

To: Acton Board of Selectman
From: South Action Train Station Advisory Committee
Re: Recommendation for Gordon Richards' Property
Date: 08 January 2015

Over the past several months SATSAC has become aware that Gordon Richards may be ready to sell his property, which borders the south side of the train station on Maple Street. In our September meeting SATSAC voted the following motion.

To advise the Board of Selectmen to investigate uses for Gordon Richards' land and buildings (19-25 Maple St, Acton, MA) and leverage its strategic value nearby the train station, rail trail, and Caouette property. The potential uses may include but are not limited to, parking for local use, managing pick up and drop off traffic flow, and public use office space.

Since then SATSAC has continued to discuss whether Gordon Richards' property could be of benefit to the train station, especially for parking. There is a critical need for additional parking at the station. The main parking lot fills before 7am each weekday. Lack of parking is the single biggest issue, by far, that SATSAC members hear about.

SATSAC believes that the Richards property could accommodate over 100 parking spaces, while leaving the buildings on the property free for other town uses. A 40B development on the property would probably require at least 50 parking spaces. There has been input at our meetings and from the public that housing developments could go elsewhere in town, but parking for commuters must be near the station.

While there are concerns about neighborhood traffic, SATSAC has not heard major opposition to adding station parking on the Richards' property. The general feeling seems to be that there may be traffic problems from a housing development as well, and there is recognition of the strong need for station parking.

After the new south-side entrance to the station opens, people dropping off and picking up commuters may find it difficult to come in via Stow Street and out via Maple Street. SATSAC believes that part of the Richards' property could be used to restructure the intersection into a traffic circle or other arrangement to allow for much smoother access.

The additional property would also allow for the drop-off and pick-up area to be enlarged. We fear that the very small pick up/drop off area at the south-side entrance might back up onto Main Street, causing a safety problem.

Mr. Richards has attended most of the SATSAC meetings since September. He seems to have a preference that his property be put to good use.

After careful investigation, SATSAC recommends that the town work quickly to acquire the Richards' property and then allocate appropriate time and resources to best engineer and architect the property in order to expand parking at the station. Please see the attached analysis, with some specific ideas of how we might leverage the Richards' property to benefit the station.

Thank you for your consideration,

South Action Train Station Advisory Committee

Analysis of 11 and 21 Maple Street

by the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

January 8, 2014

DRAFT

21 Maple St Existing Conditions

Summary:

21 Maple St (combined with 11 Maple St) represent roughly 1.5 acres of land abutting the south side (inbound track side) of the South Acton Train Station. It is a level lot set between a residential neighborhood and the planned drop off and ARRT Rail Trail parking lot.

Current use:

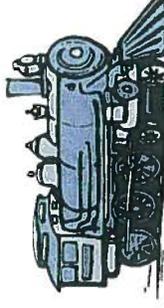
The site currently houses Gordon Richard's foundation business and serves as a storage areas for foundation forms, trucks and other related equipment. There are several lean-tos on the property, a ~1,000sqft single story garage, and a ~3,000 sqft 2 story office and garage, both recently refurbished. The MBTA currently has an easement on the property to allow access to the South Side Head House, and stores materials and equipment there.

