



TOWN COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION & HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD

Work Session

April 13, 2021

Cape Charles Volunteer Fire Company

6:30 PM

1. Call to Order – Town Council
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Establish quorum
2. Call to Order – Planning Commission
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Establish quorum
3. Call to Order – Historic District Review Board
 - A. Roll Call
 - B. Establish quorum
4. Discussion Item: Historic District Ordinances, Procedures, and Philosophy
5. Historic District Review Board Adjournment
6. Planning Commission Adjournment
7. Town Council Adjournment

 TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES	AGENDA TITLE: Discussion Item: Historic District Ordinances, Procedures, and Philosophy		AGENDA DATE April 13, 2021
	SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Develop Consensus on Historic District Ordinances, Procedures, and Philosophy		ITEM NUMBER:
	ATTACHMENTS: 1996 Cape Charles Preservation Plan, 2020 Citizens Perceptions on Preservation, Draft Revisions to Zoning Code Article VIII & Article II, Background Summary		FOR COUNCIL: Action () Information (X)
	STAFF CONTACT (s): John Hozey, Town Manager	REVIEWED BY: John Hozey, Town Manager	

BACKGROUND:

Cape Charles is a wonderfully unique place. The combination of our authentic feeling Historic District, a popular Public Beach, a revitalized “Main Street”, a beautiful Central Park, and a bustling working Harbor, all contribute to why each of us choose to live and/or work in this quaint little town. Though getting to this point took a lot of work, from a lot of people, on each of these fronts.

When it comes to the Historic District specifically, it all started in 1996 when the Town adopted a preservation plan that was the first serious look at the Town’s historic value, and how to protect that value. Based on those preservation plan recommendations, the Town adopted Article VIII of the Zoning Ordinance, which formally established the Historic District and the Historic District Review Board (HDRB) to help guide future development.

Then in 2019 the Town commissioned a survey to pulse citizens about the Historic District’s current importance to the overall qualities of the Town. This study was finished and delivered to us in the summer of 2020. Unfortunately, due to other priorities and the complications surrounding 2020, this survey is being brought forth for the first time now.

ITEM SPECIFICS:

Over the past 25 years opinions and attitudes regarding the historic district have tended to shift/evolve. Upon review of the preservation plan and other guiding documents, one can find conflicting concepts that can result in different interpretations, depending upon one’s personal views. Due to this sometimes-inconsistent guidance, differences of opinion have begun to form, especially over the past several years, over the true intent and purpose of our ordinances and procedures.

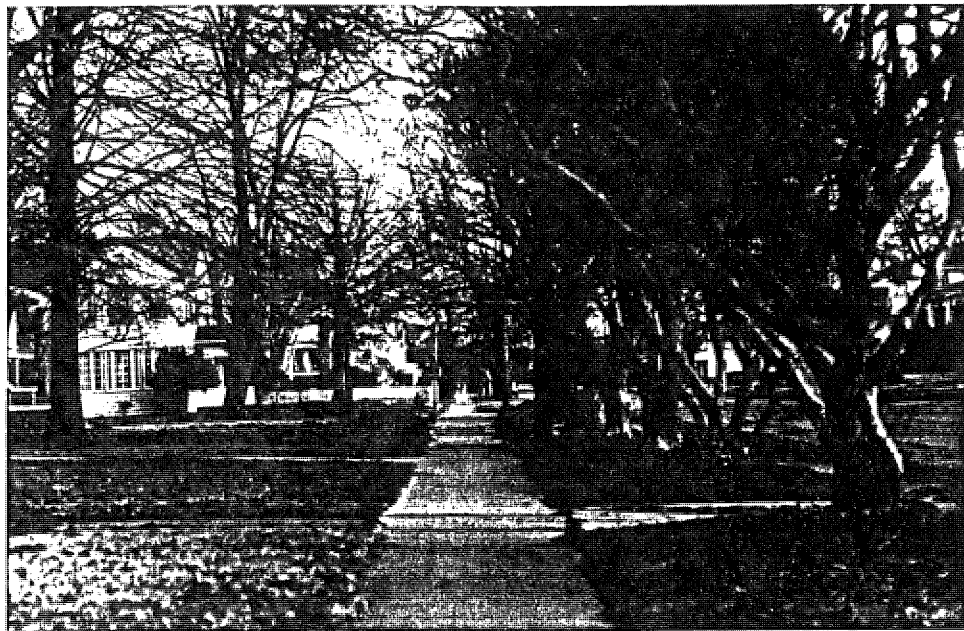
The most basic concept that needs clarification is whether the goal of our ordinance is to preserve the true historic integrity of our structures and neighborhoods, or is it to merely preserve the character (look and feel) of the history the town represents. This is the fundamental question, since the procedures and processes going forward will be completely different depending on which is chosen.

It is critical that the community reach a consensus regarding what we are trying to achieve. Without that consensus, the Town Council, the Town Planning Commission, and the HDRB could wind up working at cross purposes, which is not in the town’s best interest. Therefore, the goal of this work session is to review past recommendations and current attitudes and agree on a way forward.

RECOMMENDATION:

No official action required. Staff requests consensus direction for the development/update of historic district governing documents which will be brought back for formal adoption at a later time. Note: draft revisions provided for Articles II & VIII are for discussion purposes only and do not constitute a recommendation.

PRESERVATION PLAN
for the
TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA



Prepared for the
Planning Commission of the
Municipal Corporation of Cape Charles
Cape Charles, Virginia

by
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TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Prepared for the

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March 1996

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF CAPE CHARLES

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Cape Charles, Virginia, is a small town located on the Chesapeake Bay at the southern end of the Eastern Shore in Northampton County. In December of 1994, John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) was retained by the Municipal Corporation of Cape Charles and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to prepare a preservation plan for the town. Cape Charles is a railroad town, created in 1884 as the southern terminus of a north/south railroad line constructed along the Eastern Shore. At Cape Charles, railroad cars traveling south were loaded onto barges for the trip across the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay to Norfolk. At the town's peak period of development in the early twentieth century, as many as three hundred cars per day were transported through the town's harbor. With the decline of the railroad industry following World War II, however, the town began to experience difficult times. Over the past fifty years, the Cape Charles economy has steadily declined, with no new economic activity available to substitute for the former volume of railroad business upon which the town's well-being was based.

In part because of the low level of economic activity in Cape Charles in the mid- to late-twentieth century, the town has experienced little physical change since the 1920s. As a result, the town retains a high degree of historical integrity from its forty-year period of growth and development. In 1989, Cape Charles was surveyed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and listed as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

In recent years, several initiatives have been underway with the goal of revitalizing the economy in Cape Charles. First, local business and community leaders have been working to enhance the town as a tourist destination, taking advantage of the appeal of the Eastern Shore's natural resources and the region's proximity to population centers along the east coast. The late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century character of the town is a key element in the town's interest to tourists. Second, a large retirement community, called the Accawmacke Plantation, is proposed by Brown and Root I, Inc. that would completely surround the existing historic town and increase its size fivefold. The proposed Accawmacke Plantation project is currently seeking to overcome a final layer of environmental hurdles related to its planned marina.

Finally, Cape Charles has been selected as the site of a proposed Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park which has been the focus of the efforts of Northampton County's Sustainable Development Initiative and a variety of state and federal agencies, including the President's Council on Sustainable Development, the US Department of

Commerce, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program.

In large part because of these initiatives—i.e., the importance of the town's historic character to the success of the initiatives and the potential effect of the initiatives upon the town's historic character—Cape Charles was selected by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to receive a grant for the preparation of this preservation plan.

As a part of the proposed work in the preparation of this preservation plan, JMA undertook an informal survey of preservation plans that have been prepared for towns in the Mid-Atlantic region. Individuals in the preservation community were contacted by JMA and examples of preservation plans were collected from representative towns in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, and North Carolina. Through this informal survey, JMA found that the term "preservation plan" may take on many different meanings. Technically, the preparation of a preservation plan most frequently involves the survey and analysis of a town's historic resources, the creation of a historic district, and the adoption of a historic district ordinance with design review powers. During JMA's informal survey, the request for a town's preservation plan usually resulted in the receipt of a set of design guidelines for a local historic district.

In Cape Charles, the town's historic resources have already been surveyed and a National Register Historic District has been created. The town has no local historic district and, consequently, no historic district ordinance. There are mixed feelings among town residents with regard to historic preservation. While there is a general appreciation of the town's historic character in some sectors, there is a segment of the population that is strongly opposed to government interference in private affairs. This opposition accepts the need for zoning controls as part of the town's responsibilities but is suspicious of a town ordinance with a design review process as a way of preserving the town's historic character. While such suspicions are reasonable, understandable, and can be addressed, a general resignation among some of the town's residents that things in Cape Charles will never improve is disturbing.

In working on the preservation plan, JMA spent several months meeting with various groups and individuals, participating in the Sustainable Development Initiative, becoming familiar with the town's historic resources, and reviewing a wealth of town and county planning and development background information. JMA then met periodically with the Cape Charles Planning Commission to review planning issues and drafts of chapters of the preservation plan. The overall approach of this preservation plan is outlined in Chapter Three, *Preservation Approach*. In short, JMA has attempted to take a very comprehensive view of planning and development issues in Cape Charles and the

role that preservation and enhancement of community character can play in addressing and resolving those issues. The fundamental premise of the plan is that economic development is the most critical need of the town, that the improvement of the town's physical character is important to any economic development scenario, and that historic preservation is the central element in enhancing the town's physical character.

In many respects, this document is more of a generalized master plan for the future development of the town, building on the town's historic character, than it is a preservation plan. It views preservation as a means of inducing, or at least supporting, economic development. It does not advocate preservation for preservation's sake, as much as the quality of the town's historic resources may warrant it. This document reviews the existing physical condition of the town, outlines an approach to the revitalization of community character, and makes area-by-area recommendations for implementing such an approach. The potential for adaptive reuse of the town's commercial buildings is discussed. The roadways into Cape Charles are reviewed with an eye to preserving and enhancing their physical character, as are the community park, beach, open space, downtown commercial district, and residential neighborhoods. The relationship between the town and the county and the town's need to be actively engaged with the county's planning approach is discussed. JMA appreciates having had the opportunity to work on this preservation plan with the residents of Cape Charles and sincerely hopes that it makes some contribution to the long-term goals of the town.

CHAPTER ONE
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The town of Cape Charles was created in 1884 as the southern terminus of the first railroad to be constructed on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad (the NYP&N) was established in 1882 through the consolidation of several previously-chartered, but unconstructed, railroads. Construction work began on the NYP&N in April, 1884, extending southward from Pocomoke at the Maryland/Virginia border. On October 25, 1884, the track was completed to the location of Cape Charles, and in November, 1884, the first train service began on the line. At Cape Charles, railroad cars traveling south were loaded onto barges for the trip across the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay to Norfolk. At the town's peak period of development, as many as three hundred cars per day were transported through the town's harbor.

The NYP&N was formed principally through the efforts of two established railroad men, William Lawrence Scott (1828-1891) and Alexander Johnson Cassatt (1839-1906). William Scott was born in Washington, DC, and raised, following the death of his father around 1835, in Fortress Monroe, Virginia. Between the ages of fourteen and twenty, Scott served as a page in the House of Representatives. In 1846 he moved to Erie, Pennsylvania, where he was engaged in the coal-forwarding business. Scott formed a profitable partnership in the coal and iron mining business in 1850. In 1853, he married into a successful Erie family whose wealth was derived from railroads. Through his position and the railroad connections of his in-laws, Scott eventually became president of the Erie and Pittsburgh Railroad. He also had significant financial interests in the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific; Canade Southern; Union Pacific; and Canadian Pacific Railroads.

Alexander Cassatt was trained at Darmstadt University, Germany, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. In 1861, Cassatt joined the Pennsylvania Railroad, with which he was affiliated for twenty-one years. He left the company in 1882, by which time he had worked his way to the position of first vice president. Cassatt became wealthy through his work with the Pennsylvania Railroad and through his other personal investments. He unsuccessfully promoted the possibilities of an Eastern Shore railroad to the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and may have left his position as vice president in part to pursue this financial venture with Scott.

In May, 1883, Scott purchased three plantations comprising approximately 2,509 acres from the heirs of former Virginia Governor Littleton Waller Tazewell (1774-1860). Of this land, 40 acres were ceded to the NYP&N and 136 acres went to create the town of Cape Charles.

Cape Charles was laid out with 644 lots measuring 40 feet by 140 feet. The first lot, number 615, at the corner of Mason Avenue and Strawberry Street (currently Savage's Drugstore) was purchased in August, 1884. Most of the lots sold over the first two years of the town's establishment were located along Mason and Randolph Avenues. The number of lots sold varied from year to year. A peak of 46 lots were sold in the year 1886 compared to 7 and 6 lots sold in the years 1889 and 1895 respectfully.

A map of Cape Charles was prepared in 1887 by William Bauman, a civil engineer and a director of the NYP&N. The map shows the entire area of the present town, including the historic town, harbor, and surrounding farm land. The map is an important document for understanding how the town's "urban" and agricultural landscapes were configured and used in 1887. Within the street grid of Cape Charles, the map shows construction on at least 57 lots by that date (see Figure 3). 26 of these lots were located along Mason Avenue, 18 of which were between Plum Street and Pine Street at what was at that time the west end of town. These 26 lots represented 46% of the lots then available along Mason Avenue. The Bauman map shows 12 lots constructed along Washington Avenue on the north side of town. 17 lots are shown constructed along Tazewell Avenue, 10 of these between Nectarine and Plum. The map also shows railroad buildings and other facilities in the vicinity of the harbor.

In 1897, after the death of William Scott, lots were laid out along the south side of the harbor where Scott's private railroad siding had been located. Called the Hollywood Development, this subdivision was unsuccessful, with only three lots being sold through 1910.

In 1911, the Scott Trustees began selling lots in the Sea Cottage Addition on the west side of town. The Sea Cottage Addition was created by filling tidal wetlands between Pine Street and the bay and resulted in the creation of 145 new lots. Two additional blocks were created along each east/west streets with the exception of the block between Jefferson Avenue and Washington Avenue. The width of the new blocks varied, as the north/south streets, Beach Avenue and Harbor Avenue, were not parallel to the original grid of the town. By 1955, one hundred twenty-eight of the lots in the Sea Cottage Addition had been sold.

Cape Charles owes its existence to the railroad. Because of the unique role the town played as the Eastern Shore terminus of the NYP&N, Cape Charles prospered and developed into the largest town on the Shore—a rank it still holds. The town saw a peak of development and prosperity during the early twentieth century. This development essentially ended with the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the town's prosperity slowly ebbed away with the decline of the railroad industry following World War II.

Ironically, Cape Charles is now a railroad town almost without a railroad. Although the railroad and barges continue limited freight service through the town, the low level of service is no longer capable of supporting Cape Charles economically. Passenger service to Cape Charles was discontinued in the 1950s.¹

¹ This brief historical overview was extracted in its entirety from Pat Spriggs, *Cape Charles, Virginia, and the New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad* (Old Dominion University, December 7, 1988) and the *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, DHR File No. 65-166, prepared by David Edwards and John Salmon in 1989. While Ms. Spriggs' paper is a good start, as mentioned in Chapter Four of this document, a more detailed history of Cape Charles is waiting to be written.

CHAPTER TWO
SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Over the past thirty years, the Town of Cape Charles has been in a state of relative somnolence during which the town's economy has declined and very little physical change has occurred. Additive changes made to Cape Charles have been largely government-sponsored and financed, including construction of two assisted-housing complexes and a residential neighborhood for Coast Guard personnel. Exceptions to this generalization include the construction of a limited number of single-family residences and several small- and medium-sized commercial buildings. In general, these additions to the town have not been visually sympathetic with its historic character. Because of their limited extent, however, the additions have not adversely affected the overall integrity of the town. No major alterations or additions have been made to Cape Charles' overall organization, street patterns, boundaries, or lot configurations, all of which date from the town's period of historical significance and have a high degree of integrity.

Since mid-century, change in Cape Charles has been primarily subtractive. The most meaningful change to the town has been the disappearance of the railroad- and ferry-related structures that were once the town's core and its reason for existence. The Town of Cape Charles was laid out with a focus upon the railroad yard and harbor. The numerous structures that once filled this area are evident today only through historic photographs and post cards; most of the structures have been demolished. At present the area is largely vacant, with remaining commercial activity tremendously reduced. Like many late-nineteenth century industrial towns from which the symbols of former industrial activity have been erased, the residential and commercial areas of the town that remain are silent remnants of a past era, awaiting new purpose.

From the standpoint of preservation, and potential revitalization and reuse, Cape Charles has been fortunate. The town's physical isolation and limited size have resulted in a high degree of preservation and integrity with respect to its historic character. Unlike many similar nineteenth century industrial communities, Cape Charles has not suffered waves of influences from conflicting and sporadic economic tendencies, such as significant strip development and suburbanization, compounding and confusing its state of decline. The town's problems have a simple clarity and are of a limited and manageable physical extent.

With the exception of the loss of railroad- and ferry-related resources, subtractive change in Cape Charles, like additive change, has been limited considering the level and extended period of economic decline. Some residential and commercial buildings have been lost to fire or neglect. Vacancy and neglect in non-owner-occupied buildings have

been an increasing problem. Several modest but historically significant residences are badly deteriorated and currently scheduled for demolition. Other vacant residential and commercial buildings are threatened.

In general, however, the character of negative physical change in Cape Charles has been small in scale. It is evident in an apparent lack of appreciation of existing buildings and in a resulting lack of appropriate maintenance. To some extent, the overall lack of maintenance can be attributed to difficult economic circumstances. However, *inappropriate* maintenance must be attributed to either a lack of interest and appreciation for existing buildings or to a lack of knowledge of appropriate maintenance techniques.

In a number of instances, historically significant building details have been modified or removed in favor of more contemporary, frequently inappropriate, substitutions. Obvious examples include the replacement of wood porch posts in residential structures with decorative metal posts or the covering of original wood siding with asbestos, asphalt, and, more recently, aluminum and vinyl siding. In commercial structures, negative small-scale changes are evident in the replacement of original street-level storefronts with contemporary storefront materials. Comparison of historic photographs of Cape Charles with matching contemporary views illustrate how these changes adversely affect the character of both individual buildings and the town as a whole. However, because of their limited extent, most of these small-scale changes are easily reversible. Cape Charles' historically significant buildings retain a high degree of historical integrity.

Cape Charles' most important asset in terms of its potential revitalization is its wide range of building types. The town's residential buildings range from small bungalows and tightly-spaced single-family houses, suitable for starter, retirement, and modest-income housing, to more substantial middle-income homes, to large showplace residences. These residential buildings are grouped into neighborhoods that blend one to the next, yet maintain a distinctive character.

The town's commercial buildings are located primarily along Mason Avenue. They include small, converted frame residences, one- and two-story retail structures, multi-story masonry buildings, and monumental buildings. These commercial buildings have a variety of different-sized spaces and are suitable for a variety of different commercial and business uses. The buildings present economic opportunities that should be specifically analyzed and marketed.

Like the town's buildings, the landscapes in Cape Charles suffer from a lack of general maintenance and a loss of historic fabric. Also like the buildings, however, the overall integrity of the landscapes remains intact. There is a wide discrepancy in the town in the level of care and maintenance of individual properties and neighborhoods.

Many individual properties and neighborhoods are fully vegetated, with lawn, groundcover, shrubs, understory, and canopy trees. A number of properties have retained significant site features such as wood picket fences, which are particularly appropriate to the town's historical period of significance. Many other properties, however, are barren of vegetation and poorly maintained. The majority of these properties appear to be rental properties, as opposed to owner-occupied. A number of properties have had chain-link fencing installed, which is institutional in appearance and inappropriate to the character of the town. The most significant of these is the school property, the town's central park, the effect of which is to make it unappealing, uninviting, and forbidding.

Vacant lots have been a problem in Cape Charles. A number of lots in the town have never been developed. Some vacant lots have been recently created through fire or the demolition of existing buildings. Cape Charles was originally laid out in a grid of lots forty feet wide. As a result, much of the earlier single-family detached housing is very close together. Larger properties were created by combining two or three of the smaller lots. Many of these larger properties are still considered subdivided. While the forty-foot-wide lots exist as legal entities, the town's zoning does not currently permit building on the small lots because the extremely small side yards that result are a hazard to health in terms of light and air, and in fighting potential fires. (An exception exists for rebuilding residences lost to fire.) Many existing vacant lots are therefore potentially unusable and are not well maintained.

Most important and visually dramatic in terms of the visual character of the town's landscapes, whether private yard, public park, or streetscape, is the presence of deciduous canopy trees. Canopy trees give life to a streetscape, providing shade, color, and, most importantly, spatial variety with reference to buildings, streets, and people. Yards and streetscapes in Cape Charles that have mature, deciduous canopy trees have strong, appealing character even when adjacent buildings lack integrity, are poorly maintained, or are in poor condition. Unfortunately, large areas of the town are barren of canopy trees. Where trees exist, many have been poorly pruned by the local utility company, resulting in a grotesque, stunted, amputated appearance.

Also important to the town's landscapes are the mature plantings of crepe myrtle. Crepe myrtle is a signature plant in Cape Charles, striking to visitors from other regions and memorable to tourists. The town's crepe myrtle is generally well maintained. Introduction of new canopy trees and proper care and pruning of existing trees are the single most effective way to build a strong visual character in Cape Charles.

CHAPTER THREE
PRESERVATION APPROACH

PRESERVATION APPROACH

The preservation plan for the Town of Cape Charles seeks to identify features that contribute to the physical character of the town and to develop a design approach toward those features that will enhance community character as future change occurs. The plan seeks to go beyond the narrower goal of addressing only historic buildings. It views the Town of Cape Charles as a landscape, including both natural and cultural resources, of which the historic buildings are an important part. By addressing town character, as opposed to simply preservation, the plan seeks to broaden public recognition of the issues and public support of the plan's recommendations. It seeks also to underscore the importance of preservation to the enhancement of the town as a whole. By addressing the town as a landscape, the interrelated nature of planning and growth management issues can be recognized and, hopefully, a more coordinated and complete result can be achieved. The intent of the plan is to manage change by preserving character-defining features while adding new elements that build upon and reinforce the existing character of the town in a positive way.

Cape Charles' landscape divides into two general parts: the historic town, comprising the existing developed area, and the surrounding agricultural landscape. This preservation plan is concerned primarily with the historic town but considers the effect on the town of proposed development of the surrounding agricultural landscape, including design principles for that development. In subsequent chapters of the plan, the town's landscape is further divided into characteristic component parts. Significant design elements are identified for those parts, and guidelines are outlined for their future treatment.

Community Consensus

In order for the plan to be successfully implemented, it is essential that its recommendations represent the will of the community. As a first step, a common understanding of what Cape Charles is and could become should be established through consensus. It is hoped that the process of preparing this preservation plan, in combination with other concurrent town and county initiatives, has achieved such consensus and that the plan represents that understanding.

The means of implementing the plan should be in accord with the community's basic philosophical convictions. In Cape Charles there is a strong interest in preserving individual rights and freedom of action. In addition, there are individuals from a variety of income ranges within the community. Implementation of the preservation plan should not burden individuals with limited economic means. A flexible approach to

implementation of the preservation plan is therefore recommended, permitting the widest possible latitude for individual expression and response within the overall framework described in the plan.

Implementation of the plan is in the best interest of both individuals and the community as a whole. If successful, implementation will occur through both public and private actions, incrementally, over time. Progress may be slow and steady, taking advantage of opportunities as they arise or are created, or may be dramatic, as major projects such as the Accawmacke Plantation are undertaken. Revisions to the plan should be anticipated as new circumstances arise. Whether slow or dramatic, whether small or large, each step, each change, each revision should be consistent with the principles outlined in the preservation plan and should contribute positively to the character of the community.

Economic Development

The preservation of natural and cultural resources and the strengthening of community character is the foundation of sustainable, long-term economic development. Economic development should be the engine that drives the town's physical revitalization. It should recognize the inherent qualities of existing resources and reinforce them, taking full advantage of those qualities from a business and marketing standpoint. There is no reason that economic development and the preservation of community character should be in conflict. In choosing how to develop, though, the long-term goals of the community should take precedence over the allure of short-term gain. The town should use economic development to leverage the long-term improvement of community character.

Economic development is a critical need in both Cape Charles and Northampton County. At present, there are several significant economic development initiatives being undertaken. These initiatives involve both the public and private sectors and have broad community participation and support. The goal of the initiatives, from the community's standpoint, is real, sustainable, long-term economic growth and well being.

A downward economic spiral can undermine the character of a community by lowering land values, reducing the number of owner-occupied properties, increasing vacancy, and increasing the abuse of buildings and landscape resources. Needed maintenance of building and landscape features is frequently deferred, or inappropriate quick fixes are used that can destroy character and adversely affect the long-term building and landscape condition. Buildings are underappreciated and undervalued and can be lost through neglect.

Unmanaged economic growth, however, can be equally destructive. While a stagnant economy can actually preserve resources as a result of the slow pace of change, a vibrant economy can destroy resources through rapid growth that ignores and supplants them for expediency and short-term gain. The lesson of the decline of Cape Charles' railroad industry is that no economic strategy is permanent. Future improvements to the town that are the result of increased economic activity should therefore contribute to a long-term growth management plan, or else be non-destructive and fully reversible. Induced change should not preclude future options.

In this regard, it is important that the goals and design principles of the preservation plan be clearly stated so that potential developers understand and incorporate them as their development projects are conceived. Clear understanding from the start will also facilitate implementation and community review processes.

Alternative Economic Futures

At present, it appears that four potential economic futures face Cape Charles. These alternative futures could occur in combination, and all four support the need for, and usefulness of, a preservation plan for the town. First, there is the no-change future; Cape Charles would continue as at present, with a depressed economy and little increase in economic activity. Under this scenario, potential neglect of natural and cultural resources would continue. The number of owner-occupied residences would continue to decrease, vacancy would increase, and building maintenance would be deferred or expedient, resulting in a loss of historic buildings, a loss of significant building fabric, a degrading of the streetscape, and a diminishing of community character. A preservation plan is needed to help prevent such loss under this scenario.

Under the second potential economic future, a concerted promotion of tourism in Cape Charles would lead to a gradual improvement in the town's economic climate. Under this scenario, positive change would be slow and incremental. There would be an increased interest in town properties as a second residence and a gradual increase of tourism-based commercial activity along Mason Avenue. A preservation plan has the potential to significantly enhance tourism development in Cape Charles. A strong, attractive community character based upon the town's heritage would help increase tourism and outside investment by potential homebuyers. The town's interesting building stock would be available for appropriate adaptive reuse, particularly along Mason Avenue, assisted by the significant incentive of investment tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. A preservation plan would be necessary to guide change under this scenario so that proposed public and private improvements would be supportive of the economic development plan.

The third scenario assumes the implementation of the Accawmacke Plantation proposal by Brown and Root under the recently adopted Planned Unit Development portion of the zoning code. Though the proposed project would be phased, the impact upon the town would be dramatic. Tourism, commercial activity, and land values would increase. Compared to the first two alternatives, change would be rapid. Under this scenario, a preservation plan is important to prevent potentially rapid change from unknowingly destroying significant resources within the town and to assure that the historic town participates in, and benefits from, development. Managed change to preserve and enhance community character, as proposed in the preservation plan, would be in the interest of both existing residents and the developers.

The fourth alternative future is related to the sustainable development industrial park initiative being jointly pursued by the town and county with assistance from state and federal governments. A fundamental tenet of this initiative is the preservation, enhancement, and compatible use of the town's natural and cultural resources. The appropriate reuse of existing resources, including buildings for new industry, would be considered preferable to the construction of new facilities. A preservation plan for Cape Charles outlining principles and guidelines for compatible development and reuse would be an important part of the sustainable development initiative.

Natural Resources

A basic goal of the preservation plan is the preservation of natural resources such that a long-term, healthy ecosystem is created. Wherever possible, natural systems and processes should be enhanced and used to solve community design problems, such as groundwater recharge to fully replenish the water supply and create a water balance or stormwater retention and the purification of stormwater and wastewater through treatment in existing wetlands. If Cape Charles' natural resources are not enhanced, the goals of the preservation plan will be difficult to achieve because, first, a strong community character is based upon the character of the surrounding landscape and, second, because the tourism potential of the Eastern Shore is based upon the qualities of its natural resources.

As a primary principle, existing fragile ecosystems, wetlands, barrier dunes, stream corridors, etc., should be preserved and buffered from development. Less fragile existing ecosystems, such as woodlands, should be preserved to a significant extent as open space and should be incorporated into, and become the thematic basis for, the landscape design of proposed new development.

New development outside of the historic town should use the existing native plant communities as the design palette for proposed landscape improvements. Landscaping for as-yet undeveloped areas should appear to be a continuation and extension of the native landscape. Native canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, and groundcover should be used in the appropriate ecological conditions and combinations in which they appear in the native landscape. Horticultural species which are not part of the native landscape should be avoided. This approach will promote the health of both new landscape plantings and preserved natural landscapes. It will help in establishing a common design theme for new development and in making new development appear as though it belongs in the landscape. The approach will both physically and visually support the concept of sustainable development.

Native plant species are also highly appropriate within the limits of the historic town. In addition, though, a certain number of horticultural species are also appropriate. Cape Charles was developed in the late nineteenth century, a time when Victorian horticultural explorations and practices were at their peak. Botanists from American and European arboreta and universities were traveling the far reaches of the world, collecting rare species, and creating horticultural “museums” at home. It was a time when a great number of horticultural species were introduced into American residential landscapes. This is almost certainly true of Cape Charles as well. As a result, a variety of horticultural species should be considered appropriate to the residential landscapes within the historic town. Crepe myrtle is certainly one of these. Other appropriate horticultural species should be identified for use in design guidelines for Cape Charles.

Cultural Resources

The significant cultural resources in Cape Charles include a wide variety of man-made features. Boundary lines, streets, alleys, curbs, sidewalks, fences, buildings, utilities, and vegetation all contribute to Cape Charles’ distinctive character. The historic town in its entirety is a cultural landscape.

In preserving and enhancing Cape Charles’ community character, the goal is not to recreate a lost historical period. Rather, the goal is to respect what remains of the town’s historic character and to build upon it in a sympathetic manner. The plan proposes to understand existing character and work with it, drawing out the best of its qualities and adding new elements to complement those qualities. The preservation plan seeks to build *real* character based on *real* natural and historic characteristics, not historical imagery. The plan supports substance over style and authenticity over appearance. It respectfully recognizes Cape Charles’ past while expressing its present and future.

Cape Charles also has potentially significant archeological resources, the investigation of which can contribute important information to an understanding of the history of the town and the region. Within the limits of the historic town, archeology can provide information on the material culture of the town's early inhabitants. This information will help in understanding who these people were, where they came from, and how they lived. Aside from the value of this information from a purely historical viewpoint, this understanding is important for interpretation of the town's story to visitors. Beyond the historic town, initial archeological investigations relative to the Accawmacke Plantation indicate that significant information can be obtained on the prehistoric and early settlement periods of the region's history. Archeological resources should be considered important to a full understanding of the town's past. Requirements for new development should include the investigation of archeological resources that will be disturbed.

Preservation of Historic Fabric

Most important to the preservation of the town's existing character is the preservation of original historic fabric. Wherever possible, the preservation plan should strive to preserve original historic fabric, even if that fabric is not in good condition. At the scale of the town, the preservation of historic fabric involves preserving the overall organization and layout of the community. This means preserving the street system, boundaries, lot configurations, and areas of usage in the town (Mason Avenue for commercial usage, the park and beach for recreation, and the basic character of the various residential areas).

At the scale of the neighborhood, the preservation of historic fabric means preserving historic buildings and streetscapes. Preventing the loss of historic buildings through vacancy, neglect, and decay is an important issue in Cape Charles. Preventing building loss as a result of proposed new development could become an issue as the town's economy is revitalized. Preserving the streetscape means preserving the character and relationship of site features, such as streets, curbs, sidewalks, fences, and vegetation.

At the scale of individual buildings, the preservation of historic fabric means preserving original materials and detailing. The terms "historical integrity" and "building condition" are often used with respect to historic buildings. "Historical integrity" refers to the amount of original historic fabric that a building has, irrespective of the condition of that fabric. A building can have a high degree of historical integrity but be in very poor condition. Conversely, a building can be in very good condition, but have very little significant historic fabric remaining.

The preservation plan places a great deal of value upon retaining a building's or landscape's historical integrity. In rehabilitating a historic building it is always preferable to retain and repair existing historic building elements rather than to replace them. This is true even if the repaired element will have visible flaws. The same is true at the scale of the neighborhood and the scale of the town.

When repair is not possible, in-kind replacement is recommended. In-kind replacement refers not only to appearance, but to materials and construction techniques as well. Replacements should attempt to use materials and craftsmanship that match as closely as possible that of the existing historic fabric being removed. At the scale of a building, replacing a severely deteriorated, unrepairable wood doublehung window with a metal window, for example, significantly reduces the building's level of integrity. Like that of a fine antique, a loss of integrity results in a loss of real value.

The term "restoration" refers to returning a building or landscape to a specific, previous condition or appearance at a particular period of its history. Restoration of a historic building or landscape is frequently neither necessary nor recommended. Alterations, additions, and changes to a historic resource are considered part of the resource's historical development or evolution. Such alterations and changes can be of historical significance. Because history accrues to a resource over time, it is usually recommended that later historic fabric should not be removed in order to restore a resource to an earlier appearance. "Restoration" of a historic building, landscape, or site feature should be undertaken only when there is good reason and only when there is sufficient documentation or evidence existing to determine what the actual appearance and conditions were at the period to which the resource is being restored.

When a resource has lost its historical integrity because of changes and alterations that are not significant to its historical development and are not sympathetic to its character, both contemporary alteration and restoration are options to be considered. When adequate documentation is not available to restore a resource accurately to a previous appearance, speculative restoration should not be attempted. In such a circumstance, which is the case more often than not, it is recommended that a contemporary design be developed that is sympathetic and complementary to the character of the resource.

In addition to above-ground historic resources, as previously noted, archeological resources are significant to the history of Cape Charles. Archeological resources include potential resources both within the historic portion of the town as well as potential resources in the undeveloped landscapes north and south of the town. As these areas are developed, the ground will be disturbed and the information available through the archeological record will be lost. Preliminary archeological investigations have been

undertaken on the land associated with the proposed development of the Accawmacke Plantation. The town should be aware of archeologically sensitive areas in Cape Charles and should plan for appropriate treatment of significant sites as part of the planning and development process.

In Cape Charles, the town, the neighborhoods, the streetscape, and the buildings have a very high degree of historical integrity. On the whole, these resources have had very few adverse changes or alterations. In adapting these resources to new uses, or in rehabilitating them to be attractive to new markets, it is recommended that existing historic fabric be retained wherever possible.

CHAPTER FOUR
HISTORICAL RESEARCH, EDUCATION,
AND ADVOCACY

HISTORICAL RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ADVOCACY

Cape Charles has a small group of private citizens who are active in local public affairs. Like most municipalities, these individuals are volunteers. They frequently serve on more than one board or commission and wear more than one hat. When something needs to be done, it is more than likely that a person from this group will be found doing it, or it won't get done. Though there may be philosophical and/or personality differences among individuals within the group, there is a shared sense of responsibility, and both the capabilities and limits of what the group can achieve are commonly known.

The Cape Charles Historical Society is a private, independent organization, not affiliated with municipal government. A number of individuals who are active in the Historical Society, however, are also active in local government. The Historical Society has approximately eighty-five to ninety members, most of whom are local residents. A small proportion of these members are active in Historical Society affairs on a regular basis.

The purpose of the Historical Society is the collection of information and artifacts relevant to the history of Cape Charles. Much of the existing artifact collection is maintained by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Carlson, local antique dealers. Historical information is kept in the files of individual members. A major project of the Historical Society is the adaptive reuse of the former railroad power plant located on the south side of Route 184 on the east edge of the town. The power plant is to serve as a local museum, with rotating exhibits on the history of Cape Charles for residents, school children, and visitors to the region. The building was donated to the Historical Society by Delmarva Power Company. At present, the project is in the formative stages.

Historical Society activity has extended to limited advocacy with respect to preservation of the town's historic buildings. This activity has caused some friction within the town both because of concern that the rights of individual building owners might be infringed upon and because of the organization's independent status and lack of authority from the town to advocate public policy.

Despite the deep interest in Cape Charles' heritage by the Historical Society, there is at present no detailed written history of the town. The most complete document on the history of Cape Charles is *Cape Charles, Virginia and the New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad*. This document is a twenty-three-page college thesis written in 1988 by Paula Spriggs. *Cape Charles* includes a bibliography that would be an excellent starting point for more detailed research.

It is recommended that the Historical Society undertake a systematic collection of materials on the history of Cape Charles. This collection should include both primary- and secondary-source materials. Of special interest, however, are primary-source materials. Primary-source materials that are readily available include census records, deed records, tax records, wills, and articles from period newspapers. Of additional interest would be business records of the various railroads and key individuals associated with Cape Charles. Because of the late date of the town's establishment, these sources would provide a detailed picture of Cape Charles' establishment and development.

From this information, a detailed history of the town could be written or, alternatively, an accurate overview of the town's history written with detailed papers on aspects of the town's history added over time. It is strongly recommended that a detailed, scholarly history of Cape Charles be prepared. The history should include information on the land prior to the establishment of the town. Also of particular interest would be additional historical information on William Scott and a study of his use of lands surrounding the town as depicted in the 1887 Bauman map.

The Historical Society should undertake the task of documenting ongoing change in Cape Charles. The purpose of this documentation is to provide for future generations the information about the present that we wish we had of the past. A first step in this process is to document existing conditions in the town. Cape Charles could be on the verge of tremendous change if either the Accawmacke Plantation or Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park become reality. It is recommended that photographic documentation of the areas of Cape Charles that will be affected by this proposed development be undertaken. For the most part, these areas are limited to the open land both north and south of the town. Topographic drawings and other documents should also be preserved. As new development occurs in Cape Charles, the Historical Society should photograph the sites before, during, and after the work is undertaken. These photographs and any additional relevant information on the project should be stored in the Historical Society's archives.

It is recommended that the Historical Society focus on research and education, including projects such as the collection, organization, and analysis of primary-source materials, and the museum project. In order to undertake this work, a Historical Society archive and research office should be established. It is recommended that the town assist the Historical Society by providing such space, either in the new municipal facility at the former school building in the town's central square, or in the existing municipal building when its upper-floor offices are vacated. Alternatively, there is ample vacant office space in existing buildings along Mason Avenue. Using existing vacant office space for the archive, however, may involve costs for rent and renovation that the Historical

Society could not bear. It would also result in a potentially impermanent facility that would be of lesser benefit to the town and its residents.

With the focus of the Historical Society on research and education, it is recommended that the organization cease its activities with regard to public advocacy. The Historical Society should carefully maintain its status as a neutral, non-political, educational organization.

It is recommended that the town create a local Historical Commission to serve as an officially-designated body with respect to historic preservation issues. The Historical Commission would serve in an advisory role to the Planning Commission and Town Council. When issues before the Planning Commission and/or Town Council relate to historically-significant resources, the Historical Commission would research and provide background information on the significance of those resources as well as recommendations on appropriate actions based upon that significance. The Historical Commission would maintain official files on the town's historic resources as well as a preservation technical library, both of which could be referenced by local residents and those active in town government. It would develop a specialized knowledge and expertise on preservation issues, but would be directly responsible to the town's decision-making bodies.

Though there would probably be an overlap between the members of the Historical Commission and the members of the Historical Society, as well as other town organizations, a clear line of action and responsibility would be drawn between the private, public-service research and educational activities of the Historical Society and the officially-designated public information and advocacy activities of the Historical Commission. Incorporation of the Historical Commission within the town government would provide a means of incorporating historic preservation issues into the official, consensus-building processes of the town and would help the Commission to be responsive to the broader issues of the town.

Summary of Recommendations for Historical Research, Education, and Advocacy:

1. The Historical Society should focus on research and education relative to the history of Cape Charles. It should not be engaged in public advocacy, but should carefully maintain its status as a neutral, non-political, educational organization.
2. The Historical Society should undertake a systematic collection of materials on the history of Cape Charles. The collection should concentrate upon primary-source materials such as census records, deed records, tax records, wills, and period newspapers.

3. The Historical Society should document ongoing change in Cape Charles as it occurs. The sites of proposed new development should be photographed before, during, and after work is undertaken. These photographs and additional relevant information should be stored in the Society's archives for the benefit of future generations.
4. The Town of Cape Charles should support the educational mission of the Historical Society by providing office space for the establishment of an archive and research space. This space could be located within the new municipal facility at the former school or in the existing municipal building when it is vacated.
5. The town should create a Historical Commission to serve in an advisory role to the Planning Commission and Town Council. The Historical Commission would maintain official files on the town's historic resources, provide background information on the significance of historic resources, and recommend appropriate actions with respect to historic resources.

CHAPTER FIVE
COMMUNITY APPROACHES, PARKS,
AND OPEN SPACE

COMMUNITY APPROACHES, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE

Town Approach, Entrance, and Identity - Route 13

The approach to Cape Charles begins at Route 13. The appearance of Route 13 is therefore important to the town, both in terms of wayfinding and establishing an impression that is inviting to tourists and visitors, beckoning them toward Cape Charles and welcoming them. The predominant character of Route 13, the character visitors come to the Eastern Shore to experience, is one of a rural agricultural landscape. From an economic standpoint as well as a quality-of-life standpoint, it is in the best interest of Northampton County, the Town of Cape Charles, and other towns within the county to preserve the rural agricultural landscape as new development occurs.

The threat to the rural agricultural landscape along Route 13 is uncontrolled roadside development. If permitted to occur in a piecemeal, haphazard manner, such roadside development will destroy the visual character of the landscape, and the appeal of Northampton County to the prospective tourist trade will dramatically diminish. Equally, if not more important, uncontrolled development along Route 13 will continue to draw businesses, jobs, and investment from the towns and villages of Northampton County, where it is desperately needed.

Fortunately, the extent of existing roadside development along Route 13 has not yet reached a point of no return. Northampton County is in a position to set in motion planning policies that could preserve the rural landscape while reinforcing existing towns and villages with new development. As one of the county's largest towns, Cape Charles should play a strong leadership role in advocating appropriate planning policy changes within the county. Cape Charles should not only work with county supervisors and staff on this matter, but should also meet with, coordinate, and organize other towns within the county to effect positive, constructive, economically-sound change.

The Town of Cape Charles has already begun this effort. Proposed revisions to the county's comprehensive plan have been reviewed and discussed by the Planning Commission and Town Council. The proposed revisions feature regional commercial centers along Route 13 and neighborhood commercial uses within existing towns and villages. Route 13 would be designated as a Highway Protection Area, with the regional commercial centers positioned at specific locations. The comprehensive plan states, "Because much of the retail commerce in the County is directed at tourists, the commercial category includes development along highways. It is the principal policy of the County to encourage commercial development to be concentrated in areas where it

can best be served by transportation routes and presents the least interference with residential and other land uses.”

The problem with this policy statement is that the commercial uses that are aggregating along the highway are *not* uses related solely, or even primarily, to tourists. They are uses that are targeted toward the local, regional, resident population. To this end, businesses are being drawn away from the traditional downtowns to regional shopping centers located along the highway. The result is the continued deterioration of the county's towns. The recent shopping center constructed adjacent to Exmore is a case in point.

Furthermore, the county should be seeking to attract tourists *into* towns, not to segregate tourists out at the highway. A foundation of the county's economic development policy should be the revitalization of existing towns and villages. To accomplish this goal, the economic development and planning objective should be to attract tourists and tourist dollars into the heart of existing communities. In this way, commercial investment will be concentrated where it is needed—not in developing valuable agricultural land, but in revitalizing the county's deteriorating towns.

It is recommended, therefore, that the county's comprehensive plan be revised to state that local, regional, and tourism-based commercial uses be concentrated within and adjacent to existing towns and villages in order to revitalize local economies and downtown areas. To the maximum extent possible, these commercial uses should be accommodated within existing buildings, which should be appropriately rehabilitated to preserve and enhance the character of existing towns. Master planning and appropriate design guidelines will be necessary for each town to ensure that new commercial development is handled in a manner that enhances the town specifically to increase its tourist appeal. New development along Route 13 should be limited solely to commercial services for through-travelers. Such new development should be limited in extent, strategically located, and subject to design guidelines that ensure that it does not detract from the character of the rural agricultural landscape.

Because of the importance of these county-wide issues to the economic future of the town, Cape Charles needs to be active in planning policy formulation and implementation at the county level. At present, the proposed County Comprehensive Plan calls for significant new commercial and industrial development clustered around the intersection of Route 13 and Route 184 with space remaining for the eventual construction of a grade-separated interchange. It is recommended that this proposal be radically altered to preserve open, agricultural land in the vicinity of the interchange and to concentrate new commercial activity in and adjacent to existing towns throughout the county.

Summary of Recommendations, Route 13:

1. Cape Charles should be an active participant and a leader in county affairs because county planning policies will have a significant effect upon the town's long-term economic prosperity.
2. The town should work with the county to revise the County Comprehensive Plan such that local, regional, and tourism-based commercial uses are concentrated within and adjacent to existing towns and villages in order to revitalize local economies and downtown areas.
3. To the maximum extent possible, these commercial uses should be accommodated in appropriately rehabilitated, existing buildings.
4. Master planning and design guidelines are necessary for each town to ensure that new development enhances downtown areas both for local residents and for tourist appeal.
5. New development along Route 13 should be limited to commercial services for through-travelers. Such development should be limited in extent, strategically located, and subject to design guidelines that will help preserve the character of the rural agricultural landscape.

Town Approach, Entrance, and Identity - Route 184

The proposed County Comprehensive Plan designates Route 184 as a Highway Protection Area. The Highway Protection Area is related to roads "worthy of protection from over commercialization and strip residential development." The features that contribute to the character of Route 184 that make it "worthy of protection" include the open fields of the surrounding rural agricultural landscape, the narrow paving width, the allee of mature crepe myrtle, and the occasional, adjacent woodlands. Route 184 is protected from development on its south side by the close proximity of the railroad, which parallels the road. Along the north side of Route 184, there are a limited number of single-family residences.

Route 184 is important in establishing an initial identity for the town in the minds of visitors. Because most of Route 184 is located beyond the boundary of the town, close cooperation is required between Cape Charles and the county with respect to the evolution of the roadway. Cape Charles has proposed an overlay zoning district along Route 184, but the county has thus far not agreed to this proposal. It should, however, be

possible to protect Route 184 through its designation as a Highway Protection Area, whatever the specific mechanisms that are utilized.

It is recommended that no new commercial development be permitted along Route 184 and that no new development at all be permitted between Route 184 and the railroad. No new strip residential development should be permitted. Any new residential development should connect to Route 184 through the construction of new roadways. Any new roads for residential development north of Route 184 should be planned to interconnect with those of existing or future adjacent developments to create a road network parallel to Route 184 over the long term, should significant residential development occur.

Every attempt should be made to preserve the existing character of Route 184. The existing cartway should not be widened except as a last resort for safety considerations. The existing crepe myrtle allee should be preserved. New crepe myrtle should be planted in existing or future gaps. A significant landscape buffer should be established between Route 184 and any new development north of the road. Such a landscape buffer should be a minimum of 150 feet wide as measured from the cartway. The landscape buffer should be permitted to naturally succeed to woodland over time. Neither new plantings nor extensive management should be required.

Two key features along Route 184 are the water tower and the power plant. They are both examples of creative actions that the town is taking as part of its revitalization effort. The water tower, located on the south side of Route 184 approximately one-quarter mile east of the town line, is a prominent landmark that serves as a beacon for travelers approaching Cape Charles. Through a grant from Brown and Root, the water tower has been appropriately painted in the image of a lighthouse and has thus become a memorable conversation piece.

Similarly, the power plant is a utilitarian building that is being transformed into an attraction that will benefit the town. As mentioned in Chapter Four, *Historical Research, Education, and Advocacy*, the power plant is being adapted into a museum by the Historical Society. It is recommended that the town actively support and assist the Historical Society in this effort. It is further recommended that the power plant become more than a museum, and become a visitors' center for the town. The two uses go hand-in-hand, and there is ample space in the building to accommodate both. The requirements of a state-certified visitors' center should be investigated by the town, with the goal of eventually becoming part of the state system. In the meantime, the power plant could serve both an educational mission and an orientation/economic development mission, to the substantial benefit of the town.

The proposed development of the Accawmacke Plantation and the development of the Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park both call for a new road connection with Route 184 to be located just east of the existing spoils pile, approximately one mile west of the Route 13 intersection. The character of this intersection is important, requiring careful consideration. Because of the proposed size of the combined Accawmacke and Sustainable Technologies developments, the amount of traffic on Route 184 could dramatically increase. Because Route 184 is the only road access to Cape Charles, traffic congestion could result, and there will be pressure to widen Route 184 and thereby significantly alter its existing character. There is even some thought of making the proposed new road the primary entrance into Cape Charles, relegating the remaining portion of Route 184 to secondary-road status.

The planning and design alternatives for this new road and its connection with existing Route 184 need to be carefully considered. At present, it is recommended that the new connection be a "T" intersection, carefully designed to have minimal impact on the overall character of Route 184. The road must be clearly signed, giving the visitor the option to proceed straight along Route 184 or to turn and enter the new development and then approach the town center from the south over "the hump."

