

VILLAGE CORE TEAM

A first step in the process of determining the most appropriate places for redevelopment in the village core was to understand the town's distinguishing characteristics or assets. Elements that were identified as being the greatest assets were river access, waterfall (dam), entrance to Mad River Valley, existing commercial activity (storage, lumberyard), town hall/church/firehouse, bed and breakfast, historic structures, railroad/RR underpass, stonewall, highway access, and location between Montpelier and Burlington. Recognizing these features of the village helps identify development potential and enhancement opportunities for the town.



Architect Michael Weinberger explains designs for Village Core

Welcoming new businesses in the form of infill development within the Village Core would be ideal. Available land and access to water and sewer treatment are seen as critical constraints. Understanding these parameters and finding options within the existing infrastructure will involve strategic implementation of village growth.

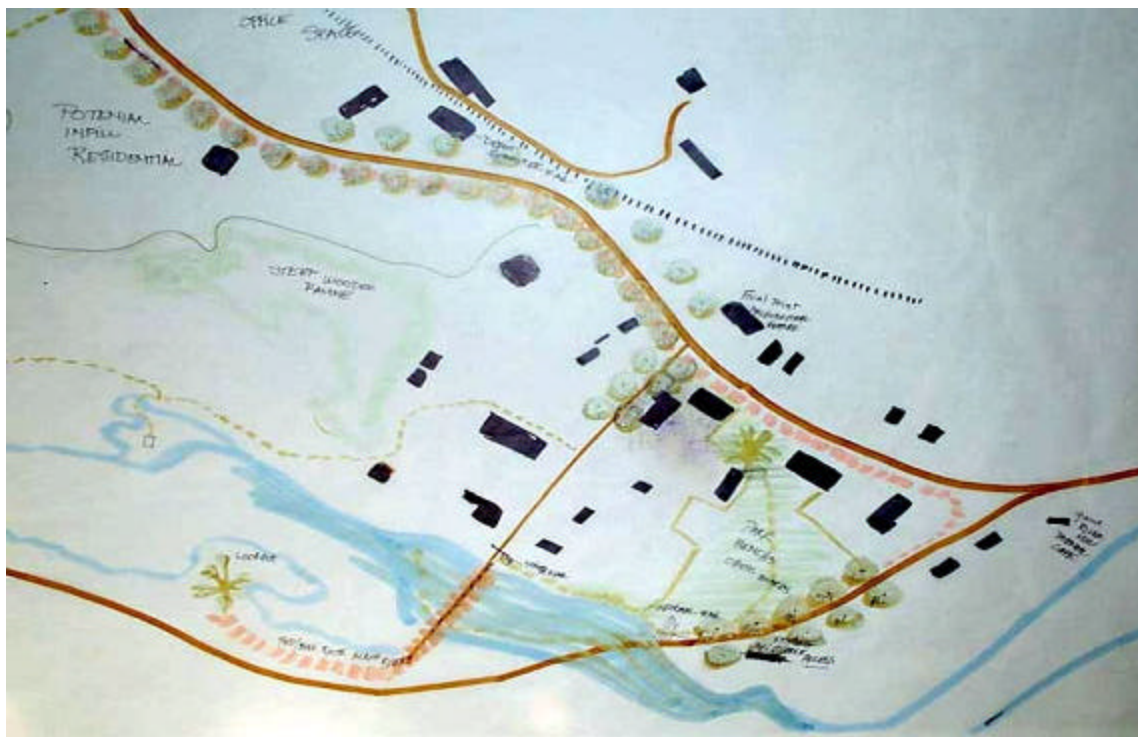
Middlesex should become more attractive for the sake of its own citizens as well as leaf-peeping tourists, skiers going to and from Mad River, summer bicyclists, etc. Taking the steps to emphasize and highlight the pleasant characteristics of the Village Core, through such means as sidewalks, a Morse Park, a river-walk and overlook, etc., are necessary investments in the village to enhance its capacity and livability.

Along with pedestrian access to the village park and other destinations (river overlook), traffic-calming methods in the village become essential. Enhancing the village and attracting new investors relies on the visibility of activity and people to create a destination.

The following images and associated bullet points illustrate the concepts and recommendations by the Village Core team.

