

“Where Rivers & Neighbors Meet”



**PLAN NH**  
Visioning *for* Sustainable Communities



# Who Is Plan NH and Why Are We Here?

- Plan NH is a 501c3 dedicated to fostering excellence in planning and design and development of New Hampshire's built environment to support a Vision of healthy and vibrant communities in the Granite State.
- Plan NH Charette program has helped over 50 communities in the State.
- Allenstown applied for a Charette to look at the Suncook area of downtown Allenstown, with an emphasis on the China Mill.
- Listening Sessions
- Work Session
- Recommendations
- Next Steps





# This Weekend's Volunteers

North Sturtevant – JSA Architects

Robin LeBlanc – Plan NH

Michelle McDonald – Plan NH

Stuart Arnett – ADG

Jamie Simchik – Fort Hill Places

Alice Carey – LBPA Architects

Ivy Vann – Citizen Planner

Chris Kennedy – UK Architecture

Jerry Coogan

Peter Michaud – NH Div. Historic Resources

Kyle Barker – Warrenstreet Architects

Matt Routhier – Bedford Design Group

Caite Foley – Catch Neighborhood Housing

Steve Hebsch – JSA Architects

Laura Getz – Plymouth State University

# Thanks To:

- Shaun Mulholland – Allenstown Town Administrator
- Matt Monahan – CNHRPC
- Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
- Town of Allenstown Officials and Citizens

# Themes

- Growth versus Change - Plan for Change
- Sense of Place
- Sense of Community
- Suncook River is not a border, but a **spine**
- Allentown: Where Rivers & Neighbors Meet

# What do *you* See?

- There is a sense of pride in the Community Center & community is family oriented
- Walking Community
- Community Identity crisis—Two separate communities Share zip code& post office “Suncook, NH”
- Allentown Location is an Asset (to other communities, resources, highways)
- Mill fully working textile mill (operating since 1860s)
- Underutilized assets—Mill area and access to water

# What do *you* want to see?

- Desire for culture (arts & history) and access, public beach, place to gather
- Want an improved look & street scape, Walking/hiking paths
- Desire for community involvement and activities— eg. skating rink, bowling alley, outside activities for kids, dog park
- Need & want for business, eg. Restaurants, local business
- Want to find community identity & uniqueness eg. to recognize French-Canadian Heritage
- Want a welcome sign

# What else do we *need to know*?

- Allentown is a bit unknown or poorly perceived
- Sewer treatment plant has an aroma, but better than past-The treatment plant has more capacity, good for community development/growth
- No tax incentives from businesses to settle here/high tax rate
- There is Little to attract people to Allentown
- Same people present at meetings
- Aging Community

