

Aquidneck Corporate Park
Middletown, RI

Landscape and
Signage Improvements
Master Plan

February 2006

Prepared For:
The Town of Middletown, RI
Produced By:
The Gifford Design Group, Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is the result of a cooperative planning effort between the Town of Middletown, the Middletown Economic Development Advisory Committee, the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, and the owners/tenants of the Aquidneck Corporate Park. It was prepared to suggest possible improvements (and the discussions leading to these suggestions) to the aesthetic and functional condition of the public rights-of-way within the park, specifically suggestions regarding public landscaping design and signage. These improvements will help to maintain and enhance the competitiveness of the Aquidneck Corporate Park for defense related and other high-tech companies. We hope The Town of Middletown can use this document to acquire funding and guide further development of this asset as a competitive Defense Related and High-Tech Corporate Park.

Bob Silva, *Middletown Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)*

Mr. Silva has shown a passion in recognizing the value of economic development for the Town of Middletown and has supported the goals of this project since its inception. He realizes the significance of aesthetic and functional right-of-way improvements throughout the Park for attracting high-quality businesses that will employ citizens and provide the structure for a sound tax base in Middletown.

Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC)

We would like to thank the RIEDC for providing funding through its Community Economic Growth Fund. The continued support of the RIEDC for local economic development efforts is greatly appreciated.

Newport County Chamber of Commerce

We would like to thank the Newport County Chamber of Commerce for aiding in the acquisition of implementation funds through various local and federal sources.

Ron Wolanski, *Middletown Town Planner*

As a planner, Ron Wolanski understands the need of a Master Plan to direct aesthetic and functional improvements within the Aquidneck Corporate Park. We thank him for his knowledge and critical guidance in the development of this document.

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INTRODUCTION

The Aquidneck Corporate Park is located between Valley Road and Aquidneck Avenue in the southern portion of the Town of Middletown, RI. The Park was originally built in the 1970's by the Town to create economic growth. The land in which the corporate park is situated was previously owned by the John Clarke Trust. Over the time following its inception, the park has been identified by others to house the largest concentration of defense related businesses in Rhode Island. The Town has acknowledged this milestone and has realized the potential of this park. They have contracted this study as a tool to improve the competitiveness of the park and promote it to more high-tech and defense related businesses.

In May of 2004, the Town hired the Maguire Group, Inc., to create the Aquidneck Corporate Park Improvement Plan. This report outlined an overall evaluation of the Park and identified (among other avenues) various landscape and signage improvements were needed to increase the aesthetic draw of the park for existing and new defense related and high-tech businesses. The Gifford Design Group, Inc., has been given the task of providing master planning services to achieve this goal.

Our project program involves evaluations of the aesthetic and functional aspects of the public rights-of-ways within the park. A thorough investigation of the park allows us to suggest enhancement scenarios that will mesh with the desires of the Corporate Park owners/tenants, as well as the Town of Middletown. In order to provide the appropriate framework for this program, we need to step back and provide a broad level of review.

One must recognize that the aesthetics of the corporate park roadways are not confined to the physical limits of the rights-of-way. View corridors within the park extend over property lines into private sectors of the park as well. While this Master Plan focuses on Town related improvements within the public rights-of-way, we also provide suggestions for improvements on private land. Furthermore, where we feel the town can work in conjunction with the private sector, we suggest cooperative improvements for ongoing evolution of the park.

The goal of this Master Plan is to suggest enhancements to the Aquidneck Corporate Park by improving park features and resources with a framework of opportunities. Our job as consultants to the Town is to discover the opportunities and present ways to capitalize on them. Identified within this report are:

- Assessments of the existing corporate park features
- Proposed Rights-of-way improvements
- Proposed administrative improvement for park function.
- Possibilities for increasing the pedestrian character of the streetscape

The following narrative is designed to present these findings and assist the Town of Middletown in seeking funds to accomplish the Master Plan's goals.

