



WORKFORCE
HOUSING COALITION
— OF THE GREATER SEACOAST —
Opening Doors to Vibrant Communities

WELLS, MAINE WORKFORCE HOUSING CHARRETTE

October 17-18, 2013



Sponsored by:



Introduction

The Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast organized a workforce housing design charrette in Wells, Maine over the course of 2013. Held over a two-day period, the process included a site walk, listening session, and design workshop, culminating in a design reveal on October 18, 2013. This, our fourth annual design charrette, produced conceptual designs for the development of two sites in Wells that included workforce housing opportunities.

What is a charrette?

A charrette is an intensive planning session where citizens, designers, and others collaborate to create a vision for development. Charrettes often take place in multiple sessions in which the group divides into sub-groups. Each sub-group then presents its work to the full group as material for further dialogue. Such charrettes serve as a way of quickly generating multiple design concepts while integrating the aptitudes and interests of a diverse group of people.

A charrette is a unique opportunity to...

- Envision workforce housing developments possible under current regulations.
- Suggest modifications to current regulations to better suit workforce housing.
- Test the financial feasibility of design concepts.
- Provide proposals to decision-makers for potential development of the subject sites.

The charrette process can be summarized in nine steps.

1. Identify study area.
2. Reach out to property owners and stakeholders.
3. Research study area.
4. Recruit volunteer teams.
5. Walk the site(s) with owners and stakeholders.
6. Listen to needs and concerns of neighbors and stakeholders.
7. Creation of design options by volunteer team members.
8. Present designs and recommendations to all stakeholders.
9. Prepare a Summary Publication with recommendations.

¹ Maine Housing, 2012 Housing Facts for York County

² Graph: Sustain Southern Maine Population and Housing Market Analysis 2013

Typical charrette teams include:

- Designers and planners - architects, landscape architects, engineers, environmental consultants, municipal and consulting planners.
- Financing and development professionals - developers, construction estimators, bankers, and real estate agents.

Charrette team members were unpaid volunteers, who contributed an average of 12 hours, plus travel time, to the Wells charrette process. This amounted to over 300 volunteer hours of professional talent and time put into the Wells project.

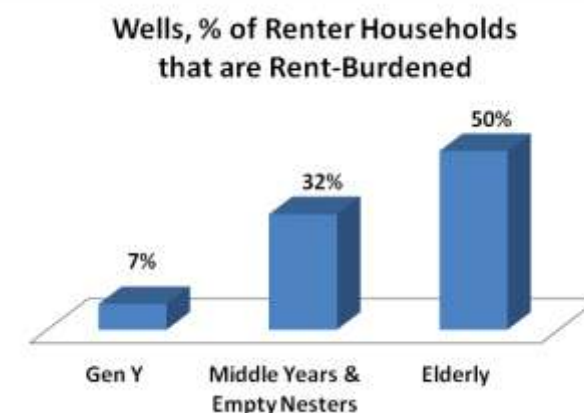
Why Wells Maine?

Wells Housing Facts

Wells Maine, like many coastal communities in Southern Maine, is a desirable community in which to live. While many residents are financially able to purchase a home, many are not.

In order for a home to be considered affordable, the cost of a monthly mortgage payment plus utilities should not exceed 30% of the household's monthly income. Likewise, affordable rental housing.

A study conducted by Maine Housing, 2012 Housing Facts for York County¹, revealed that in Wells, the 2012 median price for a home was \$220,500, which is affordable to households with an annual income of \$58,861. For rentals, data is only available at the county level and indicate that 10,657 York County households (52.4% of total renter households) are unable to afford the average two-bedroom rent of \$886 per month with utilities, as it would require a \$35,436 yearly income, figures also determined by the Maine Housing study.



Millennial - also known as Generation Y, is the demographic cohort following Generation X. There are no precise dates as to when the generation starts and ends. Commentators use beginning birth years from the early 1980s to the early 2000s.



Sustain Southern Maine’s 2013 Population and Housing Market Analysis reports some startling facts about Wells’ housing situation.¹

