

SOMERS POINT VIEWS REPORT

city visioning events



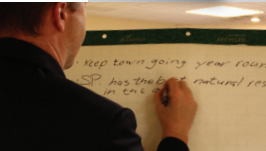
Bay Fest, Interviews



City Tours



Survey



Open House



Public Workshop



A forward thinking, civic visioning process initiated in the spring of 2011 looking ahead to what Somers Point should be in 10 or 20 years

Somers Point VIEWS Report is the result of a community driven, civic exercise, to refresh and update the policies that guide growth, investment, and preservation decisions. Initiated in the spring of 2011, the purpose was to turn community discussion to ideas about what Somers Point should be in 10 or 20 years. The document reminds us of our challenges and of the city's numerous advantages. Looking forward, The VIEWS Report and the VISION 2012 PLAN are meant to focus the interest of city leadership, property owners, and residents on the future of our 4-Square-Mile-City.

City Visioning Committee 2011 - 2012

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Prepared by The RBA Group and Brown & Keener, a Member of the RBA Group

PURPOSE

One purpose of the Somers Point Visioning Project is to refresh and update the policy framework guiding growth, investment, and preservation initiatives throughout the city. Based on ideas and issues brought forth by residents and local stakeholders, the Vision tours, interviews, workshops, surveys, and Open House all provided opportunity to contribute to a vision for the city's future. The project events provided city leadership, property owners, and residents a fresh look at their 4-Square-Mile-city and set a solid foundation for the forthcoming City Master Plan process.

GET BACK TO BASICS.

How do the citizens, whether they've lived in Somers Point for 50 years or just a few months, feel about different issues to be addressed in the Vision Plan? What is working, what isn't, and what would they like to see in Somers Point 20 years from now? How is parking and traffic flow in Somers Point? How could it be better? How is the mix of businesses on the main corridors? How do residents feel about new development and market trends? How does the quality of the city's public spaces – streets, parks, and institutions – compare to other places? It is essential to understand these ideas and discuss them in order for city residents, business owners, and local leadership to set priorities for future action.

REVEAL CITY TREASURES.

Early on, participants observed that the golf course, the bayfront district, Kennedy Park, the neighborhoods, the Somers Mansion, and the bridge landing circle are remarkable city places. How will these special places, and others, shape the future – and the identity – of Somers Point? How do residents feel about these areas being improved or represented as Somers Point destinations of interest?

MAP A COURSE TOWARD DESIRED OUTCOMES.

In the past 10 years Highway 9 and Route 52 have absorbed enormous public and private investment. How can the City's development regulations guide future private investment so that each increment of change makes the city a little better – more livable, fiscally viable, more beautiful – rather than a little worse? The pages that follow lay out an illustrative summary of a lively city-wide discussion that took place from spring to late summer of 2011.



Somers Point Zones & Character Districts

Bay Fest Talking Points

BAY FEST - APRIL 30TH

Brown & Keener set up a booth at Bay Fest to gain public input, and spread awareness about the 2021 Vision Plan for Somers Point and the public workshops that are a part of it. Many people, some of them long-time residents of Somers Point, had lots to say about what they would like to see, and how the city could better serve the community.

TALKING POINTS

Recreation

- Make a public dock for kayaks in the area behind Kennedy Park.
- Public walkway or bike path along the bay from Maryland Ave to Ocean Ave.
- Create another Bulkhead east of Obyrn Drive.
- Boat Ramp by Sunset Bay Marina?
- Fix the slip on the beach by Kennedy Park.
- Dog Parks - many people are for them/many people are against them.
- Create a public walkway that connects all the docks along Bay Ave. What about privately owned docks?
- More boat ramps, more docks, more bulkheads
- More areas for recreation - maybe a pool club



Bay Fest Map



Bay Fest Booth



Talking with residents/handing out surveys

Commerce

- More restaurants in certain areas
- Establish a Downtown - a place for investment, with places to walk and shop. Promote tourism and bring residents to Bay Road for more reasons than just fishing, Like Margate or Ventnor.
- To Dredge or Not To Dredge - Some people say it will promote tourism, others say it will ruin fishing.
- Revitalize McArthur Boulevard, find ways for businesses to stay open. Maybe put in a Wawa.
- Hospital prevents development of a downtown

Neighborhood

- Decrease traffic near the grocery store at the intersection of Bethel and 9th.
- Make areas with apartments more attractive. Assess property value, and see where apartments would be more appropriate. Apartments could be more like the Woods at Blue Heron in Egg Harbor.
- A Somers Point Memorial
- Decrease traffic at certain intersections

www.woodsatblueheron.net

Bus Tour Talking Points

Pre Stop 1 - Gateways

- No sidewalks
- Wayfinding/Signage/Welcome/Wild & Scenic River Area
- Less Construction Vehicles
- Corridor Retail
- Parking on the Road
- Landscaping/Trees/Buffers/Design Guidelines (who maintains that?)

STOP 1 - GATEWAYS

- Signage (good/bad?)/Historical Site Signs
- “Bottleneck” in the Summer
- Information Center/ Shopping Center
- Maintenance
- “It’s like the twilight zone”
- “There should be a 5 year plan for each of these areas.”

