



Higganum Center

## **PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**TOWN OF HADDAM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
September 1999

**TOWN OF HADDAM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**and**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

**A DESIGN VISION  
AND  
ACTION PLAN**

Steven A Rocco, AIA  
Architect  
Haddam, Connecticut

September 1999

## **CONTENTS:**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- a. location map

### **II. HIGGANUM VILLAGE**

- a. written recommendations and action plan
- b. Vision Plan
- c. Village Zone Limits
- d. photos

### **III. TYLERVILLE**

- a. written recommendations and action plan
- b. Vision Plan
- c. Village Zone Limits
- d. photos

### **IV. SCATTERED SITE DEVELOPMENT**

- a. written recommendations
- b. maps
- c. photos

### **V. LONG RANGE AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS**

### **VI. PROPOSED VILLAGE ZONING REGULATIONS**

- a. Higganum
- b. Tylerville

### **VII. APPENDIX: RELATED MATERIALS**

"A year ago, the Gallup Organization asked people if they would prefer to live in a city, suburb, small town or farm. Small towns were favored by 34%; 24% chose a suburb, 22% picked a farm, and 19% favored a city. Four out of five respondents lived in a metropolitan area."

*The New York Times*, September (1990).

## **INTRODUCTION: PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HADDAM**

The guiding philosophy behind this planning effort is that well considered, creative town planning and healthy economic development are compatible goals. In fact, good design will create economic development, and should be used as a tool to harness the economic power of development to achieve the desired results. We are fortunate to live in a town and a region which are noted for their historic charm and natural beauty. Our villages and surrounding landscape are of such character that they are used as television and movie locations. Most of America, living in typical suburban sprawl, has to travel to Disneyworld to see a reproduction of a picturesque town center. It is that typical modern landscape of suburban sprawl which causes people to fear any type of development. It is also that type of grim, anonymous, strip development which is a threat to Haddam, and which we are aiming to prevent through proper planning and design. The Route 82 corridor in Tylerville is particularly vulnerable due to the increasing economic pressures being felt there, which will only grow as tourist attractions, such as the new Goodspeed theater, expand. A well thought-out plan which addresses aesthetic improvements to the "built environment" (buildings & villages), as well as the underlying market realities, will not only protect the character of the town, but can be used as a tool to enhance it.

Economic development can be a controversial topic, as it is perceived in Haddam. The loss of tax revenue from the now decommissioned Connecticut Yankee Nuclear Power Plant has caused a substantial increase in the tax burden to Town residents. The only new business venture which would be of the magnitude to replace CY as a taxpayer would probably be another power plant. Studies are currently being conducted as to the feasibility of a gas-fired turbine plant on the CY site. Even still, Haddam's mil rate today is very competitive with those of neighboring towns. Thus, increases to the tax base could bring Haddam's rate lower than those of the surrounding towns. It is imperative for any analysis of the opportunities for economic development in Haddam to be sensitive to both the historic, bucolic character of our town, and cogniscent of the wariness of many Town residents regarding any type of development. But the fact remains that Haddam offers some very unique opportunities for the creation of new business, given its proximity to the river, the Goodspeed Opera House, Camelot Cruises and the Valley Railroad. Higganum Center presents other needs and opportunities for an enhanced economic climate, and the excellent access to Route 9 can provide a stimulus for additional areas of town for other types of businesses. These existing characteristics have served as a springboard for our planning concepts. Additional input was sought and considered from a variety of sources, including the business community, property owners, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the EDC board members, and the citizens who attended any of the several public hearings which were held during the past two years.

The Haddam Economic Development Commission has carried out this study to produce concrete recommendations as to steps which should be taken to enliven the state of business in Haddam. These proposals are designed to reinforce the existing character of Haddam, and in fact, insure that the future development of Haddam is carefully controlled by our strategies, and not left to happenstance.



EAST HADDAM VILLAGE



CHESTER VILLAGE



CLUTTERED INFRASTRUCTURE; NO PLACE FOR PEDESTRIANS



ON-STREET PARKING IN DEEP RIVER ON RT. 154



POOR CONDITIONS; NO PLACE FOR PEDESTRIANS



EXISTING POOR CONDITION OF INFRASTRUCTURE



SIDEWALK LOCATION ON RT. 82 IN TYLERVILLE



SIDEWALK LOCATION IN HIGGANUM CENTER

**PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:  
THE VILLAGES**



Higganum



Tylerville

## HIGGANUM CENTER

Higganum has been a center of economic activity since the first gristmill opened in the 1670's. Because of the tributary streams dropping almost 500 feet down to the Connecticut River, about two dozen mills had located here by the nineteenth century. Down at "the Landing", near Higganum Cove, the Town's first commercial center was born when a store was opened in 1752. Shipbuilding evolved as a major industry with numerous shipyards, particularly after the Revolution. Between 1790 and 1854, 109 ships were built in Haddam, according to historical Ship Registers, with at least 74 being built in Higganum. Merchant shipping, along the coast as well as to the West Indies, flourished as well. Cattle, hogs, timber, and later, granite and hay, were all moved out to sea through Higganum. The Industrial Revolution would bring a wave of manufacturing businesses, which included production of agricultural and other tools, gun barrels, and most notably, the Scovill Hoe.

As shipping down at the Landing declined, and manufacturing along Candlewood Hill Brook and the Higganum River prospered, a commercial center developed at the intersection of the Middlesex Turnpike and the road to Killingworth, our current intersection of Routes 154 and 81. Developed mostly during the second half of the nineteenth century, Higganum Center and some of the surrounding residential areas are Victorian in character, in contrast with most of the more colonial-period Haddam. The only two surviving significant commercial buildings in Higganum, both from this Victorian period, are the Higganum Feed Store (1880), and Brainerd Hall (1891), now the Country Market, which is disguised by an incompatible, recent vintage addition around the ground level.

Against this historical backdrop of bustling activity, Higganum Center today is relatively sleepy, probably doing less business now than at any time in the last three hundred years. It fails as a true village center for Town residents, being more of an amalgamation of loosely defined parking lots, disconnected shops, and over-designed access roads. Large expanses of crumbling pavement predominate, with little definition or landscaping (see photo). There is no true outdoor public space for people to mix and mingle, and help to develop a sense of small-town community. Ironically, if you could take all the businesses in the village and rearrange them in a more pleasant, cohesive manner, there would be ample activity for a successful village. Higganum contains a very busy, small supermarket, a popular drugstore, two well stocked package stores, the feed/ hardware store, a post office, men's and women's hair salons, two banks, a pizza restaurant and a more formal restaurant, a tavern, a florist, a dry cleaner, a sports collectibles shop, a ceramics hobby shop, professional offices, as well as other businesses. There are also a number of residential units right in the heart of the Village, both in houses and apartments above shops. The current activity is a good start, but by increasing the concentration of businesses and residences, the Village can be even more successful, useful for residents, and pleasant to experience.

To be a more attractive village, such as Chester, East Haddam, or Essex, Higganum Center needs to be more of a pedestrian environment. (See photos) This entails downplaying the importance of cars in the Village, and designing safe and pleasant routes and spaces for people. Attention also has to be paid to the details, such as sidewalks, curbing, landscaping, paving materials, street lamps, and

benches. And in a manner similar to downtown Deep River (see photo), on-street parking will cause people to slow down driving through town, and it will replace some of the parking being eliminated from the front yards. Because it is comprised of separate buildings, Higganum Center will never have the continuous "street facade" of a village like Chester, unless there is a radical reconstruction effort. But by carefully filling in the gaps in the streetscape, Higganum would become visually more like Goodspeed Landing in East Haddam, with free standing buildings of greater density. And by reducing the width of the streets and the intersection of Saybrook and Killingworth Roads, it would become less forbidding for pedestrians to cross to shops on the other side.

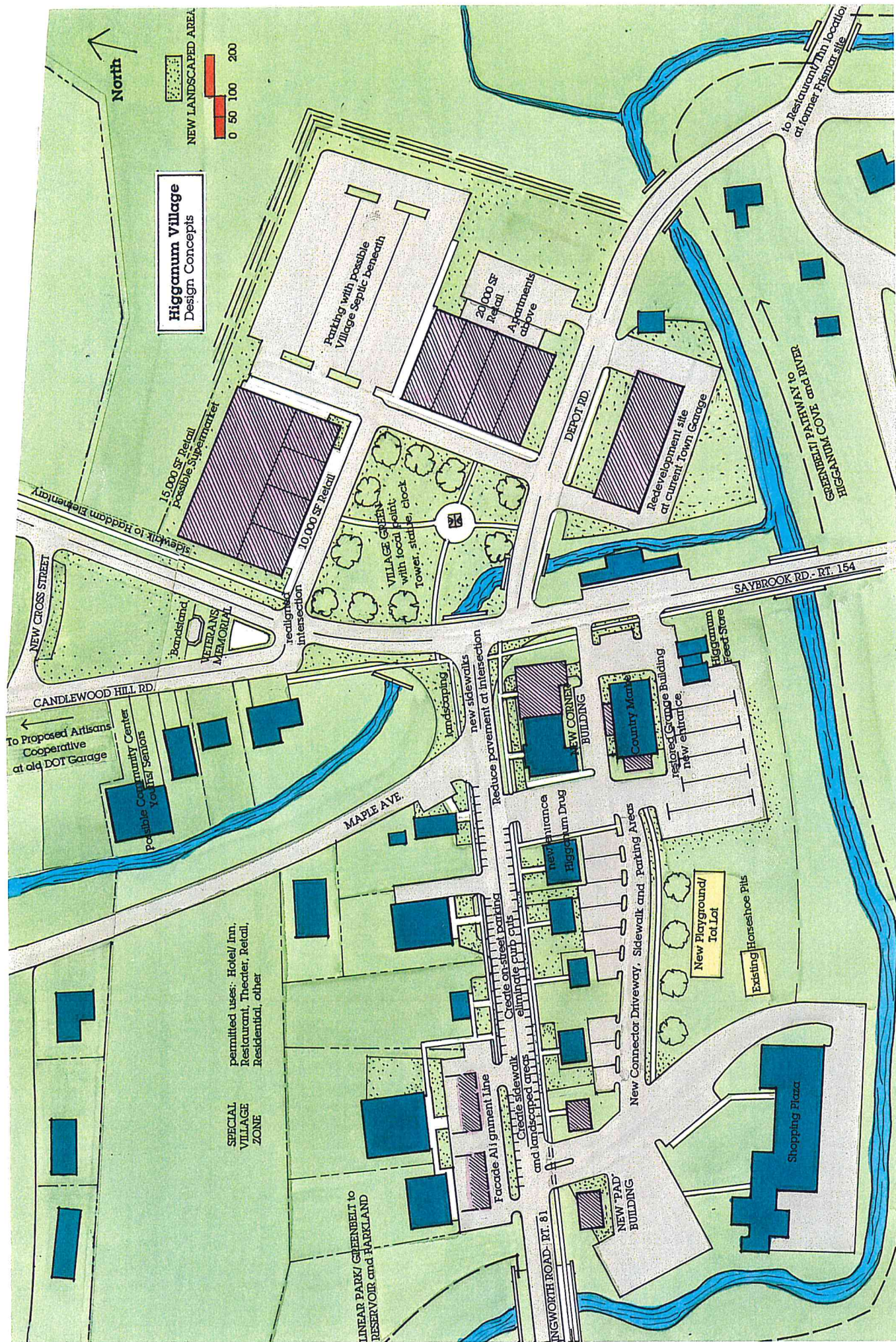
Veterans Park, sometimes referred to as "the Green", situated in the triangular parcel between Candlewood Hill Road and Saybrook Road, with the Veterans Memorial Monuments and bandstand, is an appropriate location for certain special events. It is the dramatic focal point of the Town's most well attended annual event, the Memorial Day Parade. This land was formerly the location of the Union School, and was never actually the "Village Green". Higganum Center did not have a traditional green because the Center developed in the nineteenth century around existing traffic routes. The Veterans Park parcel cannot truly function as a village green for modern day Higganum because it lacks enclosure by buildings which are important destinations for residents, it is too far removed from current village activity, and it is uphill from the Village, a major disincentive for pedestrians.

