Stop, Collaborate, and Listen

Developing relationships in New England college towns

A thesis

submitted by

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Abstract

College towns are a unique and attractive type of place, and they face an array of challenges specific to their circumstances. A high density of college students can cause behavior-related problems, and university developments can alienate non-student neighbors. Proposed mixed-use developments in the New England college towns of Amherst, Massachusetts and Storrs, Connecticut highlight these challenges by focusing on the area between the campus and the town center. In Amherst, the Gateway Corridor inspires vocal protest from residential neighbors who do not trust the town and worry about increasingly difficult student behavior. In Storrs, the creation of a downtown from scratch demonstrates how these challenges can be overcome through patient outreach and collaborative problem-solving. This thesis explores how the planning process was managed in each situation, and how participants in the development processes have viewed them. Finally, it makes recommendations for Amherst and other such processes in the future.

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An invaluable resource for study of the Gateway Corridor in Amherst is the report produced by ACP Consultants in the summer of 2011. This report presents an even-handed take on the results of the visioning process, and is essential reading for anyone interested in this topic.

Also central to my ability to complete this project were the interview subjects who took the time to speak with me at length about these two projects. Thank you all for your insights and your interest in my findings.

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Introduction

The signs on the lampposts around Amherst's downtown say "Amherst: a perfect place" with some signs continuing "to live," some "to work," and some "to learn." When I was growing up in Amherst, and even more when I returned after college, I felt that it *was* a nearly perfect place: the downtown is walkable and bikeable, there are many cafes and restaurants where one can relax and run into friends, and there are cultural offerings wherever you turn. Yet, many of my peers in the Amherst schools couldn't wait to leave town for places like the nearby Northampton or the nearest big cities of Boston and New York. There were myriad reasons for this sentiment, but two that were common were a desire for the excitement of a more urban context, and a perception that Amherst's vocal civic participation created an environment of interminable discussion which stifled action.

While I understand the sentiments of my fleeing peers, I continue to find Amherst a community of unwavering charm and potential. From that perspective, I was fascinated to follow the planning process for the Gateway Corridor, which unfolded shortly after I left Amherst for graduate school in Boston. It seemed to strike at the root of many issues in Amherst: what should the community's attitude be toward dense development? To students? To the perspectives of developments' neighbors? This thesis attempts to explore these questions through relevant literature, a narrative of Amherst's case, and the case of Storrs, Connecticut, which has conducted a similar planning process around mixed-use development in the past decade.

College towns in general are a unique and attractive environment, and they face an array of challenges specific to their circumstances. A high density of college students can

cause behavior-related problems in college towns, and university developments can alienate non-student neighbors. The two case studies highlight these challenges because of their focus on the area between the campus and the town. Both of these towns are home to their state's flagship public university. In Amherst, proposed development of the Gateway Corridor inspires vocal protest from residential neighbors who do not trust the town and worry about increasingly difficult student behavior. In Storrs, the creation of a downtown from scratch demonstrates how these challenges can be overcome through patience, outreach, and collaborative problem-solving. This thesis creates a narrative of these two projects by asking how the planning process was managed in each situation. It also asks how participants in the development processes have viewed them and what recommendations can be identified for such processes in the future.

Chapter one reviews the literature on college towns, inclusive planning, and mixed-use development to provide a context and to suggest recommendations for the cases in this study. Chapter two outlines the methodology of the research conducted. Chapter three follows the narrative of each town, starting with a background of each and proceeding to a description of the planning and development process to date. Chapter four connects the recommendations from the literature with results from the interviews, linking the recommendations to the specific context being studied. Chapter five considers limitations of this study and suggests areas for future research. Chapter six concludes the thesis, and presents the final recommendations.

This thesis developed out of a passion for Amherst, Massachusetts and its fellow college towns. The Gateway Corridor was a contentious issue in Amherst at the time this thesis

was written, and this study will help Amherst navigate the challenges encountered in the process.

Chapter 1 - Literature Review

The first section of this literature review examines how college towns are defined in the literature and uses the results to argue that college towns are a distinct type of place even though they do not fall into the conventional categorization of urban/suburban/rural. The second section explores the challenges that college towns face and finds that while these challenges are distinct, the necessary planning response to a multiplicity of interests is not wholly unique. The literature suggests that all planning processes, regardless of location, must include all parties. This principle informs the thesis's analysis and recommendations. The third section, which addresses the characteristics of successful town-gown partnerships, suggests goals for creating collaboration in college towns. As is true of much of the literature reviewed as a part of this inquiry, the partnership recommendations are largely founded on evidence from the urban context, as opposed to college towns. The literature remains relevant, however, and leads to questions about development: What is mixed-use development? How do universities go about developing real estate? How can they participate in economic development for their community? Overall, review of the literature informs this study on how to manage planning processes in the unique environment of the college town and suggests recommendations for the two case studies.

Definitions

The first point necessary to establish from the literature is the definition of some key terms. This thesis uses the term "university" when referring generally to an institution of higher learning. When referring to a specific institution, "university" or "college" will be

used as appropriate. But what are “college towns” and “neighbors”? Following is a clarification of the literature’s definitions of these important terms.

College towns

Most people think of places as urban, rural, or suburban. However, this literature review uncovered many books and scholarly articles that demonstrate that college towns are a distinct type of place with a specific set of assets and challenges. This section contains an overview of literature that describes some of the issues at play in college towns. From this background, we can understand what a college town is.

In his seminal work, *The American College Town*, Blake Gumprecht[1] defines a college town as “a place where the college or university and the cultures it creates exert a dominant influence over the character of the town.” He acknowledges that there is no clear boundary between a college town and a city that contains a college, but asserts that in big metropolitan areas there are other major cultural and economic influences, such as a state capital. For the purpose of specificity, Gumprecht identifies the following criteria as a rough set of guidelines for classification as a college town:

1. The town population is greater than one thousand,
2. Students make up at least twenty percent of their population, and
3. The town is outside of urbanized areas with populations of 350,000 or more

Gumprecht also offers more specific characteristics of college towns. Their residents are highly educated, relatively diverse, and relatively affluent. Residents tend to be

[1] Gumprecht, Blake. 2008. *The American College Town*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

politically liberal, tolerant of cultural and social diversity, and younger than national norms. The towns are transient places, lack heavy industry, and are centers of high tech development. Many residents rent their dwellings because of the high cost of living, which is generally accompanied by an array of cultural offerings usually unavailable to smaller cities.

But it's not only young people who populate college towns. In a study highlighting college towns as attractive retirement alternatives to the traditional Sunbelt locations, Hu et al. identify qualities of college towns and compare them to specially-designed retirement communities.[2] The study compares measures of unemployment, crime, cost of living, and health care between college towns and traditional retirement communities in the southern United States. Cultural and recreational opportunities are also identified as significant factors that affect the attractiveness of the town, but are not included in the statistical analysis due to difficulty of measurement. The results of the analysis show that college towns offer comparable environments to traditional Sunbelt retirement communities. Additionally, the authors indicate that the presence of college towns all over the country and the inherent proximity to young people are two benefits of college towns that make them appealing destinations for retirees.

In Ray Bromley's 2006 overview of town-gown relations[3], the atmosphere of a college town is described as a favorable "brand" or "image" that both universities and towns attempt to cultivate. The attraction to the brand comes from a perception of strong

[2] Hu, Shih-Ming, Cheng-I Wei, Margaret R. Schlais, and Jung-Mao Yeh. 2008. The potential of A college town as A retirement community. *Journal of Housing for the Elderly* 22 (1-2) (06/16; 2011/10): 45-65.

[3] Bromley, Ray. 2006. On and off campus: Colleges and universities as local stakeholders. *Planning Practice and Research* 21 (1) (02/01; 2011/10): 1-24.

cultural offerings in the arts and retail, as well as a density of liberal intellectuals. University and municipal leaders see these qualities as draws for students, retirees, potential homebuyers, and potential business owners.

Universities are also important economic generators. Bromley makes note of research and development (R&D) as critical to the economy of college towns. Gumprecht also identifies this industry cluster as inherently tied to the college town economy, especially high tech R&D.[4] Universities train large numbers of young innovators and scientists, and university research can often spin off for-profit ventures. Such activity can draw government and corporate funding into a region and encourage the creation of university technology parks and business incubators. In his review of literature on this subject, LaDale Winling notes that such promotion of universities as economic engines has been happening ever since post-war military-industrial funding started being funneled to universities.[5] Yigitcanlar and Velibeyoglu indicate in their study of Brisbane, Australia, that such thinking about universities has spread internationally.[6]

Miller and Tuttle have studied the effects of rural community colleges on their host communities and note that these schools make specific non-economic and non-academic contributions to the towns in which they are situated.[7] Foremost among the benefits identified are developing community inclusiveness, community pride, and

[4] Gumprecht, Blake. 2008. *The American College Town*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
[5] Winling, LaDale. 2010. Economic development and the landscape of knowledge. *Journal of Urban History* (05/17).
[6] Yigitcanlar, Tan, and Koray Velibeyoglu. 2008. Knowledge-based urban development: The local economic development path of brisbane, australia. *Local Economy* 23 (3) (08/01; 2011/10): 195-207.
[7] Miller, Michael T., and Courtney C. Tuttle. 2007. Building communities: How rural community colleges develop their communities and the people who live in them. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* 31 (2) (02/02; 2011/10): 117-27.

attracting intellectual, affluent, and young residents who in turn attract others with these qualities. This feedback cycle, which the authors call a "value-added community lifestyle" relates closely to Gumprecht's articulation of the cultural attraction of college towns. Community colleges are also often the central defining component of their host community.

College towns are a distinct type of place, and defined by their relationship to institutions of higher learning and characterized by many related characteristics. While they are youthful, they are also intergenerational. The next section will consider the characteristics of the non-student population that are relevant to this study.

Neighbors

The literature is vague on which members of the community are salient constituencies for town-gown relations. Some use the term "local residents" and others say "long-term residents." In the development context, the term "abutters" is often used, sometimes informally referred to as "neighbors." This other constituency is vital for any collaborative effort to succeed. In reality, every person brings to the table a unique perspective, but any study of these issues must break out of the town-university duality by integrating a third general perspective: residents.

The important characteristics of involved community residents for this study are **proximity to the site** of the proposed development (although not necessarily directly abutting) and **non-student** status. This study will use the term "neighbors" to identify this category of community members, and in doing so will imply non-student neighbors unless otherwise specified.

Mixed-use developments

The case studies in this thesis focus on the involvement of neighbors in mixed-use developments in college towns. Thus, since college towns and non-student neighbors are defined above as they pertain to this study, it is now important to address the definition of mixed-use development. At its most basic level, a mixed-use development is one which allows different land uses to exist intermingled with each other. This can be in the same building or merely in the same area. Often mixed-use areas have retail at street level. On the floors above the retail, mixed-use developments sometimes contain office space, but more common is residential units. Because of this coupling of commercial space with a population of potential customers immediately at hand, mixing uses can bring economic development that promotes attractive, livable communities. However, land use policies in the United States since the mid-twentieth century have incentivized segregated and less dense development, and some high-profile projects have led people to associate density with the negative attributes of crime and poor aesthetics. This section focuses on literature about mixed-use development, with an emphasis on clarifying its purposes.

In her 2002 piece, Jill Grant evaluates the positive reception of mixed-use development in the planning world before examining how mixed-use developments across Canada have fared against these goals.[8] Grant traces the history of segregating land uses from the early zoning intentions of the 1920s to the suburbanization and urban renewal programs of the mid-20th century. She cites the work of Jane Jacobs in the 1960s as a turning point for mixing uses, arguing that the 1980s brought a wide acceptance in

[8] Grant, Jill. 2002. Mixed use in theory and practice: Canadian experience with implementing a planning principle. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 68 (1) (03/31; 2011/10): 71-84.

professional literature of the value of Jacobs' work. Since the work of Jacobs in the 1960s, various planners and scholars have developed different models for mixing uses.[9] New Urbanism, transit-oriented development, and smart growth movements all promote different approaches to mixed-use development. They are, however, united by their goals: spreading activity across the entire day, increasing options for residential space, increasing affordability and equity of housing by reducing exclusive and segregated neighborhoods, and reducing dependence on cars.

Grant identifies new trends in her survey of Canadian mixed-use developments. She notes that cultural barriers related to security, predictability, and tranquility limit the overall success of the model, but maintains that mixed-use is a viable planning solution when working with groups that have seemingly conflicting development interests. Municipalities have enthusiastically adopted mixed-use principles in their redevelopment initiatives, and many Canadian cities exhibit the qualities associated with mixed-use.

Also in 2007, Sonia Hirt compared the treatment of mixed-uses in American and German zoning systems.[10] She argues that mixing uses can increase social interaction, engagement with civic life, efficiency of infrastructure use, equity, and sustainability. The principles behind the German model are fundamentally different from the principles behind the American model, which make the former less restrictive than the latter. In the German model, the assumption is that each place is suitable for multiple uses, and consequently, there is more mixing of uses than the American zoning system,

[9] *Ibid.*
[10] Hirt, Sonia. 2007. The devil is in the definitions. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 73 (4) (12/31; 2011/10): 436-50.

which generally does not endorse a mixed-use approach but instead segregates land use districts for one single type of use each.

