



# *Revitalizing Community Identity in Small Town America*

*Case Study:* Wanamaker, Indiana  
Examining viability and character of growth  
in an exploding satellite community.

*Comprehensive Project  
la 404*

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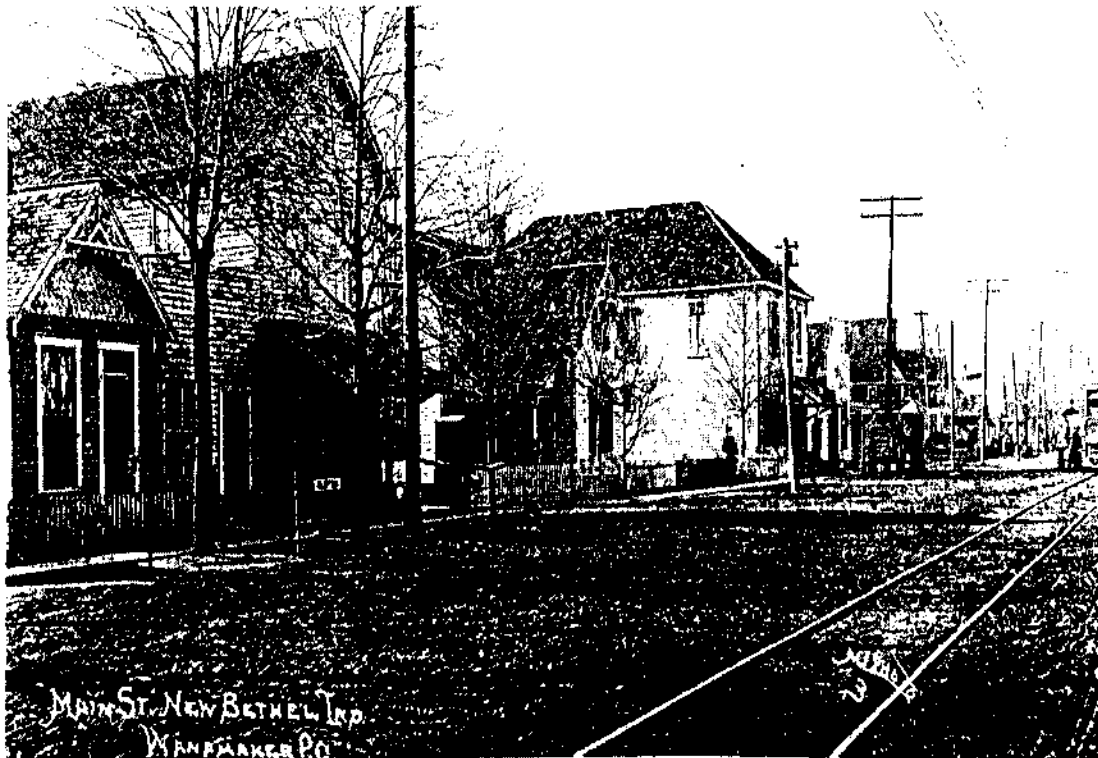
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may 1997

*Fig. 1 New Bethel Streetscape, courtesy Franklin Township Historical Society*





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*Abstract  
Revitalization of community integrity, cohesiveness, and spirit is crucial to the rural towns dotted across our Midwestern landscape. As a beginning quest to understand more fully the issues and ramifications of community planning, this project addresses both the long-term growth of Wanamaker, Indiana and the character in which contemporary development might take shape.*

*5th year comprehensive project:  
Revitalizing Community Identity in Small Town America  
Case Study: Wanamaker, Indiana  
Examining viability and character of growth  
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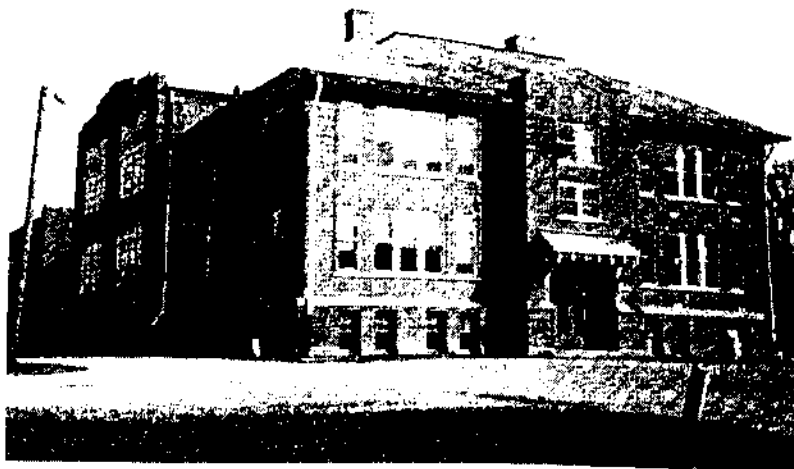
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*Fig. 2: Southeastern Avenue, Wanamaker Indiana, 1997*





Fig. 3. New Bethel High School, 1910



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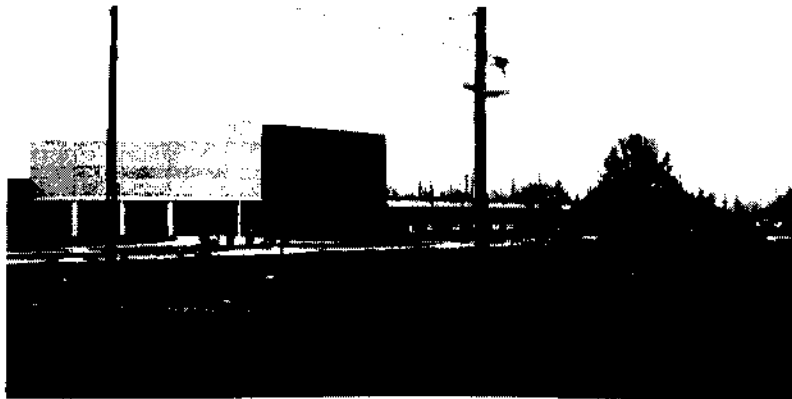
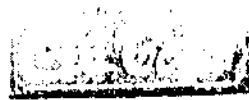




Fig. 3: The Confectionery



## Acknowledgments

*I have been extremely fortunate in my lifetime-- always surrounded by quality people. My family, friends, and loved ones have provided unselfishly their support to me throughout my college career.*

*I would like to thank Professors Les Smith and Ron Spangler for their help in completing this comprehensive project. For the entire faculty that I have been involved with over the past five years, I appreciate the diverse arrays of attitudes, perspectives, and styles with which we have approached projects. For two specific individuals, I would like to recognize their significant contribution to my knowledge of landscape architecture-- Malcolm Cairns and John Russell.*

*From these two personalities, I have learned how diverse and intriguing our profession can be. Each of them has went out of his way to make sure that not only our classwork has been at its best, but we as people have become more aware of our potentials. Thanks to you both for being dedicated to your careers and your students.*

*A warm congratulations to Mr. John Russell for reaching his new found freedom-- may only the best be before you!*

*For my classmates/colleagues/friends... it has been great to know each of you in so many ways. As intramural athletes(?), fellow companions, confidants, roommates, neighbors, co-workers, and most significantly as the Class of 1997-- we have grown together like I never imagined a group of fourteen (+-) people could. As we all take the last step from this stage of our lives, may each of us find our own personal dreams. Thank you for five very fast yet meaningful years together.*



## *Introduction*

In the wake of what we know as the 20th Century, the sense of place once innate in our rural towns has disappeared. Growth of the cityscape to mega-metropolis, row housing to suburban sprawl, family storefront to franchised strip malls, etc.... has enveloped the small communities that once bordered urban peripheries. In the early 1900's, small towns suffered from the "opportunities" the big city held— more jobs, more entertainment, and a modern lifestyle. However, since the middle of our century, a massive, unplanned shift back to the suburbs has fostered uncontrolled growth.

The topic of community revitalization, and its fundamental components, are of deep interest to me. I have grown up in a small-town community where suburban growth and increasing development have threatened to wash away any sense of place. The concept of community revitalization is integral to how small towns will be characterized as our nation continues to grow. The identity of small communities has been drastically changed by the forces of our mobile population. All growth can not be stopped or avoided, however, the manner in which rural communities will cope with commercial, residential, and civic expansion can be sensitively addressed.

*Fig. 6: Wanamaker State Bank*





Fig. 7. New Bethel High School, 1895



## Review of the Literature

The process of community revitalization has been widely studied, yet each new site requires new approaches and perspectives (Wolf, 11). In researching the literature, it was apparent that numerous case studies have been developed and executed over time. The intriguing factor is that no individual study could be directly applied to a separate community. The possibility exists for someone to pick up a number of “revitalization cookbooks” off of the library shelf. However, the multitude of forces that shape communities are vibrant and dynamic. The designer’s response to such factors is essential for positive change. Past research and application studies have traditionally tapped city planners, political bodies, and social analysts to interpret communities. Each of these professions have the ability to play important roles in the successful evaluation of locales. Landscape architects, too, have the ability to document and assess the needs of communities while offering valuable planning strategy. The unique perspective of the landscape architect facilitates compilation of solid inventory information that can be key to the understanding of environments and people (Harker and Natter, 21).

Griffiths believes that the past, present, and future link to form a sense of belonging in communities (4). Broad components ranging from geographical regionalism to marketplaces combine to shape how public spaces and communities function, interact, and develop. Communities are successful often because careful planning, or in this case replanning, has been articulately developed (Schneekloth and Shibley, 36).

Through the identification of political trends, population growth, economic forces, and public opinion, it is possible to reasonably project the needs of an area (Schneekloth and Shibley, 9). In Wanamaker, the residential market growth has exploded across the rural landscape. Like so many communities, hundreds of new families have purchased suburban lots in a once isolated corn field. The sprawling trend has continued for nearly a century, depleting the character of place and community pride



once found in towns. It is not hard to imagine what types of commercial development follow population growth — the strip malls, fast food boulevards, Wal-Mart super complexes.... you name it. “Someplace” quickly turns into “noplacel”; or at best creates an area that is unidentifiable from all others like it (from a discussion with Prof. M. Cairns).

The literature sources define community revitalization as topics from streetfront refurbishing to urban housing. In Wanamaker, a “single stop-light town”, it seems appropriate to focus on the viability of character and identity. Understanding that neither residential nor commercial expansion can be eliminated in the foreseeable future, components of this ‘Main Street Revitalization’ will center around issues of sensitive economic growth and restoring a civic landscape. As a primary source of pride and identity, a vibrant town center betters the chance of a community to maintain a healthy, prosperous economic and social base (*Wise & Williams, 2*).

Howard F. Wise, in the text *Main Street, Ohio*, said, “Downtown is an expression of what a community thinks of itself.” Although speaking with regards to larger city contexts, I believe Wise carefully articulated a key mindset about what small-town centers should represent. The image of the community is inherent in its form, character, and function.

Fig. 8: Inwood Video Store, 1997 (formerly Old High School, New Bethel Tavern)

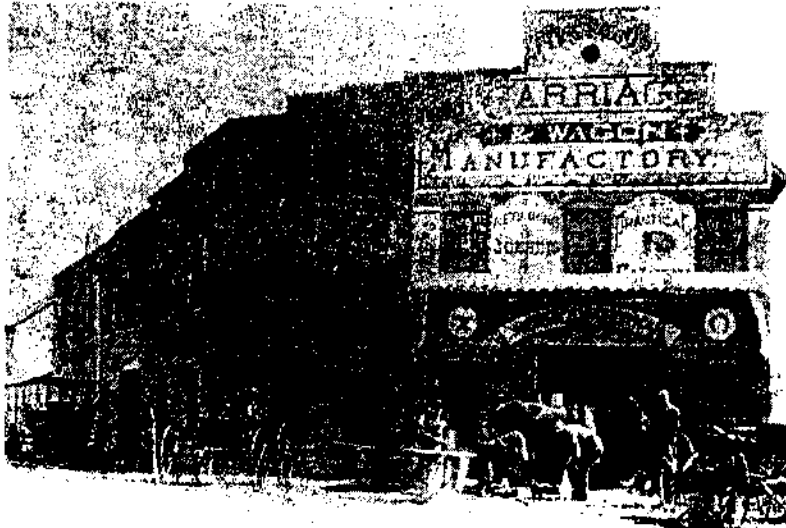




## *Project Significance*

The concept of community revitalization could not be more important in the age we live in. Town centers have lost out to larger development projects in the form of housing sprawl and commercial shopping malls. The competition from chain stores and outlet shops has destroyed the ability for small town business to function. Small community identity has been engulfed by suburban, mobile peoples more willing to drive twenty minutes to a supercenter than to walk five minutes to the corner market. 'Main Street' is unable to currently attract customers, pedestrians, or local citizens. It is imperative that as designers and humanitarians we work to preserve the character, identity, pride, and integrity of our communities.