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Following reviews of the existing corporate park features and conditions, The Gifford Design Group, Inc., has established several elements that can be improved to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the park. These elements are categorized as follows:

- *Town Related Public Deficiencies*
- *Cooperative (Public/Private) Park Deficiencies*
- *Private Park Deficiencies*

ASSESSMENT A: *Town Related Public Deficiencies*

A-1: Corporate Park Entrances



There are two (2) entrances to the Aquidneck Corporate Park. Through public discussions we have had with key stakeholders and owners/tenants of the park, we understand that there are differing opinions regarding the significance and importance of each entrance.

One of these entrances is on the western side of the park along Valley Road. Based on discussions with key stakeholders (See Appendix, Meeting Memorandum of 9-20-05), we understand that the Valley Road Entrance is perceived by many as the main entrance for visitors and owners/tenants of the Park.

The second of the two entrances to the park is at its southern end, along Aquidneck Avenue. At the public meeting of 11-16-05, it was expressed that several owners/tenants in the southern end of the park (and their clients) frequently use this entrance as well. These park users articulated that although the Valley Road entrance may be perceived as the main entrance to the park, the importance of the Aquidneck Avenue entrance can not be forgotten.

Neither of these entrances, however, portray a modern corporate image, nor do they present a clear visual identity for the park. One reason for this may be that the layouts of each entrance require wide expanses of pavement to accommodate the large turning radius of delivery vehicles. This creates an atmosphere that is cold, industrial, and uninviting.

Also, as identified by park users at the 11-16-05 public meeting, poor maintenance of the entrance landscaping has left weed infestation and overgrowth of vegetation. In particular, this is evident in the current condition of the landscape island at the Aquidneck Avenue entrance.

These entrances are important to the identity of the park. They provide the important “first impression.” They should convey an image consistent with the vision of the Town and park owners/tenants.

A-2: Park Signage Program

The existing Directory Signage within the park does not work. It is hard to read, and does not provide clear information to visitors of the Park. The aesthetics of the signage is non-effective. The lettering, color, and layout of the text is not easily read from the roadway.



Other park signage, such as traffic signage and street identification signage is in poor condition throughout the park. In some instances it is unreadable or missing.

A-3: Rights-of-Way Conditions

The Existing Roadways throughout the corporate park are in poor condition. There are cracks and erosion problems occurring throughout the roadway system. Curbing is decomposing, or non-existent. Several drainage structures have sunken and need repair and/or replacement.



The use of aboveground utilities contributes to the industrial feel of the streetscape. While aboveground utilities are a common occurrence in street rights-of-way, more modern parks are incorporating underground utilities.

Minimal landscaping leads to a stark, industrial, or institutional feel within the park streetscape. There is a lack of definition to the public ways, causing an uncomfortable setting for pedestrians.

The park's three (3) cul-de-sacs each present large expanses of pavement and a lack of greenery. Many businesses within the park offer their main entrances off of these cul-de-sacs. The existing layout and deficiency in vegetation provides no direction to prospective clients or visitors of these businesses.



Aerial Photograph of Existing Cul-de-Sac within the Aquidneck Corporate Park

The Aquidneck Corporate Park Improvement Plan (May 2004), prepared by Maguire Group, Inc., identified a desire for some users of the Park to have convenient amenities available. These include child care and fitness programs. Fortunately, the Middletown YMCA provides these services. Better pedestrian connections and a more user-friendly pedestrian framework within the park may be desired to increase the accessibility to the YMCA and other park areas.

A pleasant work environment is a great asset of any business. It can increase employee moral and productivity. Other than the facilities provided at the YMCA, no public amenities exist within the park that pedestrians may want to access. An appropriate pedestrian environment may include an exterior passive recreation area. A resource like this could provide a place for park users to spend a quiet moment outside or enjoy an outdoor lunch break. Currently, there are no public recreation areas within the park for this use.

There is also a lack of sufficient lighting for vehicular and pedestrian users of the park. Where it does exist, the lighting supports an industrial atmosphere and does not provide the streetscape with a unique and appealing visual identity.