This section has defined three core concepts for the purposes of this study. College towns are localities outside of urban areas that are heavily influenced by the significant population of students attending a university in the town. Non-student neighbors are an important constituency in college towns. Also defined are mixed-use developments, which contain both residential and commercial space. Mixing uses is disincentivized in the American zoning model, but is much more common in Europe and Canada. With these concepts clarified, we may now examine in further depth some of the challenges in college towns and opportunities for collaboration.

Sources of conflict

Although college towns are attractive for many cultural and economic reasons, they also contain unique and inherent problems that develop from tension between the non-student population and the university population. The most common categories of conflict concern student behavior and university-oriented real estate development.

Student Behavior

The greatest volume of literature exists for student behavior, especially relating to student alcohol use. Although there are other factors that affect the relationships between university and non-student populations, Elizabeth Kenyon notes in her study of university towns in England, the behavior associated with student alcohol use is one of

the foremost sources of animosity.[11] High-risk or binge-drinking is an especially big problem in college towns, as articulated by Wechsler et al. in their study of college drinking behavior and campaigns to address it.[12]

Browner and Carroll use geographic information systems to statistically evaluate police calls in Madison, Wisconsin, and they find a striking correlation between crime and spatial and temporal zones that is related to students and alcohol use.[13] At the borders of student and non-student neighborhoods, noise complaints peaked at a time neighbors go to sleep. In areas with clusters of bars, assault & battery calls peaked around closing time. Vandalism calls were dispersed beyond student neighborhoods and generally occurred throughout the morning, when residents woke up to find their property damaged. While this thesis does not address conflicts over student behavior in detail, the prevalence of tensions in this area influences other town/gown interactions, including in the planning sphere.

University Development

Although conflicts between students and non-students are the most documented by contemporary literature on conflicts in town-gown relationships, another recognized source of conflict is university development and expansion. Sungu-Eryilmaz conducted a

[11] Kenyon, Elizabeth L. 1997. Seasonal sub-communities: The impact of student households on residential communities. *The British Journal of Sociology* 48 (2) (Jun., 1997): 286-301 (accessed 9/11/10).
[12] Wechsler, Henry, Toben Nelson, and Elissa Weitzman. 2000. From knowledge to action: How Harvard's college alcohol study can help your campus design a campaign against student alcohol abuse. *Change* 32 (1) (Jan. - Feb., 2000): 38-43.
[13] Brower, Aaron M., and Lisa Carroll. 2007. Spatial and temporal aspects of alcohol-related crime in a college town. *Journal of American College Health* 55 (5) (March-April 2007): 267-76 (accessed 11/9/10).

study for the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy that examined such conflicts.[14] Universities purchase land to develop space for all of their needs: housing and academic buildings as well as cultural and recreational facilities. Occasionally, as in the case of Smith College's development of a new engineering building, expansion of academic facilities onto land formerly leased out by the university can drive out businesses considered community institutions by town residents. In the case of Smith College, a local café and residents of several properties were displaced.

Many students migrate off campus for housing because of the insufficient supply of student housing on campus, which creates an interesting tension between the conflict of student/non-student proximity and the university developments' encroachment into non-student neighborhoods. When there is pressure for universities to minimize their new developments at their periphery, it is sometimes difficult to respond to the increased housing demand. Furthermore, universities must distribute their new developments across all their need areas, so housing is often not the highest priority.

While college towns do contain conflicts related to student behavior and university development, they are most often typified by their high quality of life, as noted above. Even though there are these particular challenges and positive qualities in college towns, there are also planning practices applicable more generally that are also important to understand. This is especially true given the context of Amherst's planning process, which was perceived to be inadequate around this project. The next section will cover literature on inclusive planning, which is an important strategy for creating places that are both desired by the community and consistent with the needs of the university.

[14] Sungu-Eryilmaz, Yesim. 2009. *Town–Gown collaboration in land use and development.* Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute, PF022.

Inclusive planning

In the context of collaborations between college town and university, it is easy to assume that the biggest sources of conflict are issues specific to such places. However, the processes in which decisions are made about those spaces are also important. Understanding the planning process itself is key to understanding how events played out in Amherst and Storrs.

There is a large literature in the planning sphere on the importance of collaborative planning practices. Without integrating the perspectives of all affected stakeholders, planning processes risk the rejection of their products by significant portions of the community. It is important to apply this literature on inclusive planning to the process of planning and developing mixed-use spaces in college towns.

In the classic book on principled negotiation, *Getting to Yes*, Fisher and Ury propose a style of negotiation that they claim is much more effective than traditional positional bargaining at reaching an optimal agreement.[15] The first core element of this approach is to separate the people from the problem so that offense taken by either party does not derail the problem-solving process. Second, negotiators focus on interests rather than positions. This is because, although positions are usually rigid, interests are generally more flexible. Focusing on the interests behind positions can, therefore, lead to creative solutions that are better for all parties. Third, before deciding on the best course of action, collaborative brainstorming should generate a variety of possible

[15] Fisher, Roger, William Ury, and Bruce Patton. 1991. *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. 2nd ed. Vol. 2. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

solutions. Finally, the criteria used to decide which solution to adopt should be based on objective criteria, so that it is undeniably fair to all participants.

According to Henk Voogd's 2001 article, inherent conflicts can occur between individual interest and collective interest.[16] These "social dilemmas" are the result of rational interest-maximization by all parties. However, in *Dealing with an Angry Public*, Susskind & Field give hope that these conflicts may be resolved. They advocate for another alternative, the "mutual-gains approach," to addressing conflicts between various public constituencies.[17] This approach involves acknowledging the concerns of the other side instead of ignoring or dismissing them. It involves transparency and openness rather than calculated release of information. When there are potential unintended impacts, this approach suggests accepting responsibility and offering to compensate for adverse outcomes rather than pretending that they will not happen. Instead of complaining about delays and revisions forced by opponents, the mutual-gains approach involves accepting responsibility, admitting mistakes, and sharing power. Following these suggestions can build trust with community stakeholders, and communicate that a long-term relationship is valued.

Figure 1: Inclusive planning recommendations

Strategy	**Source**
Focus on interests rather than positions	Fisher & Ury, McKinney
Engage in open dialog with as many stakeholders as possible	Innes & Booher, Burby

[16] Voogd, Henk. 2001. Social dilemmas and the communicative planning paradox. *The Town Planning Review* 72 (1) (Jan., 2001): 77-95.
[17] Susskind, Lawrence, and Patrick Field. 1996. *Dealing with an angry public: The mutual gains approach to resolving disputes*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Separate the people from the problem	Fisher & Ury
Engage in collaborative brainstorming before bargaining	Fisher & Ury
Base decisions on objective criteria	Fisher & Ury
Acknowledge opponent's concerns, do not dismiss or ignore them	Susskind & Field
Transparency and openness, not calculated release of information	Susskind & Field
Offer to compensate for unexpected impacts	Susskind & Field
Don't complain of delays and revisions, instead accept responsibility, admit mistakes, and share power	Susskind & Field
Build incentives to keep talking into dispute-resolution process	McKinney
Share perspectives and listen to each other as equals	Innes & Booher
Aim for consensus	Innes & Booher

Burby's 2003 piece asserts that the comprehensive planning process is much more effective if it involves a wide array of stakeholders.[18] Burby analyzed 60 local plans from across Florida and Washington and interviewed planning staff to determine level of stakeholder participation. Stakeholder involvement can be facilitated by directly inviting important groups to the table. Burby asserts that planners should engage in dialogue with stakeholders to learn about citizens' concerns and to share information about planning issues.

While mediation and negotiation may be effective for resolving land use conflicts on an ad hoc and case-by-case basis, McKinney et al. argue that a more comprehensive system of conflict resolution is required to deal with recurring conflicts.[19] They assert that collaborative approaches are the optimal way to address persistent problems, and they

[18] Burby, Raymond J. 2003. Making plans that matter: Citizen involvement and government action. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 69 (1) (03/31; 2011/10): 33-49.
[19] McKinney, Matthew, Patrick Field, and Sarah Bates. 2008. Responding to streams of land use disputes: A systems approach. *Planning & Environmental Law* 60 (4) (04/01; 2011/10): 3-10.

outline useful aspects of such a system. As in *Getting to Yes*, McKinney et al. advocate focusing on interests so as not to get held up by positional bargaining. They also recommend constructing the system in a way that builds in incentives and support for participants to stay in the dialogue.

Judy Innes and David Booher argue for "collaborative rationality" in their 2010 book, *Planning with Complexity*.[20] What they advocate is a model for approaching "wicked problems" – complex issues with many stakeholders that lack objective answers or any apparent common ground from which to begin a problem-solving effort. The traditional approach in this context emphasizes expert knowledge and reasoned argumentation. Collaborative rationality, on the other hand, brings all affected parties to the table to engage in face-to-face dialogue. The process only works if all parties share information and are able to express their views and be listened to, regardless of how powerful they are. Collaborative rationality aims for consensus, because the approval of all stakeholders is important for the success of these solutions.

Inclusiveness and authentic outreach are the centerpieces of effective planning. While it is often necessary to reconcile diverse and contradicting perspectives by focusing on common interests, starting from an attitude of inclusiveness builds trust in any planning context. In the college town context, it is important to apply this model. While a diversity of constituencies exists, it is vital to include in planning the three core constituencies of town, university, and non-student project neighbors. As we will see, the cases in this study have perhaps struggled most with inclusion of neighbors. However, the collaboration between town and university is also vital and must be

[20] Innes, Judith E., and David E. Booher. 2010. *Planning with complexity: An introduction to collaborative rationality for public policy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

nurtured for any progress to be made in college towns. The next section contains an overview of literature on the characteristics of town-gown partnerships that have proven successful.

Successful partnerships

Partnerships between town and university in college towns are crucial to the functional operation of these localities. The partnership can be formalized or it can consist merely of clear communication channels, but without some collaboration around mutual interests, the college town community will be severely limited. The literature on town-gown partnerships offers suggestions for effective practices, and while most studies focus on the urban context, it is important for community leaders in college towns to consider implementing these effective practices in their own community.

Public perceptions of university activities are important to understand as a backdrop to partnership engagement. In Bruning et al.'s 2006 study, surveys suggest that community members who attended a campus event in the past six months had a much higher opinion of the university than others.[21] Although the study notes that community engagement is often one-sided, its results indicate that engagement goes the other way as well; college town residents must participate in university activities to create positive relations. In one study by Kim et al., a telephone survey finds that community residents who are more aware of the university's contributions to the community are more likely

[21] Bruning, Stephen D., Shea McGrew, and Mark Cooper. 2006. Town-gown relationships: Exploring university-community engagement from the perspective of community members. *Public Relations Review* 32 (2) (/6): 125-30.

to have a favorable opinion of the university.[22] In another study by Kim et al., exposure to negative news articles about a university is shown to correlate with lower opinions of the university among community residents, a finding reiterated by Gilderbloom.[2324]

The other side of engagement is university engagement in the community. Nash's 1973 book identifies four types of involvement: community education, neighborhood revitalization, services and research, and serving as a model. However, a more contemporary take by Martin in 2005 breaks this typology into seven categories.[2526] While many of the categories are not directly related to improving relationships around development, they are intended to improve the relationship between the university and the local community. The increased trust that results from a better relationship can help avoid conflict when development projects are undertaken. The categories identified by Martin are as follows:

- **Service learning** gets students involved in the community as part of normal coursework.
- **Service provision** is more direct institutional involvement in revitalization projects over the long term.
- **Faculty involvement** is characterized by individual faculty members driving community initiatives.

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[22] Kim, Sei-Hill, Brigitta R. Brunner, and Margaret Fitch-Hauser. 2006. Exploring community relations in a university setting. *Public Relations Review* 32 (2) (/6): 191-3.
[23] Kim, Sei-Hill, John P. Carvalho, and Christy E. Cooksey. 2007. Exploring the effects of negative publicity: News coverage and public perceptions of a university. *Public Relations Review* 33 (2) (/6): 233-5.
[24] Gilderbloom, John I., and R. L. Mullins Jr. 2005. *Promise and betrayal: Universities and the battle for sustainable urban neighborhoods*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
[25] Nash, George, Dan Waldorf, and Robert E. Price. 1973. *The university and the city*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
[26] Martin , Lawrence L., Hayden Smith , and Wende Phillips. 2005. Bridging 'town & gown' through innovative university-community partnerships. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal* 10 (2): 2-16.

- **Student volunteerism** is similar to service learning, but is outside of normal coursework and is encouraged softly instead of being required.
- **Community in the classroom** initiatives train community members in specific skills.
- **Applied research** leverages student and faculty capacity for research and data collection for the benefit of community organizations.
- **Major institutional change** restructures a university to better serve the needs of the community, for example through mission changes, course offerings, or promotion and tenure criteria.

This last approach is also advocated by Mayfield, who makes the case for pursuing a philosophy of partnerships at a comprehensive, institutional level.[27]

Recent changes in local governance have made university/community partnerships more common. Universities and local officials now focus more on broad stakeholder involvement and on decreasing the separation into government and education silos. Martin et al. identify seven attributes of successful partnerships: funding, communication, synergy, measurable outcomes, visibility and dissemination of findings, organizational compatibility, and simplicity.[28] Gilderbloom also asserts the importance of adequate funding for partnerships.[29] In a 2001 master's thesis delving deeply into qualities of Community Outreach Partnership Centers that lead to success, Laura Durham explores characteristics and strategies of successful partnerships, which are

[27] Mayfield, L. 2001. Town and gown in america: Some historical and institutional issues of the engaged university. *Education for Health: Change in Learning & Practice (Taylor & Francis Ltd)* 14 (2) (07): 231-40.
[28] Martin , Lawrence L., Hayden Smith , and Wende Phillips. 2005. Bridging 'town & gown' through innovative university-community partnerships. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal* 10 (2): 2-16.
[29] Gilderbloom, John I., and R. L. Mullins Jr. 2005. *Promise and betrayal: Universities and the battle for sustainable urban neighborhoods*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

included in Figure 2 along with recommendations from other sources.[30] These attributes are applicable to many different types of university-community involvement.

