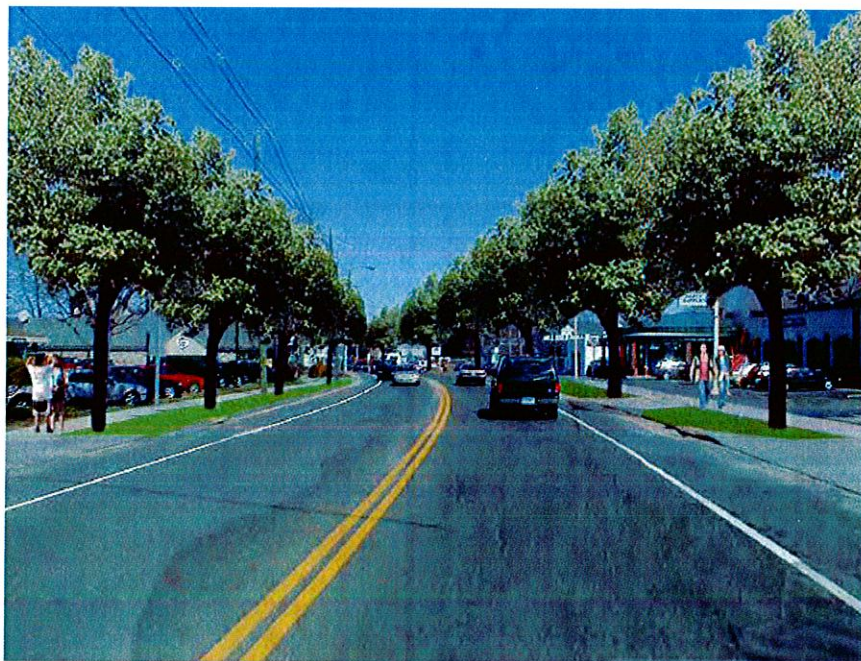


HOUSATONIC VALLEY COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

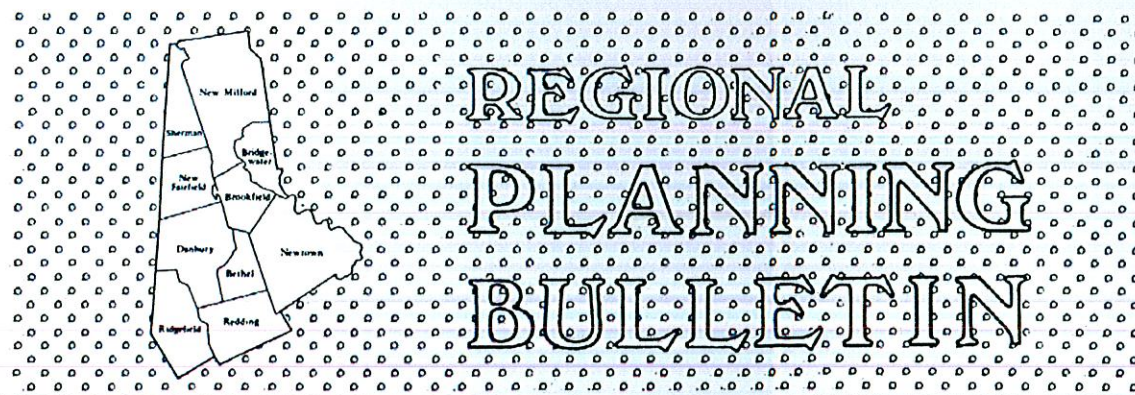
Route 35 Traffic Improvement Plan Ridgefield, CT



**Final Report
June 8, 2005**

**Prepared for the
Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
Town of Ridgefield**

**By
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
in association with Fuss and O'Neill, Inc. and
Francisco Gomes - Environmental Design**



HOUSATONIC VALLEY COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Route 35 Traffic Improvement Plan Ridgefield, CT



**Final Report
June 8, 2005**

**Prepared for the
Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
Town of Ridgefield**

**By
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
in association with Fuss and O'Neill, Inc. and
Francisco Gomes - Environmental Design**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | i |
| 1.0 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1. Study Overview | 1 |
| 1.2. Background | 2 |
| 1.3. Community Involvement Process | 2 |
| 1.4. Goals & Objectives: Why Carry Out This Study? | 5 |
| 1.5. Planning Process | 5 |
| 1.6. The Modern Roundabout | 6 |
| 1.7. Curb-Cut Management Planning | 7 |
| 2.0 CORRIDOR CONDITIONS | 9 |
| 2.1 Existing Traffic Volumes | 9 |
| 2.2 Capacity Analysis | 16 |
| 2.3 Future Traffic Conditions | 16 |
| 2.4 Origin Destination Survey | 19 |
| 3.0 NEW YORK STATE LINE TO ROUTE 33 | 20 |
| 3.1 Existing Conditions | 20 |
| 3.2 Issues | 20 |
| 3.3 Recommendations | 22 |
| 3.4 Access Management Recommendation | 23 |
| 4.0 ROUTE 35/ROUTE 33 INTERSECTION | 26 |
| 4.1 Existing Conditions | 26 |
| 4.2 Issues | 27 |
| 4.3 Recommendations | 29 |
| 4.4 Access Management Recommendation | 31 |
| 5.0 ROUTE 33 TO GOVERNOR STREET | 34 |
| 5.1 Existing Conditions | 34 |
| 5.2 Issues | 34 |
| 5.3 Recommendations | 36 |
| 5.4 Access Management Recommendation | 36 |
| 6.0 RIDGEFIELD CENTER | 38 |
| 6.1 Existing Conditions | 38 |
| 6.2 Issues | 39 |
| 6.3 Recommendations | 41 |
| 6.4 Access Management Recommendation | 44 |
| 7.0 PROSPECT STREET TO ROUTE 116 | 51 |
| 7.1 Existing Conditions | 51 |
| 7.2 Issues | 51 |
| 7.3 Recommendations | 52 |
| 7.4 Access Management Recommendation | 52 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 8.0 ROUTE 35/ROUTE 116 INTERSECTION..... | 54 |
| 8.1 Existing Conditions | 54 |
| 8.2 Issues | 54 |
| 8.3 Recommendations | 56 |
| 8.4 Access Management Recommendation | 57 |
| 9.0 ROUTE 116 TO COPPS HILL/FARMINGVILLE ROADS [COPPS HILL AREA] | 60 |
| 9.1 Existing Conditions | 60 |
| 9.2 Issues | 61 |
| 9.3 Recommendations | 64 |
| 9.4 Access Management Recommendation | 65 |
| 10.0 COPPS HILL/FARMINGVILLE ROADS TO ROUTE 7 | 73 |
| 10.1 Existing Conditions | 73 |
| 10.2 Issues | 73 |
| 10.3 Recommendations | 74 |
| 10.4 Access Management Recommendation | 74 |
| 11.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN | 77 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table ES-1: Route 35 Corridor Traffic Improvement Plan Summary..... | iii |
| Table 1: The Project Technical Committee Members..... | 4 |
| Table 2: New York State Line to Route 33 Recommendations | 23 |
| Table 3: Route 35/Route 33 Intersection Recommendations | 30 |
| Table 4: Route 33 to Governor Street Recommendations..... | 36 |
| Table 5: Ridgefield Center: Governor Street to Prospect Street Recommendations | 42 |
| Table 6: Route 35/Route 116 (North Salem Road) Recommendations | 56 |
| Table 7: Copps Hill Area (From Grove Street to Copps Hill Road) Recommendations | 64 |
| Table 8: Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads to Route 7 Recommendations | 75 |
| Table 9: Route 35 Corridor Recommendations | 78 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure ES-1: Route 35 Corridor Traffic Improvement Plan Summary Map..... | ii |
| Figure 1: Existing Traffic Volumes (2003) | 10 |
| Figure 2: Intersections With Critical Movements | 18 |
| Figure 3: Improvement Plan - New York State Line to Route 33 | 24 |
| Figure 4: Improvement Plan - New York State Line to Route 33 | 25 |
| Figure 5: Options for Intersection of Route 35 with Route 33 | 31 |
| Figure 6: Improvement Plan - Route 35 at Route 33 | 32 |
| Figure 7: Curb Cut Plan - Route 35 at Route 33 | 33 |
| Figure 8: Improvement Plan - Route 33 to Governor Street | 37 |
| Figure 9: Improvement Plan - Ridgefield Center | 45 |
| Figure 10: Improvement Plan - Ridgefield Center | 46 |
| Figure 11: Parking Plan - Ridgefield Center | 47 |
| Figure 12: Parking Plan - Ridgefield Center | 48 |
| Figure 13: Curb Cut Plan - Ridgefield Center | 49 |
| Figure 14: Curb Cut Plan - Ridgefield Center | 50 |
| Figure 15: Curb Cut Plan - Prospect Street to Route 116 | 53 |
| Figure 16: Improvement Plan - Route 35 at Route 116 | 58 |
| Figure 17: Curb Cut Plan - Route 35 at Route 116 | 59 |
| Figure 18: Improvement Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads..... | 66 |
| Figure 19: Improvement Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads..... | 67 |
| Figure 20: Improvement Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads..... | 68 |
| Figure 21: Curb Cut Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hills/Farmingville Roads | 69 |
| Figure 22: Curb Cut Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads | 70 |
| Figure 23: Curb Cut Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads | 71 |
| Figure 24: Curb Cut Plan - Route 116 to Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads | 72 |
| Figure 25: Improvement Plan - Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads to Route 7..... | 76 |

APPENDICES

(Separate Document)

Appendix A: Lane Geometry
Appendix B: Traffic Flow Analysis Details
Appendix C: Article on Modern Roundabouts
Appendix D: Signal Warrant Analysis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An analysis and evaluation of existing and future traffic operations was conducted along the Route 35 corridor in Ridgefield, Connecticut between the New York state line and Route 7 in Connecticut. Route 35 is a two-lane state roadway that serves local traffic as well as traffic passing through town.

The purpose of the Route 35 corridor study was to improve safety, traffic flow, and roadway conditions while maintaining the character of this historic corridor which is rich in aesthetic features. This *Route 35 Traffic Improvement Plan* documents conditions in the corridor and presents recommended strategies to achieve the project goals.

The Route 35 Traffic Improvement Plan was prepared by Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. for the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials. Funding was provided through the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), HVCEO, and the Town of Ridgefield.

A study advisory committee referred to as the Project Technical Committee (PTC) was established to guide and oversee the development of the improvement plan. The PTC's role was to represent the community in the identification of corridor issues and the evaluation of improvement options.

The input of the PTC was just one of the components of a coordinated community involvement process for the study. The other components included three public meetings, three project newsletters, and development of a project website. The three public meetings were held to receive input from Ridgefield citizens on the corridor issues and solutions. The newsletters provided information to the public regarding the status and findings of the study and were distributed prior to each public meeting. The project website was also a useful tool, providing project news and updates that were easily accessible through two web links, www.hvceo.org and www.ridgefieldct.org. The final report is also posted on the project website.

Alternative improvement strategies were identified through technical analysis, as well as discussions with the PTC and many Ridgefield citizens. These alternative strategies were then evaluated technically in order to define their potential impacts and benefits. Upon completion of the evaluation of the alternative strategies, the PTC worked with the study consultant team to select the strategies shown in Figure ES-1 to be recommended for implementation.

The project team also identified each improvement as either high priority, medium priority, or low priority. The lead agency and/or coordinating agency targeted to move the recommendation forward was also identified. Table ES-1 lists the improvements by priority classification and includes a planning level cost estimate for each improvement.

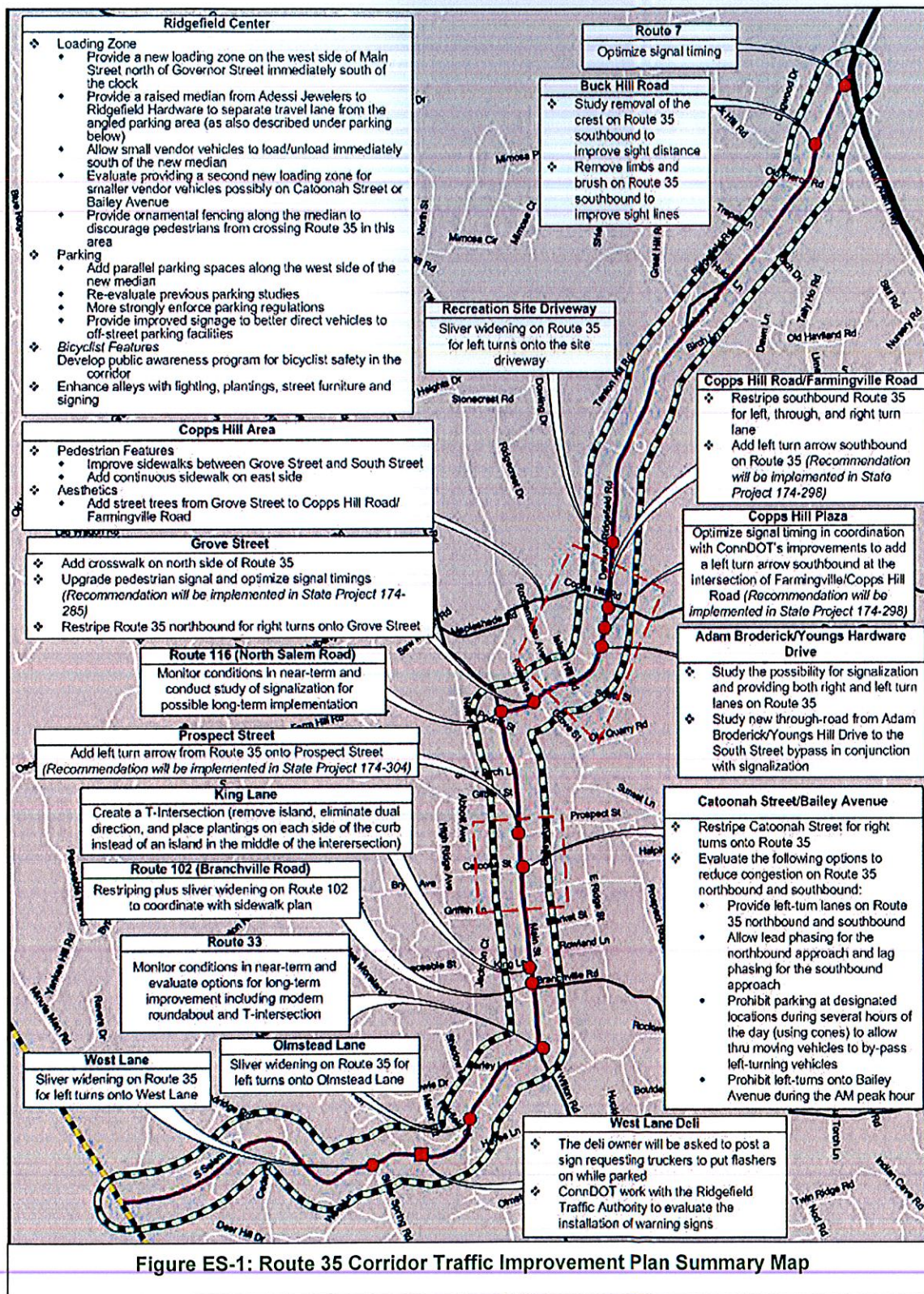


Figure ES-1: Route 35 Corridor Traffic Improvement Plan Summary Map

Table ES- 1: Route 35 Corridor Recommendations

| Location | Recommendations | Benefits | Lead Agency and/or Coordinating Agency | Estimated Cost |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|----------------|
| High Priority | | | | |
| West Lane | Sliver widening on Route 35 for left turns onto West Lane | > Provides additional pavement space for vehicles on Route 35 to by-pass to the right of the vehicle turning left onto West Lane for Route 35 > Reduces delay for through moving vehicles on Route 35 | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$25,000 |
| West Lane Deli | The deli owner will be asked to post a sign requesting truckers to put flashers on while parked | Increases awareness and visibility of parked vehicles thereby improving safety | Town | \$50 |
| West Lane Deli | ConnDOT work with the Ridgefield Traffic Authority to evaluate the installation of warning signs. | Increases awareness and visibility of parked vehicles thereby improving safety | Town/ConnDOT | \$5,000 |
| Route 102 (Branchville Road) | Restriping plus sliver widening on Route 102 to coordinate with sidewalk plan | Reduces delay for vehicles turning onto Route 35 | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$51,000 |
| Loading Zone - Ridgefield Center | > Provide a new loading zone on the west side of Main Street north of Governor Street immediately south of the clock > Provide a raised median from Adessi Jewelers to Ridgefield Hardware to separate travel lane from the angled parking area (as also descri > Provide ornamental fencing along the median to discourage pedestrians from crossing Route 35 in this area > Allow small vendor vehicles to load/unload immediately south of the new median > Evaluate providing a second new loading zone for smaller vendor | > Improves safety, reduces accident potential, and reduces driver confusion > Also improves aesthetic quality at this end of Main Street | Town/HVCEO /ConnDOT | \$102,000 |
| Parking - Ridgefield Center | > Provide a raised median from Adessi Jewelers to Ridgefield Hardware to separate travel lane from the angled parking (See above) > Add parallel parking spaces along the west side of the new median | > Increases the number of on-street parking spaces in Ridgefield Center > Improves safety, reduces accident potential, and reduces driver confusion > Also improves aesthetic quality at this end of Main Street | Town/HVCEO/ ConnDOT | \$17,000 |
| Parking - Ridgefield Center | Re-evaluate previous parking studies to move toward the goal of providing more off-street parking spaces | Long term parking management in support of economic stability of Ridgefield Center | Chamber of Commerce/Town | \$10,000 |
| Parking - Ridgefield Center | > More strongly enforce parking regulations > Provide improved signage to better direct vehicles to off-street parking facilities | > Maximizes use of Ridgefield Center parking which in turn improves patron access to local businesses > Maximizes efficient use of available Ridgefield Center parking which in turn supports economic stability of local businesses | Town | \$500 |
| Catoonah Street/Bailey Avenue | > Restripe Catoonah Street for right turns onto Route 35 > Evaluate the following options to reduce congestion on Route 35 northbound and southbound: (1) Provide left-turn lanes on Route 35 northbound and southbound (2) Allow lead phasing for the no | > Reduces delay on Catoonah St > Reduces delay on Route 35 | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$6,500 |

Table ES- 1: Route 35 Corridor Recommendations (continued)

| Location | Recommendations | Benefits | Lead Agency and/or Coordinating Agency | Estimated Cost |
|---|---|---|--|----------------|
| High Priority (continued) | | | | |
| Alley between Governor Street and Prospect Street | Enhance alleys with lighting, plantings, street furniture, and signing to direct pedestrians and vehicles to rear-lot properties and businesses | Improves pedestrian safety and enhances attractiveness of Ridgefield Center as shopping and tourist destination | Chamber of Commerce/Town | \$34,000 |
| Route 116 (North Salem Road) | Monitor conditions in near-term and re-evaluate potential for signalization in the long-term | > Maintain current character until the need for action becomes more pronounced > Signalization would reduce driver confusion and reduce congestion and delay | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$5,000 |
| Prospect Street | Add left turn arrow from Route 35 onto Prospect Street (Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-304.) | Reduces congestion and delay | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | N/A |
| Grove Street | > Add crosswalk on north side on Route 35 > Upgrade pedestrian signal and optimize signal timings (Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-285.) > Restripe Route 35 northbound for right turns onto Grove Street | > Reduces jaywalking and improves pedestrian safety > Improves pedestrian safety and traffic operations > Reduces delay on Route 35 | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$4,000 |
| Copps Hill Area | Improve sidewalks between Grove Street and South Street | Improves pedestrian facility connectivity and circulation | Town | \$20,000 |
| Copps Hill Plaza | Optimize signal timing in coordination with ConnDOT's improvements to add a left turn arrow southbound at the intersection of Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road (Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-298.) | Reduces delay | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | N/A |
| Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road | Add left turn arrow southbound on Route 35 (Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-298.) | Reduces delay and congestion | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | N/A |
| Recreation Site Driveway | Sliver widening on Route 35 | > Provides additional pavement space for vehicles on Route 35 to by-pass to the right of the vehicle turning left onto the recreation site driveway for Route 35 > Reduces delay for through moving vehicles on Route 35 | Town/HVCEO | \$38,000 |
| Buck Hill Road | > Study removal of the crest on Route 35 southbound to improve sight distance > Remove limbs and brush on Route 35 southbound to improve sight lines | Improves sight distance thus reduces accident potential | ConnDOT/Town | \$35,000 |
| Medium Priority | | | | |
| Adam Broderick/Youngs Hardware Drive | > Study the possibility of signalization > Study new through-road from Adam Broderick/Youngs Hill Drive to the South Street bypass in conjunction with signalization | Reduces delay and congestion | ConnDOT/Town | \$20,000 |
| Adam Broderick/Youngs Hardware Drive | Provide both right and left turn lanes on Route 35 at Youngs Hardware/commercial drive | Separates turning movements from through movements on Route 35 to reduce delay for through moving vehicles | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$3,000 |
| Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road | Restripe southbound Route 35 for left, through, and right turn lane | Provides turning lane and reduces delay and congestion | Town/ConnDOT | \$2,000 |
| Route 7 | Optimize signal timing | Reduces delay and congestion | Town/ConnDOT | \$9,000 |
| Low Priority | | | | |
| Bicyclist Features | Develop public awareness program of bicyclist safety in the corridor | Promotes cyclist safety and raises profile of cycling as an activity in the corridor | Town | \$30,000 |
| Olmstead Lane | Sliver widening on Route 35 for left turns onto Olmstead Lane | > Provides additional pavement space for vehicles on Route 35 to by-pass to the right of the vehicle turning left onto Olmstead Lane > Reduces delay for through moving vehicles on Route 35 | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$65,000 |
| Route 33 | Monitor conditions in near-term and evaluate options for long-term improvement including modern roundabout and T-intersection | > Modern roundabout would provide continuous flow through intersection and provide aesthetic gateway to Ridgefield > Both options could reduce driver confusion and reduce congestion on west legs | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$15,000 |
| King Lane | Modify to a T-Intersection (remove island), eliminate dual direction, and place plantings on each side of the curb instead of an island in the middle of the intersection) | > Reduces conflict points > Reduces driver confusion > Improves ease of turning for trucks | Town/HVCEO ConnDOT | \$14,500 |
| Copps Hill Area | > Add continuous sidewalk on east side > Add street trees from Grove Street to Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road | > Improves pedestrian circulation and safety > Reduces crossing demand to sidewalk on west side > Minimizes vehicle and pedestrian conflict > Extends character of Town Center into Copps Hill Area > Provides traffic calming effect | Town | \$54,000 |
| TOTAL | | | | \$565,550 |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Study Overview

The Route 35 Corridor Study was conducted to develop recommendations for the future improvement of this state roadway through Ridgefield, Connecticut. Route 35 is a two-lane roadway serving local traffic as well as traffic passing through town. The purpose of this Route 35 corridor study was to improve safety, traffic flow and roadway conditions while maintaining the character of this historic corridor which is rich in aesthetic features.

