



**Town of Narragansett  
Proposed  
Economic Development Plan**

**July 11, 2011**

# *Town of Narragansett*

## **Economic Development Plan**

V6a: 6/13/11...New Commons

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## *Executive Summary*

Narragansett produced this economic development plan to guide its future economy and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. Narragansett is the first town in RI to produce a comprehensive economic development plan with participation from all stakeholder groups.

### **Steps in Planning**

The planning process began in January of 2011 and finished in June 2011. The process included significant stakeholder engagement with hundreds of residents involved. Each step in the process sharpened the plan.

Step 1: Steering Committee formed and met – January to June 2011

Step 2: Online community survey: March 7 - 19...130 residents responded

Step 3: 1st Public Forum held on March 23...130 residents were engaged in direction setting and prioritizing

Step 4: Three workshops on 3 economic centers held on April 11, Galilee, North End and Pier...25 people participated in each workshop

Step 5: Workshop on “Sense of Place” on May 3...35 people participated

Step 6: Workshop on Narragansett as a tourist destination on May 12...35 people participated

Step 7: 2nd Public Forum held on May 26. Presented the plan and heard questions and comments from residents – plan changed as a result of Forum II.

### **The Plan has 5 Objectives**

The objectives are: develop the towns 3 economic centers...take actions to address the renter student issues...market the town...promote arts, culture and recreation...and beautify the town. 30 action-oriented initiatives are organized under the 5 objectives to be undertaken through the end of 2014. This plan is not linear. Rather it is comprehensive with many initiatives occurring simultaneously.

### **Town Council Action**

The plan will be presented to the Town Council in the early summer of 2011, first in a workshop and then for a vote. In the spring of 2011, the Town Council established 7 goals for 2011 and 2012. One of the goals is covered in this plan: “embrace the economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” A second goal is: “move the needle on student issues in the town,” is also covered in the plan

### **Implementation of the Plan**

The economic development committee of the town will manage the plan’s implementation. The committee has five roles in collaboration with the town manager and Town Council:

1. Prioritize the initiatives for year one when financial resources are required
2. Adjust initiatives from one time frame to another as conditions warrant such changes
3. Mobilize additional, non-municipal financial resources
4. Monitor and communicate results to the public – quarterly
5. Determine the status of initiatives in the holding tank, requiring further study and move them into the plan when warranted

## ***Why Do an Economic Development Plan?***

### **Purpose and Definition**

The purpose of the economic development plan is to present strategic initiatives that will continually improve the quality of life of the residents of Narragansett. This is not a “quick fix” plan...the plan requires many years of focused effort to get results. This long-term aim requires the town to:

- Track and get on the path of the next economy
- Foster a healthy community
- Become sustainable
- Foster multi-generational ethos, including young families, and do so by providing quality public education and housing at all price points

The town defines economic development based on 4 elements:

- Improve and grow the businesses already in town
- Attract and grow new businesses
- Improve infrastructure
- Insure current tax level stabilizes so it is predictable as opposed to going up or down on a moment's notice

Overall, Narragansett wants to operate as a 12 month economy with lots of vitality in all of its realms. Further, the drafters of this plan understand that the economy of Narragansett operates in the context of a regional economy, an economy beyond the borders of Narragansett.

## **Role of the Economic Development Steering Committee**

### Communicator

- Coordinate with economic development committee, town council, and other communities
- Liaison with RIEDC and RI Foundation – invite participation at key junctures/ brief them
- Media relations...determine what gets said, publicly, who says what

### Producer of the Plan

- Keeper of the plan...filter it...own it
- Decision maker regarding the planning process
- Data gathering – economic conditions and capacity
- Manage the time table

