

Proposed Downtown Parking—Town Meeting 2015

Background and Key Information



View of Depot Park and Depot Square from across the confluence of the Nubanusit Brook and Contoocook River from the proposed site of new parking, the extension of the Common Pathway and landscaping

Like many older New England communities, Peterborough was not originally designed with parking in mind. Our downtown is tightly packed, built at the confluence of two rivers, and our streets are narrow. Where this type of urban design was ideal in the 18th and 19th centuries, today it presents a multifaceted challenge:

- Finding locations for parking that is convenient for shoppers, employees and diners;
- Making sure that chosen locations do not have negative environmental or aesthetic impacts;
- Keeping the cost of construction and ongoing maintenance to a minimum; and,
- Respecting the historic features and settlement patterns of the downtown.

Today, parking in the downtown is a mix of public and privately owned spaces:

Public Parking Area	Total Spaces	Private Parking Area	Total Spaces
Main St. (on-street)	67	Depot Square	70
Municipal Lot (off of Depot St)	52	Toadstool Bookstore	54
Depot Park	73	Roy's Market	18
Grove St. (on-street)	43	9 Main St.	31
Library	40	Universalist Church	13
School/Depot St. (on-street)	33	35/45 Main St.	106
Fire Department	16	Guernsey	72
		Phoenix Mill	93
		20 Grove St.	25
		Sunapee Bank	5
Total (all public spaces)	324	Total (all private spaces)	487
Total (public + private)	811		

*Is there a need for more parking? **YES***

Those 324 public spaces are inadequate; to meet the demands of the businesses and cultural centers in our downtown we need to add approximately 200 more public spaces. The greatest need is for shorter-term centralized parking that will provide a reasonable chance of having available spaces to conveniently accommodate the needs of visitors and residents coming to town for shopping, appointments and/or dining. A secondary need is to have sufficient spaces available to meet the incremental demand created by additional redevelopment of underutilized buildings. Developers will be hesitant to make investments in redevelopment if they believe that they cannot rent the space for lack of parking.

The Select Board explored the idea of changing the parking duration in the central lot from all day to 3 or 4 hour parking. Downtown employees expressed concerns that there was not adequate alternative to meet their all day parking needs. Town Staff explored working with owners of private parking spaces to make some of the underutilized privately owned spaces available to downtown employees, but many owners expressed concern over giving up spaces.

Over the winter of 2013/2014 the Select Board directed staff to develop a public outreach program to learn from the community what they truly needed in terms of parking, and designed a public forum which would allow residents, business owners and patrons to help the Town choose the best location and structure to respond to the identified needs. Nine parking options were developed and presented at a public workshop that was designed to draw out public input regarding each solution.

In the end, through substantial public input and support, the Town chose the former Boston & Maine railroad corridor, behind the GAR Hall on Grove St., for the location of a new parking lot and footbridge that will connect the lot to Depot Park. This



Parking Today:
 324 Public Parking Spaces (shown in blue)
 487 Private Parking Spaces (shown in red)

What Have We Done Lately? The Parking Question since August 2013

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|--|---|
| ◇ 5 Select Board Meetings | proposed site |
| ◇ 3 Public Hearings | ◇ 1 Parking Occupancy Study |
| ◇ 7 Monadnock Ledger-Transcript articles | ◇ 1 Survey of Parking Use—111 Respondents |
| ◇ 1 Town Meeting vote for permitting and planning at the | |

footbridge, crossing over the Nubanusit River, will extend the common pathway that runs north/south through the town and will provide a significant amenity to enhance the walkability of the town center. The initial funding for the engineering and permitting of the project passed by a wide margin at Town Meeting in 2014, and a construction bond is now going before voters at the May 2015 Town Meeting. The payoff of the bond will be entirely funded through the Downtown Tax Increment Finance District and as such will have no impact on property tax bills over the life of the Bond.



