

# ADDITIONAL PLANNING CONCEPTS

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## Ferry Point Area, Old Saybrook

### Overview

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This report summarizes the discussion at a September 30, 2005 workshop meeting which was held to promote discussion of possible planning strategies for the Ferry Point area of Old Saybrook. Approximately 20 people from a variety of Town boards and commissions attended the meeting.

This report supplements an earlier report entitled "Possible Planning Concepts, Ferry Point Area, Old Saybrook" which was based on a similar workshop meeting held in June 2005.



Google Earth

### Overall Workshop Comments

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The comments and impressions generated from the September meeting are presented below:

1. **Consider the entire Ferry Point area** - People felt that discussion of a vision needed to focus on a larger Ferry Point area.
2. **Maintain / enhance marine commercial activities on water side of Ferry Road** - People indicated that they want to maintain the existing marine commercial aspects of the waterfront (marina and boat storage). Additional amenities for boaters could also help the area (temporary slips, showers, laundry, ships store, restaurants).
3. **Enhance Town Dock** - People also indicated that they want to maintain the commercial fishing activities supported by the Town Dock. In addition, people felt that the idea of a restaurant tied to the commercial dock where "fresher than fresh" seafood is available.
4. **Enhance public amenities in this area** - The Town should acquire the CTDOT land and use the land for recreational fields and other activities that will draw people to this area. Sidewalks, paths, and bike trails could encourage people to spend more time in this area.
5. **Support stronger connections to other areas** - People indicated that the Ferry Road area felt somewhat remote and that seasonal transit as well as walkways or bike rentals could result in a better connection to downtown. Some also felt that better ramps to Routes 9 and 95 would also help the area.
6. **Document physical capacity of the area** - Since the wastewater potential is key to any plans for the area, additional documentation of this potential is needed. Some dredge spoils on the land side of Ferry Road may not support large scale structures or year-round septic (physically or economically).

## **Possible Vision Based On Current Regulations**

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Participants at the workshop meeting appeared somewhat timid about discussing new ideas for the Ferry Point area. This is not unusual since people are generally more comfortable at reacting to a specific concept rather than generating ideas or envisioning alternative futures.

However, without some changes to land use policies or strategies, the future vision of the Ferry Point area will only reflect the current Zoning Regulations and Map.

The map diagram on the facing page suggests what the Ferry Point area might include if the current regulations are left in place.

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### **Development Programs**

- Maintenance of commercial area on Essex Road
- Possible new residential on inland side of Ferry Road
- Possible future recreational field at CTDOT land

### **Marine Commercial**

- The working marinas stay pretty much as is
- Town Dock stays as is

### **Parking**

- Uses supported by off-street parking for each use on each site

### **Vehicular / Pedestrian / Bicycle Elements**

- Possible future pedestrian connections along street



Vision Based on Current Regulations

FERRY POINT AREA, OLD SAYBROOK

## **Possible Vision For Enhanced Seasonal Development**

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One opinion expressed at the meeting was to make selected improvements that will make the Ferry Point area “the best seasonal activity area it can be”.

This strategy, if implemented, would result in incremental improvements consistent with the existing character of the area but would not result in a dramatic change to the overall development pattern.

This strategy would:

- Allow the community to “build on” what already exists and make incremental steps to help make the area successful
- Create new opportunities to expand potential of the Ferry Point area
- Try new activities or retry activities that did not work in the past

The map diagram on the facing page suggests what the Ferry Point area might include if the area was configured to be “the best seasonal activity area it can be”.

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### **Development Programs**

- Intensification of existing commercial area on Essex Road
- Possible new residential on inland side of Ferry Road
- Possible future recreational field at CTDOT land
- Possible waterfront seafood restaurant at Powerplant building
- Possible redevelopment on elevated deck at “Between the Bridges”

### **Marine Commercial**

- Possible future expansion of slips at marina
- Town Dock relocated and expanded

### **Parking**

- Uses supported by off-street parking for each use on each site
- On-street parking unlikely

### **Vehicular / Pedestrian / Bicycle Elements**

- Possible future pedestrian connections along street



## Possible Vision for Enhanced Seasonal Development

FERRY POINT AREA, OLD SAYBROOK

## **Possible Vision Based For Year Round Development**

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Another observation at the meeting was to increase the level of activity in the Ferry Point area in order create more of a focal point and to spur an active year-round area.

While changes to Zoning Regulations and the Zoning Map would be required, the Ferry Point area could evolve into a major year-round activity center.

This strategy would:

- Introduce new activities to change character of the area
- Increase the intensity level of the area
- Increase the employment, goods and services, and tax base in the area
- Create a secondary focal point in Old Saybrook

The map diagram on the facing page suggests what the Ferry Point area might include if the area was configured to be more of a year-round focal point.

