

Beach Cottage Row Historic District

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT PLAN



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Aerial View of Study Area (figure 1).



Example of Architecture (figure 2).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A row of late 19th century and early 20th century cottages currently exist on beach-front property in Nags Head, NC (figure 1). These cottages have extremely high real estate value as well as historical significance to the Town of Nags Head. This row of cottages is recognized as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places (figure 4). Many residents feel that this 'district' gives the town a sense of place and meaning. The cottages define the area's original architecture and spatial arrangement. The architecture is exclusively cottage style with wrap around porches, sash hung windows, and

unpainted shingle siding (figure 2). Many of the cottages have brick chimneys and wooden shutters. A common theme is green windows and a red front door.

To the west, on the opposite side of US 158 and to the south of the district, new development is beginning to appear. This development is both residential and commercial, most of which does not reflect or compliment the existing architectural styles. These new architectural styles have the potential to significantly weaken or destroy the historical and architectural significance of this area.

The purpose of this plan is to preserve the existing historical architecture and character in Beach Cottage Row. This plan assists my client, along with the Town of Nags Head in executing a local historic district as an overlay district for Beach Cottage Row. The plan includes recommendations and direction needed to prepare for and implement a local historic district. The plan values community participation and input and reflects the community's needs and vision for this historic area.

VISION STATEMENT

Beach Cottage Row will be a beautiful neighborhood which represents the architectural aspects of the historic Town of Nags Head. The district will be residential in character with a number of small businesses. Beach Cottage Row will be a distinct area which displays the community's character and history through preservation, maintenance of buildings and appropriate new development.

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N



L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

Introduction

In 2008, Bill Flowers (a property owner) contacted Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Masters of Urban and Regional Planning in search of assistance to protect the historic Beach Cottage Row in Nags Head, North Carolina. Mr. Flowers became a client for a Studio II whose purpose is to propose local protections that can be implemented by the town of Nags Head. Panel members are instructor Kim Chen and instructor Mort Gulak. This studio project is a graduation requirement of the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning Program at VCU.

History

An overview of the historical elements in the project area is important in that it identifies the correlation between history and the plan. An outline of the historical events which took place in the project area highlights the significance of history for the plan.

French and Spanish explorers came to the Outer Banks in search of gold between the years of 1524 and 1588. In 1584, Queen Elizabeth I

issued a charter to Sir Walter Raleigh to establish a colony in North Carolina. Several attempts were made to settle on Roanoke Island but were unsuccessful, the settlers mysteriously disappeared. The first English child born in America was born on Roanoke Island and became part of the history surrounding the lost colony. In 1607, settlers at Jamestown, Virginia tried in vain to find the lost colony.

The Lords Proprietors chartered the land in North America between the thirty-first to the thirty-sixth parallels from the Atlantic to the South Seas. During the years of 1673 and 1711, several Carolina colonies struggled into existence. Between the years of 1710 and 1718, this area was ruled by pirates, including Blackbeard. In 1729, the English Crown resumed direct rule of the colony from the Lords Proprietors.

After 1730, North Carolina was still under Royal control and prospering. Land inland and westward was also being settled.

Certain British policies became a nuisance and so colonies quickly joined in resistance. North Carolinians contributed to the defeat of British military power in the War for Independence and continued to progress as the federal system was formed in the new nation.

The early half of the 19th century was generally uneventful besides the numerous vessels lost at sea in what was to become known as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic."

During the Civil War, northern forces invaded the coast, capturing Fort Hatteras and Fort Clark on the Outer Banks. In 1862, The Burnside Expedition captured Roanoke Island, which was fundamental to the North Carolina's eastern river system. In 1862, the USS Monitor (a Union ironclad) sunk off the coast of North Carolina. Earlier, the Monitor had engaged the Confederate ship (Virginia) in combat. This was the first battle between ironclad ships.

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

In 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright made the first successful airplane flight from Kill Devil Hill near Kitty Hawk on the Outer Banks. Coastal North Carolina saw and felt the effects of World War I as the water of the Outer Banks filled with German submarines and yards at Wilmington, Morehead City and Elizabeth City were converted to building vessels for the war effort. In 1918, the Diamond Shoals Lightship was sunk by a German submarine. Shortly after, a British tanker was sunk off Rodanthe by another German submarine.

In 1937, the first production of the Lost Colony was performed at Fort Raleigh, and the Cape Hatteras National Seashore was established. Fort Raleigh, located on Roanoke Island, was designated as a National Historic Site, helping to make this area an important tourist attraction.

During World War II, German submarines patrolled the coastal North Carolina waters. The British ship (San Delfino) was sunk north

of Diamond Shoals. Bodies from this ship are interred at The British Cemetery on Ocracoke Island.

Some of the first cottages in this area were built over the water and some of them in water deep enough for sailing boats to unload luggage or parties on the porches. A few of these have been moved to the ocean side. The idea of Nag's Head as a resort originally was started from the custom of wealthy farmers taking their slaves there for their health after the crops were laid by in July. It was believed during this time that malaria was cured by the salt air and ocean baths. The slaves would sleep in hammocks under the trees. After slavery was abolished, the impoverished former owners of slaves would travel to Nags head for their own health.

The development of Nags Head has been heavily fueled by tourism. The industry of tourism replaced fishing and hunting and what was a family or cottage beach setting has now become an international destination. Much of the pristine

coastline has been preserved by the National Park System's ownership and administration of these resources.

Most of the cottages in this district represent a style of architecture that is related to the various historical events that took place in this area. The cottages were built during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The style of architecture that defines Beach Cottage row identifies a specific time in this area in which function in design was highly important. The architecture and design in Beach Cottage Row explain specific events throughout history.



Historic photo of a Beach Cottage Row Cottage.

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

Geographic Features

An analysis of the geographic features in and around the study area have a great influence on the character and identity of the area for this project.

Jockey’s Ridge State Park is located only slightly north west of the study area (figure 7). This natural feature is the tallest active sand dune system in the Eastern United States and one of the most significant landmarks on the Outer Banks. Shifting winds are constantly reshaping the dunes. There are three distinct ecological environments which encompass this park: The Dunes (figure 6), Maritime Thicket, and the Roanoke Sound Estuary (figure 5). The dunes consist of three peaks of shifting sand with no plants or animals due to the harsh environmental conditions. The amount of sand that the dunes cover makes up to 420 acres. The maritime thicket is characterized by live oaks, persimmons, red cedar, wax myrtle, bayberry, sweet gum, red oaks and pine trees. The growth of the trees is stunted by

the effects of the wind and salt causing the trees to look like shrubs. Animals such as foxes, deer and raccoon dwell here. The Roanoke Sound Estuary is a habitat for a variety of plant and animal life. This section of the park is characterized by cattails, saw grass, black needle rush and waterfowl. This is also the habitat for the Blue Crab which is an important commercial fisheries industry in North Carolina.

