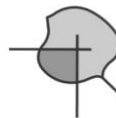


Supplemental Report to:
The Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan

August 3, 2018



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Executive Summary

August 2, 2018

The following report, produced by CES Engineering and Richardson & Associates, Landscape Architects, describes: the purpose, intent, goals and objectives for improving the Northeast Harbor Village Center; the Consulting Team's goals and how they were met in the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan; and the consulting team's response to the Town's request for an evaluation of the four petition considerations.

As the following report details, there was a significant amount of community input from a diversity of people over a number of years that defined the purpose, intent, goals and objectives for improving the Village Center of Northeast Harbor (the "Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan" or "Northeast Harbor Plan").

The Consulting Team embraced the community's input and reflected it directly in the streetscape, landscape and engineering recommendations outlined within the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan.

The process of developing the Northeast Harbor Plan was an iterative and collaborative, consisting of numerous Advisory Committee meetings, workshops, internal design team reviews, and two public meetings. The plan was ultimately endorsed by the Advisory Committee and the Board of Selectmen, and approved by public vote at Town Meeting on May 8th 2018 (Article 25).

This report also identifies how the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan addresses the four petition items which seek reconsideration by the Board of Selectmen of the Plan and several core elements of the Plan that were adopted with the approval of Article 25 by Town Meeting.

In specific:

1. Alternate approach to wire utilities. Providing an alternate electrical overhead route from Tracy Road to service Main Street businesses could produce several challenges. Servicing

businesses from behind will require permanent easements to be granted from a number of neighboring properties. This could be challenging, time consuming, and costly. Furthermore, the installation of additional services from behind Main Street may restrict the development potential for many of the businesses both on Main Street and those that are adjacent to Main Street.

Additionally, constructability would have to be evaluated to ensure there is a route available to construct utility lines underground with enough space for construction equipment to service and maintain in the future. The utility corridor chosen should not interfere with existing infrastructure, landscaping, or other site characteristics, which may prove challenging.

Altering the entrance locations for services from the front of the buildings along Main Street to the rear was not considered a practical option. Moving the service entrances for these properties away from their front facing location along Main Street could mean moving meters and reconstructing utility layouts inside buildings. This would be a labor-intensive coordination effort and would significantly increase project costs associated with work on private property.

With respect to rerouting overhead electrical service from Tracy Road, it should be noted the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan outlines a multi-year phased approach to the recommended improvements. The unified aesthetic the plan strives to accomplish over its multiple phases may be compromised by this shift. When the Plan was prepared, it insured all phases of the project would work together; significantly altering this first phase would have impacts to the subsequent phases of the plan. Landscape and aesthetic considerations for Tracy Road and the inner core between Main Street and Tracy Road would be impacted. In summary, eliminating the burying of utility wires on Main Street would have a ripple effect on a well thought out plan that has been endorsed by the Northeast Harbor Village Planning Committee and supported by the residents of the Town.

2. To reconsider time line of job schedule. Great consideration was placed in the scheduling of the proposed improvements to Main Street. This topic was raised and discussed by and with the Steering Committee with guidance and input from Tony Smith, Director of Public Works. With further focus by Mr. Smith and a representative of the contractor, the targeted construction dates of Mid-October to mid-May during the “off season” will balance the construction needs of the project with the least amount of disturbance to the business involved.

3. To reconsider that any development of buildings on Main Street be done first and that the streets and sidewalks be done last. The goal of delaying improvements to the Main Street streetscape until “any development of buildings has been completed” is impractical as the time frame and extent of this future development is not known. The plan does however, provide utility stubs for future connections and encourages new development within and around the Main Street Corridor.

4. To consider the option of incentivizing developers, established businesses and future businesses to help sustain future growth of an economical and viable Main Street. The recommendations outlined within the approved Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan *are* an incentive to developers, established businesses, and future businesses through the improved character, function, and identity they will bring to the Village. The recommended changes will attract new businesses, encourage existing businesses to stay in the Village, and create incentive for visitors to spend more time and more money in Northeast Harbor.

