



**The Town of Acton**  
**Invites you to a**  
**Public Forum**  
**for the**  
**Acton Center Traffic Study**  
**Thursday, January 29, 2015**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Town Hall**  
**472 Main Street, Acton MA**

The Town of Acton is conducting a traffic study within the Acton Center Historic District to improve upon the overall safety of these intersections. The Town has retained the consulting firm Howard/Stein-Hudson, Associates, Inc., transportation planners and engineers, to guide this study. The Town previously commissioned a study of these intersections as part of the Route 27 Corridor Study completed in 2001. The study recommended modifications to the Main Street /Concord Road / Newtown Road intersection, including signalization. The 2013 Annual Town Meeting voted funds to update and expand on the above study, with respect to the Main/Newtown/Concord intersection, to determine the most preferred alternative to this intersection that preserves the historic character and analyzes the potential impacts on the nearby roads, intersections, and neighborhoods. It is anticipated that the Acton Board of Selectmen at the conclusion of the study and receipt of public input will recommend to the next Town Meeting to either fund the final design and construction of the most favorable option or select the option to make no changes.

The purpose of this meeting is to listen to concerns and ideas of the community regarding transportation and safety conditions in the Town Center. A short presentation will be provided introducing the consultant team and initial traffic observations and data to facilitate a discussion. Following the public forum, Howard Stein Hudson will review public comments and work on developing a list of possible options (including a no build option) to address safety and operational issues in the Town Center. These options will be presented to the community at a later date.

Please come express your concerns about the Town Center. Your ideas will help inform what options will be evaluated for this area and what impacts should be considered in the evaluation.

To be added to the project email list, please contact Joe SanClemente at [js@hshassoc.com](mailto:js@hshassoc.com) or call the Acton Engineering Department at 978-929-6630 for additional information.

**Please share this notice with others who may be interested in the project.**

# Acton Center Traffic Study

Route 27 (Main Street), Newtown Road, Concord Road,  
Woodbury Road

## Public Forum

January 29, 2015



**Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.**  
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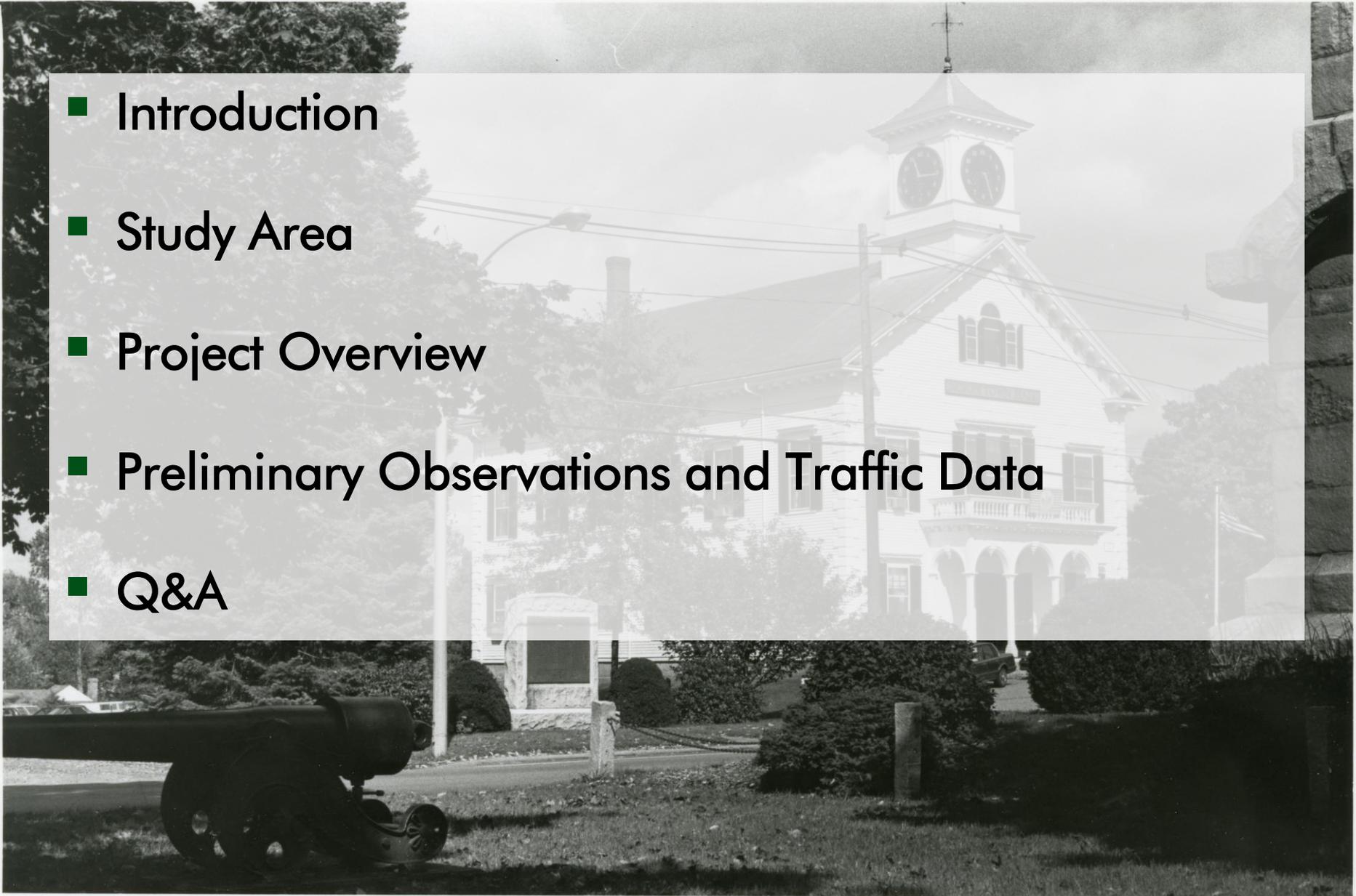
**HALVORSON DESIGN**  
PARTNERSHIP

**Epsilon**  
ASSOCIATES INC.

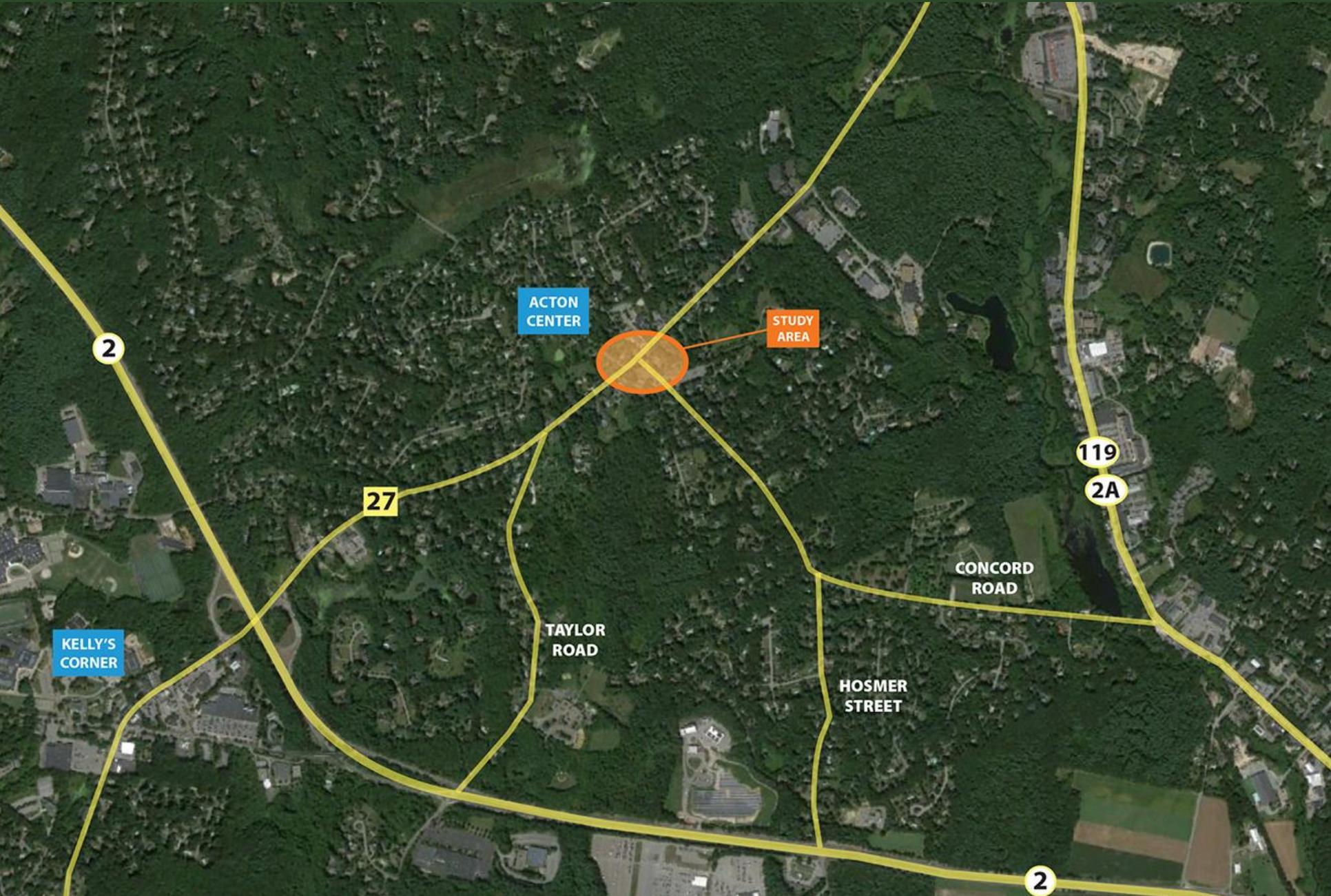


# Agenda

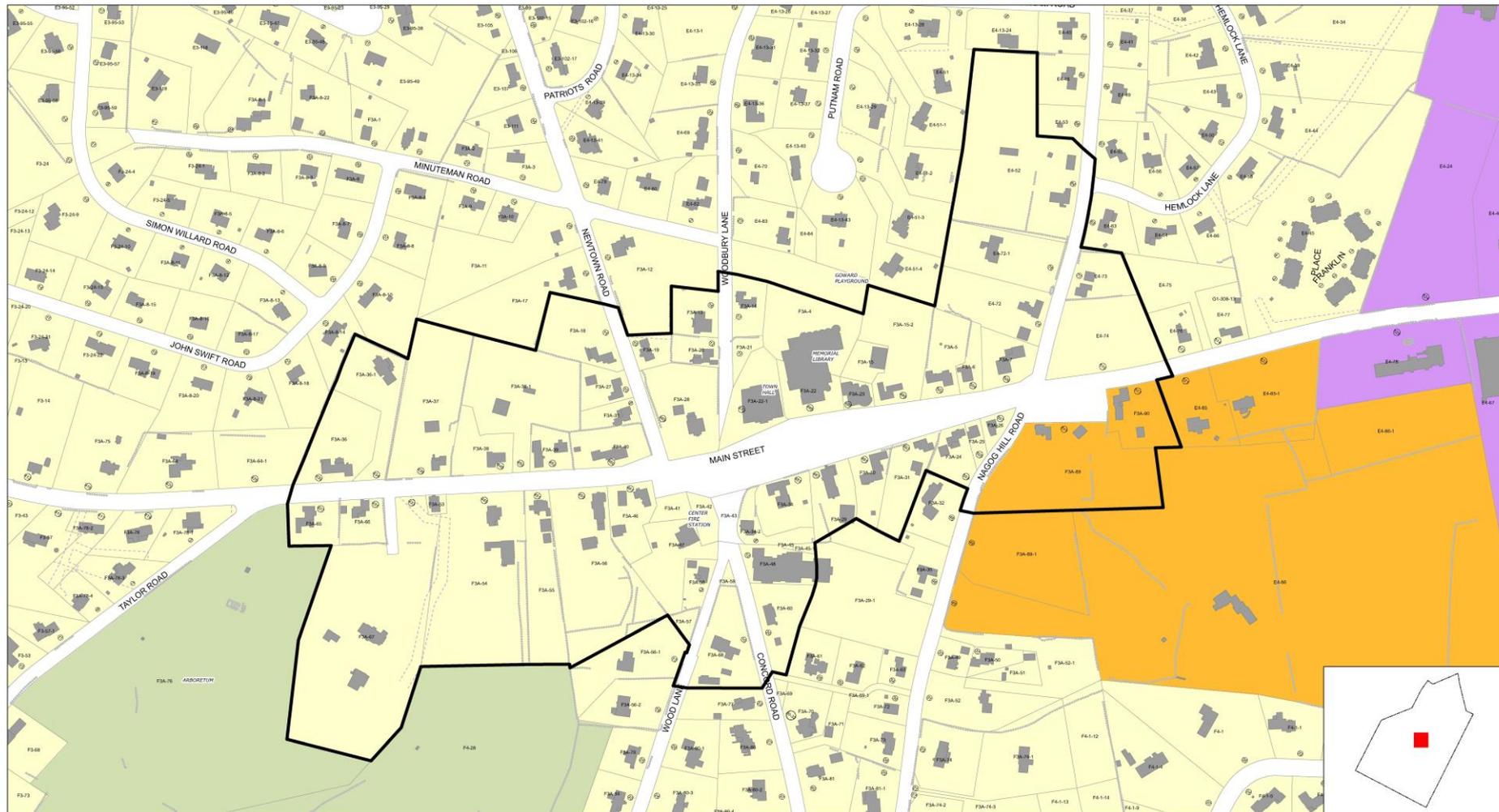
- Introduction
- Study Area
- Project Overview
- Preliminary Observations and Traffic Data
- Q&A



# Context Map



# Acton Center Historic District



Acton Centre Local Historic District  
 Parcel Boundaries  
 Easements/Private Ways  
 Stone Walls  
 Buildings

**Zoning Districts**  
 Residence 2  
 Residence 8/4  
 Agriculture Recreation Conservation  
 Light Industrial 1

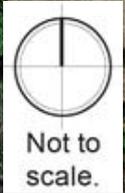
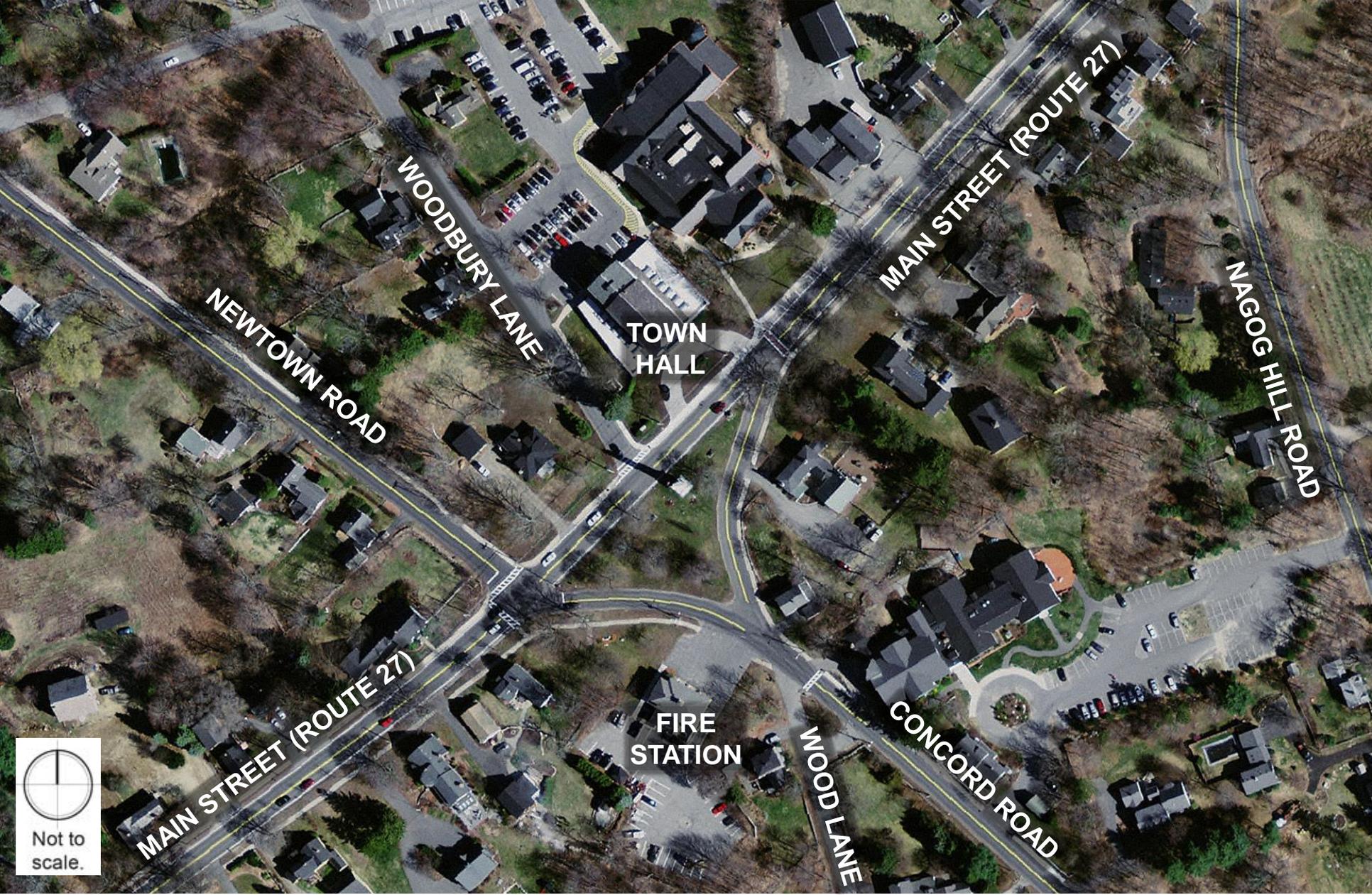


## Town of Acton Acton Centre Historic District



1 inch = 125 feet

# Study Area



# Project Objectives

- Evaluate traffic safety and operational problems within Acton Center.
- Identify suitable and effective improvements, if any, while preserving the historic character of the area.
- Consider potential impacts on the nearby roads, intersections and neighborhoods.