This geographic feature is important to the plan because of its proximity to the plan area; its aesthetic and recreational contribution to the community; its national recognition; and high numbers of visitation. Jockey’s Ridge is an important factor in predicting future growth in this area as well as increased visitors. Jockey’s Ridge has the potential be both a threat and strength to this plan. This natural feature compliments the area’s serenity and rural feel, however, being a national attraction it may also pose threats of overdevelopment in the plan area.

Location of Jockey’s Ridge relative to study area (figure 7).



Jockey’s Ridge (figures 5 & 6).



Commercial Activity
(figures 13, 14, & 15).

Visual Impression

Beach Cottage Row has a shoreline that is serene, beautiful and untainted.

Visual

This area consists of a row of historic cottages built along the ocean which are consistent in architectural style and arrangement (figure 10). The setbacks from both the road and the ocean vary slightly, but overall are consistent (figures 11 and 12). The cottages are built along the beach front with enough space in between each cottage to give a sense of privacy. The row of cottages is bounded by bypass US-12 to the west. The strip of land on the west side of US-12 includes both residential and

commercial activity. The commercial and residential buildings on this strip of land are diverse in architectural style (figure 13). The homes on this strip are mostly consistent with the historic cottage style with a few exceptions. The majorities of commercial buildings are small and are built close to the road (figure 14). There are a few shopping strips with medium sized parking lots (figure 15). To the west is highway US-158, this is bounded to the west by mostly residential activity. Just to the north of the study area, there

is a heavy concentration of commercial activity. These commercial buildings are large with very large parking lots between the buildings and street. Just north of bypass US-12, the homes are built much more densely with an architectural style that is much different from the cottage style in the project area. The overall visual impression of Nags Head is rural and residential. The beach front is mostly privately owned with few hotels. During the off-season, the area feels quiet and serene.



Beach Cottage (figure 10).



Beach Cottage (figure 11).



Beach Cottage (figure 12).

Surrounding Influences

Both Virginia Tide Water area and the Raleigh/Durham metropolitan area are within short driving distance of Nags Head. Both of these areas are among of the Nation’s fastest growing metropolises. As these areas continue to grow, Nags Head will likely become increasingly popular as a tourist destination, which is great for the local economy. However this needs to be considered for the potential effects on future development, population growth, and Beach Cottage Row.

Environmental Threats

The district is located along the shore, where there are flooding

concerns. The cottages are built to withstand high tide and flooding, with the appropriate maintenance. Precautions are necessary for future infill development as well as improvements to existing buildings.

Condition of Cottages

The U.S. Department of the Interior under the National Register of Historic Places Inventory for Beach Cottage Row indicates that the condition of the majority of the cottages is good. There are a few cottages which need maintenance. The nature of the cottage’s construction requires constant maintenance. Further, the overall continuity of the district’s character requires uniform maintenance for consistency.

Examples of Cottage Conditions (figures 8 & 9).



Economy

An analysis of the area's economy is a good indicator of the area's future population growth and specific project area's future development.

The Outer Banks, which consists of Currituck and Dare Counties has one of North Carolina's healthiest economies Currituck had approximately 23,100 population in 2005. Since July 2000, Currituck was the third fastest growing county in the state. Dare had a population of 33,900 in 2005 and is the state's 67th most populated county. Dare has grown by 2.5 percent since July 2000 which makes this the 16th fastest growing county in the state and exceeds the statewide average growth rate.

These estimates do not give an adequate picture of the number of persons that constitute the population since this is a vacation destination. A 2005 study for Dare County estimated that the effective peak seasonal daytime population of the county surpassed 220,000. Dare County supports services for a population that is seven times the size of its resident population. The Outer Banks is structured to

support tourist orientation and demand. Construction makes up 8.6 percent of the area's economy (versus 6.0 percent statewide), retail trade, makes up 18.6 percent of the economy versus 11.7 percent statewide, real estate makes up 11.4 percent of the economy compared to the state's 1.6 percent, and leisure and hospitality is at 22.3 percent (versus 9.4 percent in the state).

Growing gasoline prices has slowed down the economic growth of the Outer Banks economy somewhat but the economy continues to flourish. In the past year, employment in this area grew by 2.5 percent. This is slightly below the statewide average of 3.0 percent. Since November 2000, the Outer Banks has experienced an average annual increase in employment of 4.2 percent versus 1.3 percent in the state. The unemployment rate for the coastal area is below the statewide average.

This area is growing economically. The population is increasing, along with the numbers of visitors. The

project area should expect to see a high demand for development soon.

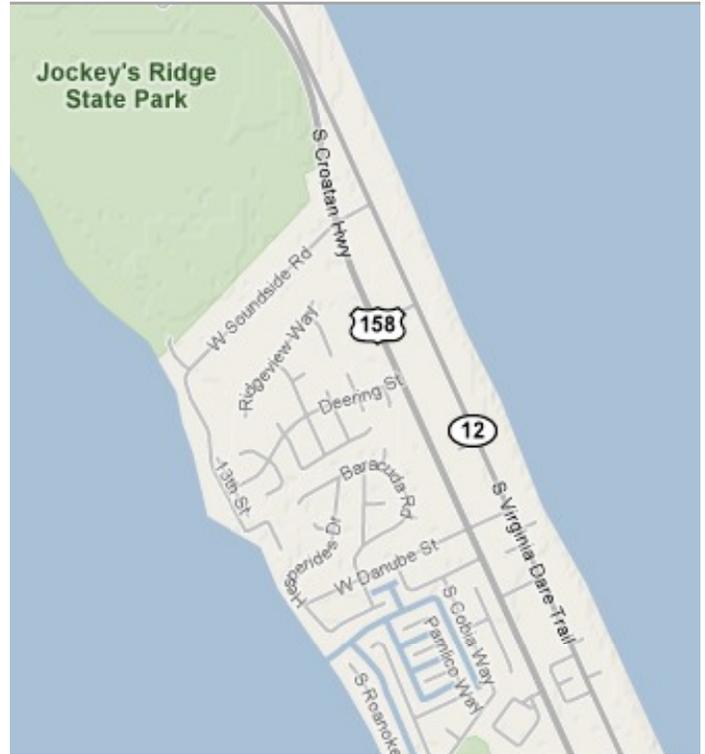
(Dare County Chamber of Commerce)

Existing Design Codes

The town of Nags Head has an existing residential design manual for new construction and remodeling. This manual contains controls on various design elements. Design elements include porches, dormers, coastal watch towers, building form, roofs, and siding materials. These policies and regulations are to protect and promote the unique and historical elements of residential architecture which is valued as an important part of the town image. The goal of this manual is to produce architecture with a coastal style without stifling creativity or modern design. A point system is used to encourage the desired design for certain categories of buildings. The most important design element of these styles is the wraparound porch and this has the greatest value in the point system.

