

Morristown Moving Forward

Comments Received on Gallery Boards

INTRODUCTION

Vision

- Change vision to “live, work and VISIT”! Unfortunately right now with bars, Morristown has the reputation of a playground
- We need to ensure that our Master Land Use Plans supports our vision – use the concept of a marketing plan
- What do you mean by sustainable?

Economic Prosperity

- Need job opportunities; business owner and entrepreneur incentives
- Add incentives for property owners to improve outside of buildings
- Need better balance of downtown retail to encourage shopping in town. Also need – or need to better promote parking discounts
- Are we employing town residents in town (walk to work)?
- Encourage businesses to interact with one another on the green during lunch breaks
- Shopping as a destination – need a place for sure that you can find a blouse for your business suit. Shouldn’t have to get in your car to go shopping.
- Need a real and sustainable mix of uses (office, residential, food, bar, retail). Needs variety; less banks; more retail and small businesses
- Help build and promote business growth in the HQ Plaza area
- To get business in town young local entrepreneurs should buy a building and rent out very cheap space to local new business for 3 years so they can establish before the high rents
- Affordable classes and transportation for people on fixed income
- Business rents are too high for “mom and pop” stores
- Security for business owners (from crime)

Complete Neighborhoods

- Great library; make it mobile with a book bus
- Free art studio for kids; need more youth hang out spaces with transportation to/from
- Develop reasons for Morristown to become a destination (jobs, nice places to live, things to do)
- Having more areas like the “parklet” spread through the area
- Medical services? Quality of life includes good medical
- Accessible to all forms of mobility
- Best town ever; need to implement a bicycle plan
- Affordable professional housing; turn empty buildings into affordable housing; need varied, more affordable housing options; more affordable apartments
- Repair sidewalks and increase bike paths
- Preserve the rich history; more signs to historic places

- Headquarters Plaza is fairly vacant. How can we fill the space? Commerce, small business?
- Make use of inaccessible/unused places
- Incorporate all populations and diversity in plan.
- Improve race relations; unite ethnic groups
- Make it easier to drive in town, less one-way streets. Possibly pedestrian-only around the green
- Integrate active design guidelines into town planning and design
- Manage drinking establishments so they don't "appear" to overwhelm center of town; don't wait for an incident to act
- Revitalize Patriots Path; signage and paving of Patriot's Path throughout Town
- Sidewalks need repair; improve walking signs; pedestrian crossing signage/talking crosswalks need to be in Spanish and English
- Tear down old buildings
- Family-friendly development
- Need to keep the look and feel of the old buildings
- Repair "old" buildings! Provide incentives for property owners to improve the outside of their buildings
- Too many vacant spaces along Speedwell Avenue; improve building facades along Speedwell Avenue; Speedwell Avenue needs to be more attractive
- Traffic – need a "Do Not Block Intersection" sign in front of Citi Bank so market traffic can exit
- No traffic/cars on North Park Place
- Can Pocahontas Lake be used for canoeing, etc.?
- Engage with sidewalk with outdoor seating/event space – eliminate dead space
- The bar raucous around South Street/West Park needs to be fixed
- Activate the square and the HQ Plaza (music activities, flea market)
- Improve the perception of schools; realtors need to learn more about Morristown Schools and promote to buyers and not have them look at other towns (Maplewood and South Orange)
- More water fountains
- Morristown Green farmers market

Environmental Health

- Need more bike paths
- Improve walking signs
- Health of the material resources that remain – Whippany should be important since natural features in Morristown are scarce
- Environmental health – need more water reports and recycling education
- Need to ensure a clean environment; quality of life issue
- Commercial, urban farm for the 80 to 100 restaurants in Morristown; more emphasis on healthier ingredients for restaurants and home cooks

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Good Governance

- Bar ordinance needed
- Better governance
- Use this process to create on-going opportunities to leverage the people and organizational assets in town to create “value added” for all (info sharing, opportunities for partnerships, etc.)

