

The Hastings Waterfront Planning Workshops

October 21, 2000

Sponsored by:
Westchester Community Foundation
NYS Department of State
ARCO Environmental Remediation LLC

Organized by:
Regional Plan Association
Village of Hastings on Hudson

HASTINGS WATERFRONT PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The following summary of waterfront planning principles was created from the *Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan* as well as the draft principles for the *Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan*.

1. **Promote Mixed-Use Development:**
   New development in the Waterfront District should be a balanced mix of residential, recreational, and appropriate water-enhanced commercial activities that are complementary to the downtown.

2. **Preserve Views:**
   Visibility of the Hudson River is important and building design must provide for open-view corridors. Structures and plantings should not wall off the river; some west views should be open even at street level; special attention should be given to the most public views.

3. **Provide Public Access:**
   The waterfront should be open to the public, with full pedestrian access from north to south and a broad plaza connecting the existing village core and the river.

4. **Preserve Historic Character:**
   Careful consideration should be given to the preservation of historic elements on the waterfront. Items such as the water tower and portions of selected brick structures should be woven into the planning of any future development.

5. **Insure Viable and Sustainable Development:**
   The development should be economically self-sustaining—there should be no negative fiscal impact on the Village.

6. **Create a Pedestrian Friendly Environment:**
   Vehicular traffic, especially commercial traffic, should not dominate the waterfront. Ensure pedestrian access and connection to village pedestrian network.

7. **Integrate New Development:**
   New development should relate to the downtown and reflect the character of the village.



HASTINGS WATERFRONT URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following summary of waterfront planning principles was created from the draft *Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan* and the *Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan.*

1. Denser development and higher buildings should be located at the north end, near the train station and the downtown

2. Open spaces should separate buildings; buildings should not wall-off views of river.

3. The character of the architecture, its height, scale and density, should be consistent with the rest of the Village.

4. There should be strong physical ties to the downtown. Although designated as a "waterfront district", the waterfront is an integral part of the village, and requires public streets and adequate provisions for north-south vehicular circulation with appropriate east-west crossroads.

5. Parking should either be under the buildings or shielded from view. Investigate decking the commuter lot to provide for the waterfront.