Strategic Uses

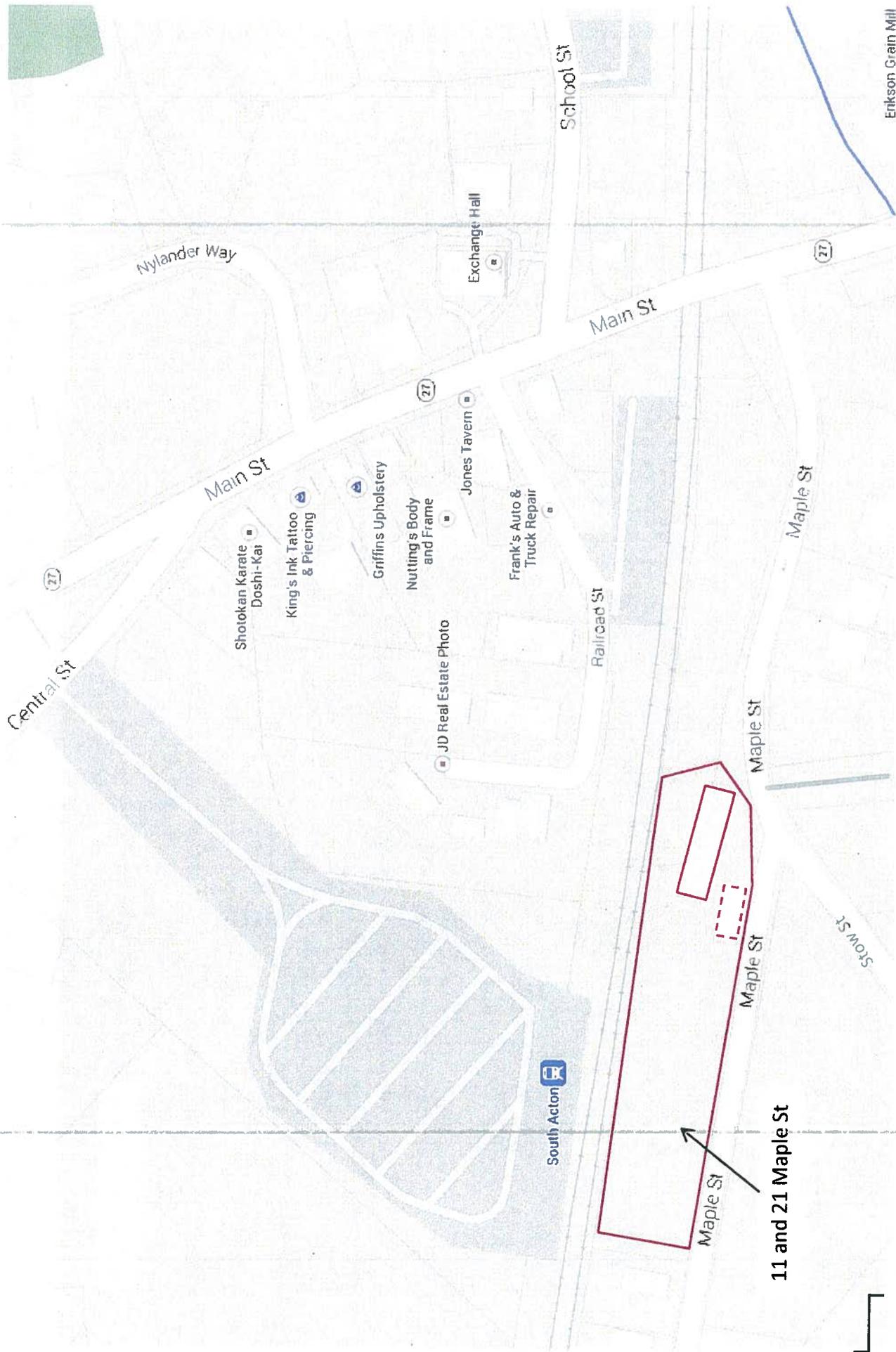
The property if made available provides a logical location for Train Station parking due to it's location, site conditions, and current commercial use. If the buildings are maintained, the usable area for parking measures roughly 110ft wide by 350ft long and could fit roughly 125 parking spaces. The buildings themselves are in good condition and could be used for many uses including town offices or rental properties.

Concerns:

1. The property sits at the far end of a residential neighborhood and neighbors are concerned that the additional available parking will negatively impact their neighborhood.
2. The area would benefit from an extensive traffic analysis with recommendations for remediation.
3. The cost of procuring the property has not been discussed but it would need to come out of town funds and would require a town meeting vote.



