

SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

ROCKY POINT HAMLET PLAN

December 2002

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Rocky Point Report

This survey was conducted in November 2002. The questionnaire was distributed by mail to 5,830 homes and post-office boxes. A total of 682 participants completed and returned the survey. The SPSS statistical package was utilized for the development of the database, the analysis of the data, and the creation of the tables. The data was checked for entry errors prior to the analysis.

Demographics

From the 682 study participants, 95.7% (641) own a home, condo, co-op, apartment, building or store in Rocky Point, while 7.6% (43) rent property [Table 1A]. At least half of the participants (310) own/rent property in North Shore Beach, 15% own/rent in Tides, while only 1.5% own/rent in Culross [Table 2A]. The majority of the participants (40.9%) are between 30-49 years of age [Table 3A], and most households (30.4%) include 2 adults and no children (58.9%) [Table 4A]. Most households own at least one vehicle (93%), and in 63.3% of the households there are 2 licensed drivers [Table 5A].

Overview of responses across categories

In this first set of analysis we measure the aggregate reactions of participants towards all examined issue categories [Table 6A]. From all topics addressed in this survey, participants are in high agreement with the future land uses in Rocky Point. On a 0-1 scale, where 1 indicates strong approval and 0 indicates strong disapproval, the average attitude towards suggested future land uses was .74. Their opinions toward suggested developments is somewhat low (.27), while their agreement with the proposed development for the business district and the underdeveloped 33-acre parcel is somewhat moderate (.43 and .40 respectively). Of most importance to the respondents was the development of the business district (.85), followed by aesthetics (.67), suggested services (.61) and traffic issues (.60), while least important were the year-round recreation questions. Residents of Rocky Point were significantly concerned (.83), but also satisfied with their community (.66) and the operation of business (.66). However, they were less satisfied with the offered public services (.53) [Table 6A].

Frequently Visited Facilities

Overall, Rocky Point facilities are not visited very frequently. The average facility is visited between 1-5 times per year [Table 6A]. The most frequently visited facilities are the North Shore Public Library, the Rocky Point Beaches, Cedar Beach, and the PJ Harbor [Table 1B]. About 37.2% of the respondents (252) visit the North Shore Public Library more than 16 times per year, while 36.9% visit the Rocky Point Beaches that often [Table 1C]. The least visited facilities are the Pine Barrens, Mod Center, the Marconi Shed, and the Temima Gezari Art Studio [Table 1B]. As many as 630 people answered that they never hunt in Pine Barrens, 614 never visit the Mod Center, and 601 have never been to the Temima Gezari Art Studio [Table 1C].

Preferred Land Use

Overall agreement with the suggested future land uses in Rocky point is high (.74) [Table 6A]. However, future land uses must be consistent with the protection of the environment and preservation of open space. On a 0-1 scale, where 1 indicates strong approval and 0 indicates strong disapproval, the average attitude towards preservation of open space was .94, and towards the protection of the environment was .96 [Table 2B]. The least favored land use related to the potential of increasing school population, for which the average score was .29. While 89.8% and 83.9% favored strongly the protection of the environment and the preservation of open space respectively, only 8.3% favored strongly the potential of increasing the school population, and 44.5% strongly opposed such use [Table 2C]. Interestingly while 18.9% of the respondents strongly favor current zoning and only 7.1% strongly oppose it, 27.2% do not have enough information to form an opinion [Table 2C].

Preferred future development

Overall, agreement with suggested developments is low (.27) [Table 6A]. The type of future development that is in agreement with the majority's vision of Rocky Point is single family homes (.77) and planned retirement communities (.42), while the least preferred is three-plus attached single family homes [Table 3B]. The support of single-family homes is very strong. As Table 3C indicates, 57.5% of the participants (383) strongly favor single-family homes, and only 11.6% strongly oppose such development. Attitudes towards planned retirement communities are more moderate, with 11.3% strongly in favor, 33.3% somewhat in favor, and 16.7% somewhat opposed, and 36% strongly opposed. Less than 1% wants three-plus attached single-family homes, while 81.6% strongly oppose such development [Table 3C].

