

**SPRINGFIELD COMMUNITY PRESERVATION
FULL APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

CPA program area - check all that apply:

community housing historic preservation open space recreation

Project/Program Title: **McKnight District Common Areas Restoration Project**

Brief Project/Program Summary:

Project will initiate a multi-year process of restoring the "Common areas" of the McKnight District so as to support ongoing livability of the area through improved parks and street spaces

estimated start date: 10/1/2020 estimated completion date: 6/30/2021

II. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Type of Applicant - check one:

City of Springfield Non-Profit Organization For-Profit Business Individual

Name of Organization: **McKnight District Improvement Association, Inc.**

Name of Contact Person: **Mark Spruell**

Mailing Address: **1030 Worthington Street**

Mailing City/State/Zip: **Springfield, Ma. 01109**

Phone: **(413) 301-6308** Fax: **N/A**

Email: **mcknightdistrictimprovement@gmail.com**

Website: **mcknighthistoric.org**

III. BUDGET SUMMARY

Estimated Project Budget: **\$390,000**

CPA Funding Request: **\$390,000**

Will you be seeking multi-year funding Yes No

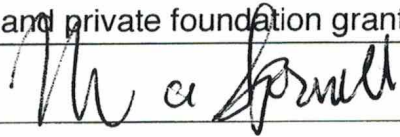
CPA Request as Percentage of Total Project/Program Budget: **100%**

List Other Secured Funding Sources:

Community volunteer time has been secured to date through petition drives, design discussions, and so forth

List Other Prospective Funding Sources:

We hope to secure commitments of other funds based on support from CPA, including MassDOT, Public sector grants, and private foundation grants based on the value of preserving McKnight

Applicant Signature: 

Date Submitted: 4-29-20

General Information: Common Spaces Proposal Overview

The applicants envision a Multi-Year Restoration and Improvement Project impacting the McKnight District. This application is based on the concept that the spaces between the properties in the McKnight National Register District are common areas that impact the overall district, including not only the several parks but also the street spaces.

Proposal Narrative

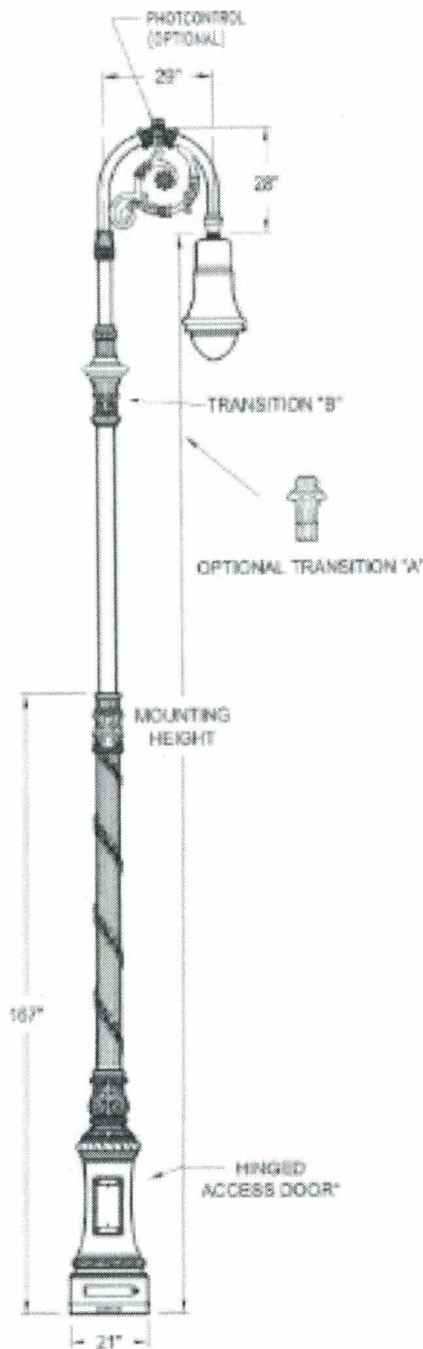
In support of this project the applicants suggest that the common areas in a historic district management of these spaces is not just a mechanical process, but that between street furniture, periodic re-design of streets, and so forth that the management of this space is and inherent part of the preservation process, in that the appearance and conduct of vehicles in these spaces impacts every historic property in the District. This is especially important to McKnight as the neighborhood many of us see as the origin of Springfield as the “City of Homes” and which we are working with others to build into a “Living museum” that can be one of the key attractions of the City economically.