*Fig. 9: H.A. Waterman Building*





## *Site Setting and Context*

As a small community bordering the City of Indianapolis, the town of Wanamaker is a rapidly growing residential area. Centered at the heart of Franklin Township in the southeast corner of Marion County, this small community struggles to maintain its identity. Once known as “New Bethel”, the town established itself on one of the cross-axial road corridors branching from downtown’s Monument Circle. Southeastern Avenue, the only radial ‘arm’ remaining from Indy’s original plan, forms the spine of the existing community development. Now filling ever so rapidly with suburban housing, the area loses more of its valuable farmland and rural character on a daily basis.

*Fig. 10: Streetmap, 1997*

*Fig. 11: New Bethel Streetscene*





Fig. 12: Cemetery Headstone, 1997



## *Problem Definition*

As communities have established themselves over the past century, prospering economic times allowed mining towns, marine communities, industrial centers, etc... to flourish. The identities of each and every town became truly characterized by the peoples, places, activities, and events that could be found there. Over time, the industrial age and rapid economic expansion slowed, deteriorating once vibrant locations. These communities have struggled to cope with changing economic times and also to grasp onto what shaped them in the first place.

Wanamaker, the focus of this study, is no exception. As a rural community once isolated from Indianapolis development, the area has held fast to its agricultural base. Wanamaker supports a handful of small, family owned businesses that have remained in the community for many generations. Commercial development in the form of new businesses and franchised stores has been discouraged, leaving all current growth in the housing market. Essentially, the area is becoming the “cheaper” suburban escape in contrast to the north side Carmel/Castleton/Fishers vicinity. With sprawl invading and tax revenue dollars in need, this project addresses responsible planning for prospective growth.

Wanamaker will continually receive pressure to grow in a manner similar to its counterparts. The examples of Fishers and Carmel demonstrate just how prolific growth can be in a satellite community... and how overly exploited an area can become with rapid economic and residential inflow. Conscientious planning has not been evident in the present suburban areas -- Wanamaker has the ability to combat the problem before it starts.

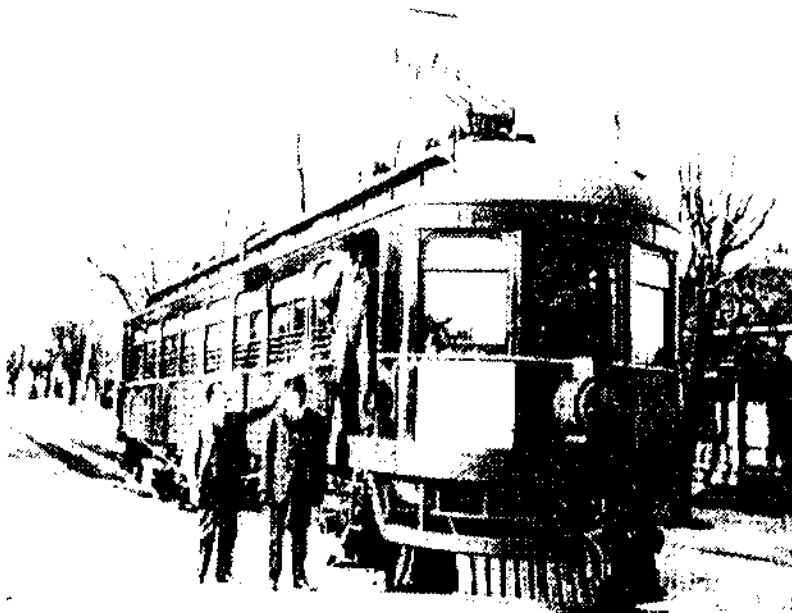


## *Historical Overview*

*The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis-- Bodenhamer & Barrows--*

As the Indianapolis area grew throughout the middle 1800's, the development of commercial farming spurred crossroad villages and small towns in outlying communities. Likewise, transportation improvements provided a stimulus for growth in Marion County, allowing new settlements to form along major routes. The town known as New Bethel, platted in 1834, was begun as a way station on the Michigan Road (currently I-74 and Southeastern Avenue). The earliest settler known in the area was William Rector, chosen justice of the peace in 1824. As a small stage stop 12 miles from Indianapolis, New Bethel offered a general store, a blacksmith, a pottery, a wagon maker, and the Smither Tavern. With the establishment of a post office in 1889, the town chose the new name Wanamaker in honor of Benjamin Harrison's U.S. postmaster general John Wanamaker. As a subject of much debate, local residents continued to use both names on signs and in conversation for fifty years.

*Fig. 13: Interurban Rail, 1905*



A population of about 250 people saw the interurban arrive in 1902, opening up commuter employment opportunities. A railroad shop in the neighboring community of Beech Grove provided jobs for many residents. As the 1950's approached, construction of two subdivisions started a trend of growth for Franklin Township. By 1970, the population of Wanamaker had grown to over 4,500 people. Residential development through the 1980's and 1990's has begun to transform the once rural community into a suburb. Today, the small community is home to more than 30,000 people -- and growing quickly.



Fig. 14: New Bethel Soda Shop



## *Project Goals and Programming*

The "small-town feel" of Wanamaker is one of its greatest assets. In a time of residential and commercial expansion, the client wishes to balance economic growth with responsible community planning. In coordination with the project goals, the community needs to strengthen its overall level of organization-- i.e. greenspaces, gathering spaces, town center, gateway identification, etc. The primary goals of the project were classified into the following categories:

### *I. Enhancing community amenities, focusing on the pedestrian-oriented components of the landscape.*

1. Open Space
  - a. opportunities for active recreation
  - b. opportunities for passive recreation
2. Gathering Space
  - a. open marketplace (farmer's market, vending)
  - b. plaza area (parade destination, public forum)
3. Park System
  - a. establishing a land acquisition and preservation plan

### *II. Establishing a "Main Street" character within the downtown district.*

1. Architectural Character
  - a. defining codes and ordinances
  - b. unity of future development
2. Streetscape Function
  - a. business face/orientation
  - b. definition of pedestrian vs. vehicular space
  - c. opportunity for 'greenscape' in the commercial area

### *III. Increasing awareness of community identity.*

1. Cultural Identity
  - a. community events and programs
  - b. historical descriptions of community landmarks
2. Gateway Identification
  - a. signage systems defining town limits and key sites



*Fig. 15. The Knoop Family Residence*



## *Assumptions*

Throughout the project, the design process was based upon the idea that fundamental opportunities would be met without constraint. The analysis of community resources and opportunities identified several specific issues within the site that required attention. It was assumed that one particular component of the study would be fully addressed in detail. The remaining landscape elements would be treated as 'future phases' of design development.

## *Limitations*

The nature of the research proposal itself called for the designer to be a highly informed expert in community planning. Due to the timeframe and context in which this project occurred, it was necessary to form a knowledge-base on a very focused portion of the universal problem at hand. The careful study of any community is an exhaustive process. The limits of this project called for fundamental assumptions (as covered above) to be made about the site, setting, and related factors.



## *Clientele*

The clients for this project are the Marion County Planning Commission, the Township Trustees, and the business owners that will benefit from planned commercial growth. The zoning and proposal review board at the Planning Commission is the group directly responsible for growth and development in this portion of Franklin Township.

## *User Study*

The citizens are the primary users of the community amenities. This study required an extensive understanding of various types of user groups and their particular needs. For example, children and school groups have needs that may coincide or conflict with vehicular traffic. Active recreation, passive recreation, community gathering space, openspace, commercial units, retail shops, educational facilities, eating establishments, and civic services are needed by the public. Children, parents, families, adults, elderly, visitors, workers, school groups, church assemblies, and event participants will be the typical user groups in community space.

*Fig. 16: Wheatley's Grocery Market, 1997*



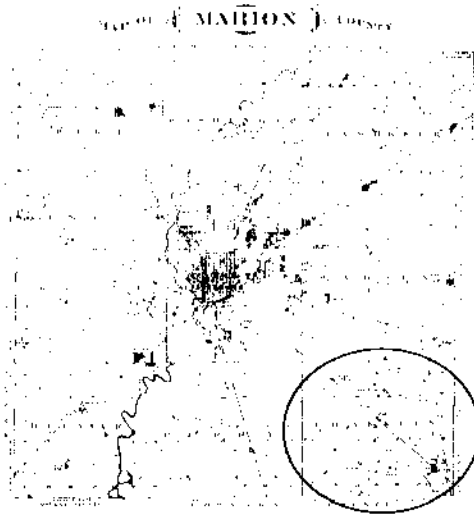


Fig. 17: Historic Marion County Map

Fig. 18: State of Indiana

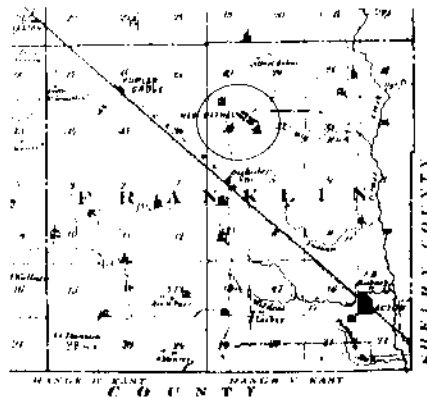
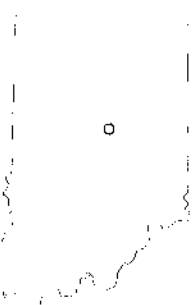


Fig. 19: Franklin Township

## The Project

### Site Location

Located in the southeast corner of Marion County, the small community of Wanamaker has witnessed substantial growth over the past two decades. As one of the most rapidly expanding populations (in terms of percentage growth) within Indiana, the town is currently preparing for what the future will demand of its community services. The site itself is defined by two major corridors-- Southeastern Avenue and Interstate 74.

Fig. 20: Image Board, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997

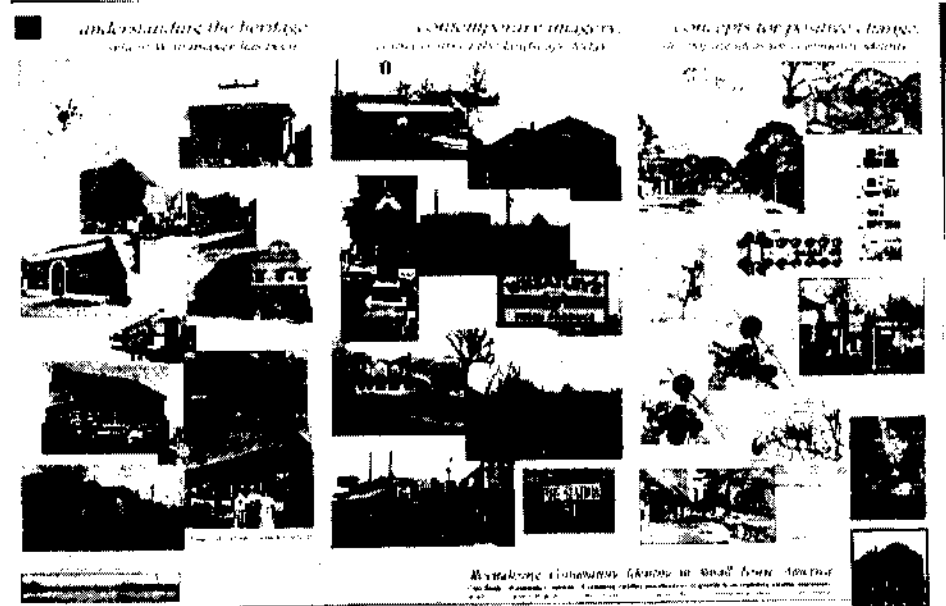
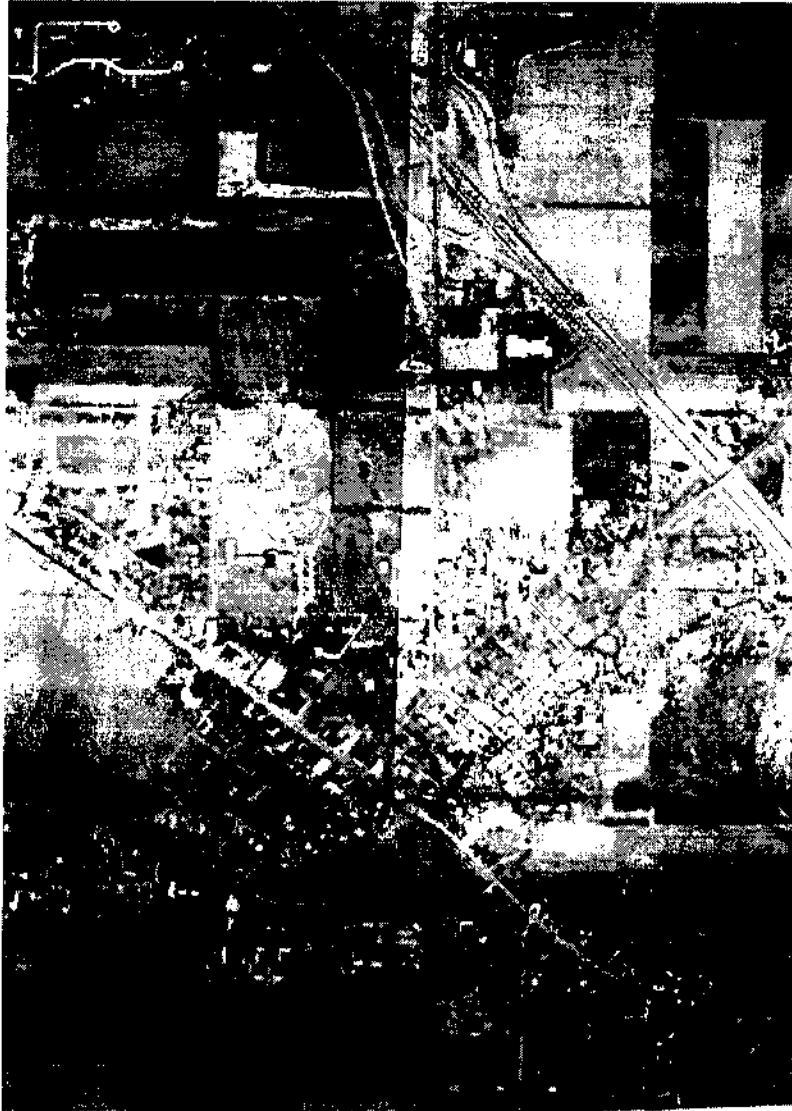




