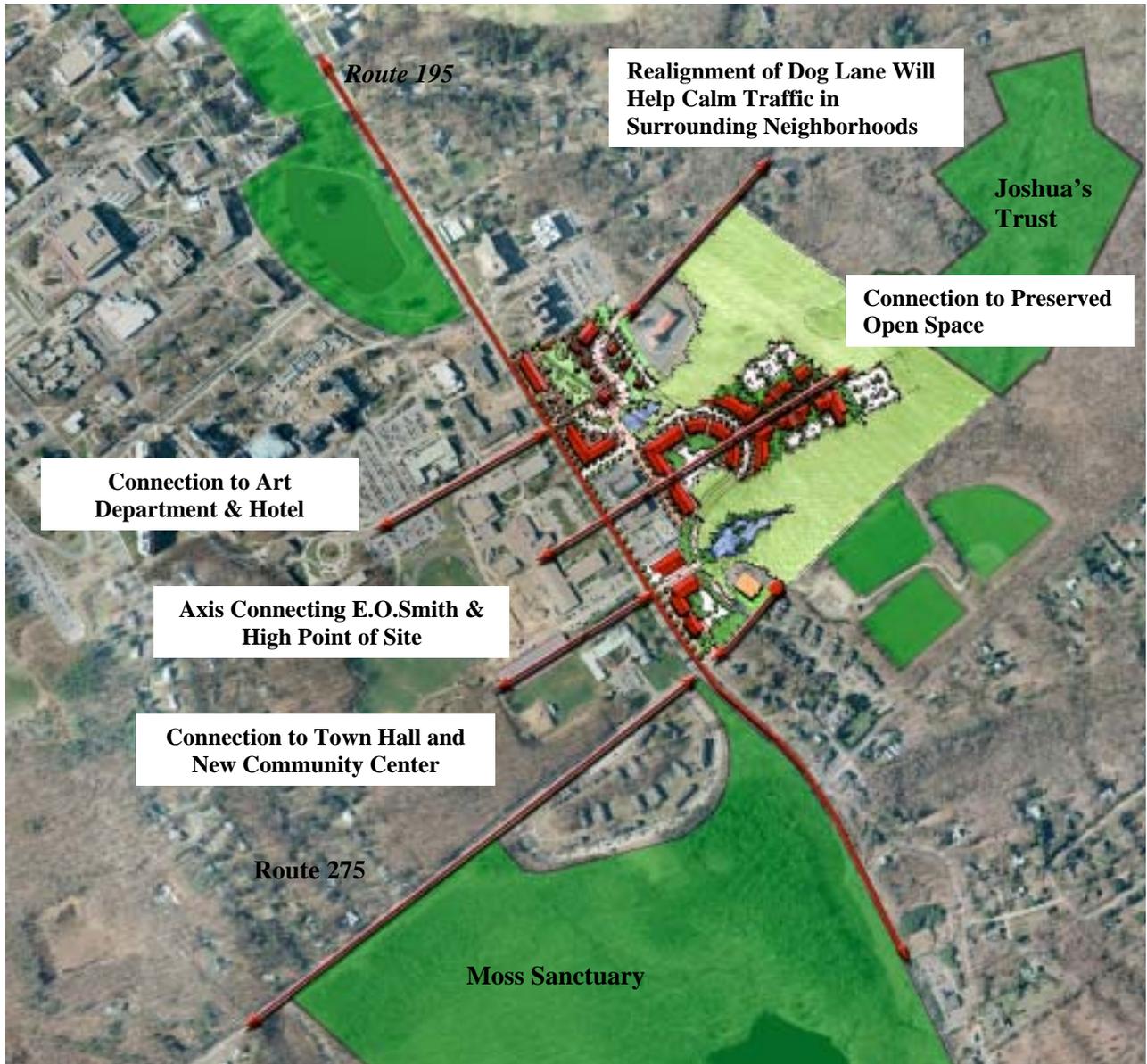


DOWNTOWN MANSFIELD MASTER PLAN



for: The Mansfield Downtown Partnership

by: The Milone & MacBroom Team in conjunction with the Miniutti Group, Harrall-Michalowski Associates, Johnson Land Design and Dr. Norman Garrick

May, 2002

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DOWNTOWN MANSFIELD MASTER PLAN

1.0 Introduction

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership has commissioned the preparation of a concept master plan for the commercial area of Storrs. The goal of this initiative is to revitalize the area into a vibrant downtown that supports a mix of residential and non-residential uses typically found in collegiate communities and in the center of traditional New England communities.

The idea of having a town center for Mansfield is not new. The Town's Plan of Development prepared in the early 1970's identified the need to have a viable and identifiable downtown. Several studies in the subsequent three decades made similar recommendations. A recent survey commissioned by the University of Connecticut revealed that a leading factor that detracted from the overall student experience was the absence of a downtown where students could find activities and opportunities away from those sponsored by the University. In the latter part of 2000, the Town accepted the recommendations of a report entitled "Mansfield Downtown Action Agenda 2000" (often referred as the Hyett Palma Report) and decided to aggressively address the issue by forming a partnership consisting of representatives of the University of Connecticut, area merchants, public officials, and interested citizens to begin to implement the community objective of "...creating a vibrant, exciting, mixed-use downtown center through leveraging the housing investment planned by the University."

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership retained the services of the multi-disciplinary team led by Milone & MacBroom, Inc., in association with Harrall-Michalowski Associates, the Miniutti Group, Johnson Land Design, and Norman Garrick. The consultant team was charged with analyzing the existing conditions of the downtown area, researching the market conditions and developing a target market strategy for the area, and preparing a concept master plan and a strategy for its implementation. This report is a summary of the findings and recommendations of the yearlong planning effort undertaken by the Partnership.

The Partnership's work has not been undertaken in a vacuum. From its first meeting in June 2001, the Partnership has encouraged public participation. A meeting to introduce the public to the project was held at the end of June. The consultant conducted a workshop with the Partnership at which the public participated in a limited way. In the latter part of September, the Partnership conducted the first of several public participation sessions at which development issues were identified through a design charrette process where participants were given the opportunity to express their ideas and to graphically display their vision of how the downtown should look. Somewhat later in the process, the University's students had a similar opportunity to express their views of what they considered to be important elements of a downtown. In addition to the charettes, presentations were made to a variety of civic groups including the League of Women Voters, Mansfield Business Association, and the Mansfield Town Council, all of which were conducted with the purpose of building a consensus for the concepts espoused in this document.

The preparation of the Master Plan was undertaken in four phases:

- *Inventory and Analysis of Existing Conditions* where existing data were compiled, and an evaluation of natural resource, land use and cultural factors influencing the project were reviewed to identify the opportunities and constraints that would give the form to the Downtown.

- Development of a *Market Strategy* that included an analysis of economic and demographic factors within the market area, surveying the business stakeholders in Storrs Center to supplement the surveys conducted previously of the area shoppers, and offering a strategy to support the economic expansion of the Downtown.
- *Concept Development* where the opportunities and constraints identified in the analysis of existing conditions together with the findings of the market analysis were transformed into physical form and alternative land use patterns were explored to determine which alternative, or combination of alternatives, were better suited for meeting the project objectives.
- *Master Development Plan and Implementation Strategy* where the selected alternative was refined and specific recommendations were made with respect to implementation strategies and responsibilities.

2.0 Inventory and Analysis of Existing Conditions

The first elements of the master planning process is characterized as fact-finding consisting of the preparation of a base map of the project area, collecting pertinent data from published sources and conducting a reconnaissance of the physical characteristics of the study area. The purpose of this effort was to identify and analyze development opportunities and the factors that may constrain those opportunities.

