

WORK TASK 7.8

Report to
**Hampton Beach Area
Chamber of Commerce**
November 1984

Improvement Strategy for Recreational Sites at Hampton Beach, New Hampshire

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NOAA
COASTAL SERVICES CENTER
234 SOUTH HOBSON AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29405-2413

The New Hampshire Coastal Program provided a grant for the preparation of this report which was financed in part by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, administered by OCRM, NOAA.

GV
182
.I46
1984

 Arthur D. Little, Inc. Reference 50993

6-18-84 10:55 AM
10/1/84

3/11

Not bad

See potential SOG(A) projects there. See notes.

I understand the bath house is to be demolished.

STATE: California (BCDC)

DATE OF RECEIPT: February 28, 1985

NATURE OF CHANGE(S): Minor changes to narrative portion of program document to make consistency apply to non-federal projects for which a federal license or permit is required if the project affects land or water uses within the coastal zone.

STATUS: CPD preliminary analysis due 3/11. Reviewers' comments due 3/15.

FINAL RESPONSE DUE: March 25, 1985

DATE COMPLETED:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
List of Tables	iii
List of Figures	iv
I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	I-1
A. Introduction	I-1
B. Findings	I-1
II. HAMPTON BEACH SEASHELL	II-1
A. Site Description	II-1
B. Recommended Improvements	II-3
C. Implementation Recommendations	II-9
III. STATE PARK	III-1
A. Site Description	III-1
B. Recommended Improvements	III-1
C. Implementation Recommendations	III-5
IV. MARSHES AT HAMPTON BEACH	IV-1
A. Site Description	IV-1
B. Recommended Improvements	IV-2
C. Implementation Considerations	IV-3

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Seashell Cost, Funding, and Implementation Considerations	II-10
2	State Park and Bath House Cost, Funding, and Implementation Considerations	III-6
3	Marsh Site: Nature Walk Cost, Funding, and Implementation Considerations	IV-4

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
1 Hampton Beach Recreation Improvement Sites	I-2
2 Seashell Site: Base Perspective	II-2
3 Seashell Site: Scalloped Canopy	II-4
4 Seashell Site: Tent-Type Canopy	II-5
5 Seashell Site: Boardwalk	II-7
6 State Park and Bath House Overall Park Plan	III-2
7 State Park and Bath House: Perspective Sketch of Improvements	III-3

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. INTRODUCTION

Supported by a grant from the New Hampshire Office of State Planning (OSP), the Hampton Beach Area Chamber of Commerce has commissioned Arthur D. Little, Inc. with the Kimball Chase Company, Inc., to evaluate three recreational sites and recommend improvements at each. The three sites, illustrated in Figure 1, are:

- o The Hampton Beach Seashell (Site A in Figure 1);
- o The State Park at Hampton Beach (Site B in Figure 1); and
- o The Marsh Area (indicated as Site C in Figure 1).

A working committee was established with representatives of the Hampton Beach Area Chamber and other local and state representatives. During the course of a series of work sessions, this committee served as a sounding board for improvement concepts put forth by consultants and provided many valuable comments and suggestions.

B. FINDINGS

This evaluation considered three sites at Hampton Beach within the context of overall recreational activity at the Beach Precinct. The theme of Hampton Beach has traditionally been as a family recreation and vacation destination. This theme should be maintained and strengthened so that Hampton Beach maintains its distinctive role as a beach community along the Northeast Atlantic Coast.

Improvements at each of the three sites are recommended to achieve the following objectives:

- o Enhance the image, quality and variety of recreational opportunities at Hampton Beach for the priority visitor target: family groups;
- o Provide opportunities which might assist in extending the attractiveness of Hampton Beach beyond the peak summer months into the shoulder seasons.

The following recommendations are made to achieve these objectives:

- o Seashell--The position of the Seashell should be strengthened as the central focal point of beach area activities and information. To accomplish this:
 - A canopy should be constructed over the seating area to enable more flexible use of facilities;

