

A REVITALIZATION  
PLAN FOR  
HIGHLAND  
SPRINGS

VIRGINIA

PREPARED FOR THE COUNTY OF HENRICO

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a professional corporation

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# INTRODUCTION

Highland Springs, Virginia has been identified as a revitalization area through a study conducted by the Henrico Community Development Block Grant Program. The study identified the area as having a high concentration of vacant and underutilized properties, a high percentage of low-income households, and a high percentage of the population living in substandard housing. The study also identified the area as having a high percentage of the population living in substandard housing.

THIS REVITALIZATION PLAN FOR HIGHLAND SPRINGS VIRGINIA  
WAS FUNDED THROUGH THE HENRICO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

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## INTRODUCTION:

Highland Springs is a suburban community of distinctive character, with a strong sense of neighborhood identity and of community pride. Originally it was a distant suburb and summer retreat. Today it is a conveniently located inner suburb at the center of the rapidly expanding eastern part of the metropolitan area.

Because of Highland Springs character as a small unincorporated town with a mixture of early Victorian houses and more recent cottages it offers an opportunity for a richer lifestyle than can be encountered in suburban subdivisions. The problems confronting Highland Springs are typical of aging suburbs

While the residential areas are in good condition the commercial strip along Nine Mile Road that bisects the community shows signs of deterioration. While suburban housing has been little changed over the last century, the needs of commercial and retail uses have dramatically changed.

The small "Mom and Pop" shops of the turn of the century were replaced with larger automobile oriented businesses in the 1950s and 60s. These larger establishments are now being replaced by huge superstores. These new discount operations can not be accommodated in older developments such as Highland Springs.

We see the basic problem of Highland Springs as this: Can Highland Springs preserve and enhance its distinctive character and remain a viable residential community into the next century? The ideal plan will accommodate and encourage the preservation of the existing small town feeling and revitalize the commercial strip.

Clearly Nine Mile Road in Highland Springs will not return to its character in the 1950s when it was an important retail center. This does not mean



that the useful life of the area is over. Highland Springs is not dying; it's changing. It is evolving into a center for secondary retail and commercial uses.

There are numerous businesses that can not be accommodated in large shopping centers, malls and warehouse stores. The Richmond metropolitan area is filled with old commercial districts that have come back from serious decline. While some of these were architecturally and historically distinguished, a number were similar in architectural character to Highland Springs. The question is whether Highland Springs can be made attractive for new businesses.

That this study has been commissioned indicates that the County of Henrico recognizes the problems which confront communities of this type, but also recognizes the rewards that are possible if older communities can retain their existing character and grow. Highland Springs can become one of the most desirable areas in the metropolitan area. It combines a good location with a small town feel.

# A PLAN FOR HIGHLAND SPRINGS.

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA

## ANALYSIS

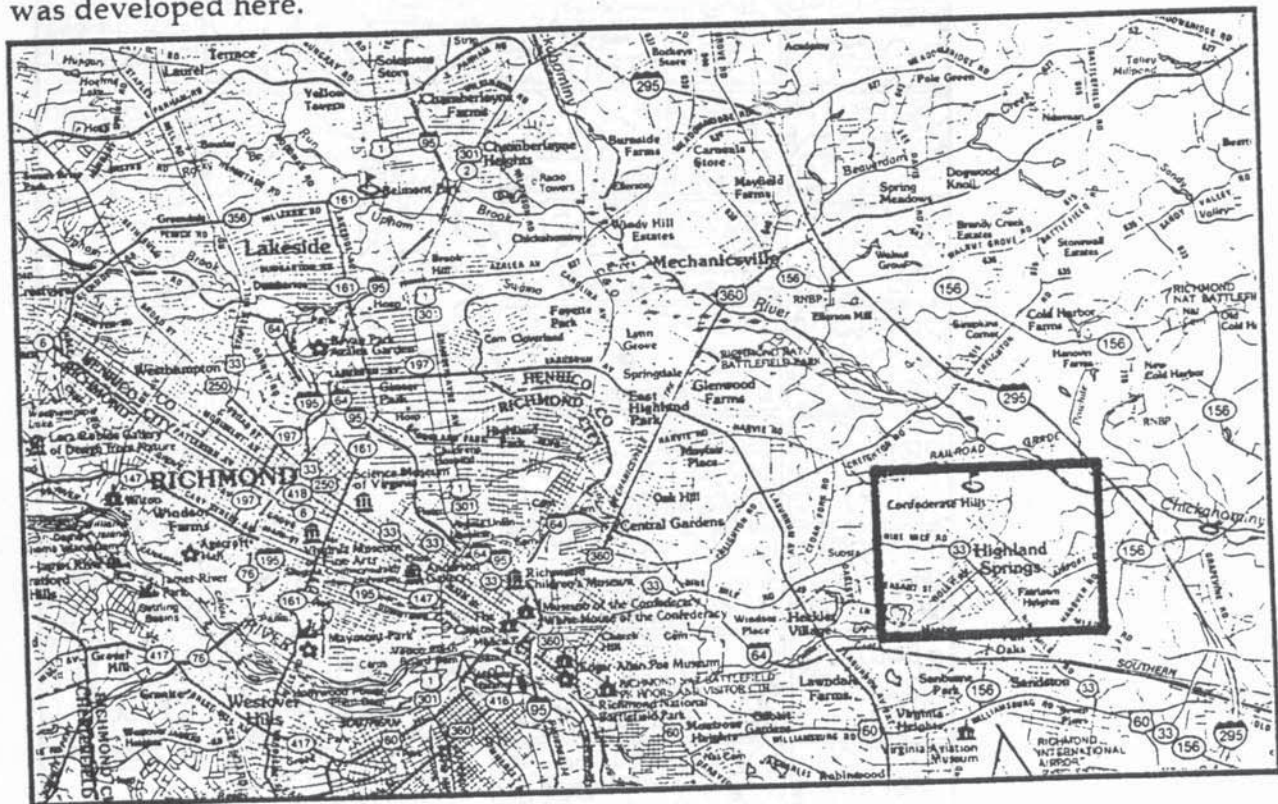




# HIGHLAND SPRINGS ANALYSIS

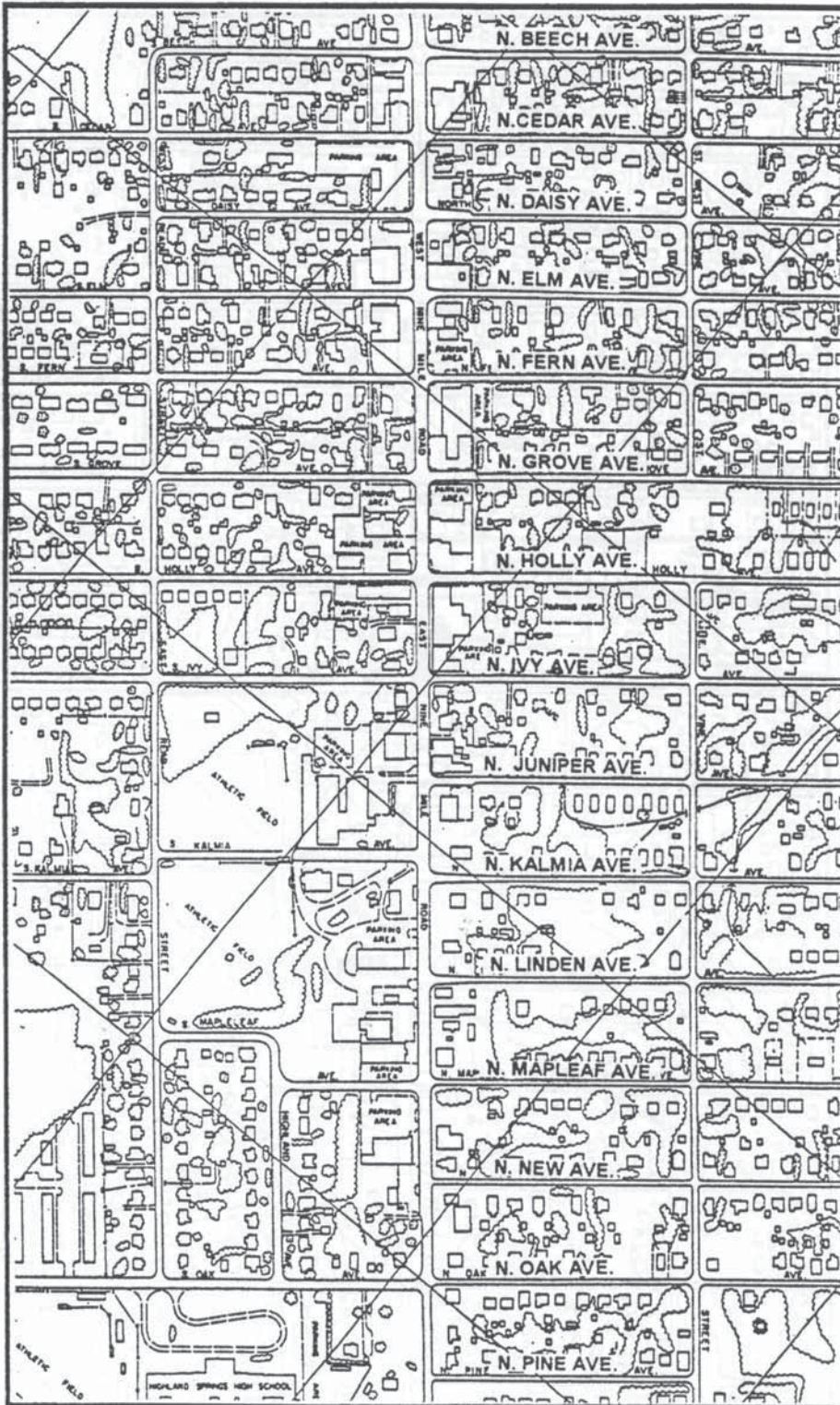
## LOCATION:

For most of its history, Highland Springs was on the easternmost edge of the Richmond Metropolitan area. It is located on the high ridge that separates the Chickahominy River and Swamp and Gillies Creek, which drains into the James River. This high location was felt to be particularly healthful, and is one of the reasons that the community was developed here.



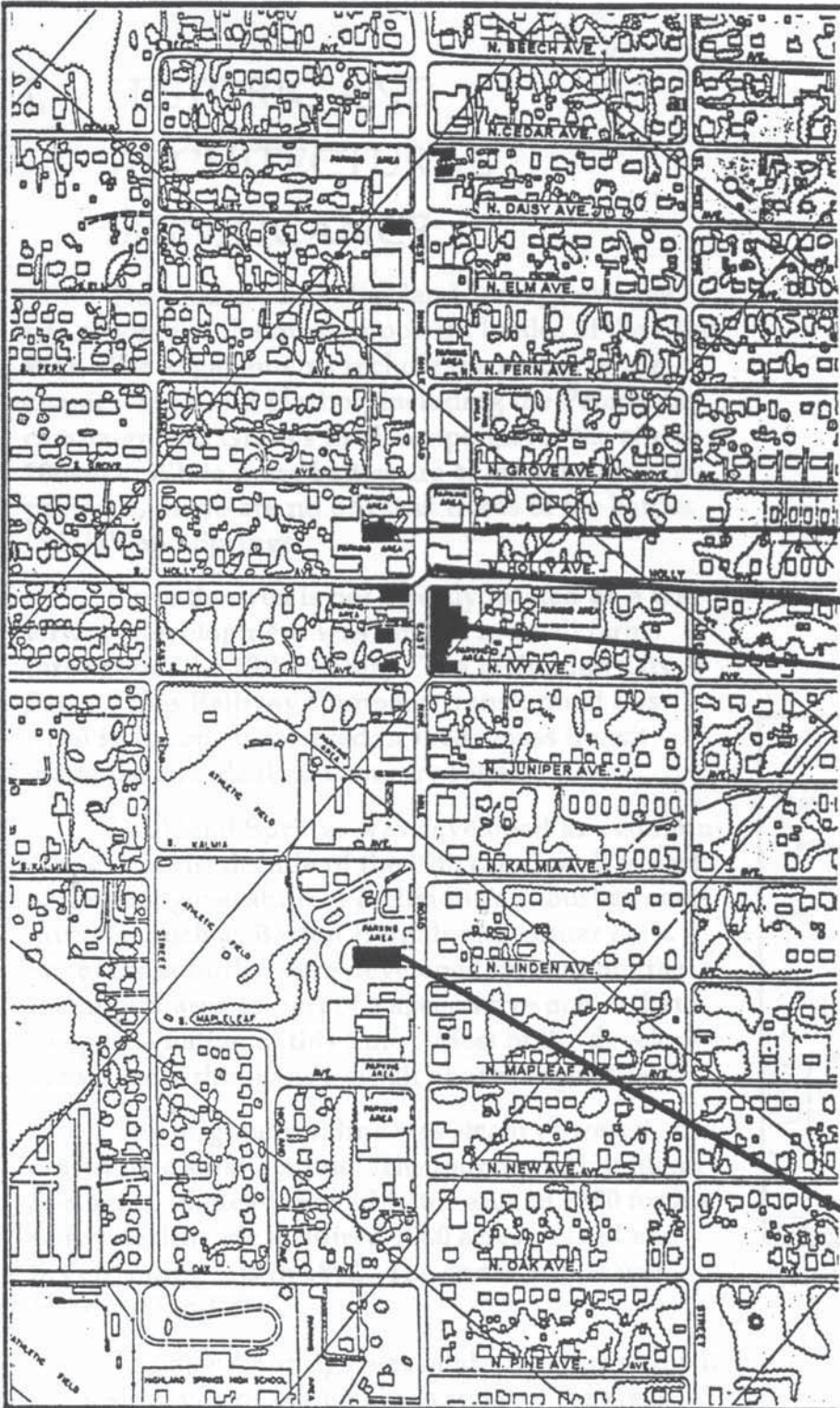
Location map of Highland Springs





MAP OF THE HIGHLAND SPRINGS STUDY AREA





- REED HOUSE
- MASONIC HALL
- COMMERCIAL BLOCK
- HENRICO THEATER

Historical and Architecturally significant structures in Highland Springs



## I. HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The area around Highland Springs was the site of some of the most important battles of the Civil War. The engagements include the battles of Mechanicsville, Cold Harbor, including the Peninsular campaign and Grant's final campaign for the city in 1864-65. While these battles are of great historic importance, there are no physical traces of the battles in Highland Springs.

Since the area is not directly located on a waterway, development was limited to small farms throughout the 19th century. The Richmond City & Seven Pines Railway Company transformed this rural isolation. Chartered in 1888, mass transit made the site ideal as a country retreat.

Highland Springs was developed as a community in the last decade of the 19th century. It is part of the first generation of Richmond's suburban communities such as Barton Heights and Ginter Park. Street car suburbs were developed throughout the Richmond area as part of a speculative mania that swept the nation at this time. Most of the developments grew slowly as a result of over expansion.

The original rail line was steam powered, operated by a small engine. The founder of Highland Springs, E.S. Read moved to the area in 1890 for his wife's health. He acquired 1000 acres of land and began selling lots in 1892. The streetcar line was electrified in 1893.

Highland Springs was modestly successful; it grew slowly, not as quickly as some of the areas nearer the city, but faring better than communities of the adjacent Richmond & Rappahannock River Railway line. That railroad was abandoned and dismantled.



The Read House

The development pattern of the neighborhood relates to the street car lines. The Nine Mile Road frontage was undesirable as a residential site due to the noise and confusion generated by the cars. The plan was established before the electrification of the line.

The blocks are long and narrow to provide the maximum number of residential sites not facing the rails. Similar patterns of blocks can be seen in Ginter Park along the rail line to Ashland. Street car suburbs play a very important role in the history of urbanization in the United States.

The character of Nine Mile Road was established at this time, commercial rather than residential. The combination of high traffic and the noise of the street cars encouraged retail and commercial growth. The densest development in the area is at the location of the former street car stop at Holly Street and Nine Mile Road.

Interesting individual buildings of this period dot the Highland Springs neighborhood. The most important early buildings include the home of E. S. Read, the founder of the community, and a number of wood frame Victorian style houses. A portion of an early school also survives.

These do not establish a cohesive sense of architectural or historical character. These are important in some areas, but the overall existing character of the area is not dominated by these early structures. The sense of community felt by the residents of Highland Springs is related to the people rather than due to architectural cohesiveness.

During World War I there was a spurt of growth. Bungalow type houses were erected then. A number of these were made of an unusual stone textured concrete block. Some of these buildings survive. There was steady growth of individual houses throughout the 1920s.