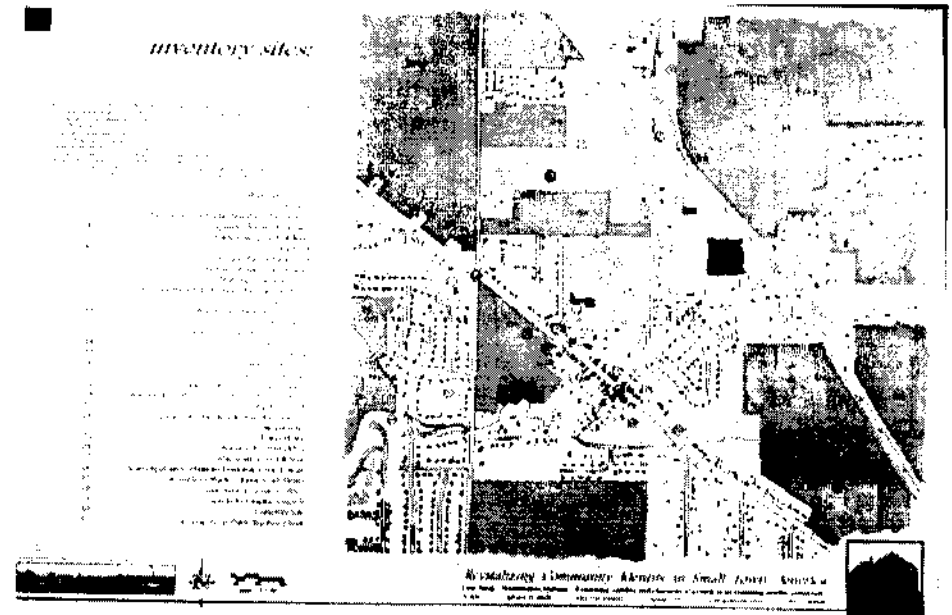


Fig. 22: Aerial Map, 1994



- 16 Boy Scout Lodge
- 17 Revco Drug Store
- 18 Wanamaker Veterinarian Services
- 19 Wanamaker Public Library/New Bethel Ordinary
- 20 Big Run Creek
- 21 Typical Suburban Residential Development
- 22 Wooded Lot
- 23 Foster Home
- 24 Wanamaker Post Office
- 25 Wanamaker Feed & Seed
- 26 Allied Appliance/Franklin Township Civic League
- 27 Wheatley's Market/Bank/Craft Stores
- 28 State Farm Insurance Office
- 29 New Bethel Baptist Church
- 30 Cemetery Site
- 31 50 Year Flood Plain: Big Run Creek

Fig. 23: Inventory Board, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997





### *Analysis and Opportunities*

Community analysis was approached from the perspective of use zones. On a broad scale, the opportunities and constraints of different areas were categorized into eleven major classes, as follows:

#### *A Open Agricultural Lands- Large Tracts:*

The farmland plots of significant size-- approximately 15 acres or more near the central town-- offer an excellent opportunity to capture the agricultural character so embedded in the community. These tracts of land are typical in mid-western style-- flat, open fields with fencerow vegetation separating properties. As well, the ability to preserve the vernacular landscape is key with regards to prospective residential development. New housing located in this type of zone must be sensitive to the character of viewsheds which help identify this community. (refer to guidelines section)

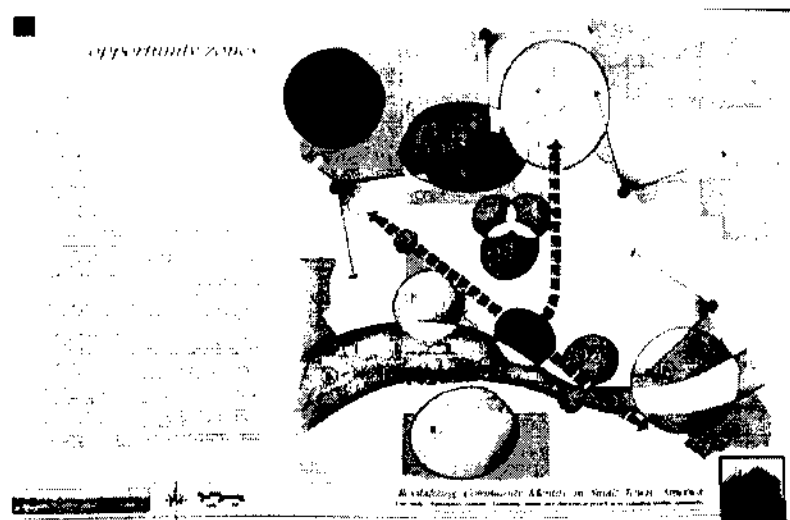
#### *B Long Pond:*

The pond area is a remnant from construction done building the I-74 Overpass. The opportunity exists to use the rugged terrain and scattered pathways to create a more designed recreation area. Mountain biking and related activities could find the zone very useful-- and currently have no such recreation amenities.

#### *C Franchised Business Area:*

The commercial zone adjacent to the I-74 exit is composed of "interchange related" businesses. The character of the area is drab and unorganized-- almost sprawling from the exit itself. The opportunity exists to use available open land to create a more defined zone of commercial development. The character of that area is key to preserving the uniqueness of this community's identity. Therefore, the manner in which this retail development is characterized must be sensitive to the image of the overall master plan. (refer to guidelines section)

Fig. 24: Opportunity Board, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997



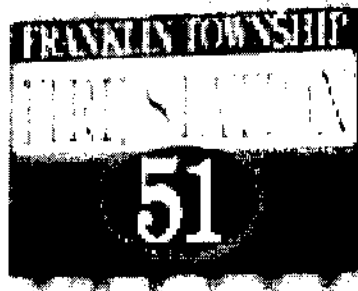


Fig. 25 and 26: Fire Station 51 and Wheatley's Market Signs, 1997



#### *D Gateway Entrances:*

The arrival to Wanamaker, specifically along Southeastern Avenue, is undefined. Entering the community is an impercievable transition-- typical of many small towns along major transportation corridors. The "sense of arrival" into the community is an opportunity which should be designed for. The location of such gateways should not be limited to the single roadway through the town, yet be considered in all routes into Wanamaker.

#### *E Elementary School:*

Wanamaker Elementary School is the primary location for active recreation, little league sports, and community gatherings. The site offers many baseball diamonds, basketball courts, and playground equipment... as would be expected at a school site. The opportunity exists to diversify the educational component of outdoor activity occurring here. Property is available adjacent to the site that could offer "outdoor learning lab" classrooms and possibly interpretive educational facilities.

#### *F Town Development Center:*

Wanamaker, governed by Marion County as a political entity, has no specific town center. The ability to host public gatherings, community events, and offer basic civic services is not a reality within the town. The opportunity to provide such a community center for Wanamaker is key to this project. The zone designated for this 'center' offers access to Big Run Creek, a high visibility to citizens and visitors, and enough open space to facilitate public events.

#### *G Big Run Creek & Greenway:*

As the sole waterway running through this town, the Big Run Creek is an essential component of the community. The fact that Wanamaker exists in this location is based primarily on this water source. The greenspace on either side of the creek is relatively intact. The opportunity exists to acquire and preserve the ecological system before heavy development can destroy it. Big Run Creek was key to the vernacular



siting of Wanamaker, and should be essential in rethinking how prospective growth might be managed.

#### *H Divided Agricultural Lands- Small Tracts:*

The existence of small open field tracts-- less than 15 acres in size-- provides a diverse range of opportunities for community amenities. As important parcels of land, the small areas can be designated for future residential development, pocket parks, community greenspace, so on and so forth. The 'satellite' location of these divided lands provides nodes that may be used for prospective community development.

#### *I Small-Town Business District:*

The "main-street" character of the downtown environment is typical of rural communities. Providing most resources for the use of the automobile, hardscape areas and vehicular spaces are quite common. The opportunity exists to reexamine how pedestrians function in Wanamaker-- and likewise how the car may be allowed to coexist with that new system. As a whole, the businesses and their respective services need not be altered, but the character with which they portray themselves will heavily influence the community's image.

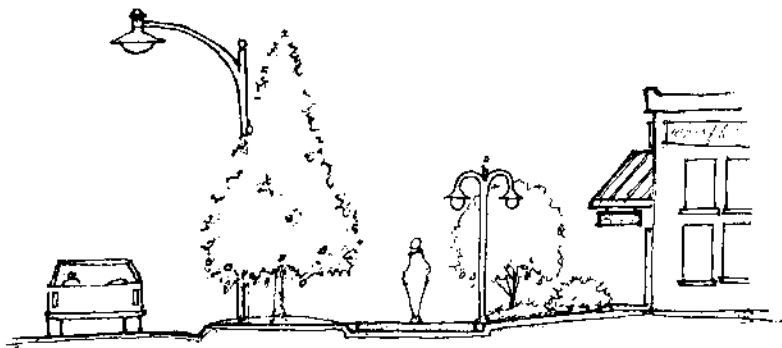
#### *J Cemetery Site:*

The location of a graveyard in Wanamaker has done one very significant task-- preserve the integrity of the Big Run Creek greenway. The cemetery offers the only planned 'parklike' setting within the town, but one that is not intended for active use. The area provides a pastoral atmosphere and the opportunity to further develop the land resources bordering the creek.

#### *K Forested Lot:*

As the only substantial woodlot within the project bounds, the need for preservation of that ecosystem is quite apparent. The availability of surrounding property is key to the establishment of successional development. Vegetative buffers, greenspace, and woodlots pro-

*Fig. 27 Pedestrian Experience sketch, transitions from street to building*





vide the opportunity to protect the integrity of the rural landscape.

The opportunity exists for this community to take advantage of plentiful land resources. Surrounding the central core of Wanamaker, several substantial tracts of open agricultural property present the opportunity to establish a park/greenway system that has never before existed in the community. Understanding that population growth is so rapid, the need for predetermined land set-a-sides could not be more important. Greenspace is an invaluable resource within the prospective planning of community-based amenities.

The noise and traffic from Interstate 74 is relatively minimal. However, the treatment of viewsheds from the interstate will be important in protecting the vernacular imagery associated with the town. Just as with future residential growth, the agricultural character of Wanamaker must be considered as a primary component of the landscape.

