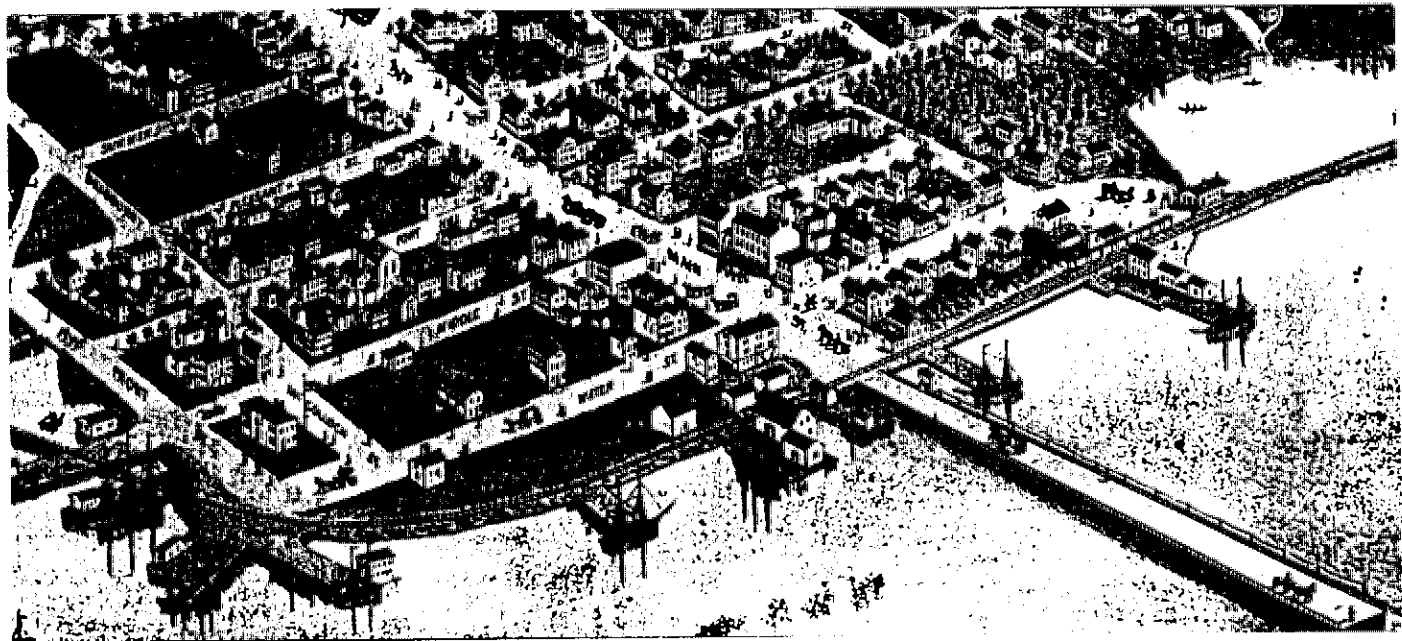
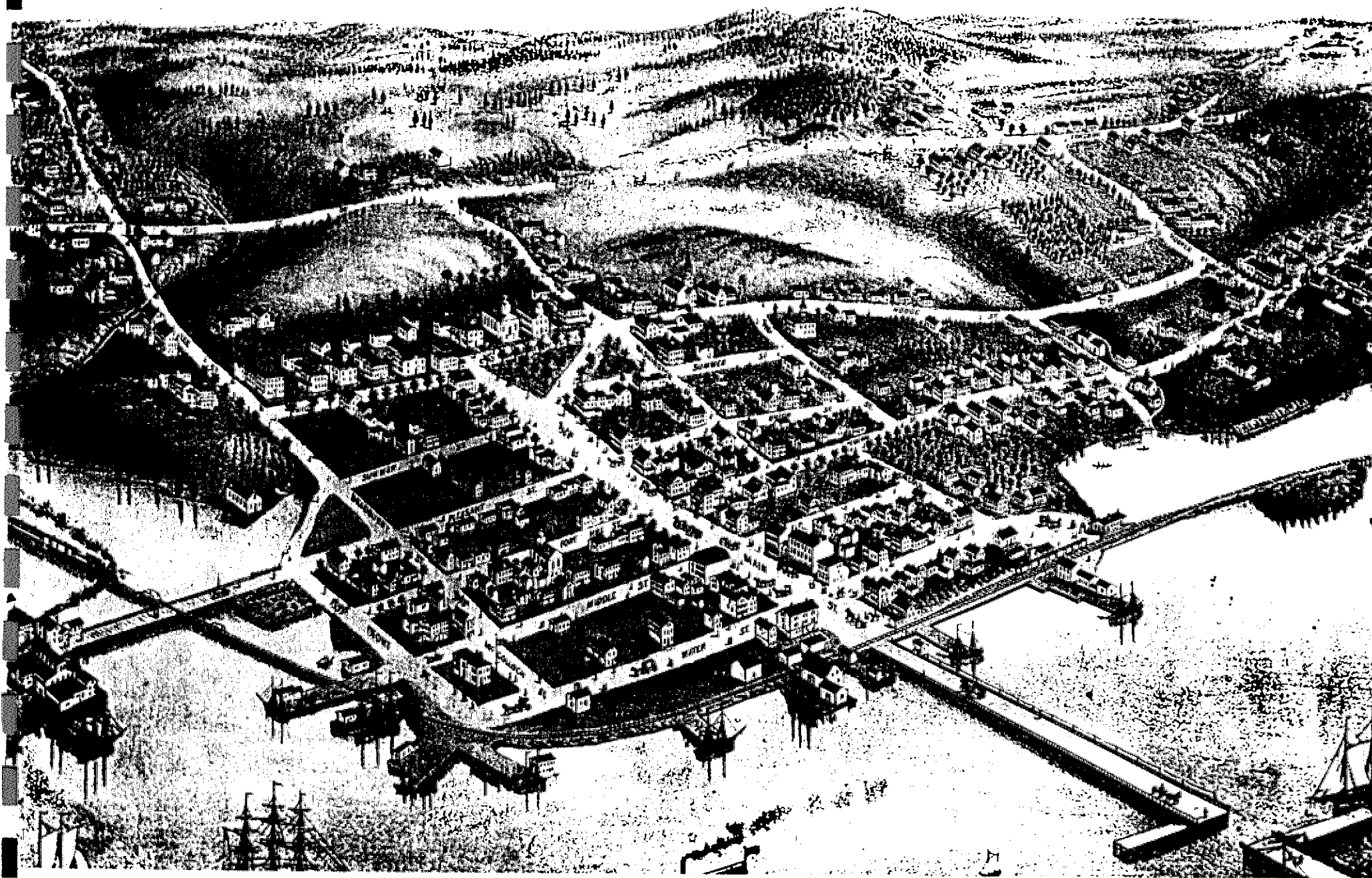


RIVERFRONT STUDY



WISCASSET, MAINE



WISCASSET, MAINE - LATE 1800's

Report of the
Wiscasset Waterfront Committee
to the Board of Selectmen
and the Citizens of Wiscasset, Maine

Prepared by

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October, 1990
Revised September, 1991
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as ammended"

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The Butterstamp Workshop
The Marston Housr Bed & Breakfast
Richard Thomas
Dan Thomas
Treats
Tree House Tavern
Two at Wiscasset Antiques
Grace Valentine
Village Hardware
Nate Whitaker
Wiscasset Bay Gallery
Wiscasset Hardware Co., Inc.
Wiscasset Home Laundermat
Wiscasset Newspaper
Ruth Wright

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Exhibits	ix
Forward	xi
PURPOSE	3
THE PROCESS	5
THE WORK PLAN	5
PLANNING OBJECTIVES SURVEY	6
GROUP WORKSHOPS	8
ORGANIZATION	11
EVOLUTION OF THE WATERFRONT	13
SETTING AND KEY ISSUES	21
SETTING	21
KEY ISSUES	22
PUBLIC ACCESS	23
Pedestrian	23
Vehicular	23
Parking	23
Railroad	24
HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER	24
Natural Features	24
Built Features	24
Visual Quality	25
HABITAT	25
MARINE RESOURCES	25
DIRECTION	25
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS	27
INTRODUCTION	27
INVENTORY	27
Public access	27

<i>Pedestrian</i>	27
<i>Vehicular</i>	29
<i>Parking</i>	31
<i>Railroad</i>	31
<i>Visual Access</i>	32
HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER	33
Historic Character	33
Visual Character	35
<i>Introduction</i>	35
<i>Natural Features</i>	35
<i>Views</i>	35
<i>Built Features</i>	36
Visual Character Summary	40
Habitat	43
<i>Upland</i>	43
<i>Marine</i>	48
ANALYSIS	51
Public Access	51
<i>Pedestrian</i>	52
<i>Vehicular</i>	55
<i>Parking</i>	56
<i>Railroad</i>	57
<i>Visual Access</i>	59
HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER	59
Historic Character	59
Visual Character	60
HABITAT	62
Upland	62
Marine	64
RIVERFRONT CONCEPT	65
INTRODUCTION	65
PUBLIC ACCESS	65

Pedestrian	65
Vehicular	68
Parking	68
Railroad	68
Visual Access	69
HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER	69
Historic Character	69
Visual Character	69
WILDLIFE HABITAT	70
Upland	70
Marine	70

DESIGN/PLANNING PRINCIPLES	71
INTRODUCTION	71
CLARK'S CREEK	71
Location and Character	71
Public Access	71
Historic and Visual Character	73
Habitat	74
VILLAGE WATERFRONT	76
Location and Character	76
Public Access	76
Historic and Visual Character	77
Habitat	79
VILLAGE HARBOR	80
Location and Character	80
Public Access	80
Historic and Visual Character	81
Habitat	82
BACK RIVER	84
Location and Character	84
Public Access	84
Historic and Visual Character	85
Habitat	88

VILLAGE WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN	91
INTRODUCTION	91
CONCEPT "A"	91
CONCEPT "B"	96
CONCEPT "C"	102
FINAL MASTER PLAN	103

LITERATURE CITED	119
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APPENDIX A	
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	121

APPENDIX B	
COASTAL WILDLIFE CONCENTRATIONS	125

APPENDIX C	
SPECIES LIST	126

APPENDIX A	
MEETING SURVEY	127

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 - Study Area	xi
Exhibit 2 - Character Areas	6
Exhibit 3 - Survey Results	7
Exhibit 4 - Historic Villages	13
Exhibit 5 - Early Settlement	14
Exhibit 6 - Shipping Center	15
Exhibit 7 - Waterfront Warehouses	16
Exhibit 8 - Knox and Lincoln Rail Line	17
Exhibit 9 - Wiscasset & Quebec Rail Line	18
Exhibit 10 - Wiscasset Waterfront	19
Exhibit 11 - Regional Setting	21
Exhibit 12 - Village Center	22
Exhibit 13 - Character Areas	27
Exhibit 14 - Pedestrian Access	28
Exhibit 15 - Vehicular Access	30
Exhibit 16 - Narrow Gauge Rail	32
Exhibit 17 - Village Skyline	33
Exhibit 18 - Natural Features	34
Exhibit 19 - Views	36
Exhibit 20 - Built Features	38 & 39
Exhibit 21 - <i>Hesper</i> and <i>Luther Little</i> Schooners	40
Exhibit 22 - Habitat	44 & 45
Exhibit 23 - Barriers to Pedestrian Access	52
Exhibit 24 - Barriers to Vehicular Access	55
Exhibit 25 - Riverfront Concept	66 & 67
Exhibit 26 - Old Ferry Landing	86 & 87
Concept "A"	94 & 95
Concept "B"	100 & 101
Concept "C"	104
Final Master Plan	111 & 112
Town Landing Perspective	114 & 115
Creamery Site Perspective	116 & 117

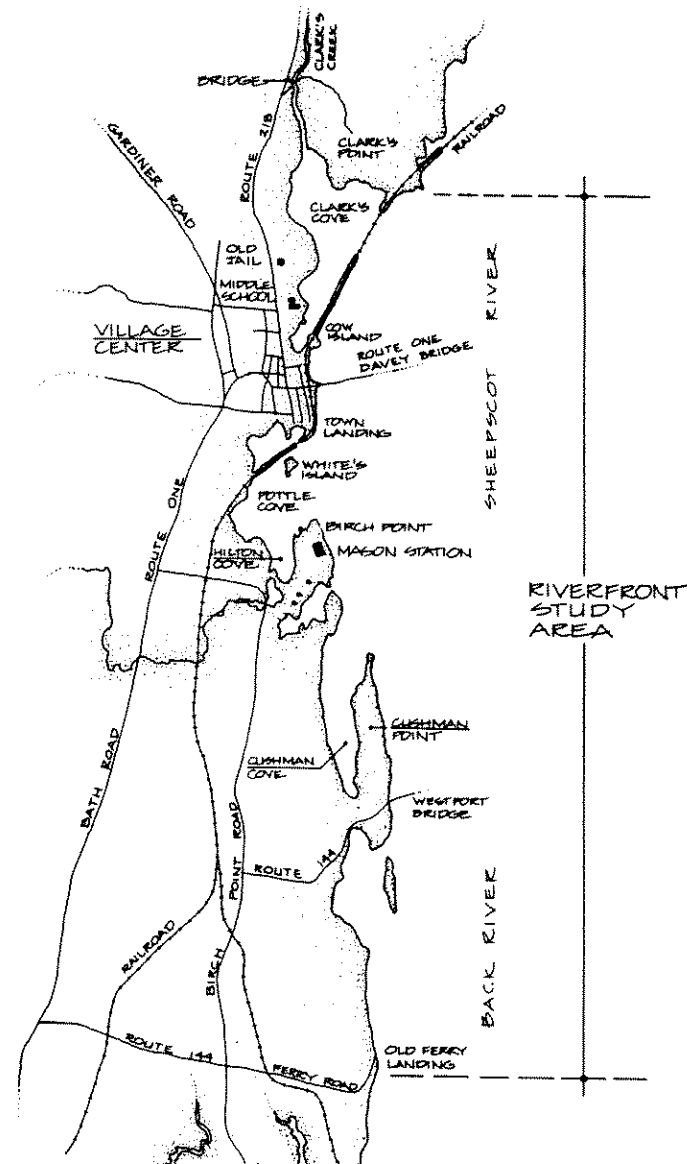
FORWARD

With the passage of the Comprehensive Plan in March of 1989, the residents of Wiscasset clearly stated the qualities of their town that they value and wish to preserve, as the town continues to develop. Among those qualities are several relating to the riverfront:

- ▶ Wiscasset's rich history and appearance of a small coastal town in a rural setting;
- ▶ The rural landscape that surrounds the historic village and it's associated wildlife habitat, floodplains, scenic views, recreational areas and open space;
- ▶ Open access to the Sheepscot River; and
- ▶ The commercial and recreational character of the village waterfront.

The Comprehensive Plan established a number of long-term objectives and policies intended to direct future growth in a balanced and responsible manner that would protect these qualities.

Using the Comprehensive Plan as guidance, the Selectmen initiated a process that would result in a master plan recommending ways to preserve these qualities and meet future needs for public access, parking and open space along the riverfront. The Board appointed a Waterfront Committee which convened in April, 1989 and defined the study area to include the shoreline properties from Clark's Creek, south to the Old Ferry Landing (Exhibit 1).



*Exhibit 1
Study Area*

In December, 1989 the Selectmen, Town Engineer and Town Planner asked consultant Holly Dominie to organize a design team for helping the Committee refine its ideas into a workable plan. She and the town's planner and engineer selected the Stroudwater Design Group and Woodlot Alternatives to assist her.

Town staff and officials and a number of residents interested in the future of Wiscasset's riverfront have all worked together in this process to develop a common "vision" for guiding the future of the riverfront. All have shared the same sense of privilege associated with the planning of an area containing such a significant share of the historical, visual and environmental qualities which residents wish to protect and preserve. All have recognised the inherent challenge in protecting these qualities in the face of competing demands and changing land use.

Throughout this study a special effort has been made to learn directly from people their opinions about what the waterfront is now and could be in the future. This has been accomplished by conducting informal workshops with local officials, waterfront landowners, and business owners within the Village Center. A high priority has been placed on listening to their concerns, trying to understand the many "visions" of what the waterfront could be from those who have influenced its past and present and will be involved with the evolution of its future. There were clearly some conflicting values that had to be addressed. As a result of the public workshops, a collective "vision" has been formulated that is expressed in the recommendations of this study.

Town Staff and The Design Team met several times to review the inventory and analysis, clarify issues, and develop alternative approaches to the collective "vision" for the area of the Village Waterfront. In July of 1990 three alternatives for the Village Waterfront were presented to the residents of Wiscasset. The townspeople reviewed and discussed the alternatives, and chose those ideas that they found to be the most desirable, practical and achievable. These ideas were then refined by the Design Team and incorporated into the final Master Plan for the Village Waterfront. This plan is incorporated into the Riverfront Study.



WISCASSET, MAINE

VILLAGE WATERFRONT AREA-1990

PURPOSE

This document presents a Riverfront Study for the Sheepscot River from Clark's Point to the Old Ferry Landing. It includes a master plan for making improvements to the Village Waterfront. It is intended to function as a working reference to guide and coordinate the broad range of future planning and design decisions by those groups and individuals who are responsible for the future of the riverfront. The Study offers a framework for decision making and provides clear standards for implementing both short and long term changes and improvements that will influence the physical access, environmental quality and visual character of the riverfront.

This Study recommends distinct and understandable goals, guidelines for the riverfront, and specific plans for the village

waterfront and Old Ferry Landing. It recommends how to provide and improve access to the Sheepscot River while protecting the natural, visual and historic character of the riverfront.

The Riverfront Study contains information on the quality of natural and built conditions and the types of uses which best fit those conditions and the goals of the community. It identifies the major issues and specific ways in which competing demands can be resolved. Except for the village waterfront, it emphasizes principles and policies over detailed solutions. In this way the recommendations provided by the Study can remain flexible as information and unforeseen events arise.

THE PROCESS

In preparing the Riverfront Study a five step process was followed. Those steps included:

- ▶ Inventory and analysis of the study area;
- ▶ Community workshops;
- ▶ The development of several schematic master plans for the Village Waterfront;
- ▶ The refinement of the schematic plans into one final Master Plan for the Village Waterfront; and
- ▶ The development of design and planning principles for the riverfront.

The following is a brief summary of the process.

THE WORK PLAN

The Design Team assembled existing data, inventories and studies available from federal, state, local and private sources; and organized and evaluated that information to determine it's relevance to the development of the Riverfront Study. Once the review of existing information was completed, additional data, inventory and field surveys necessary for a comprehensive analysis were identified and completed. An initial walking survey of the town waterfront with town officials was first conducted to identify specific issues and concerns, followed by a more thorough field survey of the entire study area. This survey identified important natural features (i.e. vegetative cover and wildlife), cultural features (i.e. development patterns and historical sites) and visual characteristics.

At the completion of the field surveys, the Design Team consolidated its data and utilized an overlay method of analysis to identify four areas of distinct character within the study

area. These areas (Exhibit 2) were identified for having distinctly different physical and visual traits:

Clark's Creek
Village Waterfront
Village Harbor
Back River

From this analysis the Design Team developed a preliminary concept for the purposes of discussing the type of activities that the residents of the Town would be interested in encouraging along the riverfront. This discussion took place at a public meeting in March 1990 where participants brought forward several concerns and a variety of personal "visions" that they were interested in exploring. Meeting participants directed the Design Team to limit conceptual master planning to the Village Waterfront only.

Subsequently, the Design Team worked closely with residents in a series of workshops to develop and refine their ideas for the future of the Village Waterfront. A number of workshops with local and state officials, as well as land and business owners along the waterfront were conducted. The workshops provided an understanding of the issues and concerns that were important to each group.

The workshops provided the basis for development of several alternative conceptual plans for the Village Waterfront. The concepts were presented to town residents on July 18, 1990 in a public workshop forum to discuss the possible activities that might be appropriate for the Village Waterfront. This meeting provided a basis for refinement of the assumptions and recom-

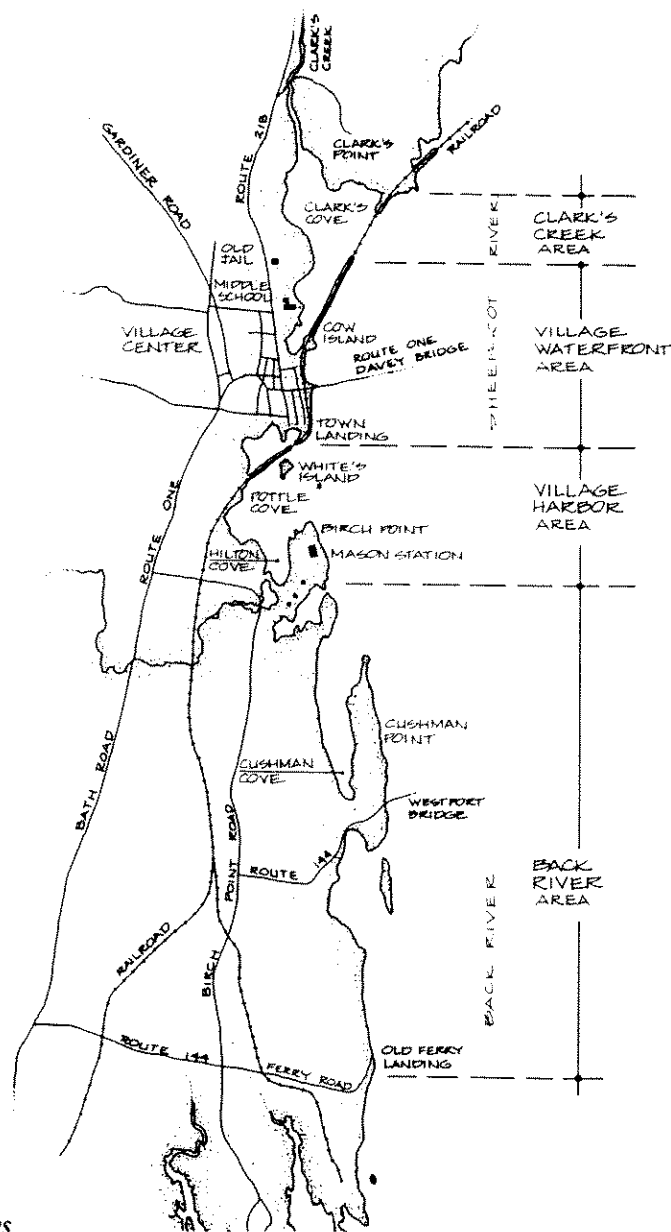


Exhibit 2
Character Areas

mendations for the final Village Waterfront Master Plan. These assumptions and recommendations expressed how residents of the Town currently use the waterfront; what they perceive as its most valued characteristics and greatest problems; and what their expectations are for its the future.

In addition to the workshops, a written opinion survey was taken of the participants at the March 1st public meeting to set community priorities.