The detailed discussion in the Report follows.

I. Overview of the purpose, intent, goals and objectives for the Improvement to the Northeast Harbor Village Center.

The following describes the purpose, intent, goals and objectives of the Northeast Village Center project. The development of many of these originated by the Town prior to the engagement of the consulting team (CES Engineering, Richardson & Associates, Landscape Architects and Planning Decisions (economic development) and served as the foundation of the consulting team's proposal and subsequent work. The resultant plan, including an understood project purpose, intent and goals was supported and approved by the Village Center Planning Committee, by the Board of Selectmen and ultimately voted upon favorably by the Town Meeting on May 8th 2018 (Article 25).

What follows are excerpts from the various supporting documents authored by both the Town and Consulting Team that highlight the purpose, intent, goals and objectives of the project.

They are presented in chronological order.

The following project goals were identified in the Town's RFP (Request for Proposals) for the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan), dated January 13, 2016:

"The Town of Mount Desert, Maine is requesting proposals from planning, engineering, and design firms to provide a plan to improve the appearance, functionality, and vitality of Northeast Harbor's village center".

"The goal of the work is to evaluate the status of buildings and infrastructure within the study area. Problems related to poor operational characteristics, poor appearance and or structural integrity and inadequate public services or amenities shall be examined."

"As an integral part of the overall plan... recommended improvements to these systems, a proposed sequence of projects, and associated cost estimates shall be provided."

“The plan will: Serve as a blueprint for future development and infrastructure improvements in the village.”

Be developed with the technical expertise of the consulting team and town staff and regular communication with, and input from the Village Center Planning Committee and the public.”

“Items to be evaluated include”:

- Vehicular and pedestrian circulation
- Road conditions
- Parking
- Sidewalks and curbs
- Signage
- Lighting and electrical services
- Public water and sewer
- Parks and green spaces
- Landscaping
- Public amenities

The RFP also states: “community attitudes, opinions and ideas concerning revitalization of Northeast Harbor’s village center will be developed during a public outreach process conducted prior to the start of the project. “

The following was codified in The Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Community Outreach Report, dated April 11, 2016.

“This report outlines the results of the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan community outreach activities. The goal of this work was to actively seek input from a variety of village and town stakeholders about existing conditions in the village of Northeast Harbor and concerns about its future. It also sought to identify a future vision for the village. This vision will guide later parts of the plan and shape recommendations for development and infrastructure improvements over the next 10 years.”

This document was a summary of the many efforts undertaken by Northeast Harbor’s interested parties to gather public input including:

- The Village Center Plan Committee Workshop (November 12th 2015)
- The Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Public Outreach Meeting (November 19, 2015)
- The Northeast Harbor Village Stakeholder Meeting (February 3, 2016), the Summer Residents Association Meeting (July 16, 2015)
- The Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Outreach Questionnaire (distributed December 2105-Febraury 14,2016)

This report references a number of important examples of feedback received from the community through the above meetings, which directly influenced the NEH Village Center Plan. They are as follows:

Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Committee Workshop

On November 12, 2015 an outreach workshop was held with the Village Center Planning Committee to discuss issues and opportunities in Northeast Harbor’s village center.

Top Projects or Actions:

The Village Center Planning Committee suggested a wide range of actions to improve Northeast Harbor’s village center.

Two of the more popular responses included:

Improving the appearance of Main Street and creating better connections between the Harbor and Main Street.

Specific projects and actions identified by the Village Center Planning Committee included:

- Put public seating areas along Main Street so people can linger there
- Put utility lines underground
- Put trees along Main Street
- Improve the landscaping along Main Street and in the marina area

Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Public Outreach Meeting

On November 19, 2015 a community public outreach meeting was held from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Northeast Harbor Library. The purpose of this event was to allow residents the opportunity to communicate their issues, aspirations and priorities regarding Northeast Harbor's village center.