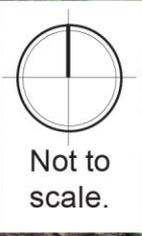
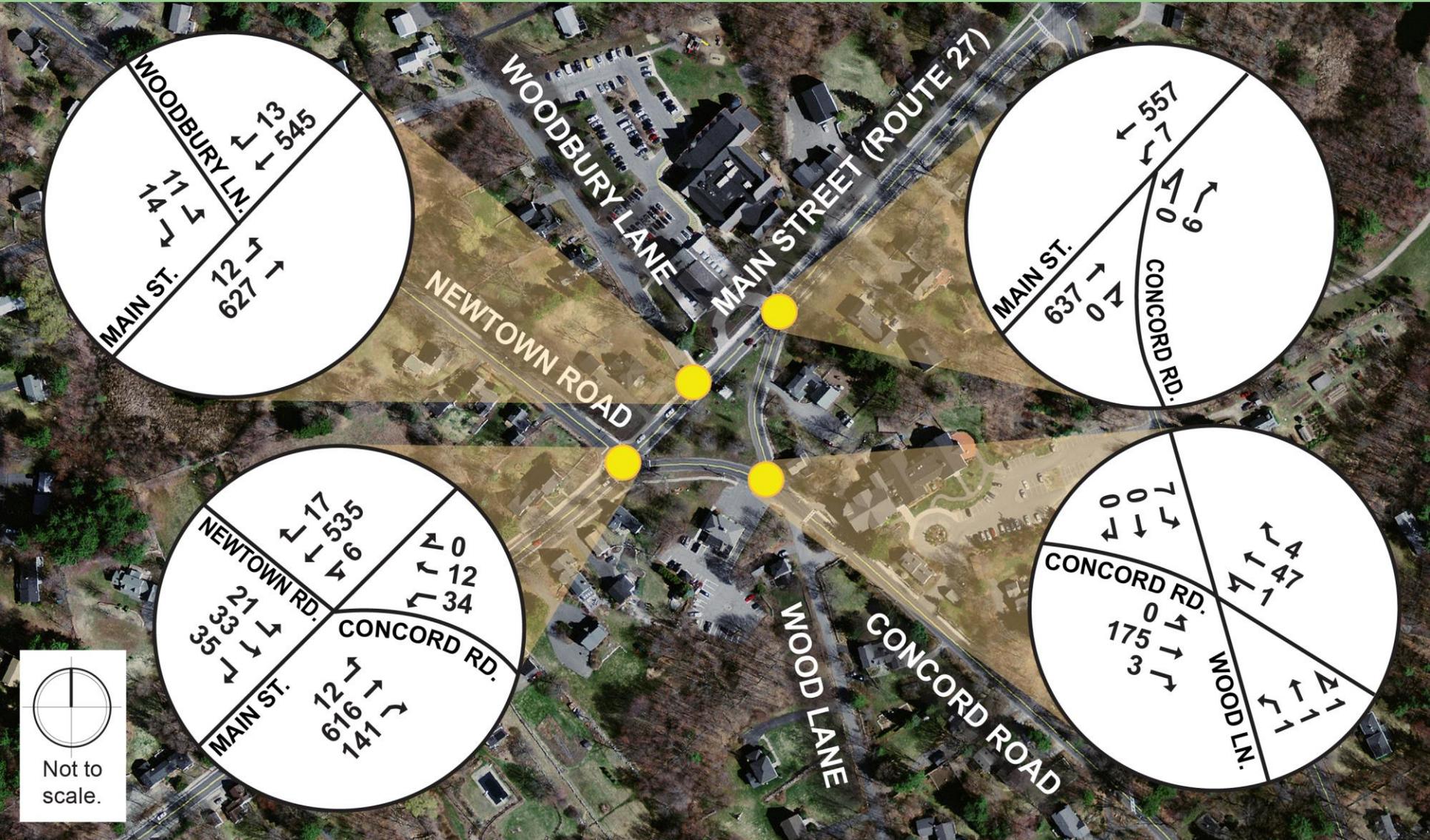


# Background

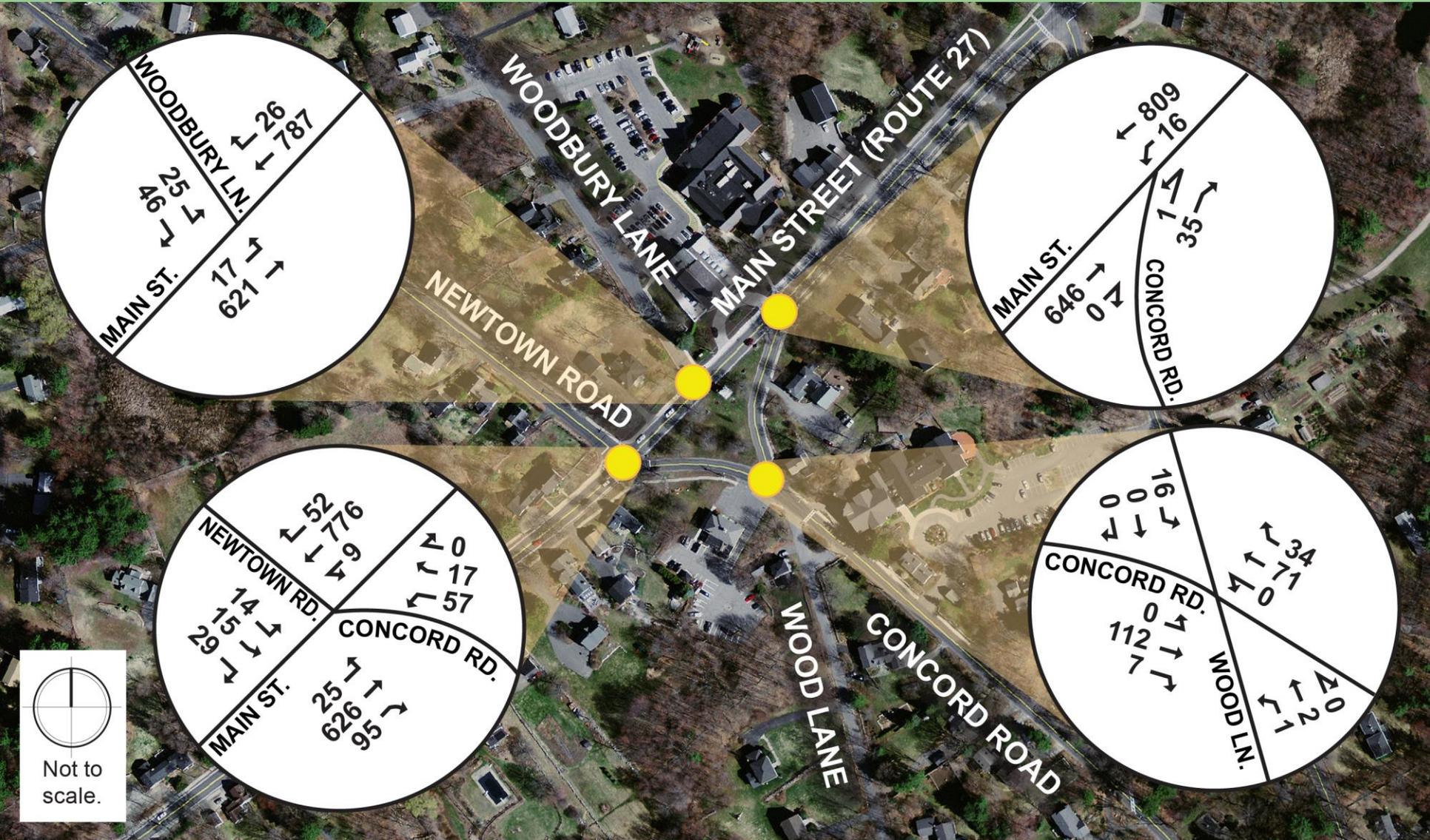
- Review prior studies
- Initial field observations November and January
- Meeting with Historic District Commission 1/13/2015
- Traffic data collection November 2014
  - Vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle counts
  - Automated traffic recorder
  - Travel speed data



# a.m. Peak Hour 7:45 a.m.-8:45 a.m.



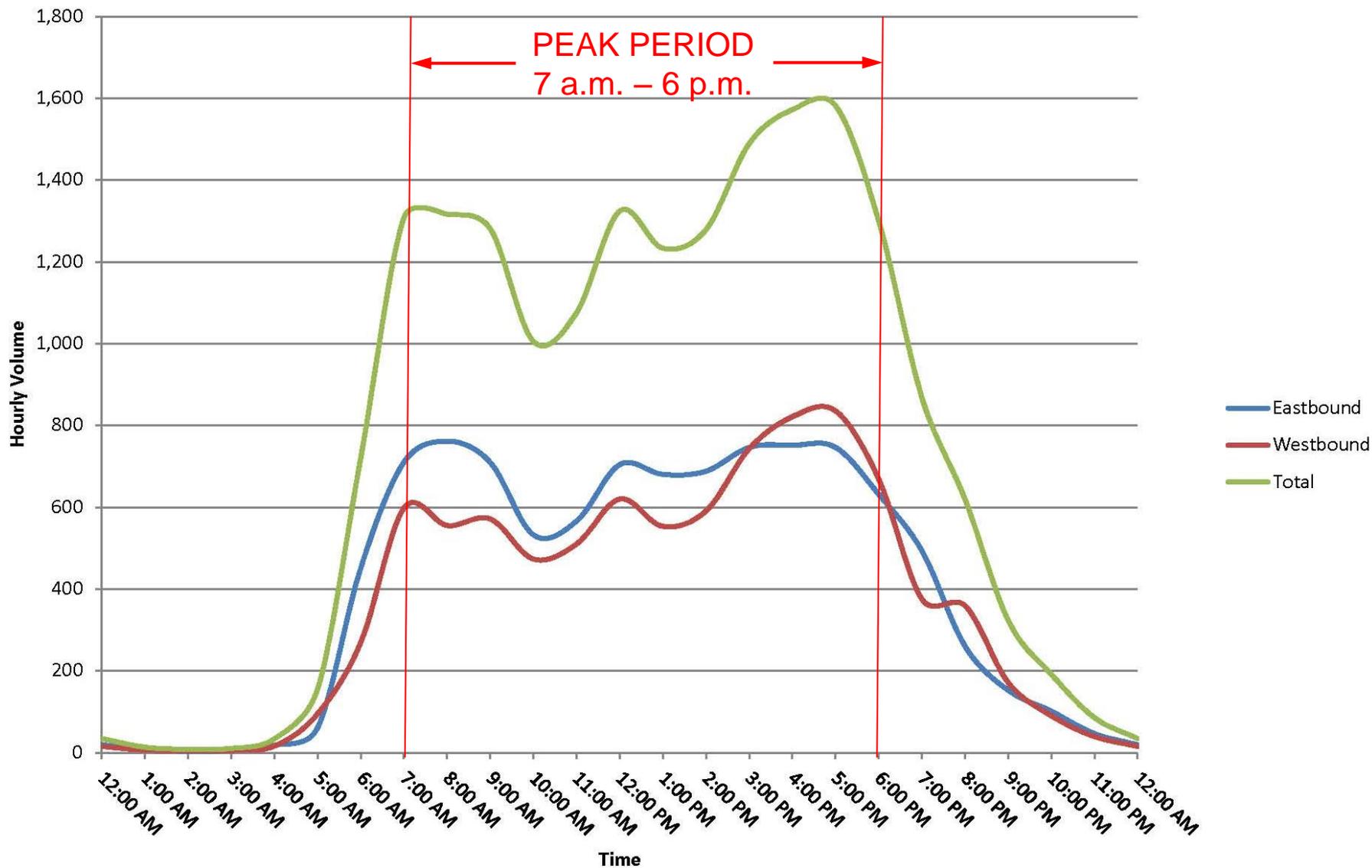
# p.m. Peak Hour 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.



Not to scale.

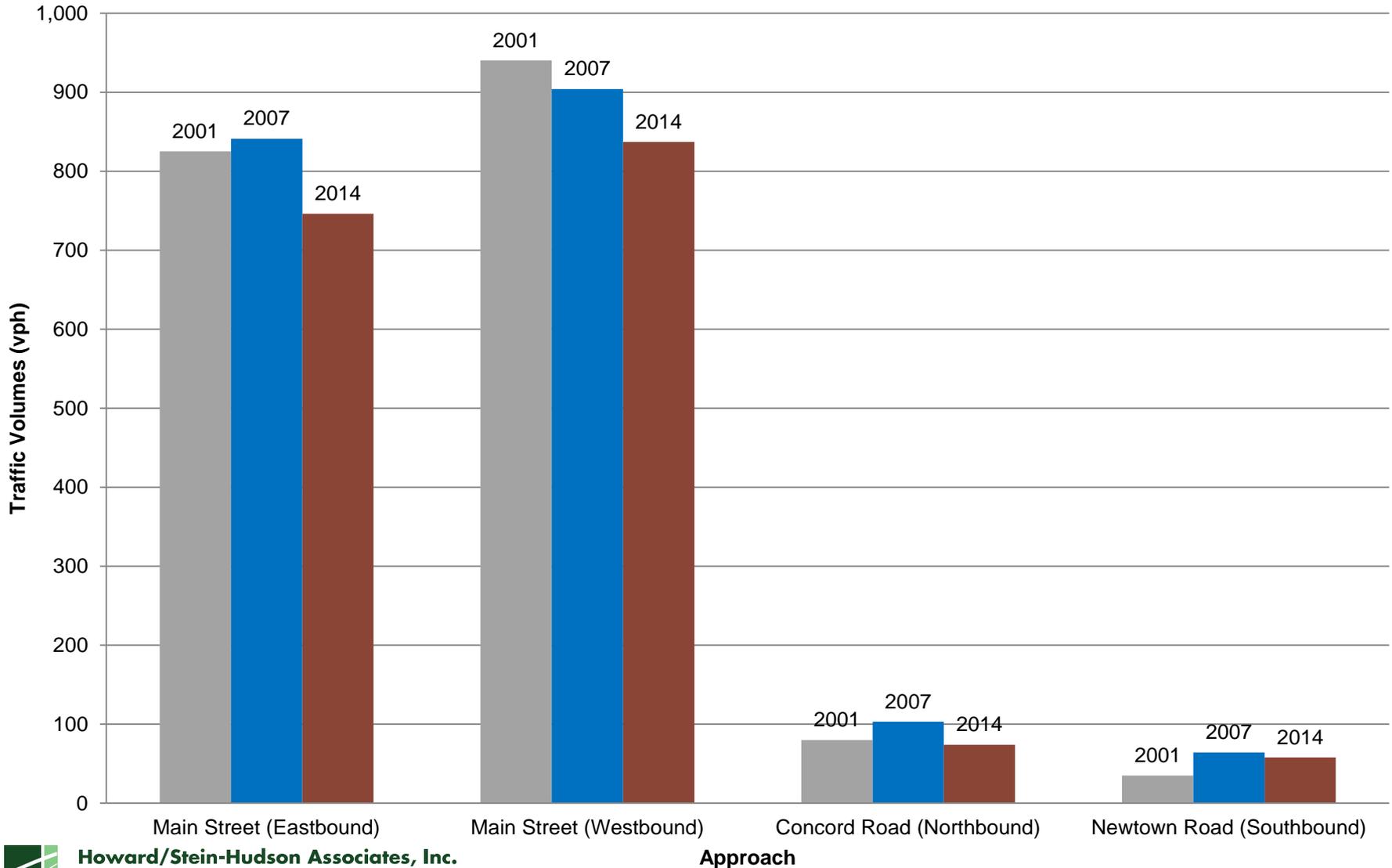
# Traffic Volumes

## Main Street West of Newtown Road



# Traffic Volume Comparison

## Main Street/Newtown Road/Concord Road



# Speed Limits

**85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed: 38 MPH**

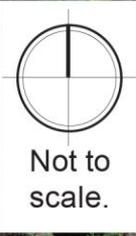
NEWTOWN ROAD

WOODBURY LANE

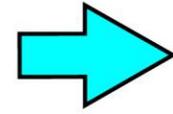
MAIN STREET (ROUTE 27)

