

*Schonder & Rust  
Properties Charrette  
Purcellville, Virginia  
Summary Notes*

*June 9, 2006*

*Loudoun County Design Cabinet*



## 1.0 Introduction

To complement Loudoun's great natural beauty, and to reinforce its sense of place, identity, and community, the **Loudoun County Design Cabinet** aims to encourage the highest quality physical environment through the use of urban, architectural, landscape, and ecological design. To assist the Department of Economic Development, the Cabinet provides a forum for discussion and advice on design related issues, projects, and opportunities. A volunteer group of design professionals, the Cabinet may also undertake special design-related projects that provide significant community benefit.

During two Design Cabinet meetings held on April 21<sup>st</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006 property owners Robert Schonder and Michael Rust discussed the possibility of selling their 8.8-acre property located on Main Street at the western end of town in Purcellville, with design plans. In doing so, future developers could use the plans to develop a unique "western gateway" that preserves the feel of Purcellville's historic district and blends into the surrounding community.

Following these meetings, the Loudoun County Design Cabinet assembled on June 9, 2006, Purcellville's Assistant Town Manager, Patrick Childs, Purcellville Planning Commission Chair, Dennis Beese, AIA, and with two property owners Schonder and Rust at Purcellville's Train Station. During this session the group embarked on designing alternative site designs for the Schonder and Rust properties.



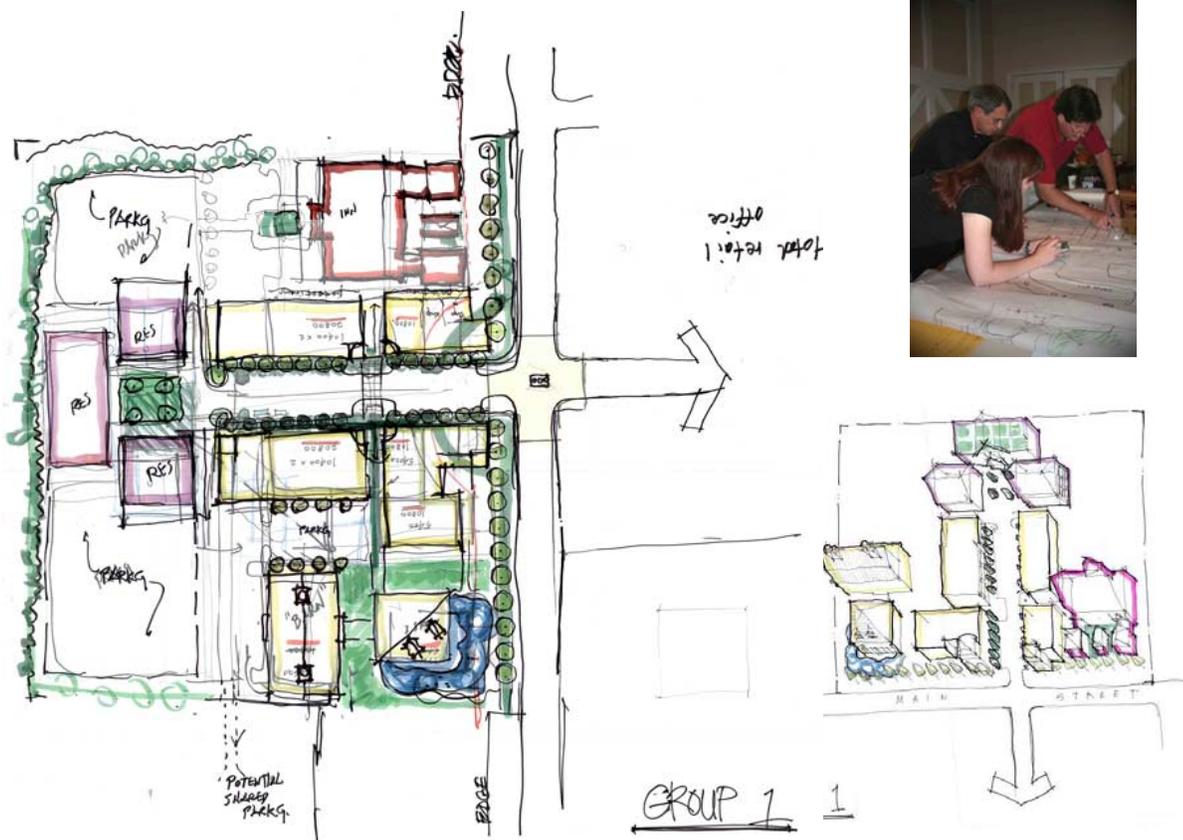
At the meeting, Purcellville's Director of Planning and Zoning and Design Cabinet member, Martha Mason Semmes, outlined to the Design Cabinet the town's MC-Mixed Commercial District regulations. As Semmes explained, the 8.8 acre-site has a maximum height allowance of 45 feet or three stories, however, any building located within 200 feet of the surrounding residential neighborhood that borders the property cannot exceed 2 stories or 30 feet. Maximum lot coverage is 40% and a minimum of 25% landscaped open space must also be maintained. Purcellville's representatives also discussed the proposed "gateway" on the eastern side of Main Street at the other end of town and how the Schonder and Rust property could serve as the complimenting western gateway.

