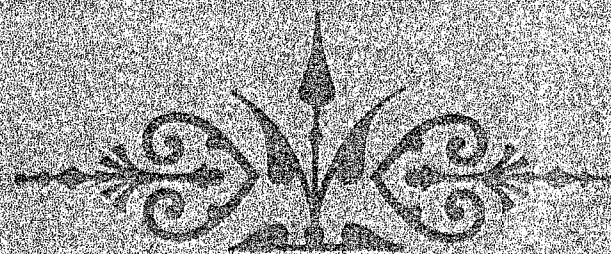


SMYRNA



Downtown Development Plan

Acknowledgements

THE DELMARVA CONSORTIUM

2525 Riva Road

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Tara L. Balte Clifford - Program Manager

Mark Friedman - Commercial Revitalization Coordinator

BEN-AMI FRIEDMAN & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Urban Design and Development Consultants

305 East 46th Street

New York, New York 10017

Ben-Ami Friedman - Principal in Charge

William Hilson - Site Graphics

Michael B. Jackson - Restoration Design

Wendy Sharp - Editor

CARLA HALL DESIGN GROUP

New York, New York

Carla Hall - Principal in Charge of Graphics and Design

Barbara Tanzman - Design and Production

COLLEGE OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY

University of Delaware

Timothy K. Barnekov - Project Co-Director

Francis X. Tannian - Project Co-Director

John E. Stapleford - Project Consultant

Katie Keeton and Kent Robertson - Project Staff

This project is supported by assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, DC, a Federal Agency, and the Philadelphia Regional Office of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Downtown Development Plan Smyrna, Delaware

A Publication of The Delmarva Consortium

Design Study Prepared by
Ben-Ami Friedman & Associates, Inc.
New York, New York

Economic Market Study Prepared by
College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy
University of Delaware

Introduction	3
Design Resources	4
Opportunities	6
Implementation	8
Architectural Styles	10
Streetscapes	12
Signs	14
Economic Market Study	17

March 1980



Introduction

The Delmarva Consortium's Downtown Revitalization Demonstration Project believes that downtown revitalization can provide a new source of economic growth to communities while they preserve their unique architectural and historical features and small town character. Smyrna, Delaware and three other Peninsula communities -- Middletown, Delaware, Snow Hill, Maryland and Onancock, Virginia -- were competitively selected by the Consortium. Key to their selection was evidence of a joint commitment by the local government and private sector to reverse the decline of their downtowns.

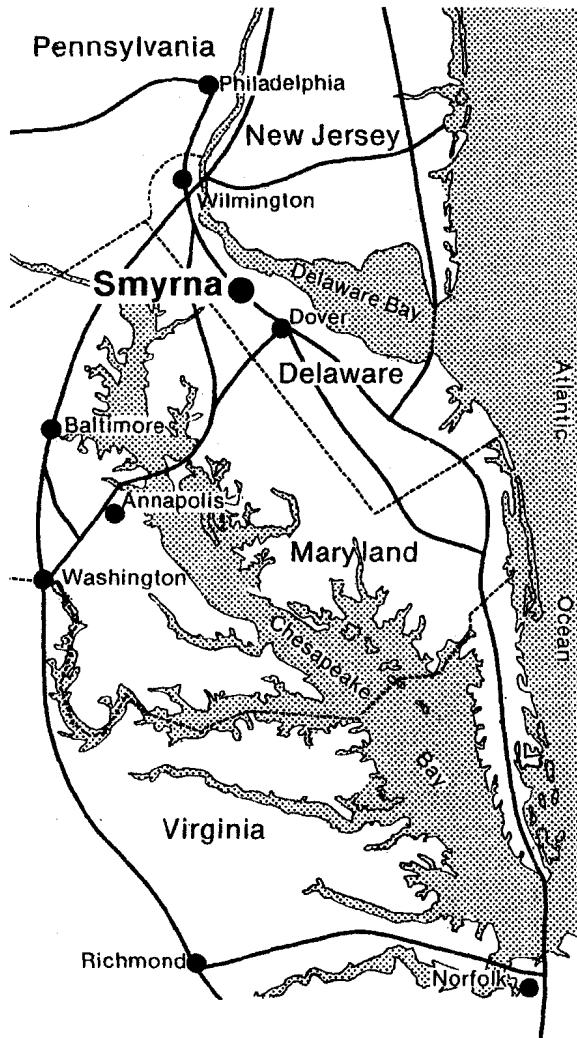
As a winner Smyrna received technical assistance services including a streetscape and design study and an economic market analysis. The results of these are detailed within, having been presented at a public meeting in December. The studies were undertaken with a view to identifying key strengths and weaknesses associated with the downtown commercial area and to making suggestions for improving the physical and economic vitality of these districts.

We hope these suggestions stimulate your vision and that you choose to implement some or all of the improvements as time, opportunity and funds permit. A positive climate for expanding markets for rural businesses and contributing to the commercial revitalization of small town "Main Street" exists, as evidenced in the recently released Federal Small Community and Rural Development Policy.

We thank the city government and local businesses as well as citizens of Smyrna for their cooperation in our work in their community and encourage them to work together to build on Smyrna's special qualities.

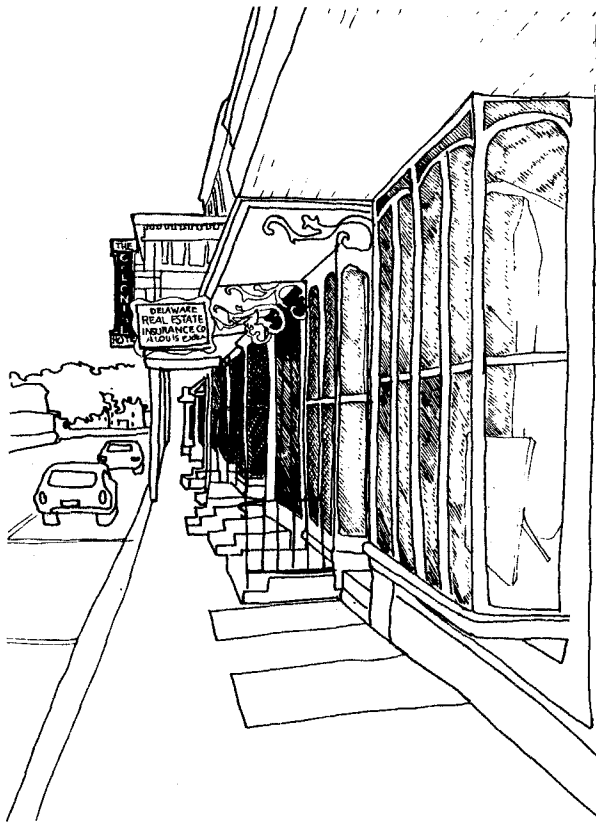
THE DELMARVA CONSORTIUM

Delaware Department of Community Affairs and Economic Development
Maryland Department of Economic and Community Development
Virginia Housing and Community Development
New Castle County Department of Community Development and Housing



Design Resources

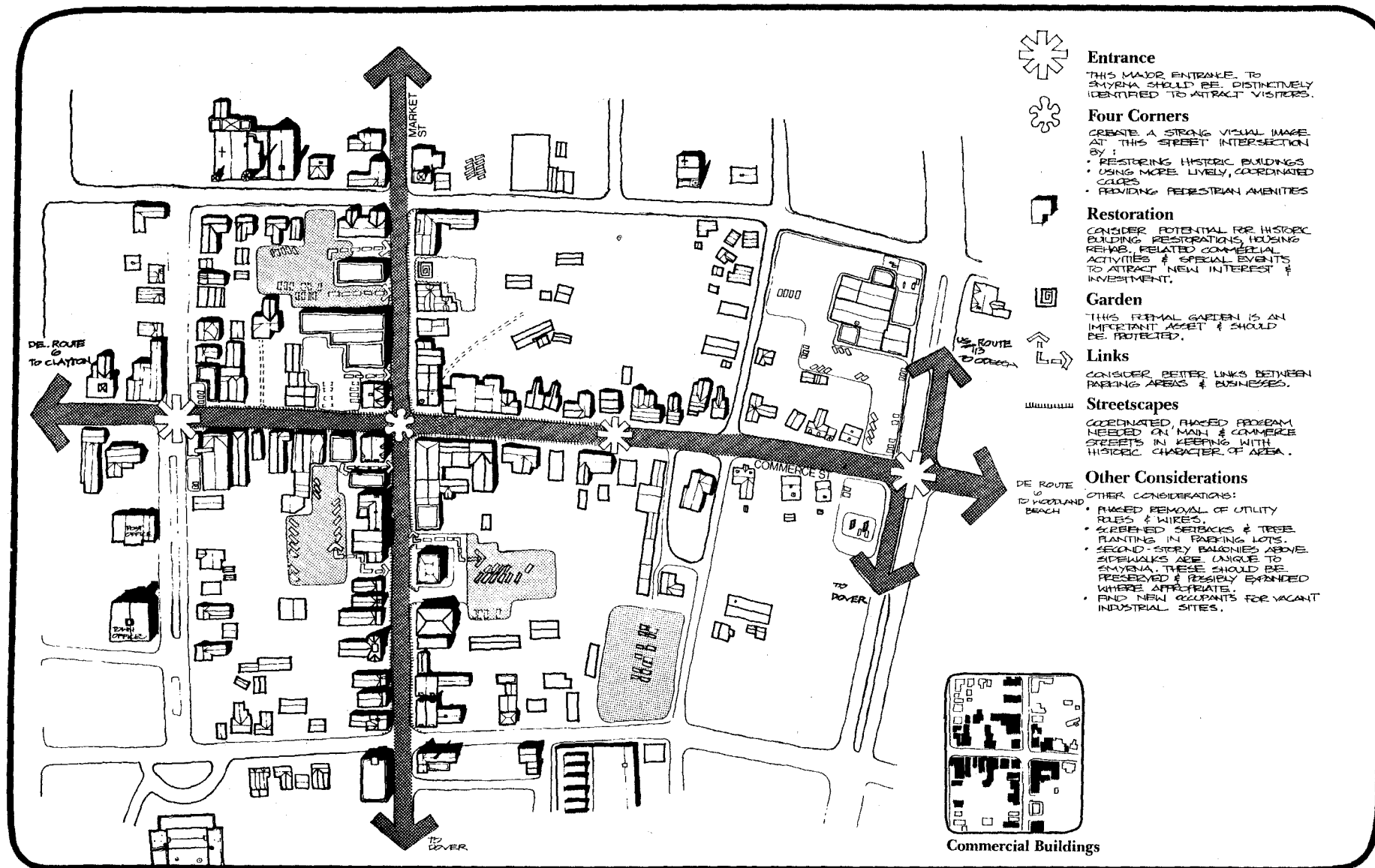
Travelling through Smyrna along U.S. Route 13, Delaware's DuPont Parkway, one hardly realizes that immediately west on Commerce Street lies one of the most interesting "undiscovered" historic urban centers in northern Delaware. Only a short distance into Commerce Street, the buildings reveal their span of almost 200 years of history, dating from the late 18th Century, through all the decades of the 19th Century and well into the 20th. The center of this historic district is the Four Corners intersection at Main and Commerce Streets, originally established as Duck Creek Village in 1768. This is the downtown area of Smyrna, Delaware, a town with more than 5,000 residents within which are some 45 businesses, numerous residences and various public and non-profit facilities.