WOOD LANE

CONCORD ROAD

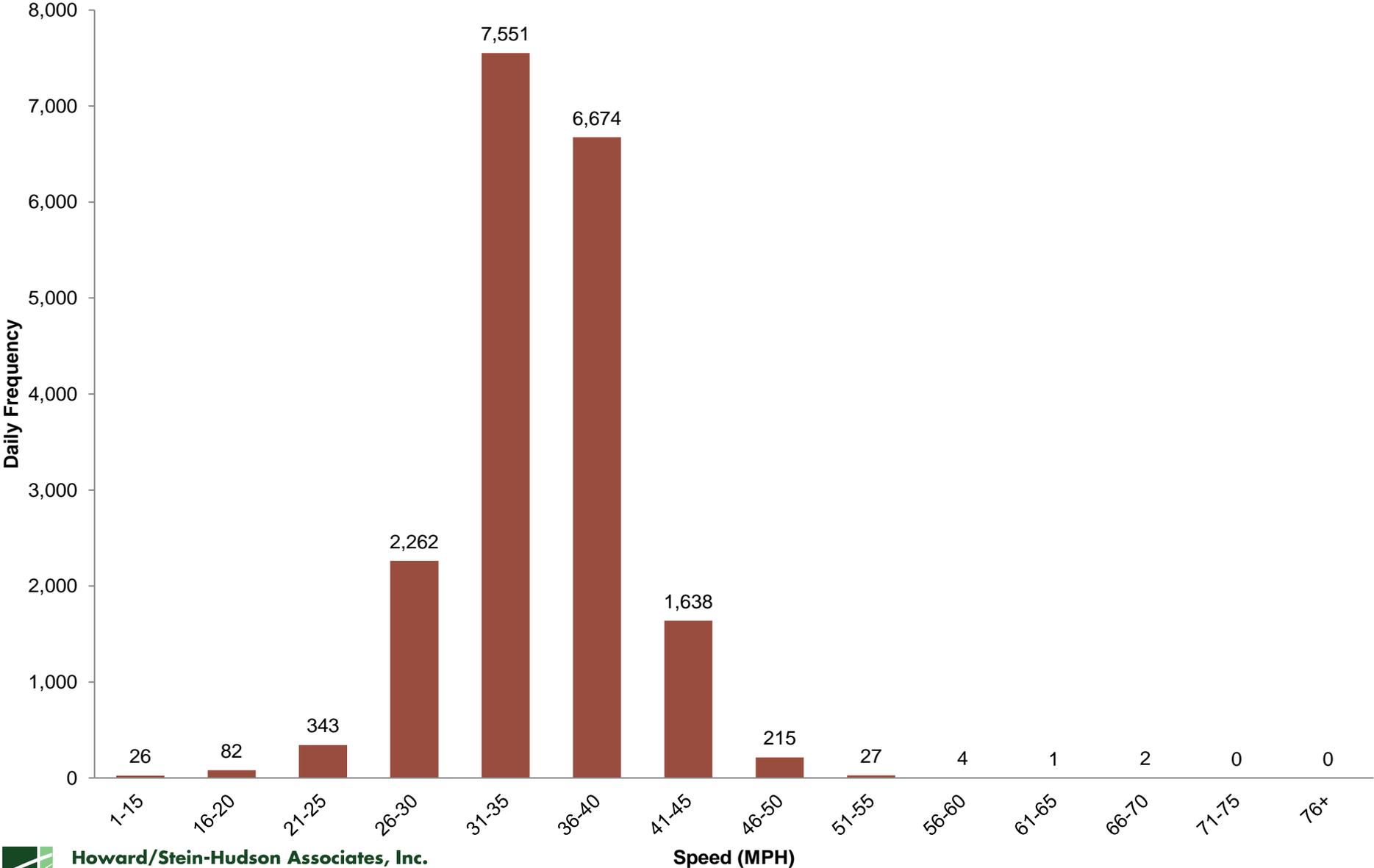


**30 MPH Zone**

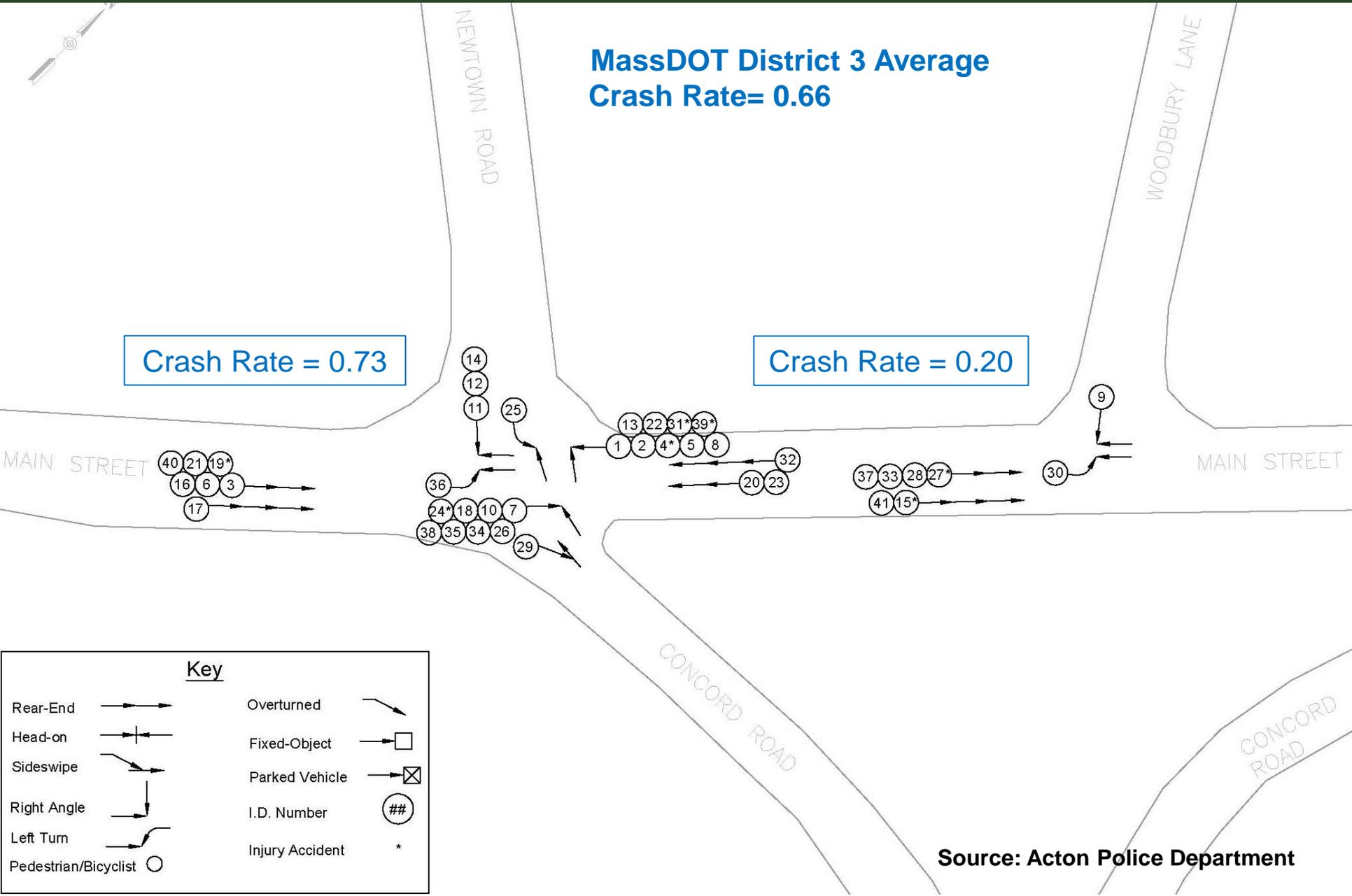


**35 MPH Zone**

# Travel Speeds



# Collision Diagram (2009 - 2014)



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Concord Road approach looking right



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Newtown Road approach looking left



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Newtown Road approach looking right



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Main Street approaching Town Center from west



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd.



Concord Road approach looking left



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd.



Textured Crosswalk



# Observations

## Concord Road at Wood Lane



Mid-block Crossing



# Next Steps

- Review public comments
- Additional field observations
- Develop possible options to address safety and operational problems
- Options to be presented at a later date



# Questions and Discussion

- **We want to hear from you:**
  - Email, telephone, mail
  - Join our stakeholder database to receive project updates.
  
- **Questions & Public Comment:**
  - Contact us  
**Nick Gross** – Public Involvement Specialist  
Howard Stein Hudson  
11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010  
Boston, MA 02108  
Telephone: (617) 482-7080  
[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)





April 21, 2015

To: Corey York, P.L.S.  
Town of Acton  
Town Engineer / Director of Public Works

From: Joe SanClemente P.E., AICP  
Howard Stein Hudson  
Project Manager

RE: **Town of Acton**  
**Acton Center Traffic Study**  
**Public Information Meeting #1**  
**Meeting Notes of January 29, 2015**

## Overview

On January 29, 2015 Howard Stein Hudson in coordination with the Town of Acton held its first public information meeting for the Acton Center Traffic Study. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project and its team to the residents of Acton, collect contact information from meeting attendees for the projects stakeholder database, as well as obtain local insight from residents to further develop a list of potential intersection options. The meeting also provided participants with the opportunity to ask questions to the project team. The meeting was attended by approximately 23 residents including the Town Engineer, a member of the Historic District Commission (HDC), and members of the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

The tone of the meeting summarized herein was largely positive with a number of audience members providing local input including personal experiences traversing the project area. During the comment period, a general consensus was agreed upon that speeding and safety are the two primary concerns in the project area. A number of conceptual ideas were brought forward by audience members including a surface road between Newtown Road and Woodbury Lane allowing a dead-end at Newtown Road near Main Street (Route 27) as well as a boulevard road configuration for Main Street (Route 27) with travel lanes on both sides of the town green. It was referenced that the boulevard option was once the configuration of the Acton town green in the 1800's.

## Summary of Comments<sup>1</sup>

- C: The reason it is so difficult to cross Route 27 is because of vehicular speed. It would be much simpler if everyone drove the speed limit. **Respect to speed limit<sup>2</sup>** should be the utmost concern on the list. The telephone pole is not difficult to see around.
- C: I disagree. The telephone pole is always in the way. If we have a **stop sign** that would be much better. The Town center needs to be **more walkable**. I would prefer raised walkways. It's important to keep the character while slowing traffic.
- C: I find that speed is not a big issue on Route 27. The problem is **unpredictable driving**; no one uses their signals.
- C: When people stick their nose out to get onto Route 27 people still drive around them. I agree that it's unpredictable.
- C: Nagog Hill Road is a much safer **alternative route**.
- C: I think everyone agrees that people are driving too fast and looking in too many directions. In Europe the solution is often to build a **roundabout**. I think **traffic lights are bad** because they encourage people to speed to get through the lights.
- C: I've never had a problem crossing this intersection as a pedestrian. Left from Concord Road onto Main Street is the most difficult move. I hope that a **traffic light is not your solution**.
- C: I often drive all the way around this area to **avoid this intersection**.
- C: I suggest **speed signs** that tell you how fast you're going. If you eliminate the speeding factor the intersection becomes much easier to navigate.
- C: **Speed is an issue** but not the only issue. People often think you are turning left exiting Concord because of the **angle of your car**.
- C: I am voting for a **traffic light** with 3 cycles.
- C: I am putting down a vote for a **roundabout**.
- C: I think you need to expand your scope to better understand the issues out there. People cut through the Church parking lot to get from Nagog Hill Road to Concord Road.

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<sup>1</sup> Herein "C" stands for comment.

<sup>2</sup> Remarks are not meant to be exact but rather highlight key points (**bold**).

- C: A **roundabout** near the northeast side of the green may work.
  - C: I am suggesting the idea to have a **new road** behind the red house that hooks up with Woodbury Lane from Newtown Road.
  - C: Removing the **telephone pole** on Concord Road would help and allow you to “T” off that intersection.
  - C: You would have to cut down a lot of trees to build that new road behind the red house.
  - C: Is it possible to put all the utilities underground?
  - C: I suggest making **Woodbury Lane a 1-way** from Route 27. **Raised walkways** and **stop signs** would also slow traffic.
  - C: Underground utilities run about \$1 million per mile.
  - C: It may be possible to **narrow the road**.
  - C: Could it be possible to **change the speed limit** as an experiment? The town of Lincoln has a 25 mph for miles through their town center.
  - C: Maybe you could **paint the road** to alert people they are entering a historic district.
  - C: The traffic that comes through from Route 27 all comes from Kelly’s Corner. We need to **slow this traffic down**.
  - C: Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) came and did walkability study. They said we do have the right to **slow traffic down**.
- 

## ***Next Steps***

As the project advances throughout the winter of 2015 and into the spring the project team will work to develop a list of possible options, update previous traffic counts and accident history, and explore the impacts of each option including a no-build option. The project team will hold a second public information meeting to present the findings sometime in the late spring. The resulting outcome will be a final report with recommendations that will be provided to the Town of Acton.



**The Town of Acton**  
**Invites you to a**  
**Public Forum**  
**for the**  
**Acton Center Traffic Study**  
**Monday, June 1, 2015**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Town Hall**  
**472 Main Street, Acton MA**

The Town of Acton is conducting a traffic study within the Acton Center Historic District to improve upon the overall safety of these intersections. The Town has retained the consulting firm Howard/Stein-Hudson, Associates, Inc., transportation planners and engineers, to guide this study. The Town previously commissioned a study of these intersections as part of the Route 27 Corridor Study completed in 2001. The study recommended modifications to the Main Street /Concord Road / Newtown Road intersection, including signalization. The 2013 Annual Town Meeting voted funds to update and expand on the above study, with respect to the Main/Newtown/Concord intersection, to determine the most preferred alternative to this intersection that preserves the historic character and analyzes the potential impacts on the nearby roads, intersections, and neighborhoods. It is anticipated that the Acton Board of Selectmen at the conclusion of the study and receipt of public input will recommend to the next Town Meeting to either fund the final design and construction of the most favorable option or select the option to make no changes.

The purpose of this meeting is to present the conceptual alternatives developed by Howard Stein Hudson for Acton's Town Center based on data collection and public comments received since the initial public information meeting held on January 29, 2015. Following the public forum, Howard Stein Hudson will review public comments and develop recommendations for consideration by the Town.

To be added to the project email list, please contact Joe SanClemente at [jsanclemente@hshassoc.com](mailto:jsanclemente@hshassoc.com) or call the Acton Engineering Department at 978-929-6630 for additional information.

**Please share this notice with others who may be interested in the project.**

# Acton Center Traffic Study

Route 27 (Main Street), Newtown Road, Concord Road,  
Woodbury Road

## Second Public Forum

June 1, 2015



**Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.**  
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PARTNERSHIP

**Epsilon**  
ASSOCIATES INC.

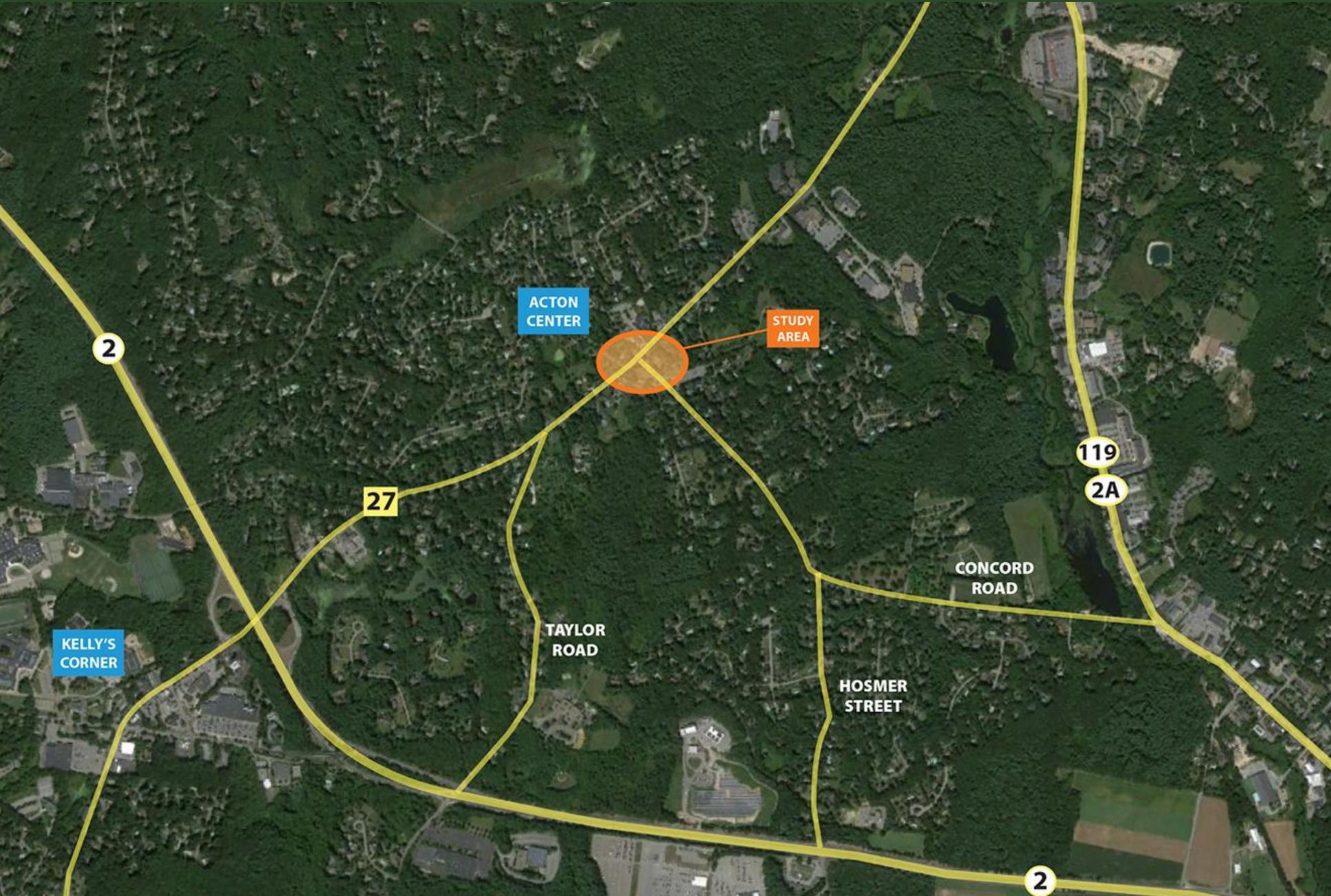


# Agenda

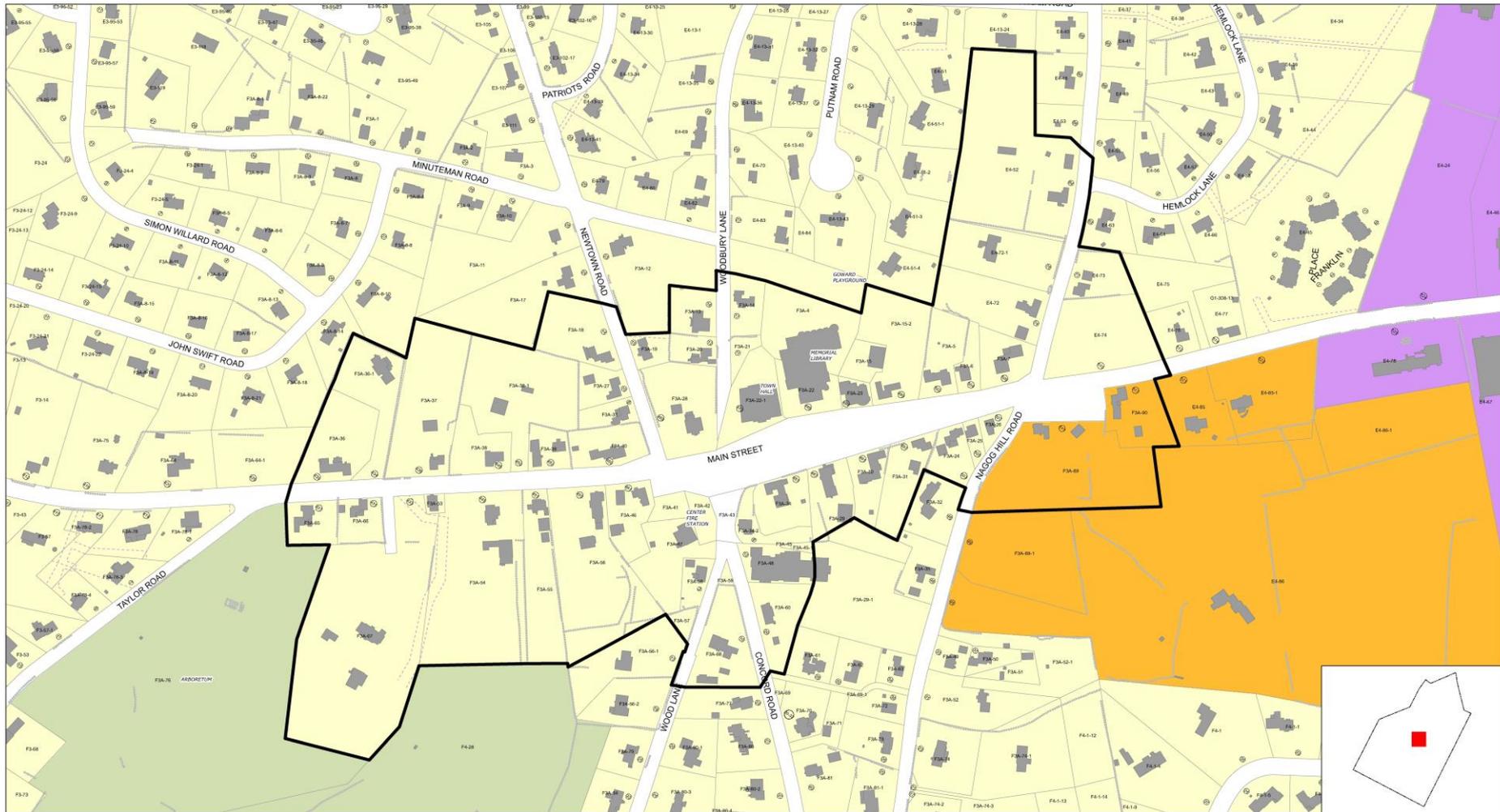
- Introduction
- Study Area
- Project Overview
- Preliminary Observations and Traffic Data
- Design Options
- Plan Review
- Discussion



