BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date: July 19, 2006 Division: Growth Management

Bulk Item: Yes ___ No X Department: Planning

Staff Contact Person: Ty Symroski

AGENDA ITEM WORDING:
A public hearing to consider adoption of Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island/Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan*. Volume 2 is specifically dedicated to the Safe Harbor and Peninsular Port Areas as well as the Intra-Island Corridors of MacDonald/Maloney Avenues and Fifth and Fourth Avenues of Stock Island.

[1st of two public hearings]

ITEM BACKGROUND:
Volume Two (2) is the culmination of over a year-long planning process during which numerous opportunities for community review, input and feedback were provided. During the onset of the process, 25 individuals representing groups of stakeholders were interviewed. Following the interviews, two interactive workshops were held to gather input, provide updates and share ideas, comments and questions of the findings and interim products. Monroe County published and mailed three newsletters which provided updates and encouraged responses on the County's website. The website hosted alternative concepts and strategies along with an interactive comment card.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing in Marathon on March 8, 2006 and granted conceptual approval of the Plan.

This item was originally scheduled for the April 2006 BOCC meeting. Due to additional information that the community wanted to provide, staff requested continuance of the item until the July 2006 BOCC meeting. The additional information is provided as part of the staff report memo to the BOCC.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COMMISSION ACTION:
On August 20, 2003, the Board of County Commissioners considered the recommendation of the Review Committee and requested Staff to enter into contract negotiations with the chosen respondent of the Request for Proposals. Wallace Roberts and Todd were the chosen respondents by Staff.

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES: N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Approval

TOTAL COST: N/A **BUDGETED:** Yes ___ No N/A

COST TO COUNTY: N/A **SOURCE OF FUNDS:** N/A

REVENUE PRODUCING: Yes N/A No ___ **AMOUNT PER MONTH** N/A **Year** ___

APPROVED BY: County Attorney X OMB/Purchasing ___ Risk Management ___

DIVISION DIRECTOR APPROVAL: TJ 7/5/2-6
Ty Symroski

DOCUMENTATION: Included X Not Required ___

DISPOSITION: ___ **AGENDA ITEM #** ___

MONROE COUNTY

YEAR 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

VOLUME TWO (2) OF THE STOCK ISLAND/KEY HAVEN LIVABLE COMMUNIKEYS MASTER PLAN

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KEY WEST-HARVEY GOVERNMENT CENTER

LIVABLE COMMUNIKEYS
VOLUME 2 OF THE STOCK ISLAND/KEY HAVEN MASTER PLAN

VOLUME 2 IS DEDICATED TO THE SAFE HARBOR AND PENINSULAR PORT AREAS AS WELL AS THE INTRA-ISLAND CORRIDORS OF MACDONALD/MALONEY AVENUES AND FIFTH AND FOURTH AVENUES.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STAFF:	Approval	MARCH 8, 2006
PC:	Approval	MARCH 8, 2006

Resolution #P16-06

BOCC TRANSMITTAL RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO. -2006

A RESOLUTION BY THE MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS **TRANSMITTING** TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS THE REQUEST FILED BY THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT AMENDING THE YEAR 2010 COMPREHENSVIE PLAN BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED AS VOLUME TWO (2) OF THE LIVABLE COMMUNIKEYS MASTER PLAN FOR STOCK ISLAND AND KEY HAVEN TITLED *HARBOR PRESERVATION/REDEVELOPMENT AND INTRA-ISLAND CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT PLAN.*

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on April 19, 2006 for the purposes of considering the transmittal to the Florida Department of Community Affairs, for review and comment, a proposed amendment to the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission and the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners support the requested amendments to the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

Section 1. The Board of County Commissioners does hereby adopt the recommendation of the Planning Commission pursuant to the draft ordinance for the adoption of the proposed amendment to the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan; and

Section 2. The Board of County Commissioners does hereby transmit the proposed amendment to the Florida Department of Community Affairs for review and comment in accordance with the provisions of Sections 163.184 and 380.0522, Florida Statutes; and

Section 3. The Monroe County Staff is given the authority to prepare and submit the required transmittal letter and supporting documents for the proposed amendment in accordance with the requirement of 9J-11.0006 of the Florida Administrative Code; and

Section 4. The Clerk of the Board is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the Director of Planning and Environmental Resources.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, Florida, at a regular meeting held on the day of A.D., 2006.

Mayor Charles "Sonny" McCoy	_____
Mayor Pro Tem Murray Nelson	_____
Commissioner George Neugent	_____
Commissioner David Rice	_____
Commissioner Dixie Spehar	_____

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY_____
Charles "Sonny" McCoy

(SEAL)

ATTEST: DANNY L. KOLHAGE, CLERK

_____
DEPUTY CLERK

MONROE COUNTY ATTORNEY
APPROVED AS TO FORM
Date: 7/6/06

BOCC ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE NO._____-2006

AN ORDINANCE BY THE MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AMENDING THE YEAR 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND **ADOPTING** VOLUME 2 OF THE LIVABLE COMMUNIKEYS MASTER PLAN FOR STOCK ISLAND AND KEY HAVEN TITLED *HARBOR PRESERVATION/REDEVELOPMENT AND INTRA-ISLAND CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT PLAN*; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF ALL ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH; AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TO FORWARD A CERTIFIED COPY OF THIS ORDINANCE TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY ARFAIRS AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan Objective 101.20 identifies the Livable CommunKeys Planning Program as a planning program designed to address community needs while balancing the needs of all of Monroe County; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners makes the following Findings of Fact:

1. Policy 101.20.1 of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan directs Monroe County to develop a series of Community Master Plans while shall include specific criteria, including close coordination with other community plans ongoing in the same area and sets out twelve principles to direct development of the master plans.

2. The Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan for Stock Island is the product of the Livable CommunKeys program as outlined in the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan Objective 101.20.

3. Policy 501.1.1 of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan states that Monroe County shall permit only port and port-related land use within the Safe Harbor/Peninsular port area of Stock Island.

4. Policy 502.1.2 of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan states that Monroe County shall permit land uses supportive, complementary to or otherwise port related nearby and adjacent to the Safe Harbor/Peninsular Port areas of Stock Island.

5. Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island/Key Haven Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan* sets out the following six principles; preserve the working waterfront, revitalize the port area while improving the physical setting, accommodate a diversity of water-oriented activities and

people, connect the port area to the surrounding community, provide access along the waterfront, and to respect and reinforce the heritage and character of the community.

6. The Master Plan will be adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan, and therefore any conflicts between the two must be resolved.

7. The Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan, Volume Two titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan* was reviewed during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission held on March 8, 2006.

8. The strategies and Action Items in Volume Two of the Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan for Stock Island and Key Haven are the equivalent to the Objectives and Policies in the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

9. The Planning Commission was presented with the Volume Two of the Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan for Stock Island and Key Haven on March 8, 2006.

10. The Board of County Commissioners was presented with the following information, which by reference is hereby incorporated as part of the record of said hearing:

a. Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan.*

b. Objective 101.20 mandates that the County complete a series of master plan documents to address local needs while balancing the needs of all of Monroe County Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan requires implementation of the recommended Strategies and Action Items. The Master Plan must be adopted as an amendment to and a part of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

c. Policy 101.20.1 requires the County to develop each master plan in accordance with twelve specific principles.

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners makes the following Conclusions of Law based on the evidence presented:

1. The Livable CommuniKeys Program requires Monroe County to produce a series of Master Plans which address local needs while balancing the needs of all of Monroe County; and

2. Volume Two (2) of the Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement*

3. Volume Two (2) of the Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan*, as adopted, recommends the amendments proposed by this Ordinance to avoid conflicts with existing Objectives and Policies and to enable the implementation of the Livable CommuniKeys Program; and

4. The proposed amendments are internally consistent with and further the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan and the Principles of Guiding Development set forth in Chapter 380, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners hereby supports the decision of the Monroe County Planning Commission and the Staff of the Monroe County Planning Department; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners that the following amendments to the Monroe County 2010 Comprehensive Plan be approved, adopted and transmitted to the state land planning agency for approval.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

Section 1. The Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan for Stock Island to Key Haven is adopted as an amendment to the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

Section 2. Amend Policy 101.20.2 in the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan to add paragraph 3 and read as follows:

POLICY 101.20.2

The Community Master Plans shall be incorporated into the 2010 Comprehensive Plan as a part of the plan and be implemented as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The following Community Master Plans have been completed in accordance with the principles outlined in this section and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners:

3. Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan* dated November 2005 and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on April 19, 2006 is incorporated by reference into the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The term Strategies in the Master Plan is equivalent to the term Objectives in the Comprehensive Plan and the term Action Item is equivalent to the term Policy; the meanings and requirements for implementation are synonymous.

the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The term Strategies in the Master Plan is equivalent to the term Objectives in the Comprehensive Plan and the term Action Item is equivalent to the term Policy; the meanings and requirements for implementation are synonymous.

Section 3. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, item, change, or provision of this ordinance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance shall not affected by such validity.

Section 4. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of said conflict.

Section 5. This ordinance shall be transmitted to the Planning Department to the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to Chapter 163 and 380, Florida Statutes.

Section 6. This ordinance shall be filed in the Office of the Secretary of the State of Florida but shall not become effective until a notice is issued by the Florida Department of Community Affairs or Administrative Commission approving same in accordance with Florida Statutes 380.05(6) and (11) and finding the amendment in compliance with Chapter 163, Florida Statutes.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, Florida, at a regular meeting held on the _____ day of _____, A.D., 2006.

Mayor Charles "Sonny" McCoy _____
Mayor Pro Tem Murray Nelson _____
Commissioner George Neugent _____
Commissioner David Rice _____
Commissioner Dixie Spehar _____

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY_____
Charles "Sonny" McCoy

(SEAL)

ATTEST: DANNY L. KOLHAGE, CLERK

_____
DEPUTY CLERK

MONROE COUNTY ATTORNEY
APPROVED AS TO FORM
Date: 4/19/06

BOCC STAFF REPORT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners

THRU: Aref Joulani, Director, Planning and Environmental Resources Department

FROM: Jose Papa, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager

RE: Additional Action Items: Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan Volume 2 Stock Island/Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Plan

DATE: July 5, 2006

MEETING DATE: July 19, 2006

Background

At the request of the property owners on Safe Harbor in Stock Island, the Planning Department staff assisted with an economic survey of property owners in Safe Harbor. In addition to economic data such as gross receipts, the survey also looked at the boat inventory, # of persons employed in Safe Harbor, persons living within Safe Harbor, and a count of available housing units.

Summary of Findings

The economic survey was conducted in order to identify the different income activities found in Safe Harbor. The survey shows that a number of marine related activities ranging from Boat Building to Research vessel operations are found within Safe Harbor. In addition to these main activities, support activities such as underwater services, fuel sales, boat yard, and restaurant/bar add to the economic activity found in Safe Harbor. These marine related activities account for $36,112,111 in gross receipts. Other activities though not necessarily marine related such as building receipts, or artists studio, also add to the economic activity in Safe Harbor. These non-marine related activity accounts for $4,794,000 in gross receipts.

The businesses found along Safe Harbor employ about 359 people. Of these 359 employees, 191 or approximately 53% live within the harbor, with a majority of these residents (164 of 191) living on a boat. In addition to persons employed within Safe Harbor, there are a total of 186 persons who live in Safe Harbor but are not employed within Safe Harbor. 65 of these 186 persons live on a boat within Safe Harbor.

Finally, the survey included an inventory of boats found within the Harbor. There were a total of 860 boats or slips found in the Harbor. The largest type of boats found in the Harbor are recreational boats (160), followed by fishing boats greater than 40' in length (101). Other boats

in the harbor include boats used for residence (liveaboards) (99), fishing boats less than 40' in length (65), shrimp boats, as well as tugs, treasure boats, and towboats.

Conclusions

Based on the survey conducted, there are a variety of uses which comprise the working waterfront, these uses need to be recognized and addressed through the development of new Land Development Regulations. These amendments could include expanding the definition of commercial fishing to include tugs and barges, treasure boats, or other large sailing vessels. The community has also suggested setting aside a percentage of slips for the commercial fishing industry as a way of ensuring the availability of space for commercial fishing industry.

Other amendments suggested by the business community at Safe Harbor include:

- Creating water-borne density, addressing that a percentage of owned or leased bay bottom that may be used for docking.

- Work with owners of large tracts of land to promote new sources of income that will help support existing operations on the property.

- Address the physical limitations of being able to redevelop or reconstruct structures that meet the required bulk regulations such as (setbacks, bufferyards, parking, etc.). It has been suggested that non-conforming structures be allowed to build back within the existing footprint.

- Finally, provide more flexibility in parking requirements by allowing water based public parking or allowing more flexibility in the use of on-street parking, and/or setback requirements.

Recommendation:

Based on the results of the survey conducted for Safe Harbor, staff recommends the inclusion of the amendments described below to the Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Corridor Enhancement Plan.

Page 34. Strategy 3

<u>Action Item: Propose amendments to the Land Development Regulations that recognize the existing marine dependent uses and the supporting uses found in Safe Harbor that are currently not a permitted use in Maritime Industries (MI). These LDR amendments could include the creation of an overlay district that makes the listed uses in the survey as permitted as-of-right.</u>

Page 34. Strategy 3

Action Item: Create water-borne density by addressing that a percentage of owned or leased bay bottom may be used for additional docking use by the commercial fishing industry, its supporting activities, or employee housing.

Page 34. Strategy 3

Action Item: Work with owners of large tracts of land to promote new sources of income that will help support and preserve existing water-dependent uses.

Page 39. Strategy 2

Action Item: Promote the reservation of slips required for commercial fishing industry through a needs analysis.

Page 39. Strategy 3

Action Item: Amend the Land Development Regulations to recognize the physical limitations of being able to redevelop or reconstruct structures that meet the required bulk regulations such as (setbacks, bufferyards, parking, etc.). Allow the reconstruction and redevelopment of non-conforming structures within the existing footprint.

Page 50. Strategy 4

Action Item: Create flexibility in parking requirements by allowing water-based public parking, on-street parking, or promoting the use of bicycle spaces.

Income based on Gross Receipts

Activity	Totals
Marine Related	
Boat Building	2,500,000
Boat Engine and Repair	1,485,000
Charter Boat	1,445,000
Dock Rent	1,586,000
Commercial Fishing	1,650,000
Fin Fishing	11,328,245
Shrimping	3,846,155
Lobster	1,117,205
Marina Operations	700,000
Research Vessel	1,125,000
TOTAL	**26,782,605**
Support Activities	
Boat Yard	2,000,000
Forklift Service	35,000
Fuel Sales	4,046,977
Ice sales	252,529
Marine Architect	475,000
Marine Related Construction	1,000,000
Marine Related (Plumbing)	70,000
Underwater services (Diving)	50,000
Restaurant/Bar	1,200,000
Tow/Salvage	200,000
TOTAL	**9,329,506**
Service Activities	
A/C Mechanic	60,000
Beach Cleaning	200,000
Construction	425,000
Welding	161,000
Woodworking	643,000
Plumbing	1,000,000
TOTAL	**2,489,000**
Rental Receipts	
Building Rental	645,000
Rental Housing	300,000
TOTAL	**945,000**
Other Activities	
Artists	60,000
Auto Storage	100,000
Transfer Station	1,200,000
TOTAL	**1,360,000**
TOTALS	**$40,906,111**

BOAT INVENTORY	TOTALS
Barges	6
Charters	35
Commercial slips	8
Dive boat	1
Houseboat	19
Large Fishing >40'	101
Liveaboard	99
Lobster	10
Power\Sailboats	44
Recreational/Commercial (For Rent)	160
Research Vessels	8
Ships (over 100')	2
Shrimp Boats	
Full Time	17
Transient	52
Small Fishing < 40'	65
Slips	
Dry slips	165
Recreational slips	19
Wet slips	33
Stone Crabs	3
Storage Boats	5
Towboats	2
Treasure Boats	1
Tugs	4
Yacht (over 100')	1
TOTAL	**860**

Employee	Number	Domicile (within harbor)	(Within Harbor on boats)
Artists	3		3
Beach Cleaning	10		
Boat Building/Boat Repair	25	10	
Charter Boat	6	4	5
Commercial Fishing Related	220	162	153
Construction	9		
Marine Architect	4		
Marina Operations	10	7	
Plumbing	12	2	
Research Vessels	14	1	1
Restaurant	25	4	
Towing	2		
Transfer Station/auto storage	8	1	
Underwater services (diving)	2	1	
Welding	2	1	
Woodworking	7.5	2	3
TOTALS	**359.5**	**191**	**164**

Census	Land Based	Boats
	22	10
	69	
	15	
		40
		15
	15	
TOTALS	**121**	**65**

Housing	Units
Rentals	
Apartments	10
Employee Housing	7
TOTALS	**17 units**

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO._____-2006

A RESOLUTION BY THE MONROE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION GRANTING CONCEPTUAL **APPROVAL** OF VOLUME TWO (2) OF THE LIVABLE COMMUNIKEYS MASTER PLAN FOR STOCK ISLAND; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF ALL ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH; AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TO FORWARD A CERTIFIED COPY OF THIS ORDINANCE TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY ARFAIRS AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan Objective 101.20 identifies the Livable CommuniKeys Planning Program as a planning program designed to address community needs while balancing the needs of all of Monroe County; and

WHEREAS, Policy 101.20.1 of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan directs Monroe County to develop a series of Community Master Plans which shall include specific criteria, including close coordination with other community plans ongoing in the same area and sets out twelve principles to direct development of the master plans; and

WHEREAS, the Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan for Stock Island is the product of the Livable CommuniKeys program as outlined in the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan Objective 101.20; and

WHEREAS, Policy 501.1.1 of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan states that Monroe County shall permit only port and port-related land use within the Safe Harbor/Peninsular port area of Stock Island; and

WHEREAS, Policy 502.1.2 of the Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan states that Monroe County shall permit land uses supportive, complementary to or otherwise port related nearby and adjacent to the Safe Harbor/Peninsular Port areas of Stock Island; and

WHEREAS, Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island/Key Haven Master Plan titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan* sets out the following six principles; preserve the working waterfront, revitalize the port area while improving the physical setting, accommodate a diversity of water-oriented activities and people, connect the port area to the surrounding community, provide access along the waterfront, and to respect and reinforce the heritage and character of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan will be adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan, and therefore any conflicts between the two must be resolved; and

WHEREAS, the Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan, Volume Two titled *Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan* was reviewed during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission held on March 8, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the strategies and Action Items in Volume Two of the Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan for Stock Island and Key Haven are the equivalent to the Objectives and Policies in the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA conceptually approved Volume Two (2) of the Stock Island Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan; and

CONCEPTUALLY PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of Monroe County, Florida, at a regular meeting held on the 8^{h} day of March 2006.

PLANNING COMMISSION OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY_____

James D. Cameron, Chair

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2006.

Stock Island, FL

Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan

Volume 2 of the
Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Plan

Final Report
November 30, 2005

Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources

Stock Island, FL

Harbor Preservation/Redevelopment and Intra-Island Corridor Enhancement Plan

Volume 2 of the
Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Plan

November 30, 2005

Prepared by *Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC*
For *Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources*

Stock Island

PORT AREA PRESERVATION/REDEVELOPMENT AND CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT PLAN

June 27, 2005

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INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Coastal areas around the nation are under tremendous pressure from population growth and associated development. While demographic factors play an important role in this trend, societal preference for shore-side living is increasingly becoming a factor in the transformation of waterfront areas.

In urbanized areas along the country's shore, waterfronts historically were used for shipping and navigation, seafood industries, defense, utilities, and heavy manufacturing dependent on waterpower. Yet the same conditions and patterns established to facilitate these activities—typically occurring on large tracts with single or limited numbers of owners, served by full infrastructure and good landside access to transportation—today make these locations extremely attractive to land developers and speculators. In addition, because waterfront land is a finite resource, the growing demand for water-oriented residential, commercial, recreational, and tourist uses creates fierce competition for these locations, inflating property values and raising communities' concerns about their ability to preserve and maintain traditional water-dependent industries on their waterfronts, particularly as pressure is created by the new uses to "clean up" the industrial setting of these areas.

As a premier coastal location, the Florida Keys' working waterfronts have certainly not been immune to these forces. The Key West Bight underwent its own, deliberate form of transformation in the 1980's. Today, as the expansion of tourist-related development in Key West and development pressures throughout the Keys continue, the historic waterfront of south Stock Island is also beginning to change.

Location map of Stock Island

The south side of Stock Island is the southernmost portion of unincorporated Monroe County. Located contiguous to Key West, the island is home to an important community comprised primarily of residential, neighborhood-serving commercial and marine-related uses. Because of its location off U.S. Highway One, the area has not been highly visible to most tourists driving past it on their way to and from Key West, but has remained rather a low-key, modest working-class community. Now, however, leisure craft marinas and high-priced gated condominiums are beginning to spring up, generally replacing commercial fishing operations and affordable housing. Given the conjunction of factors at play—which include not just the competition for use of the waterfront and the escalating property values, but also the increasingly stringent fisheries management rules; the impacts of aquaculture and foreign seafood markets competition; and the associated decline of fishing infrastructure serving small-scale commercial fishing operators, among others—it is not impossible to imagine a future in which the Stock Island waterfront might be radically different from today.

Understanding the implications of such a future is critical, because Stock Island is one of the few remaining, and most significant hubs for commercial fishing and maritime industries in the Lower Keys, and

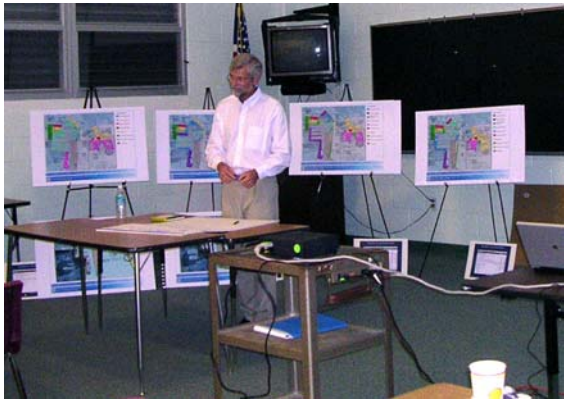
perhaps in the County as a whole. Although the County already has in place a number of policies and regulations that are designed to preserve the current character and to guide future development, the appropriateness and effectiveness of those tools must be re-examined in the context of new, and still evolving, community conditions. Equally important is to understand and incorporate the aspirations of Stock Island's residents into an overall vision for the future of the waterfront.

With this in mind, and as preparation of the Livable CommuniKeys Plan for Stock Island and Key Haven began, the Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources Department retained Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC (WRT) to address specific issues related to the future development of the "port area" of Stock Island. WRT was charged with identifying, analyzing, and making policy recommendations on key issues related to the potential preservation or redevelopment of uses in the port area and to the enhancement of two connecting community corridors, MacDonald/Maloney Avenue, and Fourth/Fifth Avenue.

The present Plan is the culmination of a year-long planning process, during which numerous opportunities for community review, input and feedback were provided.

The Plan is not intended to stop redevelopment in Stock Island, but to guide it in an appropriate direction that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community. Nor, for that matter, is the plan meant to "save" the commercial fishing industry—though it will endeavor to secure opportunities to sustain the industry's presence in Stock Island. However, providing land or facilities for commercial fishing will not, by itself, ensure the future viability of this activity. Local fishermen and seafood industries must continue their efforts to organize, and coordinate with the County, the state, and national organizations to achieve long-term sustainability of the industry.

A significant development providing critical momentum for future implementation of many of the recommendations included in this Plan is the recent passage of the *Florida Working Waterfront Protection Act* (HB 955 CS, signed by the Governor on June 8, 2005), which, among other important measures, requires Florida's coastal communities to encourage the preservation of recreational and commercial working waterfronts in their comprehensive plan, and establishes a tax deferral program for owners of recreational and commercial working waterfronts, to encourage the preservation of the current use of working waterfront properties.



A variety of opportunities for community review and input was offered throughout the planning process.

Definition of Planning Study Area

The project area consists of the following two separate, but interconnected functional elements, as identified in **Figure 1, Study Areas**:

- **"Port" Area:** This element encompasses the traditional marine industrial, working-waterfront areas of Stock Island known as Safe Harbor and Peninsular. This area is the only truly industrial, deep-water port area in the Lower Keys after the redevelopment of the Key West Bight. For the purposes of this study, Safe Harbor is identified as the area circumscribed by Shrimp Avenue along the west; Fifth/Fourth Avenue along the north; Front Street along the east; and the Atlantic Ocean along the south side, including the harbor and all parcels of land contained within these boundaries. The Peninsular component of the port area includes those parcels that make up the southeastern-most landmass in Stock Island, as well as some portion of the adjacent waterways. Combined, these two areas include about 118 acres of land, about 96 acres of bay bottom/submerged land[1], and over 8 linear miles of Stock Island's total shoreline.

- **Roadway Corridors**: Two of Stock Island's major thoroughfares have been identified for analysis and improvement under this study. The first corridor, MacDonald/Maloney Avenue, extends from US-1 through commercial developments, mobile home parks, and commercial fishing processing areas and terminates at Peninsular Avenue. This corridor is the only roadway access to the Peninsular area, as well as the major linkage to US-1 for many residents of mobile home parks within the island. The second corridor, comprising Fifth and Fourth Avenues, stretches from the west side of Stock Island, running east through the middle of the island and intersecting the MacDonald/Maloney Avenue corridor. The Fifth/Fourth Avenue corridor is the main roadway that Stock Island residents use to travel from one side of Stock Island to the other. Destinations along this corridor include Bernstein Community Park, the Safe Harbor area, a variety of commercial uses, and the recently completed Meridian West mixed-use development. The Fifth/Fourth Avenue corridor connects a majority of Stock Island residents to services and jobs within and outside the community.

Partial Aerial View of Safe Harbor by City of Key West Planning Department.

Fourth Avenue

Maloney Avenue

[1] Land areas are estimated from GIS parcel data maintained by the Monroe County Growth Management Division (2004). Discrepancies are possible due to shifts in the parcel geometry/projection of the GIS data coverage.

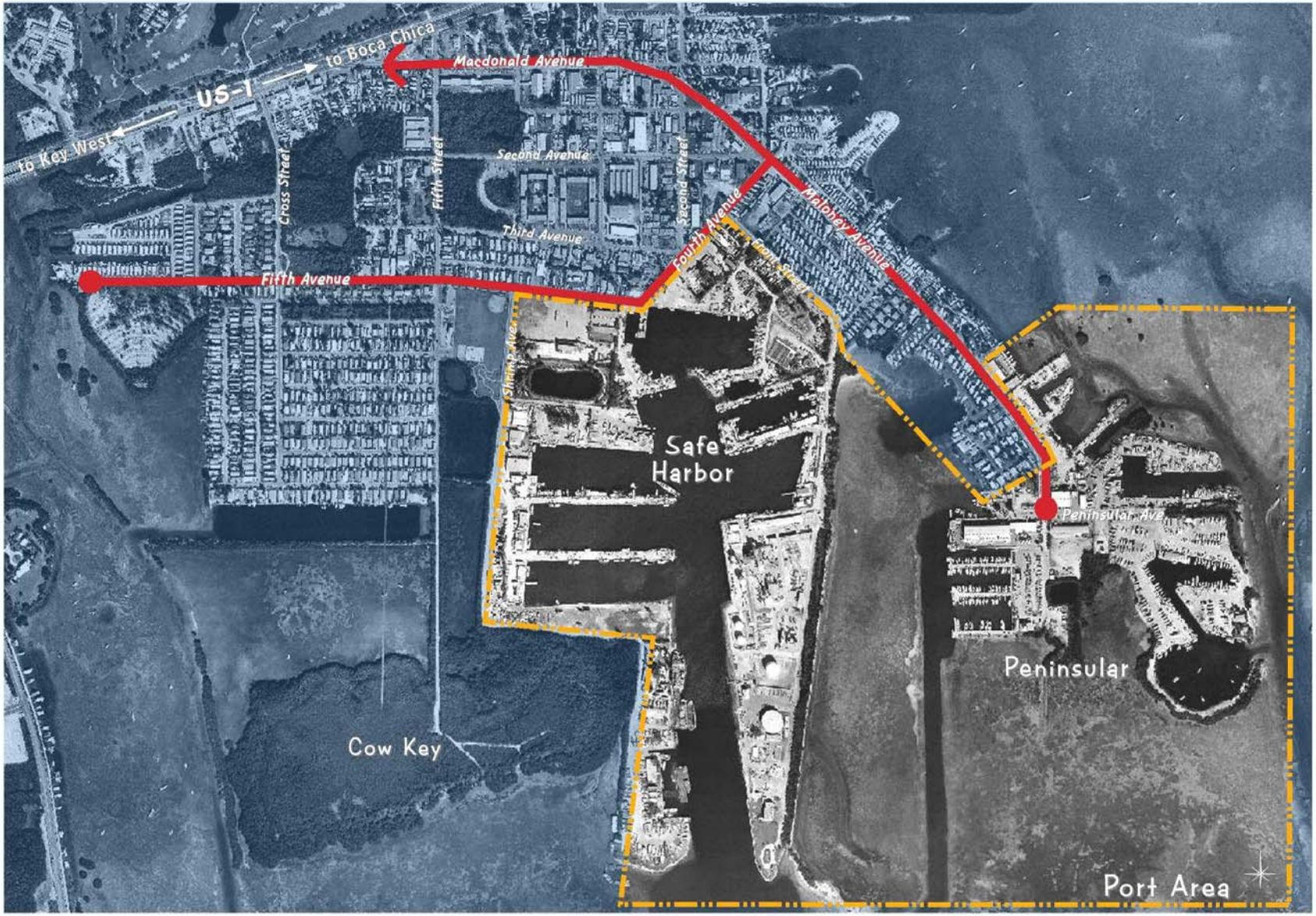


Figure 1: Study Areas

1 : 1,000
2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County

Framing the Plan's Mandate

The master planning effort for the harbor area is not occurring in a vacuum, but within the context of an established planning framework. The following paragraphs summarize the key elements of this planning framework and the relationship between those elements and this effort.

Florida Working Waterfront Protection Act

The Working Waterfront Protection Act (HB 955 CS) is the result of growing concern about the loss of Florida's commercial and recreational waterfronts to private redevelopment. Studies completed in support of the House Bill indicate that traditional "water-dependent" working waterfront activities in coastal communities throughout Florida are increasingly being replaced by often-more-profitable "water-enhanced" and "water-related" activities, leading to escalating property values and associated taxes, and—in a vicious cycle—to additional pressure for the redevelopment of still more working waterfront property. The conversion of these waterfront activities means the loss of effective access to the waterfront, not just for the maritime industries, but, in many cases, for the general public.

