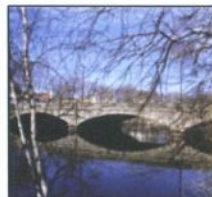




Cumberland
R H O D E I S L A N D

Cumberland's Vision

Using the Past to Enrich the Future



Gates, Leighton & Associates, Inc. has been privileged to generate these images for the 'Future' Town of Cumberland, Rhode Island. We have not done this work alone or in a vacuum. We are especially grateful for advice we've received and the assistance we've been so freely given.

- Mayor Dan McKee for having the foresight to establish a need for these Guidelines and for generously contributing his time and intellect into their development.
- George Gifford, Landscape Architect, for organizing a most effective public-client positions team and successfully acting as interpreter of local desires and professional responsiveness.
- Fred Holman, Landscape Architect, for thoughtfully leading the Design Review Committee through this "tool-making" process that will improve the overall quality of design and strengthen the sense of community in Cumberland.
- All members of the Smart Growth Initiative Task Force who gave generously of their time and talents to ensure that these Design Guidelines effectively convey widely held community opinions on the future quality of life for the people of Cumberland.



Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 1
A Diverse Landscape	Page 2 - 3
Positive Features	Page 4 - 5
The Goal	Page 6 - 7
Applying the Design Guidelines	Page 8
Mendon Road / Rt. 99 Gateway	Page 9
Cumberland Hill	Page 10 - 11
Cumberland High School	Page 12 - 13
Diamond Hill Rd. / Industrial Dr.	Page 14 - 15
Chapel Four Corners	Page 16 - 17
Berkeley	Page 18
Dexter St. Gateway	Page 19
Lonsdale	Page 20 - 21

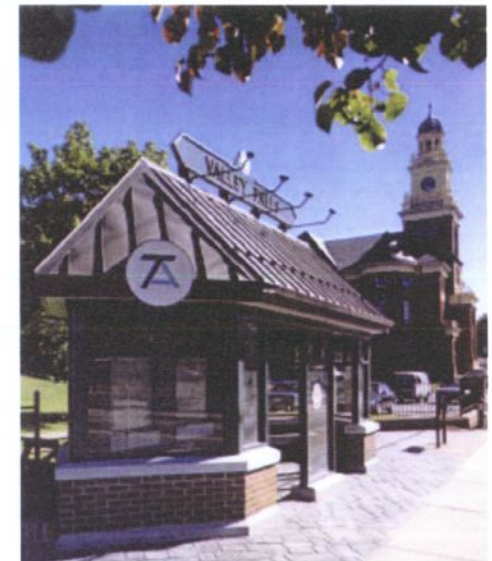




Seven reasons why Design Guidelines will enrich Cumberland's Future.

- 1.** Design Guidelines are important community development tools because historic and cultural design in new construction projects promote desirable values of attractiveness and identity. Community pride, business improvement, and healthy social relationships derive from high quality neighborhoods.
- 2.** Cumberland's built environment is a product of historically available materials and traditional construction techniques. These factors led to a "New England" feeling that is special to Cumberland; one that has juxtaposed a rural country image on the east side of town and the 19th century industrial valley on the west.
- 3.** Design Guidelines are equally valuable to public sector building committees and administrators. Every public construction project adds for better or worse to the overall impression of the community. The impact of public sector projects on the sense of "place" is profound. Public administrators and building committees have the awesome responsibility to make positive additions to community character. *(see photo this page)*
- 4.** Traditional planning and zoning regulations have relied principally on written regulations to convey their intent and their authority. These types of regulations are necessarily limited by individual interpretation of the language.
- 5.** Pictorial communication is the best way to establish a common language. The design intent within guidelines and regulations is more easily achieved through visualization.
- 6.** Pictorial guidelines are not intended to impose a specific architectural design. Owners and architects should freely exhibit their creativity and program needs in a manner that builds community cohesion while respecting the guidelines.
- 7.** Finally, while pictorial guidelines must stand on their own as conveyors of intent, these guidelines also include written outlines.

BUS SHELTER
at TOWN HALL



A DIVERSE LANDSCAPE ~ WEST

CUMBERLAND'S VISION

Cumberland's architectural townscape is modeled by two major geographical influences:

The western portion of the town, mostly along the Blackstone River, is intensely built-up. Many magnificent mill structures remain accompanied by excellent examples of practical mill housing. Low-pitched roofs and double-hung, multi-paned windows dominate the mill architecture. New projects can echo this area's industrial heritage with large simple structures of red brick and stone.



In the western area of the town, mill housing established an architectural style of symmetry and brick construction.

Pitched Roof

Dentals At
Eave Line

Symmetric
Layout



Gable End
Roof Overhang



Granite
Headers



Heavy Eave Detailing, Brackets,
Arch Forms And Shutters

Center Doorway Design, Pedestrian
Scale Front Yard And Decorative Fence



Cumberland
RHODE ISLAND

A DIVERSE LANDSCAPE ~ EAST

CUMBERLAND'S VISION



Pitched Roof

Fencing

The easterly portion of Cumberland is rural. Farms and wooded hillsides still dominate the landscape. New England clapboard style dwellings with steeply pitched roofs are the predominant building type. Projects in this part of the town should employ clapboards, double-hung windows, steeply pitched roofs, and decorative features.