RIVERFRONT PLANNING OBJECTIVES SURVEY

At the March 1, 1990 public meeting, participants were asked to rank the relative importance of a number of planning objectives found in the Comprehensive Plan, and those that were found to be of potential interest to the Town after the inventory and analysis process. The intent was to determine the kinds of uses which are deemed most appropriate for the riverfront. A special statistical consultant, Mr. Kenneth W. Fredette, was hired to assist in the tabulation and interpretation of the survey results.

It should be noted that the survey is exploratory in nature and was conducted to help set priorities of those who attended the public meeting. These results were used in conjunction with the opinions expressed in the comprehensive plan and the workshops with waterfront residents to formulate a town concensus on what should be accomplished along the waterfront.

The survey data indicated, and the March 1st discussion reinforced, that respondents placed a higher priority on pro-

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total Average Quality Points</i>
Habitat Protection (Wildlife/Rare Plants)	0.83
Visual and Historic Character Protection	0.78
Environmental Protection	0.76
Community Character	0.63
Land Uses That Depend Upon Waterfront Locations	0.58
Public Access and Use	0.53
Economic Development	0.48

*Exhibit 3
Survey Results*

tecting habitat and the visual and historic character of the town and its environment, than on encouraging public access or economic development (Exhibit 3).

This information indicates that the residents of Wiscasset place a high priority on maintaining the qualities of the town that define the quality of life for residents. Activities that are perceived to alter or change those qualities, such as Economic Development or increasing Public Access are not considered to be of high priority by the residents. They are satisfied with the way things are.

The survey then asked the respondents to rank the relative

importance of selected objectives within each category. These results reveal more specifically the concerns and priorities of the respondents regarding each general category. These results indicate the following:

HABITAT PROTECTION

The protection of wildlife habitat received the highest priority rating of the seven categories listed in the survey. Within this category the respondents indicated that the protection of critical or significant habitat areas (.90) was most important as compared to protecting travel corridors (.59) or adequate space (.61) for wildlife.

VISUAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTER

Maintaining the view (.80) and the appearance of a historic coastal village (.76) in a rural setting (.72) was indicated as being the most important character to protect when discussing visual and historic character. Conversely, respondents indicated that the visual character of an undeveloped, wooded riverfront setting (.62) was not as important. This would infer that residents appreciate the mixture of the existing colonial architecture intermixed with significant areas of field and forest along the riverfront.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The maintenance of a healthy, functioning environment (.82) is also important to survey respondents. Of particular importance is the maintenance of wetlands, flood plains and tributaries (.84) that influence the water quality of the Sheepscot River.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The community character of the village center was not given a high priority rating by the respondents (0.63). They did indicate, however, that if issues of community character were considered, then the village center should appear and function in a logical, unified and attractive manner (.73).

WATER DEPENDENT USES

The survey found that while protecting wildlife habitat and the environment had a higher priority than water dependent uses, efforts should be made to ensure that appropriate sites were available (.77) for marine related activities. A working waterfront (.67) was not seen as an important priority over other water dependent uses.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND USE

Public access (0.53) was considered to be of one of the lowest priorities of the seven surveyed planning objectives for the riverfront. The survey did indicate though, that if public access to the water (.70) is considered, that it should cause little disruption to the community (.84); that it should connect the village center with surrounding neighborhoods and special sites (.81); and that parking associated with public access sites should be kept to a minimum (.80).

TAX BASE DIVERSIFICATION

This planning objective received the lowest priority level (0.48) of the survey. The improvement of the waterfront for eco-

nomic activity is clearly not a direction that the respondents would like the waterfront to proceed in.

In summary, this survey data clearly suggests that habitat protection, particularly of critical or significant habitat areas is of high priority when considering the future of the riverfront. Residents are equally concerned about maintaining the appearance of the rural and historic qualities of the village. The survey also indicates that they will be more tolerant of impacts to the visual character of the waterfront if it is compatible with the type of visual mix that currently exists between the natural and built environments along the village waterfront. They have also indicated that protection of the riverfront environment should be given a priority over encouraging further economic development of the riverfront, which would result in the addition of increasing numbers of buildings and related improvements along the shoreline. Public access is not a well received development along the riverfront unless it is village oriented and has very little impact on community life.

This is a brief description of the data from the survey conducted in March, 1990, and what the data infer about the community "vision" of what the riverfront should be. A more detailed explanation of the survey may be found in Appendix D.

GROUP WORKSHOPS

The workshops provided a better understanding of how the residents perceive and would like to use the village waterfront area. They provided an opportunity for residents within the Village Waterfront Area, local officials and interested State agencies to express their "visions" for the village waterfront.

The process involved dividing residents of the village waterfront into small groups where they could discuss specific issues common to their neighborhood area. Three workshops targeted:

- ▶ Landowners north of Lincoln Street to the old jail
- ▶ Landowners south of Lincoln Street to Whites Island
- ▶ Business owners in the village

Individual meetings were also held with local officials, Central Maine Power, the Railroad Division Director for the Department of Transportation and the owner of Whites Island.

Each workshop group was asked to discuss their personal views of proposed improvements along the waterfront, what they liked or disliked about current conditions, and what type of future direction they would like to see for the waterfront. The three topics generating the most discussion centered on who the waterfront is for, the impact of the reactivated rail line on the waterfront, and how best to provide adequate parking and public facilities for water related uses. In general the following observations were made:

WATERFRONT USES

- ▶ Future management and direction of the waterfront should accommodate foremost the needs and desires of the people who live in town. Priority should be given to residents who use existing facilities along the waterfront, such as the Town Landing.

- ▶ The impact of tourists needs to be better managed. Many of the issues which currently confront the waterfront, such as parking, public access and traffic congestion are seasonal impacts that occur at peak vacation times.
- ▶ The establishment of a train stop on the waterfront for freight or passengers, should be discouraged, at the present time.
- ▶ Public toilets should be located closer to the central business area of the village.
- ▶ Opinion is divided on the use of the Creamery Site. Ideas range from a passive viewing area to a joint venture development for extra boating slips.

PARKING AND ACCESS

- ▶ The number of parking spaces needs to be increased in the village area. Small lots tucked between existing buildings is the most desired. Parking lots along the waterfront are not desired.
- ▶ The demand for water access at the Town Landing has exceeded its capacity to effectively provide parking for boaters accessing the Sheepscot River.
- ▶ Pedestrian movement across Route One needs to be improved to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. Opinion is divided as to the best resolution for this issue. Considerations are: an underpass, an overpass or a pedestrian free zone.

- Developing more public access sites along the riverfront is not encouraged because of the current problems that tourism inflicts upon the town and the informal understandings that currently enable local people to use private lands for river access. The concern is that those problems will not lessen through additional public access but will rather spread and possibly increase. If the only effect of increased public access were that townspeople would have an enjoyable place to stroll and access other parts of town, then the support would be higher.

HABITAT

- Joppa Cove and Whites Island areas should be maintained in a natural setting. Habitat enhancement actions by landowners are encouraged.

VISUAL CHARACTER

- Visual intrusion by the sewage treatment plant is intolerable. New additions to the plant should be more architecturally sensitive than the existing plant buildings to the town and plantings should be used to create a visual buffer around the perimeter of the plant. Other places such as the Town Landing are not visually attractive either.

The results generated from the public workshops, were incorporated by the Design Team into the development of three alternative design concepts for the Village Waterfront. These concepts were presented to town residents in July, 1990 within a workshop format. During this public meeting, participants were able to review the plans, ask questions and make com-

ments on each of the proposed concepts. Participants were asked to evaluate how well each design concept addressed their concerns and interests expressed in the previous workshops. The final Village Waterfront Master Plan reflects the results of this process, and incorporates what participants believed to be the best aspects of each alternative.

ORGANIZATION

The remainder of this report is organized to document the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Riverfront Study.

Chapter 4, "Evolution of the Waterfront" presents an historical overview of the major events that have occurred along the riverfront so that the present environment can be understood in terms of the decisions of the past.

Chapter 5, "Setting and Key Issues", discusses the current condition of the riverfront and the issues that residents find to be important along the riverfront.

Chapter 6, "Inventory and Analysis", discusses the characteristics of the natural and built environments. Specifically, access, the development pattern, and natural and built fea-

tures of the environment are discussed. This analysis discusses the key elements which create the image of a small New England coastal village surrounded by open space.

Chapter 7, "Riverfront Concept", summarizes the analysis of key elements and illustrates the key planning concepts and actions that form the overall guidelines for the design improvements along the waterfront.

Chapter 8, "Design and Planning Principles", presents a detailed description of the specific opportunities, constraints and recommendations within each of the four identified character areas along the riverfront.

Chapter 9, "Village Waterfront Master Plan", presents a detailed description of the schematic concepts and the Final Master Plan for the Village Waterfront. The timetable for the final master plan is described in "Implementation Plan", (Appendix A).

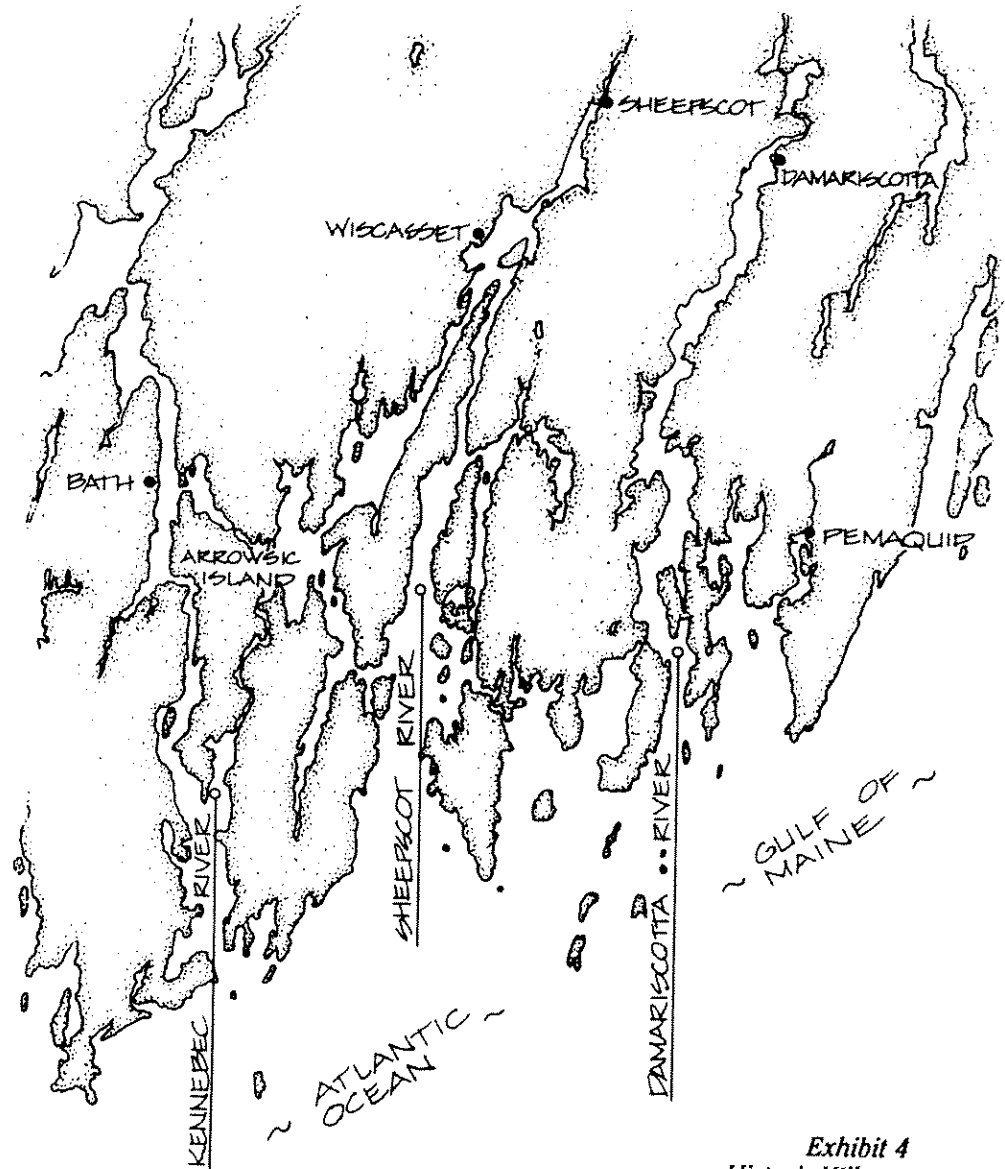
EVOLUTION OF THE WATERFRONT

The origin for the name Wiscasset is believed to have come from an Indian locative word meaning "confluence of three rivers" or "the outlet of the bay". The definition for the term "Wiscasset" continues to be debated among today's scholars. However, little doubt exists that the rich natural resources within the Sheepscot River corridor and the Town's access to the open ocean had a significant influence on Wiscasset's prosperity and development (Exhibit 4).

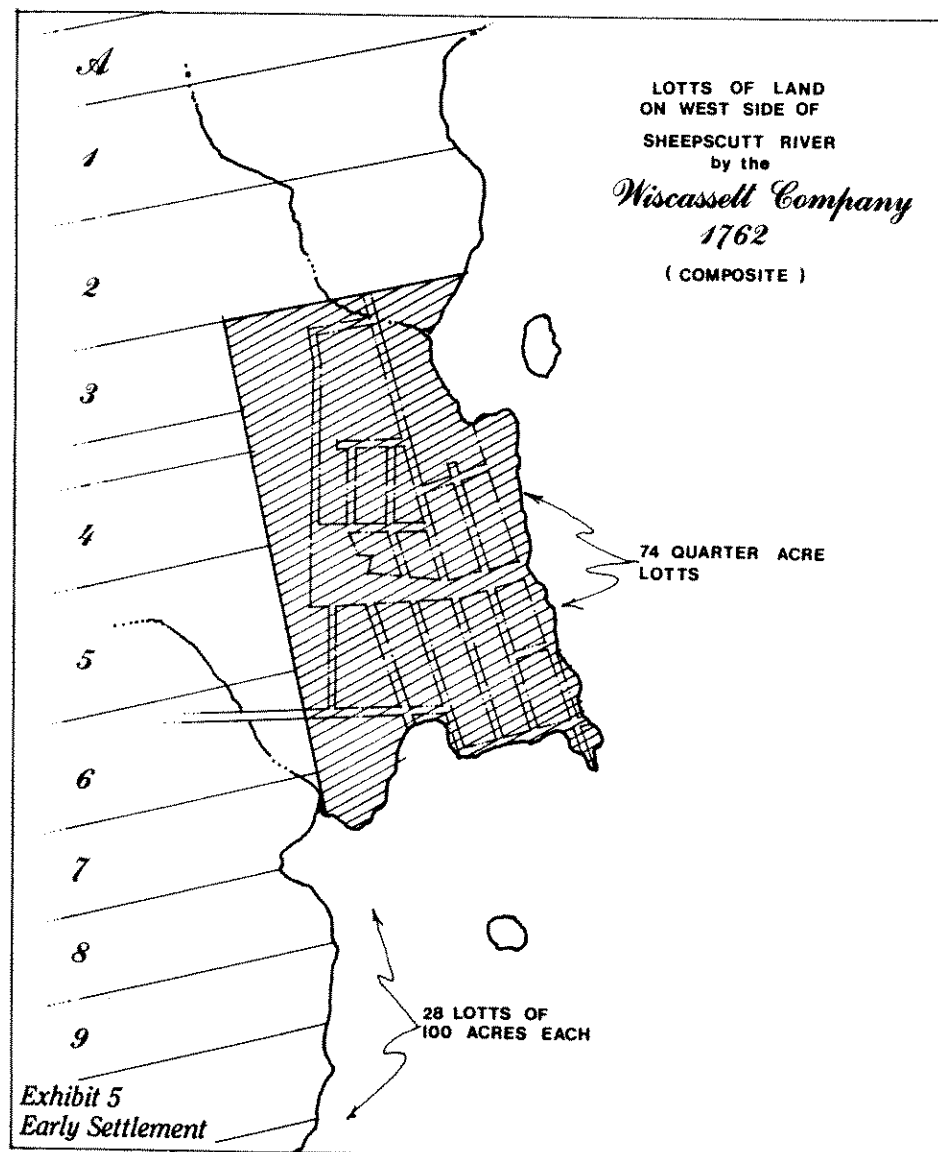
Historically, the infertile and rocky conditions of the soil, together with a short growing season, minimized the role that farming has played in the development of coastal communities like Wiscasset. The meager life-style offered by farming could not compare to the riches and abundant opportunities that were available in lumber, fishing and shipping along the rivers and the open ocean.

At the debouchure of the Sheepscot River, productive fishing grounds produced such quantities of giant cod, mackerel and flounder that by 1623, permanent fishing camps were established at Arrowsic Island, Sheepscot, Damariscotta, Pemaquid and St. Georges. Eighty-four families were known to have settled along the shores around the Kennebec and Sheepscot Rivers by 1630. Great schools of salmon, shad, alewives, striped bass, as well as beds of oysters could be found in the upstream waters of the Sheepscot River.

This plentiful bounty encouraged settlements along the banks of the Sheepscot River and in 1660 George Davie and his brother established a homestead at the current site of the Lincoln County jail. However, colonial expansion was inhibited by the Indian Wars from 1625 until 1725, the end of the



*Exhibit 4
Historic Villages*



Governor Dummer's Indian War. Resettlement in the confines of Wiscasset started again in 1729 with Robert Hooper and his family moving to the Cushman Point area. They were followed by several other settlers throughout the 1700's.

During the 1730's the Boston Company, attracted by the deep harbor and natural resources, bought the rights of the Davie heirs and invested much of their energies and money into the development of Wiscasset. Through their efforts roads were built, jetties constructed and a village development pattern began to evolve (Exhibit 5). The waterfront at this time maintained its natural configuration and direct access to the shoreline was common. Growth and progress occurring in the early to mid 1700's established Wiscasset as a shipping port. This enabled the town to take advantage of the economic growth that was to occur after the Revolutionary War in the shipping and lumber industries and establish itself as a regional economic center.

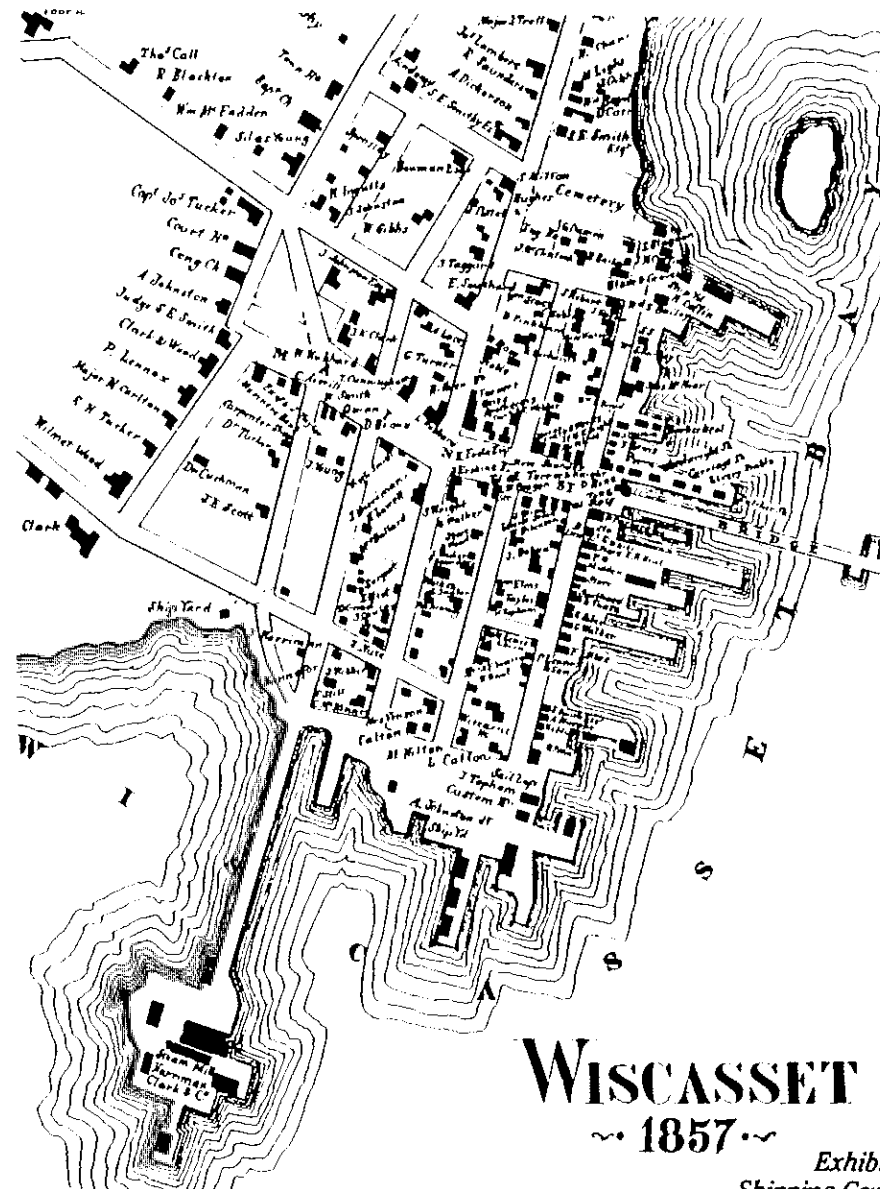
The beginning of the nineteenth century brought a remarkable and prosperous expansion to the shores of the Sheepscot River. The successful development of the fishing and lumber industries brought an increase in demand for lumber to build ships, and a need to expand shipping for the export of fish and lumber, as well as the import of salt, spices and other goods for commerce. With it's vast forests, rich fishing grounds and a deep water port that rarely froze during the winter months, Wiscasset was a business center with no equal east of Portland. Shipping flourished and the by-products of commerce enriched the

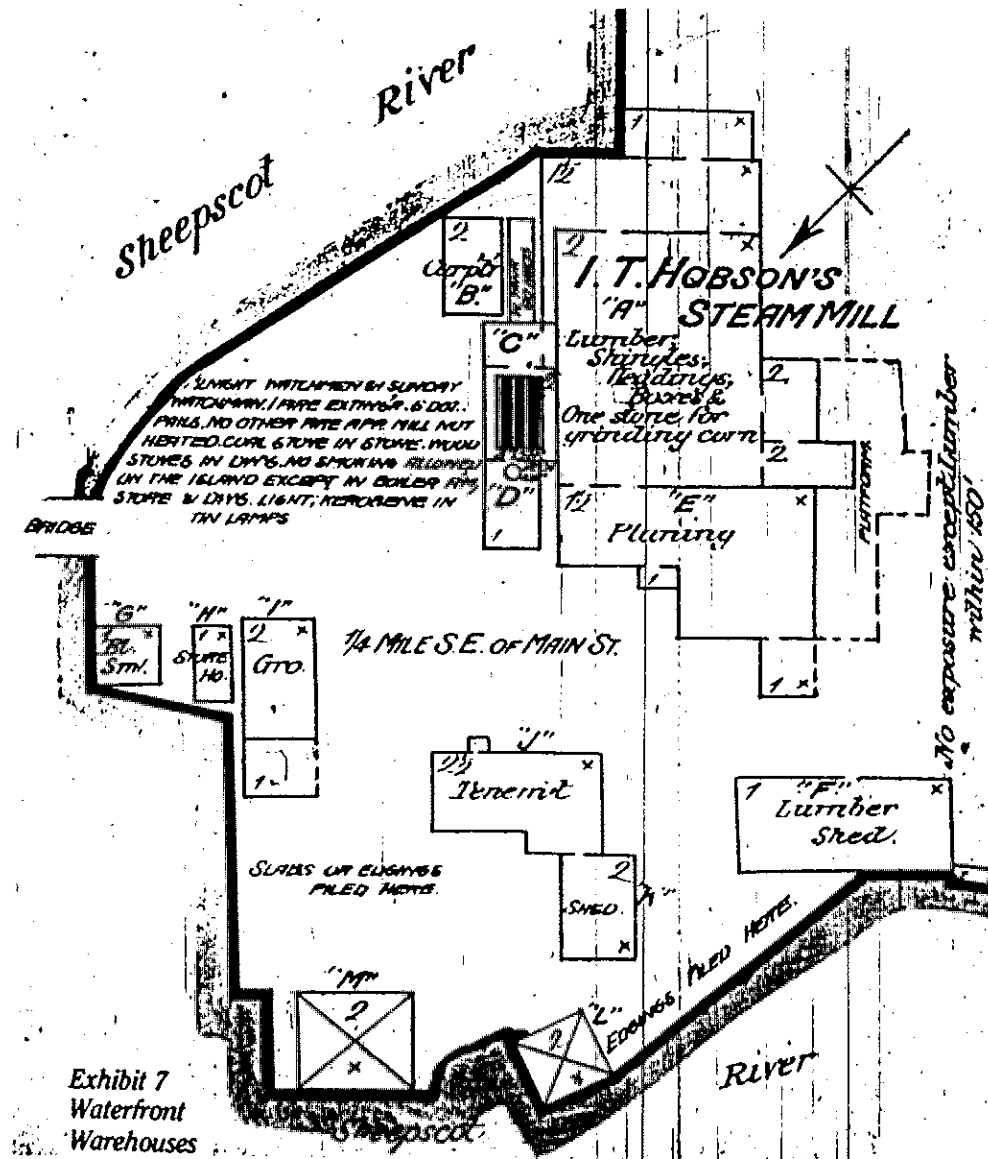
inhabitants of Wiscasset.

