



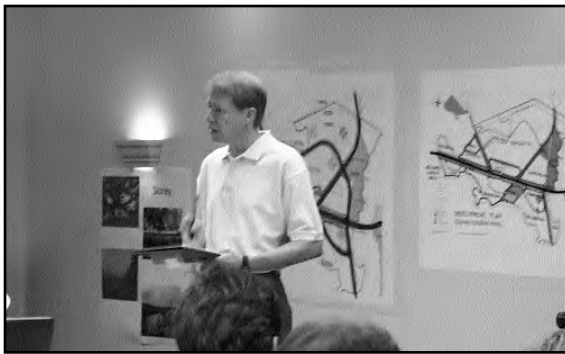
STONEY INITIATIVE AREA PLAN

ADOPTED MARCH 4, 2003

STONEY INITIATIVE AREA PLAN

Appendix to the Hilton Head Island Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by the Hilton Head Island Town Council
Ordinance No. 2003-05
March 4, 2003



Prepared by the Town of Hilton Head Island Planning Department



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This is a list of the many participants in the planning process that led to the formation of this plan. Town staff would like to extend our thanks for their participation.

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* These people generously gave their time and energy by being members of the POA subcommittee that worked with Town staff to write this plan. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

PURPOSE OF PLAN

In 1999, the Town of Hilton Head Island adopted the Ward One Master Land Use Plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan. This Plan identified the Stoney neighborhood as an area needing further attention due to several unique factors such as unusual parcel configuration, its gateway location and special development opportunities. The Stoney Initiative Area Plan was created to fill the gap in the Ward One Master Land Use Plan. It focuses on land use, density, and infrastructure needs for the Stoney neighborhood and recommends strategies to guide future development and redevelopment opportunities.

To assist in kicking off the Stoney Initiative Area Plan, a charette was held over a two and one-half day period in June 2000 to gather information and ideas from the residents and land owners in the Stoney Initiative Area. A six member team of design professionals from the South Carolina Downtown Development Association led the event assisted by Town Planning staff. A total of fifty-three people from the community participated in the charette, providing ideas and input that led to the development of this Stoney Initiative Area Plan. Many of the ideas presented in this Stoney Initiative Area Plan result from the charette report (published by SCDDA in July 2000) and several follow-up neighborhood meetings led by a subcommittee of the Squire Pope/Stoney Property Owners Association (POA).

THE STONEY INITIATIVE AREA

The Stoney Initiative Area is the gateway to the Island, located just east of Jenkins Island and extending to the tidal creek just east of the Spanish Wells Road intersection. William Hilton Parkway traverses the neighborhood, carrying every vehicle entering or exiting the Town. Nearly surrounded by tidal marshes, it is one of the most beautiful areas on the Island, yet is very difficult to develop due to the traffic and other unique conditions in the neighborhood.

Today's land uses are primarily residential mixed with some commercial businesses. During the charette discussions, it became apparent that one of the most important aspects in Stoney is a strong sense of community, and the understanding that the residents want to remain on their land and utilize it themselves as opposed to selling to other people to develop. This is their family land, it provides ties to their culture, and plays an important role in their lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Needs and Goals of the Initiative Area are identified in the Plan that focus on land use, density and infrastructure. The Plan further recommends strategies to guide future development and redevelopment opportunities in these three areas. These strategies fall into three major categories: amendments to the Land Management Ordinance, improvements to public infrastructure, and assistance to land owners.

LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:

1. Rezoning to allow a better mix of commercial and residential.
2. Revise the Use Table to allow more appropriate land uses.
3. Determine whether revisions to the design standards would encourage orientation toward the marsh, and if so, make those revisions.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE:

1. Traffic-related: improvements to William Hilton Parkway, new roads, and intersection improvements.
2. Pedestrian-related: pedestrian overpass, improvements to on-grade crosswalks, median landscaping.
3. Infrastructure-related: sewer installation, multi-purpose pathways, pathway and crosswalk lighting, installation of distinctive entry sign, bury power lines, improvements to Old Schoolhouse Park.

ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS:

1. Encourage aggregation of properties for more efficient development.
2. Encourage local land and business ownership.
3. POA establish voluntary design guidelines.
4. There are several recommendations dealing with the Town, the Stoney community, and local businesses and organizations working together to help the local land owners redevelop their properties themselves rather than sell to others.

LOCATION

The Stoney neighborhood is located at the entrance to Hilton Head Island, just east of Windmill Harbor and the Graves bridge from the mainland, and extends approximately to the Spanish Wells Road intersection with William Hilton Parkway. It is bounded on the south by Jarvis Creek and to the north by the power line easement and the marshes of Skull Creek (See Figure 1).

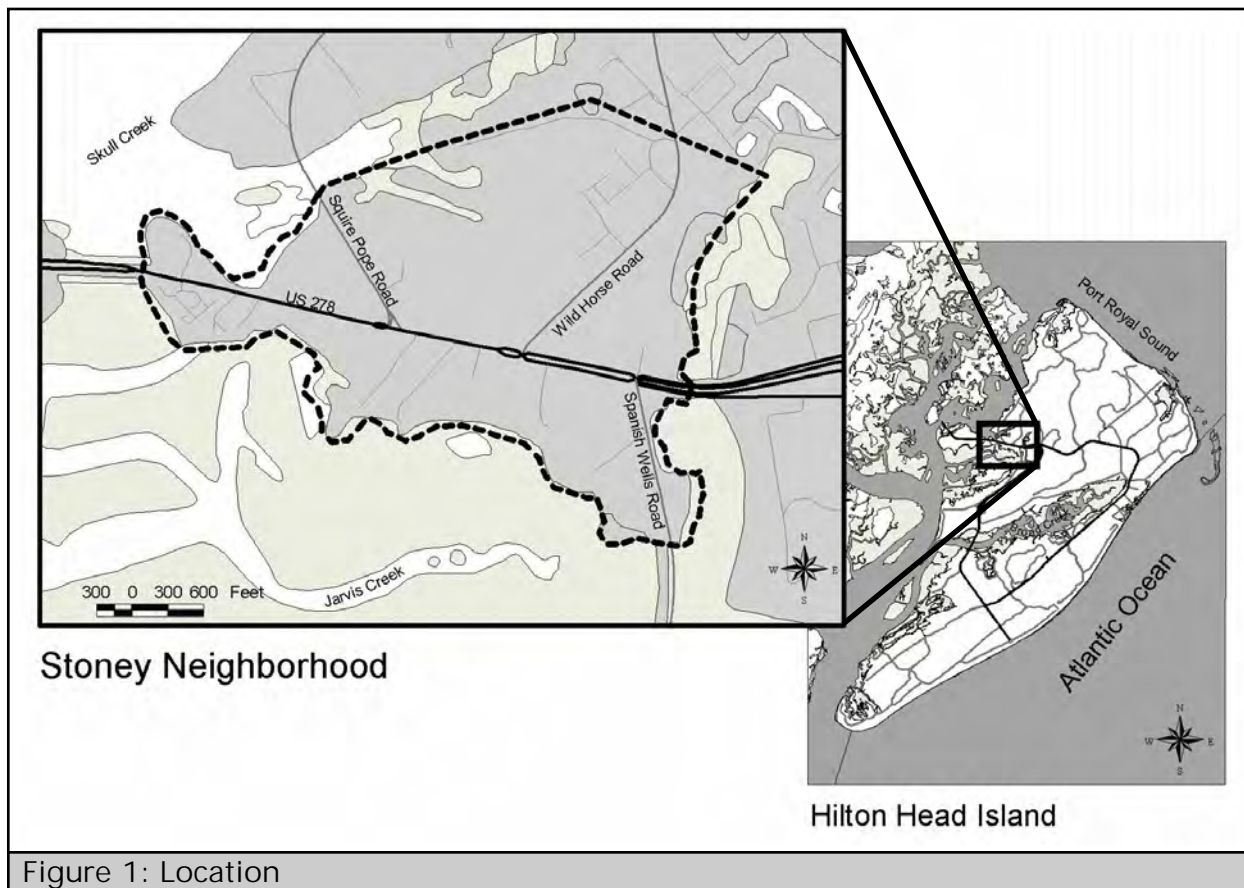


Figure 1: Location

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this study is to provide a 'neighborhood' plan that is integrated with the Comprehensive Plan, including the Ward One Master Land Use Plan, and a list of other plans, projects and goals identified by the Stoney community. It focuses on land use, density, public infrastructure and the Squire Pope/Stoney Property Owners Association (POA) involvement. The Plan attempts to strike a balance between what is needed and desired by the public and what the neighborhood needs and desires to remain a vital community. Planning staff and a subcommittee of the POA worked to ensure that the Plan reflects what is best for the community, not only from the viewpoint of planners and the rest of the Town, but more importantly from the perspective of the people who live in and own property in the community.

INTRODUCTION

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

This planning effort for the Stoney neighborhood stems from the Ward One Master Land Use Plan, which was a three year planning effort completed in 1999. During the neighborhood meetings for this plan, it became evident that two neighborhoods had unique opportunities and constraints not shared by any other area of the Island. It was decided that these areas would need future intensive study to resolve their problems. The two "initiative" areas were the Stoney and Chaplin neighborhoods. The main thrust in these two initiative area planning processes would be community involvement to identify solutions to solve unique redevelopment constraints.

The process began for each initiative area in June 2000 with a two and a half day (per neighborhood) charette at which many members of the community gathered to provide ideas, comments, feedback, and enthusiasm. It started with an orientation of the area for the charette team given by Town staff, followed by a tour of the neighborhood given by residents. Public meetings were held throughout the next day and a half to gather more input, draft a report for the Stoney neighborhood and review that draft with the residents before refining it. The public input covered a wide variety of subjects, but the main focus was consistently on the strength and importance of the neighborhood as the residents' land and place of belonging. The results of this charette were published in July 2000, entitled "The Town of Hilton Head Island – Land Use Planning Charette for the Stoney & Chaplin Initiative Areas."

Since that time, Stoney residents spent considerable time talking about the issues and possible solutions mentioned in the charette report. Town staff worked closely with the community through a subcommittee of the Squire Pope/Stoney POA to prepare the Stoney Initiative Area Plan, which includes a number of modifications to the recommendations presented in the charette report. These are discussed in detail in the following chapters.

With the implementation of the recommendations in this Plan, the quality of life in Stoney should improve, and this gateway to the Island should become an area of pride to the residents of Stoney and to those who live on, work on or visit Hilton Head Island.

HISTORY OF INITIATIVE AREA

Hilton Head Island has been home to a variety of cultures over the past 4,000 years. The vast majority of the people living on or otherwise using the Island during that time have used boats as transportation. While the Island had a road network and around fifteen vehicles in the early 1940's, it was not until 1953 that a ferry service provided regular vehicular access to the Island. That ferry docked on Skull Creek just north of what is now Windmill Harbor, establishing a road through the Stoney neighborhood, then called the Stoney Road. With the construction of the bridges connecting to the mainland, Stoney Road eventually grew into and was renamed William Hilton Parkway, bisecting the neighborhood. The occasional expansion of this road and the continual increase of traffic using it are two of the difficulties facing this community.

The Stoney neighborhood has a long history of ownership by African-Americans, many of them descendants of slaves, now called Native Islanders. Land use was primarily residential, especially during the pre-automobile era when self sufficiency was key to survival. Food was grown or obtained from the creek and other local waterways. Since the "automobilization" of the Island, land use in this area has evolved into a mixture of residential and commercial uses. At this point, traffic volume is so high on William Hilton Parkway that access to many of the commercial establishments and residences is dangerous during the busiest times of the day. Also, as traffic continues to increase, the suitability of the area for residential use is diminished, purely from a quality of life perspective.

As redevelopment and tourism continue to increase in other areas of the Island, traffic will continue to increase through Stoney. This, of course, is due to the fact that William Hilton Parkway is the only route on and off the Island. These increases will further erode the quality of life in the Stoney area without careful planning. That is the primary reason this Plan was produced – preservation of the quality of life.

STONEY INITIATIVE AREA VISION

The ultimate goal of this Plan is to provide for a high quality of life in Stoney by enhancing the mixture of residential and commercial uses in the neighborhood. Stoney, the gateway to the Island, will become an area of pride with a strong sense of community to the residents and to those who live on, work on or visit Hilton Head Island. To accomplish this, planning for redevelopment should take into consideration types and intensities of land uses which are appropriate to the scale of the Stoney community. Redevelopment will be enhanced by the protection of the natural resources and the character of Stoney, as well as installation of proper infrastructure and recreational facilities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

LAND USE

Most of the land use in Stoney was set prior to the incorporation of the Town in 1983 (see Figure 2). It is predominantly residential, with some small commercial operations that draw visitors, such as the Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center, the Coastal Discovery Museum, the Gullah Market, the Humane Association, and several restaurants. Several properties in Stoney are owned by the Town, one facility is owned by the SC Department of Transportation, and Beaufort County owns a portion of the park. There are 72 acres that remain undeveloped, including portions of large parcels with a few homes clustered in one area. Table 1 shows the existing land uses in Stoney.