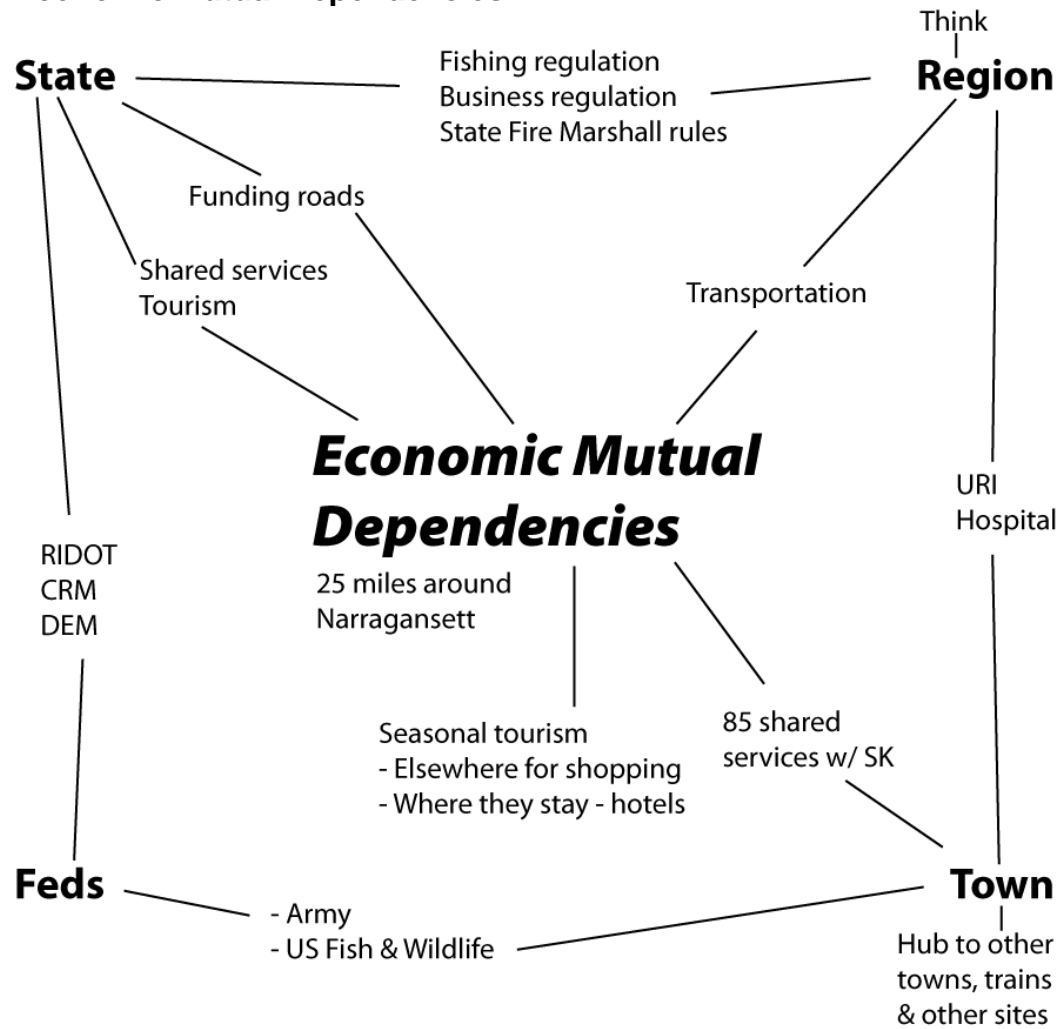
### Mobilize others

- Recruit residents for forums and workshops
- Cheerleader – keep people excited and positive
- Identify owners of initiatives

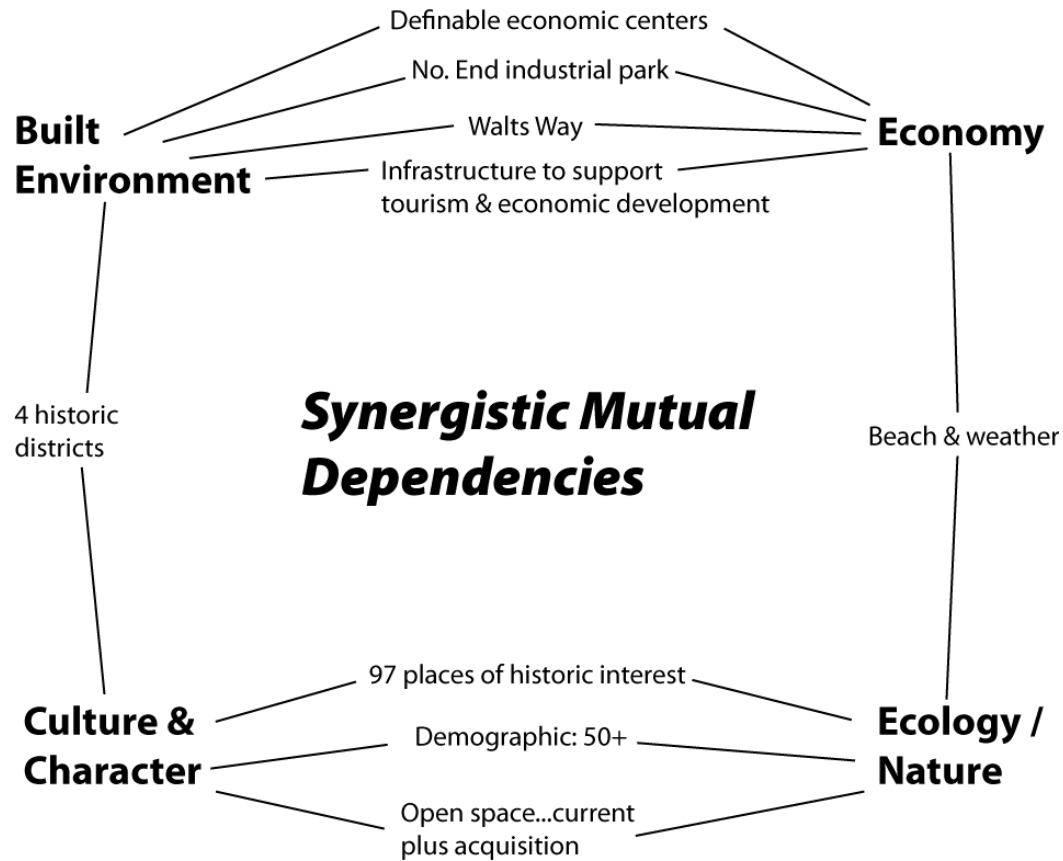
## ***Narragansett and the Region***

The steering committee created 2 maps (pages 4 & 5) to demonstrate the mutual dependencies that must work with in growing the next economy of Narragansett. In effect, to grow the economy, Narragansett has to partner with the nearby towns, the region and the state. If the town goes it alone it won't succeed, economically. Further, the town will take a "whole place" view to evolving its next economy. Thus, the additional elements of culture, character, the ecology/nature, as well as the built environment have to be aligned and integrated for effective economic development in the town and region.

