



MIDDLETOWN
Rhode Island

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN

350 East Main Road, Middletown, RI 02842
(401) 849-4027 | MiddletownRI.com

To: Hon. Paul M. Rodrigues, President
Town Council Members

From: Ron Wolanski, Town Planner

Thru: Town Administrator

Date: February 10, 2025

Re: Presentation of Atlantic Beach District Streetscapes Project 30% Design Plans

The design engineer for the proposed Atlantic Beach District streetscapes project will present the current 30% design plans for Town Council consideration during the March 3rd Town Council meeting. Please see the attached slides which provide some background on the project as well as plans and renderings depicting the proposed design. The full 30% engineering plan set is available here: <https://middletownri.gov/1064/Atlantic-Beach-District-Streetscapes-Pro>

The concept for the streetscapes improvement project was included as a recommendation in the 2007 Atlantic Beach District Master Plan. In March 2018 the Planning Board and Town Council met jointly to discuss the potential project, at which point the Town Council requested that the Planning Board begin the effort by hosting a public meeting to invite public input. Steps that have been taken since then include:

- April 30, 2018 - Planning Board hosted public workshop meeting
- May 21, 2018 – Planning Board design recommendations forwarded to Town Council
- June 4, 2018 – Town Council agrees to proceed to 30% design, incorporating the Planning Board recommendations.
- August 22, 2019 - National Grid feasibility study on undergrounding utilities completed. Investigation continues, with eventual determination that, while technically feasible, costs exceed available funding.
- October 17, 2022 – Town Council authorizes Administration to proceed with 30% and final design without including undergrounding of utilities, but to consider relocating poles where possible.
- November 21, 2022 – Site walk by Town Staff and volunteers with RI Energy to consider potential relocation of poles, resulting in identification of a limited number of poles where relocation might be feasible. Further discussion with RI Energy on feasibility, design and costs would be needed. (To occur as part of 90% plans preparation, with pole relocation to be a project bid alternate.)
- 2022-2024 – Design work proceeds. 30% plans provided for review and comment.
- April 2024 – Comments received from Town staff, Crossman Engineering, Roads & Utilities Advisory Committee, and Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Comments provided to VHB for consideration.

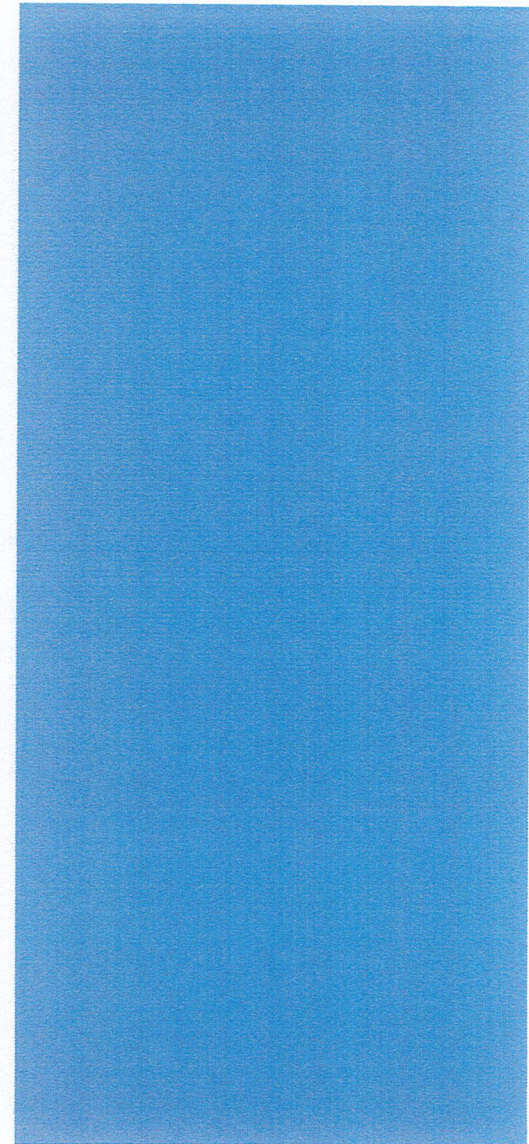
- August 1, 2024 – Staff meeting with RI Energy for additional discussion regarding potential funding for undergrounding utility lines. RI Energy confirmed that rate payers cannot be asked to fund undergrounding, and there is no other funding through RI Energy currently available.
- October 23, 2024 – Public meeting held to present the 30% plans and accept comments. The comments received from the public and committees are attached.

At this time the Town Council is asked to consider allowing the project to proceed to final (90%) design. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with any questions.

cc. Town Solicitor
Town Clerk
Town Engineer
DPW Director
Planning Board
MEDAC
Roads & Utilities Advisory Committee
Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

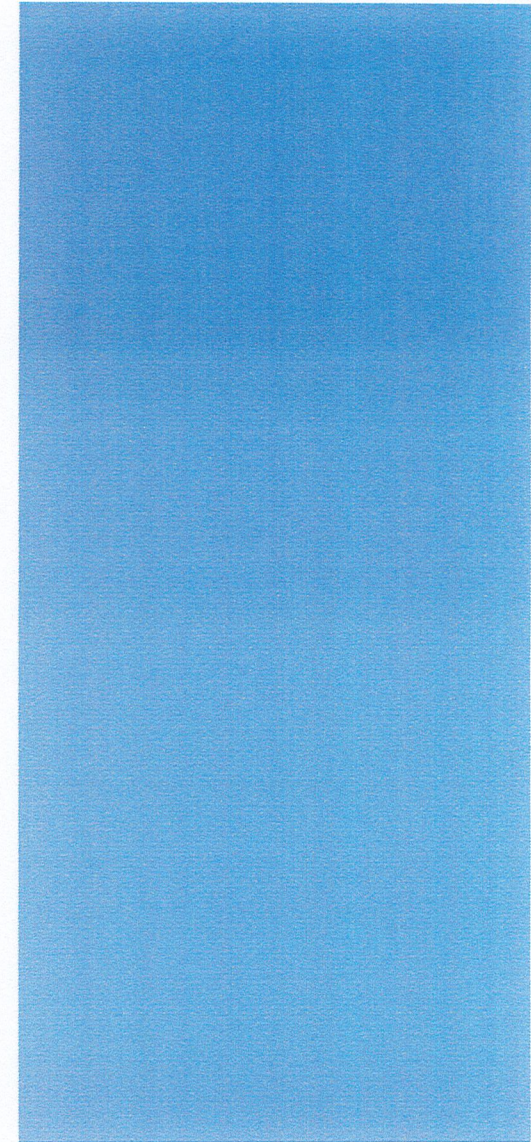
Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes
30% Plans Presentation

**Town Council
March 3, 2025**



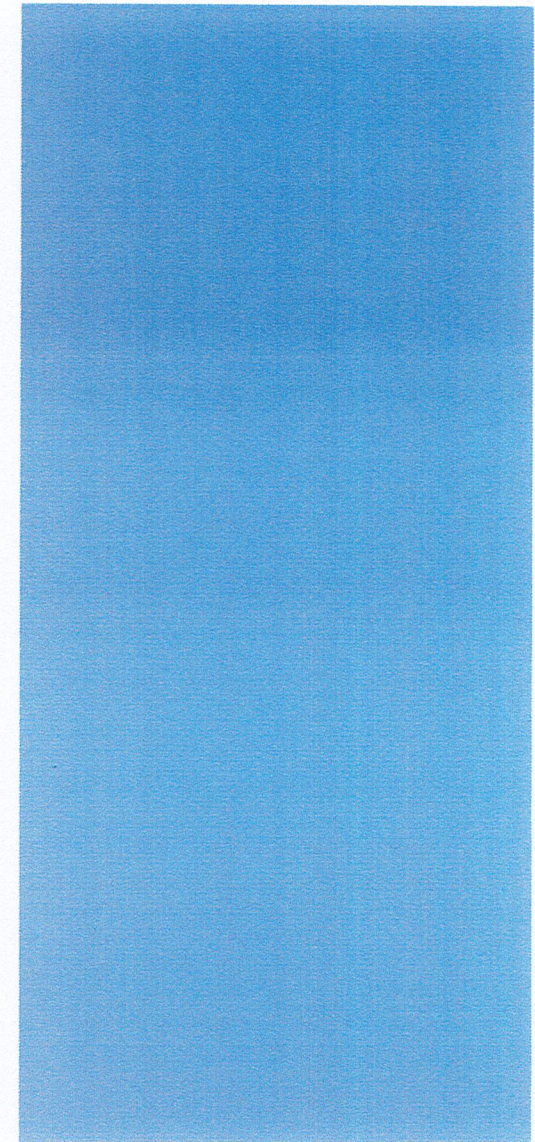
Agenda

1. Review of 2007 Atlantic Beach District Master Plan
2. Implementation Efforts
3. Presentation & Discussion of 30%
Roadway/Streetscape Plans
4. Q&A/Discussion
5. Next Steps

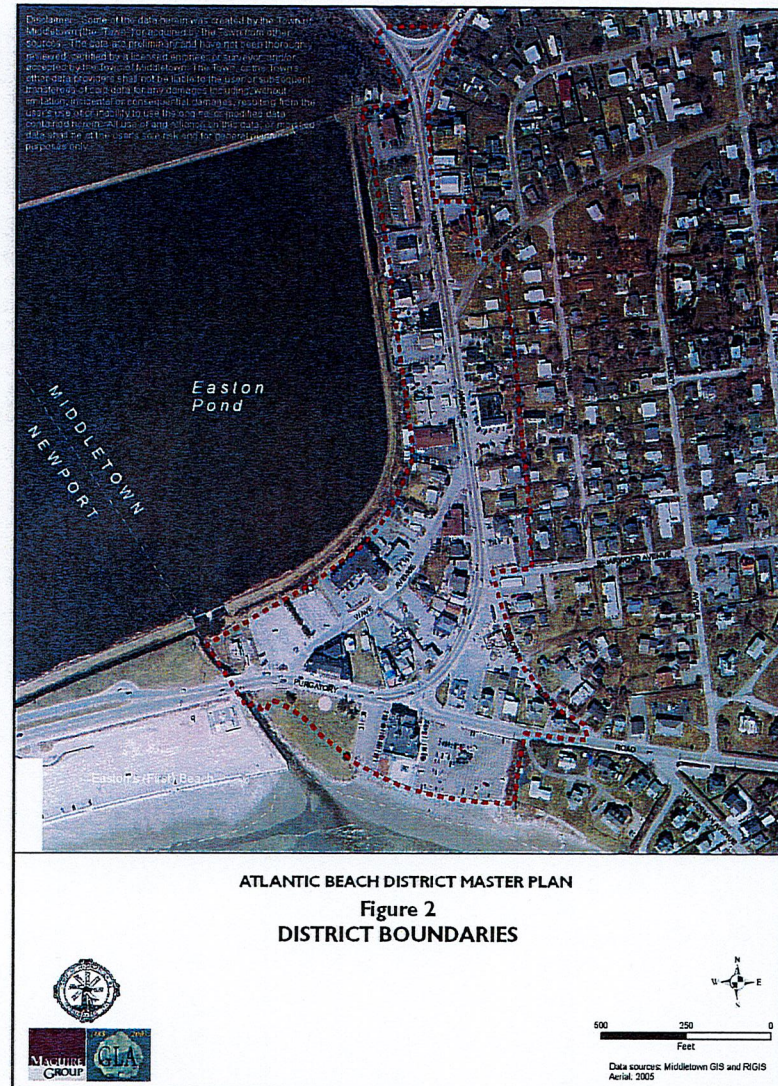


2007 Atlantic Beach District Master Plan

- Public Process
 - Two public workshop meetings, February & May 2007
 - Presentation to the Town Council, August 2007
- Final Draft August 2007
- Incorporated by reference in the Middletown Comprehensive Community Plan, March 2015, with implementation as an action item
- Vision Statement: *"...to become a more pedestrian-oriented, attractive and vibrant commercial village to serve the influx of seasonal visitors, the surrounding residential neighborhoods, and the town."*



