

2017 Middlebridge Conservation Land Management Plan

The Middlebridge Conservation Land is a 9.51-acre river front recreational area located directly on the Narrow River in the Town of Narragansett. The acquisition and protection of this unique property provides the Town of Narragansett an opportunity to provide residents access for kayaking, fishing, marine activities along with wildlife viewing and interpretation for future generations. The Middlebridge Property presently supports a kayak and paddle board concession, 37- slip marina, one caretaker's residence and two year-round residential rental units. Established by the Town Council on September 17, 2012 as an enterprise fund, it is the goal of the Town of Narragansett to provide residents an opportunity to access this important recreational and environmentally sensitive site while providing a sustaining funding source for the future.

The Vision

The Middlebridge Conservation Land is a valuable recreational and ecological resource for the residents of Narragansett. The property is one of the few active recreational areas where people can access and enjoy the Narrow River, and it is the only remaining natural 'gateway' to Narragansett. The open space, river and wetlands must be conserved, improved and restored wherever possible.



Background

The purchase and continued operation of the former “Eddy Property” at 94 and 95 Middlebridge Road poses a number of continued “management issues” that require a baseline management plan. Many of these are policy-related; others are technical, legal, or operational in nature. The Plan is divided into the following sections

- Current Conditions
- On-site Activities
- Management Update
- Marina Operations Plan

Current Conditions

The site (including both parcels) includes active residential and commercial uses, as well as partially-maintained open space. The Department of Community Development has segmented the property into the following use categories. Please refer to Map A and B.

Protected Land

Waterfront open space, wetland restoration, public open space

Community Uses

95 Middlebridge Road (north side) includes:

- The 2-story “yellow” building (lower level formerly used as a café, and upper level previously used as an office for the kayak rental operation),
- The 2- story “marina” building (first floor used for storage; second floor is currently vacant),
- Three (3) single unit detached cottages. 95B and 95C are currently rented. 95A is currently used for storage by the URI Women’s Rowing team.
- A fourth cottage, 95F, was demolished following Hurricane Sandy.
- URI Women’s Rowing Team temporary boat storage facility, dock

Marina

The 37- slip marina

Marine Recreation

Marine recreation concession operations

94 Middlebridge Road (south side) includes:

- A former residential unit (currently used as offices for the marine recreation concession
- The commercial building that supports the marine recreation operation.

Parking areas

Marine recreation concession, public

Caretaker site

The “main house” is a 2-story single family home that is currently used by the live-in caretaker, under a 5-year agreement with the Town

The entire Middlebridge Property falls within FEMA’s Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), in a Flood Zone characterized as ‘AE’ with a Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 14’ (for Lot 9) or 11’ (for Lot 10) as designated on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map 44009C0204J dated October 16, 2013. FEMA requires that any “Substantial Improvement” to a structure must comply with all NFIP standards, RI State Building Code and Town Zoning Ordinance – Section 4.7 regulations. “Substantial Improvement” means any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement to a structure, the total cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement.

Due Diligence Items

Through the use of independent consultants, the staff coordinated the completion of a Class I boundary survey of the property as well as a Phase I Environmental Assessment. Briefly, the Phase I Environmental Assessment is a non-invasive site investigation and file review to determine the potential presence of hazardous material(s) that might compromise the site in terms of development and use, or might require immediate or long term environmental mitigation. The Phase I process included site walks to visually check for oil tanks, obvious pollution sources, building asbestos, evidence of dumping or other solid waste\hazardous waste disposal, etc. Typically, lead paint, soil or groundwater testing is not done at this level, but would be triggered by any potentially adverse findings. The Phase I process also included file reviews at local and state offices that might include regulatory information or other key site attributes, and personal interviews. The Environmental Assessment was delivered to the Town on September 7, 2012. There were no compelling environmental issues found that require additional investigation, although the Phase I EA process does not include items such as radon, lead paint, or asbestos in individual buildings. Rather, it is a review of the site as a whole.