The study corridor extends approximately six miles along Route 35 in Ridgefield, between the New York state line and Route 7. The study included an analysis and evaluation of existing and future traffic operations, an active public involvement process, and development of recommended improvements. This *Route 35 Traffic Improvement Plan* documents conditions, issues, and opportunities in the corridor and presents recommended actions to achieve the project goals.

For the purposes of clearly presenting a wide range of proposed actions for the Route 35 study corridor, the corridor has been subdivided into eight logical segments in a south to north direction. Each segment is characterized by a localized development pattern and traffic characteristics. The following sections of this report discuss existing conditions, issues, and opportunities for roadway operations, and recommended future improvements for each corridor segment.

The discussion of existing conditions is a synopsis of key segment features including land use, roadway characteristics, traffic operations, transit service, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and notable historic and environmental resources. The presentation of recommended improvement actions includes not only options for roadway improvements, but opportunities for improved pedestrian and bicycle access as well as access management.

Access management is the process of managing the location, number, and design of driveways and cross streets along a roadway. Access management helps improve roadway safety and preserves roadway capacity by minimizing the number of potential vehicle conflict points and interruptions to traffic flow.

Tools that can be used to achieve access management include zoning regulations, a curb-cut plan, and physical changes to roadway design, such as medians and turn lanes. This report is supplemented by a separate curb-cut plan. A curb-cut plan is a conceptual arrangement of driveways for a roadway or roadway segment indicating the community's idea of the ideal layout for access points along that roadway.

Generally, a curb-cut plan is created for a roadway segment that has a need for improved access design and is in an area where future development and/or traffic

pressures are likely to occur. While the *Route 35 Curb-cut Plan* is a freestanding document, the curb-cut recommendations for each segment of the corridor are also included in this Traffic Improvement Plan.

1.2. Background

Route 35 serves as one of the primary roadways meeting diverse needs in the Housatonic Valley. The two-lane, six-mile state roadway is the main link between Ridgefield and Danbury. Route 35 serves local traffic as well as traffic just passing through Ridgefield. The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) and the Town of Ridgefield have long recognized that planning for the future of this state highway is critical to serving growing travel needs while still preserving and protecting the rural and historic character of the area. A 1985 traffic study conducted for the Town of Ridgefield identified a series of recommendations, some of which have been implemented.

As communities experience increased traffic congestion and development pressures over time, the need to address roadway capacity, safety, traffic flow, and parking needs is critical. Therefore, HVCEO, in concert with the Town of Ridgefield, decided to update the 1985 study.

This current planning effort, which began in the late spring/early summer of 2003, has resulted in a set of recommendations which will guide state, regional and local officials in implementing transportation improvements along Route 35 in the coming years.

1.3. Community Involvement Process

In order for a plan to be useful, relevant and implementable, it must be home-grown, rather than imposed from outside a community. To this end, one of the most important aspects of this Route 35 planning effort was the community involvement program. The outreach program had four major components:

- 1) **Project Technical Committee (PTC):** A study advisory committee was established at the beginning of the planning process to guide and oversee the development of the improvement plan. The PTC consisted of 22 members, invited by the Town and HVCEO, representing town officials, regional and state representatives, local business owners, and Ridgefield residents. The PTC's role was to represent the community in the identification of corridor issues and the evaluation of the improvement options. A list of the PTC members is provided in Table 1. The PTC met five times during the course of the study, often meeting long hours to hash through various improvement alternatives and reach agreement on critical issues.
- 2) **Public Information Meetings:** Three public meetings were held during the course of the study. These were held on November 20, 2003, March 23, 2004

and January 31, 2005. At these meetings, the project team presented study progress and findings to date and encouraged feedback from participants.

- 3) Newsletters and Publicity: Three newsletters were prepared by the project team and distributed by the Town of Ridgefield. Each newsletter was distributed several weeks prior to each of the three public meetings to encourage interest in the project, publicize project findings, and promote attendance. Newspaper and radio spots were also sought to increase the publicity of the meetings, further encourage attendance, and share more information and perspective on the study and its goals.
- 4) Project Website: Finally, a project website, linked to both the Town's website and HVCEO's website was developed to provide project information to the public and announce meeting dates. The final report, including recommendations for each of the seven roadway segments can be viewed or downloaded from the website. The project website can be reached from either www.hvceo.org or www.ridgefieldct.org.

Table 1: Project Technical Committee Members

| | |
|---|--|
| Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials | Mr. Jonathan Chew, Director |
| Town of Ridgefield | Mr. Rudy Marconi, First Selectman Mr. Charles Fisher, Town Engineer Ms. Betty Brosius, Planning Director Mr. Peter Hill, Highway Superintendent |
| Connecticut Department of Transportation | Mr. Joseph Ouellette Ms. Kathryn Faraci Mr. Steve Martinsen |
| Planning and Zoning Commission | Ms. Rebecca Mucchetti Mr. James McChesney |
| Ridgefield Police Commission | Chief Richard Ligi Ms. Susan Craig Mr. John Roche |
| Chamber of Commerce | Mr. Larry Hoyt Ms. Betsy Weber |
| Copps Hill Common | Ms. Donna Metz |
| Parks & Recreation | Mr. Wayne H. Tinker |
| Downtown Ridgefield | Mr. Todd Rabin Mr. Simon Cooper |
| HART | Mr. Rick Schreiner |
| Ridgefield Design Council | Ms. Priscilla Holmes |
| Ridgefield Citizen | Mr. Peter Laqueur |

1.4. Goals & Objectives: Why Carry Out This Study?

Traffic congestion continues to grow throughout Connecticut, not just in Ridgefield. As population in a region grows, so too does development pressure. Everyone knows what can happen when development runs amok and the character of an area starts to disappear while safety and convenience evaporate. The Town of Ridgefield and HVCEO undertook this planning effort to think ahead about planning changes, so that the character of Ridgefield can be preserved while still trying to make the necessary accommodation for travel by both local residents and business patrons as well as Route 35 through traffic.

The difficult task in this study, and along so many similar corridors throughout Connecticut, is that Route 35 must serve two purposes which are not always mutually supportive. As a state roadway, owned and maintained by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, it must be able to convey through traffic safely and efficiently, while as the Main Street and vital travel "spine" of Ridgefield, it must provide access to town businesses and residents. It is along Route 35 that many travelers get their first impression of the Town of Ridgefield, making it important that the corridor show off the Town to its best advantage.

The goal for this study, defined early in the planning process was as follows:

"To optimize the function of Route 35 through Ridgefield as both a local "main street" and a state roadway and to manage the future development of the corridor through improvements that optimize safety, recognize the land use/transportation interface, and encompass context sensitive solutions which maintain or enhance the character of the corridor."

A series of objectives were identified subordinate to that goal relating to safety, land use development, preservation of visual character, traffic flow, and accommodation of alternative modes.

1.5. Planning Process

The study process for this corridor followed a prescribed set of steps germane to any planning effort:

- Determine the goal of the study
- Collect and analyze data
- Identify issues, problems and opportunities
- Propose a series of possible alternative solutions
- Evaluate those solutions
- Recommend a course of action

The study team collected an extensive amount of traffic flow and operational data during the late spring and early summer of 2003, including a small origin-destination survey to ascertain the amount of "local" versus "through" travel in the corridor. This information served as the basis for the identification of issues in the corridor and potential alternatives to address those issues.

The planning process is not linear, however. Throughout this study, input from the community was obtained and fed back into the process to inform each of the steps in process, and steps were repeated or refined as necessary. The recommendations resulting from this iterative process are laid out in the following sections of this report. Each proposed recommendation is discussed in terms of the identified issues and opportunities, the alternatives that were discussed for that location, if any, and the recommendations that resulted from the collaborative process.

The effort during the PTC discussions was to reach consensus on recommended alternatives based on all of the information, technical analysis, and community input gathered. It must be noted, however, that for some segments of the study corridor, no full consensus was reached. In those instances, some recommendations are offered as a series of alternative solutions to be examined in more depth with more detailed site-specific design studies in the future as the need for action at those locations becomes greater. One of these options, discussed in additional depth below, was the modern roundabout.

1.6. The Modern Roundabout

Although most of us are familiar with stop signs, traffic signals, and other conventional means of intersection control, it is appropriate here to mention the modern roundabout, as several were evaluated as part of this traffic improvement plan.

The modern roundabout is largely misunderstood by the American public, but is widely used in many other countries with great success. The modern roundabout has consistently demonstrated its ability to handle traffic more efficiently and more safely than traffic signals in certain situations, as it keeps traffic flowing, forces traffic to slow down, and minimizes vehicle conflict points as drivers have to look in only one direction when entering the intersection.

Crashes that do occur are typically less severe than at signalized intersections with less property damage and personal injury. It is also safer for pedestrians as they cross the roadway at narrower points and have to look in only one direction at a time. However, ConnDOT has commented that studies suggest that visually impaired pedestrians have difficulty negotiating the crossings of roundabouts and are opposed to their use in areas of high pedestrian activity. High pedestrian activity may cause the roundabout to break down as yielding traffic can back up into the roundabout.

The modern roundabout is rapidly gaining favor in the U.S. and many are being constructed. Many state departments of transportation in the U.S. which had previously

refrained from using roundabout solutions to intersection issues are now looking more favorably on the modern roundabout and are developing guidelines and protocols for their use. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration has recently produced a manual for the use of roundabouts entitled "*Roundabouts: An Informational Guide*" (USDOT, FHWA, June 2000).

For more information about the modern roundabout, see Appendix C for the reprint of an article entitled "Common Misperceptions about Modern Roundabouts" reprinted from the American Planning Association's Transportation Planning Division newsletter.

1.7 Curb-Cut Management Planning

A Curb-Cut Plan is a conceptual arrangement of driveways for a roadway or roadway segment indicating the community's idea of the ideal layout for access points along that roadway. It is presented in a similar fashion to a site plan for future development. Generally, a Curb-Cut Plan is created for a roadway segment that has a need for improved access design and is in an area where future development pressures are likely to occur. A Curb Cut Plan is primarily a tool for use by a Planning and Zoning Commission when considering applications for changes in land use, redevelopment of properties, or increases in intensity of existing uses.

The purpose of the Route 35 Curb Cut Plan is to offer recommendations for long-term changes to the existing arrangement of driveways along the segment of Route 35 from Farmingville Road to Route 33. The Curb Cut Plan also offers recommendations for suitable locations of new driveways to serve currently undeveloped properties. The purpose of changing the location and design of driveways along Route 35 is to reduce the potential for unsafe vehicle movements on and off the road, thus reducing or improving potential points of conflict. Improvements to the arrangement of driveways along Route 35 can also help limit stop-and-go traffic and better preserve the capacity of the road to handle existing and future volumes of traffic.

It is intended that applicants for zoning approval whose property falls within the geographic area covered by the Curb Cut Plan will consult the plan as they prepare site layouts for development. In addition, it is intended that the Planning and Zoning Commission use the recommendations shown on the Curb Cut Plan as a guide to making decisions about the adequacy of driveway configurations shown on site development applications made to them during the course of the formal zoning process. *Therefore, the changes to driveway configuration recommended on the Route 35 Curb Cut Plan will take place as part of and in the course of new development or redevelopment of properties along Route 35, rather than as a distinct and separate set of actions.*

The recommended changes to the arrangement of driveways and accessways shown on the Route 35 Curb Cut Plan were based on a specific list of design criteria. These criteria focus on improving the safety of vehicle movements as well as the safest

possible interaction of vehicles and pedestrians. The design criteria were developed based on nationally recognized access management design publications, professional judgment, and as a consolidation and consideration of standards for curb-cut design that are articulated in the following local documents:

- Ridgefield subdivision regulations
- Ridgefield zoning regulations
- Ridgefield Code – Chapter 13, Article V: Construction standards for streets
- Connecticut State Highway encroachment permit requirements
- Route 7 Corridor Driveway and Access Management Plan (HVCEO/Urbitran, September 1996)
- Ridgefield Center Traffic Study (WSA, 1985)

2.0 CORRIDOR CONDITIONS

Route 35 serves as one of the primary roadways meeting diverse needs in the Housatonic Valley. The two-lane, six-mile state roadway is the main link between Ridgefield and Danbury. Route 35 serves local traffic as well as traffic just passing through Ridgefield.

For the purposes of clearly presenting a wide range of proposed actions for this study, the corridor has been divided into eight logical segments in a south to north direction. Each segment is characterized by a localized development pattern and traffic characteristics. This report discusses existing conditions, issues, and opportunities for roadway operations, and recommended future improvements in the subsequent chapters for the segments listed below:

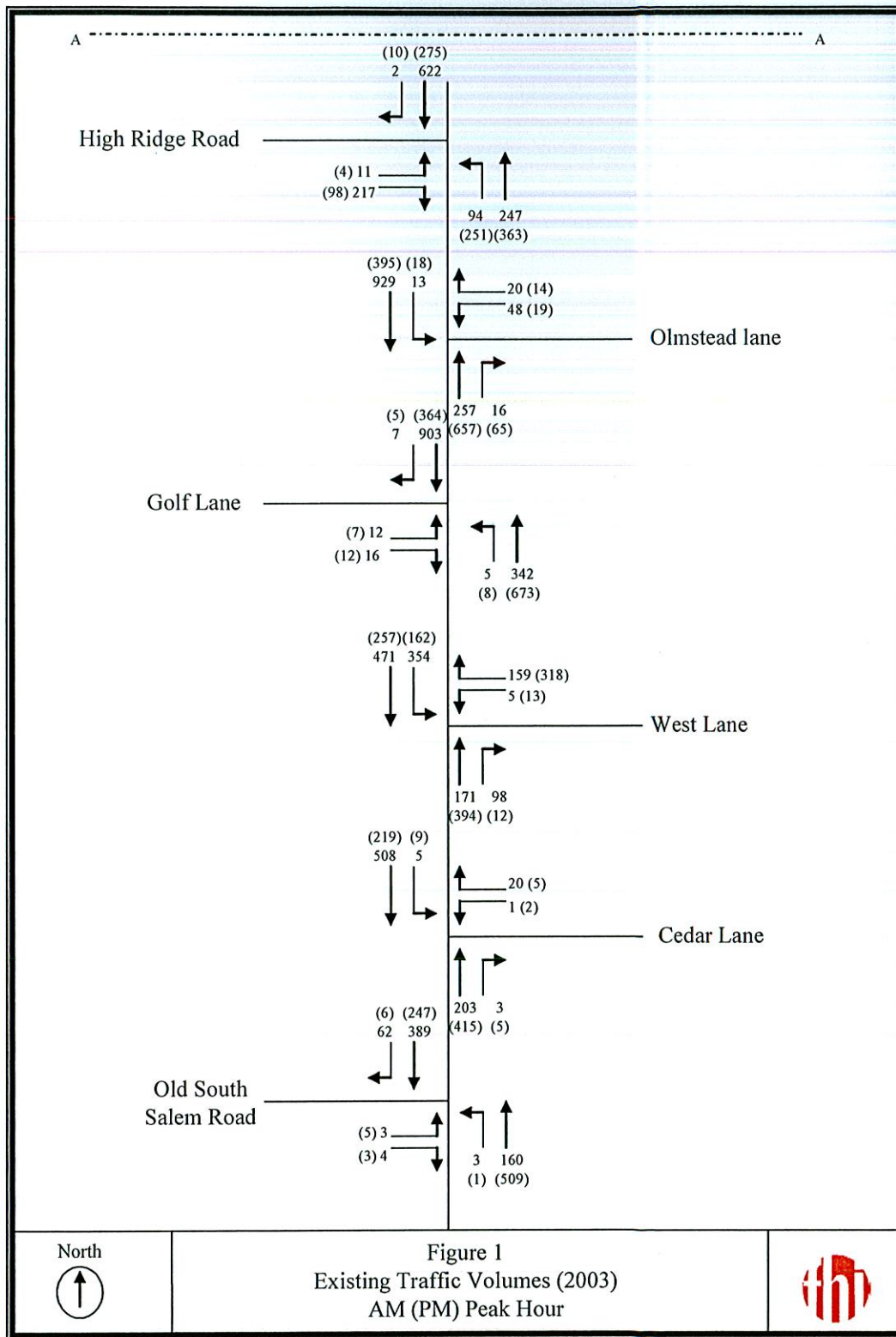
- New York State Line to Route 33
- Route 35/Route 33 Intersection
- Route 33 to Governor Street
- Ridgefield Center
- Prospect Street to Route 116
- Route 35/Route 116 Intersection
- Route 116 to Copps Hill /Farmingville Roads (Copps Hill Area)
- Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road to Route 7

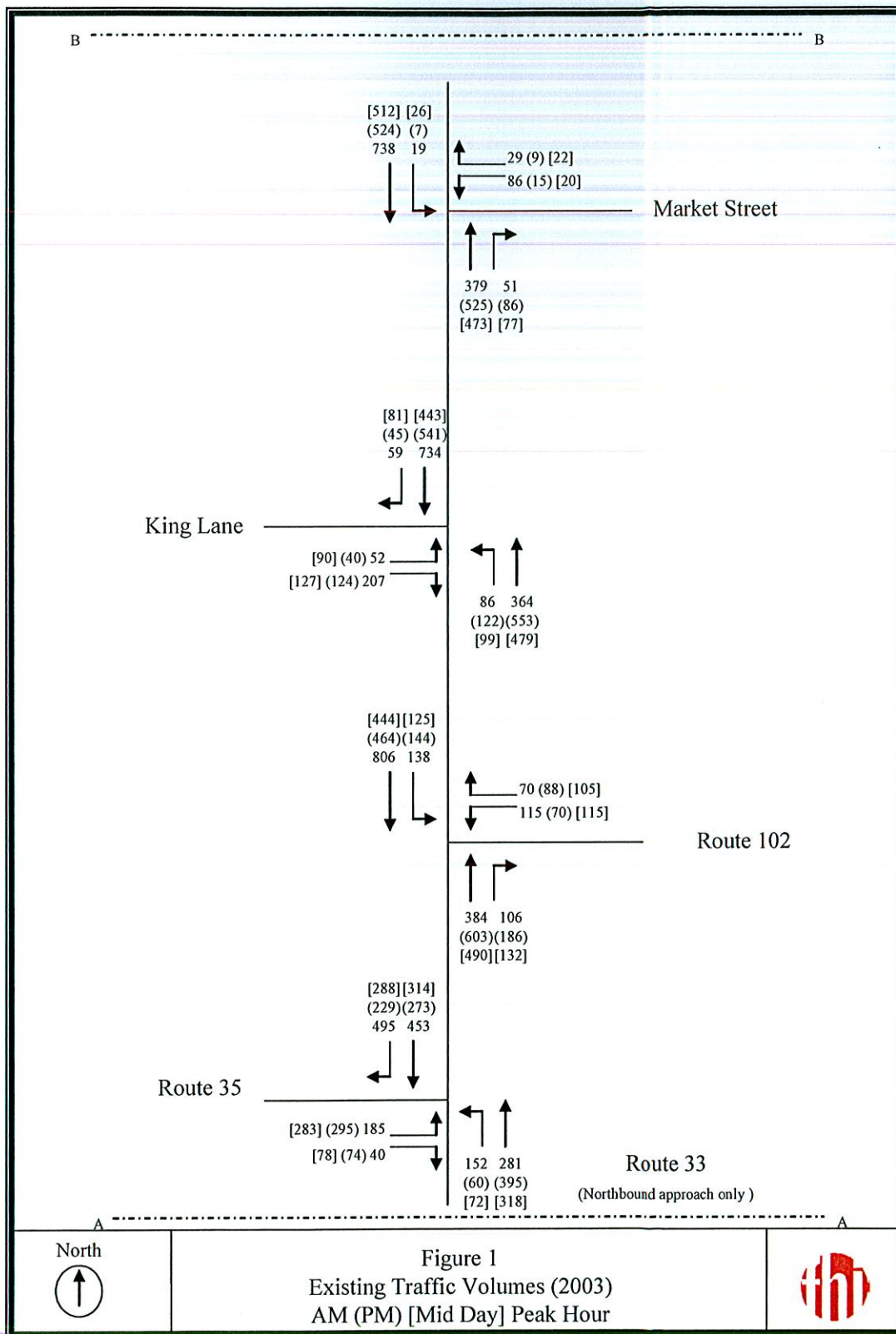
2.1 Existing Traffic Volumes

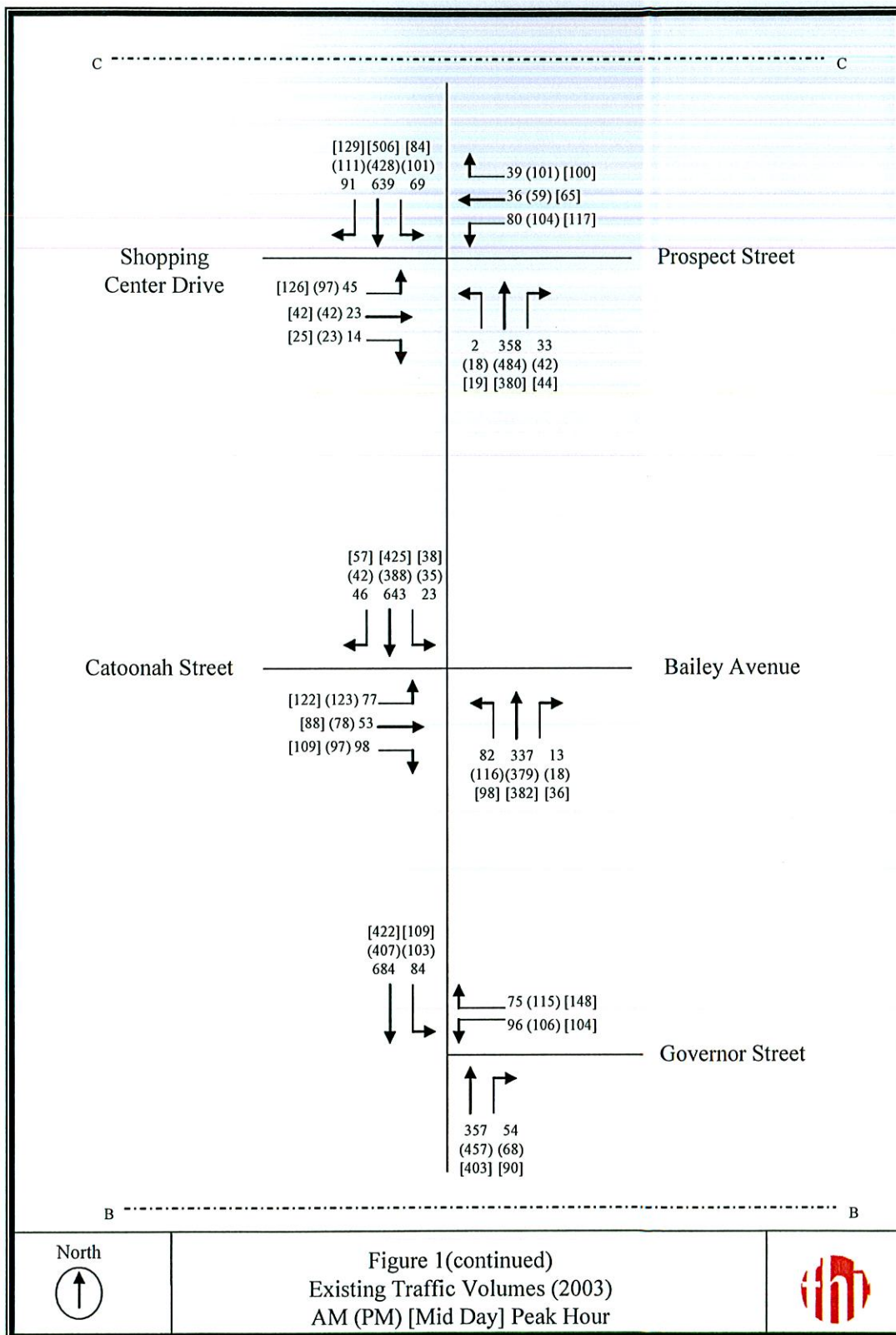
Traffic volume counts were collected in late spring of 2003 within the corridor study area as part of the effort to understand and assess traffic operations along the corridor and at key intersections. These included automatic traffic recorder (ATR) counts that represent a daily traffic volume on a section of road and peak hour turning movement counts that provide information about specific turn movements at an intersection.

