
DOWNTOWN NEW CANAAN STRATEGIC PLAN

Town of New Canaan



By:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Downtown New Canaan is the heart of the community. It provides a gathering place, a center of community government, as well as a destination for shopping, dining, and entertainment. The downtown is essential to the quality of life for residents and its value is evidenced by the steady activity there including business owners chatting with visitors, and impromptu small gatherings. The most recent update to the *Town of New Canaan Plan of Development* (Planimetrics, 2003) identified a need to develop a targeted plan for the downtown that would examine conditions today and recommend actions to achieve the goal of enhancing and sustaining it for the future. Parking downtown was noted as a particular issue.

This study is the result of that recommended downtown planning process. It has two key areas of focus. One is to identify strategies and tools New Canaan could employ to preserve the vibrant neighborhood character of the downtown with respect to land use and development. This is an issue both of land use and development type and scale, including aesthetics or design. The second critical focus area is parking supply and management. Improvements to parking were considered not only in terms of current supply and management, but potential future demand, location, and aesthetics. The area studied included all of the business and retail zones that comprise the downtown. This is reflected on Figure 1. This report documents the study findings, offers recommendations for guiding future development in the downtown, and complements that with an implementation plan to put the recommendations into action.

Study Tasks

The scope of work completed for this study included six (6) integrated tasks including:

- Parking and circulation analysis
- Analysis of existing and future land use conditions, including a visual assessment
- Buildout analysis (hypothetical maximum development downtown) to assess future maximum parking demand
- A community workshop
- Development of a strategic downtown land use and parking plan, including implementation tools
- Ongoing coordination and consultation with the Downtown Study Committee (DSC) to ensure continuous local input to the study process

The study tasks revolved around answering the following questions:

Land Use

- What is the potential for land use change in the Downtown?
- How will that impact parking demand?

- Are the zoning regulations sufficient to help New Canaan manage the character of the Downtown?
- How can they be strengthened?
- How can the zoning regulations help manage parking to ensure it is integrated well into the fabric of the Downtown?

Parking

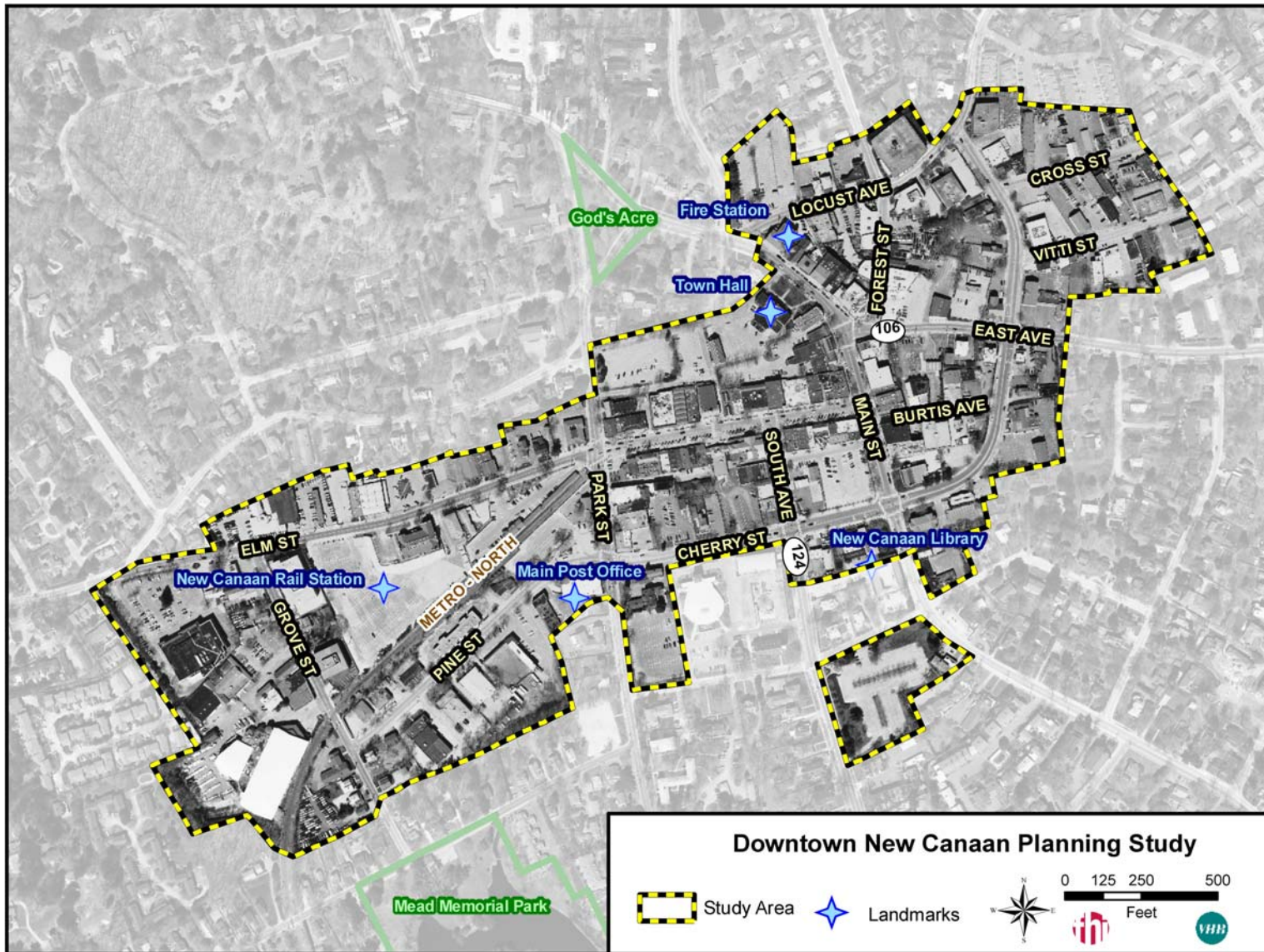
- How many more parking spaces are needed in downtown New Canaan and is there enough parking to meet the current demand?
- What is the parking demand anticipated to be in the future?
- Are the needs of any particular user (patron, commuter, etc.) not met and why?
- How can New Canaan better utilize the existing parking supply and how should the supply be expanded to meet future demand?
- What would it cost to build a garage and what's the best location?
- Are the zoning regulations sufficient to help New Canaan manage the parking supply Downtown?

Travel

- What are the traffic concerns related to the distribution and configuration of the current parking supply?
- What are the pedestrian concerns related to the distribution and configuration of the current parking supply?
- Are there any traffic operations considerations associated with adding parking capacity Downtown?
- What should be done to alleviate traffic congestion and safety concerns related to the parking system?
- What should be done to enhance pedestrian access to and from parking?

The following text summarizes how these questions were explored and what findings were made. The answers to these questions along with the community's input led to a definition of the Town's vision as well as identification of the tools and strategies that would help achieve that vision over time.

Figure 1: Downtown New Canaan Study Area



DOWNTOWN NEW CANAAN TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE

The evaluation of land use and the parking supply included

- A review of existing reports and data,
- Two walking audits of the downtown – field assessment of the visual setting and documentation of developable land/parcels
- Interviews with key town staff and the Parking Bureau
- Observation of parking utilization
- Observation of traffic flow conditions
- Observation of the sidewalk system conditions

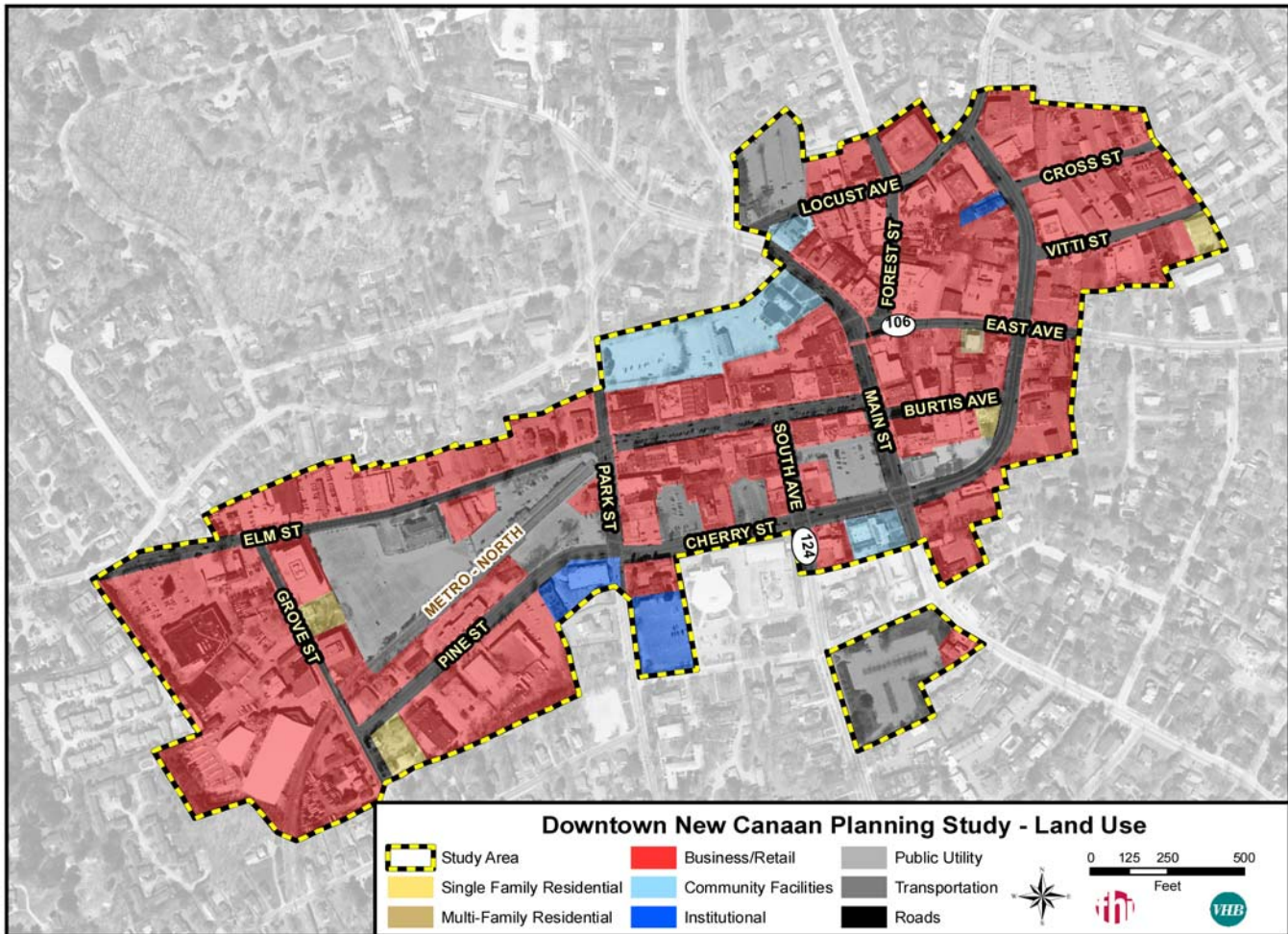
Information collected and findings of these evaluation efforts are summarized below.

Land Use and Visual Setting

2006 Land Use

The downtown covers an area of about 87 acres. Existing uses are a mix of retail, offices, community facilities, town government, and services activity. It also includes a small industrial area located on the northeast corner on Cross Street. The general pattern of land use downtown is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Existing Land Use – Downtown New Canaan



Visual Character

The visual assessment considered the perspective of those living, traveling, and working in the downtown and the setting they experience day-to-day. The most densely built areas in downtown New Canaan are along Elm and Main Streets which are lined with commercial buildings of various sizes, styles, and colors, including stucco, red brick, whitewashed brick, wooden clapboard and shingle. The buildings range from single-story storefronts to five-story industrial/office buildings and include a mix of historic and modern structures. Although these streetscapes consist of a variety of architectural styles, a Colonial Revival influence, characterized by red brick facades accented by white wooden trim, is felt throughout. Two important anchor buildings, the Playhouse and the Town Hall have been constructed in this style.

Despite an effort at cohesiveness by many of the developers of the more modern structures, the variation in building types, modern alterations to storefronts, and varying signage create an eclectic mix and provide a great deal of visual interest to the downtown. Although this is a very busy commercial center, a pedestrian feel has been kept intact by the scale and massing of the buildings as well as the sidewalks with street trees. Views throughout include these mature trees which line the perimeter of the most densely settled areas and which are planted prominently along Main Street

(particularly in front of the Town Hall). Parked cars and delivery trucks which line Main and Elm Streets detract from this visual appeal, however.

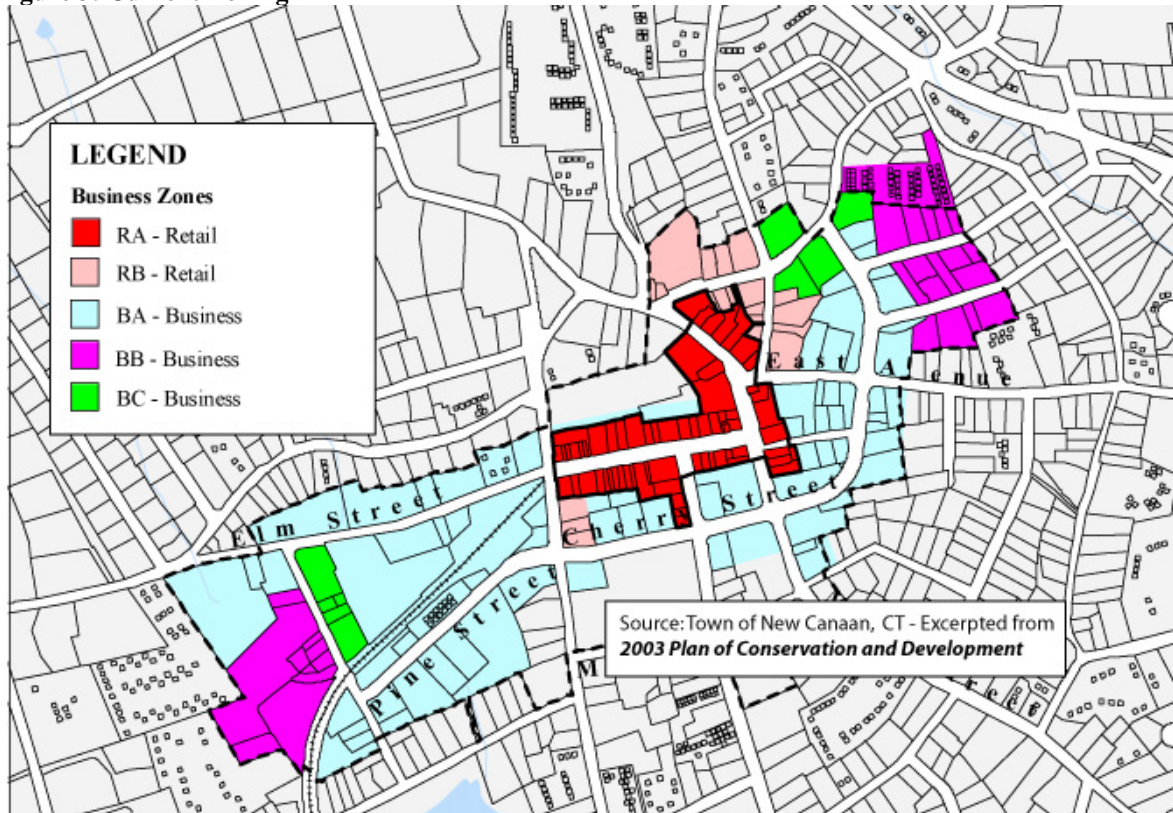
The Railroad Station forms the western boundary of the district and its Gothic styling is in keeping with both the Youth Center (behind the Town Hall) and with many of the residential structures found on the outskirts of the study area, particularly along Cherry Street and the northwestern end of Main Street. In the immediate vicinity of Elm and Main Streets, parking areas are hidden from street view by the storefronts. However, the Railroad Lot near the train station as well as the Locust Street and Pine Street lots are all open to view from the street.

A less densely built commercial/industrial area is located at the northeastern corner of the study area. Beginning with two nondescript, modern office buildings that line the intersection of Locust and Forest Streets and continuing to Cross and Vitti Streets, there is a complete lack of architectural consistency. Small, single-story concrete block and brick structures are found along Cross and Vitti Streets, while residential “Victorian” style houses line Burtis and Cherry Streets. Broad areas of open pavement revealing the backs and sides of buildings are visible from the street.

Existing Land Use Regulation

The following Figure 3 is an excerpt of the New Canaan Zoning map covering the downtown. The downtown is zoned primarily for retail or other business activity.

