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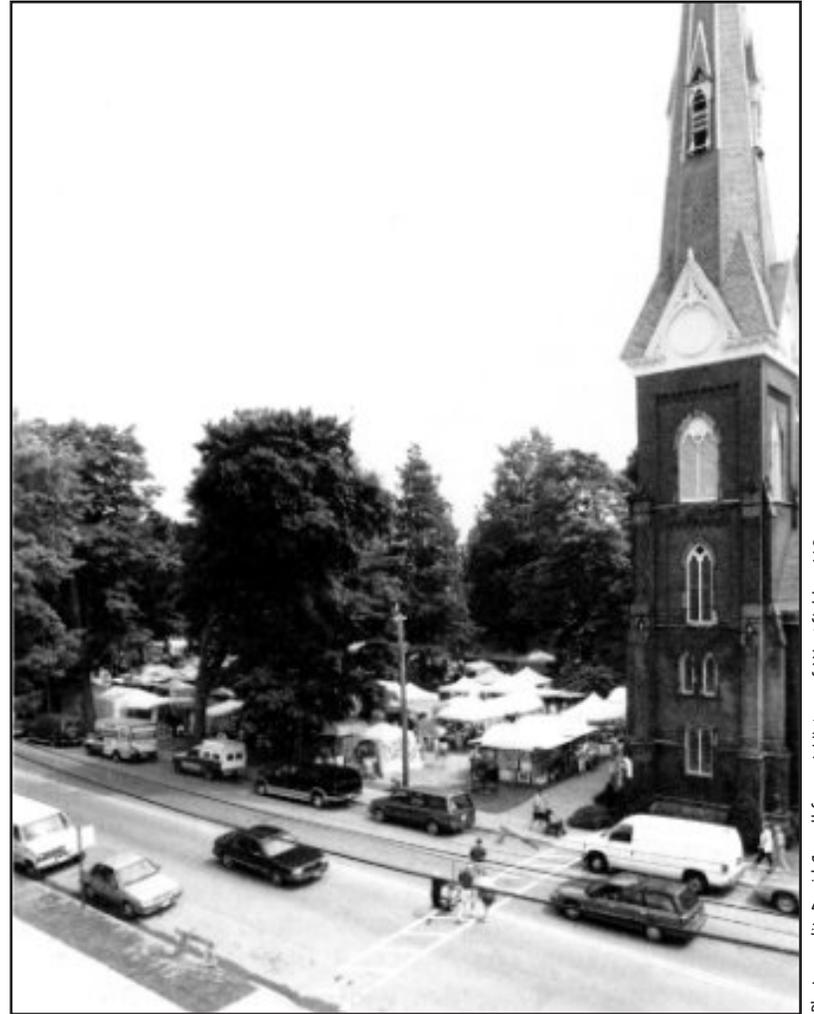


Photo credit: David Correll from, *A History of Westfield*, p. 160.

Village Center Connections

This section of the project began as a study on how to develop more parking for the village center area and broadened into an exploration of the benefits for "linking" or connecting various resources in the village with one another. Beginning with the parking issue, it seemed clear that there was a potential for additional parking in the area just west of the village center near the terminus of Water Street. The area includes existing parking lots and several parcels of land that could, if desired, be adapted for at least limited parking. The challenge in developing these locations for parking was access, both in terms of vehicular and pedestrian. Exploring the access issue led to a discovery of a broader understanding of the value of seeing the connections between Water Street and the village center.

Parking Considerations

In addressing the request to study parking, the landscape architect looked at the Water Street area for potential parking. This area seemed a logical choice based on its adjacency to the village center, the existence of significant parking structures and the existence of several undeveloped land parcels.

Existing Parking

A significant-sized parking lot owned by the Welch's corporation, exists in the area just north of the NYS Route 20 bridge. Certainly, if access to this lot can be arranged, it could provide much needed parking especially for overflow needs during events held in the village. A key issue with this opportunity is pedestrian access to village center area which is substantially higher in elevation than the Water Street area. A system of steps and ramps would be needed.

