



# TOWN OF CHESTER *DRAFT* POTTERSVILLE STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT

DECEMBER 7, 2011

This concept was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

PREPARED BY



PREPARED FOR



AND



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## UPDATE TO ENHANCEMENT PLAN

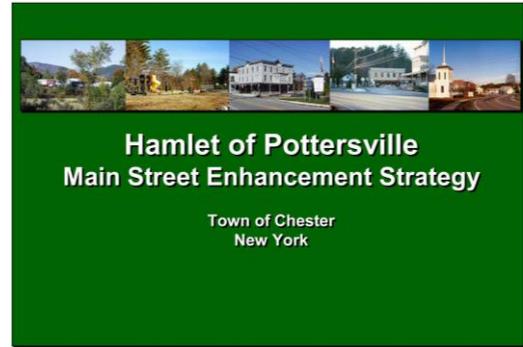
This project is part of a larger waterfront and community revitalization effort that has been carried out by Warren County in partnership with the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS), Division of Coastal Resources and the communities of the “First Wilderness” corridor of the Hudson River. Using earlier studies as a guide, our team identified areas defined in the plan to focus efforts, including evaluating new opportunity areas for improvements such as installing sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting within the Pottersville hamlet.

The original grant scope included funding to install sidewalks and lighting for the area between the Wells House intersection and the former school along County Route 19. The team reviewed and refined the focus of this study with the committee’s input to address new concerns, mostly related to traffic impacts and in the process identified areas for future project funding. Entities such as NYS DOT and continued partnership and support from the NYSDOS Division of Coastal Resources will continue to be of utmost importance.

The purpose of this Hamlet Enhancement Study is to identify appropriate treatments and install the selected improvements in the Pottersville Hamlet area.

The direction for this work comes from a prior study, Hamlet of Pottersville Main Street Enhancement Strategy (The Saratoga Associates, 2003). This study includes two areas which were not recommended for inclusion in the scope of this project: The Northeast Gateway Area east of I -87 and the South Gateway Corridor, on Valley Farm Road east of the Main Street intersection.

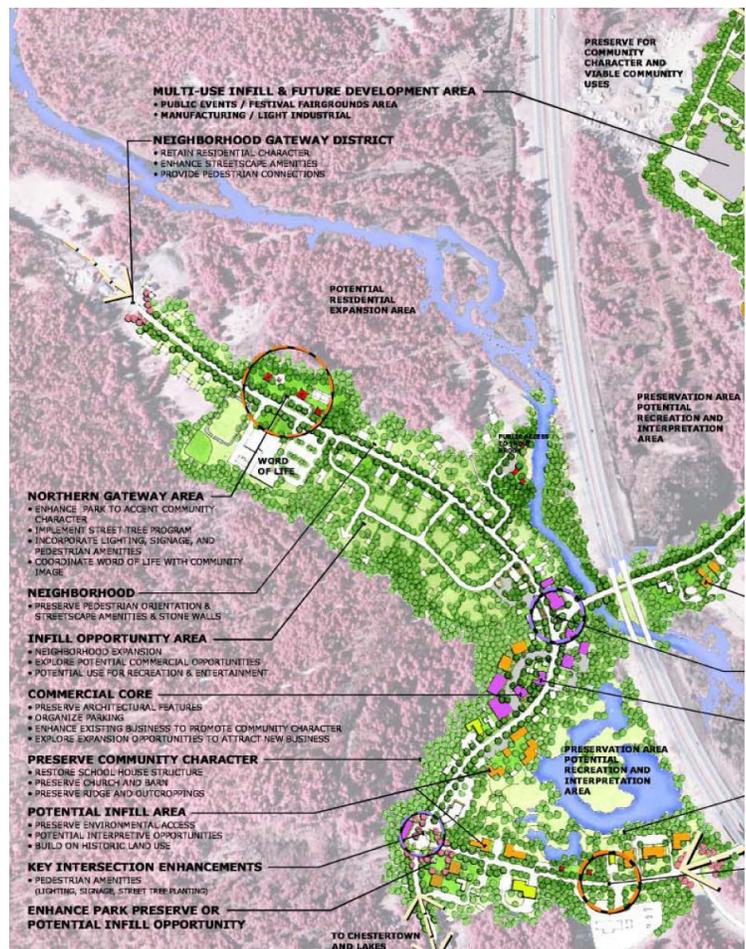
Whereas the prior 2003 plan made broad recommendations for enhancing recreation and tourism, historic architecture, way-finding signage and improving the local economy, this current study focused on physical improvements to the corridor from the Black Bear Restaurant to the Wells House.



THE SARATOGA ASSOCIATES

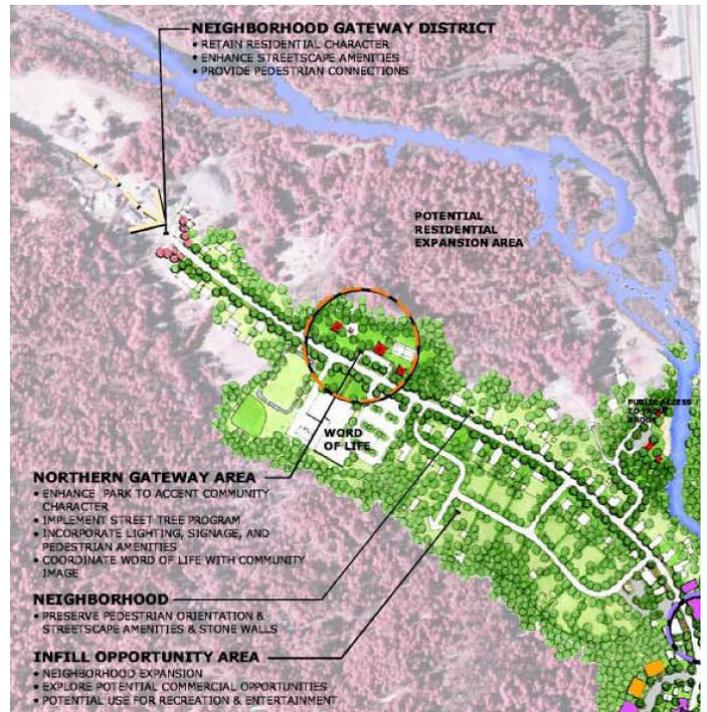
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, & PLANNERS, P.C.  
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May, 2003



