



TOWN OF
NORTH KINGSTOWN, RHODE ISLAND

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To: Stakeholder Group

From: Jonathan J. Reiner, Director of Planning

Date: October 24, 2012

Re: Route 2/102 build out and development scenarios

The project team received feedback from members of the stakeholder group (SHG) regarding the development scenarios that were presented at the last SHG meeting, and the relevance of the scenarios to the SHG process. Concerns also arose as part of the feedback questioning why we have not discussed the bigger picture issues regarding whether or not this area should be located in the Statewide Planning Urban Services Boundary (USB), whether or not this area should be designated as a growth center, and the questions about the Water Service Area (WSA).

The purpose of this memo will be to describe the five proposed development scenario options, as well as some alternatives for the roadway right of way, the USB, and the impacts on the WSA. This memo will also describe what those development scenarios mean, and how they interrelate to the zoning and comprehensive plan for that intersection.

A map of the focus area which includes the focus area parcels is attached for review (attachment 1). The radius area in this map depicts an area ½ mile around the western intersection of Routes 2 and 102. A corridor going east to the Route 4 overpass is also included in this study area. The parcels of land that are the focus of this effort are those parcels highlighted in red. The map also has text boxes indicated the name of each property. These parcels are currently under consideration for:

- possible inclusion within or exclusion from the Urban Services Boundary,
- establishment of this area or not as a growth center,
- inclusion or exclusion of these parcels in the town Water Service Area,
- resolution of the conflict between the existing zoning on the Corner Tavern and the Bald Hill Garden Center (both currently zoned General Business (GB) and their current designation in the Comprehensive Plan as high density residential,
- resolution for the recent denial by SWP for the Schartner Comprehensive Plan and zoning change; and
- recommendation for the future development vision for the Rolling Greens Golf Course.

The crux of the planning problems for this intersection is that each question that needs to be answered is very much dependent on what other decisions are made for development or non-development scenarios. For example, if the town does not wish to change any of the zoning of the land at this intersection, then it does not make any sense to designate this area as a growth center. In that case, it would also not make sense to modify the town's water service area to include this area.

It is important to remember if the stakeholder group decides against additional commercial development at the Rolling Greens property or the intersection as a whole, a resolution needs to be recommended to the

Town Council which addresses the inconsistency between the Schartner, Garden Center, and Corner Tavern properties as it relates to the Town of North Kingstown Comprehensive Plan and Rhode Island Statewide Planning's (SWP) recent denial of the Schartner future land use map amendment, which is located in the comprehensive plan. Also, if the group decides that town should not change anything, then we have not solved the problems with the comprehensive plan and zoning inconsistencies for the Corner Tavern and the Bald Hill Garden Center and the recent Statewide Planning (SWP) denial of the Schartner change.

A solution for the denial by SWP of the Schartner amendment is required. In addition, possible roadway recommendations could also be under consideration this study area to better facilitate traffic flow, incorporate multiple modes of transportation, and to improve the view shed of the corridor from the road right of way (ROW).

Water, Urban Services Boundary, and Growth Centers

In regards to both water quality and water quantity, a solution can be designed under each development scenario listed below. The standards in place today require strict limits on nitrogen loading for the protection of water quality. These standards are THE MAJOR limiting factors in the density of development for any development scenario at this intersection. All development proposals can be, and will be required to be designed to protect groundwater as is required by the town's zoning ordinance. All of the development scenarios below are modeled to meet the town's requirements. For water quantity, the town is taking steps to reduce our peak day demand of water use, specifically in the summer months. The town has been and will continue to take steps to reduce peak water usage so that water can be made available for new growth in the towns designated growth areas. If the town wishes to see growth happen at this intersection, water quantity, the availability of water, will be addressed through water management measures.

In regards to amending the Urban Services Boundary (USB) or designating this area as a growth center, these options really depend on what the vision for the intersection is, and to what level the town wishes to see growth happen at this intersection. If the town wanted to extend the WSA for this entire intersection, and possibly expand growth opportunities into the intersection and areas outside of the intersection in the future for commercial growth, it would make sense to extend the urban services boundary. If the town wanted to direct growth only to the intersection, then the town would designate this area as a growth center. If the town wished to have no commercial growth at this intersection, and change the zoning all back to residential, then no changes to the USB would be required, and the town would NOT designate this area as a growth center.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

For all of the development scenarios, please reference the chart of development scenarios included in the appendix titled *Development Scenario Comparison*. For each option, please consider whether this is what you and the stakeholder group envision for development at this intersection. Please consider the impacts of each scenario and ask yourself questions. Will the scenario be a fiscal burden to the town? Will it positively or negatively impact the character of the area? How does the scenario fit the needs of the intersection? How does the scenario fit your vision for the intersection?

