

# EPHRAIM: STREETScape DESIGN & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL PLAN

September 22, 2014

livingLAB:  
a collaborative design studio

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

livingLAB would like to thank the residents and visitors of the Village of Ephraim for their enthusiastic participation, vision and community spirit. We believe the following report represents a common desire among the various participants to protect and enhance the historic character and charm that is so undeniably Ephraim!

Special Thanks to Charity Carey, Village Administrator, for helping to ensure we had the great turnout we did.

We would also like to thank the following Boards and Committees for their leadership and participation;

## **Board of Trustees**

Mike McCutcheon – Village President  
Jim Stollenwerk  
Jane Olson  
Steve Sauter  
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## **Planning Committee**

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Ken Nelson  
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## **Historic Preservation Committee**

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Jim Stollenwerk  
Tad Dukehart  
Paul Burton  
Lisa Carlson

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Village of Ephraim, nestled in the calm waters of Eagle Harbor, has evolved from a working frontier settlement to an international resort destination. The residents of the Village have a strong tie to that history. In fact, many current residents are direct descendants of those original settlers. Everywhere you look, you are reminded of that history. From the twin steeples of the historic Moravian and Lutheran churches, to the Anderson Dock and Barn, Ephraim's history is its present.

This Streetscape Design and Landscape Architectural Plan (the Plan) attempts to enhance and protect the Village's unique character. That character is a direct result of the Village's strong historical connection and its majestic natural setting. Change in a community is inevitable. However, when not properly planned for, that change can have long term unforeseen impacts. To that end, the Plan makes recommendations that are intended to support the community's common vision. Some of those recommendations are additive to the fabric of the Village. Other recommendations suggest a peeling back of previous "improvements" that have jeopardized the very character that they were intended to support.



# 2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A four day intensive workshop was held to facilitate an open and honest discussion of the needs of the Village. Seen as a whole, the workshop was designed to facilitate community consensus and ownership of the Plan. This process has proven to encourage community pride, limit conflict and expedite the Plan's implementation.

To best develop guidelines that will protect and enhance the Village's character, the workshop was broken up into several smaller meetings and events designed to target specific topics and groups. The workshop started with a lively Visioning Session and ended four days later with a decidedly positive Open House event. Throughout the entire process elected official, Village Staff, residents and visitors alike were asked to assist with the development of a vision for the future and recommendations for how to get there. Over 150 people attended the various meetings and events. Sign-in sheets and summaries of the public input from each of the events can be found in the Appendix.

**EPHRAIM:mobileLAB**

PUBLIC VISIONING  
CREATIVE COLLABORATION  
COMMUNITY DESIGN

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AUGUST 6 - 9



# 3: THE VISION

*“A peaceful Village with strong ties to its history, that protects its natural resources, welcomes visitors, and embraces its residents new and old.”*

There was surprising commonality among the various stakeholder and participants of the workshop. Whether long term resident, seasonal visitor or municipal leader, the following elements were identified as needs;

- Improve the pedestrian experience
- Minimize the impact of parking
- Protect and enhance historic and natural resources
- Improve the aesthetics and usability of public spaces
- Maintain the character of the Village!



# 4. STREETScape DESIGN

Streets are a community's most visible public places. They connect us to community assets and to each other. Unfortunately, streets are often treated as mere thoroughfares for automobiles. In an attempt to move more cars faster through a community, we lose sight of the important role our streets play in shaping the character of a place. When successful, streets should not only serve the needs of motorists but should also provide safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities. At the same time, they should enhance the character of a place rather than detracting from it.

