

# FORT GETTY LAND USE PLAN

## Jamestown, Rhode Island

April 2006

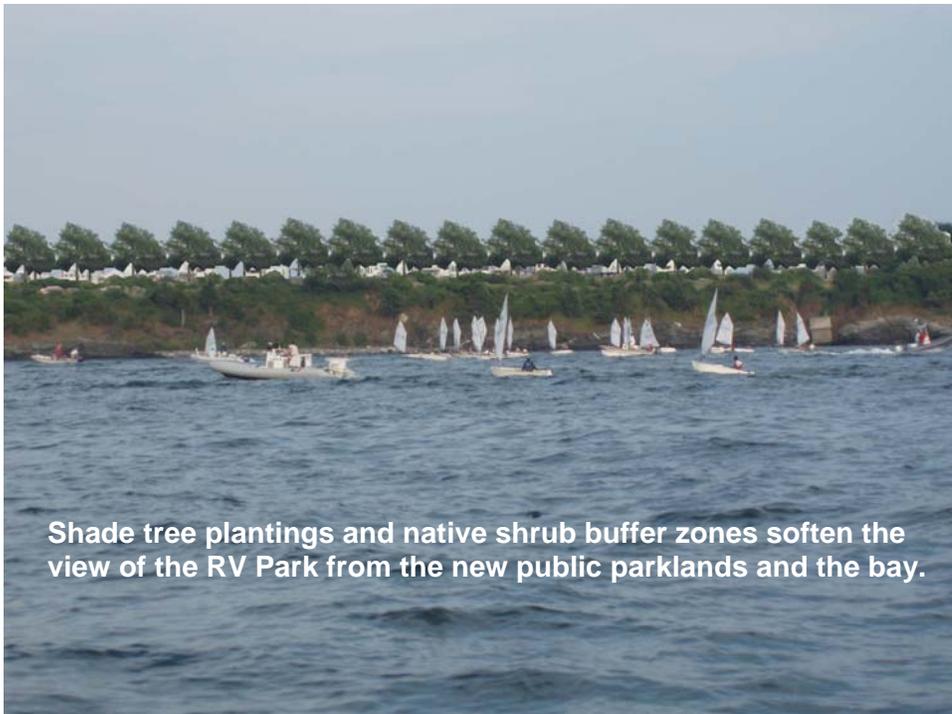
### Introduction

The need for this Land Use Plan was identified by the Fort Getty Committee during the preparation of the 2004/2005 Fort Getty Master Plan. The Master Plan was approved by the committee on May 5, 2005. The plan was also approved by the Jamestown Town Council in 2005. Three goals of the Master Plan are:

- Enhance Residents' use of the park;
- Develop additional (and improve existing) water-dependent and water-enhanced active and passive recreation opportunities;
- Ensure revenues for ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Stemming from these goals were three primary recommendations of the Master Plan:

- Take out a bond to fund construction of the project. Repay the bond from revenues generated from RV and tent site rentals and vehicle access fees;
- Retain a continuing Fort Getty Committee to work with the Parks and Recreation Department, the Harbor Commission, and other groups to coordinate improvements and their management;
- Develop a Land Use Plan to clarify the uses and organize the facilities that support them, including structures, parking, access, and landscape.



**Shade tree plantings and native shrub buffer zones soften the view of the RV Park from the new public parklands and the bay.**