Initial Building Assessment

A cursory inspection of each of the buildings at both sites for general code conformance and condition was performed by the Town staff on August 15, 2012. All of the buildings are older wood-frame construction, either slab on grade or with small crawl spaces. Foundations range from concrete block to stone. Based on the age of each building, it may be appropriate to test for lead paint and asbestos. Public water services each building via Suez (with the exception of the main house at 95 Middlebridge Road (Caretaker Site), which is on a private well). Newer on-site wastewater treatment Systems (“OWTS”) service all units at both properties (2005 for 95 Middlebridge Road) except for the main house, which is serviced by a separate OWTS installed in 1972.

Residential Buildings and Structures – South Side 94 Middlebridge Road

- **Cottage 94 A (south side of Middlebridge Road)** – This building is in good condition and is now part of the kayak operation. The interior of the building has been refurbished and is in very good condition. The building sits on a stone foundation with a small crawl space and the condition of the floor joists had not been determined. In 2012, it was thought to be appropriate to plan for roof and siding replacements, as well as new windows and doors within the next five (5) to seven (7) years at this building. This building is served by a fairly new small OWTS built around 2005 and recertified by DEM in 2012.
- **94 Middlebridge Road:** The small shed/commercial building presently supports the marine recreation concession operation. The paddle board building flooded during Hurricane Sandy but did not suffer any appreciable damage. The Town did not initiate any clean-up activities at this location.

Residential Buildings and Structures – North Side 95 Middlebridge Road

- **The 2-story yellow building** (lower level of this building was formerly used as a café, and the upper level had historically used as an office for the marine recreation concession operation). This structure is currently vacant and was gutted following Hurricane Sandy. This building would need significant upgrades in order to function as a restaurant. New plumbing, electrical, fire alarm and mechanical systems are needed, as is drywall and other finishes. The building would have to be upgraded to meet food service codes (e.g. kitchen hood) and ADA requirements, which would involve a ramp and ADA-compliant restrooms, at a minimum. This structure may also be required to meet FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program regulations as well as all applicable building code requirements.

The OWTS also will be a limiting factor as it was designed to support a small café-style restaurant, and cannot support a full-service operation without significant upgrading. Public sewers are roughly 900 feet away; however, CRMC regulations prohibit sewer extensions of more than 500 feet in this Narrow River Special Area Management (SAM) Plan zone.

Preliminary discussions with CRMC staff indicate that full CRMC Council approval would be needed for a special exception and note that those are typically only granted if there is some compelling public good. At the time that the Town purchased this property, the restaurant was open as a limited service café. It needed RIDOH and fire code upgrades in terms of food preparation equipment (e.g. fryolator) and code-related equipment (e.g. fire suppression hood). Public bathroom access for the restaurant was not in conformance with ADA requirements. The original assessment of this building in 2012 was that it would need a new roof, shingles, windows and doors within the next five (5) to seven (7) years.

The electrical system may need upgrading, including the meter sockets and main panels. The restaurant building suffered extensive flooding damage during Hurricane Sandy. The Town

initiated mold remediation and clean-up activities, but has not committed to any restoration activities. The building was gutted following the hurricane, therefore new plumbing and electrical systems, drywall, etc. would be needed prior to any occupancy.

In 2014 the Town Council approved an RFP for individuals interested in occupying the structure as a restaurant. An informational meeting was conducted on 12/18/14 and an RFP response deadline of 1/28/15. No bids were received and the building is now vacant.

- **Cottage 95 A** – This building is currently being used by URI Women’s Rowing team as office space and to store backpacks, coats and rowing equipment. The furnace for Unit A is in the yellow building. When this cottage suffered flooding and wind damage during Hurricane Sandy, the Town initiated mold remediation and clean-up activities, along with replacing the sub-floor insulation. The Trust replaced the roof under our property insurance coverage.
- **Cottage 95 B** – This building is currently rented. This building has a fairly new direct vent propane unit heater. When this cottage suffered flooding damage in the crawl space during Hurricane Sandy, the Town initiated mold remediation and clean-up activities, along with replacing the sub-floor insulation.
- **Cottage 95 C** – This building is currently rented. This cottage has a fairly new direct vent propane unit heater. When this building suffered flooding in the crawl space and wind damage during Hurricane Sandy, the Town initiated mold remediation and clean-up activities, along with replacing the sub-floor insulation.
- **Building 95D** - This building is commonly referred to as the “marina building.” The first floor of the Marina Building is used for storage. When the Town purchased the property, historic evidence of flooding was present, and the former owner acknowledged that at moon high tide and during major storms, the first-floor floods. Such flooding has been observed during moon high tides as in the photo, below. The furnace for this building is on the first floor and is elevated. The building continues to flood on a semi-regular basis, depending on tide and storm conditions. The second floor (Unit 95 D) had previously been used as a residential rental unit and is currently vacant. The exterior painted surfaces are peeling; as noted above. In 2012 it was determined that the building would need a new roof, shingles, windows and doors within the next five (5) to seven (7) years. The existing brick chimney appears to be in poor condition, (potentially unsafe) and unnecessary and should be removed or stabilized. The Marina Building suffered flooding damage during Hurricane Sandy. The Town did not initiate any clean-up activities at this location.



