

# STAFF EVALUATION

To: Planning Commission

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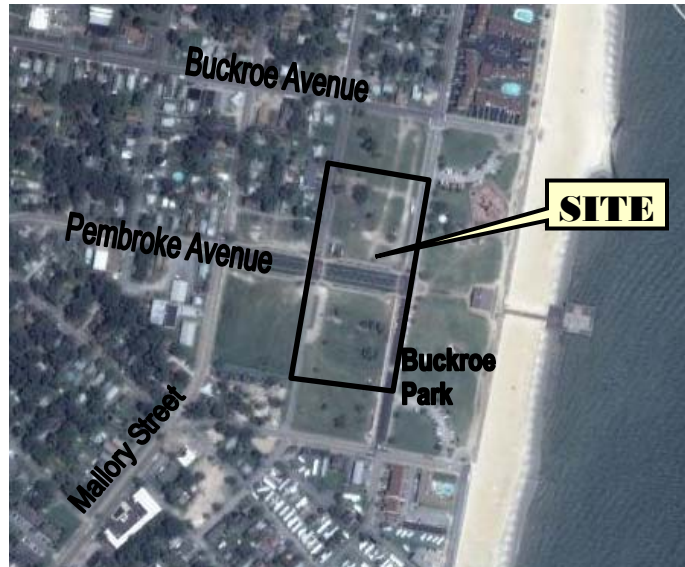
728-5244  
728-5231

Case No.: Rezoning 1224-D

Date: May 14, 2007

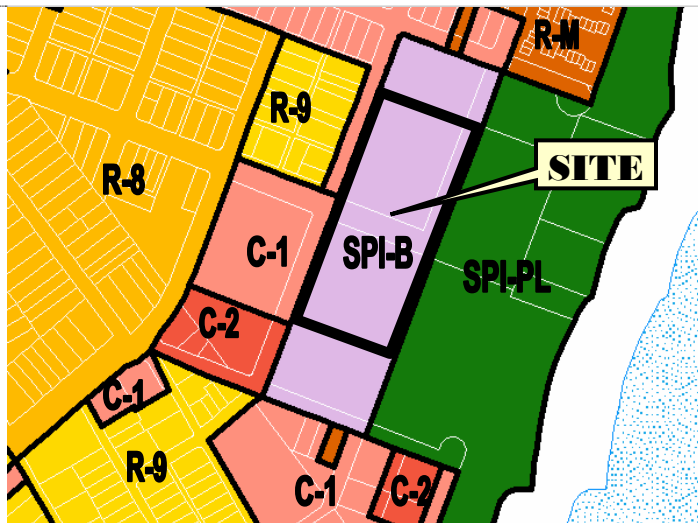
## General Information

<i>Applicant/Owner</i>	City of Hampton
<i>Requested Zoning</i>	Special Public Interest District – Public Land (SPI-PL)
<i>Purpose</i>	To align the zoning of the property with the recommended use, an extension of Buckroe Park, as found in the <i>Buckroe Master Plan</i> (2005 as amended).
<i>Location</i>	The subject property includes 5.69± acres between South 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Streets adjacent to the existing Buckroe Park.



<i>Existing Land Use</i>	Vacant
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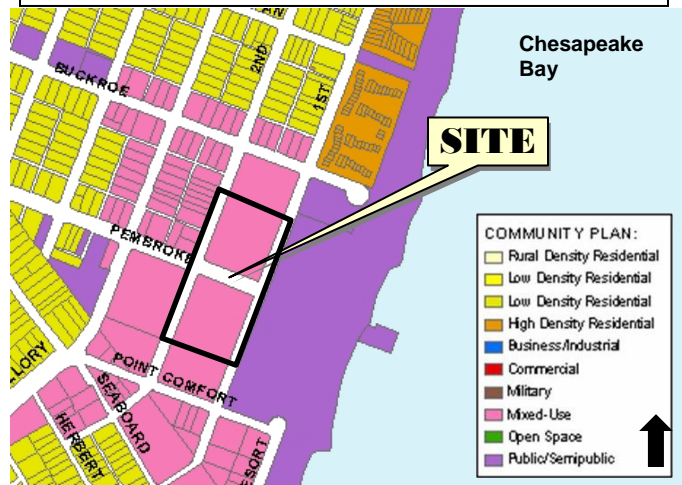
*Surrounding Land Use and Zoning*



