



Ledyard Town Center Committee

Report to the Town Council

September 12, 2007

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Vision Statement

The overall goal for Ledyard Center is to create a vibrant New England village focused on an attractive Town Green. The idea of a village implies an intensification and mixture of commercial, residential, and civic uses. It also implies a strong “sense of place” with harmonious streetscapes, walkways, and plantings. The Town Green is central to our vision because it will build upon social traditions while encouraging appropriate businesses. The density of a village allows for the critical mass necessary for economic success and for a pedestrian environment.

With its own unique character, we hope that Ledyard Center will become a destination for shopping and for services, a home for diverse age groups, and a convenient gathering place for the broader community.

In pursuit of this vision, the Committee is pleased to present this report, and requests that all land use committees review their guidelines and regulations in light of the recommendations in this report.

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Executive Summary

The Ledyard Town Center Committee was formed by a Town Council resolution in January 2006 and charged the committee with developing recommendations for the future development of Ledyard Center. The committee met throughout 2006 and 2007 to review past plans for Ledyard Center, to frame a vision for the future of Ledyard Center, to work with a team from the University of Connecticut meeting with interested residents and organizations to develop and discuss conceptual plans, to meet with interested developers, and finally, to frame the committees recommendations for moving forward with a plan.

Ledyard has developed plans for development in past years– 1965 and again in 1985, and the town center’s development progress has roughly conformed to these plans, e.g. the construction of the first leg of Fairway Drive, the construction of a new firehouse, installation of municipal water, and the very recent commercial development of the Dime Bank, Village Market and Valentino’s Restaurant.

With the growth of tourism and entertainment in the region, and ever-increasing traffic counts on Route 117, the pace of development in Ledyard Center will almost certainly increase. With these facts in mind, it is better to have a Plan of Development in place in order to be prepared for development when it comes, rather than to have development forced upon the town.

Further, the town has property that is presently unused and available (the former Ledyard Center firehouse), it owns property that is under-utilized (the fairgrounds), and it has a school building in need of renovation or replacement (Ledyard Center School). Future use of these properties should be incorporated in the overall Plan of Development for Ledyard Center as a means of leveraging those properties to attract and control development in Ledyard Center to fit with Ledyard’s vision of an attractive New England town center.

The committee proposes that Ledyard attract additional destination retail businesses to support the town’s vision of creating a village center with a sense of place and community. Toward that end, the committee recommends enhancing the existing fairgrounds as a Town Green that can support the Ledyard Fair along with additional community activities such as a farmers market, car shows, and town festivals. Private property bordering the Town Green will then become more attractive to retailers.

The town may at some point consider selling Ledyard Center School for retail development if the business environment supports interest in the property, and if the school can suitably be relocated within the Ledyard Center Village District. Fairway Drive should be completed and connected with Route 117 to present a sense of discovery, to support retail business and provide connectivity to the Town Green.

The greatest obstacle to any development in Ledyard Center is the lack of municipal sewer. However, developers could propose building their own plant and greatly expand Ledyard’s tax base. The committee proposes pursuing a public-private partnership with a responsible developer who will be amenable to building a plant and turning it over to the town in connection with a development plan that includes a balance of retail, professional office and residential space, with limits on the number of residential units. Such control

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can only be obtained through use of public investment in the development of a wastewater treatment plan.

The committee recommends the town retain the former Ledyard Center firehouse and adjacent town-owned buildings and continue to evaluate additional municipal uses for these buildings because there are too many constraints on selling or leasing them, as well as the possibility of diminishing the value of the entire property adjacent to Town Hall. An option is to demolish the buildings if parking space is determined to be a better use for the property.

Upon receipt of comments from the Town Council, the committee proposes to meet with each land use commission in Ledyard, as well as the Board of Education and the Parks and Recreation Department to present our vision and discuss specific elements pertaining to their charter.

The committee wishes to acknowledge the excellent work done by the UCONN team in the course of this project. Professor Alexopoulos was instrumental in helping organize and facilitate public meetings, and both he and his team worked hard to complete several schematic drawings of conceptual plans for Ledyard Center, capping off their role in the project with a thoughtful, creative and innovative presentation including a 3-D animated scenario for how a build-out might actually appear.

Finally, the committee wishes to thank Ledyard's Director of Planning Brian Palaia for his many evenings attending our meetings, working with UCONN to provide direction, and in researching and providing the background data for this report.

Respectfully submitted, for the Ledyard Town Center Committee

William D. Saums, Chair

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Mission Statement

To help guide its study the committee adopted the following mission statement:

Assess unique opportunity of available property in Ledyard Center to meet community needs and improve Ledyard Center.

- Develop recommendations for the future development or redevelopment of Ledyard Center:
- Prepare a conceptual design recommendation for the future Ledyard Center;
- Identify possible funding methods for Ledyard Center improvements;
- Recommend capital projects necessary to implement the future development or redevelopment of Ledyard Center.

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Background

In January of 2006, the Town Council resolved to establish a Ledyard Town Center Committee (LTCC) to plan for the future development of Ledyard Center. The LTCC is composed of nine members appointed by the Ledyard Town Council. Its members are representative of various Ledyard land-use commissions, two Town Council members and two members-at-large. The Town Council charged the committee with the following responsibility, authorizing it as follows:

- To develop recommendations for the future development and or redevelopment of Ledyard Center;
- To review previous sketches, photographs, and possible design scenarios of Ledyard Center, and prepare a conceptual design recommended for the future Ledyard Center;
- To identify possible funding methods for Ledyard Center improvements;
- To recommend capital projects necessary to implement the formal development or redevelopment of Ledyard Center.