Effective July 1, 2005, the Working Waterfront Protection Act amends Section 163.3177, F.S. to require that, in coastal counties, the future land use element of the Comprehensive Plan must now include, "without limitation, regulatory incentives and criteria that encourage the preservation of recreational and commercial working waterfronts as defined in S.342.07." This new section of the Florida Statutes, recognizing the vital importance of facilitating public access to the state's navigable waters and of maintaining viable water-dependent support facilities, defines a recreational and commercial working waterfront as a parcel or parcels of real estate property that provide access for water-dependent commercial activities or provide access for the public to the navigable waters of the state. The term "includes water-dependent facilities that are open to the public and offer public access by vessels to the waters of the state or that are support facilities for recreational, commercial, research or governmental vessels."

In addition, in describing a county's or municipality's existing and proposed system of public and private recreation sites, the open space and recreation element of the Plan must, from now on, include public access to waterways. Similarly, the coastal management element, where required, must include "the strategies that will be used to preserve recreational and working waterfronts as defined in S. 342.07."

The amendment to S. 163.3177, F.S., provides a clear context and an impetus for Monroe County's current planning efforts to ensure the preservation of its working waterfront in Stock Island through the formulation of specific strategies, incentives, and regulations.

Current Comprehensive Plan Policies

A fundamental mandate for this study is to define a plan for the long-term future of the port area consistent with the Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan. In the guiding principles for the development of the Livable CommuniKeys Plan it is stated that "*each Community Master Plan will be consistent with […] overall goals of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan to ensure legal requirements are met.*"

Objective 502.1 of the "Ports, Aviation, and Related Facilities" element contained in Chapter 3.0 of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan specifies:

> *Because of the Florida Keys' unique nature as an archipelago, Monroe County shall promote the preservation and enhancement of the existing ports and port-related activities.*

The policies related to this objective go on explicitly to depict the anticipated long-term character of the "port area" of Stock Island, as follows:

> ***Policy 502.1.1***
> *Monroe County shall permit* ***only port and port-related land uses within the Safe Harbor/Peninsular port area of Stock Island*** *[…] including but not limited to commercial and industrial port dependent uses, industry, commercial fishing, marinas, and employee housing.*
>
> ***Policy 502.1.2***
> *Monroe County shall permit land uses* ***supportive, complementary to or otherwise port related nearby and adjacent to the Safe Harbor/Peninsular port area of Stock Island*** *[…] including but not limited to warehousing, industry, affordable housing, marine businesses, and restaurants.* (Emphasis added.)

The relevance of the "port area" to the local history, community identity, and economic well-being cannot be stressed enough. The Safe Harbor area of Stock Island has access to one of the only deep-water harbors in the Keys, and serves as a major center for the County's commercial fishing industry. Clearly, the intent of these policies is to ensure the long-term preservation and sustainability of the working waterfront elements of this area. The two policies also require Monroe County to adopt Land Development Regulations and amend the Land Use District Map consistent with the intended use of the area.

At the same time, Policy 502.1.3 directs Monroe County to "*encourage and facilitate the* ***renovation and adaptation of existing port and related facilities to meet new maritime needs*** *by seeking grants from available sources, assisting private business whenever possible, and adopting Land Development Regulations responsive to the unique requirements of a port…*"

Although they do not allude directly to Stock Island, several policies associated with Comprehensive Plan Goal 105 also provide important direction for the harbor area plan effort. Goal 105 ("Smart Growth") establishes the framework to implement the requirements of the Work Program enacted by the Florida Administrative Commission in Rule 28-20.100, as well as the recommendations of the more recent Florida Keys Carrying Capacity Study. Key policies under Goal 105 that were considered in the preparation of this plan include the following:

> ***Policy 105.1.2***
> *Monroe County shall prepare design guidelines to ensure that future uses and development are compatible with scenic preservation and maintenance of the character of the casual island village atmosphere of the Florida Keys.*
>
> ***Policy 105.1.4***
> *Monroe County shall prepare redevelopment standards and amend the Land Development Regulations to address the large number of non-conforming commercial structures that are non-compliant as to on-site parking, construction and shoreline setbacks, stormwater management, landscaping, and buffers. By identifying the existing character and constraints of the different island communi-*

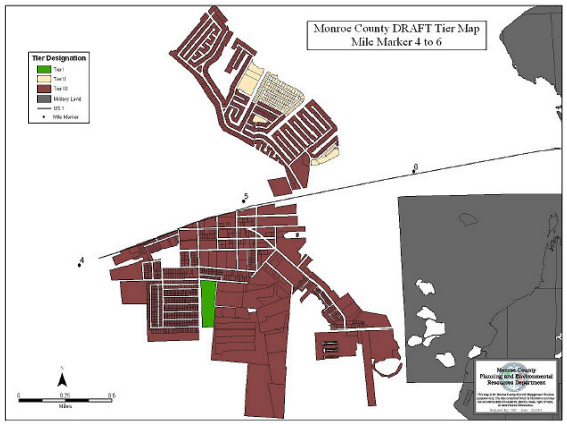
ties, regulations can be adopted that provide incentives for redevelopment and permit the continuance of businesses while moving toward an integrated streetscape.

Policy 105.1.5
Monroe County shall prepare amendments to this Plan and its Land Development Regulations that comprehensively revise the existing residential permit allocation system to direct the preponderance of future residential development to areas designated as an overlay on the zoning map(s) as Infill (Tier III) […] ..

The latter policy is likely to be instrumental in addressing-but perhaps, at the same time, will also serve to hasten-the ongoing transformation of the Stock Island waterfront, and of the community as a whole.

The "Tier System" (undergoing review as of the writing of this plan) is part of the County's multi-pronged implementation strategy to meet the conditions of the Work Program. The system, formulated to implement a 20-year land acquisition program, defines criteria to classify all land into three "tiers," according to environmental value and suitability for development or redevelopment.

Tier III comprise those areas where a significant portion of land is not considered environmentally sensitive; where existing platted subdivisions are more than 50 percent developed, served by complete infrastructure including roads, public water supply and electrical service; and which are within close proximity to established commercial areas. Accordingly, most of Stock Island is proposed for designation as Tier III. This means that planning efforts for this area should focus on facilitating appropriate redevelopment and new infill development. It also means that, as development is discouraged in, and guided away from the other tier areas of the Keys through a new Rate of Growth permit allocation point system and other complementary regulations, Stock Island-with its deep, protected harbor and mostly underdeveloped waterfront parcels-is likely to become even more attractive for both developers and speculators, perhaps accelerating the rate of change already being experienced by the community.



The majority of Stock Island is classified as Tier III (map by Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources Department).

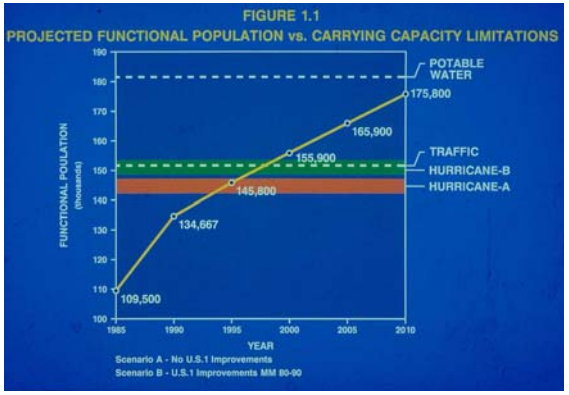
Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan

In its current form, the *Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan* has a "regional" or Countywide perspective. This is due in part to the fact that the primary focus of the comprehensive plan effort was, at the time of preparation, to establish appropriate Countywide controls on growth in order to achieve compliance with the requirements of the Florida Growth Management Act. The Plan was adopted in 1993 and, after long-running legal proceedings, it became effective in its entirety in 1997.

Monroe County will update its Comprehensive Plan in approximately two years, as mandated by the State. The long process leading to that update presents a critical opportunity to rectify the lack of local community focus of the current Plan. To do so, the Monroe County Planning Commission and the Planning and Environmental Resources Department have launched the Livable CommuniKeys Program (LCP), a planning initiative that seeks to address the very specific needs of unique island communities within the Florida Keys. The goal of the program is to determine, through community input, the appropriate amount, location, and character of additional development for each LCP planning area. The process results in a master plan that contains the specific development layout for the LCP planning area as well as action items that must be implemented to achieve the community's vision.

The LCP master plans are not meant to replace, but rather to complement and clarify the Comprehensive Plan. To date, the County has completed two LCP Master Plans, one of which (Big Pine & No Name Key) was adopted in December 2003. The second one, for Tavernier, was recently adopted. Two other master plans-the first one for the Stock Island and Key Haven area and the second one for Key Largo-are under way. In each instance, Monroe County has retained consultants to undertake specialized studies (such as corridor enhancement plans for US-1), the results of which are subsequently incorporated into the LCP Master Plan for the area.

In the case of Stock Island, the focus of this special assignment is dual, as described in the previous section, addressing the preservation or redevelopment of the harbor area, as well as the enhancement of the MacDonald/Maloney Avenue and Fifth/Fourth Avenue corridors. The recommendations of the plan will be assimilated into the LCP master



The 2010 Comprehensive Plan was an effort to establish Countywide limits on growth and development.

planning process for the Stock Island/Key Haven Area and eventually into the Comprehensive Plan. The principles that guide the LCP and master plan development are outlined in Policy 101.20.1 of the Comprehensive Plan. In particular, the following key principles from Policy 101.20.1 have informed the preparation of the harbor area plan and corridor enhancement project for Stock Island:

1. *Each Community Master Plan will contain a framework for future development and redevelopment based on the needs and desires of the community [...] .*

2. *Each Community Master Plan will include an implementation strategy, consisting of action items and an implementation schedule as determined by the action items and the capital budget [...] .*

3. *Each Community Master Plan will be consistent with existing […] goals of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan to ensure legal requirements are met. […]*

8. *Each Community Master Plan will include a community character element that will address the protection and enhancement of existing residential areas and the preservation of community character through site and building guidelines. Design guidelines for public spaces, landscaping, streetscaping, buildings, parking lots, and other areas will be developed […] reinforcing the character of the local community context.*

9. *Each Community Master will include an economic development element addressing current and potential diversified economic development strategies including tourism management. The preservation and retention of valued local businesses, existing economies, and the development of economic alternatives will be encouraged through the process.*

10. *Each Community Master Plan will include a Transportation Element addressing transportation needs and possibilities, including circulation, and safe and convenient access to goods and services. Transportation alternatives including bicycle and pedestrian connections and access will be examined [...] .*

Livable CommuniKeys Vision

It is unquestionable that the Stock Island waterfront is changing, along with the rest of the community. It is also most likely inevitable that it will continue to change.

While change may be unavoidable, however, the course of it is not. To take charge of its own destiny, the community has begun to articulate its shared desire to guide future change in a manner that preserves the working character of the waterfront, while allowing for its revitalization and improvement. These aspirations are encapsulated in the Community Vision Statement crafted for Stock Island and Key Haven through the Livable CommuniKeys planning process, of which those sections most relevant to the waterfront plan effort are quoted below (emphasis added):

> *"In the year 2024 we envision […]*
> *A diverse island community, rich in residential, commercial, cultural, and recreational opportunities; where families and friends live and work together in vibrant neighborhoods. A place that maintains an affordable cost of living for people of all income levels with an emphasis on housing; that fosters a sustainable, local economy consisting of* ***a working waterfront and a distinctive mix of commercial and industrial activities that complement the community;*** *where recreational and community facilities enhance the cultural fabric of the neighborhoods; where its citizens understand the importance of and acknowledge the responsibility to protect our vital natural resources; where a strong sense of civic pride contributes to an ever improving quality of life."*

The community aspires to preserve the working character of its waterfront.

Purpose of Project

The Vision Statement cited above reveals a community intent on retaining and building on its history, while embracing positive change. A vision, however, is of little use if not put into action. The motivating power of the vision must be combined with an action plan, in which the steps to achieve the vision are clearly articulated.

The primary purpose of this planning effort, therefore, is to translate the overall vision and aspirations for the waterfront into specific strategies and actions that achieve the vision—in summary, the "game plan" that will guide both short- and long-term decisions about the future of the area. More important, the plan is designed not to be static, but to provide a flexible development framework, capable of responding to changing conditions, as well as to changing aspirations in the community.

HOW THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED

While the planning process was facilitated by Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT), community input served as the basis for many of the ideas and concepts assembled in this document. A variety of methods were used to inform and to solicit meaningful involvement from residents, business owners, commercial fishermen, and other port area users and interests. Interviews were conducted at the outset of the process with more than 25 individuals representing groups who have a stake in the future of the area. Two interactive workshops were held at key points in the process, to offer the community opportunities to share ideas, pose questions, and review and comment on the planning team's findings and interim products. In addition, Monroe County published and mailed three newsletters as part of the Stock Island/ Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Plan process, providing periodic updates on the status of the project and inviting feedback. Alternative concepts and strategies were posted, during the intermediate phase of the process, on the County's website, along with an interactive comment card. A record of the information assembled through the

Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources Department

Stock Island/Key Haven Livable Communikeys

Volume 1, Issue 3

March 1, 2005

Safe Harbor from the sky

Peninsular from the water

Inside this issue:

Current Land Use 2

Market Trend Based Alternative 2

Holding the Line Alternative 2

Balanced Mix of Uses Alternative 3

Land Use Distribution Alternative 3

Goals: A work in Progress 4

Consultants Present Four Development Alternatives for the Stock Island Peninsular Port and Safe Harbor Areas

What kind of development does the Community of Stock Island want to see in the Safe Harbor/Peninsular Port Area over the next twenty years? This is the question the County and the Consultants Wallace Roberts and Todd have been trying to answer by researching historic uses and trends, listening to input at the summer meeting, through interviews and survey responses.

On February 15th 2005, the Consultants began the process of presenting to community four different development scenarios for the area. Each scenario contained a mixture of development including housing, commercial, restaurants, working waterfront, parks, and more. The Goal of the meeting was to begin a community wide discussion on the favored alternative of development that would satisfy the community.

The Consultants provided visual examples of possible zoning classifications that would encourage four different development scenarios. Overall, those attending the meeting were understandably concerned about their individual properties. The maps portraying the four scenarios were intended to provide examples, not definite land use changes for specific parcels or lots.

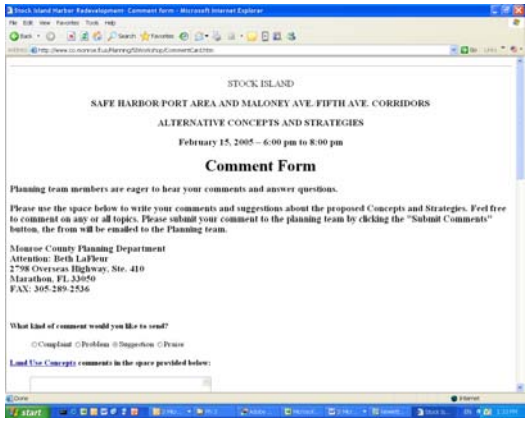
The goal of finding the best development for the entire community still depends on your feedback. The purpose of this newsletter is to continue to spread the word and gather input . We ask you to read each alternative and **contact us with your comments and preferred alternative by April 15th** at **http://www. co. monroe. .fl. us/Planning/SI-KHJun,** or by phone at 289-2500.

What's the News on the Proposed AICUZ?

AICUZ stands for the Naval Air Installations Compatible Use Zones. The purpose is to guide development to appropriate areas with the least amount of risks of noise and possible plane crashes. The proposed AICUZ is being reviewed and has not been adopted by the County. The proposed AICUZ overlays Safe Harbor and Peninsular Areas, as well as lower Key Haven.

What's New in Key Haven?

Vacant lands that parallel US 1 on Key Haven are awaiting State approval for a zone change from commercial to residential uses which will contribute to beautification of the Key Haven entrance.



STOCK ISLAND

SAFE HARBOR PORT AREA AND MALONEY AVE. FIFTH AVE. CORRIDORS

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

February 15, 2005 – 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Comment Form

Planning team members are eager to hear your comments and answer questions.

Please use the space below to write your comments and suggestions about the proposed Concepts and Strategies. Feel free to comment on any or all topics. Please submit your comment to the planning team by clicking the "Submit Comments" button, the from will be emailed to the Planning team.

Monroe County Planning Department
Attention: Beth LaFleur
2798 Overseas Highway, Ste. 410
Marathon, FL 33050
FAX: 305-289-2536

What kind of comment would you like to send?

○Complaint ○Problem ○Suggestion ○Praise

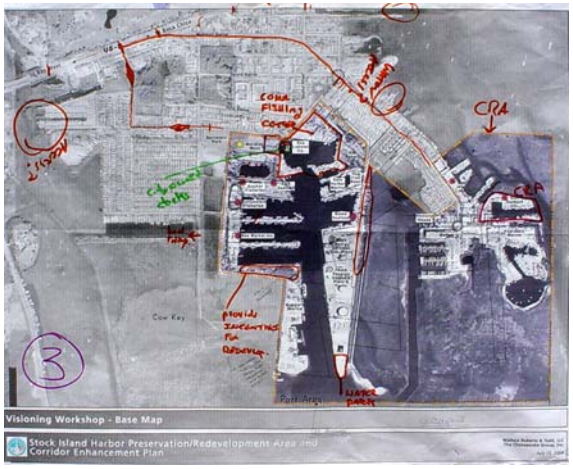
Land Use Concepts comments in the space provided below:

Methods for involving the public ranged from periodic newsletters, to web-based comment forms, one-to-one and small-group interviews, and interactive workshops.

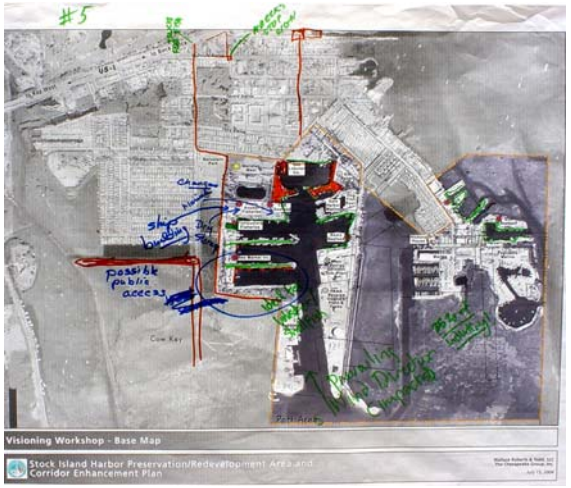
public outreach effort is available at the end of this document (see Appendices).

The planning process itself comprised three major stages. The initial discovery phase consisted primarily of the gathering and analysis of background information to understand the issues and establish the parameters of the project. Although the preparation of economic analyses was not included in the scope of work for preparation of the Plan, a large amount of economic data and recommendations were readily available in the *Economic Assessment and Strategic Economic Development Program for the Lower Keys*, prepared for Monroe County by The Chesapeake Group, which also provided assistance to WRT in the evaluation of alternative concepts during the second phase of the process.

To supplement factual information compiled in the initial step, the stakeholder interviews were also conducted in this phase. These interviews allowed WRT to become familiar with and learn, first-hand, the concerns of those who might be most impacted by, but also who are most likely to influence the outcome of this process: commercial fishermen, property owners, seafood industry and waterfront business owners, residents, and the County. In

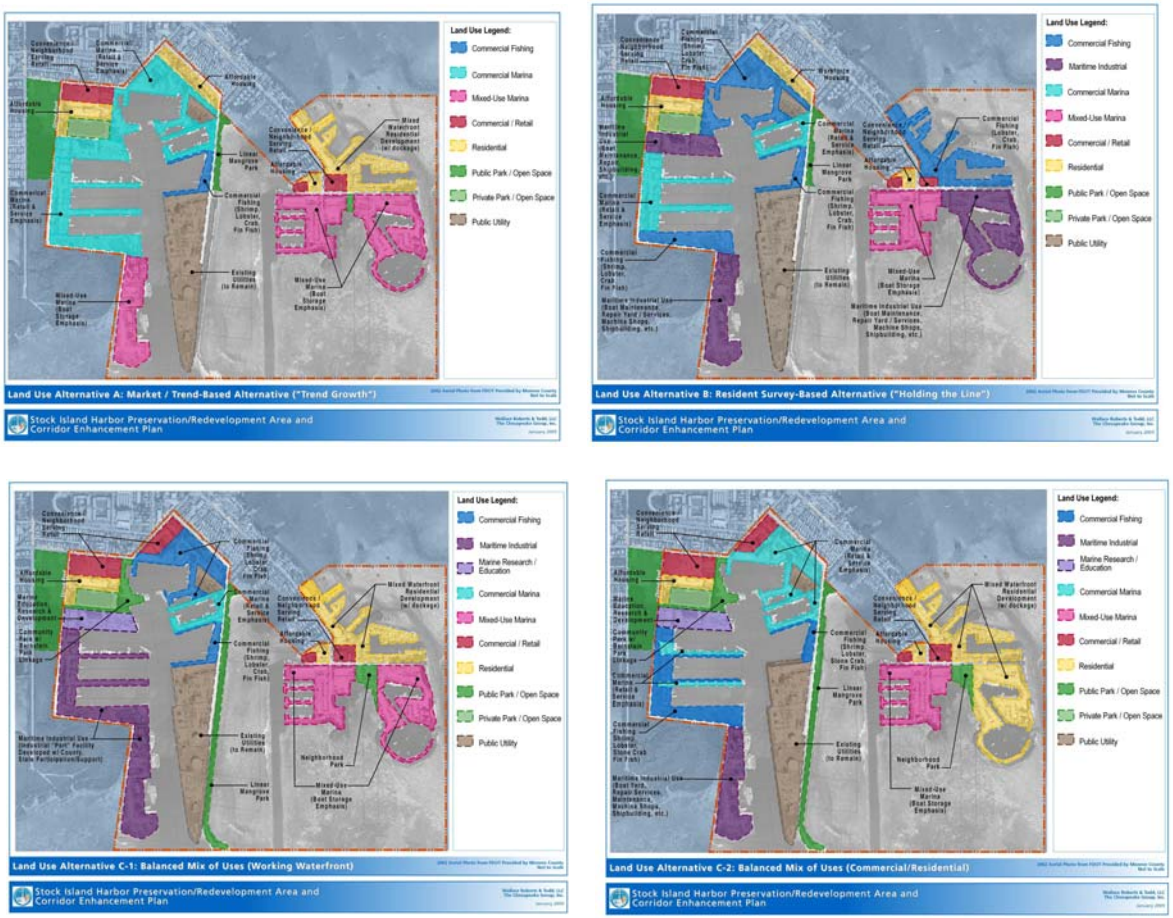


At the Visioning Workshop, participants took part in small-group discussions to generate ideas about the future of the waterfront. The ideas were recorded by the participants themselves on base maps of the planning study area, such as those on the right and below. This input provided much of the basis for the formulation of development alternatives.



addition, a visioning workshop was conducted with the community to collectively "imagine the future" of the waterfront and the roadway corridors, and to brainstorm ideas for how to achieve that future.

During the second phase, the perceptions and factual data arrayed, sorted, evaluated, and synthesized earlier were used to conceptualize a series of alternative "images" representing potential "futures" of the port area and the roadway corridors. These alternative development concepts introduced a depth of specificity with regard to the potential "look" and "feel" of the area related to land use mix and functions, linkages, circulation, and urban design components, ranging from street furnishings to signage. The alternative concepts and corresponding strategy choices were presented to the community in a workshop intended to obtain direction as to a "preferred" conceptual approach and to elicit feedback on the recommended actions. Interested citizens reviewed the concepts and either offered spoken opinions or submitted written comments, both at the workshop and later. Monroe County directed WRT to explore a policy (rather than a physical) approach, which ultimately combines elements from the various development alternatives, supported by the public input. The final phase comprised the compilation of the Plan document.



Four alternative approaches to future development were generated. The first one (top left) assumed the continuation of present trends, in which market forces would be allowed to reshape the port area for private commercial or residential use. The second one (top right) responded to community desires to "hold the line" on change, maintaining present levels of commercial fishing and industrial land. The remaining two (bottom) promote a balanced approach to the land use mix, in which development types are directed to optimal locations. The policy framework contained in this plan document combines elements from each of the different conceptual approaches.

PLAN PRINCIPLES

Through the public input process described in the previous section, six overarching plan principles were identified. These principles, which follow, frame and give shape to the goals, strategies and actions contained in this plan:

- Preserve the working waterfront.
- Revitalize the port area while improving its physical setting.
- Accommodate a diversity of water-oriented activities and people.
- Connect the port area to the surrounding community.
- Provide access along the waterfront.
- Respect and reinforce the heritage and character of the community.

Accommodate a diversity of activities and people...

Preserve the working waterfront...

Revitalize and improve the physical setting of the port area....

Provide public access along the waterfront. ..

Connect the port area to the surrounding community...

Respect and reinforce the heritage and character of the community...

Goal One: *Provide Space for a Working Waterfront and its Supporting Industries*

Some elements of the traditional working waterfront:

Boat construction

Boat repair and storage

Commercial fishing

Fish houses

Current Conditions Summary

The term "working waterfront" is used throughout this report to describe the use, as well as the character, of the port area of Stock Island. Therefore, it is important to frame the application of this term as we begin the analysis of, and offer recommendations for, the land uses mix, the functions, and the physical structure of the waterfront.

In 1995's *A Profile of Florida's Working Waterfronts*, the FAU/FIU Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems (now the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions) attempts to define working waterfronts under several classifications. From its survey of the available literature, the report provides useful insight into the difficulty of arriving at a single, narrow definition, given the diversity of functions and uses that characterize working waterfronts. The current nature of the Stock Island port area can be classified as that of a "traditional Florida working waterfront." The *Profile* defines such waterfronts as those that are not part of a commercial port, but which are an important and increasingly vulnerable part of Florida's history and culture. These are the waterfronts of communities with water-dependent economies that have relied primarily on marine industries such as commercial fishing or boat repair, as opposed to marine recreation and tourism uses, such as charter diving or sightseeing.

The FAU/FIU Joint Center report also cites Ann Breen and Dick Rigby's emphasis on the 'individualistic' enterprises that "tend to populate working waterfronts and contribute to their unique character, distinguishing them from modern corporate settings." (pg. 2). A list of traditional activities is provided by the authors to augment their definition, including: commercial fishing, tug boat bases, fish wholesale and retail operations, marinas, boat building and repair, tour boat operation, ship chandlers, sail makers, and boat rentals. Eric Thurnberg's 1991 paper on waterfront development and redevelopment in Florida identifies working waterfront uses that are "operationally dependent" on a waterfront location (marina and boat repair, shipping industries) or on waterfront access (seafood industries).

Also referenced in that study is Wendy Lovett's 1983 characterization of the working waterfronts in Florida as areas comprising industrial and commercial activities that require a waterfront location, as is the case of commercial fisheries.

Finally, the recently passed Florida Working Waterfront Protection Act (HB 955 CS), creates S. 342.07 in the Florida Statutes, providing a definition of recreational and commercial working waterfront as “a parcel or parcels of real property that provide access for water dependent commercial activities or provide access for the public to the navigable waters of the state.” Despite evidence of change, today the port area of Stock Island still fits the definition of a traditional working waterfront in the context intended by S. 342.07 F.S., with a predominance of marine and seafood-related industries and businesses. The general pattern of land uses, areas, and activities within and adjacent to the study area is shown on **Figure 2, *Existing Land Use***, and **Figure 3, *Functional Areas*.**

Table 1, in the next page, shows that approximately 55% of the land area is devoted to water-dependent uses and activities, over 40% of which complements the commercial fishing and other maritime industries. Although the number and range of facilities has diminished over the last decade, fish houses, docking, and upland storage of equipment and traps, still remain the prevalent use of land on the waterfront, constituting 20% of the land.

Maritime industrial uses, another important element of the working waterfront, include Peninsular Marine Enterprises and Robbie's Full Service Marine. These two large industrial properties include boat-launching capability with heavy-duty, oversize travel lifts, boat repair and maintenance services, and dry and wet storage. Both properties have comparatively significant upland areas. Together with smaller, specialized boat building and repair outfits, these activities comprise an additional 21.5% of the land use mix. In addition to the location of these functions, Figure 3 indicates the availability of boat travel lifts, boat pads, and boat forklifts, all of which are important elements of boatyard and storage operations.

Maritime industrial is considered the primary use of these properties, but they also accommodate some degree of mixed marine commercial activities, including marine supply

Commercial fishing in Safe Harbor.

Peninsular Marine.

Oceanside Marina.

shops and pump-out services. Additional evidence of an incremental transition toward a "modern" or "corporate" working waterfront includes the mixed development at Oceanside Marina in the Peninsular area; the recent conversion of former commercial fishing dockage to pleasure craft slips (e.g., Safe Harbor Maritime in the west side of Safe Harbor); and continued private interest in the potential redevelopment of industrial properties in the study area to residential use and to recreational marinas with upland amenities.

The trend indicated by these changes becomes more obvious in a comparison between the land use distribution in 1985 and today, as shown in **Table 2**. Although the overall loss in water-dependent land uses over the past 20 years has been limited to 4.0%, commercial fishing activities have decreased by nearly 50% during the same period. The loss is illustrated in **Figures 4 and 5, *Location of Commercial Fishing and Related Uses, 1985 and 2004***, respectively. Perhaps the most significant loss in the commercial fishing category was the conversion of the former Ming's 11.23 acres (today Peninsular Marine) to marine industrial use, even though the property remains in use classified as "working waterfront." In Safe Harbor, at least four properties have been converted in recent years to non-industrial, non-fishing uses, for a loss of more than 11 acres. These properties now serve maritime commercial uses.

Marine commercial use currently constitutes almost 14% of the land use mix. Commercial marinas typically require little upland if they do not provide dry-rack boat storage or upland amenities that require substantial parking, such as boat ramps or dockside restaurants.

Table 1: Port Area 2004 Land Use and Acreage Allocation

Land Use	Acreage	%
Water-dependent uses		
Maritime Commercial (recreational, leisure, mixed-use marina, etc.)	13.96	11.8%
Maritime Industrial (boat repair yard, ship building etc.)	25.42	21.5%
Commercial Fishing (seafood wholesale/retail/processing, dockage, trap/equipment storage and manufacturing, etc.)	25.31	21.4%
Subtotal	**64.69**	**54.7%**
Non water-dependent uses		
Residential	8.13	6.9%
Commercial (retail, office, etc.)	6.39	5.4%
Non-Maritime Industrial (warehouse, manufacturing, etc.)	4.73	4.0%
Public Utility	23.83	20.2%
Subtotal	**43.08**	**36.4%**
Other		
Park / Open Space	1.84	1.6%
Vacant/Undefined Use		
Private	7.93	6.7%
Public	0.65	0.5%
Total Acreage of Land Uses	**118.19**	**100.0%**

Source: Monroe County GIS and Property Appraiser's 2004 property records.

