

# Planning for Housing Production in Amherst

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SECOND COMMUNITY MEETING, JUNE 4, 2019



# Amherst Project Work

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40R is an effective tool that allows mixed housing and commercial development to take place within the context of carefully planned guidelines developed with community participation.

Goal is to address Amherst's affordability issues while strengthening the character and quality of the Town's neighborhoods and community centers.

Focus is on identifying development challenges and opportunities regarding particular sites as well as a potential 40R Smart Growth Overlay District.

Major consultant task areas include:

- Engage with Amherst residents and property owners throughout the planning process.
- Prepare policy, procedural and zoning analyses.
- Develop design guidelines to protect community character.
- Prepare a draft bylaw.

# What is “smart growth”?

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Direct somewhat higher density development to appropriate locations.

Mixed land uses.

Range of housing choices.

Compact design.

Near public transportation.

Walkability.

Distinctive communities.

Community participation in planning process.

Existing infrastructure.



# What is Chapter 40R?

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Allows local option to adopt Overlay Districts near transit, areas of concentrated development, commercial districts, rural village districts, and other suitable locations.

Allows “as-of-right” residential development of minimum allowable densities.

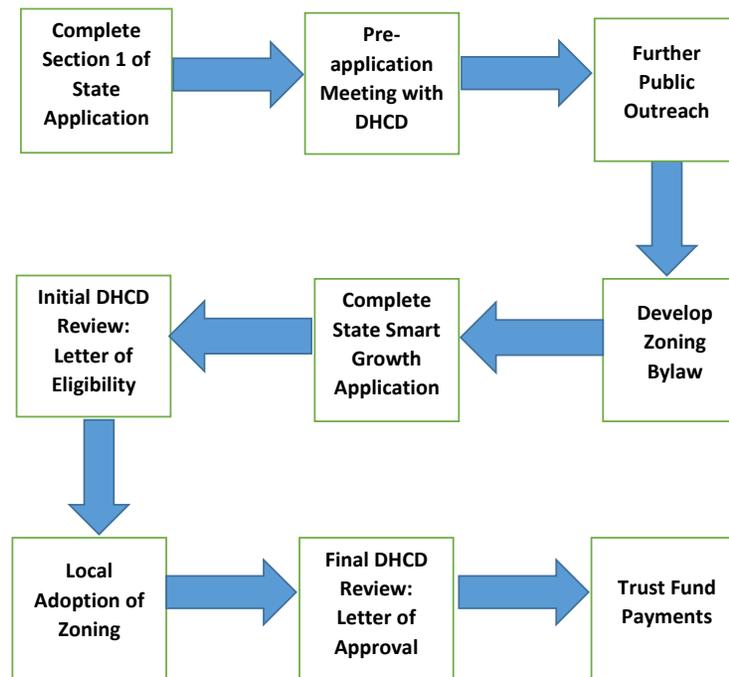
Provides that 20% of the units be affordable.

Promotes mixed-use and infill development.

Provides two types of payments to municipalities (one based on the number of projected housing units and another for each unit that receives a building permit).

Encourages open space and protects historic districts.

# How is a 40R District Established?



# Questions to be addressed tonight

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Is smart growth right for Amherst?

What criteria should the Town use to select an appropriate 40R district or other development opportunities?

Of these criteria, which are most important?

What potential 40R location best meets the site selection criteria?



# Suggested site selection criteria

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In or near an appropriate mixed-use neighborhood.

Access to public transportation.

On public water and sewer.

Sufficient size.

- Are there opportunities for garage, large-lot parking or other creative solutions to parking nearby?
- Can lots be aggregated because there is a sufficiently large increase in land value that property owners may consider joining forces or selling to one another?
- Can a high enough density be achieved to make affordable housing development feasible – economies of scale?

Likelihood of actually realizing new development in the short-term.

Located in a zone where apartments are allowed by Special Permit: BG, BN, BVC, BL.

# Other site selection criteria

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Site/district includes additional land suitable or has build-out capacity for adding future units.

Site/district includes additional land suitable for recreation/gardens.

Patient seller(s).

On a heavily trafficked street where higher density might be perceived as less threatening to existing small-scale housing and commercial uses.

Far enough away from existing neighborhoods that higher density might be perceived as less threatening to existing small-scale housing and commercial uses.

Relatively large or dense development could be balanced with a conservation easement or a community amenity that could help build support.

Others?