6. Roofs of buildings should be attractive, especially when seen from above. (i.e. encourage gabled roofs.)

7. Commercial and retail activities should be at the sidewalk level.

8. Balance built areas with "enough" open space that is welcome to all. Include a public gathering space.



STUDY AREA CONTEXT



ZINSSER PARK
9.8 acres

TOWER RIDGE
YACHT CLUB

HARVEST-ON-HUDSON
RESTAURANT

WATERFRONT PARK
1.5 acres

HUDSON VALLEY
TENNIS CLUB/RESTAURANT

REYNOLDS FIELD
8 acres

FOOD EMPORIUM

VILLAGE HALL

LIBRARY

STATION

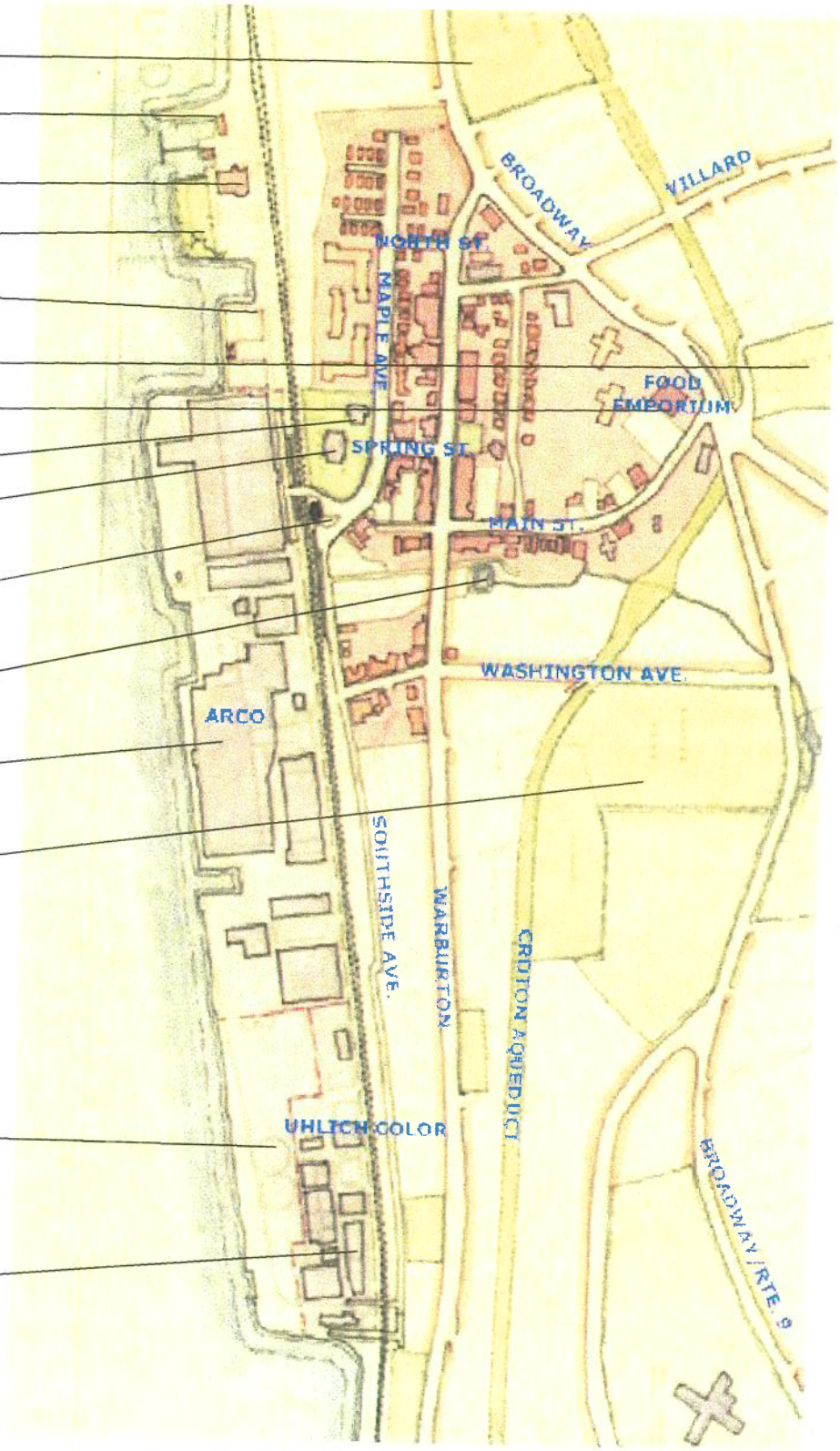
NEWINGTON-CROPSEY
MUSEUM

ARCO
29 acres

DRAPER PARK
14.8 acres

EXXON MOBIL
8 acres

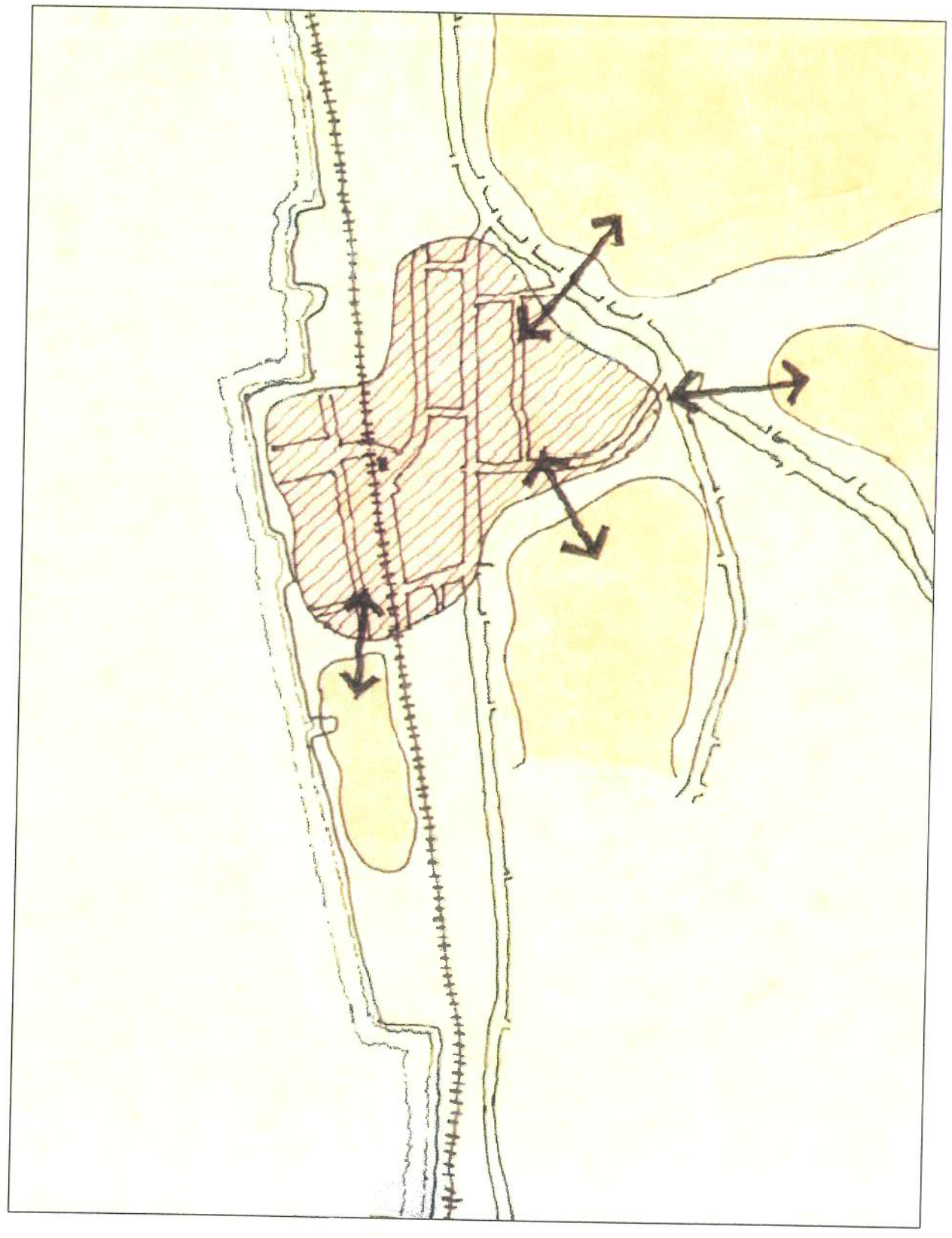
UHLICH COLOR
COMPANY



OVERALL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The waterfront should be developed in such a way that it is an integrated extension of the existing Village core, centered around the train station.