Therefore the overall project seeks to do for McKnight what the street changes did for Mattoon Street and Elliot Street a number of years ago. To remind everyone at that time Mattoon Street was blocked from Salem Street, and made one-way, to protect residents of the historic district from ‘Cut-through’ traffic, while at the same time brick sidewalks, decorative cast iron Welsbach lights, and matching cast iron bollards, benches, and so forth. This was all done with City support and in line with the construction of the new “Infill” units to fill in the gap in the streetscape caused by previous demolition.

People in McKnight have been working to this kind of agenda forward since the 1980s but for some reason it has always been blocked. At this time, therefore we want to outline the general agenda, which will be refined during the course of the project.

- 1.) General Street Furniture – Signs and Streetlights: We are proposing that the goal be that all street furniture be restored to what it was prior to the 1970s, beginning with the area around Thompson Triangle and the Dingle. This will mean restoring the cast iron street signs, where they are missing (SEE FIG 1), and replacing the aluminum street lights on St. James Avenue and Dartmouth Street and Terrace with new cast iron “Bishop’s Crook” lights (SEE FIG 3) as they were in the past. This will also mean reverting to the dark street sign poles and yellow painted bus stop signage. Finally we are proposing to

restore the elaborate traffic light that was formerly installed at the St. James, Dartmouth, and Worthington Intersection.



*Access door is secured by (2) heavy duty flat head screws. Optional tamper proof screws are available.

FIG 3 – An example of a Bishop’s Crook Streetlight similar to those in used McKnight historically, and should be re-installed on Dartmouth Street and St James Avenue



ORIGINAL STREET SIGN AT WORTHINGTON ST & INGERSOLL GROVE

These cast iron street signs were everywhere in the McKnight neighborhood in the past, but have been gradually removed in favor of reflective modern signs.

The proponents would emphasize first returning these signs to the core area around Thompson Triangle and the Dingle, and then gradually replacing more each year until the total neighborhood is restored.

- 2.) Magazine Playground/McKnight West Gateway: We are proposing the restoration of Magazine Park as staffed park, as it was when Dr. Geisel was Park Commissioner, with a playground supervisory staff as well as full-year security. This is needed to serve the diverse population and make the Park safe for children from the neighborhood. We are also proposing upgrading the finish of the park with architectural references to the Armory, possibly including a masonry/cast iron fence, masonry restroom/office structure, possibly a pavilion with space for a refreshment stand to accommodate the frequent crowds attending games, etc.. In addition we are proposing that panels or statuary be created memorializing the historic role of the Arsenal or Magazine build at this location to serve the Continental Congress and then the new Henry Knox, Geo. Washington, Shay's Rebellion. We are also thinking about creation of a community gateway as had been suggested by the McKnight Neighborhood Council in the 1980s.

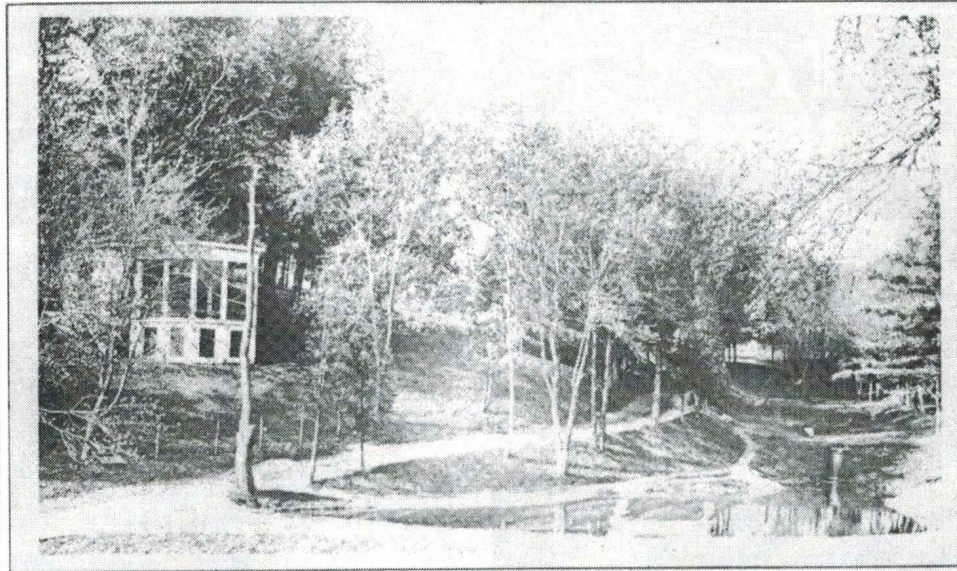
We are not proposing to complete all this work during the 2020 Fiscal year, but, since this is the primary park for the community and has been neglected for 30 years, we are proposing carrying out of some work and creation of a design competition to involve residents and interested architects in designing the more elaborate elements for completion in future years.

