

Date: 31 MAY 2019

Re: PLAN NH

I have been participating in the town's Plan NH group since its inception last year. Part of the group's plan was to restore some type of social and economic viability to downtown Rye. No one was able to explain to me how that would be accomplished. I raised the issue that the Center of Rye is small, mostly residential, and without vacant land to develop.

The actual out of town members of the "Plan NH organization" will be visiting Rye on 31 May to listen to input from citizens regarding their ideas. I am not sure what will be presented. By the way, Plan NH does not advise on a single, or particular, building within a town, only general issues, i.e. the "Center of Rye" which may include traffic, parking, sidewalks, and general use.

The only social interaction I see happening in this area is already underway at the Library through speakers and group meetings, and some periodic interaction on Parson's Field. These however are planned meetings for specific areas of conversation, or sport practices, not the spontaneity of citizens meeting by chance or by pre-disposition.

As you may know the Parsonage apartments are coming off lease this year. With this in mind I have a couple of ideas:

1. Take the 2nd floor of the Parsonage, and expand the museum square footage. This is a great opportunity to expand more display area. From my perspective as a resident, it could be well used for display, and to make citizens more acutely aware of Rye's significant history and geological variations.
2. Rip up the parking lot accessed from Washington Road, currently used by the Parsonage residents. Convert it to a "greener space"!
3. Convert the 1st floor of the Parsonage House to some type of Pub, Tavern, or Restaurant (maybe 2nd floor as well). To me, this seems the only logical way to bring any economic vitality to the "Center of Rye". This would also allow citizens to meet socially in a neutral location.
4. Where the existing parking lot for Parsonage residents exists, after ripping out the asphalt, install an outdoor seating area. This area could have a shared utilization with the Pub for at night dinner seating, by the Pub for afternoon drinks, by the coffee shop for morning coffee, and walkers and bikers alike, etc.
5. Convert the white brick building that sets across the Library parking lot from the museum, to a simple coffee shop, with simple pastries, muffins, etc., i.e. no cooking. Part of the back of this building could house outside access lavatories, which could be used by patrons, or bicycle riders.
6. Create parallel parking spaces in front of what could now become the outdoor seating area, and along that side of Washington Road from Parish Road to the end of the Library frontage.
7. Change the intersection at the War Memorial to a "Rotary". This would slow traffic coming down the hill towards the Town Hall egress, and make for safer exits from town hall. It would also help to slow traffic through the center of Rye.
8. Utilize the side entrance door of the Parsonage as a conduit to the outside eating area.
9. Delineate the outdoors eating area as follows: (viewing from Washington Road)

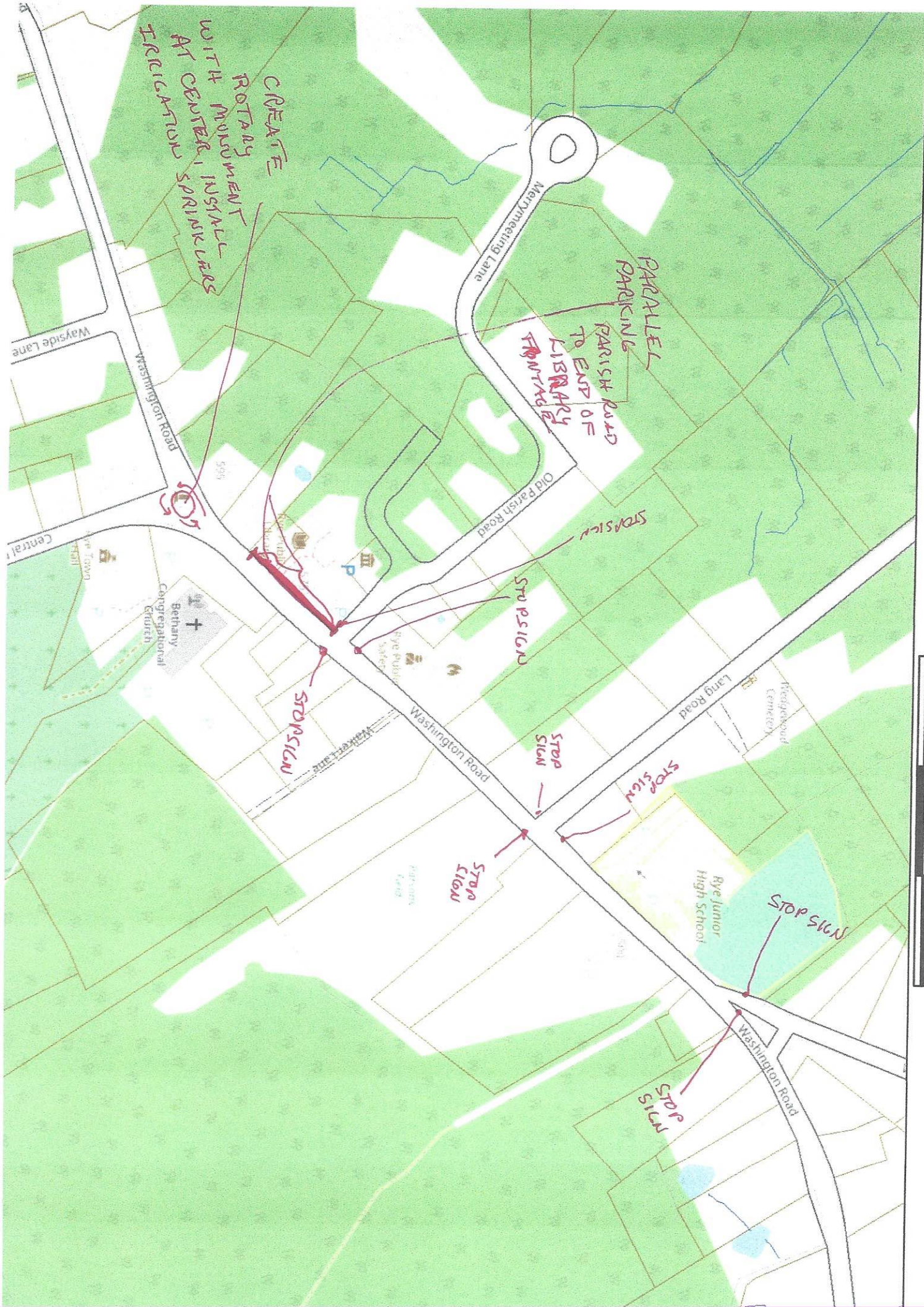
- a. Install a six-foot high fence along the back, with gated access to the Library parking lot. This fence would return to the back of the Parsonage Building and to both sides of the white brick building.
- b. On the right side (Parish Road) create a Belgian Espalier barrier.
- c. On the front side (Washington Road) - white picket fence, with a rounded arbor entrance at the middle, center-lined on the fountain.
- d. Some type of water fountain (basin approximately 5 feet in diameter) in the center of the courtyard, to help muffle vehicle noise, and create ambiance.
- e. Other plantings to be further delineated.

10. Remove some of the appendages to the Parsonage that were added in poorly thought out historical and architectural design. Reclaim the historical identity of the building as a part of the history of Rye, and the Rye Historic District.

11. Increase the use of STOP signs as a way to slow traffic in the center of Rye. This has been an ongoing debate and worry particularly at school-children transit times.

John Loftus,

Rye resident



1 inch = 33 Feet