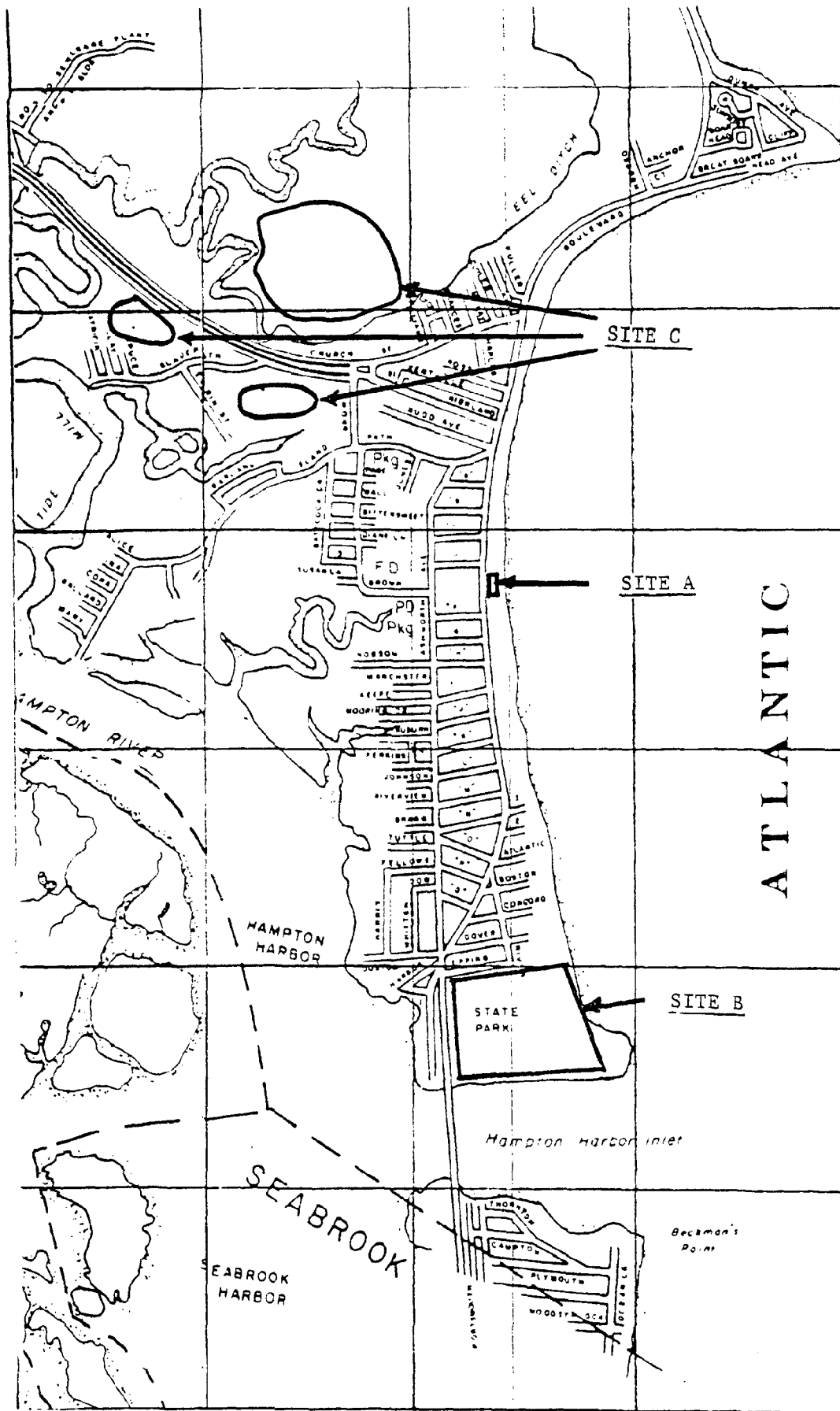


FIGURE 1. HAMPTON BEACH RECREATION IMPROVEMENT SITES

SOURCE. FROM MAP PROVIDED BY HAMPTON BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
 ▲ Arthur D. Little, Inc.

- A boardwalk should be constructed to improve pedestrian flow and the physical image of the facilities;
- Consistent color, design, and signage should be adopted by DRED and businesses on Ocean Boulevard to improve the physical image;

*Results of Hwy
boardwalk study*

← An electronic information board should be installed inside the Chamber's Beach offices along with an electronic information screen installed on the Seashell lighting tower (facing Ocean Boulevard) to provide current information regarding local and coastal activities and attractions;

- A large-screen video system should be installed at the rear of the stage (removed off-season) to provide flexible programming during mid-day and other periods, including a short film promoting activities in Hampton Beach and the Coast, and special movie and program hours.

o State Park--The facilities of the State Park should be substantially upgraded to provide day visitors a base for visiting the beach and to provide the facilities required to accommodate a variety of special events. To accomplish this:

- The bath house should be demolished and a new facility constructed with improved restroom facilities, showers, lockers and snack bar;
- An open-air special events structure should be constructed to accommodate company picnics and special programs (e.g., sailing and windsurfing regattas, kite flying contests), and picnic tables available for general use when not being used for special functions;
- A cedar playground should be constructed as an alternative activity for children attending special functions or using the beach;
- The design and placement of a boardwalk foot path over the dunes should be evaluated with the Conservation Commission, OSP, DRED and implemented as appropriate to preserve the dunes; and
- The requirements for other special facilities, such as an administration building for DRED field staff, and a pedestrian tunnel under the highway should be evaluated as part of the overall Park plan.

30-10

OST included

- o Marshes--The Chamber should establish a special committee to work with and actively support the Hampton Conservation Commission to pursue development of a nature walk or nature viewing center at the marshes. The marshes are an important natural resource at Hampton Beach as a wildlife habitat and as a confluence of a river and the ocean. This effort will serve to provide a means to stimulate recognition and awareness of this resource, and as an alternate activity for beach visitors.

II. HAMPTON BEACH SEASHELL

A. SITE DESCRIPTION

The Seashell site, noted as Site A in Figure 1, and illustrated in Figure 2, includes a small complex of cinder block buildings located in the center of Hampton Beach, on the beach, and across from the Casino complex. This property and the building facilities are owned and maintained by the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). DRED provides life guards to the beach and janitors to maintain the restrooms and the seating area after events held at the Seashell. DRED allows the Hampton Beach Area Chamber to use the North wing of the complex rent free. The Chamber operates its Beach Office here, throughout the summer seasons, staffs it with one to two people from about 9:00 a.m. to about 10:00 p.m., maintains a visitor's information desk (with brochures, etc.) and sells state lottery tickets. The organ used at Seashell concerts is also housed in the Chamber offices.

The stage of the Seashell is open towards the benches, and is used for a variety of functions--mostly evening and family in nature; band shows, organ recitals, sing-a-longs, bingo, fireworks on Wednesdays, and the like. These events are complementary to the types of "name" entertainment available at Club Casino, across the street. There is entertainment almost every night throughout the summer season and many Sunday and miscellaneous other afternoons. The inner bench area seats about 350; an additional 350 can be seated in the rear bench area on either side of the tower. Estimates of attendance at Seashell functions vary from several hundred to over a thousand on any given night (there are no accurate data on this).

