

**BATTERY PARK
SOUTH
PLANNING AREA**

BATTERY PARK SOUTH Planning Area

PLANNING AREA PROFILE:

Location

The Battery Park South Planning Area is located in the eastern portion of the Town of Smithfield. It is bounded on the north by Battery Park Road, on the west by South Church Street, on the south by Gumwood Drive and the Waterford Oaks community and on the east by the Town's corporate limits. The Planning Area consists of approximately 560 acres.

Existing Land Use and Transportation System

The Battery Park South Planning Area is a mixed use area incorporating a wide range of residential uses bordered by a mix of corridor-based commercial, light industrial and service uses interspersed with several well-located undeveloped properties. The most notable existing uses include a major community shopping center anchored by a regional chain grocery store, a cattle auction, the Bradford Mews Apartment community and the Willow Oaks, Aspen Woods, Scot's Landing residential subdivisions. The Planning Area incorporates the lower half of the the Eastern Annexation Area, one of three Isle of Wight County territories annexed by the Town of Smithfield on January 1, 1998. The vast majority of this land is vacant and maintained as woodlands, wetlands and open fields, supporting little active agricultural activities. Included within this Annexation Area is London Park, a planned residential community approved by the County prior to annexation for the development of approximately 250 single family detached residences. As part of the annexation agreement between the Town and Isle of Wight County, any property approved for development prior to annexation must maintain its granted development rights once it is brought into the Town's jurisdiction. Thus, the London Park community reserves its potential to construct 250 additional dwelling units within the Town, and therefore, for the purposes of this planning exercise, is not considered as an undeveloped property suitable for a Sub-Area designation.

The major roads serving the Planning Area include Battery Park Road, South Church Street and Smithfield Boulevard. Each of the major undeveloped properties located within the Planning Area are accessed either directly or indirectly by on of these streets. As summarized in the Battery Park North Planning Area profile, the widening of Battery Park Road is recommended in order to ensure that a satisfactory level of service is maintained along this important entrance corridor as daily vehicular trip demand increases (see the Transportation Plan-Chapter X for a more detailed explanation of the recommended improvements). The projected increase in daily vehicle trips along this corridor and the recommended roadway improvements will play a major role in shaping the future development of this Planning Area.

Existing Environmental Considerations

The Battery Park South Planning Area is unique from other planning areas in the Town in that sensitive environmental areas do not constitute a significant portion of its acreage. Only four percent of the total Planning Area, approximately 22 acres, have topographic and wetland characteristics which make them unsuitable for urban development. However, the Planning Area's future development potential is impacted by poor soil conditions consistent with those found throughout the Eastern Annexation Area. The soils in this Area drain poorly and are highly susceptible to shrink-swell conditions. These poor soil conditions will threaten the full development potential of the remaining vacant parcels within the Planning Area. Of the Planning Area's 559.2 total acres, approximately 141 (25%) have been identified as having prime development potential.

BATTERY PARK SOUTH LAND USE PLAN

The Battery Park South Planning Area is planned as a mixed-use community incorporating a wide array of housing options, a critical mass of retail commercial uses and an existing light industrial use along its principal commercial corridor, South Church Street. The future development of the Area should occur under the guidance of a master plan for each Sub-Area, as opposed to the parcel-by-parcel approach that has historically dominated Town development along its major corridors. Several well-located undeveloped properties within the Planning Area afford the Town the opportunity to augment its existing retail commercial base, provide for additional lower and middle income residential housing opportunities and implement its planning goals and objectives with respect to economic development and urban corridor design and development.

In the following sections, specific land use recommendations are presented for each of the five Sub-Areas identified in the Battery Park South Planning Area.

Sub-Area 1 Recommendations

Sub-Area 1 is located in the northwestern portion of the Battery Park South Planning Area. It is bounded on the west by South Church Street, on the south by a commercial use and the Colonial Avenue and Willow Oaks subdivisions, on the east by a stormwater basin and the London Park property and on the north by Battery Park Road. An existing residence is located within the Sub-Area and is surrounded by an expanse of flat, vacant property offering direct access to both South Church Street and Battery Park Road. The 34.1 acre Sub-Area is planned for retail commercial use at a floor area ratio of 0.20 to 0.50 square feet per net developable acre per acre. At this density, the Sub-Area's 20.0 net developable acres could support between approximately 174,000 and 436,000 square feet of retail commercial space.