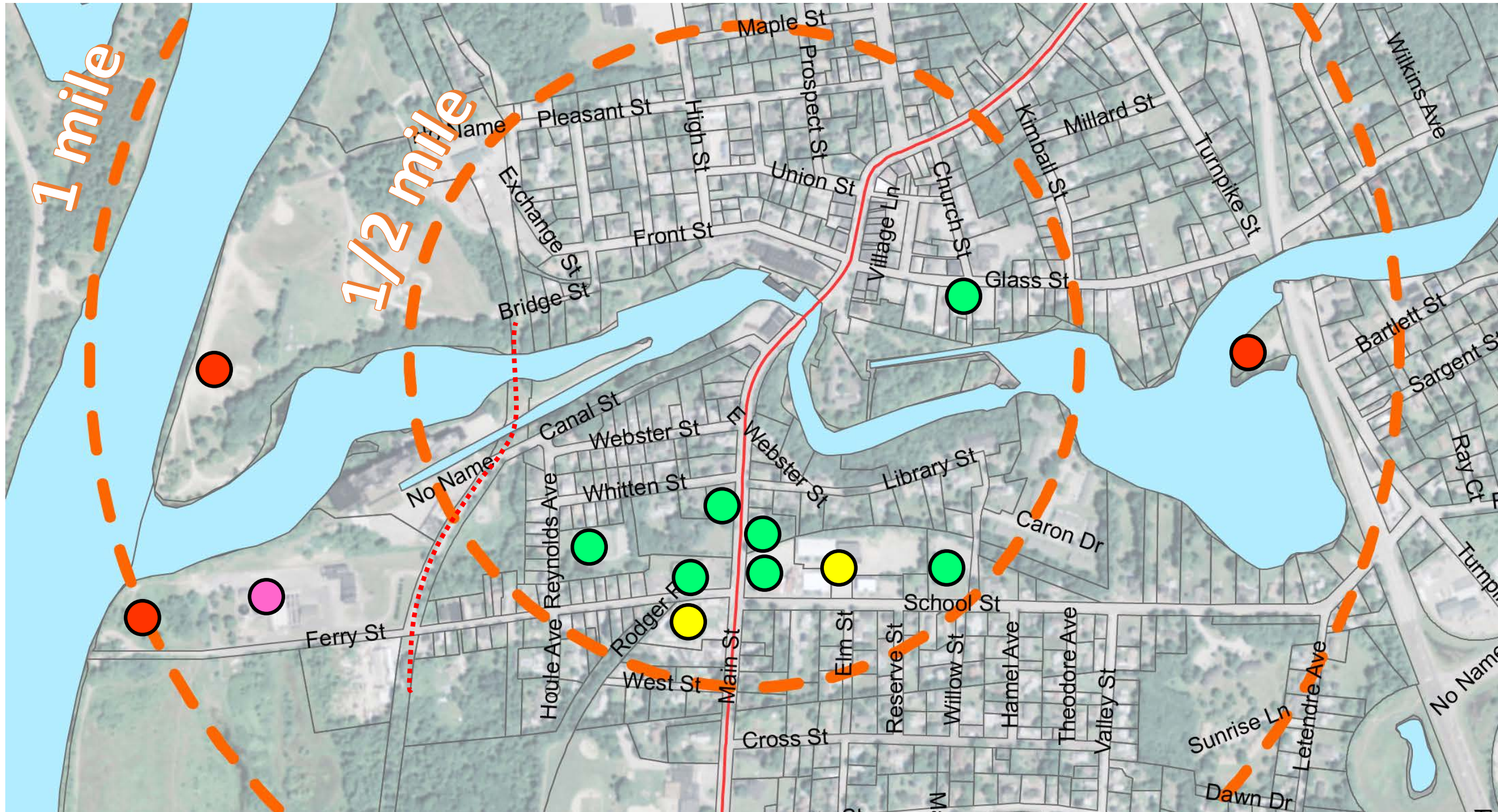


# Historical Assets





# Community Assets