## Economic Mutual Dependencies



## Synergies...Mutual Dependencies



## ***External Conditions Analysis***

A condition is a major fact, trend or conclusion...a condition is what it is.

### **Immediate conditions**

Immediate conditions are fully present with impact known and experienced.

#### Business climate

- Fishing industry and the port are hurting
- Decline in business in general
- Restaurant closings and increase in available commercial space
- Becoming a wedding destination
- State revenues are gone; how to make up lost revenue?
- We are too seasonal as a tourist destination – non-sustainable year round – Narragansett needs to extend its tourism presence into the shoulder seasons of Spring and Fall
- State of Rhode Island Economy – unemployment, underemployment, structural deficit

#### Quality of life

- Issues with renters, especially students, are adversely impacting the residential living experience and property values

#### Infrastructure issues

- Streets and sidewalks need work
- Beach erosion
- Sea wall – side walk needs repair

#### It is a real place

- Undiscovered/unpublicized beautiful places
- Fisherman's Memorial and other campgrounds are gems
- Un-crowded beauty
- Location, location, location!
- Beach is biggest asset

#### People aren't involved

- Complacent population where too many do not want change



- Citizen participation stagnant

#### Other conditions

- Great schools – high school is in the top 5 in the state
- Where are the young families?

#### **Emergent Conditions**

Emergent conditions are those on the horizon headed this way with impact perceived

#### Pressure for regionalization

- Regional program in place: if you make energy efficiency improvements there is a “guaranteed” payment from savings
- More competition for less grant money

#### Growing Infrastructure Limits

- Fewer opportunities for housing and affordable housing (and commercial)
- Beach as an asset is deteriorating – impact on future tourism
- Town is almost built-out...Fewer opportunities for development (Residential and Commercial)

#### Changing demographics

- More population is becoming seasonal
- Changing demographics – older population, more retirees

#### Business climate

- Difficulty in attracting business – everyone offers what we do
- Reduced funding from the State...need to look for new sources of revenue
- Galilee...Commercial business declining
- More competition for less consumer dollars

#### Changes at URI

- Town and landlords will be less dependent on URI – URI will build more dorms in Kingston
- URI is planning research facility at the Industrial Park

### ***Guiding Principles for Economic Development***

- Take a long-term view

- Maintain character and quality of life of the town... high level aesthetics
- Operate as a non-seasonal, 12-month economy with a diverse economic base, including expanding commercial activity
- Pick business targets to have present in town and go after them... get the best of class to come here so as to attract more of the best
- Maintain environmental soundness... sustainability
- Do development at scale to place -- be mindful of scale and scope of construction in relationship to the surroundings
- Create and use a dynamic plan... think out of the box... don't be bound by current comprehensive plan (land use decisions required by the state by every municipality) ... plan results must be measurable... re-calibrate the plan as conditions tell us to change
- Involve multiple generations in the planning process from young people to elders
- When something has to change, educate residents on why change is required

## ***Vision for the Next Economy of Narragansett***

The context for this plan is a long-term vision for the town of 15 to 20 years. Within the context of the longer-term vision, this plan is a 4-5 year near-term implementation plan. This section presents the affirmative vision elements to strive for, which will require 15 to 20 years to fully realize.

### **Affirmative vision elements**

#### Strengthen the three economic centers of Narragansett

- Galilee revitalized as a tourist destination with the fishing and port enhanced
- North end which includes the URI Bay campus, an industrial park, a potential industrial park and scattered commercial buildings. Focus on ocean technology to capitalize on research commercialization at URI
- Pier and market as a vibrant "Main Street"

#### Create a refreshed sense of place

- "Move the needle" on URI and town relations
- Mount an effective marketing campaign

#### Be a center for arts, culture and recreation – a tourism destination

- Hotels: upscale with verandas – historic feel
- Retreats—corporate retreats and serenity to host think tanks, team building
- Wedding Center
- URI hosts lots of meetings—make Narragansett part of the experience
- Music centers

- Artisans and artists such as potters
- Guided tours, walking, biking,
- Encourage creativity
- Feature URI's arts, culture and recreation offerings

#### Improve infrastructure

- Provide transit options
- Investment plan to improve key areas

### ***Bring the Vision to Life by Focusing on 5 Objectives***

30 initiatives are distributed among 5 action-oriented objectives over the next 4 years. Year one has 16 initiatives.