Table 2: 1985-2004 Land Use Change

Land Use	1985 Ac	% Change
Water-dependent uses		
Maritime Commercial (recreational, leisure, mixed-use marina, etc.)	9.95	62.4%
Maritime Industrial (boat repair yard, ship building etc.)	12.09	110.0%
Commercial Fishing (seafood wholesale/retail/processing, dockage, trap/equipment storage and manufacturing, etc.)	45.60	-44.5%
Subtotal	**67.64**	**-4.4%**
Non water-dependent uses		
Residential	1.00	713.0%
Commercial (retail, office, etc.)	6.03	6.0%
Non-Maritime Industrial (warehouse, manufacturing, etc.)	8.76	-46.0%
Public Utility	23.83	0.0%
Subtotal	**39.62**	**13.0%**
Other		
Park / Open Space	0.00	100.0%
Vacant/Undefined Use		
Private	10.28	-32.0%
Public	0.65	0.0%
Total Acreage of Land Uses	**118.19**	

Source: 1985 land use acreage estimated from Monroe County Planning Department's 1985 "A Preliminary Analysis of Commercial Fishing Dock Space."

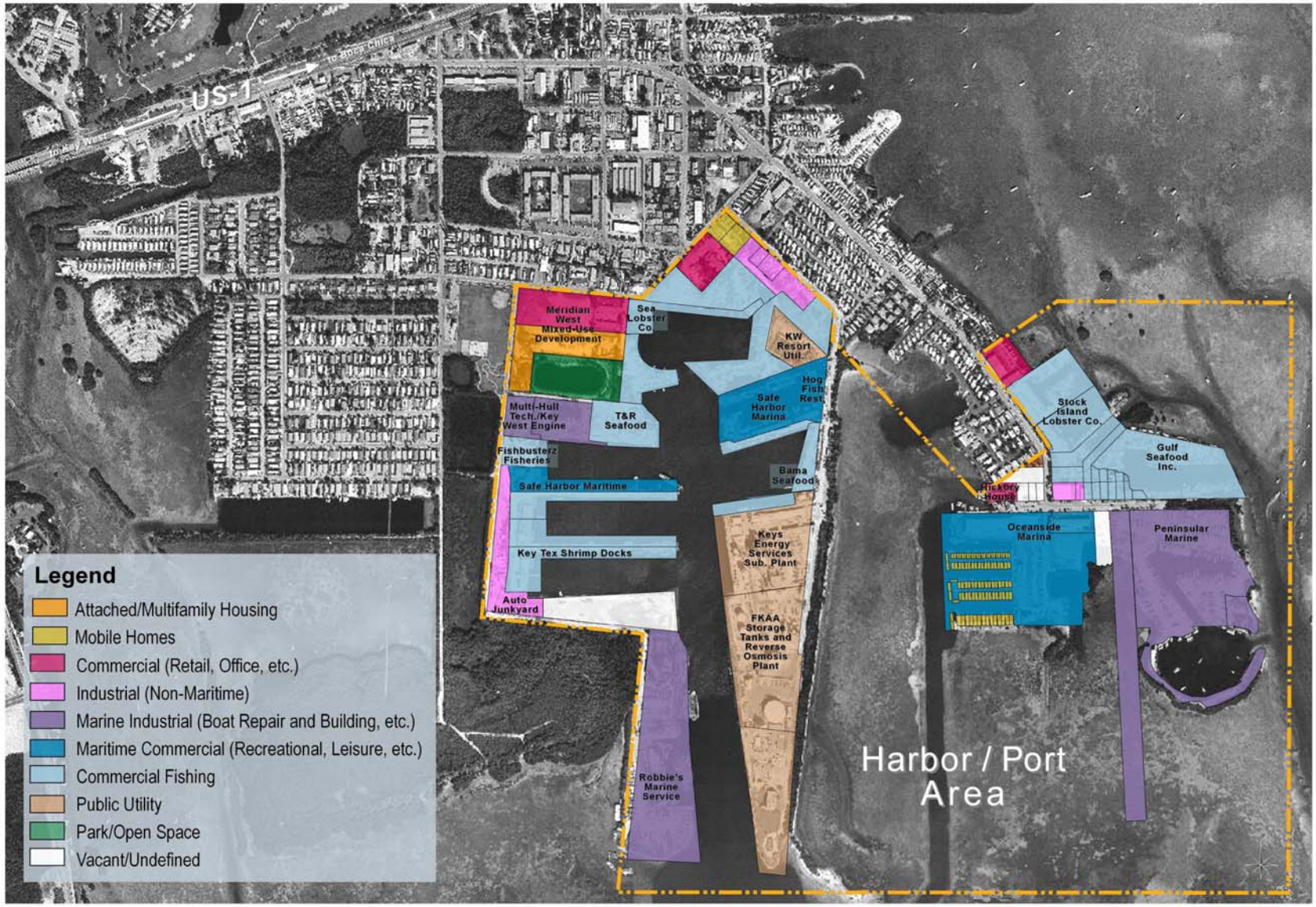


Figure 2: 2004 Existing Land Use - Port Area

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2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Land Use: Monroe County GIS and field verification

Figure 3: 2004 Functional Areas

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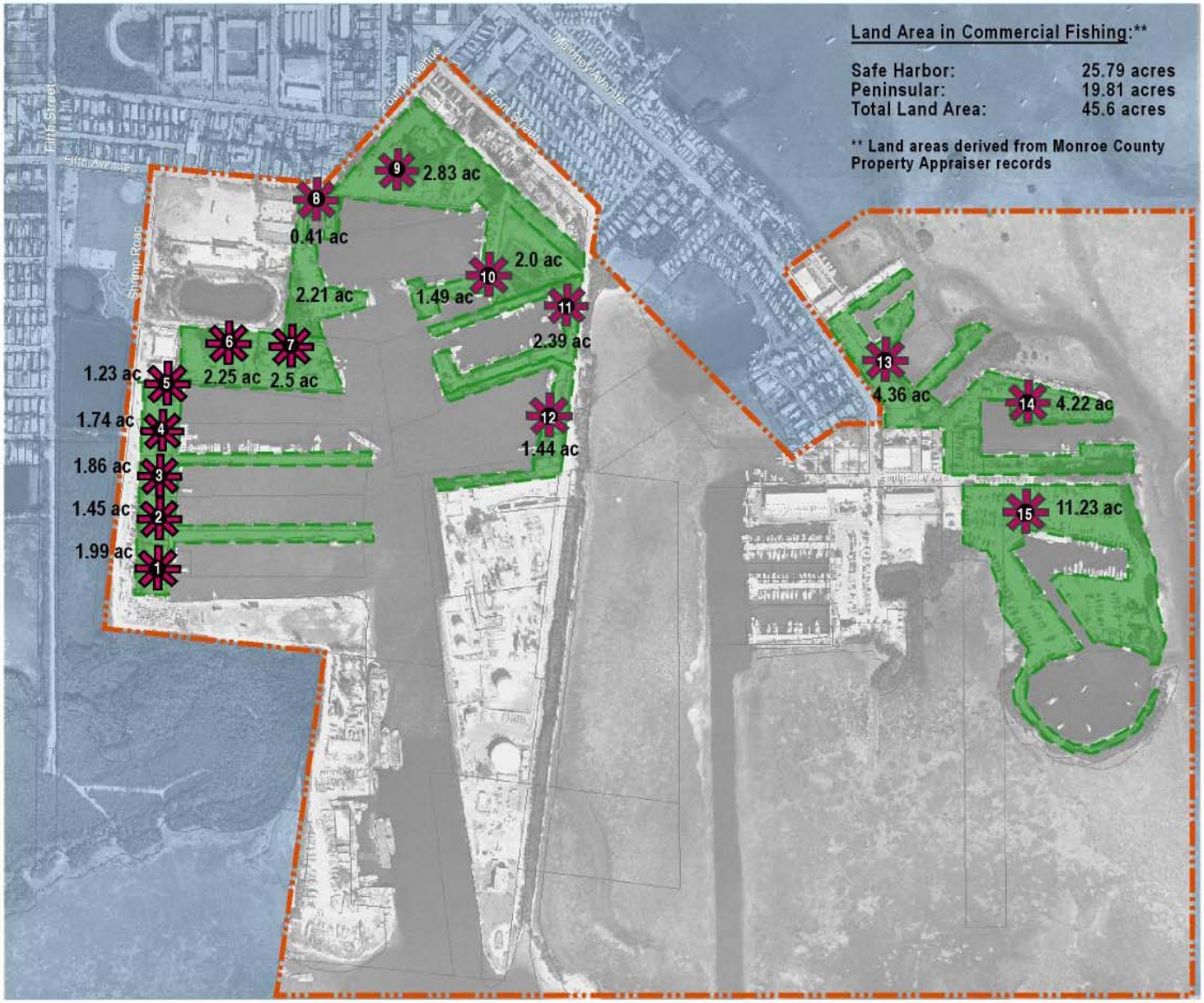
2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Monroe County GIS and field verification



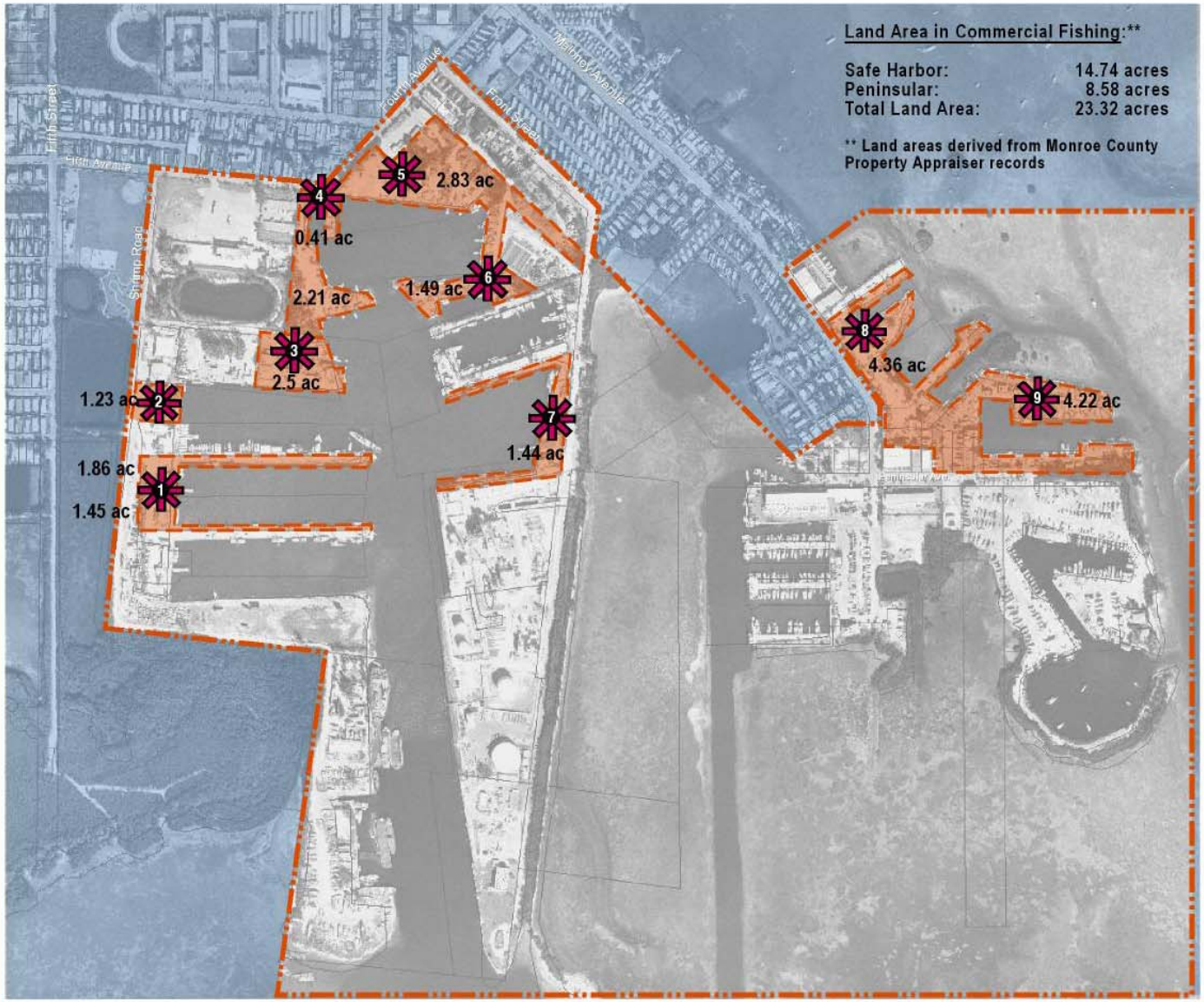
Legend:

1. Marquesas Shrimp
2. Morgan Shrimp
3. King Shrimp
4. Coral S & H Shrimp
5. Key West Lobster & Shrimp
6. E & D's
7. Carter Brothers / T & R Seafood
8. Two Friends
9. Vaneric Marine
10. Aqua Harvesters
11. Ocean Seafood & Fleets
12. Ocean Seafood & Fleets
13. Stock Island Lobster Co.
14. Gulf Seafood
15. Ming's

*Locations identified in "A Preliminary Analysis of Commercial Fishing Dock Space, Monroe County, Florida," 1985, by Monroe County Planning Department

Figure 4: Location of Commercial Fishing and Related Land Use: 1985 *

2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Not to Scale



Legend:

1. KW Seafood/Sea Market
2. Fishbusterz Fisheries
3. Carter Bros. Fisheries/ T&R Seafood
4. Sea Lobster Co.
5. Trap Storage and Work Areas
6. Trap Storage and Work Areas
7. Bama Seafood
8. Stock Island Lobster Co.
9. Gulf Seafood

Figure 5: Location of Commercial Fishing and Related Land Use: 2004

2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Not to Scale

The former is the case of the Safe Harbor Maritime property, which has limited upland area. By contrast, Oceanside Marina and Safe Harbor Marine (located on the east side of the harbor), do offer such amenities, and these two properties combined take up the bulk of land in this category, or about 10 acres.

Public utility facilities occupy approximately 20% of the land in the study area. Keys Energy Services (KES) and the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA) together own 24 acres of upland on the southeast side of Safe Harbor. The properties are developed with a power generation plant which serves Stock Island and Key West; a water storage tank; and a 2-million gallons-per-day capacity desalination plant. The water storage facility and desalination plant are used to provide potable water to the Lower Keys in the event of an emergency such as a pipeline rupture or hurricane-related disruptions. The properties have restricted access due to liability and homeland security concerns. Together, these facilities occupy a substantial share of prime waterfront location, including an adjoining 10.5 acres of bay bottom. However, neither facility is conditioned to a waterfront location. For this reason, potential opportunities should be explored for relocation of these uses in the long range, or for some degree of public access. In addition, Key West Resort Utilities, a private company, operates a sanitary wastewater treatment facility that provides service to the community. The facility occupies approximately 2 acres of landlocked property, and is a non water-dependent use. The wastewater treatment system was recently expanded to include previously un-sewered areas of Stock Island as part of the implementation of the Monroe County Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan for the Lower Keys.

FKAA and KES facilities in Safe Harbor.

Other water-enhanced but non water-dependent uses within the study area include retail, office, and service, transportation, light industrial, storage (including outdoor areas), and housing. These uses, which combined account for about 19 acres (less than 17% of the land) include the Hickory House Restaurant in the Peninsular area, mobile homes at the corner of Front Street and Fourth Avenue, the new Meridian mixed-use complex, and miscellaneous artisan shops and businesses scattered throughout the area.

Meridian West low income housing development

There are also nearly 62 acres of bay bottom in private ownership within the study area, and almost 34 acres that are under State ownership or are owned by the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority.

The bulk of the land within the Safe Harbor section of the port is zoned Maritime Industries (MI), as shown on **Figure 6, *Present Zoning***. The purpose of this zoning district is to "establish and conserve areas suitable for maritime uses such as ship building, ship repair, and other water dependent manufacturing and service uses, as well as industrial activities."

The remainder of the planning study area is zoned Mixed Use (MU). This zoning district is intended to "establish or conserve areas of mixed land uses, including commercial fishing, resorts, residential, institutional, and commercial uses, and preserve these areas representative of the character, economy and cultural history of the Florida Keys."

Analysis of Community Needs

As demonstrated by recent land use changes in the port area, market forces are affecting the economic viability of the working waterfront. There is a growing, accelerating trend toward the conversion of working waterfront property, primarily to commercial or residential uses. In addition to displacing and reducing the supply of available land for traditional marine industrial and commercial fishing uses, these changes increase property values—and property taxes—in the surrounding area, thereby creating additional redevelopment pressures. Set in motion, the process quickly becomes a downward spiral, potentially leading to a drastic transformation of the port area, as well as of the community character and cultural identity of Stock Island.

Waterfront conversion to residential and private marina use has the effect not only of displacing marine industries, but also of reducing public access to the waterfront.

Interestingly, recent studies reviewed at the State level in support of House Bill 955 CS report that "…while conversions initially invigorate the local economy (during the construction stage), the positive benefit diminishes over the long term—especially in small jurisdictions." This is because the types of service jobs created to support the new water-enhanced residential or commercial use often receive lower wages.

The community input received through the planning process reveals overwhelming support to preserve the working character of the waterfront. Responses to a community survey conducted by the County in 2004 were 68% in favor of maintaining the amount of land available for marine industries, and 63% in favor of current regulations that protect commercial fishing. Ironically, the effectiveness of those regulations to conserve commer-

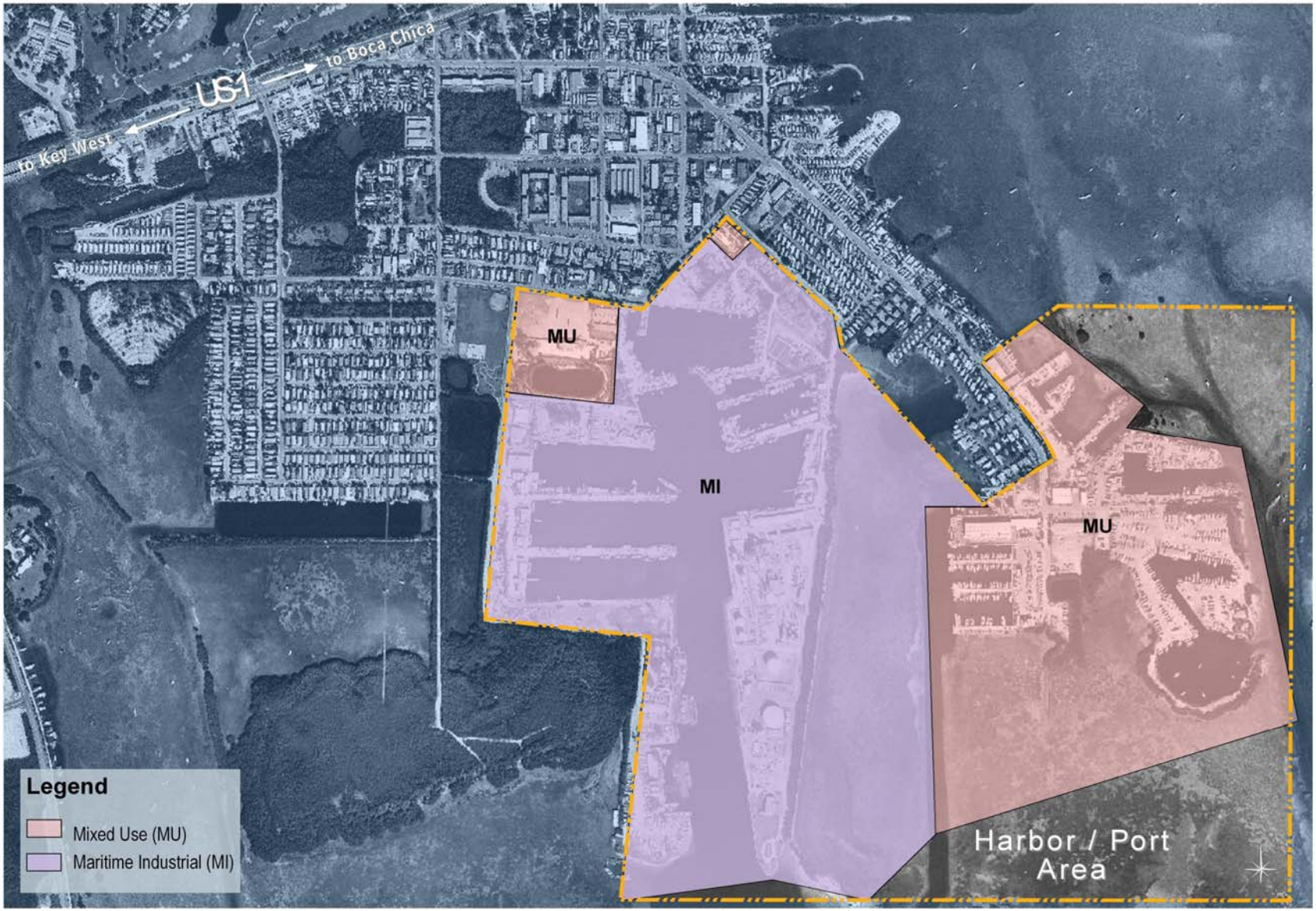


Figure 6: Present Zoning

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2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources Department

cial fishing or industrial uses is coming into question. In particular, some of the uses currently permitted in the Maritime Industries (MI) zoning district are considered too broad, inconsistent with the purpose of the district (and therefore with the Comprehensive Plan policies), and contributing to the gradual loss of the working waterfront. A detailed examination is needed of the purpose of this zoning district and of its permitted use provisions.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Support and focus on the development of maritime industrial and water-dependent uses, such as boat construction, storage, and maintenance, commercial fishing and seafood industries, marine research, and complementary marine industries, in the waterfront portions of the Safe Harbor area.

Strategy 2: Maintain and protect maritime industrial and water-dependent uses from encroachment and displacement by incompatible or non water-dependent uses.

> Action Item: Consider amending the Land Development Regulations to eliminate from the list of permitted uses under the Maritime Industries District (MI), those that are not clearly consistent with the purpose of the zoning district including:
>
> - Stand-alone, small-scale commercial retail and office uses, unless maritime-oriented or supportive of the commercial fishing industry.
> - Commercial apartments, unless destined to house employees of the marine industries.
> - Light and heavy industrial uses, unless maritime-oriented or expressly intended to serve the needs of the marine industrial or commercial fishing industries.
> - Vacation rentals.
> - Hotels.
>
> In many of these cases, all that might be required to continue to allow these uses is a qualification or clarification of their required marine-orientation.

In addition, some of the uses that are now permitted as of right, such as the small-scale retail and office, might instead be allowed as either minor or major conditional uses, or as part of a mixed use development, depending on market conditions.

Conversely, consideration should be given to adding facilities and uses that will further support the working waterfront character of the port area, such as fish houses (as defined per Sec. 9.5-247(e) of the Land Development Regulations; also refer to the Glossary section of the Appendices in this report), processing and packaging houses, ice-making facilities, marine science and research facilities, and similar complementary uses as as-of-right or minor conditional uses in this district. The Land Development Regulations currently permit many of these uses in commercial fishing and industrial districts throughout the Keys. Finally, consideration should be given to making institutional uses and public buildings and uses a conditional use in this district.

Strategy 3: Encourage the development, renovation, and improvement of existing marine industrial facilities to meet current and future needs.

Action Item: Review and amend, as necessary, the non-conforming use and non-conforming structure provisions of the Land Development Regulations to encourage expansion, renovation, and improvement of viable marine industrial uses and facilities, including docks, wharfs, lifts, wet and dry marinas, boat ramps, boat hauling and repair facilities, commercial fishing facilities, and boat construction facilities.

Action Item: Explore the feasibility of allowing ad valorem tax deferrals for properties devoted to working waterfront uses if the owners are engaged in the operation, rehabilitation, or renovation of such properties (pursuant to guidelines established in Section 14 of the Florida Working Waterfront Protection Act for Sections 197.303 and 197.304, F.S.).

Goal Two: *Preserve Commercial Fishing*

Current Conditions Summary

Commercial fishing is still a major component of the working waterfront in Stock Island, and an even greater factor in the County and regional economy. The island's direct access to the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, relative proximity to important fisheries, and access to the only deep-water harbor in the Lower Keys are key locational assets for commercial fishing (see **Figure 7, *Regional Context***). There are nine fish house operations in Stock Island, of which seven are located within the planning study area. Five of those seven are located around Safe Harbor, while the other two operate in the Peninsular area (refer back to **Figure 5, *2004 Location of Commercial Fishing and Related Uses***). There are no processing facilities in Stock Island. Overall, commercial fishing uses occupy over 23 acres of land, or about 20% of the total land in the planning study area.

Shrimp fishing activities are concentrated in the Safe Harbor area owing to adequate water depths for dockage and navigation (see **Figure 8, *Water Depths***) and the availability of existing fishing infrastructure to serve larger boats. Lobster, stone crab, fin-fishing and sponging activities and related dockage tend to be scattered, due not only to the need for large upland areas to accommodate trap storage, gear, and work space, but also to the greater docking flexibility afforded by the smaller draft of vessels used in these activities. Concentrations of these activities, however, are predominant in the Peninsular area, on the properties east of Maloney and north of Peninsular Avenue, as well as on the upland of those properties encircling the inner harbor. Available information is both imprecise and inconsistent as to how much land area is occupied for upland storage purposes because this activity is season-dependent and space-inefficient.

According to the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan, commercial fish landings are still the primary freight or cargo use of Stock Island (see Technical Document). Although the extent of the commercial fishing industry has diminished during the past decade, the same cannot be said of its economic importance. Stock Island continues to be the center of the commercial fishing industry in the Lower Keys, contributing to the County's high national and regional (state) rankings—8th and 1st in 2002, respectively—in terms of landings and dockside value. In 2003 (the most recent year of rankings by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Services), Stock Island ranked 12th among leading ports nationwide for dockside value of landings at $38.4 million.

Shrimp boats docked in Safe Harbor.

Table 3: 2003 Top-25 Commercial Fishing Landings by Port (Ranked by Value)

Rank	Port	Millions of Pounds	Millions of Dollars
1	New Bedford, MA	155.5	176.2
2	Dutch Harbor-Unalaska, AK	908.7	156.9
3	Kodiak, AK	262.9	81.5
4	Hampton Roads Area, VA	30.1	78.0
5	Empire-Venice, LA	400.0	50.8
6	Homer, AK	23.2	42.7
7	Cape May-Wildwood, NJ	74.1	42.7
8	Westport, WA	75.7	42.6
9	Dulac-Chauvin, LA	39.4	42.3
10	Honolulu, HI	17.8	41.0
11	Seward, AK	43.6	39.4
12	Key West, FL	15.8	38.4
13	Gloucester, MA	88.8	37.8
14	Brownsville-Port Isabel, TX	17.9	35.9
15	Galveston, TX	18.6	32.7
16	Point Judith, RI	44.7	31.2
17	Bayou La Batre, AL	18.5	30.8
18	Cordova, AK	71.0	30.3
19	Port Arthur, TX	17.5	30.1
20	Golden Meadow-Leeville, LA	25.5	29.1
21	Portland, ME	68.5	28.9
22	Gulfport-Biloxi, MS	17.4	26.8
23	Astoria, OR	114.1	25.6
24	Cameron, LA	259.0	25.1
25	Sitka, AK	34.6	24.8

Source: NOAA Fisheries Statistics & Economics Division of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) .
*Refers to Stock Island landings.

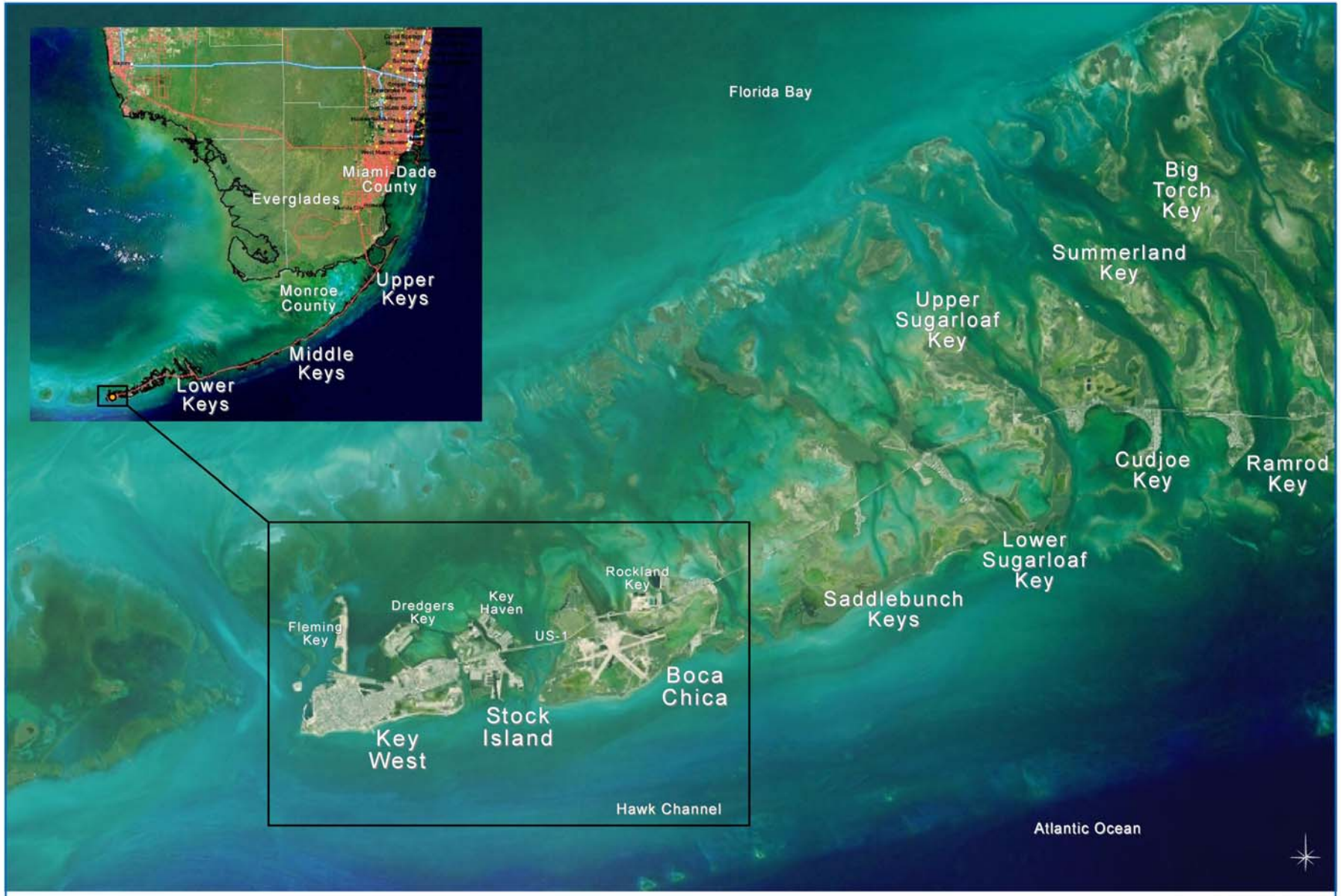

Figure 7: Regional Context

Satellite Photos from LandVoyage.com
Not to Scale

Figure 8: Water Depths

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2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Data derived from Maptech.com NOAA Nautical Charts

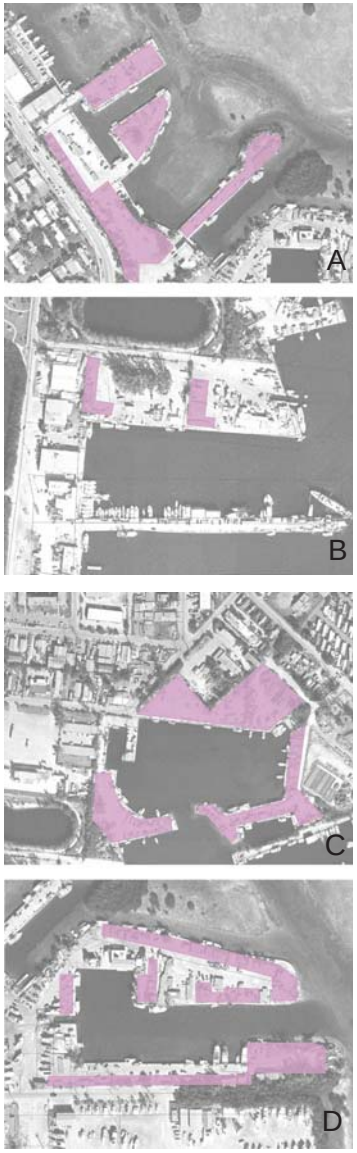
Overall, the local economy, culture, and lifestyles in the island are still very much tied to the ups and downs of the commercial fishing industry. Jobs in the fishing and seafood industries are the second leading type of employment among Stock Island residents.

