

Richford Streetscape Audit Summary: 6/13/2022

Introduction

The audit was led by NRPC staff alongside 8 Richford residents & town staff. Members of the Richford Planning Commission & Richford Selectboard were in attendance. The goal of the audit was to assess both the “moveability”¹ of the street as well as the design & feeling of the street as a place. The following key themes were identified through the streetscape audit. Additionally, area specific concerns are summarized on the following two pages.

Safety of Walking, Biking and Rolling

The majority of the study area has sidewalks on one or both sides of the street. Sidewalk condition is highly variable throughout the study area but is generally in mediocre to poor condition. Accessibility is an issue; few sidewalks are 5 foot wide and not all areas have curb cuts & tactile ground surface indicators.

River and Province Street were noted to be quite narrow. This generally has led to slower, safer traffic but has created some safety challenges regarding tractor-trailer turning radiuses. In contrast, Main Street is wide and vehicles enter downtown Richford on a hill. Vehicles were observed going much faster than the posted speed of 25 MPH. Many auditors noted that high vehicle speeds and wide crosswalks created unsafe conditions. Beyond the Dollar General there is no sidewalk, this area is therefore completely unsafe for pedestrians, despite including important destinations such as Richford’s only ATM and the Richford Elementary School.

Despite potential safety challenges, walking, rolling and biking are common in Richford. Pedestrians were observed across the study area, and cyclists were observed in several areas. Auditors also noted that Richford experiences many cyclists from Canada.