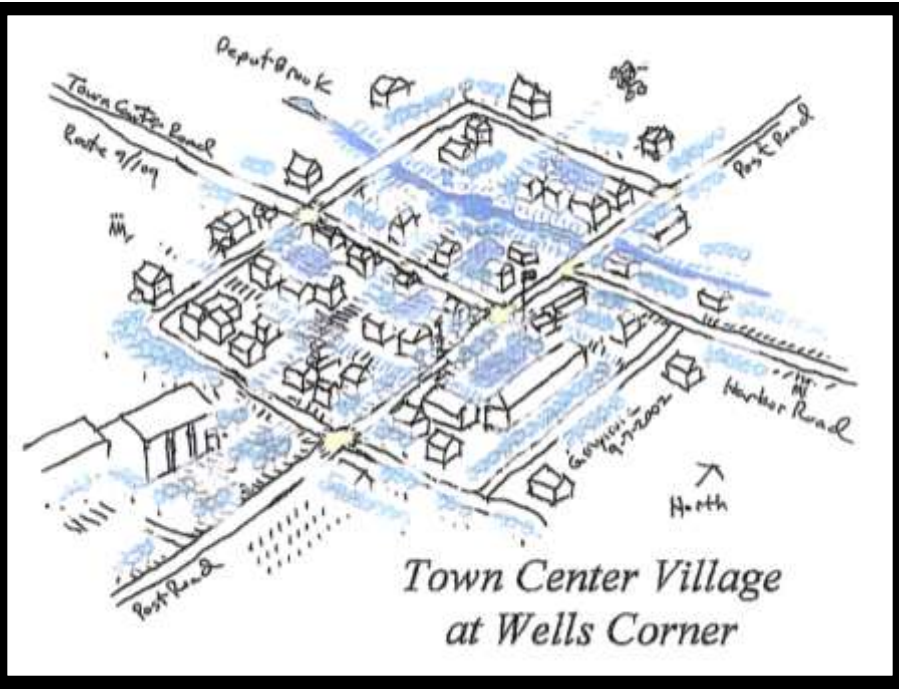
- ▶ About 61% of Wells’ households can’t afford the median priced home.
- ▶ Half of elderly tenants are rent-burdened, paying 35% or more of their incomes for rent. Surprisingly, only 7% of Gen Ys are rent-burdened.
- ▶ Over half of Wells’ housing units have 3+ bedrooms. Larger homes are more expensive and may be harder for Gen Y households to purchase.
- ▶ While the town does offer 0-2 bedroom housing options, competition with seasonal uses limits availability to year-round residents and drives up costs.

Why the Transportation Center and Wells Corner?

Two areas of potential development were the focus of the charrette. The first location is an area near the train station, also known as the Transportation Center. The second is an area close to the intersection of Route 109 and Route 1, known as Wells Corner.

Potential development in both these areas of town has been the focus of residents' attention, as well as several planning efforts over the years. In 2002, the Town of Wells developed an initial concept for the creation of a town center in the Wells Corner area.

Concept for Wells Town Center, 2002



¹ Sustain Southern Maine Population and Housing Market Analysis 2013

Then in 2006, the Town of Wells worked with partners from the EPA's Office of Smart Growth, Maine Sea Grant, and Sparh and Dabrowski Consultants to conduct a three-day design workshop for the "gateway" area from the Transportation Center to Wells Corner, with special attention on sustaining the environmental health of Depot Brook.

Concept for Wells Gateway, 2006



In 2013, the Town worked with partners from the Sustain Southern Maine initiative to develop a concept for centers of opportunity in Wells and consistently, the Transportation Center and Wells Corner areas were identified as focus areas for planning by stakeholders.

So, with attention focused on the Transportation Center and Wells Corner, the Town of Wells worked with Maine Sea Grant to identify property owners in the two areas who might be interested to voluntarily include their properties in the study area that would become the focus of the charrette. It was made clear to the property owners that the charrette was a brainstorming session and that they were under no obligation to take any action as a result of participation. Ultimately, the response to the invitation was very positive, and five owners (one in the Transportation District and four in Wells Corner area) agreed to include their properties in the charrette study area.

The Town of Wells and the Workforce Housing Coalition Charrette Committee jointly decided to evaluate the potential for future development of workforce housing in two distinct areas - Wells Corner and Transportation Center.



It Takes Teamwork

The Wells charrette was made possible only through the dedicated participation of nearly 40 people. *We would like to thank them all for joining us.*

Charrette Planning Committee

Kristen Grant, Maine Sea Grant and UMaine Cooperative Extension - *Chair*
Jonathan Carter, Town Manager, Town of Wells
Tom Emerson, Studio B-E Design Consulting
Tom House, THA Architects
Ashlee Iber, WHC Executive Director
Jack Mettee, Mettee Planning Consulting
Rebecca Perkins, Orr & Reno
Ralph Pope, Coldwell Banker Residential Realty
Kim Rogers, G. L. Rogers & Company
Gayle Sanders, Gayle Sanders Home Design



Wells Corner Design Team

Tom House, THA Architects - *Team Leader*
Richard Clark, Selectman, Town of Wells
Jeff Clifford, Altus Engineering
Elizabeth Dudley, Ironwood Designs
Bob Georgitis, Kasperzak Land Holdings
Greg Gosselin, Gosselin Realty Group
Nick Isaak, Isaak Design
Hiroko Lindsey, Lindsey Architects
Jack Mettee, Mettee Associates
Rip Patten, Credere Associates
George Reagan, NH Housing Finance Authority
Gayle Sanders, Gayle Sanders Home Design

Transportation District Design Team

Tom Emerson, Studio B-E Design Consulting - *Team Leader*
Jodine Adams, Code Enforcement Officer, Town of Wells
Francine Cram, Kennebunk Savings Bank
Valerie Giguere, Underwood Engineering
Kristi Kenney, K.W. Architects
Mike Livingston, P.E., Town Engineer, Town of Wells
Kim Rogers, G.L. Rogers & Company
Paul Schumacher, So. ME Regional Planning Commission
Ina Toth, RE/MAX Realty One
Adam Wagner, DeStefano Architects