LAND USE

The current land use map for the Town of Nags Head indicates that the study area is mostly intended for residential use (figure 17). Beach Cottage Row is almost completely residential use with a small portion of undeveloped land. The adjacent land to the west of US-12 is mostly undeveloped with areas of commercial and residential activity. This undeveloped land is key to this plan. The proximity to the beach and nearby commercial use makes this prime land for both residential and commercial activity. Further west, the land adjacent to US-158 is used almost exclusively for residential activity with some religious facility use. The area west of US-158 includes a large section of undeveloped land right on the highway. The direction of these areas and how it is developed is crucial in determining the outcome of this plan.



Indication of major transportation routes (figure 16).

ZONING

The current zoning map for the Town of Nags Head indicates exclusive low density residential use for Beach Cottage Row (figure 18). To the west of US-12, the land is zoned for general commercial activity. The land west of US-158 is zoned for medium residential activity and Jockey's Ridge Park is a special planned development district (figure 16).



Example of architecture (figure 17).



Example of architecture (figure 18).



Example of architecture (figure 19).

Architecture

The architecture of the cottages is shingle style which most accurately represents a style of architecture popular between the years of 1880 - 1900. The houses are two or three stories tall, and typified by the uniform covering of wood shingles (unpainted) from the roof to the foundation walls (figure 18). The sweep of the roof may continue to the first floor level providing cover for porches, or may be steeply

pitched and multi-planed. The eaves of the roof are close to the walls so as not to distract from the homogeneous and monochromatic shingle covering. Casement and sash windows are generally small, may have many lights, and often are grouped into twos or threes.

The consistent architectural style in this district is represented by unpainted shingle siding, large wrap around porches, sash hung windows, accents of red and green

(figure 22). The roofs are mostly gable and vary in pitch. A few of the cottages divert from this style of roof with a steep pyramidal roof. Many of the cottages have a second story wrap around balcony. The cottages are placed high on open foundations of timber pilings. They are typically constructed of vertical members with diagonal cross braces. The pilings place the houses high enough to be above low waves in case of storms, as well as making the houses more



Example of architecture (figure 20).



Example of architecture (figure 21).



Example of architecture (figure 22).

There is a common theme of repetitive braced underpinnings and a lack of a solid visual foundation in the district. The foundation height varies. Intersecting angles of wooden members make up the porches of the cottages as well. Usually roofed and supported on simple posts, the porches also feature enclosing balustrades of different kinds. A particular functional feature of Nags Head cottages is the ubiquitous porch bench. These are benches built into and extending out from the porch balustrade, with the base beginning flush with the balustrade and back sloping outward from the porch. In some cases, the screening extends out and around the bench. Nearly all the cottages have similar door and window treatments. Most have outer screen doors. The outside the screen door, is a sturdy

wooden batten door. The window shutters are also of wooden batten construction. Each is a single leaf, hinged at the top, and held open with a prop stick. When open, the shutter acts as a diagonal awning.

A number of the cottages feature freestanding garages (figure 25). These are usually simple one-story affairs, with gable or sometime hip roofs. The boathouses, which generally stand near the road, usually have ramps leading to them. Simple vertical boards, or the standard wood shingles are the primary surface materials. All the cottages rely on the simple expression of functional forms, materials, and plan for their character.

There are several variations of a common theme. One type, dating from the 1910-1940 era, is the large,

bungalow cottage, 1.5 stories high, with full-width dormers extending across the front and back slopes of the gable roof. This variation may be two, three, four, or five bays wide, and usually features porches on at least two and usually four sides. Another common and usually older style is a simple gable-roof, two-story cottage type, three to five bays wide. There are usually single-story porches on two to four sides. Another style that exists is two-stories with a hipped or pyramidal roof, with a highly restrained geometric quality. There are several one-story cottages integrated into this district as well. Some of these have steep gable rooflines with the multi-slope gables with lower, shallower slope on one or both sides engaging a porch.



Beach Cottage (figure 23).



Beach Cottage (figure 24).



Beach Cottage (figure 25).

New Architecture

The architectural style of new residential development that is taking place outside of the district is distinct and very different from the architectural style in this

district (figures 26, 27, and 28). This style of architecture is a modern beach house architecture. The homes are mostly three stories with front porches on the second and third stories. The building materials are wood and siding and

the colors are bright and diverse. Circular windows and dormer windows are a common theme (figure 28). Many of these homes include large paved driveways and fences and some have swimming pools.



Examples of new architecture (figures 26, 27, & 28).

State Enabling Legislation

In the State of North Carolina, a local historic designation is conferred by a local governing board following a recommendation by its preservation commission. Commissions only exist where they have been created by the locality, and only commissions created pursuant to state law can exercise design review over properties designated by the local governing board. A local government decides to provide for the preservation of the historical, cultural, or archaeological resources within its jurisdiction. It can pass an ordinance to create a historic preservation commission. The members of this preservation commission are selected by the local governing board from the general public. A majority of the members must demonstrate a special interest in history, architecture, archaeology, or related fields. In certain cases, the planning board may be able to act as the preservation/architecture commission.

A commission's powers are to recommend to the local governing board properties to be designated as historic districts and landmarks and to review applications from owners of designated landmarks and structures in historic districts that plan to make changes to their properties. The commission is also charged to conduct an inventory of the area's historic resources. Its other powers include conducting a public education program.

A local historic district must have a concentration of properties that are historically, visually, or culturally related either by plan or by physical development. A district may include diverse types of historic properties, but they must form a unified entity with its own identity. They can be connected by historical events or by their functions. The district is distinguished from surrounding areas by differences in various characteristics of its properties, such as type, age, style, or density, or by well-documented differences in patterns of historical development or association.