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### **Development Programs**

- Focus on “fishing village” feeling with buildings brought to the street, on-street parking, wide sidewalks, pedestrian streetscape, etc.
- Expansion / intensification of commercial area on Essex Road to extend easterly from existing business area to the State boat launch, then southerly to the Powerplant building (including possible redevelopment on elevated deck at “Between the Bridges”)
- Possible new residential on inland side of Ferry Road / possible redevelopment of existing residential areas with more intensive uses
- Possible future recreational field at CTDOT land

### **Marine Commercial**

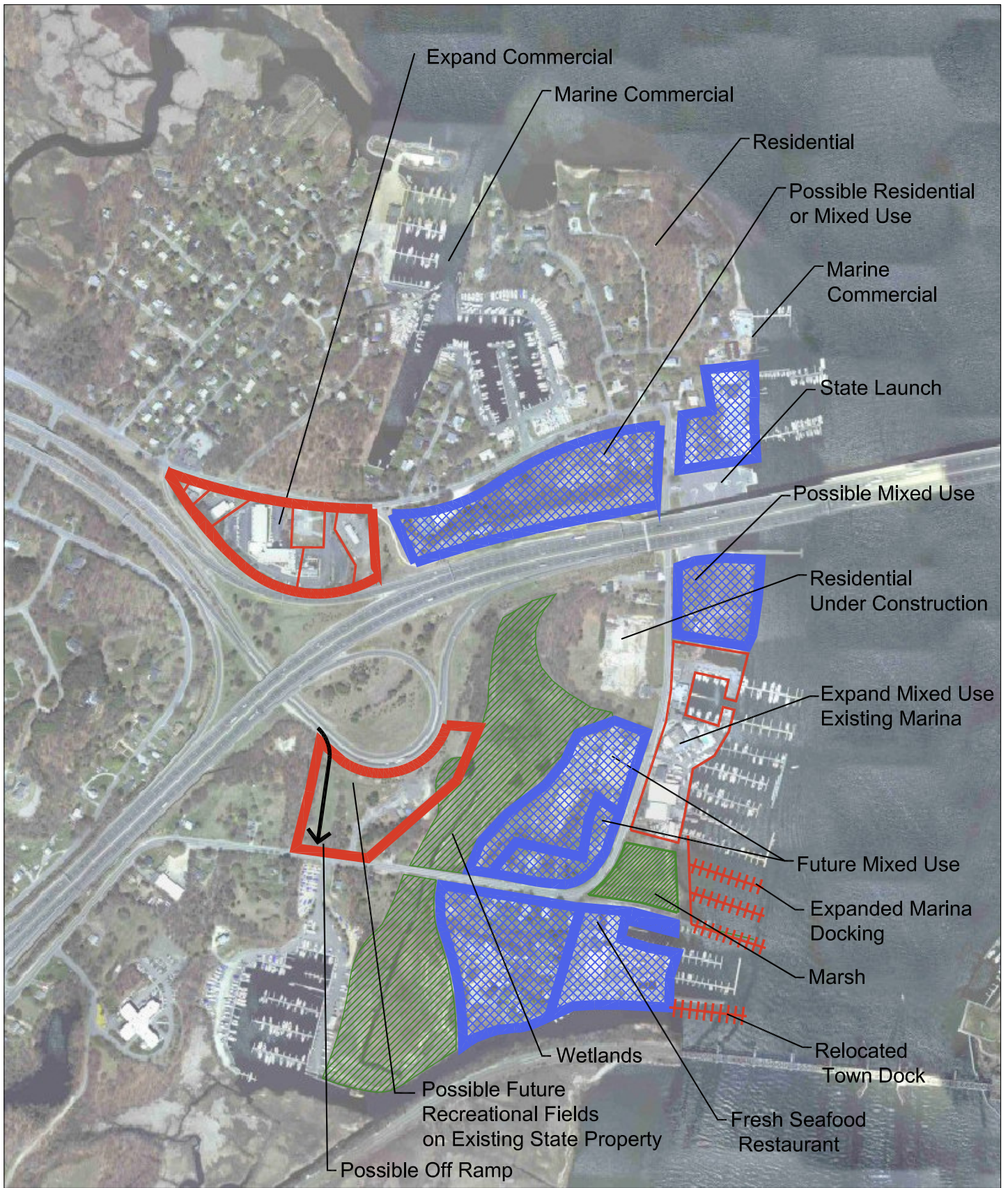
- Possible future expansion of slips at marina(s)
- Town Dock relocated and expanded

### **Parking**

- On-street parking used to reinforce active streetscape
- Uses also supported by off-street parking

### **Vehicular / Pedestrian / Bicycle Elements**

- Explore potential for new highway access (such as Route 9 SB off-ramp and I-95 NB on-ramp)
- Possible future pedestrian connections along street



Possible Vision for Year Round Development

FERRY POINT AREA, OLD SAYBROOK

## Next Steps

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Much progress has been made at the two workshop meetings in terms of exploring possible visions for the Ferry Point area. Participants should be proud that some of the issues facing the Ferry Point area have been clarified so that decisions can be made when the community is ready.

Such workshop meetings should continue to take place so that ideas can be explored and refined. This will allow the community to explore whether there is “huge potential for re-development as a vibrant and exciting destination” (as stated in the Plan of Conservation and Development).

While such meetings can involve “hard work” on the part of residents, they are preferable to having no vision for the future of the Ferry Point area. In addition, they are preferable to applicants repeatedly applying for different activities in the hopes that one (or more) of them will be approved.

In the long term, it would be best for the Town to give as much direction to property owners and others as is possible. In the short term, Old Saybrook should strive to select the preferable outcome for the Ferry Point area:

- Leave the area as it is
- Enhance the areas to be the best seasonal area it can be
- Change the area to a year-round area

None of the visions presented in this report are intended to be the only possible outcomes for the Ferry Point area. Rather, they are intended to illustrate possible alternative outcomes in a spectrum of possible outcomes. Old Saybrook should select the outcome (or any individual element) which is most indicative of what the community would like the Ferry Point to become.

**The consulting team recommends that the Town of Old Saybrook circulate the reports of the June and September workshop meetings among members of local boards and ask people which of the above three outcomes (or elements from any of the scenarios) they prefer.**

As stated in the previous report, change will occur in the Ferry Point area whether or not there is any community consensus on future directions.

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