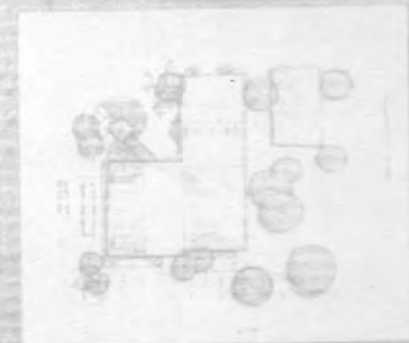


The Town of Cherryfield
Village Revitalization Plan

FEBRUARY 2002 - FINAL REPORT

Mary Knapp

* Small empty block across from you
would make great into center



prepared by

ekistics
planning & design

FINAL REPORT FOR THE TOWN OF CHERRYFIELD

Cherryfield Revitalization Plan

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Section 1

1.0 Cherryfield Revitalization Plan

The Town of Cherryfield is a historically rich and beautiful community located approximately 8 miles north of Millbridge, Washington County on State Route One. Several magnificent residences that have been, and continue to be, restored by those who desire the lifestyle available in Cherryfield typify the Town. Residents of the Town working within the region have restored some of the structures. Retirees relocating to Cherryfield have restored others. All live here because of the "village" lifestyle (everybody knows you, and you know everybody).

The Narraguagus River, passing through the heart of the Town, plays a significant historic role. A variety of 19th century water related business owners built most of the present day community. Changing economies and environmental conditions impacted the community's relationship to the river over the last 60 years. The Town has been separated from its historic relationship to the water body over time. The former riverfront downtown area (located around the intersection of Route One and the river) has dispersed as the water body's role as a focal point declined.



The Town of Cherryfield recognizes that relationships between various community elements, the river and "village" life is critical to the community's identity and future. This document explores and celebrates the various relationships considerable of contemporary opportunities in the form of a revitalization plan for Cherryfield. The Town commissioned an engineering based overboard discharge study and a Market Opportunities report to aid in forming this document. Relevant conclusions from these

are included in this report. The following provides a brief overview of the process followed in forming this document:

- Review Cherryfield's history to identify community development trends, patterns and fragmentations.
- Review the previous study work commissioned by the Town of Cherryfield.
- Develop a vision from the ideas and dreams of Cherryfield residents, and opportunities identified in the previous study work.
- Develop a plan that proposes strong connections between historic resources, contemporary needs and desires for the future.

Section

2

2.0 Historical Perspective

2.1 Historical Overview

The Narraguagus River, at Cherryfield, was home to Maine's largest concentration of mills. A one-mile stretch (from the tidal confluence to the Stillwater ponds) boasted nine dams, which in turn hosted two or three mills each. Water powered gristmills, furniture factories, planing mills, machine shops and eventually a power company shared the town's shoreline. Over 20 shoreline facilities, including shipbuilding, relied on the river by the early 1900's.



The community grew out of this activity. Commercial and industrial business, as well as residential property, paralleled both shorelines. Community centers formed at the present day intersection of Route One and Main Street (the "lower corner"), at the library/band gazebo location (former home of the Town Hall and school), and the intersection of Main and North Streets (the "upper corner"). A pedestrian bridge located at the approximate mid-point between the two bridges provided a means for students from the west side of the river with a shortcut to school, and the residents from the east side of the river with a shortcut to church.

As with most shoreline communities, changes in transportation trends alter relationships to the adjacent waterway where the community is both physically and historically based. In the late 1850s, the Maine Central Railway was installed through Cherryfield and changed transportation focus from the waterfront, thus impacting the shipbuilding industry. When the trucking industry was capable, it replaced the rail. The centrally located elements of the community that encouraged meeting and conversation dispersed as a result in changing trends (affecting the community's social structure).



Today, the schools, post office and town hall all occupy positions in the community that most residents use an automobile for visits. Some commercial and civic activity remains at the historic center (i.e. gas station and store, the band gazebo) but, as we learned during project interviews, residents meet in evening walks to exchange pleasantries but unofficial open public debate of daily issues no longer occurs as a result of "loss of venue".