Worked with both teams

Kristen Grant, UMaine Cooperative Extension/Sea Grant
Jonathan Carter, Town of Wells Town Manager
Ralph Pope, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

Property Owners

Jonathan Hall
Kathy Levesque
Pam Moody Maxon
Moe Steele and Beverly Cuthbertson Steele



Charrette Sponsors

Kennebunk Savings Bank
Town of Wells Maine
York Hospital

Additional Support provided by:

Coldwell Banker Residential Realty
Congdon’s Doughnuts
Dairy Queen
Hannaford Supermarket
IGA Supermarket
Lindt & Sprungli
Mike’s Clam Shack
Pizza by Para
When Pigs Fly Bakery

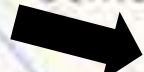
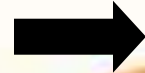
The Site Walk

The site walk is an opportunity for design team members to see each property in the study area, to learn about any special conditions of the properties from the property owners and to learn about other details that could be

helpful in the design process. The site walk began at the Transportation Center where the group viewed the parcel adjacent to the train station on which is a self-storage facility. Then the group moved on

to the Wells Corner area, convening in the junior high school parking lot to tour neighboring sites along Route 1/Post Road.

SITE
WALK
START



SITE
WALK
FINISH



Stakeholder Listening Session

Input from stakeholders is a key ingredient of the charrette process. Charrette site property owners, abutters, neighborhood residents, business owners and community members were invited to a Stakeholder Listening Session on Thursday, October 17 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Wells Activity Center.

The purpose of a public session is to give charrette team members and property owners an opportunity to hear community members’ hopes and concerns about potential future development of the sites.

The session started with a presentation on workforce housing by Ashlee Iber, Workforce Housing Coalition Executive Director. It included informa-



Ideas for the Transportation Center

What would you like to see?

- ▶ Attractive and affordable housing for seniors and young professionals
- ▶ Employment opportunities
- ▶ Extension of water and sewer systems
- ▶ Linkages to community services, shopping and entertainment
- ▶ Pedestrian-friendly
- ▶ Recreational area or dog park
- ▶ Small-town feel

What wouldn't you like to see?

- ▶ Any housing at all
- ▶ Indian Casino
- ▶ Massive development west of the turnpike
- ▶ Too much density
- ▶ Too much development

Opportunities?

- ▶ Enhanced gateway - seen first by train riders/people coming into town off the turnpike
- ▶ Making things more available to people who don't own a car, whether or not they live in the area, including those who are on vacation
- ▶ Train stop or C&J Bus stop

Challenges?

- ▶ Pump station costs - \$250K - \$100+ per foot - Extend beyond workforce housing
- ▶ Regulations - Excessive Town Hall requirements - no such thing as “affordable “
- ▶ Sewer system - How funded? - Bond -Will people want to spend their taxes on its upkeep?
- ▶ Sewer system - Final alternate funding source - Hotel, retail, business
- ▶ Sewer system design - Pipes - Where to stop - Bulk of water - Would have to dig trenches
- ▶ Traffic management

“It’s important that the town is involved in the decision-making process”

--- Rip Patten, Credere Associates

tion on what is meant by workforce housing, who needs workforce housing, and the need for workforce housing in Wells. The charrette process was explained and the audience was invited to ask questions of the three member panel - Ashlee Iber, Workforce Housing Coalition Executive Director; Kristen Grant, Maine Sea Grant and University of Maine Cooperative Extension; and Jonathan Carter, Town Manager, Town of Wells .

Kristen Grant initiated a brainstorming activity to generate ideas, hopes and concerns about potential development at the sites.

Participants were asked to consider: ***What would you like to see? What wouldn't you like to see? What are the unique considerations associated with the sites? Opportunities? Challenges?*** Participants wrote ideas on notes that were then read aloud and posted together by theme, which are captured here. These ideas were then recorded and reviewed with the charrette team members prior to beginning the designing, in order to guide their process.



Themes from the Stakeholder Listening Session

Some consistent themes emerged regarding both sites. Stakeholders expressed a desire for:

- ▶ Housing that is attractive and affordable to seniors and young people.
- ▶ Linkages between services like banking, schools, retail, salons, eateries, and entertainment.
- ▶ Development that is pedestrian-friendly and has a small-town feel.
- ▶ More local employment opportunities.

Two primary concerns stood out.

- ▶ Water and sewer services

The area near the transportation center lacks town sewer and water service. Jonathan Carter, Town Manager, Town of Wells, reported that land had been purchased by the sanitary district for a pump station in the area of the Transportation Center. How these water and sewer improvements would be funded was at issue, specifically whether tax payers would be held responsible for the cost.

Town officials explained that a funding option could include an offer of a tax incentive to a potential developer to bring water and sewer lines to the Transportation Center area. Wells Code Enforcement Officer, Jodine Adams, mentioned that the sewer district has been working on grant funding to bring the sewer lines over to the Transportation Center.

Ideas for Wells Corner

What would you like to see?