- 3.) St. James Ave and Worthington St Restoration, as recreational 'Open Spaces' complementing the historic district, with truck traffic diverted to Albany Street, and with plazas at Wellesley Street and Dorchester Street, and raised brick or cobblestone crosswalks at Dorchester, Princeton, Dartmouth, Clarendon, and Thompson Street intersections.

During the present year we are proposing carrying out of the required study for the creation of the Albany Street Truck Route, abandonment of Worthington Street for 200' from Bowdoin Street Westerly, installation of raised cobblestone crosswalks to refer to the original street fabric, and a design study for "Place Creation" along St. James Avenue in line with the concept of a "Living Historical Museum" with consideration given to broadening sidewalks and parking at Wellesley Street and at Dorchester Street.

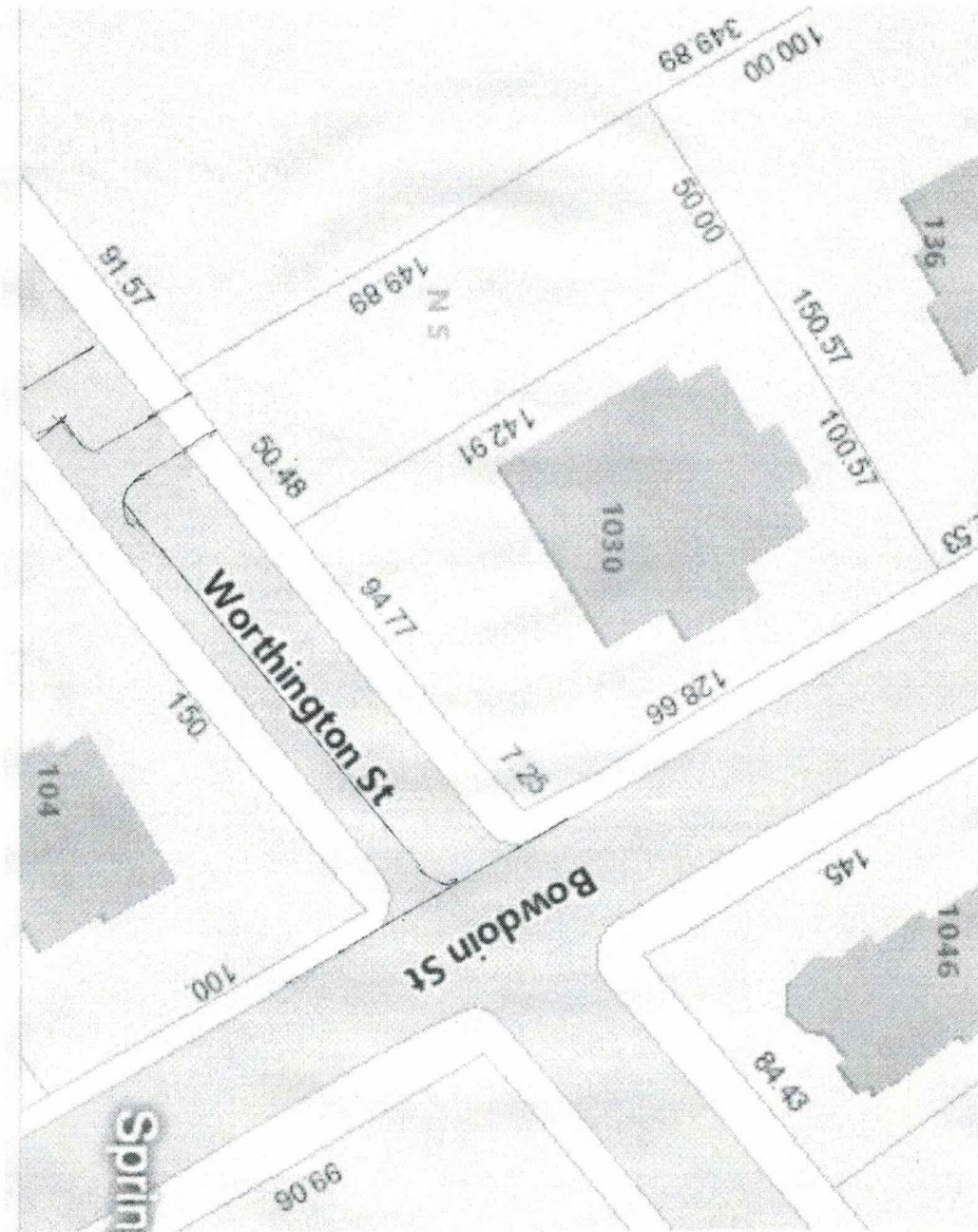
- 4.) The Dingle (Or McKnight Glen): We are proposing completion of the removal of invasive species of plants, improved signage and restoration of the drainage, with planning for improved access to the Heritage Rail Trail (If any), as well as re-creation of the historic pavilion for citizen usage, and space for sledding. (SEE FIG 2.)