Cherryfield has an abundance of beautiful Victorian and pre-Victorian homes, as well as several more contemporary buildings. Many of these buildings are vacant and in good condition. The former Cherryfield Ford building is the most significant of these. Others include waterfront buildings, a school, a former restaurant and a motel. All of the former waterfront mills are gone however, the underlying land is largely unoccupied or underutilized along most of the shoreline.

Changes in economy and environment also lend to Cherryfield's disassociation with the river. Changing economy left the mills and other water reliant business un-feasible. The

community did maintain a relationship with the river for an extended period through a

rich recreational salmon fishery that has been recently affected by environmental conditions within the regional watershed. Over board discharges from both homes and business in Cherryfield may be effecting the water quality of the river and are the focus of a concurrent engineering study.

More recent business development (last 50 years) includes blueberry harvesting and processing that relies on the excellent environmental conditions inherent in upland areas adjacent to Cherryfield (sandy, highly acidic soils). Two companies (Wyman's of Cherryfield and Oxford Frozen Foods of Nova Scotia) operate facilities and harvesting camps in close proximity to the Town. This industry has become the backbone of the local economy to the point where most local businesses depend on the annual harvest to sustain their existence for the "off-season" periods.

2.2 Lessons Learned

Village Organization

Prior to the dispersal of the town core, Cherryfield was very pedestrian in scale. People met each other to discuss issues on a daily basis while walking to the store, post office, etc. A good social environment was the result of the town's physical layout and the close proximity of important civic addresses relative to residences. In Cherryfield, this is considered the essence of village life and an important element to re-establish or conserve where found.

Interviews conducted as part of the background for this study identified the loss of the pedestrian bridge (during the great depression) as well as the relocation of the Post Office and Town Hall as the concerns, closely followed by the loss of the railway and salmon habitat. Fortunately the railway bed and river remain to provide significant revitalization opportunities contingent partially on time-based remedies, external governing body involvement and economic conditions. The more

immediate challenge is the remedy for the perceived primary concerns in some form, to retain that which makes Cherryfield a special place - a "village".



Heritage

Present day Cherryfield considers themselves to be the "Blueberry Capital of the World". Nobody else can say this (and nobody does). This is a very important part of heritage that should be explored for thematic expression throughout the community.

Other heritage to be interpreted is the history of the river and its mills and shipbuilding facilities, as well as the homes.

Economic Development

All residents recognize continued commercial and residential development is contingent on increased sewage treatment capability (most significant for commercial business on the riverfront).

Section

3

3.0 Opportunities

The following opportunities combine findings from the parallel market and overboard discharge studies, the historical overview (chapter two) and community workshops held during this project's development.

3.1 Market Study

In 2001, the Sunrise County Economic Council conducted a market study for the Town of Cherryfield to identify key business and tourism opportunities and a development strategy. The following are some of the key findings and capital projects that require consideration in this report (adapted from the study):

Data and surveys show a need in the area for retail stores, office space, and tourism services. Recommendations include two or three capital projects, a number of programs that could be accomplished with modest funding, and some that could be included in the work of existing organizations and volunteers.

Projects should be prioritized by the town according to available resources, as well as relative importance. Some can be delegated to other organizations. Having several projects, even smaller ones, underway simultaneously, makes progress evident and can help keep enthusiasm high. Larger efforts should include as many different partners as possible to ensure an inclusive planning process, use available resources efficiently, and encourage creativity when resources are limited. The following are the proposed capital projects (next page):

Foundation Capital Projects (related to this project):

- A freight yard and passenger rail stop adjacent to the existing rail corridor.
- Improve entry signage into Cherryfield from Route One and the proposed by-pass connecting Route One and Route Nine (through Cherryfield and Deblois).
- Continue to work on the ecological and tourism value of the river.
- A Blueberry Museum and Education Center that can be used during the "off-season" for public and private meetings, and local events.
- Public restrooms and additional pay phones.
- A youth center.

