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Intersection changes could cost \$2.5 million.

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The design firm studying the village's five-way intersection and the rest of the business district tonight said the proposed changes would cost a total of \$2.5 million. It also said there is a long road ahead before the first shovel is put in the ground. However, some of the stakeholders in any project on the intersection, were generally pleased with what they saw.

Lisa Nagle of [Elan Planning, Design & Landscape Architecture](#) of Saratoga Springs, speaking at the Hamilton Public Library, made it clear the plan she and partner Jere Tatic (in photo) presented was "a concept ... ideas ... just ink on paper." She said the task force studying the intersection will have more discussions before presenting its recommendation to the village Board of Trustees.

The plan incorporates some of the ideas outlined in the several options presented at an earlier meeting.

Elan suggested improving the "pedestrian experience" by:

- Shifting the center line of Payne Street to better align with Lebanon Street;
- Reducing the width of Payne Street at the intersection and widening the sidewalks;
- Shortening the crosswalks at the intersection;
- Increasing the visibility of crosswalks;
- Improving the north end of the village green while creating a space to put snow during the winter;
- Changing the sequence of traffic lights in the intersection to eliminate problems with left turns;
- Landscape improvements on the southern portion of the green.

It was also suggested that "streetscape" improvements be made including:

- Creating a bump out in front of Alliance Bank and Nichols & Beal for a pedestrian plaza with trees, sculpture and seating;
- Leaving Lebanon Street mostly as is, instead of making it one way, but widening the sidewalks;
- Maintaining parking at the north end of the village green;
- Creating bump-outs at the corners of Broad Street and East Broad at the north end of the green;
- Building a bump-out at Maple and Lebanon streets;
- Widening sidewalks on Broad Street
- Installing a bump-out on Broad Street in front of the post office;
- Reducing the width of Pleasant Street between the two sections of the village green;
- Expanding the municipal parking lot;
- Creating designated parking zones in which trucks can unload.

Most of the changes are designed to make it easier for pedestrians to navigate the intersection and cross the downtown streets. Others are purely cosmetic, while some are meant to help businesses move out of their stores and onto the sidewalks.

Nagle said the next step is for the task force to refine any possible changes and make a recommendation to the village board.

Carl Albrecht, a village trustee and chairman of the board of the Partnership for Community Development (PCD), which commissioned the study, said "a lot more discussion needs to occur."

Mayor Sue McVaugh said she was pleased with the study. She said whatever is decided upon would not move forward as one large project. Instead, the village will pick and choose what, if any, parts of the proposal it wants to pursue and seek funding for it. "We will go forward very carefully with what we think is best," said the mayor.

Ben Eberhardt, who operates the Colgate Inn and is president of the Hamilton Business Alliance, said, "I love the concept, but I think the plan needs a lot of work. We have a lot of economic development issues to address and this is one solution."