1. Develop master plans for 3 economic centers
2. Initiate actions to solve the renter/student problems
3. Mount a town-wide marketing plan
4. Develop, promote and coordinate arts, culture and recreation experiences
5. Undertake a town-wide beautification program

The initiatives are distributed in 1 of 3 time frames, from 2011 to 2014, based on those criteria:

- Length of time to get something done
- Policy required (tweak, change or create policy)
- Sequence of things: something has to be completed before something else can start
- Level of current cash or new capital required
- Capabilities required to execute (got it now, partner for it, buy it, develop it)
- Level of control that you can exercise
- Level of resistance...resistance is requisite for change, so you want some present...at the same time, trying to launch an initiative against huge resistance early out of the gate, can be the "kiss of death"
- Risk profile – sometimes it is best to start small or with a low risk thing...often it is better to get some small stretch risk taking experience as the foundation for pursuing bigger risks

Additionally a holding tank houses additional initiatives that require further study before deciding what to do with them.

Code for initiatives:

EC = Economic centers

EU + Engage URI...  
 MP = Marketing plan  
 OS = One stop  
 BP = Beautification program

**Objective #1: Develop Master Plans for 3 Economic Centers**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC1: Galilee: continue to review adverse regulations (state/fed); build on Dept of Commerce’s Economic Development Assessment</li> <li>• EC2: Pier: A focused, continuous conversation with Gilbane and community leaders regarding use of property</li> <li>• EC3: North End: Review and implement existing comprehensive development plan re: traffic, economy, landscaping</li> <li>• EC4: Overall: town hire an economic development/marketing director</li> </ul>	<p>Mike DeLuca, Director of Community Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC5: Galilee: DEM &amp; RIEDC feasibility study, i.e., continued and expanded use (start with 10 year old plan)</li> <li>• EC6: Pier: develop village zoning to address geography around the Pier and finish the bike path</li> <li>• EC7: Pier: engage Gilbane to create a “public space” within Pier Village Community Area</li> <li>• EC8: Overall town: conduct an impact analysis of the town’s rules and regulations on the business community; streamline town rules and regulations to make them more “friendly” to economic development without compromising due diligence and transparency; and craft a business development plan.</li> <li>• EC9: Overall town: work with RIPTA to determine if running buses after hours is feasible</li> <li>• EC10: Study the feasibility of locating a transit hub at Pier or Salt Pond...large buses go there and small buses fan out through town</li> </ul>	

**Objective #1: Develop Master Plans for 3 Economic Centers – continued**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC11: North End master plan: URI Bay Campus and industrial parks as center for ocean technology...map development sites...implement beautification of Boston Neck Road...conduct feasibility study for the use of alternative energy...develop industrial park signage...review zoning along route 1A (Frontage Rd)</li> </ul>	

**Objective 2: Initiate actions to solve the renter/student problems**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU1: Regarding students, landlords – make existing ordinances transparent and enforce them from the top down</li> <li>• EU2: Conduct a formal orientation with landlords and real estate agents to inform them of their obligations under the town ordinances</li> <li>• EU3: Research and adopt best practices from other places</li> <li>• EU4: Request that URI develop an orientation for off campus students to learn about the town ordinances in its off-campus student orientation (already in the works by URI) recommend it be conducted fact-to-face with students and involve officials from the town; forward existing town ordinances to URI</li> <li>• EU5: Regarding renters and landlords, consider new ordinances to fill essential gaps (what's missing after enforcing what is on the books, including significantly increasing penalties for repeat offenders to the maximum allowed by state law)</li> </ul>	<p>Grady Miller, Town Manager, Town Council and Dean Hoxie, Chief of Police</p>		

**Objective 2: Initiate actions to solve the renter/student problems – continued**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU6: Form a working group composed of the town manager, police chief and town council representatives to address the problems of “town and gown” relations</li> </ul>			

**Objective 3: Mount a town-wide marketing plan**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MP1: Launch marketing plan to brand the town as a cool place to live with elements such as ‘buy local,’ attract young, upwardly mobile...raise kids here, put kids in our schools, and use standard logo for ads and signage</li> </ul>	Grady Miller, Town Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MP2: Galilee: Create public awareness for fishing fleet and continued use of Galilee</li> </ul>	

**Objective 4: Develop, promote and coordinate arts, culture and recreation experiences**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OS1: Create an arts, culture and recreation advisory committee to develop a program of work to implement the one stop program.</li> <li>• OS2: Re-establish Narragansett Historical Society – encourage them to do oral histories of town elders</li> </ul>	<p>Barry Fontaine, Director of Parks and Recreation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OS3: Galilee: Develop eco-tourism itineraries including the better use of marshes (like Audubon Society)</li> <li>• OS4: Complete tourist profile study re: the tourist type now and the type desired and strategies for extending the tourism season into the shoulders of spring and fall</li> <li>• OS5: Conduct a feasibility study of post office use as a community center, including arts</li> <li>• OS6: Map of existing and new itineraries, especially those that extend the tourism season beyond summer. For example:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Historical house weekend with people opening their homes for dinner</li> <li>○ Feature multi-cultural, diverse events such as combining the arts with the water</li> <li>○ A real estate weekend featuring home sellers</li> <li>○ Farmer’s market in parking lot</li> <li>○ Coupon book of pre-paid vouchers</li> <li>○ South County Tourism to promote the itineraries</li> <li>○ Integration of events (kite flying, road races, beach bonfires, etc.)</li> <li>○ Identify practicing artists in town...map them; promote presence; feature open studios</li> <li>○ Have a cooking challenge event</li> <li>○ Host “Supper in the Sand”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



