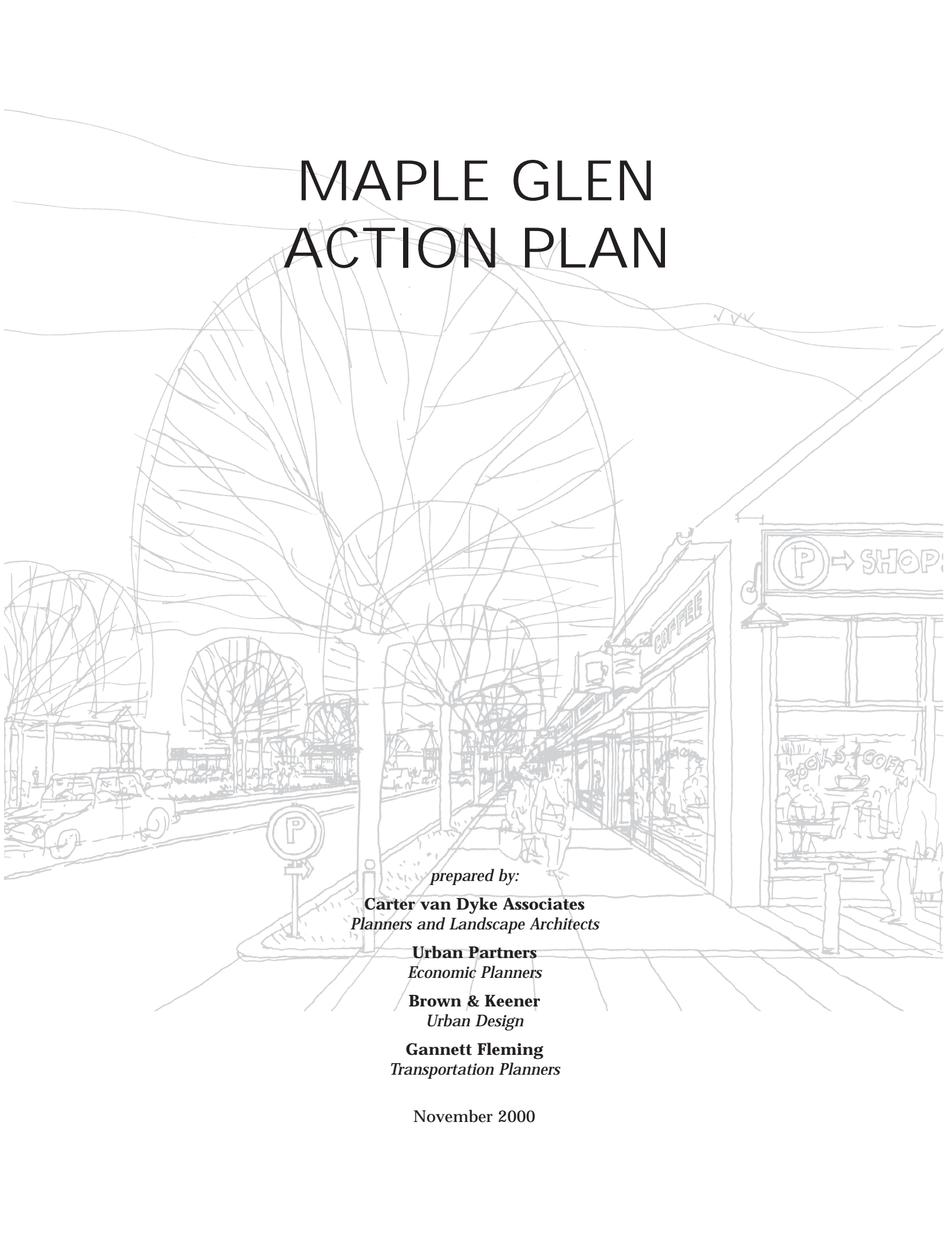


MAPLE GLEN ACTION PLAN



prepared by:

Carter van Dyke Associates
Planners and Landscape Architects

Urban Partners
Economic Planners

Brown & Keener
Urban Design

Gannett Fleming
Transportation Planners

November 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maple Glen: Exploring a New Future	1
Maple Glen: Understanding the Values That Shape the Vision	2
Maple Glen: Setting the Parameters	3
Transportation and Parking Assessment	3
Market Assessment	5
Environmental Assessment	6
Land Use and Zoning Assessment	7
Building Assessment	8
Landscape Assessment	9
Maple Glen: Vision for the Future	10
Close-up: How the Pieces Look	11
Traffic Improvements	11
Design Standards	16
Future Land Use	19
Parking	20
Streetscape Elements	21
Setting the Plan in Motion	22
Zoning	22
Funding Improvements	23
Municipal Plan Endorsement and Involvement	25

Maple Glen Vision Plan (<i>illustration</i>)	12
---	-----------

Acknowledgments

MAPLE GLEN: EXPLORING A NEW FUTURE

Maple Glen is at a crossroads. Actions are pending that provide the potential for significant changes in the Village Center. These changes include the installation of public water and sewer throughout the commercial center and the widening of Welsh Road to five lanes. These improvements will fuel the pressure for increased development.

The current commercial development of the triangular crossroads at the center of Maple Glen could not have been imagined when the three roads that define the triangle were established. Limekiln Pike, Welsh Road, and Norristown Road were all opened before 1725 to carry wagon traffic. For many years Maple Glen was a convenient crossroads location with just a post office and school for the nearby farming community.

But wagons were replaced by automobiles, and after World War II, the surrounding area developed into a suburban residential community. The roads became major regional automotive commuting routes. Maple Glen's Village Center became a prime location for commercial development to serve the needs of the surrounding community.

As a new century begins, Maple Glen is facing its next generation of development. Many of the buildings representing the first wave of commercial development are in need of rehabilitation or replacement, and new types of commercial development are looking for a place in Maple Glen.

As pressures mount to revitalize the Village Center, local residents and business people recognize the need for coordination to ensure improvement occurs not only on a site-by-site basis, but throughout the village. In particular, lessening traffic and circulation problems requires the cooperation of all local landowners as well as government agencies to ensure mutual benefit. Additionally, there is a desire to assure that development be of a scale, character, and type that will fit the character of the Village Center and serve the needs of Maple Glen residents, rather than the ubiquitous big boxes of national chains that attract traffic from the greater region.

The Maple Glen Village Association, comprised of area residents and business people, has recognized a need to assess the assets and constraints facing the village and develop a strategy for ensuring that it remains a convenient commercial center for area residents. Through an intensive planning process the Association has worked together with the Maple Glen Business and Professional Association and Horsham and Upper Dublin Townships to develop an exciting new vision for the future of Maple Glen.

It is intended that through this plan a partnership will develop between the public and private sectors, with all parties jointly benefiting: the private sector through increased land values and more profitable businesses; the municipalities through increased ratables which will enable them to provide better services; and the community residents through more convenient and safer access to businesses that provide services and goods necessary to daily life, while preserving the character of their neighborhoods.

MAPLE GLEN: UNDERSTANDING THE VALUES THAT SHAPE THE VISION

Through discussion at a series of public meetings Maple Glen residents and business people participated in the development of the following goals and objectives that serve as the basis for the plan for future development.

- **Create a center** for Maple Glen by enhancing and improving the streetscape image of the Village Center, through roadway improvements, sidewalk improvements, landscaping, and building facade improvements.
- **Maintain the community scale** of the commercial center. It should remain compact in size and small in scale, serving the daily shopping and service needs of the surrounding community. The existing character of surrounding residential neighborhoods should be protected.
- **Improve pedestrian safety and convenience** in Maple Glen. Use design and density to encourage pedestrian activity, largely through development patterns that allow and encourage customers to park once and walk to multiple businesses. In addition, establish safe pedestrian and bicycle routes that link surrounding neighborhoods to the commercial crossroads.
- **Minimize automobile congestion and safety hazards** posed by the high volume of traffic on Welsh Road, Limekiln Pike, and Norristown Road, and the conflicting needs of travelers passing through Maple Glen and those making trips to local businesses.
- **Maintain and expand the variety of businesses** that serve the daily convenience and personal service needs of the surrounding community. Active community recruitment of new businesses should target restaurant, deli, bakery, and other store types with limited current presence in the Village Center.
- **Include green spaces and features** within the village center. Landscaped open space can include focal points, resting places for pedestrians, and gathering places. Shade trees and other landscaped areas provide a visual and environmental amenity and can support the image of Maple Glen.
- **Support and encourage regional efforts to provide public transportation opportunities** that would serve the community of Maple Glen.

MAPLE GLEN: SETTING THE PARAMETERS



The lack of controlled driveways contributes to the congestion of the area. Continuous curbcuts also raise safety issues.



When access drives are located too close to intersections, confusion about who has the right-of-way has the potential to cause accidents.

The planning process uncovered the following constraints that had to be resolved to enable the revitalization of Maple Glen.