In coordination with the committee appointed to assist in this work, the following are selected goals and opportunities from the 2003 study which were considered pertinent to focus on in this study:

- Provide safe intersections in front of Wells House and at the Black Bear Restaurants
- Provide safe sidewalks along Route 9 and Valley Farm Road
- Add safe crosswalks where needed
- Enhance visual presentation of the hamlet
- Enhance park areas, potentially adding pavilions
- Provide parking for visitors and buses
- Establish streetscape and architectural beautification program
- Consider bridge rail improvements
- Add welcome signage and treatments at gateways to the hamlet and locate a First Wilderness kiosk for visitor information



A further analysis of the 2003 study findings led to more detailed possible recommendations for each of the remaining areas as summarized in the image following:

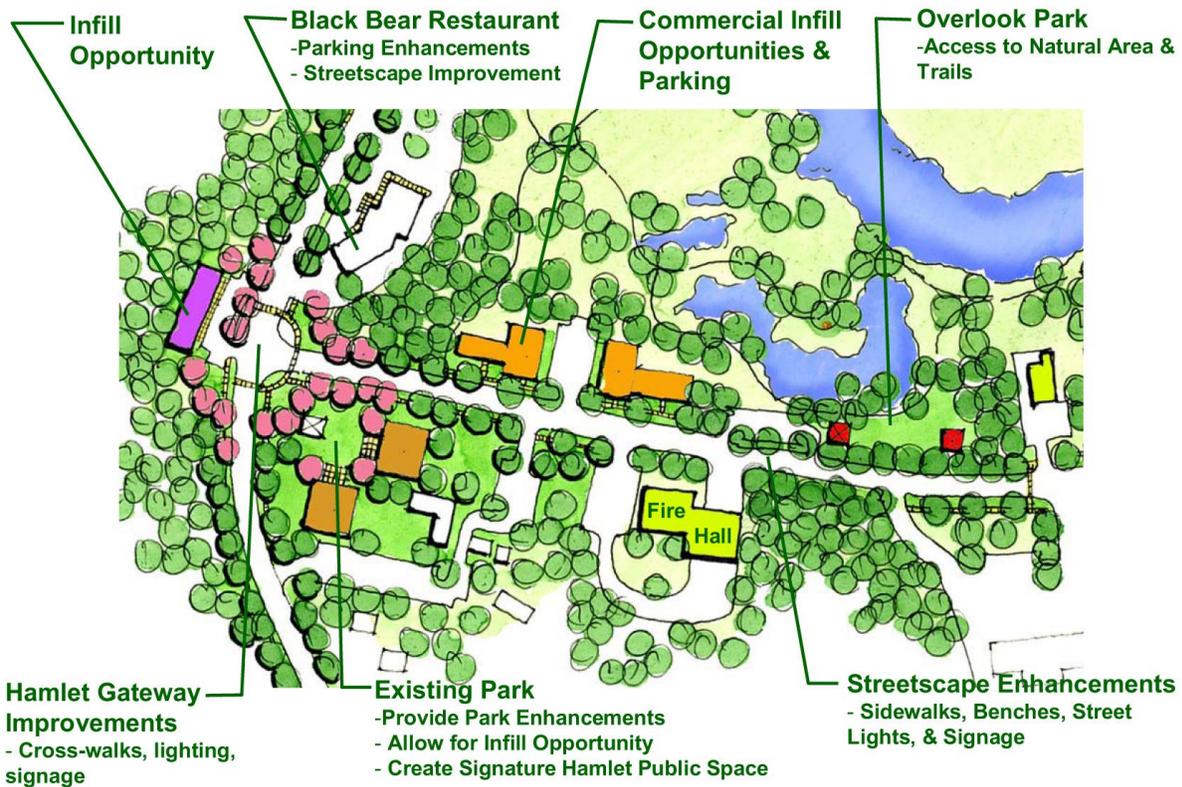


**Northern Gateway Area:** This area is located at the the park and former school site on County Route 19 and could be considered a gateway to the hamlet from the west.

- Possible landscape enhancements:
  - Lighting, gateway signage, street tree plantings
- Park improvements:
  - Pave parking area and use curb stops to define parking area; also use fencing and landscape treatments to organize space visually. Install a park sign.

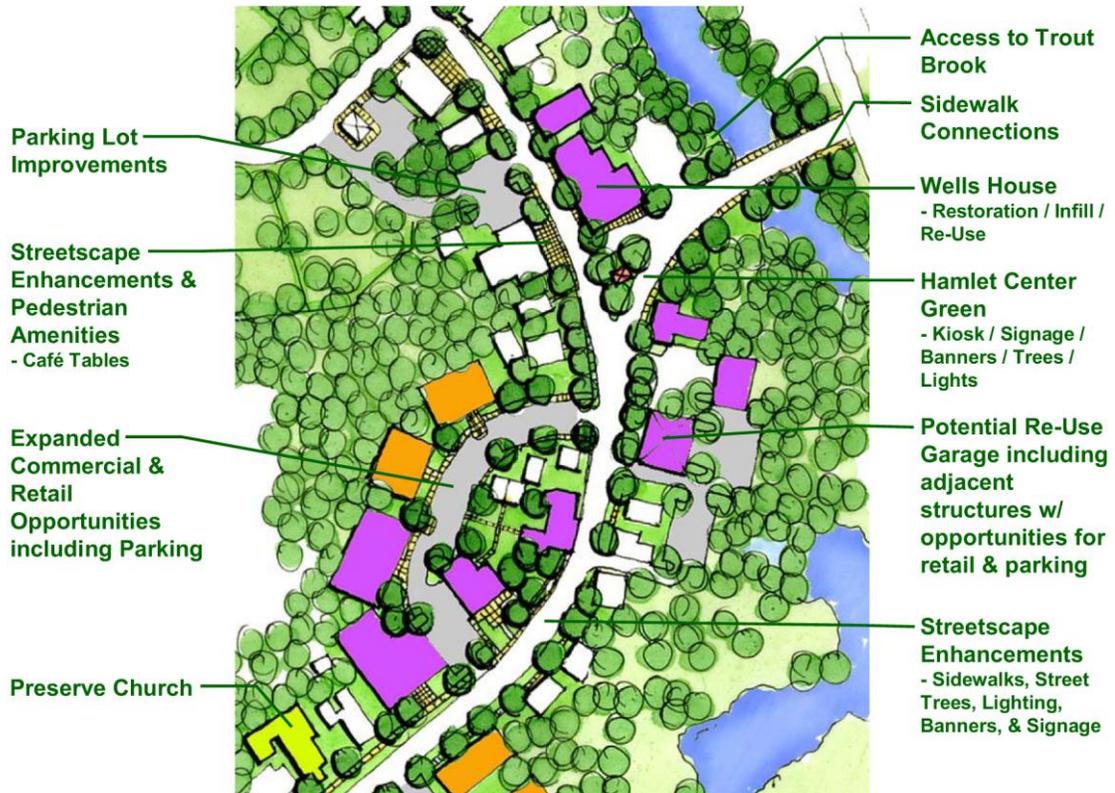
**Southern Gateway Area:** This area is located at the intersection of Valley Farm Road and Route 9 and could be considered a gateway to the hamlet from the east.