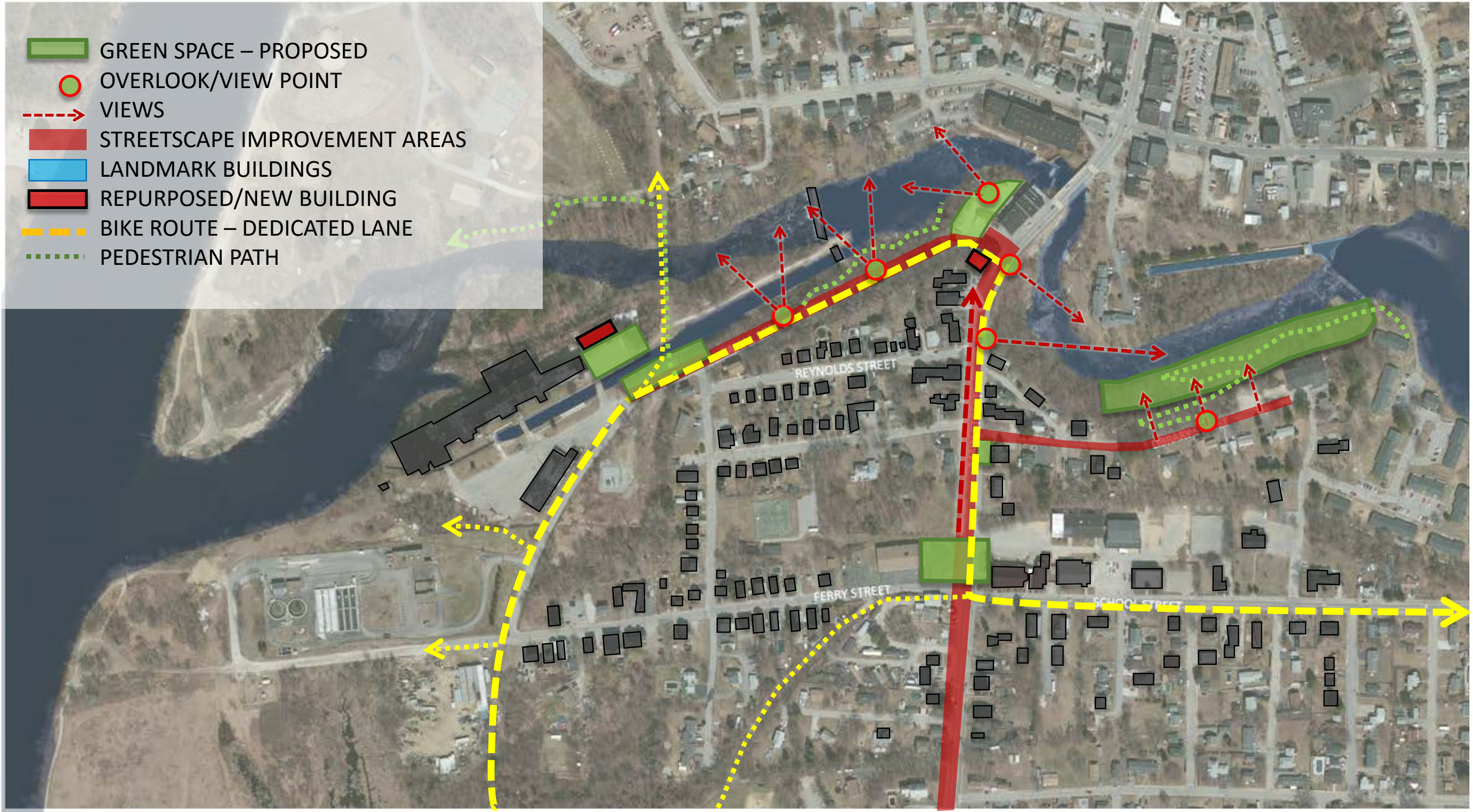
# Connectivity – Implementation Strategies