New Parking Opportunities

The three concept plans located to the right illustrate possible parking lot configurations along with opportunities for limited development such as a community service provider, small commercial activities and recreation resources. See descriptive notes accompanying each sketch.

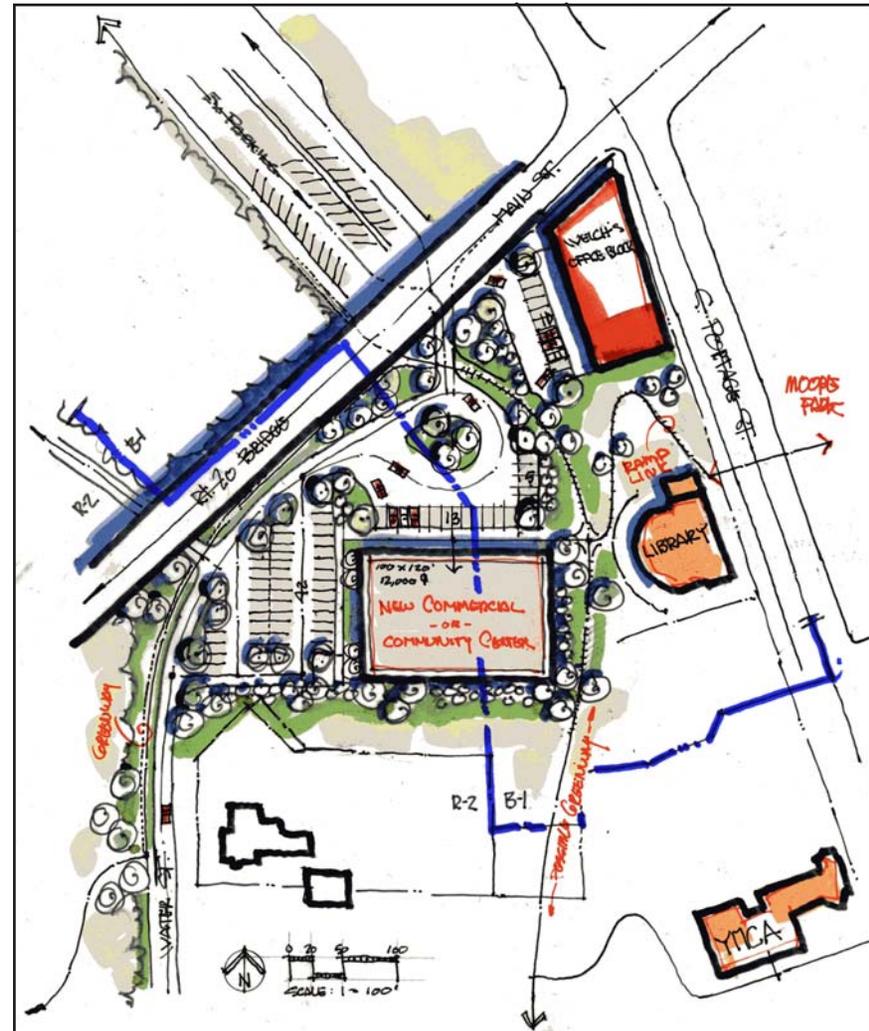
Conclusion

Gaining access to the Welch's lot, even if limited to overflow during special events in the village, would be valuable but a better system of pathways connecting the lot with the village center area will be needed. See page 42 for a description of path/ramp options.

Development in the area will be limited to some extent by both the capacity of Water Street to support additional traffic loads and the nature of the residential development that now exist in the area.

The scale and character of the residential neighborhood merits consideration when considering new development in this area. The narrow width of Water Street, the smaller lanes that connect to it and the close association of the neighborhood with the Chautauqua Creek gorge create a neighborhood setting that is small scale, quiet and intimate. Certainly these characteristics should be considered when reviewing proposals that would significantly change the traffic flow in this area.