Transportation and Parking Assessment

Three heavily traveled arterial roads, Limekiln Pike, Welsh Road, and Norristown Road, define the commercial center of Maple Glen. There are a number of factors that result in poor vehicular circulation through Maple Glen:

- Intersections are closely spaced
- Access drives to parking lots are too numerous and too close to intersections
- Signals are not interconnected
- Turning lanes are absent or inadequate
- Continuous curbcuts are present at some properties
- Intersections with angles that vary significantly from 90 degrees

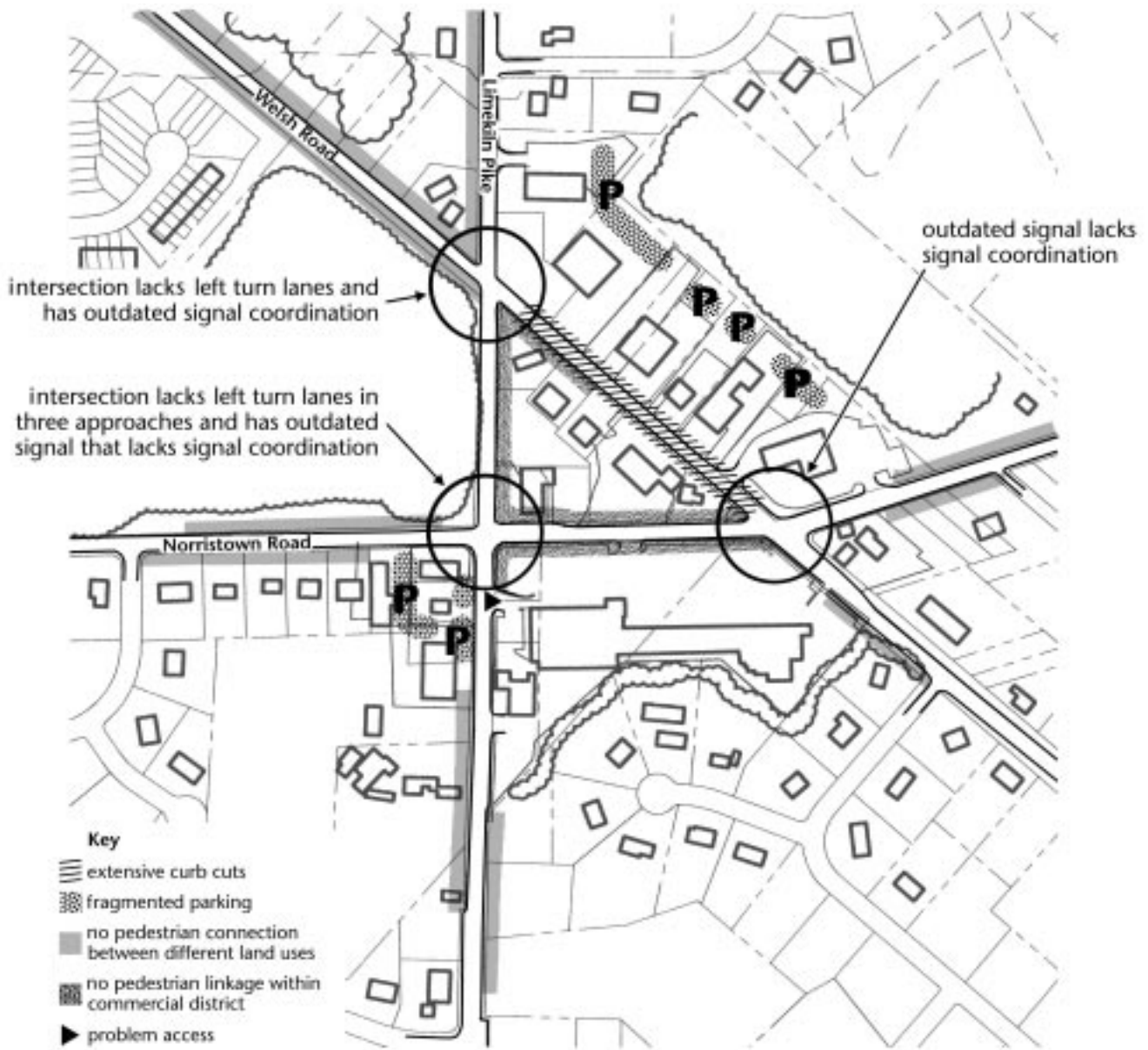
Improvements are currently being studied for Welsh Road. The proposed improvements would include widening the road to two travel lanes in each direction, and constructing a middle turn lane.

Parking facilities in Maple Glen were developed over time on a parcel by parcel basis. Many of the older retail buildings have inadequate and inefficient park-

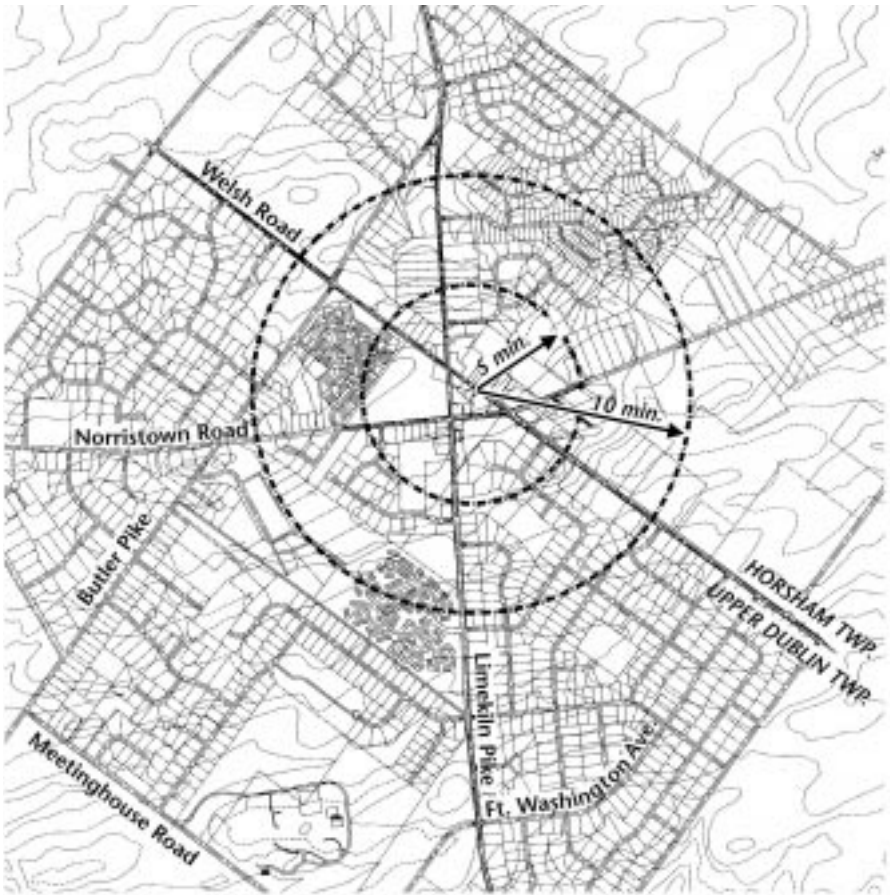
ing layouts, while others have an overabundance. Multiple access points to these parcels and associated turning movements compound traffic congestion due to the number of access points onto the roadway. There are inadequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Maple

Glen. Some properties include sidewalks, but most sidewalks are interrupted, so there is no continuous network linking the business of the commercial center to each other, to surrounding residential areas, or to nearby regional recreation trails.

Maple Glen is not currently served by public transportation. Again, this requires all trips to the commercial core to be made by private automobile. This limitation applies not only to business patrons, but also to employees, restricting the labor supply.



The lack of good traffic design contributes to the congestion of the area. Both pedestrian and auto traffic are impacted by absence of linkages and clearly defined access to parking areas.



Maple Glen is within a ten minute walk of the surrounding neighborhoods; however, there is limited pedestrian access.

real estate services, as well as health care services.

Based upon the population and income of the surrounding area, Maple Glen Village Center represents less than 9 percent of the total retail space supported by resident's purchases. The surrounding area is substantially developed and affluent, providing a large market. However, Maple Glen Village Center is physically limited in size, and residents have excellent access to nearby shopping in Willow Grove, Montgomeryville, Plymouth Meeting, and elsewhere.

These factors suggest that strong retail demand will continue to attract a wide variety of retailers to the area, and that real estate zoned for retail uses will continue to be in demand for development or upgrading. However, the physical con-

Market Assessment

Maple Glen Village Center is a small community-serving commercial district. It serves as a hub for convenience retail and services to nearby residents, and also captures some limited business from the large number of motorists passing through the area. It is experiencing expansion and currently has few vacancies.

There are approximately 60 businesses in the Maple Glen Village Center. Of these, 38 are retail and personal service establishments, most of which are convenience oriented. The largest business in the district is a Genuardi's supermarket. Retail categories with significant concentrations of store types are restaurants and bars (eleven), dry cleaners (six), and

hair salons (five.) There are also three gas stations in the Maple Glen Village Center. The non-retail businesses primarily provide financial, insurance and



Maple Glen is within a strong market place for new development.

straints of the Village Center will preclude development that requires large lots and buildings, such as department stores, home improvement centers, or warehouse-style electronics, office supply, or sporting goods stores.

Maple Glen is a strong marketplace that will continue to attract retail stores. Unfortunately, without community intervention, Maple Glen can expect to see continuing pressure for additional development of store types that replicate existing stores. Residents and businesses have expressed inter-

est in some diversification of store types. Analysis indicates that this is possible, however the community will need to be proactive in encouraging desired store types.

Environmental Assessment

Maple Glen Village Center is located on a ridge, the local high point. Surrounding areas are gently sloping, with no significant steep slopes. Several streams and associated floodplains are found within the residential areas; none impact the commercial core.

Currently, public water and sewer are available in the Horsham Township portion of the commercial core, while the portion in Upper Dublin Township utilizes on-site water and sewer. However, public water and sewer are currently being installed in the Upper Dublin portion, alleviating existing concerns regarding malfunctioning systems, especially within the interior triangle of the village center. Up until now, the lack of sewers has been a deterrent to further infill development within Upper Dublin Township.



The post office is in a poor location with inadequate parking.