This new wealth precipitated a period of rapid growth and development that significantly altered the physical configuration of the waterfront. Piers were constructed and the shoreline stabilized to improve anchorage, and the street grid of the village began to fill in with mills, storehouses and the large homes of merchants and sea captains. Although there was significant physical growth at this time the village still focused on the waterfront with the shoreline road being the primary access. At the peak of it's economic growth thirty-two merchant shipping vessels and 122 fishing vessels would call Wiscasset their home port. (Exhibit 6)

However, the economic wealth and prominence of Wiscasset began to unravel with the shipping embargo of 1806 imposed by the British and French, and continued with the embargo of 1807 imposed by America on its own shipping. The final blow to the halcyon days of Wiscasset as a shipping port came with the embargo of 1812.

The decline in shipping forced Wiscasset to diversify it's economy in order to keep pace with other communities in the area. With the decline of the shipping industry, the mills along the Sheepscot River began to take a more prominent role in the evolution of the waterfront. They prospered from the early to the late 1800's, taking advantage of the lumber and water resources that existed along the Sheepscot River and it's tributaries. Tidal and under-shot mills were common, and the remnants of such mill sites exist at the mouths of Clark's Creek and Ward Brook.





These early mills manufactured planks, barrel staves, box shooks and shingles for export directly to England, Scotland and the West Indies.

The need to meet the increased demand for wood products encouraged the specialization of the waterfront for the manufacturing and shipping of goods. This resulted in the construction of numerous mills and warehouses that were built out into the river along the waterfront (Exhibit 7). The construction of large mills and piers dominated the shoreline and blocked the water's edge from the street. The specialization of the waterfront and its physical separation from the village encouraged the development of an alternative economic area within the village center for the transaction of every day commerce.

The development of steam powered portable mills in the mid 1800's contributed to the rapid reduction of the magnificent forest along the Sheepscot River. Portable mills made it possible to harvest and mill vast quantities of wood at interior sites and eliminated the need to locate on the river for power and transportation. This resulted in the overharvesting of timber along the Sheepscot River. Concurrently, the construction of mill dams, the pollution of waterways and the overfishing of local fisheries led to the decline of the fishing industry. Together, the despoiling of the resource base for both the fishing and lumber industries so severely curtailed commerce that the economic livelihood of the residents of Wiscasset steeply declined.

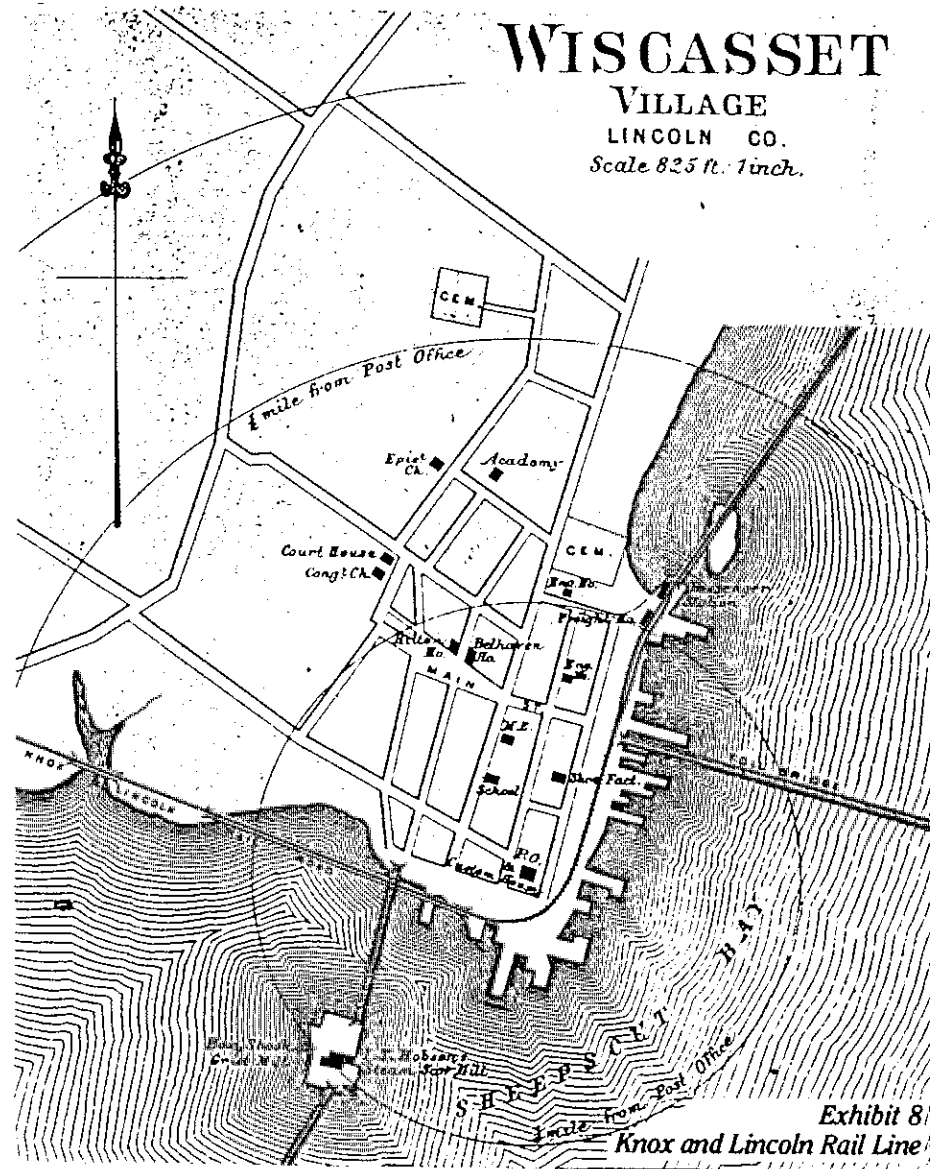
As many local lumber mills closed in the 1870's, they were quickly replaced by brick yards that took advantage of the

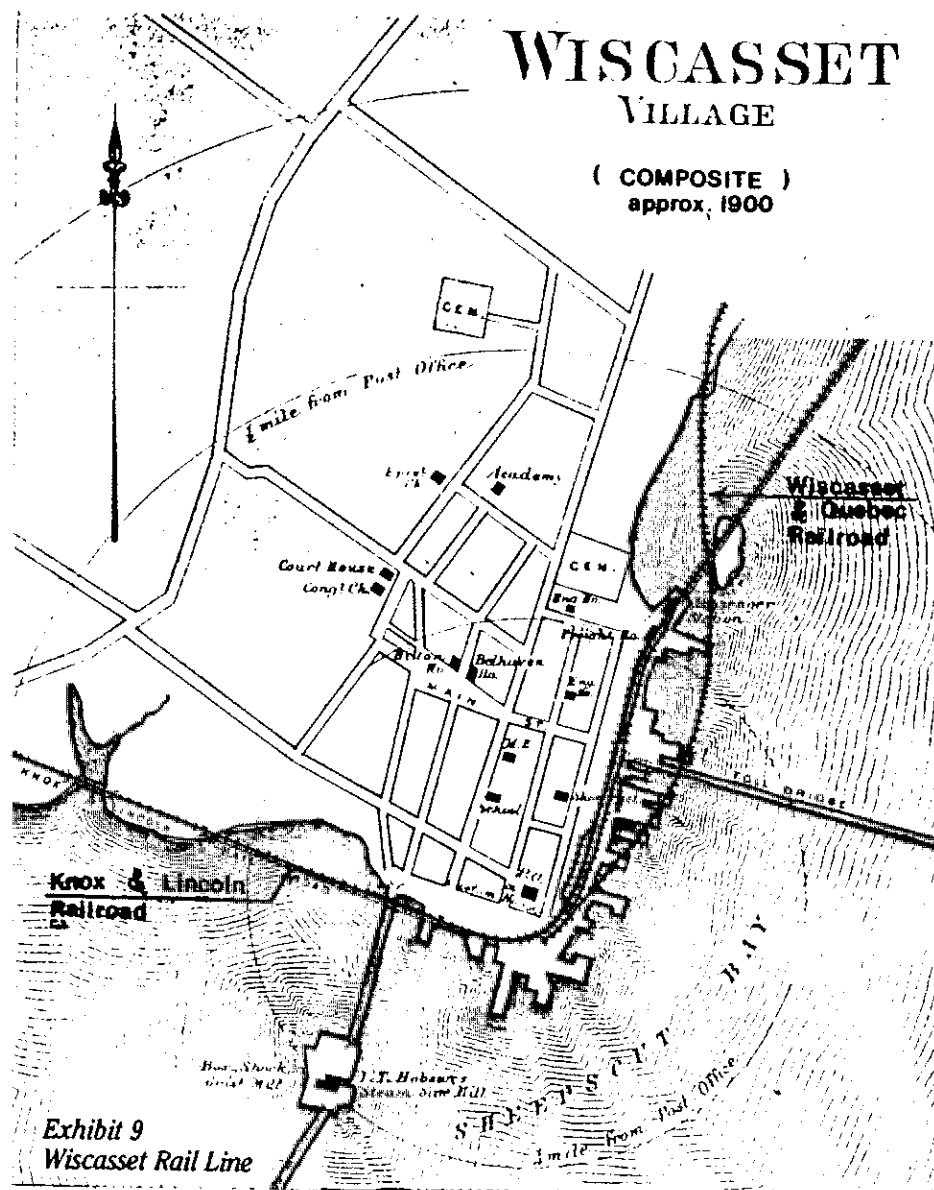
abundant amount of local clay soils. These yards never provided the economic strength that the lumber and fishing industries had; they only delayed the economic decline of the town. The most profitable of the brick yards was the Tucker & Savage yard located along the river's edge at the foot of the hill where the narrow gauge rail line traverses the Middle School site.

The decline of these industries precipitated a corresponding decline in the town's prominence as an important economic port. The economy never fully rebounded to the robust levels of the early 1800's, settling instead into a stable residential community with a diverse mix of commercial and retail business concentrated in the village center.

The hope to regain some of its previous economic vitality was sparked when the Knox & Lincoln Railroad extended the standard gauge rail in 1871 from Woolrich to Rockland, thus completing the Boston to Rockland run. By this time the waterfront area had lost its vitality and several mills and warehouses along the waterfront were razed and additional land created to satisfy the spatial needs for the rail line (Exhibit 8). These changes effectively severed the waterfront from the town as the shoreline road became functionally less useful and its economic importance further diminished, being overshadowed by the village center.

The Knox & Lincoln Railroad was never a financial success and its construction placed the town of Wiscasset in severe debt until the early 1900's when it was purchased by Maine Central Railroad and later by Guilford Industries. Guilford Industries abandoned the line in 1979 and The Maine Department of





Transportation (MDOT) purchased it in 1989. In June of 1990 MDOT leased the line to the Massachusetts Central Railroad to run freight from the Dragon Cement plant, in Thomaston, to the State Pier at the Mason Station.

With equal ambition, the Wiscasset & Quebec Railroad Company (WQRC) planned to construct a narrow gauge rail line from Wiscasset to the St. Lawrence region that would eventually become the eastern terminus of a coast to coast rail line (Exhibit 9). The rail line was to carry shipments of coal and lumber from Quebec to the Port of Wiscasset and be shipped down the Sheepscot River to other ports of call. The *Hesper* (built in 1918) and the *Luther Little* (built in 1917 at Somerset MA.) were purchased by the WQRC to ensure that shipping would be readily available from their rail terminus in Wiscasset. However, because of legal battles and the lack of sufficient capitalization the rail line never proved profitable, and the *Hesper* and the *Luther Little* were grounded at their current location at the village waterfront. The Wiscasset & Quebec Railroad Company finally succumbed in 1933 due to competition from changes in the modes of shipping freight from rail car to trucking. Remnants of this line are still visible at the Creamery site and along the shoreline north of Route One.

The evolution of Wiscasset's waterfront is a story of people living and working in close proximity to the water for hundreds of years. It is obvious that the abundant natural features of lumber, fish and a deep water harbor played a major role in the settlement and growth of Wiscasset, and ultimately led to its heyday in the early 1800's as a major shipping port. The waterfront prospered and changed dramatically during this time as areas were filled and several mills, warehouse and

other buildings were built along its shores to meet the demands of commerce. However, the elements of industrialization: the overharvesting of natural resources, environmental pollution and the introduction of new technologies, eventually brought an end in the late 1800's to the robust resource-based economy. Wiscasset failed to keep pace with these changes. The resulting decline in the economy and shipping lessened the importance of the waterfront as an area for commerce. This precipitated its neglect and decline, which was further punctuated by the construction of the rail line along the waterfront. As the village depended less on the waterfront for transportation and commerce, buildings were vacated, became unsightly and were removed. Wiscasset eventually evolved into the stable residential community that exists today. The last warehouse on the waterfront, known as the Creamery Building, was disassembled in June of 1990. Only the grounded schooners and a number of remnant piers remain from the active shipping port of the 1800's. (Exhibit 10).

This type of boom and bust cycle is typical of American commercial waterfronts. The evolution of Wiscasset's waterfront provides a clear perspective of the changes that have taken place in response to the dynamic economic and technological influences that have occurred over the years. Historically, this response has been a disjointed and incremental process, characterized by a number of loosely related decisions and actions by hundreds of landowners and entrepreneurs. The lack of vision and management of the waterfront in adapting to successive demands for new functions in the past has led to many of the incentives and constraints associated with the use and enjoyment of the waterfront today.

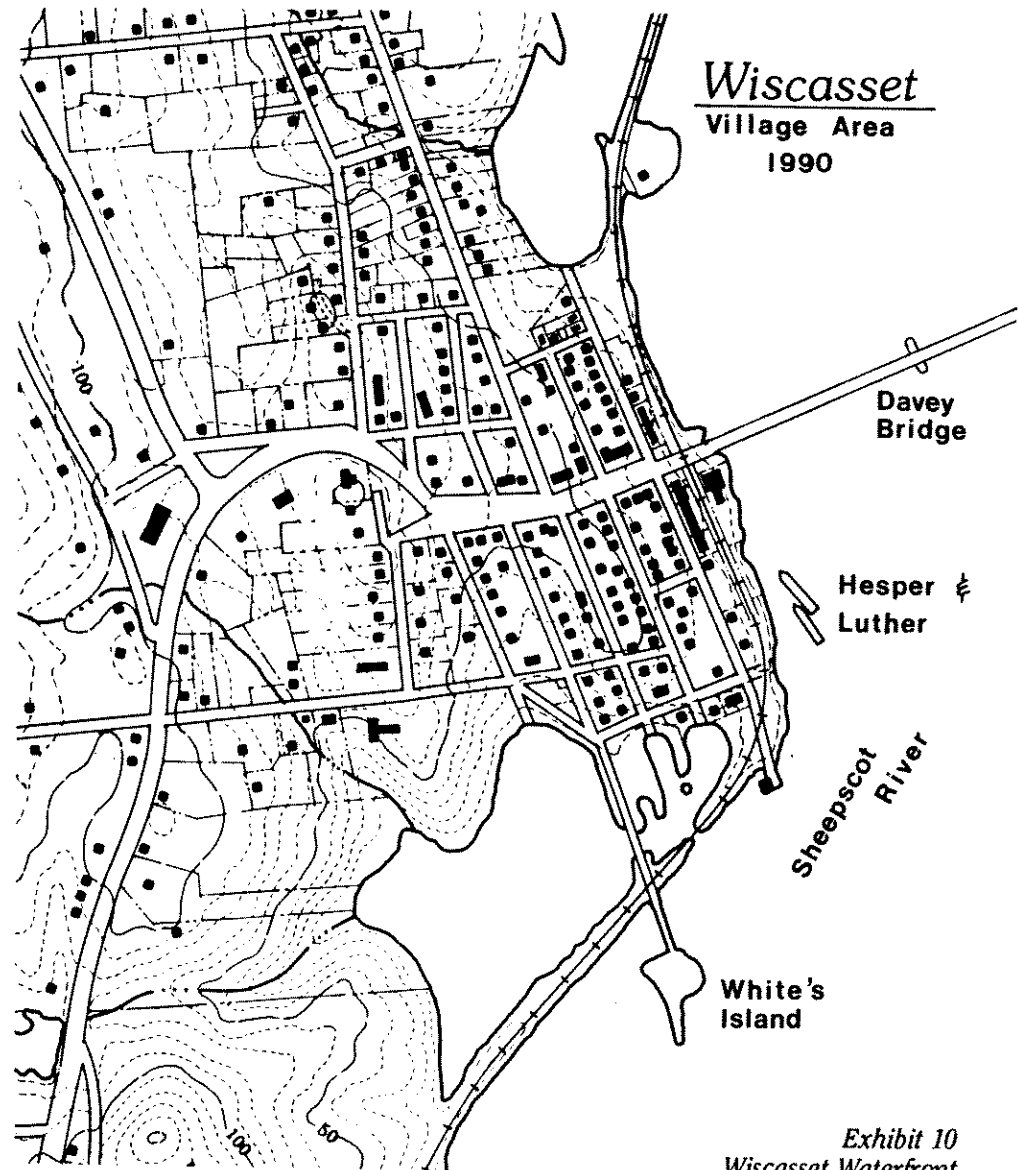


Exhibit 10
Wiscasset Waterfront

Wiscasset is fortunate, either by chance or through direct intention, to have maintained its historic architecture, small town character and pedestrian scale of its village center. These qualities are important particularly along the riverfront. for it is along the riverfront that these attributes coexist and form a special community resource that is unique in it's potential to concurrently provide diverse opportunities for economic growth, public enjoyment and civic identity for Wiscasset residents.

The quality of life that Wiscasset currently enjoys can be attributed to a balance between the types of economic uses feasible along the riverfront and the types of uses that instill civic pride and public enjoyment. This balance was established during a slower, less complicated time when changes in land ownership and economic development occurred at a less rapid pace and smaller scale.

However, the effects of a rapid increase in the recreational use and the encroachment of urban development along the waterfronts of several southern and mid-coast Maine communities has raised concern over the future of this balance and the direction that the Wiscasset riverfront may take.

Most residents agree that it is important that Wiscasset's riverfront remain attractive and accessible with a healthy natural environment. They also agree that it's physical development should be reflective of the Town's values and ideals, and that marine related uses be given a priority when considering the future development of the riverfront. Important in all of these concerns is the issue of

accessibility. What type of activities should have access to the water? How much of the riverfront should be accessible to the public?