Figure 2: Town-gown collaborative recommendations

Strategy	Source
Pressure for successful collaboration from university administration, trustees, or legislators	Cote, Reardon, Bromley & Kent, Gilderbloom
Adequate funding	Martin, Gilderbloom, Bromley & Kent
Clear goals which facilitate realization of all parties' self-interest	Fischer, Bluestone, Reardon
Collaboration with neighbors and university community to identify good programs and generate ideas	Durham, Bluestone, Martin
Frequent publicity of large and small successes to build momentum	Durham, Martin, Reardon
Persistent communication with other members and constituents to build relationships	Martin, Gilderbloom, Durham
Recognition that change takes time, and planning for that long-term collaboration with patience and persistence	Bluestone, Hill et al, Reardon
Create opportunities for leadership and ownership from community members	Goldstein, Sungu-Eryilmaz
Establishing a culture of partnership and listening at an institutional level	Goldstein, Mayfield
Long-term collaborative visioning	Durham, Bromley & Kent
Ongoing feedback loop, informal reflection, and ability to learn from mistakes	Durham, Reardon
Participation by a broad and diverse array of community and university representatives	Durham, Hill et al
Shared power and equal participation	Durham, Hill et al
Allow new projects to evolve from past successes, including	Durham

[30] Durham, Laura. 2001. What makes University/Community partnerships successful: A closer look at community outreach partnership centers. M.A., Tufts University.

through spin-off groups	
Comprehensiveness: each project is part of larger picture	Durham
Designing new buildings to fit with existing cityscape	Sungu-Eryilmaz
Empowerment (avoid fear of failure)	Gilderbloom
Individuals who understand both university politics and the workings of the community in key roles	Reardon
Measurable outcomes	Martin
Non-political advisory group in community	Durham
Projects promote local needs (e.g. contracting locally, local business development, affordable housing)	Sungu-Eryilmaz
Providing space, direction, and management for community groups	Durham
Public/Community access to university administration	Durham
Recognition by insiders and outsiders	Hill et al
University accountability (disclosing university intentions)	Durham
University appropriately trained to deal with community issues	Durham

Bluestone's 2003 article outlines success factors in housing partnerships that have usefulness beyond that specific area.[31] Universities must engage in these initiatives through enlightened self-interest. Universities should collaborate with neighbors & neighborhood groups to identify programs with a positive impact. Because building the trust and respect necessary for an effective collaboration takes a long time, patience and persistence are important. The university can lead by example and use its prestige to promote community goals. Bluestone's analysis is echoed in a 2011 Honor's thesis

[31] Bluestone, Barry, Richard Maloney, and Eleanor White. 2003. *A primer on university-community housing partnerships.* Boston, MA: Annie E. Casey Foundation, May 2003.

from Oberlin College by Amanda Goldstein.[32] She evaluates a town-gown collaboration program called The Oberlin Project and finds that establishing a culture of listening and dialogue is a good solution to town-gown tension, as well as creating opportunities for citizen ownership of projects.

Additional qualities that have led to productive collaborations between town and university are identified in three studies of public universities. Hill et al. evaluate a successful partnership around public health issues between the University of Arizona and the community of Douglas, Arizona, on the Mexican border.[33] The authors found that long-term collaboration, equal participation, broad membership, recognition by insiders and outsiders, timing, and acknowledgment that policy work takes time contributed to effectiveness. Bromley and Kent's case study of four universities in Ohio also identifies factors that can make collaboration work more effectively.[34] Their study found that favorable state politics and programs, a favorable national economy, institutional leadership, collaborative planning, and the leveraging capacity of obtaining committed funds facilitated collaboration. Bunnell and Lawson also look at factors influencing success in partnerships, specifically looking at public universities through the case study of Portland State University.[35] They note that public universities don't have deep pockets, but they can still bring together public actors, pursue long-term planning

[32] Goldstein, Amanda L. 2011. Community engagement in sustainable design: A case study of the Oberlin Project. B.A., Oberlin College.
[33] Hill, Anne, de Zapien Jill Guernsey, Rosie Stewart, Evelyn Whitmer, Yolanda Caruso, Lea Dodge, Mary Kirkoff, Emma Melo, and Lisa Staten. 2008. Building a successful community Coalition - University partnership at the Arizona-Sonora border. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships: Research, Education, and Action* 2 (3): 245-50.
[34] Bromley, Ray, and Robert B. Kent. 2006. Integrating beyond the campus: Ohio's urban public universities and neighborhood revitalisation. *Planning Practice and Research* 21 (1) (02/01; 2011/10): 45-78.
[35] Bunnell, Gene, and Catherine T. Lawson. 2006. A public university as city planner and developer: Experience in the "capital of good planning". *Planning Practice and Research* 21 (1) (02/01; 2011/10): 25-43.

efforts, and procure diverse funding. These three studies from across the country identify partnership qualities in state universities that can be effective. Therefore these conclusions may be especially relevant in other communities that are host to public universities.

Successful partnerships exhibit a variety of characteristics, including the distribution of uniquely competent individuals in specific roles. Kenneth Reardon conducted a study in 2001-2005 on university involvement in community partnerships.[36] He found that, while university-community partnerships contribute in different type of places, they can especially do a lot for distressed communities. Unfortunately, it often takes a crisis affecting both town and university for such partnerships to emerge. From these beginnings, successful partnerships grow slowly over time and emphasize small victories to build momentum. Success requires executive leadership (this point is also echoed by Weill,[37] and such partnerships also allow for their members to learn from mistakes, two points which Gilderbloom also raises.[38] It is important that partnerships recognize and facilitate all parties' institutional self-interests, because otherwise those not served by the partnership may lose interest. Finally, Reardon's study found that it is important for individuals who understand both university politics and the workings of the community to have key roles in the partnership.

Delving more deeply into the role of individuals in town-gown partnerships, a study by Esther Prins examines the roles of individual participants in the shaping of those

[36] Reardon, Kenneth M. 2005. Straight A's? Evaluating the success of Community/University development partnerships. *Communities & Banking* (Summer 2005): 3-10.
[37] Weill, Lawrence V. 2009. The president's role in cultivating positive town-gown relations. *Planning for Higher Education* (July-September 2009): 37-42.
[38] Gilderbloom, John I., and R. L. Mullins Jr. 2005. *Promise and betrayal: Universities and the battle for sustainable urban neighborhoods*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

partnerships.[39] Prins finds that individual members of a university participating in a community partnership may take conflicting approaches to it. They also may unwittingly reflect hierarchical power relations. Prins suggests that university departments should coordinate their participation in the partnership so that community partners are not overwhelmed. Weerts and Sandmann also look at the roles of individuals in these partnerships and their capacity for what they term "boundary-spanning".[40] The authors identify several types of boundary-spanning roles:

- The **community-based problem-solver** acts as a point-person for the partnership and trains members of the university community in how to interact with the outside community.
- The **technical expert** is typically a faculty member in an applied field who lends their academic expertise to a problem.
- The **internal engagement advocate** is typically in an executive academic position, who creates structure and lends legitimacy to the partnership more than contributing directly to the partnership,
- The **engagement champion** is a public face to the partnership who creates connections in the community, and rallies political resources for the cause.

To successfully engage with their host communities through collaborative partnership, universities must put a great deal of energy into assuring all the needs of such a partnership are met. Individuals with a specific range of competencies must be involved, and long-term relationship-building must be the focus. These partnerships occur against the backdrop of the specific challenges to town-gown relations of student behavior issues and university development. But there are also significant benefits to university

[39] Prins, Esther. 2006. Individual roles and approaches to public engagement in a community-university partnership in a rural California town. *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 21 (07; 2011/10): 1.
[40] Weerts, David J., and Lorilee R. Sandmann. 2010. Community engagement and boundary-spanning roles at research universities. *The Journal of Higher Education* 81 (6): 702-27.

economic and real estate development, and the next section presents literature on some of the details of these topics.

University real estate & economic development

While the projects in the case studies are mixed-use developments undertaken by a collaboration between university and town, little literature exists on this type of development specific to college towns. Instead, the majority of literature focuses on the more common phenomenon of purely university-driven expansion. Researchers have also studied economic development undertaken by universities, and some of their findings are relevant to the case studies presented later.

Real estate development

Universities regularly undertake real estate development, to build academic buildings, student housing, and other campus amenities. It can be helpful to integrate community leaders in partnerships around these developments to build trust. Sungu-Eryilmaz identifies useful characteristics for success in such real estate development partnerships.[41] In response to fears that new developments will be an eyesore, Sungu-Eryilmaz proposes that universities design new buildings to fit in with the existing cityscape. Universities can also provide affordable housing to prevent displacement of residents, or can promote local business development. Sometimes universities will give priority in contracting to local businesses, or businesses owned by women or minorities.

[41] Sungu-Eryilmaz, Yesim. 2009. *Town–Gown collaboration in land use and development.* Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute, PF022.

This type of management illustrates the university's commitment to the town in which it is based. Planning, communication, and memoranda of understanding are also tools that can be used to bring neighbors' voices into the process of university expansion. Formalizing this stakeholder participation and giving community members leadership in the process can help projects overcome what would otherwise be insurmountable obstacles.

When partnerships around university development are not pursued, however, there can be differences of perspective about the effects of development. In a 2010 dissertation, Shawn Abbott examines two case studies of university expansion, and the effects perceived both within and outside of the university. Both inside and outside interviewees saw gentrification as a major effect.[42] Internal perceptions of effects also focused on displacement, whereas external perceptions focused on increased scarcity of affordable housing. Both case studies were urban, which means that the impacts of expansion in a college town might be perceived differently. However, Abbott also notes the organizational qualities that influenced external perceptions of impacts. He found that university communication and use of eminent domain, campus architecture, university leadership, student behavior, and neighborhood history all had an impact on perceptions. Thorough communication and avoidance of eminent domain had the most significant positive impacts. Therefore, to optimize external perceptions of development, universities should do what they can to excel in these areas.

Sometimes universities manage development projects internally, while other times they contract out to private developers. Gerrity compares these two methods, and identifies

[42] Abbott, Shawn L. 2010. The good, bad, and ugly of campus expansion: Two case studies of urban university expansion initiatives in Boston and New York. Ed. D., Teacher.

benefits to both approaches.[43] From interviews and document analysis at three case study institutions (Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Gerrity determines that the benefits of involving the private sector include quality of design & construction as well as efficiency in the development process. However, he also finds that the development team must be compatible for these benefits to be realized. Clear expectations and lines of communication are also important. In the case of iconic campus developments, such as large symbolic buildings or buildings with an aesthetic purpose, Gerrity suggests that it may be better to contract out discrete parts of the project than the whole thing.

Universities themselves can also be understood in different ways in terms of their motivation. Roth's 2011 master's thesis evaluates Yale University's commercial real estate development program in light of different models.[44] He describes models of universities as both typical private developers and as developers with the broader interest of protecting their investments in the community. However, Roth's ultimate suggestion is that universities should be looked at as political entities whose policies reflect the interests of the most powerful internal groups. This conclusion draws attention to the complexity of universities as actors in a community. They are somewhat like private landowners, but also have qualities of a separate local government or of a partner in the municipal government. Yet ultimately, they are subject to internal and external pressures, navigated by the president or chancellor. It is important to avoid an overly simplistic idea of what drives university development.

[43] Gerrity IV, David F. 2009. Analyzing the private development model for university real estate development. M.S., Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
[44] Roth, David. "Urban Development through Planned Retail: Yale's Commercial Real Estate Program." J.D., Yale Law School, 2011.

Economic development

In addition to the development of real estate, universities often participate in economic development in their community and region. This participation can consist of merely providing an economic anchor through direct employment, but can also involve the encouragement of spin-off companies and other types of economic contributions. The literature on university economic development presented here suggests some reasons why universities undertake this work, and describes some of its permutations.

In 1993, Cote & Cote surveyed administrators at seventy-two American land-grant colleges and universities to collect data on the institutions' involvement in local economic development.[45] The authors find that such institutions are increasingly involved in economic development. Pressure from legislators and university presidents is one of the most powerful factors that influences these institutions to engage in economic development activities.

This pressure may be a driving force behind university economic development efforts. In her 2006 article, Karen Fischer asserts that universities are expected to take over the economic anchoring of old industrial cities.[46] Fischer notes that these expectations are sometimes unrealistic. In one example, Fischer notes that while spin-off companies are often regarded as the main way universities engage in economic development, the University of Rochester itself has a much larger economic impact than the companies that have spun off from it. This speaks both to the role of the institutions themselves as

[45] Cote, Lawrence S., and Mary K. Cote. 1993. Economic development activity among land-grant institutions. *The Journal of Higher Education* 64 (1) (Jan. - Feb., 1993): 55-73.
[46] Fischer, Karen. 2006. The university as economic savior. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 14, 2006, 2006, sec Government & Politics.

economic anchors and the low understanding of economic development options by those expecting universities to contribute.