The Henrico Theater



Later architecture generally is simple and direct; good examples of small houses, unexceptional in character. There is one major exception to this pattern of simple architecture. The Henrico Theater is one of the finest buildings of its type in the region. Its handsome Art Deco forms and modernist character are unique in the community.

The area continued to grow following World War II. Modern ranch houses filled in the spaces between the large turn of the century houses and the 1920 era bungalows. The architecture of the 1950s is in the minimal, striped down style of the period. While it is certainly typical of the time, it is not of much interest. Much of it was automobile related from the period before the completion of I-64 when Nine Mile Road was a major route to the Tidewater area.

The construction of I-64, I-95 and I-295 combined with the continued expansion of the county to the east have made Highland Springs a more central area. It is now viewed as one of the inner suburbs. The physical limitations of the site and the fully developed nature of the district mean that extensive new residential development is not possible.

## II. LAND USE:

### COMMERCIAL

The commercial area of Highland Springs consists of an early 20th century, streetcar-automobile strip development located between regional shopping centers. Fairfield Commons is a recently renovated and upgraded regional mall. Large strip shopping centers with major supermarkets flank Highland Springs to the east and west. These facilities provide generous shopping opportunities for the neighborhood.

Within Highland Springs itself, one block between Holly and Ivy retains an early 20th century character, this was at the main street car stop in the area. This contains stores directly located on the



The Intersection of Nine Mile and Holly Avenue



sidewalks, a Masonic Hall and several early houses. This area has some historic interests as the core of the community.

The remainder of the district is a 1950-60s automobile strip development. This is a mixed development consisting of personal service facilities, professional offices, and some specialty shopping. Automobile related businesses, although plentiful, do not appear to be thriving concerns.

Many of the vacant properties are former service stations and used car lots. Most of the buildings date from before the construction of I-64. Major automobile facilities typically are located on more heavily traveled roads.

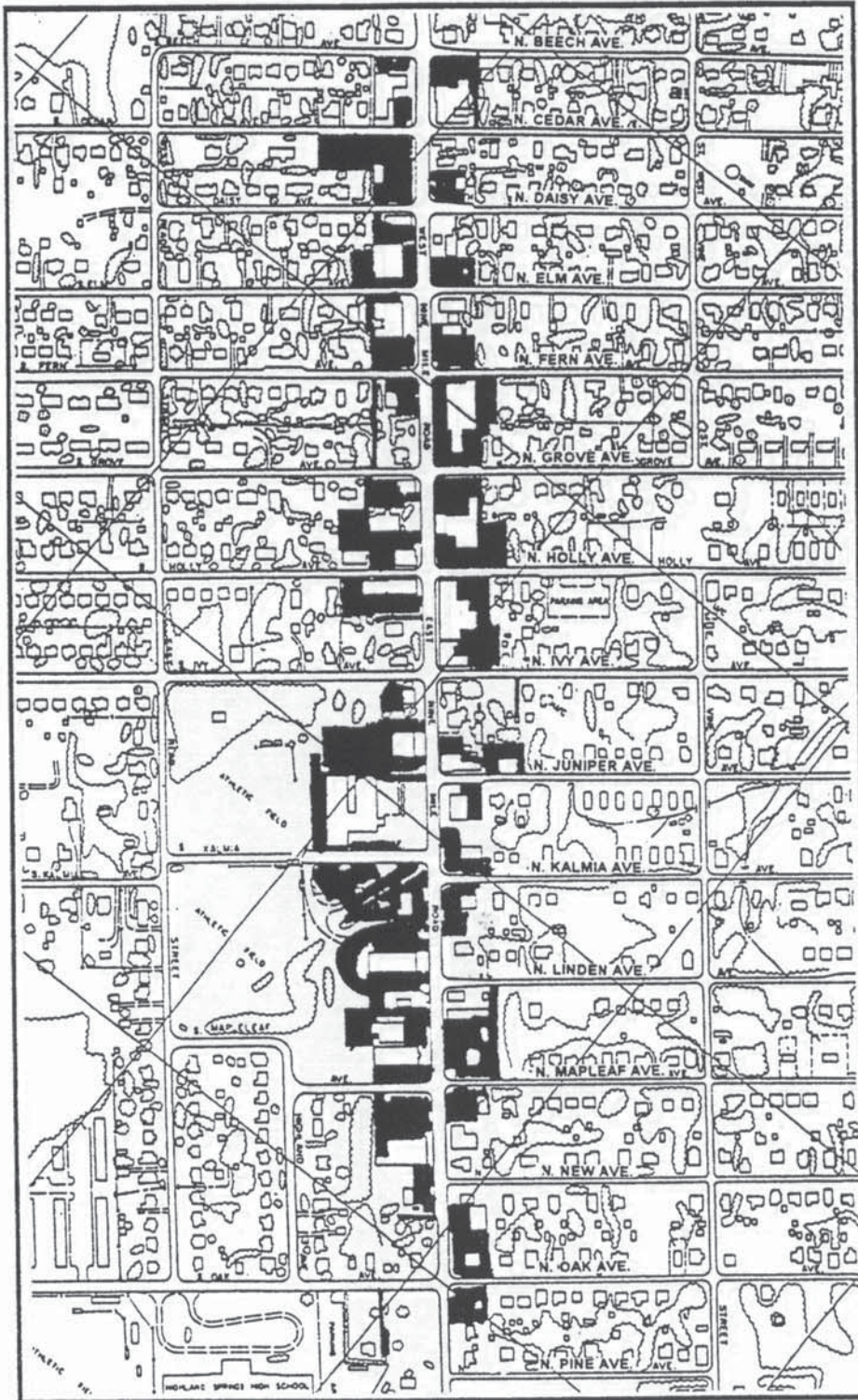
Most of the buildings are detached. Most are one story buildings except for residential properties. The majority of the structures are small to mid-sized; there are no large buildings.

There are a number of regional service related businesses such as home decorating and antique dealers. These facilities require large but not huge floor areas at modest cost. The larger buildings of the pre-shopping center era meet these needs well.

It is not possible to accommodate the modern preference for very large warehouse type stores in Highland Springs. There is not enough square footage available in the area for the modern super store without destroying the residential neighborhoods. Highland Springs is not close enough to an Interstate intersection to be a good site for such a facility.

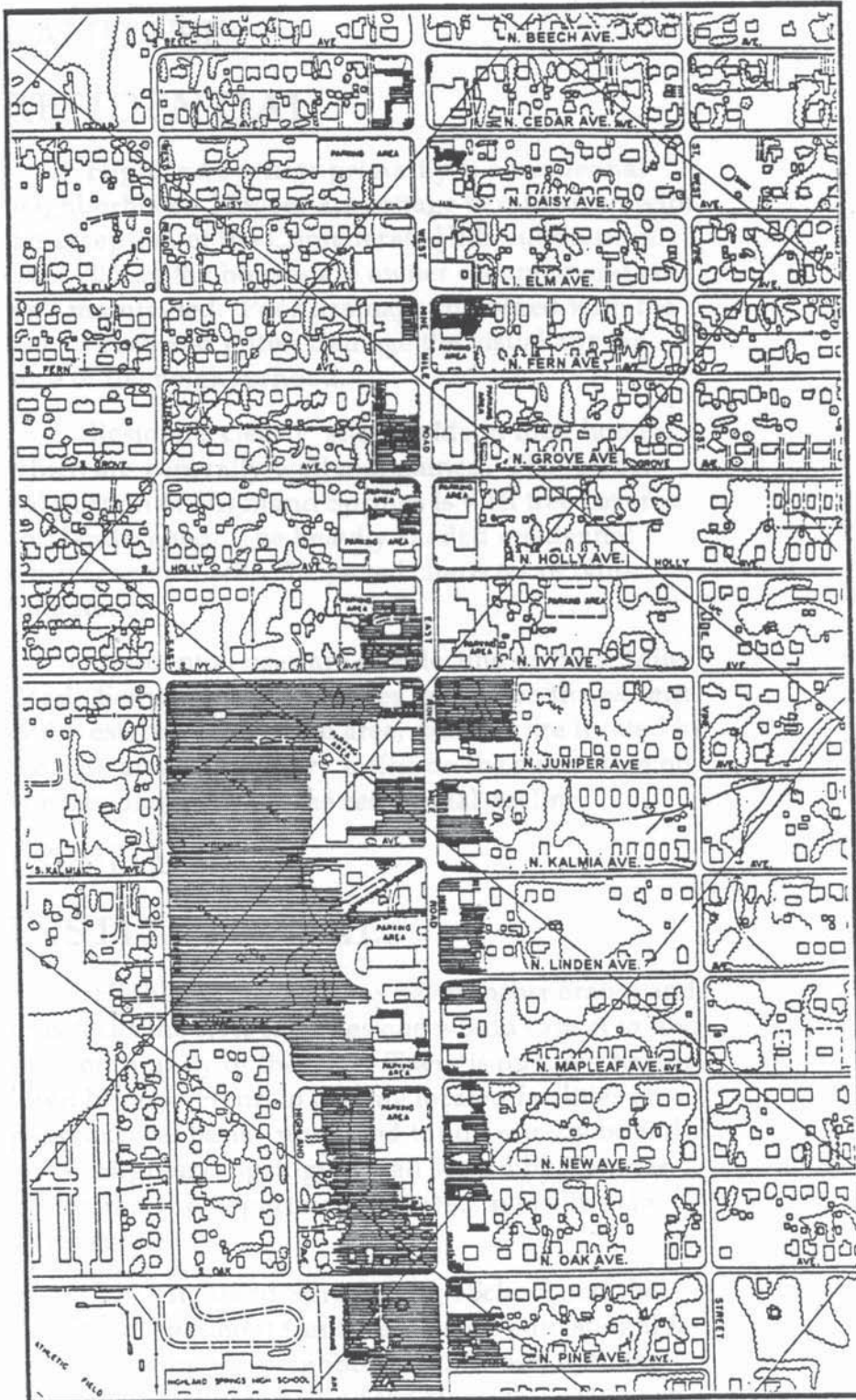
The income level of the area precludes the development of extensive specialty shops. While the area is prosperous, it is not so high as to have the disposable income needed for most high priced specialty boutiques such as those accommodated in Shockoe Slip or Cary Town.





Paved areas in Highland Springs





Green Spaces in Highland Springs



## LAND USE:

### RESIDENTIAL

Highland Springs primarily is a residential neighborhood. Houses are cottage to mid-sized with the exception of the Confederate Hills subdivision. Over 70% of the houses are owner occupied and are well maintained. Poor drainage combined with the lack of curb and gutter damage the visual appearance of the neighborhood.

Residents clearly show pride in their homes, which are generally well maintained. The residential portion of Highland Springs is well tree covered and landscaped. The heavily shaded residential streets contrast with the paved character of Nine Mile Road.

Residential uses are in a decline on Nine Mile Road. Some clusters of homes remain on the eastern and western edges of the area, but few are located in the core area. The heavy traffic on the street is an obvious explanation for the residential decline.

## LAND USE:

### INSTITUTIONAL

Highland Springs was never incorporated and thus lacks the civic facilities one would expect to find in a community of this size. There is no town hall or town library. Henrico County located facilities on a geographical basis, unrelated to community boundaries. Highland Springs is well served by libraries, police and fire departments located in facilities in other areas.

The Highland Springs High School and the Adult Development Center are major educational facilities serving the neighborhood. These, with the large playing fields behind the Henrico Theater represent civic facilities in the neighborhood. The High School and the playing fields are not visible from  
Nine Mile.



# ZONING

The commercial strip on Nine Mile Road is zoned for commercial use. The area has a mixture of B-1, B-2 and B-3 categories. The residential areas to the east of Highland Springs High School are consistently B-3. The commercial area to the west of the school is erratically mixed. There is no visible relationship between the size of the building and its zoning category.

Since this area is largely developed, the zoning is not particularly significant. The B-1 category is limiting in the number of uses permitted and the size of signs possible. Some desirable uses, such as outdoor eating areas are not permitted the B-1 areas and would be desirable. The irregularity in the zoning creates some oddities in sign regulations. Several small businesses are permitted large sign areas because they are zoned B-3, while some larger establishments in the B-1 zone are restricted.

## III. NEIGHBORHOOD PERCEPTION

As a part of this study we surveyed the residents and merchants of the area to find out their perception of the neighborhood and its strengths and weaknesses. This was done in both public meetings, personal interviews and on survey forms.

There is a great deal of neighborhood pride in the community, a strong sense of belonging to a community. They liked the home town feeling of Highland Springs.

They recognized that while Highland Springs maintained a small town feel, its position near an interstate and flanked by arterial highways made it convenient to all the facilities in the metropolitan area.

Several people mentioned that it was possible to walk to the commercial activities on Nine Mile Road. This was regarded as an asset, especially for

the young and elderly. Highland Springs is one of the few areas in Henrico's suburbs that had this potential.

The public also discussed what they saw as problems in the area. The heavy traffic and the speed of the traffic on Nine Mile damaged the essentially residential feel in the neighborhood. They specifically mentioned traffic congestion at the Post Office.

While much of the area is paved, they felt that some commercial and office facilities lacked convenient parking especially since no parking is permitted on parts of Nine Mile. Parking to the rear of the stores is poorly developed and unattractive.

While side walks exist most are in disrepair. Utility poles obstruct the sidewalk in many places. The poor maintenance of the sidewalks and the number of obstructions in the sidewalks were noted by many residents.

There was a general feeling that lighting is poor. The only street lighting in the area is standard highway cobra heads.

There was considerable concern about absentee landlords, of both residential and commercial properties. Properties owned by absentee landlords were noted as being in poorer repair than those properties owned by local residents.

Several properties were noted as being the site of continuous yard sales. These created an unattractive appearance in the residential neighborhoods.

The participants at the meetings wanted Highland Springs to be a typical American small town. They don't expect the community to become a major regional center. They see Highland Springs as a good place to live and raise a family.



## IV. STRENGTHS

Highland Springs is a solidly middle class neighborhood. The area has a very high percentage of home ownership, over 70%. This suggests that the area is stable. While the area has statistically fewer high income families than the regional average, it also has fewer poor families.

The population is typical of developed neighborhoods. It is slowly aging and is not affected by the large influx of children typical of rapidly developing suburban neighborhoods. The number of older persons will be increasing over the next decade, but again this process is not precipitous.

Residents' perceptions of the neighborhood confirm this view of the district. People think of the area as a good place to live, comfortable and pleasant.

Local office uses, such as real estate and insurance and small construction firms are prospering. These uses are consistently well maintained and are in good condition. These uses take advantage of the area's good location, and don't need the high traffic of the shopping center areas.

Highland Springs is well served by summer recreation activities and educational facilities. Recreation is team oriented. Fields are located to the rear of the Adult Education center, and are hidden from view from Nine Mile Road. The high School has additional playing fields.

Extensive educational facilities include both the Adult Education Center and the Highland Springs High School. The Springers are a considerable source of local pride.

## V. WEAKNESSES

The fundamental problem confronting the neighborhood is the contrast between the actual character of the neighborhood, a prosperous residential community, and the appearance of the

neighborhood from Nine Mile Road. Nine Mile Road looks as if a declining and ill kept retail district.