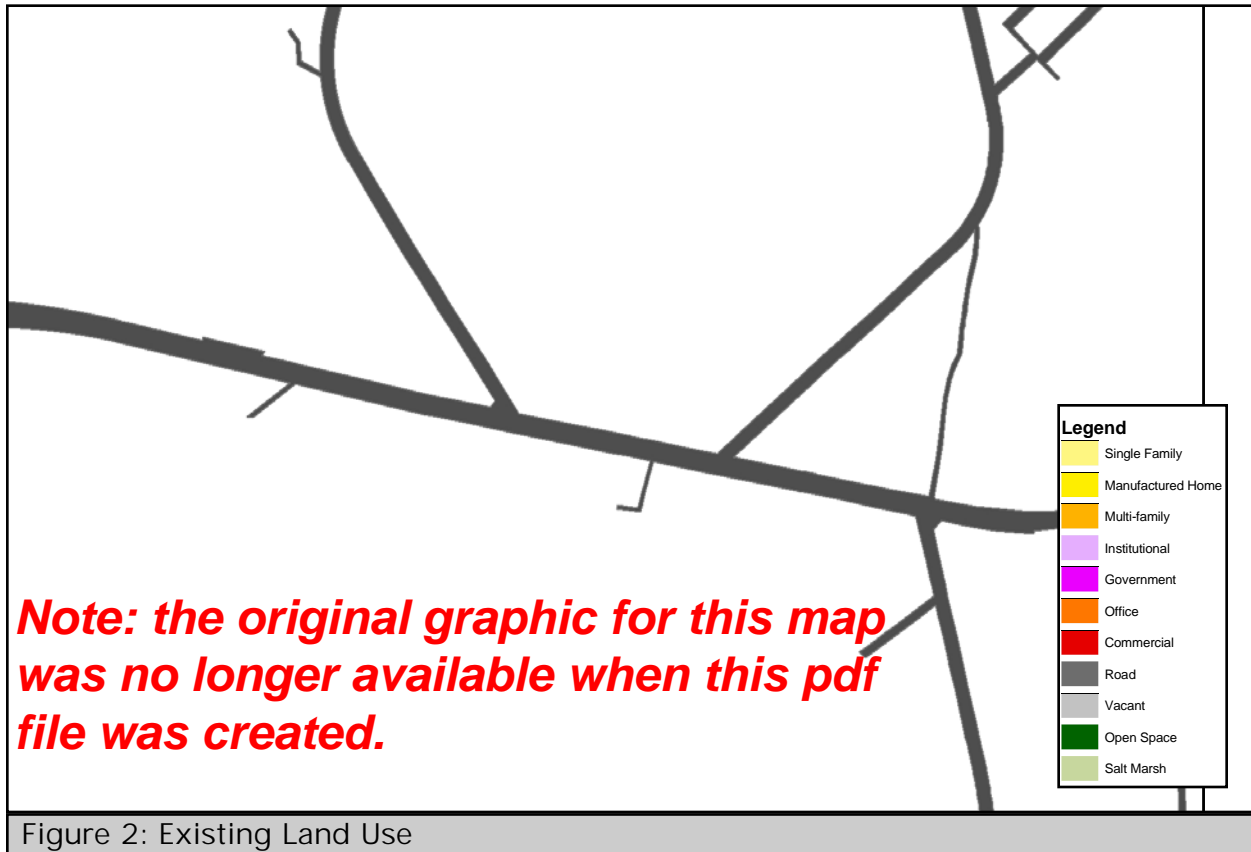


Figure 2: Existing Land Use

The majority of buildings in Stoney have been built near the roads or the marshes of Jarvis Creek or Skull Creek. Most of the buildings near the marshes are residences with three exceptions being the Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center, a restaurant, and the Humane Association. Around half the land uses along William Hilton Parkway are residential with the remainder being commercial. The majority of residential

Residential Land Uses (51 out of 190 acres)		
Single Family	Multi-Family	Manufactured Home
39 Units	0 Units	76 Units
Commercial Land Uses (23 out of 190 acres)		
Retail	Office	Other Commercial
51,340 Sq. Ft.	2,800 Sq. Ft.	35,150 Sq. Ft.
Public Land Uses (44 out of 190 acres)		
Parks	Other Publicly Owned Land	
7 Acres	23 Acres	

Table 1: Existing Land Use

structures are located along Wild Horse Road and in the area around Squire Pope Road and William Hilton Parkway. Two thirds of the residences are manufactured homes, most of which are in good condition. Currently there are several buildings which encroach into the right-of-way for William Hilton Parkway, and a number of additional structures that are close to the road and will be required to be moved or taken down for infrastructure improvements in the area.

ZONING

There are currently two zoning districts in the Stoney neighborhood – Community Mixed Use (CMU) and Low to Moderate Density Residential (RM-4) (see Figure 3). The following is the ‘Use of Character and Purpose Statements” for each zoning district, quoted from the Land Management Ordinance, Chapter 4.

“RM-4 – Low to Moderate Density Residential District: It is the intent of this residential district to protect and preserve the unique character of Native Islander areas and neighborhoods at densities ranging from four (4) units per net acres up to eight (8) units per net acre. This district is used to encourage a variety of residential opportunities.”

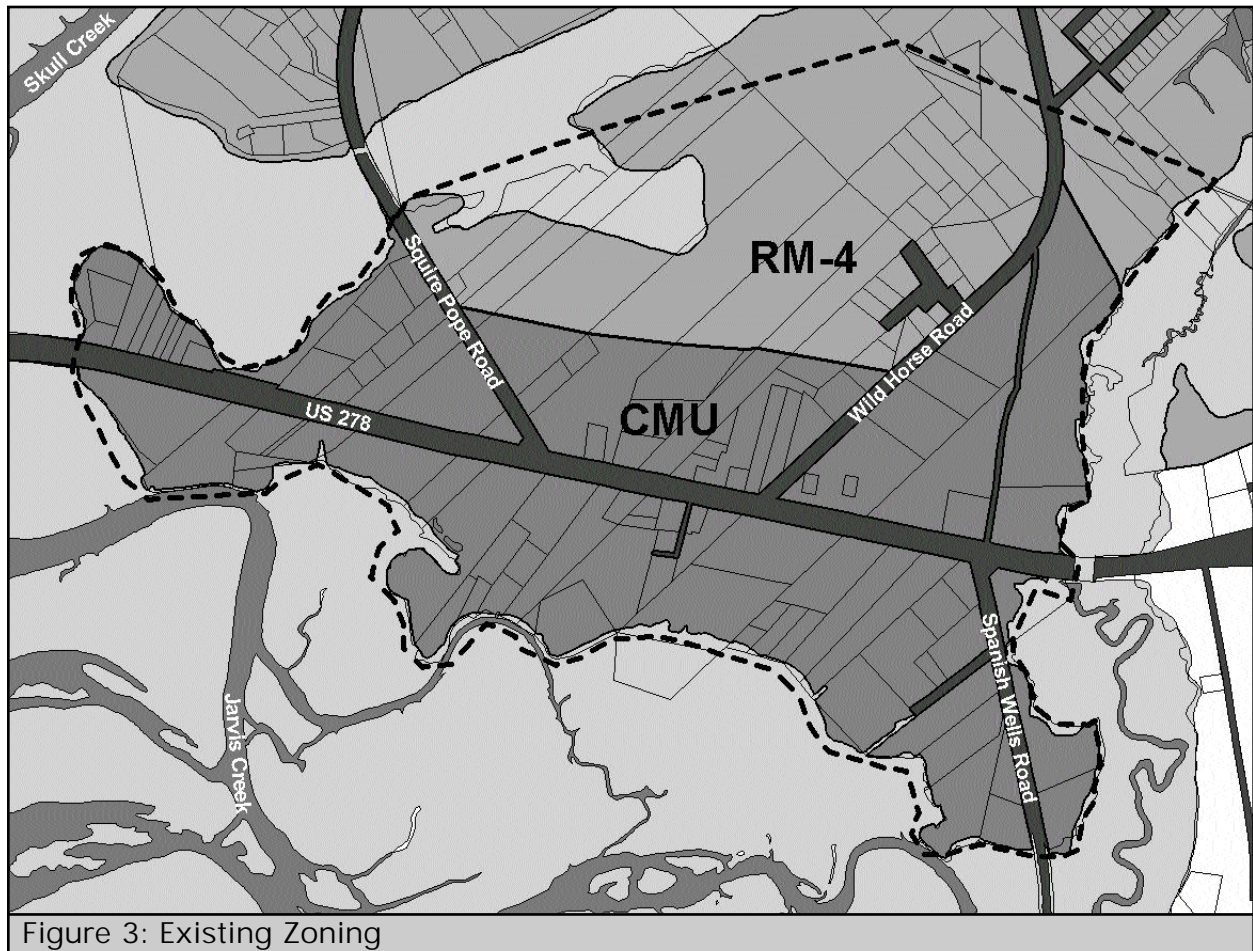
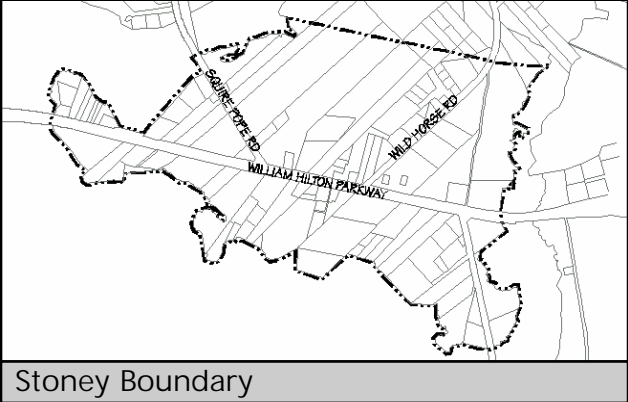


Figure 3: Existing Zoning

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

"CMU — Community Mixed Use District:

- A. It is the intent of the Community Mixed Use District to encourage development in a flexible manner in areas where transition is imminent but the direction has not yet been manifest, or in areas of sparse residential settlement, but which area would reasonably be expected to begin to mature in the near future.
 - B. It is intended that this district be utilized over large areas of land in order that the economic market place be allowed to assert itself in a positive manner.
 - C. With the exception of the Stoney Community, which has developed as a mix of commercial, light industrial and residential uses, this district is primarily residential in nature and is not intended to allow heavy commercial or manufacturing uses.
 - D. The Stoney Community shall be defined as that area fronting on both sides of U.S. Hwy. 278 bounded on the east and south by the marshes of Jarvis Creek, on the west by the marshes that separate Hilton Head Island from Jenkins Island and on the north by the marshes of Skull Creek or a distance of 1500 feet north of the centerline of U.S. Hwy. 278 which ever is closer to U.S. Hwy. 278. In all cases the marsh boundary line is co-terminus with the boundary line of the CON Conservation/Parks/ Open Space District.
- 
- E. This district (with the exception of the Stoney Community) is intended to provide self-contained areas that are separated from the main elements of the Island transportation network such that their growth under this district will remain internal, and therefore contribute to the minimization of vehicular trips on major thoroughfares. Such minimization will be encouraged by the provision of goods and services to the residents of the area from within the district.
 - F. It is contemplated that land in this district will be monitored through time and that, if land use conflicts begin to occur, further planning and rezoning to specific districts will take place. The Town will work with neighborhood residents and owners in order to adopt a neighborhood plan as a basis for more permanent land use districts than the CMU District."

The uses within these two zones differ. The uses allowed in the CMU district are more varied than the RM-4 zone and include residential (single and multi-family), public and civic (such as day care, schools, government facilities, churches, parks, and utilities), some commercial (such as restaurants, offices, bed & breakfasts, banks, and some stores), some industrial (mostly by special exception), agriculture, and marina (by special exception). Uses currently allowed in the RM-4 district include residential (both single family & multi-family), public and civic (such as day care, schools, government facilities, churches, parks, and utilities), bed & breakfast or inn by special exception, and agriculture.

DENSITY

<i>Existing Zone</i>	<i>Current Residential Density Dwelling Unit/Net Acre</i>	<i>Non-Residential Density Square Feet/Net Acre</i>
CMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Base = 4 ◆ Within 500 feet of the OCRM Critical Line = 8 ◆ With public sewer system and Family Housing Program = 8 ◆ With Family Housing Overlay District = 12 	◆ 7,000
RM-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Base = 4 du/acre ◆ With public sewer system and Family Housing Program = 8 ◆ With Family Housing Overlay District = 12 	◆ 6,000

TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

The major road that bisects Stoney is William Hilton Parkway (see Figure 1, page 1). Traffic in the neighborhood is extremely heavy since William Hilton Parkway carries all vehicles entering or exiting the Town from the mainland. The annual average amount of traffic passing through Stoney on William Hilton Parkway during a 24 hour period in 1998 was around 42,300 vehicles. In mid-June 2000 it was around 52,800 vehicles. Seasonal variations account for most of the apparent increase in these figures (June volumes are approximately 20% higher than annual averages); the real increase in volume was around 2,000 vehicles.

Traffic volumes vary throughout the day, the week, and the year. Obviously, traffic is heaviest during the morning and evening rush hours, which has been getting longer in the last few years as a majority of the Island’s workers live off Island. This trend will continue as development on the mainland occurs while major employment opportunities exist on the Island. Traffic volume varies within the week as well: traffic is moderate on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, increases on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday to the heaviest volumes on Friday. Annual variation shows the heaviest volumes in the summer, with moderate volumes during spring and fall and the lightest volumes during the winter.

Such heavy traffic volumes on the road that bisects Stoney present access problems to adjacent land uses along William Hilton Parkway. With no frontage roads to these properties, the driver’s only recourse is to wait for several minutes to enter or exit the property.

Two other major roads cross through Stoney: Squire Pope Road and Wild Horse Road. No traffic volume data exists for Squire Pope Road or Wild Horse Road. However, both roads are used by local residents and business owners of Stoney and serve as alterna-

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

tive routes for the Hilton Head Plantation residents to reach their back entrance. Squire Pope Road has a traffic light at the intersection of William Hilton Parkway, but Wild Horse Road does not. While there is a median cut on William Hilton Parkway at the Wild Horse Road intersection, it is extremely difficult for drivers on Wild Horse Road to turn left onto the Parkway due to the heavy traffic volume and large number of lanes to cross.