Neighborhood Preservation

- Provide solid examples of what is meant by neighborhood preservation
- Encourage good inter-neighborhood communication
- Make the Green safer at night
- Neighborhood preservation is always talked about but the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment always ignore it
- Traffic study is needed before Whole Foods takes over the A&P property – neighborhood preservation!! This part of town is not to serve the wealthy Mendhamites with their convenient Whole Foods accessibility. We live and pay taxes here!

Contextual Architecture and Design

- Architectural code needed
- Using Main Streets Program. Restore original building faces and interiors
- Historic preservation; leverage the history and historic features of Morristown as a destination; preserve the character of the community
- Flower pots from lamp posts
- Public sculpture on street corners or mid-street
- Make entry points more attractive e.g., Lafayette Ave. (there is lots of trash here)
- Encourage businesses to plant trees, gardens, flowers in tubs
- Less boring “plastic” development especially at the expense of old buildings full of character (see Early Street or Ann/Court Street)
- Fix Speedwell Avenue – it’s in need of revitalization
- Keep diversity on Speedwell Avenue
- Adaptable streetscapes; encourage more on-street dining areas
- Better parking
- What about the creation of a more interesting café culture/restaurant culture outdoor dining experience?

Reduce the Negative Impacts of Car Congestion

- Ensure traffic light coordination for better traffic flow
- Close a couple of roads on Sundays to encourage walking
- Reduce traffic along the Green

Bike- and Pedestrian-Friendly Streets

- Bike-friendly streets; a pedestrian community
- Does this also mean drug-free? Gun free?
- More bike racks in town; (I agree) plus covered, secured locking areas; more bike racks on street corners around the green
- More bike paths in town
- Streets need to be safe enough for children to get around
- Need to be able to access bike paths/parks on the outskirts of town; it's currently impossible ride safely with children to those places – we are forced to ride on the sidewalks
- Be careful planning bike paths alongside of vehicles
- Fully pedestrian green

Leverage Our Transportation Location

- More public transportation
- More buses to the train station
- More buses, more buses
- Parking improvements to train station

Quality, Usable Open Space

- Need more open space
- Entertainment spaces need to be assured (theaters, galleries)
- Olyphant Park, Cutler Park, etc. reinforce with signage ID (in progress)
- Provide vest pocket parks that neighborhoods can take care of
- Sponsor arts and crafts on the Green where it needs to be
- Enjoy the Green and activities offered

Equitable Development

- If A&P leaves, we need an affordable grocery store in town that is accessible by bike or on foot (not everyone in town owns a car), especially if we are striving for a more sustainable town
- Affordable food source, especially if the A&P is going to be replaced by another high-priced grocery store
- Affordable housing
- Integrate Hispanic community

Environmental and Energy Design

- Energy conservation
- More garbage cans around; more doggy bag stations
- Move farmers market to the Green
- Vehicle charging stations
- Use green energy to power Morristown and use green products for new buildings

Economic and Jobs Development

- Mixed retail, as well as bar, restaurant, banks. Small businesses would be good for the county; too many brokers in town
- Encourage more retail merchants to have a more viable downtown
- Need more jobs in town; fill HQ Plaza
- Food court/food shopping like Eataly (smaller scale) near the Green
- Need more department stores
- Are these in priority order? Economic development/jobs should not be last (#10)
- Do more to promote the hospitality industry (ex. Morristown Restaurant Week)
- Encourage creative (artists) to move in here
- Too many bars around town; Disagree – bars and other spaces create culture and encourage community interaction; bars are extremely crowded on weekend nights so not enough bars!
- Too many bars – nice to have young people, but what happens to 50+?
- Barnes and Noble at HQ Plaza
- Too many eateries
- More retail; Urban Outfitters to fit demographics of HS/young adults
- Diversity in retail; give reasons for people to visit and play
- Expand retail stores to locations on side streets off of the Green
- Expand retail stores and restaurants down Speedwell Avenue; create community while keeping diversity