Land Use and Zoning Assessment

Maple Glen Village Center is a commercial core, which is surrounded by a range of high- and low-density development, as well as vacant land, institutional uses, and landscape nurseries. Within the village center, parcels range in size from 0.3 acres to a combined size of 7.1 acres for the Genuardi's shop-

ping center. Land uses in the village center include retail, restaurant, automotive service, and offices. Two vacant parcels are found on Limekiln Pike between Welsh Road and Norristown Road. To the east is a 0.6-acre parcel and to the west a 16.8-acre parcel.

Existing structures in the district are primarily auto-oriented, many dating from the 1960s.

They commonly are set back from the roadway with parking in front of the buildings. Recent development has included renovation of existing facilities that does not alter the footprint of the existing structure, as well as demolition of existing structures and replacement with newer, larger-scale auto-oriented structures.



The existing building massing does not create a pedestrian friendly environment. Large spaces between building and expanses of blank walls disrupt visual continuity and discourage people from walking.



There is no uniform streetscape along major roads; a lack of walkways thwarts pedestrians and creates safety concerns.

Some of the uses within the district are poorly located, based on their function. For instance, the post office, a use with high daily traffic, is located on the edge of the district, on a site where both vehicular and pedestrian access is difficult and parking is inadequate.

Both Horsham and Upper Dublin Townships have commercial zoning in the Maple Glen Village Center, with various residential districts and an institutional district in the remainder of the study area. The commercial zones permit a wide variety of commercial uses. The *C2 General Commercial District* in Horsham Township is slightly more restrictive in the variety of permitted uses. Horsham Township has indicated it is their policy not to permit expansion of this commercial zoning district into the neighboring *R2* (east of Norristown Road) and *R3* (west

of Norristown Road) Residential Districts.

Upper Dublin's portion of the Village Center has two commercial zoning designations, *SC Shopping Center District* and *CR-L Commercial District - Class L*. *SC* applies to the Genuardi's shopping center and the triangle. *CR-L* applies to properties southwest of the intersection of Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike. None of the parcels in the

triangle are buildable under the yard and bulk requirements. Any proposed development or alterations in this area raise the opportunity for negotiation through the Zoning Hearing Board process. The 16 acre vacant parcel adjacent to the Village Center on Limekiln Pike is currently zoned *MHD Mobile Home Development*. Other surrounding lands are zoned *A Residential*.

The dimensional requirements of the districts have contributed to the physical development of the Village Center. First and foremost, a 40-foot minimum front yard setback has encouraged large expanses of parking between the road and the building. Furthermore, low permitted building coverage percentages limit the intensity of uses in Upper Dublin Township.

Building Assessment

The commercial buildings in the Maple Glen Village Center are mostly built in a typical highway commercial style. There is one large strip shopping center, a few smaller strip centers, and some isolated buildings. Almost all the buildings are single-story block con-

	<i>C2</i>	<i>CR-L</i>	<i>SC</i>
<i>Minimum lot size</i>	10,000 sq.ft.	N/A	6 acres
<i>Minimum front yard</i>	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
<i>Minimum side yard</i>	5 ft. ¹	None ²	50 ft.
<i>Minimum rear yard</i>	30 ft.	20 ft.	50 ft.
<i>Max. building coverage</i>	45%	25%	15%
<i>Max. impervious surface</i>	75%	N/A	N/A

¹ 15 feet for semidetached buildings.

² 20 feet adjacent to residential districts.



Large blank walls, gaps between buildings, and differing setback distances are three of the factors that disrupt the visual continuity of the street

struction. Most have flat or shallow pitched roofs and large plate-glass front windows. Many buildings have large expanses of blank walls visible from the street. In other locations, there are large gaps between buildings or significantly different setbacks

between neighboring buildings resulting in a lack of continuity along the street.

A wide variety of signage is found in the district, much is interior-lit plastic, others are painted. In some instances, signage within a strip-center is not coordinated.

Landscape Assessment

To date, most of the landscaping in the village center is associated with perimeters of parking lots. Constraints that limit the implementation of landscaping include low overhead utility lines, multiple and wide access drives for parking lots, and, in some instances, very small areas between parking lots and roadways. Currently the commercial district is surrounded in part by stands of mature trees. These trees define an edge between commercial and residential uses, providing a valuable asset and necessary buffering.

There are few coordinated streetscape improvements in Maple Glen Village Center. Sidewalks are present only intermittently along roadways. Very few street trees have been planted. Lighting installation is limited and has not been coordinated. However, the community has recently initiated efforts to remedy these conditions, beginning with the installation of banners to identify the district.

MAPLE GLEN: VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The future of Maple Glen can be directed to meet the goals of the community. Through cooperation among businesses, community organizations, and government agencies, the commercial center can be enhanced to provide an attractive, convenient source of daily goods and services for the surrounding community. By establishing a future plan for circulation, landscaping, and streetscape enhancements, private and public initiatives for upgrading, new development, and road improvements can be coordinated to create a better Maple Glen.

Maple Glen Village Center can maintain and enhance its role as a source of convenience goods and services for the residential portion of the community. Large-scale retail stores should be discouraged and a wider variety of small-scale retail and personal service establishments sought. New development in the Village Center should provide only positive benefits to the surrounding residential areas.

The future vision of Maple Glen is one of a more distinctive, cohesive, and attractive streetscape. There are many elements that will contribute to this new vision. Road improvements should establish a uniform roadway edge and uninterrupted stretches of sidewalk, lined with street trees, decorative lighting, and banners. As buildings are upgraded and replaced, they should be brought closer to the street. Building architecture should meet expressed design standards to create a distinctive and attractive “place” around the blocks that make up the triangle of Maple Glen Village Center. Concurrently, parking should be moved behind buildings and consolidated into shared and linked parking lots, with fewer access points onto the roadway.

Maple Glen should become a walkable center. Providing sidewalks along the streets of the commercial district and extending to residential areas is the first step. By creating shared parking areas and facilitating access from one parcel to the

adjacent, patrons can park once and walk throughout the district. This reduces the amount of time patrons spend moving their car and fighting traffic, and increases their ability to visit multiple area businesses. Additionally, the township should support initiatives to provide public transportation to serve Maple Glen.

Making fewer short trips within the district reduces some of the traffic congestion in the commercial area, but it will not significantly reduce the volume, much of which is pass-through traffic. However, changes to the roadway and intersections can both reduce congestion and gridlock, allowing traffic to flow more steadily through Maple Glen Village Center. These changes will include some widening, additional turn lanes at intersections, improved coordination of signals, reducing the number of access points along within the district, and reducing left turn motions into parking areas.

See the Maple Glen Action Plan on pages 12-13.

CLOSE-UP: HOW THE PIECES LOOK

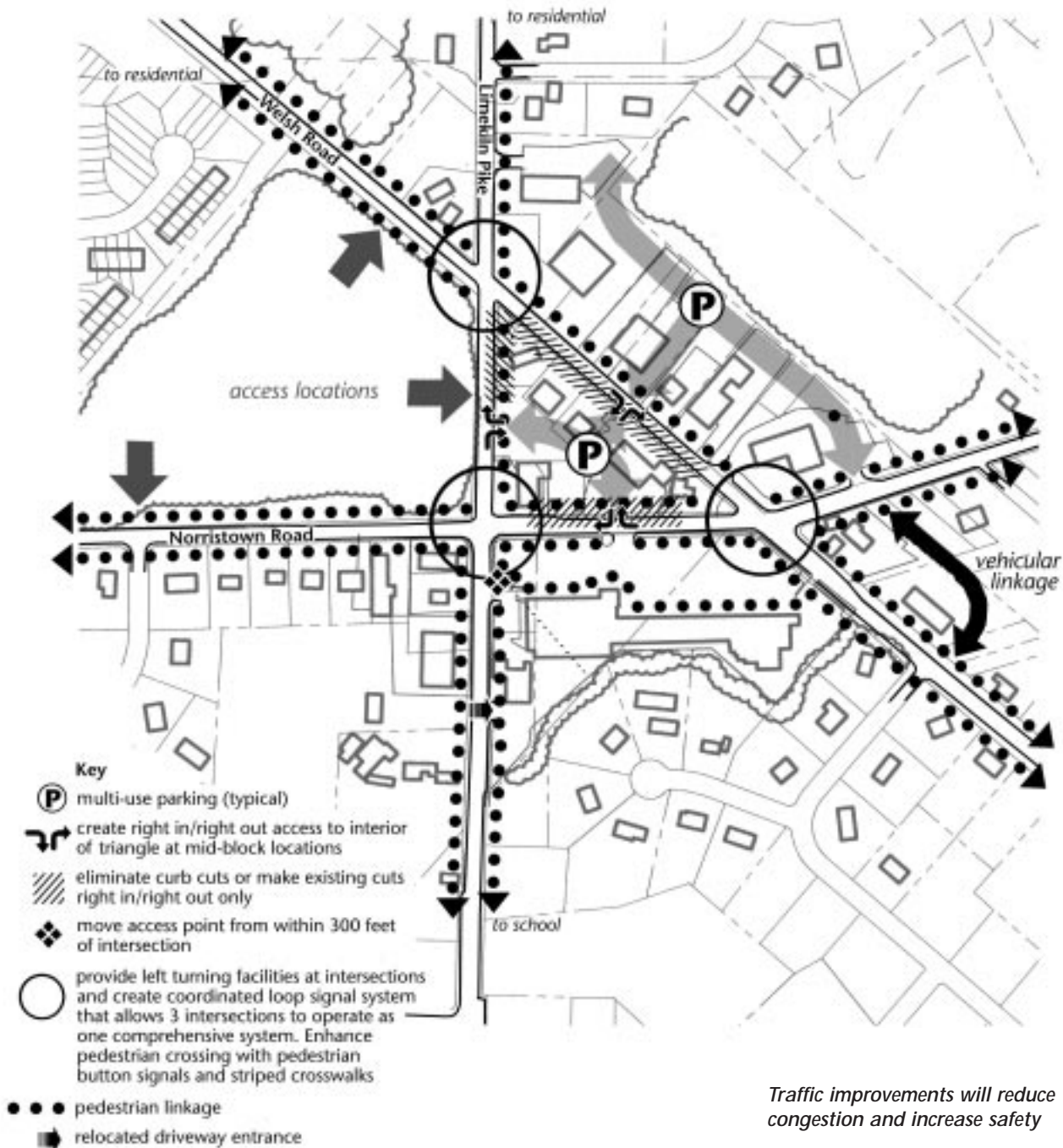
Traffic Improvements

A variety of public and private actions are recommended to improve traffic conditions in Maple Glen Village. These improvements will not reduce the total volume of traffic

