

*The conceptual build out analysis for the Study Area estimates that approximately 1,200 additional residential units could be built under current zoning. This is an important number for the community because it becomes the baseline relative to “density-neutral development.”\* The density-neutral concept sets a ceiling as to the ultimate development potential under existing zoning; development rights could be shifted within the Study Area (or potentially to the neighboring Suffolk County Grabeski Airport) but there would not be an increase in density based on the rezoning of a selected parcel(s). Residential development rights would need to be purchased from somewhere within the related school district.*

\*Note: “Density-neutral development” does not necessarily equate one housing unit to one housing unit, as the sewage impacts, traffic impacts, clearing impacts, water usage and energy consumption impacts, school district impacts and other impacts of a single family home differ from other types of housing units, accessory apartments, efficiency apartments, seasonal co-ops, motel units, housing with limitations on numbers of bedrooms (such as senior citizen housing) and elder care units, or conversion to non-residential uses, etc. However, to the extent possible, decision-makers should be mindful of the ultimate build-out of the community and consider additional means to require transfers of development rights to achieve identified community goals and objectives.

### **CENTRAL PINE BARRENS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

The Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan states the following:

*The primary strategy for the redirection of development from the Core Preservation Area is through Residential Overlay Districts. In these districts, a single Pine Barrens Credit shall allow an increase in density equal to one (1) dwelling unit, as defined by the Southampton*

*Town Code. The end result is an incremental increase in density in selected residentially zoned areas of the Town. This does not result in a net gain of dwelling units within the Town, but simply redirects development and channels growth in order to preserve more ecologically-sensitive lands. The as-of-right receiving areas are designed to accommodate those Pine Barrens Credits from the Core Preservation Area within the same school district. In no case will it be necessary to cross school district boundaries on an as-of-right basis. The net result of these Southampton Town policies is compact and efficient development that will protect Central Pine Barrens lands without significant public expenditure. The designation of receiving sites coincides with those areas where infrastructure and municipal services already exist. The cost to municipalities and taxpayers with regard to new road construction, water main extension and the provision of police, fire, and other services is thereby lowered.<sup>1</sup>*

In addition to the as-of-right RRADs, the Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan outlines potential development strategies through the use of Pine Barrens Credit (PBC) redemption for areas identified as suitable for development potentially under Planned Development District (PDD) standards, subject to further review and approval by the Town Board. These potential receiving areas are anticipated to provide more opportunities for future use of PBCs. The use of PDDs as an incentive zoning overlay tool at designated sites on the Zoning Map allows for the additional potential for conversion of residential development rights into commercial, industrial, tourism, or other uses. These receiving areas would serve to offset the

<sup>1</sup>Chapter 6, *Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Volume 1: Policies, Programs and Standards*, p. 100.

ultimate amount of single family residential development units that could be built, reducing impacts on future school district enrollments and still providing for a strong tax base, economic vitality, and strategies to protect other natural, scenic, agricultural and cultural features of the property and community character of the surrounding neighborhood.

The following potential strategies were identified in the Central Pine Barrens Land Use Plan to be employed in the future to accommodate redemption of Pine Barren Credits:

1. Use of PBCs could permit density increases for senior citizen housing and elder care facilities.
2. Overlay districts along Montauk Highway and Long Island Railroad corridors could promote revitalization and concentrated development patterns within existing hamlet centers.
3. Use of PBCs could allow accessory apartments within existing residential zoning districts
4. Mixed Use overlay districts along existing commercial corridors could allow for alternative uses to counteract strip development.
5. Appropriate industrial development area has been identified at the Suffolk County Airport for redirection of PBCs from industrially zoned land located in the Core Preservation Area, and for the conversion of residential PBCs.
6. Use of PBCs could promote tourism uses and related facilities.
7. Use of PBCs could allow multi-family, or more compact, residential development.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Chapter 6, *Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Volume 1: Policies, Programs and Standards*, pp.101-102.

In the Flanders, Northampton, Riverside area of Southampton Town within the Riverhead School District, over 80% of the lands within the environmentally-sensitive Core Preservation Area of the Central Pine Barrens has been preserved through land acquisition programs and donations of privately-held parcels through the State of New York Open Space Fund and Suffolk County's ¼-percent Drinking Water Protection Program.

In the Study Area of Eastport, Speonk-Remsenburg, and Westhampton, this same level of funding commitment for fee-title acquisition of development-restricted Core Preservation lands has not been accomplished. Funding for land acquisition of Pine Barrens properties is in competition with other open space priorities within the State, County, or Town (e.g. Farmland Preservation and east of the Shinnecock Canal the proposed Critical Wildlands and Drinking Water Protection Plan.), and the availability and viability of suitable receiving zones to accommodate redemption of PBCs is essential for implementation of the state-mandated Central Pine Barrens Plan.