Another problem with the Parkway is the large number of lanes, varying from four to nine (see Figure 4). The majority of the road has four travel lanes – two east bound and two west bound. From Jenkins Island to Squire Pope Road, the road has an additional center turn lane. This center turn lane disappears near the Squire Pope Road intersection, which then gains a left turn lane making a fifth lane. From Wild Horse Road to

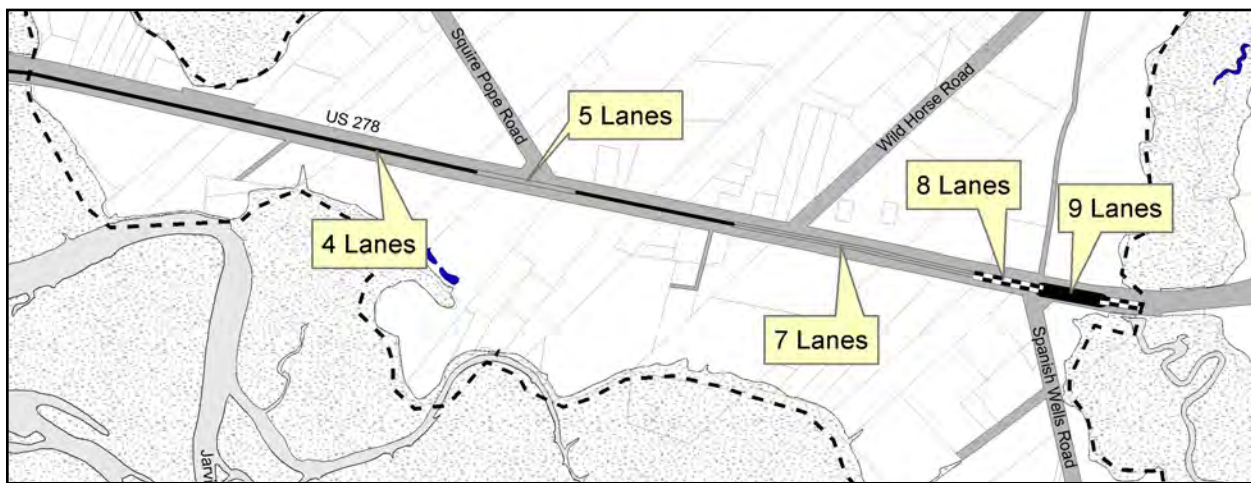


Figure 4: Number of Lanes on US 278

Spanish Wells Road, it becomes three travel lanes going each direction plus left turn lanes for the Wild Horse Road and the park intersection, totaling seven lanes. (See Figure 5). There is a short section of eight lanes at the Spanish Wells Road intersection with three travel lanes in each direction plus turn and acceleration lanes. There is a short stretch of nine lanes just eastward of the Spanish Wells Road intersection, where there is an additional turn lane for westbound vehicles to turn onto Spanish Wells Road.



Figure 5: US 278 at Wild Horse Road

Finally, the last segment in Stoney is eight lanes, four in each direction. Shortly beyond this the eastbound lanes split for the Cross Island Parkway or Business William Hilton Parkway. Obviously, the great variety of lane switches and merges contribute to a confusing section of road that bisects a neighborhood.

Speed is a problem on William Hilton Parkway. The posted speed limit is 45 mph in Stoney but it is observed that the majority of traffic goes 50 mph or

higher. While the posted speed limit is slightly slower than the speeds on the bridge and on Jenkins Island (50 mph-55 mph), it is staff's opinion that it is too high for a neighborhood area where half the land uses along the road are residential with access from the Parkway.

Another element that creates dangers is the number of curb cuts on both sides of the roads. Figure 6 shows the locations of these curb cuts along the roads in Stoney. There are forty-five curb cuts on William Hilton Parkway (not including major roads); twenty-one on the north side and twenty-four on the south side of the road. The average distance between curb cuts on the north side of the road is 200', and on the south side it is 175'. In some areas along William Hilton Parkway, driveways are as close as 45' apart. The Town's Land Management Ordinance (LMO) requires a minimum of 500' of separation between driveways on the same side of a major arterial road (such as William Hilton Parkway) for new driveways, although a waiver can be obtained in situations where this is not possible. Each curb cut (whether it be a driveway or a small road) creates another point of potential conflict between vehicles, further reducing the safety of the roadway. There are several parcels with multiple curb cuts, which would not be allowed under the current LMO unless the 500' separation requirement could be met. There are three locations where either formal or informal connections between adjacent developments have been made for vehicular access without going back out onto William Hilton Parkway.

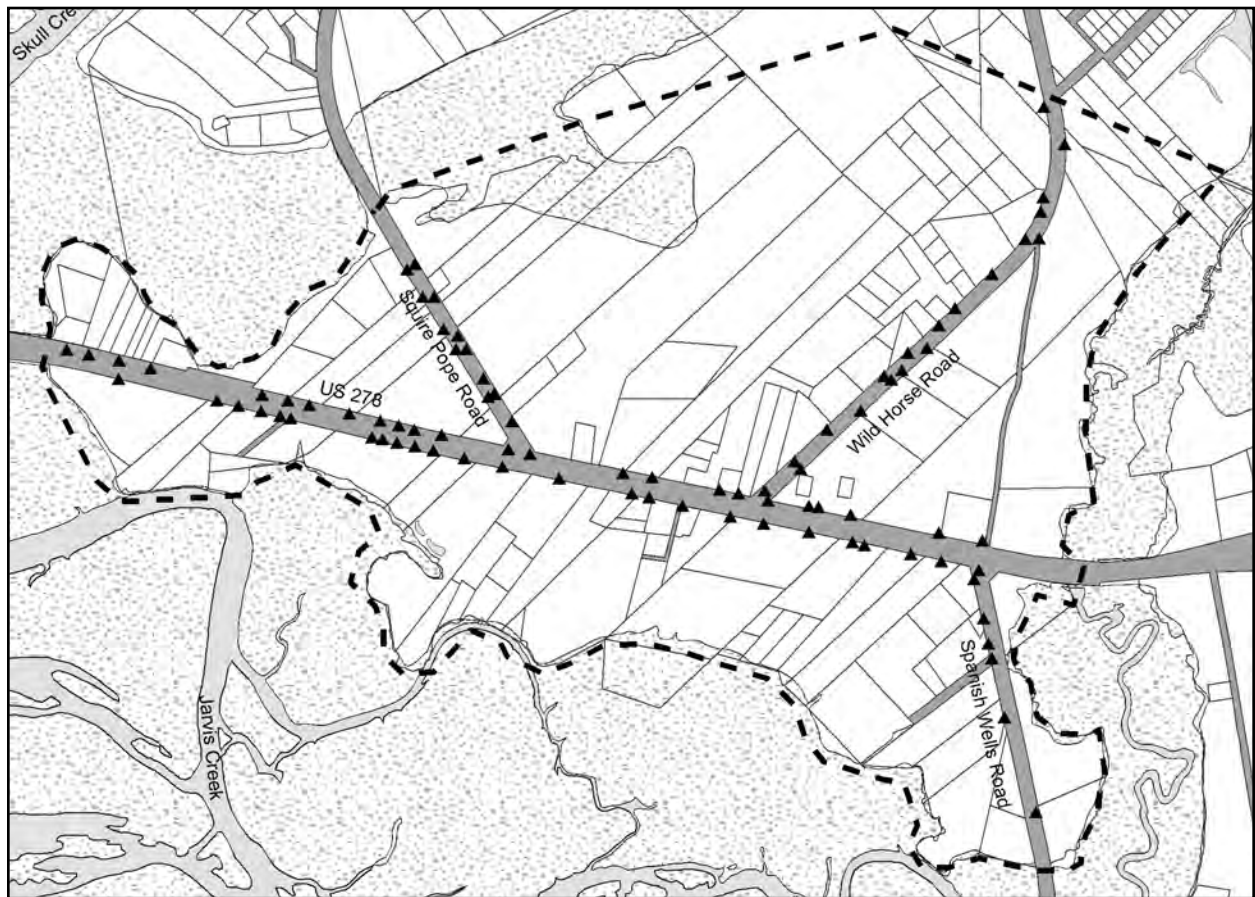


Figure 6: Curb Cuts

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

Squire Pope Road and Wild Horse Road also have a substantial number of curb cuts with short distances separating the driveways in some areas. Under the current LMO, new driveways would have to have 200' separation from other driveways on the same side of the street along these roads as well as Spanish Wells Road.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Inadequate pedestrian facilities are depicted in Figure 7. There are sidewalks directly adjacent to the Parkway along both sides. On the south side of the road the sidewalk starts at the eastern side of the driveway out of the Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center, and it stops at the Spanish Wells Road intersection. On the north side of the road the sidewalk extends the entire length of William Hilton Parkway through Stoney. This sidewalk is a 5½' wide concrete sidewalk with a 6" curb along the road side. There is no separation between the road and the sidewalk (see Figure 8).

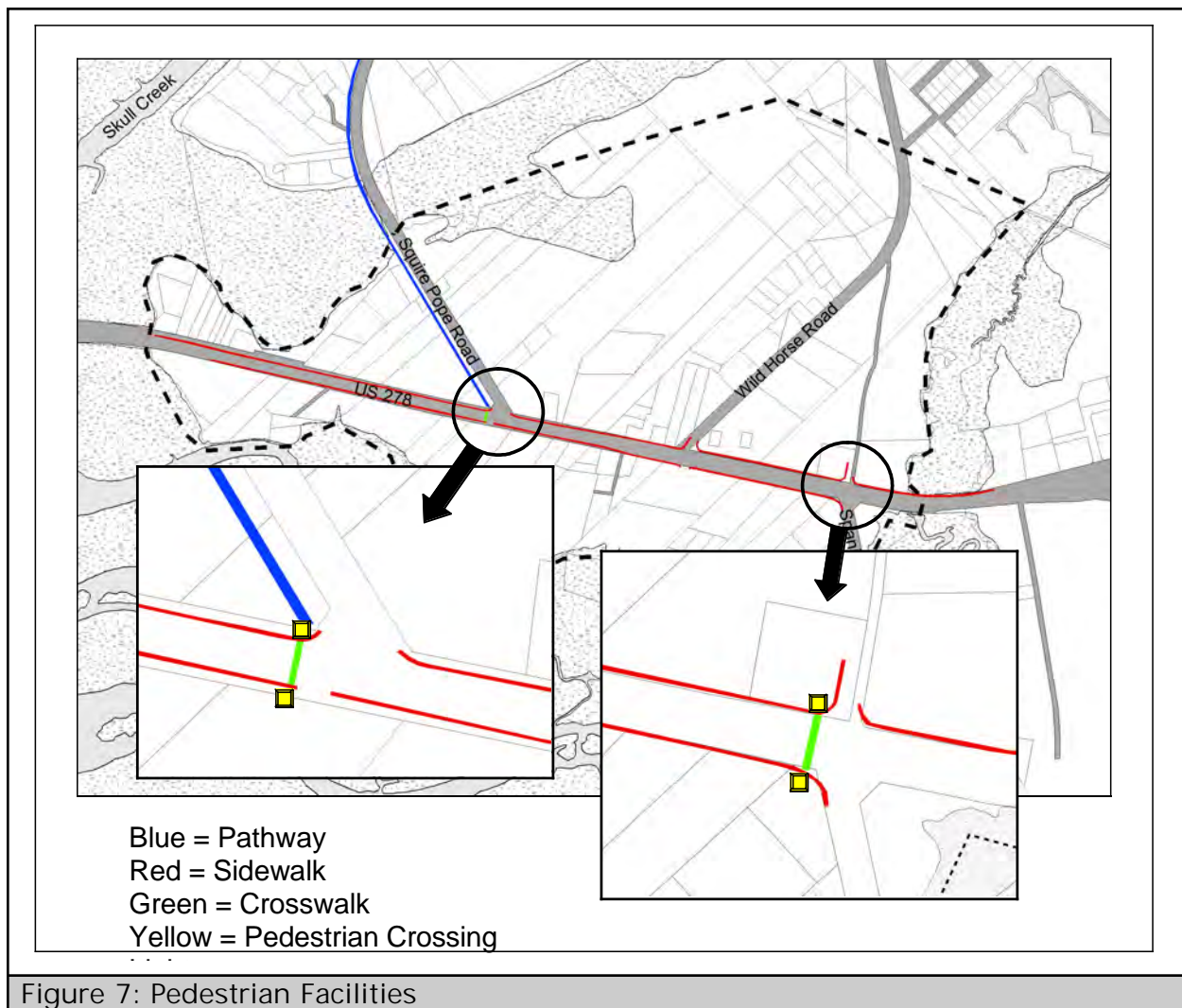




Figure 8: Sidewalk along US 278

There are two intersections where pedestrians are supposed to cross William Hilton Parkway. The Squire Pope Road intersection has a two line painted crosswalk and a pedestrian walk light. The Spanish Wells Road intersection also has a two line painted crosswalk and the second pedestrian walk light. There are no signs warning motorists of the crossings at the Spanish Wells Road crosswalk. Also, the pedestrian light at Spanish Wells Road turns to "walk" at the same time that the Spanish Wells Road traffic gets a green light. This creates a conflict between drivers turning left

onto William Hilton Parkway and pedestrians trying to cross the Parkway. As a result, pedestrians can easily be stuck in the middle of William Hilton Parkway, where they do not have access to the walk button to activate the light or a large pedestrian refuge to stand on. This is particularly dangerous for children and elderly people.

OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Other types of infrastructure existing in the Stoney neighborhood includes water lines and one very small segment of sewer line (see Figure 9). The majority of water lines throughout the area are 8" lines, with a 12" line going down Spanish Wells Road. Small lines (mostly 1.5" or 2") go down some of the side streets to service residences. It is doubtful if the trunk lines through this area are adequately sized to handle the additional demand if the area is to redevelop. The only sewer line in the area comes from the Windmill Harbour development and runs to a nearby restaurant. There are only a few properties that have the potential to tie into this line based on their location, and each would require a pump station to do so. Inadequate or unavailable water and sewer lines make redevelopment difficult for the properties in the Stoney Initiative Area.

Figure 10 shows the location of fire hydrants through the Stoney neighborhood. While these provide a measure of fire safety, they are not spaced to provide the level of service required by the International Building Code, which is scheduled to go into effect in the Town of Hilton Head Island by July 2001. This code requires a maximum distance of 400' from a hydrant to any new structure, or 600' for single family residential (either manufactured home or stick built). This distance must be measured by the route which a fire hose would be laid, which means in some situations it would have to go around other structures, including fences. This requirement will mean that additional fire hydrants will need to be installed in many areas of Stoney.

Figure 11 shows the existing overhead electrical power lines which could possibly be buried underground. Buried utility lines would add to the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood.