As is typical of old Delaware towns, buildings are spaced close to one another, in some cases forming continuous rows along the blocks. Numerous changes, some good, others not, have taken place over the years so that today Smyrna has a variety of architectural styles. Many early buildings underwent considerable remodelling, e.g., a round corner turret was added in the 1890's to an early 19th Century building at the northeast corner as part of an effort to create increased space on the second and third floors. Commercial storefronts were added to residential buildings as business expanded, yet most of the additions respected the surroundings by maintaining a coherence of building, window and roof lines. Unfortunately, more severe changes occurred in recent decades as entire buildings were razed for ill-fitting parking lots and setbacks on the north side of Commerce Street, and on the west side of North Main Street north of Commerce.

It is clear that Smyrna's historic architecture is its greatest physical resource, and much remains that can be used for future revitalization. Just as numerous other long-forgotten historic communities have found new life in restoration, downtown Smyrna has a similar opportunity. Reinvestment is especially opportune at this time because increased housing demand and limited resources coincide with the potential for revitalized historic commercial space. An application is now pending for historic district designation.

The Four Corners area already has several notable residential and commercial restorations along Main Street which are excellent examples for others to follow. It is now essential that the town government take the lead along with private interests to protect its architectural heritage for the future by specific regulations and review procedures.

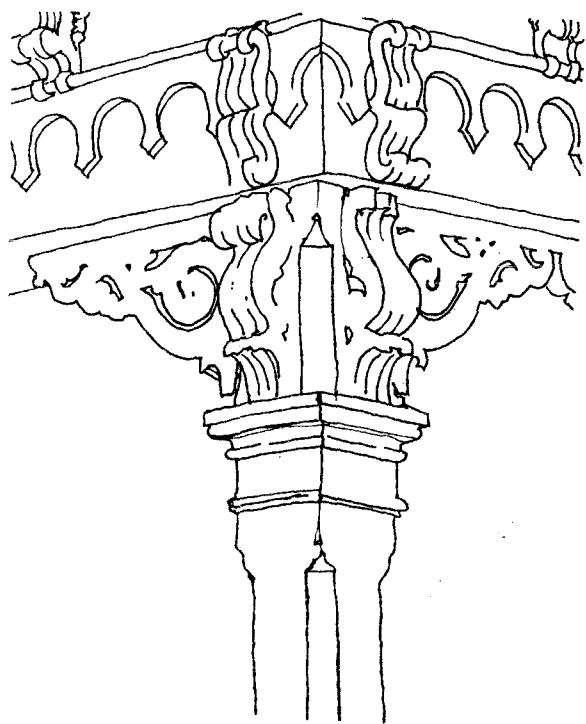


<h1>DESIGN RESOURCES</h1>	<h1>Smyrna</h1>	<div> TRAFFIC ROUTE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE </div> <div> ENTRY TO TOWN CENTER CENTRAL RETAIL POINT OPEN SPACE </div> <div> PUBLIC, COMMERCIAL & LANDMARK BUILDINGS OFF-STREET PARKING STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED </div> <div> CHURCH </div>	<p>Ben-Ami Friedman and Associates Urban Design & Development Consultants 305 East 40th St. New York, NY 10017-2223</p> <div> </div>
---------------------------	-----------------	--	---

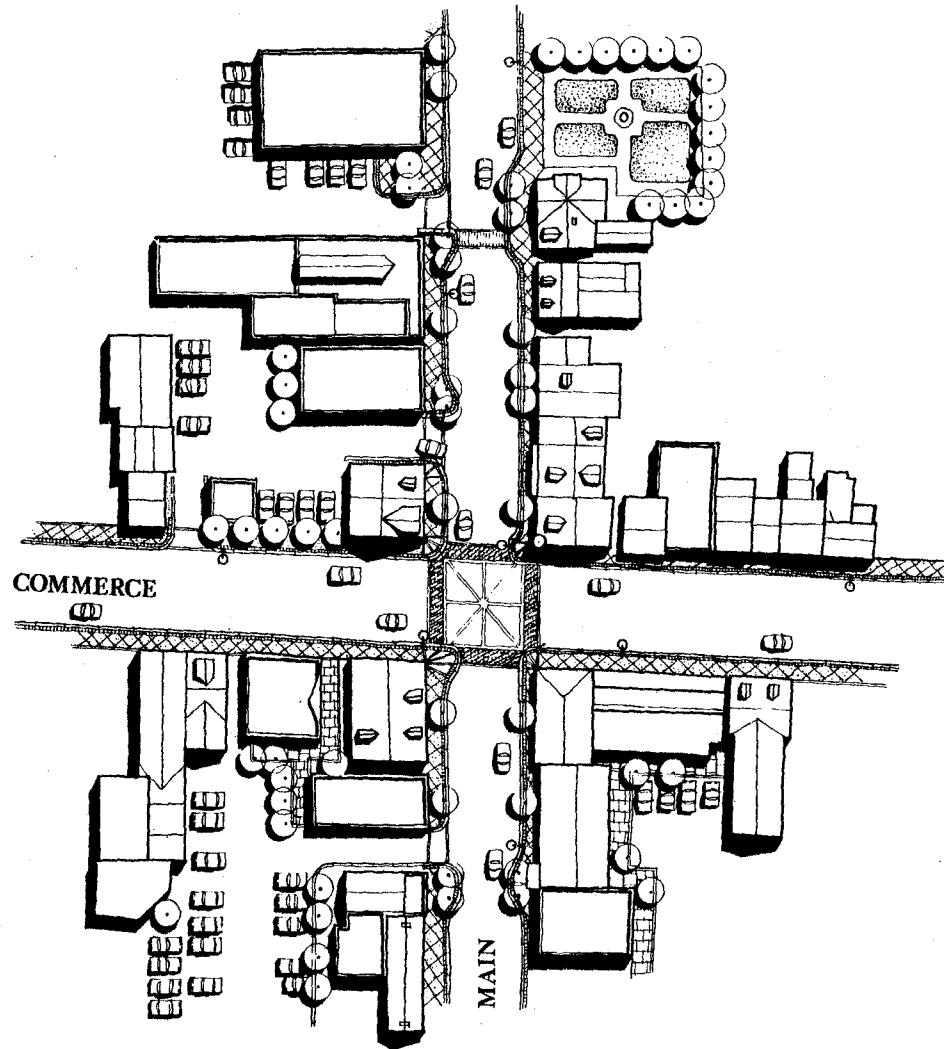
Opportunities

Because of its "Four Corners" location and architectural heritage, downtown Smyrna offers excellent design potential for physical and economic revitalization. The following revitalization efforts are recommended:

- The Four Corners intersection should be restored as one complete physical entity to re-establish a positive image at this important focal point. The landmark buildings at this intersection need to be restored to their original appearance where feasible, with recognition given to successive changes over the centuries. The existing white-wash paint treatment is unimaginative and unacceptable and should be restudied with due consideration given to paint colors, original brick finish and the many fine details of ornamentation. The streetscape (sidewalks, pavements, lights, fixtures and signage) needs reconstruction according to a coordinated design plan.
- The major and secondary entrances to Four Corners should be distinctively identified to attract visitors, especially from US 13.
- Facade restoration should be encouraged throughout the area in accordance with a strict set of design standards prepared by a qualified restoration architect. All building improvements should conform with such standards and be reviewed by qualified professionals. (In many communities professional design advice is made available without charge and federal funds are also available for commercial restoration.)
- New streetscapes should be provided according to a carefully designed theme. The historic brick walks should be restored where possible and extended throughout the district. A coordinated, phased program to remove overhead wires and poles is needed.
- The historic boxwood garden on North Main Street should be retained as an open space, and be properly maintained.
- Parking lots should be properly screened, landscaped, paved and lighted to protect property values and the quality of the district.
- A special signage system should be designed in keeping with the historic character of Four Corners.
- Efforts at restoration should be strengthened by enforcement of building codes for minimum compliance with health and safety measures. Public services such as street cleaning should be increased in the area.
- The town government should continue to press the effort for designation as an historic district.



Revitalization Concept Plan



Historic Garden

CONSIDER PRESERVATION OF THIS OPEN SPACE AS PART OF HISTORIC DISTRICT.

Streetscapes

- NEW SIDEWALKS
- CROSSWALKS
- STREET LIGHTS
- TRAFFIC SIGNALS
- DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE
- STREET FURNISHINGS
- REMOVE OVERHEAD WIRES

Facade Improvements

CLEAN & RESTORE ORIGINAL BUILDING FACADES & ORNAMENTATION. INSTALL SIGNS & AWNINGS APPROPRIATE TO FACADE DESIGN.

Pedestrian Links

PROVIDE PAVED & LIGHTED WALKWAYS BETWEEN PARKING LOTS & BUSINESSES.

Parking

PROVIDE LANDSCAPED SETBACKS, INTERIOR TREE PLANTING & LIGHTING.

Rear Access

ENCOURAGE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO BUSINESSES FROM PARKING LOTS

Smyrna - Delaware



Ben-Ami Friedman and Associates
Urban Design & Development Consultants
305 East 46 St New York 10017 NY 212.223.0029

Implementation

The most crucial ingredient to commercial district revitalization is creative and dedicated leadership. The alternative to action is the risk of spreading blight. Smyrna has expressed a strong desire to move ahead and, with proper commitment, can institute a successful revitalization program.

The drawings on these pages represent improvements which are appropriate for the revitalization of Four Corners and beyond. Such an effort should be worked out as a joint venture by the town government and agencies of the county, state and federal governments in combination with commitments from local property owners and merchants.

As a first priority it is recommended that the Four Corners intersection and the west side of North Main Street be reconstructed in conjunction with facade restorations of the adjoining properties. An approximate budget for constructing the public streetscape improvements at these locations would be about \$70,000. This estimate excludes major utility or subsurface changes.

The following actions are suggested to begin implementation of public and private improvements by the end of 1980 or early 1981:

First Half of 1980

- Hold coordinating meeting with local, county, state and federal representatives.
- Obtain local bank participation.
- Form an LDC (Local Development Corporation). Get state approval.
- Prepare a feasibility study for special downtown assessment district.
- Prepare and approve design standards for building restoration and signage.
- Negotiate agreements with owners and merchants to restore and rehabilitate properties.
- Retain a restoration architect for comprehensive design administration.
- Begin tenant search and commercial and residential promotion program.
- Prepare applications for various loan and grant programs.
- Budget and commence with design contract for public improvements to Four Corners and North Main Street.