The major issues involved with the potential development of this Sub-Area are (1) maximizing the development potential associated with the prime location of the vacant parcel, (2) protecting the integrity of the emerging Battery Park Road entrance corridor, (3) vehicular access and (4) implementing the Battery Park Road improvements. This Sub-Area is widely recognized within the community as an extremely valuable piece of property in terms of its visibility, location, accessibility, topography and size. As such, the Town should make every effort to proactively target suitable regional retail commercial or hotel lodging end-users for the site that would expand the Town's existing commercial base, support its ongoing efforts to boost local tourism and/or provide additional products and services not currently available to Town residents. The future use of the site should also serve as a "secondary gateway" along the Battery Park Road Corridor that visually welcomes travelers to the urban core of Smithfield. In order to maximize the development potential of this site and achieve its highest and best use, the existing residence located within the Sub-Area should be relocated or razed to make room for the identified future use.

A thoughtful master plan should be created for the Sub-Area which provides for shared vehicular entrances and efficient internal street systems, protects the integrity of the Battery Park Road Entrance Corridor and improves the visual quality and functionality of the South Church Street Corridor. Access points into and out of the Sub-Area should be limited along both South Church Street and Battery Park Road in order to prohibit the further proliferation of curb cuts along these roadways, while still providing the necessary access needed to adequately serve the individual businesses within the development. The master plan should include to reserve the right-of-way necessary to implement the recommended Battery Park Road improvements (ie. widening the road to include two additional lanes).

Sub-Area 2 Recommendations

Sub-Area 2 covers 61.7 acres and is located in the northeastern portion of the Battery Park South Planning Area. It is bounded on the west by the London Park property, on the south by the the Scot's Landing subdivision and the Town's corporate boundary, on the east by the Town's corporate boundary and on the north by Battery Park North. The only existing use located within the Sub-Area is a cattle auction that operates throughout the year. The Sub-Area is planned for light industrial use with an allowable floor area ratio of 0.20-0.30 square feet per net developable acre. At this proposed density, Sub-Area 2's 28.7 net developable acres could support between approximately 250,000 and 375,000 square feet of light industrial space.

The major issues involved with the potential development of this Sub-Area are (1) rezoning the vacant property, (2) vehicular access, (3) provision of public utilities and (4) buffering from adjacent uses. The property is currently zoned C-C, Community Conservation. In this instance, the C-C zoning classification serves as a "holding zone" for property which allows for the continuation of the present use of the land until market considerations dictate a clear highest and best ultimate use for the property. In this case, a

small portion of the land is currently being used for a cattle auction, while the balance of the property is conserved as vacant property, including a substantial area of wooded land. The local marketplace has yet to give rise to any formal development plans or pressures, and no subsequent plans are anticipated for the near planning term. However, as part of its quest to proactively increase economic development activity, the Town has identified Sub-Area 2 as a suitable site for future light industrial use. In order to develop the Sub-Area for light industrial purposes, the property would first have to be rezoned to the I-1, Light Industrial zoning classification.

Access is far and away the most critical issue impacting the future land use plan for this Sub-Area. Battery Park Road will provide the sole direct vehicular access to the Sub-Area, and presently it offers only two lanes that are becoming increasingly taxed to full capacity. As mentioned earlier, the HRPDC has recommended that Battery Park Road be widened in order to support anticipated increases in traffic demand along the road in the next fifteen years. The future development of the Sub-Area for light industrial use would place additional demands on this emerging entrance corridor and should only be supported in conjunction with the recommended road improvements. Furthermore, in order to adequately support future trucking and employment traffic demands imposed by the future user(s) of the site, it is recommended that the future development of the Sub-Area also include the construction of a center turn lane and a right-hand turn lane on the eastbound side of Battery Park Road to serve a single entrance into the facility. These turn lane improvements should be paid for by the eventual developer of the property.

