

PLANNING DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

TO: PLANNING BOARD

FROM: JULIET WALKER, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER

DATE: MAY 15, 2015

**SUBJECT: Application of North End Properties, LLC & Deer St Development Company, Inc.
(Harborcorp)**

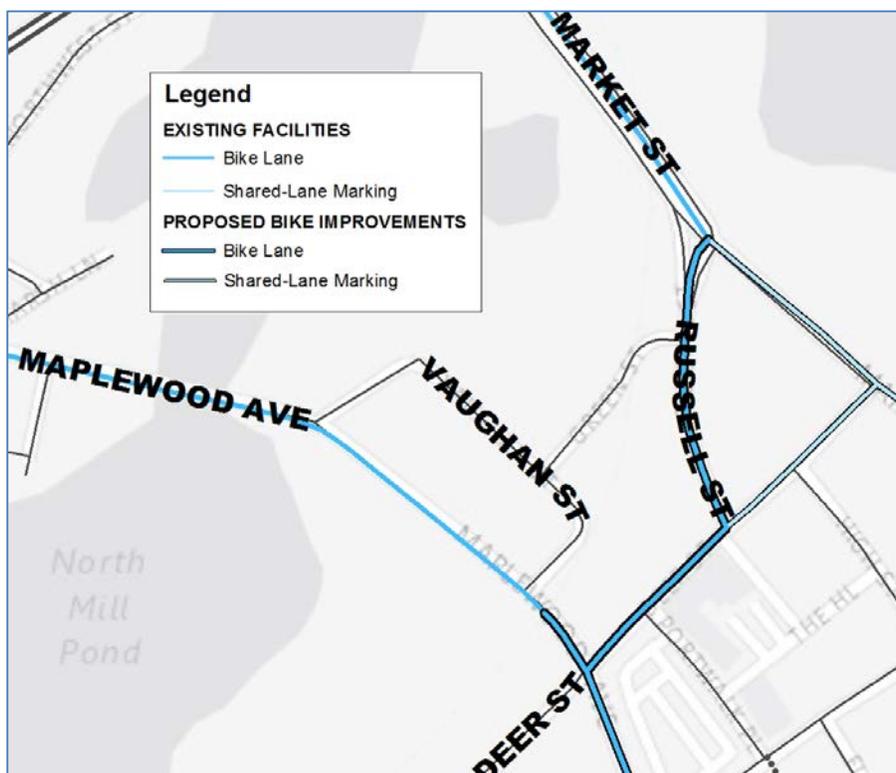
At the April 16 public hearing for this project, a number of questions were raised regarding pedestrian and bicycle access and overall traffic circulation and on-street parking for this site and the desirability or appropriateness of certain proposed bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for this location. This memo explains the context of this project in relation to the City's recently adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan lays out a complete bicycle and pedestrian network for the City. The network connects existing bicycle and pedestrian routes with future routes to define a complete interconnected system of trails, paths, sidewalks, and on-road routes throughout the City that enables people to access transit, schools, employment, recreation, and daily needs and services. The recommended improvements included in the Plan not only fill in the gaps in the network, but also support one of the stated goals of the Plan -- to improve overall safety and comfort for people using this network. Another goal of the Plan is to increase the number of walking and bicycling trips in the City.

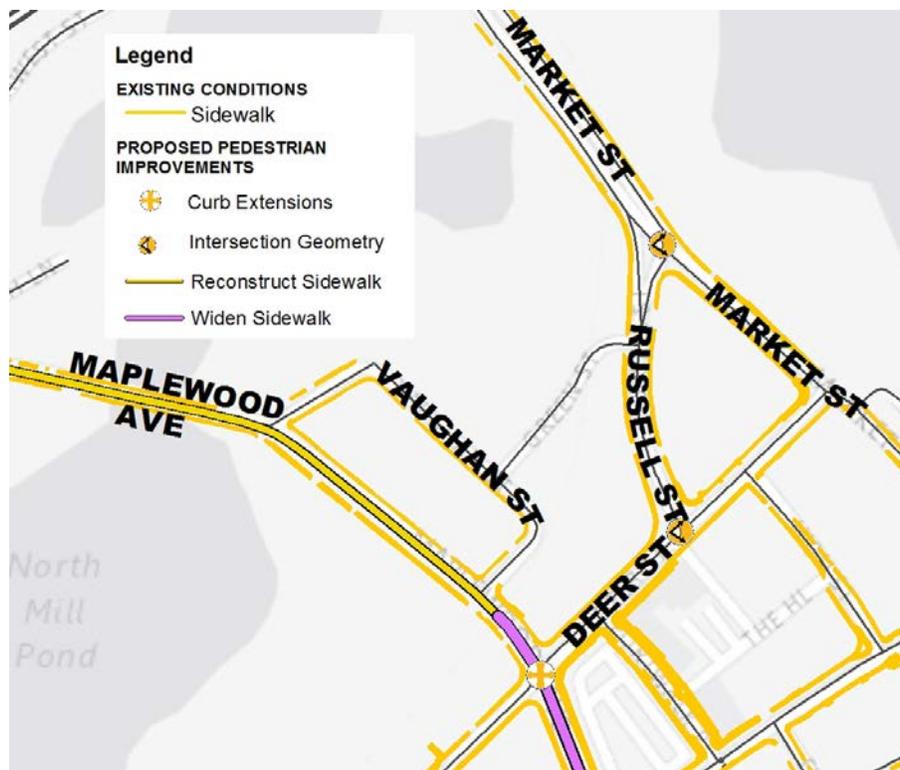
There are over 200 individual projects included in the Plan in order to complete the network. It is recognized that not all of the projects will be implemented immediately, but will occur over time, as opportunities and funding become available. As with other infrastructure projects in this City, some of these projects will be undertaken through the Capital Improvement Plan and implemented by the City using public funds. Others, as with the Harborcorp project, will be implemented as public / private partnerships as a result of the development review process.

As shown on the maps below, the Harborcorp project is located at a critical gap within the bicycle network. Deer St and Russell St are the recommended route between existing bicycle lanes on Maplewood Ave and Market Street and a future bicycle route along Middle Road.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2014) BICYCLE Network Recommendations



Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2014) PEDESTRIAN Network Recommendations



The Plan's recommended improvements included addition of designated bicycle lanes along both Deer St and Russell St. In addition, the Plan recommendations for the pedestrian network include improving the intersection geometry at the intersections of Russell St and Market St, Russell St and Deer St, and Deer St and Maplewood Ave.

Harborcorp's proposed off-site improvements along Russell St, Deer St, and Maplewood Ave support the recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan with the exception of the addition of shared lane markings on Deer St instead of full bicycle lanes. While not the highest and best bicycle facility for this roadway, shared lane markings are appropriate in this case due to the projected low vehicle speeds due to planned traffic calming measures along this section. In addition, the use of shared lanes as opposed to full bicycle lanes along this section provides sufficient right of way to provide wider sidewalks in a location where pedestrian volume is anticipated to be substantial. The proposed improvements seek to balance access for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

In addition to supporting the recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the bicycle and pedestrian improvements are part of the project proponent's transportation demand management strategy as outlined in the project's Traffic Impact and Access Study. In order to reduce project-related vehicle trips and peak hour traffic demand, the project proponent has committed to measures that will help encourage the use of public transportation and encourage bicycling and walking to work. Providing on-street improvements that increase the comfort and safety of these modes of travel are essential in order for such measures to be successful.