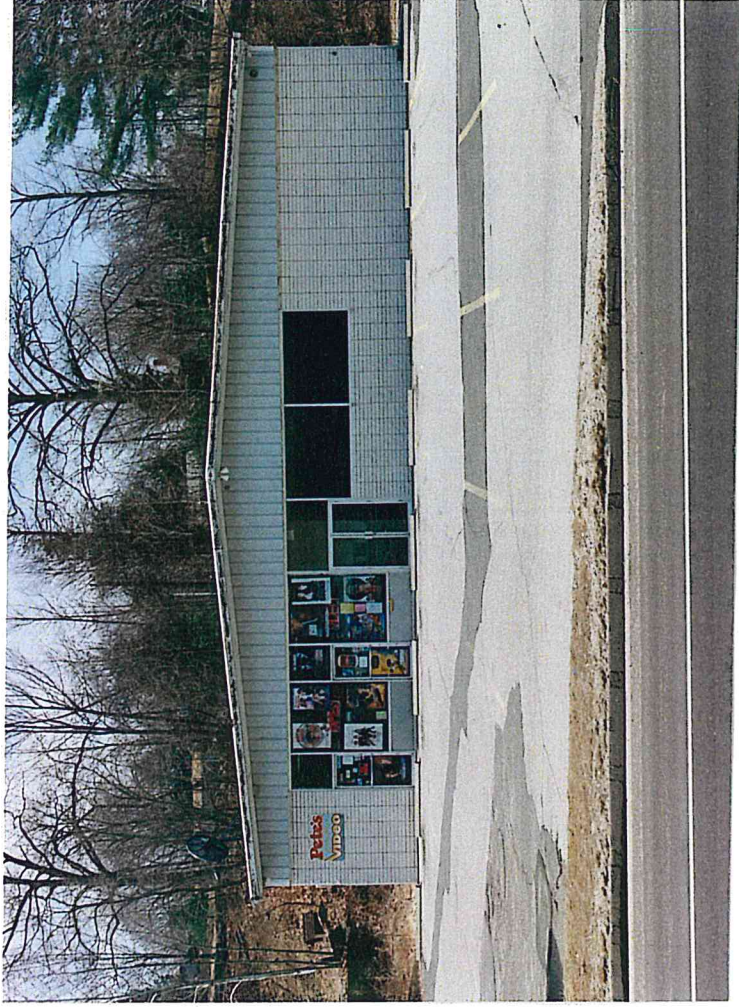
This having been said, there are many measures which can be taken to improve the character and utility of Higganum Center. Some are very modest in terms of cost, others are more involved, and others require only planning for the future. Adoption of a new Special Village Zone, delineating the desired uses and physical requirements, is a necessity and an initial step from which all other activities will emanate. The specific measures recommended to improve Higganum Center, as indicated in this Sixteen Point Action Plan are:

1. FIRST PRIORITY: The Town should take the appropriate action to rezone and replan the vacant industrial parcel at the head of Killingworth Road, known as the Rossi site, and create a true Village Green, surrounded by mixed residential and commercial space (see rendering). Appropriate use of this property is key to the future of Higganum Center. The site may need some environmental remediation, and Federal grants and "Brownfields" developers should be sought to create a public-private partnership to redevelop it. This site provides the Town with an opportunity to create an outdoor community meeting place, provide more intensive commercial activity to increase the critical mass, a visual focal point at the termination of Killingworth Road such as a clocktower or statue, and a chance to introduce more residential units to enliven the village around the clock. The site needs to be filled to meet the level of the street, at least at the Green and building frontages. This will provide a possible location for a community septic system, serving at least this site, and possibly most of the village.
2. Reduce the width of Killingworth Road as it intersects with Saybrook Road.
3. Create an intersection with defined right turns, not high speed, sweeping curves.

4. Create on-street parking on both sides of Killingworth Road, similar to Route 154 in Deep River. Do not install parking meters.
5. Eliminate the nearly continuous curb-cuts on Killingworth Road, removing perpendicular parking from the front yards of the buildings.
6. Install curbs and sidewalks as shown, throughout Village. Reorganize chaotic infrastructure (see photo), such as along Saybrook Road frontage of Citizens Bank.
7. Landscape newly defined non-paved areas between curbs and sidewalks, and between sidewalks and buildings.
8. Align termination of Killingworth Road to increase the distance to Depot Road.
9. Realign Candlewood Hill Road at Saybrook Road to create a perpendicular intersection, pulled farther away from intersection with Killingworth Road.
10. Improve existing connecting road from Candlewood Hill Road to Saybrook Road across the north edge of the Veterans Memorial Park.
11. Create a new connecting drive from the Country Market parking lot to the Brookside Shopping Plaza, which will serve the new parking areas behind the existing row of buildings on Killingworth Road.
12. Create a new playground to complement the horseshoe pits, create a walkway, benches, trees and pedestrian scaled lighting, to encourage the use of Higganum Center by more people, being drawn from both shopping areas.
13. Establish a building "Alignment Line", to which all new buildings shall be built, in order to create a more continuous street facade, reinforcing the sense of being a "village". Buildings, such as those housing the former meat market and Neal's Cleaners, will conceivably be replaced and must be built closer to the street, in alignment with the designated line.
14. Locations for new buildings should be identified as shown. These buildings will fill in the streetscape, reinforcing the identity and character of the village.
15. The Grange Building, originally known as Brainerd Hall, now housing the Country Market, should be restored to resemble it's original design. A sensitively designed addition could provide more space or a new entrance, closer to the bulk of the parking.
16. A greenbelt pathway should be created from the reservoir and adjacent Park, down through the Village along the brook, and on down to Higganum Cove. A linear park such as this will bring more people in Higganum Center, and in general, be an improvement to the quality of life for Town residents.

Note: Historical information courtesy of Portrait of a Rivertown, J. Cunningham and E. Warner, 1984.





EXISTING CONDITIONS, KILLINGWORTH ROAD, HIGGANUM CENTER



LOCATION OF PROPOSED CONNECTOR DRIVE



LOCATION FOR LANDSCAPED PARKING AREA AND CONNECTOR DRIVE



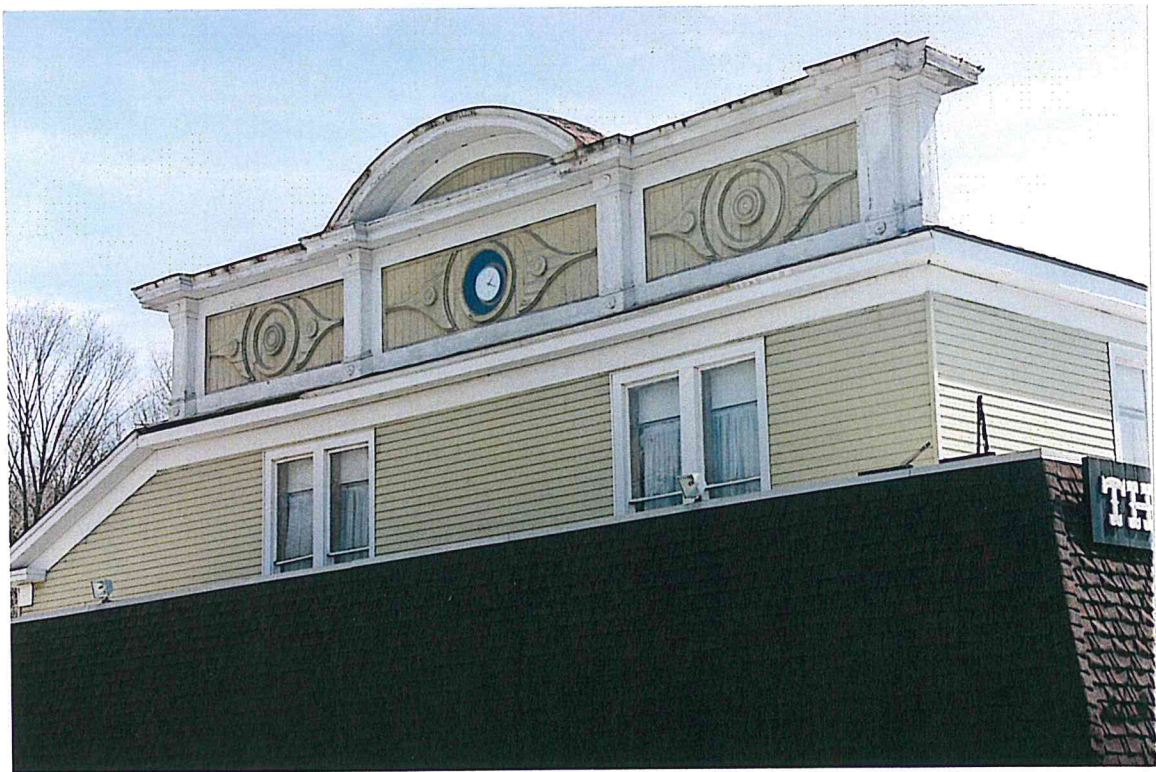
REDEVELOPMENT SITE AT FORMER FRISMAR PROPERTY



SITE FOR HIGGANUM GREEN AND RETAIL/ RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX



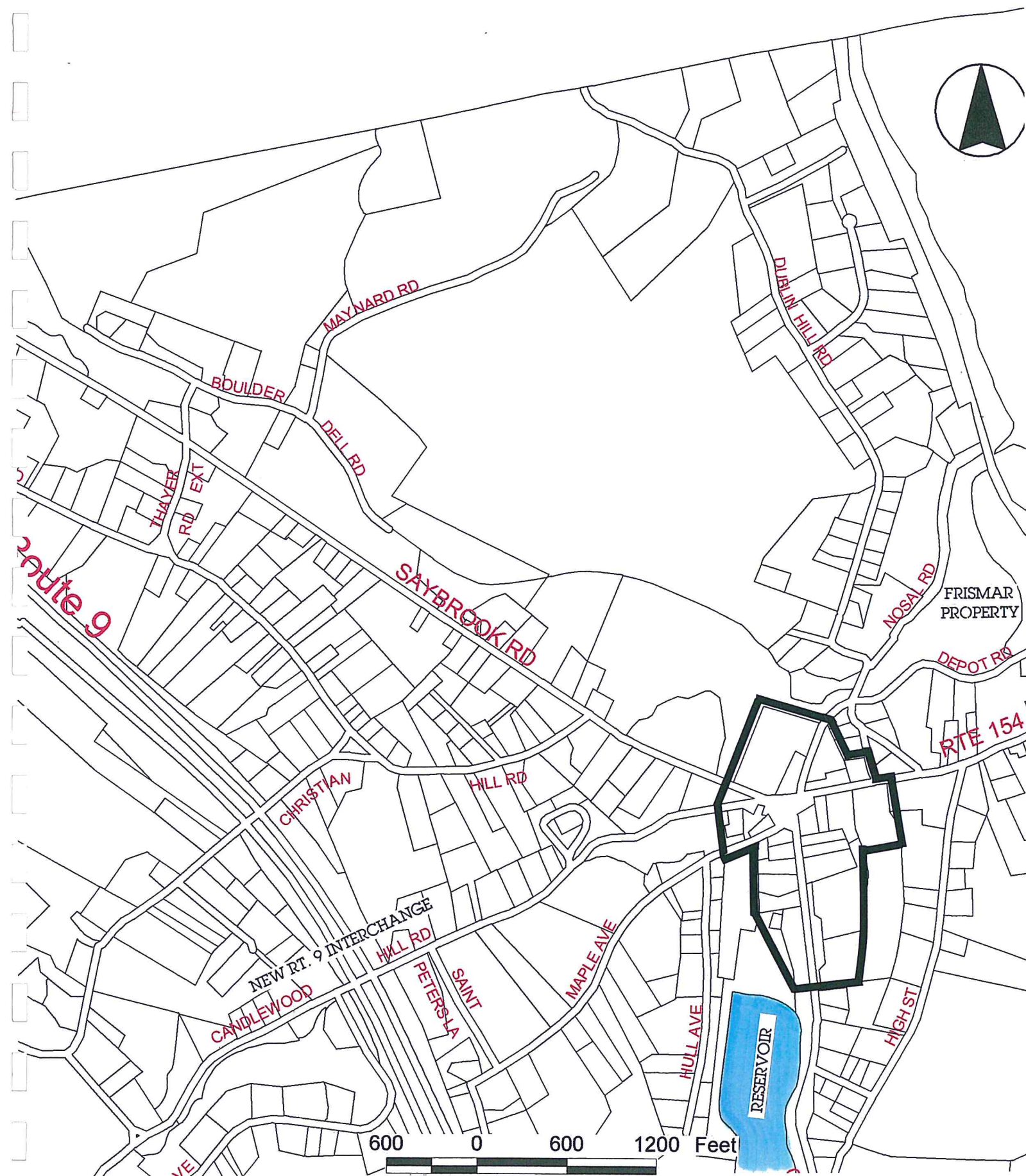
VIEW TOWARD THE PROPOSED GREEN



HISTORIC BRAINERD HALL IN NEED OF RESTORATION



New Higganum Village Green, Clocktower of Haddam Granite, Shops, Apartments



HIGGANUM VILLAGE ZONE LIMITS

THE VILLAGES:  
TYLERVILLE

evidenced by the presence of a "Subway" sandwich shop, and the reports of Dunkin' Donuts and a major drugstore chain negotiating with landowners. Significant development pressures on Tylerville are at hand, and are bound to increase when the Essex Steam Train establishes a station here next year, and if the Goodspeed Opera House is successful in creating a second theater, as is their goal.

In an effort to prevent the evolution of Bridge Road into a sprawl-type commercial strip of development, and to try to guide new development to be of a desirable character, there are a number of measures which need to be taken by the Town of Haddam and the appropriate land-use commissions. Tylerville represents a very different set of issues and opportunities than Higganum Center. Whereas Higganum serves as a community shopping and services center, and more density is beneficial, Tylerville has a role for neighborhood services, but much greater potential in addressing the business of tourism. Also differentiating Tylerville is that the character of the existing neighborhood is of free-standing, residential type structures on individual lots. Therefore, the image to be sought along Saybrook Road and Bridge Road is one which is harmonious with that type of historic context. Larger buildings and different uses may be accommodated set back from the street, but the street frontages should be smaller in scale, and align near the street.