3.2 Overboard Discharge Study

The Town commissioned A. E. Hodson Consulting Engineers to develop a sewer improvement strategy for Cherryfield. The findings were not complete when this draft report was compiled however, the engineers are developing a strategy that combines improvements to the sewage treatment conditions and revitalization projects simultaneously.

3.3 Community Desires

Consultations began with a review of the 1998 Sunrise County Economic Council's vision workshop that identified a long list of community revitalization ideas. We then interviewed several residents to shorten the list to the following "primary projects":

- Treatment of existing overboard discharges.
- Sidewalks.
- A motel to provide tourist and business accommodations.
- A year-round restaurant (possibly associated with a motel).
- A waterfront park with a farmer's market.
- A blueberry center with year round educational facilities.
- A place with small offices.
- A youth center.
- More assisted care living to allow seniors from Cherryfield to remain in Cherryfield.
- Retail business expansion.
- Public washrooms.
- A visitor information center.
- Recreation facilities.

These projects were provided to approximately 30 residents (in 5 working groups) at a workshop for prioritization and placement on a town map. The groups were relatively aligned in prioritizing and locating the projects. The workshop's "big idea" was that projects should be combined where possible to enhance the opportunity of success. The following describes the prioritized projects at various locations.

A Town Center

This is the 100% point for projects requiring high visibility and good access such as the blueberry center, public washrooms, visitor information as well as expanded office and retail business.

A Central Park

This is the civic core of the Town extending from the town center to the Academy building where people walk the shoreline, meet at a farmer's market and a community center (at the Academy building). A waterfront park (adjacent to the train station building) connects to the opposite side of the river by a pedestrian bridge.

The Upper Corner

The upper corner is the gateway to blueberry country from Cherryfield and the entrance to Cherryfield from the north (Route 193). This location is where the train station is returned to its place along the tracks when the proposed tourist passenger and freight line is re-established. Expanded parking in this area supports business opportunity at the existing house adjacent to the bridge (corner of Willey District Road and Main Street).

A Youth Center

The former motel and restaurant on the west side of the river presents an opportunity for various community groups and the Town to develop a youth center in the renovated building.

A Motel/Restaurant

A final location for the motel restaurant was not determined at the workshop. Residents believe this facility requires a view of the river, should be above the floodplain and have good visibility from Route One.

Section

4

4.0 Revitalization Program

The revitalization program combines all of the previous work. The following are the key elements of the strategy.

4.1 Pulling the Town Together

History has seen Cherryfield's central area spread out. The library, town office, some business and the schools have left the central area for locations at the edge of the community. This has lessened the opportunity for residents to meet and talk on a daily basis. The plan proposes locations for sidewalks connecting the central area of the town with some of these activities to encourage more and safer "walks" and opportunities to "meet" and talk more often on important daily routes.

4.2 Sewer Improvements

Providing sewage treatment is critical to expansion/infill opportunities along the river. The Town Center area and an active O.B.D. on the west side of the river require servicing first followed by expansion to the north. The proposed strategy is incremental with new areas added as budget commitment allows. Each new increment requires an area dedicated for a treatment system (likely a recirculating sand or peat filter system, or a conventional treatment plant as identified by A.E. Hodson Consulting Engineers).

Sewage treatment will require laying pipe and land for treatment. Pipe should be laid under the riverside shoulder of the road to include sidewalk as part of the re-instatement. Land should be purchased for treatment that can be used as parks or as another municipal use. This allows State funding for sewage treatment to extend into

town beautification with little additional investment. A central park can be built as a result of the first phase of sewage treatment work.

4.3 You are "In Cherryfield"

The present Town Center area lacks the visual "punch" to stop visitors. Route One and Main Street (from Route 193) intersect at this location and is the 100% point to do this (irregardless of the proposed Route One-Route Nine connector which will increase traffic coming into Cherryfield on Route 193). This location is proposed to host a variety of projects that, when implemented, can inform visitors that they have entered somewhere to stop and look around. Visitor services should



Section 5

5.0 Concept Plan

The concept plan places the following projects into the Town of Cherryfield based on the revitalization program.