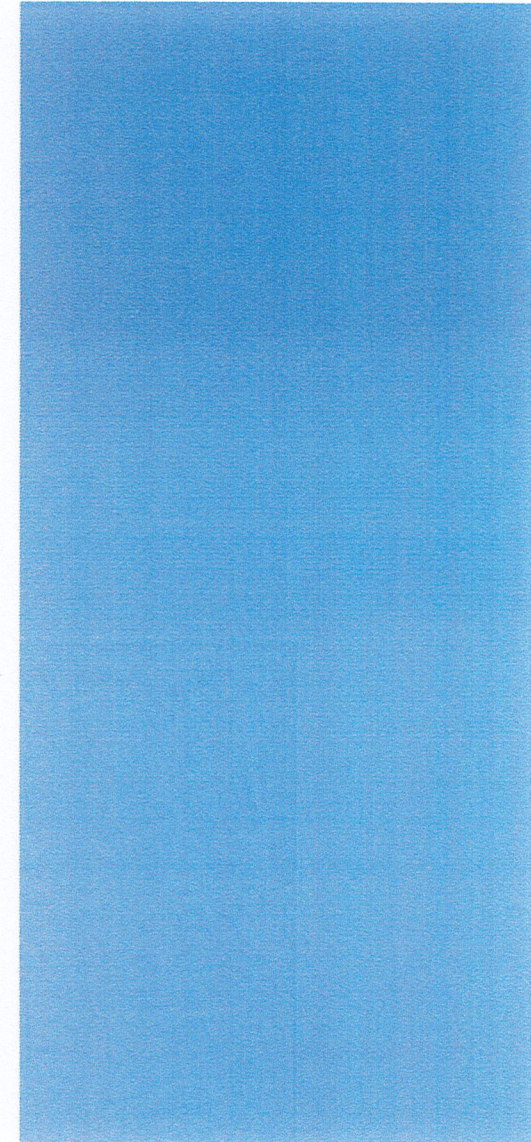
2007 Atlantic Beach District Master Plan



2007 Atlantic Beach District Master Plan

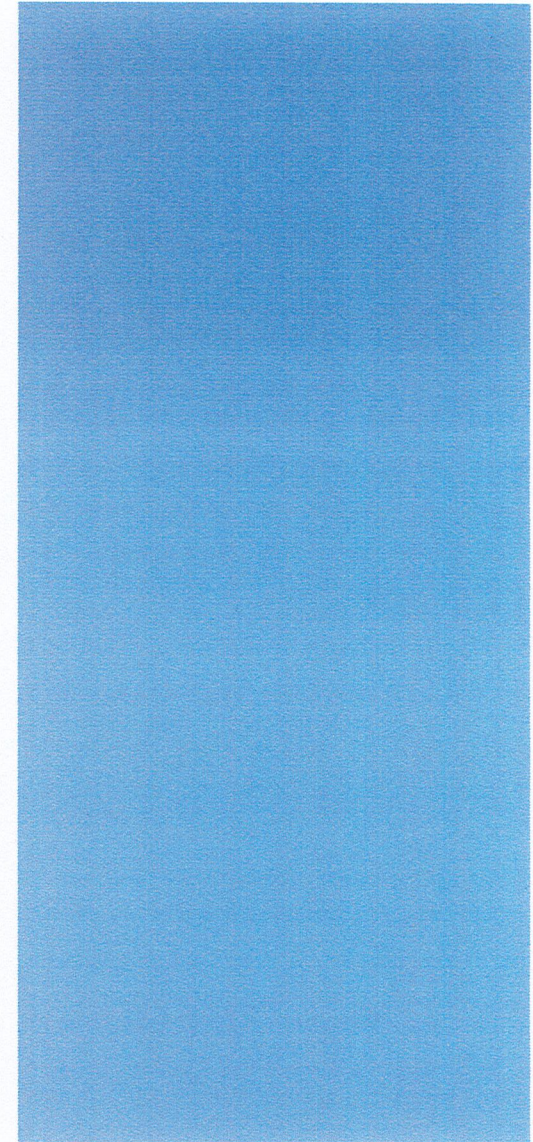
Goals

- Develop and implement safety and aesthetic improvements to promote pedestrian activity that will support local small businesses, including streetscape improvements and pedestrian circulation throughout the district;
- Study traffic flow and parking within the district to provide safety and efficiency
- Identify opportunities to capitalize on the proximity of the district to beaches, hotels and other attractions for the benefit of local residents and the town business tax base
- Identify options to promote private development that will be consistent with the vision for the district, including opportunities to promote an appropriate mix of uses and building and site design.



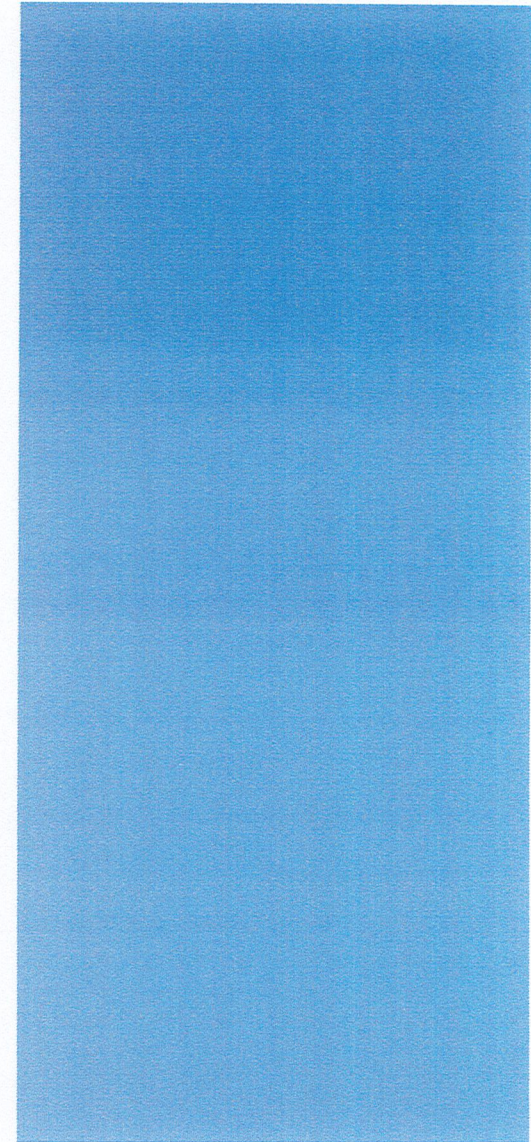
2007 Atlantic Beach District Master Plan

- Recommendations
 - Reevaluate types of uses allowed in the district
 - Pursue intersection improvements: Aquidneck Ave. & Valley Rd.; Aquidneck Ave. & Newport Ave.; Aquidneck Ave. & Briarwood/Crescent; Aquidneck Ave. & Purgatory
 - Consider modification/improvements to Dunlap Wheeler Park
 - Improve Aquidneck Ave. cross section, sidewalks & streetscapes
 - Consider establishing a business improvement district (BID) and/or a neighborhood business association

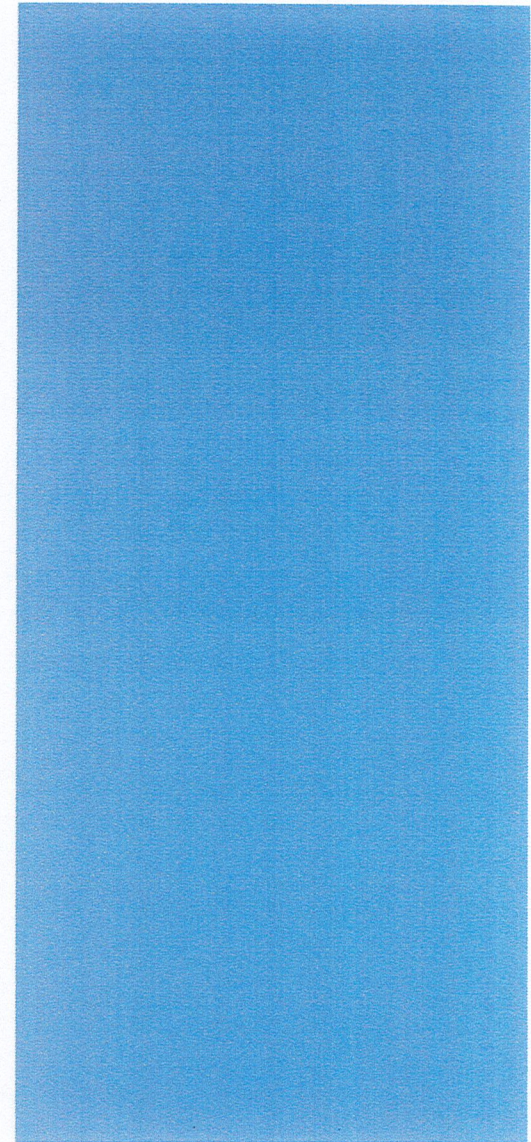


Atlantic Beach District Implementation

- ABD overlay zoning district established.
- Tax increment financing (TIF) district establish to fund public improvements.
- Design of potential improvements to Dunlap Wheeler Park underway w/ Open Space & Fields Committee.
- Intersection improvements underway
 - RIDOT & Town cooperating on design and construction of intersection improvements.
- Design of Aquidneck Ave. roadway & streetscape improvements underway
 - 30% design plans complete.
 - Worked with RI Energy to get cost estimates for undergrounding of utilities.
 - Public meeting to present 30% plans October 23, 2024
 - Potential request for funding through the state transportation improvement program (STIP).