- Possible landscape enhancements to include lighting, gateway signage and tree plantings as well as crosswalks connecting to the hamlet sidewalk system.
- Enhancements for park, streetscape and pedestrian zone:
  - Park amenities ie. Benches, pedestrain lighting, trash receptacles and eased connection to sidewalk system
  - Narrow or eliminate wide curb openings to allow greater walkability



**Hamlet Center Area:** This is the main area of the hamlet along Route 9 between the Wells House intersection and the Black Bear intersection.

- Streetscape Enhancements including sidewalks, street trees, lighting, banners, café tables and signage. Add curbing to define pedestrian zone in targeted areas as sidewalk edge definition.
- Lighting Strategy: Add new pedestrian level fixtures to existing utility poles, or continue lighting style as used in the northern gateway.
- Sidewalk Connections
  - Provide better connectivity of existing sidewalks on west/south side
  - Provide crosswalks at key intersections
- Add and define core area parking



**Additional Important Topics:**

Among the topics discussed during area business interviews and the committee meetings, the most commonly mentioned issue and of highest concern was clearly traffic calming and enforcement of traffic safety laws:

Committee members and other involved property owners felt it important to establish traffic calming especially at these intersections and throughout the hamlet using visual and physical cues, such as lighting w/ banners, trees, sidewalks; etc.

- Safety comes first before or must be integral with beautification
- Recent fatal accidents in the hamlet along the NYS Route 9 were a major concern of all committee members

Black Bear Restaurant Intersection:

- The committee felt it would be important to coordinate with the owner of the Black Bear Restaurant to ask them to consider improvements to the street frontage which would organize the curb openings, providing a pedestrian zone along the road. This could create an opportunity for patio dining space in front of the restaurant which might be beneficial to the property owner while enhancing the streetscape character of the hamlet.

Throughout the hamlet:

- Establish a more defined edge between the travel lanes and the pedestrian zone. Consider using curbing to provide a clear separation between the travel lanes and the pedestrian zone.
- Organize parking and pedestrian spaces along the road with striping and signage.
- Utilize traffic calming measures to slow speeds of incoming traffic. Address concerns with visibility of traffic control devices, where necessary.

In consultation with Warren County Planning Department and NYSDOS, Behan Planning and Design presented this review of the prior plans, including a discussion of additional opportunities and projects identified by Behan that would fulfill the specific needs of this funding opportunity. These opportunities were considered and refined further during committee discussions. Analysis plans and drawings were utilized to represent some of the challenges that some of the situations present. Analysis informed the discussion which then led to the schematic designs which were developed later.

## STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

At the March 24 committee meeting, it was decided to keep the focus area on the hamlet between the Wells House Intersection and Black Bear Intersection. The committee agreed that beautification must come after the safety issues are addressed (or that aesthetic improvements needed to be integrated with safety and traffic calming improvements). Thus the study area was more compressed than that of the earlier plan, focusing the committee's efforts on the concentrated area and in keeping with the funding available at this time. Opportunities for future improvements were also evaluated so that future efforts can be expedited. The following project elements were identified by the committee for more detailed design development as part of the current scope of work:

### **Black Bear Intersection:**

- Consider the option of defining curb openings and sidewalks with lighting and plantings to create a safer and more appealing corridor along the road in this area. Discuss idea with owner.
- Consider crosswalks, sidewalk connections and landscape enhancements in this area especially at the intersection.
- Look for the opportunity to provide an area for the First Wilderness Kiosk in this area.
- Provide enhancements to create a Gateway to the hamlet for arrivals from the east.

### **Wells House Intersection:**

- Consider and discuss an intersection realignment
  - Calm traffic entering the hamlet from this direction (both roads)
  - Consider adding gateway elements to signal arrival at the hamlet

From these efforts with the committee the design team was then able to organize potential project into those that can be done with this grant and those that should be done as funds become available (long term projects).

## HAMLET STREETSCAPE ANALYSIS

This analysis appropriately focuses attention on the sections of the corridor identified as priorities by the committee. The highlights of this analysis are presented in the following section:

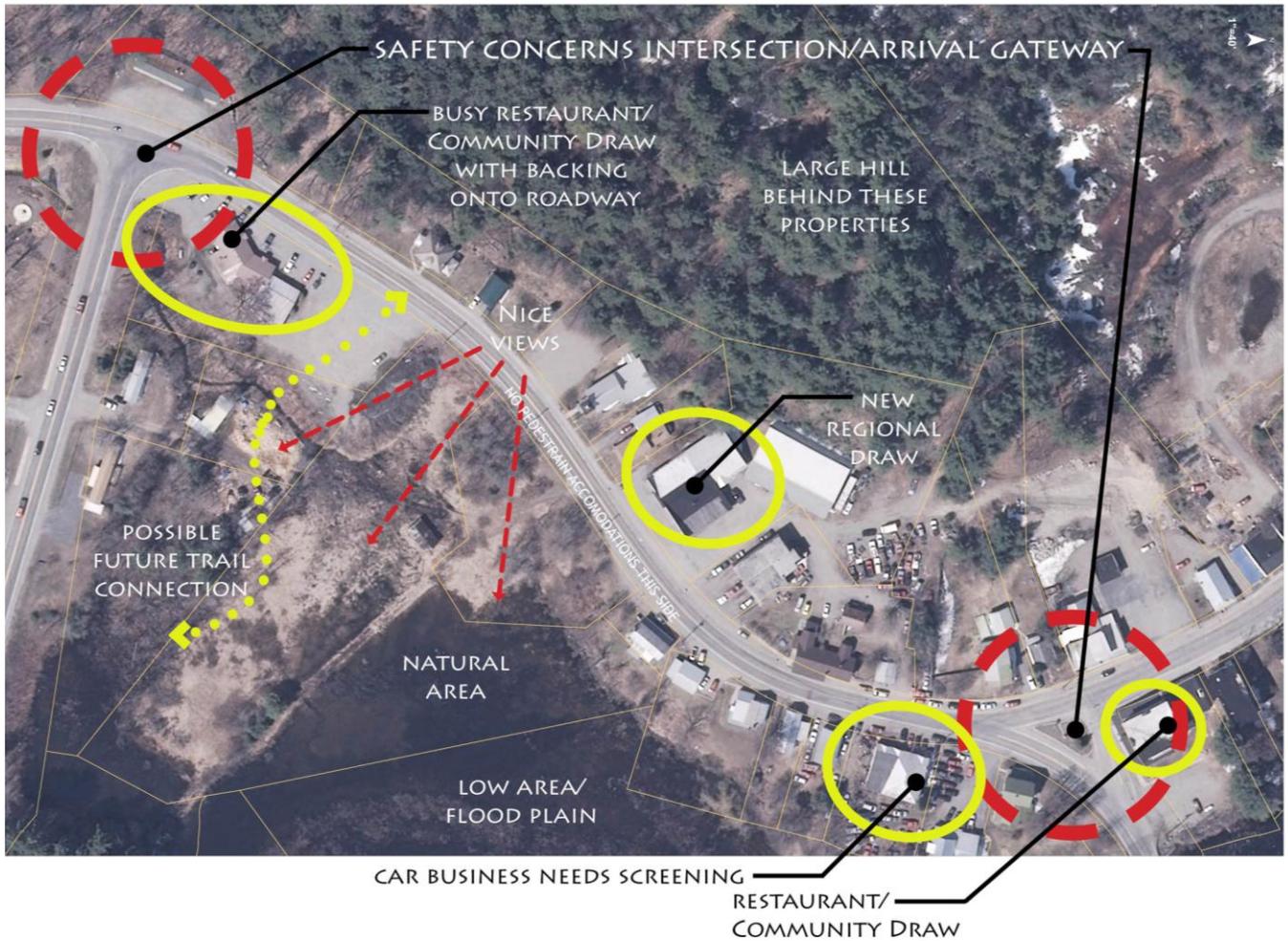
### Overall Hamlet Analysis:

The committee identified safety as their highest concern so the following items in the analysis would be considered of highest importance for implementation:

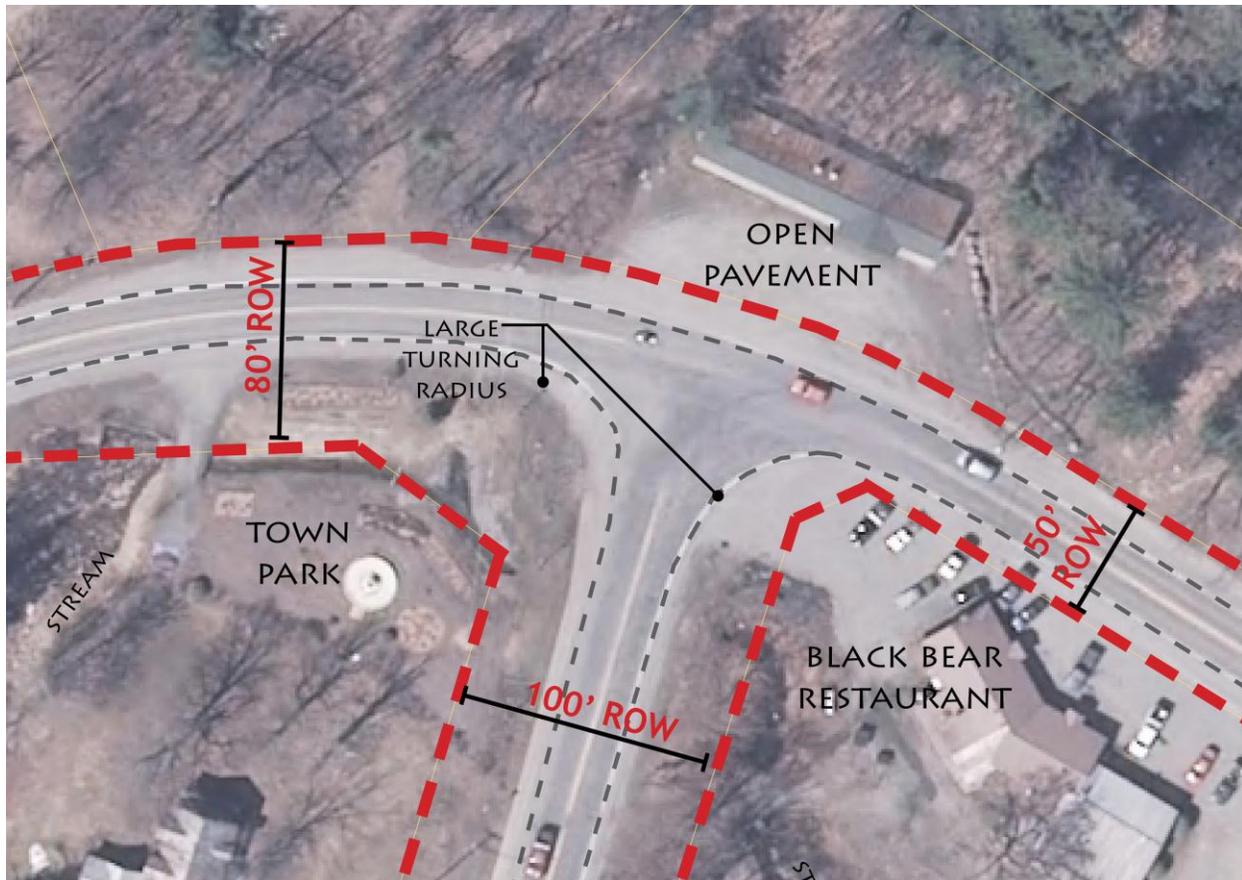
The hamlet is bookended by two intersections of concern to the committee, the Black Bear intersection (Valley Farm Road and NYS Route 9) and the Wells House intersection (Olmstedville Road/County Road 19 and NYS Route 9). Both have popular, destination restaurants with site conditions which exacerbate the unsafe aspects. See separate discussions for each intersection below.