STOP 2 - COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

- Convenience - “everything is here”
- Easy Access/Direct Line
- Mix of Old and New
- No “Restaurant Row”
- “No Shopping Anchor”
- No Sidewalks, not Pedestrian/Bike-friendly
- Manage Traffic - Center lane? Access Road?
- Tourists cut through neighborhoods to avoid traffic
- Trucks don’t stop at the stop signs.
- What makes businesses close?
- Design/Sign guidelines/Lengthy Approval Process
- Parking/Construction/Curb appeal/Landscaping
- “Only mom and pops who have been there forever seem to do well on Rt9, probably because they don’t have the startup costs of the chains”

STOP 3 – REC FIELDS

- No Kill Fishing Pond - storm drains dump into it now.
- Dog park?
- Youth Center closed?
- Area For Small Children to play?
- Master Plan for Walking Path
- Parking Issues During Games
- Safe Routes For Schools Paid for the Sidewalk here
- Safer Street Crossings/Close the Street?
- Tried Speed Bumps - only to find that they were illegal
- Turn the Yield Sign into a Stop Sign

Pre Stop 4 – Neighborhoods

- Apartment Complex Maintenance
- Traffic Light Timing
- Size of the Signs are different here
- Walking Path along Bay Avenue
- Decorative Lighting
- Doggie bag dispensers
- Commercial vs. Residential



Guided Bus Tour of Somers Point



Entering Somers Point from the Parkway



Somers Point Roadways

STOP 4 – SHORE ROAD / BAYFRONT

Public destination - “something to lure Ocean City folks”

Pedestrian Mall/Water Taxi/Bayfront Access/Bikeway/
Theater/Rays Pier/Dredging/Quality of the Sand on the
Beach

Houses on the Bayfront vs Retail

Re-examine Historic District

Closed Hotel (Sunrise)

Hospital Garage - ugly/too many parking spaces

Synergy between business to relieve parking issues

Move Boat Storage Elsewhere

Talk to property owners about better uses for properties

North Bay Ave. - development plan for condominiums

Pre Stop 5 – McArthur

Nightclubs causing problems

New alignment “could cause problems in the summer”

STOP 5 – JFK PARK

Kayak Launch/Finger Dock/Erosion/
Signage for the Park/Entrance Gate

People that come by water taxi - dinner/shopping

Stream Bank Demolition

Boardwalk at the Point

Apartment development on hold

Phase 1 for the Bluff starts this year

Most of the Park Activity is not right on the water

Planned to close the road/bring the gazebo to waterfront

Cul-de-sac - kids could run from bluff to the playground

New parking configuration - parking along the road

Children’s Activities Area - funding for younger play area

BACK AT GREGORY’S

Additional comments about Stop 1:

Signage/Wayfinding should be great/Icons - indicating
other things, History, Architecture, etc.

No “stay here” feel/ “Gateway To The Shore”

Don’t brand it so much. Market.

Speed limit change/sense of arrival

Rt 9 / 52 intersection is “very important”

No parking business vehicles overnight in neighborhoods

Additional comments about Stop 2:

Never going to be walking/biking on Rt. 9 - It’s our utility
“We’re a bar town”

Find out why businesses don’t succeed

Careful with Branding - historic destination “isn’t enough”

Interchangeable building types, for when businesses fail?

4 types of retail: Rt9 Strip, Commercial nodes, Bay Avenue,
Rt 52 (How do we connect all the “nodes?”)

Additional comments about Stop 3:

Sightlines interrupted by landscaping

Additional comments about Stop 4:

Can the hospital support local businesses?

New buildings aren’t in keeping with the historical.

City was “better when we were all dancehalls”

Public Access/Pedestrian walkway/Dining/Sailboat rental

Paving parking area vs. using shells/waterfront experience



Somers Point Neighborhoods



Marsh along Northern Bay Avenue



Hospital on Bay Avenue

SURVEY Findings

WHAT WE HEARD YOU SAY

“If You Were King of Somers Point What Would You Do For The Town?”

General

Plant more trees and flowers/Clean up the litter/Enforce Dog Waste Law
Lower expensive insurance premiums

There really are 2 Somers Points - one East of Route 9 and one West - understand it's one town
Make it a safe and walkable town

Make Somers Point a place for a younger generation
Tax shore memorial hospital

Housing

Get Rid of Apartments/Institute Property Maintenance Ordinance/Tenant Requirements
Decrease the number of multi-family and low income housing. Add more single-family housing.

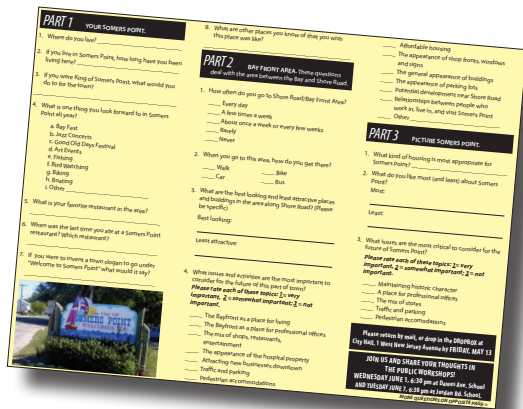
Bayfront, Beaches & Parks

Make Bay Avenue & MacArthur Blvd. Tourist Areas/Clean up the Beach Area

Build New Pier At The Beach

Move the Hospital away from the Bayfront/ Improvements on the East Side of Shore Rd.

Promote Waterfront/Better utilize our waterfront demographics



Discussions about JFK Park improvements

SURVEY

Traffic, Roadways & Parking

Fix Pot Holes/Demolish Apartment Complexes/Build a Community Center

Make the Area of the RT 52 Bridge More Attractive

Parking!

Cut the grass in town going into Ocean City.

Grass medians with trees in parking lots/Solar Electric Panels on Public Buildings and Parking Lots

Commerce

Make Bay Ave. More Commercial

Keep Small Town Charm

More Chain Stores like Lowes or Sears.

Permit Cottage Industry along side streets between Shore Road and Bay Ave.