Top Projects or Actions:

Workshop participants suggested a wide range of action items to improve Northeast Harbor's village center. The most popular response was to improve the appearance of Main Street by putting utilities underground, widening sidewalks, improving building facades, and by installing improved lighting, greenspace, landscaping and seating.

Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Stakeholder Meeting

On February 3, 2016, a community stake holder meeting was held from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm at the Neighborhood House in Northeast Harbor. Individuals who either owned property or a business within the study area and people identified as key stakeholders in the planning process were invited to this event. The purpose of the meeting was to identify key assets and issues in the village study area and to solicit a vision for its future. This meeting was organized around small working groups of 4 to 6 participants, each staffed by one or more Village Center Planning Committee members.

Top Projects or Actions:

Participants suggested a wide range of action items to improve Northeast Harbor's village center.

The more popular responses included: upgrading the visual appearance of Main Street by improving its built environment such as lighting, sidewalks, building facades, utility lines and landscaping; adding more restaurants; and increasing the amount of affordable housing.

Summer Residents Association Meeting, Northeast Harbor

On July 16, 2015 at 4:30 pm the Town of Mount Desert Summer Residents Association held its first summer meeting at the Neighborhood House in Northeast Harbor. At this meeting, preliminary information about the proposed Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan was provided and a short outreach session was conducted.

Attendees desired changes included:

1. Putting utility wires underground, at least on Main Street

2. Sidewalk improvements along Main Street

Numerous other varied suggestions were stated.

Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan Outreach Questionnaire Responses

Recommended Improvements:

1. Landscaping – Benches and other street improvements
2. Street and sidewalk repairs
3. Put utilities underground
4. Parking improvements

Plan Priorities:

1. Streetscaping
2. Sidewalk Improvements

Visions for the Future:

1. Same quaint town but with a beautiful pedestrian promenade along Main Street
2. Vacant lots built out, power lines underground, cleaner, wider sidewalks, and pathways, lights with flowers, a small pocket park for visitors to sit and relax

As evidenced in the selected excerpts, and further supported within the full documents referenced, there was a significant amount of community input from a diversity of people that ultimately defined the purpose, intent, goals and objectives for improving the Village Center of the Northeast Harbor.

II. The Consulting Team's Goals and how they were met in the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan

The resultant goals described in the previous section became the foundation which guided the consultant team's development of The Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan.

The Final Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan has the following goals:

- **Improve the overall aesthetics, functionality and vitality of Northeast Harbor Village.**
- **Increase pedestrian opportunities and provide improved areas for casual social gathering.**
- **Provide areas for expanded commercial and residential development by increasing development infill opportunities.**

- **Improve the connection between Main Street and the Harbor.**

The consultant team’s process was an iterative and collaborative one consisting of numerous advisory committee meetings, workshops, internal design team reviews, and two public meetings. These efforts culminated in a Final Report which includes Site Inventory and Analysis Diagrams, a Final Plan, an Engineering Report, an Economic Report, and Cost Estimates. The purpose of this Final Report is to serve as a foundation or ‘Master Plan’ for further planning and design development advancements for the Northeast Harbor Village Center.

The Final Plans recommendations addresses a number of issues while maintaining and enhancing the key assets of the village. These suggested improvements directly align with the goals and objectives determined by the Town, its residents and the consulting team.