The Main Street/NYS Route 9 corridor between the two intersections is the core of this small hamlet with several businesses and residences, as well as a church and a new regional draw, the Railroads on Parade site. There is a densely utilized auto repair business which has often parked vehicles over into the pedestrian area out front. This condition combined with the lack of adequate pedestrian facilities and poorly designed parking areas contributes to a sense of confusion, reduces public safety for pedestrian and vehicular traffic and takes away from the attractiveness and overall economic potential of the hamlet. These negative conditions occur right at the arrival gateway from the west, leaving visitors with an unsightly early impression while the pedestrian zone is compromised.

Pedestrian facilities and reducing potential vehicular conflicts are important for both public safety and for the economic viability of the hamlet. Unfortunately, the current design of the NYS Route 9 corridor does not serve either of these goals as well as could be done. Throughout this hamlet, the pedestrian zone has been minimized, perhaps for ease of winter maintenance. Further, the pavement and lane width and large turning radii at intersections leads to excessive perceived design speeds and makes pedestrian crossings more dangerous than necessary. While snow removal is an important job, and accommodating large vehicles must be addressed, the design of the highway should nonetheless be revisited to consider the extent to which public safety and economic attractiveness are unnecessarily compromised.



Finally the hamlet corridor offers several opportunities to connect to the larger landscape. The low wetland to the east offers views and a possible future trail connection to the Schroon River, as well as potential recreational amenities for residents and visitors in the waterfront/floodplain area. With cooperation from willing property owners, and local leadership, these opportunities may be considered as long term projects which could be implemented with additional study as funding becomes available.



### Black Bear Intersection Analysis:

- Large areas of undefined pavement
- No stop bars at the intersection, westbound
- Stop signs are set back due to the enlarged driveway opening
- Large turning radii cuts into the pedestrian zone
- No pedestrian facilities or amenities
- No crosswalks, stopbars
- No gateway features or orientation at this arrival point



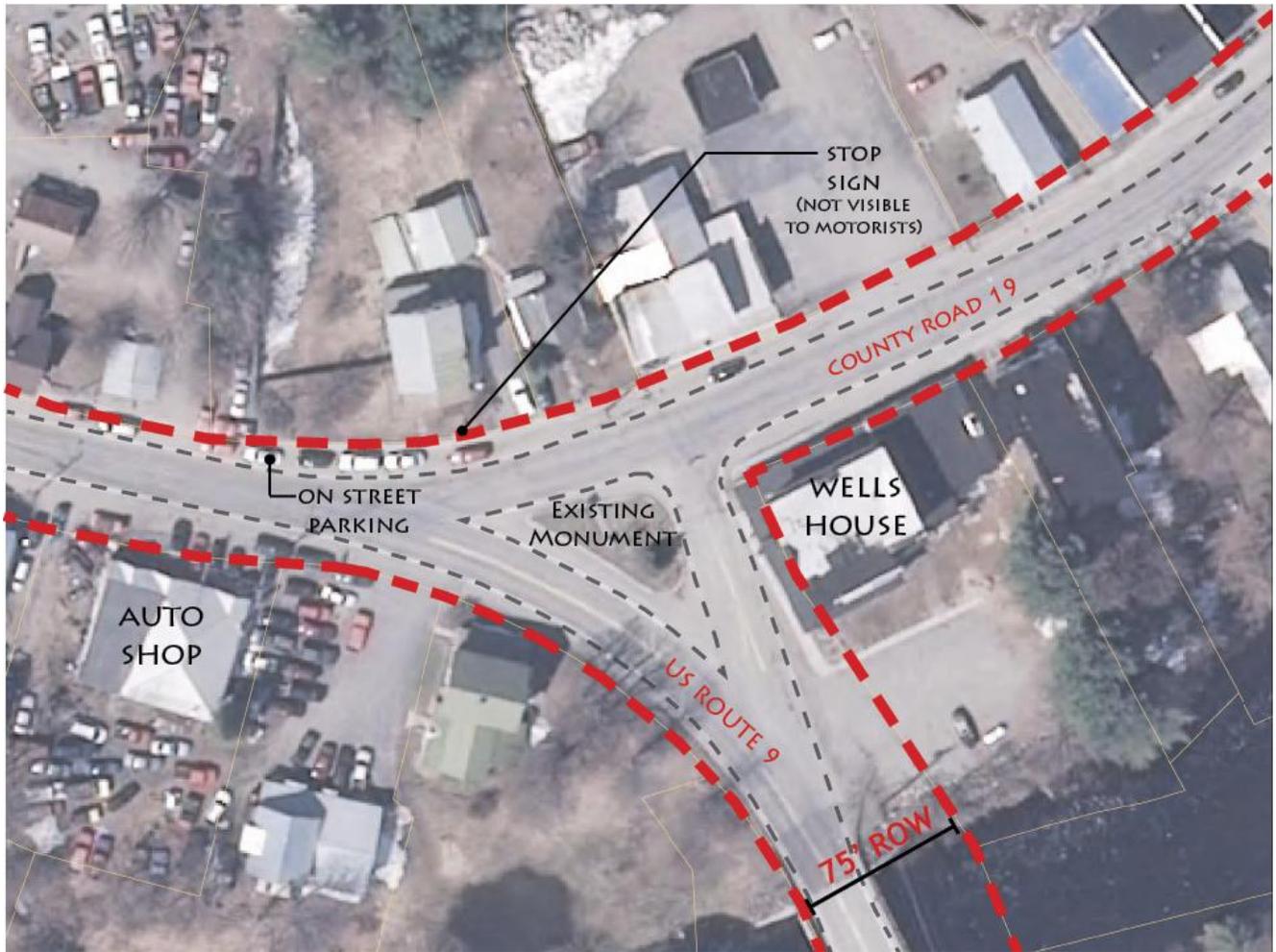


- The above photographs show the large swaths of pavement at the intersection of Route 9 and Valley Farm Road. High speeds, accommodated by large turning radii and the absence of pedestrian amenities create an unsafe situation for pedestrians. The photo on the right shows vehicle parking that backs into the state right of way, creating a safety issue for both motorists and pedestrians.