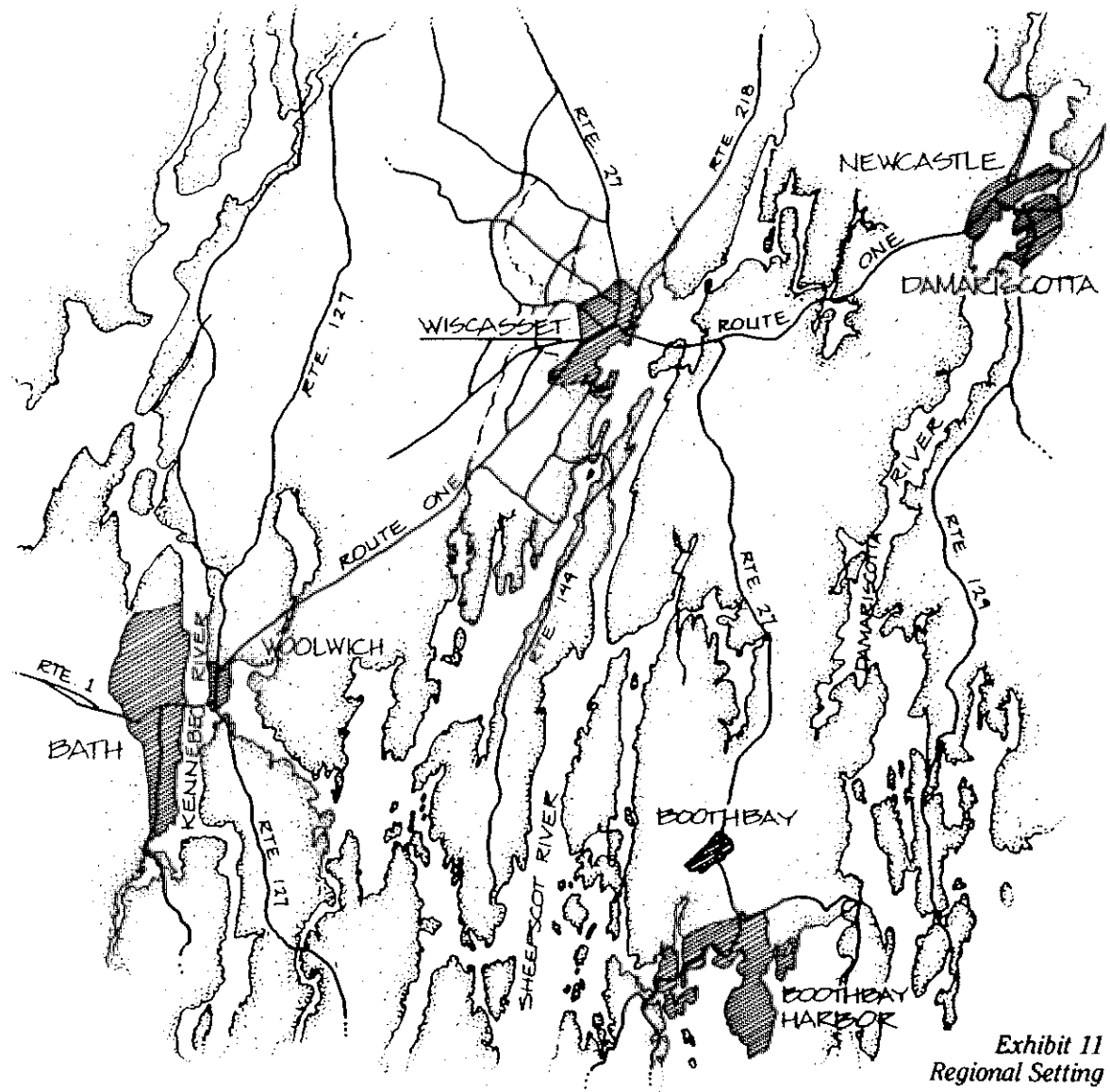
SETTING AND KEY ISSUES

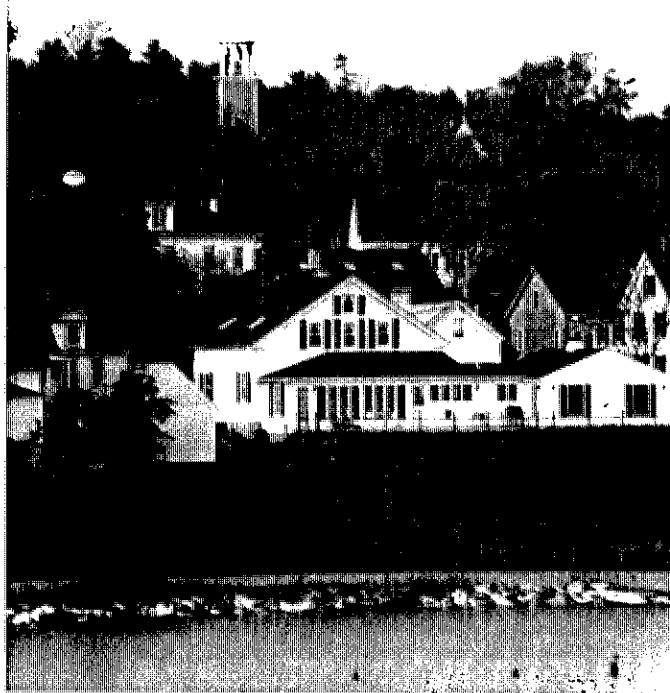
SETTING

Wiscasset's waterfront is special. Located on the Sheepscot River, approximately fourteen miles inland from the ocean, few communities can boast of a deep water, working waterfront which has maintained significant areas of productive wildlife habitat, abundant natural and architectural beauty, and numerous historic sites (Exhibit 11). The approximately nine miles of continuous shoreline within the study area offers a variety of economic, scenic and recreational opportunities to visitors and town residents alike.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the village center is the central hub of activity along the riverfront. Historically, this has served as the center for economic activity and expresses the historic, intimate and pedestrian charm of a small coastal community that Wiscasset is known for. North and south of the village center the urban fabric of town gives way to large areas of woodland and open meadows. Quality wildlife habitat is particularly abundant in the Clark's Creek and Back River areas.

The waterfront supports a small, active marine and shipping trade at the Town landing and State Pier, as well as several opportunities for pleasure boating. Spectacular views of the Sheepscot River and the village center exist from several vantage points along the riverfront. All of this activity occurs within the framework of a small New England coastal town with a rural character and abundant open space. This gentle, natural setting with its recreational, cultural and economic amenities is one of the





*Exhibit 12
Village Center*

reasons why Wiscasset is so special (Exhibit 12).

Over the years the importance of Wiscasset as an economic center has steadily declined, while the interest in the quality of life within the town as a residential community has grown. The increase in the number of people wishing to visit or reside in Wiscasset has brought pressure upon the town's ability to maintain the historic, visual and environmental characteristics that define the town's quality of life. These are attributes that the residents have identified through numerous workshops and the Comprehensive Plan, as being important to the well being of the town.

To date the town has successfully provided a healthy balance between natural and built conditions. But this balance can not be taken for granted. The overflow from already crowded southern Maine towns and people's desire to live in more rural areas have made Lincoln county the State's fastest growing county. (1990 U.S. Census) This trend is expected to continue. The challenge for the town will be to manage continued growth in such a way as to maintain the high quality standard of living in the face of increasing demands for those qualities. With forethought, careful planning and dedicated attention to the details of implementation, it can be accomplished.

KEY ISSUES

The Comprehensive Plan gives explicit guidance about the kind of attention that townspeople would like given to their waterfront and it's associated land uses. The important issues facing the waterfront are those which threaten

to diminish it's environmental quality, easy access to the river, historical image and visual character. The following is a brief description of the key issues as identified through the public workshops, the Comprehensive Plan and observation by the Design Team. Specific issues relating to the village waterfront will be discussed in Chapter 8, "Design and Planning Principles".

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE RIVERFRONT

PEDESTRIAN

- ▶ Poorly articulated pedestrian circulation routes across Route One hinder the movement of pedestrians and vehicles in the waterfront area. Current crossings are poorly defined and difficult for pedestrians to navigate with high seasonal traffic volumes.
- ▶ Reactivation of the rail line may generate the potential for pedestrian/train conflicts that have not existed in recent years.
- ▶ The lack of public property in some areas restricts public access to the water.
- ▶ Incidents of vandalism and rowdy behavior on the waterfront restricts the enjoyment of the riverfront by town residents.
- ▶ Many of the public sites that provide pedestrian access to the riverfront are auto-oriented and not inviting to the pedestrian.

VEHICULAR

- ▶ Circulation conflicts with the reactivated rail line will periodically impede vehicular access to the waterfront area.
- ▶ Lack of parking in the village inhibits vehicular access for waterfront users.
- ▶ Seasonal increase in the number and type of vehicles creates competition for limited parking spaces, limiting vehicular access for water uses.
- ▶ Inefficient circulation patterns by people from out of town looking for parking adds to the congestion on village side streets.
- ▶ Seasonal traffic volume on Route One impedes attempts to cross this traffic corridor.

PARKING

- ▶ Lack of adequate parking does not support the full use of available square footage of retail/office space in the village.
- ▶ Fluctuation in demand creates the seasonal lack of adequate number of parking spaces, particularly in the village center.
- ▶ The inefficient layout of existing parking lots contribute to the inadequate number of parking spaces.

- ▶ Appropriate signage to efficiently direct drivers to existing available parking is lacking.
- ▶ Inadequate enforcement of parking regulations encourages congestion of some lots.
- ▶ Lack of designated parking spaces for boat trailers and buses creates a shortage of parking spaces for cars around the town landing area.

RAILROAD

- ▶ The reactivation of the line may necessitate the redefinition of appropriate crossings to provide a safe environment along this corridor.
- ▶ Reactivation of the rail line will create a number of conflict points between rail and pedestrian movement, and may impede the availability of public access to the waterfront.
- ▶ Increases in the use of the rail line will have some negative effects on the quality of life for residents and quality of wildlife habitat areas.
- ▶ The designation of MDOT lands, adjacent to the rail line corridor, exclusively for rail line activity would eliminate several recreation, public access and service uses that have become established while the rail corridor was in a state of abandonment.

- ▶ Activities associated with the rail line, such as, parking storage and repairs could potentially have a negative effect on environmental, visual and the historic qualities valued by town residents.

HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER

NATURAL FEATURES

- ▶ Future development along the riverfront could remove substantial portions of woodland and open fields that would diminish the important natural component of the visual character.
- ▶ Unrestricted and/or inappropriate public access could contribute to the physical deterioration of some natural areas.

BUILT FEATURES

- ▶ Future development along the riverfront that is not in character with the existing built environment could diminish the image of a small New England coastal village.
- ▶ Deterioration, modification or removal of existing historic structures, remnants and historic sites could diminish historic and visual character.

VISUAL QUALITY

- ▶ The Town wishes to protect the impression of a small New England coastal town of predominantly 18th and 19th century architecture and surrounding open space.
- ▶ Changes in existing land use patterns would alter the relationship within existing historic development patterns between the density of built structures, related open space and wooded areas.
- ▶ Incremental encroachment by development on visually sensitive areas along the shorefront would have a negative cumulative affect on the visual integrity of the area.

HABITAT

- ▶ Inconsistent zoning along the riverfront does not provide adequate protection for shoreline habitat.
- ▶ Encroachment by development within the proposed width of the Water Resource Protection District affects habitat quality.
- ▶ Mapping and classification of important nesting and habitat sites within the Sheepscot River corridor is important to the maintenance and management of healthy wildlife populations.
- ▶ Allowing indiscriminate public access into sensitive habitat areas by hikers and/or motorized vehicles, will

diminish and destroy the quality of wildlife habitat necessary for maintaining and managing healthy wildlife populations.

MARINE RESOURCES

- ▶ The Town Landing and the Old Ferry Landing need to be improved to accommodate the increasing demand for water access by a variety of groups.
- ▶ The Town wishes to protect major stretches of saltwater marshes and tidal flats to ensure a sound environmental base that will support commercial harvesting of marine resources.
- ▶ Physical improvements along the Village Waterfront should give priority to water-related uses.

DIRECTION

The direction provided by these issues is clear: the unique natural features, visual character and historic qualities are of great importance to the residents of Wiscasset. Because of these attributes and the quality of life that they collectively provide, the town of Wiscasset is a desirable community to live in.

There are at the same time certain aspects of growth and change that threaten these qualities. They are: tourism, the rail line, and new development to meet housing and commercial needs. The impact that they will put on the town to maintain its unique quality of living can be

accommodated if there is a commonly understood set of objectives and a coordinated set of management policies. The purpose of this study is to recommend such a set of objectives and policies.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

To ensure that the values expressed through the workshops and in the comprehensive plan were incorporated into the Waterfront Access Plan, the Design Team conducted a thorough inventory and analysis of the existing conditions, features and policies in effect within the study area. It specifically reviewed and studied the natural features, the visual character, the historical and cultural features, and the zoning and ownership patterns that existed within and adjacent to the study area.

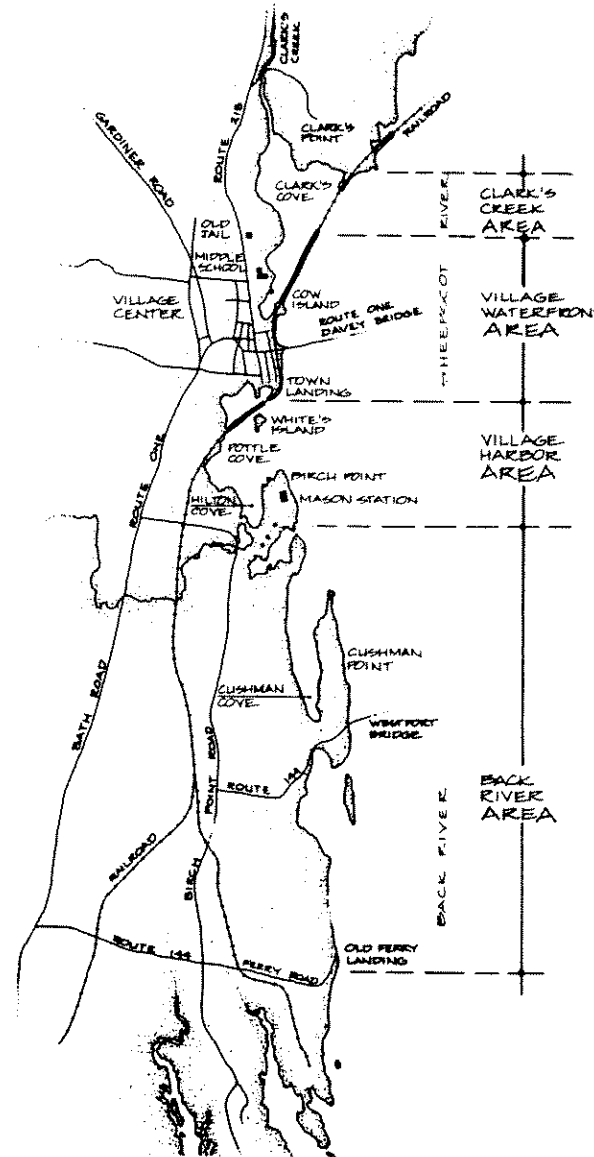
The Design Team compiled the data and analyzed it using an overlay method that identified four distinct character areas along the Wiscasset riverfront. These areas were identified as: Clark's Creek, Village Waterfront, Village Harbor and the Back River (Exhibit 13). Each character area was defined by a unique combination of natural, visual, historical and development pattern traits. These zones were important in the analysis of the study area because they provided cohesive physical units for developing planning and design principles for areas along the riverfront. The following text describes the findings and conclusions of this inventory and analysis and highlights important implications for planning and managing the riverfront.

INVENTORY

PUBLIC ACCESS

Pedestrian

The principle paths for pedestrian movement along the



*Exhibit 13
Character Areas*

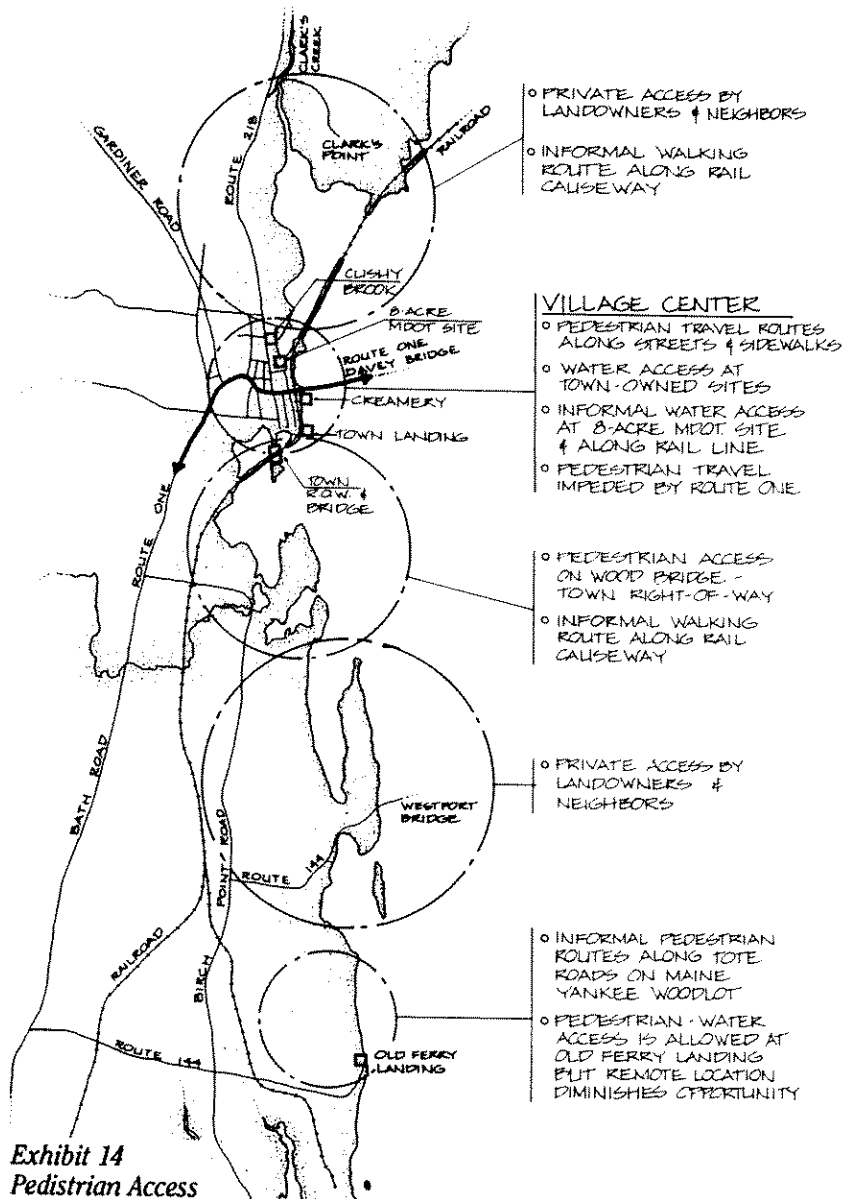


Exhibit 14
Pedestrian Access

riverfront conform to the existing street grid within the village center and along Route 218 from the Clark's Creek bridge to the village center (Exhibit 14). Several informal routes exist along the rail causeways, the rail bed of the narrow gauge line and along the shoreline between the Creamery site and the Town Landing. Pedestrian movement around the village harbor is inhibited by land ownership patterns and existing topography along the shoreline. Informal paths also exist south of the Mason Station along Cushman Hill and the Maine Yankee woodlot, north of the Old Ferry Landing.

The majority of river access sites along this system of paths and walks are concentrated along the Village Waterfront. These sites are scattered along the shoreline and vary from such informal points as the Clishy Brook site, with an occasional visitor, to the more improved Town Landing which handles a high number of visitors seeking access to the river. No formal pathway system, other than existing roads or "desire lines" exists, which links these sites together to create a continual walking experience. Seasonally high traffic volumes on Route One impede pedestrian movement through the village and along the waterfront travelling in a north-south direction. Pedestrian access to the waterfront occurs along and across the rail bed in a random fashion without being confined to any particular routes or crossing points.

Additional town access exists at the terminus of several village street right-of-ways. However, because of the limited space and long term established use of these areas by abutters, the practicality of using these sites for public

access is limited. A few sites exist north and south of the Village Waterfront where public access is available on a more informal basis to landowners, neighbors and friends.

North of the village center, in the Clark's Creek Area, access to Clark's Creek and the Sheepscot River is limited to the bridge crossing at Clark's Creek. No formal access sites have been developed in this area. However, the Town owns a small parcel of land, just west of the bridge, that it has improved as a turn-around for snow plows during the winter months. No other lands are publicly owned. Residents in the area also access the shore of the Sheepscot River along the abandoned rail bed on an informal basis. This trail corridor is enjoyed by abutting land owners for passive recreational uses (i.e. walking, bird watching etc.).

South of the Village Waterfront Area, access to the riverfront is limited. Within the Village Harbor Area, access is provided by a town right-of-way from the base of Pleasant Street to White's Island, continuing across the harbor to Birch Point. This right-of-way is sixteen feet in width and has been improved by the Town with a wood pedestrian bridge to White's Island. The Island, however, is privately owned and public use is not openly encouraged. The remainder of the land around the Harbor is privately owned, with Central Maine Power being the largest land holder. Town residents frequently use the existing train causeway to traverse the harbor area. This activity will become restricted in autumn of 1990, when the standard gauge rail line is reactivated.

In the Back River Area, formal access is available at the Old

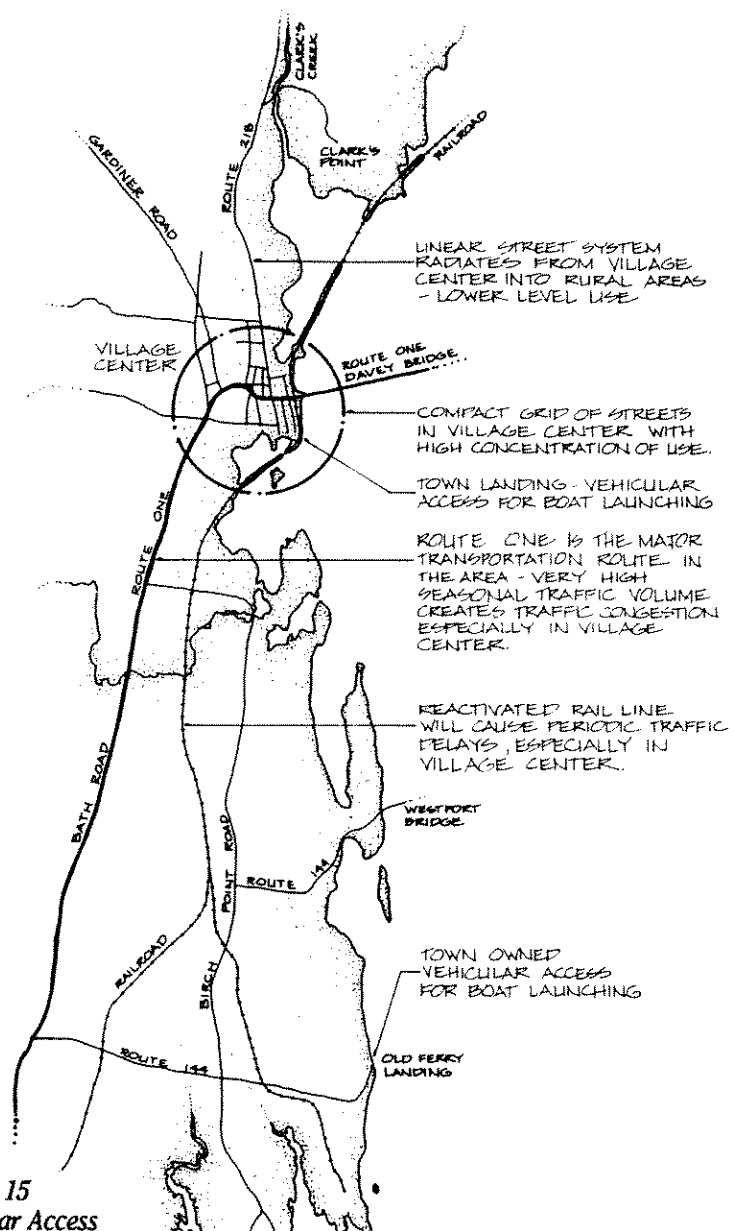
Ferry landing at the end of Ferry Road. The usefulness of this site for pedestrian access is limited because of its remote location. Several informal pedestrian access routes exist along the many tote roads and paths that crisscross this area.