ASSESSMENT B: *Cooperative Park Deficiencies*

B-1: Land Use Guidelines

There is a lack of guiding documents to direct the on-going and future growth of the park as a competitive high-tech corporate park. There were plat restrictions on the corporate park when it was first developed. However, we understand that these restrictions have expired (See Meeting Memorandum from 9-20-05 in Appendix).

Other than the Town Zoning Ordinance, no other land use restrictions exist. According to the Town Zoning Ordinance, the zone designation of the entire Aquidneck Corporate Park is '*Office Park (OP)*.' This zoning classification allows various industrial, commercial, and manufacturing uses. If the Town or owners/tenants of the park wish to market the park to a more specific use (such as high-tech or defense related businesses), Park Specific Land Use Guidelines could help guide the development and growth of the park in this way.

There has also been a decline in the involvement of the owners/tenants and owners of the park as an association. This may be one cause for the lapse of the previous plat restrictions. A strong association does not exist; therefore, there is no collective voice for the owners/tenants of the park to address specific park needs.

B-2: Site Design Guidelines

As with the lack of plat restrictions (that could direct land use and growth of the park), there are currently no specific site design guidelines to improve and maintain the aesthetics of the corporate park.

Specific site elements of the individual properties within the park, such as landscaping, buffering, and building design, have an aesthetic affect on the public rights-of-way as well as the individual business. Although many businesses within the park have done a good job in addressing these aesthetic issues with respect to the overall appearance of the park, others have not.

Site Design Guidelines can help establish minimum design standards for private companies to abide by. As in the case of Land Use Guidelines, these guidelines could be established and implemented by a strong park association.

ASSESSMENT C: *Private Park Deficiencies*

C-1: Private Owner/Tenant Initiative

Many companies have taken the initiative to enhance their appearance from public areas, mainly at their visitor entrances. This activity can be encouraged, particularly with respect to landscaping and signage. However, there are instances where the service or utility entrances have not been given appropriate treatment to hide the potentially unsightly service activity. Because of the overall layout of the corporate park, this results in instances where the unscreened secondary or rear entrances of some buildings are obvious from the public rights-of-way, or directly across the roadway from main entrances to other facilities.

Some buildings and facilities within the Corporate Park have service and visitor entrances that are not well labeled or not appropriately separated from each other. The result is a lack of definition and proper distinction to the appropriate entrances of several buildings. This can be disorienting for the visitors or perspective clients of these individual companies. Furthermore, it could lead to possible unsafe conflicts between vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns.

MASTER PLAN

Design Goals and Opportunities for Improvement

This Master Plan Report suggests landscape and signage improvements to maintain and enhance the competitiveness of the Aquidneck Corporate Park as a first-class location for defense related and other high-tech companies. It outlines our assessment of park deficiencies and opportunities. In addition to the discoveries we have made through the master planning process, this plan is intended to be in accordance with the documented goals of the Town of Middletown and the owners/tenants of the Aquidneck Corporate Park. This Master Plan identifies **Three Major Categories of Opportunities for Improvement**, and goals for enhancement:

A. Town Related Public Opportunities

- Goal A1: Park Entrance Improvements
- Goal A2: Park Signage Program Improvements
- Goal A3: Park Rights-of-Way Improvements

B. Cooperative (Public/Private) Park Opportunities

- Goal B1: Land Use Guidelines
- Goal B2: Site Design Guidelines

C. Private Park Opportunities:

- Goal C1: Park Association Establishment
- Goal C2: Private Park Improvements

The following pages will outline these opportunities and goals and suggest potential policies for improvement.

OPPORTUNITY A: *Town Related Public Opportunities*

GOAL A1: Park Entrance Improvements

Entrance Signage:

- A1.1 A new corporate park logo and entrance signage could provide a more aesthetic corporate park image, to both the Valley Road and Aquidneck Avenue Entrances, consistent with the goals and objectives of the Town and Park Occupants. This goal is to create an atmosphere and appearance of a competitive facility specializing in the offices of high-tech and defense related corporations (See *Exhibit 1: Typical Entrance Concept*).