Roadway/Streetscape
Graphics & 30% Plans





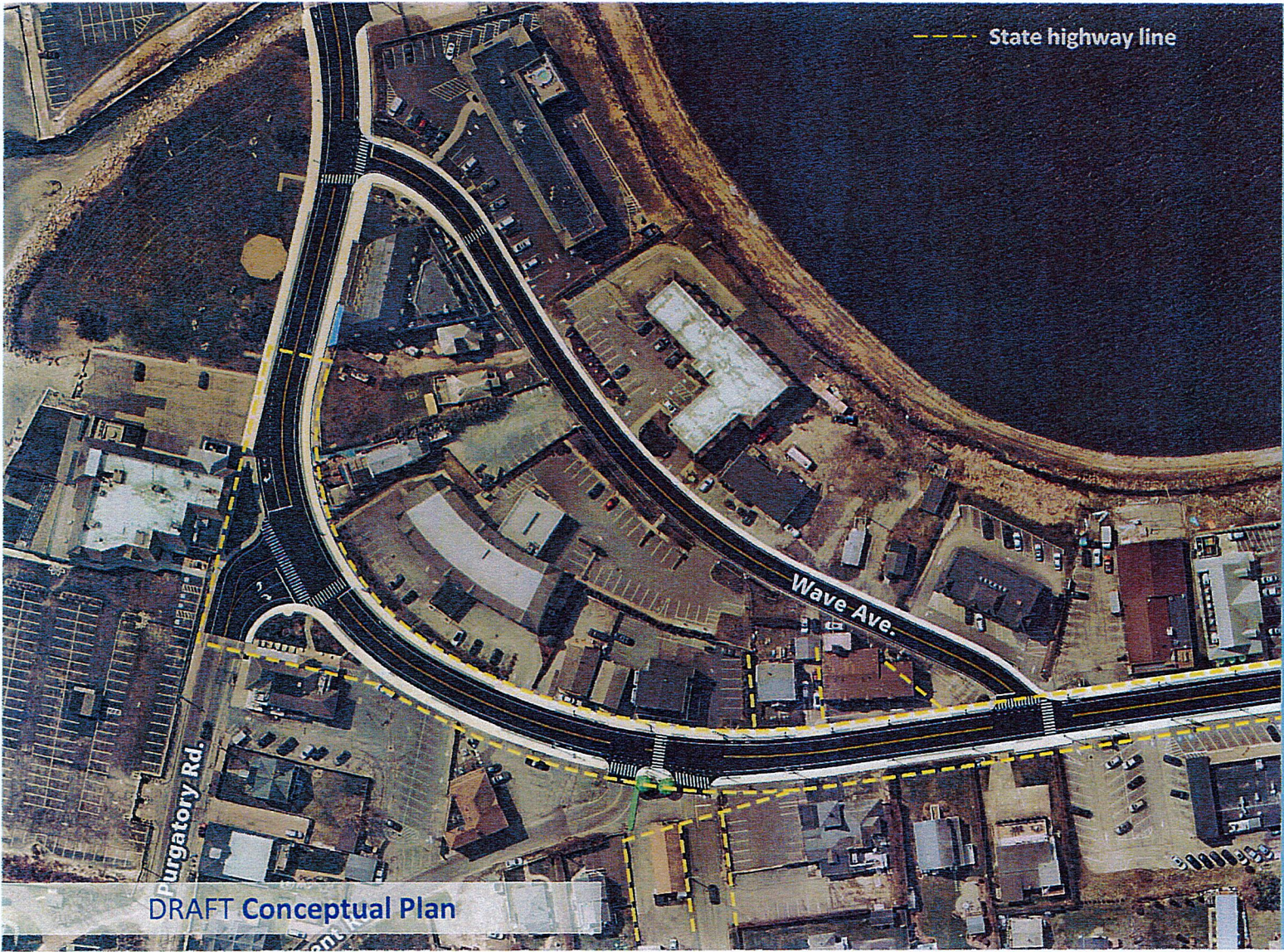
--- State highway line

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI

DRAFT Conceptual Plan



10/23/24



--- State highway line

Wave Ave.

Purgatory Rd.

DRAFT Conceptual Plan

**Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans**
Town of Middletown, RI



10/23/24

--- State highway line

Aquidneck Ave.

Newport Ave.

DRAFT Conceptual Plan



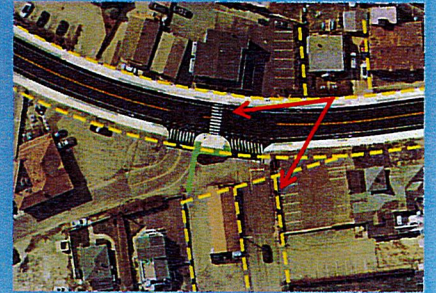
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Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI



VIEW 1 Perspective at Crescent Rd.

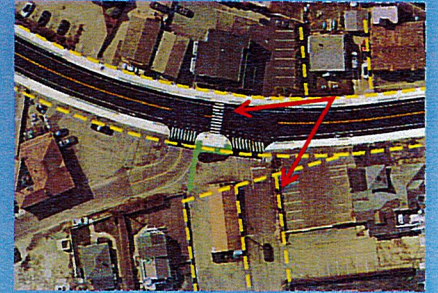
Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI

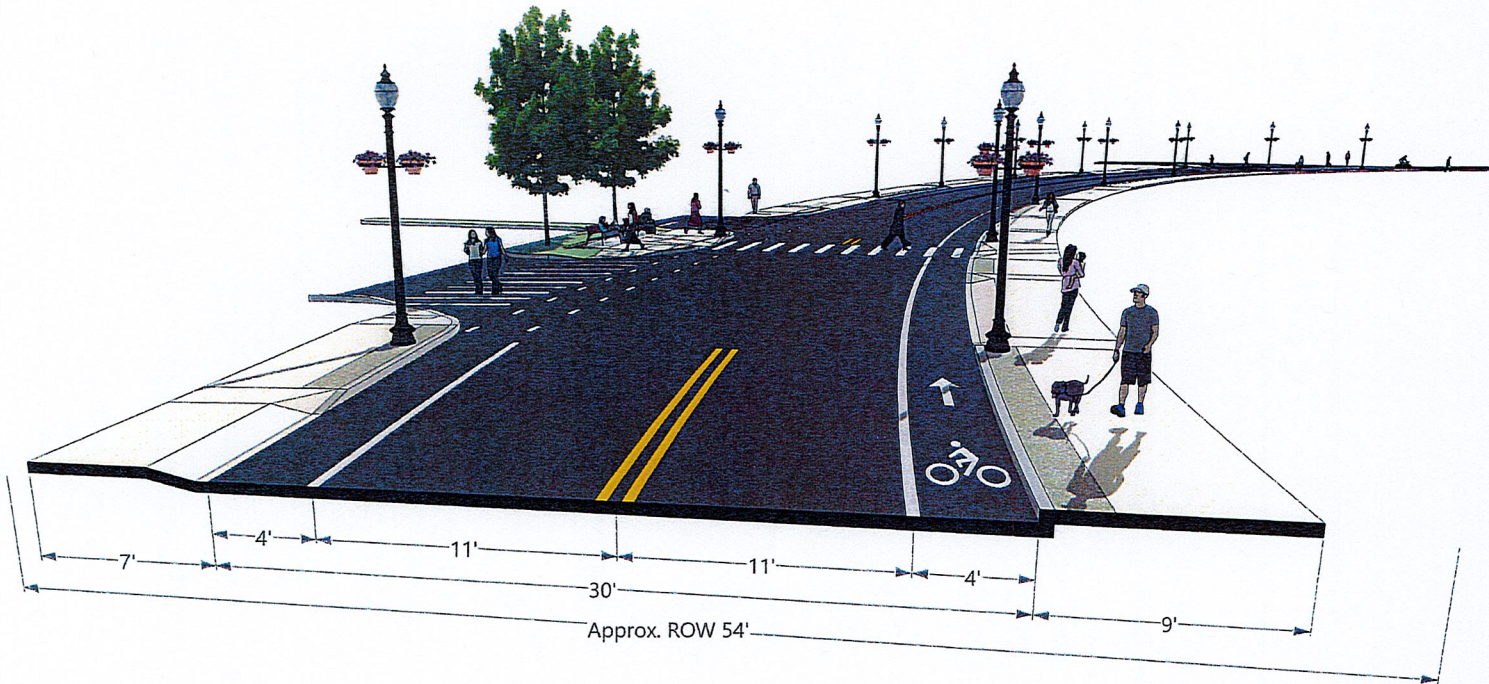




VIEW 1 Perspective at Crescent Rd.

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI





DRAFT Section near Crescent Rd.

**Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans
Town of Middletown, RI**

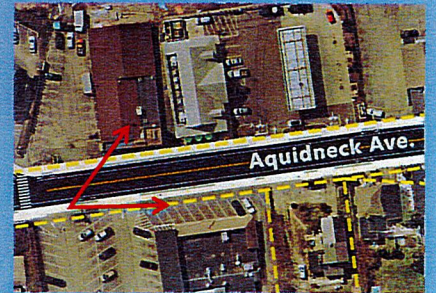


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VIEW 2 Perspective near Wave Ave.