Heavy Eave

Symmetric Layout

Shade Trees

Appropriate Scale for Signage

An agricultural landscape dominates many of the roadways and buildings set back further from the street.



Shutters

Pedestrian Friendly Porch

Lawn Area



Cumberland
RHODE ISLAND

POSITIVE FEATURES

CUMBERLAND'S VISION

Strengthening Cumberland's Future By Honoring Its Past.

The key to strengthening community character is to understand the reasons for using materials and methods, and to carry those reasons forward in contemporary means and programs.

The following photos are examples of positive features both large and small, that add to the overall ambiance of the Cumberland Landscape.



Strong, solid architecture with landscaping and sidewalk bollards defining a corner lot.



Appropriate scaled sign with materials common to the town's history



Simple, yet creative approach to signage with fencing and landscaping to soften view of cars



Well defined street "edge" using fencing and trees



Community character is strengthened by adoption of a "continuum" philosophy.

A "continuum" approach fosters evolutionary growth, rather than a radical departure in design. Such a policy does not dictate a certain type of design, but rather promotes design that can trace its heritage. This is the crux of Cumberland's adopted strategy toward architectural design and community growth.



Shade trees and picket fences provide a pedestrian friendly streetscape



Reuse of older buildings maintains the historic scale of the village character



Roadside stone wall & rail fence suggest a rural setting for a new development



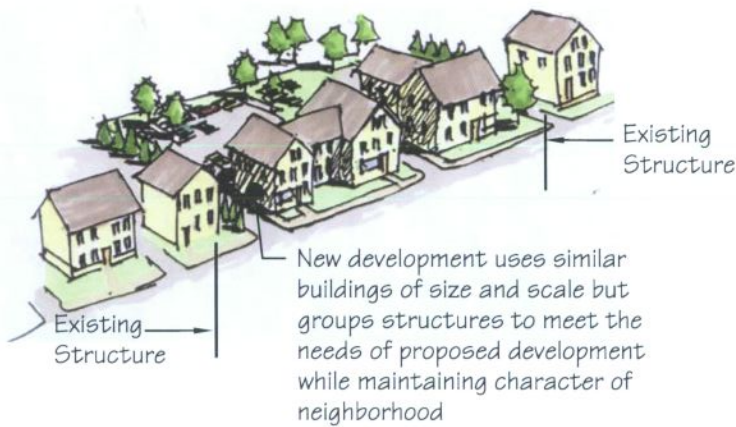
Road edges benefit from fences and planting strips while also defining front yards.

The goal of these Design Guidelines is to achieve architectural harmony by ensuring that new projects honor the "context" of their surroundings.

"Context" is not singular. "Context" is a blend of the environmental, historical, cultural, and economic forces that have shaped and continue to shape a particular built environment. All proposals for new projects should be presented along with explicit examples of the traditional themes that have been incorporated into the proposed design.

To achieve the best design solutions possible, certain questions must be asked:

- *What are the site conditions of the surrounding properties and how will proposed development respond to these conditions?*
- *What shapes, sizes and materials used in historic structures are appropriate for today's development?*
- *How can identifying historical and decorative features help emphasize a larger sense of place?*



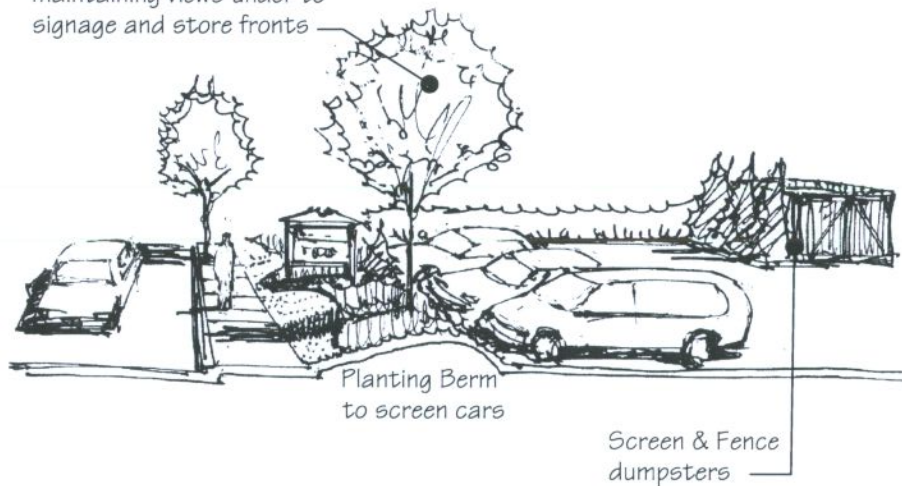
In every project, in every context, the project's landscape defines its locale, its value, and its responsibility. The New England environment dictates that landscapes in Cumberland meet certain requirements of installation, appropriateness, longevity, and maintenance. New landscapes in Cumberland should reflect the realities of the New England weather.

