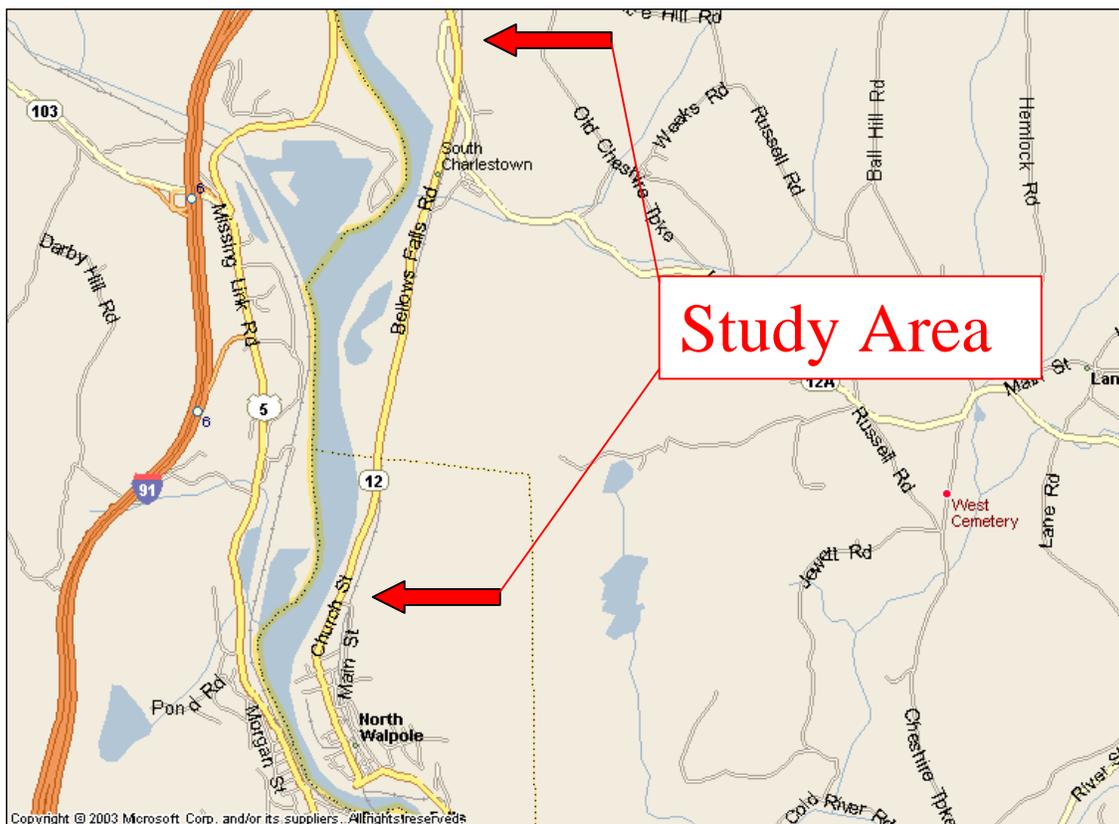




Workshop Results for the NH 12 Corridor in North Walpole and Charlestown December 12, 2007

On December 12th, 2007 approximately 20 people gathered at the Silsby Library / Municipal Building in Charlestown for a Place Making Workshop facilitated by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC). The intent was for Charlestown and Walpole residents to evaluate the existing NH 12 corridor and to identify opportunities for improvement that exist along the corridor. The ideas generated will help define the context of the area and guide the development of options to improve the NH 12 corridor in Walpole and Charlestown.

Participants were asked to evaluate how the places currently performed in terms of Access & Linkages, Uses & Activities, and Comfort & Image. They interviewed people who they encountered in the area and then came up with opportunities for improvements in the short and long term. Finally each group was tasked to write a problem statement for their site.



The Place Audit Exercise Form is shown below:

Transportation

Context - Community - Environment



**New Hampshire
Department of Transportation**

Walpole – Charlestown 14747

This exercise is intended to be used as a tool to evaluate how well streets and adjacent land uses are performing as Places, and identify opportunities for enhancing them in the future.

 ©2006 Project for Public Spaces, Inc. The "Place Audit" cannot be used without formal, written permission from PPS. If permission is granted, full credit must be given to PPS on all written materials and in any verbal descriptions of the same. www.pps.org

LOCATION: _____

A EVALUATE THE PLACE (10 minutes)

Evaluate how well this area performs.