Green Space and Circulation

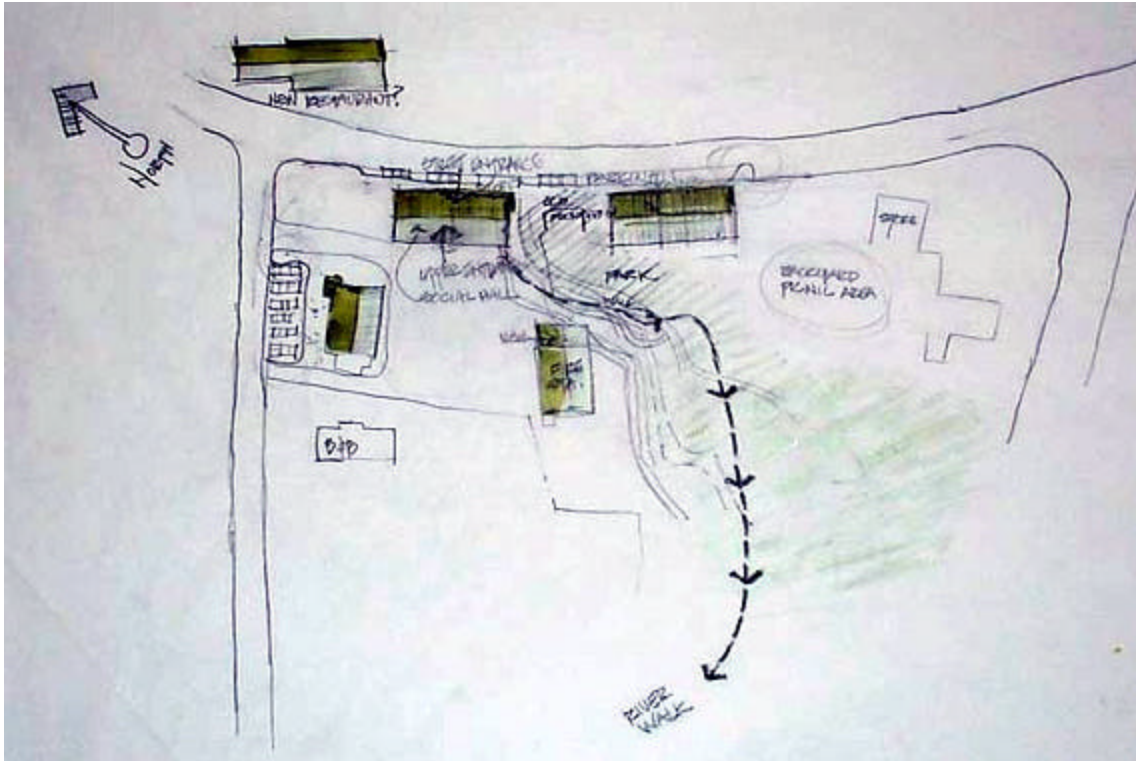
- ?? Keep Morse property as green space – make it a public park
- ?? Add walking paths
- ?? Add river walk
- ?? Build pedestrian bridge over the river or to the island
- ?? Install sidewalks
- ?? Improve sight-lines on Rt. 2 – certain locations are limited making it dangerous
- ?? Add bike racks