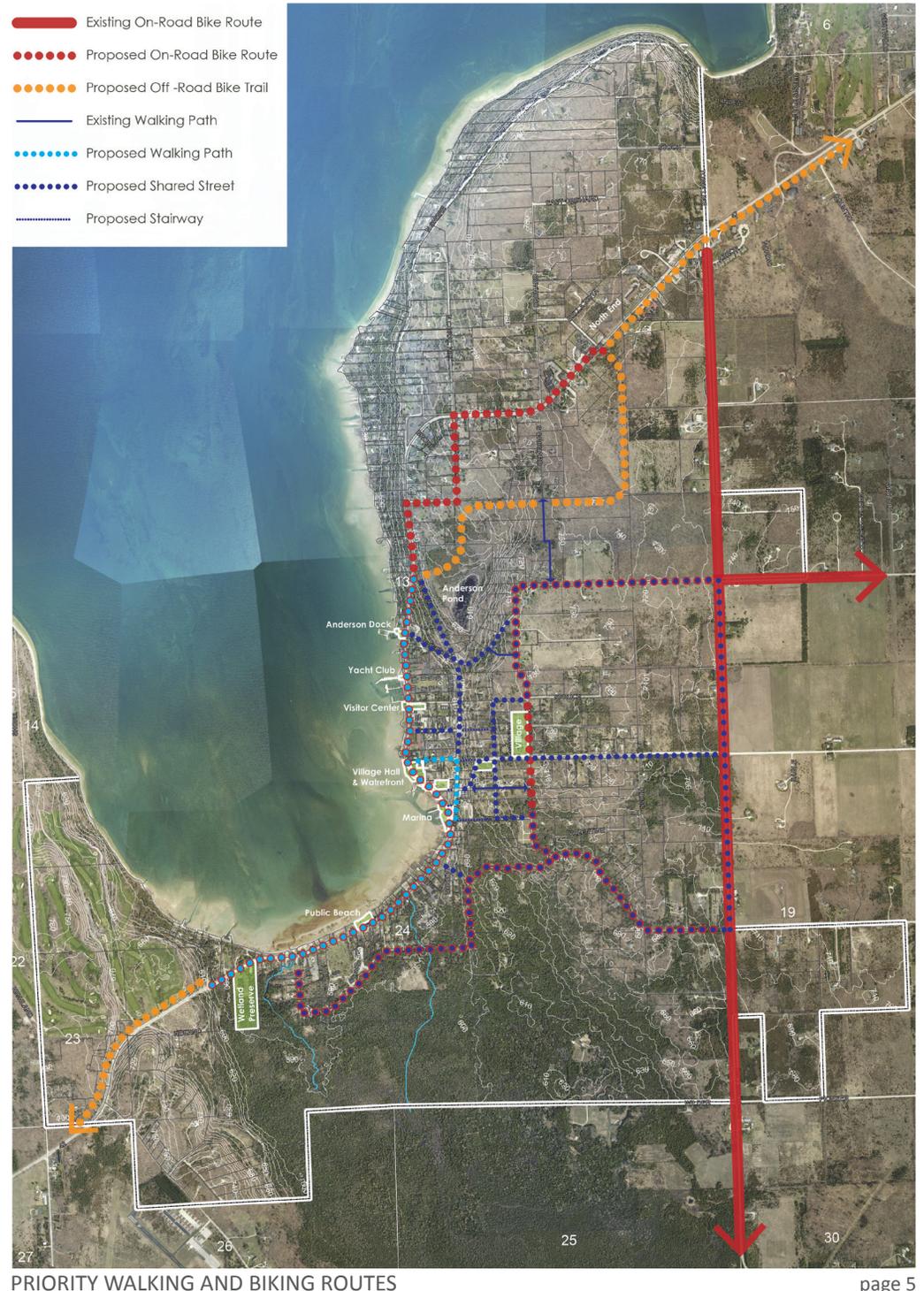
While it may be appropriate for cars, bikes and walkers to “share the road” on many of the rural roads within the Village, many of the streets in and adjacent to the Village Center need to provide safer accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists. The following plan identifies priority walking and biking routes within the Village.



## PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

It is imperative that residents of, and visitors to, Ephraim have safe alternatives to driving within the Village Center. This will help alleviate much of the demand for convenience parking while allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the peaceful character of the Village. While the current “walk ways” do provide some facilities for pedestrians, during the busy summer months these facilities are often unsafe and disconnected. The following recommendations are intended to improve the safety of pedestrians;

- Provide a continuous, accessible (ADA) pedestrian system that connects all the cultural and natural resources of the Village.
- Provide a dedicated sidewalk along the full length of Water Street.
- Provide marked crosswalks at all roadway intersections as well as Village Parks and Landmarks.
- Provide share the road signs and other pedestrian amenities along rural walking routes.
- Improve existing stairways and build new stairways where needed through public ROW at the Escarpment.
- Provide an off-road multi-use pathway where public property and or ROW allow.
- Consider a pedestrian underpass at the golf-course/DNR property.



## BICYCLE FACILITIES

Bicycling is a fun and healthy alternative to driving. It provides Village residents and visitors that chance to more intimately explore more remote Village activities and neighboring towns. Like walking, the more folks that choose to bike the less parking is needed in the Village Center. To that end, a safe and enjoyable facility for bikes must be planned and implemented throughout the Village. To increase the number of people that choose biking within the Village, the following recommendations should be considered;

- Connect the North and South Ends to the Village Center via a multi-use pathway.
- Further connect the pathway to Sister Bay's multi-use path to the north and Fish Creek to the south.
- Provide Shared Road signage and marking on priority biking routes.
- Consider a Village bike sharing program.
- Provide bicycle parking throughout the Village.



## PARKING

In the past the Village has aggressively tried to provide needed parking within the Village Center. The result of this well intentioned "improvement" is that asphalt and parked cars has become the dominant landscape feature. This "shoe horning" of parking spaces has resulted in a confusing and unsafe pedestrian realm. In addition, there is a sizable negative visual impact on important cultural and natural features such as City Hall and the Waterfront Park. To protect the character of the Village, a comprehensive parking strategy should be developed. At a minimum, the following parking recommendations should be implemented;

- Limit parking to the east side of Water Street (Hwy 42)
- Limit parking to one side of public Rights of way within the Village Center
- Consolidate public off-street parking in discreetly placed and well screened lots
- Provide remote parking at the Village Administration Building or other site for employee parking, trailer parking, and events.
- Provide shuttle service during peak season and events that provides access to remote lots and the north and south ends of the village.
- Provide wayfinding signs that direct visitors to public parking lots.



PAVED AREA WITHIN VILLAGE CENTER



# 5. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL PLAN

The carefully preserved history of Ephraim shines against its incredible natural setting. People come from far and wide to take in the stunning sunsets over Peninsula State Park. The Village Center is nestled between the Niagara Escarpment and the beautiful waters of Eagle Harbor. To best showcase the assets that have made Ephraim famous, a renewed commitment should be made to providing public spaces that are complimentary to its setting and history. The strategy outlined above to consolidate parking and provide improved pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure will create needed opportunities to improve the functionality and aesthetics of the Village's public spaces.



## PARKS

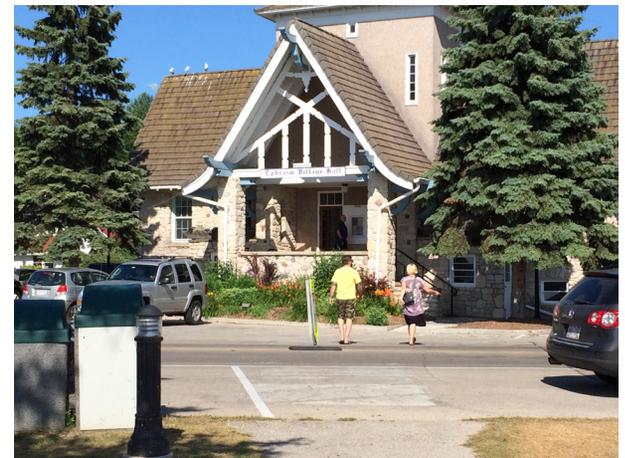
Many of the Villages parks are in decline. Their heavy seasonal use, perceived need for parking and low maintenance management approach have contributed to the current condition of the parks. The following recommendations are intended to improve these public spaces for the use of Village residents and visitors;

- Limit parking within the parks to the minimum needed to accommodate ADA requirements and pick-up drop-off.
- Install permanent irrigation systems and regular maintenance.
- Provide lighting and furnishing in parks.
- Provide strategically placed ornamental planting.
- Provide shade trees and structures.