Streetscape and Landscape Recommendations:

- Enhance the Main Street storefront edge
- Turn vacant lots into infill development opportunities
- Create stronger physical and visual connections between the village and Harbor, key institutions, and Tracy Road
- Develop a pavilion linking the Harbor and the village core
- Create planted entrances at the north and south ends of Main Street
- Shift to a greater dispersement of parking over the village
- Increase Ped-Bike trails
- Improve pedestrian circulation
- Develop wider sidewalks along Main Street
- Integrate a unified vocabulary of materials and amenities
- Relocated above ground utilities underground
- Reconfigure the parking lot at Main Street and Summit Road
- Summit Road is realigned to “T” up with Main Street
- The addition of a stop sign on Main Street
- Simplify Main Street and Neighborhood Road to form a “T”
- Add attractive, native plantings.
- Transform the directory space into a small gathering space
- Develop a front gathering space at The Great Harbor Maritime Museum
- Eliminate vehicle access to the parking area on the south side of the Museum and replace with plantings and street trees
- Diagonal parking along Main Street is maintained along with one-way traffic southbound

- Overall parking quantities in the Village have been maintained, however, the locations are changed.
- A narrower curb to curb dimension on Main Street widens the west sidewalk
- Develop a three-foot-wide sidewalk on the east side of Main Street
- Add street lamps along the east side of Main Street
- Plant street trees along Main Street
- Add benches along Main Street
- Add striped crosswalks and granite posts for pedestrian crossings
- Add bike racks and trash receptacles along Main Street
- Enhance sidewalks and add street trees and street lamps on both sides of Summit Road
- Add street trees and street lamps along Neighborhood Road
- Create a mid-block development including a pedestrian connection between Main Street and Tracy Road
- A vacant lot transforms to a park like village trail and connects to the Harbor Trail
- Streetscape improvements will be made on Sea Street
- Eliminate the 'mega' public parking lot in favor of smaller, dispersed parking lots
- Infill will grow the village in the direction of a key asset of the village, the Harbor.
- A promenade is created along the edge of the bluff
- A 'Village Walk', is created, lined with existing shops and new development infill
- A three-foot-wide sidewalk is located on the east side of Tracy Road.
- Street trees and street lamps are added on Tracy Road
- Parallel parking on Tracy Road contributes to a more evenly dispersed public parking layout
- To accommodate parking needs, there will be a one-way northbound traffic lane on Tracy Road

Engineering Recommendations

- Make any needed repairs or improvements to public utilities during this construction process
- At this time no major issues are known to exist with the sewer system; however, additional investigations would need to be completed to verify the function and condition of individual service lines.
- Identify any areas which may be developed in the future and provide sewer disposal service lines, if they do not currently exist.
- The main water line be replaced with new properly sized main lines throughout the Village improvement area
- Include new service lines and individual curb stops (Valves) as needed

- Relocation of existing fire hydrants in coordination with The Fire Department and Public Works Department
- Complete an assessment of the future storm flow conditions to determine flow paths and required collection areas.
- Develop a new storm drainage system consisting of new catch basins and storm drain piping
- This will require the installation of several individual and combined pad mounted transformers throughout the Village area. With the existing density of the Village it may be a challenge to establish service to all existing structures. With the limited area available within the roadway system, and existing developed lots, it is expected that several easements would be required on private properties to install service lines and transformers.
- Installation of underground utilities can however be targeted to specific locations. It may be recommended that specific areas be identified that would be the most desirable for underground service and a plan developed to determine the cost and complexity of the installation. This could include only one street or even sections of streets.
- Convert overhead electric utilities to underground service
- Convert all existing building entrances to underground service.
- If the overhead system is to remain, several utility poles will need to be relocated with the proposed roadway reconstruction. Currently many poles are on the edge of travel ways or in sidewalks. With the reconfiguration of the roadway it is expected that several of these poles will conflict with planned improvements.

III. Response to the Four Petition Items:

1. The reconsideration of underground power, telephone and internet on Main Street and supply those utilities from behind buildings with overhead poles.

The overhead utility lines were placed underground in order to allow for landscape improvements and amenities to be incorporated within the Main Street corridor. By burying these lines, a more attractive and desirable Main Street could be established.