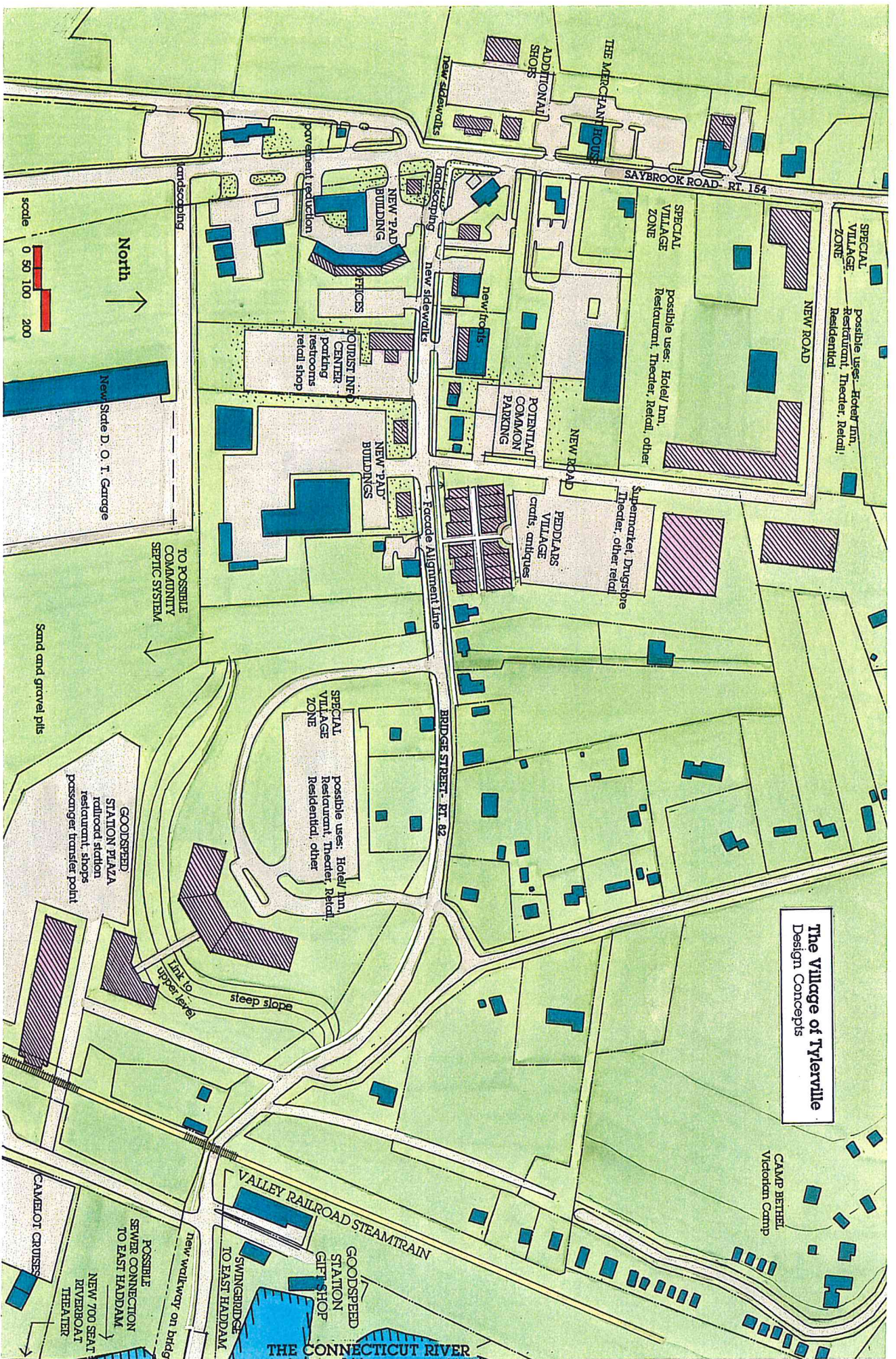
Action should be taken to promote the "building out" of Tylerville in the manner supported by the Town residents who attended the public meetings, and the goals endorsed by the Economic Development Commission. This will require certain infrastructure improvements, zoning regulations changes, and a proactive and supportive attitude toward the targeted type of development. Mixed-use development, which includes new residential construction in the Village, as well as retail/ commercial, needs to occur. Adoption of the new Special Village Zone is the necessary initial step, as in Higganum. The "Vision Plan" is an illustrated compilation of these concepts, including some possible examples of projects which reflect the intent. Buildings, such as The Peddlers Village, similar to the Mystic shopping complex, are not meant to be the only way these sites can be developed, but rather, are just one illustration of the possibilities. Other actions needed, as included in the Sixteen Point Action Plan for Tylerville, are as follows:

1. FIRST PRIORITY: Pursue funding for public sanitary sewers and water supply. Sewage disposal can take the form of multiple community septic systems, a new treatment plant, or even connecting under the River to the East Haddam plant at the Goodspeed Airport. Water options include drawing water from a new wellfield, or connecting to the existing system in Chester. No development of any significance can occur without this infrastructure.
2. A new street should be created from Saybrook Road to Bridge Road from the north. This will open up acres of level, sandy land for development, as well as give traffic an option to flow back around the block when the bridge is opened.
3. Establish a "Building Alignment Line" along Bridge Road, so that new development maintains the street facade created by the neighboring historic houses.
4. Create an attractive, inviting, River Valley Tourist Information Center on the site

of the former D. O. T. garage. This facility should serve as the tourism center for the entire region, should have bright, clean, public restrooms, and should be manned at least during the summer months. There should also be ample room for bus parking to permit the flow of large numbers of potential customers to area businesses. Brochures and maps should be available at all times.

5. Facade improvements should be encouraged for buildings in the zone which are not up to the character of the rest of the district. Grant programs, or low interest loans would stimulate this activity.
6. New building areas, or "pads", should be identified where such buildings will help fill-in the streetscape, or help shield other buildings set back further which are not in keeping with the village image.
7. Pavement reduction should take place on Saybrook Road around the gas stations and Sebastian's Cafe, paved areas should be defined with curbs or edging, and landscaping should fill the new areas.
8. Sidewalks should be built along both sides of Bridge Road, with at least one side going down the hill to the Swingbridge. Sidewalks should extend on Saybrook Road along the full length of commercial activity, on both sides. As property is developed in either direction, the sidewalks should be extended.
9. A lightweight pedestrian walkway should be added to the south side of the Swingbridge, as unobtrusively as possible, to help connect Tylerville and Goodspeed Landing, forming one continuous district for entertainment and tourism. The two towns should continue to pursue this goal with the State, and possibly have any adjoining new large-scaled commercial developments contribute.
10. Haddam and East Haddam should also cooperate on having the Swingbridge illuminated in the evenings, especially the south side. A "necklace" of lights outlining the operable, cantilevered span could be beautiful, but low-keyed. Again, the towns would need the State's support in this, and possibly Northeast Utilities could help underwrite the cost as they are doing with the Arrigoni Bridge in Middletown..
11. Common parking areas should be established where possible, to the sides and rears of businesses, such as behind the commercial buildings on the north side of Bridge Road.
12. Signage regulations for commercial enterprises must be adopted which will follow and reinforce the desired character of the neighborhood. While it is very difficult to dictate taste, the range of possible sign types can be narrowed so that there is some harmony and control over signage, something which is lacking at this time. (see photos)
13. Help create a train station at Bridge Road for the Valley Railroad Steam Train to bring more tourists to the area.

14. Develop other transit links to surrounding tourism attractions, such as Goodspeed, Gillette's Castle, and Chester Village. Possibilities include trams, "trackless trolleys", double decker busses, and water taxis, such as "Duckboats" (see photo).
15. Improve State Department of Transportation signage on Route 9, which doesn't identify Haddam or Tylerville on Exit 7 highway signs. Also improve and organize D.O.T. signage on Routes 154 and 82, Saybrook and Bridge Roads (see photos).
16. Formalize a program between Haddam and East Haddam to promote and plan the Swingbridge/ Goodspeed area. This area, spanning the two towns, should be conceived of as one region, just as Groton and Stonington promote Mystic as one location. Mystic similarly spans town borders, separated by a river and a drawbridge. Creating more density and a more seamless commercial experience across Route 82 is necessary to make this happen.



The Village of Tylerville  
Design Concepts



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN TYLERVILLE



SIGNAGE CLUTTER



SIGNAGE IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT



EXAMPLES OF GOOD SIGNAGE IN TYLERVILLE & HIGGANUM



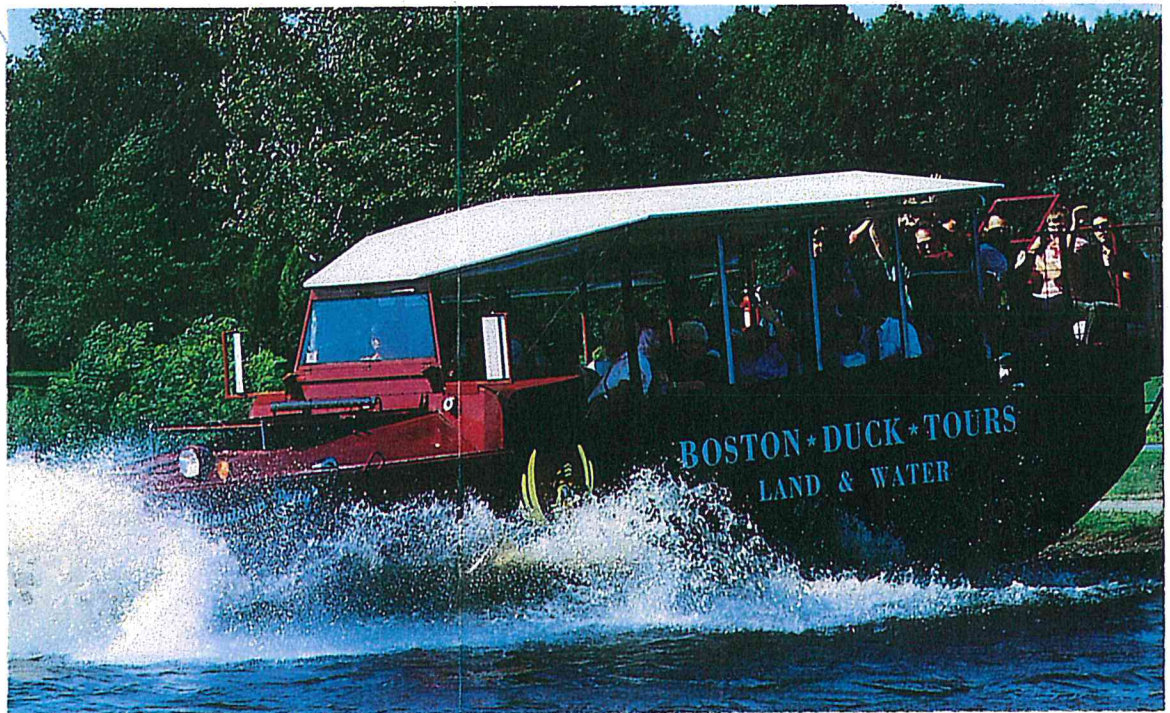
LACK OF HADDAM REFERENCE ON ROUTE 9 SIGN