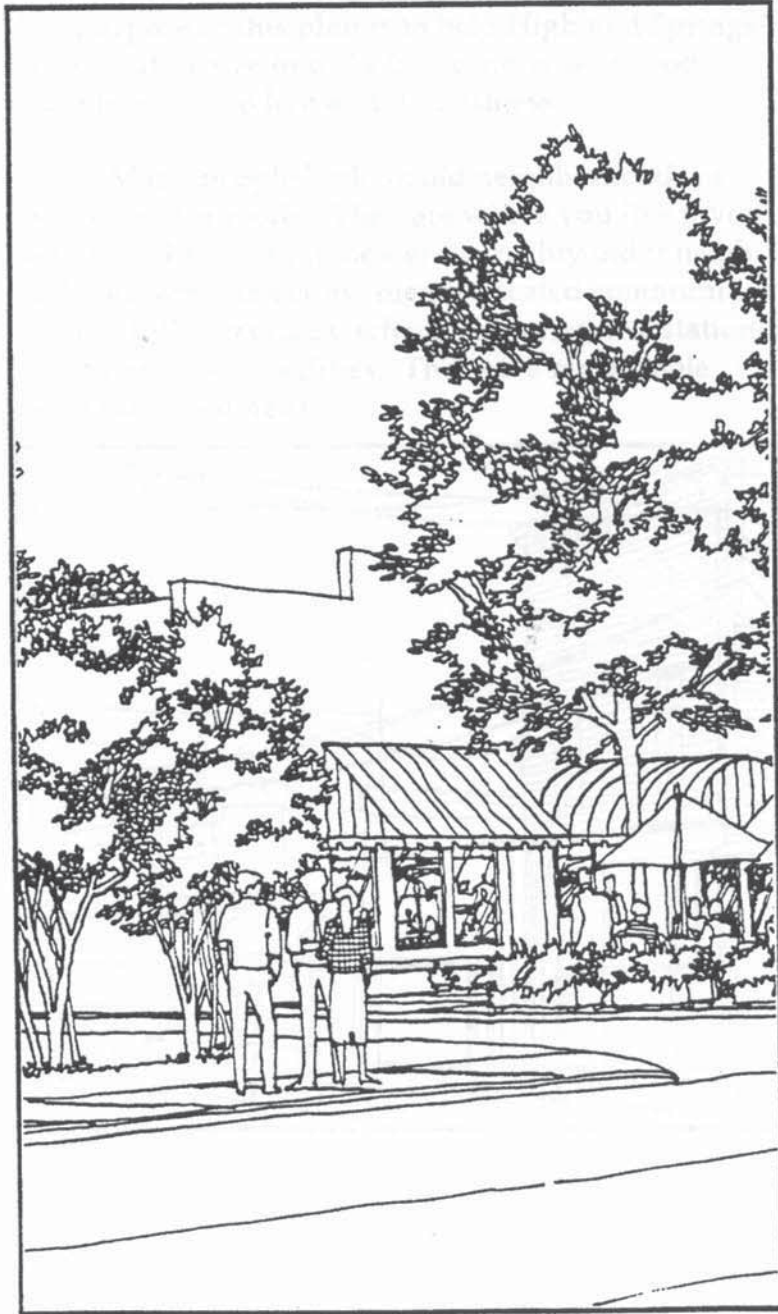
The main problem confronting the area relates to the run down appearance and the vacant properties in the district. Some of the existing businesses do not look like going concerns. There is a general lack of concern with the appearance of the properties and the way the appearance affects public perception.



# A PLAN FOR HIGHLAND SPRINGS

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA

## THE PLAN



# A PLAN FOR HIGHLAND SPRINGS

Highland Springs is a healthy and prosperous residential community that is beginning to age. Generally, it is in good physical and economic condition. The purpose of this plan is to help Highland Springs to age and evolve into the 21st century as a good place in which to live and do business.

Many people look on old neighborhoods as used neighborhoods. They are where you live if you can't afford something newer. In reality older neighborhoods are often conveniently located communities that are fully served by schools, libraries, fire stations and other public facilities. They give remarkable value for investment.

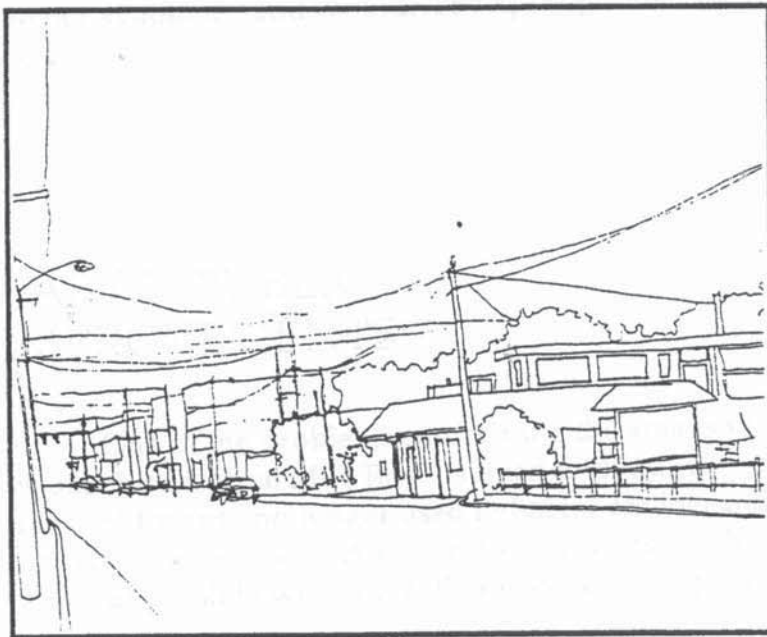




A thirty to forty year old house is better built and much less expensive than the modern equivalent. Older commercial buildings give more square footage for less money than the modern shopping center space.

Highland Springs is an established stable community that is a good place to raise a family and do business. The qualities that distinguish Highland Springs are not visible from Nine Mile Road.

Whatever one might say about the view of the community from the road, it does not look like a thriving community. The street looks run down; as if no one cares about the way the neighborhood looks.



The residents of Highland Springs have a realistic view of their neighborhood. They want it to be a better place to live and do business. It will never become the site of high style boutiques, restaurants or shops. It will serve the needs of the residents and the surrounding area. Residents stated that they viewed Highland Springs as their hometown. They want this home town feeling enhanced. Residents want the neighborhood to be improved; they don't expect it to be transformed.

They are proud of the neighborhood and want that pride to show. The quality of small town life that they admire needs to be expressed in the buildings on Nine Mile Road. The planning effort consists of two parts, a series of small scale projects which can be undertaken by individuals and groups and larger scale efforts which must be made by the county government. The proposed projects are both long term and short term.

This plan seeks to make Highland Springs' assets visible. Much of this plan is do-it-yourself, paint-up clean-up, fix-up items. This reflects the self-reliant nature of the community, and reflects the economic realities of the late 20th century. Big bucks are not available, and wouldn't be appropriate if they were.

## PART I. PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

One of the problems confronting the area is visual clutter. Nine Mile Road is lined with utility lines, old signs, no longer used lights for car lots and broken up sidewalks. An effort to remove as much of this as possible would greatly improve the appearance of the area.

Some aspects of this Anti Clutter effort require considerable time and planning to achieve. Utility lines are not just decorative accessories. They are fully functional items that relate to overall schemes of power and communication distribution.

One of the objectives of the design effort in Highland Springs is to give the neighborhood a sense of identity. This can be done through actual signage



that indicates the entrances to the community, and through a consistent approach to signage within the community. The streets named after plants in alphabetical order present an obvious way that the areas can be identified.

Throughout the Richmond area, street lights and special furnishings are used to define special areas. This has been done in historical areas such as in Shockoe Slip and on Monument Avenue, and is typical of modern commercial areas.

## PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS IN THE RIGHT OF WAY

**I. Sidewalks.** Nine Mile Road is lined with concrete sidewalks that are deteriorated and irregular. Through the years utility poles and cuts have sliced through the concrete. Normal aging has added further irregularities. Residents mentioned both the convenience of the sidewalk itself and the poor condition of the existing walks with the hazardous irregularities and poorly located poles and signs.

The sidewalks have reached the end of their normal life-span and need to be replaced. As a part of the replacement process, poles, signs and other obstructions need to be relocated to standard positions in the walks. Obstructions should be located on the edge, rather than in the middle, of the walks. Ideally this work would be done in coordination with a reworking of the utility lines.

Special surface treatments are not required for the area. Standard sidewalks were originally installed in the area and standard modern concrete walks would be appropriate for the rebuilding. The only change in the design would be the accommodation of barrier free requirements. This is one of the few areas in Henrico County where a handicapped pedestrian or wheel chair environment is possible.



## II. Street Lights

The street lighting of Nine Mile Road is provided by standard cobra head fixtures. Throughout the Richmond Metropolitan area, street lights give character to districts and to reinforce their distinctive ambiance. While this is most notable in Richmond's historic districts such as Monument Avenue, Church Hill or Shockoe Slip, it is also a standard feature of most modern commercial and retail developments.

New street lights should be pedestrian scaled and would ideally refer to the character of the historic area. The fixture and the poles should be adaptable to serve many functions, supporting street signs, banners and hanging baskets. There are a wide variety of ornamental fixtures available.

We propose using an early 20th century electric fixture similar to those used elsewhere in the metropolitan area in the period 1900-1929. Highland Springs was created by the electric street car; an electric fixture is historically suitable and appropriate.

Most modern versions of period fixtures can hold a variety of lighting sources; incandescent, mercury vapor, sodium vapor or metal halide. We suggest that metal halide or sodium vapor be used.

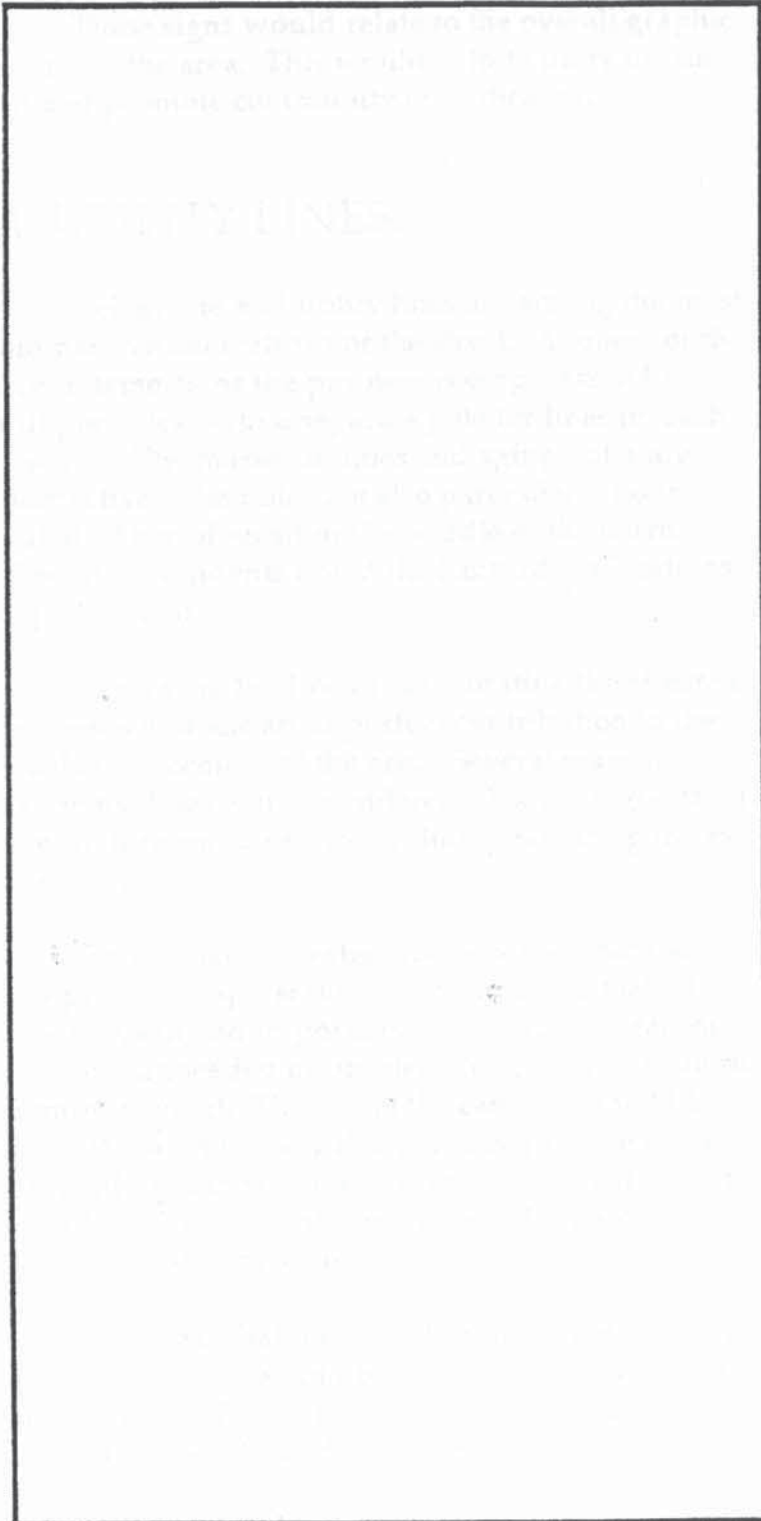
Where possible, we suggest that the new lights be located on the inside of the sidewalk against the property line. This location will protect the poles from minor traffic mishaps and would permit the use of fiberglass poles. These poles are economical and low maintenance.

The poles ideally would be used for signs, banners and street identification. Seasonally varied banners are regularly used in many of Richmond's commercial areas and would be appropriate here.



Street Light





This drawing indicates suggested locations for new street lights in Highland Springs. Note that these locations are base on photometrics provided for a specific fixture. If another fixture is selected, the spacing may need to be changed. It is intended that the light poles be placed on the inside edge of the sidewalk. This will protect the Fiberglass poles from most vehicular damage.

We propose that the poles also be used for mounting signs for individual businesses. This would get the signs near the street where they could be easily seen by both pedestrians and vehicular drivers.

These signs would relate to the overall graphic scheme of the area. This would help to unify the district and promote community identification.

### III. UTILITY LINES:

Telephone and utility lines are among the most dominant visual features of the street. At many of the street intersections the problem is emphasized by multiple poles, with a separate pole for lines in each direction. The masses of lines and aging poles are unattractive. The poles are also particularly poorly located. They often sit in the middle of the narrow sidewalks. Residents noted the hazardous locations for pedestrians.

Removing the line or ameliorating the effect of the lines will make an important contribution to the visual enhancement of the area. Several ways to change the lines were considered. These ranged from from underground service to simply replacing the existing poles.

Preliminary investigation revealed that these lines provide major service to the area and that all lines are used and important. While house cleaning, removing unneeded or obsolete lines, would result in an improvement. This is not the case on Nine Mile Road. It would be possible to redesign some of the pole configurations at the corners to reduce the multiple poles. However, this would result in only a modest visual improvement.

It is clear that the cost of putting all of the utilities underground would be prohibitively expensive. This would be difficult to justify in this area. The area is a mature, fully developed district.

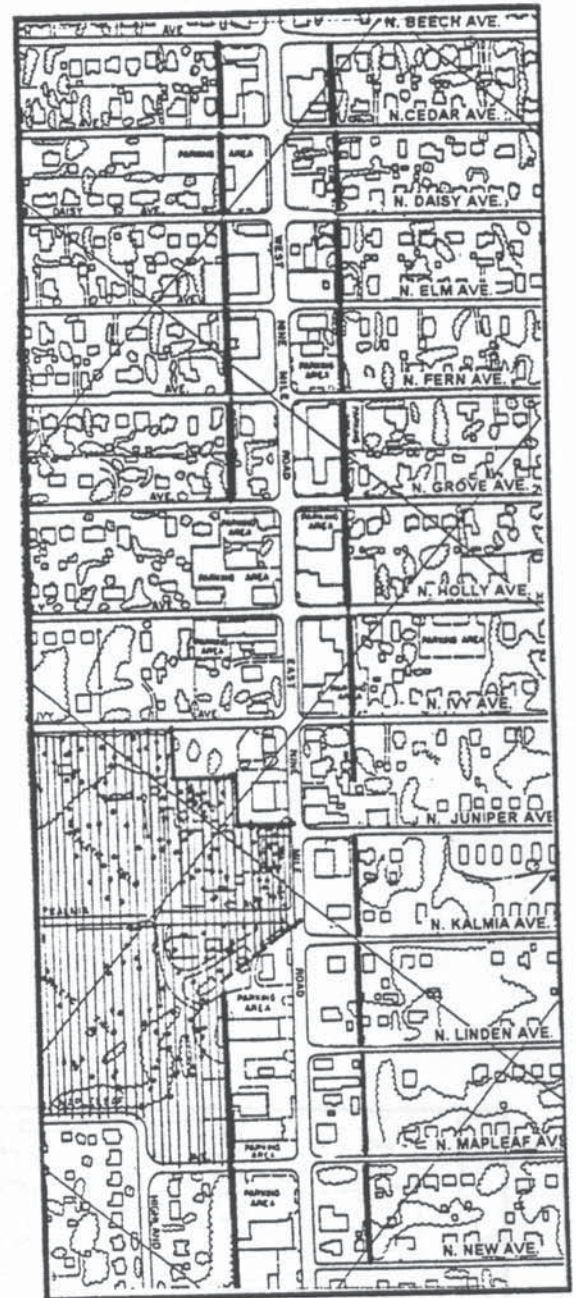
The preferred way to treat the utilities would be to relocate the wires to the rear of Nine Mile Road in the remains of the area's original alley system. As was typical in 19th century real estate developments, the street was designed with a complete alley system.



Highland Springs' system is largely intact on the north side of Nine Mile Road, and is partially intact to the south of the street. The combination of alley and publicly owned properties make it possible to envision such a scheme to eliminate the utilities visual impact on the neighborhood.

A number of Richmond area historic neighborhoods have made use of an alley system and have eliminated the visual impact of utility lines. Most of the buildings on Nine Mile Road have service from the rear, so the cost to the individual merchant or property owner will be minimal. Relocating the utility lines to the rear of the properties which front on Nine Mile Road would provide the optimal improvement to the appearance of the street.