**Objective 5: Undertake a town-wide beautification program**

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BP1: Overall town: foster citizen engagement: bring together diverse neighborhood organizations and residents so everyone from all the neighborhoods can talk to each other, including a focus on citizen-led physical improvements</li> <li>• BP2: Galilee: Fix and improve visual pollution including better garbage control</li> <li>• BP3: Pier: develop beautification code and enforce ordinances for no parking in yards or off of the roads</li> </ul>	<p>Grady Miller, Town Manager, Town Council and Dave Ousterhout, Director of Public Works</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BP4: Develop investment plans to guide capital improvements for infrastructure and key spots. Completed a comprehensive review of needed infrastructure improvements including roads, seawall, beach erosion and “big town green” and take out curve in road downtown. Identify key spots such as Narrow River/Salt pond.</li> <li>• BP5: Evaluate town entrances – determine what’s required to make them “gateways”</li> </ul>	

***Holding Tank – Other Initiatives***

Initiatives in the holding tank require further study before a decision can be made about them.

Year 1	Owner	Year 2 to 3	Year 4 plus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galilee: Parking</li> <li>• Galilee: infrastructure plan and signage</li> <li>• Investigate the feasibility of rental property being designated as a business and pays business taxes; consider a resident and non-resident tax structure</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study the feasibility of forming “Beach City” transportation cooperative...a new transportation service that integrates all the needs of moving people in, out and around town...tourists use it during the day and workers at night...town operates shuttles for visitors with people paying to park at the schools... marketing plan for the regional transportation system...attract a scooter rental business</li> </ul>	

## ***Background Material***

### **Say “no” to – what is out of bounds?**

- “No” to overly burdensome local regulations
- “No” to development that is too big for the scale of the town
- “No” to sacrificing identity – can build on it... but not trash it
- No retail that doesn’t contribute to the base – no pawn and thrift shops, no clusters of bad uses, e.g., multiple used bookstores
- No adult uses

### **Unclear ... needs more thinking... analysis?**

- Do we want a “downtown” if so, what is it?
- Do we want better coordination and promotion of events?
- Should job creation be a prerequisite to economic development?
- How to capitalize on historic sites such as the South County Museum etc.?
- Do we want to attract franchises (Taco Bell, others)?
- Do we want more seasonal (summers only) business?
- What should be our relationship with university students?
- What kind of variety of housing product do we want available?
- Do we use tax policy incentives? What can we do to incent development, e.g., tax incremental financing or density bonus?
- Conduct a review of current business regulations and other barriers to entry!

### **Additional research needs**

#### Flow of people and cars

- Seasonal traffic flows
- Migration data – people coming and leaving town
- Tourism #'s

#### Business climate

- Current mix of businesses in town by types of business
- # employed
- Buying patterns

### Costs

- Commercial tax rates compared to other municipalities
- Year-round vs. seasonal housing costs

### Census data

- Population breakdown
- Income levels
- Education levels

### Other

- Breakdown of land categories and zoning categories

## ***Notes from 5 Workshops***

In addition to the community Forum, 5 workshops were held in April and May, 2011. The workshops focused on establishing the context for and then prioritizing initiatives for the plan.

### ***North End as an Economic Center – 4/21/11***

#### **What are the major facts about this center?**

1. It is a gateway to Narragansett
2. No identification of industrial park – unapparent access to park
3. World class research institutions (Bay Campus)
4. Zoning – needs help
  - State maintain highway
  - Rite Aid to Willows – poor landscaping on 1A. Needs unifying landscape, traffic control
  - Traffic light at Rite Aid
5. Retail services in North End
6. Traffic issue in summer on 1A
7. Tourist attraction Bonnet Shores Beach Club
8. Christofaro Park – asset
9. Intellectual educational center, inter-space facility, Coastal Resource Center (visitors' center)

#### **Discuss questions/issues from the list below that intrigues you**

##### An array of questions and issues to consider

It was not necessary to answer all of these questions during the workshop. The questions were meant to spark creative thinking in identifying initiatives for the plan.

- What services are not represented along the Boston Neck Road commercial corridor?
- Should a merchant association be encouraged to form in order to promote the beautification and promotion of the area?
- Do we need more pedestrian friendly shopping in the area?
- Is a PR campaign useful to alert residents to what is accessible at the Bay Campus? (Pervasive attitude among residents that the Bay Campus is off limits.)
- Do we need industrial park signage from Boston Neck Road identifying the tenants?
- A look at the current mix of the industrial park: what would be the optimum mix for the park?

- What type of retail/commercial entities are needed to make the North End more attractive, signage and traffic control?
- How can we use the North End as a gateway to Narragansett?
- How can we take advantage of the tourist aspects of visiting the Bay Campus?
- What are the potential business opportunities?

Issues of intrigue based on the above questions

1. Develop North End Industrial Park to marine industries
2. Research feasibility of development possibilities at area adjacent to industrial park
3. Workforce development
4. Blend business, education and tourism – innovative for other coastal communities (wind)
5. Funding to upgrade visitors' center at Bay Campus specific area for 40-50 people could go scheduled certain days a week
6. Activities that promote local businesses. Bonnet Shores Beach Club activities off season. Open earlier on weekends.