# Potential locations

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Downtown

North Amherst

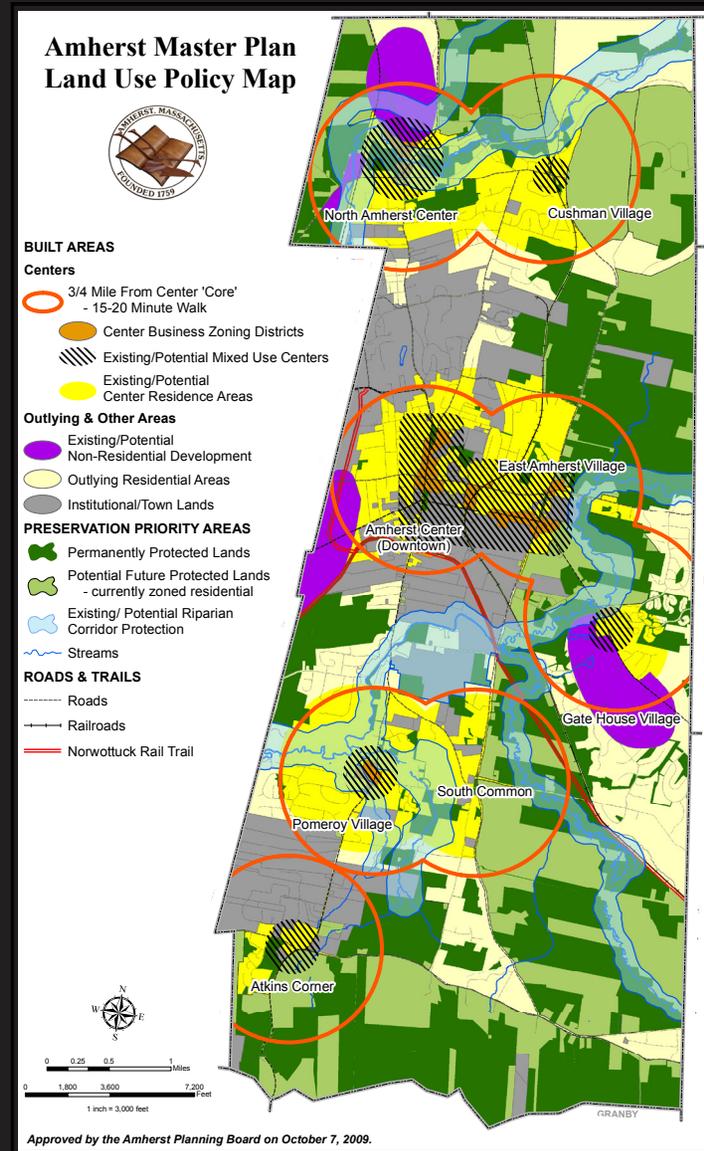
Pomeroy Village

# Design Planning Methodology

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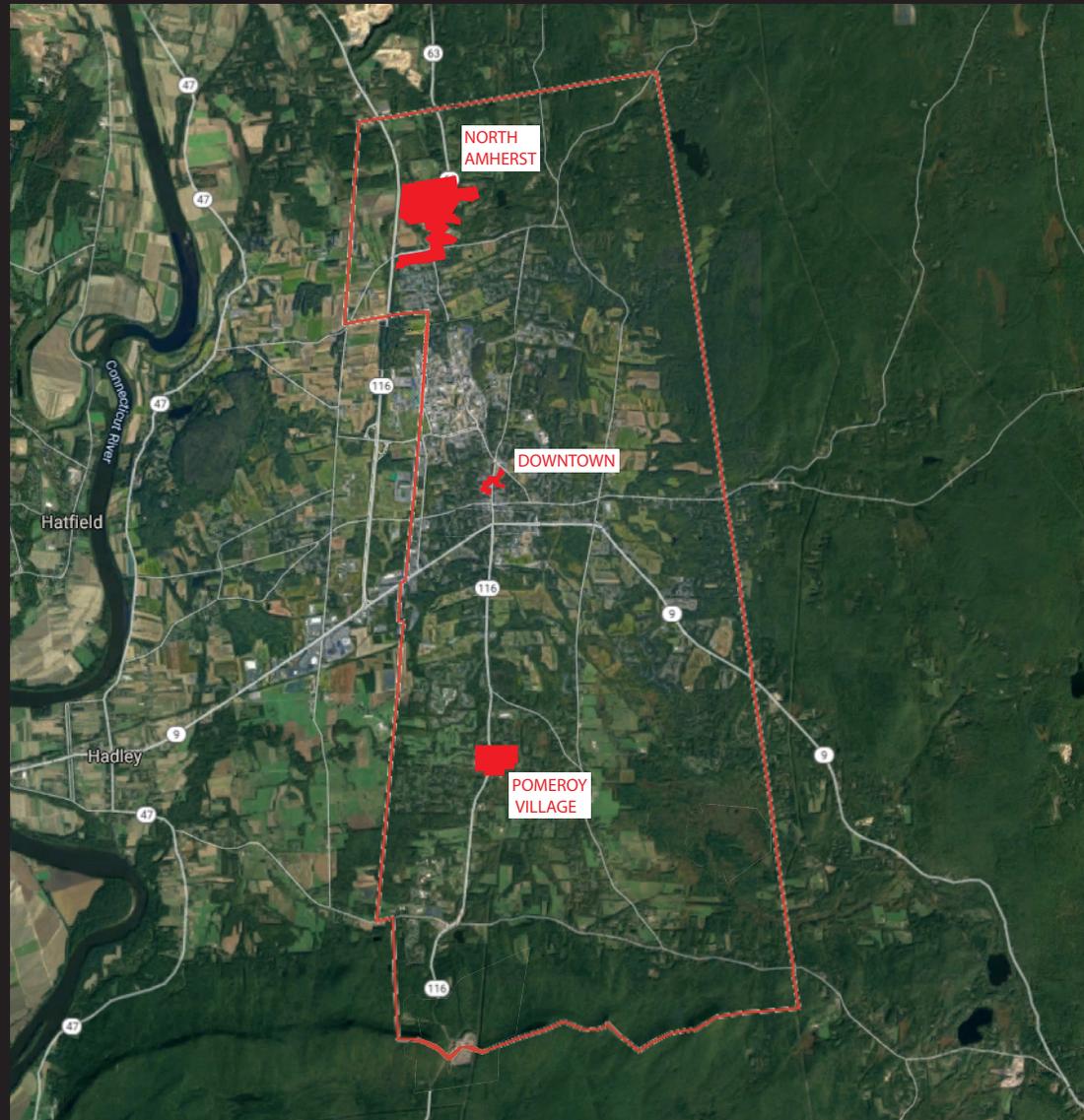
1. Work with the community to identify areas that can support additional development.
2. Document the character of existing neighborhoods and their defining features.
3. Identify parcels where development should be encouraged to help meet housing needs.
4. Evaluate potential heights, setbacks, and massing in relation to neighborhood context.
5. Develop form-based code standards that define architectural scale and material features.
6. Model proposed build-out scenarios for review and comment.
7. Finalize outline of 40R district to include parcels whose development furthers Amherst goals.
8. Finalize Design Guidelines that insure that development conforms with community expectations.