# Context Map



# Acton Center Historic District



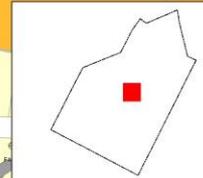
Acton Centre Local Historic District	<b>Zoning Districts</b>
Parcel Boundaries	Residence 2
Easements/Private Ways	Residence 8/4
Stone Walls	Agriculture Recreation Conservation
Buildings	Light Industrial 1



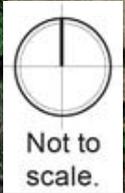
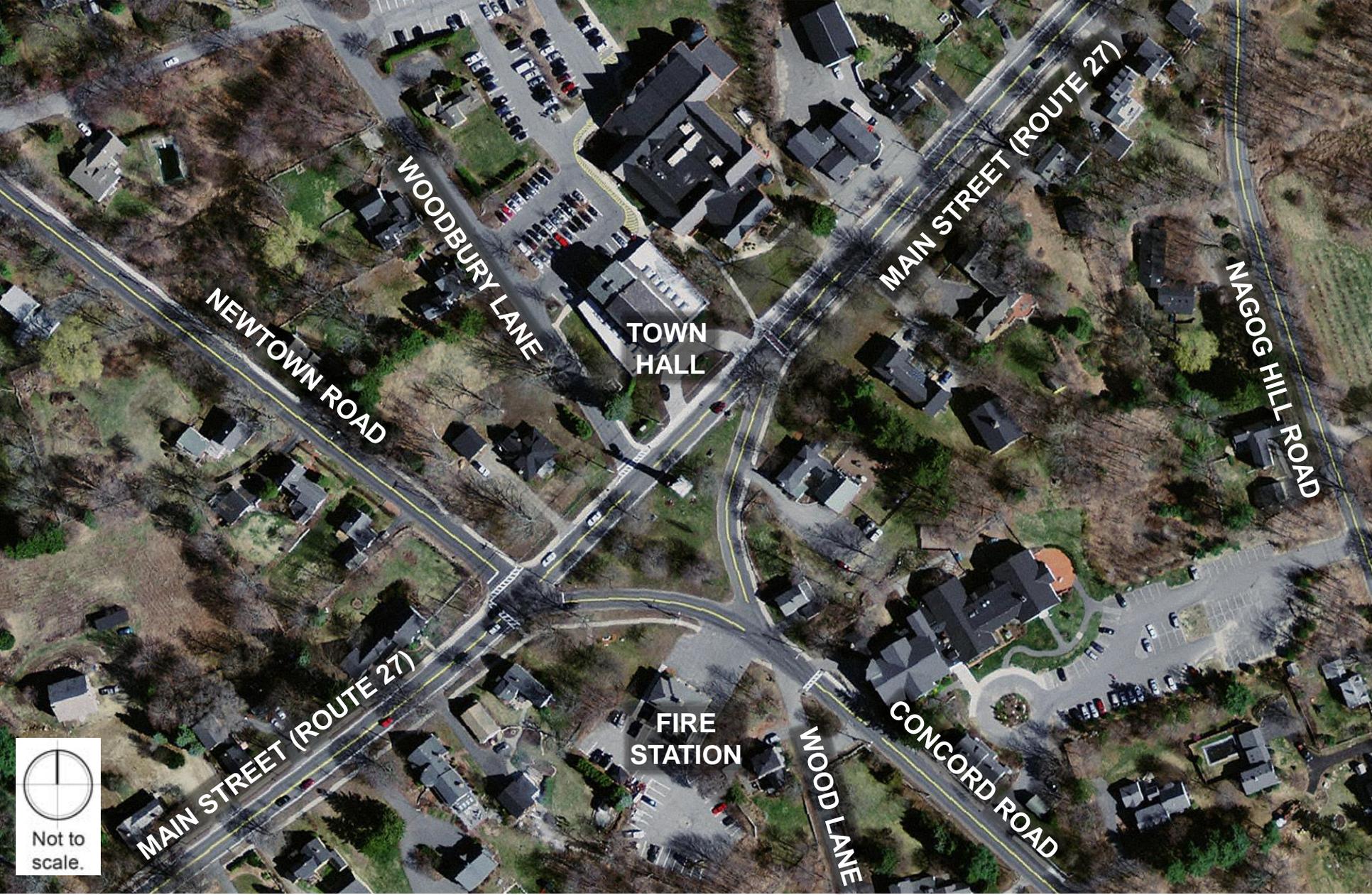
## Town of Acton Acton Centre Historic District



1 inch = 125 feet



# Study Area



# Project Objectives

- Evaluate traffic safety and operational problems within Acton Center.
- Identify suitable and effective improvements, if any, while preserving the historic character of the area.
- Consider potential impacts on the nearby roads, intersections and neighborhoods.

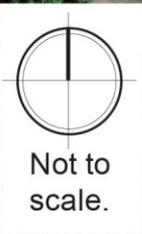
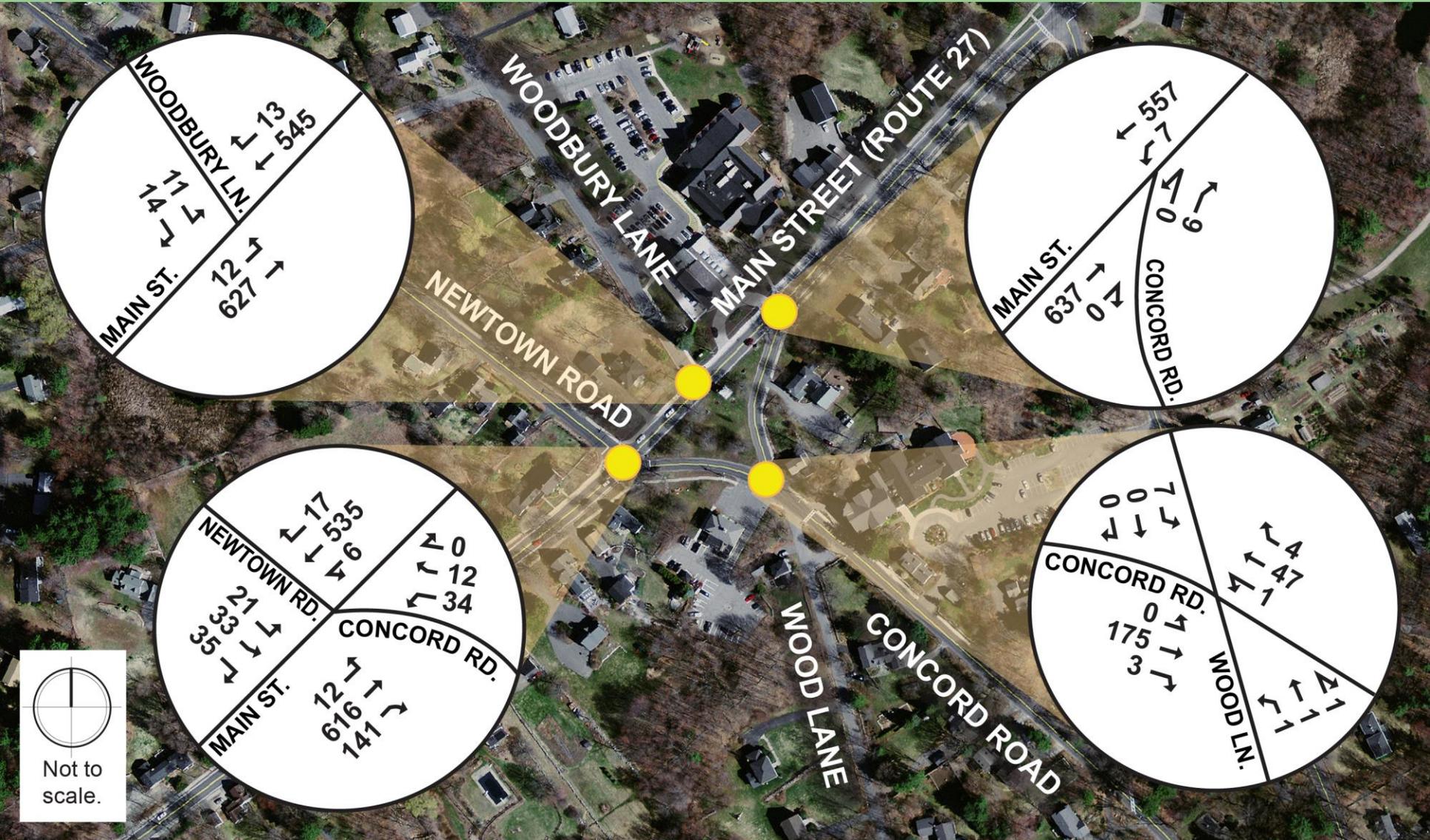


# Background

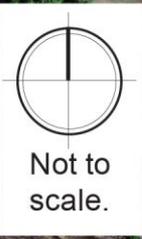
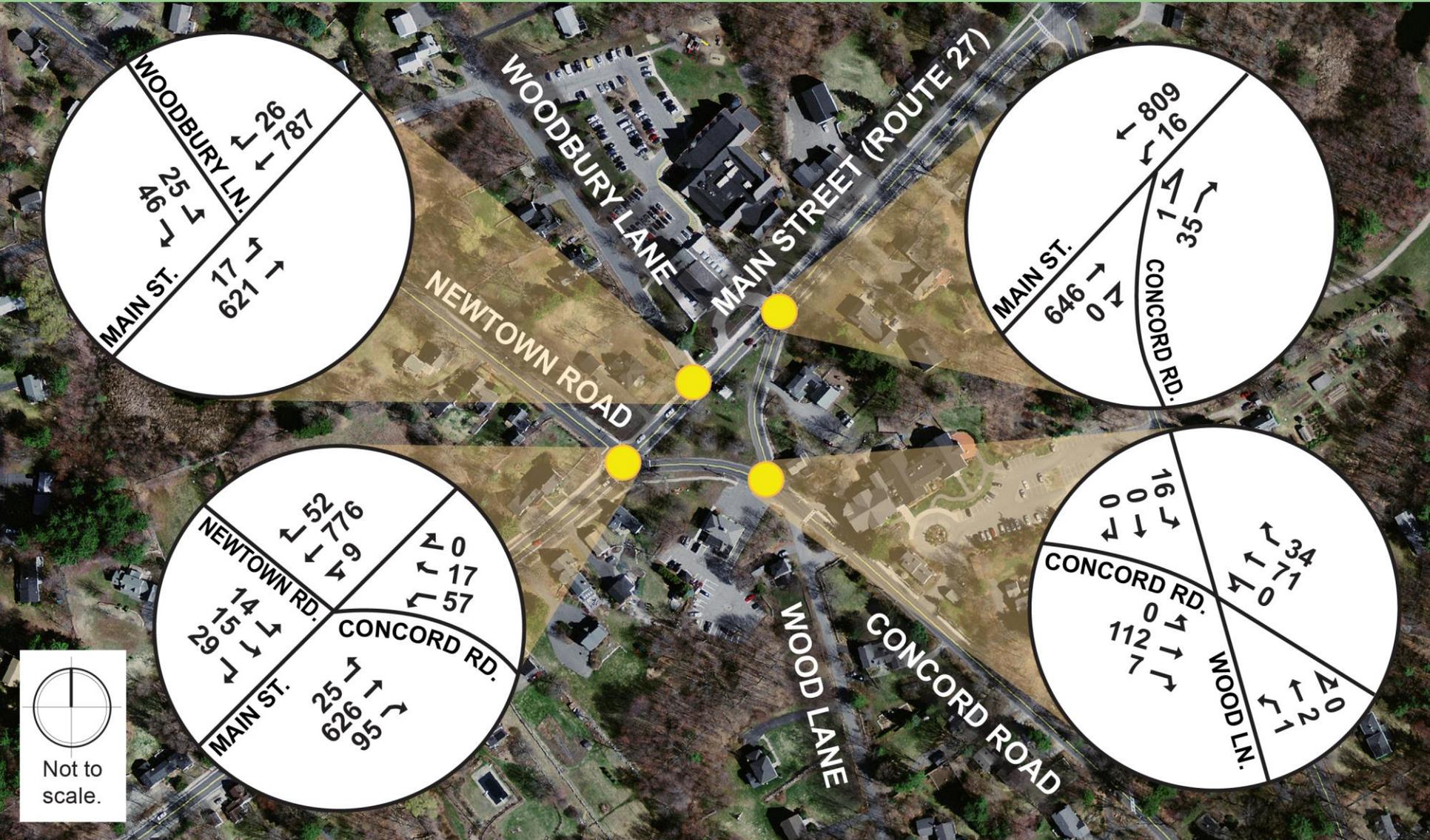
- Review prior studies
- Initial field observations November and January
- Meeting with Historic District Commission 1/13/2015
- Traffic data collection November 2014
  - Vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle counts
  - Automated traffic recorder
  - Travel speed data
- Initial Public Forum on 1/29/2015