Analysis of Community Needs

The size of the commercial fishing boat fleet-including shrimpers and lobster, stone crab, and line fishing boats-varies widely, making it especially difficult to accurately estimate current and future needs. According to various stakeholders interviewed for this effort, the shrimp boat fleet can reach up to 300 boats at the peak of the season. However, the same sources put the yearly average number of "resident" shrimp boats in Safe Harbor at about 30. Shrimpers tend to spend significant periods of time at sea, coming only to unload and sell.

Most commercial fishermen in Stock Island are in lobster fishing. Estimates provided by fishermen and seafood business owners put the current "resident" fleet at about 40-60 lobster boats in the Safe Harbor area, another 50 boats or so in the Peninsular area. Additional anecdotal information collected as part of this process indicates that a lobster or stone crab fisherman on average may use approximately 3,000 traps, which require about 6,000 square feet of combined trap storage and work space if traps are stacked eight (8) high. Using these numbers as a standard, the present estimated size of the lobster boat fleet would require space to store between 270,000 and 330,000 traps, equivalent to between 12 and 16 acres. While currently there is sufficient land in the port area devoted to commercial fishing uses, as shown in Table 1, to accommodate this amount of storage, the activity tends to be too scattered to allow for space efficiencies. It must be noted that trap storage is not considered "operationally dependent" on having a waterfront location—non-waterfront storage sites are, therefore, a possible alternative—but proximity and access to the waterfront are certainly desirable conditions for this use.

There also appears to be consensus among the fishermen and the business owners that storage needs might even be met on fewer acres (12 to 14), if operations were reorganized, consolidated, and optimized for efficiency. Adequate dockage and processing houses to serve about 50-80 boats were also deemed critical infrastructure elements for the long-range sustainability of the commercial fishing industry in Stock Island. The introduction of fish processing facilities should be encouraged as well, to retain revenue from these operations in the Keys.



General location of existing trap/gear storage and fishing work areas: (A) Stock Island Lobster Co.properties; (B) Rusty Anchor and 3-Ds properties; (C) inner Safe Harbor, Bernstein and Rackman properties; and (D) Gulf Seafood property.

A co-op could prove beneficial by providing needed services and infrastructure facilities for its members, including cheaper dockage, fuel, waste disposal, trap storage, bait, ice, cold storage and discounted goods from co-op owned store.

Formation of a fishermen's co-op could benefit the industry in Stock Island in a number of ways, including provision of necessary infrastructure at lower costs.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Publicize/increase general awareness of the significant economic contributions of Stock Island's commercial fishing industry to the local, regional, and state economy.

Strategy 2: Work with Monroe County Commercial Fishermen, Monroe County Marine Extension Program and other pertinent agencies and organizations, to determine, on an ongoing basis, the landside and waterside (dockage) needs of the commercial fishing industry in Stock Island.

> Action Item: Maintain an up-to-date inventory of commercial fishing locations and facilities, including docks, trap storage, processing/cold storage facilities, ice making, etc. to determine land use needs and issues.
>
> Action Item: Study the feasibility of Monroe County getting involved in helping to fund necessary commercial fishing infrastructure projects. Potential funding sources include:
>
> - Issuance of Revenue Bonds.
> - Creation of Special Taxing District.
> - Florida Coastal Management Program: Coastal Initiatives Partnership grants
> - Florida Department of Community Affairs: Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Small Cities CDBG or Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.
> - U.S. Economic Development Administration grants.
>
> All new facilities should be designed to meet the highest environmental and water quality standards.

CLEAN MARINA

Any new commercial fishing, as well as marine industrial projects, should meet the highest standards.

Strategy 3: Encourage the preservation and enhancement of existing commercial fishing uses in the port area.

Action Item: Work with Monroe County Commercial Fishermen, the Florida Departments of Community Affairs and Department of Environmental Protection, Monroe County Marine Extension Program, and other pertinent agencies and organizations to ease regulatory framework that may hinder the enhancement and expansion of existing infrastructure (including docks, fueling, fish houses, etc.) to support commercial fishing needs.

Action Item: Review and amend, as necessary, the non-conforming use and non-conforming structure provisions of the Land Development Regulations to encourage expansion, renovation, and improvement of viable commercial fishing and seafood industry uses and facilities.

Action Item: Explore the feasibility of implementing tax relief measures to encourage the retention of existing working waterfront activities, including commercial fishing. Options include:

- Deferral of ad valorem taxes and non-ad valorem assessments for qualifying recreational and commercial working waterfront properties that maintain existing commercial fishing operations and uses in Stock Island for a determined period of time, e.g., ten years. (This option is now offered by the state through S. 197.303 F.S.)
- Differential taxation program for properties used for commercial fishing (with assessments based on use or income, and specific recapture provisions).

Action Item: Explore expanding the County's Transfer of Development Rights program to include, as potential sending sites, properties that currently accommodate commercial fishing uses.

Strategy 4: Consider requiring easement agreements for commercial fishing on waterfront property through the development/redevelopment approval process. (Such easements could be removed with the consent of the County only if proof is presented that the easement is no longer needed).

Continue to monitor practices and approaches used by other fishing communities to protect and enhance their marine-oriented industries.

Strategy 5: Consider outright acquisition of waterfront property, preferably with existing infrastructure (i.e., marinas) for commercial fishing or multi-purpose use (e.g., waterfront park and commercial fishing) within the port area. The property could be leased back to a private management entity such as a broad-based coalition of commercial fishing interests, such as a co-op.

Explore the possibility of acquiring key waterfront parcels for multi-use, such as commercial fishing and waterfront park.

Action Item: Explore and pursue partnerships and funding sources for land acquisition. Some potential partners and sources include:

- Trust for Public Lands
- Florida Coastal Management Program/Coastal Initiatives Partnership Grants (Working Waterfronts)
- Florida Department of Community Affairs/Waterfronts Florida Partnership
- Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program
- Florida Land and Water Conservation Fund Program

Strategy 6: Encourage the development of affordable housing to support employees of the commercial fishing and seafood industries.

Action Item: Continue and expand existing Monroe County's affordable and workforce housing programs and incentives for those employed by the marine industries.

Goal Three: *Enhance the Area's Identity as a Water-Oriented, Commercial Fishing Community*

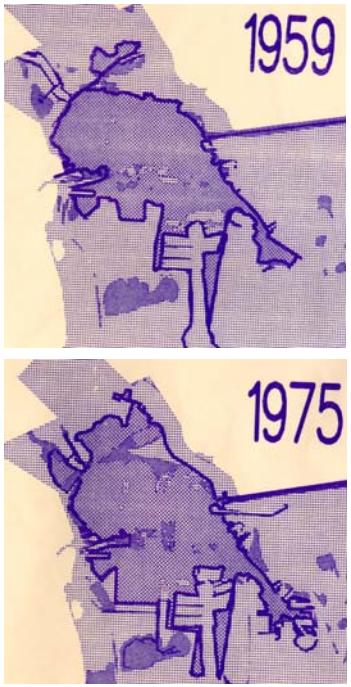
Current Conditions Summary

Commercial fishing has been present in Stock Island, in one form or another, for at least 200 years, and until 20 years ago it remained the most important economic activity in the Lower Keys. The island's image as an individualistic, diverse community with a proud working-class heritage was one of the most emphasized attributes at the various stakeholder meetings, the Visioning workshop, and the Alternative Concepts and Strategies Workshop.

Over the years, the community has strived to maintain its identity, notwithstanding the shadow cast, often long, by its more citified and better known neighbor, Key West. A historical sketch of Stock Island included in the study *A Computer-Directed Geographic Coastal Use Classification System for Ecologic Planning* provides some indication of the origins of this mindset (pg. 58). The historical sketch describes how extensive sections of the island, including the Safe Harbor and Peninsular areas and their adjoining waterways, are the product of dredge-and-fill activities which were carried out to build facilities accessory to the City of Key West.

In 1951, the City of Key West opened a landfill on the north side of Stock Island. This decision had a significant, long-lasting negative impact on property values on the island. Admittedly, the presence of this facility, combined with the perceived unattractiveness of the industrial waterfront setting, has probably served to keep housing comparatively affordable for working families with a predominance of mobile homes and trailer parks-thus cementing the community's identity as "blue-collar."

Over the next two decades, the port area continued to evolve and take shape. By 1975, the configuration of both sectors of the port area was settled, with the exception of today's Oceanside Marina. The Peninsular side, with shallow water access and moderately sizable upland, became home primarily to the lobster and stone crab fishing industries. In Safe Harbor, the deep channel and protected landing provided shelter to the shrimp boats, as well as to smaller lobster, stone crab, and fin fishing boats. Over time, the preponderance of the commercial fishing industry and related infrastructure, together with the presence of supporting maritime activities, came to define the utilitarian character of the



Maps by the University of Florida Cartographic Research Laboratory show dredge and fill activity shaping the Safe Harbor and the peninsula over a 15-year period. (From UFCRL Map Atlas, 1990.)

waterfront. The construction of significant utility facilities in the Safe Harbor area further consolidated the waterfront's industrial character. These facilities, including a power generating plant, large water storage tanks, and a reverse osmosis plant, remain today, occupying a substantial portion of the waterfront.

In the 1980's, the revitalization of the Key West Bight displaced many traditional industrial uses from the waterfront, forcing the relocation of the remainder of the commercial fishing fleet from the Bight to Stock Island. Currently, Stock Island is the center of the commercial fishing industry in the Lower Keys, the largest concentration of commercial fishing activity in the Keys as a whole, and home to a variety of industrial uses associated with the commercial fishing industry.

The revitalization of the Bight essentially closed the door on commercial fishing in Key West. Today, the Bight is devoted to tourist-oriented, commercial, and recreation activities.

Analysis of Community Needs

Despite a long history of commercial fishing, there is no public celebration in the community of Stock Island's fishing heritage, nor a clear physical expression of the community's identity. This plan aims to acknowledge and reinforce the synergy between commercial fishing activities and the unique atmosphere of the port area as an identity giver to the community.

One way to build community and reinforce a sense of place is to develop a "town center" or “business district” that integrates and focuses on elements of the waterfront, such as Safe Harbor. The public involvement process revealed a variety of opinions as to what the "center" of Stock Island might be, if any, but many stakeholders felt that Safe Harbor is likely the most recognized community feature. While no distinct “town center” exists today, the mixed-use character and concentration of commercial establishments observable in the sector bound by Fifth Street, Fifth Avenue, and Maloney Avenue gives some indication of a "business district." This area should be designated as the community’s town center and encouraged to develop with local-oriented businesses, services, and community facilities. The harbor and Bernstein Park, located at the corner of Fifth Street and Fifth Avenue, are natural focus points for this district. Bernstein Park is the only public park facility in the community. The park property was acquired through a combination of local, State and federal funds, and includes a major wetlands (bay bottom) component which currently is unused for recreational purposes.

The potential “town” center is, indeed, central to the community. Bernstein Park (below, photographed by the City of Key West Planning Department) lies at the west terminus of the area.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Enhance Safe Harbor as the landmark waterfront feature of the community.

Action Item: Require, as part of new development and redevelopment, the creation of a boardwalk or "harborwalk," to link together uses and activities along the water.

Action Item: Promote a diverse mix of land uses to support increased activity in the harbor area, while remaining compatible with its working waterfront character and function.

Action Item: Explore options for providing more direct connections between Bernstein Park and the harbor—for example, via "greenway" (i.e., along "Boatyard Row" drive) or "blueway" (i.e., wetlands to harbor) linkages—to create an enhanced, unique community landmark.

Strategy 2: Improve accessibility to, and general visibility of, Safe Harbor and the businesses located in the area.

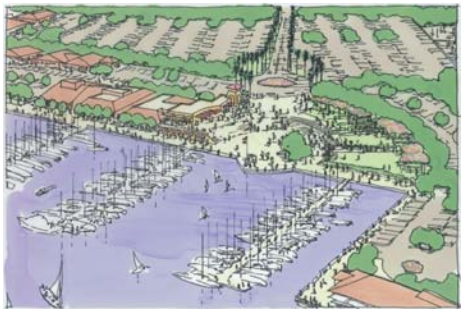
Action Item*:* Encourage private development to incorporate public "gateways" into the harbor, to strengthen the interaction between this feature and the proposed "town center" along Fifth and Fourth Avenues.

Action Item: Develop a comprehensive sign strategy to improve wayfinding for visitors and patrons of businesses located in the Safe Harbor area.

Action Item: Provide safe visual access points from adjacent roadways into the harbor as a means of orientation.

Action Item: Improve linkages from surrounding residential neighborhoods to the harbor area.

Explore options for connecting Bernstein Park and the harbor.



"Open up" the harbor at strategic locations to make it a focal point of the proposed "town center".

Provide safe visual access to the water from adjacent streets.

Encourage improved business and directional signage.

Action item: Working with appropriate government agencies, encourage and facilitate, to the extent necessary to maintain safe navigation and access into the harbor, allowable dredging activities.

Strategy 3: Define community identity through a coordinated program of signage, public art, streetscape, public spaces, etc.

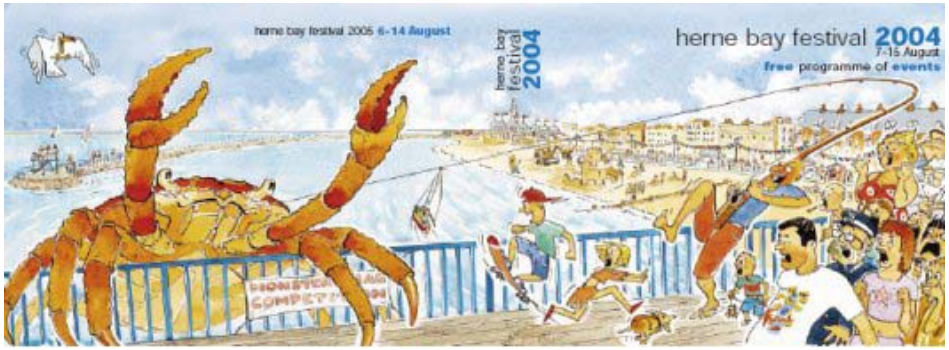
Action Item: Create community entrance features at US-1 identifying Stock Island as a commercial fishing community.

Action Item: Investigate the long-term feasibility of developing community gateway parks on the site of the Fire Station with potential reuse of the building as a community center, and on a vacant site south of Maloney Avenue between Second Street and Maloney Avenue. Preliminary ideas for these parks are shown in **Figure 9, Preliminary Concept for Gateway Parks**.

Suggested locations for new community gateway parks.

Strategy 4: Use the cohesive identity of the area to promote community events.

Action Item: Work with community groups to organize and host events that promote community building and strengthen community identity, such as seafood festivals, Saturday fish markets, Blessing-of-the-Fleet festivals, Harbor Clean-Up Days, etc.



Organize events that capitalize on the cultural identity of the communty as a commercial fishing community.

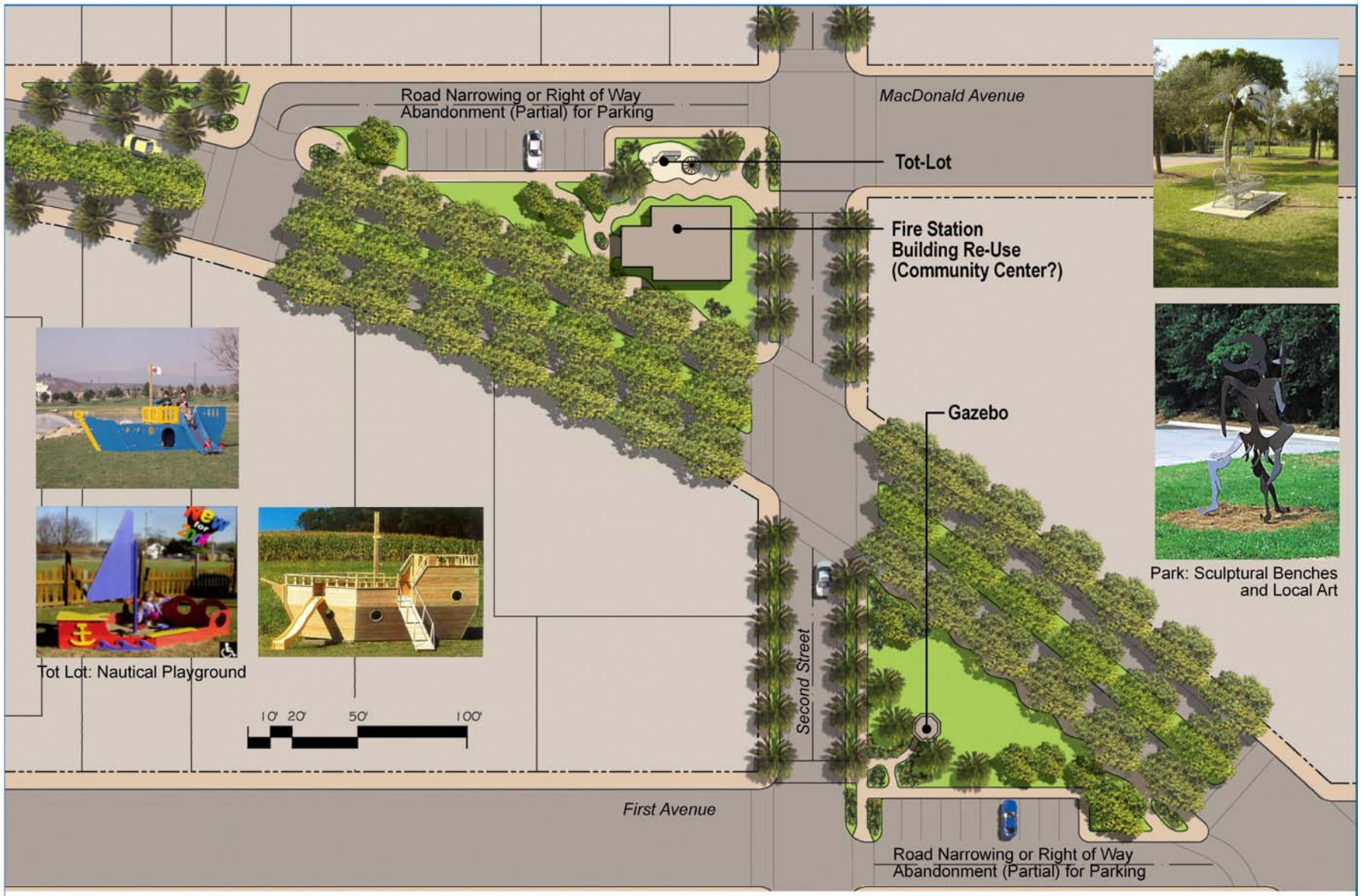


Figure 9: Preliminary Concept for Gateway Parks

Goal Four: Revitalize the port area while improving its physical setting and appearance

Current Conditions Summary

Although industrial areas tend to be aesthetically "messy" by their very function, one of the most common complaints expressed by participants in the planning process was related to the “grungy” appearance and poor quality of existing development. Several factors contribute to this impression. The presence of industrial debris and of major electric power lines and other utility lines overhead create a sense of visual clutter. The gravel used on roadway shoulders generates a significant amount of dust, which is dragged and smeared onto the paved surfaces by vehicles. Weedy lots and faded hand-made signs tacked onto electric poles produce an unkempt aspect. Cars haphazardly parked on shoulders and driveway connections leading to nowhere perfect an image of untidiness and disarray.

Industrial areas tend, by their very nature, to be “messy” in appearance.

Analysis of Community Needs

The lack of design standards was cited as a weakness by some, but most stakeholders disliked the idea of a "uniform" architectural style-particularly anything that could be identified or equated with Key West. The community favors, instead, using urban design and site development tools to reinforce the community's cultural identity as a modest, working-class, commercial fishing community.

Community identity features need to be created, or improved. Consensus was detected in relation to the need for coordinated community design elements such as streetscape, landscape, and signage. For example, attractive “gateway” markers are needed to visually announce to visitors that they are entering a special place. Consolidated directional signs, well-designed and properly permitted by the County, could also go a long way toward improving aesthetics and wayfinding into and within the community, particularly benefitting businesses in the Peninsular area, Safe Harbor, and the community’s emerging “town center”. Today, signs on public property are generally prohibited by the Land Development Regulations, and off-premise sign allowances could be difficult to achieve for many Stock Island businesses removed from US-1 or the major island roadways.

Undergrounding of public utilities, while unlikely in the short term, should be a long-term objective to be achieved through public and private sector collaborations, not only for aesthetic reasons but also to minimize power outages related to storm damage.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Raise the bar on design and development quality, while retaining the "small town," "fishing village character" of the community through new development and redevelopment.

> Action Item: Identify design vocabularies appropriate to the character of Stock Island and develop guidelines to address bulk, building envelope, height, etc.

Strategy 2: Define individual "identity" for waterfront areas (districts) while maintaining an overall cohesiveness.

> Action Item: Explore public land acquisition for development of neighborhood and community waterfront parks at key locations, to serve the surrounding community, provide water access, and complement the function of the port area as a community focus.

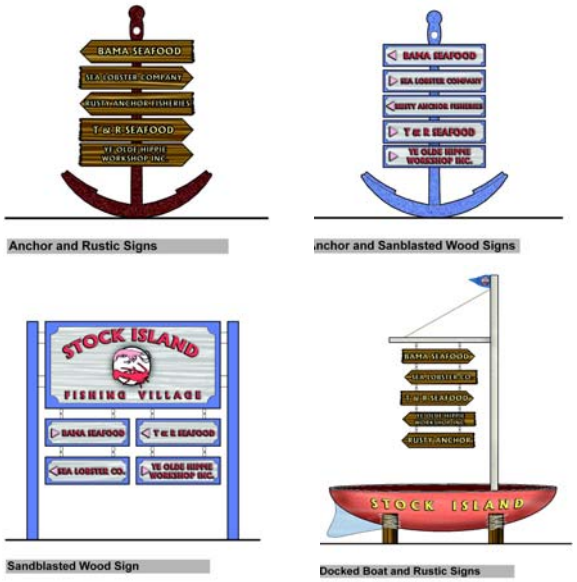
> Action Item: Amend the zoning district boundaries to reclassify non-waterfront properties located along the northeast section of Front Street, currently zoned Maritime Industrial (MI), to Mixed Use zoning (MU), as a transition zone between residential uses to the northeast, and the Safe Harbor area.

> Action Item: Continue to work with the Naval Air Station at Boca Chica, through the AICUZ process, to determine an optimal mix of uses for Peninsular, including housing where possible, and amend the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning as necessary to reflect and encourage the resulting mix.

Strategy 3: Reinforce the edges of "districts" within and surrounding the port area through the installation of district, neighborhood, and community signage, where appropriate.

> Action Item: Pursue Neighborhood Enhancement Grants and other available sources of funding to support design, construction, and installation of signs consistent with a comprehensive signage strategy. Suggested locations are indicated in **Figure 10, *Potential Locations for Identification or Directional Signage***.

Identify design vocabularies (not styles!) appropriate to the character of the community.



Preliminary ideas for a comprehensive community signage system.

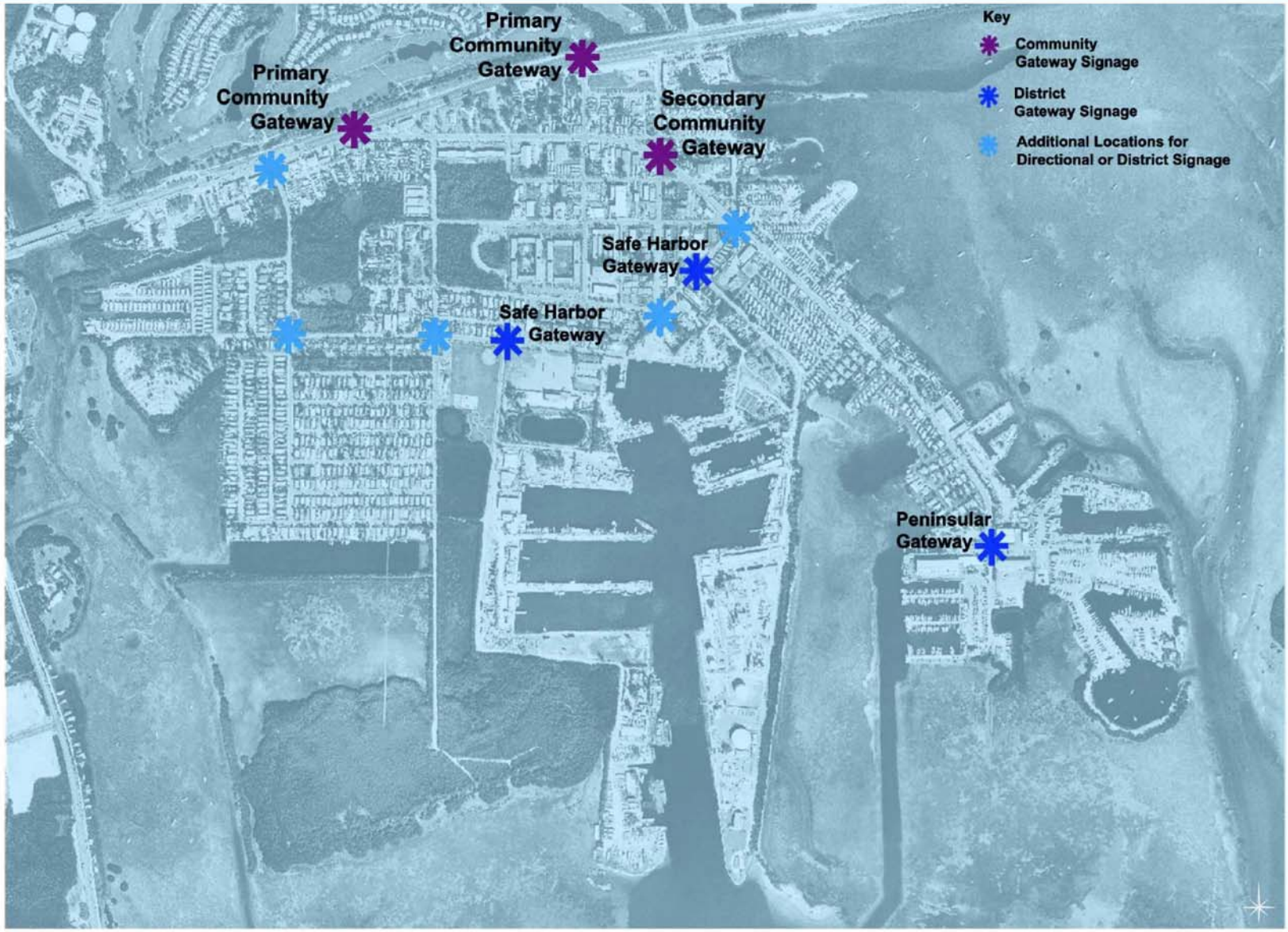


Figure 10: Potential Locations for Identification or Directional Signage

2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Not to Scale

Strategy 4: Build additional flexibility into the zoning, land development regulations, and permitting processes to promote the desired development character.

Action Item: Consider amending the parking provisions in the Land Development Regulations to ensure the provision of adequate, but not excessive parking and loading areas for commercial fishing, maritime industrial, and commercial marine uses. Examples of potential modifications include:

- Establish ranges of minimum and maximum parking requirements.
- Offer parking reduction incentives (credits) for mixed-use development with shared parking, transit access, or available on-street parking.

Strategy 5: Pursue burying utility lines within the port area as a long term goal.

Action Item: Coordinate with the Public Works Department, private landowners and private developers, to relocate utility lines underground when the opportunity arises.

Strategy 6: Increase landscape buffers along the street boundaries of industrial property, as well as tree canopy along the major corridors and key community locations such as Bernstein Park.

Action Item: Revise landscape and buffer yard requirements in the port area, including both those applicable to Peninsular and Safe Harbor.

Strategy 7: Promote public safety and crime prevention in the port area.