ACCESS, LINKAGES & INFORMATION	← DISAGREE		AGREE →	
Pedestrians can easily walk throughout the corridor	1	2	3	4
Pedestrian access is safe and convenient	1	2	3	4
Transit availability is appropriate for the corridor.	1	2	3	4
Bicycling is easy:				
- Routes are safe and convenient;	1	2	3	4
- Routes are well marked.	1	2	3	4
Automobiles do not detract from the pedestrian experience.	1	2	3	4
There is adequate directional signage and location information.	1	2	3	4
Autos are able to use the facility safely and efficiently.	1	2	3	4
SUM of ANSWERS = _____				
AVERAGE ANSWER (Sum: ____ / 8) = <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				

COMFORT & IMAGE	← DISAGREE		AGREE →	
The road is attractive and fits its surroundings.	1	2	3	4
The road respects and highlights important natural and scenic features (park, river, wetlands, agricultural land, forest, etc.)	1	2	3	4
The road respects and highlights important community features (skylines, historic places, etc.)	1	2	3	4
The road feels safe and well cared for.	1	2	3	4
There are places along the road to pull off and view the scenic surroundings.	1	2	3	4
SUM of ANSWERS = _____				
AVERAGE ANSWER (Sum: ____ / 5) = <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				

USES & ACTIVITIES	← DISAGREE		AGREE →	
There are opportunities to use the corridor for active recreational experiences (e.g. walking, access to boating, fishing, hiking).	1	2	3	4
Uses are easily visible and inviting for drivers and pedestrians	1	2	3	4
Populated areas (a commercial area or residential area) have many different activities occurring.	1	2	3	4
The road enhances the setting of and access to local businesses.	1	2	3	4
The different uses along the corridor make for a pleasant walking experience.	1	2	3	4
Land uses are appropriate for the setting.	1	2	3	4
Access to the road are safe, easy and appropriate.	1	2	3	4
SUM of ANSWERS = _____				
AVERAGE ANSWER (Sum: ____ / 7) = <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>				

Transportation

Context - Community - Environment

AVERAGE ACCESS, LINKAGES & INFO _____

AVERAGE COMFORT & IMAGE _____

AVERAGE USES & ACTIVITIES _____

SUM of ANSWERS = _____

AVERAGE ANSWER (Sum: ____ / 3) =

B IDENTIFY the OPPORTUNITIES (20 minutes)

List below, by category, the opportunities that exist in this corridor. Add others not mentioned. Include both short-term, low-cost opportunities and long-term changes.

1. What do you like best about this corridor as a whole?

2. List a few things that you would do to improve this corridor that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot.

3. What 3 changes would you make to this corridor in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

4. What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements? Please be as specific as possible.

C PROBLEM STATEMENT (15 minutes)

Working as a group develop and reach consensus on a Problem Statement that:

- is 2 or 3 sentences;
- includes problem & needs related to transportation, community and environmental concerns;
- does not pre-figure solutions;
- is not mode-specific.

What Makes a Great Place?

In evaluating more than 1,500 public spaces around the world, Projects for Public Spaces (PPS) has found that successful ones have four key qualities: they are accessible, people are engaged in activities there; the space is comfortable and has good image; and finally, it is a sociable place: one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit. PPS developed The Place Diagram as a tool to help people in judging any place, good or bad.

Imagine that the center circle on the diagram is a specific place you know: a street corner, a playground, a plaza outside a building. You can evaluate that place according to four criteria in the red ring. In the ring outside these main criteria are a number of intuitive or qualitative aspects by which to judge a place; the next ring shows the quantitative aspects that can be measured by statistics or research.

700 Broadway
 New York, NY 10003
 T (212) 675-6660
 F (212) 675-6677
 www.pps.org

Summary of Workshop Exercise

Section A:

The combined average score of all 5 groups for "Section A" equaled 1.6 out of 4.

Section B:

The most common and similar responses to Section B questions were the following:

B1 – What do you like best about this corridor as a whole?

- Scenic qualities and scenic views,
- Direct connection between the two towns with limited curb cuts.

B2 – List a few things that you would do to improve this corridor that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot.

- Improve guardrail,
- Improve signage to Fall Mountain School,
- Shim pavement for better drainage, and
- Create pull offs for scenic viewing.

B3 – What 3 changes would you make to this corridor in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

- Add shoulders / widen road,
- Replace guardrail (preferably with scenic material),
- Accommodate bicycles,
- Separate railroad and road,
- Stabilize river bank,
- Improve drainage, and
- Increase / enhance scenic pull-offs and views.

