

II. JAMESTOWN'S VISION – THE MILLENIUM AND BEYOND

A. THE 1998 COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

The State of Rhode Island enacted the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act in 1988. This Act modernized the 1920's era statutes, which were sorely out of date and under implemented. The 1988 Act mandated the preparation of Comprehensive Community Plans in each City and Town in Rhode Island.

A vital component in the comprehensive planning process is citizen participation. Having successfully implemented a citizen survey in 1978, the Jamestown Town Council and the Jamestown Planning Commission decided to distribute another community citizen survey in January 1990. This survey was instrumental in developing the goals, policies and implementation strategies for the 1991 Comprehensive Community Plan; the first Comprehensive Plan prepared under the new enabling legislation.

Under a State mandate to update the current Comprehensive Community Plan, last May, the Planning Commission and the Town Council again solicited responses to a community survey. The survey was mailed to all registered voters in Jamestown and, to taxpayers not registered to vote in Jamestown as requested. Jamestown's returned 1116 of the 3615 surveys distributed. This represents a 31% return rate, which in statistical terms is tremendous.

This summary will provide a synopsis of the 1998 survey as well as provide some comparison between the 1990 and the 1998 surveys.

1. Survey Profile

Over 97% of the respondents were year round residents, and the average age was 53. Almost half (44.8%) live in the village and East Shore Road, followed by 24.5% from the Shores and 18.2 percent from the north end.

Over 73% of responders have lived in Jamestown for more than 11 years and 92% own their own home. Almost one-quarter work in Jamestown, 21.5% work on Aquidneck Island, 20% each work in Northern and Southern Rhode Island, and 14.4% work in Metropolitan Providence. The average household income is between \$60,000 and \$90,000, with 60% of incomes evenly distributed between \$36,000 and \$120,000. 38.4% of the respondents have 2 wage earners per household.

Survey responders ranged in age from 18 to 89 with an average age of 53. Most children of respondents attend public schools.

Over 40% responded to the 1990 survey and 26% felt that their views have changed very little since that time.

2. Data Summary

Jamestowners overwhelmingly agree (86.6%) that the main goal for Jamestown is to “maintain the Island’s rural character” and feel that the “natural environment” is the most desirable quality (87%) of living in Jamestown. This is consistent with the 1990 response where 77.4% thought that the “natural environment” was the most desirable quality. Other very desirable equalities include “small town character” (79.6%), “access to bay” (76.5%), and Jamestown’s location in the state (61.6%).

The authors of the survey felt that the Town’s drinking water situation was the most important issue facing the Town and requested responses to 8 different water related questions. The majority (92%) of those surveyed thought the Town has a water quantity problem and 55.6 felt that the Town also has a water quality problem. To solve the water quantity problem, 46.4% want to spend the money required to provide a permanent solution. When posed with measures to mitigate the water quantity problem, 79.5% support public education regarding water management, 57.6% want a Town supported rebate program for installation of water saving devices. Similarly (56.3%) support changing the water use rate structure to discourage excessive water use.

Only 27.3 thought the Town should start planning now to provide municipal water to areas of the Island that now depend on private wells. Almost half (45.5%) of the respondents support requiring water saving upgrades, such as low flush toilets and banning automatic lawn sprinkler systems (56.1%); only 2.8% have automatic lawn sprinklers. There was no consensus on whether the Town Council should also act as the Board of Water Commissioners (40.1%) as opposed to forming a separate commission (37% and 20% unsure).

Two times more respondents (56%) supported a required inspection program for private septic systems than did not support such a program (23%).

Responses were tied about creating historic districts on the Island. Those that did support creating districts wanted them (in order of dominance) downtown, all over the island, and Shoreby Hill. The majority (70%) of responders would like to see the scenic views on Jamestown preserved by managing vegetation growth.

Land preservation continues to be supported by the populace. In 1990, approximately 75% favored continued preservation of open space on both Beavertail and Center Island (watershed) areas. Today, 76.6% want additional open space/recreation land preserved, with 19% of those agreeing only if it does not cost anything. Public/Private partnerships (e.g.: the Town in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy) were the most popular response for how to fund this additional open space/recreation land. Other suggestions include development impact fees (33.5%), 1-3% real estate transfer fee (33%) and municipal bonds (26.4%).

It is most important to buy open space for drinking water protection (67.3%), followed by the protection of natural resources (66.3%), limiting new houses (48%), protecting scenic views (41.9%), and preserving agricultural land (40%).