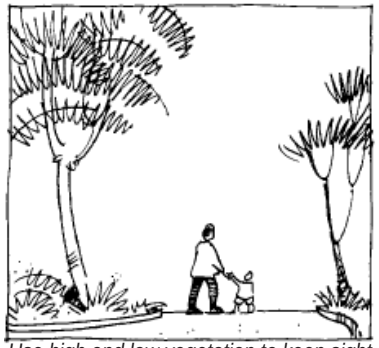
Action Item: Coordinate with Monroe County Fire Rescue Services, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office and neighborhood organizations and residents to conduct periodic "safety audits" of the area to identify potentially unsafe areas. (Walk-throughs should generally be conducted after dark.)

Action Item: Coordinate with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office to continue addressing problem locations for loitering or drugs.

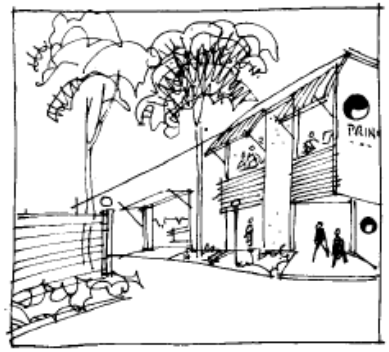
Require generous landscaped buffers along the street frontage of industrial uses.

Promote public safety and security in the area.

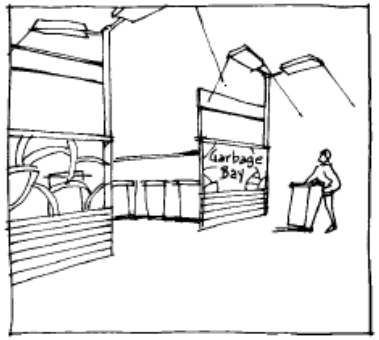
Action Item: Provide education to area business, residents, and developers, on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies.



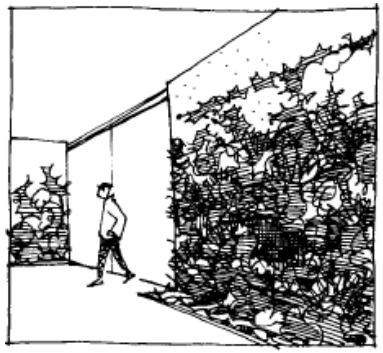
Use high and low vegetation to keep sight lines, minimize entrapment points.



Place offices in the front of buildings.



Provide good lighting in public and service areas.



Plant "green" (vegetated) walls to prevent graffitti.

Examples of CPTED strategies(images by Penrith Valley, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Development Control Plan).

Goal Five: *Promote Opportunities for the Diversification of the Local Water-Dependent Economy*

Current Conditions Summary

Commercial fishing has been a major component of the local economic base for over 20 years. Stock Island contains the largest concentration of commercial fishing activity in the Keys, contributing over $38 million in value of dockside landings to Monroe County's and the State's economy in 2003 (the most recent year of rankings by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Services).

However, the commercial fishing industry is in transition. As a result of increasing industry regulation; rising costs of fuel, equipment, dockage fees, insurance; and competition from foreign markets and aquaculture, the industry is experiencing a gradual but clear trend toward consolidation in the number of "business" entities involved, particularly among small-scale fishermen. There has also been some "corporate" consolidation. Thus, while the volume of catch may remain nearly unchanged over time, the numbers of people and of businesses involved has diminished. This trend-similarly experienced by other industries related to the harvest of natural resources-appears likely to continue, with increasing efficiencies resulting in a smaller but more effective industry. Natural resource-dependent communities tend to be quite vulnerable to regulatory and market forces that impact the base industry, and drastic changes, in turn, affect the well being of the community. Fluctuations in economic prosperity are common because both the availability of, and the market demand for the resource can be cyclical (i.e., seasonal).

All this points to the need to diversify the local economy. While input obtained through the planning process indicates strong community support for protecting the commercial fishing industry, it is critical to stimulate a diverse, stable year-round economy, and to offer those who may eventually abandon commercial fishing the opportunity both to remain employed in Stock Island, and to retain and use to best advantage their background in the performance of new economic activities.

Table 4:

Stock Island Landings by Year

Year	Millions of Pounds	Millions of Dollars
2003	15.8	38.4
2002	17.5	43.2
2001	16.4	40
2000	16.9	50.6
1999	19.8	51.9
1998	18.9	44.8
1997	18.8	54.9
1996	23.7	62.8
1995	23.4	66.7
1994	21.5	53
1993	20.3	35.2
1992	9.4	17.4
1991	14.1	35.1
1990	11.4	21.7
1989	9.6	17.3
1988	9.2	16.8
1987	12.3	22.4
1986	15.4	27.4
1985	15.3	23.3
1984	17.7	21.8
1983	11.7	18.6
1982	10	19
1981	18	27

Source: NOAA Fisheries Statistics & Economics Division of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) .

Analysis of Community Needs

The port area of Stock Island has the capacity to support a variety of activities and uses. Currently, there are negligible amounts of research and development (R & D) and water-based eco-tourism uses or facilities. Yet, diversifying the range of marine-oriented industries, as opposed to other economic activities, offers clear benefits. First, this economic orientation is consistent with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan goals and policies for this area, as well as with the wishes articulated by the community, and other goals set forth in this plan. Second, there is a growing relationship between the commercial fishing industry and marine-oriented research and development activities, potentially facilitating the transition from one industry to the other.

An *Economic Assessment and Strategic Economic Development Program for the Lower Keys* prepared by The Chesapeake Group (TCG) indicates that commercial businesses in the Keys face numerous challenges to their survival, including the regulatory environment. In contrast, there are significant opportunities in the Keys for marine science and education. Biological research will continue to expand, with Florida playing an increasingly prominent role in the future, due to its water resources. Several communities around the state already are attempting to capitalize on locations in proximity to water and land-based resources. In the Keys, several models exist already, including the Mote Tropical Research Laboratory in Summerland Key; the Keys Marine Laboratory in Long Key, operated by the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) and the Florida Institute of Oceanography (FIO); the University of North Carolina at Wilmington's (UNCW) National Undersea Research Center for the Southeastern United States and Gulf of Mexico; and Reef Relief in Key West.

Although the presence of the R&D industry is marginal today, there is great potential for attracting institutions and industry to Stock Island.

The study by TCG indicates that great potential exists for marine technology and water-based research and development, and suggests several approaches that Monroe County might use to attract the R & D industry to the Lower Keys. Most important will be seeking and establishing partnerships with institutions of higher education, private pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry, and non-profit organizations.

Eco-tourism is another facet that offers significant economic potential. Water-based or water-related activities that may be promoted include canoeing, kayaking, snorkeling and diving, camping, and birding.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Support the expansion of employment opportunities in a broad range of marine-oriented businesses and industries, including marine sciences and research, marine education, marine technologies, biomedicine, and eco-tourism.

> Action Item: Provide a balanced mix of uses within the port area through the Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations to accommodate existing and new marine-oriented businesses and industries and supporting uses, including marine sciences and research, marine education, marine technologies, biomedicine, and eco-tourism.
>
> Action Item: Work with Monroe County Marine Extension Program, FKCC, and other institutions to develop training programs to create a qualified local labor force for jobs in new marine-oriented industries.
>
> Action Item: Encourage local business owners to use the local labor force whenever possible.
>
> Action Item: Seek funding to promote the creation of private-sector jobs in the targeted industries. A potential source is the Revolving Loan Fund (RFL) program of the South Florida Economic Development District (EDD), which is managed by the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC).

Strategy 2: Support and promote the development of marine-based research and marine science uses and facilities as part of the use mix in the port area.

> Action Item: Pursue partnerships or the formation of a consortium with private industry, universities, and various levels of government to attract marine-based research and education programs, uses, and facilities to the port area.
>
> Action Item: Explore options for direct recruitment of individual biotechnology companies or institutions.

To generate new jobs and a diversified marine-based economy, partnerships should be pursued with private industry, higher education institutions, and government agencies.

Strategy 3: Support and expand water-based eco-tourism activities.

Action Item: Protect and enhance existing natural resources located within the planning study area as an attraction for eco-tourism industry and a potential component of the diversified local economic base.

Strategy 4: Encourage the development of workforce housing to support employees in the marine science, education, and eco-tourism industries.

Action Item: Continue and expand existing Monroe County's workforce housing programs and incentives.

Strategy 5: Build additional flexibility into the zoning, land development regulations, and permitting processes to promote the desired development mix.

Action Item: Consider amending the parking and loading provisions in the Land Development Regulations applicable to marine sciences and research, marine education, marine technologies, biomedicine, and eco-tourism uses. Examples of potential modifications include:

- Establish ranges of minimum and maximum parking requirements.
- Offer parking reduction incentives (credits) for uses that share parking, have transit access or available on-street parking.

Action Item: Explore ways to further streamline review and permitting processses. Consideration for expedited review could be given to development proposals that:

- Involve new/expanded marine sciences and research, marine education, marine technologies, biomedicine, and eco-tourism uses.
- Create a (to be determined) minimum number of new jobs.
- Include workforce housing to support these uses, where allowed.
- Have undergone pre-submittal review.
- Submitted completed development applications.

Expand and promote eco-friendly tourist activities, such as kayaking.

Goal Six: *Provide and Improve Waterfront Access*

Current Conditions Summary

Community input provided through the planning process suggests frustration at the irony of living on an island where open access to the waterfront is becoming increasingly limited. Although a significant amount of waterfront land within the study area is owned by the public utilities, public access is essentially barred from those properties, due to safety and security concerns. The remainder of the property, on and off the waterfront, is in private ownership.

The absence of public waterfront land ownership compounds the difficulty of preserving access to the water, since the perceived trend in redevelopment is toward residential uses, typically with restricted access. Private efforts toward the "condominiumization" of existing dockage, both in the Peninsular and Safe Harbor areas, raise this challenge by further fragmenting the ownership pattern

Monroe County does not own waterfront property in the community, within or outside the planning study area, that could be used to accommodate commercial fishing or simply for public water access purposes. Currently, there is only one public boat ramp in Stock Island, located on US-1 at Mile Marker 5.2. However, the ramp is on FDOT land and has very limited parking and boat launching capacity.

Public access is restricted to the utilities' properties.

The most expansive views of the harbor are accessible only from the water's edge itself.

Analysis of Community Needs

Stock Island is in dire need of improved visual and functional access to the water's edge to accommodate both the operations of marine industrial uses and the recreational needs of residents and visitors. The provisions of the new Florida Working Waterfront Protection Act provide additional motivation for considering a variety of strategies, both in the form of incentives and regulatory requirements, to preserve, expand, and enhance access to the water.

Existing view corridors, while scarce, need to be protected and maximized. New "gate-ways" providing views of the water are also needed, not just for aesthetic or logistical reasons, but also to create a sense of place and improve wayfinding.

A few concentrations of common ownership exist in the harbor and Peninsular area, creating opportunities to reclaim both visual and functional water access through the private redevelopment process or through public acquisition. Landowners need to be encouraged to provide public access facilities on the water, and to link individual facilities into an incremental "harborwalk". The harborwalk would connect the diversity of uses along the waterfront, serving as the unifying element for the harbor to become the community's premier landmark, and creating value as a recreational feature. Handi-capped accessibility needs to be taken into consideration in every case. Where security and safety are issues, features need to be built into the harborwalk to ensure users are safely segregated from heavy equipment, hazardous materials, and risky activities.

Public ownership of key waterfront property also needs to be considered, to ensure preservation of water access for the public in perpetuity.

Landowners should be encouraged to contribute to the incremental development of a unified harborwalk. The boardwalk can be spartan through the industrial areas, and become more "polished" through the commercial and residential areas.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Facilitate the provision of visual and functional waterfront access.

Action Item: Adopt site design and development standards to protect water view corridors.

Action Item: Work with private landowners and developers to voluntarily set aside access (e.g., through easements), build access facilities (e.g., harborwalk, board-walks, boat ramps, or boat slips for public use), or facilitate the public acquisition of identified locations.

Action Item: As an alternative to voluntary set asides, consider amending the Land Development Regulations to require all new development or redevelopment of waterfront property to retain or provide access along the water.

Action Item: Promote the creation of public access linkages to the water from Bernstein Park.

Action Item: Explore and pursue partnerships and funding sources for land acquisition. Some potential partners and sources include:

- Trust for Public Lands
- Florida Communities Trust/Florida Forever
- Florida Coastal Management Program/Coastal Initiatives Partnership Grants:
- Florida Department of Community Affairs/Waterfronts Florida Partnership
- Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program
- Florida Land and Water Conservation Fund Program

Action Item: Identify potential local trails and waterfront destinations to incorporate into the Florida Keys Scenic Highway and the Overseas Heritage Trail programs, and plan for necessary improvements.

Protect water view corridors through site design standards.

Identify potential trails and destinations to become part of the Overseas Heritage Trail.

Goal Seven: *Create an efficient, visually attractive network of intra-island corridors.*

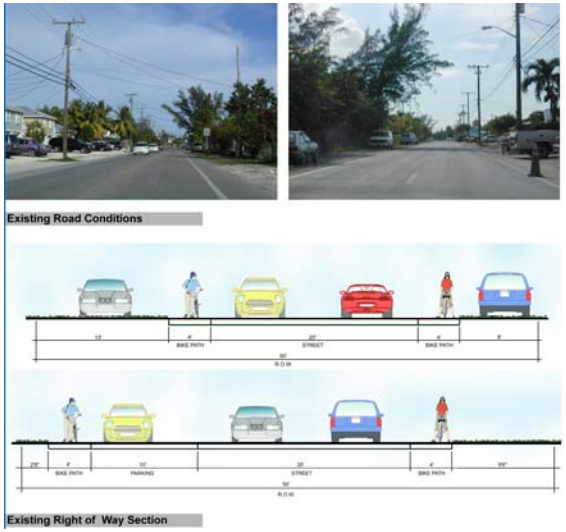
Current Conditions Summary

As shown in **Figure 11, *Traffic/Circulation Network***, MacDonald/Maloney Avenue and Fifth/Fourth Avenue are the two primary corridors that traverse the island in the west-east direction. Both corridors go through, and connect, community sectors that are either predominantly commercial, or predominantly residential, without distinction or indication of the transition between uses. Few shelters and amenities are offered to pedestrians or bicyclists on either of the two corridors.

According to plans provided by the Monroe County Engineering Department, MacDonald/Maloney Avenue has a 60-foot wide right-of-way, the widest in the island's street network. The road has four driving lanes but the two outside lanes are used primarily for on-street parking. It is the only street in Stock Island that has sidewalks on both sides of the street, although the sidewalks are narrow and punctuated by frequent driveways. (Some of the driveways, however, are currently closed off to traffic access, and abandonment might be explored). The sidewalk is separated from the travel lanes/parking lanes by a thin planting strip, but landscape—other than grass—is sparse. Although there appears to be significant bicycle traffic on this roadway, bicycle lanes are not present. Utility lines are located above ground, occupying the span of the planting strip and contributing to an impression of simultaneous plainness and clutter. East to southeast of 2nd Street, the sinuous layout of Maloney Avenue results in some potentially conflicting intersection alignments and geometries. A repetitive cross-street labeling system, coupled with the unusual alignment of the roadway, can be disorienting particularly to first-time visitors (e.g., 2nd Street and 2nd Avenue both intersect Maloney Avenue, as do Fifth Street and Fifth Avenue).

The typical right-of-way section of Fourth and Fifth Avenues is 50-foot wide, which accommodates two 10-foot travel lanes, bike lanes on both sides of the street, and paved or graveled shoulders. On-street parking occurs informally on the shoulder. Between 5th Street and Shrimp Road on-street parking is designated on the south side of the street, in front of the park. There is a lack of sidewalks, street trees, and other pedestrian amenities on this roadway, despite the fact that it traverses the community's informal "business district" located, roughly, between 5th and 2nd Streets. Utilities are above ground on this

MacDonald and Maloney Avenues.



Fifth and Fourth Avenues.

Figure 11: Existing Traffic/Circulation Network

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2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Field observation/Key West Transit

roadway as well. The bend of 4th Avenue to the northeast generates another confusing 3-road intersection with 2nd Street and 3rd Avenue.

Analysis of Community Needs

Creating safe links between different community commercial and residential sectors and between these sectors and the shoreline is of priority. Stock Island is a small community, with a predominance of residential uses and a significant population of youths under the age of 18 who need a secure street environment. Improving the performance and aesthetics of the island's major corridors will not only enhance the quality of life of the residents, but if done within the context of a comprehensive, coordinated framework as proposed in this section of the Plan, they will also contribute to reinforce community identity and sense of place.

Walking and bicycling are common modes of transportation for the community—yet the infrastructure and amenities to support these activities are rather marginal. Given the anticipated/desired pattern, scale, and character of future development, providing a safe and enjoyable environment for cars and transit, cyclists, and pedestrians is the main concern. Development of additional bicycle and sidewalk facilities, traffic calming, and orderly provision of parking where needed are key community needs. Reorganizing confusing traffic movement patterns and conflicting intersection designs that represent potential risks for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles, is particularly important at the following intersections:

- Maloney and 2rd Street
- Maloney and 1st Avenue
- Maloney at the junction with 4th and 2nd Avenues
- 4th Avenue at the junction with 2nd Street and 3rd Avenue.

Within the past year, the Monroe County Public Works Division completed a comprehensive capital improvement project in Stock Island, comprising upgrades to 17 local streets. Repaving, addition of bike lanes, and drainage improvements were the key activities included in this project. The recentness of this enhancement may hinder the County's ability to budget additional street improvements in the immediate future. However, Maloney Avenue was not included in the scope of the "Stock Island Roads II" project, and

Traffic conflicts at several local intersections pose threats to pedestrians, bicycle riders, and vehicles.

may become a good pilot project. Outside funding may be available in the form of Florida Department of Transportation grants, which should also be pursued for maintenance of projects subsequent to construction. In addition, the County could require private developers to participate in improving roadways, specifically segments directly impacted by the vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic generated by their developments.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

Strategy 1: Enhance the physical and functional environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Narrow, consistent front yard setbacks contribute to a sense of pedestrian scale.

Action Item: Amend the land development regulations to require front yard building setbacks no greater than 10 feet along MacDonald, Maloney, Fourth, and Fifth Avenues, to define a consistent street edge and to create a pedestrian-friendly scale, particularly within the "town center" along Fifth and Fourth Avenues.

Action Item: Review and, as necessary, amend County engineering standards for public sidewalks to ensure the creation of a coordinated pedestrian network.

Action Item: Require all new development and redevelopment along MacDonald, Maloney, Fourth and Fifth Avenues to provide public sidewalks consistent with the County standards.

Action Item: Require the provision of bicycle facilities and parking in all new development and redevelopment.

Action Item: Develop and implement a coordinated program of pedestrian amenities for MacDonald, Maloney, Fourth and Fifth Avenues, to include:

- Addition of shelters to bus stops.
- Installation of trash receptacles, planters, bike racks, and light fixtures at appropriate intervals.
- Wayfinding system/consolidated directional signs.

Preliminary ideas for elements of this amenities package are shown in **Figure 12, Street Furnishing Concepts**.

Nautical / "Rustic"

Streamlined Industrial

Contemporary

Figure 12: Street Furnishing Concepts

Action Item: Require, as part of new development and redevelopment, the planting of street trees at regular intervals to shade pedestrians and bicyclists, calm traffic, and create a continuous tree canopy that enhances the aesthetics of the community as a whole.

Strategy 2: Consider engineering options to correct the alignment and design of conflictive/confusing intersections.

Action Item: Study, design, and prioritize improvements for the following intersections:

- Maloney and 3rd Street
- Maloney and 2nd Street
- Maloney at the junction with 4th and 2nd Avenues
- 4th Avenue at the junction with 2nd Street and 3rd Avenue.

Action Item: Investigate the feasibility of a potential closure, partial abandonment, or narrowing of east-west segments of MacDonald Avenue extension and First Avenue between Second Street and Maloney Avenue to minimize traffic conflicts at the junctions of First Avenue and Maloney and MacDonald Avenue extension at MacDonald Avenue.

Strategy 3: Develop a hierarchy of street design concepts, depicted in ***Figure 13*, Corridor Enhancement Framework,** to reflect/identify the predominant character of the surrounding/adjacent areas, as described by the concepts shown in ***Figures 14*** through ***20***.

Tree-lined streets add to community character, provide shade for pedestrians and cyclists, and slows traffic.

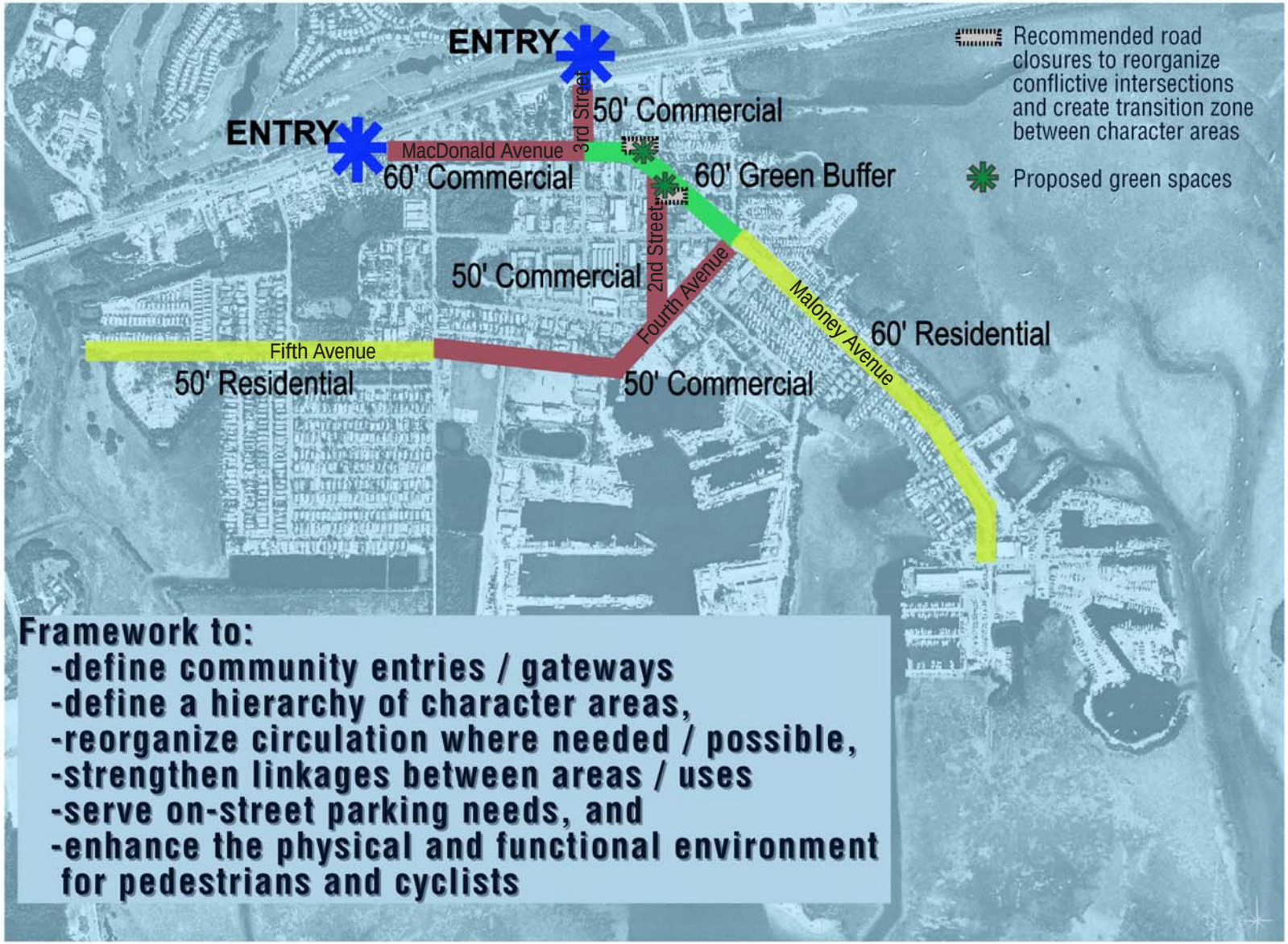
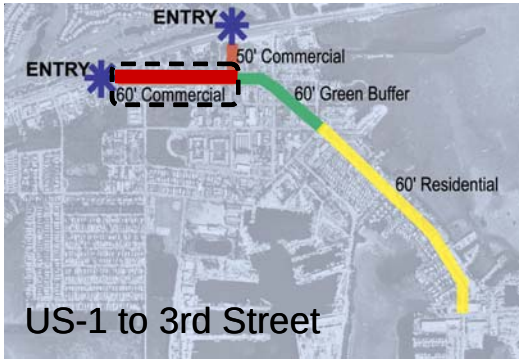


Figure 13: Corridor Enhancement Framework

2002 Aerial Photo from FDOT Provided by Monroe County
Not to Scale

- MacDonald Avenue commercial character area (segment between US Highway 1 and 3rd Street): Two 12-foot wide travel lanes; sidewalks, bike lanes, and designated parallel on-street parking on both sides of the street, with street trees (palms) planted in bump-outs.



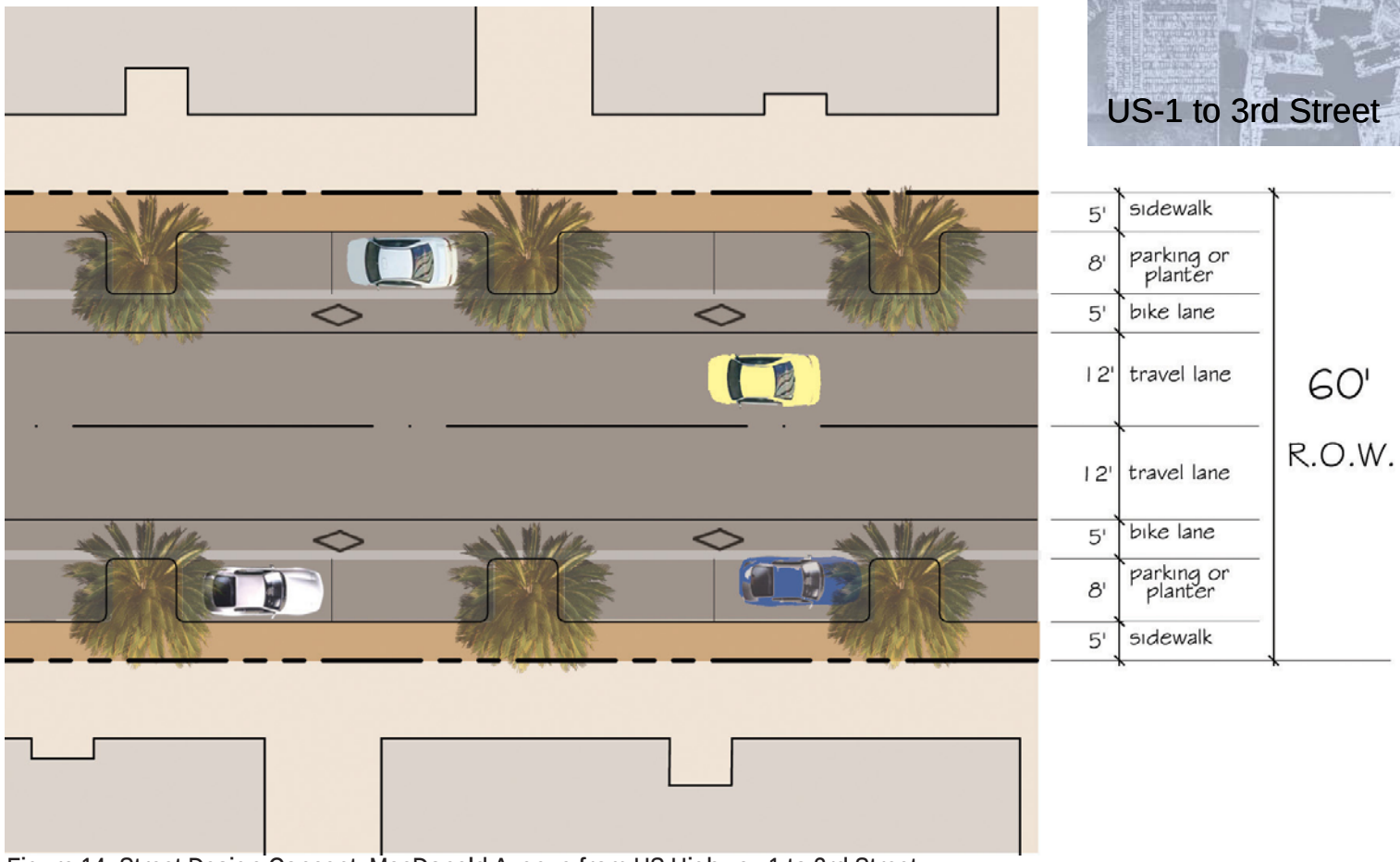


Figure 14: Street Design Concept, MacDonald Avenue from US Highway 1 to 3rd Street

- <u>MacDonald/Maloney Avenue transition zone</u> (segments between 3rd and 2nd Streets, and between 2nd Street and 4th Avenue): Two 11-foot wide travel lanes; a 14-foot wide median planted with canopy trees at regular intervals (left turn lanes where required); sidewalks, bike lanes, and street trees lining both sides of the street (palms between 3rd and 2nd Streets, canopy trees between 2nd Street and 4th Avenue); no on-street parking.

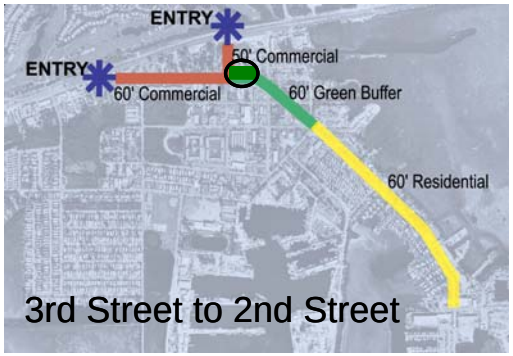


Figure 15: Street Design Concept, MacDonald/Maloney Avenue from 3rd to 2nd Streets

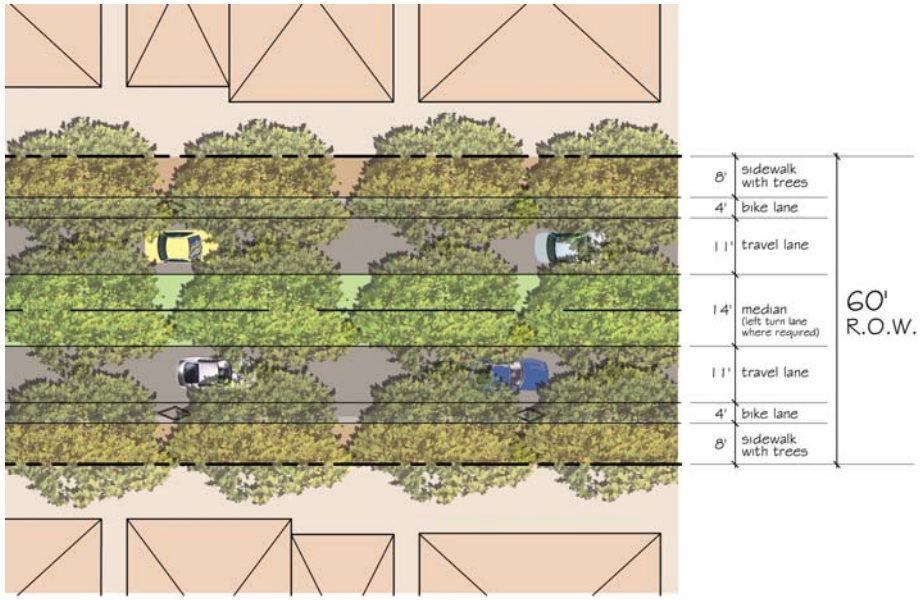


Figure 16: Street Design Concept, MacDonald/Maloney Avenue from 2nd Street to 4th Avenue

- Maloney Avenue residential character area (segment between 4th Avenue and Peninsular): Two 12-foot wide travel lanes; sidewalks, bike lanes, and designated parallel on-street parking on both sides of the street (no median), with canopy trees planted in bump-outs.