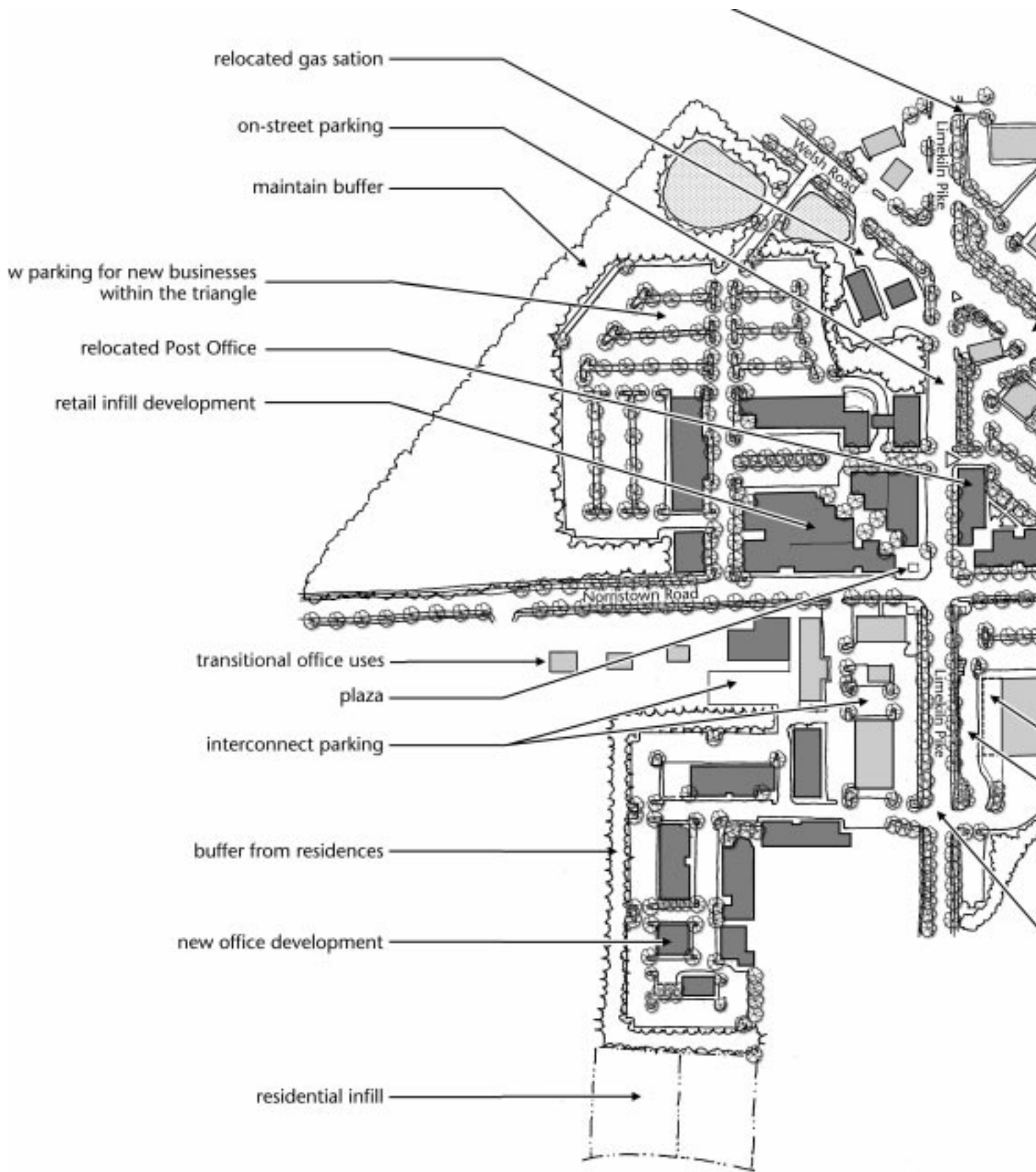
through the area, but will keep traffic at moderate speeds while reducing congestion and gridlock. These improvements will also facilitate through-traffic flow by reducing turning movement conflicts.

- **Intersection improvements.** Left turn lanes should be installed at the major intersections. Signals should be upgraded and intercon-

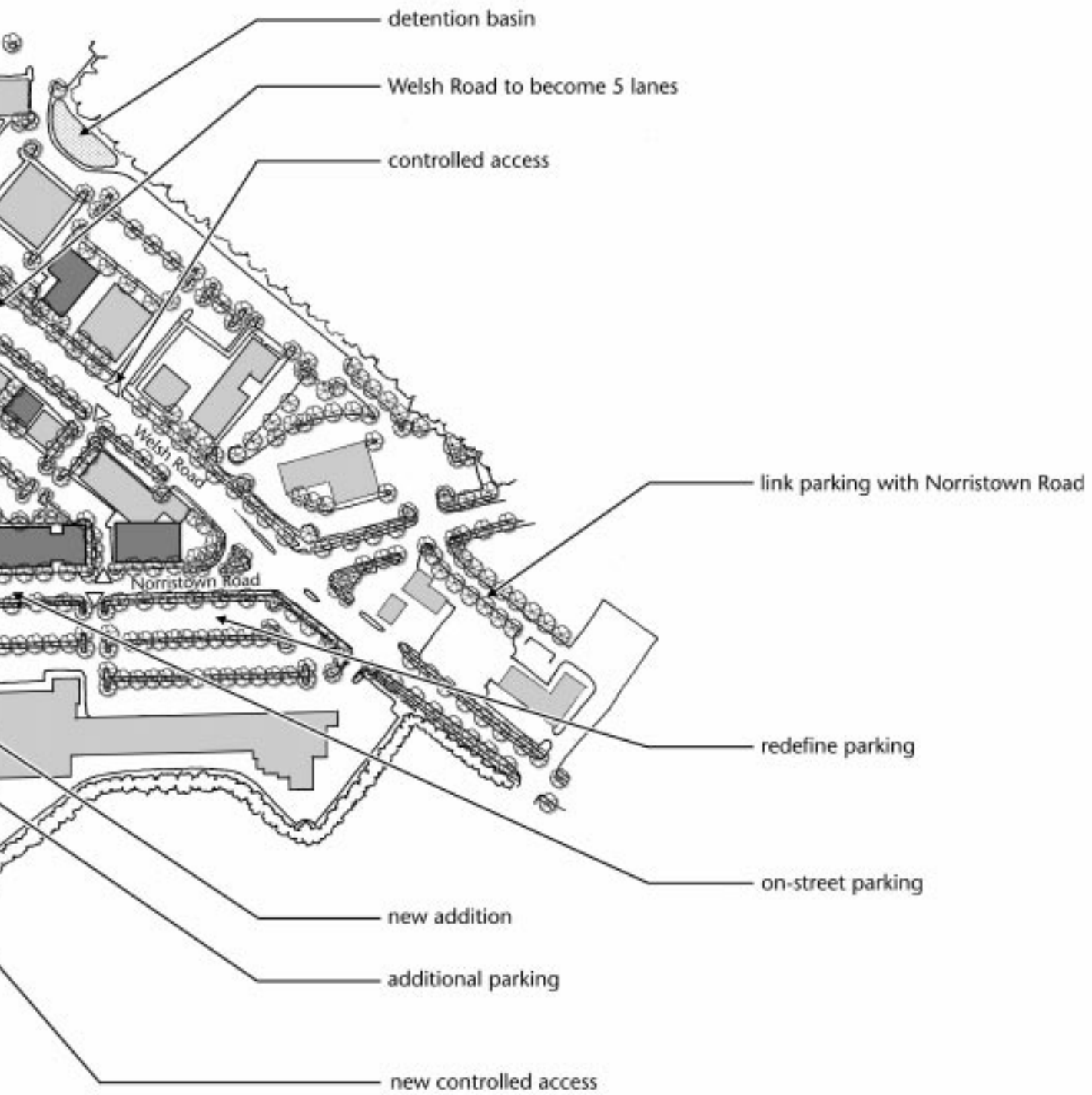
contin. on page 14



Traffic improvements will reduce congestion and increase safety



Maple Glen Vision Plan



Key

- new infill development
- existing development

nected at the three corners of the triangle. Improvements should include buttons to request pedestrian crossing and well-delineated crosswalks. With the widening of Welsh Road, pedestrian safety islands should be installed at its intersections.