# 2009 AMHERST LAND USE MAP



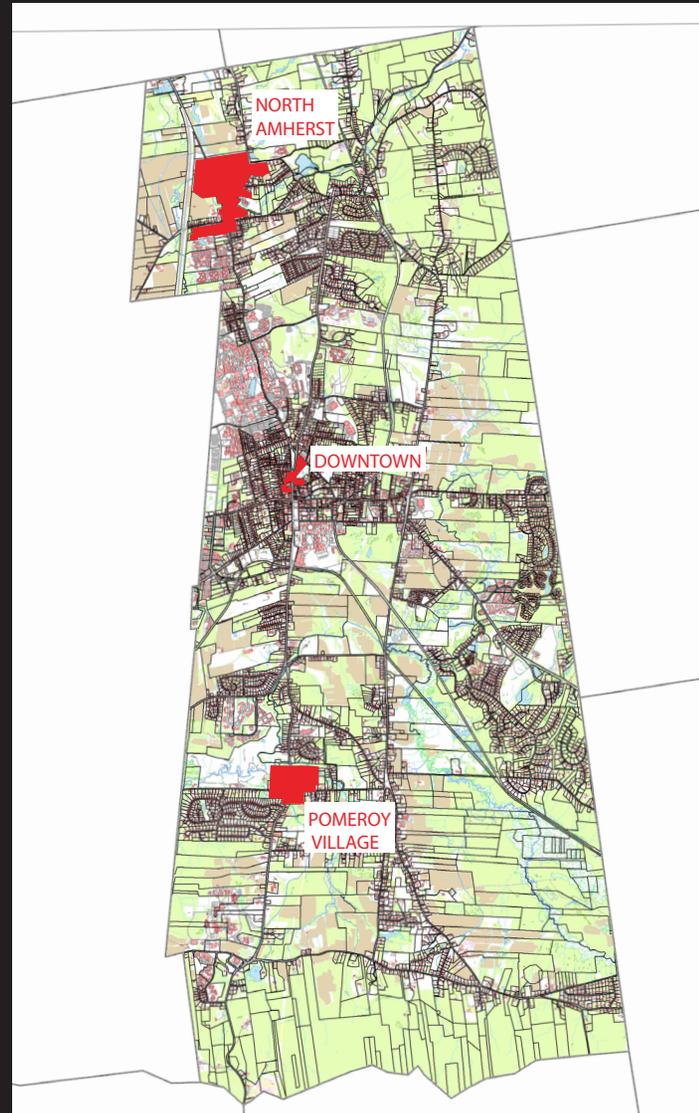
THE TOWN HAS PRIORITIZED REDEVELOPMENT AT AMHERST'S VILLAGE CENTERS AS ARTICULATED IN THE OCT. 7, 2009 LAND USE POLICY MAP, WHICH WAS BASED ON A 1973 PLAN TO PROTECT OPEN SPACE.

# 40R DEVELOPMENT SITES



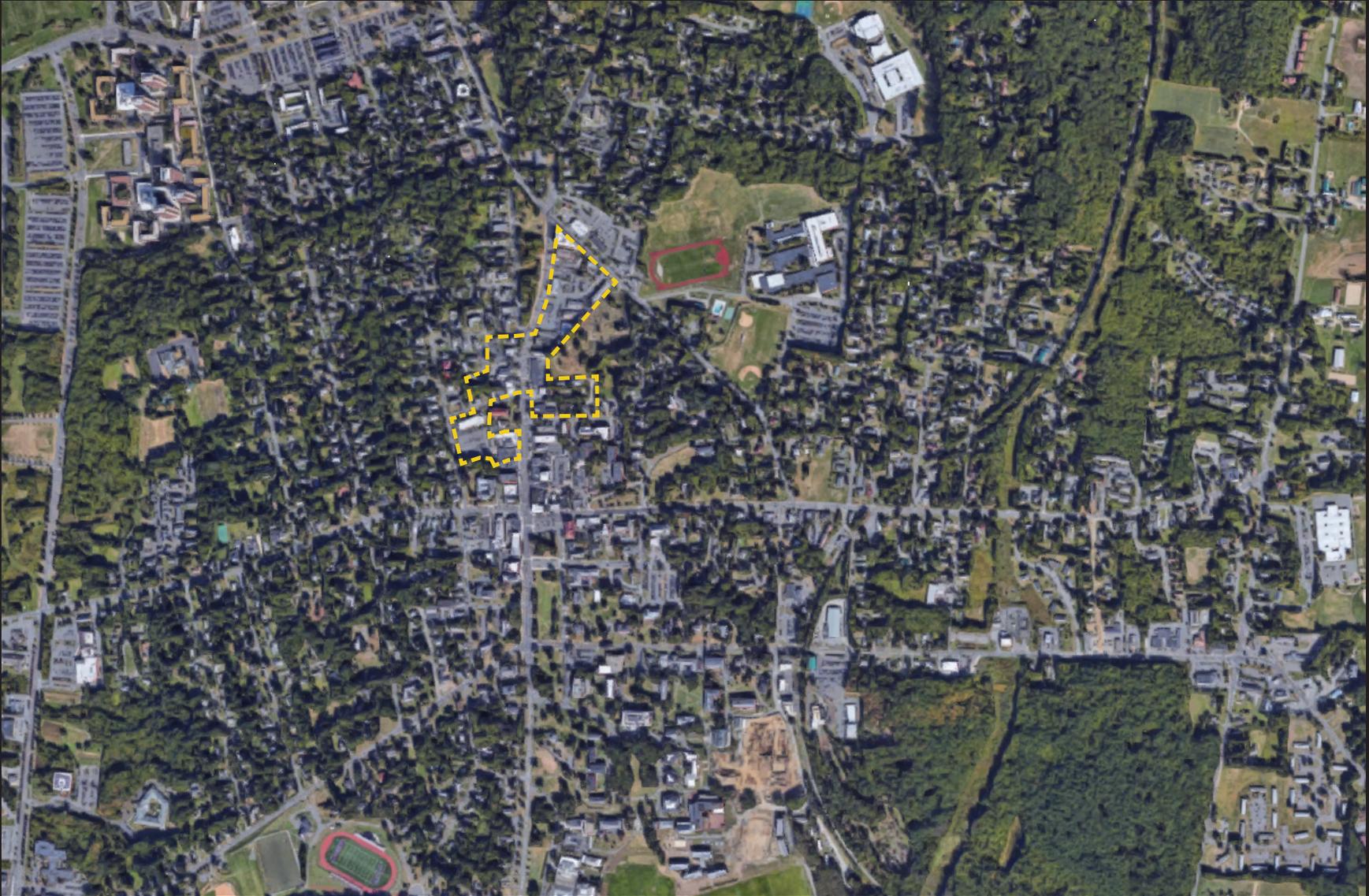
RECENT DISCUSSIONS HAVE CONFIRMED THE 2009 POLICY – REDEVELOPMENT IN VILLAGE CENTERS CHANNELS THE NEED FOR HOUSING INTO ALREADY DEVELOPED AREAS, PRESERVING OPEN SPACE.