The provision of public utilities to the site will also play an important role in the future development of the Sub-Area. Currently, an 8-inch water line runs the full length of Battery Park Road, as does a 16-inch force main providing sanitary sewer service. The Town would require that the future developer of the site extend the necessary water and sanitary sewer lines from these existing lines into the Sub-Area to serve the recommended light industrial use.

Another important consideration for the future development of this Sub-Area is the future stability of adjacent uses, specifically the scattered single family residences located along Battery Park Road, the Scot's Landing subdivision to the south, the planned London Park community to the west and the existing cattle auction located within the Sub-Area. The master plan for the recommended light industrial park should include sufficient setbacks and landscape buffers, as provided for in the revised Zoning Ordinance, to minimize the impact of light, noise, dust, smoke or any other externality on these important adjacent uses.

Sub-Areas 3 and 4 Recommendations

Sub-Area 3 is located in the western portion of the Battery Park South Planning Area. It is bounded on the north by Smithfield Boulevard, on the west by an existing shopping center, on the south by Sub-Area 4 and on the east by the Good Shepherd Catholic Church. Sub-Area 3 covers approximately 11 acres and is planned for attached residential development, at a density 68 dwelling units per acre. At this

proposed density, Sub-Area 3 could support between approximately 36 and 48 new dwelling units within its 6 net developable acres.

Sub-Area 4 is located in the central portion of the Battery Park South Planning Area. It is bounded on the north by Sub-Area 3 and the Good Shepherd Catholic Church, on the west by an existing shopping center, on the south by the Bradford Mews apartment community and on the east by the Scot's Landing subdivision. Sub-Area 4 covers approximately 19 acres and is effectively "land-locked" from any direct access to either Smithfield Boulevard or South Church Street. Because of its poor accessibility, lack of public utilities and its heavily wooded terrain, Sub-Area 4 is planned for community conservation development which is intended to preserve existing natural features and vegetation, promote interim agricultural and forestry activities and production and encourage the conservation and maintenance of sensitive environmental areas. This land use designation would allow single family detached residential development at a density of no more than one dwelling unit per acre. At this density, as many as 12 new dwelling units could be developed within the Sub-Area's 12.2 net developable acres. Although the future land use designation for the Sub-Area promotes a density range that would support up to one residential unit per acres, the existing zoning (C-C, Community Conservation) of the properties located within the Sub-Area provides that new residential subdivisions shall only be permitted in the district via special permit and that each subdivision shall not exceed five lots. Thus, any future subdivisions proposed for residential purposes must be individually rezoned to a residential zoning district compatible with the Comprehensive Plan and pursuant to the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

The major issues involved with the potential development of these Sub-Areas are (1) vehicular access, (2) the provision of public utilities and (3) buffering from adjacent uses. Access is particularly important with respect to Sub-Area 4 as it is effectively "land-locked" without direct access to an existing roadway. Access to the Sub-Area should be granted by an easement via a well-planned internal street in Sub-Area 3 to Smithfield Boulevard. Sub-Area 3 in turn, should be limited to a single entrance off Smithfield Boulevard in order to prevent the further proliferation of curb cuts and additional entrances along this collector road. Currently, the intersection of Smithfield Boulevard lacks a traffic signal despite the fact that it provides the sole vehicular access for several hundred residents located in the southeastern portion of Town. As part of the future master planning of these two Sub-Areas, the Town should analyze the projected impact of future development of the vacant properties on the capacity of the collector road and this important intersection in order to determine if projected increases in traffic demand warrant the addition of a traffic signal and/or possibly a turn lane serving the projects.

The provision of public utilities to the planned uses in each Sub-Area will be another important consideration in their future development, particularly for Sub-Area 4 given its location. Currently, an 8-inch water line provides Town water service along both Smithfield Boulevard and South Church Street. Sub-Area 3 would be most logically served by a line extending from Smithfield Boulevard, while Sub-Area 4 could receive service from an extension from the proposed line in Sub-Area 3 or from the South Church Street line via an extension easement with the adjacent shopping center. A 4-inch force main providing Town sanitary sewer service extends from South Church Street to the Colonial Avenue pumping station just north of Sub-Area 3. Sub-Area 3 would be able to tap into this line to obtain sanitary sewer service,

while Sub-Area 4 would require an extension of this line via Sub-Area 3 or an extension of existing lines from the Bradford Mews pumping station to the south.

