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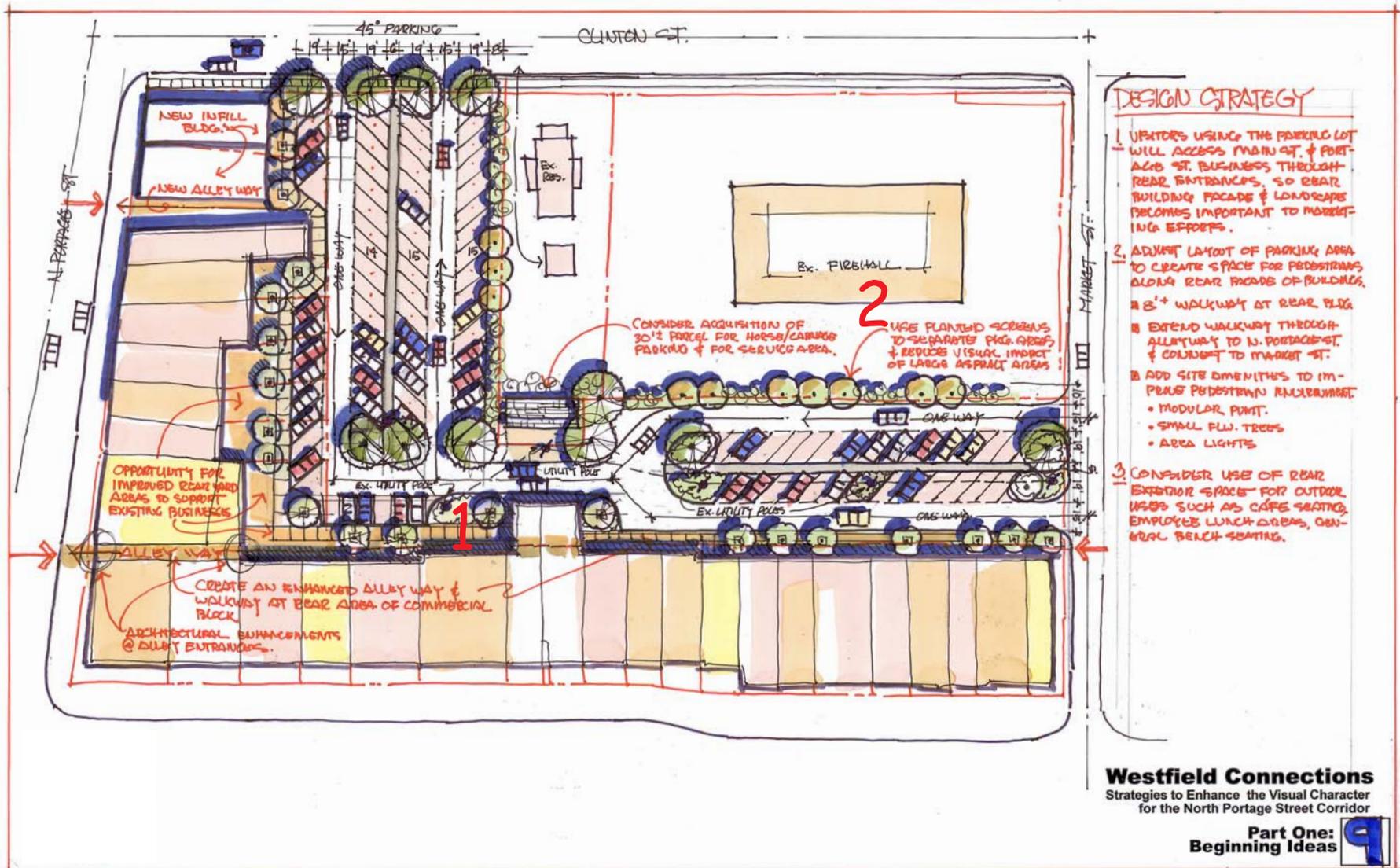
Municipal Parking: An Important Visual Landscape

After traveling along North Portage Street (and other access streets to the village) the next area of the village a visitor is likely to encounter is one of the municipal parking lots. While Westfield is fortunate to have a parking area such as the lot located behind the East Main Street commercial block, it is important also to consider the image that the parking lot presents to visitors.