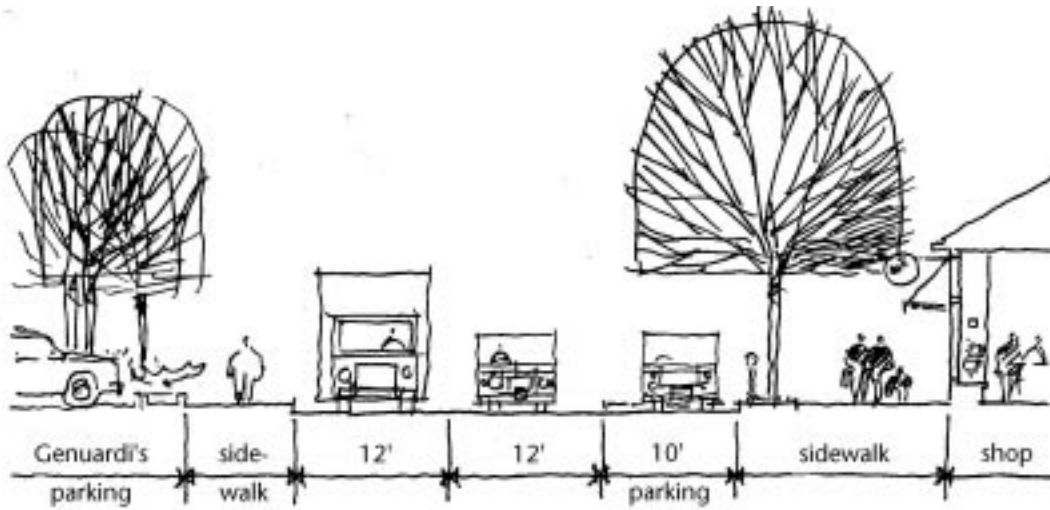
- **Eliminate continuous curb cuts and multiple access points.** These encourage too many turning motions across heavy traffic, resulting in traffic back-ups and gridlock. All access to properties within the triangle should be through a single shared right-in right-out only access point on each block along Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike, providing the entrance to a shared parking area for the entire triangle. Along Welsh Road, where a fifth lane is proposed, it will be possible to accommodate left lane turning movements into the shared parking of the center triangle and the opposite parcels.

- **Relocate entrance to the Genuardi's shopping center.** The access drive to the shopping center located on Limekiln Pike is too close to the intersection with Norristown Road, resulting in back-ups that block the intersection related to left turns into the property. We recommend that structures adjacent to the shopping center be removed, the parking lot extended and the entrance moved further south on Limekiln Pike

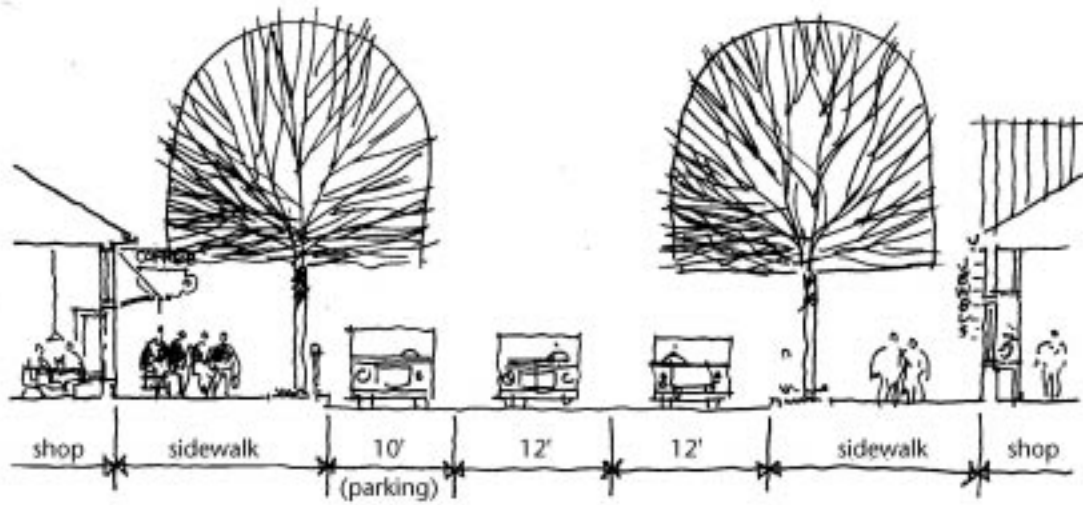
- **Rear linkages along Welsh Road.** Properties along Welsh Road in Horsham Township should develop interconnected parking to the sides and rear. This will allow patrons to visit more than one business without having to turn into the traffic of Welsh Road.

- **Provide sidewalks throughout the Village Center, extending along major roads to residential areas.** Providing a safe means of pedestrian access along all roads and connecting to the entrances of all businesses will encourage more people to walk from businesses to business within the Maple Glen Village Center and to walk from nearby neighborhoods to the Village Center. Allowing people the ability to walk rather than drive will reduce the number of auto trips into the district.

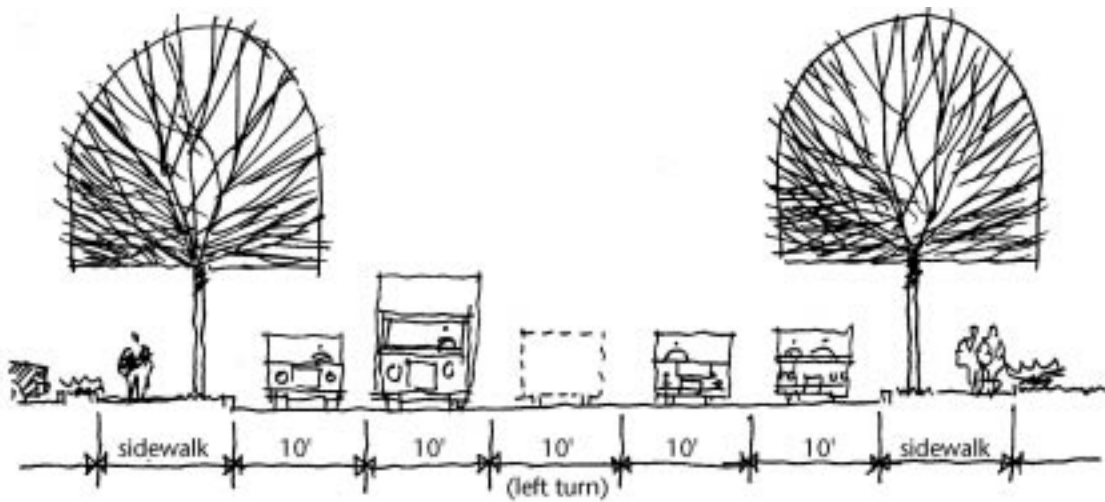
- **Design road improvements to maximize benefits.** Where road improvements are planned, coordinate with implementing agencies to achieve design features that contribute to enhancing the image of Maple Glen. All roads should have curbing, and investigation should be made into developing a regional storm sewer facility. Consideration should be given to placing utilities underground, to improve the area appearance and allow for the installation of shade trees. Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike should be planned for on-street parking along one side of the cartway. This parking will facilitate the proposed infill retail development and promote traffic calming.



Proposed cross-section of Norristown Road with on-street parking on one side in front of new shops



Proposed cross-section of Limekiln Pike with on-street parking on one side

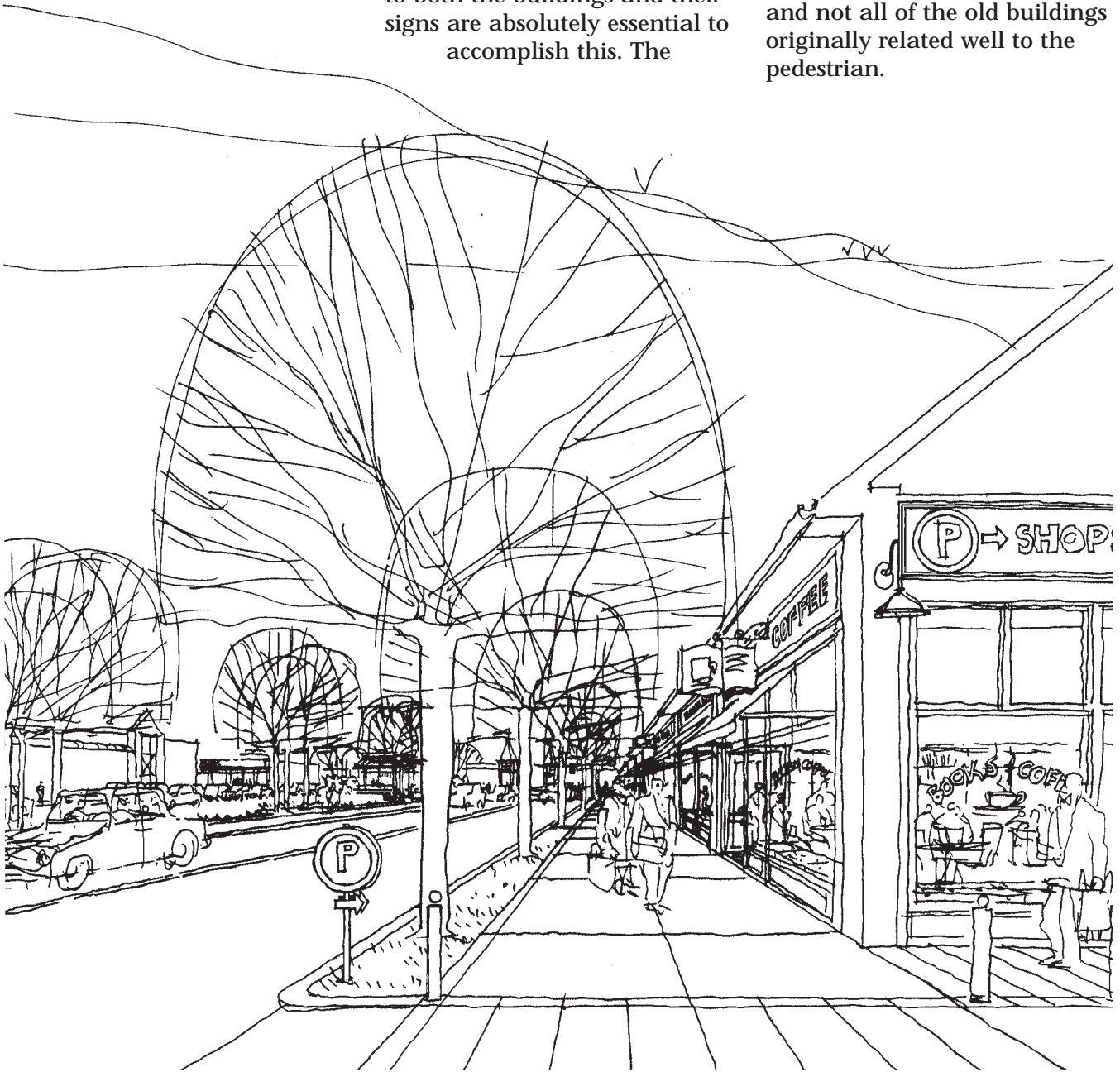


Proposed cross-section of Welsh Road showing five travel lanes and no on-street parking