Help people find jobs/job training

Bars & Restaurants

Market bars. More restaurants/Not Fast Food

Allow respectable business owners to open new restaurants and bars on the bay.

Entertainment

Bowling, Movies, etc.

Trolley Service from Bay & Maryland Avenue to Boardwalk at 9th street.

Promote Tourism

Shopping

Make a Shopping District.

Make Somers Point attractive to professional businesses

Collaborate with Linwood/Northfield on public services.

Architectural committee - oversight of properties



Exiting Somers Point via the Parkway

SOMERS POINT 2020 VISION PLAN



Neighborhood near 3rd Street



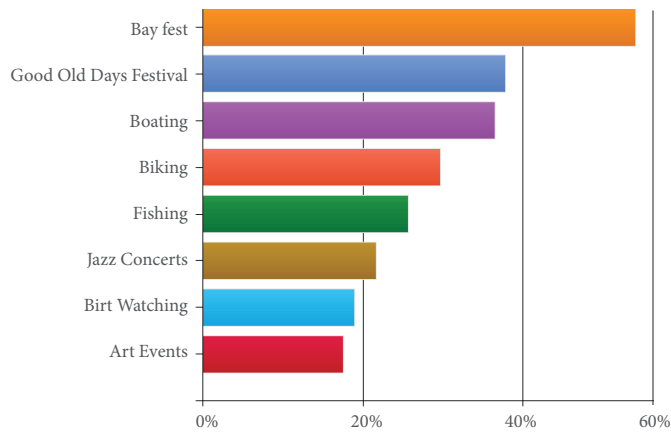
Discussion at Kennedy Park, Stop 5.



Somers Point welcome sign

PICTURE SOMERS POINT

What is one thing you look forward to in Somers Point all year?



5. What is your favorite restaurant in the area?

- 35% - Anchorage
- 22% - Crab Trap
- 13% - Charlie's
- 7% - Bayshores, Gregory's, Sandi Pointe
- 3% - Doc's Place, Applebees, Around Back
- 2% - Fitzpatrick's, Amore, Smiths, Primo's, Godfather's, Breakfast Cafe

6. When was the last time you ate at a Somers Point restaurant? Which restaurant?

- 30% - 1 or 2 days ago
- 25% - this week or a week ago
- 35% - two weeks ago
- 3% - three weeks ago
- 5% - over a month ago

7. If you were to invent a town "slogan" to go under "Welcome To Somers Point" what would it say?

- 16% say - Keep the one we have!
- Gateway to the bay
- We're having a party - you're invited
- A Residential Community on the Rise
- Dock a While
- We're glad you are here
- We're Friendly
- Relax, Slow Down, You Are In Somers Point
- A town where neighbors help neighbors
- You'll find it here
- A Great city with really good people!
- Your Dine & Wine Stop
- If things keep going as they are, "Welcome to South Pleasantville."
- "Somers Point" take note!
- Birthplace of Richard Somers
- A town that cares about year long rest
- For all the great times
- Now is the time
- Year Round Charm on the Bay
- A bayfront town
- Welcome to Somers Point - We have the perfect apartment unit just for you!
- A small drinking town with a fishing problem
- The Pursuit of Happiness starts here
- Real estate taxes much too high
- Home of Richard Somers, an American Hero



Closed Business on Rt. 9



Kern Field



Kern Field

SURVEY

8. What are other places you know of that you wish this town was like?

“Any place that has a nice downtown to walk around. We have this beautiful bay and every thing is closing down on it. Have some clothing shops, coffee places, live music. Make it comfortable for people to walk around and enjoy the beauty of it.”

- 15% - Cape May
- 13% - Ocean City
- 13% - Linwood
- 7% - Northfield, Upper Township, Sea Isle, NJ,
- 5% - St. Michael's
- 3% - Key West

Other Places:

- Tuckerton, because the Bay is always featured
- Disney World - (Litter Free)
- The bay district would be great if more like Lewes, DE
- Birch Grove Park, Northfield (more parks and open areas)
- Florida Keys
- Bay Harbor, Michigan
- South Beach, Miami
- Newport, Oregon
- Egg Harbor Township
- Asbury Avenue
- Beaufort, N.C. Charleston, S.C.
- New Hope, PA
- South St., Philadelphia
- Haddonfield, NJ
- Cape Cod
- Smithville

- Longport
- Margate
- Ft Myers beach
- Ocean City, MD
- Chestnut Hill
- Stone Harbor
- Haddonfield
- Annapolis, MD
- Province Town, MA
- Monmouth Beach, NJ
- Nantucket
- Ameila Island
- Rehoboth, DE
- Saratoga Springs, NY