## The Fort Getty Land Use Plan

- **Reconfiguration of the RV Campground** to include 86 sites with all new upgraded utilities and sites regraded to be more level. 66 of the sites will be 30x60 ft, 20 will be 30 x 50 ft. (existing standard RV site averages 28' x 60');
- Consolidation of the RV campground to the east side of the top of Fox Hill will **open up over four acres of prime water-view parkland for public enjoyment**. This additional acreage will create a public open space amenity of over 17 acres exclusive of the RV campground, tent campground, and other active use areas;
- Development of **a more organized and intensive active water-based recreation area** in the vicinity of the existing boat ramp and pier. The plan recommends construction of a new bulkhead with clam-shell surface to allow cars and emergency vehicles to turn around at the base of the existing pier and to enhance access to the water for boating through construction of a timber pier over the existing rip-rap area to the east of the pier access road, and the development of a Community Sailing School with trailer parking and dinghy storage next to the boat ramp;
- **Renovation of the existing Rembijas Pavilion** to include park rest rooms and enhanced facilities for beach-front banquets and functions. Relocate volleyball court, boardwalk beach access, dune restoration, expanded parking, I.S.D.S.;
- **Redevelopment of the existing tent camp sites** to include 16 partially secluded sites overlooking Batteries Tousard and House. Planting and selective mowing will define tent sites within a vegetated buffer zone to enhance privacy and quality of the experience. Short-term parking for loading and unloading to be provided;
- Construction of **a new section of park access road** around the south and west side of the batteries to allow public access through the park and to the active marine recreation facility without going through the RV park. The access road to the RV park will be gated off in the summer season to restrict access for RV campers only. This segregation and exclusivity will enhance the experience of both public users and the RV campers. Twenty parking spaces have been included which offer prime views down the West Passage for passive enjoyment of the public;
- Construction of **a remote parking lot for 96 cars** next to the Gate House to accommodate second vehicles for RV campers and general overflow parking;
- Construction of a **boat storage area** near the Gate House to accommodate the collection of recreational equipment attendant to boating;
- Construction of an **additional five tent camping sites** in the cedar grove behind the boat storage area. These sites will allow drive-up access for convenient and handicapped-accessible camping as opposed to the remainder of the sites, which do not have adjacent parking;
- Construction of a **Beach Pavilion** adjacent with parking for 14 cars at Battery Whiting. Along with this is planned vehicular controls and dune restoration to repair and prevent further degradation of the barrier sand dune of South Beach;

- Renovation of the existing rest room building behind Battery Tousard as a **Recreation Department Maintenance Facility** including a centrally-located park management office and fenced yard for storage of equipment and materials;
- Reconstruction of the existing RV park rest room facility into a centrally located **Park Visitors' Center** including rest rooms and perhaps vending and educational interpretive signage. Existing I.S.D.S. to be relocated and upgraded.

**Synopsis of recommended roadway improvements:**

Existing roads to be refurbished in place:	4200 LF
Roads to be removed:	2800 LF
New Roads	<u>2500 LF</u>
Net amount of roadway on the site:	300 LF less roadway

**Phasing:**

Many aspects of the Fort Getty Land Use Plan can be implemented on an independent schedule as funds allow. The key issue requiring thoughtful phasing is the RV Park and associated regrading, utilities, and roadway infrastructure. This must be accomplished without severe reduction in the number of RV sites available during construction, because this would adversely affect cash flow. The Land Use Plan lends itself to the sequential development of key features related to the RV park and roadways:

**Phase One:** Rebuild portion of existing roadway between Rembijas Pavilion and the Boat Ramp, including terraced grass sites for 42 RV's including new water and electrical service. This will not displace any RV's during construction.

Construct the new perimeter roadway around the batteries. Build new overflow parking lots near Gate House and begin planting and selective mowing program to allow reversion of native vegetation for buffer areas.

**Phase Two:** Construct the remaining 44 RV sites in the Land Use Plan. This will displace an approximately equivalent number of existing RV sites that will be accommodated in the new scheme. In fulfillment of the Master Plan intent, this will result in a net loss of 19 RV sites from the existing condition.

**Phase Three:** Remove the excess roadways and RV park infrastructure to create the new open parklands to the west of the RV park.

Also build Park Visitors Center and adapt existing rest room building to Recreation Department management / maintenance facility.