# a.m. Peak Hour 7:45 a.m.-8:45 a.m.

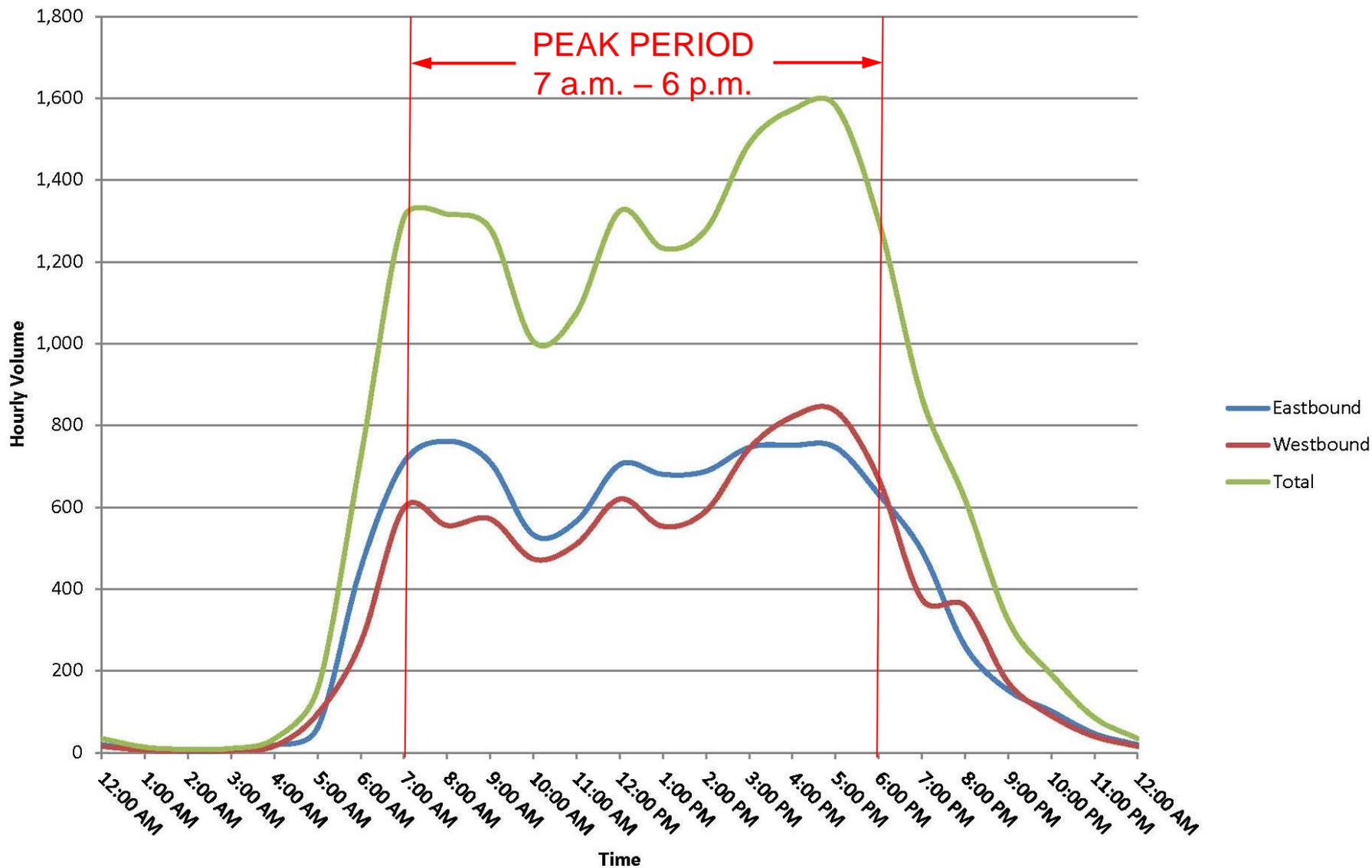


# p.m. Peak Hour 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.



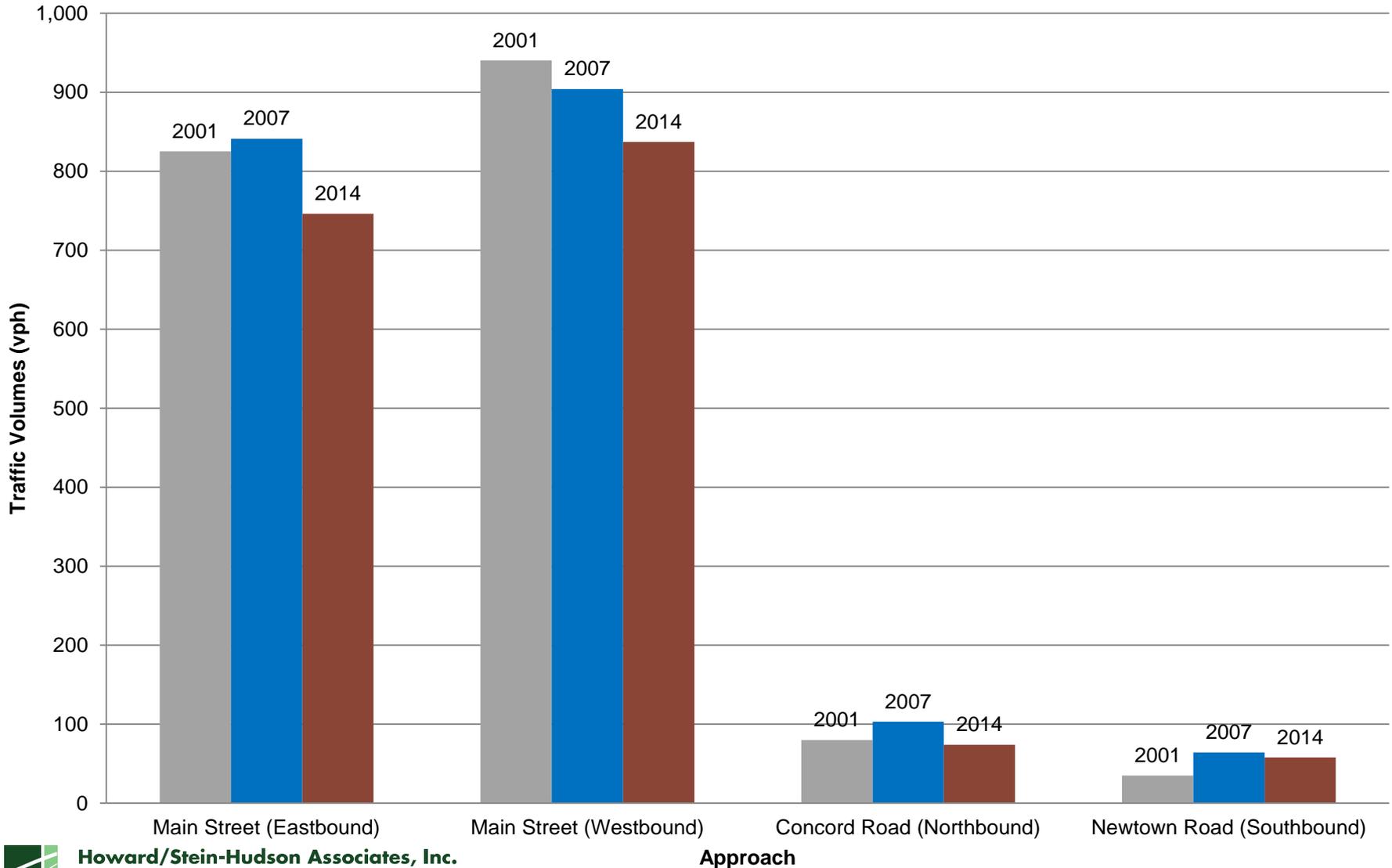
# Traffic Volumes

## Main Street West of Newtown Road



# Traffic Volume Comparison

## Main Street/Newtown Road/Concord Road



# Speed Limits

**85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed: 38 MPH**

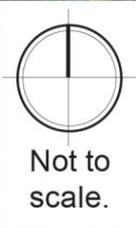
NEWTOWN ROAD

WOODBURY LANE

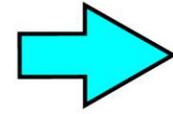
MAIN STREET (ROUTE 27)

WOOD LANE

CONCORD ROAD

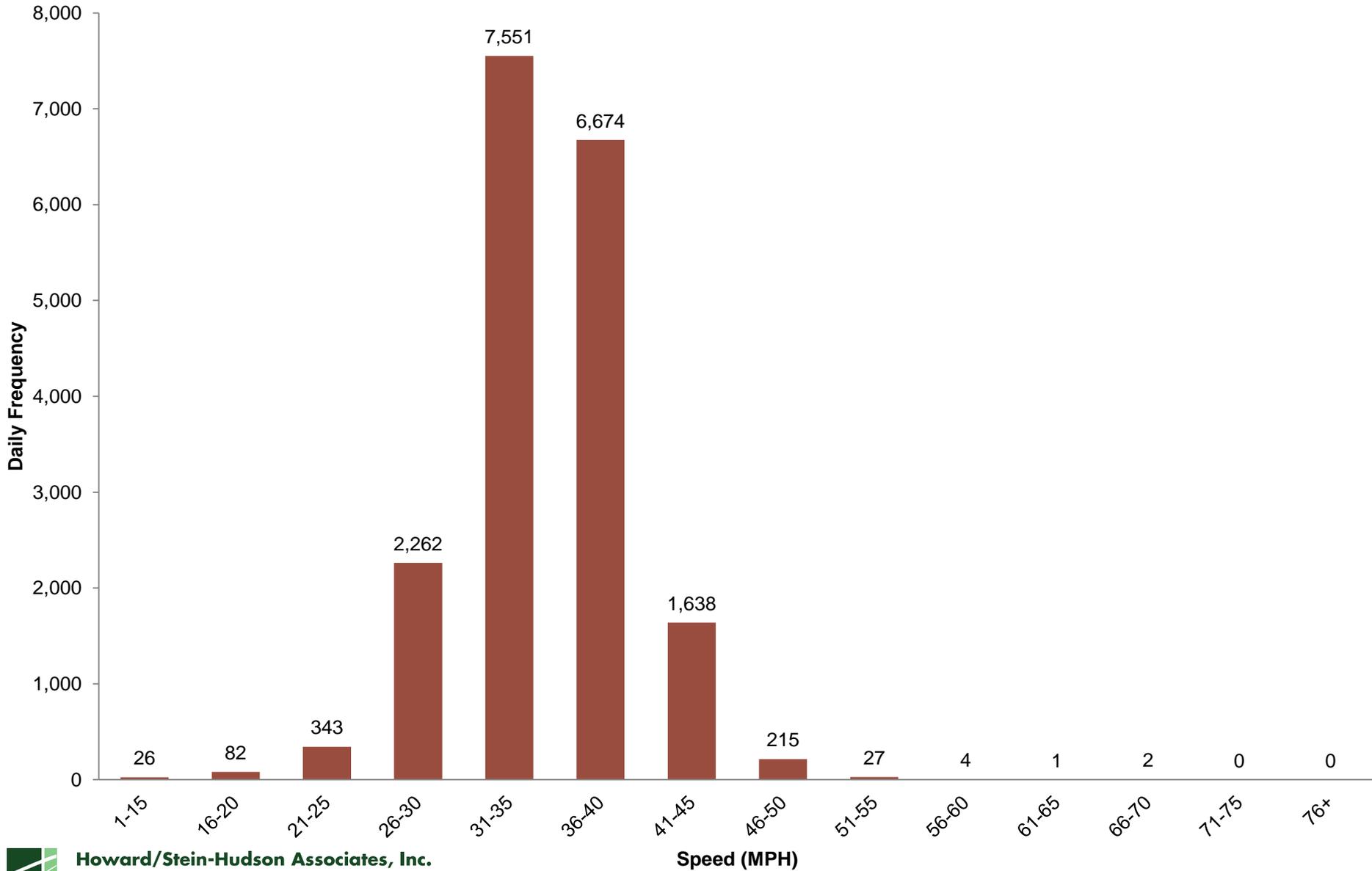


**30 MPH Zone**

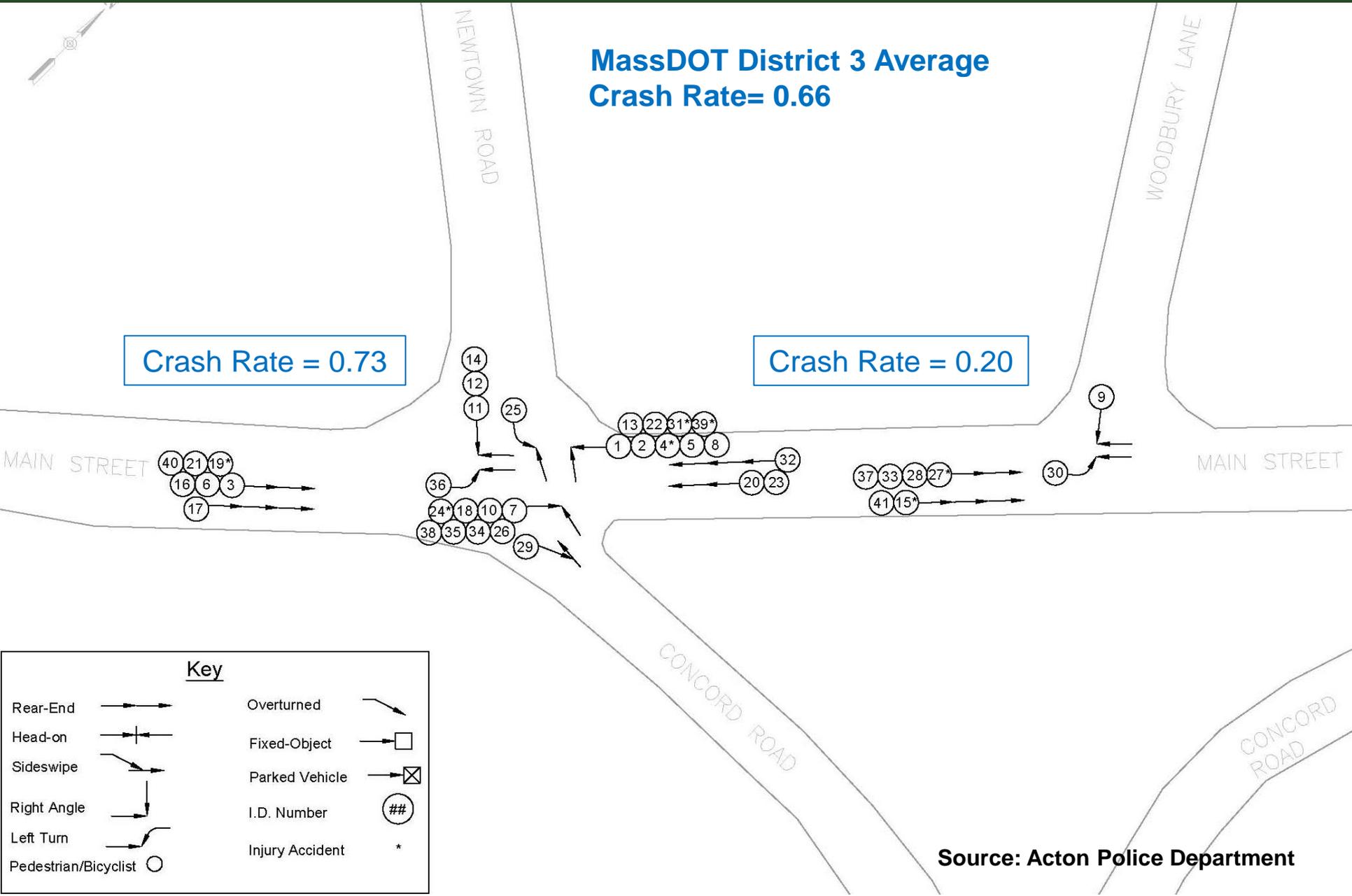


**35 MPH Zone**

# Travel Speeds



# Collision Diagram (2009 - 2014)



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Concord Road approach looking right



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Newtown Road approach looking left



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Newtown Road approach looking right



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd./Newtown Rd.



Main Street approaching Town Center from west



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd.



Concord Road approach looking left



# Observations

## Main Street at Concord Rd.



Textured Crosswalk



# Community Comments

- Need to slow high traffic speeds
- Residents currently seek alternate routes
- Intersection sight lines and confusing geometry
- Unpredictable driver behavior
- Increase walkability
- Avoid installing a traffic light



# Existing Conditions



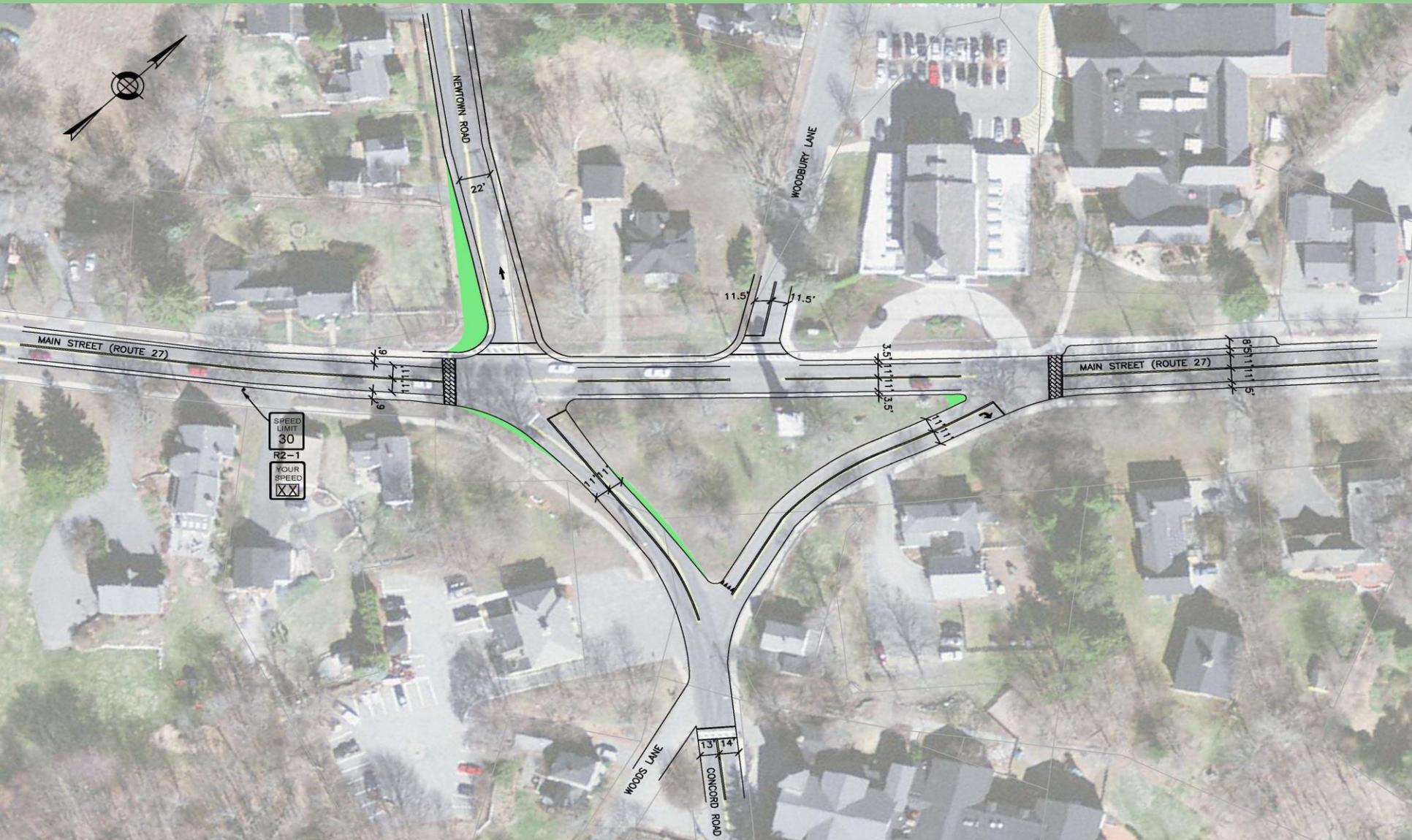
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# Design Concept 3a



