

3 Milliken photo.jpg

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# THE MILLIKEN PROJECT

**Improve a neighborhood to  
build community**

Waterville Community Land Trust  
South End Neighborhood Association

DRAFT  
9-7-2020

## **Executive Summary: The Milliken Project**

Named for the family that built the twenty homes on two streets, Moor and Carrean, during the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this project is focused on the revitalization of a neighborhood suffering from decay and neglect. This project directly pursues the vision laid out in the city's Comprehensive Plan and the South End Neighborhood Association's Strategic Plan.

The project will develop partnerships with interested groups/organizations, each of which will contribute to a greater understanding of how a neighborhood can be coaxed from disinvestment to a community of pride, both in hearth and hearts.

Waterville Community Land Trust (WCLT) will purchase and renovate homes on these two streets, beginning with the completion of its current home at 3 Moor St. As is true of all community land trust homes, 3 Moor and all other home renovations and sales to low-income families will all remain perpetually affordable. WCLT will use leasehold purchases to renovate homes from owners who wish to remain but desire improvements. If able to purchase, absentee-owner rentals will return to local ownership under WCLT's stewardship. WCLT will convert those properties to co-ops, condominiums, or rental/owner homes for the existing tenant/owners or new families of color, seniors, veterans, or handicapped.



FIGURE 1: WATERVILLE'S SOUTH END CIRCA 1930s?

The South End Neighborhood Association (SENA) may focus on improvements to the existing children's playground and community garden. Pop-up programs will be developed in concert with WCLT, the neighbors, and other participants for experiments to determine 'what works', such as: 'overnight dog park', 'art board', 'listening center', 'gorilla horticulture', 'one-day home commercial use', and 'flower pots on our steps'.

The city of Waterville will assist with infrastructure projects, as best able under its department budgets. Projects to be considered will be removal of cracked and unused asphalted surfaces, seeding of bare areas, installation of park and garden components, installation of lighting and fences, and cooperation with WCLT and SENA to apply for grants and the U.S. Conference of Mayor's Community Wins contest.

WCLT is working with an architectural/city planning student, as part of the community outreach program of Colby College, to study where the Milliken Project succeeds, fails, or could have been more successful. Questions such as the following will be examined for answers: what can WCLT do to help neighbors, who wish to improve their properties but do not have the resources; what changes on a street creates pride in place; how can a tax-poor city support these initiatives; did this initiative attract predatory real estate motives; did the land trust invest in the right properties; did other neighborhoods express a desire for the same focused project; and, would the land trust and other partners wish to do this again.

Project partners will seek other interested organization to join us.

## **The Case for Revitalization of a Waterville Neighborhood**

Waterville is a great place to live with all of the advantages that a small college town of fewer than 18,000 residents offers. There are many choices for restaurants, movie theaters, an opera house, arts programs, and a school system considered one of the best in the area. However, there are many neighborhoods within the city that suffer with vacant, abandoned, and poorly maintained homes; families that are rent challenged; high unemployment; and with low homeownership rates.

Waterville has often compared its community metrics with Augusta. Waterville has a lower homeownership rate, higher poverty rate, higher percentage of single parents, lower median home price, lower household income, and a greater number of rent and mortgage burdened residents. A Boston Federal Bank study reported that in 2014, 20% of Waterville's low and moderate-income families were unemployed, while Augusta averaged 4.5% unemployed for that same population. Only 33% of Waterville's family incomes and 38% of Augusta's families are above the 180% poverty level required for-free or reduced lunches for the pre-high school ages. Forty-six percent of Waterville residents own their homes while fifty-three percent of Augusta residents own their homes.

### **Importance of Home Equity for Generational Wealth**

Unemployed or underemployed families seldom are able to purchase and hold onto homes, the very source of wealth and security for so many Americans. According to 2013 U.S. census data, home equity was 66% of the net worth of people between the ages of 65 and sixty-nine; 70% of the net worth of people between the ages of 70 and seventy-four; and 76% of the net worth of people over age 75. Renters, who have no equity in a home, are unable to use their homes for equity loans or reverse mortgages. They are also unable to leave a home to their children, thereby perpetuating generational impoverishment. These families must live with long-term economic instability.

The Federal Bank study also compared Waterville to another Central Maine town, Skowhegan. Despite nearly identical median incomes for families in Waterville and Skowhegan ("census tract" Skowhegan), the home ownership disparity is significant: 46% to 60%, respectively. For low-moderate income families, the difference becomes even greater: 24% in Waterville to 59% in Skowhegan. Foreclosure rates are exceedingly low. The foreclosure rate for Skowhegan is 0.04%; Waterville is 0.02%. (see below for comparison with rental evictions)

<https://www.realtytrac.com/statsandtrends/foreclosures/maine/>

### **Renters lose their homes at a greater rate and more frequency than homeowners lose their homes to a foreclosure**

The tenant eviction rate for Kennebec County is estimated at 4.0%, Somerset County 3.0%, and Cumberland County 1.0%. The U.S. national average is 2.5%. Kennebec County's eviction rate is 25% higher than Somerset, even though median rents collected are nearly identical and

household incomes nearly the same. It is truly tragic that evictions can occur when only a small fraction of a yearly rent is not paid. Around 2008, eviction rates steeply increased in Kennebec and Somerset Counties. We may assume that more tenants were unable to pay rent after the recession of 2008. The same sharp eviction increase, beginning around 2014, may have been because of an improving economy and landlords wanted to ‘catch up’ on perceived lost rent.