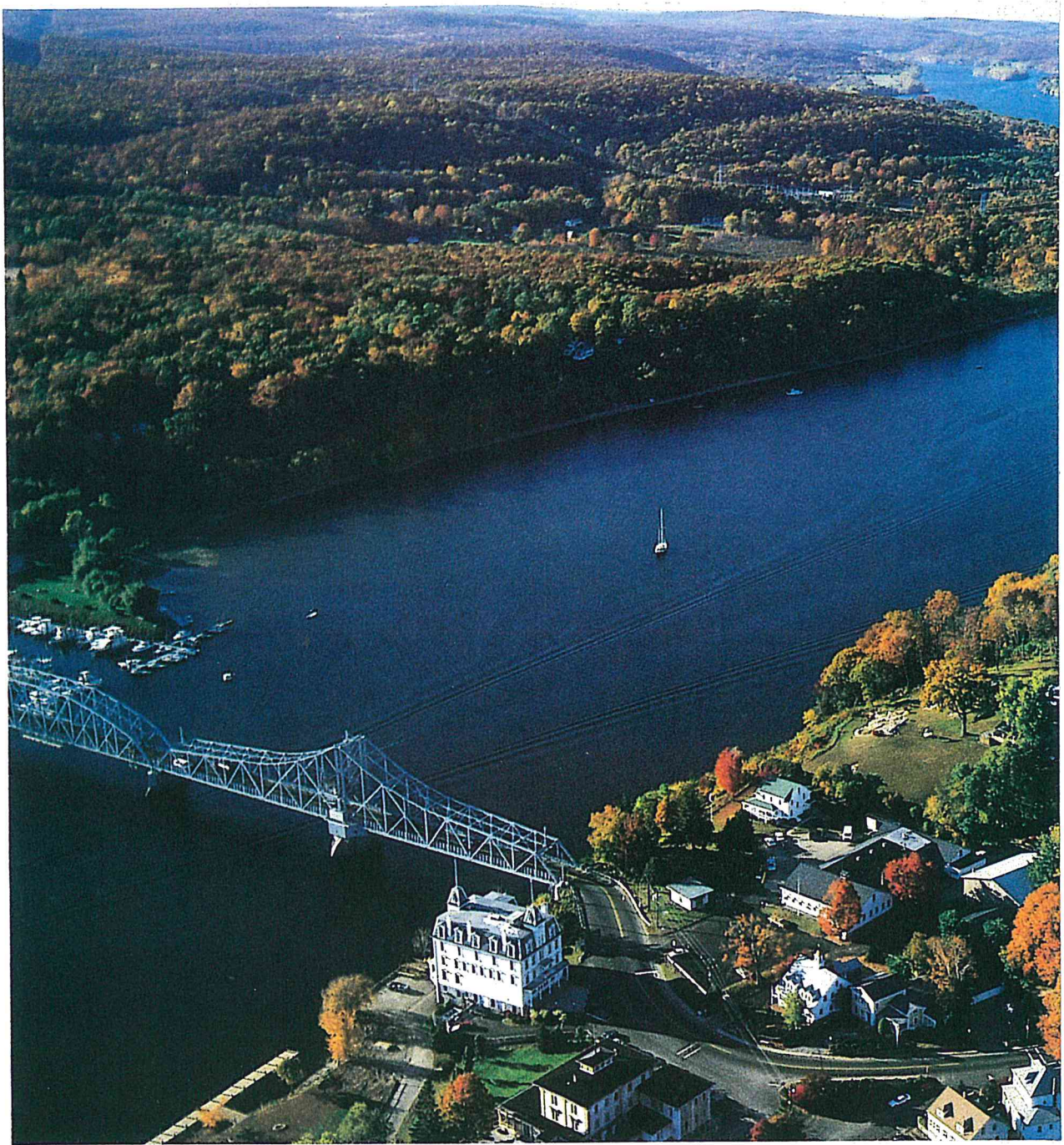
SITE FOR "WELCOME TO HADDAM" SIGN, & SIGNAGE CLEAN UP



SIGNAGE NEEDING ORGANIZING

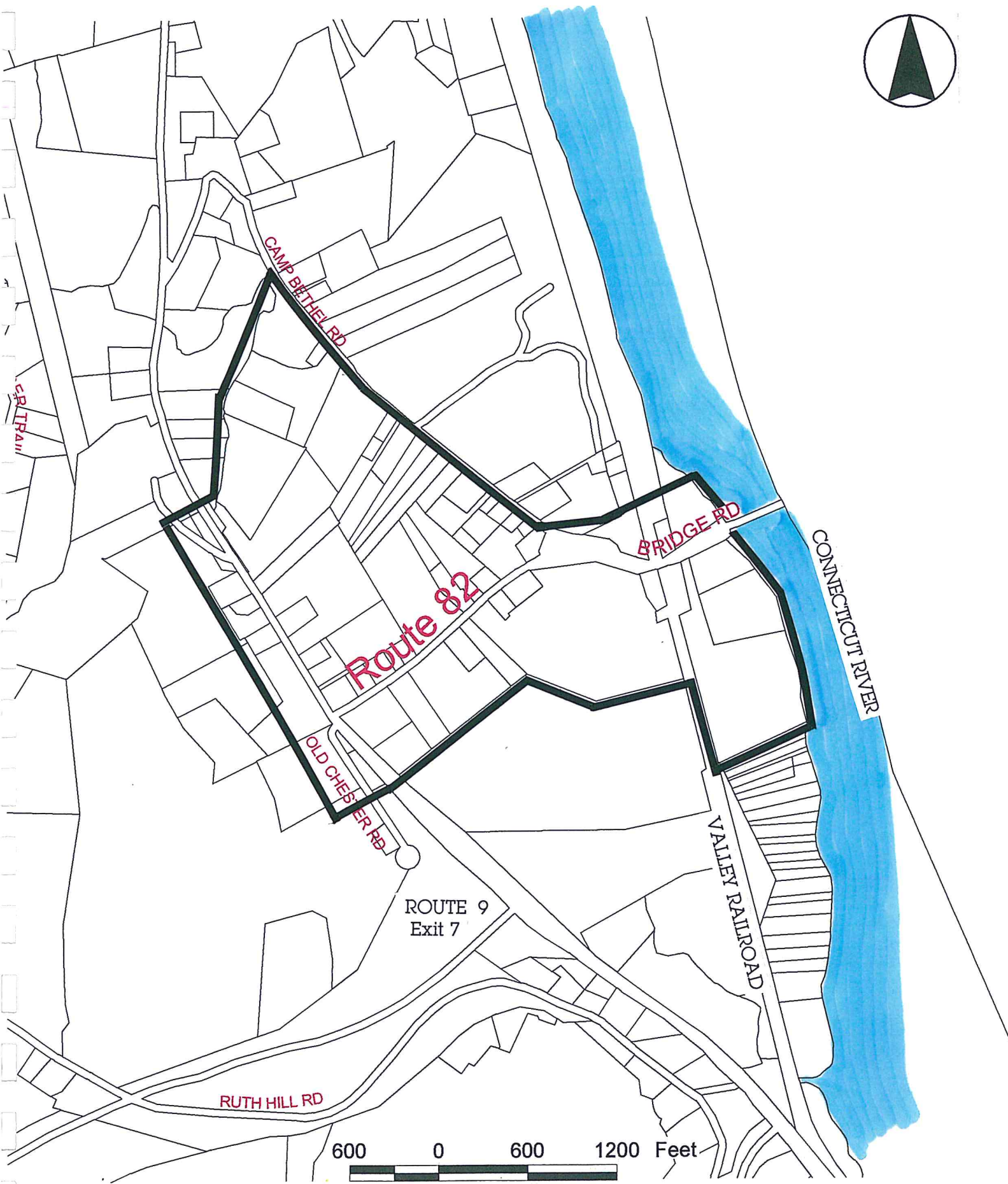


"DUCKBOATS" COULD LINK TYLerville TO EAST HADDAM, GILLETTE'S CASTLE, AND CHESTER VILLAGE.



Tylerville is well positioned to share in the burgeoning tourism trade in the River Valley.

(photo courtesy of the Connecticut River Valley and Shoreline Tourism Bureau)



TYTLERVILLE VILLAGE ZONE LIMITS

## SCATTERED SITE DEVELOPMENT

## SCATTERED SITE DEVELOPMENT

Haddam offers a number of very interesting sites outside of the villages which should be promoted for commercial development in very specific ways. These sites are typically the locations of an earlier use which has become outdated, and often the remnants of the prior use are an asset to be maximized in the reuse of the parcel. Zoning regulations must be put in place which permit the type of use for these sites which is most advantageous to the Town, while still likely to actually attract investment. In some cases, assistance from government programs may be necessary to make a site financially feasible. But redevelopment grants are available, and the restoration of sites with contamination is very common now, with the use of "Brownfields" grants. Thus, for some of these properties, a "public-private partnership" is appropriate.

1. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT: Begin to explore with the D. O. T. the feasibility of a new entrance and exit from Route 9 at Candlewood Hill Road. The topography appears to be conducive to this concept, so much so that people have worn a dirt road entrance onto Route 9 north already. Minimal disruption to residential properties appears to be necessary (see photo). This would result in there being five exits at almost equal spacing from Exit 10 to Exit 7. Located between Exits 9 and 10, this exit could be numbered as "9A", which would also be a reference to the old Route 9A which runs through Haddam, renamed Route 154 by the State over the protests of many local residents. This new exit would greatly improve the chances of reusing the old, mostly empty, mill complex at this intersection. It would be a direct connection to Higganum Center, and it would offer a great improvement to travelers from Durham and parts of Killingworth.

2. SCOVIL COMPANY MILL NO. 2: The mill complex referred to above, located on Candlewood Hill Road at Route 9 (see photo). Dating back to 1860, this long, masonry structure, with large open spaces and clerestory monitor windows, has tremendous potential for commercial use. With the aforementioned new exit from Route 9, this building would undoubtedly be rehabilitated and occupied quickly. But unless or until that comes to pass, the building lends itself to being a type of incubator facility which is targeted for the home-office business which has grown and needs larger quarters. Haddam, and surrounding towns have enjoyed an explosion of home businesses in recent years, given the communication revolution. Many of these businesses could benefit from a step up in accommodations, but without moving into a city. Part of the lure would be shared facilities, such as conference rooms, copy centers, administrative staff, and the chance to mix with other people and businesses. Zoning regulations need to be adjusted, and grants to defray the cost of the renovation should be sought.

3. THE D. & H. SCOVIL COMPANY OFFICES: A smaller, two story, Second Empire style building across Scovil Road from Mill No. 2 (see photo). Most of the comments about Mill No. 2 apply to this building as well, though because of its much smaller size, it would be any easier project to begin with, and it lends itself to different types of tenants, including professional offices and offices for small companies.

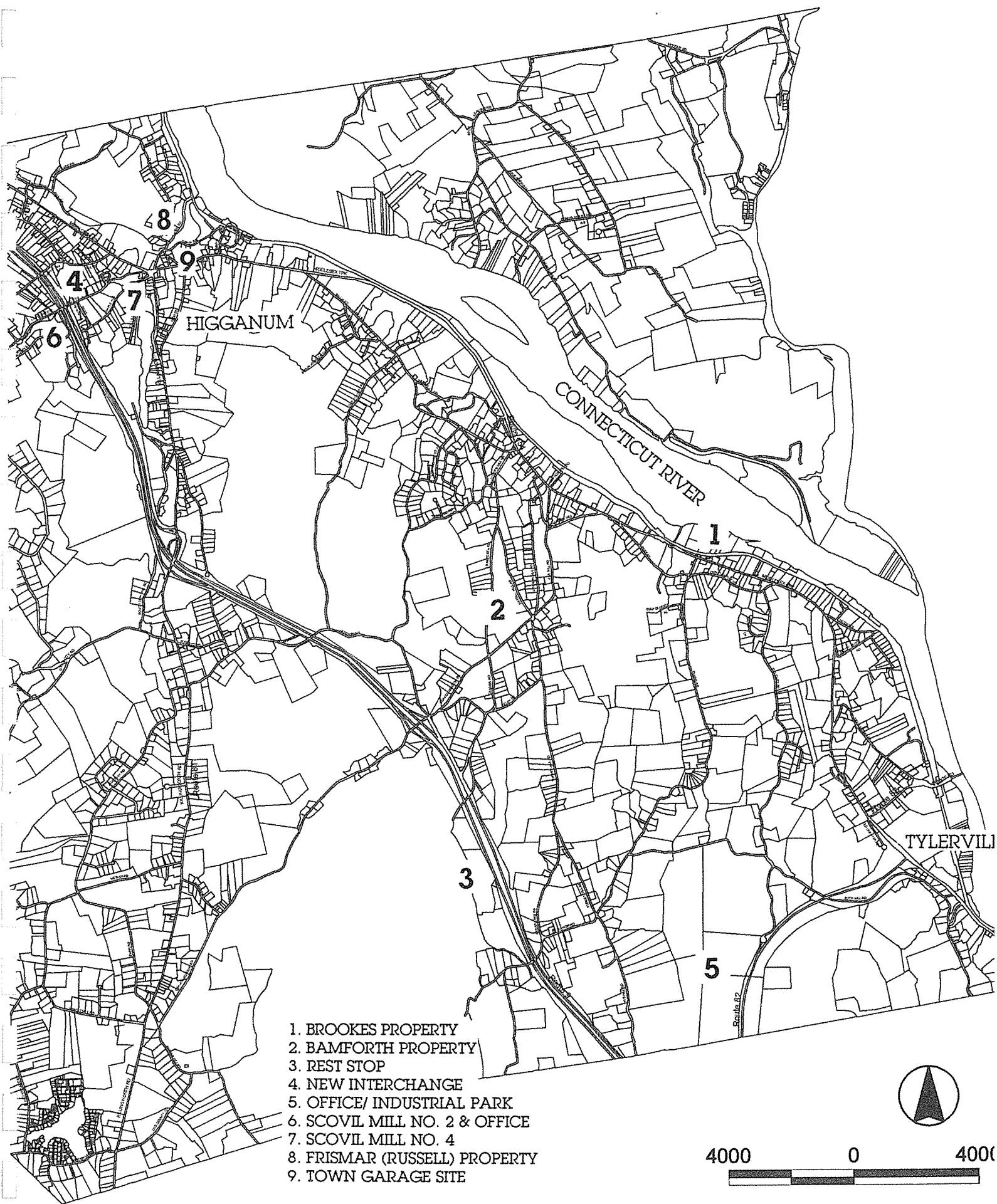
4. SCOVIL COMPANY MILL NO. 4: Currently the D. O. T. garage in Higganum Center, these are two, long, parallel masonry buildings, constructed in 1866 and 1887. The earlier mill, closer to Candlewood Brook, may have been added to a smaller mill, built about 1838, visible from the west end with twelve-over-twelve sash. The buildings are two story, 40 feet wide, and 200 and 260 feet long (1866). The property is contiguous to the commercial district of Higganum Center, adjacent to Fire station One, which is planned to become a community center. The State has said it intends to vacate this property within the next few years, and there has some conjecture about it's use after that. To reuse this site as a Town Garage would be a mistake for the Town's long term interests. The market study done for Haddam by the firm of Bartram and Cochran recommended that an artisans and crafts market and studio be established to fill a complete void that exists in this area. Scovil Mill No. 4, given it's configuration and location in the Center, would be ideal for this use. A tent or eventually a glass shed roof could cover the space between the two buildings, and there would be a, all-weather, indoor and outdoor, arts and crafts market with studio space immediately inside. Even the current garage doors lining this courtyard would work well for this use, and the buildings would need minimal adaptation. This facility could become a regional draw for people to come to Higganum Center (see photo and rendering).