The LTCC reviewed past plans (1965 and 1984) and studies regarding Ledyard Center, observing that those studies advocated development of a town green, considering development along the lines of a traditional New England setting important.

Ledyard is in a unique situation regarding development of its center, and the differences between the development climate now and during past studies are as follows:

- The center is located near several major resort and entertainment centers:
 - Foxwoods Resort and Casino
 - The Mohegan Sun Casino
 - Mystic and its surrounding attractions
- Ledyard Center is also situated on a direct traffic route between the former Norwich Hospital site and Interstate Route 95. Should that site become another major entertainment center, route 117 can expect significant increases in traffic counts.
- Traffic in Ledyard Center is presently 11,000 cars per days and is expected to grow to 15,000 cars per day (source: State of CT DOT) within a few years.
- Ledyard Center is now supplied by municipal water, and will soon complete the long-awaited Route 117 water main to Ledyard Center
- Ledyard townspeople possess significant buying power that, due to lack of retail services in Ledyard, is currently spent in other surrounding communities
- Development interest in Ledyard Center appears to be growing as evidenced by recent development in Ledyard Center including the new Dime Saving Bank, the new Village Market, and the expansion of Valentino's Restaurant. All were designed to enhance the New England look of Ledyard Center.

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- The town owns significant property in the center of town. (See attached description of town-owned property, “Ledyard Center - Town Owed Property Current Assessment”.)
 - The former Ledyard Center firehouse is vacant and available for re-use as a result of construction of the new Ledyard Center Firehouse.
 - Ledyard Center School is in need of replacement or renovation.
- Despite increased events hosted by the Fair Association, the fairgrounds are still not used to their potential. Improvements to the fairgrounds could enable that space to support the annual Ledyard Fair while providing an adjoining park-like setting as an enhancement to retail businesses desiring to locate in an attractive New England town center like Ledyard. (See attached examples of communities that closely associate a town green with retail stores, “Town Green Community Enhancement to that also Enhance Retail Businesses”.)
- The town’s recent acquisition of the Clark Farm property (several miles north of Ledyard Center) provides additional space that could complement Ledyard Center development by future relocation of some town facilities.

The Committee worked with the University of Connecticut School Of Landscape Architecture’s professor John Alexopoulos to assess Ledyard Center’s potential, and in the process compiled a list of pros and cons regarding the attractiveness of Ledyard Center for development. The assessment resulted in many positive aspects; however, the lack of sewer is a prime inhibitor to growth and development.

Based upon its proximity to tourist centers and casino resort areas, Ledyard Center could use its town-owned properties including the fairgrounds to foster economic development in the center of town in the form of commercial retail and professional office space. By enhancing the fairgrounds and creating a town green, Ledyard Center could continue to host the Ledyard Fair and offer additional town green amenities to the types of retail businesses envisioned when the Ledyard Center Village District Zoning Regulations were first enacted. With their proximity to a town green and with frontage along Route 117, Ledyard Center School, the former firehouse and town hall sites could become prime retail property in the future. The fairgrounds could and should be enhanced with better landscaping and stone walls instead of chain link fencing to make it more attractive from the roadway. The fairgrounds can also be improved to connect the Ledyard Center along Route 117 through to the Fairway Drive development area, while better accommodating current and additional uses for the fairgrounds.

Looking at the potential for Ledyard Center the Committee compiled a list of Pros and Cons.

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<i>Ledyard Center PROs and CONs</i>		
PRO	CON	Comments
Municipal water	Water tower will provide water pressure but may not aesthetically mix well with Ledyard Center development	
	No sewer service	Limits residential growth, but also restricts commercial appeal
	Ledyard Village district Regulations in place	Ensures high standard for new development; adds cost to development
Former Ledyard Center Firehouse vacant	Limited parking available.	Opportunity for planned development
	Ledyard Center School is in need of renovation	Provides opportunity to consider options in Ledyard Center, renovations or new school would be costly, strong local ties to school
New Village Market opened in May 2006		Does not comply with village district regulations; but along with Dime savings Bank, could provide foundation for further development that meets Village District Regulations
	Groton water study to protect source for reservoir includes Ledyard Center	Restrictions may preclude development need to be discussed with Groton Utilities
Town owns fairgrounds		Significant parcel of property
	SCWA well restrictions near new firehouse may impede development	It will be difficult to permit activity in this area while this is active source for water supply.
Population in and around Ledyard Center has increased		Better able to support businesses
Traffic in Ledyard Center has increased		Better able to support businesses but more congestion

In the spring of 2007 the committee briefed interested Ledyard stakeholder organizations on its findings and conceptual plans. Most groups were supportive, but; lacking details, they were at times noncommittal. Some looked to maintain the status quo; while others were concerned that inertia or opposition would prevent Ledyard from moving forward.