*Fig. 28 Big Run Creek, 1997*

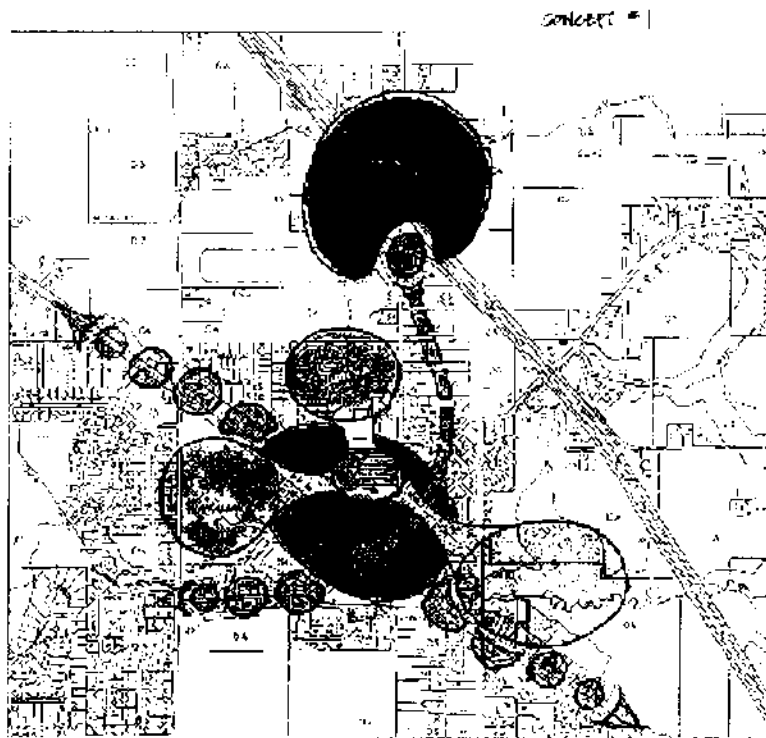




### *Concept 1*

The first concept addresses the idea of merging two separate commercial areas into one larger entity. By creating a strong transition between the zones, the perception of one commercial area could become possible. Furthermore, the establishment of a triangular park system bordering the central business district would help define the bounds of the downtown. Further retail development would be funneled along Southeastern Avenue, expanding as typical along a strong linear corridor. This approach preserves openspace available currently, attaches to the existing structure of growth, and lends itself to smooth transitions into town.

*Fig. 29. Concept #1, Comprehensive Project, April 1997*





## Concept 2

The benefits of the second concept include defining separate identities for the two commercial zones. With a variety of services offered in each area, competition would be controlled through selective permitting. The central business district itself has been enveloped by a ring of parks, all linked to the downtown through pedestrian ways. As well, the concept lends itself to four distinct "gateway" entrances to the town, allocating the area to be considered as the town limits. This approach creates a "miniature" urban context-- a central district bounded by open land.

Fig. 30. Concept #2, Comprehensive Project, April 1997

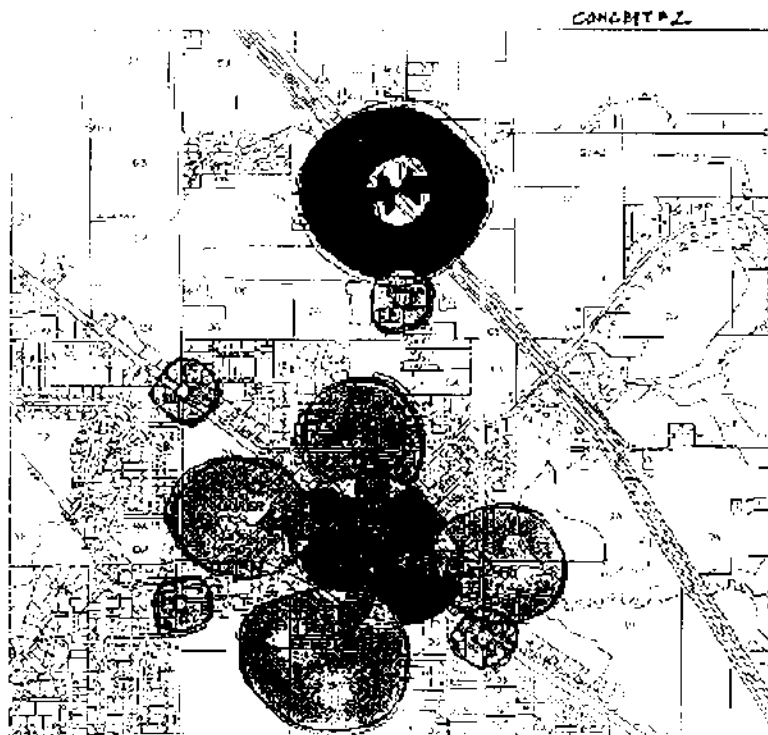
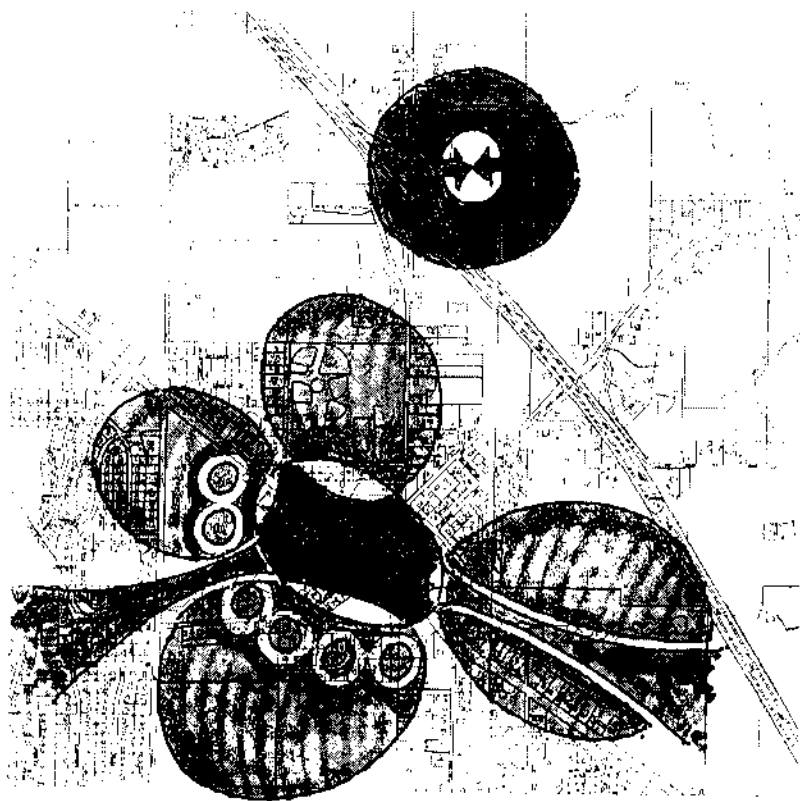




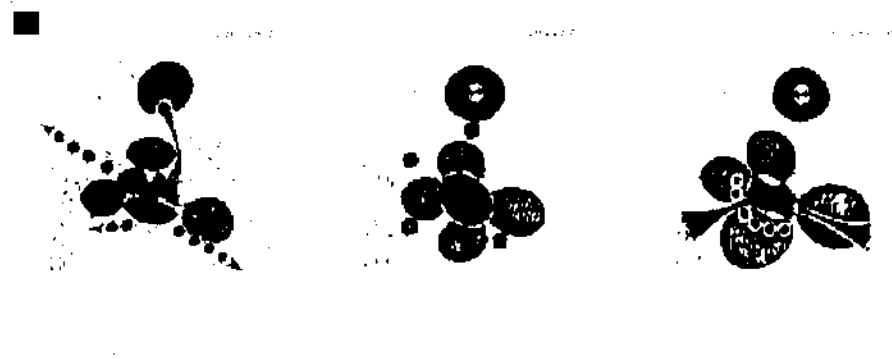
Fig. 31 Concept #3, Comprehensive Project, April 1997



### Final Concept

The merger of concepts created the final design strategy. This concept utilizes the positive features of both #1 and #2, synthesizing the design approach. The central business district is again enveloped by a park system ring. On the south border of the downtown, future commercial growth is appropriated. The relation between the Big Run Creek greenway and new development is direct-- reflecting back to the vernacular orientation of the town. The interchange related services are clustered together in one specific area, attempting to protect the agricultural integrity of the surrounding land uses. "Satellite" residential developments are indicated as areas for prospective housing growth surrounding Wanamaker.

Fig. 32 Concept Board, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997

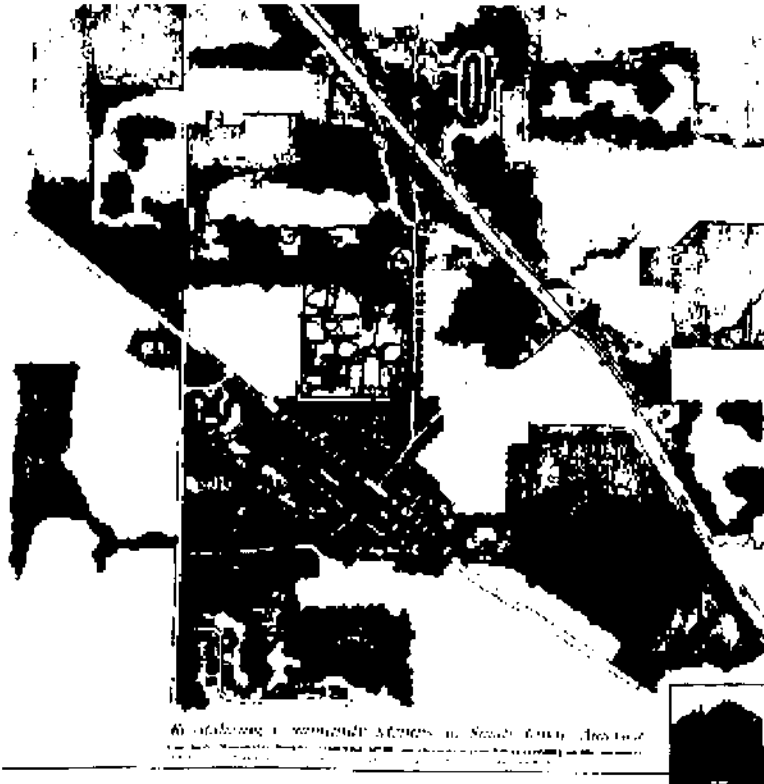




## Master Plan

The community master plan utilizes design features and functional guidelines as frameworks for this comprehensive project. In terms of "vision planning" for Wanamaker, revisiting the vernacular strategies of location and context are key. Throughout history, communities have been located on major transportation routes and bodies of water. For this town, the Big Run Creek was the water source that provided life to a stage coach destination isolated twelve miles from the urban center of Indianapolis. "Reattaching" to the concept of the waterway is how this plan harkens to older times. Vernacular land planning embraced the water as an integral component of the landscape. In that spirit, this plan focuses a new vehicular circulation pattern and commercial development towards the greenway itself.

Fig. 33: Master Plan Board, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997

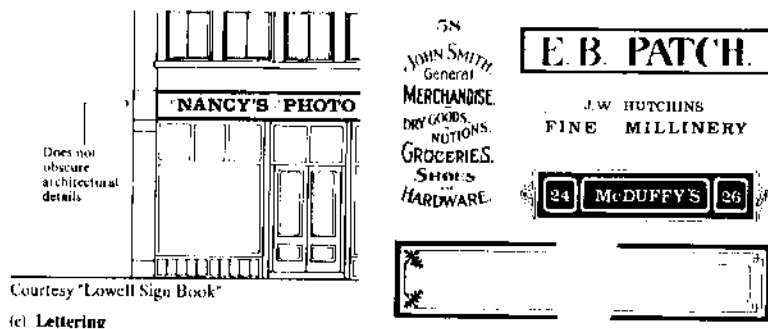


Another significant portion of this project addresses the idea of how the past might be interpreted to present-day users. By tying the concept of 'identity' to cultural heritage, the use of historical features/markers/events can help the town develop a character of its own. Historical landmarks, such as the Interurban's presence in Wanamaker, are re-implemented in the fabric of the community as tools to create dialogue and activity. A series of important events and sites in the town would be addressed in a similar manner-- encouraging people to learn more about the environment around them.

As discussed in the opportunities portion of this booklet, the establishment of a park system and land preservation plan is used to strengthen both the concept of responsible community growth and the pedestrian oriented amenities so necessary within the town. Before this project took shape, no openspace was planned for park uses, greenway development, or future community expansion. The development of a land acquisition plan is essential to the long-term health of Wanamaker. Communities that take the initiative to sensitively define the parameters by which

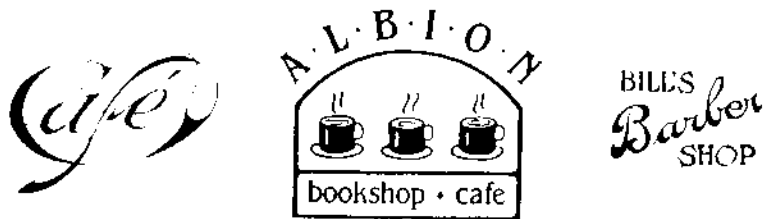


Fig. 34: Suggested Signage Treatments, Dealing With Change in the Connecticut River Valley



Courtesy "Lowell Sign Book"

(c) Lettering



prospective growth will occur create quality environments for their citizens.