2.1 Study Area

Figure 1:
Project Site



*Master Plan for Downtown Mansfield
The Milone & MacBroom Team in conjunction with the Miniutti Group, Harrall-Michalowski Associates, Johnson Land Design,
and Dr. Norman Garrick*

The study area encompasses an area of approximately 45 acres generally bounded by the intersection of Storrs Road (State Route 195) and Mansfield Road, the south entrance to the University of Connecticut campus in the vicinity of Shippee and Buckley Halls on the north, and by the intersection of Route 195 and South Eagleville Road (State Route 275) on the south. The area extends from the vicinity of Route 195 easterly approximately 1,850 feet to the rear of the land owned by the University behind the existing commercial development. See Figure 1. While the area on which Storrs Center is to be developed is located on the easterly side of Storrs Road, the Partnership did take into consideration the overall context of the area and the influences of surrounding land uses on the downtown. In essence, the study area extended as far to the north as Mirror Lake on the University property and as far to the south as Hank's Hill Road. Consideration was given to the municipally owned land on the west side of Storrs Road including the Town office complex and E.O. Smith High School.

A base map of the study area was prepared utilizing the topographic maps provided by the Town of Mansfield. Wetland boundaries were initially taken from the Town's official wetland map, but were subsequently refined by the field identification of the wetlands by Baystate Environmental Consultants who has been retained by the University of Connecticut to conduct an environmental impact evaluation (EIE) of the study area. The base map includes the location of existing buildings, roads, parking areas, as well as such natural features as wetlands, vegetation boundaries and topography. Property lines were taken from the Town's tax maps. See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Base Plan



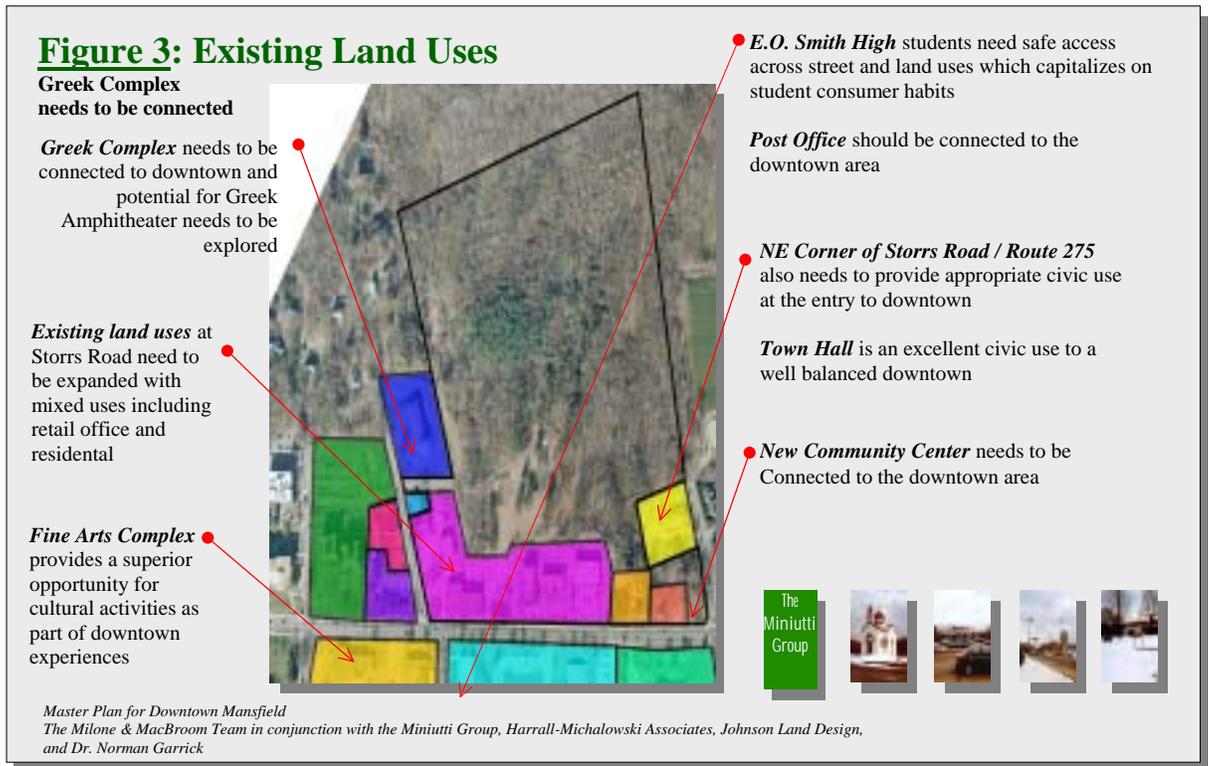
*Master Plan for Downtown Mansfield
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In addition to the base maps, a three-dimensional computer simulation model was developed for the purpose of illustrating the physical characteristics of the study area.

Land Use and Infrastructure

An inventory of existing land uses within the study was conducted using the Town's tax files as the basis of the inventory. The published data was field verified and found to be substantially accurate. A list of owners and tenants is provided as part of the parking analysis in Section 2.3 below.

There are three land uses in the study area with the predominant uses being public or institutional and commercial. The institutional uses are generally associated with the University's School of Fine Arts, E.O. Smith High School, and the Town's municipal office complex, all of which are located on the west side of Storrs Road. The commercial uses are located on the east side of Storrs Road and are primarily individual retail, office, and eating establishments. The Storrs Post Office is located at the southerly end of the study area. Residential buildings associated with the University are situated both to the north of the area (Shippee and Buckley Halls) and at the intersection of Storrs Road and South Eagleville Road. To the east of the commercial uses is a large vacant parcel owned by the University. In fact, of the 45-acres in the study area, approximately 90 percent are owned by the University. See Figure 3.



The portion of the study area between Dog Lane and South Eagleville Road is designated as Planned Business (PB-2) by the Town of Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission. Under this zoning designation, the permitted uses generally include retail and service establishments similar to the existing uses. Residential uses are not permitted except for group homes as defined in the Connecticut General Statutes. While some of the existing uses may have nonconforming aspects with respect to yard and area requirements specified in the Zoning Regulations, the uses themselves appear to conform to Regulations.

All of the utility service providers in the study area have been contacted to determine the adequacy of the existing utilities to continue to provide service to a redeveloped downtown. Telephone, electric, and gas services all have sufficient capacity to serve the area. However, it is likely that the distribution system will have to be relocated as part of the cost of development.