B4 – What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements? Please be as specific as possible

- Rail Road Company,
- Conservation Commission,
- Connecticut River Joint Commission,
- Scenic Byway Council,
- Biking groups,
- Rotary Club,
- NH Fish & Game,
- Trucking and Busing Companies,
- Student Conservation Association, and
- Trans Canada.

Summary of Workshop Exercise (Continued)

Section C – Problem Statements:

“While corridor has high scenic value, it cannot be enjoyed or traveled safely because of narrow roadway squeezed between railroad and river.”

“The road is narrow, bordered by the river and railroad, causing a dangerous passageway. The need is to ensure that this road remains safely usable at all times while complimenting the scenic beauty of the area.”

“The road is narrow with insufficient shoulders and drainage due to the pillars from the NH 12A overpass, the river, and the railroad’s close proximity. Travel along this corridor is unsafe for walking, bicycling, and other recreational activity.”

“Road may fall into the river and in addition to that, there are many safety issues to solve. Road is unsafe for pedestrians, trucks, and cars.”

“The road is not wide enough and there are no shoulders. Pavement is rough due to the concrete underbase and riverbank instability, which is a significant safety and environmental concern. Other safety issues include the proximity to the railroad, condition of the guardrail, potential for hydroplaning, and safety of pedestrians and cyclists.”

Workshop Exercise Details

Each of the 5 groups (approximately 4 people per group) completed the exercise and presented the following results:

Group #1:

Section "A" Average Score = 1.72 out of a possible 4

Responses to Section B:

B1: Like the view and the proximity to the river; like the limited curb cuts, limited turning movements, and limited intersections; like the wildlife, eagles, and waterfowl,

B2: Short Term: upgrade with scenically sensitive guardrail, add more pull offs, and add scenic byway signage,

B3: Long Term: add shoulders and bike lanes; upgrade to scenically sensitive guardrail; separate the railroad from the road; perform riverbank stabilization (south end)

B4: Local Groups: Rail Road, Conservation Commission, Connecticut River Joint Commission, Scenic Byway Council, Biking groups.

Section C Problem Statement:

"While corridor has high scenic value, it cannot be enjoyed or traveled safely because of narrow roadway squeezed between railroad and river."

Group #2:

Section "A" Average Score = 2 out of a possible 4

Responses to Section B:

B1: Like the scenic quality of the corridor,

B2: Short Term: improve guardrail,

B3: Long Term: move railroad, add a bike trail, and widen the road, and

B4: Local Groups: N/A

Section C Problem Statement:

"The road is narrow, bordered by the river and railroad, causing a dangerous passageway. The need is to ensure that this road remains safely usable at all times while complimenting the scenic beauty of the area."

Group #3:

Section "A" Average Score = 1.2 out of a possible 4

Responses to Section B:

B1: Like scenic view of river,

B2: Short Term: improve and add guardrail; improve drainage to prevent puddles in summer and ice spots in winter,

B3: Long Term: relocate NH 12 to the east side of the railroad tracks; make NH 12 wider, straighter, and flatter; improve drainage, and

B4: Local Groups: Rotary Club to provide "Welcome to Charlestown Sign".

Section C Problem Statement:

"The road is narrow with insufficient shoulders and drainage due to the pillars from the NH 12A overpass, the river, and the railroad's close proximity. Travel along this corridor is unsafe for walking, bicycling, and other recreational activity."

Group #4:

Section "A" Average Score = 1.6 out of a possible 4

Responses to Section B:

B1: Like quick and direct route, like the scenic view,

B2: Short Term: improve signage to Fall Mountain Regional High School,

B3: Long Term: install new guardrail, add shoulders, fix the drainage, and add a left turn lane, and

B4: Local Groups: NH Fish & Game, Trucking and Busing Companies.

Section C Problem Statement:

"Road may fall into the river and in addition to that, there are many safety issues to solve. Road is unsafe for pedestrians, trucks, and cars."

Group #5:

Section "A" Average Score = 1.6 out of a possible 4

Responses to Section B:

B1: Like scenic views, like direct access between Walpole and Charlestown,

B2: Short Term: install new guardrail, shim pavement, improve shoulders,

B3: Long Term: widen shoulders, improve access to river (boat ramp and boat access), improve guardrail, and stabilize the riverbank, and

B4: Local Groups: student conservation association could help in developing trails, and Trans Canada could assist with access to the river.

Group #5 Section C Problem Statement:

"The road is not wide enough and there are no shoulders. Pavement is rough due to the concrete underbase and riverbank instability, which is a significant safety and environmental concern. Other safety issues include the proximity to the railroad, condition of the guardrail, potential for hydroplaning, and safety of pedestrians and cyclists."