



SELECTBOARD – SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

MEMS GREENSPACE / MEMORIAL AVENUE /  
SCHOOL STREET PROJECT

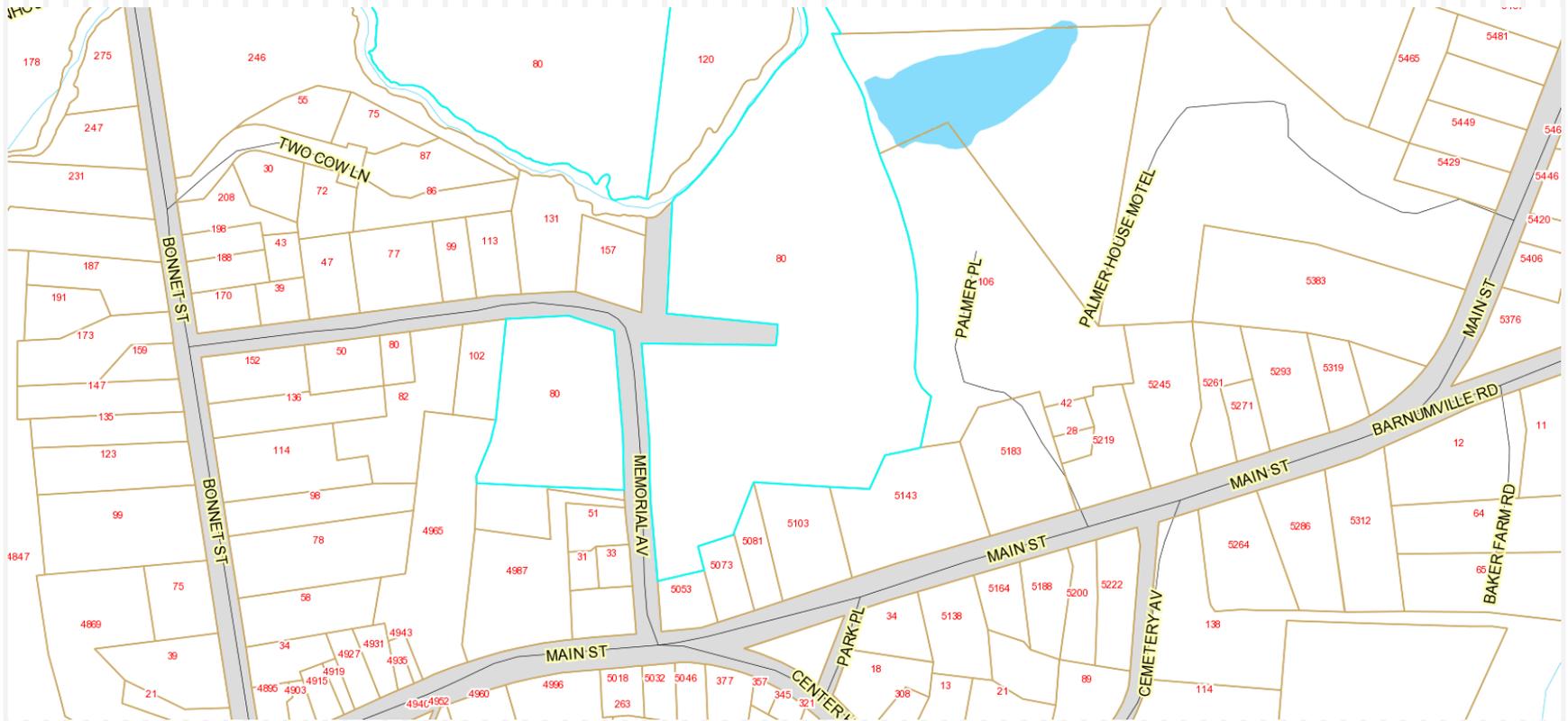
Hosted by the Manchester School District and Town of Manchester, Vermont  
November 29, 2016 - Jackie Parks Room @ MEMS