**What are the center's current assets, such as the Inter-Space Center, and capabilities to leverage better? What are some of the big concerns and what makes it a concern for economic development?**

Assets

- Christofaro Park
- Bay Campus
- So. Ferry Church lecturers
- Narrow River
- Wildlife refuge
- Industrial park
- Sprague bridge access
- Strategic location of state-ocean sciences
- Retail – between major shops:
- T Willows
- Brickleys
- Bike Shop
- Bank coming in
- Roch's
- Bay State Nursery
- Bike land on Rte 1a (Nantucket)
- Visitors' center at Rite Aid
- Aquarium...(internship opportunities)

- Parking in one area and pedestrian walks to link retail
- Art exhibit at Bay Campus – outdoors under tents
- Ice cream truck to Bay Campus – Kelly Beach and Christofaro Park.

### Concerns

None were raised

### **When you think of ocean technology, what comes to mind?**

- Alternate energy research
- Ocean serving technology – global sensors in ocean
- New England open water systems
- Cleaner, faster, move different ocean vessels
- Computer engineering technology
- URI needs funding
- Ocean engineering industry would help
- Industrial park – build ocean industry (like ASA)
- Professors – industry
  - Federal
  - Homeland Security
  - Department of Defense
- Build plan – present to federal agencies for North End Industrial Park – cluster of similar businesses
- Good students contracted out to do research for industry
- Traffic 1A – for growing businesses – build more frontage road access or link parking lots.

### **Beyond the initiatives listed (earlier in the third part of section 2 of this handout), what additional initiatives, if any, do you propose to do? In what time frame?**

1. Working group of town and Bay Campus individuals – business, education, science, tourism
2. Merchants association
3. PR campaign
4. Welcome gateway – visually!
  - Signage uniform brand identity – banner as in Pier
  - Create entryway
  - Explore alternate energy that will support Bay Campus and industrial park.

## *Pier as an Economic Center – 4/21/11*

### **What are the major facts about this center?**

- Pier is an actual physical center
- Geographic location encompasses diverse environments
- Very popular beach
- Good schools
- Lack of year round residents
- Off-season revenue is weak
- Historic architecture is a plus
- Aging population
- Lack of parking

### **Discuss, among you, some of the questions and issues presented below that intrigue you**

#### An array of questions and issues to consider

It was not necessary to answer all of these questions during the workshop. The questions were meant to spark creative thinking in identifying initiatives for the plan.

- What are the potential business opportunities?
- Should we be pursuing a theme to attract a specific shopper – for example – shoe stores, potters and artists or children's stores?
- Alternative Main Street: should the Town consider returning a Main Street to the area?
- Should Boon Street or Narragansett Avenue become the next Main Street?
- We need to address the current mix of stores, the desired mix, what type of events (town sponsored) are needed in the Pier area, and tying the Pier into the beach and Canonchet Farm areas?
- How do we get the major players (store owners, land owners) more involved in the development of the area?
- Given the complexity of the Pier, would it be more effective to mount an outside in strategy? In effect focus on the areas just off of the Pier where there is life and animate that first?

#### Alternative main streets intrigued the group:

- Boon: shopping already exists...historic structures...train station...walkability
- Narragansett Avenue: main entrance into town...walkability
- Beach (Ocean Road): beach links Pier Market and Ocean Road...walkability...sidewalk on Ocean Rd...park on corner of Memorial and Ocean (Farmer's Market)



**What are the center's current assets and capabilities to leverage better? What are some of the big concerns and what makes it a concern for economic development?**

Assets

- Canonchet Farm
- The beach/clubhouse/facilities
- Walkability
- Notoriety
- Upgrade hotel
- Upgrade beach facilities

Concerns

- Lack of year-round residents
- Public buying in
- \$

**Conceiving of the Pier as the downtown...this vision will take many years to manifest...why does this matter to Narragansett? What are your doubts?**

It matters because

- Yes – matters that the Pier is a downtown – community spirit
- Essential services are there but need to build them from there
- Downtown needs to unify a diverse population
- Town Common – or The Village
- Keep businesses open
- Coordinate events
- Create historic activities
- Enriches quality of life

What are your doubts?

- History of failure
- Negative attitude toward visitors drives business away
- Overcoming negative attitudes regarding Gilbane redevelopment
- Doubts about major landholders commitment to the Pier Marketplace

- Big concerns and what makes it a concern for economic development?

### *Galilee as an Economic Center – 4/21/11*

#### **What are some of the major facts about this area?**

- Commercial fishing
- 85-90% state owned
- Infrastructure is lacking (needs upgrades)
- Tourism (pass through) hub to Block Island
- Limited parking
- Minimal recreation
- Lack of year-round business

#### **Discuss, among you, some of the questions and issues presented below that intrigue you**

##### An array of questions and issues to consider

It is not necessary to answer all of these questions tonight. The questions are meant to spark creative thinking in identifying initiatives for the plan.