1. Development under residential conservation design regulations (Option A in appendix)

This is an option for the future development of the intersection based on existing zoning for Rolling Greens, and changing the zoning on the other three parcels: Schartner Bald Hill Nursery, Corner Tavern, and Bald Hill Garden Center, to residential. The Rolling Greens property could be built as a conservation design subdivision under the existing zoning today. The Morris Farm property (in Exeter) could be built to this development option today. This assumes that both of

the applicants build their developments under the OPTIONAL conservation design subdivision regulations. As for the Corner Tavern and the Bald Hill Garden Center, this is what the current NK Comprehensive Plan states should be built on these properties in the future. These two properties are both currently zoned commercial, but for many years, the comprehensive plan has designated these properties residential. Clearly there is an inconsistency existing today regarding the two properties between the town's comprehensive plan and zoning map. This scenario has approximately 54 1/2-acre house lots on the Rolling Greens property, 14 1/2-acre house lots on the Morris Farm (in Exeter), and five 1/2-acre house lots on the Schartner property. The Corner Tavern still has the restaurant on it, and the Bald Hill Garden Center has four 2-acre house lots in addition to the existing commercial building. This option would preserve the golf course as open space, as well as a substantial portion of the farmland on the Morris farm, and more than half of the currently unprotected Schartner farmland.

This is a possible scenario for the future of these four properties as it would be consistent with the CURRENT comprehensive plan designation for the properties, except for the Schartner piece which would need to be changed from commercial to residential. This scenario would require that the town change the comprehensive plan and the zoning for the Schartner piece back to residential, and to change the Bald Hill Garden Center and the Corner Tavern from General Business to residential.

Lastly, the state denied the commercial zoning change to the NK Comprehensive Plan for the Schartner piece, as it was inconsistent with the surrounding zoning. The state indicated that the town can either:

- a. Change the commercial properties back to residential zoning; or
- b. Plan for a village center type of zoning district at this intersection.

If this scenario were implemented, the existing uses on those properties would still be legally allowed to continue, but if they wanted to change in the future, they would have to be changed to residential. This residential development scenario would most likely meet the requirements of SWP. This area would not need to be designated as a growth center, the USB would not need to be adjusted, and no changes to the town water service area would be required.

2. Mixed-Use Village Scenario (Residential Focus) – under CVD ordinance (Option B in appendix)

This scenario shows all of the focus area parcels developed under a Compact Village District (CVD) ordinance scenario, but has more of a residential focus on the Schartner and Garden Center properties, and has less commercial than what is currently allowed under the existing General Business (GB) zoning. The Corner Tavern is still shown as it currently exists because in reviewing possibilities for development on the site, it appears that a restaurant is the highest and best use on that property. This CVD option for Rolling Greens contains 106 residential housing units (at an average of 2 beds per unit) and 30,000 square feet of commercial zoning, with a maximum building footprint of 15,000 square feet. The Garden Center is proposed to have 20,000 square feet of commercial in possibly two 10,000 square foot buildings and approximately 15 residential units (20 bedrooms in total). The Bald Hill Nursery/Schartner property is proposed to have 20,000 square feet of commercial in possibly two - 10,000 square foot buildings and approximately 15 residential units (20 bedrooms in total). There is also a space for an outdoor farmers' market shown on this plan for that property. The Morris Farm is shown to have four residential house lots. This option would preserve the golf course as open space.

The current CVD ordinance does not allow a commercial building footprint to exceed 15,000 square feet for a parcel bigger than 10 acres in size, and if a parcel is less than 10 acres, the largest commercial footprint allowed would be 10,000 square feet. When compared with the buildout scenario under existing zoning, the net amount of commercial in this CVD is less than what the existing zoning allows for the intersection. The impact to the groundwater from nitrogen is less under this CVD proposal compared to the existing zoning buildout. This is due to having strict standards for commercial development, but not having the same strict standards for residential developments. Regardless of whether a CVD is in place or not, commercial development scale is primarily limited by nitrogen loading standards across all of these properties.

This proposal would require a zone change and comprehensive plan amendment for all of the focus parcels to a Compact Village District (CVD). This scenario would not require changing the USB, but would make sense to designate this area as a Growth Center. It would also make sense to include this development scenario within the town's WSA. This CVD- residential focus development scenario would most likely meet the requirements of SWP. The SHG could also recommend no additional zoning changes outside of the RG, Schartner, Corner Tavern, and Garden Center properties to assist in preventing the creeping of commercial zoning down Ten Rod Road or Quaker Lane.