Second Half of 1980

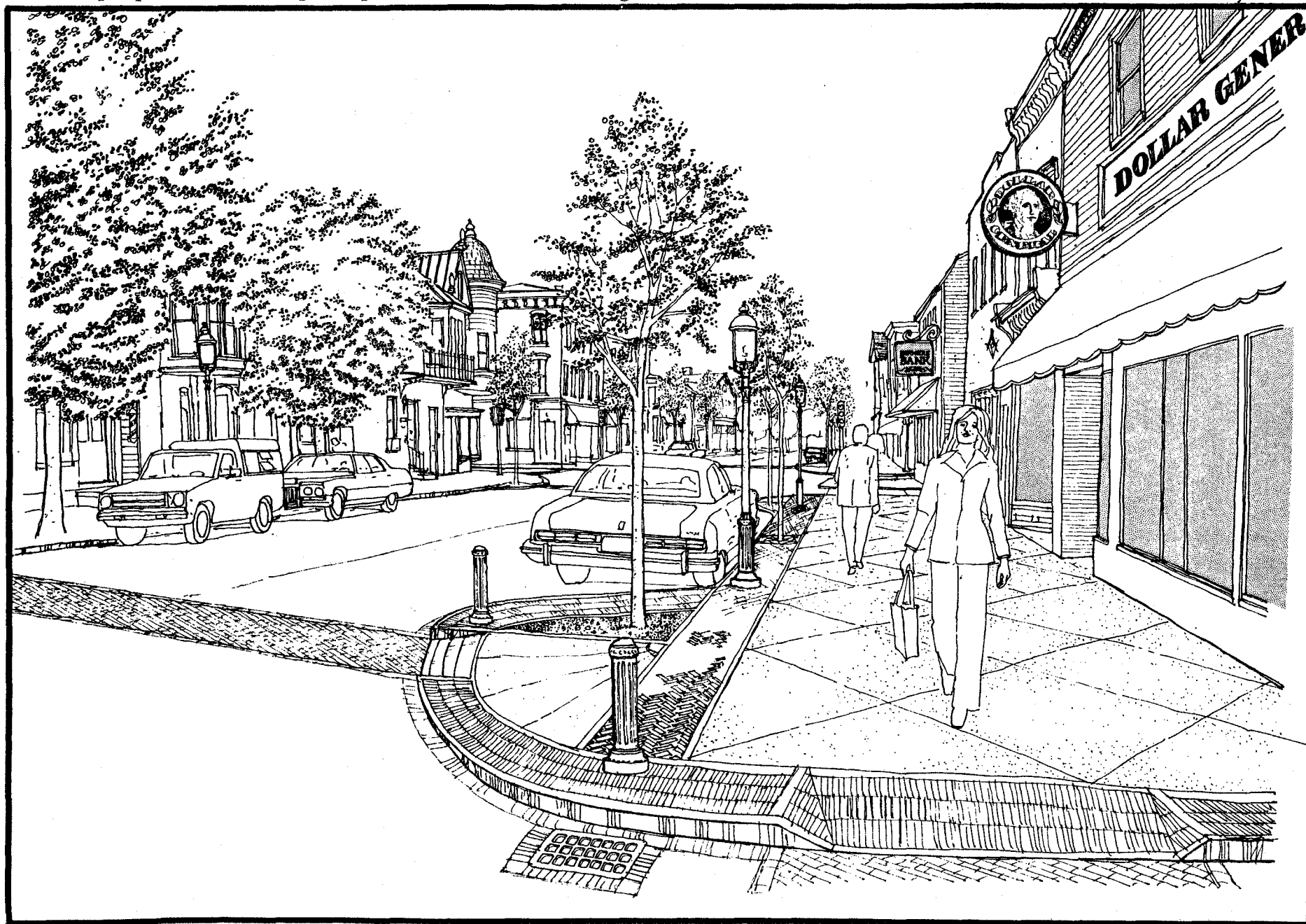
- Establish special downtown assessment district.
- Initiate and coordinate programs of LDC and assessment district.
- Merchants and owners submit applications for various types of restoration and rehabilitation loans & grants.
- Complete construction documents and advertise for public improvements.

First Half of 1981

- Start construction of public improvements.
- Merchants and owners receive funds and begin restoration of buildings.

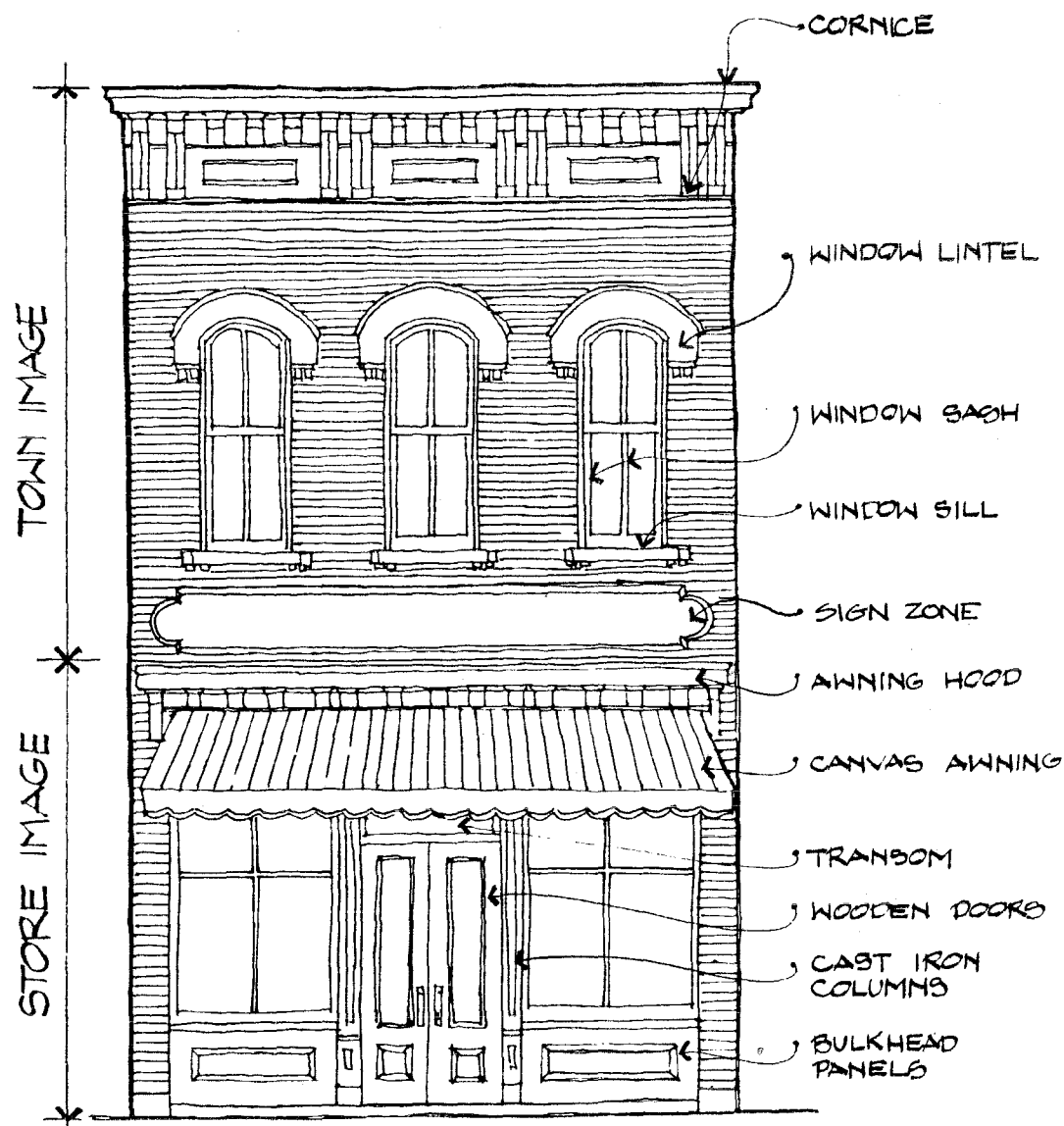


View of proposed streetscape improvements and building restoration on North Main Street with Four Corners beyond



Architectural Styles

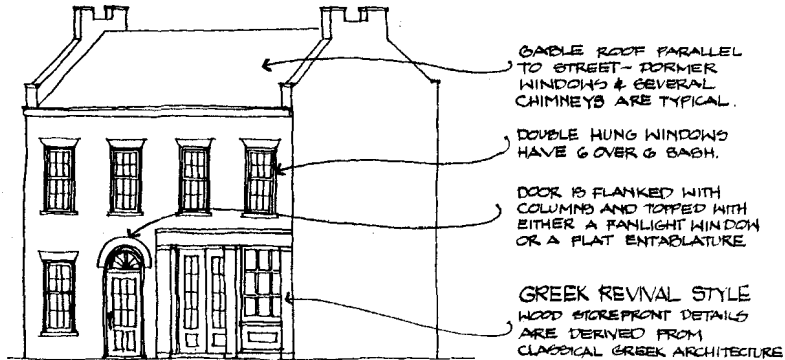
PARTS OF A BUILDING



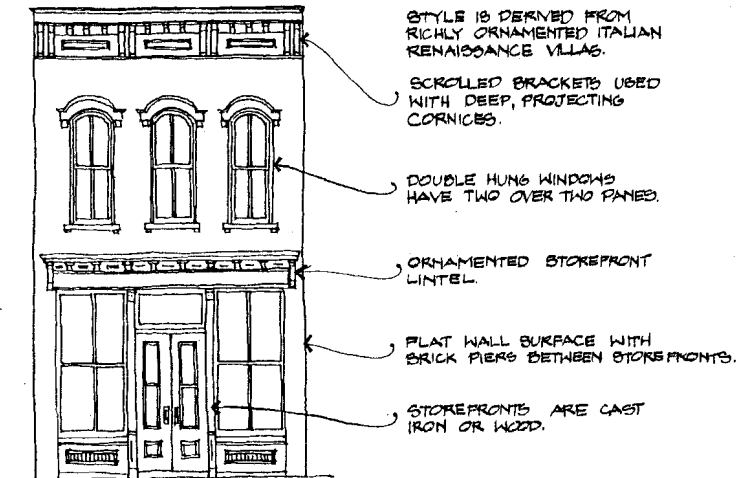
The vitality and personality of a downtown commercial district is to a large extent determined by its architectural character. The towns of the Delmarva Peninsula are fortunate to have a large variety of historic buildings that are relatively intact. These buildings illustrate the history of each town and the evolution of various architectural styles from the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The sensitive restoration of this unique resource is a key factor in successfully recapturing the vitality of these downtown commercial districts. Particular attention must be given to the intricate ornamentation in brick, wood, iron, stone, stained glass and brass. Proper restoration of this wealth is crucial. Stripping or covering original ornamentation for the sake of "modernization" is definitely inappropriate; and so is the remodelling from one original architectural style to another. Illustrated on the opposite page is a guide to determining in what style a building is constructed and the salient characteristics that should be retained.