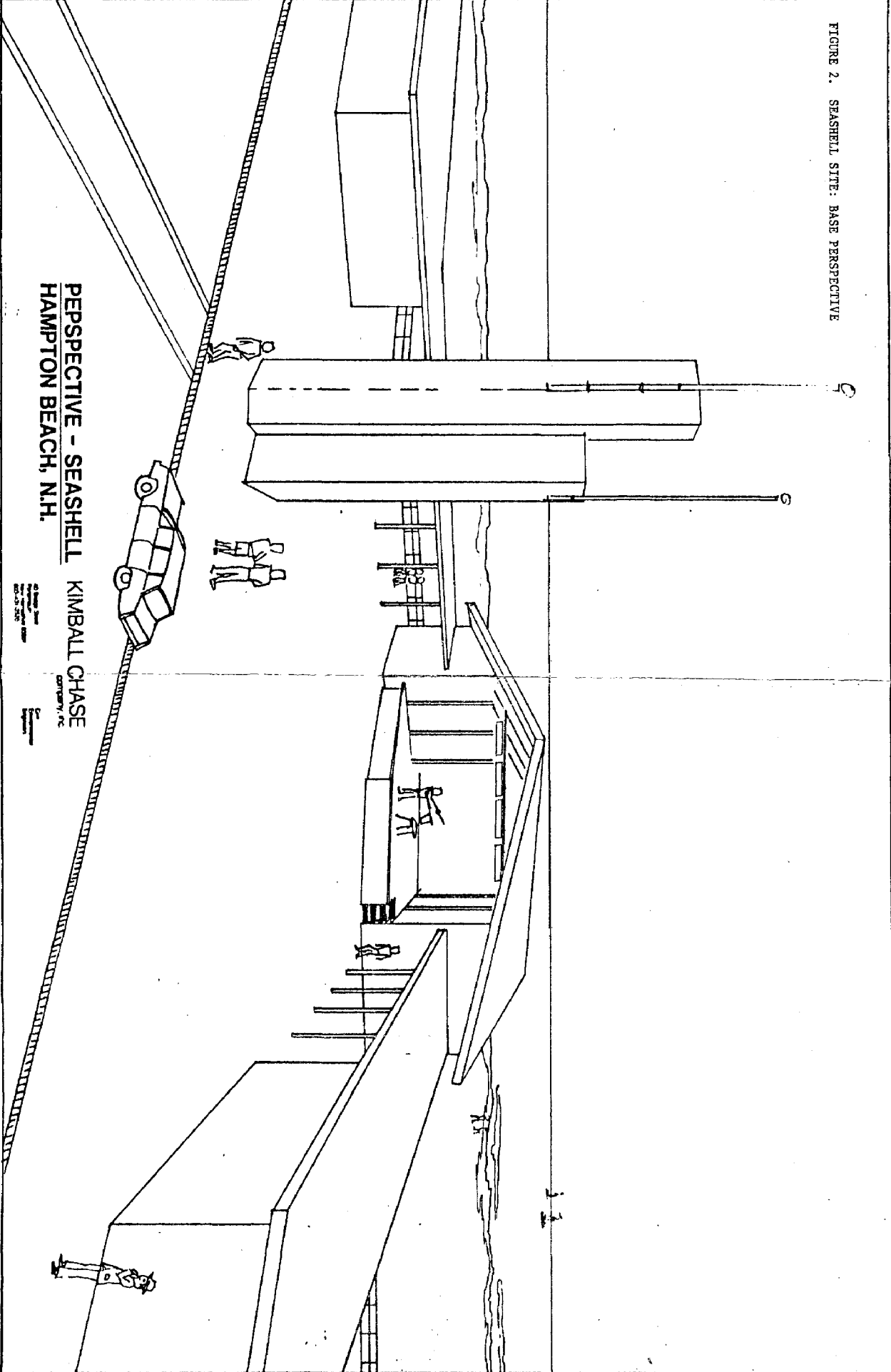
Responsible for overall programming, the Chamber sponsors regular events held at the Seashell. Their budget for Seashell entertainment in the 1983 summer season was \$15,000, funded directly by membership contributions from beach area retailers, motel and restaurant operators, other merchants, etc. The Chamber sold "everything under the sun" (Hampton slogan) tee-shirts in the 1984 summer season to raise additional money for entertainment but is reluctant to compete directly with tee-shirt retailers.

Although the evenings are fully scheduled at the Seashell, events are not regularly scheduled at mid-day periods. Because of its central location at the main beach, there is strong potential for increasing use of this facility during the day time. The day time period should be the focus of increased programming with the objective of enhancing mid-day activities available at the beach.

The physical condition of the Seashell building complex is fair to poor. The Chamber has been maintaining the inside of its facility, otherwise, the Seashell building itself and bench area are somewhat

SEA SHELL - HAMPTON BEACH

FIGURE 2. SEASHELL SITE: BASE PERSPECTIVE



PERSPECTIVE - SEASHELL **KIMBALL CHASE**
HAMPTON BEACH, N.H. **CONCEPTUAL ARCHITECTURE, P.C.**

© Kimball Chase
 1984-1985

Scale

run down. To a large extent, the deterioration is cosmetic, which adversely affects perceptions of the quality of the beach area. Maintenance of these buildings is a DRED responsibility.

B. RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

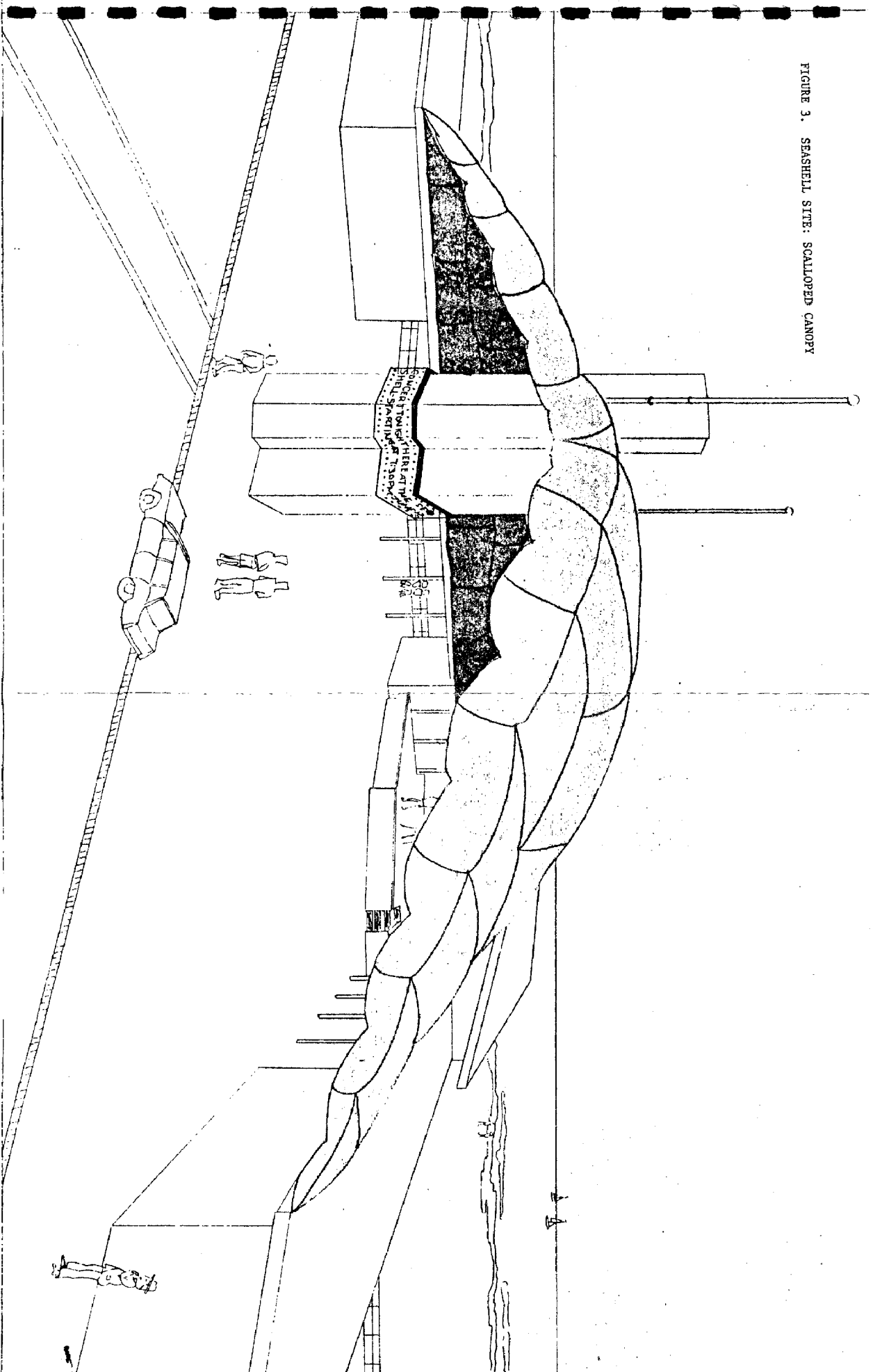
Six improvements are recommended for the Seashell site with the objective of:

- o Reinforcing the Seashell as a central focal point for beach and coastal information;
- o Enhancing the quality of facilities;
- o Broadening the type of programming offered;
- o Extending use of the facilities throughout the day; and
- o Providing more flexibility for a variety of uses of the facility.

Three recommendations involve structural improvements or physical modification of existing facilities. These are:

- o A canopy system to cover the Seashell seating area. The Seashell seating area is limited in its use because of its exposure to the environment. On hot sunny days, visitors to the beach seeking shade are restricted to the limited seating under the roofed areas. During periods of mist or light rain, attendance is low or events are postponed due to adverse conditions. Two canopy systems have been considered as coverings for the seating area to address these shortcomings, as illustrated in Figures 3 and 4. These systems would be constructed of a tubular steel frame with a removable canvas covering. Either system should be installed at the beginning of each season and removed at the end, to minimize exposure of the system to off-season storms, prolonging its life. The system illustrated in Figure 3 is a scalloped design, offering a distinctive visual effect to the central beach area, and is constructed on a permanent support system. The system illustrated in Figure 4 is tent-shaped in a design consistent with that of the Seashell, and is constructed on a removable support system. A variation on both designs was considered in which the canopy covering could be mechanically retracted throughout the season as required. The retractable system would enable viewing of events or the Seashell platform stage from the second floor of the Casino building--during crowded Seashell events, viewers often congregate across the street to catch a glimpse of Seashell performances. The two non-retractable systems are estimated to cost approximately \$117,600 based

FIGURE 3. SEASHELL SITE: SCALLOPED CANOPY



SEASHELL CANOPY
HAMPTON BEACH, N.H.

11-4

KIMBALL CHASE
CONTRACTOR, INC.