#### Wells House Intersection Analysis:

- Stop sign and bar not visible at intersection
- Existing monument is organizer for the intersection and is part of the state ROW
- No crosswalks or pedestrians accommodations
- Wide entering radius keeps incoming traffic moving at high speed





- The above photographs show the intersection at the arrival points from NYS Route 9 and County Rd 19. Some pedestrian amenities exist but are not consistent enough to provide buffer from vehicles traveling at high speeds, including the logging trucks arriving from the west.

**Streetscape throughout Hamlet Analysis:**

- Lack of edge definition treatment along roadway to provide pedestrian shelter
- Existing lights along the north side of Route 9
- Minimal on-street parking
- Minimal plantings and pedestrian amenities



**COMMITTEE MEETINGS (ALL MEETING MINUTES WERE PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND WARREN COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT)**

October 19, 2010 Kick Off Meeting: Focus: Identify priorities from the TSA Plan

March 24, 2011 Committee Meeting: Focus: Triage of work within the Hamlet

May 4, 2011 Committee Meeting: Focus: Priority projects for this year

**AGENCY MEETINGS**

May 10, 2011 Meeting with Kevin Heyjos, Warren County Highway

June 1, 2011 Meeting with Mark Kennedy, NYS DOT

October 8, 2011, Meeting with NYSDOT and Warren County Highway

## TOWN BOARD MEETING

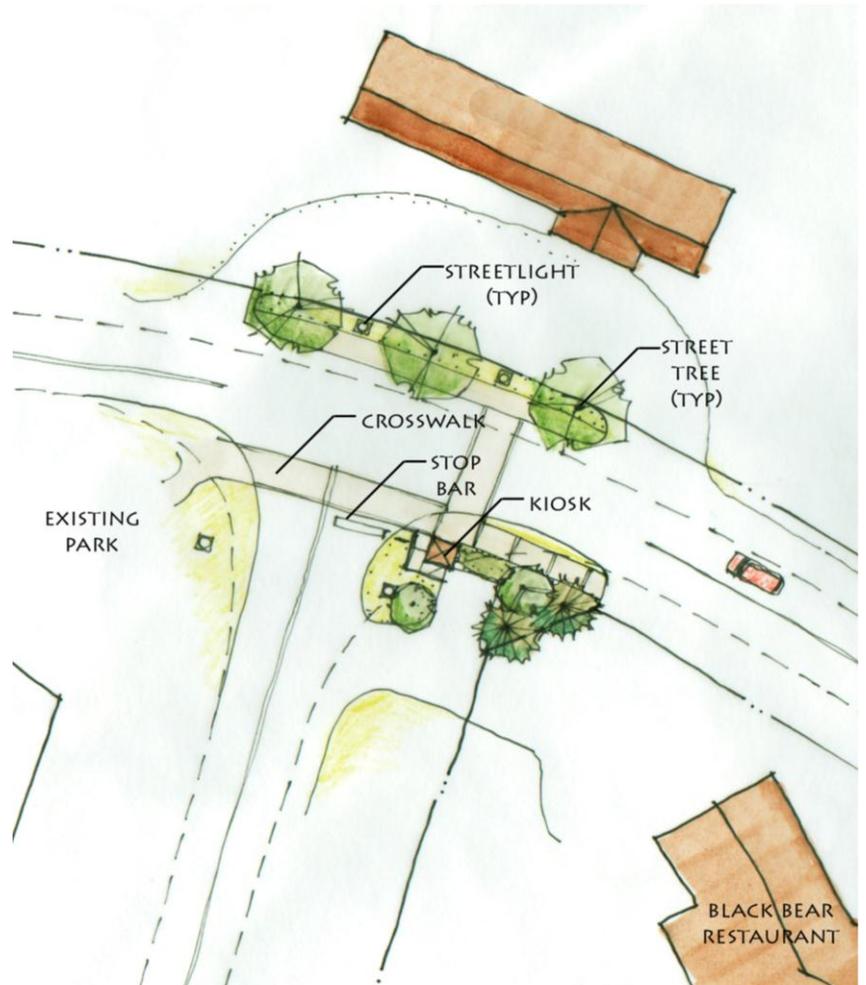
May 10, 2011 Town Board Meeting: Public presentation of updated recommendation for hamlet enhancements.

The process of meeting with the committee, the involved traffic and highway departments and with the Town Board and public evolved the ideas under consideration and coalesced them into the following proposed improvements for the Hamlet of Pottersville:

## SCHEMATIC DESIGNS

### Black Bear Intersection - Improvements for Further Review and Refinement:

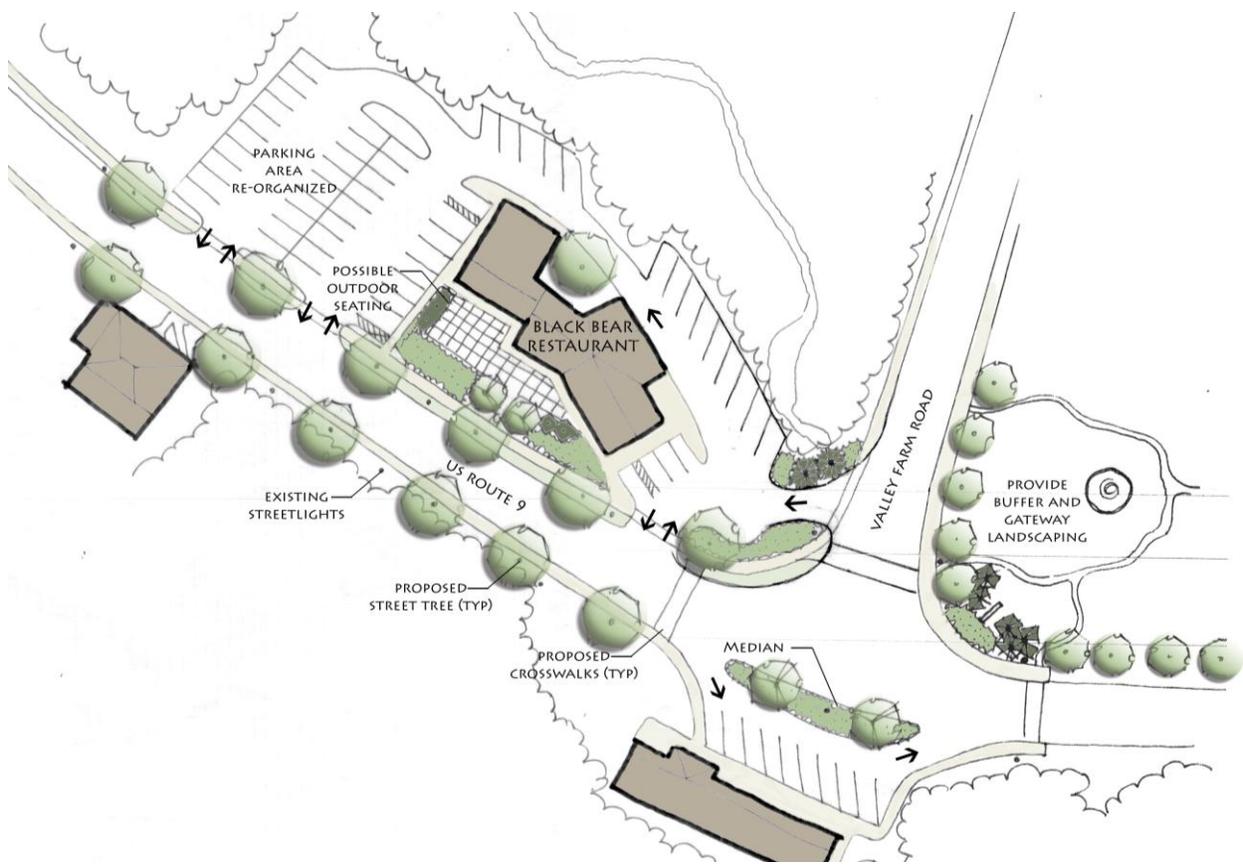
- Evolve this into a gateway to the hamlet, including a First Wilderness kiosk and other improvements to orient visitors and slow down the entering traffic
- Enhance safety at this intersection by tightening the turning radii to slow traffic, using mountable curbs, as needed for trucks.
- Enhance pedestrian safety by incorporating stop bars, stop signs, crosswalks and sidewalks
- Consider incorporating a pedestrian activated walk signal
- Consider a median on west side of intersection with lighting and a Welcome to Pottersville sign ( see image, following)



Possible enhancement to entry area



- Median to create definition between travel lane and pedestrian/parking area
- Stop bars before crosswalks
- Possible pedestrian-activated signal or other traffic control device
- Lighting, signage and trees to serve as a visual cue to arrival at the hamlet



Wells House Intersection Potential Improvements for Further Refinement (Short-term)

- Install bump-out to make stop sign more visible
- Install new stop bar
- Install crosswalks
- Create new sidewalks in front of Wells House with 2 new streetlights

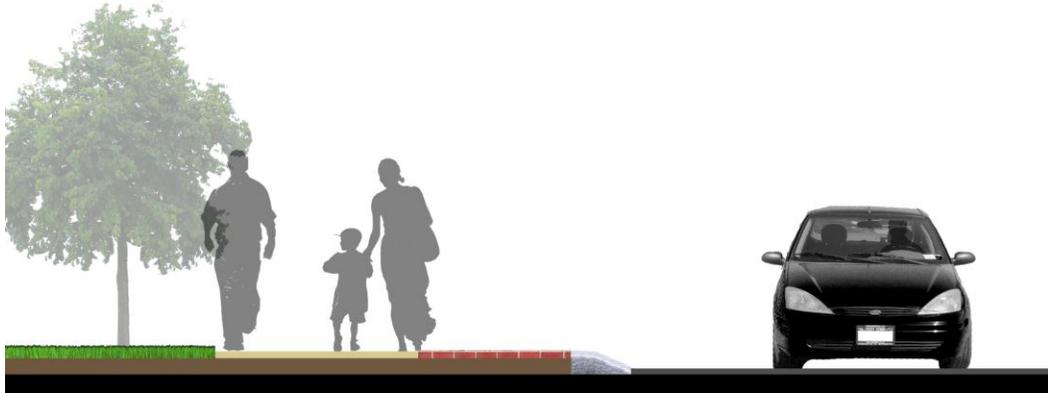


Wells House Intersection Potential Improvements for Further Refinement (Long-term)

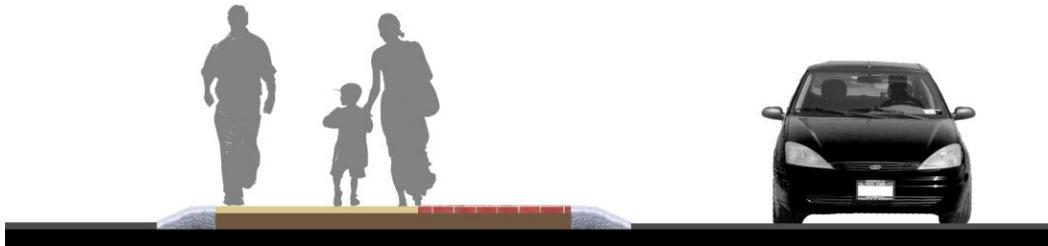
- Create “T” intersection with Route 9 and County Route 19
- Stops all incoming traffic
- Allows the monument to become a larger community gathering space
- Allows for adequate pedestrian linkages
- Consider alternative designs that provide similar safety and aesthetic benefits



