

Shore Line Times

100th Year — Number 13

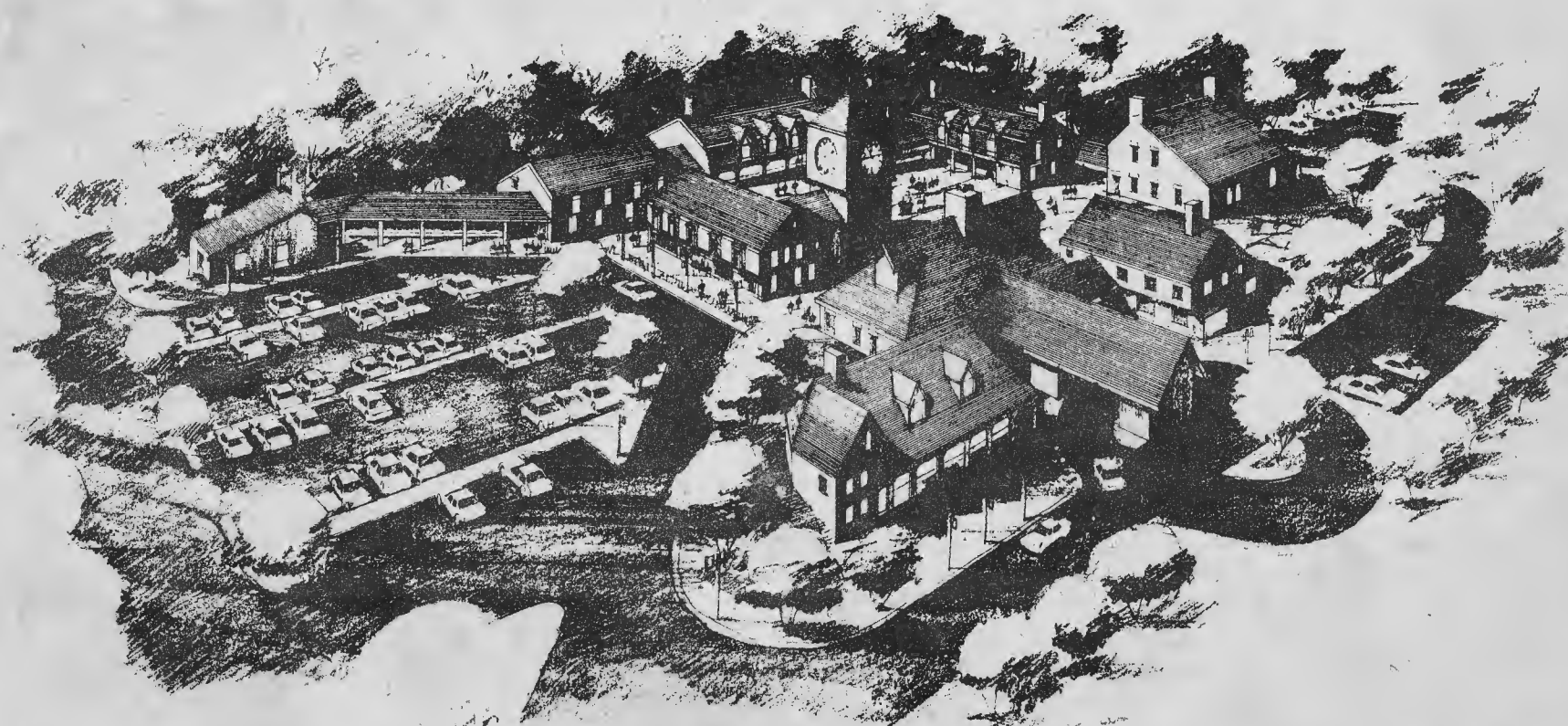
Madison Section

Madison, Connecticut

January 13, 1977

3 Sections

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Architect's rendering of North Madison Circle Village.

At North Madison circle

'Shopping village' plans presented

A tentative proposal for a 'shopping village' to be constructed in three phases on 26.6 acres, southeast of the Route 80 traffic circle, was informally presented to the Madison Planning and Zoning Commission last week for its "reactions."

The property was purchased recently from Wallace Leete of Madison by Anthony G. Russo of AGR Inc. of North Guilford. Maurice E. Libson of New Haven is architect for the project; Gordon Bilides, engineer; and Beverly Scala of CBS, leasing agent.

Frontage is primarily on Route 80, west of the circle, explained Mr. Libson, with limited access from Route 79.