The quality of a landscape demonstrates its client's attitude toward the public good.

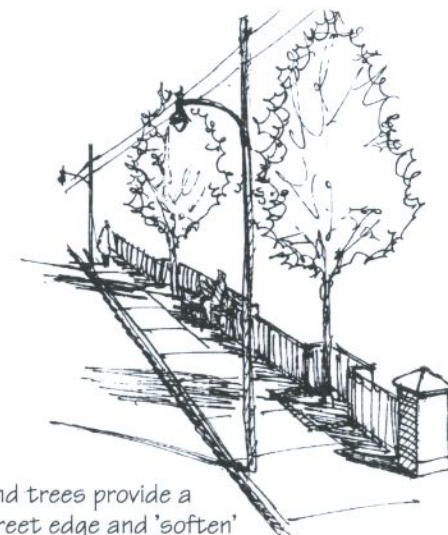
As the density of development inevitably increases, the role of project landscapes to maximize the "fit" of a project into its surroundings is extremely important.

- *How are perceptions of villages formed by street edges and siting of buildings?*
- *Why is appropriate planting critical to Cumberland's ambiance?*
- *What community values are conveyed through its landscapes?*

High canopy trees to provide shade while maintaining views under to signage and store fronts



Fencing and trees provide a strong street edge and 'soften' views to utility lines while ornamental lights and benches enhance the pedestrian experience.

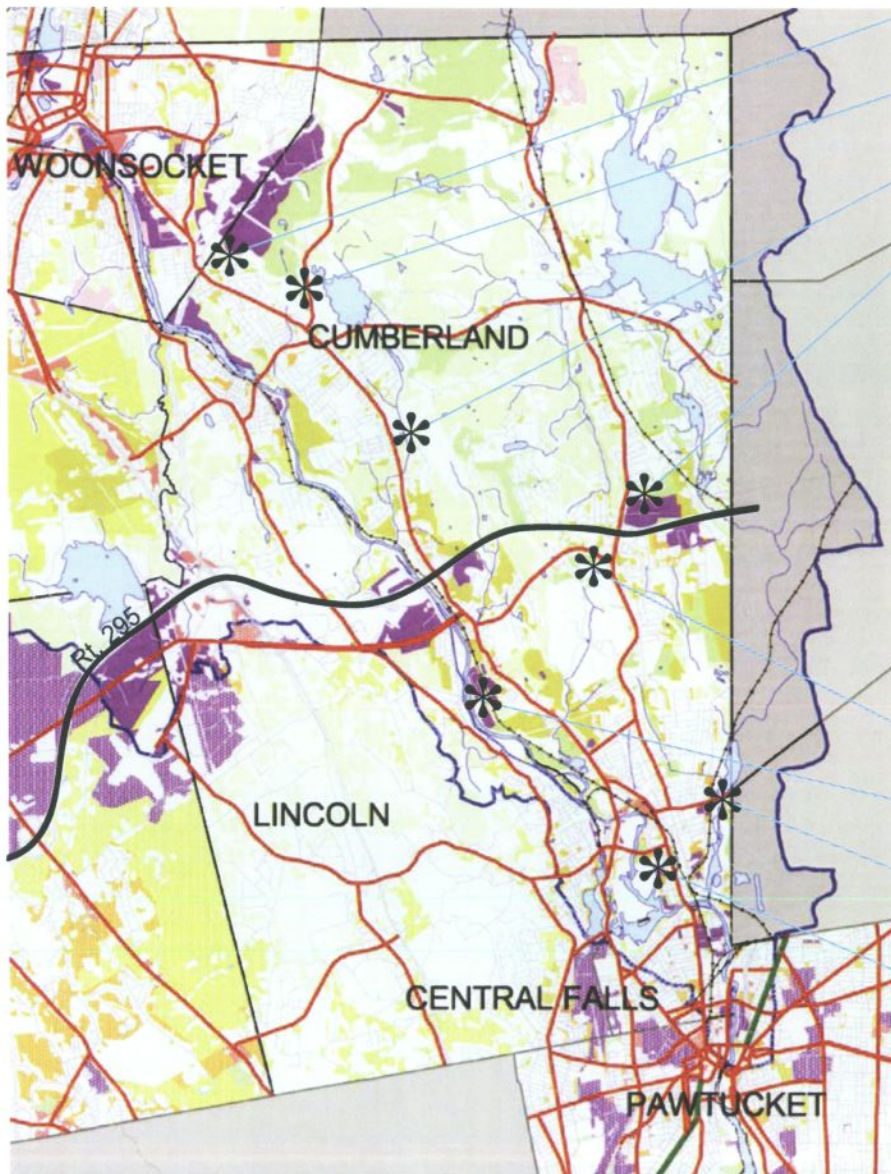


'Infill' projects should maintain setback and streetscape features similar to adjacent properties



APPLYING THE GUIDELINES

CUMBERLAND'S VISION



Mendon Rd. / Rt. 99 Gateway (Page 9)

Cumberland Hill (Page 10-11)

Cumberland High School (Page 12-13)

Diamond Hill Rd. / Industrial Dr. (Page 14-15)

This study selects several potential development sites throughout the town that vary in size and scale. The Purpose is to present images suggesting how new development can draw from, and enhance its surrounding context.