- **Put Your Money Where Your House Is:** using residents' funds to purchase underutilized or abandoned commercial space for rehab/reuse.
- **Tactical urbanism for Main Street:** Traffic is too fast coming from Hooksett towards Suncook Village. Employing some temporary bollards to mark off bicycle paths, etc. would help.
- **Traffic calming for Main Street:** Raised crosswalks, bulb-outs, bike path to visually narrow roadway and make it more of a street than a road. At the "Hinge" (Main and Canal) colored and textured asphalt to call out the area, draw people down Canal toward the China Mill.
- **Pocket parks along Main Street,** particularly at the Fire House. There's lot of asphalt meeting Main Street – more greenery would improve look and feel of Allenstown.

# Connectivity – Funding Sources

- Neighborhood Improvement Funding - Oswego Renaissance as model for neighborhood improvement. If at least 60% of a block commits to exterior improvements, 50/50 matching funds up to x amount available from charitable organization. Also programs for paint, etc.
- Transportation Alternative Plan Funds (Federal – improvements of bicycle/pedestrian access)
- NH State Parks Recreational Access Funds

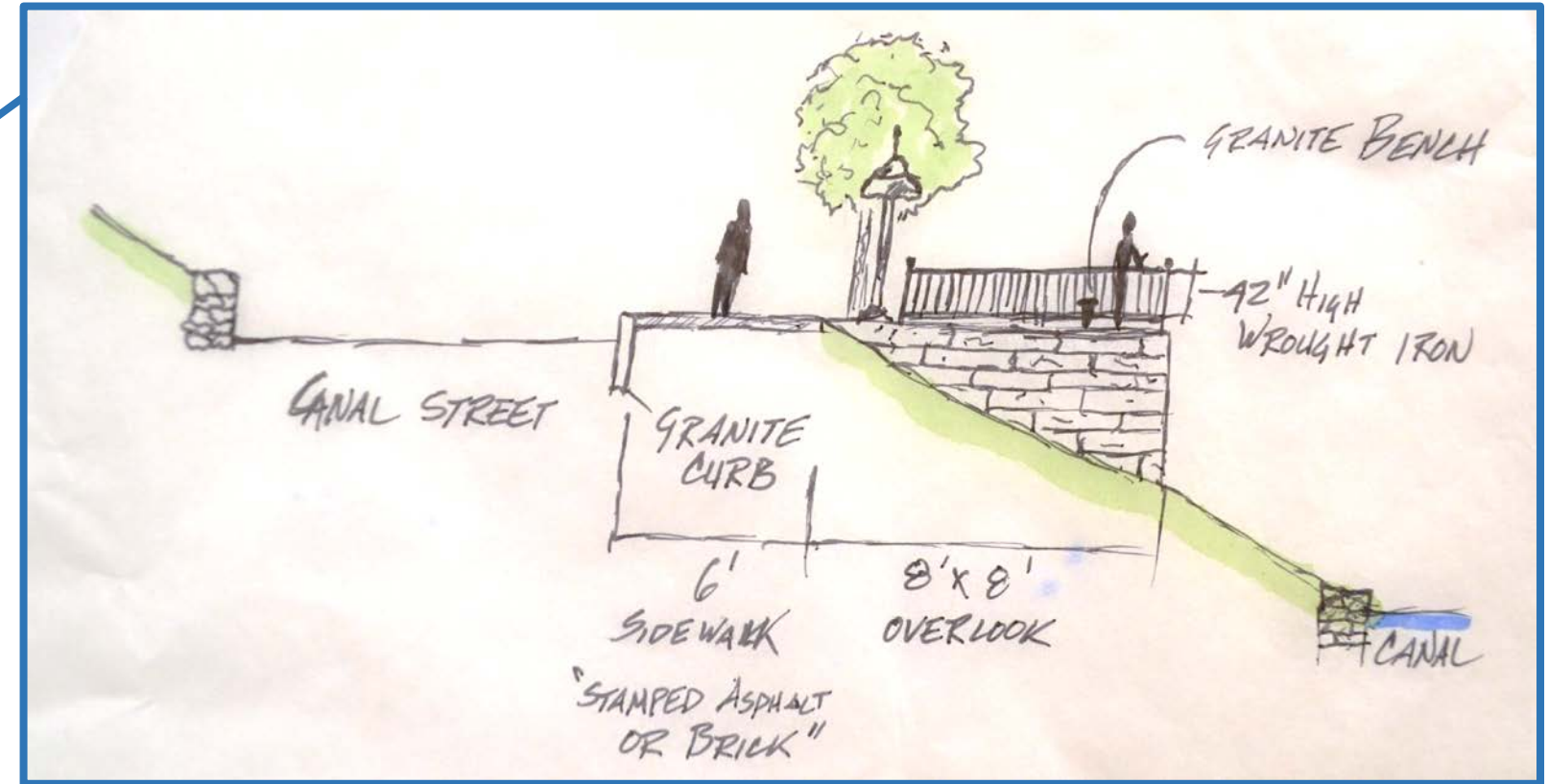
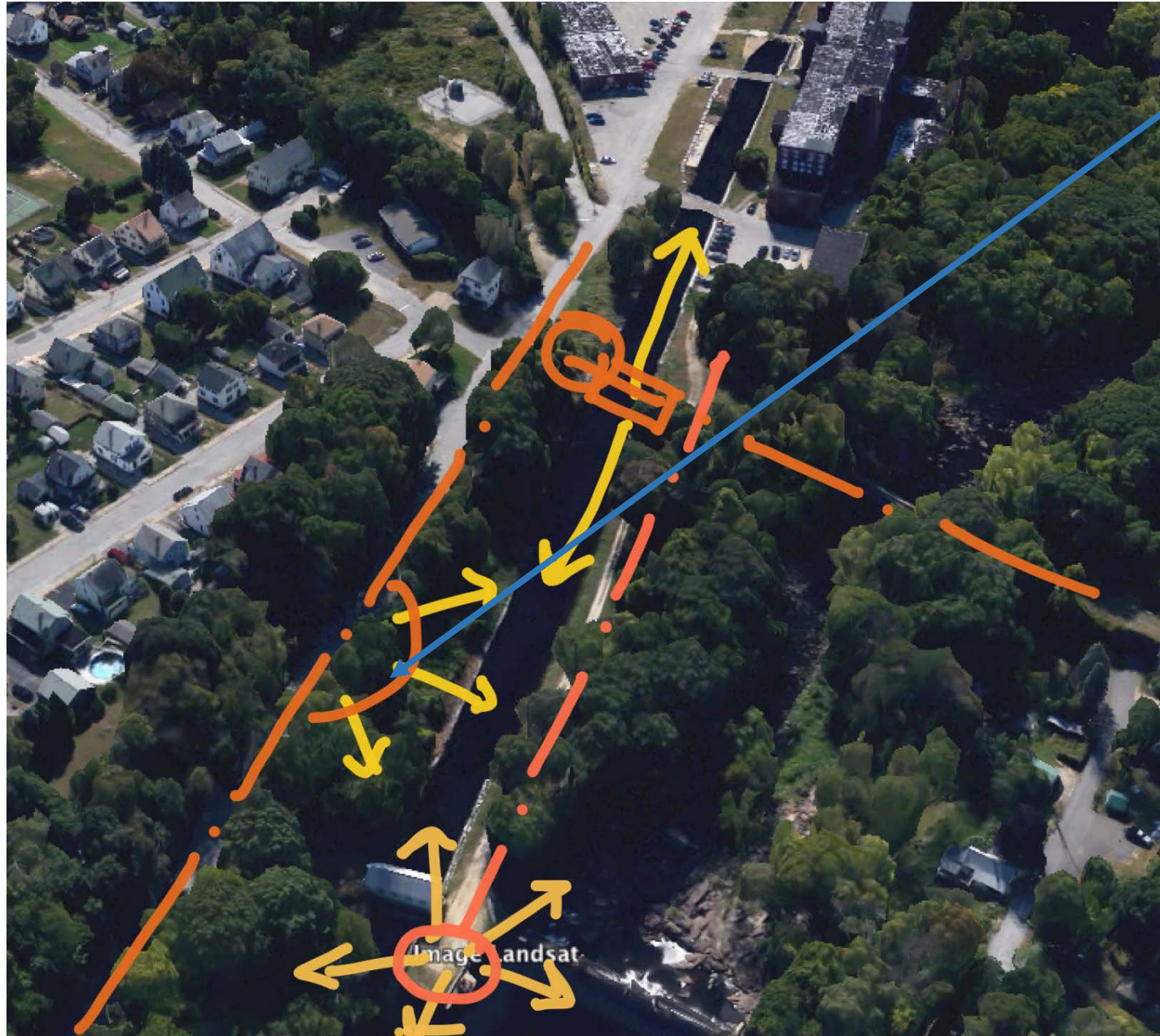