The types of pedestrian environment along the riverfront fall into two general categories. The areas north and south of the Village Waterfront Area are characterized by travel routes that follow the shoulders of existing roadways, and by informal use of pathways that traverse private property to access the water's edge. In general, these travel routes function well to serve the type of low level, local pedestrian use that occurs in these areas. The Village Waterfront, on the other hand, is characterized by a much higher level of pedestrian travel along the river and to specific access sites. This pedestrian environment is more concentrated with a larger number of people trying to access the waterfront either by foot or by car. The concentration of activities and users trying to access the area generates a number of conflicts and the need for a more clearly defined and efficient pedestrian system.

VEHICULAR (Exhibit 15)

The roadway network within the riverfront study area can be characterized as two distinct types:

- ▶ The compact grid in the village center.
- ▶ Linear roads that radiate from the village center,



such as, Route 218 and Birch Point Road that parallel the riverfront.

Route 218 and Birch Point Road provide access from the village center to remote water access sites at the Clark's Creek bridge and the Old Ferry Landing. These roads traverse a rural landscape and provide an adequate level of vehicular access to the water for the Clark's Creek, Village Harbor and the Back River Areas.

The network of streets in the village center, however, has a much higher demand on it to provide adequate access to a variety of destinations. Concentrated within the village center are the numerous shops, offices, restaurants, residences, Yacht Club and the Town Landing which all depend on this network of streets for vehicular access.

The primary vehicular circulation route in the village center is the Route One Corridor. High seasonal traffic volumes along Route One impede vehicular traffic flow attempting to cross or enter Route One. Circulation is impeded further by the large numbers of people attempting to find parking near the Town Landing and other businesses; the increase influx creates an increased demand for parking which is not met by existing supply. As stated in the previous section, the majority of water access sites in town are concentrated in this area. Thus most people who want to access the waterfront have to come here. Also a number of other attractions are concentrated in this area of town.

PARKING

In the Clark's Creek, Village Harbor and Back River Areas, and in the less developed areas of the Village Waterfront Area, parking is adequately accommodated by on-site lots for the many residences and business within these areas. An exception to this is the limited public parking available at the Old Ferry Landing, a boat launch facility at the southern boundary of the Back River Areas. This lot is extremely undersized for the type and extent of use that it receives and this effectively limits the number of people able to access the river from this location.

In the more developed area of the Village Waterfront Area, an inadequate number of parking spaces throughout the village center is a persistent problem in the peak summer and fall travel and vacation seasons. The most visible result of the limited parking available in the village center is that the seasonal parking demand creates congestion along streets in the village center as visitors and residents attempt to find parking and often park illegally out of frustration. This problem is particularly acute in the area of the village south of Route One and near the Town Landing, as an increased number of fishermen, visiting boaters, residents and patrons of nearby shops and restaurants all attempt to use the limited parking available.

One of the less obvious effects that limited parking has on the village center is that it has hindered the full use of the upper floors of many commercial buildings that cannot provide enough parking to satisfy existing zoning requirements.

The relative amount of open land available along the waterfront would appear to offer some relief by offering the opportunity to create additional parking spaces. However, this type of land use along the waterfront contrasts with a number of policy statements listed within the Comprehensive Plan and expressed at the workshops.

RAILROAD

Two existing rail lines traverse the riverfront study area. The former Wiscasset and Quebec rail line follows the contour line of the shore from the Creamery site in the Village Waterfront Area, northward to the mouth of Clark's Creek where it heads inland into Alna. Since its abandonment in 1933 this rail line has become overgrown with vegetation or removed to accommodate construction associated with private residences, the Middle School, the Sewage treatment plant and Route One, which now truncates the rail line. A substantial part of this rail line exists today as remnant pilings along the shore of the village waterfront. (Exhibit 16)

Currently, the rail bed is informally used by local residents for hiking along the shoreline. It offers many spectacular views across the mouth of Clark's Creek and the Sheepscot River, as well as pleasant views up the several streams and creeks valleys along the shore. Consideration has been given to restoring the Wiscasset & Quebec rail line from Alna to the Davey Bridge. However, given the physical obstructions that exist between these points this plan seems highly unlikely.

*Exhibit 16
Narrow Gauge Rail*



The second rail line is the standard gauge rail line owned by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT). This line extends across the Village Harbor, northward along the Village Waterfront and across the mouth of Clark's Creek. The rail causeways north and south of the Village Waterfront are frequently used by the public to walk from the White's Island area to the shore along Hilton Cove and from Cow Island to Clark's Point. This rail line will be reactivated in the autumn of 1990 and its effect on the riverfront is expected to be minor, but has still not been determined. However, use of the causeways for significant pedestrian movement is likely to discontinue.

VISUAL ACCESS

Visual access to the riverfront is another type of access which is highly important to town residents. Although harder to define or protect than pedestrian, vehicular, commercial or recreational access, it is arguably the most important because it is available for all residents and visitors to enjoy regardless of land ownership patterns or other barriers to physical access along the riverfront. The riverfront is highly visible by nature, however, the type of visual access varies from location to location.

The Clark's Creek Character Area is highly visible from the Route One bridge, the village waterfront and higher elevations within Town. Because of the high degree of visual access to and from this area, the visual significance of this zone is high. Many views of the rural and undeveloped areas of Clark's Creek are available from Route One, Route 218, and by boat from the river.

The Village Waterfront Area is highly visible from Route One coming into and out of Town. Views from the Route One Bridge headed west are of a compact and traditional and picturesque coastal Maine village. Traveling east, views are through the village streets and to the river and opposite wooded shores. Many town residents enjoy the unique opportunity of walking out onto White's Island where the shoreline, the Village and its Skyline may be viewed. (Exhibit 17)

The Village Harbor Area is visible at a distance while approaching Wiscasset from the west on the Route One

bridge. It is highly visible from the streets in the village center and from White's Island. It is an important area visually because it is viewed on a daily basis by town residents and by tourists visiting the village center. Its shoreline is also visually prominent from the water for boaters using the yacht club and Town Landing.

The Back River Area is visually prominent from the Edgecomb Bridge, the Westport Bridge, the Old Ferry Landing and from areas around the Mason Station. It is important visually because of the "wilderness" setting that it provides in pleasant contrast to the more developed areas of the Town.

HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER

Historic Character

In the 1800's the Wiscasset riverfront was the focal point of a vibrant economic community. Many shipbuilding and lumber mills rimmed the harbor and large numbers of wooden piers were built out into the river for shipping. Captain's houses were built up on the slopes above the harbor and many of the existing buildings today in the village center were built at this time. Although the economic vibrancy of the riverfront has declined many of the historic remnants remain along the riverfront.

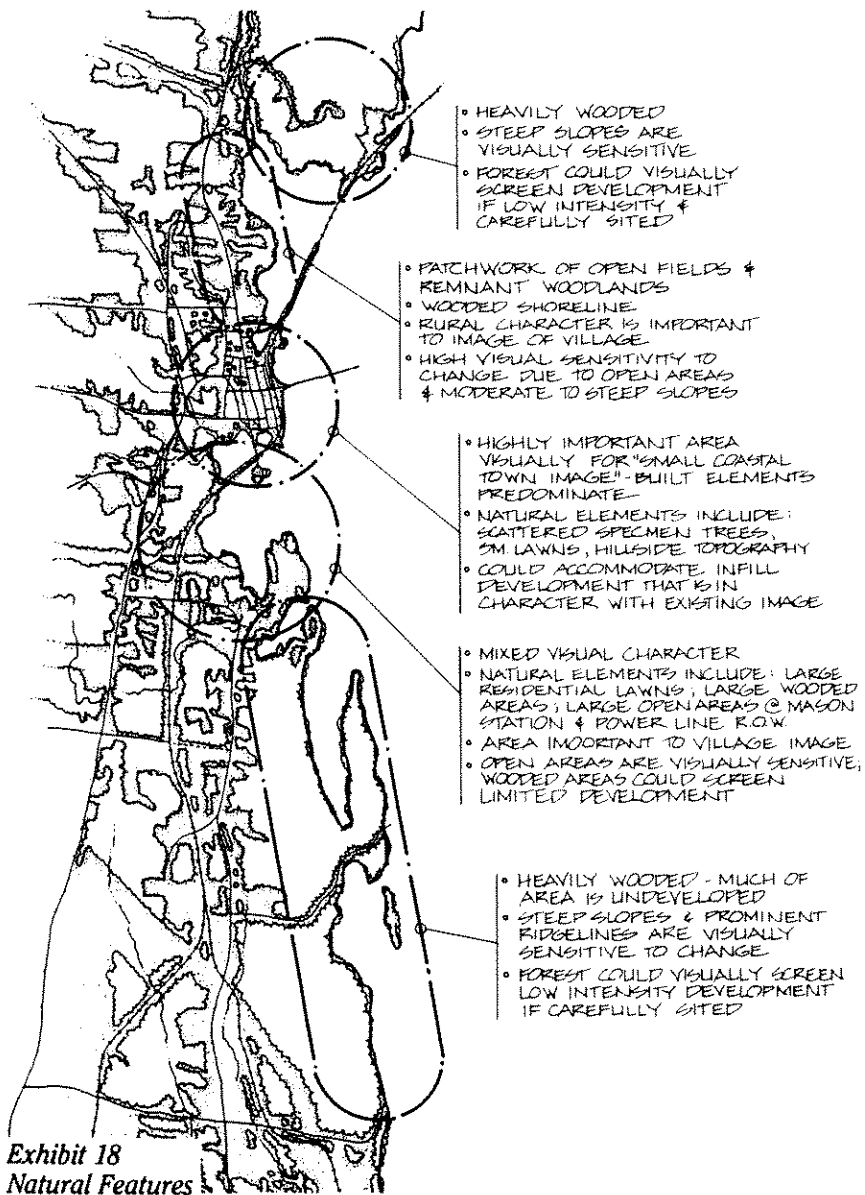
The village waterfront contains a number of the noted historic buildings and sites along the river. This area is associated with the village center, and together they encompass the rich history and culture of the town. The Village Waterfront lies within the Historic District of the

Exhibit 17 The Village Skyline



town and contains several important historic sites within its boundaries. The most prominent of these along the waterfront are the *Hesper* and *Luther Little* shipwrecks just north of the Town Landing. The area of the Village Waterfront contains many other significant historic sites. Among the more notable are the Old Jail House, remnants of the narrow gauge rail line, the site of the Round House for the rail line and the Kingsbury Shipyard Site on the Back Cove (ME 491-11). A number of historic sites can also be found north and south of this area.

North of the Village Waterfront, several important historical and cultural features exist within the Clark's Creek



Area. During the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century several sawmills and gristmills were located at the mouth of Clark's Creek. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has registered the Sutter Dam Site (ME 491-01) at the mouth of Clark's Creek. The remnants of the dam are still visible today at low tide. A historical site of local importance not listed by the Commission is the narrow gauge rail line that runs along the Wiscasset shoreline from the Creamery Building site, north to the Wiscasset/Alna town line.

Few historic remnants exist south of the Village Waterfront that depict the activity that once occurred here. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has identified two sites in the Village Harbor Area: The Capt. Williamson House Site at Hilton Cove (ME 491-19) and the Williamson's Mill Site at the mouth of Ward Brook (ME 491-05). The one noted by the State in the Back River Area is the Bailey Site along Route 144 at the Cowseagan Narrows (ME 491-18). More may exist but have yet to be identified and recorded.

Contributing to the historic character of the riverfront is the historic development pattern which evolved as the village grew. The relationships that developed between buildings and open space, and streets and the river currently give Wiscasset its grace and elegance. Consideration should be given to maintaining both these specific historic sites and the less easily defined historic development patterns that provide the Town with its current historical charm. Future growth and utilization of the

waterfront area should be developed to respect the historical heritage that the residents value.

Visual Character

• Introduction

The Wiscasset riverfront has a diversity of physical conditions that together create a dynamic visual environment. These physical conditions range from areas dominated by natural elements to areas composed entirely of built elements. The following discussion highlights the most important of these:

• Natural Features

(Exhibit 18)

Undeveloped areas throughout the riverfront are dominated by a diversity of natural features: shoreline, coves, stream outlets, hills, woodland and meadows. These areas provide both contrast to the built environment and distinctiveness to the riverfront. During the course of development along the riverfront, these natural areas have remained undeveloped and, as a result, add to its physical beauty. Many of the natural areas serve either as backdrops to development or in certain areas frame an entire area. Their presence has helped reinforce the functional organization of the village and enhance its visual interest and level of amenity. Several individual components of the natural environment are especially important in defining the visual character of the riverfront. These are:

Topographic - This feature provides an important visual backdrop for the village center and the riverfront area. The ridge line is especially important to the

visual character of the riverfront because of its prominence. Physical changes along the ridge line will be easy to detect and could negatively impact the existing visual quality for the riverfront area and the village center.

Steep Slopes - Provide a dramatic contrast with the two dimensional plane of the river. They are usually wooded and present a rugged character along the water that contrasts with the clean, built line of the village center. Changes in the wooded character of these areas could have a substantial negative visual effect because of their prominence.

Open Space and Vegetative Pattern - During the course of development of the village, numerous open fields and woodlots developed in association with buildings and roadways. This pattern of open fields and wooded areas provides a sense of the rural way of life. These areas provide visual interest by framing views, serving as a backdrop and providing a contrast to the built environment.

• Views

(Exhibit 19)

Two different types of vistas exist along the riverfront: those across expansive natural areas and those within and from built areas. Significant vistas across expansive natural areas include:

- View from Hilton and Pottle Cove shoreline back toward the village center.

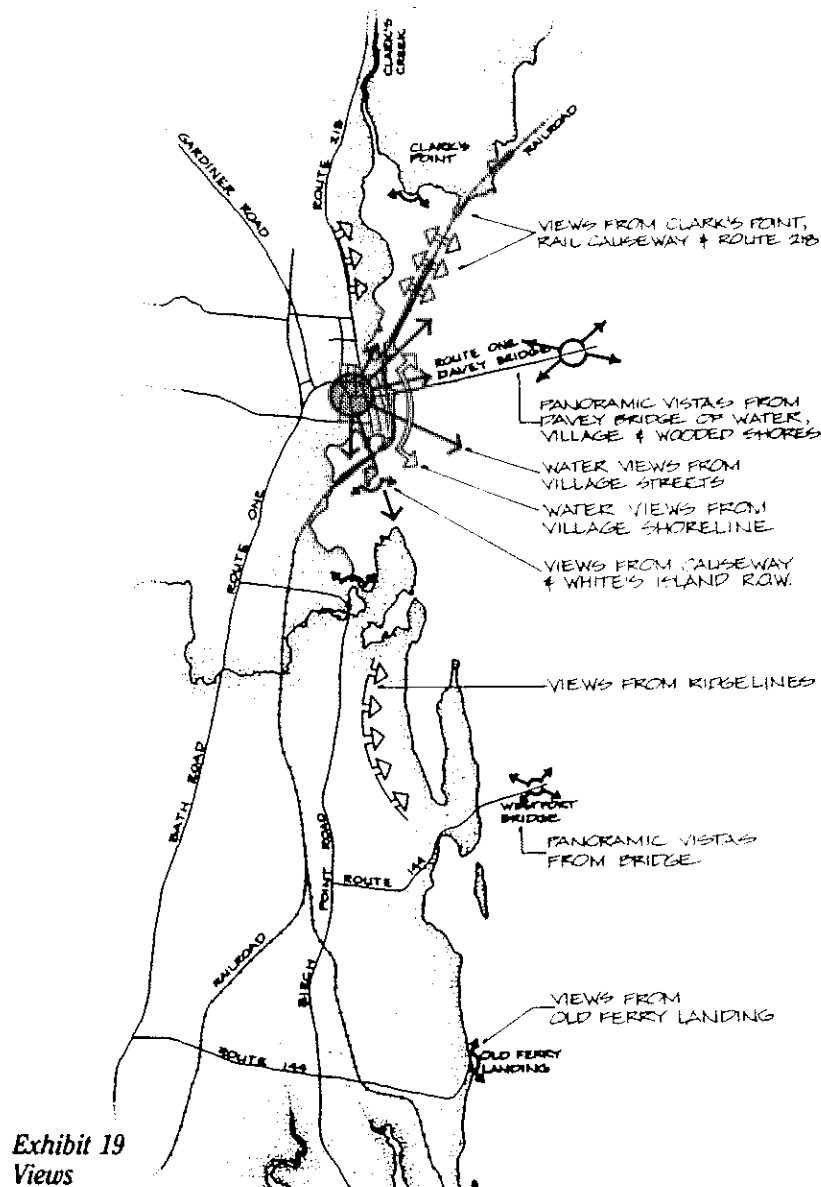


Exhibit 19
Views

- ▶ View from atop the bluffs of Cushman Hill out across Cushman Cove and the Back River.
- ▶ View across the Village Harbor from the causeway.
- ▶ View across the mouth of Clark's Creek from the narrow gauge rail bed and the causeway.
- ▶ View from Clark's Point down the Sheepscot River.

Significant vistas from developed areas.

- ▶ Vistas from Route 218 out toward the mouth of Clark's Creek.
- ▶ Vistas from village streets of the Sheepscot River, Village Harbor and the Mason Station.
- ▶ View from Route One of the Sheepscot River and the Mason Station.
- ▶ Views from the Davey Bridge of the Village Center and adjacent shoreline.

BUILT FEATURES

(Exhibit 20)

The riverfront area is dominated by the 18th and 19th century architecture of the village center. Almost all of the buildings constructed during this time form a consistent, coherent visual environment and relate well to their sites. Their presence has created the functional organization of the village and defined its pedestrian scale and historic charm. Several individual components of the built environment are especially important in defining the visual character of the riverfront. Those are:

Historic Development Pattern - The visual character of the village center is strongly influenced by the way

buildings and intervening open spaces relate to one another. In a simple way the perpendicular grid of streets in the village center has resulted in the tight clustering of buildings, constructed in a consistent pattern located parallel to the street with intervening small lawns and open spaces. Conversely, several radial streets leave the village center and parallel the river resulting in a more varied pattern of development. This varied pattern includes buildings parallel and close to the road, captains homes at the edges of the village center sited to respond to topography and views, and farmsteads forming small clusters of buildings often far from the roadway. The changing character of this development pattern forms a composite which is basic to the visual character of a small New England village.

Skyline - The village center skyline is distinct and forms an important element to the visual character of the riverfront. It is dominated by the church steeple, the roof lines of former Captain's homes and mature trees within the village center. Collectively, these elements influence form the village skyline and reflect the important institutions at the time when the village evolved - the church, the court house and the leaders of the community.

Landmarks and Focal Points - Several structures and buildings along the riverfront serve as landmarks and focal points along the riverfront. Landmarks are important to the image of the riverfront because they are visually prominent and distinctive built elements

that contribute to the cultural and historic identity of the village. Focal points are also visually prominent elements that provide a sense of orientation along the riverfront.

Significant landmarks along the riverfront are:

- ▶ The church steeples that punctuate the village sky line.
- ▶ The Mason Station at Birch Point.
- ▶ The *Hesper* and *Luther Little* Schooners grounded at the village waterfront. (Exhibit 21)

Significant focal points along the riverfront are:

- ▶ The Davey Bridge.
- ▶ The rail causeways north and south of the village center.
- ▶ The Sewer Treatment Plant on Cow's Island.

The development of additional landmarks or focal points along the riverfront should respect the established character. New landmarks or focal points along the riverfront would help define the location of certain activities along the riverfront, assisting in its organization and function.

Gateways and Entrances - Within the study area, three important gateways exist that serve as entrances into the waterfront area. The Route One - Railroad area serves as the primary entrance for people accessing the village from the east. This area does not provide a positive visual image in keeping with the village center. The poorly defined parking areas and

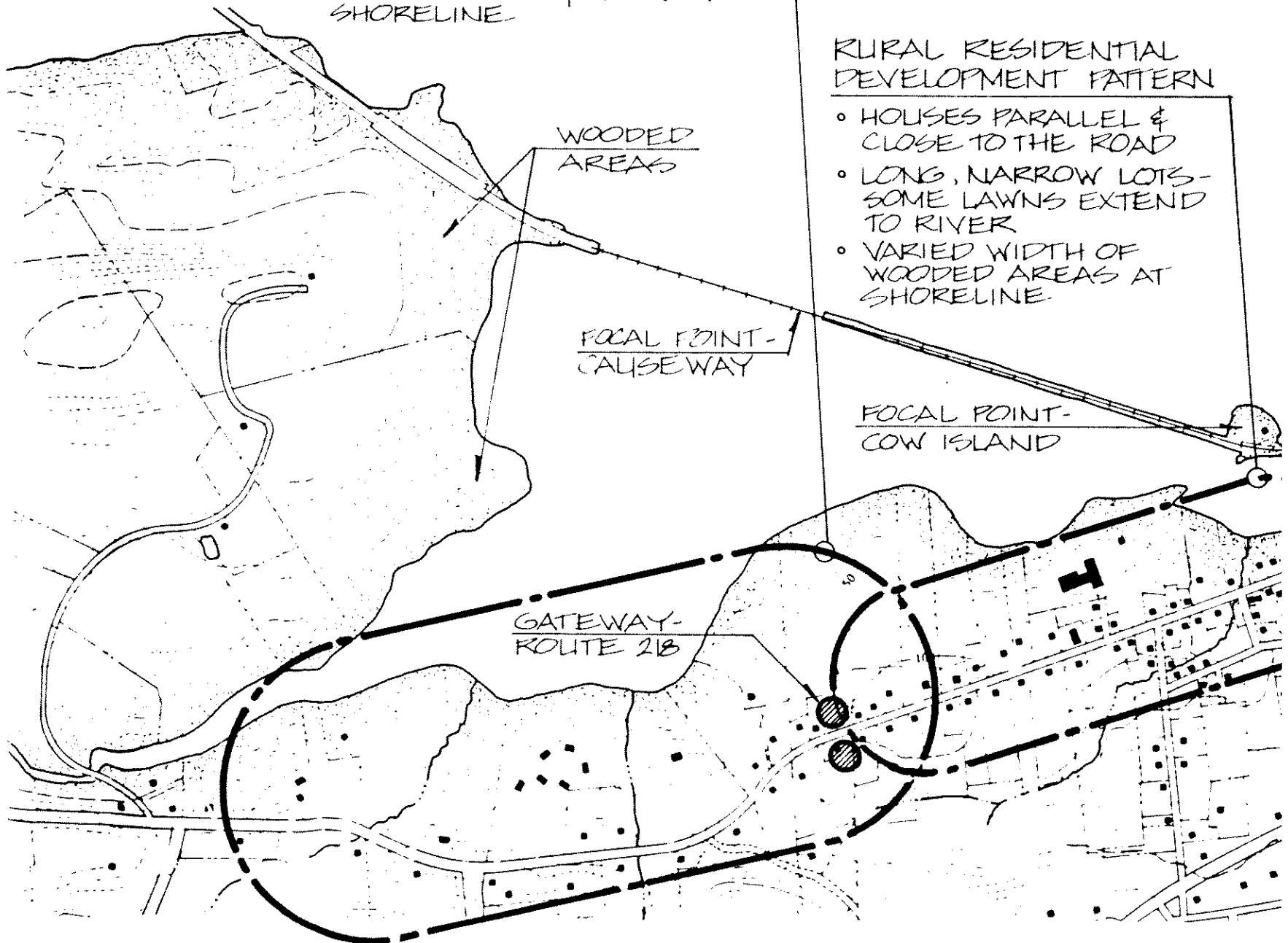
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