# 40R DEVELOPMENT SITES



THE 40R AREAS IDENTIFIED TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL WHERE COMMERCIAL VITALITY, OPEN SPACE PROTECTION AND INCREASED HOUSING CAN WORK TOGETHER.

# DOWNTOWN



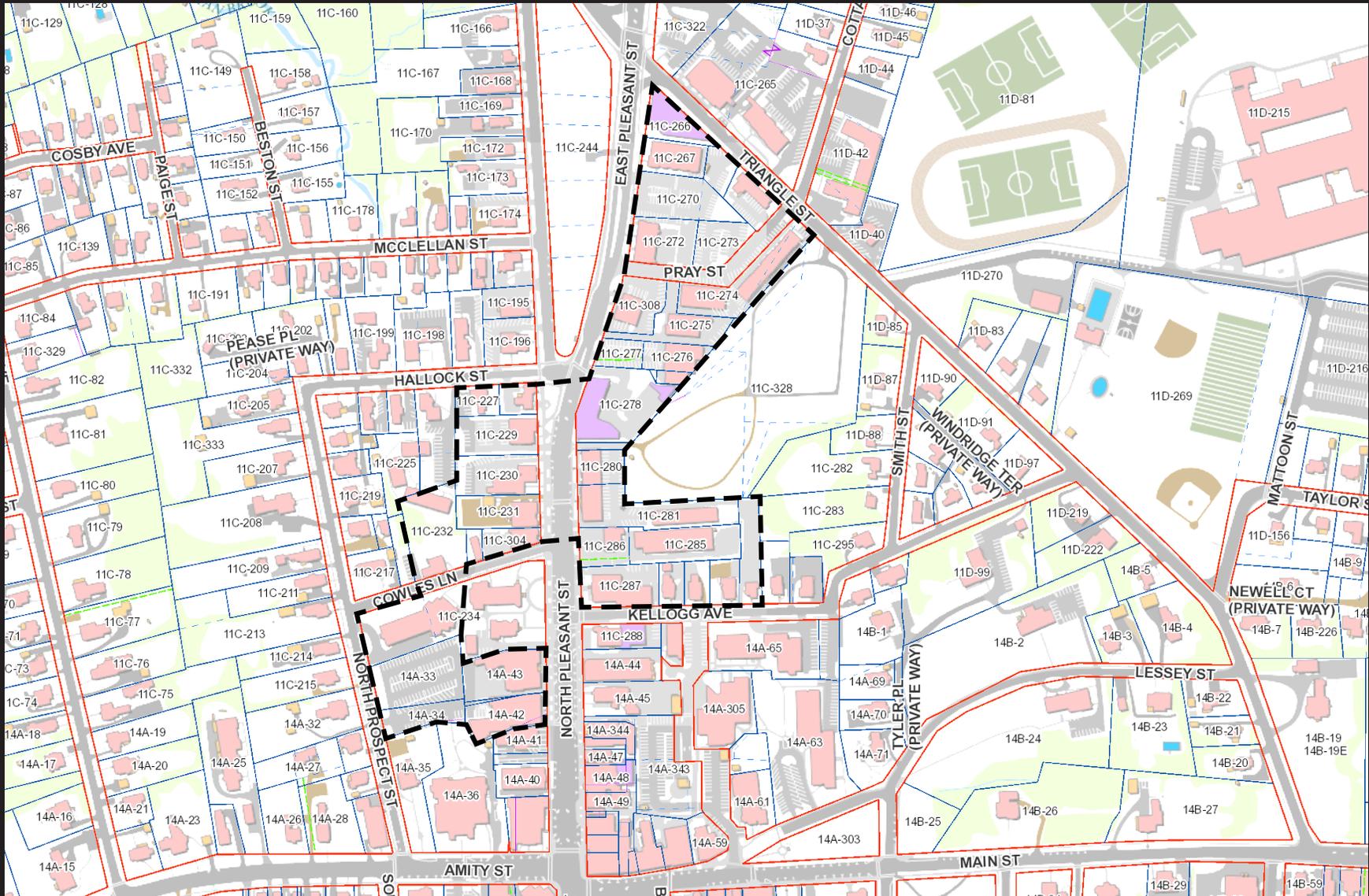
**A DOWNTOWN 40R WOULD PUT MORE HOUSING RIGHT NEAR STORES AND RESTAURANTS AND CLOSE TO UMASS AND AMHERST COLLEGE. RESIDENTS COULD WALK EVERYWHERE.**

# DOWNTOWN



**THERE ARE A SERIES OF 4 AND 5 STORY BUILDINGS DOWNTOWN, SOME 100 YEARS OLD, OTHERS NEWER. A 40R WOULD ALLOW MORE CONSTRUCTION THIS SCALE, AND WOULD INCLUDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**

# DOWNTOWN



**A DOWNTOWN 40R WOULD PROTECT SMALL SCALE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS, BUT WOULD INCLUDE SITES WITH LOTS OF ASPHALT AND 1 STORY BUILDINGS THAT COULD BE BETTER UTILIZED.**