In general, it seems appropriate for small scale or occasional-use activities to locate in this area especially those related to passive recreation and arts/music events.



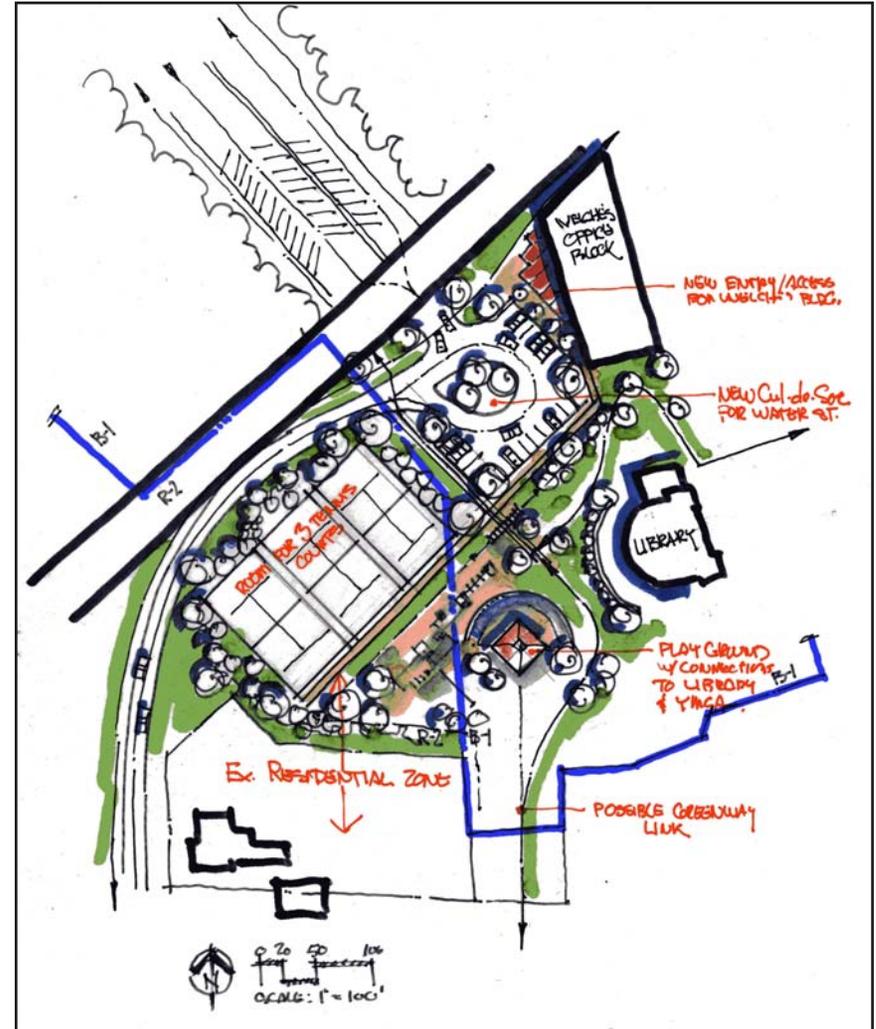
Concept Sketch 1

In this plan, the area north of the existing residential area is developed in a combination of a community service center (or small commercial) and associated parking (approx. 50 cars). Water Street is extended as shown, terminating in a cul-de-sac that provides road access to the rear of the Welch's Building and their parking lot to the north. Pedestrian links are provided to interconnect this site with South Portage Street, East Main Street, the Library, YWCA, and to a potential Greenway trail that could potentially be developed along sections of the abandoned rail ROW that exist in this area. See Section 6, Westfield-Chautauqua Greenway for more on this topic.



