

Figure 26. Proposed Improvements to the Ocean State Job Lot Mall

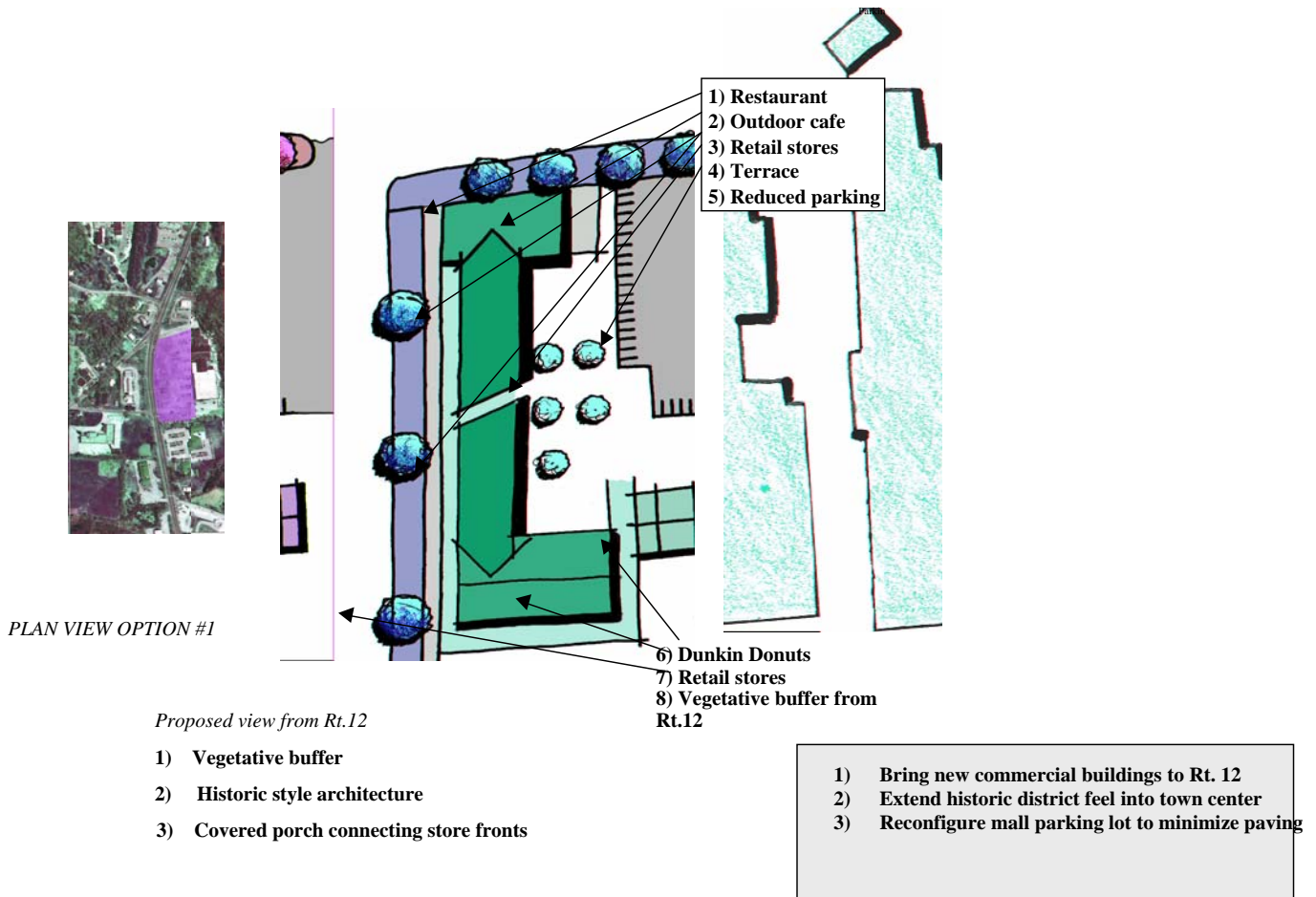


Figure 27. Proposed Improvements to the Job Lot Mall - Details

Figures 28, 29 and 30 tie the New England Village concept proposed for the Ocean State Job Lot Mall and depicts reuses of the Gales Ferry School site. Connecting any of these concepts with a pedestrian walkway, also depicted, will help make the village more cohesive and more attractive to developers. The Route 12 Tri-Committee considers the concepts depicted in figures 28, 29 and 30 to be independent of the specific reuse of the Gales Ferry School but believe that

development should include the recommendations of the University of Connecticut Route 12 Corridor Study regarding green ways and New England themes. The Tri-Committee also believes that these proposals offer residents an excellent way to retain and improve the village nature of the area, encouraging consistent development. Connections to the Farmers Market and Erickson Park via a bicycle path are natural extension of this concept.