# DOWNTOWN



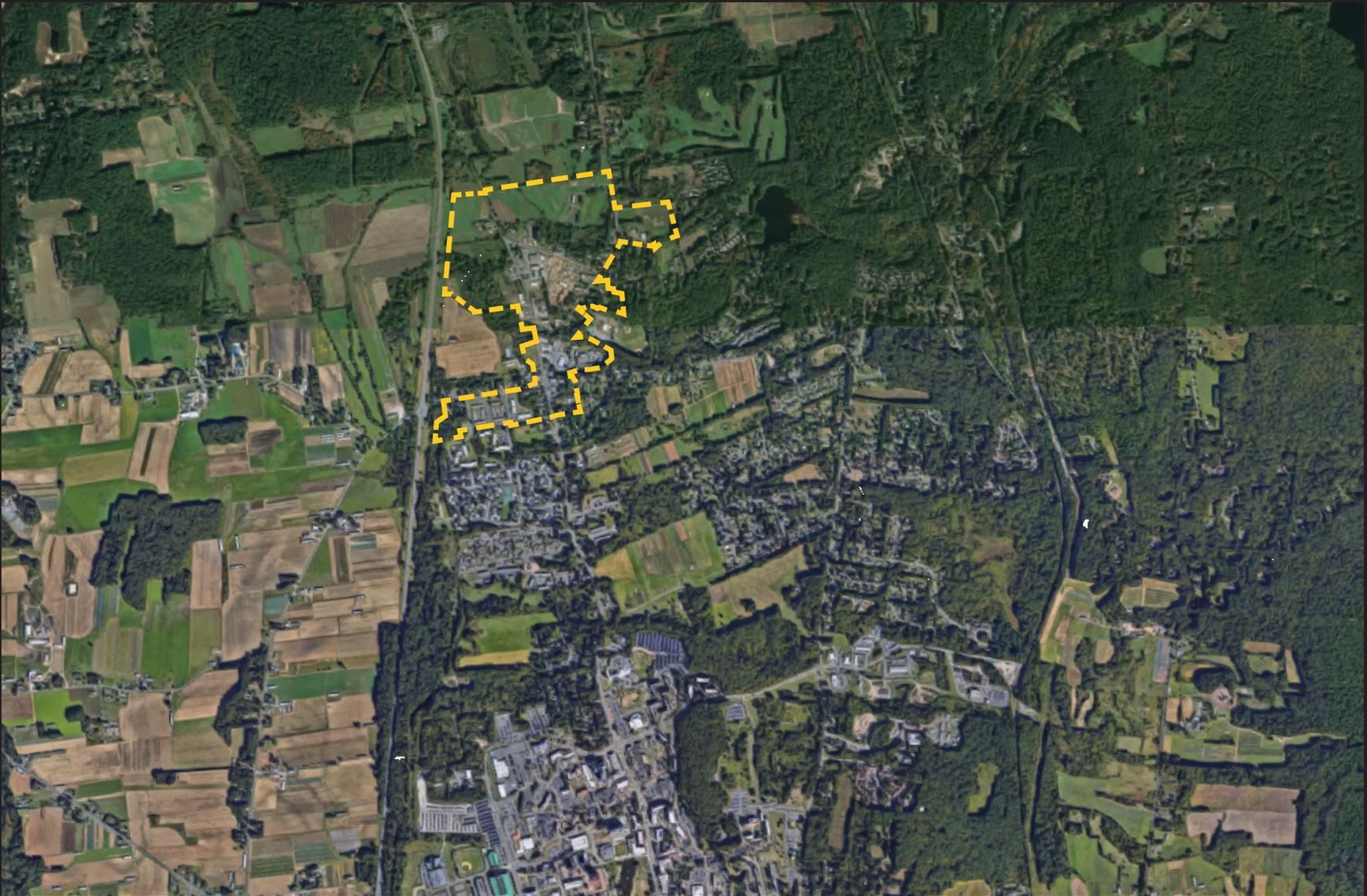
**THE CENTER OF DOWNTOWN IS DEFINED BY 4 STORY BUILDINGS WITH RETAIL ON THE GROUND FLOOR. THERE ARE ALSO 1, 2 AND STORY BUILDINGS OF VARIOUS AGES LINING THE STREET.**

# DOWNTOWN



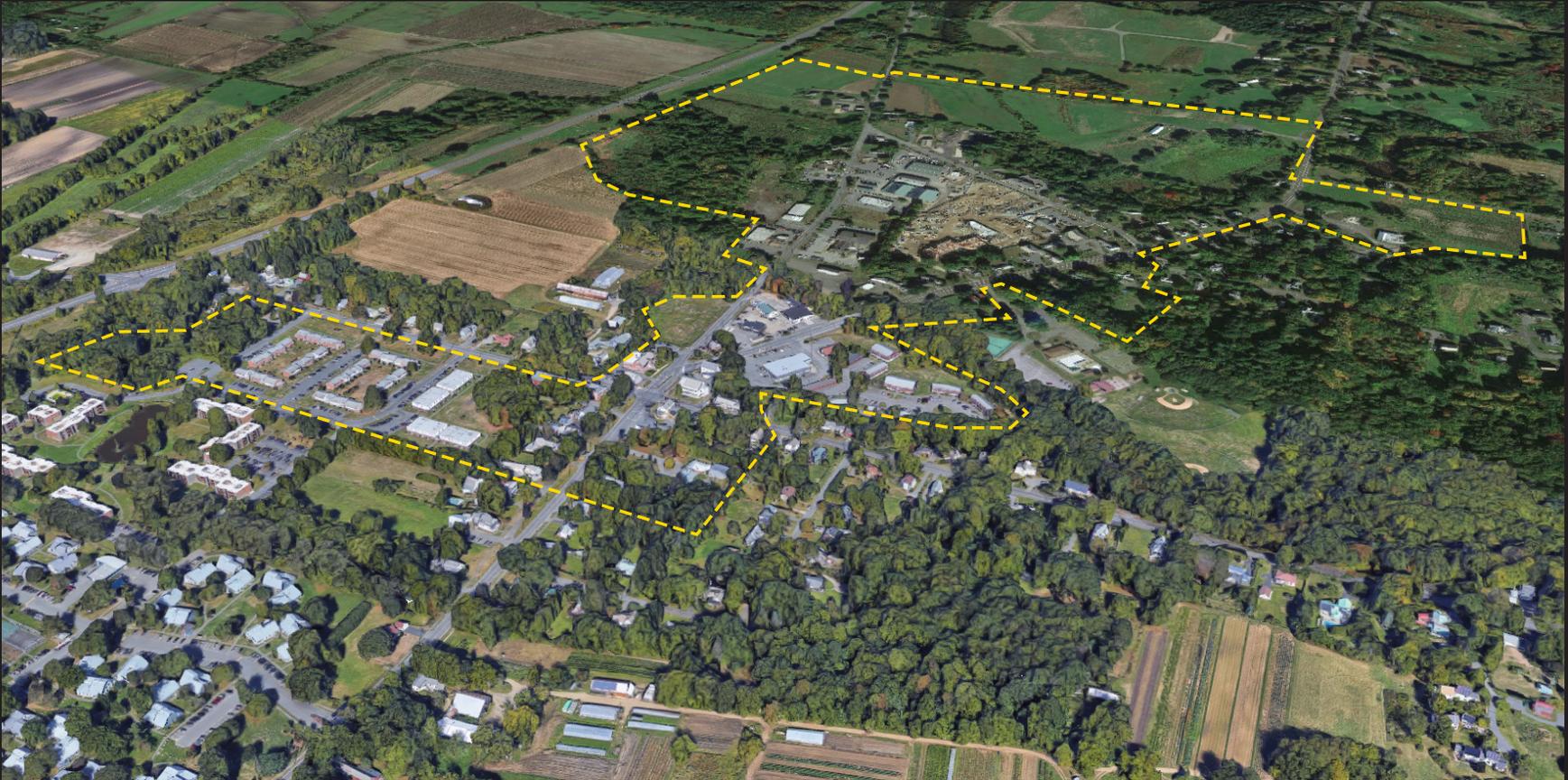
**SOME OF THE OUTLINED DOWNTOWN 40R IS ASPHALT AND BUILDINGS THAT DON'T CONTRIBUTE TO AMHERST'S CHARACTER. DESIGN GUIDELINES CAN INSURE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT DOES,**