The Committee worked with the UCONN team to consider several build-out scenarios. The UCONN team proposed several versions of a combined retail and residential build-out surrounding a central green space. The Committee commended the School of Landscape Architecture for its work and noted that it portrays a dense retail and residential development that would establish a sense of community within the center as well as achieving the desired New England look. The Ledyard Town center Committee is not, however, prepared to endorse the density portrayed by the UCONN renderings, instead envisioning a less dense build-out, primarily due to economic factors and the lack of sewer (see attached “Ledyard Center Build-out Scenario”). The UCONN study does recommend leveraging town-owned property to create a New England-type center using

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open space and a town green, with which the committee agrees. The committee also believes that market forces and the Ledyard Center Village District regulations will determine the scope and the pace of the Ledyard Center build-out.

Meeting minutes of the Ledyard Town Center Committee are attached in Appendix B. Note that Mr. William LaRoue, who resides at 760 Colonel Ledyard Highway, attended most meetings and offered constructive comments.

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Recommendations for Ledyard Center

The committee proposes that Ledyard attract additional destination retail businesses to improve Ledyard's commercial tax base and to create a sense of place and community for the town center. Destination retail businesses are not chain or big box stores, because chains and big box stores are not unique. Chains are in fact, homogenous and designed to be located where traffic counts are already high... Destination retail businesses are unique, locally owned businesses that bring customers to Ledyard Center from neighboring towns, and the revenue dollars from these businesses remain in the community, rather than flowing back to corporation shareholders in other states.

Destination requires a critical mass: A number of unique retail businesses so that once here, customers will shop longer if given more choices. Destination retail attracts more destination retail business, once established.

Ledyard Center Village District is already zoned for multi-family/condominiums and mixed use. Destination retail businesses will also find multi-family zoning attractive because it supports the critical mass of customers needed to support a village design with foot traffic.

Examples of destination retail businesses include

Concepts	Examples
Old-fashioned soda fountain	Michaels Dairy
Upscale restaurant	
Boutique clothing store	Pentangle
Boutique toy store	Mystical Toys
Community farm co-op	
Old fashioned movie theater	Niantic Theatre
Bookstore/coffeehouse	Green Marble

Businesses like these bring a sense of community and place, with locations that provide entertainment, shopping, food and drink. The Ledyard Town Center Committee's specific recommendations to support this vision are as follows:

Recommendations for a Town Green

Develop a Town Green on town-owned property adjacent to Colonel Ledyard Highway* presently used for the Ledyard Fair. In developing the Town Green, the committee believes a Town Green will:

- enhance the town center
- provide a central focus around which development can occur consistent with Ledyard Center Village District regulations, and
- extend use of the fairgrounds for community events including the annual Ledyard Fair.

The committee considers retention of existing structures such as the Morgan Barn and Holdridge Pavilion important. The Committee also believes that by filing an application with the DEP and Army Corps of Engineers (if they determine their jurisdiction is applicable), the wetlands on the east side of the fairgrounds could either be relocated or

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enhanced with interpretive signage and walking paths as a complementary asset to the Town Green.

Specific recommendations regarding the Town Green include:

- Small improvements, such as adding top soil, a flag pole, tree plantings, and replacement of the chain link fence along Route 117 with a stone wall, can quickly enhance the fairgrounds with the more attractive appearance of a Town Green.
- With some landscaping and better turf, the Town Green would be an attractive setting for farmer's markets, craft fairs, antique shows and car shows; all of which would further enable support business in Ledyard Center.
- The Town's Plan of Development generally supports a town green that would enhance the potential for Ledyard Center development.
- The existing historic former one room Ledyard Center Schoolhouse is already an attractive asset. Its use could be extended to additional community events.
- The existing exercise track and playscape should also remain as part of the Town Green setting with additional turf and supporting landscaping.
- Walkways and greenways should connect the Town Green to, and encourage build-out of, Fairway Drive and surrounding areas. Examples of such connections are included in the UCONN conceptual drawings.

Descriptions of Town Greens that relate to the potential for Ledyard Center are included in Appendix D.

* (from now on referred to as Route 117 to distinguish it from Colonel Ledyard Highway east of the traffic light at Route 117)

Recommendations for Roadways in Ledyard Center

The Committee recommends the construction of wide boulevards for new streets in Ledyard Center and perhaps for existing roads in order to maximize on-street parking while encouraging unique landscaping.

Zoning Regulations for the Ledyard Center Village District do not allow parking lots in front of businesses. This requirement conforms to the vision of a village center. The committee believe that a village center is distinct from a typical shopping center in that storefronts should be brought up to the sidewalks rather than be placed beyond a sea of parking lots.

On the other hand, retailers prefer to have parking in front of their shops. It offers convenience to their customers and gives a sense of vitality to their businesses.

The answer is to maximize on-street parking by allowing face-in or angled parking on the street. In some places this concept could be further enhanced by having a median divider in the street with additional face-in parking. The median strip and sections in the parking area could be landscaped with trees, flowers and grass.

In most situations, additional parking would occur behind the stores, but the businesses would be given credit for the on-street parking in their count of minimum required parking spaces.

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Stockbridge, MA, Litchfield, CT and many other New England towns use this concept safely now in their attractive village centers.

The committee recommends completing Fairway Drive in the concept plans developed with UCONN, extending it to the north and then west to connect with Route 117 north of Lou's Enterprises. The developer of the property should construct the road to town specifications and then turn it over to the town as part of their application to develop the property.

A combination of the wide boulevard concept is envisioned near the area of Ledyard Center School, while turning lanes might be more appropriate further north, especially at the proposed intersection of Fairway Drive.