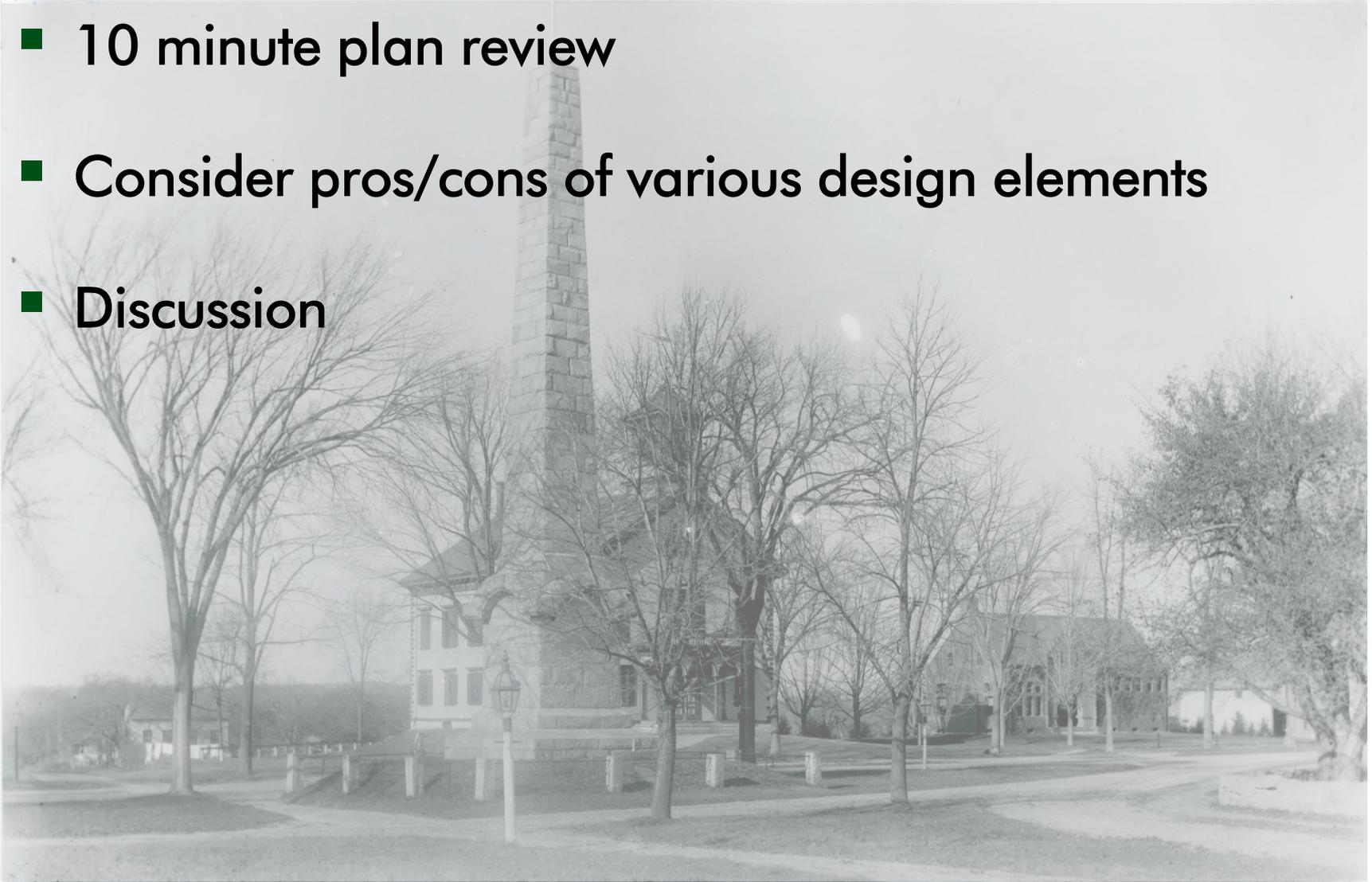
**Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.**

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# Concept Plan Review

- 10 minute plan review
- Consider pros/cons of various design elements
- Discussion



# Next Steps

- Review public comments
- Develop recommendations
- Technical memorandum to Town



# Questions and Discussion

- **We want to hear from you:**
  - Email, telephone, mail
  - Join our stakeholder database to receive project updates.
  
- **Questions & Public Comment:**
  - Contact us  
**Nick Gross** – Public Involvement Specialist  
Howard Stein Hudson  
11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010  
Boston, MA 02108  
Telephone: (617) 348-3352  
[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)



## Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Joanne	Bisseth	BOH
Donna	Bottari	Resident
Frank	Bottari	Resident
Christopher	Byrnes	Resident
David	Clark	Resident
Patricia	Clifford	Resident
Elizabeth	Crowley	Resident
Kathleen	Donnellan	Resident
Michael	Fisher	Resident
Katie	Green	BOS
Christopher	Greene	Halvorson Design
Nick	Gross	Howard Stein Hudson
David	Honn	DRB, HDC
Larry	Kenah	EDC, KCSC
Virginie	Landre	Resident
Sid	Levin	Resident
Molly	Loughman	Beacon Newspaper
Sophia	Malamud	Resident
Greg	Maxwell	Resident
Franny	Osman	BOS
Kareen	Pierce	Resident
Joe	SanClemente	Howard Stein Hudson
Tom	Stokes	Howard Stein Hudson
Alex	Siu	Howard Stein Hudson
Nancy	Tavernien	Resident
Rob	Ullihan	Resident
Barry	Yaceshyn	Resident
Corey	York	Town Engineer

# Design Concept 1

## Main Street

- Raised center islands on either side of Concord Road
  - Pedestrian refuge
- Restripe 11 foot lane widths
- Permanent Electronic Speed Radar signs

## Newtown Road

- Realign at intersection

## Concord Road

- Realign at Newtown Road intersection
- One way travel lanes
  - Reduce pavement width
- New left Turn Lane between horse trough and cannons

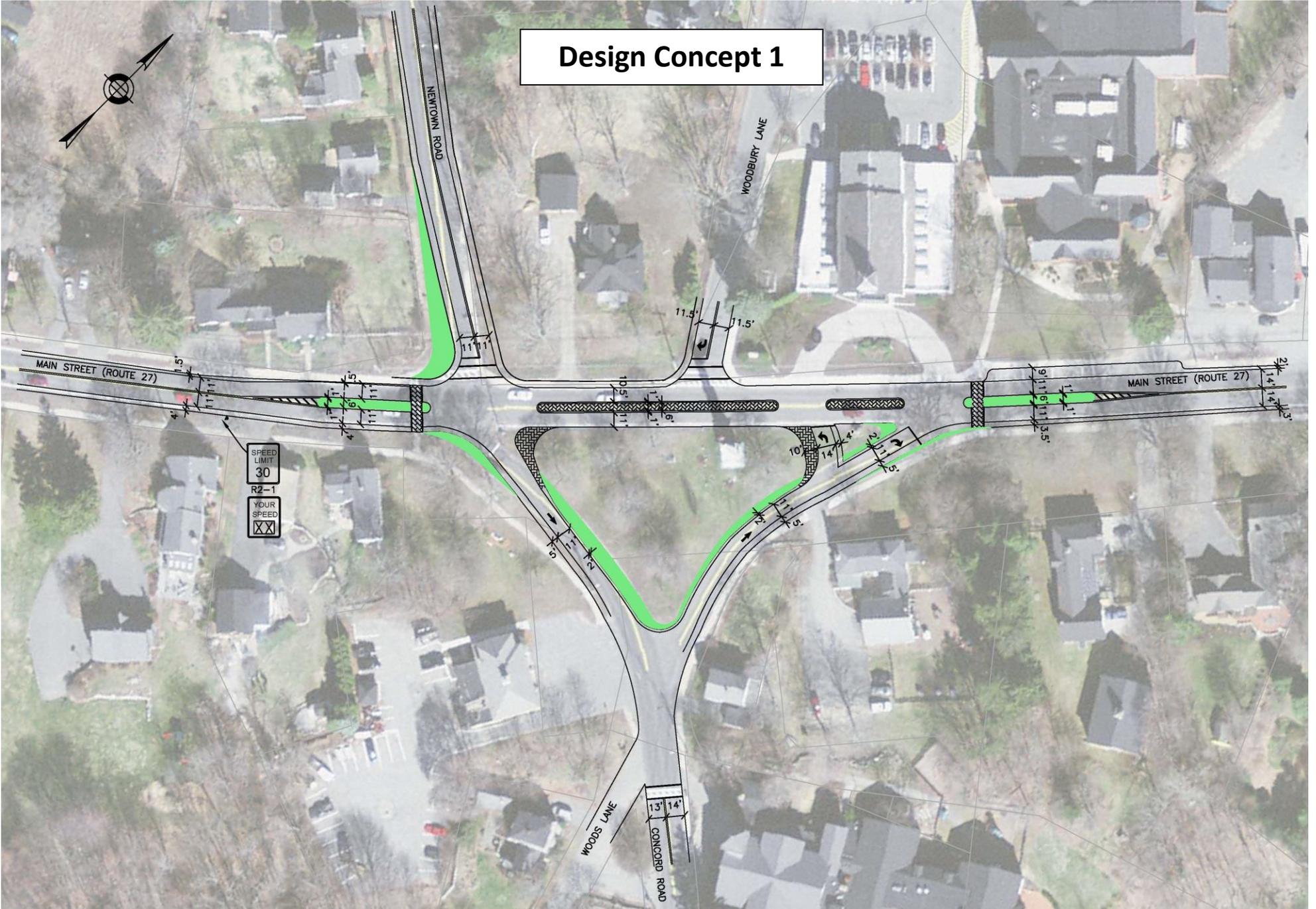
## Woodbury Lane

- Right Turn Only

## General Notes:

- New roadway alignments will accommodate large trucks and emergency vehicles
- Green areas indicate pavement being removed

# Design Concept 1



## **Concept 2**

### **Main Street**

- Raised crosswalks on either side of Concord Road
- Restripe 11 foot lane widths

### **Newtown Road**

- Realign at intersection

### **Concord Road**

- Realign at Newtown Road intersection

### **General Notes:**

- New roadway alignments will accommodate large trucks and emergency vehicles
- Green areas indicate pavement being removed



## **Concept 3A**

### **Main Street**

- Restripe 11 foot lane widths
- Permanent Electronic Speed Radar signs

### **Newtown Road**

- Realign at intersection
- One-way Traffic flow

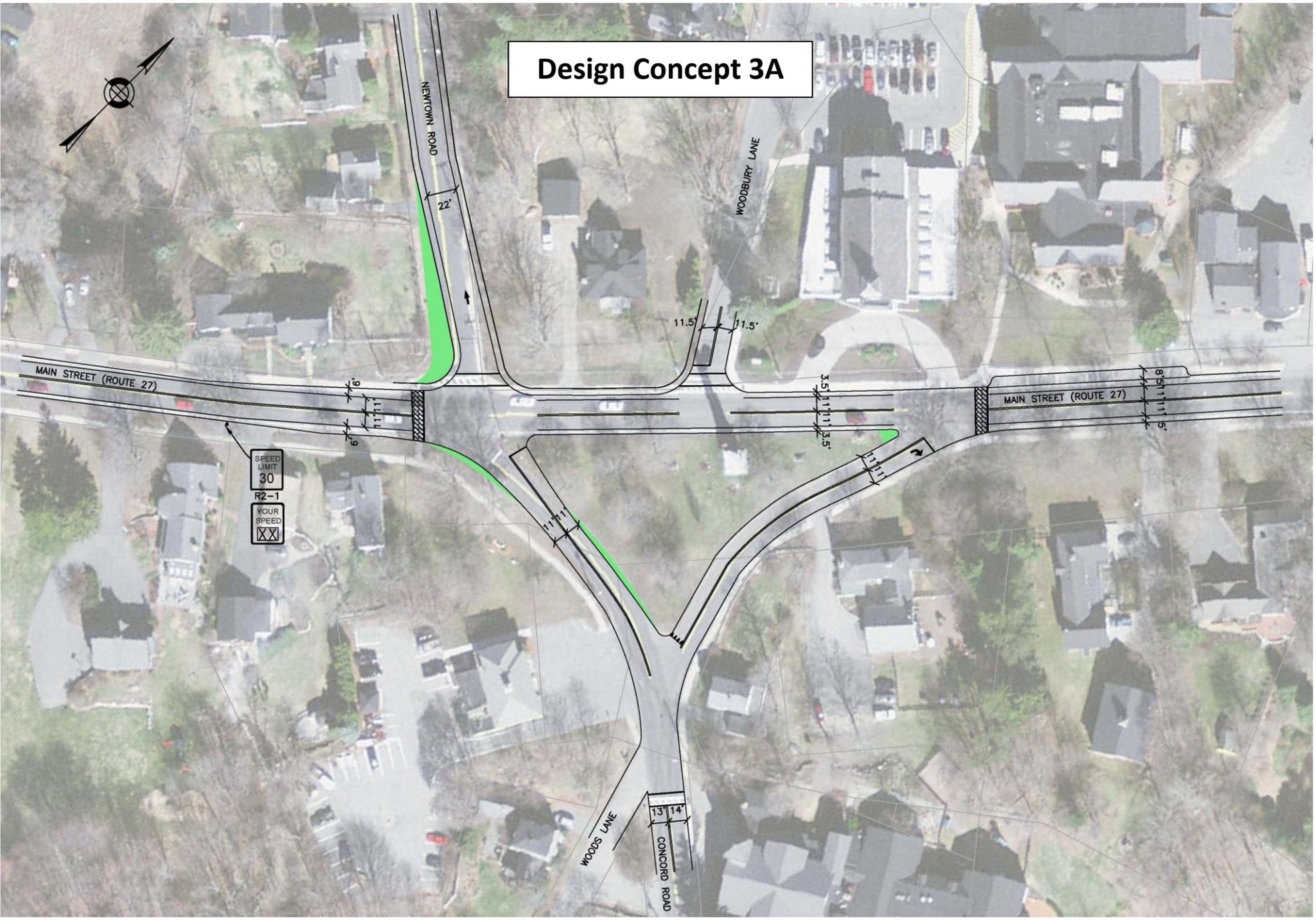
### **Concord Road**

- Realign at Newtown Road intersection

### **General Notes:**

- New roadway alignments will accommodate large trucks and emergency vehicles
- Green areas indicate pavement being removed

# Design Concept 3A



## **Concept 3B**

### **Main Street**

- Restripe 11 foot lane widths
- Permanent Electronic Speed Radar signs

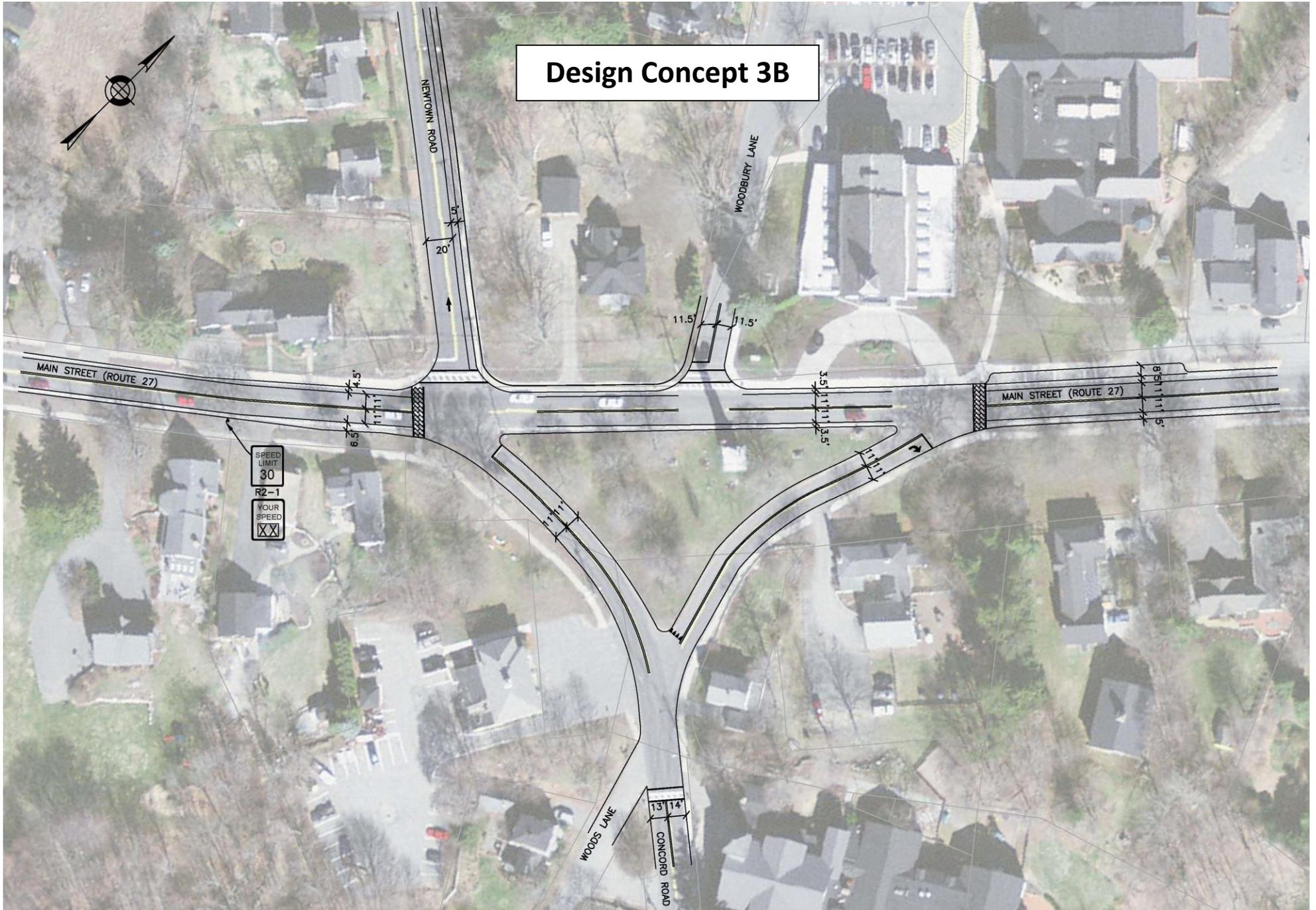
### **Newtown Road**

- One-way Traffic flow

### **General Notes:**

- New roadway alignments will accommodate large trucks and emergency vehicles
- Green areas indicate pavement being removed

# Design Concept 3B



**Public Comments**

**Due by July 4<sup>th</sup>**

## Nick Gross

---

**From:** Joe SanClemente  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2015 4:01 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Corey York  
**Subject:** Fwd: comments on Acton Center study

**Joe SanClemente, P.E., AICP**  
Associate Principal  
**HOWARD STEIN HUDSON**  
**direct:** [617.348.3334](tel:617.348.3334) **main:** [617.482.7080](tel:617.482.7080)  
[11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010](mailto:jsanclemente@hshassoc.com)  
[Boston, Massachusetts 02108](mailto:jsanclemente@hshassoc.com)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** David Shoemaker [REDACTED]  
**Date:** June 1, 2015 at 9:20:13 PM EDT  
**To:** Joe SanClemente <[jsanclemente@hshassoc.com](mailto:jsanclemente@hshassoc.com)>  
**Subject:** comments on Acton Center study

Joe,

You mentioned that it would be very difficult to change the area over which the speed is maintained at 30 MPH, and even risky. Two thoughts:

1) It still feels to me like a sensible request and the present 30 MPH limit is not due to prevailing speeds — it is due to the character of the town just there. I think it should be worth pursuing.