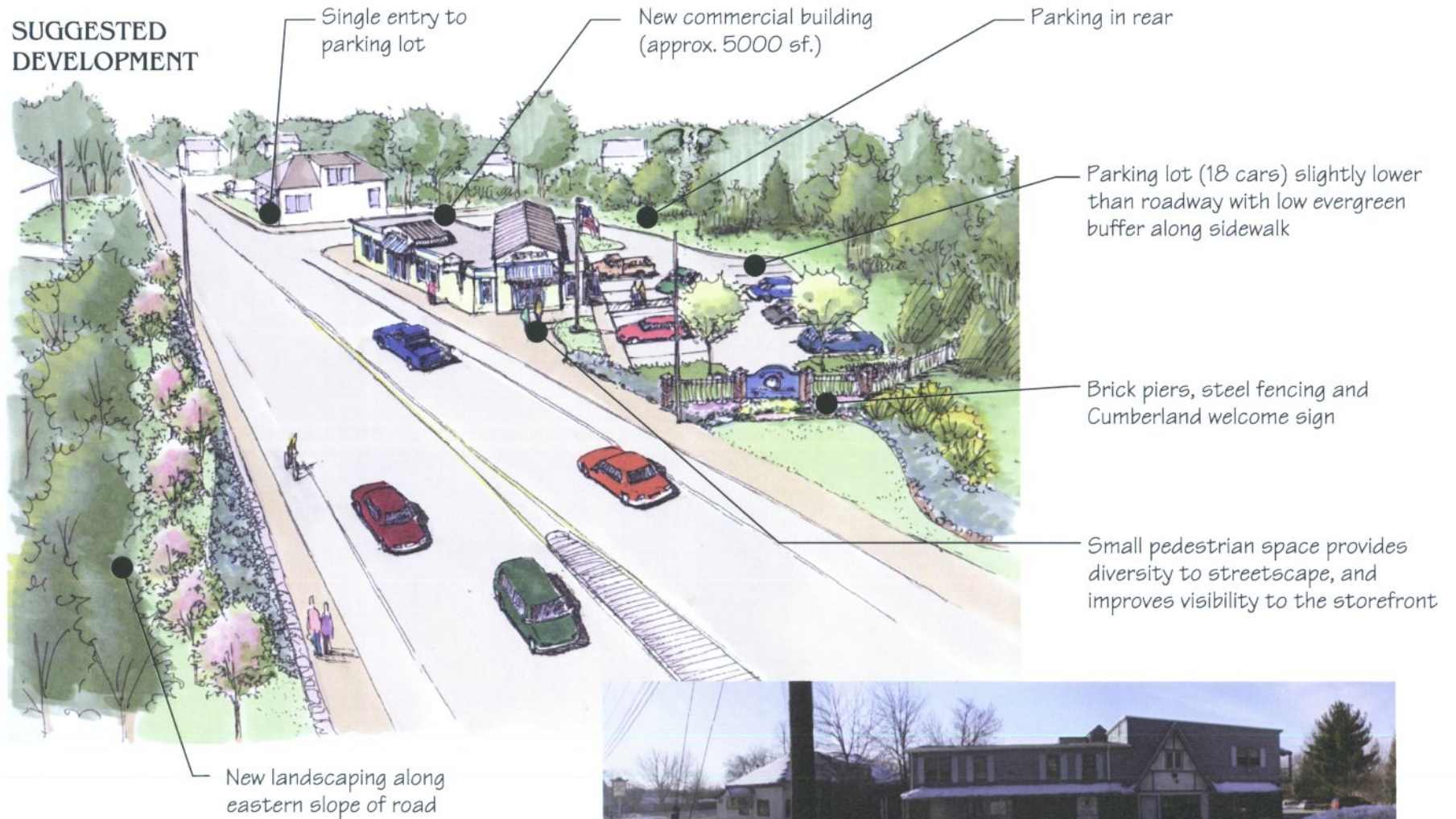
Chapel Four Corners (Page 16-17)

Berkeley (Page 18)

Dexter St. Gateway (Page 19)

Lonsdale (Page 20-21)

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



CUMBERLAND HILL

CUMBERLAND'S VISION

Infill and Reuse Projects are "Smart Growth"