5.1 Central Park Project

The Central Park project includes the first phase of sewage treatment, the sidewalks and development of a civic park. This begins with the design and construction of the first phase of the sewage treatment system. The land indicated on the Concept Plan (Figure One, next page) indicates the location of the property, which should be purchased for a treatment facility, and the approximate area that can be "hooked up". Hook-ups may be 2"-4" diameter piping that gathers septic tank effluent for transportation to the riverfront park for treatment. Personal septic tanks will require pumping every 3-5 years.

The collection system is placed under the shoulder of the road and re-instated with the much-desired sidewalk (granite curb with asphalt walking surface) and on-street parking. Lighting is presently on the street side power poles. Connections that must cross the road to join the primary collection pipe are done in groups of three or four homes to minimize crossings. The primary pipe extends to the park where a treatment facility is located. Another pipe is "bridged" from the an existing O.B.D. and residential/commercial building on the west side of the river to the park to allow for future development on both sides of the river. The connection becomes a walking bridge to replace a former bridge that washed out during the great depression. Therefore, the first phase of sewage treatment includes the sidewalk, a walking bridge and a central park as part of the re-instatement work.

Cherryfield Maine • U.S.A. Figure 1

October 2001
Contour Interval: 10 feet
1996 Aerial Photography

Prepared by
ekistics
ARCHITECTS

0 100 200 300 400



Blueberry Preserves Company



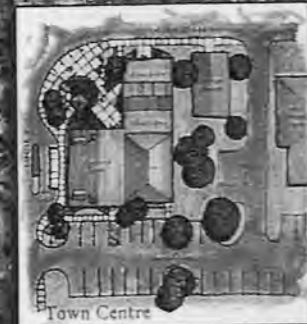
Blueberry Preserves Company



Bridge Improvements - Route 1



Market



Town Centre



Town Centre Perspective



Prior to beginning the sewer work, the Town can prepare for the park by removing uses not consistent with a park. This would include the repair garage on Main Street, which can be "swapped" with another suitable building. The concept plan illustrates a swap with the garage adjacent to the Town Hall however, this can be any location that both parties find agreeable. The remaining waterfront garage can be converted to the desired farmer's market. Future projects within this park include landscape improvements and interpretation to tell the story of Cherryfield's river heritage.



Market

5.2 Town Center

This project includes the re-use of the Cherryfield Ford building as a Blueberry Museum, a visitor center, public washrooms, and office and retail space with landscape work that makes this area the "Town Square". The concept plan illustrates how this area may look.

The parking area at the rear of the building extends into the Heritage Museum property and the first house from this location on Main Street (which could be privately purchased and converted to an Inn). The extended area provides more parking and better vehicle circulation in and around the re-development.



Town Square Perspective

This project will be developed as a private/public partnership. A private developer can own and develop the building while the town center portion of the site can be developed as a municipal project (in association with MDOT as a gateway project).

5.3 The Route One Bridge

Travelers through Cherryfield cross the Route One Bridge with little to inform their location. The concept plan illustrates one approach to treating the bridge for this purpose. Blueberry themed lighting and banners tell inform about both Cherryfield and what is available here.

5.4 Cherryfield Preserve Company

The Raye's Mustard Company in Eastport has thrived as a locally owned and family operated business that provides relevant model for a local preserves company in Downeast Maine. This model should be carefully examined for Cherryfield to capitalize on the community's blueberry heritage.

A preserve company at the upper corner (in the riverfront house at the Main Street and Willy Road intersection) can be acquired, structurally stabilized and landscaped in preparation for



Blueberry Preserves Company

development as a blueberry preserve company. This adds value and to one of Cherryfield's biggest economic assets (the blueberry industry) while providing income for circulation within the community. This also makes the "gateway" to blueberry country from the south and Cherryfield from the north. The concept plan illustrates how this project may look.