Middlebridge 95D February 14, 2014 8:00 am High Tide

- **The Main House 95E** – The building is a 2-story single family home that is currently occupied by the live-in caretaker. The house is a two (2) story wood frame structure built on a slab. The building is in fair condition in terms of the building envelope. The second-floor building interior is in good condition, with recent upgrades. The former owner noted that the building did flood (with about an inch of water) during 2011's Tropical Storm Irene. The first floor (garage and storage space) may need mold remediation work. The furnace was replaced in 2008. There is some evidence of water staining around the interior of the chimney. The deck (approximately 560 SF) appears to be attached to the house only by a ledger board, and should be replaced or securely anchored. There is a ramp system for accessibility that will need to be reinforced or replaced (or simply removed, if the caretaker does not need it). This building is serviced by a well and an older OWTS. In 2012 it was determined that the building would need a new roof, shingles, windows and doors within the next five (5) to seven (7) years. When the main house suffered flooding damage during Hurricane Sandy, the Town initiated mold remediation and clean-up activities, but has not committed to any restoration activities.
- **Cottage 95F** – Cottage 95F was demolished on August 6, 2013 per Town Council direction due to significant flood and wind damage sustained during Hurricane Sandy.

Summary of building inspections

In 2012 it was determined that each of the buildings should have building envelope improvements, including roof (with the exception of Cottage 95A, which now has a new roof) windows, doors, and shingle replacements within the next five (5) to seven (7) years. The electrical services and systems should be checked and inspected. Paint samples should be collected and tested for the presence of lead. Each building should be tested for asbestos material (flooring, wall panels, pipe insulation, etc.). Smoke detectors should be inspected and replaced\installed as necessary. Radon testing should be conducted. In 2012, it was determined that each unit would need to be painted within the next two years. Each unit is serviced by Suez (except for the main house which has a private well) and on the North Side of Middle bridge requires a new water service to each unit with shut off capability to isolate each building for emergencies.

On Saturday, October 7, 2017, Abcor Restoration Company conducted a survey of all existing buildings in support of the 2017 Middlebridge Management Plan update. The results of this survey and subsequent renovation indicative cost estimates were presented to the Narragansett Land Conservancy Trust on Thursday, October 12, 2017. These indicative cost estimates have been used to inform the recommendations of the updated plan.

On-Site Activities

Marine Recreation Concession Operation

The concessionaire for the marine recreation concession is currently Narrow River Kayak. A five-year contract was approved by the Town Council on November 20, 2017 with an expiration date of December 31, 2022.

URI Women's Rowing Team

URI has a lease with the Town of Narragansett which expires June 30, 2018. With this lease, the rowing team is able to practice on Narrow River. The team stores its boats in a large temporary structure to the east of the property, uses a temporary dock, and stores its equipment in buildings 95A and 95D. The temporary dock has seasonal restrictions and can only be used in the spring and fall, and not the summer due to CRMC permit restriction, described more fully below.

Narrow River Preservation Association and Narrow River Land Trust

Both of these environmental preservation organizations use the Middlebridge Conservation Land to conduct educational and recreational activities to encourage protection of the river and its watershed. These activities have been conducted over the past several years.

Middlebridge Management Plan Update

On August 7, 2017, the Town Council instructed the Narragansett Land Conservancy Trust (“Trust”) to update the 2016 draft Middlebridge Management Plan¹ (“Plan”) with a deadline of December 21, 2017. The Trust met with the Departments of Community Development and Parks and Recreation, Narrow River Preservation Association, and Narrow River Land Trust. The Trust also requested indicative restoration cost estimates of the existing buildings from Abcor Restoration, a contractor of the Town of Narragansett.