Figure 3: Current Zoning



In general, the core of the downtown, which is primarily Retail A zone, has more restrictive zoning requirements than the remainder of the downtown under the other Retail and Business zones. Those zones allow for a broader range of uses including automotive sales and service, personal service establishments on large (two acre or more) parcels, large office buildings, and multifamily dwellings. The features of land use allowed in the zones which encompass the downtown are summarized in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Current Zoning Provisions Relative to Downtown New Canaan

Zone*	Permitted Uses	Special Permit Uses	Notable Provisions
Retail A	Retail up to 7,500 s.f. (no automotive); banks and restaurants (no drive-thru); offices; services; residences (up to one bedroom/750 s.f. only) ; non-office uses with site plan approval	Outside dining as an accessory use	No offices, residences or non-personal services on the first floor; parking exempt
Retail B	Same as Retail A plus municipal facilities and new car dealerships; public parking lot; non-office uses with site plan approval	Multifamily or mixed-use with multifamily; outside dining as in Retail A; gas stations; underground parking	Same as Retail A; multifamily - no more than 1 unit per 1,500 s.f. of lot area

Table 1 Continued

Zone*	Permitted Uses	Special Permit Uses	Notable Provisions
Business A	Areas for single purpose shopping and services which require on-site parking; offices with limitations on size and location; underground parking	Any non-office use as permitted by Special Permit in the Retail B Zone; contracting services and offices (with restrictions)	Retail sales of bulky items which would be difficult to carry any distance; automotive services and drive-in banking are o.k. in this zone. Also allows for residential uses for diversity
Business B	Retail sales and services of heavier or more intensive nature; garden supplies, hardware, or lumber retailers with large area storage requirements; dry cleaners/laundries, specialty sales and services; delivery services; veterinary clinic with Site Plan approval	Same as Retail B Zone	Municipal facilities, cultural facilities, religious institutions and public or commercial parking lots are permitted. Also allows for residential uses for diversity
Business C	Intended for large office buildings in locations that would not conflict with village character; any use permitted in Retail B Zone	Same as Retail B Zone; veterinary clinic	Also allows for residential uses for diversity

*All of these zones are also within a designated Village District

Village District Zoning

Section 6.12 of New Canaan’s zoning regulations establishes design review and oversight in the downtown through the Connecticut General Statute section 8-2j, Village Districts Act. All of the zones which comprise the downtown (and the study area) are also covered by an overlay Village District Zone. The Village Districts Act authorizes towns to designate village districts as a way of protecting unique areas with distinctive character, landscape and historic structures. Within these areas, the zoning commission may adopt regulations governing the design and placement of buildings and maintenance of public views. Any new construction or remodeling of the exterior of a structure in New Canaan’s Village District is subject to review and approval by the Commission in accordance with a set of design guidelines relating to:

- Relationship of buildings to the site and adjoining areas
- Landscaping and site treatments
- Building design
- Signs and lighting

2003 Town of New Canaan Plan of Development Context

The *Town of New Canaan Plan of Development* (POCD) establishes policy that sets the direction for future growth in New Canaan. Along with this policy, it offers some recommendations for how the preferred pattern of future growth and/or redevelopment should be managed. The overall policy for the downtown expressed by the POCD (paraphrased) states that the focus should be to preserve, as much as possible, the elements which residents' value including:

- Retail character of streets like Elm Street
- Streetscape
- People living in the center
- Mixed use buildings
- Inclusion of medical / office space
- Maintenance of common areas

In order to achieve this, the Town should:

- Not expand the Business Center beyond current limits except for minor modifications to permit zoning district lines to follow property lines.
- Consider forming and using a Design Review Committee to guide building and site design.
- Maintain building scale commensurate with the scale of the majority of the existing buildings within the Business District Center.
- Limit the size of new buildings to two stories in height with control on overall floor-area-ratio (FAR) and an absolute limit on building size.
- Severely limit commercial growth, especially of large office buildings.
- Encourage existing retail and service businesses, especially small businesses, to remain through appropriate zoning measures.
- Explore allowing limited mixed-use development in one building or on one site.
- Continue to evaluate the adequacy of existing parking and emphasize proposed parking priorities.
- Discourage or prevent any changes in streets in the downtown that might encourage through-traffic.
- Continue to consider desirable traffic levels and emphasize desirable traffic standards.
- Identify and protect historical districts or sites within the limits of the law

Since the POCD was completed, New Canaan modified the zoning downtown to include a Village District overlay with design review authorized and design parameters established (Section 6.12 New Canaan Zoning Regulations, June 18,2005). The zoning regulations also spell out a process for the review of all development applications within the Village District. This regulatory approach was outlined above.

Future Development Potential

Methodology

An analysis of the maximum potential for added development downtown (buildout) was conducted to assess the possibilities for land use change as well as future maximum demand for parking. The maximum potential for growth that was determined for the downtown is a hypothetical number of square footage of building space that could fit into the downtown given a set of assumptions about constraints on future development. Those assumptions are listed below. This buildout is not a level of development that is guaranteed to occur. Rather, the actual pace and extent of future land use change downtown will be determined by market forces, financial considerations, and the degree to which the Town both promotes the downtown and manages change through zoning and infrastructure. Consequently, the value of the buildout analysis is the information it can provide about what downtown conditions *could* be like in terms of square footage of development if no change is made to the current municipal management approach or land use regulations. It is, in a sense, also a worst-case scenario for parking demand.

A number of assumptions were made about future development potential in collaboration with the Town Planner in order to make a reasoned assessment of the full development capacity in the downtown. New Canaan build-out assumptions include:

- Locations of potential new development or redevelopment were identified based on a field visit, use of New Canaan assessment records, and consultation with the Town Planner
- Some sites were noted to be underdeveloped, i.e. having the potential for additional floor space
 - For these sites, it was assumed that floor space would be added to yield two floors on the existing footprint
- Some sites were noted to be candidates for redevelopment, i.e. older structures with nearby buildings undergoing redevelopment
 - For these sites, it was assumed that new buildings would be constructed, floor area was calculated based on maximum FAR (floor area ratio) under current zoning
- The City assessment records were assumed accurate for total square footage of existing buildings in lieu of other documentary sources
- Where it was anticipated an existing building might be replaced, new structures would be assumed to be at a height and scale consistent with the existing neighborhood character and adjacent properties
- Current zoning constraints would apply. Consequently, the underlying zoning and Village District design review process would manage the scale, aesthetics, and intensity of development
- The potential new uses were assigned based on existing zoning constraints as follows:
 - BA – Retail on the first floor, office on the second floor
 - BB – 4000 s.f. of office space, the remainder as services
 - BC – Office space
 - RA/RB – Retail on the first floor, office on the second floor
- Parking required was assumed to be provided as per the New Canaan zoning regulations

- Required parking waived for RA Zone
- Residential Use: per the guidance of the DSC it was assumed that none of the new development would be second floor residential units

Maximum Development Potential

Table 2 reflects the findings of the buildout analysis in terms of square footage of additional development that could occur downtown by type. The parking demand related to the potential buildout is discussed in the following section on parking and travel.

Table 2: Development Capacity

Downtown Zone	Potential Added Development in Square Feet			Total additional square footage**
	Services*	Office	Retail	
BA - business		10,652	10,652	21,304
BB- business	35,110	22,785		57,895
BC- business		7,099		7,099
RA- retail	1,956	30,825	41,781	74,562
RB- retail		-224	-224	-448
TOTAL	37,066	71,137	52,209	160,412

* Services include such businesses as dry cleaners, banks, and beauty salons

**Added square footage above that which currently exists

The 2002 parking and traffic study (*Town of New Canaan Business District Parking & Traffic Study*, EarthTech, May 24, 3003) estimated that there was 903,500 square feet of existing development in New Canaan’s business district or downtown. The potential buildout would represent an 18 percent increase over this cumulative building space or development density/intensity there. New development would be predominantly in the form of infill, making use of existing underdeveloped sites or redeveloping formerly developed parcels.

Summary of Land Use Findings

Downtown New Canaan’s core today is predominantly an area of small scale retail mixed with limited vacant parcels. However, many buildings are single story with potential for expansion to a second floor. Zoning provides for a reasonable transition from this limited-scale village center to gradually larger-scale development at the fringes of the downtown. The types of land use allowed by zoning also makes a reasonable transition from a retail focus in the core of the downtown to a broader mix of commercial and office activity on the downtown edge. The total potential for new added building space is estimated at about 160,400 square feet under current zoning rules. If this maximum intensity of development were realized, the effects could be anticipated to be a greater

density of development yet retaining a consistent development scale of two-story buildings in the core to three story buildings at the downtown fringes.

The downtown has a unique feel that is appealing to residents and welcoming to visitors. Although the mix of buildings is eclectic, architecturally, the blend of sidewalks, street trees, and varied buildings makes for a strong sense of place. If full buildout were realized, it is not expected that the overall character of the downtown would change dramatically as the zoning regulations limit the yards, setbacks, height and bulk of new buildings, prohibit drive-through businesses, as well as require design review under the Village District overlay zone. In addition, buildout would only represent an 18 percent increase over current development intensity.

While the current zoning regulations provide a sound mechanism for managing the scale and aesthetics of the downtown, given the existing diversity of building types, the Village District guidelines could be more detailed to help development applicants better understand what architectural design, building mass, and location and design for parking would be compatible with the current setting. The review of the zoning regulations also found that there are limited requirements for access for pedestrians. This aspect of the site design requirements could also be strengthened.

Although there is very limited vacant property downtown, there is the opportunity for adaptive reuse and renovation of a variety of parcels. Also, there is some (albeit limited) potential for redevelopment to result in so-called big-box (such as a franchise pharmacy) or strip development outside the Retail A Zone. This is because the regulations contain no limitations on overall gross floor area for a single building for one or more retail purposes. If several parcels were consolidated under a redevelopment proposal, the aggregate size of the combined parcels may accommodate a large single structure. While the buildout analysis found potential for some new development, it is also notable that recent updates to the zoning requirements for the retail zones may also result in new development that is less intense on a site by site basis than occurred previously. That is, a new development that reuses a former existing business site may be limited to less square footage (via floor area ratio) than allowed for the previous use.

Parking and Travel

Parking Supply

As part of this study, previous studies and reports were compiled and reviewed, including the most recent study, the *Town of New Canaan Business District Parking and Traffic Study*. In addition, discussions were held with Parking Bureau staff and a field reconnaissance was conducted to validate parking utilization findings documented in these previous works, and identify any major changes in parking supply or use. The findings of the parking analysis are summarized on Figure 4 and reflect that many of the management recommendations from previous studies have been implemented. Parking fee structures and time limits have begun to be modified, and some previously underutilized parking lots have been converted to allow for permit or meter use. This, along with additional business growth in the downtown fringe have increased periphery parking demand, and have used up much of the fringe surplus that was available in 2002.

The findings of the parking supply analysis are depicted on Figure 4. In summary, the analysis found that:

- The parking supply findings of the 2002 parking study are still valid in that the core of downtown is generally deficient by approximately 420 parking spaces.
- Fringe parking demand has increased since the 2002 study and parking lots that were highlighted as underutilized in 2002 have been recently observed to have significant demand. New parking management initiatives have also led to increased use of these fringe lots.
- The rail station lots do not meet local or regional demand.

Zoning for Parking

Zoning provisions for parking downtown must balance the community need to ensure there is an adequate supply of spaces against other community goals such as maintaining economic vitality and downtown character. The downtown presents unique challenges for parking. Spaces set aside as surface parking can interrupt the visual landscape and fabric of the downtown. In addition, in a space-constrained environment, land utilized exclusively for parking reduces the area available for economic growth. Yet, without adequate parking, the downtown will not flourish. To date, New Canaan has addressed this in part by exempting private developers from any required parking in the Retail A Zone. As parking is still needed to meet the demand generated by businesses in this district, this exemption has had the effect of increasing demands on municipal parking as well as displacing those spaces to the downtown fringes and other downtown zones.

The New Canaan zoning regulations for parking within the remaining business and retail zones (outside the Retail A Zone) include the following basic features:

- Ratio of parking required per type of activity
- Location of parking on-site or within 300 feet of the principle use
- Location of parking behind the front yard setback line or building line –generally placing it behind main structures fronting on the street
- Requirements for handicap parking spaces
- Detailed requirements for interior landscaping for parking lots of 20 or more spaces
- Allowance for reductions in required parking for:
 - Uses that are predominantly storage facilities
 - Shared parking
 - Up to 25% at Planning and Zoning Commission discretion where the demand for spaces can still be satisfied
 - Deferral of construction of some parking for phased growth of a business
- Prohibition on parking structures except in the Business C zone.

Future Parking Demand

The 2002 parking and traffic study examined parking supply block by block and compared the findings with anticipated demand. Based on this study, there is an existing parking shortfall in the downtown core of approximately 420 parking spaces adjacent to the highest generating land uses. It is important to note, that inadequate parking discourages patrons and thus decreases the perceived parking shortfall.

In addition to existing parking shortfalls, there is the potential for additional development in the downtown area. This will increase the number of parking spaces required to service the downtown area long term. The future development analysis, summarized previously in Table 2, indicates that the maximum potential for added development in the downtown area is 160,412 square feet. Based on the Town of New Canaan's zoning regulations, an additional 365 parking spaces would be required to serve that hypothetical maximum level of development. Based on data from the Parking Generation Manual, produced by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) (2003), 160,400 square feet of additional downtown development will generate a demand of approximately 400 parking spaces. Although the town of New Canaan's zoning regulations are generally consistent with the demand forecasted by the ITE manual, it is important to note the parking requirements in the zoning code are still overly conservative. They work to counteract the Magic Circle's parking exemption by more stringent requirements for parking in the remaining downtown districts. The end result is a parking deficient core, with a surplus in the fringe, which perpetuates some of the existing parking problems, in that parking is not conveniently located.

Thus, if full buildout of the downtown area were to occur, an additional 825 parking spaces would be required to accommodate existing shortfalls and latent demand (425 spaces) and additional future demand associated with growth (400 spaces).

Traffic Observations

Regional access to New Canaan is provided via Main Street/South Avenue (State Routes 124 and 106), which connect the business district to Route 15 to the south. To the north, Route 106 continues through New Canaan and connects to Route 7 towards Danbury and provides access to Stamford and Wilton, while Route 124 provides access to New York.

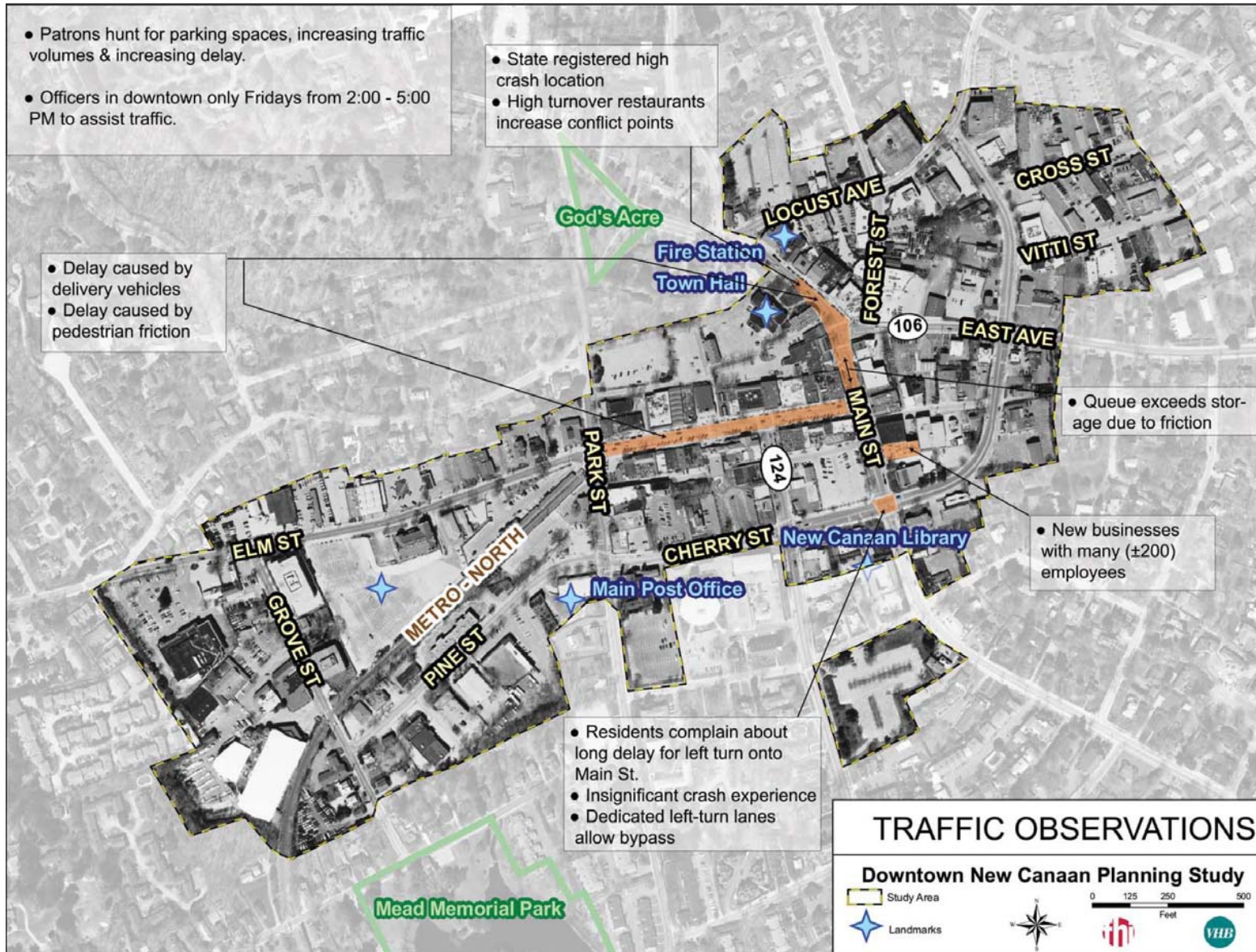
In order to qualitatively assess the existing traffic operations in the downtown area, a field reconnaissance and review of readily available information was conducted. Findings of this review are highlighted on Figure 5.