Future of Under-developed 33-acre parcel located north of 25A

Overall, agreement with the suggested developments for the underdeveloped 33-acre parcel is below average (.40) [Table 6A]. When asked about the future of the under-developed 33-acre parcel located north of 25A, most participants favor government purchase for public use (.73). The least preferred option was a light commercial development (.11), a development for mixed use (.17), and retail stores or medical and professional space (.17) [Table 4B]. More analytically, 45.3% agree strongly with government purchase for public use, and only 11.6% strongly disagrees with this option. Suggestions favoring a light commercial development received strong opposition from 75.6% of the participants, and so did the proposal for retail stores (67.8%) and the mixed-use proposal (64.6%) [Table 4C].

Cultural preferences

Cultural developments are of moderate importance (.56) [Table 6A]. The performing arts center is the highest priority of the respondents (.63), while an arts museum is the least preferred option (.49) [Table 5B]. While 27% consider a performing arts center very important, 20.9% prefer great lawn with band shell, 19.8% strongly favor a history museum, and 15% strongly favor an arts museum [Table 5C]. The history museum is somewhat important for 41.4% of the participants, while an art museum remains the least favored second choice (34.2%).

Educational preferences

Educational developments are considered of moderate importance (.59) [Table 6A]. A public library is favored the most among participants (.73) while a batting cage is favored the least (.40) [Table 6B]. While 50.5% consider a public library very important, and only 11% consider it not at all important, only 9.6% consider a batting cage very important, and 29.7% argues that it is not at all important. Adult educational facilities are considered somewhat important by 41.3% of the respondents, and not at all important by only 10% [Table 6C].

Recreational preferences – Outdoor

Outdoor recreation alternatives receive moderate attention (.54) [Table 6A]. A biking trail (.70), a jogging trail (.68) and sports fields (.68) are high in the preference of the participants of the survey. The least preferred outdoor recreation is a roller hockey facility (.36) [Table 7B]. While 32.1% find a biking trail very important, only 10.1%

say so for a roller hockey facility. 49.2% find jogging trails as somewhat important, and 28.5% find a skateboard area not at all important [Table 7C].

Recreational preferences – Year-round

Overall, year-round recreation also receives moderate support (.52) [Table 6A]. A bowling alley and a swimming pool receive the highest ratings for year round recreation (.59), and racquetball courts receive the lowest rating (.43) [Table 8B]. 28.3% find a swimming pool very important, and 23.6% prefer a bowling alley. 24.1% find yoga not at all important, and 19.8% believe that racquetball courts are not at all important [Table 8C].

Preferred services

Overall, suggested services receive somewhat greater support (.61) [Table 6A]. Summer programs for children are the most preferred service (.79) and a professional fire department the least preferred (.54) [Table 9B]. Of the 682 participants, 51.2% find summer programs for children very important, and only 6.6% find it not at all important. A community center is the first choice of 30%, it is considered somewhat important by 44.5%, and not at all important by 9.4%. A police station is also favored strongly by 30% for the participants, while 12.6% find it not at all important [Table 9C].

Aesthetic preferences

Overall, aesthetics are considered at least somewhat important [Table 6A]. Improved waterfront seems to be the priority of Rocky Point residents (.82), as well as handicap access (.79). On the other hand, a gazebo (.43) or a duck pond (.48) are the least preferred [Table 10B]. Of the respondents, 61% consider improved waterfront very important, and 54.9% consider tree plantings through the business districts very important. Handicap access is considered very important by 52%, and not at all important by only 4.8%. A duck pond and a gazebo are seen as not at all important by 25.5% and 215.6% respectively [Table 10C].

Development of Business districts

Overall, the suggested business district developments do not receive high support (.43) [Table 6A]. A bookstore or a waterfront restaurant are the most preferred

proposed developments for the business districts (.79 and .71 respectively). Strip mall shopping, fast food restaurants and a light commercial industrial center are the least preferred (.17, .20 and .20) [Table 11B]. The bookstore was strongly favored by 44.5%, and least favored by only 5.8%, while the waterfront restaurant was strongly favored by 38.8% and strongly opposed by only 12%. The least desired development was the strip mall shopping, with 64.4% strongly opposing it, and the light commercial industrial center, receiving strong disapproval by 57.8% [Table 11C].

Priorities in Business districts

Rocky Point residents place great importance overall to the development of their business district (.85) [Table 6A]. As evident in Table 12B, the average importance of each topic is well above the middle .5 level. There is however some variation between the topics. For example, attractive shopping areas are a priority to Rocky Point residents (.96), and so is parking access (.90). Least important are tax incentives for new business development (.74) and tax incentives for existing business improvements (.79) [Table 12B]. 583 respondents (86.6%) consider attractive shopping areas very important, and only .6% considers them not all important. Parking access is a big issue for 70.9% of the respondents, while tax incentives for new business development are considered very important by 42.7% [Table 12C].