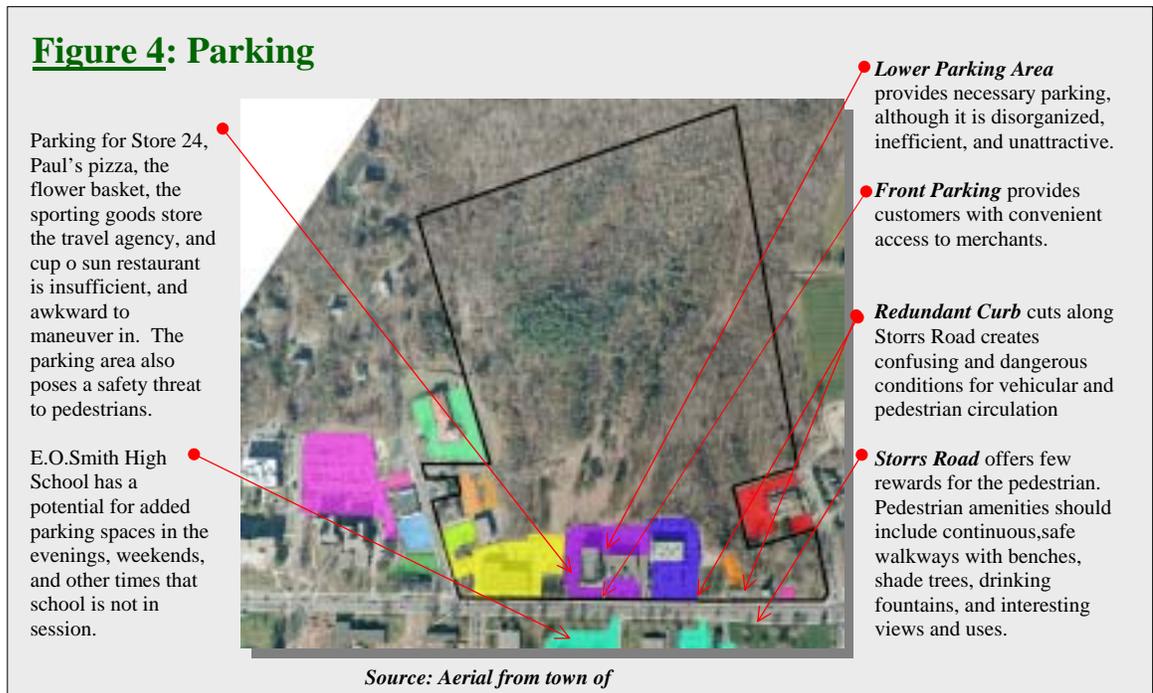
The area is now served by the University's domestic water system. Based on the preliminary findings of the on-going water supply study for the Town, it appears that there is sufficient capacity to serve the increase in housing units and the expansion of non-residential activities in the downtown area.

Sanitary sewer service is provided by the University of Connecticut. Based on information provided by the University, it appears that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate an increase in housing and the expansion of the non-residential activities in the downtown area.

While there are no reported capacity problems with the storm drainage system in the study area, there are no provisions in place to address water quality. In fact, it is likely that stormwater discharges into Mirror Lake from this area may contribute, in part, to the apparent water quality problems of the lake. Assuming that the redevelopment of the area will involve the relocation of streets and parking, the reconstruction of the drainage system should be anticipated. The installation of "Best Management Practices" (BMP's) for the stormwater collection system would be part of the new system.

2.2 Existing Parking and Pedestrian Circulation

An inventory of the existing parking lots in the study area has been made and is illustrated on Figures 4 through 7. From a functional perspective, the parking system is disjointed, wastes space, and encourages the use of the automobile within the downtown rather than being a place that encourages walking or cycling. In essence, the automobile appears to dominate the area visually and spatially.



It is interesting to note the differences between the two standards as applied to the study area. Using the Town's Zoning Regulation, all but one property has a deficiency in parking. Overall, 564 spaces are required whereas 418 spaces exist, a deficiency of approximately 25 percent. In contrast, using ITE's recommendation based on national studies of similar uses, only 369 spaces are required indicating that there is an excess of 13 percent. It can be concluded that Mansfield's requirement for the mixed-use development in this case is somewhat excessive given the village setting and the proximity to pedestrian population of the University.

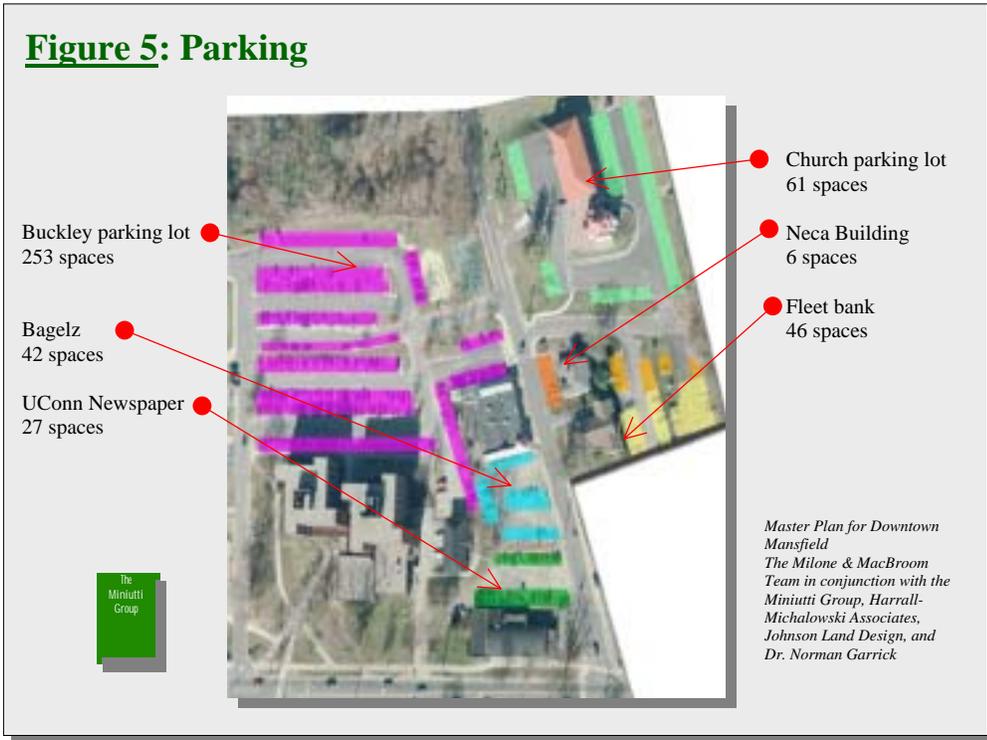


Figure 7: Parking

Post office
16 front
20 rear
17 side

Facilities
8

UConn Print Shop
20



The pedestrian circulation system in the study area tends to lack organization and consistency and the number of crosswalks from east to west are limited to three locations. Within the commercial area, walks do not have sufficient separation from parked cars, and are disconnected between individual properties. The use of planting areas, covered walks and similar “wayfinding” techniques are virtually absent from the downtown. See Figure 8.

Figure 8: Pedestrian Circulation

Covered pedestrian walkway does not have enough separation from vehicles

This area of sidewalk lacks connection from the retail buildings to the university

Pedestrian walkway lacks connection

The Covered walkway here has a small planted buffer from parking. This helps to remove the conflict between pedestrian and automobile.



Source: Aerial from town of Mansfield

2.3 Existing Traffic Conditions

An analysis of the existing vehicular circulation in the vicinity of the study has been undertaken to establish a baseline for determining what improvements may be necessary to accommodate improvements to the downtown. In the preparation of the traffic analysis, the UCONN 2000 Master Plan (February, 2000) and the Site Traffic Evaluation Study Expansion and Renovation of E.O. Smith High School (March 27, 1997) were reviewed.

Route 195 (Storrs Road) between Mansfield Road and Route 275 (South Eagleville Road) is a two-way, north-south State roadway with a posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour (mph). The roadway is classified as a minor rural arterial. Traffic on Route 195 within this area is a mix between institutional trips (E.O. Smith High School, UCONN, Mansfield Town Offices), residential trips, and commercial/retail trips which are reflected in the large number of curb cuts. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes recorded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) during the fall of 1999 reveal that Route 195, north of Route 275, serves approximately 12,500 vehicles split between 5,900 vehicles traveling northbound and 6,600 vehicles traveling southbound.

Traffic signals are located at the intersections of Route 195 with Mansfield Road / Bishop Center Drive, Dog Lane / Bolton Road, and South Eagleville Road / Post Office Drive. These three intersections are coordinated. Traffic control at the other driveways consist of stop sign control.