While it is desirable to relocate the utilities, we recognize that this will necessarily be a long process. The improvements we are proposing for the street and the buildings on the street can take place without the utility work. New trees, removing the clutter of old signs and improving the sidewalks, buildings and lights will all contribute to the revitalization of the neighborhood.



The alley system in Highland Springs:  
 Dark lines indicate remaining alleys.  
 The hatched area indicates publicly owned property



## PART 2. PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Individual property owners and merchants will revitalize Highland Springs. The biggest problem confronting the area is the appearance of neglect. Highland Springs doesn't look as if anyone cares about the area. While the conditions of the sidewalks and rights of way contribute to the problems, stores and businesses which have not been renovated or maintained for years are the core of the problem. A new sidewalk will not make a run down business look good.

This plan does not dictate a single solution for the architectural shortcomings of Highland Springs. A single approach is not possible for the greatly varied individual structures of the area. Some buildings need little more than a coat of paint to look good, others can't be greatly improved without major renovation.

Since this plan is to be implemented by individuals, we suggest that easy, comparatively economical schemes be proposed now for immediate action. We also suggest that further improvements be developed for later construction. Then the improvements in the area would justify further capital outlays.





## BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

Businesses should first look at the current condition of their building and clean it up. Windows need to be washed, burned out lights need to be replaced. Remove old signs, lights, out of date advertizing and similar items which clutter up the appearance of their property.

Free advertizing and signs provided by suppliers and manufacturers tend to age poorly. Moulded plastic signs discolor, get brittle and crack. These should all be removed. While it is important to dispose of signs which advertize establishments which are closed, most businesses need new, well designed signs. Many signs are located where they can't be seen from a car.

Garages and automobile repair establishments should look at their property and relocate unsightly elements behind fences and screens. There is no problem with automobiles being actively repaired in the front of a garage. Car repair is a somewhat messy by its nature. However, it is undesirable to use the front of a building for storage of wrecked vehicles. This is not only unsightly but bad business.

Customers want to know that their car is protected behind a locked fence when it is not being repaired. Similarly, when the passer by sees a car sitting untouched for a week or two in front of a garage, he or she does not get the impression that this is an efficient business.

If they have on site parking, property owners or merchants should restudy the configuration of existing parking areas to determine the maximum number of spaces that could be accommodated on the site in an efficient way.

Many parking lots look as if cars simply stop where they feel like it, rather than parking. This reduces the number of cars which can be accommo-

dated and is unsightly. An orderly arrangement of spaces on the properties will both make the area more attractive and will provide additional spaces.

As a part of this redesign, spaces for trees or shrubs may be found. A well designed parking area will have left over spaces where cars will not fit. We should make use of these for greenery. At the end of the redesign, the areas should either be paved or landscaped.

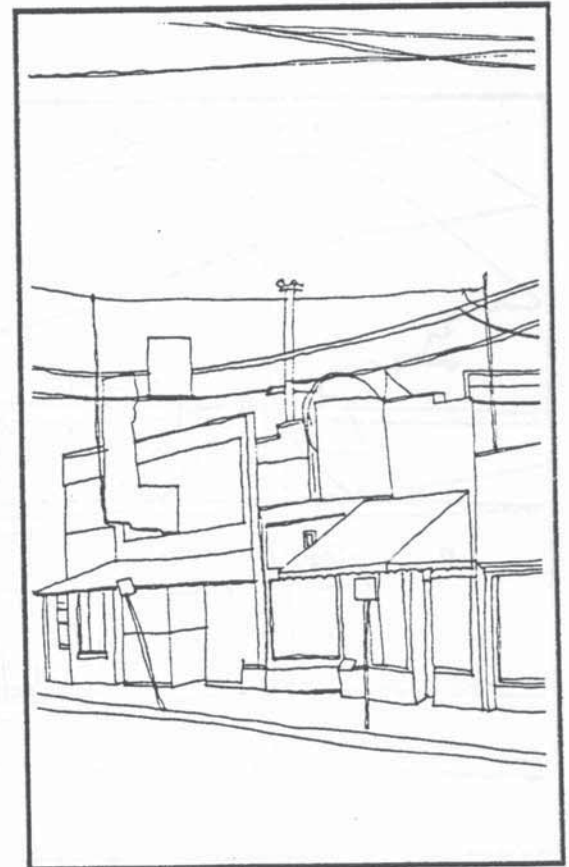
The edge of the parking areas needs to be indicated clearly. While it is not necessary for there to be a curb in all cases, a clearly defined boundary between the parking and landscaped areas is desirable. Almost all of the lots need to have their paving repaired, repaved or resealed. When this is done they should be re-striped to show the new parking arrangement.

While a good portion of the Highland Springs' commercial strip is paved there is a parking problem for some of the buildings. This is generated by the lack of on street parking on Nine Mile Road, and by the irregularities in the parking areas which are available. These problems are made worse by the poor conditions of the parking areas that are available.

The parking areas behind Nine Mile Road in the block between Holly and Ivy are not paved and are deeply rutted. This lot needs to be paved and developed as customer parking.

The approach to building renovation varies with the character of the individual structure. Many fronts are bare and inhospitable. Commercial fronts in this area typically made use of fabric awnings to shelter the pedestrian and to protect the display windows from the sun.

Originally the awnings were made of canvas and tended to deteriorate. Many were replaced with aluminum awnings in the 1950 and 60s as an effort to



Metal Awnings on Nine Mile Road



duce maintenance costs. Many of the metal awnings have deteriorated. They are bent, dented and the colors have faded. They need to be replaced or covers with new materials.

New fabrics with extended life spans and great resistance to fading have revitalized the use of fabric. They are being reintroduced in historic districts and have proven to be effective for eight to ten years. While the new awning materials will need to be replaced at the end of their life-span, this provides an opportunity to freshen the appearance of the building.

Older building generally need little more than painting, new signs and awnings. Generally speaking, there are few structures throughout the area which would not benefit from a new coat of paint.



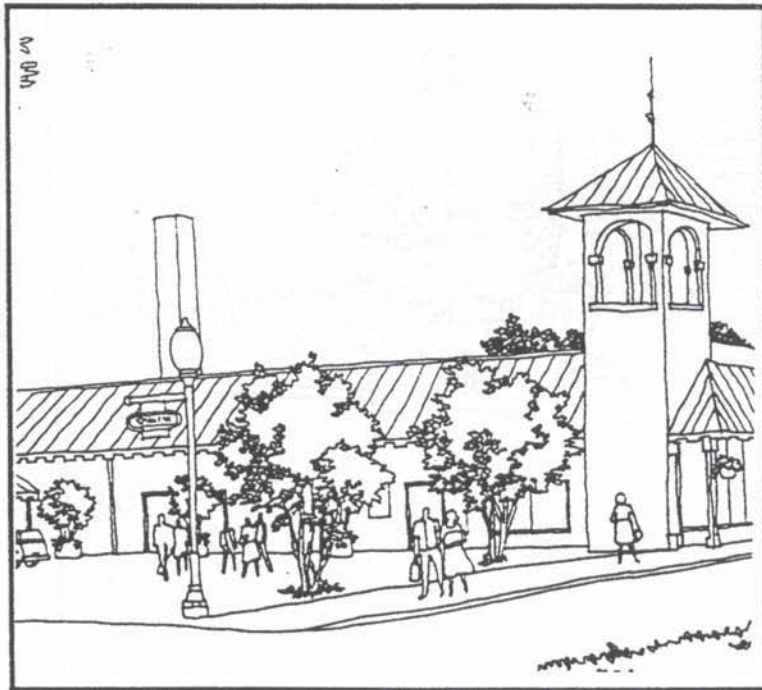
1950 era, one story, flat roofed, brick buildings have little character and can not be restored to

have qualities they never possessed. Some of these have projecting metal sun screens that tend to leak. Flat, built-up roofs are also continuing maintenance problems.

There are several places where there are large pylons that were intended to support signs. Most of the sign have now vanished, but an opportunity remains to take advantage of these elements.

Beyond general maintenance considerations, awings present the best chance for visual change in these buildings. In some cases a new awning could be stretched over the metal framework of a sun screen or metal awing. This would provide good support for the awings and solve the leak problems associated with these elements.

From both a maintenance and appearance it is desirable to do away with the flat, built up roofs. A metal, gable roof superimposed on top of the existing would be desirable. Modern metal roofs have permanent finishes and are low maintenance. They are







BEFORE: The corner of Nine Mile and Daisy



AFTER

standard elements in commercial construction in the suburbs and would be appropriate in Highland Springs.

With the exception of the Henrico Theater, most of the buildings erected before 1940 are small. Later buildings tend to be larger. These larger buildings have worked well for businesses, such as carpet and floor coverings. These businesses need large square footages.

It is also possible to subdivide the larger structures to create smaller rental spaces.. This was done with the former bowling alley and has been successful.

The age and size of Highland Springs buildings make it an ideal site for new businesses which can not afford the cost of modern shopping center spaces. Highland Springs could serve as an incubator for new businesses. This is a good way to develop smaller retail and office establishments. Small affordable spaces for individual business men and women will be the future of the commercial area in Highland Springs.

## LANDSCAPE:

The broad expanses of paving and the lack of trees and shrubs distinguish Nine Mile Road from the adjacent residential areas and make it look inhospitable. It also distinguishes the area from modern commercial and retail areas that are landscaped. The look of a paved wasteland helps to create the sense of desolation in the area.

While some parts of the Richmond Metropolitan area are marked by orderly street tree planting schemes, this is not typical of Henrico County, and would be difficult to implement on Nine Mile Road.

The wide variety of conditions that exist in Highland Springs, that combines residential, com-

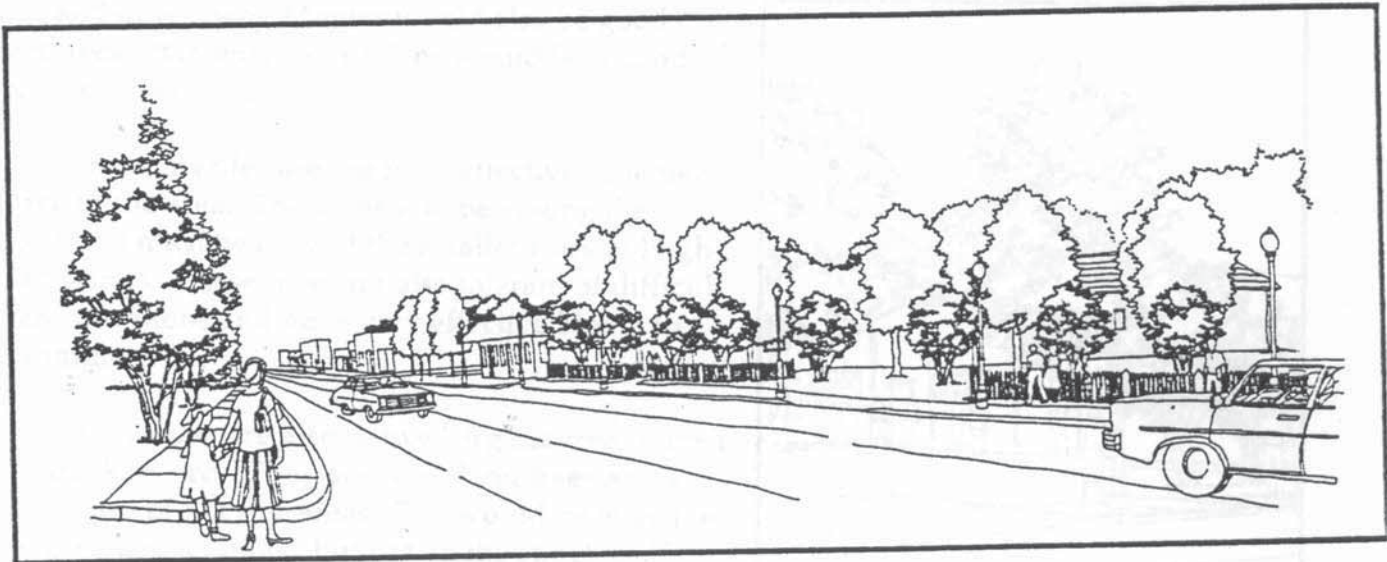




mercial and office uses in an almost random way makes an orderly pattern difficult to achieve.

Street tree planting schemes work best in areas of common land use, or in areas planned for street trees. This is not the case on Nine Mile Road in Highland Springs.

We propose an informal planting scheme that can be adjusted for the conditions of individual property owners along Nine Mile Road. This informal scheme will create a landscape similar to that of the residential areas that flank the street.



Where residential properties remain, or where office buildings retain residential set backs with front lawns, we recommend a residential type landscape treatment. This consists of several large shade trees, interspersed with ornamental trees and shrubs. It is desirable to define the front yards with a residential style fence.

The fence will define the property, ease maintenance and clarify pedestrian patterns. We prefer a picket type fence, but there are a number of acceptable possibilities. The picket fence was typical of residential neighborhoods of the era when Highland Springs was developed.

A modern picket fence with a modern permanent finish is desirable. Metal or clad materials are more expensive than treated or painted wood but age well and require little maintenance.

Within the yard, the landscaping is largely up to individual property owners' personal preferences. The greatest need is for large shade trees, and the front yards present the best opportunities for these on the street.

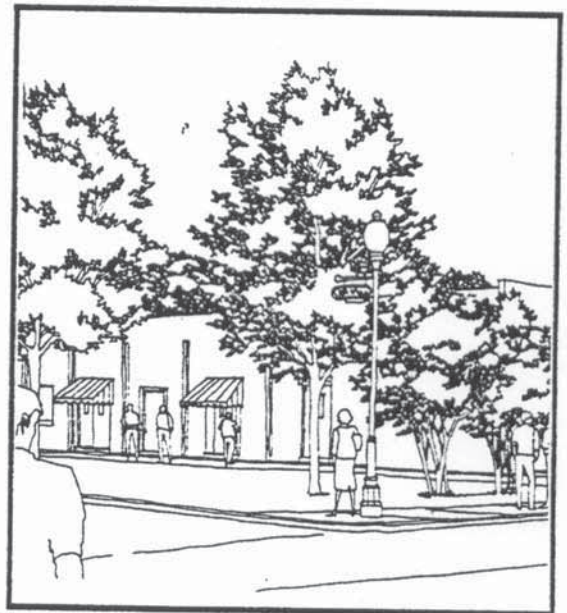
Oaks are the normal shade tree in this area and would be appropriate. Willow Oaks have been successfully planted in difficult areas in the Richmond area. They are fast growing and disease resistant. Red or Norway Maples would also be good street trees. "Greenspire" lindens would be a good choice for lawn areas.

Crape myrtles are the most effective ornamental tree in the area. These seem to be among the largest and most healthy of the smaller trees in Highland Springs. These trees are also tolerant of difficult urban conditions and have very effective bloom in the summer.

Dogwoods are also native Virginia trees with a good track record. They are woodland trees and are less tolerant of hot dry areas. They would be effective in larger planted areas, but not on the street itself. Bradford Pears have also done well. Bradford Pears have a handsome spring bloom, and are hardy in urban settings.

Flowering shrubs such as azaleas and flower beds would be an attractive addition to the area, but these are higher maintenance items and require a firm commitment by the property owners for care and maintenance.

Perennial flower and flowering shrub beds are comparatively low maintenance compared to annual beds. The Adult Education center and the Highland Springs High School would be good sites for more elaborate landscape treatments.





These might be associated with vocational and educational programs.

Many lots are completely occupied by buildings and paving. In these cases there is an opportunity to plant a shade tree on the property line. These will break up the expanses of paving and soften the visual appearance of the district.

Similar possibilities exist where there is angled parking and in the spaces next to signs and equipment. In smaller spaces, crepe myrtles would be appropriate rather than shade trees.



Before: The corner of Holly and Nine Mile Road

Located near the original street car stop, this block was the commercial center of early Highland Springs. While these are some of the oldest structures on the street, alterations have injured the early character.