# Connectivity Sites

## CANAL STREET





# Connectivity Sites

## SUNCOOK/ALLENSTOWN GATEWAY





# Connectivity Sites

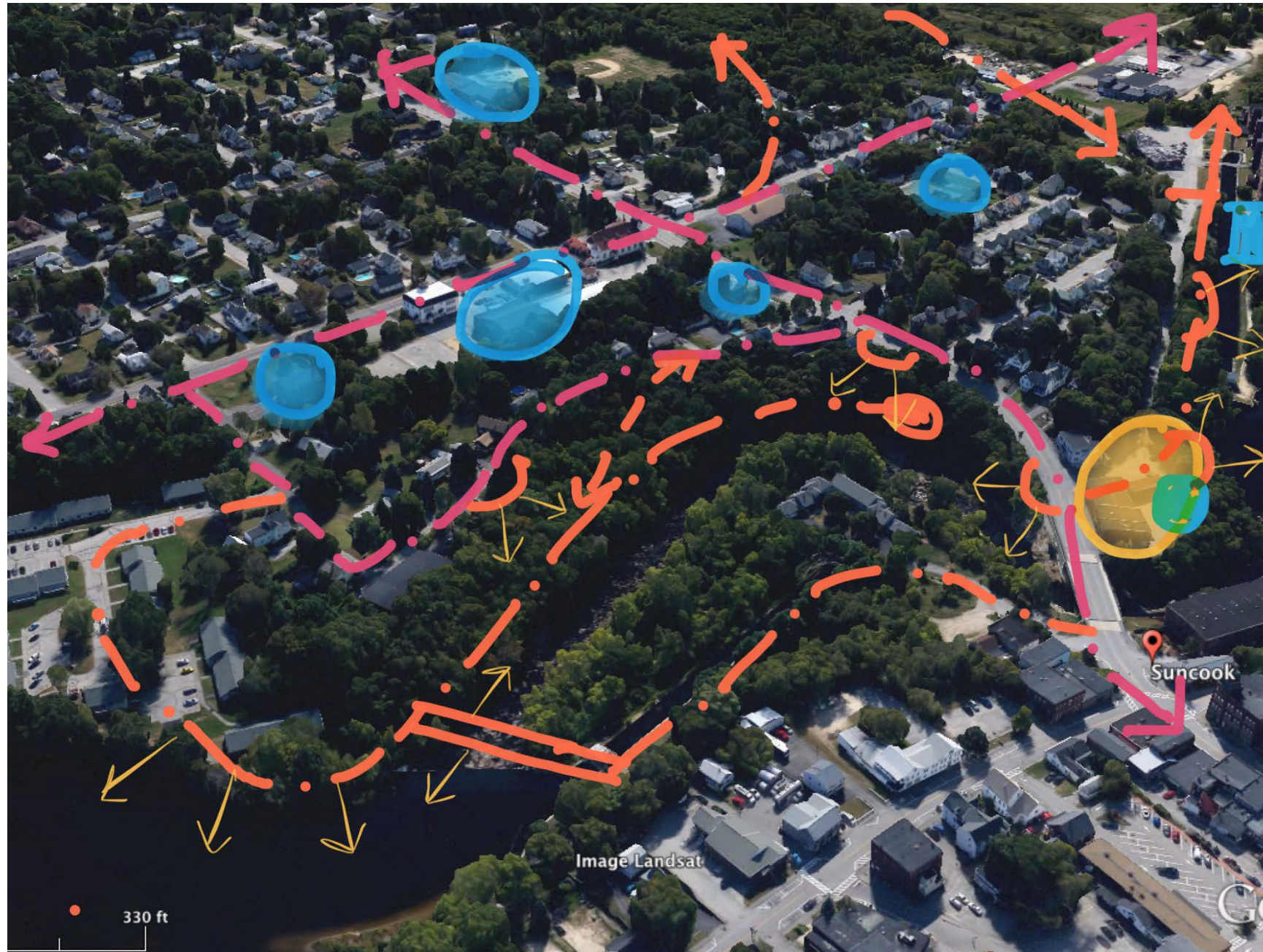
## “CANAL STREET OVERLOOK”