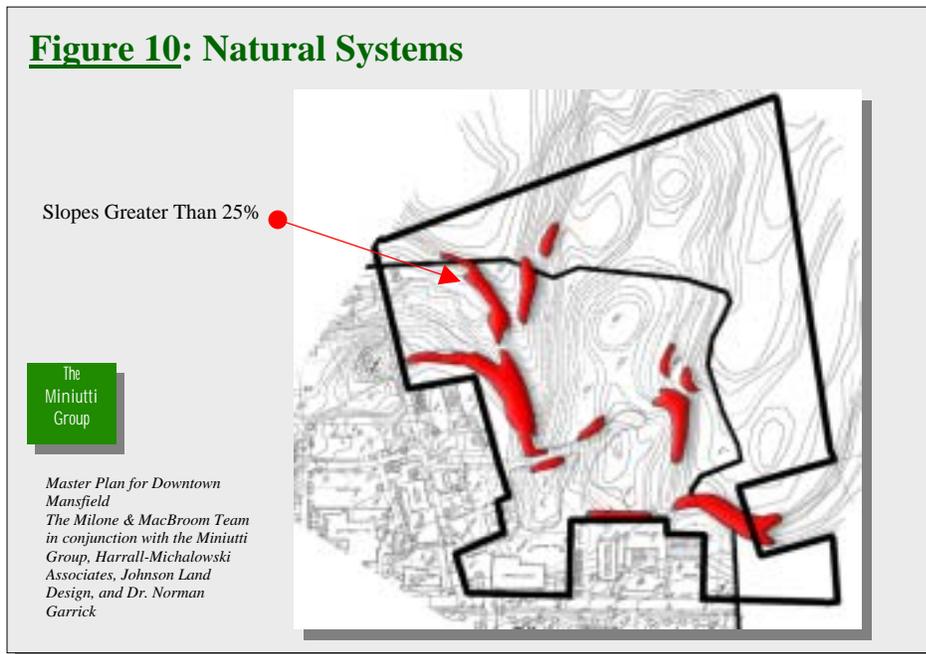
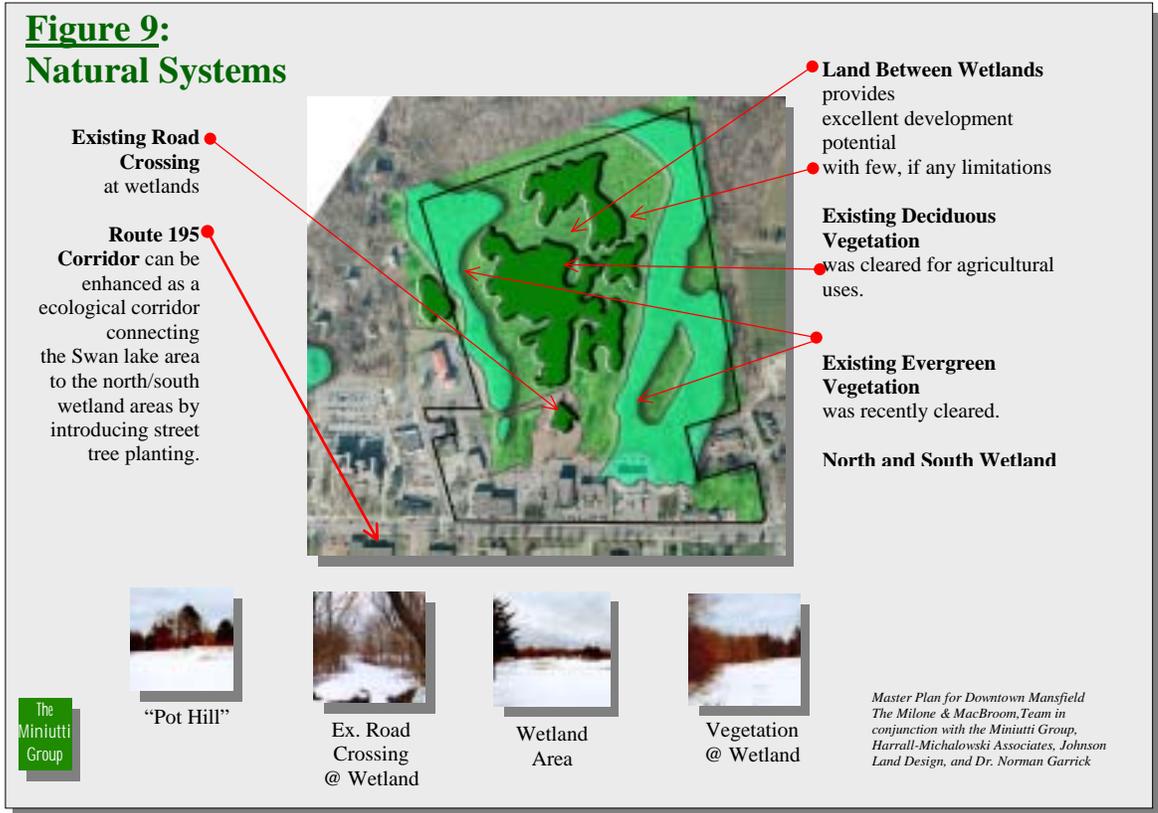
Within the study area, traffic improvements associated with the UCONN 2000 Master Plan include minor roadway widening and improvements to the signal timing and phasing at the intersections of Route 195 / Mansfield Road and Route 195 / Dog Lane / Bolton Road. Additionally, Mansfield Road will be realigned with the Bishop Center Drive.

A review of The Suggested List of Surveillance Study Sites (SLOSSS) generated by the ConnDOT for the years between 1997 and 1999 were evaluated. Within the study corridor, there are two locations that are identified as areas in need of immediate accident reduction or highway safety improvements. ConnDOT classifies these high accident locations by assigning a value to each location based on the type of incident, the frequency, the type of roadway, and the average daily traffic. The first location occurs at the intersection of Route 195 and Dog Lane and Bolton Road. This location is ranked 1,407 out of a total of 1,503 locations. The other location occurs along Route 195 between Route 275 and Bolton Road. This location is ranked 1206. With any plans for development, accident mitigation measures should be addressed.

In examining the University's traffic study with respect to the growth in traffic volumes, it can be concluded that the level-of-service at the three intersections within the study area (Mansfield Road, Dog Lane-Bolton Road, and South Eagleville Road) will deteriorate by the year 2004 without any intervention to revitalize the downtown. Any redevelopment in the downtown that will generate traffic beyond what now exists will cause further deterioration in the level-of-service at these intersections unless operational improvements are incorporated into the improvement plans.

2.4 Natural Systems

The natural resources of the study area were evaluated to determine the extent to which they may influence the redevelopment of the study area. These features are illustrated on Figures 9 and 10.



The site has a long history of human intervention, which accounts for the stonewalls, successional vegetative growth, and cleared areas (fields). There is a ridge that runs in an east to west orientation and a number of rock outcrops. This area is affectionately referred to as “Pot Hill”. On either side of the ridge are wetlands that follow the same east to west orientation as the ridge.

The inland wetlands were identified and mapped by others and that information was made available for our use. The wetland system located in the north of the vacant land in the study area has been disturbed by a “road” crossing where fill has been placed to elevate the crossing above the natural grade of the wetland. The portion of the wetland westerly of the crossing is somewhat degraded, while the balance of the wetland appears to have a higher value. A vernal pool has been identified on the easterly side of the property and the level of protection required will be determined as part of the Environmental Impact Evaluation.

Overall, the quality of the wetland system in the project area appears to be moderate. Aside from the area of the wetland that has been identified as being degraded, the wetland system should be maintained. Direct disturbance of the wetland by filling should be avoided. Stormwater discharge to the wetland should be pretreated through the use of best management practices.

Based on data from the Tolland County Soil Survey, the non-wetland soils on the vacant part of the project area consists of well-drained compact upland soils that are formed over a till base. Bedrock has been exposed on the slope immediately behind the existing parking area. In general, the site’s soils are considered to be conducive to urban development, although care will be required during construction to manage erosion and sedimentation. Bedrock may be encountered in areas where there may be deep cuts associated with utilities and regrading.