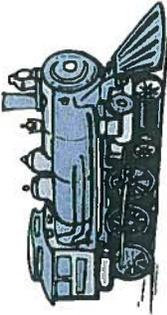
Area Map



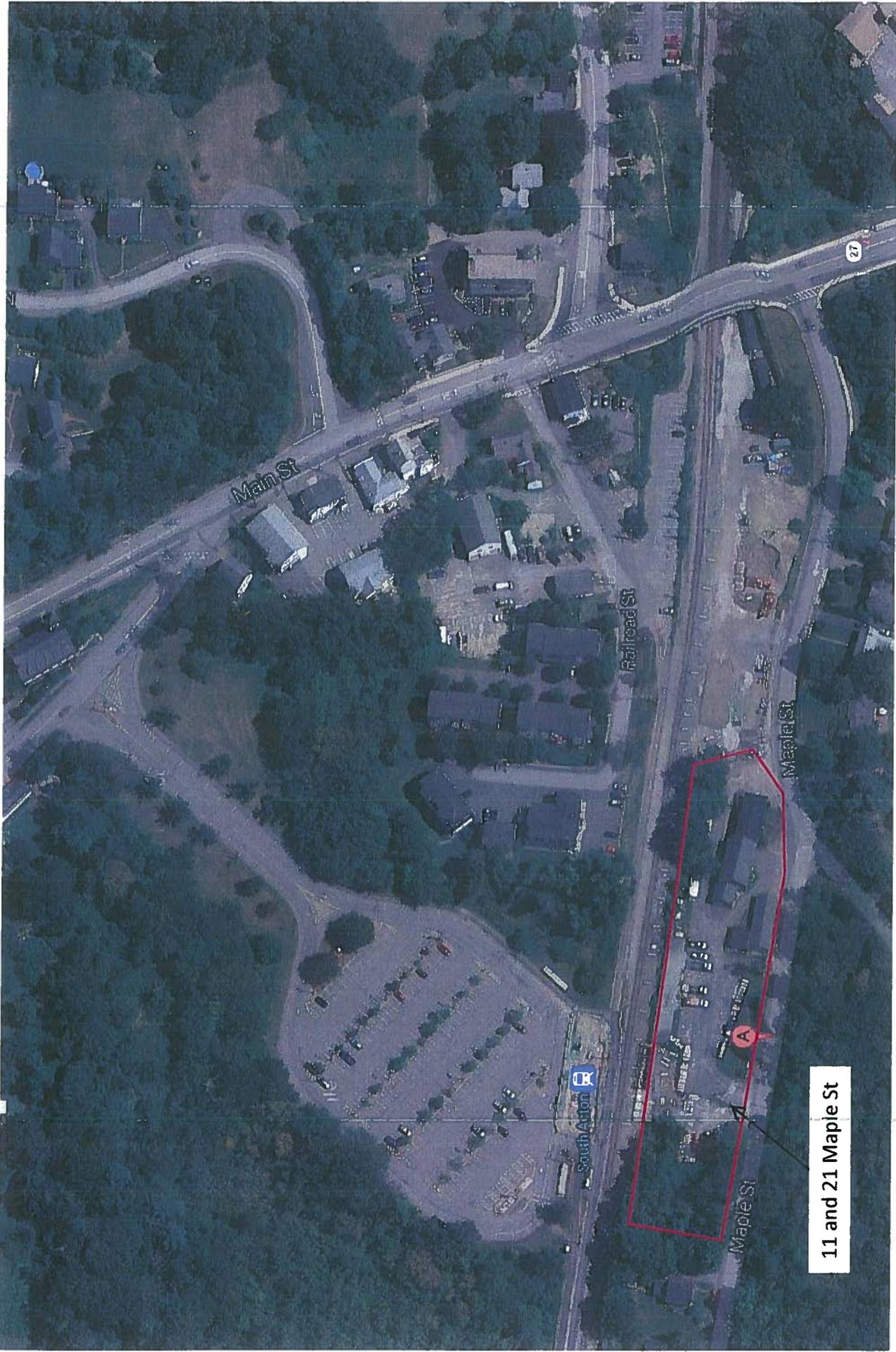
Tractor Path

11 and 21 Maple St

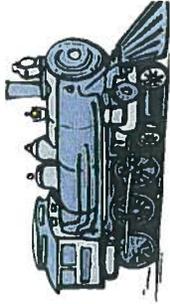
Erikson Grain Mill



Area Satellite View

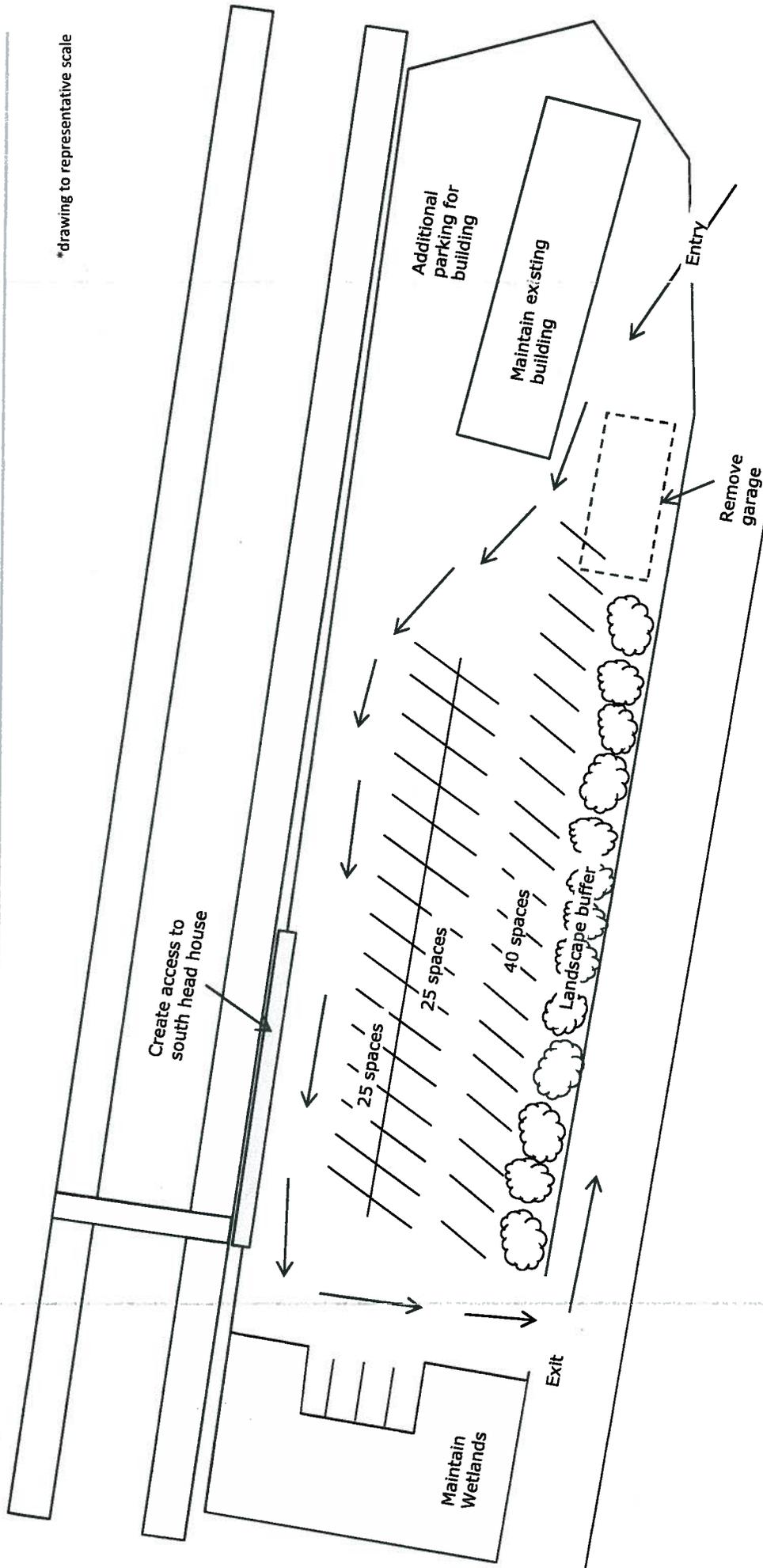


11 and 21 Maple St



11 and 21 Maple St Proposed Mockup

*drawing to representative scale



Parking Potential:

Lot size: 1.5 acres
 Main parking area: 350' x 110'
 Parking space size: 9' x 18'
 Aisle width: 25'
 Potential for: 100 - 115 spaces

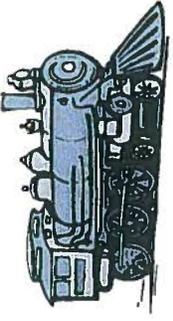
Parking Revenue Potential:

100 spaces
 X \$4.00 per space
 X 5 days per week
 X 50 weeks per year
 \$100,000 annually

Proposed use for the building:

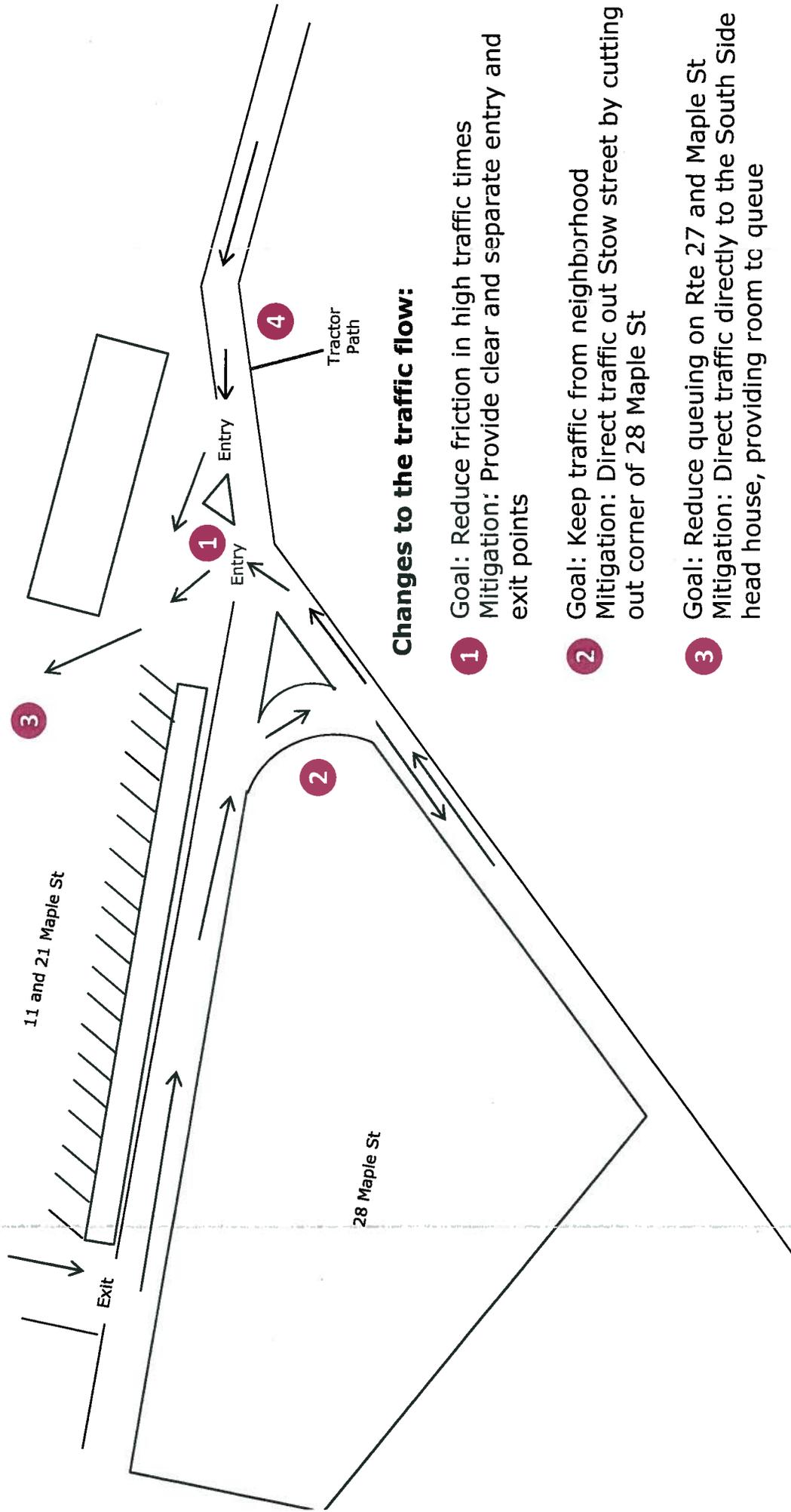
Town offices
 Town garage
 Small scale manufacturing*
 Storage*

*rent revenue not considered



11 and 21 Maple St Proposed Traffic Flow

*drawing to representative scale



Changes to the traffic flow:

- 1** Goal: Reduce friction in high traffic times
 Mitigation: Provide clear and separate entry and exit points
- 2** Goal: Keep traffic from neighborhood
 Mitigation: Direct traffic out Stow street by cutting out corner of 28 Maple St
- 3** Goal: Reduce queuing on Rte 27 and Maple St
 Mitigation: Direct traffic directly to the South Side head house, providing room to queue
- 4** Goal: Factor safety needs of those on rail trail
 Mitigation: Provide parking closer to tractor path and with appropriate speed reduction devices