The survey responders feel that Jamestown has adequate active recreation (72%), passive recreation (68%) and facilities for boating (71%). The level of satisfaction for outdoor recreation has increased over the last 8 years, where in 1990 only 66.6% were satisfied with the facilities.

Most (76.1%) were satisfied with the goods and services in Town while others felt that a new and cleaner grocery market with better prices was desirable. The satisfaction rate was slightly higher (84.5%) in 1990.

The majority (70%) have not used overnight rental rooms in Jamestown and therefore were satisfied (51%) with the number of rental rooms available. Bed and Breakfast houses were supported in some residential areas (41%) while others preferred that they be prohibited (33.1%).

Jamestowners did not see the need for a tourism office (73%) but would like to have a community bulletin board in the downtown area for announcing local events and news (64%). The primary focus of the East Ferry area should be a multi-purpose working waterfront. Most responders (61%) support maintaining facilities for the commercial fishing industry. This is again consistent with the 1990 survey where a majority felt that the current fishing activity should be maintained at not only East Ferry, but Ft. Wetherill Boat Basin and West Ferry.

Over half (52.5%) felt that Jamestown only has a parking problem in the summer and 41.6% feel the Town should therefore develop another municipal lot. An equal number of respondents (25%) felt that it should be either a pay-for-park lot or free to all.

A large number (81%) of those questioned are in favor of a tree planting/replacement program along major roads in Jamestown. Specifically, Narragansett Avenue and Southwest Avenue were targeted for such a program in addition to other major roads.

Many (58%) want a system of bike routes developed in Jamestown that are along major roads but separated by a grassed area (22.1%). Except for Carr Lane (42% not wide enough, 39% just right), most respondents were satisfied with the road widths of major roads in Jamestown.

Almost half of the respondents did not want to see additional water transportation encouraged in Jamestown. Those who did want to see additional service (26%) wanted to see it occur to Providence and up and down Narragansett Bay.

46% would support development review of new houses; similar to what the Planning Commission does now for new commercial development. The responses were equal for and against allowing accessory apartments within single family homes.

If constructed, 51% of responders want to see the new, consolidated Town Hall in the same location as the existing Town Hall. Fifty-two percent were not in favor of placing utility wires, such as telephone and electric, relocated underground in the Downtown area. The estimated cost for this project was \$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000.

3. Conclusion

Respondents agreed with all the goals of the current Comprehensive Community Plan. This information as well as the above information will be useful to the Planning Commission in forming or reiterating overall goals and policies for the updated Comprehensive Plan. The information, however, will not be used as an all-inclusive indicator of public preferences for land use decisions and policy formulation. Public workshops and hearings will complement the survey. These additional meetings will serve as a verifier of the survey and will allow information to be discussed in more detail.

B. BUILDOUT

In the spring of 2000, the Town of Jamestown conducted a buildout analysis. A buildout analysis is a method of determining the maximum potential future population under current rules and regulations of a community and environmental conditions. After the maximum population is calculated, the community can plan long-range goals and policies to protect natural resources and provide services and facilities.

1. Assumptions and Considerations

Jamestown's buildout analysis was conducted with the following assumptions and considerations:

- a. Current zoning regulations are intact.
- b. Average household size is 2.41 persons per household for 1990 through 2000 (based on 1990 Census Bureau Data). Future projections are 2.41 persons per household based on the State Department of Planning Statistics.
- c. An average of ten percent of the land will be used for roads and infrastructure in subdivided residential area (this percentage was average for Jamestown subdivisions).
- d. Wetland property protected under the Wetlands Protection Act, enforced by regulations administered by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), will not be built upon.
- e. Extensions and connections into the Town's sewer or water system are consistent with current 2000 regulations of the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners.
- f. All new residential development will be single family homes.
- g. All dwelling units are year round, not seasonal, units.

2. Definitions

The following definitions may be useful in interpreting the Buildout Analysis:

- a. **DEVELOPABLE LAND** - All land which is currently vacant, not protected from development through deed restrictions, easements, or open space zoning and does not contain natural characteristics which would prohibit development (the presence of wetlands or constraints due to soil type).