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

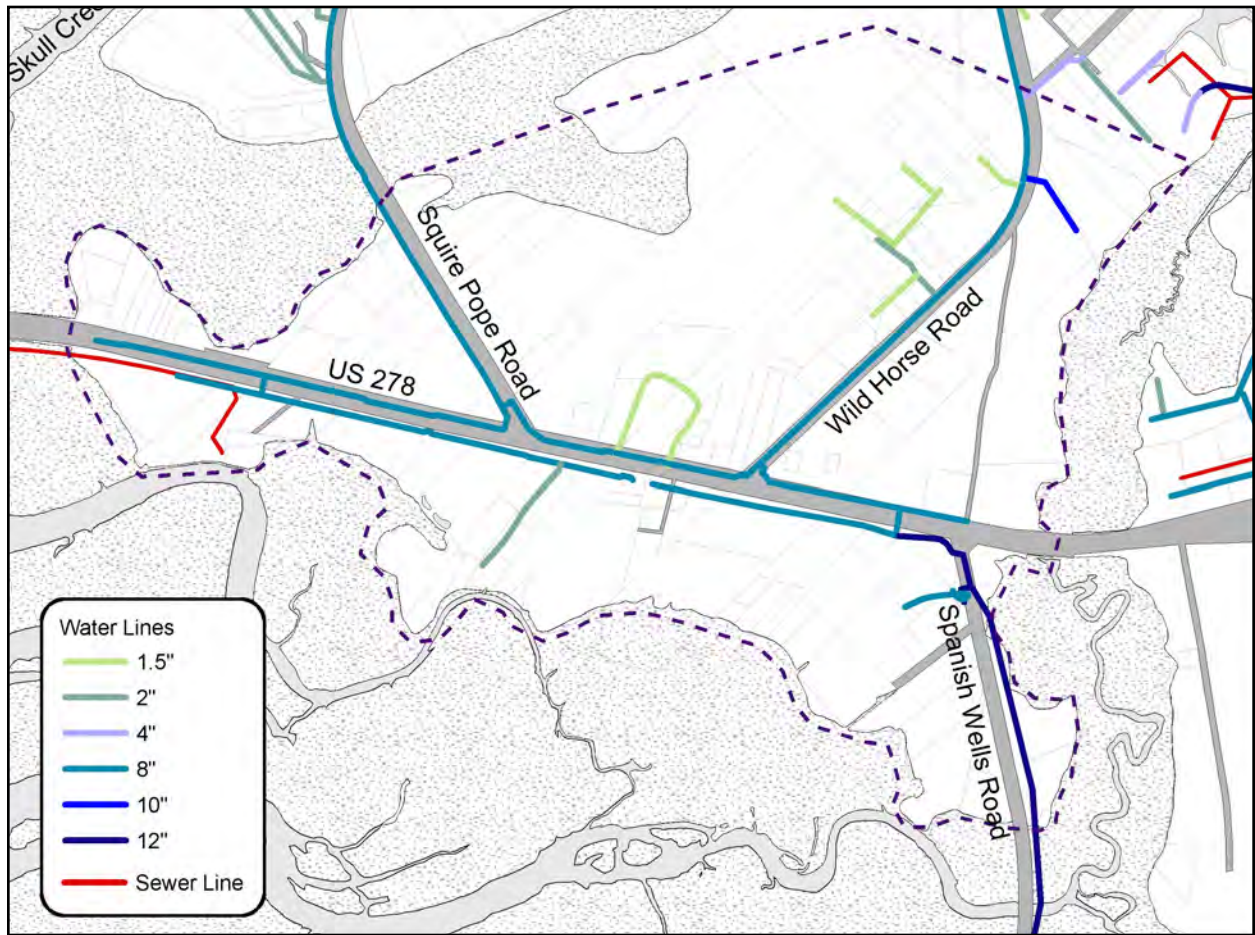


Figure 9: Water and Sewer Lines

Source: Hilton Head No. 1 PSD

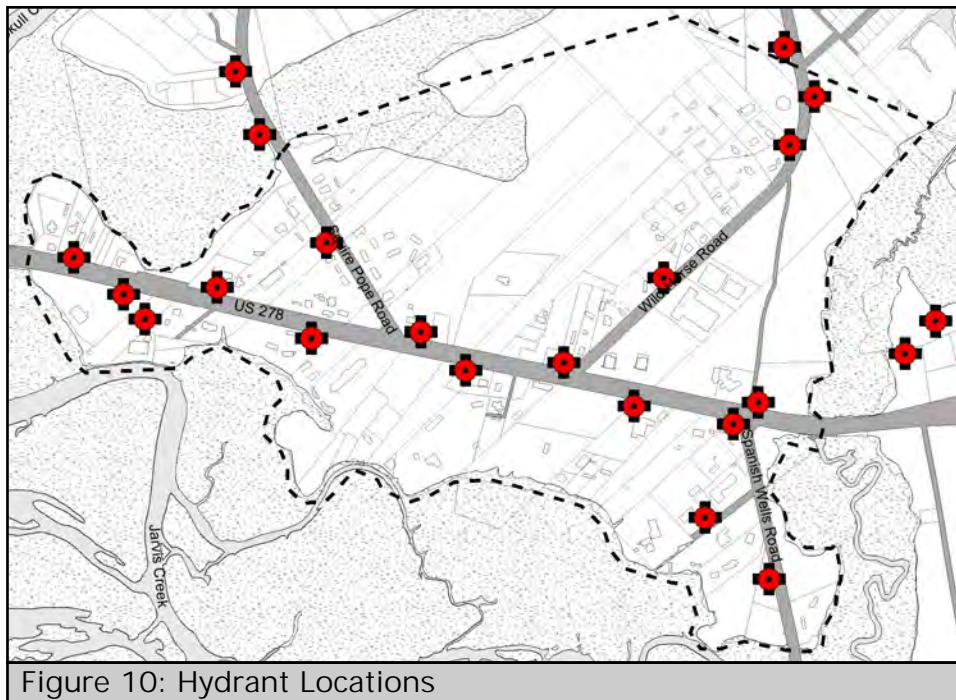


Figure 10: Hydrant Locations

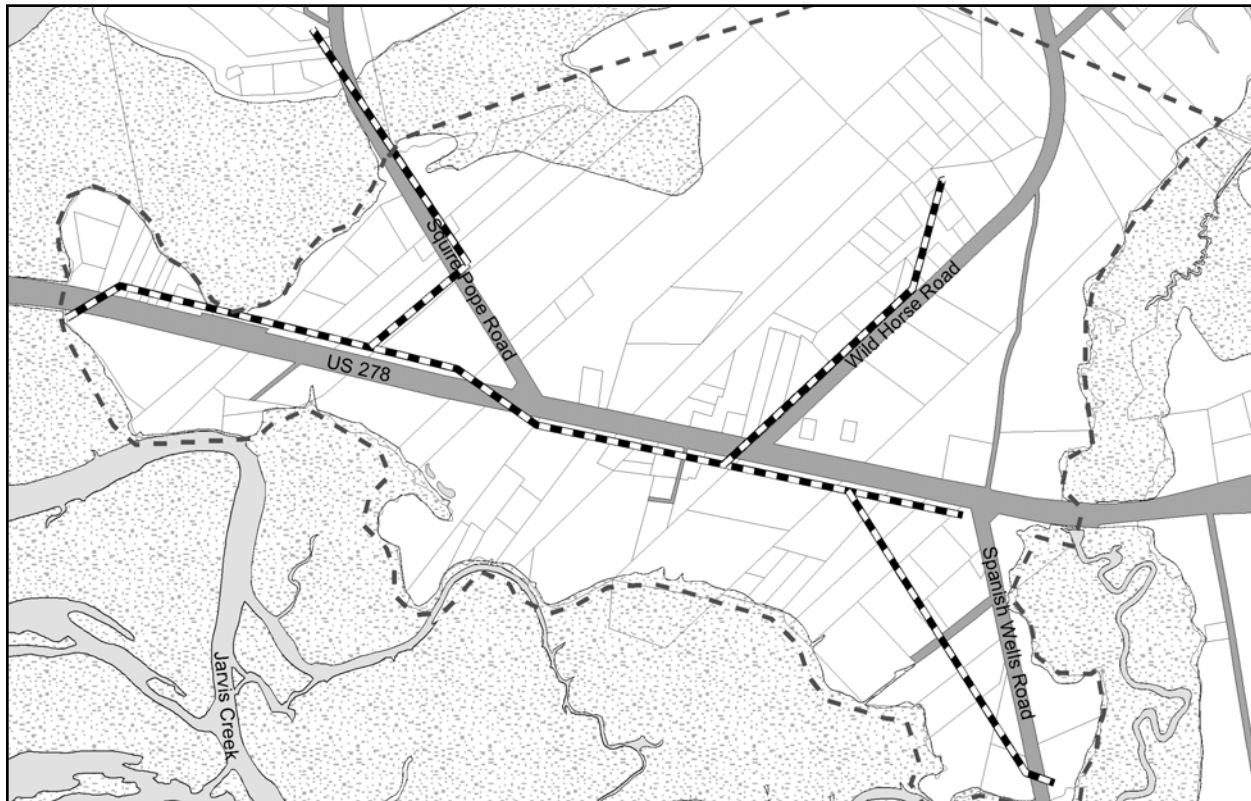


Figure 11: Power Lines

NATURAL FEATURES

The Stoney neighborhood is almost entirely surrounded by salt marsh, but consists of primarily upland soils. Figure 12 shows the National Wetlands Inventory, the light gray area surrounding Stoney is salt marsh and the dark areas are freshwater forested wetlands. The National Wetlands Inventory is a nationwide study done in the early 1980's to identify major wetlands across the nation. The methodology used did not result in identification of small wetlands (under 1 acre), nor did it result in particularly accurate identification for moderately sized wetlands. Therefore its usefulness in a relatively small area such as the Stoney neighborhood is limited, but it does provide a general sense of the location of the wetlands. In addition, the depiction of the salt marsh areas is fairly accurate. The reader should remember that there are some wetland areas within Stoney that are not shown on this map.

Figure 13 shows the soil types in the Stoney area; green soils are salt marsh soils and brown ones are upland soils. "Sk" soils are Seabrook soils, which are moderately well drained with a rapid permeability. This is a sandy soil which has a high water table – within 2' to 4' of the ground surface about four months of the year. Due to this water table, this soil is only moderately suited for construction of homes and small commercial buildings, and is not suitable for septic systems – the effluent from the system will leach into the ground water during much of the year, and the sandy nature of the soil will not provide much filtering of the effluent, leading to potential pollution of nearby waterways.