5. THE FRISMAR SITE/ RUSSELL MANUFACTURING COMPANY: All that remains of over 300 years of industrial history is a cut granite foundation and some rubble, set along the Higganum River just below the falls, and above the Cove (see photo). Because of the drop in elevation of the river at this site, this has been a prized site since Higganum's earliest days. The Town's first gristmill was built here in 1678, and a series of industries followed, notably the Russell Manufacturing Company, who made cotton webbing here from 1860 till 1946. A spectacular fire in the late 1980's completely destroyed the three-story, wood framed complex, which had sections going back to 1840. For contemporary use, however, what we are left with is a beautiful and massive granite foundation, and a beautiful site, perched at the bottom of the falls. The recommendation is that most of this property, encompassing Higganum Cove, become part of the Town of Haddam's open space, and that the mill site be set aside for a commercial endeavor, such as a restaurant or inn. The site is wild and secluded, yet incredibly close to the village. There will need to be an improved awareness of this location for people in Higganum Center for this site to be successful though. Signs pointing this out as an historic and scenic location, and a scenic overlook from the south side of the Higganum River, would help to achieve this.

6. THE BROOKES SITE: Route 154, south of the Mill River, near the "Shad Shack". Situated between the Connecticut River and the railroad tracks, this 14 acre tract was previously a sand and gravel pit, but has been regraded to be level. Because it is diagonally across the River from the nuclear power plant, this otherwise spectacular property has not been utilized in recent years. It also includes a wharf and remnants of docks, from prior use as a marina. There are some access issues to be dealt with, including it's own bridge over the tracks at one end of the site, and a grade crossing via a right-of-way at the other end. But this site could be developed in a number of ways, including residential, now that the power plant is being decommissioned. But to maximize it's potential in terms of generating tax revenues

and new jobs, it's unique location should be capitalized on for some type of commercial venture. One strategy is to look ahead to when the Valley Railroad comes up to Haddam Meadows State Park, as they are planning. A problem for the tourist trains and riverboats is that people, especially children, can only go so far on these rides before boredom sets in. Points of interest or attractions of some sort need to be spaced out along the route to keep the trip enjoyable for people. This site, halfway between the planned Tylerville/ Goodspeed station, and Haddam Meadows, should be developed to be another "jewel on the necklace" of attractions coming up the River from Gillette Castle and points south. This is one of the few, if not only, undeveloped properties which can access both the riverboat traffic and the train line, and can become a passenger transfer point. Once the customers are passing through the site, any number of ventures are possible. The Valley Railroad has indicated the desire to find a location for a train museum to exhibit it's growing collection of locomotives and railroad cars. If the access issues could be solved, this site would be ideal for the Valley Railroad Museum, with outdoor and indoor rail sidings, plus restaurants, a marina, a riverboat dock, and plenty of parking.

7. THE ROUTE 9 REST STOP AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER: Travelers coming from virtually any direction who pass through Haddam on Route 9 have not encountered a rest stop in the State of Connecticut. There are no facilities on any of the highways, with the exception of I-95 from the southerly direction. At a minimum, a Tourist Information Center and Rest stop, such as on I-91 entering Vermont, could be located here in order to get people to become aware of the Lower Connecticut River Valley and it's attractions. This type of facility would, most likely, have to be run by the State, as Vermont does. Market research should be done to determine if a facility with some type of restaurant, even limited, would negatively impact local eating establishments, or cause more people to become familiar with the area, and ultimately have a positive impact. It seems unlikely that significant numbers of people are coming off Route 9 into Haddam in search of a quick bite and rest stop. It is difficult to find any such facilities, especially after 8 p.m.. A more elaborate rest stop complex could be quite attractive if done correctly, such as the rest stop off of Route 84 in Sturbridge, Mass. It would be useful to find out through a market research consultant what type of impact could be expected. Aside from the increase in tourism awareness, there would be the greatly improved property value and tax revenues. If the properties to be used included the Town-owned land along Route 9, there could be a sharing of the continuing revenue stream stipulated in the lease. A cursory review of the area reveals that there is land on the southbound side of Route 9, south of Exit 8 (see photo), which could be used for this purpose. Further investigation should take place into ownership and status of tax payments, and the interest of owners. But merely the existence of "the Haddam Rest Stop and Information Center" would boost the Town's identity.



EXIT 8

TURKEY HILL

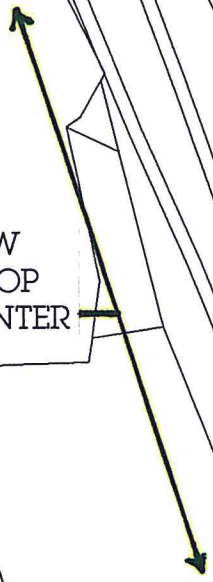
TURKEY HILL RD

CEDAR LAKE RD

DICKINSON RD

Route 9

VICINITY OF NEW  
HADDAM REST STOP  
AND TOURISM CENTER



0 600 1200 Feet





LOCATION FOR REST STOP & TOURISM CENTER ON ROUTE 9



PROPOSED INTERCHANGE FOR ROUTE 9 AT CANDLEWOOD HILL RD.



STURBRIDGE REST AREA AND INFORMATION TOURIST CENTER



OFFICES AT SCOVIL MILL NO. 2



SCOVIL MILL NO. 4  
(STATE GARAGE)



Artisans and Craftsmens Co-op at Scovil Mill: studios and marketplace

## **LONG RANGE AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS**

## **LONG RANGE AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS**

In the interests of making the Town more attractive to companies looking to relocate, Haddam should consider some improvements which could be called "quality of life" changes. When owners of small companies, such as the high tech businesses, no longer need to be in an urban environment, they are looking to "exurbia", or small town America, more and more often to relocate. This is a well documented national, as well as local, trend. When the top management of the company, the top of the "pyramid", prefers a certain area to live in, the company often follows. When compared with many surrounding towns, Haddam offers little in the way of amenities. There are no town beaches nor recreational complexes, no outdoor pool, no town park with facilities or activities, no golf course, no boat launch, and incredibly, no riverfront property. And Haddam is no longer the tax haven it once was. Needless to say, any improvements to Town amenities will first benefit the current residents.

There are some properties which could be designated to fill some of these voids, some currently available, and some not. These proposals should be considered to be part of the Long Range Capital Plan, and an action plan set into motion on any of the ideas which are supported, before these parcels are utilized in other ways.

1. **THE BAMFORTH PROPERTY:** Located between Bamforth Road and Hayden Hill Road, this land is approximately 40 acres of open, rolling fields (see photo). It is close to Town Hall and the center of Town, and near Route 9 and Beaver Meadow Road, the only east/west cross street in Town.

Proposed use: **TOWN PARK.** This property could accommodate facilities for residents of all ages and different interests. These uses could include: a picnic shelter, an outdoor pool complex, bocce courts, horseshoe pits, baseball/ softball fields, soccer fields, a children's playground, benches, amphitheater and bandshell, and whatever else people would like. This would give the community a place to gather and interact, get to know their neighbors, and hold Town events.

2. **THE HIGGANUM RESERVOIR PARKLAND:** This land is primarily of the west shore of the reservoir, and is accessed from Hull Avenue and Dish Mill Road at the other end

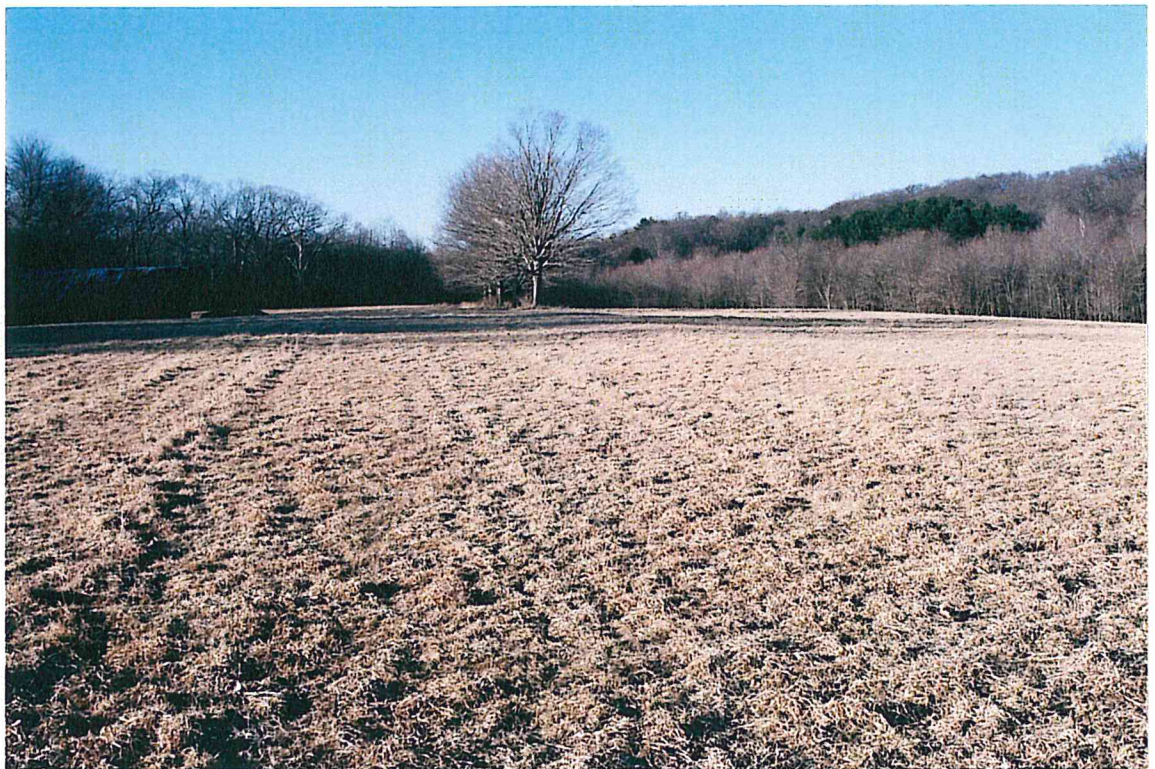
Proposed use: **TOWN BEACH AND CAMPGROUND.** Haddam has a unique opportunity here to create a beach and a campground in a forest, right in town. The Town has had negotiations with the State to acquire the property, but it is important to create a long term plan for it's use.

3. **HIGGANUM COVE:** Situated at the bottom of Depot Road, below the falls of the Higganum River, this parcel contains a tidal basin with direct, but limited, access to the Connecticut River.

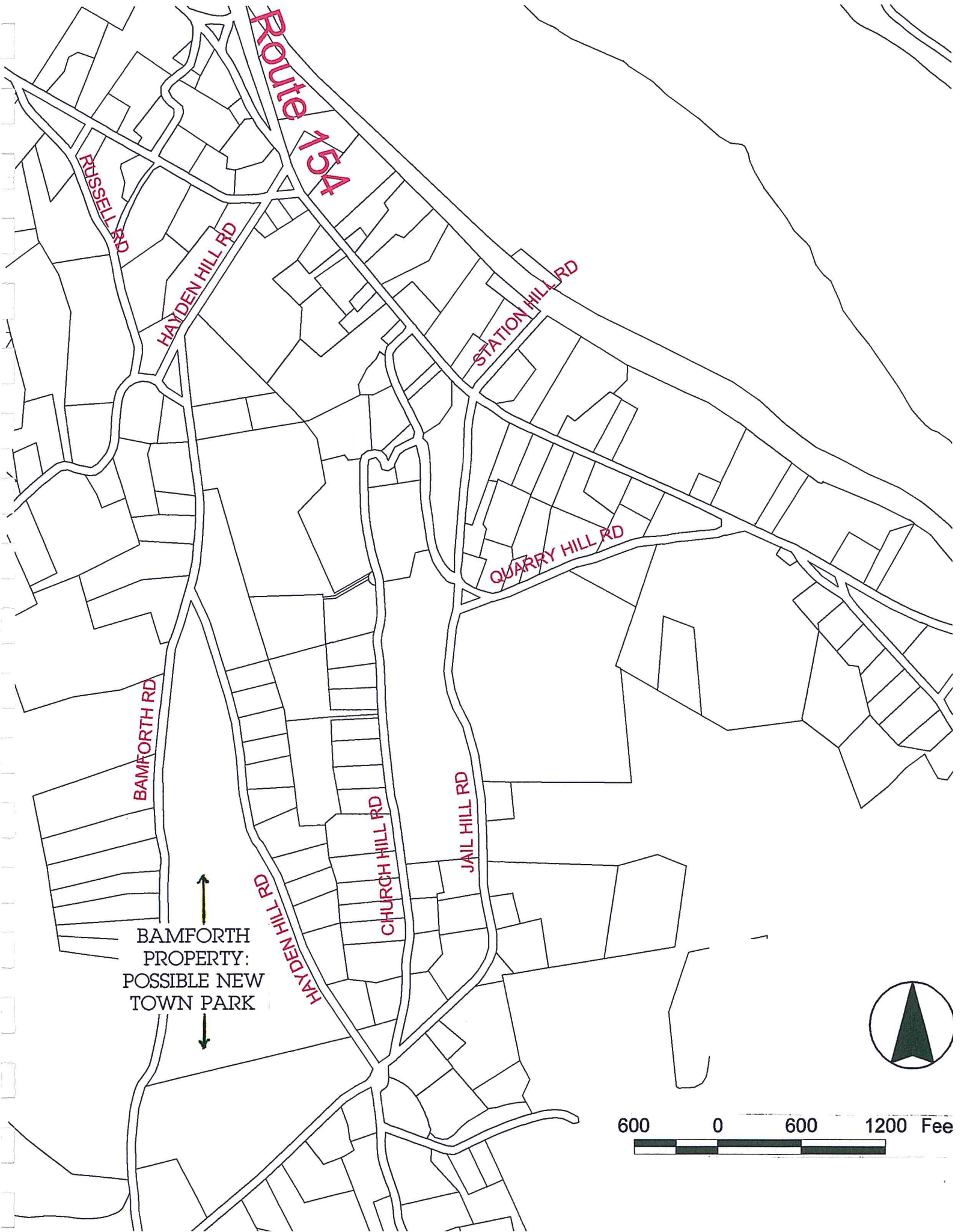
Proposed use: This is an excellent opportunity for passive recreation and sheltered access to the Connecticut River, something the Town lacks. It would be an ideal spot to put in small boats, such as canoes. The low clearance of the railroad trestle will prevent boats beyond a modest size. A beach is also possible here, if any environmental issues are resolved. The State has said on the record that they intend to convey this property to the Town.



