	4.3
Period lighting .....	4.2
Improved regulatory, directional & informational signage.....	4.2
Maximized safe on-street parking .....	4.2
Relocated utility lines .....	4.1
Narrower travel lanes for vehicles.....	3.9
Sidewalk extensions to provide shorter crosswalks .....	3.9
Parallel parking only .....	3.8
Bicycles share vehicle travel lanes .....	3.8

A final open-ended question asked people for comments and/or other recommendations. Responses to this commentary section of the survey are shown in *Appendix A* attached.

## Outreach Efforts

Outreach to the community and gathering information from people interested in the VSC project remains important to us. Four different efforts are being implemented:

**Website.** The website we imagined and recommended to the BOS was designed and implemented on a *pro bono* basis by York resident Christine Hartwell of New England Site Solutions. The site at [www.yorkvillage.org](http://www.yorkvillage.org) contains the three final scenarios developed by the VSC as well as a series of historical and contemporary photographs. It also contains a document library containing an archive of documents and video presentations made by the VSC since its inception.

**Public Service Announcement.** In an effort to obtain more input from the community, the three options developed have been incorporated into a public service announcement which we plan to put up on Channel 3 on an ongoing basis.

**Display Boards.** A series of foam display boards have been made so that the core ideas of the VSC can be accessed by people in town. We intend to display them in public places such as the Library, Chamber of Commerce, Town Hall and the Museums of Old York.

**E-Newsletter.** We have been working on developing an electronic newsletter which can be sent to individuals who have shared their e-mail addresses with us. Our hope is that people who receive these periodic updates will share the information with people whose e-mails we do not have, thereby providing a wider network of informed citizens.

## **Engineering Survey**

Following release of funds by the BOS, Dean Lessard led the committee in a bid process to identify a surveying firm capable of conducting an existing conditions survey of downtown York Village. The process led us to one firm - LinePro Land Surveying, Inc. of Shapleigh, Maine. Winter has delayed the progress of the fieldwork phase of the study but LinePro has been honoring its commitment to the Town, conducting necessary deed research until snow is off the ground. Letters were sent to adjacent property owners, both by LinePro and by the Town, so property owners would not be surprised to find surveyors adjacent to their property

## **Beyond the 2-Minute Village**

The VSC's conceptual drawings for the Village did not extend throughout the entire study area because we were focused on the Monument area. The area between the Berger Building and Moulton Lane is being added to the conceptual drawings in order to make the conceptual area match the mapped area. LinePro's work also conforms to this complete area. Additional work underway by the Committee will show the extent of the options under development. In effect, the area under study is being extended to the 5-Minute Village and beyond in all directions. There was strong interest on the part of some business owners to extend our purview to the East. It was always the intention of the VSC to extend this scope and we are happy to be able to do so now.

## **Parking**

A rough estimate of existing parking in the Village shows as many as 67 spaces on the streets within the two-minute village. Until the various studies are completed we do not know exactly how many spaces would be lost if head-in parking were to be replaced with parallel parking or another configuration. It is safe to assume that some spaces would be lost under each option. Adding more off-street parking to make up for any losses remains one of our goals. In December 2013, the VSC recommended that the BOS put before the voters the question of acquisition of the Hodgin property which would add 33 additional off-street spaces. The BOS decided against doing so at this time.

## **Urban Design Process**

***Request for Qualifications (RFQ).*** At the time of our last presentation to the BOS, we talked about next steps. These included the survey of existing conditions as well as some sort of professional design work both to verify the feasibility of the proposed intersection scenarios and to produce some graphics to help the community better understand the changes proposed for York Village. Through VSC and staff discussions, it was decided that we should pursue a unified strategy of incorporating planning and design work into the ultimate technical engineering services that will be required to implement future changes to downtown York Village.

Our idea is to identify a number of multidisciplinary urban design firms with the capacity and interest to lead a thorough process that incorporates public input, visual aids, technical vetting of the ultimate design and construction documents. To this end, we have issued a request for qualifications (RFQ) through various public outlets including newspapers and the Town's webpage (*See Appendix B*).