New residential development on the waterfront should not create a separate enclave, but rather another neighborhood, comparable in scale to other neighborhoods in Hastings, and with the same positive relationship to the downtown and the Village as a whole.





PLANNING FRAMEWORK: *Village, Neighborhood, Campus*

The relationship of the Village to the waterfront changes along its length: the north is the most accessible, the most public and the most intimately connected with the Village center; the south is the most private and least accessible. This fact, as well as the existing land ownership patterns, suggests a roughly tripartite organization for the site.

Village

- an extension of the existing Village "downtown" with a similar density and mixed-use character
- uses range from housing above offices and stores to civic uses such as a performance or exhibition space
- a "village green" or "town square" is part of the connection to the existing downtown and to the waterfront
- ideally, multiple entities are involved in developing this portion of the site to promote the kind of variety found in the existing downtown

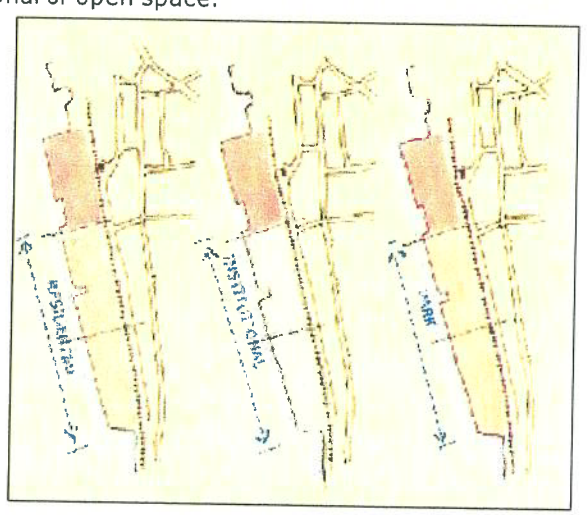
Neighborhood

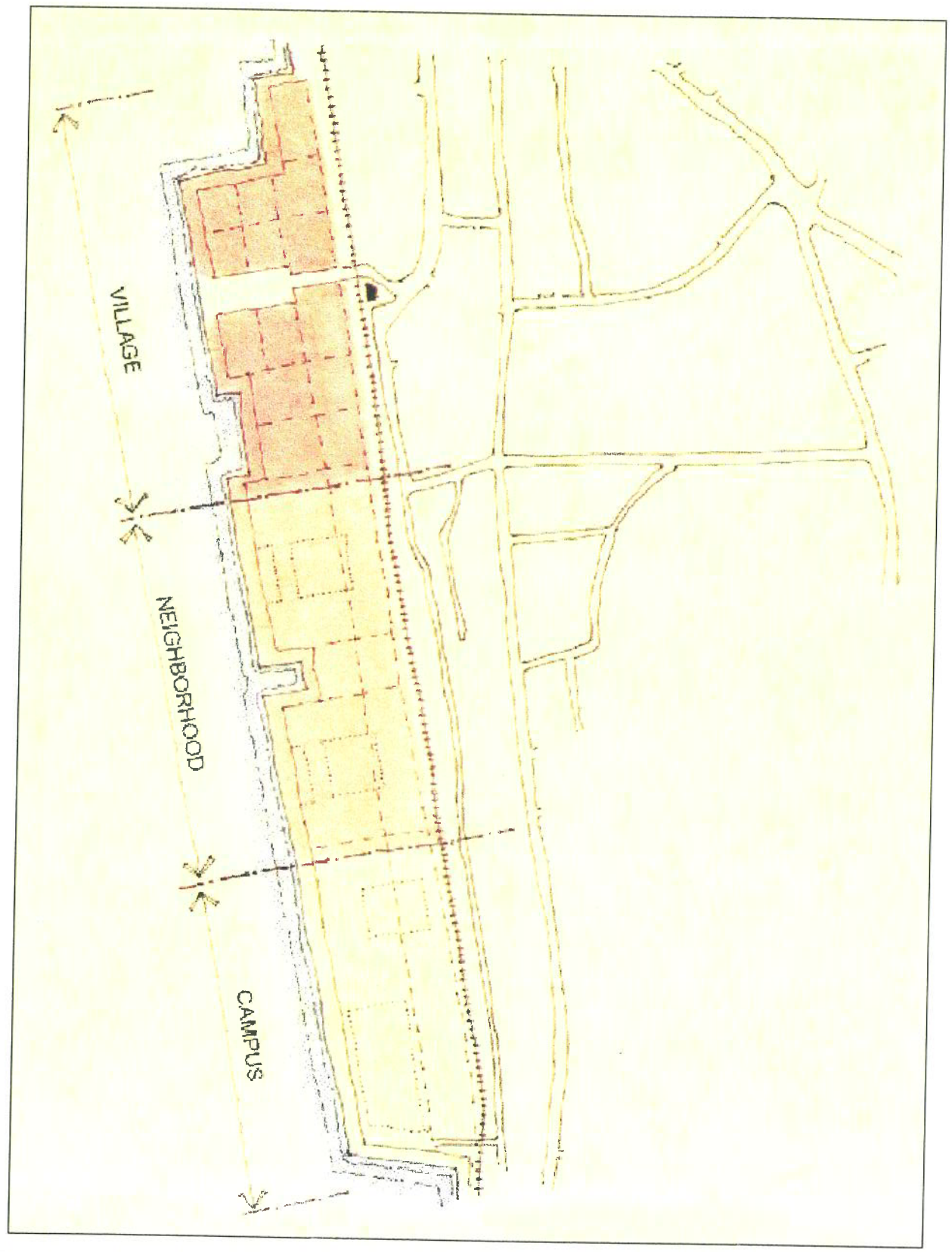
- a residential area that is not a separate enclave, but rather another neighborhood, comparable in scale to other neighborhoods in Hastings, and with the same positive relationship to the downtown and the village as a whole
- the design of the housing includes semi-public spaces that are in turn linked to a larger system of open spaces connecting the entire waterfront
- a single entity will probably develop this portion of the site, but design controls will insure a vareity of typical of other Hastings