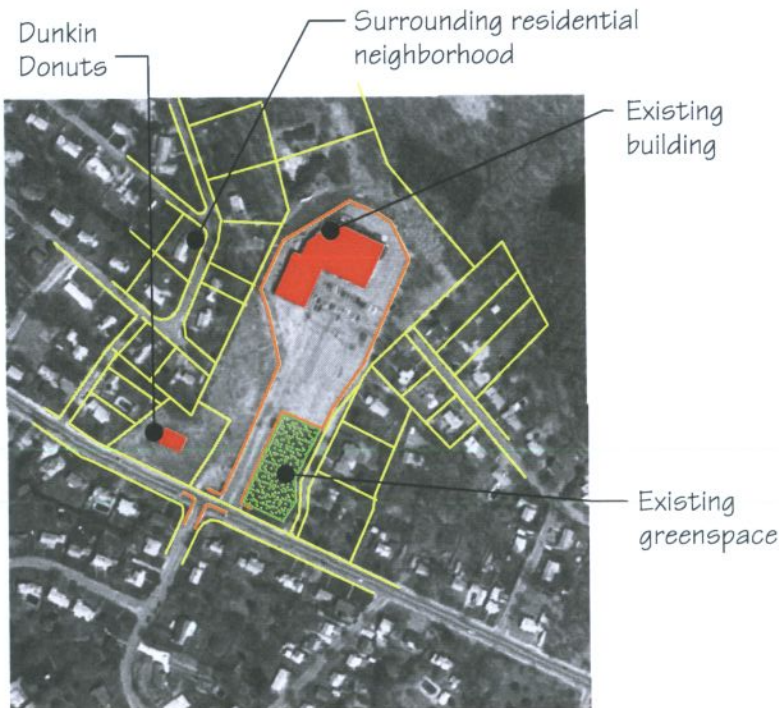
Cumberland's remaining woodlands and open spaces can be preserved by locating new development projects in previously used sites. Developments for infill projects must be sensitive to their surrounding neighborhoods and incorporate good design practices that promote a higher level of visual harmony.

(Image No. 1)

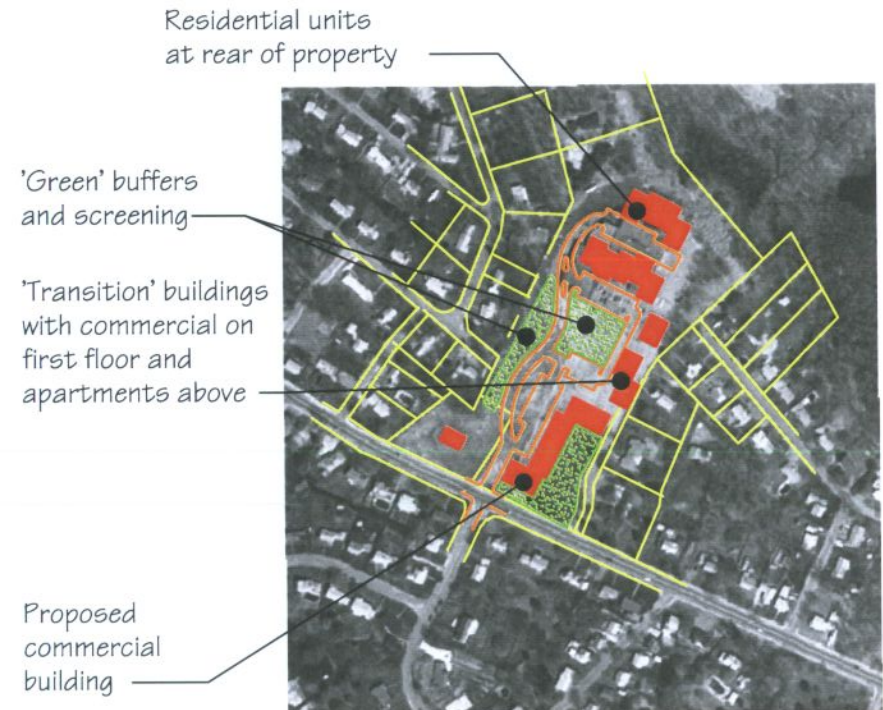
This commercial property on Mendon Road (Old Benny's Store) was studied as a potential in-fill site. The existing buildings are identified in black and a significant open lawn area is also identified as having a positive impact to both the streetscape and the adjacent residential houses.

(Image No. 2)

The proposed mixed-use development has commercial buildings fronting Mendon Road while maintaining the existing greenspace. The rear of the property transitions to housing units which is in keeping with the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Additional greenspaces are proposed as either buffers from neighbors or screening of new parking lots.



(Image No. 1)



(Image No. 2)



Commercial building at street front with parking in rear

Existing greenspace to be maintained and used as a buffer between residents and proposed commercial use