SITE FOR HIGGANUM GREENBELT



POSSIBLE SITE FOR TOWN PARK AT BAMFORTH PROPERTY



BAMFORTH  
PROPERTY:  
POSSIBLE NEW  
TOWN PARK



**PROPOSED NEW "VILLAGE ZONE" REGULATIONS:  
HIGGANUM AND TYLERVILLE**

## NEW "HIGGANUM CENTER" ZONE

**General Purpose:** To promote the development of Higganum Center in a manner which improves both the economic performance as well as the esthetic quality of the Center. Higganum, as a center for commerce, will benefit from a greater concentration of buildings and businesses. A more pedestrian-oriented environment needs to be created, with sidewalks, reduced street widths, on-street parking, a more visually cohesive pattern of buildings, and a slower pace of automobile traffic. The intersection of Saybrook Road, Route 154, and Killingworth Road, Route 81, ought to be a more memorable location, as the commercial center for the Town, and needs a focal point. A new Village Green will provide both a visual and social focus for Higganum.

Note: Building size and placement regulations pertain to the street frontages along Saybrook Road and Killingworth Road. For parcels of land five acres or larger in the designated zone, proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations shall apply. Permitted uses apply to the entire Village Zone.

### I. **Permitted Uses:** All require administrative site plan approval.

- A. Residential:
  - 1. Single and multifamily dwellings\*
  - 2. Beds and Breakfasts
  - 3. Temporary Roadside stands
  - 4. Accessory apartments to residential and commercial uses.
  - 5. Senior Citizen housing, including: nursing homes, convalescent homes, assisted living centers.
- B. Commercial:
  - 1. Retail Stores and Showrooms.
  - 2. Professional and Business Offices.
  - 3. Theaters, live action or film.
  - 4. Barber and Beauty shops.
  - 5. Watch and shoe repair, and other similar personal services.
  - 6. Tailoring and dry cleaning businesses (off-site cleaning)
  - 7. Financial Institutions.
  - 8. Restaurants.
  - 9. Gasoline Stations, auto and/ or engine repair shops
  - 10. Marinas, docking facilities for cruise ship lines and passenger terminals.
  - 11. Stores for the sale of alcoholic beverages.
  - 12. Hotels, Inns, Resorts, Conference Centers.
  - 13. Banquet Facilities.
  - 14. Post Offices
  - 15. Police, Fire, or Ambulance Stations,
  - 16. Laundromats
  - 17. Temporary roadside stands

#### notes:

- 1. See table for units per acre.
- 2. Buildings may mix uses, such as residential dwelling units being located above retail uses.
- 3. Each new project constructed or major renovation shall construct a 4 foot sidewalk across the front of the property.
- 3. No parking is permitted in the front yard setback. Parking is permitted in side and rear yards.
- 4. Parking requirements may be reduced if a communal lot is located in the immediate vicinity.
- 5. All uses are dependent upon meeting all other applicable codes and regulations, including the Public Health Code.
- 6. Important: Limitations may apply because of available potable water and septic disposal capacity.

## NEW "HIGGANUM CENTER" ZONE

### II. Schedule of Area, Height, Bulk and Placement Requirements:

Min. Lot Area	1/2 acre
Min. Lot Frontage Width	100 ft.
Minimum Front Yard Setback:	30 ft.
Maximum Front Yard Setback	40 ft.
Minimum Side Yard	10 ft.
Minimum Rear Yard	20 ft.
Maximum Building Height	35 ft.
Maximum Building Coverage	40%
Max. Building & Parking Coverage	80%

#### notes:

1. Applicant shall attempt to align building front with neighboring buildings where possible.
2. Lots which have the size and configuration to accommodate more than one building must align a fronting building within the Front Yard Building Zone.
3. Lots which are not located in the "Street Facade Alignment Area" may obtain a waiver as to placement of the building on the site.
4. Adjacent parking areas are to have access lanes brought to the property line by each landowner.
5. Reductions for required are available for proximate complimentary uses.

### III. Building and Site Requirements

1. "Frontage Buildings" located in the Facade Alignment Zone along Killingworth and Saybrook Roads shall be sided with wood siding, brick or stone masonry on the front, and at least 40 foot returns on the sides.
2. "Frontage Buildings" shall have a front elevation comprised of not more than 75% fenestration.
3. "Frontage Buildings" shall have a pitched, shingled roof, with the gable either perpendicular or parallel to the street. Straight line or flat parapets may be approved on a case by case basis
4. The Building Design must be approved by the Village Design Review Committee, whose approval shall not be unreasonably withheld. The Committee shall review for conformance with the guidelines contained herein, but may not require a specific style.
4. Colors must be approved by the Village Design Review Committee, which shall establish a list and samples of pre-approved colors, but who may also approve additional colors.
5. A Landscape Plan must be approved by the Design Review Committee. Parking areas visible from the street are to be partially screened with landscaping or berms, at a height of 24 inches minimum, 48 inches maximum, but the parking area shall still be visible from the street.
6. The "cornice line" of all Frontage Buildings is not to exceed 36 feet. Dormers, cupolas, towers, and other character enhancing elements may be constructed above the cornice line.

## NEW "TYLerville VILLAGE" ZONE

**General Purpose:** To permit more intensive development in Tylerville, along Saybrook Road (Route 154) and Bridge Road (Route 82), in a manner which enhances the image of the village, and seeks to avoid "suburban sprawl". As more tourism-related businesses are developed on both sides of the Swingbridge, the development pressures on properties along Routes 82 and 154 may increase dramatically. We seek to guide this development, to encourage positive development, to enhance the visual character of Tylerville, to reinforce its historic, residential character, rather than to allow the Village environment to be degraded by haphazard, sprawl-type development.

Note: These proposed regulations pertain to the street frontages along Saybrook Road and Bridge Street. For larger parcels of land, a minimum of five acres possibly, a regulation for a Planned Unit Development project- a "PUD", is also being developed, as a complementary element to the Village Zoning regulations.

### I. **Permitted Uses:** All require administrative site plan approval.

- A. Residential:
  - 1. Single and multifamily dwellings
  - 2. Beds and Breakfasts
  - 3. Temporary Roadside stands
  - 4. Accessory apartments to residential and commercial uses.
  - 5. Nursing homes, convalescent homes, assisted living centers.
  
- B. Commercial:
  - 1. Retail Stores and Showrooms.
  - 2. Professional and Business Offices.
  - 3. Theaters, live action or film.
  - 4. Barber and Beauty shops.
  - 5. Watch and shoe repair, and other similar personal services.
  - 6. Tailoring and dry cleaning businesses (off-site cleaning)
  - 7. Financial Institutions.
  - 8. Restaurants.
  - 9. Gasoline Stations, auto and/ or engine repair shops
  - 10. Marinas, docking facilities for cruise ship lines and passenger terminals.
  - 11. Stores for the sale of alcoholic beverages.
  - 12. Hotels, Inns, Conference Centers.
  - 13. Banquet Facilities.
  - 14. Post Offices
  - 15. Police, Fire, or Ambulance Stations,
  - 16. Laundromats

#### notes:

- 1. Buildings may mix uses, such as residential dwelling units being located above retail uses.
- 2. Each new project constructed or major renovation shall construct a 4 foot sidewalk across the front of the property.
- 3. No parking is permitted in the front yard setback. Parking is permitted in side and rear yards.
- 4. Parking requirements may be reduced if a communal lot is located in the immediate vicinity.
- 5. All uses are dependent upon meeting all other applicable codes and regulations, including the Public Health Code. Some limitations may apply because of potable water and septic disposal limitations.

## **NEW "TYLerville VILLAGE" ZONE**

6. The "cornice line" of all Frontage Buildings is not to exceed 24 feet. Dormers, cupolas, towers, and other character enhancing elements may be constructed above the cornice line.
7. Frontage Buildings shall not exceed 75 feet in uninterrupted length, without some type of setbacks or recesses. The purpose is to maintain a residential scale to new construction, particularly as seen from the road.

### **IV. Signage Recommendations**

1. Free standing, internally illuminated signs are limited to eight square feet per business, and shall not exceed twelve inches in height and eight feet in length.
2. Signboards mounted on buildings shall not exceed twelve inches in height and twelve feet in length if internally illuminated, and 24 inches in height and sixteen feet in length otherwise.
3. Signs shall not protrude more than one-third the distance above the cornice line to the ridge line.
4. Carved wooden signs may exceed the limitations by 100%.
5. Free standing signs for multiple businesses, such as mounted in front of a shopping center or mall, shall be mounted on the ground, and not more than twelve feet in total height. They shall not exceed 24 square feet if internally illuminated, and 32 square feet otherwise, in face area of one side.
6. Neon signs mounted inside a window shall not be counted against overall sign limitations.
7. There shall be no moving, rotating, blinking or "chasing" signs.
8. Seasonal signs for special sales or promotions shall be permitted for not more than thirty days in any six month period, and may not exceed 100 % of the business's allowable sign area.
9. All signs must have no less than a two-to-one horizontally oriented proportion, e. g. two feet high by four feet wide.
10. Hanging signboards mounted perpendicular to a building are permitted only in accordance with the following limitations, and do not count against the maximum allowable sign areas for a business:
  - a. may not project more than thirty six inches from the building
  - b. shall be a minimum of twelve inches and a maximum of forty-eight inches in any direction
  - c. may not be internally illuminated
  - d. may not exceed ten square feet

Bibliography of publications related to "broad view" town planning and design, those which take a multi-disciplinary approach (the widely publicized neo-traditional planning movement), as well as critiquing the disastrous legacy of "Suburban Sprawl".

Adler, Jerry. "Bye-Bye, Suburban Dream", Newsweek, May 15, 1995, pp. 41-53.

Alexander, Christopher et al. A Pattern Language. MIT Press, 1977.

Arendt, Randall. Rural By Design: Maintaining Small Town Character. American Planning Association; Planners Press, 1994

Duany, Andres. Towns and Town-Making Principles. Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Rizzoli Publications, 1991.

Goddard, Stephen B. Getting There. Basic Books, Harper Collins Publishers, 1994.

Katz, Peter. The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community. McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994.

Kunstler, James Howard. The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape. Simon and Schuster, 1993.

Langdon, Philip. A Better Place To Live: Reshaping the American Suburb. The University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.

Unwin, Raymond. Town Planning In Practice. Princeton Architectural Press, 1994 (originally published 1909).

# BUSINESS

THE MIDDLETOWN PRESS

Stocks .....B2-4  
Religion .....B5  
Weather .....B6

SECTION  
**B**

## BRIEFS

### Green is the theme for Haddam center

By ERIK HESSELBERG  
Middletown Press Staff

**EAST HADDAM**—The local Economic Development Commission wants greener more "pedestrian friendly" business districts.

The commission's new plans to revitalize the village centers of Higganum and Tyngsboro, unveiled Thursday at a district chamber meeting at East Haddam's Sunrise Resort, include pocket parks, side-walks, trees and a town green.