Further improvements can be obtained if access roads, connecting the parking lots of retail shops on the west side of Route 12, are employed. The walkway at Hurlbutt Road is still retained. An access road parallel to Route 12 would connect the Citizens Bank Plaza and Gales Ferry Drug Store across the Gales Ferry School site with egress at the Christy Hill Road traffic light and Military Highway traffic light. To retain adequate green buffering, Route 12, in this area, would be moved east. The road cuts at the Job Lot Plaza exit opposite Hurlbutt Road and at Dunkin Donuts are eliminated. The parking lot space near the retail stores and bank are not, however, wide enough to include a full road, parking, and a green buffer. The concept to separate through traffic from local residential and business traffic will help establish the Gales Ferry Village as a New England type area. The exact design will require an traffic access analysis along Route 12.

The Gales Ferry Village Center can be improved by:

- a) Creating a green way along Route 12.*
- b) Retaining or developing a New England motif for retail shops.*
- c) Interconnecting the retail shops and residencies by sidewalks, street lights, and slow vehicle roads, connecting retail shops south and north of the center with sidewalks and street lights,*
- d) Connecting the center with the bicycle path to the Erickson Property park.*
- e) Retaining part of the Gales Ferry School as a park.*
- f) Connecting the center with the retail farm market West of the center.*
- g) Consolidating road and business signs by developing a common style and grouping many small signs.*
- h) Adding walkways across Route 12 so pedestrian traffic to retail shops in the area can be easily accessed, and*
- i) Incorporating the old one room school house into the development, relocating it if necessary.*