SUGGESTED INFILL DEVELOPMENT



EXISTING SITE VIEWED FROM MENDON ROAD



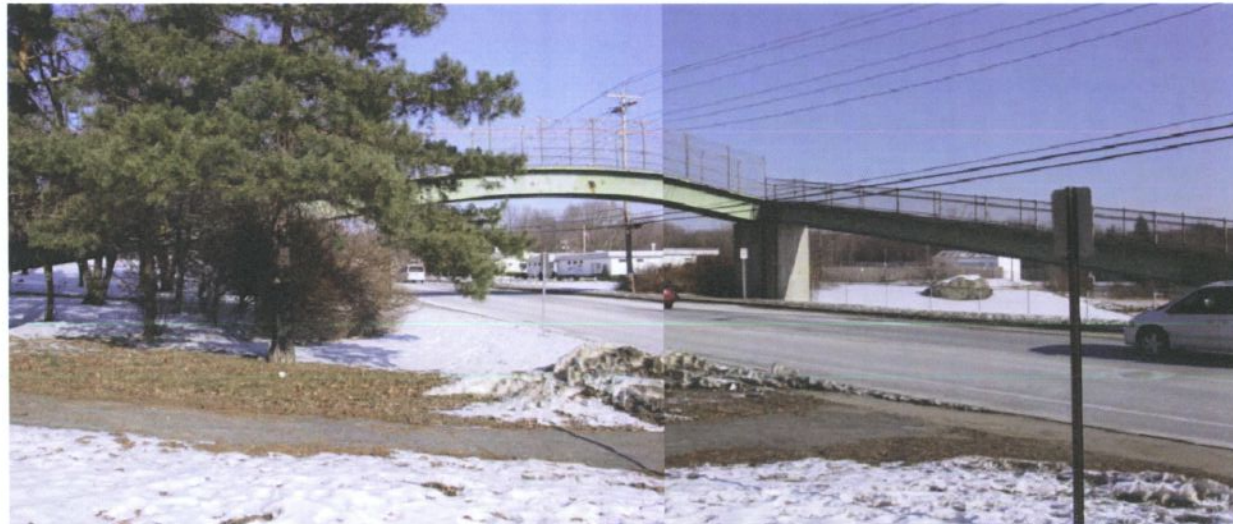
Proposed buildings would be designed to reflect the architectural character of other appropriate buildings along Mendon Road



Setting high standards for design in private developments must be matched by local government's commitment to the same high standards. When all parties are given fair and equal treatment, people and projects will respond with community enhancing designs. Public acceptance of community design standards is generated when public projects become models for community character. Public sector projects must promote good planning and design *by example*.

Conceptual Design Improvements for Mendon Road Boulevard....

Cumberland High School is sited on a wonderful hill overlooking its primary sports fields, but separated from them by traffic-heavy Mendon Road. For some years an arched pedestrian bridge has provided safe access between the school and the fields, but the design character of the bridge is "highway minimal".