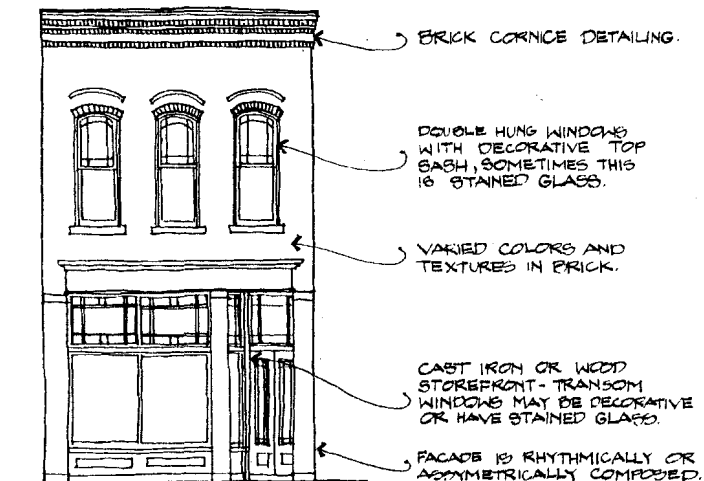
FEDERAL STYLE 1790-1830



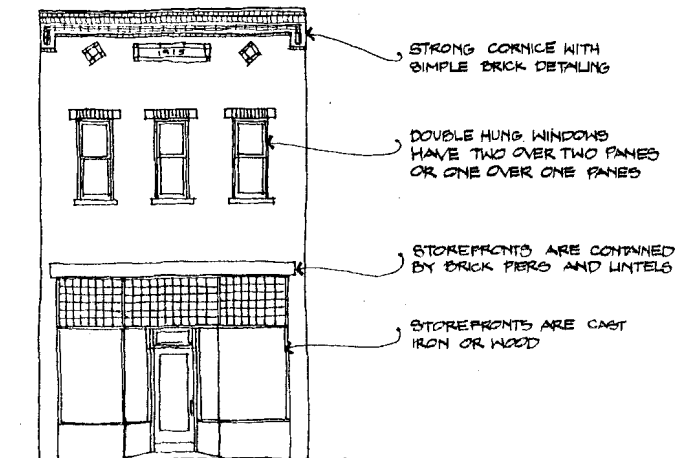
ITALIANATE STYLE 1865-1885



QUEEN ANNE STYLE 1875-1900



20TH CENTURY COMMERCIAL 1900-1920



Streetscapes

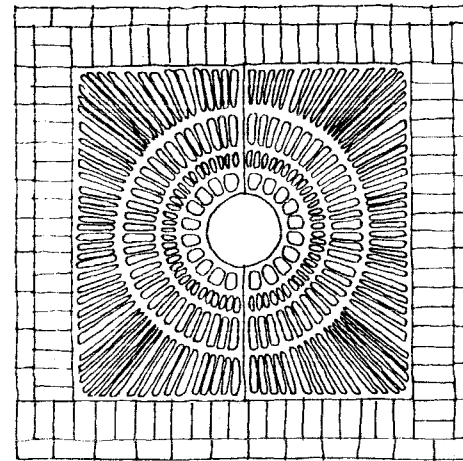
Most town centers on the Delmarva Peninsula have developed characteristically around narrow streets. As pressures of vehicular traffic and parking needs increased over the years, roadways have been widened and sidewalks narrowed. Today many of these sidewalks provide only minimum widths for pedestrian needs.

For downtown commercial revitalization to succeed, increased numbers of people need to be attracted to shop, browse, socialize and do business. Much will depend on providing a safe and appealing pedestrian environment in conjunction with restored building facades and improved merchandising. Accordingly, the public streetscape needs to be renovated in keeping with a carefully prepared design that is befitting the character of the historic town center.

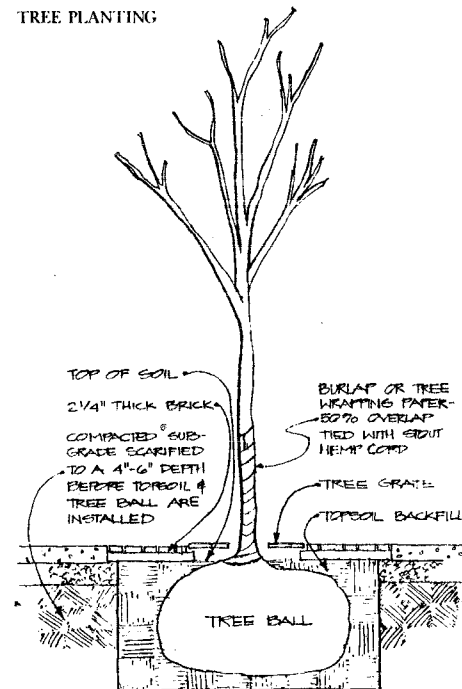
Shown on the right are examples of the elements to be included in a typical streetscape design. In some instances a selection of styles is shown for one component so as to offer an appropriate choice. Additional styles are available from various manufacturers. Also shown is a plan of a typical street intersection as seen from above illustrating how a new, unified streetscape program would look upon completion of installation of widened sidewalks with decorative pavements, paved crosswalks, lights, and planting of trees.