- ▶ Attractive and affordable housing for young people
- ▶ Attention to other sites - Clam Shell Alley & Route 1 provide good access
- ▶ Employment opportunities
- ▶ Mixed-use 3-4 story structure at corner
- ▶ Village - Town center
- ▶ Walkable, pedestrian-friendly

What *wouldn't* you like to see?

- ▶ Housing near the Junior High School
- ▶ More traffic

- ▶ Increased traffic

Increased traffic concerned many community members. From May to October, traffic volumes increase significantly in most areas of the Town. Comments were adamantly against development that would exacerbate traffic issues.

"Slowly, the sanitary district and the water district are realizing that things are starting to happen."

---Jonathan Carter, Town Manager, Town of Wells

Opportunities?

- ▶ Design - Eliminate overhead utilities
- ▶ Jobs - Create year round jobs in the private sector
- ▶ Make local zoning more accommodating for free-standing accessory dwelling units - Use accessory dwelling units for workforce housing
- ▶ Make workforce housing like Hidden Pond Resort in Kennebunkport (modular) - a development model
- ▶ Merge vacant backyards of all individual properties
- ▶ Shared parking - Business by day/ residents by night

Challenges?

- ▶ Capacity for public services
- ▶ Change - Some residents were resistant to change
- ▶ Character - Maintaining historic fabric of the community
- ▶ Development costs - Who would pay for this and future development?
- ▶ Lack of local attractions - Why would single young adults or young couples without children want to live in Wells?
- ▶ Seniors putting more strain on local medical providers when many are not taking new patients
- ▶ Traffic - Increased traffic! – Need alternate route developed - Reduce traffic impact
- ▶ Vacant sites - When the new public safety building is done, what happens to the site at the intersection of Route 109/1?
- ▶ Young families increasing the strain on schools

SITE 1: The Transportation Center

Observations from the site walk

The Transportation Center study area comprised two parcels, currently used as a privately owned self-storage facility. The parcels are adjacent to Interstate 95, off exit 19. To the west is the Wells Transportation Center. The Transportation Center houses Amtrak Downeaster Train service, and several other businesses, such as a bus company.

Within approximately one mile east of the site are various community services (town hall, library, police station, hospital and medical offices), retail and other consumer services (banking, supermarket, and shopping).

The Transportation Center is not currently zoned for residential development or a town center type of building density. Dimensional standards suit highway/commercial/transportation-oriented uses, and current permitted uses are not compatible with the development of work-force housing. Zoning would need to be modified to include multi-family housing as an allowed use. Additionally, extending the water and sewer services would be necessary to spur development on the site and adjacent properties.

The charrette team members met for the first leg of the site walk with Jonathan Hall, owner of the Wells Storage Solutions lots. During the discussion, a key theme was the opportunity to be “car-less” in Wells. As a tourist destination, a “car-less vacation” that would encourage visitors to use the Downeaster train linking them to the local trolley service was seen as an opportunity, especially if a hotel were available at the site.

Jonathan Carter, Town Manager, Town of Wells, told the group that town officials envisioned more development when the train station was built 10 years ago. *“That hasn't happened,”* Carter said, explaining that the lack of sewer and water service discourages development, and likewise, the lack of development discourages the extension of sewer and water service.



Transportation Center Designs & Rationale

The team’s intent was to create a mixed-use, Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The site’s location adjacent to the highway and to the train station will allow it to become a multi-modal transportation hub. Future residents could access employment centers in the Dover/Portsmouth, New Hampshire area or Portland, Maine via car, bus or railway without contributing to traffic congestion. Locating supporting retail within walking distance of the residential uses will also reduce traffic and enhance current and future Transportation Center user experiences while making the area attractive to future residents.

Transit Oriented Development - a fast growing trend for creating vibrant, livable communities. Also known as Transit Oriented Design, or TOD, it is the creation of compact, walkable communities centered around high quality public transit systems. This makes it possible to live a higher quality life without complete dependence on a car for mobility and survival.

Development at this site will require a transition from transportation-only zoning, as the area exists now. The move to transit-oriented, mixed-use zoning, coupled with the completion of the water and sewer infrastructure to support it, will allow appropriate development to occur in the Transportation Center area. Making the zone comprehensive enough to include areas on either side of the highway interchange will spread the cost of infrastructure improvements over a larger number of property owners, potentially reducing the amount of the Town’s contribution.

The design includes retail and restaurant establishments at ground level, with residential units above. Also included is a Visitor’s Center. To meet the needs of tourists, business travelers, and seasonal workers, an extended stay hotel is incorporated into the design to provide these non-residents with easy access to lodging in Wells via Amtrak train and local trolley service.

Transportation Center Zoning & Infrastructure

The presence of public water and sewer is certainly required for higher density development, such as workforce housing. The town could consider a public/private venture to enable construction of the needed infrastructure. Creation of a TIF District (Tax Increment Financing) would be one option.

Tax Increment Financing District - a public financing method that is used as a subsidy for community development projects such as redevelopment, and infrastructure improvements.

