

A DEVELOPMENT VISION WITH RURAL CHARACTER ALREADY EXISTS FOR SOUTH BROADWAY

Statement by Sustainable Saratoga

City Council UDO Workshop on August 10, 2021

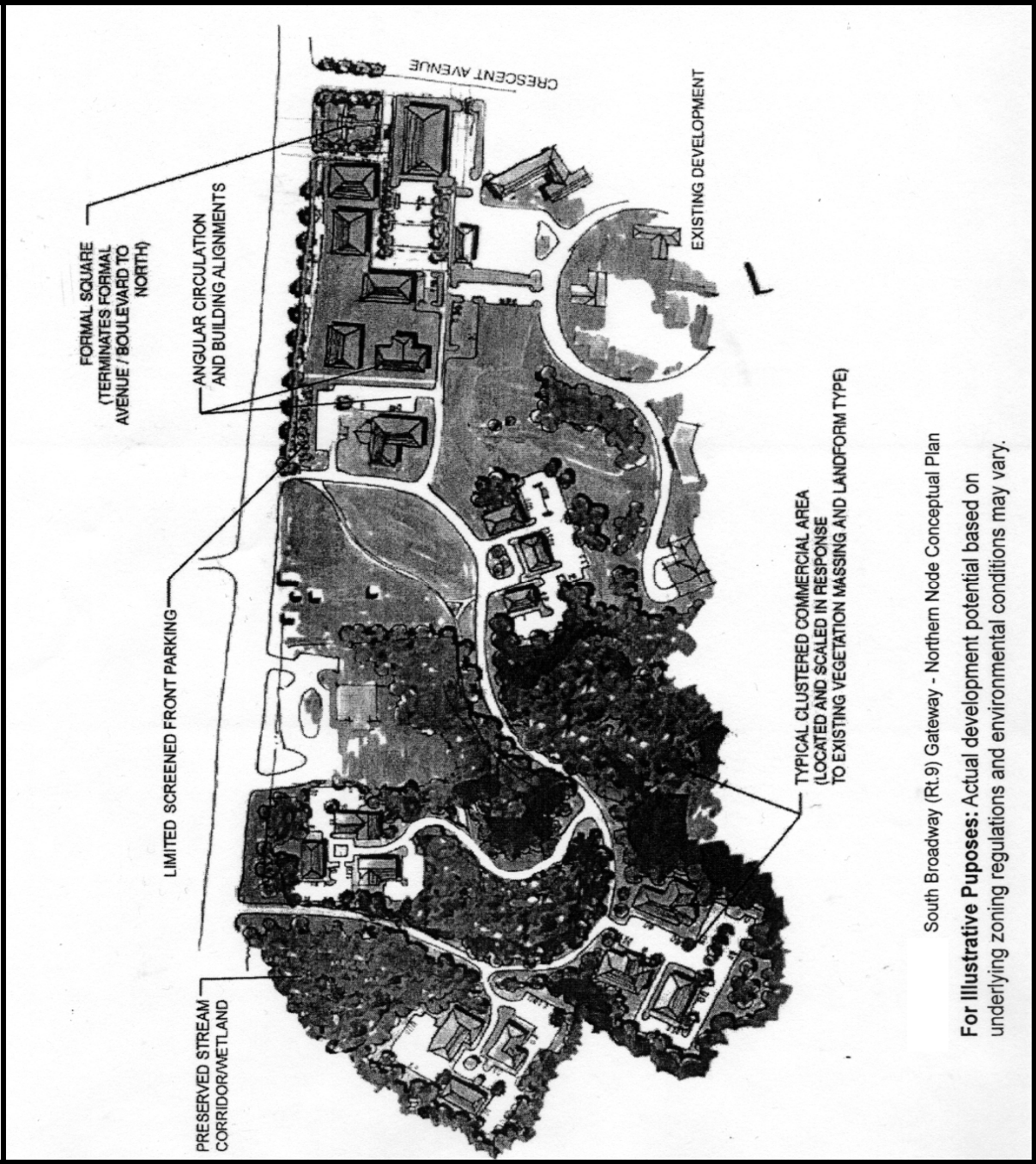
At last week's UDO workshop, omitted from the discussion was the vision for gateway development that was adopted in 2003.

- That vision is found on pages 17 & 18 in Article 3 of the existing zoning ordinance. These pages are attached.
- This vision is part of the Gateway Design District #1. On South Broadway it runs from Crescent Avenue (Saratoga Honda) down to the former Joe Collins site.
- The two drawings provide a realistic illustration of how development can appropriately fit on the developable lands along this corridor while also protecting sensitive environmental areas.
- This entire corridor is within the City's Greenbelt (the Country Overlay District).
- The 2015 Comp Plan calls for land uses of low/moderate intensity – but also requires “rural character” for all development within this corridor.
- The vision illustrated on the next 2 pages clearly meets the 2015 Comprehensive Plan mandate.
- The existing ordinance requires this vision to be implemented by both the Design Review Commission and the Planning Board. However, because these guidelines are mostly voluntary, the land use boards largely did not require applicants follow them during their review of the Honda expansion, Homewood Suites Hotel and the Just Cats project.