- SOME HISTORIC FARMS / CLUSTERED FARM BUILDINGS
- LOWER DENSITY - MORE OPEN SPACE
- LARGE FIELD AREAS & WOODED SHORELINE

FOCAL POINT -
DAVEY BRIDGE

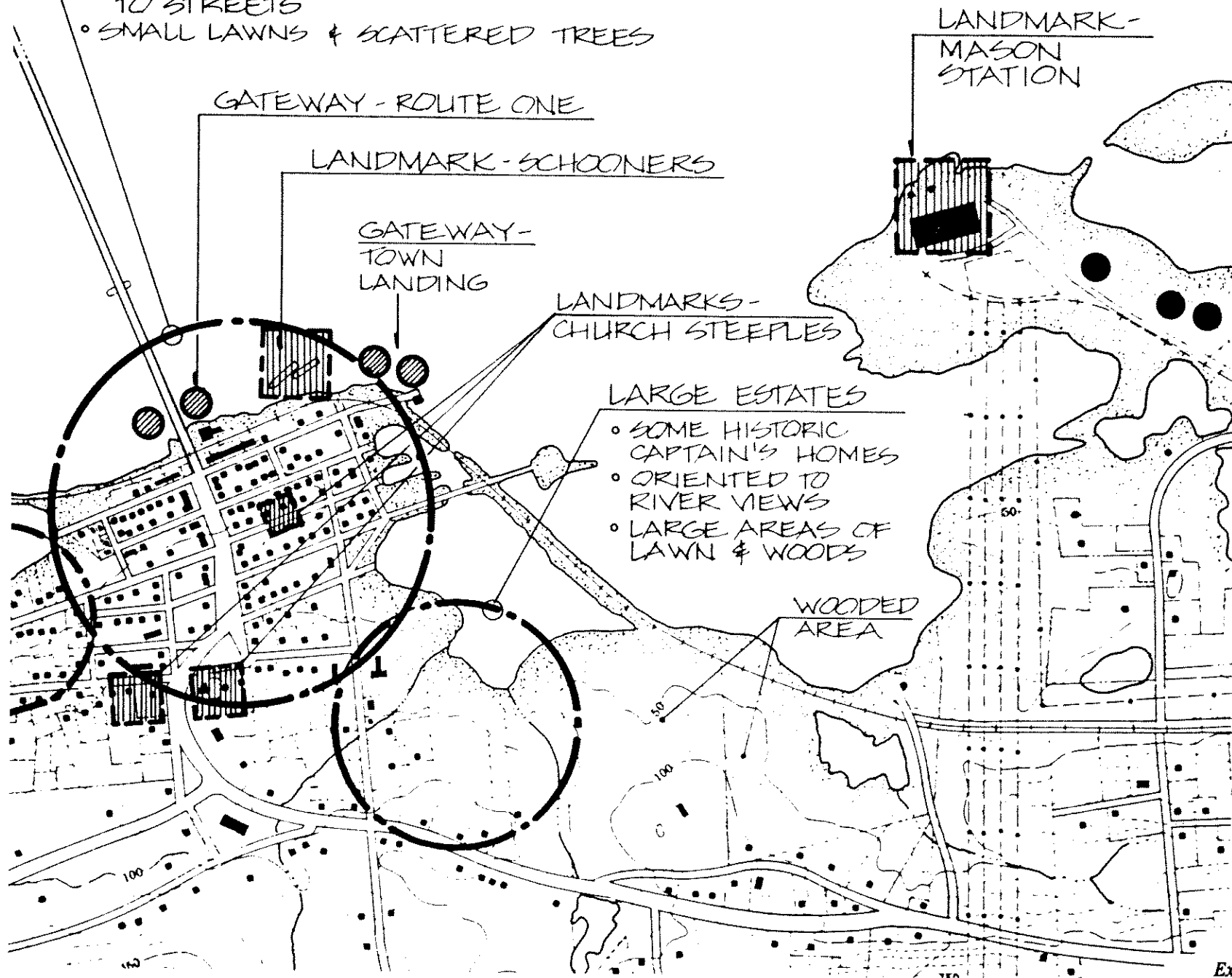
RURAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

- HOUSES PARALLEL & CLOSE TO THE ROAD
- LONG, NARROW LOTS - SOME LAWNS EXTEND TO RIVER
- VARIED WIDTH OF WOODED AREAS AT SHORELINE

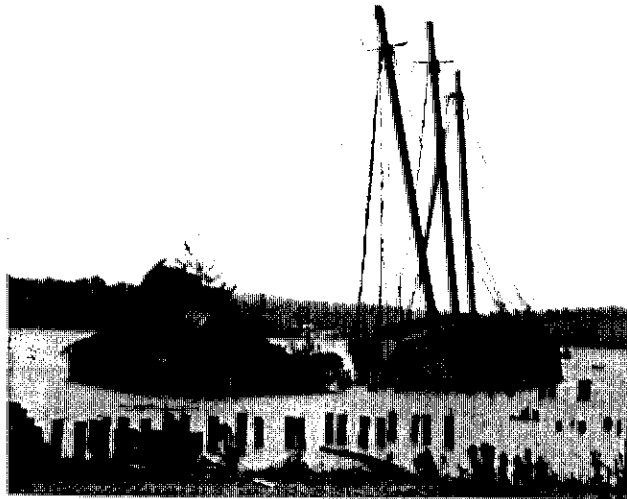


VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

- COMPACT STREET GRID
- CLUSTERED BUILDINGS PARALLEL TO STREETS
- SMALL LAWNS & SCATTERED TREES



*Exhibit 21
Hesper and Luther Little Schooners*



unkempt vegetation on either side of Route One do not provide a positive sense of arrival and welcome to complement the high visual character of the village center.

The Town Landing provides another major gateway to the village center for recreational and commercial boats that approach the Town from the Sheepscot River. This gateway lacks clear visual definition and needs further articulation to establish a strong identity.

The third, and final gateway into the village is along Route 218 at the area of the Old Jail House. This area begins a pleasant arrival sequence that transitions from the rural, open areas on the outskirts of town through a moderately developed area, that terminates

in the village center. This sequence is very successful as it is.

Materials - Early construction of the village was usually wood clad or brick. In areas where earlier architecture remains, wood, brick and stone continue to be the dominate building material.

VISUAL CHARACTER SUMMARY

Together, the historic, natural and built features combine to create the visual image of a traditional coastal New England village in a rural setting. The combination of the elements described above create a number of unique visual images along the shoreline. The differences and similarities among these visual images and their location has led to the classification of the riverfront into four distinct visual character areas presented in this study.

The Clark's Creek Area is characterized by the configuration of the shoreline, the moderately to steeply sloping banks, and the visual contrast between mature trees and open farm fields which create a high degree of visual enclosure and strong visual interest.

The visual character of the Clark's Creek Area is a mixture of significant areas of undisturbed woodland interspersed by a limited number of open fields and single family residences along it's shoreline. Along the south slope of Clark's Point, steeply sloping, wooded banks descend sharply down to a rocky, cobble shore with pronounced ledges that extend into the cove. This area offers a number of pano-

ramic views across the Sheepscot River to Edgecomb, and across the cove to the Village Center. At the mouth of Clark's Creek the visual setting is much more intimate and the view is much more defined. On the eastern shore of the Creek heavily wooded banks descend sharply onto projections of ledge that slope into the water. Mature hemlock and pine lean out from these banks towering over the water, reinforcing the enclosed cove and directing views along the channel of the creek. On the western shore of the creek mature woodlands of pine and oak begin to give way to working farms and single family residences towards town. The land is gently rolling with several small streams and swales traversing open fields and remnant pockets of woodland. The views become much more open as you proceed south toward the Village Center. Mature pine and red oak line the shore over emergent grasses. The abandoned narrow gage rail bed forms a linear landform that parallels the western shore, at times merging with the natural shoreline and at times forming an isolated white spine defined by it's rubble ballast base.

Views into and from the Clark's Creek cove of the undeveloped wooded shoreline, with a few scattered houses and farm fields are what helps create the image of the small village center with a defined edge surrounded by rural land.

The visual character of the Village Waterfront can be defined as a contrast between physical development and natural features. Along the northern edge, the visual character of this area forms a transition from the rural open fields and remnant pockets of woodland into a more

structured form of residential development around the small cove north of the village center. This area is defined by single family homes, set back from the shoreline by areas of lawn which sweep down to a naturalized edge along the western shoreline of the Sheepscot River. The houses that wrap around the cove, create an inwardly focused, intimate visual setting. This setting is in sharp contrast with the railroad causeway and the gravel parking lot just east and south of the cove. Although these latter areas are not particularly visually pleasing, they do provide a number of vantage points for open, panoramic views out over the Sheepscot River and up toward the Village Center.

The visual character along the village waterfront, although completely urban in character, is comprised of similar contrasts. This area, a relatively narrow strip of land directly adjacent to the village center, offers panoramic views out over the Sheepscot River and Village Harbor. However, taken by itself, it is a relatively barren area lacking in any substantial visual appeal. Views from the Town Landing are panoramic out over the Village Harbor and the Sheepscot River. Again, however, there is little visual connection made between the Town Landing and the village center. The historic, intimate and pedestrian scale of buildings and streets in the village center does not extend down to the village waterfront edge. The lack of vegetation along the village edge also contributes to its somewhat negative visual character. In addition to these elements, the historic ship wrecks, just offshore, provide a counterpoint of historic interest that speaks of picturesque abandonment and maritime history. Above the immediate shoreline edge at the village Center exists the

composite of narrow streets, historic buildings and pleasant pedestrian character that gives Wiscasset its reputation as the "prettiest village in Maine".

This sense of separation between the village waterfront and the village center is further reinforced by the fact that several of the waterfront businesses orient toward the town center along Federal Street and away from the waterfront.

This area, with the compact village center and clear transition to village residential and rural surroundings, contains the essence of the visual character which is valued by the residents of Wiscasset.

The Village Harbor Area is an area of diverse land uses and contrasting visual character which are brought into close visual relationship because of their location around the sloping shoreline of the Harbor, Pottle Cove and Hilton Cove. The enclosed configuration of the harbor creates a visual character that is defined by the diverse land uses along its rim.

The character of the shoreline south of the village center is moderately to heavily wooded, with views to several large and visually prominent residential estates. This wooded and residential shoreline character dominates the northern portion of the area.

The visual character of the southern shore is visually dominated by a clear cut that accommodates high voltage power lines which run westward from the Mason Station.

The lack of vegetation within this utility right-of-way is a severe visual intrusion upon the otherwise pastoral landscape. This condition presents the only truly negative visual impact within this character area.

The building mass and industrial character of the Mason Station at the southeast terminus of the harbor, provides an interesting counterpoint to the visual character of the historic village across the harbor, the wooded residential character along the western rim of the harbor, and the more natural appearing landscape south of the power plant. In addition to these areas, there exists, an historic mill pond formed by the damming of Ward Brook before it enters Hilton Cove. This particular area has a park-like landscape character which offers views across the harbor to the village and the Mason Station. This Area, with its visual diversity, enclosed configuration and continued use as a boating and mooring area, is important to the visual quality of the riverfront. The northern, wooded portion of the harbor shoreline also provides the southern "visual boundary" of the historical village center.

The visual character within the Back River Area is rugged and heavily wooded. The slopes of Cushman Hill descend steeply into Cushman Cove and the Cowseagan Narrows down rocky bluffs and onto cobble shores. The steeply sloping terrain offers spectacular views across Cushman Cove and the Cowseagan Narrows to Westport. This area is totally undeveloped and provides a rugged beauty that contrasts sharply with the developed visual character of the Village Center. The shores of Cushman Point retain the same rugged character although this peninsula has

been subdivided into single-family residential housing lots. From the house lots and access road, the dense woodlands offer only an occasional filtered view out over the water.

It should be noted that this area is highly sensitive to visual impact because of its steep slopes and visually prominent ridge line. Goals for the preservation of existing visual quality and the inherently sensitive quality of this area should be carefully evaluated before change and growth occur in this area.

HABITAT (Exhibit 22)

Upland Habitat

Within the Riverfront Study Area the Sheepscot and Back River corridors contain a diverse array of high quality wildlife habitat:

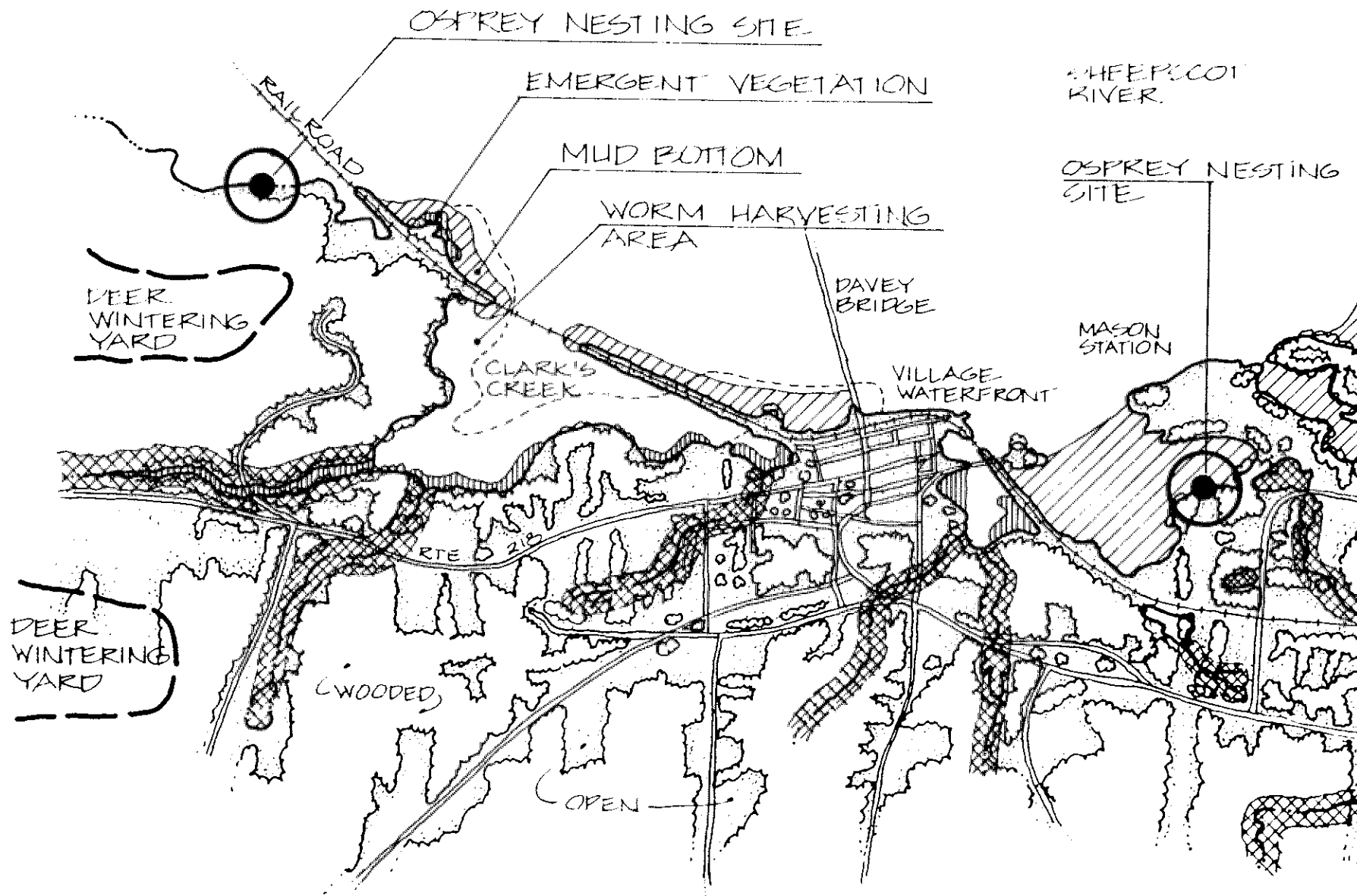
Clark's Creek Cove and the adjacent portion of the Sheepscot River are classified as a Class "C" coastal wildlife concentration area by the Inland Fish and Wildlife (IF&W). Areas with a Class "C" rating are significant because of the abundance and diversity of wildlife they support, and their importance to rare species. The rating system used by the IF&W is a three tier system based on the value of coastal wildlife relative to other areas that are rated within the State, as well as, the relative abundance and diversity of species a particular area supports. A Class "C" rating is significant at a local level and is defined as an area with moderate species abundance or diversity.

(see appendix for definitions).

The relatively steep, south-facing slopes of the upland area located between Clark's Point and the mouth of Clark's Creek are dominated with a forest cover primarily composed of a mixture of white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and red oak (*Quercus rubra*). Much of this area has reverted back from former agricultural uses to distinct patches of paper birch and aspen woodland on the hillsides. Remnants of old orchards are apparent from stands of existing Apple trees (*Pyrus malus*) that are scattered along the hillside. Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and white pine dominate the wooded area immediately along the eastern shore of Clark's Creek. Deer are often observed within these forested areas because of the cover and the food source they provide. A deeryard, located to the northwest of Clark's Creek, has been rated by Inland Fish and Wildlife as having a high (D3) value. A second deeryard immediately north of Clark's Point has received a moderate rating of (D2).

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucephalus*) were observed roosting in the pines near Clark's Point on several occasions and feeding along the shoreline of the cove. Although no active nests are known to exist within the survey area, eagles often frequent open water areas, particularly during the winter months when they concentrate along the unfrozen, tidal waterways.

Scattered residential development has fragmented much of the natural character of the shoreline south of the Clark's Point Road Bridge. Most of this development has occurred immediately, alongside Route 218 and has not



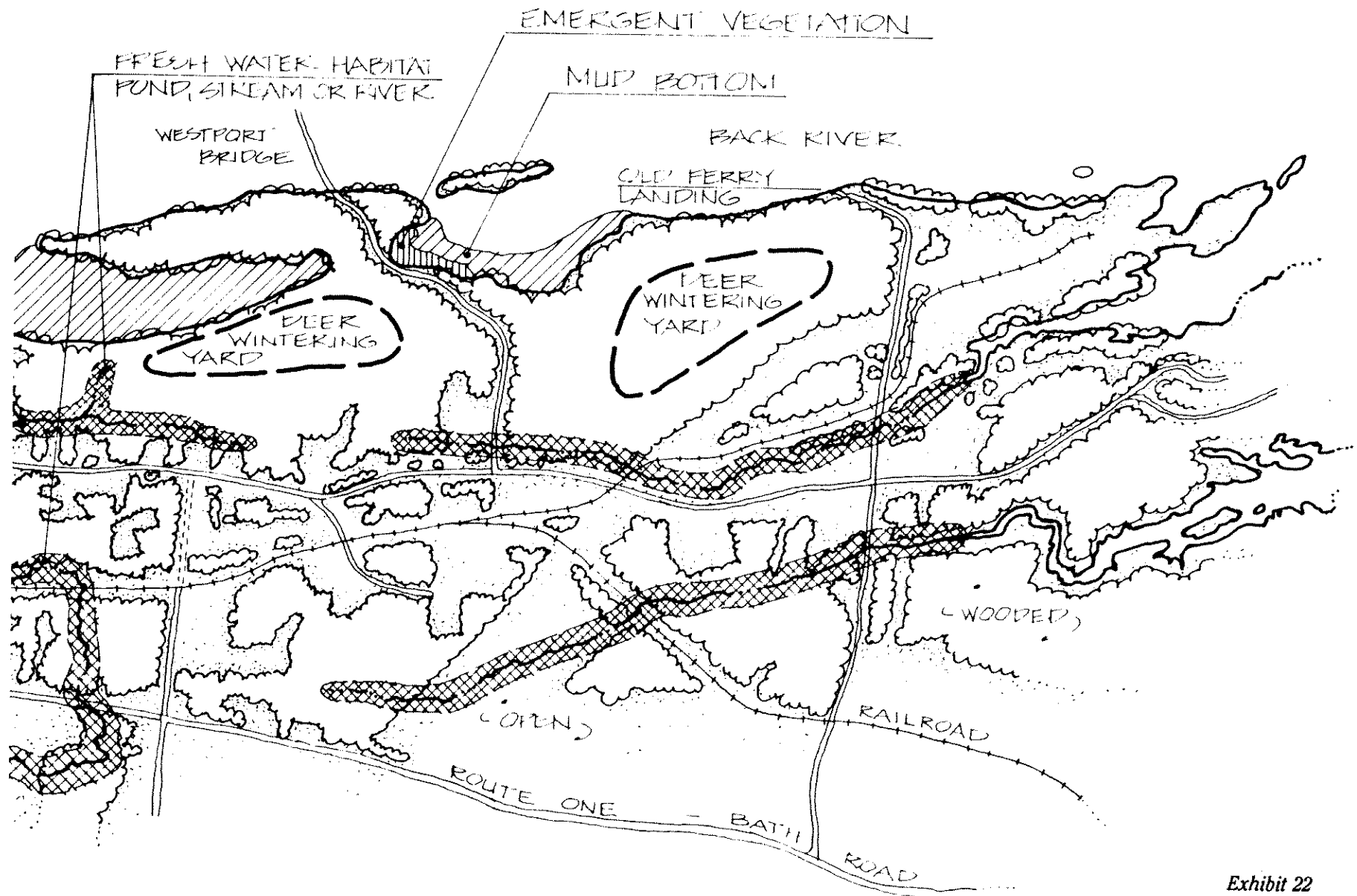


Exhibit 22
Existing Habitat

directly impacted the rivers edge. Several existing hay fields extend from behind the roadside homes to a narrow strip of red oak and white pine that still remain along the shoreline. Some portions of the southern end of this section, however, contain extensive shoreline stands of oak and pine that provide food and habitat cover for a variety of animals that frequent the area (see appendix I)

Development within the Village Waterfront Area has had a marked influence on the quality and type of natural habitat found within this area. The development pattern within this study area transitions from an open, rural-residential land use pattern with open yards and fields and wooded shoreline north of the village center, to the more urban character and intense development pattern associated with the village center.

North of the village center one finds a mix of hardwood stands, open fields and several perennial streams that flow into the Sheepscot River. South of the Middle School the shoreline area begins to become more intensely developed with the Wiscasset municipal sewage treatment plant located on Cow Island, the Town Landing, and accessways to both the southern end of the Maine Central Railroad causeway and the Davey Bridge across the Sheepscot River dominating the waterfront. Existing trees and shrubs in this area are limited to what is found within private yards and undeveloped portions of properties.