TREES

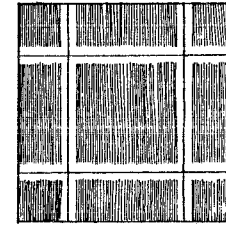
TREE GRATE IN PAVED BORDER



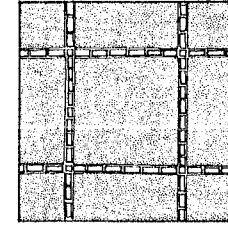
TREE PLANTING



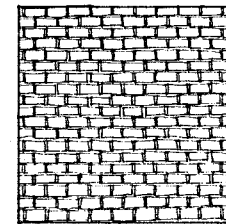
PAVEMENTS



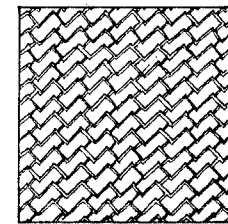
BRUSHED CONCRETE



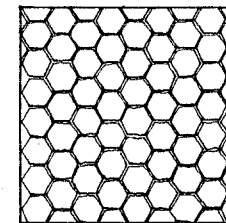
EXPOSED AGGREGATE



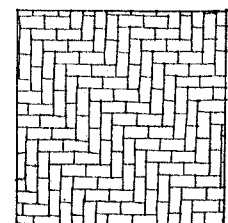
BRICK PAVERS



Z-BLOCK

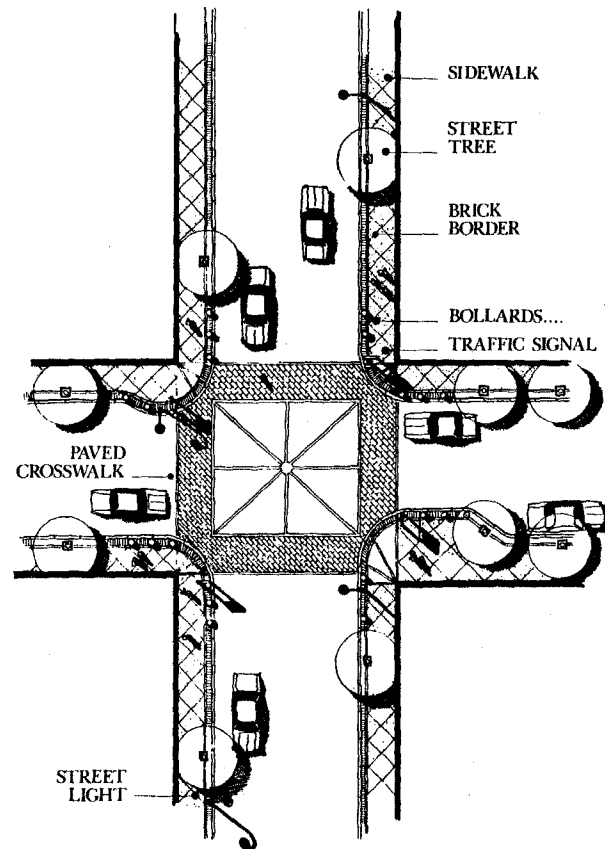


HEXAGONAL BLOCKS

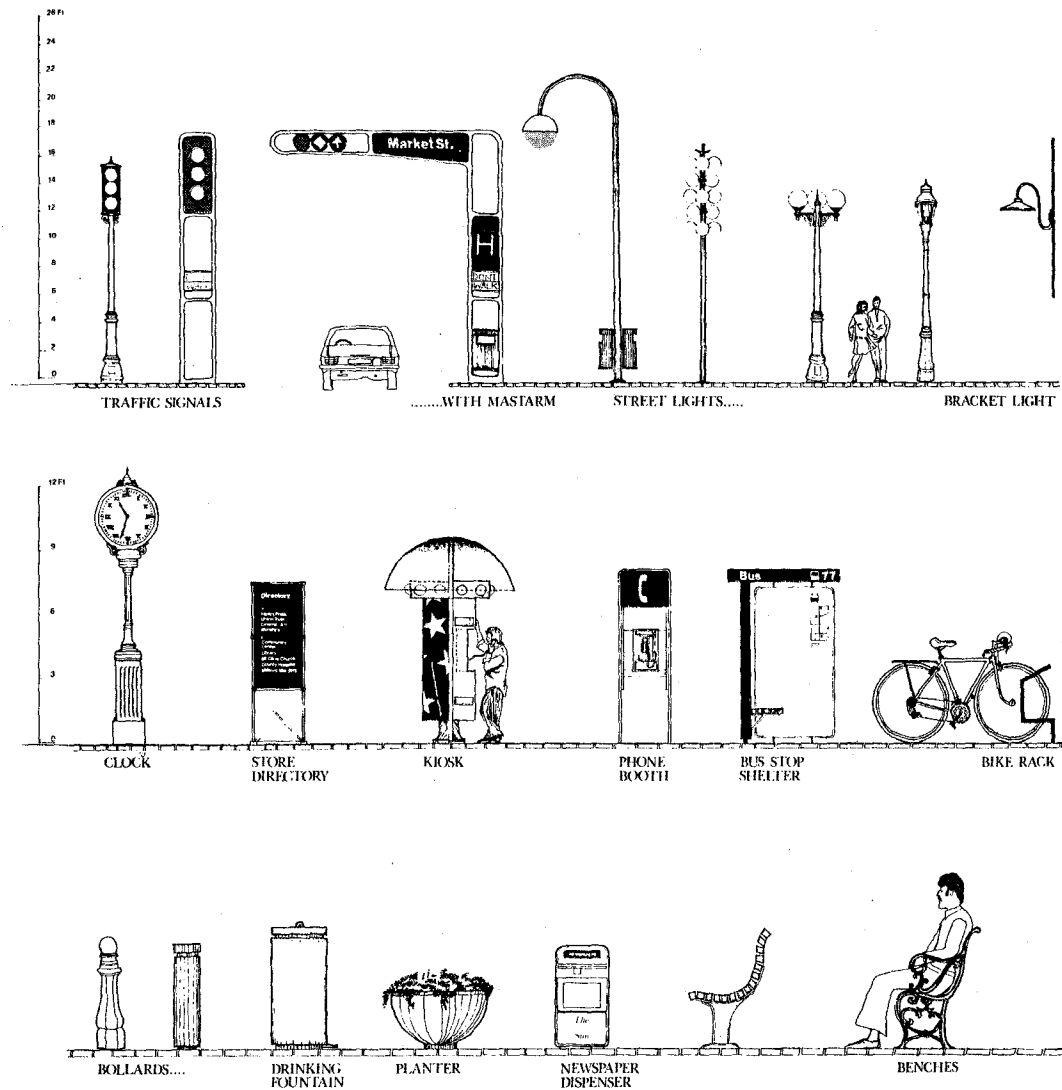


HERRINGBONE BRICK

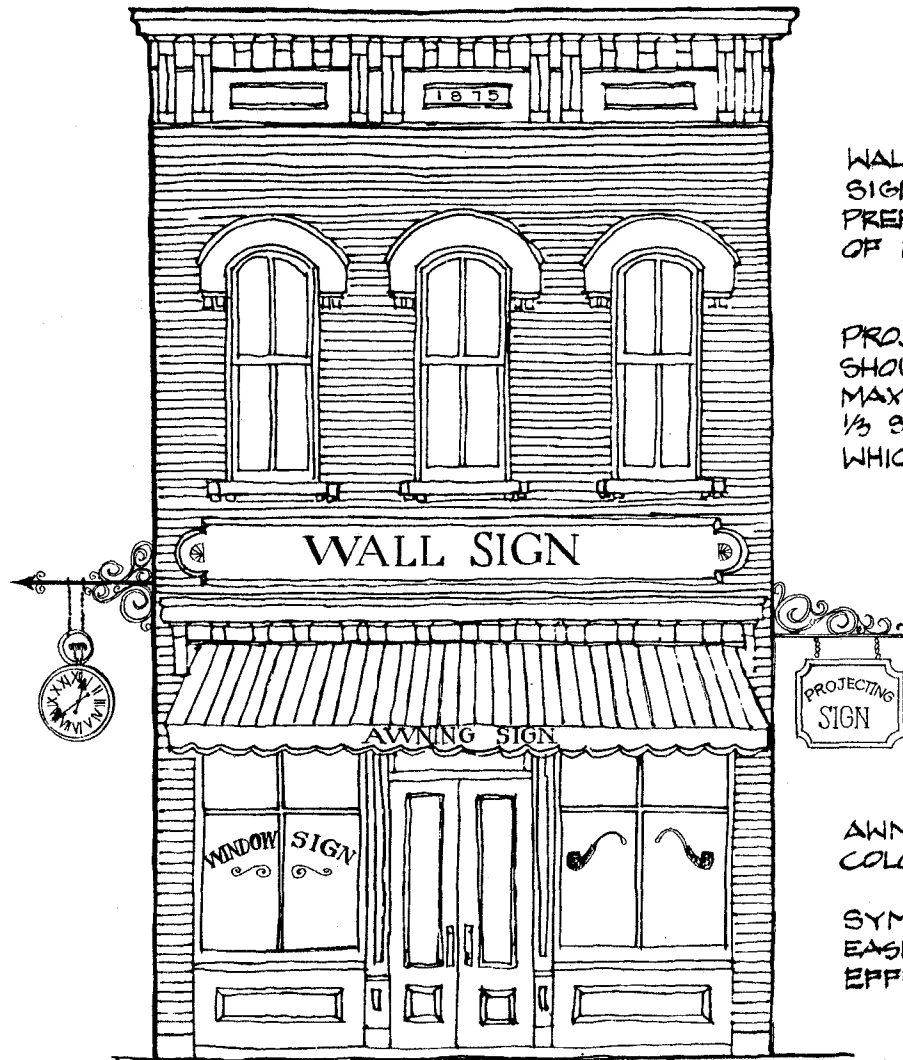
INTERSECTION



FURNISHINGS



Signs



WALL SIGNS ARE IN
SIGN ZONE AND ARE
PREFERABLY MADE
OF NATURAL MATERIALS

PROJECTING SIGNS
SHOULD PROJECT A
MAXIMUM OF 48" OR
1/3 SIDEWALK WIDTH,
WHICHEVER IS LESS.

AWNING SIGNS ADD
COLOR & VARIETY

SYMBOLS ARE
EASILY LEGIBLE &
EFFECTIVE.

As much as any single element, signs determine the quality of a downtown district. Whereas good signage can add variety and life to a commercial district, poorly designed signage can destroy the historic quality of the downtown and negate any of the positive effects of restoration.

Simplicity is the key to successful signs; graphic symbols and a minimum of information provide quick and easy identification. Light letters on a dark matte background are the most effective.

Commercial signs in small historic towns should:

- Have a unified and consistent theme.
- Use a type face style consistent with building age.
- Have a maximum of three colors.
- Fit into the size and proportions of the storefront.

Wall signs should be placed in the sign zone of the facade which is usually directly above the store front. Projecting signs should not extend more than 48 inches or 1/3 sidewalk width from the face of the building, whichever is less.

Signs may also be carefully placed on awnings to add variety and color to the streetscape. Sign standards need to be agreed upon and strictly enforced by local ordinance.

TOWN REVITALIZATION: GENERAL CONDITIONS

Investment decisions made by families, developers or business firms are what set any town's revitalization in motion. Investment usually consists of additions to and replacement of an area's capital stock, such as houses, stores and factories.

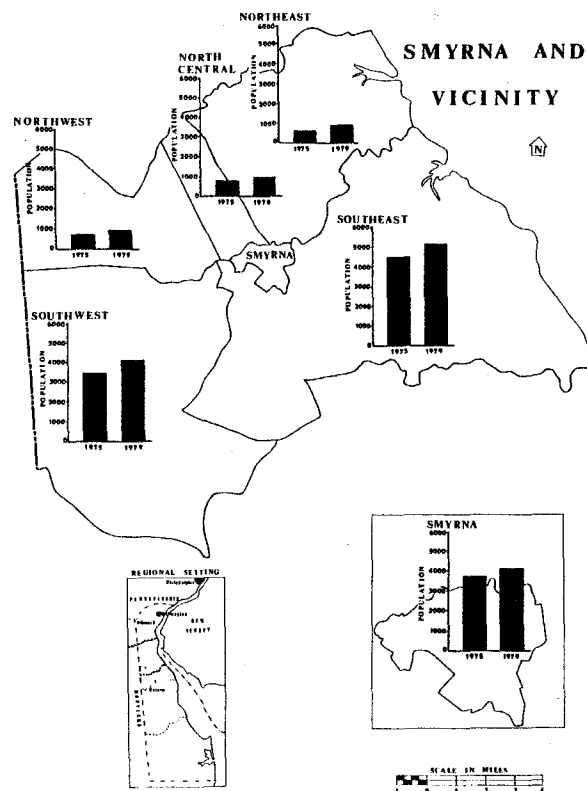
The key to area or town economic revitalization lies in attracting investment.

Two forces may presently favor commercial investment in downtown Smyrna: (1) population growth over the next decade and (2) current consumer demand. The location of Smyrna in Northern Kent County, Delaware, puts it at the fringe of a metropolitan area and at the rim of an orbit of economic activity and access regionally centered first on Philadelphia and secondly on Wilmington. With growth controls, tighter zoning, environmental constraints, and rising congestion in the suburban ring, the metropolitan areas continue to decentralize. This means attractive smaller towns at the metropolitan fringe like Smyrna are likely to capture a definite share of the increased demand for custom built homes and may expect to maintain moderate or above average rates of population growth.

SMYRNA HISTORY AND TRENDS

Smyrna established itself as a community and center because of transportation. First in importance historically was water transport, which allowed grain and fruit produced in the countryside to enjoy low cost access to markets in Philadelphia and elsewhere. Duck Creek Landing east of the town became a base for ship construction, a terminal for passenger travel, and a communications center since messages and news in early times traveled most quickly by water. Roads were built to the north and south that eventually linked the port activities to all areas within Delaware. Roads to the west gave Smyrna a market into Maryland. Transportation advantages by water and by road made Smyrna a town with attractions to banks, a newspaper, granaries, fertilizer manufacturers, hotels, and a range of retail outlets for the people who lived in the town or who came into town from the farms outside.

Around 1750 railroads entered the American scene. People in Smyrna with water shipping interests managed, at first, to block a rail line into town. Instead, the first nearby rail depot was built in Clayton. This decision, a result of



factional interests in Smyrna, reduced future economic and population growth. By rejecting direct rail access, Smyrna limited its economic potential, especially since Duck Creek did not have the capacity to serve the next generation of vessels. After the 1870s water transport and ship-related services in Smyrna went into a persistent decline. A spur rail line was run into Smyrna from Clayton, but since switching time was lost, rail related industry did not favor Smyrna as a location.

Between 1900 and 1950 small manufacturing plants (clothing, luggage) developed in the area providing employment lost in food processing and in water transport industries. Smyrna's downtown continued to be a regional retail center: banks, movie theaters, churches, and doctors' offices, serving people living in town and in outlying areas. In the 1920s, with the upgrading of Route 13, which bypassed downtown, auto related business activities invested in sites along the highway away from the traditional center of Commerce and Main Streets. Once again, transportation activities and decisions related to transport played an important role in Smyrna's development. Downtown Smyrna, unlike many towns, remained as a unit with buildings and road networks styled in the 1800s.

The people of Smyrna have kept their water transport activities out of town, held the railroad main line outside city limits, and shunted auto-truck access away from the center of town. This combination of decisions restricted the growth of commercial activities inside the town center. The special kinds of buildings (mail railroad station, for example) that would have accompanied this commerce were never built, or built at reduced scale, within the downtown. On the other hand, shocks of adaptation most other towns suffered in their core areas were avoided. The structures, both residential and commercial, that were built before the automobile era remain largely intact. This heritage is both a major asset and a liability for downtown commerce in the 1980s.

Access to the outside world, especially important to agricultural industries and to manufacturing plants which require markets and supplies (fuel, raw materials) for what they produce, is one asset that helps explain town size, change and growth. With limited outside world access, Smyrna grew little between 1880 and 1930. Industries began operating within the city, but none grew large and several phased out after time passed.

A second force that explains town growth is its ability to be a market center for people living in the immediate surrounding region, and in Smyrna's case,

for farm families located within 15 or 20 minutes travel time to town. Smyrna is 14 miles from Middletown to the north, and only 12 miles to the much more important city of Dover to the south. These two places compete as centers of retail and service activity with Smyrna. After 1950, the growth of the Dover Air Base, of state government, and of several manufacturing firms in Dover has tended to restrict Smyrna's market potential. Chiefly this is due to the legal, banking and similar services along with retail outlets in Dover which make that city a center with more attractive opportunities and variety.

While Dover enjoys retail and service market center advantages over Smyrna, the growth in Dover's population and the widespread availability of the automobile has allowed Smyrna to become a place of residence for persons working in the State Capital. Commuting now links the growth of Dover directly to downtown Smyrna, bringing with it spendable income and population.

Additionally, public investments and the year to year operation of major public facilities, such as the Delaware Home and Hospital and the State Prison, bring large numbers of jobs and people to the town. Expansion or contraction of these public institutions is a relatively powerful demographic and economic force. These two institutions, because of their relatively large size and year round activity, have had a permanent impact that is of significant proportion in a town of Smyrna's size.

Of major significance for investments and other policies that could revitalize downtown Smyrna in the 1980s are the most recent trends. What is the magnitude and direction of change since the 1970 U.S. Census? These issues are of special importance because the answers help set a tone for all present decisions and because little has been published about very recent changes. Moreover, it may be that potential investors place extra weight upon the most recent trends as signalling whether the town has begun to exhibit definite growth or has returned to a pattern of stagnation.

The most recent trends influence investments and other policies for revitalizing downtown Smyrna. What is the magnitude and direction of change since the 1970 U.S. Census?

Map 1 shows Smyrna and the surrounding vicinity. Table 1 shows for each of the areas on Map 1 recent estimates of housing units, most of which are within six miles of downtown Smyrna. The number of and rate of change in housing

units represents one concrete reflection of investment and indicates area revitalization.

TABLE 1 SMYRNA AND VICINITY*

	Housing Units		% Change
	<u>1975</u>	<u>1979</u>	
<u>Kent County</u>			
Smyrna (town)	1197	1293	8.0
Southeast	1450	1677	15.7
Southwest	1017	1342	31.9
<u>New Castle County</u>			
Northeast	269	299	11.2
Northcentral	262	313	19.5
Northwest	240	297	23.8
 TOTAL: Smyrna and Vicinity	 4435	 5221	 17.7

SOURCE: College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware.

*The six sub-areas are identified in Map 1.

Smyrna and its vicinity gained 786 new housing units between 1975 and 1979, an increase of 17 percent. Smyrna town has enjoyed additional household investment but on percentage change basis has been below the five surrounding sub-areas. Population change is a second component important for downtown revitalization. Table 2 displays population estimates for Smyrna and its vicinity. As a residential center within its sub-region the role of the town of Smyrna is declining.

The changes in Smyrna can be compared with changes in the Smyrna vicinity and with those in Middletown and New Castle County. Table 3 reflects that Smyrna's rates are below those in southern New Castle County and in Middletown, with Smyrna vicinity having a higher rate of housing increase than Smyrna town itself.