Sub-Area 5 Recommendations

Sub-Area 5 is located in the southwestern portion of the Battery Park South Planning Area. It is bounded on the north by an existing shopping center, on the west by State Route 10/U.S. Route 258, on the south by the commercial portion of Waterford Oaks and on the east by a storage facility and the Bradford Mews apartment community. The 14.7 acre Sub-Area is planned for retail commercial use at a floor area ratio of 0.20 to 0.50 square feet per net developable acre per acre. At this density, the Sub-Area's 9.6 net developable acres could support between approximately 84,000 and 210,000 square feet of commercial space.

The major issues involved with the potential development of this Sub-Areas are (1) vehicular access and (2) buffering adjacent uses. This Sub-Area should be planned to be accessed from a single, shared commercial entrance along South Church Street. A shared entrance would be preferable for this Sub-Area because future entrances along this roadway should be minimized in order to decrease future traffic congestion along this heavily traveled commercial corridor. Along with the careful placement of the entrance, the eventual site plan for the Sub-Area should also provide sufficient vegetative buffering between the future development and the storage facility and apartment complex which lie adjacent to the property's eastern boundary. Vegetation should also be maintained as much as possible and should be incorporated into a thoughtful landscaping plan for the site in order to implement the goals and objectives of Town's corridor design guidelines and to help moderate the noise, exhaust and lighting generated by passing traffic. Additionally, future development in the Sub-Area should be of a scale and design quality consistent with adjacent commercial uses along this portion of the South Church Street corridor. Together, these uses should establish a strong identity that effectively welcomes travelers to Smithfield and provides visual clues as to the upcoming transition from the rural area to the urban core of the Town.

FUTURE LAND USE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan projects the Battery Park South Planning Area as an integrated, mixed-use community which will provide several opportunities to meet the Town's economic development objectives with respect to expanding its existing retail commercial core, providing additional motel facilities to support new tourism and conference visitors and attracting additional light industrial development. The Plan also calls for future development along the Town's important entrance corridors to avoid duplicating the mistakes of past parcel-by-parcel sprawl development by implementing a master planning approach to vacant parcels that respects the integrity of these corridors and follows the spirit of the new corridor design guidelines. The plan for the Area also provides for a suitable transition from its mix of highway related commercial, industrial uses along these corridors to the mix of residential uses beyond. The Battery Park South Planning Area has the potential to accommodate between approximately 48 and 60 new households. It also has the potential to provide between approximately 258,000 and 645,000 square feet of new retail commercial space and between approximately 250,000 and 375,000 square feet of new

light industrial space. The development of this Planning Area should provide significant non-tourist related employment and revenues for the Town. However, the active use of these properties may not occur for many years because there are no pending development plans for the Area beyond the London Park residential project (which calls for approximately 250 single family homes that are not included in the potential new household formations provided above). In the interim, the Town should encourage the creation of a master plan for the various Sub- Areas designated above which respects the natural environment and efficiently provides suitable building sites to meet Town planning objectives. No development should take place until the required and extensive utility improvements are completed by the developer(s) of each particular site.

The table on the following page summarizes the development potential of each of the Sub-Areas as recognized in the Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

BATTERY PARK SOUTH PLANNING AREA

Sub-Area	Sub-Area Acreage	Net Developable Acreage	Recommended Use	Density	Yield
1	34.1	20.0	Retail Commercial	0.20-0.50	174,240 - 435,600
2	61.7	28.7	Light Industry	0.20-0.30	250,034 - 375,052
3	11.3	6.0	Attached Residential	6-8	36 - 48
4	18.8	12.2	Community Conservation	1	12 - 12
5	14.7	9.6	Retail Commercial	0.20-0.50	83,635 - 209,088
Sub-Area Total	140.6	76.5	Estimated Totals: Community Conservation Attached Residential Retail Commercial Light Industry		12 - 12 36 - 48 257,875 - 644,688 250,034 - 375,052
Sensitive Environmental Areas	22.0				
Existing Urban Development	396.6				
Planning Area Total	559.2	76.5			