These signage improvements could include the use of locally available field stone. Field stone walls are a defining element of the Town of Middletown. Their use in the construction of signage would tie the park in with the aesthetic “fabric” of the community (See *Exhibit 5: Possible Entrance Sign Concepts*).

Also, the use of large, high contrast lettering makes the sign text more readable from long distances. For example, this could include a light text color set on a dark background (See *Exhibit 5: Possible Entrance Sign Concepts*).

A new corporate park logo should reflect a high-tech and defense related theme. The use of an appropriate large park logo on the sign gives the “passer-by,” a graphic first impression of the professionalism of the park community (See *Exhibit 5: Possible Entrance Sign Concepts*).

Small landscape accent plantings placed in front of the park signage, including low maintenance perennials such as daylilies, would provide seasonal color and interest. In addition, larger shrub plantings and/or evergreen tree plantings behind the sign would provide an aesthetic backdrop to the sign that will help to “set the sign into the landscape,” and provide visual support (See *Exhibit 1: Typical Entrance Concept*).

Entrance Aesthetics:

- A1.2 In addition to the signage improvements suggested above, new plantings and landscape design at both entrances could help accent the corporate park entry points and soften their rigid appearance.

Field stone wall segments could be added along the rights-of-way at the entrances to incorporate the aesthetic image of the Town of Middletown with the park (See *Exhibit 1: Typical Entrance Concept*).

The addition of low maintenance perennial massings in front of the walls would provide a realistic and natural appearance. Mixing in small massings of flowering and evergreen shrubs along the lengths of stone wall can also add to the seasonal interest of the entrance drives (See *Exhibit 1: Typical Entrance Concept*).



Example of Landscaped Boulevard at a Modern Corporate Park Entry

- A1.3 Also, new or improved landscaped boulevards containing trees and shrubs could be introduced at both entrances to reduce and “break-up” the large expanses of bituminous concrete (asphalt) that exist at the entrances to the park (See *Exhibit 1: Typical Entrance Concept*).

Trees with the landscaped boulevard should be chosen to improve aesthetics, while minimizing any interference with vehicular sight lines. Therefore, trees with a high branching and/or columnar habit and branching structure should be specified in sensitive locations.

Entrance Function:

- A1.4 Circulation and access to the park could be improved if one entrance was defined as a main visitor's entrance, while the other was designated as a secondary entrance.

According to input from the 9-20-05 meeting, the Valley Road Entrance to the park is perceived by many users of the park as the Main Entrance. This entrance should reflect this through the use of signage and aesthetic improvements. A directory sign and pull-off will be most effective at this entrance for visitors of the park.

The Aquidneck Avenue Entrance could be designated as a secondary entrance to the park. However, as expressed by park users at the 11-16-05, this entrance is currently used by owners/tenants within the southern portion of the park. Therefore this secondary entrance should remain open to all traffic that desires to use it. However, amenities such as directory signs may not be needed at this entrance.

Aesthetic improvements could be provided to improve the secondary entrance's appearance from Aquidneck Avenue, but these improvements could be at a more appropriate scale for a secondary entrance. A focus should be placed on the use of low-maintenance plantings, and the ongoing maintenance and "up-keep," of the entrances.

- A1.5 A new "Pull-Off" area for visitors entering the park could provide a safer and easier viewing area for a directory sign at the main park entrance on Valley Road (See *Proposal Exhibit 2: Pull-Off Area Concepts*).
- A1.6 An additional "Pull-Off" area could be provided at the park entrance on Valley Road for people exiting the park. This element could provide safer and easier access to the public mail boxes (See *Proposal Exhibit 2: Pull-Off Area Concepts*).
- A1.7 The Mail Box "Pull-Off" listed in Item A1.6 above could incorporate a public bus stop for use by owners/tenants and visitors of the park (See *Proposal Exhibit 2: Pull-Off Area Concepts*).