- Is commercial fishing still the heart and soul of the area?
- How does the town ensure that the fishing industry remains the predominant employer?
- Is there room for museums and geo-tourism classrooms and eco-tourism projects?
- Should we look into a parking garage to free up state owned land that is currently used as a parking lot?
- We need to look at the current mix of businesses, the desired mix...how to make Galilee a destination place
- What are the signage and traffic issues?
- How to take advantage of the tourist fishing market and individuals going to Block Island and spending money in Galilee

##### Questions/issues to discuss that intrigue you

- Fishing is heart and soul. Needs redefinition of healthy balance and focus. Lacks balance
- Community – political support for the port
- Marketing and advertising
- Room for eco/museums (biomed)
- Tourism
- Salt Pond (URI interns)
- Include fishermen in prospective educational programs
- Parking garage – very needed

- Use Galilee master plan as a basis for mixed-use village
- Galilee needs website, booklet, info center
- Infrastructure update, signage, storefront updates. Town and state closer collaboration
- Support and services for fishing
- @1 assets:
  - 3rd leading port \$
  - Beaches/Salt Pond/shell fishing
  - Destination/BI ferry
  - Whale watch
  - Recreational fishing
  - Dining
  - Missed benefits – people \$, fishing\$
  - Downside: people, parking, lack of restrooms, garbage
  - Needs: restrooms and garbage removal

**What are the center's current assets and capabilities to leverage better? What are some of the big concerns and what makes it a concern for economic development?**

Current assets

- Bring capital collected all year from Galilee fees (dockage, land leases, etc.) back to maintain infrastructure in Galilee

Big concerns

- Lack of funding
- Ferry zone protected
- Parking
- Work together; state and town
- Local control of port
- Advisory board for port management
- Inadequate lodging
- Destination status
- Federal government coming in
- Infrastructure
- Lack of vested interest
- Leases/private ownership – certain zones – non commercial

**Conceiving of Galilee as a mixed use port with fishing, business and the ferry:  
What are the upsides and benefits?**

Upsides

- Mixed use = community support
- Right mix of business = diverse age groups demographics
- Increased tax base
- Potential workforce
- Stability – longer season
- Diversity
- Perception is everything
- Appreciation of industry, i.e. fishing, ferry, restaurants, retail
- Emulate Stonington, CT, Portland ME
- Mixed use = destination
- Better ideas/viewpoints = diverse community
- Big concerns and why it's a concern for economic development

What are the downsides?

- Town end? Pt. Judith
- Difficult consensus
- Lack of events
- Difficulty to have events

*A deeper sense of place with a focus on students, landlords and residents – 5/3/11*

**What are the major facts about Narragansett's sense of place?**

Physical environment

- Parking issues
- Occupancy regulations – is renting a business...occupancy regulations are unclear and not enforced.
- Trash collection, litter

Cultural

- Small town...that's why people like it: uniqueness
- Unparalleled natural beauty
- Rental properties = an investment community

### Economy

- No central business district
- Large rental investment
- Tourism...authentically beautiful and seasonal: May-October...local to New England – the tourist core are “day trippers”

### Wild card

- Residential living compromised by poorly managed rental properties
- Aesthetics of town compromised by un-kept properties and streets
- Decline in values property – concern with attracting year round residents

### **What questions intrigue you to have a conversation?**

Remember the point is to answer all these questions...the questions are posed to help you develop specific initiatives...add to the third bullet initiative that exists

1. Create a separate office in town that manages ordinance enforcement...paid for by fines and fees
2. More pro-active people to work in the town and in the solicitor's office – people who will respond faster...separate from ordinance – proactive problem solver
3. Add to existing initiative to enforce ordinance...Focus on the quartet of: rental owner, renter, realtor, and year-round resident
4. Hold people accountable if they break law – charge them when break law
5. Make existing rules and ordinances transparent...orient, especially students to implementation of these rules and ordinances

## **Regarding students renting in town, what are the...**

### Overall benefits?

- When each house is occupied in off-season there is more consistency
- Benefit is having grad students and serious upper level students: bio-medical, pharma, etc.
- Youthful energy, e.g., students are working at a restaurant...and you have a conversation on what they are learning
- They do shop and spend money locally...which local businesses depend on for regular income.

### Overall Drawbacks?

- Diminished quality of life due to nuisance behavior
- People leaving town because their dream retirement got flushed out
- Over renting for a “given” occupancy limit...that over taxes utility, fire, police, etc.
- Real estate market is influenced by rental,...does not encourage residential but rather an investment culture

## **Regarding students in the town...**

Reframe the message from landlord/student to landlord-property manager/ tenant!! This reframing will make the issue less personalized and easier to address going forward.

### Do students add economic value to the town? If so, what is the value?

- They bring economic value...and activity on the street
- Realtors get commission on rentals...but it is a small portion of people
- We are exporting out of town too much of the rental income
- Provide rent for landlords
- The town is losing revenue because they are really businesses and we are not taxing them as such.

### Or do students reduce economic value? If so, in what ways?

- Even restaurants that try to accommodate students, struggles...e.g., they fail...three examples, including Red Stripe, that tried to accommodate students and failed
- Students breaking the law are frightening people out of town...not being held accountable for breaking the law...scaring away young people who want to start families and move here...we must admit the unruly student is a town-wide problem...and our median income is dropping according to census and losing population overall

- Reduction in property values especially in certain neighborhoods...and some neighborhoods are worse off than other parts of town
- We don't have enough police officers, especially midnight-8:00 am shift.