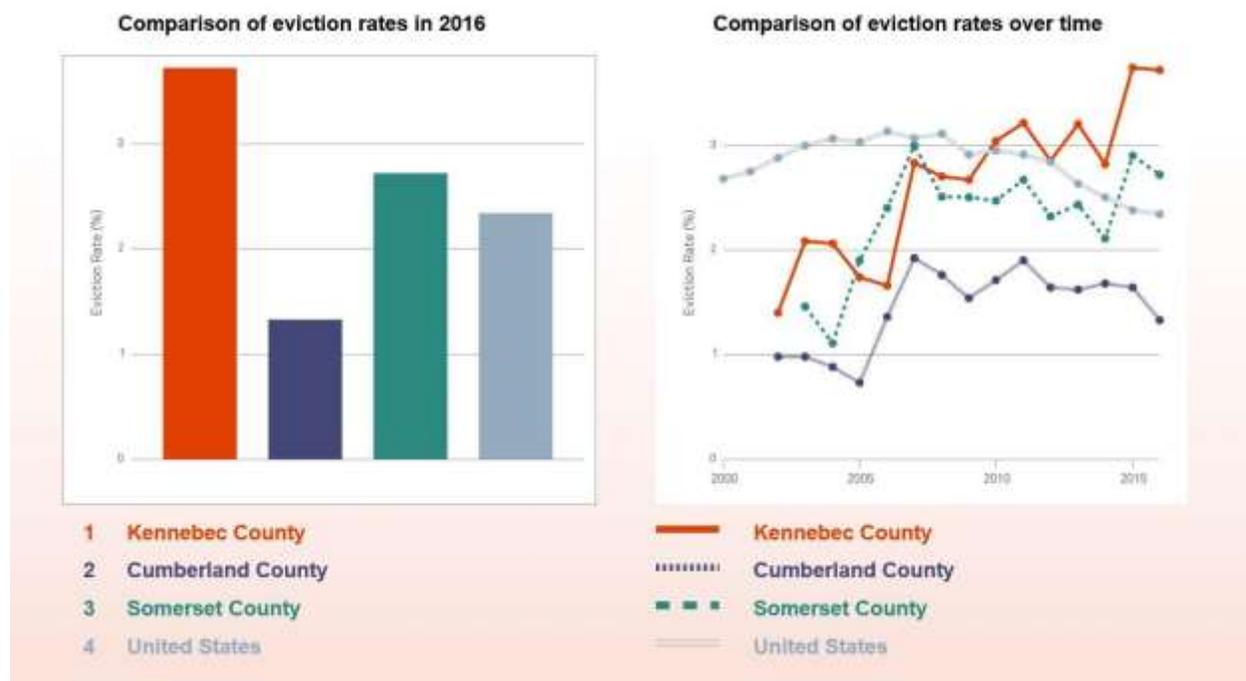


FIGURE 2 EVICTION RATES

<https://evictionlab.org/map/#/2016?geography=states&type=er>

### Rent is increasingly more expensive

The Joint Center for Housing Studies determined that “Housing affordability has been a growing concern across the US over the past three decades. Indeed, between 1990 and 2017, the number of units renting for under \$600 inflation-adjusted per month (the maximum affordable rent for a household earning \$24,000 per year) dropped by nearly 4.0 million. The drop brought down the share of low-cost units at this rent level from fully 46 percent of the rental stock in 1990 to just 25 percent by 2017. Across the US, low-cost units (defined at various rent thresholds) were a declining share of the housing stock in every state, while all but a few states also had declines in the absolute number of low-cost units—highlighting an upward shift in the distribution of rental units. Low-income renters are particularly impacted by diminishing low-cost supply, as evidenced by a strong correlation at the US state level between the extent of losses of low-cost rentals and rising housing cost burdens for low-income households between 1990 to 2017.” *Joint Center for Housing Studies, “Documenting the Long-Run Decline in Low-Cost Rental Units in the US by State” By Elizabeth La Jeunesse, Alexander Hermann, Daniel McCue, Jonathan Spader September 2019*

More than 6 million families with children pay more than 30% of their income. Only one-quarter of low-income families who would qualify for housing vouchers or other rental assistance receive help.

### **Housing Insecurity Impacts children**

Housing insecurity places a heavy penalty on our schools and students. Our schools report a significant number of transient students. Families must move when they lose their apartment, perhaps due to rent increases, family breakups, or poorly maintained properties. Such housing insecurity increases the risks of child neglect and abuse from stressed parents. Children who do not have a stable home have more difficulty learning and exhibit behavior and mental health problems.