The topography of the vacant land is moderately sloping, with a few areas having slopes in excess of 25 percent. In general, the area’s topography is not a significant limitation to development opportunities provided construction on the steep slopes is avoided.

2.5 Visual Characteristics

The evaluation of visual quality is somewhat subjective. However, the elements that contribute to making an area pleasing and another area unpleasant are capable of identification and evaluation. In the case of Storrs, the spatial organization is best characterized as being haphazard. The area is dominated by pavement, overhead utilities, signs, and eclectic buildings. In the developed commercial area, there is an absence of landscaping that softens the harshness of the automobile dominated space. Specific visual characteristics related to the vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems include:

- The offset intersection at Dog Lane and Bolton Road
- Storrs Road is too wide for village scale streets.
- The south entry to the University is understated and is easily missed by visitors. It does not function as a gateway to either the campus or the downtown.
- The lower (easterly) parking area is disorganized, inefficient and unattractive.

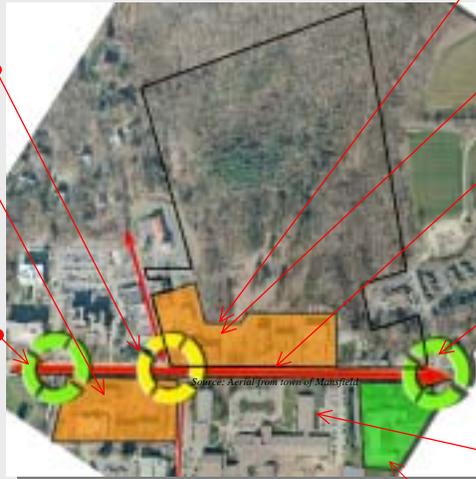
Overall, the scale of Route 195 is that of a major bypass road and not that of a main street found in a traditional New England village center. See Figures 11 and 12.

Figure 11: Imageability

Dog Lane, Bolton Road, Storrs Road intersection is too large for village scale streets

Fine Arts Complex offers little sense of the excitement that occurs behind the walls. The new red sculpture is a step in the right direction.

South UConn Entry is understated and is easily missed by visitors. Does not function as a "Gateway" to the downtown nor as one of the two major entries to UConn.



Lower Parking Area provides necessary parking, although it is disorganized, inefficient, and unattractive.

Existing Commercial Buildings lack a uniformity and appropriate detailing for a New England look.

Route 195 Corridor is dominated by pavement, telephone poles, and automobiles. The scale is that of a major by-pass road, not of a New England town center.

Village Gateway lacks the imagery and energy needed to "set the stage" for a downtown destination. Does not function as a "Gateway" to the town center.

E.O Smith High site needs to bring some of the raw energy of the students to the street in a positive way.

Town Hall is well sited. The site could be designed to facilitate programmed activities similar to "Get to Know Your Town".



Route 195



Lower Parking Area



Sculpture @ Fine Arts Complex

Figure 12: Imageability

Dog Lane is used by speeding motorists intent on taking a "short-cut" through a residential area.

Dog Lane, Bolton Road, Storrs Road intersection is offset and hazardous, only to be worsened by future land-uses, such as the new UConn hotel.



Source: Aerial from town of Mansfield

Lower Parking Area provides necessary parking, although it is disorganized, inefficient, and unattractive.

Front Parking provides customers with convenient access to merchants.

Redundant Curb cuts along Storrs Road creates confusing and dangerous conditions for vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

Downtown Gateway Does not mark a change from rural highway to village scale street.

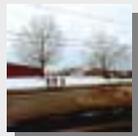
Storrs Road offers few rewards for the pedestrian. Pedestrian amenities should include continuous, safe walkways with benches, shade trees, drinking fountains, and interesting views and uses.



Master Plan for Downtown Mansfield
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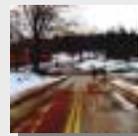
Route 195



Route 195 Curb Cuts



Bolton Road / 195 intersection



South UConn Entry Gateway

Architecturally, our process included the research and presentation of successful urban projects, both domestic and international, including a study of the local context. Mansfield, in particular, Storrs, has a rich collection of building types and styles, including agricultural structures such as barns, silos, and institutional buildings such as the neo-gothic dorms, as well as colonial style residences. The commercial buildings lack a strong character or image as they currently exist. We are attempting to convey, what makes a downtown pedestrian friendly and how to create a "Sense of Place" for the community, capitalizing on the role of the University as an intellectual, cultural institution. Mixed-use buildings, being the model building type, include elements such as:

1. Human- Scale building facades
2. Street Trees
3. Street Furnishings
4. Outdoor Dining
5. Awnings
6. Covered Arcades
7. Balconies
8. Thu-Block Connections

Figure 13: Vernacular Architecture

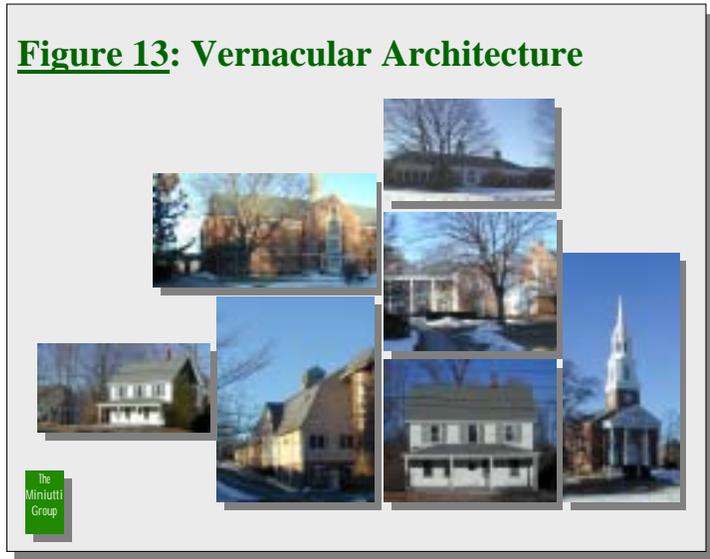


Figure 14: Site Architecture



Design guidelines or a village code is required to address building square footage, height, uses, placement, and architectural character (style and materials specification). Creating a ratio of mixed-uses and appropriate relationships to one another in a comprehensive plan is imperative. The sensitive interface between landscape and architecture is the key to creating that 'sense of place'. An

opportunity for a large mixed-use building, with good proximity to the campus and Route 195 exists with the store 24 block. It can serve as the prototype with restaurants and retail uses on the ground level, office on the second level, and housing, such as artists' lofts, on the third level. It's this mixed-use formula that promotes density and year-round activity.

3.0 Alternative Development Concepts

Understanding the context in which one is working is the first step in exploring development concepts. Simply taking an inventory of the existing conditions is insufficient; interpreting the opportunities and constraints and applying that knowledge to the design is a critical element to the design. Equally important to understanding the context is the examination of what has “worked” elsewhere in similar circumstances and incorporating the applicable treatments into the design. Both of these steps were undertaken at the outset of the design for Storrs Center.

3.1 Understanding Storrs Center

The physical conditions of Storrs Center have been described in previous sections of this document. Perhaps more important to the transformation of the downtown is understanding its place in the community. At present, the downtown appears to cater in many respects to student population and the nearby residents. The data in the “Target Market Strategies” prepared as part of this study (Appendix A) indicates that the sales in the downtown are only a fraction of what could be captured from the market area. Residents choose to spend a significant part of their disposable income elsewhere instead of Storrs Center. In essence, the downtown survives on a nine-month economy when the University is in session.