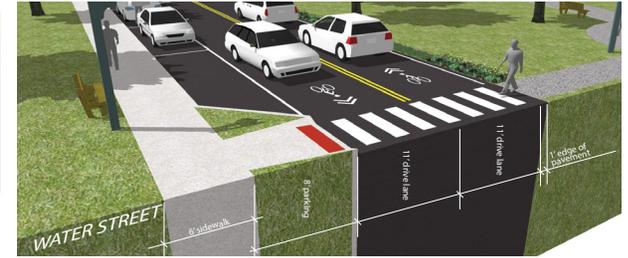
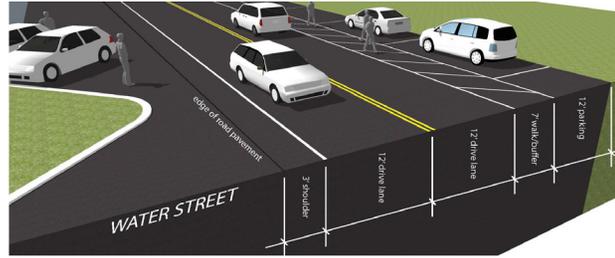
## CIVIC BUILDINGS

The Village has been blessed with incredible public buildings. The City Hall, Fire Station, and Visitor Center are among the unique civic buildings that anchor the public spaces within the Village. Unfortunately, like the Village's parks, its civic spaces have also suffered from an overabundance of on-site parking and limited maintenance. These assets should be celebrated and connected to their associated public spaces. To improve the quality and character of the Village's civic space and buildings the following recommendations are suggested;

- Limit parking in front of civic buildings.
- Provide enhance ornamental plantings in civic spaces and around civic buildings.
- Provide permanent irrigations systems and regular maintenance.
- Provide places to sit and gather.



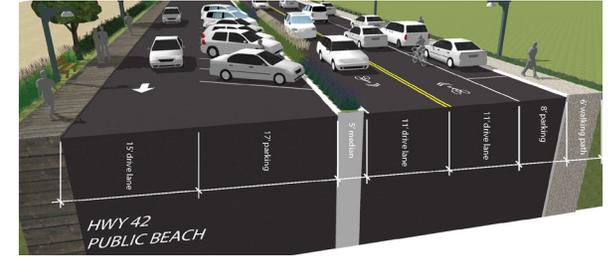
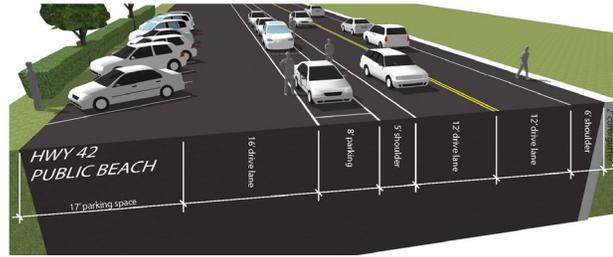
# VILLAGE CENTER