Design Standards

An active walkable retail district must be designed to be comfortable and interesting to the pedestrian, in order to encourage shopping and attract shoppers to return another day. A few simple principles that apply to both the buildings and their signs are absolutely essential to accomplish this. The

examples of successful downtowns elsewhere, of varying characters and sizes, testify to this necessity: Corning, NY, Haddonfield, NJ, Mount Holly, NJ, Doylestown, PA, and nearby Chestnut Hill are but a few. In all of these instances new buildings are interspersed with old, and not all of the old buildings originally related well to the pedestrian.



*View along Norristown Road looking west toward Limekiln Pike intersection.
New buildings should be located near the sidewalk with awnings and signs that are pedestrian oriented*

Building Design Principles

- Every building in Maple Glen Village Center must include active retail continuously along the sidewalk, large and handsome shop windows, and doors from the sidewalk to the shops inside. Non-retail uses such as offices, schools, and storage disrupt the pedestrian/shopper flow, and discourage their continued movement to other shops. Blank walls are unacceptable along any pedestrian way. In the triangle area at the center of Maple Glen, this principle should apply to the sides of the buildings that face the streets, the connecting walkways, and—as much as possible—to the parking lot in the rear.
- Every building must be located at (or very near) the sidewalk line. Other than small setbacks and small open spaces for variety, no large open spaces—and especially no parking lots—should be located along the primary shopping streets. This applies especially to Norristown Rd. and Limekiln Pike.
- All buildings should have pitched roofs, with either overhangs or cornices to give visual interest. Gable ends are more compatible with the houses in the surrounding neighborhoods, and should be included in the various roof designs. Variety in roof lines is also a compatible characteristic; variety in ridge heights, cupolas, skylights and monitors, and dormers (where real) are some examples of this design intention.
- Buildings should be made of forms that have some use; false elements, such as empty dormers or blank windows, are not acceptable. Maple Glen is trying to establish a level of quality that is consistent with its market aspirations, so attention to these details is essential.
- Awnings are strongly recommended over storefronts facing the pedestrian walkways.
- Colors of building walls, trim, roofs, awnings, and signs should include a variety of hues, but within a range that makes all the parts compatible with each other. Neither repetitive monotony nor cacophony are desired. A color palette that strikes a balance between the two should be agreed upon. This detail will make a great deal of difference in the character of Maple Glen's shopping area, so it deserves very careful thought.
- A basic set of materials should be agreed upon. For example, stucco, painted wood siding, painted wood trim, natural aluminum storefronts, clear glass, and bricks are materials that can establish both variety and quality. On the other hand, bronzed aluminum, vinyl siding, tinted glass, and unpainted wood may not. Some roof shingles resemble slates or wood shingles, and can give a sense of quality; some shingles appear thin and have colors that are not compatible with most of the suggested wall materials. In a community of sloped roofs, the design and color of shingles is important; this may be a case where one color/style is recommended for all roofs, no matter what the design of the buildings below.
- Everything must be well maintained. Paint that has peeled or is peeling, windows that are not cleaned or are cracked, awnings that are faded or torn, bricks and stone that are dirty—all symbolize a lack of interest in the success of the business, and of the whole shopping area.

The Design of Signs, Awnings, and Other Features

Signs and awnings are the most visible ornament of a downtown shopping district. Signs in Maple Glen have three responsibilities: they must be clearly visible to the pedestrian shopper; they must be sufficiently legible to the passing motorist; and they must create—as a group—a vibrant and varied character that complements and enhances the handsome buildings and streetscape of this remade shopping area. There are ten principles that must be followed in order to fulfill these responsibilities.

- The proper design of signs—including the brackets as well as the signs themselves—adds great richness to downtown shopping areas. In order to be visible to the pedestrian, projecting signs should be included. A variety of signs should be acceptable, including the projecting signs: signs directly on the building facade, signs painted on the shop front window, signs on awnings, and signs hanging behind the storefront glass. Paper signs that are taped to the window are not acceptable, because they are not compatible with the strength and variety of the building architecture, and they are evidence of lower quality goods in the store.
- Signs mounted on facades must be designed to be integrated with the architectural details of the building; they cannot be so large as to hide

cornices and other trim. This is not intended to be a highway shopping area; very large signs are absolutely incompatible with the type of retail that is expected here. The most easily acceptable signs that are mounted on buildings, for instance, are those made of single letters, and not large metal or plastic boxes.

- Signs should be externally illuminated. Large metal and plastic internally illuminated signs would be incompatible with the scale and character that is expected of the individual buildings and of the whole Village Center.
- Signs should be the appropriate size, so that they are in proportion with the building facade and the width of the narrow shopping street, yet visible and legible to the pedestrian and the driver. The nature of the message is part of this issue, since signs can include both words and symbols, and because the “right size” will require a thoughtful determination of a simple and direct message.
- Signs should use colors so that they are vivid, varied, interesting, and legible; but they also must be consistent with the architecture of the building. Careful study is needed to create a compatible yet stimulating palette.
- Awnings must fit within the structural frame of the building. Awnings must not cover any of the elements of the building facade. As part of this principle, awnings

should also give shelter to the sidewalk; steep awnings that are used primarily as signs are not acceptable.

- Awnings can include words and symbols as signs, but they must fit on the vertical face; signs on the angled portion of the awnings become too large to be the “right size.”
- The colors of awnings should be considered when evaluating the colors of the buildings; they should complement and enrich the facade. Color studies, in keeping with those for signs and buildings, are needed.
- Signs on the sidewalks (“sandwich boards”), outdoor cafe furniture, outdoor retail displays, and outdoor planters all are part of the shopping experience, and can enrich this experience if they are done right. They obviously must be located to permit shoppers to walk. They also must be designed and selected to complement and enrich the buildings and the street. A presentation of possible design choices can give helpful guidance to retailers and to the community in these matters.
- As with buildings, on-going maintenance is essential. Signs need cleaning and repainting, light bulbs need changing, awnings should be cleaned or replaced, plants should be watered, sidewalks should be clean. This attention to detail is as essential to commercial success as it is to civic pride.

Redesign of Existing Buildings

All of the principles regarding buildings, signs, awnings, and other features apply to existing buildings. Although some conditions cannot reasonably be changed (e.g., the exterior materials of the building facades), paint, glass, signs, awnings, and trim can all be modified. Of special interest is the design of the roofs. A flat roof building will not be in keeping with the small-scale character that is expected in Maple Glen, so careful consideration of the addition of pitched roofs on existing buildings should be part of any building renovation.