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

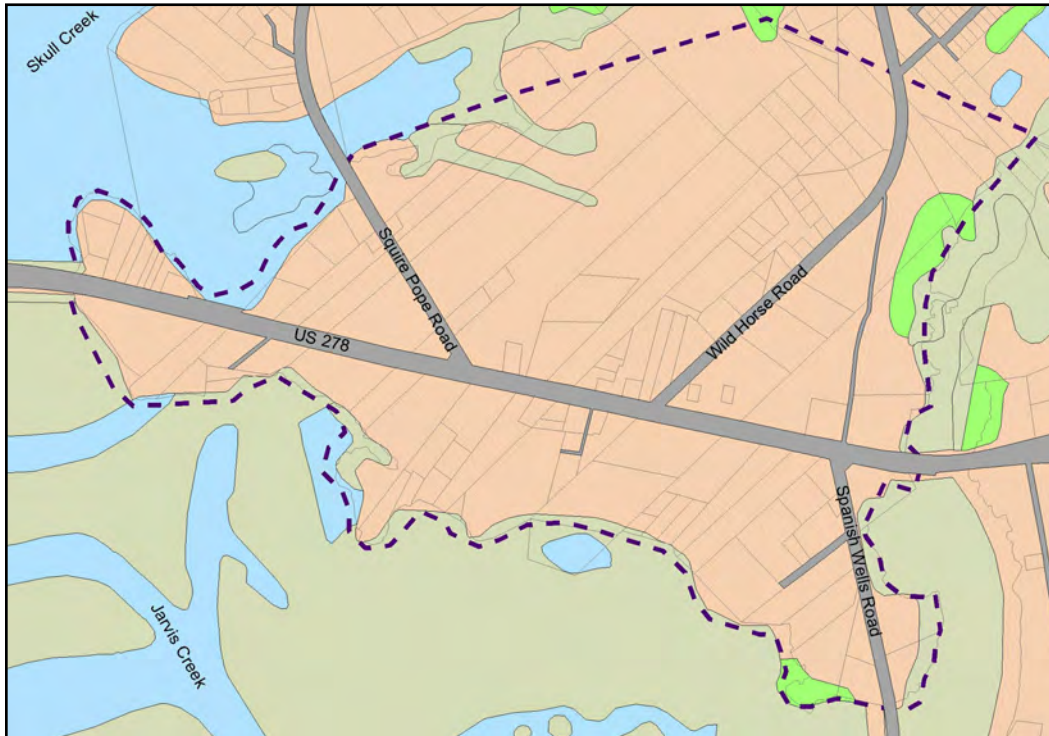


Figure 12: National Wetlands Inventory

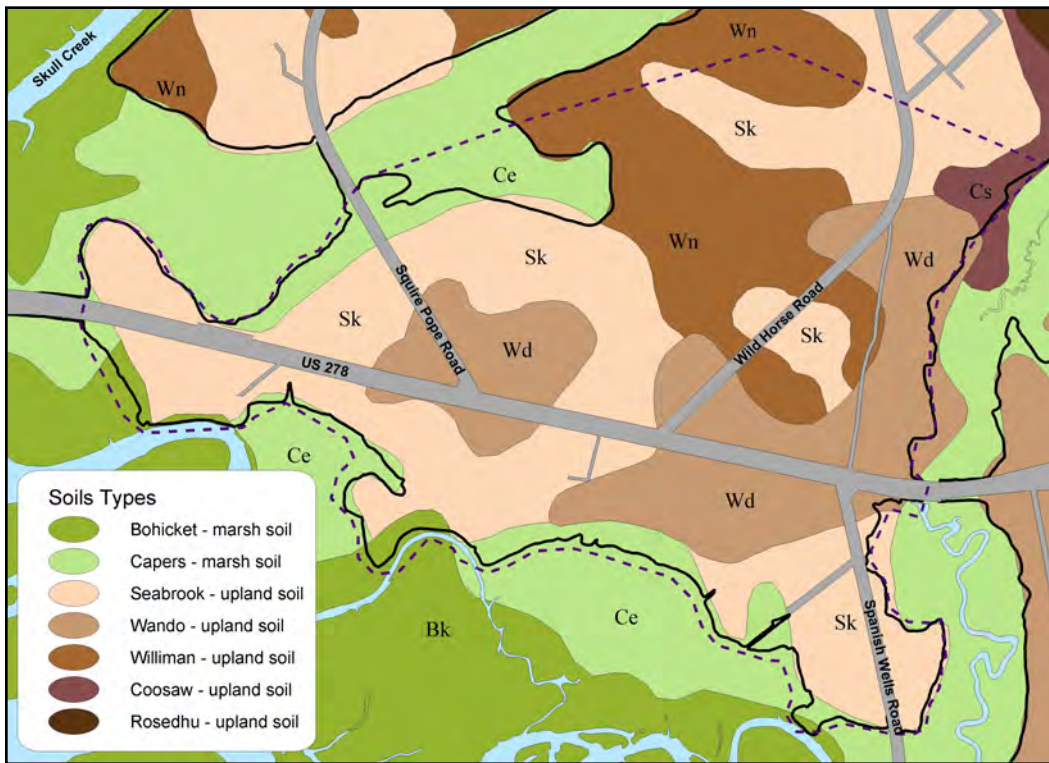
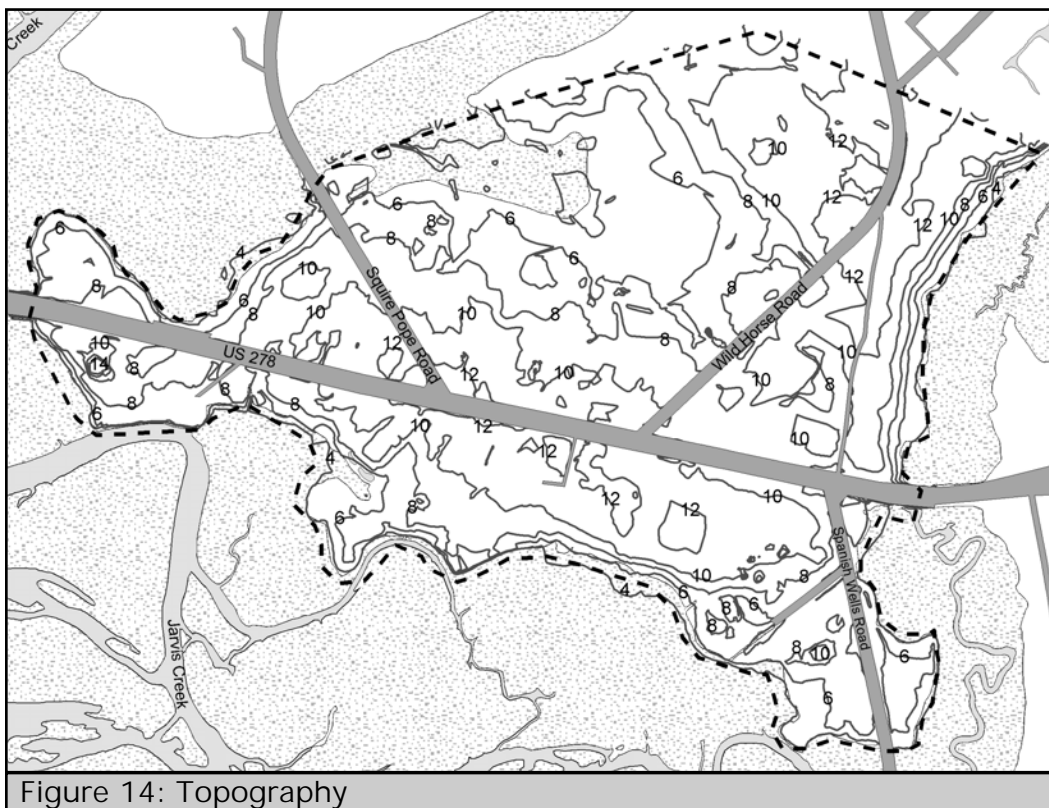


Figure 13: Soil Types

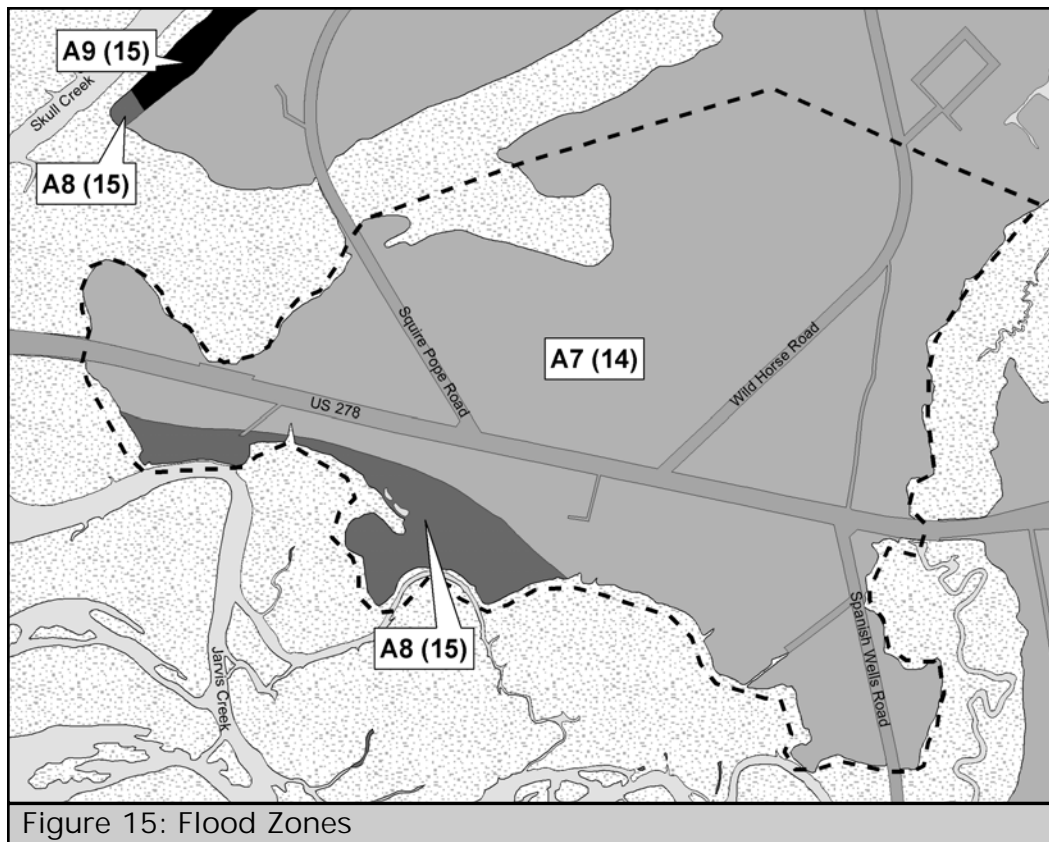
“Wd” soils are Wando soils, which are excessively drained, rapidly permeable soils with a water table commonly below 6’. These sandy soils are well suited for construction of homes and small commercial buildings, and are well suited for septic systems. They are the best soils in the Stoney area. “Wn” soils are Williman soils, which are deep, poorly drained, moderately permeable soils. This soil has clay in the lower layers, but is sandy at the surface. The water table in these soils is at or near the surface for about five months of the year. This soil is rated severe for construction of homes and small commercial buildings due to wetness. For the same reason, it is not suitable for septic systems.

Some of the limitations of these soils can be mitigated with the installation of drainage systems, such as around the foundation of a building. However, the use of septic systems is not recommended for the Seabrook or Williman soils due to the high ground water levels during a good part of the year. Discussions in other chapters of this Plan will recommend the use of public sewer for development in the Stoney area; this information on soils supports that recommendation.

While Hilton Head Island is usually perceived as “flat”, the Island does have topography. The Stoney area has elevations ranging from 4’ to 14’ above sea level, so the notion that it is “flat” is quite true. Nonetheless, the small elevation differences do have an impact on construction of structures in the area – those built on sites that are at an elevation of 6’ must be elevated to a greater degree than those built on higher sites to comply with flood regulations. Figure 14 shows the topography of the area, and Figure 15 shows the flood zones (from FEMA). The entire area is within the 100 year flood

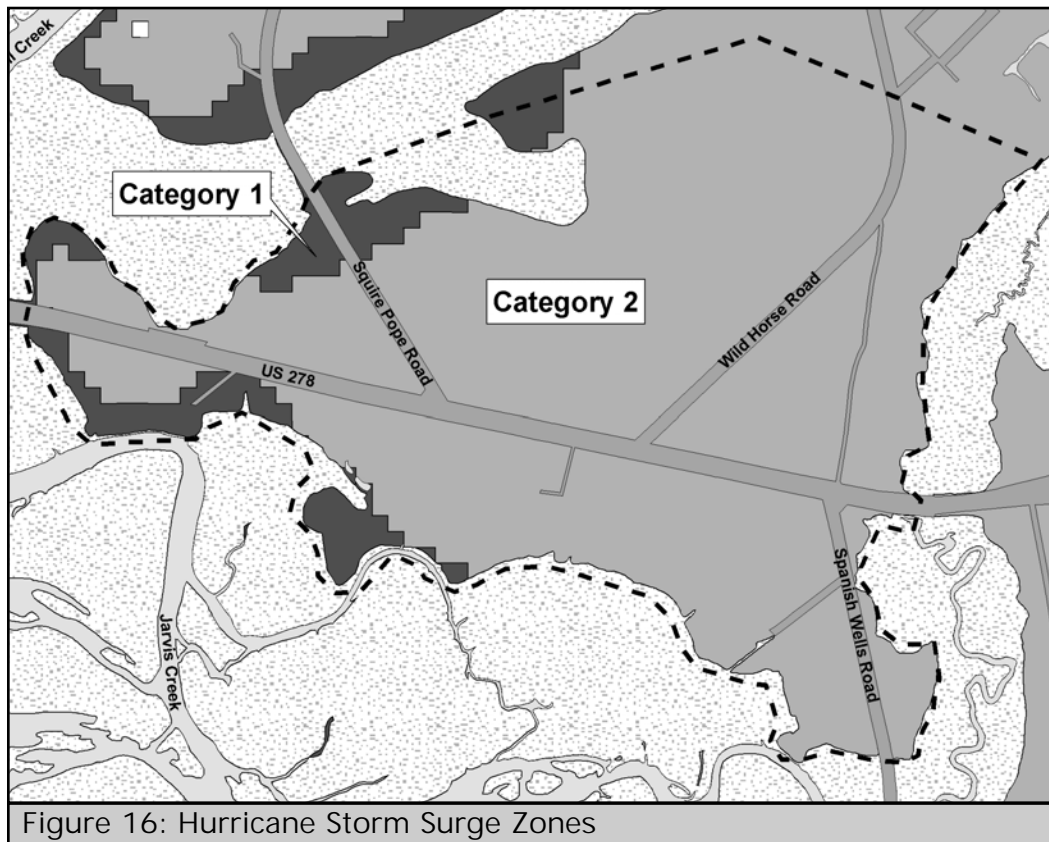


EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS



plain, and all structures must be built with the finish floor elevation over 14' above sea level within the A7(14) zone. Structures must be built to above 15' above sea level within the A8(15) zone, which is along a portion of Jarvis Creek (the darker green). Obviously, it is more costly to build on a site which is 6' above sea level than on one that is 12' above sea level.

Figure 16 shows the Hurricane Storm Surge zones. A few areas directly along the shoreline will be inundated by the storm surge from a Class 1 Hurricane. The remainder of Stoney will be inundated by the surge from a Class 2 or higher hurricane. Obviously, the depth of the surge will be greater with stronger hurricanes. The maximum depth during a Class 5 hurricane could be over 20', thereby flooding all structures. Only the tops of some trees will be above water in such a storm. The potential for total devastation is quite high with the stronger hurricanes (Class 4 or 5). Manufactured homes are particularly at risk during a hurricane, where damage will likely be from wind as well as flooding, and could be substantial in storms as weak as Category 2. The Stoney community is one of the neighborhoods on the Island with a significant number of manufactured homes; therefore, property damage to homes could be great even during a relatively small storm. Installation of manufactured homes on permanent foundations, or proper tie-down of these units, will help prevent damage from smaller storms. Floodproofing of buildings constructed on slabs should help prevent some damage from lower storm surges.



NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY & SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The Stoney neighborhood has been a community for over 100 years, well before modern development started on the Island. As mentioned previously, it has always been the gateway to the Island since it is located just to the east of Jenkins Island, which is a natural landing spot for both ferries and bridges. While the majority of the tourism development has occurred elsewhere on the Island – closer to the beaches – the Stoney area has had some tourism related development: the Gullah Market, a few restaurants, and the Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center. These have not had an adverse impact on the cohesiveness of the neighborhood, which is defined more by the people and their culture than by land use patterns or roads. The strength of the community has kept the neighborhood intact despite the major division caused by the presence of William Hilton Parkway.

That isn't to say there are not beautiful natural environments in Stoney – quite the contrary. The salt marshes of both Jarvis Creek and Skull Creek provide peaceful and attractive backdrops to any land based activity. The majority of the land use along the marshes is residential, but there are a few commercial properties as well. The Crazy Crab restaurant and the Welcome Center are two examples of how commercial development can take advantage of the views along the creek. The Welcome Center maintains a natural buffer between the building and the creek, while the restaurant has minimal buffer protecting the creek or the wildlife using the marsh. Future development

EXISTING CONDITIONS & CONSTRAINTS

should be required to maintain the natural vegetated buffer as required by the LMO, in order to reduce the negative impact of stormwater runoff entering the marshes and creeks.

LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The Town has land development regulations which address the siting and design of buildings, parking lots, etc. on the site. Setbacks, buffers, and height are the three main items that can restrict development on a site.