TABLE 2 SMYRNA AND VICINITY POPULATION*

	<u>1975</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<u>Kent County</u>			
Smyrna (town)	3746	4024	12.2
Southeast	4437	5081	14.5
Southwest	3429	4162	21.4
<u>New Castle County</u>			
Northeast	793	881	11.1
Northcentral	778	912	17.2
Northwest	710	860	21.1
TOTAL: Smyrna & Vicinity	3893	5920	14.6

SOURCE: College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware.

*Excludes population in group quarters.

TABLE 3. COMPARATIVE CHANGE, HOUSING AND POPULATION
AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENTAGE SINCE 1975*

	<u>Housing</u> <u>(annual rate)</u>	<u>Population</u> <u>(annual rate)</u>
Smyrna	2.0%	3.1%
Smyrna and Vicinity	4.4	3.7
Middletown	8.8	10.5
New Castle County		
below the Canal	6.4	7.2
New Castle County		
outside Wilmington	4.1	0.3

SOURCE: College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware.

*Annual averages cover 1975-1979 for Smyrna and for Smyrna and Vicinity, but cover 1975-1978 in the three other instances.

The overall conclusion is that the town of Smyrna has had slow but average growth in numbers of people in four years (1975 to 1979) while Smyrna vicinity has had strong activity.

SMYRNA MARKET POTENTIAL

Trends in Smyrna retailing, followed by an estimate of spatial distribution of consumer demand in the Smyrna area are described. Then the general locational constraints placed upon retail and service outlets by the spatial distribution of product demand are examined, concluding with a discussion of the retail and service potential of Smyrna. Every five years, the United States Bureau of the Census conducts a Census of Retail Trade. The results for Smyrna are set forth below.

TABLE 4 SMYRNA RETAILING TRENDS

	Levels of Activity	
	<u>1972</u>	<u>1977</u>
Number of Stores	89	100
Sales (\$1,000)	\$21,067	\$39,980
Payroll (\$1,000)	\$ 2,286	\$ 4,229
Employees	450	567
Pay per Employee	\$5,080	\$ 7,459

SOURCE: Census of Retail Trade 1972 and 1977, U. S. Bureau of the Census.

All five retail indicators shown in Table 4 improved in Smyrna between 1972 and 1977, and the rate of change for Smyrna on all indicators (Table 5) outran rates of change in Kent County, New Castle County and the State of Delaware. Inflation adjusted sales volume, or realized purchasing power, grew 31.4 percent in Smyrna between 1972 and 1977 compared to 5.5 percent in Kent County, -3.7 percent in New Castle County and 0.1 percent in the State. By 1977, total sales (not adjusted for inflation) for Smyrna retailers stood at \$39,980,000 and total retail payrolls were \$4,229,000. If the same annual increase in sales and payroll that took place between 1972 and 1977 held through the past two years, these are the estimates for 1979: total sales,

\$55,630,000 and total retail payroll, \$5,789,000, giving Smyrna a strong retailing performance.

TABLE 5 PERCENTAGE CHANGE COMPARISONS IN RETAIL ACTIVITY WITH COUNTIES AND THE STATES (1972-1977)

	Smyrna	Kent County	New Castle County	State of Delaware
Number of Stores	12.4%	-5.4%	-10.2%	-7.7%
Sales	89.8	52.4	39.2	44.5
Payroll	85.0	49.8	32.3	38.7
Employees	26.0	18.0	5.5	9.8
Pay per Employee	46.8	26.9	25.5	26.3

SOURCE: Census of Retail Trade 1972 and 1977, U. S. Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 6 PERCENTAGE CHANGE COMPARISONS IN RETAIL ACTIVITY (1972-1977) WITH SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES

	Smyrna	Dover	Wilmington	Newark	Middletown
Number of Stores	12.4%	-5.1%	-2.8%	7.2%	11.8%
Sales	89.8	49.3	31.1	68.1	109.6
inflation adjusted sales*	31.4	3.3	-9.3	16.3	45.1
Payroll	85.0	47.0	15.5	50.2	127.0
Employees	26.0	19.0	-3.0	19.4	77.9
Pay per Employee	46.8	23.5	19.0	25.8	27.6

SOURCE: Census of Retail Trade 1972 and 1977, U. S. Bureau of the Census.

*Sales were inflation adjusted using the 1972 and 1977 Consumer Price Indexes for the Philadelphia SMSA (U. S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Table 6 shows that all five of Smyrna's retail growth rate indicators for the 1972 to 1977 period are above those for Dover, Wilmington and Newark; and generally in line with the high performance of Middletown. Smyrna has begun to realize the economic benefits accompanying population spillover from larger urban centers.

Smyrna is an established retail and residential center. Many families from the area to the north below Townsend, from the area to the west of Smyrna into parts of Maryland, from the town itself, and to a lesser degree from areas south towards Dover could make Smyrna their main shopping center. Table 7 shows the most recent estimates of households by income level.

TABLE 7 HOUSEHOLD INCOME SMYRNA AREA, 1969 and 1975

Household Income	Number of Households		Percentage Distribution		% Change 1969-1975
			of Households 1969	of Households 1975	
Less than \$5,000	581	536	21.5	12.1	-7.8
\$ 5,000 - 9,999	1072	854	39.6	19.3	-20.3
\$ 10,000 -14,999	683	1936	25.1	43.6	183.5
\$15,000 - 24,999	311	1003	11.5	22.6	222.5
\$25,000 and over	61	106	2.3	2.4	73.8
TOTAL	2708	4435	100.0	100.0	63.8

Estimated Total Household Income (\$ millions)

1969: \$26.5

1975: \$55.6

SOURCE: U. S. Census, 1970 and the College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, New Castle County Information Survey, 1976 and College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, State Wide Recreation Survey, 1977.

Total household income increased almost 110 percent during the six-year interval. When these income figures are adjusted for inflation, the real purchasing power in the Smyrna area rose a healthy 41.1 percent. The

estimated total household income in the Smyrna area for 1979 was \$76.1 million based on 5135 occupied households with average household income of \$14,832. Estimated after tax spending power was \$64.7 million.

Table 8 shows the estimated market potential in 1979 for the Smyrna area broken down into seventeen different spending categories.

TABLE 8 SPENDING RATES AND MARKET POTENTIAL SMYRNA AREA 1979

Spending Category	Estimated* Rates of Spending (%)	Estimated Market Potential (\$1000)
Food at Home	10.3	\$ 7,838
Food Away	3.5	2,664
Alcoholic Beverages	0.8	609
Tobacco	1.1	837
Shelter	8.3	6,316
Household Operation	9.7	7,382
Housefurnishings & Equipment	3.4	2,587
Clothing	4.6	3,501
Dry Clean & Laundry	0.5	381
Transportation	16.0	12,176
Health Care	5.1	3,881
Personal Care	1.3	989
Recreation	6.0	4,566
Insurance-Pensions	6.4	4,870
Gifts & Contributions	4.0	3,044
Taxes	15.0	11,415
Savings	4.0	3,044
TOTAL		\$ 76,100

*The U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has conducted detailed surveys of family income usage. The percentages for each spending category in Smyrna were derived from these family income surveys, adjusted for factors affecting spending when households are located at the fringe of metropolitan areas and for recent price trends in the consumer price index. See U. S. Department of Labor Bulletin 1992, published in 1978, pp. 78-83.

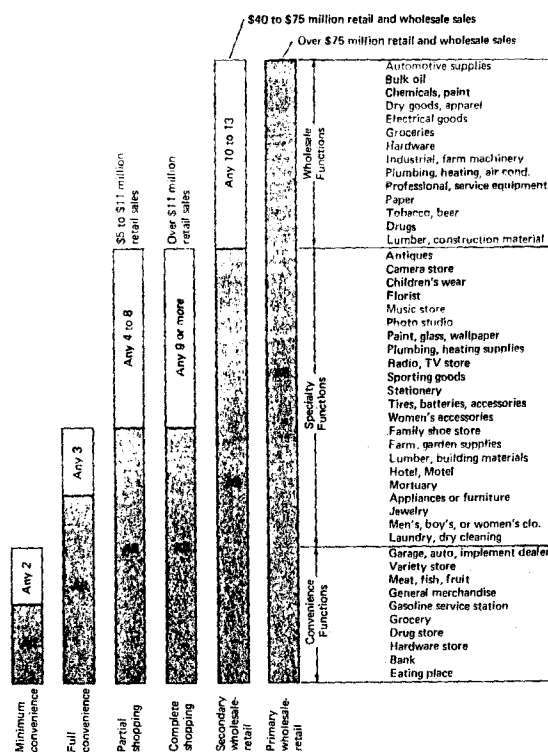
Transportation, including vehicle purchases, gasoline and vehicle maintenance, leads all categories of consumer expenditure. Leaving taxes aside, transportation expenditures are followed in importance by food purchases and expenditures on shelter (including rent and mortgage payments). Expenditures on household operations rank fourth and include telephone charges and payments for fuel, water, trash, sewage, laundry and cleaning supplies, domestic and other household services, and miscellaneous household products (e.g., light bulbs and paper towels). In recent years, the fastest growing expenditure categories have been purchases of food away from home, health care, household operations (including utilities) and recreation.

The price a consumer pays at the counter for an item is not the item's full purchase cost. In addition to the counter price, a customer "pays" the costs of transportation to and from the store. Since many household retail and service purchases are for frequently needed and relatively low-priced convenience items (e.g., food, toothpaste), the bulk of these consumer purchases occurs close to home, where travel costs are minimized.

On the other hand, spending on large durable items (e.g., cars, furniture, appliances) will be more geographically dispersed. Consumers seeking favorable quality and price on large items will often search among various sellers. Therefore not all of the \$64.7 million in private (after taxes) market potential will be spent in Smyrna or in the Smyrna area. Leakages of expenditures will be related to a number of factors. First, as indicated, household spending on larger budget items (dishwashers or automobiles) will be spread over a wide spatial area. Secondly, consumer travel studies show that trips from the home to any shopping destination increase when the number of activities (banking, stores, library) at the destination increase. Smyrna area households will shop in the regional Christiana and Blue Hen Malls, in downtown Dover, at the Dover Air Base, or even in downtown Newark. Smyrna stores will, for the most part, siphon off convenience item purchases, together with stores along major local routes and in Townsend, Kenton, Leipsic, Cheswold and Hartly.

Finally, a large proportion of Smyrna district residents commute to jobs located above the canal and in Dover. Household purchases by these families will be spread over a broad spatial area. Purchases of items such as food, clothing, and consumer durables will shift toward the site of employment,

TABLE 9
GOODS TRADED IN CITIES AT
DIFFERENT LEVELS IN THE
HIERARCHY



while purchases of products such as automobile supplies actually will increase in the town where commuters live.(1)

The leakage of resident consumer expenditures can be offset by shoppers coming into the Smyrna area from around Middletown and Odessa, from Maryland, and from tourist traffic on Route 13. On balance, however, the expenditure estimates in Table 8 can be taken as the upper limit of potential 1979 purchases inside the Smyrna area. Given the size of its trade area, Smyrna with around \$40 million in retail sales can accommodate retail activities such as a supermarket, a drug store, and a hardware store, a restaurant, a bank, and an auto garage. There is a lower probability that Smyrna merchants could successfully operate outlets for all of the goods at the upper level of Table 9.