As shown on Figure 5, of the State roadways within the study area, Main Street, north of East Avenue is the only roadway segment highlighted by ConnDOT as a location with a higher than expected crash rate, when comparing it to similar roadways in the State. The likely contributing factors for why this roadway segment is highlighted as experiencing a higher than expected crash rate include queues extending back from the East Avenue intersection along with uncontrolled vehicle turning movements which include motorists maneuvering into and out of high turnover on-street parking spaces and the unsignalized exit drive from the Town Hall parking areas.

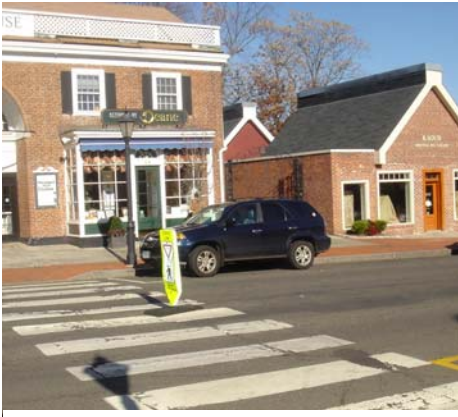
In the downtown area, local access is provided by Main Street, a two-lane roadway with parallel on-street parking, and Elm Street, a 4-lane roadway, with angled parking on both sides. The high demand on-street parking causes traffic delay with motorists hunting for parking spaces, traveling slowly and circulating around the street network. This contributes to higher vehicle miles traveled in the downtown core which further contributes to overall traffic congestion. There are also no designated loading zones within the downtown core which creates conflicts and delay as the majority of deliveries are made with trucks double-parked in a travel lane. In addition to vehicle-induced traffic delay, other downtown traffic delay is caused by friction or conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians who commonly cross the street at unmarked locations, mid-block.

In general, no significant, chronic, delay or congestion was observed or has been highlighted by the community or the Downtown Study Committee. The traffic character in the area is typical of a village environment with some isolated locations with delays, some parking/vehicular flow conflicts, and some loading/vehicular conflicts. The traffic flow recommendations presented later in this report suggest some strategies to address some of these isolated issues, however it does not appear that there exists a system-wide capacity deficiency that requires significant roadway improvements. In addition, it is often considered desirable to have friction and slow moving traffic within a downtown village setting as it reflects a “traffic calmed” environment by slowing traffic in areas with heavy pedestrian activity.

Figure 5: Traffic Observations



Pedestrian Observations



Midblock crosswalk on Elm St.

New Canaan's compact layout, abundant street-level activity, and existing sidewalks make it a very pedestrian-friendly town. Most intersections have crosswalks and pedestrian ramps, and the busiest areas also have mid-block crosswalks controlled by yield-to-pedestrian signs. Also, vehicle speeds are low in the areas with highest pedestrian volumes. Pedestrian circulation is encouraged through various aesthetic enhancements, such as brick pavers, granite curbs, benches, decorative lighting, and landscaping. Finally, the location of the train station just off the Elm Street business corridor provides opportunities for trip linking. Commuters, for example, can get off

the train in the evening, walk to Elm Street for dinner or shopping, then walk to their car and drive home. With this said, there is still potential for an improved pedestrian environment in the downtown. A few pedestrian-related issues are noted below.

Sidewalk widths: Based on observation, many sidewalks, especially on side streets, are narrow and may not comply with ADA standards. A more complete inventory would be required to determine actual dimensions and ADA violations, however. Additionally, many of these narrow sidewalks are completely bisected by driveway entrances, which present a difficult obstacle for wheelchair users.



Narrow sidewalk on Forest St. St.

Sidewalk maintenance: In general, sidewalks are well-maintained, but in some locations protruding bricks or bumpy asphalt pose a tripping hazard and create obstacles for wheelchair users or others with limited mobility. This may be an issue of growth in street trees with root systems that have displaced the brick in some walks.

Pedestrian ramps: Most crosswalks have pedestrian ramps, but some do not.

Sidewalk furniture and obstructions: Various sidewalk obstructions were observed throughout the study area, including newspaper boxes, utility poles, and amenities provided by merchants (planters, benches, etc.). This type of street furniture can impede pedestrian circulation – especially on narrow sidewalks – if not sited properly.

Large turn radii on corners: Several intersections have corner radii that leave little space for pedestrians and cannot accommodate ideally-designed (perpendicular) ramps. These radii may or may not be necessary, depending on traffic volumes and number of large vehicles.

Intersection of Main Street and Locust Avenue: This intersection is a broad expanse of blank asphalt that is difficult for pedestrians to negotiate. It has only one crosswalk that does not correspond to pedestrian desire lines. In addition to more crosswalks, this location could benefit from geometric reconfiguration to improve pedestrian safety and circulation.

The Town is in the process of completing an inventory of the sidewalk system. Along with this, corrective actions to address some of these issues on a location by location, site specific basis are being pursued.

DOWNTOWN VISION, OBJECTIVES, AND ISSUES

A vision statement is an expression of the how New Canaan residents and the business community would ideally picture the downtown in the future. It is a statement of wishes for what they hope it would be. The vision, concerns, and objectives for the downtown were identified through the discussion with the DSC, feedback from a community workshop, and findings of the technical analysis described above.

Downtown Vision Statement

Downtown New Canaan will continue to be the heart of the community offering a unique character that enhances the quality of life, health, and safety of residents, businesses and visitors. It will be easy to navigate by car, bicycle, and on foot. It will be an activity destination with small businesses, local merchants, public gathering spaces, community government, and an inviting sidewalk system. It will also have enough parking to meet the needs of downtown shoppers, visitors, and employees. At the same time, parking will be woven into the fabric of the downtown such that it does not detract from its aesthetic qualities.

Downtown Objectives – to achieve this Vision there is a need to:

- 1) Sustain and enhance downtown character/aesthetics
- 2) Maximize efficient use of existing parking supply
- 3) Expand the parking supply to meet long-term demand
- 4) Improve vehicle loading options
- 5) Improve pedestrian access and amenities
- 6) Enhance traffic operations

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS

Strategy Options

A wide range of potential strategies were considered to address the downtown objectives as well as identified issues and opportunities. Potential strategies were evaluated using a set of performance considerations. These were qualitative factors used to determine the relative benefits of each strategy. They included:

Downtown Objective

Related Strategy Performance Considerations

1) Sustain and enhance downtown character	Promotes consistency with existing character Impact to streetscape Provides for pedestrian access and safety Contribution to green space/pocket parks Complementary to existing building scale and mass
2) Maximize use of existing parking supply	Cost/funding options Spaces gained Pedestrian access/linkages Proximity to core Impact to traffic operations Safety Aesthetics Enforceable Impact to business operations ADA accessible
3) Expand parking supply long-term	Cost/funding options Spaces gained Constructability Pedestrian access/linkages Proximity to core Impact to traffic operations Safety Aesthetics Impact to business operations ADA accessible

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 3) Improve vehicle loading options | Cost/funding options
Pedestrian safety
Proximity to core
Impact to traffic operations
Impact to business operations |
| 4) Improve pedestrian access | Connects remote lots to core
Adds to streetscape
Improves roadway crossings/safety
Provides pedestrian amenities and respite areas
ADA accessible
Cost/funding options |
| 5) Enhance traffic operations | Cost
Constructability/space needs
Impact to traffic operations
Impact to parking
Pedestrian safety |

Recommended Strategies

Based on the assessment of a diverse set of strategies for guiding the future development of the downtown, the following is recommended to achieve the downtown objectives.

Land Use

Downtown Objective 1. Sustain and enhance downtown character/aesthetics

Recommendations:

L-1. Strengthen design criteria in Village District Zone: Due to the eclectic variety of buildings currently downtown, there is a need for the design criteria in the zoning regulations for the Village District to be as clear as possible regarding what is considered consistent and complementary to the district setting. This can be accomplished in three ways:

- a. Written design criteria
- b. A separate design manual referenced by zoning regulations
- c. Pictures

The written design criteria can specify architectural styles, landscaping, and building facades which are acceptable. These can be incorporated directly into the zoning

regulations. The current regulations do provide general guidance regarding this. The language in the New Canaan regulations is very similar to that found in village and neighborhood preservation district zoning in other Connecticut towns. The Town of Farmington takes the design criteria one step further by requiring applicants to consult a local history of the town for descriptions of acceptable architectural treatments and styles.

An alternate approach would be to create a separate design manual for the downtown that is incorporated by reference into the zoning regulations. The Town of Simsbury has a detailed manual that provides a good model for how to implement this approach. The table of contents and an excerpt from the Simsbury manual is included in Appendix A.

It is recommended that the New Canaan regulations include a reference to preferred signature styles downtown including Colonial Revival, Victorian, and Gothic. Additionally, in order to address the issue of diverse architecture that now defines New Canaan's downtown, it is recommended that a third approach also be applied. It is recommended that the regulations and/or manual include photographs of existing buildings downtown which represent architectural styles and treatments that are desirable for the Village District. For example:



- L-2. Add overall building size limitations for the downtown zones: For clarity, it is recommended that Section 4.7 of the zoning regulations regarding area and dimensional requirements in the Retail and Business zones add language regarding specific allowable overall square footage in a single building or contiguous group of buildings in addition to height limitations. There are limits specified for office uses

but not other types of land use. Commonly, a franchise pharmacy can be around 15,000 square feet while a book superstore might be around 90,000 square feet. Shopping centers range widely in size from less than 30,000 s.f. for a strip development to 800,000 s.f. for a super-regional mall.

- L-3. Explore establishing a façade improvement program: Grant money is available to municipalities through the Connecticut Department of Economic Development (DECD) for an Economic Development Façade Improvement Program to benefit local businesses. The program provides a financial incentive for improving the exterior appearance of commercial buildings. Façade improvement grants are on a reimbursement basis: property owners are reimbursed for approved façade improvements after payment has been made to the contractor and the work has been certified by the Town in accordance with the individual business owner agreement. An example of an informational brochure for a façade improvement program from the Town of Rocky Hill is included in Appendix A.
- L-4. Consider establishing a Main Street program: The Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC) is a statewide nonprofit corporation funded by The Connecticut Light and Power Company and DECD. It is a subset of a larger national organization. It provides support to Connecticut municipalities for economic and community development within the context of historic preservation. CMSC focuses on revitalization of Connecticut's commercial districts by providing education and training, resources and technical assistance, and advocacy. The CSMS assists communities in identifying their downtown revitalization needs, planning for programs to meet those needs, and working to promote the downtown as a destination. Communities that adopt a Main Street program generally set up an oversight committee of downtown business associations, chamber of commerce, individual business owners and the local government. They then pursue a variety of public-private partnerships to enhance the physical setting of the commercial core, engage in marketing programs and promotional activities for the downtown, and sponsor community events to heighten awareness and utilization of the downtown. The CMSC also offers one-on-one business consulting services to businesses who participate in a local Main Street initiative.
- L-5. Conduct a market demand study: There is a desire to sustain small-scale retail businesses in New Canaan's downtown and to discourage franchise businesses with associated branded architectural themes. It is recommended that a detailed market analysis be conducted for the downtown that can identify the potential market demand for businesses by type. This would set a baseline for targeted marketing efforts to retain existing commercial development and generate new, desirable and sustainable economic growth. Along with this, the Planning and Zoning Commission should identify what specific types of uses are most desirable for the community; what activities they'd like to see remain and what new uses they'd like to see arrive. This information can be compared against the market findings to highlight what efforts may be needed to adjust the allowable uses in the downtown zones and what

business outreach may be needed to address conflicts between what is desired and what the market will bear.

Zoning can be used to limit or prohibit specific types of land use in a particular zone as one method of directing the business mix. However, if such prohibitions are not linked to actual market demand, the effect of limited allowable business types along with limited market demand could result in a weaker economic base that cannot be well sustained. Consequently, an understanding of the factors that will drive the demand for economic activity in downtown New Canaan is essential to tailoring both promotional efforts for the downtown and zoning tools which can help shape the desired land use pattern or character. As part of this market study, the influence of limited parking and/or paid parking can be assessed from a market perspective.

L-6. Adopt incentive programs to attract desirable businesses: Many communities use a diversity of both regulatory and non-regulatory incentives to attract the types of businesses they wish to see in a commercial district or downtown. Regulatory incentives contained in the zoning ordinance can include allowances for greater intensity/density of structures on a lot, more flexibility in parking, open space, public space, and/or signage requirements, and reductions or waivers of fees associated with development applications. In addition, some communities offer a streamlined development approval process for desirable forms of development. For example, in Tolland, the zoning administrator can approve some developments that are allowed by right and meet all site plan requirements, bypassing the formal Planning and Zoning application and decision making process.

Non-regulatory incentives by a municipality are generally financial and can include:

- Prioritizing funding of infrastructure improvements to key areas of the community where redevelopment and/or infill is desired
- Offering matching funds to pay for off-site improvements that may be required to mitigate a project's impacts such as impacts to roadways or stormwater management systems
- Offering tax credits, breaks or deferrals for desirable projects. These tax benefits can be varied in form as well such as straight property tax relief or job-creation tax credits
- Creation of a development financing authority.
- Offering to partner with a business to support remote parking by employees or employee use of transit to work

L-7. Blend parking facilities aesthetics with the character of the downtown: Aesthetics of parking facilities can include not only landscaping and location (as addressed in New Canaan's regulations), but specifics for signage design, fencing, naturally vegetated drainage structures, pedestrian paths, and pedestrian amenities such as benches, water fountains, and lighting. It is recommended that photographs of desirable street furniture, fixtures, and signs be incorporated into the regulations to provide more comprehensive parking facility design guidance in the Village District.

In addition, requirements for pedestrian amenities should be specified. A sample model regulation for pedestrian access is included in Appendix B.

If elevated parking structures such as decks or garages are developed, it is recommended that the Town adopt design guidelines in the form of a design manual for them. Such structures should be designed to incorporate retail uses on the ground floor street frontage, Colonial Revival or Gothic style façades, pocket parks at street corners, and venues for street art such as sculptures and wall murals.

- L-8. Develop and fund a municipal parking lot enhancement program: The existing municipal parking lots generally have perimeter landscaping but no interior plantings or amenities to provide for the safety and comfort of pedestrians. It is recommended that New Canaan add a line item to the municipal budget for capital expenditures to upgrade and maintain landscaping, and provide respite areas, shade, lighting and walkways within municipal parking lots.

Table 3: Summary of Land use Recommendations

ID Number¹	Recommendation	Description	Implementation Steps
L-1	Strengthen Village District design guidelines	Add more specific language and graphics/photos to the zoning regulations to clarify preferred architectural styles for the downtown - suggest using Colonial Revival, Victorian, and Gothic as signature styles	Town Planner and Planning and Zoning Commission draft amendment to the zoning regulations to incorporate photographs and graphics – Village District regulations.
L-2	Limit Building size through zoning	Add limit for overall square footage of a single structure or contiguous group of structures out side retail A Zone	Town Planner and Planning and Zoning Commission draft amendment to the zoning regulations – Section 4.7: area and dimensional requirements.
L-3	Adopt façade improvement program	Pursue this DECD funded program to offer grants to property owners to enhance their building facades downtown	Board of Selectmen establishes organization for program and coordinates with DECD for funding application.
L-4	Implement Main Street program	A municipal-private partnership with downtown/business zone business owners (<i>to include business zones east and west of the core of downtown as well as Main Street area</i>) to enhance and maintain the downtown including physical maintenance/enhancement and marketing activities.	Board of Selectmen outreach to business community to form public/private organization for Main Street program. Contact Connecticut Main Street staff for assistance with organizational structure and first year program goals & activities.
L-5	Conduct market demand study	Conduct a detailed market analysis for the downtown that provides a realistic market profile reflecting market demand; indicates how zoning might be adjusted to encourage desired target business sectors; and quantifies the potential economic benefits of adding parking capacity downtown (garage)	Board of Selectmen issue an RFP for Market Study and set aside of funding for the project.
L-6	Adopt incentive programs to attract desirable businesses downtown	Use of a diversity of both regulatory and non-regulatory incentives to attract the types of businesses New Canaan wishes to see downtown.	Board of Selectmen partner with Planning and Zoning to investigate a package of incentive approaches
L-7	Strengthen parking facility aesthetics requirements in zoning regulations	Incorporate photographs of desirable designs, street furniture, fixtures, and signs into the regulations to provide more comprehensive parking facility design guidance in the Village District	Town Planner and Planning and Zoning Commission draft amendment to the zoning regulations to incorporate photographs and graphics – Section 6.2- Parking & Loading.
L-8	Create municipal parking lot improvement fund	Dedicate funds from capital budget for ongoing <i>public</i> parking facility enhancement - <i>This fund would be distinct from a fee-in-lieu of parking fund</i>	Board of Selectmen to create new line in capitol budget – Public works department develop project list with cost estimates and construction schedule.