Summary of Recommendations, Route 184:

1. No new commercial development should be permitted along Route 184. No new development should be permitted between Route 184 and the railroad.
2. Any new residential development located north of Route 184 should be connected to Route 184 and should be separated from Route 184 by a significant landscape buffer. The landscape buffer should be permitted to naturally succeed to woodland over time.
3. Every attempt should be made to preserve the existing character of Route 184. The cartway should not be widened unless absolutely necessary for safety concerns. The crepe myrtle allee should be preserved, maintained, and expanded.
4. The water tower and the power plant are strong, positive features that represent the spirit and character of the town to visitors in a creative way. The town should actively assist the Historical Commission in the adaptive reuse of the power plant into a museum/visitors' center.
5. The effect of the substantial proposed new development in Cape Charles on Route 184 needs to be carefully considered. In particular, alternatives for the proposed intersection

of the roadway to the Accawmacke Plantation and Sustainable Development Industrial Park should be fully explored.

Town Approach, Entrance, and Identity - Route 184 and Fig Street

There has been great consternation over the seemingly awkward entrance into Cape Charles caused by the disjointed connection between Route 184 and Mason Avenue, the town's primary commercial street. Route 184 meets the historic street grid of Cape Charles at Fig Street. Straight across the intersection from Route 184 is Randolph Avenue, an early residential portion of the town. In order to reach the commercial center of Cape Charles, it is necessary to turn left on Fig Street for one block, turn right onto Mason Avenue, and travel several blocks along Mason to the town's commercial storefronts.

The existing Comprehensive Plan for Cape Charles calls for the realignment of Route 184 as it approaches the historic street grid so that it connects directly into Mason Avenue. This proposal continues to be discussed within the town. A disadvantage of this arrangement would be both the cost and the necessity of demolishing or moving the power plant.

It is recommended, however, that the existing street configuration be accepted as an idiosyncrasy of Cape Charles and that it be turned into a positive design feature. The existing arrangement causes visitors to stop, think, and choose. There is no question but that one has "arrived." As long as the choices are made clear, there is no disadvantage to the arrangement. It is an opportunity for the visitor to pause and for the town to welcome them.

Traffic flow at the intersection of Route 184 and Fig Street can be appropriately coordinated through a prioritized arrangement of stop signs and yield signs. To prevent traffic from inadvertently continuing down Randolph Avenue, a landscape/signage barrier could be created that would prevent vehicles from entering Randolph Avenue, while allowing vehicles to exit it. Such a barrier would protect the residential character of the street by protecting it from unwanted and unnecessary traffic. Making Randolph a one-way street would not be necessary.

The key design features of the entrance to Cape Charles include the historically significant shops on the south side of Route 184, the supermarket on the north side of Route 184, the intersection, the Kellogg Building, and the Ice Plant.

The existing shops along the south side of Route 184 have the potential to be a strong positive visual element. Appropriate rehabilitation of the street facade, however, is recommended. The rehabilitation need not be either extensive or expensive. It should seek to bring out the existing, simple, historic character of the buildings, not to cover it over with a modern commercial treatment. Asphalt paving in front of the buildings should for the most part be removed and replaced with grass or groundcover. A sidewalk should be installed. The edge of the roadway should be clearly defined, though curbs are not necessary. Parking for the retail uses of the buildings needs to be established, either beside, behind, or shared with the market across the street.

The parking lot of the existing food market (Meatland) on the north side of Route 184 should be significantly upgraded visually. This could be achieved by redesigning the parking layout, clearly defining aisles and parking spaces with painted lines, creating a significantly wider landscaped area along Route 184 with numerous deciduous canopy trees, and creating landscaped islands within the parking lot, also with canopy trees.

Beyond the historic shops and the market are existing open lots on both sides of Route 184 at the intersection with Fig Street. The north lot is owned by Brown and Root and a "Welcome to Cape Charles" sign has been constructed on it. The south lot is owned by the town. Both of these lots should remain open space. Dirt shoulders adjacent to the roadway should be planted with grass and protected from vehicles. The park-like appearance of the two lots should be enhanced over time with new plantings, especially canopy trees. The welcome signage could be redesigned in a format that would be continued throughout the town and would be the town's signature. Directions to downtown and to the marina should be clearly presented.

The Kellogg Building is a colorful and lively structure in a Spanish Colonial style, constructed in the 1920s. As Cape Charles develops economically, it should be an attractive commercial property. The unique character of the Kellogg Building significantly enhances the entrance into Cape Charles and should be preserved.

The Ice Plant is also significant, but is in deteriorating condition. If at all feasible, it should be saved. The Ice House is not only historically significant to the town, it is the visual terminus of Mason Street. If the building is lost, it is recommended that that site remain undeveloped as open space.

Summary of Recommendations, Route 184 and Fig Street:

1. It is not necessary to reconfigure the connection between Route 184 and Mason Avenue. However, design improvements should be undertaken to improve the visual character of the entrance into Cape Charles.
2. The existing shops along the south side of Route 184 should be retained and their facades rehabilitated in keeping with the historic character of the buildings. Asphalt paving in front of the buildings should be removed and the areas landscaped. A sidewalk should be installed. Parking for the buildings needs to be created.
3. The parking lot of the existing food market on the north side of Route 184 should be significantly improved through design and landscaping. Numerous canopy trees should be planted.
4. At the existing intersection of Route 184 and Fig Street, the existing open lots should remain open space. Existing planting should be enhanced, again through the addition of canopy trees. New welcome signage and directional signage should be installed using a common theme that will be carried throughout the town. Traffic should be prevented from continuing west on Randolph Avenue to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood.
5. The Kellogg Building should be preserved. If possible, the Ice House should be preserved. If not, the site should become open space.

Central Park

The core of the Town of Cape Charles is its central park. The park not only lies at the center of the historic street grid, but principal avenues were created to lead to it from each of the cardinal points. Unfortunately, however, the park does not play a central role, either visually or functionally, in the life of the town. It is a forgotten space. Over the years, with the construction of a school on the northeast corner of the site, the park has been devoted to use as athletic fields and had been fenced off from adjacent neighborhoods. Recently, the school has been abandoned and turned over to the town. In another of the strong positive actions taken by the town in recent years, the school is to be rehabilitated as the new municipal center.

Adjacent to the existing school building are two temporary buildings which are in poor condition. A new, high-quality tennis court has been constructed by Brown and Root for the town. The tennis court has been a subject of controversy within the town because of

the limited interest in tennis by town residents. The location of the tennis courts is unfortunate because they block access to the park from the northern portion of Peach Street, one of the primary streets created to center on the park. The existing tennis courts should remain but should, if possible, be made more accessible to residents. Tennis clinics and programs could help achieve this. It is recommended that the two temporary buildings be removed. The space they occupy should be used to reestablish a strong pedestrian connection between the park and the north portion of town. Parking for the existing school building could also be provided there.

The adaptive reuse of the school building as a municipal center is strongly supported by this preservation plan. Additional parking that may be required for this use must be minimized and carefully designed not to adversely impact the use of the park as a park. To the extent possible, the renovation of the school should seek to restore the original appearance of the building.

It is recommended that the central park be reestablished as a park and that its physical connection with adjacent neighborhoods be recreated. The chain link fencing surrounding the park should be removed at the earliest opportunity. The temporary buildings between the school and the tennis courts should be demolished and removed. The space in which the temporary buildings are located could be used for parking, but should remain open as the new physical link to the neighborhoods north of the park.

A conceptual plan for the long-term development of the park should be created. Uses that will be appropriate to the park should be planned and implemented in a phased manner. It is recommended that the central park be a park for passive recreation. Informal landscaped pedestrian entrances should be created from east and west Mason Avenue and north and south Peach Street. Like many areas of Cape Charles, the planting of numerous deciduous canopy trees would make the strongest visual improvement to the appearance and character of the park. The landscaping of the park should serve as a central, green core of open space from which the streetscapes radiate.

Some open grass areas should be retained for informal play such as catch, Frisbee, neighborhood soccer, touch football, and softball. A play area for small children should be created. An outdoor basketball court should be constructed to provide an appealing alternative for teenagers and young adults who currently play on the streets. Suggestions for improvements should be solicited from residents. The goal is to create a park that will be used by residents and will epitomize the charm and character of Cape Charles for visitors.

It is strongly recommended that organized, active recreation such as Little League fields not be constructed in the central park. Such uses should be confined to specially-designated areas beyond the town's historic grid. A site north of, and adjacent to, Washington Avenue would be appropriate for active recreation.

Summary of Recommendations, Central Park:

1. The rehabilitation of the school building as a municipal center should be undertaken. To the extent possible, the original appearance of the building should be reestablished.
2. Parking for the municipal center should be carefully designed to be visually appealing and not to adversely affect the park.
3. The two temporary buildings should be removed. The space they occupy could be used for parking but should reestablish a connection from the park to the neighborhoods on the north side of town.
4. The chain link fences surrounding the park should be removed as soon as possible.
5. A long-term plan for the park should be created and implemented over time. Many new deciduous canopy trees should be planted. Informal landscaped entrances should be created to extend Mason Avenue and Peach Street into the park. The central park should have open grass areas for informal games, an area for small children, and a basketball court for young adults. Ideas for desired improvements should be solicited from residents. The goal is to create a park that will be used by residents and will epitomize the charm and character of Cape Charles for visitors.
6. Playfields for organized, active recreation should not be constructed in the park and would be better located adjacent to the historic town grid, north of Washington Street.

The Beach

Cape Charles' beach is one of the strong positive assets that should contribute significantly to the town's appeal as a tourist destination. The beach extends along the entire length of the town's historic grid adjacent to the Chesapeake Bay. A paved "boardwalk" borders the length of the beachfront, adjacent to Bay Avenue. The bandstand, constructed on the boardwalk opposite the end of Tazewell Avenue, has become a visual symbol of the town and is featured on the town's seal. Recently, a new wooden boardwalk has been extended out along the jetty at the south end of the beach. The boardwalk gives an excellent view up and down the shoreline and features

interpretive signage on the ecology of the shore. With sand dredged from the bay by the Corps of Engineers, the beach is an excellent location for swimming and sunbathing by residents and visitors alike. Its convenience to the town's residential neighborhoods, commercial district, and places of accommodation make it a strong, positive, unique element in the mix of attractions for prospective tourists.

The beach needs to continue to receive the attention of the town in maintaining it as a desirable summer recreational site. The erosion of sand from the beach is a serious long-term problem that must be continuously monitored and addressed with state and federal agencies. Alternatives for addressing beach erosion should be assessed in terms of minimal adverse visual impact. Massive, engineered break-walls could be visually obtrusive and counterproductive in terms of the sustainable design concepts the town and the county are promoting and using as a marketing theme. Rules for appropriate beach behavior should be strictly enforced to maintain an appealing family-oriented atmosphere. Parking for visitors using the beach could be better organized and defined along Bay Avenue. It is recommended that appropriate shore-tolerant tree species be planted in the landscape divider along Bay Avenue to both soften the street's appearance and to serve as an initial windbreak for adjacent residences. Shore-tolerant, dune-related species are usually low and hardy. Views of the bay should not be obstructed.

Summary of Recommendations for the Beach:

1. The condition of the beach and quality of the experience it offers should continue to be a primary concern of the town as Cape Charles' tourism potential is enhanced.
2. The erosion of sand from the beach is a long-term problem that must be monitored in association with state and federal agencies.
3. Rules for appropriate beach behavior should be enforced to maintain a family-oriented atmosphere.
4. Parking along Bay Avenue could be better organized and defined.
5. Appropriate shore-tolerant tree species should be planted in the landscape divider along Bay Avenue to both soften the street's appearance and to provide an initial windbreak for adjacent residences.

The Shoreline, Creeks, Wetlands, and Open Space System

The Town of Cape Charles has significant natural areas beyond its historic core that are ecologically sensitive and are primarily water-related. These natural areas include an extensive shoreline, both along the Chesapeake Bay and along the town's two major creeks: King's Creek on the north and Plantation Creek on the south. Tongues of smaller creeks, wetlands, and drainageways extend inland from the shorelines. As part of the sustainable development concept, these shorelines, creeks, wetlands, and drainageways should be preserved in a natural vegetative state, both for ecological and aesthetic reasons. These areas also have a high probability of having significant prehistoric archeological sites. Anchored to the historic town grid, it is recommended that the natural areas become the backbone of a comprehensive open space system interwoven throughout the town as new development occurs. The landscape of the existing streets and of proposed new development should build off of and further extend this open space system.

The North Shorelines, Creeks, and Drainageways: North of the beach is the natural shoreline of the bay that extends three-quarters of a mile to the mouth of King's Creek. This shoreline is presently composed of areas of young woodland, woodland edge, narrow stretch of beach, and mud flats that are exposed at low tide. At the mouth of King's Creek, the shoreline extends inland past the existing marina and includes a small creek that borders the existing golf course. The shoreline and alignment of this creek are a portion of the eastern boundary of the town. The small creek reaches southward across Route 184 toward the railroad and terminates in an area of native woodland through which Route 184 passes. Additional drainageways extend inland from the shoreline. The largest of these drainageways trends southeastward from the bay and touches Washington Avenue at Nectarine Street. This drainageway has been mechanically excavated and its alignment straightened. It is surrounded by a large area of emerging successional woodland.

The land north of the town's historic grid is planned for extensive new development as the northern tract of the proposed Accawmacke Plantation being undertaken by Brown and Root. A large marina is proposed for King's Creek that will involve significant expansion of the watered area and will largely alter the existing landscape. As the land is developed in future years, it is recommended that the existing shoreline along the bay, the shoreline along King's Creek not associated with the proposed new marina, and the small creek and drainageways be preserved in their natural state. As a general planning principle, a landscape buffer should be established along the shorelines, creeks, and drainageways that should become part of an interconnected, comprehensive open-space system for the town.

Such an open space system would be a significant part of the sustainable development approach being adopted by the town and the county. It should extend from the shores, creeks, drainageways, and wetlands through the new development to connect to the streetscape of the historic town core. The vegetation of both the streetscape and new development should then build off of and further extend the landscape of this open space system. While primarily a network of natural surface-drainageways, the open space system will also serve as a network of pedestrian linkages and a buffer between adjacently developed areas. The landscape of the open space system should be permitted to succeed naturally over time. The natural landscape buffer along the shore is necessary to protect the existing shoreline.

The South Shorelines, Creeks, Wetlands, and Drainageways: South of the harbor of the Town of Cape Charles is a two-mile-long shoreline along the Chesapeake Bay. The beach and dunes associated with this shoreline have been identified as ecologically sensitive and unique. This shoreline should be preserved in its natural state. The existence of black gum trees over two hundred years old have been noted in this area. An additional landscape buffer area should be established between the dunes and proposed new development.

From the mouth of Plantation Creek, the shoreline extends inland with numerous marshy areas, wetlands, small creeks, and drainageways. This land comprises the large south tract of the proposed Accawmacke Plantation. Like the northern tract noted above, the south tract is planned for extensive residential, commercial, and recreational development. As recommended for the northern tract, an open space system is recommended for the southern tract of the Accawmacke Plantation that will preserve the shorelines, marshes, wetlands, creeks, and drainageways in a landscape of native successional vegetation. Like the northern tract, this open space system should be extended into and throughout the new development as landscape buffers, streetscapes, and fringes of the proposed golf course to create a comprehensive network. A significant, natural open space system should be the organizing principle around which new development is planned.

Summary of Recommendations for Shorelines, Creeks, Wetlands, and Open Space:

1. The existing shorelines, creeks, wetlands, and drainageways should be preserved in their natural state as a landscape buffer of native successional vegetation.
2. This network of landscape buffers organized around ecologically-sensitive features and drainageways should become the backbone of a comprehensive open space system as part of the town's sustainable development concept. The natural open space system

should extend through new development to connect to the streetscape of the historic core of Cape Charles. The vegetation of both the streetscape and proposed new development should build off of and extend the landscape of the open space system.

3. The unique and ecologically-sensitive landscape associated with the beach and dunes along the bay south of the harbor should be preserved and buffered from adjacent new development.

CHAPTER SIX
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

The downtown business district in Cape Charles is centered in a row of commercial buildings located in the four-block stretch of Mason Avenue between Plum and Harbor streets. Cape Charles' downtown district is unusual because it is not situated on a major through-road, like the downtown districts of most towns, and because it is one-sided—commercial buildings are located only on the north side of Mason Street, facing the largely undeveloped railroad property and adjacent harbor to the south. Approximately twenty-eight businesses are located within the downtown business district, most of which are oriented toward the local residential population. They include small retail stores, personal services, a food market, and restaurants/cafes. Approximately seven of the existing businesses are small retailers oriented toward the tourist trade.

Cape Charles' downtown district has struggled for many years. Most recently the downtown suffered a blow when McCrory's, a retail fixture on Mason Avenue occupying several adjacent buildings, closed its doors. Like the rest of Cape Charles, however, the downtown district has strong potential in terms of character, appeal, and available building stock.

Business Development Organization and Marketing Plan

Cape Charles has two local business organizations: the Cape Charles Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants' Association. The Chamber of Commerce has been responsible for organizing two town events: the 4th of July Festival in the early summer and the Crab Festival in the late summer or early fall. Beyond the organization of these events, neither organization has been particularly active in recent years.

It is recommended that the two organizations be merged and revitalized into a new Cape Charles business development organization with the goal of developing markets, promoting existing businesses, and attracting compatible new businesses to the town. A clear marketing strategy and marketing plan should be outlined that can be implemented and expanded in stages. The marketing plan should be based on attracting the three identifiable markets of interest to Cape Charles. The plan should define the kind of downtown business center that Cape Charles has the potential to be, identify the steps needed to create it, and take action.

The first market of importance to Cape Charles is the local market, comprised of existing and future residents of the town. This is the neighborhood market mentioned in the county comprehensive plan. Because it is already in place, this is the easiest market to

attract and the market that should receive the business development organization's immediate attention. Many of the existing downtown businesses are primarily serving this local market at present. The range of services provided to the local market should be complementary and well-rounded in order to make Cape Charles a strong downtown center. The existing range of businesses should be compared to the range of businesses available in established towns elsewhere on the Eastern Shore. The size, range, and quality of businesses in specific categories should be compared to those of their competitors as well as to those of other established towns. Where specific businesses in Cape Charles fall short in the quality or range of services offered, they should be encouraged to make changes and should be supported in their efforts. Where types of businesses that do well elsewhere are found not to exist in Cape Charles, a concerted effort should be made to attract such businesses to the downtown area.

The second market of interest to Cape Charles is the regional market encompassing the residents of Northampton and Accomack counties. As with the local market, specific comparisons can be made with competitors in the region both in terms of the range of total businesses and services offered and in the range and quality of services in specific business categories. Cape Charles should assess its standing in relation to regional competitors, identify its strengths, and devise specific actions to increase its potential as a regional center. Key to the goal of becoming a regional commercial center is the current county planning policy of encouraging regional commercial development in locations along Route 13 versus a proposed policy of concentrating new commercial development in existing towns. This policy difference has been discussed previously in Chapter Five, dealing with the character of development along Route 13. The local business organization should be a clear voice and active participant in this debate.

The third market that should be focused upon in a marketing plan for Cape Charles is tourism. The potential for tourism in Cape Charles has been well-recognized. Though tourism has increased incrementally in recent years, the critical mass that must be reached for tourism to thrive has not yet been achieved. As mentioned above, downtown Cape Charles currently features approximately seven businesses oriented toward the tourist trade. There are currently four full-time bed and breakfasts, with the potential for more. An organized and concentrated effort is necessary to bring the town's tourism potential to fruition. Cape Charles' primary assets relative to tourism are location and character. Location is important in terms of the natural beauty of the Eastern Shore, the available access to the ocean and the bay, and the quiet "hide-away" sense of the town. Though recognized, the natural appeal of the town's character has yet to be acted upon. The purpose of this preservation plan is to help coordinate such action. The general lack of appreciation of the town's unique character by many local residents and the lack of willingness of residents to take the necessary actions to strengthen that character are the

two largest obstacles standing in the way of a successful tourism-based economy in Cape Charles.

There are several concrete steps that a Cape Charles business development organization can take in promoting business activity downtown. Cape Charles should develop an advertising theme and look that is readily identifiable and builds off of the character of the town that businesses are attempting to promote. Cape Charles' businesses should advertise together in a limited, targeted, regular manner. Costs should be shared. The advertising message should be consistent, promoting the town as a whole, though its emphasis may change and different businesses may be featured on a rotating basis.

Town events should be revitalized. The 4th of July Festival and the Crab Festival should be coordinated to attract people to Cape Charles and to encourage them to return throughout the year. Additional events, such as the recent June Jubilee, may be added, though care must be taken not to overburden volunteer event organizers. Additional events could play off of successful existing regional events such as the Harvest Festival and Birding Festival by offering supplementary attractions. Attendance at events should be monitored in terms of the degree to which the local, regional, or tourism markets are participating. Successful events held in other Virginia and Maryland communities should be studied as models for Cape Charles.

The Cape Charles business organization should become a partner with the Cape Charles Historical Society in the adaptive reuse of the power plant as a museum and visitors' center. The visitors' center's function of the program should orient visitors to the businesses and services available in Cape Charles.

A stated goal of the joint Cape Charles/Northampton County Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park is the revitalization of the town and the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of its existing buildings. To this end, as businesses are sought to become part of the Industrial Park, the distinct effort should be made to fill the buildings along Mason Avenue first, before new facilities are constructed elsewhere. For some uses, this will not be feasible, but for many it will. The Sustainable Technologies concept will have strong marketing and tourism potential. The Cape Charles business organization should be active in the development of the park as it pertains to downtown development. The park concept should be used by the organization as a marketing theme.

The development of the Accawmacke Plantation will have a profound effect upon Cape Charles. The proposed downtown business organization should support the development effort but should assure that new commercial development associated with the

Accawmacke Plantation complements, but does not compete with, commercial interests along Mason Avenue.

Finally, the business organization should be a leader in the revitalization of the town's historic character. The economic revitalization of Cape Charles depends in a large measure upon the perception visitors have of the town, whether the visitors are part of the local, regional, or tourism markets. The town's unique late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century character is its most attractive feature. To the extent that the town's character can be used to make Cape Charles stand apart as a marketing attraction—make it a special place to visit, spend time, and shop—it should be taken advantage of. Developing the buildings and streetscape along Mason Avenue in a manner that reinforces the existing character of the buildings should be a primary concern of the Cape Charles business organization. Just as important is the character of the town as a whole. Cape Charles should be a beautiful and interesting destination for its own sake—the approach down Route 184, the central park, the beach, the historic neighborhoods. Cape Charles has a quality and ambiance that are rarely found elsewhere. With a minimum of coordination and effort, the town's character can be put to work in a real and economically tangible way to the benefit of businesses and residents alike.

Summary of Recommendations for Business Development Organization and Marketing Plan:

1. The existing Cape Charles Chamber of Commerce and Merchants' Association should be merged and revitalized into a proactive business development organization.
2. A marketing plan should be developed for Cape Charles which can be implemented in stages. Study should be undertaken of the local, regional, and tourism markets. Efforts should be made to offer new services through existing businesses and to attract compatible new businesses.
3. The business organization should be active in changing county planning policy from encouraging regional commercial development along Route 13 to encouraging regional commercial development in and adjacent to existing towns.
4. A common advertising effort should be undertaken by downtown businesses. The advertising should promote the town and feature specific businesses on a rotating basis. The advertising should have an identifiable look and theme.
5. Town events should be revitalized and used to encourage visitors to return.

6. The business organization should become a partner with the Historical Society in the adaptive reuse of the power station as a museum and visitors' center.
7. The business organization should be active in the Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park, encouraging the appropriate rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings.
8. The organization should work to assure that new commercial areas associated with the proposed Accawmacke Plantation are complementary to and not in competition with the downtown area.
9. The business development organization should be a leader in the revitalization of the town's historic character.

Mason Avenue - Fig Street to Plum Street

The entrance to Cape Charles from Route 13 to Mason Avenue has been discussed in the previous chapter. Upon turning from Fig Street onto Mason Avenue, travelers are presented with the long vista of the avenue. This vista is powerful primarily because of the open expanse of the railroad yard and harbor to the south. Other than the sudden sense of openness, Mason Avenue, at this location, does not have a well-defined visual character. The town's commercial core, located between Peach Street and Harbor Street, is not clearly visible and recognizable. Because there are no other clear options, first-time travelers continue down Mason Avenue seeking visual clues as to where they are and where they should go. The two blocks of Mason Avenue between Fig Street and Plum Street must be traveled before the four-block commercial core is reached.

The character of the portion of Mason Avenue between Fig Street and Plum Street is important because it is the gateway to the commercial core. Its design function should be to guide visitors as smoothly as possible to the commercial core as they take in the visual scene before them. It is the first experience visitors have of the relationship between the town, the harbor, and the bay.

On the north side of Mason Avenue, the two blocks between Fig and Plum streets include some of Cape Charles' earliest, simplest, and most historically significant residential structures. It is here that the first residences were constructed in Cape Charles soon after the town was created. This row of residential structures was once continuous. Today, however, it is framed and punctuated by larger, nonresidential structures. At the northwest corner of Fig and Mason is the Kellogg Building, a colorful, 1920's commercial structure in a Spanish Colonial style. At the corner of Nectarine Street and

Mason Avenue is an automobile dealership, occupying both the northeast and northwest corners. On the northeast corner of Plum and Mason is the Municipal Building, including the large Fire Department annex.

The nonresidential structures are thus located at each intersection with Mason Avenue in these first two blocks. The Kellogg Building was briefly discussed in the previous chapter. Because of its unusual character, it visually enhances the entrance into Cape Charles, and its long-term preservation and use should be of strong interest to the town. The automobile dealership and Municipal Building/Fire Department are both important uses along Mason Avenue which should be supported and sustained.

Between these structures are the historically significant residential buildings. Six residential buildings are located between Fig and Nectarine streets. An additional two buildings in this row have been demolished in recent years, creating a vacant lot that is currently used for parking. Ten residential buildings are located between Nectarine and Plum streets. Most of these buildings are currently used as residences. Two, however, are used for small commercial businesses.

Demolition Ordinance: These residential buildings, though modest, are significant to the historical development of the town and should be preserved. The enhancement of the buildings and their landscapes is also important to the entrance experience onto Mason Avenue. Most important is to prevent future building loss through demolition. This portion of Mason Avenue is currently zoned B-1, Business District. Because of their modest character, pressure may develop over time for the demolition of these residential structures to make way for new commercial construction. There is currently a large variety of vacant commercial space available in the town's commercial core. In addition, there is ample existing open space for new commercial construction in Cape Charles on the south side of Mason Avenue. The demolition of these residential buildings is not necessary to accommodate new commercial uses that cannot be accommodated within the existing buildings. Demolition should not be permitted if at all possible.

It is recommended that demolition of these structures be discouraged through the adoption of a demolition ordinance by the town. A demolition ordinance, common in historically significant towns throughout Virginia, has four important functions. First, it informs owners and developers that it is the policy of the town to discourage demolition of historically significant buildings, and it explains why. Second, it has a provision to prevent demolition by neglect. Third, it can create a period of time during which developers, the town, and other interested parties can seek alternatives to demolition. Finally, the Code of Virginia (Section 15.1-503.2) gives the town or associated persons

or organizations the option of purchasing the property in question at fair market value as a last resort.

Techniques to Promote Rehabilitation: The appropriate maintenance, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of the residential buildings should be encouraged. There are three ways in which this could be achieved. First, the permitted uses included in the zoning code for the first two blocks of Mason Avenue should be restricted to uses that can be accommodated by the existing buildings. The existing zoning code includes a wide range of permitted uses in the B-1 district, such as schools, service stations, and lumber supply, which clearly could not be accommodated within the existing residential structures. The zoning code should be revised to eliminate potentially destructive uses in this area, customizing permitted uses within the B-1 district to the available resources. The zoning ordinance should list the general categories of desired commercial uses for this two-block area and then require developers to demonstrate that the uses as they propose them can be accommodated within the existing residential buildings.

Second, the zoning code should limit the size, volume, and location of proposed additions to the existing buildings. It should: 1) state the town's policy that the existing residential buildings should be retained and appropriately reused, 2) limit the size of additions to the existing residential buildings to one-half the size of the existing buildings, 3) limit the location of new additions to the side and rear of the existing buildings, and 4) establish side and rear yard requirements similar to those of existing residential districts (at present the B-1 district has no yard requirements except adjacent to residential districts).

Third, a minimum level of design review should be included within the zoning code. Design guidelines should be created for the use of owners and developers and to serve as a touchstone to inform the review process. The goal of the design guidelines should be to preserve the character of the buildings by preserving original historic building fabric and features. Most important is that large-scale building features, such as porches, should not be removed. Next is that original building fabric and detailing, such as original windows, siding, and trim, should not be removed. Some features, such as original windows, can be economically rehabilitated. Storm windows and doors can enhance thermal performance. New building materials such as siding should be similar to existing building materials. It is possible, however, though not recommended, that some building features could be covered, such as covering original wood siding with new vinyl siding. However, in such cases, it should be required that the installation be accomplished in a way that retains the original building fabric and detailing beneath. Finally, the massing and volume of proposed additions should be generally in scale with the massing and volume of the existing buildings.

Such a level of design review would be both minimal and flexible. More detailed and demanding guidelines are possible should the town desire to implement them. The basic goal of preserving historic buildings and fabric, however, does not require that buildings be fully restored. There need be no requirements relative to paint colors or the detailed design of new elements.

Streetscape: Improvements to the streetscape in the two-block area between Fig and Plum streets would improve the visual character of the approach to the commercial core. Mason Avenue is a wide street, with two full lanes of traffic and room for parallel parking along the curb. The street has concrete curbs with a grass strip separating the curb from the concrete sidewalk. Curbcuts for driveways exist at the location of each residential building. Overhead electrical wires are located above the grass strip. Opposite the block between Fig and Nectarine streets is the steep embankment of "the hump," the overpass providing access over the railroad from the town to the harbor.

Expensive public improvements are not necessary to improve the visual character of the streetscape. As noted throughout this report, the most important measure that can be taken to improve the visual character of the streetscape is the planting of deciduous street trees. In the case of the two-block area between Fig and Plum streets, there are few existing street trees. Most of those that exist are evergreens, which block the view and do not create space beneath as do deciduous trees. The planting of numerous deciduous street trees is recommended. In the grass strip beneath the overhead wires, low-growing crepe myrtle are recommended. In private yards, beyond the wires, canopy trees should be planted. The embankment of the hump should be densely planted with appropriate native shrubs to create a strong visual presentation. Parking in the existing vacant lots should be permitted, though at a minimum the parking areas should be paved with gravel. Requirements for additional parking, as it becomes needed, can be accommodated by new parking lots located on the south side of Mason Avenue. Parking lots should be landscaped with canopy trees.

Summary of Recommendations, Mason Avenue - Fig Street to Plum Street:

1. The existing residential buildings on Mason Avenue between Fig Street and Plum Street are among the earliest structures in the town and should be preserved.
2. A demolition ordinance should be created to discourage the demolition of these existing buildings. The ordinance will inform owners and developers of the town's interest in preserving existing buildings. It can create a period of time to allow owners, developers, and the town to consider alternatives to demolition. The ordinance should include a provision prohibiting demolition-by-neglect.

3. The zoning code should be modified to restrict permitted uses in this two-block area to uses that can be accommodated in the existing buildings.
4. The zoning code should limit the size, volume, and location of proposed additions. Side yard requirements should be similar to those in residential districts.
5. A minimum level of design review should be created through the zoning code, the goal of which is to encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic building fabric.
6. Design guidelines should be created for the use of building owners and developers and to serve as a touchstone to inform the review process.
7. The existing streetscape should be enhanced through the planting of deciduous street trees in yard areas, crepe myrtle in the grass strip adjacent to the street and beneath the overhead wires, and shrubs on the embankment of the "hump."
8. Parking areas should be paved with gravel.

Mason Street - Plum Street to Harbor Street

Cape Charles' commercial district is concentrated within the four-block stretch of Mason Avenue between Plum Street and Harbor Street. Of these four blocks, the two central blocks contain most of the town's existing commercial buildings as well as the core of its current commercial activity. A few additional commercial buildings are located in the first block of Peach and Strawberry streets. These structures are included in the discussion outlined below. It is the two blocks of Mason Avenue between Peach and Pine streets, including the commercial buildings along Peach and Strawberry streets, that should be the focus of the town's attention in the revitalization of the downtown area.

Cape Charles has a variety of commercial building types typical of an early-twentieth century town. Buildings in the downtown area are mostly small in scale, with small commercial storefronts at street level and limited space at the second-floor level. Approximately 31% of the existing commercial buildings along Mason Avenue, Peach Street, and Strawberry Street are one story in height. Approximately 53% are two stories in height. The few three-story structures are notable exceptions and contribute to the interesting variety of rentable spaces available downtown. Most of the area's existing commercial buildings have brick exterior walls and wood-framed interior construction. The buildings are generally of party wall construction with no setback from the sidewalk.

The few vacant lots along the north side of Mason Avenue between Peach and Harbor streets appear to have been the result of building loss, whether by fire or other causes.

Downtown Cape Charles has a high degree of historical integrity, and the assemblage of existing buildings is representative of the town's historical development. The period of significance of downtown Cape Charles stretches from the 1890s to 1940, with a significant concentration and peak in building activity dating from the 1920s. This range and concentration appears to correlate perfectly with the historical development and peak economic activity of the town. Sixteen (43%) of the town's thirty-seven commercial buildings in the downtown area date from the 1920s. These include many of the area's most significant buildings, such as the 1921 former Northampton County Trust Building, now Nations Bank, and the three-story Parson's Building, now Hubbard's Home Center. By comparison, four buildings (9%) date from the 1940s, five (14%) date from the 1930s, six (16%) date from approximately 1910, three (8%) date from approximately 1900, and three (8%) date from approximately 1890.

Other particularly significant buildings in the commercial area include the 1907 L. E. Mumford Bank at 121 Mason Avenue (corner of Pine and Mason), the 1940's Palace Theater at 303 Mason Avenue, the c.1910 three-story commercial building at 273 Mason Avenue (corner of Strawberry and Mason), the 1920's Pure Oil station at 401 Mason Avenue (now BP at Peach and Mason), and the area's earliest commercial structure, the two-story 1886 wood-frame building at 335 Mason Avenue (Peach and Mason).

Building Usage: A casual survey of Mason Avenue indicates that approximately twenty-eight businesses are located in approximately forty-six available street-level commercial spaces in Cape Charles' downtown core. This figure indicates a street-level occupancy rate on the order of 60%. The largest percentage of businesses in the downtown area, 32%, are retail stores oriented to the local market. These include the existing food store, drug store, bakery, hardware store, household goods, appliance store, video store, and liquor store. Approximately 25% of the businesses downtown are specialty shops oriented largely toward tourists and out-of-town shoppers. Existing specialty shops include a boutique, art gallery, antique dealer, quilt store, gift store, jewelry store, and a bait and tackle store.

Approximately 18% of the downtown businesses are service-related, also oriented to the local market. Services-related businesses include a bank, cleaners, self-service laundromat, hair salon, and senior center. There are three (11%) entertainment-oriented businesses along Mason Avenue. This figure does not include the Palace Theater, a significant future resource which is currently open on a part-time basis. Included in the entertainment category are video/pinball machine facilities and a karate school. Three

(11%) existing businesses are food-related, including one family restaurant, one cafe, and one bar and grill. There are only two (7%) professional offices that have been identified in the downtown area in the course of this study.

Most of the existing businesses in downtown Cape Charles are good, desirable businesses appropriate to the character of the town, as well as to the existing historically significant building stock. Though a few of the businesses are marginal, both economically and in terms of their contribution to the business climate, these businesses may tend to disappear as vacant space is filled, the business identity of downtown becomes defined, and the competition for space increases.

The mix of businesses downtown is good, balanced between local goods and services (40%) and tourist- or visitor-based goods and services (25%). The problem is the comparatively low number of businesses compared to the number of available spaces—the approximately 60% level of vacancy—and the volume of business they do. The proposed marketing plan for Cape Charles, discussed in an earlier portion of this chapter, should assess the level of business currently conducted—is it sufficient to sustain existing businesses? “Anchor” businesses should be identified and recruited to lead the marketing effort. At present anchor businesses appear to include Nation’s Bank, Savage’s Drug Store, Watson’s Hardware, Hubbard’s Home Center, Bayshore Market, the ABC Store, and Dollar General. Every effort should be made by the recommended business development organization to retain and involve existing anchor businesses, to assist more-fragile businesses, and to recruit new businesses.

The very low number of professional offices—doctors, realtors, lawyers, financial consultants, etc.—in downtown Cape Charles is surprising and may be indicative of the nature of professional services on the Eastern Shore. Are most professional offices in homes? The recommended business development organization for downtown Cape Charles should investigate the professional services market in the region and make a concerted effort to attract this market to Mason Avenue. Professional services are ideal for the vacant second-floor spaces in the town’s commercial buildings.

Building Condition: The general condition of most buildings along Mason Avenue appears to be good. This assessment is based upon the lack of visible evidence indicating that buildings or building fabric is deteriorating and threatening the buildings’ structural integrity. It is not based upon the degree to which buildings have been appropriately rehabilitated or restored, but only upon the level of basic maintenance. Though there is a relatively high vacancy rate downtown, most of the existing vacant buildings are interspersed between occupied buildings. In a number of circumstances, vacant commercial spaces are located in buildings that are otherwise partially occupied. While

downtown Cape Charles has the appearance of an area that is struggling economically, it does not appear to be abandoned or neglected. Only the row of buildings on Mason Avenue between Pine and Harbor streets have the outward appearance of neglect and mistreatment that raises concerns about building conditions that may threaten their long-term viability.

Most of the downtown area's commercial buildings are of good quality construction. The 1920s, when many of the downtown buildings were constructed, was a period when good quality materials were generally available and good construction techniques were generally used. Investment during this period was more long-term and less expedient in intent than it was in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. One needs only to compare the wood-framed commercial building at 335 Mason Avenue, constructed in 1886 and the earliest commercial building in the downtown area, with 203, 207, or 209 Mason Avenue (Parsons Building) or 10 Strawberry Street (Mack Building) to clearly see this difference. In part because of the decline in economic activity in Cape Charles, there has been relatively little change to the existing commercial buildings since they were constructed as compared to the amount of change in other similar towns. Less change has meant that the buildings not only have a higher degree of historical integrity, and are thus excellent candidates for rehabilitation and reuse, but also that the buildings have not been compromised as frequently with expedient, short-term alterations to accommodate changes in use or the desire to keep up with changes in fashion and appearance.

The danger in many neglected downtown areas is that the level of business activity drops so low, and the buildings are so large in comparison to that level of business activity, that owners are financially overwhelmed and are not able to afford and keep up with basic building maintenance needs. Expedient maintenance measures that can actually increase deterioration are undertaken to stretch the life of failed roofing, flashing, or other building elements, or required maintenance is neglected altogether. This scenario does not appear to have occurred to any significant degree to the commercial buildings in Cape Charles. While the level of business activity in downtown Cape Charles may be slow, it has never threatened to disappear. The low level of business activity in Cape Charles appears to be more a function (so far, at least) of a long-struggling regional economy than it has been of a wholesale abandonment of the town. Cape Charles' commercial buildings for the most part are of a manageable size and type that makes basic maintenance possible despite low rents or modest profit levels. While maintenance may not have been entirely appropriate or of the highest quality, the reasonable size and simple character of the buildings, their good overall construction, and the lack of previous compromising alterations have rendered these measures sufficient to preserve the basic integrity of the structures.

The kinds of changes that have occurred to commercial buildings in Cape Charles have been largely superficial. They have included signage alterations, painting of brickwork, and the covering of original storefronts with modern facing materials, be they the metal cladding of the 1960s or the more contemporary wood-shingled pent roofs. For the most part, these changes have been modest in scope and have not affected the overall historical integrity of the buildings. Where original storefronts have been covered over, in most cases the original building features appear to have been retained beneath the cladding. Most changes have involved only inappropriate signage and paint colors. With minimal investment, these storefronts can be rehabilitated to be more in character with the character of the buildings and the town.

The most serious modification of the commercial buildings along Mason Avenue has been the covering of the historic brick facades with "Permastone." Permastone is a stucco treatment that is intended to look like cut stone. It is highly inappropriate to the character of the town. (Where on the Eastern Shore is stone available or has it ever been used as a local building material?) Furthermore, in applying the stucco, it is possible that the original brick was damaged. Investigations should be undertaken by building owners and the town to determine whether the original brick was damaged on buildings to which a Permastone treatment has been applied. Buildings with Permastone should be targeted for rehabilitation. If the brick has not been damaged, the stucco should be removed and the brick restored. If the brick has been damaged, removal of the Permastone treatment and the installation of a more appropriate smooth stucco is a recommended alternative.

It is recommended that the historical commission discussed in Chapter Four create a library of documents outlining appropriate preservation materials, methods, and techniques for use by building owners and contractors. This library should include design guidelines from other communities as well as preservation briefs, bulletins, and technical publications available from the National Trust, the National Park Service, and others. Owners of historic buildings and local carpenters should be made aware of its availability. Workshops could be held reviewing and demonstrating appropriate rehabilitation and maintenance issues and techniques. A list of contractors with experience in appropriately maintaining historic buildings should be circulated by the commission. A task force of these individuals should be made available to consult with building owners. The business development organization and historical commission should generally monitor building conditions and notify owners of apparent problems that could seriously affect building fabric.

Adaptive Reuse Potential: Because of the quality of the construction of the town's existing commercial buildings, their simple configuration and limited height, and the variety of available spaces, the buildings in downtown Cape Charles have strong

potential for adaptive reuse. The variety of available spaces is an important consideration in developing a marketing plan and in attracting new businesses. As noted above, Cape Charles has one-, two-, and three-story buildings. Building types range from small shops with limited space on the street level, such as at 311 and 323 Mason Avenue, to large retail/office structures with ample open space at street level and ample additional space on upper floors, such as at the three-story structure at 273 Mason Avenue or the Parsons Building at 209 Mason Avenue (Hubbard's Home Center). There are high-quality specialty buildings like the Palace Theater and the former Northampton County Trust Bank (Nations Bank) and general purpose retail/office buildings like 219-221 and 225 Mason Avenue (Watson's Hardware), 263 Mason Avenue (McCrory's), and 10 Strawberry Street (Mack Building). Downtown Cape Charles is not overwhelmed with any one type of space, but has a good quantity of a variety of different types of spaces. This variety of available spaces creates the potential for a variety of businesses, with a potentially healthy mix of size and spatial requirements.

The problem along Mason Street is not with the quality or condition of the building stock, but with the low level of business activity. If the level of business activity could be raised, the resources are available for a healthy revitalization. As has been discussed previously, the level of business activity could be raised by the implementation of the proposed Accawmacke Plantation or by the proposed Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park. If these initiatives are not successful, and possibly even if they are, revitalization of downtown Cape Charles will be slow. But nonetheless, the town and the local businesses must be united and aggressive in their planning and marketing efforts. The resources are available if the activity can be generated.

While improvement in the appearance of downtown buildings alone will not make revitalization happen, it will help substantially by demonstrating the town's and local business' ability to plan and implement thoughtful and constructive change. It will establish a climate that is business-friendly. Improvement in the appearance of downtown buildings need not be costly or restrictive. There are two key elements: first, and most importantly, buildings should be properly maintained, especially roofs, parapets, flashings, windows, and exterior walls. Second, from an aesthetic standpoint, improvements should work *with* the existing character of a building rather than impose a superficial, contemporary treatment upon it. As has been discussed in Chapter Three of this document, *Preservation Approach*, rehabilitation of the existing historic building fabric is the easiest, most cost-effective, and most important way of working with the character of an existing building. Heavy-handed bureaucratic deliberations are not necessary in downtown Cape Charles. Elaborate restoration treatments are not required. Simple guidelines that will enable owners and contractors to recognize, understand, and work with the character of their buildings could transform Mason Street and demonstrate

to the outside business community that Cape Charles is serious about, and capable of, a concerted revitalization of business activity.

The only way to successfully implement appropriate change to the appearance of downtown buildings is through some level of design review. Design review is the self-imposition of simple design principles and guidelines by business and building owners in their own self-interest to achieve a unified, prosperous appearance for the town's business district. It is a process based upon consensus. Design review is used to achieve a mutually-desirable community goal that could not be achieved by individual business and building owners on their own. The design principles and guidelines are based upon the concept of using the inherent character of the town and its buildings to attract tourists, shoppers, and outside businesses. Design review can be open, easy, simple, and flexible. It should be an essential revitalization tool of the town and the recommended downtown business organization.

Building Codes: The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of Cape Charles' commercial buildings will require upgrading the buildings with respect to local building codes. This becomes an issue primarily for buildings with second- and third-floor levels. It is not, however, a difficult issue to resolve. Building codes have a provision for accommodating existing conditions in historically significant structures. All of the buildings in downtown Cape Charles that contribute to the National Register historic district—certainly all of the two- and three-story buildings—are historically significant and thus can benefit from this code provision. In general, what is achieved with historically significant buildings with respect to code compliance is a mitigation package that substantially improves public safety while preserving historic character, features, and significant building fabric.

The key issues with respect to code compliance are fire detection, fire and smoke spread, and egress. Rehabilitation of three-story buildings and larger two-story buildings will require two means of egress, or stairways by which upper-level occupants can safely exit the building in case of a fire. Mitigation generally starts with the installation of a fire detection system throughout the building comprised of centrally controlled smoke detectors, alarms, pull stations, and a monitoring service. Such systems are routinely required and are not expensive. Sprinkler systems should not be required.

One of the two required means of egress, or stairways, from upper levels in a mitigation package for a historically significant building is usually the existing historic stairway, which probably does not fully comply with current code requirements. This stairway may usually remain so long as it can be separated from occupied spaces with rated doors and, in most cases, partitions. Existing plaster partitions are usually adequate to provide

the required fire separation. The second required means of egress is usually a fully-complying exit stair accessible from all spaces and located within the building. This stairway will be enclosed by a two-hour rated partition and will exit directly to the outside. Fire escapes are no longer permitted.

Finally, a one-hour fire separation is required between floors. Existing wood and plaster construction is usually an acceptable level of separation, though sometimes an additional layer of rated gypsum board is installed over the existing plaster ceiling. What is most important is that smoke is not able to travel between floors, making escape difficult or impossible.

New Construction: An interesting feature of Cape Charles' downtown commercial district is the ample amount of open space available in addition to the excellent supply of existing building stock. Mason Avenue was laid out with buildings only on the north side of the street. The south side of Mason Avenue has been historically used primarily by the railroad, the life-blood of the town. Today, since the decline in the railroad industry and the reduction in the volume of railroad traffic, the railroad requires less space than it has historically occupied. Consequently, much of the vacant land along the south side of Mason Avenue is available for new development.

In addition to this vacant land on the south side of Mason Avenue, there are a limited number of vacant lots available for development on the north side of Mason Avenue. Two small vacant lots are located near the corner of Mason Avenue and Peach Street. Additional lots are located in the block between Pine and Harbor streets. It is also possible that development pressure could be felt in the residentially-scaled blocks between Fig Street and Peach Street.

The area included in the blocks between Fig Street and Plum Street has been discussed in a previous portion of this chapter. It is recommended that new commercial development in this area be limited to the appropriate adaptive reuse of existing buildings. The demolition of existing buildings should be prohibited to the extent permitted by state law. The adoption of a demolition ordinance by the town has been recommended. New construction in the blocks on the north side of Mason Avenue between Fig and Plum streets is not recommended.

New construction is also not recommended in the vacant lots on the north side of Mason Avenue in the block between Pine and Harbor streets. While new construction cannot be stopped on these lots, it should not be encouraged by the town or the recommended business development organization.

The town or recommended business development organization should concentrate its efforts on filling available vacant space rather than promoting new construction. Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse should be the first priority. New construction should be encouraged only when adaptive reuse is not feasible. Such conditions will occur when the program requirements of a new business cannot be met by the existing available building stock. Because of the variety of spaces currently available, however, it should be possible to avoid new construction for the foreseeable future.

There are two businesses currently located on the south side of Mason Avenue. These businesses are the Bayshore Market and the Dollar General store. While both businesses are important to Cape Charles, the structures they occupy do not contribute positively to the character of the streetscape. Both structures are typical, one-story retail boxes. Their long, low facades are not sympathetic to the character of the existing buildings along Mason Avenue. Both buildings have been sited adjacent to the sidewalk, which is appropriate. (All new buildings along Mason Avenue should be sited adjacent to the sidewalk to maintain or create a street presence.) Bayshore Market is sited at the end of Strawberry Street, which is unfortunate, as it prohibits the future pedestrian extension of Strawberry Street beyond Mason Avenue.

It is recommended that a master plan be undertaken for the future development of the vacant land on the south side of Mason Avenue. No new construction should be allowed on this land that does not conform to the goals of the master plan. It is also recommended that design guidelines be prepared for buildings and site development of the land. The master plan and the design guidelines should promote new construction that is consistent with the long-term interests of the town and the downtown area.

As noted above, new buildings should be located adjacent to the existing sidewalk to create a streetscape similar to that existing on the north side of Mason Avenue. Buildings should be of contemporary, not historical, design, but should to the extent possible have a similar massing and be of similar or sympathetic materials to those of existing buildings along the street. Because of the large variety of existing buildings along Mason Avenue, a large variety of massing configurations are appropriate. It is recommended that new buildings have storefronts and expanses of glass at street level, similar to existing buildings, to create a lively sidewalk experience. To the extent possible, two-story buildings should be strongly encouraged to promote a mixed-use environment.