Our concern is that the UDO proposes to eliminate this vision.

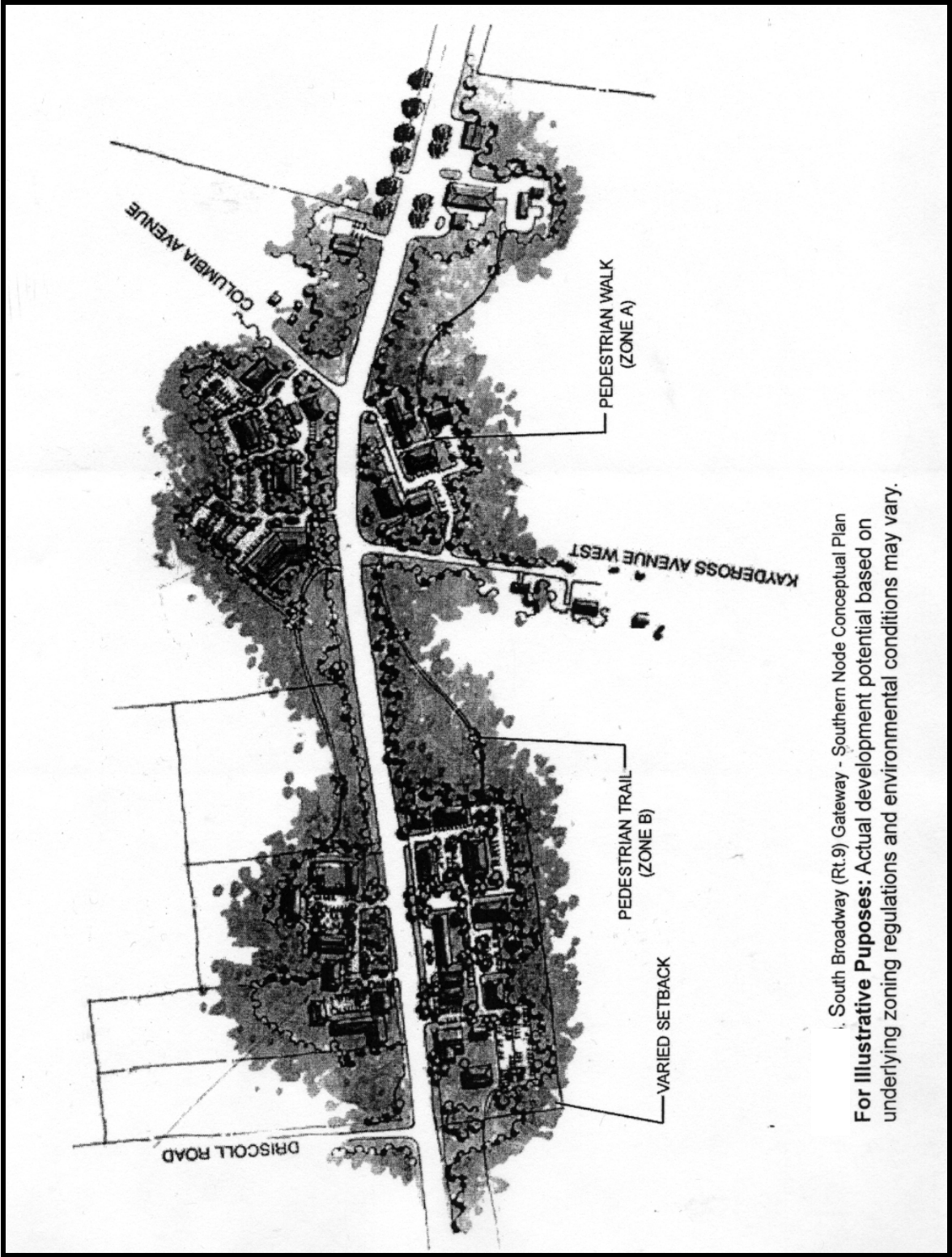
- Despite raising these points over the last few years, we have never been given a clear explanation for why these strong rural character design guidelines are being removed. We found no record of public opposition to them.
- The existing guidelines for this corridor run for 10 pages and include over a dozen clear graphics that illustrate how buildings, parking, buffers, etc. should be designed to achieve rural character.
- The UDO's preplacement design guidelines are less detailed than the existing ones. They run less than 3 pages, only have 2 illustrations, do not cover the entire corridor and do not convey a clear rural character vision.
- Eliminating strong rural design standards will weaken protections for the City's Greenbelt.

We believe the simple and feasible solution is to keep the current vision and design standards for this corridor but make a few wording changes to make the standards mandatory.



South Broadway (Rt.9) Gateway - Northern Node Conceptual Plan

For Illustrative Puposes: Actual development potential based on underlying zoning regulations and environmental conditions may vary.



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