

Long Valley Downtown & Pedestrian Sidewalk Plan

*Sub-plan Element of the Circulation Plan Element
of the
Washington Township Master Plan*

Washington Township

Morris County, NJ

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Introduction

This is a sidewalk and pedestrian improvement plan for Long Valley Village, which has been prepared and adopted by the Planning Board as an amendment to the Circulation Plan Element of the Washington Township Master Plan, dated December 8, 2003. The Planning Board is authorized to prepare an adopt a Circulation Plan Element in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28.b.(4), as follows:

(4) A circulation plan element showing the location and types of facilities for all modes of transportation required for the efficient movement of people and goods into, about, and through the municipality, taking into account the functional highway classification system of the Federal Highway Administration and the types, locations, conditions and availability of existing and proposed transportation facilities, including air, water, road and rail;

Historic Long Valley Village

Downtown Long Valley Village is perhaps most noteworthy as one of Morris County's loveliest rural historic districts, which is called the German Valley Historic District. Downtown Long Valley includes an attractive and intimate mix of historic buildings that are used today as residences and commercial businesses. The roads through the historic district are narrow in width due to centuries-old historic development patterns that predate modern transportation.

Downtown Long Valley includes historic commercial uses in modest frame and stone buildings, modern shopping centers, the Long Valley Middle School, the scenic South Branch of the Raritan River, the Columbia Trail (Patriots Path) and outlets to Schooley's Mountain Park. Downtown Long Valley includes a wide range of typical downtown uses such as stores, offices, restaurants, sandwich and ice-cream shops, commercial services, houses of worship, residential neighborhoods, the firehouse, the emergency squad and the Washington Township Municipal Building.

Downtown Long Valley is the crossroads of fairly heavily traveled County Routes 513 & 517 that intersect in the Village. These roads convey significant local and regional volumes of traffic north and south; and east and west through the Downtown on a daily basis. The pristine waters of the South Branch of the Raritan River flow through downtown, providing opportunities for fishing and canoeing as well as picturesque views to be enjoyed all year round. The Columbia Trail extension of Patriot's Path winds through Long Valley along the South Branch. Distant views to Schooley's Mountain and open farmland form a picture perfect backdrop to the Downtown.

Within Long Valley's busy confluence of County highways, commercial, civic, residential and recreation uses, the narrow historic roadways through Downtown have only piecemeal components of a modern sidewalk system. Long Valley's vehicular

transportation network has evolved in response to the need to provide efficient movement of traffic through the Downtown, without a focus on the pedestrian. This has resulted in an inhospitable and unsafe environment for pedestrians, particularly for school-age children and visitors to the Downtown. In Long Valley, pedestrian mobility is important for public safety, and to maintain cohesiveness among the Downtown destinations and businesses, where the need for pedestrian access emerged long ago as a local priority.

Establishing a coordinated and effective downtown pedestrian sidewalk system is also important to a vital and commercially successful Downtown. By addressing the needs of the pedestrian, the Township can build upon the wealth of resources in Long Valley to make it an important regional destination for tourism. A vital Downtown can pay dividends to the Township as land values rise when local business are successful.

2003 Master Plan

The Circulation Plan Element of the 2003 Master Plan highlighted the need to address alternative modes of transportation, as follows:

“Pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle paths are an important component of the Township’s Circulation Plan for those residents of the community that walk and ride for exercise and particularly for the Township’s youth, unable to drive themselves. Pedestrian sidewalks safely separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic along busy thoroughfares, collector and local roads. Bicycle paths and routes can also be effective in providing connectivity among residential neighborhoods and non-residential destinations in the community, such as schools, parks, the library, and commercial services”.

The 2003 Circulation Plan Element also noted that “Sidewalks assume a particularly high priority throughout the downtown area to provide connectivity among commercial and community services and schools. A goal of this plan is to establish a continuous sidewalk among downtown destinations to serve both residents of and visitors to the downtown. Sidewalks have evolved in a somewhat piecemeal fashion downtown, and a common brick design coordinates various segments of the discontinuous network that has been constructed to date.”

2008 Downtown Pedestrian and Sidewalk Plan

The Long Valley Downtown Plan moves forward the challenge in establishing needed sidewalk and other improvements throughout the downtown by identifying a comprehensive network of sidewalks, pedestrian paths and bicycle routes to link residential areas with local points within the community such as Long Valley Middle School, the Municipal Building, the Columbia Trail, the shopping centers, parks and proposed new community center.

The plan also seeks to identify:

- A single design theme that reinforces historic character, and design specifications to guide future sidewalk development (in historic districts and other areas).

- A design standard and specification for historic village roads, where right-of-way width limits sidewalk construction along existing roads.
- A priority list of sidewalk segments to guide publicly funded sidewalk construction and identify public sources of funding to assist with sidewalk and pedestrian path construction.

The Sidewalk Plan should also identify bicycle routes throughout the downtown along with identifying bicycle equipment needed such as bike racks and storage facilities. Design of arterial and collector road improvements should take into account and accommodate bicycle lanes within their paved width. Where necessary, bike routes should be appropriately marked.

Crosswalks

Crosswalks should be installed at appropriate locations Downtown. Along with the marking of crosswalks, signs should be used for crosswalk identification for drivers and traffic enforcement to require vehicles to yield to pedestrians within the crosswalk.

Lighting & Way Finding

Pedestrian scale lighting and a way finding (sign) system should be established downtown. Lighting should be consistent with the historic nature of the village. The way finding system should be uniform in nature reflecting an important subject matter to the community. It could become an element for tourism recognition of Downtown Long Valley as a destination. A common way finding theme could be introduced through 'gateways' to the Village area, which would establish a sense of arrival and alert the traveler to Downtown Long Valley. These gateways could aid in welcoming travelers as they enter the Village, and direct their attention to points of commercial and recreational interest.

Technical and Planning Assistance

This plan places a high value on the recommendations that were developed through the Walkable Community Workshops conducted for Washington Township by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), the Morris County Department of Planning (Division of Transportation) and Gail Werner, Senior Citizen Coordinator and Grants Coordinator for the Township.

NJTPA working with its member counties in the NJTPA region in addition to the City of Newark and Jersey City conducted a series of half-day workshops on development walkable communities. The workshops were conducted in the fall of 2006, and again in the fall of 2007 to those interested in participating. The workshops were designed to educate and instruct stakeholders, residents, and professionals in identifying barriers to walking and to improve pedestrian safety in each of the communities.

Each county nominated a municipality and then coordinated with local representatives to develop an invitation list of a broad range of individuals including local leaders, planners

and engineers, interested business owners, and residents. Morris County selected Washington Township as its choice for a planning partnership to build a more walkable community.

Goals and Objectives

There are a number of goals and objectives in Washington Township's Master Plan that should be noted in developing this plan.

These include a number of goals from the Master Plan, which are restated below.