The design of buildings consistent with the concepts of sustainable design should be strongly encouraged by the town since the Sustainable Development Industrial Park is a key marketing initiative. New buildings and site development should serve as demonstration projects for testing and monitoring sustainable design concepts. To this

end, design guidelines for new construction should outline, highlight, and promote sustainable building design concepts and technology. Grants should be sought by the town for the development of ecologically appropriate solutions to public infrastructure problems, such as stormwater management, water supply, electrical service, and sewage disposal, to serve as standards. The design standards should be based upon the use of appropriate natural systems to solve design and infrastructure problems.

The amount of land available for future development should be reviewed and negotiated with the railroad. Enough land should be preserved for the railroad to allow for an efficient and profitable future operation. The master plan should identify areas that should be set aside to meet the long-term parking needs of a healthy downtown commercial district. The availability of land for parking is a unique circumstance that is not common in older downtown neighborhoods. Potential future parking needs should be calculated. The vehicular and pedestrian circulation for the proposed parking should be worked out in the master plan. It is recommended that the existing street pattern north of Mason Avenue be extended south into the railroad property—existing streets should be extended, whether for vehicle or exclusively pedestrian circulation. Streets, pedestrian walkways, and parking areas should be heavily planted with native deciduous canopy trees. The potential for future access to the harbor along the alignment of each existing north-south street should be preserved. Land for other potential public improvements, such as a future ferry wharf or harbor overlook, should also be reserved. Programming for such potential future uses should be the first step in undertaking the master plan.

Streetscape: Mason Avenue is very wide, providing ample space for two travel lanes and two lanes of parallel parking. Historic photographs show that the north side of the street once had perpendicular parking bays. The width of Mason Avenue and the vacant land on the railroad property create an openness which is the predominant, if not overwhelming, characteristic of the streetscape. This openness has been a key element of the streetscape since the town was created. A great deal of change can be accommodated along Mason Avenue before this openness will be lost. The generally open character and the sense of exposure to the harbor and the bay should be preserved in the future development of the town.

Streetscape improvements have been undertaken along the north side of Mason Avenue in relatively recent years. The improvements feature a wide, concrete sidewalk with street trees and overhead street lamps. The street trees are widely spaced and have not yet grown to the extent that they make a significant impression on the spatial character of the streetscape. Some of the street trees are located in planting beds. Some local store owners have planted several of the beds with flowers. Such treatment has, however, been spotty at best and maintenance of the planting beds has been a persistent problem. Most

street trees are located in very small, square beds. The small beds and excessive exposure appear to have affected the health and growth rate of the trees.

The existing streetscape along the commercial portion of Mason Avenue is tolerable, if not appealing, exciting, or entirely appropriate. It is not recommended that the town seek to undertake expensive streetscape improvements at this time. The town's efforts should be focused instead upon business development, marketing, and the occupancy and rehabilitation of the existing building stock.

Improvements to the streetscape, when implemented, should consist of the removal of excessive concrete paving, the enlarging of planting beds to provide air and water to the roots of street trees, and the planting of numerous additional deciduous street trees. The sidewalk along Mason Avenue is comprised of concrete that is divided by construction joints into three rows parallel to the street. It is recommended that the concrete in much of the row adjacent to the curb be removed and replaced with brick pavers set in sand. Such a treatment would improve the visual appearance of the sidewalk, provide the air and water for street trees, and serve as a walking surface. A less costly solution for the short term would be to remove smaller portions of the concrete in the row, install topsoil, and plant a low-maintenance groundcover such as periwinkle (*Vinca minor*).

The town may wish to consider recreating the perpendicular parking arrangement previously existing along Mason Avenue. Either a parallel or perpendicular parking arrangement would permit the removal of street paving at key locations to reduce the paved street width and create additional planted islands, principally at intersections, to reduce the width of street that pedestrians must cross. While sidewalks must be provided for pedestrian crossing, most of the area of the islands could be planted in groundcover and street trees.

The improvement of existing storefronts has been briefly outlined above in the discussion of building condition and rehabilitation. In general, existing storefronts have a high degree of historical integrity and are in good condition. In some cases, inappropriate cladding and pent roofs have been installed at street level obscuring the character of the existing buildings. Signage along Mason Avenue varies in size, type, and quality, creating a disjointed appearance that is bad for business. In rehabilitating existing buildings and storefronts, owners should work with the existing character of their buildings' storefronts. False fronts and modern cladding should not be permitted. Signage should be restrained and appropriate to the period of the existing building, in most cases the early-twentieth century. Design guidelines should be created for the storefronts along Mason Avenue to assist owners in understanding and correctly applying design principles. Until customized design guidelines can be created, guidelines from

other similar downtown districts should be used. As recommended above, a flexible design review process should be implemented.

Summary of Recommendations, Mason Avenue - Plum Street to Harbor Street:

1. The problem along Mason Avenue is not with the quality or condition of the existing building stock, but with the low level of business activity. The recommended business development organization should work to retain and involve existing anchor businesses, to assist more-fragile businesses, and to recruit new businesses to the downtown area.
2. The professional services market should be investigated to determine how it can be attracted to Mason Avenue.
3. The improvement in the appearance of downtown buildings alone will not make revitalization happen, but it will help substantially by demonstrating the town's and local business' ability to plan and implement thoughtful and constructive change. Two key design principles should be pursued: the proper maintenance of buildings, and improvements that work *with* the existing character of a building.
4. A library of reference materials should be maintained by the recommended historical commission, outlining appropriate preservation materials, methods, and techniques for use by building owners and contractors.
5. Workshops should be held to review and demonstrate appropriate rehabilitation and maintenance issues and techniques.
6. A list of contractors with experience in appropriately maintaining buildings should be available from the historical commission.
7. A task force should be created to be available to consult with building owners.
8. The business development organization and local historical commission should generally monitor building conditions and notify owners of apparent problems that could seriously affect building fabric.
9. A design review process should be implemented to create a unified, prosperous appearance for the business district. Design review should encourage improvements that are sympathetic to the character of the existing buildings.

10. Building code issues should be addressed through mitigation packages that improve the safety of existing buildings being rehabilitated but that do not comply with requirements that would diminish a building's historic character.
11. The town or business development organization should concentrate upon filling available vacant space rather than upon new construction.
12. A master plan and design guidelines should be created for the open area south of Mason Avenue to promote future new development that is consistent with the long-term interests of the town.
13. The design guidelines should encourage use of sustainable design concepts for private improvements and require them for public improvements to enhance the sustainable development marketing theme. New development should serve as demonstration projects for testing and monitoring sustainable design concepts.
14. Long-term parking needs for downtown should be calculated and designed and the land set aside in the master plan for the area south of Mason Avenue.
15. The existing street pattern north of Mason Avenue should be extended south into the vacant railroad property in the master plan for the area. The potential for future access to the harbor should be maintained as should land for other potential future public improvements.
16. The open character of Mason Avenue's streetscape should be maintained.
17. The town should not undertake expensive streetscape improvements at this time but should concentrate on marketing, increasing business activity, and the reuse and rehabilitation of existing vacant buildings.
18. Improvements to the streetscape, when they are undertaken, should consist of the removal of excessive areas of concrete sidewalk, the enlarging of tree planting beds to provide air and water to root systems, the creation of planted islands reducing the street width at key locations, and the planting of numerous additional street trees.

Mason Avenue - Harbor Street to Bay Avenue

The block along the north side of Mason Avenue from Harbor Street to Bay Avenue is a residentially-scaled block with four existing buildings. Three of the existing buildings are residences constructed c.1900. The fourth building is a boarding house or inn

constructed c.1910. The buildings are located in a row beginning at the east end of the block, at Harbor Street. All four of the buildings are historically significant and have a high degree of historical integrity. At the west end of the block is a vacant lot that extends the full width of the block facing Bay Avenue. This vacant lot comprises approximately 40% of the area of the block.

The existing lots fronting on Mason Avenue between Harbor Street and Bay Avenue, including the entire vacant lot, are currently within the B-1 Business District of the zoning ordinance. Discussions have been ongoing in the Planning Commission and the Town Council regarding the inappropriateness of this zoning classification. Not only could the existing residences be lost to development, but the vacant lot at the end of the block could be commercially developed to the detriment of the residential and recreational character of Bay Avenue and the beach.

It is strongly recommended that the lots along the north side of Mason Avenue be rezoned to R-1 Residential, including the vacant lot. The adaptive reuse of the existing residences as bed and breakfasts or inns should be permitted. Adaptive reuse of the residences as specialty shops is also possible, though it is recommended that specialty shops be concentrated in the central commercial district to the extent possible. The bottom line should be that the existing residential structures remain, that the residential character of the block be maintained, and that any new development along Mason Avenue (both sides) or Bay Avenue be sympathetic with the existing structures and the residential character and use. Design guidelines and a design review process are recommended to help achieve this goal. Purchase of the vacant lot for a community park would be highly desirable if it could be arranged.

Summary of Recommendations, Mason Avenue - Harbor Street to Bay Avenue:

1. The existing lots along the north side of Mason Avenue, including the vacant lot, should be rezoned R-1 Residential. Adaptive reuse of the existing residences as a bed and breakfast or inn would be appropriate.
2. New development along Mason Avenue (both sides) or Bay Avenue should be sympathetic with the existing structures and residential character and use. Design guidelines and a design review process are recommended to help achieve this goal.

Townwide Recommendations and Sample Ordinance

In this and the following chapters, existing conditions in different areas of Cape Charles have been reviewed and recommendations have been made for revitalization. While the

intent has been to customize the recommendations as much as possible to the specific conditions of each area addressed, a number of common recommendations have emerged and should be applied to the historic portion of the town as a whole. These common recommendations include recommendations for a historical commission, design guidelines, demolition ordinance, demolition-by-neglect ordinance, and some level of design review when building permits are required for exterior alterations, new construction, and signage.

At the request of the Planning Commission, a sample ordinance for these recommendations has been prepared and is included in this document as Appendix A. It is entitled "Community Revitalization Ordinance." In creating the ordinance, models currently in use in other Virginia communities have been reviewed and adapted. The ordinance has been written to be simple, direct, and as unintrusive and flexible as possible.

The emphasis in creating the proposed ordinance has been upon strengthening community character of Cape Charles' commercial and residential neighborhoods, not strictly upon historic preservation. The flexibility of the ordinance will be derived from the manner in which it is interpreted by the town. The town could chose to interpret it in a very strict manner, as some other Virginia communities have chosen to do, or the town could interpret the ordinance in a very loose and flexible manner.

A design review process will require some level of design guidelines, as has been discussed in portions of both Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. The design guidelines will outline the principles of appropriate design and rehabilitation work, but will not mandate solutions. Design solutions will be determined through discussions and negotiations between owners and the review committee (the proposed Historical Commission), with the oversight and decision by the Town Council. The level of flexibility of the review process will therefore ultimately be determined by the community through consensus decisions reached by the town's elected representatives. In order to facilitate revitalization, it is strongly recommended that the town adopt such an ordinance.

CHAPTER SEVEN
RESIDENTIAL REVITALIZATION

RESIDENTIAL REVITALIZATION

Cape Charles' Historic Street Grid

Cape Charles is laid out on a rectangular grid which is the single-most defining feature of the town. The grid is oriented facing south toward the railroad and harbor, formerly the basis of the town's economy. The southern edge of the grid, Mason Avenue, features the town's commercial center, which has been discussed in the previous chapter. Behind Mason Avenue, filling out the grid to the north, is the town's residential district.

Cape Charles' grid is seven blocks wide (east/west) and five blocks deep (north/south). The original portion of the town was laid out in 1883/84 and was comprised of the five-block by five-block section to the east. In 1909, an additional two blocks, called the Sea Cottage Addition, was laid out on fill adjacent to the bay. At the center of the grid is the central park, originally four square blocks in area. Over time, buildings have been constructed along the north and south edges of the square. Two wide boulevards center on the square, dividing the town's grid into quadrants. Peach Street is the north/south boulevard. Mason Avenue is the east/west boulevard. The boulevards were designed with sufficient width to accommodate a center island/divider. The remainder of the grid is comprised of residential streets.

The original portion of the town is made up of two sizes of blocks. The typical block is a rectangle with its long dimension oriented east/west. An east/west alleyway divides most of the blocks in half. In each of the two halves, fourteen lots, 40 feet wide (east/west) by 140 feet deep (north/south), were arranged in a row facing the avenues to the north and south. The center two rows of blocks in the town's grid, between Plum and Strawberry streets, are squares. On these square blocks, lots are arranged facing east and west as well as north and south. The blocks in the Sea Cottage Addition extend the town's east/west avenues, but the north/south streets, Harbor Street and Bay Avenue, are slanted to align with the bay rather than the town's rectangular grid.

Cape Charles' rectangular grid of streets is a predetermined pattern superimposed upon the landscape at the town's creation. Because of the variations in the rectangular pattern—the central park, the boulevards, the alleys, the Sea Cottage Addition—there is a richness to the grid that contributes significantly to the town's character. Over the past one hundred twelve years, Cape Charles has been engaged in filling out this grid with homes, churches, and other residentially-related structures. Construction began in the southeast corner in 1883 and progressed to the north and west. The homes that were constructed range in size, type, and style. Considerable variation in the homes occurred

over time with changes in stylistic development of the architecture of the times. Additional variations in the pattern of the grid occurred as original 40-foot-wide lots were combined to create larger lots for larger homes and as new lots were created facing east/west at some locations, breaking the generally prevailing north/south orientation of lots.

The filling out of the grid over time has created a series of neighborhoods that blend one into another almost imperceptibly. During the peak period of the town's development, these neighborhoods included people of all types and income levels—railroad workers, railroad managers, and support personnel. It is recommended that the Cape Charles Historical Society undertake a study of the development of neighborhoods in the town through the detailed review of Sanborn Insurance Company Maps, census reports, and deed records. Through these documents, it should be possible to create a detailed picture of the physical and social evolution of Cape Charles in the years between 1883 and the 1920s. Despite the changing mosaic of building types, architectural styles, lot sizes, income levels, and other differences evident in Cape Charles' development, the rectangular grid dominates the pattern, leveling the differences and creating a community.

The filling of the town's grid has never been completed. A considerable amount of open space remains in the blocks along the north edge of the town. A number of contemporary buildings have been constructed here. In creating the National Register Historic District in Cape Charles, a line was drawn around contributing properties which excludes portions of the street grid at the north end of town. Because of the overriding significance of the street grid, it is recommended the this Historic District boundary be redrawn to include the portions of the grid previously omitted. The creation of a local historic district for Cape Charles should include the entire town grid. Future development within the grid should be sympathetic with the existing town character.

Summary of Recommendations, Historic Street Grid:

1. The Cape Charles Historical Society should undertake a study of the development of Cape Charles' neighborhoods through the detailed review of Sanborn Insurance Company maps, census reports, and deed records.
2. The National Register Historic District for Cape Charles should be expanded to include the entire street grid. A local historic district for the town should also include the entire grid. Future development within the grid should be sympathetic with the existing town character.

Building Condition and Integrity

Like the downtown business district, the residential district of Cape Charles has a high degree of historical integrity. This integrity exists both at the scale of the neighborhood and at the scale of individual buildings. Since experiencing its high-point of development in the 1920s, there has been very little change in the town in terms of pressure for new housing development or pressure for building removal. The town's high level of integrity can be attributed to the long-term decline in the town's economic activity. As a result, Cape Charles is like a time capsule, a complete community, with all of the mythical attributes of the classic American town, bypassed by the mid- and late-twentieth century, and waiting to be reawakened.

As outlined in Chapter Two, *Summary of Existing Conditions*, change to Cape Charles' residential buildings has occurred in small-scale increments. Most of this change has been related to maintenance of the exterior fabric of the existing buildings, and much of the change has been inappropriate to the building fabric, resulting in the degradation of the buildings' original character. The covering of exterior siding, removal of historic detailing, replacement of original windows, and removal or insensitive enclosure of porches have all been characteristic of the kind of negative changes that have occurred to residential buildings.

Because of the depressed economic conditions in the county over the years, many homeowners in Cape Charles have not been able to afford the cost of renovating or making additions to their homes. Many have also not been able to afford to properly maintain their buildings. The problem of proper maintenance has been made more difficult in Cape Charles by a general lack of appreciation for the character of existing buildings. It has been compounded by the lack of maintenance engendered by a high rate of building vacancy, absentee ownership, and conversion of owner-occupied housing to rental housing. As a result, many buildings have not been properly maintained in Cape Charles. Historic building fabric is slowly and steadily degrading, vacant buildings are left to deteriorate, and the character of the town is left to drift.

Building Rehabilitation

There are three good reasons why the residential buildings and neighborhoods in Cape Charles should be properly rehabilitated. The first reason is simply because the buildings and the neighborhoods are interesting, of high quality, and valuable in and of themselves. Rehabilitation is worth undertaking for its own sake. The second reason is to improve the quality of life of the existing residents of Cape Charles. The elements necessary for a high quality residential community are present in Cape Charles but need appreciation,

development, and care. The third and most compelling reason is to lay the foundation for the long-term economic revitalization of the town by creating a community that people want to come to—to visit, to vacation, to live, to move their businesses, to move their families, to spend their dollars, to invest in their futures. There appears to be a consensus in the town of Cape Charles that revitalization and rehabilitation are desirable goals. The difficulty is in how to achieve it.

Community revitalization cannot be achieved without community consensus. Consensus involves agreement upon a goal and upon a means of achieving that goal. Some actions can be community-wide actions, undertaken by the town as a whole—the planting of street trees, the improvement of streets and sidewalks, etc. These town actions will help create and preserve neighborhood character, but will not be decisive. Neighborhood revitalization is dependent upon the understanding, involvement, participation, and individual actions of many private property owners.

Revitalization starts with education, which has been touched upon in Chapter Four of this document, *Historical Research, Education, and Advocacy*. Beyond educating property owners as to the character, value, and proper care of what they have, there must be a process to guide change in the general direction mutually agreed upon. Zoning and subdivision review are such processes. There are three tools which are essential if change in the town's neighborhoods is to be guided in a positive direction and if neighborhood revitalization is to be achieved. They are a demolition ordinance, design guidelines, and a design review process. These tools have been used in many communities all across the state and the nation. Without these tools, the character of the town will continue to drift and ebb away. What is worse, if strong economic pressure suddenly comes to bear, for instance through development of the Accawmacke Plantation proposal, the town's neighborhoods are completely vulnerable to dramatic and catastrophic change in terms of community character. It is strongly recommended that a demolition ordinance be adopted, that design guidelines be created, and that the town adopt and experiment with a simple, flexible form of design review.

Demolition Ordinance: The creation of a demolition ordinance has been discussed in Chapter Six, *Downtown Revitalization*, with respect to preserving potentially vulnerable buildings along Mason Avenue. The existing residential buildings in Cape Charles' residential neighborhoods are vulnerable as well. At present, there is nothing to prevent an outside developer from acquiring an existing residence, series of residences, or entire block, demolishing all of the existing buildings, and constructing a row of townhouses, an apartment building, or a mobile home park. It is only the lack of economic pressure that is currently preventing such a threat.

The first goal of neighborhood revitalization must be to preserve buildings that contribute to the character of the neighborhood. As noted in Chapter Six, a demolition ordinance, common in historically significant towns throughout Virginia, has four important functions. First, it informs owners and developers that it is the policy of the town to discourage demolition of significant buildings, and it explains why. Second, it has a provision to prevent demolition-by-neglect. Third, it can create a period of time during which developers, the town, and other interested parties can seek alternatives to demolition. Finally, the Code of Virginia (Section 15.1-503.2) gives the town or associated persons or organizations the option of purchasing the property in question at fair market value as a last resort.

Issues involving the demolition of buildings are usually more complicated than the proposed demolition itself. Demolition is usually proposed in conjunction with other development proposals that may or may not be advantageous to the town and thus becomes part of a package that must be considered. Building loss is incremental and if allowed to proceed unabated can destroy the town's character. In general, therefore, the demolition of buildings that contribute to the town's character, including outbuildings, should be discouraged. In practice, the issues can become complex and politically-charged. Applications for demolition must be weighed by the town on a case-by-case basis. Without being unreasonable, the town should discourage demolition and seek accommodating alternatives with owners and developers. Crisis situations should be anticipated as best as possible before they occur and should be avoided if possible.

Perhaps the most important part of a demolition ordinance is the portion related to demolition-by-neglect. Demolition-by-neglect is usually addressed in an ordinance through a notification process. When an instance of demolition-by-neglect is identified, the town undertakes a process of notification. An owner has ninety days from the time that notification of a violation is received from the town to commence corrective actions. Beyond that period, financial and other forms of penalties may be applied.

There are instances of demolition-by-neglect that are occurring now in Cape Charles. Several buildings in the town's northeast quadrant are currently proposed to be demolished using Community Development Block Grant moneys. These buildings are vacant residences that have been left to decay by their owners. Though modest, these buildings are historically significant with respect to the town's National Register Historic District, and they contribute significantly to the character of the neighborhood in which they are located. Several of the buildings are unique building types in Cape Charles, and their loss will be irreplaceable. At a minimum, they should be documented before they are destroyed. As a result of the neglect of these buildings, public money that could have been used to make positive improvements to the neighborhood is being used to demolish

buildings that private owners have allowed to become unsafe and a public hazard. Other vacant buildings in the town, larger and less isolated, are approaching the stage where they too will be beyond saving. Such occurrences should be aggressively prevented by the town. Aggressive action is required immediately.

Demolition-by-neglect is often difficult to enforce. By the time a problem is outwardly identifiable, it is frequently too late to save a structure without costly intervention. The buildings being neglected are often marginal in quality, character, or function, and the town can appear to some to be unreasonable in requiring improvement for buildings that are perceived by owners and the public as of little value. Once a problem has been identified, it is frequently difficult to enforce compliance. Not only are there legal costs for the town, which may not be supported by the public for buildings of marginal value, but the penalties are often less costly than corrective action. Demolition-by-neglect citations frequently lead to applications for the demolition of the structure by the owner. Unless the town is willing to purchase the structure, it can be a no-win situation.

Yet demolition-by-neglect is a serious problem in Cape Charles. The way to avoid the problems noted above is to be alert to potential problems and to act early and decisively, before the problems become irreversible. The historical commission, recommended in Chapter Four, should survey the town and identify buildings that are, or are likely to become, vulnerable to demolition-by-neglect. Vacant buildings, poorly-maintained rental buildings, and buildings in marginal locations will be at the top of the list. It is critical to act early, before deterioration of a structure has progressed too far.

Of most importance to a structure is the integrity of the roof. Next is the condition of windows. Cape Charles has several buildings in which windows are missing and there is no covering over window openings to protect against the weather. Penetration of water into a structure will cause rapid deterioration, whether the building is constructed of wood or masonry. Deterioration will often not be evident from the exterior until it is too late to correct inexpensively.

The first step in the process of dealing with threatened buildings should be an informal discussion with the building owners. This discussion will inform the owners of the town's concern, and will alert the town to the attitude and expected degree of cooperation of the owners. Once it is clear that water penetration is occurring, and building fabric may be deteriorating, the contacts with the owner should be progressively increased. The town should be firm yet fair in its actions—the goal is to get results. Legal action should be used only as a last resort. In some cases, it may be necessary for the town to help the owner obtain financial assistance for the work necessary. The use of CDBG moneys for stabilization of buildings is far more desirable than its use for the demolition of buildings.

The goal of a demolition-by-neglect ordinance is to save endangered buildings. The goal is stabilization and protection, not improving appearance. Stabilization and protection may be achieved in the most cost-effective manner and may result in a less than desirable exterior appearance—for instance, the use of asphalt roll roofing on a roof or exterior, plywood closure of door and window openings, or guy wires to stabilize deteriorated structural members. Retention of original historic fabric, even when deteriorated, should be a primary objective. Building fabric that is loose or has fallen from the building should be salvaged, tagged, and stored in the building.

Design Guidelines: Design guidelines have two purposes. The first is educational. Design guidelines educate property owners in the appreciation of their buildings, in appropriate maintenance techniques, and in making decisions regarding potential changes. The second purpose of design guidelines is for use in a design review process. Design guidelines represent the level of consensus that the community has reached with regard to physical change in the community. It outlines the framework and informs the judgments around which design decisions are made. It is not a set of rules. Rules are an easy way to gain compliance but are authoritarian, lack flexibility, and are counterproductive. In order to allow the maximum flexibility in accommodating change, design goals and principles should be established, not rules. Design guidelines outline and illustrate the desired goals and principles that will contribute toward, reinforce, and work with the character of a building or a neighborhood. The owner or designer are encouraged to exercise their creativity or personal preferences in determining how to achieve those goals and principles. Brief examples of kinds of issues which should be included in design guidelines for Cape Charles' residential neighborhoods are outlined below.

As discussed in Chapter Three, Preservation Approach, appropriate maintenance is the most important part of preserving significant buildings. The most important aspect of appropriate maintenance is preserving and rehabilitating original, historic building fabric. Doors and windows are particularly important to the architectural character of individual buildings. As moving parts, they are subject to hard and frequent use. When deterioration occurs, the first impulse of many homeowners is replacement. Replacement windows and doors are seldom of the long-term quality of the originals. They adversely affect the historical integrity of a building by destroying original, antique fabric. Furthermore, replacements usually change the visual character of a building. The rehabilitation of existing doors and windows is critical to the preservation of the character of individual buildings. In rehabilitating and maintaining existing buildings, it is recommended that original doors and windows be retained and repaired wherever possible. Where not repairable, replacement in-kind in size, profile, and configuration should be the goal. The installation of weatherstripping around existing wood sash is the

first step to be undertaken in making original windows weathertight. For thermal insulation, the installation of storm windows is preferable to the replacement of windows even though storm windows are visible on the exterior and are not "in character." The use of storm windows preserves original historic fabric which would be lost if windows were replaced.

Porches are critical architectural elements along the residential streets of Cape Charles. The porch is a unique outdoor living area that belongs to the house but partakes in the life of the street. The full extent of its lightweight structure and fine detailing is fully exposed to the weather, requiring the maintenance and repair of porches to be a constant process. Steps nearly always extend beyond the roof line of porches and are thus exposed to the weather even more than the porches themselves. Because of their exposure, porches and porch steps are frequently the first elements of an older building to deteriorate and the first elements to disappear.

As with doors and windows, it is important to retain as much historic porch fabric as possible. Repairs should be with in-kind materials, almost always wood, with profiles to match existing as nearly as possible. All visible porch components should be painted wood, unless there is historic precedent for the use of weathering wood such as cedar. The removal of porches and the replacement of porch features with inappropriate substitutes, such as decorative metal posts or concrete floors, should be avoided. The enclosure of porches should also be avoided, particularly when the porch is on the front of a house. When undertaken, for instance on a side porch, new construction should be placed behind the existing post and railing, so as to preserve the key visual elements of the porch. The walls of the enclosure should reflect the massing relationship of solid-to-void of the porch itself, resulting in a large amount of glass.

Wood siding and trim are also key visual elements in the residential buildings of Cape Charles. Many of the town's residential buildings, having been constructed in the late-Victorian period, have several contrasting types of siding and elaborate wood trim. As the skin of a building, the purpose of siding is to shed water quickly and prevent the decay of the underlying structure. Siding also plays an important visual role in establishing the scale of a building. Each clapboard or shingle casts a shadow line, adding visual depth to the wall surface, while the size of the clapboard or shingle visually affects the mass and proportions of each building. Wood trim serves an important visual purpose by providing architectural ornament and an important functional purpose by sealing the structure at vulnerable locations. Corner boards, fascia boards, window caps and trim, architraves, and cornices are examples of trim elements that protect joints of a building from exposure while adding visual character. Like other significant building elements, wood siding and trim should be retained and repaired. Aluminum and vinyl

siding are not recommended because they trap moisture against the original wood siding of a house and hide deterioration that may be occurring. When aluminum or vinyl siding is installed, however, the width of the new siding should match that of the original wood siding and original wood trim and detailing should be retained. These and other design principles are the kinds of maintenance and rehabilitation issues that are outlined in design guidelines.

With regard to new structures, it is not the purpose of design guidelines to require “historical” designs or the adherence to a particular style, formula, or set of architectural elements. “Period architecture” and the strict quotation of architectural elements and details is distinctly not their intent. There is a wide range of building periods, styles, and types that contribute to the character of Cape Charles’ residential neighborhoods. This diversity itself is a key element of the town’s character. To walk in Cape Charles is to see virtually every architectural style from the town’s founding in 1883 through the 1940s. There is no strictly “correct” style in Cape Charles. The slavish and literal copying of architectural styles and elements would trivialize and confuse the genuine historic architecture of the town. What is fascinating about the buildings in Cape Charles is that they are real, the genuine article, not copies. In order to contribute to the clarity of the town’s history and development, new construction should appear to be at the end of the architectural continuum, and not mistaken to be somewhere in the middle. Contemporary architecture should be representative of the time in which it is created and should thus contribute to Cape Charles’ architectural diversity for the appreciation of future generations.

New buildings, however, can be contemporary while at the same time being sympathetic and compatible with existing buildings and an existing historic context or character. This is achieved through compatible scale, massing, siting, orientation, materials, and forms. Because there are a variety of ways in which a new building can be compatible with existing buildings, there are no simple rules that can be written. This is why design guidelines and an informed design review process are the most flexible and fair way to achieve the intended goal of preserving neighborhood character.

Scale involves the size of a building. Cape Charles is comprised primarily of two- and three-story residential buildings. Low, horizontal ranch houses, long rows of townhouses, or large apartment buildings are out of scale with the residences in Cape Charles. Not only do they look out of place, but they destroy the character of the neighborhood. All are currently allowed by-right in the town. Massing of a building reflects the sense of lightness or weight, whether by the proportions of wings or projections of a building, or by solids and voids created by windows and porches. A

contemporary building can have similar scale and massing to those of existing buildings without being of a particular historical style.

Similarly, new buildings can be sited and oriented on a lot in a similar manner to existing buildings. They can also be of similar materials. None of these issues speak directly of historical style, and none can be proscribed simply by rules. The principles outlined in design guidelines are general and generic. They allow a great deal of design flexibility and personal preference while imposing an overall discipline. The need for the overall discipline is established by the community by consensus in its own self interest. The wide range of specific design solutions available within that discipline are up to the individual.

Because design guidelines are usually general and generic, and because of the desire for maximum flexibility in Cape Charles, the town can use design guidelines from other towns for the indefinite future. It is recommended that a wide variety of design guidelines be obtained from other communities for reference. From these, Cape Charles could create its own set of design guidelines. Grants are also available from a variety of sources for the preparation of design guidelines. The more flexible the approach, however, the less the need for tailored design guidelines.

Design Review: Cape Charles will not be able to revitalize its residential neighborhoods without some level of design review. Most importantly, the town will not be able to protect itself from inappropriate new development without design review. Design review will have a minimal effect upon existing residents. It is only triggered by the requirement to obtain a building permit. It therefore has nothing to do with painting a house, changing a door, applying storm windows, hanging a gutter, or other aspects of routine home maintenance.

Design review will come into play when buildings are renovated, additions are added, and new buildings are constructed. It will provide a process whereby these changes to the neighborhood can be accomplished in a manner that works with the character of the existing buildings, rather than against it. Because design review is based upon design principles outlined in the guidelines and not upon rules, it has the ability to be very flexible. Because owners and builders will have the design guidelines before they plan their projects, they will be aware of the design principles the community is attempting to achieve and will be able to design their project to their individual needs within the framework of those principles.

Most importantly, design review is the only way that a community can protect itself from outside developers that may wish to impose their will and force an unwanted and

unsympathetic project upon the town. A block of townhouses or a series of garden apartment buildings are two examples of inappropriate building types that would destroy the character of Cape Charles but to which the town is currently vulnerable. Projects of this type cannot be banned. If, however, they must conform to a set of design guidelines, the town is in control—unwanted, large-scale developments are either impossible, or they must be designed to reinforce the character of the community. There is no other zoning procedure under the law that has the large-scale protective capability for small communities.

It is strongly recommended that Cape Charles adopt a simple design review process as part of its zoning ordinance. It is recommended that the design review process be the responsibility of the historical commission recommended in Chapter Four, but that for the near future the historical commission be the present Planning Commission. As time goes on, additional members with special expertise could be added to the historical commission and Planning Commission members could leave. The historical commission would review building permit applications affecting the exterior fabric of a building. Where the work to be performed under a permit application is the rehabilitation of existing building fabric, such projects would be quickly approved. Where new work is proposed, that work would be expected to conform to the broad principles outlined in the design guidelines. Where there was a conflict between the principles in the design guidelines and the proposed work, the historical commission would work with the owner to negotiate a mutually-acceptable solution. If no compromise is possible, the owner would appeal to the Town Council. If satisfaction was not received before Town Council, additional legal remedies would be available.

It is not recommended that the Town Manager, Zoning Officer, or Planner be placed in a position of undertaking design review. Because of the desire to have maximum flexibility, no simple rules can apply to design review as can be applied to zoning setbacks. As in a subdivision and land development review, flexibility is achieved by having a group of individuals who have gained experience in the field, where a majority vote overrules a perhaps unreasonable or overzealous colleague. It is recommended that the town retain a design professional to advise the historical commission, at least in the beginning, with recommendations on specific applications. Such advice would speed reviews along until the commission gained the necessary experience. Qualified design professionals are available on the Eastern Shore.

Summary of Recommendations, Building Rehabilitation:

1. Neighborhood revitalization is dependent upon the understanding, involvement, participation, and individual actions of many private property owners. The goals of

neighborhood revitalization and the means of attaining those goals should be built around community consensus.

2. A demolition ordinance should be adopted that discourages the demolition of existing buildings that contribute to the town's character.
3. The demolition ordinance should also address demolition-by-neglect. A notification process should be created through the ordinance by which owners are required to correct conditions stemming from demolition-by-neglect. Aggressive action is required by the town to address current demolition-by-neglect problems.
4. The historical commission should survey the town and identify buildings that are, or are likely to become, vulnerable to demolition-by-neglect. The town should act early to address these problems before legal action is required and before deterioration has progressed so far that the buildings will be lost.
5. The town should obtain design guidelines from a variety of towns and cities across the Commonwealth for reference and review. From these samples, a simple set of written design guidelines for Cape Charles can be created. Alternatively, should more detailed design guidelines be desired, a grant could be obtained for the preparation of customized guidelines specifically for Cape Charles.
6. The town should implement and experiment with a simple design review process. Only applications for a building permit involving exterior building modifications would be subject to the design review process, which would be similar to a subdivision and land development review process. The design goals of the review should be based upon a set of clearly-written design guidelines that would be adopted by the town and available to owners and developers. The design review should be the responsibility of a historical commission. In the beginning, the historical commission should be the present Planning Commission. Over time, additional members could be added to the historical commission and members of the Planning Commission could retire.
7. The town should retain a local architect to assist the historical commission in the design review process during the early stages.

Affordable Housing

The issue of affordable housing has been an important one in Cape Charles. This issue has primarily been the concern of the town's minority community, which is concentrated in the northeast portion of the town. The town is currently undertaking the rehabilitation

of several existing residential buildings in the northeast portion of the town using Community Development Block Grant moneys. This project has been referenced previously in this chapter with respect to the demolition of several existing structures. With respect to structures that are to be rehabilitated, it is recommended that the proposed rehabilitation work fully comply with the recommended design guideline standards that should apply to the town's entire historic district. Such compliance will be required by HUD with respect to federal standards. The CDBG projects can be used as models for private owners undertaking the rehabilitation of their own residences. The projects will demonstrate that proper maintenance of a significant building is not an economic issue. Appropriate maintenance of a building costs the same or less than inappropriate maintenance.

The affordable housing issue has been raised with respect to the town's existing 40-foot-wide lots. The existing zoning code does not permit building upon 40-foot-wide lots, primarily for fire safety reasons, despite the fact that many of the town's existing historically significant buildings are located on 40-foot lots. The minimum lot width for new construction is currently 80 feet. From a design standpoint, this zoning requirement is appropriate and similar requirements have been used in many other communities with similar problems. Forty-foot-wide lots are simply not appropriate to modern standards of light, air, and safety.

In the northeast portion of the town, however, many individuals cannot afford the cost of purchasing two 40-foot lots, and the town has expressed the desire to permit construction of affordable housing on 40-foot lots with certain restrictions. The purpose of the restrictions is first to enhance the safety of the housing by mandating the maximum spacing between buildings possible. The second purpose of the restrictions is to obtain affordable housing that is compatible with the character of the existing neighborhoods.

In order to provide more affordable housing opportunities in Cape Charles, it is recommended that construction on 40-foot-wide lots be permitted as a conditional use on selected blocks where the existing historical pattern of housing has been on 40-foot lots. These blocks would primarily be located in the northeast portion of the town. Construction of new housing on 40-foot lots would not be permitted in areas where larger lot sizes currently exist.

The maximum footprint of permitted construction on 40-foot lots would be 24 feet by 40 feet (960 sf), with a minimum required building floor area of 1200 sf. This requirement would result in the construction of a two-story building. In addition, it is recommended that the proposed housing be subject to the design review process recommended previously in this chapter. Design review would address the roof form which the

proposed building would have as well as window types and sizes, and exterior cladding materials. New affordable housing should be similar in character to existing housing. There are several good examples of simple, affordable building types that could serve as models for the new housing. In general, roofs should be gable roofs, windows should be doublehung windows of a size similar to existing windows in the neighborhood, siding should be similar to the existing horizontal wood siding used throughout the town, and small porches should be constructed at entrance doors. It is recommended that the construction of new affordable housing be undertaken on existing blocks within the town and not on undeveloped land beyond the town's historic grid.

Summary of Recommendations, Affordable Housing:

1. The current rehabilitation of existing buildings being undertaken using CDBG funding should comply with appropriate design guidelines applicable to the town. The rehabilitation projects should serve as models for home owners.
2. To increase the availability of affordable housing, construction of new houses on 40-foot-wide lots should be permitted as a conditional use on selected blocks. Construction on 40-foot-wide lots should not be permitted on blocks where larger lot sizes currently exist.
3. The maximum footprint of permitted construction on 40-foot lots should be 24 feet by 40 feet (960 sf), with a minimum required building floor area of 1200 sf, resulting in a two-story building.
4. The proposed housing should be subject to a design review process. New buildings should be similar in character to existing building types in the neighborhood. In general, roofs should be gable roofs, windows should be doublehung windows of a size similar to existing windows in the neighborhood, siding should be similar to the existing horizontal wood siding used throughout the neighborhood, and small porches should be constructed at entrance doors.

Streetscape

As has been discussed throughout this report, the character of the streetscape is very important in defining the character of Cape Charles. In many ways, the livability and apparent prosperity of the town is more dependent upon the visual quality of the streetscapes than it is upon the actual condition or appropriate rehabilitation of the town's historic buildings.

In Cape Charles, the streetscapes are comprised of the classic elements of the small-town, American neighborhood—the street, the sidewalk, and the front yard. Neighborhood streets in Cape Charles come in two types. The standard streets have asphalt paving and concrete curbs. Small grass strips divide the sidewalk from the curb. Front yards are generous and lead to open front porches. Street trees, understory trees, occasional wooden or decorative metal fences, and outbuildings are important elements in the landscape.

In addition to the standard neighborhood street, Cape Charles has the central boulevards—Peach Street and Mason Avenue. These streets were originally paved with concrete and had central landscaped island dividers. Along Peach Street, only one and one-half blocks of concrete paving and islands remain, the blocks immediately south of the central park. Along other portions of Peach Street the islands have been removed and the entire street has been paved with asphalt paving. The original concrete paving and landscaped islands remain along Mason Avenue. East Mason Avenue has a wide landscaped island. West Mason Avenue has a narrow landscape island, with wider grass strips between the curb and sidewalk.

In addition to the streets and boulevards, approximately 30% of the blocks in Cape Charles have east/west oriented alleyways running between the north- and south-facing lots. These alleys are unpaved and are dotted with outbuildings, which should be considered historically significant elements in the landscape.

The critical elements of the streetscape are already in place in Cape Charles. Expensive public improvements are not necessary. In many places, the concrete sidewalks have heaved slightly with age, and replacement of portions of the sidewalks will be an ongoing small-scale concern over time. The heaving sidewalks do not detract from the character of the neighborhood, but can be a potential safety concern. At the corner of Tazewell and Plum, the existing concrete steps are spalling and eventually need replacement. Replacement of existing concrete sidewalks should match existing details. The color of the concrete should match the color of the existing sidewalks through the use of appropriate sands in the mix. Recent improvements to concrete sidewalks in the town have not been appropriately colored.

The most significant problem with the streetscapes in Cape Charles is the lack of street trees in many areas. Where street trees do not exist, the streetscape appears barren and uninviting. *The single most dramatic action that the town or individual property owners can take to significantly improve the character of Cape Charles is the planting of many new deciduous canopy trees in yards and along streets.* Significant canopy tree planting throughout the town should be an early action in the town's revitalization program.

Where overhead wires are existing, rows of crepe myrtle should be planted. Existing trees should be pruned to grow around overhead wires and should never be topped.

In addition to the planting of street trees, the town should encourage home owners to remove inappropriate fencing. Chain link fencing is found at a number of locations in Cape Charles and is highly inappropriate to the character of the town. Appropriate fencing should be of wood pickets or decorative ironwork, examples of which can be found at several locations. The retention and rehabilitation of original porches is also an important issue related to the streetscape. The appropriate treatment of porches has been outlined in a previous portion of this chapter. It includes retaining historic building fabric and detailing and avoiding porch enclosure.

The town should encourage the proper maintenance of existing outbuildings. Outbuildings are significant elements in the streetscape. Should the town adopt a demolition-by-neglect ordinance as recommended in this chapter, many of the buildings that will receive the attention of the town with respect to demolition-by-neglect will be outbuildings. Existing alleyways should also be retained. Alleys should remain unpaved, though a gravel surface may be desirable in the ruts where tires run.

Summary of Recommendations, Streetscape:

1. The critical elements of the streetscape are already in place in Cape Charles. Expensive public improvements are not required.
2. As concrete sidewalks require replacement over time, new sidewalks should match existing sidewalks in detail and in color. Appropriate coloring of new sidewalks can be achieved through the use of appropriate sands in the mix.
3. The single most dramatic action that the town or individual property owners can take to significantly improve the character of Cape Charles is the planting of many new deciduous canopy trees in yards and along streets. Significant canopy tree planting should be an early action in the town's revitalization program.
4. Home owners should be encouraged to remove inappropriate fencing, particularly chain link fencing. Appropriate fencing in Cape Charles should be of wood pickets or decorative ironwork.
5. Outbuildings are an important element of the landscape in the town's neighborhoods. Appropriate maintenance of existing outbuildings should be encouraged.

6. Existing alleyways should remain unpaved. If paving is necessary, it should be limited to gravel placed in the tire ruts.

CHAPTER EIGHT
SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRIAL PARK

SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRIAL PARK

The County of Northampton, in which Cape Charles is located, is in the process of implementing a Sustainable Development Action Strategy to facilitate and promote sustainable economic development on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Sustainable economic development, as outlined by the county, is development that is economically viable, environmentally responsible, and socially equitable. The county's sustainable development initiative was begun in September, 1993, with the designation of a Sustainable Development Task Force and the creation of a full-time county staff position, the Director of Sustainable Development. Through the activities of the task force and the director, the Sustainable Development Action Strategy was created and was adopted by the county in June, 1994. Northampton County's sustainable development initiative is funded through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Resources Management Program with a grant provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The purpose of the sustainable development initiative is to promote immediate and lasting economic development that capitalizes on the county's natural and cultural resources while preserving and enhancing these resources for the benefit of future generations. The Sustainable Development Action Strategy was the first step in implementing the initiative by providing an organized framework for action, targeting appropriate industries with economic potential for the county, identifying natural and cultural resources vital to these industries and to the county, identifying actions necessary to build these industries while protecting and enhancing resources, and encouraging community participation in the development process.

The strategy targeted five existing industries with economic potential for the county within the sustainable development concept: agriculture; seafood and aquaculture; heritage tourism; arts, crafts, and local products; and research and education. In addition, the opportunity for attracting new industries compatible with, and exemplary of, the sustainable development concept to Northampton County was recognized.

A major initiative with respect to attracting new industries is the creation of a Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park in Cape Charles. The proposed industrial park, to be called the Port of Cape Charles, was chosen by the President's Council on Sustainable Development in October, 1994, to be one of four prototype sustainable industrial facilities to be created across the country. In April, 1995, a design charrette was held in Cape Charles with the participation of local residents, business people, design professionals, and representatives of local, state, and federal government. The charrette

resulted in the creation of a conceptual plan for the proposed industrial park. Aspects of the conceptual plan are entering the next phase of implementation while the county and state are actively recruiting appropriate industries.

Sustainable Development and Historic Preservation

The concept of sustainable development is fully compatible with the principles and objectives of historic preservation, adaptive reuse, economic development, and the enhancement of community character as outlined in this preservation plan. Sustainable development recognizes the interdependence of natural and manmade environments and seeks ways that the two can thrive as one. Sustainable development is energy efficient, ecologically responsible, culturally expressive, and community based. It eliminates waste, promotes diversity in plant and animal life, and makes creative use of natural systems to transform design problems into environment-enhancing opportunities.

The Small-Scale Community: The concept of sustainable development supports the creation of pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and communities. In this respect, Cape Charles is an ideal location for the sustainable technologies industrial park. Cape Charles is a complete community, with business and industrial infrastructure, a downtown commercial district within walking distance of neighborhoods, a variety of appealing residential neighborhoods and housing types, the potential for appropriate infill development, town parks, and natural open space. Even with this range and completeness of available amenities, Cape Charles remains small in size and intimate in character. Cape Charles is manageable in size; its problems are confined to its own boundaries and can be addressed through small-scale, ecologically-enhancing solutions. As a self-contained community located within a sensitive and spectacular landscape, Cape Charles is ideal as a stage for a model program of sustainable economic development.

Adaptive Reuse: Adaptive reuse of existing buildings and landscapes in accordance with the principles of historic preservation is a central theme of sustainable development with respect to the recycling of existing resources, the appropriate use of cultural resources, and the support of community values. The principles of historic preservation as they relate to historic Cape Charles are discussed in some detail in Chapter Three, *Preservation Approach*, and subsequent chapters of this document.

It should be noted that the principles of historic preservation may at times appear to be in conflict with other goals of sustainable design and development. For instance, a goal of sustainable design is energy conservation. Energy conservation may suggest that the most efficient way to reduce energy consumption is to fill cavity walls with loose

insulation, resheathe the exterior of a building with rigid insulation and new siding, or to replace original windows with contemporary thermally-glazed units. While these may be cost-efficient ways of achieving energy conservation, they can actually cause long-term damage to older buildings and are usually not recommended. Filling cavity walls with loose insulation without installation of a vapor retarder at the interior wall causes condensation to form within the wall, dampening and ruining the insulation, encouraging mildew, and causing wood structural members to deteriorate. The installation of exterior insulation and siding and the replacement of original windows violates the preservation goal of retaining and rehabilitating original historic fabric.

Issues such as these have been addressed many times in the past, and there is a wealth of experience and literature available to assist in their resolution. Design guidelines and a design review process, as discussed in previous chapters, would be important tools in assisting building owners in resolving these apparent conflicts. The bottom line is that a balance that addresses both goals and creates a win-win situation is available and must be sought through patient research and investigation of the issues.

Heritage Tourism: Among the existing industries identified by the county's Sustainable Development Action Strategy is heritage tourism. As has been discussed previously, heritage tourism has an important economic development potential for Cape Charles. More than any other community in Northampton County, Cape Charles has the potential to be both an attraction to visitors to the Eastern Shore and a host providing services and amenities for visitors attracted to other Eastern Shore resources and events. As has been noted, the present indifferent appearance of the town with respect to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century community character that is so attractive to visitors is the largest obstacle frustrating the goal of becoming a tourist center. As has also been noted, improvements in building and streetscape appearance and a concerted marketing plan are necessary to direct the town's efforts toward this goal.

As a part of the plan, sustainable development itself should be a major marketing theme with the town as a living example of its implementation. The town should study what it means to be a self-reliant, sustainable community. In planning and in the enhancement of its community character, including historic preservation, Cape Charles should become a model. Town services and utilities should be developed along experimental lines, using natural systems to generate electricity, recycle waste, and exemplify sustainable processes, techniques, and applications. The town's generating network, waste water system, and other infrastructure services should become tourist attractions.

The Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park Conceptual Plan

A conceptual plan for the Port of Cape Charles Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park was created in the spring of 1995 through a community workshop process. The plan shows the new industrial park located to the south of the historic town and including the Eastern Shore Railroad, the existing harbor, and the site of Bayshore Concrete. New construction within the park is to be organized along the periphery of existing natural wetlands, which are to be expanded and used to purify wastewater. A new entrance road is to be constructed south of the existing railway to connect to Route 184 east of the town's boundary. The primary north/south connection between the industrial park and the historic town will be via the existing bridge over the railroad, known locally as "the hump."

A primary goal of the Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park is the revitalization of the historic town of Cape Charles. To this end, to the extent possible, new industries are to be located in existing historic commercial buildings along Mason Avenue. The revitalization of Mason Avenue through the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and through compatible new construction on the south side of Mason Avenue will take precedent over the construction of new facilities elsewhere in the proposed industrial park. In undertaking new development and adaptive reuse, the recommendations and guidelines outlined in Chapter Six, *Downtown Revitalization*, should be applied.