The East Main Street lot, like many municipal lots throughout New York, evolved from a more utilitarian origin. It is primarily a service area of the adjacent buildings. Besides storing cars it is also the place where trash is kept, where utilities connect to the buildings, where HVAC equipment is located, etc. It is also the place where we see the back facades of buildings - facades which were never designed to be primary points of access and so are typically more utilitarian than decorative.

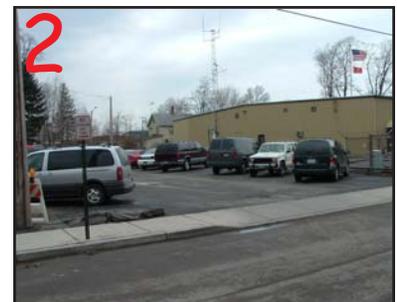
But today, the municipal parking lot is a primary point of access for visitors and as such, care should be given to the image of the village it projects to visitors. This section describes several design ideas that can help shore up the landscape within the East Main Street parking lot as well as assess the potential for new areas for parking.





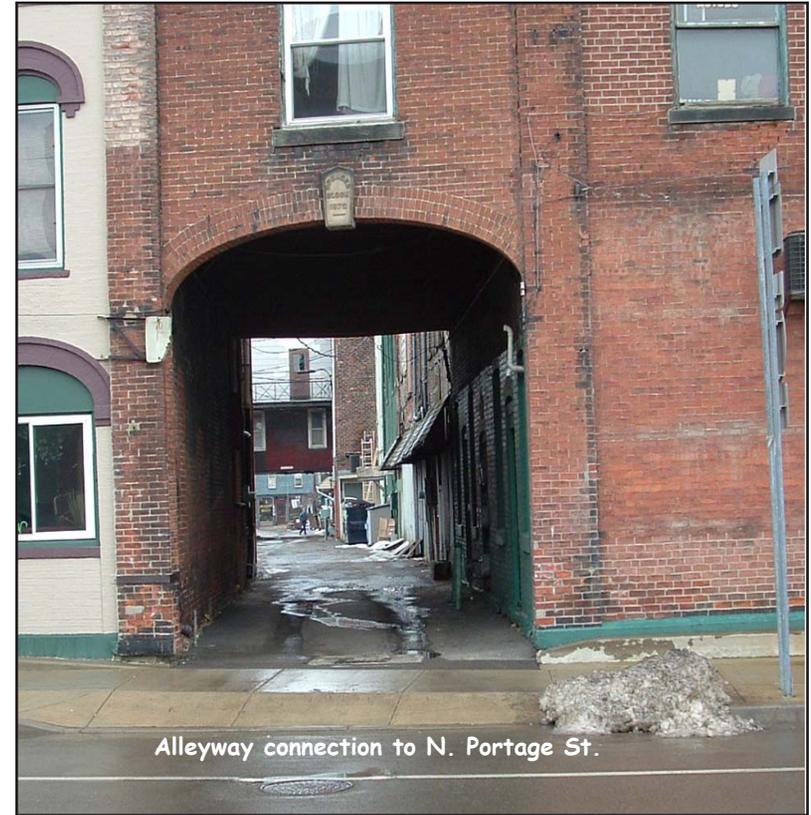
1 Visitors to the village will first look for free, convenient parking. Once the car is stored safely, they will enter the village by foot. In this regard, the rear side of Main St. businesses present the first, close-up, image of the village. So it is important to reconsider how the rear, utility areas of Main St. buildings can present a more interesting image to visitors. See the facing page for a design strategy addressing the "pedestrian interface" for the Main St. parking Lot.

Screens using plant materials placed between parking lots can "breakup" the view of extensive areas of asphalt and stored cars and help mitigate the negative views of





Interface area between the parking lot and businesses along Main St.



Alleyway connection to N. Portage St.