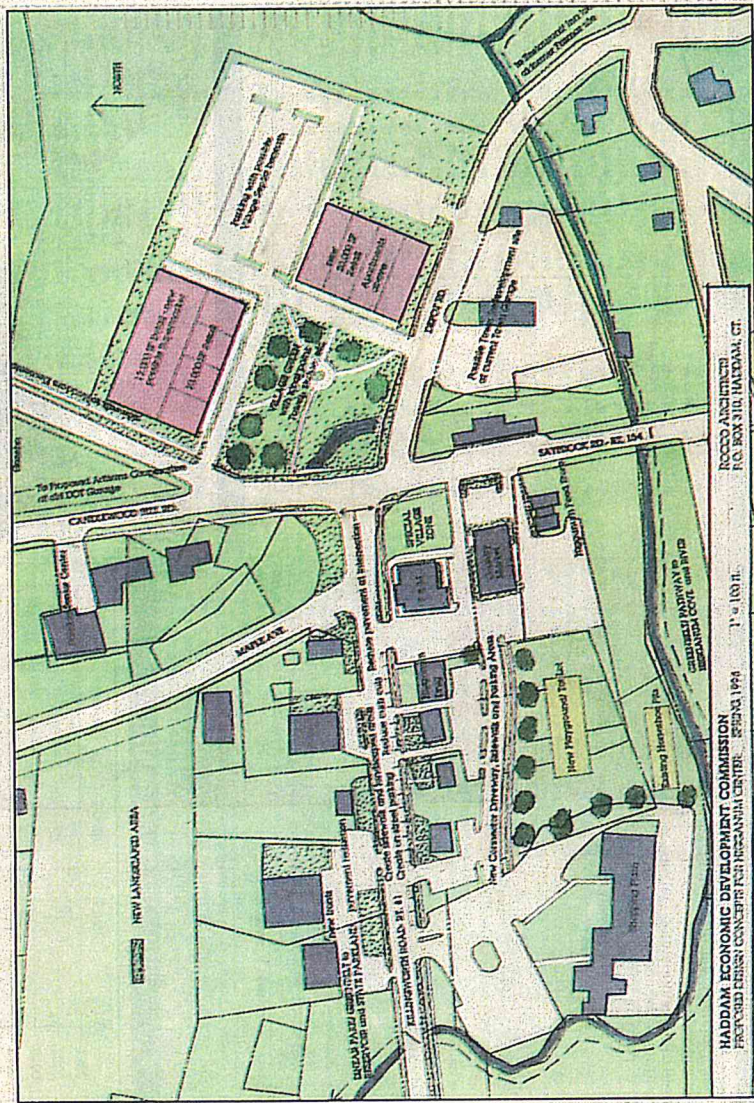
*"We want to create a place where people want to get out and walk around,"* Rocco said. Within the framework of economic development, Rocco wants to create in Tyngsboro and Higganum a village-like atmosphere similar to Essex, Chester or Mystic.

In Tyngsboro, antique and craft shops, a supermarket, a drugstore and several theaters have been proposed.

In Higganum the focus of the proposal is largely on landscaping, which includes sidewalks, trees and other plantings.

"We've got to reduce the amount of pavement," Rocco said.

"The state roads are much wider than they have to be," Rocco advises narrowing the



Architect Steve Rocco's vision of a new village center for Higganum. The Economic Development Commission wants to make central businesses more pedestrian friendly.

roads at the intersection of Routes 154 and 81 in Higganum center and filling in with side-walks and landscaping. Street architecture such as park benches and street lamps would enhance the roadside, he said.

The focal point of Rocco's Higganum revitalization plan is Village Green, proposed on a portion of the former Rossi industrial site.

A clock tower, a fountain or similar centerpiece is proposed

for the green. Rocco said the existing green, although attractive especially with the new gazebo, is problematic because it's sloped.

"People just don't like walking up hill," he said. Real estate developer Raymond Bogdan, while a strong supporter of the proposal, cautioned that a town sewer system is needed to make the plan a reality. He urged Rocco to include sewers in future

designs. Outgoing commission chairman, Paul Marin, is upbeat over the redevelopment plans, as is selectman Michael Jordan.

"We're really encouraged," Jordan said, adding that the plans will help to make Haddam "memorable."

Jordan said the redevelopment effort never would have been accepted 10 years ago when Connecticut Yankee nuclear power plant was operat-

ing. But since the plant's closing two years ago, residents are more amenable to economic development, Jordan said.

"It's an issue of economic growth," he said. The EDC received a \$45,000 grant from the federal Economic Development Administration for the study. Officials are looking to receive additional federal funds to execute the plans.

Positive press regarding the improved business environment in Haddam can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

PRESERVATION WEEK 1999

## PROTECTING the *Irreplaceable*

Henry S. Davis



Jonathan Starr house, Guilford, c. 1915 (above) ... and in 1998.



Guilford Keeping Society Library Collection.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, which I am privileged to serve, is in the business of saving special places and the quality of life they support, and sprawl destroys both. It devours historic landscapes. It drains the life out of older communities, stops their economic pulse and often puts them in intensive care—or sometimes even the morgue.

We pay in open space and farmland lost, in time lost to sitting in traffic, and in higher taxes. Finally, we pay in the steady erosion of our quality of life. Inner cities have become enclaves of poverty. Long, frustrating commutes leave us less time with our families. Tranquil neighborhoods are destroyed by road-widening. Historic landmarks get demolished and carted off to the landfill. Everyplace winds up looking more and more like Noplace. These signs point to an inescapable fact: Sprawl and its byproducts represent the number-one threat to community livability in America today. And in a competitive global marketplace, livability is the factor that will determine which communities thrive and which ones wither. Nobel Prize-winning economist Robert Solow puts it this way: "livability is not some middle-class luxury. It is an economic imperative."

*continued page 8*

## The Sprawling of America .....by Richard Moe

America today is engaged in a great national debate. It's a debate about sprawl.

The central question in the debate is this: Will we continue to allow haphazard growth to consume more countryside in ways that drain the vitality out of our cities while eroding the quality of life virtually everywhere? Or will we choose instead to use our land more sensibly and to revitalize our older neighborhoods and downtowns, thereby enhancing the quality of life for everyone?

### In This Issue

Rural Roundtable	3	Preservation Conference	6
Around the State	4	Streets, Roads & Highways	10
		New Listings on the National Register	12

## Sprawl, cont'd from p.1

There are two essential elements in any effective program to combat sprawl: sensible land-use planning and the revitalization of existing communities. These are issues traditionally and best handled at the state and local levels — and that, in the end, is where the fight against sprawl will be won or lost. But the federal government also has a crucial role to play in the process.

Many factors have helped propel the exodus of people and jobs from our central cities, but that exodus has been greatly facilitated — even accelerated — by the effects of federal policies. Sometimes these effects have been intended and sometimes they have been inadvertent, but in most cases they have been profound. Because the federal government has contributed so heavily to the problem, it has a clear duty to help find solutions.

It can — and should — do so in four ways:

**First, it should correct policies that encourage or reward sprawl.** The biggest offender is federal transportation policy, which can be summed up in a short phrase: “feed the car, starve the alternative.” As Jessica Mathews wrote a while ago in the *Washington Post*, “Americans are not irrationally car-crazed. We seem wedded to the automobile because policy after...policy... encourages us to be.” Transportation

officials generally try to “solve” problems by building more roads — an approach which is like trying to cure obesity by loosening your belt.

People need transportation choices and communities need balanced transportation systems. Federal policy hasn't done a good job of offering them — but that may be changing. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, or TEA-21, enacted last year, encourages planning that looks beyond irrelevant political boundaries and allows for greater citizen and local government participation in making transportation decisions. That's welcome news, certainly, but TEA-21 is a promissory note that will be redeemed only through hard work at the state and local levels. It offers a great opportunity for the federal Department of Transportation to take a leadership role in urging the states to take full advantage of this landmark legislation.

**Second, the federal government should reward states and communities that promote smart growth and help revitalize existing communities.**

Being anti-sprawl is not being anti-growth. The question is not *whether* our communities should grow, but *how* they will grow. More and more people

— private citizens and public officials alike — are realizing that the answer to that question lies in sensible land-use planning.

I suggest that we design a federal “smart growth scorecard” — a system that favors sensible, sustainable growth and evaluates the effectiveness with which states and communities meet that test. States that amend their building codes to make them more “rehab-friendly” or that remove their constitutional ban against the use of state gas tax revenues for mass transit projects,

# PRESERVATION WEEK 1999 PROTECTING the Irreplaceable

for example, are taking positive steps to fight sprawl and restore communities. They ought to be rewarded. The federal scorecard would give states credit for initiatives such as these and would give smart-growth projects an edge in the competition for federal funds.

**Third, the federal government should promote regional cooperation as a key to effective control of sprawl.**

When it comes to sprawl, city limits and county lines are often meaningless marks on a map. Limited jurisdiction makes it hard for local government to deal with an issue of this magnitude, and efforts to control sprawl in a limited area often just shift the problem from one community to another. It's like trying to stop a flood with a picket fence.

While regionalism by itself does not curb sprawl, it can moderate one of the engines of sprawl: the costly bidding wars between neighboring jurisdictions for sprawl-type development that holds out the hope for new tax revenues. Encouraging and assisting regional efforts all over the country should be a cornerstone of federal policy.

**Controlling sprawl is only half the battle, which brings me to the fourth thing the federal government should do: provide incentives for re-investing in existing communities.**

Discussions about the plight of the



Harriet Gans

Route 7, Wilton

C. Lynn



Newtown

cities often overlook a simple fact: When people leave the city it's not necessarily because they love sprawl or hate urban life, but because leaving is the rational thing to do. More than anything else, urban flight is an indictment of bad schools, crime and poor public services. As if this "push" weren't enough, people are "pulled" out of the city by policies and practices that make homes and infrastructures in the suburbs less expensive and easier to build.

In place of this "push-pull" combination, we need public policy that favors existing communities. Fifty years ago, the government began to offer economic inducements to families that wanted to flee to the suburbs; it's time to offer those same kinds of inducements to entice middle-class residents to return to, or stay in, the city. We need to focus energies and resources on reclaiming the streets and neighborhoods where people live — the towns, inner cities and older suburbs that we've neglected so badly for the past half-century. We must attract middle-income families back to the towns and cities, and we must improve the quality of housing for lower-income people.

One way to do this is by enacting the Historic Homeownership Assistance Act. This legislation, which has broad bipartisan support in both houses of Congress, would extend federal tax credits to homeowners who renovate their historic homes, giving

residents of older neighborhoods incentives to stay in invest in their community's future, and providing an incentive for others to move back into the city. [Editor's note: a similar bill has been introduced in the Connecticut General Assembly; see insert.] By offering a way to put deteriorated property back on the tax rolls while making homeownership more affordable for lower-income residents, this law could greatly benefit communities all over the country. Obviously, this one act won't solve

America's urban problems — but it can help, and a step in the right direction is better than standing still.

In fighting sprawl, we're dealing with an issue that undermines many of the national goals and values we've embraced over the years. The provision of affordable housing, improved mobility, a clean environment, the transition from welfare to work, the livability and economic health of our communities — all these are undermined by sprawl. In fact, there is scarcely a single national problem that is not exacerbated by sprawl or that would not be alleviated if sprawl were better contained.

We can continue turning much of our nation into a tragic patchwork of ruined cities and spoiled countryside, or we can insist on sensible federal policies that strengthen communities instead of scattering them randomly across the landscape.

The choice is ours, and the time to make that choice is now. ☐

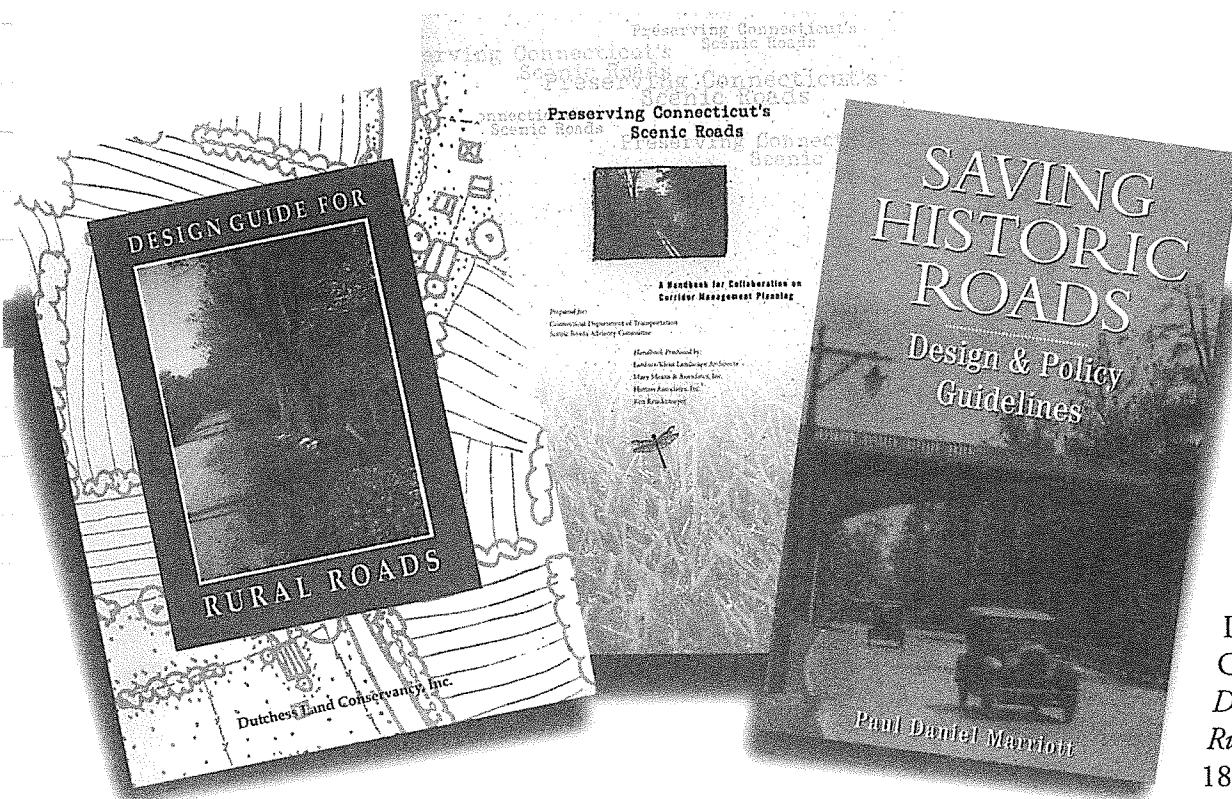
*Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is the keynote speaker for the Connecticut Trust's annual preservation conference on May 7. This article is excerpted from a speech he gave to the National Press Club on January 22, 1999.*

## THREATENED HISTORIC SITES: *A Call for Nominations*

What do you think are the most important threatened historic sites in Connecticut? Every year the Connecticut Trust publishes a list of especially important sites that face urgent threats, and we need your suggestions. For each one, please give us as much of the following information as you can, including:

1. Name and address of site
2. Owner
3. Description
4. Setting, including landscape
5. Historic significance, including Register status, if any
6. Threat to its preservation
7. Community commitment and efforts to save the property
8. Your name and telephone number
9. Photographs that give an accurate impression of the property, its setting, and its condition

Send your suggestions by July 15 to the Trust at 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut 06517; telephone: (203) 562-6312; fax: (203) 773-0107; email: [ct\\_trust@yahoo.com](mailto:ct_trust@yahoo.com).