MOBILITY ELEMENT

Goals and Objectives

General

- These are good goals

1. Auto Circulation

- a. Car sharing at HQ Plaza
- b. Please find a different route from 287 to Mendham (make cars get off 287 at Harter Road then go through)
- c. One-way streets force you onto already congested main streets. Be better to avoid area if possible
- d. Review one-way streets – maybe too many moving away from the Green?
- e. Minimize traffic problems/issues in town
- f. Morristown is part of NJ. Cars must be part of the plan
- g. Traffic on Speedwell near HQ Plaza is often heavy and not well structured
- h. Traffic is a nightmare at certain times of the day. Flow along Lafayette onto Morris/Pine Street is awful at certain times of the day
- i. Street cops are unnecessary; traffic lights create a lot of backed up congestion i.e., James Street/South Street intersection
- j. Work with Morris County Board of Transportation for ideas and coordination
- k. Eliminate the “No right turn” at the light on James Street/South Street intersection (left turn from James to South already exists)
- l. The Lafayette to Ridgedale merge is dangerous; moving to far right is tricky with cars coming off 287 South at Lafayette
- m. Merge from 287 to Madison – Help!
- n. Add more speedbumps; No speedbumps – add landscaping bump outs to slow traffic
- o. Loading zones; greater emphasis on regulations for retail and commercial loading zones
- p. Need street lights and 4-way stop signs in town
- q. Improve traffic around the Green , Morris Avenue, and South Street

2. Pedestrians and Bikes

- a. Sponsor/encourage walking or biking events so all residents see how easy it is to walk in town – from home to Green to town, etc.
- b. Super important and needed now!
- c. Implement bike plan
- d. Walking from train station to South Street after 11 p.m. – via Green, too many bar-goers; via Pine, too dark. I’m afraid to walk home from the train station after 11 p.m. – how are you going to make me feel safer?
- e. Pedestrian cut-through at Olyphant and Lafayette
- f. Completely connected with no disappearing buffer zones
- g. Bike rentals

- h. Bike corrals at government buildings
 - i. Finish walking and bike paths such as Patriot's Park
 - j. Connect Speedwell Lake, Pocahontas Lake and Patriot's Path. Manage these resources sensitively and protectively but also provide access. Pocahontas is a hidden gem – a "wild" part of Morristown. Would be nice to have a Loantaka type recreation area in Morristown or to create a greenway connecting Burnham, Foote's Pond, Speedwell Lake/Pocahontas for biking, walking and running
 - k. Crossing Lafayette near Staples – train station is very dangerous (and visually unattractive)
 - l. Enforce bike lanes – keep bikes off sidewalks
 - m. Connect the Green and HQ Plaza physically and aesthetically. The Plaza lacks pedestrian scale and nature
 - n. Connect Morristown with adjacent communities via bike paths e.g., traction line trail (Morristown and Madison) – into Morristown central neighborhoods
3. Public Transit
- a. Need a special bus route to bring people in to town for lunch and dinners
 - b. Public transit to local hospitals, etc.
 - c. #3 is crucial
 - d. Coordinate with surrounding communities and employers
 - e. Get regional employers, industries, county government, school districts (Morristown, Township, Morris Plains) to join as stakeholders in a real bus system
 - f. Weekend trollies to take people to 3 or 4 key attractions; (Weekend trollies seem very expensive)
4. Parking
- a. More parking by South Street and Elm Street
 - b. Parking is needed
 - c. More parking for visitors and residents
 - d. Parking even on secondary streets is a problem – meters are too short so everyone is always running to the meter
 - e. Fear of tickets discourages people from coming downtown
 - f. Commercialize Pine Street to attract pedestrian business from the train to eliminate the need for so many parking spots
 - g. Free parking in town for residents? What about short-term spots (e.g., 15 minutes)?
 - h. Work to improve/change the perception that there is parking in town
 - i. Flat level parking is more "friendly" and has a small town feel
 - j. We have plenty of parking – this is a PR problem