Waterville High School has a graduation count of 63 for economically disadvantaged students while an 80 for all-students. For comparison, Skowhegan Area High School is also 80 for all-students but 75 for economically disadvantaged students. <https://www.maine.gov/doe/dashboard>

It will not be a surprise to our local educators that the school systems of such towns as Falmouth, Cape Elizabeth, and Yarmouth are rated as an “A” from a real estate oriented website. <https://www.niche.com/k12/d/waterville-public-schools-me/> The Waterville school systems are rated as a “B-“and both Augusta and Skowhegan as “C”s.

Parents, who are able to use their vouchers to find rental apartments in communities with better schools, if such rentals may be found, significantly improve their children’s futures. Improvements in Waterville’s poorest neighborhoods would benefit families and our schools.

It is probably not a stretch to state that better schools and neighborhoods attract employers looking for new locations to establish a business. If the housing is poor and tax rates high, the schools are likely to be struggling. If both schools and neighborhoods are not rated well, companies will look elsewhere. If residents cannot find decent paying jobs, either they move or their families may endure economic stress.

## **Revitalization: For Our City and Our Families**

Federal, State and City governments, neighbors, and nonprofits can work together to revitalize neighborhoods. Even small investments may encourage families to invest their savings and sweat-equity into marginal, but improving neighborhoods.

Revitalization of neighborhoods is good for the city as well. Waterville is known anecdotally as a ‘high tax’ city. Improvement of neighborhoods increases the tax base and incentivizes further investments. An increased tax base spreads out city budgets among taxpayers.

It is important to achieve a balance between an increased residential tax base—ie, gentrification—and retaining affordable homes for economic diversity in the city. Starter and empty-nest homes, as well as homes for workforce families, families of color, handicapped individuals, and veterans, are desired to produce more diverse and interesting neighborhoods.

Community land trusts provide a safety net that can protect low-income families from losing their homes, even as the neighborhood around them improves. In communities across the United States, CLTs are providing homes and safety to families in cities, small towns, and farming communities. Community land trusts are governed by local residents and homeowners of CLT homes. The CLT shared equity program offers key benefits in the following three categories:

- Lasting affordability preservation
- Wealth creation for families of limited incomes
- Community stabilization/displacement prevention

Research also suggests that positive outcomes in these categories depend significantly on effective stewardship, program design, and resident involvement.

[https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/harvard\\_jchs\\_shared\\_equity\\_housing\\_lit\\_review\\_carlsson\\_2019.pdf](https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/harvard_jchs_shared_equity_housing_lit_review_carlsson_2019.pdf)

CLTs are most successful in communities where there are governmental policies that support their housing and community initiatives. States such as Vermont and New York offer financial assistance to purchase land or build homes. Many local governments offer vacant land or homes taken for taxes to their CLTs for development. Cities can participate in projects by improving infrastructure such as sidewalks and lighting and improve community assets such as parks, public transit, and improved playground equipment and programs.

<https://www.lincolnst.edu/publications/policy-focus-reports/city-clt-partnership>

## Waterville’s Comprehensive Plan

### Vision for a Better City

**The City has laid out a roadmap for improving its neighborhoods. WCLT wishes to work with the city to help all of us meet these crucial goals.**

In Chapter 13 of the Waterville Comprehensive Plan, a vision for a better city was developed:

- Encourage and promote affordable, quality housing opportunities for all residents of Waterville.
- Encourage a variety of types and densities of housing to accommodate households of different sizes, ages and incomes.
- Create vibrant and safe residential neighborhoods.
- Improve the quality of life in neighborhoods by addressing crime, nuisance activities, trash, blighted buildings and poor housing conditions.
- Promote and preserve the unique architecture and historical heritage of our neighborhoods.

- Support and encourage the work of Waterville’s neighborhood groups and associations.
- Encourage new housing opportunities through the renovation of vacant buildings, on infill lots, and on the upper floors of buildings in the Downtown.
- Encourage an increase in owner-occupied housing.

**To accomplish the vision**

1. The City shall promote the availability of quality housing for all segments of the population and cooperate with private investors as well as local, state, and federal agencies to make housing opportunities available.
2. The City shall continue to use Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to increase the availability of quality housing for people of all income levels, with the renovation of existing units as our top priority
3. The City shall pursue opportunities to help property owners increase the energy efficiency of their homes (including weatherization) and upgrade their heating systems to use cleaner fuels.
4. The City shall pursue an aggressive approach to the issue of vacant, substandard or problem buildings by taking the following action steps:
  - a. The City Manager will propose the addition of a new position within the Code Enforcement Office for 2014.
  - b. The City Tax Collector will prepare a list by December of each year of all properties to be foreclosed. The City Manager will solicit recommendations from neighborhood associations regarding City action on these properties within the neighborhood area(s), taking into consideration the following: **recreation, open space, parking, and a need to increase owner-occupied housing.**

**The South End Neighborhood Association (SENA) Plan**

SENA is a group of neighbors and supporters who work, with an equal voice, to revitalize and energize the Waterville, Maine South End neighborhood. WCLT wishes to work with SENA to accomplish their goals. The Milliken Project reaches to achieve these improvements in our project neighborhood.