Recommendations for Ledyard Center School

The Ledyard Center School is a 40,000 square foot, single story elementary school originally built in 1948. It consists of 24 full classrooms, 4 offices and 1 multi-purpose room of approximately 3,500 square feet. The building is structurally sound, but is in need of significant interior and exterior renovations in the next 5 to 10 years to meet educational needs. The renovations required are significant enough in scope that replacement of the building is considered as a reasonable and practical alternative.

The building occupies a 24 acre site with 800 feet of frontage on the east side of Route 117. It is thought that this site could be desirable for commercial development. According to local retail business owners, the school also has a significant and positive effect on retail traffic in Ledyard Center in support of these businesses, and any plan to change the location of the school should be carefully evaluated to make sure that such a change is not harmful to existing retail businesses.

Therefore, the committee recommends that Ledyard Center School should not be re-located for at least 5 years, and possibly not even 10 years or until traffic counts have increased to better support existing businesses. At that time, the school could be replaced with a new building located on other town-owned property in Ledyard Center. The preferred site would be adjacent to the new fire house on Fairway Drive, depending on the number of acres available to support parking and playing fields. Since the new school would be adjacent to the new town green, the school parking and play areas should be planned together with the new Town Green. The current school building could be converted to commercial use, after a new facility is constructed. The architectural character of the current façade could be considered for retention as future generations might find this style of building becoming rarer than it is today.

A second choice for the new school site might be the former Clark Farm property; however, relocating the school there will have a negative impact on retail traffic in Ledyard Center.

The committee recommends that renovation of the existing facility not be ruled out for these reasons:

- If traffic counts do not continue to grow, moving the school will likely cause harmful effect on existing local retail business

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- If the net cost of renovation is lower than replacement, renovation then becomes the more attractive option. Demolishing some sections of the building and replacing them with a two story addition might better serve the needs of the school community.

Recommendations for the Former Ledyard Center Firehouse, Town Hall Annex and Related Buildings

The firehouse presents multiple challenges, and no clear alternatives. While the firehouse stands unused, it represents property immediately adjacent to the Town Hall that could be used for expansion in future years. Further, residents and employees use the parking lot behind the firehouse day and night for overflow parking.

Any long term lease agreement should stipulate that use of the parking lot behind the building is not permitted, that the building itself and the land immediately in front is the only property subject to lease. In addition, the firehouse property contains a right-of-way paralleling the south border to the property behind it.

The building itself is not particularly attractive or historic, nor is it particularly useful for anything other than storage or as a garage. Therefore, demolition is also a viable option in that it would provide additional parking for public use.

The Ledyard Town Center Committee makes the following recommendations regarding the firehouse, Town Hall Annex and adjacent buildings:

- Retain the firehouse and the Town Hall Annex unless market conditions and/or development opportunities arise that would further enhance Ledyard Center and at the same time provide new and improved facilities at a different location.
- Investigate alternative municipal uses for the firehouse, such as a community center, police station or expansion of administrative offices.
- If no use exists or is contemplated for the former ambulance center and small garage west of the parking lot behind Town Hall, demolish these structures to create additional parking. Further, additional parking could be obtained by paving some of the unused property near the grassy area behind the firehouse.
- The committee believes that since all of these buildings are adjacent to each other, that to split up the property now diminishes its value for the future, either for municipal use or for resale.
- Thinking in the very long term, Ledyard's existing municipal buildings might need to be consolidated into a single municipal facility. Options for location of this facility include the present Town Hall property, the current Ledyard Center School and the Clark Farm property.

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Recommendations for Wastewater Treatment

The Committee recommends that the Town negotiate a partnership with the private sector to bring municipal sewers to Ledyard Center.

The Committee has come to understand that a village development, as proposed in our vision statement, is not possible without municipal sewers. The use of on-site septic systems will result in buildings being spaced out to the extent that they do not create a village. In most parts of Ledyard Center the soil conditions are problematic for leaching fields and there is a relatively high water table. Moreover, we find that about half of Ledyard Center is within the Groton Reservoir watershed, which heightens the standards for treatment of waste and storm water.

The April, 2006 Ledyard Center Sewer Feasibility Study conducted by Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. found that a build-out of Ledyard Center would bring an estimated flow of between 169,000 and 245,000 gallons per day. These engineers could not identify any way to accommodate more than 15,000 gallons per day using on-site (alternative treatment facilities a/k/a package/pocket plants) facilities. This calculation was based upon the use of packaged wastewater treatment facilities located in Ledyard Center. Another alternative explored by this study was to collect and pump this effluent to the Highlands Wastewater Treatment Facility. That was estimated to cost between 7.7 and 12.4 million dollars, with some added unknowns about the capacity of the current settlement fields.

A third conceptual option recently put forth by a developer is to pipe the effluent down Stoddards Wharf Road to a new high-tech facility and release the treated water into the Thames River. That alternative is estimated by the developer to cost 10 million dollars.

We are not recommending that the Town move ahead on its own to build municipal sewers in Ledyard Center. We think that it is impractical to expect that the Town taxpayers would approve such a large expense to bring sewers to one small section of the community. However, in our talks with potential developers, we believe that private investors would be willing to put forth nearly all of the expense of these sewers if they could receive assurances from the Town regarding their plans and if they were allowed the use of some Town-owned land. Of course, the Town should insist that it will end up as the owner of all sewer facilities after the investors have recouped their costs. Also, there should be solid legal guarantees in the form of cash bonds posted by the developer that the new plant and its connecting facilities will be built to state standards for wastewater treatment and building construction quality in order to prevent a repeat of the Highlands treatment plant takeover at town expense.