Campus

- a setting, like that of a college campus, that contains a variety of semi-private and private open spaces. This is in keeping with the relatively private and inaccessible nature of this end of the waterfront.
- these private and semi-private spaces are nevertheless linked to a larger system of open spaces connecting the entire waterfront.
- institutional uses, such as the branch of a school, a maritime institute or a continuing care facility are most appropriate here
- this is also the best location for a major park with active recreation

Within this framework it is possible to speculate on schemes that are mixed use at the north end, and then primarily residential, institutional or open space.





PLANNING FRAMEWORK: *Prospective Uses by Location*

VILLAGE

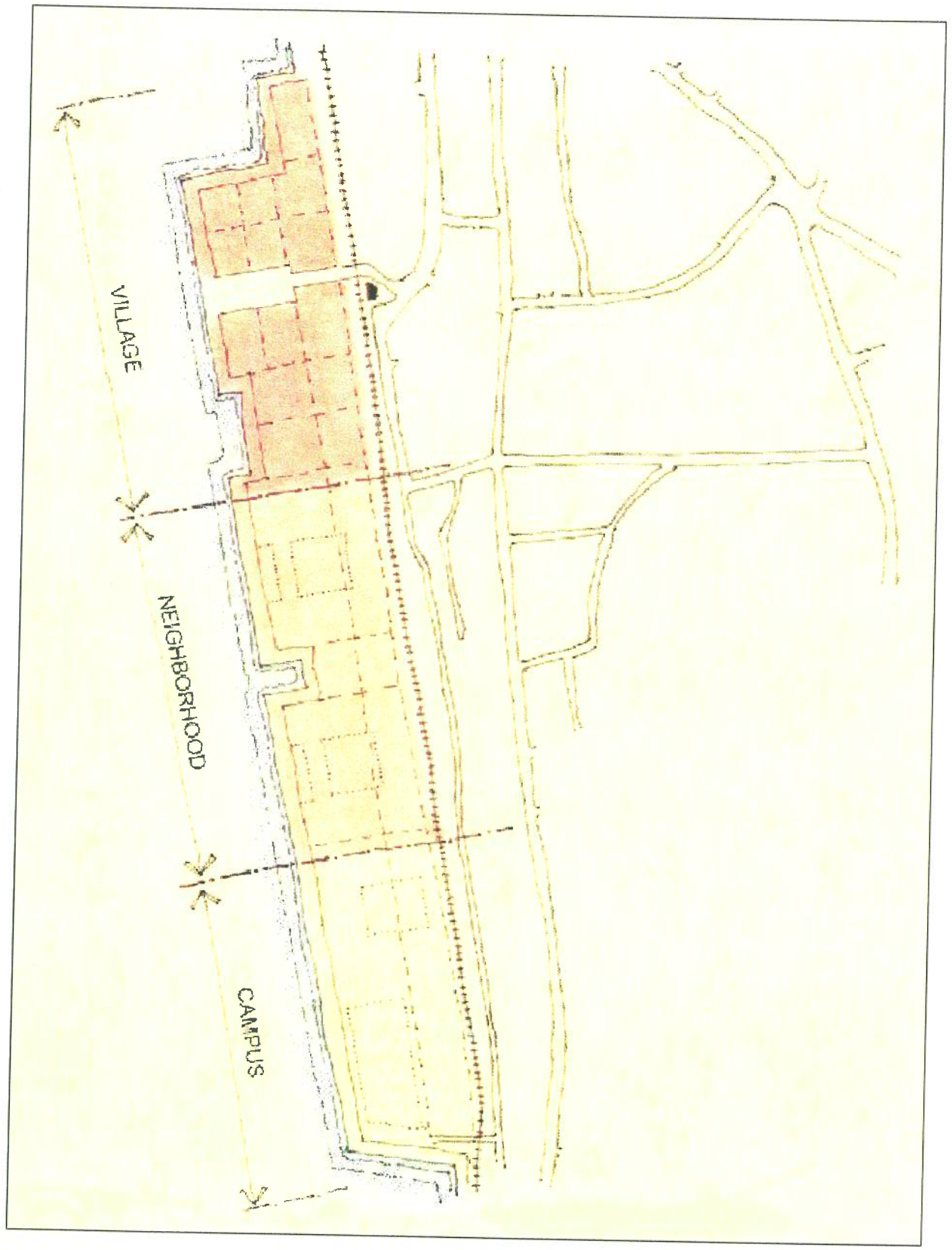
Preferred Uses - first choice location	Potential uses - second choice location	Possible uses - third choice location
• High-rise housing (if acceptable) • Live-work space • Retail • Outdoor sales • Hospitality: inn, boatel • Offices • Medical Offices • Industry: media companies • Private Recreation: health club • Marine: boat docking, fishing and marine stores, boat rentals • Water Transportation: ferries, water taxi, excursion boats • Performing Arts • Museum/institute: historic boats, nature center, maritime institute, river ecology center • Indoor playspace • Passive recreation: fishing pier, promenade, village green	• Senior housing • Private Recreation: skating rink • Marina • Marine: boat launch • Indoor playspace: indoor pool	• Passive recreation: rollerblading, bicycling