**Goals as provided by SENA’s Strategic Plan**

**Parks and Recreation**

1. Enhance access to the Kennebec River
2. Public parks should be enhanced for use by all ages
3. Create more open space between homes
4. All neighborhoods should be within 1500 feet of a public park
5. Create safe travel ways to connect neighborhoods to the downtown, Kennebec River and other areas of the city

**Transportation and Infrastructure**

1. Address roads, sidewalks and traffic deficiencies in a timely manner
2. Improve off-street parking in neighborhoods

3. Support KVCAP van and transit services

### **Commercial**

1. Direct a mix of commercial and residential development toward the old business section of the South End
2. Improve and enhance access between downtown and the South End

### **House and Quality of Life**

1. Enhance and improve housing
2. Create a vibrant neighborhood
3. Increase the affordable homeownership. Increase one-and two-family homes from the current 62% to 80%
4. Reduce the number of multi-family units in the more densely populated area
5. Target for improvement areas with deficiencies in parking, snow storage, open space, recreation and housing condition
6. Consistently address quality of life issues (crime, nuisance activities, trash, poor housing condition, and parking)
7. Promote and preserve the architecture and historical heritage of the neighborhood
8. Reinvigorate the South End neighborhood investment fund to finance proposed improvements
9. Support SENA's role as an advocate for residents and positive change in the neighborhood

## Waterville Community Land Trust

Waterville Community Land Trust, founded in 2013, is a 501c3 nonprofit organization governed by a board of Waterville residents with a mission to provide perpetually affordable homes for a revitalized Waterville. To accomplish its mission, it purchases existing homes, renovates them, and sells them to low-moderate income families. Waterville Community Land Trust (WCLT) purchased, renovated and sold its first affordable home in 2018.



FIGURE 3: WLCT FIRST HOME

WCLT is now renovating its second affordable home at 3 Moor Street.

Figure 4: 3 Moor Street Home as Purchased



FIGURE 5: 3 MOOR WITH PORCH REBUILT BY CARPENTER LES REXFORD

## **A Revitalized Community is More than Housing**

WCLT is also developing a garden and park on Water Street on 3+ acres of land with 300 +feet on the Kennebec River. Two poorly maintained homes and a garage were demolished to clear the land for the park. Once completed, the park will provide a flower and vegetable garden; a patio with benches to enjoy the view of the river; a nature park with boardwalk for kids to explore; and an orchard to provide fresh apples and cherries for all who wish to sample them.



**FIGURE 6: WCLT'S PARK ON THE KENNEBEC (NEWLY PLANTED PATIO)**



**FIGURE 7: WCLT'S 3+ ACRE PARK ON THE KENNEBEC RIVER**

## The Milliken Project: To Develop a Model for Other Neighborhoods

The Milliken Project focuses on only two streets, Moor and Carrean Streets, and a small section of Pine Street, in Waterville's South End. The project is to revitalize the neighborhood by renovating some of the homes for low-income families, provide incentives for investment in the other homes by families, and develop assets for the neighborhood that will make it an even more desirable place to live. Directors of Waterville Community Land Trust have spent considerable time in the neighborhood and have found that the residents work together to protect each other and their properties. A neighbor of WCLT's 3 Moor Street has watched for any signs of vandalism during its renovation; this is a good neighbor service that might be difficult to find in some other locations of the city.

### History

In 1874 Daniel Libby Milliken filed a plan for house lots in an area in the South End, or Plains, of Waterville. The Sanborn map of 1889 shows that fifteen years later, many of the small 1 ½ story homes had been built along "Mercier" Street, now named Moor Street, and Carrey Street, now Carrean Street. On the southwest corner of Mercier and Water Street there was a grocery store, later a bottling plant, attached to a dwelling. This lot is now a children's playground.