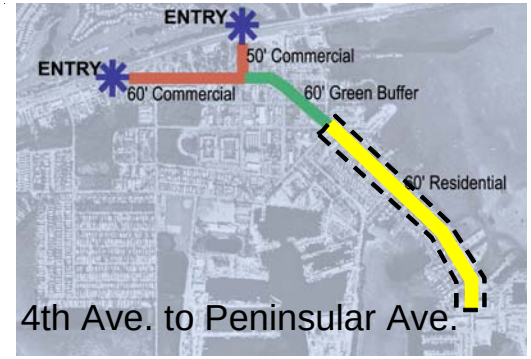


Figure 17: Street Design Concept, Maloney Avenue from 4th Avenue to Peninsular Avenue

- Fifth/Fourth Avenue commercial character area/"Town Center" (segment between Maloney Avenue and 5th Street): Two 10-foot wide travel lanes; sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides of the street; on-street parking on one side of the street only, with palms planted in bump-outs; the other side lined with palms planted at regular intervals.

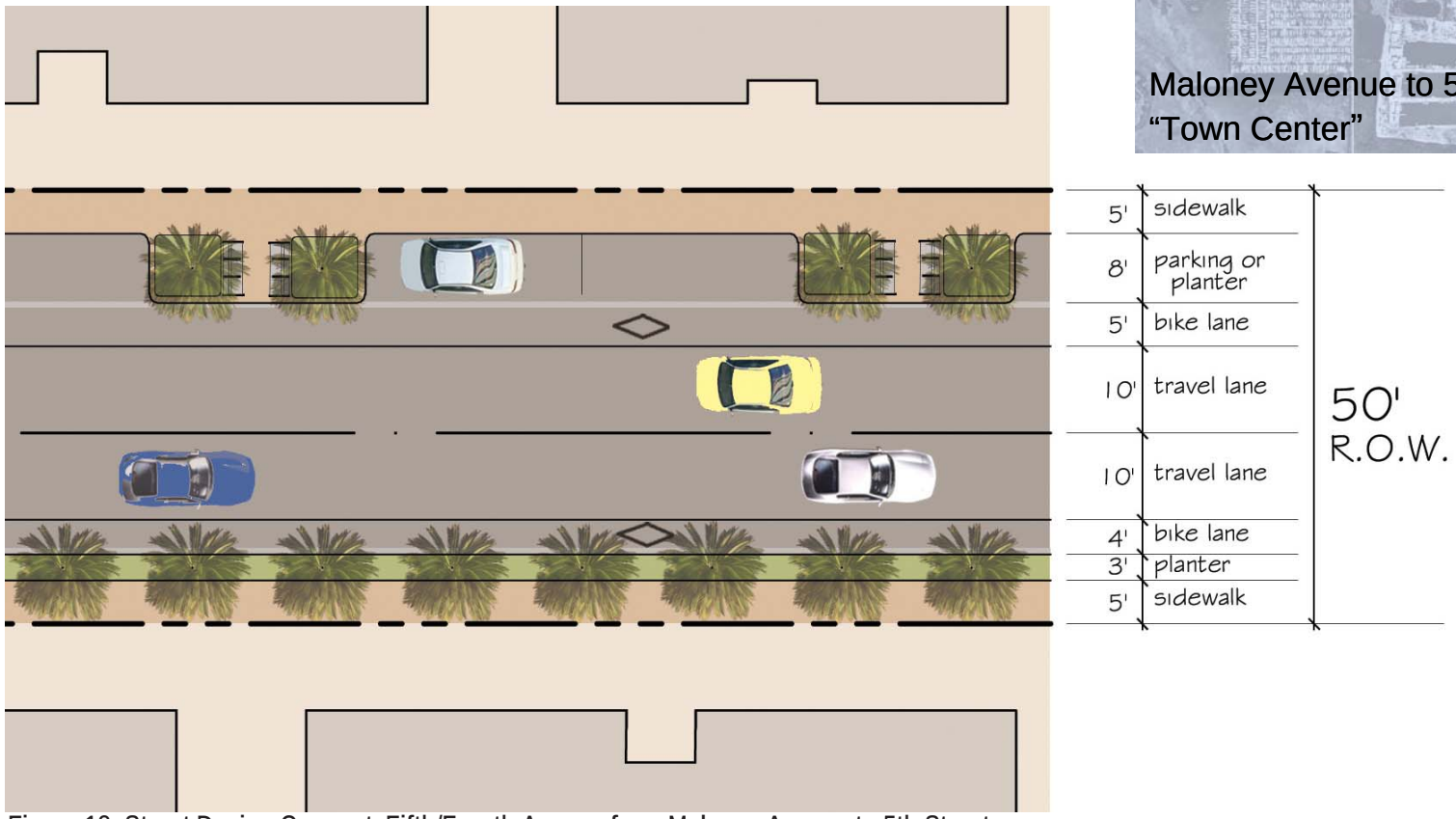
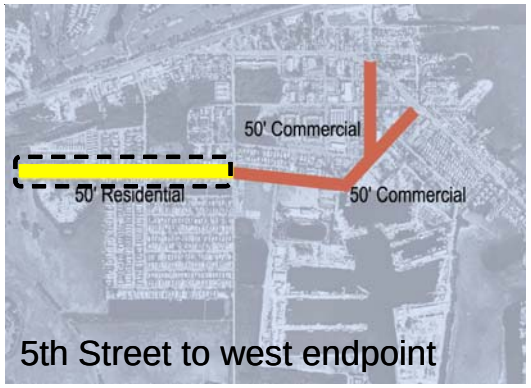


Figure 18: Street Design Concept, Fifth/Fourth Avenue from Maloney Avenue to 5th Street

- Fifth Avenue residential character area (between 5th Street and west endpoint of Fifth Avenue): Two 12-foot wide travel lanes; parking on one side of the street only, with canopy trees planted in bump-outs; the other side lined with regularly spaced canopy trees in a continuous planter strip; sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides of the street.



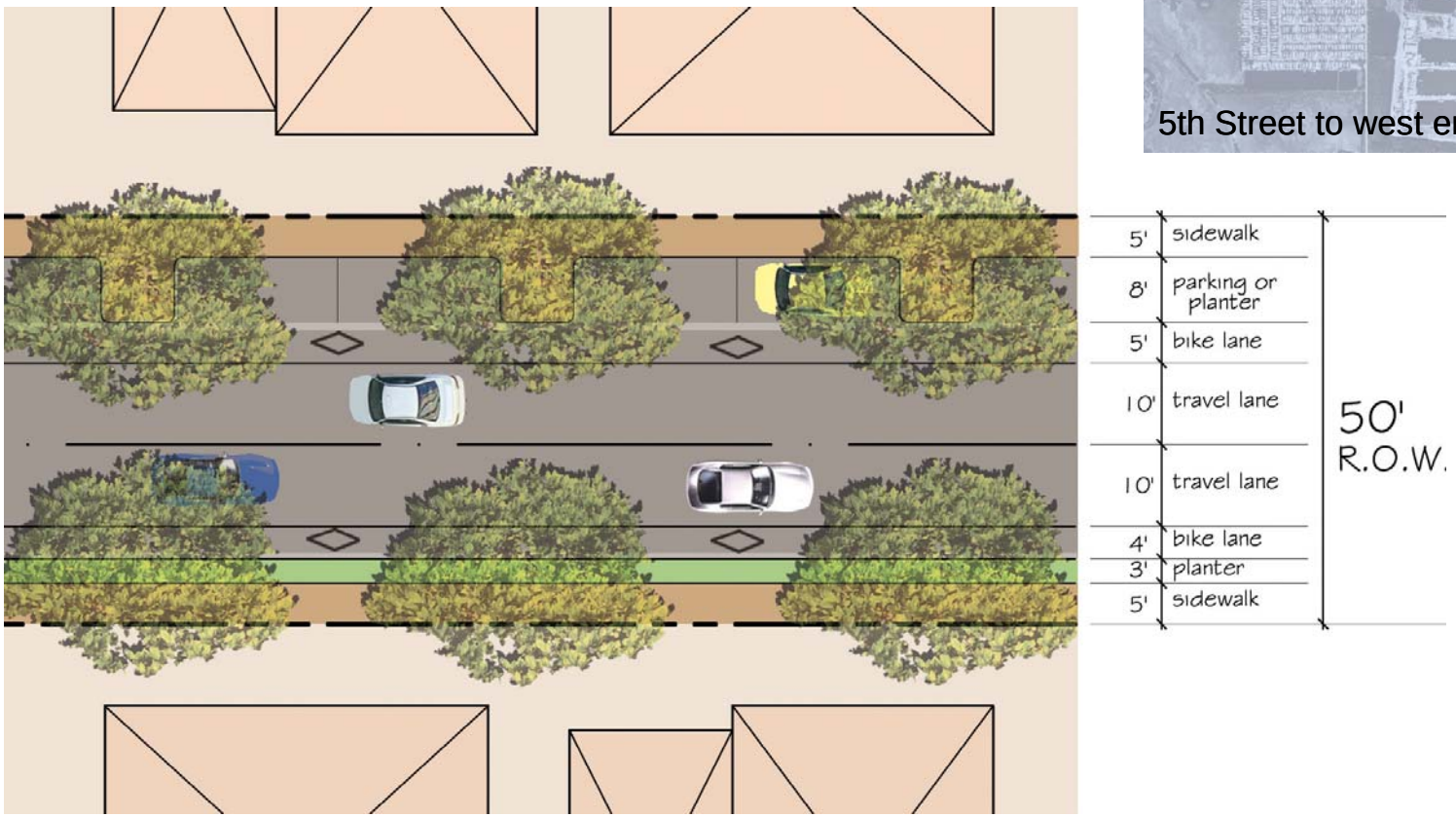


Figure 19: Street Design Concept, Fifth/Fourth Avenue from 5th Street to West Endpoint of 5th Avenue

- Third and Second Street connectors (between US-1 and MacDonald Avenue, and between Maloney and Fourth Avenues, respectively): Two 11-foot wide travel lanes; no on-street parking; both sides of the street lined with regularly spaced palms in a continuous planter strip; 5-foot sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides of the street.

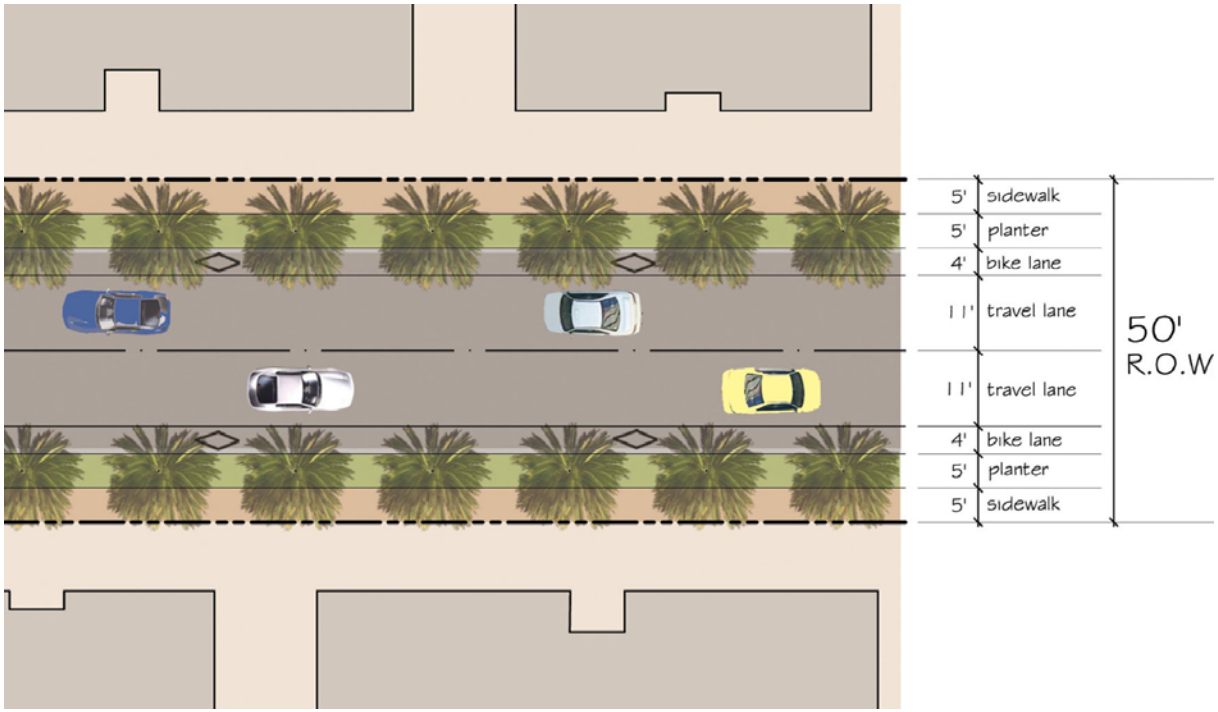
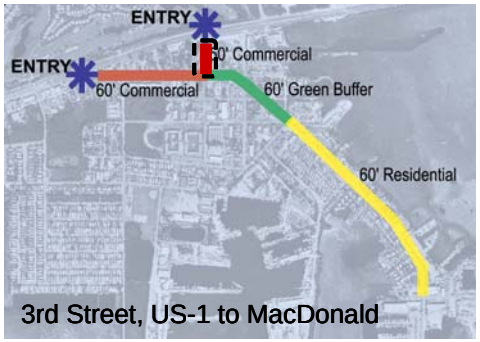
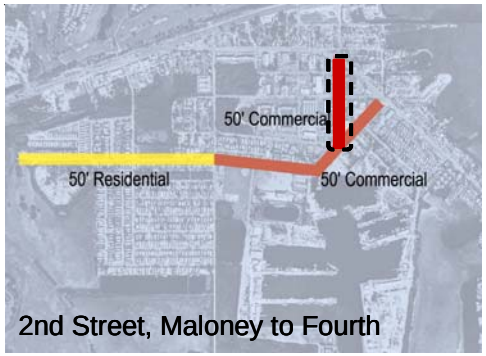


Figure 20: Street Design Concept, Third and Second Street Connectors





Action Item: Pursue, to the maximum extent possible, available outside funding for design, construction, and maintenance of street improvements, including grants from the Florida Department of Transportation.

Strategy 4: Promote consolidation of access driveways in existing and new development whenever feasible.

Action Item: Review and amend access management standards in the Land Development Regulations to foster the development of a continuous sidewalk network.

Action Item: Review and amend site development standards in the Land Development Regulations to require parking to be located to the rear or the side of buildings whenever feasible, and to encourage shared access to limit the number of driveways on major corridors (applicable particularly to MacDonald, Maloney and Fourth Avenues).

Strategy 5: Use on-street parking as a means for traffic calming through areas of pedestrian traffic.

Action Item: Consider offering a parking credit to future development for on-street parking spaces located directly in front the development being served, where a reduction in the required on-site parking would result in a better site design and greater overall development quality.

Action Item: Consider amending the parking provisions in the Land Development Regulations to ensure the provision of adequate, but not excessive, parking and loading areas. Examples of potential modifications include:

- Establish ranges of minimum and maximum parking requirements.
- Offer parking reduction incentives (credits) for mixed-use development with shared parking, transit access, or available on-street parking.

Strategy 6: Pursue burying utility lines along major corridors as a long-term objective.

Action Item*:* Coordinate with the Public Works Department, landowners, developers, and appropriate utility companies to relocate utility lines underground when the opportunity arises.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS AND ANTICIPATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Although many of the actions proposed in this plan involve amendments to the Land Development Regulations, and some necessitate private developer cooperation, a large number potential capital improvement projects are also outlined in the plan.

Most of these, and likely the most costly, pertain to the planned enhancement of MacDonald/Maloney Avenues and Fourth/Fifth Avenues, as well as to intersection improvement needs identified in the plan. These projects must be financed by Monroe County since the roads are all under county jurisdiction. However, funding for improvements may be available from grant programs under the purview of agencies such as FDOT and DCA. The projects can be easily prioritized and phased to meet funding availabilities. It is recommended that a "pilot project" be implemented initially. Because of their high impact as community gateways, two likely candidate segments are MacDonald Avenue from US Highway 1 to 3rd Street, and the "transition zone" of MacDonald/Maloney Avenues between 3rd and 2nd Streets.

Complementary projects, such as the comprehensive community signage program, will also require capital funds. The cost of this project cannot be estimated until a determination is made of the number, locations, and design of the signage. It is recommended that Neighborhood Enhancement or CDBG grant funding be pursued to partially finance this initiative. This project may be phased or prioritized by category of signage to coincide with availability of monies (e.g., community gateway signs first; then waterfront district gateway signs; and, in a future phase, additional directional signage and/or neighborhood signs).

The proposed relocation of utility lines is another big-ticket item, considered in the plan a long-range, "opportunistic" project. Placing lines underground can cost 5 to 15 times more than the cost of overhead lines. The County should coordinate closely with Monroe County Public Works and with Keys Energy Service to take advantage of improvement projects that might afford opportunities for undergrounding. The County should also seek cooperation from private development interests to undertake the additional cost of undergrounding projects as part of the redevelopment process.

Probably the most complex "projects" proposed in this plan involve the potential acquisition of land, particularly waterfront parcels. The target properties have not been identified; therefore, potential costs are not estimable at this time. A variety of grant programs are available. However, the excessive cost of waterfront property and speculator interest may make it prohibitive to acquire some key parcels. For this reason, the plan attempts to offer alternative approaches to reach similar results. For example, if outright public acquisition of waterfront property for commercial fishing is not practicable, the County could still require easements on private property for the same purpose.

Glossary

Following are definitions for many of the terms referenced in the Plan, describing how such terms are used in the text.

Boatyard: A facility whose function is the construction, repair, or maintenance of boats, which may include provisions for boat storage and docking while awaiting service. ("Marine Industries Association of South Florida Master Plan" pg. 27)

Commercial fishing: The catching, landing processing or packaging of seafood for the commercial purposes, including the mooring and docking of boats and/or the storage of traps and other fishing equipment and charter boat uses and sport diving. (LDR Definitions Sec. 9.5-4)

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): Refers to the theory that when development is appropriately designed, it can reduce the likelihood of crimes being committed.

Dock or Docking Facility: Means a fixed or floating structure built and used for the landing, berthing, and/or mooring of vessels or water craft either temporarily or indefinitely. Docking facilities include but are not limited to wharves, piers, quays, slips, basins, ramps, posts, cleats, davits, piles or any other structure or attachment thereto. For the purposes of this chapter docks shall not include "water access walkways" as defined below in this section. (LDR Definitions Sec. 9.5-4)

Easement: An agreement that confers on an individual, company or municipality the right to use a landowner's property in some manner. While an easement grants right, it also has the effect of partially limiting the owner's use of those portions of land affected by the easement. Easements are usually registered on the certificate of title, and run with the land. However, the holder of the easement may discharge its rights and consent to the removal of the easement.

Fish Houses: Defined as commercial establishments that buy and sell, at wholesale and/or retail, seafood products, bait, ice, fuel, and other products and services required by the commercial fishing industry. (LDR Definitions Sec. 9.5-4 and Sec. 9.5-247 (e))

Marina: A facility for the storage (wet and dry), launching and mooring of boats together with accessory retail and service uses, including restaurants and liveaboards, charter boat and sport diving uses, except where prohibited, but not including docks accessory to a land-based dwelling unit limited to the use of owners or occupants of those dwelling units. (LDR Definitions pg 791). [Also Commercial Marina: a business providing for a fee docking facilities or moorings for boats and accessory service and facilities such as boat sales, rental and storage, marine supplies and equipment, marine engine and hull repairs, construction and outfitting of pleasure craft, fuel and oil, electricity, fresh water, ice, shower and laundry facilities, and on-premises restaurant. ("Marine Industries Association of South Florida Master Plan" pg. 27)]

Maritime Industries District (MI): The purpose of the MI District is to establish and conserve areas suitable for maritime uses such as ship building, ship repair and other water dependent manufacturing and service uses. (*Stock Island Safe Harbor area is all within the MI District) (LDR Sec. 9.5-221)

Mixed Use District (MU): The purpose of the MU district is to establish or conserve areas of mixed uses, including commercial fishing, resorts, residential, institutional and commercial uses, and preserve these as

areas representative of the character, economy and cultural history of the Florida Keys. (*Peninsular area is within the MU District) (LDR Sec. 9.5-219)

Port facility: Harbor or shipping improvements used predominantly for commercial purposes including channels, turning basins, jetties, breakwaters, landings, wharves, docks, markets, structures, buildings, piers, storage facilities, plazas, anchorages, utilities, bridges, tunnels, roads, causeways, and all other property or facilities necessary or useful in connection with commercial shipping. (FAC 9J-5.003 Definitions)

Recreational and Commercial Working Waterfront: A parcel or parcels of real property that provide access for water-dependent commercial activities or provide access for the public to the navigable waters of the state. Recreational and commercial working waterfronts require direct access to or a location on, over, or adjacent to a navigable body of water. The term includes water-dependent facilities that are open to the public and offer public access by vessels to the waters of the state or that are support facilities for recreational, commercial, research, or governmental vessels. (Sec. 14 HB 955 CS, creating S. 342.07(2), F.S.)

"Traditional" Working Waterfront: A working waterfront with commercial fishing and workboat repair yards, seafood processing and fish-house facilities that are not part of a commercial port and may represent a part of Florida's history and culture threatened by urban development and market forces (Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems, "A Profile of Working Waterfronts," Executive Summary pg. iv)

Water dependent facility (also water-exclusive facilities): A use that is functionally dependent on actual access to open waters (LDR Definitions Sec. 9.5-4)

Water-dependent uses (also water-exclusive uses): Uses or activities which can be carried out only on, in or adjacent to water areas because the use requires access to the water body for waterborne transportation including ports or marinas; recreation; electrical generating facilities; or water supply. (FAC 9J-5.003 Definitions)

Water-enhanced uses: Uses or activities that have no critical dependence on obtaining a waterfront location, but whose profitability and/or the enjoyment level of its users would be increased significantly if the use were adjacent to, or had visual access to, the waterfront. (New York Coastal Management Program, Sec. 2). Water-enhanced uses do not require a waterfront location in order to function, but they are often essential to the efficient functioning of water dependent uses and can be an essential contributing factor to their economic viability. Further, water-enhanced uses often increase the public's enjoyment of the waterfront. A water-enhanced use can take the form of a commercial business or a public facility. Examples include: marine services; boat repair; bait and tackle shops; water view restaurants; and waterfront parks.

Water-related uses: Activities which are not directly dependent upon access to a water body, but which provide goods and services that are directly associated with water-dependent or waterway uses. (FAC 9J-5.003 Definitions).

Waterfront access: Encompasses public or private-owned water dependent facilities that are available to the public, including marinas, mooring fields, boat yards, boat ramps, and commercial fishing support marinas. It does not include "ports" or military waterfronts. (Florida Senate Committee on Community Affairs, "Working Waterfronts" pg. 1, footnote 4).

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Existing Plans, Studies and Initiatives

In addition to an extensive outreach effort to obtain public input, the planning effort relied upon a number of existing plans, studies, and regulations as part of the documentation of current conditions. While it is not the intent of this plan to provide summaries of each of the documents consulted, their importance needs to be acknowledged.

The Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources and Engineering Departments made many of the documents and maps available, including GIS-based data for base mapping purposes. Other information was collected by the consultant from a variety of sources, including the Monroe County Property Appraiser's website, local newspapers, and personal communication with community stakeholders, and supplemented with various resources on the Internet as well as through field verification to the maximum extent possible. In addition, the Monroe County Marine Extension Office of the University of Florida/Florida Sea Grant Program generously provided numerous maps, studies and reports related to the commercial fishing industry.

Some key sources and information used in the development of this plan include the following:

" Monroe County Land Development Regulations (LDR).

" Monroe County Year 2010 Comprehensive Plan, Policy Document and Map Document.

" Memorandum dated 8/16/00, prepared by the Monroe County Planning and Environmental Resources Department (Monroe County Planning), to the Board of County Commissioners, providing the background and rationale for the adoption of the Livable CommuniKeys program; establishing the guiding principles for the preparation of LCP master plans for each local community; and creating the language of the amendment to introduce Objective 101.20 in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The amendment was adopted in 2000, and two LCP master plans, one for Big Pine and No Name Keys, and one for Tavernier, have been prepared and approved since then. Two more, including the master plan for Stock Island and Key Haven, are ongoing.

" Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Master Plan Draft Existing Conditions Report, dated 6/1/04.

" Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys 11/13/03 Community Visioning

Workshop Summary (dated 1/5/04), containing a tally prepared by Monroe County Planning staff of the community's consensus opinions on Stock Island's perceived strengths and weaknesses. The results of that workshop suggest that residents in general value the island's identity as a commercial fishing center and as a working-class community, but also believe that the physical environment could stand to be enhanced.

" Stock Island and Key Haven Livable CommuniKeys Community "Meeting 2 and Survey Results" (dated 6/28/04), a memorandum summarizing, first, the outcome of an exercise conducted by Monroe County Planning Staff to identify and prioritize types of future development or activities that the community supports. Commercial fishing (and dockage for this activity) was the top priority in this category. The second part of the memo summarizes responses to a survey conducted by the Planning Department, regarding community topics such as community character and quality of life, transportation and traffic, economic development, regulatory framework, community facilities and environment. Approximately 2,700 questionnaires were mailed. Responses in the following areas provided insight for this planning effort and served as the basis for several of the concepts developed in the second phase of the planning process:

-68% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the assertion that the community should maintain the amount of land available for light industrial and commercial fishing.

-Over 62% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the assertion that they support current regulations in the Comprehensive Plan that protect the commercial fishing industry.

-Over 61% of the respondents expressed disagreement or strong disagreement to supporting increased tourist-oriented uses in Stock Island.

-About 65% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that residential and commercial uses should be separated. (A large portion of Stock Island is zoned for mixed use; it is unclear if the question is intended to clarify the meaning of this concept).

-20% of the respondents expressed the need for bicycle and pedestrian trails, bike paths, and sidewalks.

-Between 10% and 13% of the respondents felt the community needs additional recreational facilities, including a swimming pool, boat access, and playground equipment.

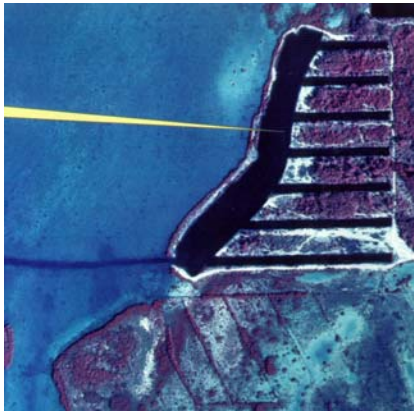
-Over 53% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the adoption of an ordinance allowing a uniform design for off-premise signs.

" "Fish and Wildlife Recreation Creates Huge Economic Boon for Florida: Economic Impacts 2003", a brief Florida and Wildlife Conservation Commission report summarizing the most recent analyses of the economic benefits of various water-related activities. The report indicates that Statewide economic impacts derived from the commercial fishing industry for 2003 reached $1.2 billion.

" Economic Activities Associated with the Commercial Fishing Industry in Monroe County, Florida. Using 1990 data, this 1992 study shows that the economic impact to Monroe County 2 generated from all activities associated with the commercial fishing industry (including landings, seafood processing, wholesaling, retailing, and distribution, sales, etc.), exceeded $90.4 million in economic activity, $32 million in earnings, and created over 2,000 full-time jobs.

" A Preliminary Analysis of Commercial Fishing Dock Space in Monroe County, FL (dated 5/22/1985), and A Report on the Commercial Fishing Industry in Monroe County and the Proposed Comprehensive Land Use Plan (dated 10/29,85). Two reports written by the Monroe County Planning Department in collaboration with local chapters of Organized Fishermen of Florida during the Comprehensive Plan process, as a basis for the creation of future land use and zoning designations to protect the commercial fishing industry in the Comprehensive Plan and the LDRs. Both reports utilized the results of a Keys-wide survey to assess the status and needs of the commercial fishing industry, for the purpose of setting aside appropriate amounts and locations of land for commercial fishing and establishing a policy framework in the Comprehensive Plan. The reports indicate that the total seafood landings in Monroe County exceeded 19 million pounds in 1983, with a reported value of over $31 million. At the time, it was reported that the County's shrimp industry had as many as 350 shrimp boats operating on a seasonal basis, with over 1,300 smaller boats involved in lobster, stone crab and fin fish fishing. Nearly a million lobster and stone crab traps were being used. In Stock Island, the survey found seven seafood establishments in the Safe Harbor and Peninsular areas, serving a regular fleet of approximately 200 boats, which were believed to grow to about 300 in season. Approximately 154,000 traps were stored at these sites. The largest trap storage capacity (55,000 according to the survey) has since been lost with the conversion of Ming's to today's Peninsular Marine. The report also documents the County's analysis of additional sites for

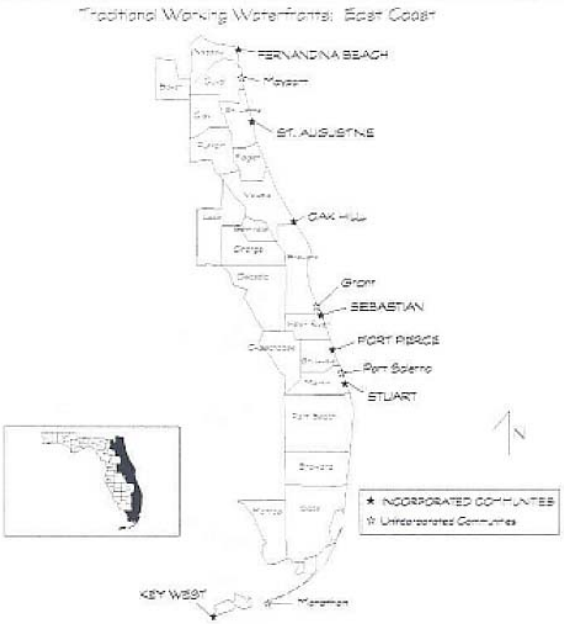
potential designation as commercial fishing zones. It is noteworthy that the so-called "Sub-pit" site in Boca Chica, a location that was been mentioned as a potential relocation site by commercial fishermen interviewed for this project, was at the time positively evaluated for designation as a Maritime Industries (MI) or Mixed Use (MU) zoning district. This designation was subsequently rejected due to waterside and landside access limitations (water depth, landside access controlled by Navy, etc.).