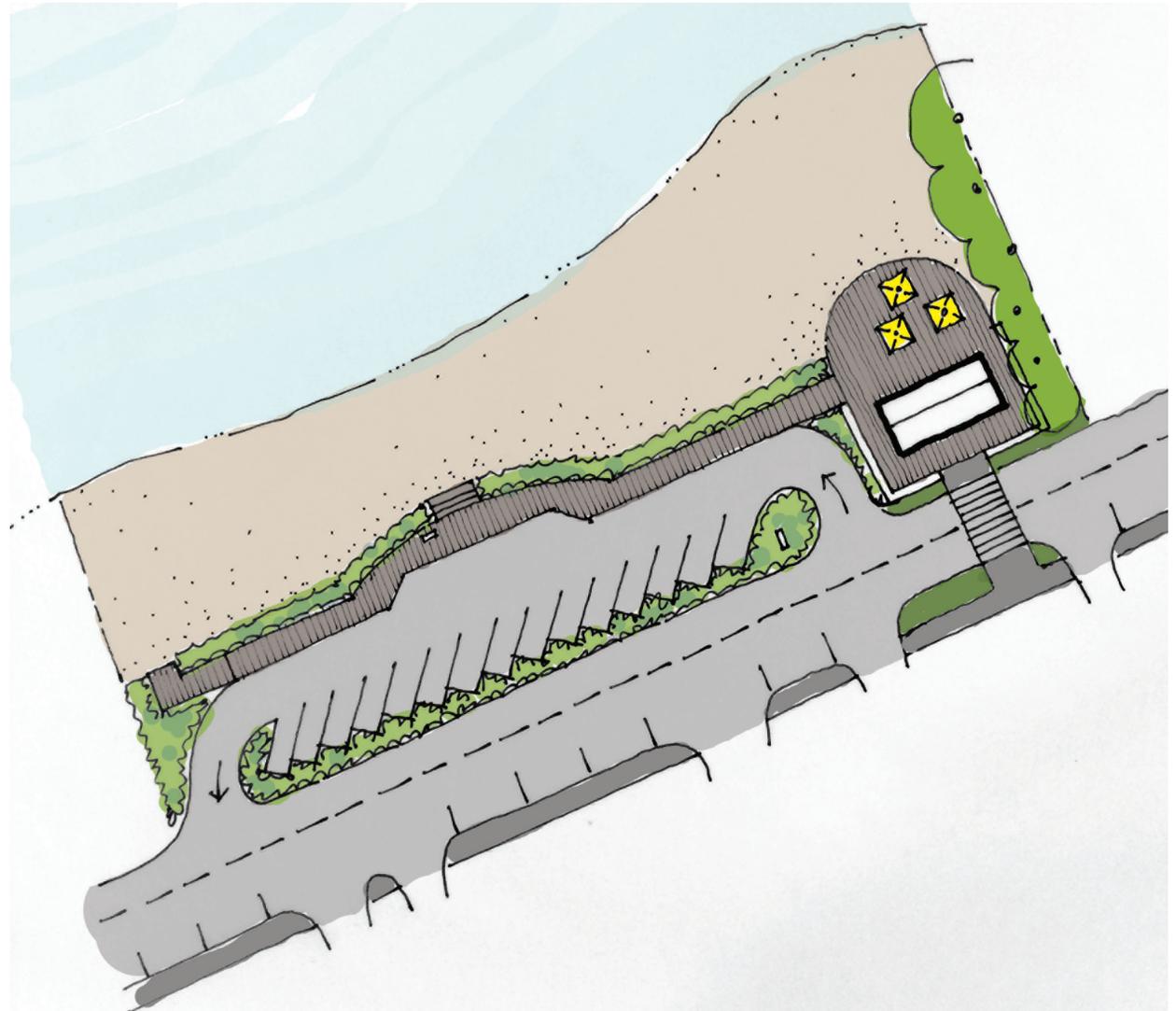
- Limit parking to east side of Water Street.
- Provide a sidewalk along the east side of Water Street.
- Provide a continue waterfront path where feasible.
- Create a centralized parking lot.
- Remove parking from in front of Wilson's and the Village Hall.
- Create pockets of ornamental landscaping and places for public art.
- Develop safe crosswalks at all intersections.
- Connect to Moravia Street via improved or new stairways and overlooks.



# PUBLIC BEACH



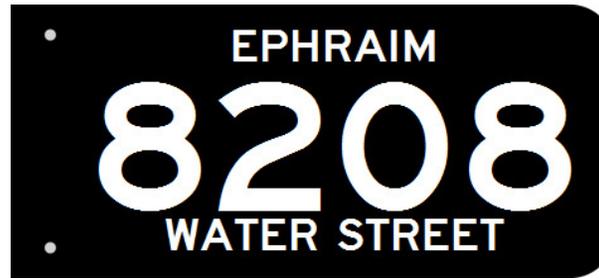
- Construct a deck with seating at the Bath House.
- Renovate the Bath House to standard of other civic buildings.
- Create a boardwalk with ADA access to beach.
- Re-configure parking and add drop off.
- Eliminate parking on west side of Water Street.
- Provide safe crossings of Water Street
- Provide a low wall or plantings to help protect against beach erosion.