Current zoning of the Transportation Center site is 20,000 sq. ft. sewer; 100 ft. coverage, 45 ft. or 3-story maximum building height. Setbacks are 40 ft. state highway, 25 ft. lot line or railroad.

In order to incorporate Workforce Housing or any other residential use at the Transportation Center site, zoning changes would need to be made or an overlay district would need to be created. Currently, residential is not a permitted use. Community water and sewer service to the area would allow for a significant lessening of the current 20,000 square foot lot requirement and zoning standards more applicable to Transit Oriented Development would need to be instituted to allow for a mixture of uses.

Careful consideration should also be given to potential proximity conflicts with more industrial transportation uses. While bus connections to the transit station would be a given, separation of trucking, storage, distribution and delivery operations, especially vehicular from the mixed use and pedestrian oriented areas would be beneficial.



“The first thing we asked was how many units are allowed under the current zoning of the area? The answer was zero. So, we were going to go home, but we decided to take another stab at it.”---Adam Wagner, DeStefano Architects





Transportation Center Concept Design (aerial)

The Transportation Center concept design is comprised of mixed-use buildings with retail space on the ground floors, as well as a Visitor's Center and a coffee shop, and 29 residential units above. Workforce housing would be one-bedroom (700 sq. ft.) and two-bedroom (850 sq. ft.) units.

The design also includes a 28,800 sq. ft. extended stay hotel. There would be a need to offset the housing development costs. The hotel could be used as housing for summer workers, business travelers, and longer-term tourist stays. Hotel units would be equipped with kitchenettes, making

them appropriate for extended stays. The concept also includes natural forest and wetland areas.



Transportation Center Concept Design (street view)

The design includes retail units on the ground floor with workforce housing rental units above and maintains architectural styles characteristic to the Seacoast area .

SITE 2: Wells Corner

Observations from the site walk

The Wells Corner study area is located at the heart of what most residents would consider the de facto town center. Wells Corner is the core of the town's:

- ▶ Municipal services - town hall, police and fire stations, library, and activity center;
- ▶ Academic institutions - elementary, junior high, and high schools, and at the outskirts, York County Community College;
- ▶ Medical services – urgent care center and medical offices;
- ▶ Small business district – grocery store, restaurants, home and personal care businesses.

But while Wells Corner is home to these amenities, a recognized town center has not been identified. This is because the town's original center was Ogunquit Village, which formed its own town in the 1980's. The creation of a definable town center has been under consideration among officials and residents for decades. This goal formed the main planning theme of the charrette.

Four property owners representing five, privately-owned parcels were officially considered in the Wells Corner study area. The parcels' total area equals approximately 11 acres and includes:

- ▶ Two large, undeveloped lots without Route 1 frontage;
- ▶ A massage/spa business and personal residence;
- ▶ A motel with 12 units and personal residence;
- ▶ A pet grooming business and personal residence.

Current regulations in the study area are for general/business zoning, which includes a wide range of permitted uses with dimensional standards geared to a highway/commercial zone. Some of these existing standards may not be compatible with the goal of creating a town center that provides a community gathering place and retains small town character.

The charrette team members met for the second site walk with Pam Moody Maxon, Moe Steele and Beverly Cuthbertson Steele, and Kathy Levesque, owners of four of the five properties included in the study area. During the discussions, key themes included creating :

- ▶ A walkable town center;
 - The proximity of the area's services promotes a "park once" opportunity, enabling community members to walk between businesses, schools, and municipal services. Walkability is also key due to the need to ensure safe travel for students walking in the vicinity of the three schools. Shared parking for schools, residences, and business was also considered as a way to manage parking demand between daytime and nighttime uses.
- ▶ A community gathering place where outdoor social, educational, and arts events could be held;
- ▶ Housing affordable and attractive to local young people and families;
- ▶ An access road between Route 109 and Route 1 to provide travel alternatives and alleviate traffic pressure on the Wells Corner intersection.



Wells Corner Designs & Rationale

One of the main design goals was to create a walkable community. Housing that is within walking distance to services, retail, restaurants, and schools can reduce traffic congestion and the cost of bussing students. Housing opportunities established within walking distance to the existing middle school, which is located near the Wells Corner area, could potentially entice a larger applicant pool of teachers and other school workers.

One design concept combines the three focus area parcels to produce three multi-use buildings that would allow both small retail and residential units. Each building would house eight residential units, totaling 24 units - workforce housing, market-rate housing, or a combination.

An alternative is to keep the three parcels as private individually-owned lots and then adding accessory units or individual buildings to increase the number of housing units on each parcel, utilizing the existing available open space. Charrette team members recommend that the additional units would be best located at the back of the lots.

There also remains the option to supplement or tie into the York Hospital location nearby. Partnering with the hospital could potentially create shared parking for patients during the day and residents at night.

“Workforce housing is available to the middle income households in the community.”