Dutchess Land Conservancy, *Design Guide for Rural Roads* (1998), 186 pages.

*Here are reviews of three books relating to the preservation of historic and scenic roads and the corridors through which they pass.*

Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects *et al.*, *Preserving Connecticut's Scenic Roads: A Handbook for Collaboration on Corridor Management Planning* (1998), 36 pages.

In 1994 the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) launched a program to create management plans for state scenic roads, based on the recognition that the roads' scenic qualities depended as much on the character and use of the land through which they passed as on the treatment of the roads themselves—issues beyond the control of ConnDOT. A team of landscape architects and planners created management plans for 14 state scenic roads (see *CPN*, March/April 1996).

In addition to the corridor plans the program included this handbook, which highlights some of the key issues addressed in the plans, reports on some of the lessons learned, and offers recommendations for the future of scenic roads in Connecticut.

An important section of the book lists recommendations for the future of the scenic roads program, drawn up at a conference on scenic roads held in June, 1998. Among them:

- ConnDOT should commission or offer grants for studies on certain special issues relating to scenic roads, such as maintenance guidelines or standards for improving pedestrian safety.
- A commitment to corridor management should be made a condition for scenic road designation.
- Enabling legislation is needed to allow towns to address such issues as ridgeline protection, a streamlined waiver process for road design, and greater local input into state facility siting.

*Preserving Connecticut's Scenic Roads* is very brief, and the recommendations in particular would be more helpful if they were more fully explained. It's a good place to start, though, and could be of use in places that don't have any scenic roads but want to preserve their scenic and historic character.

So you've convinced your town's Director of Public Works to consider more appropriate design for a rural road, but he wants to know where he's going to get some guidance in designing the road. Show him this book. It offers specific guidelines for designing and building rural roads that blend in with the landscape.

The book is divided into two parts. The first is more general, offering design suggestions for a variety of types of rural roads, ranging from village streets to industrial access roads; it also has sections on bridges, sidewalks and parking areas, bike lanes, and gravel roads. Part II is more specialized, aimed at the Director of Public Works rather than the general public. With careful reading, though, the public may learn a good deal about how roads are designed and built.

The authors have drawn heavily on several works to create this design guide. Anton Neessen's *Visions for a New American Dream*, one of the basic texts of neotraditional planning, is one of them, along with more specialized handbooks from the New York Department of Transportation, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the Vermont Local Roads program. The aim is

*continued page 15*

## Connecticut's Agenda Should Be Smart Growth

Jefferson B. Davis

Connecticut needs a vision that improves prospects for all the state's residents over the long term. This agenda should be built around the theme of "smart growth" – policies that encourage development in areas where infrastructure already exists and that promote the preservation of open space.

Smart growth's components should include, but not be limited to, issues such as coordinated land-use planning on the state, regional, and local levels; the establishment of "priority funding areas" for projects that receive state benefits above \$100,000; strong brown-field incentives to make contaminated urban sites productive again; and the purchase of open space and development rights.

Most fundamental is revenue-neutral property-tax reform. When I was Pomfret's first selectman, my job was simple – find ways to grow the local tax base to keep down property taxes. I ran to become a state representative because I recognized that that narrow agenda was self-defeating.

Why are smart growth policies so important to Connecticut's future?

We allocate hundreds of millions of bonding dollars for our cities, yet researcher after researcher finds that no community that has reached the financial despair of our poorest cities has ever been turned around because of massive government spending.

At the same time, driven by overreliance on property taxes, towns wage war with each other in the less-than-zero sum game of chasing new grand list growth.

No attention is paid to how much money needs to be spent on new roads and the expansion of utilities. As a result, people are stuck in cars for longer periods of time as they commute across regions to work, while the high cost of utility extensions with no growth in customers increases utility costs and hurts the state's competitiveness.

Hanging in the conference room at the Connecticut Economic Resource Center in Rocky Hill are special advertising supplements Governors Weicker

and Rowland have run in *Forbes* and *Fortune* magazines trumpeting Connecticut as the place where businesses should locate. Without exception, those supplements depict the open spaces and the historic features of our state. Now is the time to save them.

Governor Rowland has already started on important elements of smart growth like the purchase of open space and brownfield remediation. But some of the more difficult issues like real property-tax reform, restructuring the relationship between our cities and towns, and a growth management strategy that recognizes the new realities of economic competition need his leadership.

I hope the Governor will use his leadership and political capital to promote an agenda that not only doesn't cost money, but will save money and improve the state's economy and the quality of life. He will be surprised at the depth of support. ■

*Jefferson B. Davis, D-Pomfret, is a state representative and House chairman of the General Assembly's Planning and Development Committee.*

## Using Village Districts to Preserve Heritage: One Town's Approach

Diane W. Fox

Last year, the General Assembly approved legislation enabling communities to establish Village Districts to "Protect the distinctive character, landscape and historic structures of the State of Connecticut's village centers." Greenwich has three areas that may qualify to become Village Districts: Byram, Old Greenwich, and Cos Cob. Each has a distinctive history, architectural style, and neighborhood characteristics, but they all provide retail, institutional and recreational opportunities to their residents. Each is currently undergoing pressures for expanded retail/commercial areas and the demolition of existing residences. While the town has Local Historic Districts and Historic Overlay zones, which have been very effective in pre-

serving certain structures and areas, this new legislation provides a unique vehicle to protect other areas with a thematic design at a time when demolition is at a peak.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has secured funding for the next fiscal year (beginning in July, 1999) to hire a consultant who will inventory the village centers and make recommendations to the Commission, neighborhood associations, and residents on how to preserve and plan for these unique areas as Village Districts.

This study will also fulfill some of the goals of the town Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Plan, approved in May, 1998. The plan calls for the town to inventory, designate and publicize historic and tradi-

tional neighborhoods; to identify neighborhood design elements and guidelines for homeowners and builders; and to establish a public-private partnership to create a town Preservation Plan.

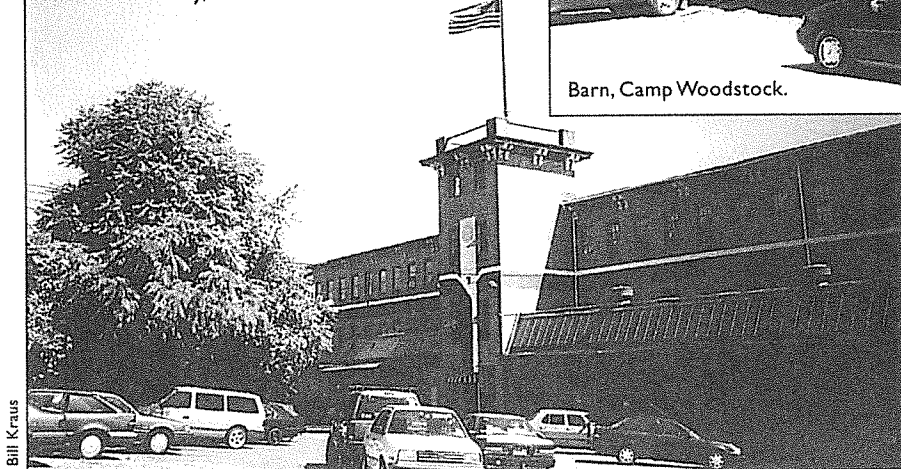
There are five steps in the process of designating Village Districts:

1. Educate the residents and support for the designation of each area as a Village District.
2. Inventory the structures and landscape and settings of each district, and identify problems.
3. Establish standards of design unique to each area and in common to all, including public landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, pedestrian, bike and vehicle circulation.

*continued next page*

professional firms are donating services, including Briggs Knowles Architects of New York, TAMS Consulting of Boston (specialists in parking garage design), and the accounting and consulting firm of Ernst & Young, who are preparing an economic impact study. Kraus expects that the alternate design will prove less expensive, since it will not require the city to buy and demolish the Lock Factory.

The Lock Factory, Norwalk



**Norwalk.** A group of residents are working to save the oldest building occupied by a black church in Norwalk. The present owner, J. Cox & Son Auto Body, wants to demolish the former Bethel AME church for more parking.

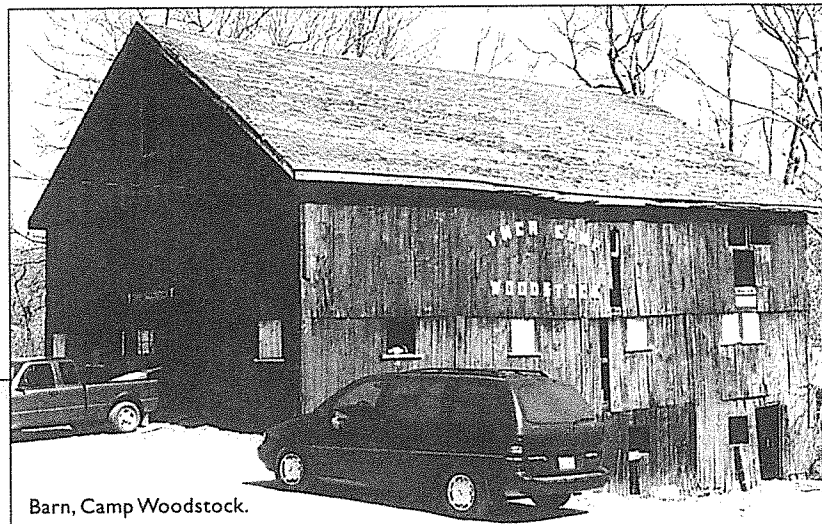
The structure was built in 1850 as the education building of the Congregational Church on the Green. It was given to Bethel, the city's first black congregation, and moved to its present location in 1886. The congregation moved to another site in 1954 and a Masonic lodge then used the building. At least six Norwalk churches are considered to have their roots in the building. It has been extensively remodeled.

A group headed by assistant Fire Chief Sanford Anderson is attempting to find a place to move the building to. They hope that it could be used for community activities.

At the Norwalk Historical Commission's February 25 meeting, Cox Auto asked that the church be removed from the city's historic inventory so that it could be demolished. The motion was tabled for 90 days to allow Anderson's group to put together a proposal. They

are looking for a site to move the building to and at possible ways of using it.

**Woodstock.** Children attending Y.M.C.A. Camp Woodstock will once again participate in crafts and other activities in the camp's historic barn. It and the adjacent farmhouse, both built in 1865, formed the heart of the camp, established in 1922 by the Hartford "Y." From the beginning, the barn was an activity center with an emphasis on crafts. It withstood the 1938 hurricane, but over the past ten years its functions were assigned to other buildings and it



Barn, Camp Woodstock.

was used only for storage as it fell into disrepair. The camp's Board of Managers considered demolition, but voted in March of this year to keep the barn and restore it as a symbol of the camp's past and a reminder of Connecticut's strong agricultural history. After a \$65,000 renovation, the barn will once again house crafts activities, as well as an indoor climbing wall and facilities for theatrical productions.

The effort to restore the barn was led by Fred Sibley of Greenwich, a member of the camp's Board, with the assistance of the Connecticut Trust — particularly Board member Jean McClellan of Woodstock — the National Trust's "Barn Again" program, the Woodstock Historical Society, and the Billings Farm Museum in Woodstock, Vermont. Funds and support for this project are welcomed: call or write Mike Sherman, Director, Camp Woodstock, 42 Camp Road, Woodstock Valley, Connecticut 06282; (800) 782-2344. 🏠



**SOLID/FLUE**  
Chimney Savers  
Division of J.P. Maguire Associates

**IF YOUR CHIMNEY IS UNLINED,  
YOU'RE COURTING DISASTER!**

*The original cast-in-place lining  
system . . . call for an inspection.*  
1-(800) 233-8220

Galen (Hap) Shepherd  
(203) 633-2383

**Maurer & Shepherd Joiners Inc.**  
Authentic Colonial Joinery  
17th & 18th Century Millwork

Windows, Doors & Entryways  
Raised Pine Walls  
Old Glass Moldings, Wide Pine Flooring  
Beaded & Feather Edge Boards

CUSTOM WOODWORKING

122 Naubec Avenue  
Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033

A marketing campaign promoting business development can sometimes benefit from a motto or slogan which strives to capture the character of the town and it's attitude toward business. A contest to choose a motto can generate interest in itself. One possible Haddam Economic Development motto is as follows:

# Haddam

## Connecticut

where the

# Past

meets the

# Future

f o u n d e d

1 6 6 8

f i b e r o p t i c ' d

1 9 9 3





Artisans and Craftsmens Co-op at Scovil Mill: studios and marketplace