GOAL A2: Signage Program Improvements

Directory Signage:

- A2.1 Directory sign locations should be placed to ensure that they are effective in providing simple directions to park visitors. The most appropriate location for a directory sign is along Johnnycake Hill, and close to the main park entrance at Valley Road (See *Appendix, Aquidneck Corporate Park Aerial Photograph*). A new "Pull-Off" area would provide a safer and easier viewing area of the sign for vehicular visitors of the park (See *Proposal Exhibit 2: Pull-Off Area Concepts*).

A2.2 A different style of directory signage would be more affective in providing visitors with an understanding of the park and its layout (See *Exhibit 6: Possible Directory Sign Concept*). More effective signage may include:

- a. A more efficient organizational method to (with a glance) better direct visitors to the name and location of their destination within the park.
- b. A larger font for the text on the sign. The text should be a color that provides a high level of contrast against the body of the sign. This allows for easier reading of the sign from any distance.
- c. Graphic visual aids such as a park map to provide visitors with an understanding of the layout of the park.

Traffic and Street Signage:

A2.3 The Town Department of Public Works (DPW) should evaluate all of the traffic signage and street signs within the park on a regular basis. All damaged or missing signs should be repaired and/or replaced as needed.

GOAL A3: Rights-of-Way Improvements

Pavement Conditions:

- A3.1 All roadways within the park require resurfacing.
- A3.2 All Drainage Structures that are in disrepair should be repaired or replaced.
- A3.3 Where curbing does not or will not conflict with the original drainage design of the park, particularly where new sidewalks could be placed, new concrete or granite curbing may be appropriate to better define pavement edges and driveway entrances.

Curbing visually enhances the streetscape by providing a clean edge to pavement areas. It also provides a safer pedestrian environment by providing an edge to contain vehicular traffic (See *Exhibit 4: Typical Streetscape Concept*).

Cul-De-Sac Layouts:

A3.4 The existing Cul-De-Sacs provide large expanses of paved areas with very little vegetation. These cul-de-sacs could benefit from additional plantings and reduction of pavement area by creating landscape islands within their centers (See *Exhibit 3: Typical Cul-De-Sac Concept*).

Aboveground Utilities/Lighting:

A3.5 Relocating utilities underground would improve the visual appearance of the roadways, and help solve other utility concerns. For example, aboveground utilities can be visually obstructive to the facades of the buildings within the park. Relocating utilities underground would address this concern. Also, the placement of utilities underground provides a level of safety from the elements, and helps to prevent subsequent damage to the utility infrastructure itself.

A3.6 Street lights within the Corporate Park are inadequate. The placement of new street lights along all roadways within the park may help to increase vehicular safety and provide a higher level of park security from vandals, etc.

Street Trees:

A3.7 Street trees should be incorporated into the rights-of-way within the park where room allows. If possible, they should be placed on both sides of the roadway (See *Exhibit 4: Typical Streetscape Concept*). The specific street tree varieties chosen should be columnar in form and/or have a high branching character so as to create a canopy, and reduce any interference with vehicular traffic flow. Some varieties of street tree which may be appropriate for this use may include, but not be limited to:

- Acer rubrum ‘Armstrong’ (Columnar Red Maple)
- Malus ‘Centurion’ (Upright Red Crabapple)
- Pyrus calleryana ‘Chanticleer’ (Chanticleer Pear)
- Ulmus parvifolia (Lacebark Elm)
- Zelkova serrata ‘Green Vase’ (Japanese Zelkova)

Street trees have been proven to provide shade to harsh roadway environments where large expanses of pavement without vegetation provide an “Urban Heat Island Effect.” Large expanses of uninterrupted paved areas absorb and release a high amount of heat. Shade trees can help to reduce this.

Street trees have also been affective in the moderation of vehicular speed within roadways. In addition, they can have a more visible affect on the atmosphere of a streetscape, by reducing the industrial or institutional feel of a corporate park campus such as this.

Pedestrian Character of the Streetscape:

A3.8 There are currently no sidewalks within the park. Pedestrians are forced to walk within the roadway. Sidewalks, crosswalks, and curbing could be added to at least one side of all interior park roads to provide a safer and more pedestrian friendly atmosphere (See *Exhibit 4: Typical Streetscape Concept*).