Responses to this RFQ (due by May 28) will tell us to whom we might go to for the professional design work. We believe this RFQ process offers an opportunity to find the right team of professionals to assist with all the anticipated future steps required to implement positive, community supported changes to York Village.

**Next Steps.** Following the RFQ, the next stage will involve developing a proposal for the BOS to consider. We believe that this RFQ process will allow us to identify the right firm to do this complex work. We expect many firms to be interested in this project but we believe far fewer firms have the requisite expertise. As part of the process, we anticipate that a community design forum will be held in Summer or Fall, following identification of the firm to do the design and planning work.

We want to be clear that no commitment of funds for future work has been proposed nor will it be proposed without the direction of the BOS. The Board will be kept informed about the results of the RFQ process as it is completed. Our plan is to find the right firm, clarify the proposed fees, scope of work, etc. before coming to the BOS with any recommendations involving funding not already authorized. A request to authorize the expenditure of funds can be anticipated this year but nothing we have done or are doing involves construction at this point. Our best guess is that 10% of overall project costs will be for design work; another 20% will be necessary for construction engineering; and that the majority of funds (70%) will be necessary for construction. It is in the construction phase that traditional competitive bidding processes are proposed.

### **Zoning Issues**

As noted above, the Committee is beginning to extend its scope beyond the 2-Minute Village. One of the areas where this is happening is what we have started calling the East End of the Village, roughly from Hospital Drive to Moulton Lane where special opportunities may exist for walkways and bicycle trails. Another is the West End — the Museum area — where lack of clarity sometimes exists regarding public use of private property. Conceptual drawings are being undertaken by the VSC to include the expanded area (aka the 5-Minute Village and beyond). The work going forward will address pressing zoning issues throughout the Village. We expect shortly to be asking the Planning Board to consider possible changes in existing zoning ordinances. Among the areas needing change are standards for lot coverage, set-backs, on-site parking requirements, building heights and general use.

### **Turnover in VSC Membership**

**Christine Grimando.** In the middle of March, two members of the VSC informed the Committee that they would be leaving their posts to take up other employment. Town Planner Christine Grimando will be leaving after April 1<sup>st</sup> to become Senior Planner for the City of Portland. An opening has been posted and a search is now underway for her replacement. We hope this search proceeds smoothly but we realize that the skills and knowledge Christine brought to the VSC will not be replaced easily. We request that another Town hall liaison be appointed so that there will be no loss of communication between the VSC and the administration of the Town.

***Dawn Fernald.*** The other loss is of Dawn Fernald, who will be leaving York Hospital to become Director of Marketing and Community Relations at Wentworth Douglass Hospital. Dawn was a substitute for Steve Pelletier who was a founding member of the VSC. We believe it is important to have a slot on the VSC representing the Hospital and hope a substitute can be arranged. The contributions of each of these women have been immeasurable. Their work on the VSC is much appreciated. The VSC has some thoughts about possible replacements for these two former members and would like to discuss the matter with the Board.

### **Conclusion**

The VSC has been advised that some members of the BOS feel they have not received sufficient information about the activities of the VSC. Effective immediately, agendas and minutes of all VSC meetings will be distributed to all members of the Board and not just to the Town officials who hold membership on the VSC. Finally, members of the VSC would like to meet with the BOS in a workshop format as we did in August last year. We would be happy to include representatives of the Historic District Commission and the Planning Board at that meeting. We are available for such a meeting whenever it is convenient for the BOS. We look forward to continuing our work together with you.