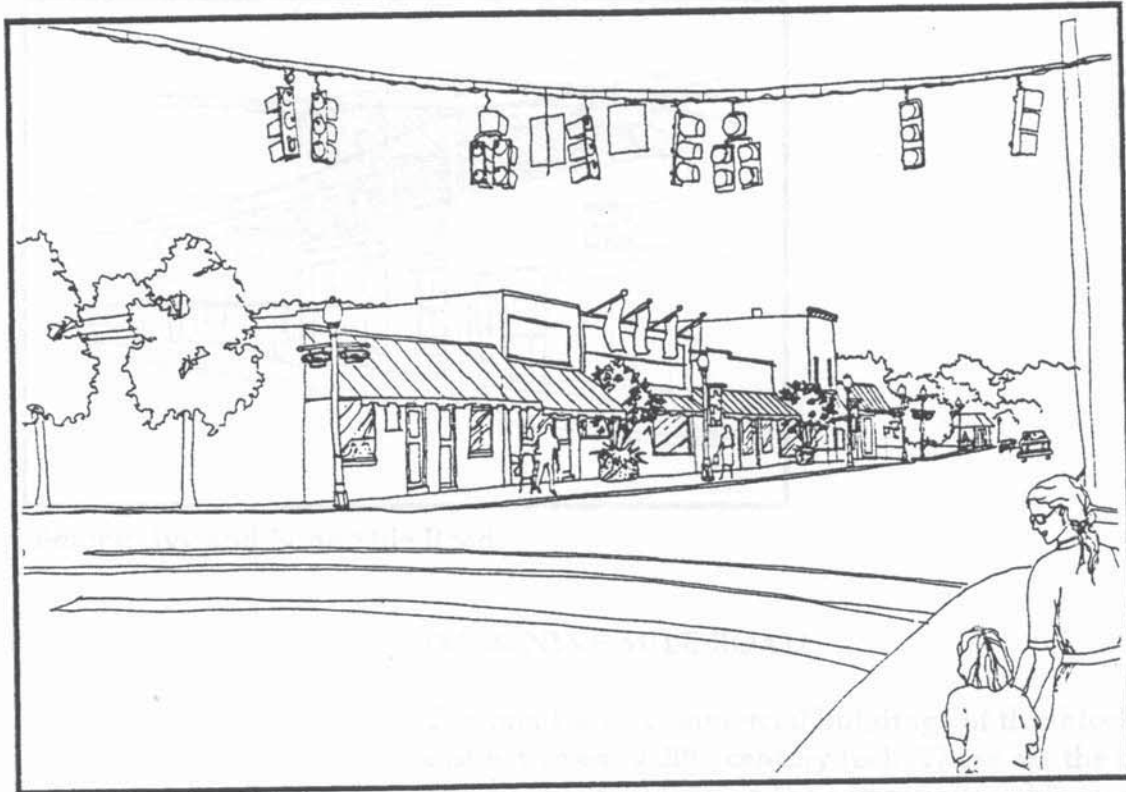
The proposed first phase of work involves:

- A. Painting individual structures
- B. Removing old signs
- C. Adding awnings to individual fronts
- D. Provide banners
  
- E. Rebuild sidewalk
- F. Provide ornamental trees in planters
- G. New street lights and street signs

Work in later phases might include:

- H. Reroof individual structures, provide new sloped roofs in metal

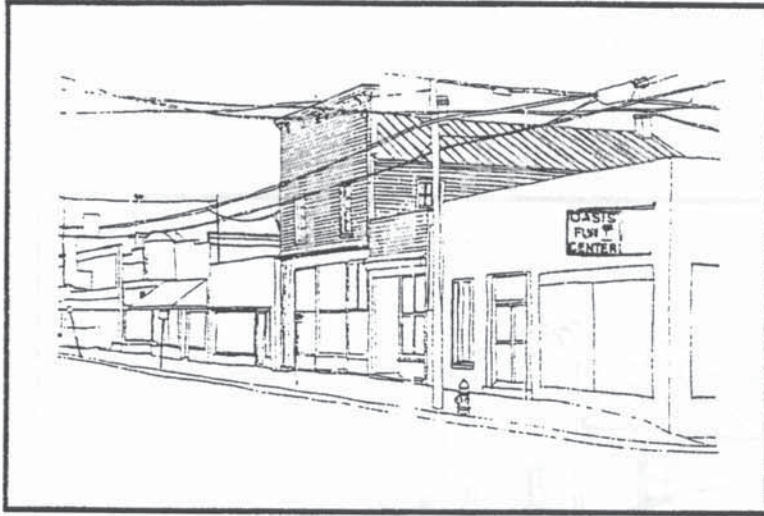




After



Further development



Before: Ivy and Nine Mile Road

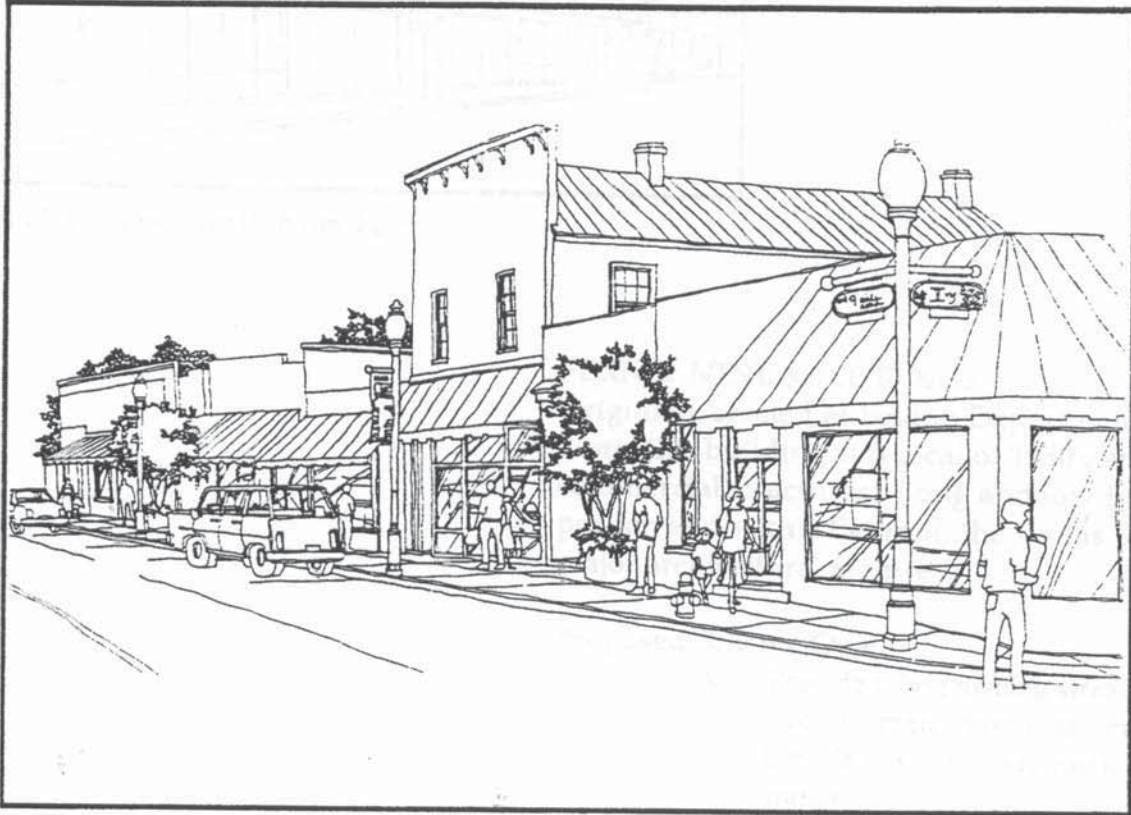
### IVY & NINE MILE ROAD

The small scale commercial buildings of this block have a distinctive early 20th century feel. These are the oldest commercial buildings in the community. this was the original downtown Highland Springs.

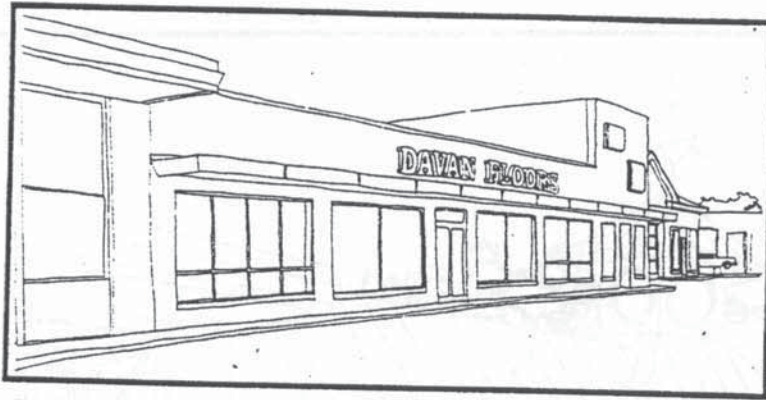
#### Proposed Improvements:

- A. Remove old metal awnings and replace with fabric awnings.
- B. Remove abandoned Signs
- C. Paint buildings.
- D. Replace sidewalk with new concrete walk.
- E. Since the sidewalk is narrow, this is one of the few areas in Highland Spring where trees in planters are desirable.
- F. Provide new street lights. the drawing illustrates banners mounted on the street light poles.
- G. Develop a paved parking area to the rear of these shops.





After



Before: View North from Fern

#### FERN & NINE MILE ROAD

Originally erected as Seldon Department Store, this building is typical of 1950's era commercial structures. Long and low in proportion and with a flat roof, the sign is the major architectural feature.

#### Proposed Scheme One:

- A. Provide fabric awning stretched over the metal overhand. Provide a gable like feature to mark entrance.
- B. Illuminate awning and provide painted sign at entrance.
- C. Revise the mullion pattern in the windows to de-emphasize the large expanses of glass
- D. Provide trees at the edge of the property.

#### Proposed Scheme Two:

- E. Provide a metal roof covering the ledge with a coupola marking the entrance.





After: Davan Floors



Before: E. S. Read House

#### THE READ HOUSE

This mansion, erected by E. S. Read, the founder of Highland Springs, is the most impressive single residence in the community. Now used as medical offices, the building has been well maintained and is well preserved. The large magnolia in the front yard are notable local landmarks.

#### Proposed Improvements:

- A. Repaint the trim on the house
- B. Restore the yard to a residential appearance. Provide a fence and residential type landscaping in the yard.
- C. Provide street lights.
- D. Provide new sign at the street.





After: E. S. Read House



Before: Corner of Mapleleaf & Nine Mile Road

#### MAPLE LEAF AND NINE MILE ROAD

This building was a bowling alley until converted into small rental spaces. The set back from the road provides an opportunity for landscaping on the street.

#### Proposed improvements:

- A. Provide awnings on the windows, a canopy to make the entrance.
- B. Fence in the front yard, landscape the grassy plot.
- C. vary the architectural treatments of the side entrance to make them more individual
- D. Paint the building.

Future improvements might include finding a tenant who could make use of the outdoor space. We have shown an outdoor cafe in the sketch.





After: Corner of Mapleleaf & Nine Mile Road



Before: Corner of Daisy & Nine Mile Road

#### DAISY AND NINE MILE ROAD

Stewart's Restaurant occupies a two story building on the corner. To the rear is a former automobile parts store which has been converted to use as a consignment shop.

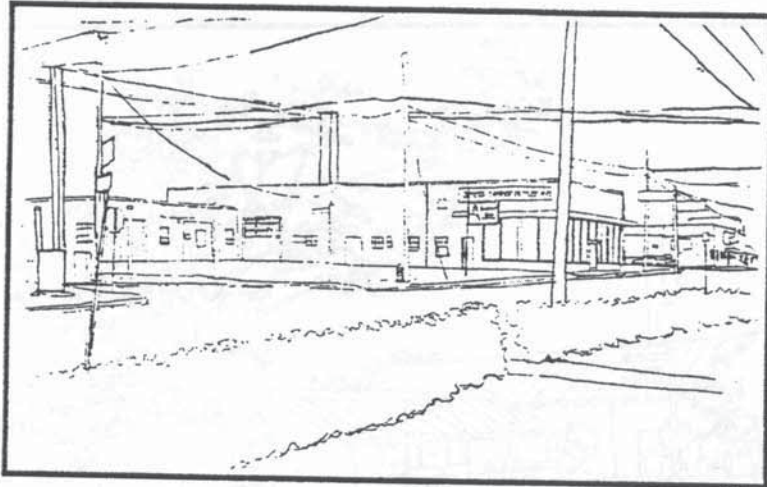
##### Proposed Improvements:

- A. Remove old signs and replace
- B. Repaint Stewart's Restaurant, provide a new awning.
- C. Provide new street lights.
- D. add trees where possible in the parking areas between the buildings.
- E. Provide new awnings and signs for the consignment shop.





After: Corner of Daisy & Nine Mile Road



Before: Corner of Grove & Nine Mile Road

### GROVE AND NINE MILE ROAD

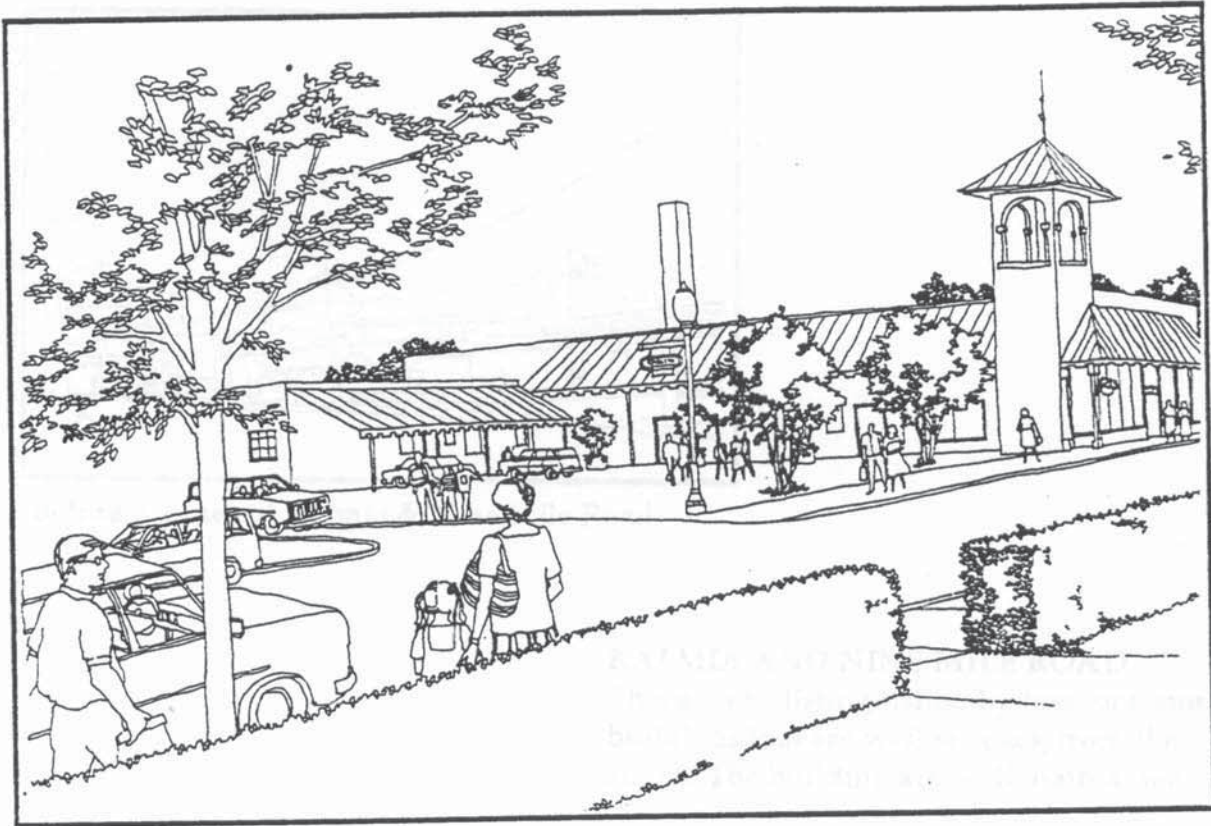
The corner location for the former Heckler Chevrolet building presents an opportunity for increasing the visibility of the building. The building itself is a large, bland, 1950's era structure.

The scheme for this building illustrated a more elaborate architectural approach than the previous drawings. This structure is suited for sub-division into smaller rental units.

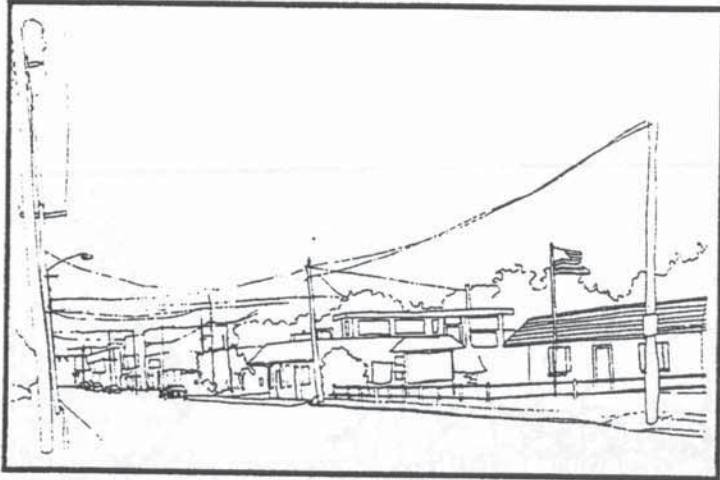
#### Proposed Improvements:

- A. Wrap the building in a metal roof which will provide a sun shade.
- B. Provide an ornamental tower to be a focal point for the street in this area.