Director of Public Works Rodney Bartlett presents three of the nine possible parking solutions to a group at the February 24, 2014 Public Hearing

Overview of Parking Improvements and Studies—1994 through Today

Parking in downtown Peterborough before 1994:

- 163 public parking spaces
- 690 parking spaces in privately-owned lots
- 853 total parking spaces

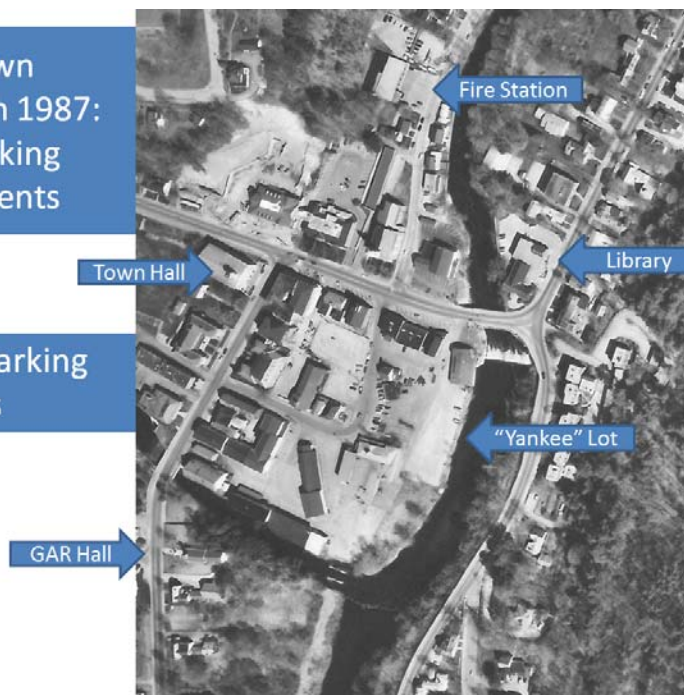
1994—Town purchases the “Yankee” parking lot

1997—Parking Improvements Work gets Underway

- ♦ *Parking Survey Completed:*
 - ♦ 225 Town-owned parking spaces existing
 - ♦ 300 more would be needed if all buildings were filled to capacity
- ♦ *Downtown 2000 began work on Depot Park and Riverwalk projects*

Downtown
Peterborough 1987:
Before Parking
Improvements

163 Public Parking
Spaces



Depot Park and parking under construction, 1997-1999

1998—Improvements extend to the Library

- ♦ *Repurposed Kyes-Sage House property adds to the Library parking lot*

1999—“Yankee” Parking Lot Completed

2003—Downtown Circulation & Street Parking Task Force Report

2010—Hoyle Tanner & Associates Study of Two-Story Parking Garage at Municipal Lot