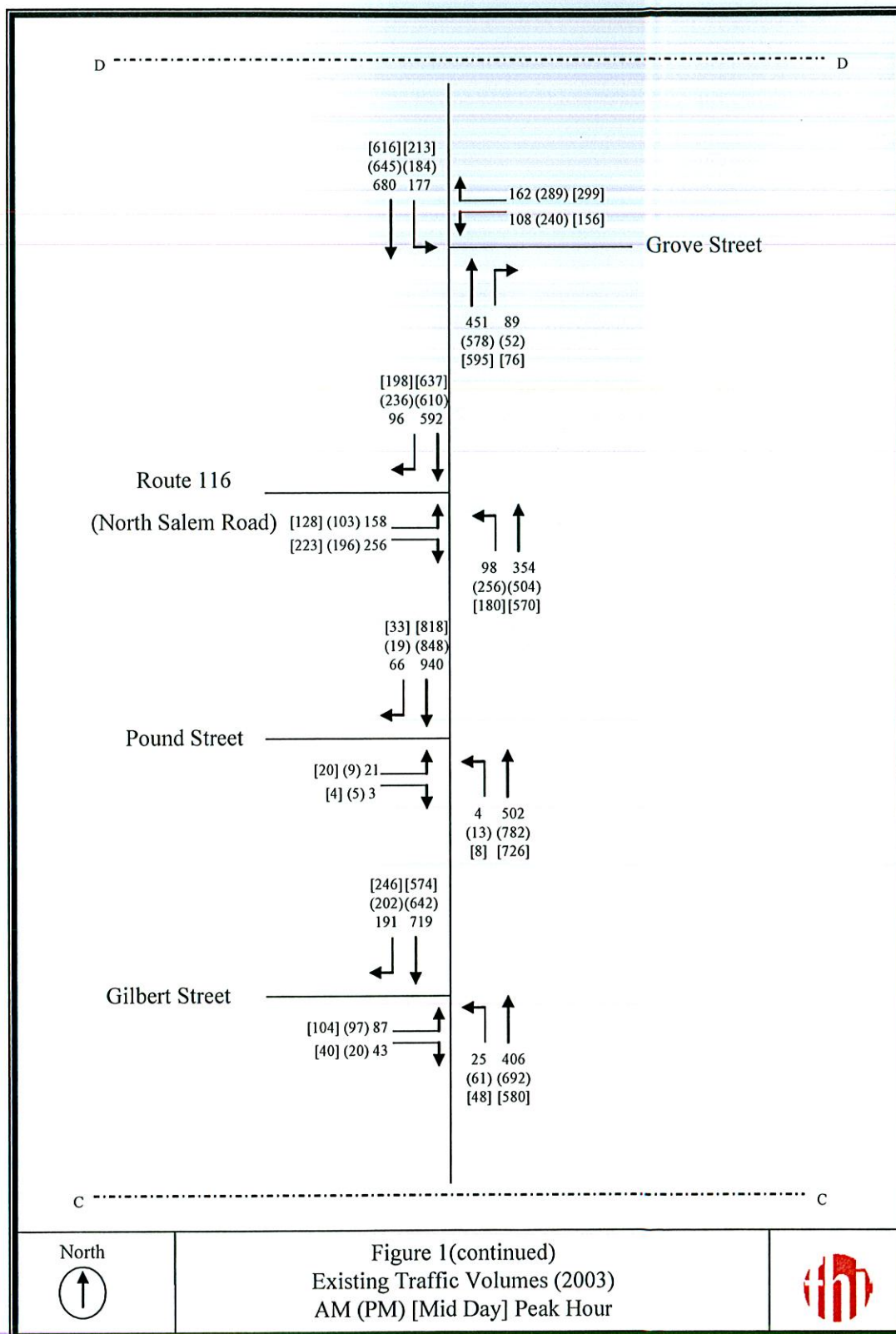
Automatic traffic recorder (ATR) counts were collected at three locations along the corridor: south of Prospect Street, south of Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road, and south of Route 7. Daily traffic volumes along the corridor range from 10,500 to 14,300 vehicles per day (vpd). The ATR counts indicate a relatively even directional split (the ratio of volume of traffic traveling northbound versus volume of traffic traveling southbound).

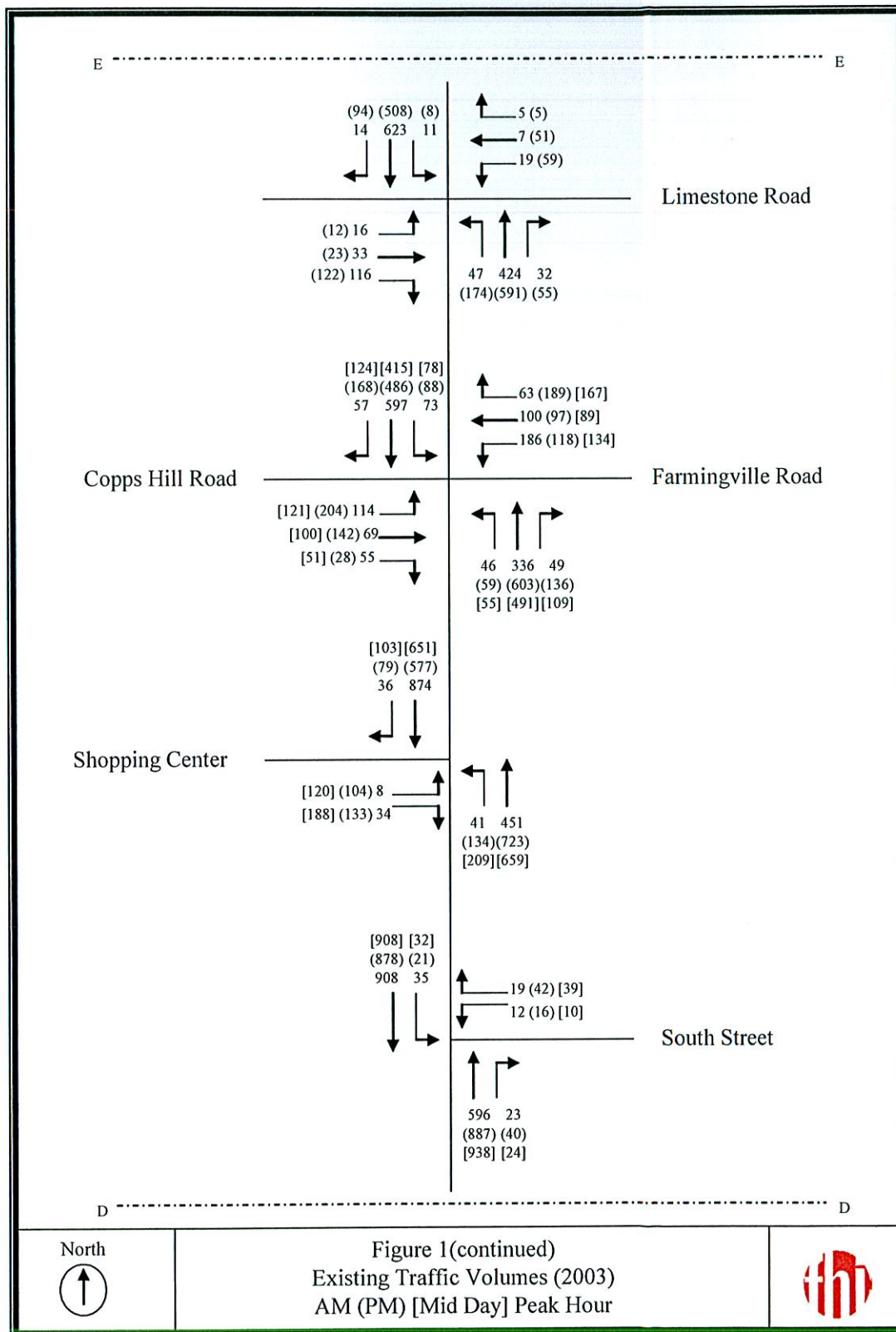
Peak hour turning movement count (TMC) data was collected at twenty-four intersections along the corridor during the weekday morning and afternoon peak period. TMC data was also collected during the Saturday mid day peak period between Ridgefield Center and the Copps Hill area. Figure 1 shows the existing peak hour TMC data.

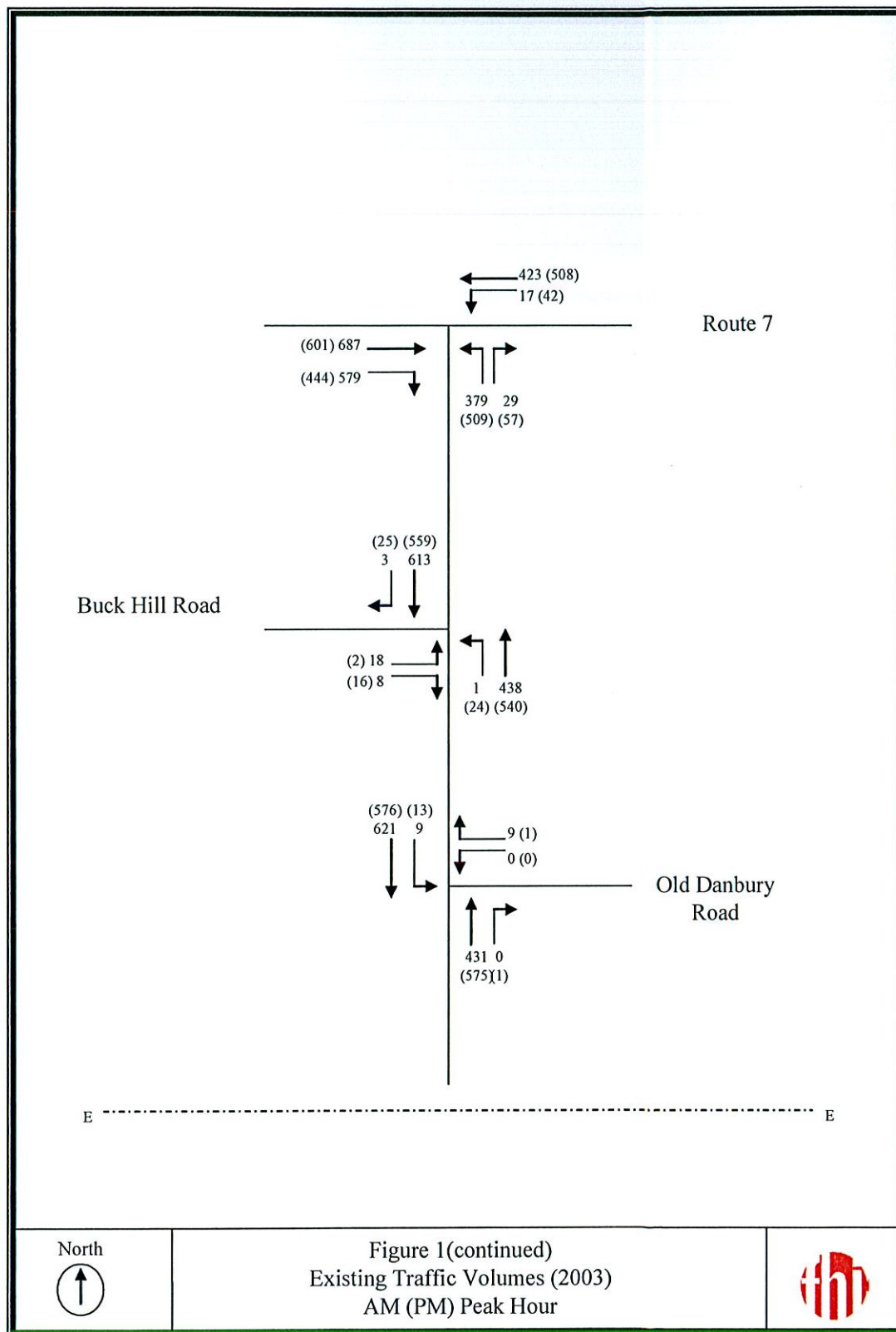












From review of the traffic data, the segments of Route 35 in the Copps Hill Area and Ridgefield Center are the concentrated areas of high traffic volumes and consequently are the most congested areas along the corridor.

The highest traffic volumes on Route 35 during the AM, PM, and Saturday peak hours were recorded in the Copps Hill Area between South Street and Copps Hill Shopping Center entrance. There were 1,435 vehicles (492 northbound and 943 southbound) recorded during the AM peak hour, 1,756 vehicles (857 northbound and 899 southbound) during the PM peak hour, and 1,808 vehicles (868 northbound, 940 southbound) during the Saturday mid day peak hour. The lowest traffic volumes were recorded at the southern end of the corridor just north of the New York state line with 556 vehicles (163 northbound and 393 southbound) recorded during the AM peak hour and 760 vehicles (510 northbound and 250 southbound) during the PM peak hour.

2.2 Capacity Analysis

Capacity analyses were performed to determine how roadway segments or intersections in the study corridor are operating. A capacity analysis generally provides one or two important pieces of information: a volume to capacity (v/c) ratio and/or a level of service (LOS). Volume represents the travel demand and capacity represents the amount of traffic the roadway or facility can accommodate under prevailing conditions. Thus, the v/c ratio for a roadway segment is a reflection of how the facility is accommodating the demand. Volume to capacity ratios that approach or exceed 1.0 indicate traffic congestion or poor operating conditions. The level of service (LOS) at an intersection divides the range of intersection operations into six letter grades, ranging from A to F, with A being the best and F the worst.

For intersections, the difference between the LOS grades reflects the amount of delay experienced by a motorist. LOS A describes operations with little or no delay. At LOS D, the influence of traffic congestion becomes more noticeable and is considered to be the greatest acceptable level of delay. At LOS E and LOS F delays are substantial. Intersection capacity analyses (LOS and v/c ratios) were performed at the 24 corridor study intersections for the AM, PM, and Saturday peak hours.

Intersection operation analyses were performed for the three peak hours (weekday AM and PM, and Saturday mid day) for the twenty-four intersections in the study area. Results from the analysis indicate that sixteen of the twenty-four (67%) intersections have one or more turning or through movements that operate at LOS E or LOS F during the AM, PM or Saturday mid day peak period, as shown in Figure 2. Though a turning or through movement operates at LOS E or F, it is possible that the overall intersection operates at a better LOS.

2.3 Future Traffic Conditions

Intersection operation analyses were also conducted to evaluate the effects of traffic growth on the transportation system expected by 2025. A review of the historical traffic

volume data indicates that a one percent (1%) growth rate per year is a reasonable assumption. In general, an intersection having a poor LOS under existing conditions will continue to function poorly or will deteriorate further if additional demand from future growth is added and if no improvements are made to the roadway, such as lane additions, restriping pavement, etc.

Results from the analyses indicate that twenty-one of the twenty-four (88%) intersections will have one or more critical movements that operate at LOS E or LOS F during the AM, PM or Saturday mid day peak period, also shown in Figure 2. In summary, traffic on the Route 35 corridor is expected to increase resulting in increased congestion and delay if roadway improvements are not implemented.

● Fail in existing (2003) & future condition (2025)
 ● Fail in future condition (2025)

2.4 Origin Destination Survey

On Tuesday, June 17th, 2003, an origin-destination (O-D) survey was carried out along Route 35 in Ridgefield. Survey cards were passed out to drivers at the intersection of Route 35 with Governor Street in the southbound direction during the AM, mid day, and PM peak periods. Drivers were asked to either return the survey card by mail or go online to the project website to respond.

The purpose of this survey was to obtain some empiric travel data from people traveling along Route 35 on a typical weekday. Information obtained from the surveys would help determine the percentage of through traffic on the Route 35 corridor as well as information relating to trip purpose and trip frequency.

Survey results indicated that the majority of traffic passing the survey point was "local" traffic as opposed to "through" traffic. Local traffic is defined as trips having one or both trip ends within the study area, while "through" traffic is defined as traffic which has neither trip end in the study area, but is just passing through. Of the total vehicles surveyed, 81% either began or ended their trip in Ridgefield and are thus considered local traffic. The remaining surveyed vehicles (19%) are considered to be through traffic.

Responses to the survey questions also provided information such as the city/town of the start and end of the trip, purpose of the trip, how often they traveled on Route 35, and the number of persons in the vehicle.



An O&D study was conducted to determine the amount of "local" versus "through" travel

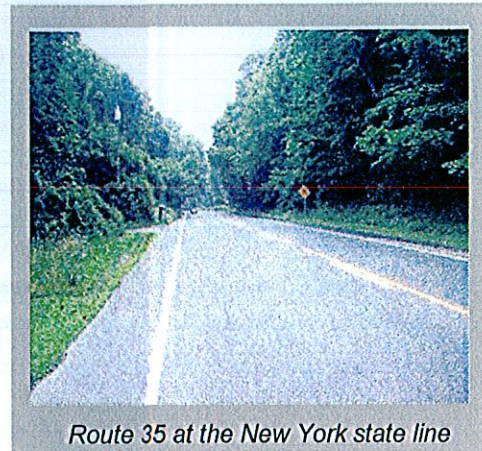
Summary of Origin and Destination Survey

- 19% of trips are thru trips
- 81% of trips start and/or end in Ridgefield
 - Ridgefield to Ridgefield (51%)
 - Ridgefield to Other (39%)
 - Other to Ridgefield (10%)
- 84% travel Route 35 daily
- Work related trips
 - 87% of AM
 - 31% of Mid day
 - 29% of PM
- 80% single occupancy

3.0 NEW YORK STATE LINE TO ROUTE 33

3.1 Existing Conditions

State Route 35 begins at the Ridgefield-New York state line and extends northeasterly to its terminus at Route 7. The section of Route 35 from the New York state line to Route 33 can be described as a rural area with scenic views and characterized by single family homes on large lots, affluent neighborhoods, a bed and breakfast inn, and a deli (West Lane Deli). The West Lane School located at Route 35 and West Lane is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Transportation Features

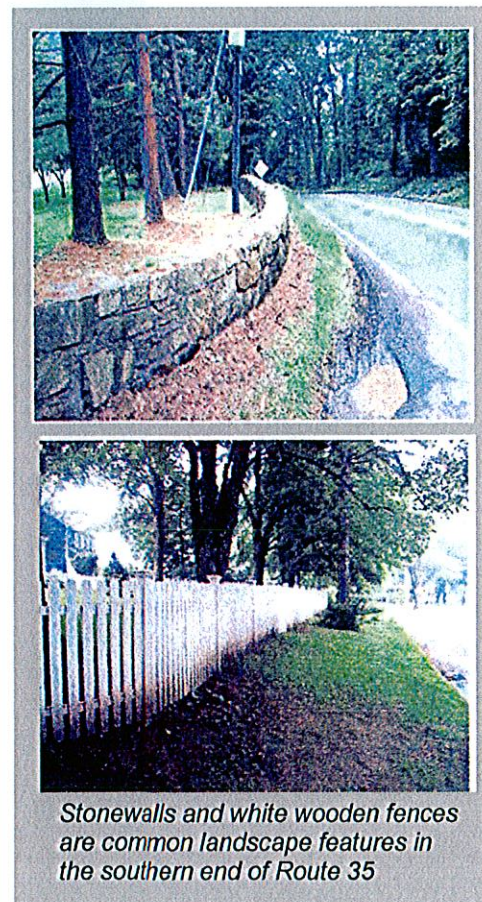
Route 35 in this section has horizontal and vertical curves and shoulder widths ranging from 1 to 6 feet. The most common road edge features are low stonewalls and white wooden fences. Cross streets along this section of Route 35 provide access to homes and neighborhoods. These cross streets are unsignalized and are stop sign controlled. As part of this study, the six intersections listed below were evaluated. The lane configuration for this segment of Route 35 can be seen in Appendix A.

- Old South Salem Road
- Cedar Lane
- West Lane
- Golf Lane
- Olmstead Lane
- High Ridge Avenue

3.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

The main traffic flow issue along this section of the corridor is relatively long delay for vehicles entering Route 35 from the cross streets during peak travel periods. With the current volumes on Route 35, it can be difficult for cross street exiting vehicles to find sufficient gaps both in the northbound and southbound direction to make left turns onto Route 35.



Vehicles entering Route 35 from Olmstead Lane currently experience a long delay (LOS E or F) during the morning peak period. In the future, as traffic volumes increase (approximately 1% per year), vehicles entering Route 35 from Golf Lane and High Ridge Road during the morning peak will also experience a long delay (LOS E or F), as will vehicles entering Route 35 from West Lane during the evening peak period. Additional detailed traffic analysis information is provided in Appendix B.

Left turns from Route 35 to cross streets also impede travel, resulting in increased congestion and delays for vehicles on Route 35 as they either stop to wait for a turning vehicle or try to by-pass to the right of the left-turning vehicle.

Parking

Existing parking for the West Lane deli is only permitted along the business' lot frontage on Route 35. On-street parking has been prohibited along the opposite, north side of Route 35 by the Town and the State Traffic Commission for safety reasons, to prevent patrons crossing Route 35 to get to the deli. However, the amount of parking area that is legally available to deli patrons is not sufficient to meet the demand during peak business hours, particularly the weekday lunch hour. In addition, there are no defined parking spaces in the area generally used for deli parking, and, as a result, vehicles are parked haphazardly. Some patrons actually park facing northbound traffic, creating potential safety concerns. Off-street parking is limited as well, as access to the rear of the deli is restricted to a narrow driveway which essentially forces patrons to park on-street in front of the deli and adjacent properties.