Historic districts may be treated either as overlay districts or as separate use districts. An overlay district does not replace or alter the existing zoning; it superimposes the historic district over the existing zoning. A separate use district is an entirely new zoning classification, with its own permitted uses, dimensional requirements, and other zoning regulations.

The process of designation begins when a commission identifies a property or an area as a potential landmark or district. An investigation is made of the historic, prehistoric, architectural, and cultural significance of the area. A report of this investigation, including a description of the boundaries, is submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office. The State Historic Preservation Office then reviews the report and makes recommendations about the report and the description of the proposed boundaries.

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

The local governing board may choose to refer to interested bodies for other recommendations. The commission then may recommend to the local governing board that it designate the proposed district. The local governing board may designate the district by following the usual procedure for adopting or amending a zoning ordinance. Public hearings will be required as part of this procedure. Before an area can be designated as a historic district, the local governing board must find that the area has special historic, prehistoric, architectural, or cultural significance and shows integrity of design, setting, materials, feeling, or association. It

is not necessary for every property in a historic district to be individually significant. A district may be considered significant even if none of its components possess individual distinction as long as the group as a whole has significance and integrity.

The State Historic Preservation Office plays an advisory role in offering technical assistance in selecting boundaries. It is up to the commission or the local planning board to recommend the boundaries of a proposed district to the local governing board. It is up to the local governing board to make the boundary decision. The boundaries should be selected to

contain a significant concentration of properties contributing to the historical and visual character of the district as a whole. In drawing boundaries, it is important to consider visual barriers, visual changes, historical boundaries, and clearly differentiated patterns. Owners of local landmarks or of properties in a local historic districts are required to obtain certificates of appropriateness from their preservation commission before making significant changes to a property, before beginning construction, or before demolishing or relocating a property. Commissions adopt design guidelines as the criteria to judge what changes are appropriate.



Nags Head Beach (figure 29).

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N



GOALS/OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1

The Cottages of Beach Cottage Row will be preserved and maintained as a national treasure.

OBJECTIVE: Demolition of the cottages of Beach Cottage Row will be regulated through regulations stated in overlay local historic district.

GOAL 2

Beach Cottage Row will have definition and recognition as a distinct historic area.

OBJECTIVE: A local historic district will give Beach Cottage Row the necessary tools to accomplish consistency and definition.

OBJECTIVE: Proper signage that is visible from the road will indicate entry and exits points in the Beach Cottage Row district.

GOAL 3

The unique character of Beach Cottage Row will be preserved.

OBJECTIVE: Future development and new construction will be controlled to compliment the existing architectural theme of the district.

OBJECTIVE: Beach Cottage Row will have an overlay local historic district that includes buildings and vacant land which are adjacent to the historic area.

GOAL 4

The existing architectural style of the cottages in Beach Cottage Row will be preserved.

OBJECTIVE: An overlay local historic district for Beach Cottage Row will include maintenance design codes which will require buildings to have consistency and integrity in design.

OBJECTIVE: An overlay local historic district for Beach Cottage Row will require an architectural review for all improvements made to a building.



planning elements

Visioning , Strategies and Recommendations

Element 1

Local Historic Overlay District which controls existing and future architecture.

Element 2

Defined boundaries of the Beach Cottage Row Historic District which include historic properties as well as the adjacent land.

Element 3

The Town of Nags Head will obtain undeveloped property when possible to ensure the

development will facilitate the direction of the Local Historic District Plan.

Element 4

Public Improvements.

Element 5

Maintenance recommendations will be included in the Local Historic District.

Element 6

The Local Historic District will include guidelines applying to

improvements.

Element 7

Design standards will be required for all buildings located in the Local Historic District.

Element 8

The Local Historic District will include guidelines applying to new construction and additions.

Element 9

The Local Historic District will regulate demolition.

Element 1

Local Historic Overlay District which controls existing and future architecture.

A local historic overlay district for Beach Cottage Row will compliment the existing zoning ordinance without changing the zoning controls or land use plan for the area. This district will facilitate the community in controlling the type of future development, redevelopment and demolition that takes place in the historic area. Design Controls will apply to both commercial and residential buildings.

Element 2

Defined boundaries of the Beach Cottage Row Historic District which include historic properties as well as the adjacent land.

The defined boundaries of the Local Historic District will include much of the undeveloped land in close proximity to the historic properties. The boundary will also include the properties which are visible from the historic area. This

boundary includes all the properties and land listed in the national district as well as the land directly adjacent to this strip of land to the west of US-158. This boundary will protect the existing architectural buildings and regulate any new development in the undeveloped land on both sides of US-12 (see figures). The design of the commercial activity to the west of US-12 will be controlled to compliment the consistency of the adjacent historic cottages.

Element 3

The Town of Nags Head will obtain undeveloped property when possible to ensure the development will facilitate the direction of the Local Historic District Plan.

The State of North Carolina assists localities with funding involving the acquisition of property which is important to community planning.

Element 4

Public Improvements.

SIGNS

Well designed signs which identify Beach Cottage row as a distinct historic area will facilitate the Local Historic District Plan in giving the area recognition and “physiological boundaries.”

Signs will be located at entry and exit points on the north and south boundaries of the district along bypass US-12 and US-158. Signs will be visible from the road and have design to compliment the neighborhood.

STREET LIGHTING

Street lighting should honor the architectural character of the district. Roadway lighting should be differentiated from walkway lighting.

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping design will enhance the streetscape and contribute a strong aesthetic along the street frontages. Appropriate landscaping will buffer the visual severity of surface parking lots from view.

Element 5

Maintenance recommendations will be included in the Local Historic District.

Property owners within the historic district will be expected to maintain properties to comply with the district’s character and identity.

Element 6

The Local Historic District will include guidelines applying to improvements.

All improvements made to existing buildings will be subject to an architectural review which uses the codes indicated in the Local Historic District document.

Element 7

Design standards will be required for all buildings located in the Local Historic District.

For this planning element, it is important to include the fundamental design elements which give this district its unique

character. Design standards will require property owners with property within the district to comply with design codes for existing buildings.

Element 8

The Local Historic District will include guidelines applying to new construction and additions.

For this element of the plan, it is important to determine the appropriate infill for this Local Historic District. New construction should compliment the existing historic buildings rather than be duplicates of them. Fundamental aspects of appropriate infill and new construction include scale, height, width, proportion and massing, materials, colors, doors and windows.