DESIGNED BY
ARCHITECTURE

CONTRACTOR

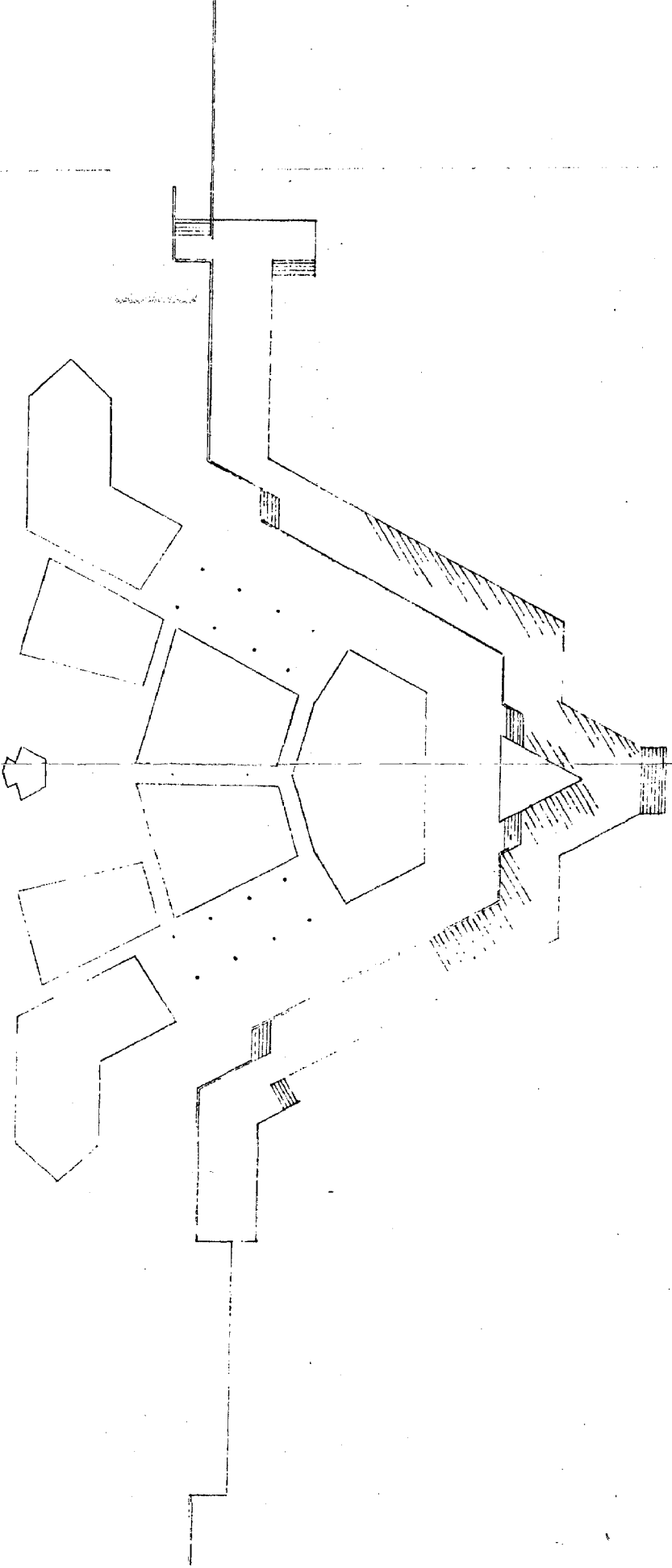
on estimates provided by the manufacturers. If a retractable system is selected, a special design would be required, with an additional cost of approximately \$100,000, also based on manufacturers and engineers estimates.

- o Structural improvements to the railing around the Seashell and creation of a boardwalk. The conceptual design of a boardwalk around the Seashell facilities as a strolling and beach viewing area is illustrated in Figure 5. This boardwalk would serve to facilitate pedestrian flow around the Seashell and its information services and would enhance the visual effect of the complex as a beach overlook. Estimated cost of this improvement is \$92,000, based on evaluations by the project team engineer, with the input of DRED staff.
- o Consistent color scheme and signage. To enhance the visual image of the Seashell complex, itself, and of the Ocean Boulevard area, in general, a consistent color, design and color scheme should be selected jointly by the Chamber leadership and DRED, working with Town Officials. This improvement should be made as soon as possible by DRED, and implemented with regularly scheduled maintenance. In addition, the Chamber should strongly encourage retailers, restaurants and hotel owners to adopt the color and signage design scheme as they regularly maintain or upgrade facilities. A consistent visual appearance on Ocean Boulevard will go a long way toward upgrading the image of the beach community.

Three improvement recommendations involve a combination of capital investments in electronic equipment and programming. These are:

- o Information Screen on Seashell Light Tower. An electronic information screen should be constructed on the Seashell Tower facing Ocean Boulevard as illustrated in Figure 2. This screen should be programmed daily by Chamber staff to announce Seashell events and other activities at the beach (e.g., the Sperry Regatta lottery drawings, etc.). Sponsorship can be encouraged by providing local businesses access to the system to disseminate information on special events related to their businesses (e.g., performers at Club Casino, specials at local restaurants, party boat tours, etc.). Depending upon the complexity of the system installed, costs for the information screen are estimated at \$20,000 and up. This system will be one important element in reinforcing the information dissemination role of the Chamber and Seashell site.