For the present year we are proposing that work be confined to the removal of invasive species of plants, restoration of the drainage, and re-creation of the space for sledding that historically existed along Clarendon Street.



The McKnight Glen - Springfield, Mass.

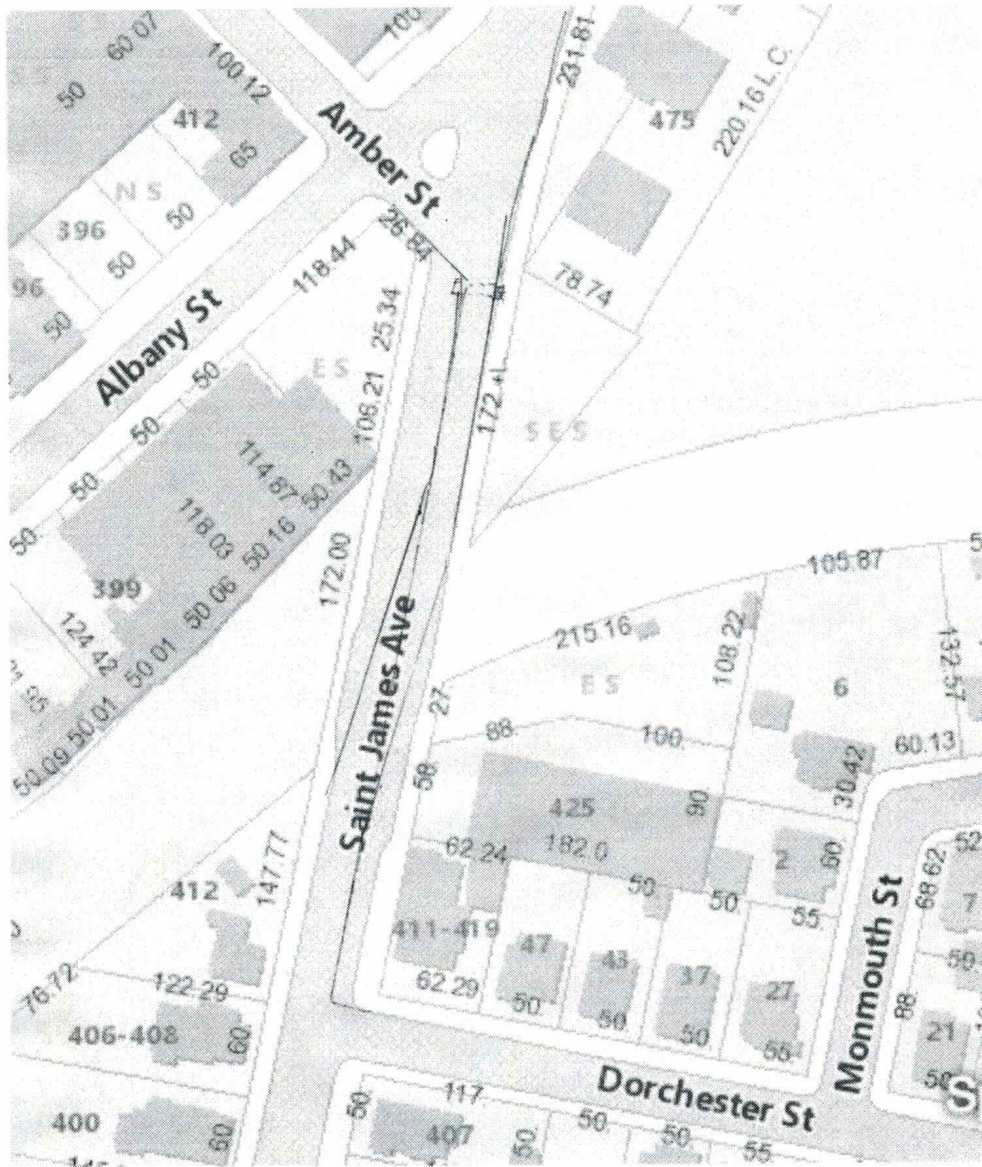
FIG 2 - A Historic View of "The Dingle," as retained by Dr. Dubois of Harvard Street, transferred from glass courtesy of Martha Ann S. Gaby