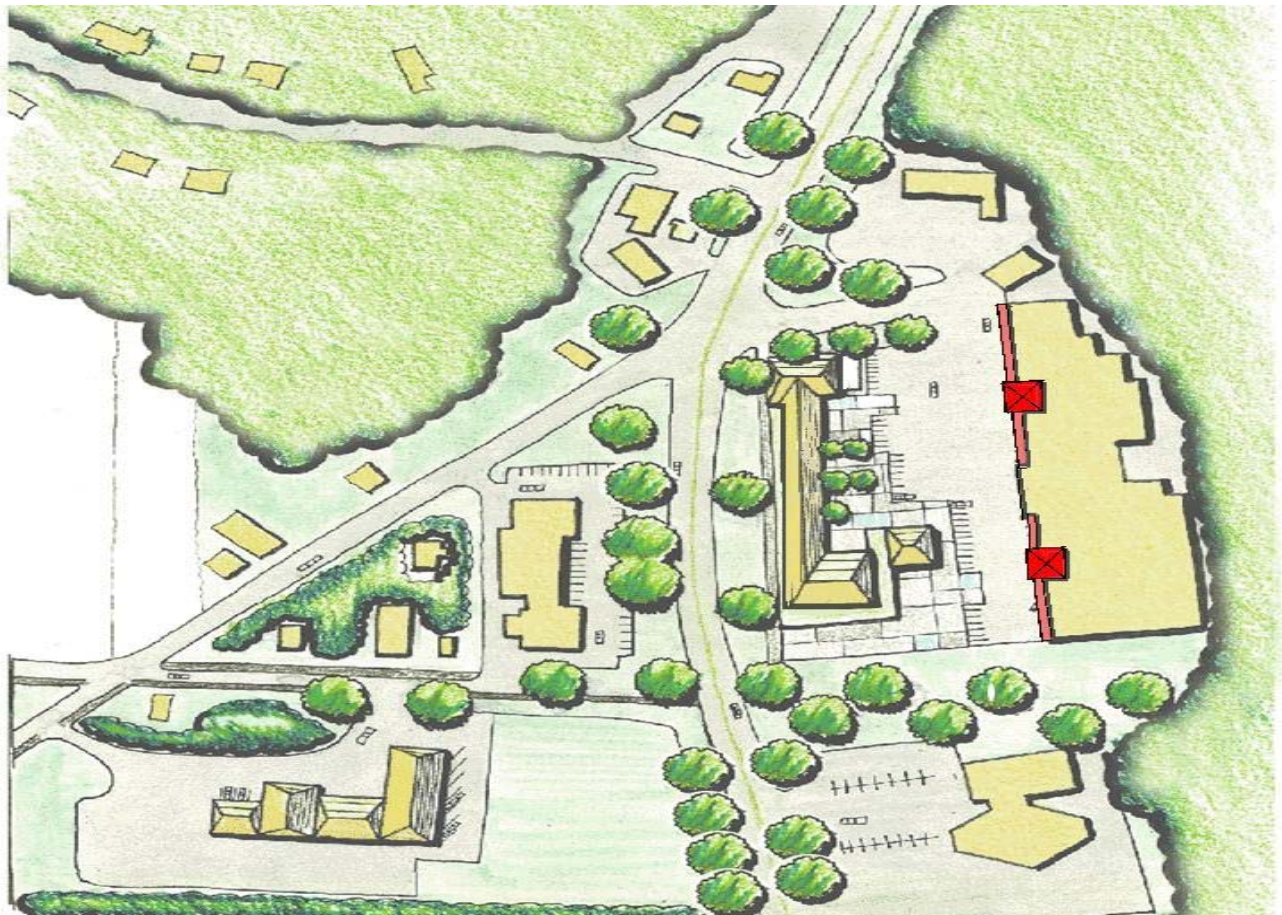


Figure 28. New England Village Concept for Gales Ferry Village Center

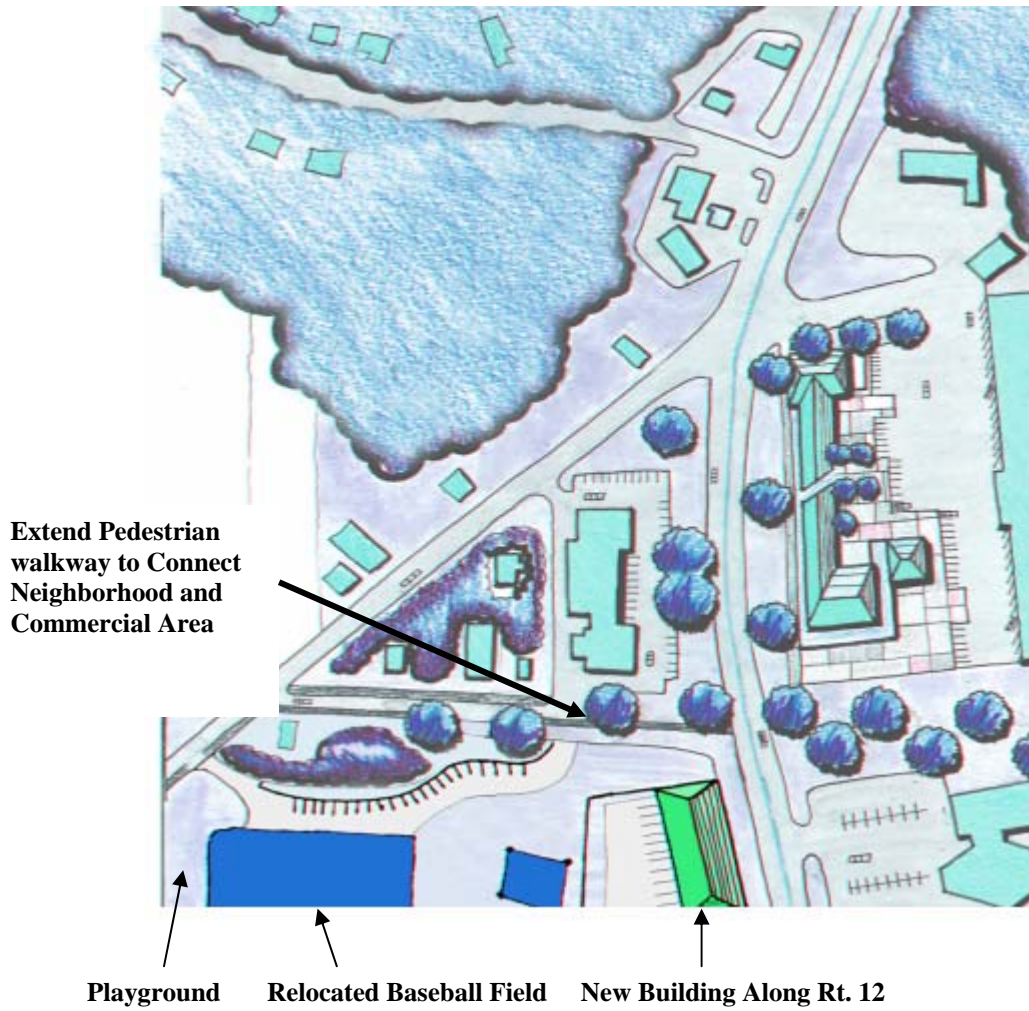
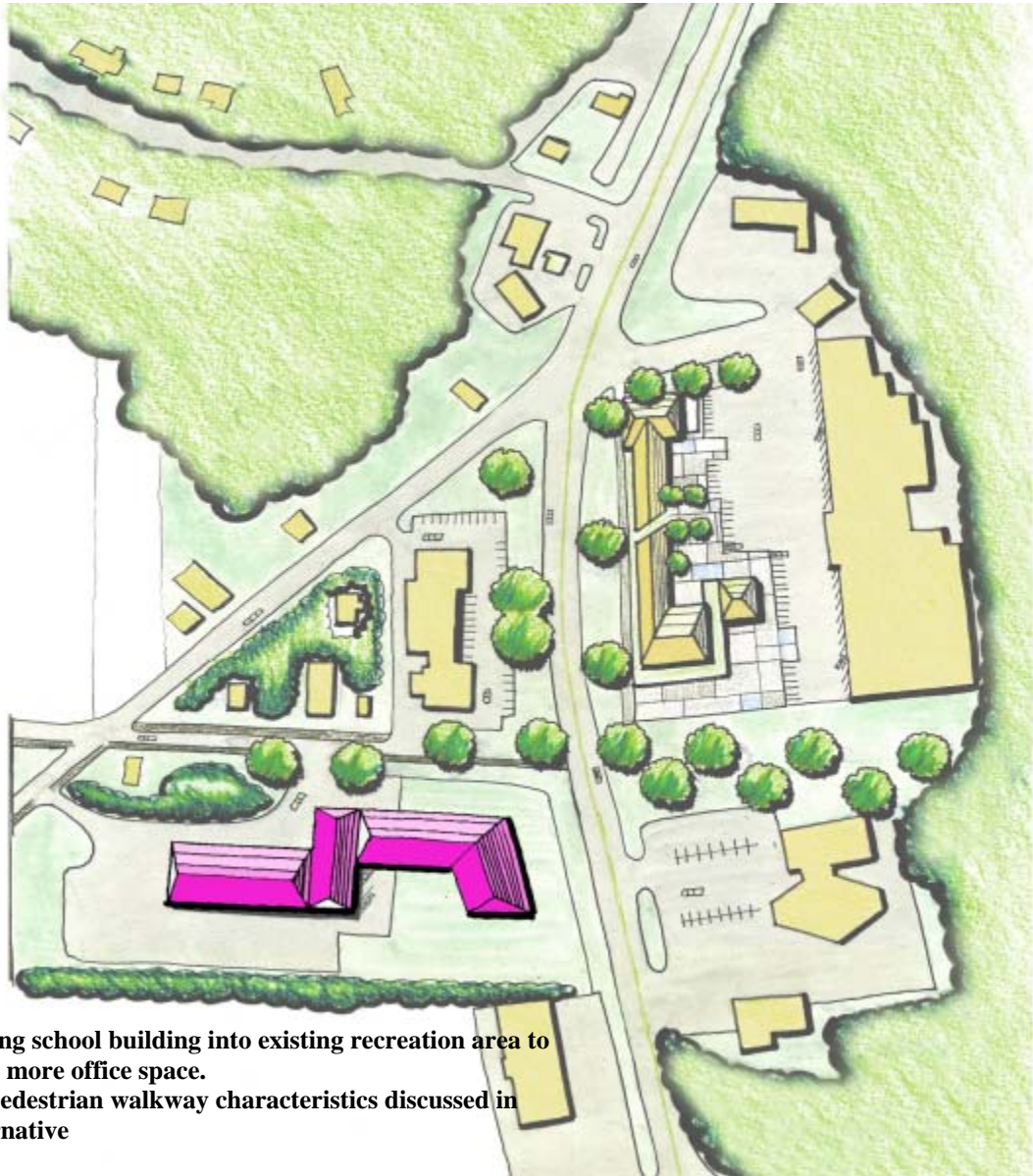


Figure 29. New England Village Concept - Alternative



Expand existing school building into existing recreation area to accommodate more office space. Incorporate pedestrian walkway characteristics discussed in previous alternative

Figure 30. New England Village Concept Alternative

Figure 31 depicts greenway improvements to the Kartway site as a means to integrate Kartway into the New England Village theme. Although obviously not New England village type architecture, Kartway is a long established ice cream, soda shop and recreational area that can continue to coexist in the area and with the recommendations offered by the University of Connecticut, can become a more valuable property.