FIGURE 5. SEASHELL SITE: BOARDWALK



**SEASHELL BOARDWALK
HAMPTON BEACH, N.H.**

KIMBALL CHASE
COMPANY, INC.
ARCHITECTS
1000 BOSTON STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02118
TELEPHONE 617-552-1100

*7/21/71
Don't see TR
business*

- o Electronic Information Board located within Chamber's Beach Offices. Similar to the information boards located atop the John Hancock Tower in Boston and in many airports, the Chamber should install in its office an electronic information board which illuminates points of interest at the press of a button. The board should display a map of the region with a blow-up of Hampton Beach. Two types of information can be displayed. First, general information regarding "public facilities" can be displayed, such as, state parks on coast, nature walks, boat ramps, state docks. In addition, promotional information about local businesses can also be displayed, including location of lodgings, restaurants, movie houses, various types of shops and entertainment. The latter can be used as a mechanism through which businesses can provide contributions to fund the two electronic information systems and video system in return for promotional visibility. This system is estimated to cost \$10,000 and up depending on the volume of information to be displayed and the complexity of the system.

- o Large screen video system for Seashell stage. A large screen video system should be installed by the Chamber at the rear of the Seashell stage as the principal mode of providing alternative forms of entertainment and programming for a variety of viewer groups and beach visitors during the mid-day periods. This system should be linked to the Hampton cable-TV system to provide access to the Disney channel (for young children) and other special channels (for different viewer groups). A relatively consistent day-time schedule should be established and maintained such that a given hour (for example, 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.) is childrens hour, another period is "old movies" and so forth. The Chamber should establish a liaison with a video-mutual operation so that special movies or shows can be obtained and shown on rainy days. Finally, the Chamber together with other beach community interests should fund the filming of a special film, seven to ten minutes in length promoting the theme: "Stay at Hampton Beach, tour the Coastline", depicting visually the wide variety of family recreational opportunities ranging from the beach, the waterslide, windsurfing, to party boat trips and tours of the Isles of Shoals. The costs of these recommendations include; \$5,000 or higher for the video screen; plus monthly charges of \$15 or higher for cable systems. These costs will vary depending on the quality and complexity of each item.

C. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

To implement each of the recommendations outlined above, the Hampton Beach Area Chamber should undertake the following steps, as outlined in Table 1:

- o Initiate discussions with DRED staff to establish an ongoing dialogue and working relationship, encouraging and supporting DRED in its efforts to carry out recommendations to construct the canopy over the Seashell seating area, establish a boardwalk and improve railings, and agree upon a consistent color, design and signage scheme for DRED and private facilities on Ocean Boulevard. These efforts should be undertaken immediately, building upon the involvement and inputs of DRED staff throughout this project. The Chamber should also reach out to OSP staff, to elicit their continued support and advice in implementing these projects.

- o Initiate efforts to marshal the support of Chamber leadership and membership in carrying through the recommendations for electronic information board and screen and video system. With this broad support, the Chamber should consider alternative systems, refining their programming and promotional requirements, and should solicit "bids" from suppliers for each system. Based on the cost of selected bids, the Chamber should undertake a fundraising program, integrated with a promotion dissemination program for supporting business. With the systems installed, the Chamber staff should assume responsibility for programming and maintenance.

TABLE 1

SEASHELL COST, FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Improvement	Estimated Cost*	DRED Funding**	Other Sources of Funding	Suggested Role for Chamber and Other Groups
Seasonal Canopy System	\$ 117,660	\$ 115,000	Private business donation	Chamber initiative proposal, work jointly with DRED, OSP. To agree on design; DRED to implement and fund
Retractable Canopy System	\$ 217,660	\$ 115,000	?	Chamber should consider importance of "retractability" before proceeding
Boardwalk and Railing Repair	\$ 92,000	\$ 92,000	--	Chamber and DRED agree on proposal; DRED implement and fund
Consistent color and design scheme, signage	No net cost above regular maintenance	--	--	Chamber initiative proposal; achieve agreement for implementation with DRED, local businesses
Electronic Information Screen on Seashell Tower	\$ 20,000 +	--	Private business donations in return for promotion dissemination	Chamber leadership in fund raising, implementation and programming
Electronic Information Board in Chamber Offices	\$ 10,000+	--	Private business donations in return for promotion dissemination	Chamber leadership in fund raising, implementation and programming
Large Screen Video System	\$ 5,000+ (video screen) \$ 5,000+ (movie)	--	Private business donations in return for promotion dissemination	Chamber leadership in fund raising, implementation and programming

Source: Arthur D. Little, Inc., and Kimball Chase Company, Inc., 1984.

* Cost estimates are preliminary only, to be utilized for the purposes of decision-making and planning.

** Estimates of DRED funding are based on budget allocations for FY 1985-86.

III. STATE PARK

A. SITE DESCRIPTION

The State Park and Bath House, indicated as Site B in Figure 1, includes a beach area, an old bath house, refreshment stand and parking lot. DRED owns, maintains and operates this facility. The beach area is "wilder" than the main beach, has some dunes, and is attractive to those seeking a "quieter" beach, separated from the bustle of the boardwalk. The dirt parking lot can accommodate 400 to 700 cars (wide range because it is unlined and its boundaries are not clearly defined). On weekdays in July and August, the lot is 25 to 50 percent full and DRED estimates that there are 2.0 to 2.5 persons per car. On sunny, peak weekend days, the lot generally "fills up" with 2.5 to 3.0 persons per car.