NEIGHBORHOOD

Preferred Uses - first choice location	Potential uses - second choice location	Possible uses - third choice location
• Mid-rise housing • Townhouses • Senior housing	• Lifecare senior housing • Continuum care housing • Live-work space • Private recreation: health club • Marine: Boat docking • Water transportation: ferries, water taxi • Indoor playspace: teen center • Passive recreation: fishing pier, promenade, village green, rollerblading, bicycling	• Mid-rise housing • Townhouses • Outdoor sales: fetes, farmers market, flea mrkt. • Hospitality: boatel • Offices • Industry: media companies • Marine: fishing and marine stores, boat rentals • Water Transportation: excursion boats • Performing Arts: band shell • Museum/Institute: historic boats • Indoor playspace: community center

CAMPUS

Preferred Uses - first choice location	Potential uses - second choice location	Possible uses - third choice location
• Life care senior housing • Continuum care housing • Hospitality: hotel, conference center • Industry • Private recreation • Marina • Marine: boat launch, boat building • Water transportation: port facility • Museum/institute: nature center, maritime institute, river ecology center, branch of a school • Outdoor recreation; ball fields • Passive recreation: rollerblading, bicycling	• Mid-rise housing • Townhouses • Outdoor sales: fetes, farmers market, flea mrkt. • Hospitality: boatel • Offices • Industry: media companies • Marine: fishing and marine stores, boat rentals • Water transportation: excursion boats • Performing Arts: band shell • Museum/Institute: historic boats • Indoor playspace: community center	• Senior housing • Retail: restaurants • Private recreation: health club • Marine: boat docking • Water transportation: ferries, water taxi • Indoor playspace: teen center • Passive recreation: fishing pier, promenade



MARKET INFLUENCES

Profitable uses that can be counted upon to generate significant cross-subsidies for site improvements and amenities:
Midrises
Townhouses
Senior housing/assisted living

Break-even or high-risk uses that cannot be counted upon to generate significant cross-subsidies for site improvements or amenities, but which may be useful in order to create a ***mixed-use*** environment.
Retail
Offices
Inn

Non-profitable uses that would require some sort of subsidy to locate on the site, but which may be useful as ***loss-leaders*** for other uses (indicated in parentheses)
Live/work space for artists and others
Outdoor sales (retail, park)
Inn (retail)
Boutique industry (retail)
Private recreation/health club (retail or housing, depending on the use)
Theaters (retail)
Excursion boats (retail)
Museum/institute (retail)

Other non-profitable uses that would enliven the site, in general, but are not needed as loss-leaders, per se:
Conference center
Marina
Boat launch
Ferries and water taxis
Indoor play space

Housing is the use for which there is the strongest market. In fact, the housing requires hardly if any loss-leaders. The waterfront and its adjoining promenades and parkland provide ample amenities already. This waterfront site does not have market resistance due to the overall value of housing in its adjoining upland community (as, for example, in downtown Yonkers), **or due to the** absence of a housing market (as, for example, Battery Park City in its early years).