1. Develop a system of linked hiking, bicycle, cross county ski, and equestrian routes - Recreation Plan;
2. Encourage pedestrian and public transit and linkages – Conservation Plan;
3. Encourage pedestrian and public transit and linkages wherever practical and encourage ridesharing and alternative transportation systems (buses, car and van pooling, bicycling, and walking) – Conservation Plan;
4. Reduce the need for vehicular trips by facilitating better interconnections among residential, commercial, office, and recreational uses – Conservation Plan;
5. Design bikeways, pedestrian walkways and other routes to maximize opportunities for non-motorized travel in existing and new development – Conservation Plan; and
6. Encourage multi-use development forms in locations such as commercial districts and centers that will maximize utilization of the land and reduce reliance on the automobile – Conservation Plan.

The development of this plan will serve to promote a number of benefits to residents, businesses and visitors of the community. Increased walking reduces traffic congestion, air and noise pollution, wear and tear on roads, and consumption of fossil fuels. Well-planned pedestrian improvements may serve to minimize the potential for pedestrian-motor vehicle-related crashes, injuries and fatalities. Increased walking may also serve to reduce the need for additional roads, travel lanes and parking.

The U.S. Surgeon General issued a report that confirms what most of us already know: Americans are not getting enough exercise. The American Heart Association has listed physical inactivity as the fourth major risk factor associated with chronic disease. And, of great concern to public health officials in all parts of the United States, the trend is getting worse: almost half of all children do not get enough exercise and nearly one-fourth engage in no form of real physical activity¹.

The public health community is working to encourage Americans to become more active, and one of the major focuses of their efforts is promoting walking. It is inexpensive; it can be done by almost everyone, and if conditions are right, it can be done almost everywhere.

¹Page 4; Bicycle Federation of America Campaign to Make America Walkable, Creating Walkable Communities. A Guide for Local Governments; Washington, DC, December 1998

In many communities today, “conditions” are not very good for walking. In fact, most school-age children do not have a very good, safe route to walk to school. So public health workers and agencies are lending their support to efforts to create more walkable (and bicycle-friendly) communities.

Fortunately, Downtown Long Valley has a number of important destinations that are able to be linked in a manner that can promote safe and walkable conditions building on many of the sidewalk segments already in place within the Village.

In consideration of the foregoing, other possible objectives include:

1. Encourage walking to promote healthy and active lifestyles.
2. Establish the downtown as a destination for walking.
3. Bring more awareness to the historic heritage and resources that exist in the Downtown.
4. Encourage energy efficiency and protect air quality by reducing dependency on the automobile by providing alternatives means of mobility.
5. Provide for a more walkable community.
6. Investigate the possibility of modifying the existing “all busing” policy for school children, once it can be demonstrated that safe pedestrian and bicycle access has been established among neighborhood and schools.
7. In addition to the physical improvements in this plan, the Township should also advance educational, enforcement, and encouragement programs that raise awareness of pedestrian safety and mobility as a priority for the community. Examples may include Walking School Bus, police enforcement of drivers yielding to pedestrian laws, educational and promotional banners and printed materials, Public Safety Announcements, etc.

More specific objectives were identified in the Walkable Communities Workshop². These also should be taken into consideration.

1. Ensuring safety is the primary consideration for walkable communities. Crossings must be safe and well-marked. Motor vehicles must travel at appropriate speeds.
2. Aesthetics are an important determinant in the decision whether to walk. A well-designed pedestrian regime encourages more walking.
3. Good routes and short distances between destinations encourage trips on foot and by bicycle.
4. The pedestrian space must reflect the various levels of mobility. Proper design benefits all users, and allows all to participate in the community.

² NJTPA and Morris County Depart. Of Planning, Development and Technology, Div. of Transportation, Walkable Community Workshop Summary, December 11, 2007, Pages 4 and 5.

Architecture of the Plan

The Walkable Community Workshops were utilized to develop the majority of the recommended improvements for this Plan. Morris County Planning Board staff, the Downtown Business Association and the Washington Township Historic Preservation Committee contributed to the recommendations developed in this plan.

The process of developing the recommendations involved three works sessions of the Walkable Community Workshops. The first session focused on informing the participants about the elements of a walkable community, a description of barriers that may need to be overcome, the reasons why people don't walk, and a description of best practices of a walkable community.

The second session involved an audit of field conditions. Guided walks led by local officials and volunteers proceeded from the Municipal Building along Schooley's Mountain Road, to the Middle School and then out to the shopping centers on East Mills Road. The group identified specific problem spots to address in the formulation of ideas and solutions for a walkable community Downtown.

The third session had the various participants break into three working groups. These small teams formulated a series of improvements that are recommended to meet the goals of the Long Valley Downtown Plan in making it a walkable community.

The groups' recommendations recognized the historic elements of Long Valley such as the scale, density, and architectural integrity of the buildings. Recommendations took into account specific needs and issues identified Downtown. Recommendations took into account community assets, and opportunities that exist Downtown. Particular attention was given to the following locations:

1. Intersection of Schooley's Mountain Road and Fairview Avenue
2. Crossing of Columbia Trail at Schooley's Mountain Road.
3. Intersection of East/West Mill Road and Schooley's Mountain Road/Fairmount Road.
4. Connectivity along East and West Mill Road.
5. Condition of existing sidewalks.

The following is a summary of priorities for improvements that were developed by the three working groups as summarized in "Walkable Communities Summaries" that were developed from the workshop. The priorities are not listed in any particular order, rather they are identified as priority improvements that should be addressed as funding may become available.

1. Pedestrians are forced to walk in the roadway due to gaps in the existing sidewalk network, damaged sidewalks, obstructions, and the lack of maintenance in certain locations.

2. A mid-block crossing along Schooley's Mountain Road at the Columbia Trail should be established for safe crossing of CR 517.
3. Conflicts exist between pedestrians and vehicular traffic at the intersection of East/West Mill Road (CR513) & Schooley's Mountain Road/Fairmount Road (CR 517) due to the skewed alignment of the intersection, wide turning radii, lack of sidewalks, open access to driveways, and faded crosswalk markings.
4. An extended wait at the CR 513/517 intersection causes pedestrians to have to wait longer than desired, which results in pedestrians crossing against the light.
5. Speed Limits – Consideration could be given to establishing a consistent reduced vehicular speed limit throughout core village area of town (i.e. 25mph), which may be more compatible with the objective of creating walkable communities and school zones.
6. Lighting - High overhead lighting does not illuminate the sidewalk area – sidewalk lighting with light sources at frequent intervals along sidewalks and closer to the ground would enhance pedestrian safety during hours of darkness.
7. Sidewalks along the corridor are sporadic, with various gaps in connectivity as well as width. Sidewalk improvements should be prioritized to first establish a continuous network throughout Downtown, and second to provide sidewalks on both sides of the roadways where possible. Sidewalks on both sides of the street would eliminate uncontrolled pedestrian mid-block crossings and improve pedestrian safety.
8. Crumbling curbs and sidewalks were noticed in several locations.
9. Sidewalks are not clear of obstructions such as parking, landscaping, and encroachments from adjacent businesses.
10. Sidewalks are not maintained, ground cover, plant growth, leaf litter and other debris (organic matter mixed with soil) impede pedestrian traffic and cause tripping hazards.
11. Streetscape treatments are inconsistent.
12. Existing sidewalk network does not provide access to major destination points throughout downtown. Sidewalks are located along one side of each roadway.
13. Wayfinding. A few good examples of municipal parking signs exist. However a more consistent and visible wayfinding approach is needed to bring cohesion throughout the downtown area.
14. Bicycle parking facilities - Present at the bike shop along West Mill Road. Additional facilities are needed at the trail crossing, school, and shopping centers.
15. Quality of bus stops/transit stops - No shelters at the designated transit stops were observed. Stops should be easy to locate.
16. Benches - Benches are present in front of the municipal parking lot, but sporadically throughout the rest of the corridor.
17. Public restrooms and water fountains are absent.
18. Crossings are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Depressed curb ramps with truncated domes are not present. Sidewalks are not consistently present, and walking surface is cracked, heaving, and obstructed in several locations.
19. Alignment of crosswalks and curb ramps. Curb ramps generally were not present, and crosswalks were faded.