2) Simply bracketing the current 30 MPH region should already help more than the current close spacing of the raised traffic control ‘lumps’, so putting them at the current ends of the 30 MPH region would be preferable.

Then:

Here is a vote in favor of raised traffic control lumps also at the crosswalk at the Church-FireStation crossing; and to add one on Newtown Road at Minuteman. That latter could be motivated by the 25 (!) MPH limit on Newtown and a quick traffic study, coupled to looking at pedestrian routes toward and from the playground (young children on bicycles) and to/from the library (a considerable pedestrian attraction).

Another possibility which I also think would modulate traffic and people’s attitude about the intersection would be to put a 4-way stop at Minuteman and Newtown. I would hope that there would be some studies that show the influence and value of setting the stage for challenging intersections some distance away from the intersections.

Echoing a comment: slowing speed helps universally.

David Shoemaker



## Nick Gross

---

**From:** Bob Puffer [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 02, 2015 9:16 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; cyork@acton-ma.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Hi Nick-

There were a number of good ideas presented at the meeting but there is only just so much that is practical since no one is going to pave over the common.

I do not think a traffic light is needed and it would certainly be resisted by the Historical Commission. Also it is too costly. A last resort.

I think that one way circulation around the common is problematic and the left turn onto Main St south is too close to the Woodbury St exit.

Northbound trailer trucks and fire apparatus need a large turning radius which would eat into the common.

I would suggest a three to six month trial of the following which can all be done at little cost—

- 1) Install radar traffic signs on the existing speed limit posts.
- 2) Narrow Main St using paint. This should slow traffic and prevent the “inside” passing of left turning cars. This could be made permanent if successful.
- 3) Make Newtown Rd one way which could be quickly reversed if not successful.

If these measures are not helpful they could be easily be restored to the existing without digging up the common or doing any construction.

Why not try these measures and see how well they work ?

They could all be done within a month and you would have more data on which to base a permanent design.

I think it much better to do a reversible experiment and not just study the matter to death.

Regards,

Bob  
[REDACTED]

---

**From:** Nick Gross [<mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 02, 2015 4:17 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; [cyork@acton-ma.gov](mailto:cyork@acton-ma.gov)  
**Subject:** Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Good Afternoon,

I hope you are all doing well. Thank you to those who were able to attend last night’s Public Forum for the Acton Center Traffic Study. We received some excellent comments and insight throughout the meeting.

Attached you will find last night’s presentation in a PDF format which includes the four design options for the Town Center. Please feel free to forward the presentation to your friends, neighbors, and other interested parties. As it was mentioned last night, we are looking to receiving your comments on the various design elements as we work towards developing final recommendations for consideration by the Town. Please send your written comments to either myself or our project manager Joe SanClemente (cc’d) by July 4.

If you have any general questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. This is truly an exciting project and we look forward to hearing from you.

Be well,  
Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

**direct:** 617.348.3352 **main:** 617.482.7080

11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010

Boston, Massachusetts 02108



Engineers + Planners

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Matt Mehler [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 03, 2015 10:04 AM  
**To:** Nick Gross; Mary Ann Mehler  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Hi Nick,

Thank you again for your work on the Acton Center Traffic Study and the public forums. You did an excellent job outlining the various proposals at the recent public forum.

I wanted to reiterate my objections to design concept proposals 3A and 3B. In both proposals, I hold serious concerns to altering Newtown Road into a one way street. As a resident of [REDACTED], I believe both of these proposals would pose a significant threat to public safety as they would force traffic travelling down Newtown Road heading into the center to take a left turn onto Minuteman Road.

Minuteman road is residential side-street and one without sidewalks or crosswalks spanning either intersections between Newtown Road or Woodbury Lane. The section of Minuteman road between Newtown Road and Woodbury Lane does not have double yellow painted divider, nor does it have a stop sign at the end on the corner of Woodbury and Newtown. I hope that you are aware that many families use Minuteman road to access the new playground and the public library. In the warmer months many young mothers push strollers, children ride bikes and parents walk with young children in middle Minuteman road because there are no sidewalks heading to the library. Additionally, this section of Minuteman road is full of pot-holes, which ironically I do not mind as they serve to slow existing traffic heading to and from the town hall/library. During events at town hall and the library (such as the book sales and well attended public meetings, Patriots Day marches), the library parking lot fills up and cars park along the sides of Woodbury Lane and Minuteman Roads. While these events are infrequent, parked cars do narrow these roads and force pedestrians to walk in middle of the road. Diverting commuting traffic down these roads would be dangerous. It would also add to congestion along Woodbury Lane with traffic to the library and Woodbury Lane also does not have sidewalks at the Minuteman Road side.

In addition to pedestrian safety, I believe that diverting all incoming traffic travelling down Minuteman Road into the center would be dangerous for drivers as well. Proposals 3A and 3B of the traffic study would force all incoming traffic travelling down Newtown Road heading into the center to take a left turn, which would require vehicles to cut across traffic heading out of the center. While it is possible that proposals 3A and 3B would decrease traffic at the intersection of Route 27 and Newtown Road, I believe that both proposals would funnel commuter traffic down a densely populated residential side street that are not suitable to safely accommodate additional volume.

In short, I opposed turning Newtown Road into a one-way road as described in proposals 3A and 3B. I imagine that many residents in the area, who also have young children, will share my concerns. I will be sure to share the powerpoint and the various proposals with them.

Thank you again,

Matt Mehler

On Tue, Jun 2, 2015 at 4:16 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

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Be well,

Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

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## Nick Gross

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**From:** Tricia Forrester [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 03, 2015 2:23 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Hi Nick,

I attended the Monday evening presentation and saw all four proposals. I like many of the aspects for the first proposal, especially the one-way direction of the traffic pattern.

I am a Wood Lane resident and have always had concerns about the speed of traffic that comes in both directions at the top of our road. The top of Wood Lane and Concord Road is a bus stop for all 5 elementary schools as well as for the middle and high school. Buses can not navigate the dead end road so our bus stop is located at the top of the street. I can't tell you how many times the bus driver has written down license plate numbers for cars that do not stop for the kids to get on and off. I am up there four times a day and see this all the time. The bus comes up Concord Road, heading to the triangle and Main Street.

I think there needs to be some consideration with regard to the crosswalk at the church and fire station parking lot. There are painted lines and signs but it is situated at the top of the incline in the road. Drivers do not realize there is a crosswalk there until they are on top of it. I really think this crosswalk will need to receive the same treatment that is located at Main Street and Newtown Road. At least something similar to the walk at the library end. Drivers will need to see that sidewalk much more clearly delineated if we are increasing the volume of traffic in that area of the triangle. I think this is a sight line issue at this end of the triangle similar to what is going on at Main and Newtown.

Tricia Forrester  
[REDACTED]

On Tue, Jun 2, 2015 at 4:16 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

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## Nick Gross

---

**From:** Brenda Nelson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 04, 2015 11:10 AM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** ACTON MEETING

Good morning, Nick,

Thanks for the meeting in Acton on Monday night. I have a few comments.

This is my most annoying situation: I live on Wood Lane. I want to go to the library. If I go to the left of the monument on Concord Road, I can't turn right. If I go to the right of the monument, I can't turn left. So my choices are to cross two lanes of traffic and head down Newtown Road, or to go right on Main Street to Nagog Hill Road. In either case, I have to go further than is necessary and through neighborhoods that don't appreciate extra traffic.

Having said that, I liked option #1 the best, as it makes the most corrections.

These are things I don't like:

No right turn, no left turn signs. One way streets. Blinking lights to tell me how fast I am going. Raised center islands.

We will be watching to see how this turns out.

Thanks,  
Brenda Nelson

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Kathleen Donnellan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 04, 2015 7:39 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; cyork@acton-ma.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Dear Nick, Alexandra and team,

I was at both discussion meetings regarding this intersection and want to thank you for taking the time to listen to those of us who live and drive through it regularly. At this recent meeting, I felt you really did understand the multiple, unique factors that make this a difficult and dangerous intersection. I support Option 1 because I think it is the only option that adequately addresses the geography, limited site lines, and speed at that intersection. I don't think the lower impact options would solve the problem. In particular, I believe re-aligning Concord Road and Newtown Road so that they are more directly across from each other and the left turn is more of a right angle is important. The raised dividers seem to be particularly important if there is a desire to make that intersection safe for pedestrians. The only recommendation proposed that I (along with many others at the meeting) oppose is making Newtown Road one way. Given the number of neighborhoods and houses that need to use Newtown Road as one of their only exits to the main roadways, making Newtown one way would result in other traffic problems as cars found detours to the one way. And I don't think that solves the problem at the intersection nearly as well as making Concord one way on either side of the intersection.

Kathleen Donnellan  
[REDACTED]

*Kathleen Donnellan*

On Tue, Jun 2, 2015 at 4:16 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

Good Afternoon,

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If you have any general questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. This is truly an exciting project and we look forward to hearing from you.

Be well,

Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

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## Nick Gross

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**From:** Corey York <cyork@acton-ma.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 05, 2015 2:23 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross; Joe SanClemente  
**Subject:** FW: Newtown Rd / Rt 27 intersection - public comment on traffic plans

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**From:** Deb Matthews [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 05, 2015 2:22 PM  
**To:** Highway Department; Manager Department; Board of Selectmen  
**Subject:** Newtown Rd / Rt 27 intersection - public comment on traffic plans

Hi -

my name is Deb Matthews, and I have lived at [REDACTED] in Acton for the past 17 years. As you know, this is right off Newtown Road, just over 1 mile from the Newtown Road/27 intersection. I go through that Newtown Rd / Rt 27 interesection many times a week - usually 4-6 times a day as I drive my kids to their various activities.

It's an awful intersection. I turn my car radio off, and have the kids hush each time I go through it. In 17 years, I have had several near-misses, and observed at least 2 accidents there myself. The problem is, you never know what the driver across the way is going to do. Most drivers "zip", or take turns, as traffic from both sides tries to merge on to 27. A couple times a month, though, I observe drivers who piggyback behind the car in front of them (not waiting to take their turn), and that's when accidents happen. It doesn't help that the flow of traffic on 27 is often 35+ mph, but I think the most dangerous thing is the crossing driver's unpredictability.

I personally think a traffic light is the best solution for this intersection. There are many historical places that have traffic lights all around us, and the argument that "it's a historical location" just doesn't justify the constant accidents and risk that that intersection engenders.

Please please don't rule out considering a traffic light for that spot!! It's the safest, most predictable approach for that spot.

Sincerely,  
Deb Matthews

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Corey York <cyork@acton-ma.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 05, 2015 2:50 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross; Joe SanClemente  
**Subject:** FW: Rt 27 and Newtown Road traffic light

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 05, 2015 2:49 PM  
**To:** Highway Department  
**Subject:** Rt 27 and Newtown Road traffic light

Dear Mr Waite

It has been brought to my attention that Acton will not be putting in a traffic light at the intersection of Rt 27 and Newtown Road. This is very concerning to me as the intersection is almost impossible to navigate. Attempting to cross over from either Newtown or from Concord road is and has become increasingly dangerous.

I would hope you and your team would reconsider having a light there.

Best,

Sarah O'Neill  
Acton Resident

## Nick Gross

---

**From:** Joe SanClemente  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2015 4:00 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Corey York  
**Subject:** Fwd: comments on Acton Center study

**Joe SanClemente, P.E., AICP**

Associate Principal

**HOWARD STEIN HUDSON**

**direct:** [617.348.3334](tel:617.348.3334) **main:** [617.482.7080](tel:617.482.7080)

[11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010](#)

[Boston, Massachusetts 02108](#)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** David Shoemaker [REDACTED]  
**Date:** June 7, 2015 at 11:02:00 AM EDT  
**To:** Joe SanClemente <[jsanclemente@hshassoc.com](mailto:jsanclemente@hshassoc.com)>  
**Subject:** comments on Acton Center study

Joe, one more note — I did a little reading on the volume of sound as a function of speed, and the perceived level grows linearly with the speed (in fact the sound power grows exponentially, but the ear is logarithmic, so that the two effects are complementary).

That level of detail is unnecessary and uninteresting to most, but I do recommend (as before) that low speeds are key to reclaiming the sense of the historical district and that intersection in particular, and communicating clearly to the public that lower speeds means less noise could help (there is one resident of Main St who expressed concern about speed bumps ‘because they make noise’ — on balance, I think a smooth speed bump should reduce the noise considerably, and I’d hope to get this message across).

thanks -

David

=====  
Joe,

You mentioned that it would be very difficult to change the area over which the speed is maintained at 30 MPH, and even risky. Two thoughts:

1) It still feels to me like a sensible request and the present 30 MPH limit is not due to prevailing speeds — it is due to the character of the town just there. I think it should be worth pursuing.

2) Simply bracketing the \_current\_ 30 MPH region should already help more than the current close spacing of the raised traffic control ‘lumps’, so putting them at the current ends of the 30 MPH region would be preferable.

Then:

Here is a vote in favor of raised traffic control lumps also at the crosswalk at the Church-FireStation crossing; and to add one on Newtown Road at Minuteman. That latter could be motivated by the 25 (!) MPH limit on Newtown and a quick traffic study, coupled to looking at pedestrian routes toward and from the playground (young children on bicycles) and to/from the library (a considerable pedestrian attraction).

Another possibility which I also think would modulate traffic and people’s attitude about the intersection would be to put a 4-way stop at Minuteman and Newtown. I would hope that there would be some studies that show the influence and value of setting the stage for challenging intersections some distance away from the intersections.

Echoing a comment: slowing speed helps universally.

David Shoemaker



## Nick Gross

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 07, 2015 9:47 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** Traffic study for Acton Center

Hello Nick, I haven't been able to make the meetings, but did want to make some comments. I saw that people do not want a traffic light, and in light of the fact that the numbers for traffic have done down in 2014, I would agree. That change needs to happen via one of the 4 proposed plans, which appear to improve sight lines etc. sounds reasonable.

It would be nice to think that changing speed signage in the area would change human behavior relative to those changed signs, but I think all it would do would be to garner money for the town...really not making the townspeople happier.

My recommendation is to improve the sight lines and put in a 4 way stop. That will cause slower speeds, allow timid drivers to drive safely through the intersection and keep traffic moving at a reasonable pace thru that intersection during peak travel times.

It's an inexpensive solution. Judi KOtanchik

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Carol Rodman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 08, 2015 5:05 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** Acton Town Ctr Traffic Study

Dear Nick,

I received the study summary & read it, and looked at the diagrams, though I could not attend the meeting. Though it indicates that a traffic signal is not part of the "historical tradition" in some peoples' opinions, I disagree strongly that this should be a relevant criteria for change to promote public safety. This town center intersection is a busy one at many times of day, not just an hour at rush hour times. It often can take at least several minutes to make a turn from Concord Rd onto Rt 27 or to cross Rt 27 toward the library and Town Hall parking lot (or in reverse direction). Many drivers become impatient and take risks here with left turns or to cross Main St., creating high risks for accidents. Also to consider here is the need for a crosswalk with a pedestrian traffic control signal, so that it is safe for walkers to cross 27.

The proposed solutions of creating changes in traffic flow direction will only "kick the can down the road" by backing up traffic in both directions on 27, and creating difficulty with turns at Brook St. (already a left turn hazard) and also down 27 nearer to the Roche Bros. Plaza (and 27 in both directions in this area is already gridlocked for several hrs. daily).

I think it is time for those concerned with "tradition" to consider the harm done when traffic is not adequately controlled for the safety of all, vehicular and pedestrian. Many towns of similar size, conscious of their historic traditions, such as Concord and Lexington, have had to install traffic control lights on main streets to better ensure public safety.

I suggest you all rethink this and consider what a real solution for this issue is, practically, efficiently and for public safety.

Sincerely,  
Carol Rodman  
[REDACTED]

## Nick Gross

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**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of Jim Snyder-Grant [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 08, 2015 3:44 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; cyork@acton-ma.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

Sorry I've had to miss both meetings. The large-format posters in Town Hall were quite helpful - thanks for posting them.

Design concept 1 gets us 2/3rds of the way to a rotary/roundabout. Why not go all the way and make that stretch of main street be one-way southwest, and form a complete counter-clockwise circle? It would make the non-main street crossings much safer. The route would need to be stretched a bit to turn it in to more of a circle, which I'm sure adds to the cost, but it seems a great solution for an area where traffic is stable or falling slightly, but is still active enough to cause accidents in its current configuration.

Jim Snyder-Grant  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Acton MA 01720

On Mon, Jun 8, 2015 at 2:43 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

Good Afternoon,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoyed the weekend. I would like to again thank those of you who were able to attend the second public forum for the Acton Center Traffic Study that was held on June 1, 2015.

Attached you will find a PDF of the four design concepts presented on June 1 and a brief summary describing the key elements.

The design concepts have also been posted to the Town's website (<http://www.acton-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3146>) and are available for public viewing at Acton Town Hall in the ground floor lobby.

As a friendly reminder, please send written comments to us by **July 4**.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Be well,

Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

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## Nick Gross

---

**From:** Roland Bartl <[rbartl@acton-ma.gov](mailto:rbartl@acton-ma.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 08, 2015 3:34 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; Corey York; Kristen Guichard  
**Subject:** RE: Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

Just a reminder, that the successful design concept should be consistent with the Town's Complete Streets Policy and thus, I presume, include bicycle facilities. I don't need a reply, thank you.

Roland Bartl, AICP  
Planning Director  
Town of Acton  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720  
978-929-6631

---

**From:** Nick Gross [<mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 08, 2015 2:44 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; Corey York  
**Subject:** Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

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Be well,  
Nick



### Nicholas Gross

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

### Howard Stein Hudson

**direct:** 617.348.3352 **main:** 617.482.7080  
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Boston, Massachusetts 02108



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**Nick Gross**

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**From:** Gill Watt [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 09, 2015 3:11 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** Acton center traffic study - rotary?

Hi,

I'm curious. Was any consideration given to creating a rotary like the ones at Carlisle center or Concord center? A rotary would certainly slow traffic and would enable cross-traffic to navigate the intersection without the current level of risk and stress, nor would they require traffic signals.

Thank you.