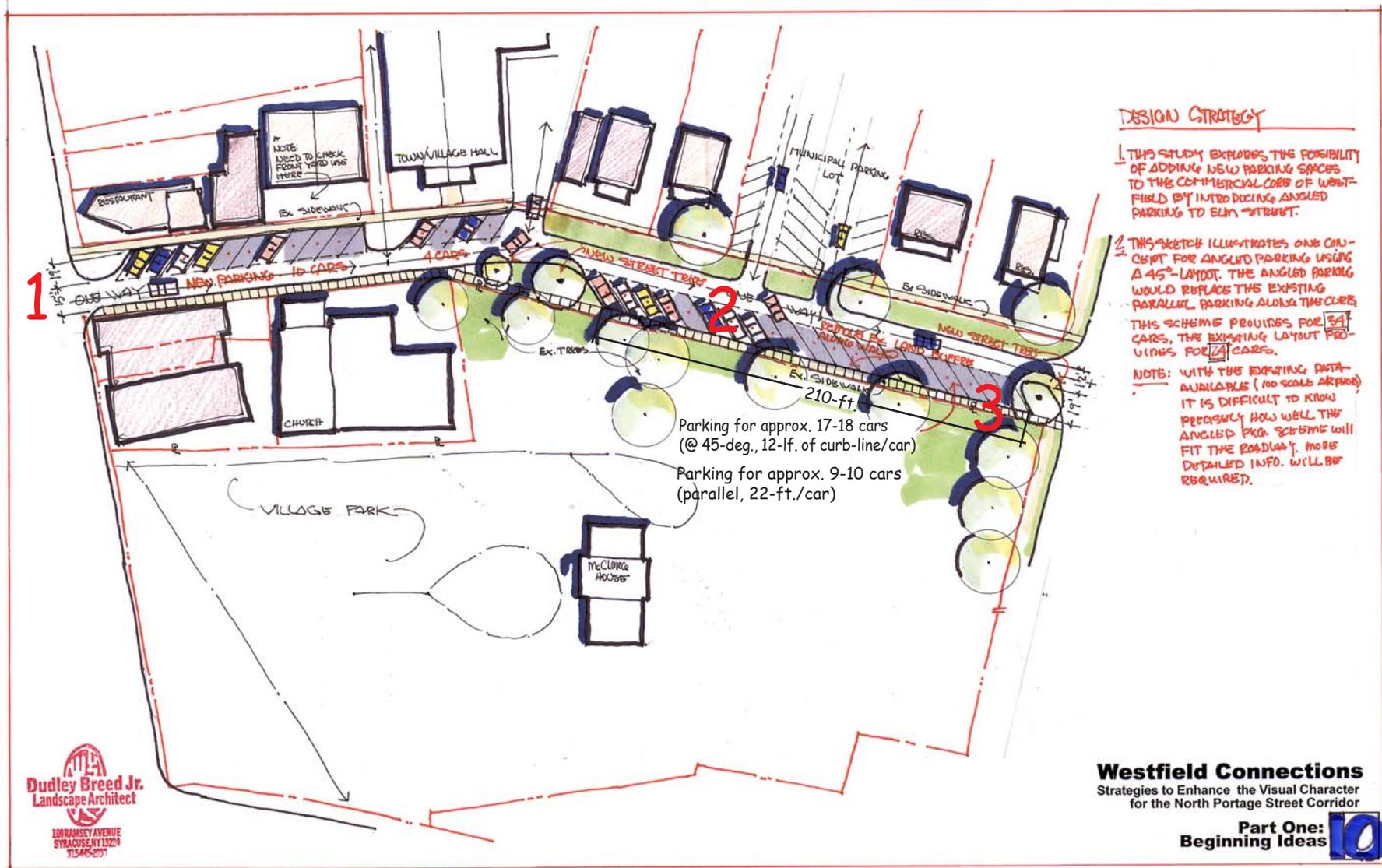
NEW WALKWAY PROVIDES A GOOD TRANSITION FROM PARKING LOT TO SHOP ENTRANCES AND HELPS ESTABLISH A PEDESTRIAN SPACE FOR THE REAR AREA OF MAIN STREET BUSINESSES.