After: Corner of Grove & Nine Mile Road



Before: Corner of Kalmia & Nine Mile Road

#### KALMIA AND NINE MILE ROAD

This area is distinguished by low, one story buildings that are well set back from the street. The buildings are well maintained.

This area needs little improvements except for the addition of landscaping. New trees and street lights will restore the sense of the street and the

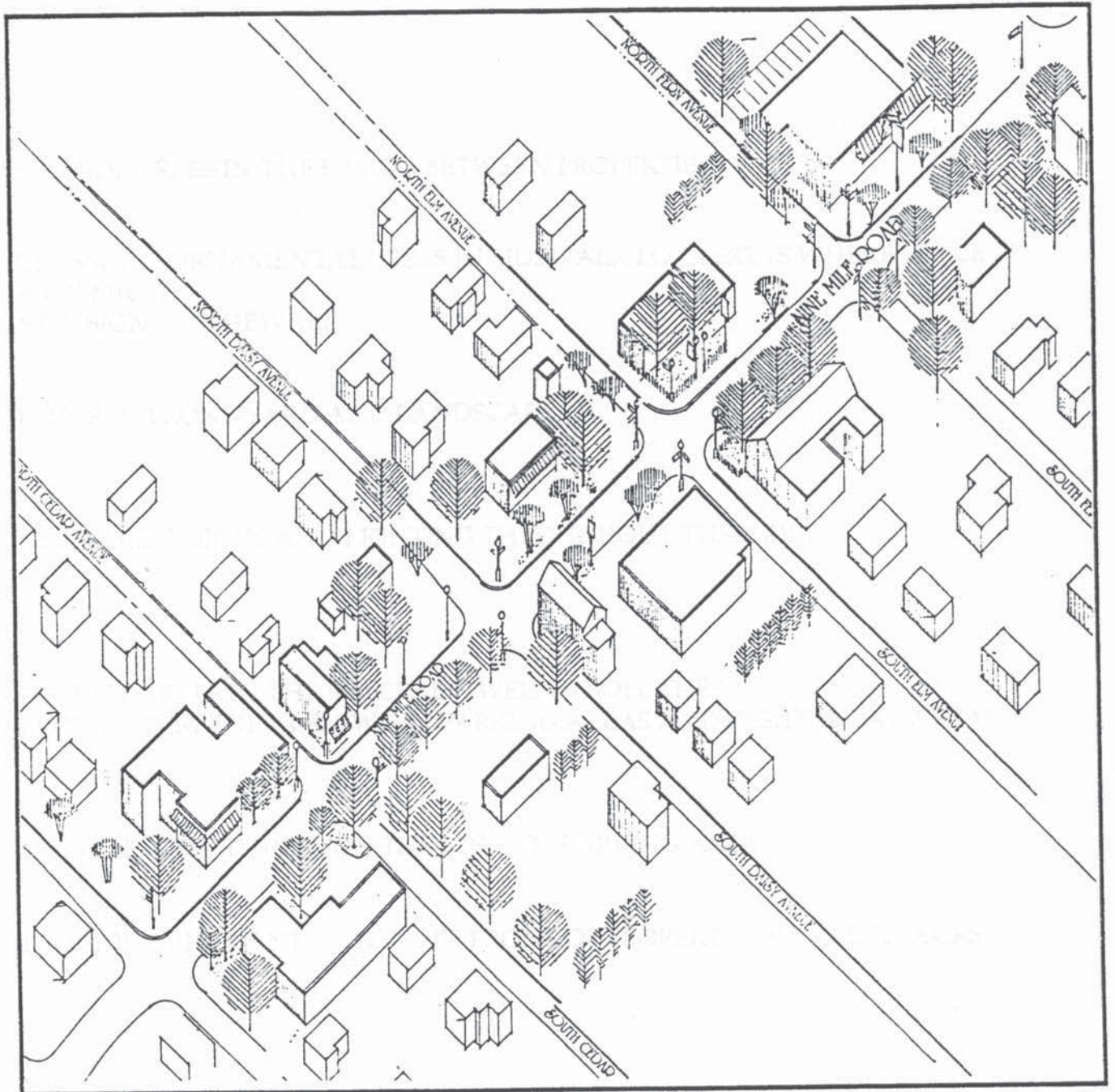
Proposed improvements:

- A. Provide fences to identify the front yards.
- B. Landscape the front yard spaces with shade and ornamental trees
- C. Provide street lights





After: The Corner of Kalmia & nine Mile Road



PHASE ONE PLAN -FROM BEECH TO FERN



PROVIDE TREES IN THE SPACES BETWEEN PROPERTIES

USE SMALL ORNAMENTAL TREES IN SIDEWALK LOCATIONS WHERE SPACE IS  
A PREMIUM  
NEW SIGN AT SIDEWALK

FENCE IN FRONT YARD AND LANDSCAPE

NEW STREET SIGNS AND LIGHTING THROUGHOUT THE AREA

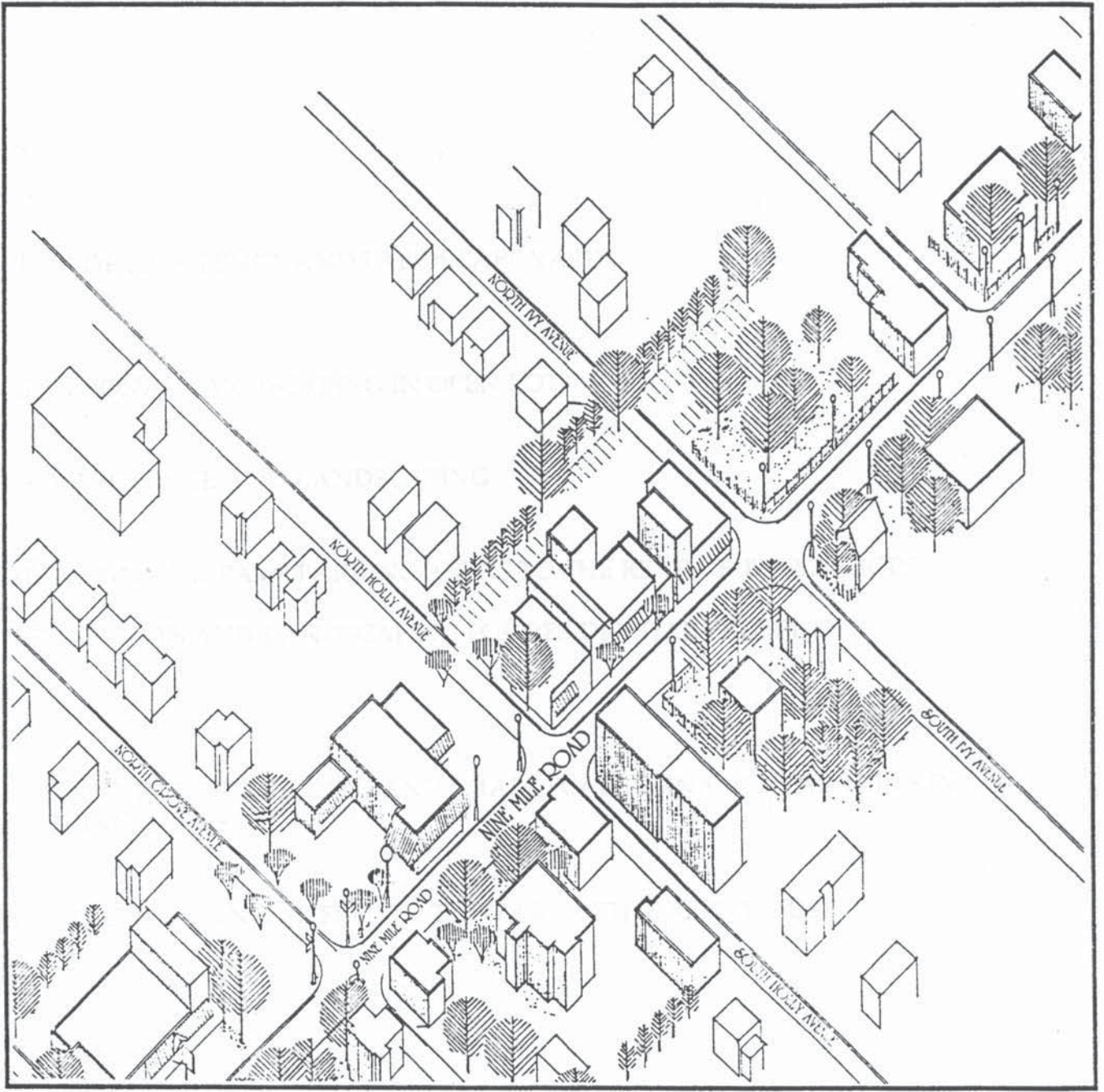
PROVIDE TREES IN THE SPACES BETWEEN PROPERTIES  
PROVIDE SCREENING BETWEEN PARKING AREAS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS

PROVIDE STREET TREES ON THE EDGE OF PARKING AREAS

PROVIDE ORNAMENTAL TREES IN FRONT OF PROPERTIES WITH SETBACKS

PHASE ONE: REPLACEMENT OF SIDEWALKS, INSTALLATION OF NEW STREET  
SIGNS AND LIGHTING WILL REPRESENT THE MAJOR PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN  
THE AREA. INDIVIDUALS WILL PROVIDE LANDSCAPING AND BUILDING FRONT  
IMPROVEMENTS.

IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENTS WILL DEPEND ON FUNDING. WHILE  
PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE ENTIRE NINE MILE ROAD AREA WOULD BE  
DESIRABLE, A PILOT BLOCK OR AREA WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE WAY TO  
APPROACH THE INITIAL DEVELOPMENT.



PHASE ONE PLAN -FROM FERN TO KALMIA



PROVIDE NEW FENCE AND LANDSCAPE YARDS

ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING IN OPEN LOT

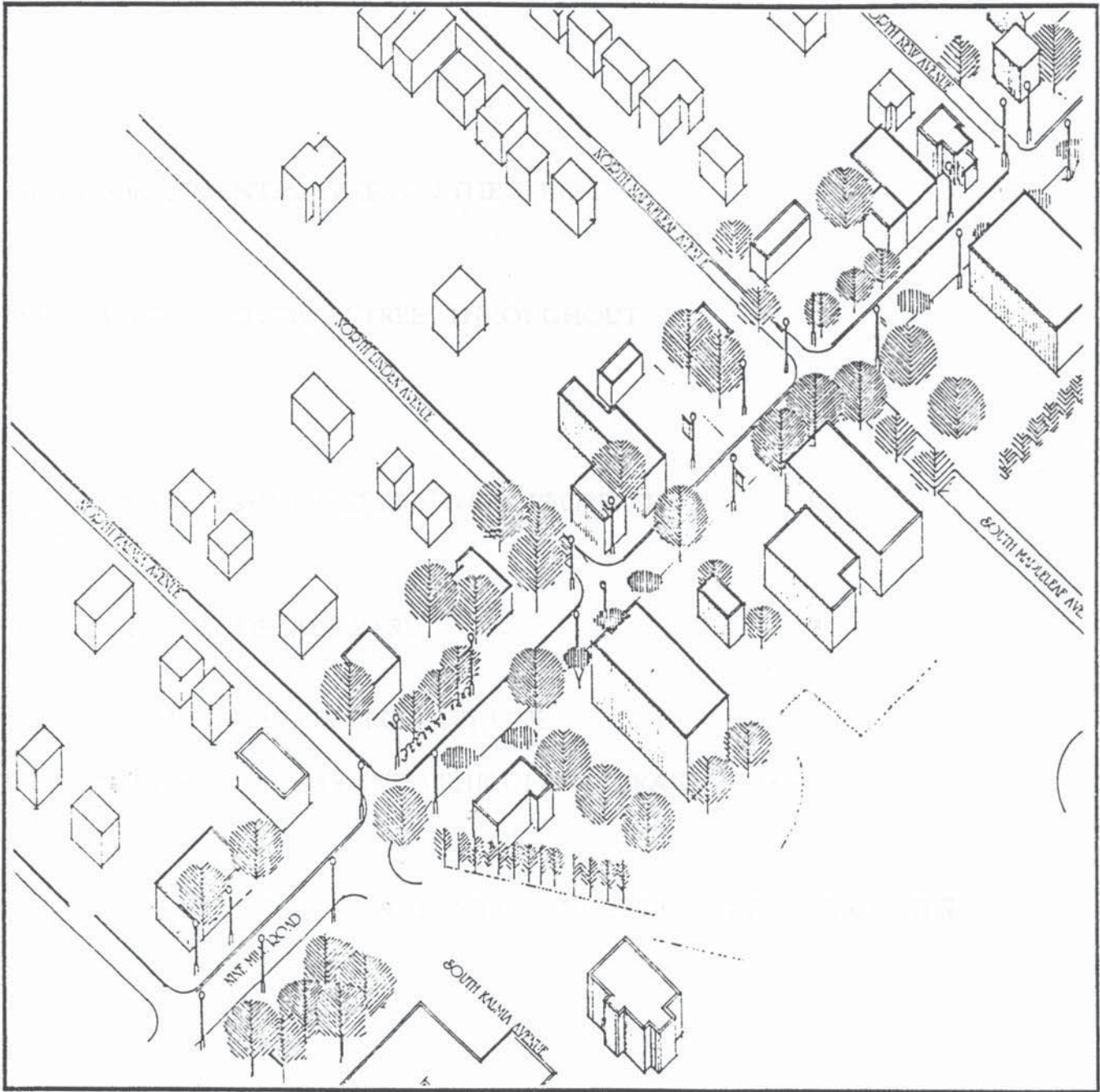
PROVIDE FENCE AND LANDSCAPING

REDESIGN AND PAVE PARKING AREAS TO THE REAR OF THESE SHOPS

NEW FENCES AND LANDSCAPING FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

USE AWNING ON BUILDING AND SMALL SCALE ORNAMENTAL TREES IN  
PARKING AREAS

RESTORE RESIDENTIAL FEEL TO THE YARD OF THE REED HOUSE



PHASE ONE PLAN -FROM KALMIA TO NEW AVENUE



PLANT ORNAMENTAL TREES ON THE STREET

NEW LIGHTS AND STREET TREES THROUGHOUT

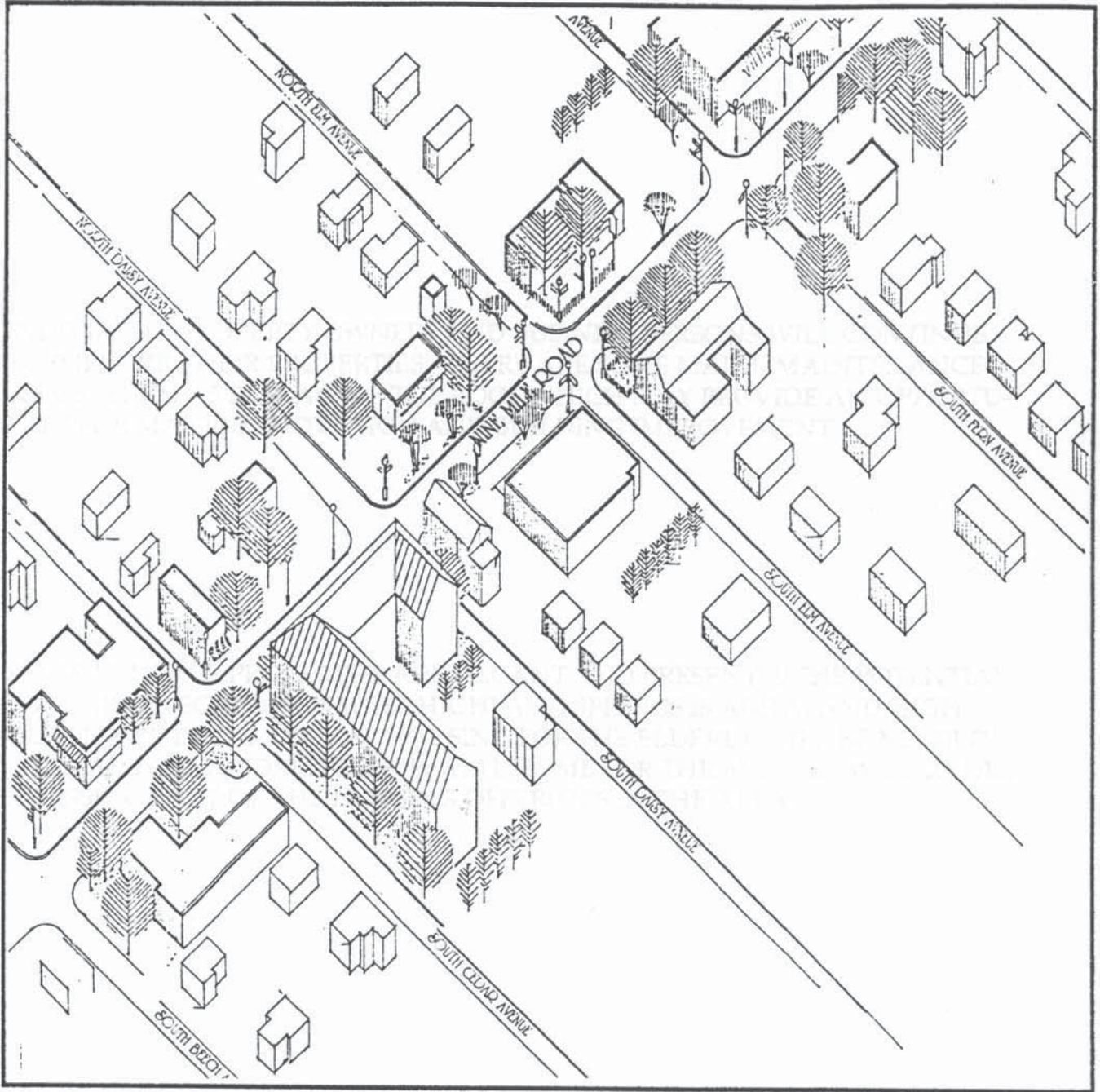
TREES ON THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN PROPERTIES