- b. DEVELOPED LAND - Land that, no matter what the size, has a structure with value over \$10,000.
- c. PERMANENTLY PROTECTED LAND - Properties that are protected by public ownership, ownership by private organization whose main goal is land preservation, deed restrictions, purchased development rights, conservation easements and the like.
- d. DEED RESTRICTION LIMITING DENSITY - Properties that may or may not be developed but will never be developed to their full potential due to a deed restriction limiting density.
- e. VACANT - All land that does not have any structures valued over \$10,000 and includes but is not limited to undeveloped residential and commercial lands, water bodies, agricultural land, recreation land, and open space lands.

The tables that follow show results of the Buildout Analysis, including projected future population for each Town plat, projected number of units for each plat, and total potential connections to the Town's water and sewer services. It should be remembered that a buildout analysis reflects the greatest possible growth under current conditions. Other factors such as environmental and economic conditions influence land development and will ultimately influence the rate of population growth

BUILDOUT ANALYSIS GENERAL OVERVIEW

LAND AREA

TOTAL LAND AREA	6034
Vacant Land	2800
Developable (vacant)	1630
Developed (includes subdividable properties)	3234

NEW UNITS

Potential New Units (Based on Current Zoning)	1133
With Sewer and Water	
With Water Only	
No Services	
TOTAL	1133

NEW POPULATION

Potential New Population (Based on 2.38 pph)	2696
2000 Population	5622
TOTAL BUILDOUT POPULATION	8318

Percentage Increase 32%

POTENTIAL NEW UNITS IF FULLY DEVELOPED		PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD (pph)	TOTAL NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL PERSONS
Single Family Homes	1121	2.38	2668
Single Family Homes in Commercial Districts	12	2.38	28
Totals	1133		2696

EXISTING POPULATION (2000 population) 5622 + POTENTIAL POPULATION 2696
= POPULATION AT BUILDOUT - **8318**

BUILDOUT ANALYSIS
COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND POTENTIAL POPULATION BY PLAT

PLAT *	EXISTING POPULATION	<u>POTENTIAL</u>	TOTAL	<u>PERCENT INCREASE</u>
1	251	290	541	116
2	378	102	480	27
3	612	169	781	28
4	198	100	298	51
5	424	245	669	58
6	19	200	219	1052
7	210	226	436	108
8	1335	226	1561	17
9	1328	219	1547	16
10	205	102	307	50
11	53	93	146	175
12	241	217	458	90
13	14	7	21	50
14	422	188	610	45
15	402	157	559	39
16	251	155	406	62

* See Plat Map Index on page 237

BUILDOUT ANALYSIS BY PLAT & ZONING DISTRICTS
BUILDOUT BY PLAT

<u>PLAT</u> *	EXISTING UNITS	VACANT DEVELOPABLE ACREAGE	NUMBER OF POTENTIAL UNITS	POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE (2.38 pph)
1	104	217	122	290
2	157	185	43	102
3	254	94	71	169
4	82	282	42	100
5	176	79	103	245
6	8	146	84	200
7	87	222	95	226
8	554	48	95	226
9	551	99	92	219
10	85	72	43	102
11	22	277	39	93
12	100	252	91	217
13	6	47	3	7
14	175	17	79	188
15	167	28	66	157
16	104	54	65	155
TOTAL	2632	2119*	1133**	2696

* See Plat Map Index on page 237

BUILDOUT ANALYSIS BY ZONING DISTRICTS

<u>ZONE</u>	VACANT DEVELOPABLE ACREAGE	NUMBER OF POTENTIAL UNITS	POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE (2.38 pph)
R-8	9	64	152
R-20	99.9	78	185
R-40	276.11	447	1064
RR-80	1408.24	455	1083
RR-200	321.3	77	183
CL	1.45	7	17
CD	1.7	5	12
CW	0.93	0	0
DM	0.31	0	0
TOTALS	2118.94*	1133**	2696

* - Vacant developable includes vacant lots and does not include subdividable lots.

** - Includes potential units on vacant developable land as well as subdividable land.

**BUILDOUT ANALYSIS
WATER & SEWER CAPACITY**

URBAN DISTRICT			
	WATER	SEWER	WATER AND SEWER
CURRENT	1146	1106	1079
POTENTIAL	162	179	-----
TOTAL	1308	1285	1079

Capacity of Water System 1667

RURAL DISTRICT			
	WATER	SEWER	WATER AND SEWER
CURRENT	230	0	22
POTENTIAL	61	0	-----
TOTAL	291	0	22

Hydraulic Capacity of Sewer System Approx. 2750 hookups *
Ideal Capacity of Sewer System 3750 hookups *

Notes:
Average Daily Usage: 200 gallons/day/family
Treatment Capacity: 0.75 million gallons/day
Current Usage: 185,000 gallons/day

* Due to conditions of existing sewer pipes, groundwater infiltrates pipes adding an additional 200,000 to 1.3 million gallons of water treated per day depending on the season. This reduces the maximum capacity of the sewage treatment plant from 3,750 to approximately 2,750 units.