South of the treatment plant, along the waterfront to the base of Pleasant Street, little natural habitat remains to support any significant level of bio-diversity within this

area. Remnant pieces of land are all that is left of what was once a wooded shoreline. The development of the waterfront along this section of shoreline has reduced the ability of this area to support any significant wildlife to the point where the Department of Environmental Protection has classified this area as non-redeemable.

This ecozone is predominantly affected by the high degree of adjacent land use, the general water quality of the Sheepscot River and the level of tidal flushing through the railroad causeway located north of the treatment plant and immediately south of the Town Landing.

Within the Village Harbor Area, the IF&W has identified the Hilton Cove area as a Class "C" coastal wildlife concentration area. The area is defined as an area with moderate species abundance or diversity.

The southern edge of Pottle Cove is overshadowed by an extensive power line right-of-way extending northwest from Central Maine Power's (CMP) Mason Station located on Birch Point. Because of the placement of the power lines, patches of pine and oak are relatively small and scattered along the steep, north-facing shorefront of Pottle Cove. A shallow, relatively undisturbed tidal pond, approximately two acres in size, is located adjacent to the western shoreline of Pottle Cove, northwest of the railroad track. This pond is dominated by cord grass.

Ward Brook drains through an emergent freshwater marsh, northwest of Birch Point Road, into a freshwater pond located at the southwest end of Hilton Cove. The pond was

created by the damming of Ward Brook on ledge outcrops located along the edge of the tidal cove. Water levels in the pond and upstream marsh are regulated by this structure. A small stand of cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) is located north of the pond. The pond itself is primarily surrounded by maintained lawns extending along the entry drive to the Mason Station.

Birch Point forms the eastern boundary of Hilton Cove. Present natural features of the Point have been heavily influenced by continued development of this Point for commercial use. Today it is dominated by the Mason Station, an electric generating plant. A stand of paper birch skirts the Power Station along the southern end of Hilton Cove, while several small stands of aspen and pine are scattered along the shoreline edges of the Point. An osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) nest was located within the Hilton Cove area.

Within the Back River Area, IF&W has identified Cushman Cove as a Class "B" coastal wildlife concentration area. This is a regionally significant area of the Maine coast. Class "B" areas are defined as areas with high species abundance or diversity, or areas of importance to a State listed Special Concern, Indeterminate Status, or Watch List species.

This area is relatively undeveloped and characterized by steep, east-facing slopes predominately forested with white pine/red oak/sugar maple forest cover association. Hemlock, red oak and several miscellaneous hardwood and softwood species are scattered throughout the shoreline slopes. The area between Cushman Cove and Birch Point

Road north of Route 144 (Westport Island Road) is dominated by the forested slopes of Cushman Hill. The north-west facing slope of Cushman Hill is more gradually sloped than the steeper, eastern side. Paper birch and other mixed hardwoods dominate the upper slopes, while white pine and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) dominate the lower portions. A wetland dominated by red maple is located along the bottom of the hill. The area of Cushman Hill includes a fairly extensive deer yard that has been mapped and identified by IF&W. The exact extent and value of the deer yard habitat is not known at this time and will require further study by IF&W.

South of the Westport Island Road lies another fairly extensive wooded area. The immediate shoreline slopes are steep and predominantly covered with white pine, while the more inland areas are dominated by a mixture of white pine, red oak, trembling aspen, paper birch, with scatterings of balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), red spruce (*Picea rubens*), and hemlock. A second mapped deer yard extends south to Ferry Road. The extent and value of the habitat within this deeryard will require further evaluation by IF&W. A public boat launching site of limited size is located at the Ferry Landing site.

This ecozone is predominantly affected by the topography of the shoreline area, absence of development, and the general water quality of the Sheepscot River.

The area between the Mason Power Station and the Old Ferry Landing is relatively undeveloped and characterized by steep, east-facing shoreline slopes and pine/oak forest.

The steep, rocky slopes have prevented easy, direct access to the shore and thus, the subsequent development of the shoreline area. Appropriate multiple-use management of the forest resources will provide the critical support necessary to maintain local wildlife, timber and recreational resources. Proper management of the wooded slopes will also maintain and enhance the existing aesthetic quality of the Town.

Marine Habitat

Marine resources encountered within the study area are fairly common in this part of Maine and provide an important economical asset to the Town. Maintaining the health of significant marine habitat areas is important to the character and liveliness of Wiscasset.

The natural features within the Clark's Creek Area are strongly influenced by the water quality of Clark's Creek and the many perennial streams that enter the Sheepscot River. A causeway and bridge, constructed by the Maine Central Railroad extends approximately 4500 feet across the mouth of Clark's Creek Cove from Cow Island to the southern tip of Clark's Point. Tidal flow within the cove area has been restricted to an approximately 1100 foot gap in the earthen and rock causeway. This limited opening has reduced the ability of this area to properly flush itself of sediment and nutrient runoff from adjacent shores.

Shoreline flats within this character area provide habitat for marine worms that have been traditionally harvested by local fishermen. The immediate intertidal zone is primarily rocky with patches of bladder wrack (*Fucus vesicu-*

losus) and knotted wrack (*Ascophyllum nodosum*) often found washed up on the rocks. Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) is located in small patches immediately along the shoreline south of the Clark's Creek outlet. Black ducks (*Anas rubripes*) were noted to regularly feed within the strips of emergent vegetation immediately along the shore, while red-breasted mergansers (*Mergus serrator*), white-winged scoters (*Melanitta fusca*), pintails (*Anas acuta*), common goldeneyes (*Bucephala clangula*) and buffleheads (*B. albeola*) were often noted further offshore in the cove and river.

Despite periodic closings of the local mudflats, the marine resources of Wiscasset and the Sheepscot River are generally regarded as exceptionally clean and healthy. This is directly influenced by the lack of upstream industry. Water quality within the Sheepscot River drainage has a significant effect on the entire Wiscasset shoreline, and the continued well-being of those dependent on the utilization of these finite natural resources. Maintaining the quality of this resource base is dependent upon the level and support for the prudent regulation of point and non-point pollution sources within the Sheepscot River watershed.

Within the Village Waterfront Area development along the shore has had a marked influence on the quality and type of wildlife and habitat found from the treatment facility causeway southward to the Town Landing, as well as, the tidal areas situated between the railroad causeway and the shore west of the Town Landing.

Mudflats, traditionally used by local fisherman as worm-

harvesting areas, continue to extend from the Clark's Creek Estuary, southward, along the shoreline to an area immediately south of the Edgecomb Bridge. The productivity of these flats has been diminished over time because of persistent runoff and changes in the water chemistry in this area. Joppa cove, approximately 430 feet across, directly west of the treatment plant is dominated by mudflats with patches of cordgrass along the outer edges. Siltation of this cove has occurred rapidly over the last several years due to a large volume of sediment runoff from sites upstream. A narrow strip of cattails (*Typha angustifolia*) now exists along the southern edge of the cove. Along the cove's western edge a small perennial stream traverses through several private yards before emptying into it. The cove area currently provides regular roosting habitat for herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*), black backed gulls (*Larus marinus*), and ringed-billed gulls (*Larus delawarensis*).

West of Whites Island, the causeway on which the former Maine Central Rail line runs, extends approximately 2000 feet from an area just south of the Town Landing to a point north of Pottle Cove. The extension of the railroad causeway across the harbor creates a protected tidal area situated between the causeway and the shore. Tidal flows in this area are severely restricted due to the earthen and rock causeway. Access to White Island can be gained by traversing a wooden bridge to the island from the railroad causeway.

This tidal area contains the remaining evidence of former piers and wharves. Salt marsh grass (*Spartina patens*) has become established on the remnants of these former

structures. Cordgrass is located throughout much of the remainder of the tidal wetland. Large areas of red oak and white pine ring the western edge of the tidal flats and extend upland along two perennial streams that drain the east-facing slope of the village shoreland.

Black ducks were noted to regularly feed within these areas of emergent vegetation located immediately along the shoreline, while mallards (*Anus platyrhynchos*), red-breasted mergansers, white-winged scoters, common goldeneyes and buffleheads were regularly observed both in the cove and river areas.

Development within the Village Waterfront Area provides both positive and negative planning attributes. The level of development has significantly reduced the biological diversity of the shoreline edge and it's ability to regenerate quality wildlife habitat. On the other hand, it offers easy access to the shoreline providing a unique opportunity for both year-round residents and seasonal guests to appreciate and enjoy the unique natural features of the Town. The tidal river and shoreline is a natural centerpiece for the town to use in providing any number of passive recreational uses that would directly benefit many of the local citizens and businesses. In addition, there exists a number of locally original and distinctive educational opportunities involving the numerous and readily accessible, natural and historic features of Wiscasset. The proximity of the shoreline mudflats to the Middle School provides a unique and ready-made laboratory which could allow many young students the ability to develop a better appreciation for both the ecology of the tidal waters and the history of Wiscasset.

In the Village Harbor Area it is not uncommon for black ducks to regularly feed within the narrow strips of emergent vegetation located immediately along the shoreline, while red-breasted mergansers, white-winged scoters, common goldeneyes, and buffleheads were regularly observed both in the coves and river. Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) were often noted well into the central portions of the river. A narrow, sheltered cove extends approximately 2000 feet along the southern edge of Birch Point. No direct public access by land to this tidal cove is available, providing feeding opportunities with limited disturbance for mallards, red-breasted mergansers, white-winged scoters, common goldeneyes and buffleheads.

The quality of the marine resources within this area is predominantly affected by the adjacent land use, and the general water quality of the Sheepscot River.

Within the Back River Area, Cushman Point is a narrow, relatively steeply-sloped peninsula of land extending from, and running parallel to, the main Wiscasset shoreline. The Westport Bridge crosses the Cowseagan Narrows to Westport Island across the southern end of Cushman Point. Cushman Cove is a long, narrow body of water, approximately 3400 feet long, that separates the majority of Cushman Point from the mainland. The narrow cove is approximately 1000 feet across at its widest point. Development of the shoreline area has been hampered by the extreme steepness of the surrounding shoreline. Much of this tidal area is too deep to accommodate emergent vegetation. The cove provides feeding opportunities with

limited disturbance for red-breasted mergansers, white-winged scoters, common goldeneyes and buffleheads. Emergent vegetation is more available within the small cove that is enclosed by the southern end of Cushman Point, and is located immediately south of the Westport Island Road. Black ducks and mallards were noted to feed along this section of shoreline.

ANALYSIS

PUBLIC ACCESS

The Comprehensive Plan clearly states that "...ample parking and ready access to and from the Sheepscot River" is a goal that the Town wishes to achieve as part of its growth management objectives. With over nine miles of shoreline along the Sheepscot and Back Rivers such a goal would appear to be easily met. Traditionally, local fishermen, wormers, boaters and residents have accessed the waterfront at such public facilities as the Town and Old Ferry Landings and from several private properties where landowners have not objected to local access. However, increases in recreational boating, residential development and the number of tourists over the last five years has brought a proportional increase in the demand for access to the water. This has begun to exceed the capability of existing facilities and the willingness of neighbors to allow free access across their property. Conflicts have occurred frequently between visitors and residents for limited access to the waterfront.

Through the study of the riverfront area and conversations with town residents, the Design Team has identified a number of physical, institutional and psychological barriers which currently inhibit access and enjoyment of the riverfront:

Physical Barriers - Physical barriers are generally considered to be the most imposing in restricting

access. Such barriers generally include bridges, highways and railroad lines. These types of infrastructure improvements along the riverfront make it easy to get near the shoreline but difficult to actually reach it. Wiscasset's riverfront has a number of such physical barriers along its shoreline.

Institutional Barriers - This type of barrier occurs where physical access is possible but is not allowed because of obstacles created by legal, political or economic conditions. Institutional barriers generally include: utility plants, waste water treatment facilities and military facilities. The private ownership of property can also be considered an institutional barrier. Institutional barriers tend to be exclusionary or self-contained, and depending on their use may hinder or preclude access to the water all together.

Psychological Barriers - This barrier often stems from impressions of the riverfront's accessibility, safety, users and general activities associated with areas of the riverfront.

Several of these "barriers" have existed as part of the character of the riverfront but were never considered to be barriers to water access by local residents. However, because of changes in either their use or an increase in demand, a number of these physical elements currently pose impediments to citizen access and enjoyment of the riverfront.

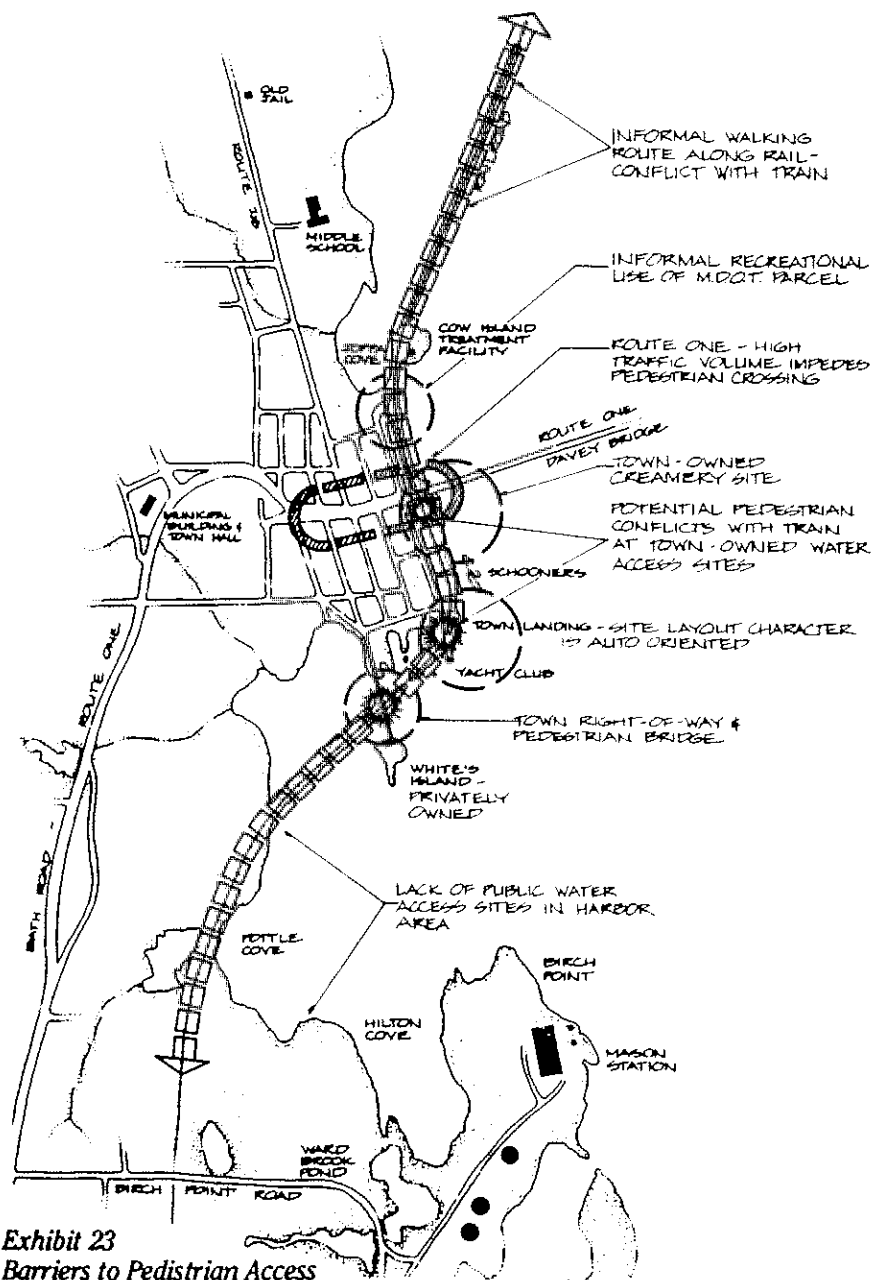


Exhibit 23
Barriers to Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian (Exhibit 23)

The most impacted by these barriers is the pedestrian movement along and access to the riverfront. Several physical, institutional and psychological barriers exist along the riverfront that impede pedestrian access and enjoyment. These barriers either deter or directly limit the access to areas along the riverfront.

The physical barriers found along the riverfront that impede pedestrian access are:

Route One Highway and Bridge - The abutment for the Davey Bridge creates a physical barrier for pedestrian movement traveling in a north-south direction along the village waterfront. Adequate clearance for pedestrians does not exist between the base of the bridge span and the elevation of the shoreline to allow people to travel along the riverfront without crossing Route One at grade. Traffic on Route One has more than doubled since 1980, and is particularly heavy during the summer months. This inhibits easy crossing for people trying to access either side of the village waterfront. Traffic volumes are expected to continue to increase in the region, along with the demand for tourism and recreation.

The establishment of a separate grade crossing for pedestrians and vehicles would be the most efficient solution to reduce the conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular movement across Route One. However,

because of costs, shoreline configuration and the concern for personal safety, the development of such a crossing is prohibitive. An at grade solution, either through proper traffic signals or the crossing guard currently used, appears to be the most feasible solution at this time.

MDOT Rail Line - Since its abandonment in 1979, pedestrian movement along and across the rail line has become commonplace. Concerns for pedestrian/rail conflicts and the issue of liability could significantly reduce pedestrian access to the water if physical barriers, such as chain link fencing, are erected. Discussions with Massachusetts Central Railroad have indicated that they do not intend to erect any type of barriers along the rail right-of-way at this time.

The rail causeways from Cow's Island to the southern tip of Clark's Point, and from White's Island to the shoreline of the village harbor are currently traversed by pedestrians wishing to access either shore from the village waterfront. These access opportunities will be curtailed with the reactivation of the rail line.

More random pedestrian crossings of the MDOT rail line frequently occur around the Yacht Club, the Town Landing, the Creamery Site, and along the tracks between the Town Landing and the Creamery Site. This free movement is not expected to be curtailed by the projected one train trip per day. If the number of daily rail trips increases substantially, every effort should be made to assure that pedestrian access to the

waterfront is maintained.

Because of sight-line concerns at the town landing, pedestrian access to the landing from the parking area above the landing off Water Street should be controlled by the use of planned access points across the railroad tracks.

Rocky Bluffs / Steep Slopes - The shoreline of Wiscasset has several areas of steep slopes and rocky bluffs that impede physical access to the water. These areas are particularly prevalent in the area of Cushman Cove and around Clark's Creek. Although such natural land configurations obstruct physical access, they do offer spectacular view points for visual access along the ridge and from the water. Such areas should be respected and physical access to the water from the land side not encouraged.

Several institutional barriers also exist which impede pedestrian access to the water. Those are:

Property Ownership Patterns - The lack of publicly owned property along some sections of the riverfront is a significant institutional barrier to public access. The majority of town owned lands that provide public access to the water are located along the village waterfront. A limited number of opportunities for public access exist north and south of the village center. The concentration of town owned land in the village center is due to an historical pattern of land ownership established as the town developed and provided public

services for it's residents.

The benefit of such a pattern is that clustering of public access sites in the village waterfront reinforces the historic land use pattern of the town. This reinforces the village center as the focus of the town, and helps maintain the rural character that currently surrounds it by removing development pressures for water access from the areas of Clark's Creek, the Village Harbor and the Back River. This has helped preserve the image of a traditional historical village within a rural setting that the town wishes to maintain.

Conversely, by having the majority of access points clustered in this fashion, the result has been that an increase in the demand for water access has overrun the ability of these facilities to accommodate the demand for parking and vehicular access. Efforts to accommodate these needs, by increasing parking and improving streets, has resulted in diminishing the pedestrian orientation at these sites along the waterfront. Very little pedestrian amenity, such as benches or trash receptacles exists, and in places adequate pedestrian linkages are lacking. Excess demand for water access - primarily boat launching - should be accommodated by the development of other sites either within the village center or at another location in order to reduce the congestion and demand for the facilities in town.

Waste Water Treatment Plant - Access to the shoreline around Cow's Island is physically possible but is

restricted because the waste water treatment plant occupies this site. This site provides a number of good vantage points for viewing the village, Clark's Point and the surrounding views across the river, and is relatively secluded. The existing physical conditions currently discourage access to this area because of fencing and occasional odors. The facility will be expanded in the early 1990's. Improving public access to this section of shoreline is not considered by townspeople to be essential to their enjoyment of the waterfront.

Mason Station - Access to the shoreline around the Mason Station is physically possible but is restricted because of issues of liability and the activities that occur there. Unlike Cow's Island, access to Birch point is much more significant because of its deep water pier and the opportunity to relieve some of the boating congestion and associated parking problems at the area of the Town Landing. An opportunity exists for the Town to discuss with CMP the possibility of achieving water access for recreational boating as part of CMP's plans to improve the facility for the shipping of cement products. If a boat launch area is developed on CMP property, the opportunity would also exist to extend pedestrian access to this location on the harbor.

Psychological barriers also exist along the riverfront, which cause town residents to avoid using certain areas even when the opportunity exists. Discussions with several residents have pointed out the following perceptions about

the riverfront:

- ▶ The village waterfront is a place residents would not visit at night because of the groups of young adults that congregate at the town landing, as well as other areas along the waterfront.
- ▶ If access along the riverfront is expanded for residents' enjoyment, it will eventually be over used by tourists and local young adults.

Psychological impediments can only be totally removed by educating the public about the amenities to be found along the waterfront. The active participation of local law enforcement and residents working together will help ensure that the proper use of the riverfront occurs. The riverfront is a local resource the community need not give up the use to other groups on the assumption that improvements to the waterfront will encourage undesirable activities to occur. Such activities can be eliminated or deterred through proper design, planning and most of all, community involvement in the development and maintenance of the riverfront.