The Urban Land Institute surveys performance of stores and service outlets, chiefly in shopping centers.(2) They then publish data showing the average square footage and the average sales for different types of outlets. The most recent set of data covers 1975. After making several adjustments, it is possible to estimate the 1979 threshold sales size by various kinds of shops. Table 10 shows these estimates. Fundamentally, the kinds of products and services shown are those a town the size of Smyrna, given its present market potential, could support. Most of the products are convenience goods items, bought frequently. Presumably most of the regular customers would come from Smyrna and vicinity, an area previously shown on Map 1. This is an area, within four miles or less of downtown which had a spendable income after taxes estimated at \$54.9 million in 1979.

If all of the 23 outlets of Table 10 had been operating in Smyrna, and if they had achieved the average sales level for their type of outlet, then, they, alone, would have generated \$11.1 million in sales during 1979: a level of sales well within Smyrna's market potential.

(1) William T. Boehm and Martin T. Pond, "Job Location, Retail Purchasing Patterns, and Local Economic Development," Growth and Change, January 1956, pp. 7-11.

(2) The Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers: 1975, Washington, D.C.: The Urban Land Institute, 1975, pp. 159-205.

TABLE 10. SINGLE OUTLET SALES AND SIZE ESTIMATES

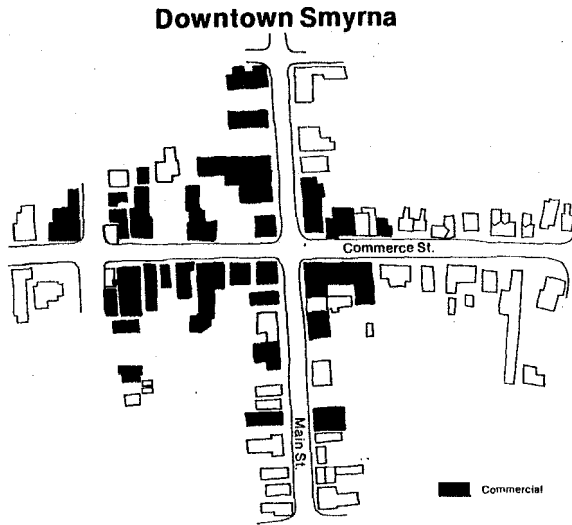
	1979 Average Annual Sales (\$000)	Average Leasable Area (Sq. Ft.)
<u>Food</u>		
Meat & Fish Market	\$ 380	1,600
Supermarket	3,400	20,000
Restaurant w/liquor	230	3,150
Restaurant no liquor	155	2,300
<u>General</u>		
Catalogue Store	390	4,200
Discount Department	2,400	36,000
Variety Store	400	7,500
<u>Clothing</u>		
Children's Shoes	155	1,600
Ladies' Specialties	150	1,650
Men's Shop	180	2,000
Family Wear	190	2,200
<u>Specialty Shops</u>		
Camera	210	1,020
Liquor-wine	250	2,400
Appliances	250	2,600
Drugs	625	7,300
Auto Dealer	530	7,500
Hardware	310	5,400
Furniture	240	6,500
<u>Services</u>		
Cinema	310	10,800
Photographer	150	1,250
Cleaner	75	1,600
Beauty Shop	80	1,200
Shoe Repair	40	600

Utilizing information from Table 8 and Table 10 and taking into account the types of retail activities and services already established in Smyrna and vicinity, the following general conclusions can be reached:

1. Certain categories of business may presently be excluded from consideration as tenants for Smyrna: an additional supermarket, package store, appliance store, cinema, hardware (based on sales to consumers only, not businesses) or luncheonette. If the growth in single-family households continues, the potential for expansion of retail hardware will improve. These families purchase four to five times more hardware than renters, mobile home or condominium owners.
2. There is some potential for the entry of another medium size furniture store. The estimated annual market potential for household furniture purchases in the Smyrna area is currently about \$710,000. An average furniture store would need to capture only one-third of this market.
3. Local retailers are only capturing about one-half of the potential market for clothing in the Smyrna vicinity. An additional clothing store, perhaps specializing in men's clothing, seems warranted.
4. Some expansion of existing dry cleaning services seems justified, given recent population and income trends.
5. A medium size discount department store should be established.
6. Discussions with merchants and patrons and an examination of the available retail and service outlets in the Smyrna area suggests that there may be a need for the following types of facilities: shoe and shoe repair shop, bakery, and a professional office building.
7. The estimates of spendable income indicate that the Smyrna area has a growing sales potential and should easily be able to maintain its present level of retailing.

DOWNTOWN SMYRNA

For the purposes of this project, downtown Smyrna is defined as the area within one block of the intersection of Main and Commerce Streets, except in the western direction on Commerce Street where the downtown extends two blocks from the intersection. The study area contains 67 separate facilities, including 45 retail stores or professional offices, 15 single or multi-unit residences (including upper-floor apartments), 3 public or private nonprofit organizations (a fraternal organization, a school administration building, and a union office), and 4 vacant commercial units. The boundaries of the downtown are identified in Map 2.



Information Gathering Techniques

Information about the downtown was gathered through a questionnaire distributed to the retailers and professionals located in the study area; by telephone and face-to-face contacts with nonrespondents, realtors and others knowledgeable about the downtown area; and through a survey of persons encountered on the street. Thirty-one out of forty-five of the retailers and professionals responded to the written questionnaire and eight were contacted by phone.

Fifty-two persons were interviewed on the street over a period of several days. These individuals varied in age from 15 to 81 and included 30 females and 22 males. Nearly 70 percent live within three miles of the downtown and over 95 percent have lived at their present address for a year or more. The respondents included 78% whites and 21% blacks. Their mean income was \$9,500.

Forty percent of the individuals encountered on the street had come to the downtown area to do their banking, 34 percent were shoppers, and 13 percent were working in the downtown. The remaining 13 percent were present for a variety of reasons: going to the doctor, the post office, the laundromat, dining out, and walking. Eighty percent indicated that they usually came downtown during the weekday.

The information gathered through the surveys and other data collection methods is presented in the following summary of the problems and characteristics of the downtown.

Problems and Characteristics of the Downtown

Business Climate. According to the business survey respondents, the business climate in downtown Smyrna in recent years has been mixed. About 61 percent

report that the trend in sales growth over the last two or three years has been somewhat better or much better than expected, but 39 percent report that it has been somewhat worse or much worse than expected. Sixty-eight percent expect that in the next year or two business will be somewhat better or much better than at present.

Customer Views of the Downtown.

The respondents to the customer survey were asked to indicate what they liked and disliked about the downtown. The positive views included its proximity to home or work (67 percent), its atmosphere, community and image (23 percent), customer service (19 percent), access (8 percent), and parking (6 percent). Mention was also given to the restaurants, safety, store hours, values and special sales. About 6 percent of the respondents stated that there was nothing that they liked about the downtown.

The negative views included the poor variety of stores (33 percent), poor merchandise selection (25 percent), parking (12 percent), high prices (12 percent), ugly store exteriors (8 percent), lack of safety (8 percent), and police (6 percent). Mention was also given to poor image, limited store hours, trucks, lack of stores for young people, and racial prejudice.

Competition. Respondents to the customer survey reported that they also shopped in Dover (90 percent), Smyrna Mart (73 percent), Wilmington including Prices Corner and Concord Mall (13 percent), Christiana Mall (7 percent), Newark including Castle Mall (3 percent), and Middletown (1 percent). These figures do not add up to 100 percent since some respondents indicated more than one shopping area. The most frequently stated reasons for shopping in areas outside of downtown Smyrna were merchandise selection (53 percent), store variety (38 percent), good values (23 percent) and proximity to home (13 percent).

Local Stores and Services. The following retail outlets and services are located in the downtown study area (see Map 2):

<u>Retail</u>	<u>Total Square Footage</u>
2 Antique Shops	1000
Jewelry Store	3500
Ladies Apparel Shop	1250
2 Gift Shops	3260
Hardware Store	6500

<u>Retail (cont.)</u>	<u>Total Square Footage</u>
Appliance Store	1000
Variety Store	4000
Pharmacy	4000
Market	3200
2 Cleaners	1700
2 Package Stores/Taverns	6800
2 Luncheonettes	850
Floor Coverings and Window Treatments Store	1200
Catalog Store	1600
Sporting Goods Store	1500
Newsstand/Card Shop	1200
2 Wholesale (candy/ tobacco) outlets	12500

<u>Service</u>	<u>Total Square Footage</u>
Appliance Repair	1250
2 Funeral Homes	4200
2 Banks	4200
Hotel	----
Real Estate Office	630
Certified Public Accountant	1250
2 Lawyers	700
2 Insurance Agents	1800
4 Barbers	1525
Newspaper	2000
Beauty Salon	650
Poolroom	2500
Chiropractor	800
Doctor's Office	1000
Nursing Home	----
Telephone Office	----

Public and Institutional Occupancies in the Downtown Study Area

School Administration Building
Fraternal Organization Hall
Union Office
Church

Deterioration. Neither the customer survey nor business survey revealed deterioration to be a major concern. Nevertheless, there are areas in the downtown which have one or more deteriorated buildings and many buildings could benefit from a fresh coat of paint.

Property Ownership. Twenty-five (51 percent) of the retailers and professionals own the structures that house their enterprises, and only six of the structures that house rental units are owned by landlords who reside outside of Smyrna. Control over the property in the downtown area thus rests in large part in the hands of the business and professional community or residents of Smyrna. The problem of absentee landlords, uninterested in the future of the downtown, should not be a major barrier to a program of revitalization.

Rental Space. Approximately 23,900 square feet of ground floor space is now being rented in the study area at an average annual rate of approximately \$1.80 per square foot. Another 2500 square feet of space is vacant (not including the theater).

Vacancies and Lack of Store Variety. At the time of the survey, vacancy of commercial space was not a major problem in downtown Smyrna. Several prominent spots were vacant: the theater, a 1600 square foot space at the intersection of Main and Commerce Streets, and a space at the corner of Mt. Vernon and Main Streets. About 33 percent of the customers surveyed complained about the poor variety of stores in the downtown, and 25 percent complained about the poor selection of merchandise. Respondents to the business survey and the customer survey were asked to indicate what types of stores are needed in the downtown. The following types of stores were identified:

<u>Store Type</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
	<u>Business Survey</u>	<u>Street Survey</u>
Clothing	55	26
Shoe/Shoe Repair	40	13
Children's Wear	25	--
Restaurant	20	4
Department	10	40
Fabrics	10	--
Variety	5	8
Record	5	4
Entertainment	--	8

Single mention was made by respondents to the business survey of an active movie theater, a bakery, a cleaning service, a convenience market, a bookstore, a camera shop, a sporting goods store, a small appliance repair service, an unpainted furniture store, and a pizza parlor.

Loitering and Police Protection. Businessmen and a few customers indicated concern about loitering in the downtown area. About 30 percent of the merchants stated that loitering dissuades some customers from shopping in the downtown and a number felt that the police were not providing adequate protection.

Parking. Only 11 percent of the customers interviewed had difficulty finding parking spaces, and only 12 percent stated that lack of parking was a bad feature of the downtown. Nevertheless, there does seem to be a parking problem along the western leg of Commerce Street. A larger percentage of merchants in this area indicated that parking was a problem for their customers. One element of this problem, cited by about 20 percent of the merchants, is the use of parking space by owners or employees of downtown enterprises.

There are two parking lots on the northern leg of Main Street that are poorly maintained or undeveloped. Removing the weeds and trash, paving, and landscaping would contribute significantly to the attractiveness of the downtown.