The following sections summarize the recommendations of the Trust to the Town Council, by segment of the property and are referenced on Map B.

Protected Land

This segment of Middlebridge Conservation Land should be conserved, improved and restored wherever possible.

Waterfront Open Space

1. The Director of Parks and Recreation should work with the caretaker to restrict mowing along the river to allow natural re-growth of wetland vegetation to provide as much buffer as practical.

Wetland Restoration

2. The Director of Parks and Recreation should work with the caretaker to keep the saltmarsh and freshwater wetland areas in the northeast corner of the site free of debris and yard waste. All mowing of area which appear to be freshwater wetlands should cease.

Public Open Space

3. The Director of Community Development should work with the Trust and other organizations, as appropriate, to develop a Conservation Management Plan for the public open spaces, waterfront and wetlands. This plan should be approved by the Trust in 2018. This Conservation Management Plan should include at least the following components: professional identification of wetlands, plans to remove or treat non-native or invasive plants, plans to plant native vegetation, plans to restore fresh water and saltwater wetlands, mowing plans and a monitoring plan to ensure that the maintenance and use of the space is consistent with sound conservation management principles.
4. The Trust should consider using the open space to demonstrate the proper control of invasive species and the reintroduction of native species.
5. The Trust and the Director of Parks & Recreation should consider engaging a native plant grower to lease a portion of the public open space for a native plant nursery for on-site planting and perhaps retail sales

¹ The 2016 draft Plan was accepted and placed on file by the Town Council on June 20, 2016

6. The Trust should work with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as it plans any interconnection of the Middlebridge Conservation Land with existing and proposed trail networks

Community Uses

See Building Recommendations, below

7. The Town of Narragansett should extend the existing arrangements with the URI Women's Rowing Team in accordance with normal practices of the Town.
8. URI and / or the Town should apply to CRMC for a modification to the permit to allow the URI Women's Rowing team to keep its dock in the water during the summer. If successful, the team will be asked to provide recreational rowing programs for the community.

Marine Recreation

None

Parking Areas

9. The Director of Parks and Recreation should provide designated parking areas for the marine concession in an area marked off by post and rope
10. The Director of Parks and Recreation should provide designated parking areas for the public

Caretaker Site

11. The Director of Parks and Recreation should clearly differentiate the area for the sole use of the caretaker from the public areas of the rest of the site. Fencing, vegetation or other permanent forms of demarcation should be installed on the Caretaker Site perimeter.

Building Recommendations

12. The following maintenance work should begin as soon as incremental budgetary funding is provided
 - a. Repaint the exterior of 95 Middlebridge ("yellow building")
 - b. Replace the roof of 95 D ("marina")
 - c. Repaint the exterior of 95 D
13. 95 Middlebridge ("yellow building") should be developed as a visitor center or meeting room
 - a. 2nd floor should be only used for storage

14. 95 D Middlebridge (“marina”)
 - a. 1st floor should continue to be site storage for the marina, marine recreation concession, and URI rowing team
 - b. 2nd floor should be used by the URI Women’s Rowing team for storage

15. 95 A, B, C (“cottages”) – These buildings could possibly be used as:
 - a. Concession buildings
 - b. Long term - use one cottage as a site comfort station

16. 94 and 94A (“kayak buildings”)
 - a. Continue to be used for the marine recreation concession

17. Issue a request for proposal (“RFP”) to obtain repair and restoration costs
 - a. The RFP must have a well-defined scope for each building
 - b. Bid costs should be provided by line item (‘a la carte’) and over time
 - c. Bids must comply with all applicable regulations, to including FEMA/NFIP and RISBC

18. Issue a request of interest (“ROI”) to determine if there is any interest in using 95, 95A, 95B, or 95C for concessions
 - a. The ROI must have well defined terms and conditions

19. Review the results of the RFP and ROI to plan and program any additional repair or restoration work to be performed
 - a. The Trust and town staff should jointly perform this review

Other Recommendations

20. Relocate the main roadway entrance from the west (river) side to the east side of the buildings. Remove the existing paving and establish the waterfront as passive recreation or waterfront buffer areas.