The committee also recommends that the town continue to participate in the Groton watershed study to ensure that state officials are aware that Ledyard Center's commercial growth is important to Ledyard's economic health.

The committee also recommends that the town pursue obtaining grants to help pay for sewer service in Ledyard Center in a public-private partnership to help protect regional water quality and enhance Ledyard Center's economic potential.

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Implementation of the Recommendations: Next Steps

- Upon receipt of comments from the Town Council, the committee should meet with each land use commission in Ledyard, as well as the Board of Education and the Parks and Recreation Department to present our vision and discuss specific elements pertaining to their charter.
- Ensure the Town's Plan of Development supports the Town Green concept.
- Begin implementing the recommendations by developing landscape designs to improve the fairgrounds and secure funding to construct the changes.
- Pursue state and federal green funds to support development of the Town Green.
- Publicize the town's intention to develop the fairgrounds into a Town Green that would be complementary to businesses and residents.
- Assign responsibility to a town commission for maintaining the Ledyard Center Plan of Development and preparing the capital improvement plan necessary to support it and move the plan forward.
- Determine the market value of town-owned property in Ledyard Center. Assessments should include the current value and potential value after Ledyard Center improvements.
- Determine replacement costs for the Ledyard Center School in accessible but not prime retail/commercial areas.
- Determine replacement costs for the Town Hall in accessible but not prime retail/commercial areas.
- Explore a public-private partnership to bring municipal sewers to Ledyard Center.

**Ledyard Town Center Committee
Report to the Town Council**

Appendix A

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A LEDYARD TOWN CENTER COMMITTEE

Whereas, the Ledyard Town Council recognizes a timely opportunity to plan for development of Ledyard Center since the town has vacated the former Ledyard Center Firehouse, has cognizance of other land and property in Ledyard Center, and significant maintenance for Ledyard Center School has been identified by the Board of Education, and Ledyard Center is one of the commercial centers in Ledyard, and development of Ledyard Center will encourage economic development and improve the spatial definition and character of the town center.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that there is hereby established a Ledyard Town Center Committee to be composed of eleven members appointed by the Ledyard Town Council. Those members shall be representative as follows:

- One member from the Economic Development Commission
- One member from the Planning Commission
- One member from the Zoning Commission
- One member from the Parks & Recreation Commission
- One member from the Board of Education
- Two members of the Town Council Land Use Committee
- Two members from the public at large
- The Mayor is an ex-officio member

Be it further resolved, that any vacancies on said committee shall be filled by the appointment of the Ledyard Town Council with priority given to maintaining the structure above; and

Be it further resolved, that said Ledyard Town Center Committee is authorized;

To develop recommendations for the future development and or redevelopment of Ledyard Center;

Identify development strategies and events along with necessary infrastructure to support those strategies;

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To review previous sketches, photographs, and possible design scenarios of Ledyard Center; and prepare a conceptual design recommended for the future Ledyard Center;

To recommend capital projects necessary to implement the future development or redevelopment of Ledyard Center;

Identify funding strategies to develop Ledyard Center

Be it further resolved, that the Ledyard Town Center Committee is authorized to recommend to the Mayor the execution of such contracts as may be approved by the Ledyard Town Council and expend such funds as may be hereinafter authorized and appropriated for the above purpose; and

Be it further resolved, that within thirty (30) days of appointment of this committee, an organization meeting of said committee shall be held at which members shall choose a Vice Chairman and a Secretary. The Chairman of the Ledyard Town Center Committee shall be the Chairman of the Town Council Land Use Committee.

Be it further resolved that said committee will render a briefing to the Town Council no later than six (6) months after the organization meeting or as deemed necessary.

Be it further resolved, that said committee shall at least quarterly report its activities to the Town Council and shall submit a final report upon completion of the project, no later than _____, _____.

Adopted by the Ledyard Town Council on _____, _____

Chairman

The committee, which has good representation from town committees with involvement in Ledyard Center, is comprised of:

List members and affiliation per the resolution; identify chairman, vice-chairman and secretary.

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Appendix B

Ledyard Town Center Committee Meeting Minutes

(To be inserted in final document)

Appendix C

Summary of Ledyard Town Center Committee Meetings with Town Organizations

(To be inserted in final document)

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Appendix D

Town Green Community Enhancements that also Enhance Retail Businesses

Successful instances of retail development boarding Town Greens are evident in Westerly, RI and in Mystic, Westbrook, Guilford and Madison, CT. The Town Green in those towns also supports community events including fairs. The scope of the events seems to be limited by the size of the Town Green with the Green in Westbrook relatively small but still well used. The Ledyard fairgrounds are large by comparison to the Greens in the towns mentioned above.

Pictured on the next page is the Guilford town green that hosts craft fairs and the annual Guilford Fair. The businesses, restaurants and offices surrounding the green benefit from the Town Green setting and are prime retail sites. The townspeople benefit from the open space enhancement of the commercial area. The vitality of businesses, restaurants, and shops is enhanced by the ambiance generated by the Town Green setting. The businesses, restaurants, and shops also support the town's tax base and provide services to townspeople. In Guilford, the Town Green is large enough to support a large craft fair and still sustains a park-like atmosphere.