The parking congestion is further aggravated by the limited sight distance along Route 35 northbound to the west of the deli. Motorists on Route 35 traveling northbound have limited sight distance around the curve to the west, and when approaching the deli, must slow down due to patrons pulling into and out of its parking areas. In addition, the sight distance and visibility for travel on Route 35 is often reduced by large vehicles and trucks parked at the site. The combination of all these features results in congestion and delays for the through-moving vehicles on Route 35 northbound as well as safety concerns related to on-street parking confusion.

Summary of Issues
Route 35 from New York State line to Route 33

- Delay on Route 35 caused by left-turning vehicles
- Delay on approach streets caused by heavy volumes on Route 35
- Limited on-street and off-street parking at the West Lane Deli
- Limited visibility of vehicles parked at the West Lane Deli caused by trucks pulled off at the West Lane Deli and by the curvature of Route 35 to the west of the deli.

Alternative Solutions

Options that were considered to address the congestion and delay created by turning movements to and from side streets in this segment of Route 35 included minor widening of Route 35 at the intersections of West Lane and Olmstead Lane and additional traffic control devices (such as stop signs). The potential traffic operations impacts of these were discussed at some length by the project team and the PTC.

Several options were also considered to address the issues at West Lane Deli. Although the range of feasible options was limited, the PTC felt it important to make an effort to improve the current situation. It was also recognized that any efforts to improve conditions would need to be a collaborative effort of the Town of Ridgefield, ConnDOT, and the deli owner in order to find a workable solution that does not compromise the viability of the deli business.

Access to the rear of the deli is limited, and overall site constraints mean that additional off-street parking is not a feasible option. Therefore, potential options for addressing the potential safety issues focused on better management of on-street parking and the traffic movements in and around the deli. These options included requesting the deli operator to ask patrons to put their vehicle flashers on when parked and additional signage along Route 35 to warn motorists of the deli parking area. The additional signage could include a new advance "Congested Area" warning sign. This sign has been used in the past on other state highways in special circumstances.

3.3 Recommendations

ConnDOT commented that the number of southbound left turns onto Olmstead Lane is very low (20) during either the AM or PM peak hour (2025) and that traffic analysis results indicate the Route 35 approach operates at either LOS A or LOS B. ConnDOT commented that unless there is a pattern of accidents on Route 35 associated within vehicles turning left onto Olmstead Lane, the need for sliver widening should be revisited. However, the PTC felt the greatest benefit would be to provide sliver widenings on Route 35 to allow through-moving vehicles to by-pass vehicles turning left onto Olmstead Lane. Therefore, the PTC decided to retain this recommendation in this traffic improvement plan.

The PTC also agreed that it was necessary to increase the awareness and visibility of parked vehicles at the West Lane Deli but without compromising the ability of the deli to carry on its business.

As a result of this process, the following recommendations as shown in Table 2 and Figures 3 and 4 were selected for the improvement program.

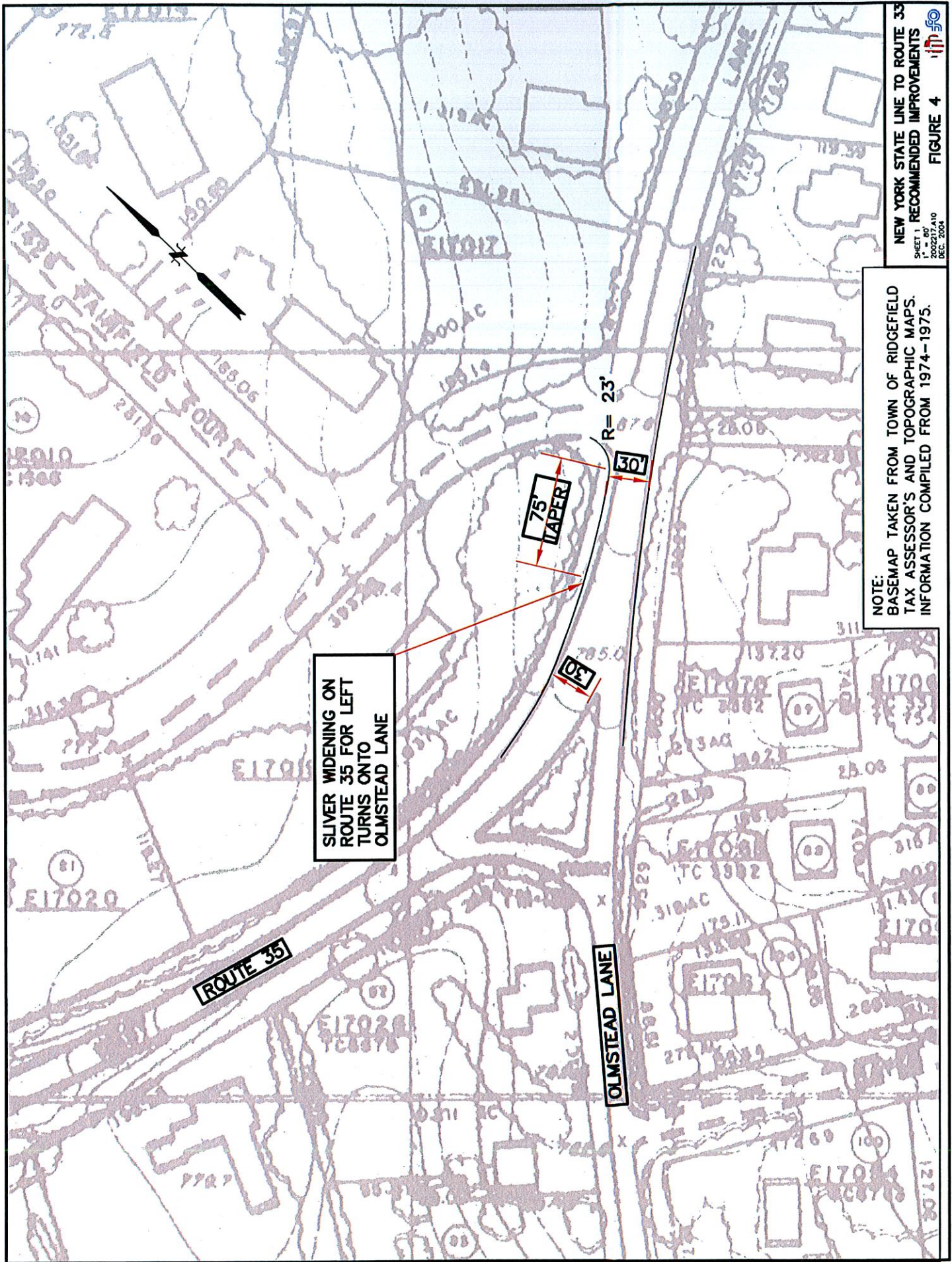
Table 2: New York State Line to Route 33 Recommendations

| Location | Recommendations | Benefits |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| West Lane | Sliver widening on Route 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides additional pavement space for vehicles on Route 35 to by-pass to the right of the vehicle turning left onto West Lane from Route 35 Reduces delay for through-moving vehicles on Route 35 |
| West Lane Deli | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The deli owner will be asked to post a sign requesting truckers to put flashers on while parked ConnDOT to work with the Ridgefield Traffic Authority to evaluate the installation of warning signs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases awareness and visibility of parked vehicles Increases awareness of area congestion |
| Olmstead Lane | Sliver widening on Route 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides additional pavement space for vehicles on Route 35 to by-pass to the right of the vehicle turning left onto Olmstead Lane from Route 35 Reduces delay for through-moving vehicles on Route 35 |

3.4 Access Management Recommendation

As described in Section 1.1 *Study Overview*, management of curb cuts was also considered throughout the study corridor. This section of the corridor is primarily residential. Options for improving the location of driveways on single-family home lots tends to be more limited than for non-residential lots.

In addition, the low volume of traffic to and from residential driveways generally is such that tight control over the location of such driveways isn't warranted or beneficial. Therefore, there are no access management recommendations on Route 35 from the New York state line to Route 33.



NOTE:
BASEMAP TAKEN FROM TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
TAX ASSESSOR'S AND TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS.
INFORMATION COMPILED FROM 1974-1975.

4.0 ROUTE 35/ROUTE 33 INTERSECTION

4.1 Existing Conditions

State Route 33 intersects with Route 35 (Main Street) approximately 1 mile from the New York state line. An historic stone fountain sits on a traffic island at this intersection. The Cass Gilbert Fountain is a town landmark which was donated to Ridgefield in 1915 by an architect and former Ridgefield resident.

This intersection is surrounded by private homes and the First Congregational Church which is located on the southwest corner. The National Register of Historic Places defines the Ridgefield Center Historic District as the area between the junction of Route 35 and Route 33 north to the junction of Route 35 and Pound Street. Thus, this intersection serves as the southern boundary of Ridgefield's historic district.

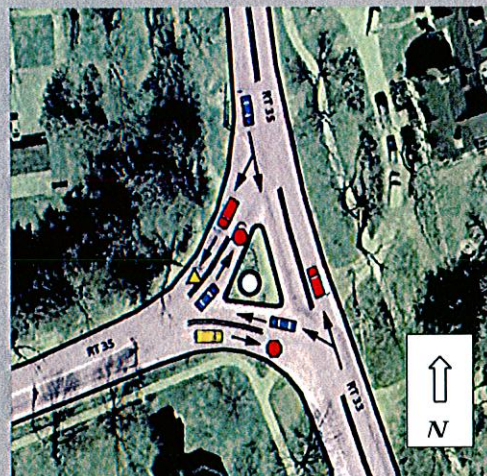
Transportation Features

At this intersection, Route 35 northbound actually runs eastward toward the fountain and is striped such that two lanes of traffic operate on either side of the fountain. As shown in the drawing to the right, vehicles traveling eastbound on Route 35 must turn left at this intersection to continue traveling northbound onto Main Street or turn right to go southbound onto Route 33. Route 33 is a two-lane state route and is the northbound approach to this intersection.

Sidewalks and crosswalks are located at this intersection for the safety of pedestrians. Crosswalks on the eastbound approach connect to a sidewalk in the traffic/fountain island. Sidewalks are set back from the roadway by a wide planting strip on the Route 33 approach and the Route 35 southbound approach.



The intersection of Route 35 with Route 33 looking northbound



Current lane configuration for the intersection of Route 35/Main Street, and Route 33

4.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

Two of the main concerns at this location are intersection configuration and control. Under a more typical configuration, this intersection would be a common "T" layout. However, due to the prominent local landmark and the alignment of the eastbound leg of the intersection, Route 35 northbound splits around the fountain to create a "Y" shaped intersection. With the fountain as the focal point of this intersection, both legs of the "Y" are two way.



Route 35 at Route 33 – "Y" intersection looking north and east

Though the intersection configuration presents some confusion to the driver, it is noteworthy that the incidence of crashes at this location is not considered high (48 crashes over the six year period from 1997 to 2004). This is most likely because local residents and travelers are aware of the awkward movements required at the intersection and exercise caution when traveling through. The fountain was damaged by a crash in June 2003, shortly before this study began. Subsequently, the town formed a Fountain Committee to review options for rebuilding the fountain. The committee decided to rebuild the fountain in its existing location. By the end of summer 2004, the fountain was rebuilt with lighting and plantings on a higher base to increase its visibility. The location of the fountain has been an important factor in this study in evaluating options for improving safety at this intersection.



The town's landmark fountain was nearly destroyed in a car crash in June 2003



The fountain was rebuilt near the end of summer 2004

At present, traffic is controlled at this intersection by means of stop signs on Route 35 eastbound, a yield sign on Route 33 northbound, and no traffic control on Route 35/Main Street southbound. Presently, left turns from Route 35 eastbound onto Route 35/Main Street operate at a LOS F.

While through movements from Route 35/Main Street to Route 33 experience no real delays, the opposing northbound approach on Route 33 experiences considerable delay, which will continue to increase as traffic volumes build on all legs of the intersection.

While sufficient gaps do currently allow waiting vehicles to emerge from Route 35 northbound onto Main Street, there is already considerable delay at certain times of day when Main Street traffic is heaviest. It is expected that at some point in time, traffic will increase to the point that gaps become fewer and farther between. This will further increase delay and add to the accident potential as some cars will try to emerge from the stop signs when gaps are not sufficiently long to allow this.

Summary of Issues Route 35/Route 33

- Configuration -The present intersection design is not a standard "T" intersection and the two two-way legs of the "Y" presents some confusion for the drivers. The location of the fountain presents difficulty for turning trucks, as they must negotiate a large turning radius, often obstructing the opposing lane, to avoid the fountain.
- Intersection control - While stop sign control will continue to work for a while, at some point in time the intersection will fail completely as traffic volumes increase. Vehicles trying to turn onto Route 35/Main Street will no longer be able to find safe gaps in traffic. This is exacerbated by the configuration of the intersection, as emerging drivers must keep their eye on numerous turning movements, not just the mainline traffic.

Alternative Solutions

Three major alternative improvement options were evaluated for this intersection, several of which have sub-alternatives. They include the following:

- Modify the intersection to a standard "T" intersection: Maintain stop sign control, but improve safety by creating a "real" T intersection, without the added complication of the two two-way legs of the "Y". This can be done either by closing one leg of the intersection or by making each leg on the Route 35 eastbound approach one way. Either of these configurations requires either

slight relocation of the fountain or reconfiguration of the island on which the fountain sits.

- Install a traffic signal: This would also involve reconfiguration of the intersection to allow a simple "T" layout. The existing configuration with multiple turning movements would not be suitable for traffic signal control. This configuration also requires either slight relocation of the fountain or reconfiguration of the island on which the fountain sits.

[NOTE: A traffic signal warrant analysis was conducted in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), 2003 Edition. Results from the warrant analysis concluded that existing and future intersection traffic volumes do exceed the minimum vehicular volume warrants for Warrant 1: Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume, Warrant 2: Four-Hour Vehicular Volume, and Warrant 3, Peak Hour Vehicular Volume.]

- Install a modern roundabout: As with the other alternatives, a modern roundabout would require reconfiguration of the intersection. It is also likely that a slight amount of additional property for right-of-way would need to be acquired. A roundabout would require the fountain to be moved northerly and into the center of the roundabout area, such that intersection traffic would circumnavigate it. The fountain and surrounding landscaping would serve as the centerpiece of the roundabout.

The evaluation of these alternatives indicated that the modern roundabout would be the best alternative operationally. Under this alternative, the intersection would operate the most smoothly and with the least delay.

4.3 Recommendations

The PTC wrestled with the options available for this intersection and the implications of each. A sizeable group preferred the roundabout alternative with its operational, safety and aesthetic advantages. Many also liked the idea of an attractive landscaped roundabout serving as a southern "gateway" to Ridgefield Center.

Conversely, a sizeable number disliked the roundabout because of the necessary property-taking. Some on the PTC felt that the roundabout would present a hazard to drivers [Note: *Empirical roundabout studies suggest that this is not the case, but this sentiment persists whenever roundabouts are discussed, as the modern roundabout represents an unknown to many American drivers who are more familiar with rotaries or smaller traffic circles. For more information, see roundabout article in Appendix C*]. ConnDOT's Project Concept Unit commented that a possible future roundabout at Route 35 and Route 33 offers little deflection on Route 33 and southbound Route 35.

In the end, the work done and decisions made by the Fountain Committee drove the decision-making process, as a decision was made to rebuild the fountain in the same

location. This precluded all but the do-nothing alternative in this location. If the PTC had had strong consensus for one of the other alternatives, some accommodation or negotiation with the Fountain Committee could most likely have been made. However, the split nature of feelings within the PTC did not warrant such an accommodation.

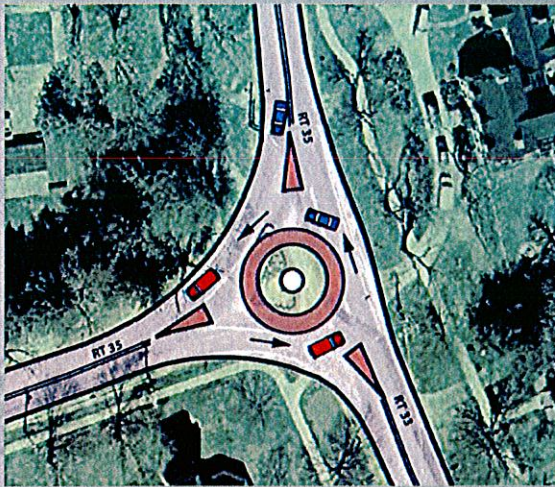
Thus, the PTC decided to leave this intersection as it is for now and to monitor traffic operations and delay in this area with the understanding that some other alternative will most likely be needed at some point in the not too distant future.

None of the evaluation done for this study will be "lost" because of this decision. As summarized in Table 3 and shown in Figures 5 and 6, the PTC agreed to forward two alternative long-term solutions in this plan: the roundabout and the stop sign T-intersection (with reconfigured island). These options are considered as potential long term improvements. The work that was done for this study will be available to facilitate future reconsideration of those improvements when this intersection needs to be re-evaluated.

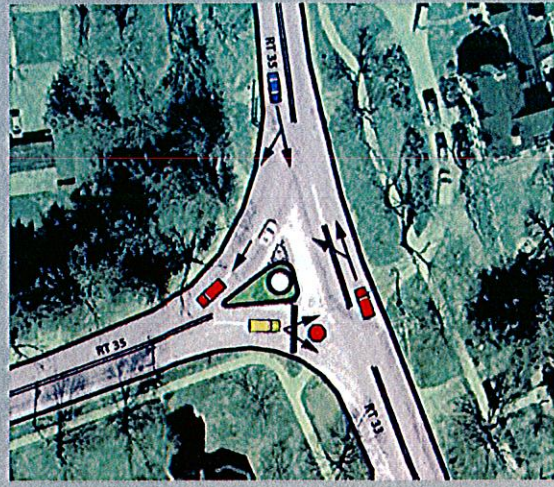
Table 3: Route 35/Route 33 Intersection Recommendations

| Recommendations | Benefits |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor conditions in near term and conduct more in-depth evaluation as changing conditions require. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modern Roundabout (relocate island at center of intersection) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides continuous flow through intersection • Reduces congestion on west legs • Enhances the visibility of the fountain and provides a gateway • Minimizes vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist conflict points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stop sign/T-intersection (modified island) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eases turning movement for vehicles turning left onto Route 35 from Route 33 northbound • Reduces driver confusion |

Long Term Options for Intersection of Route 35



Modern Roundabout



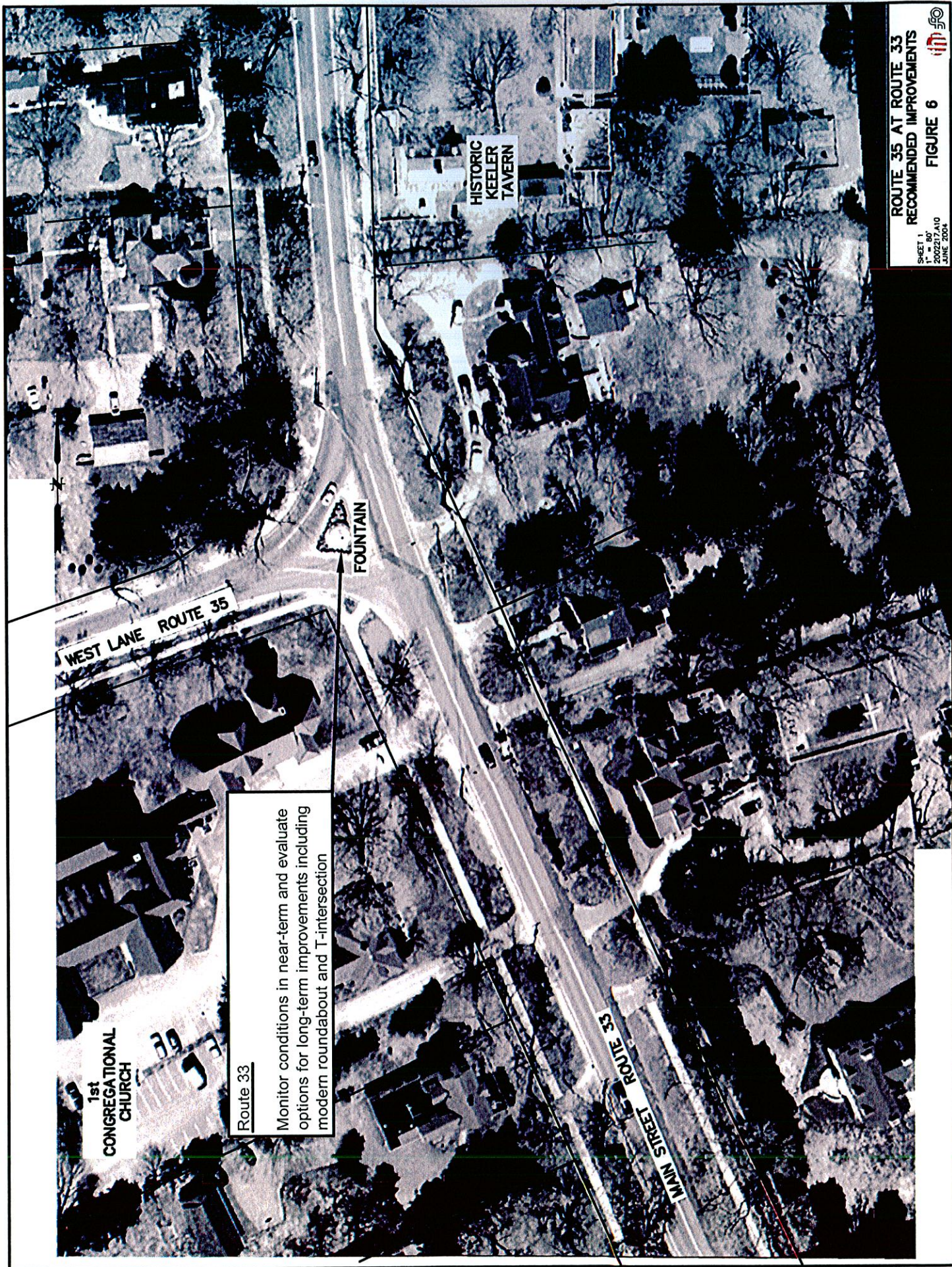
Stop Sign-T Intersection (With Modified Island)

Figure 5: Options for Intersection of Route 35 with Route 33

4.4 Access Management Recommendation

Curb-cut recommendations for this area of the corridor focus on limiting the number of non-residential access points close to the intersection of Route 35 and 33 to reduce the contribution that turns from those drives make to conflict points in the intersection.

Recommendations for long-term changes to the existing arrangement of driveways and for suitable locations of new driveways to serve currently undeveloped properties at the intersection of Route 35 with Route 33 are provided in Figure 7.

