

TOLLAND VILLAGE AREA

Overview

The Tolland Planning and Zoning Commission requested an evaluation of planning, design, and regulatory strategies for what is referred to as the Tolland Village Area (the northern quadrants of the Interstate 84 / Route 195 interchange). In preparing this booklet, we reviewed the December 2009 Plan and supporting materials, conducted a site walk of key properties, and met with many of the landowners and tenants to hear their ideas, thoughts, and concerns.

The Booklet provides:

- An overview of key issues for the subject area
- Details on an area by area basis of opportunities and challenges
- A summary evaluation / assessment
- Options for the next steps



Summary of Initial Assessment



AREA A:

- Minor physical constraints
- Sight line issue on 195
- Need to resolve Town-owned land
- Shallow buffer to adjacent houses
- 4 parcels
- 2 owners plus Town
- 1 owner (2 parcels) is key

Likely Potential
Near Term

AREA B:

- Structural capability of land is unclear
- Lack of direct access / visibility to 195
- Affected by I-84 noise
- 1 parcel
- 1 owner

Likely Potential
Mid – Term

AREA C:

- Existing operating businesses
- Auto-oriented uses
- Small parcel sizes
- Owner/tenant reluctance
- 3 parcels
- 2 owners

Likely Potential
Long Term



AREA D:

- Existing operating businesses
- Auto-oriented uses
- Small parcel sizes
- Owner/tenant reluctance
- 3 parcels
- 2 owners plus State DOT
- DOT property may be key

**Likely Potential
Long Term**

AREA E:

- Topography is challenging
- Bedrock is challenging
- Earthwork may be expensive and time consuming
- Noise from I-84
- 4 parcels
- 3 owners plus State DOT