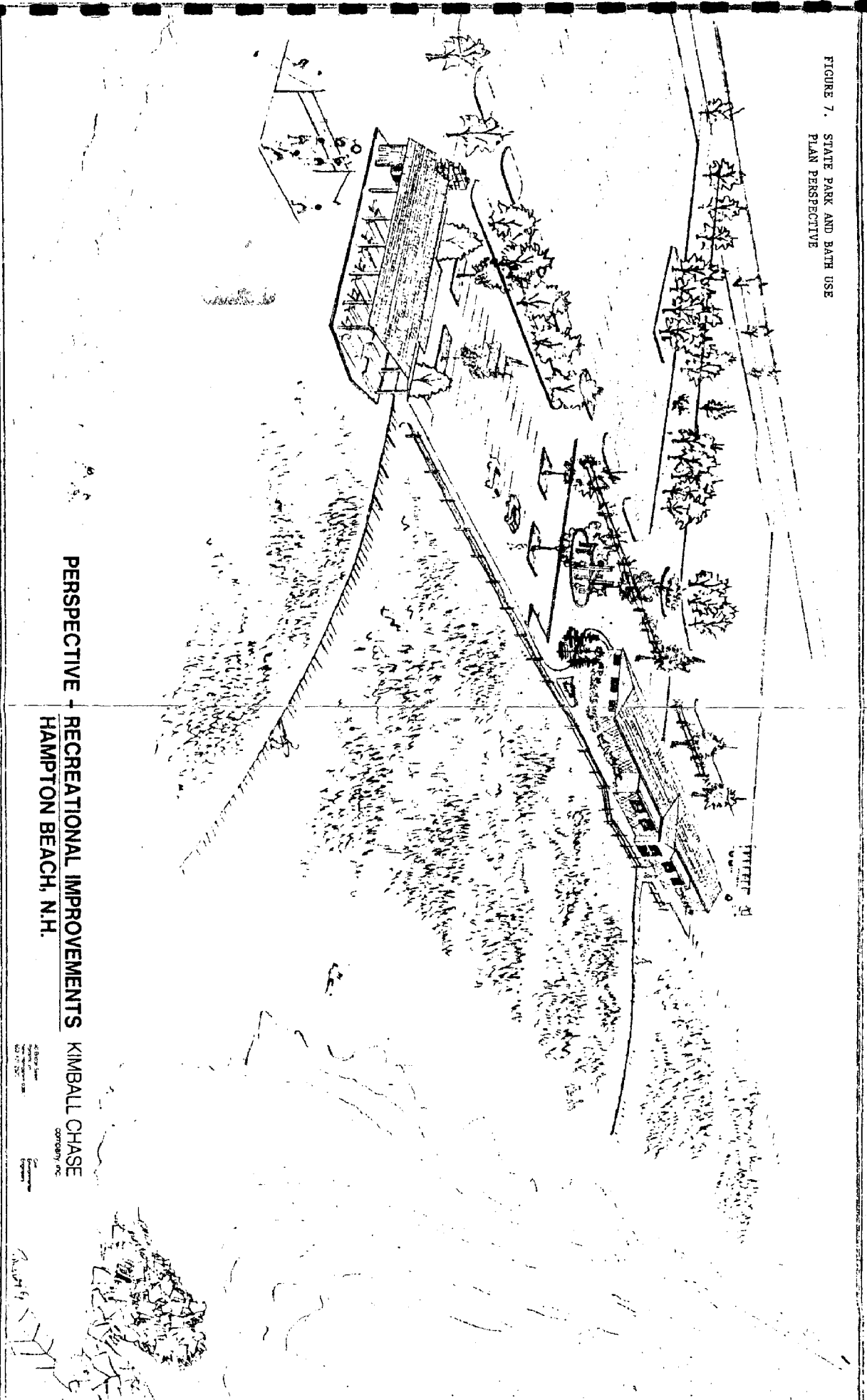
DRED has estimated that the beach capacity is 4,000 to 5,000 at high tide, however because of its "remote location" relative to the rest of the beach, it rarely is overcrowded. The bath house is in considerable disrepair. The building is an old gray concrete slab structure. The center part of the building is 2 stories in height although there is no apparent use of anything but the ground floor. In addition to the restrooms, the ground floor houses a fast food stand.

B. RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

A series of improvements are recommended at the State Park site to enhance its use as an alternative type of recreational facility at Hampton Beach, appealing to day visitors seeking a quieter, more pristine beach with picnic facilities. In addition, this facility should become the first state park on New Hampshire's coast capable of hosting corporate gatherings (picnics, recreational events, and the like), and accommodating the "headquarters" of special events such as the Sperry Regatta. With the improvements recommended below, the State Park will become a unique facility enhancing recreational opportunities in Hampton Beach as well as along the New Hampshire coastline. The recommended improvements illustrated in Figures 6 and 7 include:

- o Demolishing existing bath house and constructing a new facility. The new bath house facility, illustrated in Figures 6 and 7, should provide restrooms with showers and lockers so that day visitors can use the State Park as a base -- showering and changing after a day on the beach, to leaving belongings in lockers as they tour the rest of the Beach, for dining, shopping, or a special event at the Seashell or Club Casino. The shuttle bus service linking the central part of Hampton Beach should be encouraged to extend its route south to the State Park, to provide easy access to the central beach for day visitors using the Park