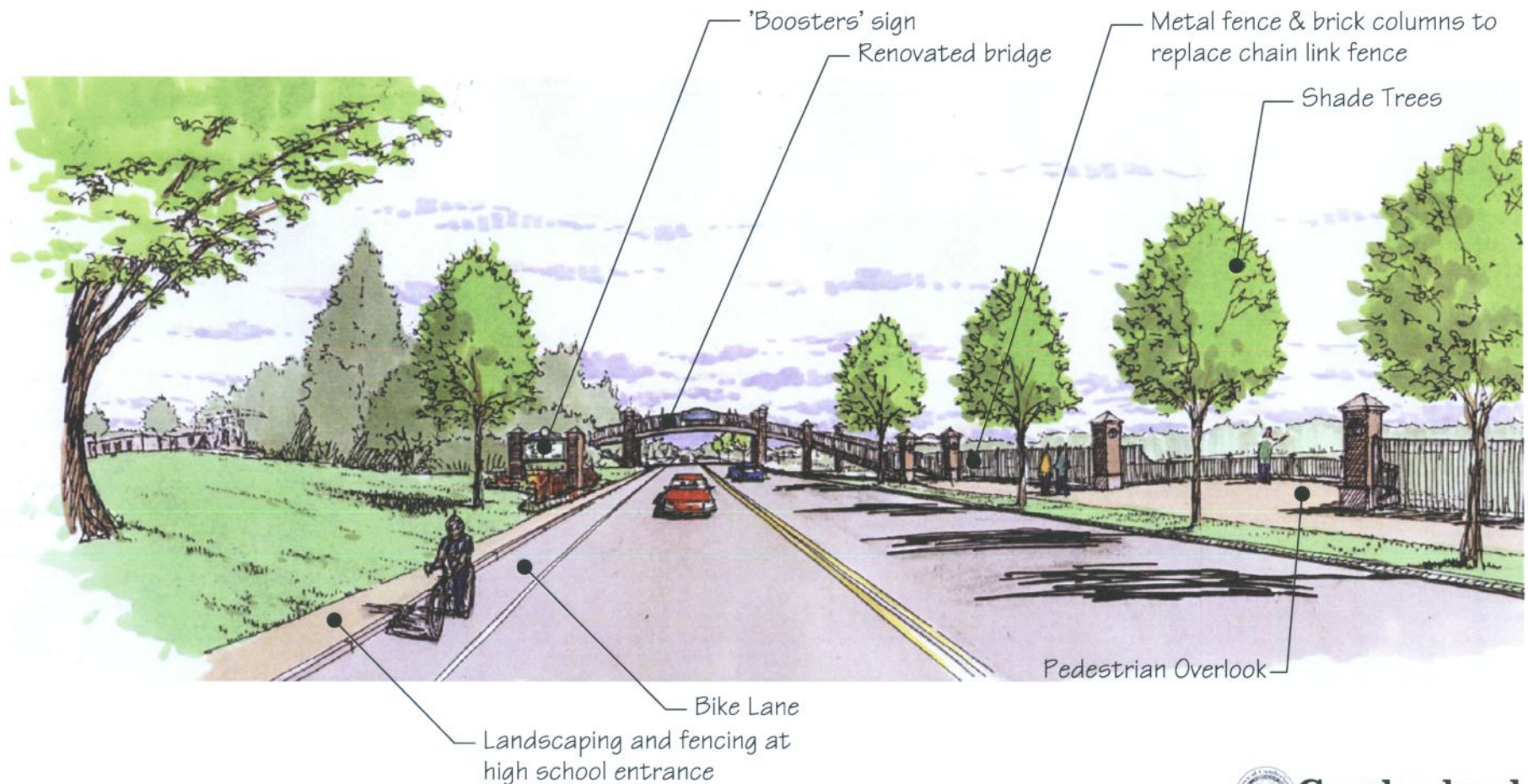


EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



Cumberland's vision for the future is not just limited to commercial property....

Now comes an opportunity to architecturally upgrade the style of the bridge and its surrounding area. To enhance the pedagogical symbolism, this area will assume the character of an educational campus through introduction of brick columns, new fencing, new lighting, new signage, and new landscaping. Traffic calming measures will be introduced along Mendon Road. When combined with the Proposed Wellness Center on the High School grounds, these physical improvements will compliment the ever-improving quality of education of Cumberland.



DIAMOND HILL RD. / INDUSTRIAL DR.

CUMBERLAND'S VISION

Let Historical Character Shape Future Development.....

New construction should draw from the existing architecture of pitched roofs and dormers



SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT

This corner lot at Diamond Hill Road and Industrial Drive was identified as a potential site for constructing an entirely new building. With that assumption, this development study offers a solution that sets the building back to allow for some parking in front with a strong landscaped area behind the sidewalk. The two-plus story structure is placed to align with neighboring structures and because of its setback the architecture suggests a vertical element that fits with its corner lot site location. Pitched roofs with dormers bring interest to the building as well as expanded square footage for upper floors. First floor arcades and awnings provide comfortable pedestrian circulation around the building.



EXISTING SITE

Pitched roofs and dormers



Cumberland
RHODE ISLAND

Commercial Developments need "Substance" to Overcome Mediocrity.....

This shopping strip on the south corner of Diamond Hill Road and Industrial Drive offers a good example of an outdated structure looking for a new face lift for both the building and landscaping. High canopy street trees are introduced to reinforce the streetscape and frame views to the storefronts. The building improvements include a larger facade design that provides a greater height and increased display area for an organized sign system. Pitched roofs with a corner tower structure give the building a more "New England" character and allows the entire development to have a contributing presence on Diamond Hill Road.

Tower structure
with signage

High canopy trees
framing view to
storefront and
defining edge of road



SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

New facade
improvements
with organized
sign system

Sidewalk links
commercial use
with nearby
residential
neighborhood

Low landscaping and fencing to soften view of
parking lot but maintains view to storefront



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



CHAPEL FOUR CORNERS

CUMBERLAND'S VISION

How New Development can Create a Village.....

The villages of Cumberland are traditionally walkable neighborhoods with necessary daily services close-by. Over time, accommodation of automobiles has caused loss of yards, trees, even the buildings themselves. The results are villages pockmarked with disturbing gaps in their streetscapes and repetitive expansive parking lots. Chapels Four Corners is unfortunately one of these areas where the village character is all but lost. The existing conditions, however, makes this area ideal for redevelopment that could actually bring back a pedestrian friendly village that's more reflective of Cumberland's character rather than another pit stop along a highway corridor.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



Cumberland
RHODE ISLAND

The most significant change would be replacing the outdated and under utilized commercial buildings on the west side of Diamond Hill Road with two-plus story buildings located behind the sidewalk. Parking areas would be located to the sides, or preferably behind the buildings so that the architecture (not the automobiles) would dominate the new village streetscape. Wide sidewalk areas would connect parking areas to street front entrances. Existing developments would introduce pedestrian improvements, landscaping and properly scaled signage that promote a comfortable, safe village character.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT



Sidewalks leading from parking to storefronts



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



Defining the roadside edges also helps to reduce traffic speeds.....

Cumberland is a community of villages. Vehicles are necessary for mobility, but speeding vehicles destroy neighborhoods. Drivers set their speed far more by the shape and size of the road, than by limits set by street signs.

"Traffic Calming", a term that means using physical and visual cues to reduce drivers' tendencies to speed, results from narrowing the perceived travel lanes, allowing on-street parking, and providing bicycle lanes. This study area on Martin Street provides an opportunity to see an edge condition that is strongly defined on the south side by buildings, landscaping and fencing, but is rather weak along the north side.