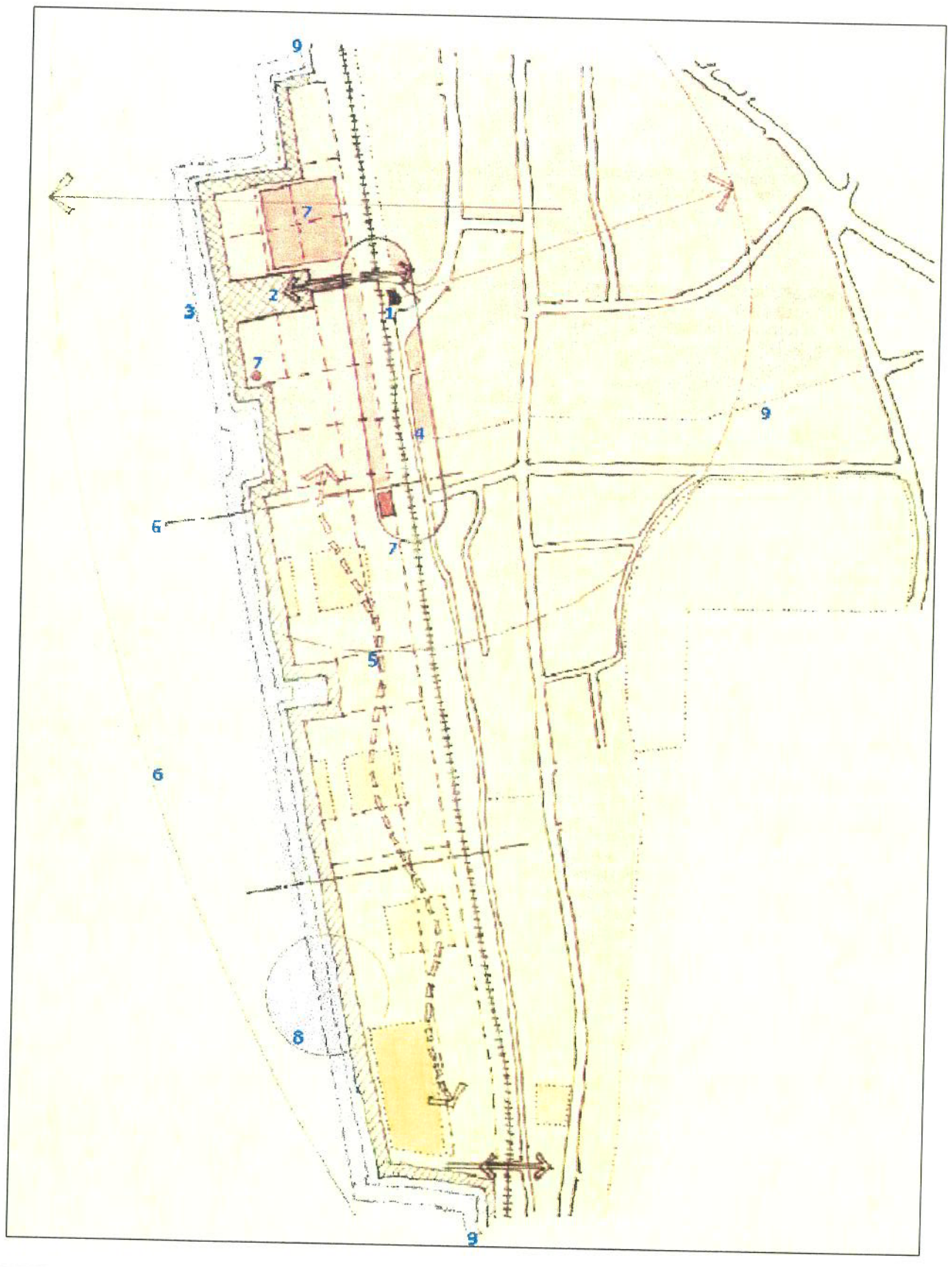
Note, instead, that most of the loss-leaders are for the retail. The Hastings waterfront is isolated from highways, and has significant competition for regional retail expenditures, including existing and prospective waterfront developments to the north and south. Local residents would have to drive through the existing downtown to get to the waterfront. Therefore, the waterfront has to offer some inducement more than views if it is to have more than a collection of a half-dozen restaurants and idiosyncratic stores. The questions are therefore (1) whether it is worth "pumping up" the retail, and (2) if so, with what package of loss-leaders.
Finally, note that **a number of uses that are otherwise viewed as profitable may be so, but are based on entrepreneur, not conventional development deals**. Restaurants, inns, a conference center, private recreation facilities, and, at this location, even offices are probably not bankable. These uses cannot be counted upon in a development scenario. The best that Hastings can do is to provide inducements for such uses, e.g., mandate some (e.g., private recreation) in connection with approvals, or provide incentives (e.g., density bonuses) for others.



PLANNING FRAMEWORK: MAJOR ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the overall tripartite strategy *(Village, Neighborhood, Campus)*, all proposals for the site must respond to certain issues and opportunities which can be considered the "givens":

1. The immediate train station area is the primary linkage between new development and the existing downtown.
2. A "village square" or "green" is part of the connection from the Village to the waterfront.
3. There is continuous access to the waterfront. A more intensive multi-use esplanade is appropriate at the "Village" (northern) portion of the site.
4. The development must be oriented to the Village as well as to the water.
5. A system of public and semi-public open spaces should link the entire site.
6. Views from the Village are important in terms of the scale and character of development and to maximize visual access to the Hudson River valley. Views from the River back to the Village are also very important.
7. The existing water tower and Building #2 (former headquarters building) should be incorporated into the plan. It may be possible to re-use portions of Buildings #52, #53 and #54.
8. There is a deep water port at the south end of the site.
9. Pedestrian linkages beyond the site should be made to a possible Hudson River trail and to the network of Village trails and pedestrian ways.