20. Access management. The northwest quadrant of the intersection of East/West Mill Road and Fairmount & Schooley's Mountain Road (CR 513 & 517) has no curbs and parking and driveways for the commercial properties at that location have unrestricted undefined vehicular open access to the lots, and there is no appropriate accommodation for pedestrian travel. This is an area of conflict among parking and driveway access for vehicles, and pedestrians.

Recommendations

This Plan recommends a series of specific improvements, which are shown on Figure 1, entitled 'Downtown Long Valley Existing and Proposed Sidewalks and Crosswalks'. These improvements are summarized below.

Sidewalks

Each of the three groups from the workshop identified sidewalks as one of their highest priorities. Figure 2, entitled 'Downtown Long Valley Study Area' identifies those areas where sidewalk presently exists in the accepted pattern of the Township, those areas where sidewalks exists but are not in the pattern acceptable to the Township and areas where it is recommended but does not presently exist at the present time.

Sidewalks should be constructed of brick to maintain consistency with previous sidewalk installations and to preserve the historic character of the area. Working with Township officials, the Downtown Business Association volunteers and the Historic Preservation Committee have identified a brick specification that should be used throughout the Downtown. This brick design standard should be identified in the ordinance as the Township's official standard for site plan improvements. An additional consideration is that the HPC has advised that the NJ State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) continues to advocate the use of real brick whether molded clay or wire cut within historic districts.

East and West Mill Road

Specifically, the study groups recommended the inclusion of sidewalks along both sides of East and West Mill Road. A continuous sidewalk should be established along both the north and south side of the East and West Mill Road between the Middle School and Old Farmers Road. It was also noted that it may be possible to establish a trail connection through the Land Trust preserved lands and across the South Branch riparian corridor from East Mill Road to the area of the former Welsh Farms site. A pedestrian bridge was located across the river in the past, and this could be reconstructed for this trail connection.

West Mill Road:

The sidewalk along the south side of West Mill Road should extend from the intersection of Fairmount Road to the Long Valley Middle School. Presently, an asphalt path extends from Fairmount Road as far as the school where a portion of concrete walk extends to the exit of the parking area. The asphalt is in stable condition, but will require replacement.

No sidewalk is present in front of the school. It is also recommended that the sidewalk extend from the school to the proposed Community Center (see discussion of community center below).

No sidewalk is located on the north side of West Mill Road and should be located from the intersection to beyond the Middle School. Providing consistent sidewalks along the north side of West Mill Road will increase accessibility and connectivity to and from the proposed community center, the Middle School and Downtown businesses.

East Mill Road:

On East Mill Road there is sidewalk that extends along the north and south sides proceeding east from the intersection of Mill Road and Schooley's Mountain Road. Along the north side sidewalk segments are intermixed with concrete sections. Gaps on the north side are found heading east toward the MUA. Sidewalk is located along a business frontage adjacent to concrete segments in front of the MUA building. A gap in sidewalk exists between the MUA and the new shopping center.

On the south side of East Mill Road, sidewalk extends approximately 500' from Fairmount Road in the Village. A gap of approximately 1,650' without sidewalk exists between the village sidewalk segment to the office and retail shopping center sidewalk opposite the new shopping center.

The Historic Preservation Committee has highlighted the need for ADA compliant parking and a safe pullover for tour busses to the LaTourette Mill on East Mill Road. The HPC recommends the use of matching brick to provide a unified affect with the rest of the district while maintaining the existing narrow walkway without expanding to a full width sidewalk along that stretch of East Mill Road. The feasibility of maintaining the existing parking accommodations along East Mill Road should be revisited when designing pedestrian improvements in this section of the Downtown.

Community Center – CR 517 Realignment – East & West Mill Road linkage:

The Master Plan Community Facilities Element discusses development of a community center, which may include a pool with facilities for cultural activities, such as a theatre on an approximately 15 – 20 acre site of unconstrained land to accommodate a facility approximately 30,000 – 40,000-sq. ft. in area. A location identified next to the Middle School adjacent to Downtown has been identified as the preferred location in the Township for this facility. Washington Township owns development rights on a site adjacent to the middle school, which may be an appropriate location for this facility. Enhanced access to this location may be achieved through construction of the proposed realignment of CR 517 that is to extend from East Mill Road, across Fairmount Road behind the brew pub, circling around the southerly and westerly side of the Middle School to a point of intersection with West Mill Road. Sidewalks should be planned and constructed as part of CR 517 realignment for enhanced pedestrian access to the community center and Middle School. The proposed CR 517 Realignment and sidewalk

considerations are discussed in the section below entitled “Downtown Long Valley Trail System”.

Schooley’s Mountain Road

Sidewalk recommendations include construction of continuous sidewalk along both sides of Schooley’s Mountain Road between the intersection with East and West Mill Road to the Municipal Building. Presently paver sidewalk extends along the east side of Schooley’s Mountain Road from East Mill Road, across the South Branch and Fairview Avenue intersection as far as the new bank that was formerly the home of the Township’s tax offices. Beyond the new bank, concrete sidewalk extends approximately 150’. No sidewalk currently exists on the west side of Schooley’s Mountain Road between West Mill Road and the Municipal Building.

Fairmount Road

On Fairmount Road, the narrow short segment of sidewalk between West Mill Road and the brew pub parking lot should be widened. This existing segment is approximately two feet in width and should be widened to the extent achievable (at least four feet, preferably six feet). Given the roadway width limitations, a modest widening may be possible. On the east side of Fairmount Road, there is a small area of sidewalk that extends from the traffic light along the frontage of the lot on the corner. This segment should be extended as far as the sheep cheese farm tourist destination.

Crosswalks and Intersections

Figure 1 identifies a series of crosswalk intersections, some of which would be constructed as segments of sidewalk are completed, others of which can be addressed now.