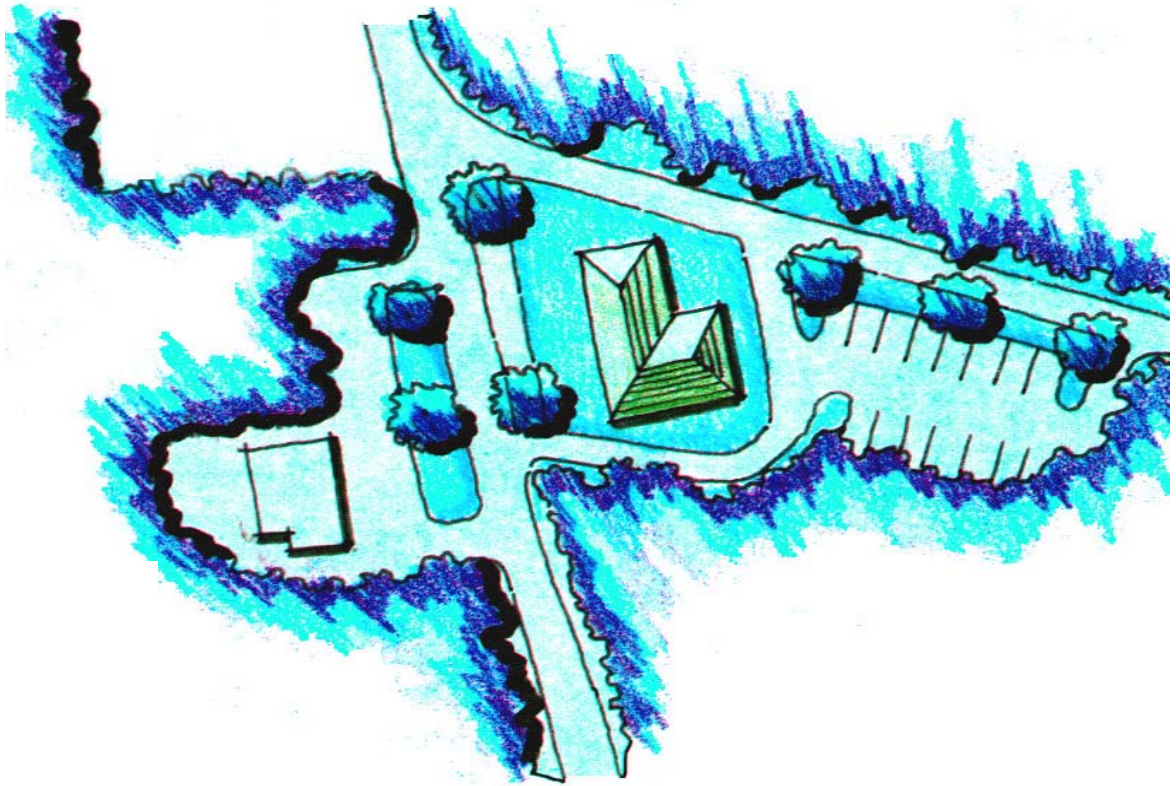


Figure 31. Greenway Improvements to Kartway

6.4 Gales Ferry Village Center North to Preston

Except for the modern chemical facility at Allyn Point, Route 12 north of Gales Ferry Village is relatively lightly developed. It may be characterized by five major features: Dow Chemical Company; residential areas that are predominately removed and shielded from the highway by forest and ledge buffers; the elementary/middle school campus; two churches; and the scenic views of the Thames River, Route 214, Stoddard Hill State Park, Holmberg Orchards, and Poquetanuck Cove.

In this area, Dow shields its facility from view from Route 12. The Cape Cod-style meeting house that Dow Chemical Company retains along Route 12 helps give Route 12 the same desirable rural New England appearance.