Element 9

The Local Historic District will regulate demolition.

The demolition of any structure in the Local Historic District will be subject to review by the Local

Historic District Commission. The Commission will not issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of any building within the district unless the applicant can show that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition.

The commission will only approve requests for demolition when:

- 1) There are not alternatives to the proposed demolition. Property owner should first examine the execution of rehabilitation or re-sale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation.
- 2) A building or structure is deemed not to be a part of the historic character of the Local Historic District.
- 3) The Commission deems that a building or structure has deteriorated beyond the point of feasible rehabilitation.

The commission has the authority to consider three factors in arriving at decisions involving proposed demolitions:

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

1) The historic and architectural value of a building. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation define a building to be historic if it is at least 50 years old. However, this does not mean that any building or structure less than 50 years old does not have historic or architectural value. Buildings or structures built more recently than 50 years ago can be significant architecturally if associated with

a significant building style or exhibit relation to a historical event or contribute to the historic character of the district.. The commission has the discretion to decide on a case-by-case basis, if a building is an appropriate candidate for demolition.

2) The effect that demolition will have on the surrounding neighborhood. Individual buildings are significant contributing elements to the immediate area in which they

are located. Removal of that building may have a positive or negative effect on the neighborhood.

3) The type and quality of the project that will replace the demolished building. When demolition requests are made in conjunction with designs for a replacement structure, the overall quality of the new design is an appropriate factor in determining the merits of demolition.



L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

designguidelines

Maintenance and Repair Recommendations.

PAINT MAINTENANCE

Paint protects exterior materials (i.e. wood and metal) from deterioration. Routine paint maintenance is essential. Specific to Beach Cottage Row, paint should only be used on doors, door frames and window frames. Shingle siding on cottages should not be painted.

Recommendations

Scrape away loose, peeling paint gently to the next sound layer. Hand scraping and sanding are the preferred techniques for wood.

Sandblasting or high-pressure washing to remove paint from wood should be avoided.

Carefully test chemical cleaning to insure that the level of mixed ingredients will not cause surface damage.

Do not use an open flame to remove paint.

Remove dirt, grease and grime using a soft bristle brush before painting.

WOOD MAINTENANCE

Cracked or warped boards may result from long-term exposure to the extremes of weather or from pressure stresses. Removal and replacement with sound boards is often the only solution.

Recommendations

Routine inspection is necessary to inspect signs of water saturation, rot or pest infestation of wood.

Repair of leaking roofs, gutters and downspouts will mitigate problems associated with excessive moisture.

Removal of vegetation that grows too close to wood will improve the breathability of the wood.

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Property owners are advised to not replace existing windows with smaller ones in an attempt to increase energy efficiency and reduce maintenance. The use of storm windows is strongly encouraged.

PORCH MAINTENANCE

Recommendations

Wood of porches and entrances should be inspected for signs of rust, peeling paint, wood deterioration, open joints around around frames, old putty and inadequate caulking.

Painted surfaces should be kept painted, and caulk and glazing putty should be intact and in good condition.

Doors should be weather-stripped. Joints should be sealed to prevent water infiltration.

designguidelines

designguidelines

Design Guidelines for Improvements

SUBSTITUTE MATERIALS

The use of synthetic materials that will alter the appearance, proportion and details of a structure is strongly discouraged. Substitute materials should not be used unless there is an unavailability of historic materials, there is an unavailability of skilled craftsmen, or the original materials are of poor quality.

PAINT

Color palette will be reviewed by staff on a case-by-case basis. Paint colors are determined by the architectural style of the structure.

It is important that color selections blend with and complement the overall color schemes on the street.

Fluorescent and obtrusive colors should not be used because these

were not the traditional colors used on the historic structures. Numbers and variety of colors should be limited.

Individual architectural detailing should not be emphasized with an additional color.

Doors and shutters can be painted a different color than the walls and trim.

Enamel paint should be used only on doors and trim.

Cottage siding should be left unpainted. Painting previously unpainted materials is historically inaccurate and is not permitted.

Varnishing building surfaces that have not historically been varnished is not appropriate.

ROOFS

Substitute materials may be used if using the same kind of material is neither technically or economically

feasible. Substitute materials should mimic the original style and form as much as possible. New elements such as vents or skylights should not be added to the front facade of a roof.

Original chimneys should be retained, as their removal could alter the overall character of the structure.

WINDOWS

Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair.

The number, location, or size of windows should not be changed by cutting new openings or blocking out windows.

PORCH AND ENTRANCE

Entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character should not be removed.

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The entire porch should only be replaced if it is too deteriorated to repair or is completely missing; replacements should match the original as much as possible.

Existing entrances or porches should not be removed.

The addition of a new entrance to a primary dwelling elevation is strongly discouraged.

A primary entrance should not be altered to give an appearance that was not originally intended.

FENCES AND WALLS

New, street-front fences and walls are not recommended, except in cases where new infill construction occurs adjacent to a historic property with a fence or wall.

Rear-yard privacy fences should mimic traditional fence designs.

[Fundamental Design Elements for Existing Buildings](#)

PAINT

A paint palette will be available to guide property owners in color selection.

Paint colors are determined by the architectural style of the structure.

WINDOWS

With historic buildings, original windows should be retained.

Boarded windows should be uncovered.

Wood shutters should be functional, and not nailed to the wall.

Metal and vinyl shutters should not be used.

PORCHES

Elements that are damaged or loose should be repaired to match the detail of the existing original fabric.

Hardware and locks that are original should be reused.

Whenever possible, repair and replacement of a porch is preferable to complete replacement.

FENCES

Original fences should be retained and maintained if possible.

If not original to a site, new street front fences and walls are not recommended.

MATERIALS

Maintain and preserve historic building materials and details that contribute to the character of the building and the significance of the district as a whole.

Repair historic building materials and details matching the original in regard to size, shape, design, scale, color, texture, and material.

It is inappropriate to paint historically unpainted elements.

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ROOFS

Maintain and preserve historic roof forms and materials.

Repair or replace significant roof features.

DOORS

Preserve and maintain historic doors as well as historic materials, details and features of the doors that contribute to the character of the historic building and district.

HISTORIC STOREFRONTS

Maintain and preserve historic storefronts and their significant features including entrances, display windows, upper-story windows and signs.

It is inappropriate to replace historic building materials that are in sound condition with new or substitute materials.

It is inappropriate to replace clear

window glass with textured, tinted, stained, colored, or opaque glass.