**Beyond the listed initiatives in the plan, what else do you propose to do? What goes in what time frame?**

Regarding your overall priorities (based on criteria for what goes in what time frame)...each person used 3 dots to select their priorities regardless of time frame.

*Narragansett as a Tourist Destination for Art, Culture, Recreation*

**What are the major facts about Narragansett as a tourist destination?**

Physical environment

- Water
  - Beach
  - Pier
  - Shoreline
  - Galilee
  - Seawall
  - Narrow River
- Non-Water
  - Recreation
  - Biking
  - Food – restaurants
  - Camping
  - Weddings
  - Rural landscape
  - Corporate destination
- Historic
  - Towers
  - Kinney bungalow
  - Pier – Century Street
  - Ill So. County
  - Canochet
- Deterrents

- Road conditions
- Parking
- Upkeep
- Rental issues
- Erosion

### Cultural

- Arts
  - Fine arts
  - Cultural
  - Culinary
- Outdoor recreation and education
  - Tours
  - Bird watch
  - Eco-tourism
  - Beach culture
  - Citizen science
- History
  - Colonial
  - Victorian
  - Native American
  - military

### Economy...economic generators

- Beaches and scenic beauty
- Water related activities (surfing, boating, fishing)
- Local seafood dining – retail

### Wild card...our premise is that we want to increase the shoulder season and not just deepen summer season

- Lack of public restrooms
- Under utilization of our summer assets...beyond the beaches
- Ice rink, move night, gazebo events...big production screen on the green



## What questions intrigue you to have a conversation?

The point is not to answer all the questions...the questions are to help develop specific initiatives...what initiatives have emerged from your conversation?

1. Beautifying seawall
  - Extend it to Newton Avenue
  - Maintain it
2. Have a multi-cultural event that incorporates art, water, etc....
  - have it (them) on shoulder weekends
3. Turn the Pier Marketplace sign perpendicular
4. Using the theater for multiple purposes
5. Integrate some events
  - Kite flying
  - Fishing events
  - Volleyball
  - Fall road races
6. Revitalize the Marketplace at the Pier
  - Have multiple stalls in parking lot
7. Hazard Castle becomes a combo of Blithewold and Tanglewood
  - A lot of potential for the property
  - Possibly even a hotel
8. Bonfires on the beach
9. Rainy day experiences
  - Such as an aquarium to visit
  - Tie in to Save the Bay
  - No...let's utilize URI Bay Campus resources
  - S.T. Bay has poor science and the programs are costly
10. Having a cooking challenge

## **Overall, regarding tourists in town, what are the...**

### Benefits?

- Jobs
- Town revenue
- Vibrancy
  - Tourists give us energy
  - They change the atmosphere
- They give us the opportunity to create the town we want to create
  - To bring in the tourists we want
- Out of state tourists buy property and help maintain taxes
- Out of state tourists tend to be better educated and have higher income
- Tourists events are also for us.

### Drawbacks?

- Residents quality of life
  - Parking
  - Noise
  - Trash
  - Safety
- They don't come back enough
  - Actually they tend to come back again and again
  - It's really a benefit
- Although we get tourists, they get impression they're not wanted
- Resident attitude is a deterrent to tourists

## **Economic value of tourism...**

Do tourists add economic value to the town?

If so, what is the value?

- Housing demand
- Taxes generated by businesses servicing tourists...help to off-set property taxes and they pay 50% more

- In the economic engine, we're the third piston...after Providence and Newport

Do tourists reduce economic value?

- Nothing significant

If so, in what ways?

- A Pier homeowner trying to sell house in summer cannot maximize value

#### Overall data (statewide)

- Tourist expenditures are \$6.8 billion
- Average spend/visitor is \$384
- 1 of every 10 Rhode Islanders owes their job to tourism
- RI keeps 62 cents of every dollar spent by visitors
- 5% of RI gross product – tourism
- Tourism generates 12% of all state/local revenue

#### **Tourism targets...**

What's the profile of the tourist the town wants?

#### Quality tourists within 50 miles (local)

- Person who values the town for more than beach...has broader interests
- Shoulder season tourist
- Appreciates local products, local produce
- Families at beach eat and drink locally...and don't leave trash
- Affluent, educated, well-mannered families...looking for recreation, dining...who don't use cars

#### Quality tourists beyond 50 mile radius

- Appreciation of ecology, history
- Promote history of Narragansett
- Empty-nesters who want the "stay-cation"

What are the "top ten" specific/current attractions to draw them in?

- Fishing and boating
- For shoulder season, emphasize museum
- Hazard Castle
- Emphasize iconic architecture
- Beyond beach-river, dunes, estuary...4 distinct coastal systems – we have 4 within 3 miles
- Beaches
- The value-add of dining, accommodations, etc.
- Uniqueness of culinary capacity...play up our quirky foods
- Gilbert Stuart attraction
- Largest North American archeological site in RI...not yet open to public
- Health and wellness resources...e.g., yoga, massage therapy
- Non-chain boutiques