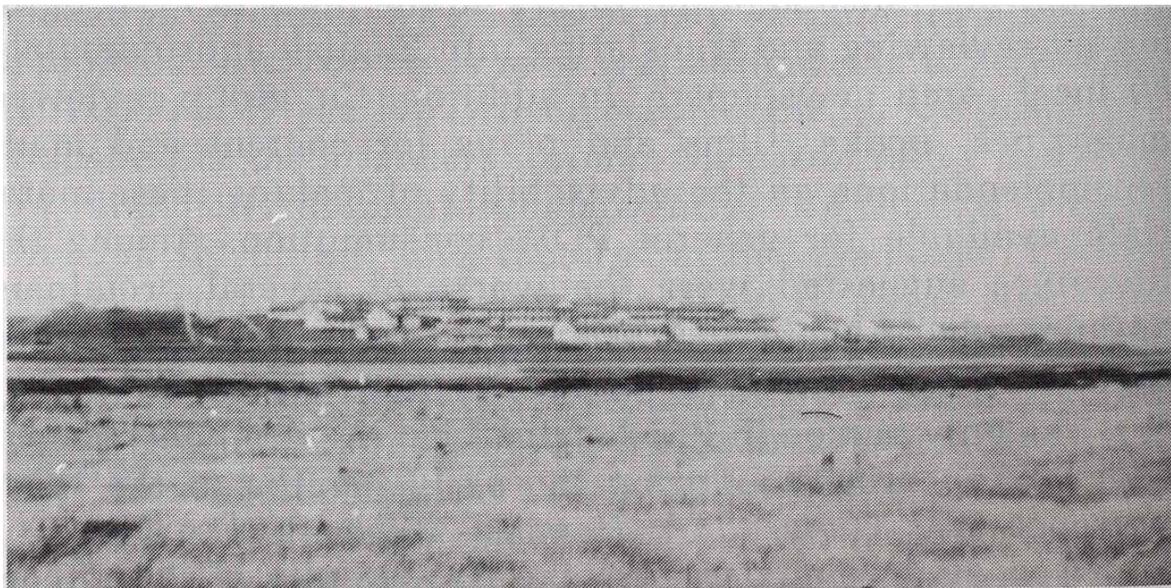
Development of Rembijas Pavilion and Sailing School areas can be implemented independently from the sequential phases above.

## Historical Background and Recommendations



**Historical land uses** on Fox Hill include agriculture and military defense. The painting at left ("Rhode Island Landscape", 1859, by Martin Johnson Meade) may evoke a sense of what the area could have looked like 100 to 300 years ago. The only archaeological evidence of former land uses that is evident to the casual observer relates to defense.

Military defense of West Passage is the activity that resulted in Fox Hill's colloquial name changing to Fort Getty. The Defenses of Narragansett Bay during World War II included the construction of two major gun emplacements: Batteries "House" and "Tousard" occupy the highest elevation of the site, while Battery "Whiting" occupies a position along the south beach. Both installations plus a small partially-underground Commander's Position remain as reminders of the site's strategic importance in those times of conflict. The main batteries were mostly filled in by the Town in the 1970's, and Battery Whiting has been used to stage firefighting practice events, and has been vandalized repeatedly. Visible remains are in mostly poor condition. One concrete building associated with Battery Tousard is in use as park rest rooms. Other concrete foundations remain here and there around the site. The park infrastructure, however, including the roadway network, wood pier, and septic field, are mostly left-over from the military period.



View from the east in 1945<sup>1</sup>

Fort Getty was also used as a prisoner-of-war camp during World War II which is the subject of even more interesting and unique history. The stone entrance piers at the beginning of the causeway to Fox Hill were constructed by German prisoners -of-war.<sup>2</sup>

Of the remains of the military period, **it is recommended that the batteries themselves should be preserved and protected** from further vandalism and other abuse.



Rest rooms (right), Battery Tousard (left)

Existing fences and railings installed for public safety should be retained and upgraded.

The various generic concrete foundations around the site should be removed as necessary to make way for new park uses, or retained to the extent that they do not conflict with the use of the park.

The principle inheritance of the military era seems to be the roadway network, which was left as is and the RV park developed with the roadway network as a given.