----George Reagan, NH Housing Finance Authority



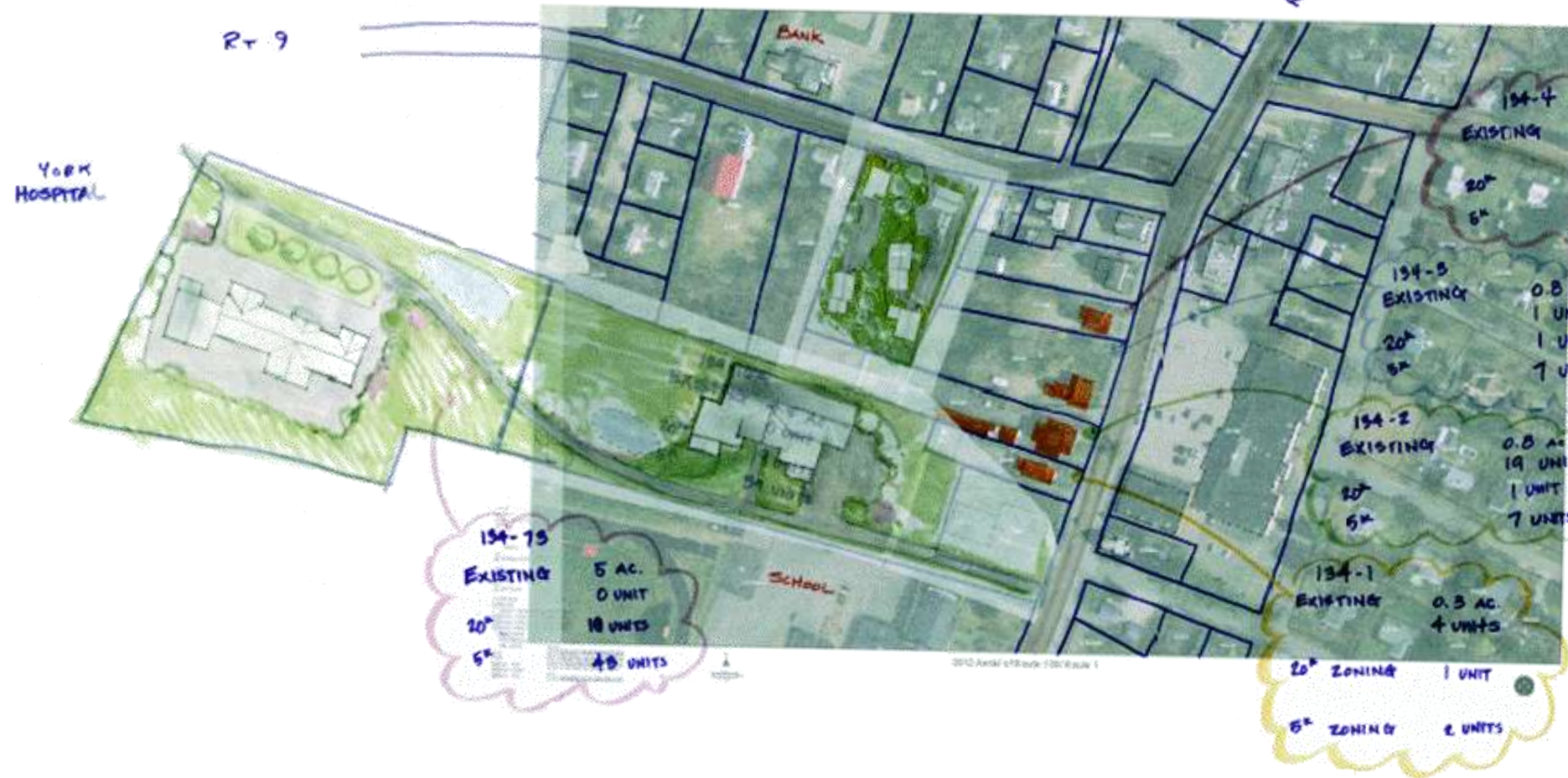


Wells Corner Design Option 1

The focus of this design concept would be on new construction to include mixed-use, retail/commercial/studios and two multi-family apartment buildings. Four units of first floor retail space, four units of second floor

commercial space, eight studio apartments, and 16 units in each of two multi-family residential buildings, totaling 32 apartments. Market-rate for two-bedroom units ranges from \$925 to \$1250 per month,

excluding utilities. Market-rate for studio apartments averages \$850 per month, excluding utilities. Retail space averages \$12 sq. ft./yr. triple net. Second floor commercial space averages \$8 sq. ft./yr. triple net



Wells Corner Design Option 2

The second concept envisions amending the existing structures to include two mixed-use, multi-family buildings as well as adjacent retail space. One building would contain 39 market-rate residential housing units and the other would be targeted as workforce housing, containing 43 units. Both buildings could also potentially contain retail space at ground level.

Market rate for two-bedroom units range from \$925 to \$1250 per month, excluding utilities. Residential rental units priced at \$850 per month gross rent are considered affordable to the area's median renter income.

Wells Corner Zoning & Infrastructure

The design team recommends the following allowances and changes to the town's zoning and building design standards to accommodate workforce housing development and to achieve the goals of the project.