- Schooley’s Mountain Road, Fairmount Road, East & West Mill Road Intersection (See Figure 3, entitled ‘Fairmount/East Mill/West Mill/Schooley’s Mountain Road Crosswalk’);
- East Mill Road at Old Farmers Road;
- West Mill Road across from Middle School;
- Schooley’s Mountain Road at the Columbia Trail Intersection (See Figure 4, entitled ‘Columbia Trail – Schooley’s Mountain Road Crosswalk’).

Crosswalk and Intersection design approaches are provided in the Appendix to this plan, which include discussion of a wide variety of planning and design considerations for crosswalks.

The Historic Preservation Committee has commended the goal of sidewalk and pedestrian illumination and clearly marking the crosswalks at mid-street and the major intersection is commendable. Their concern is that the use of modern visual intrusions in the Historic District, such as devices with blinking countdown hand signals, should be minimized as much as practical to protect historic character.

Downtown Long Valley Trail System:

The roadway network serving Downtown Long Valley interfaces with an extensive trail system that coordinates with the recommendations in this Pedestrian and Sidewalk Plan (See Figure 5 entitled “Downtown Long Valley Trail System”. The Long Valley trails include:

- (1) Patriots Path, which extends to Long Valley from Morristown and across Schooley’s Mountain to points north;
- (2) Columbia Trail, which extends along the Columbia Gas Pipeline in the former High Bridge Branch of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. Extending south and west from Long Valley, the Columbia Trail parallels the South Branch of the Raritan River through Middle Valley, Califon, Hoffmans and Ken Lockwood Gorge to High Bridge. The Columbia Trail extends east from Long Valley to Flanders;
- (3) Schooley’s Mountain Park trails, which are an extensive network of trails in the park that provide access for fishing and hiking to the South Branch, trail-head access on Fairview Avenue, and hiking trails that extend up Schooley’s Mountain Road to East Springtown and Naughtight Road; and
- (4) Washington Township Land Trust Trails, which extend along the through the South Branch riparian corridor and preserved lands located Downtown that are owned by the Land Trust.

These trails serve to provide a means of pedestrian access between Downtown Long Valley and many of the Township’s neighborhoods. By improving pedestrian safety Downtown, opportunities for Township residents to visit the Downtown without having to drive are enhanced.

Sidewalk improvement recommendations in this plan are intended to improve inter-connectivity with this extensive system of trails that intersect in Downtown Long Valley. Improving Downtown as a walkable community, will not only serve as meaningful quality of life enhancement for residents, these improvements can play an important role in improving travel and tourism to the Township. In an era when the price of energy is likely to discourage long distance travel for many, a destination as lovely and quaint as Long Valley with all of its amenities is an attractive day-trip alternative to longer distance travel.

Travel and tourism should be embraced as an economic development opportunity for the Downtown and specific improvements to serve out-of-town visitors, such as improved ‘way finding’ through better signing to identify trail connections should be provided for visitors. In addition to walkable community pedestrian improvements and way finding signs, improvements such as parking at the Columbia Trail and information kiosks, consistent with an appropriate way finding theme that is compatible with the historic district are additional low-cost improvements that could increase visitation to Long Valley.

Recommended improvements to increase accessibility visitation to Long Valley trails:

- Trail system way finding signing for visitors and tourists;
- Adequate parking at trail heads;
- Information kiosks;
- Public restrooms and water fountains.

The Historic Preservation Committee endorsed the concept of sign uniformity throughout Downtown if it can accomplish increased identification of key downtown elements while avoiding the over use of signs (i.e. sign pollution). The HPC recommends the use of a unifying design logo on signs, such as the stone arch bridge or the Union Church ruins.

These improvements, along with the walkable community recommendations for enhanced pedestrian safety and access throughout the Downtown may be viewed as important, but modest investments in Long Valley's future as a vital tourist destination in the region.

Appendices -

The Appendix that follows in this plan identifies a more in depth discussion of additional recommendations that have been developed to improve Downtown pedestrian safety and access. These build upon the basic recommendations of the plan outlined above, and are intended to establish a broader range of recommendations to comprehensively plan for and establish a walkable community in Downtown Long Valley. These recommendations include:

- Crosswalk and Intersections;
- Streetscape Improvements;
- Lighting;
- Columbia Trail;
- Bicycling; and
- Potential Funding Sources.

APPENDIX

Crosswalks and Intersections

The following Crosswalk design approaches are identified to define ways to protect the access and safety of pedestrians at intersections, who's safety may be most vulnerable to serious injury from accident. At the same time these improvements should adequately meet the needs of motor vehicles and reasonable balance of free flow of traffic.

- Intersections that function well for pedestrians are typically compact.
- Free-flowing motor vehicle movements are either eliminated or vehicles are forced to a significantly slower speed through the intersection.

- All legs of intersections should be available for pedestrian use; closing a crosswalk doesn't necessarily prevent pedestrians from crossing in that direction.
- Pedestrians need to be able to travel in a direct line across the intersection leg and the direction of travel needs to be clearly identified for all pedestrians, including those with sight impairments.
- Avoid increasing potential conflicts or the level of pedestrian exposure to motor vehicles.³

Crosswalks are, perhaps, the most critical element in the pedestrian network. While most people can find a way to travel along the street, it is a fact that most crashes involving pedestrians take place when they are trying to cross the street. Safe crossings, including crosswalks, are essential.

A crosswalk is generally defined as the portion of the roadway designated for pedestrians to use in crossing the street. Marked crosswalks increase visibility of the pedestrian crossing area, define the space for crossing, and draw pedestrians to the appropriate crossing point. There is no legal difference between a marked or unmarked intersection crossing (Figure 2). Unmarked crosswalks exist where a sidewalk or walkway, if extended beyond the curb in the direction it is heading, would cross a street or highway.

There are several attributes of good crosswalks that can help lead to good design decisions.

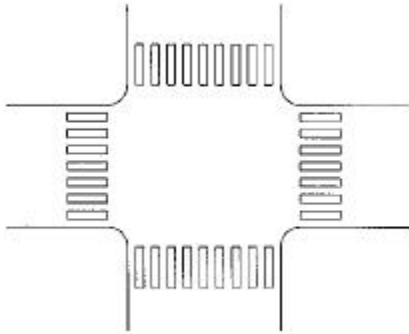
- **Clarity.** It should be obvious where to cross and easy to understand possible conflict points with traffic.
- **Visibility.** The location and illumination of the crosswalk should allow pedestrians to see and be seen by approaching traffic while crossing.
- **Appropriate intervals.** There should be a reasonable match between the frequency of good crossing opportunities along a street and the potential demand for crossing.
- **Short wait.** A pedestrian should not have to wait unreasonably long for an opportunity to cross.
- **Adequate crossing time.** The time available for crossing should accommodate users of all abilities. Phasing of lights should incorporate time provided for pedestrian crossing.
- **Limited exposure.** Conflict points with traffic should be few and the distance to cross should be short, or it should be divided into shorter segments with refuges.
- **Continuous path.** The crosswalk should be a direct continuation of the pedestrian's travel path.
- **Clear Crossing.** The crosswalk should be free of barriers, obstacles and hazards⁴.