# NORTH AMHERST



**A NORTH AMHERST 40R WOULD REINFORCE THE DEVELOPMENT THAT IS ALREADY TAKING PLACE, AND WOULD BE CLOSE TO UMASS. SIGNIFICANT AREAS ARE WETLANDS AND CAN'T BE DEVELOPED.**

# NORTH AMHERST



**THE OUTLINED AREAS ARE ADJACENT TO WELL-TRAVELLED ROADS  
AND HAVE MUNICIPAL UTILITIES ALREADY IN PLACE.**



# NORTH AMHERST



**NORTH AMHERST STREETS AND ROADS ARE LINED BY USES THAT COULD BE MORE BENEFICIAL TO THEIR OWNERS AND THE COMMUNITY. THEY COULD BE DESIGNED TO BE MORE PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY.**

# NORTH AMHERST



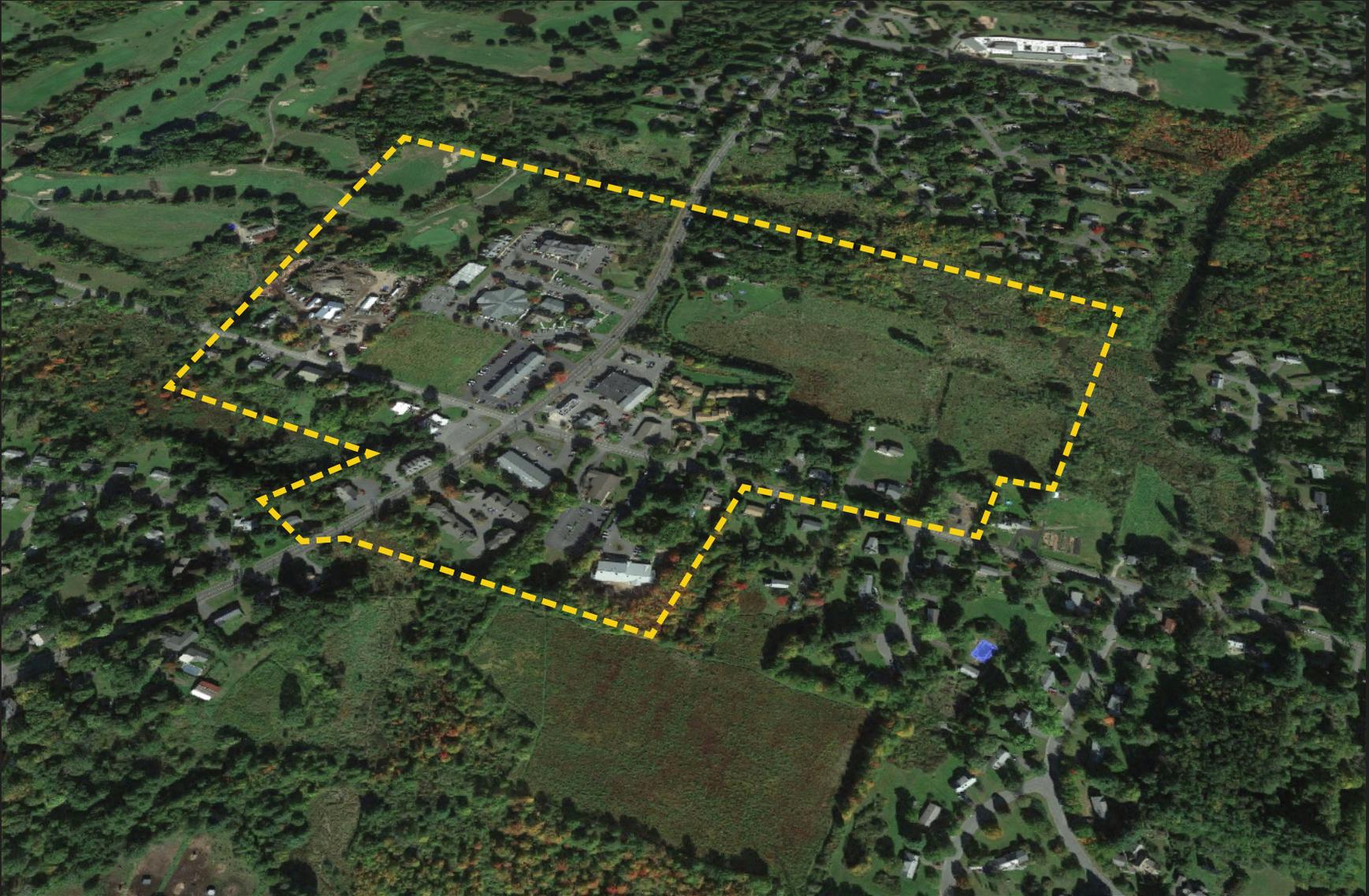
**SOME UNDEVELOPED AREAS ARE SUBSTANTIAL IN SIZE AND COULD HELP RESOLVE AMHERST'S ON-GOING STRUGGLE TO MAKE HOUSING AFFORDABLE - WHILE RESPECTING WETLANDS.**

