
Lenox Village Center Improvement Plan
Lenox, Massachusetts

Study completed 2008
Phase II in construction 2010

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Ashfield, MA

with
Foresight Land Services
Greylock Design Associates

Lenox is blessed with a lively, compact and walkable village center, with a wide variety of shops and ample parking, surrounded by mature trees, and protected as a local historic district. But it was challenged by an aging infrastructure, including crumbling sidewalks, oversized cobrahead light fixtures, and underground utilities in need of replacement.

When Town Meeting appropriated funds to replace the water main and substitute historic fixtures as light standards, the Town took the opportunity to look at the larger picture. WCA collaborated with engineers from Foresight to study circulation patterns, pedestrian safety, green space connections, service and delivery areas, and infill potential that would enhance commercial viability while establishing a more cohesive village identity.

Comprehensive site assessment and on-going conversations with town officials, property owners and merchants, resulted in design principles to:

- Enhance pedestrian safety (wider sidewalks, better lighting, safer and shorter cross-walks, designated sitting areas, barrier-free access throughout)
- Provide efficient, safe car movement (clear gateways, simplified circulation, discrete loading areas, organized internal parking with improved connections)
- Improve green connections (reduced pavement, pocket parks, additional street trees)
- Encourage private collaboration (extend improvements into privately owned properties through similar materials, shared access, aggregated service areas, interior walkways)

Phased implementation began with Church Street, where on-street parking alternates with wider sidewalks to slow traffic and enhance pedestrian safety. Raised modular concrete pavers indicate pedestrian crossings; bump-outs shorten crosswalks and reduce intersection size. Angled granite curbs are cut to meet ADA standards for access. Additional street trees and pocket parks provide shaded gathering places. And historic streetlights bring a greater coherence to the village.



Alternating parking with wider sidewalks slows traffic, screens cars, and provides room for additional street trees along a renovated Church Street. New pedestrian scale streetlights are patterned after the historic Westinghouse standard.

Crumbling sidewalks and commercial deliveries challenged pedestrians within the historic Lenox Village business district.



Special paving extends from the public sidewalk up to commercial doorways, erasing the distinction of property lines for greater coherence.



New gateway park welcomes people to the revitalized business district and provides a shady gathering place at the corner of Church Street and Walker Street.

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continued

A strong sense of place *is enhanced with a coherent design:*

- Historic streetlights and special pavement at key gateways and crosswalks protect and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Convenient, central, well-organized parking improves circulation.
- An internal village walk connects parking to shops and various gathering and sitting areas.



Walt's watercolor perspectives gave property owners, merchants and town officials a feel for what could be achieved through the streetscape improvements.



Gateway pocket park *sets the tone for the refurbished business district.*



Carefully beveled granite curbs *provide a smooth transition from roadside to sidewalks, and no longer challenge mobility.*



Changes in pavement texture, color and shape *signal pedestrians and drivers alike to changes in grade and user priority.*