2006

Concerning a Vision Statement for McKownville.

It is obvious that nearly all of the 900 plus land uses in McKownville—the homes and the businesses and the open land—will remain in the same use for many years to come. But there will be changes and there will be pressure for changes that are not desired. It is the latter that need be addressed here.

First the open spaces. The areas alongside the Krumkill, the pond/reservoir area, Abele Park, the areas near the Northway at the end of Warren, Mercer and Providence, and the area at the end of Waverly. It is not desired that these be fully developed. McKownville needs open spaces and paths and recreation sites. And more than we now have. An open space plan needs to be completed.

Now the residential land uses. Undoubtedly some more "mother--in--law apartments" are going to be constructed. There does not seem to be a problem with them since the Town has a process for having them eliminated when they are used "out of code". The predominant dwelling is the single family unit. There is concern that more large additions will be built (miniMcMansions)—and that car ownership will increase such that front gardens will entirely become parking areas. The former needs more discussion and the latter needs to be guarded against.

Thirdly, the major side roads—Fuller, Schoolhouse and McKown. These should not become anymore commercial than they are in McKownville. Their unsuitable geometry—the curves, hills lack of clear line of sight for drivers and pedestrians—makes them unsuitable for commercial development as does the volume of traffic on each of these roads.

Fourth, there are about ten architecturally or historic buildings in McKownville—the McKown home across from the Pub (1245 Western), the Knowles family farm house on the corner of Knowles Terrace (1261 Western), the Frank Lloyd Wright looking home on Western (1423 Western), the older home on the Holt-Harris property off of Norwood Street, the David's home (1455 Western), the home that was once Dr. Mastrianni's office (1461 Western), the Macomber residence (1430 Western), Mrs. Strassburg's home and the old barn that goes with it (1 McKown Road) and a few

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others, maybe. These should be protected as McKownville changes.

Western Avenue. It will continue to be mixed commercial and residential, with the land on the north side remaining nearly all residential. The 7 or so acres near the City line on the east presents a great opportunity for some development-possibly high end condominiums with some retail. Since nearly all of the properties on the 7 acre site are on the market and the suggested high end development makes it possible that this will add to the profits of the present owners, such a development may indeed be realistic.

The area on Western just over the City line—that near Homestead—offers about two dozen small retail shops. Though not very attractive they present an opportunity for the proposed 7 acre site to even more can defining land use for McKownville.

Therefore is sites along Western in McKownville become available, they might be considered for reuse as multi-family sites of as mixed retail/family sites, such as the empty lot behind Passano or the site next to the Christ Lutheran Church or the site where Robert's Realty offices (and nearby offices) are now sited. Each of these require very difficult to come by solutions for automobile access, but such might be possible.

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It is difficult to suppose what McKownville will look like with all of the new roadway work that is scheduled but not yet completed. It may change our view of McKownville quite a bit. But as of nov

Finally, though enforcement is the responsibility of the Town, it is up to the residents to know when enforcement problems are likely at issue and to inform the Town that such and such a site needs to be looked at more carefully. But since residents do not know when a site may be out of code, largely because homeowners do not know what is in the code, enforcement is more lax than it should be.

The Association and the Town needs to address this problem.

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In short, the McKownville of the future will undoubtedly look much like the McKownville of the present and the many attractive homes in McKownville, especially those that are historic and/or architecturally important, should be protected. Open spaces may be developed but walking paths and recreation sites need be set aside. The future McKownville should contain more multi-family housing and mixed use (retail/multi-family) sites along Western Avenue, especially on the south side. The area near the City line should become an architecturally attractive site, again with a mixture of housing and retail shops.