" Economic Impacts of Bluebelting Incentives on the Marina Industry in Florida, a 1990 evaluation of the economic costs and benefits of "bluebelting" as a means for preserving public access in waterfronts. Bluebelting is equated with land use policy and incentives established by many States and local governments to protect farming in agricultural areas ("greenbelting"). Several forms of bluebelting were evaluated, including:

-Preferential property tax incentives;
-Restrictive agreements;
-Exclusive and nonexclusive water-dependent zoning; and
-Purchase of development rights (PDR).

Although the report focuses primarily on recreational marinas, the authors' conclusions are potentially relevant to all types of water-dependent activities. Based on the cost/benefit analysis of each bluebelting option considered, the study concluded that the most attractive, and therefore most effective option for marina owners to preserve the marina use would be a preferential property assessment with deferred taxation. This option is not currently available in Florida and would require legislative action.



" Working Waterfronts, a report prepared in 2004 by the Committee on Community Affairs for the Florida Senate, examining the loss of access to the waterfront for marine industries, including commercial fishing and recreational boating, and for general public use. The report profiles the decline in commercial fishing and recreational working waterfronts due to conversion of waterfront property, particularly to private residential use and dockominiums. In addition, it identifies programs and strategies currently in place in communities around the state, and recommends new strategies, to help preserve or increase public access and to help recreational and fishing working waterfronts remain economically viable. The study concludes with recommendations for the state Legislature to consider expanding existing programs or creating new initiatives to facilitate the preservation of public waterfront access at the state and local levels, including expanded tax relief options; increased funding for existing programs, or new funding programs, for land

acquisition and/or development of public waterfront access; and enhanced coordination between the marine industries and government agencies.

" Key West Port Study: Safe Harbor Property on Stock Island, prepared for the Key West Port and Transit Authority in 1987 to determine the feasibility of acquiring the Safe Harbor property (today Robbie's Marine) with the intent to develop commercial cargo operations associated with the Port of Key West. The property had been seized by the U.S. Attorney in a drug enforcement operation in the mid 1980's, and was under the control of the General Services Administration. The study concluded that while the physical characteristics of the property were suitable for commercial port cargo operations, the market and economic conditions at the time were not. This conclusion is probably valid today as well. The Key West Port and Transit Authority did not pursue the plan, and the property today is in private ownership.

" Economic Assessment and Strategic Economic Development Program for the Lower Keys, prepared by The Chesapeake Group, Inc. for Monroe County in 2003-2004, evaluating existing conditions and opportunities for economic development for the Lower Keys. The study describes the Lower Keys as an area whose economic diversity is usually underestimated. In addition to general tourist activity more associated with Key West, activities that form part of the economic structure of the Lower Keys include recreational boating, diving, and fishing, eco-tourism, commercial fishing, sponging and diving, ship repair and dry-dock activity, marine research and development, and retail and service activities serving both residents and visitors. The strategic program put forth in the study consists of seventeen major recommendations, of which the following are highlighted as of significance to this assignment:

-Preserve the commercial fishing industries in Stock Island and nearby locations.

-Preserve access to the water by commercial interests.

-Develop a biotechnology industry through direct company recruitment and/or public/ private sector alliances.

-Expand water-based eco-tourism.

-Create a traditional "main street" area through the application of common design elements, cooperative parking, marketing and promotion in a defined strategic area.

" Tourism vs. commercial fishers: development and changing use of Key West and Stock Island, Florida, an article which documents the history, and examines the economic factors that contributed to the displacement of the commercial fishing activity from Key

West to Stock Island, and the implications a similar trend in Stock Island. The conclusions of this study are rather gloomy for the future of the industry, not only in that community but globally. Potential solutions are not offered.

Stakeholder Interviews [3]

A series of interviews with local stakeholders, conducted at the outset of the project, provided the first opportunity for community input in the planning process. The purpose of the interviews was to collect facts, perceptions, and opinions from those stakeholders regarding existing conditions, aspirations and concerns about the future of the port area of Stock Island, as well as about the Fifth Avenue and Maloney Avenue corridors.

The interviews took place on four dates: March 1, March 2, March 25, and April 2, 2004 in Stock Island, Key West, and Miami. Interviewees included local business owners, property owners and developers, commercial fishermen, government agency representatives (Monroe County Planning Department and Public Works Department, Monroe County UF/IFAS Sea Grant Marine Extension Program), community and neighborhood association representatives, and elected officials. A complete list of the stakeholders interviewed is shown in the following table, with known affiliation as of the dates of the interviews.

List of Interviewees

Name	Stakeholder/Organization/Group
Douglas Gregory	Univ. of Florida MC Extension Sevice
Joe Shaefer	Univ. of Florida MC Extension
William C. Niles	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
Simon Stafford	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
Mimi Stafford	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
Jesus Diaz	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
George Niles	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
Ruben Ravelo	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
Gordon Williams	Monroe County Commercial Fishermen (MCCF)
Roger Berstein	Property Owner (SHPA)
Charlie Renier	Business Owner
Andy Griffiths	Business Owner
Walter Crumbley	Property Owner/Business Owner (SHPA)
Bob Mongelli	Property Owner/Business Owner (SHPA)
Joe O'Connell	Property Owner/Business Owner (SHPA)
Catherine Harding	Consultant for Safe Harbor Property Association (SHPA)
Danny Hamilton	Manager, Boyd's Campground
David Koppel	Monroe County Engineering/Public Works
Carolee McReynolds	Stock Island Community Association
Roger Green	Manager, VP Oceanside Marina
John Cotis	Business Owner
Kim Higginton	Property Owner, County Commission Candidate/District 1
Dixie Spehar	County Commissioner/District 1

[3] After the initial series of interviews was conducted, additional individual input was provided by Peter Bacle, owner of the Stock Island Lobster Co., via copies of letters addressed to Monroe County Mayor George Neugent in 2000, and to the LCP Planning staff in early 2004 as well as through personal communication; by Don Craig, agent for prospective owners/developers of Robbie's Marine property, also through personal communication. Although this input is not summarized in this section, it has been duly considered and is available separately.

Port Area Issues:

- With the exception of Marathon, Stock Island is the last major commercial fishing port in the Keys, consistently ranking 3rd or 4th highest producing port in the nation in terms of dollar value.
- Commercial fishing is the heart of the community and the County needs to help preserve the industry and the diversity it brings to Stock Island.
- External factors impacting the viability of commercial fishing include: restrictions on licenses/catch/fisheries, fuel prices, insurance costs, and competition from cheap foreign seafood imports, particularly farm-raised shrimp.
- Local factors affecting the industry include: land use for commercial fishing operations is not owned but leased from others; current zoning designations of both port areas accommodate too broad a range of uses; waterfront access is being lost to speculative development; uses/activities supportive of commercial fishing (fueling, icehouses, fish houses) cannot survive; property owners have no financial incentive to maintain existing uses (property taxes based on potential use, not actual use); loss of affordable housing for those who work in industries that support commercial fishing (welders, repairmen, etc.).
- The two sides of the port area very different in character: Safe Harbor tends to be more industrial than Peninsular, which is more oriented to recreational boating.
- Liveaboards are recognized in the community as an important form of affordable housing, but the condition of many units is questionable. At the same time, liveaboards are seen as a major contributor to water quality degradation.

Regulatory Issues:

- Land development regulations are too rigid / not redevelopment-friendly; they do not provide incentive to improve properties that cannot meet every requirement due to nonconforming status.
- The County should consider flexible setbacks, parking, landscaping; additional FAR or density (bonuses) could be used as incentives for maintaining commercial fishing.
- Current zoning is too open to effectively protect commercial fishing; at the same time, other constraints (ROGO, NROGO, etc.) lock property owners into their current uses, often at a loss.

- The development review processes lack predictability, creating uncertainty and mistrust not just on the part of developers but also for neighbors of proposed developments.
- Code enforcement is seen as often being arbitrary or inconsistent, based on unclear rules and regulations.

Roadways/Circulation Issues:

- County Public Works and Engineering recently completed a community-wide road improvement project which included Fifth Avenue (resurfacing, re-stripping, paved shoulders, stormwater system, bike lanes). This may make the County Commission less disposed to spend funds for additional improvements on Fifth in the short term.
- Improvements were also planned for Maloney Avenue, including resurfacing and re-striping with designated parallel parking lanes, but funds for this project were eliminated from the Seven-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Some intersections are badly designed, with too many roads converging in a single point. County Engineering is open to consider realignment of those intersections to improve safety.
- Bike lanes are critical because bicycles are the only mode of transportation available to many residents.
- Although traffic congestion is not yet a problem, traffic calming should be considered at specific locations to improve safety for pedestrians, particularly the high population of young children in the island.

Parking Issues:

- On-street boat trailer parking and RV parking creates conflicts and takes available parking away from regular vehicles.
- Parking on the swales contributes to a "cluttered," "junky" appearance of the streetscape and hinders the ability to create a continuous sidewalk network.
- On-street parking is necessary in some areas, like Maloney Avenue, where some adjacent mobile home parks do not have off-street parking.

Transit Issues:

- Bus service is provided by the City of Key West and serves primarily Key West destinations.
- The service is widely used by residents and even tourists. Additional stops and extended routes would be beneficial (e.g., have a route go to the end of Maloney).
- Bus stops have no amenities and are not well maintained.
- The County generally opposes installation of bus shelters to prevent vagrancy and signage conflicts.

Streetscape Issues:

- The County does not do much landscaping on rights-of-way because of maintenance issues, however, some maintenance-specific grant funding has been obtained for projects in Key West and the same could be done in Stock Island.
- The County doesn't typically pay for street lighting off US-1, except for safety reasons.
- Directional signage is nonexistent, businesses rely on improvised signs posted (illegally) in the right-of-way to direct potential customers.

Infrastructure Issues:

- Burying overhead electric lines would be desirable in order to reduce visual clutter and minimize the risk of power loss during storms. However, the existence of a shallow water table makes undergrounding very costly.
- The sewer system is privately owned but County funding was provided to lower the eventual cost of individual property hookups. The system has been mired in conflict and issues are still awaiting resolution.
- The system has planned expansion capacity, and can accept about 1,500 additional equivalent dwelling units, but it was not designed to serve the entire community. Redevelopment of the waterfront as high-density residential, for example, was not anticipated and it is believed some properties in the port area are not included in the system. However, developers are able to build package plants on their own.
- Trash is a community-wide problem; pick-up is perceived as not occurring often enough. Waste Management policy for bulk items is to provide pick up twice a year upon request. Yard waste must be cut and bundled up in specific sizes and amounts before it is picked up.

Miscellaneous/Communitywide Issues:

- The community sees itself as "the forgotten island," always being neglected by the County. This has led some residents (mostly property and business owners) to push for incorporation; others think that the solution is to allow Key West to annex Stock Island. Most residents, however, do not favor either of these alternatives.
- Many necessary facilities are seen as lacking. These include: a "better" fire station (the County has allocated money to acquire property for this purpose); a post office; a library; a school and more parks to serve the increasing population of children that will come with the opening of the Meridian housing development and others in the works; better facilities at Bernstein Park; a community center. In addition, more neighborhood-serving commercial uses should be encouraged, such as banks, dry cleaners, drugstores (one is proposed on US-1).
- Providing/maintaining public access to the waterfront is critical - it is the essence of life in an island, yet, in Stock Island, residents have very limited access to locations from where to view the water, fish, swim, or launch a boat.

The following is a summary of input received at the interviews. It is not meant to be a direct transcript of comments, although exact quotes are included whenever possible.

Monroe County Commercial Fishermen/ Monroe County Sea Grant Marine Extension Program

The commercial fishing industry brings about $100 million annually to the County. Stock Island is the last major commercial fishing port in the Keys, other than Marathon. Commercial fishing is the second major industry in the County. Commercial fishing tends to be a family-run, multi-generational business. The County needs to preserve the industry and its diversity; commercial fishing is the heart of this community.

Most fishermen do not own land for their business, but lease it from property owners-therein lays the weakness. Fishermen typically lease docking space (and in the case of lobster fishermen, trap storage space), and either sell catch independently or work with the leaseholder. Independent sales get about $0.40 per pound, but rent at about $4.50 per sq.ft. for trap storage use.

Today, although the County has zoning designations specifically created to protect this industry, in Stock Island these protections are ineffective. The property owners were able to rezone from commercial fishing zoning to Marine Industrial (Safe Harbor area) and Mixed Use (Peninsular area) -both much broader categories in terms of allowable uses than commercial fishing zoning.

Most fishermen in Stock Island are in lobster fishing; some are in line fishing, but this arm of the industry is in trouble now with the exception of king mackerel fishing. Shrimpers amount to about 30 boats on average year round, with 70-80 at peak season. However, these boats spend significant time at sea, coming in only to unload and sell. Overall, between 200 and 300 commercial fishing boats still make Stock Island their home. This is a significant decrease from just a decade ago -and many shrimp boats (about 80%) are no longer coming to Stock Island preferring to go to Tampa or to Texas. Only two ice-houses remain in the Safe Harbor area today, and the only fuel dock is at Bama Sea Food.

Given the observed development pressures, few among this group seem to doubt that the entire port area could all become condos/marinas, with maybe "a few token fishing boats" left.

One problem faced by commercial fishermen today comes from government regulations. Access to licenses is limited, and increasing restrictions and competition have already driven many out. However, the fisheries are doing well and will not disappear, so this is not the key issue, and government regulations are more of an indirect constraint. In fact, "latent capacity" of the industry was described as excessive, but the perceived trend is towards a greater operational consolidation and increased productivity (i.e., less fishermen doing equal work for equal volume). Only those with business savvy and high-efficiency operations will survive.

The biggest challenge for commercial fishing in Stock Island (and elsewhere) is the potential loss of waterfront access. Despite many hurdles the commercial fishing industry continues to make Stock Island (with Key West) the 3rd or 4th highest producing port in the country in terms of dollar value. It is also the most productive in the Southeast region for lobster, shrimp, and crab catch. The peak dockside value is estimated at about $40 million, with a multiplied value (indirect and induced effects) of another $60 million or so, according to the results generated IMPLAN model. If the catch were processed locally, this multiplier would be greatly increased.

Although the development pressures in Stock Island are very strong and will likely increase, some in the group stated that they have seen somewhat of a turnaround in the community's concern for the commercial fishing industry, with many residents now indicating that they would like to see the continuation of the fisheries rather than the transformation of the entire waterfront into a high-end condo enclave.

Yet, as seen by most, the only way the commercial fishing industry will survive in the Lower Keys, is if fishermen are able to acquire waterfront property with adequate dockage and enough upland to set up ancillary operations. How much dockage would be needed is uncertain, but a range between 50 and 80 boats was alluded to.

The site would not necessarily have to be in Stock Island, and in fact a couple of potential properties were suggested; however, regardless of location, the site would have to have good accessibility to the Gulf. One of the properties mentioned, the so-called "Sub Pit" on Boca Chica, is part of a platted but incomplete/abandoned waterfront subdivision. Several obstacles would have to be overcome and some may be unsolvable (e.g., Federal and State assistance would be needed to acquire and develop, including channel dredging; the site is also inside the Sanctuary, therefore it is unlikely Fish & Wildlife would approve development).

Another site with potential was mentioned in Fleming Key, but, again, in that site, dredging would also be needed because the existing average draft of 4'-5' would be inadequate. Dredging is not likely to be permitted.

Regardless of location, it is thought that a minimum of 3 lobster or non-shrimp processing houses would be necessary upland to serve the needs of the industry in the long term.

Alternative solutions were mentioned as well. For example, a study on bluebelting by Sea Grant was mentioned which suggested several (non-site specific) options for preserving the presence of commercial fishing in and public access to the waterfront, including:

- County purchase of waterfront property for the purpose of entering into long-term lease with a consortium;
- Regulatory requirements for developers to maintain a certain share of commercial fishing for the benefit of the community;
- County purchase and "retirement" of development rights from waterfront property to retain commercial fishing uses/operations.

The question was raised as to whether setting up a Co-op might help the plight of the fishermen. Assistance from the Federal Government would be necessary, but the challenge is to get the fishermen to acquiesce. Competition makes reaching agreement difficult. Nevertheless, it is an option that offers leverage; if the fishermen controlled their own dockage, processing houses could buy for higher prices ($0.60 to $0.75).

General opinion is that Stock Island "does not want to become Key West Bight" but many feel this is already happening. The conversion of affordable housing (particularly existing trailer parks) into high-end market rate units is hastening this transformation, and the high cost of living is making it difficult for workers to remain in the area. It is acknowledged that some efforts are being made (e.g., affordable housing complex on the former dog track site, etc.), but more is needed if the island's socio-economic diversity is to be maintained. Property tax appraisals based on potential use and not on actual use are also driving property owners to prefer redevelopment for higher-return uses.

Safe Harbor Property Association (Property and Business Owners)
A somewhat loose formation of owners of property and businesses in the Safe Harbor area, the group indicated that its overarching goal is to promote improvement in the Safe Harbor area to benefit the local economy and overall quality of the community. Some indicated that the main drive behind the creation of the group is general mistrust of and frustration at the County's perceived inability to respond effectively to the very specific challenges facing this area.

While members acknowledge that commercial fishing has been an important component of the local economy, heritage, and character, many see the future of the small-scale commercial fishing industry found in Stock Island as nothing short of bleak. Competition from foreign markets (particularly imported, farm-raised shrimp), inefficiency of operations, increasing restrictions on fisheries, licensing, etc., and declining numbers of fishermen entering the trend-a generational fracture similar to that seen in rural agricultural communities where farming has traditionally been family-run.

Estimates provided by the group put the current "resident" fleet at about 40-60 lobster boats in the Safe Harbor area, another 50 or so in the Peninsular area. This is a sharp decline from the numbers of even a decade ago. The number of shrimp boats is variable, they spend long periods at sea; peak numbers are estimated at between 200 and 300. Some mention concerns about mechanized trawler boats that cause widespread destruction of ocean bottom in the process of catching shrimp as one reason for restrictions. The old methods of cast-nets, traps, and long-line fishing are less onerous on the environment and going back could help not only ease restrictions but also be a factor in creating a badly needed market niche for locally caught "Key West shrimp".

The disappearance of necessary support infrastructure is also a critical reason for the decline of the small-scale industry. Only 3 fish houses and 1 icehouse remain in the harbor. No processing houses exist; all the business is in wholesale and retail. Local processing would expand the industry's ability to survive.

The price of new boats, insurance, equipment, and depreciation factors are yet another part of the equation. A new slab boat may cost $900,000, but after 2-1/2 years in operation, its value may be down to $250,000. Slab boats tend to anchor offshore - most don't come in the harbor at all. Crews can remain full-time on the boat for 6-8 months at a time.
Land values/market forces/investment trends were acknowledged as a major contributor to the conversion of waterfront from traditional "working" uses. Some in the group expressed reluctance to allow this change to occur, citing local character, ties to the fishing industry and to the community. However, they pointed out that the perceived encumbrances to enact physical improvements of any kind, due to local regulations, and the high property taxes are disincentives to maintain these low-revenue uses in their current form. Many mentioned the concept of the "fishermen's wharf", existing in places like San Francisco and Portland, as an opportunity to preserve the working waterfront character, not just for commercial fishing, but also for support uses including boat repair, chandlery, seafood sales/dining, etc.

Boyd's Campground
Unlike many of the trailer parks in Stock Island, the primary business of Boyd's Campground is transient rentals for recreational vehicles, particularly focused on large campers. The campground does not provide affordable housing. Over 200 campsites are available. The high season is from November to March, with a low summer occupancy of about 10%.

One challenge to the business is that over the past decade, campers have doubled in size and the local streets are not of a width to accommodate. In addition, being off the highway, effective signage is needed to guide customers to the site. The campground relies on reservations (large rigs mostly) and drive-ups (smaller campers and pop-ups mostly). Circulation within Stock Island is confusing and directional signage is an absolute necessity, but the regulations make it very difficult to obtain off-site signage. Signalization throughout the community is very poor. Circulation/traffic improvements would also help, particularly at problematic intersections like 4th and Maloney, where too many roads converge. It is acknowledged that on-street parking of boat trailers and campers is an occasional problem.

Campground users tend to rely more on public transportation than other types of visitors and transients. Boyd's encourage its customers to use transit and alternatives such as walking and bicycles, but the infrastructure for those modes is not very good. For example, there is no bike path along Maloney. Bus service, provided by the City of Key West, is available in Stock Island, to and from Key West, but the service is not very reliable, the bus stops lack amenities and are not well maintained. Vagrancy is still a problem. The bus routes do not go all the way to the end of Maloney Avenue.

Stock Island needs additional services and facilities to serve residents and visitors locally. Additional services like banks (only one right now), a post office, a library, dry-cleaner (also only one), and a pharmacy (one is proposed).

There have to be ways to maintain the integrity and affordability in the community while improving its appearance and quality of life. However, the County regulations themselves are driving many of the changes. Transient units count as ROGO allocations and are highly coveted now. Many smaller RV parks are being squeezed out due to the cost of required infrastructure improvements, particularly sewer. Boyd's has its own on-site treatment plant, hook-up fees are extremely high for many. Liveaboards are also a problem in terms of trash and water quality. With the predominantly easterly wind, most of the waste generated by liveaboards ends up on shore.

Monroe County Engineering

The following County-owned facilities exist in Stock Island: Bernstein Park, the Fire Station, and the street network. The County has been looking to buy additional property, lately on Fifth Avenue next to the dog track parcel where the Meridian complex is located, for additional facilities, possibly a new fire station. The existing one was recently renovated but more space is needed. The money is budgeted for a new one.

In addition, the County recently completed an extensive road improvement project in Stock Island, "piggybacking" onto the sewer project. On Fifth Avenue, stormwater drainage was upgraded (French drains, drain wells, 10" trenches), paved shoulders and bike lanes were provided, and the entire road was resurfaced and re-striped. Cross Street was also resurfaced and bike lanes were added. The project also included a number of other local streets (about 17 total). The newness of the Fifth Avenue project may factor into the County's ability to undertake additional improvements to that road in the short term.

No changes have occurred on Maloney Avenue recently. The County had planned to resurface and re-stripe the road, with designated parallel parking lanes, but the project was cut from the 7-year plan due to budget constraints. It is acknowledged that realignment of some intersections may be necessary and the County would certainly entertain recommendations.

Discussion of street improvements indicate the following issues:

- Regarding the prospects for undergrounding utilities, this is very costly to do anywhere in the Keys due to the low road elevations and a superficial water table.
- The County does not typically do a lot of landscaping in the right-of-way due to maintenance costs, but if funding sources are available, such as from FDOT maintenance grants, which are being used in Key West, it is possible.
- Regarding streetlights, the County also does not typically install them anywhere off of US-1, except for safety reasons. The only other County-owned lights are the 30-40 foot tall aluminum poles on Card Sound Road.
- Key Energy Services, which serves Stock Island, does install poles by contract with private owners.
- Regarding bus shelters, they have been frowned upon in the past because they end up as advertising billboards for private businesses.
- On-street parking throughout Stock Island is perceived as a big problem, but in many instances it is necessary because off-street parking is not available.
- Regarding trash/debris, the Waste Management policy is that bulk pick-up is available upon request not to exceed twice a year. May need to revisit?

Issues with the sewer system project also need to be considered in redevelopment. The system is privately owned, but the County put in a share of about $4 million to lessen the impact of hook-up fees to individual property owners. The average fee was estimated at about $2,700 per property. The system, as installed, involves vacuum technology, with valve pits required for individual connections. However, some property owners wanted a gravity system. The system can accept some gravity, with limited buffer tanks. The system was to be accomplished in 3 major phases, adding about 1,500 equivalent dwelling units. The plant is working at about 499,000 gpd, with capacity for up 1,000,000 gpd.

URS' ongoing study will determine how the system may need to be expanded to accept additional connections. The system was not planned to serve all of Stock Island, and it is believed that the Safe Harbor area may not be included, so

redevelopment at any intensity higher than the existing would have to be carefully considered. However, individual owners might put in package plants if needed.

The County is in the process to take over some of the remaining private roads in south Stock Island to integrate infrastructure improvements, but litigation in some instances is causing delays.

The County has not previously used tools such as business improvement districts or tax increment financing to improve specific areas, but this does not mean such techniques might not be considered.

Stock Island Community Association

Stock Island has traditionally been seen as "the forgotten island" in the Florida Keys. This has been both a blessing and a curse, but many residents feel neglected by, and lacking representation before, the County. Some owners among the boating property community are pushing for incorporation, while some residents would likely favor annexation to Key West instead.

Many facilities are needed to adequately serve the local population: a new fire station, a post office, a library... With additional families moving to the island as a result of affordable housing projects, even a school will be needed to serve the population of children, which the highest in the entire Keys. A traffic light at Fifth Avenue and Shrimp Road will likely be needed to improve safety for those new residents at Meridian. Also, the community needs another park and a community/ recreation center.

The property owned by Ms. Carolee Reynolds is offered as an example of issues that need to be addressed. The complex has 66 affordable units, mostly housing service industry workers but also about 20 commercial fishermen. The site is served by its own sewer plant, but now it will cost over $800,000 to hook-up to the central system. At such magnitudes of cost, many existing mobile home parks are being squeezed out and housing affordability is being lost, and with it, the ability for the fishing industry to remain viable. Commercial fishing is part of the heritage of the community; most want it to be protected. The disappearance of affordable housing is a major factor in why the community is changing. Property values have soared in recent years, so much so that a single-story, detached single family home in Lincoln Gardens can now sell for about $400,000. The economy needs to be diversified, with different retail and services to generate revenue and support the fishing industry, including restaurants, fish houses, tourism-serving uses.

Liveaboards are also a high priority in controlling water quality issues. They should be regulated. Waste constantly washes up on shore, due to prevailing wind directions, creating health hazards and nuisances.

Crime is another important local problem. There is loitering and drug sales in some areas of the community. Crime Watch programs are only beginning to have an impact, but more is needed.

Public access to the water is a priority for the community. The only existing true

public waterfront access is the boat ramp at US-1, and this site is too narrow and does not have adequate parking or public security or controls. It is ironic that the community is, after all, an island, yet the residents have virtually no access to the waterfront. Ideally, additional access would be provided in the form of a public park with a boat ramp, even a swim area. Some potential opportunities for creating this park were mentioned, including the former drive-in theater and Ms. Reynold's own property.

Oceanside Marina

Although the two sides of the port area are very different in character, it can be said that the waterfront is generally underutilized. Safe Harbor is more industrial than Peninsular, although many of the uses are similar. Oceanside was able to follow through with original plans, which make the most of its site, thanks to pre-existing approvals (vesting?) -the same development probably could not be achieved today.

When the property was purchased in 1993, the long boat storage buildings were in place. In 1996, the docks were condominiumized. There are 96 rental units out of a total of 113 wet slips. Some are liveaboards, most transient. The marina acts as the rental agent for individual owners. The marina is full service and offers fueling, pump-out stations, and utilities. There are 22,000 sq. ft. of dry storage holding about 220 racks. The racks accept boats up to about 36 feet, handled through power forklift. There is also a 5,000 sq. ft. restaurant, and a 22-unit luxury condo building. All the units are sold.

The property master plan contemplated usage for 432 boats, but the facility is under capacity. The drainage was master planned for best practices and the utilities are underground. The site has its own advanced wastewater treatment facility, which cost over $250,000 to construct and is designed for an ultimate capacity of 11,000 gpd. Right now, only about 3,500 gallons are handled daily-the plant could accommodate the entire community as it exists today. Oceanside would like to connect to the central system to recoup the cost of the on-site facility.

The situation in Stock Island is not unusual. Small-scale commercial fishing, particularly lobstering, is a declining industry. There may not be a "next generation" to keep it going. This is very much due to outside factors, including environmental degradation and water quality issues at the local, regional, and worldwide scales. Restrictions on catch do have an impact, but the industry historically has been oversaturated.

Development pressures are also playing a role. For years, Stock Island waterfront properties have just been left alone, but now the property owners are becoming more aware of the value and are waiting to cash in.

Yet it may be possible to strike a balance between the needs of the community and the needs of property owners. Develop-

ment can certainly be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and ecologically sensitive at the same time.

Focus on creating new jobs to diversify the economy and create a "trickle-down" benefit. At Oceanside, about 18-20 full time positions are maintained (not including boat crews), many more part-time, and many small businesses lease out space. Commercial fishing is an important component of the character of Stock Island, can be preserved, but Safe Harbor is one of a few sites with deep channel access and existing dock infrastructure, and needs to be better utilized. Complementary uses such as restaurants or hotels should be allowed. The rough-&-tumble character of the community can be preserved… although some of the more industrial activities would probably have to be isolated from higher-end development to avoid conflicts.

Community-wide improvements are necessary to support this transformation. "Eyesore" properties along the Maloney Avenue corridor need to be taken care of, and the corridor beautified with nice sidewalks, landscape, underground utilities, and amenities. Do not, however, try to emulate more urban corridors like Clematis in Palm Beach or Las Olas in Fort Lauderdale-this is not the character of Stock Island.

Business Owner (Fishbuzters)

Many factors are affecting the local commercial fishing industry. This is not a new situation, as the County has been grappling with this issue for years; however, changes have accelerated in the past decade. The Commercial Fishing zoning districts were created for the purpose of protecting locations where the industry can subsist, but the nature of Safe Harbor is different and it was zoned Maritime Industries instead. In this district, many permitted uses are not directly related or supportive of commercial fishing, and property owners do not have any incentive to maintain the use if they can generate greater revenue from selling or allowing the conversion to a higher permitted use.