1 – Correlates to identification number in the text

Parking and Travel

The vision statement for downtown New Canaan states that it is important to have enough parking to meet the needs of downtown shoppers and visitors that, at the same time, does not detract from the aesthetic qualities of the downtown. That statement speaks to the importance of an adequate parking supply to a community and downtown shopping district.

Due to the importance of parking for the vitality of the downtown, both New Canaan staff and consultants have commented on parking over the years. In the mid 1960's the New Canaan Board of Selectmen indicated a need for a parking structure, highlighted by a then existing deficit of 200 parking spaces. In the 1960's, the Town Planner commented on lost revenue, indicating one million dollars of business were lost per year due to parking shortfalls. Many other studies were undertaken over the years with the most recent commissioned by the town in 2002 which indicated a shortfall of parking in the downtown core of approximately 420 spaces. As part of this study, the existing shortfall of 420 parking spaces in the downtown core was generally confirmed to still be valid.

In addition to current shortfalls, there will be the need for additional future parking as properties get developed or redeveloped. As indicated in previous sections of this report, based on current zoning, downtown New Canaan has the maximum potential for an increase of just over 160,400 square feet. The ITE Parking Generation Manual indicates that an additional 400 parking spaces will be needed to support potential future buildout of the downtown, independent from the 425-space existing deficit. This results in a future full-build out parking deficit of approximately 825 spaces.

To alleviate both the short- and long-term parking deficiencies, parking management and supply mitigation measures have been formulated, with the assistance of the Downtown Study Committee. The short-term improvements include lower-cost management approaches that are relatively easy to implement and focus on getting the most use out of the existing parking supply. The long-term parking mitigation measures include higher-cost measures that are more complex to implement and focus on adding significant parking supply in an already constrained downtown. The following sections define these suggested improvements.

It is important to note, that the effectiveness of each of the recommendations should be evaluated through occupancy observations for on-street parking and off-street lots to determine what, if any, changes in parking use results from the recommendation. In addition to occupancy observations, a parking turnover study should be conducted for any recommendation that may affect short-term on-street and proximity parking lots. Both these studies should be conducted prior to implementing each recommendation and monitored for approximately one year after the recommendation has been in-place to confirm the effectiveness of the recommendation.

Downtown Objective 2. Maximize use of existing parking supply.

Recommendations:

- P-1. Monitor turnover at on-street spaces for one year and install on-street meters if warranted. A paradox currently exists between parking fees and parking convenience. Parking on the street, the most convenient, and usually the most expensive, is free of charge in New Canaan with only a time limit (two-hour) restriction. Remote parking lots, on the other hand, which are more inconvenient due to their distance to the shopping district, require a fee for use. This paradox encourages employees and other long-term users to park for free on-street and relocate their car to avoid the two-hour time limit, if required. There is no incentive for parkers to use the remote parking lots. Additionally, due to financial and physical disincentives for shoppers to park in the remote parking locations, people are encouraged to circulate the roadway network looking for a parking space, leading to increased traffic activity and congestion.



Single- or multi-space meters should be installed on Main and Elm Streets with an emphasis on minimizing their aesthetic impacts on the streetscape. A fee structure should then be set to encourage parking in the remote parking lots. Rates should be set no lower than that of parking rates in the Morse, Court, Playhouse or Park Street lots, currently set at \$0.25 per half hour. Given the current fee structure, \$0.50 to \$0.75 per hour for on-street parking is appropriate when establishing a parking fee hierarchy based on convenience.

Meter technology has advanced to the point where coins are not the only form of payment with technologies such as credit card and pay by cellular telephone available, increasing the convenience of parking meter use. Municipal “smart cards”, similar to those recently implemented in the City of New Haven, can increase the convenience of parking meters for those who use them regularly. The current two-hour time restrictions on-street should be set at 60 to 90 minutes to encourage turnover for shoppers, and ticketing policies for these areas should allow a grace period of 15 minutes before ticketing an expired meter so not to penalize shoppers.

In New Canaan the parking enforcement and meter collection for off-street parking are conducted by the four parking enforcement officers and a supervisor making up the Parking Bureau. Further, the Parking Bureau is responsible for both enforcing time restrictions and parking meter violations. However, the Police Commission is responsible for enforcement for on-street parking violations. It is not the intent of this recommendation to extend the geographical extent of the enforcement activities; only to redistribute efforts from enforcing time limits to enforcing parking meter violations. As such, little to no changes in manpower is anticipated necessary.

Recently, the town of New Canaan revised their parking management strategy to encourage long-term parking in the Center School parking lot. It is recommended that these changes be given some time to take effect and that a parking turnover study be conducted in one year on Main and Elm Streets to determine the effects this has had on discouraging long-term on-street parking. Again, the effectiveness of all of the Parking Commission's continuing varied efforts to enhance its management of existing downtown parking should be monitored and re-evaluated after one year to measure effectiveness.

- P-2. Relocate municipal employee parking to the Locust Street lot: Currently, municipal employees park in a surface lot adjacent to the New Canaan Town Hall. The downtown shopping core would be better served if this parking was available to shoppers and employees of the downtown core.

The Locust Street lot, on the other hand, is too remote to directly service patrons and employees of the downtown core, but is well within walking distance for Town Hall employees. Relocating municipal employees to the Locust Street lot would free up valuable proximity parking for the downtown area. This shift in demand from the Town Hall parking lot to the Locust Street lot is expected to be accommodated by existing parking availability at Locust Street and through redistribution of existing demand. Department managers and others who regularly use their cars for town business throughout the day may need to remain in the current parking lot, however, as a matter of practicality.

To assist in making the walk more acceptable/desirable, the town should consider pedestrian improvements to enhance/strengthen the connection between Town Hall and the Locust Street lot. Streetscape enhancements (i.e. aesthetic lighting, benches, and rain shelters) could be implemented as well as efforts to make the pedestrian crossings/crosswalks more conspicuous for passing motorists. A safe, well demarcated pedestrian pathway through the Town Hall rear property/parking lot would also be beneficial such that employees need not walk in the driveway. This initiative could be coupled with various remote parking incentives such as reduced monthly rates and periodic rewards (raffles and prizes) to those parking in the remote lot. The Danbury Hospital has, for example, successfully used such special promotional activities to encourage employees to use more remote parking

- P-3. Relocate retail/commercial employee parking: Employees of the downtown areas are not encouraged to park remotely and therefore place undo stress on a system ultimately designed for the convenience of downtown shoppers. Employees have been observed parking in prime on-street parking spaces, some moving their cars when the two-hour on-street parking limit expires. A plan to encourage employees to park in more appropriate (remote) parking locations needs to be implemented. Implementing on-street parking meters will help as will increased parking rates in lots intended for high turnover. However, to further encourage remote employee parking, a program of free or reduced-fee parking passes for remote facilities (or other incentives) should be

considered. It is important to note, however, that this could result in decreased revenue if some employees are currently paying for off-street parking.

In order for this strategy to be successful, business owners need to take an active role in the program, to ensure their employees are educated and encouraged to park in areas that will help support the overall success of the downtown core.

- P-4. Modify parking fee structure: Historically, the parking fee structure that was in place did not account for convenience or demand at a certain location. During this study, parking rate changes have been enacted that, to some extent, begin to surcharge for convenience. Parking rates at three existing short-term parking lots, Morse Court, Playhouse Lot, and Park Street, have been doubled from \$0.25 for an hour to \$0.25 for a half hour. This effectively has begun to “encourage” some employees to seek the less expensive parking areas intended for long-term parking such as the Center Street and Locust Street lots. Those spaces once utilized by employees, are now available to shorter-term downtown patrons. Further management of the pricing structure should continue and will continue to encourage long term parkers to utilize the more remote locations.
- P-5. Modify time limit structure: Time limits for on- and off-street parking facilities should reflect the needs of the users. Parking in close proximity to the shopping district should be short-term providing users with up to 60 or 90 minutes of parking. The further from the downtown core, the longer the time limit should be. This methodology promotes efficient use of parking infrastructure and maximizes convenience for patrons. Patrons with the shortest duration shopping trips have the easiest access to their vehicle while people staying for long durations can park remotely and not block prime spaces for extended periods.

Downtown Objective 3. Expand the parking supply to meet future deficits

Once the short-term parking management strategies have exhausted the system’s ability to meet the parking demand, the following longer-term improvements are recommended:

- P-6. Implement a downtown shuttle service: A circulator shuttle from remote parking areas to the downtown shopping and dining area is one alternative to disperse parking demand in the downtown area and encourage use of remote parking lots and/or garages by patrons and/or employees. Factors that will influence the viability of a shuttle service include convenience for patrons and operating costs. The convenience for riders will be influenced by number and spacing of stops/destinations, schedule, and comfort and safety of the stops.

Shuttle stops should be close enough to destinations so that travelers can comfortably walk with shopping bags (generally 5 minutes or less). Stops should ideally include (at a minimum) some information kiosks, shelter, and lighting. A reasonably direct route should be created among the desired stops, so that no one passenger is riding the

shuttle for more than about 10 minutes. The stops and the route should be able to accommodate patrons at various destinations, such as stores and restaurants which open/close at different times of the day. The headway (time between stops) of the shuttle should be kept to a practical minimum and will depend upon the length of the routes, times at each stop, and the number of vehicles operating on the circulator route. Finally, marketing is a key factor in the success of shuttle usage. Marketing can include promotional activities as well as adequate signage and route brochures.

There are a number of municipalities in the U.S. that have existing shuttle service. These areas often have at least one major destination including universities, regional tourist attractions, and/or major transportation terminals such as airports or train stations. The shuttle services are operated in varied ways including publicly (often by a transit district), privately, or through a public-private partnership. Many are operated as a free service.

Start-up costs for a shuttle service will vary substantially based on the equipment, number of vehicles, and financing arrangements. New shuttle buses that carry between 14-25 passengers cost approximately \$50,000 - \$80,000. This direct cost to the municipality will be counter balanced by less tangible benefits including support for patronage at downtown businesses, more visitors downtown overall and more efficient use of the available parking supply. Examples of successful downtown shuttle services and their operators include:

- The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority owns and operates their Downtown Shuttle, a free circulator system. Electric buses provide daily access to such attractions as the Tennessee Aquarium, the Chattanooga Choo Choo, convention center, shopping, hotels, and employment sites in the Downtown area.
- The City of Providence has trolley service provided by the Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority. It operates small trolleys that run in overlapping circles through the business district, legislative district, and arts district.
- The Dartmouth Downtown shuttle (Hanover, NH) is operated by Advanced Transit and receives significant contributions from several local towns, Dartmouth College, and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center.
- The Norfolk Electric Transit Downtown Shuttle is provided by both the City of Norfolk, VA and Hampton Roads Transit.

Other municipalities in the U.S. have recommended or are in the process of completing studies to implement shuttle transit service. One relevant example is the University of Oregon. In 1996, the University reviewed several strategies to address parking issues. One strategy included use of a shuttle between the campus and downtown Eugene. The shuttle would run from 7 AM to 11 PM, providing added

evening transit service for faculty and students and more midday service for a variety of off-campus trips. Two alternative operating plans were developed for the shuttle. Under Alternative 1 the shuttles would run every 15 minutes during peak periods which would be midday from 10 AM to 4 PM when the greatest turnover of arrivals and departures occurs, and every 30 minutes for off-peak periods during the morning (7-10 AM) and in the afternoon and night (4-11 PM). Assuming a shuttle capacity of 25 passengers, shuttles operating every 15 minutes during the midday would provide a passenger capacity of 100 per hour. Under Alternative 2 the shuttles would operate every 30 minutes during peak periods and every hour during off-peak periods. The estimated cost for Alternative 1 operations (with 15 min. headways) was estimated at \$95,000 per year. That included an annualized cost for the purchase of three vans, assuming a five year life (capital cost), and an annual operating and maintenance cost of \$55,000, which would include driver, and vehicle maintenance costs. Alternative 2 operations (30 min. headways) were estimated at \$55,000 per year, including the capital, operating and maintenance costs. Ultimately, the university took an alternate approach. It partnered with the local transit district to plan an expanded route system to better serve the university and partnered with them, providing free service to university students who use their student identification card for transit system rides.

P-7. Adopt a Fee-in-Lieu of Parking program: The Connecticut General Statutes (Section 8-2c) authorizes a zoning commission to require or allow payment of a fee in lieu of parking requirements. This means a development applicant can pay a fee per required parking space instead of constructing the actual spaces. A fee can only be accepted when the zoning commission has found that the number of parking spaces which would be required in connection with a development would a) result in an excess of parking spaces for the development or in the area surrounding it; or b) could not be physically located on the parcel of land for which the development is proposed. The regulation must further provide that the amount of the fee be determined in accordance with a formula or schedule of fees spelled out in the regulations. In any case in which a fee is proposed to be accepted in lieu of a parking requirement, a two-thirds vote of the zoning commission is necessary for approval. Any payment in lieu of parking is made to the town or city and must be deposited in a fund established solely for the acquisition, development, expansion or capital repair of municipal parking facilities, traffic or transportation related capital projects, the provision or operating expenses of transit facilities, or capital programs to facilitate carpooling or vanpooling. The proceeds of such fund must not be considered a part of the municipal general fund. Sample zoning language for a fee-in-lieu option is provided in Appendix B.

In connection with a fee-in-lieu program and related zoning requirements, it is recommended that New Canaan no longer provide parking exemptions for the 'magic circle' or Retail A zone. This will help to ensure that the parking demand created by new business or changes in use in this zone will be fully accounted for in the parking supply. In order to accommodate this, particularly as changes in use occur, New Canaan should encourage a gradual shift by private business to increased reliance long-term on the municipal parking supply to meet downtown needs. For example,

where a change in use in the 'magic circle' would require more parking than the previous activity, the zoning regulations should permit and even encourage the new use to meet its parking demand to some degree with municipal parking. This approach would also allow New Canaan to manage the strategic location of parking in the context of downtown character.

Any increased reliance on the municipal supply would, however, not only allow the Town to accommodate changes in use in the 'magic circle' but would also increase pressures to expand the overall municipal supply of downtown parking. Therefore, matching the pace of downtown business growth with appropriate related municipal parking supply becomes a balancing act. The Planning and Zoning Commission should have access to real-time information regarding the changing availability of municipal parking spaces to inform their decisions about approving downtown development/redevelopment proposals. In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission should balance zoning requirements for parking with both maximum and minimum allowances for spaces to be provided from municipal lots in order to allow the Town to maintain sufficient public parking over time to meet anticipated long term demand. This may help prevent over-commitment of municipal spaces to downtown uses before plans can be implemented to supplement or expand that supply.

P-8. Clarify and strengthen other zoning requirements for parking: It is recommended that New Canaan employ additional strategies to strengthen the zoning regulations for parking, particularly if the parking exemption in the Retail A Zone is eliminated, including:

- Add specific language that calls for review of parking proposals by the Parking Commission as part of zoning applications; encourage close collaboration between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Parking Bureau on proposed private parking changes that would impact the downtown.
- Add maximums as well as minimums for number of required parking spaces. Franchise businesses such as pharmacies commonly desire more parking than may be required in order to entice patrons into their stores. A zoning limit on the maximum number of spaces allowable will help ensure spaces provided are well matched to demand and that an overabundance of parking is not built for one site and then underutilized. Appendix B includes a Connecticut example; the Town of Tolland employs parking maximums for many land uses.
- Add options and standards for meeting the parking requirements in the downtown including:
 - a. Option for lease of municipal spaces by a private business
 - b. Broader off-site parking allowances; allow parking to be up to 750 feet from the principal use provided there is ease of access, pedestrian amenities such as a sheltered walkway, or transit access
 - c. Allow parking to be off-site and met with the municipal supply where it can be demonstrated that sufficient municipal parking is available
 - d. Broader allowances for shared parking arrangements; Provide a

formula for calculating the amount of shared parking allowed based on the demand of the individual uses that would share the parking site (See Appendix B for an example).