Pedestrian Interface

The interface between the parking lot and the stores and restaurants along Main St. is important in establishing a positive image of the village to visitors. The sketch to the left presents a strategy that creates a pedestrian walkway along the rear side of the Main Street buildings. Textural pavement (brick, precast, etc.), pedestrian-scale lighting, plantings and colorful signage can create a pleasant corridor for people moving from the parking lot to the stores and shops.

The challenge here will be to find a way to redress the needs for pedestrian access while maintaining the utility requirements of the space, such as trash storage and HVAC equipment. It is suggested that a shared waste storage area be created in the parking area so that individual trash storage need not be placed at each building location.

It is also important to realize that the rear facades of the buildings do not need to be renovated to the degree that the front facades are maintained. Existing rear facades, well maintained, can provide an interesting backdrop for the pedestrian walkway.



1 Elm Street intersection with East Main Street, looking south.



2 Elm Street, looking south with area considered for angled parking outlined in yellow.



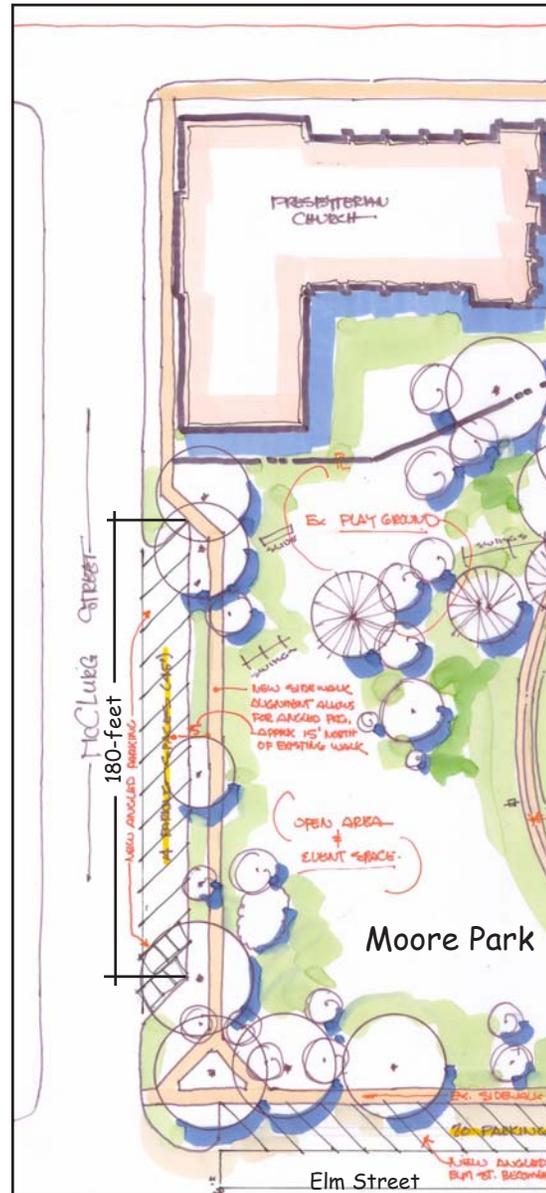
3 Elm Street, looking north showing inside edge of new parking area.

Elm Street Parking

This scenario suggests changing Elm St. to a "one-way" traffic pattern in a southerly direction. This would allow a portion of the roadway to be converted to angled parking space with the goal of increasing parking in the village center area. It would also eliminate the problematic turning situation that now exists while entering Main St. from Elm St.

Angled parking can provide approximately 40% to 50% more parking than parallel parking in a given area. The plan to the left illustrates this. The southern section of the street has a curb-line of approximately 210-ft. Using 22-ft. per car for parallel parking, this area would support 9 to 10 parking spaces. Using 20-ft. per car, yields parking space for 10 to 11 cars.

With angled parking, about 12-ft. of curb-line is needed per car yielding space for 17 to 18 cars. These values however, are subject to change based on physical conditions along the street. But it is certainly worth exploring in more detail. Additional study will also be necessary to determine the feasibility of converting the two-way traffic pattern on Elm Street to a one-way system.



McClurg Street Parking Study: angled parking concept.