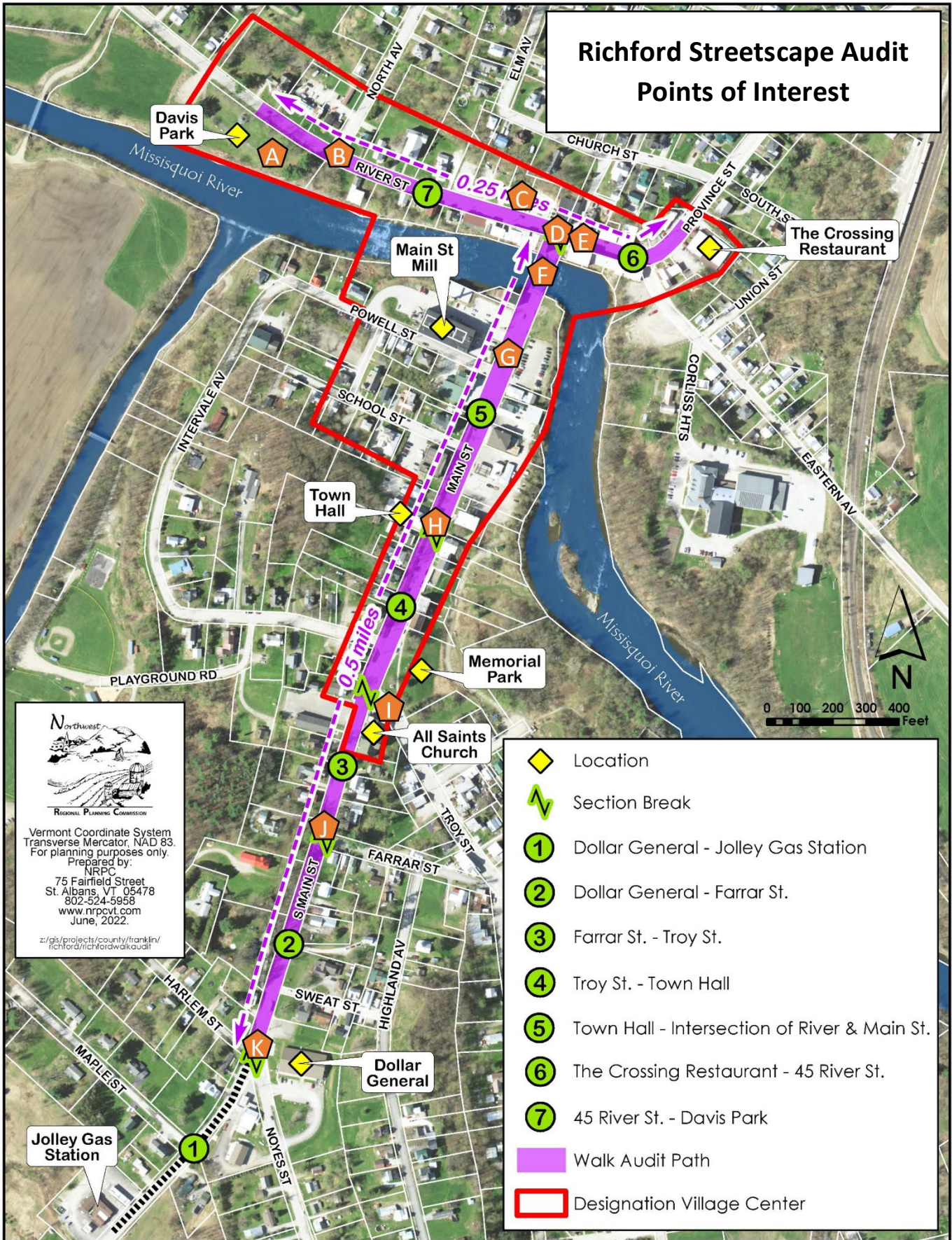
Streetscape as a Place

Vacant/poorly maintained buildings were observed in many sections, especially on River/Province Street and along the lower half of Main Street. Additional forms of investment, such as a revolving fund, might be needed to spur private investment in façade repairs. Auditors noted some crime and other safety concerns throughout the audit area. Disturbances at night have been an issue recently. However, unsafe vehicle behavior remained the largest safety concern of auditors.

Auditors noted the bridge and several views of the Missisquoi River as positive aspects of the streetscape of Richford. These elements make Richford’s downtown unique and should be capitalized on. In addition, the retail and restaurant businesses on River/Province Street and the variety of parks throughout Richford were noted as appealing destinations.

¹ Ability to travel via walking, biking or rolling.

Richford Streetscape Audit Points of Interest



Northwest
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Vermont Coordinate System
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83.
For planning purposes only.
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z:/gis/projects/county/franklin/
richford/richfordwalkaudit

- Location
- Section Break
- 1 Dollar General - Jolley Gas Station
- 2 Dollar General - Farrar St.
- 3 Farrar St. - Troy St.
- 4 Troy St. - Town Hall
- 5 Town Hall - Intersection of River & Main St.
- 6 The Crossing Restaurant - 45 River St.
- 7 45 River St. - Davis Park
- Walk Audit Path
- Designation Village Center

Points of Interest- Summary

A: Davis Park is a positive feature of this area and serves as a local destination.

B: The curb cut at the intersection of River Street and North Avenue does not meet ADA standards. While it is newly paved with a curb ramp, there is no tactile ground surface indicator and it is dangerously angled out towards River Street, rather than crossing North Avenue.

C: The municipal parking lot creates a large open area with no sidewalk or crosswalk. Access management should be considered. This parking lot may see increased future use, as the Town is considering allowing it to be used for residential parking in lieu of on-lot parking spaces for future developments.

D: The sharp corner and narrow street with on-street parking on the intersection of River and Main Street is a safety concern. Tractor-trailer trucks often end up on the sidewalk while turning.

E: Buildings on this section of River & Province Street are raised above street level and all require one or more step to enter, making them not accessible. There was a discussion about the possibility of raising sidewalks in this section of street, which would allow better access to the buildings for those with disabilities.

F: The Richford Main Street bridge and the views of the Missisquoi River along the bridge are positive defining features of Richford's downtown.

G: The crosswalk across Main Street to Main Street Mill is very long, making it challenging to cross.

H: The crosswalk from Town Hall across Main Street is long. Getting onto the crosswalk on the Town Hall side requires using stairs, so it is not accessible to all. There is no separation between the bottom stair and the start of the road, which creates a safety challenge.

I: The crosswalk across Troy Street requires going across Memorial Park, and does not follow Main Street. Many people will not use the crosswalk if their destination is on Main Street. Instead, they will cross closer to the intersection with Main Street where this is no crosswalk and it is a very wide crossing. Auditors discussed adding a pedestrian island in this area.

K: The intersection by Dollar General is generally unsafe due to traffic moving at high speeds, and the sidewalk ending at Dollar General. There is no crosswalk for residents on the west side of Main Street to cross towards Dollar General.

L: There are many sections of sidewalk that are in poor condition creating a hazard for pedestrians.²

² Throughout study area, not shown on map.

Points of Interest- Images

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