# Overall Project Goals



- **#1 Priority! Improve student, pedestrian, and vehicle safety**
- Improve overall functionality and use of the properties collectively owned by the School District and Town
- Enhance the overall streetscape and landscape around MEMS and School Street neighborhood

# Properties - Tax Map



# Properties - Overview



GRAPHIC SCALE



EXISTING CONFIGURATION  
MANCHESTER ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL  
NOVEMBER 18, 2016



# The Project...



- Project is a collaboration between MEMS staff and Town staff, Town engineer and BCRC staff.
- Two well-attended public meetings so far.
- Changes made based on comments: relocation of parking lot and recess area, 8 foot wide bike and pedestrian path along Memorial Avenue, etc.
- Sidewalk study funded by VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant: School Street – Sidewalk; Bonnet Street – Pedestrian Crossing; Main Street – Pedestrian Crossing

# Pedestrian Concerns / Issues



- No existing sidewalks on School Street
- No pedestrian crossing at intersection of School Street and Memorial Avenue
- Existing crosswalk at Main Street:
  - Poor visibility (north)
  - Main Street curve
  - Angled alignment
  - No bump-outs
  - Parking spots on Main Street (hide crosswalk)
- No existing crosswalk at Bonnet Street

# Memorial Avenue Pedestrian Concerns



- Sidewalk on Memorial Avenue:
  - Too narrow (footpath)
  - East side of road only
- Crosswalks on Memorial Avenue: mid-block
- No crosswalk at intersection of School and Memorial (curve)
- Street lighting inadequate - limited by GMP utility poles
- No designated drop-off area @ MEMS

# Memorial Avenue Roadway Concerns



- Intersection of Memorial & School
  - Curve (not 90 degree intersection)
  - No vehicle control (STOP signs)
  - Higher speeds
- Pavement width – too wide = SPEED
- Two-Way vs. One-Way Traffic = SPEED
- Speed humps – may not be ideal solution
- Inadequate on-street parking
  - Wrong side of street
  - None on southern half of Memorial

# Memorial Avenue Roadway Concerns



- Streetscaping - minimal
- Dying trees – Norway Maples
- Utility poles in Memorial Ave.
- Fence between street and field needs repair
- Poor roadway grading – high crown
- Poor roadway drainage
- School Street - no municipal sewer and smaller lots

# MEMS Outdoor Space Concerns



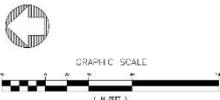
- Current athletic fields are inadequate
  - Bowen Field
    - Size is good – 100+ yards
    - Used too much (recess), poor condition
  - Memorial Avenue Field (front field)
    - Too small (80 yards)
    - Too wet, poor access (road crossing and roadway and parking lot on three sides)
  - Field Behind MEMS
    - Too small (60 yards)
    - Uneven, low, poor condition
    - Goal faces parking lot (broken windshields)
- Greenspace behind MEMS disrupted by MEMS parking lot
- Basketball Court
  - Potentially encroaching on private easement, too close to road and bus lane
- Playground Equipment – out of date (separate committee)

# MEMS and Town Parking Concerns



- **MEMS Parking Lot**
  - In need of repair (cracking)
  - Size is insufficient for current MEMS staff (100) and visitors
  - Used only during school hours and school event
  - Co-mingled with bus drop-off
  - Not currently maintained by Town DPW
- **Town Parking Lot**
  - Also in need of repair
  - Inefficient layout (loss of parking spaces)
  - Used by abutters (dumpster, crates, drainage, etc.)
  - Poor drainage (plus water from Rite Aid roof)
  - No streetscape
  - Too small for peak seasons
- **Historical Main Street may not have adequate public parking**
- **No downtown Park and Ride lot for commuters**

# Proposed Project - Overview



PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION  
MANCHESTER ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL  
NOVEMBER 18, 2016



# Project Component – Dedicated Drop-Off Area

- Establishes dedicated drop-off circle slightly south of front door of MEMS.
- Relocates thru road (Memorial Ave.) away from MEMS to the south and west to make room for drop-off area.
- Established three-way STOP at intersection of Memorial Avenue and drop-off area to slow traffic.
- Establishes dedicated bus drop-off area (no cars) north of MEMS gym.