Respectfully submitted,

The Village Study Committee:

Stu Dawson  
Antonia DeSoto  
Dawn Fernald  
Christine Grimando  
Gloria Gustafson  
Joel Lefever  
Ron McAllister  
Peter Smith  
Scott Stevens  
Lew Stowe

### ***List of Appendices***

- A. Elements Opinion Poll Comments and Recommendations
- B. Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Notice

## *Appendix A*

### ***Elements Opinion Poll Comments and Recommendations***

- Overhead Utilities should be underground, not simply relocated for aesthetic as well as practical reasons! Practically speaking, to maximize safety and minimize maintenance!
- Extend the elimination of utility poles to old library and around the ancient cemetery by historic buildings
- Don't like parallel parking. Leave it alone.
- Keep traffic moving, but SLOWLY just in the center of town. No traffic light, no more stop signs, no changes of lanes. Minimize the bump-outs on the sidewalks.
- Relocate town hall - use town owned land in center of town behind cemetery and put off-street parking there too
- End school zone signs at Village Elementary
- In favor, as long as enhancement for business.
- Better business climate – see Ogunquit!
- You must take measurements and keep in mind the area of turning & parking needed for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles or they will be running over the curbs and safety zones.
- Utilities should be underground. I support sidewalk extensions - very important!
- Bike racks needed
- NO bump-outs!
- All of the following:
  - ~ broader sidewalks - 10-12 feet for outdoor use as cafe, etc.
  - ~ use real bricks on sidewalks
  - ~ eliminate shortcut behind monument - a waste and dangerous for parking
  - ~ relocate monument as needed to get better space utilization
  - ~ design drainage creatively
  - ~ survey the right-of-way as it is
- Consider
  - ~ off-street parking not needed – York Hospital should provide its own parking
  - ~ no "hokey" faux brick, no hokey faux gas lights, no tacky banners
  - ~ more sidewalks, sidewalks, sidewalks
  - ~ create a traffic flow that is comprehensible to visiting drivers
- Don't make the sidewalk extensions too long/deep
- Improve underground drainage infrastructure.

- Require privately developed and paid for employee parking  
(rather than current situation in which these folks hog available parking)
- Keep monument as focal point at intersection. Drainage as well as surface water needs to be addressed in this project
- Dedicated bike lane if possible.
- You are doing a great job! Thank you.
- Keep talking! Change will happen.
- Don't do anything..... just make everyone go home!
- For any option, provide a three-way stop at the monument.
- Please prioritize fully shielded street lamps over "authenticity"
- Utilize front of firehouse parking lot to replace lost parking spaces.
- Addition of sidewalks and parking would enable greater utilization by restaurants, etc.
- Reverse diagonal parking....back in to park.
- Provide unloading zones for businesses to receive goods.
- During an average day, employees from local businesses and the hospital park on the street and in the library lot for periods of 6-8 hours. A quick and effective fix would be to limit parking in the village to less than 2 hours. This should especially be enforced during the summer season. We can keep our small town feeling by using signs instead of meters. This would free up parking spaces along with bringing in revenue from parking tickets for violations.
- Provide sensible turning lanes, smaller overall traffic interchange, big enough green space that it matters.
- Don't believe it would be possible to take out the road in front of Masiello building due to traffic patterns.
- Add parking meters for on-street parking spaces
- Need clear turn options at intersection
- Improve building facades
- Install raised crosswalks to make it safer for pedestrians
- Keep up the good work.

## *Appendix B*

### REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS TOWN OF YORK NOTICE TO CONSULTANTS

#### ***YORK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN, DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION***

Statements of Qualifications will be received by the Town of York at the Community Development Department office, 186 York Street, York, Maine, 03909, until 1:30 p.m. on March 28, 2014. Statements will be accepted from those consultants which the Town determines are the most likely to be qualified and capable of performing the work. All other statements may be rejected. In order to be considered responsive, five (5) copies and one (1) electronic copy (PDF) of the complete statements must be submitted. Statements need to be limited to 20 single sided pages (8.5x11), size 12 point font, including appendices. Statements need to be clearly marked "Request for Qualifications for YORK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN, DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION."