The design charrettes and other public discussions conducted by the Downtown Partnership proved to be quite helpful in defining what the public perceived to be important attributes for the downtown. Clearly, in order for Storrs Center to become truly the village center for Mansfield, its character has to change radically. The eclectic architecture, the disjointed vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, and the strip development orientation of the buildings toward the highway have to be replaced with a more cohesive development pattern. One only has to look at the classical architecture of the University, the historical residences and agricultural buildings scattered throughout Mansfield, and the traditional institutional buildings adjacent to Storrs Center to get a sense of how the buildings in the downtown could appear after its renaissance. This is not to suggest that the buildings of the downtown should replicate the existing architecture. Rather, new buildings should have those desirable elements of scale, proportion, height, and the variety of durable materials that can be found in the architecture found throughout the community.

3.2 Elements of a Successful Downtown

Every downtown is unique, but the elements that contribute to making a downtown a desirable place to be can be identified. If one were to look at a typical New England downtown, Amherst, Massachusetts, for example, you would find that the buildings surround a common public gathering space and the buildings are separated from the street only by the sidewalk. Buildings are arranged in blocks 200 to 300 feet apart. Within each block, there are a variety of uses including retail and service establishments at the street level, offices at the second story, and residences on the upper stories.

Within a successful downtown there is both on-street parking as well as off-street parking. The on-street parking provides convenient short-term access to the commercial uses while the off-street parking discreetly placed behind the buildings so as not to be intrusive on the view from the street provides the opportunity for longer-term parking. The streets in the downtown tend to be narrower than what has become customary in the suburban setting with travel lanes in the range of 10 feet for the local streets and somewhat wider for through streets.

Successful downtowns have a variety of amenities that entice people to linger. The sidewalks are designed not only for linking one block to another but also as a public space where pedestrians can congregate. The sidewalks and public areas are landscaped with shade trees to provide a human scale to the street, relief from the summer heat, and separation of pedestrians from vehicles. Pedestrian lighting is provided to promote safety and to encourage nighttime activity. All of these elements are designed to unify the downtown through the consistency of materials.

No downtown would be successful without people. The downtown merchants need to have traffic to survive and cannot depend solely on customers traveling beyond a short distance shop. By incorporating a residential component into the mix of commercial uses is what distinguishes a downtown from the suburban mall and gives a 24-hour life to the downtown.

3.3 Design Principles for Storrs Center

The Downtown Partnership has incorporated the desires of the community as expressed in the design charrettes with the elements identified in the case studies as being important to the success of a downtown and has applied the following design principles to its vision for the revitalization of Storrs Center:

- Storrs Center should become a destination district with a substantially greater quantity and diversity of uses designed to capture a greater share of the disposable income of the community.
- Storrs Center should have mix of land uses including retail, office and residences layered where possible in the same building.
- Residential uses should be for both students as well as non-students alike with University housing located to the rear of the downtown. The density of the housing should be in the range of 10 to 15 units per acre.
- The downtown should be laid-out in a grid with blocks of 200 to 300 feet.
- A parallel street to Storrs Road should be constructed to facilitate the movement of traffic through the downtown to its perimeter.
- A hierarchy of streets should be created within the downtown with the width of the street being commensurate with the traffic volume.
- Buildings should be placed at the street line with parking on both sides of the street. Visibility at the street level into the rear of the downtown should be promoted.
- Shared off-street parking should be strategically placed throughout the downtown but should not be intrusive to the visual quality.
- Buildings architecture should be influenced by the existing vernacular found in the traditional buildings of Mansfield.
- A central civic space (the “Green”) should be provided to foster public events.

- The downtown should be pedestrian friendly with sidewalks and other streetscape improvements designed to be the common thread that links the elements of the downtown.

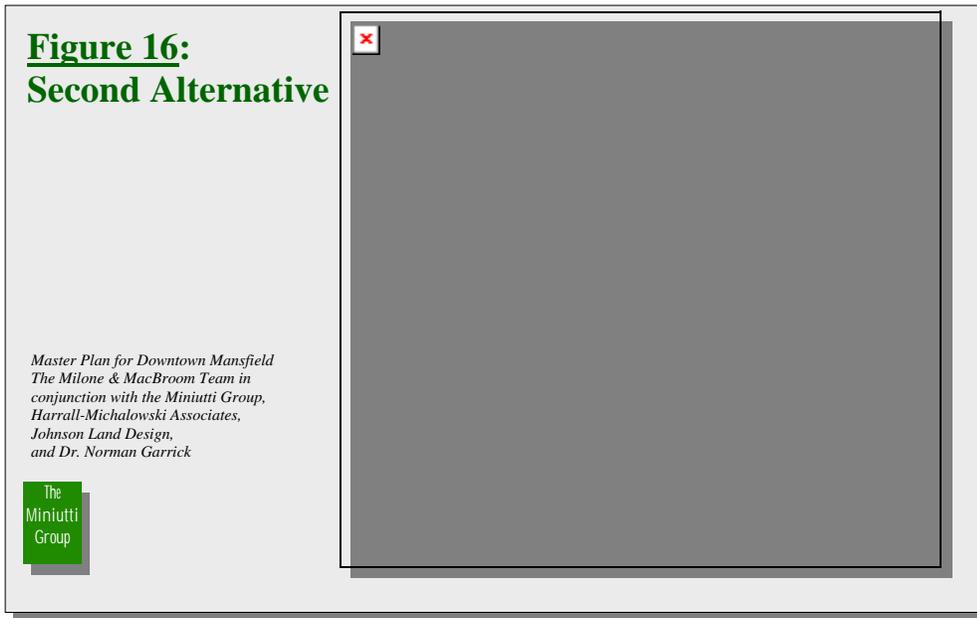
3.4 Alternative Concepts

The Downtown Partnership explored four alternatives illustrated in Figures 15 through 17 before selecting the preferred development concept. While there are similarities in each alternative, there are also significant differences among the alternatives as noted below.

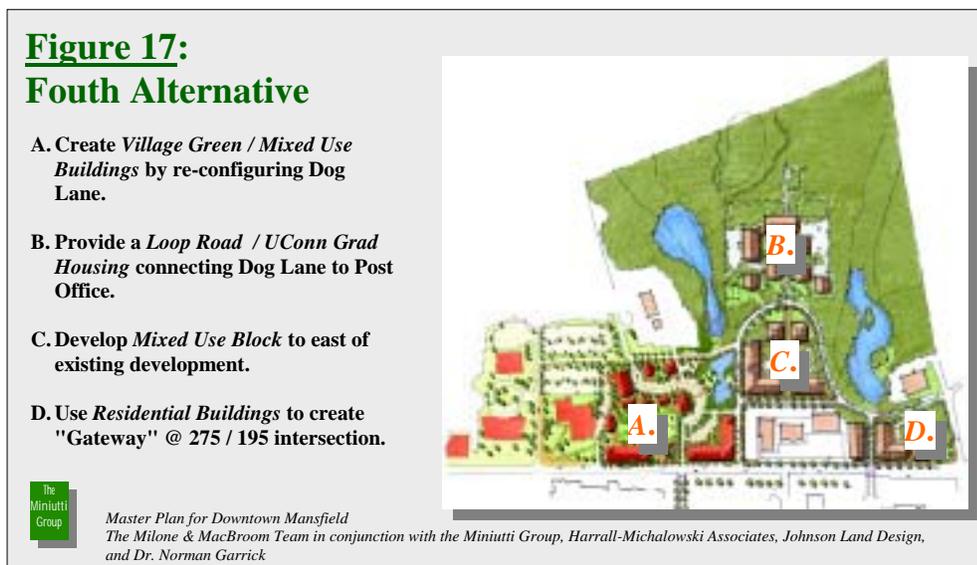


- Developed quite early in the design process for the purpose of generating discussion, the first alternative was the consultant’s interpretation of the general guidance from the Hyett-Palma report previously commissioned by the Town. It illustrated modest expansion of the commercial development in Storrs while maintaining the existing uses to a large extent. The proposed graduate student housing was placed to the rear of the downtown in a single large structure and the “green” was located to the north of the existing retail uses. From a circulation perspective, a new interior road was shown connecting the south gate to the University through the Bishop Center to a new intersection opposite the driveway to the Town office building. Dog Lane would be terminated at the new road. The principal drawback to this alternative is that it does not expand the economic opportunities to the extent that believed to be possible in Storrs Center.
- The second alternative explored the grid pattern of blocks and streets where the concept of 200-foot blocks dictated the location of new buildings and the placement of the “green”. Under this scenario, there would be several new intersections with Storrs Road, two of which would be significant. One would be located opposite the south gate to the University and the other opposite E.O. Smith High School. There would also be a parallel road to Storrs Road, but it did not run the length of the downtown. The graduate student housing was located in three large structures farther to the east under this concept, close to the wetland on the east edge of the property. While this alternative achieved the objective of creating smaller blocks,

the overall circulation system was “forced” resulting in a somewhat disjointed street pattern and the potential of too many intersection conflicts.