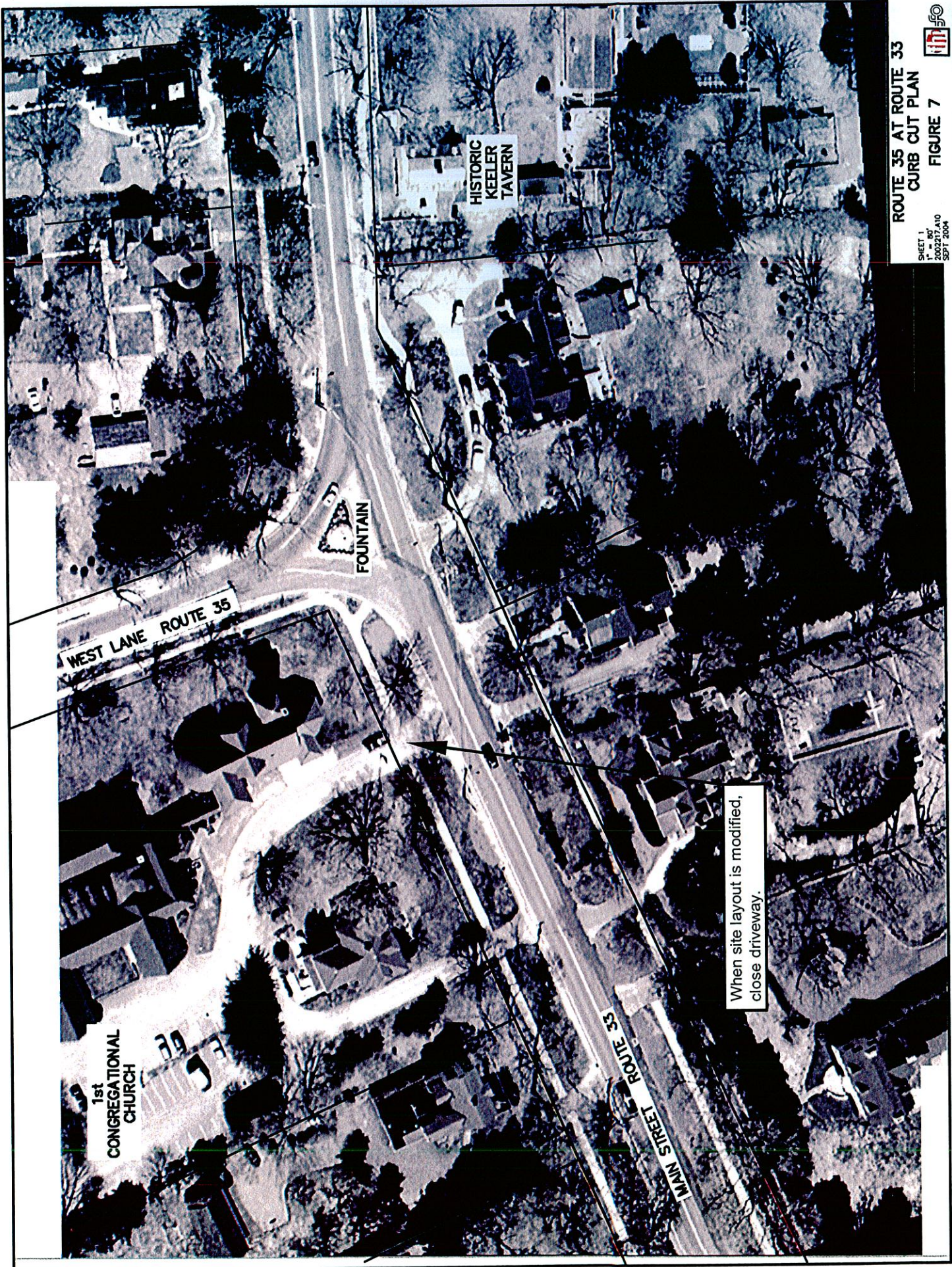


ROUTE 35 AT ROUTE 33
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

FIGURE 6

SHEET 1
BY
2002/AIO
JUNE 2004





ROUTE 35 AT ROUTE 33
CURB CUT PLAN

FIGURE 7



SHEET 1
1" = 80'
DATE: 10/14/00
SEPT 2004

5.0 ROUTE 33 TO GOVERNOR STREET

5.1 Existing Conditions

Route 35 from Route 33 to Governor Street can be described as a village area characterized by single family homes, an art museum, and the United Methodist Church. This section provides a gateway to Ridgefield Center from the south and also forms part of Ridgefield's historic district.

Transportation Features

Route 35 in this section has shoulder widths ranging from 2 to 4 feet. Sidewalks are present on both sides of the roadway and are set back from the curb line by a wide planting strip. The following three intersections were evaluated in this segment:

- Route 102
- King Lane
- Market Street

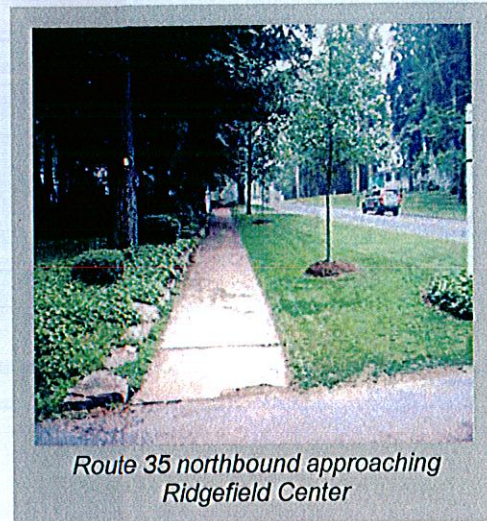
These intersections are presently unsignalized with cross streets controlled by a stop sign. A traffic island at King Lane exhibits dual direction of flow on both legs of the "Y" intersection there as King Lane approaches Route 35. The lane configuration for this segment of Route 35 can be seen in Appendix A. The parking lot for the United Methodist Church located on the corner of Route 35 and King Lane also serves as a park-n-ride lot for commuters.

Weekday fixed route transit service is provided by Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART) on the Ridgefield-Katonnah Shuttle, which provides service from the King Lane park-n-ride lot to the Katonah, New York, train station. Average daily ridership (2003) on this service is approximately 88 passengers/day.

5.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

Vehicles turning onto Route 35 from Route 102 and King Lane currently experience relatively long delays (LOS E or F) in the morning, evening, and Saturday mid-day peak periods, while vehicles turning onto Route 35 from Market Street experience long delays (LOS E or F) during the morning peak period only. As traffic volumes increase (approximately 1% per year), the delay for vehicles entering Route 35 from Route 102 and King Lane will also increase to unacceptable levels (LOS E or F) during all peak periods by the year 2025. Delay for vehicles on Market Street will also increase and will



*Route 35 northbound approaching
Ridgefield Center*

occur during both the morning and evening peak periods by the year 2025. Detailed results of the traffic analysis are provided in Appendix B.

Left turns from Route 35 to cross streets and into driveways result in increased congestion and delays as other vehicles on Route 35 must either stop to wait for a turning vehicle or try to by-pass to the right of the left-turning vehicle.

The King Lane intersection with Route 35 poses a particular concern. This intersection is configured very similarly to the Route 35/33 intersection with a traffic island placed in the center of King Lane, containing attractive plantings and a fire hydrant. King Lane is very narrow and splits around the island to intersect in a "Y" with Route 35. Both legs of the "Y" are two way. This configuration presents some confusion for the driver and difficulty for turning trucks, as they must negotiate a large turning radius to avoid the island, making turning more difficult.

Summary of Issues Route 33 to Governor Street

- Delay on Route 35 caused by left-turning vehicles
- Delay on approach streets caused by heavy volumes on Route 35
- Intersection configuration at King Lane presents some confusion for the driver and causes difficulty for turning trucks

Alternative Solutions

In order to address the various issues and concerns raised at King Lane, the two alternative solutions listed below were evaluated.

- Keep the island and remove the dual direction on the "Y" approach (forming a more traditional "T" intersection). This would reduce the number of conflict points and the potential for crashes to occur.
- Remove the island completely and relocate/replace the plantings to the sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, thus narrowing the intersection to a traditional T-intersection. This would improve the turning radii for cars and trucks while maintaining the aesthetics and character of the intersection.

These alternative solutions were developed as a result of technical analysis and discussions with the PTC and other Ridgefield citizens. While some cited the traffic and safety issues as key and others felt maintaining the aesthetics and character of the intersection was most critical, it was agreed that both these goals are top priorities for the Town.

5.3 Recommendations

As with the Route 35/33 intersection, the PTC wrestled with the options available for the intersection at King Lane. A sizeable group preferred to keep the island and eliminate the dual direction. This would improve the operation and safety of the intersection while maintaining the aesthetics of the island. The remaining PTC members preferred to remove the island and place plantings on both sides of the roadway, which would maximize the operational and safety benefits while still maintaining plantings at this intersection.

After much deliberation, the PTC decided to recommend removing the island and placing the plantings on both sides of the roadway. The PTC also decided to recommend restriping and a sliver widening on Route 102 in coordination with the Town's sidewalk plan to reduce delay at that location.

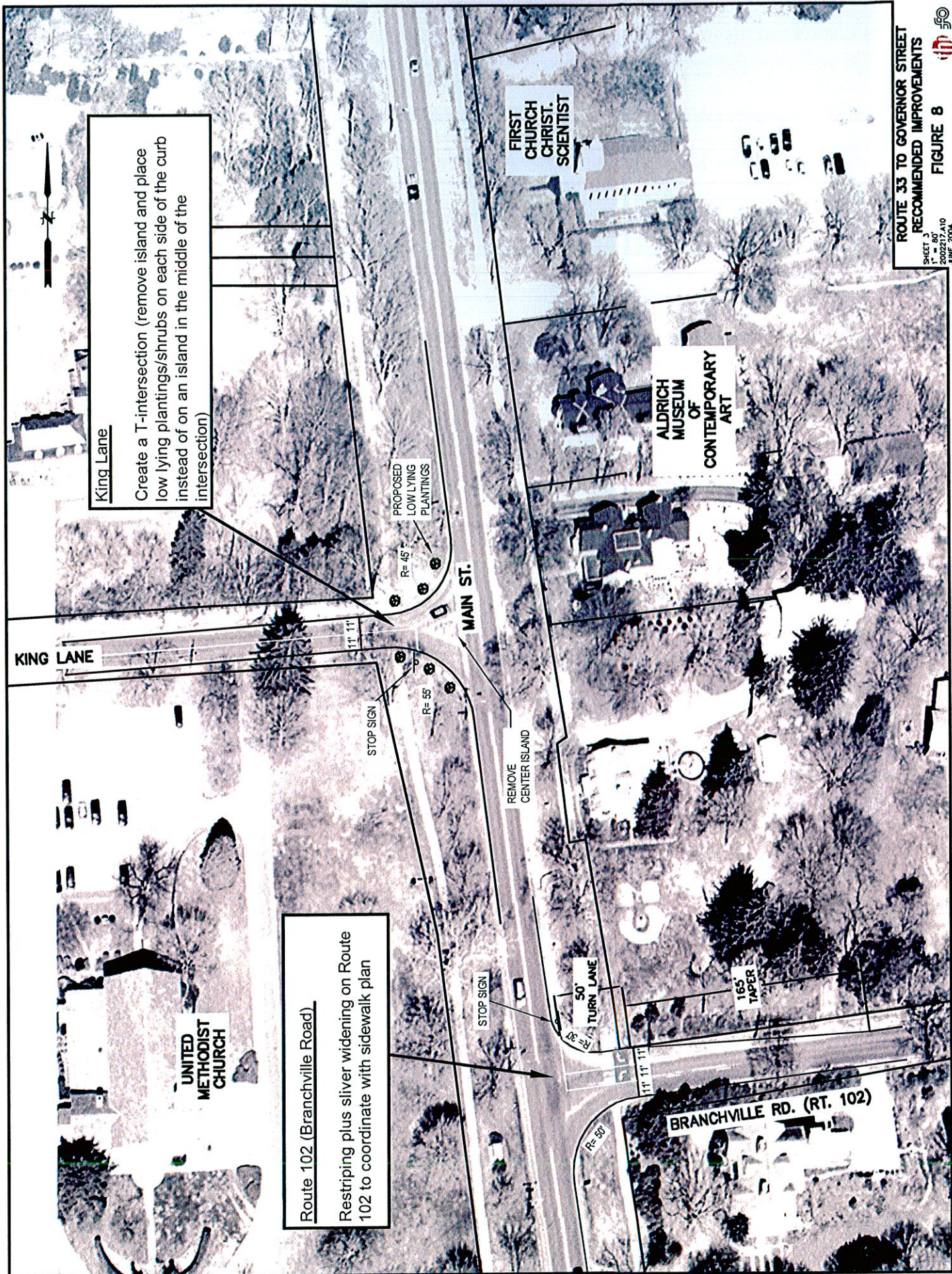
ConnDOT's Project Concept Unit has commented that the recommended improvements at Route 102 (Branchville Road) and King Lane are good ideas. The recommendations for this segment of Route 35 are presented in Table 4 and in Figure 8.

Table 4: Route 33 to Governor Street Recommendations

| Location | Recommendations | Benefits |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Route 102/ Branchville Road | Restripe plus sliver widening on Route 102 in coordination with the Town's sidewalk plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduces delay for vehicles turning onto Route 35 |
| King Lane | Modify to a standard T-intersection (remove island, eliminate dual direction, and place plantings on each side of the curb instead of an island in the middle of the intersection) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduces driver confusion• Improves turning movements for trucks |

5.4 Access Management Recommendation

There are no access management recommendations on Route 35 from Route 33 to Governor Street.



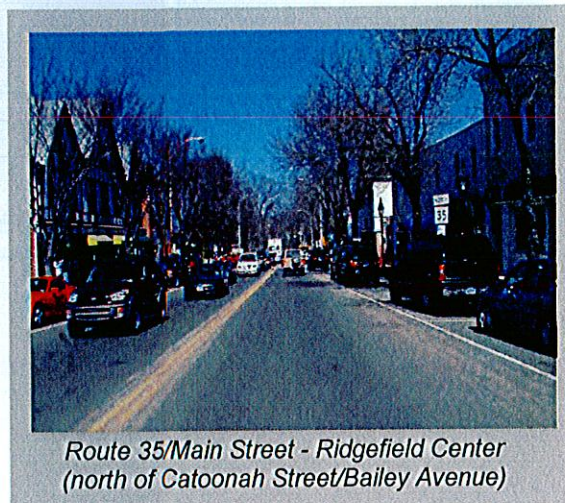
ROUTE 33 TO GOVERNOR STREET
 RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS
 FIGURE 8
 SHEET 3
 1" = 50'
 JUNE 2004

6.0 RIDGEFIELD CENTER

6.1 Existing Conditions

Ridgefield Center is defined in this report as the area along Route 35 (Main Street) from the intersection of Governor Street to the intersection of Prospect Street. Ridgefield Center is a densely developed business district serving the Town's core government and business activity.

The Center includes the Town Hall, town library, post office, fire station, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Ballard Park, and many commercial and retail businesses. The Ridgefield Center Historic District also includes this segment of the study corridor. Ballard Park is one of the numerous historic resources within the district and was the location of "The Battle of Ridgefield" in 1777.



Transportation Features

Signalized intersections are located at Governor Street, Catoonah Street/Bailey Avenue, and Prospect Street. The traffic signals at the intersections of Governor Street and Catoonah Street/Bailey Avenue are operated by one controller and are also interconnected for coordinated operation. The Center also offers a loading zone area just south of Catoonah Street on the west side of Route 35 (Main Street). Appendix A illustrates the lane configuration along this segment of the study corridor.

The pedestrian environment along Route 35 in Ridgefield Center includes sidewalks, marked crosswalks, and pedestrian signals at the signalized intersections. Throughout, the sidewalks are extended from storefront to curb line and are supplemented with pedestrian amenities such as textured pavement surfaces, benches and landscaping. There is a high level of pedestrian activity in Ridgefield Center including both residents and seasonal tourists, contributing to the sense of place and the pleasant overall ambiance of Ridgefield's downtown.

On-street parking is permitted along both sides of Main Street from Governor Street to Prospect Street. Most is parallel parking, with angle parking permitted along the store fronts opposite Town Hall on the southwest corner of Main Street at Catoonah Street. On-street parking is restricted to two hours duration, with no overnight on-street parking allowed anywhere in the Town.

There are 54 on-street parking spaces in Ridgefield Center, including 22 in the northbound direction and 32 in the southbound direction. Southbound, 17 are angle

spaces. Of the total 54 spaces, two are marked as handicap-accessible, one northbound and one southbound. Weekday fixed route transit service is provided by HART on the Ridgefield Loop service line, which provides service from Danbury Fair Mall to Prospect Street and carries an average of 24 passengers per day (2003).

Crash Summary

The most recent crash data (1997 to 2002) shows a total of 614 crashes from Route 33 to Cops Hill/Farmingville Road. A summary of the crash data at the intersections of Main Street with Governor Street and Catoonah Street are provided below:

- Governor Street intersection
 - 41 crashes
 - 7% of total crashes
 - Common type of crash - Rear end (59%)
- Catoonah Street intersection
 - 25 crashes
 - 4% of total crashes
 - Common type crashes - Rear end (40%) and parking (36%)



On-street parking provided in front of businesses in the Town Center

6.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

The high volume of vehicular and pedestrian travel demand within Ridgefield Center results in congestion and delay at all three signalized intersections during morning, evening and Saturday peak periods. This is expected to continue to worsen as traffic volumes increase (approximately 1% per year) over time. Additional detailed results of the traffic analysis are provided in Appendix B.

Left turns from Route 35 impede travel and result in increased congestion and delays. Left turns onto Route 35 from the minor approaches (side streets) also result in increased delays on those minor streets.

The left turn lane provided on the southbound approach at the signalized intersection of Route 35 with Prospect Street does not provide a green arrow for a left turn phase. Due to the heavy through volume of traffic on Route 35, it is difficult to make left turns at this signalized intersection.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety

The pedestrian amenities in Ridgefield Center such as sidewalks and crosswalks provide walkers with good access to the various land uses. However, pedestrians crossing Route 35 mid-block through the loading zone present safety concerns as they mix with vehicular and truck traffic. There are no cyclist facilities on Route 35 in this segment of the corridor.

Cyclist safety is also compromised in Ridgefield Center by parallel and angle parking, making cyclists less visible to drivers. Also, cyclists do not have the use of striped shoulders as a travel lane as they do elsewhere in the corridor.



Pedestrians crossing mid block in the loading zone conflict with truck deliveries and parked vehicles and add to the overall confusion in the area

Parking

On-street parking spaces are convenient for the short term parker and a positive feature for business owners allowing easy access for customers. Short term parking allows for a quick turnover of spaces, although it impedes traffic flow as drivers maneuver to park.

Ridgefield Center business owners have indicated that drivers often park on-street longer than the two-hour limit, thereby causing would-be patrons to make other choices about where to conduct their business. Business owners feel that they are losing business when patrons cannot park in close proximity.

Off-street parking facilities are also available in Ridgefield Center, but indications are that more are needed to meet the overall parking demand. Residents and business owners have noted that the off-street parking lot behind Town Hall is also used as a by-pass route by drivers wishing to avoid Bailey Avenue, a one-way roadway.

Loading Zone

The Ridgefield Center loading zone area presents a complexity of issues as currently configured. Conflicts can occur among delivery trucks, pedestrians, vehicles en-route, and on-street parkers,



Vehicular conflicts in the loading zone area between parked vehicles and truck deliveries

adding significantly to the accident potential there. The loading zone is frequently used by single unit vendor trucks which park behind the angle parking spaces, often conflicting with the vehicles backing from their parking spots. Compounding this situation is the presence of pedestrians in the angle parking and loading zone area as they either cross the roadway or access their vehicles.

In addition, some stores receive deliveries via semi-trailers which must back into the alley in between the angle parking spaces. This backing operation, while usually performed by a highly experienced driver, stops traffic flow in the southbound direction as well as within the angle parking area and often conflicts with pedestrians walking along the sidewalk and within the parking area.

Also, the current layout and configuration of the loading zone is confusing for drivers turning from Catoonah Street to Main Street southbound. Drivers are uncertain of the location of the through travel lane on Main Street and will often turn into the loading zone area to travel southbound. While recent changes (pavement markings and signal timing revisions) at Catoonah Street/Bailey Avenue have been made to improve traffic operations and reduce this confusion, additional improvements are needed to address the myriad of safety and traffic flow issues associated with the loading zone.

Summary of Issues Ridgefield Center

- Delay on Route 35 caused by left-turning vehicles
- Delay on approach streets caused by heavy volumes on Route 35
- Off-street parking lots used as a by-pass
- Parking demand issues
- Parking enforcement
- Location of loading zone adds confusion and accident potential
- Delivery trucks in loading zone interrupt traffic flow
- Loading zone used as a travel lane
- Pedestrian and vehicular conflicts
- Lack of bicycle facilities

6.3 Recommendations

Upon completion of the evaluation of the alternative solutions, the PTC worked with the study consultant team to select the improvements to be recommended for implementation. As a result of this process, the following options in Table 5 and Figures 9 through 12 were selected. ConnDOT commented that the Main Street angle parking protection island is a good idea, but felt the recommended improvement to restripe Catoonah Street isn't wide enough to stripe as a two-lane approach at Route 35. ConnDOT commented that if the centerline is shifted, it is likely that there will not be ample width to accept trucks entering from Route 35. In further discussions with the PTC, based on further investigation, it was decided to retain this recommendation and address turning issues in the design.

ConnDOT has also commented that implementation of the new loading zone area and changes to the existing loading zone area must be accepted by all affected merchants. The loading zone is authorized by the State Traffic Commission, and past precedents of changing such permits, without approval by affected merchants have not been successful.