# Connectivity Sites

## RIVER ACCESS





# Connectivity Sites

## RIVER ACCESS



# Traffic Calming





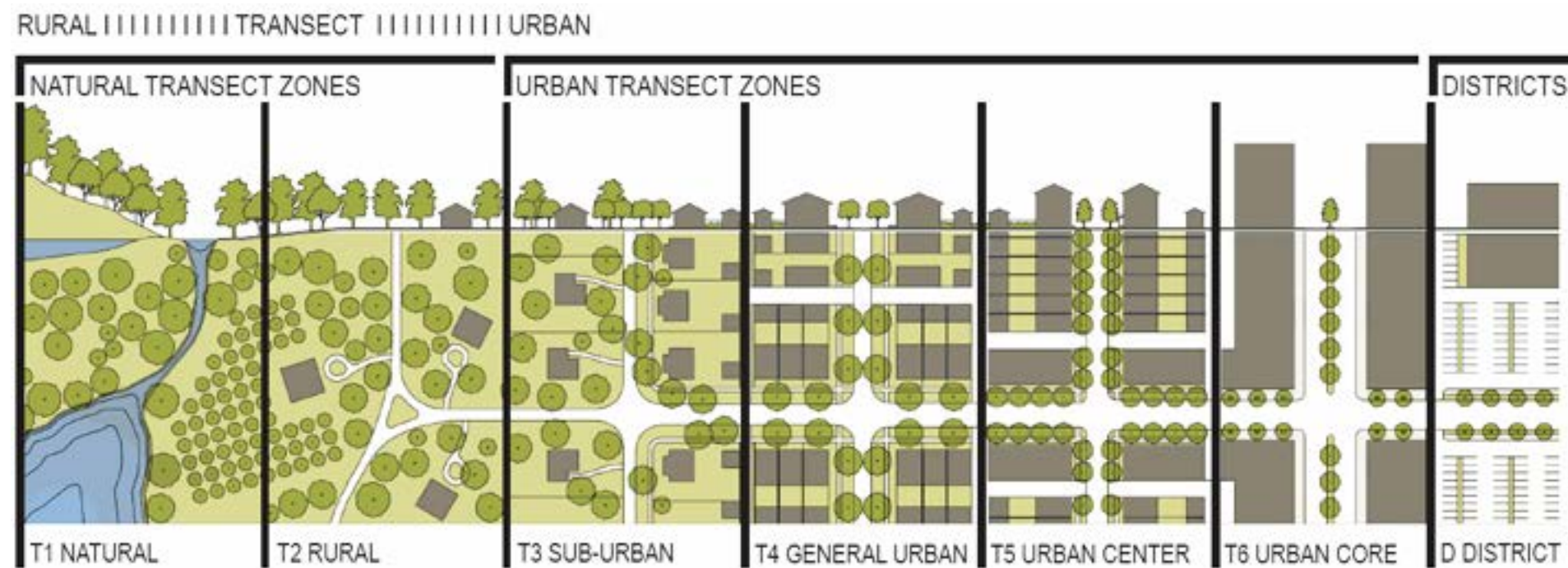
# Tactical Urbanism – Testing Ideas





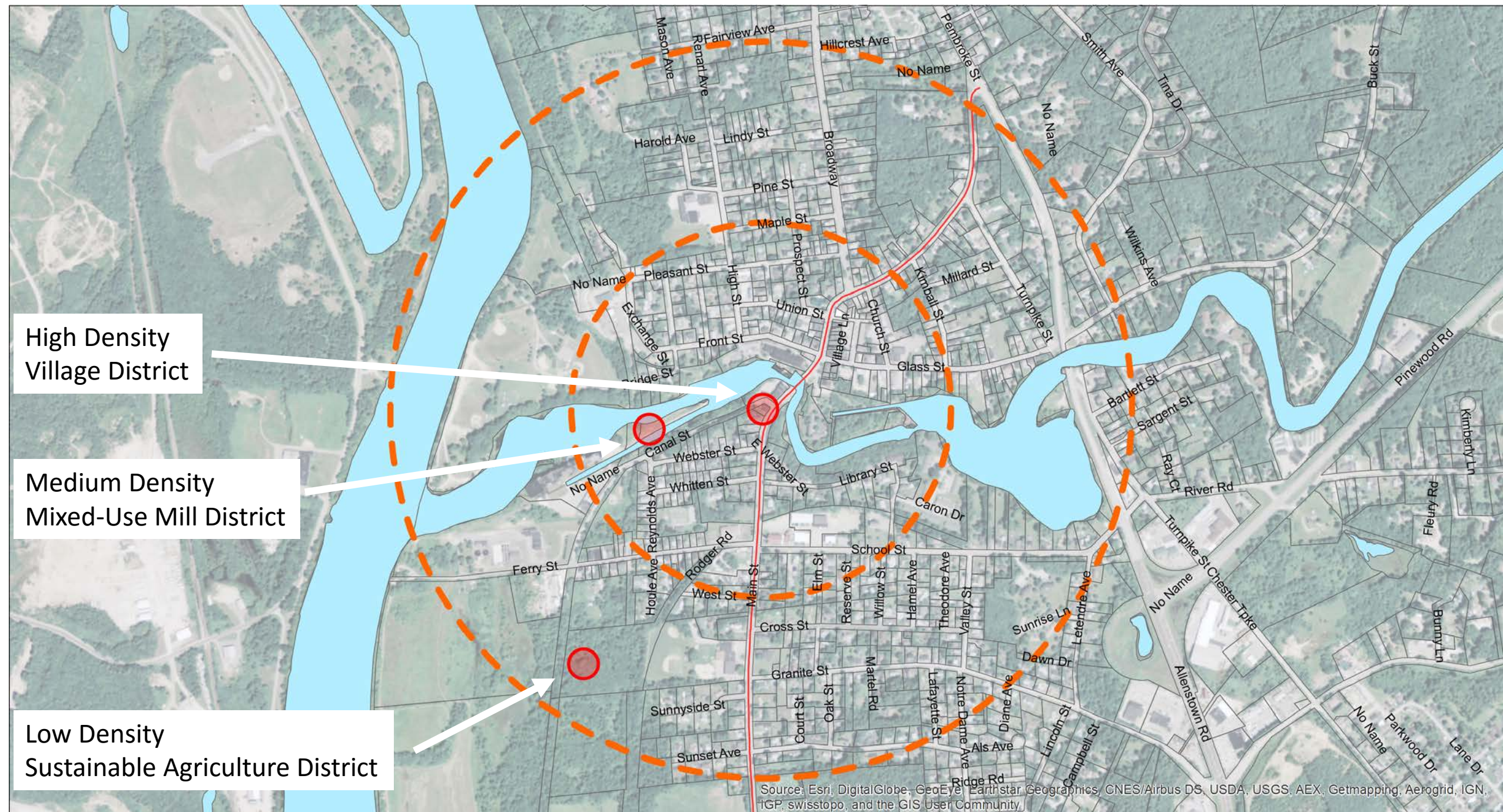
# Allenstown Transect Strategy

- What is a high density to low density transect look like?



