

PLANNING CHALLENGE GRANT INITIATIVE

2006 PROJECT SUMMARY

NORTH KINGSTOWN POST ROAD CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION – GROWTH CENTERS, DESIGN GUIDELINES, TDR & ZONING REVISIONS

Project Sponsor: Town of North Kingstown, Department of Planning

Contact: Jonathan Reiner, Planning Director, 401- 268-1571

Statewide Planning Liaison: Nancy Hess, 401-222-6480

Project Cost: \$95,000

Challenge Grant Amount: \$59,000

Anticipated Completion: February 2008

Products: Study Report available at: www.planning.ri.gov/misc/pcgrants6.htm

Background

This Planning Challenge Grant was for the planning and implementation of the primary recommendations identified in the 2005 North Kingstown Post Road Corridor Plan. The 2005 Plan provided data, recommendations, and a framework for implementation through zoning and/or land development ordinances, design guidelines, infrastructure improvements, and other measures. This project focuses on the economic, land use, design, density, infrastructure and transportation improvements along the 4½-mile Post Road Corridor, which has been subject to inconsistent development patterns and significant circulation issues. A \$59,000 Challenge Grant from the Rhode Island Division of Planning/Statewide Planning Program funded implementation tasks outlined in the Post Road Corridor Plan.



Current



Potential

Objectives and Process

This project's primary goal was to revise and develop new land use planning tools that would promote the development of village scale high-density along the Post Road Corridor. Key implementation programs for this project include:

- Village Growth Centers** Promote compact village growth centers that are pedestrian oriented with appealing streets and public spaces.
- Design Guidelines** To establish and eventually maintain a vibrant pedestrian friendly mixed-use Post Road Corridor.
- Transfer of Development Rights** To further support the creation of village scale high-density through the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) from the "sending" zones of undeveloped and target conservation land in Town to the Post Road Corridor "receiving" area.
- Revisions to Zoning Standards** Revise the Town's approach to permitting in an ordinance that is easier to understand and administer. Establish the Post Road Corridor as an economic development center by providing significant density bonus incentives.
- Education & Public Outreach** Through a series of meetings and workshops with the public and business community, to explain the improvements within the Corridor and to receive input regarding community needs, concerns, and visions.

Major Findings and Recommendations

Actions and policies encouraging successful village scale redevelopment along the Post Road Corridor include:

Village Growth Centers – The creation of two, village growth centers. A Quonset/Davisville Village Center oriented towards the formation of high-density economic development opportunities at the Quonset Gateway and high-density infill redevelopment. The second, a Reynolds Farm/Oakdale Road Village Center, oriented towards long-term planned residential and commercial development of vacant and underutilized parcels at high-density with improvements to public infrastructure and utilities.

Design Guidelines – The standards recognize the importance of consistency in building materials, scale and articulation, massing, design, and architecture that represent the region's traditional New England heritage shall be used to shape development. Standards specifically address site design, building size, height, scale, placement, materials, windows, roofline articulation, entryways, landscaping, pedestrian circulation, parking, loading, driveways, signage and lighting.

Transfer of Development Rights – Identify "sending" zones that are a priority for conservation and/or environmentally constrained. Transfer the Development Rights from the "sending" zones to the Post Road Corridor, the designated "receiving" zoning. The program will be purely voluntary however the financial incentives of granting much higher density bonuses in the "receiving" zone will make the program successful. To function efficiently, a TDR Credit Bank will be empowered to negotiate the value of the development rights and sell them when the opportunity arises in the "receiving" zone.

Revisions to Zoning Standards – The revision process started with a comprehensive audit of the dimensional standards, permitted uses, density and other special provisions that could affect the vision for Post Road. The audit also identified procedural and substantive material that may conflict with the goals of the project. The centerpiece of the modifications will be in the specific provisions for Land Development and Development Plan Review. The Post Road Corridor will exist as a separate zoning district and will have access to significant density bonuses through the use of inclusionary mixed use zoning (affordable housing) and TDR.

Education & Public Outreach – The project team has conducted

a broad outreach program to educate stakeholders regarding the scope and value of the proposed changes. Presentations have been made to the Chamber of Commerce, local political organizations, Town Council, Planning Commission, the banking/lending community and individual property owners. A series of renderings were developed by the project architect to help stakeholders visualize the goals for density and design along the Post Road Corridor.

Next Steps

The final steps to implementation include adoption of the ordinances and regulations by the Planning Commission and/or Town Council. It is important that sewer infrastructure improvements along Post Road take place in order to support the anticipated high-density development. The Town will continue to work to promote the programs to transform the Post Road into a vibrant walkable corridor.