Pedestrian areas can further enhance the street edge with well defined crosswalks that 'bridge' wide expanses of asphalt driveways



Existing View at Martin Street

4' minimum
bike lane

Grass shoulder

Street trees

Fencing



SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT

New commercial building (approx. 7000sf)
with parking in back

'Pride corner' with town
achievement signs

Commercial sign to be in
scale with neighborhood



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

Town and State welcome
signs joined in one wood
frame and post structure

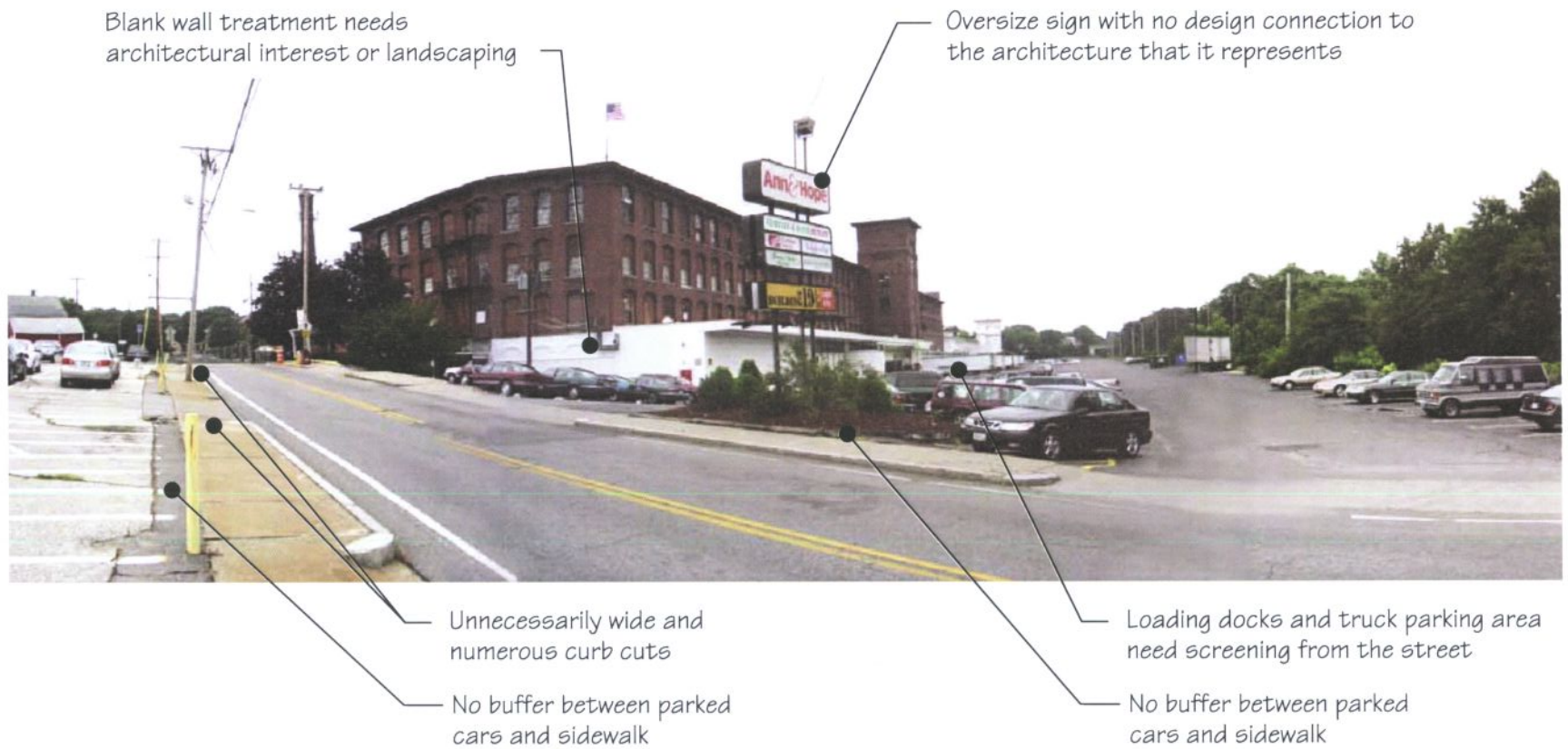


EXISTING SIGN



Respecting the Form & Function of the Past Promotes Compatible Development for the Future.....

Cumberland boasts many large mill structures. Many are productively occupied, but others are empty or underutilized. These structures are valuable assets that will contribute to the town's tax base for many more years. Almost all of these important buildings are surrounded by large parking areas devoid of landscaping and presenting a tired run down appearance. The old Ann & Hope mill building presents an opportunity to look at a typical mill building and study the design elements needed to make the complex more village friendly.



Promoting reuse of mill buildings will continue to be a sound development strategy for the town.....

These structures are innately sound and adaptable to new uses. Streetfronts must be landscaped to define the roadway edges. The windblown expanses of asphalt must be aesthetically enhanced with traffic island, trees, and special accents. Where useful additions have been made, color harmony with the larger structure can immediately and economically improve the overall appearance of the complex.