Commander's Position

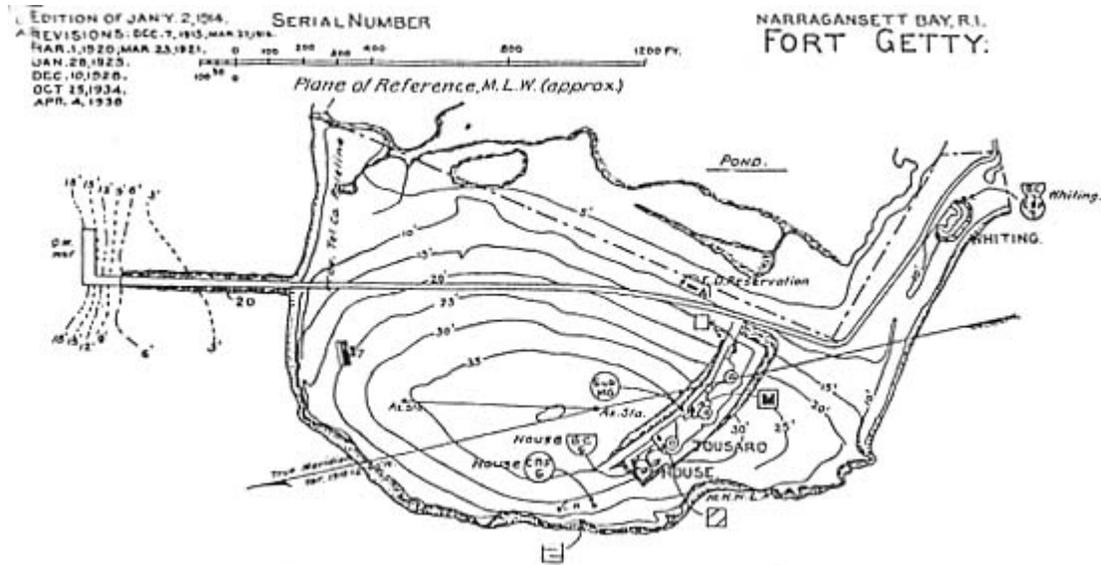
The military roadwork network is very rectangular and for what it may lack in grace it makes up for in efficiency.

The Visitors' Center will provide an opportunity to tell the story of the natural and social history of the site and its environs. Interpretive signage there and throughout the park, with links to more in-depth information, will contribute to the public's enjoyment, appreciation, and sense of stewardship of this unique and beautiful place in the world.

