

MEMORANDUM

TO: Essex Junction Planning Commission
FROM: Regina Mahony
DATE: May 31, 2021
RE: Design Review & Historic Preservation Overlay District

Following up the last meeting's discussion on the location of design review and historic preservation overlay districts, I recommend that we think about the purposes and where the standards apply separately (though still put them in one overlay district).

For reference, **the purpose** as stated for the Village Center is: "to protect those buildings listed or eligible for the State or Federal Register of Historic Places while accommodating new and appropriate infill and redevelopment supporting increased density and multi-modal development. Infill and redevelopment brings opportunities to protect existing historic resources and provide new sources of architectural and urban design for the 21st century while increasing density, activity and economic opportunity in the Village Center District."

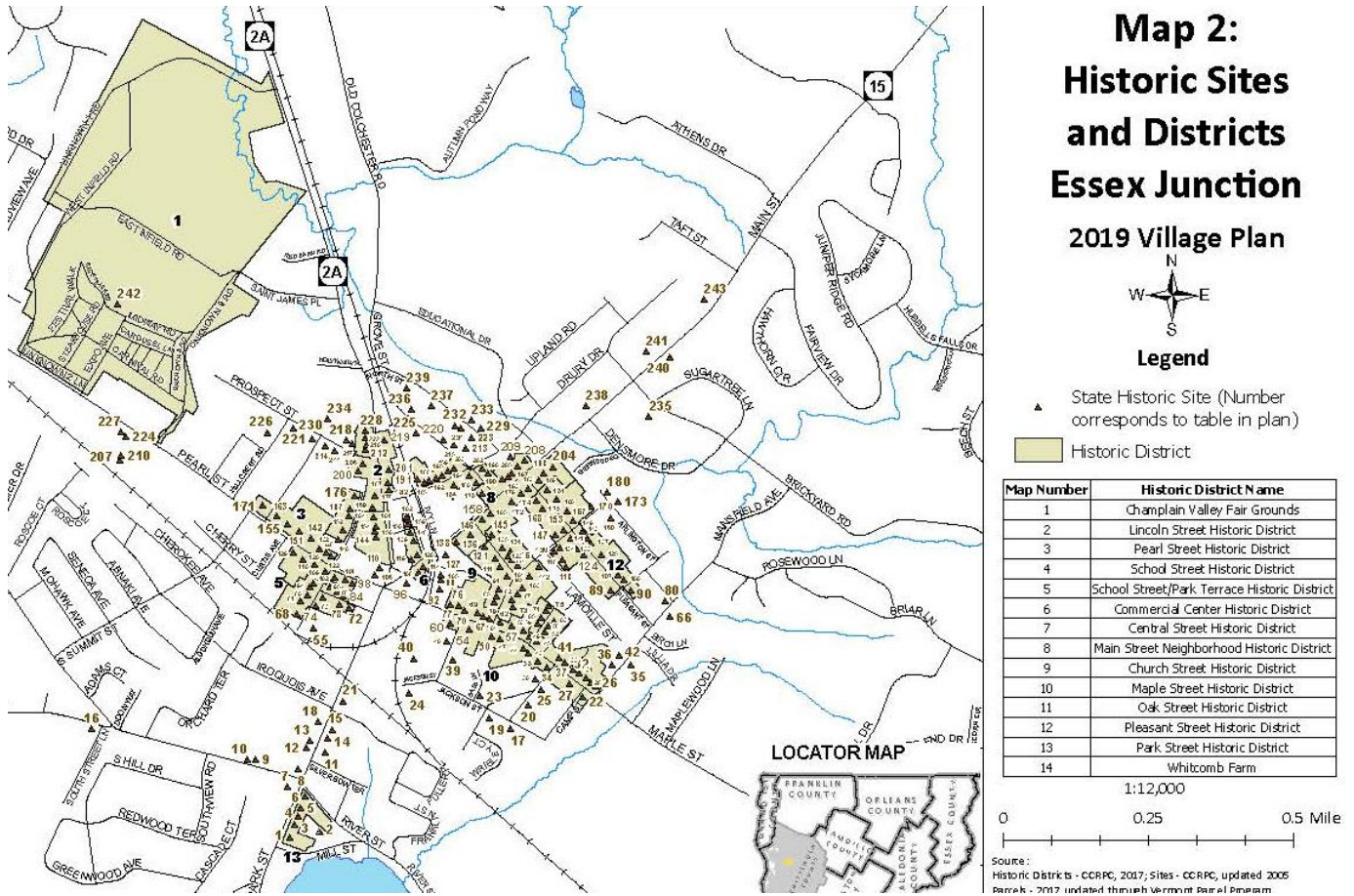
For reference, **the applicability** as stated for the Village Center is 1. For design review: any proposed construction, reconstruction, demolition, or exterior alteration (including a change of color) of any building in the district; and 2. For historic preservation: alterations, additions or redevelopment of existing historic structures are applicable to all buildings listed or eligible for the State or National Register of Historic Places.

Recommendations:

1. Update the purpose statement in the Village Center district to include the Design Five Corners concepts: Maximize space in the Village Core; calm traffic and reclaim more space for people. Include the following design elements central greenspace and pocket parks, buildings lining the streets, a pedestrianized Main Street, multi-story mixed-use buildings, and additional street trees.
2. Carry forward similar concepts into the new overlay purpose statement, making it clear that it is important to establish a pedestrian friendly atmosphere from the surrounding neighborhoods into the Village Center.
3. Establish the overlay in the following locations as discussed at the last meeting, with some follow-up thoughts from me in red. Here is an online map for your reference: [ArcGIS - Essex Junction Zoning](#).
 - *Main Street* – from the end of the Village Center District to Educational Way on one side, and 81 Main Street on the other side. Just one parcel deep.
 - *Lincoln Street* - from the end of the Village Center District to North Street/Grove Street. Both sides of Lincoln Street – follow the Residential Office boundary and the Multi-Family/Mixed Use – 2 zoning district boundaries.
 - *Pearl Street* - from the end of the Village Center District to West Street Extension on the one side and to the end of the Highway-Arterial zoning district on the other side. **Though I'd suggest you end it at the end of the Highway-Arterial zoning district on both sides of the street b/c not much can be done on the rest anyway, and this would keep it cleaner.**
 - *Park Street* - from the end of the Village Center District to Cascade Street on one side, and 106 Park Street on the other side.
 - *Maple Street* - from the end of the Village Center District to Maple Street Park on one side, and Albert D. Lawton Intermediate School on the other side. **Though I'd suggest that you only go as far as Mansfield Ave/Camp Street. While the majority of this is residential (with the exception of a doctors office and mechanic) and likely to stay that way, it does follow the historic structures map. If**

you do want to go to the Park/School, let's talk about whether including those actual properties makes sense or not.

- Regarding applicability for Historic Preservation within the overlay, mimic the applicability to existing or eligible historic structures. For your reference, I've included the state historic sites and districts map from the Comprehensive Plan. Because this data is old it is likely that many of these structures have lost their historical significance, but it is helpful to see the extent of the applicable properties. Because the data is old, I'd suggest that the overlay district language give applicants the opportunity to prove that there is no longer any historic significance to their properties before being required to comply with the standards.



- Regarding applicability for Design Review within the overlay, I recommend "any proposed additions to existing buildings, or demolition and reconstruction shall be subject to these rules. Regular maintenance, exterior alterations and change of use are exempt." I'm suggesting this because outside of historic structures I'm not sure there is any reason to review exterior alterations in any of these areas.

Let's review these recommendations. Once we have agreement, I will update the text accordingly.