FENCE AND LANDSCAPE YARD

PLANT SHADE TREES ON PROPERTY LINES

SCREEN PARKING AREAS AND VEHICULAR STORAGE AREAS

ENHANCE LANDSCAPING IN FRONT OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

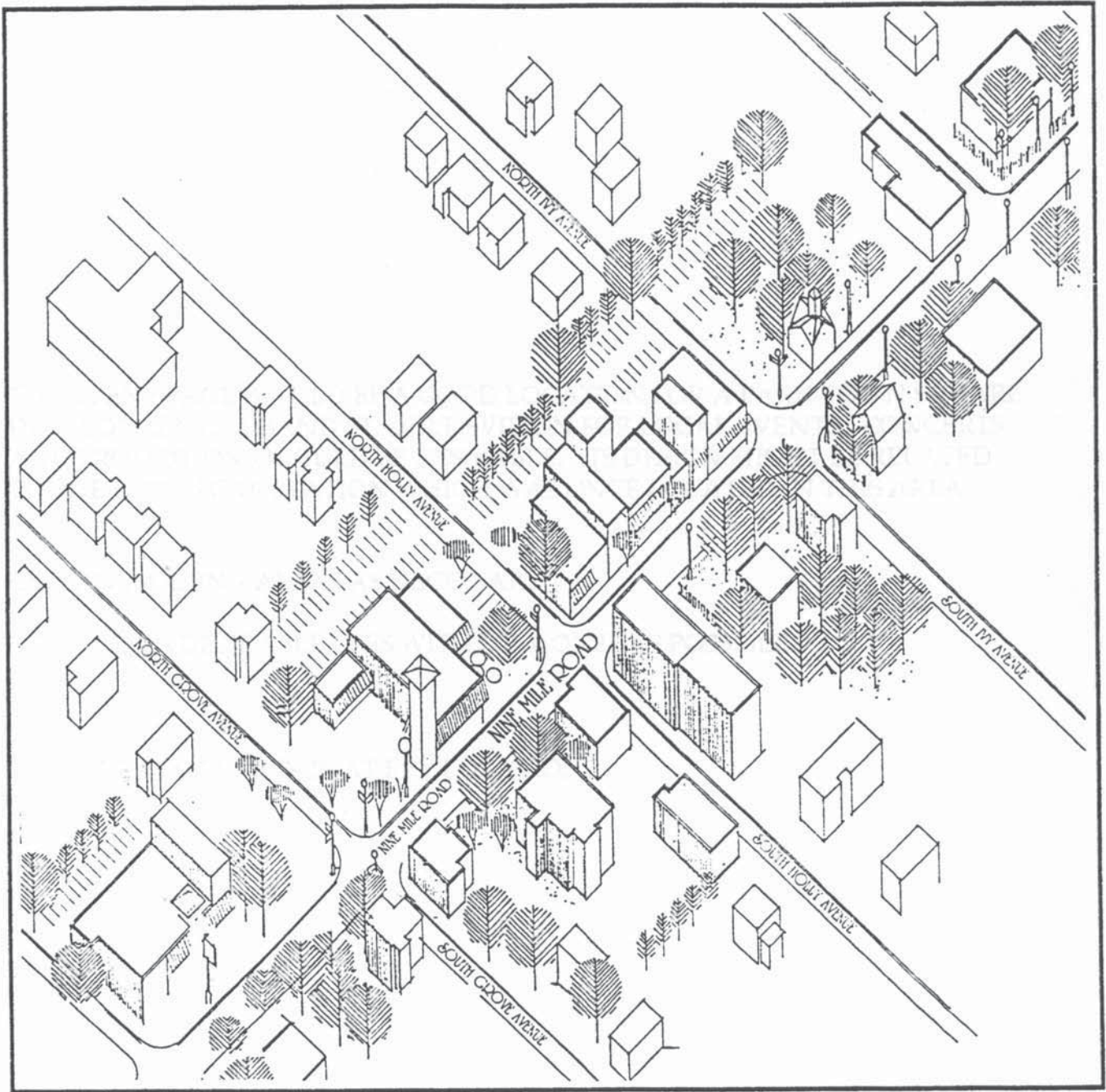


PHASE TWO PLAN -FROM BEECH TO FERN



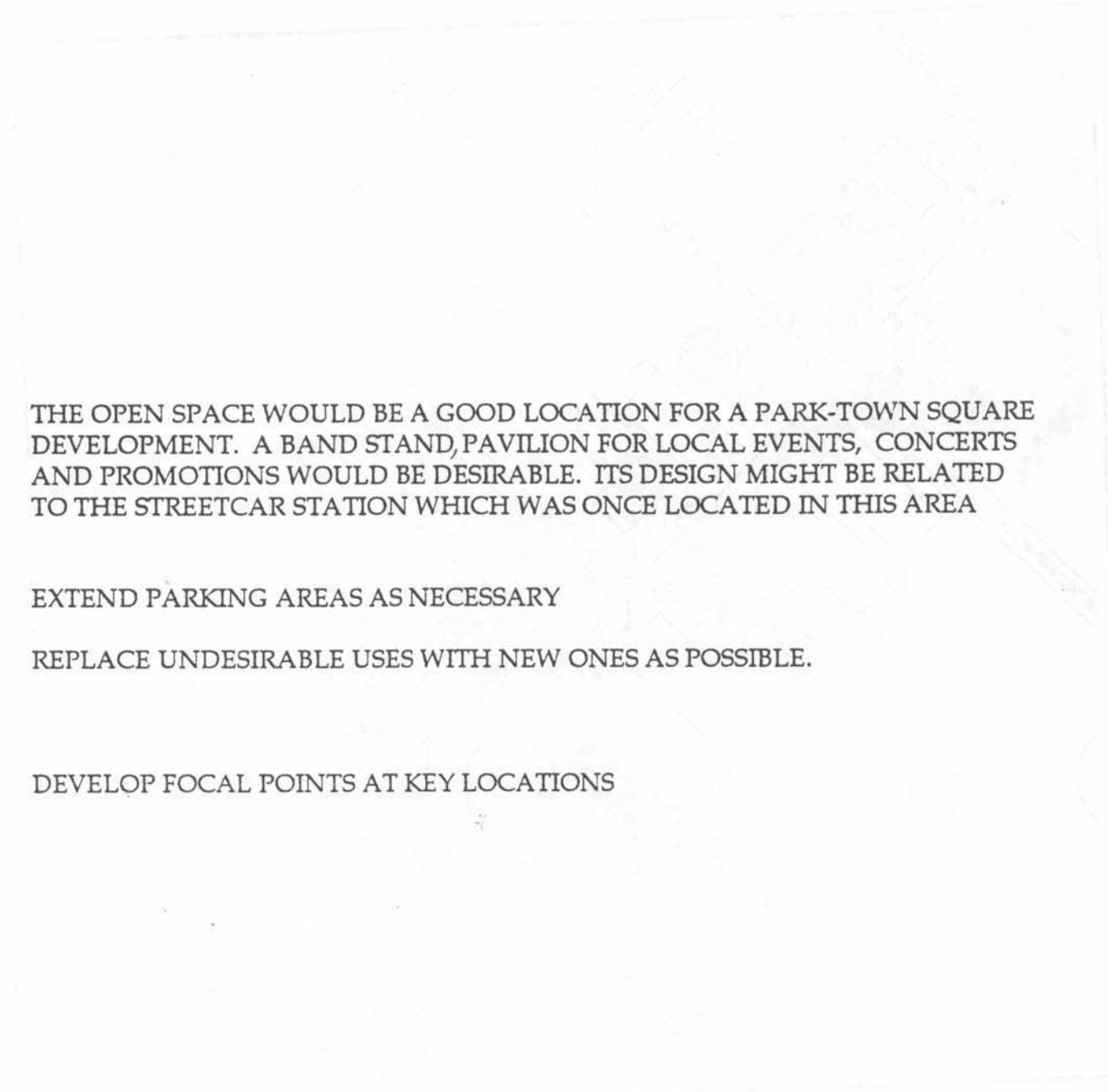
INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY OWNERS AND BUSINESS PERSONS WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR PROPERTIES. THERE ARE SOME MAJOR MAINTENANCE ITEMS, SUCH AS REPLACING THE ROOF WHICH MAY PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MAJOR RENOVATION AND BUILDING IMPROVEMENT.

SEVERAL LARGE PROPERTIES ARE VACANT AND PRESENT A THE POTENTIAL FOR LARGER SCALE PROJECTS. HIGHLAND SPRINGS IS AGING AND HIGH QUALITY BUT ECONOMICAL HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY WILL BE NEEDED. A LOCALLY SPONSORED RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR THE ELDERLY WOULD FILL A MISSING PART OF THE HOUSING OFFERINGS IN THE AREA



PHASE TWO PLAN -FROM FERN TO KALMIA



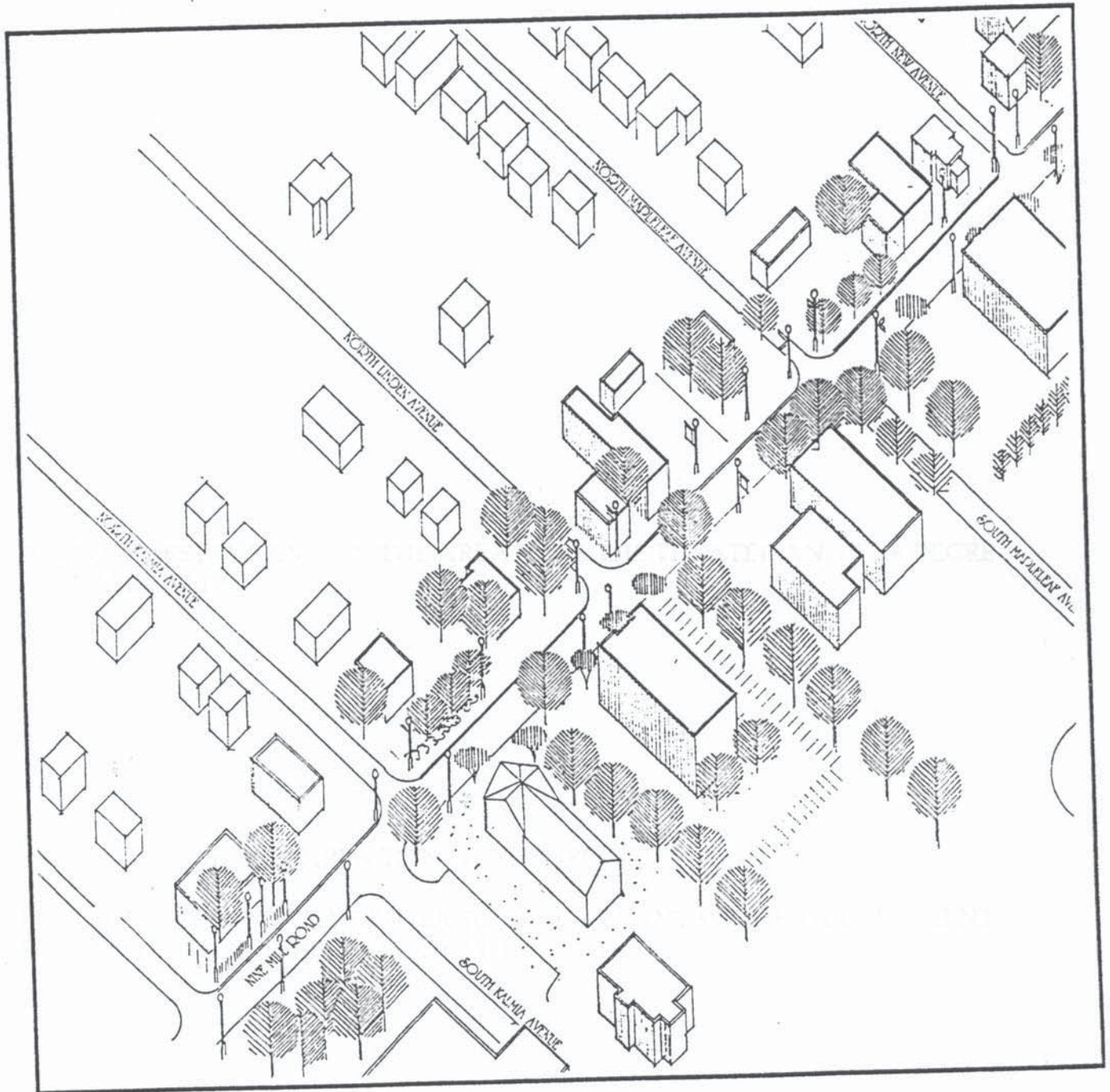


THE OPEN SPACE WOULD BE A GOOD LOCATION FOR A PARK-TOWN SQUARE DEVELOPMENT. A BAND STAND, PAVILION FOR LOCAL EVENTS, CONCERTS AND PROMOTIONS WOULD BE DESIRABLE. ITS DESIGN MIGHT BE RELATED TO THE STREETCAR STATION WHICH WAS ONCE LOCATED IN THIS AREA

EXTEND PARKING AREAS AS NECESSARY

REPLACE UNDESIRABLE USES WITH NEW ONES AS POSSIBLE.

DEVELOP FOCAL POINTS AT KEY LOCATIONS



PHASE TWO PLAN -FROM KALMIA TO NEW



PLAN FOR  
HIGHLAND SPRINGS  
IMPLEMENTATION

DEVELOP RESTAURANTS IN THE AREA NEAR THE THEATER AND THE RECREATIONAL FIELDS.