³ Washington Department of Transportation, [Pedestrian Facilities Guidebook](#)

⁴ City of Portland, OR, Office of Transportation, [Pedestrian Design Guide](#)

To advance the sidewalk system there must complimentary pedestrian safety and accessibility improvements especially at intersections. It is recommended that improvements for pedestrian take place at the intersection of East and West Mill Road and Schooley's Mountain Road and Fairmount Road including:

1. Upgrade existing traffic signals to be brought up to current MUTCD standards for an offset intersection, and incorporate pedestrian countdown signal heads with push button assembly
2. Install high visibility ladder style crosswalks

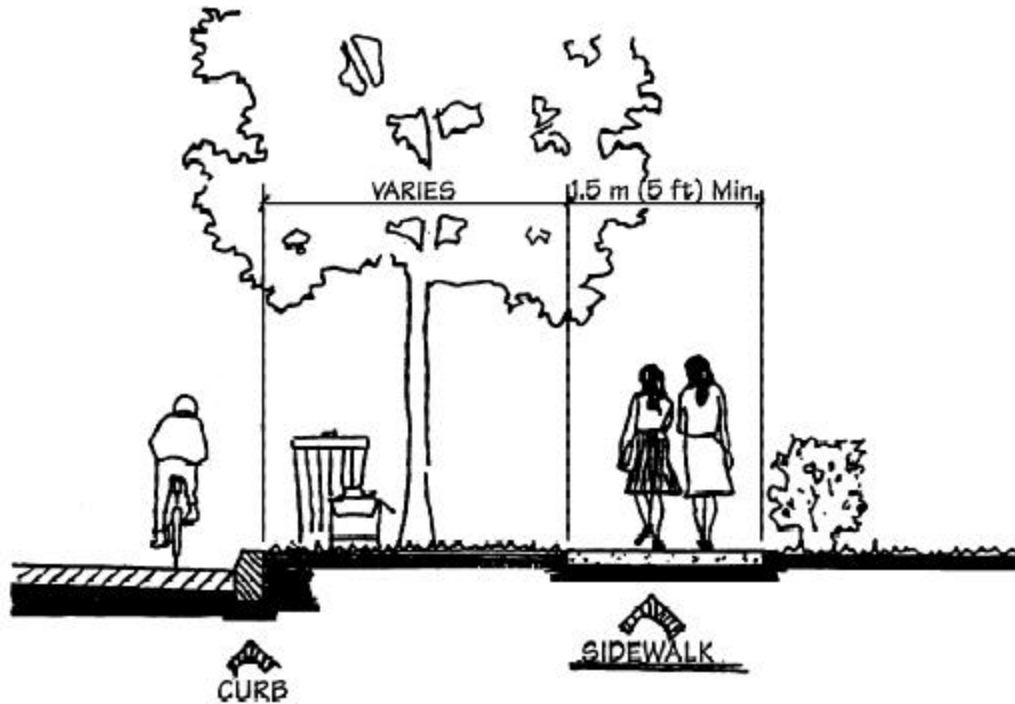


3. Install curb ramps and sidewalks to provide fully accessible intersection for all quadrants
4. Reduce pedestrian conflicts by decreasing the size of the northwest curb radii, slowing turning traffic, and replacing the faded painted median across Schooley's Mountain Road.
5. Provide advanced warning signs to inform motorists of approaching signalized intersection and pedestrian crossings.⁵

Streetscape Program

The working groups recommended that a comprehensive streetscape program should be developed including landscaping, lighting, street furnishings, bike racks, and wayfinding signs. The improvements would grant residents and visitors suitable facilities, helpful information, and comprehensible direction to intended destinations.

⁵ NJTPA and Morris County Depart. Of Planning, Development and Technology, Div. of Transportation, Walkable Community Workshop Summary, December 11, 2007 Page 6



One of the priority recommendations from the working group was the development of pedestrian scale lighting that is historic in nature. In most redevelopment plans there is an expressed difference between lighting for vehicles as opposed to pedestrians.

The intent of lighting is to ensure that it contributes to the character and safety of the area and its use without disturbing adjacent properties. Lighting provided within parking lots and along pedestrian walkways serves different purposes. Typical lighting fixtures for parking lots are usually limited to heights of 24 feet and a smaller scale of 12 to 16 feet for pedestrian walkways.

Most modern lighting for parking lots are shielded from producing off-site glare, either through exterior shields or through optical design inside the fixture, so that the direction of the light is downward. Historic style lights for pedestrian walkways along streets are typically not shielded but because of their limit on height they do not tend to offend property owners.



Light fixtures attached to the exterior of a building should be designed to be architecturally compatible with the style, materials, colors and details of the building and other lighting fixtures used on the site. Consideration should also be given to the type of

light source utilized and the light quality such produces. In an historic district neon facade signs should be prohibited as is the use of low pressure sodium or mercury vapor lighting either attached to buildings or to light the exterior of buildings.

The Historic Preservation Committee has noted that the style of fixtures used in the parking lot of the LV Brew Pub should be complimented, though not necessarily matched to the existing poles. The HPC suggested that the Township direct the Planning Board to consult with the HPC for their comments when developing a standard design for pedestrian lighting. The HPC also noted the need for house side shielding and conservatively placement of fixtures to protect the intrusion of lighting on private residences where possible.

Wayfinding is the organization and communication of our dynamic relationship to space and the environment. Successful design to promote wayfinding allows people to:

1. Determine their location within a setting,
2. Determine their destination, and
3. Develop a plan that will take them from their location to their destination.

The design of wayfinding systems should include:

1. Identifying and marking spaces,
2. Grouping spaces, and
3. Linking and organizing spaces through both architectural and graphic means.

Some of the important components of the wayfinding system should be the location of crosswalks especially those that are mid-block. Other important destination component would be the middle school, shopping centers, the main commercial area of the Village, the community center (once completed) and entrances into Long Valley.

There are four main categories of graphic wayfinding elements: (1) orientation, (2) directional information, (3) destination identification, and (4) situation and object identification.⁶

Graphic information is the most direct way for people to find their location. Typical graphic wayfinding information includes systems made up of text, pictograms, maps, photographs, models, and diagrams. Visitors are required to observe, read, learn and comprehend these systems as they make their way through a site or building.

Some guidelines are:

- Be consistent with text and graphic devices and the location of signage throughout the system.
- Use upper and lower case letters for highest legibility except in the case of single word signage.
- To increase legibility, avoid single line spacing.

⁶ Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access School of Architecture and Planning - University at Buffalo, The State University of New York Buffalo, NY

- For best legibility, the space between words in signage is typically the lower case "e" of the given font.
- Group information on complex signs to increase comprehension.
- Use flush left, ragged right to achieve ease of legibility.
- Display common rather than obscure or technical names (e.g., use Ear, Nose, and Throat rather than Otorhinolaryngology).
- Avoid abstract or difficult to learn pictograms.
- Whenever possible, use pictograms and text together for reinforcement.
- In signage, use colors that are easily recognizable by name such as blue, orange, gray. Reserve the colors red, yellow, and green for public safety uses.
- Use color combinations that have at least a 70% brightness differential.
- Design lighting, windows and surfaces to prevent glare on signage.
- Place signs within the cone of vision to increase detection and legibility.
- Repeat information displayed for longer distance detection in a format for close detection.
- Avoid blocking signage with building elements such as lights and air vents.