- In the third alternative (not shown), the buildings of the downtown were located in four clusters with each cluster having its own central space either as a “green” or for parking. The principal cluster of buildings enframed the primary “green”. The second cluster in the middle of the downtown contained four buildings for mixed uses. The third cluster at the south of the downtown could contain both housing and retail. Finally, the graduate student housing was illustrated as being a series of smaller structures surrounding a small open space area. The grid pattern of local streets was maintained in this scenario but the principal north-south collector street became more curvilinear in order to avoid a wetland encroachment. This alternative began to achieve most of the design objectives for the downtown. However, the University expressed concern about the traffic that would be routed through the Bishop-Shippe-Buckley complex.



- The fourth alternative was essentially the same as the third except the vehicular connection into the Bishop Center was eliminated. Instead, traffic from Dog Lane would either follow the collector street to the south or meander through a new local street connecting to Storrs Road at the Bolton Road intersection.

4.0 Master Plan and Implementation Strategy

The conceptual master plan recommended by the Downtown Partnership is similar to the fourth alternative described above but modified to reflect more precisely the extent of the University’s graduate student housing needs and what is believed to be a balanced approach to the expansion of the non-residential development for Storrs Center. See Figure 18. It should be clearly understood that a master plan by its very nature is a guide for the future development and is not intended to be a site plan. It is expected that the design principles that guided the preparation of this plan will be adhered to over time, and the development concept presented in this report will be refined and modified as more definitive design documents are prepared for implementation.

Figure 18: Conceptual Master Plan

- A. Create Village Green / Mixed Use Buildings by re-configuring Dog Lane.**
- B. Provide a Loop Road / UConn Grad Housing connecting Dog Lane to Post Office.**
- C. Develop Mixed Use Block to east of existing development.**
- D. Use Residential Buildings to create "Gateway" @ 275 / 195 intersection.**



*Master Plan for Downtown Mansfield
The Milone & MacBroom Team in conjunction with the
Miniutti Group, Harrall-Michalowski Associates, Johnson
Land Design, and Dr. Norman Garrick*

4.1 Proposed Land Use

The proposed land use in Storrs Center will be a mix of retail, office and residential uses consistent with the recommendations contained in the “Target Market Strategies” report appended to this document and summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of Proposed Floor Area

| | <u>Ground Floor</u> | <u>Upper Floor</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Retail | 78,000 s.f. | 0 | 78,000 s.f. |
| Office | 1,000 s.f. | 30,000 s.f. | 31,000 s.f. |
| Service/Education | 11,000 s.f. | 22,000 s.f. | 33,000 s.f. |
| Residential | 32,000 s.f. | 187,000 s.f. | 219,000 s.f. (146 d.u.'s) |
| Subtotal- new | 122,000 s.f. | 239,000 s.f. | 361,000 s.f. |
| Existing Buildings | | | 74,000 s.f. |
| | Total | | 435,000 s.f. |

The proposed buildings would be located in four groups as follows:

- Village Green Mixed Use

The Village Green would contain up to ten buildings including two existing structures that could be expanded or replaced. Two of the new buildings, each three stories, would be located on Storrs Road while the others would be located on a new road connecting Dog Lane at the existing Bolton Road intersection.

- University Housing

The University Housing will be located on the hill to the east of the downtown. The buildings will be clustered around a central pedestrian area with access and parking to the perimeter of the cluster. It is expected that approximately 400 beds could be accommodated at this location.

- Mixed Use Block

The mixed-use block would be located between the privately owned commercial buildings and west of the University housing and would contain up to five buildings. The buildings would be up to three stories in height with retail on the ground floor and office and residential uses on the upper floors. The buildings would be placed at the street line with additional off-street parking in the rear. The buildings would overlook the wetland to the south of the downtown.

- Residential Block

The final cluster is located at the south end of the downtown along Storrs Road. Due to the site characteristics, it is envisioned that two of the buildings would be life style housing with two stories on the street side and three stories on the east side with a small parking deck behind the buildings. The third building could be primarily for service –related uses with either office or residential above the ground floor.

4.2 Circulation

The street pattern for Storrs Center as it is envisioned by the Partnership will be laid-out in a grid pattern. There will be a collector street that parallels Storrs Road extending from Dog Lane to the street that now provides access to the Post Office and the high school playing fields. Dog Lane would be extended around the proposed village green to intersect Storrs Road at Bolton Road.

Two new local streets will intersect Storrs Road, one opposite the driveway to the municipal office complex and the other southerly of what is now Store 24. It is anticipated that one of the driveways from the high school will be combined with the municipal office driveway and other existing curb cuts will be eliminated to improve the traffic flow on Storrs Road.

A hierarchy of streets will be created. Internal streets will have travel lanes of 10 feet with parallel parking on both sides of the street. The collector street will have 12-foot travel lanes to accommodate through traffic. The new street linking Dog Lane to Storrs Road is designed to have perpendicular parking to serve the Village Green establishments.

As noted previously, all streets except Storrs Road will have on-street parking. Additional off-street parking areas will be located strategically throughout the downtown. They will be available for general use, not assigned to a particular business or land use, and will be suitably landscaped to reduce their visual impact. Overall, approximately 1000 spaces will be required with an additional 375 designated for the University housing.

Sidewalks will be constructed throughout Storrs Center to link all the uses as well as providing pedestrian access to adjacent uses on the west side of Storrs Road. The sidewalks should be of sufficient width to permit seating where appropriate. The selected material for the sidewalk should be consistent throughout the downtown and should be extended through the crosswalks at intersections. Consideration should be given to having raised intersections at internal crossings as a means of calming traffic flow. Pedestrian phases should be added to the signalized intersections along Storrs Road.

4.3 Site Improvements

The existing infrastructure supporting Storrs Center will have to be modified significantly to accommodate the contemplated revitalization of the downtown. The existing Town streets will have to be abandoned and new streets constructed. The stormwater collection system, sanitary sewer system, domestic water supply system, and other utilities will have to be entirely replaced from their connections in Storrs Road easterly to the location of the proposed housing. The precise location of these systems and the phasing of the work, together with their associated costs, cannot be determined until the latter stages of the planning and design process.

4.4 Architectural Code

In our efforts to create a 'Village Code' or design guidelines for Downtown Mansfield, we have used the Store 24 building block as a prototype for a new, mixed-use building. The 'Required aspects of the Building Form' have been addressed in terms of building square footage, height, uses, placement and architectural character. Solar exposure, street furnishings and outdoor spaces have been incorporated to help unify the landscape and architecture, and to create a continuity between the campus and the future buildings of the master plan.