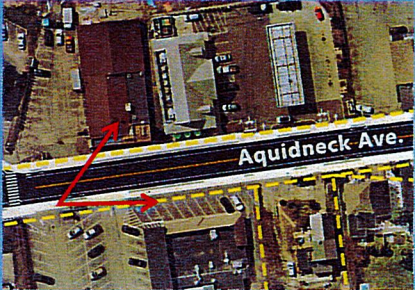
Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI

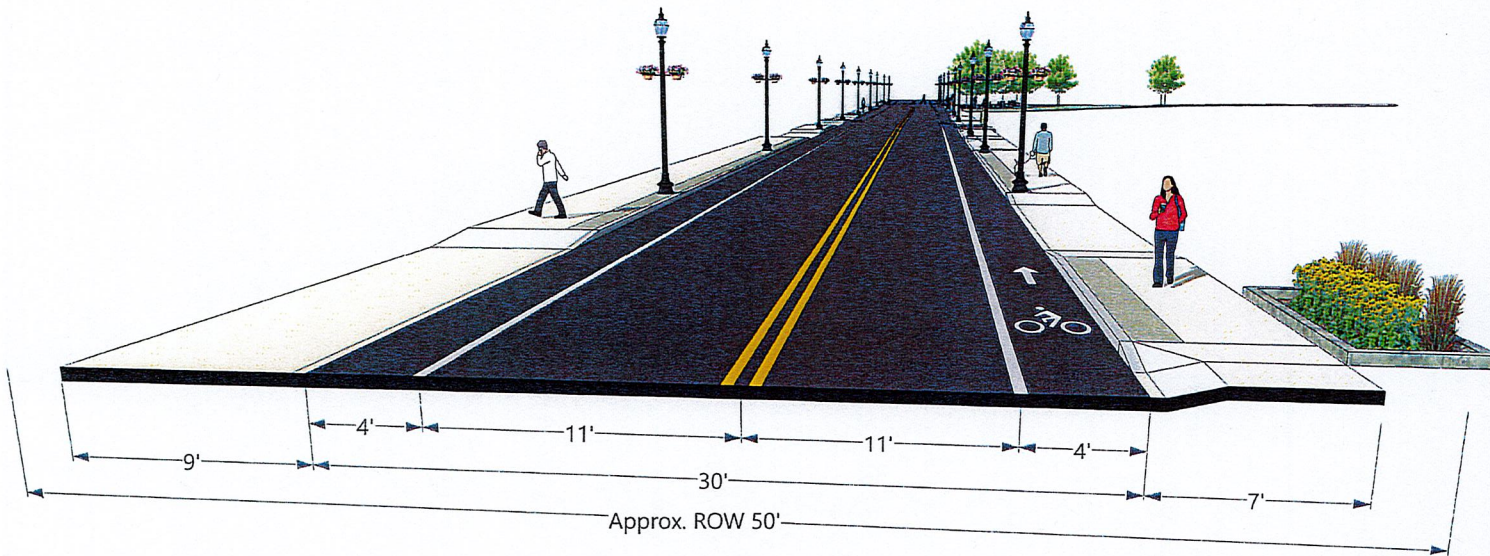




VIEW 2 Perspective near Wave Ave.

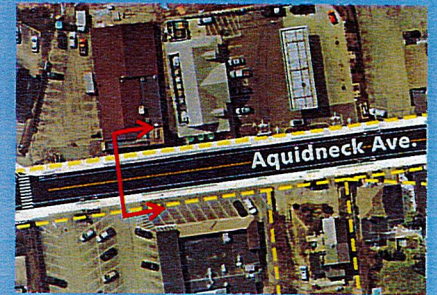
Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans
Town of Middletown, RI





DRAFT Section near Wave Ave.

Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans
Town of Middletown, RI

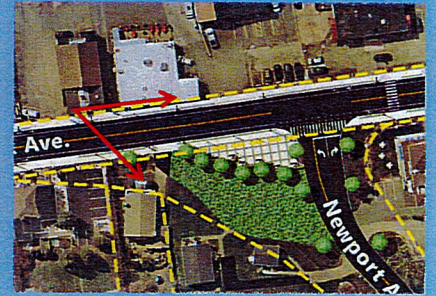


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VIEW 3 Perspective near Newport Ave.

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI

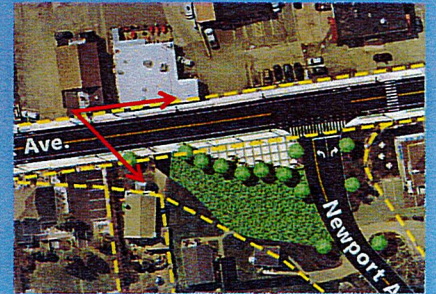


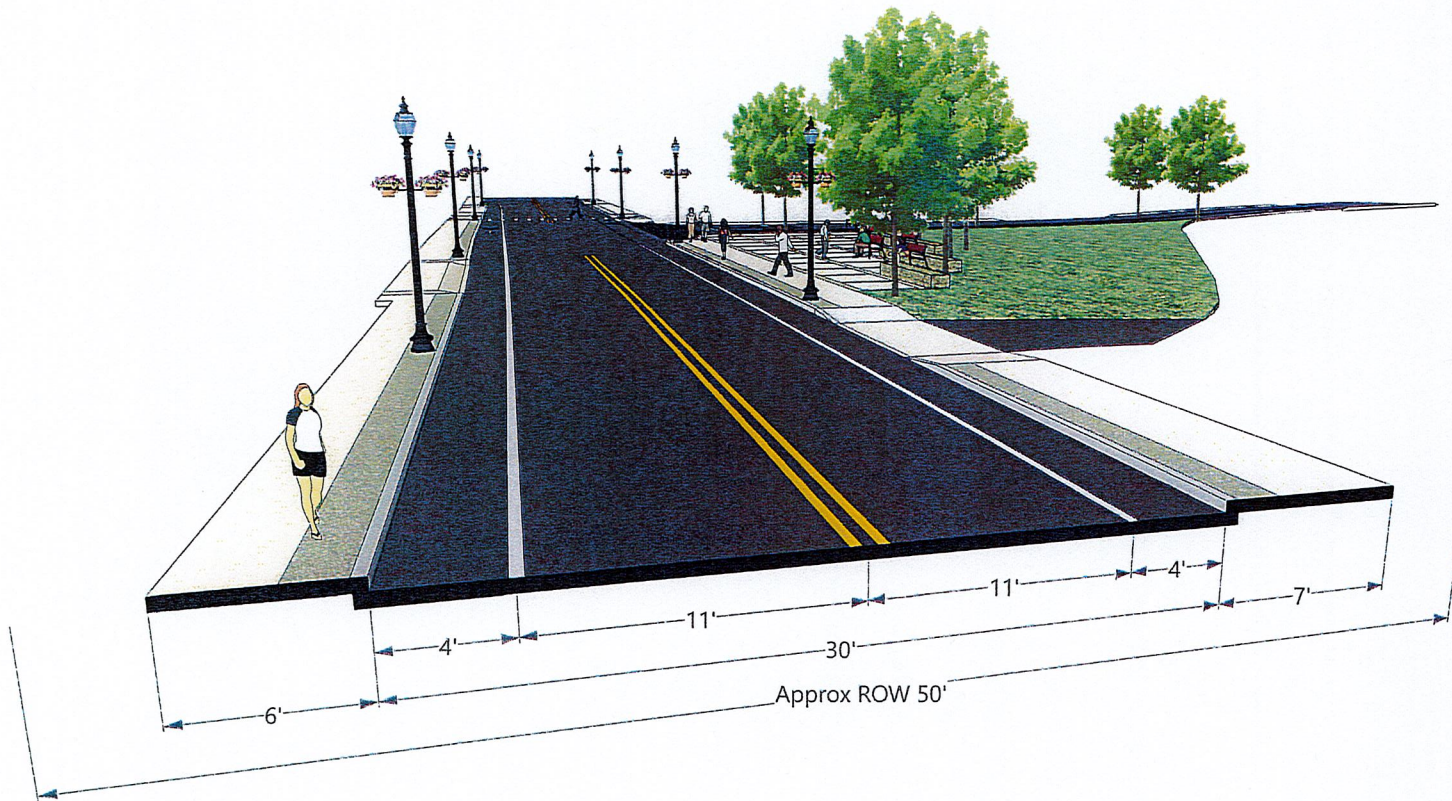
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VIEW 3 Perspective near Newport Ave.

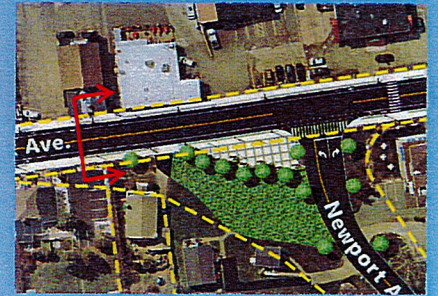
Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI





DRAFT Section near Newport Ave.

**Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans**
Town of Middletown, RI

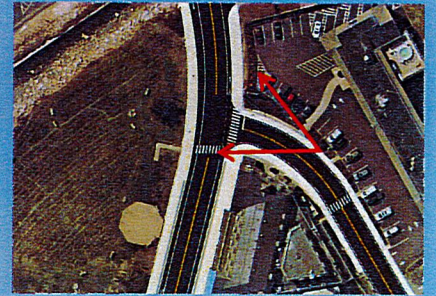


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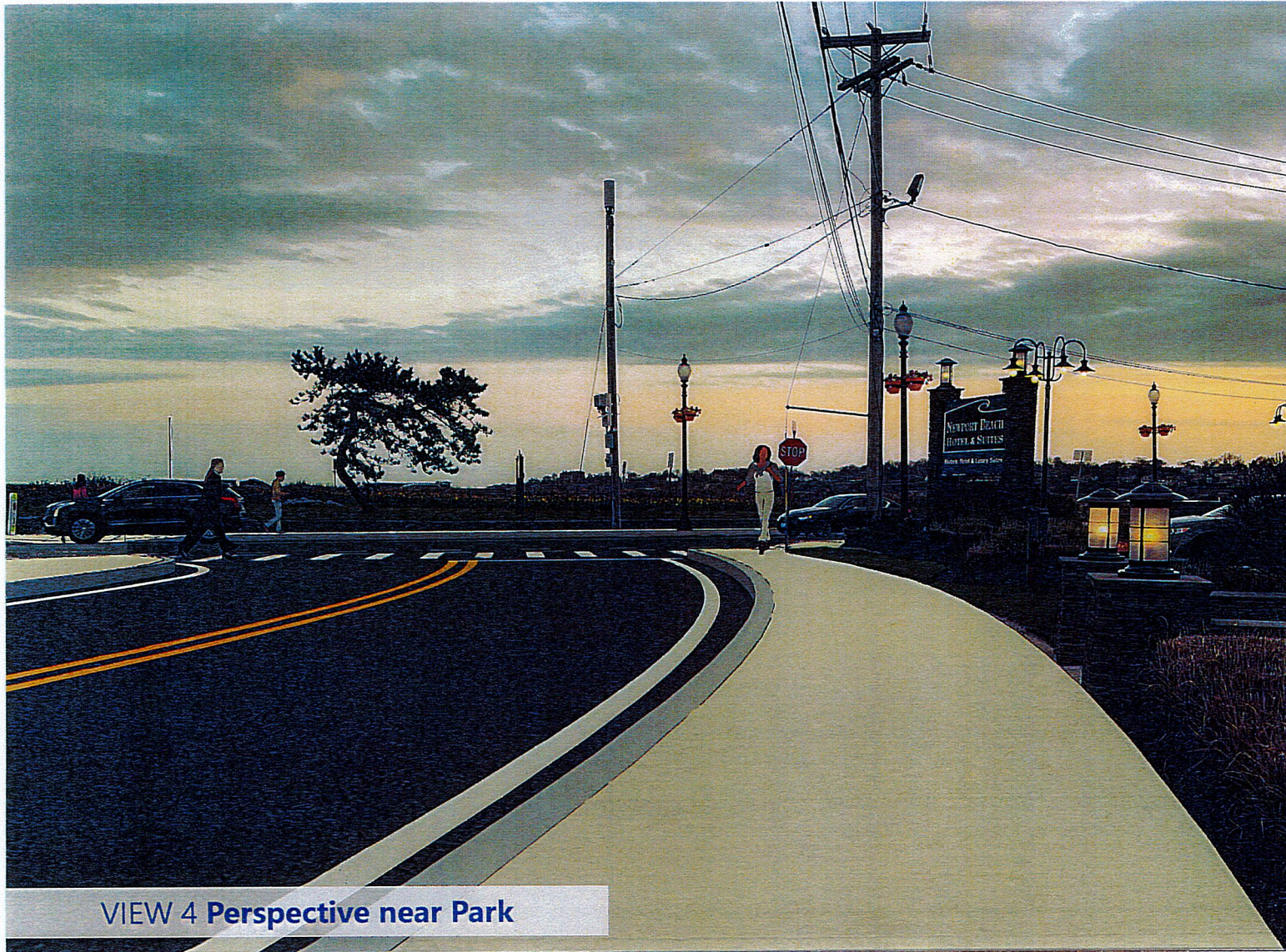