The idea of competition between commercial entities-- the small family owned businesses vs. the I-74 'interchange related' services-- has been addressed through careful permitting of retail licenses. By not repeating the identical type of consumer services in the two locations, it is feasible for coexistence of both to occur profitably.

Another key to the lasting vitality of this effort is embedded in the details-- placemaking. By repeating themes, unifying materials, coordinating events, and providing associations to community belonging, the opportunity exists to provide a "decorative richness" to the town.

*The larger goal of these collaborative procedures is to increase the likelihood of achieving and sustaining an imagery of place that affirms an increased sense of identity in both old and new American environments. We need to find images in our built environment that activate our curiosity about where we are, inspire some reverie about our future there, and perhaps elicit a whimsical smile about where we have been. We need art and urban design that make the stored humanity of places accessible to the community as a whole... (Placemakers-- Fleming)*

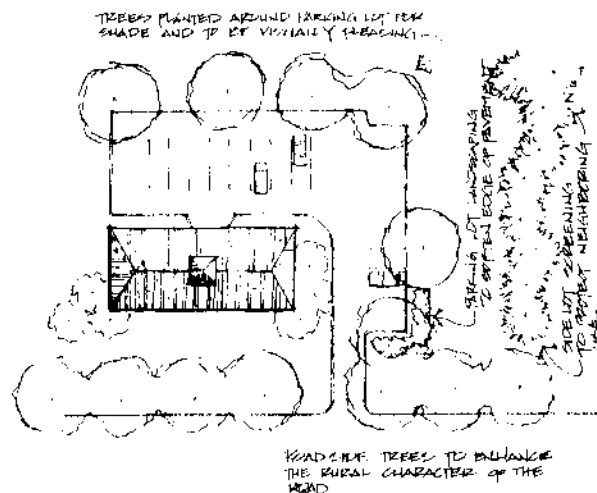
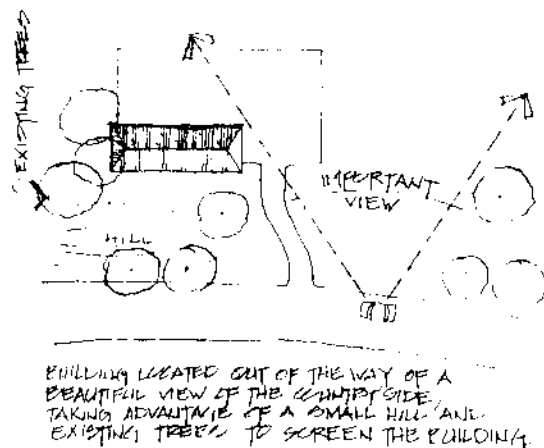


Fig. 35 and 36: Viewshed and Commercial Buffering Treatments. Dealing With Change in the Connecticut River Valley



The guidelines necessary to incorporate and preserve the character of the town are many over. As a beginning to this process, several fundamental issues have been dealt with concerning the following:

*architectural facades*— treatment of building faces, attention to brick and material work, etc...

*planting coordination* — choreography of blooming displays, reestablishment of vegetative woodlots, etc...

*signage schemes* — unifying banners, gateway entrances, etc...

*greenspace acquisition* — purchasing program for land set-asides, greenway additions, etc...

*commercial development* — allocating permits and retail licenses, controlling growth and zoning, etc...

*lighting standards*— adopted styles of lighting units, organized display of seasonal displays, etc...

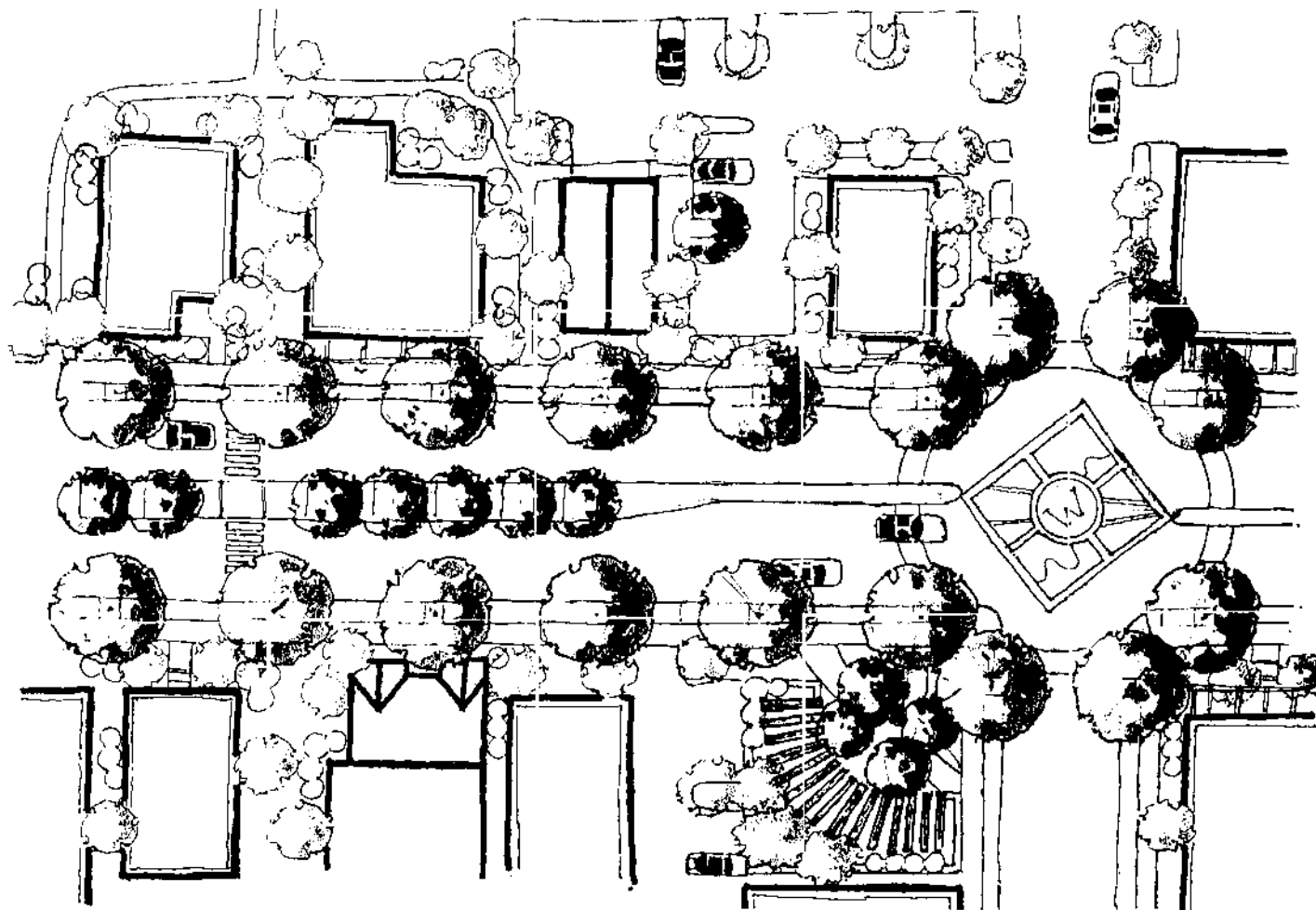
*residential development patterns*— clustered housing units, viewshed protection, etc...

The development of these strategies must be done with both the input of community members, as well as the establishment of a town council. The master plan design features and guidelines will only be as effective as the citizens of Wanamaker make them. Community support is essential to the initiative.



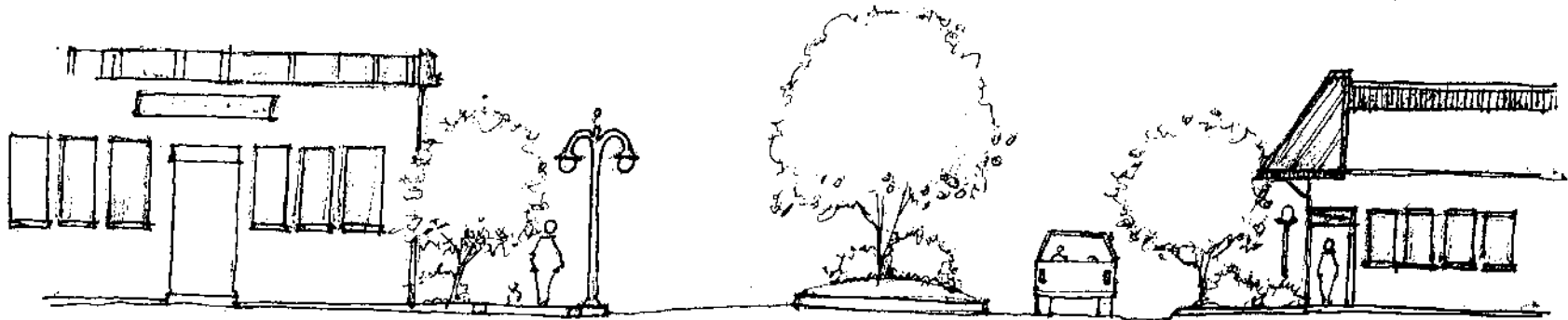
The intersection plan depicted here illustrates the concepts of pocket greenspaces, clustered parking areas behind buildings, street boulevarding, and bringing details (i.e. paving materials, circulation, etc) into the fabric of downtown. As part of the larger master planning process, the look at 'destination' places is necessary within the vernacular setting.

*Fig 37: Intersection Plan: Downtown Scene, Comprehensive Project, April 1997*

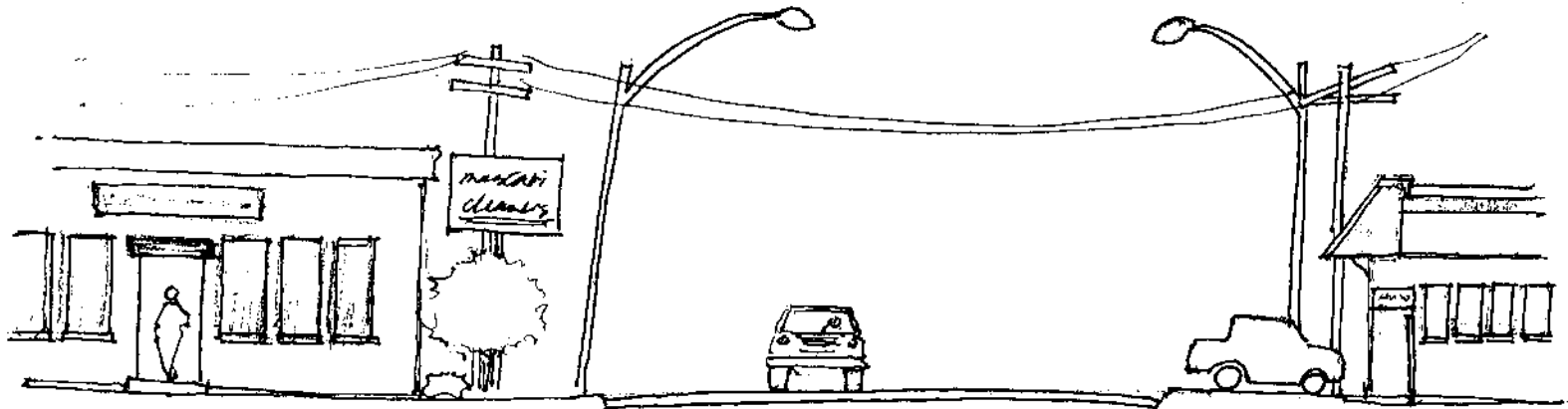




The before and after sections here represent the changes made regarding the pedestrian-to-business-to-vehicular space. By using planting materials, zone separation, and sensitive lighting/signage patterns, the experience of 'Main Street' can be significantly enhanced.