- e. Make these options Special Permit activities to enable the Commission to exercise control over approval of alternative parking plans on a case-by-case basis, with clearly defined criteria for decision-making being applied.
 - f. Require a parking impact study that quantifies the projected parking demand for any new business or change of use in the downtown.
- Pursue private-public partnerships for parking including:
 - a. Arrangements for the set-aside of municipal or public parking spaces in private lots
 - b. Shared parking when municipal parking and private parking have different time-of-day or day-of week demand (i.e. public parking on a Church parking lot on weekdays. This approach has worked well in Litchfield, Connecticut)

P-9. Create parking-related incentives: Provide incentives for developers to meet New Canaan parking objectives. Incentives to encourage beneficial parking proposals can include:

- Making allowances for connected parking lots and/or shared parking as broad as possible and encourage this. There is a financial/economic advantage to developers to provide shared parking, allowing for more intense development on their parcel and lower overall development and maintenance costs. It will be important to ensure that pedestrian access among lots is maintained.
- Allowing some increase in lot coverage or intensity or providing a financial incentive for creative parking solutions. In each case, the developer would need to quantify how the proposed solution provides a direct benefit to the Town and still provides adequate but not excessive parking. Creative solutions might include:
 - a. Lease of spaces from a municipal facility that would be designated/signed for use by the associated business
 - b. Purchase of permits in a municipal facility
 - c. Financial incentive provided to employees to park in a municipal lot/off-site lot
 - d. Financial support for a municipal shuttle service
 - e. Adding pedestrian linkages to another parking facility with adequate available spaces such as new crosswalks, ramps, and stairs

P-10. Construct a parking structure: Through a collaborate process undertaken by the project team and the DSC, four locations were determined to be potentially suitable for the construction of parking infrastructure. These locations included; Locust Street Lot, Playhouse Lot, Morse Court, and the Lumber Yard Lot.

Preliminary investigation highlighted the Playhouse lot, Locust Avenue lot and the Lumber Yard lot as the most viable locations for structured parking. These locations appear to be “highly advantageous” due to their location, current capacity shortfalls, latent demand, and minimal impact to the abutting properties. It should be noted that as part of the recommended Market Demand Study each location identified in the study should be examined to determine the costs and benefits each will have on the community.

Although each location appears suitable for parking infrastructure improvements, each garage will service different user groups. The Playhouse lot is expected to primarily appeal to visitors of the downtown; the Lumber Yard lot will primarily benefit commuters using the train; while the Locust Avenue lot can accommodate visitors to the downtown as well as Town Hall employees. A secondary user of any of these structures would be employees of the downtown businesses. Both the Playhouse lot and Locust Avenue lot add the convenience of being within a short walk to downtown, while the Lumber Yard lot may require a shuttle system, described previously, to encourage employees and downtown visitors to utilize the structure. A preliminary assessment of the costs for a parking deck at the Lumber Yard lot along with a related sketch site-plan is included as Appendix C.

There are several options commonly used for funding parking infrastructure. Opportunities may exist for construction costs to be financed through the municipality utilizing bonds or through federal funding sources and grants. If the garage was financed through a municipal bond, operating costs, debt service, and long-term maintenance is anticipated to be over \$500,000 per year. Additional costs such as administrative services for the parking passes and security for the parking lots will not be significant as those services are already provided by New Canaan staff. It is important to note that in order to cover the annual cost of the bond, annual parking permit fees will need to increase significantly, which may not have support of businesses or the community.

If it is not financially feasible to construct a parking structure with Town of New Canaan funds, there may be the potential for obtaining federal funding and grants to supplement the construction costs of the garage. Concept plans need to be developed long before construction of the garage is necessary such that the project can be included in the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Once included on the TIP, funding sources such as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding, which is administered through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), can be applied for. It is important to note that if outside funding sources are tapped some control and management of the garage can be lost. In light of the foregoing factors, securing federal dollars is considered the least preferred option for construction of a new garage in downtown New Canaan. The market analysis recommended as part of the “Sustain and enhance downtown character/aesthetics” recommendations should explore the costs and benefits of a garage in terms of downtown economy to help set a threshold for when construction should be pursued.

Downtown Objective 4. Improve vehicle loading options

Recommendations:

- P-11. Create additional loading zones. Revise on-street parking layout to include strategically located short-term (15 minute) loading zones large enough to accommodate single unit trucks. A suggested location for consideration is at the intersection of Elm Street at South Avenue and Main Street at East Avenue due to their centralized location. This strategy should be considered in coordination with construction of additional parking capacity, as existing on-street parking will be affected.
- P-12. Implement loading time restrictions: The Town of New Canaan currently does not have an ordinance restricting deliveries to certain times during the day. An ordinance should be enacted to restrict vehicles from making deliveries during periods of peak activity in the downtown area. Although an ordinance of this type is difficult to enforce, carriers may schedule their deliveries in an attempt to be in compliance and some benefit is expected. Based on historic traffic volume data, a restriction between the hours of noon and 3:00 pm would be appropriate, with 15 minute maximum delivery duration.

Table 4: Summary of Parking Recommendations

ID Number ¹	Recommendation	Description	Implementation Steps
P-1	Monitor turnover at on-street spaces and install meters on Main and Elm Streets if warranted. Set rates and time limits that discourage or preclude long-term parking on street	Install single or multi-space parking meters along Main Street and Elm Street to generate higher parking turnover rates. Parking rates should be set higher than the rates charged for off-street parking lots due to their convenience and to further encourage long-term parking in the periphery of the downtown area.	Parking Bureau research parking meter options and costs and develop purchase and installation program in collaboration with Public Works Department
P-2	Relocate municipal employee parking to Locust Street Lot	Currently, municipal employees park adjacent to Town Hall, in a lot within close proximity to the Downtown core. This is valuable parking that could be better dedicated to support downtown businesses. The Locust Street Lot is an option for employees, for example, that is less than 500 feet from Town Hall. Offer incentives to employees to park in a somewhat more remote location.	First Selectwoman to collaborate with Parking Bureau to both re-assign municipal employee parking and offer incentives for use of Locust Street lot. In advance of program start-up, meet with municipal employees to introduce the program and resolve concerns
P-3	Encourage commercial employees/downtown workers to utilize remote parking locations	Employees of downtown businesses have been observed parking on-street, some moving their car from one location to another when the time limit expires. Encourage downtown employees to park in more appropriate long-term (remote) parking through a program of offering them free or reduced cost parking passes (or other incentives) for use in a remote parking location.	Partners in the Main Street program collaborate with Parking Bureau to develop and promote incentive program for employee remote parking.
P-4	Revise parking fee structure (continue ongoing program)	The parking price structure was consistent for all lots, and did not vary based on convenience or demand. The pricing structure is in the process of being modified such that a premium is changed for prime lots. This program should be ongoing.	Parking Bureau continue to implement and re-evaluate impacts of changes to fee structure for parking. Set written policy for fee structure for coming five years.
P-5	Revise overall parking time limit structure	Time limits for parking should reflect the needs of different categories of users. Parking in very close proximity to the shopping district, i.e. Main Street and Elm Street should be only short-term, providing users with up to an hour of parking. The further from the Downtown core, the longer the time limit should be.	Parking Bureau evaluate impacts of changes to time limit structure for parking. Draft written policy for time limit structure for coming five years.

ID Number¹	Recommendation	Description	Implementation Steps
P-6	Implement downtown shuttle service to connect the central business district (CBD) with remote parking	Establish a circulator shuttle (can be trolley, mini-bus, or other vehicle) from parking facilities/future garage to downtown shopping and dining area	Public Works along with Planning Office explore options for shuttle routes and vehicles. Conduct survey to determine probable demand. Develop a plan for timing and funding of service. Pursue private sponsorship or public/private partnership.
P-7	Establish fee-in-lieu of parking program rather than exemptions for parking in the "magic circle" or Retail A zone	Modify zoning regulations to require or allow payment of a fee in lieu of providing parking spaces. This means a development applicant can pay a fee per required parking space instead of constructing the actual spaces; in combination with this, no longer provide parking exemptions for the 'magic circle' or Retail A zone. <i>This would apply to both new uses and changes in use.</i>	Town Planner and Planning and Zoning Commission draft amendment to the zoning regulations –Section 6.2- Parking & Loading.
P-8	Add zoning requirements/options for parking	Broaden the variety of ways in which a development applicant can meet the required parking supply in the downtown zones	Town Planner and Planning and Zoning Commission draft amendment to the zoning regulations –Section 6.2- Parking & Loading.
P-9	Add incentives to the zoning regulations for creative parking solutions	Offer incentives such as fee waivers and increase in development intensity for parking schemes for development that is beneficial to the Town as a whole.	Town Planner and Planning and Zoning Commission draft amendment to the zoning regulations –Section 6.2- Parking & Loading.
P-10	Construct a parking structure at the Lumber Yard site	Pursue, long-term, the construction of a parking deck or garage at the Lumber Yard site. The construction of a parking garage at this location could add cohesiveness to the Elm Street corridor if street level retail was included. <i>The market study should explore the costs and benefits of a garage in terms of downtown economy to help set threshold for when construction should be pursued.</i>	Board of Selectmen starts the process by issuing RFP for preliminary design with cost estimate; Translate findings into a prioritized transportation projects list for inclusion in regional Transportation Improvement Plan. Federal transportation funding could be pursued through the CMAQ program.
P-11	Establish more strategically located Loading Zones	Revise the on-street parking layout to include strategically located short-term (15 minute) loading zones large enough to accommodate single unit trucks. This should be considered in coordination with construction of additional parking capacity.	Public Works Department coordinate with Parking Bureau to identify potential locations for removal of selected on-street spaces and program to re-stripe and re-sign those locations for short-term loading.
P-12	Loading time restrictions	Via ordinance, limit the amount of time allowed for loading and unloading in on-street loading zones	Public Works Department to coordinate with Parking Bureau to post new prominent signage with loading zone time limits. Consult with affected businesses to encourage off-peak loading and before sign installation.

Walking

Downtown Objective 4. Improve pedestrian access and amenities

Recommendations:

W-1. Provide improved pedestrian connections to parking: As part of the ongoing inventory and sidewalk enhancement program, the Town of New Canaan should:

- Install wayfinding signage in municipal parking lots to direct pedestrians to access points and popular destinations.
- Improve handicap access to municipal parking lots through one or both of the following:
 - Construct wheelchair ramps connecting parking lots with nearby streets and popular destinations
 - Install signs directing wheelchair users toward safe and accessible routes
- Modify zoning to require private parking facilities to include interior walkways and connections to available sidewalk network

W-2. Improve general pedestrian circulation: As part of the ongoing inventory and sidewalk enhancement program, the Town of New Canaan should:

- As part of planned street reconstruction, widen sidewalks wherever possible to meet ADA minimum guidelines of 4' (5' minimum width recommended). This may require narrowing travel and parking lanes where feasible, but could be accomplished if pedestrian circulation were given top priority. Driveways should be constructed with wheelchair accessibility in mind. As a first step, redesign the sidewalk segment on Forest Street; widen the sidewalk, eliminate uneven driveway crossings, add continuity and consistency to the design, and add corner ramps to all intersections.
- Where feasible, upgrade existing curbs to ensure that all crosswalks have ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps. Ramps should also be installed as part of any planned sidewalk reconstruction.
- Continue to encourage business owners to provide aesthetic streetscape improvements, but ensure that all street furniture is properly sited so as to permit a minimum 4' wide clear path for pedestrians. Items such as newspaper boxes should not be clustered at intersection corners.
- When streets are reconstructed, intersections should be constructed with the minimum corner radii necessary based on numbers of heavy vehicles making turns. Corners should include perpendicular pedestrian ramps wherever possible, rather than diagonal ramps, as shown below.
- Install crosswalks on the east and south side of the Main Street/Locust Avenue intersection, and adjust signal timing to accommodate pedestrian crossings. As part of future planned reconstruction, consider geometric reconfiguration to shorten crossing distances and improve pedestrian flow.

- Improve the connection between the train station and Elm Street business district by installing some of all of the following wayfinding elements:
 - Install directional signs near train platform
 - Develop and distribute a Downtown map
 - Install distinctive entry markers on Elm Street to direct pedestrians' attention

W-3. Adopt a separate sidewalk ordinance: New Canaan should adopt a sidewalk ordinance (independent of the current streets and sidewalks ordinance) to guide and/or require businesses fronting on a public walkway to maintain the sidewalk. The ordinance would guide property owners on the location of street furniture and advertising they provide as well as maintaining sidewalk safety (keeping it clear of obstruction). In addition, the ordinance can limit the location of marketing materials, newspaper boxes, and artwork installed by any business or organization. An example of an ordinance restricting the location of newspaper boxes is included in Appendix A.

W-4. Pursue funding for streetscape enhancements: New Canaan should solicit transportation enhancement funding and/or community development funding to enhance the downtown streetscape and extend the sidewalk/streetscape theme along Main Street to the west and east of the downtown core. Sources of funds can include Transportation Enhancement funds through the US Department of transportation as well as Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants through the State Office of Policy and Management. In 2007 STEAP grants for downtown streetscape improvements were awarded to East Lyme, Newington, and Portland.

Table 5: Summary of Pedestrian Recommendations

ID Number¹	Recommendation	Description	Implementation Steps
W-1	Improve pedestrian connections to parking as part of ongoing inventory and enhancement program	Install wayfinding signage aimed at pedestrians such as information kiosks and improve handicap access to municipal lots. Modify zoning to require private parking facilities to include interior walkways and connections to available sidewalk network.	Public Works Department develop signage program and post new prominent signage. Coordinate with Main Street Partners for downtown ‘branding’ before sign installation.
W-2	Improve sidewalk connectivity and quality as part of ongoing inventory and enhancement program	As part of planned street reconstruction, widen sidewalks to meet ADA minimum guidelines; prioritize sidewalk maintenance; upgrade existing curbs and crosswalks for ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps; install ramps as part of any planned sidewalk reconstruction; install crosswalks on the east and south side of the Main Street/Locust Avenue intersection; adjust signal timing to accommodate pedestrian crossings; consider geometric reconfiguration of crosswalks to shorten crossing distances, and improve pedestrian flow. Improve the connection between the train station and business district by installing wayfinding elements: directional signs near train platform, downtown map, and distinctive entry/gateway markers.	Public Works Department to establish a sidewalk improvement program. Prioritize improvements and funding and construction schedule.
W-3	Adopt a separate sidewalk ordinance	A separate sidewalk ordinance would guide property owners on the location of street furniture they provide as well as maintaining sidewalk safety (keeping it clear of obstruction)	Board of Selectmen draft new ordinance to address sidewalk construction and maintenance responsibilities of Town and private property owners with frontage on public sidewalk.
W-4	Pursue funding for streetscape enhancements	Solicit transportation enhancement funding and/or community development funding to enhance the downtown streetscape and extend the sidewalk/streetscape theme along Main Street to the west and east of the downtown core.	Board of Selectmen would start process by issuing RFP for preliminary design with cost estimate and translating the findings of that process into a prioritized transportation projects list for inclusion in regional Transportation Improvement Plan. Coordinate with Main Street Partners for opportunities for public/private joint projects.

1- Correlates to identification number in the text

Downtown Objective 5. Enhance traffic operations

Recommendations:

T-1. Continue to enhance wayfinding signage: Recently, the Town of New Canaan undertook a wayfinding signage improvement project that significantly improved the conspicuity of municipal parking facilities. Additional improvements, however, are recommended such as replacing the text ‘Municipal Parking’ with ‘Public Parking’ or ‘Parking – Downtown Shopping District’. All signs in the downtown area should be revised to provide consistent signage that is clearly provided for public use.



T-2. Install sidewalk bump-outs: A major traffic operations constraint in most vibrant downtown areas can be attributed to pedestrian crossing of roadways. This necessary constraint can be minimized by reducing the time a pedestrian is within the roadway. To that end, providing sidewalk bump-outs at key crossing locations can increase both efficiency of vehicular traffic flow and safety for non-motorized users.