The first phase of development, to be begun "as soon as possible," estimated to cost \$800,000, is "concerned mainly" with the northern portion, an RS-zone (rural shopping), with the intent of "creating a shopping village in Madison." Development of the rest of the project is planned for a later date.

The village will be developed in "park-like surroundings," said Mr. Libson, with architecture in keeping with the colonial atmosphere of Madison.

Included on the property used for phase I, noted Mr. Libson, are some wetlands which "will enhance the area." It is planned to construct a footbridge across this area.

Although a traffic survey has not yet been made, said Mr. Libson, entry into the village will be "some distance" from the circle as traffic control is "an important consideration."

To facilitate shopping in in-

clement weather, the architect has planned exterior courts with covered walkways between buildings.

The village is hoped to attract a wide variety of tenants, said Mr. Libson, ranging from banks to professional offices to specialty and food shops, travel agency, real estate office and art gallery, for a total of 27-28 stores.

The proposed phase I, pointed out Gerard Gelinas, commissioner, extends from the RS zone into the adjoining RU-zone (rural district).

This was done, explained Mr. Libson, to conserve land in the

RS zone and to prevent creation of a "sea of asphalt."

Parking areas, to accommodate 271 cars in phase I, should be located in the interior of the property, with buildings and their architectural features "predominant" when viewed from the highway, said Mr. Libson. The developers will "strive for the natural look," utilizing rock out-croppings and trees as part of the landscaping.

Buildings will be constructed of redwood and cedar, using natural stain on vertical siding and clapboard.

Commissioner Michael Laws

stressed the necessity of a traffic study in this area; of the realization that this shopping center must serve the needs of the North Madison area; and of the danger of creating a "tourist attraction."

Robert Montgomery, commissioner, wondered if the plan might be too "grandiose" for the area.

Mr. Libson, however, stated that the village would be planned as a "moderate size" village with a variety of stores and shops competitive with similar area facilities, so that it would be economically successful.

The current rental cost for

Madison was cited at \$5-8 per sq. ft.

About 38,000 sq. ft. of phase I would initially be constructed for lease, explained Mr. Libson, "with additional space built as the need becomes apparent."

Because this is a commercial district, explained Robert Snow, chairman, the area can be developed as the owners wish "as long as they comply with the zoning regulations."

"Considering what could be put in a commercial district," Mr. Snow noted, "this plan seems to be far more appropriate for the area than other alternatives."

Landing strip meets 'flak'

First Selectwoman Vera Dallas has written to John Girard, chief airport engineer of the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics, requesting that the DOT delay its decision on the proposal to locate a private airfield off Horsepond Road.

Residents have 30 days from the date of the public hearing to submit written statements to the DOT concerning this application.

In view of the fact that an application has been filed in the zoning office to amend zoning regulations so that establishment of private landing areas in residential zones is prohibited, Mrs. Dallas announced Monday that she has asked the DOT to "delay any decision on Theodore Cole's application to establish a restricted landing area in

Madison for his Piper 180 aircraft until the Planning and Zoning Commission has sufficient time to meet legal requirements to take action on the matter."

Public Hearing

Mr. Girard had conducted a public hearing at the town hall last week to discuss Mr. Cole's application for a license to operate a private unpaved airfield on his property.

If granted, the license would permit Mr. Cole to construct a runway approximately 1700-ft. long by 75-ft. wide.

The town currently subsidizes Griswold Airport, a commercial airport located approximately three miles south of Mr. Cole's property. Griswold has an 1800-ft. paved runway.

Private Airport

Mr. Cole's airfield, if allowed,

would be classified as a restricted airfield or private airport. While he could invite other pilots to land at the airstrip, he could not charge landing or tie-down fees as can commercial airports. In order to be licensed by the DOT for a commercial airfield, a separate application would have to be made.

Use of this property as a restricted landing area meets present zoning regulation requirements.

The application to amend the zoning regulations, filed with the zoning office Monday, would add to section 3.1.5 (accessory uses in residential areas) and 5.1.5 (accessory uses in rural areas) restrictions prohibiting private airstrips in these districts.

Petition Opposes

A petition, signed by 82

residents in the vicinity of the proposed airstrip, was also presented to Mrs. Dallas Monday morning requesting that she "notify the Department of Transportation, asking for a delay on the request for an airstrip on the property of Theodore Cole of 346 Horsepond Road."

The petitioners added that they "believe that the proposed airstrip will be inadequate insofar as safety provisions are concerned (lights, insurance, noise, etc.) and feel that the residential areas nearby will be unduly endangered."

"An established airport which meets all the safety and operative requirements is not more than three miles away from the proposed airstrip and could well be used."

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