With respect to the conceptual plan of the proposed industrial park as illustrated, it is recommended that two issues be reconsidered and revised. The first issue is the proposed new entrance road. The conceptual plan shows a new four-lane divided entrance road connecting to existing Route 184 east of the existing dredge spoil site adjacent to the Eastern Shore Railroad. The connection to Route 184 implies that the new entrance road will become the primary entrance into Cape Charles, with the existing Route 184 becoming, essentially, a back entrance. Visitors to Cape Charles would use the new entrance road, arrive at an intersection east of the harbor, and turn north, approaching the historic town by way of the hump.

While this proposed entrance scenario has its appeal, it places the industrial park before the town and creates an awkward and unnecessary diversion for residents and visitors whose destination is the historic town and not the industrial park. It is recommended that the primary entrance to Cape Charles remain existing Route 184 and that the character of the roadway be managed and preserved as outlined in Chapter Five, *Community Approaches, Parks, and Open Space*. The new entrance through the industrial park should be an option, not the primary entrance, and should connect to existing Route 184 as an intersection. The design of the new entrance through the industrial park should be

in accordance with sustainable principles, minimizing paving and disturbance of the existing woodlands and wetlands. The new entrance should not have the appearance of the typical suburban corporate campus.

The second issue with respect to the conceptual plan is the extension of the town's existing street grid into areas of proposed new development on the north and west sides of the town. The orthogonal grid is a seventeenth and eighteenth century planning innovation that was widely used throughout the nineteenth century. It is not a principle of sustainable design. While the grid is appropriate to historic Cape Charles, it is not necessarily appropriate to the undeveloped land adjacent to the town. From a historic preservation standpoint, the proposed extension of the grid confuses an understanding of the town's historical development in much the same way that copying historic styles for contemporary buildings would confuse and trivialize the genuine historic architecture of Cape Charles.

Site planning beyond the historic grid in Cape Charles should be responsive primarily to ecological considerations—topography, woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, storm drainage, etc. The most important goal of the new development should be the creation an appealing and “sustainable” contemporary community. A component of this goal should be the creation of a significant open space system to preserve the relationship of the town to the rural landscape with which it has been associated since its establishment. New site developments, like new buildings, should be expressive of the time in which they are constructed. They should be compatible with historic resources, but not imitative.

CHAPTER NINE
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

A large area of land approximately nine times the size of the existing historic town of Cape Charles has been designated as a proposed planned unit development. This land is 1,900 acres in area and divided into two parcels. The northern parcel includes most of the open land between the historic town and Kings Creek to the north and west. The southern parcel includes all of the land between the Chesapeake Bay and Plantation Creek south of the railroad, harbor area, and Bayshore Concrete. The proposed planned unit development is to be called the Accawmacke Plantation and is being planned by the land's owner, Brown and Root I, Inc. Brown and Root is anticipated to sell the approved development package and is therefore not expected to be the final developer.

The land surrounding the historic town grid is currently primarily in agricultural use. The land has historical significance related to William Scott, Cape Charles' founder, who purchased the land and developed it for his own use. Scott's use of the land is depicted in the 1887 Bauman map. A number of historically significant ruins, including the house which Scott enlarged and lived in, remain and should be documented, if not stabilized and preserved. The history of the land is also significant for its use prior to the establishment of Cape Charles, including its association with the Tazewell family and a significant prehistoric archeological potential as outlined in a Phase I study of the site. The history of this land should be studied and documented before the land is lost. If possible, remaining historic resources should be preserved and landscape resources should be incorporated into the design of the development.

The Accawmacke Plantation is intended to be a retirement community centered around a golf course and a four-hundred-slip marina. The marina will be located on the northern parcel while the golf course will be located on the southern parcel. The development is to be constructed in phases and will have a maximum of 3,000 dwelling units when completed, over five times the number of structures currently located within the historic town. The proposed development has been in the planning stages for approximately eight years. It is currently in the process of addressing final environmental and planning hurdles, related primarily to the size of the proposed marina.

The Accawmacke Plantation is strongly supported by the town of Cape Charles as a key to economic revitalization. Certainly the development will have a tremendous impact upon the town. First, all of the existing remaining open land within the town will be developed. Second, considerable development pressure will be experienced within the historic town, both in the commercial downtown district and in the residential

neighborhoods. Finally, additional development pressure will be experienced adjacent to Cape Charles, along both Route 184 and Route 13.

The proposed planned unit development is important to Cape Charles because of its economic potential. The Accawmacke Plantation could replace the railroad as the economic foundation of the town. However, there is also the danger that the development could overwhelm the town, altering its character, causing the loss of existing buildings, and driving out existing residents as land values increase. It is critical to the long-term interests of Cape Charles that the economic benefits of the Accawmacke Plantation be channeled in ways that reinforce and enhance the character of the historic town and its residents.

A principal goal of the project should be to reinforce Cape Charles' downtown commercial district, not to compete with it. Three types of commercial areas are proposed for the Accawmacke Plantation. A Specialty Commercial District (SC District) would be located on the northern tract in the vicinity of the marina and on the southern tract in the vicinity of the golf course club house. The purpose of the district is to accommodate an integrated mixture of specialty retail and land uses associated with hotels, inns, bed and breakfasts, conference centers, health and tennis clubs, or marina uses. The permitted uses within the SC District are wide ranging and include many tourist-oriented uses that are expected to provide the basis for the revitalization of Cape Charles' existing downtown commercial district. It is recommended that commercial development in the proposed SC District be limited to uses directly supporting hotels, inns, conference centers, health and tennis clubs, and the marina, and not include the wide ranging tourist-oriented retail uses until such time that the revitalization of downtown Cape Charles is firmly established.

A similar problem occurs in the proposed Commercial District (C District) and General Business/Industrial District (GBI District) included in the planned unit development. These districts are to be located to the south of the railroad and east of the harbor. Like the SC District, the C District includes many retail commercial uses that are to provide the basis for downtown revitalization. Development of the C District would be similar to developing a commercial mall along Route 184 or at the intersection of Routes 184 and 13—it may tend to weaken the downtown commercial district rather than reinforce it. It is recommended that the C District be eliminated and that the GBI district be amended to include the area of the proposed Sustainable Development Industrial Park. The permitted uses within the GBI District should be tailored to the sustainable development theme. Retail commercial uses should not be permitted.

As has been discussed in Chapter Seven, *Residential Revitalization*, Cape Charles' residential neighborhoods are currently vulnerable to inappropriate new development, including townhouses, multiple-family dwellings, apartment houses, and mobile home parks as conditional uses. It should be noted that under existing law, conditional uses are extremely difficult to deny. The conditional use designation really only permits the town to add reasonable conditions to an otherwise acceptable use. Because Cape Charles has never been subject to development pressure, the full implications of this portion of the zoning code and the town's vulnerability because of it may not be apparent to most residents. There is presently nothing in the code that would deter a developer from purchasing a block, demolishing existing housing, and constructing apartments, condominiums, or townhouses. Such development pressure could occur as the Accawmacke Plantation is constructed.

In order to avoid such a scenario, the town should adopt a number of the recommendations outlined in Chapter Seven of this document. The zoning code should be amended to prohibit undesirable and inappropriate housing and development types. A delay-of-demolition and demolition-by-neglect ordinance should be enacted. The most important recommendation, however, is the creation of a design review process based upon preserving and enhancing the town's historic character. *Only design review can ensure that new construction is compatible with the existing character of the town and the interests of its residents.* It is the most powerful tool available to local residents in protecting their communities from outside developers whose only interest may be to maximize profits.

Finally, it is recommended that the development of the Accawmacke Plantation become a means of creating a significant open space system in Cape Charles. At present, the open space which surrounds the historic town is taken for granted. With the construction of the Accawmacke Plantation, the open space in its present form of agricultural fields and woodlands will be lost forever. The construction of the Accawmacke Plantation should be viewed as an opportunity to achieve both development and a permanent open space system. While the existing conceptual land use plan for the Plantation includes a considerable amount of active open space in the form of a golf course, passive (i.e., natural) open space is not addressed except in specific ecologically sensitive areas.

It is recommended that the proposed development include creation of a significant *passive* open space system. The passive open space system should be a manifestation of the sustainable development concept and should be the design theme of the land development plan. The system should include ecologically sensitive areas and seek to preserve existing woodlands, wetlands, and stream corridors. Preserved open space areas should be linked with connectors of native vegetation. The requirements for

“bufferyards” as outlined in the planned unit development document should be revised to include only native species and plant communities. The bufferyards should have a diversity of species—including ground, shrub, understory, and canopy layers—and should be permitted to succeed and become threads of native woodlands. They should not be treated as “screens” or suburban lawns. Site drainage in the development should use swales in lieu of pipes to the maximum extent possible. Swales and stormwater retention areas should be planted with native species and should be permitted to succeed to native woodlands, becoming part of the open space system.

In undertaking a general review of the planned unit development document with respect to this preservation plan, a number of points have been noted that should be considered by the town. These points include the following:

- The document notes that the developer reserves the right to preserve trees within road rights-of-way and parking lots. The preservation of existing trees should be a goal of the project and should be actively encouraged and required by the town, not be simply at the option of the developer. (Page 4-2)
- Designation of streets as public or private is noted as being at the discretion of the developer. Such decisions should be at the discretion of the town. (Page 4-2)
- There is no definition of “building coverage.” The term “building coverage” should be changed to “lot coverage” and should clearly include all impervious surfaces associated with development. (Page 4-2)
- The Conservation-Open Space District (CO District) should concentrate upon the preservation of natural, passive open space. A percentage requirement for passive open space should be established. (Page 6-20)
- In the SC, C, and GBI Districts, the document gives the Administrator the power to determine that “any other commercial or professional use which is comparable in nature with the foregoing uses” is a permitted use. Such decisions should only be made by Town Council and such uses should be as conditional, not permitted, uses. (Pages 6-23, 6-26, 6-29)
- The definition of “lots” in Section 9-7 includes public and private utility easements up to 20 feet in width, easements for ingress and egress, natural flood fringes, drainage areas, and retention basins. Such infringements restrict the free use and purpose of the already minimal individual lots and should be netted out. (Page 6-34)

- Sign regulations in Section 9-13.1 should be carefully reviewed. It is recommended that signage in the new development have a distinctive design theme and character that is compatible with signage in the town's historic district. Internally lit signage should be severely limited, if not prohibited. (Pages 6-38 through 6-41)
- Construction standards should be established for private streets similar to those for public streets. (Page 7-6)
- Sidewalks and trails are to be installed at the discretion of the developer. This should be revised to be at the discretion of the Town Council. Trails will be an important component of the open space system, encouraging pedestrian and bicycle circulation links throughout the town. (Page 7-6)
- The document requires cul-de-sacs 100 feet in diameter. This should be dramatically reduced to the minimum necessary to accommodate fire trucks in order to reduce paving area. Circles with islands could be required in lieu of cul-de-sacs to reduce paving even further. (Page 7-6)
- Street lights are to be installed at the discretion of the developer. This should be revised to be at the discretion of Town Council. Lighting levels should be minimized to reduce light pollution. (Page 7-8)
- Required road widths are listed in Table IV on page 9-4. These road widths appear to excessive. As a general design goal, road widths should be minimized. As an example, a minor road is listed as having a lane width of 10 feet and a shoulder of 6 feet. Assuming two lanes and two shoulders, this implies a road width of 32 feet. Minor roads should be no wider than 18 to 20 feet. Reinforced grass shoulders (grass over a gravel base course) are preferable to paved shoulders and curbs. (Page 9-4)
- Bufferyards should be landscaped only with native species so that buffers appear to be an extension of the natural landscape. Bufferyards should have a diversity of species—including ground, shrub, understory, and canopy layers—and should be permitted to succeed and become threads of native woodlands. Existing native vegetation should be preserved as buffers wherever possible. Bufferyards should not be treated as either solid "screens" or suburban lawns. Site drainage in the development should use swales in lieu of pipes to the maximum extent possible. Swales and stormwater retention areas should be planted in native species and should be permitted to succeed to native woodlands, becoming part of the open space system. (Appendix A)

FIGURES

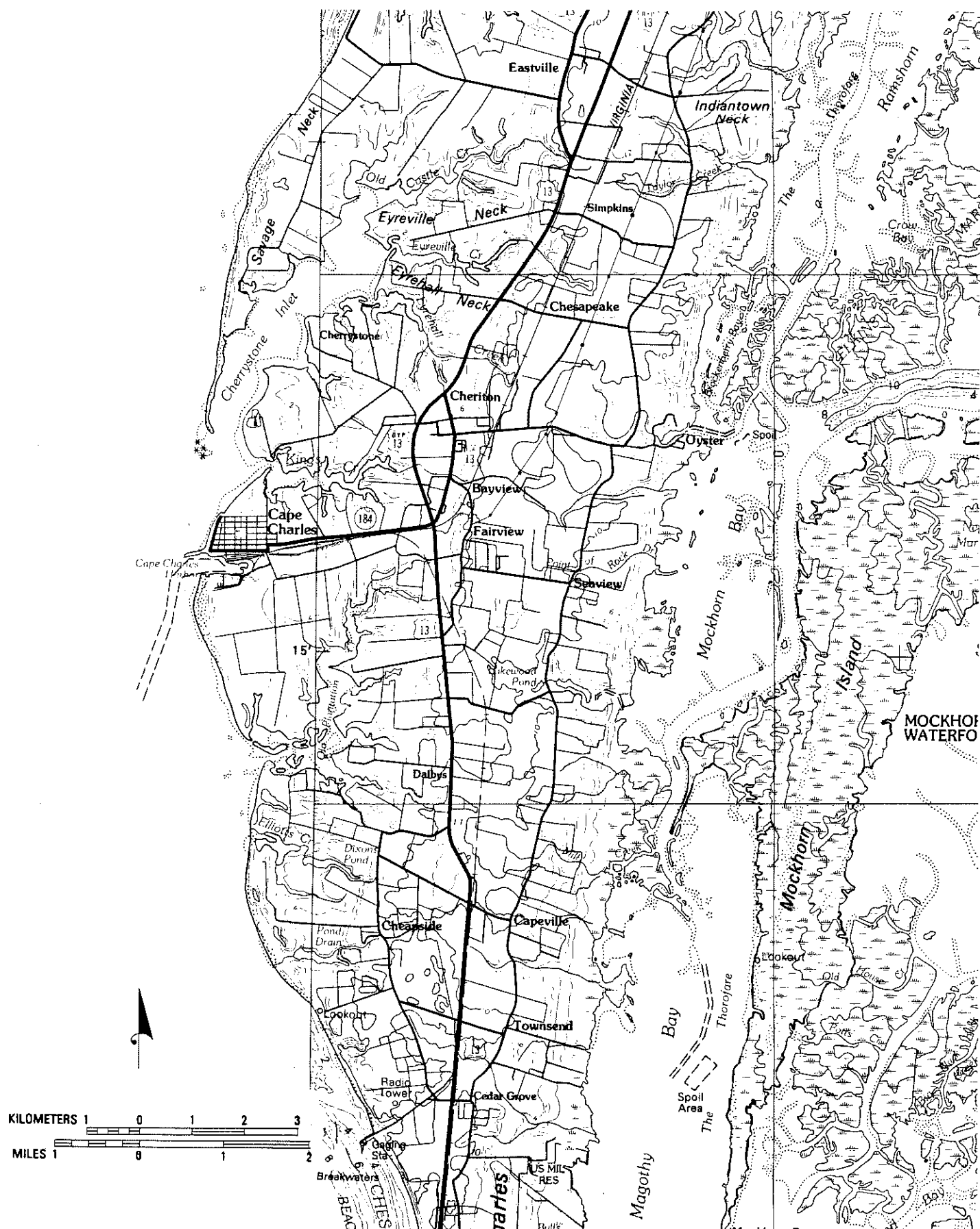


Figure 1. Northampton County, Virginia, in the vicinity of Cape Charles. Detail of USGS 30 x 60 minute series, *Cheriton, Virginia, Quadrangle* (1981).

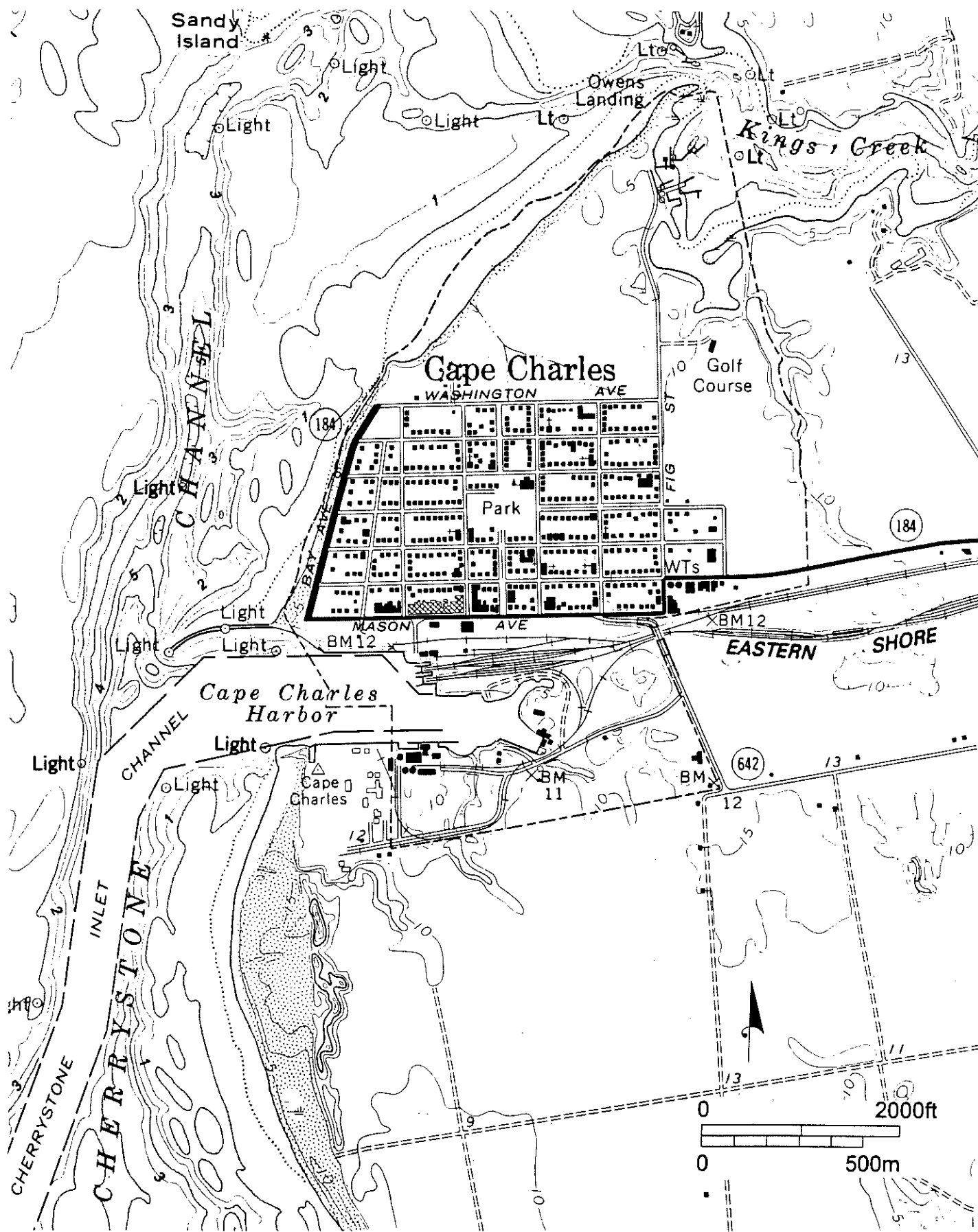
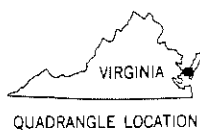


Figure 2. Cape Charles, Virginia. Detail of USGS 7.5 minute series, Cape Charles, VA Quadrangle (photorevised 1986).



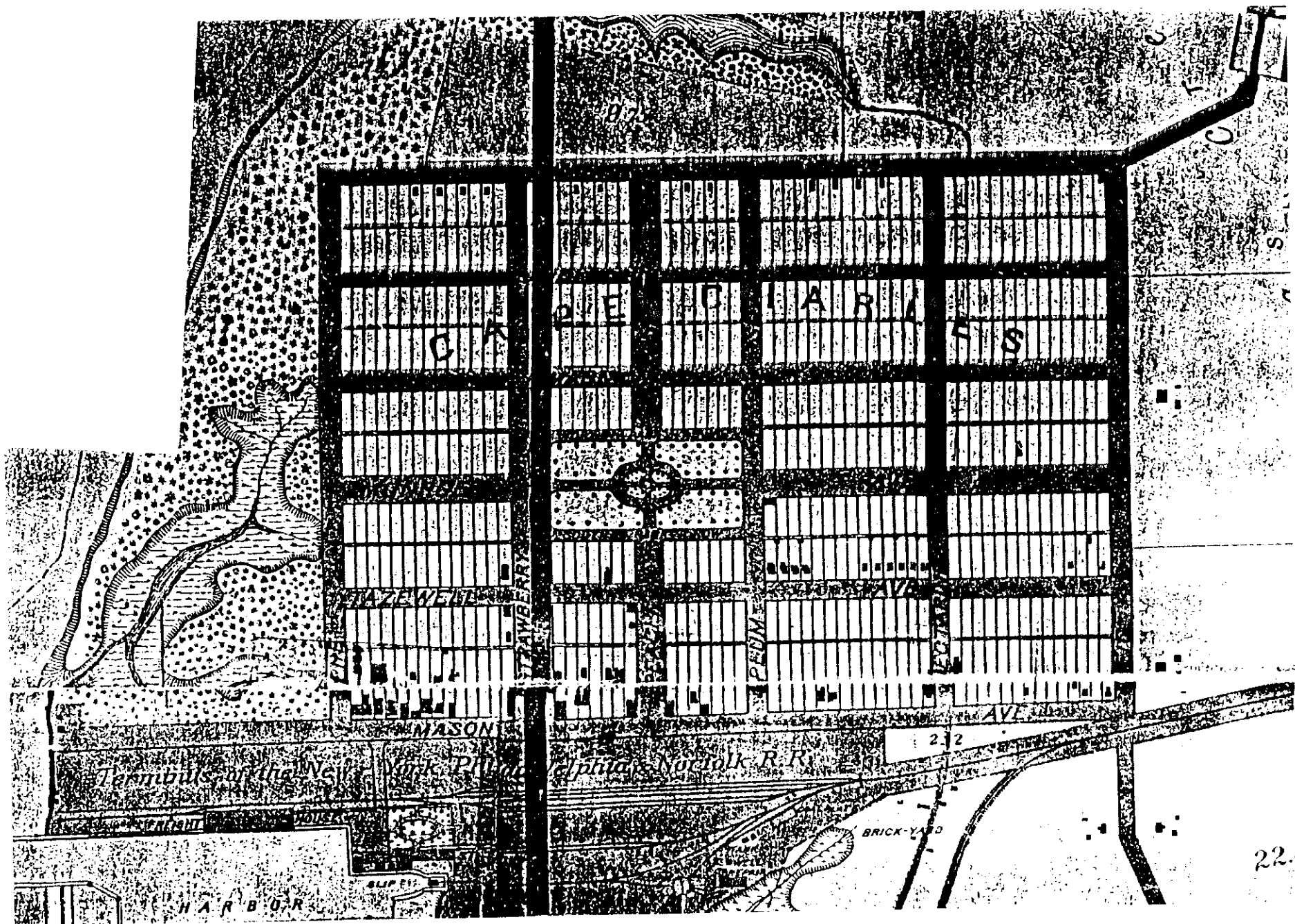


Figure 3. Map of the Town of Cape Charles, 1887, by William Bauman. In the archives of the Eastern Shore Public Library. Copied from Spriggs, *Cape Charles, Virginia, and the New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad* (1988).

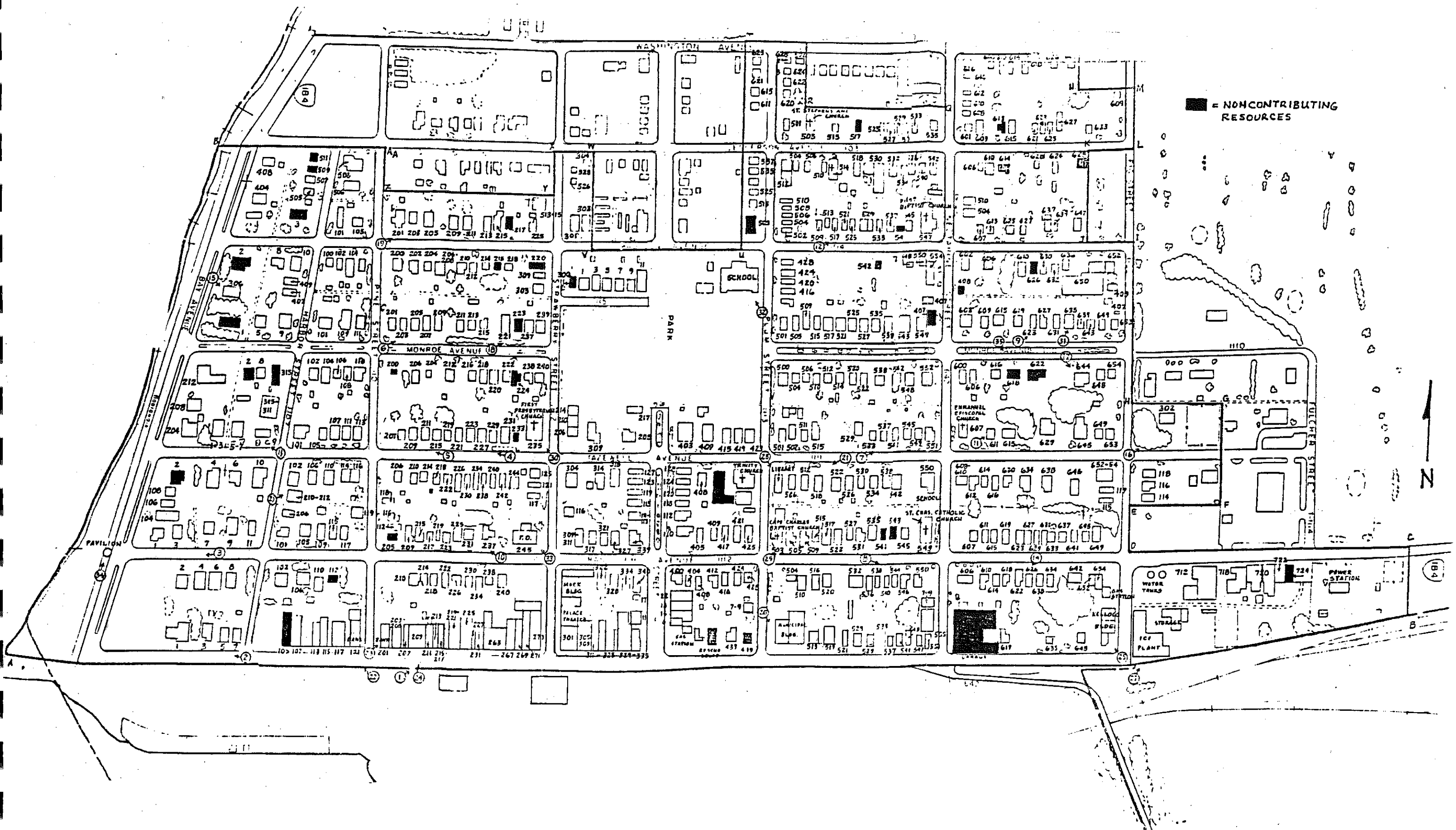


Figure 4. Map of the Town of Cape Charles showing contributing and noncontributing resources to the National Register historic district. Copied from the *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, DHR File No. 65-166 (1989).

PLATES

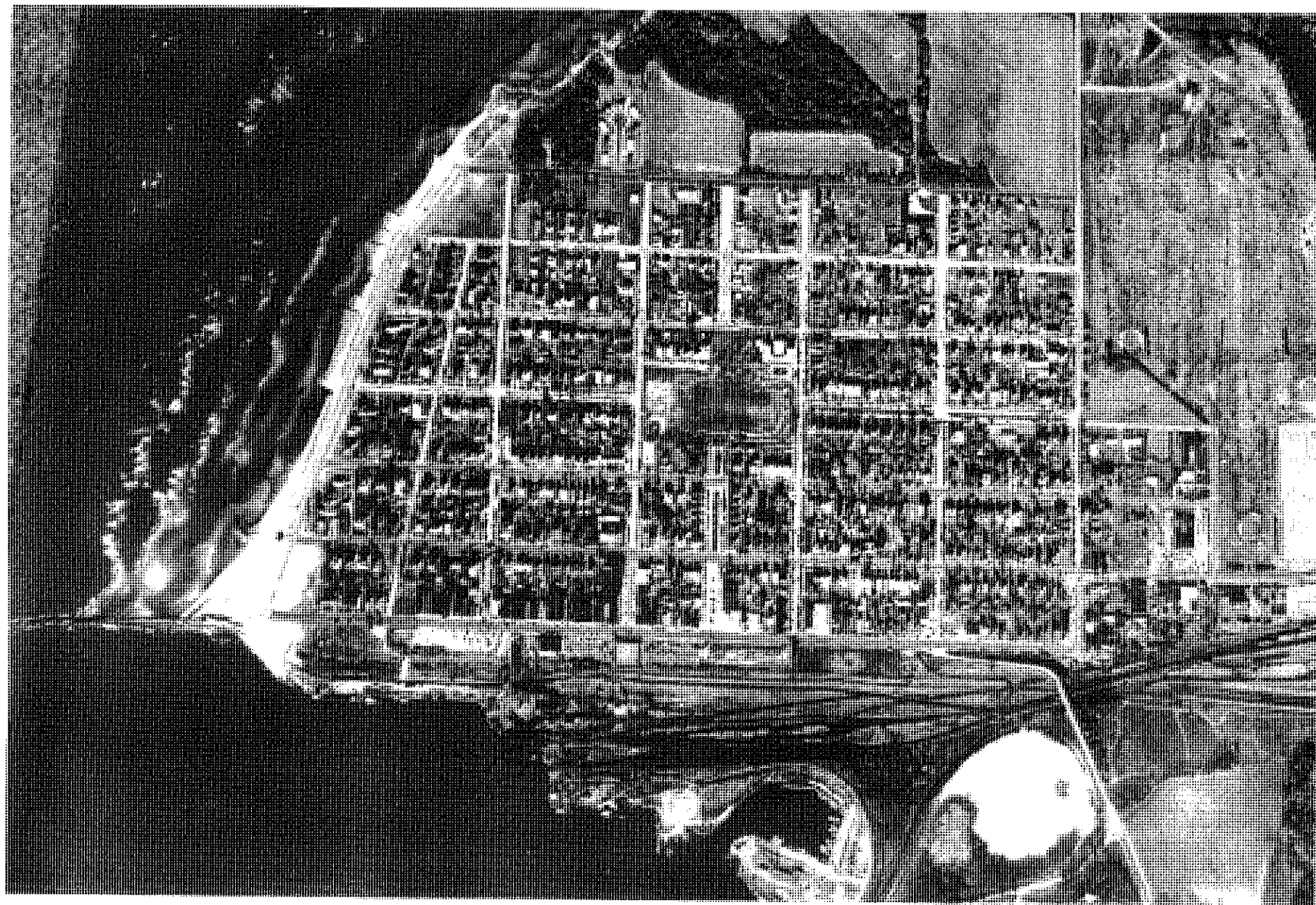


Plate No. 1. The Town of Cape Charles.



Plate No. 2. Route 184 looking west toward Cape Charles. The rural character of the approach to town should be preserved.



Plate No. 3. Crepe Myrtle, the open agricultural landscape, and the woodlands beyond are important to the character of Route 184.



Plate No. 4. Route 184 at the entrance to Cape Charles lacks the character and definition that could be provided by appropriate landscaping.



Plate No. 5. Route 184 near the intersection with Fig Street. A clearly defined street width and street trees would improve the sense of arrival.



Plate No. 6. The open railroad yard and harbor from "the hump." This open space provides opportunities for future development, parking, and parks.



Plate No. 7. Mason Avenue from "the hump." Appropriate care of older buildings and increased landscaping could improve its appearance.



Plate No. 8. Improvements to historically significant housing along the eastern portion of Mason Avenue should be encouraged.



Plate No. 9. Vacant lots can provide off-street parking, but should be paved with gravel.

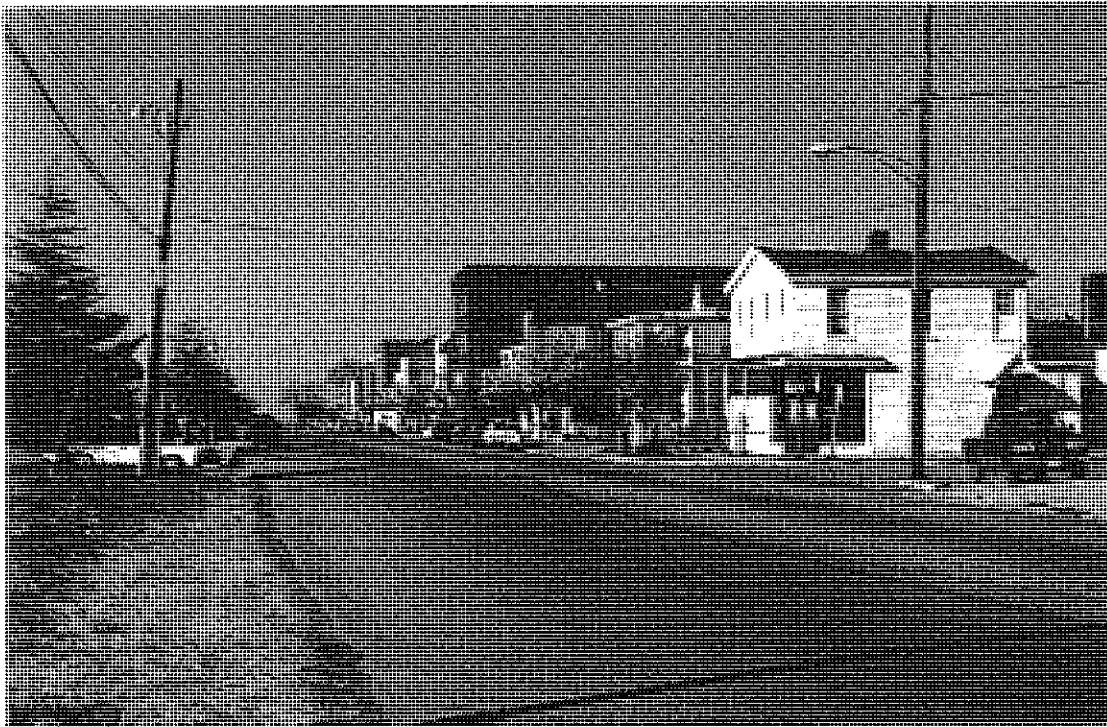


Plate No. 10. The east end of the commercial district. The excessive width of Mason Avenue detracts from the character of the streetscape.

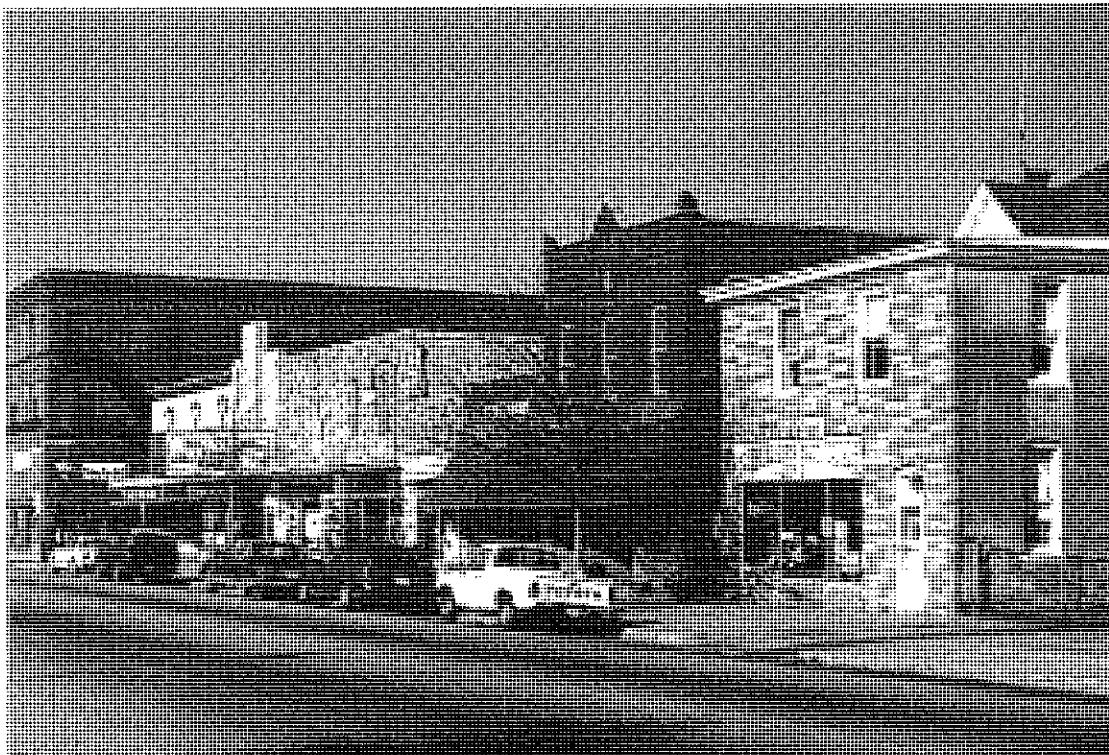


Plate No. 11. Some commercial buildings have received inappropriate treatments in the past, such as stone-faced stucco. Owners should be encouraged to work *with* the character of their buildings when making improvements.



Plate No. 12. The quality and variety of building types in the commercial district are strong points. Many types and sizes of businesses could be accommodated.



Plate No. 13. Expensive new streetscape improvements are not necessary in the commercial district. It would be desirable, however, to reduce the area of concrete sidewalk to increase the number of street trees and to provide them with a better growing environment.



Plate No. 14. Underutilized and vacant commercial buildings on Peach Street.



Plate No. 15. Cape Charles has many high-quality commercial buildings with vacant space.



Plate No. 16. The beachfront along the west side of town is a strong community asset.



Plate No. 17. The town's central park is also a strong asset, but needs landscaping and purpose to make it the attraction it could be.



Plate No. 18. The former school, to become the municipal building, should be a model for appropriate rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.



Plate No. 19. Cape Charles' many small churches contribute significantly to the charm of the community.



Plate No. 20. Cape Charles has many residences with strong, appealing character.



Plate No. 21. Even the simple and small residences have great charm.



Plate No. 22. Original metal picket fencing, large canopy trees, and appropriate maintenance—this is one of a number of residences that epitomizes the character of Cape Charles' residential neighborhoods.



Plate No. 23. The small house at the right is an example of a building whose form is not sympathetic to the character of the existing neighborhoods. Simple design guidelines and design review are necessary to help guide new construction.



Plate No. 24. Cape Charles has many interesting dwellings which together, and with appropriate care, could provide a strong neighborhood character.



Plate No. 25. These simple residences in a less affluent portion of town are unique building types. Even simple buildings are significant to the historic character of the town.



Plate No. 26. At the time of this photograph, broken windows and a lack of maintenance made this building vulnerable to loss. Vacant buildings should be properly closed and maintained.

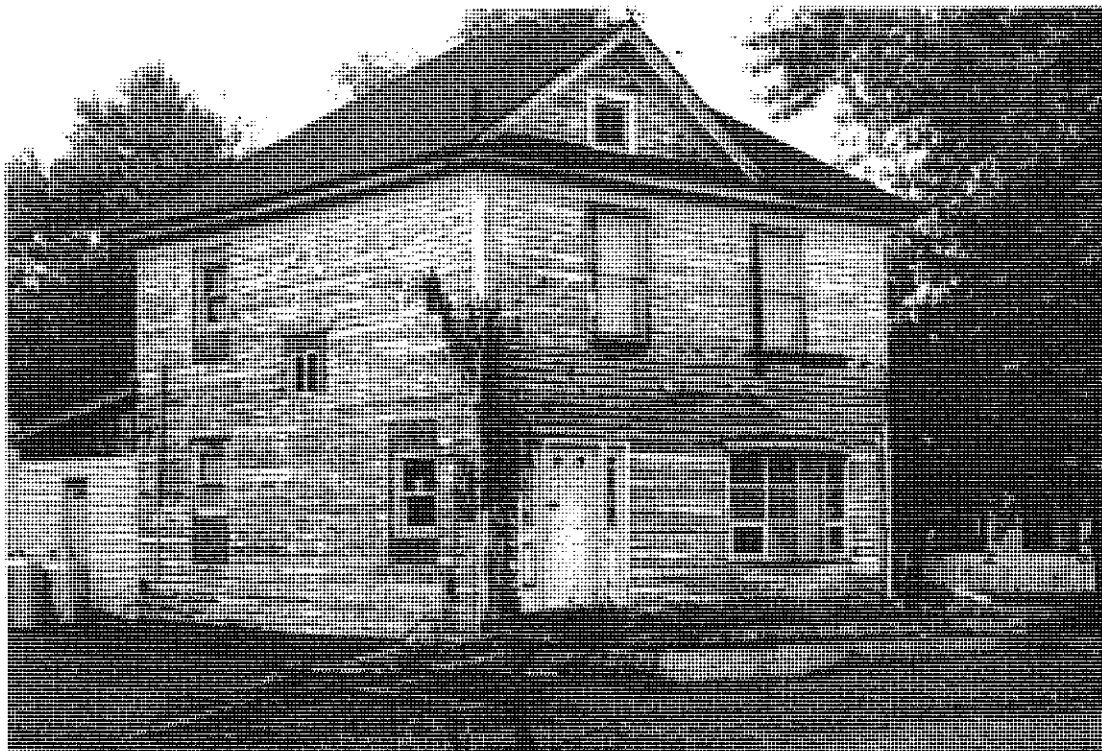


Plate No. 27. The inappropriate alteration of windows and doors, the removal of the front porch, and the lack of maintenance at this building could have been avoided through a design review process.



Plate No. 28. Deciduous street trees are important in providing character in residential neighborhoods.

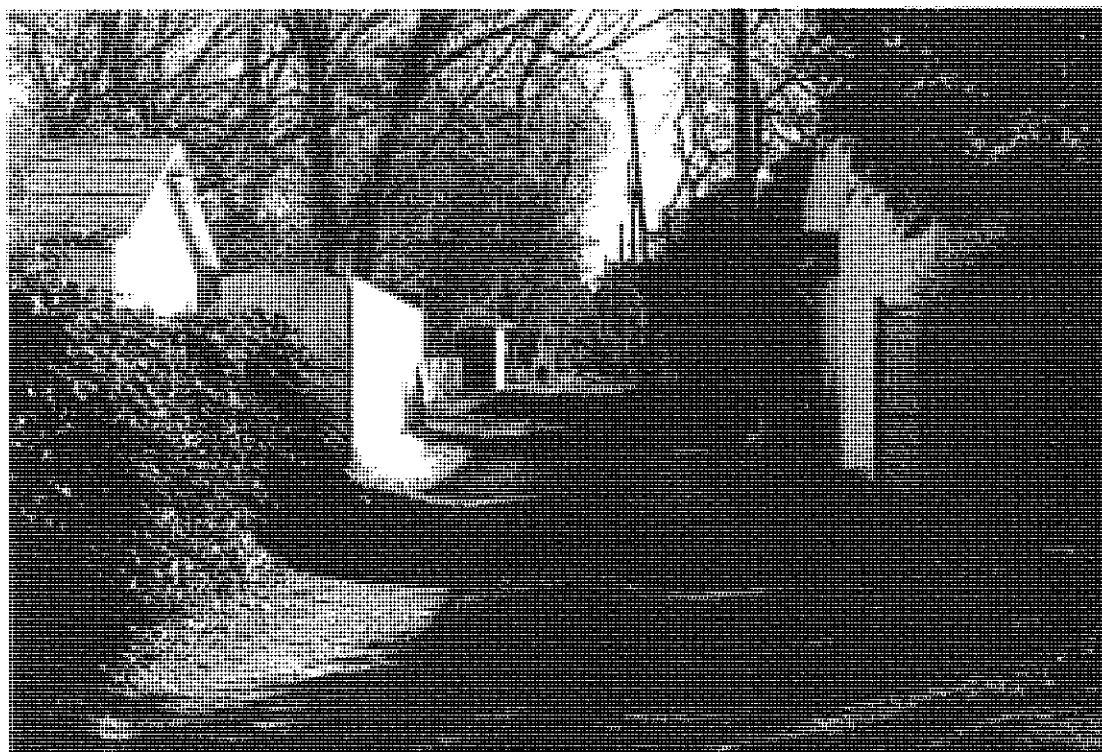


Plate No. 29. Cape Charles' dirt- and gravel-paved alleys have the potential for great charm.



Plate No. 30. Porches are a critical building feature and streetscape element in Cape Charles.



Plate No. 31. The town's many porches should be preserved through proper maintenance.

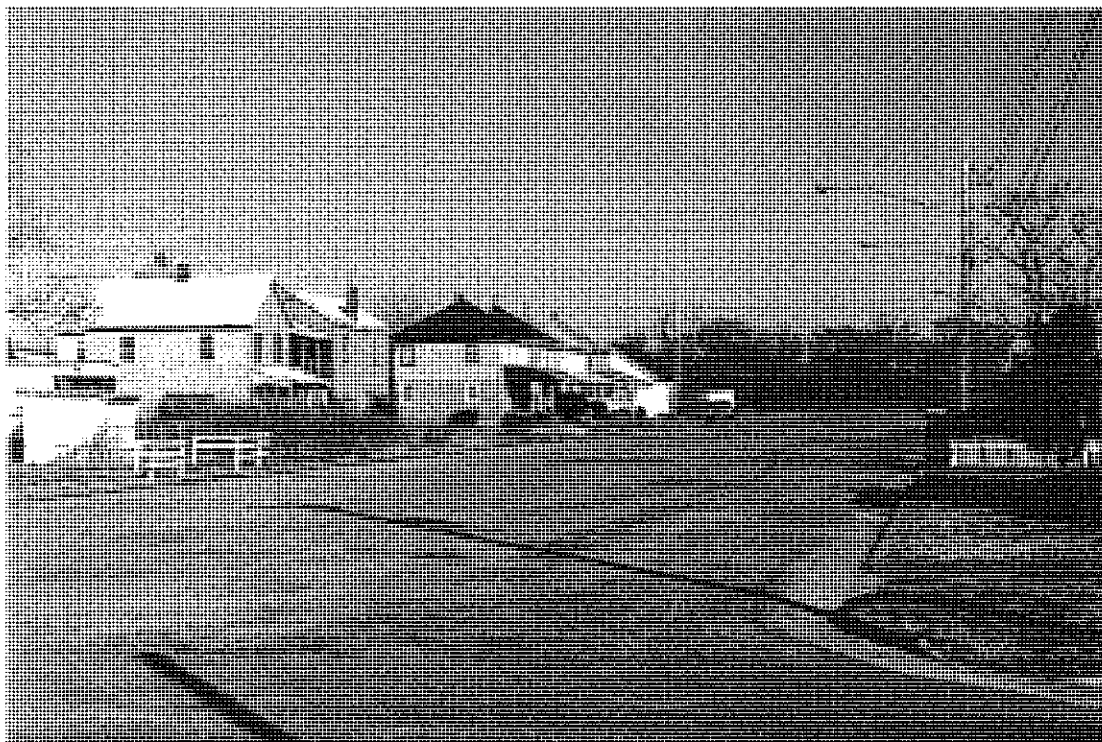


Plate No. 32. Peach Street north of the central park is barren because the middle island has been removed. The island should be recreated.

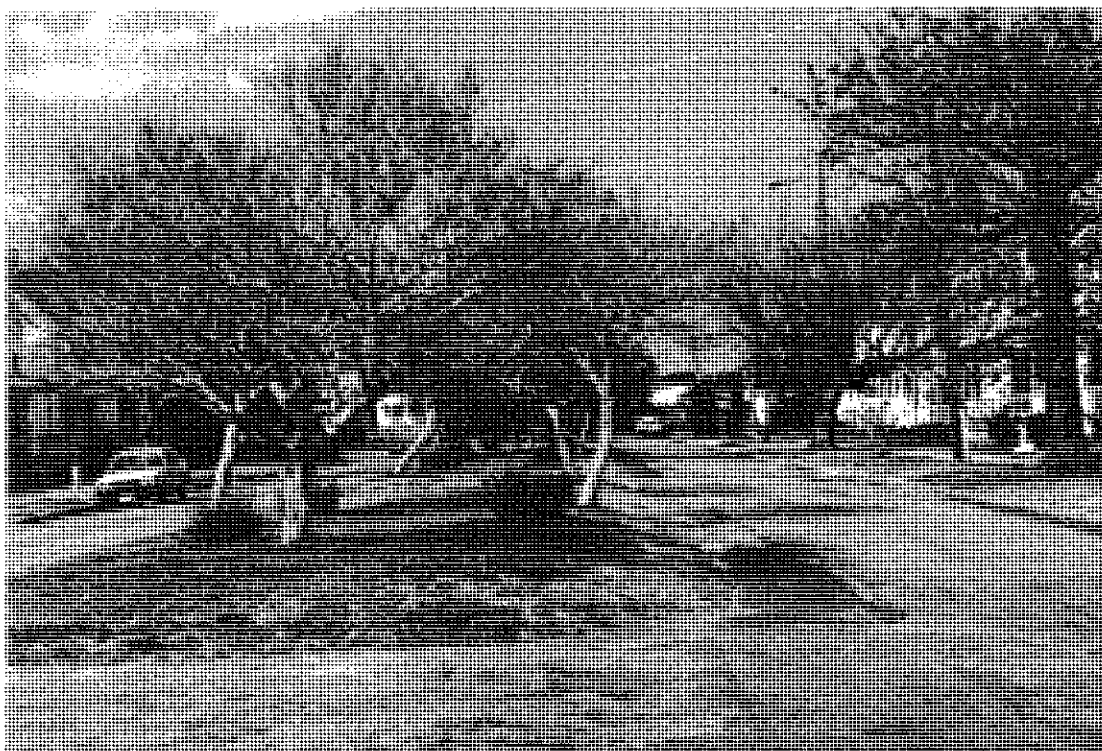


Plate No. 33. South of the central park, the island has been retained in the middle of Peach Street, and the street has great charm.