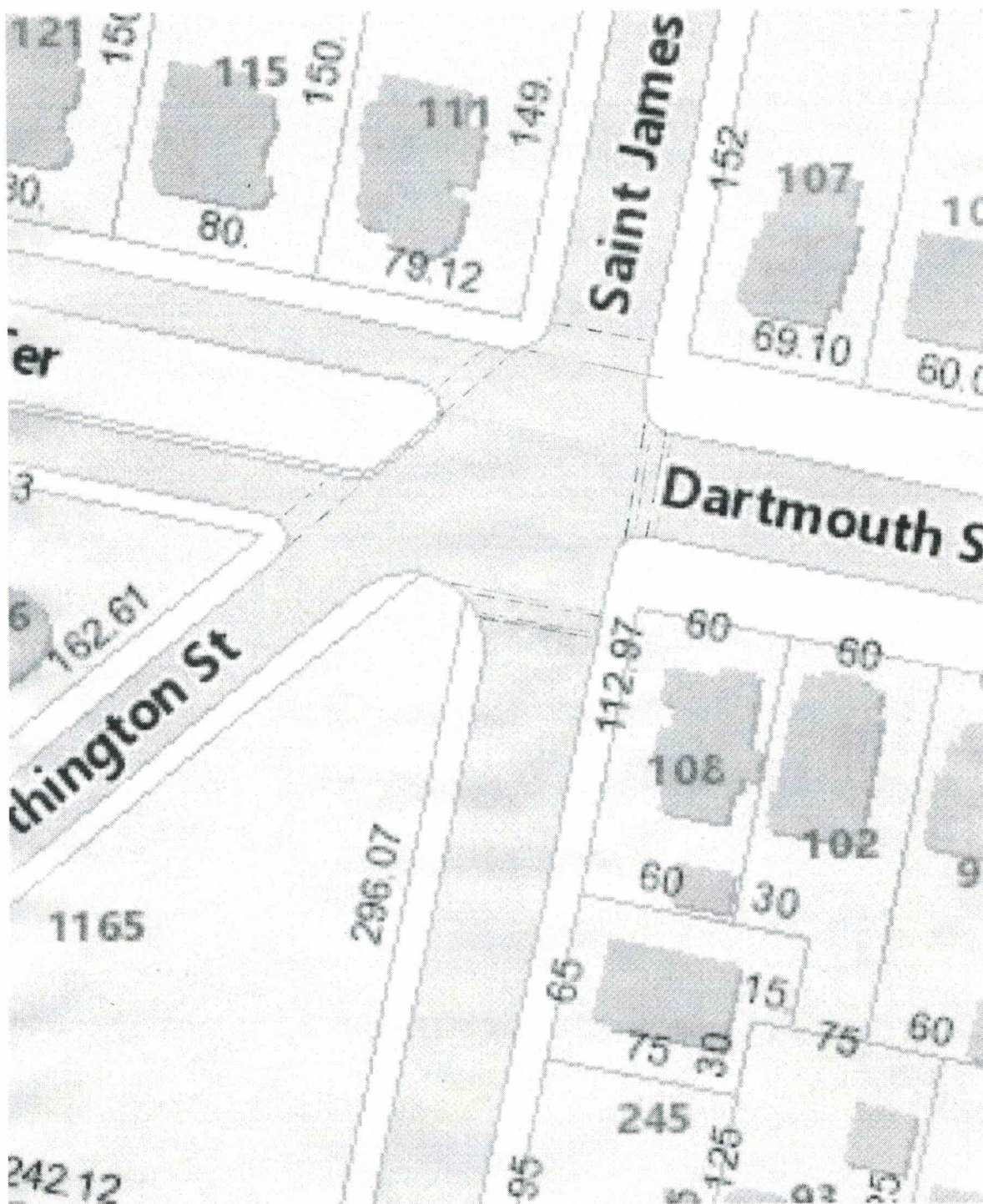
ROUGH SKETCH OF WORTHINGTON ST./BOWDOIN ST. INTERSECTION, showing possible expanded yard on the NW corner and driveway accessing both properties on the Southern side of the present street.