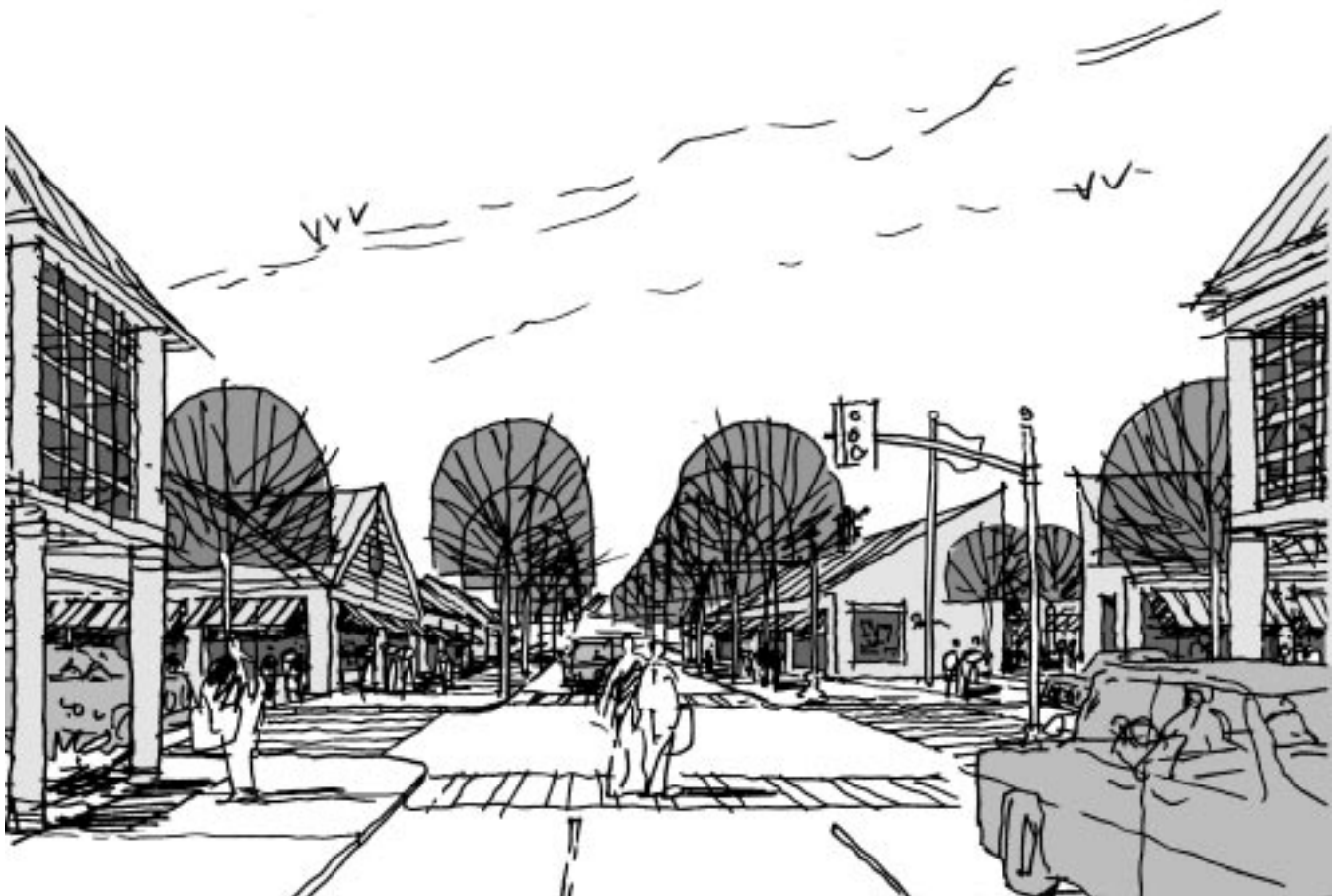
Future Land Use

On the whole, land use will remain as it is in the Maple Glen Village Center. Three proposals are made for improving and enhancing the Village Center. They include relocating certain uses, encouraging infill development, and considering limited expansion of the commercial area in Upper Dublin Township.

The Maple Glen Post office is a center of activity. It gives the village its name and is a part of the area's daily life. Many trips to the Village Center are spurred by a need to visit the post office. Currently, it is located on the edge of the dis-

trict in a building that is difficult to access. We recommend it be moved to a central location at the Northeast corner of Limekiln Pike and Norristown Road. With access via a shared parking lot interior to the triangle and pedestrian links throughout the Village Center, a trip to the post office could be easily supplemented with visits to several other businesses in the Village Center. This would also require relocation of the gas station at this site to the southwest corner of Welsh Road and Limekiln Pike.

The proposed future plan of Maple Glen Village Center indicates the introduction of several new buildings around the trian-



This view looking north along Limekiln Pike at the Norristown Road intersection shows the proposed location of the post office on the right corner

gle and along Welsh Road. These infill structures are intended to create a continuous facade along the streetscape. This continuous facade serves many roles. It will serve to distinguish this portion of the roadway from the surrounding residential area, giving more of an identity and sense of place to Maple Glen Village Center. The visual stimulus of buildings close to the street combined with streetscape improvements will cause drivers to slow down as they pass through the area to take note of their surroundings. A continuous row of facades also encourages pedestrian activity, as walking past storefronts and window shopping makes distances seem shorter.

Finally, the plan proposes expansion of the commercial districts in Upper Dublin Township. This expansion would allow for new development that would provide additional support to fund the improvements proposed for the Village Center. Additionally, the office development proposed would provide additional customers to retail and service-oriented businesses, customers that would be able to walk within the district before or after work or during their lunch hour. New development could also include parking areas to be shared by existing businesses for employee parking, freeing up adjacent spaces for customer parking.

Parking

Alluded to in much of the above discussion, significant changes to the design of parking areas within the Maple Glen Village Center are proposed. These changes are motivated by the compatible goals of reducing turning motions along the arterial roads and encouraging and supporting pedestrian access. Parking should be located to the rear and sides of buildings wherever possible, so a continuous building facade can be maintained along the street.

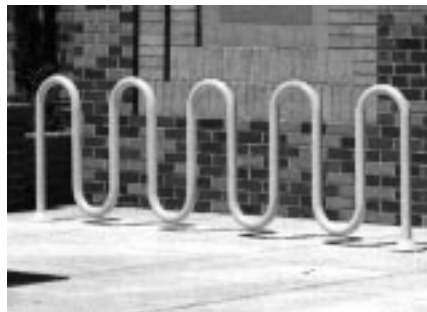
Consolidation of parking is proposed within the interior of the central triangle. This lot would have access from three points, one on each block, each designed to be right-in right-out only. Interconnection of parking areas is also recommended for properties in Horsham Township along Welsh Road. Additional parking for the entire village is proposed as part of the development of the tract west of Limekiln Pike between Norristown Road and Welsh Road. It is anticipated that extra parking in this location would be assigned to other businesses for employee use, allowing patrons to park in on-site spaces.



Typical trash receptacle



Typical planter



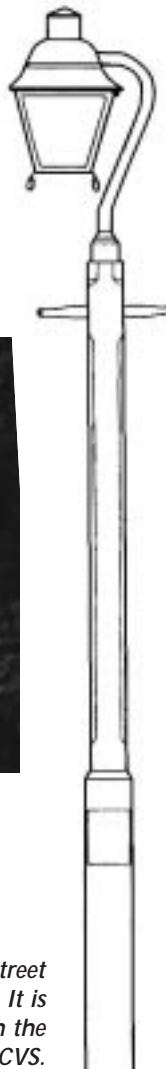
Bicycle racks will accommodate the large number of bicycles

Streetscape Elements

It is important that the community develops a consensus on the streetscape elements that will help define the character of Maple Glen. The streetscape is defined by a combination of street trees, sidewalk features, lighting fixtures, bollards, benches and trash receptacles. The following is a selection of streetscape elements that need to be incorporated into any new development within the village. The final selection process needs to be finalized by the community after this plan has been approved by the two Townships.



Wooden or metal benches help define the character of a space, as well as providing seating for shoppers and pedestrians.



These are possible street light alternatives. It is also possible to match the existing lights at CVS.

SETTING THE PLAN IN MOTION

The Maple Glen community provides a strong retail market. Retail developers and businesses will respond to this market opportunity in the manner that provides the maximum return on their investment of money and time. Maple Glen residents and officials of Upper Dublin and Horsham Townships face a real and immediate choice in shaping this investment opportunity and, as a result, in dealing with the issues of Maple Glen Village Center:

- They can passively continue on the historic path of development—parcel by parcel—and watch the Village Center slide farther into an uncoordinated patchwork of deteriorating older properties and ever-widely spaced highway-oriented retail boxes;
- OR
- They can proactively lead a pattern of coordinated development and redevelopment that establishes a positive core for Maple Glen.

The economics of Maple Glen are strong enough that developers and retailers—within reasonable limits—will follow the lead provided by the community. The Maple Glen Village Center Plan outlined in this document asserts that the community will lead and through that leadership coordinated development will produce a true community village.

Zoning

To assure expansion of the commercial area of Maple Glen Village within Upper Dublin Township achieves the goals of this plan, we recommend the creation of four overlay districts to facilitate this development. The general provisions of these districts are outlined below. However, the details of the ordinances would be drafted at the time development is proposed.

Overlay 1: Mobile Home Park Parcel

An overlay district on this parcel would permit small scale retail development (establishments less than 25,000 sq.ft.), banks, and second floor offices as an alternative use at this site. In return, a developer would be required to provide approximately sixty percent of the parking required for uses located in the triangle area. Additionally, new development must include relocation of the post office from its current site to the northeast corner of Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike, and relocation of the gas station currently at that site to the southwest corner of Limekiln Pike and Welsh Road.

Overlay 2: Triangle Area

To facilitate redevelopment of the triangle area in conformance with the plan outlined here, an overlay district would permit increased building coverage. Buildings would be required to be located adjacent to the sidewalk to create an active streetscape. On-street parking would be permitted along Limekiln Pike and Norristown Road. Furthermore, parking must be located in a shared lot on the interior of the triangle accessed by right-turn-in right-turn-out only drives. Development in this manner is also conditioned upon additional parking available on the Mobile Home Park zoned parcel.

Overlay 3: Genuardi's Site

In exchange for circulation improvements—relocation of the post office and relocation of the Limekiln Pike parking lot entrance further from the intersection—the required setback of the building from Limekiln Pike would be reduced. This would allow expansion of the retail square footage.

Overlay 4: Nursery Site

The nursery site located to the southwest of the intersection of Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike provides opportunity for office development. An overlay to allow this development would require it to be conditioned on redevelopment of the existing retail at the intersection of Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike. Improvements would include reducing the number of curb cuts and reducing the amount of parking in front of businesses. On-street parking would be permitted on Limekiln Pike.

Overlay 5: Norristown Road

The existing residences located along the southern side of Norristown Road facing the existing Mobile Home Park district are ready candidates for adaptive reuse as office uses. An overlay for office uses would be predicated upon shared driveways to minimize curbcuts, streetscape improvements, and buffers with fences to screen the office uses from the residences to the rear of these properties.

Funding Improvements

Road Improvements and Sidewalk Construction

Primary funding for planned road improvements and new sidewalk construction in the Maple Glen Village Center will come from PennDOT's county road fund pool. Some funding assistance may be available from the federal (TEA-21) transportation program, which includes funding for a wide range of transportation improvements and enhancement projects, including those geared toward pedestrian travel. PennDOT distributes all federal highway and TEA-21 Funds and all state road improvement funds. In Montgomery County eligible activities are designated by the County and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

Other improvements undertaken in the Maple Glen Village Center should be coordinated with already planned roadway improvements to assure that project elements are financed most economically. For example, water and sewer installation, roadway improvement, sidewalk installation, and landscape enhancement should all be coordinated to avoid placing features that will soon need to be disturbed for other improvements.