Plate No. 34. The lack of street trees and appropriate plantings detracts from the character of the streetscape.

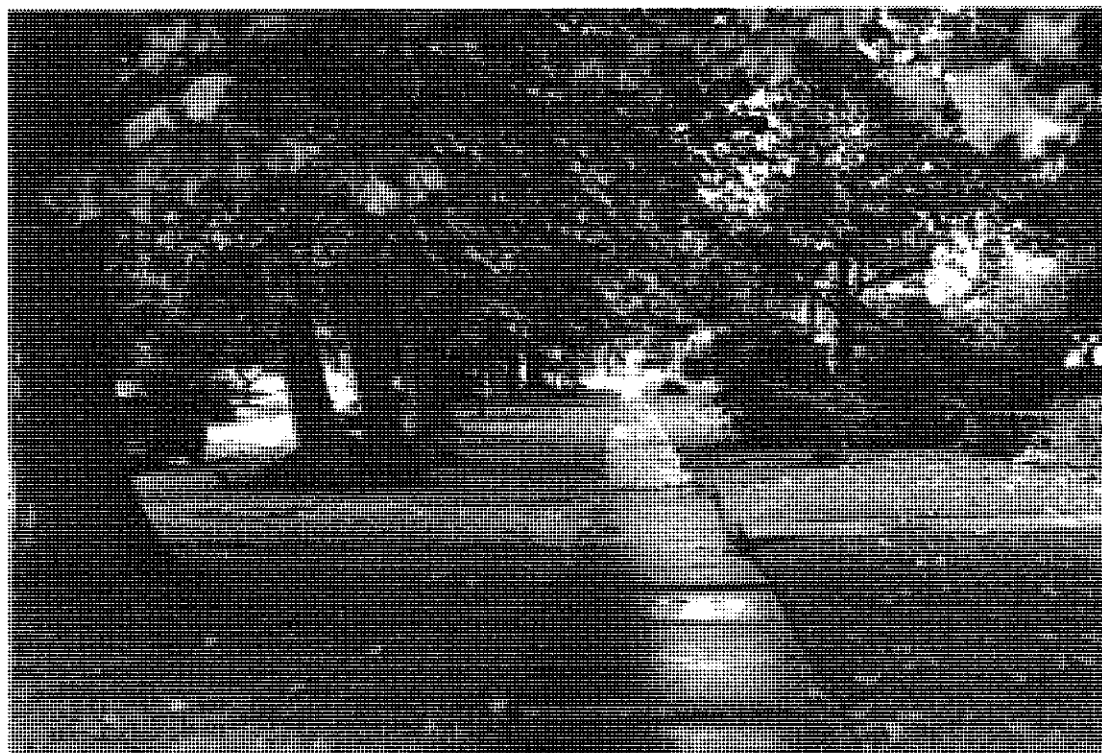


Plate No. 35. In contrast, this sidewalk has strong, appealing character because of the quality of the vegetation.

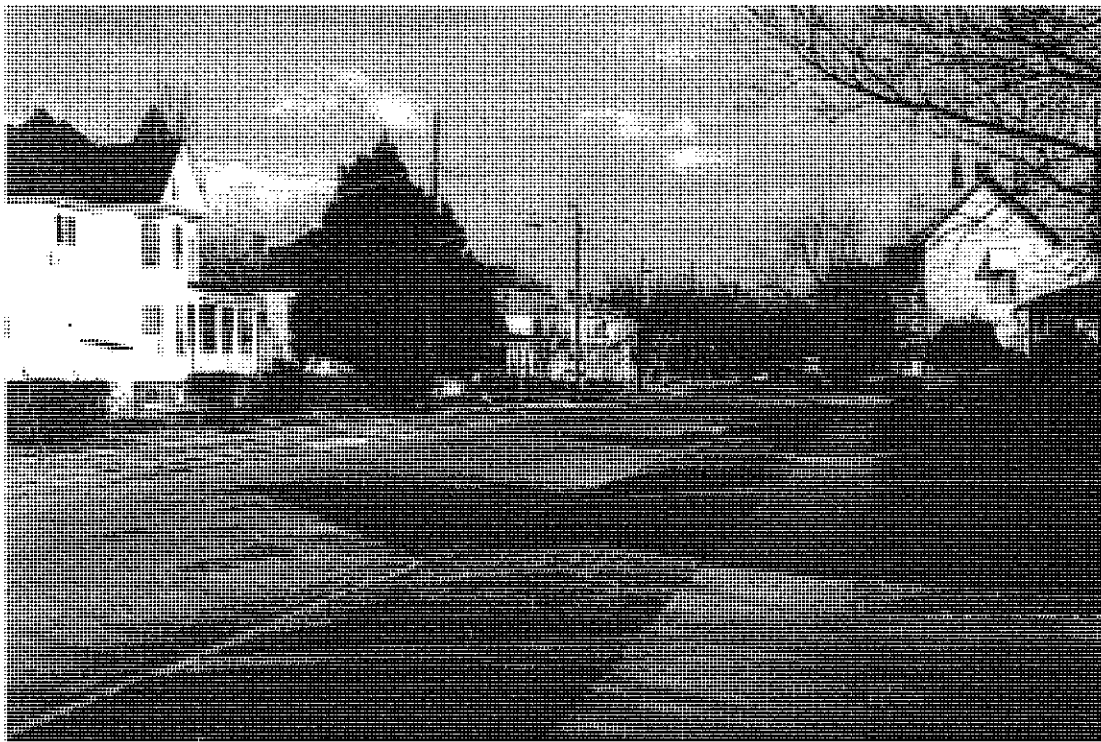


Plate No. 36. Without street trees and other vegetation, many streets in Cape Charles appear barren.

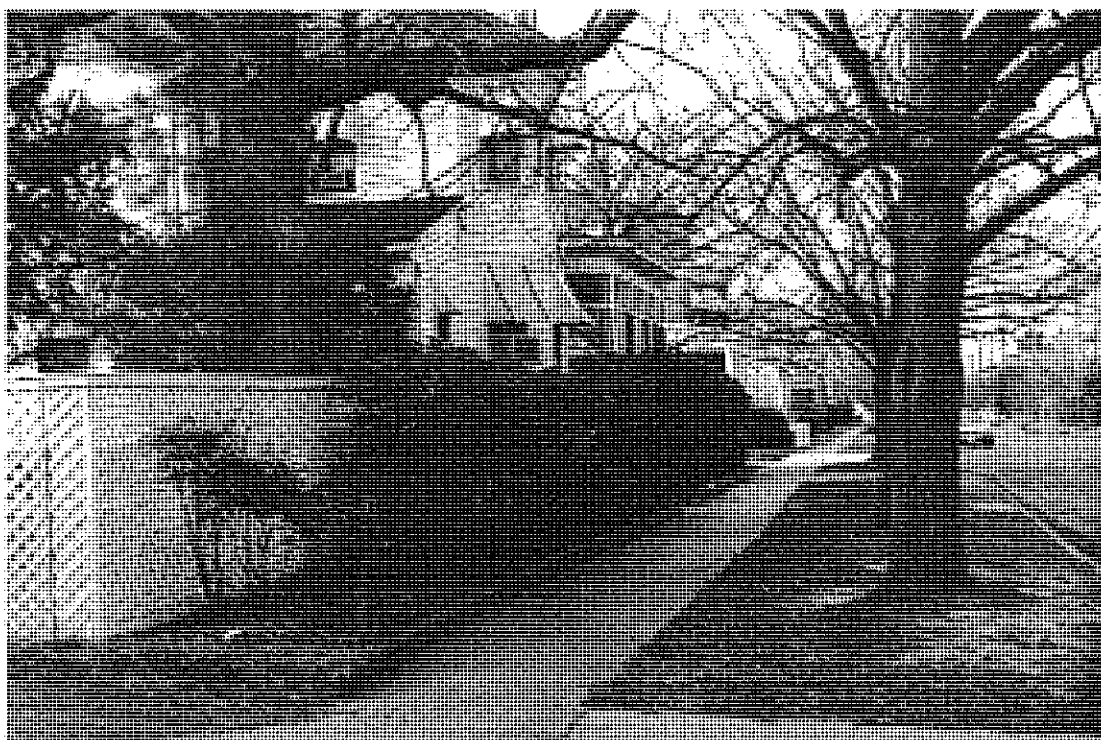


Plate No. 37. Street trees, small gardens, appropriate fencing, and landscaped yards give character to the streetscape and the neighborhood.

APPENDIX A
COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION ORDINANCE

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF CAPE CHARLES
Community Revitalization Ordinance

Section 1-1. Purpose; intent.

In order to promote the economic, cultural, educational, and general welfare of the Municipal Corporation of Cape Charles, the Town Council deems it essential that the qualities relating to the historic community character and history of the town be preserved. Some of these qualities are the continued existence, character, and preservation of historic neighborhoods, buildings, and archeological sites, and the continued construction of buildings and site improvements that are sympathetic to and in keeping with the character of the area. It is further the intent of the Town Council that the Historical Commission, established within this chapter, shall work with the Planning Commission and share expertise and assistance in achieving the intent as set forth above.

Section 1-2. Historical Commission: establishment, composition, appointment, terms of members.

(a) A Historical Commission is hereby established consisting of not more than five members, appointed by the Town Council. More than 50 percent of the appointed members shall be residents or property owners of the town. Members shall have a demonstrated interest in and knowledge of the historical character of the town. The Town Council shall appoint at least one member with a background in one or more of the following areas: real estate, local history, architecture, architectural history, or preservation. At least one member shall be appointed from the Planning Commission upon recommendation to the Historical Commission by the Planning Commission.

(b) Each member shall be appointed for a term of four years, except the first established Historical Commission where two members shall be appointed for a two-year term and all remaining members shall be appointed for a four-year term. All subsequent appointments shall be for a four-year term. When a term expires, a member may be reappointed or a new member appointed to begin the next four-year term. A chairman of the Historical Commission shall be appointed by Town Council. The chairman shall conduct meetings, report regularly to the Planning Commission and Town Council, and organize and coordinate the affairs of the Historical Commission. A secretary shall be chosen to record the activity of the Historical Commission and may be a nonmember with no voting privileges.

Section 1-3. Boundaries.

The boundaries of the historic neighborhood revitalization district shall be marked as an overlay zoning designation on the official zoning map. The established district may be amended by the Town Council upon consultation with the Planning Commission and the Historical Commission, using the procedures in place for amending a zoning ordinance of the town. The Historical Commission may recommend new districts or amendments to existing districts to Town Council.

Section 1-4. Relationship to zoning districts.

The historic neighborhood revitalization district regulations promulgated by the Historical Commission, as provided in this chapter, are intended to preserve and protect historic or architecturally worthy buildings, structures, streets, site features, and neighborhoods. In all zoning districts lying within the boundaries of the historic neighborhood revitalization district, the regulations for both the zoning district and the historic neighborhood revitalization district shall apply. Whenever there is a conflict between the zoning district ordinances and regulations of the historic neighborhood revitalization district, the more restrictive shall apply.

Section 1-5. Classification of buildings and structures.

Within the historic neighborhood revitalization district, all buildings and structures shall be classified and designated on the historic neighborhood revitalization district map as contributing or noncontributing. Contributing buildings and structures shall be buildings and structures identified as contributing to the character of the historic neighborhood. Noncontributing buildings and structures shall be buildings and structures identified as not contributing to the character of the historic neighborhood. In general, the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places for historic districts shall be used in determining whether a building or structure is contributing or noncontributing. The historic neighborhood revitalization district map shall be approved by the Mayor and Town Council and made part of the zoning map.

Section 1-6. Responsibilities of the Historical Commission.

The responsibilities of the Historical Commission shall include the following:

- (a) Hold public meetings on a regular basis and as often as necessary, and hold workshops and site visits as necessary.

- (b) Provide advice and recommendations to the Planning Commission and Town Council on subjects and particular projects related to preserving, enhancing, and revitalizing the character of existing historic neighborhoods.
- (c) Advise persons owning property or living within the historic neighborhoods on measures which they may take to preserve the historic character of their neighborhoods.
- (d) Review and approve, not approve, or conditionally approve proposed exterior alterations, demolitions, relocations, new construction, signage, and other projects and developments which may change or alter the character of the historic neighborhoods included in the historic neighborhood revitalization map.
- (e) Sponsor public information and educational activities related to historic preservation, community revitalization, planning, building restoration and rehabilitation, cultural landscapes, and other related issues when deemed appropriate. Such activities may include workshops, lectures, classes, research, etc.
- (f) Coordinate with Northampton County and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources on local preservation and revitalization efforts.
- (g) Report to the Planning Commission and Town Council on its activities and make recommendations in an annual report on the operation of the Historical Commission and the status of historic neighborhood revitalization within the town.

Section 1-7. Development standards.

- (a) No project requiring a building or signage permit and involving exterior alterations, demolitions, relocations, new construction, structures, or signage shall be undertaken within the historic neighborhood revitalization district unless the same is reviewed and approved by the Historical Commission or, on appeal, by the Town Council as being architecturally compatible with the character of the buildings, structures, and site features within the neighborhoods.
- (b) No structure within the historic neighborhood revitalization district shall be razed, demolished, or moved without the approval of the Historical Commission or, upon appeal, by the Town Council.
- (c) The Historical Commission shall use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in reviewing proposals for all exterior alterations, demolitions, relocations, new construction, structures, and signage coming before it. In

addition, the Historical Commission shall prepare historic neighborhood revitalization district design guidelines which shall be substantially consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The written design guidelines shall be made publicly available.

(d) Any property owner who is aggrieved by the final action of the Historical Commission and Town Council may appeal to the circuit court for review of the action by the Town Council by filing a petition at law, setting forth the alleged illegality of the action of the Town Council, provided such petition is filed within 30 days after the final decisions rendered by the Town Council. The filing of the petition shall stay the decision of the Town Council, pending the outcome of the appeal to the court, except that the filing of such petition shall not stay the decision of the Town Council if such decision denies the right to raze or demolish a historic landmark, building, or structure. The court may reverse or modify the decision of the Town Council, in whole or in part, if it finds upon review that the decision is contrary to law or that the decision is arbitrary and constitutes an abuse of discretion; or the circuit court may affirm the decision of the Town Council.

Section 1-8. Demolition.

(a) The owner of a historic building or structure within the historic neighborhood revitalization district shall be entitled to raze or demolish such building or structure provided that he has applied to the Historical Commission or Town Council for such right. An owner is entitled to raze or demolish his property pursuant to the procedure outlined in the Code of Virginia section 15.1 - 503.2.

Section 1-9. Demolition-by-neglect.

No officially designated contributing building, structure, or site within the historic neighborhood revitalization district shall be allowed to deteriorate due to neglect by the owner which would result in violation of the intent of this chapter. Demolition-by-neglect shall include any one or more of the following courses of action or inaction:

- (a) Deterioration of the exterior of a building to the extent that it creates or permits a hazardous or unsafe condition.
- (b) Deterioration of exterior walls or other vertical supports, horizontal members, roofs, chimneys, exterior wall elements such as siding, wooden walls, windows, brick, plaster or mortar to the extent that it adversely affects the character of the district or could lead to irreversible damage to the structure.

- (c) Defective or deteriorated flooring or floor supports, or flooring or floor supports of insufficient size to carry imposed loads with safety.
- (d) Any fault in the building or structure which renders the same structurally unsafe or not properly watertight.

If the Historical Commission determines that a structure in the historic neighborhood revitalization district is being demolished by neglect it shall send notification to the owners stating the reasons therefore, and shall give the owner 90 days from the date of the notice in which to commence work. If appropriate action is not taken at this time, the zoning administrator may initiate appropriate legal action as provided further in this chapter.

Section 1-10. Penalties for noncompliance.

- (a) Failure to correct a defect after a notice that the Historical Commission has determined that a property is being demolished by neglect shall constitute a misdemeanor. Such misdemeanor shall be punished as set forth in Section ____ of the Code. Each day that the violation continues is a separate offense.
- (b) Any property owner in the historic neighborhood revitalization district who does not obtain Historical Commission approvals as required within this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and may be punished as set forth in Section ____ of this Code.
- (c) Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to restrict or prohibit the Town Council to acquire in any legal manner any historic area, site, building, or structure or the land pertaining thereto for the use, observation, education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the Town.



Public Perceptions of Historic Preservation in Cape Charles, Virginia

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July 1, 2020

Introduction/Executive Summary

This report was funded by the Town of Cape Charles, and the authors are grateful for its support. We were engaged to research public attitudes about historic preservation among the residents and visitors of Cape Charles (hereafter, generally CC). To address these issues, the study uses data from public sources as well as three separate surveys: an in-person survey conducted on the streets of the town in the summer of 2019, a survey to over 1,100 utility customers mailed out during October 2019, and a Facebook survey conducted by the town in the last three months of 2019. Survey questions for the in-person and mailed survey were designed based on an information-gathering process that encompassed the first half of 2019.

The purpose of the report is not to set priorities or establish policy, and it makes no implied or explicit guarantee of accuracy related to current conditions. The report uses data obtained from surveys conducted by the Public History Center as well as data provided by third parties (e.g., the United States Census and a Facebook survey conducted by CC) to understand public opinion concerning historic preservation in CC.

The key findings of the analysis are as follows:

- Cape Charles residents generally value the historic nature of their town's built infrastructure, and generally believe that this creates both pecuniary and nonpecuniary value
- Residents, especially those with higher educations and women, are more likely to believe the town's essential nature is primarily historic, as opposed to a beach community
- Tourists value the town's beach, but also believe CC should repair derelict buildings and should help lower income residents make historically appropriate repairs
- Although many believed that preservation was valuable, there was less agreement with the role of the government in financing it. One of our policy recommendations is to create an

ad hoc committee with representatives from the town, contractors, potential donors, and lower income residents to discuss this problem and to derive solutions that will be acceptable to most constituencies. Additional policy recommendations are contained in the conclusion of this report.

Overall, people who live in Cape Charles full time, those who own property here but also live elsewhere, and tourists and workers who have an economic relationship with the town generally believe that its history should be preserved, and this creates an opportunity for policy makers to develop mechanisms and frameworks that will achieve this goal.



Public Perceptions of Historic Preservation in Cape Charles, Virginia

I. Introduction

This study was commissioned by the Town of Cape Charles, Virginia (hereafter, generally referred to as “CC”) in order to obtain and analyze survey data related to public perceptions of historic preservation, specifically in the historic overlay of the town.

II. Motivation and Process

In late 2018, the Public History Center was contacted by then-Town Manager Larry DiRe to assist Cape Charles with its historic preservation plan, which was widely perceived as outdated and in need of improvement. Based on further discussions with him, we agreed to undertake a three-phase process to provide information for policy makers about public opinions concerning the value of historic preservation and the best ways to regulate and guide relevant behavior.

Phase 1 revolved around research on how best to gather relevant information and perspectives from the broader public. In March through May of 2019, we led a number of charrettes and meetings with various constituencies, and conducted an informal online survey (using Qualtrics) of town leaders to obtain information about what topics and issues would be most appropriate for public surveys. We also conducted a literature review of two disciplines that were intellectually adjacent to town planning and historic preservation, documenting a decade or so of relevant research from academic historians and economists.

Much of the work during Phase 1 was donated in-kind by the Public History Center. We attended two national conferences (Main Street and the Urban Land Institute) relating to historic

preservation. We contributed many hours of research work on a pro-bono basis as a benefit to the community; these efforts form part of the service obligations associated with our employment at Christopher Newport University.

What resulted from the information gathering conducted during Phase 1 of the project? Many issues came up in the course of not only (1) the literature review, but also (2) in the charettes and focus group meetings that took place in the first half of 2019. In fact, there was substantial overlap between them.¹ In the literature review, we found a number of academic papers that related how historical structures can drive economic activity and create value. Living on the Virginia Peninsula, we knew from first-hand experience that history can create demand for tourism and this is a key economic driver in much of Hampton Roads. Therefore, one goal of the mailed and in-person surveys would be to understand how the public views the economic implications of the historical legacy of built structures in Cape Charles.

Of course, some vexing issues that came up in the May 9 meeting would not be amenable to inclusion on a brief survey sent out to the general public. Two of these stand out: process and elements. Should applications for renovation or new construction go through a two-stage process? How can we ensure consistency in the application of guidelines? Will the town council support the decisions of the HDRB? Which specific design elements should be addressed: porches, windows, paint color, chimneys, satellite dishes, etc.? These issues are not very applicable to broad surveys of the public that may not have a lot of information or strongly-felt opinions on process or specific architectural elements.

¹ This can be revealed by reading the literature review, and then comparing it to the discussion that took place on May 7, 2019 at a joint meeting between the Town Council and the Historic District Review Board (HDRB). For a summary of the discussion during that meeting, please see Appendix A, Table A-3. Items indicated in red text in that table directly informed the wording of both the in-person survey and the mailed survey conducted during the second half of 2019.

Three major lines of inquiry stood out, however, as quite appropriate for survey-based information gathering from the general public:

- **First**, what is the essential nature of Cape Charles, and does the fundamental character of the community derive from its beach, or its historic town center? This issue came up during the charettes, and seemed to be a central question driving whether and how preservation should be pursued by the policy-makers of the town.
- **Second**, what economic value does the public associate with the historic charm and atmosphere created by the built legacy of the structures in the town? Our literature review and charettes both indicated that history has its own intrinsic value, but can also drive pecuniary value. We felt that the policy-makers of Cape Charles would appreciate a detailed understanding of public views on this issue.
- **Third**, assuming that preservation was a goal worthy of pursuing, how would resources be allocated appropriately to it? Many homeowners in Cape Charles have relatively high household incomes, but a substantial number do not. Houses fall into disrepair, some are abandoned, and a few become derelict and are demolished. Indeed, on 12 March, 2019, the Town Manager had emailed us pictures of two structures about which he was concerned.

For all of these issues, it was important to obtain information from three basic categories of people: those who live in Cape Charles full time, those who own property here but also spend much time elsewhere, and those who have an economic relationship with the town either as workers or tourists, but do not live there. The first category includes those who interact most intimately with the historic nature of the town—they do not divide their residential loyalties with other jurisdictions, and also benefit from the maximum exposure to its charm and nonpecuniary value over the course of a year. They would also be the ones who would likely face the highest financial burden from any publicly-funded effort to preserve derelict structures that are not being maintained by homeowners.



Derelict Houses in Danger of Demolition, (Larry Dire, March 2019)

The second constituency have a substantial stake in the community, but because they split their time with other locations, they may not have the same level of motivation to become personally involved in the hard work that preservation might entail. The third category is likely drawn to CC as a tourist destination, both for the beach and for the historic charm of its neighborhoods. They are likely to face the lowest direct stakes in terms of subsidies or community financing for preservation. (If landlords pass on fees used to subsidize preservation in the form of higher rental costs, they might be indirectly involved in financing it, however.)

To gauge a better understanding about how groups evaluated the three items of inquiry, we designed both an in-person survey that was conducted during the height of the tourist season, as well as a written survey that was distributed to all of the utility customers of the town.² The in-person survey was designed as a brief encounter with the respondent, because survey methodology

² Survey questions are contained in Appendix B.

reveals that there is a finite limit to the amount of time a person will spend before they cut the survey short, leading to an issue called survey attrition. It would take place during the summer months, when peak tourist season meant we would have access to visitors of the town. Indeed, for this survey, which we conducted on Main Street, on the beach, and in Central Park, less than a fifth of the respondents reported that the zip code of their primary residence was 23310. This survey contained five questions, relating to why the respondent was in town, their opinions about derelict structures, and one question about whether the town should handle the issue of paying for preservation. We also inferred their gender. We faced some difficulties because cell phone service was spotty in some places, but were able to obtain several dozen usable responses from this effort.

Because the mailed survey was a longer, written instrument, it delved into much more detail about the three major issues. We were also able to obtain more demographic information, which helped provide the data we will use below for the regression analysis. The first eight questions of the survey were Likert-style questions, which are familiar to anyone who has ever had to decide whether they “strongly agree,” “agree,” “disagree,” or “strongly disagree” with a given statement. (“Neutral” is the fifth response.) We began with questions about the fundamental character of the community—beach town vs. historic district—and obtained information about public perceptions of how historic preservation creates economic value and whether it is worthy of investment. But the thorny issue of how to finance it, especially for private residences with low household income constituted the third set of items. We also collected demographic information concerning education, zip code of primary residence, gender, age, ethnicity, and income.

Because many utility customers pay on an automated basis and often discard the hard-copy envelopes that contain the utility bills, we decided it would be best to not use the standard mailing techniques and use the CNU logo on the outside envelop and to print the survey on CNU

letterhead—this resulted in a very high response rate.³ We were grateful to the town’s dedicated public servants for providing access to the addresses of CC utility customers and for helping with the onerous practice of stuffing over a thousand surveys and self-addressed stamped return envelopes.

In Phase 3, we entered all of the hard copy mailed survey forms. A few issues arose regarding people who provided spurious or unusable data for different questions.⁴ We analyzed the data, resulting in the report you are now reading.



³ As part of Phase 2, we were required to obtain 300 survey responses, and were happy to report that we delivered about 150% of this number, actually obtaining 448 completed surveys: 83 from the in-person effort in the summer, and 365 mailed replies (out of about 1,100 utility billing addresses polled). This corresponds to a very high response rate of about 33%).

⁴ These are discussed in Appendix D: Data Notes

III. Cross-Tabs and Descriptive Statistics

A. Mailed Survey

1. Overview

The survey was mailed out on October 15, and we received 365 returned envelopes. Appendix D contains information on how the data were “cleaned” for analysis as well as the number of responses for each survey item. That number varied, anywhere from a low of 316 (year born) to a high of 364 (the Likert question regarding new construction). Table 1 presents the number of responses for the various Likert-style questions. For these items, and throughout this study, a score of 5 corresponds to “strongly agree” and a score of 1 corresponds to “strongly

Table 1: Summary of Likert-Style Items

Survey Items	Usable Responses	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q1. Cape Charles is primarily a <i>beach community</i> that also has a historic town center.	356	3.23	1.35
Q2. Cape Charles is primarily a <i>historic town</i> that also has a beach.	359	3.73	1.22
Q3. Owners of real estate in the historic district (“overlay”) should conform to their property’s historic look and feel when making <i>renovations and repairs</i> .	362	3.97	1.06
Q4. <i>New construction</i> in the historic district of Cape Charles should conform to the look and feel of neighboring homes and buildings.	364	4.18	0.99
Q5. The charming, historic nature of the town’s homes and buildings contributes to property values of real estate in Cape Charles.	362	4.28	0.97
Q6. To reduce demolition of derelict buildings, the Town of Cape Charles should establish a fund that can help low income homeowners make historically accurate repairs and improvements.	363	2.83	1.36
Q7. Such a fund should be financed from fines levied against property owners who do not conform to the historic preservation zoning guidelines.	359	2.50	1.40
Q8. Cape Charles should restrict the amount of new development in areas near the historic center to preserve the small-town nature of the community.	358	3.34	1.40

disagree.” Thus, the average score shows the level of agreement with the statement. With a score of 5 indicating strong agreement and a score of 1 indicating strong disagreement, any average score greater than 3 would suggest general agreement in the community, with higher scores corresponding to more agreement. The range of responses is reflected by the standard deviation, such that smaller standard deviations correspond to more agreement with the statement.

As Table 1 indicates, on the whole, the respondents to the mailed survey had a somewhat stronger agreement with CC being primarily a historic town, with the importance of the beach being secondary. The higher score for Q2 than Q1 supports this, although the numbers are close enough that the difference is not of a very large magnitude. Below, we consider how many “5” vs. other scores each question received.

The statement with the strongest support (Q5, with an average [mean] score of 4.28) was about the value that derives from the historic charm of the town’s homes and buildings. Other statements with very strong support were that renovations and repairs (Q3) and new construction (Q4) should conform to the historic look and feel of the property and the neighborhood.

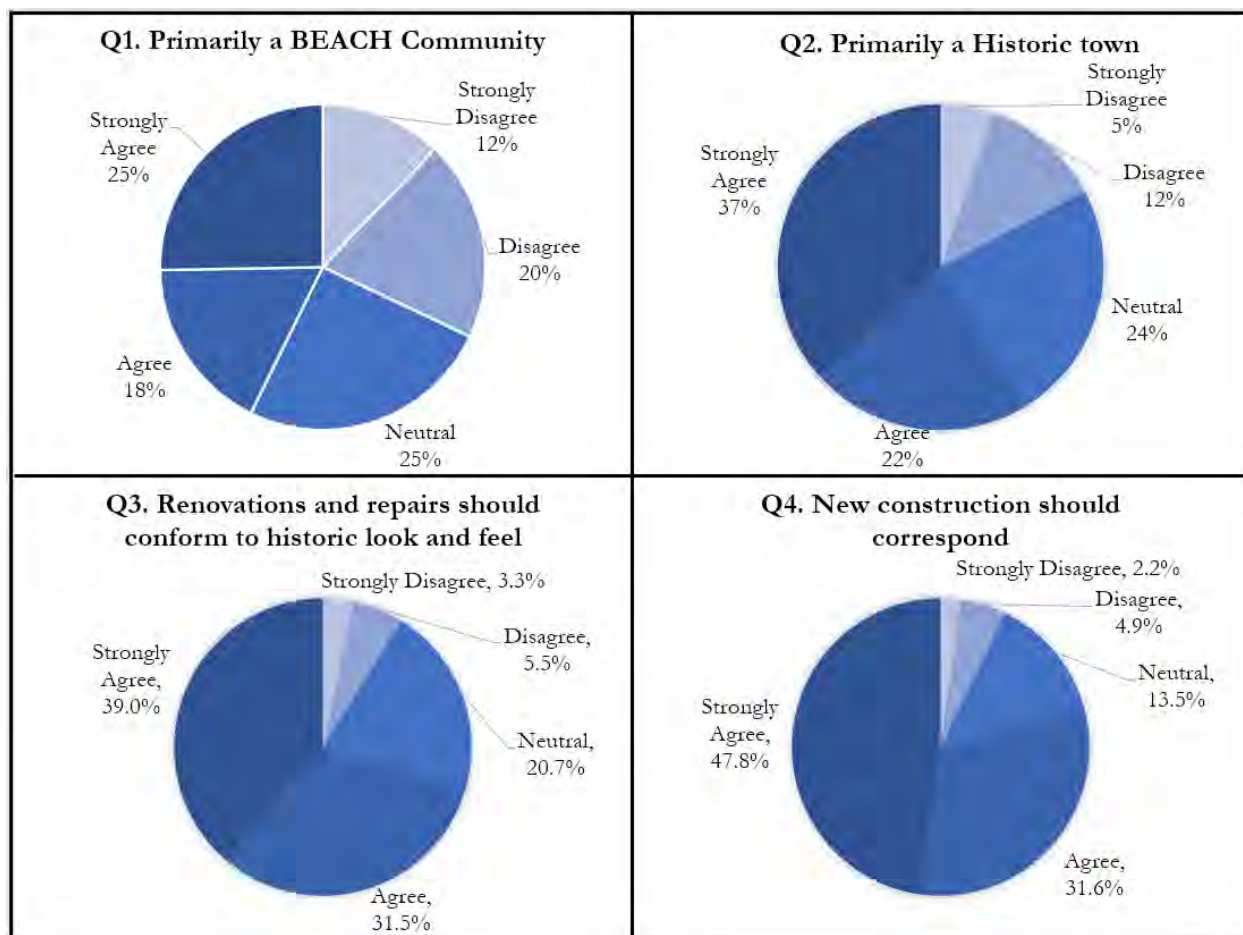
The survey items with the lowest agreement (average values between 2.50 and 3.34) and highest dispersion (indicated by higher standard deviations) related to the survey items measuring how CC might fund public support for historically consistent renovations. As we will see below, both visitors and CC residents felt that derelict historic structures should be renovated rather than demolished, but there was not a clear consensus on how to achieve this. We will explore this finding in more detail, below.

2. Answer Distributions

In this section, we show using pie charts and other graphics how the survey answers were distributed. As Table 1 indicated, among the Likert scale questions, the strongest agreement was for

Q5 (the fact that charm creates value), whereas the strongest disagreement was for Q7 (assessing fees for violations of historic ordinances to finance a public fund designed to help lower income homeowners make consistent renovations and repairs). Here we delve into the findings for the Likert-scale questions as well as the other items on the mailed survey.

Figure 1: Likert-Scale Responses for Items Q1 – Q4

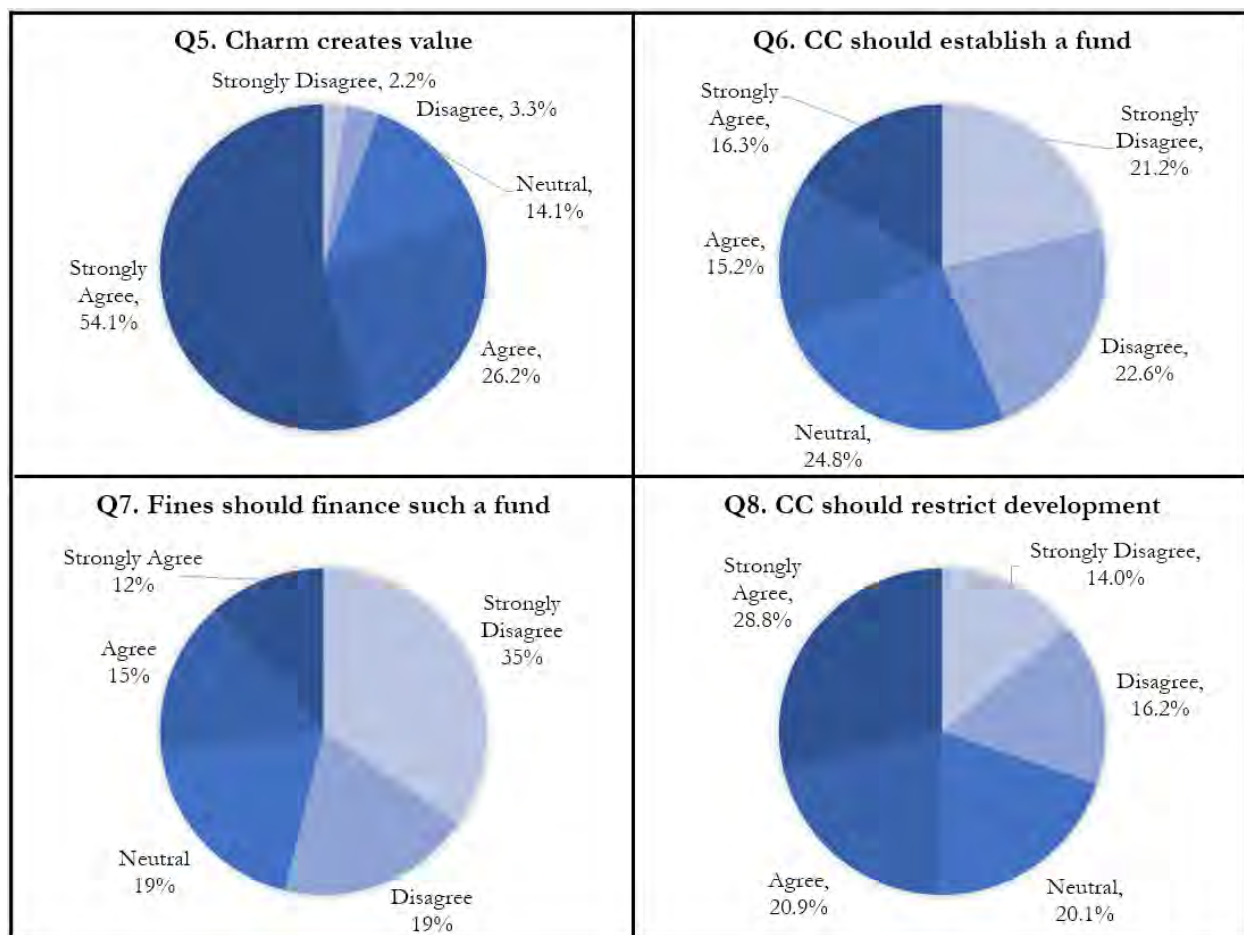


The first four Likert-scale questions are detailed in Figure 1. Consistent with Table 1, the figure shows that there was less support for the idea that CC is primarily a beach community (agree and strongly agree amounted to 43% of responses) and more support for the idea that CC is

primarily an historic town (59%). For Q3, 70.5% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that renovations and repairs should correspond to the structure’s historic look and feel. In terms of new construction, respondents were even more likely to support (79.4%) this statement.

Results for items Q5 through Q8 are depicted in Figure 2, on the next page. The figure again supports the findings from Table 1. For example, a very solid majority of respondents believed (80.3%) with the statement that, “The charming, historic nature of the town’s homes and buildings contributes to property values of real estate in Cape Charles.”

Figure 2: Likert-Scale Responses for Items Q5 – Q8

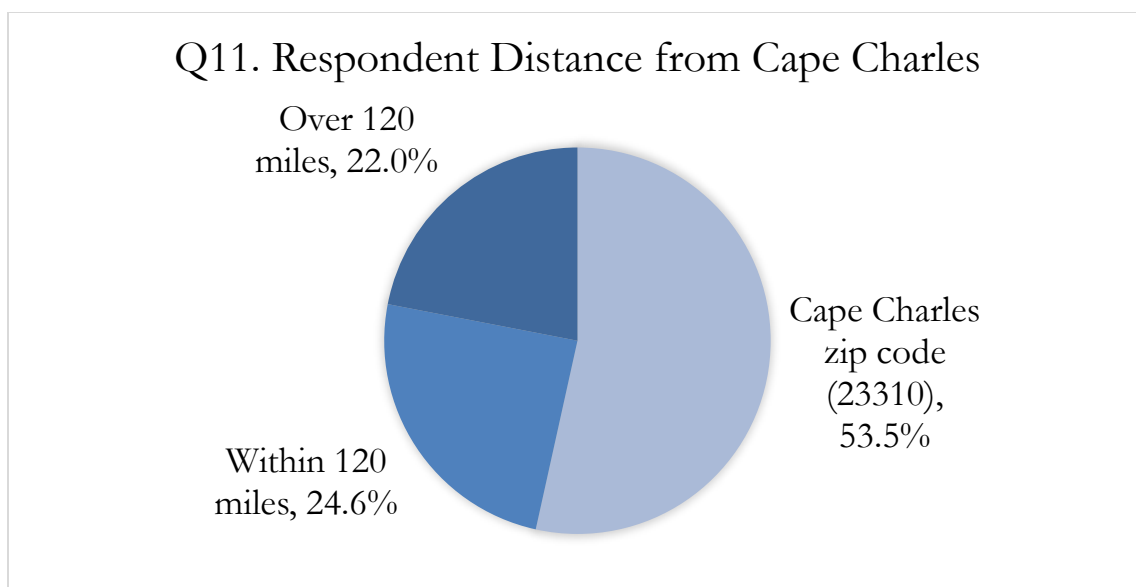


More variation in sentiment occurred for the various questions related to financing a fund to help lower-income residents comply with historic codes for renovations and repairs. Combining the responses “strongly agree” and “agree” for Q6 and Q7 only yielded totals of 31.5%, 27%. About half of the respondents (49.7%) were in agreement or strong agreement with Q8, which related to restricting development in the historic center.

We now turn to items Q9 through Q15. The first of these related to the level of education completed by the respondent. We found that an astounding 37% had obtained a Bachelor’s degree and an additional 49.6% had obtained an advanced or graduate degree. This is a very high number, given that only 11% of the Virginia population has a bachelor’s degree or better (U.S. Census). A further 10.6% had done some college work, and only 2.8% (corresponding to 10 respondents out of the 357 who answered this question) had only a high school or GED level of education.

A little over half of the respondents (52.9%) indicated female gender, with 47.1% indicating male gender. (For data on non-response and “other” answers, see Appendix C).

Figure 3: Zip Code Analysis





Survey item Q11 asked respondents for the “zip code of your primary residence,” and as Appendix C indicates, we obtained 346 usable responses. We calculated the distance between this answer and the zip code of Cape Charles, which is 23310.⁵ Just over half of respondents indicated CC was their primary residence, and a further quarter or so lived within about two hour’s drive of the town, but about 22% lived further than 120 miles away.

To confirm respondent location, each response came in an envelope, and many of these had an identifying postmark that generally was legible enough to infer the state through which the letter came. Analyzing the 339 readable postmarks showed that the vast majority (83.8%) were from Virginia, accounting for 284 responses. The other state postmarks were, in order, Maryland (16), Pennsylvania (13), Delaware (11), North Carolina (6), Florida (2), New Jersey (2), and Ohio (2). One envelope came from each of the following states: Connecticut, Nevada, and Wyoming.

The survey item (Q12) with the lowest response rate was age, but we still obtained 316 usable responses. The age demographic profile of the mailed survey was rather high. Almost a third (29.4%) of the respondents were in their 70s or older, with another third or so (33.9%) in their 60s. About 23.4% were in their fifties, and only 13.3% were younger than that. This reflects a substantial difference from the Facebook survey demographic, discussed further below, which corresponded to a younger population.

Survey item Q13 asked the respondent to choose all terms that apply relating to their ethnic identity. In this case, the sample skewed very White, indicated by about nine in ten respondents. Only 4% identified as Black, and Asian and Hispanic were indicated by 1.7% of the sample.

⁵ Each zip code was associated with a latitude and longitude using a freely available online directory (<http://federalgovernmentzipcodes.us/>). To assess distance between the Cape Charles zip code (23310) and that of the respondent, we used the Haversine formula, which adjusts for the curvature of the earth, and is described by:

$d_{lon} = lon2 - lon1$

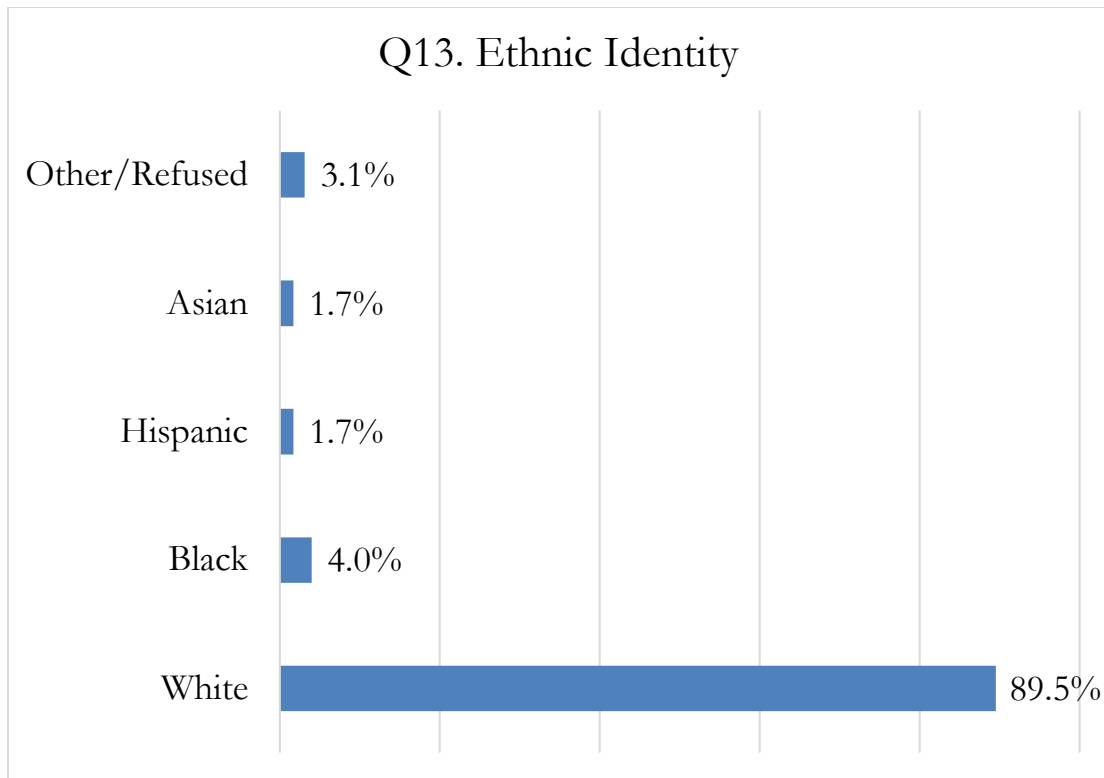
$d_{lat} = lat2 - lat1$

$a = (\sin(d_{lat}/2))^2 + \cos(lat1) * \cos(lat2) * (\sin(d_{lon}/2))^2$

$c = 2 * \text{atan2}(\sqrt{a}, \sqrt{1-a})$

$d = R * c$ (where R is the radius of the Earth).

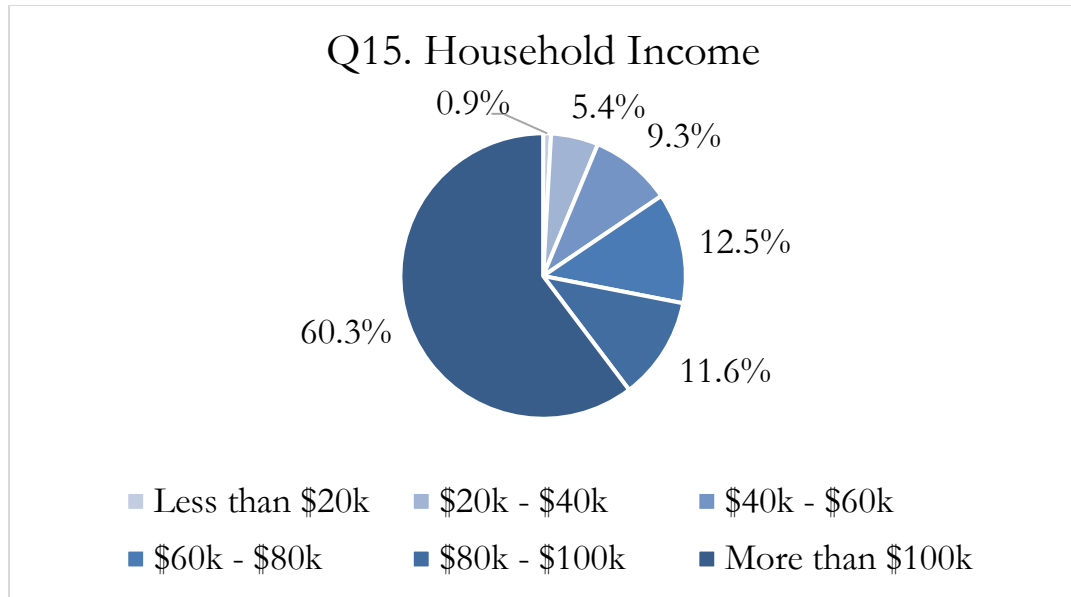
Figure 4: Low Racial Diversity of Sample



The final closed-end item (Q15) on the survey related to household income, with responses indicated in Figure 5 on the next page. Again, the respondent population was not representative of Virginia; the majority (60.3%) of the sample reported household incomes above \$100,000 per year. This compares to only about 35.8% of households at that income level based on 2018 U.S. Census data for the state of Virginia.

Overall, the “median” mailed survey respondent was a white female who lived in Cape Charles, had a high income and agreed that the historic charm of the town created value, and that it should be preserved both in terms of repairs as well as new construction. We will delve into these data much deeper in the regression analysis, below.