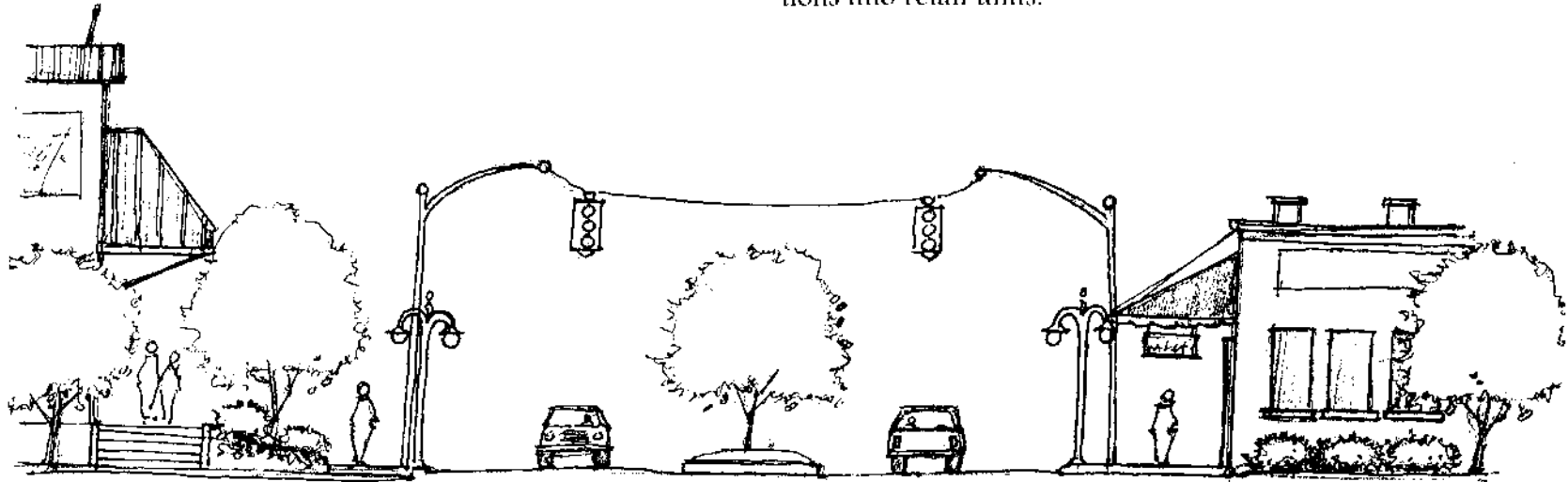
*After Section*



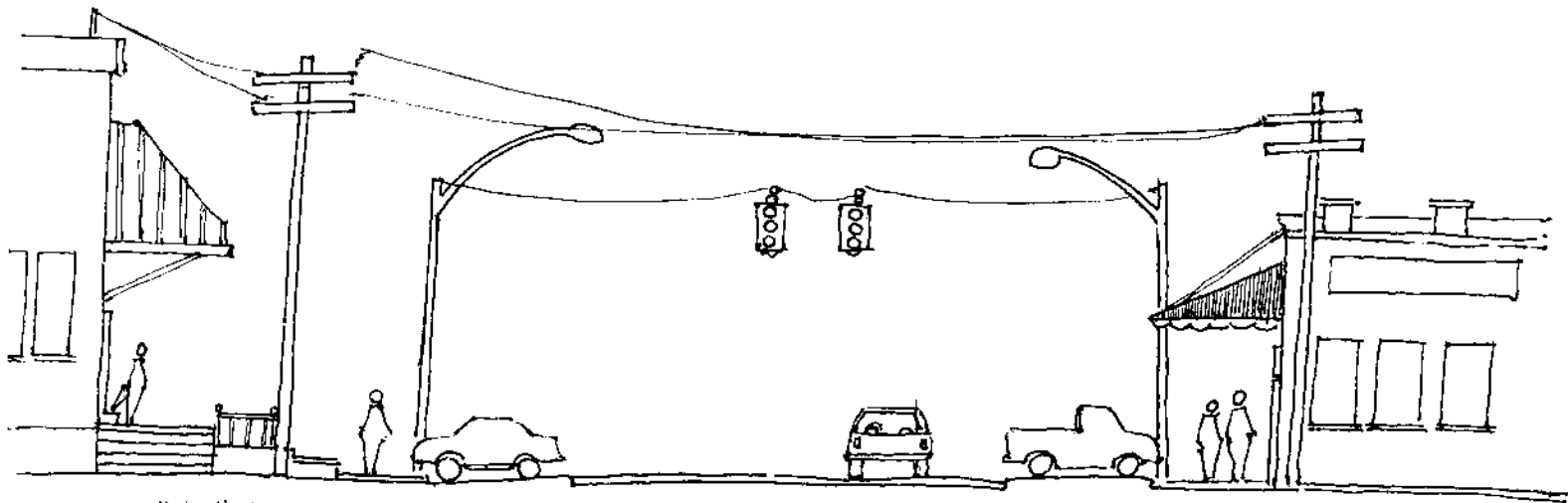
*Before Section*



The relationship of businesses to the streetscape is crucial for an active commercial district. The implementation of a planted boulevard allows for clear definition of vehicular space and allows parallel parking to remain in the central business district. The interface of pedestrian walkways to storefronts is again softened and enhanced by the use of transitions into retail units.



*After Section*

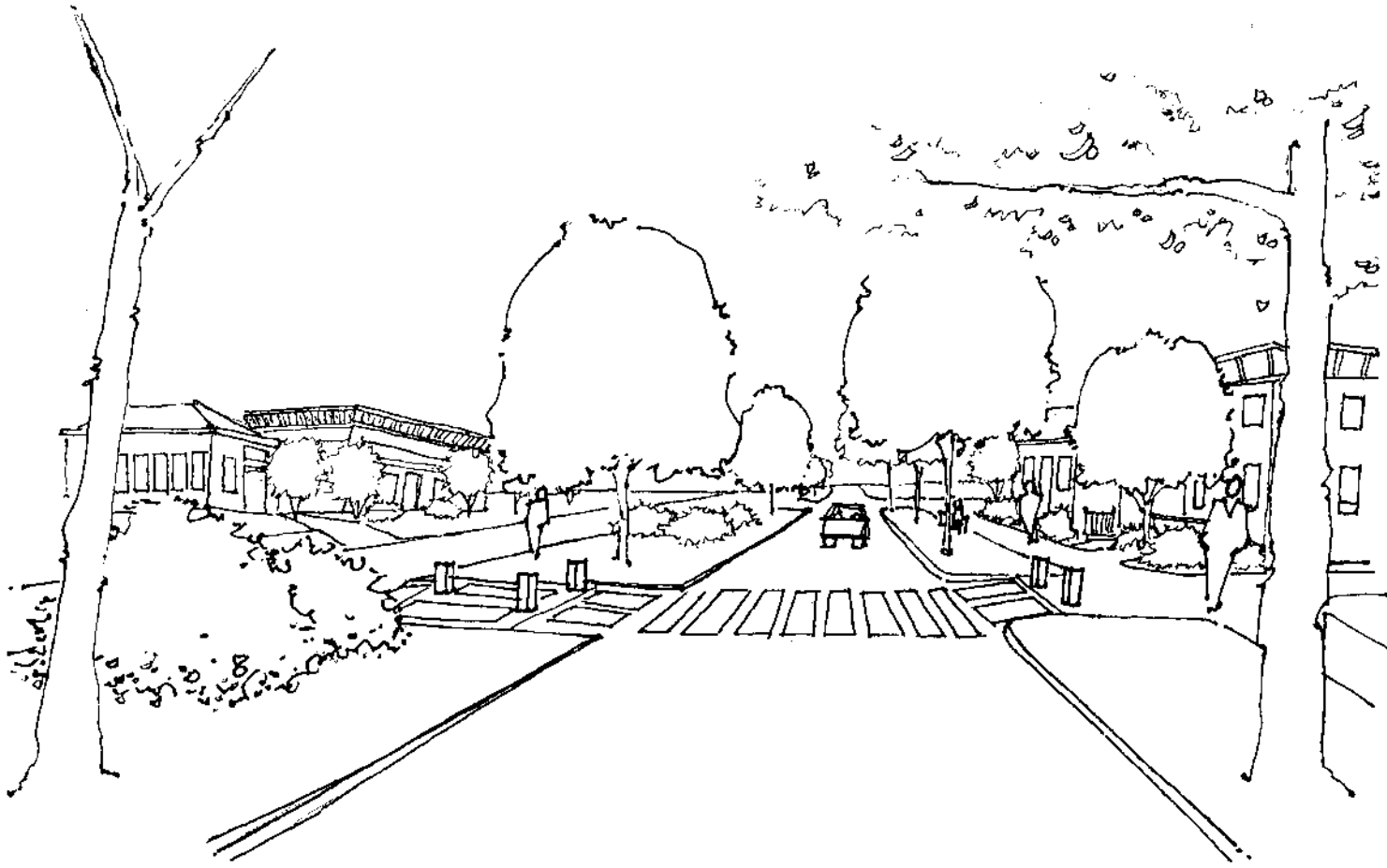


*Before Section*



### *Streetscape View:*

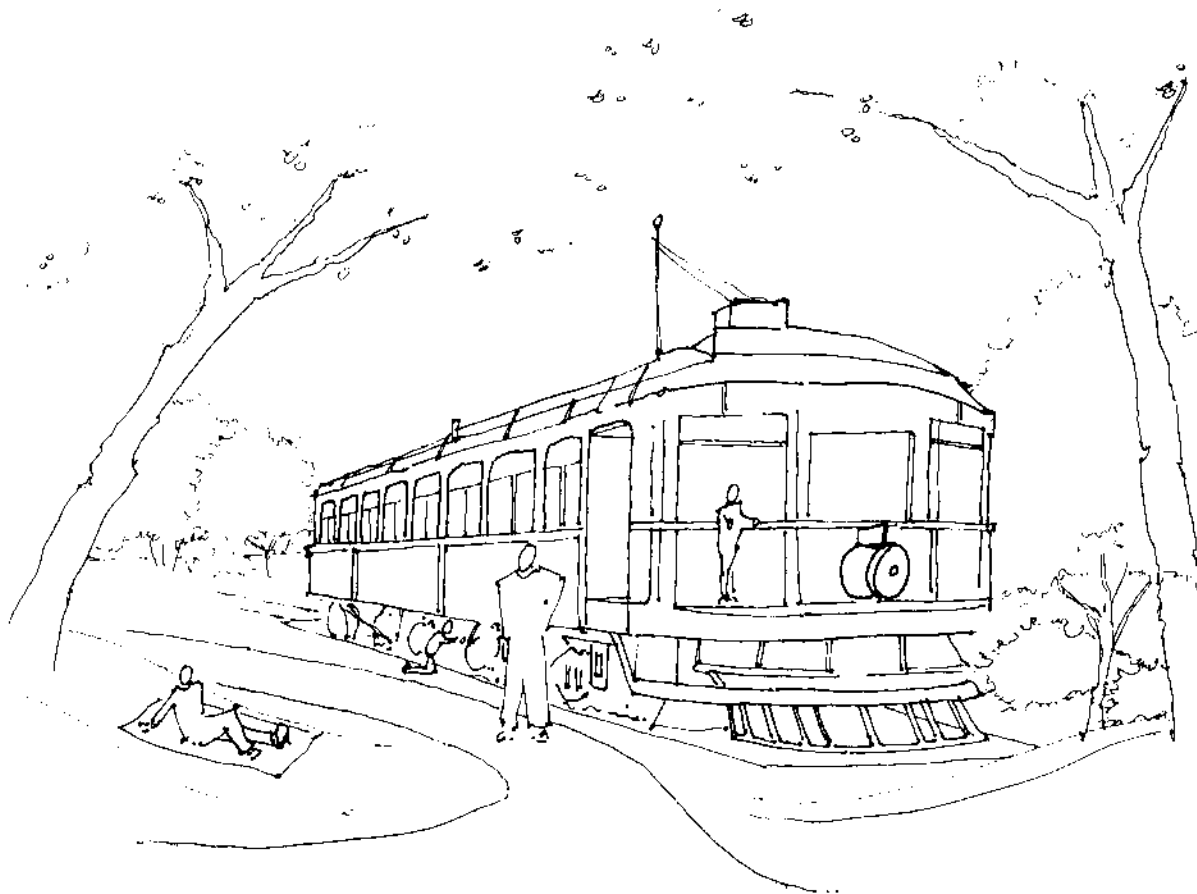
The character of a small town streetscape creates a lasting impression. The concepts of boulevard planting, defined pedestrian crossings, and a more intimate relationship of business-to-sidewalk experiences helps to develop the identity of a cohesive community.