This goal was supported on a number of levels. As the design was being developed through 2017 and early 2018, the Project Team conducted two public meetings to discuss the project elements, which including the burying of overhead utility lines. Additionally, the Village Center Planning Committee served as a sounding board to the consultants to help guide the recommendations for Main Street. Ultimately this Committee approved the plan that was then brought forward to the Board of Selectmen.

This plan included the recommendation that Main Street would be free of overhead wires, and include the planting of trees as well as street lighting.

Given the approval of this recommendation, the team proceeded to provide an approach that would optimize an underground conduit system servicing all properties on Main Street. Because construction of underground utilities is costly and labor intensive, ensuring the shortest possible conduit runs was essential in the design process. Burying the existing utilities on Main Street allows for optimum use of the proposed utility corridor on Main Street. The majority of utility entrances that currently exist for businesses served from the overhead utilities on Main Street are located nearer the front of the buildings. Shorter conduit runs for individual services to businesses are achieved by utilizing Main Street as a corridor for the underground utilities. Providing service from other streets with the goal of keeping the utility buried was not considered practical.

Providing an alternate electrical overhead route from Tracy Road to service Main Street businesses could produce several challenges. Servicing businesses from behind will require permanent easements to be granted from a number of neighboring properties. This could be challenging, time consuming, and costly. Furthermore, the installation of additional services from behind Main Street may restrict the development potential for many of the businesses both on Main Street and those that are adjacent to Main Street.

Additionally, constructability would have to be evaluated to ensure there is a route available to construct utility lines underground with enough space for construction equipment to service and maintain in the future. The utility corridor chosen should not interfere with existing infrastructure, landscaping, or other site characteristics, which may prove challenging.

Altering the entrance locations for services from the front of the buildings along Main Street to the rear was not considered a practical option. Moving the service entrances for these properties away from their front facing location along Main Street could mean moving meters and reconstructing utility layouts inside buildings. This would be a labor-intensive coordination effort and would significantly increase project costs associated with work on private property.

With respect to rerouting overhead electrical service from Tracy Road, it should be noted the Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan outlines a multi-year phased approach to the recommended improvements. The unified aesthetic the plan strives to accomplish over its multiple phases may be compromised by this shift. When the Plan was prepared, it insured all phases of the project would work together; significantly altering this first phase would have impacts to the subsequent phases of the plan. Landscape and aesthetic considerations for Tracy Road and the inner core between Main Street and

Tracy Road would be impacted. In summary, eliminating the burying of utility wires on Main Street would have a ripple effect on a well thought out plan that has been endorsed by the Village Center Planning Committee and supported by the residents of the Town.

2. To reconsider time line of job schedule so as not to put in danger the viability and profitability of the last existing Businesses on Main Street and surrounding streets.

Great consideration was placed in the scheduling of the proposed improvements to Main Street. This topic was raised and discussed by and with the Village Center Planning Committee with guidance and input from Tony Smith, director of Public Works. With further focus by Mr. Smith and a representative of the contractor, the targeted construction dates of Mid-October to May 24 during the “off season” will balance the construction needs of the project with the least amount of disturbance to the business involved.

3. To reconsider and convey to developers, the town voters have voted in the positive to improve Main Street and that any development of buildings on Main Street be done first and that the streets and sidewalks be done last so as not to damage the new Street and side walk to further damage due to future utility and construction work.

The goal of delaying improvements to the Main Street streetscape until “any development of buildings has been completed” is impractical as the time frame and extent of this future development is not known. The plan does however, provide utility stubs for future connections and encourages new development within and around the Main Street Corridor.

4. To consider the option of incentivizing developers, established businesses and future businesses to help sustain future growth of an economical and viable Main Street.

The recommendations outlined within the approved Northeast Harbor Village Center Plan *are* an incentive to developers, established businesses, and future businesses through the improved character, function, and identity they will bring to the Village. The recommended changes will attract new businesses, encourage existing businesses to stay in the Village, and create incentive for visitors to spend more time and more money in Northeast Harbor.