Streetscape Improvements

Many of the streetscape improvements recommended for the Maple Glen Village Center will require the expenditure of public money. Appropriate sources of these funds include the federal government – through PennDOT and HUD programs – the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Montgomery County, and Horsham and Upper Dublin Townships. Efforts should be made through the State Representative's office to identify commercial district streetscape improvements to be given priority for PennDOT and TEA-21 financing and for inclusion in the PA and Montgomery County Capital Budget Redevelopment Assistance Program.

Funds for special redevelopment projects are considered by the State legislature for inclusion in the programs of the State Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) or for larger investments in the PA Capital Budget Redevelopment Assistance Program every 3-4 years. Typically, up to 50 percent of funding may be provided.

The cost of some Maple Glen streetscape improvements may be significantly lessened if completed with township road crews and equipment. However, because many of the recommended streetscape improvements exceed the level of improvement typically made by public agencies, or require the use of better quality materials than those funded publicly, some transference of these costs to beneficiary private owners may be appropriate. Special

assessments might be established to finance improvements such as sidewalks, landscaping, pedestrian crossings, etc. Through this mechanism, Horsham and Upper Dublin Townships would issue a bond to cover the costs of certain infrastructure improvements that benefit Maple Glen Village Center property owners. Property owners whose properties were directly affected by the benefit would pay an additional assessment as part of their property taxes to pay off the bond over a ten-year period.

Many of the recommended physical improvements – banners, street trees and plantings, benches, etc. – are relatively inexpensive items that can be financed by individual participants or project sponsors. Local service clubs are typically very successful in organizing fundraising efforts for comparatively inexpensive and highly visible community projects. Individual businesses may also sponsor these types of improvements, which serve as an effective additional form of advertising within their area.

Shared Parking

The coordination of shared parking is recommended as a means to reduce vehicular congestion and facilitate pedestrian travel to multiple businesses within Maple Glen Village Center. These types of arrangements require the joint participation of several property owners and the determination of how any improvement costs are to be distributed. In some cases, township participation may be required to finance necessary improvements. Local financial institutions should be approached to determine their interest in developing a special loan program for such shared cost projects. By creating a vehicle through which financing for a particular project is underwritten as a single loan to multiple property owners – with each participant responsible for his proportionate share of the project's cost – local banks can help expedite the process which would, typically, require each participant to individually seek his share of project financing. Additionally, this packaged lending approach may meet Community Reinvestment Act requirements, especially if offered at slightly discounted interest rates.

Individual Business Improvements

This plan provides opportunities for private investment in at least four ways:

The development of lands west of Limekiln Pike between Welsh Road and Norristown Road, coordinated with the redevelopment of the inner triangle, will be a substantial and highly visible new private investment.

The development of offices on the nursery site to the southwest, with improvements at the southwest corner of the intersection of Norristown Road and Limekiln Pike, will further expand investment.

The proposed relocation of the post office and parking expansion on the Genuardi's location will provide the opportunity for reinvestment in the supermarket itself.

The proposed coordinated parking arrangements and overall upgrading of the area will encourage reinvestment in underutilized and currently vacant properties. The underlying economics of commercial development in Maple Glen should be sufficiently strong to privately fund business development activities. There may be need, however, for interim financing to facilitate control of individual parcels in the triangle area to create the desired coordinated pattern of development. The Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority may be an important resource for this purpose, both as a vehicle to achieve this coordination and as an entity that can access interim property acquisition financing from County and State sources.

Many of the property improvements and business expansion activities recommended for Maple Glen Village Center will require the direct participation of independent, small business entrepreneurs. For some of these businesses, it may be necessary to make available affordable financing. Local financial institutions can be encouraged to provide targeted financing, perhaps augmented by the Small Business Administration's LowDoc program, which can easily be incorporated in the bank's small business lending program. The goal of the LowDoc program is to simplify the application process and provide a rapid response rate (usually 2 to 3 days) for established businesses requiring up to \$150,000 in working capital, building/equipment purchase or repair, facade improvement and other business expansion activities.

Municipal Plan Endorsement and Involvement

The Maple Glen Village Association should present this plan to the supervisors of Horsham and Upper Dublin Townships. Acceptance of these plans by the Townships will allow them to direct other governmental agencies, such as PennDOT, as well as landowners and developers contemplating projects within the Village Center, to the goals and recommended actions of the plan.

The Townships' involvement in coordinating the installation of public water and sewer in Maple Glen is an example of how they play a necessary role in assisting with the implementation of the plan. Additional municipal support will be vital in coordinating road, sidewalk, and streetscape improvements. Township officials will also play a key role in negotiation with developers and implementing overlay zoning as discussed in general below; the details of any ordinances will be finalized at the time development is proposed.

The plan may also be used by the Maple Glen Village Association as a marketing tool to attract developers and businesses. It indicates the commitment of existing businesspeople and community residents to improving the character and maintaining the economic vitality of the Village Center. This provides an incentive for those looking to locate a business in such an area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Steering Committee:

Maple Glen Village Association

Patricia Barnes, *President*
Carol Bonnet, *Vice President*
George Slotnick, *Secretary*
Maripat Pressler, *Treasurer*
Richard Molish, *Board Member*
Fred Unger, *Board Member*
Louis Guerra, *Board Member*
George Hayeck, *Board Member*
Gene Pressler, *Board Member*
Andrea Steinberg, *At-Large*

Project Team

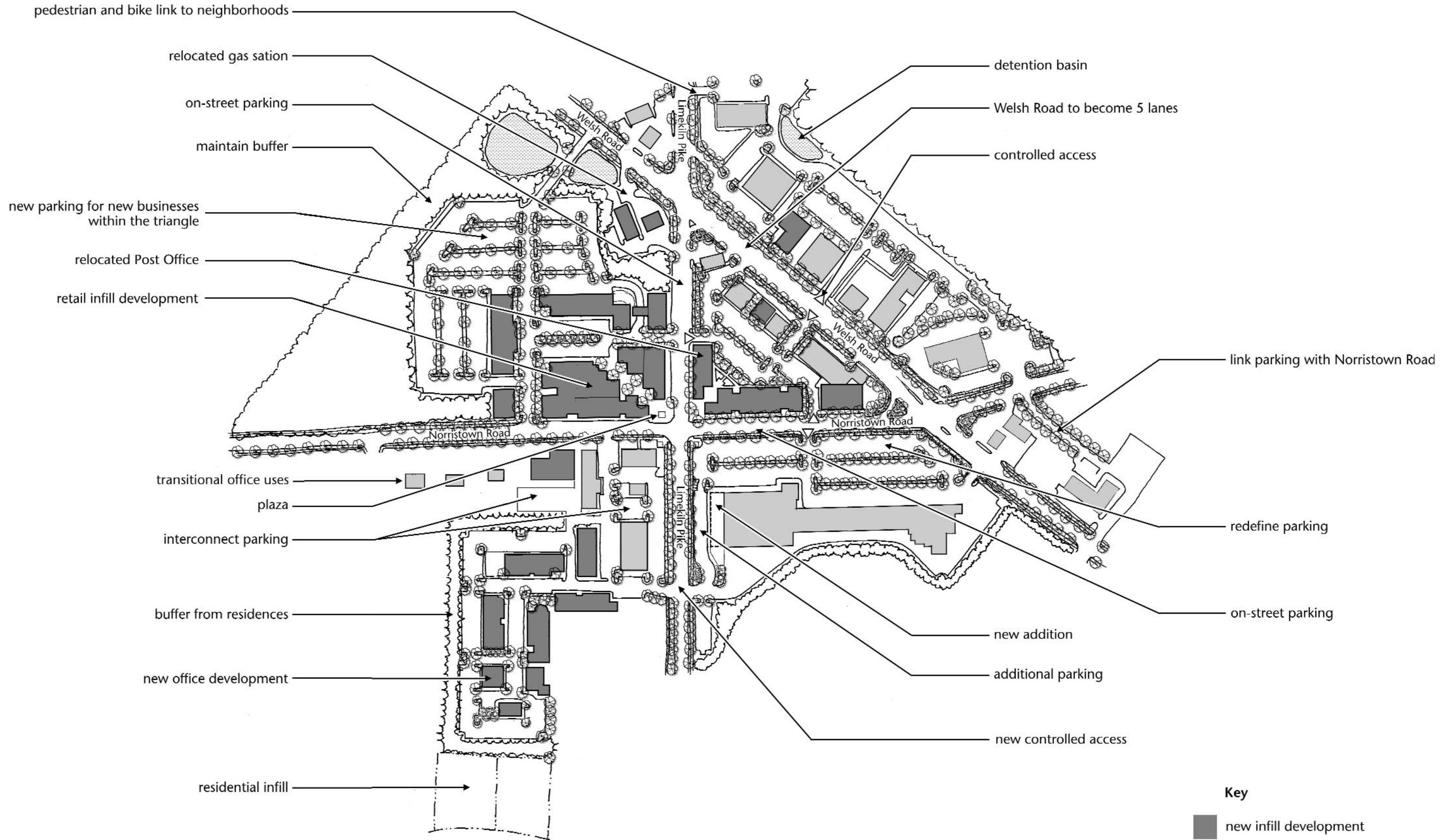
Planning Consultant
Carter van Dyke Associates

Economic Consultant
Urban Partners

Urban Design
Brown and Keener

Transportation Planners
Gannett Fleming

*Funding for this report was made
possible by the Upper Dublin
Township Board of
Commissioners, the Horsham
Township Board of Supervisors,
and the Maple Glen Village
Association*



Key

- new infill development
- existing development

Maple Glen Vision Plan