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The Madison green, shown below, affords some of the same amenities (craft fairs and community space) as the Guilford green but does not provide the same business/commercial center as property near the green consists of schools, a church and government buildings. The retail center in Madison is just east of the green.

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Both the town greens in Guilford and Madison are examples of community spaces that enhance the commercial area, allow for fairs and shows, and provide excellent community space for the town's residents. Currently, the Ledyard fairgrounds, shown below, lacks landscaping and amenities that would create the community space that would encourage commercial development in the Center and provide a community space for craft fairs, farmer's markets, and community events that would further enhance the commercial viability of Ledyard Center. It is envisioned that the Ledyard fairgrounds could support both the annual fair, all of the events currently conducted at the fairgrounds and, with improvements serve the town as a park and enable development in Ledyard Center.

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Appendix E

Ledyard Center - Town Owed Property Current Assessment

Ledyard Center, at the junction of Routes 117 and 214, consists of Ledyard Center School, Town Hall, vacated firehouse, post office, residential homes, restaurants, a gas station, stores, businesses, a bank, a church, a library, a war memorial flag pole, and the town's fairgrounds. Ledyard Center is close to the Fairway development area, which contains businesses, condominiums, and apartments and is zoned as a Village district. Village district regulations would lead to development that would be typical of a traditional New England town center. Within the past several years, a bank has been built and a new store/commercial building has opened, both are consistent with the Ledyard Center Village District standards. The center is ideally situated close to the areas major resort and entertainment centers; within 5 miles of the Foxwoods Resort and Casino, 4 miles from the former Norwich Hospital site that may also become a major entertainment center, and 5 miles Mohegan Sun Casino. Traffic in Ledyard Center is 11,000 cars per days and is expected to grow to 15,000 within a few years.

Ledyard Center School (build in 1948) occupies 40,330 square feet on 24 acres with frontage on Route 117. The Town Hall (including the Town Hall Annex and former Emergencies Services Building) and former Ledyard Center firehouse (built in 1962) occupy 15,119 and 4,512 square feet, respectively, on 1.34 and 1.02 acres, and also have frontage on Route 117. These town-owned buildings have served the town well and, in many instances, need or will need renovation to continue to meet the town's needs.

Ledyard Center School Property

Land: 24.06 acres, relatively level grade

Frontage: 800 feet on east side of Route 117

Building: 40,878 square feet Elementary school, 1 story, originally built in 1948, 24 full classrooms, 4

Offices, 1 multi-purpose room approximately 3500 square feet

Construction: Exterior – brick veneer.
Foundation – Concrete.

Walls – brick on steel frame with painted plaster.

Bathrooms – ceramic tile.

Floors – concrete slab with vinyl tile and asphalt tile floors.

Ceilings – Acoustical block

Lighting – Thin tube fluorescent with recessed lighting in multi-purpose room

Heat – oil fired steam heat

Roof – Flat built up, 1993

Zoning: Ledyard Center Village District

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Windows – New, insulated, 11
years old

Condition – Structurally sound

Utilities: Municipal water

Electrical

Septic on site

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Ledyard Center School is the oldest school in the District and is in need of exterior and interior renovations. In 1994 Chow Lawler Associates, contracted by the Board of Education to assess the overall condition of school facilities estimated four phases, code, maintenance and infrastructure, space needs and changes, and demographics and technology, totaling \$6,500,000.

Former Firehouse Property

Land: 1.02 acres, relatively level grade
Frontage: 189 feet on west side of Route 117
Building: Main building 4,512 square feet, 2 stories, 1962, 4 rooms
Construction: Exterior – brick veneer.
Foundation – Concrete.
Walls – brick on steel frame with painted plaster.
Lighting – Thin tube fluorescent with recessed lighting in multi-purpose room
Heat – oil fired steam heat
Roof – Pitched, approximately 20 years old
Zoning: Ledyard Center Village District



Utilities: Municipal water
Electrical
Septic on site

Ledyard Town Hall Property

Land: 1.34 acres, relatively level grade
Frontage: 180.78 feet on east side of Route 117
Building: Main building 11,378 square feet, 2 stories, 48 years, 30 rooms;
Annex 2,200 square feet, 1 story, 1977, 4 rooms
Former Emergencies Services Building 1,394 square feet, 1 story, 1969, 2 rooms

Construction: Exterior - brick veneer.
Foundation – Concrete.
Walls – brick on steel frame with painted plaster.
Lighting – Thin tube fluorescent with recessed lighting in multi-purpose room
Heat – oil fired steam heat
Roof – Pitched approximately 5 years old

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Utilities: Municipal water

Electrical

Septic on site

Zoning: Ledyard Center Village District

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Ledyard fairgrounds

Land: ?? acres

The fairgrounds have animal sheds, an office/storage building, pavilions, snack booths, a stage, horse rings, and an old wooden schoolhouse maintained by the town's Historical Commission. The fairgrounds are used several times a year for the annual Ledyard Fair, school field days, High School pep rallies, horse shows, 4H animal shows, and community events like a Christmas coral sing.



Area Surrounding Town-owned Property

In the vicinity of town-owned property, Ledyard Center consists of single floor retail and restaurant buildings along with several two story retail/office buildings and one gas station.