While these studies identify ways in which universities are involved in their local communities and ways they can improve in this area, Reardon's 2005 article examines why town-gown partnerships may focus on economic development.[47] He identifies four reasons why universities have been doing more to engage their communities in recent years:

1. Funding for universities is increasingly justified for its local economic impact.
2. Universities recognize that their recruitment success depends on an attractive local environment.
3. Campus expansion requires good town-gown relations.
4. A growing awareness of the economic power of universities pressures administrators to be responsible citizens.

The initiatives studied by Reardon all focused on expanding opportunities for the university's community, and included a broader spectrum of stakeholders than traditional economic development partnerships. They also emphasized "buy local" campaigns and were more interested in business retention than recruitment. In all cases, significant obstacles were encountered in the early stages of the partnerships. As all the literature above on successful partnership shows, universities can overcome these obstacles by fully engaging with and supporting the partnerships.

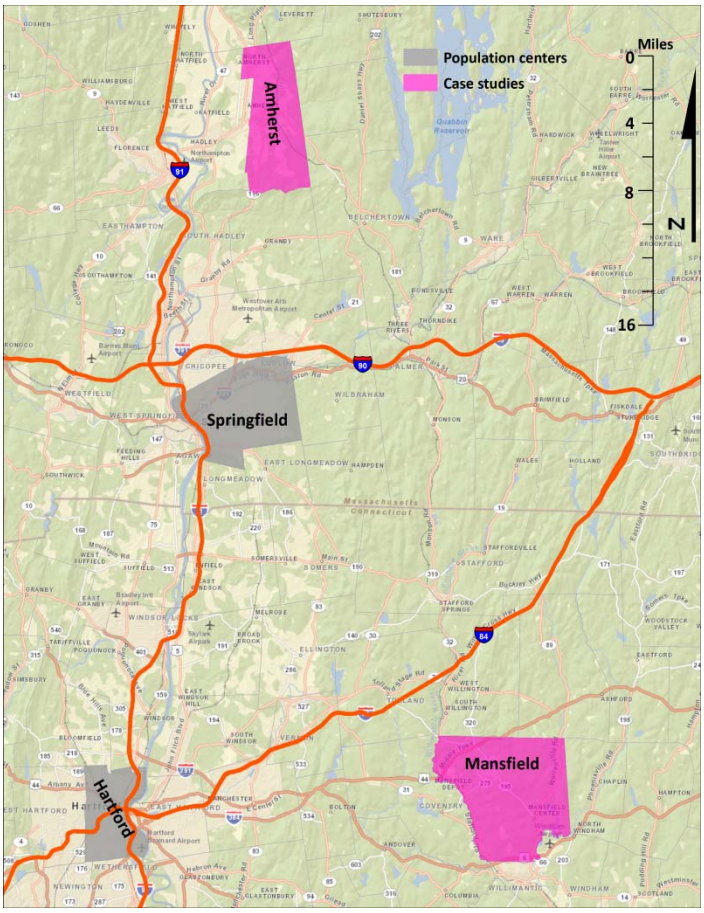
The preceding literature review shows us that while there are differences in lifestyle between students and their non-student neighbors, there are strategies that can be

[47] Reardon, Kenneth M. 2005. Straight A's? Evaluating the success of Community/University development partnerships. *Communities & Banking* (Summer 2005): 3-10.

pursued by universities and local governments to create collaborative environments. The sample of literature above also touches on some general concepts in the broader fields of mixed-use development and collaborative planning. This thesis examines planning processes and strategies in the context of two New England college towns and makes recommendations for constructive planning engagement between university, town, and resident stakeholders.

Chapter 2 - Methodology

Figure 3: Basemaps of Amherst and Storrs



As the question of how college towns plan for mixed-use developments is a descriptive one, the case study method was chosen to answer it. This application is specifically advised in *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* by Robert Yin, a highly regarded authority on case study research. The comparative case study method can provide insights into a subject from a breadth of perspectives and with a depth of understanding not as easily attained using other methods. Therefore, it was necessary to identify cases which would be appropriate examples through which to address the research questions.

The case which inspired the topic, Amherst and the University of Massachusetts, needed to be one of the two case studies in order to determine its nuances. In 2010, representatives from Amherst visited Storrs, Connecticut and Hanover, New Hampshire in the summer of 2010 to inform the Amherst planning process.[48] Thus, these two communities were initially selected as the comparisons for the case study of Amherst. Early in the process, however, Hanover was eliminated due to its lack of similarities with the Amherst case study. That left Storrs as the only comparison. Storrs is a section (known as a "village") of the town of Mansfield in Connecticut. In this report, "Storrs" and "Mansfield" will be used interchangeably except when context requires one name to be used specifically. Storrs is home to the University of Connecticut, a flagship state university campus just like the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Also, the mixed-use projects in each town were undertaken collaboratively by the town and the university. For these two similarities, the case studies of Storrs and Amherst were selected.

The two projects in question are at different stages of development. Amherst is in the midst of a long process of developing the "Gateway Corridor" or "Gateway District," an area between the downtown and the University of Massachusetts campus. While it is known by both names, it will be referred to here as the "Gateway Corridor." The planning for this area began in 2010, and got off to a rocky start before being redirected into further visioning by the town's current town manager. In Mansfield, the Storrs Center project attempts to create a mixed-use town center where none existed before

[48] Although the representatives visited a development in Storrs called Husky Village, a different one, Storrs Center, is the topic of this thesis because it provides a more relevant comparison to Amherst. Husky Village is purely student housing that was built as a new location for fraternities and sororities, whereas Storrs Center embodies the more recent vision for the development in Amherst as a mixed-use development.

at the border of the University of Connecticut campus. This development began in 2002, and by the time of writing, had nearly completed construction of its first phase of buildings.

Although the two cases are not perfect corollaries for each other, they share many qualities. In addition to hosting flagship state university campuses, they are roughly the same size, have tension about student housing and nuisance houses, and are in the same general New England environment. Furthermore, the sites of each development are largely owned by the universities, and in each case there has been concern that the university could unilaterally build a dormitory on the land instead of engaging in a collaborative mixed-use development.

The purpose in compiling these cases is to obtain a full narrative of the planning and development process in these communities and to investigate the extent to which that process involves neighbors. This thesis also examines the feelings of participants about the paths of the projects to date. Based on the literature discussed above as well as the interviews, we can make recommendations for how similar processes should proceed in the future. The case studies are intentionally discussed in a way that allows the experiences of Storrs Center to inform the process in Amherst. This is because Storrs Center is further along and has overcome some of the hurdles currently faced in Amherst. This thesis will make observations about what has worked well in Storrs, and recommendations for Amherst based on those observations as well as stakeholder interviews and the literature.

Interviews and other data sources

Interviews with individuals connected to the projects were an essential information-gathering tool in both of these case studies. Interview subjects were identified from quotation in media accounts, participation in public meetings, and the recommendation of other interview subjects. A mix of subjects with a range of perspectives related to the process was attempted: university, town official, business community, and resident. The goal of the interviews was to obtain diverse perspectives on the process. The Tufts Institutional Research Board approved the interview plan before interviews started, with the condition that the interview subjects not be connected to their responses in an identifiable way. Nineteen interviews were conducted in Amherst and eleven in Storrs. Notes from all interviews were synthesized to identify themes and trends.

Figure 4: Distribution of interviews

	Amherst	**Storrs**
Town Official	6	2
University	3	1
Resident	7	4
Business	2	0
Other*	1	4

***Includes the consultant hired in Amherst and members of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership in Storrs.**

One of the interview subjects in Amherst noted that in issues of neighborhood tension around town-gown development, there are far more perspectives than merely town and university. This thesis attempted to understand the multiplicity of perspectives in this way. At the simplest, the true perspectives at play are town officials, university

administrators, supporting business community members, opposing business community members, supporting residents, and opposing residents. In reality, every individual brings his or her own unique perspective, but perhaps this categorization is at least a better way to conceptualize the dynamic than the simple "town-gown" duality. This study attempts to get beyond that duality by categorizing interview subjects as **town officials**, **university representatives**, **business community members**, **neighbors**, and **other actors**. While two members of the business community in Amherst were interviewed, efforts to reach members of the Mansfield business community were unsuccessful. Contact information for these potential subjects was acquired late, and attempts to reach them were unsuccessful. The last category, "other actors," includes both the consultant hired in Amherst and members of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership in Storrs.

While the data collection for this case study was performed primarily through interviews and a survey of key participants, it was supplemented by document analysis of newspaper articles and direct observations of the sites involved in each study. These additional methods were used to gather context rather than to collect data for analysis.

Interview questions

The interviews began with a wide array of questions, developed from recommendations in the literature and a desire to understand the context in both case studies. The results of the literature review served as a framework for developing the questions, which in turn framed my discussion of the interview and survey results (Chapter 4). This discussion, based on both the case studies and the literature review, set the stage for

recommendations in Chapter 5 for improving the mixed use planning process in college towns.

While the questions were all based in the literature, it quickly became apparent that there were six questions that were producing the most valuable information. These questions were:

- What do you see as the goals of the project? How were they developed?
- What was the momentum like for the project? Was it fairly consistent, or lots of stops and starts, and how was that managed?
- What are some of the arguments for the project? Against it?
- What sort of relationship do you feel the university has with the town?
- How do you feel the relationship between town and university could be improved?
- What sort of neighbor involvement has been included in past projects?

The following questions were consistently asked during the initial interviews but were later dropped because they were producing less relevant information.

- How did the project come about?
- How much success has the project had in achieving its goals?
- Was funding for the project adequate? What funding sources were used?
- Who are some of the people who have been most involved in moving the project forward? In opposing it?

The next four questions were also occasionally asked in the earlier interviews, but they all deal with public involvement. These questions were often answered by the interview subjects before the questions were asked, so they were sometimes skipped. In some cases, a version of one of the following questions was asked to further develop responses:

- How have you been involved in the planning process? How have critics made their voices heard?
- Was there a continuous process of neighbor involvement, or was input solicited only on occasion?
- How and at what stages has the planning process involved the project's neighbors?
- What opportunities were created for residents to have ownership of project elements?

The later interviews all concluded with an open-ended question about whether there was anything important that the interviewee felt had not been discussed in the interview. This question sometimes produced valuable information.

The interviews were conducted primarily over the phone, with several interviews in Amherst and one in Storrs conducted in person. They lasted between ten minutes and one hour, with the majority taking approximately half an hour. Notes were taken during the interviews; no recordings were taken. Overall, the interviews provided a quite broad view of the two case studies, due to the inclusion of many different perspectives.

Survey on perceptions of opponents' concerns

After interviews were completed and the results were synthesized, it became apparent that more detail would be valuable in one area. Although the analysis highlighted subjects' perceptions of the concerns of project opponents, this information had a low level of precision. Therefore, a second research instrument was assembled using the results of the interviews to make a survey on this topic. Interview subjects from both cases were emailed a list of concerns mentioned in the interviews and asked to rate the concerns on a five-level Likert scale of perceived significance. A rating of one meant that the respondent did not feel it was a significant concern of opponents, whereas a rating

of five meant the subject felt it was a central concern. The concerns identified and presented to Amherst subjects were:

- Neighbors needed more clarity and honesty about the intentions of the project.
- Neighbors do not want any change.
- Neighbors would not support any development until the current problems are solved.
- Neighbors were offended by their treatment at meetings they attended.
- Neighbors felt student behavior would continue to be poorly managed.
- Neighbors feared dense student housing would be like Southwest or the old Frat Row.
- Neighbors did not feel that important studies & analysis had been done.
- Neighbors do not want anything built near them.
- Neighbors were concerned about inadequate control of nuisance houses.
- Neighbors did not feel that they could trust the town.
- Neighbors felt their neighborhood was being treated as part of downtown when it really wasn't.

Storrs subjects were sent the following list:

- There are problems with the developers' labor practices.
- The project would create too much traffic.
- The tax burden on Mansfield resident because of the project would be too large.
- The development is too big.
- These residents do not want any change.
- The project would put a strain on the water system.
- The project would not succeed.
- The decision-making process around the project was undemocratic.
- The town could not be trusted to use tax dollars wisely.
- The housing component would be filled with students.
- The garage would be a problem for the town.

The response rate for the survey was relatively low. All Amherst neighbors submitted responses, but very few other interview subjects participated. Therefore, the survey results provide insights into neighborhood interview subjects' prioritized concerns, but can tell us little regarding how well other stakeholders perceive those concerns.

The methodology for this thesis was well-suited to the research questions and the nature of the two case studies. The interviews were effective at developing a narrative that accounted for many perspectives on the planning processes. While a greater number of perspectives is always valuable to obtain, the information gathered through these methods was sufficient to provide a solid understanding of the cases. The next chapter will detail the narrative of the two projects as presented by the interview subjects. Following that, recommendations will be given for the future course of Amherst's Gateway Corridor.

Chapter 3 - The planning process in Amherst and Storrs

Both Amherst, Massachusetts, and Storrs, Connecticut, are home to flagship state university campuses. These universities dominate the economy and culture of their host towns, and the relationships between the two entities are multifaceted. The institutions contribute much in terms of identity, culture, and jobs to each town, and most residents appreciate their presence to that extent. In Amherst, major town-gown issues have centered in recent years around inappropriate student behavior on weekend nights and the widespread conversion of single-family homes to student rentals. In Storrs, while there are student residences that are viewed as nuisances by neighbors, other issues have claimed greater attention. There, the biggest issues have been questionable management of the university's water infrastructure and unilateral developments by the university which have offended some residents.