VIEW 4 Perspective near Park

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI

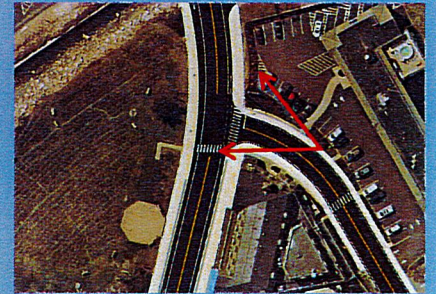


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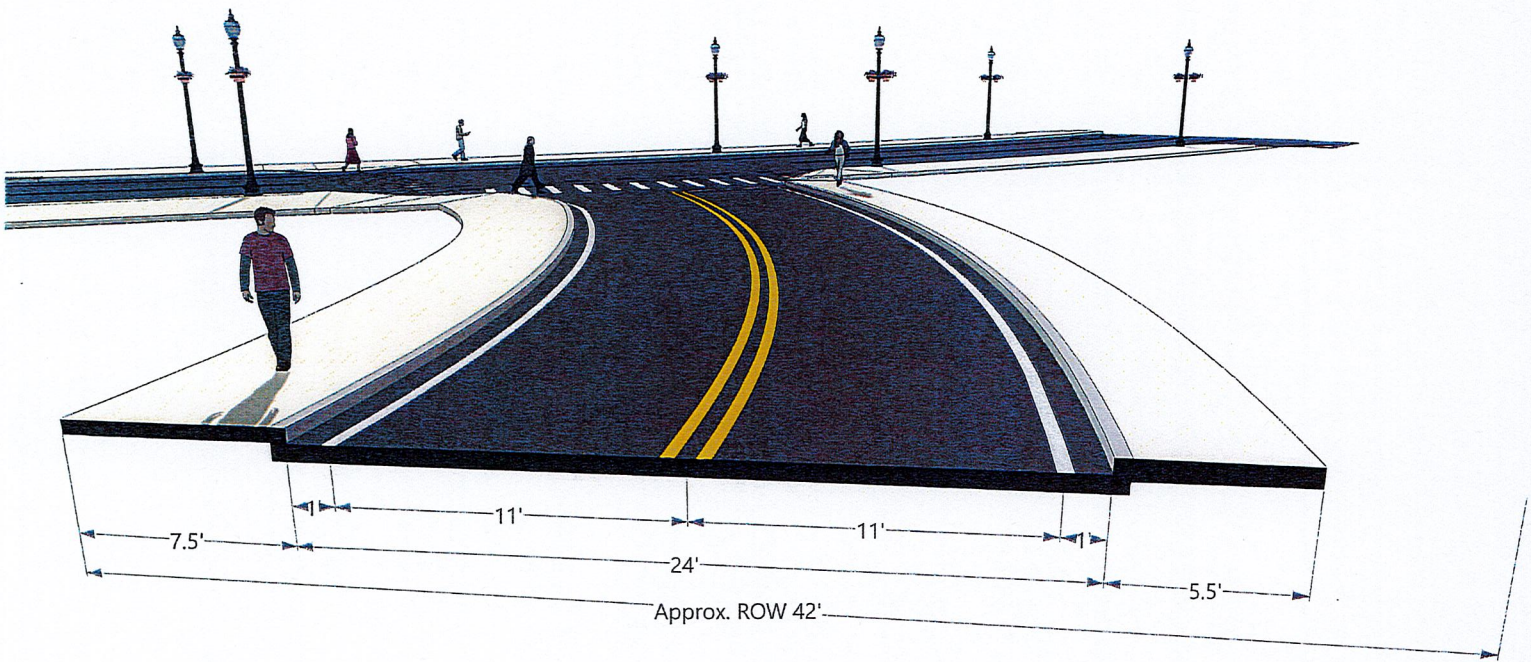
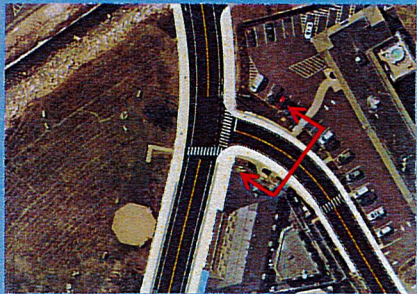
VIEW 4 Perspective near Park

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI



10/23/24

Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans
Town of Middletown, RI



DRAFT Section near Park

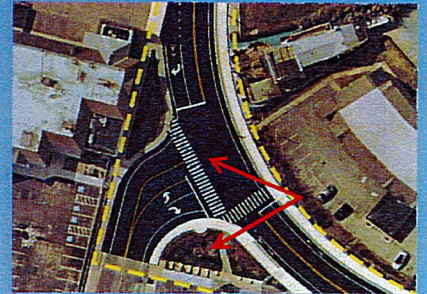


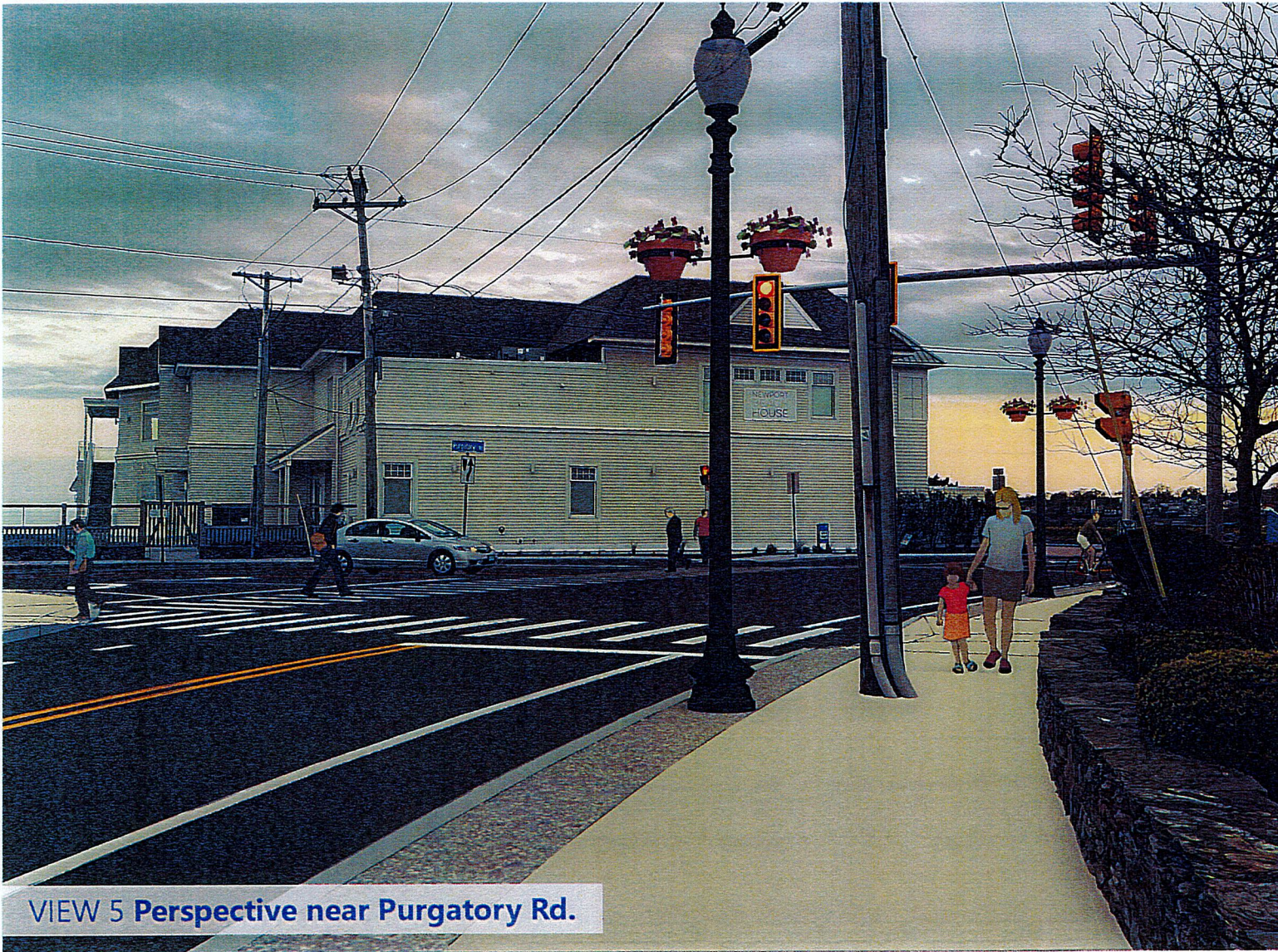
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VIEW 5 Perspective near Purgatory Rd.