A3.9 Past studies have outlined a desire by owners/tenants of the park to have additional amenities available within the park. As stated earlier in the assessments section of this report, the Middletown YMCA provides amenities such as child care and fitness programs to the public. Better pedestrian connections could be made to the YMCA through the addition of sidewalks.



Dr. John Clarke Monument located along John Clarke Road

A3.10 The existing lighting is not only inadequate for vehicular safety as stated in item A3.6 above, but also is inadequate for pedestrian use. Pedestrian scale lighting could be placed within the rights-of-ways throughout the park for safety and aesthetic purposes.

A3.11 The John Clarke Memorial Site is located along John Clarke Road, within the Aquidneck Corporate Park. This area of the corporate park presents a good opportunity to create a small pocket park for the passive recreation of its owners/tenants and visitors.

**OPPORTUNITY B:
*Cooperative (Public/Private) Park Opportunities***

GOAL B1: Land Use Guidelines

- B1.1 The creation of Land Use Guidelines will allow the Corporate Park to formally outline and state that it is dedicated to its strategy of becoming a home for high-tech defense related businesses.
- B1.2 Land Use Guidelines should be a product of the collective opinions and desires of the corporate park occupants and the Town of Middletown. They would direct growth of the park in the direction set forth by the Corporate Park Association and the Town. However, they should also provide some development flexibility for the existing and incoming businesses. Any drafted guidelines within this park should acknowledge and respect the neighboring community.

GOAL B2: Site Design Guidelines

- B2.1 The Corporate Park currently has no guidelines specific to the park for site design. New Site Design Guidelines could provide a map to ensuring proper development and overall park aesthetics and function.

The Site Design Guidelines should be generated collectively with the Corporate Park Association and the Town of Middletown. These Guidelines should be specific to the corporate park, but built on a design platform established by current state and local guidelines.

- B2.2 The Site Design Guidelines should be used to provide a required *minimum* aesthetic standard to the park. For example, the guidelines could require landscaping for proper buffering and screening of truck loading areas on individual properties. This would help in improving the overall aesthetic for the park, particularly as viewed from public areas.
- B2.3 Site Design Guidelines should also include regulations to ensure smart growth and good design. For example, the Aquidneck Corporate Park Improvement Plan prepared by the Maguire Group, in May 2004, notes that a large percentage of land area within the park is occupied by parking lots. Differing businesses have differing parking requirements, therefore the guidelines could accommodate varying amounts of parking areas as appropriate for the business served. The guidelines could address site specific design requirements for parking, and could incorporate flexible provisions, such as shared parking areas.
- B2.4 As part of the site design guidelines, standards should be included requiring the maintenance of existing site features and landscaping. Proper maintenance and “up-keep,” will extend the life of future park enhancements.

OPPORTUNITY C: *Private Park Opportunities*

GOAL C1: Establishment of a Park Association

C1.1 As noted in our assessment of park deficiencies, there is a lack of a strong, active park association. This hinders the park members from having a collective voice when communicating or doing business with the Town or other public agencies. It also impedes the owners/tenants of the park from having orderly communication amidst themselves.

A park association should be created that would include all tenants and/or owners of the Aquidneck Corporate Park. An active association would help to establish a collective voice, helping to have all members' agendas and concerns heard. It would open dialog between park members to discuss issues that affect their companies and relay ideas that could benefit the park and increase its competitiveness.

C1.2 A complete association of park tenants and/or owners would ensure that everyone would have equal representation when guidelines are drafted. As discussed in Opportunity B above (*Cooperative (Public/Private) Park Opportunities*), these guidelines could direct the future growth of the park, the maintenance of existing and future park improvements, and the Park's overall aesthetic and functional qualities. The association would allow these guidelines to provide minimum design standards and maintenance requirements for all current and new owners/tenants.