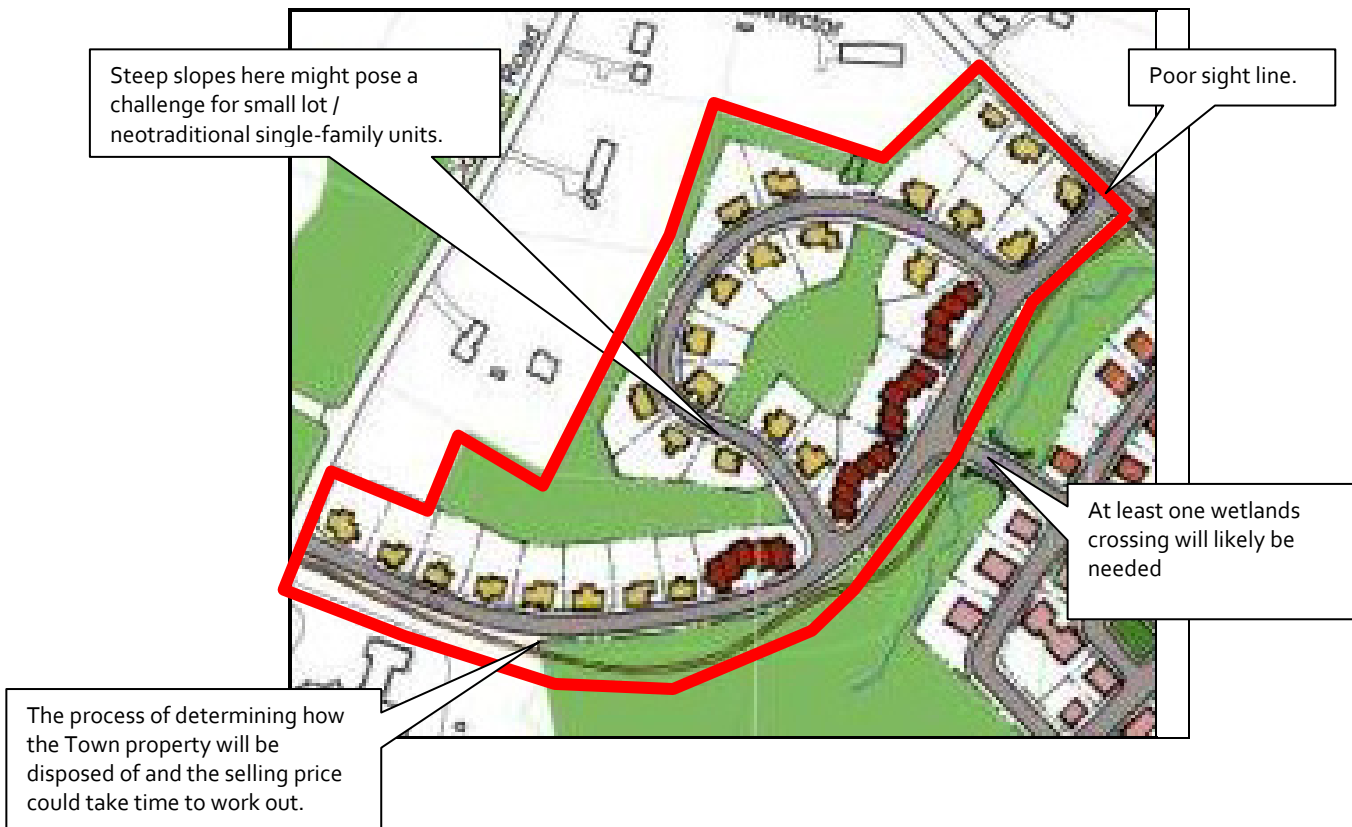
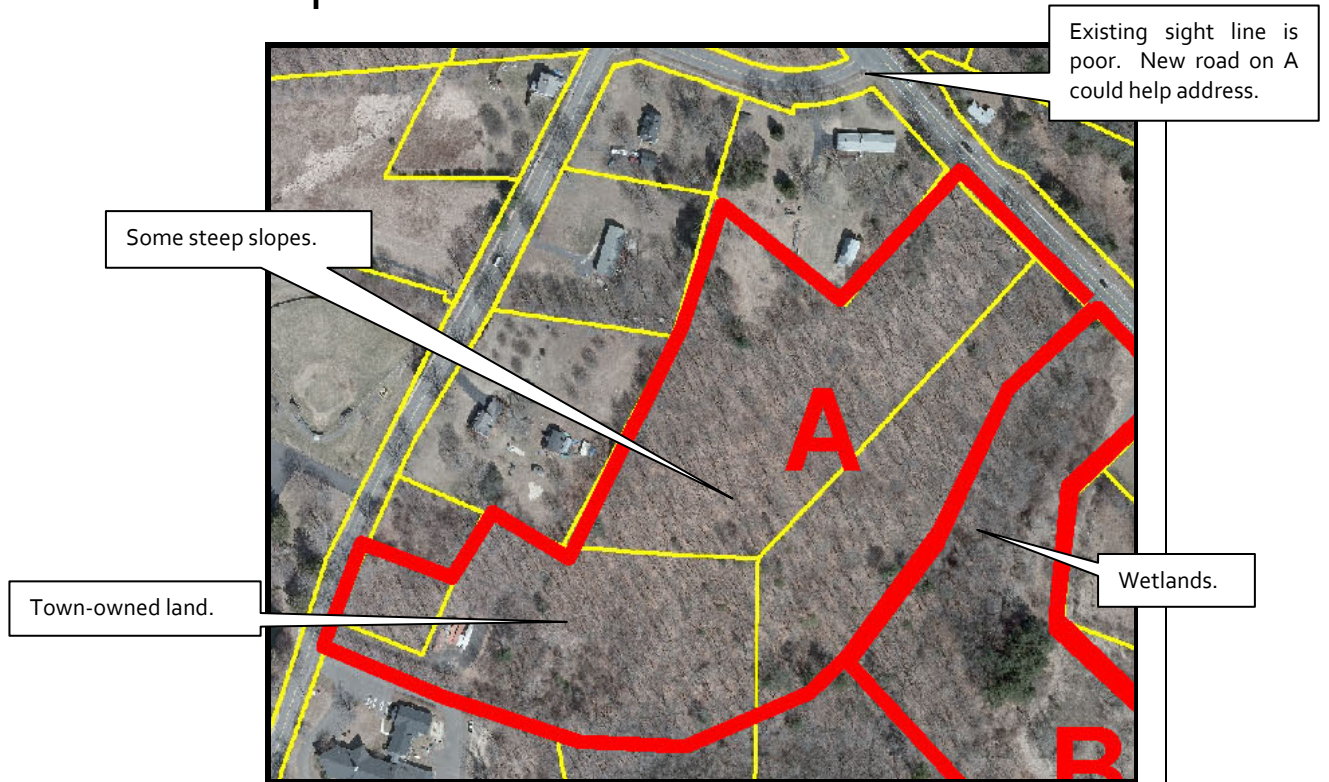
**Likely Potential
Mid to Long Term**

AREA F:

- Shallow buffer to adjacent houses
- Dependent upon E being built or would be a cul-de-sac neighborhood
- 1-3 parcels
- 1-3 owners

**Likely Potential
Near Term**

Area A – Maps and Plans



Area A – Findings and Recommendations

Depicted Use	Residential – small lot single family Residential – townhouse style multifamily
--------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

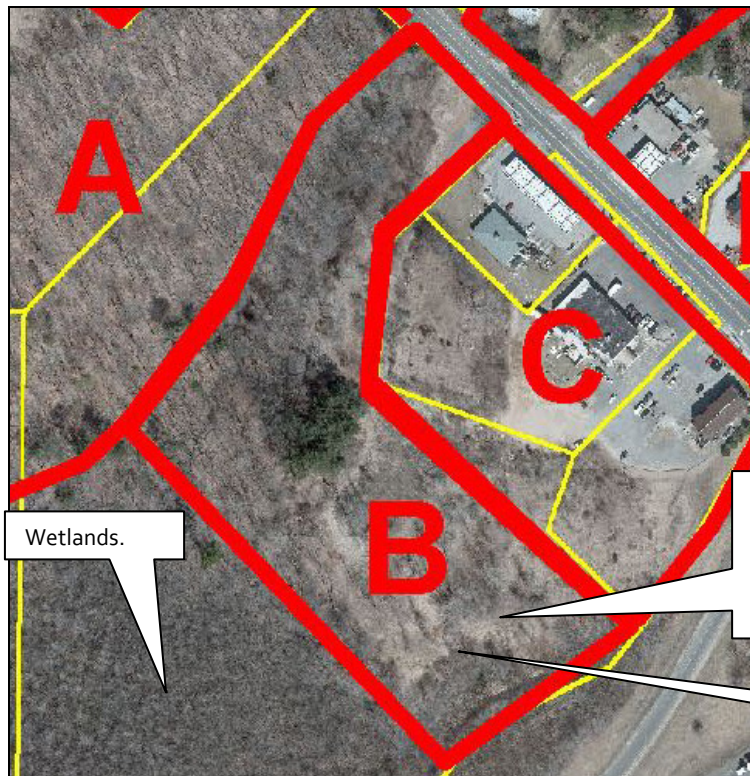
Inventory / Assessment

	Opportunities	Challenges
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property seems easily developable with minor wetlands constraints at edge of developable area and moderate slope constraints in middle of developable area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slopes may complicate a smaller lot or higher density approach
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major owner is interested in near-term development possibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town parcel appears integral to creating an overall neighborhood Process for including Town-owned land is not clear
Access / Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A roadway through to Cider Mill may improve traffic safety One-sided road may be attractive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sight line appears poor for depicted intersection at Route 195 Road connection to Area B needs to cross wetland / brook A through road to Cider Mill may become a “cut-through” One-sided road may be expensive
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewers available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current sewer allocation may need to be revised to support desired density
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate density residential could provide a transition between commercial and residential areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider buffer to adjacent residences may be desirable

Preliminary Recommendation(s) For Discussion

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with higher density residential concept (single-family and/or townhouse) Consider alternative intersection location at Route 195 Refine concept for this area (especially with wider buffer to adjacent houses) Determine desirability of road connection to Cider Mill Determine process for utilizing Town-owned land

Area B – Maps and Plans



Area B – Findings and Recommendations

Depicted Use	Limited mixed use, primarily residential
--------------	------------------------------------------