There is the recognition of the importance of the historic importance of Long Valley and some historic point of relevance may be chosen as the backdrop to the signs. An option may be the use of a unifying design logo, such as the stone arch bridge or the Union Church ruins. Whatever sign design theme is chosen, signs should still adhere to the guidelines above, but at the same time be conservatively placed to avoid the over use of signs.

Another feature to consider is the placement of benches, trash receptacles, bike racks and shelters at various commercial and transit locations. The primary focus of these improvements should be within the village and at the shopping centers.

Columbia Trail

Completed in 1876, this former rail line was established by the Central Railroad of New Jersey as the High Bridge Branch. The line ran from High Bridge to Port Oram, currently known as Wharton, in Morris County. The line accommodated passengers, but was highly regarded for its shipments of iron ore from the mines in Morris County. The most spectacular wreck occurred on April 18, 1885 when Engine #112 (known as The Columbia), pulling 45 cars plummeted off a 60 feet wooden trestle into the South Branch of the Raritan River. The wooden trestle was replaced by steel piers in 1930 and is now known as the Ken Lockwood Gorge Bridge. The last passenger excursion occurred in 1935 and the last freight train ran on April 1, 1976.⁷

⁷ Hunterdon County Department of Parks and Recreation; [The Columbia Trail Part of the South Branch Reservation Guide](#)

In the mid 1990's, the Columbia Gas Company of West Virginia constructed a gas line under the rail bed. The Hunterdon County Department of Parks and Recreation and Morris County Department of Parks and Recreation now operate and maintain the trail under lease agreement with the Columbia Gas Company.

The Columbia Trail in Morris County is quite scenic, as the meandering and scenic South Branch of the Raritan River parallels the trail along most of its route through the county. An excellent half-way point along the trail in Morris County is Long Valley, New Jersey, where the trail crosses NAME road. Just north of Long Valley, Patriots Path provides links east towards County Route 513 and west towards Schooley's Mountain Park.

One of the recommendations is the establishment of a mid-block crossing at Schooley's Mountain Road and Columbia Trail. At this location a mid-block crosswalk, advanced warning signs, and possibly some form of a traffic calming. As previously noted a high visibility ladder style crosswalk to enhance visibility of the crossing should be provided and prior to the area consideration should be given to traffic calming devices such as curb extensions or raised crosswalk to further emphasize the priority of the mid block crossing. This type of treatment can also assist in reducing speeds. Any raised treatment concept should be coordinated closely with the emergency services personnel and the County.

Trail head improvements should clearly define a separate entrance and exit point for the parking area from the mid-block crossing. One of the recommendations is the development of a shelter and the placement of benches at the entrances of the Trail. Also recommended is the placement of kiosks at the entrance to the trails providing information about its history and its usage.

Bicycling

Bicycle access to these points of interest should also be provided, and consideration should be given to identifying and signing "bicycle routes" throughout the Township. Adding bicycle routes may provide an alternative means of transportation for youngsters who rely on their parents for transport to sports and social activities. Signing of these routes will aid in calling drivers attention to the need to share the road with bicyclists. Design of arterial and collector roads should include bicycle lanes within their paved width where possible. Bicycle routes should be designated along the major thoroughfares in the Township, particularly along County roads.

Bicycle routes should be exclusive from sidewalk usage. Dual usage will result in accidents and will deter pedestrian usage. Considering these points bicycle treatments are likely relegated to the shoulder of the County road system.

County route 513 (West and East Mill Road) is classified as a rural major collector except for a small portion from Schooley's Mountain Road to County route 625 (Bartley Road) where it is classified as an urban collector. West Mill Road pavement width is only 22 feet⁸ as of March 1997. Width two feet shoulders and of course two travel lanes this cartway does not allow for proper bike lane delineation.

⁸ According to the 2007 Straight Line Diagrams published by New Jersey Department of Transportation.

This does change on East Mill Road where the paved cartway goes to 34 feet, down to 20 and then to 24 feet, but in these cases the shoulders along the 20 foot sections are 8 feet and they are 3 feet in the area of 24 feet. This provides for greater bikeway delineation.

Fairmount Road (County Route 517) is classified as a rural major collector. Its cartway varies from 24 feet to 22 feet with two feet shoulders as it approaches Mill Road. Again this route is limited for bikeway delineation.

Schooley's Mountain Road (County route 517) becomes an urban collector. From the intersection it has a 26 cartway to Maple Avenue with two feet shoulders. Beyond this section the cartway changes to 24 feet with varying shoulder widths from two feet to ten feet where it intersects with Hastings Drive. On this portion of County Route 517 fewer issues in establishing a bikeway within the right-of-way are encountered.

Potential Funding

Beyond the responsibility of property owners and the Township there are some programs that could assist in funding the recommended improvements.

Most significant it is federal transportation policy to promote the increased use and safety of bicycling and walking as transportation modes. The inclusion of the bicycle and pedestrian elements in transportation plans and programs may be accomplished by addressing bicycle and pedestrian issues throughout the transportation planning process and integrating bicycle and pedestrian elements as appropriate in the transportation plan and programs. A separate section on bicycle and pedestrian specific issues in addition to or in place of an integrated element may be appropriate. This approach would address the mandate of developing transportation facilities that will function as an intermodal transportation system. The bicycle and pedestrian plan elements should contain policy statements and goals as well as, whenever possible, the inclusion of specific projects and programs. The plan and the TIP should identify the financial resources necessary to implement the bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs⁹.

Advancing this policy New Jersey Department of Transportation and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority have continued to program bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the respective capital improvement programs and aid to local governments.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal, state and local effort to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school - and to make walking and bicycling to school safe and appealing. The goal of New Jersey's Safe Routes to School Program is to assist New Jersey communities in developing and implementing projects and programs that encourage walking and bicycling to school while enhancing the safety of these trips.

Local and regional government, schools and community non-profit organizations ready, willing and able to implement SRTS initiatives are eligible to apply for funding. Applications are available for projects and programs to improve the health and safety of New Jersey children who bike or walk to school. The New Jersey Department of

⁹ Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Planning Guidance; Federal Highway Administration, US Department of Transportation, Updated august 2003.

Transportation awarded the first SRTS grants in July 2007. A second round of reviewing applications is underway. (The solicitation announcement for the second round of grant applications was made available in January 2008.

Two other programs are the **NJTPA's FY2009 Local Safety Program and the High Risk Rural Roads Program**¹⁰. The Local Safety Program (LSP) provides federal funding for construction of quick-fix safety improvements on county and local roadways. The High Risk Rural Roads program provides federal funds for construction improvements to address safety problems and opportunities only on rural collector or rural local roads that meet program eligibility standards. Examples of eligible LSP projects include:

- New or upgraded pavement markings;
- New or upgraded signage;
- Traffic signals and traffic signal upgrades;
- Traffic calming measures;
- Bicycle lanes or other safety measures within existing ROW;
- Crosswalks or other pedestrian safety measures;
- Reflective pole markers;
- Conversion of medians into turning lanes;
- Removal of fixed object hazards (not including trees).