The largest retail concern is Holdridge Farm Nursery which draws people from the surrounding area.

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The Ledyard Congregational Church and Bill Library anchor the Center and border the fairgrounds.



The recently completed Village Market



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Appendix F

Ledyard Center Build-out Scenario

Location: Route 117 and Route 214

Zoning District: Ledyard Center Village District-1, Ledyard Center Village District-2, Ledyard Center Village District-3, and Multi-Family Village District

Description: Ledyard Center has been the subject of numerous studies and plans. Most are similar and call for significant development in the center. While traffic counts (lower than Rt. 12 or Rt. 2) and the competition from neighboring communities limit the possibility for a large retail center, the existing mixture of uses can be expanded. Investment in water (underway) and sewer systems and public buildings (existing building need renovation to continue to meet town needs) will be necessary. Additionally, cooperation between all landowners is a necessity.

1. Infrastructure - Water is available in or near Ledyard Center. The SCWA system behind the fairgrounds will not support a large build-out. The system, however, could be expanded or linked with other nearby systems. Having sewer or a package treatment facility available to the center should be explored as this will greatly affect the amount of development that can occur in the center.
2. Access- Ledyard Center is at the crossroads of Route 117, Route 214, and Colonel Ledyard Highway. While the traffic volumes are less than Route 12 or Route 2, there is adequate access for a commercial district. Interior road development must occur to open the larger commercial tracts for use.
3. Visibility - As Ledyard Center is re-built, marketing will be necessary to alert customers/tenants to the area. The make-up of the traffic should be used to determine which businesses will have success. Since it appears that regional commuter traffic is prominent, businesses such as food and clothing stores should be considered.
4. Cost of Development or Re-development - The land is highly suitable for increased development. Cooperation more than cost will drive the success of this area. This includes public investment.
5. Environmental Factors - There are small pockets of wetlands to be avoided, but there are few other constraints. Storm water detention for the area should be addressed as a whole for the Center.
6. Neighborhood Impact - This project would create a neighborhood/village. The impact will be positive given the proper mix of retail, governmental, office and residential uses.

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Zoning. The Ledyard Center Village District Regulations (LCVD -1, 2, & 3 and MFVD) clearly states the goals for this area. Desired commercial uses are permitted. Residential uses are limited in the village district to second or third floors within the LCVD-1 district or multi-family and condominiums within the LCVD-2 & 3 and Multi-Family Village District (MFVD). The LCVD-2 District limits residential use to 75% of the proposed development.

7. Build-out Assessment

Goals - (from Zoning Regulations) “To encourage the development of a Village Environment in Ledyard Center.” (from 1998 Draft Plan of Conservation & Development) New water and roadway infrastructure should continue to be developedwith a focus on ...Ledyard Center. Ledyard Center’s Fairway Drive should be completed. (from the Economic Development Workshop) Finish LCDD and Make Ledyard Center more like a Main Street.

This build-out uses the very similar proposals for development from 1965, 1972, 1977, and 1985 and the above-stated goals to determine suggested boundaries and a possible mix of uses for the successful implementation of Ledyard Center.

Zoning Provisions - . The Ledyard Center Village District-1 regulations, limit use to permitted commercial uses or commercial with optional residential units up to two bedrooms that are not on the ground floor. There are no minimum lot sizes or widths within this district. Ledyard Center Village District-2 & 3 allow multi-family and condominiums mixed with permitted commercial uses. The Multi-Family Village District permits only multi-family, condominiums, cooperatives, and townhouses with minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet. As in all Ledyard Districts, there is a 35 foot height limit. The 35 foot requirement is specified as the maximum height for egress. This requirement can be waived by the Fire Marshall. All development must adhere to the design standards of village districts as outlined in the Plan of Conservation & Development. Proposals are reviewed by the Design Review Board for the Village Districts and a report is made to the Zoning Commission.

Infrastructure - As documented in recent local plans, the road and water systems in Ledyard Center need to be expanded. These are obtainable objectives because the land is available for streets. Discussions with the SCWA indicate that the developed well field is currently not large enough to support a fully developed center (current pump maximum is 25 gallons per minute). The municipal water connection from Groton along Route 117 will alleviate the water constraint and is under construction. A water tank is planned as well with an expected completion date of fall 2008.

The sewer issue is rather more complicated. The cost and feasibility of bringing sewer to Ledyard Center is being explored with competing alternatives of expanding the Highlands Plant or developing another treatment facility near the Thames River.

This build-out assumes that the road way system (Fairway Drive) would be expanded to allow access to the land between Route 117, Colonel Ledyard Highway, and Route 214.

Focus points/District Boundaries. The existing Village District boundaries were adopted to address previous concerns expressed in the Plan of Conservation & Development and Economic Development Strategy Report regarding the size of the

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former LCDD, non-alignment of the design standards with the goals of the Design District, and the uses allowed under the former regulatory structure. The new regulatory structure is centered around form based development codes that require the creation of a critical mass and strong sense of place by balancing density considerations with architectural and design review guidelines.