21. The Narrow River Preservation Association and Narrow River Land Trust are encouraged to continue and expand their environmental education activities held at the Middlebridge property. Their long-term efforts to improve the water quality of the Narrow River is essential for the long-term safety and viability of the Middlebridge Conservation Land.

22. The name “Middlebridge Conservation Land” should be used and signage should be installed on the site. The words “Owned by the people of Narragansett” should be included on any signage.

23. The Narragansett Land Conservancy Trust should update this Plan every five years, or sooner if conditions warrant.

Middlebridge Conservation Land Operations

This section addresses the day to day operations of the entire Middlebridge Conservation Land which is managed by the Narragansett Parks and Recreation Department.

Administrative

All administrative responsibilities; utility invoices processing and reconciliation, rental payments, marina slip billings, marina waiting list, material requisitions, bid documents, purchase orders, written communications, web site are all managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation at 170 Clarke Road.

Maintenance

Daily site maintenance, lawn care, snow removal, tree and shrub care, litter control, building, parking lot, marina, signs and dock and maintenance, are handled by the on-site caretaker Matt Eddy with support and assistance as required by the Parks and Recreation maintenance staff from 51 Mumford Road.

Security

24-hour security is provided by live-in caretaker Matt Eddy who presently has a five-year lease agreement with the Town of Narragansett through March 31, 2023. The lease is available for review upon request.

Insurance

The Town currently has no flood insurance on the property.

Policy

With input from the Narragansett Land Conservancy Trust the Narragansett Parks and Recreation Department Director works with the Town Manager while receiving direction and input through and from workshops/council meetings from the Town Council on policies for the Middlebridge Property.

Budget

The following table shows the annual revenues and costs associated with Middlebridge based on the FY 2018 budget. The table also provides information on the debt financing used to purchase the site.

| | Income Statement | FY2018 Budget | Comments |
|------|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Operating Revenues | | |
| | Mooring fees | 25,375 | 37 slips; 34 @ \$700; 3 @ \$525 |
| | Rental fees - Cottages | 15,000 | 2 @ \$625 /month each |
| | Rental fee - URI Rowing | 20,000 | Contract expires 6/2018 |
| | Other revenue | 1,000 | |
| | Concess RV - Narrow River Kayaks | 32,500 | New contract approved 11/6/2017 |
| | Total Operating Revenues | 93,875 | |
| | Operating Expenses | | |
| | Salaries & benefits | - | |
| | Prfsnl Srv | - | |
| | S Wst Disp | - | |
| | Rntls Leas | - | |
| | Gnrl Ins | 3,000 | |
| | Oprtng Spl | 1,000 | |
| | Gas/Lubric | 350 | |
| | Htng Fuel | - | |
| | Pch Wtr Sv | 1,000 | |
| | Tlphn Srvc | 1,000 | |
| | Electricity | 900 | |
| | Total Operating Expenses | 7,250 | |
| | Net Operating Income | 86,625 | |
| | Equip Repr | 1,000 | |
| | Bldg Repr | 12,000 | |
| | Grds Maint | 6,000 | |
| | Depr Exp | - | |
| | Total Non-Operating Exp | 19,000 | |
| | Net Income | 67,625 | |
| | Debt Financing | | |
| | Purchase Price | 1,400,000 | |
| | Total Project Costs | | |
| | General Obligation Bond | 974,000 | |
| | Land Conservancy Trust | 500,000 | |
| | Total | 1,474,000 | |
| | Total Costs | Principal | Interest |
| 2013 | 11,931.50 | - | 11,931.50 |
| 2014 | 151,282.75 | 129,000.00 | 22,282.75 |
| 2015 | 149,110.00 | 130,000.00 | 19,110.00 |
| 2016 | 150,863.75 | 135,000.00 | 15,863.75 |
| 2017 | 152,495.00 | 140,000.00 | 12,495.00 |
| 2018 | 154,003.75 | 145,000.00 | 9,003.75 |
| 2019 | 150,451.25 | 145,000.00 | 5,451.25 |
| 2020 | 151,837.50 | 150,000.00 | 1,837.50 |
| | 1,071,975.50 | 974,000.00 | 97,975.50 |