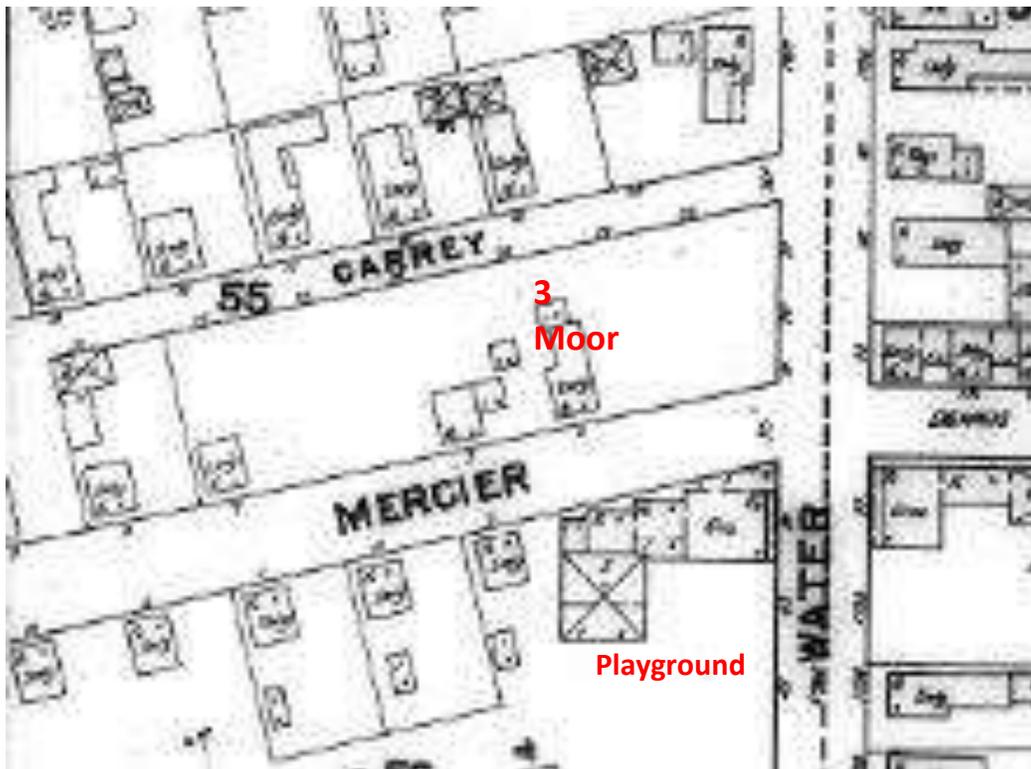


FIGURE 8: 1889 SANBORN MAP

Celestine Lassard purchased her lot and house in August, 1887 from George Milliken, son of Daniel. This property became 3 Moor Street, the house that WCLT now owns. All of the homes followed the same simple designs found throughout the South End with variations in room sizes, number of rooms, and number of windows. They were all probably originally wood clapboarded, but vinyl or asbestos siding has replaced clapboards on nearly all of them. Some acquired additions, usually to the rear, or porches added on a side or front. Two small bedrooms on the second floor and a third carved out of the downstairs may have accommodated the parents or families that often housed more than two generations.

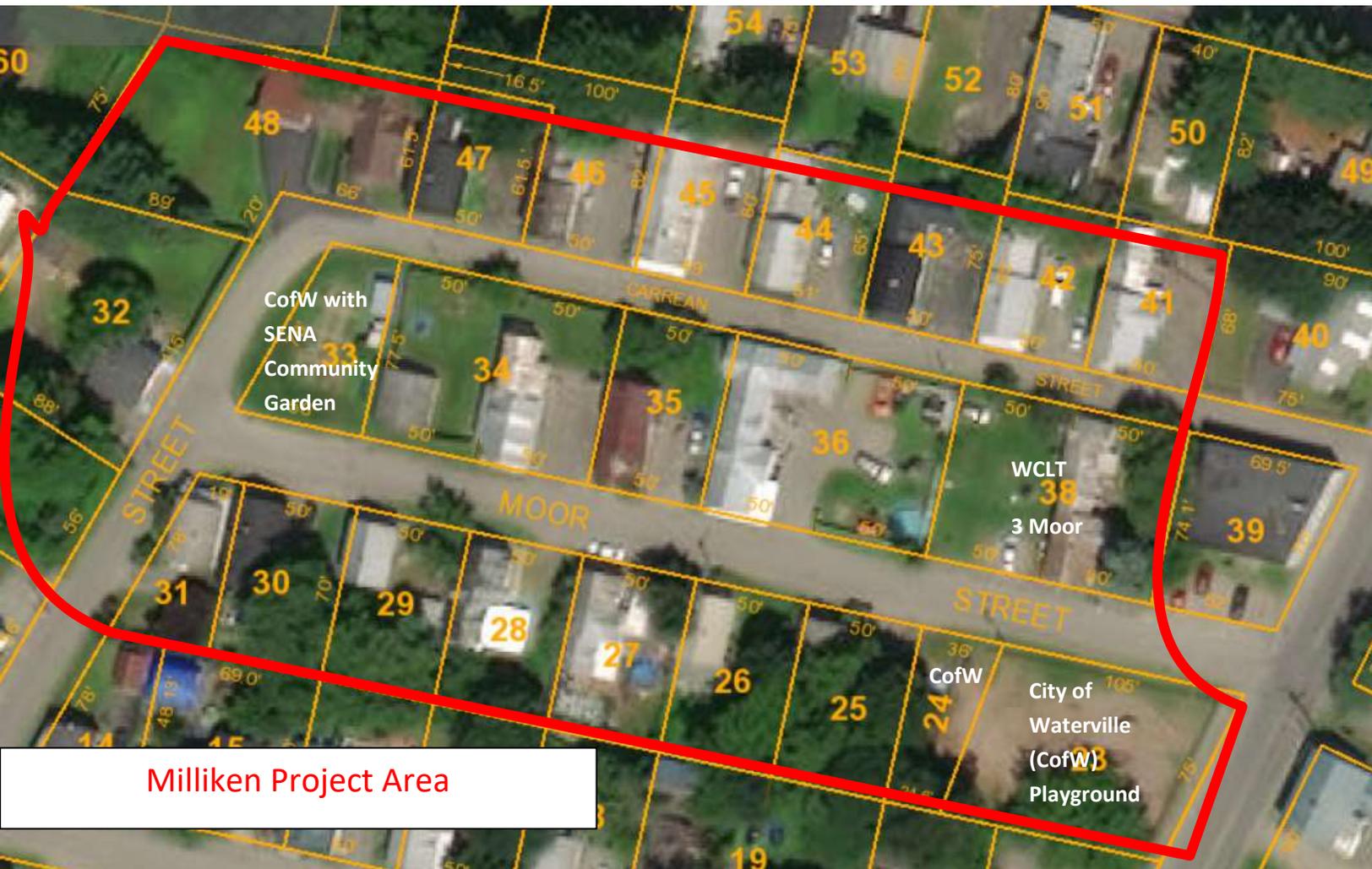
Although always thought by locals to be ‘mill houses, it does not appear that these houses were built by the mills, as is more likely for the duplexes that can be seen across Water Street from the Lockwood mills. These Milliken houses were clearly developed to take advantage of small lots and may have been nearly mass-produced to reduce their cost. .