Much of existing the development and viewscape along this section of Roue 12 is consistent with University of Connecticut's recommendations to maintain a rural New England appearance:

- a) Dow Chemical (Figures 32 and 33)
 - Substantial set backs and tree buffering from Route 12
 - Retention of the 200 year Allyn House as a corporate meeting house, with tasteful landscaping
 - Colonial style main gate house
 - Conservation of Mount Decatur as a forested back drop to shield and mitigate the visual impact of industry
 - Maintenance of the Allyn colonial cemetery, the oldest in Ledyard
- b) Woodridge, St. Luke Lutheran Church, the Glenwoods, Pheasant Run and Williamsburg Apartments
 - Major residential developments are shielded from Route 12 by substantial setbacks, topography and forested or rock ledge buffers. These buffers also afford Route 12 travelers with a rural, wooded viewscape.
 - Access limited to only one or two entrance streets.
- c) St. David Episcopal Church and United Way Office (Figures 34 and 35)
 - Rural New England character with parking lots not adjacent to Route 12.
- d) Existing Tree Buffer (Figure 36)
 - Exists along this section of Route 12, still retains forested buffer, most undeveloped land.

- e) Scenic, Recreational and Agricultural Areas
- Significant, attractive views of the Thames River occur along this northern section of Route 12.
 - Stoddard Hill State Park preserves 46 acres of forested, rocky upland, providing picnic facilities, hiking and sweeping views up and down river (see recommendations in Section 8).
 - Holmberg Orchard perpetuates a traditional New England agricultural use of 144 acres along and on the hillside above Route 12 and Poquetanuck Cove. The orchard and roadside store are patronized by a large clientele. (Figure 37).
 - Poquetanuck Cove, extending 2.5 miles from the Thames River to Poquetanuck Village along the Ledyard/Preston border, contains 250 acres, including tidal open water and marsh. Waterfowl, fish, shellfish and water related animals abound. Its shores, though substantially buffered by native vegetation, are lightly developed with homes and the Holmberg Orchard. Two hundred seventy shoreline acres are protected by land trusts, the DEP, and the Ledyard car top boat launch. State law prohibits waterfowl hunting. The cove is otherwise protected by zoning, wetland, and Coastal Area Management (CAM) guidelines. Preservation of the existing shoreline forests and the Holmberg Orchard were specifically cited by University of Connecticut as an essential ingredient of Route 12 development. (Figures 38 and 42 and Section 8).
 - Route 214, Stoddards Wharf Road, were considered especially scenic by the University of Connecticut study because of the overhead tree canopy and forests growing right to the pavement edge (Figure 39).

The University of Connecticut study noted inconsistent architecture along Route 12. professor Alexopoulos noted that the Gales Ferry Firehouse (Figure 40) is not consistent with the recommended rural New England character and has no vegetative buffering it from Route 12 remains. The old gas station/store on River Drive just off Route 12 is in general disrepair and no longer operating (Figure 41). *The following recommendations are made by the Tri-Committee for the northern section of Route 12:*

- a) *Further development along Route 12 near Dow Chemical is possible and should be buffered from the highway and from residents.*
- b) *Require 100-foot minimum depth vegetative buffers, preferably of native forest species, for all new development. Where practical, encourage the same, or systematic street tree planting similar to Gales Ferry Village recommendations, for already developed land.*
- c) *Minimize curb cuts by through planning and zoning regulations. The use of shared driveways or entrance streets is encouraged.*

- d) *Establish planning and design guidelines to minimize cutting of existing forest buffers as indicated in the University of Connecticut study.*
- e) *Consider petitioning the Connecticut DOT for Scenic Road designation of Route 214, from Route 12 to Lantern Hill Road.*
- f) *Encourage improvements to the gas station/store on River Drive, through incentive or grant and restore the site to residential zoning.*
- g) *Ensure continuation of agricultural usage of the Holmberg Orchard and Store in perpetuity through incentives or purchase of development rights.*
- h) *As recommended in 1996 by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Poquetanuck Cove's resources would be best protected by establishing a formal partnership between Ledyard, Preston, DEP, the abutting land trusts, local residents, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Protection efforts could range from obtaining donated lands or development rights to encouraging use of best management practices for lawn maintenance. No additional public facilities are recommended beyond existing Nature Conservancy trails and the Ledyard car top boat launch. In no case should commercial zoning, which existed prior to construction of the new Route 12 bridge, be returned to this ecologically sensitive resource. Figure 42 show pictures of wildlife visiting the cove.*
- i) *Negotiate with CONNDOT, DEP, and Providence & Worcester Railroad to establish a Thames River Scenic Overlook at the west side of Route 12 across from the Ledyard school campus (Gales Ferry and Juliet Long Schools). Provide safe vehicular entrance and egress and a paved parking area (similar to Nautilus Overlook in Groton). Heavily used by fishermen, this location is frequently unsightly from trash and suffers trail erosion to the river.*



Figure 32. Dow Chemical



Figure 33. Dow Chemical Meeting House at Plant Entrance