Fundamental Design Elements for New Construction.

SCALE

New construction should maintain the existing human scale of the Local Historic District for both residential use and commercial use.

New additions and infill structures should incorporate human-scale elements such as porches into their design.

HEIGHT, WIDTH, PROPORTION AND MASSING

New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding houses and commercial structures.

New structures should have the same number of stories as the majority of structures on the block.

New construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of commercial and residential properties in the Local Historic District.

New structures should avoid the use of staggered setbacks, towers or elaborate balconies.

MATERIALS, COLORS AND DETAILS

New construction should not cover or destroy original architectural elements.

Materials in new construction should be compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.

Paint colors for new additions should compliment those of the primary structure. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors found in the neighborhood.

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DESIGN

Design new construction to be contemporary in design; it is not appropriate to create a false sense of history through replication.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original structure.

SITING

Additions should be subordinate in size to the main structure and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating them at the rear of a structure is preferred.

New infill construction should respect the prevailing setback patterns of the surrounding block faces. The minimal setbacks evident in most districts reinforce the traditional street wall.

New structures should face the

most prominent street bordering the site.

New infill structures should be spaced within 20% of the average distance between existing houses on the block

FORM

New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the neighborhood. The appropriate building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that facilitate an identity to a structure.

New construction should be contemporary in style with surrounding historic structures.

NEW OUTBUILDINGS

Outbuildings should be compatible with the design of major buildings on the site in the degree of roof slope and materials used.

Outbuildings should respect the

siting, massing, roof profiles, materials and colors of existing outbuildings in the neighborhood.

Outbuildings should be smaller than the main residence.

Outbuildings should be easy to remove without being destructive to historic structures.

General Guidelines for Additions

Design and construct new additions so that there is a minimum loss of historic materials and other character defining features of the historic building.

Design and construct new additions to have minimal impact on site features.

Design and construct new additions in a smaller scale than the historic building so that it does not detract from the significant scale.

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NEXT STEPS

Implementation Strategies

The implementation of a Local Historic District Plan relies most heavily on the compliance and cooperation of three fundamental entities - the community, the local government and the state. The cohesion of these three entities is crucial in implementing a Local Historic District. The following are recommended steps in meeting this requirement.

Step 1

Community participation.

Step 2

Establishment of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Step 3

Adopt Rules of Procedure.

Step 4

Design Guidelines.

Step 5

Procedure for designation of historic district.

Step 6

Acquisition and Management of Historic Properties.

Step 1

Community participation.

Local Historic Districts must reflect the needs, desires, and values of the local community therefore it is mandatory that an overwhelming majority of the community has involvement in the plan.

Community involvement will take place in five distinct phases (visioning and recognition of need, direction setting, plan formulation, implementation, and monitoring, reviewing and revising). These phases can take place in any number of meetings.

Community Workshops

Community workshops which are facilitated by the town government will provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about planning tools and strategies and form a cohesive vision and direction.

Community workshops are to be lead by a person who is educated in planning elements, visioning and strategies. During these meetings, all community residents will be given the opportunity to contribute. Community

workshops can be held before, after and/or during the planning process.

Visioning/Recognition of Need

A visioning session will take place in order for the town government and planning facilitator to gain an understanding of the community’s needs. At this point, a presentation with existing conditions and ideas will be given to the community by the planning facilitator. Following the presentation, the community will be encouraged to contribute. Ideas and input will be collected and recorded throughout this session.

Direction Setting

This phase of the planning process will produce a clear direction with goals and objectives. Public citizens will have an input and be a part of in this process.

Plan Formulation

During this phase, ideas from community members, planning technicians and local government

members will be solidified into a clear plan of action

Plan Implementation

Community members will be informed on implementation strategies and provided with information regarding implementation.

Monitoring, Reviewing, and Revising

Community workshops will be provided to the public after plan implementation. This will give the town the chance to gather input and feedback on the success of the plan and will give the community the opportunity to express itself.

Step 2

Establishment of the Historic Preservation Commission.

(The following section is based on the public information distributed by Preservation North Carolina, State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Archives and History, and North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources).

The local governing board may establish a historic preservation commission by adopting an ordinance.

This ordinance must be consistent with state law, which specifies the composition, powers, and responsibilities of a historic preservation commission. In establishing a historic preservation commission, a local governing board may choose to designate a local planning board as its historic preservation commission.

Ordinance Establishing the Commission

COMPONENTS OF ORDINANCE

- ▶ The commission’s purpose and composition.
- ▶ Requirements for commission meetings, attendance, and administration.
- ▶ The commission’s powers and responsibilities.
- ▶ The criteria and procedures for designating historic districts.
- ▶ The procedures for reviewing applications for certificates of

appropriateness.

- ▶ The exterior features that the commission must consider in reviews.
- ▶ The procedures for appeals from the commission’s actions.
- ▶ The ways in which conflict with other laws is to be resolved.

The ordinance should be specific and detailed. To ensure that the ordinance conforms with state law, it should use the language of the state enabling legislation wherever possible.

The ordinance is drafted by the city attorney, in close consultation with the local government’s elected officials and staff.

THE COMMISSION’S PURPOSE

Historic preservation commissions are established so that local governing boards can preserve the district and promote the use and conservation of the district for education of the residents of the community.

THE COMMISSION’S COMPOSITION

- ▶ A commission must have at least three members.
- ▶ A commission member’s term can be no more than four years.
- ▶ The majority of commission members must have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in history, architecture, archaeology, or related fields.
- ▶ All commission members must reside within the territorial jurisdiction of the local governing board.

Step 3

Adopt Rules of Procedure.

Once a historic preservation commission is established, it must adopt rules of procedure. These rules describe how the commission operates. These rules must comply with state statutes and the local ordinance establishing the commission.

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

A historic preservation commission functions as both an advisory body to the local governing board and as a quasi-judicial body that makes decisions about proposed changes to properties in the historic district.

The commission is acting in an advisory way when it recommends designation of landmarks or districts, or revocation of designation, by the local governing board. The commission acts as a quasi-judicial body when it reviews and decides on applications for certificates of appropriateness from property owners who wish to make changes to properties in the historic district.

The commission’s rules of procedure need to conform with the state historic preservation enabling legislation and the local ordinance establishing the commission.