McClurg Street Parking

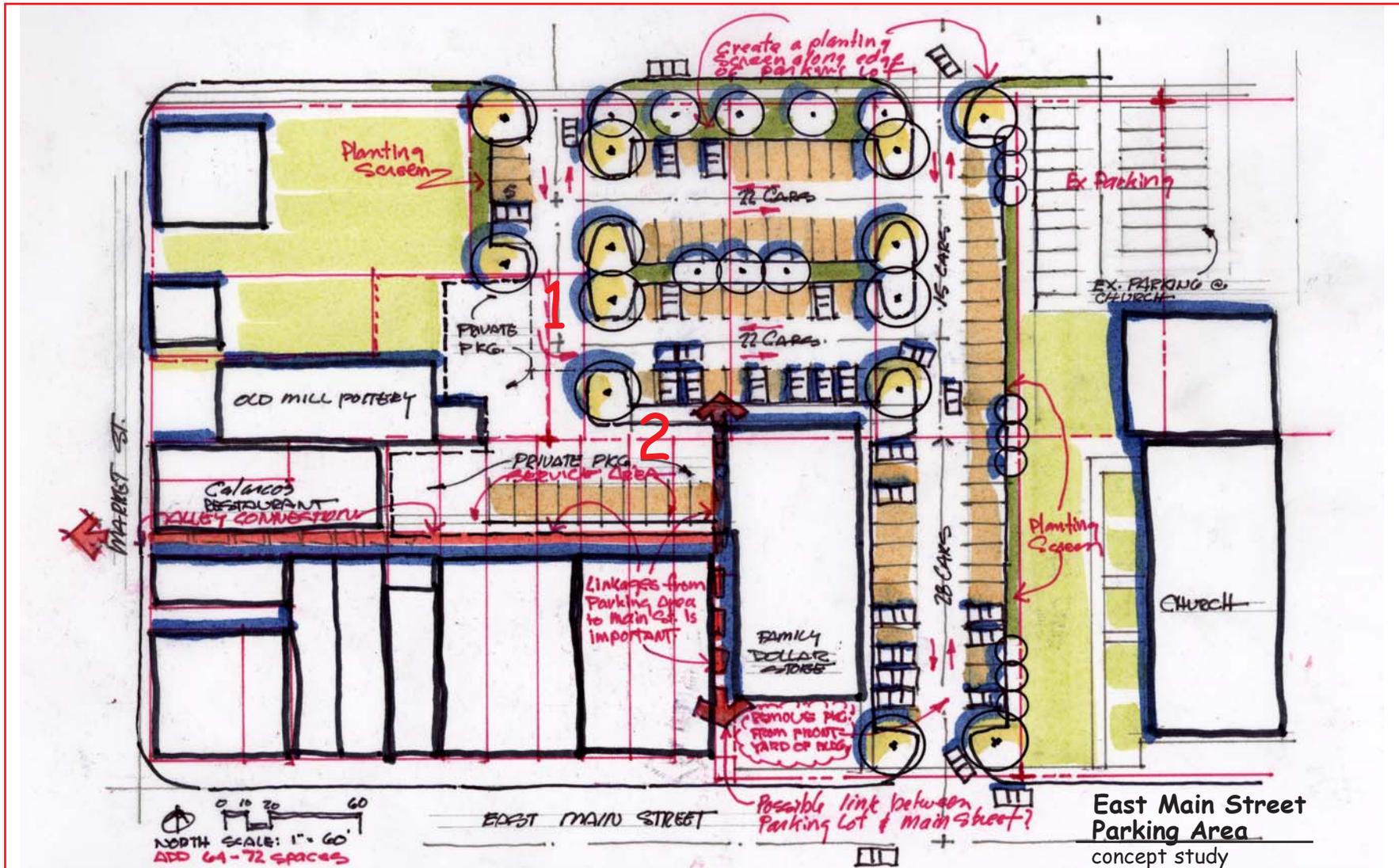
Another parking option near Elm Street and also associated with Moore Park is angled parking for McClurg Street. This parking would have a similar 45-degree orientation as that discussed for Elm Street. However McClurg Street would remain as a two-way street.

45-degree angled parking can provide approximately 45-50% more parking spaces. However conditions along the road may adjust this figure. In the plan to the right, angled parking is shown for 14 cars along a section of road 180-ft. long. The same area with parallel parking (using 22-ft./car) would provide parking for 8 to 9 cars.