A sample of eligible construction and operational uses for HRRRP funds include:

- Intersection safety improvement.
- Pavement and shoulder widening (including addition of a passing lane to remedy an unsafe condition).
- Installation of rumble strips or another warning device, if the rumble strips or other warning devices do not adversely affect the safety or mobility of bicyclists, pedestrians, and the disabled.
- Installation of a skid-resistant surface at an intersection or other location with a high frequency of accidents.
- Improvement for pedestrian or bicyclist safety or safety of the disabled.
- Construction of any project for the elimination of hazards at a railway-highway crossing that is eligible for funding under section 130, including the separation or protection of grades at railway-highway crossings.
- Construction of a railway-highway crossing safety feature, including installation of protective devices.
- Construction of a traffic calming feature.
- Elimination of a roadside obstacle.
- Improvement of highway signage and pavement markings.
- Installation of a priority control system for emergency vehicles at signalized intersections.
- Installation of a traffic control or other warning device at a location with high accident potential.

¹⁰ NJTPA Local Safety Program Guidelines and High Risk Rural Roads Program Guidelines Revised: November, 2007

- Only "operational activities relating to work zone safety" are eligible under HRRRP; "Planning integrated interoperable emergency communications equipment and traffic enforcement activities relating to work zone safety" are NOT eligible under HRRRP.
- Installation of guardrails, barriers (including barriers between construction work zones and traffic lanes for the safety of motorists and workers), and crash attenuators.
- The addition or retrofitting of structures or other measures to eliminate or reduce accidents involving vehicles and wildlife.
- Installation and maintenance of signs (including fluorescent, yellow-green signs) at pedestrian-bicycle crossings and in school zones.
- Construction of yellow-green signs at pedestrian-bicycle crossings and in school zones.
- Construction and operational improvements on high risk rural roads.

A recent grant application has been filed by the Morris County Division of Engineering, Department of Public Works for the FY 2009 Local Safety Program and FY 2009 High Risk Rural Roads program involving the intersection of County Route 513 West Mill Road and County Route 517 Fairmount Road. Part of the justification for the project was the following:

While there have been no pedestrian injuries during the time period, Washington Township is developing its historic downtown and is experiencing an increased presence of pedestrians at this intersection. A nearby middle school and recreational facility, Columbia Trail, are each located approximately one quarter of a mile west and north from the intersection, respectively. Additionally, the proposed improvements support recommendations made during a recent Walkable Communities Workshop conducted on December 11th and sponsored by NJTPA and Morris county Division of Transportation.

The proposed improvements would increase safety at the intersection through:

1. Decrease the northwest curb radii slowing traffic to a safer speed making a right from Fairmount Road and heading west on West Mill Road,
2. Crosswalks would be repainted to improve pedestrian safety and visibility,
3. Countdown pedestrian signals would be installed,
4. Push button assembly would be installed to indicate the signal being sent,
5. Curb cuts and sidewalk would be installed.

The four foot sidewalk would be installed along the south side of Mill road to provide continuous pedestrian access between the intersection and the middle school, and they will be brick to maintain consistency with the previous sidewalk installations and to preserve the historic character of the area.

Long Valley Study Area

Portion of Washington Township
Morris County, NJ

January, 2008

Legend

- Asphalt Sidewalk
- Concrete Sidewalk
- Concrete/Paver Sidewalk
- Paver Sidewalk
- Proposed ROW
- Long Valley Study Area
- Parcel



0 500 1,000 Feet

Data Sources: NJDEP,
Morris County, iCubed - Fort Collins CO
Banisch Associates, Inc.

Figure 1

This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been NJDEP verified and is not State-authorized.

BANISCH
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Planning and Design



Columbia Trail Crosswalk

Portion of Washington Township
Morris County, NJ

January, 2008

Legend

- Asphalt Sidewalk
- Concrete Sidewalk
- Concrete/Paver Sidewalk
- Paver Sidewalk
- Long Valley Study Area
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Columbia Trail
- Parcel



0 250 Feet

Data Sources: NJDEP,
Morris County, iCubed - Fort Collins CO
Banisch Associates, Inc.

Figure 2

This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been NJDEP verified and is not State-authorized.

BANISCH
ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning and Design



Fairmount/Mill Crosswalk

Portion of Washington Township
Morris County, NJ

January, 2008

Legend

- Asphalt Sidewalk
- Concrete Sidewalk
- Concrete/Paver Sidewalk
- Paver Sidewalk
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Long Valley Study Area
- Parcel