Build-out. Since the historic proposals for Ledyard Center have called for a mixture of public and commercial uses, this build-out follows suit. However, the assumptions have been revised to take advantage of increased maximums in impervious surface areas that allow for larger building footprints to be constructed. These assumptions will deal with land that is currently undeveloped and will not take into account the possible redevelopment or additions to existing properties that have been made possible by more lenient standards. For each zoning district this appendix will assume that 40% of lot area could consist of building space while the remaining lot area will need to be reserved for road infrastructure, parking, and other site appurtenances as opposed to 30% build-out assumed in prior build-out scenarios. This build-out assumes the existence of an alternative wastewater treatment facility or conventional off-site treatment facility. This build-out scenario also accounts for land not previously considered for build-out in the original Ledyard Center analysis included in the Economic Development Strategies Plan.

A review of vacant parcels in the Village District zones shows that there are approximately 150 acres of undeveloped land excluding Town owned property.

Forty acres of that is located in the LCVD-2 zone which allows a maximum of 75% of a proposal to be residential. A build-out of this acreage would produce a gross floor area square footage of 696,960. A second story would add 696,960 sf of space. Out of 1,393,380 sf available, 1,045,035, of which could be dedicated to residential units. Assuming that the units were two bedroom apartments or condominiums of 1200 sf that would produce 435.6 residential units. The remaining square footage, 174,240, could be dedicated to office, retail, or institutional uses.

Fifteen acres of undeveloped land remains in the MFVD zone. The MFVD zone allows residential units only. Gross floor area square footage would be 261,360. A second story would add 261,360 sf of available residential space as well. Assuming two-bedroom apartments or condominiums of 1200 sf that would produce 435.6 residential units.

The LCVD-3 zone contains 70 acres of undeveloped land. The zone allows retail, office, institutional, and residential uses. The only restriction on the residential use is a maximum of two-bedrooms per apartment/condominium; single family residential uses are allowed on interior lots only. Assuming a 40% build-out of lot coverage, 1,219,680 sf of gross floor area for any of the allowed uses. If used entirely for residential two bedroom apartments/condominiums of 1200 sf this could produce 1016.4 residential units. A second story could be built for the same square footage allowing for the possibility of doubling residential units or use as office space. Retail or office uses could be subdivided for services based on market demand or user needs.

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The LCVD-1 zone contains 25 acres of undeveloped land. Residential uses are restricted from occurring at the ground level. The gross floor area square footage at 40% maximum lot coverage multiplied by two to account for a second story is 871,200. Assuming the second story (435,600 sf) would be used for two bedroom residential units of 1200 sf each, 363 units could be produced. The remaining 435,600 sf of space on ground floor could be subdivided for services based on market demand or user needs.

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Appendix G

Meetings with Interested Organizations

The Ledyard Town Center Committee agreed that it was important to present the development plan for Ledyard Center to the citizens of Ledyard. This was done generally to get the information and ideas in front of the public to accomplish “buy-in”, and to obtain feedback from the town citizens. A list was prepared of Ledyard organizations to which the plan could be presented. The list consisted of:

Ledyard Rotary	Ledyard Lions Club	Ledyard Center School PTO
Ledyard Board of Education	Ledyard Library Commission	Ledyard fairgrounds Association
Ledyard Volunteer Fire Co.	Gales Ferry Fire Co.	Parks and Recreation Commission
Ledyard Congregational Church	Ledyard Center Nursery School	Ledyard Women’s Club
Permanent Commission for Senior Citizens	Ledyard Senior Club	Citizens at Large

Two work sessions were held by the Ledyard Town Center Committee. The first was held on October 17, 2006 and the second was held on November 27, 2006. Members of the above groups were invited to attend. The work sessions were conducted by Professor John Alexopoulos of the University of Connecticut Program of Landscape Architecture. The purpose of the work sessions was for UCONN to gather information and input from Ledyard Citizens to include in their development plan recommendation.

Once the plan was developed and presented to the Ledyard Town Center Committee, the Committee wanted to present it to the same groups invited to the work sessions. A letter was sent to the organizations chairpersons, asking them if the Committee could present a PowerPoint slide presentation of the plan at one of their meetings. A number of groups responded, and the Ledyard Center Development Plan was presented to the following groups:

Board of Education, 2-21-07	Library Commission, 2-26-07
Ledyard Center School PTO, 3-13-07	Ledyard Fair Association, 3-20-07
Rotary Club, 3-29-07	Lions Club, 4-19-07

At each presentation the organization members were encouraged to comment and ask questions. The questions and comments were recorded. A detailed list of questions and comments for each presentation are included elsewhere in this report.

Some themes emerged from the questions and comments:

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The Ledyard Center School should remain in Ledyard Center, whether it is a renovation or a new school;

Putting a town green on the fairgrounds and/or increasing the use of the fairgrounds was a popular idea;

There were concerns about how this plan would affect tax rates (who would pay for sewers and roads);

The plan would upset the rural character of Ledyard Center;

The plan would be prepared and never implemented, like two preceding plans.

There was very little comment about the disposition of Town property (the fire hall).

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Ledyard Town Center Committee

Board of Education	Paul Kunkemoeller
Economic Development Commission	Bill Saums
Parks and Recreation	Bob Gunnels
Planning Commission	Rob Lawrence
Town Council (LUPPW)	Dave Holdridge
Town Council (LUPPW)	Pete Champagne
Zoning Commission	Kevin Dombrowski
Member at Large	Dave Berkstresser
Member at Large	Jeff Beacham
Ex-officio	Mayor Susan Mendenhall
	Town Planner Brian Palaia