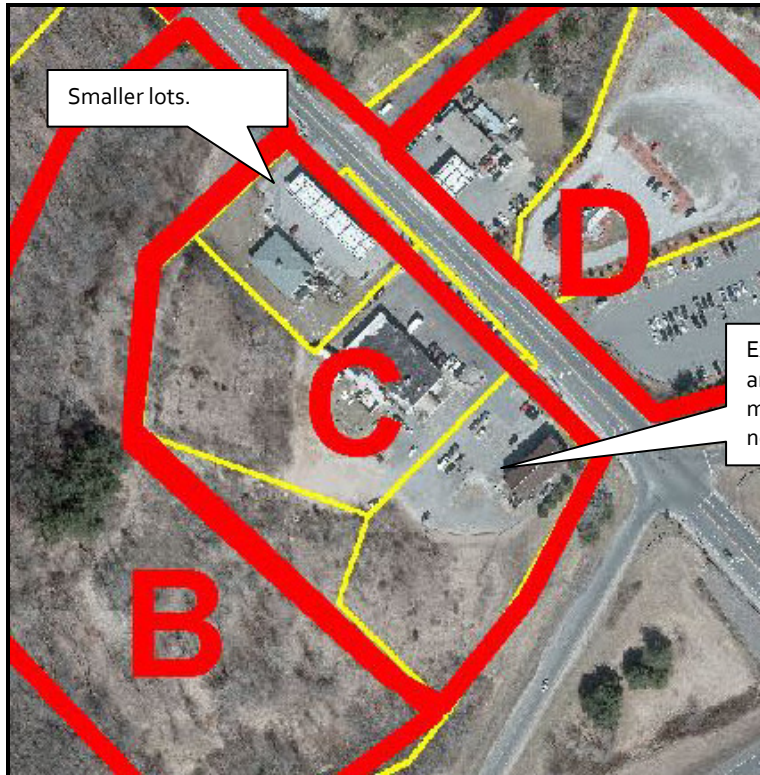
Inventory / Assessment

	Opportunities	Challenges
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No major grade / slope issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land appears to contain non-structural fill (debris, etc.) which may not support buildings, roads, or infrastructure Addressing structural fill issue may be expensive
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major owner is interested in near-term development possibilities 	
Access / Circulation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct access to Route 195 may be limited
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewers available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current sewer allocation may need to be revised to support desired density
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity / visibility to I-84 may be a significant opportunity Proximity to UConn may be a significant opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent uses may hinder some potential uses Lack of visibility from Rt. 195 may be an impediment to some uses Noise from I-84 may be an impediment to some uses

Preliminary Recommendation(s) For Discussion

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determine structural suitability Consider potential traffic access / circulation arrangement Consider one or more potential uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed use (retail / office / residential) Destination hospitality (hotel) Convenience hospitality (restaurant) Destination retail (typically does not require visibility) Convenience retail (typically requires visibility) Multi-family residential Refine concept for this area

Area C – Maps and Plans



Area C – Findings and Recommendations

Depicted Use	Mixed use – higher intensity
--------------	------------------------------

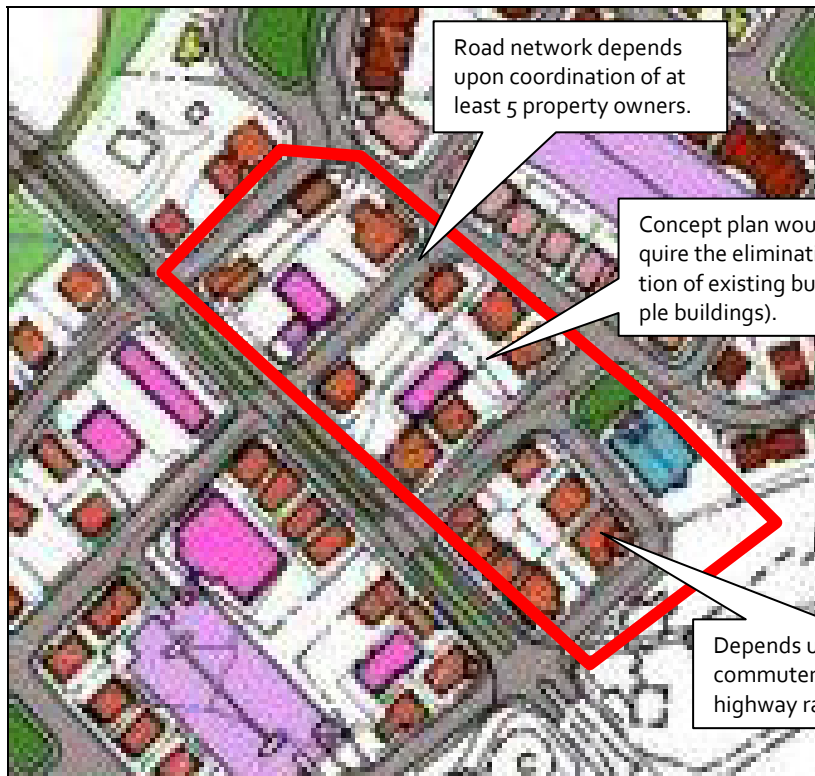
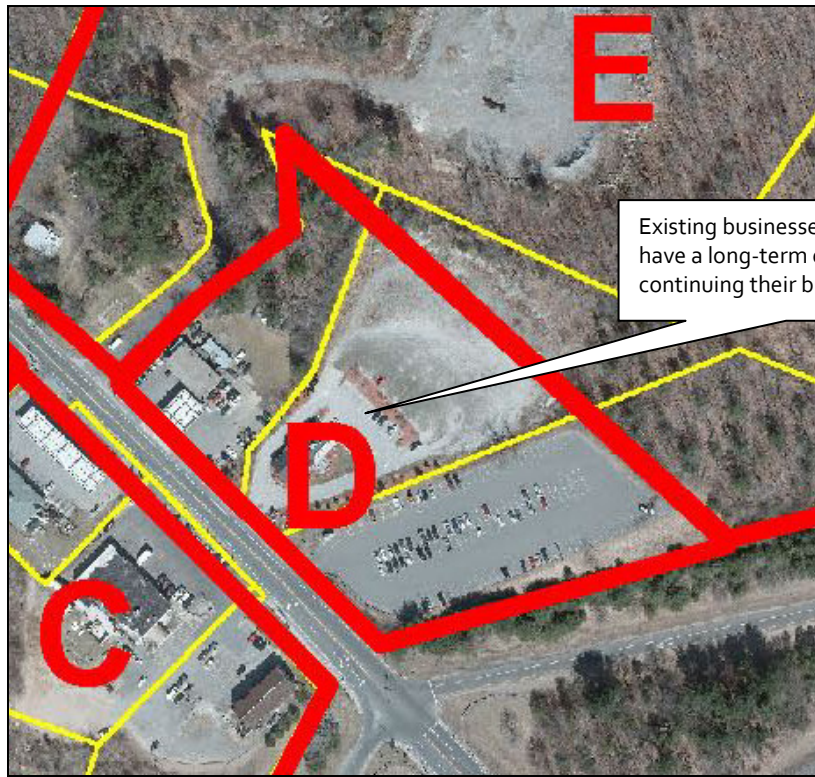
Inventory / Assessment