2011—Hoyle Tanner & Associates Review of Public Parking Layout

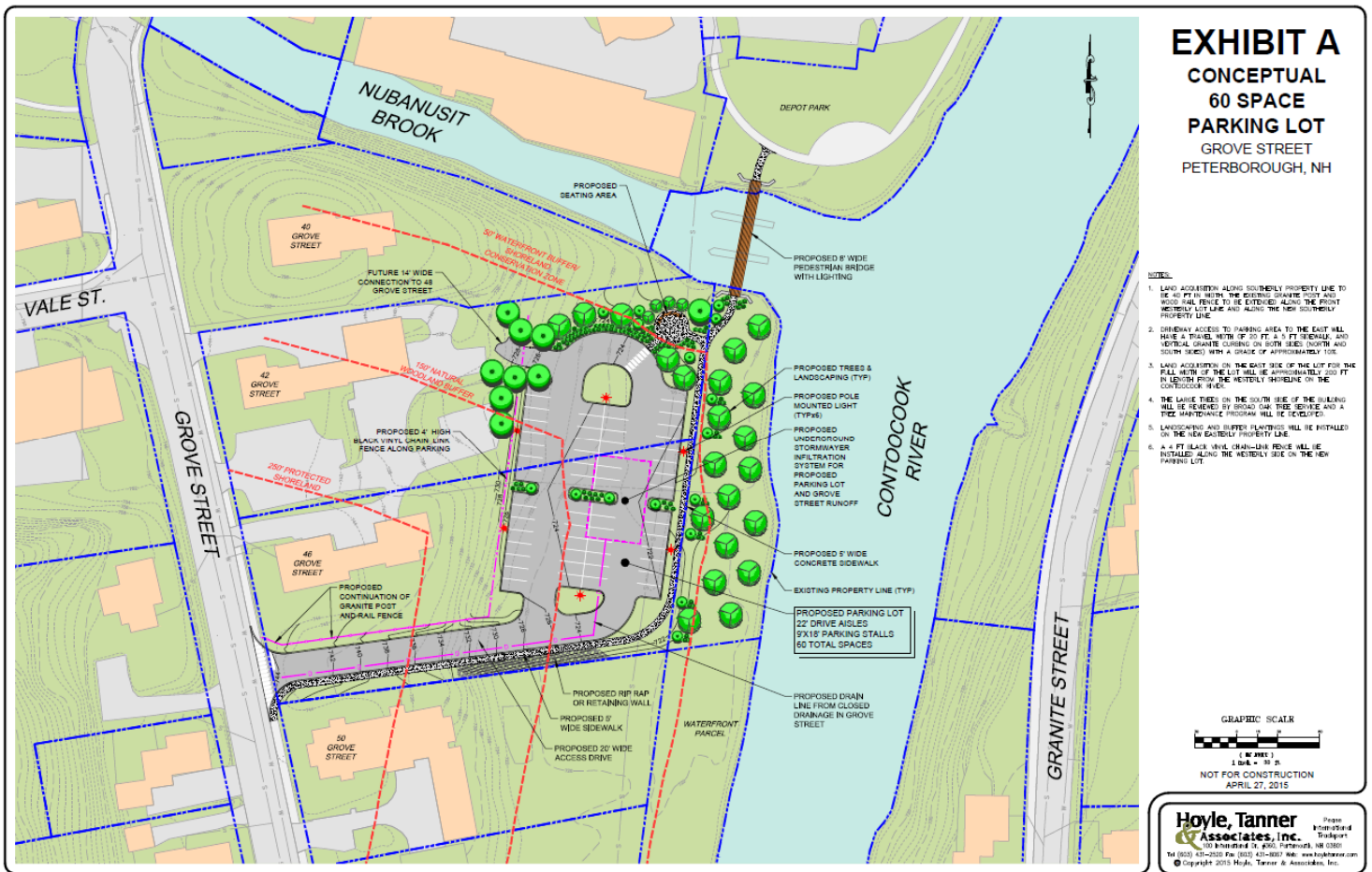
2012—Fire Department Public Parking Lot Improved

2013-2014—Parking Occupancy Study & Survey of Parking Use completed

2015—Parking Survey updated:

- ♦ 324 Town-owned parking spaces existing
- ♦ 200+/- more would be needed at full occupancy of existing, built-out space

2015—Preliminary design of proposed parking lot completed



Conceptual plan of the proposed parking lot showing the foot bridge connecting the new paths and green space to Depot Park.

Why More Parking?

- ◇ Parking is necessary for continued economic and business vitality in Downtown Peterborough—businesses cannot thrive if their patrons can't get to them
- ◇ If every building in the downtown were fully occupied, we would be short parking where we need it the most
- ◇ New parking is essential to the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings

Why This Proposal?

- ◇ Parking at this location would provide close access to all-day parking for the owners and employees of Depot Square businesses freeing up spaces in the core of the downtown for their patrons
- ◇ A pedestrian bridge to downtown will cross the river, connecting to and extending the Common Pathway and Depot Park
- ◇ The proposal makes use of a previously disturbed area—the former Boston & Maine Railroad corridor
- ◇ The proposed parking lot will improve storm water management from a portion of Grove Street
- ◇ The first stages of preparing the site will include reclamation of the hazardous waste left by coal-burning trains along the rail bed
- ◇ Of the nine proposals presented at the public hearing held on February 24, 2014, this proposal was the only one to receive overwhelmingly positive feedback for its location, convenience and capacity
- ◇ Because of its location within the Greater Downtown TIF District, the purchase of the land and construction of the lot will have no impact on your taxes
- ◇ All day parking in this location will be part of a comprehensive downtown parking management plan

More information, including all of the studies referred to in this pamphlet can be found by going to our website
www.townofpeterborough.com