MAJOR ISSUES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

1. 100 year flood plain
Most of the site is below the 100 year plain. Regulations require that the lowest habitable floor of any structure must be at or above this elevation. Garage and utility spaces may be below the elevation, but insurance and flood proofing costs are prohibitive. Therefore any new developments will require raising the site two to four feet with clean fill (see discussion of Contamination Issues and Site Preparation issues).

2. Limited access
At present, automobile and pedestrian access is limited to the Dock Street Bridge and the pedestrian bridge at the train station. Any significant redevelopment will require improvements at this bridge and the ramps connecting to it, new pedestrian bridges, improvement of the Zinsser Bridge at the south end of the site and a new connection to Warburton Avenue (see discussion of pedestrian and automobile access issues).

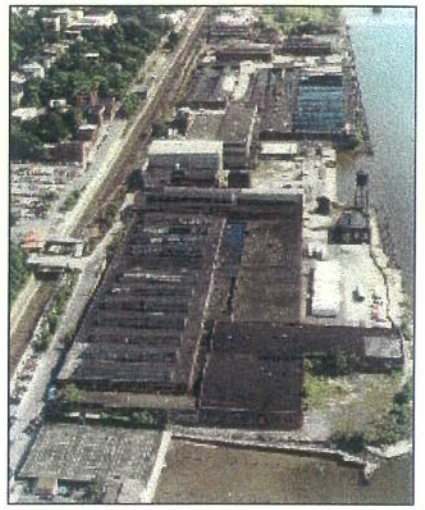
3. Traffic
A number of intersections in town are at marginal levels of service and will be impacted by future development. Mitigation of these impacts will burden future development (see discussion of traffic and transit issues).

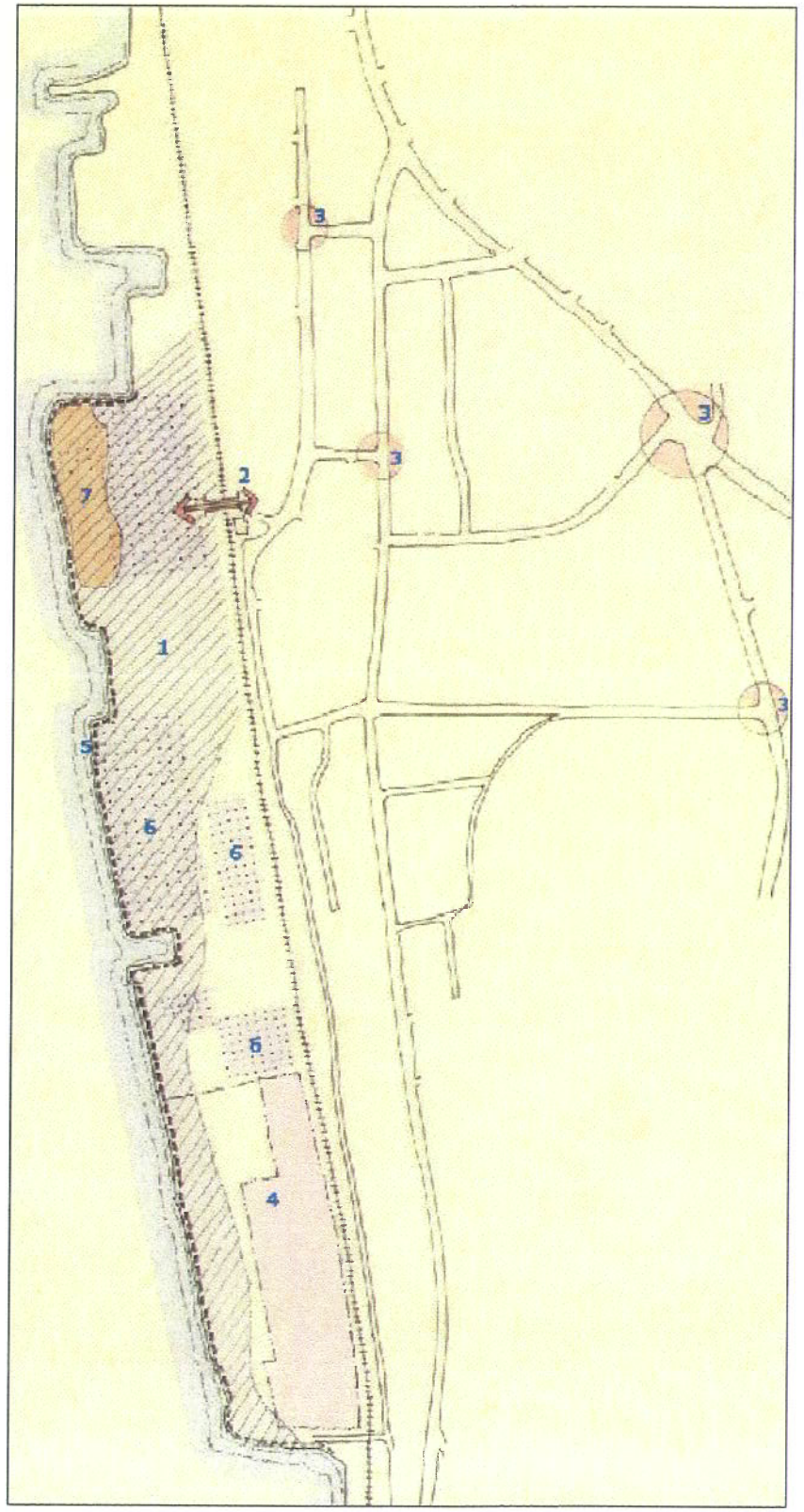
4. Site Control and Phasing
While a single owner (ARCO) is in control of the most northern two thirds of the site, a long-term plan must incorporate the two parcels at the southern end of the site owned by Mobil Exxon and Uhulich Color Company. Mobil Exxon is un-built property subject to the same remidiation process as ARCO. Uhlich Color Company, has expressed their desire to remain an industrial use. Redevelopment must be phased to account for the continued presence of Uhlich Color Company and respond to the ongoing industrial operations there.