Drawing 1 - Circulation and Green Space

Municipal Complex

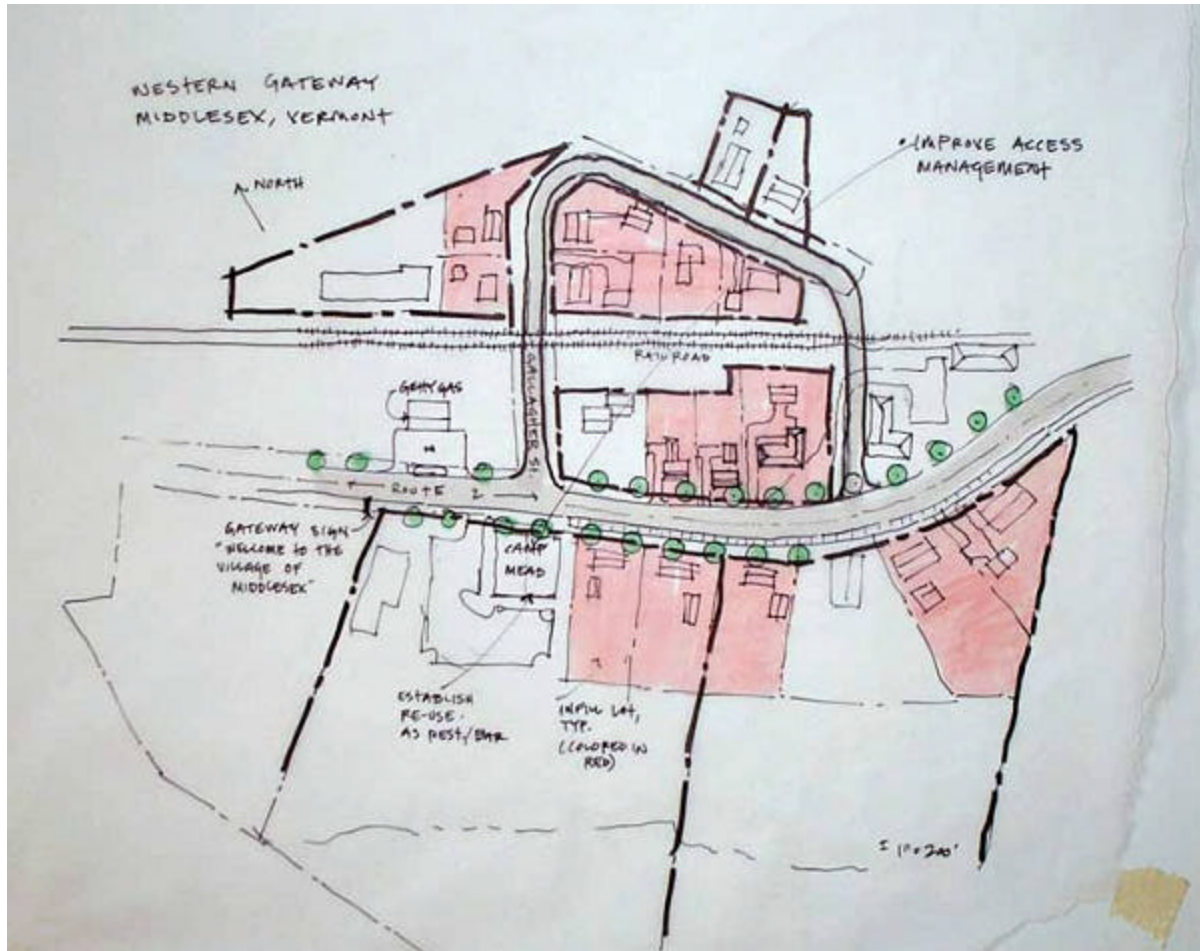
- ?? Better define the municipal complex by adding a community center on most northern part of Morse property/ next to town hall
- ?? Create areas of on-street parking
- ?? Expand firehouse on site
- ?? Create an entrance to and pathway within the Morse property green space



Drawing 2 – Municipal Complex

Village Infill

- ?? Seek help for the many historic buildings that are in distress
- ?? Create a mixed-use residential/commercial development in railroad area
- ?? Improve access through Gallagher St.
- ?? Find a developer for a local restaurant/pub
- ?? Develop a community center
- ?? Subdivide larger lots to allow for infill potential



Drawing 3 – Village Infill

Conclusions and Analysis for the Village Core

1. Keep the Morse property as green space and make it a public park--this is the central recommendation. The park can serve as a focal point for the village and attract residents as a pleasant destination. It will entice people who are traveling through town to stop and enjoy the river. There should be park benches, picnic tables and chessboards amidst the walking path through the Morse property.

2. Develop a trail through what is now the Green Mountain Power land with overlook of the dam, and a loop up and around to Camp Meade. Connect to the trail through the Morse Property as a "river walk." Access to the river was recognized to be one of the main assets of the village, so a path along the river would develop this feature. Accompanying the river walk could be a pedestrian bridge over the river where the old bridge used to be. Sidewalks along Rt. 2 will help ensure pedestrian safety and encourage residents to walk around the village. Lastly, bike racks at both the country store and the new community center provide amenities for bicyclists traveling through town.

3. Better define and thus improve the municipal complex (town hall, firehouse) by adding a community center to help revitalize the village core. Build a community center on the northern most part of the Morse property. Connect this site to the municipal complex with stairs and ramp creating an outdoor courtyard or focal point between the various municipal buildings. The redesign of this strategic village location can enhance existing buildings, respond to space needs and constraints, and deal with parking and circulation concerns. The redesign of this area speaks to community goals as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

4. Create on-street parking outside the community center and in front of the Morse Park entrance on Rt. 2. The design and engineering of the on-street parking can be part of a larger streetscape, parking, and sidewalk implementation grant.

5. The number of distressed historic buildings provides opportunities for renovation and infill development. Redevelop one of these building as a library or restaurant/pub to provide a much-desired location for residents to congregate. Rebuild the railroad area into a mixed-use zone which will allow for both residential and commercial options and improve access through Gallagher Street to accommodate the increased traffic. Subdivide existing lots into smaller parcels as an option for initiating or motivating compact residential development.