Figure 5: Respondents Reported Very High Incomes



B. In-Person Survey

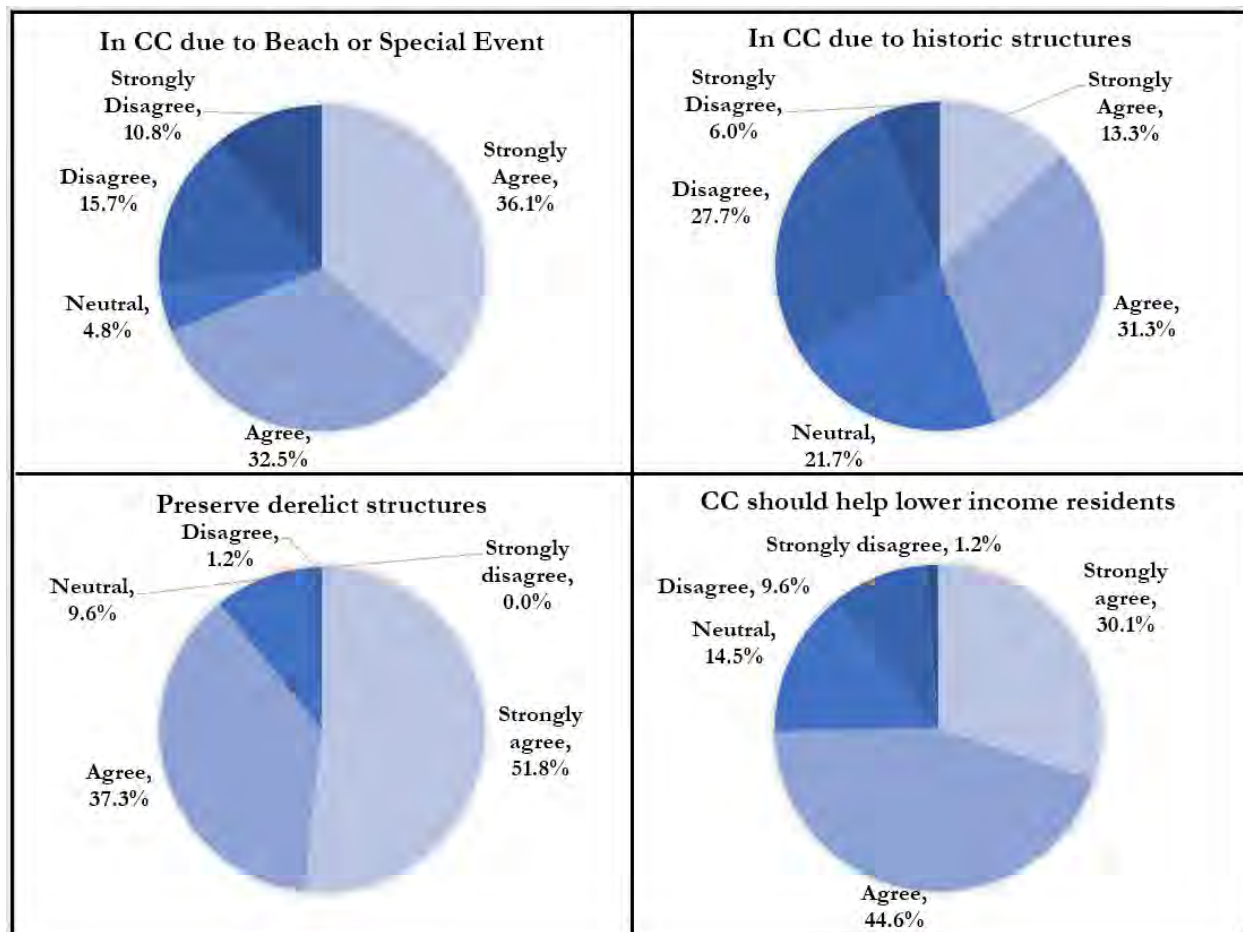
In contrast to the 15 items on the mailed survey, the in-person survey we conducted only contained 5 questions so as to limit the amount of survey fatigue (i.e., people ending the survey before it was over). Table 2 provides summary statistics for the Likert-style questions. Figure 6 provides a summary of the questions in the form of pie-chart graphics.

Table 2: Responses from In-Person Survey

Items from in-person survey	# of Responses	Average	1s	2s	3s	4s	5s
Q1. I am in Cape Charles primarily because of the beach or a special event.	83	3.67	9	13	4	27	30
Q2. I am in Cape Charles primarily because of the historic nature of the houses and other buildings.	83	3.18	5	23	18	26	11
Q3. Derelict historic buildings in Cape Charles should be repaired and renovated as opposed to torn down.	83	4.40	0	1	8	31	43
Q4. Cape Charles should help lower income residents to make historically accurate repairs to their homes.	83	3.93	1	8	12	37	25

As with the mailed-in survey, a value of 5 corresponded to “strongly agree” and a value of 1 corresponded to “strongly disagree,” so higher average scores indicate stronger agreement with the sentiment. Therefore, Table 2 shows that the survey item that received the highest agreement (score of 4.40) related to preservation of derelict structures. There was also a strong belief (3.93) that the town should, “help lower income residents to make historically accurate repairs to their homes.” The other two questions related to the reason the respondent was in CC. Many agreed (3.67) that they were in town for a special event, likely an evening concert given the dates on which the survey was conducted (August 24 and August 31). Fewer were in town due to the historic nature of the town’s buildings, which is not surprising given the zip code analysis, discussed next.

Figure 6: Likert-Style Responses from In-Person Survey

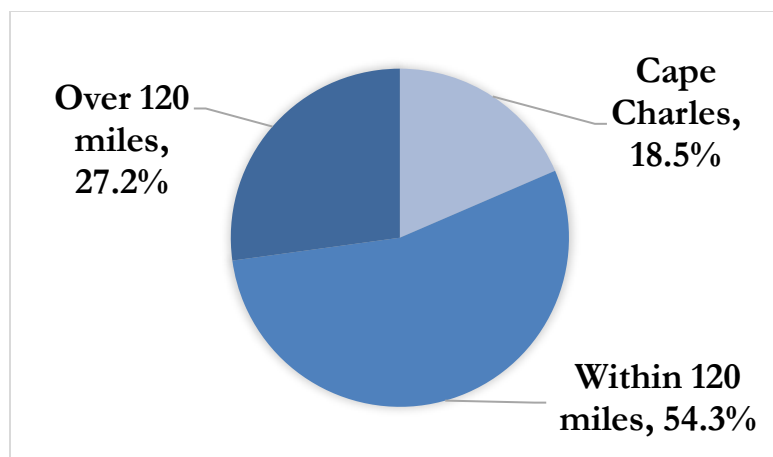




August, 2019 In-Person Survey Conducted in Central Park

In addition to the four Likert-style questions, we also collected data on respondent primary residence location (using zip code), and the survey administrator collected gender data. We found that, unlike the mailed survey, respondents were primarily from out of town, as fewer than one in five lived in CC. In terms of gender, the survey was evenly split between men (51%) and women (49%).

Figure 7: In-Person Survey Distance Using Zip Code



C. Facebook Survey

In the late fall of 2019, town authorities conducted an online survey using Facebook concerning public perceptions as part of the comprehensive plan initiative. That survey touched on a wide variety of issues; two questions, however, are relevant to the present study.

First of all, respondents were asked to assess the importance of several items related to preservation. (The question wording was, “Preservation - On a scale of 1 (little or no importance) to 5 (highest importance) please rate the following.”) The results are indicated in Table 3, which shows that the most agreement (highest score) was for preservation and enhancement of the public beach. The low number of observations for this item, however, calls into question the reliability of this finding. Two other items relevant to our study include the level of respondent support

Table 3: Ranking Preservation Goals

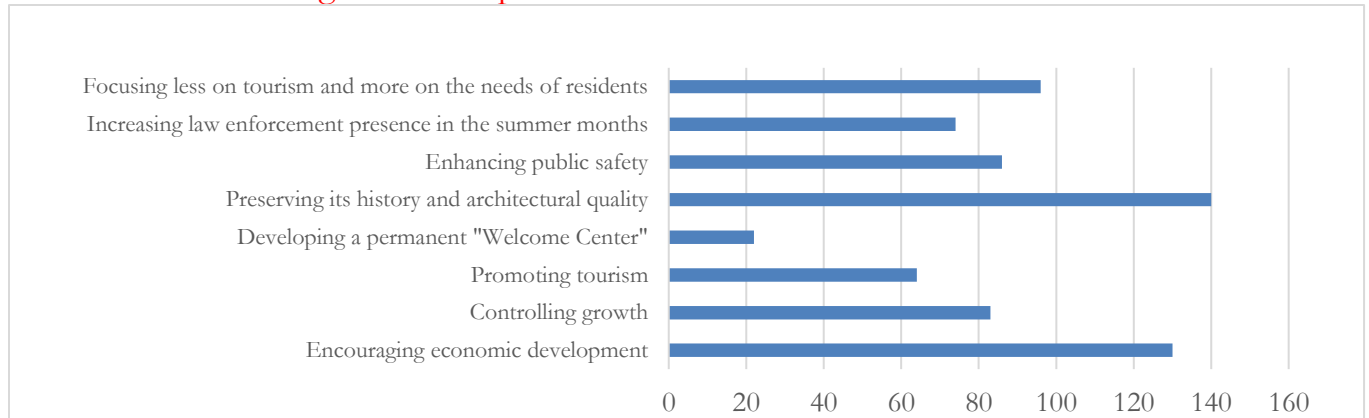
Items from CC Facebook survey	# of Responses	Average	1s	2s	3s	4s	5s
Preservation of the town's image as a "family centered" beach town community	214	4.35	8	4	28	40	134
Preservation of the town's image as a historic railroad town	213	3.39	24	25	59	54	51
Preservation and enhancement of the Historic District	211	4.18	8	9	29	57	108
Preservation and enhancement of the Town's Central Park	213	4.26	5	8	24	66	110
Preservation and enhancement of the Town's public beach	51	4.80	0	0	1	8	42
Preservation and enhancement of the Town's Welcome Center	211	3.41	19	19	75	53	45
Preservation and enhancement of the Town's deep-water harbor	212	4.34	5	10	21	48	128
Preservation and enhancement of the Town's retail center	213	4.20	4	7	32	69	101
Preservation and enhancement of the Town's open spaces	213	4.34	2	5	31	56	119

for the historic district (4.18) for the “town’s image as a historic railroad town” (3.39). As a reminder, any score above 3.0 constitutes agreement (on average across the sample). This means that survey respondents generally agreed with preserving and enhancing the historic district.

Second, respondents were asked to provide guidance on the comprehensive plan. The question was worded, “As it plans for the future, what should Cape Charles Comprehensive Plan focus on? Please only check your top 5 concerns).” Figure 8 provides results of these answers.

Again, preservation is revealed an important goal of the community since the answer with the most responses was, “Preserving its history and architectural quality” with 140 respondents indicating this as one of their top five goals for the comprehensive plan.

Figure 8: Comprehensive Plan should focus on:



III. Representativeness: Comparing the Surveys

Each of the survey techniques (mailed, in-person, Facebook) have their own strengths. The mailed survey had a very high response rate (about one-third, which is far in excess of the 5% or so standard response rate to mailed surveys). It also allowed a lengthy, detailed set of questions to be filled in at the leisure of the respondent. The in-person survey was very important for obtaining information from tourists and those who did not live in the town. The Facebook survey had the advantage of being publicly available to everyone, not just utility customers and not just those that happened to meet a survey administrator during the summer concert season. Taken as a whole, the three surveys took place during a long period, from late August through November. In this section of the study, we present data on the similarities and differences among the surveys in terms of respondent age, gender, and respondent location.

In terms of age, the Facebook survey used course age categories as opposed to the mailed-in survey which simply asked for the year the respondent was born. Nevertheless, we can infer that the Facebook respondents were younger on average, as indicated in Table 4. About one-quarter of the

online survey sample was younger than fifty, and only half were in their 60s or older. The majority of the mailed survey was in the oldest of the three age cohorts, but that group included only just under half of the Facebook respondents.

Table 4: Age of Respondents in Facebook vs. Mailed Survey

Age Cohort	Mailed Survey	Facebook Survey
60 +	63.29%	49.76%
50s	23.42%	24.64%
Younger than 50	13.29%	25.59%

In terms of gender, both the mailed and in-person surveys were more or less balanced. The Facebook survey did not contain an item related to gender. In the mailed survey, about 53% of the respondents were female, whereas in the in-person survey about 49% were female.

In terms of location, all three surveys collected these data so we can compare the samples of each. Most (79%) of the online respondents owned a home in CC, whereas only 40% live in CC full-time. Another fifth (21%) live in CC part-time. This means that about 40% of the respondents were tourists or others who did not live in CC. The mailed survey also reflected geographic diversity. As reported above, when asked for the zip code of their primary residence, a little over half provided the CC zip code (23310), about a quarter provided a zip code within two hours drive or so, and the remaining 22% provided a zip code further than 120 miles from town. Zip codes from the in-person survey were more likely to be from outside of CC. Less than one fifth lived in town, over half lived within two hours, and a little over one quarter (27%) lived further away than that.



IV. Statistical Analysis

In this section, we employ statistical analysis of the data we have gathered, in order to provide deeper perspectives into how the three fundamental constituencies of the public think about the three lines of inquiry introduced at the start of the study. As a reminder, they can be briefly summarized as: beach vs. history, history is valuable, how to pay for preservation? The three distance-based constituencies were: fully local, somewhat local, far away.

A. Analysis of In-Person Survey Data

This section assumes a basic knowledge of statistics, including correlation, p-values, and multiple regression analysis. We will summarize the findings below for readers who are less familiar with these methods.

We compared three survey items (Q1—here because of the beach, Q2—CC should preserve derelict buildings, Q3—CC should help pay for lower income preservation) to the distance information embedded in the zip code of the respondent’s primary residence. We found four relationships that were statistically significant.

The first significant finding was that people who thought CC should help lower income households were also more likely to believe that CC should preserve derelict structures. This might reflect a fundamental view of society being important vis-à-vis a more individualistic ethos. Second, we found that the three location categories (local [zipcode is 23310], near [within 120 miles], far [more than 120 miles]) were related to some of the opinion items. Compared to “near” and “far” groups, locals were less likely to support the idea that CC should preserve historic structures and they were also less likely to believe that CC should help lower income households repair them. In addition, we found that respondents in the “near” category (within 120 miles) were more likely to

support the idea that CC should help lower-income residents with historic preservation costs compared to those in the “local” or “far” categories.

B. Analysis of Mailed Survey Data

For this section of the report, we analyzed the relationships between the Likert-style opinion data obtained in the first part of the survey against the demographic information obtained in the second half of the survey.

In terms of raw correlations between variables, we found quite a few that had statistical significance. Unsurprisingly, Q1 (primarily a beach) was negatively correlated with Q2 (primarily historic). Other findings were more interesting, such as the fact that emphasis on CC as a beach community was negatively correlated with almost every other Likert-style opinion, including Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, and Q8. These findings were highly statistically significant, with p-values ranging from less than 1% to about 4%, considered strong enough to be published in good-quality academic journals. Clearly, people who more highly valued the beach were less likely than others to value historic preservation. In terms of questions Q3 (charm drives value), Q4 (new construction), and Q5 (repairs), many people agreed with most of these statements. The third item of inquiry—how to pay for preservation—was the most interesting, and was encapsulated in Q6 (endowed fund) and Q7 (fees).

Among the demographic variables (Q9 – Q15), we found that females generally had lower education and lower income, which is not surprising given that educational and professional opportunities were limited for women during the decades in which many older Cape Charles residents would have been in their peak earning or learning years. We also found that incomes of people who indicated CC was their primary residence were somewhat lower compared to people who provided a primary residence outside of the town. This could be driven by the fact that very

wealthy respondents had additional properties outside of town, and therefore reported a primary residence outside of CC.

We performed some multiple regression analysis⁶ on the Likert-scale opinion items, to determine if any demographic values (age, education) were associated with the strength of various opinions. Results are in Table 5. Given there was substantial agreement on items Q3 (repairs), Q4 (new construction), and Q5 (charm drives value), we do not report full regression results for estimations using these as dependent variables. One consistent finding was that women expressed stronger agreement with Q5, whereby they associated historic charm with pecuniary property value.

A number of results reported in Table 5 reflected statistically significant relationships. The strongest evidence is indicated by three stars, which happens three times on the table. More highly educated respondents (those with a graduate degree) were *significantly less likely* to believe that CC is primarily a beach community. This is controlling for gender, domicile, income level, and age. Women were *more likely* to believe that CC is “primarily a historic town that also has a beach.” Finally, respondents with a household income of \$100,000 or more were less likely to agree that the town should establish an endowment to support preservation. This finding is interesting because people in this income group are not less likely than others to agree that the charming, historic nature of homes in CC contributes to property values.

Some other relationships were less strong, but still statistically significant (indicated by either ** or * on the table). Respondents from high income households and who were older were less likely to agree that CC is primarily a beach community. Older respondents also were more likely to agree the town is primarily historic in nature. High educational achievement also is associated with a

⁶ Given that the dependent variables were categorical, taking the values of 1 through 5, we began by estimating negative binomial models. But the STATA software package we were using was not able to resolve an issue relating to concavity, so we report here results from ordinary least squares estimation. It goes beyond the scope of this report to investigate this issue further, but we hope to do so in the future in a more detailed statistical analysis of the data.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Results

The table reports coefficients and T-values (in parentheses) for OLS regressions using categorical variables Q1, Q2, Q6, Q7, and Q8 taking the value of “1” for strong disagreement and “5” for strong agreement. Independent variables were dummies for graduate degree, female, local domicile, nearby domicile, and high income. Age was calculated as 2019 minus year born.

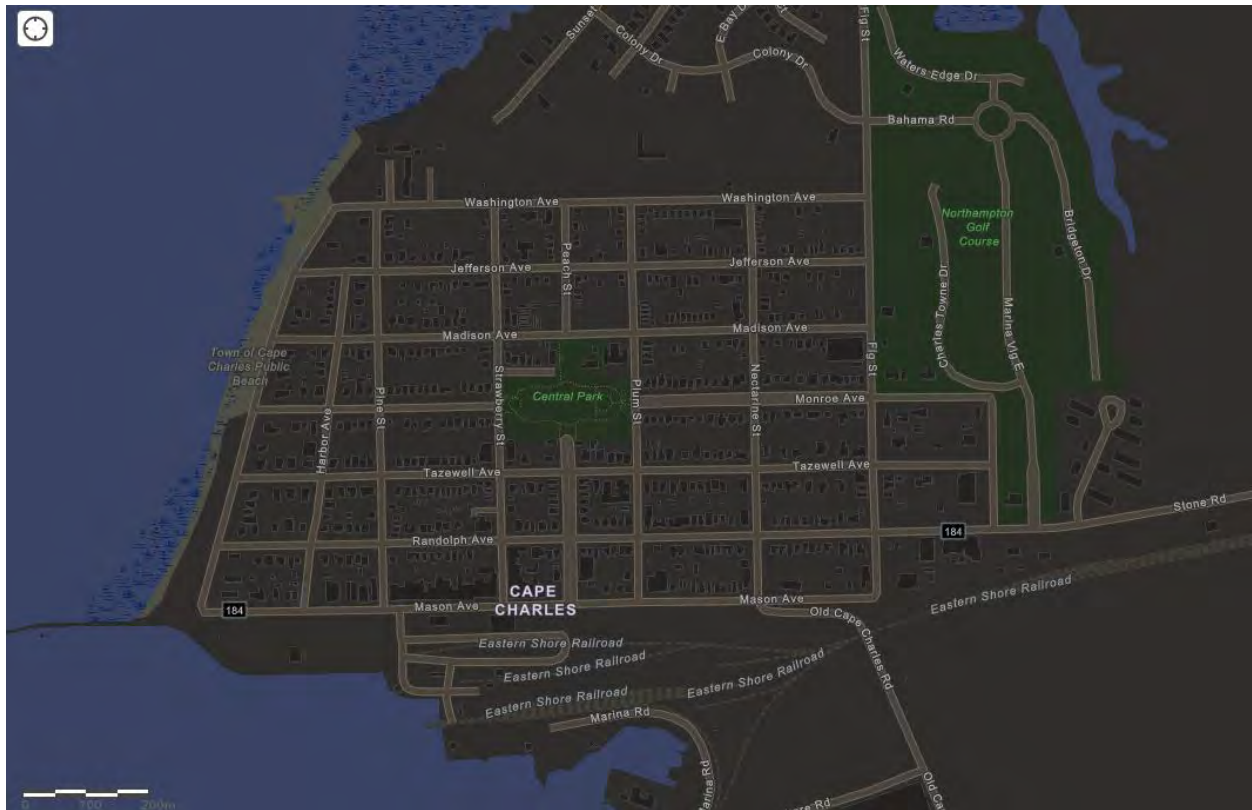
Dependent Variable:	Q1	Q2	Q6	Q7	Q8
Highly Educated (Grad degree = 1)	-0.46*** (-2.84)	0.22 [†] (1.50)	0.34** (2.10)	0.16 (0.92)	0.01 (0.05)
Female (=1)	-0.24 [†] (-1.48)	0.55*** (3.64)	0.15 (0.94)	-0.07 (-0.43)	0.33* (1.58)
Local (Zip 23310 = 1)	-0.05 (-0.12)	-0.06 (-0.18)	-0.18 (-0.47)	-0.66 [†] (-1.61)	-0.43 (-1.05)
Near (Zip within 120 miles = 1)	-0.08 (-0.21)	0.13 (0.37)	-0.01 (-0.98)	-0.643 [†] (-1.56)	-0.06 (-0.14)
High income (>\$100k = 1)	-0.30* (-1.66)	-0.01 (-0.03)	-0.55*** (-3.06)	-0.33* (-1.70)	0.15 (0.76)
Age	-0.02** (-2.48)	0.01* (1.85)	-0.002 (-0.39)	0.002 (0.32)	0.002 (0.26)
Obs.	267	268	272	270	270
R ²	6.43%	6.85%	5.34%	2.51%	3.54%
F-Test	2.98***	3.20***	2.49*	1.13	1.61 [†]

Note: T-statistics in parentheses. Levels of significance at the 1%, 5%, 10%, and 15% levels are denoted by ***, **, *, and [†], respectively

stronger belief in a fund to help low income households make repairs. Higher income respondents were less likely than others to support fees levied against guideline violations. Women were more likely to agree that new development should be restricted in the historic core of CC.

Finally, a few relationships are worth noting, but at only a 15% level of significance (denoted by a [†] on the table); they are more tenuous. There was some evidence that more educated respondents believed that CC is primarily a historic town. Compared with the few respondents that reported primary residence zip codes more than 120 miles from CC, those in and near the town were less likely to support establishment of an endowment for repairs in lower income households.

There were only a small number (15) of such respondents, and perhaps they were of very high incomes so that they did not feel they would notice a burden of higher fees.



V. Summary, Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The study opened with a discussion of three different areas of inquiry and three different constituencies. In this final section of the report, we provide an overview of our central findings, and make some policy suggestions.

A. Summary of Major Findings

We summarize our findings in Figure 9 on the next page, which presents a matrix of overall opinions as well as how different groups varied along the three key research questions. Overall, there was strong support for the historic character of the town, and highly educated respondents and women were even more likely to agree this was even more important than the beach. In addition, there was strong general agreement that the historic look and feel of structures in the community was important and created value. The comments left by respondents to the various surveys also generally supported the historical nature of the town and believed it was valuable, in either a pecuniary or nonpecuniary sense.

The third research issue, however, exhibited the least level of agreement. Highly respondents were more likely to favor the creation of an endowment or fund to help support historically accurate repairs for lower income residents (survey item Q6), but respondents with higher incomes did not agree. The subset of 110 mailed survey respondents with both high incomes and graduate degrees, there was almost evenly split on item Q6, with an average score of 2.95, slightly higher than the score of 2.86 for those who had one or none of these characteristics.

Figure 9: Summary Matrix
Policy-Relevant Opinions Regarding Historic Preservation in CC

<i>Lines of inquiry →</i> <u><i>Constituencies</i></u>	<i>Fundamental character of town: beach or history?</i>	<i>Does the town's historic charm create economic value?</i>	<i>How should we attract resources to preserve integrity of the built environment?</i>
<i>Beliefs and findings common to all constituencies</i>	More agreement that the town is primarily historic than a beach community, especially highly educated and women	High levels of agreement that charm creates value, and that both new construction and repairs and renovations should preserve it	Differing opinions, with highly educated more likely to support a fund to help low income homeowners make historically accurate renovations; higher income less likely to agree with this.
<i>Constituency #1: Primary residence located in CC zip code</i>	On average, agreed history was more important than beach	On average, agree that town's charm enhances property values	Complicated and difficult to summarize; disagreement on how best to do this
<i>Constituency #2: Live within 120 miles of CC</i>	Neither more or less likely to value the beach over the historic nature of the town.	Somewhat tenuous evidence this group is <i>more</i> likely to believe charm creates value, even compared to the other two groups	Highest average belief that derelict structures should be repaired and renovated, based on in-person survey
<i>Constituency #3: Economic relationship with town (e.g., tourists)</i>	Tourists queried in the in-person surveys generally believed in the importance of the beach, for obvious reasons. Yet non-locals were <i>more likely</i> than locals to feel that derelict structures should be repaired rather than torn down.	Even more likely than other two groups to believe that derelict structures should be repaired, consistent with the belief that preservation creates value.	Strong belief that the town should help low-income residents with historically accurate repairs.



B. Policy Recommendations

We were engaged to help the town understand public opinion about historic preservation in Cape Charles as an important first step in creating a new preservation plan. Of course, the overall public—and various constituencies within it—will have different notions and opinions about values and general ideas relating to preservation. It would not have been meaningful to ask, for example, detailed questions about construction approval processes or specific architectural features that will form an integral part of any historical preservation plan, zoning ordinance, or guidelines.

Our recommendations for an updated historic preservation plan are forward-looking, and take into account the current situation as well as likely future developments. The public strongly agreed that preservation was important, so our first recommendation is for the town's policymakers to take these sentiments seriously. One interesting comment from a resident was that the town would not have survived its economic downturn a few decades ago had not the historic nature of the town drawn newcomers.

Second, the town is about to be built out, with fewer and fewer vacant lots. More pressure will likely be applied to allow auxiliary dwelling units, and the existing desire for more workforce housing might accelerate. Therefore, another policy recommendation we have is to allow these sorts of changes, but to apply, for example, form-based codes that guide the overall appearance of structures but do not dictate how they can be used by property owners or residents. On this front, it will be difficult to balance the advantages that come from the removal of property rights restrictions against the desires of some current homeowners to promote long-term residents as opposed to vacationers.

Finally, we suggest that the town engage in a process of education that will help both business owners and residents understand any new guidelines, and help them take advantage of any subsidies or tax credits that might be helpful. Given the differences of opinion about the best

methods to subsidize and support repairs that preserve the look and feel of households with lower incomes, we would suggest further study on this front, and perhaps the creation of a blue ribbon panel or ad hoc advisory committee consisting of community leaders, contractors, potential donors, fundraisers, and lower income residents.

Cape Charles possesses a valuable, historic built environment. Although certain controversies have developed regarding some processes associated with the historic review system, the town has a deep well of highly educated, sophisticated, and experienced residents that we feel will continue to guide the development of the town toward policies that will preserve and protect this important legacy.

Appendix A: Comments from Phase 1 Meetings and Surveys

To obtain public perceptions that would inform the questions and wording for the mailed and in-person surveys, we conducted a number of charettes or public input sessions during the spring of 2019. We produce here the comments that were made, per notes taken at the meetings.

1. General public Meeting on 4 March, 2019

On this date, Dr. Sheri Shuck presented a PowerPoint lecture with a number of questions designed to motivate discussion about historic preservation. A summary of that meeting is located as Figure A-1.

2. Qualtrics Online Follow-Up Survey from 4 March, 2019 meeting

Each attendee of the March 4 meeting that provided an email address received a follow-up survey via email. The responses to the questions were as indicated in Table A-1. For this meeting⁷ we conducted a paper survey, as well as an online follow-up, each of which are reported below. Ten questions were posed to the respondents, along with two Likert-scale questions with responses located in Table A-1.

3. Joint Meeting on 7 May, 2019: CC Planning Commission and Historic District Review Board

During this meeting, we gathered information in two ways. We distributed paper copies of a brief survey with results indicated in Table A-2. We also took notes on a 2-foot-by-3-foot pad of easel-mounted paper. The comments are contained in Table A-3. These comments were very helpful in motivating the surveys we conducted in the second half of 2019. Comments indicated in red from Table A-3 were directly used to motivate survey items in the mailed survey and the in-person survey conducted in the second half of 2019.

⁷ Available at: <https://capecharles.municipalcms.com/files/documents/HistoricDistrictReviewBoardMinutes05-07-19121008062619PM1701.pdf>

Figure A-1: Summary of March 4 Meeting

Notes from March 4, 2019 Cape Charles open meeting

The meeting began with the presentation from Dr. Shuck, after a kind introduction from Mr. Zach Ponds. The following description follows somewhat from the formal content Dr. Shuck's presentation, but the major focus of taking notes was to capture voices from the various community members in attendance (see photos at end of the document for a visual impression of the attendees.)

Dr. Shuck mentioned that “restoration” is distinct from “rehabilitation” which is in turn distinct from adaptive use. An example of restoration would be to tear off aluminum siding, or replace a second floor or to jack a house up so its elevation increases. Rehabilitation involves adaptive use, including modern plumbing, kitchen appliances, a focus on energy efficiency and HVAC installation. Adaptive use was pioneered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act—purists dislike this. “Preservation” is an approach that would not include modern plumbing, for example.

What motivates preservation? One reason is that historic buildings become an asset to the community, similar to the role played by the beach and the harbor. Nostalgia is another motivation; people value authenticity (as opposed to a reproduction). This goes beyond just physical structures, and could include trying to preserve the tree scape or to improve the beach.

Many comments were made by participants in the meeting, with a free-flowing discussion that took place after the end of Dr. Shuck's prepared remarks. Someone mentioned that there used to be more civic activity around the historical legacy of the town. For example, there was once an annual event similar to Richmond's Bellevue Garden Walk. On a given Sunday in April, people would be able to tour homes—just for the community, it wasn't advertised to the general public. Also, there was once more participation in the Virginia state garden tour.

According to a recent real estate market study, about 1/3 of historic homes are owned today by people who don't live here. About 486 homes are not owner-occupied.

There was discussion about the essential nature of Cape Charles—is it a historic district with a beach, or a beach town with a set of historic buildings? The story in broad strokes is that when the railroad went away, the town fell into disrepair. Dr. Hall (also of the Public History Center at CNU) raised the question of trying to find similar towns elsewhere that could help act as a blueprint for a Cape Charles preservation plan. One knowledgeable member of the audience suggested Cape May of New Jersey might be a good comparison.

Dr. Shuck mentioned that one idea going forward would be a biographical approach to telling the history of select houses, using archives and oral history.

Some other issues that were discussed included motivating people to take history more seriously through education about zoning. Cape Charles was characterized as being “income separated” with some wealthy people, but others who were more resource-constrained. Similarly, some structures were not built solidly, and often are torn down. Historical restoration is expensive, and not every aspect of the built environment will be able to attract investors and/or warrant careful preservation.

Some in the room lamented the fact that some old structures have been torn down that could easily be saved. For example, the beautiful Mansard Hotel and a grocery store with doors that opened at an angle to the street have been lost. Every department in the town might not have the full picture or be on the same page when it comes, for example, to misaligned incentives—people who are focused on engineering might be tempted to declare a building unsafe even if it could be saved with proper resources, but if there is a lack of historical appreciation, it might be difficult to balance safety against history. Town Manager Larry DiRe mentioned that 38 structures have been demolished since 2002, and that two more are in imminent danger (see photos at the end of this document). One person mentioned the well-known preservation cases related to Grand Central Station and Madison Square Gardens. Even in Cape Charles, property owners must comply with preservation guidelines.

A brochure with a walking tour of Cape Charles was mentioned as well. One person raised the issue as to how extensive should historic protections be—should someone have to apply for a permit to paint their house a certain color, for example? Sometimes it is hard to get people to agree. The Rosenwald School is not in the historic district, but there was talk of preserving it for some community-centered adaptive use. There was discussion about the extent of the “overlay” and it was mentioned that some houses are certified and some are not. People also discussed the idea of keeping the grid-based circulation pattern of traffic. A review of the Harbor district was also mentioned as something to be planned in the future. Also, the 40 acres that used to be the railroad—the community needs to think hard about this.

Finally, someone mentioned that the preservation plan should be a reminder to ourselves (the people of the Cape Charles area), of where we came from AND also serve to educate newcomers.



Table A-1: Qualtrics Follow-Up Survey from March 4 Meeting

Survey Item	Responses
Thank you for attending the meeting on March 4. We would like to follow it up by offering a chance for you to weigh in regarding several issues that were discussed. The first question is: How did you hear about the meeting?	Cape Charles morning news - computer
	Council meeting and town newsletter/Facebook
	email from the Town staff
	From the Town
	Gazette, Cape Charles Happenings, Mirror
	HRB board
	I did not hear about the meeting. Had I heard, I would have been present.
	I did not.
	I happen to go on the town website and opened an agenda for the regular town council meeting and saw this was the agenda.
	I never heard about the meeting, unfortunately.
	Internet
	local newsletter
	Neighbor
	Never did
	Out of town, did not attend meeting
	This is my second pass at this survey so I shouldn't be counted as an extra individual. See below for comments.
	Through the Town Planner & Town Manager.
	Town email
	word of mouth
What did you expect from the meeting, and did it meet or exceed your expectations?	could not be there preserving the way of life- including the buildings
	A bunch of 80-year-old people that can't handle change/of course not.
	Came into meeting without any expectations since agenda/content was not known. Expected to hear more about plans/steps for updating the preservation plan.
	direction on how to set a vision and develop a strategy
	Expected on overview on the preservation process and possible next steps as it pertains to Cape Charles. The meeting totally met my expectations.
	Hoped to hear a plan for protecting historic resources
	I expected that we would discuss our Town's existing Preservation Plan and next steps to updating it; however, I was very glad to see that we started with a basic preservation primer! So, in that way, my expectations were exceeded.
	I had hoped to learn about the various types of buildings in Town and how they contribute to the Historic District
	It certainly met my expectations
	It exceeded my expectations. I expected to be told what had already been decided.
	More history of Cape Charles historic buildings
	n/a
	n/a
	NA
	necessary steps to move forward - information was well presented but folks were looking for action steps
What do you think are the main elements that should be included in the updated historic preservation plan for Cape Charles?	All you have to do is look at the dilapidated buildings around Mason Ave. and on the way to Bay Creek and you have all the history you need.
	exterior preservation of existing structures, new structures fitting into existing design, out buildings fitting into the design of structures on the property.
	Historical preservation of the existing homes. Cape Charles is in the process of becoming Disney-fied. Bright houses, expanded to more floors, residences over garages. Brick buildings downtown that have none of the original character!
	I sincerely hope we stop "demolition by neglect." I would like to see all the contributing homes remain and not be demolished. Hopefully the plan could help homeowners determine the age and historic significance of their home, appropriate ways to improve existing structures, appropriate paint colors and painting guidelines, and appropriate materials. It should also

	contain information on how to obtain financing for such renovations (if available). The Town should offer some sort of recognition or reward for appropriate improvements.
	it should be more prescriptive and reduce chances for the review board to have to make subjective decisions.
	More respect and cooperation by the Town for the Historic District Review Board
	not sure, but at least: 1) a narrative of what makes Cape Charles worth preserving (culture/architecture/use); 2) a survey of the historic district (to identify the contributing historic assets); 3) a short section that would describe the preservation efforts (successes and possible failures) since the first plan was adopted; and 4) next steps for implementing a plan for the future.
	Not to expand the plan to include the harbor area but to keep it focused on what is now considered the historic part of town. Making a distinction between truly historic structures vs. others, including new construction, and not holding the same standards for all within the boundary. Ultimately being very clear as to what those standards are that eventually get adopted into ordinance space and not in 'guideline' space.
	Original windows and siding have a clear directive
	preserve all time periods in the life of the town
	Protect historic commercial buildings (one was recently torn down); remove vinyl siding from approved use; preserve viewsheds
	Railroad elements. Tourist train.
	Requirements to maintain our historic designation, how we are performing vs requirements, training plan for historic review board to ensure that they understand requirements, plan for minimum historic standards for home restorations, penalties for non-compliance.
	The 1996 Plan has the requisite detail. The updated plan should follow similar main elements but also tie in with the Historic District Guidelines and be in consonance with the 2016 Comp Plan.
	The largest problem is the Historic District Review Board does not follow the guidelines as stated. They continually allow items to be approved that are beyond the guidelines. The individual "neighborhoods" in Cape Charles are now a mishmash of architectural design. The history of "Jersey Town" has not been preserved.
	To preserve the historic flavor of the town and the small town feel of the community.
	We need broader plan of development especially the harbor area. I now there is one but no one knows what it is.
Do you have any opinions about the two historical structures that were identified by Town Manager Larry DiRe as being under imminent threat of demolition? How might the town act to preserve them, and other buildings that might face this issue in the future?	try to find interested buys
	crowdfund basic repairs to make safe then charge the owners; do not let owners continue to earn increased prices of land that held demolished buildings (why should they profit???)
	I am not aware of these two buildings.
	I don't know what buildings are being referenced. Again, we are not preserving, except when high income folks come into town and turn a house into a luxury rental property or second home.
	I think the Town should follow Sec. 8.21 of the historic district overlay in the Zoning Ordinance to analyze each structure under threat.
	I think there should be a lot of public exposure if a building is being considered for demo. Plenty of lead time to see if support can be generated for preservation. And more experts in Volvo's in the decision such as engineers and preservation experts.
	I was not at the meeting
	I wasn't able to attend the meeting so am unaware of which buildings these are. I'm not sure of the legal ramifications, but if it's possible to legally force the owner to stabilize the building or force the sale of it to have it restored.
	local, state and federal funding
	no opinion on the two structures - I expect there are good models and best practices that can be studied
	no.
	Not sure I even know what they are.
	Possibly reach out to the owners and work with them to make restorations happen.

	They should not be demolished The Town should work with the owners as much as possible. The decision to demolish any structure should be carefully considered by both the Town Manager and a designated group. The designated group should be composed of people who have an understanding of construction and renovation. Hopefully there would be certified contractors, architects, a historian or other highly qualified people. The people who make this decision should be committed to preservation and strategic thinkers... they should be people who can "think out of the box" to find ways to fix, repair, maintain, finance, etc. I also think the Town should highlight structures that have been renovated appropriately.... perhaps a picture of the structure before and after
	The town should not expend taxpayer money to preserve historic structures without the ability to recover the money. A structural engineer should determine the ability to determine the feasibility of retaining the exterior and costs associated with this. This should only be applicable to the main historical structures within the overlay district and not all homes. The 50% demolition criteria should be looked at to see if this needs to be more specific in detail, interior and/or exterior. Right now, it is very subjective in nature. Separate in ordinance space truly historic buildings from all homes in the historic district.
In general, how can/should Cape Charles best balance the rights of property owners to have autonomy over decisions that impact the value of the real estate they own, but at the same time protect the heritage and historical legacies that provide value for home owners and the community at large?	1. Better communication that people who buy in or live in a national historic district with the zoning overlay will have additional requirements to meet. 2) Recognition that the contemporary use of historic structures and materials must be included - balance purist preservation with useful and complementary rehabilitation.
	A clear strong Preservation Plan that is BACKED by ordinances should be available on the front page of the town website. And every house that sells in the historic district should have it disclosed in the listing that there is the preservation Plan is
	buyers of historic buildings should be informed before purchase of the limitations on changing historic structures--if they don't like them, they should not purchase the property
	By having both parties (resident & town) work together to maintain the integrity established within the ordinances & guidelines of the town.
	Could the town guarantee low-interest loans for repairs for needy homeowners? or negotiate discount rates with contractors for town approved projects for needy homeowners (like basic roof repairs or painting) to preserve the homes?
	develop a clear set of guidelines, communicate it clearly and enforce it consistently
	Have a clear directive on what is considered important to save when doing renovations. Also maybe consider fines for work being completed without review like replacing siding with vinyl
	I feel there are things that can be done to a structure that enhance it that are within the scope of historical accuracy that are not original to the structure and that some leeway should be given for the tastes and sensibilities of the home or land owner. There are a variety of architectural styles represented in town and from reading the historic review board guidelines, I have the impression some are not included in the current wording of the guidelines even though the structures are now 60 years old or more. These property owners have the rights to do anything they want and their next-door neighbors have guidelines to follow. This doesn't seem right to me. Also, in my humble opinion, new houses being built should follow some design guidelines so that they better fit the flavor of the town. I will express a very personal opinion here. I was extremely disappointed in the changes and expansion of the newer home near the corner of Mason Ave and Bay. It looks as big as a hotel and although not unattractive, in my humble opinion, is totally inappropriate to the architecture both surrounding it and the town. If there were guidelines governing this expansion, I believe this would not have been done.
	In the past there have been people who did what they wanted instead of asking permission (or sometimes when permission was denied) they did what was convenient or cheapest. If the Town or the Review Board denies appropriateness, their decision should stand. People or businesses who flagrantly ignore guidelines should pay the consequences. We are a small Town. Surely there are people who work for the Town who can notice when builders are doing unapproved work.
	Other towns have restrictions on development of historic districts. Find a model that AT LEAST maintains the external historical structure.

	Property owners should be made aware when they come in that the area is designated as an Historical site and should be made aware, they must follow guidelines. There are many other properties outside of the Historic District that can be developed.
	Separate the truly historic structures from all others. Internal decisions are up to the home owner. Look at functionality issues such as chimneys, no longer used and yet when people try to renovate, the HDRB at times prohibits removal. Sometimes in front of the house and sometimes in the rear where people can't even see them. Removal of non-functional chimneys opens up floor space.
	The value of the real estate in the historic district is dependent on the integrity of the historic district in total. Town should study other historic districts that do this well - old town Alexandria, Mount Vernon or Bolton Hill in Baltimore, Capitol Hill on DC. Historic preservation typically increases real estate value and property owners chose to own property in an historic district, so the rights of the individual cannot be the priority.
	They have their work cut out for them.
	they must follow the rules as set forth by the town, historical review board and zoning. If you bought an old home then you need to be willing to play by the rules.
	We need a fair and knowledgeable Historic committee.
What are the most important architectural aspects of the existing historical structures that you think should be preserved, in terms of exterior design or other elements?	Everything seen by a pedestrian as they walk by, usually the front & side elevations 3/4 to the rear. Front porches, including turned spindle railings, and tongue & groove porch floors that run perpendicular to the front elevation. Sadly, much new construction is just pressure treating decking with wide boards run parallel to the front elevation, including deck railings with square pressure treated or vinyl sheathed spindles. Chimneys should not be allowed to be knocked down.
	Exterior design. Street scape.
	Exteriors should maintain their look, new structures should have a look to blend in their neighborhood
	Facades & historical aspects setting the house apart.
	Facades, materials to the greatest extent practical, on homes - non enclosed porches, roof lines, window sizes and placement
	hmmmm.
	I feel that the original architectural style of a structure should be maintained, but details like shutters and the removal of nonfunctional chimneys should be more loosely examined. I'm somewhat afraid that if too many restrictions are placed on property owners, there will be no progress made in the town. That's not to say that a building of a 21st century ultra modern steel and glass structure should be allowed. But adding a french door or shutters to an existing building should have a more relaxed set of rules.
	I think there is an open question between preserving vs establishing a common 'tone' for the town that needs to be resolved first
	open porches, Victorian trims, height differences in commercial district, 40-ft height limitation, small buildings in residential areas, low density, varieties of colors, open viewsheds
	Porches, windows and exterior details such as siding (at least the same profile even if replacing) and trim details
	Porches, changes to the front appearance, changes to materials because they cannot be obtained, too costly, etc.
	porches, chimneys, window openings & Front doors
	Preserve the turn of the century look
	Same size and outside features. A house in the 200 block of Harbor has gone from a 2-bedroom cottage to a 4-bedroom 3-story home, all approved by Historical Review committee.
	This should not be a survey question - this is a question for experts like National Historic Trust. Preservation is not a consensus driven exercise.
	Window sizes/mullions, porches, placement of the building on the site (traditionally all lined up), screened in front porches should be banned as they are not historically correct. Guidelines on removal of chimneys and the appropriate siding should be followed.
	Windows, Porches, shutters, roof lines, height limitations to additions or additional floors. Setbacks must be preserved.
	Woodwork

A possible example of a "peer" or "aspirant" community that was mentioned in the meeting is Cape May in New Jersey. Can you think of other examples we might draw upon as we work together with the community to draft the preservation plan?	Cape and Cape May are quite different. Saugatuck, Michigan and Jamestown, Rhode Island may be better fits
	Cape May is a good one. Old Town Alexandria; Mount Vernon, Bolton Hill, Federal Hill in Baltimore; Capitol Hill or Georgetown in DC.
	Culpepper Virginia
	Edenton NC??
	Georgetown, VA?
	Gloucester, Berlin, Spring Lake, NJ; Franklin, TN
	I'm not sure at this point.
	no.
	Savannah
	Smithfield, VA
	Sorry no.
	St. Michael's
Do you have any other comments, suggestions, or points of view that would help the CNU Public History Center as it drafts the preservation plan for Cape Charles?	Cape Charles' history is based on the railroad and ferry industries but we do not celebrate that heritage. More family-oriented activities and exhibits would provide additional reasons for visiting
	Cape Charles needs a lot of work.
	Having lived in other historic districts, I've been really disappointed that this topic is not taken seriously here. So many homes in town have been stripped of their character. If Town does not develop some expertise on this topic, more of our historic charm will be lost each day. A big and simple example - vinyl windows are not allowed on the front of homes in historic districts. Original windows are prized in other historic communities - they can be restored and re-glazed. Vinyl windows are not more energy efficient and windows are not even the primary source of heat loss in an historic home. And the builder grade front doors going on homes throughout the historic district are like black eyes.
	Lay out the steps expected to be taken and targeted timeline so as to get. Understand that the input received will primarily be from people living in the historic district. When discussing use of town funds for preservation, we have a population that includes Bay Creek, etc. They, along with our-of-town home owners, may have a different perspective about spending town money on a section of town they do not live in.
	no
	None
	Northampton County desperately needs worker housing, which can be put on the east end of the newly vacated railroad property and have taller structures since they will not impinge on historic viewsheds
	not at this time.
	Not right now.
	Owners should be allowed to paint their houses whatever color they want, but exterior alterations to walls, windows, and porches should be reviewed.
	Pictures speak a thousand words.... Pictures of examples of appropriate historic renovations in the Town would allow people to see the benefits
	Preserve the black history of the town particularly on the North side
	The most important component of a plan that will ACTUALLY PRESERVE both the historic and new building in Cape Charles is a comprehensive Resilience Plan to mitigate the effects of sea level rise and increasingly violent storms. The beach dunes are frequently cut down to 8.5 feet above sea level, which will not be tall enough to prevent wind-driven surges. The town's stormwater drainage system is already inadequate, and will not handle the big storms that are coming. The town must mobilize local, state and federal resources both to come up with a Resilience plan and implement its recommendations.
	The term "preservation" is becoming increasingly inappropriate for Cape Charles, with the removal of the railroad history near the harbor, and the coming of a harbor developed to service large yachts.

	The undeveloped side of Mason Ave that is currently under the Harbor Review Board is about to be sold by the railroad to developers. It should now fall under Historic Review Board so that its heritage is preserved as well as new building construction can blend nicely with the old commercial buildings it shares Mason Ave with. Main Street is also working toward this goal. It would help to have both HDRB Reps on both the Harbor Review, and Main Street Boards.
Do you have any suggestions as to how we might contact interested members of the community who were not in attendance at the event on March 4?	broader advertisement. Problem is, most members do not live here full time.
	Daily Cape Charles updates, Facebook, the town should maintain email addresses and send notices to all residents and owners
	I didn't hear about the meeting until after it was over. I'm not sure I could have attended at the planned time. Perhaps a town wide mailing could be done to make everyone aware of the changes being looked at. Perhaps included in the water bill.
	I would think in simple terms - you know where each historic home is in town. If you want to reach everyone, leave flyers. And the town Facebook page.
	Information can be sent by the Town electronically or from Joan Natali's newsletters.
	Make sure you obtain input from others that you had sent your emails to. Those attending were primarily those interested in preservation. I have forwarded this survey to others (about 15) in the historic overlay district to gather their inputs also. If others did the same, that would expand the input and start to draw others into the discussion.
	Maybe have Cape Charles Main Street reach out to its stakeholders?
	Need more publication of future dates
	no idea.
	notice on the Town's Facebook page
	The CC Gazette
	Today is the first day I saw this link. Upon meeting w Paul Grossman he and I realized that it didn't get disseminated. I've just published the link on the Facebook Page for Main Street
	write stories for the Mirror
Do you have any experience designing a historic preservation plan for another community? If so, could you describe it?	You have my email now.
	I do not, however I have a deep interest in the preservation of historic homes and have applied twice to be on the historic review board. I have read the historic guidelines and feel strongly some changes could be made. I also see changes in structures around town, some I think are good and some I think are not. I also see new structures being erected that I don't feel fit the town and I have concerns about that.
	In Franklin, TN, we were called the Heritage Foundation. In addition to being the architectural review board, it was the conservator of the historic records and photos archive. We also ran events during the year to increase awareness and appreciation for preservation. Such as the Christmas Candlelight Tour of Homes, a Dickens of a Christmas commercial downtown event, and a summer House & Garden tour.
	No
	No
	no
	no
	no
	no
	No - we've owned homes in historic districts and have done historically correct restorations.
	no.
	No.
	no.
	Sadly no.
	We do historic renovations in Northern Va

Table A-2: Written Responses from CC Town Leadership Retreat on 7 May 2019

Question	Responses
1. Why is historic preservation important to CC?	- Economic; Livelihood of residents; well-being of families - Maintain continuity of the country - Maintain designation as “Historic District”
2. What elements of CC’s heritage should we preserve?	- houses, churches—roads—beach - all - Railroad layout of town buildings; contributing structures
3. What have we done previously to preserve and protect that heritage?	- Establishment of historic review board - Not much. Need ordinance - Uneven, some strict, some lenient
4. What are we currently doing to preserve and protect that heritage?	- Continue the conversation - Need ordinance - Taking it on a case-by-case basis because of differences from block to block
5. What should we do to preserve and protect it in the future?	- Need to write ordinance - Keep quality of boards (Historic District Review, Planning)
6. What is the relationship between resilience (e.g., water level rise) and preservation?	- Houses may be need to be raised - We don’t know - Safety trumps! - Barrier island effects
7. How should preservation be coordinated with zoning, land use, and growth management in CC?	- Meetings and implementation of guidelines - Comp plan - Coordinate in area of common ground
8. Should the local government have preservation responsibilities, and if so, what should they be?	- Yes—support the rules and wishes of the preservation board - Comp plan - Yes - Commissions (Historic District Review, Planning)
9. What incentives should be provided for historic preservation in CC, and how should they be funded?	- Tax credit - Already is. Tax credits for historic preservation - Tax credits; appeal to something that doesn’t exist elsewhere
10. What should the relationship be between preservation and education?	- A great deal - The preservation decisions need to be broadcast to realtors and property owners - Education is crucial for new arrivals unfamiliar with historic rules and regulations

Likert-style questions: (5 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree)

The meeting on May 7 was useful and provided a chance for me to express my thoughts about the historic preservation plan being developed. Answers: 2, 5, 4, 4. Average response = 4.25.