- ▶ Create a town center overlay district;
 - ⇒ Mixed-uses including live, work, shop opportunities.
 - Permitted uses to include:
 - Multi-family residential;
 - Small business/retail - grocery, convenience, bookstore, personal and professional services;
 - Restaurant/café;
 - Art/craft gallery.
 - Option of conditional use permit to allow flexibility of uses if applicant meets additional standards.
 - ⇒ Flexible design standards that build on the existing, small-town New England character of the area, while retaining existing, historical buildings and addressing:
 - Scale, height, roofing, windows, facades, materials, landscaping.
 - ⇒ Dimensional standards to allow greater density:
 - 5,000 sq. ft. lot/per unit, as in the Wells Beach area;
 - Smaller front setbacks - zero lot line;
 - Reduce road frontage minimum requirement;
 - Increase building height maximum to ~40 - 45 feet, such as 3 stories with dormered 4th floor.
 - ⇒ With increased density, develop environmental impact standards to promote low impacts development that addresses impervious cover, storm water management, etc.

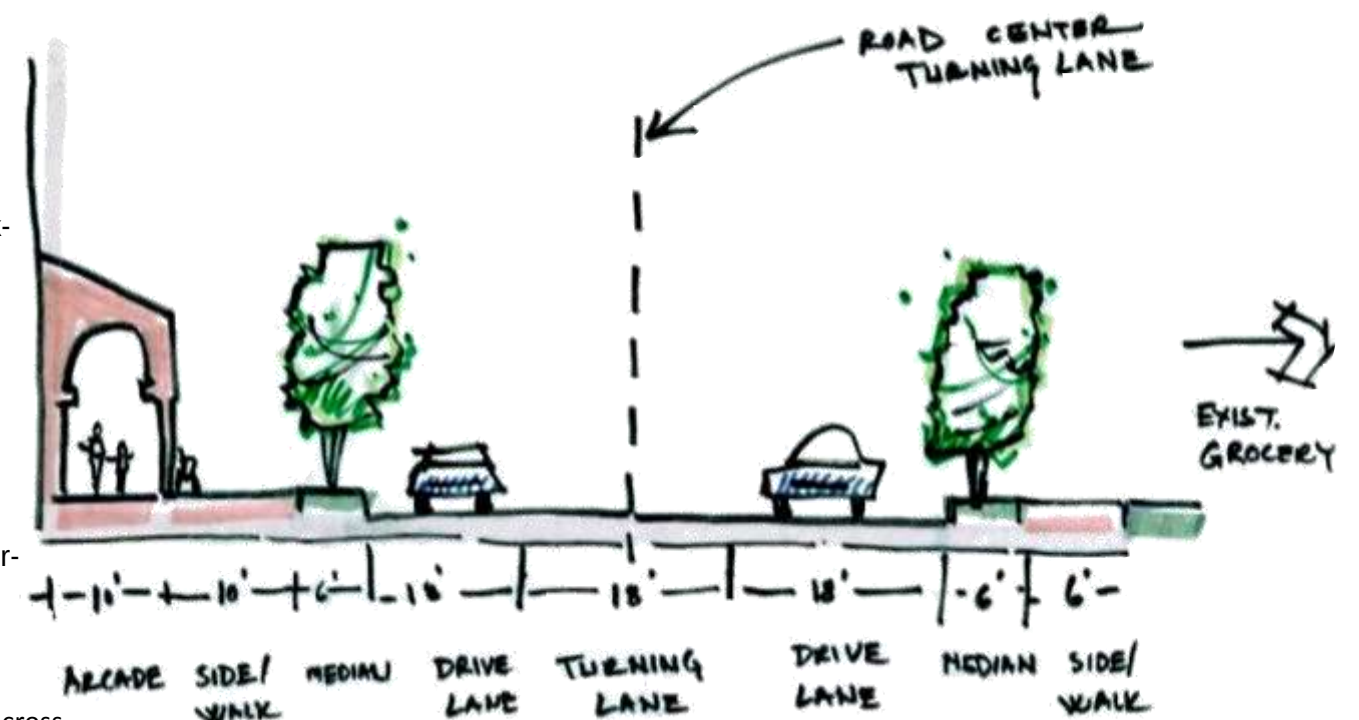
- ⇒ Pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
- ⇒ Lower existing parking requirements; manage parking demand throughout the area by including shared parking

- ▶ Provide incentives for development of workforce housing;
 - ⇒ Density bonus.

Aside from slowing traffic, a welcoming pedestrian-oriented experience can be reached by maximizing a physical separation from traffic.