The Sanborn Maps, produced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for commercial insurance purposes, show that tenements and flats were built in the South End. Grocery stores, bottling facilities, and bakeries, perhaps all owned by French families, developed on the primary roads. Public sewage was being developed in Waterville around 1890 and so these structures may have always had or soon developed bathroom and kitchen plumbing. The lot sizes average a little more than a tenth of an acre, but two or three of the homes now occupy double lots. Few people would have owned cars or horses in these neighborhoods, particularly since there was a trolley service on Water Street with destinations to the many stores on upper Water Street and Waterville’s Main Street. Many residents probably worked in Waterville and Winslow in the local mills or service industries.

These homes may have been typically financed by loans from local attorneys, banks, or private loans from men associated with banks. Some lenders were families who owned shares in the mills in Waterville. There is evidence that some buyers had problems paying for city services and/or their mortgages in just a few years after purchasing their properties. Without further research, we do not know if foreclosures, liens, or delinquencies were greater for these South End residents than others throughout Waterville. The years from 1893 to the Great Depression of the 1930’s suffered from many recessions and so-called panics that may have hit the city’s poorest residents the hardest.



The South End was settled by French Canadians who traveled the Quebec Road to Waterville, beginning in the 1830’s, for employment in the paper and fabric mills along the Kennebec. Most had large families and we can envision neighborhoods full of children playing in streets, parks, and empty lots and the smell of home cooked meals. Today, families are much smaller, and many homes are occupied by senior citizens. Some of these once single- family homes have been divided into rental units or rented rooms.



Milliken Project Area

**The Moor, Carrean and Pine Streets Neighborhood**

There are twenty-three lots within the Milliken Project Area.

- Nineteen are owned by individuals,
- Three lots are owned by the city of Waterville, and
- One lot is 3 Moor, owned by WCLT.

The city lots provide open spaces to an otherwise densely packed neighborhood. One lot is a playground and the other is maintained as a community garden by the city and members of the South End Neighborhood Association and its Quality of Life Committee.

These homes typically have well laid out interior plans for commodious living. The lots are small but provide sufficient spaces for children to play in their own yards. The homes were built close to the streets, not atypical for the times, so that snow plowing and removal impacts the use of front yards. The homes are perfectly sized for small families and seniors and could be adapted to serve the handicapped, as some may already do. The density of homes is one that easily lends itself as a ‘village’ that takes care of each other.

The average assessment of the homes on the street is \$30,100. The median is \$31,500 with a variation from a low of \$21,200 and a high of \$43,000. The median is one-quarter the average single-family residential assessment in the city. (Waterville’s assessor confirmed that the AVERAGE assessment is \$123,487 and the MEDIAN assessment is \$108,900.) The below unsymmetrical shaped bell curve of city wide homes and their assessments indicates that there are a few homes of exceptionally higher value in Waterville to bring the average values up above the median.



### **Rented Homes**

Sixty percent of the nineteen homes in the Milliken Project area are owned and rented by absentee owners; two may be family owned with the tax bill mailed to a third family member. Two homes appear to be owner occupied with an apartment rented on the second story. Sixty percent is not atypical for the older sections of Waterville and may even be a low percentage of absentee ownership for other, once affluent neighborhoods, such as upper Summer Street or the Victorian area of Waterville. (Those areas both have much larger houses that are more easily divided into multiple units, which are generally more profitable as rental properties. Attic apartments with three-story staircases built in the fronts of homes are unfortunately a common sight in Waterville.) The owners of rental properties in the Milliken Project area live, according

to public records, in other Maine communities, New Hampshire, or Massachusetts. Nothing is known about these owners; some may have inherited these homes and are retaining them as family rental businesses.