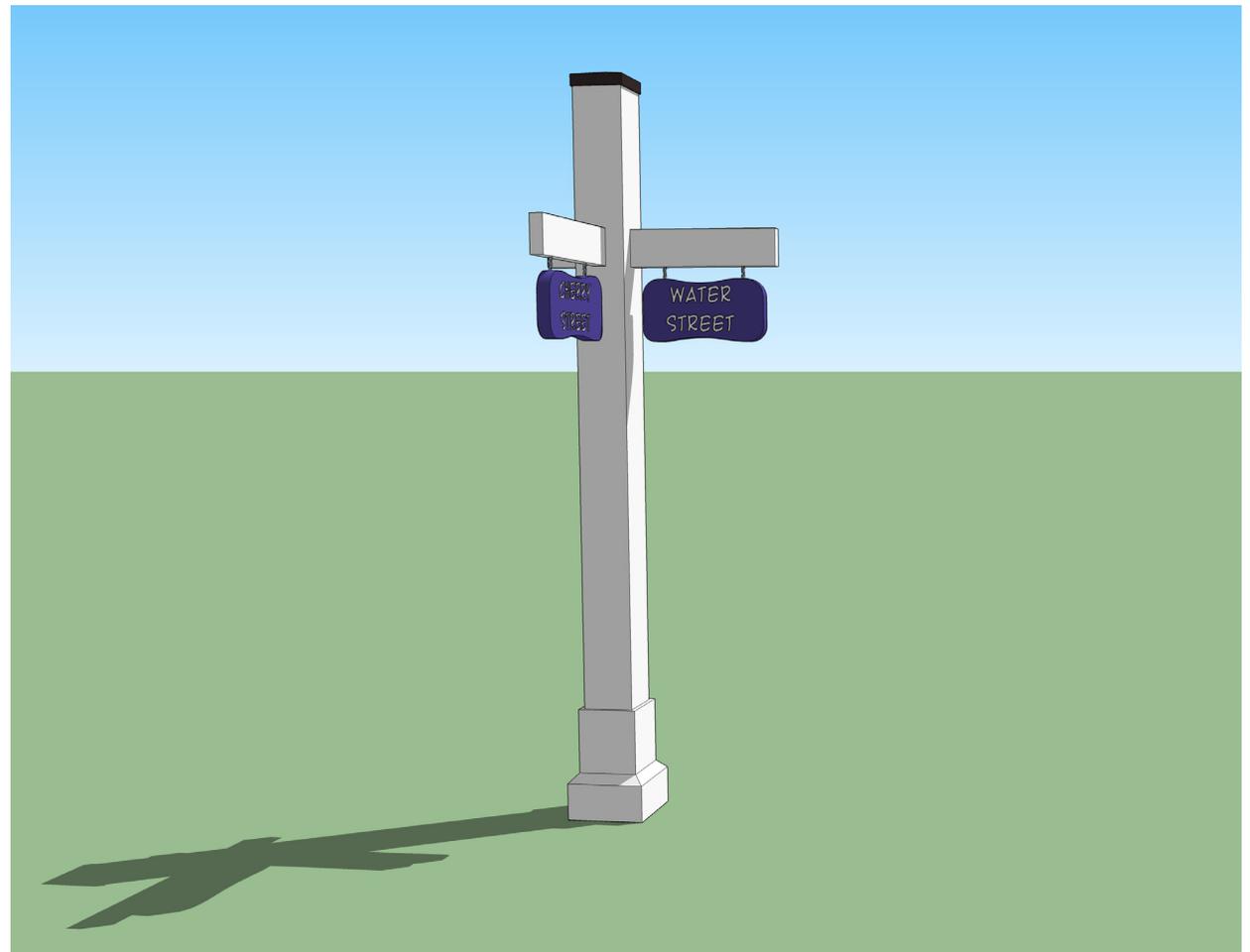
## SIGNS

Signs are an often overlooked design opportunity. Signs not only convey important information, but also have an important impact on the visual character of an area. In the Village, a somewhat haphazard selection and arrangement of signs have begun to distract from the very character that draws people to Ephraim. To address this concern and to better serve the Village, a more cohesive family of signs is recommended, one that builds on the Ephraim's unique history and setting. The following guidelines and recommendations are intended to help ensure that signs placed in the Village are legible, consistent and contextual;