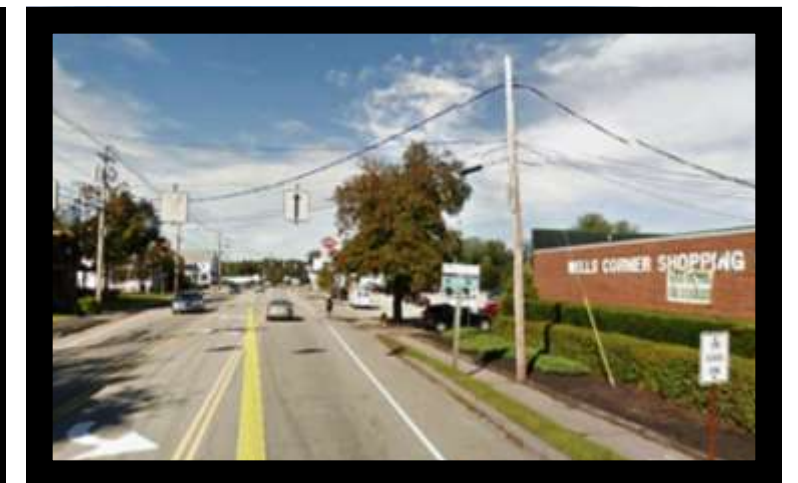
The following techniques and goals may be incorporated to support existing town measures, as practical, to increase pedestrian safety, traffic calming and other "complete streets":

- ▶ Curb extensions or "bump-outs" to shorten crossing distances;
- ▶ Wide sidewalks for events and café dining;
- ▶ Street trees for traffic calming and climate enhancement;
- ▶ Medians to separate and slow traffic;
- ▶ Medians as stopping points for pedestrian crosswalks;
- ▶ Pavement markings;
- ▶ Pavement surface and accent treatments;
- ▶ Signs, signals, and lighting;



Streetscape design created by Elizabeth Dudley, Ironwood Designs

- ▶ High visibility crosswalks;
- ▶ Pedestrian activated lights;
- ▶ Pedestrian scale lighting and amenities at crosswalks to accentuate the areas for pedestrian safety;
- ▶ Embrace barrier-free design and universal accessibility.



About the Workforce Housing Coalition

The Greater Seacoast of Southern Maine and New Hampshire is one of the least affordable regions in the country. Many cannot afford to live in the communities in which they work, so they endure long commutes: which is harmful to the environment and limits time with family and at volunteer activities. Some people move away, leaving employers who are unable to hire and retain the workers needed to sustain and grow their businesses.

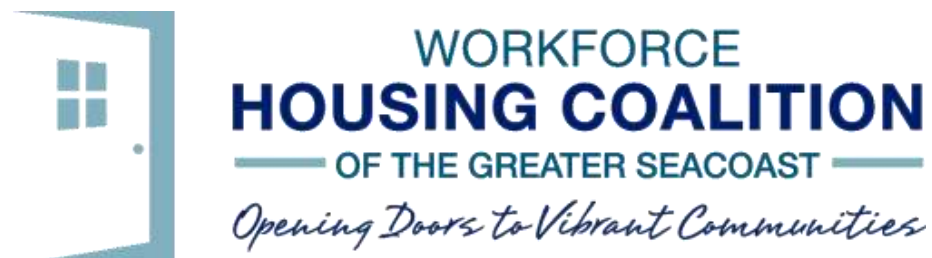
The Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast is a 501c3 non-profit organization with an office in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Our mission is to be a catalyst for the development of a range of housing options affordable to the diverse workforce in the Greater Seacoast region. We build support for workforce housing by educating municipal officials, developers and community members about the benefits of a balanced supply of housing options for the area's diverse workforce.

Who needs workforce housing?

Those who take care of our children, our seniors and our communities are among those who need workforce housing. For example, teachers, health care workers, artists, municipal employees and the other workers who provide essential services - retail, service, manufacturing, and hospitality workers.

With the support of our members, we tackle the complex issues that contribute to the Greater Seacoast region's limited housing options. We offer planners and developers advice and resources on how to meet the housing need. Through our annual design charrettes, we inspire dialogue and generate concept designs that include innovative ways to increase the local supply of workforce housing.

We envision an adequate supply of affordable, desirable housing throughout the Greater Seacoast region that provides opportunities for our workforce to put down roots, creating a more diverse community that benefits us all.



Since the Coalition's inception in 2001, we have helped nearly two dozen communities in the Greater Seacoast region of New Hampshire and Southern Maine to improve their housing regulations. In turn, local developers have created over 350 new units of workforce housing.

The lack of an adequate and balanced supply of housing poses a significant threat to the region's economic health and future. Addressing this issue requires that a broad range of individuals, organizations and public officials become engaged in efforts to change attitudes towards housing development.

What Can YOU Do?

- Learn the facts about the area's housing situation and recognize the link between an adequate and balanced housing supply and the area's economic and social stability.
- Participate in local planning processes and monitor local regulatory practices to ensure that they provide reasonable opportunities for appropriate housing development.
- Tell your local officials that you expect them to support actions, which lead to a balanced housing supply, and be prepared to support specific housing initiatives that make sense for your community.
- Participate in the work of local non-profit housing development organizations or other housing providers.
- Communicate your concern about the lack of adequate housing to state policymakers and advocate for policies and programs that support housing development.

Learn more about how you can support the Workforce Housing Coalition and help to promote a friendlier climate for workforce housing development in your community, visit www.seacoastwhc.org.





Opening Doors to Vibrant Communities

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New Hampshire Housing
Bringing You Home

United Way
of the Greater Seacoast