Some renters may have rent-to-own leases. These arrangements typically require that tenants pay a large option price, pay for all maintenance expenses and sometimes, are responsible for the real estate taxes. It may not be uncommon for low-income families to be unable to afford major maintenance expenses. According to national data, very few eventually gain title to their homes through these rent-to-own arrangements. <https://www.lawny.org/node/64/beware-rent-own-agreements>

### **Owner-Occupied Homes**

The six owner-occupied homes appear to be in good condition. Two have been recently renovated with new siding and other apparent updates.

### **Maintenance Observations**

An inventory of maintenance problems observed during various visits are recorded as follows:

- Possible code issues: poorly supported porch roofs and steps, trash and debris filling front and back yards, windows broken, open structures where animals breed, and large blue tarps covering over rough siding with clapboards removed or fallen off.

WCLT would like to work with the owners or renters to find a way to repair these homes.



- Aesthetic issues (trash dumpsters in front yards, siding falling off, plywood-covered windows, weeds growing between and around buildings, inadequate parking spaces).



WCLT would like to assist with maintenance issues for interested owners. In order to accomplish its goals, WCLT will need to purchase some homes from absentee owners or purchase a leasehold from homeowners. WCLT's challenge will be to find sufficient funding that is flexible enough so that it can offer homeowners help with their homes with the minimum of 'strings' attached.

### **Two Parks in the Milliken Project**

The Milliken project area includes two parks owned by the city of Waterville. One parcel is used as a children's playground and the other as a community garden. The garden is stewarded by members of SENA and the Quality of Life Committee. The city provides compost, mulch and water. These parks are 'anchors' for the Milliken Project due to their positions on both ends of Moor Street. They provide open space for the residents that can be improved for both young and old. They also are an excellent location for pop-up activities, as described below.



*Figure 1 SENA and City Community Garden*



*Figure 2: City Children's Playground*

## **Must Our Residents and our Neighbors Live with Neglect?**

We often hear people say that the less advantaged must live somewhere and in that manner, passively approve of substandard and inadequately maintained living conditions. As is nearly universally stated, when we help others, we help ourselves. Everyone will benefit by a city that strives to assist its residents to live in a safe and attractive neighborhood.

### **Bare Bones of the City's Budget**

Waterville is a service center with many nonprofits doing good work but are tax exempt. Without major commercial centers and with significant numbers of tax-exempt properties, the city has gained a reputation as being a high-tax city. Consequently, many people moving into the area look to the communities surrounding Waterville, which carry a lower tax burden.

Many people worry that if neighborhoods are gentrified, poor people will be forced to leave the city. There is certainly plenty of evidence, beyond only anecdotally, that this is true.

How can we help families own or rent good quality homes in thriving neighborhoods that they can afford? Community Land Trusts, working with the city and other nonprofits, have proven their merit to provide homes for low to moderate-income families and provide spaces for nonprofit businesses. By an initial focusing on increasing home ownership, we will give more families an opportunity to earn equity rather than pay rent their entire lives. Community land trusts make sure that lower income families will continue to live in Waterville.

Year after year, Waterville's city budget is 'bare bones'. The greater portion of the city's budget is spent on schools, public safety, general administration and public works. Parks, Recreation, culture, and health & welfare are given from 2% to less than 1% of the city's budget,

respectively. Much of the park and recreational expenditures are paid by users to facilities such as the city pool and Quarry Road. Taxes collected constitute only 41% of the city’s income while 44% come from grants, with the most significant being the state’s contribution to education.

Waterville may wish to apply for grants that are available from various sources. The city would benefit from an open process where it advertises grant opportunities to nonprofit partners and works with them to develop the best projects that will help the city achieve its goals.

One of the few grants with considerable flexibility to build community assets is the Community Development Block Grant, administered by the state. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, also administered by the state, provides grants for land acquisition and infrastructure for parks and trails. The US Departments of Transportation, Housing & Urban Development, and Environmental Protection Agency all have grants that would benefit the city and its residents.

One advantage to a city in partnership with its nonprofits is that nonprofits are able to apply to foundations and private sources of grant and donations for projects that a city cannot access.