- 5.) Bay Street Restoration, as a recreational 'Open Space' complementing the historic district, with raised brick or cobblestone cross walks at Thompson, Catherine/Dartmouth Street, and Princeton Street.
- 6.) Re-Design of St. James Avenue/Albany Street/Dorchester Street Intersection: This would provide for the increased sidewalk/Parking for the retail uses,

interaction with the Heritage Rail Trail (if any), and re-direction of truck traffic to Albany Street.

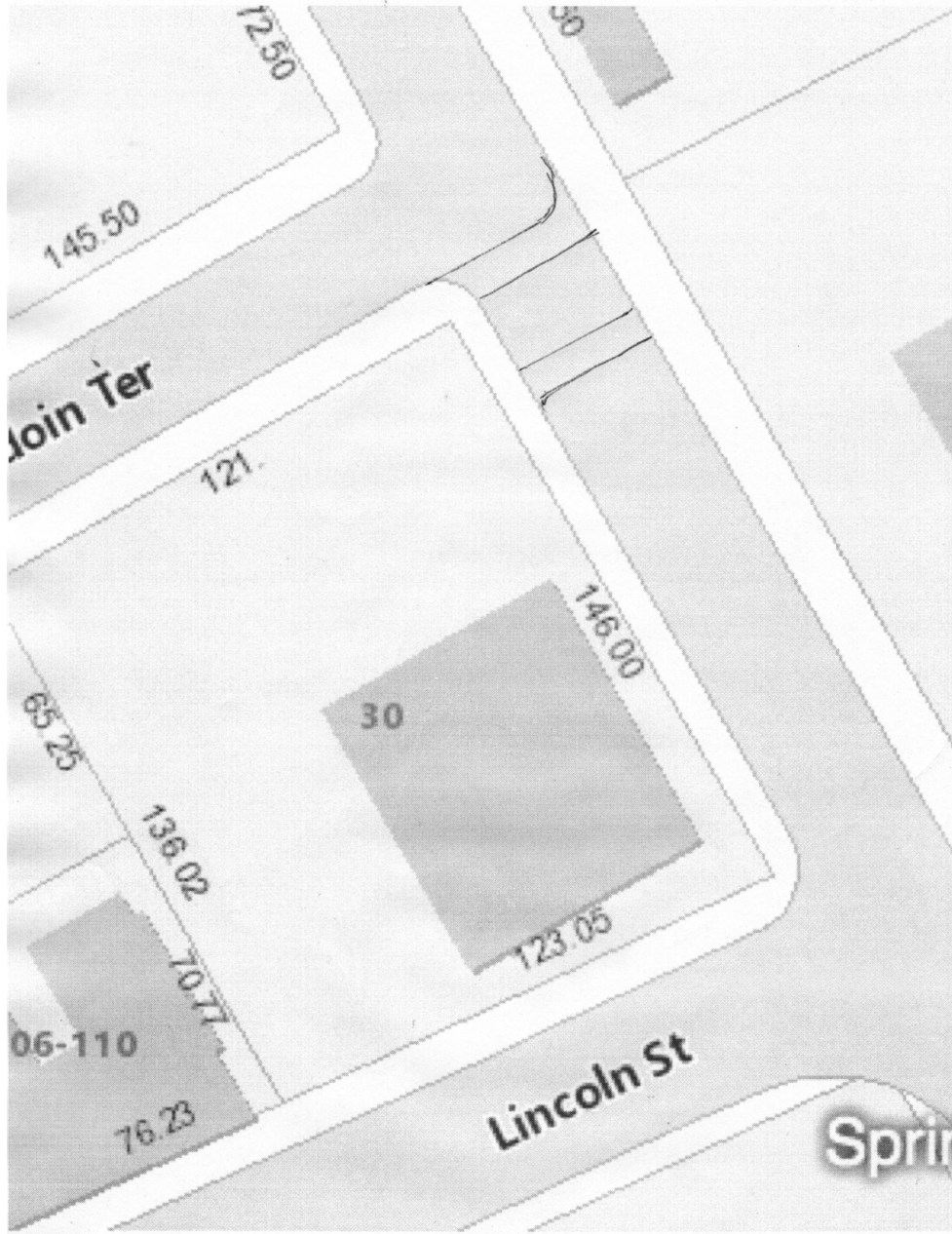


ROUGH SKETCH SHOWING POSSIBLE “TRAFFIC DAMPENING” CHANGES on St. James Ave, with a roadway narrowed to 24 feet on St. James Avenue, designed to channel over-weight truck traffic now damaging homes in the historic neighborhood and endangering local residents down the projected “Truck route” on Albany Street.



WALKWAYS AT ST JAMES AVENUE AND WORTHINGTON STREET might be located as shown in this rough sketch. We are suggesting that these be constructed using the same kind of granite cobblestone pavers that once covered most streets in the McKnight neighborhood. These would be both an authentic preservation installation and also serve as a traffic-dampening measure.

SOME IDEAS FOR OTHER POTENTIAL STREET CHANGES, all of which are designed to enhance the experience for people living in the McKnight instead of those driving through it. These suggestions are not designed to be exhaustive. These are just a few of what will probably be many ideas that will be generated by residents and evaluated as part of the projected Common Areas Community Planning Process