	Opportunities	Challenges
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No issues with slopes or grades. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental issues may exist on one or more sites due to historic uses
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much of area is under ownership of 1 person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owners / tenants are not presently interested in redevelopment possibilities Small parcels may make it difficult to offer incentives to redevelop Unclear if highway ramps will be relocated
Access / Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenient access to Route 195 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic volumes may make it more difficult to create a pedestrian friendly environment Road pattern shown in sketch plan may conflict with existing uses Parking structure crosses property lines
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewers available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current sewer allocation may need to be revised to support desired density
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to I-84 is a significant opportunity New roads can open up new opportunities for frontage and visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent uses may hinder some potential uses

Preliminary Recommendation(s) For Discussion

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consider potential traffic access / circulation arrangement Refine concept for this area and consider showing how existing uses / buildings could be retained / expanded as part of an overall scheme until redevelopment occurs (show additions to existing buildings rather than separate buildings in front of existing buildings)

Area D – Maps and Plans



Area D – Findings and Recommendations

Depicted Use	Mixed use – higher intensity
--------------	------------------------------

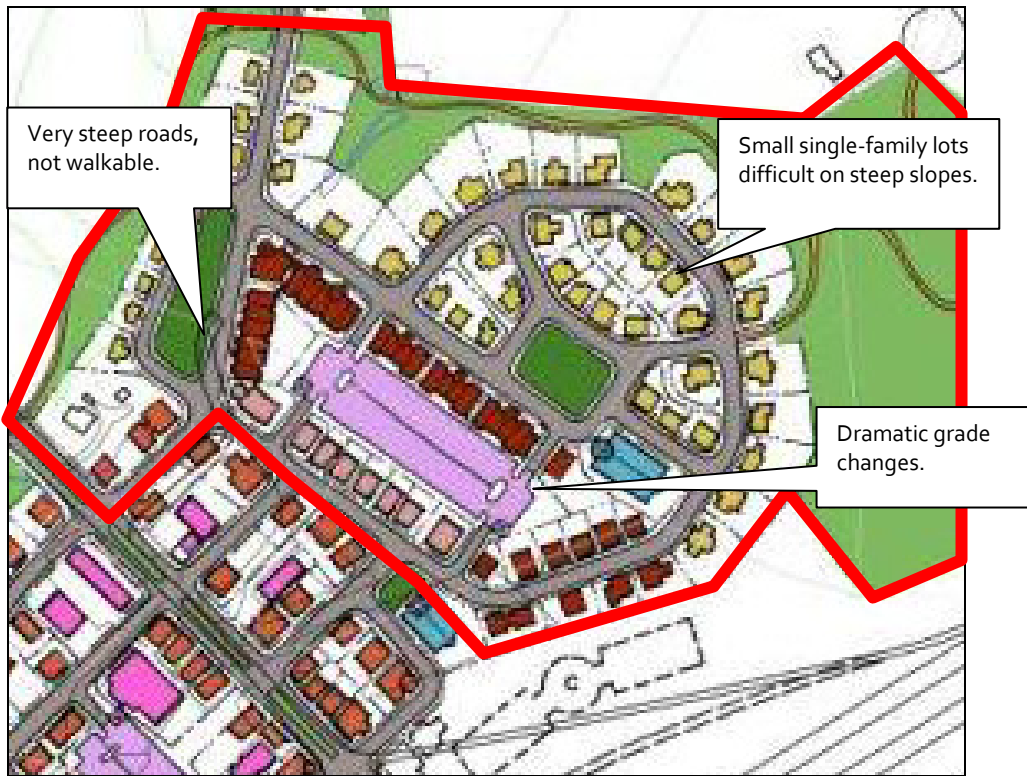
Inventory / Assessment

	Opportunities	Challenges
Physical		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slope toward rear of area and possible bedrock may pose development constraints Environmental issues may exist on one or more sites due to historic uses
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some owners have expressed interest in some form of additional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most owners / tenants are not presently interested in development possibilities prepared to date State commuter lot may have uncertain disposition Unclear if highway ramps will be relocated Small parcels may make it difficult to offer incentives to redevelop
Access / Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenient access to Route 195 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic volumes may make it more difficult to create a pedestrian friendly environment Road pattern shown in sketch plan may conflict with existing uses
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewers available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current sewer allocation may need to be revised to support desired density
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to I-84 is a significant opportunity New roads can open up new opportunities for frontage and visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear if parking structure is economically feasible (is required for relocation of commuter lot)

Preliminary Recommendation(s) For Discussion

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consider potential traffic access / circulation arrangement Look at concept plan options that are not dependent upon use of the commuter lot to understand impact if that parcel was not available at an opportune time. Refine concept for this area and consider showing how existing uses / buildings could be retained / expanded as part of an overall scheme until redevelopment occurs (show additions to existing buildings rather than separate buildings in front of existing buildings)

Area E – Maps and Plans



Area E – Findings and Recommendations

Depicted Use	Small lot single family housing / multifamily housing Mixed use buildings Parking garage / town green / other civic uses
--------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