St. Michaels



Rehoboth



Hammonton



Cape May



Key West



Ocean City



Birch Grove Park



Amelia Island



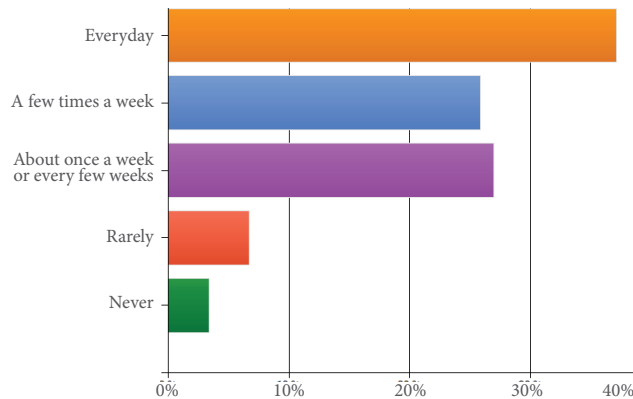
Annapolis



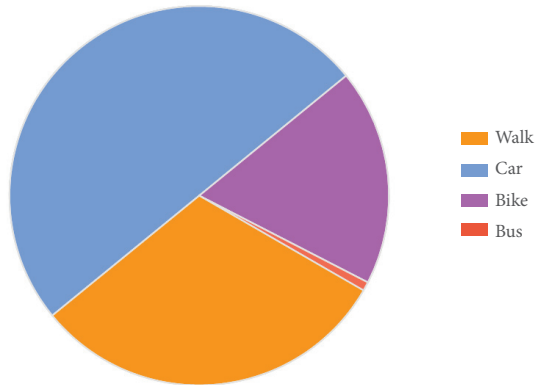
Nantucket

BAY FRONT AREA

1. How often do you go to Shore Road/Bay Front Area?



2. When you go to this area, how do you get there?



3. What are the best looking and least attractive places and buildings in the area along Shore Road?

BEST LOOKING:

- “The Gregory’s and Charlie’s properties have a ton of character and are part of the fabric of Somers Point.”
- 20% - Sandi Pointe
- 20% - Atlanticare Building
- 16% - The Churches, Hospital
- 12% - Charlie’s, Gregory’s
- 8% - Anchorage, Library, City Hall, Dr.’s offices
- Some of the businesses
- Parts of Bay Ave.
- Newer office buildings
- Docs
- Smitty’s
- Restaurants
- Houses across from Christ Church
- When coming in from Linwood to the DQ
- victorian era houses
- Museum
- Bay
- SP historical buildings
- two block area around city hall
- Harbor Cove
- The Inlet (too bad that closed too)
- Some of the medical buildings
- Old China outlet

LEAST ATTRACTIVE:

- 45% - Atlantis Apartments
- 9% - Across the Street from the Apartments
- 5% - Hospital, Closed Businesses , Shore Road near the Gates Apartments
- 3% - Houses in disrepair, Rental Units, For Sale property across from Sandi Point, S.P. Mansion
- Bayshores II Restaurant
- Tattoo Parlor
- Dairy Queen
- Slum Lord rentals next to VW by Wawa
- Bus Stop area next to Wawa on Maryland Ave.
- Library
- Middle of Town
- Maryland Ave.
- North of St. Joes

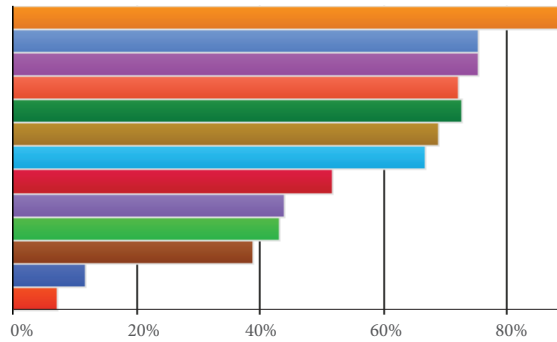


Entering Somers Point from Ocean Heights



Construction at the base of the bridge

4. What issues and activities are the most important to consider for the future of this part of town?



- The mix of shops, restaurants and entertainment
- The appearance of shop fronts, windows and signs
- Relationships between people who work in, live in and visit Somers Point
- Attracting new businesses downtown
- The general appearance of buildings
- The appearance of the hospital property
- Pedestrian accommodations
- Traffic and parking
- The appearance of parking lots
- Potential development near Shore Road
- The Bayfront as a place for living
- Affordable housing
- The Bayfront as a place for professional offices

PICTURE SOMERS POINT

1. What kinds of housing is most appropriate for Somers Point?

- 45% - Single Family
- 13% - Less apartments
- 9% - Condos
- 7% - Middle Income
- 5% - Mixed Use, Family Homes
- 3% - Upper Income, Less Rentals, Townhouses
- Upper Middle Class
- Over 55 condos
- Duplex
- Refurbished Homes
- Private
- Small
- Cottages
- Individual Housing
- Less low income



Pedestrian crossing



Single-story Homes on Mac Arthur



Kennedy Park Pavilion



Golf Course

2. What do you like most (and least) about Somers Point?

MOST:

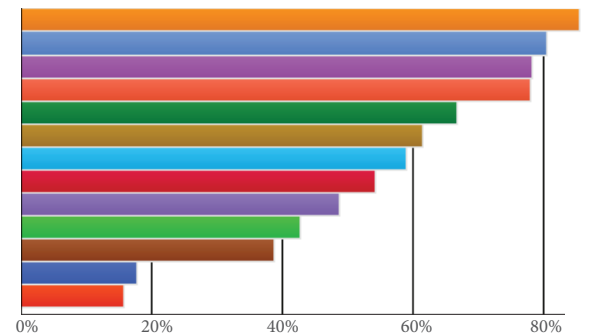
- 15% - Accessibility/ Location
- 15% - Small Town Charm/Quaintness
- 15% - Bayfront/Access to Water
- 13% - People
- 7% - Convenience/Has everything you need
- 5% - Bars/Restaurants, Beach/Ocean City, Kennedy Park
- 3% - Sense of Community, Shopping, Relaxed
- Marinas
- May Ave
- Walkability
- Greenery
- Schools and Safety
- Bay Community - down the shore but also residential
- Diversity, Heritage, Culture, Soul
- Bike Path
- Climate

LEAST:

- 23% - Too Many Apartments
- 19% - Low Income Housing
- 11% - Taxes
- 9% - Unkept Properties
- 7% - Hospital
- 5% - Litter
- 3% - Rude people in neighborhoods
- 3% - rising crime rate
- Lack of character vacant lots
- Development and shopping centers
- Many sales signs (home & store)
- Non-enforcement of drug/liquor laws
- Dogs - owners who don't control their barking and don't clean up after them
- 9th st causeway construction/traffic
- More entertainment. Movie theater, MiniGolf, Bowling

- Hospital Construction
- Building codes and approvals
- Lack of Bayfront Activity
- Unsafe municipal dock - closed theater
- Run down, no new investments
- It's inability to envision greatness
- Getting too cramped and crowded

3. What issues are the most critical to consider for the future of Somers Point?



- The appearance of streetscape/landscape
- The appearance of shopfronts and signs
- The general appearance of buildings
- Entertainment & community events
- Maintaining historic character
- Pedestrian accommodations
- The mix of stores
- Nighttime lighting
- The appearance of parking lots
- Traffic and parking
- The quality of the bicyclist's experience
- Affordable housing
- A place for professional offices



K Mart Shopping Center on Rt. 9



Bike route signage



Kennedy Park

SURVEY

4. If there were more events such as art festivals and musical performances, where would be the best place for these activities?

- 29% - Kennedy Park
- 27% - Beach
- 22% - Bay Ave
- 15% - Gateway Theater
- 11% - Park
- 5% - Sandi Point
- 5% - Bay Front
- 3% - The Pit
- Others Say: Bike Path, Scattered Venues, Schools

SOMERS POINT SHOPPING

1. Where do you shop for groceries?

- 46% - ShopRite
- 41% - Acme
- 7% - Santori's
- 3% - Genardi's in Egg Harbor Township
- 3% - Bonterras
- Others Say: Wawa, Mazzeos, Starn's, Bob's Seafood

2. Where do you shop for apparel?

- 17% - Hamilton Mall
- 10% - Online/Shore Mall/Mall/Boscov's
- 8% - Macy's
- 7% - Kmart
- 5% - TJMaxx
- 5% - Outside Somers Point
- 3% - May's Landing
- 3% - Cherry Hill
- 3% - Kohl's
- 3% - Ocean City
- 3% - Thrift Store
- Others Say: Tilton Rd, King of Prussia, A.C. Outlets, The Hub, Promenade, JCPenny, Hamilton Twp., Sam's, BJ's, The Walk, Fashion Bug

3. What shopping districts/centers in or near Somers Point do you feel are the best places to shop?

- 16% - ShopRite Plaza
- 10% - Kmart Shopping Center
- 10% - A.C. Outlets
- 10% - Hamilton Mall
- 8% - Acme Plaza
- 5% - Somers Point Plaza
- 5% - Ocean City
- 5% - Malls
- 3% - Pier One, Hamilton Twp., Boscov's, Central Square
- Others Say: CVS, Hallmark, Beauty Supply Store, Shore Hardware, Shore Mall, Consumer Square, Ocean Heights Center, Shopping Centers, Egg Harbor Township, Cape May



Street Parking on Bay Ave



Parking Lot near the Beach on Bay Ave



Homes with Porches on Bay Ave

4. What kinds of shops/businesses are most needed in Somers Point?

- 19% - Clothing
- 5% - Boutique Stores
- 5% - Like Central Square in Linwood
- 5% - Upscale Shops
- 5% - Department Store
- 5% - Craft Stores
- 5% - Small Downtown Shops
- 5% - Gift Shops
- 5% - S.P. Beach Supplies and Gifts (On Bay Ave.)

- Retail
- Bike Shop
- Arts
- Subway
- Menswear
- More Shops In Bayfront Area
- Nice Specialty Stores
- Nail And Hair Salons
- Shops that appeal to “vacation” theme
- Small amusment park, mini-golf course
- Specialty shops and storefront cottage industry
- Small independently-owned businesses
- What would bring in Most revenue?
- Chain restaurants, home improvement stores
- Successful ones!
- Clothing - anything nicer than Kmart

- More small businesses, antique shops, informal coffe shops.
- Any business that would fill a regional need
- A few midscale/buffet type restaurants like Golden Corral
- Cafés with outdoor seating
- Anything to make this town just a little nicer
- Fewer bars/More middle and upper income families
- Professional offices/retailers, restaurants (Panera Bread, Cheescake Factory), Red Lobster, Olive Garden,
- A wide variety of shops/diverse shopping experience
- Places for kids activities/sporting goods/coffee house - entertainment/activities, eco-community center, skating rink, large place for weddings or banquets near the Bay
- More affordable restaurants along Rt. 52/Smaller shops
- Clothes shops, boutiques, antiques
- Shopping in walking distance - small town, quaint, unique



Public Parking On Bay Ave



Gateway Theater on the Bayfront



Discussing Bay Ave. near the beach



Returning to the tour bus

OPEN HOUSE Notes

COMMERCE AND DEVELOPMENT

Waterfront

- Parking
- (Bay and Higby) Supposed to be single-family detached - Now a parking lot.
- Bayfront is mainly boat storage
- We tried to create a Main St. with waterfront village
- Dredge Bayfront... boat traffic, muddy
- Need playground at beach
- Advertise, market summer attractions, market hospital
- Add new restaurants, dancing, a social waterfront, entertainment.
- Reopen theater on Bay
- Walkability on Bay Ave, like 10 years ago, and businesses that draw walking and mingling.
- Water taxi
- Transit shuttles
- Bring back old fishing village

Rt 9

- Vacant/closed businesses
- There's no place to walk on Rt. 9. It's too hard to cross.

- Limit strip malls chains etc.
- Support businesses, restaurants, etc.