### ***Community Landmark:***

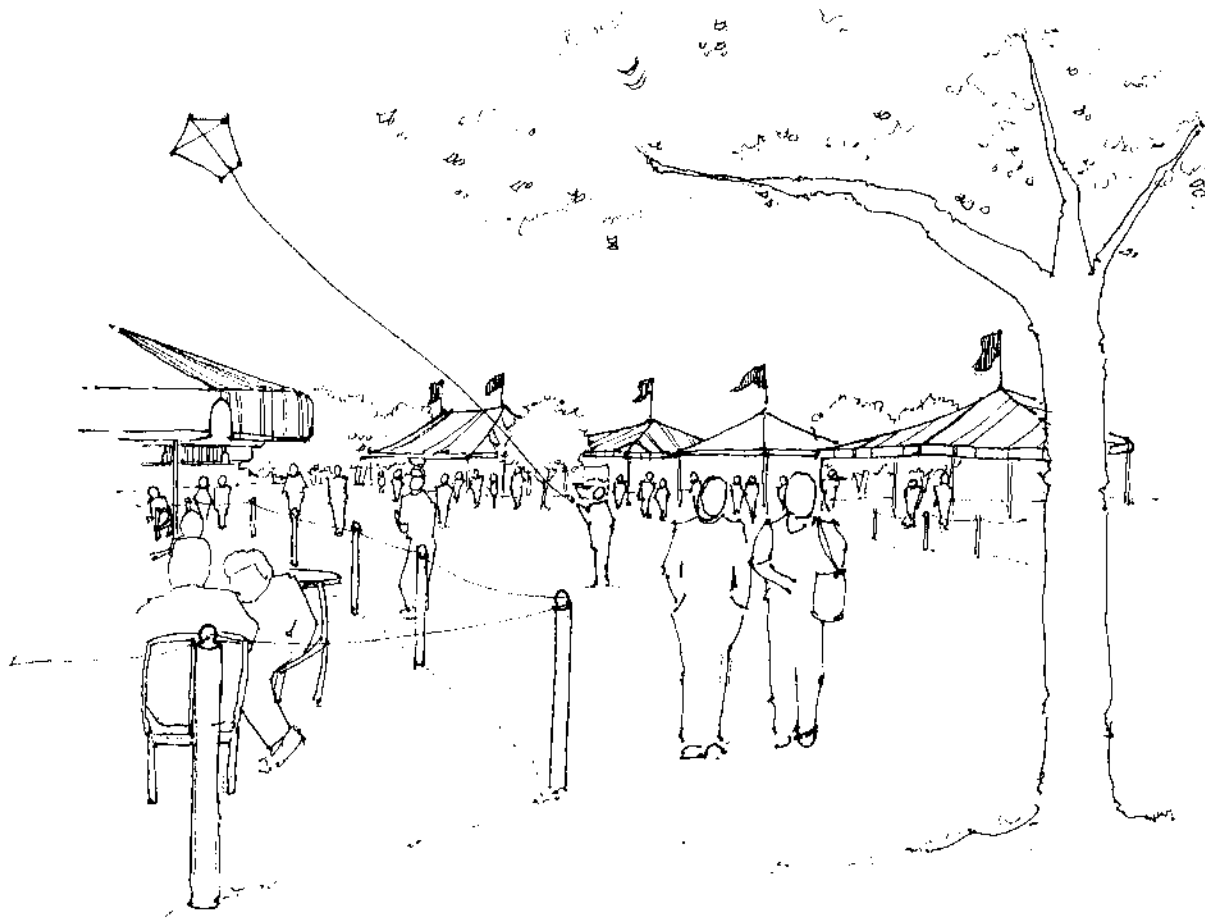
In tying heritage to community identity, the image depicts the location of an Interurban train in a small community park. Surrounded by casual pathways and a passive atmosphere, the historic piece reflects on the community's past history. As noted in the sketch, the train itself is able to be climbed through and investigated by users of all ages.





### ***Festival Gathering:***

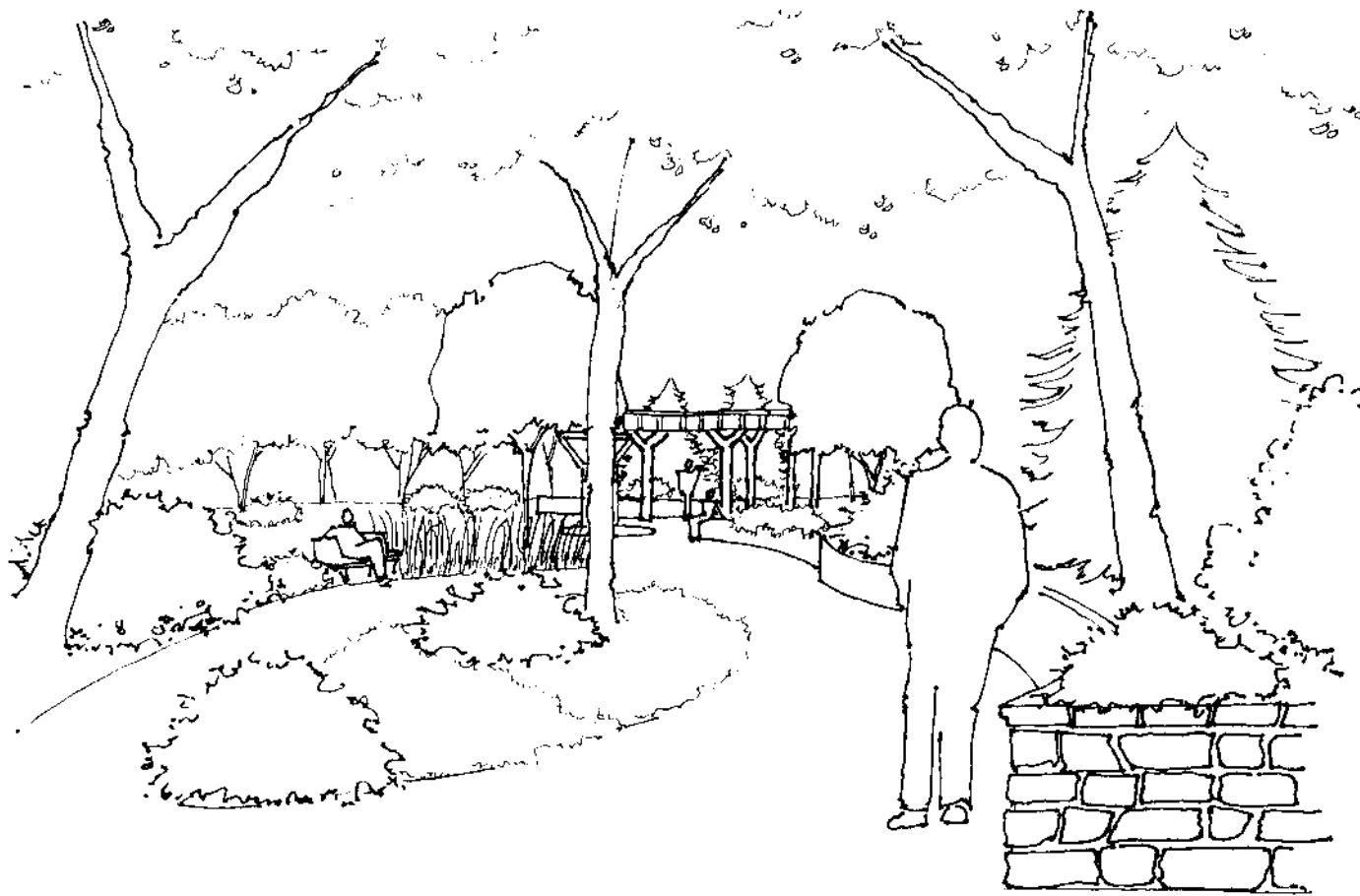
The ability to gather as a community is essential to small town environments. The town center provides space for the festival atmosphere of street fairs and special celebrations. Highlighting the social interaction common in rural areas serves to solidify what creates community identity and character from its deepest roots.





### ***Corner Park:***

Located at the heart of the downtown, this park provides needed greenspace for citizens. Utilizing a currently vacant lot, the park creates an enclosed space that invites in people-- a destination. As a tool to promote social gathering and pedestrian activity, the park meets functional needs of users and likewise aesthetically enhances the ambiance of the town.





### ***Cluster Development:***

In an effort to protect the vernacular landscape, residential developments will utilize clustered unit spacing. As new housing communities develop around the area, each will maintain its own individual character while adhering to proscribed guidelines. By preserving viewsheds and land resources, the agricultural heritage of the area is maintained.

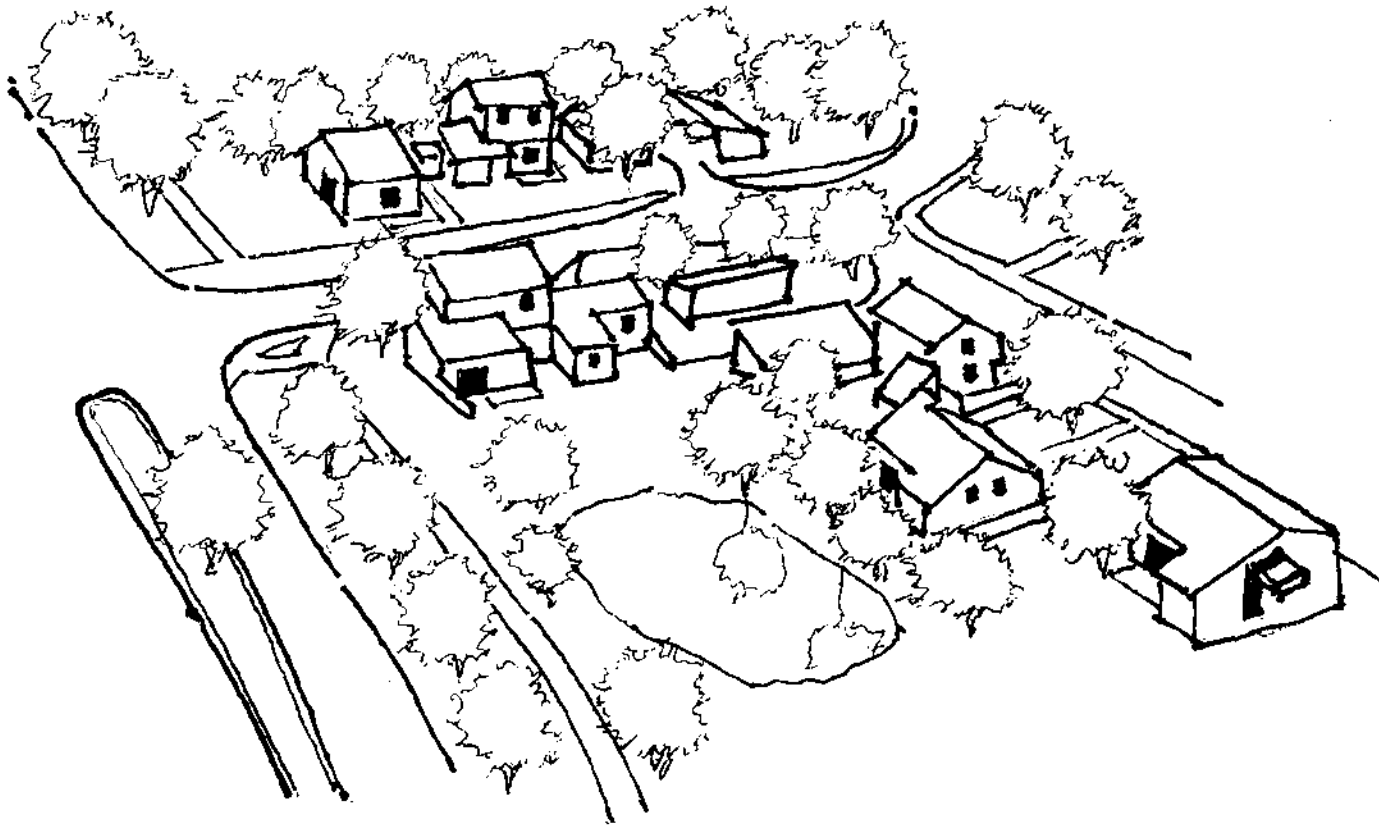




Fig. 38: Tree Grate Detail, Comprehensive Project, April 1997

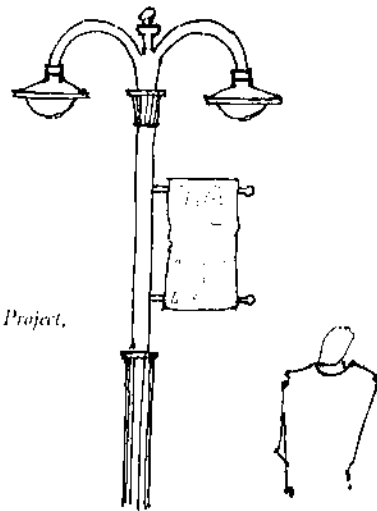
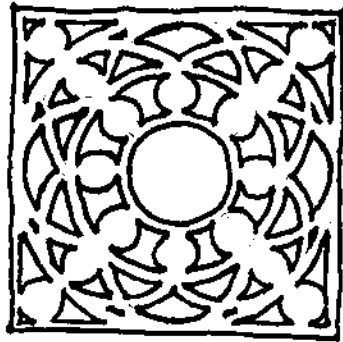