# Project Component – Better Crosswalks

- New crosswalk from School Street across Bonnet Street.
- Improved crosswalks at Main Street and Memorial Ave. – bump-outs, elimination of parking spaces on northern side of Main Street and closing of Maplefields curb cut onto Memorial Ave.
- New crosswalks at drop-off roadway and Memorial Ave., bus drop-off area and School Street parking lot.



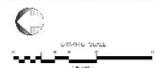
# Project Component – Recess Area / Park

- Consolidates recess activities in the northern portion of the Memorial Ave. field.
- Includes kid-friendly sports field (50 by 30 yards with smaller goals), basketball court, playground for older students, 4-square courts and sitting area.
- Recess area accessible from bus drop-off area, car drop-off area, MEMS front door and Memorial Ave. parking lot without crossing roadway!
- Pre-K and K playground to remain behind MEMS in fenced area (per code).



# Project Component – Better Athletic Fields

- MEMS currently has three fields: Bowen Field (110 by 50 yards - soccer), Front Field (80 by 50 yards – field hockey) and Back Field (60 by 40 yards - soccer).
- US Youth Soccer recommends 100 by 50 yards (minimum); field hockey 100 by 50 yards (regulation).
- Bowen Field (only regulation field) is currently in very poor condition due to excessive use as recess field and athletic field.
- MEMS has agreement to use Town's McClellan and Eckhardt Fields for games.



# Project Component – Increased Parking

- Convert parking lot behind MEMS to greenspace – not used on weekends or during summer months; eliminate Town parking lot behind Rite Aid (to be sold).
- Replaced with two parking lots – Memorial Ave. lot with 73 spaces and School Street lot with 69 spaces, plus 11 spaces along Memorial Ave.; 153 spaces in total (increase)
- Memorial Ave. parking lot designed to be used by downtown Main Street businesses on weekends and during summer months.



# Project Component – Better Ped and Bike Access

- Includes sidewalk along School Street (south side of road). Currently no sidewalks. Roadway is about 20 feet wide. Too narrow for cars and peds.
- Wider sidewalk (8' wide) along Memorial Ave. (east side) with better connection to Rec. Park and Riley Rink. Dual use -- bikes and pedestrians.
- New sidewalk along Memorial Ave. (west side) to connect parking lot to downtown.



# Project Component – Streetscape

- Includes installation of standalone streetlights along Memorial Avenue, Memorial Avenue parking lot and section of School Street. Currently utilizes GMP poles – not effective for night events like games, concerts, etc.
- Narrows Memorial Ave. (too wide = fast) and eliminates current intersection @ School Street and Memorial Ave.



# Project Component – Landscaping

- Project includes replacement of dead/dying trees (Norway Maples) along Memorial Ave.
- Socialization area (benches, picnic tables and trees) in front of MEMS front door.
- Relocates storage shed near School Street parking lot.



# Cost of the Project



- PRELIMINARY PROJECT COST ESTIMATE: ~\$1.5 MILLION\*
- Does not include contingency.

\* Does not include playground – fundraised by Friends of MEMS

# Funding the Project



- Funding the Solution:
  - Better Connection planning grant up to \$67,500 (Town)
  - Park & Ride grant up to \$80,000
  - VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant (Town)
  - Mitigation park agreement (Bank Building)
  - Surplus Town parking lot possible (Town)
  - CIRC Fund (Town)
  - Bonding (Town and/or School)
  - General Fund and School Fund
  - Fundraising: playgrounds by Friends of MEMS

# Next Steps...



- Three public meetings thus far.
- Three options:
  - ▣ Do Nothing
  - ▣ Amend / Change / Phase the Project
  - ▣ Move Forward
- If “Move Forward” option is selected:
  - ▣ Town – MEMS: who is doing what and paying for what?
  - ▣ Develop funding plan (see previous slide)
  - ▣ Design phase (funding @ 2017 Town Meeting?)
  - ▣ Construction phase. When? Phased?