Concept Sketch 2

In this plan, parking is the primary use (approx. 100 cars) of the site but consideration is given as well to pedestrian interests. Here, a community space has been developed that could serve as a site for smaller-scale musical events, art shows, summertime activities for children or events associated with the library and the YWCA. Pedestrian circulation is planned to allow connections to the village center area as well as north and south to points that can access Chautauqua Creek and the Little League field. Limitations with this scenario relate to the capacity of Water Street to support the added vehicular traffic this plan may generate, visual impacts of the lot and noise levels from site activities. However, well designed buffer plantings can help mitigate these factors.



Concept Sketch 3

This last study explores a recreation theme wherein tennis courts and a small playground are located along with a more modest parking facility (20-25 cars). Links with Chautauqua Creek are also established at nearby properties owned by the village. This concept places a higher emphasis on pedestrian needs and perhaps fits the general nature of the Water Street area better than activities requiring larger amounts of parking and vehicular access.

Ramps to Water Street

While studying the parking and development opportunities in the Water Street area it became clear that access between Water Street and the upper level of the village center - Moore park and East Main Street - would require a system of steps and ramps to traverse the 20 to 30-feet of grade difference between the two areas. The only connection now in place is a set of stairs located at the NW corner of South Portage Street

and Main Street in a narrow passage between the Welch's Building and the NYS Rt. 20 bridge. To be effective, an alternate, accessible pathway would need to be established. Field studies identified two possible routes. These are the North Portage St. - Welch's Parking Lot Ramp and the South Portage St. - Library Ramp. These routes are described below.

North Portage St. - Welch's Parking Lot Ramp

This ramp system aligns across the sloping land that lies between Welch's parking lot on the north side of the NYS Rt. 20 bridge and the commercial buildings located on the west side of N. Portage St., near the intersection with Main St. The pathway reaches the upper elevation at the Lincoln-Bedell Sculpture Park. From here pedestrians can proceed to East Main Street or Moore Park.

The sequence of photographs below illustrates this ramp's alignment.



Welch's Parking Lot



Ramp along side slope



Ramp along side slope below Lincoln-Bedell Park



Walkway connection to Main St. @ Lincoln-Bedell Park

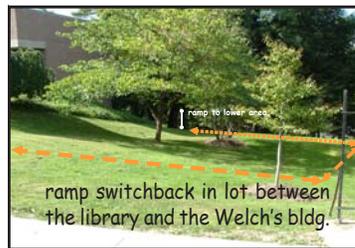
South Portage St. - Library Ramp

This ramp traces a route from the rear area of the library up the sloping grade and through the lawn area of the parcel located between the Welch's Building and the Library. It meets the sidewalk along South Portage Street opposite the existing curb cut for disabled access. From this point, pedestrians can cross South Portage St. to access Moore Park or other areas in the village.

The sequence of photographs below illustrates this ramp's alignment.



area behind the library



ramp switchback in lot between the library and the Welch's bldg.



ramp connects to S. Portage St.



walkway connection between the library and Moore Park

Photo credit: David Correll from, *A History of Westfield*, p. 160.