ROUGH SKETCH OF POTENTIAL INTERRUPTION OF BOWDOIN STREET NEAR LINCOLN STREET, intending to curb high speed traffic endangering residents near Magazine Playground and on Bowdoin Street.



THIS ROUGH SKETCH ILLUSTRATES A POTENTIAL PLAZA LOCATED NEAR THE NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL SPACES AT ST JAMES AVENUE AND WELLESLEY STREET. This would both reinforce the retail uses and also serve as a traffic-dampening device.

Project FY 2020 Budget

Magazine Playground Initial Improvements	\$200,000
The Dingle	50,000
Street Furniture Restoration	20,000
Raised Cobblestone Crosswalks	20,000
The Truck Route Study	20,000
Worthington and St. James Ave 'Traffic Dampening' work	40,000
The Place-Making Design Study	<u>40,000</u>
Total	\$390,000

Time Line

Initial Street-Closing Proposal	May-June 2020
City Council Approval of CPA Funds	October 2020
Design Work Bids Sought	December 2020
Design Work Commences	February 2021
Prelim. Planning for YEAR 2	March/April 2021
Construction Work Commences – YEAR 1	May/June 2021

Attachments

The proponents at this time expect all parks and streets, including street furniture to be retained in municipal ownership, and will be working with City Departments as time and the Coronavirus allows to refine these plans in the coming months.

If needed the MDIA will consider other arrangements, but this has not been worked out at this time.