Table 5: Ridgefield Center: Governor Street to Prospect Street Recommendations

| Recommendations | Benefits |
|--|---|
| <p>Catoonah Street/Bailey Avenue Intersection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restripe Catoonah Street for right turns onto Route 35 • Evaluate the following options to reduce congestion on Route 35 northbound and southbound <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide left-turn lanes on Route 35 northbound and southbound 2. Allow lead phasing for the northbound approach and lag phasing for the southbound approach 3. Prohibit parking close to the intersection to allow room for an additional lane of turning vehicles during the AM and PM peak hours (using cones) to allow thru moving vehicles to by-pass left-turning vehicles 4. Prohibit left-turns onto Bailey Avenue during the AM peak hour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces delay on Catoonah Street • Reduce delay on Route 35 |
| <p>Loading Zone Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a new loading zone on the west side of Main Street north of Governor Street immediately south of the clock • Provide a raised median from Adessi Jewelers to Ridgefield Hardware to separate travel lane from the angled parking area • Provide ornamental fencing along the median to discourage pedestrians from crossing Route 35 in this area • Allow small vendor vehicles to load/unload immediately south of the new median • Evaluate providing a second new loading zone for smaller vendor vehicles possibly on Catoonah Street or Bailey Avenue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves safety, reduces accident potential, and reduces driver confusion • Also improves aesthetic quality at this end of Main Street |

Table 5: Ridgefield Center: Governor Street to Prospect Street Recommendations
(Continued)

| Recommendations | Benefits |
|--|---|
| <p>Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a raised median from Adessi Jewelers to Ridgefield Hardware to separate travel lane from the angled parking (See above) • Add parallel parking spaces along the west side of the new median • Re-evaluate previous parking studies to move toward the goal of providing more off-street parking spaces • More strongly enforce parking regulations • Provide improved signage to better direct vehicles to off-street parking facilities" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases the number of on-street parking spaces in Ridgefield Center • Improves safety, reduces accident potential, and reduces driver confusion • Also improves aesthetic quality at this end of Main Street • Long term parking management in support of economic stability of Ridgefield Center • Maximizes use of Ridgefield Center parking which in turn improves patron access to local businesses • Maximizes efficient use of available Ridgefield Center parking which in turn supports economic stability of local businesses |
| <p>Develop public awareness program of bicyclist presence in the corridor</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes cyclist safety and raises profile of cycling as an activity in the corridor |
| <p>Enhance alleys with lighting, plantings, street furniture, and signing to direct pedestrians and vehicles to rear-lot properties and businesses</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase pedestrian safety • Enhances attractiveness of Ridgefield Center as a shopping and tourist destination |
| <p>Add a left turn arrow from Route 35 onto Prospect Street <i>(Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-304.)</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces congestion and delay on Route 35 southbound |

***Simulation of Loading Zone
Recommendations
Ridgefield Center***



Provide a raised median to separate parking from travel lane on west side of Route 35



Relocate the loading zone to the west side of Route 35 north of Governor Street.

6.4 Access Management Recommendation

Ridgefield Center has a multitude of driveways, alleys, and side streets that create conflict points for turning vehicles. The curb-cut plan in this section of the corridor focuses on long-term opportunities to reduce the number of driveways, combine driveways, and enhance internal circulation through parking lots off Main Street. Collectively, these changes could both improve safety and facilitate access to all local businesses. Recommendations for long-term changes to the existing arrangement of driveways and for suitable locations of new driveways to serve currently undeveloped properties in Ridgefield Center are provided in Figures 13 and 14.

Loading Zone

- Provide a new loading zone on the west side of Main Street north of Governor Street immediately south of the clock
- Provide a raised median from Adessi Jewelers to Ridgefield Hardware to separate travel lane from the angled parking area (as also described under parking below)
- Allow small vendor vehicles to load/unload immediately south of the new median
- Evaluate providing a second new loading zone for smaller vendor vehicles possibly on Catoonah Street or Bailey Avenue
- Provide ornamental fencing along the median to discourage pedestrians from crossing Route 35 in this area

ST STEPHEN'S
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

LOADING ZONE

MAIN ST.

CATOONAH ST.

Ridgefield Center

Parking

- Add parallel parking spaces along the west side of the new median
- Re-evaluate previous parking studies
- More strongly enforce parking regulations
- Provide improved signage to better direct vehicles to off-street parking facilities

Bicyclist Features

Develop public awareness program for bicyclist safety in the corridor

SHOPPING
CENTER

RIDGEFIELD
TOWN HALL

BAILEY AVE.

Alleys between Governor Street & Prospect Street
Enhance alleys with lighting, planting, street furniture and signing to direct pedestrians and vehicles to rear lot properties and businesses

Catoonah Street/Bailey Avenue

Restripe Catoonah Street for right turns onto Route 35
Evaluate the following options to reduce congestion on Route 35 northbound and southbound:

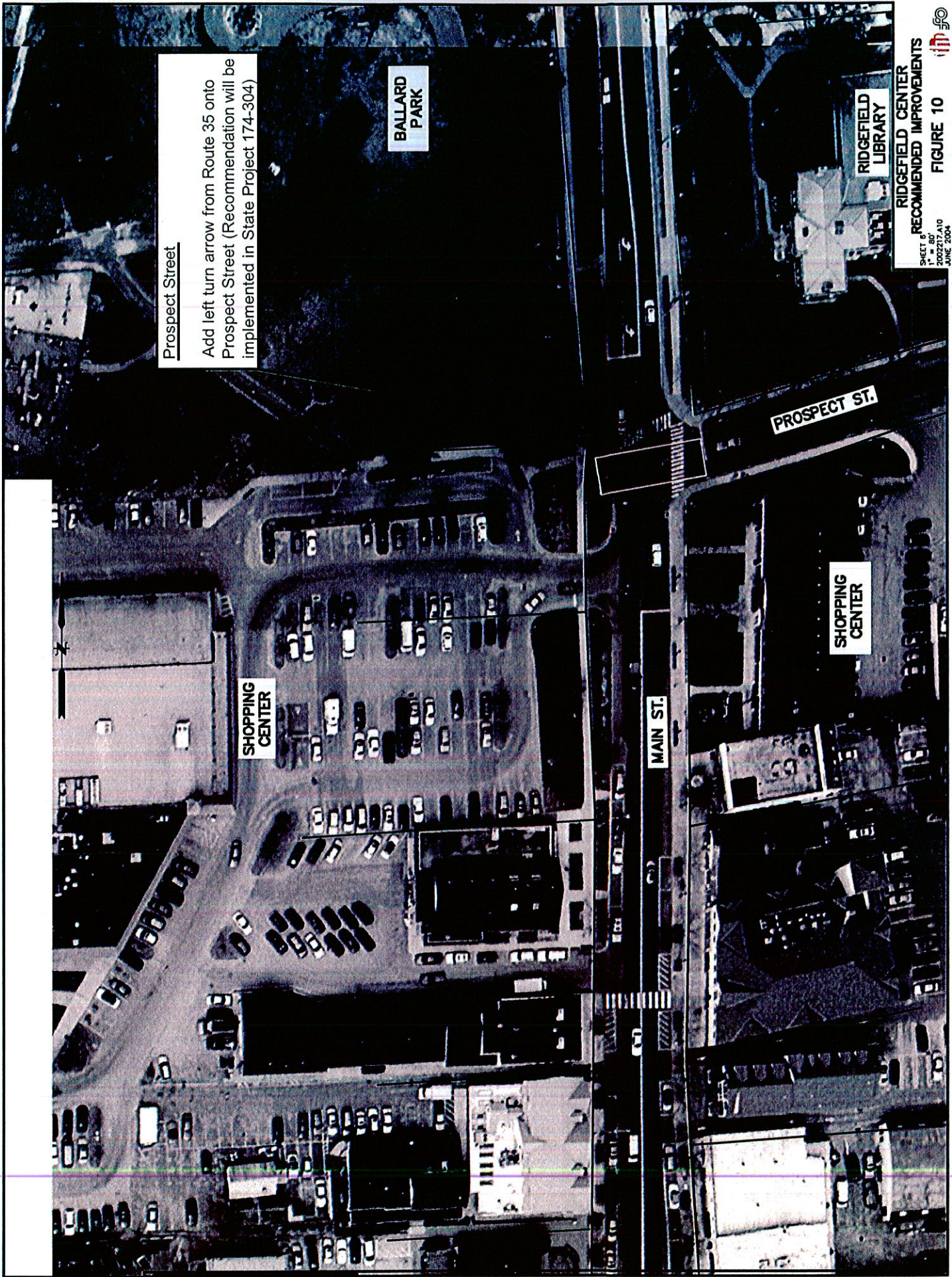
1. Provide left-turn lanes on Route 35 northbound and southbound
2. Allow lead phasing for the northbound approach and lag phasing for the southbound approach
3. Prohibit parking at designated locations during several hours of the day (using cones) to allow thru moving vehicles to by-pass left-turning vehicles
4. Prohibit left-turns onto Bailey Avenue during the AM peak hour

RIDGEFIELD CENTER
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

SHEET 5
1" = 80'
TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
JUNE 2004

FIGURE 9



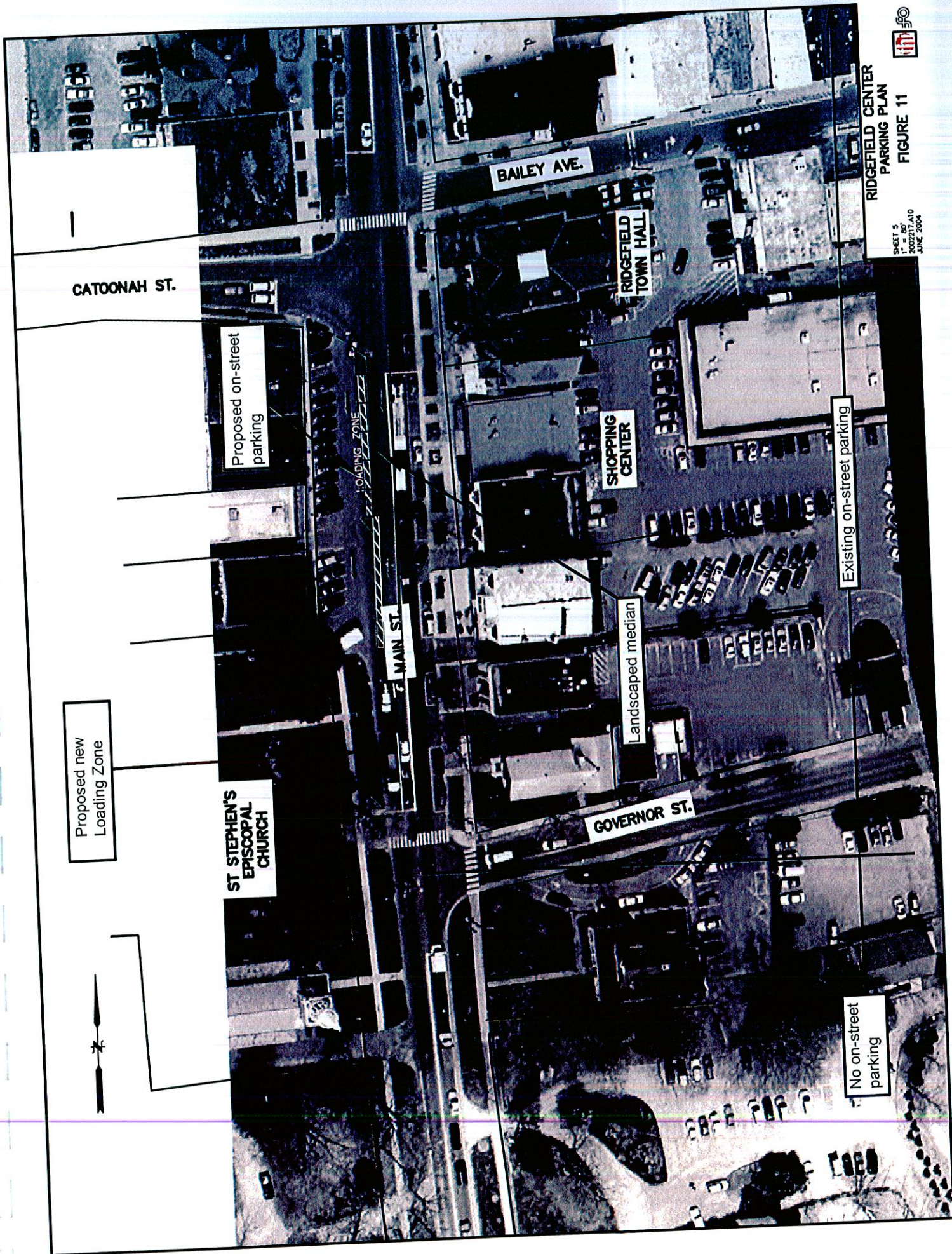


RIDGEFIELD CENTER
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

FIGURE 10

SHEET 80
1" = 80'
2002217 A10
JUNE 2004

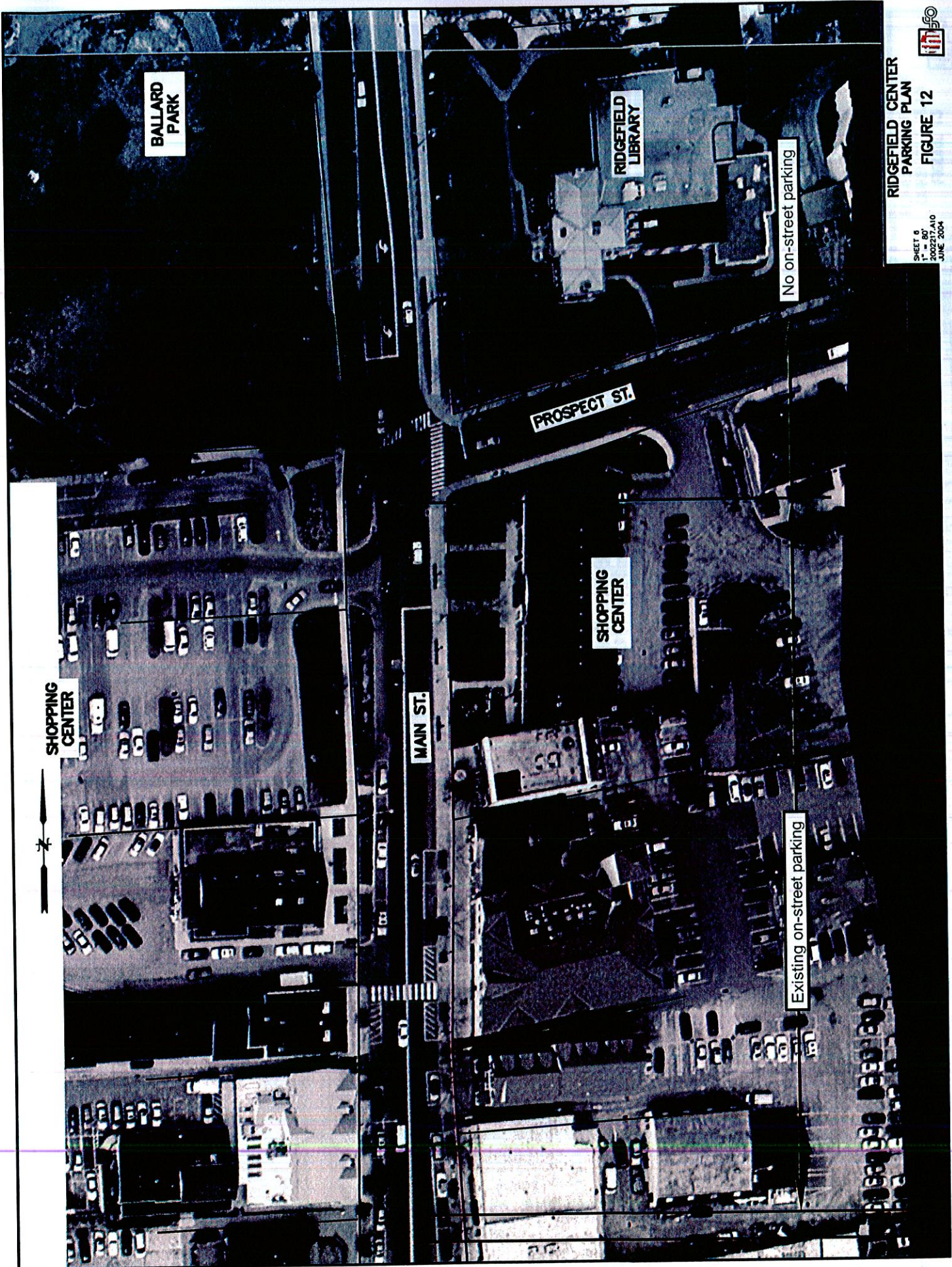




RIDGEFIELD CENTER
PARKING PLAN
FIGURE 11

SHEET 5
1" = 80'
2002/7/10
JUNE 2004





RIDGEFIELD CENTER
PARKING PLAN

FIGURE 12

SHEET 5
1" = 80'
2002217.A10
JUNE 2004



When opportunity arises, enhance/develop shared internal access route among these properties. In addition, enhance wayfinding to encourage access via Catoonah Street.

SHOPPING CENTER

BALLARD PARK

Alignment of Prospect Street opposite shopping plaza undesirable, but current site constraints (100-year-old tree) prevent improvement.

MAIN ST.

PROSPECT ST.

SHOPPING CENTER

When site layout is modified, narrow driveway and redesign as right-turn-out only.

When site layout is modified, narrow driveway and redesign as right-turn-out only.

RIDGEFIELD LIBRARY

RIDGEFIELD CENTER
CURB CUT PLAN
FIGURE 14

SHEET 6
1" = 80'
2002217.A10
SEP 2004



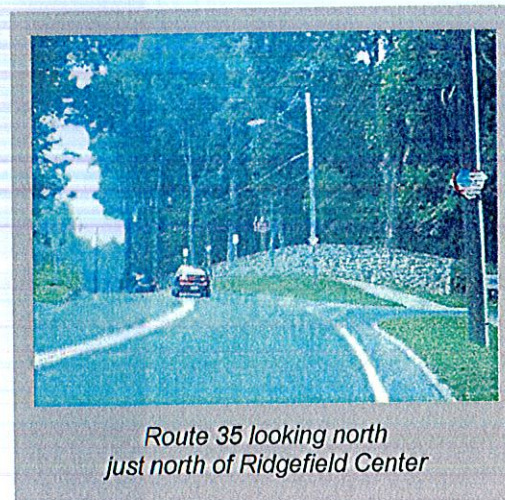
7.0 PROSPECT STREET TO ROUTE 116

7.1 Existing Conditions

The section of Route 35 from Prospect Street to Route 116 traverses a low-density suburban area with scenic views and is also within Ridgefield's historic district.

Transportation Features

Route 35 in this section has approximately 3 foot wide shoulders on both sides. The dominant landscape feature is a wide green buffer along the road framed by low stone walls. Sidewalks are approximately 4 feet wide and are continuous on both sides of the roadway. The cross streets are unsignalized and are stop sign controlled. As part of this study, two intersections, Gilbert Street and Pound Street, were evaluated. Appendix A illustrates the lane configuration along this segment of the study corridor.



*Route 35 looking north
just north of Ridgefield Center*

7.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

Vehicles entering Route 35 from Gilbert Street and Pound Street currently experience a relatively long delay (LOS E or F) during the morning, evening, and Saturday mid-day peak periods. As traffic volumes increase (approximately 1% per year), congestion and delay will worsen. Additional detailed results of the traffic analysis are provided in Appendix B.

Left turns from Route 35 impede travel, resulting in increased congestion and delays on Route 35. Anticipated future development of new housing in this segment will generate additional traffic. In particular, in early 2004, Ridgefield's Planning and Zoning Commission received proposals for a new development of single family homes on the corner of Gilbert Street at Route 35, with two buildings and access drives located on Gilbert Street and Route 35.

Summary of Issues Prospect Street to Route 116

- Delay on Route 35 caused by left-turning vehicles
- Delay on approach streets caused by heavy volumes on Route 35

7.3 Recommendations

Though the PTC considered a sliver widening on Route 35 to allow through-moving vehicles to by-pass vehicles turning left onto Gilbert Street, no recommendations were included for this location at this time. If further development occurs in this section of the corridor, roadway improvements by developers may be considered.

7.4 Access Management Recommendation

Route 35 from Prospect Street to Route 116 is lightly developed with relatively few driveways. The curb-cut plan in this section of the corridor focuses on long-term opportunities to reduce the number of driveways and consolidate multiple driveways serving a single property. Recommendations for long-term changes to the existing arrangement of driveways and for suitable locations of new driveways to serve currently undeveloped properties between Prospect Street and Route 116 are provided in Figure 15.



Maintain driveway as a pedestrian and special event access only.

When opportunity arises create a shared driveway between this property and the Town of Ridgefield property to the west.

CANONFIELD

GILBERT ST.

MAIN ST.

THE ELMS INN



8.0 ROUTE 35/ROUTE 116 INTERSECTION

8.1 Existing Conditions

State Route 116 (North Salem Road) intersects with Route 35 approximately one mile north of Ridgefield Center. The focal point of this intersection is Joe's Corner, a local business, which is located between the North Salem Road approach and the Route 35 southbound approach. The surrounding area is a mix of private homes and other small businesses.

Transportation Features

The intersection of Route 35 with Route 116 has an unusual geometric configuration due to the topography and layout of surrounding land uses.

An intersection control beacon suspended on a span wire in the center of the intersection, along with stop sign controls on the Route 35 northbound and Route 116 approaches provides the intersection traffic control. Route 35 northbound is a two-lane approach allowing vehicles turning left onto Route 116 to have an exclusive lane. Through-moving vehicles on Route 35 northbound must bear right at this intersection. Route 116 eastbound is a two-lane approach and is on a downward slope. Route 35 southbound is a two-lane approach and is an uncontrolled free flow movement.



Route 35 northbound approach at the intersection of Route 35 with Route 116



Route 35 southbound approach at the intersection of Route 35 with Route 116

8.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

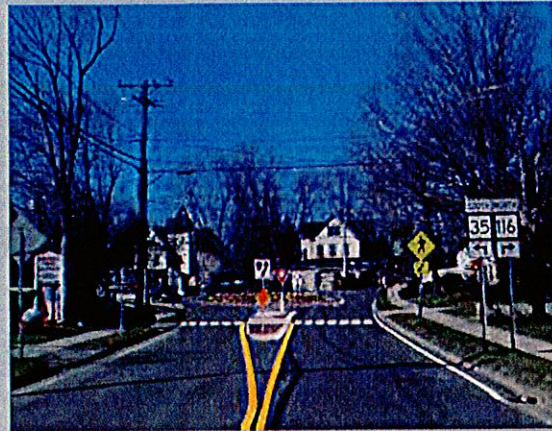
The North Salem Road intersection with Route 35 is one of the more challenging corridor issues. The introduction of North Salem Road at an oblique angle, just where Route 35 curves sharply toward the Copps Hill area, creates a confusing and awkward intersection situation. To add to the confusion, two of the three directional approaches to the intersection are stop sign controlled, while southbound traffic on Route 35 is uncontrolled.

Summary of Issues Route 35 at Route 116

- Intersection configuration is confusing and awkward with poor sight distance and conflict points.
- There is delay on all approaches except the Route 35 northbound right/through movement.