-Gill Watt

[REDACTED]  
Acton

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Lynn Hughes [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 09, 2015 5:21 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

Having studied the various designs, my household prefers Concept #1, except for the permanent traffic speed signs. We would prefer to do without these "cluttery" signs, then add them later on if they still seem desirable.

Thank you for all your hard work!

Lynn Hughes  
Wood Lane

On Jun 8, 2015, at 2:43 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

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Be well,  
Nick

<image001.jpg>

**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

**direct:** 617.348.3352 **main:** 617.482.7080

11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010

Boston, Massachusetts 02108

<image002.png> <image003.png> <image004.jpg>

<Concept\_Outlines\_Final.pdf>

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Laurel Fardella [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 14, 2015 10:39 AM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; cyork@acton-ma.gov; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

Hi all,

Thank you for an informative meeting. I need to go on record stating in my opinion the best option for this intersection is to install traffic lights. None of the attached design options will alleviate the problem or reduce accidents to the degree that a light will.

The fact is people become impatient waiting for endless traffic on Main Street and make hasty decisions leading to accidents. The intersection creates frustration and stress among drivers, which lead to bad decisions. Also, drivers facing each other on Concord and Newton have a great deal of difficulty determining who goes first when either crossing or turning on Main Street.

I live on Minuteman Road and fear all sorts of traffic issues with any of the four design options. My car was also totaled when a car turning on Main Street hit me because the driver (a young man) just didn't see my car crossing over Main Street from Concord Road.

A light is the only sensible and responsible option for this intersection. Though I was told the "townspeople" don't want this, my experience in this meeting was that several people expressed this wish. Was there a poll taken on this issue?

My impression in this meeting was that the Town doesn't want to spend the money on a light. I don't buy the argument that it would ruin the historical aesthetic. I've been in plenty of historic towns with lights, and I appreciate the value placed on my safety while enjoying the history. Which is more important: human lives or town ratings? Let's get our values straight please.

There is also plenty of room to install a light in that intersection (the other argument I heard). Why take "baby steps" as someone said, by redesigning the intersection, when in the end I think we all know a light is the only safe and responsible solution?

Please value human lives over town curb appeal and do the right thing: install a traffic light.

Thank you,

Laurel Fardella

On Mon, Jun 8, 2015 at 2:43 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

Good Afternoon,

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As a friendly reminder, please send written comments to us by **July 4**.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Be well,

Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

direct: [617.348.3352](tel:617.348.3352) main: [617.482.7080](tel:617.482.7080)

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Boston, Massachusetts 02108



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**TOWN OF ACTON  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
472 MAIN STREET  
ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 01720  
hdc@acton-ma.gov**

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15 June 2015

Howard Stein Hudson  
11 Beacon Street Suite 1010  
Boston, MA 02108

Attn: Nicholas Gross, Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

Re: Acton Center Traffic Study Design Concepts Presentation Comments

Dear Mr. Gross,

Thank you for your firm's presentation at the Acton Town Hall on June 1, 2015. Several members of the Acton Historic District Commission (HDC) were able to attend the presentation and, in addition, at the HDC's subsequent meeting on June 10, 2015, we continued our discussion. The HDC offers the following comments for consideration:

- The goals for the project need to be articulated and benchmarks for a successful resolution better defined. For instance, if the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed falls below 30MPH is that a successful outcome? Similarly, if the accident rate decreases to a certain degree is that a successful outcome? What combination of these verifiable parameters is considered a success? What constitutes success for the more intangible aspects of the project such as balancing traffic improvement and safety with historical character and appropriateness?
- The HDC believes that minimal, incremental changes followed by monitoring for improvement against the goals and benchmarks rather than a full-fledged overhaul of the study area is the best approach. Some sort of phased design and construction implementation may be warranted.
- It was unclear to the HDC how the various traffic schemes affect the speed of vehicles; for instance, does a one-way system yield slower moving traffic? There was no consensus among the HDC members for a particular traffic scheme.
- Although it was mentioned as very difficult to change, we believe the extent of the 30MPH zone should logically extend from Taylor Road to Nagog Hill Road. The HDC is willing to assist in whatever state-level negotiations may be necessary to accomplish this objective.
- The HDC has strong objections to electric speed signs within the District as well as any reliance on road painting used for traffic control measures. A change in paving material (such as cobble stones) is the preferred method for demarcation. This project would be an opportune time to replace all of the painted crosswalks with a higher quality solution.
- Raised planting beds will call attention to Main Street and detract from the importance of the Common itself. We suggest a change in paving material in the same plane as the asphalt roadway will suffice and is a more appropriate solution.
- We assume the utility pole on the Common at the Newtown Road intersection will be moved regardless of what other improvements may occur.

- If raised crosswalks are used, we suggest an additional raised crosswalk at the Acton Woman's Club.
- Please clarify whether raised speed humps were being proposed in any solution (as different than raised crosswalks) and what the height and width dimensions would be for such speed humps.
- Lastly, a rethinking of the location of elements on the Common and a re-landscaping of the entire Common should be discussed and hopefully funded as part of the Acton Center District Traffic Study. The horse trough is, for instance, in an awkward location when trying to see oncoming traffic while exiting Concord Road and the present landscaping of the Common is merely a result of various accretions over time rather than representative of a well conceived, historically appropriate plan.

Undoubtably, the HDC will have additional comments and we look forward to subsequent meetings and discussions with your firm towards the goal of balancing the traffic concerns in the Acton Center District with its historic character and significance.

Sincerely,

David Foley  
HDC Chair

Cc: Cory York, Acton Engineering Department

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Catie Floyd McMenamin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 29, 2015 4:14 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; cyork@acton-ma.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg; image002.png; image003.png; image004.jpg

Hi Nick,

I wanted to share my comments on the traffic design concepts.

I live on John Swift Road and find the Newtown Road/Main Street/Concord Road intersection much worse at all hours on weekends than I do during weekday rush hour.

When coming from Newtown, I don't typically avoid that intersection. However, I avoid it as best as possible when coming from Concord Road. For example, if I'm coming down Route 2 from Concord, I purposely don't get off at the 2A/119 exit in the Concord Rotary, which would then have me driving down Concord Road and across Main Street. I continue on Route 2 until the exit for Route 27/Main Street and then turn left on Musket to get to John Swift Road.

As a resident of John Swift Road, I really don't like the idea of making that section of Newtown one way (Concept 3). This will create more traffic through my neighborhood as cars heading toward Main Street are forced to turn either right or left on Minuteman. This will also create more traffic through the neighborhood behind the library (Woodbury, Patriots, Meadowbrook & Putnam). I already know cars cut through my neighborhood – driving too fast for a residential area – and I know cars cut through the neighborhood behind the library to get to Main Street – also driving too fast for a residential area. Also, Minuteman is not wide enough to handle greater traffic flow; it's barely wide enough right now.

From the one decision to make Newtown one way, traffic could noticeably increase on all the residential roads in that area. To head north on Main Street, cars would turn off Newtown as early as Patriots and cut over to Nagog Hill Road, which is a blind turn from Putnam Road. Increasing traffic there will undoubtedly increase car accidents at the Putnam Road/Nagog Hill Road intersection.

In all honesty, I would leave the intersections as they are now. The people who use them most already know how and when to avoid them.

Thank you for taking the time to field these comments.

Best,

Catie McMenamin  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)>

**Date:** Monday, June 8, 2015 2:43 PM

**To:** Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)>

**Cc:** Joe SanClemente <[jsanclemente@hshassoc.com](mailto:jsanclemente@hshassoc.com)>, Alexandra Siu <[asiu@hshassoc.com](mailto:asiu@hshassoc.com)>, "[cyork@acton-ma.gov](mailto:cyork@acton-ma.gov)"

<[cyork@acton-ma.gov](mailto:cyork@acton-ma.gov)>

**Subject:** Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

Good Afternoon,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoyed the weekend. I would like to again thank those of you who were able to attend the second public forum for the Acton Center Traffic Study that was held on June 1, 2015.

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As a friendly reminder, please send written comments to us by **July 4**.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Be well,

Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

**direct:** 617.348.3352 **main:** 617.482.7080

11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010

Boston, Massachusetts 02108



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## Nick Gross

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**From:** Janet K.Adachi [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 01, 2015 12:28 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Subject:** Acton Center Traffic Study - 2d public forum, 6/1: comments re alternative design proposals

Mr. Gross:

Having attended the 6/1 public forum at Town Hall, and studied the slide presentation that you emailed to participants after the forum, I realize that no one solution will serve the needs of all who find themselves in the Town center, whether because they live there, are doing business there or are just driving through en route to somewhere else. But if we must pick and choose among the divergent needs, I would prefer to make the Town center safer, more pleasant and less of a hassle for people who work, live in, are doing business in or walk/bike in the Town center. If that means some inconvenience to motor vehicle through-traffic, so be it. Drivers will either adjust or find alternative routes. So my thoughts:

1) Among Options 1, 2, 3a and 3b, I prefer a gradual approach based on a mix of elements from Options 2 and 3b, which would help to control the traffic speed, and give the Town leeway to make more modifications as necessary:

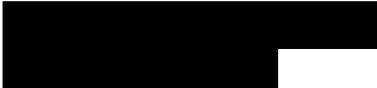
- Re-align Concord Rd southerly branch onto Main, and Newtown Road to form 4-way intersection -This is an idea that definitely requires engineering/traffic-management background!
- In lieu of raised crosswalks, use the same street-level walks in contrasting color/material/texture, but add Historic-District-appropriate, easy-to-read reflective signs to remind motorists of the law requiring that they yield. Maybe insert reflectors along either edge of walk.
- In lieu of narrowing lanes, consider adding HD-appropriate, reflective signs at the boundaries to the HD: "Entering Acton Center Historic District. Speed limit strictly enforced" or the like. Add or move speed-limit signs to ensure that drivers in HD know what the speed limit is.
- In lieu of a permanent speed-detector device/reminder, consider placing such devices temporarily as reminders and deterrents to drivers; and periodically posting patrol cars in the Town Center as further reminders and deterrents.
- Consider making Concord Road, northerly branch one-way heading north onto Main. People wishing to turn left from Main onto Concord should do so at the new 4-way intersection.
- Consider 4-way stop at the new 4-way intersection - This won't be a popular idea, but it would slow traffic and better accommodate vehicles making left turns. I often go through the 4-way intersection at Lowell Rd and Barretts Mill Road in Concord, where cars back up daily during rush hour, especially in the evening, but everyone takes turns and eventually gets through. Alternatively, if no 4-way stop at the new 4-way intersection, consider prohibiting left-turns from Concord Rd southerly branch onto Main Street, and from Newtown onto Main and Woodbury onto Main, at least during commuter hours.
- Consider some sort of adjustment to Concord Rd northerly branch onto Main, to minimize obstructed view to left due to trough (I slow down or stop just before I pass the trough because I get a better, safer view of traffic coming from the left without having to move my car close to passing traffic or crane my neck as I must at the intersection with Main Street. I realize that the trough has profound historic significance but its location is sub-optimal from a traffic-safety perspective.

2) I have particular concerns about certain proposed changes in the 4 options:

- Elevated crosswalks - I am concerned about the additional noise not only for residents but for drivers, and think there are other, equally effective means for increase driver awareness of pedestrians.
- Dividers/medians on Main St. - My concern is more with the addition of structure to the center of the road that might be unnecessary, will require maintenance and will add visual clutter; I am less concerned about the impact of islands on bicyclists and the Town's implementation of its Complete Streets policy, whose rollout isn't going to rise or fall on the basis of what we do in the Town center.
- One-way, northwestbound Newtown Road - My concern about making Newtown one-way is the possibility that traffic congestion and related inconvenience will shift to other locations not designed to handle such traffic.
- Additional Concord Road northerly left-turn branch onto Main - Left-turn volume at that location currently is low, with good reason due to the limited visibility, so accommodating and encouraging left turns seems unwise

Many thanks for the study and the public forum.

Janet K. Adachi



## Nick Gross

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**From:** Bruce Green [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 03, 2015 10:44 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente  
**Subject:** RE: Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Hello Nick and Joe,

The ONLY real solution is a traffic light. I think any short term solution will prove that having a light is the real solution. I hope there will not be too many more crashes until this is recognized.

If we must consider a short term solution, please consider my following comments:

- Definitely support Concept 1
- Very definitely do not support Concepts 3A and 3B (very much against any one way on Newtown Rd!) Many residents exit the residential area up Newtown Rd to Rte 27.
- Support "your speed" pole signs both ends of the zone

Thank you,  
Bruce Green

[REDACTED]  
Acton

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**From:** Nick Gross [<mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 02, 2015 4:17 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; [cyork@acton-ma.gov](mailto:cyork@acton-ma.gov)  
**Subject:** Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Good Afternoon,

I hope you are all doing well. Thank you to those who were able to attend last night's Public Forum for the Acton Center Traffic Study. We received some excellent comments and insight throughout the meeting.

Attached you will find last night's presentation in a PDF format which includes the four design options for the Town Center. Please feel free to forward the presentation to your friends, neighbors, and other interested parties. As it was mentioned last night, we are looking to receiving your comments on the various design elements as we work towards developing final recommendations for consideration by the Town. Please send your written comments to either myself or our project manager Joe SanClemente (cc'd) by July 4.

If you have any general questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. This is truly an exciting project and we look forward to hearing from you.

Be well,  
Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

**direct:** 617.348.3352 **main:** 617.482.7080

11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010

Boston, Massachusetts 02108



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## Nick Gross

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**From:** Don Miller [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 03, 2015 4:42 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; cyork@acton-ma.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Acton Center Planning Study - Public Forum Follow Up

Hello,

I have been an Acton resident for 12 years and living at [REDACTED] for the past 8 years. It is painfully clear to me—and virtually everyone I know who lives in this area, or passes through it, as well as many visitors from out of town—that we are in dire need of a stoplight at the corner of Rt 27 and Newtown/Concord Roads.

Crossing this intersection is a daily ordeal, fraught with frustration and often danger as people, fed up without waiting many minutes for a break in the flow of traffic which never comes, take their chances and pull into or across Rt27 when there is little or no space and time to do so.

This is a dangerous and extremely unpleasant situation which I do not believe can be alleviated by any of the proposed changes. A STREETLIGHT IS REQUIRED.

I and my fellow citizens do not understand where the town got the idea that people are opposed to a light. I will be happy to circulate a petition which will contain hundreds of signatures, if the town makes the error of some other attempt at a solution. We need a light.

I would appreciate a direct response but even more so, a public announcement regarding this issue. We did not hear about this until the 6/1 meeting.

Perhaps a local referendum is in order. Democracy.

Don Ethan Miller  
Acton

On Jun 2, 2015, at 4:16 PM, Nick Gross <[ngross@hshassoc.com](mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com)> wrote:

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If you have any general questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. This is truly an exciting project and we look forward to hearing from you.

Be well,  
Nick

<image001.jpg>

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Boston, Massachusetts 02108

<image002.png> <image003.png> <image004.jpg>

<Acton\_Center\_Public\_Forum\_Presentation\_6-1-15.pdf>

## Nick Gross

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**From:** Brian Bendig [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 04, 2015 11:56 AM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; Corey York (cyork@acton-ma.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts  
**Attachments:** Concept\_Outlines\_Final.pdf

Dear Mr. Gross, et al.:

I live in Acton Center, at [REDACTED], very close to Main Street and the Common/Town Hall area. I use the Main/Concord/Newtown configuration of routes daily. I attended the design concepts presentation last month at Acton Town Hall. Your group did a fine job.

My preference is to make no design changes to Acton Center, including any road realignments. My experience leads me to question the need for any design changes in this national and state historic district, which for a long time has retained much of its charm through vigilant efforts. I do not understand the basis for physical alterations in 2015. We are several decades into the higher-volume motor vehicle traffic era in Acton, and for much of each day traffic and other uses remain very light there. Heavy vehicle use conditions have existed in portions of each day for a very long time, moreover. The town and local area's significant population expansion was over by the 1980s; in 12 years of use, I have never encountered a noteworthy or newer problem with driving, walking or biking in the historic center, or one that would merit altering the appearance of this charming and historic locale. Those violations I have seen were the result of people choosing to commit them because they perceive no consequences.

Consistent with the above, the design concept I would support among the presented alternatives is 3B. Concept 3B is the least intrusive/damaging to the longstanding arrangements in the heart of the valuable historic center. I would advocate for one change to 3B, however: instead of permanent electronic radar signage to deter speeding, it would better balance preservation with speed limit enforcement to have the town more often station a police vehicle in the Town Hall front driveway. The town police often misplace police vehicles to deter and catch speeders or other violators in lower traffic areas (i.e., in lower potential violation areas), such as the vicinity of Woodlawn Cemetery. Permanent electronic radar signage, if it makes sense, should go in less historically sensitive areas.

Thanks for considering my input.

Brian Bendig

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**From:** Nick Gross [<mailto:ngross@hshassoc.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 08, 2015 2:44 PM  
**To:** Nick Gross  
**Cc:** Joe SanClemente; Alexandra Siu; [cyork@acton-ma.gov](mailto:cyork@acton-ma.gov)  
**Subject:** Acton Center Traffic Study - Design Concepts

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Be well,  
Nick



**Nicholas Gross**

Planner, Public Involvement Specialist

**Howard Stein Hudson**

**direct:** 617.348.3352 **main:** 617.482.7080

11 Beacon Street, Suite 1010

Boston, Massachusetts 02108



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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Joe SanClemente](#); [Nick Gross](#)  
**Subject:** Acton Center Traffic Study  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 22, 2015 1:40:35 PM

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Hi

I looked at the traffic study available online. I live near the intersection being studied and myself and other neighbours have a long standing problem. We were hoping that your study recommendations would address the problem but unfortunately it does not seem to.

The problem is that when coming from Newtown Rd towards Main St it is extremely difficult to take a left and is a huge safety issue. The same scenario exists when attempting to do so from Concord Rd towards Main St. The problem is made worse because the only alternative if you want to go to North Acton from Newtown Rd to to go to Town Hall and take a left there - which is as bad. Hence there is no alternative that works.

Trying to slow down traffic is an experiment that quite frankly will not work. And that is the universal opinion of those that live there and are most affected. The only alternative that will work is signals. Like others I do not like the idea of signals near a historic district but in a case where there is a safety issue such as this - there is no choice.

Please let me know if you need any further information.

Thanks  
Terence