COMPONENTS OF RULES

- ▶ Selection of officers and duties of members and officers.
- ▶ Scheduling and notice of

- ▶ meetings and hearings.
- ▶ Conduct of business at meetings.
- ▶ Recommendation of designation of district.
- ▶ Recommendation that the designation be revoked.
- ▶ Application for a certificate of appropriateness and review of applications.
- ▶ Appeals from commission decisions.
- ▶ Record keeping and reporting.
- ▶ Amendment of the rules of procedure.

Step 4

Design Guidelines.

The commission cannot regulate or review exterior changes to the exterior appearance of properties in the historic district until design guidelines have been adopted. When reviewing applications for certificates of appropriateness, the commission must use its established design guidelines to determine whether proposed changes in appearance in keeping

with the special character of the district. Guidelines tell property owners in advance how proposed changes to their properties will be judged. Use of guidelines helps ensure that all property owners are treated equally. Guidelines systematize the decision-making process, helping the commission function.

Design guidelines cover each item, and type of change listed in the ordinance establishing the commission.

FEATURES COVERED BY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- ▶ architectural style
- ▶ general design
- ▶ general arrangement of the exterior of a building or other structure
- ▶ kind and texture of building material
- ▶ size and scale of the building
- ▶ type and style of all windows, doors, and fixtures.
- ▶ color

L O C A L H I S T O R I C D I S T R I C T P L A N

In the development of design guidelines, the commission should draw on the expertise of its own members and its staff as much as possible.

FEATURES OF NEW CONSTRUCTION

spacing, positioning, scale, and orientation

- ▶ distance between adjacent buildings
- ▶ ratio between building widths and spaces between buildings
- ▶ setback: the distance from the lot line to the building
- ▶ lot coverage: the percentage of lot area covered by primary structures
- ▶ building height
- ▶ size of units of construction and architectural details in relation to the size of people
- ▶ relationship of the building mass to adjoining open space and

- ▶ nearby structures
 - ▶ orientation of the building and facade to the street
- shape and proportions*

- ▶ shape of the facade
- ▶ relationship between the height and width of the facade
- ▶ directional character of the facade: vertical, horizontal, or non-direction
- ▶ distribution and proportion of window and door elements
- ▶ relationship of strong to weak elements in the facade
- ▶ use of protruding elements such as porches, bays, dormers, and balconies
- ▶ proportion and spacing of entrance or porch projections
- ▶ ratio between facade area and the width of horizontal projections
- ▶ roof form: shape, direction, pitch, and

arrangement
materials, colors, and architectural features

- ▶ dominant materials, textures, and colors
- ▶ the manner in which materials are used and the way in which architectural elements are combined
- ▶ appurtenant fixtures

Step 5

Procedure for designation of historic district.

Historic district designation is a type of zoning that applies to a group of properties. It provides controls on the appearance of existing buildings and new construction within the district. The historic preservation commission recommends designation, and the local governing board designates a historic district by adopting or amending a zoning ordinance.

To be considered for designation as a historic district, an area must have a concentration of properties that are historically, visually, or culturally related either by plan or by physical development.

Overlay Districts

When historic districts are treated as overlay districts, the boundaries of existing zoning districts are not changed. The historic district is laid over the underlying use and dimension zones. The historic district designation does not affect the uses to which the land within the district may be put; the pre-existing zoning determines what use can be made of each property in the district.

STEPS FOR DESIGNATION OF HISTORIC DISTRICT

- ▶ An investigation is made of the historical, architectural, and cultural significance of the area proposed for designation.

- ▶ A report of this investigation, including a description of the proposed district's boundaries, is submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office.
- ▶ The State Historic Preservation Office has the opportunity to review the report and to make recommendations.
- ▶ The local governing board may refer the report and boundaries description to other bodies for recommendations.
- ▶ The commission may recommend to the local governing board that it designate the proposed district.
- ▶ The local governing board may designate the district by following the procedure for adopting or amending a zoning ordinance. Public hearings will be a part of this procedure.

Step 6

Acquisition and Management of Historic Properties.

A historic preservation commission may acquire, dispose of, restore, preserve, manage, and operate property in historic districts.

In Appreciation

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Contents

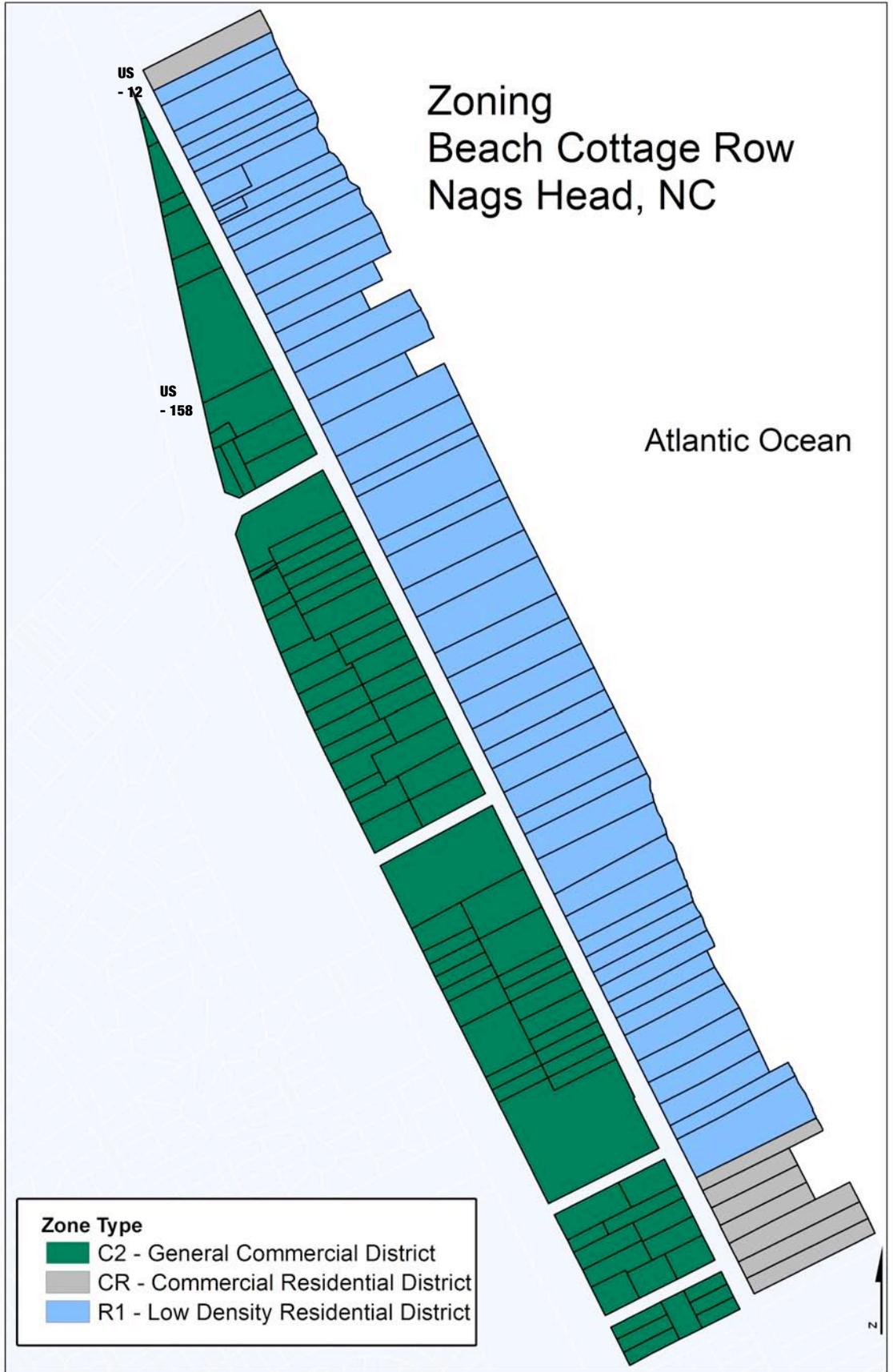
Executive Summary: 1
Vision Statement: 1
Map (Location): 2
Map (National District Boundaries): 2
Introduction: 3
History: 3
Geographic Features: 5
Visual Impression: 6
Surrounding Influences: 7
Environmental Threats: 7
Condition of Cottages: 7
Economy: 8
Existing Design Codes: 8
Land Use: 9

