

Shelburne Road/Route 7 Corridor Design Charrette

Town of Shelburne & Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Opening Session: Issues, Concerns, Suggestions & Vision

Day 1 - 2/1/14 - Shelburne Town Hall

- When the corridor was expanded to 4 lanes, traffic bottlenecks shifted from the north end to the south end at the river where it returns to 2 lanes, the traffic issue was relocated but not resolved.
- Growth will drive a steady increase in traffic. The corridor needs long-term traffic management, circulation and access solutions
- Pedestrian/bike infrastructure exists along the corridor but there's no reason to walk.
- Need better bike path. Existing lanes are OK but trucks and other traffic are off-putting.
- Rt. 7 is just not walkable. The vortex of passing traffic makes it uncomfortable.
- Route 7 because things are spread out and of limited interest to residents.
- If buildings were closer to street and each other the corridor would be more walkable, views would open up, and more land could be available for new homes behind.
- The Red Apple is an eyesore and should be addressed.
- There needs to be a better front-back mix of uses (commercial along frontage and residential behind).
- Shelburne's population is aging - If you want to attract younger people need to make it more affordable.
- Visual Issues—street trees small and dying. Parked trucks are used as virtual signs.
- Harbor Highway now a parking lot. This is part of a trend toward wider setbacks.
- Empty buildings send the wrong message.
- There is a lack of connectivity between businesses.
- The corridor generally feels like a no-man's land—you don't want to be there.
- A few places feel like Shelburne, but almost by accident. Shelburne Bay Plaza works well. A large nearby neighborhood one reason for its success. It's somewhat of a social gathering area.
- Need to make this about establishing community—not just making it look better. Shelburne Bay Plaza works because it's the center of a neighborhood.
- The Jelly Mill Plaza also has potential for additional development and vacant space rental.
- How can Shelburne collaborate with South Burlington on certain issues? What can be done about pedestrian safety? (Dangerous, especially at night). South Burlington plans are driven by density—what is the implication for Shelburne? How do we create an entrance that feels like you're entering Shelburne? What is the identity of Shelburne? Unified, welcoming...
- How do you create a delineation and distinction between S.Burlington and Shelburne? Could we create an open space break and other gateway treatments? How do you get landowners to support it?

- Need to create supportive business environment. Form-based code could allow increased density and make approvals faster and easier.
- Install flowers and gardens along the medians. Signs, banners to advertise coming attractions further south on Route 7.
- The town's review process is currently focused on use. What can we do in the future to get a better design that is visually attractive and economically successful?
- The town does have design standards. Tractor Supply is an example of the result. It's better than it could have been.
- How does FBC work and how will it fit with the town's current design regulations?
- The corridor needs more trees! Visual preference survey (VPS) images with trees always score higher. Need to focus on good preparation and planting techniques.
- Need to create a major gateway treatment - Enter Shelburne! See big trees, sculpture, lighting, signage, plantings, etc.
- Need town to budget for trees and maintenance.
- Uncomfortable feeling between residential and commercial users. Need to bring back more traditional mixed-use relationships.
- Route 7 is a monolith but we don't need to look at it that way. Could focus on better east-west connections, and uses that to create internal connectivity and access.
- There is a lack of access to the east. Could we create more links to Spear Street?
- Need to change the philosophy that the northern section is part of S. B. That mentality needs to stop.
- Need to be careful that nodes don't become islands.
- How much control does the town have over state-owned highways? The town could take over Rt. 7, but then it would have to maintain it.
- How to make Rt. 7 a place for people to live and work, not just commercial pass-through; how can the town encourage more residential and office uses in addition to retail and restaurant.
- There may be opportunity for live/work/walk at future neighborhood nodes
- Need case studies to show land and business owners that FBC will increase economic opportunity.
- Need to include preservation of the nice houses that remain. Historic houses help distinguish the corridor from S. Burlington.
- Future buildings should be designed for diverse uses. Dorset Street area shows what buildings close to the road look like.
- Need spaces where events can happen—formal and informal community gathering spaces.