MOBILITY ELEMENT

Proposed Street Types

General

- Make Macculloch Avenue Neighborhood not a cut-through
- Streets adjacent to the Green should be pedestrian-only on the weekends to promote walking and business growth
- I think an accessibility column might be warranted (in the table)
- Universal accessibility
- Have a summer weekend connecting train on the M&E railway to the Whippany Train Museum
- Parking meters on secondary streets should have longer times
- More benches on South Street
- Not rocket science – anything that can get people from all walks of life to come together
- What categories can traffic calming be used in?
- You guys rock! Agree with all proposed street types
- Move traffic signal at Maple and Miller to Macculloch and Miller
- More light-activated pedestrian crosswalks
- Quickly fix the area of Speedwell from North Park Place to Marty's Cycle
- Provide more pedestrian streets around the Green
- Two-way traffic around the Green
- Spruce up Patriot's Path; From Speedwell Lake to Pocahontas Lake to MLK and then connect to Traction Trail
- Move Patriot's Path; follow under the Whippany River train tracks at the Abbett Avenue playground
- Restructure traffic near Morris and Spring Street intersection near 7-11
- Improve Morris Street; make it walkable at night
- DeHart Street goes to historic neighborhood; should be protected and only residential for any vacant lots
- Shorter light on Taft Lane and Morris Street
- Have more talking and visual signs for the blind and deaf
- Abbett Avenue also has business – blend residential and business together
- I love finding old alley ways between buildings that link streets for pedestrians
- Separate roads for 18-wheelers and delivery trucks
- Put traffic light back at Madison and Maple – lots of accidents happen there
- South Street needs a bike path to finish the road where park is!!
- Lafayette merge from 287 to Ridgedale is dangerous and often congested
- Provide safe access for pedestrians to town center for all neighborhoods

Primary Activity Corridor (PAC)

- Noise is a problem and needs to be addressed on West Park. Even PACs need to be livable

- Include mobile vending zones
- Crossing is dangerous
- The recent improvements in making pedestrian crossings safer has made walking around town easier but on mornings where you cross 4 lanes traffic often does not see you – how about pedestrian flashing lights activated by pedestrians to alert traffic on both sides. They have this in Boulder, CO and it works great
- On-street parking should be banned on busier streets like Early
- Renderings
 - I love it!
 - Needs more parking
 - Less vehicular traffic around the Green
 - Increase height of trees on approaches to the Green. Also blend in types of trees and plantings into these approaches that exist on the Green so as to signal entering the Town Center
 - Have you see Montclair’s Park Street? Awesome

Secondary Activity Street (SAS)

- Streets around the Green should be secondary
- Renderings
 - No room for sidewalk cafes on DeHart Street

Town Thoroughfare (TT)

- More pet/child/family-friendly places inside and out

Residential (R)

- Get utilities to “tighten up” overhead lines running through neighborhoods; looks terrible and have gotten snagged on delivery trucks when they hang too low
- Clean up unnecessary and redundant signage; straighten up all the signs – they look drunk
- Always have sidewalks (even in residential)
- Olyphant Park Neighborhood needs sidewalks; neighbors turned down the offer from the town the last time the street was paved; let’s figure it out with next paving cycle
- Somehow manage speed on residential streets
- Cutler Street (and all of Cutler Park) should be residential; way too much traffic from out of town
- Renderings
 - Why are four crosswalks needed with 2 residential streets? Too much paint

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY FORM

Goals and Objectives

General

- Goals are great. Priorities could be in a different order: 6, 4, 2, 3, 1

Healthy and Residential Neighborhoods

- Morristown recreation should have activities for all ages
- Need more affordable housing for healthy community
- Maintain diversity
- Agree to increase affordable housing; rental housing, not apartments
- Need a mosque; we have to travel to Boonton or Rockaway