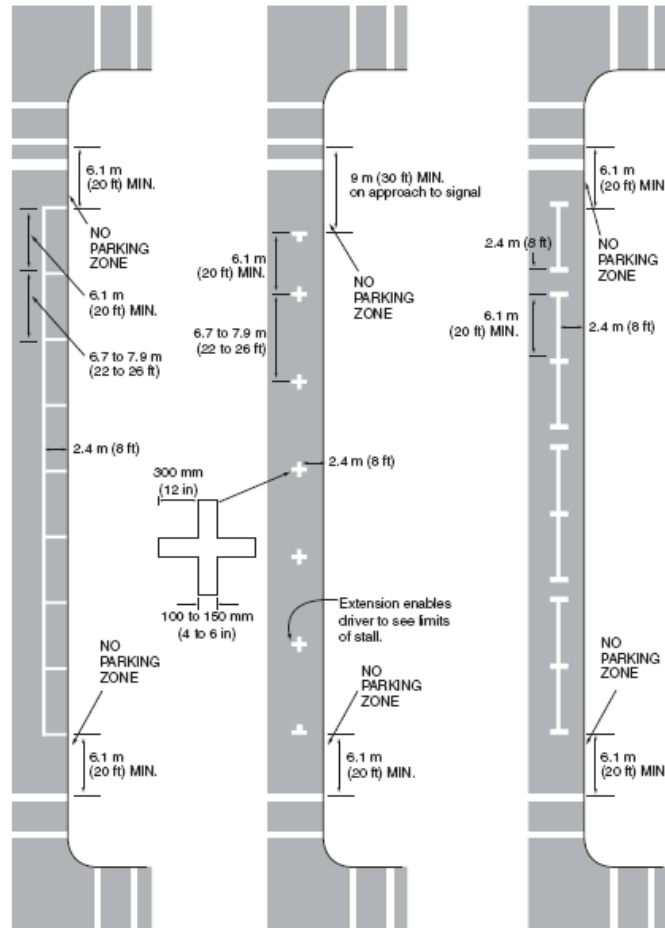
If the bump-outs were part of a larger streetscape improvement project, state transportation enhancement funding may be available to reimburse the municipality, however, this funding is limited and a competitive application process needs to be followed. Discussions with the regional planning agency (Southwestern Regional Planning Agency) should be held to determine the availability of 2009 funds.

T-3. Eliminate some isolated parking spaces right at intersections: In the downtown core of New Canaan, parking is permitted in extremely close proximity to crosswalks and into intersections. As shown in the graphic below, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) restricts parking within 20 feet of a pedestrian crossing. As such, a no parking zone of 20 feet (30 feet at signalized intersection crosswalks) should be provided at all pedestrian crossings, including but not limited to the following locations:

- Main Street at East Avenue
- Main Street at Elm Street
- Main Street at South Avenue
- Main Street at midblock crossing west of South Avenue
- Main Street at Park Street

This will somewhat reduce the total on-street parking downtown by around 15 spaces but will bring the existing crosswalks into conformance with the safety requirements set forth by the Federal Highway Administration through the MUTCD.

In addition, parking is permitted within the limits of several signalized “T” intersections. Main Street at East Avenue is an example of this with vehicles permitted to park opposite of East Avenue. When a vehicle is maneuvering into or out of those parking spaces, they are unaware of which roadway has the right-of-way, increasing the likelihood of a conflict.



Source: Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2003r1/Ch3.pdf>, accessed July 2, 2007

T-4. Continue local efforts to ensure the maintenance of the current vertical clearance of the MetroNorth Railroad overpass on Route 106: The existing MetroNorth Railroad overpass on Route 106 has limited vertical clearance and therefore precludes the largest trucks from using Route 106 as a through north-south route. Route 106 cuts diagonally through the heart of downtown. Therefore, opening Route 106 to the largest trucks (by increasing the overpass' vertical clearance) would have a detrimental effect on the downtown's character, aesthetics, safety, traffic congestion, pollution (noise and air), and wear and tear on the downtown roadway system by allowing for more through truck traffic to traverse through the heart of New Canaan. Keeping the current vertical clearance prevents Route 106 from becoming a maximum-sized truck bypass between I-95 and Route 7. While it is recognized that maintenance to the bridge will be necessary over time to ensure its structural soundness and safety, it is recommended that the vertical clearance not be change when other bridge improvements are completed.

Table 6: Summary of Traffic Recommendations

ID Number¹	Recommendation	Description	Implementation Steps
T-1	Continue to Enhance Wayfinding Signage	Recently, the Town of New Canaan undertook a wayfinding signage improvement project that significantly improved the conspicuity of municipal parking facilities. Additional improvements, however, are recommended such as replacing the text ‘Municipal Parking’ with ‘Public Parking’ or ‘Parking – Downtown Shopping District’.	Public Works Department continue signage program and post new prominent signage with wayfinding information. Coordinate with Main Street Partners for downtown ‘branding’ before sign installation.
T-2	Add sidewalk bump-outs at key locations. Review and adjust coordination of pedestrian crossing timings downtown	A major traffic operations constraint in most vibrant downtown areas can be attributed to pedestrian crossing of roadways. This necessary constraint can be minimized by reducing the time a pedestrian is within the roadway. This can be accomplished by adjusting pedestrian signal crossing timing and coordinating timing among signals. See pedestrian access recommendations below as well.	Public Works Department to issue RFP for design and construction of bump-outs. Prioritize improvements by location, identify funding, and determine construction schedule.
T-3	Strategically remove parking near intersections to promote more efficient intersection flow	There are several locations where vehicles are permitted to park up to, and in some cases, into intersections. These parking spots should be removed.	Public Works Department coordinate with Parking Bureau to identify potential locations for removal of selected on-street spaces and program to re-stripe and re-sign those locations.
T-4	Continue local efforts to ensure maintenance of the current vertical clearance of the MetroNorth Railroad overpass on Route 106	The existing MetroNorth Railroad overpass on Route 106 has limited vertical clearance and therefore precludes the largest trucks from using Route 106 as a through north-south route. This limitation is considered a local benefit to the downtown New Canaan and should be preserved through continued local advocacy efforts.	Each new Board of Selectmen routinely renew/resign the “truck bypass resolution” (originally signed on June 15, 1999). Selectmen monitor regional meetings such as SWRPA to stay current with bridge maintenance and reconstruction plans. State Department of Transportation plans such as the annual project list and Master Transportation Plan should also be routinely reviewed to ensure local authorities are aware of any bridge projects at this location.

1- Correlates to identification number in the text

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Board of Selectmen for the Town of New Canaan will have primary responsibility for implementing the recommendations of this strategic downtown plan. They should assume primary oversight for the implementation program and monitor its progress, collaborating with other town boards, commissions, and departments in moving the action items forward. The Board of Selectmen's continued attention to these action items can create momentum to see them through to completion. Where appropriate, the Town should also actively seek the cooperation, support (financial and otherwise), and involvement of other interested parties such as the local business community and local residents. Consideration should also be given to having the Downtown Study Committee that assisted with this study, continue in a formal capacity, playing an advocacy and oversight role for the implementation of the plan's recommendations.

The matrix below summarizes the recommendations and identifies a generalized timetable for their implementation. The timetable is as follows:

- Short-term: within the next one to three years
- Medium-term: three to five years
- Long-term: five to ten years
- Ongoing: within the next year and continuing beyond as necessary

The cost for implementation is shown either with a range or with an 'order-of-magnitude' as follows:

- Low- less than \$10,000;
- Moderate - \$10,000 - \$75,000;
- High- \$75,000- \$200,000;
- Very High - \$200,000 or more

Priorities for implementation are ranked as follows:

1. High priority
2. Medium priority
3. Low priority

A short-term Immediate Action Plan is provided following Table 7.

Table 7: Summary Recommendations and Implementation Plan

	Action Item	Primary Responsibility	Time frame	Cost (\$1,000)	Priority
L-1	Strengthen Village District Design Criteria	P&Z Commission	Short	Low	1
L-2	Add Building Size Limits to Zoning	P&Z Commission	Short	Low	1
P-3	Relocate Retail/Commercial Employee Parking	Chamber of Commerce	Short	Low	1
P-11	Create Additional Loading Zones	Parking Bureau	Short	Low	1
T-1	Enhance Wayfinding	Town of New Canaan	Short	Low	1
T-3	Eliminate Some Parking at Intersections	Town of New Canaan	Short	Low	1
T-4	Maintain Vertical Clearance on Rt. 106 RR Bridge	Town of New Canaan	Short	Low	ongoing
P-2	Relocate Municipal Employee Parking	Town of New Canaan	Short	Moderate	1
P-4	Revise Parking Fee Structure	Parking Bureau	Short	Low	ongoing
P-5	Revise Time Limit Structure	Parking Bureau	Short	Low	2
P-7	Adopt Fee-in-Lieu of Parking-Zoning	P&Z Commission	Short	Low	2
P-8	Add Zoning Requirements/Options for Parking	P&Z Commission	Short	Low	2
P-12	Adopt Loading Time Restrictions	Parking Bureau	Short	Low	2
W-3	Adopt Sidewalk Ordinance	Town of New Canaan	Short	Low	3
L-6	Add Parking Aesthetics to Zoning	P&Z Commission	Short	Low	3
L-4	Pursue Main Street Program	Chamber of Commerce	Short	Moderate	3
T-2	Install Sidewalk Bump-outs	Town of New Canaan	Medium	\$ 5 / corner	1
L-5	Conduct Market Demand Study	Town of New Canaan	Medium	\$60-100	1
L-7	Create Municipal Parking Enhancement Fund	Parking Bureau	Medium	High	2
P-1	Monitor Turnover and Install On-Street Meters	Parking Bureau	Medium	High	2
P-9	Create Parking Related Incentives	P&Z Commission	Medium	Low	3
L-3	Pursue Façade Improvement Program	Town of New Canaan	Medium	Low	3
W-1	Improve Pedestrian Connections To Parking	Town of New Canaan	Long	Mod. to High	1
W-2	Improve Pedestrian Circulation	Town of New Canaan	Long	High	2
W-4	Pursue Funding for Streetscape Enhancements	Town of New Canaan	Long	Low	2
P-6	Implement Downtown Shuttle	Town of New Canaan	Long	\$55/year	3
P-10	Construct Parking Garage	Town of New Canaan	Long	\$ 530 K/Year	3

Immediate Action Plan

This listing includes those high priority activities that can be initiated in the coming year and which have low capital investment costs.

Action Item	Primary Responsibility	Notes
Strengthen Village District Design Criteria	P&Z Commission	Zoning amendment
Add Building Size Limits to Zoning	P&Z Commission	Zoning amendment
Conduct Market Demand Study	Town of New Canaan	Start process by developing and RFP and setting aside funds in upcoming budget year
Add Parking Aesthetics to Zoning	P&Z Commission	Zoning amendment
Relocate Municipal Employee Parking	Town of New Canaan	These actions can be implemented in phases and should be accompanied by incentives
Relocate Retail/Commercial Employee Parking	Chamber of Commerce	
Revise Parking Fee Structure	Parking Bureau	Current ongoing program
Revise Time Limit Structure	Parking Bureau	
Adopt Fee-in-Lieu of Parking-Zoning	P&Z Commission	Zoning amendment
Create Additional Loading Zones	Parking Bureau	Initiate consensus building process to identify locations
Adopt Loading Time Restrictions	Parking Bureau	Will require signage
Enhance Wayfinding	Town of New Canaan	
Eliminate Some Parking at Intersections	Town of New Canaan	Involves restriping roadway and signage

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The above recommendations offer a range of strategies that can help preserve and enhance the character of downtown New Canaan and guide the provision of parking well into the future. The downtown today is vibrant and has just enough parking to meet most of the current demand with diligent management of the existing supply. Anecdotal evidence is that if you are seeking a parking space downtown, one can generally be found, even if it isn't in your first location of choice. Consequently, the short-term strategies for the downtown focus on building on current zoning tools and continuing efforts to maximize use of existing parking to preserve that vibrancy and parking capacity that currently serves New Canaan well. Yet, this report should be considered to be a "living document" that is continuously fine tuned to meet the changing needs of the downtown and is updated as appropriate. The recommendations should be revisited periodically to take stock of what the effect has been of those that have been implemented as well as to consider new directions which can build on those strategies in response to change.

Preserving and enhancing a downtown is a matter of appreciating the dynamic nature of its component parts including land use, parking, access, and aesthetics. Downtown needs will evolve as the community evolves. The recommended strategies do not stand alone and are dynamic in relationship to one another as well. As enhancements are completed in response to one issue area, there are likely to be indirect effects on others. For example, when parking is removed at intersections to improve how they function, the lost spaces will need to be recaptured elsewhere in order not to diminish gains with other parking strategies. Or, as redevelopment occurs in areas such as Cross and Vitti Streets, and the enhanced Village District design guidelines are applied, the types of land uses that are attracted to the area may become somewhat different than those that are there today. Zoning will need to respond not only to what the Town wishes that area of the downtown to offer, but to the real-world influences of the Village District design constraints in the context of the regional markets. This is why there is no silver-bullet approach that will, in a single measure, permanently address all of the objectives that New Canaan has for its downtown.

It is also a matter of time. Most of the strategies recommended herein require some capital outlay that must be budgeted for over time. Too, zoning solutions must be considered to have a gradual, long-term effect. Their impact is only felt in relation to incoming development proposals and is only retroactive in select circumstances of bringing non-conforming uses into conformance. Because of all of these factors and the interwoven nature of one issue to another and one strategy to another, implementation of these recommendations would best be served by strong public and private partnerships for the future of the downtown. As a first step, a working partnership between the Town and the private sector could be developed through the continued work of the Downtown Study Committee set up as a standing committee charged with monitoring progress downtown and finding ways for all the downtown stakeholders to partner in response.

APPENDIX A
EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

EXCERPT: SIMSBURY DESIGN MANUAL

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Character Places

Town Center and Villages

A. Town Center and Villages

- Town Center - Hopmeadow Street - East
- Town Center - Hopmeadow Street – West
- Tariffville
- West Simsbury Center
- East Weatogue
- West Weatogue
- Hoskins Station – Westover Plain
- School Campuses:
 - Ethel Walker
 - Master’s School
 - Westminster School

Village elements and patterns are familiar to the New England landscape. The village form evolved as a distinct assemblage of buildings coexisting simply and purposefully as an expression of functional relationships (sometimes referred to as a “cultural landscape”). Every component that the viewer sees existed for a reason and very little developed as purely ornamental. The buildings were closely related to the road for efficiency. The supporting buildings such as barns and outbuildings were located in close proximity providing shelter from wind. Front porches and trees planted close to buildings or along roads provided shade in the summer or shelter from rain. Villages supported the markets and became the nucleus of community activity for settlers in outlying areas.

Most villages shared similar physical conventions. For example, the village provided a variety of mixed uses – in addition to housing, there were places for assembly, education, and religious activity as well as for commercial and industrial development. Shops, workplaces, schools and residences for all income groups were located in proximity. Distinct neighborhoods were roughly defined within a five-minute walking distance from center to edge. The village displayed a clear perimeter as defined by broad open space or a “green belt” surrounding the settlement center. Typically, the open space contained neighboring farms. The size and patterns of streets equitably met the needs of pedestrians and vehicle traffic. Building size and architectural character spatially defined the streets and squares. Parks were distributed and designed as communal places for recreation and

social activity. And, finally, civic buildings occupied important places within the community and were symbolic of the community identity.

Each village developed in a distinctive pattern shaped by the circumstances of its location, such as along major transportation routes or rivers. Contrary to the popular belief that most New England towns evolved around a “town green”, Simsbury developed in a linear arrangement with a double row of buildings on opposing sides of a primary transportation route. Similarly, the other villages of Weatogue and Hoskins Station were nodes of community activity along the same north-south route. Tariffville, on the other hand, evolved as a mill town located at river’s edge to harness available waterpower. West Simsbury developed primarily as a farming village without significant civic, commercial or industrial activities.

Several private school campuses within Simsbury adopted the settlement patterns of traditional villages. Buildings are organized around “common space” for public assembly and share similar architectural characteristics such as scale, form and shape, and façade and material detailing. Surrounding athletic fields provide open space separation from adjoining uses and delineate the edges of the campus site.

While each village is unique, they share many similar landscape patterns and notable physical conventions including:

- Historic structures and sites
 - Residences
 - Storefronts
 - Schools
 - Cemeteries
- Village settlement patterns
- Civic and commercial services
- Recreation
- Neighborhoods

continued on page 40

Character Places

Town Center and Villages



Hopmeadow Street



Ethel Walker School



Tariffville



West Simsbury Center



Character Places

Town Center and Villages

Vulnerability to change:

- Cultural qualities
 - Loss of unique community settlement patterns
 - Scale and siting continuity
 - Loss of public landscapes
 - Decline of neighborhood identity
 - Decline of commercial services
 - Loss of recreation and civic facilities
- Historic qualities
 - Loss of historic architecture
 - Loss of historic sites
- Visual qualities
 - Inappropriate siting and scale of new buildings
 - Inadequate upkeep, renovation, disuse, and demolition



Above: View looking north, at Hopmeadow Street and Plank Hill Road, c. 1900. Below: View in September 2001.



EXCERPT: ROCKY HILL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BROCHURE



TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
761 OLD MAIN STREET
ROCKY HILL, CT 06067

Economic Development Office
860-258-7717

SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY REVITALIZATION

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

AUGUST 2006

A Financial Assistance Program for Commercial Property Owners on the Silas Deane Highway in Rocky Hill, Connecticut

Introduction

The Town of Rocky Hill has partnered with the Town of Wethersfield to establish a Revitalization Agenda for the Silas Deane Highway. This agenda includes the provision of a Façade Improvement Grants Program to improve the aesthetics of the Silas Deane Highway. The Town of Rocky Hill believes that the creation and maintenance of attractive building facades is important to the economic health of the Town. The condition, image and appearance of business buildings play a large part in the impression which businesses, residents and visitors have of the Silas Deane Highway. When neglected, business buildings create an image of a deteriorating economic base.