Downtown Smyrna is not capturing its proportionate share of the area's growing retail and service market. The following set of recommendations, if adopted, will improve the business climate in the downtown area.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

- o Establish Downtown Association and create subcommittees on Downtown Cleanup and Revitalization, Tenant Selection and Recruitment, and Downtown Promotion.
- o Start the process of revitalization by establishing a cleanup week, developing cooperative efforts to repair and repaint storefronts, and decorating vacant storefronts.
- o Grant zoning variance for building at corner of Mt. Vernon and Main.
- o Establish a local historic district in the downtown and work for federal certification.
- o Request the Governor to take action on the General Metalcraft Building.
- o Recruit new branch store tenants to the downtown among established businesses in northern New Castle County and Dover.
- o Draw traffic into the downtown from Route 13 with new signage and special events in the downtown. Give careful consideration to establishment of a mid-Delaware Tourist Bureau on Route 13 at the intersection with a major street leading into the downtown.
- o Hold special events in Market Plaza at peak traffic flow through Smyrna such as flower sales, flea market, farmer's market, holiday events, used furniture or antique sales, etc.
- o Create contractual arrangement between the town and the owners of private parking lots in the downtown to repair, landscape, and provide for general use during regular business hours.
- o Use the theater for community activities and live shows as well as for commercial movies.
- o Involve the business community in improving the residential facilities located in the downtown.
- o Promote the downtown through joint advertising and an annual sidewalk sale.

Substantial awareness of the problems of the downtown and insight into needed solutions already exists among the merchants and public officials of Smyrna. What is not well understood is how to develop a plan of action to begin and sustain the process of revitalization. The recommendations made here are intended to make the most efficient use of limited resources so that downtown Smyrna can once again become an active and attractive shopping and service area.

Organize

Restoration will require a coordinated effort over a long period of time. It must involve the city officials and community residents as well as the professionals, merchants, and others interested in revitalization of the downtown area. Leadership, of necessity, will have to come from those with the greatest stake in the process, the members of the business community.

It is vitally important that a downtown association of merchants, professionals, and others concerned about the downtown, be established. No significant progress toward downtown revitalization can occur without the active support and leadership of an organized business community.

This organization must take the lead in locating new business enterprises, pool resources for better and more widely distributed advertising, develop common hours and joint sale days, press the town and the state to assist in the restoration and maintenance of the downtown, and seek resources for community development. These efforts will be difficult because they must be voluntary, and there will always be some who will not participate yet will gain from the work of others.

The Downtown Association should establish the following committees: Downtown Clean-up and Revitalization, Tenant Selection and Recruitment, Downtown Promotion. These committees will provide an organizational framework for the important tasks described below.

Clean-up and Rehabilitate

The primary asset of the area is its character, tradition and architectural style. Smyrna cannot compete with large shopping malls in Dover and northern New Castle County in terms of variety of goods and services and business volume, but these areas must artificially create what Smyrna already possesses--an authentic architectural heritage. The structures found in Smyrna will never be built again. They provide the focal point for drawing people into the area.

Replacing them with modern structures does not make good economic sense. The logical way to an improved business climate in downtown Smyrna is to preserve and restore as many of the older structures as possible.

It is clear that appearance is a problem in some parts of the downtown. While deterioration is evident, it should be noted that nearly all the buildings in the downtown are structurally sound and many have architectural or historical character. Some merchants have taken the lead already. Several structures have been completely renovated during the last three years; other buildings have been carefully maintained; but more needs to be done in the rest of the downtown.

Restoration should include all structures occupied by public agencies and community organizations. Upper stories of all buildings should be put in good repair to present the best possible image to the customer.

The proposed Committee on Downtown Clean-up and Revitalization should start immediately to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Establish a cleanup week to encourage the city, merchants, professionals, organizations and others located in the downtown to clean curbs and sidewalks and remove refuse and weeds from all properties, including vacant lots.
2. Encourage individual and cooperative refurbishing efforts to repair and repaint storefronts, clean windows, install new curtains and shades in upper floor windows, and clean brick or stonework.
3. Decorate vacant storefronts with attractive displays. The local schools and other public and charitable groups should be invited to provide displays.

The town administration should support revitalization through a continuing program of downtown beautification, including improvement of sidewalks and curbs, landscaping, street lighting, public signage, and maintenance of fixtures and plantings. The town should also perform a courtesy inspection of properties in the downtown and provide owners with a list of deficiencies. No enforcement action should be taken at the present time.

Particular attention should be given to vacant structures which have not been made available for occupancy by their owners. These structures may constitute a fire hazard and as such endanger the welfare of those living or working nearby.

The Town of Smyrna has the power under Article IV, Title 24, of the General Ordinance to require owners to vacate, repair, or demolish structures which are deemed "dangerous buildings." The vacant structure on North Main Street should be inspected immediately to determine if it is a dangerous building.

Grant Zoning Variance for Building at Mt. Vernon and Main Streets

A commercial facility at this location has been vacant for a considerable period in part because it is located in an area which is zoned residential. Section 4 of the Zoning Ordinance states that a non-conforming use of land shall be eliminated if the non-conforming use ceases for a period of more than 90 days. In this case, however, the facility is located adjacent to a commercial area, and it cannot be adapted to residential use without expensive remodeling. The result is a boarded-up building that presents a poor visual image to both the commercial area of the downtown and the residential block next to the downtown. Nevertheless, the residents are justifiably concerned that commercial reuse would bring noise and congestion to their neighborhood.

In order to facilitate reoccupancy of the building, a zoning variance should be granted to a commercial activity that is consistent with the residential character of the neighborhood, such as a professional office, antique store, or photographer's studio.

Work for the Creation of a Historic District in the Downtown

Efforts already underway to create a historic district in downtown Smyrna should continue. Designation as a historic district will make structures in the downtown eligible for Historic Preservation Loans and Grants. In addition, it will help identify the area as a tourist attraction and enhance its value for prospective buyers of historic homes.

Any structure in a certified historic district that is not obviously of non-historic character (e.g., gas stations) is eligible for a Historic Preservation Grant for approved rehabilitation. Grants of up to 50 percent of costs may be obtained for structural repairs, bringing plumbing and wiring to code standards, insulation, installation of storm doors and windows, and rehabilitation for adaptive re-use. Matching funds must come from non-federal money or from approved donated goods and services. Community Development funds are not considered federal money and therefore may be matched to the federal Historic Preservation Grant.

Any residential structure in a historic district is eligible for a Historic Preservation Loan up to \$15,000 per dwelling unit, not to exceed \$45,000 per structure, with up to 15 years to repay. Interest is at the current market rate, not to exceed 12 percent. Community Development Block Grants may be used to subsidize the costs. Loans are available for work similar to that eligible for Historic Preservation Grants.

Finally, the Tax Reform Act of 1976 allows owners of commercial or residential rental structures in a historic district to amortize the costs of approved rehabilitation over a 5 year period. Any work done between June 14, 1976, and June 15, 1981, is eligible.

The Town should not wait for the state and federal governments to certify downtown Smyrna as a historic district. Discussions with the State Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs should continue to ensure that appropriate action is taken with regard to the district's nomination for federal certification, but in the meantime the Town should designate the area as a historic district and establish municipal regulations to protect the structures located there. Examples of locally adopted historic district ordinances should be reviewed and used as models for a Downtown Smyrna Historic District.

Request Governor to Take Action on the General Metalcraft Building

The Town of Smyrna should request the Governor to designate the identification of a new use for the vacant General Metalcraft building as a major priority of the State Department of Community Affairs and Economic Development.

The State of Delaware has a responsibility to take action in this situation because the state decision to loan funds to General Metalcraft through the Internal Revenue Bond Financing Program allowed the company to move to a new plant in Dover. This move resulted in the loss of a substantial number of employees working in an area adjacent to downtown Smyrna.

Recruit New Tenants for the Downtown

A Tenant Selection and Recruitment Committee should be established by the proposed Downtown Association to identify retail activities and services needed in the Smyrna area and to visit successful entrepreneurs in New Castle County and Dover who may be interested in establishing a branch in Smyrna.

The market analysis of the Smyrna area provides some guidelines for determining what types of retail or service activities have potential as successful tenants

in Smyrna. An additional supermarket, package store, appliance store, cinema, hardware store, or luncheonette, are not likely candidates for location in Smyrna. Given the existing array of services and retail outlets not located in the area, there may be room for an additional furniture store, a men's shop, a shoe store/shoe shop, a medium size discount department store, and some expansion of dry cleaning services.

The committee should have information about each vacancy in the downtown, a brief description of the downtown and the trade area, and information about the revitalization program. In addition, the committee should work with landlords to obtain needed building improvements and to negotiate incentives to assist tenants during the first year of operation (reduced rent, help in remodeling, etc.).

Draw Traffic into Downtown from Route 13

A large amount of traffic flows through Smyrna on U.S. Route 13, particularly during the summer when people travel from the north to Delaware and Maryland beaches. This traffic represents a major untapped market for the businesses in the downtown. In order to draw this traffic the following steps need to be taken:

1. Improved signage at the points where Main Street and Commerce Street intersect with Route 13. This signage should identify the historic character of the downtown, specify shops that might appeal to tourists, and announce special events that are taking place in the downtown.
2. Give careful consideration to the proposal to construct a mid-Delaware Tourist Bureau on Route 13 at the intersection of a major street leading into the downtown.
3. Develop special events in the downtown, such as sidewalk sales, flea market, farmer's market, etc. (see below).

Hold Special Events in Market Plaza

During periods of peak traffic flow through Smyrna, special events should be held in Market Plaza to draw foot traffic into the downtown area. These events might include a flea market, flower sales, farmer's market, holiday events supported by local organizations, used furniture or antiques sales, etc. These events should be supported by effective signage on Route 13.

Make Better Use of Existing Parking Space

The two privately owned parking areas on North Main Street (on both sides of Happy Harry's Pharmacy) should be paved and landscaped. The parking problems on West Commerce Street can be alleviated by the development of a pedestrian walkway to the street from the parking lot behind Sayer's Jewelry Store. A contractual arrangement should be established between the town administration and the owners of these areas to facilitate their general use and to draw from public and private funds for their development, landscaping and maintenance.

Employers should make sure that their employees are not utilizing valuable parking space on street frontage. Off street parking should be located and reserved for employees.

The town should consider the merits of a municipal parking authority to develop and maintain parking areas in the downtown.

Encourage Multiple Uses of the Theater

The theater is a valuable asset to Smyrna and should not be allowed to deteriorate or to be abandoned as a theater. Increased gasoline costs over the long run will strengthen the market for a local movie theater, but in the meantime movie presentations alone will not sustain the theater. Creative use of the theater for community activities and live shows as well as for commercial movies will help preserve it as a facility and increase traffic in the western side of the downtown. Live performances may be an effective way to bring revenue to the theater and to attract people to Smyrna.

Improve the Residential Character of the Downtown

There should be an organized effort, supported by the business community, to improve the residential structures in and around the downtown. Upper floors that can be used for apartments should be renovated and vacant residential facilities should be restored and made suitable for occupancy. This will contribute to the physical revitalization of the downtown and generate additional activity that will add to the general vitality of the area. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG), and Historic Preservation funds may be available to upgrade the housing stock in downtown areas.

Promote the Downtown

The proposed Chamber of Commerce Committee on Downtown Promotion should start immediately to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Develop a program of joint advertising for downtown businesses. Using old photographs or line drawings, joint advertising can emphasize the distinctive qualities of the downtown.
2. Develop an annual sidewalk sale similar to that held in Newark, Delaware. Existing municipal regulations which prevent sidewalk sales from being held should be revised to allow for at least one organized sale per year.