Rt. 52

- Revitalize Route 52 corridor
- Somers Point has space on Route 52 to develop
- Route 52 needs revitalization between Rt. 9 and 52 Bridge
- Wayfinding and Route 52 connection to Somers Point attractions

Other Commercial Nodes

- Historic bars and restaurants
- Museums
- Mansion
- Community theater like Moorestown
- The Gormet Garage was great
- Gateway... image of community
- Get people to stop for wine & dine opportunities
- Promote new bike bath
- Like the Anchorage, Eddie and the Cruisers.
- Outdoor cafés, awnings (West Hartford)... like New Hope
- Develop MacArthur

- Bubba Mac's was great
- Need more culture... Shakespeare in the park.

General

- Outside dining
- Global study for hotel feasibility
- Create things that are worth stopping for
- Hotels--ocean city overdeveloped... no room for conventions
- Need things that pay taxes!
- Need some upscale stores - Anchor stores draw smaller scale shops
- Different from seasonal stores to accommodate year-round visitors
- Reach out to companies...Trader Joe's/Whole Foods - there is community here to support
- Commercial building should conform to village look and feel.
- Painted signs on wood - No metal
- Image: small quaint family town
- Improved draw with varying scale restaurants and social meeting place
- Be picky about what's allowed to be developed
- Past image: partying/partying town

- Need more family events, businesses
- Quaint attractive village... want to stay
- Limit or eliminate alcohol at Good Old Days picnic in part... family town.
- Bring back rich history
- More for families to do together
- Nice, moderately-priced restaurants
- Limit happy hour cheap drinks crazy
- Walkable, livable, place
- Community
- Bike share program

OPEN SPACE

Waterfront

- We like concerts at the beach
- Pier under-used - peter duke of fluke only - and run down
- Used to have Seaport Village plan
- Eco-tourism
- Mainstreet nature walk, ecotourism
- Develop Bay Avenue/Seaport Village
- Along the Avenue wanted shops, stores, mixed-use

- Seaport Village, shops, residences, parking garage
- Fishing
 - Used to have motel, Dolphin Dock, clam bar, businesses on Bay Avenue. Across from clam bar was house on large lot - where a proposal for seven townhouses was brought forward and turned down.
 - Lost all to developer/hospital campus, condos and low income housing on Bay Avenue.
 - Private ownership makes it hard to access water (need railings)

Kennedy Park

- Need to fill empty stores around the park
- Outside theater on JFK park... bay as backdrop
- Gazebo trialing etc. Leading center and never went anywhere - Horse and carriage etc.
- Wooden walkway, Moreland Avenue, today by Caroline's - nature walk. Revisit this idea

Corridors

- Somers Point...a corridor with no town center
- Old MacArthur Boulevard Theater
- Cluster Development on Main Boulevard - businesses support each other
- Shore road is a Main St....Somers mansion, City

- Historic Center
- Sandi Point lot across the street - 8 years ago, proposal similar to Ocean City's "Flanders" looked great, like Haddonfield.
 - Anchor by the circle
 - Identify Historic Town Center on Shore Road as Main Street
 - Shore Rd. zoning given away to hospital campus plan.
 - There are many places without sidewalks - that needs to be resolved, it's a liability issue.
 - A city needs a center
 - We have no Mainstreet/no town center
 - We have no place to shop and stroll.
 - We are identified as a corridor city - It's a shame.

Other Places

- Dog park? (some disagreement)
- Special needs: autism play areas, age & ability-based play
- Firehouse lot and behind it is used for boat storage
- Example - Reading PA outlet center
- Ideas from 8 to 10 years ago known to bring money
- Mixed-use

OPEN HOUSE

- Reopening the theater is a good idea
- 800 Bay, town trolley
- Platts furniture
- Crate & Barrel
- JC Penny outlet store in old theater
- Somers point Historic Commission - a very informed and informative group. Historic district had \$20,000 grant for cataloging historic resources.
- We need a vision and a good master plan
- Recession - people don't come
- Bands, bars, etc.
- Bill Morrison- help to fix up (Redevelopment... Bought Properties)
- People need to get excited about the city
- Community Theater - we are devoid of culture

NEIGHBORHOODS

Parking

- Bay Avenue parking lot... plan?
- Prefer not parking
- Granite block curbs gone after paving

Design Guidelines

- Sightlines
- Need vision for future of historic district
- Zoning needs guidelines
- The historic district/ land-use and zoning/ Ordinance has no teeth
- Somers Point needs a development theme
- How about a little culture?
- Want more flowers and landscaping
- Somers Point needs to have a way to encourage development that support town's character/theme

Corridors

- Good new ratables! - Route 52 corridor
- Shore Road used to be main street
- MacArthur Blvd. needs to be redeveloped
- We need an Avenue/Shore Road connection
- Shore Rd. should evolve into a Bay Ave.
- High-end retail—Gap in coverage/Boutiques
- Rt. 9 will not work
- We need a major theme - we need a mainstreet
- There could be a Gateway at old circle

Waterfront

- Need the Theater open
- Waterfront assessment from 1991/1992
- Somers Point has great natural resources
- Should 3 sisters be taken off register (of historic places?)
- We need to enhance Bay Avenue
- Bay Avenue should be the heart of the town
- Preserve docks... fishing village
- We don't love Bayfest
- We love the beach and night activities
- The rest of Somers Point has to evolve to a Bay Avenue development pattern.
- Bay Avenue charm and eateries



Somers Mansion



Kern Field

- Small town is lacking charm except for Bay Ave
- Bay Avenue land-use issues for growth
- Bay Avenue receives \$1 million grant - spent \$10,000 to study