(One of the few grants available to a community for projects such as economic development, housing and city revitalization is the CDBG or **Community Development Block Grant**. These grants require 20% matching funds for housing projects. 2020’s grant is for housing renovations but it is unknown if an application was submitted for Waterville. Here is a list of grants given to Waterville over the past ten years through a state vetting process:

2009	DR	500,000	Slum & blight: landscape at Head of Falls; DT facades; housing rehab;
2009	HA	250,000	Convert Gilman School into 33-35 family rental apartments
2010	PF	350,000	Waterville Opera House Life safety and efficiency improvements
2010	PS	40,000	Educare Central Maine
2011	SPMF	220,000	Jobs for Maine Graduates Pathways to Prosperity and Maine MEP
2013	BA	300,000	Bragdon Farms, LLC (no longer in operation)
2014	SPMF	100,000	Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership job training
2014	RCPA	145,000	Pass-thru for 2014 TA providers (Kennebec Behavior Health, etc?)
2018	SPMFD	100,000	Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership job training
2019	SPMF	450,000	North River Company/Lockwood Mills (low income units)

## **The Milliken Plan for Neighborhood Revitalization**

A plan is only as good as the input received in its development. This paper is a preliminary plan that must evolve as new ideas and partners join with the revitalization of Waterville's neighborhoods. An essential part of any plan is to survey and engage those who are to be impacted by any proposed program. Without their input and participation, we cannot expect to succeed. A draft survey is at the end of this paper.

As a preliminary plan, WCLT plans the following:

- I. Invest in Home Renovations and New Construction, if needed
  - A. WCLT may purchase single-family homes, when funds are available, renovate, and sell as CLT homes. One of WCLT's missions is to protect the historic fabric of the city.
  - B. For homes owned and occupied by families who wish to improve their homes, WCLT may purchase the land and renovate the home that allows the family to own their home and preserves a leasehold as perpetually affordable
  - C. WCLT will consider providing other types of housing for the neighborhood such as co-ops, apartments, and co-housing, as needed by the neighborhood.
  - D. WCLT will endeavor to include housing built for veterans, seniors, single parent households, singles, and special-needs residents.
  - E. WCLT may develop a walking trail from the Milliken neighborhood to WCLT's Park by the Kennebec
  - F. Provide more open space within the neighborhood, whenever feasible and practicable
  
- II. Invest in Neighborhood Improvements
  - A. WCLT and its partners will consider developing the following for use of the neighborhood residents.
    - i. Consider merging the current playground and community garden to corner of Moor and Water Street.
    - ii. Consider using existing community garden land for pop-up activities (see below for examples of pop-ups) for experimentation of what 'works' for the neighborhood residents
    - iii. Consider developing a storage facility for the neighbors
    - iv. Consider developing/investing a greenhouse project for teens to learn how to run a business as a community sustainable agricultural business
    - v. Develop a neighborhood Facebook group/page
    - vi. Build a Community Bulletin Board at the Community Garden
    - vii. Consider more attractive street lighting

- viii. Develop a place in the park for families to sit in the shade and provide a table for checkers or card playing
- ix. Determine if heat pumps can be purchased inexpensively and installed in homes with owner occupancy
- x. Offer small home repairs with Habitat for Humanity

B. WCLT and its partners may ask the city to participate. The city is under no obligation to participate and must consider its other priorities within its budget.

Ideas are, as follows:

- i. Support infrastructure changes such as improvements to parks
- ii. Plant shade trees, as requested by residents
- iii. Remove old asphalt sidewalk in front of 3 Moor
- iv. Offer a 'large item dump' pick-up once a year with partner participation
- v. Provide district water for gardens
- vi. Improve the road pavement
- vii. Seek Funding from the state for partner activities from sources such as CDBG and cooperate for other funding opportunities that require city participation

## **Pop-Up Activities—Serious Fun**

All Residents: Start documenting the street. Share the beauty of neighbors and neighborhood surroundings on our Facebook Group page.

All residents: Make-A-Seat Event. Build your own street seat out of whatever materials you can find. Can be funky, classy, or practical but it is all for creative (and sometimes useful) fun.

For Kids and the rest of us: Set up a small, interactive community art project on your corner. Share your art with people in small ways.

Just to be Crazy: Set up a listening booth. Somebody sits and listens to anybody who wants to talk.

Checkers anyone? : Consider developing a 'giant checkers game' on the ground

For those unkempt areas: plan a guerrilla garden uprising. Surreptitiously fill in unkempt lots or small patches of untended land with plants and flowers, or tossing a "seedbomb" at a hard to reach patch of land, turns lost space into lush greenery.

Community Celebration Show-Off Day: Everyone place pretty, potted plants on every step and invite the city (and the press) to see our neighborhood. (Pots can be anything around that will hold dirt and we will grow the flowers in the community garden)

Build a pop-up playground. Gather loose parts (wood scraps, old tires, cardboard boxes, stones) and then ask kids of all ages to help design their own playgrounds. During the winter, make snow forts.

Urban Johnny Appleseeds: Include an urban orchard in our community garden

Pop-up dog park. Use temporary fencing for a pop-up dog park once a week or more, as posted on a community bulletin. Install doggie sanitation stations.

Launch an oral history project on our Group Facebook page. Documenting your neighbors' stories preserves the fabric and history of a neighborhood, giving context to why this place and its people matters.

Who wants to be our docent? Develop a tour guide for our neighborhood. Keep a blog on our Facebook Group page and community bulletin board.