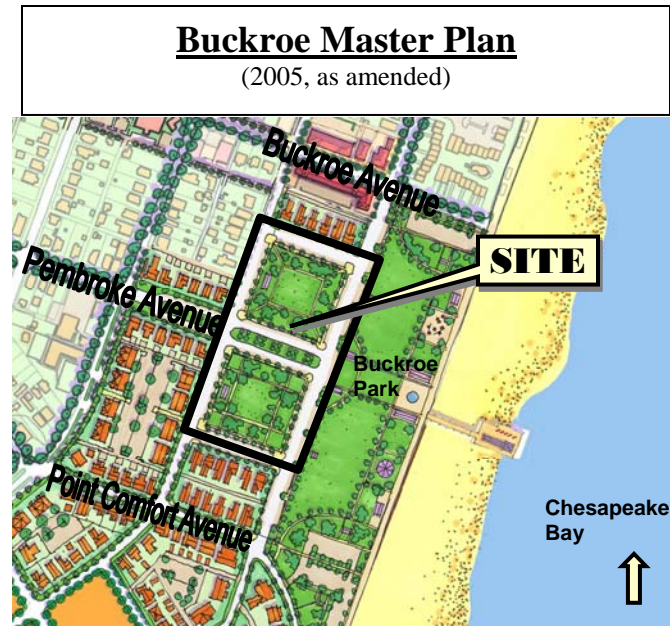
	<b>North:</b> SPI-B and Neighborhood Commercial District (C-1): Vacant land, realty management office, retail commercial, and a single family home
	<b>South:</b> SPI-B, Multiple Residence District (R-M), C-1, and Limited Commercial District (C-2): Vacant land and an apartment building
	<b>East:</b> SPI-PL: Park and beach
	<b>West:</b> C-1 and One Family Residence District (R-9): Vacant land and single family homes
<i>Existing Zoning</i>	Special Public Interest – Buckroe District (SPI-B)
<i>Public Policy</i>	The land use map of the <u>Hampton Community Plan</u> (adopted in 2006 as amended) recommends this property be incorporated into a mixed-use district. The Community Facilities section of the Community Plan recommends “the creation of urban and waterfront parks to enhance the character and urban design of the city while promoting redevelopment and reinvestment” (CF Policy 31, p. CF-31). This recommendation is echoed in the <i>Buckroe Master Plan</i> , which is adopted by reference in the <u>Hampton Community Plan</u> .

### **Hampton Community Plan**

(2006, as amended)



The *Buckroe Master Plan* contains more specific recommendations for the Buckroe Neighborhood than those found in the Community Plan. The Master Plan recommends expanding Buckroe Park to include the subject properties as shown below. Along with making improvements to the land, two new roads should be created along the northern and southern edges. These roads should provide on-street parking for improved park and beach access.



### History

The subject property is deeply entrenched in Buckroe's long history. The history plays a significant role the existing zoning, recently adopted land use recommendations, and the proposed zoning. The Buckroe Beach area spent many years as a resort destination. In 1895, the Buckroe Amusement Park opened. Decade after decade, many people came to Buckroe both from within and outside of the state.

However, over time, Buckroe became a residential neighborhood as its popularity as a vacation destination waned. The amusement park and surrounding businesses began to deteriorate. Between the costs in managing the declining property and the unbearable competition created by Busch Gardens and Kings Dominion the amusement park closed permanently in 1985.

In 1986, the City of Hampton purchased the amusement park property as well as some surrounding properties. A ten acre park, Buckroe Park, was established as a public amenity to the beach front. The remaining property, including the property subject to Rezoning Application No.1224-D, was held in reserve for redevelopment.

In the early 1990's, a development proposal for the

property west of South 1<sup>st</sup> Street came forward. The scale of this proposal was seen as out of context in Buckroe and denied. However, this proposal helped bring to the forefront three key issues within the neighborhood; 1) the housing stock was greatly underperforming, 2) the vacant properties have a very high potential for development, and 3) any development of the site must be of high quality and compatible with the existing neighborhood.

Subsequently, in 1996, a special zoning district, SPI-B, was established with the intent of withholding the property from development until it was proven necessary to develop the property in order to help revive the housing stock in the core of Buckroe.

Seeing that the Buckroe Neighborhood housing stock was still struggling, the City re-engaged the Buckroe community to develop and adopt the *Buckroe Master Plan* in March of 2005. The Master Plan has recently been refined with the 2007 amendment to the Bayfront Initiative, a depiction of which is shown in the Public Policy section of this report. City Council has set forth a policy that a mixture of additional park space and new development is most appropriate in this area in attempting to strengthen the housing stock and vitality of the Buckroe Neighborhood.

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*Uses*

The SPI-B District does not allow any permanent structures to be erected, including those for public use. The SPI-PL District allows structures for public use to be built. These structures include park amenities such as restroom facilities, shelters with a permanent foundation, and permanently installed recreation equipment.

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## Analysis

Zoning is an essential tool for implementation, serving to encourage and promote the type of development envisioned in the Master Plans for Strategic Investment Areas while also preventing inappropriate and incompatible development from occurring. Several City sponsored comprehensive rezonings will be necessary in order to ensure that the zoning in Buckroe is compatible with the land use patterns recommended in the *Buckroe Master Plan*. The proposed rezoning represents Part IV of this rezoning process in Buckroe.

This particular request is to rezone 5.69± of vacant, City owned property to the Special Public Interest – Public Land District for the purpose of expanding Buckroe Park. The stated intent of the SPI-PL district is to “establish a special classification for certain parcels of publicly owned or leased property... (and) permit the greatest certainty regarding the character of potential uses of public land” (Hampton City Code: sec 17.3-25). The property is currently zoned Special Public Interest – Buckroe District, which was created and applied as a holding zone. This district was intended to be temporary if the land was needed for neighborhood revitalization efforts. Hampton citizens, representatives, and staff applied great effort in developing the *Buckroe Master Plan* with the intent being that the recommendations of the Master Plan be implemented to revitalize this historic bay front community.

The Master Plan encourages an upgrade of the existing park as well as an expansion to the subject property. The proposed expansion creates two new blocks of parks space of at least 2 acres each. By rezoning to the SPI-PL District, the City will have the ability to add various structures, such as restroom facilities, as accessories to the new park area as it is designed and sculpted. Under the SPI-Buckroe Zoning District such improvements are not permitted.

Rezoning the subject property to SPI-PL will bring the expansion under the same zoning category as the rest of Buckroe Park and Buckroe Beach. Approving this rezoning would apply a zoning district which limits the potential land uses of the park while allowing improvements to the land that meet the recommendations of the *Buckroe Master Plan*.

***Staff recommends approval of Rezoning Application No.1224-D.***