Schonder and Rust discussed their ideas to have properties that integrate with the neighborhood, with sensitivity towards the materials used, size of the buildings, and to include sidewalks with parking located behind the building – not on the street side. They provided photo examples of other commercial centers in the region and highlighted aspects that they liked about those properties. This included a unique design and barn-style red roofs.

The Design Cabinet then split into three groups to incorporate the ideas and come up with possible designs. The group then reconvened to discuss the proposed designs.

The following notes represent highlights from each of the three designs.

## 2.0 Team One Design Ideas



Design One emphasizes using the property as Purcellville’s western-side “gateway.” The proposed complex is made up of retail, office, and residential buildings, with a restaurant, a barn style building and a hotel/ inn included. The restaurant has a water feature and a patio that overlooks the golf course (above drawing – lower right corner), this providing a dining atmosphere with nice sunset views. The entire area focuses on preserving the historic streetscape with a focus on pedestrian areas, with buildings located up front along Main Street and parking in the back of the property. A traffic light is located on Main Street at the main entrance.

### Legend for the design above

- Yellow represents retail and office buildings
- Blue represents the restaurant’s water feature
- Purple represents residential buildings
- Red represents a hotel/ inn
- White represents parking



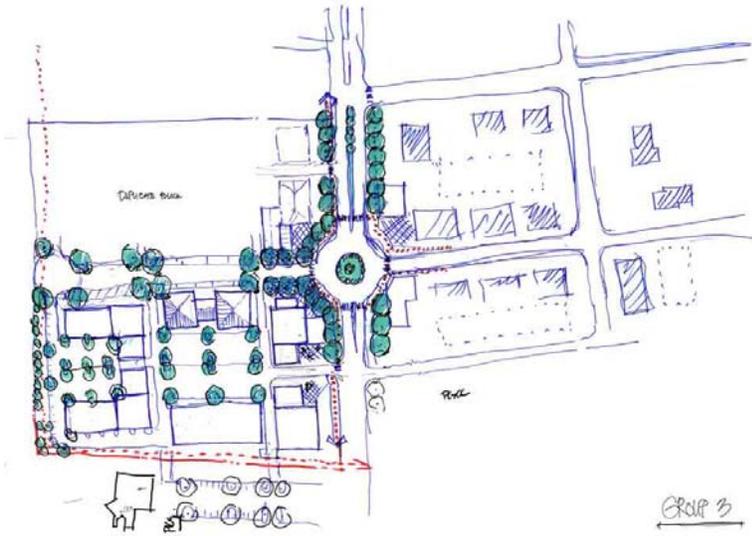
### 3.0 Team Two Design Ideas



Design Two also locates a restaurant along the southwestern corner of the property (red dot on lower left in drawing). A large business center is located on the southeastern portion of the property (lower right in drawing). Two road accesses allow clients to enter into the complex from Main Street. The buildings mainly consist of offices, executive office suites and retail space. The office condos along the eastern portion (right side) would mimic houses that back to the property to maintain the proportion. The buildings further away from the residential neighborhood are larger. There is a water feature in the middle of the parking lot.



## 4.0 Team Three Design Ideas



Design Three lays out the buildings in squares. The buildings are 1-2 story mixed-use office condos. Parking is located in the interior of the square to preserve the pedestrian streetscape. Main Street, which is the central road in the design, is tree-lined with a traffic circle located at the main entrance into the property.



## ***5.0 Response to the Designs***

Responses from the owners and the town were mainly positive. The property owners liked the mixed-use combination of residential with commercial, the restaurant overlooking the golf course, the use of second floor buildings, and the location of a hotel/ inn on the property. Their concern is that the future developer might have a different idea for the property than what was presented among the three Design Cabinet groups. The town proposed adding the Design Cabinet's three concept designs to Purcellville's Comprehensive Plan to give future developers ideas on how the town would like to see the property developed, and encourage them to build more in-line to the wishes of the current property owners.