It should be noted that the Massachusetts and Connecticut university systems differ in administrative organization and location. The UMass flagship campus in Amherst is run by the Chancellor (as are the other campuses), and the President of the University system supervises the Chancellors from Boston. The President of UConn, on the other hand, is stationed on the flagship campus in Storrs, with Directors in charge of each satellite campus. Therefore, the President of UConn holds a similar role relative to the Storrs campus as does the Chancellor of UMass-Amherst to that campus, yet the UConn President has greater power and access to state resources. There is much optimism on the part of Mansfield town officials about the new President of UConn, Susan Herbst. Town Officials generally see her as invested even more in the town-gown relationship

than past presidents have been. Amherst officials express similar feelings about outgoing Chancellor Robert Holub. It is their hope that Chancellor Holub's replacement, Kumble Subbaswamy, will work to enhance town-gown relations to a comparable extent.

Figure 5: Demographics of cases

All data from 2010 Census	**Amherst**	**Storrs**
Residents (inc. students)	37,819	23,989
University enrollment	24,617*	17,345
Percent students in dorms	60.74%*	57.38%
Non-student residents	13,202	6,644

***Amherst College and Hampshire College have a combined enrollment of approximately 3,000 students. While those students are included in the above figure, this study is primarily concerned with UMass, which has an enrollment of approximately 21,000 students. Also, the on-campus residence rate at Amherst and Hampshire Colleges are 91.34% and 77.13% respectively, according to the 2010 Census, whereas the UMass on-campus housing rate is lower, at 57.09%. This figure may differ slightly from official numbers, but is intended for comparison to Storrs, to indicate that the two towns have a similar percentage of students living on campus.**

Storrs

Storrs is a village in the town of Mansfield, which contains several scattered villages. The flagship campus of the University of Connecticut is located in Storrs, as are town offices, the regional high school, and a community center. Mansfield is the second most populous town in Tolland County due to the university population. It is only forty minutes outside Hartford, but it retains a rural character that residents value. Its local government is mostly administered by the town manager, but there is also a 9-member town council and an annual town meeting. After outlining town-gown relations, this section will describe the projects in Mansfield that provided a background to the development of Storrs Center. It will also present the Mansfield Downtown Partnership

as a model organization for creating positive community change through a town-gown collaboration.

Town-gown relations in Storrs

Storrs has had strong town-gown relations in recent years. Before the start of the Storrs Center project, there were several unilateral development projects by UConn that created tensions with the town. These projects will be elaborated further in the next section. Following the creation of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership and the commencement of the Storrs Center planning in the early 2000s, however, relations between the town and the university have improved dramatically. The Storrs experience demonstrates that collaborative projects are one of the best ways to build the town-gown relationship. While building the town-gown relationship was not an explicit goal of the Storrs Center project, it has served that important function.

While several interviewees mentioned student behavior as an issue, the challenge of managing the water infrastructure of the town was much more pressing. Since Storrs Center has been underway, it has been the biggest focus of the town-gown relationship, and the water issues have been one of the biggest challenges presented by the project. As a result, other challenges have been de-emphasized, with residents focusing instead on the relatively positive project that is underway.

Another issue mentioned by interviewees in relation to the university-community relationship is staff turnover. The departure of key individuals to the town-gown relationship can often be a challenge, but in Mansfield this phenomenon has instead resulted in the growth of the relationship. The new president of UConn, Susan Herbst, is

seen by many interviewees to be more invested in improving the relationship with Mansfield than were previous presidents. This could be in part due to a strategy for dealing with turnover that was identified by one of the interview subjects. The arrival of new key staff members can be used as an opportunity draw those staffers into the collaborative relationship from the beginning of their time on the job. This helps define their job as being about the collaboration. This strategy has been pursued by those involved with the Mansfield Downtown Partnership when several significant town and university positions turn over.

Previous Planning and Development in Mansfield

There has been interest in improving the vitality of Storrs since at least 1995. At that time, UConn completed a planning process that called for a dramatic investment of one billion dollars to modernize the university's facilities. The same year, the town-gown committee produced a report that anticipated redevelopment in the area around the Mansfield Municipal building and the southeast corner of UConn's campus. In 2000, community leaders developed a working plan to create a more vibrant downtown in this area.

In the decade preceding the Storrs Center development, there were also several town-gown issues that created problems for residents' trust in the university. One was a proposed development on Horsebarn Hill, north of the eventual Storrs Center site. The university entered negotiations with the drug company Pfizer to create a test facility on this site but encountered such intense public pushback that Pfizer walked away from the deal. Another development, Hilltop Apartments, at UConn's southwest corner, raised

concerns from neighbors for its construction quality, its purported hiring of undocumented workers, and its poor communication with neighbors.

A third project that provides background context for Storrs Center is the community center, which was built in the early 2000s by the town, abutting the municipal building on South Eagleville Rd. It was supposed to provide recreational space and to house offices of the Parks and Recreation department. Most importantly, the community center was intended to be self-supporting. Some community members were concerned that, if it were not successful, the taxpayers would end up paying for it. Another concern was that if it were run like a business, its user fees would be too expensive for many citizens to afford. This project was still fresh in residents' minds when Storrs Center was announced, and thus citizens voiced many of the same concerns in response to the Storrs Center proposal.

These previous projects in Mansfield created an atmosphere that was initially hostile to new development. But by creating an entity representing each of the town, university, and business communities, local leaders were able to reverse the course of public sentiment to the point where Storrs Center was able to break ground with community-wide consensus about its value.

Figure 6: Mansfield Timeline

- 1995 - Trustees complete the UConn 2000 plan for state investment in the university system
- 1995 - Town-Gown Committee produces report which lays the groundwork for the downtown idea
- 2000 - Community leaders have discussion about the potential for the university and the town, and develop a working plan to create a downtown

- 2001 - Business, town, and university leaders form the Mansfield Downtown Partnership
- 2001 - The town of Mansfield begins construction of the Community Center
- 2002 - The Partnership completes the Concept Plan for Storrs Center
- 2002 - The town of Mansfield designates the Partnership as a municipal development agency
- 2003 - The Partnership creates a Municipal Development Plan
- 2003 - The Community Center opens
- 2004 - The Partnership selects LeylandAlliance to be the project developer
- 2005 - The Municipal Development Plan approved by Mansfield, the Partnership, UConn, and the Windham County Council of Governments
- 2006 - Municipal Development Plan approved by state Department of Economic and Community Development
- 2006 - The Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission approves the first building of Storrs Center
- 2007 - The Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission approves Storrs Center as a Special Design District
- 2007 - A walkway is built connecting Storrs Road with the Community Center
- 2008 - Mansfield receives a $10 million state grant for the first parking garage
- 2008 - The Partnership receives statewide awards for smart growth and consensus-building
- 2008 - The Partnership completes Sustainability Guidelines for Storrs Center
- 2008 - The state approves the stormwater management plan, and the federal wetlands license is granted
- 2008 - Commercial tenanting for the first phase of Storrs Center begins
- 2009 - The state Department of Transportation approves certificate for improvements to Storrs Road
- 2010 - Mansfield receives $4.9mil from the Federal Transit Administration for an intermodal center, bringing the total federal funding to $23 million
- 2011 - The Mansfield Town Council approves the Development Agreement for Phases 1A & 1B
- June 29 2011 - Construction on the first phase of Storrs Center begins.
- Dec 13 2011 - The Partnership announces the businesses to occupy the first buildings.

Creation of Mansfield Downtown Partnership

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership carried Storrs Center forward. The Partnership is a collaboration between the Town of Mansfield, UConn, and the local business

community. Each of the three has representatives on the Partnership's board, and each contributes to its budget. The purpose of the Partnership is to bring economic development to Storrs and two other village centers in Mansfield. The Partnership, under the guidance of director Cynthia van Zelm, has undertaken the long process of shepherding the Storrs Center process through the planning, public outreach, and grant-seeking processes. With the help of developers LeylandAlliance and EDR, the Partnership is now guiding Storrs Center through the construction and leasing process. The Partnership received a state award in 2008 for smart growth and community consensus-building. These awards and the success of the development to this point speak to the relevance of Storrs Center as an example for planning processes in other college towns relating to mixed-use development.

While Storrs Center has progressed in a generally positive fashion, there have been concerns from some vocal Mansfield residents. According to an interview with a member of the Partnership, Storrs Center originally was proposed with a student housing component, a plan that was "scuttled quite quickly" in anticipation of an anti-student-housing backlash similar to what was experienced in Amherst. Another major issue that Storrs Center had to overcome was the water politics of Mansfield. The town does not provide its own water, but instead relies on wells and the water systems of UConn and a neighboring town. Several years before the start of the Storrs Center planning process, a stream near UConn went dry due to poor management of the system. There has been general concern in the community about this issue, which came into play when Storrs Center was proposed. Developers determined that Storrs Center would use UConn's water system, which drew even greater attention to the issue. Over the course of the project and in response to increased attention to the problem of water

management, UConn has taken some steps to improve its management of the water system.

Another pivotal concern that Storrs Center had to work through was opposition to town expenditures on the project. At one point, some concerned neighbors undertook an initiative to remove the funding for the Partnership from the Mansfield town budget. Luckily for the Partnership, another group of supportive Mansfield residents prevented the funding from being removed.

Finally, a third concern that Storrs Center has faced is the hiring of local workers. Previous projects by UConn in Storrs were accused of hiring undocumented workers in construction, and there were allegations that Storrs Center was employing similar labor practices. Despite minimal documentation, those concerned are vocal enough that central proponents such as the Mansfield mayor and town manager are aware of the need to ensure that labor issues are not a problem.

Mansfield has faced obstacles to the successful completion of the Storrs project, but stakeholders have persevered and conducted successful community involvement the entire time. Despite obstacles such as geographical challenges with the site, the need to bring on a second developer because of the 2008 recession, and some pushback from residents, the proactive outreach of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership allowed the town to create a downtown development that was widely accepted by neighbors.

Amherst

Amherst is the most populous municipality in Hampshire County of western Massachusetts. It is home to the University of Massachusetts, Amherst College, and Hampshire College. These three institutions are part of the Five College Consortium, along with Smith College in Northampton, eight miles southwest of Amherst, and Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, which borders Amherst to the south. Amherst and Northampton are the two dense town centers in an otherwise rural county. Amherst's unofficial motto is "Amherst, where only the *h* is silent," referring to its pronunciation (*AMM*-erst) and its propensity for vocal civic participation. Its government is made up of a semiannual, 240-member representative town meeting, a five-person select board, and a town manager. Other entities of town government relevant to this study are the planning board, whose members are appointed by the town manager, and the redevelopment authority, whose members are elected by the public. By state law, zoning changes must be approved by a two-third majority of town meeting.

Town-gown dynamics

The relationship in Amherst between the town and the university has several distinct challenges. The challenges are often conflated in the discourse around these issues, but it is important to acknowledge and understand the distinctions. First, there is the behavior of students on weekend nights, when they roam in large groups outside the houses of non-student neighbors, behaving disrespectfully as they walk between dorms and bars, searching for a party. Second, UMass owns a large amount of land in Amherst, and this land is mostly tax-exempt. This causes great pressure on residential property taxes. Finally, there are the issues related to student rental properties. According to

interview subjects, the tight housing market in Amherst creates a vacancy rate less than one percent. This incentivizes the conversion of single-family homes into student rental properties. The low vacancy rate also disincentivizes landlords of student rental properties from maintaining the properties adequately, because they know they will be able to fill them even if the property has certain code or aesthetic deficiencies. This last incentive is more true of absentee landlords than those landlords who live on the property as well, or at least are close enough to actively manage them. Several interview subjects assert that neglect of student rental properties by absentee landlords bears a high correlation and perhaps causation with "nuisance houses," where regular noise and other violations draw heavily on town resources and the patience of neighbors.

In some ways, student behavior in town has improved in recent years, but has worsened in other ways. Autumn of 2006 saw the demolition of five particularly troublesome fraternity and sorority houses that were referred to as "Frat Row." This property now plays a central part in the discussion of the Gateway Corridor. Also, the annual spring weekend at UMass, Hobart Hoedown, has been the scene of especially unfortunate student behavior in the past, and in recent years has been controlled somewhat more responsibly by the university.

According to neighbors, these steps forward have been countered by a worsening of the behavior problems of mobile intoxicated students on weekend nights. Residents of Fearing Street, which is a main thoroughfare between downtown and Southwest, home to the highest-density student residences, have received much abuse and property disrespect from students. One resident described drunken students in his yard playing

on his daughter's backyard swing set, and another urinating on his compost pile. A second Fearing Street resident had the branches ripped off of the bushes in her yard by passing students and reported excessive noise, "screaming, howling, a boiling up of the energy" occurring between 10pm and 2am on weekend nights. When residents confront students, they are met with a sense of entitlement; these students feel that the disrespectful behavior is their right. While it is undeniable that proximity to students will necessitate some lifestyle clashes, the disrespect and entitlement to misbehave is both unacceptable and getting worse.