Thriving Commercial and Mixed-Use Areas

- More dress shops
- Dessert shops that stay open late on weekends
- Food trucks along the Green are great!
- Bars/restaurants when/if landscape in back would be nice “social space” “garden type” backyard
- Increase diversity of retail

Sustainable Building and Site Design

- Please no giant five-story development on Lafayette at train station
- The Town should try to achieve LEED accreditation
- More emphasis on sustainable design
- Builders should be required to include sustainable practices
- All new construction and commercial renovation projects should use LEED recycling guidelines
- Stop building all high-rises until we know current occupancy and inventory under construction; we risk white elephants
- More buildings with green LEED certification
- Manage height restrictions – HQ Plaza is a height eyesore – let’s not make the same mistakes

Safe and Attractive Streetscapes

- Make it safe and attractive in all neighborhoods, not just the wealthy ones
- Need more green (planters?), art in HQ Plaza

Usable, Connected Public Spaces

- Open space!!
- Dog parks close to town (Abbett Park?)
- Incorporate public artwork into open spaces
- Open Pocahontas Lake and Patriot’s Path

- Need more pocket parks
- No more golf courses
- We need a cultural destination, like a museum, downtown; emphasis on thought
- HQ Plaza as a youth hang out place
- Agree that HQ Plaza needs to be the site of more events – perhaps complimentary to the Green – and serve as “open space” in that neighborhood area
- Need a plan to connect buildings and streets; need welcoming environment for folks to end up, relax and perhaps meet
- Promote people lingering – especially families, not just adult activities
- An open space plan is long overdue
- Lake is an asset that is unused or underused. River around Coal and Center could be an asset too
- Soccer fields or other open space at Coal and Center could help mitigate flooding while drawing recreation uses (I think soccer demand is not being met with current open space)

Historic Preservation

- Local incentives for maintaining/restoring/preserving historic properties (existing property owners or new investors/developers)
- Emphasize historic Morristown’s core/unique traits
- #6 is a must do
- Everything old is not historically worth preserving; but boring cookie cutter developments are not always the answer
- Save CVS; car dealer rehab
- Incorporate the historic elements of Washington and other persons who helped build our country; need shuttle bus and tour guides like Gettysburg, Williamsburg, Boston, etc.

Planning and Zoning Administration

- Don’t require zoning approvals for solar panels. Generally, find ways for existing property owners and proposed projects to “go green” without added costs and headaches from town hall
- Clawback provisions in redevelopment and other large projects that over promise but under deliver (e.g. more school kids than projected, more revenue than claimed in negotiating PILOTS, low-quality retail)
- A more friendly building department
- Zoning enforcement critical
- In zoning code, differentiate between restaurants, restaurants/bars (after 11 p.m.) and regulate max concentrations by residential uses
- Create and fund an Urban Farm zone
- Enforce zoning on Speedwell and help that area become a destination for Spanish food...not TV’s
- Goal #7 very important – restrict variances

- Facilitate by-right opportunities for smaller affordable housing opportunities (i.e., increased density, reduced parking allowed for fewer cars, etc.)
- Can the air rights over the rail yard behind staples be utilized to a more productive use (either to maximize proximity to train station or benefit that retail center)?