The Town can provide a long-term lease to a developer for the property under the condition that parking for adjacent uses and access to the shoreline is maintained if required. The developer will also provide product to local stores and the blueberry

museum for resale. No product, except large orders, is sold from the preserve company; however, visitors are invited to view the process and enjoy the scent of the heated preserves. Once again, the Town should look at Raye's Mustard in Eastport as a good example of this type of project.

5.5 Motel/Restaurant

The concept plan illustrates a proposed location for the motel and restaurant that meets the criteria proposed at the community workshop. At present, this location is a residence and furniture store; however, the owner would be amiable to redevelopment with some assistance and advice from the Town and the Sunrise County Economic Council.

5.6 Youth Center

The vacated River Road motel and restaurant provides an excellent location for a youth center (programmed and designed by the youth). The existing motel portion of the building can be removed and replaced with an active play turf surface (covering the entire back portion of the site). The existing restaurant building and deck can be renovated for the youth center.

5.7 Community Center

The Town can provide limited funding to the Academy building board of trustees to renovate the upper level of their building for use as a community center. Uses identified at the workshop include visiting play, band concerts and community meetings. The Town will need to work with the Academy's Board to find shared interests that make this project possible. In any event, the structure should remain in active use to retain the building's architectural significance.

5.7 Train Station

The existing train station building (sitting adjacent to the Main Street garage), can be moved back to its original location for use as a tourist stop when the rail line is re-established. The Town of Cherryfield and Heritage Society can work with the line restoration developer to ensure this occurs in a historically accurate manner.

5.8 Senior's Care

Visitors to the workshop identified the existing senior's facility or homes throughout the Town as potential locations to ensure senior's can stay in Cherryfield when special care is required. The Town can work with local/regional developers to identify approaches to this project.

Section 6

6.0 Action Plan for Implementation

6.1 Be a Maine Development Foundation Downtown

The Maine Development Foundation (Augusta) identifies three downtowns annually to closely work with in realizing their plans. The Town of Cherryfield should aggressively court this group to be one of the downtowns. This should begin by formally inviting their downtown coordinator to Cherryfield for a visit and a presentation of the plan by Town staff or committee members.

* Has
this been
done
by whom
or who can
do it

6.2 Spread the News

This document presents several very good homegrown and well-rationalized projects intent on re-vitalizing Cherryfield. The Town should distribute copies of this report to regional, State and Federal interests to inform others about Cherryfield's future plans. The Town should consult the Maine Development Corporation, the Sunrise County Economic Council and the Eastern Maine Development Corporation on the best approach to doing this after presenting the plan to each.

This will also help with identifying the static and changing funding sources and programs. The Town of Cherryfield will need to stay in touch with groups such as SCEC, EMDC, MDOT and the Maine Development Foundation to stay informed of funding programs.

6.3 Apply for Funding for Phase One Sewer Development

The Town of Cherryfield should work with an engineering and design firm to develop plans and applications for phase one of the sewer treatment project focused on the area

indicated on the concept plan. All land purchases or rights-of-way will be identified during this work for acquisition by the Town with project funds. Cost estimates for the re-instatement work is included in the budget (Chapter 7 of this report).

6.4 Acquire the Main Street Willey's Road Property

The Town should acquire the property at the corner of Main Street and Willey's Road (probably through tax sale) for future use. The Town can then stabilize the building, provide the preliminary site work to enhance investment attraction, and work with the Sunrise County Economic Council to identify an approach to developing the site as a blueberry preserve company.

6.5 Move the Main Street Repair Garage for a Farmer's Market

The Town can identify a suitable property to move the garage to in preparation for developing a farmer's market within the central park. This report proposes a location for the swap however, the Town may have a better location that meets the criteria of the garage owner.

With little renovation to the existing waterfront garage, the Town can then promote and open a weekly farmer's market administered by the Town office or another appointed individual.

6.6 Begin the Town Square Project

The Town should work with the Sunrise County Economic Council and the Delta Development Corporation to identify potential developers for the Blueberry Ford building. With a broad possibility of uses, a variety of partnership opportunities may be identified and explored. The Town can develop the Blueberry Museum and store, as well as the site work, as their participation in the project.