At the same time as student behavior has been evolving, the attitude of the administration to town-gown issues has changed in recent years. In keeping with a national trend identified in the literature, UMass administrators have increased their interest over the past decade in upholding a high quality of life in Amherst. Several subjects mentioned how quality of life in Amherst is extraordinarily important to UMass to attract good students, faculty, and administrators. According to many of the interviewed town officials, the outgoing Chancellor, Robert Holub, worked more in this area than any previous chancellor. He did this by establishing a strong relationship with town officials and dispatching two high-level administrators, Deputy Chancellor Todd Diacon and Director of External Affairs Nancy Buffone, to manage the town-gown relationship. Consequently, the university has engaged in more partnerships with the town and has begun taking more responsibility for the behavior of its students off campus. The student code of conduct was recently updated to include behavior off-campus, and all stakeholders hope such improvements will continue under the new Chancellor, Dr Subbaswamy. Because of all these factors, the relationship between the university and town officials has flourished in recent years, while the relationship

between students and their non-student neighbors has been characterized by increasing frustration, directed mainly at the town.

Figure 7: Amherst timeline

- Oct 24 2006 - UMass begins the demolition of Frat Row
- Fall 2006 - Master Plan public idea-gathering meetings take place
- Spring 2007 - Master Plan work group workshops take place
- Oct 2007 - Consultant presents the Master Plan draft to Town Meeting
- Nov 2008 - Master Plan review moves from the Comprehensive Planning Committee to the Planning Board
- Nov 2009 - Shaffer floats the original concept for the Gateway District
- Feb 3 2010 - Planning Board adopts the Master Plan
- Early 2010 - Shaffer is in touch with UMass administrators about the Frat Row parcel
- Feb 24 2010 - Shaffer suggests to the ARA that they be the oversight board for the Gateway District
- Feb 25 2010 - The first article published in the local newspaper, which describes the Gateway District as "a mix of college housing and commercial and retail space, providing a needed area for students to live and enhancing the town's commercial tax base."
- Mar 10 2010 - UMass representatives begin attending ARA meetings
- Summer 2010 - Shaffer develops a memorandum of understanding with UMass administrators
- Jun 16 2010 - The local newspaper publishes the first article about neighbor involvement in meetings
- Summer 2010 - UMass hires Todd Diacon as Deputy Chancellor
- End of Aug 2010 - Shaffer announces his departure
- Sep 1 2010 - Shaffer, Chancellor Holub, and ARA chair John Coull sign agreement
- Oct 2010 - Musante becomes town manager
- Early Jan 2011 - Musante & Diacon come to ARA to lay out new vision for process
- Apr 28-30 2011 – ACP conducts a charrette to collect stakeholder visions
- Jun/Jul 2011 - ACP issues a report based on the charrette and additional research
- Aug 9 2011 – UMass decides not to transfer Frat Row parcel to town
- Oct 2011 - UMass starts working on transportation plan
- Nov 7 2011 - Town meeting approves funds for housing study

Foundation of Gateway

The Gateway Corridor was identified as an area for potential development soon after the demolition of Frat Row in 2006. Many stakeholders identified the stretch of North Pleasant Street between the UMass campus and the densest part of downtown as an area which does not meet its full potential. Some even referred in interviews to the area as a "hole" in the walkable downtown. Interviewees articulated various goals for the area, including increased student housing and a better transition between the campus and the downtown. Before analyzing these goals extensively, though, it is important to examine the background for the planning in the Gateway Corridor.

Between 2006 and 2010, Amherst completed a comprehensive planning process to update the town master plan that had been unchanged since 1969. The process contained many opportunities for input and refinement. First, there were idea-gathering workshops. ACP Consulting was hired to synthesize these ideas into a report in 2007. The comprehensive planning committee (CPC) streamlined the results presented in the report, resolving contradictions and removing implausible suggestions. After the CPC, the master plan subcommittee of the planning board further refined the plan, though much of this work had been done by the CPC. This work resulted in the final master plan in 2010. Some residents felt that, although their views had been expressed in the initial report, the final document failed to represent their perspective. Town officials acknowledge that some residents feel this way, but assert that the final report represents the most honest and consistent document that was possible given a wide array of legitimate yet contradictory perspectives.

Figure 8: Master Plan goals addressed by Gateway

- Preferentially direct future development to existing built-up areas.
- Create vital downtown and village centers (areas of mixed use, including retail, commercial, and residential elements) that are walkable, attractive and efficient.
- Identify and inventory key locations for business development, and adopt land use regulations that can help broaden the Town's business tax base while avoiding inappropriate businesses, big boxes, heavy industry, etc.
- Guide new housing growth so as to minimize impact on Amherst's open space and small-town rural character.
- Encourage a greater mix of housing types, sizes, and prices serving a wider range of income levels than is currently available throughout Amherst. Encourage the development of economically diverse neighborhoods.
- Revise the zoning code to promote infill development in strategic locations.
- Increase the opportunity for infill development and the location of housing development near services.
- Encourage housing that meets the needs of special populations.
- Support the creation of taxable student housing that will lessen the pressures on residential neighborhoods.
- Broaden and leverage partnerships with UMass and the Colleges.
- Improve regulatory environment to encourage business development.
- Strengthen partnerships with colleges and University and improve coordination of services and facilities.

Source: Amherst Master Plan, available at http://ma-amherst3.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/3092

In addition to the master planning process, several other planning processes have influenced the discussion of the Gateway Corridor. First, there was discussion in 2010 of transforming Mount Pleasant Apartments in the Gateway Corridor into permanent housing for formerly homeless individuals. This attempt fell through because it missed a deadline for Community Development Block Grant money, and it also encountered political problems. Neighbors were alarmed at the proposal, and it increased their mistrust of the town and of developers. The second project that has influenced stakeholders' feelings about Gateway is an attempt to re-zone two village centers in

Amherst using form-based zoning, a model that had been discussed for the Corridor as well. Form-based zoning is a new zoning tool which regulates physical form more than land use, intending to encourage walkable urbanism. The form-based re-zoning attempt marginally failed to achieve a two-thirds vote in the Fall 2011 town meeting, which was seen as a bad sign for Gateway. However, not all reasons for the failure are generalizable to Gateway. The third project is Boltwood Place, an infill development in the heart of Amherst's downtown that has the same mixed-use strategy as has been proposed for developments in Gateway. Boltwood Place finished construction during the spring of 2012, and several interview subjects referred to it as a trial run of whether new housing in Amherst's downtown could avoid becoming packed with students. These three projects affected how neighbors of the Gateway Corridor perceived the planning process for development. While the first two proposals lowered trust in the town's planning processes, Boltwood Place was generally perceived with cautious optimism.

Gateway process begins

The decision to embark on a Gateway Corridor project came about for a variety of reasons. Foremost, the project followed directly from the town's master plan. Additionally, the 2006 demolition of Frat Row created an opportunity for new development on its former site. In early 2010, Town Manager Larry Shaffer began speaking with UMass administrators about the future of this parcel. In late February of that year, Shaffer came to the Amherst Redevelopment Authority (ARA) and suggested that it might play a lead role in the redevelopment of the area. Redevelopment authorities serve as urban renewal entities throughout the state, with the goal of

redeveloping areas that are “substandard, decadent, or blighted.” While redevelopment authorities are often thought of in relation to their most powerful tool, eminent domain, they have numerous other powers, including the issuance of bonds. The ARA was created in 1971 to revitalize the Boltwood Walk area of downtown Amherst. Its early work involved renovation of the buildings that now house the Bangs Community Center, Rao’s Coffee, and Johnny’s Tavern. In 2001, the ARA completed their most recent project in the Boltwood Walk area, the Boltwood Walk parking garage.

Not long after the ARA was designated by Shaffer as the overseer of the Gateway planning process, representatives from the university also began attending ARA meetings. It was not until mid-June of 2010 that significant opposition from neighbors of the project was registered in the local newspaper, the Amherst Bulletin. The opposition centered on suggestions that a redevelopment of this area could include undergraduate housing, which neighbors did not want. This opposition combined with a lack of preparedness by town and university officials to integrate the perspectives of neighbors resulted in behavior from a variety of sources that exacerbated the lack of trust that Gateway neighbors and town officials already felt toward each other. One public official related in his interview that he enjoyed telling residents that they are wrong, and he also used a mocking voice in our interview to illustrate the concerns of neighbors. In another interview, a former member of the town staff related how he was accused of being a liar by a Gateway neighbor, something that could understandably hurt his feelings and escalate the distrust. This sort of behavior from all of its sources clearly contributed to the disagreements surrounding the project.

At the end of the summer, Shaffer announced his retirement. This was just one week before an agreement was signed between the town, the university, and the ARA. The agreement stated that UMass would attempt to transfer ownership of the parcel to the ARA, for the purpose of building a large mixed-use development that would include student housing. The process for transferring land owned by the university is a long one that must be approved in the state legislature. According to Amherst's State Senator Stan Rosenberg, this transferal process is rarely problematic if it is approved by all local parties, but it still takes a full legislative cycle (two years) to complete. UMass would do this if the Town changed the parcel's zoning to allow for such a development, as the proposed development would differ from the area's existing zoning for single-family homes and duplexes. Additionally, the agreement announced that UMass and the Town would cooperate to fix problematic student rentals, and to address student behavior problems through "mutual community policing initiatives." This agreement named the area the Gateway Redevelopment District.

In October, the Select Board appointed Assistant Town Manager and Finance Director John Musante to replace Shaffer. Musante immediately recommended that the ARA slow the process and hire a consultant to conduct an extensive public process to evaluate community desires for the Gateway Corridor. In January of 2011, Musante and UMass Deputy Chancellor Todd Diacon came before the ARA to describe their vision for the site. Shortly thereafter, the ARA hired ACP Consulting to conduct a public visioning process. This process occurred at the end of April 2011.

The report produced from this visioning process was presented in July of 2011. The report denied that urban renewal money would be a good source of funding for it and

that the neighborhood to the west of North Pleasant should be included in the study area, which were two of Shaffer's assertions about Gateway (see Figure X). Neighbors had been making both of these points for months, and the ACP report agreed with them. Following the release of the report and general acknowledgment that there was passionate disagreement over the future of the site, the university withdrew its offer to transfer the frat row parcel to the ARA. This development disheartened many proponents of the project and made some feel that intentional and collaborative development of the site was now impossible.

At the same time, the report also recommended action steps that have since begun, and development of the Gateway Corridor is still moving forward. The first step is to conduct a transportation and traffic study of the area around the Corridor. The UMass master planning process took on this study, which was completed with the help of planning firm VHB in the early months of 2012. The second action step recommended by the study is a housing market assessment of Amherst, which would make recommendations about appropriate housing options for a mixed-use development in the Gateway Corridor. In Amherst's fall 2011 town meeting, money was approved to hire a consultant for a town-wide housing study, which was begun in the spring of 2012. However, some interview subjects expressed concern about this study. They noted that a good study would need to both assess the market for new housing in Amherst, as well as the town's housing policy, and some were concerned that this study would be unable to fulfill both objectives.

This section has displayed the history of both Storrs Center and the Gateway Corridor in relation the planning process for each project. As the planning process for the Gateway

Corridor continues, it will be important to thoroughly integrate the perspectives of all stakeholders. The following section identifies themes from the interviews conducted in both case studies, and should thus be read closely in preparation for further collaborative related to these projects.

Chapter 4 - Perspectives on the Planning Process

In reviewing the results of the interviews, the following came up as the most important themes: student housing, understanding of project goals, understanding of neighbors' concerns, empathy, and executive leadership.

Student Housing

In both Storrs and Amherst, student housing emerged as a concern of neighbors, and in Amherst it has been a central issue. Thus, while the research question focuses on the planning process itself rather than its products, it is important to understand the student housing issue. Residents care most about undergraduate housing, as graduate students are perceived as more mature and similar in lifestyle to non-student residents. UMass and UConn house fifty-one percent and sixty-six percent of their undergraduates on campus, respectively, as shown in Figure 9. This leaves approximately six thousand undergraduates living off campus in Mansfield and approximately ten thousand in Amherst. These students need somewhere to live, and there are three options to house them. The university can build housing, a private developer can build housing off campus, or single-family homes can be converted to use as student rentals. The university only has so much capacity to build housing, and the zoning bylaw in Amherst makes it nearly impossible for private developers to build cost-effective apartments. Therefore, the trend has been creeping conversion of single-family homes. This pressure is especially severe in neighborhoods adjacent to campus, such as the neighborhood to

the west of the Gateway Corridor, which has been a source of frustration for some proponents of development in the Gateway. Some interviewees feel that this pressure is the main problem for neighbors, and the development of dense student housing in the Corridor can be a solution. However, a more significant issue for Gateway neighbors is the noisy and disrespectful behavior of students on weekend nights. They expect further dense student housing to worsen this problem.

Figure 9: Universities ranked by relative amount of on-campus housing

University Name	Total Enrollment	Housing Capacity	Housing Usage	% Capacity	% Usage
Stanford U.	14173	11500	10500	81.14%	74.08%
UConn	17836	11946	11854	66.98%	66.46%
UMass-Amherst	21373	12046	11032	56.36%	51.62%
Boston U.	22314	11538	10782	51.71%	48.32%
New York U.	21536	12500	10337	58.04%	48.00%
Michigan State U.	42700	16312	15500	38.20%	36.30%
Pennsylvania State U.	41000	12533	13000	30.57%	31.71%
Purdue U.	38000	11500	11446	30.26%	30.12%
Rutgers U.	50000	16000	14639	32.00%	29.28%
Indiana U. at Bloomington	42500	11625	10858	27.35%	25.55%
U. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	41918	10387	10169	24.78%	24.26%
U. of Michigan-Ann Arbor	41042	10597	9579	25.82%	23.34%
Texas A&M	44000	10993	9906	24.98%	22.51%
Arizona State U.	67082	11492	13886	17.13%	20.70%
Ohio State U.	50995	10112	10104	19.83%	19.81%

An alternative solution to the student housing shortage put forward by many neighbors was that it is the responsibility of the university to house more of its students on-campus. However, two analyses from the Association of College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO) show that UMass has one of the highest percentages of on-campus housing of any of its peer institutions. As shown in Figure 9, UMass houses the third highest percentage of its students on-campus among its peer schools. In addition to drawing attention to this fact, several interview subjects noted that there are many priorities for building construction on campus, and dormitory construction must be balanced with other needs.