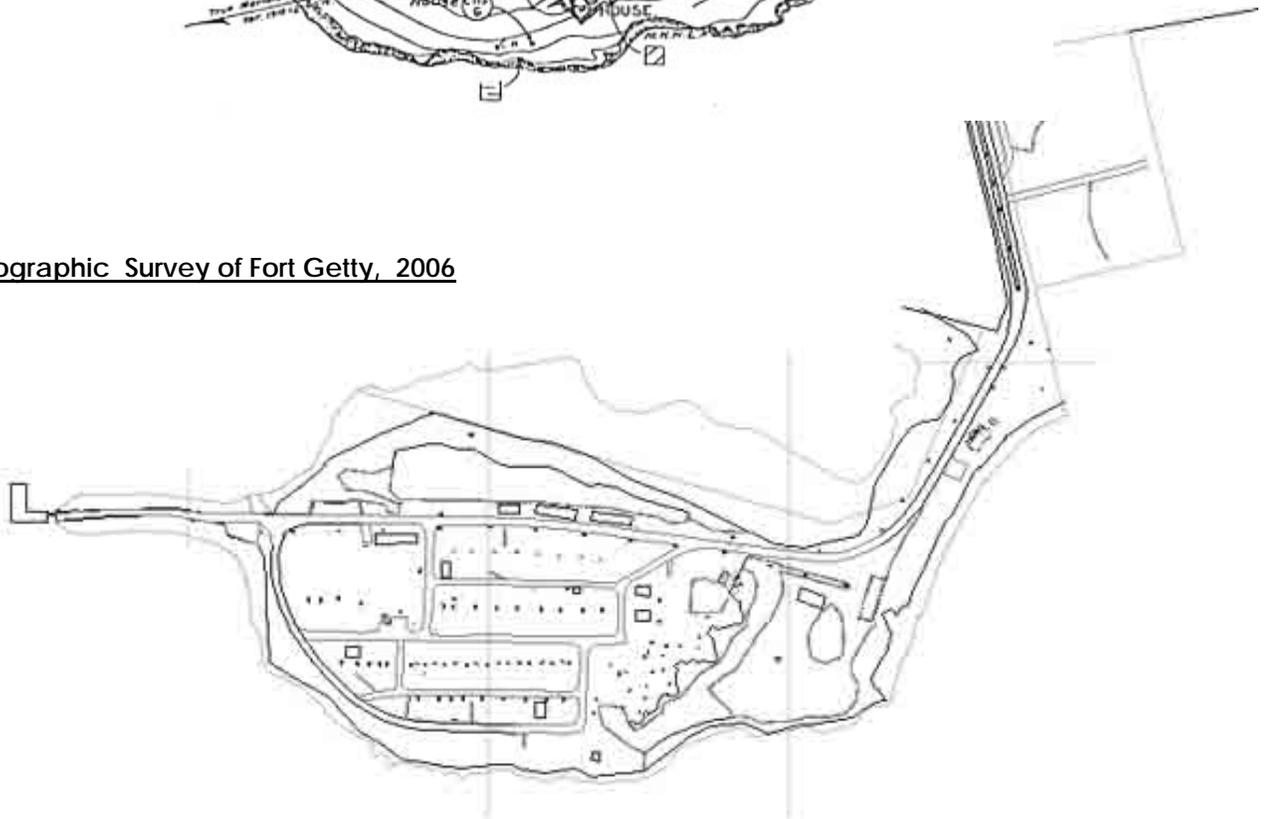


Battery Whiting

Military Map of Fort Getty , ca. 1930



Topographic Survey of Fort Getty, 2006



**Notes:**

1. image taken from Defenses of Narragansett Bay during World War II, 1980, by Walter K. Schroeder
2. *ibid.*

<b>OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>					
In providing opinions of probable construction cost, the Client understands that DONALD SHARP INC. has no control over costs or the price of labor, equipment, or materials, or over the Contactor's method of pricing, and that the opinions of probable construction costs provided herein are to be made only on the basis of DONALD SHARP INC.'s professional qualifications and experience. DONALD SHARP INC. makes no warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy of such opinions as compared to bids or actual costs.					
ITEM	AMT	UNIT	COST	NET	TOTAL
<b>BUILDINGS AND SITE WORK</b>					
clearing / site preparation	1	allow	20,000	20,000	
demolition, including paving and walls	1	allow	200,000	200,000	
earthwork (cuts and fills)	35,000	CY	10	350,000	
new asphalt roadways/parking	65,000	SF	8	520,000	
new gravel/clamshell roadways/parking	70,000	SF	5	350,000	
resurface existing asphalt roadway	85,000	SF	2	170,000	
marine bulkhead and fill	1	allow	300,000	300,000	
wood pier	8,000	SF	50	400,000	
Visitors Center with new ISDS	1,800	SF	200	360,000	
Sailing School with new ISDS and dock	1,500	allow	300	450,000	
new underground utilities to park	1	allow	350,000	350,000	
new underground utilities for RV sites	1	allow	50,000	50,000	
adapt existing rest rooms to maint.fac.	1	allow	20,000	20,000	
renovate Rembijas Pav. w/ new ISDS	5,200	SF	150	780,000	
Beach Pavilion at Battery Whiting	3,000	SF	120	360,000	
upgrade gate house	100	SF	100	10,000	
Subtotal				4,690,000	
Contractor's O&P at 12%				562,800	
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$5,252,800</b>
<b>LANDSCAPING</b>					
loam and seed	100,000	SF	5	500,000	
evergreen tree	100	EA	200	20,000	
shade tree	400	EA	300	120,000	
shrubs and mulch	7,000	SY	60	420,000	
Subtotal				1,060,000	
Contractor's O&P at 12%				127,200	
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$1,187,200</b>
<b>SITE AMENITIES</b>					
dinghey / kayak storage racks	1	allow	10,000	10,000	
beach access boardwalks	2,500	SF	25	62,500	
functional and interpretive signage	1	allow	20,000	20,000	
picnic tables	20	EA	500	10,000	
bollards (vehicle control)	200	EA	100	20,000	
fencing	240	LF	50	12,000	
gates	4	EA	2,000	8,000	
benches	10	EA	800	8,000	
site lighting	1	allow	50,000	50,000	
Subtotal				200,500	
Contractor's O&P at 12%				24,060	
<b>Site Amenities Subtotal</b>					<b>\$224,560</b>
				Project Subtotal	<b>\$6,664,560</b>
Estimate and Design Contingencies at 15%				999,684	
<b>Subtotal Probably Construction Costs</b>					<b>\$7,664,244</b>
Design, engineering, and permitting at 15%				1,149,637	
<b>Project Total for Design, Engineering, Permits, and Construction</b>					<b>\$8,813,881</b>