Figure 19



Master Plan for Downtown Mansfield
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Johnson Land Design, and Dr. Norman
Garrick



**Figure 20:
Architecture**

‘Village Code’ Height:

Max. 3 stories

Uses:

1st Retail/Restaurants

2nd Office/Services

3rd Housing

Placement:

50% max. building lot coverage

100% req’d. street frontage build-out

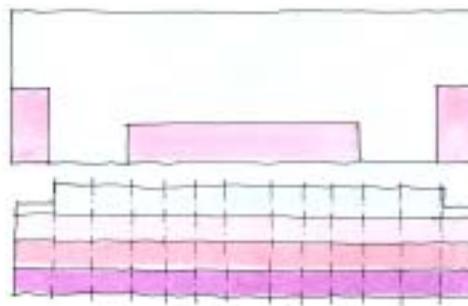
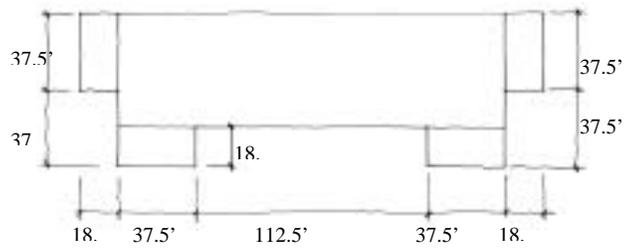
0’ req’d. setback from street frontage

0’ req’d. setback from side lot lines

190’ max. building frontage

10’ or 15’ sidewalk req’d.

12’ clear height arcade req’d.



Min. 10’w continuous
arcade @ ground level

Mechanical penthouse

3rd- Housing/lofts

2nd- Office/services

Ground-
Retail/restaurants

Mixed-use building diagram



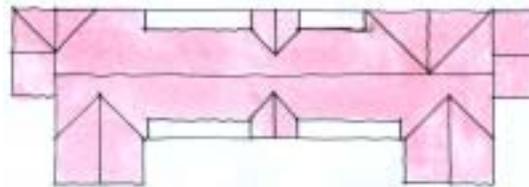
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Figure 21

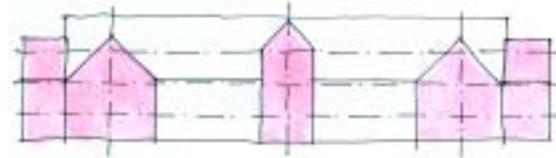
Required Aspects of Building Form:

Building appendages-min. 2 stories
Through-block connections in middle of
front and rear elevations
Continuous 12' clear height arcade @
ground level
Outdoor dining/retail space @ corners
and/or middle front of building-canopies
permitted
Min. 10' setback @ 3rd level housing
for balconies
Mechanical penthouse @ roof level

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Miniutti
Group



Building appendages in elevation and plan



Rooflines

Figure 22

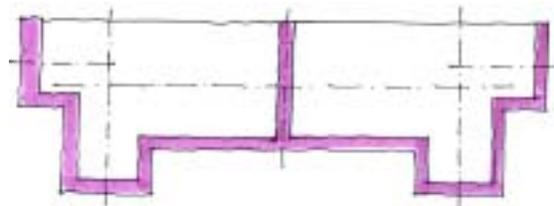
Required Aspects of Building Form (cont.):

Street furnishings ie.benches, waste
receptacles, bicycle racks,street trees, lighting
to be provided. Awnings permitted pending
design approval. Openings in exterior façade
are designed for intended uses and solar
orientation as follows;
Ground level-min.12'wx12'h arcaded
openings and glass storefronts beyond for
retail/restaurant uses
2nd level-min. 6'wx8'h windows with low E
glass coating
3rd level- min.12'wx8'h fixed and operable
windows and doors for solar exposure and
egress

The
Miniutti
Group



Exterior spaces for outdoor dining



Openings in façade for arcade, doors, windows and balconies

Figure 23

Required Aspects of Building Form (cont.):

Building materials must be appropriate to the climate and must be selected for Honesty in function and their ability to Age gracefully.

Materials for mixed-use buildings will vary as follows;

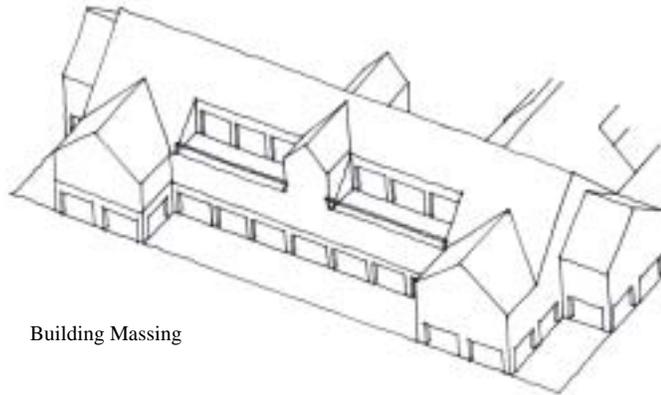
Ground level- brick or stone veneer arcade

2nd level- brick or stone veneer @ appendages and brick/stone or metal panel at infill

3rd level- Metal, shingle or slate tile roofing and glass entries @ housing units. Skylites permitted where viable @ rear building roof only. Code required railings @ all balconies. Chimneys must be brick or metal.



Building Materials including glass, brick and/or stone, wood and shingles



Building Massing



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4.5 Modifications to Land Use Regulations

As noted previously in this document, Storrs Center is currently designated as a Planned Business District. While most of the contemplated uses for the downtown would be permitted under the existing regulations, the nature of the development would not be permitted. For example, the residential uses are not permitted in the PB-2 zone. In addition, the parking current standards for parking are not necessarily applicable to the more urban pedestrian-oriented condition contemplated for the downtown.

Given the uniqueness of the proposed Storrs Center, it is recommended that a new zoning district be created to permit the flexibility needed to allow development to occur. Such a regulation should acknowledge the concept of mixed use development, buildings having as many as three stories without traditional setbacks, common parking (both on-street and off-street) as distinct from parking for individual establishments, lower parking ratios in recognition of the pedestrian orientation of the downtown, and finally, the higher density of development associated with a more urban setting. In addition, modification to the ordinances governing the width of streets would be required to accommodate the narrower local streets. The necessary amendments to Zoning Regulations should be undertaken as part of a more detailed implementation plan for Storrs Center.

4.6 Implementation

The Downtown Partnership considered three alternative approaches to advancing the concepts for revitalizing Storrs Center. First, the implementation could be left to the normal private development process wherein the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission would adopt an

amendment to the Zoning Regulations to allow the development to occur as described in this document. Thereafter, a prospective developer would apply for local land use approval and, once granted, the project would proceed. The drawback to this approach is that a private developer has no ability to control any property other than his own. In this instance, most of the land is owned by the University leaving very little to be developed by a private individual, unless the University decides to sell its assets.

The second alternative would have the University be the developer. Under this scenario, detailed site development plans would be prepared for local land use approval, and once approved, development would proceed. There are two potential problems with this scenario. One is the difficulty for the University to be a developer of a non-educational project. The other is the ability of the University to acquire and dispose of property, relocate roads and utilities without the cooperation and participation of the Town.

The implementation method recommended by the Partnership is for the Mansfield Town Council to create a municipal development corporation under Chapter 132 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The development corporation would act as the municipal development agency and charged with the preparation of the project plan (MDP). Once the plan is adopted, the corporation would then be charged with its implementation including site development, marketing and business recruitment initiatives as well as seeking funding from a variety of public sources. While it is the critical first step in the MDP process, this master plan is not the project plan. In addition to the physical issues associated with the development of the downtown, the MDP defines land acquisition and disposition, areas of demolition, design and development standards, land use restrictions, job creation, business displacement and relocation and project financing. Without the public intervention enabled by Chapter 132, the development of Storrs Center will not occur in a timely manner.