Contents

Zoning: 9
Existing Land Use Map: 10
Existing Zoning Map: 11
Architecture: 12
New Architecture: 14
State Enabling Legislation: 15
Goals and Objectives: 17
Planning Elements: 18
Map (New Historic Overlay District): 20
Design Guidelines: 23
Implementation Strategies: 28
Acknowledgments: 34
Works: 35

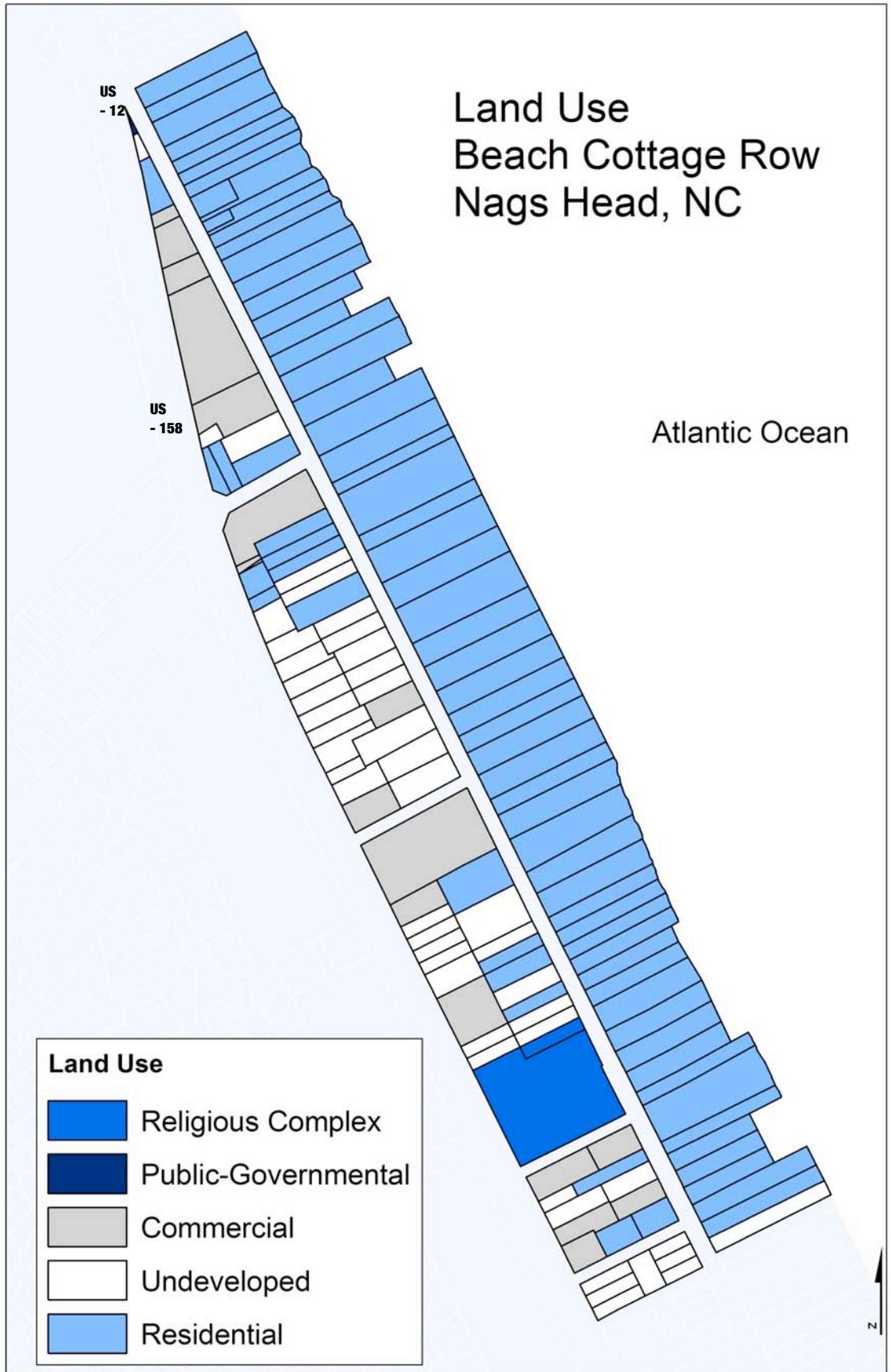


Current Zoning Map
(Figure 18)



Information from Town of
Nags Head, North Carolina
Master Plan.

Current Land Use Map
(Figure 17)



Information from Town of
Nags Head, North Carolina
Master Plan.

Local Historic District Boundaries
(Figure 30)

Beach Cottage Row
Historic District
Nags Head, NC