# POMEROY VILLAGE



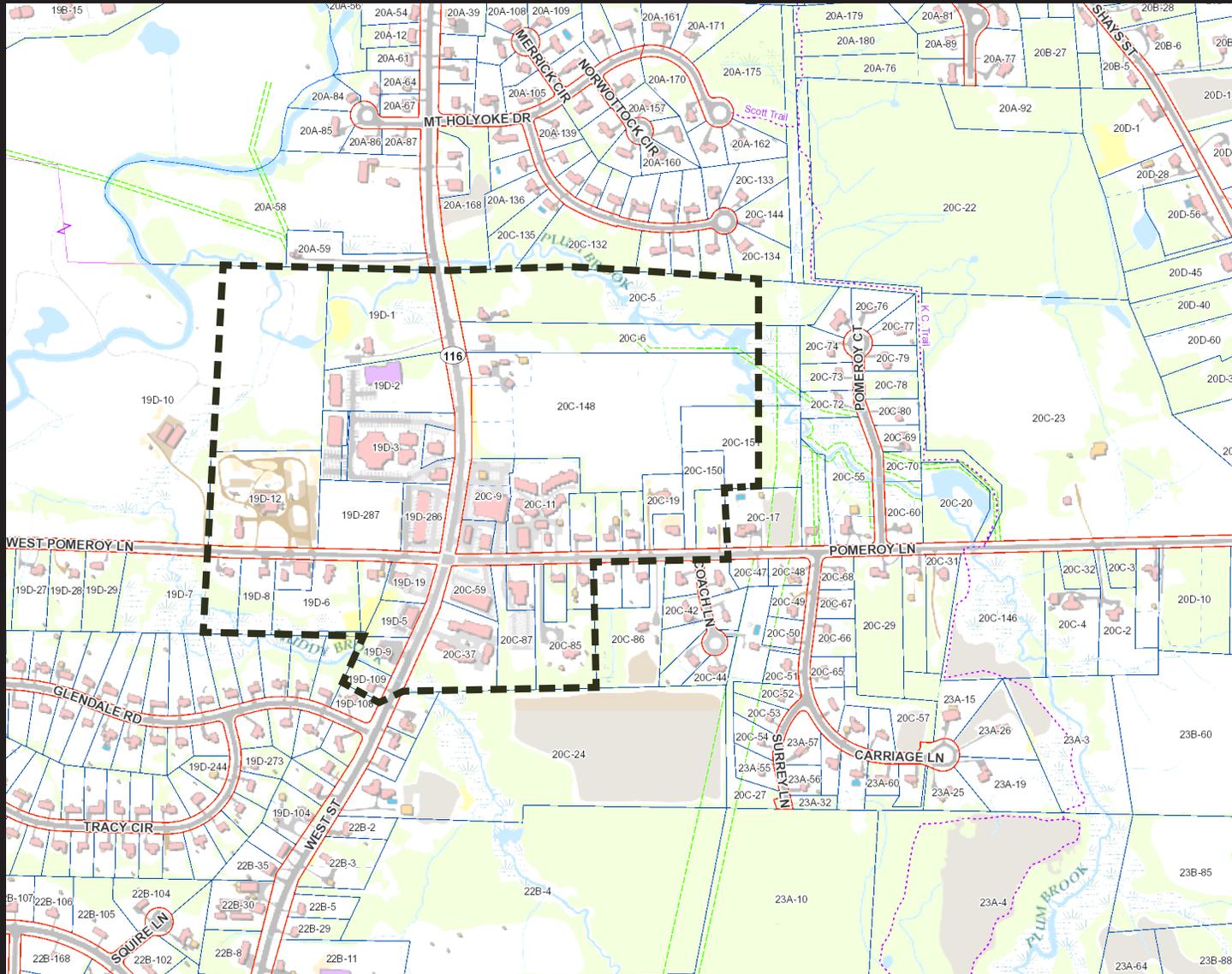
**POMEROY VILLAGE IS ABOUT 2 ½ MILES FROM AMHERST CENTER  
AND A MILE FROM HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE. IT IS AT AN IMPORTANT CROSSROADS.**

# POMEROY VILLAGE



**THE OUTLINED AREA INCLUDES STRIP RETAIL, OFFICE, AND OPEN SPACE, AND A LIMITED AMOUNT OF RESIDENTIAL. MORE HOUSING WOULD REINFORCE THE VILLAGE CHARACTER.**

# POMEROY VILLAGE



**CONSTRUCTION CONCENTRATED ON PARCELS CLOSE TO POMEROY VILLAGE WOULD REDUCE DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE ON OPEN SPACES THAT SHOULD BE PRESERVED.**

# POMEROY VILLAGE



**MANY OF THE PARCELS ARE UNDER-UTILIZED;  
HOUSING COULD BE ADDED ABOVE RETAIL OR ADJACENT TO OFFICE DEVELOPMENT.**

# POMEROY VILLAGE



**MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT, OR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ON LARGER PARCELS, WOULD REINFORCE THE VITALITY OF THE AREA WHILE PROTECTING OPEN SPACE.**

# 2013 HOUSING STUDY - DOWNTOWN



**IN 2013 WE PREPARED A HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN RECOMMENDING WAYS TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN AMHERST. WE DID CASE STUDIES FOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT.**