Community Form Designations

General

- Would love a graphic that matches existing zoning types to these new categories
- For a town of 16,000 why 17 different zones
- Keep building at a maximum 2-3 stories. Please don't turn Morristown into New Brunswick or Hoboken. It will kill all of the charm of this town. (NIMBY Fool!! Build high!! Heights = sustainability and prosperity)
- Do we have to stay in the single-family detached motif? We need new motifs allowing housing of all levels of affordability
- More open space. Empty lots and holes in ground should be addressed (ex. Lot next to Pazzo Pazzo)
- Improve access to Abbett Avenue Park
- Explore bed and breakfasts
- Any moderate to high-density residential housing must consider traffic issues
- How long does a redevelopment zone stay without redevelopment?
- Create walking tracks/loops through neighborhoods
- Develop the hillside at Washington/Atno Street
- Bring Berkeley College to Morristown
- How do we balance residential next to industrial?
- How is the town dealing with the massive retail development on East Hanover Avenue and impacts on Ridgedale Avenue?
- How about allowing some ultra modern counterpoint buildings set off against the historic ones i.e., Bed Bath and Beyond
- The train station asset and Morris Street and Lafayette to 287 is the growth corridor and should become the town core

TC-3 Town Core High Density

- High density (7 stories max) is appropriate for the core area
- The 7 stories of 40 Park Place, the Metropolitan, and proposed Building C violates this already
- No more than 3 story buildings on South Street
- All buildings on South Street should have similar architecture to maintain character
- Build higher level condos in redevelopment areas by the train station
- Add grocery store near the Green

TC-1 Town Core Low Density

- Obey setback variances from these residents

CR-1 Corridor Residential High Density

- Strange that this is the only HD Corridor proposed (Orange on map). Mostly older 1-2-3 families on a hill. High density does not fit with other side of street or seem right

NC Neighborhood Center

- I don't think 3-story height is reasonable but not sure what the right number is

NR-1 Neighborhood Residential Medium Density

- Address vacant lots and spaces
- Rents are too high

SNR-3 Suburban High Density

- General design character – love all of these

Light Industrial District

- Some could be on South Street – art studios, pottery design, etc.

Open Space/Recreation

- Lake Pocahontas Park – great opportunity
- Dredge Lake Pocahontas and improve access through/along Patriot's Path

YOUR SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS

- Get the State to cede back the property reserved for the Route 24 extension
- Make better use of the Whippany River
- Chef Melody's Healthy Cooking School
- Cut and cover over 287 on Route 510
- Places for outdoor public art
- Improve and exploit Patriot's Path from Spring to Wal Mart/Cedar Knowles
- Latin Americans bring to the country many professions and diversity – it would be great to have a Latin Center within the community
- Make better use of the playground/park on Budd Street
- Preserve residential neighborhoods (near the center of town)
- The "greenway" (bike route – Florida Keys to Maine) – requires bike paths along coastal cities, towns, thoroughfare
- Family picnic areas, dog parks, children's playground
- Need a teen center to distract teens of all ages, races and backgrounds
- I don't know what it's called, but has anyone ever heard of/considered (pre-fab) elevated parking lots (or a parking lot on top of a parking lot) similar to what is in Newark.
- Book store
- Lake activities – boating
- Need to fix vacant buildings
- Bike racks
- Bring back antique shops
- Encourage greater diversity of business types
- Healthier choices – farmer's market
- New ordinance to close bars early
- A small J. Crew or Banana Republic
- Highline-like walk along Oxbow or Whippany
- A community center that folks can rent for gatherings (picnics, BBQ's)
- Utilize lakes (canoe rentals)
- 15-minute parking to pick-up take out food
- Another 24-hour store on the West Side
- Object to proposed Epstein's amendments "Buildinc C" DeHart Street
- Need to court small businesses – need to give people a reason to live and work in Morristown
- Lunch hour window shopping is a drag – not enough retail. Too many banks and restaurants. Need more retail
- A communication board for people and businesses to post on and a web site
- Love the green and historic aspects
- Foote's pond needs a rescue
- Enforce ordinances you have
- Keep building at or below 3 stories high

- Preserve residential; preserve history; preserve culture
- Restaurant diversity
- Ugly hotel; too tall and it needs a facelift
- Keep building low
- Lake Pocahontas and Speedwell restoration
- Better connections from train station to Washington's Headquarters
- Keep the old – otherwise this will look like everywhere else