The process for creating the new preservation plan allows for sufficient community input and seems to be off to a good start. Answers: 2, 5, 4, 4. Average response = 4.25.

In addition to the paper survey, we recorded comments from the community for each of the questions listed in Table C-2; these are reproduced in Table C-3, below

Table A-3: Responses from 7 May 2019 CC Joint Meeting

What elements of CC's heritage should we preserve?	A. Historic District vs. whole town: older homes (vs. new houses); Elements are what need to be maintained (except, e.g., paint colors hard to prove, so can't be regulated.) Each structure has a historic record of "lived experience." Many empty lots—what causes this? Can't make an 1880s house today but can preserve look and feel. B. An 1894 house→ built for people who worked on waterfront; cedar siding. Can't make entire town a historic district. Of course, "contributing structures." C. What about the "international style" (First half of the 20th century) Flat roofs, no ornamentation, much glass—would this be OK in the middle of CC? Also, what about other styles that are historic BUT visually different than most of CC? D. Vacant lot on Mason Avenue. Next door: extensive renovation. HDRB: façade, height E. Town Council must back HDRB
What have we done previously to preserve and protect that heritage?	F. Guidelines are clear: continue character, what might happen over the next 50 years? G. Elements = context; maybe style & shape can differ in specific "villages"? Preservation vs. reconstruction: <i>Front porches</i> (tongue-in-groove with balustrades) vs. <i>front decks</i> (pressure-treated lumber sheathed in vinyl). Does it change context of neighborhoods? - Standard: new vs. repair. Department of Interior: consider environment, not just a single building. Not just the historic structure, but also what derives the appearance of "new" construction. Character drives the economic engine. Example: shutter style depends on block: some streets missing a chimney very obviously. Window types. Need to preserve original windows.
What are we currently doing to preserve and protect that heritage?	- Criteria. One idea for an improvement in working of the HRDB would be a two-phase approval: First, design; Second, build. Shutters, shingles, etc. Board takes things step-by-step. Board must have back-up: consistency is important, especially for, chimneys. Size and width of porches. Any visible exterior elements. Interiors: tax credits require some preservation. Chimneys: lots have been lost in last few months. Did all of the removed structures really pose a safety hazard? Were safety codes applied objectively and consistently?
What should we do to preserve and protect it in the future?	- Viewshed (example: Franklin, Tennessee: front elevation 2/3 of side elevation). What about technology (e.g., satellite dishes)? Ordinance (town council) vs. guidelines. Prevailing character can change over time, (thus, standards should be very specific). Inconsistent enforcement: what if people ask for forgiveness <i>ex post</i> as opposed to seek permission <i>ex ante</i>? This sets a precedent. - Other landscape elements: fences? Sidewalks (VDOT right-of-way), pathways. Siding→ vinyl OK? The can was kicked down the road on this issue from the last historic preservation plan: what does the current generation think? - Would a two-step process be OK? Or, best: zoning administrator (might include member of board, but may not be feasible). Would a formal sit-down with property owner be better? Followed by a full board review? Should both steps be public? These issues apply especially for "problematic" applications. - Guidelines: suggestions vs. requirements. Text changes are needed.

Why is historic preservation important to CC?	A. Brown signs Tax credits; don't change historic character B. Town has a history to tell; see the history as it comes along: process C. Variety of homes: Victorian, 1960s, Craftsman, 50-year old rule includes ranch-style, preserve value of restoration D. Property values: work E. Railroads → relationship: workers, pullmen, houses (and commercial buildings) brought here to be built F. Historic district important; not just beach G. Original street plan → Central Park; uniqueness of this plan; vision of two men H. Grounding: where we were and going. Also, evolution and continuity I. Aesthetically pleasing → economics thrives on it; historic nature; No revival if historic structures did not exist; must motivate J. Cultural heritage → history of story-telling; disappearing places = disappearing stories; need to connect to roots
What is the relationship between resilience (e.g., water level rise) and preservation?	- Resilience → comprehensive plan will need to address this (starting next year) - Preservation tax credits even for increasing height. Permeable pavers? Helps, but not historic. Good resource: keepinghistoryabovewater.org. - Safety trumps—have to be resilient in order to preserve - What about local Coast Guard base: any plans for increasing resilience? - A resilience video was produced in 2014—hunting lodge on Cobb Island or one of the barrier islands. Flood of 1933 forced many barrier islanders to move; barrier island center (located about 12 miles up the road from CC).
How should preservation be coordinated with zoning, land use, and growth management in CC?	- In a couple years, the entire historic district will be built out. Some vacant lots will likely stay as such - Given growth, almost no new houses. Fifteen new houses were built in 2018 vs. only about 4 or so in 2019. So, the next focus will be on renovation, especially bad shape houses will be sold (Demolished? Rebuilt?) - Pressure will grow to allow auxiliary dwelling units (ADUs) - Phased rules? The 1999 comprehensive plan says that preservation plan should have equal standing with it. Use changes, but appearance/character stay the same. (Also known as “form-based codes.”) Rehab tax credits might change: Virginia moving to maybe abolish these? Zoning → new homes coming in on tractors. - Is the town an historic district with a beach, or a beach with a history? Or is it a railroad town, with a railroad heritage and museum?
What incentives should be provided for historic preservation in CC, and how should they be funded?	- Incentives: Main Street provides economic vitality - Endowment: build it up from penalties and use it to provide subsidies towards historically accurate renovations and repairs. Different building permit fees, especially if use higher quality building materials. But maybe put a cap on the market value of the property to ensure funds are going to those that need them. - Provide education resources - These incentives are available: must educate business owners. How would they learn about it?
What should the relationship be between preservation and education?	Education: Outreach is an issue. How reach those who are traditionally excluded from the process?



Appendix B: Survey Questions

1. Mailed Survey

The survey was mailed in a massive bulk franking exercise conducted at the CC municipal building on October 15, 2019.

A. Likert-Style Items

Q1. Cape Charles is primarily a <i>beach community</i> that also has a historic town center.
Q2. Cape Charles is primarily a <i>historic town</i> that also has a beach.
Q3. Owners of real estate in the historic district (“overlay”) should conform to their property’s historic look and feel when making <i>renovations and repairs</i> .
Q4. <i>New construction</i> in the historic district of Cape Charles should conform to the look and feel of neighboring homes and buildings.
Q5. The charming, historic nature of the town’s homes and buildings contributes to property values of real estate in Cape Charles.
Q6. To reduce demolition of derelict buildings, the Town of Cape Charles should establish a fund that can help low income homeowners make historically accurate repairs and improvements.
Q7. Such a fund should be financed from fines levied against property owners who do not conform to the historic preservation zoning guidelines.
Q8. Cape Charles should restrict the amount of new development in areas near the historic center to preserve the small-town nature of the community.

B. Other Items

What is the highest level of school you have completed?

☐ Less than 9th grade ☐ Some high school ☐ High school grad/GED
☐ Some college ☐ College graduate ☐ Advanced/graduate degree

Please circle your gender: male female other/no response

What is the zip code of your primary residence? _____ In what year were you born? _____

Which term best describes your ethnic identity? (check all that apply):

☐ White ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian Other: _____

Please indicate your approximate annual household income last year:

☐ Less than \$20,000 ☐ \$20-40,000 ☐ \$40-60,000 ☐ \$60-80,000 ☐ \$80-100,000 ☐ over \$100,000

2. In-Person Survey

In order to increase the response rate of a survey conducted face-to-face during a busy summer evening, we limited the number of questions to the following:

A. Likert-Style items

Q1. I am in Cape Charles primarily because of the beach or a special event.
Q2. I am in Cape Charles primarily because of the historic nature of the houses and other buildings
Q3. Derelict historic buildings in Cape Charles should be repaired and renovated as opposed to torn down.
Q4. Cape Charles should help lower income residents to make historically accurate repairs to their homes.

B. Other information

Finally, we asked for the respondent's zip code. And, rather than ask an additional question, the survey administrator recorded the respondent's gender at the end of the interview.



Appendix C: Open-Ended Survey Responses

1. Comments from mailed survey, by postmark date

Postmark Date	Open-Ended Comments
17-Oct	I believe that in order to preserve the beauty and charm of the Historic District, stricter regulation on new construction should be imposed. Houses are being squeezed into every which way, trees are being removed to make way for these homes, and no matter how strict the historic guidelines, they'll never be true historic homes. Some are downright UGLY! Seriously?
18-Oct	→The amount of buildings approaching the need for demolition due to structural instability is very small as opposed to years ago. Topic is not important. → Need to differentiate between contributing and non-contributing properties when establishing criteria for rehabilitation and new construction. They should not be the same.
18-Oct	Question 6 needs clarification--"low" income families defined. I am a retiree and I doubt I could purchase anything in the historic district, nor afford to renovate it. The town might consider giving tax breaks to anyone taking on these homes. Question 7 conform? The guidelines are so often over-ruled that this is a joke. [Question 8] needs clarification such as "along Mason Avenue." Development should be handled carefully based on what the town sees as her future.
18-Oct	We became residents (full time) Jan 2019. We looked in many areas for our "perfect" small historic town and Cape Charles has everything we have been looking for including a beach! We relocated from South Florida.
19-Oct	CC should be focused on educating property owners and potential buyers on historic preservation zoning guidelines with the goal of minimizing fines being levied. Model after other historic districts that provide welcome packets and detailed guidelines online. And offer more guidance to avoid contentious issues.
19-Oct	I am proud to say that my deceased sister in law and her husband left an endowment to CNU towards any student from Madison County, VA.
19-Oct	I believe that historic districts and historic development restrictions should be left in museums. This town will never improve or grow as long as the town is burdened by building restrictions and policies (signed illegible).
19-Oct	Retired
19-Oct	We own three properties in the 200 block of Mason Avenue. Our intent is to be permanent residents in 3-5 years. We are heavily invested and pay large property taxes so we do care about the future of CC.
21-Oct	- Interesting dilemma for town & residents. / #6 - If the building is directly in Need Repairs, it may make sense to build New construction than Renovate. Modern construction techniques Are beneficial to the community over the long term. That being Said New Construction rules about window, doors facade etc. can be a requirement. / I Am A resident that Recently Renovated my property under historic rules for tax credits. (Identifying information removed.)
21-Oct	* Not sure what ethnicity has to do with the questions. * income should not matter either. I do think that infrastructure should come first. Cape Charles is lacking in this very important part of growth.
21-Oct	"Property's look and feel" does not mean using materials of 1886!! We're allowed a LOT of diversity in construction over the past 50+ years - you can't turn back the clock and enforce arbitrary standards. They are GUIDELINES not laws!!! Also, people come for the beach, not to shop - that's an extra.
21-Oct	... YOU KIDDING HERE? OUR TOWN'S PRETTY GOOD AT CODE ENFORCEMENT, + LEVELED FINES WILL NOT COVER RENOVATION. / EXPENSES FOR DERELICT HOMES: NO WAY, NO HOW. IT SOUNDS GOOD ON PAPER, BUT DO THE MATH. IMPOSSIBLE. (arrow pointing to the right) DERELICT HOMES SHOULD BE TORN DOWN IF NOT MAINTAINED. THIS IS TRUE OF ALL TOWNS.
21-Oct	1. This town was established in 1876. There are quite a few residences built in 1960 and later which don't resemble at all those built in the late 1800's/early 1900s. 2. It is exceedingly difficult to regulate <u>good taste</u> . 3. I believe home owners should be entitled to some discretion--especially paint colors. 4. I believe the town design/layout ("urban plan") is the most important single feature that contributes to the town's charm. 5. I like blending new with old. I don't want to live in the Victorian Age. 6. I believe the guidelines should remain guidelines, and not become mandatory preservation requirements. 7. The historic review board seems to be moving away from discretionary review.
21-Oct	Cape Charles needs to lower house prices so LOCALS can live here - not just vacation homes. I can barely afford rent.
21-Oct	I do feel that it is a Small Town with period Houses not all are Historic (Put Period). The town should do a case by case study as to where new construction should be (identifying information omitted).

21-Oct	I do not feel that the town elected officials care about the historic feel of the town. They should stay out of the historic review board's business. If the town didn't want to follow the rules, they should not have gotten a historic designation.
21-Oct	I feel the town needs to decide if it wants to keep the current policy of allowing homeowners to (illegible) restore to original condition or change it to "historic look and feel" They are not the same thing. My experience is that there is not a lot of consistency on what is approved.
21-Oct	New, NON-CONFORMING CONSTRUCTION CAN RUIN THE LOOK OF AN ENTIRE BLOCK, IT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED
21-Oct	PLEASE BE OPEN MINDED TO SOME DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE ROUTE 13 CORRIDOR
21-Oct	Preserving the historic character of the CC historic district should not require property owners to adhere to the sec. of interior's guidelines for preservation. Common sense regarding historic rehabilitation restoration needs to be employed - and categorically is not. PS: Thank you for your efforts!!
21-Oct	Thank you for making Cape Charles maintain its historic preservation mindset!
21-Oct	The <u>concrete plant</u> is the <u>worst</u> detraction for this historic town and beach /shoreline enjoyment. The town should raise the money to buy/demolish it and bring the natural shoreline back in that area.
21-Oct	THE FREE MARKET IS WHAT IS PROPELLING THE CAPE CHARLES RENAISSANCE. YOUNG(ER) HOMEOWNERS ARE ATTRACTED TO THE AREA BECAUSE OF THE HISTORIC CHARM ... BUYING HOMES FOR PRIMARY OR SECONDARY USE, FIXING THEM TO BRING THEM OUT OF DISREPAIR AND RETURNING THEM TO A HISTORIC LOOK ... AS IF THEY WERE FIRST ASSEMBLED/BUILT BACK AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. ITS THAT FREE MARKET THATS "SAVING" CAPE CHARLES - NOT GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION TO HELP HOMEOWNERS MAKE REPAIRS. THATS OPENING UP A CAN OF WORMS I'D NEVER SUPPORT.
21-Oct	THE TOWN NEEDS TO CREATE A PLAN FOR DRIVING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS. THE PLAN NEEDS TO BE FLEXIBLE TO ALL KINDS OF STYLES + DESIGNS, INCLUDING DURABILITY + QUALITY, AND CONSIDER ECONOMIC GROWTH. THIS IS NOT ABOUT PRESERVING, BUT SETTING BASIC STANDARDS FOR GROWTH, IN EVERY ASPECT.
21-Oct	Town of Cape Charles should follow the example of Northampton County regarding a (illegible) (illegible) tax break to encourage renovation + rehabilitation + run down properties in the historic district. The County provides a 10 year period before (illegible) the break on & weak won (illegible) by before an open valuer.
21-Oct	We retired to Cape Charles because of its small town, diverse - economically and ethnically - character. Over 10 years we have watched it become increasingly an affluent second home and retirement community. This has brought income but its character has changed.
21-Oct	What is your definition of historic? CC, is not old!! / should allow solar + skylights / ok solar + skylights / (illegible) / (illegible) up + down + / looks the same! / don't need a fund. They are / (illegible) (illegible) up. / Complete with town edge zoning / Why is this important? / Who cares? / You know my name! / Why? / Why? / Why?. Already too many locals had to leave - sad. NOT SUCH STRINGENT RULES, but generally (illegible) - + paint colors, (illegible) porch railings, but allow energy saving consumption!
21-Oct	While there is a feeling amount some "old town" (Historic District) residents that we are a beach town first, I feel strongly we are an Historic District that also happens to have a beach. The town's government/depts. needs to figure this out, one way or the other, it's been a bit of a roadblock.
22-Oct	As far as we know, the town's maintenance code is not enforced as it pertains to derelict structures.
22-Oct	CC needs to maintain small beach feel with historic town. Maintain their appeal to family destination.
22-Oct	City Council need to recognize the beach as a vital part of Cape Charles. The businesses in town don't drive the economy, the beach does. It needs to be replenished. Without the beach there will be no businesses in CC.
22-Oct	Homeowner in 23310 zip code also; 60-40 split of residences.
22-Oct	I support any efforts to <u>increase</u> the perception of CC's historic nature, i.e., historic walking tours, special event house tours, restoration of railroad cars. We need CC to attract visitors <u>year round</u> and have off season programs for year round residents, and offering programs on the town's history would be well received.
22-Oct	I taught marketing at the University of Richmond and did a lot of survey research. In the future, your envelopes should be the size of the questionnaire.
22-Oct	If the city wants to fund a levee against current owners it should be a citizen vote, not a City Council vote.
22-Oct	In my opinion, the town is equal parts historic and beach--neither more than the other. Ridiculously expensive water hookup fees and minimum monthly after costs should be addressed prior to any other fines, in my opinion. Otherwise, completely supportive of Historic Restoration/Preservation! Thank you for the survey! :)
22-Oct	My family has lived in Northampton County since the mid-19th Century and family members observed the beginning of the death of CC when the ferry line moved south and took business with it. Many people have

	continuously blocked development and new business that would have been beneficial for town residents as well as residents of Northampton County. I am against limiting development and levying fines.
22-Oct	New construction, renovations and repairs should conform to the historic look/feel but within reason to what is energy/cost efficient. There are also many lower maintenance options of materials that should be allowed within reasonable accommodations, while maintaining the historic charm. Survey questions are very subjective (vague).
22-Oct	The answers to question 1 and 2 reflect my opinion and preference. However, the town needs to make a decision one way or another and base its decisions going forward with the agreed-upon emphasis. They should not try to support both visions. Question 3-the decisions on historic repairs and renovations should be reasonable and not dissuade people from purchasing. Question 7 - the fund should be supported by a small increase in property taxes, not fines. Impossible to forecast the amount that might or might not be raised by fines.
22-Oct	Unfortunately, as charming as the historic nature of the town is, without the beach the current rebirth does not happen. The town must prioritize future development with this in mind.
22-Oct	You can do look and feel but that does not necessarily mean older materials. There are many new materials that respect the historic look-feel, but are more cost-effective, energy efficient, and environmentally friendly. - What do you mean by restrict new development? That's a loaded statement. - Be thoughtful if you are going to institute fines for "breaking" historic guidelines. There are plenty of communities that residents don't care and just pay the fine--there are other communities that require the homeowners to take down the non-conforming work, typically resulting in costly lawsuits.
23-Oct	1. Please dogs off the beach or make a place for them. Do not like my child stepping <i>into that</i> . 2. Please clean all the overgrown grass on sidewalk. I feel a lot of sidewalk could be covered up by grass. 3. I noticed that some shops and bars have overgrowth that should be kept up. I love CC and want to see it keep its hometown feel. But keeping up its looks counts.
23-Oct	Cape Charles' historical claim was based on the railroad. That claim is no longer valid because the railroad is now gone, leaving the town with only interesting old houses. Newer houses and buildings will soon out-number the old homes, even in the downtown area. Common sense needs to be used in the future
23-Oct	I feel that growth is fine for Cape Charles, as long as it is not going to change the quaint feeling of the town. It shouldn't become a rowdy party town. The charm of the town drives people there/here.
23-Oct	I feel that people come to CC to go to the beach (which is currently very unkempt, i.e., dirty, bad dunes, etc.). Then, while here, will go shopping, eat at our restaurants, visit downtown. But the draw is the beach.
23-Oct	I hope I won't be priced out of Cape Charles. It is good to be in a quiet place. The houses are so interesting, but which I had a bit more normal shopping here--so many trinket stores and I'm past wanting those.
23-Oct	Own condo in Cape Charles. Live in Delaware.
23-Oct	Q7: Unless they are low income
23-Oct	Questions 3 and 4 are poorly written. Owners need some say with their property decisions. It is not all or nothing!!!
23-Oct	The historic committee needs to loosen its grip so that modern materials and current building codes can be met when renovating houses.
23-Oct	To point my house every 5 years would be \$5,000, but to side it would be \$10,000, so I should be able to side my house to protect my investment in <u>my</u> home.
23-Oct	We do not feel its (<i>sic</i>) the towns (<i>sic</i>) job to rescue "derelict" buildings. I cannot envision earning enough from fines to provide any significant financial assistance. Also we feel that instituting a fine structure may lead to the town "hunting" for every violation in an overly aggressive manner. We are in favor of limiting high density development within the overlay district, but homeowners and property owners should be able to use their properties as zoning permits. With the cost of ownership in Cape Charles, is there really anyone who makes less than \$100k who can afford to own or build there? Within reason, no one should build a multi-story purple concrete block house, but we also don't want the town to look like Colonial Williamsburg. p.s. you send a return, addressed, envelope that is not the correct size to fit your questionnaire.
23-Oct	Would be a nice improvement to see the Trees along Mason Avenue topped and shaped--it would add so much more appeal to the street and businesses there. Also add some colorful flowers to the area--curb appeal! It just looks so tired and irty right now. Perhaps the store owners should have a fund for flowers downtown! All in all--Cape Charles has come a long way! Loving the progress there, and the charm of the old buildings. I would also like to see a way to keep the cherrystone campers from coming over and taking all our beach parking area. They have a beach! And it takes away from the locals and CC beach summer rentals--getting worse every year.
24-Oct	A fund financed by tourists who violate golf cart safety rules and who bring dogs onto the barrier islands, etc. This summer was disgraceful. With a free beach, free concerts, free parking, volunteer fire and volunteer rescue sources, after a while, "free" = no value.
24-Oct	Beach community vs. historic town is not a one or the other question. From late April to the first week of October, CC is a beach community. From mid-October to late April, it is an historic town. Fines alone will not

	be adequate sources for funds to help low-income homeowners. Other sources for the fund must be established. New development--especially that attracts year-round residents--should be encouraged but within the character of the town.
24-Oct	Historic preservation board has been abusive. I have no proof but I suspect there is a lot of corruption in the town and county politics.
24-Oct	I fear that the current success of the tourist trade in our town, if not properly controlled, may ruin the small town "Americana" attraction that brings tourists here and makes this a good place to live for retirees as well as young families. We need more quality full time jobs and no more condos.
24-Oct	I feel that these questions are showing a bias <u>against</u> new growth in Cape Charles.
24-Oct	I value historic preservation of town homes and structures, but not at the expense of citizens for whom this could be a hardship. I am also concerned that requiring the use of wood (rather than hardyplank or PVC) could have environmental impact. Wood must be constantly replaced in our climate and we should be conserving it. I think it should be permissible to use material that has the look of wood, but are more affordable and easier to maintain. We should use new materials when available.
24-Oct	It is a shame the beach was not maintained in 2019 like previous years. The beach brought us to Cape Charles. We met many new people who bought property summer of 2019 because they loved the beach. Many people commented beach not cleaned as in previous years.
24-Oct	Q7: Not a very good idea. Should have a general fund.
24-Oct	Restrict development, should strictly adhere to historic guidelines.
24-Oct	The most important factor in new construction is SCALE. Examples: the new buildings along south side of Mason Ave feel right. They could have been there for decades. However, the large new building on Bay Ave that sits on multiple lots is an eyesore. It doesn't belong there.
24-Oct	Wood frame homes should be allowed to use siding that looks like wood but isn't. Old stand yellow pine used, sometimes quarter sawn, can't be replicated and is cost prohibitive if it can be found. The character of older homes is important, window sizes, porch trim if it can be found and afforded really helps hold the character. I also feel that a 2019/20 house should look if it was built that year. I do not like someone trying to build an 1800s house with modern materials.
25-Oct	Existence of concrete plant decreases the desirability of the town.
25-Oct	It was the small town, historic district in close proximity to the bay that attracted us to CC 17 years ago. We built a new home on a vacant lot in the historic district that most people think is an older house remodeled. The two most troubling things about CC is the way the town has allowed the dunes to take over. Elderly and handicapped can't even use the boardwalks, which are covered in sand, to access the beach. The beach as we know it has been destroyed. A pit. The back-in parking is a travesty. Just try having dinner in front of a restaurant and a diesel truck backs in--there goes your dinner. Please address the out-of-control sand dunes and the back-in parking. Also, as one turns in front of the drug store to go down Mason, one is greeted by an unsightly recycle trailer. I mentioned this to the town manager and he blew me off. Thanks!
25-Oct	Next time send the correct size envelope!
25-Oct	The nostalgic American beach town vibe can best be achieved by (1) maintaining a beach, (2) adding COHESIVE elements such as continuous sidewalks (N-->S and E-->W) on every block; replacing the street lights on every block in historic district with a single style. (3) The Town of CC should use existing tax revenue to bury the 20th and 21st century signs of infrastructure--electric lines, TV dishes and cables, internet service. Silly to require specific brick mortar color, then string cables across the street to the HISTORIC brick. Side benefit--no more butchered trees in town!
25-Oct	The number of derelict properties continues to fall due to market forces. Establish a fund for derelict owners is a poor idea. The fund would be inefficient and benefits would flow to those with ties to local officials. Please contact me for additional information if desired. (Identifying information omitted to ensure survey anonymity). P.S. an envelope sized to survey would be helpful
25-Oct	The town won't agree to collect enough fines to make a difference. Preservation of buildings needs to begin before they become "derelict." Unfortunately the laws of the Commonwealth do not permit this (we are a Dillon Rule state). Note that buildings in the historic district may not be torn down unless they are structurally unsound. This opens the door to "demolition by neglect," which, though illegal is difficult to enforce because it does not require "restoration," but only actions to prevent degradation, like boarding up windows and doors.
25-Oct	Too late to enforce now--and impossible to reach consensus on "look and feel" of history. Mason Avenue new side vs old side are both brick and similar height.... But Mason Ave is NO LONGER looking like a "historic town" -- and lost that potential anyway with the construction of Heritage Village, the old grocery now backed up to golf cart rental eye sore, and multiple single level, no porches, homes built in 1960s or 1970s throughout Historic district.

26-Oct	As a homeowner who has recently gone through a full gut renovation (only studs left standing), I can share that people sincerely appreciate the attention to historical detail. I think the architecture and aesthetics are the second biggest draw after the beach.
26-Oct	Limit the use of properties as vacation rentals or Vacation Rental by Owner--this destroys the charm of the town.
28-Oct	Absolutely NO central planning. Cape Charles is only historic-like the 1960s. Town is eclectic and mor of a arts-boutique-rural town. It would be a mistake to go down the road this survey is suggesting.
28-Oct	Cape Charles is really a unique gem in Virginia's cultural assets; a town that has retained its small town feel yet embraces newcomers each season. It's important to preserve the original historic architecture but allow continued growth that will "blend well" new businesses and residences with the old. Carefully considered and open minded integration is key and such an approach should improve the county and city's tax base to improve historic preservation.
28-Oct	Q3/4: As long as the regs are within reason, i.e., using modern materials that maintain a classic look.
29-Oct	- Don't think fines levied as proposed would not raise adequate funds - New development should be decided on a case by case. Some new development may be needed to provide additional needs and services. - While a historic town center is important, if CC weren't near the beach there would be much less interest.
29-Oct	Thank you! 10/28/19
29-Oct	The historic aspects of CC certainly have its charm and appeal. However, the overreach of the review board is over bounds. The center streets (i.e., Tazewell) are held to strict/unattainable standard whereas 2-3 streets away it seems there are no regulations whatsoever. Further, the review board doesn't factor cost (which is insanely high due to isolation and monopoly of market by construction co.) or necessary accommodations such as gutters that resolve deteriorating foundation/ordinance issues. There should be a balance and that is absolutely not the case in any forum.
29-Oct	You need to evaluate development against the capacity to handle the influx of people and the resiliency of the town's infrastructure.
30-Oct	CC is a beautiful place with lots of charm. My concern is that people will forget what it was that they fell in love with about CC and try to change it into something it's not.
30-Oct	Doctorate
30-Oct	I would prefer to keep the small town feel while having the shop & food choices we have now. I would like to keep it from having any non-family type of atmosphere.
30-Oct	Q6: Is this an issue of people not being able to afford repairs or is it a situation of people/owners "sitting on" houses and not fixing them? We know of houses that people would buy and fix up but the owners are unwilling to repair them and unwilling to sell. We don't want to fix up houses for people who let these houses sit empty nd fall into disrepair. Perhaps a lien should be put against these owners? As opposed to a fund being established.
30-Oct	While I agree with keeping the historic look and feel when doing renovations/repairs to homes in the historic district, I feel renovations using aesthetically consistent and historically appropriate maintenance-free materials (vinyl) should be allowed. It is unconscionable that historic district homeowners be required to replace with wood when new construction homes are allowed to use these maintenance-free materials.
31-Oct	Low income home owners should be financially assisted, in more ways than just historically accurate repairs (roof repair, siding repair, insulation, etc.) If not, a very important segment of CC's population will be bought out and lost. Focus on Washington, Jefferson, and Madison neighborhoods.
31-Oct	Very difficult to tease out the beach community and historic town pieces--it is in fact, the <u>combination</u> of both that makes it so special.
1-Nov	NEED AFFORDABLE HOUSING
13-Nov	I bought my run down, empty "cottage" in 2003, so I am new to Cape Charles. I would like to see assistance for old time residents of Cape Charles who might need help to maintain their property so they don't have to sell. -
14-Nov	1: Public Safety - the tourists who came here this summer were very disrespectful. There were violations of all the town rules from dog poop on the beach to children driving golf carts, etc. There is no enforcement. We need a strong police chief and police force who will actually get out of their cars + issue citations. 2: Town Manager - Experience at a Va. General Assembly. The next town manager should have a strong working knowledge of the Va. General Assembly + Va. regulatory agencies, especially VDOT. Unfortunately, with the Dillon Rule structure, the regulatory power it designates to the cities + towns. Relationships with the local knowledge of the G.A. structure (committees, etc.) is vital to Cape Charles receiving its share of the budget and taxation authority the town needs to manage its evolution into a major tourist attraction. 3: Further Building on Mason Avenue. We strongly object to a special use permit for any further buildings which block the view of the port from Mason Avenue. The railroad + the port are the heart of the town's history. Tourist would much rather see a view of the water boats than brick buildings which obliterate the beauty of the town.

14-Nov	Hi, I agree with keeping the town historic but there are a lot of more houses that were not built to look old. I don't know what "look and feel" means but the town is allowing tall (3 story) near homes that tower over the existing homes. I say they shouldn't be allowed, Joe.
14-Nov	I'm a retired senior citizen over a (illegible)
16-Nov	We feel when renovating an old home in a historic area like CC that the materials used can be new and still look great. For example: rather than clapboard or hardy plank for siding, vinyl can look really good with new wood-like products available. The same for vinyl porch columns, picket fences, porch flooring, and railings.
26-Nov	Strongly feel that surveys and most consultants are a waste of tax dollars. Town should do its own research and polling.
Postmark missing or illegible	Cape Charles should establish tax breaks for long time residents so they won't be taxed out of their homes as values rise. CC is a small town with numerous tourist amenities including a working marina, a friendly beach, a resort with two championship golf courses, and a quaint downtown shopping area. The Eastern Shore can be called "Historic". CC, which only dates back to 1900 +/-, is a little shy in the "Historic" nature by comparison! Calling something "Historic" doesn't mean it is! If buildings are "derelict", inherently they are eyesores and should be demolished at the owner's expense. When the lots are subsequently developed, the replacements, if complying with district guidelines, will most be certainly be a neighborhood enhancement I find it unfair for a property owner not to be able to do so as he/she wishes on their property. If there is room for improvement, the town should install <u>and repair</u> the sidewalks in CC. Your questions invade privacy. I think Cape Charles should help homeowners fill out and qualify for historic tax credits which will go a long way to ensure restoration rather than Renovation. Thank you for asking. I was born and raised in Cape Charles. Left town to attend Virginia State University in 1963. Graduated in 1967. Returned to renovate homestead in 1999. Moved to larger home in 2012. Family and friends enjoy the serenity of Cape Charles, the hospitality of the people, the southern cuisine and the beach. We visit monthly! So many historic homes have been improved and changed without the historical look in mind and APPROVED by the town. Moving forward, how can you hold others to a higher standard now. Just look around town and see the upgrades--IT'S TOO LATE! Such as fund should not exist. CC should levy fines against property owners who do not repair derelict buildings ... and this (fines) should not be based on the income levels of the property owners. The \$ amount of the fine(s) should be the same for all property owners. If fines cannot be paid CC should take possession of the property and auction said property. The town screwed up by selling the high school building for \$10.00 Should have used that building for a civic center and town offices. Cape Charles should establish tax breaks for long-time residents so they won't be taxed out of their homes as values rise.

2. Comments from Facebook survey conducted by CC⁸

A. Open-ended responses to question concerning preservation (Facebook Q4)

Too late to preserve the town's image as a "family centered" beach town
Preservation of the Town's African American History
Keep Growing
Enhanced activities for young people, that include all demographics
Preservation & Promotion as tradition small town America at its best! Preservation of the harbor as a working harbor welcoming to watermen and commerce.
preserving walkability on railroad property
facilities for public use in retail district
all above are the charm of small towns across America
Retail but not just novelty items for tourist. The year-round residents need other stores. Clothing, health products, etc.
Bathrooms at the North end of the beach and centrally along Mason Avenue

⁸ Available at: <https://capecharles.municipalcms.com//files/documents/CapeCharlesComprehensivePlanSurveyResults1701112455010820AM.pdf>

As opposed to the cultivation of the town as a retirement community
Maintain diversity - what's left of it
Preservation of natural habitats
Connectivity to walking/running/biking trails from the Historic District is also important
Preservation of the Town Government
Land around harbor
Stay good at what we're good at. Don't try to be an Ocean City or VA Beach. Stop squeezing houses into very small lots!
Beach maintenance/nourishment (charge for beach parking)
Far more effort should go into the harbor as a town asset. Improve amenities at the harbor to attract boaters and encourage them to stay (Laundromat, transportation such as a car to rent/borrow while staying)
Better parking
Preserve & enhance Stone road as a corridor to the historic town
Personally, I'm not a strong advocate of historic design since the building design is of multiple periods. I do advocate design standards which blend with the old and reflect modern practice, e.g., energy conservation.
What welcome center does question refer to? I think we need to establish a welcome center
We need to preserve the look and feel of the town - NOT bring it back to 1884!! The development on the south side of Mason generally doesn't fit. We also need to consider the area out to the Museum (Vance's, Eastern Shore Custom Carts, the dentist, etc.) as part of the town vice just the 8x7 blocks of the Historic District. We are a beach town with a nice Main Street, not the other way around. People come to the beach first and foremost, shopping second.
Improving water quality!
Smart growth, only if it meets the historic and harbor guidelines to maintain the quaintness of the historic village. There should be no buildings taller than the Wilson building
Easements for every business in town!
Raise and extend the breakwater by the fishing pier to calm the harbor. Create a second breakwater from the Concrete Plant to the first navigation mark to make the harbor entrance smaller and less susceptible to storms.
Control "party" rentals
Don't know where this is.
Have been coming to CC many times a year for over thirty years before retiring here. The beach boardwalk has to be cleaned up. The town building and remodeling should stay historic, not Walmart plastic.
Cape Charles is NOT a "beach community". Virginia Beach is a beach community, Ocean City is a beach community, Atlantic City is a beach community. Cape Charles is an farm community with a harbor and a pile of dredge sand to call a beach. There are farms, a harbor, a recovering cement plant, and local businesses that can only support life 75% of the year. There are lots of aqua farms for oysters and plenty of crab pots but no local fresh seafood to be had. Quit pandering to the elite northerners and focus on the holsom community Cape Charles truly is. Be the fishing capitol of the far south bay.
Preservation and enhancement of the beach
Historic preservation is good but if carried too far can stifle investment.
The shoreline needs to be cleaned up to look less industrial
The small town atmosphere, quiet, friendly and historic nature of Cape Charles is what drew me to the town.
Get rid of the feral cats. It's embarrassing when you invite friends and they comment on the smell
The industrial historic significance of the town is more important to me than the tourist trade.
I don't believe that Cape Charles as a vacation spot is of any importance to homeowners. In fact the influx of the tourists into our town is beneficial to business owners and those with rental properties. It puts a huge strain on our water and sewer, our police department and homeowners
Would love some shade options on the playground.

Parking in the "downtown area" needs to be addressed
The BEACH... this is our attraction. Take care of it!
"family centered" meaning not a party beach town yes, but welcoming of all types and structures of family. small town, open minds is something i love about the people we have met, would love to see that continue.
The beach is the ANCHOR!!!!!!!
Would like to see CC as a historic beach community

B. Open-Ended Responses Regarding Development (Facebook Q5)

Too late to explore ways to reduce the number of vacation rentals by owner & definitely need a community center for all
More inclusion of town's African American heritage and lower Northampton county residents.
Explore installing meters during the tourists season ear mark revenue to enhance beach area
Limit size & number of waterfront condos, etc, No OC or VA Beach
maintaining walkability
restrooms, public parking, jobs
Our public restrooms are in need of repair
Top Priority-Coastal Resilience Improve Drainage
Golf carts are not treated as motor vehicles and should be. There's very little law enforcement it seems.
Please finish sidewalks in town! Corner of Monroe and Harbor
Explore options for off leash dog park
off street parking for boats specifically
Golf cart pathways would be nice but current compromise character of historic district
High speed internet service 4
Work with county on school improvements
Explore ways to hide ugly concrete industrial area from downtown. It'll be hard to enhance the harbor and tourism potential with that eye sore
Bike and walking trail from Town to Route 13 and beyond
I'd prefer to attract more full time residents (working or retirees) than tourists in the winter.
Our economy needs to be based on more than tourism.
Stop Marketing Tourism so strongly. It changes our character. People will find us!
If you are going to consider a golf cart path only. Golf carts should then be removed from the public streets! Golf carts have become a huge nuisance in this town. 2 rental companies, hotels that offer carts to guest and marinas that offer them too. Tourists drive to town in vehicles and then rent carts, parking has become a real problem.
Golf carts are a disaster. No rules are enforced...drunk drivers, kids driving them (with and without parents), no turn signals, blocking traffic!! Now there is talk of motorized scooters being rented - recipe for disaster!!
Finding a location and provider for medical and or emergency medical center is imperative for the town and lower county!
I don't understand the need for a community center when you have the Civic Center and the Palace Theatre- the town should also be focused on supporting existing organizations that make an impact for year-round, full time residents.
Explore ways to bring in jobs with a living wage and absolutely get more than one grocery store.
As a full time resident, creating a new parking plan/area for tourist season is crucial. The small town of Cape Charles does not have the infrastructure to support the amount of vehicles that are present on any given day during the tourist season. Residents are not able to park in front of their homes most days and during a busy day at the beach you have cars parked anywhere and everywhere. It is a safety hazard for all and a major inconvenience to residents. There also needs to be more/better community restrooms.

Resources are better utilized by increasing CC presence at the ES Welcome Center and perhaps State welcome New Church
Affordable housing could be in the county. Town could partner with new YMCA and not duplicate with a town community center. Recycling is a regional issue not just the town
Reverse angle Parking on Mason is useless and dangerous
Our current welcome center is an amazing museum and place. Making it into more of a community center would be great. Economic development that is not low wage retail and restaurant jobs that builds up diversity in our economy is most important.
Let's improve our water for drinking, our sidewalks, street cleaning
Offering recycling and pickup of said recycling in CC is a HUGE want of ours. We currently bag our recycling and take it over to Cheriton once a week. Living in a condo, that means we have to sit with our recycling in bags so we don't have to make multiple trips
Keep speeding in check and street boat storage in check and golf carts will not need special pathways other than extending limits to CC Brewery
Golf cart traffic to the bre9is out of control, crossing on private property because the town did not build the legal path and will not enforce the rules for safe legal operation of carts.
Since a YMCA is coming, perhaps the Town could partner with it, and not need a separate community center.

C. Open-Ended Responses Regarding CC Comprehensive Plan Focus (Facebook Q8)

We need more lights and sidewalks around the town.
Encourage education by creating more mini libraries in the African American and Mexican communities
future land use map
public parking and public accommodations in retail district
I am in favor of more modern or South Beach Florida look on Mason.
Resilience in the face of rising sea water and Drainage improvements
Strengthening the bond/interaction between the town and the schools is super important.
Placing permanent public restrooms near Strawberry Station, the Library, and/or near Bailey's/Peach Street
Public restrooms
preserving diversity of residents; improve quality of water
Increase adherence to Town codes and laws or remove them
Focusing on keeping CC family friendly and safe (which benefits residents and tourism alike)
Not "controlling" or limiting growth, but making sure CC grows thoughtfully with residents and visitors in mind.
I would like to see more support for children's activities at the theatre and in the park.
Very concerned about water quality
(4) Historic District losing its charm (5) Make sure the price to live here doesn't get exorbitant than only out-of-towners can afford to buy homes
1. Promoting Cape Charles as a place to live (easy commute to VA Beach/Norfolk, high speed internet, tax incentive for year round residents) 2. Vacation rental regulation/enforcement
expand opportunities for physical activity, such as basketball courts and bike paths
Transparency in local government and recruiting more citizen activism, less conflict of interest & multiple roles by town
Methods for attracting year-round, full-time jobs, that provide a living wage at or above the median income for the country.
Infrastructure maintenance and improvements
sidewalks and streets need to be redone

I would say Managing growth, rather than controlling. Some economic growth would help sustain the town. There are too few full time residents to sustain the town without something else, e.g., tourism. I'd be more enthusiastic about tourism but most jobs are minimum wage and seasonal. Are we unsafe? More law enforcement?
Parking of boats and trailers on public streets
Management of the harbor and the beach would be my other top 5 concern
W should be allowed to walk dogs on the beach, after 6pm during the summer season
proper infrastructure for growth
Providing easements for business owners on Mason Ave.
workforce housing
Rental Units should be limited to ensure Cape Charles does not become a transient town
Fixing the quality of our orange water!!!
Maintenance or improvement of beach
To reiterate: focusing less on tourism and more on the year-round residents!
Boats parked on streets in historic district
Environmental sustainability should be on this list. With sea level rise and other climate change issues, I think this should be one of the top priorities for our town. This includes recycling.
While I am very pleased and proud of what cape charles has become over the last few years, I feel the town officials are more attracted to the money coming in than the needs of residents.
Balancing residents quality of life with tourist needs
Concerned about the stated perception by local official that this is a town that no one lives in. We pay taxes but since we are retired and are only in CC intermittently, we are not requiring services, like schools.
While the beautiful architecture is a cherry on top would have never bought a home here were there not a beautiful beach.
Drinking water, recycling, storm water, trash pickup
Maintaining the beach
Keep the beach clean and safe...since dogs can run loose, it basically feels like an uncontrolled dog park
Feral cat issue
Industrial development including leveraging working harbor and rail connection
If tourism does continue to grow, police presence will need to increase in summer months. Golf cart rental companies need to make it clear that 7 year old or anyone without a drivers license should not be driving the cart and they are not to be driven down the sidewalks.
Encouraging diversity
determine what are laws vs suggestions. ie, town beach signs. rental properties encourage large groups of people. no control - 4 packed SUVS should not pull up to 1 rental home. negative impact on residents
Work on a plan to develop the harbor area.
ensuring the gap between the been heres and come heres is lessened so that the new people can understand and appreciate what the people who have been here and made this wonderful town what it is can help the come heres to maintain and only enhance those characteristics. we are a come here and want to help preserve and enhance, not change.
Personally not aware of public safety being an issue.....
Not happy about expensive homes turned into weekly rentals. Also do not appreciate home owners who live in CC part time as a problem...the "town where nobody lives"

Appendix D: Data Notes

In this appendix, we provide some details regarding how we “cleaned” data for the statistical analysis as well as some raw output from Stata, the package we used.

Table D-1: Responses to Mailed Survey

#	Topic	Usable Responses	Notes/Exceptions/Data Cleansing
Q1	Beach community	356	
Q2	Historic town	359	
Q3	Renovation/repairs	362	
Q4	New construction	364	
Q5	Charm creates value	362	A value of “3.5” was rounded up to 4
Q6	Fund for derelict	363	
Q7	Fees finance that fund	359	A value of “-1” was converted to “1”
Q8	Restrict new development in historic overlay	358	
Q9	Education	357	A value of “c,d” was recorded as d, and a value of “e f” was recorded as e.
Q10	Gender	340	In addition to the usable responses, six respondents indicated “both” (often due to a husband-wife team answering the survey together); two “other” responses
Q11	Zip Code	346	Two non-usable responses: “Richmond” and “you know.” Two other non-usable responses because zip code does not exist (23710, 23815)
Q12	Year Born	316	Ranged from 1928 to 1997
Q13	Ethnic Identity	353	Some respondents marked more than one possibility. See Q14 for “other.”
Q14	“Other” identities		Comments included: American, Does not matter, Does this need to be asked?, Eastern European, Native American, Who Cares?, Why?, X, --
Q15	Annual household income	335	Comments included: retired, Why?

Raw Stata Output

A. In-Person Survey

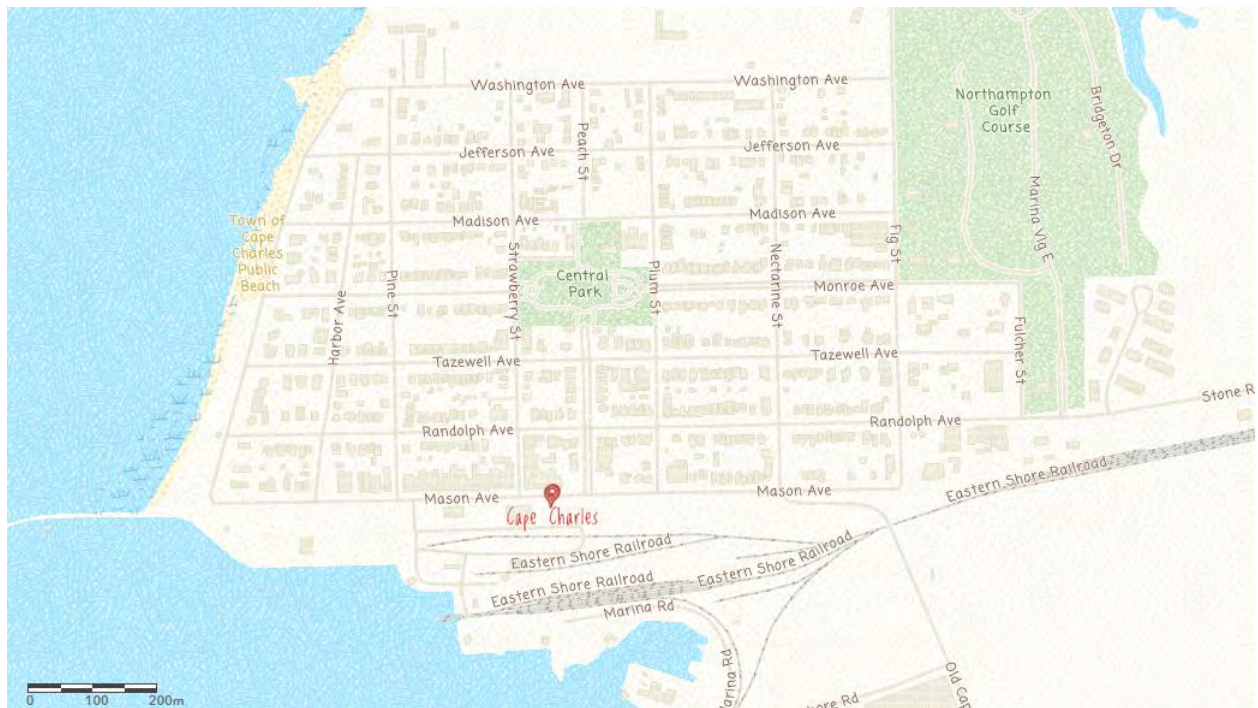
. pwcorr beach- far, sig

	beach	derelict	helploinc	distance	category	local	near
beach	1.0000						
derelict	0.1639 0.1438	1.0000					
helploinc	0.0208 0.8535	0.3177 0.0038	1.0000				
distance	-0.0066 0.9531	0.0464 0.6806	0.0545 0.6292	1.0000			
category	0.0467 0.6786	0.1357 0.2271	0.1445 0.1981	0.7902 0.0000	1.0000		
local	-0.0835 0.4587	-0.1870 0.0946	-0.2709 0.0144	-0.4141 0.0001	-0.7727 0.0000	1.0000	
near	0.0673 0.5504	0.1090 0.3326	0.2280 0.0406	-0.4175 0.0001	-0.1406 0.2106	-0.5199 0.0000	1.0000
far	-0.0025 0.9825	0.0412 0.7150	-0.0188 0.8676	0.8292 0.0000	0.8322 0.0000	-0.2911 0.0084	-0.6659 0.0000
	far						
far	1.0000						

B. Mailed Survey: Correlation Matrix

. pwcorr q1 - q8 female high local near far age graddeg , sig							
	q1	q2	q3	q4	q5	q6	q7
q1	1.0000						
q2	-0.5560 0.0000	1.0000					
q3	-0.2013 0.0001	0.4098 0.0000	1.0000				
q4	-0.2013 0.0001	0.3635 0.0000	0.7408 0.0000	1.0000			
q5	-0.2080 0.0001	0.3664 0.0000	0.6095 0.0000	0.6734 0.0000	1.0000		
q6	-0.1103 0.0380	0.2366 0.0000	0.3467 0.0000	0.2997 0.0000	0.2742 0.0000	1.0000	
q7	-0.1232 0.0212	0.2675 0.0000	0.5126 0.0000	0.4252 0.0000	0.3477 0.0000	0.6114 0.0000	1.0000
q8	-0.2187 0.0000	0.2344 0.0000	0.3755 0.0000	0.3822 0.0000	0.3585 0.0000	0.2572 0.0000	0.3123 0.0000
female	-0.0450 0.4135	0.1782 0.0011	0.0038 0.9441	0.0731 0.1791	0.1086 0.0464	0.0594 0.2760	0.0008 0.9886
highincome	-0.0257 0.6445	-0.0352 0.5243	0.0073 0.8943	0.0292 0.5954	0.0348 0.5280	-0.1402 0.0103	-0.0869 0.1152
local	0.0081 0.8834	-0.0455 0.4065	-0.0109 0.8412	-0.0331 0.5426	-0.0764 0.1611	0.0054 0.9215	0.0319 0.5607
near	0.0120 0.8272	0.0363 0.5076	0.0048 0.9300	0.0078 0.8864	0.0855 0.1168	-0.0296 0.5868	-0.0764 0.1629
far	-0.0479 0.3845	0.0231 0.6731	0.0150 0.7836	0.0617 0.2562	-0.0197 0.7178	0.0580 0.2872	0.1050 0.0548
age	-0.0912 0.1101	0.1084 0.0566	0.0532 0.3477	0.0140 0.8051	0.0257 0.6510	0.0187 0.7419	0.0496 0.3823
graddeg	-0.1529 0.0042	0.1030 0.0536	0.0906 0.0887	-0.0122 0.8190	0.0578 0.2771	0.1050 0.0481	0.0523 0.3283

	q8	female	highincome	local	near	far	age
q8	1.0000						
female	0.0692 0.2078	1.0000					
highincome	0.0722 0.1913	-0.1716 0.0021	1.0000				
local	-0.1253 0.0219	0.0237 0.6706	-0.3135 0.0000	1.0000			
near	0.0980 0.0738	-0.0166 0.7663	0.2826 0.0000	-0.9144 0.0000	1.0000		
far	0.0687 0.2107	-0.0174 0.7549	0.0817 0.1465	-0.2336 0.0000	-0.1801 0.0008	1.0000	
age	-0.0119 0.8343	-0.0876 0.1283	-0.2710 0.0000	0.1782 0.0019	-0.2071 0.0003	0.0670 0.2459	1.0000



Town of Cape Charles

Article VIII

Historic District Overlay

"The Cape Charles Historic District encompasses nearly all of the town of Cape Charles as it was originally laid out in 1883-1884 as well as the Sea Cottage addition, an area west of the original limits of the town, that was developed after 1909...The town was originally laid out in an unusual twenty-seven block grid pattern dominated by a central park with four landscaped streets that radiate from the park and serve as a main cross axis for the town's circulation pattern. No other such plan is known to exist in Virginia."