A setback is an area between a structure such as a building and the property line. The purpose of setbacks is to ensure adequate light and air between buildings, and to allow separation from the street. (See Figure 17.) The Town of Hilton Head Island has two types of setbacks, which are applied equally in all zoning districts within the Town except the PD-1 district (the Planned Unit Developments, which have their own setback regulations). The two types are adjacent use setbacks and street setbacks.



Figure 17: Illustration of setbacks. The photo on the left shows a building with no setback from the street right-of-way, while the photo on the right shows a building with a substantial setback.

Adjacent use setbacks range from 20' to 40' depending on the two uses (the one being developed and the one next to it, applies for up to three sides of the property). A typical example is a commercial building being constructed next to a single family residential use – the setback is 30' from the property line. Another example is for a single family subdivision, along the exterior boundaries the setback is 20' if it is adjacent to another residential use, or 30' if it is adjacent to a commercial use. Setbacks do not apply to individual homes, only to the exterior boundary of a subdivision.

Street setbacks vary depending on the type of road: major arterials have the greatest setback requirement, minor arterials have a slightly smaller setback, and all other roads have the smallest setback. This is because these different types of roads have different impacts on the uses adjacent to them – obviously a major arterial has a greater impact

(from noise, etc.) on land uses than a small local road. In Stoney, the setback from William Hilton Parkway is 50'. The setback from Squire Pope Road, Wild Horse Road, or Spanish Wells Road is 40' unless the structure is less than 2' high (such as a deck) in which case it is 30'. From all other streets the setback is 20 feet unless the structure is less than 2' high, in which case the setback is 10'. In addition, there are setback angles, which limit the amount of building mass that can be constructed up against the setback line. Staff believes the setback angles are not so restrictive as to limit the usability of a parcel of land.

Buffers are another technique used to enhance the environment. Buffer areas minimize the negative impacts of having land uses of different types located adjacent to one another. Buffers differ from setbacks in that they are vegetated, either with existing natural vegetation or with new landscaping (or a combination of the two). Hilton Head Island does not regulate the amount of vegetation that must be within the buffer, but generally speaking the more vegetation (particularly tall shrubs), the better the buffer will screen any negative impacts of a development (light, noise, dust, movement, etc.). As with setbacks, there are no buffer requirements for a single family house, but there are buffer requirements for the exterior boundary of a subdivision. The Town has three types of buffers: buffers between adjacent uses, buffers from streets, and buffers from tidal wetlands. See Figure 18.

Buffer sizes range depending on the uses from 20' to 30' plus structural elements (such as a fence or wall). The buffer required between residential uses is 20', and between residential and commercial uses is 25' plus structural elements (wall, fence, etc.). Again, these do not apply to the construction of a single family home, unless it is along the exterior boundary of a new subdivision. The buffer required between the street and a use again depends on the type of street it is: major arterial, minor arterial, or other roads. The buffer from William Hilton Parkway is an average of 60' with a minimum of 50', which means that the buffer line does not have to be straight – it can curve in and out, but must not be narrower than 50' and must be an average across the width of the



Figure 18: Illustration of buffers. The photo on the left illustrates a good buffer between the development and the street, while the photo on the right shows a minimal buffer between the development and the creek.

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parcel of 60'. From Squire Pope Road, Wild Horse Road, or Spanish Wells Road the buffer is an average of 30' with a minimum of 25'. From all other streets the minimum buffer is 20', and there is no average specified.

Finally, building height is regulated for a couple of reasons – one is to ensure public safety especially in regards to fire, and the other is to minimize the visual impact of tall buildings. Permitted height varies depending on which zoning district a development is in, and in some cases it also varies with density. In the CMU district, residential buildings in developments up to 4 dwelling units per acre are permitted to be up to 35' tall. Residential buildings in developments over 4 dwelling units per acre are allowed to be up to 45' tall, with a maximum of 3 habitable stories over 1 level of parking. These are generally multi-family buildings such as apartment buildings. Non-residential buildings in the CMU district are permitted to be up to 35' tall, with a maximum of 2 habitable stories over 1 level of parking. In the RM-4 district, the maximum height of buildings is 35' tall.

In Stoney, these land development regulations can be overly restrictive in a few cases due to the parcel configuration (see Figure 19). The issue is simply that in some areas, the size and shape of the parcels themselves discourage development for uses other than single family, and if consolidated with adjacent parcels, the options for redevelop-



Figure 19: Parcel Configuration

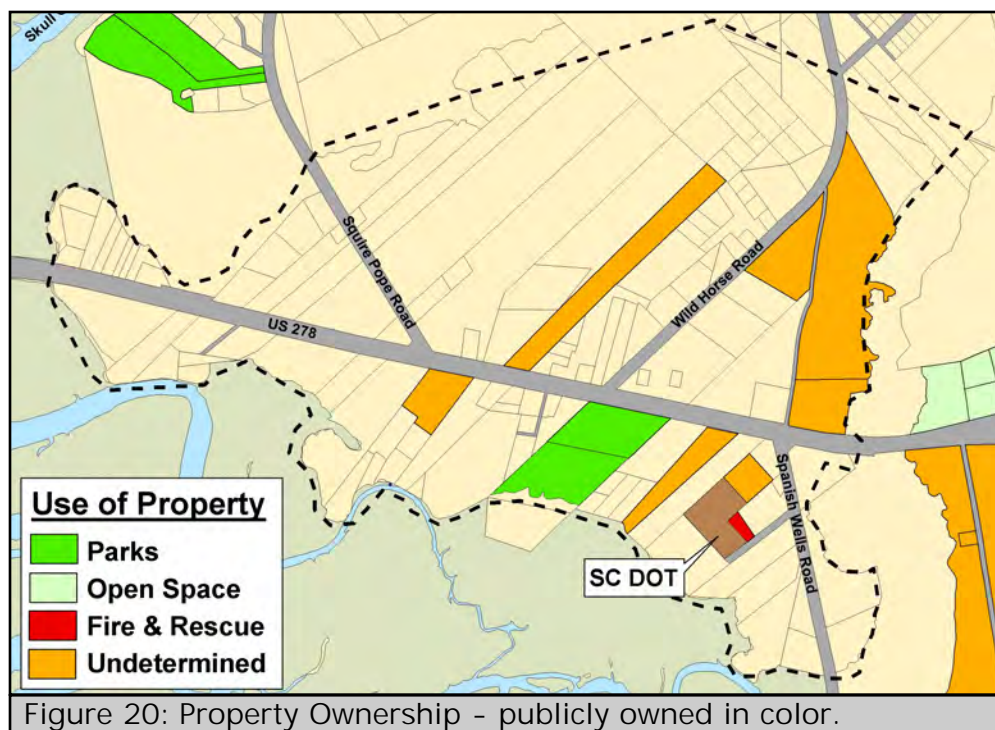
opment broaden. Setbacks and buffers become less restrictive simply because there is more room on the parcel to develop. The majority of parcels in Stoney are large enough to handle development on their own.

Opportunities for redevelopment are increased especially in cases where access to new roads would be affected, and in the William Hilton Parkway corridor where the zoning will likely permit some commercial development. The majority of owners will probably not want to consolidate parcels, but in some cases it may become apparent to them that it would be the most sensible thing to do if they want to redevelop. There are some residents in the neighborhood who are thinking of trying to collaborate on potential redevelopment with family or neighbors.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Figure 20 shows the ownership of property in Stoney. The majority of land is privately owned, but there is a fair amount of publicly owned land. Most of the Town owned land has not been designated for any particular use, but portions of it will likely be used for future road rights-of-way and for parks or open space.

One element that used to serve as a community gathering place was the old Hilton Head Elementary School Building, where many Island residents attended school. The land where the school once stood is now owned jointly by the Town and Beaufort County and contains two tennis courts and a basketball court comprising a neighborhood park. As will be discussed in later chapters, there may be an access road passing through the park somewhere between the tennis courts and William Hilton Parkway. The community would like this park to include a historical plaque about the school, since it was such an important part of their lives.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

The Stoney neighborhood is situated in one of the best yet at the same time worst areas of the Island in regards to potential for redevelopment. It is one of the best given its location, where every vehicle entering or leaving the Town must drive through it. This presents an incredible opportunity for commercial development geared toward the passing motorist. Yet it is this same traffic that makes it among the worst areas on the island, for the simple reason that there is too much traffic for the design of the roadway and the pattern of development that has occurred over the years. There are too many curb cuts, many of them too close together, to allow for safe entry and exit to individual parcels along William Hilton Parkway given the volume and speed of traffic.

Stoney is also surrounded almost entirely by water or marsh, providing beautiful views in nearly all directions. Access to the water itself is limited due to the distance between the upland and the waterway and the small size of the channel in Jarvis Creek. There are a few locations along Jarvis Creek where small watercraft such as kayaks can be launched, at least at high tide (see Figure 21). Redevelopment in this area should take into consideration these beautiful vistas, but in a manner that does not compromise the environment or the natural beauty of the area.

The Stoney neighborhood is also located adjacent to the Honey Horn property, which will be used as a museum and cultural center for the Island. It should serve as a major recreational facility for the Island, and should increase the use of the Stoney area by visitors. For example, visitors to Honey Horn may eat at restaurants and shop in stores located in Stoney.

Similarly, the Beaufort County School district's Hilton Head campus is located close to the Stoney neighborhood, and includes the Island Recreation Center. This campus includes many opportunities for recreation and is accessible via sidewalks and pathways from Stoney. The Boys & Girls Club is located up Gum Tree Road from the school campus, and also provides good opportunities for children living in Stoney. It too is accessible via sidewalks and pathways.



Figure 21: Jarvis Creek

Given the right combination of new access roads and new zoning, the potential for redevelopment in the Stoney neighborhood is there. Redevelopment could be done in such a way as to strike a balance between the residential use of the land, much of which has been in family ownership for generations, and limited commercial redevelopment. It could also be done without creating an adverse impact on the environment or the natural beauty of the area.

LAND USE AND DENSITY

Need 1: The current zoning district of CMU no longer meets the needs or desires of the Stoney residents. The majority of land owners want to retain the ability to live on their land, or for their children and grandchildren to live on their land, but to have the flexibility to have some form of commercial development if they so choose. This could be in the form of residential over commercial uses, or a house located behind a small commercial business.

Goal 1: Establish the zoning along William Hilton Parkway as a mixed use district where residential and non-intrusive commercial uses would be allowed. This district should be called the "Stoney Mixed Use" district, or SMU. Consider establishing a density system allowing varying non-residential densities that would yield a total greater than what is allowed currently, to encourage mixed use developments.

Need 2: The remainder of the land in the Stoney Initiative Area (the area outside of the boundaries of the proposed Stoney Mixed Use zoning district) should be used for residential purposes, primarily for single family. Discussions with the community have indicated there may be good reason to establish a separate residential district to accommodate more appropriate uses for the Stoney residential area.

Goal 2: Preserve the residential nature of the remaining land area while adjusting the permitted land uses to better suit the residents of the Stoney community.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Need 3: Traditionally, site planning orients the building toward William Hilton Parkway. Marsh views are not being taken advantage of, prohibiting the public's enjoyment of the area's scenic vistas.

Goal 3: Preservation of and enjoyment of the Island's natural resources should be incorporated into site designs and planning. Owners should be encouraged to design their sites to take advantage of marsh views. Elevation of buildings to meet flood regulations can allow a land owner to capitalize on those views, and in some cases can allow parking under the building, thus reducing the amount of impervious surface on the site.

Need 4: Current setback and buffer regulations can be overly restrictive on small lots or on long narrow lots. Nonetheless, they are important elements of site design needed to minimize the impacts of development on neighboring properties.

Goal 4: Encourage the consolidation of parcels where feasible to result in larger land areas where setbacks and buffers would not be overly restrictive. Examine the possibility of revising the setback and buffer regulations for redevelopment, where compromises would be made between the Town and property owner to achieve redevelopment to everyone's best interest.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Need 5: Road Improvements: It is recognized that the combination of traffic volume, traffic speed, and the high number of curb cuts in this area have created a dangerous situation for anyone trying to turn into or out of a property along this stretch of William Hilton Parkway.

Goal 5: Improve safety conditions on William Hilton Parkway for both local and through traffic as well as for pedestrians. The construction of small frontage roads to provide access to properties without requiring a curb cut is a natural solution to the existing problems, and was met with agreement by the participants of the charette. If the new roads suggested in this Plan are constructed, almost all curb cuts on William Hilton Parkway between Spanish Wells Road and Squire Pope Road could be closed.

Need 6: All three major intersections with William Hilton Parkway in Stoney have current situations that cause problems with either traffic flow or safety.

Goal 6: Make improvements to these three intersections to improve traffic flow and safety for both vehicles and pedestrians.

Need 7: Lack of landscaping next to William Hilton Parkway detracts from the potential beauty of Stoney and encourages drivers to continue at a high rate of speed.

Goal 7: William Hilton Parkway should be landscaped along the sides. This will accomplish two things: it will help to buffer existing uses from the highway, and it will narrow the perspective of the drivers, forcing them to concentrate more on the road and slow them down. The design of the landscaping must take into consideration appropriate sight distances at drive-ways, and should avoid the solid hedge look.

Need 8: Pedestrian Facilities: Existing pedestrian facilities are inadequate to encourage people to get out of their vehicles and move around the Stoney neighborhood. The Stoney community must be a neighborhood that is safe for pedestrians. This will lead to better use of the area, which will stimulate redevelopment to take advantage of the mobility of people (without use of cars).

NEEDS & GOALS

Goal 8: Infrastructure such as a pedestrian overpass, improved crosswalks, landscaped medians for refuge, and pathways set back from William Hilton Parkway should be constructed for better pedestrian safety and maneuverability.

Need 9: Public Infrastructure: Only one parcel of land in Stoney is connected to a public sewer system. This lack of sewer service prohibits further development of an area that is comprised of soils not conducive to septic systems, as was shown in the section on natural features in Chapter 2 – the soils in Stoney are not suited for septic systems, especially at the densities allowed in the area.

Goal 9: Provide for better sanitary sewer availability for public health reasons as well as to provide more economic opportunities for the Stoney residents. New sewer lines should be installed in new road rights-of-way wherever possible, as there is little room available in the right-of-way along William Hilton Parkway.

ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS

Need 10: Family ownership of land in Stoney is a critical element of the strong sense of community that exists in Stoney. Continued local ownership and redevelopment should be encouraged.

Goal 10: Continue to provide currently available assistance from Town Planning staff for basic questions dealing with how the LMO design standards affect development, and work with local organizations such as NIBCAA and the CDC to help them establish a new program to provide assistance to land owners for more detailed conceptual site planning.

Need 11: There are currently no design guidelines for an owner to follow to design a building which will fit into the Stoney character. While the Town does have design guidelines, they don't necessarily result in buildings which fit into the Stoney neighborhood.

Goal 11: The POA should work on developing a set of voluntary design guidelines to assist landowners in designing their buildings. This effort must be coordinated with the Town's Design Review Board.

Need 12: The Stoney neighborhood currently has no real identity visible to people passing through it or people not familiar with it. The presence of the parkway through the neighborhood has eroded the cohesiveness of the community.

Goal 12: Install an entry sign with a graphic which suitably illustrates the culture of the Stoney neighborhood to identify the neighborhood for people passing through, and redesign the street signs to include this graphic identi-

fier. Investigate the possibility of incorporating this graphic into the future pedestrian overpass, if it is built.

Need 13: There are currently a number of structures which are located close to or within the right-of-way for William Hilton Parkway which will need to be moved or removed for infrastructure improvements along the corridor (including highway and/or pathway improvements). Residents impacted by these projects should be provided with an alternative to moving out of the area.

Goal 13: Research the feasibility of establishing a subdivision on Town owned property in or near the Stoney Initiative Area which residents impacted to the degree that their homes must be removed for infrastructure projects within the Stoney Initiative Area can relocate to.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

As with any plan, it is the implementation of the goals which results in changes to the community. The same is true in the case of the Stoney Initiative Area. The Needs and Goals can be divided into three categories: amendments to the Land Management Ordinance, public infrastructure, and assistance to land owners. This chapter provides a discussion of these.

AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

Implementation of several of the goals in the previous chapter depends on amendments to the LMO. These involve changing the land use, density and design standards. The details of what uses will be permitted, how they will be permitted (by right, by condition, or by special exception), as well as the details on densities to be permitted will be worked out during the LMO amendment process. Guidelines for these changes are described below.

STRATEGY #1. FUTURE LAND USE AND DENSITY PROVISIONS



In order to facilitate economic development and redevelopment in the Stoney community the majority of the land along William Hilton Parkway should be zoned for a more refined mixed use district (called the Stoney Mixed Use district) where residential and commercial uses would be allowed (see Figure 22). When

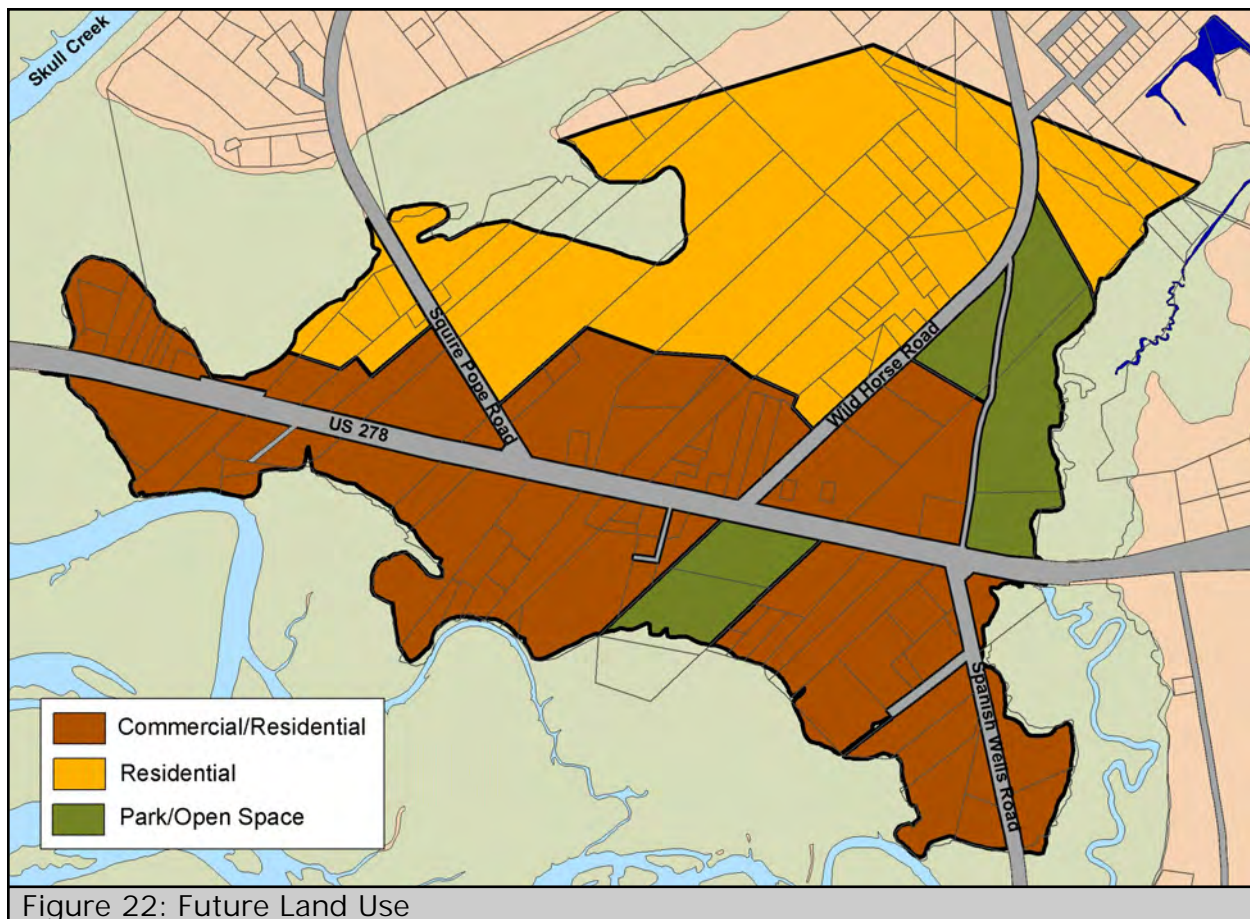


Figure 22: Future Land Use

drafting the LMO amendments in regard to this recommendation, care must be taken to avoid conflicts between adjacent land uses. Examples of uses that could be permitted in the district include residential, churches, parks, restaurants (but not drive through), offices, bed & breakfasts, inns, hotels or motels, and some small retail commercial. Appropriateness of designating the land use as permitted by-right, by special exception, or permitted with conditions should also be examined.



Residential densities should remain similar to what is currently allowed in the Stoney neighborhood (see chart on page 7). In the SMU district, the densities are recommended to be 10 dwelling units per net acre for residential uses, 20 rooms per net acre for hotel/motel/inn uses, and 7,000 square feet per net acre for non-residential uses. The concept is to permit commercial development at a scale that is similar to what is currently existing in the neighborhood. Since this is to be a mixed use district, flexibility in the combination of residential and non-residential densities should be examined in order to encourage a mixture of residential and commercial uses on the same piece of property.

STRATEGY #2. FUTURE DESIGN PROVISIONS



Buffer and setback provisions pertaining to William Hilton Parkway will remain in effect, but should be examined to determine if modifications to create flexibility are appropriate. The goal of providing flexibility in the required performance standards is to create a win/win situation where the property owner can get some relief from setbacks in return for denser buffers or other similar performance standards.



Freshwater and tidal wetland buffer regulations will remain in effect, but are being examined to determine if flexibility in the maintenance of those buffers can be added to allow view windows to be created. One advantage of elevating buildings to meet the flood zone regulations is that the first floor will be high enough to take advantage of the marsh views without excessive pruning in the buffer.



Development in the areas along the marshes should be oriented towards the marsh views, as opposed to the William Hilton Parkway frontage. The scale and massing of the structures should be in keeping with the rest of the Island Character; their height should be below the treetops surrounding the building location. The buildings in this area should also endeavor to compliment one another in style and function. Finally, the location of the buildings should take into account the effect the building has on the view shed from land uses across the marsh and boaters in the marsh.



Assistance from the Town should continue to be provided to land owners to help them understand the requirements of the LMO. Other organizations should be encouraged to provide land owners assistance in designing developments that take advantage of marsh views while protecting the natural resources.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Public projects include construction of new roads, sewer lines, pathways, pedestrian facilities, parks, etc. The Stoney community will benefit greatly if all these recommendations are implemented, and will still benefit if only some of the recommended projects are constructed.

To illustrate, consider the needs regarding pedestrian facilities. At present, walking around the Stoney neighborhood is intimidating at best and dangerous at worst. The sidewalks are located directly adjacent to the highway, where the vast majority of vehicles pass at high speeds. There is no margin of error for drivers or pedestrians. In addition, crossing William Hilton Parkway is extremely dangerous at all but two locations, where pedestrian activated traffic lights are located. As discussed earlier in this Plan, both of those have problems as well. If a pedestrian overpass and better designed pathways are constructed, and improvements are made to the on-grade crossings, this will lead to better use of the area. These changes will stimulate redevelopment to take advantage of the mobility of people without use of cars.

These types of public infrastructure projects can be financed in several ways:


- ◆ As part of the cost of developing property (developer paid);
- ◆ Capital Improvement Program (CIP) — funding for the CIP comes from a variety of sources, including impact fees, grants, real estate transfer fee, beach fees, hospitality tax, ATAX, and other sources;
- ◆ Tax Increment Financing (TIF);
- ◆ Grants and other outside funding sources.


STRATEGY #3A: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS - ROADWAY


It is recognized that sometime in the next decade it is likely that improvements to the road network carrying traffic from the mainland to the Island will need to be made. Various alternatives to accomplish an increase in capacity should be considered; widening the existing William Hilton Parkway through Stoney should not be assumed to be a given. Proposed land uses as well as siting of structures on properties along William Hilton Parkway should be taken into consideration. In some cases, structures will need to be moved which could impact residents to the extent that they will need to find another place to live. The Town should consider establishing a new residential neighborhood specifically for those who are displaced by road and other infrastructure projects in the Stoney Initiative Area.

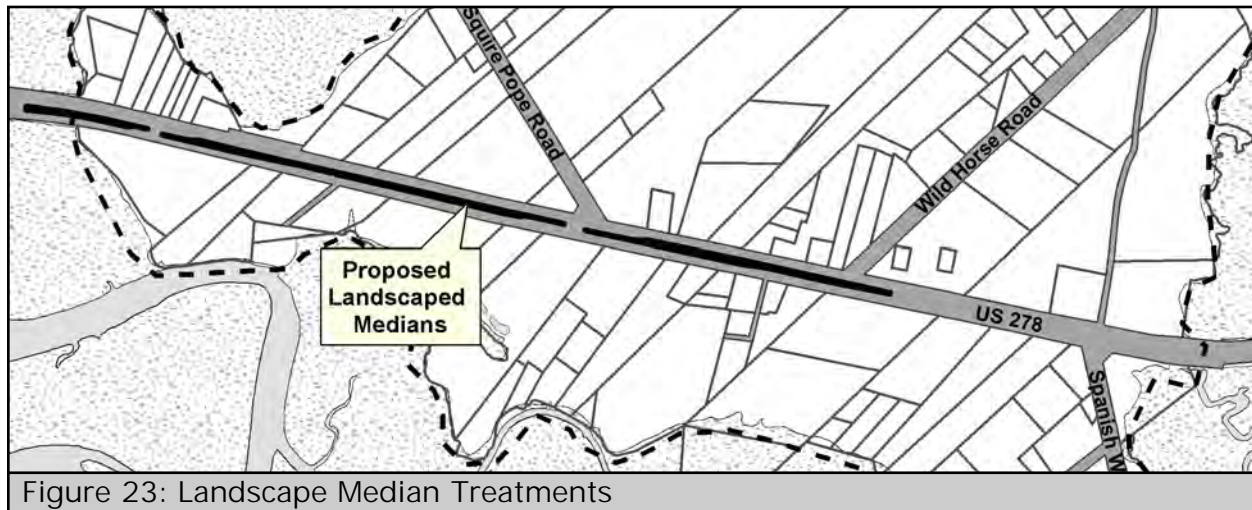


There are a variety of techniques that can be used to slow traffic on roadways, including traffic calming as well as enforcement of speed limits. A study of speed limits in the area was conducted in the summer of 2001, which indicated that the speed on William Hilton Parkway through Stoney is appropriate and it is not recommended to be reduced. The following paragraphs discuss several methods to calm traffic.


-  Construct a median on William Hilton Parkway between Wild Horse Road and Jenkins Island. One median cut should be constructed at the Welcome Center, positioned to line up with the access to the residential development on the north side of William Hilton Parkway. This median should be landscaped with appropriate vegetation to focus the driver's attention on the road and the area they are driving through, without the distractions that exist today (see Figure 23.)


-  In conjunction with this, curb cuts should be consolidated to facilitate traffic getting into and out of the area.

-  Install landscaping along the sides of William Hilton Parkway. Landscaping along William Hilton Parkway through Stoney should be designed as a single plan, including both sides of the road, any proposed pathways, and the median. Heavy landscaping along residential properties is recommended to increase buffering between the residences and the road/pathway.



STRATEGY #3B: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS - NEW ROADS

-  Construct a new road from Wild Horse Road to William Hilton Parkway along the old Horseshoe Road that comes out at the Spanish Wells Road intersection. In conjunction with this, close the intersection of Wild Horse Road and William Hilton Parkway (see Figure 24). This will provide the space needed to construct the pedestrian overpass (see Pedestrian Improvements, page 33). This will have a positive impact on the redevelopment of the entire area.