Alternative Solutions

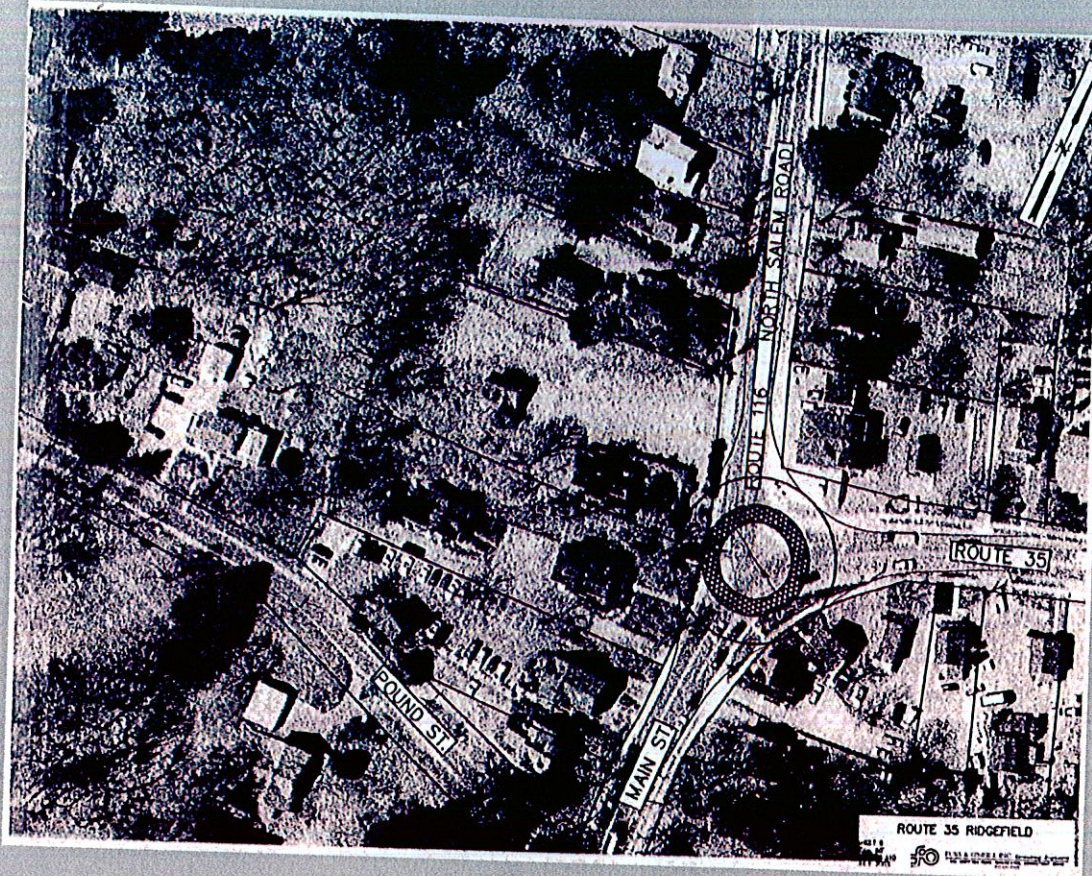
The PTC wrestled with a variety of options for this intersection. Similar to the Route 33 intersection, a roundabout and signalization were the major alternatives evaluated. A traffic signal warrant analysis was conducted in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), 2003 Edition. Results from the warrant analysis concluded that existing and future intersection traffic volumes do exceed the minimum vehicular volume warrants for Warrant 1: Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume, Warrant 2: Four-Hour Vehicular Volume, and Warrant 3, Peak Hour Vehicular Volume.]



Alternative Solution Roundabout

Both signalization and a roundabout perform better than the current intersection configuration. As with the Route 33 intersection, the PTC was split on the pros and cons of these alternatives. Some felt that a roundabout at Route 33 and Route 116 offered an opportunity to introduce an attractive "gateway" treatment to Ridgfield Center at the northern end of downtown, while handling traffic efficiently and safely. Others on the PTC worried about the grade changes at Route 116 and the potential land takings, which are likely to be more severe here than at the Route 33 intersection. While the land taking at the Route 35/33 intersection would only require a sliver of land, the taking at Route 116 would likely impact a larger area and several existing land uses.

In the end, the PTC decided that the land use requirements for a roundabout presented too much of an impact. They limited the recommendation at this intersection to monitoring conditions in the short-term and re-evaluating the need for signalization in the long-term.



Alternative Solution Roundabout

8.3 Recommendations

The following options in Table 6 and Figure 16 were developed for the Route 35/Route 116 intersection.

Table 6: Route 35/Route 116 (North Salem Road) Recommendations

| Recommendations | Benefits |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor conditions in the near-term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current character until need for action becomes more pronounced |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-evaluate potential for signalization in the long-term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signalization would reduce congestion and delay |

8.4 Access Management Recommendation

There are numerous residential as well as commercial driveways very close to the intersection of Route 35 with Route 116 (North Salem Road) as well as ongoing new construction in the immediate area. In particular, the frontage at Joe's Corner invites drivers to access the business anywhere on the east corner where Route 35 and Route 116 meet. This increases the opportunity for vehicle conflicts added to the hazardous conditions presented by the intersection itself.

Curb-cut recommendations in this location focus on reducing the number of curb-cuts within the functional area of the intersection. The *Route 35 Curb-cut Plan* also recommends clarifying access patterns to Joe's Corner to the extent possible, as this is a particularly troublesome access management situation. The recommendations for long-term changes to the existing arrangement of driveways and for suitable locations of new driveways to serve currently undeveloped properties in the vicinity of the intersection of Route 35 with Route 116 are provided in Figure 17.

Route 116 (North Salem Road)

Monitor conditions in near-term and conduct study of
signalization for long term

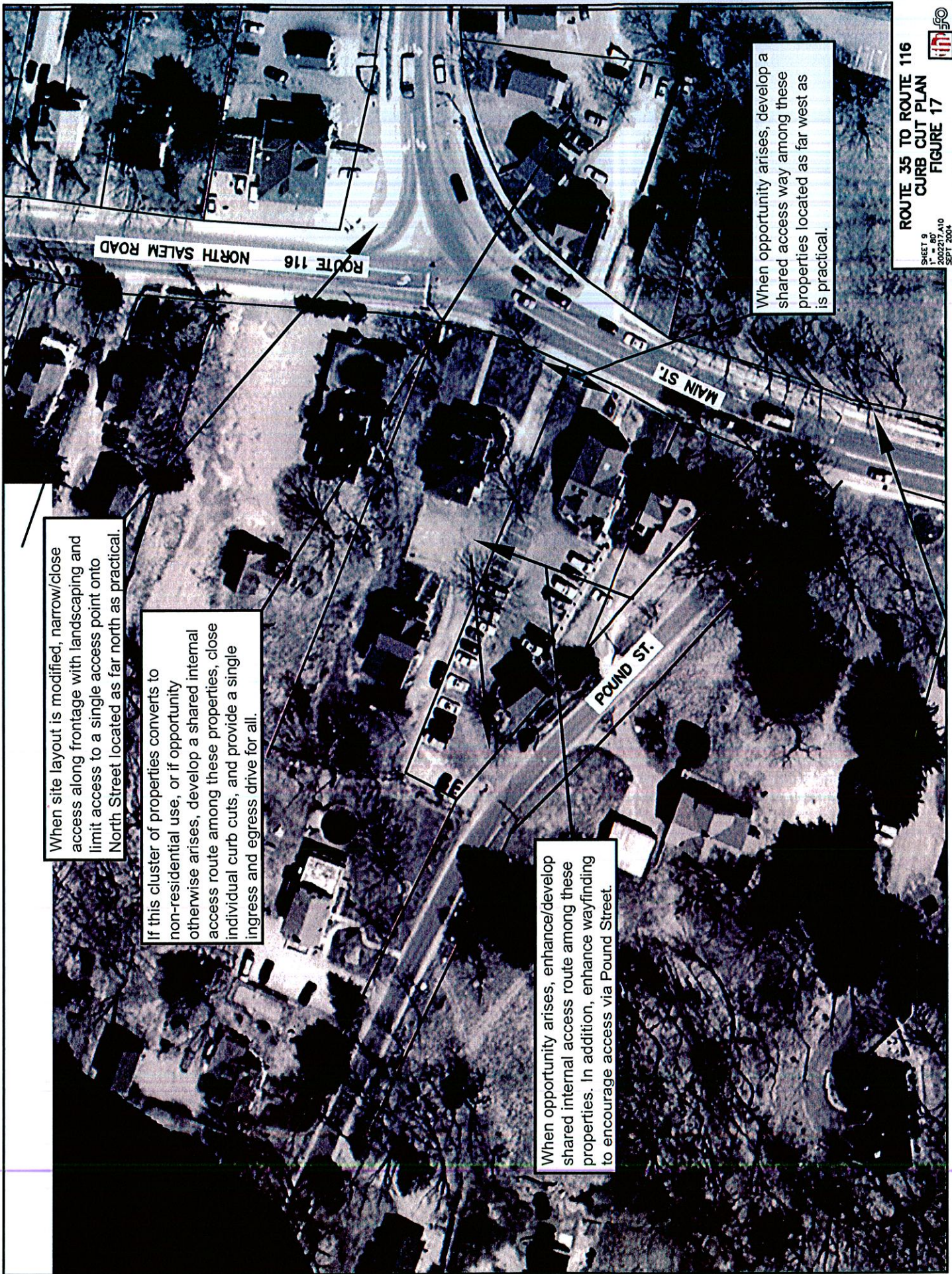


ROUTE 35 AT ROUTE 116
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

FIGURE 16

SHEET 8
1"=200'
2002/10/10
JUNE 2004





When site layout is modified, narrow/close access along frontage with landscaping and limit access to a single access point onto North Street located as far north as practical.

If this cluster of properties converts to non-residential use, or if opportunity otherwise arises, develop a shared internal access route among these properties, close individual curb cuts, and provide a single ingress and egress drive for all.

When opportunity arises, enhance/develop shared internal access route among these properties. In addition, enhance wayfinding to encourage access via Pound Street.

When opportunity arises, develop a shared access way among these properties located as far west as is practical.



9.0 ROUTE 116 TO COPPS HILL/FARMINGVILLE ROADS [COPPS HILL AREA]

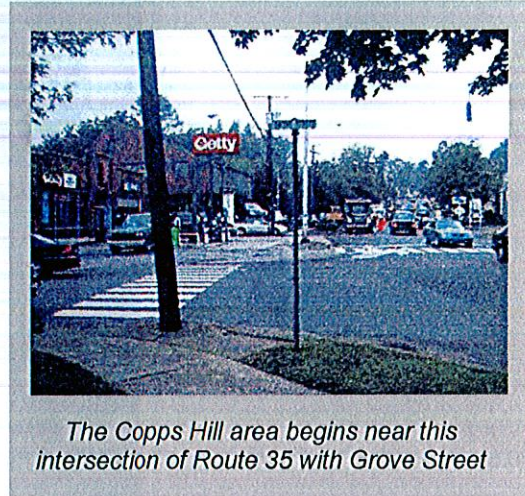
9.1 Existing Conditions

For this study, the section of Route 35 (Danbury Road) from Route 116 to Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road is defined as the Copps Hill area. This section of the corridor can be described as more densely developed, lined with banks, retail stores, business offices, restaurants, gas stations, and a commercial-retail complex known as the Copps Hill Shopping Center.

Transportation Features

Route 35 in this section is wider than elsewhere in the corridor. Turning lanes are provided for both left and right turning vehicles at signalized intersections. As part of this study, the following four intersections were evaluated.

- Grove Street
- South Street
- Copps Hill Plaza Driveway
- Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road



The pedestrian environment in the Copps Hill Area includes some sidewalks, marked crosswalks, pedestrian actuated signals at the signalized intersections, and pedestrian signage indicating proximity to a pedestrian crossing area. The sidewalks that are available in many locations are on both sides of the roadway and range from 2 to 4 feet in width. There isn't much pedestrian activity in the Copps Hill area. Though this may be due in part to the fact that sidewalks are not continuous, are often in poor condition, and the speed and volume of traffic discourages crossing the road.

Crash Summary

The crash data collected for the corridor shows a total of 616 crashes during the past six years in the Copps Hill area. This area had the highest number of crashes (267) of any of the corridor sections within the analysis period. The specific locations of a high number of crashes included:

- Segment between Roberts Lane and Island Hill Road (just north of Route 35/Route 116)
 - 88 crashes, 14% of total crashes
 - 1 crash involved a pedestrian
 - Common types of crashes

- Rear end (50%)
- Turn intersecting paths (20%)
- Head on (11%)
- Segment between South Street and Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road
 - 89 crashes, 14% of total crashes
 - 2 crashes involved pedestrians
 - Common types of crashes
 - Rear end (42%)
 - Turn intersecting paths (24%)
 - Turn same (10%)
- Route 35 & Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road intersection
 - 87 crashes, 14% of total crashes
 - Common types of crashes
 - Rear end (46%)
 - Side swipe (14%)
 - Head on (11%)

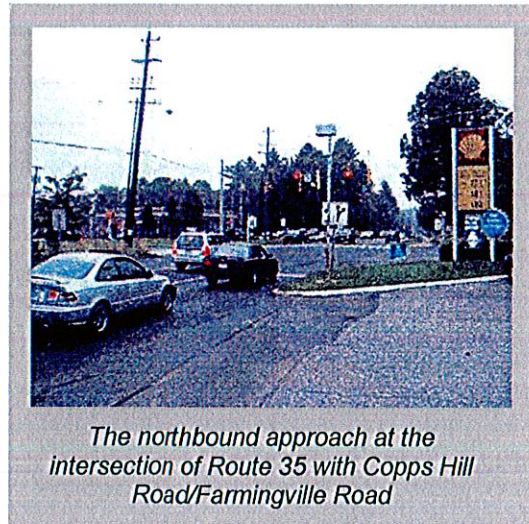
The intersection of Route 35 with South Street also had 39 crashes during the same period with the most common types of being rear ends (56%) and head on crashes (18%).

9.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

Current vehicular and pedestrian travel demand within the Copps Hill area creates high traffic volumes and number of turning movements due to the retail and commercial development there. Current congestion and delay (LOS E or F) exists for vehicles turning onto Route 35 from South Street during the evening and Saturday mid-day peak periods. Also, through-moving and left turning vehicles on Farmingville Road experience long delays (LOS E or F) during the evening and Saturday mid-day peak periods.

In addition to the above-mentioned movements, as traffic volumes increase (approximately 1% per year), it is expected that vehicles on Route 35 southbound and turning onto Route 35 from Grove Street, Farmingville Road, and Copps Hill Road will also experience delays due to congestion by the year 2025 during the morning, evening,



The northbound approach at the intersection of Route 35 with Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road

and/or Saturday mid-day peak periods. Additional detailed results from the traffic analysis are provided in Appendix B.

Numerous left turns from Route 35 throughout this segment impede traffic flow, resulting in increased congestion and delays for through travel on Route 35. Many businesses in this segment of Route 35 have two or more driveway entrances, some of which have poorly defined frontages and are not signed, so that drivers are forced to decide which spots are for entering and which for exiting. The overall large number of curb cuts creates many turning conflict points, as well as greatly increased driver confusion and accident potential.

The southbound left turn lane at the signalized intersection of Route 35 with Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road does not provide a green arrow left-turn phase, making it difficult to make left turns due to the heavy through volume of traffic on Route 35.

The Adam Broderick/Youngs Hardware Drive intersection was not initially identified for detailed analysis. However, field observations and comments from the public suggest that there are a significant number of left turns into the drive from Route 35 northbound and southbound. These left turns impede travel, resulting in increased congestion and delays for through-moving vehicles on Route 35.

The Adam Broderick/Youngs Hardware Drive has been identified by the Ridgefield Planning and Zoning as a potential site for signalization. Also, an eventual connection to the South Street by-pass has long been considered.

Pedestrian Access

The sporadic pedestrian amenities in the Copps Hill Area such as intermittent sidewalks and crosswalks provide irregular walking access to the various land uses. Sidewalks are discontinuous and many are in disrepair. The numerous curb cuts interrupt the pedestrian infrastructure, and overgrown vegetation obstructs the functional width of the sidewalks in some areas. While pedestrian signage is provided to caution drivers of pedestrian crossings, these signs are outdated and are in need of modification to current standards.

The PTC also felt that an additional crosswalk is needed at the intersection of Route 35 with Grove Street to provide direct access to the north side even though there is an existing crosswalk. However, ConnDOT feels that since the existing crosswalk on Route 35 is located in the middle of the intersectional area, a new crosswalk on the north leg is not necessary. After further discussions, the PTC felt strongly that a crosswalk should be retained in this traffic improvement plan to further enhance pedestrian amenities. An exclusive pedestrian phase will be added in State Project 174-285 for crossing both Route 35 and Grove Street.



West side walkway of Route 35 is narrow. Overgrown vegetation also constricts the functional width of the sidewalk.



Sidewalk on the east side of Route 35 ends abruptly at A&P shopping center parking lot.

Aesthetics

The historic character and scenic views that are very prominent along most sections of the Route 35 corridor are interrupted in the Copps Hill area. There are few aesthetic landscape features in the area such as stonewalls, brick paving, cobblestones, street trees, streetlights, and planting beds. The distinct and separate environment of this segment of the corridor abruptly disrupts the otherwise consistent community character along Route 35 through to Route 7.

Continuing the same streetscape and aesthetics from Ridgefield Center through the Copps Hill area would visually link the two areas and enhance the aesthetic and historic ambiance that characterizes Ridgefield as a whole.

Summary of Issues North Salem Road to Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road

- Delay on Route 35 and intersecting streets
- Left turns interrupt through movement
- A high number of crashes
- Many and poorly defined curb cuts
- Lack of signage in and out of parking lots
- Sidewalk disrepair
- Discontinuous sidewalks
- Outdated pedestrian signage
- An additional crosswalk is needed at Grove Street
- Visually inconsistent with both rural and town center character

9.3 Recommendations

The PTC worked with the study consultant team to select the improvements to be recommended for implementation. The recommended improvements are shown in Table 7 and Figures 18-20.

**Table 7: Copps Hill Area (From Grove Street to Copps Hill Road)
Recommendations**

| Location | Recommendations | Benefits |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Grove Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add crosswalk on north side on Route 35 Upgrade pedestrian signal and optimize signal timings (<i>Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-285.</i>) Restripe Route 35 northbound for right turns onto Grove Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces jaywalking Improves pedestrian safety Reduces delay Improves pedestrian connectivity and safety |
| Adam Broderick/Youngs Hardware Drive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study the possibility for signalization and providing both right and left-turn lanes on Route 35 Study new through-road from the Adam Broderick/Youngs Hardware Drive to the South Street bypass in conjunction with signalization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces congestion and delay Improves overall traffic operations Reduces delay for through-moving vehicles on Route 35 |
| Copps Hill Plaza | Optimize signal timing in coordination with improvements to add a left turn arrow southbound at the intersection of Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road (<i>Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-298.</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces delay |
| Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restripe southbound Route 35 for left, through, and right turn lane Add left turn arrow southbound on Route 35 (<i>Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-298.</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides turning lanes and reduces delay and congestion Reduces delay and congestion |
| Pedestrian Features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve sidewalks between Grove Street and South Street Add continuous sidewalk on east side | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves pedestrian circulation Improves pedestrian circulation Reduces crossing demand to sidewalk on west side Minimizes vehicle and pedestrian conflict |

Table 7: Copps Hill Area (From Grove Street to Copps Hill Road) Recommendations (continued)

| Location | Recommendations | Benefits |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Aesthetics | Add street trees from Grove Street to Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extends character of Town Center into Copps Hill • Provides traffic calming effect |

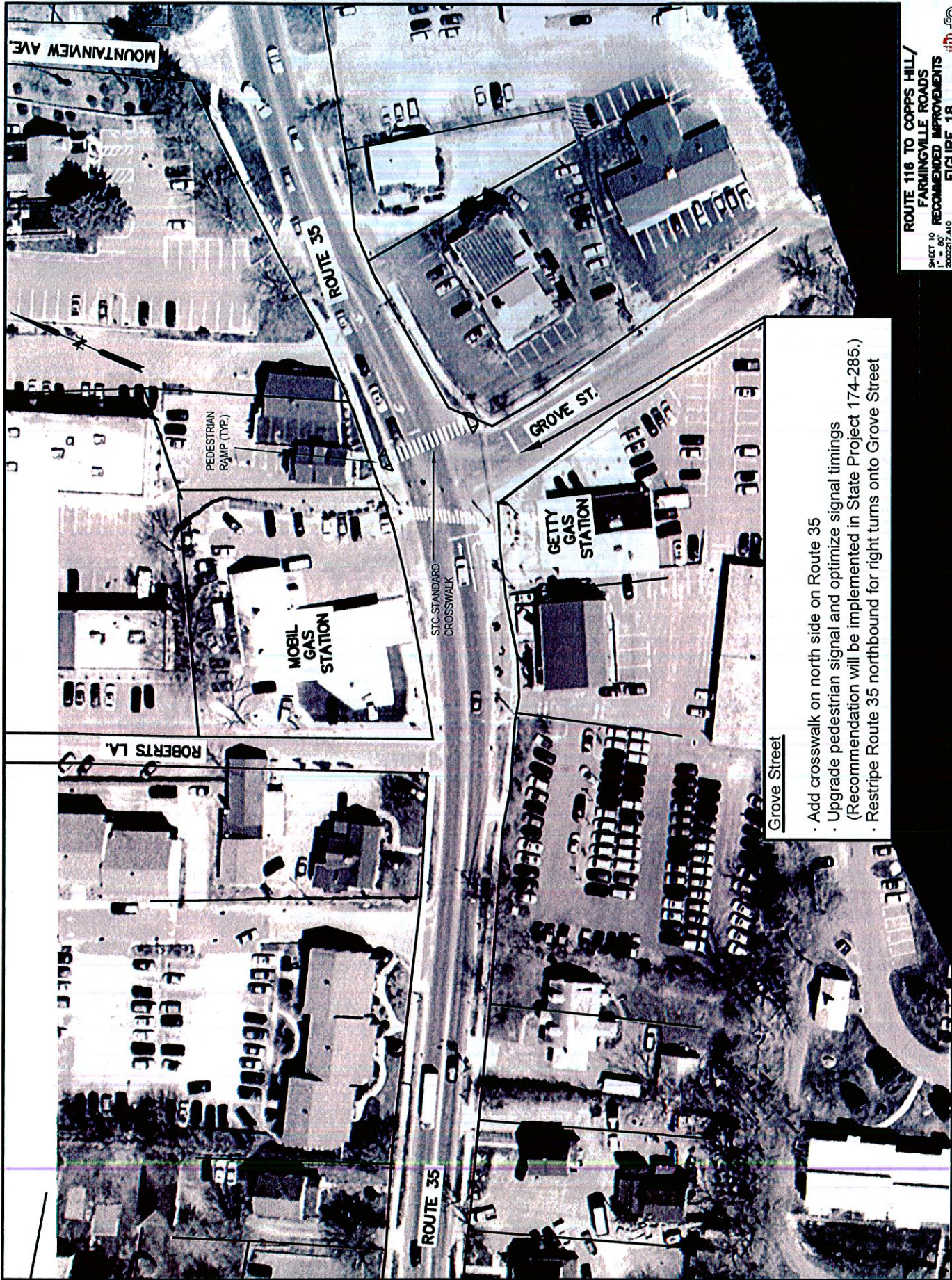


Copps Hill Area - Addition of street trees from Grove Street to Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road would extend some of the character and ambiance of Ridgfield Center to the Copps Hill Area

9.4 Access Management Recommendation

As noted above, this section of the corridor is heavily developed with numerous curb-cuts. Many of the driveways serving businesses in the Copps Hill area are poorly defined, lack clear signage, and have minimal distance separating them from adjacent drives. All of these features can lead to excessive turning conflict points.