- Street signs should be placed on the northwest and southeast corner of all intersections.
- Keep vegetation clear of signs.
- Fire Numbers should be simple and easy to read.
- Develop an ordinance to require fire number signs, to regulate their placement, and to ensure their maintenance and visibility.
- Develop a wayfinding plan that includes Gateways, public parking locations, and important destinations to assist visitors arriving by any mode to easily navigate Ephraim.



9"X20" TWO SIDED FIRE NUMBER SIGN FOR USE OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE CENTER, SMARTSIGN.COM



## FURNITURE

The selection of furnishings can both provide functionality but can also help to unify the public spaces through the use of common elements that reflect the unique character of the Village. Simple designs with hand-crafted details will best support the community's common vision for the Village. Benches, tables and waste receptacles should be thoughtfully placed to ensure their usefulness and ease of maintenance.

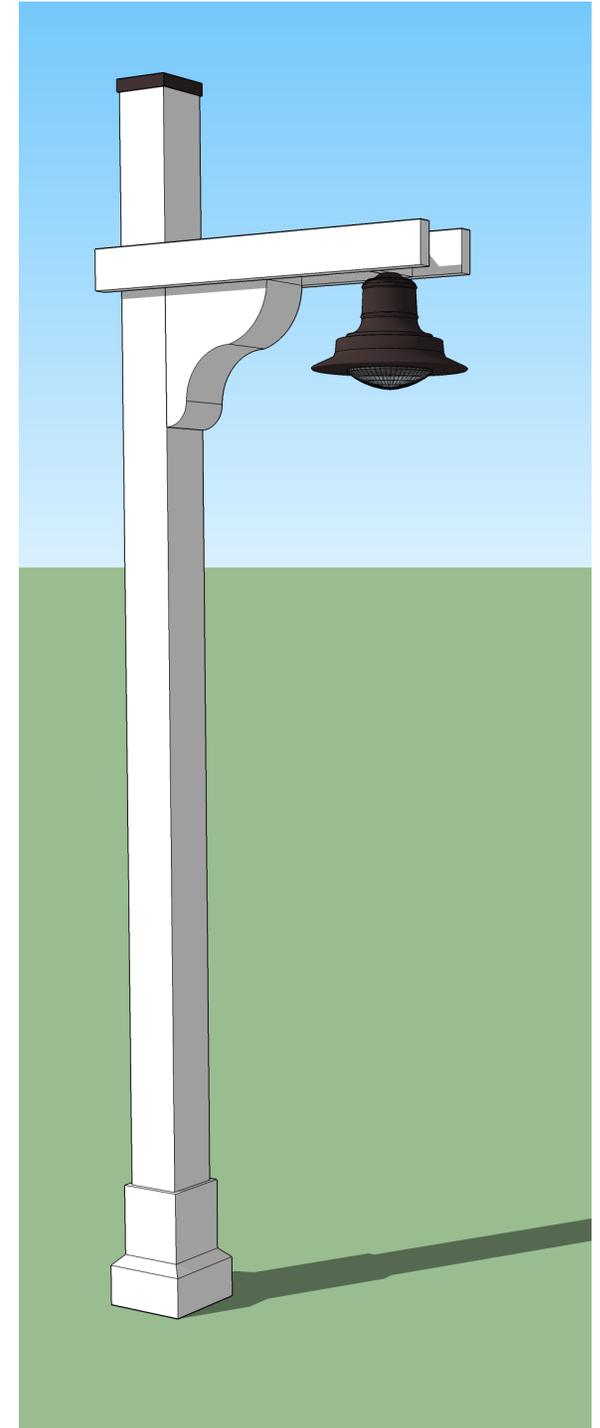


## LIGHTING

The current street lighting fixture draws ire from residents. Its colonial style is incongruous with the character of Ephraim. In addition its design contributes to local light pollution and glare. The recommended light fixture complements the quaint image and craftsmanship of the Village and employs a Dark Skies compliant shielded lamp. These fixtures should be located throughout the Village Center along public ROW's and walkways as well as in public parks and civic spaces. In the rural portions of the Village the fixtures should be used at intersections (can be combined with street signs) and public parking lots.