The parking area would be placed in the area now occupied by the existing sidewalk which, would be relocated further inside Moore Park on the north side of the line of existing street trees.



McClurg Street with area for angled parking.



1 View from the existing parking area north along the existing gravel drive.

Improvements to this parking area will require acquisition of additional properties and improvements to the storm drainage system. The plan should also include planting buffers to screen the parking lot from neighboring residential properties.



Existing parking area.

East Main Street Parking Lot

The Village of Westfield maintains an area of existing but unimproved parking behind the commercial buildings on East Main Street, east of Market Street. The municipal area also adjoins with several privately held parking areas and residential properties. As part of the Village Center design study, the landscape architect was asked to consider ways to enhance this parking area for broader use by the public. The concept sketch plan to the left summarizes findings from this study.

A rear area parking lot certainly can be a valuable asset to the adjoining businesses on Main Street and Market Street as well. And the lot would certainly be useful in providing parking during special events that may be planned in the village. However, the present size and orientation of currently held property by the village does not present a significant parking asset. And, as indicated by the village, there also exists a drainage issue that would need to be addressed.

To function better, a larger area would be needed to establish more efficient double-loaded parking bays. Also, travel lanes would need to be connected to two or more outlets to the streets - to Clinton Street and possibly to East Main Street. The sketch to the left illustrates a concept design that incorporates the above considerations. The plan shows two access points on Clinton Street and one connection to East Main Street. The interior parking layout includes two east-west oriented double-loaded parking bays and an extension of the existing parking pattern located adjacent to the Dollar Store. Plantings are located along Clinton Street to screen views of the parking lot from the neighboring residential properties.

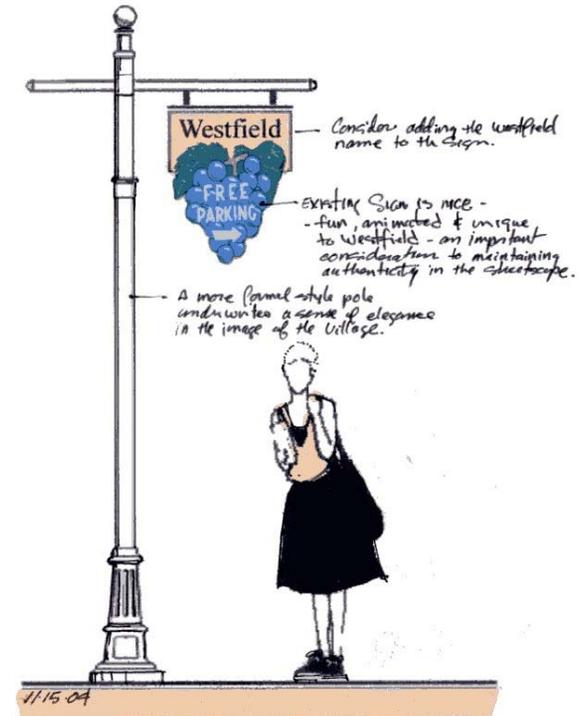
The plan however requires the acquisition of

several properties and would also likely entail agreements with other area property owners. It will also require treatments to manage storm water on the site.

As a potential parking area for the village, this area certainly merits further study. Additional information will be required as to the extent and cost of infrastructure required to manage storm water considerations, availability of properties to allow expansion of the lot, and other matters related to existing traffic analysis related to access from the village street and East main Street, a state highway. Consideration should also be given to adjoining property owners to understand their needs relative to parking in this area.

Water Street Parking Studies

Additional parking studies were also completed for the west side of the village below South Portage Street at the terminus of Water Street. These were conducted as part of a study looking at pedestrian connections through the village center and are discussed in Section 5: Village Center Connections.



Parking Signs

The existing parking signs used in the village have a warm and welcoming design and should be maintained. There is a need to review where the signs are located and add or relocate signs to be sure they are placed for visitors to see them.

Another suggestion, illustrated to the left, calls for a more elegant pole support for the sign. The pole can be styled following the design of the new streetlight poles.