General

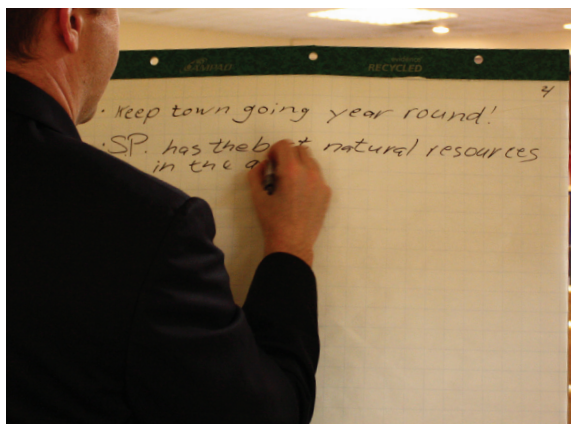
- Hotel/Motel demand?
- Length of season - not all year round
- Keep town going all year round
- Smoke-free parks - now full of cigarette butts
- Embrace heritage
- We love the park, ocean, good old days.
- We love the bike path

Housing

- Need stronger enforcement on rental properties/ drugs/who's in these properties?
- Start rental registration fees
- Open dialogue between housing and Dept of Ed.
- Cap the number of apartments

TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION

- Walking by Bay Avenue
- Speeding
- Pockets of parking like the waterfront plan
- Bay Avenue Parking
- 800 Avenue... valet parking in city lots
- Paid parking in municipal lots
- Cross Easements
- No parking on easements and outings
- Enforce



Public Participation: Somers Point Open House



Somers Point Open House

VISION WORKSHOPS

The vision workshops were organized as follows:

- Introduction & Presentation of Visualization Strategies

After welcoming residents to the Visioning Workshops, consultants presented some background information on precedents; how changes would affect new development, and the methods that can be used to visualize these changes.

- Breakout Session for the “Mapping Exercise”

Members of the community were invited to point out the general good and bad things about Somers Point. Each were given a set of different colored sticky notes, on which they could write their ideas and thoughts and then place them directly on the map of Somers Point in a specific location.

- Breakout Session to work with “Talking Cards”

Members of the community then worked with topic-based “Trading Cards.” A facilitator was placed with each group to briefly explain the process of using the cards. After the cards were passed out, the facilitator lead the group through each one, explaining the topics and then allowing time for rankings and comments to be written by the participants. After the cards were discussed and responses were given, the facilitator lead the group in a brief discussion of what they felt the most important 5 topics were, and what some of the comments were. A spokesperson was chosen by the group to represent them.

- Breakout Summary

Each group’s spokesperson had an opportunity to summarize their observations and concerns and share them with the entire room. Consultants then presented the next steps in the process, including methods for interpreting the collected information and possible methods for publicly displaying it.



Public Workshop Presentation

CARD SUMMARY

What are some good things about Somers Point?

- Parks
- Senior Center
- Marinas
- Library (we want to keep it) and Historical District
- Schools - located well (could be better utilized by the public)
- Golf/Banquet/Condos
- Hospital makes it a destination
- Harbor Cove
- Bar Scene
- Opportunity for Development
- Small park behind the shopping center on Defeo Lane
- The Beach
- Existing parks (but could be better utilized)
- Bay Ave
- Bike Path
- Kern Field
- Dog Park

- Kennedy Park
- Concerts on the beach
- Yard Sales
- Bay Avenue toward Linwood
- Bayfront/Fishing Pier
- Kayak Launch

What are some things in Somers Point that could be better?

- Apartments and non-professionally rented properties
- Parking and traffic
- Over-industrialized by the bayfront
- Abandoned buildings throughout the cities
- Lax enforcement of codes (or no enforcement) Enhancing access for maritime activities
- Should promote churches and VA more
- Need better Gateways (artistic)
- Not good enough at culture yet
- Boat Storage
- Bay Avenue Utilities
- Building Maintenance
- Kennedy Access

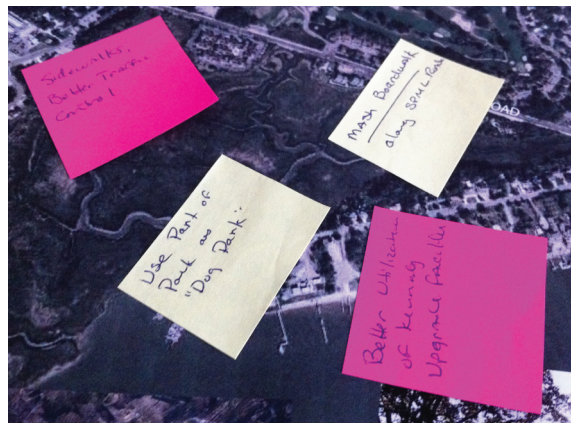
- Methadone Clinic
- Poison Ivy on the Bike Path
- Groveland
- Sidewalk along the Golf Course
- Kern Field Utilization
- Rt. 9 is ugly
- MacArthur
- no continuity on Bay
- Dog Parks (people picking up after their dogs)
- Litter
- There could be more shops and restaurants
- Real Estate agents should really sell Somers Point

Other general things that could be improved:

- Groveland shopping center
- High-end housing community for Business Owners of Somers Point (currently they all live in Linwood)
- Properties that are vacant and are located next to each other could be used for parks
- Crosswalks along New Rd.
- Intersection by Godfather's needs a crossing guard or some sort of traffic calming for the children that walk there when they get out of school.