3. Village (Commercial Focus) Scenario under CVD ordinance (Option C in appendix)

This scenario shows the Rolling Greens (RG) property as submitted by the applicant to the town. This application is under consideration at the October 16, and 30, 2012 Planning Commission meetings. This proposal includes what the applicant would like to build on the Rolling Greens property and conceptually expands that development pattern to other commercially zoned pieces of land to the south and west including the Schartner land, the Corner Tavern, and the Bald Hill Garden Center. This proposal would require a zone change and comprehensive plan amendment for all of the focus parcels to a Compact Village District (CVD). This plan for RG has approximately 50,000 square feet of commercial space, including approximately 5,000 for a new Oatley's restaurant, and approximately 106 residential housing units. This development scenario shows the Schartner, Corner Tavern, and the Bald Hill Garden Center properties built out under a CVD zone option. The existing business on those properties could stay as they currently are, or have the ability in the future to change according to the criteria of the CVD zone. This scenario has 60,000 square feet of office or retail uses at the Schartner piece, 6,000 square feet of restaurant at the Corner Tavern, and 67,500 square feet of retail/office. This option would preserve the golf course as open space.

The CVD ordinance does not allow a commercial building footprint to exceed 15,000 square feet for a parcel bigger than 10 acres in size, and if a parcel is less than 10 acres, the largest commercial footprint allowed would be 10,000 square feet. When compared with the buildout scenario under existing zoning, the net amount of commercial compared to the CVD is less, although, the impact to the groundwater from nitrogen is less under the CVD. This is due to having strict standards for commercial development, but not having the same strict standards for residential developments. Regardless of whether a CVD is in place or not, commercial development scale is primarily limited by nitrogen loading standards across all of these properties.

In order to implement this development scenario for the entire intersection, the properties would need to be changed in the comprehensive plan to mixed use village center and the zoning would need to be changed to CVD. Under this development scenario, it would make sense to include this area in the town's Water Service Area (WSA), not move the Urban Services Boundary

(USB), but instead to designate this area as a growth center. This would address the concerns of SWP in their recent denial of the Schartner amendment. The SHG could also recommend no additional zoning changes outside of the RG, Schartner, Corner Tavern, and Garden Center properties to assist in preventing the creeping of commercial zoning down Ten Rod Road or Quaker Lane.

4. Development of a “Transfer of Development Rights Village (TDR Village) Scenario – commercial focus” village development at intersection (Option D in appendix)

This development scenario is an example of a more dense “village development” option for the intersection. This development option would have more residential and commercial density than the village scenario on the developed sites, but could also preserve the Morris and Schartner properties through the town’s transfer of development rights process. This option would preserve the golf course as open space. This proposal would require a zone change and comprehensive plan amendment for all of the focus parcels to a Compact Village District (CVD). This development option would require amendments to the current CVD zoning text to allow development this dense with TDR’s, and would most likely occur under some type of transfer of development rights (TDR) option. Sending areas and receiving areas would need to be determined. This development option would require a designation of the intersection as a growth center, inclusion in the WSA, and comprehensive plan and zoning changes to CVD. This development scenario would most likely satisfy the requirements of SWP.

5. Development possible at current zoning build out (Option E in appendix)

These slides were presented within the PowerPoint presentation dated 9.26, and at our previous stakeholder meeting. These are very important slides in that they depict what could be built today under the current zoning and current comprehensive plan designations. These options could realistically meet all of the existing groundwater zoning requirements. The current water system has sufficient water capacity to build at this development intensity. The specific development types and building sizes are indicated on the plan. *Please do not ignore this scenario because it has not yet been built.* This development scenario will include the loss of the golf course, the development of over 50 2-acre lot with 3-4 bedroom houses on Rolling Greens, the development of over 100,000 square feet of office or retail on the Schartner property, approximately 75,000 square feet of retail on the Garden Center property, and either keeping a restaurant or having a possible pharmacy or other large chain box-type use on the Corner Tavern property of approximately 15,000 square feet. This option would also see a build out of the Morris Farm in Exeter to 17 single family 4-acre house lots. Under this scenario the maximum building footprint on the Schartner piece is 20,000 square feet, and is 50,000 square feet on the Bald Hill Garden Center property.