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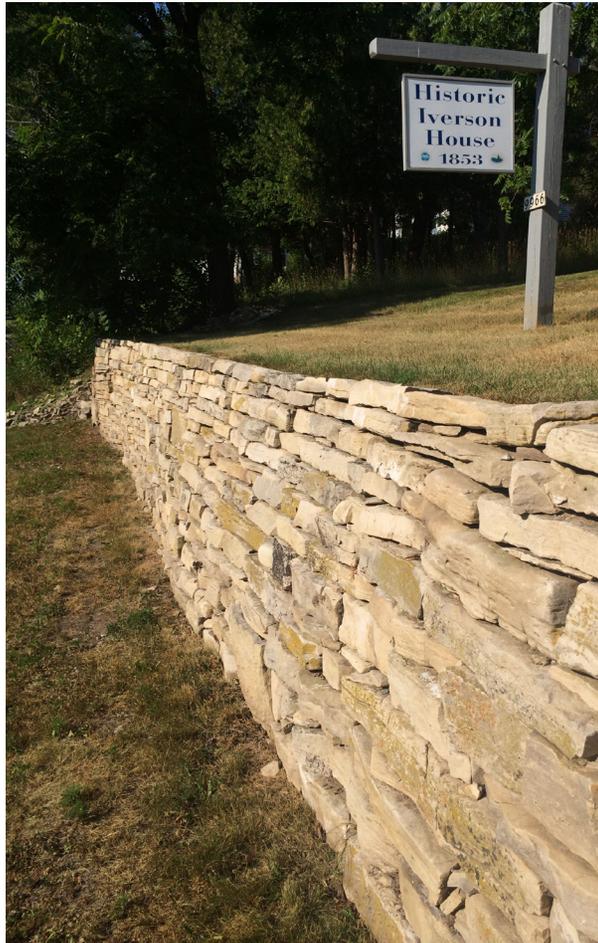
## PLANTS

The plants used in the public spaces in town should both compliment the natural setting and provide needed color, shade. A limited plant palate made up of native species such as Sugar Maple and Cedar can combine with turf lawn and strategically placed decorative perennial wildflower groupings to complement the Village's unique character.



## PAVING/WALLS

A rich palette of materials exists in the Village. Limestone walls and split rail fences help to define public spaces and compliment the incredible architectural assets of Ephraim. To compliment these traditional elements, a combination of crushed limestone and exposed aggregate pathways should be used to provide needed pedestrian accommodation. Special areas that require a more refined look can be paved with limestone flags. In beach areas consider the use of boardwalks to delineate circulation and to provide needed ADA accessible routes.



# 6. FUTURE PROJECTS MATRIX

PROJECTS	TERM			RESPONSIBLE PARTY
	Short	Mid	Long	
Pass a Complete Streets Resolution	✓			Planning Committee/Board
Develop a Conceptual Plan for Water Street (HWY 42)	✓			Physical Facilities Committee
Develop a Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan		✓		Planning Committee
Develop a Village Center Parking Lot		✓		Board of Trustees
Develop a Bike Sharing Plan		✓		Administration
Explore Village Tram/Shuttle Service		✓		Administration
Design HWY 42 Bike Path		✓		Physical Facilities Committee
Re-design Waterfront Park			✓	Physical Facilities Committee
Re-design Public Beach			✓	Physical Facilities Committee
Design/Re-design Escarpment Stairways and Overlooks			✓	Physical Facilities Committee
Improve Anderson Dock			✓	Historic Preservation Committee

# 7. APPENDIX