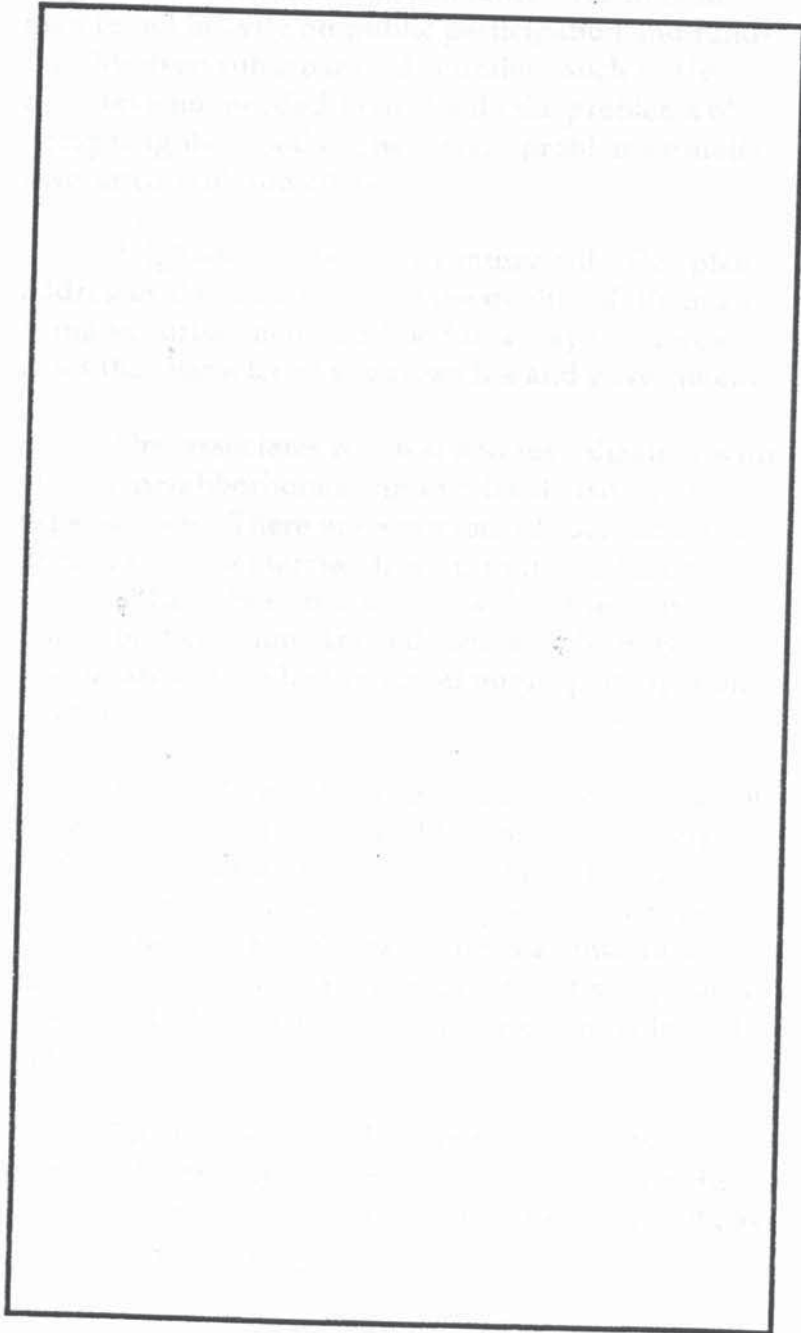
EXTEND A PARK LIKE AREA TO NINE MILE ROAD

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY CENTER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ADJACENT EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

# A PLAN FOR HIGHLAND SPRINGS

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA

## IMPLEMENTATION





## IMPLEMENTATION:

By using a combination of small scale public and private efforts, this plan will revitalize the commercial areas of Highland Springs.

This plan is developed in a period of limited public financial resources and in an area that is proud of its self reliance and independence. Traditional plan relied heavily on public participation and funding. Modern suburbanized counties, such as Henrico, have not needed to deal with the problems of aging neighborhoods. These were problems usually associated with old cities.

Highland Springs is a century old. This plan addresses the need to insure the quality of life in an aging suburban neighborhood in a way that recognizes the character of suburban life and government.

One associates renewal and revitalization with old city neighborhoods, and with extensive public expenditures. There are a number of successful residential and commercial districts in the Richmond area that have been revitalized without substantial public participation. Indeed, some of the most successful areas have had minimal public participation or cost.

Pride in a neighborhood is an essential part of the mix of elements that lead to a revitalized neighborhood. While architectural and historical significance has played a role in many places, it is not a requirement. While Shockoe Slip is architecturally notable, Carytown's architecture is undistinguished. A sense of identity and pride is the essential ingredient.

The residents of Highland Springs have this sense of belonging to a community. While Highland Springs was never an incorporated town, it has always been a strong community.

## I. Neighborhood Organization

Highland Spring's is a late 19th century real estate development, which was never incorporated as a town or a village. It is not like Ashland or Ginter Park. Henrico County distributes public facilities on a geographical basis, largely unrelated to subdivisions. Thus, while Highland Springs is well served by public facilities such as libraries, these are not located in the community itself.

This pattern is not unusual in the Richmond area. There are few incorporated areas in the metropolitan area. Community associations are the normal way the neighborhoods encourage community pride and revitalization. Groups of merchants and residents have been notably successful in efforts to increase public awareness of a neighborhood or district.

The West Avenue Association, founded in 1941, seems to be the oldest in the area, but other groups such as the Fan District and Shockoe Slip Associations have been notably successful. Some areas, such as Church Hill, were redeveloped with heavy financial participation of a private organization, the Historic Richmond Foundation. No such participation occurred in Shockoe Slip or in the Fan District. In these areas not a penny of public money was used except in street, sidewalk and street light improvements.

The community organization plays two major roles. The most important is to promote a district and to recruit development and investment. A second function is to represent the area's interests publicly. Expressing the neighborhood's needs and concerns at zoning hearings, and before governing bodies both reinforce the neighborhood's sense of identity and helps protect the neighborhood from deleterious developments.

You can make a strong case that neighborhoods and community organizations are the natural



leaders in the efforts to revitalize districts in the Richmond area. Private efforts have been more successful and more economical than government sponsored efforts. The comparison of neighborhood driven redevelopment with municipality or redevelopment agency sponsored development is not flattering to the official organizations.

The community organization will not transform a neighborhood overnight. Since they are made up of people who are residents of an area and are firmly committed to a district, they can make substantial improvements over a long time. The fifty years old, West Avenue Association and the Fan district Association, which is almost forty years old, have encouraged the transformation of their districts in small scale incremental ways.

Successful community groups' activities tend to follow well-defined patterns.

A. Community awareness.

1. Regular meetings
2. News Letters
3. Neighborhood Cleanup events
4. Recognizing improvement through awards programs

B. Promotion

1. Coordinated promotional activities
2. Developing neighborhood events and festivals

C. Representing the neighborhood in public forums

1. Board of Supervisors meetings
2. Zoning

The basic elements for a community organization in Highland Springs exist. The community's centennial was a successful event. The community meetings associated with this study have been well attended and the sense of community involvement is strong. The raw material of a community organization exists. The exact form that such an organization takes is up to the neighborhood and should not be pre defined by the county or the consultant. It might take the form of a broad based neighborhood wide organization, or a more closely focused merchants'

organization. Both have been successful in other Richmond area districts.

Clearly such an organization is needed. The carry through on the plan will be in the hands of the neighborhood. The implementation period of a plan is often a short period of two to three years. This reflects political reality but is unrelated the realities of revitalization. The private redevelopment of Shockoe Slip began in 1973; Church Hill in 1957.

There will be complete changes in personnel in the planning and development departments of the government in a twenty to thirty year period, not to mention several complete changes in the make up of elected governing boards. The community organization is the most likely group to carry through on the objective of neighborhood revitalization.

## II. REGULATIONS

### REGULATORY RELIEF

A number of the merchants and property owners of the area complained of the regulations that applied to the area by the normal zoning and building code. The problems that confront Highland Springs are similar to those experienced in many areas that were developed before the development of modern codes.

Highland Springs developed before set backs, parking, drainage and screening regulations. Many regulations that make sense on West Broad Street for a major shopping center, bear little relation to quarter acre developed sites on Nine Mile Road. We suggest that it is advantageous to the county for property owners to make improvements to Highland Springs, even if the result is not in full compliance with the current regulations.



Three objectives must be maintained:

1. The public must be protected against unsafe conditions,
2. The public must be protected against nuisances,
3. The property owners and merchants must be encouraged to improve their properties.

Legislation exists permitting special design districts in Virginia in some localities. These permit regulatory relief for specific districts. While the proto-type for such districts are for historic properties, the concept would seem to be applicable for older urban areas.

Such a district would be possible where the buildings are more than thirty years old, where a majority of the buildings do not meet current zoning regulation minimum requirements, and where property values are stable or declining. The objective of a district would be to reduce the regulatory hassle for both the residents and property owners and the county.

## SIGN REGULATIONS

Old sign which are no longer in use are a problem in older commercial districts. Unused signs from earlier uses dot the area. In some cases the sign is intact, in others the frame alone remains. We are suggesting that Highland Springs remove old signs as a community cleanup project as a part of this proposal.

It might be advantageous for the county change its sign regulations to avoid future problems with signs on vacant properties. The county could require that old signs, temporary lighting, and other display or identification elements be removed when a property is vacated. A regulation to this effect would both reduce the visual clutter of the area, but would eventually result in converting all of the signs in the area into conformance with current regulations

Fixtures that have exposed incandescent or fluorescent light bulbs should not be allowed except as

seasonal decorations. Broken bulbs and glass are an eyesore and a hazard where strings of lights have been left in place. Signs should be further limited to those which identify the actual business, not soft drink, beer or cigarette manufacturers.



## IMPLEMENTATION- A LIST OF TASKS

The following list sub-divides the plan for Highland Springs into discrete tasks and lists the persons or organizations that are responsible of the implementation of the task. It also briefly discusses the work of each item.

The implementation schedule for the public elements will depend on funding from a variety of sources. The vast majority of the elements in the plan can be done by individuals during the next year.

The biggest single item on the list is the relocation of utilities. This is also the elements that will take the most time to design and eventually achieve. Building and landscape improvements are not dependent on the utility work.

This design scheme is consciously designed to avoid depending on an individual item that, if not achieved, will ruin the plan. At public meetings we have emphasized that the efforts of individual merchants and landowners are the only essential items in this plan.

As long as there is participation from a core group of merchants, plan will become reality. We have already developed more detailed schemes for eleven properties in Highland Springs. If these proposals are implemented the visual character of the district will be changed.

**TASK:** New Sidewalks

**Links to other tasks:** The reconstruction of the side walks is associated with the proposed new street lights and the possible relocation of utilities.

**PHASING:** This task can be phased according to available funding.

**DESIGNED BY:** The intention is to replace the sidewalks in the existing configuration. There are several locations where additional curbing would be desirable to clarify traffic patterns.

**EXPEDITED BY:** The planning staff

**IMPLEMENTED BY:** The County of Henrico

**COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:**

- A. Most of the sidewalks in Highland Springs were installed in the early 20th century. The side walks show signs of age; they are irregular, broken and hazardous in some locations.
- B. The residents of Highland Spring mentioned the sidewalks as a major amenity, and noted the problems with them.
- C. No major redesign of the walks is necessary. However, it is desirable to take this opportunity to remove or relocate obstructions in the walks.
- D. It is preferable to replace entire blocks of sidewalks rather than repairing individual bad areas. The combination of old and new concrete will not have the beneficial visual impact of a new walk.
- E. Implementation will need to await resolution of the utility line relocation.

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

The earliest time that this work could be achieved is the fall



**TASK: New Street Lights**

Links to other tasks: New street lights are associated with the proposed rebuilding of the sidewalks.

**PHASING:** This task can be phased according to available funding.

**DESIGNED BY:** The planner has selected a fixture and has preliminary photometrics.

**EXPEDITED BY:** The planning staff

**COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:**

- A. Existing lights are provided by cobra head fixtures mounted on utility poles. Residents expressed a desire for better and more attractive lighting.
- B. The selected fixture is a period appearing unit. It is similar to those used in the Richmond area in the period 1914-39. It is historically appropriate for the area. The proposed luminaire is modern designed for efficiency and to avoid glare.
- C. Similar fixtures are manufactured by a number of companies. Competitive pricing is possible.
- D. We propose a fiberglass pole erected on the inside of the sidewalk where possible. The pole is economical, low maintenance and strong. This location will avoid conflicts with the utility lines.
- E. The pole is suited for supporting signs and banners.

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

The earliest this could be implemented would be the fall of 1994.

TASK: New Signs at entrances to Highland Springs.

Links to other tasks: This task is unrelated to other projects.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: A design is proposed by the planner.

EXPEDITED BY: A community group

IMPLEMENTED BY: A community group.

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. A new sign marking the entrance to Highland Springs is proposed by a women's club.
- B. The original design submitted by the club has been modified to relate to the neighborhood revitalization effort.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

This can be erected this summer.



TASK: New Street Signs

Links to other tasks: This task is related to streetlights.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: A design is proposed by the planner.

EXPEDITED BY: The planning staff

IMPLEMENTED BY: the County of Henrico

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. A new signs marking the streets of Highland Springs would be desirable to identify the limits of the neighborhood.
- B. The original design has been proposed by the planner. The design needs to be cleared with the appropriate county and state agencies.
- C. The sign can be mounted on the proposed new light poles or on the existing utility poles.
- D. This would be a good project for a community organization to undertake.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

These can be erected by the fall of 1994.

**TASK:** Building Facade Improvements.

**Links to other tasks:** This task is unrelated to other projects.

**PHASING:** This project can be implemented at any time.

**DESIGNED BY:** A design is proposed by the planner.

**EXPEDITED BY:** Individual property owners or merchants

**IMPLEMENTED BY:** Individuals.

**COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:**

- A. Most of the commercial buildings in Highland Springs are ageing and have not been renovated in many years.
- B. The architect will meet with each individual who expresses interest and will return with drawn proposals for the owner to evaluate.
- C. If appropriate the architect will provide a more detailed proposal for a specific scheme to guide the merchant in his or her improvement project.
- D. Proposal will be related to the financial abilities of the individual merchant. They will include both renovation proposals and clean up proposals.

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

These can be begun this spring.



TASK: Sign Removal Improvements.

Links to other tasks: This task is unrelated to other projects.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: Not applicable.

EXPEDITED BY: A community group, individual property owners or merchants

IMPLEMENTED BY: Individuals.

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. The changes of uses through the years have resulted in the accumulation of a number of old signs that are no longer used or useful. A similar situation exists with old lighting stands.
- B. These signs are both mounted on buildings and on poles.
- C. Many of these signs or standards can be removed by individual merchants.
- D. This would be an ideal project for a community cleanup day. The area has many of the skills needed to remove the signs. Towing trucks, welding and similar skills are all associated with the area.

E.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

This could be undertaken this spring.

TASK: Trash Pickup, Cleanup Day

Links to other tasks: This task is unrelated to other projects.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: Not applicable.

EXPEDITED BY: A community group, individual property owners or merchants

IMPLEMENTED BY: Individuals, the County could help by providing trash trucks.

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. Residents mentioned problems of trash accumulation and overgrown lots.
- B. A neighborhood cleanup day would be a desirable event. A number of neighborhood groups in the area sponsor these days on a regular basis.
- C. While this would be good for the Nine Mile Road corridor, such a day, or series of days would be good for the entire district, including the residential areas.
- D. Sponsorship would be through a businessmen association or community groups.
- E. This event would ideally become a regular event.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

This could be undertaken this spring.



**TASK: Community Organization**

**Links to other tasks:** This task is unrelated to other projects.

**PHASING:** This project can be implemented at any time.

**DESIGNED BY:** Not applicable.

**EXPEDITED BY:** A community group.

**IMPLEMENTED BY:** Individuals, the County could help by providing organizational advice.

**COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:**

- A. The neighborhood is has never been organized. This type of organization has been successful in promoting a number of Richmond area neighborhoods and districts.
- B. This could take the form of a neighborhood or merchants' association.
- C. This would serve as a way to promote the area and recruit new merchants.

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

This could be undertaken this spring.

TASK: Landscape Improvements.

Links to other tasks: This task is unrelated to other projects.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: A design is proposed by the planner.

EXPEDITED BY: Individual property owners or merchants

IMPLEMENTED BY: Individuals.

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. there has been little effort given to landscape in Highland Spring. There are no n Highland Springs are ageing and have not been renovated in many years.
- B. The architect will meet with each individual who expressses interes and will return with drawn proposals for the owner to evaluate.
- C. If appropriate the architect will provide a more detailed proposal for a specific scheme to guide the merchant in his or her improvement project.
- D. Proposal will be related to the financial abilities of the individual merchant. They will include both renovation proposals and clean up proposals.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

These can be begun this spring.



TASK: Private Parking Improvements.

Links to other tasks: This task is unrelated to other projects.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: A design will be proposed by the planner for individual merchants.

EXPEDITED BY: Individual property owners or merchants

IMPLEMENTED BY: Individuals.

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. Parking areas are typically in poor repair and haphazard in design.
- B. The architect will meet with each individual who expresses interest and will return with drawn proposals for parking improvements for the owner to evaluate.
- C. The proposal will be related to the financial abilities of the individual merchant.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

These can be begun this spring.

TASK: Housing for the elderly

Links to other tasks: This task is unrelated to other projects.

PHASING: This project can be implemented at any time.

DESIGNED BY: This will be designed by a private developer.

IMPLEMENTED BY: A non-profit community Group.

COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- A. The neighborhood is gradually getting older. It would be desirable to find housing for older persons who would like to stay in their community.
- B. Community oriented housing is usually sponsored by church or community organizations. This insures that the project will directly meet the needs of the community.
- C. There are several possible sites within Highland Springs. The configuration of properties is such that a large project would not be possible. Ideally, one or two smaller sites would be available to accommodate this need.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

There is no schedule for this project.