Competition from cheap farm-raised foreign products has also reduced the local fishermen's ability to sell at a reasonable, competitive price. The cost of fuel, supplies, equipment and maintenance, licensing, insurance, even housing and groceries, makes it almost impossible for local fishermen to remain in business as it is. Still, the industry is not likely to disappear. Indications are that it will continue to shrink (in numbers of fishermen and boats), but at the same time to become more effective. Even with a smaller fleet, Stock Island commercial fishing will likely retain its share of the regional and State economies. The key is to create a market niche for locally caught seafood-e.g., marketing the Key West Pink Shrimp as a unique local product. Some local houses do sell to Key West restaurants, but the majority of the catch still leaves the County. If local processing and more complementary uses could be added to the equation, including dockside restaurants, markets, etc., that share could increase significantly.

Fishermen also need to get more involved in what happens in the Safe Harbor and Peninsular areas of Stock Island, but one of the greatest hurdles is that fishermen do not own any of the properties that they operate from, nor are they likely to. The same is true for a number of businesses. As a result, many feel powerless, intimidated or afraid that if they speak up, they might be turned out and lose their livelihood. However, if the land continues to be converted to other uses at the pace it is going, soon all access to the waterfront will be lost not just for fishermen, but also for other industrial maritime activities and the public in general. The County should try to acquire some property on the Harbor to keep for public use, lease back to the fishermen for docking, unloading, and storage of traps.

The County also needs to add flexibility to its regulations in dealing with nonconforming waterfront properties around the Harbor, in particular. Because of the 50% rule, for instance, there is little incentive for improving existing structures. Parking, stormwater drainage, and setback requirements, are perceived as too burdensome and rigid to meet the redevelopment or improvement particulars of these sites.

Property Owner (Kim Wigginton)
There is widespread interest, coupled with mistrust, about the CommuniKeys process after the recent outrage over the (real or perceived) wastewater system problems. The community has begun to recognize that it needs to get involved and demand to have a say in issues that affect it, early in the planning process.

In addition, the concerns of the community at large need to be addressed. The community needs go beyond those at the waterfront. Addressing the loss of diversity due to the loss of housing affordability/ conversion of mobile homes and RV parks is a priority. In a few exceptions, park plots are individually owned, which makes it harder for a single developer to assemble. At the same time, the 50% rule and limitations on mobile homes are a disincentive to owners to initiate improvements; this leads to neglect and blight. How do you reconcile these needs?

The community also needs area-wide improvements, including additional community facilities, particularly another park or better facilities at Bernstein; a community center, a library… Additional parkland with waterfront access would be wonderful.

Overall, more facilities to serve the needs of families with young children are needed.

According to the 2000 census figures, Stock Island is the Keys community with the largest population of children. A better road network, with amenities and improved safety for pedestrian circulation, and recreation facilities, will probably be two of the top community priorities.

District 1 County Commissioner (Dixie Spehar)
The CommuniKeys master planning process was discussed, focusing on the public involvement component. Different stakeholder groups were said to have expressed concerns over what they perceive as potential (conflicting) preconceptions about the outcome of the master planning process, particularly for the waterfront. Every effort should be made to represent and involve every stakeholder group in the process.

Stock Island is a special community, different from others in the Keys. It is a community with many needs and limited resources. The Commission is striving to meet those needs, seeking land and funding to build a new fire station, other community facilities and services that will become increasingly necessary.

Commercial fishing is a vital component of the community, its economy, and its heritage, and should be protected and strengthened. How to preserve access to the waterfront for this activity as well as for the benefit of the community at large is part of the bigger picture that must be kept in mind. At the same time, today this need must be balanced with private property rights. Achieving this balance is both critical and a challenge.

Property Owner (Roger Bernstein)
The Bernstein name is intimately linked to Stock Island. The area was used as the headquarters for Charley Topino quarry operations, and is mostly the product of dredge and fill. Mr. Bernstein, Sr., partnered with Topino in the mid 1950's to build Safe Harbor, mostly with a focus to capitalize on the anticipated traffic between Cuba and Key West. Although this traffic did not materialize, the Bernstein family came to own and shape substantial portions of south Stock Island. This included the dog track and stock car racetrack properties, the sites of-not just one but two-drive-in theaters, several residential subdivisions, and a significant amount of waterfront property in the Safe Harbor area. The Bernstein family also owned the site of Bernstein Park. The family retains strong local ties, including the fact that Miriam Bernstein (mother) is still a resident. The community has seen much change over the years. Today, small, inland single-family residential lots in Lincoln Gardens subdivision sell for over $400,000. The value of land, particularly waterfront, continues to rise, and correspondingly high property taxes are a disincentive to maintain the traditional low-revenue maritime uses. Everyone wants to capitalize-even though the County's regulatory framework can be overwhelming for most.

Things will improve for commercial fishermen if the local industry is able to distinguish itself from foreign competition - e.g., develop a brand name and market to specific high-end segments willing to pay a higher price for quality product. The future of the industry is not entirely at risk: it will endure, but with fewer boats, fewer fishermen working harder but more efficiently and exerting better control over operations. Islamorada Fish Company is a probable model for how the industry will evolve.

Not only fishermen, but also numerous ancillary industries that serve maritime uses are striving to endure through this evolution. One example is Key West Engine, which has been located on the harbor for about 15 years but whose business now focuses primarily on pleasure boats.

It is of the essence to find ways to ease this transition, to ensure the survival of Stock Island's working character and diversity. Diversity is what makes Stock Island different from the rest of the Keys. The fishermen must continue to have access to affordable docks and upland storage. However, land in Stock Island is no longer affordable, nor (for the most part) available, and there is no other viable place for the commercial fishing industry to go in the Lower Keys.

For property owners, some type of tax relief could be decisive in preserving commercial fishing uses. Mr. Bernstein is not eager to eliminate these uses, but the tax burden is significant and the pressure to convert uses increasing.

At the same time, the regulations are so cumbersome that they discourage property owners, from undertaking needed improvements. One example is the property on the southwest side of the harbor, former site of the junkyard (a portion of this use remains at the west end of the site), for which permits for dockage have been in process through DEP and the County for two years.

It is acknowledged that the Maritime Industries zoning offers some flexibility in uses, but other controls, such as ROGO and NROGO, are preventing redevelopment. In addition, relief from certain requirements is needed to provide incentive to owners, such as higher FARs and flexibility for nonconformities.

Visioning Workshop Input

A visioning workshop was conducted with the community on July 15, 2004, to collectively "imagine the future" of the waterfront and the roadway corridors, and to brainstorm ideas for how to achieve that future. After a short presentation of the project parameters, the attendees joined in small groups to participate in a one-and-a-half hour discussion of the following topics:

1. Waterfront Uses/Mix - existing and potential (what, where, how much, etc.)

2. Functional Relationships/Linkages - between waterfront uses, and between these and surrounding uses

3. Waterfront Access - existing and potential (where, how, etc.)

4. Circulation/Mobility/Connectivity - vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian

5. Development Character - building placement, orientation, size, scale, parking, service/ loading, etc.

6. Design Character - architectural style(s), urban design elements (lighting, paving, etc.), landscape character/quality, etc.

7. Identity Features/Landmarks - gateways, signage, etc.

8. Program Elements - events, festivals, etc.

After the breakout session, the participants reassembled to hear presentations of the key points resulting from the small group discussions. The following is a summary of the contributions made by each of the groups.

Group 1

Waterfront Uses/Mix

" Maintain fish houses- not enough room for, many more uses
" Peninsula Marina
    Now: mixed-use marina
    To be: Lower waterfront: high-end residential, Upper waterfront: fishing, dry storage, expanded docks (private ownership)
" Oceanside Marina- residential/mixed-use, restaurant, fuel dock
" Hickory House- for sale, residential/ expanded private docks
" Vacant lot- 18-20 housing, 7 occupied by commercial fishing
" Owners - need incentives to help maintain fishing uses
" Residential - need incentives to retain existing residential uses
" Property Rights:
- What goes into that property can be controlled by county
- Need County-owned property to ensure fishing uses?
" Development Rights?
" Lack of land - what do you do to keep people living here?
" Money is driving force
-Encourage property owners to do certain things
" $$ - taxes will come out of Stock Island

Water Access! $$$$

" Foundation - move to Fleming Key (sub-base)
" Commercial fishing needs dedicated land
" Need to own
" County owned property
" Developers pay for
" County needs to get the property in the fishermen's hands *****
" Waterfront access, not parking

Stock Island:
-Fishing remains- can it be tourist?
-Restaurants- on the fishing dock
    -Sale of fishing
    -Clean up fishing to be more consumer friendly

Circulation/Mobility/Connectivity

" Bus stops- need to be decent, shaded, out of rain, and addition of trash cans
" Streets with curbs, landscaping, and drainage

Signage/ Wayfinding

" Better organized parking
" Entrance from US1- throughout Stock Island

Design Character

" Build community?
" Mixed income
" Post office/bank, etc.
" Better parking- more shade
" 3 stories (3 levels-2 usable, 35')

Group 1 - Summary of Key Issues/Ideas

1. MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL FISHING USE
-present form, not token for tourists

2. MAINTAIN DOCKAGE LEVELS

3. CLEAN-UP AND ORGANIZE STOCK ISLAND

4. PRESERVE EST. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING IN PRESENT FORM

Group 2

Waterfront Uses/Mix

" Key West missed out on opportunity to create working waterfront
" People coming to Keys want to see fishing boats
" Scale of commercial fishing operation is diminishing- % of fishermen has disappeared- still viable
" Keep commercial fishing
" There needs to be financial support by the county to keep tax on property low
" Mixed-use: particularly high-end housing to support commercial fishing
" Local restaurants that serve locally caught seafood
" Storage of fishing equipment- offsite?
" FKAA, FKES- possible storage site
" Fish Houses
" Four Travel lifts
" Fuel Delivered specifically for fishing
" Ice a necessity - currently supplied by Bama
" Premium on parking
" Traffic calming
" Most of the uses do not provide enough parking
" Add piers for boat dockage
" Most of the fishermen are also residents Stock Island
" Fishing- utilizes a lot of land

Waterfront Access

" Overlook @ Sea Lobster?
" Points of access as opposed to a large wrap around trail

Circulation/Connectivity

" Need for bike racks

Design Character

" Transfer Station & KW Resort Utility
- Smelly!!!
- Cell towers and satellite dishes are unattractive landmarks
- Attractive landmarks- Bernstein Park (park), Cow Key (possible park)
" CLEAN IT UP!!!!

Group 3

Waterfront Uses/Mix

" Limit non-water related industrial uses
" Constraint for affordable housing in harbor area is current value of land
" Encourage mix of commercial and residential in harbor area
" Commercial fishing: threat is loss of access
" Some form of subsidy (similar to TDC and tourism- for commercial fishing
" Create CRA in harbor or gulf seafood area
" Condense number of fish houses- form co-op type of organization- reduce internal competition

Linkages

" Smaller boats need ice
" Larger boats ice from larger boats
" Dependency of some businesses on others
" Need boat lifts and repair if commercial fishing is to survive
" Marine support businesses on Shrimp Road- pressure

Waterfront Access

" Public Access
Possibly at the end of 5th St.
Problem with trailer parking
Shrimp Rd. - boat ramp
Public dock

Southern tip off KAA property possible use as public beach

Circulation/Mobility/Connectivity
" Cross St. is also major corridor
" Identity potential " turnarounds"
" Facilitate access of US1
" Re-design Fourth and Maloney
" 2nd St., 3rd and 4th Avenue

Identity Features
" Streetscape US1

Design Character
" Public Fish Market/ something like Baltimore
" Complex with tourist and local appeal
" CRA would give outline for development and design character
" Relaxation of shoreline setback in some cases
" Consider PUD's

Program Elements
" Utilize Bernstein Park for events
" parking is a problem for any event drawing in large numbers of people

Group 4

Waterfront Uses/Mix
" Multiple use and zoning does not align
" Leave space for commercial fishing
" Guarantee land for commercial fishing
-Tax incentives for businesses that wish to remain
-Government-owned land
" County pump out boats
" More recreational uses

Functional Relationships
" If you drive out fishermen, the residential character of the community will change
" Market forces will change everything, both commercial and residential
" Businesses that support commercial fishing will go bankrupt
- some work out of their homes
- 5th St. to 4th Avenue house industry that support commercial fishing
" Conversion of affordable housing will hurt the existing industries

Waterfront Access
" Create park at Osmosis Plant
" Is Osmosis Plant functional?
" Robbie's Marina is one of few places to haul
" Robbie's Marina must be cleaned up- good thing that it was brought up, but keep in mind that not many places are left to haul
" Not much access for residents who are not located on a canal
" Create public access to water (public ramp @ Murray Marine
" Dockominiums increase access and provide affordable housing
-Increase multi-use
-Have been restricted from visual improvements

Circulation
" Change the name of 5th St. so it will not be so confusing (5th Ave. Corridor)
" Insufficient access and signage from US-1- direct cars to Stock Island
" Shrimp Avenue is a problem
- only access to west end of waterfront
- abandoned cars
- ugly dirt road- should be paved
- No utilities - need them!
- Not wide enough for trucks
" Traffic congestion is bad at 4th Avenue
- concerns it will increase once Meridian West is fully occupied
- road must be repaired
" Cars parked/abandoned on roads (such as 5th Ave.) should be cleaned up
" Cyclist are at times drunk
- people don't ride bikes for recreation

Design Character

" Don't want restriction on home/property design-county has enough restrictions
" Emphasize single family homes rather than condos
" Clean up lots/ front yards
" Don't want to turn into "gateway" to Key West
" Concerned about design/property restrictions and affordable housing

Landmarks

" None- except Burger King
" Need signage
" People buy fresh seafood from Bama Seafood
" Hog Fish Restaurant and Rusty Anchor
  - old Key West
  - locally owned and patronized
  - clean
" Hickory House - jazz night

Miscellaneous

" Drug use and prostitution
" Lifestyle of commercial fishermen

Summary

" Clean up Stock Island
" Provide/Maintain space for commercial fishermen
" Retain affordable housing but clean the properties up
" More signage
" Reduce congestion on 4th Avenue

Group 5

Character

" Working waterfront an asset
" Parking needs
" Tighten-up zoning
" Mix of uses- industrial, fishing, liveaboards, restaurants
" Traps
" Ocean breezes

Issues

" Changes are happening fast
" Life is what happens when we plan
" Planning is not fast enough
" Be Gone-Before-Plan
" FL Legislative Session
Tax relief for commercial fishing and other waterfront uses

Waterfront Uses/Mix

" Evaluate to determine if a minimum 25% of port area for commercial fishing- part deep for shrimp boats will preserve the industries $30 million
" How to maintain? Purchase
" Conversions of fishing docks
" Need tax break to commercial fishing
" Public purchase of dock and lease back
" Shrimp boats need large areas to lie on side cannot use slips
" Need place for traps as well and place to keep fishing boats
" Working waterfront as an asset
- tourism to see
- restaurants
" Need to keep fish house to keep fishing industry
" Possibility of joint use W/FKE and FKAA and fishing
" Lobster and stone crabs 20%
" Fin fish 80%

Waterfront Access

" Public roads to water-keep
" No public ownership
" Gated, condo waterfronts-no public access
" Boat ramps
" If condos on ocean complete, view and breeze lost

Links

" Need enough boats to maintain a "fish house"
" Retain the boat yards needed for fishing fleet
" Need parking for boats
" Trailers near access point
" Protect the uses
" Restaurants for local seafood

Group 6

Waterfront Uses/Mix
" Walt - more restaurants and retail
" Joe - wants seafood to stay on Isle, cost of processing, more restaurants-more traffic
" Pam - allow flexibility in use
" Joe - flexible zoning, parking

Functional Relationships/Linkages
" Parking - half by boat and car
" Liveaboards
" Employee housing above uses
" Unload fish-market-restaurants all on Stock Island
" Need service areas for boats large and small
" Environment restrictions are killing it
" Develop another waterfront

Circulation/Mobility/Connectivity
" Junk cars abandoned
" Water taxi
" Confusing signage- need signs
" More charters and retail
" Storage by KW residents -bad

Development Character
" Old Key West (not Key West)
" Rustic
" Diverse people and uses
" Cultural diversity
" See water
" Code needs to be "in true" with uses now

Design Character
" Code to certain uses (multi-homes-improvements to one in a park forces improvements in all-disincentive for improvements/maintaining)
" Old Key West
" No AR committee
" All catch 22
" Rustic open air
" Historic societies in waterfront

Identity Features/Landmarks
" Annual shrimp festival, Stock Island Yacht Club vs. Key West, fish contests, boat festival

Group Summary
" Planners need to live in the real world
" Basically happy with what % we have-more piers, restaurants with seafood markets attached in order to support fishing community, revitalize old buildings, redevelopment that compliments existing uses
" Seafood goes fish boats to restaurants and markets in Stock Island.
" Employee housing in area to serve uses (liveaboards)
" Tax incentives to keep commercial fishing
" Some existing; not publicly owned
" Need to open aqueduct and osmosis plant
" Need trees in Bernstein Park
" No traffic problems "really"; but people drink and bike or drive scooters - public transportation
" Old Key West - not Key West; restrict open air uses, high density development; dust is a problem
" Fish Busterz, Rusty Anchor, Hickory House, Whole Harbor
" Other waterfront area to develop high-end housing or commercial fishing

The group's problem: codes are inflexible, no repairs, parking; cost of property and outside money and taxes, change in economics, fishing, and access

Group 7

Waterfront Uses/Mix

" Uses have naturally developed over time
" Need equipment an supply, repair available
" Should study what area can support
" Dockage for fishing boats disappearing
" Haul out facilities crucial- may handicap industry if haul outs disappear
" Separate liveaboards form commercial fishing
" Currently there is balance between commercial fishing ,liveaboards, marinas
" Provide pump-out facilities
" Central sewage to port area
" Many different crafts, shops, skills - retains for tourists
" Safe harbor and marina area-good for tourism
" Boardwalk in tourist area

Functional Relationships/Linkages

" Port area 'hub' of Stock Island
" Area unique and should be protected
" Liveaboards - affordable housing for employees of area
" New affordable housing complex (dog track) will vastly increase traffic over limited road system
" Add 5th St. as alternative route to Shrimp Rd.

Waterfront Access

" Very limited now
" Some use of electric company property for public park/use?
" 'Cow Key' area open for some type public use (kayaking, nature walking)
" Use end of roads for public areas
" County purchase of mobile park(s) or other land for reuse as public water access for residents and tourists (suggested by Commissioner Spehar)

Circulation/Mobility

" On Maloney Ave., use one side for parking and other for bikes/people
" Put boat trailers off streets (currently all over Maloney)
" 4th and Front Streets opened for public access/walking and better tourist access to safe harbor area

Development Character

" McDonald/Maloney need changes to parking of cars, trailer, etc.
" Develop parking on Front St.
" Potential parking areas
- old race track
- Front St.
- K.W. Oxygen Service Property
" Strip centers utilize limited land area better
" 'No' to high density and high rises
" Setbacks and right-of-ways used as if private lands -need to change

Design Character

" Curbs and sidewalks needed
" Dual purpose sitting areas/shelters for recreation , walks, bus stops
" More trees and landscaping
" Too much copy of Key West look
" Spottswood Shape and Coral Hammock good examples to follow
" Existing fire house, historic qualities to preserve and it's features used in local design
" May need professionals to help with design

Features/Landmarks

" Need directional signage to various areas
" Identify 'gate' intersection with "Welcome to Stock Island" sign- landscaping, monument, or other feature
" McDonald and 5th St. are dangerous intersections
" 2 access points to Stock Island -Miami is US1 and 5th St.- landmark or fishing motif monument that id's gate to S.I., Secondary gate- US1 and McDonald- needs directional signage

Events

" Seafood festival - Bernstein Park
" Music festival
" Artist festival on docks, park
" Dog show

Plenary Session Summary: Key Issues/ Ideas from All Groups

Group 1

- Maintain commercial fishing
- Maintain housing
- Clean up Stock Island/fishing
- Incentives to maintain fish houses
  - additional development
  - county buy property
- Move fishing?--would have to
- Better bus stops…
- More trees/signs - better
- Better organized parking
- Build a community - services, library, etc.
- Height - go up 1 additional level
- No consensus on style!

Group 2

- Identify public access to water
- 3 places
  - boat ramp @ end of 5th St.
  - waterfront parking @ FKAA
  - gulfstream parking
- Limit non-waterfront uses @ water edge
- Encourage mix - community/housing
- Create CRA - focus revenue to help keep commercial fishing (don't move)
- Co-op for fishermen-enhance profitability
- Upper end of inner harbor
  - boats/traps/ice houses
  - place for public docks- short term, transient dockage, fish market
- Circulation - better access to inner harbor off US1
- Location for library/fire-along US1

Group 3

- Character - "Not Key West"
- Get public access
- Get buildings closer to water if allow public access
- Create particular design for port
- Streetscape on US-1 - slow traffic/ see entrance to Stock Island @ MacDonald and US-1
- Programs - Bernstein park for events
- Parking - how, where to provide

Group 4

- Redevelop to complement existing uses
- Seafood goes to local restaurants
- Tax incentives to keep commercial fishing
- Water access (now private)- KFAA site
- Trees in Bernstein park
- Design
  - rustic/ open air
  - high density
  - dust a problem
- Landmarks - whole harbor area
- Problems:
  - code is not flexible: unrealistic to bring buildings into full compliance
  - economics of commercial fishing
  - planners must live in the "real world"
  - high-end housing: somewhere else
  - keep worker's housing

Group 5

- Mixes-use waterfront
- Need guaranteed land for commercial fishing
- Need more recreation sites
  - FKAA reverse osmosis site
  - North of Robbie's
  - Murray's Marina
- Need for affordable housing to support fishing
- What happens if commercial fishing leaves
  - lose affordable housing
  - lose related businesses
- Clean up Robbie's - a good thing
- Dockominiums: more access/affordable housing
- Circulation: confusing 5th St./5th Ave.
- Need more signage @ US1
- Shrimp Rd-only access to west end - should be paved, widened, utilities
- Traffic congestion @ 4th Ave.
- Parked / abandoned cars
- Bikes used because they have to… / dedicated bike paths

" Own design character
  - emphasis on single-family homes / not condos
  - no additional restrictions
" Landmarks
  - Burger King
  - Local businesses / local resident landmark: Bama Seafood, Rusty Anchor, Hickory House
" Miscellaneous: drug use and prostitution big problem

Group 6

" Things happening so fast
" Need to slow down - plan can't be finished fast enough
" Loss of commercial fishing
  - key to keep it here/ essential to character
  - need right land, side areas, and dock space
" Working waterfront
  - asset
  - boardwalk like Key West
  - restaurants
  - fish houses
  - FKAA joint use-trap storage
" Numbers have to work
" Keep places to pull boats
" Concern about gated condos: removes access, lose view/breeze
" Need funding sources - tax relief

Group 7

" Keep haul-outs
" Study to find what fishing can be supported
" Pump-outs
" Shops/ tourist attraction @ Safe Harbor
" Concern of traffic impact @ affordable housing - alternatives to link roads
" Water access:
  - Keys Electric
  - Cow Key Creek : kayaks/trails/ park
  - County could buy trailer parks- create public water access/ support affordable housing
" Maloney - narrow bike trail on one side
" Change parking along Maloney
" Sites for tourist parking
" Strip centers vs. individual entrances
" Curbs and sidewalks needed
" Preserve historic fire house
" Landmarks: need signage, ideas for fishing monuments, theme (e.g., Big Lobster)
" Seafood festival, dog show

General Comments/Questions

" Larger/additional meetings/ better location for meetings/ more notice
" Will the plan happen?
" Will County adopt/implement plan?
" When is planning "done"? (finished)
" Does County have $$$?

Alternative Concepts and Strategies Workshop Input

A community workshop was held on February 15, 2005, to present and solicit feedback on a range of concepts and strategies for the redevelopment of the harbor area and enhancement of the two roadway corridors. The following is a record of comments and questions received from attendees, and the responses offered by the planning team.

Q/C: The term "government intervention" is scary - it suggests that the County will use condemnation or eminent domain. Either way some people will take a hit/ some will reap benefits.

A: There is no suggestion that the County will condemn or take property.

Q/C: How is this process going to work?

A: Although it was suggested at the beginning of the meeting that participants would cast "votes" on the alternatives, the term "vote" was inaccurately used. The purpose of the proposed exercise was for participants to indicate/articulate their preferences among the different concepts, not to select any one alternative tonight to become "the plan."

Q/C: What do the concepts represent? Are they specifically about individual pieces of property and what can be done on these, or are they about the general character of the area?

A: The concepts are meant to represent generalized "visions" of the character of the area. While a number of factors have been considered (upland area, water frontage, water depth, etc.) to denote the potential optimal function in particular sections of the study area, the concepts should not be considered recommendations at the parcel-by-parcel level.

Q/C: How was the meeting publicized? Not enough notice was given.

A: The County advertised the meeting in the newspaper and also sent postcards to a mailing list comprising hundreds of addresses.

Q/C: Participant claimed not to have received a postcard, but asked the audience whether anyone else did. (In response, a significant number of hands went up).

Q/C: Participant introduced himself as Jim Brooks, representing the NAS Key West at Boca Chica. Mr. Brooks began by commending the planning team for its efforts. In particular, the addition of tree canopy all over the island is an excellent idea, since trees are good for noise abatement. However, there is concern that some of the land use concepts did not consider the latest AICUZ map update. The AICUZ not only takes into consideration noise, but also accident probabilities. The NAS' first concern is safety.

A: The planning process is, at this point, being guided by the recent legal determination that the County must undergo a full adoption process of the updated AICUZ. Until then, the County is bound by the current regulations, reflecting the 1977 AICUZ map.

Q/C: Mr. Brooks cautioned about the application of the County's legal determination.

A: It is understood that said determination might not be the final step. However, at this time this is the direction received from the County.

Q/C: Is enough upland storage being provided in the alternatives for lobster traps?

A: The planning team has struggled with this question. Anecdotal information indicates a single lobster fisherman needs about 11,000 sq. ft. of combined upland

storage and work area. However, there is evidence that this is only the result of inefficient operations and use of land. In addition, the number of fishermen that call Stock Island home tends to fluctuate. So there is no clear-cut answer to the question of how much is needed. Nevertheless, each concept which contemplates commercial fishing does incorporate outside storage areas for traps.

Q/C: Has the use of public utility land been considered or discussed for storage purposes?

A: At this time, there is indication that both utilities intend to maintain their presence in Stock Island and that at least one, if not both, are planning expansion of their operations in the short to mid-range future. Due to security concerns, it is not likely that land would be available on their properties for other public uses.

Q/C: Has the planning team contacted DEP regarding their most recent "Gestapo" tactics? When boats/traps come out of the water, any kind of discharge is now considered "toxic". On the participant's property, a $40,000 closed loop wash-down system was required, with proper waste disposal going to approved sites. These increasingly stringent regulations are squeezing many marine industrial operations out - and commercial fishing is likely to be next. How are these regulations reconciled with the land use? Now a "moratorium" is being pushed through on Stock Island to prevent any redevelopment of marinas. This could make it economically impossible to operate waterfront marine uses affordably.

A: The planning team is aware of DEP regulations, but has no control to change them or relax them. The County will continue to work both with DEP and with developers/property owners to ensure that future development meets all local and state standards.

Q/C: Has the planning team considered the idea of connecting Bernstein Park to Cow Key?

A: Yes, as part of a "big picture" concept for community-wide green infrastructure. However, Cow Key is immediately outside of the harbor area, which is the focus of this study. Recommendations will likely be included in the Livable CommuniKeys Plan.

Q/C: How can other people in the community have input in this process?

A: All the information will be posted and available on the County Planning website. The County will create an interactive comment page for people to submit their opinions and will distribute newsletters and work with community groups to further disseminate the information.

Q/C: The County previously bought space in a local newspaper to post alternatives on the airport design, and asked people to vote on them. Maybe something like that could be used to get input.

A (From Marlene Conaway, Planning Director): This meeting is not the end of the process. There will likely be another public meeting and once the plan is completed, a full adoption process including planning commission and county commission hearings where public input will be collected. The plan will be reviewed many times before it is adopted.

Q/C: How will implementation of the plan work? What will landowners have to do?

A: Once the plan is adopted, existing uses or features that are not consistent with the new plan will remain as "nonconforming" until such time as redevelopment occurs. Only an application for redevelopment would trigger the need to comply.

Q/C: What is the timeframe for completing the planning process?

A (From Marlene Conaway, Planning Director): The first draft of the final report is due in April. Once the report is complete, the County will incorporate it into the Livable CommuniKeys Plan. This process may take a while, but it is expected that the full CommuniKeys Plan will go to the Commission in the summer.

Q/C: Stock Island is not in a "status quo" situation--things keep changing. Consider what happened in Key West (Bight); today it is happening in Stock Island. The reality is that because of regulation (net ban, etc.) there are 50% less traps in the water today, with the inevitable result of decreases in return for commercial fishermen and the commercial fishing industry. Many in the community and maybe in the audience may say that they support commercial fishing, but they do not see the big picture. The industry is getting smaller, some places will/need to close and consolidate. And regulations are still coming down. The idea of providing housing for commercial fishermen is fine in theory, but where will the fishermen to live there come from? There is no "next generation," fishermen are getting out because they cannot afford to stay in the business. The County cannot save commercial fishing by throwing a few bucks at someone to keep them going. Commercial fishermen do not want to shut down their operations, and they do not want to rely on subsidies.

Q/C: It does not seem fair for the County to make somebody change the use or the zoning of their property or tell them what they can or cannot do.

A: With zoning and land development regulations in place, the County in essence already defines what owners can or cannot do on their property. Further, land in the Peninsular area is already zoned for uses other than what is there today; therefore, zoning changes may not be necessary. In addition, commercial fishing zoning does not exist in Stock Island today, so nobody can be "forced" to remain in commercial fishing under today's rules.

Q/C: The possibility that this process will end in some sort of "hybrid" plan, i.e., a mix of several of the concepts, was mentioned earlier in the meeting. What about encouraging mixed use? Is this likely?

A: Absolutely--mixed use is an excellent suggestion. This could be a tweaking or an expansion of the mixed-use zoning currently in place in a significant portion of the study area.

Q/C: What are needed to save commercial fishing are incentives--Stock Island commercial fishing needs cooperation from the County.

Q/C: Who ordered this study and who are the consultants working for? Nobody asked for this project. The County does not own the properties.

A: The County requested the study, which is being completed as part of the overall Livable CommuniKeys Plan for Stock Island and Key Haven. The study responds to concerns about the future of the commercial fishing industry and the loss of waterfront access, not only in Stock Island but throughout the Keys.