In an attempt to improve the aesthetics and strengthen the economic vitality of the Silas Deane Highway, the Town of Rocky Hill will provide incentive financing to stimulate façade improvements and reinvestment to commercially owned real estate in accordance with program guidelines. Commercial property owners and tenants may be eligible for a 75% rebate of the cost of eligible exterior building façade and site improvements, up to a maximum of \$50,000, as funds are available.

This program is funded with STEAP funds from the State of Connecticut, administered through the State Department of Community and Economic Development.

Program Purpose

The primary purpose of the Façade Improvement Program is to improve the appearance of the Silas Deane Highway and beautify the area to increase patronage to businesses. Additionally the program will also work to achieve the following:

- Leverage private investment on the Silas Deane Highway.
- Stabilize and increase property values.
- Create a cohesive commercial neighborhood straddling the town of Rocky Hill & Town of Wethersfield.
- Spur further development on the Silas Deane Highway.
- Increase sales volume of local businesses.

Eligible Property Types

Any property, which contains a commercial or retail use and is located on the Silas Deane Highway between exit 24 of I-91 and the intersection of Dividend Road, is eligible for the program.

Projects will be funded on a first come first serve basis, as funds are available. The following types of properties are not eligible:

1. Properties which are expected to undergo demolition.
2. Properties which are not utilized or are not planned to be utilized for retail or commercial uses.
3. Buildings which are determined to be physically unsound by the Façade Coordinator and Chief Building Official.
4. Buildings which are exempt from property taxes such as church owned buildings used for religions purposes.

Required Periods of Ownership and Recapture Provisions

- A. Applicants receiving rebate awards will be expected to sign a Letter of Agreement with the Town which outlines the specific conditions of the rebate and the applicant's commitments. The Letter of Agreement will be filed in the Town of Rocky Hill Land Records.
- B. Rebates are forgiven on a pro-rated monthly basis (or portion thereof) over a seven (7) year period based upon the amount of the rebate.
- C. If the property is sold prior to three (3) years following reimbursement by the Town of Rocky Hill, then the entire amount of the rebate shall become immediately due and payable to the Town. Exceptions may be made, with the approval of the Façade Committee, for property transfers not considered sales (including, but not limited to, dissolution of a partnership and transfers pursuant to a will or an estate). Failure to return all rebate funds to the Town shall be grounds for the Town Manager to file a lien against the subject property and initiate legal action.
- D. Owners who sell their property subject to a façade rebate after three (3) years but prior to seven (7) years after reimbursement by the Town shall be required to repay the outstanding

rebate balance as specified in item B. above. Failure to return remaining rebate funds to the Town shall be grounds for the Town to file a lien against the subject property and initiate legal action.

General Parameters

- A. Under a Letter of Agreement, the Town of Rocky Hill (under the authority of the Façade Committee) will rebate 75% of eligible costs for eligible façade improvements up to a maximum of \$50,000 per property. The applicant will be responsible for the remaining 25%.
- B. The rebate will apply to the expense of materials, design services and wages for a renovation project and will not apply to the cost of borrowing or for permit fees.
- C. The rebate will apply to projects which secure bank financing and to projects which are self-financed.
- D. Should the façade improvement require structural engineering design, those may be considered costs upon Committee approval.

Other Program Requirements

- A. If, during the seven (7) seven year period following reimbursement by the Town, the property owner (including any new property owner(s) subsequent to reimbursement by the Town) undertakes any further exterior work on the property, such work shall conform to the Design Guidelines and shall be approved by the Façade Committee. Failing to comply with this provision may cause the remaining percentage of the rebate to become immediately due and payable at the option of the Façade Committee and Town Manager.
- B. The undersigned agrees to keep in good state of repair all exterior improvements undertaken through the program.
- C. The property owner agrees to permanently remove all billboards and signs not directly related to the occupancy of the buildings.
- D. The property owner shall pay all taxes and assessments on the subject property and shall keep in good state of repair, all buildings or personal property subject to a façade rebate. The subject property shall be insured against loss by fire or otherwise in such forms of insurance as may be required by the Façade Committee and the Director of Finance.
- E. The building(s) must be in general good condition as deemed by appropriate Town of Rocky Hill Staff.
- F. No owner may be delinquent in the payment of any Town taxes. In the case of multiple owners with several properties, taxes must be current on all properties owned by every owner including taxes on motor vehicles and/or personal property.

- G. The rebate recipient(s) must be the owner(s) of the property or retail or commercial tenants of the building. All owners with an interest in the property must sign the facade application and Letter of Agreement.
- H. Property owners who receive financial assistance from the Town of Rocky Hill under this Façade Improvement Program will not be eligible for any other town financing program.

Eligible Façade Rehabilitation Activities

The types of activities which may be done include the following:

- Minor Masonry work
- Storefront and Doors
- Awnings
- Masonry Pointing
- Power Washing
- Painting
- Signage
- Lighting
- Windows
- Landscape Improvements including plantings, sidewalks and exterior patios
- ADA improvements in conjunction with façade work

These improvements must be made to the building façade, which is visible from the Silas Deane Highway.

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to the following:

- Rehabilitation expenses incurred prior to application submittal, review and approval
- Property acquisition/mortgages
- Mortgage refinancing
- Cost of borrowing (loan interest & fees)
- Permit fees
- Construction and design of new buildings or additions to existing structures
- Wages paid to the applicant or members of applicant's family for construction work
- Interior renovation expenses
- Any portion of expenses for which the applicant pays a contractor in merchandise or service in lieu of cash
- roof replacement
- paving and line striping
- security grills

Program Procedures

A. Marketing Phase

1. The Town will mail notice or will conduct a personal visit to property owners on the Silas Deane Highway.
2. The Town will distribute flyers to businesses. A list is maintained of interested parties in the Economic Development Office located on the 2nd floor of Town Hall)
3. The Town will distribute application materials to all interested parties (available in the Economic Development Department located on the 2nd floor of Town Hall).

B. Façade Improvement Committee

1. The Façade Improvement Committee shall be formed to review and decide on all application requests under this program.
2. The Façade Improvement Committee shall be composed of the Economic Development Director (who shall also be the Façade Coordinator), the Director of Planning & Building, and the Town Engineer. The Committee may seek advice and guidance from other sources to assist in the review of applications.
3. The Façade Improvement Committee will meet as needed to review and act on applications.

C. Application, Approval and Payment Process

1. Interested business/commercial property owners may contact the Economic Development Office for program application forms and design guidelines and program requirements.
2. The applicant prepares and submits an application to the Economic Development Office with all necessary documentation (color) photographs of the existing façade, Town Assessor's Card, Tax Affidavit, a general description of the desired work, deed (s), lease agreements and other documents as deemed necessary by the Economic Development Director). If the Tax Affidavit disposition is favorable, the applicant may continue with the process.
3. The Façade Coordinator and the Town's consultant architect meet with the property Owner/applicant to discuss program guidelines and design features. A concept plan is prepared after a site visit.
4. Once the concept plan is completed by the Town's consultant architect, the Architect, applicant and Façade Coordinator meet to discuss the plan and possible

APPENDIX B
SAMPLE ZONING PROVISIONS

**DARIEN NEWSRACK CONTROL ORDINANCE
NOTICE OF ENACTMENT
OF AMENDMENT TO DARIEN'S
CODE OF ORDINANCES**

**NEWSRACKS NOTICE OF ENACTMENT
OF AMENDMENT TO DARIEN'S
CODE OF ORDINANCES**

NEWSRACKS ON PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAYS

(1) DEFINITIONS. The following words and phrases shall have the following meanings, unless the context requires otherwise:

- a. **“Newsrack:”** any self-service or coin-operated box, container, storage unit or other dispenser installed, used or maintained for the display, sale or distribution of newspapers, periodicals or other printed matter, including advertisements (“publications”).
- b. **“Distributor:”** any person responsible for the installation, operation, or maintenance of a newsrack in a public right-of-way.
- c. **“Person:”** an individual, firm, corporation or other entity as defined in Section 1-1(k), Connecticut General Statutes.
- d. **“Public right-of-way:”** any area owned and/or operated by the Town or any other governmental entity that is open for use by the public for vehicular or pedestrian travel, including, but not limited to, roadways, sidewalks, streets or other rights-of-way.
- e. **“Roadway:”** that portion of a street that is improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular traffic, exclusive of the berm or shoulder.
- f. **“Sidewalk:”** that portion of a street between the curb line and the adjacent property line.
- g. **“Street:”** the entire area encompassed by a roadway and a sidewalk.

(2) PERMIT REQUIRED –

- a. No person shall install, maintain, or operate any newsrack on any public right-of-way without first obtaining a permit for each such newsrack from

the Department of Public Works. To issue a permit the Department of Public Works must receive the applicable fee and an application which includes the following:

- i.** The applicant's name, address and telephone number, and the distributor's name, address and telephone number, if different and the title of the publication.
- ii.** The requested location of each newsrack.
- iii.** A written statement in a form satisfactory to Town Counsel whereby the applicant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Town, its officers, agents and employees from any loss, liability or damage, including expenses and costs for bodily or personal injury or property damage sustained by any person as a result of the use, installation, maintenance, or operation of a newsrack within the Town including reimbursement of Town for any reasonable attorney fees. Such statement shall further certify that the Town is not liable for any damage to any newsrack.
- iv.** Proof that the applicant has obtained a liability insurance policy issued by an insurance company licensed to do business in the state of Connecticut insuring the applicant, the operator if different, and the Town as an additional named insured against all claims of personal injury or property damage which could arise in connection with the newsrack. The policy, by its terms, shall not be cancelable prior to the expiration date of the permit without 30 days written notice to the Town.
- b.** The Board of Selectmen shall establish the permit fees, minimum liability insurance coverage amounts, fines for violations and other charges required by this chapter. Fees, fines and charges established under this chapter shall be sufficient to defray the Town's costs and expenses hereunder. All fees, fines and charges paid under this chapter are non-refundable.
- c.** Upon the issuance of a newsrack permit, the Department of Public Works shall assign the location for the newsrack, and that location shall be set forth in the permit. Failure to install a newsrack at the location set forth in a permit shall be a violation of this chapter. A permit shall be valid only for the newsrack locations specified therein.
- d.** A newsrack permit shall be valid for three years from the date of issuance, and shall be renewable in accordance with the permit requirements set forth in this chapter, provided the newsrack remains in compliance with the standards set forth in sections 3 and 4 of this chapter for the entire term of the permit.
- e.** The applicant shall affix the permit number and the distributor's name, address and telephone number to the newsrack in a place where such information may easily be seen. On a coin-operated newsrack, the distributor shall provide the means to report malfunctions of the dispenser

or secure refunds, in the event that the coin-return mechanism malfunctions, by displaying a working toll-free number.

- f. If a successor distributor assumes responsibility for a newsrack, or there is a change in the publication dispensed from a newsrack while a permit for such newsrack is valid, the new distributor must fulfill the permit application requirements set forth in this chapter, with the exception of paying the fee for duration of the permit.

(3) INSTALLATION & PLACEMENT OF NEWSRACKS –

- a. No newsrack may project onto, into or over any part of a roadway, and no newsrack shall rest, wholly or in part, upon, along or over any part of a roadway.
- b. No newsrack shall be chained, bolted, or otherwise attached to any permanently fixed object located or to any property not owned by the distributor within a public right-of-way. Distributor may attach newsracks to a fixture owned by distributor or by a person who has consented to such attachment in a writing filed with the application for a permit. Any attached newsrack shall be rigid and secure and prevent the newsrack from swiveling, turning or otherwise moving while so attached.
- c. No newsrack shall be placed, installed, used or maintained within fifteen (15) feet of any:
 - i. Marked crosswalk.
 - ii. Fire hydrant, fire call box, police call box or other emergency facility.
 - iii. Curb cut or a curb return.
 - iv. Marked bus stop or school bus stop, parking space for the handicapped or on any access ramp for disable persons.
- d. No newsrack shall be placed, installed, used or maintained:
 - i. At any location where the clear space for the passageway for pedestrians is reduced to less than four (4) feet.
 - ii. At any location whereby such newsrack interferes with the cleaning of any sidewalk by the use of mechanical sidewalk cleaning equipment.
 - iii. Within five hundred (500) feet and on the same side of the street of any other newsrack on a public right-of-way that contains the same publication.
 - iv. In such a manner as to restrict the safe exit from and entry to properly parked vehicles.

(4) APPEARANCE AND MAINTENACE OF NEWSRACKS –

- a. No newsrack shall be used for advertising or publicity, other than that dealing with the publication to be dispensed there from.

- b. Each newsrack shall be maintained in a clean and neat condition and in good working order at all times. Newsracks shall be kept free of graffiti; decals; extraneous markings; rust; and faded, chipping or peeling paint. Newsrack viewing windows shall be kept free of cracks, blemishes or scratches.
- c. Any newsrack that remains empty for thirty (30) continuous days, or unserviced for thirty (30) continuous days after the newsstand release of a later issue or edition of the displayed publication shall be deemed abandoned and in violation of this chapter.

(5) EXISTING NEWSRACKS –

Newsracks installed prior to this chapter's effective date shall be brought into compliance within ninety (90) days of such effective date, or be deemed to be in violation of this chapter.

(6) VIOLATIONS –

- a. When it has been determined by the Department of Public Works that there has been a violation of this chapter, or that a newsrack has been installed, used or maintained in violation of this chapter, the Department may issue a fine in an amount set by the Board of Selectmen. The Department may issue an order to correct the violation which shall be sent to the distributor's address by certified mail. The order shall state the violation, inform the distributor of the Town's intention to remove the newsrack if the violation is not corrected within thirty (30) days from the date of the certified mailing, and set forth the procedure to appeal the order.
- b. Failure either to correct a violation or to appeal the determination within thirty (30) days from the date of the certified mailing of the order described in Section 6(a) may result in the newsrack's removal. The Town's cost and expense to remove and store the newsrack shall be assessed against the distributor. If the distributor fails to claim a removed newsrack and pay the accumulated charges within ninety (90) days of removal, the newsrack shall be deemed to be unclaimed property and may be disposed of by the Department of Public Works.
- c. When a distributor corrects a violation the Department of Public Works shall inspect the newsrack to determine that it has been brought into compliance with this chapter. A reasonable, additional charge for this inspection shall be assessed against the distributor.

(7) APPEALS --

- a. For the hearing of an appeal under this chapter, the First Selectman shall appoint one or more newsrack violation hearing officers to hear appeals.
- b. A distributor may appeal any finding, determination, notice, order or action taken under this chapter within thirty (30) days of the certified mailing of the notice described in Section 6(a). Such appeal must be made in writing and filed with the Office of First Selectman.
- c. All hearings under this chapter shall be held on a date not more than ten (10) business days after receipt of the letter of appeal.

(8) EMERGENCY REMOVAL-

Nothing contained in this chapter shall be interpreted to limit or impair the Town's authority to remove any newsrack which presents a clear and present danger of imminent personal injury or property damage to users of the public rights-of-way.

(9) SEVERABILITY --

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this chapter is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this chapter.

(10) EFFECTIVE DATE-

This ordinance is effective April 1, 2007.

By direction of the Representative Town Meeting held November 13, 2006.

Dated at Darien, Connecticut this 14th day of November 2006.

Donna E. Rajczewski
Town Clerk

SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR ZONING: FEE-IN-LIEU OF PARKING PROGRAM

Kirkland, Washington

4.0 Options for Meeting Parking Obligations

The applicant may meet his/her parking obligation, computed using subsection (2) of this section, by providing the required number of parking stalls in the building or on the building site containing the primary use conducted on the subject property. The applicant may propose to meet all or a portion of the parking obligation by paying a fee-in-lieu of parking for each required parking stall or fraction of a stall into a special fund that will be used to provide and upgrade municipal off-street parking within the CBD, Planned Areas 6 or 7 Zones, or park/public use zones located adjacent to the CBD. The per-stall fee shall be \$20,000 in 2006 dollars and shall be adjusted annually in November of each subsequent year based on the "Engineering News Record" Construction Cost Index 20-City average (ENR CCI) for November. The actual fee-in-lieu amount shall be established at the time of payment.

The City may consider the applicant's proposal and shall base its decision whether to grant approval on whether the City has current plans or programs in place to provide or upgrade municipal off-street parking within the CBD, Planned Area 6 or 7 Zones, or park-public use zones located adjacent to the CBD. Plans and programs shall include capital improvement program projects for future off-street parking. The City's decision will be made by the Planning Director as part of the permit process for the applicant's project. The Director may approve the request, reject the request, or approve a lesser number of in-lieu parking stalls than requested.