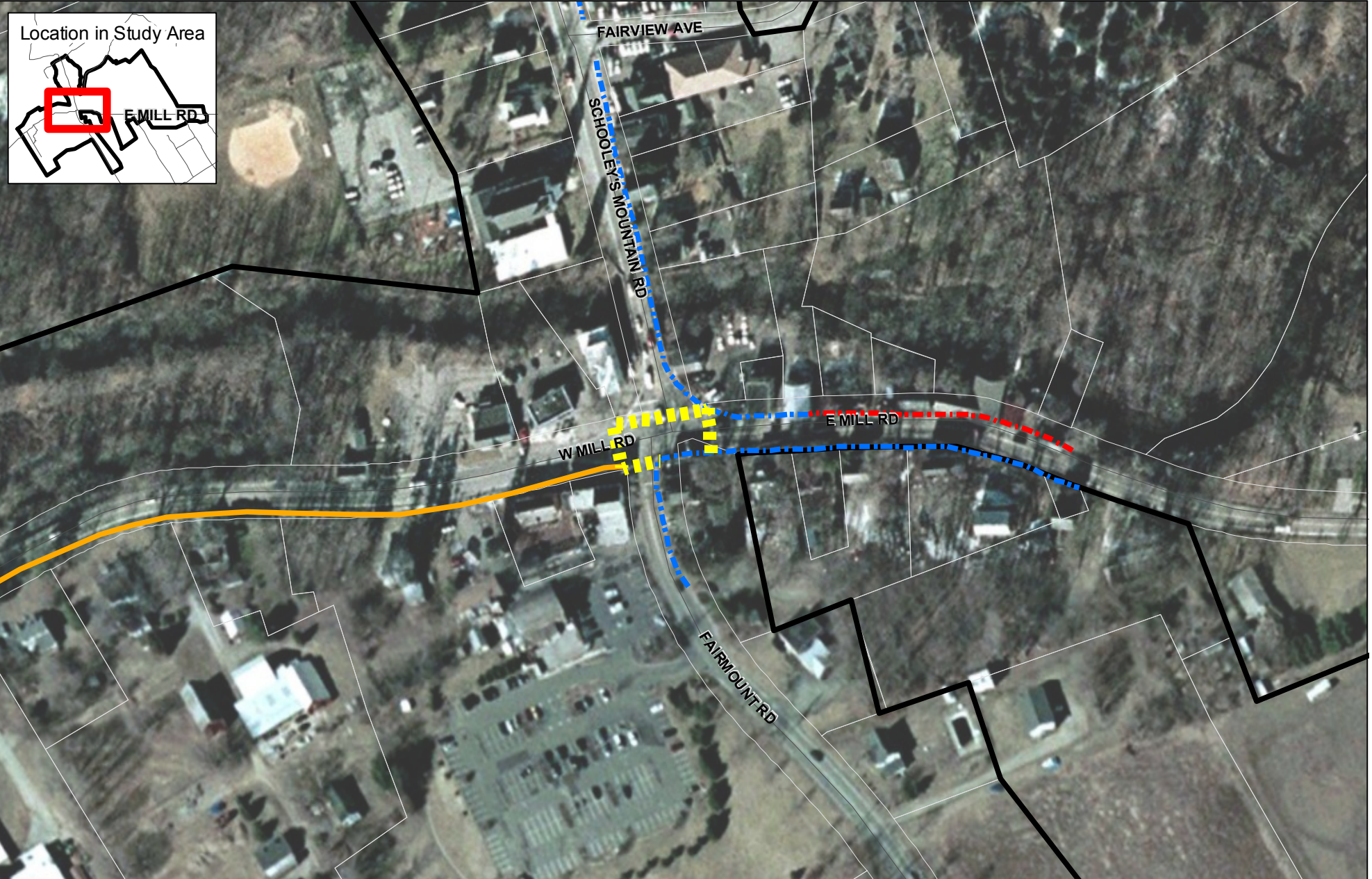
0 250 Feet

Data Sources: NJDEP,
Morris County, iCubed - Fort Collins CO
Banisch Associates, Inc.

Figure 3

This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been NJDEP verified and is not State-authorized.

BANISCH
ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning and Design



Long Valley Existing and Proposed Sidewalks and Crosswalks

Portion of Washington Township
Morris County, NJ

January, 2008

Legend

- Proposed Crosswalk
- Existing Sidewalk
- Proposed New/Improved Sidewalk
- Long Valley Study Area
- Proposed ROW
- Parcel



Data Sources: NJDEP,
Morris County, iCubed - Fort Collins CO
Banisch Associates, Inc.

Figure 4

This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been NJDEP verified and is not State-authorized.

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Downtown Long Valley Trail System* and Existing and Proposed Sidewalks and Crosswalks

Figure 5

Portion of Washington Township
 Morris County, NJ
 *as identified in the 2003 Master Plan
 Trail System Map
 June 2008

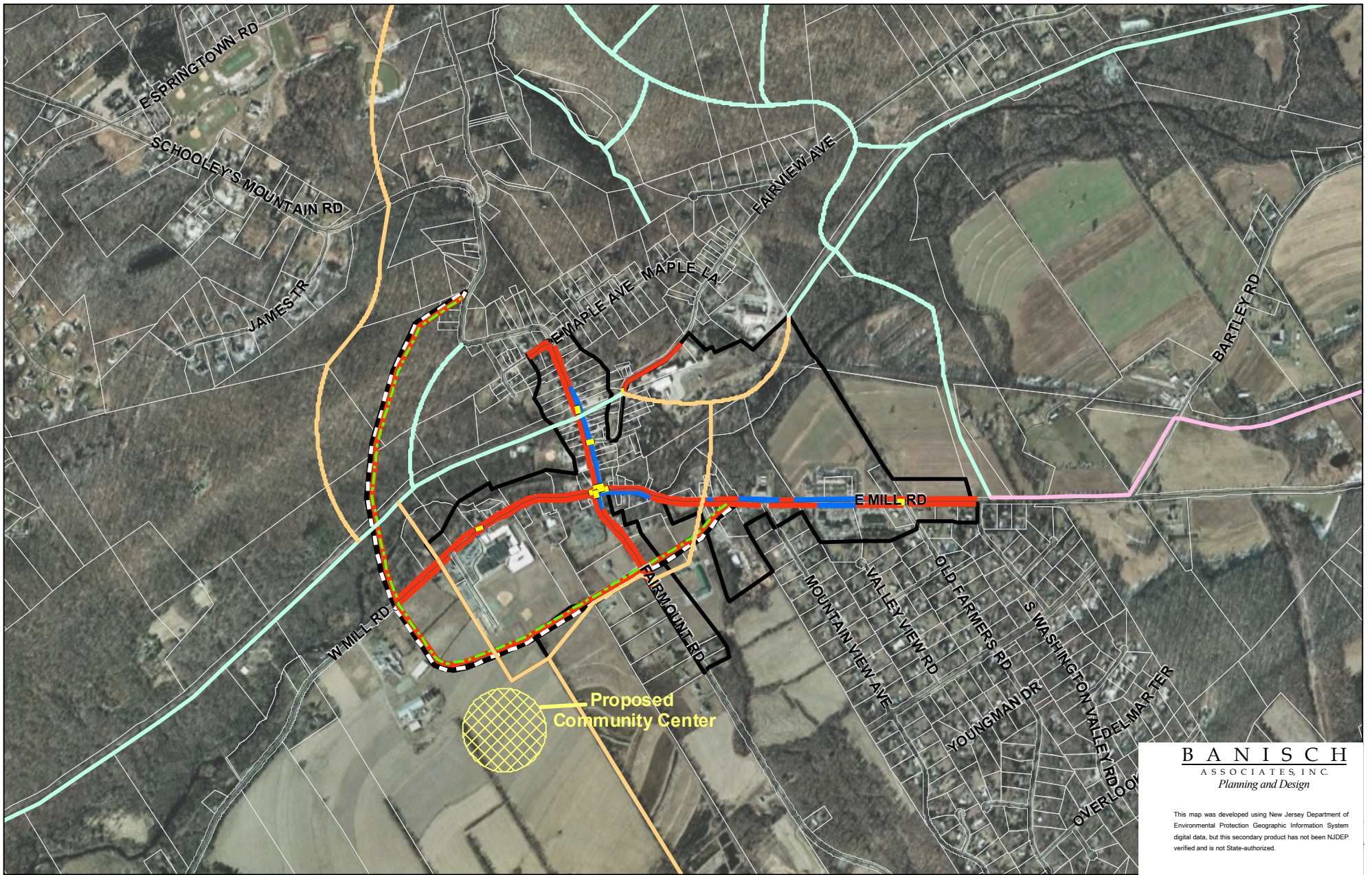
Legend

- Existing and Recent Trail Addition
- Existing Sidewalk
- Proposed Crosswalk
- Trail Development in Progress
- Proposed New/Improved Sidewalk
- Long Valley Study Area
- Future Trail Extensions Planned
- - - Proposed Bike Path
- Proposed CR 517 Realignment



Data Sources: NJDEP,
 Morris County, icubed - Fort Collins CO
 Banisch Associates, Inc.

0 500 1,000 1,500
 Feet



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 ASSOCIATES, INC.
 Planning and Design

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