Fig. 39: Light Fixture Detail, Comprehensive Project, April 1997

Fig. 41: Paving Detail Study, Comprehensive Project, April 1997

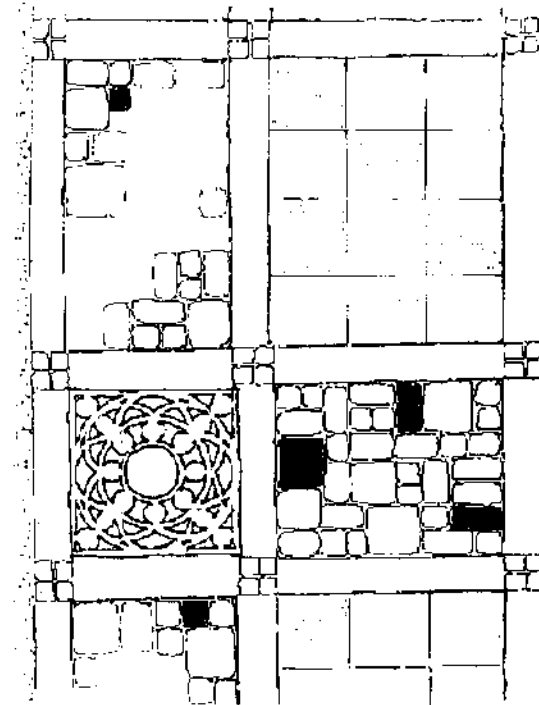
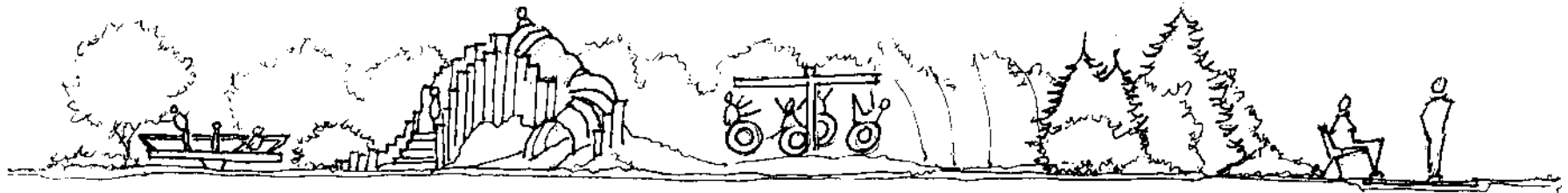


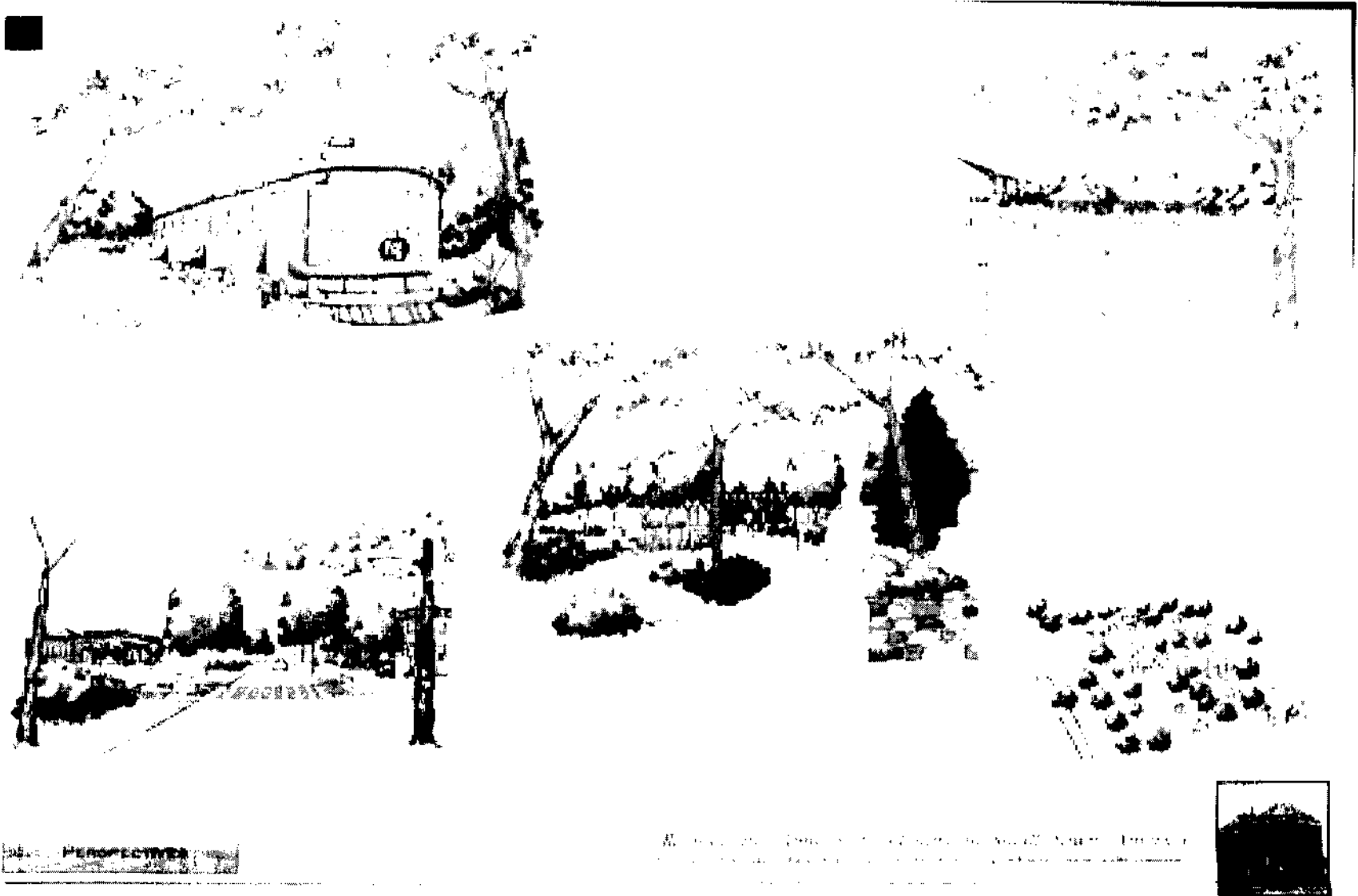
Fig. 40: Playground Section, buffering to walks and parking areas



The placemaking ability of good design stems from the craft of small details. This project has addressed primarily the concepts of community growth and expansion, yet strives to provide images of what the fabric of Wanamaker might be comprised of-- paving patterns, walkway bufferings, lighting fixtures, tree grates, signage, etc. Attention to this level of detail is essential to the quality of experience users should be presented with.



Fig. 42: Perspectives Board, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997

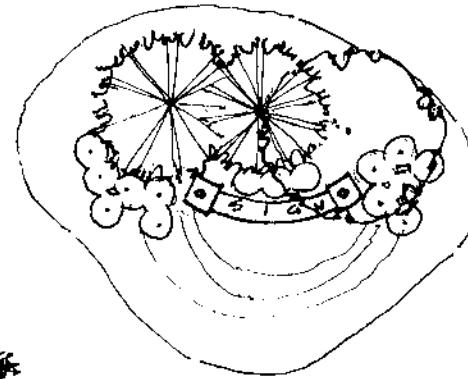
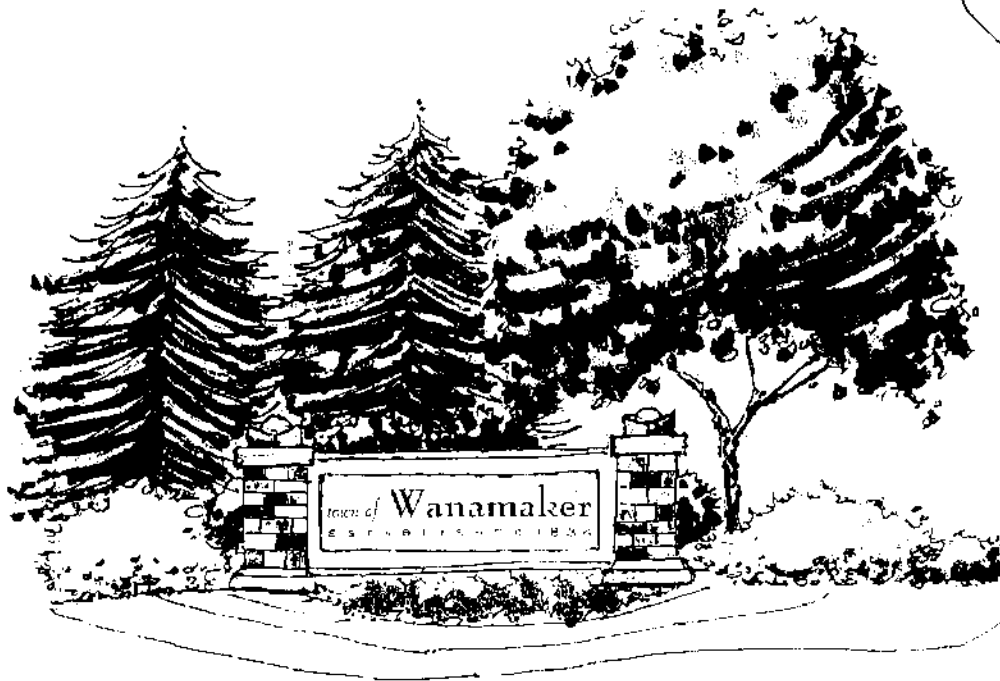




### *Gateway Signage:*

The identification of entry into Wanamaker is a transition that can be enhanced through delineation of town limits. The use of sensitively developed signage, using repetitious materials and forms within the streetscape, can help identify the sense of arrival into the community.

*Fig. 43: Gateway Signage Sketch, Comprehensive Project Presentation, April 1997*

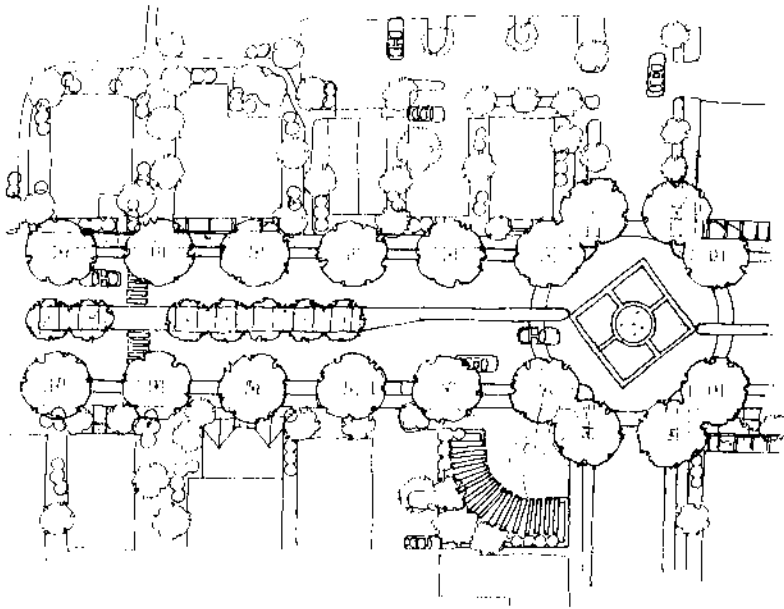




## *Conclusions*

Throughout this comprehensive design project, issues from broad scales of community growth down to material details and paving patterns have been addressed. This case study represents the opportunity to understand more fully how rural communities have and will cope with changing times. As the agricultural base dwindles from our landscape and precious vernacular resources are threatened, it is our call as landscape architects and environmental designers to respond to the inherent traits that create small town atmospheres. The protection and revitalization of community identity is a noble cause-- as concerned citizens and beneficiaries of those values radiating from our rural communities, we must make it our task to help establish an initiative aimed towards preserving our cultural heritage.

This study is one such example of how our small towns might be more clearly understood.





## *Appendix Material*

### *Appendix A: Personal Initiatives*

#### *Design Principles:*

As a student of landscape architecture, the curriculum engaged has developed certain guiding principles for my work. It has been essential to my study that I involve the community in the design process, respond sensitively to ecological entities, protect valuable historic resources, and develop a long-range plan that respects the context of the site. These primary design principles are inspired from the studio classroom— and inherent from growing up as a member of this small community. It is undeniable that the emotional ties to bettering your own community have been strong motivating factors.

#### *Declarative Statement:*

Landscape architects play a significant role in the identification and interpretation of fundamental components of what shapes a community. The way communication, public space, and social dynamics function are essential to the comprehensive planning process with regards to revitalizing community identity.

#### *Objectives:*

On a personal level, I have accomplished several fundamental objectives. As I have progressed through the landscape architecture curriculum here at Ball State, it has become readily apparent how detailed the design process can be. To compensate for obvious time constraints in individual studios, many crucial components of holistic design were left unaddressed. As I approach my departure from this institution, it has been my goal to aggressively pursue my creative thesis project in a manner that would increase my understanding of talents, skills, and insight I will offer to the profession.





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