City of Norwalk, Connecticut

118-1222. Payment in lieu of parking. [Added effective 2-27-1987][Amended effective 7-28-2000]

A. Purpose. The purpose of this regulation is to allow land uses within the Norwalk and South Norwalk business district to meet the off-street parking requirements, in full or in part, by the use of municipal parking facilities, subject to the payment of an in-lieu parking fee to the city. Such payments will allow the City of Norwalk to acquire land, finance, design, construct and carry out capital repairs and perform other necessary and desirable actions to provide municipal off-street parking facilities in the designated area.

B. Applicability. The Commission, upon written application, may permit the payment of a fee by an applicant who is the owner or developer of a designated property, as defined below, for the purposes set forth in Subsection A hereof, subject to the following:

(1) A payment of a fee in lieu of parking shall apply only to new construction, additions to existing buildings of one thousand (1,000) square feet or greater, and to changes in use not eligible to use municipal parking facilities as described in § 118-1220L and 118-501E [Added effective 12-24-1992; 7-28-2000]

(2) Payment of a fee in lieu of parking shall be limited to certain properties designated by the Commission as being within a reasonable walking distance of a municipal parking facility or land designated for use as a municipal parking facility. The designated properties are shown on a map entitled "Designated Properties for Fees in Lieu of Parking," as such map may hereinafter be amended.

(3) Any off-street parking requirement met in this manner shall constitute a covenant running with the land such that a change in ownership shall not require payment of an additional fee. [Amended effective 12-24-1992]

(4) In the event that the Zoning Board of Appeals grants a variance for all or a portion of the required parking spaces of any designated property, such variance shall be granted only upon the condition that the applicant make payment to the City of Norwalk in accordance with the provisions of this section for the varied number of spaces.

C. Establishment of a special fund.

(1) The payment of fee in lieu of parking shall be determined by the following formula:

Payment in Lieu of Parking Fee

<p>No. of spaces X \$15,000 X</p>	<p>ENR* Cost Index on effective date of Zoning or <u>Zoning Board of Appeals Approval</u></p>
	<p>ENR* Cost Index on July 19, 2000</p>

*NOTE: ENR means the publication Engineering News Record.

(2) Funds collected from such payments shall be deposited in a special fund and used solely for acquisition of land, financing, design, construction and carrying out capital repairs and performing other

necessary and desirable actions to provide municipal off-street parking facilities in the area. Any income earned by moneys on deposit in such fund shall accrue to the fund.

D. Conditions of payment.

(1) One hundred percent (100%) of the payment due for each designated property choosing to utilize this regulation shall be made to the City of Norwalk prior to the issuance of a building permit to the applicant. The city may accept twenty-five percent (25%) of the payment prior to the issuance of a building permit and the balance prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy at the discretion of the Commission.

(2) Funds paid to the City of Norwalk as a fee in lieu of parking shall not be refundable for any reason.

(3) Nothing herein shall be deemed to require the city to undertake the acquisition, construction, expansion or development of any particular off-street public parking facility.

SAMPLE ZONING LANGUAGE: BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS

Excerpt Northwestern Connecticut Parking Study – Phase II Model Zoning Regulations for Parking for Northwestern Connecticut

Section PAM: Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

Section PAM.1 Intent

It is the intent of these regulations to promote and support access by bicycle and walking throughout the community. To this end, all parking lots must be designed to provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access as a part of any parking lot design including safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle movement to and from public walkways and/or bikeways, streets, or transit stops.

Section PAM.2 Bicycle Access Design Standards

A minimum of one bicycle parking space shall be provided for each 20 off-street automobile parking spaces within the Central Business Zone or Village Center Zone.

At a minimum, all bicycle parking spaces shall be provided in the form of bicycle racks with locking capability. Bicycle parking facilities shall be designed and installed to include

1. Spaces that are a minimum of 2 feet by 6 feet per bicycle
2. The minimum number possible of potential conflict points between bicycles and motor vehicles
3. Lighting
4. Provision for locking of bicycles to the rack or bicycle locker
5. Adequate spacing for access to the bicycle and locking device when the spaces are occupied.
6. Where possible, bicycle parking shall be located within view of building entrances or in view of windows, and/or security personnel stations.

Section PAM.3 Pedestrian Access Design Standards

Provision for safe and convenient pedestrian access shall be incorporated into landscaping plans for any parking area. This shall be clearly shown on all site plans.

Any parking lot designed, constructed, and maintained, as part of a development must be designed such that the flow of pedestrians can be directed through a system of convenient routes that bring them to central walkways leading to main entrances. All walkways shall be constructed to provide for:

1. Safe separation of all walkways from motor vehicle traffic through the use of raised sidewalks and/or landscaping between sidewalks and parking spaces and/or driving aisles
2. Safe, well-articulated pedestrian crossings demarcated with pavement markings, pedestrian warning signs, and lighting
3. A minimum of 4 feet in width

4. Inclusion of plantings, benches, and lighting along walkways and at all pedestrian crossings
5. Design, construction and maintenance to accommodate disabled individuals per Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements

SAMPLE – SHARED PARKING CALCULATION METHODOLOGY

EXCERPT- MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA

ARTICLE IV- REDUCING OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

541.190. Shared parking. The zoning administrator may authorize a reduction in the total number of required parking spaces for two (2) or more uses jointly providing off-street parking when their respective hours of peak operation do not overlap. Shared parking shall be subject to the location requirements of section 541.250 and the following conditions:

- (1) Computation. The number of shared spaces for two (2) or more distinguishable land uses shall be determined by the following procedure:
 - a. Multiply the minimum parking required for each individual use, as set forth in Table 541-1, Specific Off-Street Parking Provisions, by the appropriate percentage indicated in Table 541-2, Shared Parking Calculations, for each of the six (6) designated time periods.
 - b. Add the resulting sums for each of the six (6) columns.
 - c. The minimum parking requirement shall be the highest sum among the six (6) columns resulting from the above calculations.
 - d. Select the time period with the highest total parking requirement and use that total as the shared parking requirement.

Table 541-2 Shared Parking Calculations

Land Use Classification	Weekdays			Weekends		
	1:00 a.m.-7:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.	1:00 a.m.-7:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.
Office	5%	100%	5%	0%	15%	0%
Retail sales and services	0%	100%	80%	0%	100%	60%
Restaurant (not 24 hr)	20%	70%	100%	30%	75%	100%
Residential	100%	60%	100%	100%	75%	90%
Theater	0%	60%	100%	0%	80%	100%

SAMPLE ZONING LANGUAGE: MAXIMUMS AND MINIMUMS FOR PARKING SPACES – TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT

Section 170-102. Number of Parking Spaces

A. Off-street parking for customers and employees shall be provided and maintained in connection with the use, substantial change in use, construction, conversion, or increase in intensity of use of buildings or structures. Such spaces shall be provided using the following guidelines in amounts per 1000 square foot (s.f.) of Gross Floor Area (GFA):

Land Use	Maximum	Minimum
Bank	5	2
Small Commercial Centers (up to 10,000 sq. ft.)	7	3
Free Standing Retail	5	2
General Office Building	5	2
Industrial Plant	8	2
Medical Office Building	10	2
Nursing Home	4	1
Restaurants	14	6
Bed and Breakfast	1.2 spaces per guest room or suite	1 spaces per guest room or suite
Personal Services	3	2
Day Care Centers	1 space per 3 children at max. capacity	1 space per 8 children at maximum capacity
Churches and Places of Worship	1 space per 3 seats in portion of the building used for services	1 space per 5 seats in the portion of the building used for services
Museums and Libraries	2	1
Social, Fraternal Clubs and Organizations	4	3
Elementary, Middle and High Schools	As determined by Commission	1 space per 5 seats in the auditorium
Hotels and Motels	1.2 spaces per guest room or suite	1 space per guest room or suite
Warehouse		1 per employee
Home Occupation	4 per dwelling unit plus 1.5 per non-resident employee	2 per dwelling unit plus 1 per non-resident employee
Multi-Family Residences	2.5 per dwelling unit	1 per dwelling unit

Commercial Kennel	3	1
Automotive Sales and/or Rental (employee, customer & display)	As determined by the Commission	As determined by the Commission
Automotive Repair and/or Service (employee & customer)	As determined by the Commission	As determined by the Commission
Gymnasiums, Physical Fitness Centers, Health Spas, Martial Arts Centers and Dance Studios	10	2
Indoor Recreation Facilities	5	5

B. Restrictions

1. For uses not listed in this section, the minimum and maximum number of parking spaces required shall be comparable to the closest other similar use as determined by the Commission.
2. Where two or more different principal or accessory uses are located on the same premises the parking requirements for the different uses shall be computed separately and cumulatively.
3. When computation of required parking spaces results in a fraction of a car space the required number of spaces shall be increased to the next whole number of spaces.
4. No area shall be credited as a parking space which is in any part credited or used as a loading space or travel way.
5. No required parking space shall be used for the sale, storage, or display of goods.

Section 170-103. Waivers and Exceptions

It is the intent of these regulations that all structures and land uses be provided with a sufficient amount of off-street motor vehicle parking, while allowing for some flexibility of site design to accommodate the unique characteristics of individual properties. This section of the regulations is intended to set standards for conditions under which a waiver or exception from the general parking requirements may be allowed.

The Commission may require the submission of a parking demand analysis as part of any request for a waiver or exception from the general parking requirements. Except for buildings or parts of buildings used or occupied for residential use, all or part of the off-street parking requirements may be waived by the Commission where the proposed site creates unique parking demand, design or construction.

A. Parking Reduction Requests.

In the case that an applicant believes that the required parking amounts are in excess of what is needed for the proposed use, the applicant may submit a request with justification to the Commission for a reduction in parking space requirements. The Commission will consider and act on this request concurrent with and as part of the full development application process.

B. Parking In Excess of the Maximum.

The Commission may approve parking lots with more spaces than the allowed maximum provided all of the spaces above the maximum number are composed of a pervious surface, and

where adequate stormwater management is provided as specified in Section SWM of these regulations.

The Commission may also approve parking lots with additional impervious parking spaces above the allowed maximum spaces where the use of pervious spaces would not be environmentally sound and where a stormwater management plan is included with the application and implemented, employing, at a minimum, the stormwater management measures specified in Section SWM of these regulations.

C. Shared Parking.

By Special Permit, the Commission may allow up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the required parking spaces for a use which operates primarily during the evening or on weekends to be counted toward the parking requirements of a use which operates primarily during the daytime or on weekdays, and vice versa. All of the shared parking spaces shall be located within five hundred (500) feet more or less of the main building entrance of the recipient use. In approving such a Special Permit, the Commission shall find that there shall not be a substantial overlap of peak parking periods for the uses and that legally documented arrangements satisfactory to the Commission have been made to guarantee long-term access to and use of the shared parking spaces by the recipient use.

D. Reserved Parking.

If an applicant can demonstrate that the demand for off-street parking spaces for the proposed use is less than the minimum required, the Commission may agree to the applicant reserving up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the required spaces for future parking needs. Such reserved spaces shall be of standard size, shown in dotted lines on the site plan and labeled "Reserved Parking," and shall be limited to natural or grassed areas without trees or buildings thereon. The Commission may require the future construction of said reserved parking, or a portion thereof, into paved parking within three (3) months of written notice to do so based upon a change in parking demand, a change of use or a change in traffic safety circumstances as determined by the Commission. Such notice shall take into account the time of the year suitable for pavement installation.

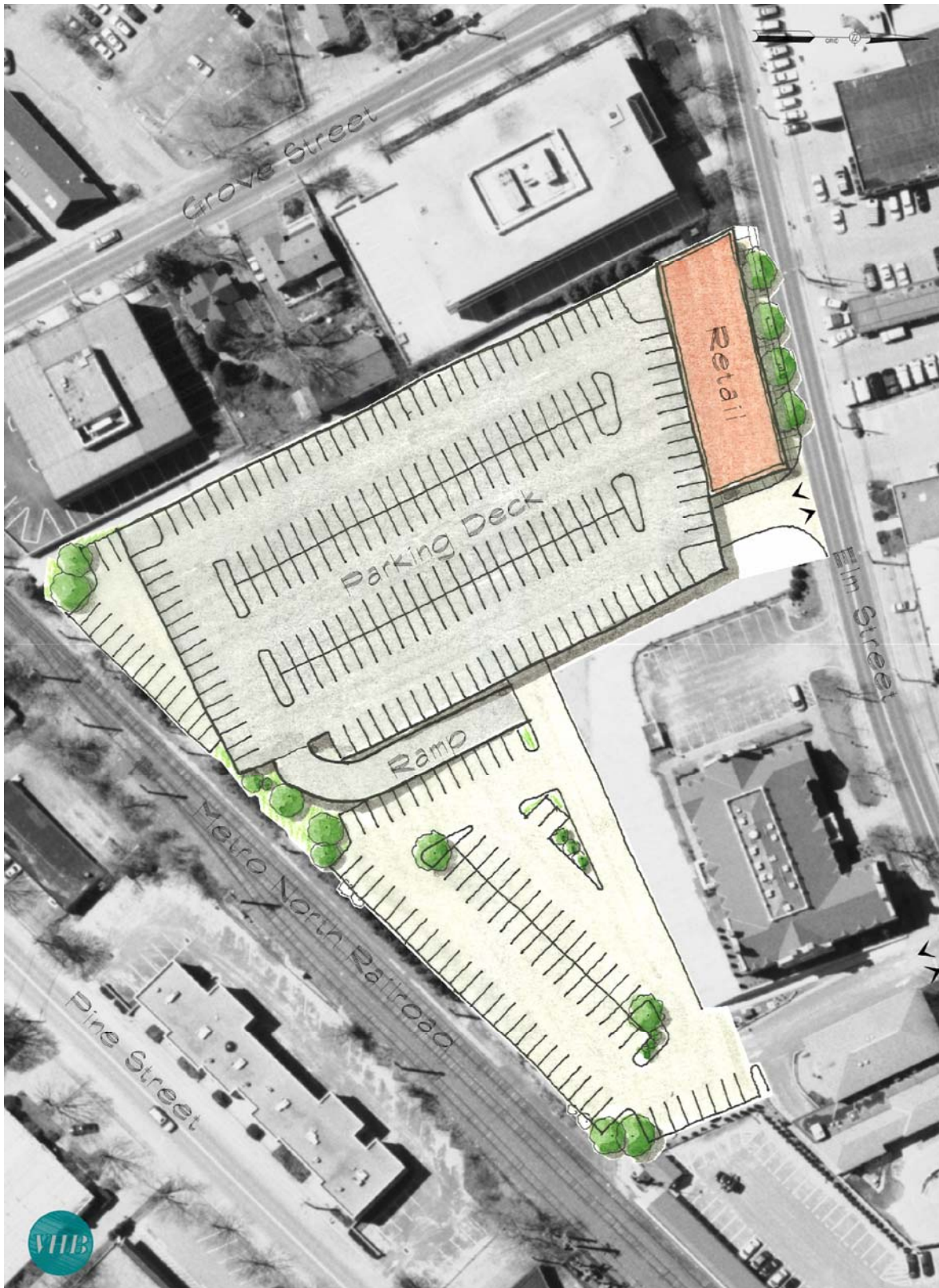
APPENDIX C
POTENTIAL COSTS AND DESIGN - LUMBER YARD LOT PARKING DECK

OPTIONS FOR A PARKING DECK AT THE LUMBER YARD LOT

The Lumber Yard Lot has been highlighted as one advantageous option for building a new parking structure in downtown New Canaan due to its location, current capacity shortfalls, latent demand, and minimal impact to the abutting properties and based on an indication from the community that this location was the not objectionable. In addition, the construction of this parking infrastructure could add cohesiveness to the Elm Street corridor if street-level retail was included, by closing the visual void, created by the expanse of existing parking up to Elm Street. Users of this facility would include commuters utilizing the rail station, patrons of local businesses, and downtown employees. Combining this strategy with a shuttle bus would further encourage employee parking there and therefore would help meet the parking demand throughout the downtown core.

A feasible design for a structure, as sketched in Figure 6, would provide the Lumber Yard Lot with ± 500 spaces and would cost approximately \$5.1 million in construction costs (2010 dollars). The conceptual layout, provided below, shows this parking facility as a single-level deck over surface parking and approximately 10,000 square feet of retail on the street front (not included in the construction estimate).

Opportunities may exist for construction costs to be financed through the municipality utilizing bonds. If the garage was financed through a municipal bond, operating costs, debt service, and long-term maintenance is anticipated to be \$530,000 per year. Additional costs such as administrative services for the parking passes and security for the parking lots will not be significant as those services are already provided by New Canaan staff. If the ± 500 space deck was oversold to 560 parking passes, the permits would need to cost approximately \$950 per year to cover the anticipated expenses associated with the deck. To offset some of these annual costs, alternative revenue streams, including public/private partnerships can reduce costs by leasing retail/commercial space as part of this project. It is important, however, to consider the impacts of increasing the yearly fee for the parking garage from \$345 per year to \$950 per year, as demand may decrease and/or shift to other parking areas.



Conceptual Lumber Yard Parking Structure