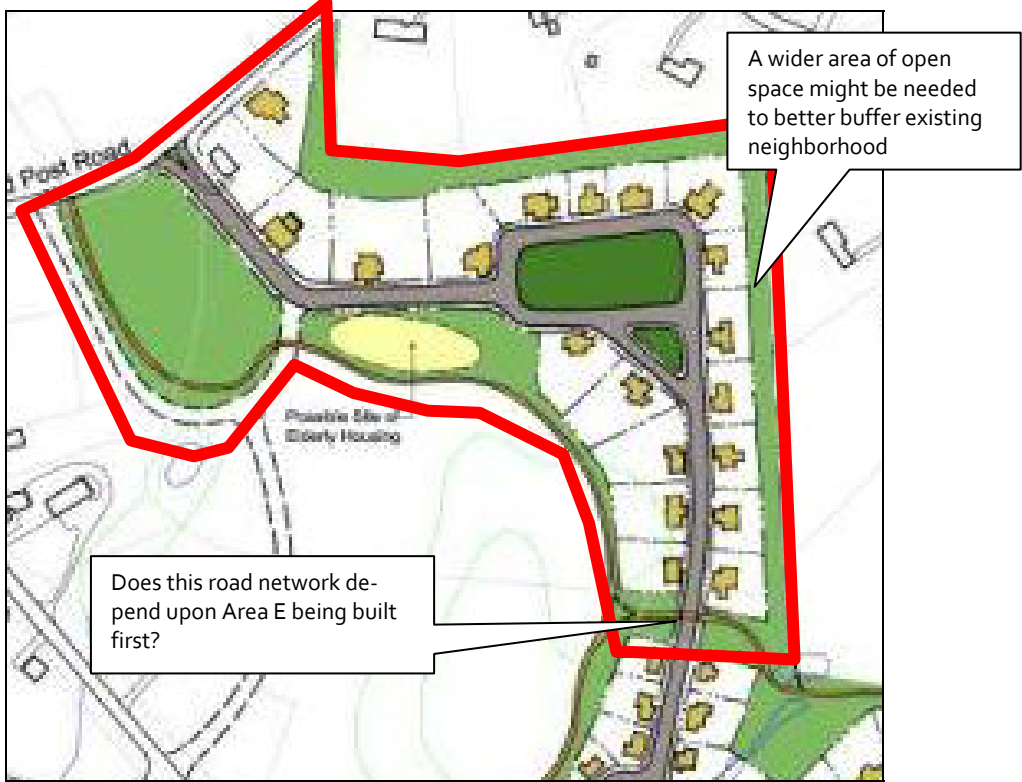
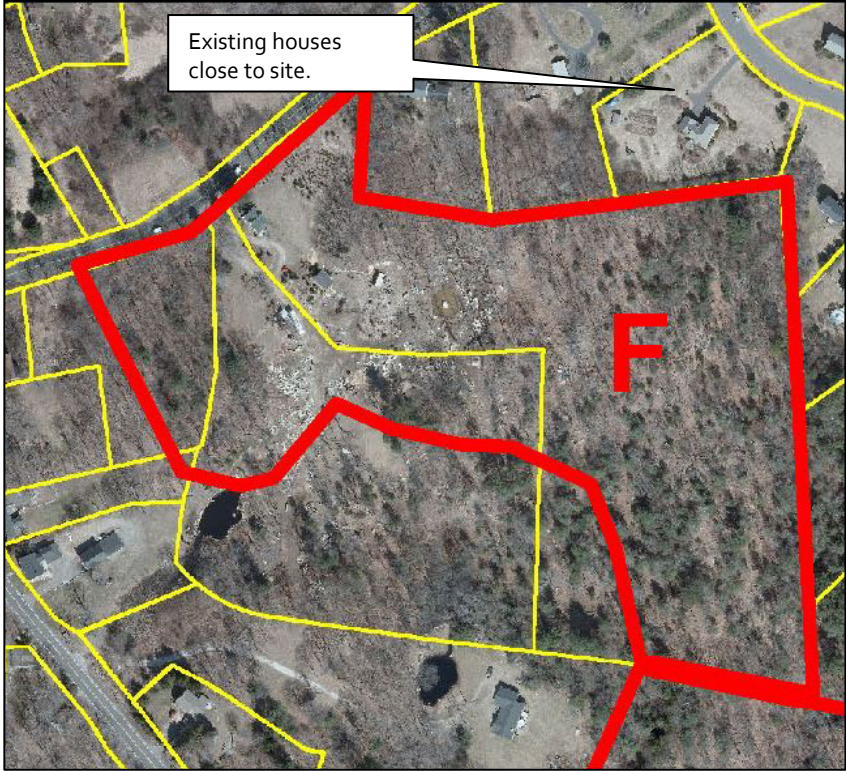
Inventory / Assessment

	Opportunities	Challenges
Physical		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slope and bedrock will require extensive clearing and grading for buildings, roads, and utilities • Blasting may be required • Extensive coordination required to implement the plan drawn (grading, roads, etc.) • Site preparation may take long time with extensive disturbance • Wetlands / vernal pools require revisions to plans
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owners willing to consider development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State commuter lot may have uncertain disposition
Access / Circulation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steeper road grades (up to 9 %) may make it difficult to create a pedestrian friendly environment • Road pattern shown in sketch plan may conflict with existing uses
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewers available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current sewer allocation may need to be revised to support desired density
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to I-84 is a significant opportunity • New roads can open up new opportunities for frontage and visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear if parking structure is economically feasible (is required for relocation of commuter lot) • Basements may be difficult due to blasting • Current plan does not seem to allow for driveways and garages • Noise from I-84 may be an impediment to some uses

Preliminary Recommendation(s) For Discussion

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider potential traffic access / circulation arrangement 2. Look at concept plan options that are not dependent upon use of the commuter lot to understand impact if that parcel was not available at an opportune time. 3. Refine concept for this area

Area F – Maps and Plans



Area F – Findings and Recommendations

Depicted Use	Small lot single-family housing / elderly housing Small civic green
--------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------

Inventory / Assessment

	Opportunities	Challenges
Physical		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear if bedrock a potential issue here Wetlands / vernal pools may require revisions to plans
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town is moving forward with elderly housing 	
Access / Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has frontage along Old Post Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steeper road grades (up to 9 %) may make it difficult to create a pedestrian friendly environment
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewers may be available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current sewer allocation may need to be revised to support desired density
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could develop from Post Road with subsequent connection to other areas Opportunity to design elderly housing with new urbanism principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small lots do not show garages or driveways Wider buffer to adjacent residences may be desirable

Preliminary Recommendation(s) For Discussion

1. Refine concept for this area (especially with wider buffer to adjacent houses)

Evaluation / Assessment

Implementing the plan as currently depicted might be a challenge – mainly due to physical issues. Areas B and E in particular appear to have issues which could take time and money to resolve. For Areas C and D, the existing property owners are focused on maintaining their current operations and generally have not yet expressed interest in the redevelopment potential of these areas.