Several interview subjects suggested that Amherst should become more "about" UMass, like the host communities of many other flagship state universities are. Indeed, one Storrs interviewee expressed frustration about this topic relating to UConn as well. She acknowledged the valid concern from some residents that residential development would bring students, but then asked "What's wrong with having students living downtown?" She felt that appropriate spaces need to be built for students, and if such spaces do not exist, behavior that is unhealthy for the community results. But, she lamented, "When you say this, people say 'see? The project *is* about students!'" Because the root of much resistance to dense student housing is related to behavior issues, continuing to rein those in is an imperative before expecting neighbors to be enthusiastic about more students living near them.

Amherst residents frequently likened the proposed student housing element of the Gateway Corridor to Frat Row or Southwest, the 70s-era high-rise campus housing at the bottom of Fearing Street. Southwest's aging architecture is characterized by brick

and concrete and is the source of much of the disturbance identified by interviewed neighbors. There is another development of on-campus housing, however, to which university and town interview subjects compared the plans for Gateway. This newer development, called North Apartments, is very popular and does not have the behavior problems associated with Frat Row or Southwest even though it also houses a large number of students. The North Apartments are more modern in appearance, an attribute that interviewees in both Amherst and Storrs asserted influences student residents to behave better. All proponents of student housing development in the Gateway Corridor intend that any student housing incorporated into the project be more like North Apartments than like Southwest or Frat Row.

In summary, there is confusion over the primary student problem facing Amherst and the residents of the Gateway Corridor. While development of student housing in the Corridor would ease the pressure to convert single-family homes to student rentals, it could worsen the problem faced by neighbors of disruptive student behavior on weekend nights. If proponents of student housing wish to continue to pursue that avenue, they must ensure (and convince neighbors) that it would not exacerbate the behavior problem.

Understanding of project goals

This perception of project goals was closely examined in the interviews. Interview responses were categorized to extract the perceived goals mentioned by each subject.

Figure 10: Perceived goals by role in Storrs

	Create town center	Bring in more shops	Economic development	Increase housing	Create pedestrian-friendly area
Town (2)	2	1	1	0	0
Partnership (4)	4	4	2	2	1
Neighbors (4)	4	3	3	3	3
University (1)	1	1	1	0	1
Total	11 (100%)	9 (82%)	7 (64%)	5 (45%)	5 (45%)

Interviewees in Storrs expressed a general consensus about the goals of the Storrs Center development. Every respondent pointed to the creation of a vibrant town center as the primary goal of the project. According to one town official, this goal was to "create a sense of place that many college towns and New England towns have, a civic place that serves as the heart of the community." That had not existed in Storrs previously, and it was difficult for UConn to attract the best students & faculty without it. The fact that this goal was so widely understood is a testament to the clarity and cohesiveness of the message developed by proponents of Storrs Center.

The others of the top five goals mentioned were all articulated by at least forty-five percent of interviewees. There were two distinct approaches to economic goals of the project, which is reflected in Figure 10 by the categorization of "more shops" and "economic development," Subjects who mentioned the provision of goods & services or improved shopping had their response categorized as "more shops." Those who

emphasized the jobs-creating aspect of businesses or the vibrant atmosphere they create were identified as "economic development." Another trend that should be noted is that fewer town and Partnership subjects mentioned the increase in housing and creating a pedestrian-friendly environment than neighborhood and university subjects.

Figure 11: Perceived goals by role in Amherst

	Student housing	**Activate downtown**	**Connect town and campus**	**Build something**	**Increase tax base**
Business (2)	1	2	2	0	1
Town (6)	4	3	3	1	2
Neighbors (7)	7	2	1	4	2
University (3)	3	1	2	2	1
Other (1)	0	0	0	0	0
Total (19)	15 (79%)	8 (42%)	8 (42%)	7 (37%)	6 (32%)

In Amherst, the goals of the Gateway project were more muddled. This observation was corroborated by numerous interview subjects. One goal that nearly all interviewees were clear on was the intention to create student housing. This was articulated in the initial memorandum of understanding, and while it was later dropped due to political realities, it was widely believed to be a driving goal of the project. There was no clear consensus on any of the other goals articulated, especially compared to the understanding of goals in Storrs. This is one of the core problems in the way the Gateway project was undertaken.

Although business and town interview subjects felt strongly that the economic development goals of activating the downtown and connecting it to campus were

important to the project, neighbors and university interviewees did not articulate these goals as strongly. Aside from student housing, the only other goal that neighbors generally believed was behind Gateway was the desire to "build something." While several town and university subjects felt there was a need to build something to refresh the town's built environment, neighbors were more often negative about it. Several neighbors connected this goal to a feeling that the town's actions are driven too much by developers and property-owners, and thus developments such as those proposed in the Gateway Corridor were catering to "private" or "vested" interests. The final of the top-five most articulated goals, increasing the town's taxable land, was only mentioned by six of the nineteen interviewees. This indicates that if this was a core goal, it was not communicated adequately.

Overall, the lack of goal clarity in Amherst indicates that proponents of the project did not coordinate well their messaging about the Gateway Corridor. Lessons might be learned from Storrs, where interview subjects were in much greater agreement about the goals of Storrs Center. This is a factor that may correlate with project success, and certainly correlates with adequate outreach.

Understanding of neighbors' concerns

This topic was inspired by recommendations from the literature on inclusive planning, especially the work of Innes and Booher. The interviews measured the extent to which a

culture of listening was established by identifying which concerns were attributed to neighbors by other interviewees. The "priority" column in Figure 12 is a subjective assessment based on interviews with neighbors, and the "perception" column is the number of non-neighbor interview subjects who articulated that perceived concern.

Figure 12: Perceived and actual concerns in Storrs

	Priority	**Perception**
Storrs Center will become student slum	High	6 (60%)
Storrs Center will burden the water infrastructure too much	High	4 (40%)
The parking garage will cause higher taxes	High	4 (40%)
Residents can't trust the town to behave responsibly	High	1 (10%)
Decision-making for Storrs Center has been undemocratic	High	0 (0%)
Storrs Center will fail to achieve its goals	Medium	3 (30%)
The developers use non-union, non-local, undocumented workers	Medium	1 (10%)
Storrs Center will create too much traffic	Low	3 (30%)
Opponents do not want any change	Low	2 (20%)

In Storrs, the dynamic around neighbors' concerns was generally one of understanding and authentic consideration. On concerns about the details of the Storrs Center project, there was a solid understanding of which goals were the most important to opponents. However, on concerns about the validity of the development process, there was less recognition of opponents' concerns. These concerns were either over- or under-articulated by proponents. This fact may be a result of proponents focusing on those concerns about which they felt something could be done. On these actionable concerns, there was a higher degree of understanding.

Understanding led to action. The Partnership and developers took measures to address the concerns that they understood. For example, residential units were marketed exclusively to non-student populations until late in the pre-leasing process, and consequently estimated student composition of the housing was low. The university was influenced to improve its management of water infrastructure. State grants were secured and developers assumed initial risk to assure the town was not liable for losses from the parking garage. By taking steps to work through these concerns, project proponents showed respect for opponents and widened the base of support for the project. Through processes such as this, community consensus can be built and projects can reach a widely supported completion.

Figure 13: Perceived and actual concerns in Amherst

	Priority*	**Perception**
Can't trust town	High	4 (33%)
↳ Student behavior poorly managed	High	5 (42%)
↳ Want clarity and honesty about intentions	High	0 (0%)
↳ Offended by disrespectful and unprofessional treatment	High	0 (0%)
↳ Want to see market studies and financial accounting done	High	0 (0%)
↳ Don't believe neighborhood part of downtown	Medium	1 (8%)
↳ Nuisance houses poorly controlled	Low	3 (25%)
Fear dense student population like Southwest or Frat Row	High	7 (58%)
Nothing until current problems solved	Medium	3 (25%)
Opponents do not want any change / Opponents are NIMBYs	Low	3 (25%)

***Based on analysis of interviews**

The main reason why neighbors have opposed Gateway is that many of them do not trust the town. This lack of trust is due to worsening student behavior on weekend nights, lack of clarity and honesty about the intentions of this project, a feeling of disrespect and unprofessional treatment at meetings, a feeling that important market studies and big-picture financial accounting has not been done, and persistent assertions that the "general residential" zone is part of downtown, when the zone's residents believe it should not be. Non-neighbor interviewees in Amherst articulated a scattered understanding of these concerns, and they strongly emphasized the assumption that neighbors are afraid of students. While "fear" is potentially a misconception, neighbors were uninterested in creating another nearby location with a dense population of undergraduates. Many neighbors referenced the proximity of Southwest and several mentioned the memory of Frat Row to illustrate this point. As in Storrs, proponents understood specific concerns more than they understood more general concerns that took issue with the project as a whole.

Another perception was that opponents of Gateway do not want any change, an attitude often referred to as "NIMBY," which stands for "Not in my backyard" and assumes that opponents of a project would have no trouble with the project if it were not proposed close to them. While this term is generally derogatory, the widely-respected consultant who worked on the Gateway community visioning process articulated that, "when you go from general policy recommendation to the more specific level of planning and design, people who had paid less attention to the master plan pay more attention when it's in their neighborhood." This expectation was also articulated by other subjects. Neighbors did not articulate this motivation themselves, but it was mentioned by a moderate portion of proponents.

Some Amherst officials interviewed did not clearly articulate the concerns of neighbors, which could be due to a lack of nuanced understanding or their disinterest in becoming more familiar with the concerns. Most town and university officials demonstrated attitudes of jaded frustration in the interviews. But perhaps neighbors, themselves, are not adequately clear about their concerns. For example, in interviews, neighbors often referred to student behavior problems, creeping conversion of single-family homes in non-student neighborhoods, and troublesome nuisance houses as "problems with students." By obfuscating the specific issues, these generalizations foster a difficult environment for consensus, and consequently created more roadblocks to proceeding with the development process in the Gateway Corridor. Furthermore, neighbors rated nearly all of their concerns very highly, which could lead to confusion on the part of town officials about which concerns were most important.

The follow-up survey generally reinforced the conclusions above: the most significant concerns expressed by neighbors were about lack of trust in the town and a desire to avoid dense student populations. Furthermore, proponents understood neighbors' concerns better when they were more actionable. Although proponents understood the importance of the two goals mentioned above, they tended to identify aversion to change as a more significant concern of neighbors than neighbors did themselves. Two additional concerns were emphasized by neighbors in the survey that were not seen as very significant to other respondents: the first was a desire to see more market studies and financial accounting about the effects of proposed changes, and the second was about the relationship between the neighborhood and the downtown. Neighbors felt that their neighborhood was distinct from downtown, while town planners insisted that

the downtown included the neighborhood. However, comments submitted by some respondents along with the survey indicate a nuanced understanding that was more sympathetic to neighbors' concerns than the numerical ratings suggest.

Figure 14: Concern weighting from follow-up survey

	Neighbors	**Others**
Can't trust town	4.0	3.5
↳ Student behavior poorly managed	4.6	4.5
↳ Want clarity and honesty about intentions	4.8	5.0
↳ Offended by disrespectful and unprofessional treatment	2.8	3.5
↳ Want to see market studies and financial accounting done	4.8	3.7
↳ Don't believe neighborhood part of downtown	4.7	1.8
↳ Nuisance houses poorly controlled	5.0	4.7
Fear dense student population like Southwest or Frat Row	4.8	4.5
Nothing until current problems solved	4.6	4.5
Opponents do not want any change / Opponents are NIMBYs	1.2	3.5

The difference between Storrs and Amherst is subtle on the issue of understanding and articulation of opponents' concerns. In Storrs, there was strong understanding of concerns about specific aspects of the project, and little mention of concerns about the legitimacy of the process. In line with that understanding, proponents of Storrs Center had worked through the actionable concerns, showing respect and building trust. In Amherst, there was a similar overall level of understanding, but more of the concerns were process-oriented, so proponents of development in the Gateway Corridor had little to work with. Furthermore, there was not a defined project under Mr. Shaffer's leadership, so there were few specifics to delve into. Following the visioning process and

Mr. Musante's appointment as town manager, more weight was given to the understanding of neighbors' concerns. This change in emphasis was widely applauded by interviewees of all perspectives.

Empathy

Another important factor in building trust is empathy for perspectives different from one's own. The literature reaffirms that trust is a vital condition for collaborative planning and partnership, and the most important trust-building quality is empathy. To be empathetic is to demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the other side. In heated disagreements, this skill is difficult to master, but it is important for truly inclusive planning. Analysis of the interview results suggests the extent to which each interviewee displayed empathy with the views of other perspectives. Dismissive language or tone when describing a subject's opponents (e.g. using derogatory words like "NIMBY") was taken as an indication of low empathy, whereas validating and legitimizing language regarding the other side (e.g. "these are all very valid concerns") were seen as showing high empathy.