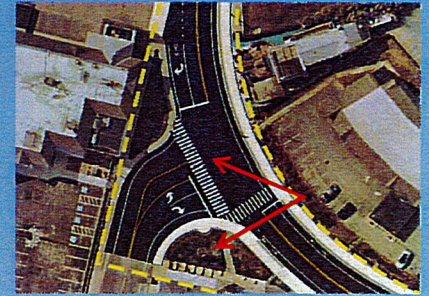
Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI





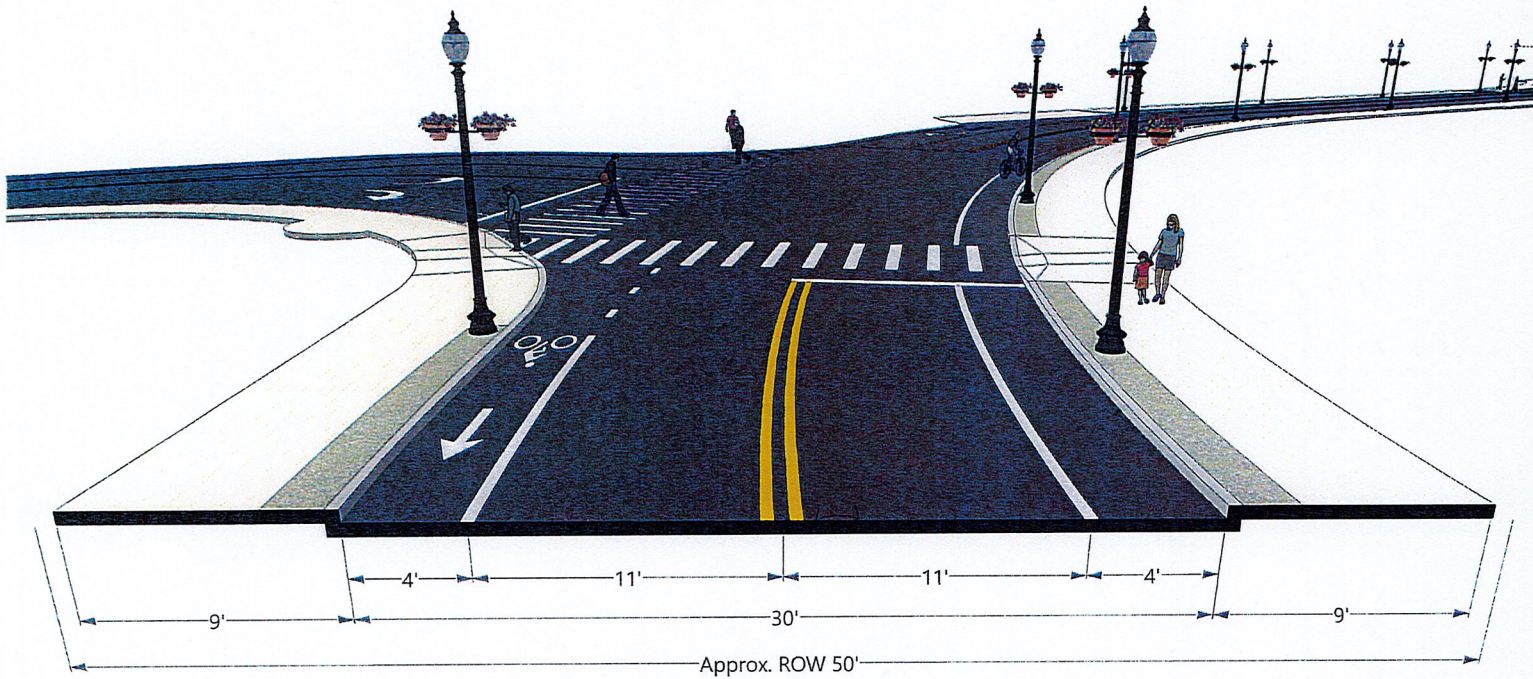
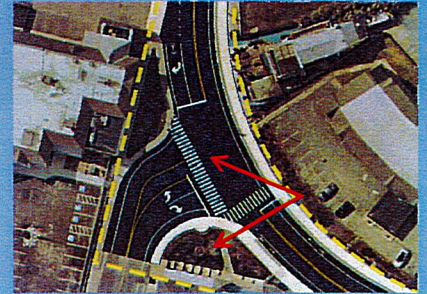
VIEW 5 Perspective near Purgatory Rd.

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI



10/23/24

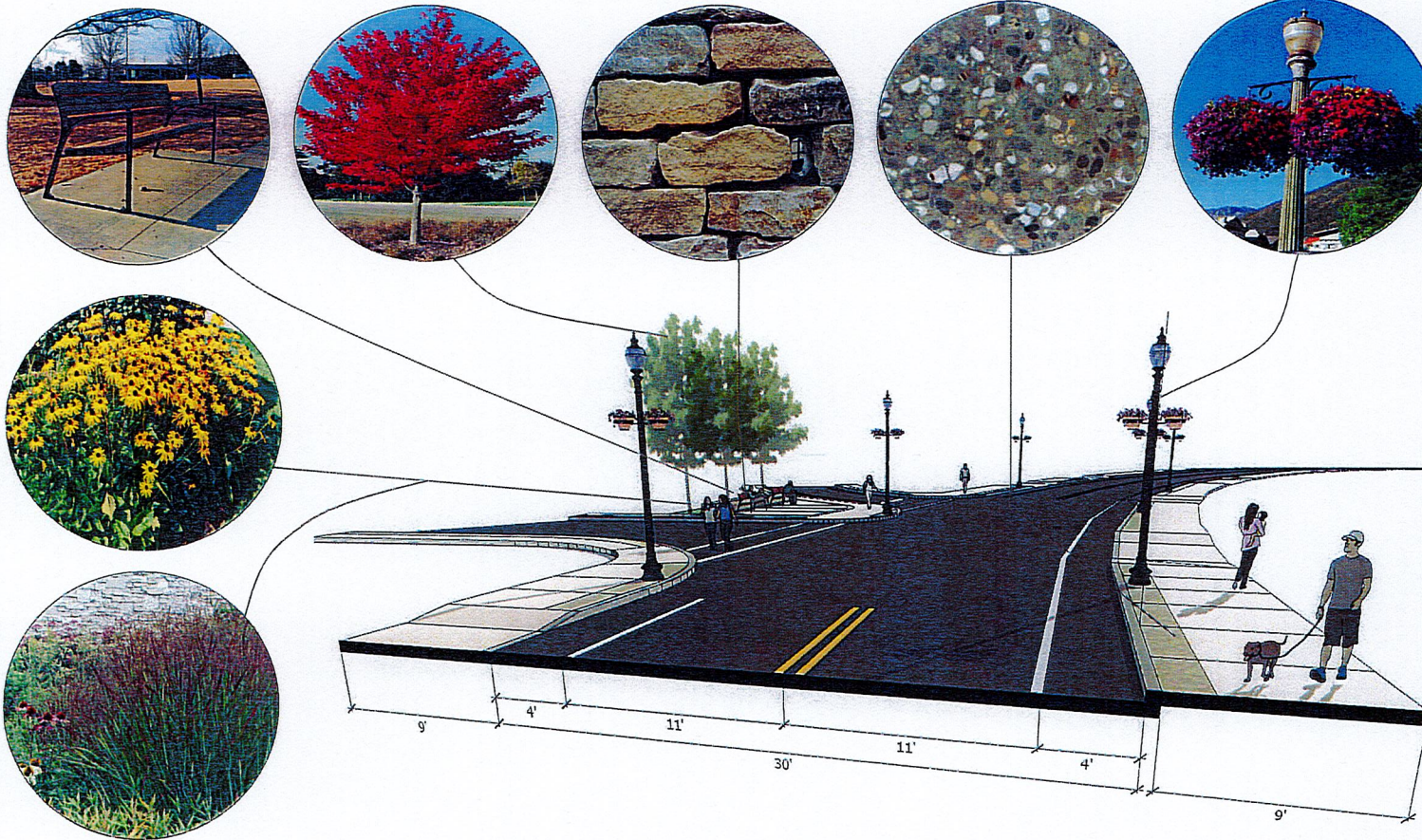
Aquidneck Avenue
Streetscapes 30% Plans
Town of Middletown, RI



DRAFT Section near Purgatory Rd



10/23/24



DRAFT Ideas for a Palette of Materials

Aquidneck Avenue Streetscapes 30% Plans Town of Middletown, RI

Note:

Sketch shows a sample of a potential palette of landscape materials. This is for discussion only. Actual materials selection will come later in the process.

Input received

- Public input

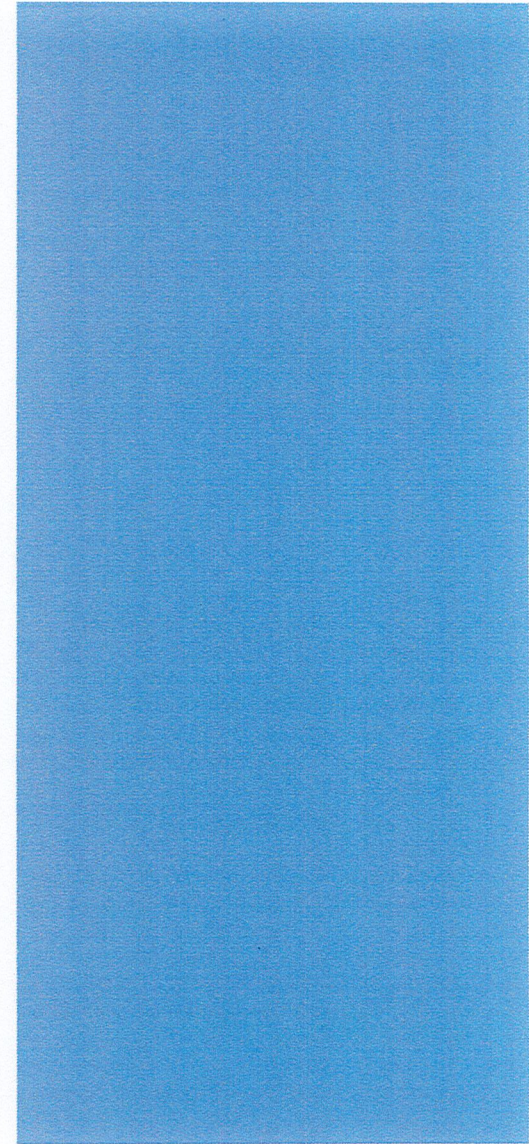
- Support for sidewalk improvements
- Project should not proceed without undergrounding of utilities
- Need for high-visibility or raised crosswalks
- Bike lanes should have adequate width and possibly delineators. Consider bike lanes on Wave Ave.
- Concern with Briarwood & Crescent intersections
- Consider boardwalk along pond
- Consider exposed aggregate concrete and esplanade sidewalk
- Use dark-sky compliant lighting