- 1989 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form Section 7, page 1.

"An interesting stock of architectural styles in both the residential area and the downtown commercial area contribute an historic style and authenticity. The street patterns, lot configurations and boundaries, which were laid out in an historic grid pattern, have remained largely unaltered, adding to the Town's historical integrity. Cape Charles' late nineteenth and early twentieth century character is a key element in the Town's interest and attractiveness to tourists. The traditional downtown commercial area on Mason Avenue still serves as the commercial center for the Town. It is important that the Town's historic character be protected, not only for its intrinsic value, but also to contribute to attract and expand tourism in Cape Charles." – Town of Cape Charles 1999 Comprehensive Plan, page 40.

The Town of Cape Charles participates in the Certified Local Government program and in so doing demonstrates a commitment to keep what is significant from the past for the benefit of future generations. The architectural integrity of existing structures shall be recognized, and future development shall be compatible.

Section 8.1 Purpose of the District *[revised – 08/16/18]*

The purpose of this district is to provide for protection against destruction or encroachment upon historic areas, buildings, monuments, or other features, or buildings and structures of registered architectural significance which contribute or will contribute to the cultural, social, economic, political, artistic, or architectural heritage of the Town of Cape Charles and the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is also the purpose of the district to preserve the designated historic areas and historic landmarks and other historic or architectural features from destruction, damage, defacement to ensure that buildings, structures, streets, walkways, or signs shall be erected, reconstructed, altered, or restored so as to be kept architecturally compatible with the character of the historic district.

Section 8.2 Criteria for Establishing Historic Districts--General Character

The boundaries of the Historic District shall in general be drawn to include areas containing buildings or places in which historic events occurred or having special public value because of notable architectural or other features relating to the cultural or artistic heritage of the community, of such significance as to warrant conservation and preservation. The district may include either individual buildings or places of such character, and a reasonable distance beyond, or it may include areas or groupings of structures which have significance relative to their patterns of development or social and

economic or architectural interrelationships even though some structures in the area might not possess significant merit when considered alone.

Section 8.3 Inventory of Landmarks and Contributing Properties Established

The Town of Cape Charles has established as part of this ordinance ~~a an inventory~~ map covering the area included in the Historic District, based on the criteria set forth in this ordinance. This map herein ~~after called the inventory map~~ shall be as much a part of this ordinance, ~~as if fully described herein and shall be filed as a part of this ordinance by the Town Clerk of the Town of Cape Charles.~~ Until such time as it is changed in this ordinance, the period of significance for the Town will be 1880s to 1964 as delineated in the Cape Charles Historic District National Register of Historic Places (amended 2019). As identified in the National Register, sStructures or sites designated as properties which contribute to the historic character of the Town shall be known as contributing properties for the purpose of this Ordinance. ~~Should a building or structure within the boundaries of the historic district not be listed in the national register, the age of the house or structure will be used to determine classification (i.e., built before 1965 will be considered as contributing).~~ The board may be presented with evidence of extensive changes previously made or other information that may warrant the board in changing a property's classification. Structures or sites not designated as landmark or contributing properties shall be known as noncontributing properties. Should a building or structure within the boundaries of the historic district not be listed in the national register, the building or structure will be classified as noncontributing. The ~~inventory~~ map may be amended from time to time in the same manner as the zoning district map.

Section 8.4. Application of the District; Relation to Other Zoning Districts

To enable the district to operate in harmony with the plan for land use and population density embodied in these regulations, the Historic District is created as a special district to be superimposed on other districts contained in these regulations and is to be so designated by a special symbol for its boundaries on the Zoning District Map. The uses, housing types, minimum lot requirements, minimum yard requirements, maximum height, and accessory uses and accessory signs shall be determined by the regulations applicable to the other districts over which the Historic District is superimposed except as these other district regulations may be modified by application of the regulations in the Historic District.

Section 8.5 Permitted Uses [revised – 08/16/18]

A building or land shall be used only for any use or accessory use permitted in the zoning district in which the premises are situated and upon which the Historic District is superimposed.

Section 8.6 Historic District Review Board; Creation

For the general purposes of this Article as herein stated and specifically to preserve and protect historic places and areas in the Town through the control of demolition of such places and through the regulation of architectural design and uses of structures in such areas, there is created a board known as the Historic District Review Board.

Section 8.7 Historic District Review Board; Membership [revised – 08/16/18]

The members of the Historic District Review Board shall be appointed by the Town Council. The Membership shall consist of five citizens, at least three of whom shall be residents of the local historic district.

Section 8.8 Historic District Review Board; Terms *[revised – 08/16/18]*

Upon approval by the Town Council, members shall be appointed for a term of five years. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be only for the unexpired term. Members may be reappointed to succeed themselves. A member whose term expires shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

Section 8.9 Historic District Review Board; Qualifications *[revised – 08/16/18]*

Members of the Historic District Review Board shall have demonstrated interest and knowledge in the historical and architectural development of the Town and when possible be a licensed architect or engineer, Planning Commission member, or licensed building contractor.

Section 8.10 Historic District Review Board; Organization *[revised – 08/16/18]*

The Historic District Review Board shall elect from its own membership a chairman and vice chairman who shall serve annual terms and may succeed themselves. The chairman shall preside over all meetings in addition to having the duties and responsibilities of other members of the Board. The vice chairman shall preside over meetings of the Board in the absence of the chairman.

Section 8.11 Historic District Review Board; Rules *[revised – 08/16/18]*

The Board shall meet in regular session on the third Tuesday of every month when an application has been filed requiring consideration. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the chairman or a majority of the members after public notice as required.

Section 8.12 Historic District Review Board; Meetings; Hearings *[revised – 08/16/18]*

Written notice of a special meeting is not required if the time of special meeting has been fixed at a regular meeting or if all members are present at a special meeting or file a written waiver of notice. For the conduct of any hearing and the taking of any action, a quorum shall be not less than a majority of all voting members of the Board. The Board may make, alter, or rescind rules and forms for its procedures, consistent with the ordinances of the Town and the general laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Section 8.13 Historic District Review Board; Procedures

The Board shall with the concurrence of the town manager, establish procedures for all matters coming before it for review and all meetings shall be open to the public. The Board will have the right to appeal decisions of the town manager to the Town Council.

Section 8.14 Historic District Review Board; Powers and Duties

The Historic District Review Board shall have the power and authority for issuing or denying Certificates of Appropriateness for construction, reconstruction, substantial exterior alteration, razing, or relocation within the historic district. In addition, the Board shall have the following duties:

- A. To assist and advise the Town Council, the Planning Commission, and other Town departments, agencies, and property owners in matters involving historically significant sites at buildings or other properties in historic districts such as, but not limited to, appropriate land usage, parking facilities, and signs.
- B. To continuously evaluate conditions and advise owners of historic landmarks or contributing structures or other properties in historic districts on problems of preservation.
- C. To ~~conduct-oversee~~ studies deemed necessary by the Town Council or Planning Commission concerning location of historic districts and means of preservation, utilization, improvement, and maintenance of historic assets in the Town.
- D. To propose additional historic districts or additions or deletions to districts.
- E. To ~~adopt-recommend~~ standards and guidelines for adoption by the Town Council review to supplement the standards set forth in this Ordinance.
- F. To formulate recommendations to the Town Council concerning the establishment of an appropriate system of markers for selected historic sites and buildings, including proposals for the installation and care of such historic markers.
- G. To cooperate with and enlist assistance from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other interested parties both public and private in its efforts to preserve, restore, and conserve historic landmarks, buildings, sites, or areas within the Town.

Section 8.15 Summary of Administration Review Procedures *[revised – 08/16/18]*

In general, it is the purpose of this ordinance to establish review procedures for actions affecting properties in the Historic District. ~~To this end, some actions are exempted from special historic and architectural review altogether, except as normal review may be necessary for issuance of a building permit. Other actions, depending on the possible consequences thereof, may be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator or by the Historic District Review Board acting with original jurisdiction, or, in the most serious cases, action by the Town Council following action by the Historic District Review Board.~~

- A. Actions related to "Standards" will be exclusively the purview of the Zoning Administrator.
- B. Actions related to "Guidelines" will be the purview of the Historic District Review Board, except that guidelines that are relatively straight forward may be delegated to the Zoning Administrator at the discretion of the Historic District Review Board.
- C. In all cases the decisions of the Zoning Administrator shall be appealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals as stated in §2-2.6.2.C, the decisions of the Historic District Review Board may be appealed to the Town Council, and the final decisions of the Town Council may be appealed to the Circuit Court of Northampton County.

**Section 8.16 Certain Minor Actions Exempted from Review by the Historic District
Review Board [revised – 08/16/18]**

Within the Historic District certain minor actions which are deemed not to have permanent effects upon the character of the historic district are exempted from review for architectural compatibility by the Historic District Review Board. Such actions shall include the following and any similar actions which in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator will have no more effect on the character of the district than those listed:

- A. Repainting the structure. (Original painting of masonry surfaces is not exempted from review.)
- B. Replacement of missing or broken windowpanes, roofing slates, tiles, porch floor, posts, rails, shingles, window frames, or shutters where no substantial change in design or material is proposed.
- C. Addition or deletion of storm doors or storm windows, window gardens, or similar appurtenances and portable air conditioners located in existing windows, doors, or other existing wall openings (if no building permit is required for such addition or deletion).
- D. Addition or deletion of television and radio antennas or skylights and solar collectors in locations not visible from a public street or a waterway.
- E. Landscaping involving minor grading, walks, low retaining walls, temporary fencing, fencing immediately surrounding trash receptacles or outdoor ventilation units, small fountains, outdoor showers and ponds which will not substantially affect the character of the property and its surroundings.
- F. Construction of off-street loading areas and off-street parking areas.
- G. Creation of outside storage in a commercial or industrial district which does not require structural changes or major grading and is not visible from a public street or waterway.

~~Any changes to a structure (contributing and noncontributing) that are not visible from a public street or public place, i.e., alteration that is obscured from view from the street by the original structure and not merely obscured by fencing landscaping, non-historic additions, or other impermanent obstructions. Alleys in this context are not to be considered public places.~~

- H. Additions or deletions to an existing building which are not subject to public view and which will not significantly alter the character of the building. Alleys in this context are not to be considered public places.

~~G.I.~~ Covered by other zoning ordinance requirements as administrated by the Zoning Administrator unless altered by the overlay ordinance.

- J. Receiving historic preservation tax credits through state or federal offices.

K. Demolition of non-contributing buildings or structures.

~~Receiving historic preservation tax credits through state or federal offices.~~

~~Demolition of non-contributing buildings or structures.~~

L. Alterations or repairs made to a building or structure for the purpose of temporary emergency stabilization.

~~H.~~

Section 8.17 Delegation of Authority [revised – 08/16/18]

- A. The Zoning Administrator or Building Official shall have authority to order that work be stopped and that an appropriate application be filed for review by the Historic District Review Board in any case where the action has an adverse effect on the Historic District.
- B. The Historic District Review Board shall periodically review the design guidelines contained in this section.

Section 8.18 Approval of Historic District Review Board Required [revised – 08/16/18]

- A. Except as herein otherwise provided in this article, no building or structure, including signs, shall be erected, reconstructed, restored, or substantially altered in exterior appearance and no contributing buildings or structures shall be razed or demolished within a historic district and no permit authorizing same shall be granted unless and until the same is approved by the Historic District Review Board and a Certificate of Appropriateness has been issued by that body, with right of direct appeal to the Town Council as hereinafter provided, as being architecturally compatible with the historical, cultural, and/or architectural aspects of the structure and its surroundings.
- B. "Substantial alterations" shall be defined as any and all work done on buildings, structures, or sites in a historic district other than those specifically exempted herein:
 - 1. General examples of "non-substantial" alterations:
 - a. Work done to prevent deterioration or to replace parts of a structure with similar materials in order to correct any deterioration, decay of, or damage to any structure or on any part thereof, or
 - b. To restore same as nearly as practical to its condition prior to such deterioration, decay, or damage.
 - 2. Examples of work not constituting "substantial alteration" include those minor actions exempted from review by §8.16 of this article.
 - 3. General examples of work constituting "substantial alterations" include:

- a. Construction of a new building at any location or a new ~~permanent~~permanent accessory building requiring a building permit on a landmark or contributing property or on a site within the Historic District.
 - b. Any addition to or alteration of a building which increases the square footage of the building or otherwise alters substantially its size, height, contour, or outline.
 - c. Any change or alteration of the exterior architectural style of a structure, including removal or rebuilding of porches, openings, dormers, window sashes, chimneys, columns, structural elements, stairways, terraces, and the like. (What about decks, patios, and fences?)
 - d. Any change or alteration of ~~the exterior color scheme of the structure or~~ any of its significant elements, including porches, openings, dormers, window sashes, awnings, canopies, chimneys, columns, stairways, terraces, decks, fences or any other structural elements. This also applies to all structures on the site.
 - e. Addition to or removal of one or more stories or alteration of a roof line.
 - f. Any other major actions not specifically covered by the terms of this section, but which would have an effect on the character of the historic district.
- C. In any case in which there might be some question as to whether a project may be exempted from review, may constitute a minor action, or may constitute "substantial alteration," the Zoning Administrator shall be contacted for an interpretation prior to commencement of work.

Section 8.19. Certificate of Appropriateness *[revised – 08/16/18]*

Evidence of the approval required under the terms of the Historic District shall be a certificate of appropriateness issued ~~by on behalf of~~ the Historic District Review Board, stating that the demolition, moving, or changes in the exterior architectural appearance of the proposed construction, reconstruction, alteration, or restoration for which application has been made are approved by the Historic District Review Board or Zoning Administrator. The Historic District Review Board may permit modifications of original proposals if such modifications are formally acknowledged, clearly described, and recorded in the records of the case. A certificate of appropriateness shall be in addition to any other permits required. Any action by applicants following issuance of a permit-requiring certificate of appropriateness shall be in accord with the application and material approved and any conditions appended thereto.

Section 8.20 Design Guidelines; Standards for Review *[revised – 11/21/19]*

- A. The Historic District Review Board shall be guided in its decisions by the design guidelines.

- B. It shall be the duty of the Historic District Review Board to ~~prepare-recommend~~ amendments to the design guidelines.
- C. The Town Council shall adopt and amend the design guidelines after conducting at least one public hearing pursuant to §15.22204 Code of Virginia.
- D. Guidelines shall offer general recommendations for all new infill buildings in Cape Charles' historic district. New infill construction building is not to diminish, detract, or distract from the character of surrounding historic buildings or the overall historic district. ~~However, the intent of these infill guidelines is not to be overly specific or to dictate certain designs but to allow for the creation of new buildings that are compatible with their historic settings.~~ The Historic District Review Board may be more flexible in applying these new construction guidelines.
- ~~C.E.~~ Alterations and additions to non-contributing structures that affect the exterior appearance of the structure or additions should be compatible with the district following ~~separately-created the~~ guidelines for New (Infill) Construction, ~~and should not aim to replicate historic buildings, nor return the structure to its original form.~~ Criteria for non-contributing structures ~~are to may~~ be less restrictive than that applied to contributing structure rehabilitation.

Section 8.21 Demolition: Alternate Procedure: Offer to Sell

- A. Prior to approval of any application for demolition, modification, moving, or removal of a contributing structure within the Cape Charles Historic District; the zoning administrator, the Historic District Review Board, or the Town Council, as applicable, shall review the application for its compatibility with each of the following guidelines.
1. Whether or not the contributing structure is of such architectural or historic interest that its removal would be to the detriment of the character and integrity of the Historic District.
 2. Whether or not the contributing structure is of such interest or significance that it would qualify as a National, State, or local historic landmark.
 3. Whether or not retention of the contributing structure would help to preserve and protect a historic place or area of historic interest in the Town.
 4. Whether or not plans for future use of the site after demolition are appropriate, compatible, sympathetic, and complimentary to the character and integrity of the Historic District.

No subsequent application under Section 8.21A regarding the contributing structure may be made until more than one year after a final denial by the Town Council.

- B. In addition to the right of appeal herein elsewhere set forth, the owner of a contributing structure in the Cape Charles Historic District shall as a matter of right

be entitled to move, remove, modify, raze or demolish all or part of such contributing structure provided that:

1. The owner has applied to the Town Council for such right.
2. The owner has for the applicable period of time set forth in the time schedule in Section 8.21.B.4., and at a price reasonably related to the fair market value of the contributing structure and the land, other improvements and appurtenances pertaining thereto (assuming the buyer will be required to preserve and restore the contributing structure in place on the property) as determined by the average of two (2) real estate appraisals from two (2) different appraisers, made a bona fide, public offer (pursuant to the requirements of this Section 8.21 B.) to sell such contributing structure, and the land, other improvements and appurtenances pertaining thereto (collectively, the "Property"), to the Town and any other person, firm, corporation, government or political subdivision or agency thereof, which gives reasonable assurance that it is willing to preserve and restore the contributing structure in place. If the two (2) required real estate appraisals submitted by the Owner differ by more than ten percent (10%), the owner must have the Property appraised a third time at his own expense by a third real estate appraiser selected by the Town. The bona fide offer to sell must be at a price not more than the average of the two such appraisals that are closest to one another.
3. No bona fide contract, binding upon all parties thereto, shall have been executed for the sale of any such Property thereto, prior to the expiration of the applicable time period set forth in the time schedule in Section 8.21.B.4. Any appeal which may be taken to the court from the decision of the Town Council, whether instituted by the owner or by any other proper party, notwithstanding the provisions heretofore stated relating to a stay of the decision appealed from, shall not affect the right of the owner to make the bona fide offer to sell referred to above.
4. The time schedule for offers to sell shall be as follows:
 - a. Three (3) consecutive months when the offering price is less than twenty-five thousand dollars.
 - b. Four (4) consecutive months when the offering price is twenty-five thousand or more but less than forty thousand dollars.
 - c. Five (5) consecutive months when the offering price is forty thousand or more but less than fifty-five thousand dollars.
 - d. Six (6) consecutive months when the offering price is fifty-five thousand dollars or more but less than seventy-five thousand dollars.
 - e. Seven (7) consecutive months when the offering price is seventy-five thousand dollars or more but less than ninety thousand dollars.

f. Twelve (12) consecutive months when the offering price is ninety thousand dollars or more.

5. Before making a bona fide offer to sell, the owner shall first file a statement with the Zoning Administrator along with the appraisals required by Section 8.21.B.2. The statement shall identify the Property, state the offering price, the date the offer of sale is to begin, the names and addresses of adjacent property owners, and the names and addresses of listing real estate agents, if any. The owner shall be required to maintain the Property in at least its current condition during the term of the public offer. No time period set forth in the time schedule contained in Section 8.21.B.4. shall begin to run until the statement has been filed. Within five (5) business days after receipt of a statement, copies of the statement shall be delivered by the Zoning Administrator to the Town Manager, the Town Council, and the Historic District Review Board. Within thirty (30) days after the receipt of a statement, the Zoning Administrator: (a) shall place notice of the statement once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town, (b) post a notice of the statement prominently on the Property, and (c) send notice of the offer, accompanied by the statement, to the adjacent property owners by certified or registered mail.
6. During the time period for the offer to sell, the Town may take steps as it deems necessary to preserve the contributing structure in accordance with the purposes of this article. Such steps may include, but are not limited to, consultation with civic groups, public agencies, and interested citizens, recommendations for acquisition of the Property by public or private bodies or agencies, and exploration of the possibility of moving structures or other features on the Property.
7. The fact that an offer to sell a Property is made at a price reasonably related to fair market value as described previously may be questioned by any party who files with the Zoning Administrator, on or before sixty (60) days after the offer for sale has begun, a petition in writing signed by at least twenty-five (25) persons owning real estate within Cape Charles, questioning such valuation. Upon receipt of such a petition, one (1) disinterested real estate appraiser shall be appointed by the petitioners, and the cost of the appraisal shall be borne by the petitioners. Said appraiser shall forthwith make an appraisal of the Property on the same basis as described in B.2. above, and the Town shall use the average of the lower two appraisals to establish fair market value under Section 8.21.B. In the event such valuation indicates that the price at which the applicant offered to sell the Property was at a price that is higher than the Property's fair market value, the offer to sell shall be void and of no force and effect for purposes of satisfying the requirements set forth in this Section 8.21.B.

Section 8.224 Maintenance and Repair Required [revised – 08/16/18]

- A. The purpose of this section is solely to stop demolition by neglect, whereby owners of property in the Historic District allow the structure, or historic attributes of the structure, to become a hazardous building or structure. Any building or structure which is determined to be in such an unsafe condition that it would endanger life or

property are governed by Town Code Chapter 18, Article III, Unsafe Buildings or Structures and under the sole jurisdiction of the Town's Code Official.

- B. All buildings and structures in the Historic District shall be preserved against decay and deterioration and maintained free from structural defects to the extent that such decay, deterioration, or defects may, in the opinion of the Historic District Review Board and Town Council, result in the irreparable deterioration of any exterior appurtenance or architectural feature or produce a detrimental effect upon the character of the district as a whole or upon the life and character of the structure itself, including but not limited to:
1. The deterioration of exterior walls or other vertical supports, including broken doors and windowpanes;
 2. The deterioration of roofs or horizontal members;
 3. The deterioration of exterior chimneys;
 4. The deterioration or crumbling of exterior plaster, wood, or mortar;
 5. The deterioration of any feature so as to create or permit the creation of any hazardous or unsafe condition or conditions.
- C. After notice by the ~~Historic District Review Board~~ Zoning Administrator or Building Official by certified mail of specific instances of failure to maintain or repair and of an opportunity to appear before the Historic District Review Board, the owner or person in charge of said structure shall have ninety (90) days to remedy such violation. Thereafter, each day during which there exists any violation of this section shall constitute a separate offense and shall be punishable as provided in this ordinance. In the alternative, if the owner fails to act, the Historic District Review Board may recommend to the Town Council that the Zoning Administrator, after due notice to the owner, enter the property and make or cause to be made such repairs as are necessary to preserve the integrity and safety of the structure and the reasonable costs thereof shall be placed as a lien against the property.

Section 8.22-23 File of Actions to be Maintained [revised – 08/16/18]

In order to provide guidance for the consistent application of standards and guidelines, ~~for the improvement of standards and guidelines~~, and for assistance to future applicants and the promotion of consistent policies in guiding applicants toward better standards of design, the Zoning Administrator ~~and the Historic District Review Board~~ shall maintain a file containing a record of all applications ~~brought before them~~, including drawings and photographs pertaining thereto and the decision of the Zoning Administrator or the Historic District Review Board in each case. The file documents shall be complied by the Zoning Administrator and maintained by the Town Clerk and remain the property of the Town ~~but, which~~ shall be held-made available for public review.

Section 8.23-24 Administration; Zoning Administrator

Except as authorized herein the Zoning Administrator shall not authorize a permit for any erection, reconstruction, integral exterior facade change, demolition, or razing of a building or structure in the Historic District until the same has been approved by the Historic District Review Board as set forth in the following procedures.

Section 8.24-25 Receipt of Application

Upon receipt of an application by the Zoning Administrator for each permit in the historic district, the Zoning Administrator shall oversee the following:

A. Pre-application review: Persons considering action that requires a certificate of appropriateness, as set forth in this ordinance, are to request an informal informational meeting with the Zoning Administrator and at least one member of the Historic District Review Board prior to submitting a formal application for a certificate of appropriateness. Requests for such informational meetings can be made to the zoning administrator, who will contact a member of the board. The informational meeting will occur within thirty (30) days of receipt of such a request. The purpose of an informational meeting is to review the design guidelines and standards and the procedures for obtaining a certificate of appropriateness. Neither the applicant nor the zoning administrator/board member(s) shall be bound by any informational meeting or conceptual review. Zoning administrator can use discretion on the need for a pre-application meeting or the inclusion of a board representative depending on the nature of project proposed.

~~A.B.~~ Forthwith ~~Pending acceptance of~~ Once accepted by the zoning administrator as a fully completed application, the zoning administrator will forward to the Historic District Review Board a copy of the application, together with a copy of the site plan and the building plans and specifications filed by the applicant if such application requires the Historic District Review Board to meet and render a decision;

~~B.C.~~ Maintain in his their office ~~Compile~~ a record of all such applications and of ~~his handling and the~~ final disposition of the same, records to be maintained by the Town Clerk;

~~C.D.~~ Require applicants to submit three (3) hard copies or one electronic version of material required to permit compliance with the foregoing.

Section 8.265 Material to be Submitted for Review [revised – 08/16/18]

By general rule, or by specific request in a particular case, the Historic District Review Board may require submission of any or all of the following in connection with the application: architectural plans, site plans, landscaping plans, construction methods, proposed exterior lighting arrangements, elevations of all portions of structures with important relationships to public view and such other exhibits and reports as are necessary for its determinations. Requests for approval of activities proposed in historic districts shall be accepted only from the record owner of the land involved in such proposal, or ~~his their~~ agent.

Section 8.276 Other Approvals Required

The Zoning Administrator will review submitted applications for COA against zoning requirements before going to the Historic District Review Board for pre-application review and approval. In any case in which an applicant's proposal also requires the approval of the Board of Zoning Appeals, final action by the Board of Zoning Appeals shall precede final action by the Historic District Review Board. The Board of Zoning Appeals may, however, table a proposal in order to request the comments of the Historic District Review Board. In this case, Final action by the Historic District Review Board shall be taken prior to consideration of proposals requiring site plan approval.

Section 8.27-28 Action by the Historic District Review Board; Issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness [revised – 08/16/18]

The Historic District Review Board shall render a decision upon any request or application for a Certificate of Appropriateness within ~~sixty (60)~~ ninety (90) days after the filing of an application accepted as complete. Failure of the Historic District Review Board to render such a decision within said ~~sixty (60)~~ ninety (90) day period, unless such period be extended with the concurrence of the applicant, shall entitle the applicant to proceed as if the Historic District Review Board had granted the Certificate of Appropriateness applied for prior to denying the Certificate of Appropriateness. The Historic District Review Board, on the basis of the review of information received, shall, upon request, indicate to the applicant the changes in plans and specifications, if any, which in the opinion of the Historic District Review Board, would protect and/or preserve the historical aspects of the landmark, building, structure, or district. If the applicant determines that ~~they~~ he will make the suggested changes ~~and does so in writing~~, the Historic District Review Board may issue the Certificate of Appropriateness. Agreed to changes will be so indicated on the Certificate of Appropriateness.

The zoning administrator will be responsible for issuance of the Certificate of Appropriateness to the applicant and the Town's Code Official office within five (5) business days. Denials of applications are to be stated in writing to the applicant along with the reasons for such denials by the zoning administrator and issued within five (5) business days. Once a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted, that applicant can obtain permits to start work with the understanding that work may be stopped should an appeal be filed to the board's decision within a 30 day period following the decision and bear the consequences of the appeal's final decision.

Section 8.28-29 Expiration of Certificates of Appropriateness [revised – 08/16/18]

Any certificate issued pursuant to this article shall expire of its own limitation twelve (12) months from the date of issuance if the work authorized thereby is not commenced by the end of such twelve (12) month period; and further, any such certificate shall also expire and become null and void if such authorized work is suspended or abandoned for a period of twelve (12) months after being commenced. Any period or periods of time during which the right to use any such certificate is stayed pursuant to this article shall be excluded from the computation of the twelve (12) months.

Section 8.29-30 Inspection by Administrator After Approval

When a Certificate of Appropriateness has been issued, the Zoning Administrator or Town Building Official shall from time to time inspect the alteration or construction approved by such certificate and shall give prompt notice to the applicant of any work not in accordance with such certificate or violating any ordinances of the Town. The Zoning

Administrator or Town Building Official may revoke the certificate or the building permit if violations are not corrected by the applicant in a timely manner.

Section 8.30-31 Delay of Approval

In the case of a proposal other than for demolition or moving but involving a designated landmark where the Historic District Review Board or, on appeal, the Town Council cannot reach a satisfactory agreement with the owner and where the Historic District Review Board or, on appeal, the Town Council decides such action to be in the public interest and not in conflict with any provision of law, it may delay the effective date of an approval for a period of three(3) months from the date of application or appeal to enable negotiations to be undertaken and completed for acquisition of the property for preservation or public use. Failure of negotiations within this period shall be the equivalent of a denial of the application by the Historic District Review Board or, on appeal, by the Town Council.

Section 8.34-32 Conditions Imposed by the Historic District Review Board

In approval of any proposal under this section, the Historic District Review Board or, on appeal, the Town Council may limit such approval by such reasonable conditions as the case may require, including but not limited to, the specifications enumerated for conditional uses and for the Town Council.

Section 8.32-33 Appeals; Decisions of the Historic District Review Board

[revised – 11/15/18]

An appeal from a decision of the Historic District Review Board may be taken to the Town Council by the owner of the property in question or by any party aggrieved and must show that he has an immediate, pecuniary and substantial interest in the litigation, and not a remote or indirect interest, which shall be taken within thirty (30) days after the decision appealed from by filing with the Zoning Administrator the following: a notice of appeal specifying the grounds thereof; a signed statement listing any personal or business relationship with any general or subcontractors associated with the project under appeal; a signed statement that all real and personal property taxes are current as of the date of the filed appeal notice; a signed statement listing any personal or business relationship or partnership with the property owner(s) associated with the project under appeal; a fee equal in value to the fee paid by the property owner(s) associated with the project under appeal. The person submitting the appeal shall not be allowed to present any evidence that was not presented to the Historic District Review Board, nor are they allowed to contact individual members of the Town Council prior to appeal meeting. Council members having any relevant interaction with the applicant shall disclose such interaction prior to considering the appeal. The Zoning Administrator ~~shall transmit to the Town Council within five (5) days~~will prepare a document of all the papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed from was taken. The Town Council shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing, give public notice thereof and decide the same within sixty (60) days from the date the person submitted a request for appeal. At the hearing the appealing party may appear in person or by agent. In exercising its powers, the Town Council may, in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance, reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify any order, requirement, decision, or determination appealed from

and make such order, requirement, decision or determination as ought to be made and to that end shall have all the powers of the Historic District Review Board.

Section 8.33-34 Appeals; Decisions of the Zoning Administrator [revised – 11/15/18]

An appeal from a decision of the Zoning Administrator may be taken to the Board of Zoning Appeals by the owner of the property in question or by any party aggrieved and must show that he has an immediate, pecuniary and substantial interest in the litigation, and not a remote or indirect interest, which shall be taken within thirty (30) days after the decision appealed from by filing with the Zoning Administrator the following: a notice of appeal specifying the grounds thereof; a signed statement listing any personal or business relationship with any general or subcontractors associated with the project under appeal; a signed statement that all real and personal property taxes are current as of the date of the filed appeal notice; a signed statement listing any personal or business relationship or partnership with property owner(s) associated with the project under appeal. The Zoning Administrator shall transmit to the Board of Zoning Appeals within five (5) days all the papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed from was taken. The Board of Zoning Appeals shall fix a reasonable time for the meeting, give public notice thereof as required pursuant to §15.2-2204; Code of Virginia, and decide the same within sixty (60) days. At the meeting the party may appear in person or by agent. In exercising its powers, the Board of Zoning Appeals may reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or may modify, any order, requirement, decision, or determination appealed from and make such order, requirement, decision or determination as ought to be made.

Section 8.34-35 Appeal to the Circuit Court from a Decision of the Town Council

[revised – 11/15/18]

An appeal from a final decision of the Town Council may be filed with the Circuit Court within thirty (30) days after said decision in the manner prescribed by law by the owner of the property in question, by any party aggrieved and must show that he has an immediate, pecuniary and substantial interest in the litigation, and not a remote or indirect interest, or by the Historic District Review Board. The filing of an appeal shall stay the decision of the Town Council pending the outcome of the appeal to the court, except that the filing of such petition shall not stay the decision of the Town Council if such decision denies the right to raze or demolish a designated landmark, building, or structure. The court may reverse or modify the decision of the Town Council, in whole or part, if it finds upon review that the decision of the governing body is contrary to law or that its decision is arbitrary and constitutes an abuse of discretion, or it may affirm the decision of the Town Council.

Section 8.35-36 Violations and Penalties

Any violation of this Article and the penalties for all such violations shall be as set forth in §2.4.3 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Section 8.36-37 Definitions [revised – 08/16/18]

For the purpose of this article, ~~certain~~ terms and words pertaining to the Historic District are hereby defined. ~~The general rules of construction contained in Article II of this Ordinance are applicable to these definitions.~~

~~**ALTERATION** is any change, modification, or addition to a part or all of the exterior of any building or structure.~~

~~**BUILDING** is any enclosed or open structure which is a combination of materials to form a construction for occupancy or use.~~

~~**ADMINISTRATOR, THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**, is that person appointed by the Town Council as the individual who issues the permit for the construction, alteration, reconstruction, repair, restoration, demolition, or razing of all or part of any building.~~

~~**BUILDING PERMIT** is an approval statement signed by the Building Permit Office authorizing the construction, alteration, reconstruction, repair, restoration, demolition, or razing of all or a part of any building.~~

~~**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS** is a certificate or other statement indicating approval by the Administrator or the Historic District Review Board as the case may require of plans for construction alteration, reconstruction, repair, restoration, relocation, demolition, or razing of a building or structure or part thereof in a historic district.~~

~~**CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES** are those properties constructed fifty (50) years or more ago.~~

~~**DESIGN GUIDELINES** are those set of guidelines, standards, and regulations adopted pursuant to §8.20 of this Code.~~

~~**Guidelines** are parameters within which the Historic District Review Board has the discretion to act and make decisions.~~

~~**HISTORIC DISTRICT** means an area containing buildings or places in which historic events occurred or having special public value because of notable architectural or other features relating to the cultural or artistic heritage of the community of such significance as to warrant conservation and preservation.~~

~~**HISTORIC LANDMARK** is defined as any building or place listed on the National Register of Historic Places or on the Register of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.~~

~~**RECONSTRUCTION** is any or all work needed to remake or rebuild all or part of any building to a sound condition, but not necessarily of original materials.~~

~~**REPAIRS** are any or all work involving the replacement of existing work with equivalent material for the purpose of maintenance, but not including any addition, change, or modification in construction.~~

RESTORATION is any or all work connected with the returning to or restoring of a building or a part of any building to its original condition through the use of original or nearly original materials.

Standards are requirements that are evaluated by the Zoning Administrator and not under the discretion of the Historic District Review Board.

This original ordinance was duly considered following a required public hearing held on December 11, 2001 and adopted by the Town Council of Cape Charles at its regular session on the same day. All members voted in favor of its adoption: Chris Bannon, Charles Brown, Donald Clarke, James Davis, Dave Flora, and Frank Lewis.

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Definition Changes resulting from Article VIII Revision
~~August 19, 2020~~March 24, 2021

ADMINISTRATOR, THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, means the official charged with the enforcement of the zoning ordinance. The Administrator may be any appointed or elected official who is ~~by formal resolution~~ designated to the position by the Town Council. The Administrator may serve with or without compensation as determined by the Council.

ALTERATION means any change or rearrangement in the supporting members of an existing building, such as bearing walls, columns, beams, girders, or interior partitions, as well as any exterior change such as in doors, windows, roof, siding, porches, means of ingress or egress, or any enlargement to or diminution of a building or structure, whether horizontally or vertically, or the moving of a building or structure from one location to another.

BUILDING means any structure having a roof supported by walls which is solidly enclosed, including any area which is solidly enclosed with glass or any other rigid material which will not allow for the passage of air.

BUILDING PERMIT means written permission issued by proper authority for the construction, repair, alteration, ~~or~~ addition, restoration, demolition, or razing of all or a part of any building or structure. ~~to a structure.~~

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS is a certificate or other statement indicating approval by the Administrator, the Harbor Area Review Board or the Historic District Review Board as the case may require of plans for construction, alteration, reconstruction, repair, restoration, demolition, or razing of a building or structure or part thereof.

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE OR PROPERTY means a structure, building, or place constructed on or before ~~1964~~1940 OR which has special significance because of notable architectural or historic features relating to the cultural or artistic heritage of the community which are of such importance as to warrant conservation and preservation. ~~(from 8.38) The National Register of Historic Places (amended 2019) provides the listing of contributing structures and properties. If a structure or property is not listed in the register, the date of the property or structure will determine classification (i.e., structures and properties built before 1965 will be considered contributing) unless there is evidence presented to the Historic District Review Board for their determination otherwise. Should a building or structure within the boundaries of the historic district not be listed in the national register, the building or structure will be classified as noncontributing.~~

DESIGN GUIDELINES are those set of guidelines, standards, and regulation and recommendations adopted pursuant to §8.20 and §9.20 of this Code. Guidelines are parameters within which the Historic District Review Board has the discretion to act and make decisions.

HISTORIC AREA-DISTRICT is an area designated by the state government within which buildings, structures, appurtenances, and places are of basic and vital importance because of their association with history; or because of their unique architectural style and scale and detail; or because of their being a

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part of or related to a square, park, or area or general arrangement of which should be preserved and/or developed according to cultural, historical, or architectural motives or purposes.

NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE means a structure ~~built after 1940-1964 OR which has been altered to such a degree that is no longer representative of the period in which it was built or is in such poor physical condition that its retention is difficult.~~ that is not a contributing structure. ~~(from the Historic District guidelines)~~

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: The National Register of Historic Places recognizes buildings, sites, and district for their historic significance, and requires has documented that the that significance be associated with a discrete chronological period for Cape Charles Historic District.

PRESERVATION is the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project. However, new exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment.

RECONSTRUCTION is any or all work needed to remake or rebuild all or part of any building to a sound condition, but not necessarily of original materials. It is the process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location. Reconstruction is different from the other historic treatments in that it is undertaken when there are often no visible historic materials extant or only a foundation remains.

REHABILITATION is the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

REPAIRS are any or all work involving the replacement of existing work with equivalent material for the purpose of maintenance, but not including any addition, change, or modification in construction. the return to functionality of existing elements with authentic looking materials.

RESTORATION is any or all work connected with the returning to or restoring of a building or a part of any building to its original condition through the use of original or nearly original materials. It is the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

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STANDARDS are requirements that are evaluated by the Zoning Administrator and not under the discretion of the Historic District Review Board.

BACKGROUND

1996 Preservation Plan

Introduction

In many respects, this document is more of a generalized master plan for the future development of the town, building on the town's historic character, than it is a preservation plan. It views preservation as a means of inducing, or at least supporting, economic development. It does not advocate preservation for preservation's sake, as much as the quality of the town's historic resources may warrant it.

Preservation Approach

The preservation plan for the Town of Cape Charles seeks to identify features that contribute to the physical character of the town and to develop a design approach toward those features that will enhance community character as future change occurs.

Preservation of Historic Fabric

Most important to the preservation of the town's existing character is the preservation of original historic fabric. Wherever possible, the preservation plan should strive to preserve original historic fabric, even if that fabric is not in good condition. At the scale of the town, the preservation of historic fabric involves preserving the overall organization and layout of the community. This means preserving the street system, boundaries, lot configurations, and areas of usage in the town (Mason Avenue for commercial usage, the park and beach for recreation, and the basic character of the various residential areas).

At the scale of the neighborhood, the preservation of historic fabric means preserving historic buildings and streetscapes. Preventing the loss of historic buildings through vacancy, neglect, and decay is an important issue in Cape Charles. Preventing building loss as a result of proposed new development could become an issue as the town's economy is revitalized. Preserving the streetscape means preserving the character and relationship of site features, such as streets, curbs, sidewalks, fences, and vegetation.

At the scale of individual buildings, the preservation of historic fabric means preserving original materials and detailing. The terms "historical integrity" and "building condition" are often used with respect to historic buildings. "Historical integrity" refers to the amount of original historic fabric that a building has, irrespective of the condition of that fabric. A building can have a high degree of historical integrity but be in very poor condition. Conversely, a building can be in very good condition, but have very little significant historic fabric remaining.

The preservation plan places a great deal of value upon retaining a building's or landscape's historical integrity. In rehabilitating a historic building, it is always preferable to retain and repair existing historic building elements rather than to replace them. This is true even if the

repaired element will have visible flaws. The same is true at the scale of the neighborhood and the scale of the town.

When repair is not possible, in-kind replacement is recommended. In-kind replacement refers not only to appearance, but to materials and construction techniques as well. Replacements should attempt to use materials and craftsmanship that match as closely as possible that of the existing historic fabric being removed. At the scale of a building, replacing a severely deteriorated, unrepairable wood double hung window with a metal window, for example, significantly reduces the building's level of integrity. Like that of a fine antique, a loss of integrity results in a loss of real value.

The term "restoration" refers to returning a building or landscape to a specific, previous condition or appearance at a particular period of its history. Restoration of a historic building or landscape is frequently neither necessary nor recommended. Alterations, additions, and changes to a historic resource are considered part of the resource's historical development or evolution. Such alterations and changes can be of historical significance. Because history accrues to a resource over time, it is usually recommended that later historic fabric should not be removed in order to restore a resource to an earlier appearance. "Restoration" of a historic building, landscape, or site feature should be undertaken only when there is good reason and only when there is sufficient documentation or evidence existing to determine what the actual appearance and conditions were at the period to which the resource is being restored.

When a resource has lost its historical integrity because of changes and alterations that are not significant to its historical development and are not sympathetic to its character, both contemporary alteration and restoration are options to be considered. When adequate documentation is not available to restore a resource accurately to a previous appearance, speculative restoration should not be attempted. In such a circumstance, which is the case more often than not, it is recommended that a contemporary design be developed that is sympathetic and complementary to the character of the resource.

In addition to above-ground historic resources, as previously noted, archeological resources are significant to the history of Cape Charles. Archeological resources include potential resources both within the historic portion of the town as well as potential resources in the undeveloped landscapes north and south of the town. As these areas are developed, the ground will be disturbed and the information available through the archeological record will be lost. Preliminary archeological investigations have been undertaken on the land associated with the proposed development of the Accawmacke Plantation. The town should be aware of archeologically sensitive areas in Cape Charles and should plan for appropriate treatment of significant sites as part of the planning and development process.

In Cape Charles, the town, the neighborhoods, the streetscape, and the buildings have a very high degree of historical integrity. On the whole, these resources have had very few adverse changes or alterations. In adapting these resources to new uses, or in rehabilitating them to be attractive to new markets, it is recommended that existing historic fabric be retained wherever possible.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines have two purposes. The first is educational. Design guidelines educate property owners in the appreciation of their buildings, in appropriate maintenance techniques, and in making decisions regarding potential changes. The second purpose of design guidelines is for use in a design review process. Design guidelines represent the level of consensus that the community has reached with regard to physical change in the community. It outlines the framework and informs the judgments around which design decisions are made. It is not a set of rules. Rules are an easy way to gain compliance but are authoritarian, lack flexibility, and are counterproductive. In order to allow the maximum flexibility in accommodating change, design goals and principles should be established, not rules. Design guidelines outline and illustrate the desired *goals and principles* that will contribute toward, reinforce, and work with the *character of a building* or a neighborhood. The owner or designer are encouraged to exercise their creativity or personal preferences in determining how to achieve those goals and principles.

With regard to new structures, it is not the purpose of design guidelines to require "historical" designs or the adherence to a particular style, formula, or set of architectural elements. "Period architecture" and the strict quotation of architectural elements and details is distinctly not their intent. There is a wide range of building periods, styles, and types that contribute to the character of Cape Charles' residential neighborhoods. This diversity itself is a key element of the town's character. To walk in Cape Charles is to see virtually every architectural style from the town's founding in 1883 through the 1940s. There is no strictly "correct" style in Cape Charles. The slavish and literal copying of architectural styles and elements would trivialize and confuse the genuine historic architecture of the town. What is fascinating about the buildings in Cape Charles is that they are real, the genuine article, not copies. In order to contribute to the clarity of the town's history and development, new construction should appear to be at the end of the architectural continuum, and not mistaken to be somewhere in the middle. Contemporary architecture should be representative of the time in which it is created and should thus contribute to Cape Charles' architectural diversity for the appreciation of future generations.

New buildings, however, can be contemporary while at the same time being sympathetic and compatible with existing buildings and an existing historic context or character. This is achieved through compatible scale, massing, siting, orientation, materials, and forms. Because there are a variety of ways in which a new building can be compatible with existing buildings, there are no simple rules that can be written. This is why design guidelines and an informed design review process are the most flexible and fair way to achieve the intended goal of preserving neighborhood character.

2021 Community Strategic Plan

Goal

To maintain the authentic character of the historic district

Metric: maintain status on the national registry and a satisfactory audit from the Dept of Historic Resources

2020 (2019) Public Perceptions of Historic Preservation

Table 1: Summary of Likert-Style Items

Survey Items	Usable Responses	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q1. Cape Charles is primarily a <i>beach community</i> that also has a historic town center.	356	3.23	1.35
Q2. Cape Charles is primarily a <i>historic town</i> that also has a beach.	359	3.73	1.22
Q3. Owners of real estate in the historic district (“overlay”) should conform to their property’s historic look and feel when making <i>renovations and repairs</i> .	362	3.97	1.06
Q4. <i>New construction</i> in the historic district of Cape Charles should conform to the look and feel of neighboring homes and buildings.	364	4.18	0.99
Q5. The charming, historic nature of the town’s homes and buildings contributes to property values of real estate in Cape Charles.	362	4.28	0.97
Q6. To reduce demolition of derelict buildings, the Town of Cape Charles should establish a fund that can help low income homeowners make historically accurate repairs and improvements.	363	2.83	1.36
Q7. Such a fund should be financed from fines levied against property owners who do not conform to the historic preservation zoning guidelines.	359	2.50	1.40
Q8. Cape Charles should restrict the amount of new development in areas near the historic center to preserve the small-town nature of the community.	358	3.34	1.40

As Table 1 indicates, on the whole, the respondents to the mailed survey had a somewhat stronger agreement with CC being primarily a historic town, with the importance of the beach being secondary. The higher score for Q2 than Q1 supports this, although the numbers are close enough that the difference is not of a very large magnitude.