GOAL C2: Private Development Aesthetics and Function

C2.1 Private owners and tenants of the park are responsible for the aesthetic and functional character of their individual businesses. They should be cognoscente of any portions of their site(s) abutting public areas and neighboring developments.

a. *Corporate Signage:*

Individual Corporate Signage should be functional and mindful of the overall aesthetics of the park. Sign design should comply with any sign design guidelines that may be drafted and adopted by the Corporate Park Association and the Town of Middletown.

b. *Landscaping:*

All existing and future developments within the park should make a conscious effort to provide proper landscaping to buffer and screen any service or utility areas of their individual buildings from the public rights-of-way and neighboring businesses. Although many individual properties within the park are mindful of this, and have done well to address it, some properties within the park have not provided the same level of detail to this issue. Site Design Guidelines as discussed in Opportunity B above (*Cooperative (Public/Private) Park Opportunities*) would help to ensure that all park owners/tenants abide by a minimum acceptable standard of landscape and buffering.

All developments should also provide aesthetic landscaping features at their discretion. Landscaping can be critical to establishment of the image of the park as a competitive high-tech company facility. With this in mind, park specific Site Design Guidelines could provide a minimum standard for acceptable private corporate landscaping.

In addition to enhancing the overall appearance of the park, the use of appropriate landscaping on the individual properties within the park can improve or properly emphasize site specific signature elements such as corporate signage.

c. *Private Development Layout*

- *Private Business Pedestrian Entrances:*

Some buildings within the corporate park have service and visitor entrances that are neither well defined nor separated from each other. Redesign of the entrance layouts may make them more accessible and visible to visitors/prospective clients of the individual businesses.

Signage could also be used to better define where service or visitor entrances are. Site elements, such as architectural fixtures or landscaping could be used to emphasize or de-emphasize particular entrances to the buildings as the individual business sees fit.

- *Individual Parking and Vehicular Access:*

Some developments within the corporate park have visitor/customer vehicular and parking entrances that are not visible and share access points with service or delivery entrances. A redesigned layout of these entrances may make them more accessible and visible to the public.

As in the case of better defining pedestrian entrances, signage could be used to better define where individual parking entrances are.

Site elements and landscape additions or subtractions could also enhance vehicular entrances and make them more visible while complementing the streetscape of the rest of the corporate park.

Unused parking space may be shared by neighboring businesses within the park as determined through agreements between owners/tenants included within the corporate park association.

CONCLUSION

The Aquidneck Corporate Park has been identified by others as the home of the largest concentration of defense related businesses in Rhode Island. The goal of this Master Plan Report was to suggest landscape and signage improvements for maintaining and enhancing the competitiveness of the Aquidneck Corporate Park as a first-class location for defense related and other high-tech companies.

In this narrative, we have described our assessment of the existing conditions of the park and outlined its deficiencies and opportunities. We have acknowledged the importance of enhancing its aesthetic and functional character, and provided goals and policies in order to improve these conditions within the park.

It has been a point of this Master Plan to harmonize the goals we have presented with existing documented concerns and wishes of the occupants of the corporate park, the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, the Middletown Economic Development Advisory Committee, and The Town of Middletown. The coordination of this study with public input and the *Aquidneck Corporate Park Improvement Plan* (Maguire Group, Inc., May 2004) can achieve the ultimate goal of all interested parties.

The following pages provide exhibits that will support this narrative as well as supporting memorandums of public input used in creating the Master Plan.

Meeting Memorandum:

Date of Conference: 11-16-05

Aquidneck Corporate Park:

Aerial Photograph

Proposal Exhibit 1:

Typical Entrance Improvements Concept

Proposal Exhibit 2:

Pull-Off Area Concepts

Proposal Exhibit 3:

Typical Cul-De-Sac Improvements Concept

Proposal Exhibit 4:

Typical Streetscape Improvements Concept

Proposal Exhibit 5:

Possible Entrance Sign Concepts

Proposal Exhibit 6:

Possible Directory Sign Concept

Site Observation Memorandum:

Date of Site Visit: 9-13-05

Meeting Memorandum:

Date of Conference: 9-20-05

Preliminary Cost Estimate:

Estimated costs for Installation and Maintenance of Recommended Improvements