- Committee/staff input

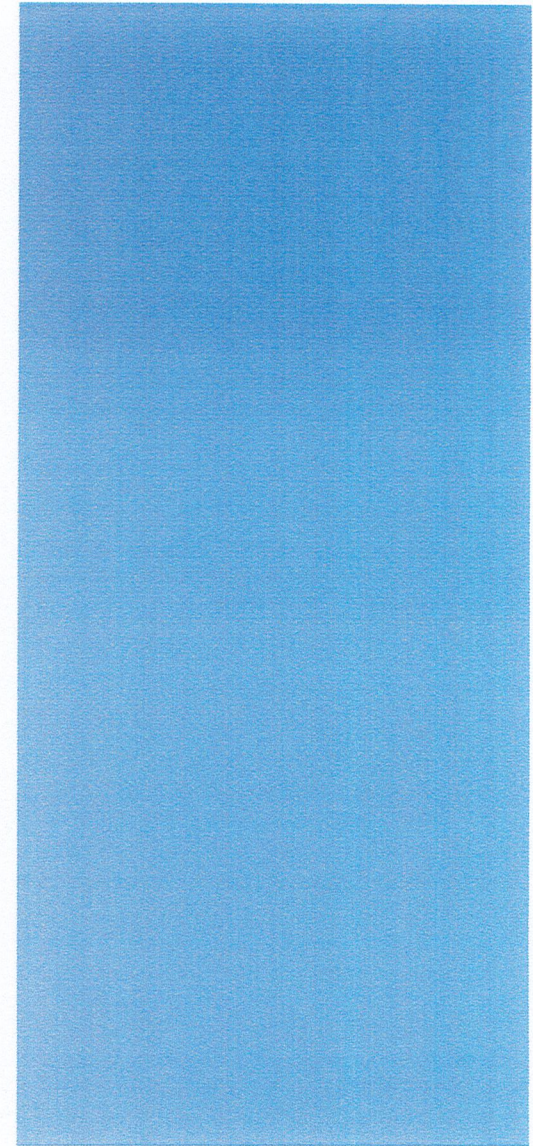
- Narrow the travel lanes to 10' to provide 5-foot wide bike lanes
- Use green paint to identify bike lanes
- Consider raised crosswalks & flashing beacons
- Provide bike lane to the left of dedicated right-turn lane at Purgatory
- Consider reducing width of Purgatory intersection
- Provide only one lane for traffic exiting Newport Ave.
- Sidewalks should not be widened if results in narrowing travel lanes.
- Consider removing utility poles
- Consider right-turn-only from Crescent

Next Steps

- Town Council reviews design and considers authorization to proceed to 90% design.
- Town requests inclusion of project in STIP (due 3/14/2025).
- Engineers incorporate comments and complete 90% design plans.
- Investigate funding alternatives for construction.



Q&A / Discussion



ABD Streetscapes Oct. 23, 2024 Public Meeting Comments and Responses

1. Concerns with visibility of crosswalks. Suggest more robust pedestrian crossings like raised crosswalks, flashing beacons, RRFBs, etc. especially at Memorial Boulevard/Aquidneck Ave intersection and near the Purgatory Road intersection. Suggest using TIF money for a concept study of a potential boardwalk along the pond.

Response: Crossings will be assessed in further detail moving to the next design submittal and any additional safety improvements will be implemented to the best extent practicable.

2. Support removing overhead utility lines

Response: Noted

3. Concerned with the proposed bike lane widths being smaller than they are today. Concerned with safety and traffic at Briarwood/Crescent/Aquidneck intersection.

Response: Confirmed with her that the existing bike lanes will not be getting smaller, but the travel lanes will be slightly narrowed. Seemed to be a large amount of participants who agreed with the Briarwood/Crescent/Aquidneck intersection being a major issue.

4. Suggest bike delineators to separate bike lanes from travel lanes and to add bike lanes on Wave Ave. Suggest funding the TIF and pursuing grant funding for undergrounding of utility lines and using power grid resiliency as a driving reason. The pedestrian signal pushbutton at Purgatory Road/Aquidneck Ave does not work from the Newport Beach House towards Tickets.

Response: Bike delineators or some sort of separation will be looked into as well as any potential lanes on Wave Ave.

5. Suggest safety improvements to Briarwood/Crescent/Aquidneck intersection, investigate opportunities to provide public parking (potentially existing RI Energy property) to allow people to patronize businesses and fund the TIF. Concerned with resiliency of Wave Ave pump station and encourage the protection and mitigation of it to be made a priority. Interested in a boardwalk idea around Easton's pond, potentially moving some of the pedestrian traffic off the main stretch of roadway and potentially putting the utility lines under the boardwalk.

Response: Noted

6. Comments: Any improvements to the sidewalks are appreciated. Utility lines are the most disruptive to business owners and when they invested in the area they were told utilities would be put underground which was a big selling point to them coming to the area. Curious how big of a percent the undergrounding of utilities is to the entire scope of the project.

Response: Utilities undergrounding is around \$20 million and all the other improvements currently are estimated around \$5 million.

7. Asked if the Valley Street/Aquidneck Ave rotary is a part of this project. Expressed need to improve the whole area, funding the TIF, and prioritize undergrounding. Should not move the project forward unless there is undergrounding of the utility lines. Concerned with Briarwood intersection and bump out at Memorial/Purgatory.
8. Suggests no thru traffic on Crescent Ave.
9. Curious as to what the current speed limit is through the project area. Suggest crosswalk buttons at every crosswalk, raised crosswalks or speed bumps to slow down traffic, putting a bus stop at the proposed pocket park near Newport Ave. Shared concerns with traffic and parking. New to the area and interested in learning more about the utility undergrounding aspect of things.
10. Suggest beautifying intersection at Valley/Aquidneck outside of the project limits.
11. Improve Valley/Aquidneck intersection and making it an adopt-a-spot, encourage using exposed aggregate for the sidewalks and amber lighting. Asked about the stormwater treatment system.

Response: Will note the requests for sidewalk treatments. Described the stormwater treatment being used for this project.

12. Request lighting to be dark-sky compliant. Suggest esplanade sidewalks and bike delineators.

Response: Noted.

13. Encourage Town Council to fund the TIF and to get RI Energy to identify this area as a priority for resiliency work. Should not do anything unless done correctly.



April 12, 2024

Ronald Wolanski, AICP
Director of Planning and Economic Development
350 East Main Road
Middletown, RI 02842

**RE: 30% Submission Review
Aquidneck Avenue Rehabilitation**

Dear Mr. Wolanski,

The Middletown Bicycle Pedestrian and Advisory Committee (BPAC) has completed a review of the Aquidneck Avenue Rehabilitation 30% Submission plan set, prepared by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), dated September 2023. The BPAC's review primarily focused on the Signing and Striping Plans (Sheets 35 through 40).

The purpose of this letter is to present our comments on the 30% submission plans for consideration by the design consultant (VHB). The comments and recommendations reference guidance and standards presented in the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) publication *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 11th Edition* (MUTCD).

1. The plan set indicates that a four-foot wide on street bike lane would be provided along the corridor. **The BPAC would strongly recommend that the proposed bike lane be a minimum of five feet in width. A four-foot-wide unprotected bike lane is the standard minimum and should be applied in pinch-point locations only. A five-foot wide bike lane could be achieved by narrowing the travel lanes to ten feet in each direction, which would promote slower vehicles speeds. Ten-foot travel lanes are within the acceptable range outlined for urban arterial roadways.**
2. The plan set indicates that the bike lane would be marked using standard white pavement markings. **The BPAC would recommend the use of green pavement markings to further establish the roadway space dedicated to bikes. At a minimum, green pavement markings would be requested in areas where bicyclists and drivers are likely to cross paths, as shown in Figure 9E-2 of the MUTCD, which is provided as an attachment.**
3. There are four uncontrolled crosswalks spanning Aquidneck Avenue throughout the corridor. **Due to the high pedestrian activity throughout this corridor, the BPAC requests that the design consultant consider the installation of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RFFB) at these uncontrolled crosswalks. It is also requested that the design consultant consider the possibility of raised crosswalks at the mid-block crossing locations to reduce vehicle travel speeds approaching the crosswalks.**

4. The signalized intersection of Aquidneck Avenue at Purgatory Road currently operates with a right-turn overlap phase for vehicles turning right from Aquidneck Avenue onto Purgatory Road. The plan set indicates that the exclusive right-turn lane would be a shared lane between bikes and vehicles. Due to the right-turn overlap phase, this would not be appropriate as vehicles turning right would conflict with bikes continuing through on Aquidneck Avenue. **The BPAC requests that this approach be revised to propose a bike lane to the left of the dedicated right-turn lane to eliminate this conflict. Green pavement markings should be used within the transition space to indicate that bicycles have the right-of-way, as shown in Figure 9E-3 of the MUTCD, which is provided as an attachment.**
5. The crosswalk spanning Purgatory Road at its intersection with Aquidneck Avenue measures approximately 80-feet. **As part of the sidewalk reconstruction proposed as part of this project, the BPAC would request that the design consultant consider extending the curb at the intersection to shorten this crossing distance. This would be beneficial to pedestrians, may improve signal operations due to the shortened pedestrian phase, and the tighter radius would promote slower vehicle speeds at the intersection.**
6. The utility poles run along the west side of Aquidneck Avenue throughout this corridor. The utility poles are shown to be located within the proposed sidewalk. **The BPAC requests that the design consultant confirm that the sidewalk width maintains a minimum 3-foot clearance at locations where utility poles are located within the sidewalk to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.**
7. As part of the reconstruction of the intersection of Aquidneck Avenue at Newport Avenue, two travel lanes, including a left-turn lane and a right-turn lane are proposed to be provided on Newport Avenue. **The BPAC notes that Newport Avenue primarily serves residential neighborhoods that can access Aquidneck Avenue via multiple routes. It is requested that the design consultant consider combining the two-lane Newport Avenue approach to a single shared lane that would serve both left and right-turning vehicles. This would provide a shorter crossing for pedestrians, and may allow for additional space at the proposed pocket park located in the southeast corner of the intersection.**

We trust that our review and recommendations of the Aquidneck Avenue Rehabilitation improvements will be considered by the design consultant. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Emily Buck
Middletown BPAC Chair on behalf of the BPAC

Attachments:

- Referenced MUTCD Figures

Figure 9E-2. Example of Pavement Markings for Bicycle Lanes on a Two-Way Street

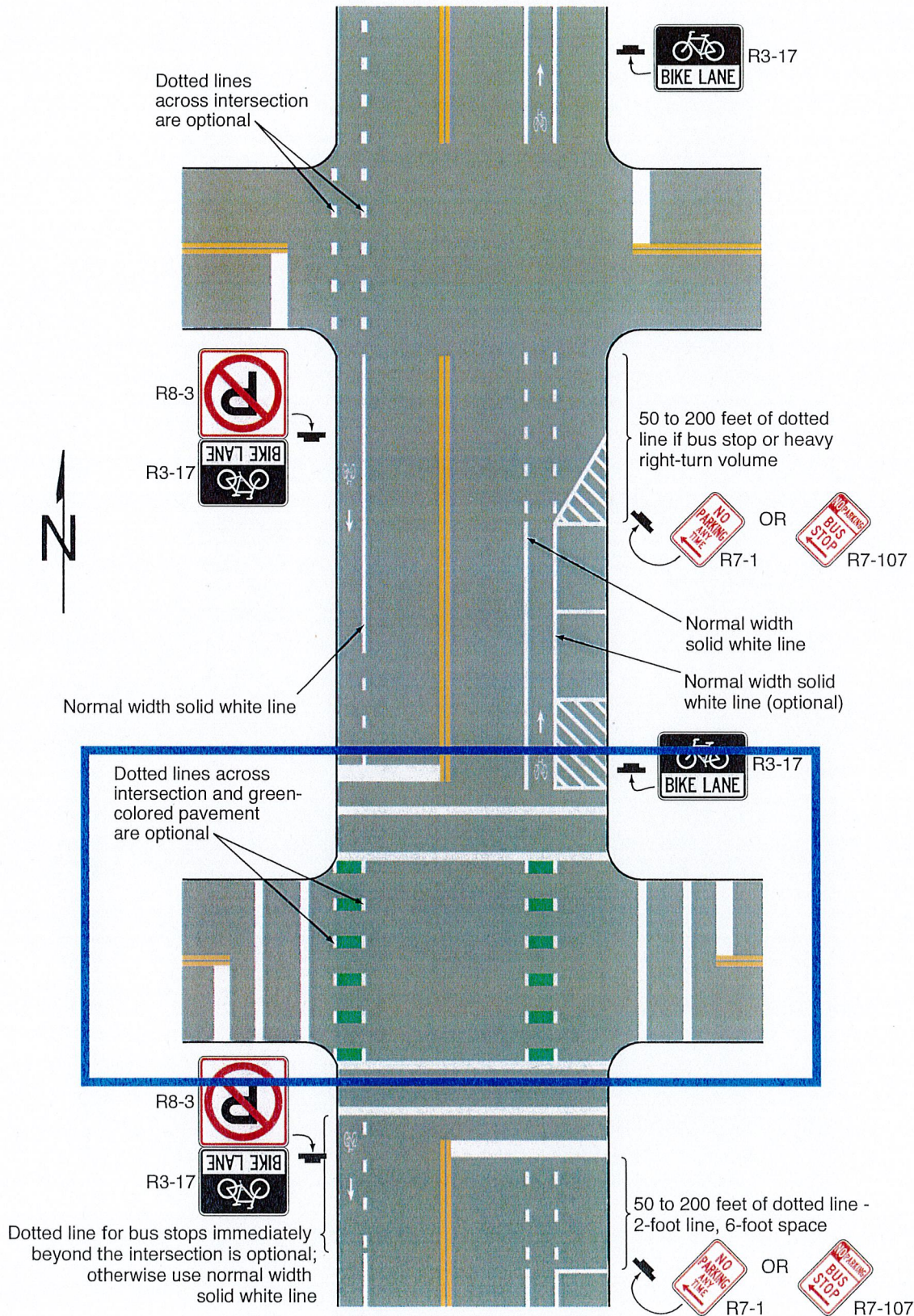
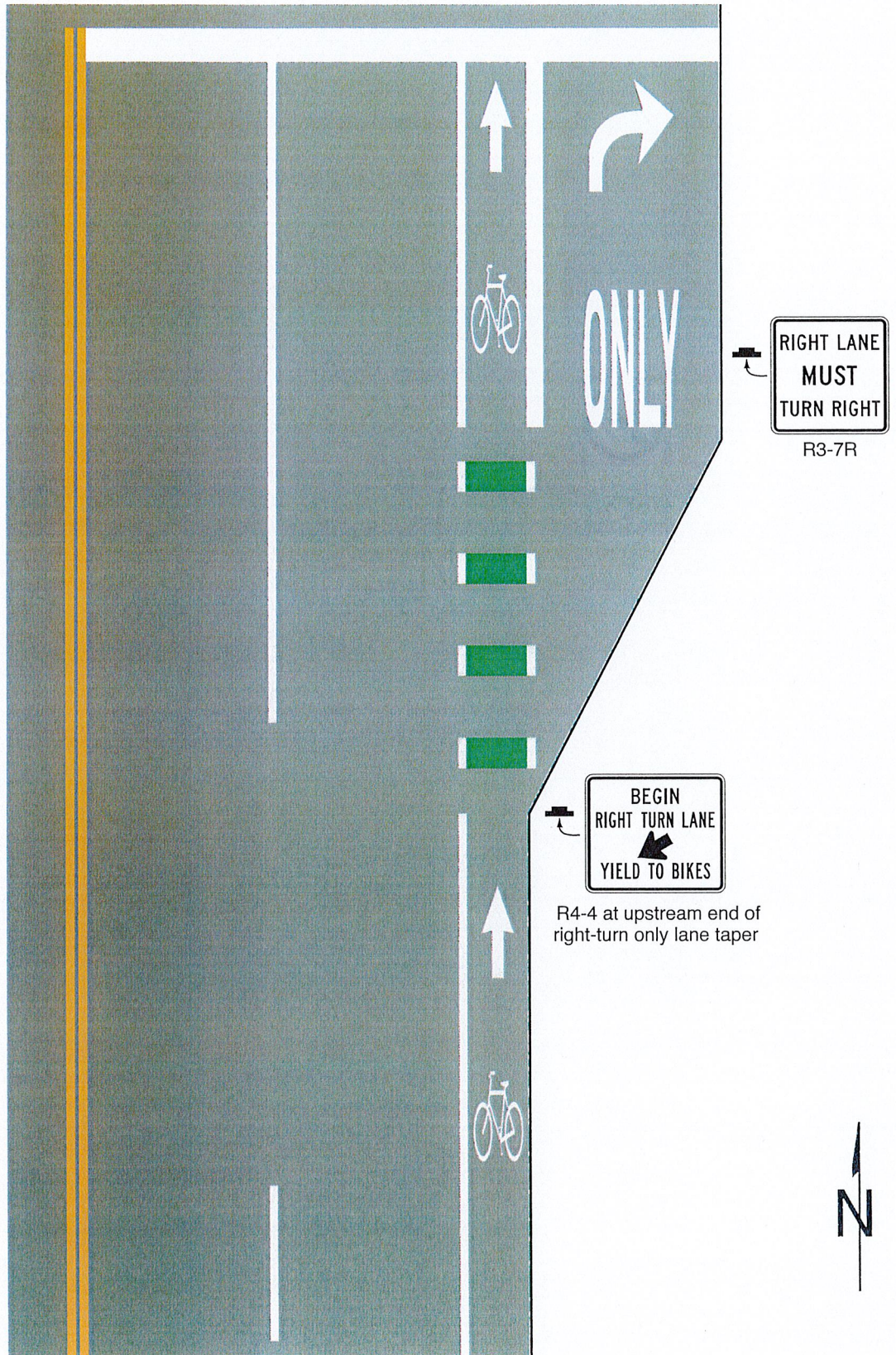
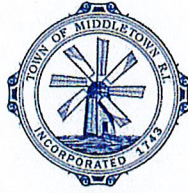


Figure 9E-3. Examples of Bicycle Lane Markings on an Approach to an Intersection
(Sheet 1 of 3)





MIDDLETOWN, RHODE ISLAND

MIDDLETOWN ROAD AND UTILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: THURSDAY 4.4.2024 AT 4:00 PM

Location: Middletown Public Works Conference Room - 9 Berkeley Ave. Middletown, RI

MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance: John Mello, Mike Gaston, Matthew Sullivan, Marc Thayer, Bill DiMarco,
and Julian Peckham

Robert Hanley, DPW Director

Tom Welch, Town Council

1. Call to Order at 4:02 pm
2. Minutes from the meeting on 3/7/2024 were reviewed and approved 6 – 0
3. New Business:
 - a. Meeting attendance: with an informal roll call the Secretary will note the attendance and include in meeting minutes.
 - b. Aquidneck Ave Lower project:
 - i. Various comments and concerns by the committee.
 - ii. Plans are at 30% and are in the process of being reviewed and commented by Crossman Engineering.
 - iii. It was noted that the building at Rejects is close to the property line along Aquidneck Ave.
 - iv. Proposed reconfiguration of Newport Ave. at Aquidneck Ave. What becomes of this land based on 30% submission.
 - v. Narrow sidewalks at Rejects and poles 10 and 11 are two concerns of the committee.
 - vi. The committee does not think that the narrowing of Aquidneck Ave at any location should be considered.
 - vii. The committee questions the need of sidewalk at the East end of Wave Ave, what purpose does that serve?
 - viii. At the area of Crescent and Briarwood the plans seem to indicate redoing island and narrowing Aquidneck Ave.
 - ix. The committee questions redoing the width of Aquidneck Ave. We agreed that the island at Briarwood/Crescent is necessary to keep intersections from merging.
 - x. Comment: Right turn only sign Crescent and Aquidneck.
 - c. Wave Ave hotel:
 - i. Eight units shown utilizing the septic service from the existing home

- ii. Crossman Engineering is reviewing drainage calculation
- iii. We need to see architectural details and sections on proposed concrete retaining wall on the South (Aquidneck Ave) side of the property
- d. Coddington Highway Transportation Development:
 - i. It is noted, Chairman John Mello recused himself from this discussion and left the room.
 - ii. Comments from committee:
 - No outside storage of materials.
 - Show electric power on plans.
 - Should there be a proposed manhole over the 36" line, at midway point of line.
 - Committee has no concerns about the proposed development of this parcel.
- e. Newport National Golf Course:
 - i. Irrigation proposed along Mitchell's Lane.
 - ii. As previously stated, is the easement for water and sewer wide enough for their necessary separation.
 - iii. Easement leading to "hotbox" must remain in grass

4. Old Business:

- a. Jay Peckham Memorial Bench update:
 - i. Matt Sullivan is filling out the application; some parts are vague.
 - ii. We still need to get something to Wendy Marshall, so that the Committee can review and comment.
 - iii. John Mello will get together with Julian Peckham and Matt Sullivan to generate a cover letter.
- b. School Building Committee update:
 - i. Marc Thayer gave a very informative presentation of the present status of proposal.
 - ii. Marc has some very preliminary plans, just not for public viewing as of yet.
 - iii. Marc gave the Web location showing the current status of the various elements of the project.
- c. Aquidneck Ave Project (recently completed):
 - i. No comments
- d. Purgatory Road Project and Lower Aquidneck Ave project:
 - i. Mike Gaston has noted various locations in Warren, RI where they have "exposed aggregate" in concrete sidewalks.
 - ii. Committee discussed locations where Middletown might try this methodology.
 - iii. Purgatory Rd sidewalks would not work with this type of aggregate material.

5. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned 6:30 pm