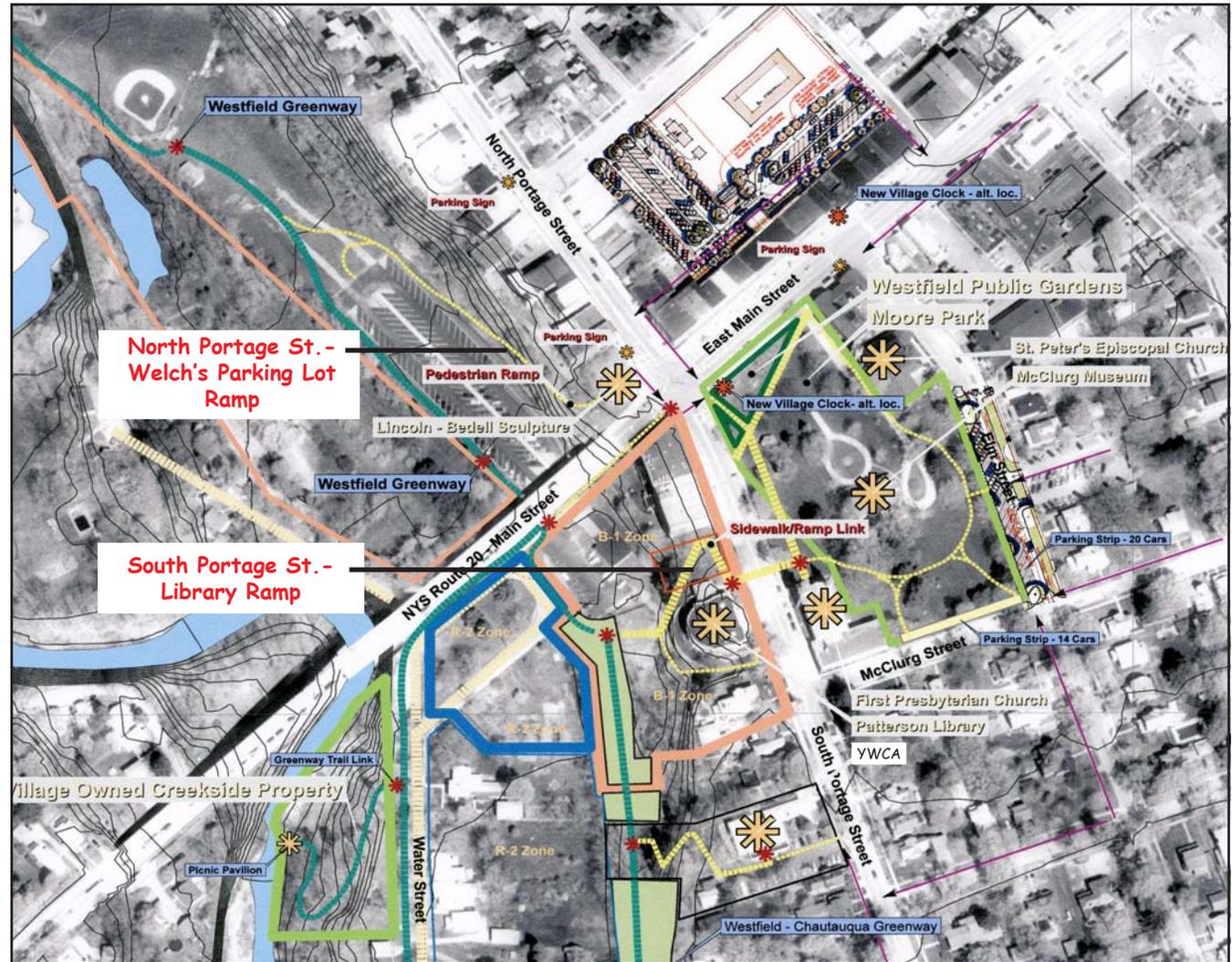
Connections

The adjacent map summarizes a design strategy for the village center that extends the findings from the study of parking opportunities in the Water Street area to include pedestrian connections throughout the village center. The map shows the connections from Water Street up to North and South Portage Streets (described in detail below) and offers a framework for pedestrian links that connect various places and spaces in the village to one another.

Take a Walk!

Ideally, the system would allow a resident, for example, to walk from any neighborhood in the village, enter Moore Park and enjoy the park setting with its shaded lawns, public garden, historic landscape of the McClurg Mansion and the beautiful architecture of the adjacent Church buildings. (See enhanced path system for Moore Park outlined previously in Section 4).

From there, one can move through the park and cross South Portage St. to the Library. There, one can follow an accessible path down to Water Street and access potential use areas located there.



Map of pedestrian pathways and trails that form an integrated system of people and places in the village.

But the connections don't stop there. They can continue to link up with a Greenway trail system that offers access to points north - Barcelona Harbor and south - Chautauqua Lake - along a variety of interesting corridors including Chautauqua Creek, the historic rail/trolley ROW's and a number of the beautiful rural roads that wind

through the vineyards that surround Westfield.

The Greenway system is described in the next section.