-  Construct a new road to the north of William Hilton Parkway to provide access to properties without requiring curb cuts on the Parkway. The land to the north of this new road should be used primarily for residential development, and to the south for neighborhood commercial development. This road should be built fairly close to and paralleling William Hilton Parkway, from behind the gas station at the Spanish Wells Road intersection to Squire Pope Road (see Figure 24).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

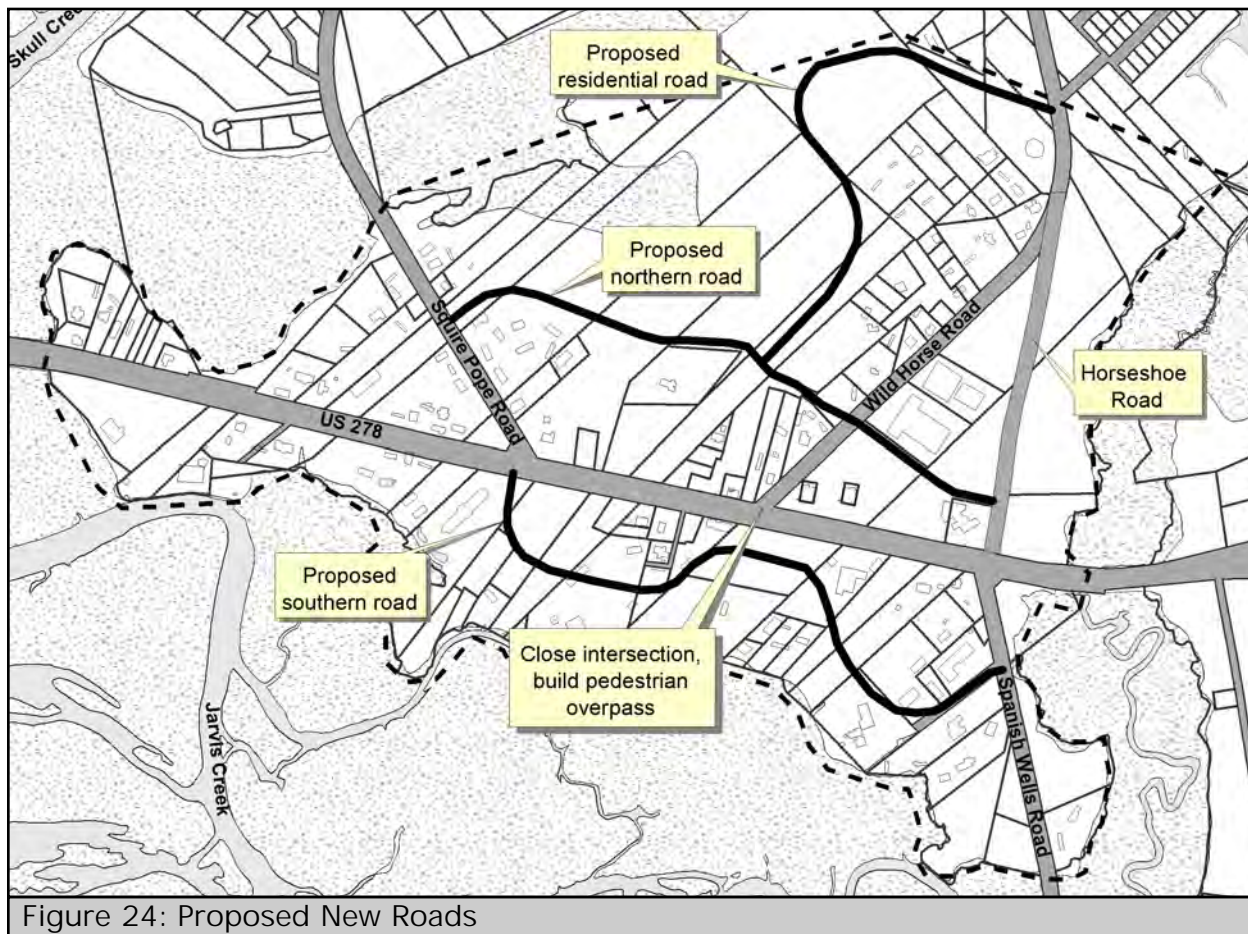


Figure 24: Proposed New Roads



In addition to that new road, it is recommended that a new road be constructed in the northern portion of this area to provide access for residential development. This road should go from Wild Horse Road near the water tower, behind the existing homes southwest of the water tower, and wind its way down to the new road proposed above. This road would open up opportunities for residential development in a large undeveloped area. The actual location of this road must take into consideration the presence of wetlands in the area (see Figure 24).



Construct a new road to the south of William Hilton Parkway from Spanish Wells Road at Humane Way to the Squire Pope Road intersection. This road should wind through the area and would provide safe access to allow for commercial growth and redevelopment. The area to the east of Old Schoolhouse Park is currently primarily commercial with some residential near the marsh, while the area to the west of the park is mostly residential with some commercial near William Hilton Parkway and the Gullah Market at the intersection. Construction of this road would open up a significant amount of land for redevelopment. Conversely, without this road, commercial development in this area should not be encouraged, as access would have to be from the Parkway, and property configurations do not allow for safe distances between curb cuts (see Figure 24.)

STRATEGY #3C: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS - INTERSECTIONS



In the case of Squire Pope Road, it is recommended making it a full fledged four way road intersection (with construction of the new southern access road), adding a right turn only lane onto the Parkway from Squire Pope Road, adding a right turn only lane from the Parkway onto Squire Pope Road, and re-examining the timing of the traffic light to ensure appropriate traffic flow on both the Parkway and on Squire Pope Road and the new southern road. (See Figure 25).

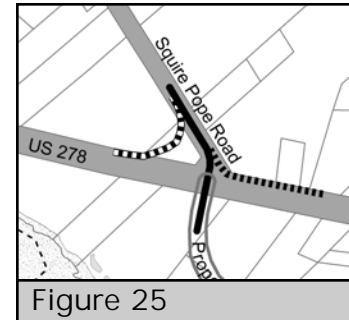


Figure 25



Recommended improvements at Spanish Wells Road are to make it a full fledged four way intersection with the construction of Horseshoe Road, and to re-examine the timing of the traffic lights and whether it will be necessary to have left turn arrows installed. It can be expected that with the construction of Horseshoe Road, there will be an increase in traffic making left turns from eastbound William Hilton Parkway to access the residential areas toward Gum Tree Road. Thus, this intersection should see a substantial amount of left turning traffic from all four legs, so left turn arrows may be warranted. (See Figure 26). The potential construction of a new access road in the general location of the existing Humane Way may cause conflicts with improvements at this intersection. This issue should be studied when planning is done for the design of the new road and for the intersection improvements.

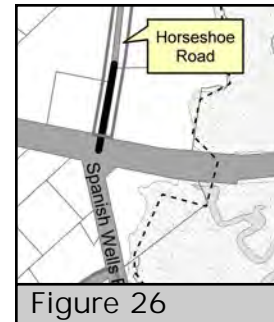


Figure 26



Close the existing Wild Horse Road and William Hilton Parkway intersection. With the planned new road to service the commercial development along the Parkway, closing of this intersection should not be a major issue. The result will be safer access to those commercial properties. (See Figure 27).

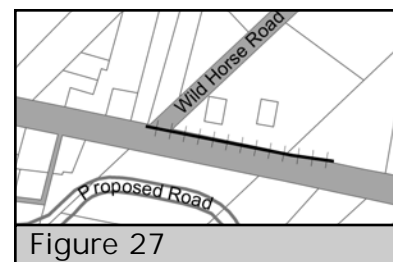


Figure 27

STRATEGY #3D: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS - PEDESTRIAN



Investigate the possibility of constructing a pedestrian overpass across William Hilton Parkway. The closing of the existing intersection of Wild Horse Road when Horseshoe Road is constructed provides an opportunity to locate this overpass in the best spot possible – at the Old Schoolhouse Park. Depending on the final alignment for the new access road recommended for the south side of William Hilton Parkway, the overpass could go over both William Hilton Parkway and the new access road, taking pedestrians from the north side of the Parkway directly into the park.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES



Also related to these recommendations are improvements to the on-grade crosswalks in the area. It is recommended that all crosswalks (which should be located at every leg of every intersection) be painted with a solid color of some contrast to the pavement, clearly delineating the area where pedestrians walk. In addition, there should be a textured and painted surface on the roadbed some 50 to 100 feet before the crosswalk on William Hilton Parkway to warn motorists that they are approaching a crosswalk. Finally, signage on William Hilton Parkway should be installed warning motorists that there are pedestrians in the area.



In conjunction with that recommendation, there should be safe landing areas in the center of William Hilton Parkway where pedestrians can safely stop when they cannot get across the entire width of the highway in one light cycle. These landing areas should be landscaped to provide a more secure area for people to wait, by more clearly defining the pedestrian space from the vehicle space. Also, these landings should have a push button for people stuck in the middle of the road to be able to activate the pedestrian light again.

STRATEGY #3E: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS - PUBLIC FACILITIES





As was stated previously in this Plan, the majority of soils in the Stoney area are not suitable for septic systems at any density, and even the Wando soils (the best in Stoney) are not capable of handling even 4 septic systems per acre. In order for development or redevelopment to occur in the Stoney neighborhood, either residential or commercial, the area must be connected to the public sewer system. Main lines should be installed along William Hilton Parkway (where no alternative route exists, such as within the right-of-way for new roads), Squire Pope Road, Wild Horse Road, Spanish Wells Road and any proposed new road in order to provide adequate availability for properties throughout the area. These lines should be sized to accommodate future growth based on future land use (see Figure 22, page 28).




Construct bike paths along both sides of William Hilton Parkway, replacing the existing sidewalks. The landscaping referred to in this Plan should be planted between the bike path and the road bed in some areas, especially where the path must be located relatively close to the roadway (see Figure 28.) One difficulty that will arise in the implementation of this recommendation is that some homes or businesses will be in the way of the bike path. While the Town generally will not construct a pathway such that it will have such a great impact, in a few cases structures may need to be moved which could impact residents to the extent that they will need to find another place to live. The Town should consider establishing a new residential neighborhood specifically for those who are displaced by road and other infrastructure projects in the Stoney Initiative Area.



Figure 28: Bikepath

-  In order to provide for safe use of the bike paths at night, it is recommended that low level lighting be installed along the proposed bike paths and that appropriate lighting be installed at street intersections where there are pedestrian crossings. Pathway lighting should utilize a shoebox design to eliminate unnecessary lighting of the sky, or a short bollard design. Lighting design decisions should be made on a case by case basis for the different areas proposed to be lit (pathways versus intersections, and whether there are homes close by).
-  Investigate the establishment of an island wide public transportation system. It should be noted that such a transportation system could help to alleviate some of the traffic pressures in the Stoney area as well as the entire island.
-  Investigate the feasibility of burying overhead power lines that run along William Hilton Parkway, as that would improve the aesthetics of the area as well as get them out of the way of other projects such as the installation of pathways. Also, it should be researched to determine if burying power lines could be done in conjunction with the construction of pathways, water lines, or sewer lines.
-  Improvements should be made to the Old Schoolhouse Park. The POA committee has expressed an interest in having markers installed in the park that would provide historical and cultural information and would help to maintain the culture and character of the neighborhood. The design of the park should take into consideration any future pedestrian overpass at this location.

STRATEGY #3F: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS - OTHERS

 One important aspect of safety on the roadway is enforcement of traffic laws on this stretch of William Hilton Parkway. The Town should coordinate with the Beaufort County Sheriff’s Office to provide increased enforcement of the speed limits in this area.


 The charette recommended that a distinctive entry sign for the neighborhood be installed which has some visual representation of the community character, and also that new street sign names which duplicate the graphic in the entry sign be installed. Such signage would serve two purposes: it would provide a unifying theme for the neighborhood, and it would help non-residents to identify the neighborhood and places within it. Figure 29 depicts a prototype sign which includes a graphic that is copyrighted by the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA). It is not the intent of the Town to use this graphic in any sign without the express written permission of NIBCAA.



Figure 29: Sign Prototype

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS

Encourage the continued efforts of this neighborhood POA and continue a working relationship with them to mutually support the goals of this Plan. Property owners and stakeholders need to have an input mechanism to provide information or feedback to the Town and strengthen the interdependent relationship.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY #4A: ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS - AGGREGATE PARCELS

The Plan recommends that property owners work together to aggregate parcels for more efficient development. It is an idea with merit but in reality will only happen when the configuration of parcels is really a major stumbling block to redevelopment and the property owners are willing to work together.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY #4B: ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS - ENCOURAGE LOCAL LAND AND BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

Several groups can be utilized to help encourage local land and business ownership. Assistance from these groups would encourage land owners to keep their land as opposed to selling to other developers. The Town Planning staff is always available to answer questions and help people understand the regulations to which their land is subjected, and they are available as a first step for individuals in the planning of their properties for new development. Existing organizations such as the Native Island Business and Community Affairs Association (NIBCAA) and the Community Development Corporation (CDC) may be able to step in and provide assistance with the planning and design of individual properties. Local banks could set up low interest loans and other funding mechanisms to assist low income land owners with redevelopment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY #4C: ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS - VOLUNTARY DESIGN GUIDELINES

Voluntary design guidelines can be created so people would have something to refer to in designing new buildings in Stoney that would reflect the character of the neighborhood. Such voluntary guidelines should be produced by the POA and coordinated with the Town's Design Review Board.



Related to this idea is the recommendation that the POA be allowed to review and comment on proposed special exception applications. While this is a good idea, it would also have to be voluntary, and would require the POA to keep itself appraised of proposed development. The application would still have to go through the required review process as established by the LMO and State law, and any comments from the POA would be strictly voluntary and not required as part of the Town's review process. Nonetheless, it could be beneficial to both the neighborhood and the applicant to have this open dialogue.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY #4D: ASSISTANCE TO LAND OWNERS - OTHERS

Research grant and other programs that can be tapped into by the Town to provide financial assistance to land owners trying to improve their property or required to move their home or business due to encroachment by public facilities such as roads. Local community groups could also work with local banks to set up low interest loan or other funding mechanisms to assist low income land owners with these things.



The Town can work with NIBCAA and other community groups to establish a second step design assistance program – this could enlist the help of local design professionals to meet with individuals to start to design new development or redevelopment in a conceptual form. The final design and engineering phase of the process would be up to the individual land owner to obtain.