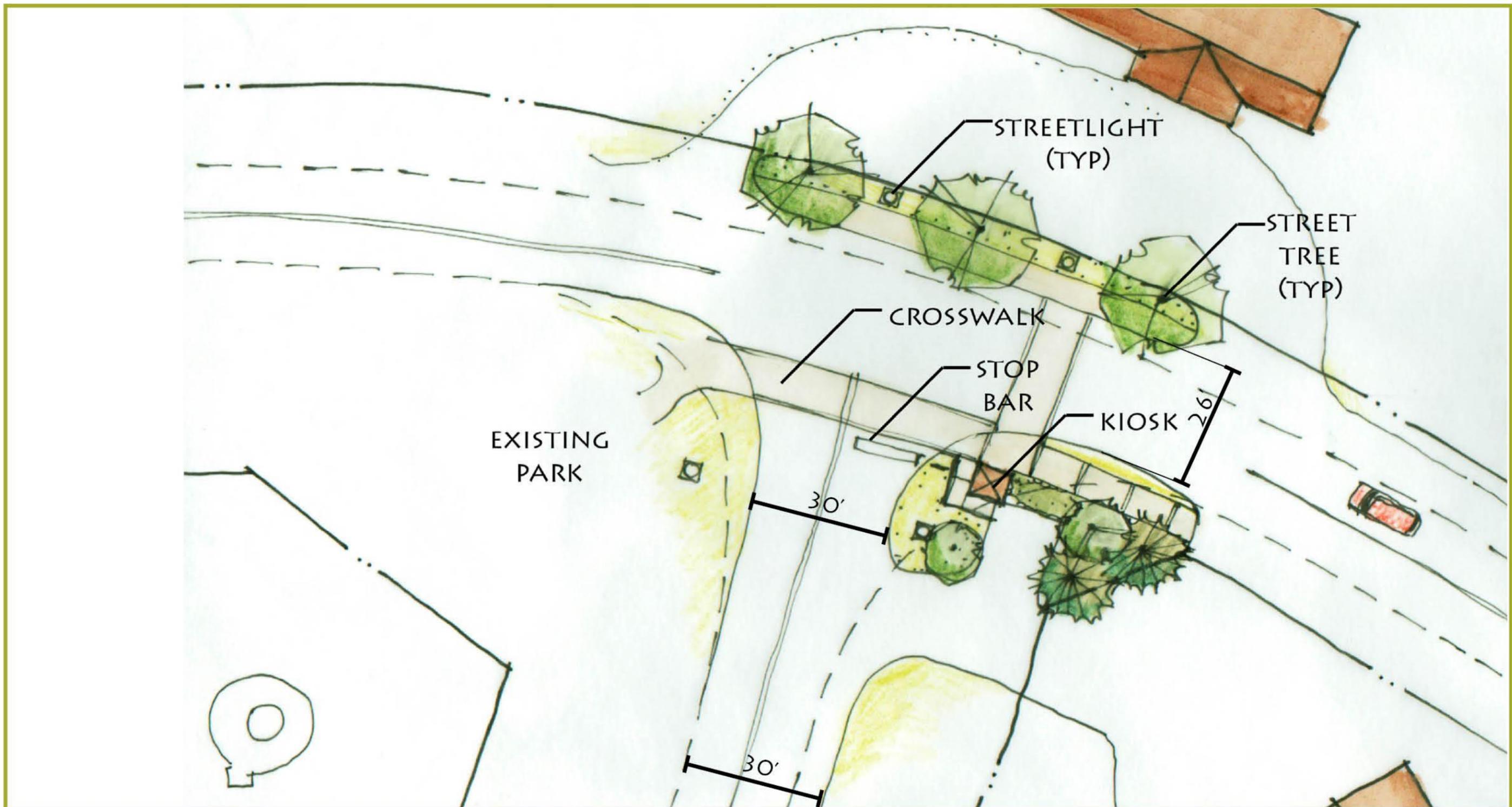
Streetscape Improvements throughout hamlet



Typical streetscape section with tree planting, 6' wide sidewalk, amenity area, and sloped curb.



Streetscape section with limited room for planting, but still uses a 6' sidewalk and sloped curb to define the street and pedestrian area.



**Draft Concept Black Bear Intersection**

**Pottersville Streetscape Enhancements**  
 Town of Chester, NY  
 June 1, 2011



SCALE: 1"=20'



This concept was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

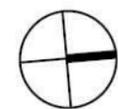


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 112 Spring Street, Suite 305  
 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



**Draft Concept Wells House Intersection- Short Term**

**Pottersville Streetscape Enhancements**  
 Town of Chester, NY  
 June 1, 2011



SCALE: 1"=20'



This concept was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

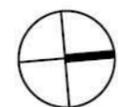


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 112 Spring Street, Suite 305  
 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



**Draft Concept Wells House Intersection- Long Term**

**Pottersville Streetscape Enhancements**  
 Town of Chester, NY  
 June 1, 2011

  
 SCALE: 1"=20'



This concept was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.



  
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## Draft Alternative Concept Wells House Intersection

Pottersville Streetscape Enhancements  
 Town of Chester, NY  
 October 12, 2011



SCALE: 1"=20'



This concept was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.



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 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

## CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENT ANALYSIS

A basic description of the scope of work for further design and engineering for the revitalization of the highway corridor that is so central to the Pottersville Hamlet includes:

- Realignment and reconstruction (curbs, crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting, First Wilderness Kiosk, and plantings) of the intersection of NYS Route 9 at Valley Farms Road
- Curb, lighting and sidewalks for the hamlet core area
- Traffic calming/bumpout design concept for Olmstedville Road at intersection with Route 9 in Pottersville (potential project to be carried out Warren County Highway Department)
- Realignment and reconstruction (curbs, crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting, First Wilderness Kiosk, and plantings) of the intersection of NYS Route 9 at Olmstedville Road (County Road 19)

### **Future Action Items**

We have identified opportunities for future improvements that will take a level of design and engineering development w more extensive coordination for design development, environmental review, and permitting than is possible under the current scope of study that has produced this report. It is recommended that the county planning department present these findings to the Adirondack-Glens Falls Transportation Council to help find resources for advancing these concepts. The NYSDOT, Warren County Highway and Planning Departments, and the Town of Chester and adjacent property owners would all need to be involved in the next phase of work as described herein.