6.7 Enhance the Route One Bridge

Like what? Repro of old covered bridge?

This report suggest modifications to the Route One bridge intent on stopping visitors. The Town should work with State and Federal representatives, as well as the

What abt outside of Maine Grocers? New roof & move Victorian "Country Store" lines? Summer ice cream stand w/ little bldg across street by river

Department of Transport to complete a final design, cost estimates and contract documents for this work (prior to issuing tenders and picking a contractor).

5.8 Promote the Youth Center

The Town can work with various youth, community and "good-will" groups to develop a strategy for developing the youth center at the former River Street motel/restaurant location. The Town's participation can be site development work (parking and a soccer field).

6.9 Continue to be a part of River Enhancement

At present, all levels of government are working on revitalization of the river. The Town is presently involved with this work and can continue to be - specifically in the area of education and interpretation. The Town can work with the various river interests to develop interpretive panels in the proposed central park that increases awareness in restoration and the interprets the history of Cherryfield (related to the river).

5.10 Initiate the Motel and Restaurant Discussions

- * The Town can work with the Sunrise County Economic Council to identify partners for the motel and restaurant (inclusive of the existing landowners). Potential partners may include existing food retailers within the community.

How abt the ^{wonderful} old Red Bldg. (Alfred Albert's) on corner of bridge - rehabilitated into restaurant & Inn w/outdoor deck dining over river (Umbrella tables)

- New ideas 1- the planting (purchased in quantity) of young "cherry" trees for every yard & all along river
- "Sunrise" County played up at entrances to Washington Co.
2. Way better "Welcome to Cherryfield" signs (closer in)
 3. Peter Dustin's made into Antigue Mall, upstairs & down
 4. Other empty riverside houses turned into artisan shops, galleries & antique stores ala Newmarket, MD AND a "Lobster Supper" continued thing all summer (ala Nova Scotia)
 5. Town Motto/Slogan* ~~seaver~~ →
 6. Big Need: serious bakery
 7. A couple of colorful sailboats permanently moored near Rt bridge
- q of shop names (after checking w/Lubec)
- February 2002 Alex Graham (town)
- Ekstein's Planning & Design

Section

7

7.0 Budget Estimates

The following provides budget estimates for the previously described projects.

Town of Cherryfield Budget Estimates

Ekistics Planning and Design

December 2001.

Project	Amount	Unit	Cost/Unit	Total
1.0 Central Park Project				
Sidewalk Re-instatement to Park	5300	lin.ft.	\$35	\$185,500
Pedestrian Bridge to support Sewer Line	1	bridge	\$70,000	\$70,000
Riverwalk Trail	1	lumpsum	\$15,000	\$15,000
Move Existing Repair Garage (w/ renovation)	1	lumpsum	\$15,000	\$15,000
Renovate existing garage to Farmer's Market	1	lumpsum	\$15,000	\$15,000
Park Enhancements (sigange, seating, trails)	1	lumpsum	\$40,000	\$40,000
			total	\$340,500
2.0 Town Center				
Blueberry Center (with interpretation and retail)	1	lumpsum	\$250,000	\$250,000
Visitor Center (w/ washrooms)	450	sq.	\$85	\$38,250
Circulation and Parking	1	lumpsum	\$25,000	\$25,000
Plaza Space at Front of Building	1	lumpsum	\$110,000	\$110,000
			total	\$423,250
3.0 Route One Bridge Enhancements				
Lighting and Signage (could be \$60,000 if no electrical exists at bridge)	1	lumpsum	\$40,000	\$40,000

Table One, continued...

Project	Amount	Unit	Cost/Unit	Total
1.0 Cherryfield Preserve Company				
Property Acquisition	to be determined			
Building Stabilization	1	lumpsum	\$10,000	\$10,000
Parking and Circulation	1	lumpsum	\$20,000	\$20,000
			<u>total</u>	<u>\$30,000</u>
5.0 Youth Center				