Vehicular (Exhibit 24)

A number of physical barriers exist along the riverfront that impede vehicular access. These barriers are:

Route One - The volume of seasonal traffic on Route One reduces the ability of vehicles traveling along the

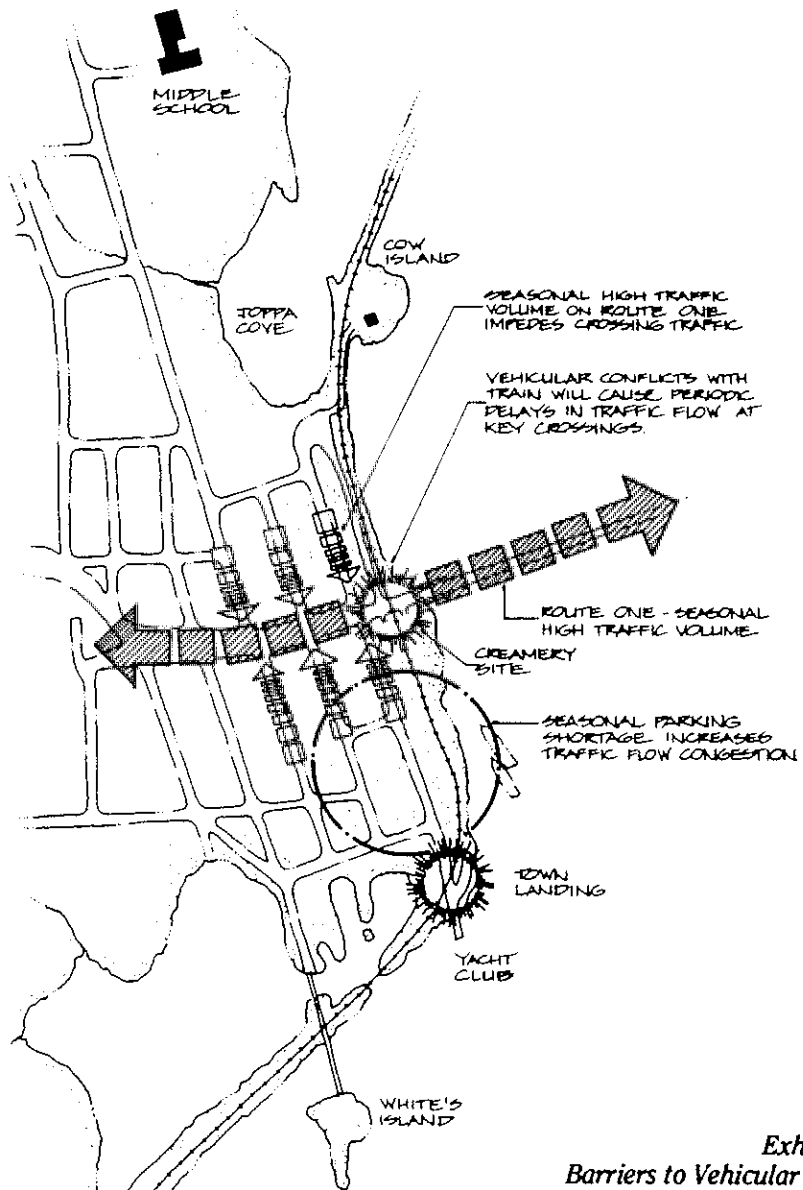


Exhibit 24
Barriers to Vehicular Access

side streets within the village center to access Route One, as well as other parts of the village center. Proper traffic signalizing at one or more intersections in the village center to allow adequate traffic flow from side streets appears to be the best option at the present time. This type of solution could improve both vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow problems in the village and along the village waterfront.

MDOT Rail Line - The reactivation of the rail line is expected to bring no more than two rail trains through town per day (one round trip). Traffic flow along Route One will be stopped during each train passage. The effects of this will be to create a periodic increase in traffic congestion along Route One and the village side streets. Periodic delays will also occur at the access drive to the Town Landing and Yacht Club. The initial number of trains passing through town, and the initial length of these trains is expected to have a minor effect on the seasonal traffic flow along Route One and vehicular access to the waterfront (conversation with MDOT). However, if the number of trains and the length of trains increases over time, the effect on the town will become more pronounced.

Parking

Inability to park close to the riverfront serves as a physical barrier for people who depend upon motorized vehicles for mobility. This is particularly true for the elderly and the handicapped, as well as for people who live outside the town and desire access to the riverfront. The Comprehensive Plan states that adequate parking for public buildings

and river access sites is an objective of their growth management policy. Parking north and south of the village center is easily accommodated on individual lots, which is traditional of the land use pattern found in these areas. Land parcels north and south of the village center average in size from five to fifteen acres, with several parcels of twenty acres or more. Should future facilities for water access north or south of the village center be desired, there is ample land available to provide adequate parking, at present time. To assure public access in the future, the Town may consider the purchase of a parcel.

Parking needs within the village center are accommodated by a number of small lots with five to fifteen spaces tucked in between buildings, and by a number of on-street parking spaces along several of the side streets. This system has worked well in keeping a balance between providing parking and maintaining the pedestrian and historic character of the village center. This existing, historic development pattern within the village center was established at a time when transportation needs were satisfied either by foot or by horse. Consequently, buildings were clustered tightly together in response to a slower more laborious mode of transportation. Today, this historic development pattern provides a scale and historic charm in the village that town residents wish to maintain. This type of development pattern, because of the inherent lack of available sites suitable for the creation of additional parking, precludes the development of an adequate number of parking spaces that would efficiently meet current and seasonal demands. The availability of parking within the village center is inadequate to meet the demand during the summer and

fall months. The lack of parking spaces in the village center has also hindered many existing businesses from using the upper floors of their buildings because of an inadequate number of spaces to satisfy existing zoning standards. The lack of adequate parking is further complicated by:

- Insufficient parking for boat trailers which use the Town Landing. Often these trailers are found parked along the side streets close to the Town Landing, occupying one or more parking spaces.
- Random layout of some parking areas within the village center. A properly designed layout of these lots could increase the number of parking spaces.
- Insufficient signage to direct visitors to the closest parking lot available. Because the lots within the village center are small and tucked away between buildings it is difficult for people unfamiliar with the town to find a parking space. While some may argue that this result is desirable, it leads to cars travelling up and down the residential side streets and adding to the already congested traffic flow. Many park where they please, simply out of frustration.

To resolve the parking problem within the village center several have suggested using the open land along the waterfront for parking or the creation of a satellite lot at the edge of the village center. To resolve the parking problem by either, creating large satellite parking lots or siting parking along the water would diminish the village character of Wiscasset by disrupting the balance between

vehicular and pedestrian uses.

Any solutions proposed for the resolution of this problem, should respect the existing development pattern within the village and the wishes of residents to avoid siting large parking areas on the waterfront. If additional lots are created, they should be relatively small in size, fit within the historic development pattern and be located such that pedestrian access from them to the village center is feasible.

Railroad

Two rail lines traverse the study area of the Wiscasset riverfront. The former Wiscasset and Quebec narrow gauge rail line has been abandoned since 1933. Since it's abandonment, the condition of the rail bed has been one of general disrepair. Today it is characterized by areas of erosion, overgrowth of vegetation, removal of sections of the bed and the conversion of significant sections to other land uses (the Middle School ball fields and single-family residences). Currently, sections of the remaining rail bed are used for informal recreation access to the shoreline by local residents. This type of opportunity for informal access along the river could become more important in the future if the parcels of land abutting the river are sold and subdivided. Development of these parcels may result in the loss of the informal understanding that currently exists between neighbors which allows for pedestrian access along the river.

A private group is attempting to purchase the entire length of the rail bed from the Middle School to the Alna/Wiscasset town line for the purpose of restoring rail service along

the existing rail bed. It hopes to use the line for light rail passenger and freight service. Given the legal, monetary and physical obstacles that exist to achieving this task it appears that its near term realization is highly unlikely. However, significant support for this endeavor has been expressed at several of the riverfront study workshops. Therefore, the option to pursue this plan should be left open.

The second rail line that traverses the riverfront is the standard gauge line currently owned by MDOT. The Town has stated in its Comprehensive Plan that the reactivation of the MDOT rail line should be the first priority for use of this line. It also has stated that it wishes that parking and other facilities associated with the reactivation of this line not increase traffic congestion, degrade the environment or have adverse effects on existing neighborhoods.

The Maine Department of Transportation has signed a contract with the Massachusetts Central Railroad to upgrade the line and begin hauling freight in the Autumn of 1990. Discussions have also taken place concerning the feasibility of passenger service along this line for tourists and for workers commuting to Bath Iron Works. The potential effects on the town are many, the most noticeable of those being upon traffic circulation, the riverfront environment and adjacent neighborhoods.

The effect upon traffic circulation will probably be the most noticeable felt by the town. Trains which will pass along the village waterfront must cross two existing major traffic flow routes in town: Route One and the access road

to the Town Landing and Yacht Club. The traffic flow on both routes will be interrupted and delayed by the train as it either arrives or leaves the State Pier at the Mason Station. On Route One this will cause traffic to stack up in both the village center and on the Davey Bridge. Such delays could be substantial during peak flows of vehicular traffic. The full effect of such traffic delays on the Town can not be measured at this time. It can be assumed, however, that increase in traffic congestion caused by train delays will be noticeable, especially during peak vehicular travel times. The Town should negotiate with Massachusetts Central Railroad on issues of scheduling and train length to reduce this effect.

The town could be further affected by traffic congestion if the eight acre site adjacent to the treatment plant is ever developed as a commuter lot for BIW workers taking the train to work. The location of a commuter lot on this site is appealing because of its accessibility to Route One. Conversely, its appeal is tarnished by the fact that traffic circulation in this area is already at capacity. For this reason, MDOT has no plans to use the site for this purpose.

Reactivation of the rail line will have an effect on the environment and wildlife along the riverfront as well, especially at Clark's Point and the Village Harbor area. The serenity of the wildlife habitat in these areas will be disrupted. This is especially true for the Clark's Point area where Osprey, Bald Eagles and a number of coastal ducks have been observed to using the area for feeding, nesting and the rearing of young. Several deer yards are also located in this area and the effect of the train on these yards

is unknown at this time. The Village Harbor area, although already affected by development, also provides substantial summer and winter habitat for coastal ducks, osprey and herons. The extent of the effect upon these areas will vary depending upon the particular type of wildlife and the number and length of train trips through these areas.

A reactivated rail line can also be expected to have an effect on the residential and commercial neighborhoods along the riverfront. Trains passing along the riverfront can be expected to generate noise, dust and odors from exhaust. In addition to these sensory impacts, a reduction is also likely to occur in the random pedestrian access over the tracks to the water's edge, which is now enjoyed by neighborhood residents. It is unclear at this time what uses may occur on the MDOT parcel, however, any use of this parcel for rail related parking or storage of equipment and material could diminish the visual quality of the riverfront and views from some residences to the water.

Visual Access

The level of visual access along the riverfront is quite high. Access can be obtained from a number of vantage points within the village center, along Route 218, from the Route One Bridge and a number of points along Cushman Point and the Back River areas. The quality of these views is very good and their type varies from open, panoramic views from the waterfront to more filtered views from various secondary roads. Maintaining a high degree of visual access along the riverfront is important because it is a type of access that is available for all residents and visitors to enjoy regardless of land ownership patterns or other bar-

riers to physical access along the riverfront. Future development along the riverfront could reduce the ability to see the riverfront from a number of areas.

HISTORIC AND VISUAL CHARACTER

Historic Character

The urban context of a waterfront is partly determined by its heritage. In light of the fundamental role the navigable waters of the Sheepscot River played in the development of the town of Wiscasset it comes as no surprise that many of its rich resources of historical and cultural significance are located along the Village Waterfront. The type and importance of these resources varies depending on their age and location. Some of the more well known historical sites are:

<i>Study Area</i>	<i>Historical Sites</i>
Clark's Creek	Sutter Dam (ME 491-01) Wiscasset and Quebec Rail Line
Village Waterfront	Kingsbury Shipyard (ME 491-11) Old Jail House WQR Round House Site Hesper Schooner Luther Little Schooner Wiscasset and Quebec Rail Line
Wiscasset Harbor	Capt. Williamson House Site (ME 491-19) Williamson's Mill Site (ME 491-05)
Back Cove	Bailey Site (ME 491-18)

These historical and cultural resources enhance the use and enjoyment of the riverfront by providing a unique element of community identity and civic pride. Depending on the historic designation, ownership and condition of these and other historic sites, the heritage of the waterfront can either produce many opportunities or prohibit the use of sections of the riverfront altogether.

The Comprehensive Plan states a strong intent to protect the town's appearance as a small New England coastal community with historic architecture and abundant open space. Of particular importance is the protection of the "impression of a historic rural way of life". Many who refer to Wiscasset's historic character, scale and elegance often give credit to specific historic sites and buildings as important references to Wiscasset's heritage, while overlooking one of the important cornerstones of Wiscasset's historical character and charm - it's historic development pattern. The historic development pattern is what provides the village center with that feeling of pedestrian scale, dramatic views down narrow streets to the Harbor and Sheepscot River, and the small town atmosphere that everyone enjoys. It is the spatial relationships of building to building, buildings to roads and buildings to the river, that people first see, experience and subsequently identify as the elegance, scale and neighborliness of Wiscasset. These relationships form the basis for describing Wiscasset as that small New England coastal community surrounded by abundant open space. The traditional rural setting for the coastal village is directly related to the spatial relationships that Wiscasset's historical land use pattern has established over the years.

The spacial qualities formed by Wiscasset's historic development pattern has created a rhythm between open space, woodlots and buildings that are difficult to regulate or recreate under standard zoning policies. The influence that the historic development pattern has on the appearance of Wiscasset is especially evident along the shoreline between Clark's Point and Birch Point. In this area, the historic development pattern is clearly expressed as the compact village center surrounded by residential neighborhoods which blend into a rural landscape. One can clearly see the closely spaced buildings of the village, the ship captains' homes with sweeping lawns to the waters edge and the agrarian quilt of farmstead, open field and woodlots that collectively creates the image of the rural New England coastal village the Town wishes to protect. However, the concerns for parking, building setbacks and road standards, which dominate the development process today, no longer produces this type of rural development pattern. Given that growth and development pressure may eventually result in the acquisition and subdivision of a number of the larger riverfront parcels in accordance with current zoning laws, this historic quality may be diminished. Accordingly, Wiscasset should consider the establishment of a special riverfront zoning district or other regulatory method to maintain the qualities of this development pattern.

Visual Character

Vision is an active sense that responds to physical forms, movement, colors, textures and contrasting elements. Collectively these elements produce the visual interest of a particular landscape and influence how people perceive

its visual character. When assessing the visual character of an area such as the riverfront of Wiscasset, it is important to realize that the natural and built features along the riverfront only partially determine it's description. The determination of an area's visual character is equally influenced by viewer exposure, viewer sensitivity and visual interest.

- ▶ Viewer exposure refers to the position of the observer in relation to the scene that he/she is observing. The perception of the riverfront's visual character will vary with the distance, elevation and movement of the viewer at the time of observation. As distance increases, the ability of the viewer to see detail of an object decreases. The higher the point of observation, the greater the range of vision for the viewer. For moving observers, the viewing time, combined with the speed of travel determines what objects can be seen on a particular route.
- ▶ Viewer sensitivity refers to how distinct viewer groups differ in their perceptions of the visual environment. Indirectly, people's values, opinions, experiences and preconceptions influence their impression of a waterfront's visual appearance. Viewer sensitivity will vary between individual viewer groups. The comprehensive planning process helped to develop a consensus among town residents that Wiscasset's rural character and small New England coastal village setting is valuable and should be maintained. This consensus was used as the bench mark for assessing viewer sensitivity along the riverfront.

- ▶ Visual interest in a landscape can be attributable to its form, texture and special features. Conceptually, landscapes are made up of edges and spaces. The edges give form to what the eye sees by providing spatial definition. In this respect, perhaps there is no stronger edge than where land and water meet. The two-dimensional configuration of the water's surface is in sharp contrast to the vertical elements found along the shoreline.

These three elements, viewer exposure, viewer sensitivity and visual interest, were used to evaluate how each of the four study areas might be influenced by visual change. "Visual change" for this study is defined as changes to the existing physical setting significant enough to alter the historic visual character that the Town wants to preserve. Although there are certain features that are common to the entire shoreline, the physical traits of each area creates a unique visual setting. Appreciation of each setting is defined by the assortment of physical elements composing a waterfront and by the viewer response to these elements.

The Wiscasset riverfront study area is designated as a Coastal Scenic Area by the State Planning Office (WI01). The visual quality of the riverfront corridor remains quite high throughout the entire study area. Clark's Creek, Village Harbor and the Back River areas have similar degrees of edge complexity, a strong sense of enclosure, a number of good views from higher elevations and a predominately forested/agrarian visual character. All three are highly sensitive to potential impacts on visual quality from improperly sited new development because of several

areas of steep slopes that are visually prominent from a number of different viewing angles. The Clark's Creek and Village Harbor Areas, are the most vulnerable because of large areas of cleared open space on these slopes. Conversely, the Back River Area because it is heavily wooded is able to provide a limited degree of buffering against the potential for negative impacts from new building.

The Village Waterfront, together with the Village Center, has a well defined traditional New England character that provides a strong pedestrian and urban scale, a clearly articulated skyline, and an established palate of traditional colors, materials and construction methods. The Village Waterfront has a rich visual texture produced by the combination of building materials, vegetation and unique features found only in this area. Materials such as wood, granite and brick provide a blending of colors and textures, as well as firm lines and structure to the view of the waterfront. Vegetation, on the other hand, softens the hard appearance of shoreline structures. The visual excitement of the village waterfront is enhanced by the presence of features, such as moorings, the yacht club and the schooners that are found only along the water. Often these structures are visual landmarks and serve as a focal point within the waterfront setting.

Because of its already developed nature, this Area has a high ability to absorb the potential for negative visual impacts, provided that the proposed development is similar to the existing character of the Town. Within this Area considerations of the scale of proposed buildings, colors, building materials etc. will minimize the impact to the

historic visual character of the Town.

HABITAT

Upland Habitat

Wiscasset is fortunate to have a fairly diverse array of high quality natural habitats along the coastal corridors of the Sheepscot and Back Rivers. This study found the Back River ecozone to have the highest level of species abundance and diversity of the four coastal ecozones studied. The IF&W rated this area as a Class "B" habitat, with state significance. The Clark's Creek and Village Harbor ecozones were each found to have a lesser degree of species abundance and diversity and were rated as a Class "C" habitat area by the IF&W. These areas were found to be important habitat zones at the local level. The Village Waterfront ecozone was found to be too greatly affected by development patterns associated with the village center for any remaining areas of wildlife habitat to be significant for their biological productivity.

The habitat types encountered within the Clark's Creek, Village Harbor and the Back River ecozones can generally be described as being typical for a White Pine/ Northern Red Oak / Red Maple forest cover association, which is common for this region of the State. Northern Red Oak, Eastern White Pine and Red Maple are the predominate tree cover found within this type of forest cover association. Common tree associates are white ash, paper birch, yellow birch, sugar maple, beech, hemlock and black cherry. Typical understory shrubs found within this association are witchhazel, alternate - leaf dogwood, maple leaf

viburnum and an occasional cluster of mountain laurel. Wildlife species found within the study area are typical of the type of wildlife associated with the White Pine/Northern Red Oak/Red Maple forest cover and the marine resources common for this region of Maine (see appendix—II). Significant wildlife resources within these areas, as defined by IF&W, include deer wintering areas in the Clark's Creek and Back River ecozones, several osprey nest sites associated with the Clark's Creek, Village Harbor and the Back River ecozones, concentrations of marine worms within the Clark's Creek and Village Waterfront ecozones, and several clam flats within the Village Harbor and Back River areas. General coastal wildlife concentration areas also exist within the Clark's Creek, Village Harbor and Back River ecozones. No rare or endangered plants were identified at the time of this inventory. The characteristics for each ecozone are summarized in the appendix.

Many of the wildlife habitat resources are in generally good health due to the relative stability of current development patterns within the shoreline area, current availability of suitable habitat, and the good water quality of the Sheepscot River upstream from the town. The quality and health of each of the ecozones is directly tied to the proper management and development of land within and adjacent to the river corridor; the proper management of the general water quality of the Sheepscot River; and the appropriate degree of tidal flushing within Clark's Creek Cove and the Village Harbor.

An important aspect of proper land management for habitat preservation is the maintenance of existing shoreland

vegetative buffers and minimizing further disturbances within these areas. Sufficiently wide vegetative shoreland buffers that have a diversity of vegetative layering from grasses and forbs to understory shrubs and trees to tall canopy trees, provide critical riparian and coastal edge habitats for many species of wildlife identified within the four ecozones. The success of these buffer areas in maintaining wildlife populations is based on the relative availability of the proper type and level of habitat critical to those species found within these ecozones. Proper habitat includes a land base with resources necessary to provide adequate levels of food, water and shelter. Shelter includes among other things, the cover necessary for nesting and raising young. A greater degree of habitat diversity allows for a greater diversity in wildlife species, and will contribute to the overall vitality of the natural community-at-large.

Given these needs, the clearing or harvesting of timber within these shoreland areas should be regulated to minimize the extent of forest canopy openings. In addition to its aesthetic impact, the maintenance of adequate softwood cover and oak mast production in this area is essential to the continued prosperity of the white-tail deer found in this area, not to mention black duck and other wildlife. The maintenance of large diameter shoreline pines and oaks will also provide regular roosting perches for bald eagles, osprey, blue herons and other birds.

The existing quality and diversity of habitat within these four coastal ecozones is a direct result of the continuous and intricate interactions between the natural resources of

the upland areas and those resources within the tidal river systems. If that process is disrupted too severely, as in the Village Waterfront area, the ability of that area to support a significant level of bio-diversity will be severely limited.

Marine Habitat

The water quality of the Sheepscot and the Back Rivers is an important contributing factor for the health of the many locally valued natural resources found today. Historically, the water quality of these tidal rivers has been an important economic asset to the Town. Maintaining the quality of these rivers is critical to the continued economic well being and quality of living that the Town now enjoys.

The Comprehensive Plan states that one of the town's growth management policies is to maintain clean, open waters to support commercial fishermen, recreational boaters, swimmers and wildlife habitat. An important first step toward achieving this goal is the action currently being taken to improve the capacity of the Town's wastewater treatment plant on Cow's Island. The capacity of the facility will be increased by five hundred percent to a half million gallons per day of treated wastewater. Completion of this expansion is expected to be completed in 1993.

Equally important to maintaining the integrity of the water quality and natural habitat associated with these rivers is the preservation of adequate vegetative buffers along the shores of the riverfront. Such vegetative buffers control erosion, limit nutrient runoff and moderate water temperature. These are important factors in maintaining water quality and aquatic habitat. Proper watershed man-

agement along intermittent and perennial streams to control sediment and nutrient runoff from point and nonpoint sources outside the shoreland buffers should also be implemented to maintain quality habitat.

Construction of the earthen and rock causeway for the rail line has resulted in the formation of several small cove-like areas with a restricted level of tidal action. The reduction in tidal action has resulted in the degradation of water quality for several areas in the Village Waterfront and Village Harbor that previously had an adequate tidal change to remove excess sediments and nutrients. An improvement in water quality in these areas could be achieved through creating additional openings in the existing causeways and thereby increasing the extent of tidal flushing for these coves. This increased flushing capacity would raise the natural ability of the coves to purge themselves, but might result in the loss of some existing mudflat area due to increased tidal scouring of area(s) immediately adjacent to the new openings. Providing additional tidal access to the cove area west of the Town Landing would likely benefit the quality of the tidal habitat with a minimal loss of mudflat areas. Actual overall advantages and disadvantages would depend on the location and size of the opening(s).

Maintaining the existing distribution, diversity and abundance of Maine's coastal wildlife depends on the continued availability of undisturbed, biologically productive marine habitats. Local support of rigorous shoreland zoning procedures is essential in maintaining these resources for Wiscasset's present and future benefit.