It is essential to consider the reality that leaving the current zoning of the intersection as is would NOT address the concerns of SWP in their comprehensive plan denial. The comprehensive plan denial would remain in place if the current zoning and comprehensive plan designations stay as they are defined.

6. Development at this site under existing and some type of village zoning (South County Design Manual, RIDEM, 2002) (Attached in Appendix – 3 slides)

Older models of development for this site were developed for the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management in 2002, as a model to conserve land when the focus area parcels were developed. This was completed showing a number of development scenarios, similar to the exercises that we are completing, as part of this original intersection vision. One option shown which was based on existing zoning (build out) prior to the purchase of development rights at the Schartner Farm is now not possible for that property because of the purchase of development

rights, but the other build out options are still possible on the unprotected parcels. The village scenario is similar to what would be allowed under a CVD, although this development scenario was focused more on agricultural commercial uses (another option that the group could focus on in the final recommendation).

IMPROVEMENT SCENARIOS FOR THE ROADWAY

In addition to what happens within the land that is privately owned, it is important for the group to make recommendations on the future use of the Ten Rod Road and Quaker Lane right of way (ROW). The ROW in this area is unusually large due to the historic use of this road for transportation of livestock and other agricultural products many years ago, and if the town wishes to preserve this as a two lane scenic road, we should state that in our findings and why. No matter what the future land use designation of this intersection, to ignore the ROW and the possibilities of improving this portion of the corridor would be a lost opportunity. Further, the design of the ROW will play a critical role on how future development affects the character of this roadway and the so-called “gateway” status between Exeter and North Kingstown. Options that were discussed at the meetings included screening with landscaping, a bike path, walking trails or sidewalks, and treatments that would slow down the traffic on the roadway. There may also need to be other infrastructure improvements to the ROW to address automobile safety. All of these options must be considered in the context of the upcoming installation of a roundabout at the intersection and the installation of a turning lane at Lang Drive and Ten Rod Road. **All** of the development scenarios below include the location of the roundabout as well as a walking/biking component to them.

Moving forward...

The stakeholder group has heard from the commercial property owners that they do not want to give up any of their property rights. In the first meeting of the entire group, everyone at the table acknowledged the need to develop solutions that recognized these interests. However several members of the stakeholder group stressed the need for a solution that is also good for the character of the area, has a positive tax flow for the town, and is good for the land owners and the abutters of the intersection.

The group’s first task is determining what type of development is most appropriate for this intersection. Once that has been determined, we will then address the following questions:

- The current General Business zoning at the intersection does allow buildings up to 50,000 square feet in size. The town does not currently allow for “big box” development (buildings over 50,000 square feet in size) in the existing zoning designations at this intersection, is that limitation appropriate or inappropriate development for this intersection?
- This intersection, including the 10 acres of commercial zoned land in Exeter owned by the Schartner family, currently has 35 acres of commercially zoned property. Is that too much, just right, or not enough commercial zoning for this intersection? What is the right amount of commercial zoning at the intersection and what is the rationale for such a number? (For examples, the Rolling Greens current application shows less than 8 acres of commercially zoned land on that plan).
- Should the town extend the Urban Services Boundary to this intersection or not?
- Should this area be designated as a growth center or not?
- Does the town want to include this entire intersection in the town’s Water Service Area?
- Are there specific uses that the group would recommend not be allowed at this intersection? Is there a focus on what uses should be encouraged at this intersection? How important is this issue compared to the other concerns for this intersection?
- What are the benefits of each development scenario? What are the negatives of each development scenario?

- Is the concept of the CVD zoning correct for this intersection? Does the CVD zoning need to be amended to truly meet the vision for the intersection?
- Should transfer of development rights (TDR) be utilized to implement any of these or other development scenarios?

At the last stakeholders meeting on September 26, 2012, a memo was passed out to the stakeholder group regarding possible final products of this stakeholders group that would be given to the Town Council and Planning Commission in order to come up with a resolution to the current planning issues at the intersection. In considering our development options for this intersection, different aspects of each of these options could be considered in your deliberations of what works for this area the best looking forward to the next twenty years. There is also an extensive amount of information in relation to this project on the project webpage at <http://www.northkingstown.org/visioning-process-routes-2-and-102>

If you should have any questions about these development scenarios, this stakeholder process or the project, please feel free to contact the planning department at 268-1571. In order to give you the best possible information we need to hear from you, the stakeholders about any issues of clarity or any concerns with the project.

cc: Embury, Alyward, Planning Commission, Planning Department, Kelly, Flinker, Ferguson