VISION WORKSHOPS

- Bay Avenue needs better sidewalks, and maybe have the powerlines placed underground.
- Sign Guidelines
- Parking lots that are family-friendly (where people look and slow down/traffic calming).
- The hospital is a good thing – it brings a lot of economic development to Somers Point in terms of staff and visitors spending money in town. The location could be better, but it is what it is.
- We like the golf course and the type of lifestyle it brings to Somers Point. Keeping that as an asset is important to the town, particularly the catering/events facility there, and additional condo development around it would be good.
- The boat storage sheds on the bayfront are definitely not the best use there and are in fact an eyesore, especially as you come over the bridge from Ocean City.
- The bayfront should continue to be geared toward marine uses – boating, fishing, etc.
- Gateways are definitely needed at key points as you enter town, especially on McArthur and Route 9. Attractive wayfinding signage is also needed to guide visitors to the key points of interest.
- The “apartment complexes” are a nuisance and should be replaced by new market-rate housing.



Mapping Exercise



Public Workshop Boards

CARD WORKSHOPS

Commercial Areas & Gateways			Downtown & the Waterfront			Neighborhoods		
	%YES	%NO		%YES	%NO		%YES	%NO
Mixed-Use Building	94%	6%	Historic Buildings	89%	6%	Historic Buildings	86%	8%
National Retail Chain	53%	47%	Maritime Activities	94%	0%	National Retail Chain	17%	72%
Pad Commerce	47%	50%	Mixed-Use Building	94%	3%	New Development	50%	39%
Single-Story Building	72%	25%	Pad Commerce	17%	67%	Single-Story Buildings	67%	19%
Apartments Over-The-Shop	56%	42%	Large Buildings	6%	94%	Buildings of Different Sizes	53%	25%
Gateway Features	83%	11%	Public Access	94%	0%	Parking Lots	33%	44%
Rear Parking Lot	58%	36%	Signs	94%	0%	Porches	83%	0%
Signs	80%	11%	Small Buildings	78%	14%	Schools	69%	8%
Defined Crossings	89%	11%	Bike Lanes	72%	22%	Bike Lanes	50%	39%
Marked Entrances	78%	8%	Crosswalks	89%	6%	On-Street Parking	72%	17%
On-Street Parking	33%	58%	On-Street Parking	69%	25%	Shared Driveways	36%	42%
Traffic	36%	44%	Shared Parking	89%	3%	Traffic	28%	44%
Front Parking Lot	39%	39%	Parking Lot	64%	28%	Landscaped Buffer	69%	19%
Landscaped Buffer	86%	6%	Plazas	53%	33%	Parks	89%	0%
Public Art	86%	6%	Pocket Park	86%	3%	Playgrounds	78%	17%
Trees	72%	22%	Public Art	83%	14%	Street Trees	75%	17%

VISION WORKSHOPS

GOOD AND BAD OF SOMERS POINT

Near the circle

BAD:

Fix the lighting

Old Town Marts - eyesore, wasted space - Arts Center possible

Marinas and Restaurants

BAD:

Boat Storage along Bay Ave must go!

Tow boat commercial equipment not in sync with waterfront, next to old Inslet restaurant.

Corrugated Metal Marina building.

Lot next to Bayshores II

Bay Avenue Marina Boats in storage.

GOOD:

Small restaurants and shops along Bay Avenue.

Clam Bar/Around Back

Love the Waterfront

Bay Ave. Restaurants are Great.

Fishing Pier Should Stay

Harbor Cove Marina

Hospital

Bay Ave. Area

BAD:

Bay Ave utility should be underground

Gateway Theater improvements needed

Open the waterfront on Bay Ave for pedestrian and recreational use

GOOD:

Morrow Beach a positive channel, Needs dredging

Water Taxi

Marina's

Keep Maritime Activities on the waterfront

Shore Rd. Area

BAD:

Too many disrespectful renters and uncaring landlords. Code enforcement on rentals.

Parking too close to corners

GOOD:

Could have a package of things to do in SP

more benches to sit all over town

Miss the firehouse breakfast

This is Good. Restaurants on Shore.

Thriving Bar/Restaurant Scene.

Library/Location

Kennedy Park

BAD:

Kennedy Park needs improvement and better access to Broadway.

Better utilization of Kennedy. Upgrade facilities.

GOOD:

Kennedy Park kayak launch.

Use of part of park as dog park.

MacArthur Boulevard & The Golfcourse Area

BAD:

Cluttered Residential Properties

Trash

Need more destination Retail outlets. Trader Joes? X-walk at NYNY and Rt. 9 for school.

Traffic intersection

MacArthur Blvd needs to be mowed regularly

Develop main entryway/MacArthur & Rt.9

Neighborhoods

BAD:

Do our taxes go up?

I wish this would change - Exton Rd.

What to do with Park?

GOOD:

Senior Center and playground

Rt.9

BAD:

Not enough small shops

Groveland strip mall needs a makeover

Ocean Buffet Restaurant isn't successful here

GOOD:

Rt. 9 is great for having what you need, but it is mostly ugly and few people come from out of town there, except for Fitz-partick's

Near Kern Field

BAD:

Methadone center needs to GO

GOOD:

Schools

Ball Field

Veterans Park

Great facility, but needs improvement to bring more people and increase security.

North-end of Rt. 9

BAD:

Traffic Control Rite Aid Area

No more apartments

Promotion of churches

GOOD:

Walkway

Shopping

High-end community housing

Location & variety, Shopping
Acme Plaza

Veterans Group

Bike Path

BAD:

Poison Ivy along the bike path

GOOD:

Bike path is great. Could be better with community art projects and comfort stations.

North Bay Ave.

BAD:

Clean up litter everywhere

GOOD:

Walkway

Marsh walkway Maryland to Ocean Ave.

Good Neighborhood