Level of concern with existing conditions

Rocky Point residents are also concerned with the topics addressed in this survey (.83) [Table 6A]. The average concern level of each question is above .63, indicating that for all the questions most respondents were selecting the very concerned or somewhat concerned option [Table 13B]. Most concerned are the respondents in regards to school taxes (.94), and the preservation of pine barrens (.92). Least concerned are residents about access to public transportation (.63) and proximity to a police station (.71). From the 682 respondents, 83.9% answered that they are very concerned with school taxes, the preservation of the Pine Barrens (79.9%) and teen drug and alcohol use (75%). 33.7% are somewhat concerned about the homeless people and the proximity to a police station. On the other hand, 8.5% are not at all concerned about access to public transportation [Table 13C].

Level of satisfaction with Rocky Point community

The overall satisfaction with Rocky Point community is above average (.66) [Table 6A]. Residents are overall very satisfied with Rocky Point as a place to live (.83) and

as a place to raise children (.80), and least satisfied with the lack of variety of cultural amenities and recreational facilities (.48). Of all respondents, 48% are very satisfied, and 45.2% somewhat satisfied with Rocky Point as a place to live. Only 8.5% are very satisfied with the existing recreational facilities, and only 11.5% are very satisfied with the existing cultural amenities [Table 14C].

Level of satisfaction with Rocky Point Business district

The average evaluation of Rocky Point business district is positive (.66) [Table 6A]. Respondents were most satisfied with the convenience of parking at Waldbaums/Pier1 (.85), and their appearance (.83), the convenience of parking at Kohl's (.83) and the vehicular access of Waldbaums/Pier1 (.82). They were least satisfied with the appearance of the CVS Center (.41), and the appearance of Downtown (.43) [Table 15B]. 55.2% of the respondents were very satisfied with the convenience of parking at Waldbaums/Pier1, and 51% were very satisfied with the convenience of parking at Kohl's. Similarly, 42.6% were satisfied with the vehicular access of Waldbaums/Pier1 and 45.9% were very satisfied with its appearance. On the other hand, only 4.7% were very satisfied with the appearance of the Downtown area, while 19.8% were very dissatisfied. Similarly, only 4.8% were very satisfied with the appearance of the CVS Center, and 17.9% were very dissatisfied with it. Interestingly while 9.3% were very satisfied with handicap parking and only 7.2% were not at all satisfied, 31.4% did not have a set opinion on the topic [Table 15C].

Level of satisfaction with Public Services in the community

Rocky Point residents show moderate levels of satisfaction in respect to the public services available to the community (.53) [Table 6A]. They are mostly satisfied with garbage collection services (.75), turning lanes (.69), traffic lights (.67) and police services (.67), and least satisfied with controlling the cat population (.36), visual pollution (.36), notification of zoning (.42), and road drainage (.41), and pothole repair (.43) [Table 16B]. Of the 682 participants, 36.5% were strongly satisfied with garbage collection services, 20.4% were strongly satisfied with police services, but only 5.5% were very satisfied by sewer maintenance, and 5.6% by the attention to the community by public officials. Additionally, residents of Rocky Point select the "do not know" option on several issues. 46.3% do not hold an opinion on the prevention of puppy breeding mills, 36.7% on the protection from vicious dog breeds, and 25.4% on the control of cat population [Table 16C].

Importance of Traffic/Road issues

Residents of Rocky Point consider most traffic issues very or somewhat important (.60) [Table 6A]. Parking issues receive the most attention. Parking of unlicensed vehicles should not be allowed on narrow streets (.90), and cars should be restricted from parking on roads that impede traffic (.89). However, parking of unlicensed vehicles on driveways is an issue of less importance (.41%). Of lowest importance is the elimination of public buses from North Shore Beach (.31) [Table 17B]. While 75.1% of the respondents argue it is very important not to allow parking on unlicensed vehicles on narrow streets, and 69.9% argue it is very important that cars are restricted from roads that impede traffic, only 2.7% and 1.9% find these issues of no importance. Parking of unlicensed vehicles on front lawns was considered not at all important by 33.7% of the respondents, and 39.7% believe that it is not at all important that the public bus is eliminated from North Shore beach.