The recommended curb-cut plan for the Copps Hill area focuses on clarifying driveway openings and directional signage, opportunities to consolidate driveways, reducing the overall number of driveways, and improving internal circulation among businesses. Long-term curb cut recommendations are provided in Figures 21 - 24.



Grove Street

- Add crosswalk on north side on Route 35
- Upgrade pedestrian signal and optimize signal timings
(Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-285.)
- Restripe Route 35 northbound for right turns onto Grove Street

ROUTE 116 TO CORPS HILL/
FARMINGVILLE ROADS
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS
FIGURE 18

SHEET 10
1" = 80'
2002217.A10
JUNE 2004



Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road

- Restripe southbound Route 35 for left, through and right turn lanes
- Add a left turn arrow southbound on Route 35 (Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-298)

Copps Hill Plaza

Optimize signal timing in coordination with ConnDOT improvements to add a left turn arrow southbound at the intersection of Farmingville Road/Copps Hill Road (Recommendation will be implemented in State Project 174-298)

NOTE: AERIAL PHOTO DOES NOT REFLECT THE CURRENT SITE LAYOUT AT COPPS HILL PLAZA

LANE MARKING SIGN

PAMBY'S SERVICE CENTER

COPPS HILL ROAD

ROUTE 35

FARMINGVILLE ROAD

SHELL GAS STATION

SHOPPING CENTER

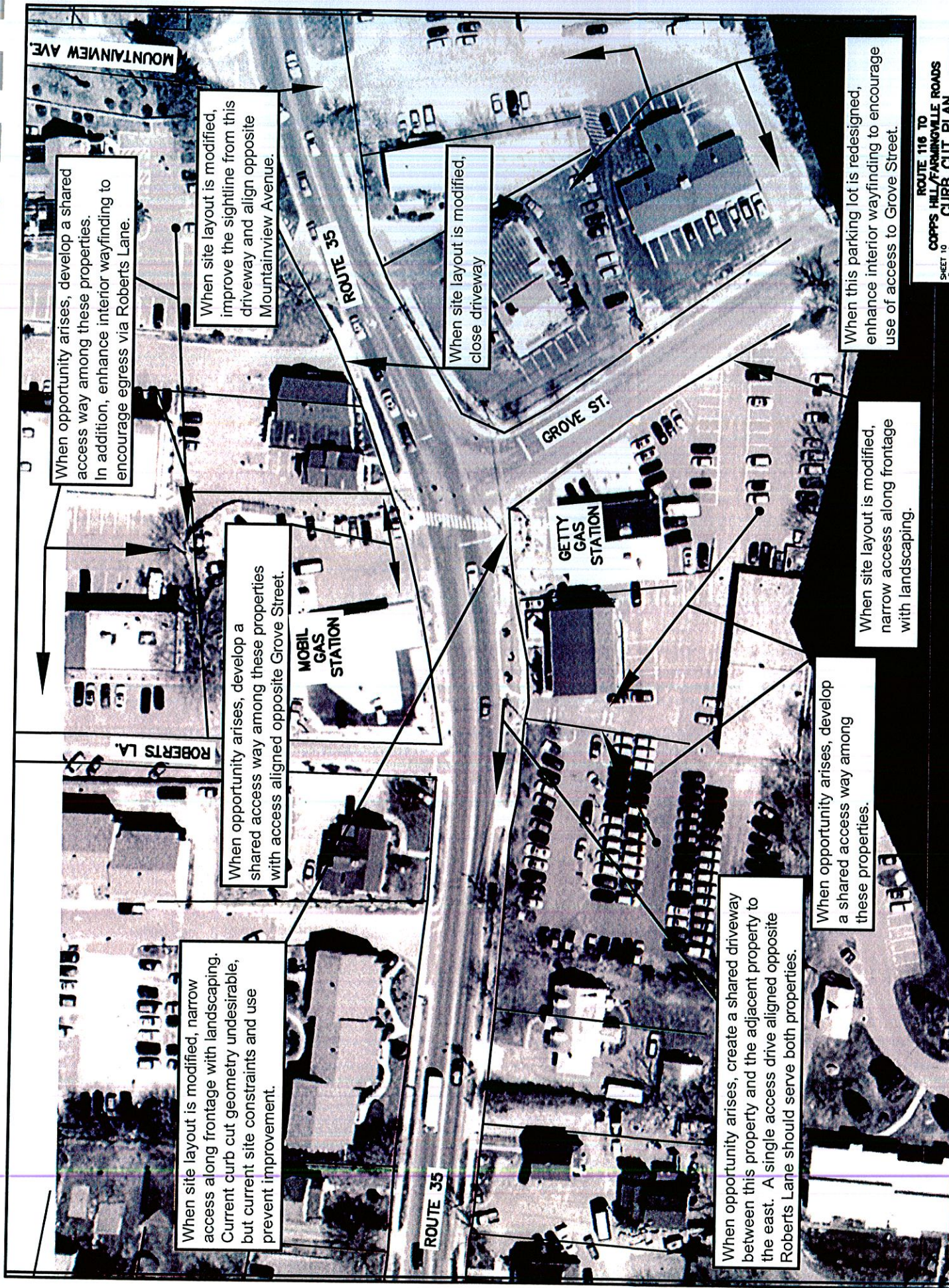
ROUTE 118 TO COPPS HILL FARMINGVILLE ROADS

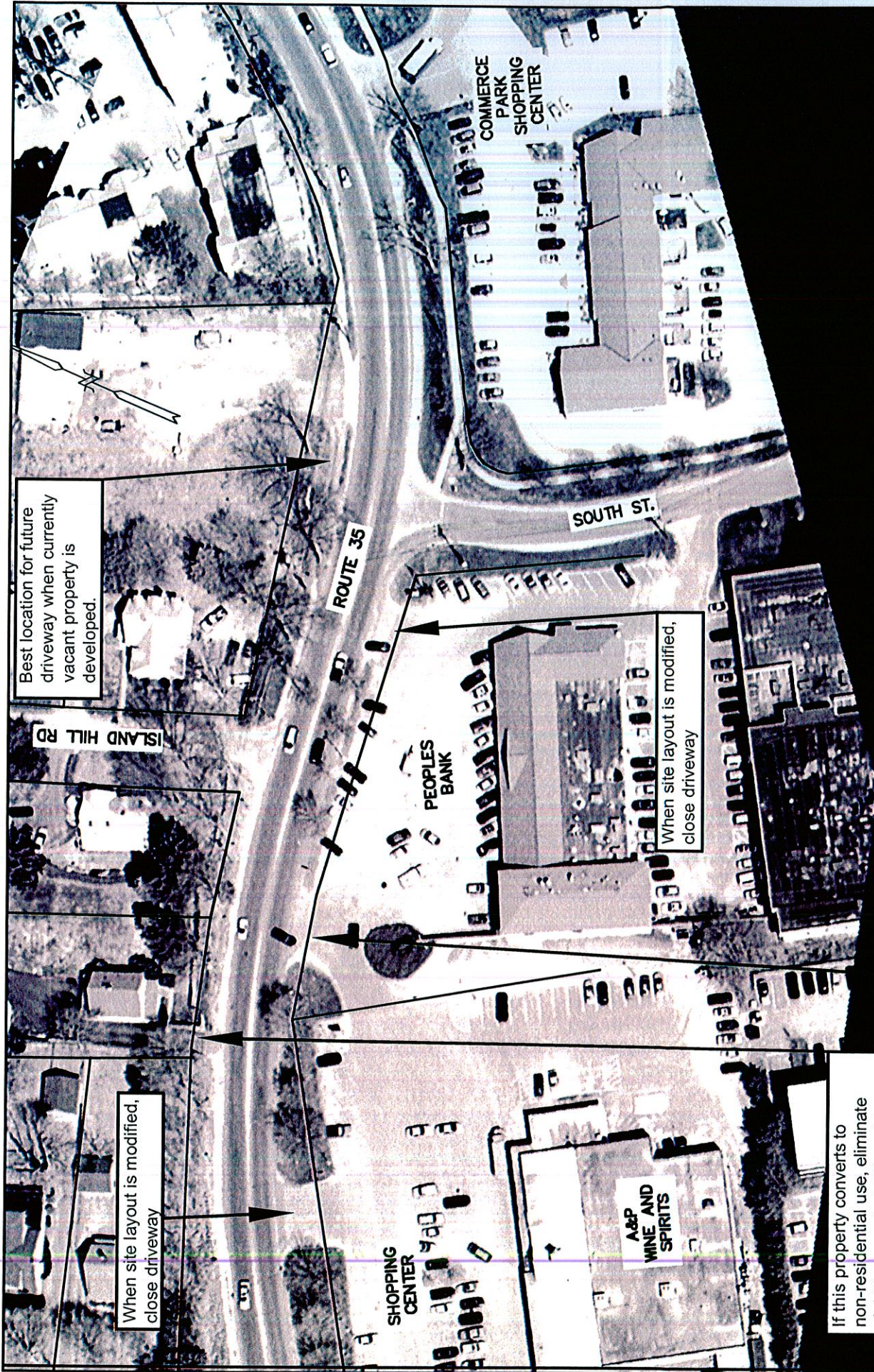
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

SHEET 13
1" = 80'
2002/27/10
JUNE 2004

FIGURE 20







Best location for future driveway when currently vacant property is developed.

ISLAND HILL RD

When site layout is modified, close driveway

ROUTE 35

PEOPLES BANK

SOUTH ST.

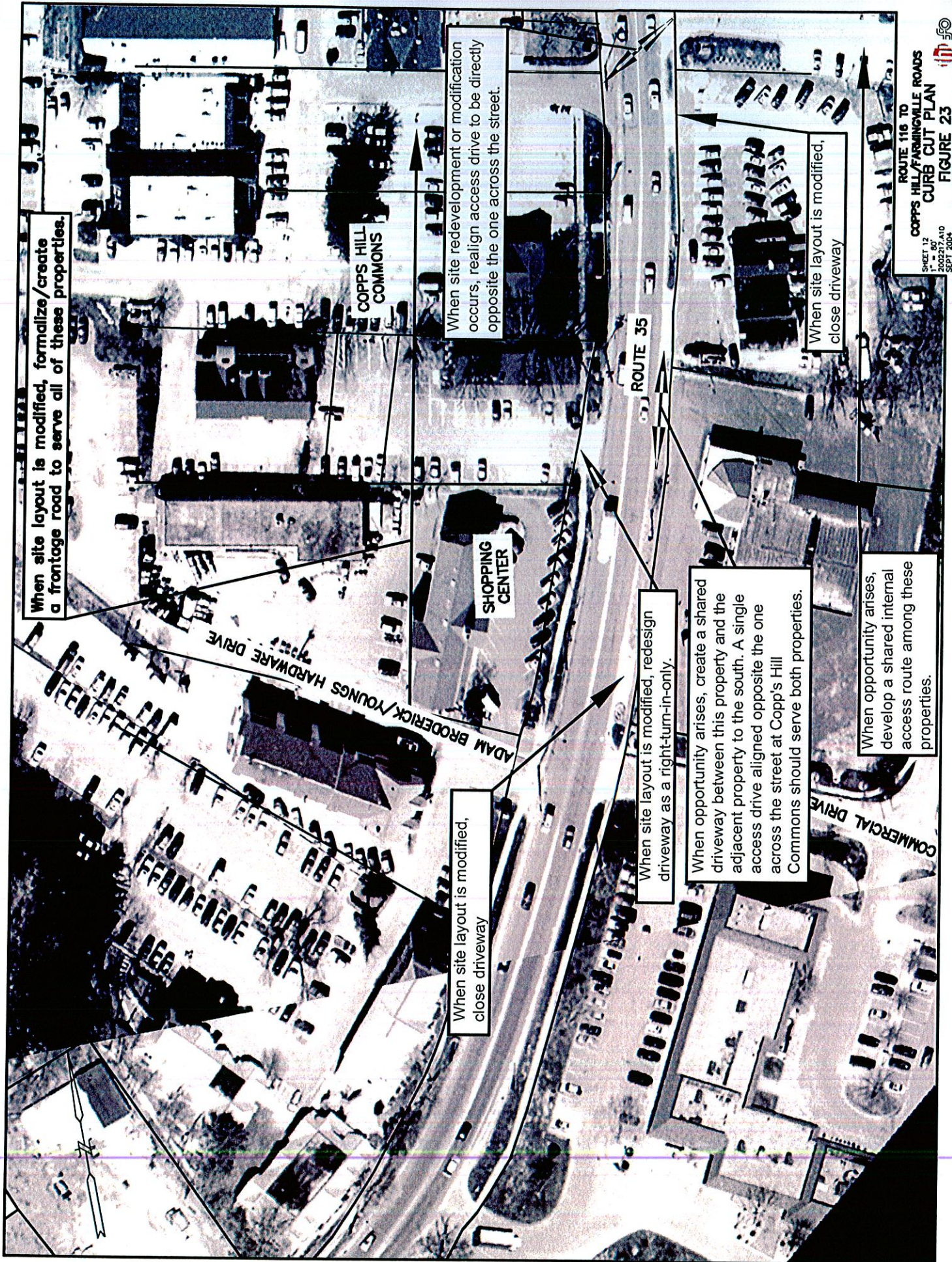
When site layout is modified, close driveway

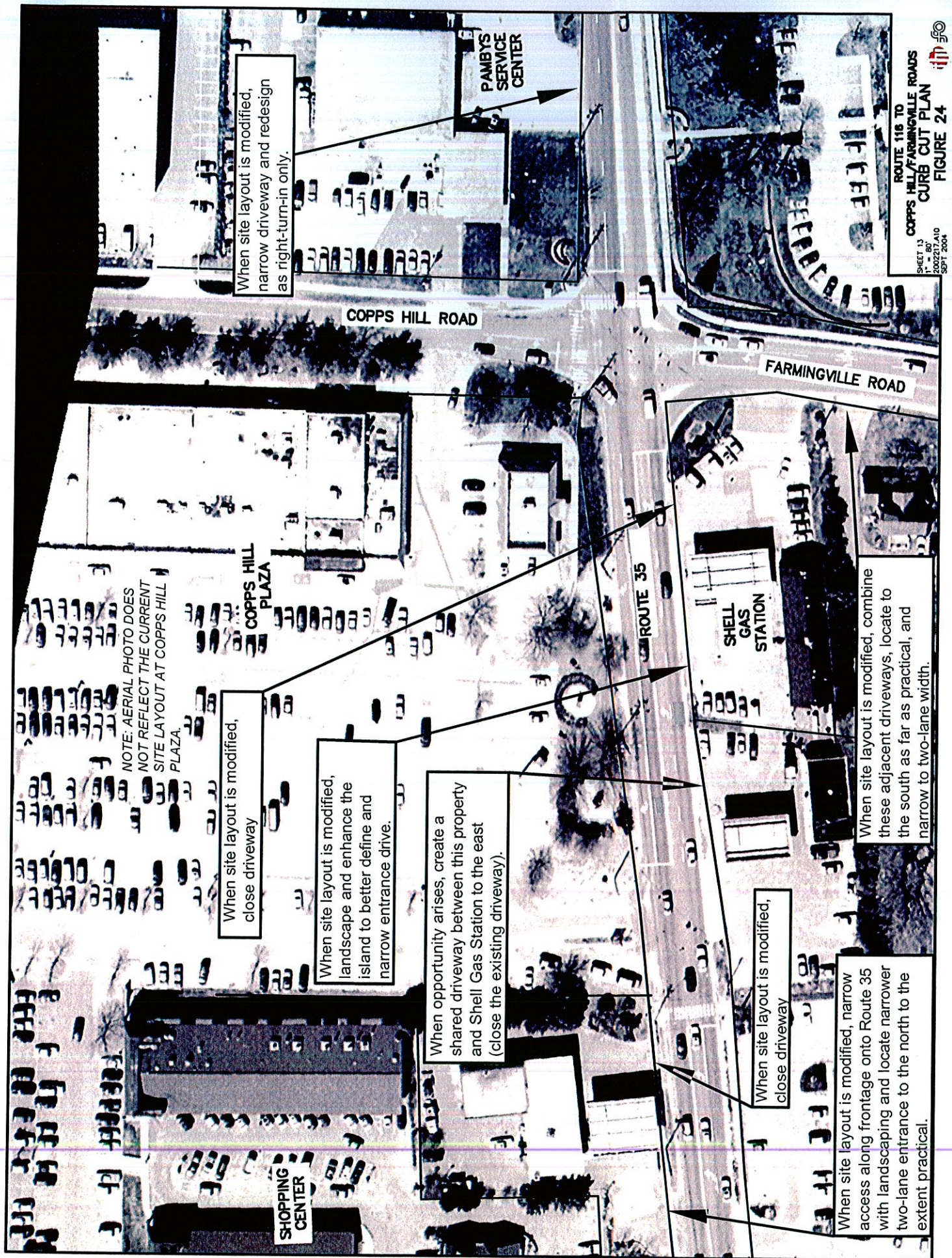
SHOPPING CENTER

A&P WINE AND SPIRITS

If this property converts to non-residential use, eliminate sightline constraint from driveway.

This access currently has pavement markings for one-way-in travel. Recommend adding curbing and signage to more strongly restrict use as an exit.





When site layout is modified, narrow driveway and redesign as right-turn-in only.

PAMBY'S SERVICE CENTER

COPPS HILL ROAD

FARMINGVILLE ROAD

ROUTE 35

SHELL GAS STATION

NOTE: AERIAL PHOTO DOES NOT REFLECT THE CURRENT SITE LAYOUT AT COPPS HILL PLAZA.

When site layout is modified, close driveway

When site layout is modified, landscape and enhance the island to better define and narrow entrance drive.

When opportunity arises, create a shared driveway between this property and Shell Gas Station to the east (close the existing driveway).

When site layout is modified, close driveway

When site layout is modified, narrow access along frontage onto Route 35 with landscaping and locate narrower two-lane entrance to the north to the extent practical.

When site layout is modified, combine these adjacent driveways, locate to the south as far as practical, and narrow to two-lane width.

10.0 COPPS HILL/FARMINGVILLE ROADS TO ROUTE 7

10.1 Existing Conditions

The section of Route 35 from Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road to Route 7, the terminus of Route 35 is a predominantly rural area reflecting characteristics similar to the southern end of Route 35. The town's recreation center is located just north of the Copps Hill area.

Transportation Features

Route 35 in this section has several horizontal and vertical curves with shoulder widths ranging from 1 to 6 feet. The most common features in this section are low stonewalls and mature landscaping.

Most of the cross streets are stop sign controlled except for the signalized intersections at Limestone Road/Haviland Road and Route 7. The intersection with Buck Hill Road operates with a flashing beacon. The following four intersections were evaluated.

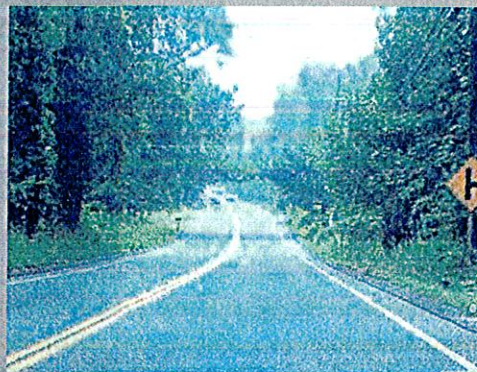
- Limestone Road/Haviland Road
- Old Danbury Road
- Buck Hill Road
- Route 7

Sidewalks terminate just north of Copps Hill Road, though pedestrian crosswalks are located at the intersection of Route 35 with Route 7.

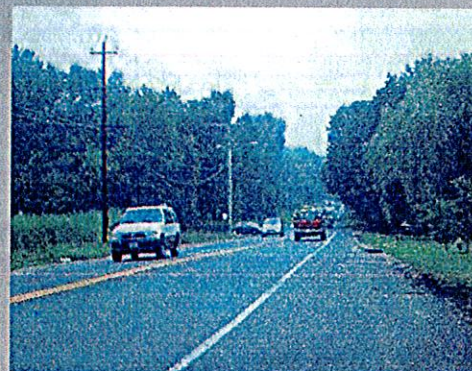
10.2 Issues

Traffic Flow

Vehicles traveling northbound on Route 35 currently experience a long delay (LOS E or F) at both signalized intersections in this section of Route 35 during the evening peak period. As traffic volumes increase (approximately 1% per year), it is expected that northbound through movement on Route 35 will continue to experience delay as will the eastbound through



Route 35 north of Copps Hill Road/Farmingville Road looking north



Route 35 between Copps Hill Road and Route 7 with striped shoulders approximately 6 feet wide



Ridgefield Bank frontage typifies community aesthetics with stone wall, landscaping, etc.

Table 8: Copps Hill/Farmingville Roads to Route 7 Recommendations

| Locations | Recommendations | Benefits |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Recreation Site Driveway | Sliver widening on Route 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides additional pavement space for vehicles on Route 35 to by-pass to the right of the vehicle turning left onto the site driveway from Route 35 Reduces delay for through-moving vehicles on Route 35 |
| Buck Hill Road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study removal of the crest and vegetation on Route 35 southbound to improve sight distance Remove limbs and brush on Route 35 southbound to improve sight lines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves sight distance thus reduces accident potential |
| Route 7 | Optimize signal timing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces delay |

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The alternative improvement strategies identified in this study were identified as either high, medium, or low priority based on a number of factors including safety, traffic flow priority, cost, and the level of perceived need for the improvement to the Town. The lead agency and/or coordinating agency targeted to move the recommendation forward was also identified. Table 9 lists the improvements by implementation schedule and priority classification and includes a planning level cost estimate for each improvement.

The actions recommended as part of this *Route 35 Traffic Improvement Plan* should be implemented through a cooperative effort among HVCEO, Town of Ridgefield, the Ridgefield business community, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The following steps are recommended for implementation of this plan.

- The Town of Ridgefield should review and formally endorse or accept the corridor recommendations
- An oversight committee or an agency be designated by the Town to implement the study recommendations
- The committee would establish a regular schedule to meet and discuss steps to maintain and monitor progress, reporting to the Town of Ridgefield .
- The Town of Ridgefield should coordinate with HVCEO in identifying priority projects for inclusion in the Regional Transportation Plan and ConnDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.
- The Town of Ridgefield and HVCEO should continue coordination with ConnDOT to initiate the feasibility and preliminary design studies called for in the plan recommendations
- Funding sources for those highest priority projects should be identified by the implementing agencies