5. Bulkheads
The existing bulkheads must be repaired and then maintained. Some of this work may be accomplished as part of environmental remediation (see discussion of contamination issues). Long term maintenance of waterfront bulkheads is expensive.

6. Existing Foundations
Most of the existing buildings will be demolished either because they cannot be salvaged, because they are unsuitable for the new uses contemplated for the waterfront, or because of environmental remediation. Nevertheless, the slabs-on-grade and the many pilings that support them may remain. These slabs and piles, which interfere with new construction and utility lines, are expensive to remove and may be difficult to remove without disturbing contaminated soil (see discussion on Contamination Issues, Site Preparation, and Reuse of Existing Piles and Structures).

7. Contamination and Soil Stability
The site is made of fill and construction debris. The unstable soils are unsuitable for conventional foundations and new buildings will require pilings which are expensive (see discussion of Site Preparation Issues). The site is heavily contaminated. In addition, the long-term use of the site may be constrained even after a clean up plan is agreed to and implemented. These constraints might include restrictions on digging new trenches for new utilities or foundations (see discussion of Contamination Issues).





ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION ISSUES

Portions of the Hastings waterfront contain varying levels of PCBs, heavy metals, PAHs, petroleum, and other chemicals. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is now determining what kind of cleanup to require for the three properties. The proposed remedial action plan (PRAP) for the northern portion of the site, which is now owned by ARCO Environmental Remediation Ltd. (AERL), is expected to be issued by the spring of 2001. Separately, DEC is now preparing a PRAP for the Mobil/Uhlich parcels (which are being considered together), expected by the end of 2000. Yet another PRAP will cover contaminated sediment in the Hudson River off the northwest portion of the site; DEC expects to release that plan in the spring of 2001.

ARCO is currently replacing the existing bulkhead along a portion of the site. As part of the remedy, DEC may require replacement of the bulkhead along other portions of the site as well.

DEC is considering several possible approaches to the cleanup of the sites. These include excavation of fill material to various depths; capping with clean fill; capping with impervious material such as asphalt; and others. For the Mobil/Uhlich site, groundwater treatment of volatile contaminants is also being considered.

For all the sites, the selection of the final remedies will be based on the regulations that govern remediation of contaminated sites in New York State. By law, every cleanup must be designed to protect human health and the environment. State groundwater quality standards and soil cleanup objectives are also considered. The future use and design of the property does not in itself determine which remedies will ultimately be selected. For the purposes of the workshop, no potential future uses were discounted because of the contamination of the site.

However, the remediation strategy that is ultimately chosen will have some repercussions on the future development of the site. For the purposes of this workshop, the following issues are relevant:

Bulkhead – Additional sections of the existing bulkhead may have to be replaced as part of the remediation. The new bulkhead should accommodate proposed new uses of the waterfront. The bulkhead may have to be maintained in perpetuity to as part of the remediation strategy. *For purposes of the workshop, this capital investment as well as the on-going maintenance of the bulkhead was not factored into the development pro-forma for the ARCO site. It was included for the Mobil/Uhlich site.*

Piles – Due to the structural characteristics of the existing fill, new buildings will have to rely on piles for support. *RPA assumed that new piles are feasible and would not create extraordinary costs.*

Clean fill and site stabilization – Since much of the site is three to four feet below the 100-year floodplain, fill will have to be brought in to raise the ground surface above the floodplain as part of the redevelopment of the site. Additionally, new, clean soil or other capping technology is likely to be mandated as part of the cleanup of the site. Provisions for management of stormwater may also be part of the remediation. *For purposes of the workshop, RPA assumed that the developer will have to bring in an additional two feet of fill to raise the ground surface above the 100 year floodplain and that the developer would pay for site drainage.*

Subsurface construction – Because of the floodplain elevation and the structural condition of the fill, subsurface construction (such as parking garages and foundations for buildings) may not be possible. Additionally, any subsurface work (such as the installation of utility lines) will have to consider whether contamination remains, and if so whether special designs and construction techniques are necessary. *RPA assumed no subsurface construction would be possible.*