**TOWN OF
NARRAGANSETT**
Rhode Island
Middlebridge
Proposed Land Uses

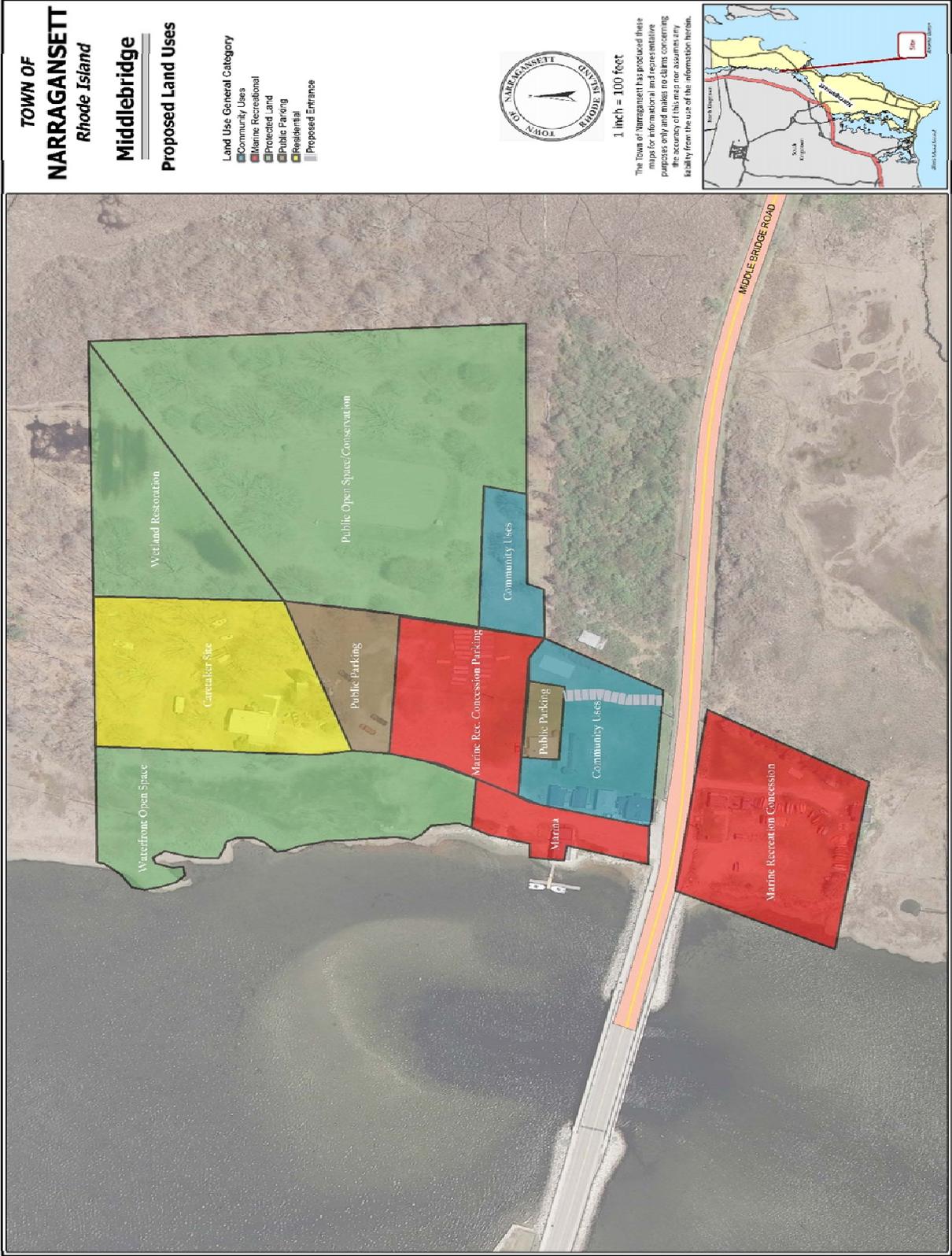


1 inch = 100 feet

The Town of Narragansett has provided these maps for informational and representative purposes only and makes no claims concerning the accuracy of the map nor assumes any liability from the use of the information herein.



Map A – Middlebridge Conservation Land Site Map showing buildings



Map B – Middlebridge Conservation Land Site Map showing land use categories