Despite these challenges, a modified approach could be advanced for the Tolland Village Area. The next section outlines key decision points that can move the Town forward.



Next Steps

In order to determine the next steps for the Tolland Village Area, three questions should be addressed:

1. Do we move forward with detailed planning to advance opportunities in the Tolland Village area?
2. If yes, which vision do we move forward with?
3. Which approach do we take?

The following addresses each of these questions in detail.

1. Do we move forward with detailed planning to advance opportunities in the Tolland Village area?

- a. Yes
- b. No - let's look at other areas of Town instead

2. If yes, which vision do we move forward with?

- a. Revert back to the concepts from the earlier UConn study, integrating elements of new urbanism design where possible
- b. Continue with a new urbanism / town center approach as proposed in the December concept plan
- c. Continue with a new urbanism / town center approach, but revise concept plan to address issues and concerns raised
- d. Other vision _____

3. Once we have our vision, what approach do we take?

Zoning	Concept Plan	Process for Development	Implications / Considerations
Repeal TVA overlay zoning regulation	Concept plan left as separate document or put in zoning appendix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners or Town could apply for zone changes and/or plan approvals in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reverts back to prior zoning Existing uses are conforming Vision is not codified
	Insert concept plan into the POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners may choose to apply for zone changes and plan approvals in the future to implement the vision in accordance with the plan in the POCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reverts back to prior zoning but establishes an overall vision for the Tolland Village Area in the POCD Existing uses are conforming
Leave TVA overlay in place	No changes (current situation / process)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners may choose to apply for text changes and plan approvals in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing uses are conforming Vision is not codified
	Insert concept plan in zoning appendix / provide reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners may choose to apply for text changes and plan approvals in the future to implement the vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have overlay zone in place with reference to a concept plan Existing uses are conforming Vision is not codified, but is referenced
	Insert concept plan into POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners may choose to apply for text changes and plan approvals in the future to implement the vision in accordance with the plan in the POCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have overlay zone in place with overall vision for the Tolland Village Area in the POCD Existing uses are conforming

Zoning	Concept Plan	Process for Development	Implications / Considerations
Modify TVA to "planned development"* district, with new urbanism principles in zoning	Insert concept plan into POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners may choose to apply for plan approvals in the future to implement the vision in accordance with the plan in the POCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have overlay zone in place with overall vision for the Tolland Village Area in the POCD Existing uses are conforming Provides flexibility to developer to design site in accordance with new urbanism principles Gives Commission broad discretion to approve or not approve, but landowner may feel process does not provide predictability
Replace TVA overlay regulation with <u>mandatory</u> "planned development"* process requiring new urbanism principles	Insert concept plan into POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners must meet new requirements of zone when developing / redeveloping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing uses may be non-conforming Provides flexibility to developer to design site in accordance with new urbanism principles Gives Commission broad discretion to approve or not approve, but landowner may feel process does not provide predictability Could make minor upgrades / expansions a cumbersome process

*A planned development district allows for an area of minimum contiguous size, as specified by zoning provisions, to be planned and developed as a single entity. Uses and dimensional requirements can be specified in the zoning regulations or can be determined when a landowner prepares a master plan for his or her land as part of the zone approval process.

Zoning	Concept Plan	Process for Development	Implications / Considerations
Modify TVA overlay regulation to allow optional "form-based" district	Insert concept plan into POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners can apply for plan approvals in the future to implement the vision in accordance with the plan in the POCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have overlay zone in place with overall vision for the Tolland Village Area in the POCD Provides greater predictability to developers because regulations are very specific Provides less flexibility to property owners
Replace TVA overlay regulation with mandatory "form-based" district	Insert concept plan into POCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners must comply with form based code in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision is codified Current buildings may be non-conforming as to form Provides greater predictability to developers because regulations are very specific Provides less flexibility to property owners