The Town of York, through the York Village Study Committee, is soliciting Statements of Qualifications for planning, design, engineering and project management services for the York Village Masterplan, Design & Construction Documentation in historic York Village, Maine. The project will include complete street design, signage (regulatory, directional, and informational), pavement markings and traffic control; bicycle and pedestrian enhancements; hardscape and landscape design; public parking; public space creation and design; possible underground and above ground utility relocations; drainage modifications and improvements including implementation of green infrastructure; public participation and acceptance or any other pending engineering related activity as determined by the Town of York and York Village Study Committee.

The successful firm may be required to: create preliminary design reports; perform field surveys; plot topography and cross sections; prepare submissions for utility verification and relocation engineering; develop right-of-way plans; prepare drainage reports; perform geotechnical investigations and prepare geotechnical reports; prepare type, size and location reports; prepare structure drawings (including culverts, catch basins and monument support) for repair, rehabilitation or replacement; prepare erosion control details and narrative; prepare applications for environmental and other federal, state and municipal permits; perform traffic counts and analyses, including detour planning and mapping; prepare traffic control plans and narrative; investigate utility and property involvements and coordinate with utilities; prepare submissions for meetings; attend meetings with the Village Study Committee, Town boards or other agencies; and prepare construction plans and documents, specifications and estimates.

Any questions regarding the RFQ process should be directed to Christine Grimando, Town Planner, at (207) 363-1007 or [cgrimando@yorkmaine.org](mailto:cgrimando@yorkmaine.org). Formal responses will not be provided for questions received by telephone. All questions should be submitted by March 20, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. in order for the Town to respond to consultants prior to the acceptance deadline. Consultants shall not contact any other Town staff or Committee members for clarification of contract provisions, and the Town will not be responsible for any interpretations so obtained.



## I. Background

In May of 2011, the York Board of Selectmen appointed a committee to look into ways in which York Village might be revitalized. Since that time, the Village Study Committee (VSC) has met with business owners, residents and other interested parties to get their feedback on how York might reach the goal of establishing a framework that will promote the vitality and beauty of York Village and create a dynamic, safe, and sustainable town center which reflects the history of a community and is both welcoming to visitors and supportive of local businesses.

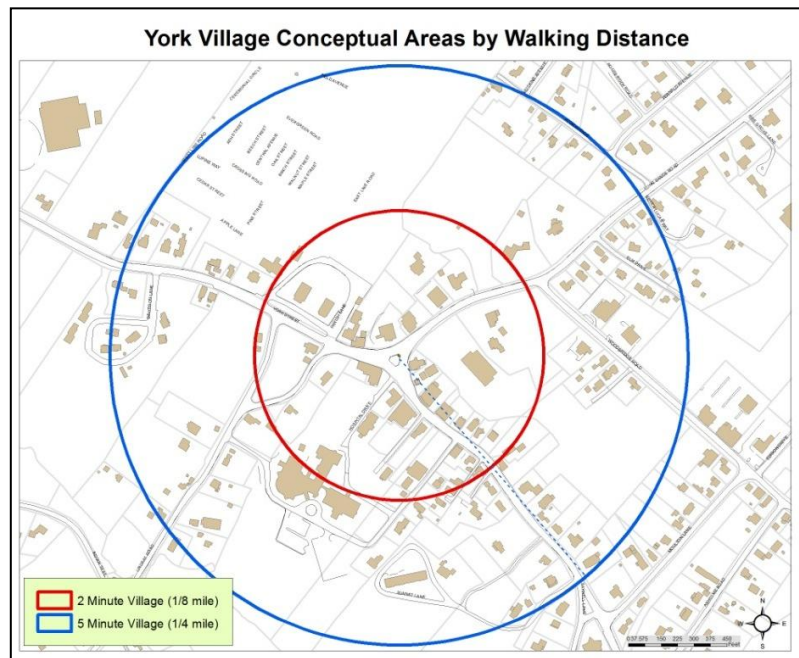
In October of 2012, the VSC filed a summary report with 25 detailed recommendations related to public process, key properties, parking, sidewalks, traffic, streetscape, planning and zoning. The work of the VCS to date has resulted in the development of three possible options for the monument intersection at the heart of York Village, already narrowed down over several years from multiple other designs.