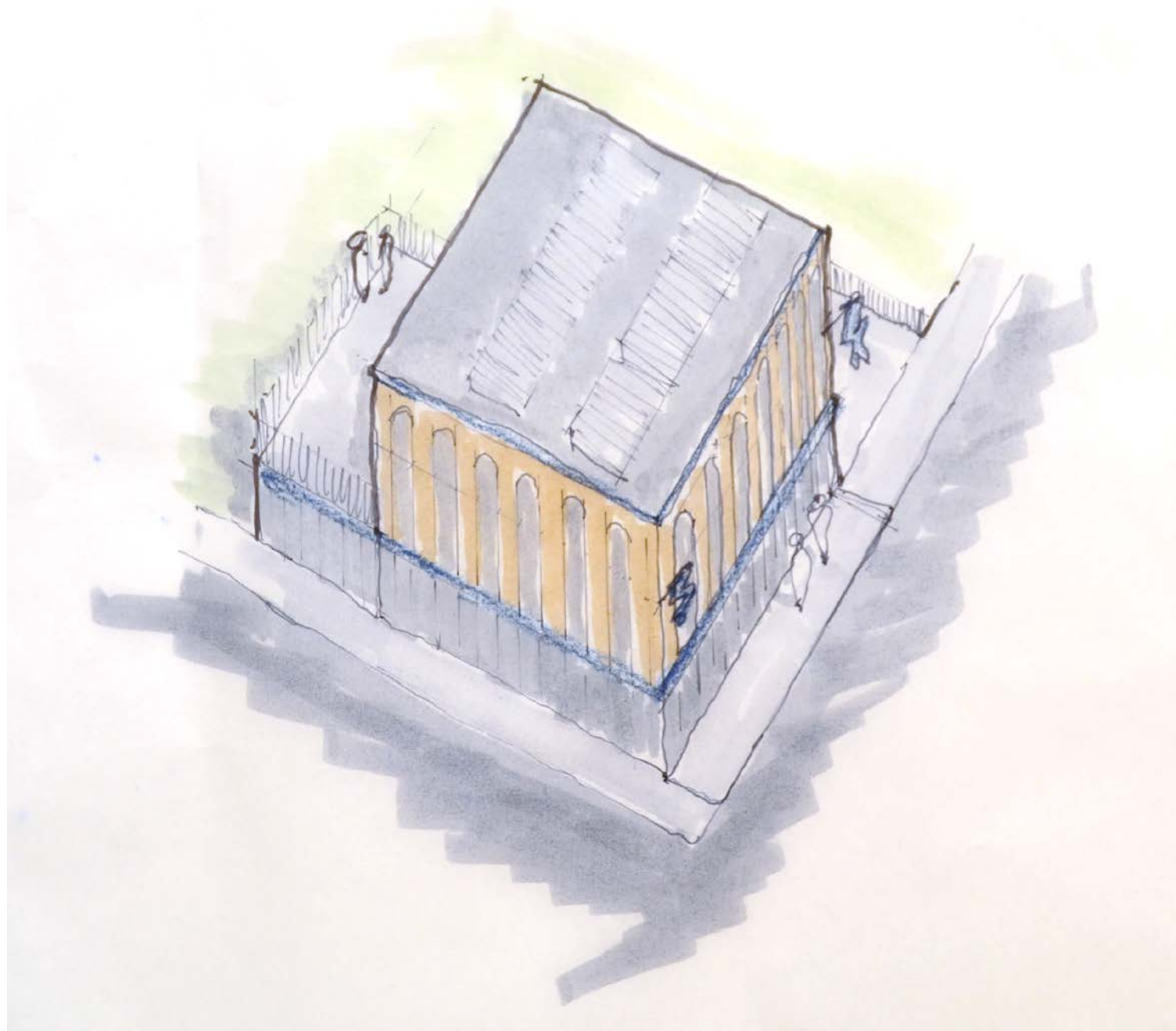


# Housing Districts





# New Housing Forms – Urban District



- Sized to Match Downtown Buildings
- 1st Floor Commercial
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Residential
- 36 Units

# New Housing Forms – Mill District



- Medium sized to mimic former
- Set close to street w/ yard in back
- 24 Units per Acre



# New Housing Forms – Agriculture District



- Sized for use:
  - Small Houses
  - Larger Community Farm Building
- Shared Common Structures
- Cars outside w/ yard inside the compound
- 16 units per Acre
- Preserves Open Farm Land

# Marketing

- Suncook Village is one market, development-friendly, open to public/private partnerships
- Attract local investment by creating new districts enticing new/diverse partners
- Three targets:
  - Enhance Village District services and awareness
  - Design Mill District to anticipate mixed-use development
  - New Sustainable Agriculture District for millennials and empty-nesters

# Project Financing – Source & Uses

USES	SOURCES
Significant historic upgrade to factory	Federal tax credit @10%
Re-use of factory – mill site for historic-OK mixed use including market-rate housing	Federal tax credit @ 20%
Boat launch with ADA access	State tax credits
Community gardens	CDBG – Community Development Block Grants
Bike trail to Hooksett	US EDA Infrastructure grants
Regatta Pavilion, park and Fitness-walking trail	Town owned property as incentive for private sector investment
Upgrade pool property	Town owned land for agi-residential development
Brownfield clean-up and reuse with possible recreation areas	Public-private co-development



# Financing

- Historic tax credit ready
- Enlarge 79E district to include Mill District
- Evaluate if a tax increment finance district is advisable
- Work with existing China Mills business to help finance improvements



# Financing

- Financing methods:
  - Historic tax credits (10% or 20%)
  - New market Tax Credits
  - CDBG funding
  - CDFA tax credits
  - Low income housing tax credits
  - Brownfield funding



# Zoning

- Cross-border zoning district, more substantial than overlay district
- Solidify identity of Suncook Village
- Provide as a catalyst for joint municipal efforts
- Ensure development on either side of the Suncook River echoes each other
- Form-based, not use-based







# Zoning

- Key is compatibility and flexibility on both sides of the river
- Zoning should allow for or facilitate what the market wants to develop/redevelop
- Potential options:
  - Form-base codes (Dover, NH)
  - RSA 674:21 Innovative Land Use Controls
  - Contract zoning (ME)
  - Market-based zoning

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Thank you for your time!