Figure 15: Empathy perceived in interview subjects

	Amherst Total	Amherst Empathy	Storrs Total	Storrs Empathy
Town	6	1	2	1
Neighbors	7	2	4*	2*
University	3	0	1	1
Business	2	0	0	0

Other/Partnership	1	1	4	1
Total	19	4 (21%)	11	5 (45%)

***It should be noted that of the "neighbors" interviewed in Storrs, three played a supportive role in the project, and only one was in opposition. The two members of this category described as empathetic were supportive.**

This analysis provides a very rough estimate of this vague quality of empathy, but it is perhaps illustrative of a crucial difference between Storrs and Amherst. In Storrs, the percentage of interview subjects who displayed empathy for the other side was twice as high as for those in Amherst. Because interview subjects in both towns make up a large portion of the significant and visible actors in their respective projects, this statistic suggests why Storrs received a statewide award for community consensus-building whereas the process in Amherst has stumbled over public opposition. The vagueness of this analysis warns against taking too many conclusions from it, but it is possible that the correlation between empathetic actors and success of the process is a compelling one.

Executive leadership

Active leadership is vital for any initiative. In town-gown collaborations, that leadership is valuable from many areas. Top university administrators and senior municipal officials can drive participation in collaborative endeavors. Additionally, organizations specifically intended to facilitate the town-gown relationship can be extraordinarily helpful in advancing collaborative solutions.

The interviews in Storrs unequivocally praised the leadership of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership. While acknowledgment was given to the importance university

and town leadership, the Partnership's executive director, Cynthia van Zelm, was frequently credited by a diverse range of subjects as being "instrumental" to the process. According to one subject who had been involved with the Partnership from the beginning, Ms. van Zelm has done "a fabulous job interfacing with community. She is perfect for the job and she's grown with it." Another subject asserted that Ms. van Zelm has been "a strong catalyst from beginning; she's been very committed. She's worked a lot of overtime, given it one hundred percent. She's been the momentum, kept the project going, kept everyone informed, done grantwriting, and reported to all the different agencies. She's been the hub of the wheel." In addition to garnering these supportive words from interview subjects, Ms. van Zelm and the Partnership leveraged their small local budget to attract millions of dollars of public grants and private capital. This work supplements the Partnership's basic project management role to make them an invaluable component of the Storrs Center project.

In Amherst, leadership from Chancellor Holub led to greater engagement in town issues by senior university staff, especially from Deputy Chancellor Todd Diacon and Director of External Relations Nancy Buffone. However, several interview subjects felt that the "real power" in the state university system, the President and Board of Trustees, were disengaged from the town-gown issues on the ground in Amherst due to their location in Boston. A greater interest from these players could potentially allow for more substantial efforts on the part of the university, though it is also possible their presence could stifle the creativity and flexibility coming from the Chancellor's office. Storrs is similar to Amherst in this regard. The UConn administration had a founding role in the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, and continues to be closely involved in its board and committees. This difference could be explained by the fact that Storrs is physically closer

to its state capital than Amherst is, though it is in a rural area outside of the urbanized area.

An extension of this finding on executive leadership is to look at leadership from non-university actors in the partnership. In Amherst, virtually all interview subjects had nothing but praise for current town manager John Musante. Whereas the previous town manager was held responsible for a poorly managed planning process and a problematic style of interacting with the public, Mr. Musante was credited with turning around a process that got off to a horrible start. Subjects spoke of Mr. Musante "walking the walk" on public involvement, calling him "credible", "trustworthy", and "honorable". Multiple subjects said "he's doing a great job". This finding was echoed across a diversity of perspectives.

This section has elaborated on themes identified in the interviews. Student housing has played a significant role in both projects, and has emerged as a central issue in Amherst. Perceptions of both the projects' goals and the concerns of neighbors were stronger in Storrs than in Amherst. Stronger understanding of project goals is related to the success of project outreach and message clarity. While clarity about concerns was also important, a bigger distinction was seen in the understanding of concerns between process-oriented concerns and actionable concerns. Related to understanding of perspectives different from one's own is empathy for those perspectives. Greater empathy was apparent in Storrs interviews, but empathy was not correlated to the role of the interviewee. Finally, strong leadership was apparent in both cases from town and university leaders, but Storrs benefited tremendously from having a third entity whose

sole purpose was to facilitate the collaborative endeavors, the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

What can Amherst learn from Storrs? From the literature? Its own participants? The two case studies have been explored with these questions in mind. Specifically, the research questions asked how the planning process was managed in each of the two case studies, how participants in each planning process have viewed them, and what recommendations can be identified for such processes in the future. Through conducting interviews in both communities, it was found that while both processes involved concerns about student housing, there were other concerns that were more important. In Amherst, neighbors were concerned with student behavior, in Storrs residents were concerned about increasing the burden on the university's water infrastructure, and in both communities opponents of the projects had a low degree of trust in town officials managing the projects. Interviewees in Storrs exhibited stronger agreement about project goals and about neighbors' concerns than in Amherst, and Storrs interviewees also more frequently exhibited empathy for perspectives different from their own. Finally, effective leadership was important in both case studies, especially as it related to the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, which was instrumental in shepherding Storrs Center through a successful public process and into development.

This section will first suggest areas in which further studies of this topic could be improved, and limitations of this study. It will then summarize the recommendations for Amherst from the literature and from interviews. With the implementation of these suggestions, the planning process in Amherst may be able to avoid some of the challenges that have faced it in the past.

Limitations

As with any study, great lengths were taken to ensure the legitimacy of the research, but some shortcomings are inevitable. First, while this study contacted a large number of stakeholders, no complete collection of perspectives is ever possible. There are some perspectives which it would be useful to integrate further in future studies, especially those of the business community, who were difficult to reach in both case studies. Second, while this thesis reframes the town-gown relationship to one involving town officials, the university, and non-student neighbors, it has been pointed out that university students belong in such a categorization as well. Acknowledgment is made above to the multiplicity of perspectives, and indeed, interviews are categorized differently than the framing would suggest, but the perspective of students is one that would be useful to integrate into the framing and the interviews. Part of the perennial problem in college towns is that students do not feel a need to engage with the community due to their short time there, so future study should make a strong effort to integrate their perspective. Finally, there are a number of other cases with potential applicability to the developments Amherst and Storrs that would be useful for future studies to integrate further. A sampling of these cases and a summary of their relevance is provided in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Other relevant college towns

Town	University	Relevance
Hanover NH	Dartmouth College	Visited by Amherst representatives
Durham NH	University of New Hampshire	Interested in creating downtown
Saratoga Springs NY	Skidmore College	Successful in building housing in historic downtown

Philadelphia PA	Drexel University	Building mixed-use gateway development
New Brunswick NJ	Rutgers University	Building mixed-use gateway development
Columbus OH	Ohio State University	Built mixed-use gateway district
Chapel Hill NC	University of North Carolina	Has a town-gown-downtown partnership
State College PA	Pennsylvania State University	Similar student behavior problems
Kent OH	Kent State University	Has development similar to Gateway under way

Recommendations

Make trust-building between all perspectives a core priority

The literature is clear that authenticity, trust, and inclusiveness are essential characteristics of any initiative that wishes to successfully engage all parties. There are many different perspectives, and it would be a poor decision to consider those perspectives different from one's own to be malicious, corrupt, or ignorant. This study shows that collaborative respect is a valuable pursuit because engaging all members of the community as equals is the most effective way to make things better. Storrs has done well in this regard, and Amherst could learn from the outreach done by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

The Amherst neighbors who have stymied projects in the past are intelligent and reasonable people. The problem is that they do not trust town staff, the ARA, or private developers. To build this trust, the assumptions of both sides must be discussed and backed up by data. Additionally, all parties must respect the integrity and intelligence of all other parties. Counterproductive, disrespectful behavior must be curtailed from all

parties, and, in the words of Amherst town manager John Musante, “an adult conversation needs to be had.” All stakeholders must resolve to be respectful in this way, and everyone will have to be patient and open to legitimate arguments from other perspectives.

Create an official entity to facilitate the town-gown relationship

In Storrs, the Mansfield Downtown Partnership has been an invaluable asset to the strengthening of the town-gown relationship and the completion of the first phase of the Storrs Center development. Currently no comparable entity in Amherst exists to facilitate these processes. While strong channels of communication have been adequate to improve the relationship between town officials and university administrators in the past, to build this trust further while also engaging neighbors, an official collaborative entity would be very useful. This recommendation is in line with the literature on town-gown partnerships. As mentioned above, it is possible the new business improvement district in Amherst could potentially fulfill some of this role, because UMass, town government, and local businesses are all represented on its board of directors. Stakeholders should work to develop the business improvement district into an entity that can serve this general facilitation purpose.

Continue the authentic outreach to neighbors

The planning process for development in the Gateway Corridor must authentically consider the concerns of neighbors. One interviewee lamented the fact that neighbors first hear of projects like Gateway through the newspaper. It is possible that town officials are reluctant to reach out to neighbors earlier in the planning process because

they feel that they will get shot down. Instead of trying to halt the projects entirely, it would be productive for neighbors to approach project proposals by asking what goals were, and helping to reconcile interests. These methods may are already be employed, but a greater emphasis on this interest-based strategy would certainly improve the discourse.

While neighbors are still skeptical that they are being listened to, the halting of the ARA process started by former town manager Larry Shaffer may have been the best thing for the public process in Amherst. John Musante, the current town manager, has a vision for a much more robust public process as the planning moves forward. Undoubtedly, there are more improvements that could be made to better facilitate the participation of Gateway neighbors. Perhaps with Mr. Musante at Amherst's helm, the implementation of these changes can bring the Gateway process to a successful completion.

Seek input on solutions for student behavior and housing

The relationship between housing and student behavior is a critical issue that Amherst must address in an inclusive and transparent way in order to improve town-gown relationships and build trust. The Partnership was able to facilitate a conversation on these topics in Storrs.

Discourage disruptive use of new housing

The Partnership in Storrs is pursuing several strategies to limit the disruptiveness of undergraduate students living in the new housing being constructed across the street

from the UConn campus. First, the construction of the units is intended to discourage the sort of large parties that are familiar in Amherst. There is key-card access for the building, and active property management can be required in the special permit process. Furthermore, UConn took out a master lease on approximately twenty units of the first Storrs Center building to use as housing for visiting faculty and lecturers. A similar agreement could be pursued in Amherst.

Draw incoming faculty into the neighborhood adjacent to campus

The university should assist incoming faculty in finding housing in Amherst. One interview subject from the university and several from the neighborhood expressed this as an area where the university could improve. Only thirty percent of UMass employees live in Amherst according to the town's Master Plan. More faculty and staff living in the neighborhoods surrounding the university could lead to an increased investment by the university in these neighborhoods' quality of life. The university could increase this percentage through offering incentives.

Engage new staff in collaboration from day one

Participants in the collaboration should take the opportunity presented by frequent administrative turnover to involve new staff in collaborative partnerships immediately upon their arrival. Recruiting new administrators and staffers into the collaboration methodically can strengthen the town-gown relationship.

Approach ideas from neighbors with an open mind

One recommendation from the inclusive planning literature that seems particularly salient for these cases is that instead of complaining of delays and revisions, those in favor of development should instead accept responsibility, admit mistakes, and share power. No idea is perfect, and it is gracious as well as honest to respect the local expertise of neighborhood stakeholders when they offer suggestions for the development. As demonstrated by Storrs Center, allowing project timelines to be delayed can create the breathing room that is sometimes needed to reach a successful completion.

Emphasize empathy in disagreements around land use conflicts

All parties in the discussion of town-wide policies and planning should strive for empathy with the interests of other perspectives, while expressing their own desires in the form of interests. The literature is clear on this point, and the analysis of interviews suggested that the higher level of empathy in Storrs may have led to success in overcoming the challenges faced during the planning and development process.

Use superior visualizations in outreach

It would be helpful to integrate superior visuals into any further outreach. Architectural drawings, quality maps, and three-dimensional renderings of development ideas are all valuable for clearly communicating the vision for a development. This recommendation was strongly asserted by one of the Amherst interview subjects. Although the role of effective visuals in past outreach is difficult to measure, it is undeniable that it would help all parties better understand proposals.

Conclusion

In any planning matter with passionate and legitimate yet contradictory positions, it is necessary for town officials to make tough decisions for the benefit of the community. This occurred in the Amherst master planning process, when disagreements about the town's goals resolved in favor of protecting open space by encouraging dense development in the town's core. Such decisions will never please everyone, and that is simply the way public policy works. The best that can be done is to honestly and thoughtfully consider all perspectives, and to deal with each person in a professional and respectful manner.

However, local policy is not all discord and disagreement. When the focus shifts from positions to interests, brainstorming can develop creative solutions that satisfy all parties' basic desires. Public planning processes can uncover these sorts of general interests and can also synthesize them into widely acceptable solutions. It is the hope that this thesis will encourage participants in Amherst's planning efforts to behave professionally and to seek mutually beneficial solutions as the only acceptable outcome.

Ultimately, everyone in Amherst agrees that the challenges of student behavior and the housing crunch caused by student rentals are major issues that need to be addressed. There is also wide agreement that town services are stretched. Even in the Gateway process itself, there has been great improvement from the mismanaged beginning to the present state of the planning. If there can be similar progress on solving the town's deeper issues including zoning codes and trust issues, and if some of the recommended practices from this study are implemented, there is no reason why projects such as

Gateway cannot be implemented in a way that is healthy for both the town, its residents, and the university.

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