# 2013 HOUSING STUDY - POMEROY VILLAGE



**WE DID CASE STUDIES FOR OTHER VILLAGE CENTERS IN AMHERST, INCLUDING POMEROY VILLAGE. THE CURRENT STUDY BUILDS OFF THIS WORK AND THE SUPPORT WE RECEIVED IN THE COMMUNITY.**

# DESIGN GUIDELINES

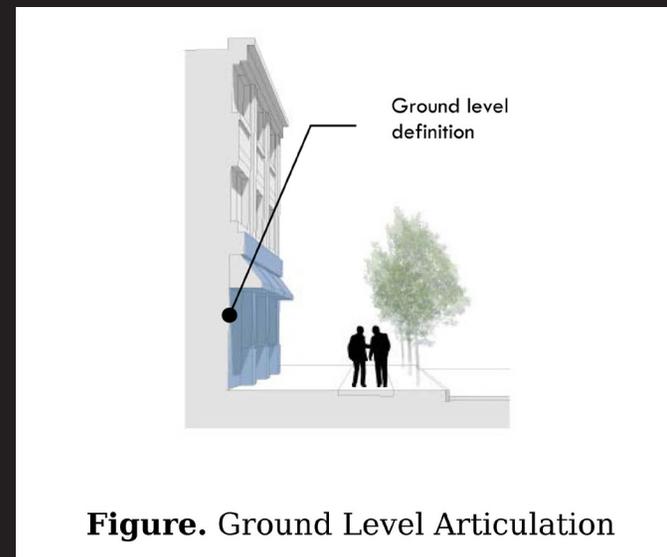
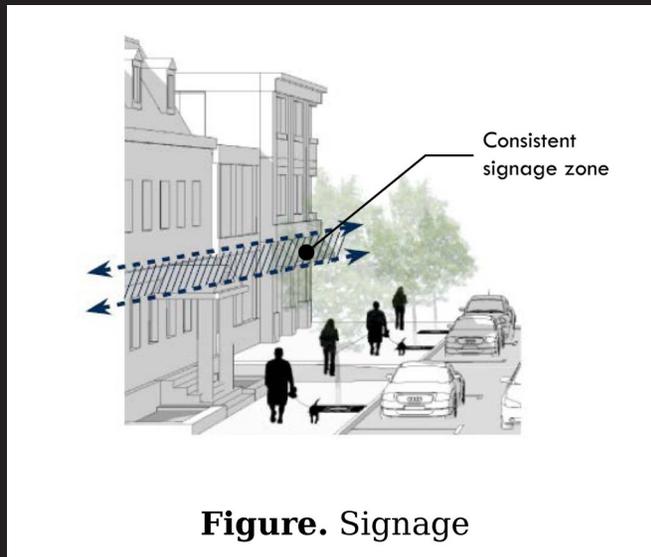
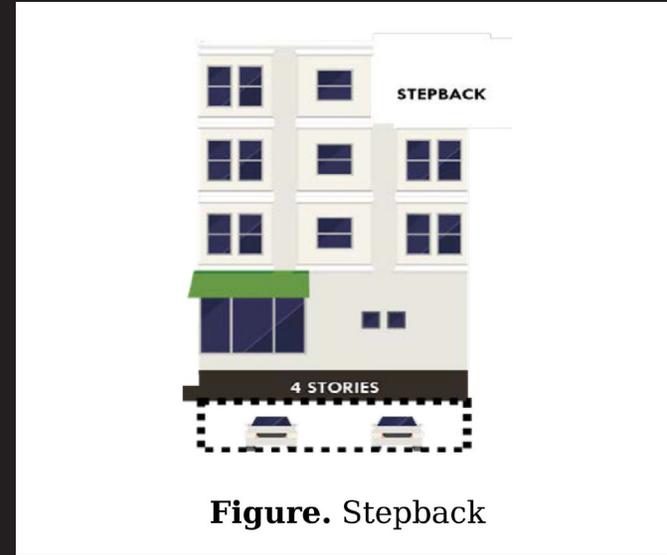
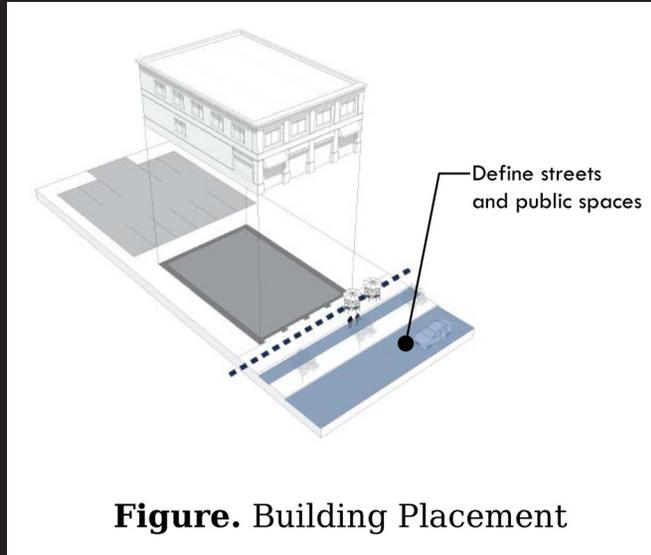
ACCEPTABLE FACADE MATERIALS: BRICK/ARCHITECTURAL STONE, TERRA COTTA, THRU-COLOR FIBER CEMENT

UNACCEPTABLE FACADE MATERIALS: PAINTED RESIDENTIAL QUALITY FIBER CEMENT, VINYL



**THE FINAL 40R ZONING BYLAW WILL INCLUDE DESIGN GUIDELINES THAT THE TOWN WILL ENFORCE. DRAWINGS AND TEXT WILL SET CLEAR REQUIREMENTS FOR WHAT CAN AND CAN'T BE BUILT.**

# DESIGN GUIDELINES



THE DESIGN GUIDELINES WILL ESTABLISH BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS TO THE STREET, HEIGHT, DESIGN CHARACTER, AND OTHER FEATURES TUNED TO THE PARTICULAR NEIGHBORHOOD.