Extensive relevant materials produced by the committee can be viewed on a website devoted to this project, [www.yorkvillage.org](http://www.yorkvillage.org).

The site's *Document Library* (<http://www.yorkvillage.org/yvscLibrary/index.html>) includes final recommendations and copies of previous presentations.

*Options for Tomorrow* (<http://www.yorkvillage.org/options/index.html>) includes more detailed descriptions, as well as graphics of the monument intersection scenarios.

At this stage, the VSC is focused on examining the feasibility of the three options through continuation of the extensive public process already underway. The VSC's vision is to emerge with a single design for this intersection as well as for the public realm fanning out from it inside the study area. This vision includes a design that encompasses traffic flow, sidewalks, vehicle travel lanes, provisions for bicycles, utility placement and streetscape elements such as furniture and way-finding, public space creation, and public realm landscaping.

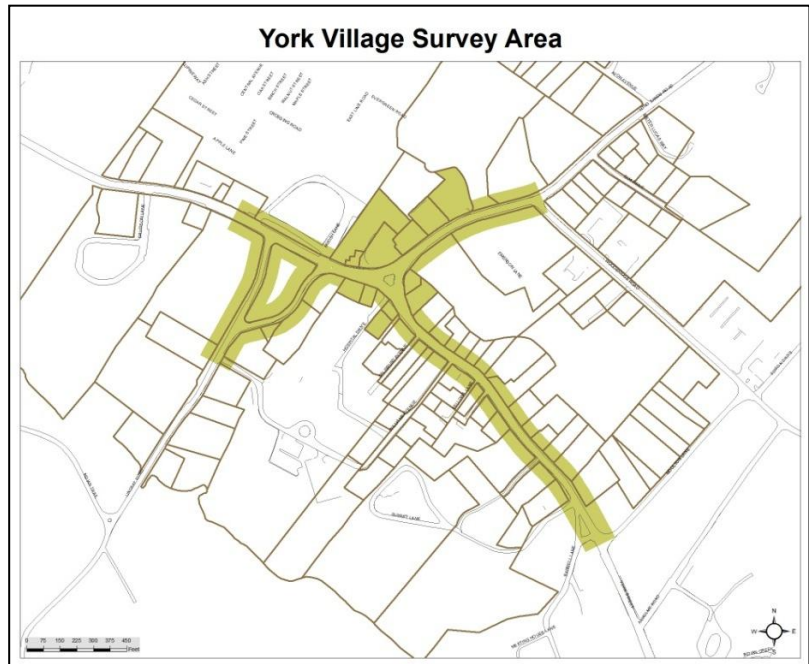


## A. Project Area

Early on in the planning process, the committee conceptualized York Village in geographic terms, focusing on walking radii from the Civil War monument at the center of the primary York Village intersection. The area of concern for this particular stage of improvements is a portion of York Street and a portion of Long Sands Road, falling between the radii of a 2 and a 5 minute walk (or 1/8 and 1/4 of a mile) from the monument. An engineering survey of existing conditions in the area is currently being conducted. Inset maps show the study radii and the survey area, respectively.

## B. Anticipated Scope of Services

The VSC has completed over two years worth of outreach and research, which is reflected in their carefully considered recommendations. It is expected that the chosen consultant team will build on the progress made on this project. The VSC will continue to play a leadership



role in seeing this project to completion and in its interface with all aspects of the community. The consultant team will work in partnership with the VSC to those ends. The project has now reached a stage requiring technical assistance from a planning, urban design, and engineering team. The anticipated tasks included in the scope of services are as follows:

- C. Initial Feasibility Assessment of the three intersection designs in regard to turning radii, traffic flow and safety.
- D. Conceptual plan of proposed improvements suitable for presentation at public meetings. The plan should include landscape treatments such as street trees, sidewalks, location of lighting fixtures, overhead utility relocation possibilities, (with underground utility placement fully explored), bike markings, any other proposed public spaces, etc. The plan should include not only the central intersection, but also the area of York Street and Long Sands Road that are encompassed by the 2-5 minute village radii. Final limits of improvements will have to be determined, but will not exceed the limits of the areas shown in the graphics above.
- E. An assessment of on-street parking spaces and off-street publicly accessible spaces, including any loss of existing parking that results from the proposed design, and the total maximum number of spaces available at conclusion of the project.
- F. Preliminary design plans & opinion of cost.
- G. Final Design Plans for construction and associated costs.
- H. Attendance at Village Study Committee Meetings.
- I. Multiple Public Meetings.

Final proposal and details of a contract will be determined after a qualified team is selected. The above list may vary somewhat in final form after discussion between staff, consultant team, and the Village Study Committee.

## **II. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS**

This will be a qualifications-based selection process. Consultants responding to this Request for Qualifications shall submit:

1. Letter of Interest;
2. Complete description of consultant team experience and areas of expertise, clearly identifying past projects of similar nature. The consultant team shall describe its range and depth of experience relevant to this solicitation and the extent to which such services form their combined principal areas of activity. This section shall also discuss the consultant team's available resources for carrying out the work including labor, equipment, facilities, and so forth. This segment of the proposal shall not exceed two pages;
3. Resumes for each member of the consultant team as well as an indication of the nature and extent of each individual's participation;
4. Profiles of previously performed projects (within the last five (5) years), which highlight the team's qualifications may be included in an appendix (limited to five project profiles);
5. Three professional references for the consultant team or key project personnel. Required information: Reference name, his or her position, their company and contact information, and a brief description of the consultant team's relationship with the reference;
6. Identification of a project manager, who shall be responsible for all work and shall be the primary point of contact. The project manager should have demonstrated proficiency in urban design;
7. A listing of any citations or notices of violation issued within the last five years to local offices of firms represented in the Statement of Qualifications, including labor law violations, environmental law or regulation violations, safety law violations, or any pending litigations or unresolved claims.

## **III. CONSULTANT SELECTION**

Interested firms shall respond to this request by submitting a Statement of Qualifications on or before the time due for submission. Following the receipt of the Statements of Qualifications, a review committee will evaluate the proposals and select consultant teams to interview. In selecting consultants, emphasis will be placed on their qualifications and experience with similar projects.

The Town of York is soliciting proposals from a team of qualified consultants with demonstrated experience in downtown revitalization initiatives, with, at minimum, expertise in civil and/or traffic engineering, landscape architecture, architecture, economic development, community planning and urban design. The Town will select the best consultant for the project and present a contract agreement to that consultant for approval. During the evaluation, if necessary, the Town may wish to request supplemental information from some or all members of the consultant team. The Contract will include the Final Scope of Work for the project.

The Town will consider the following factors during the evaluation of the submitted Statements of Qualifications for this project:

1. Team Qualifications;
2. Understanding of Project Objectives;
3. Past record of performance with respect to cost control, work quality, ability to meet schedules and previous experience on similar projects;
4. Experience obtaining state and federal funding.

#### **IV. CONTRACT**

Any contract entered into by the Town shall be in response to the Statement of Qualification and subsequent discussions. The contract award shall be based on the criteria described herein. Once the contract has been agreed to and executed, the Town will authorize work to proceed.

The Town of York reserves the unqualified right to reject any or all Statements of Qualifications and to accept the Statements of Qualifications which in its sole judgment will under all circumstances serve its best interest. The Town of York reserves the right to negotiate the final product and cost with the selected consultants. If the Town is unable to enter into an agreement with the selected consultants, the Town reserves the right to terminate negotiations and initiate negotiations with another consultant team. No compensation will be paid for the failed negotiations.