3. Findings of Buildout Analysis

According to the buildout analysis, if current building activity is maintained at the present rate of approximately 27 new single family homes per year, the Town could be fully developed in 42 years or about the year 2042. This number could drastically change if the rate of building were to increase or decrease significantly. The average number of new homes built in the 1980s was 48 and it was 46 in the 1970. Total buildout would increase the population to 8,313 persons, an increase of 32 percent over the current estimated population.

Areas, which would experience the highest rate of growth, are the northern end of Jamestown and Beavertail peninsula as well as the center island south of the John Eldred Parkway. These areas with the least current development and are predominately open space, woodlands, farmland and wetland areas. These areas are also very scenic and ecologically sensitive. Current zoning regulations require a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet for development on the majority of the north end, 200,000 square feet minimum lot size in the center island area and 40,000 square feet minimum lot size in the Shores. Public water service is available to lots that have frontage along Beavertail Road. A large portion of land both in the north end and Beavertail is temporarily protected under the Farm, Forest and Open Space Program.

Many attempts have been made to protect our scenic and ecologically sensitive areas. Of the 508 acres of farmland, 66 acres are permanently protected, not including active recreation, there are 989 acres of permanently protected land in Jamestown. Deed restrictions limit the density of approximately 181 acres and 7 acres have conservation easements over portions of residential property. The Conanicut Island Land Trust (CILT) estimates that we have 1,484 acres of permanently protected land, 88 acres of conservation easement land and over 700 acres of farmland, of which 225 are permanently protected. It is estimated that the discrepancy is due to the CILT having a more complete inventory of lands with conservation easements. Without extensive deed research, this information is not available to the Town.

Another projected area of high growth is the Jamestown Shores neighborhood, which could increase approximately 33 percent. An increase of this magnitude in the Jamestown Shores neighborhood under current conditions will result in the potential for groundwater pollution from numerous ISDS in close proximity to private wells. During drought conditions, there is a risk of wells running dry and salt-water intrusion. To avoid these potentially hazardous situations, local regulation and control over development is necessary.

The buildout analysis predicts that the Dumplings area could increase up to 50 percent over its current population. Large lot zoning of 80,000 square feet minimum lot requirement protects the Dumplings area, and public water service is available to lots with frontage along a portion of Highland Avenue, Walcott Avenue, Fort Wetherill Road and Racquet Road.

The Village area is likely to experience the least amount of future growth because of the limited amount of developable land available. A maximum population increase of 17 percent may be realized in this area.

The buildout analysis is a useful tool in future planning for public services and facilities. The growth potential in the water and sewer districts is extremely important because of the limited capacity of these systems. The buildout analysis shows that, if all land were to be developed, the water use of these units would continue to exceed the capacity of the Town's public water supply. This indicates an immediate need for a strict water conservation policy and for continued investigation of ways to increase the public water supply system.

The current condition of the Town's sewer lines allows for vast amounts of groundwater to infiltrate into the sewer pipes and into the treatment facility. The infiltration reduces the amount of wastewater that can be treated by the facility. If leaky pipes are replaced and all gutter drains and sump pumps are removed from the system, the sewer treatment facility could process waste from approximately 3,750 homes -- this is over 2,800 more homes than are currently being serviced by the system.

It should be remembered, however, that in houses with wells and septic systems a significant amount of water extracted from the ground for use is returned to the groundwater system. Therefore, it is not recommended to extend sewers into high-density areas, which rely upon private wells, unless public water service is available.

The buildout analysis should be utilized for long-range future planning for schools, police and fire protection, recreational facilities, road construction, other public services and facilities, open space protection and potential growth controls. The buildout of the community is not the goal but rather a measure of the maximum future demand on resources and services. The community must recognize and examine the impact of future development on these resources. Proposed changes in Town Ordinances and policy should consider the effect of a 32 percent population increase on community resources. The community should develop innovative controls to accommodate or limit the rate of population increase without further taxing our natural resources, residents and present conditions in Jamestown.