FIGURE 7. STATE PARK AND BATH USE
PLAN PERSPECTIVE



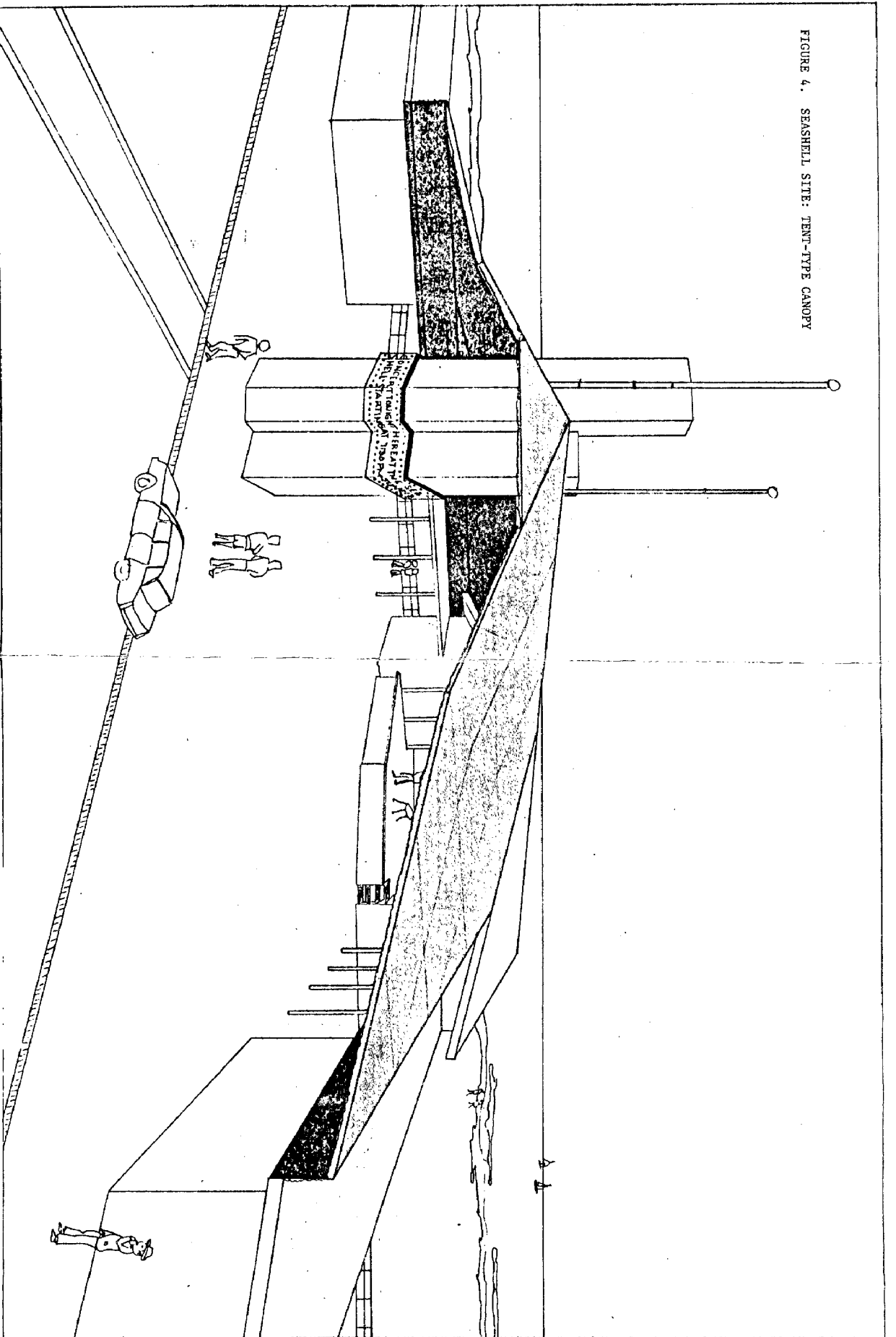
PERSPECTIVE - RECREATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS
HAMPTON BEACH, N.H.
KIMBALL CHASE
COMPANY, INC.

1000 North Main Street
Hampton, N.H. 03843
Tel. 603-785-1234

III-3

84-577

FIGURE 4. SEASHELL SITE: TENT-TYPE CANOPY



SEASHELL CANOPY
HAMPTON BEACH, N.H.

II-5

KIMBALL CHASE
CENTER, INC.
ARCHITECTS
100 N. STATE ST.
NEWTON, MASS.
02459

as a "base". The cost of the bath house demolition and new construction is estimated at \$255,7500, compared to the DRED budget allocation of \$250,000. The Chamber should actively encourage DRED to implement this improvement.

- o Construct an open-air, roofed structure south of the bath house and west of the dunes to host special events. This facility should be the site of company picnics, special community functions and special events' "headquarters" (e.g., the Sperry Regatta). Visitors coming to this facility can enjoy the beach, but also have the benefit of being partially secluded from the bustle of the central beach. When not being utilized by special groups, this facility can house picnic tables for regular visitors. Between this facility and the harbor channel, a natural barrier such as bushes or a wood fence should be installed to discourage visitors (particularly children) from walking too close to the channel, a dangerous body of water for swimming or for accidental falls due to the currents. This facility is estimated to cost \$64,800. The Chamber should work actively with DRED and the local Legislative delegation to see that the necessary funds are allocated and the project is implemented. The Chamber should jointly pursue programming and scheduling responsibility with DRED, establishing a mailing list of New Hampshire businesses and associations and annually sending a mailing to alert these groups of the availability of the State Park facility for special functions.
- o Construct a cedar playground adjacent to the bath house. A cedar playground should be constructed to serve as a diversion for young children visiting the beach or attending a special function at the State Park. The Chamber should undertake this as a special project, purchasing the cedar playground materials for \$10,000 to \$15,000 (depending on the size of the playground) and encouraging Chamber members to volunteer their time to construct the playground. This project can serve to mobilize the membership to participate in the enhancement of the State Park, so that they have a stronger commitment and pride in the site.
- o Pursue other improvements to the State Park. Wooden board walk paths should be constructed over the dunes between the visitor areas (bath house, special events, shelter and parking lot) and the beach to control foot traffic and preserve the dunes. These pathways have been successfully controlling dune erosion at the National Seashore and other Cape Cod Beaches. This is recommended in concept only: precise design and cost estimates should be determined in conjunction with the Hampton Beach Conservation Commission. Construction of an administration building should be

705-1A

considered at the Southwest corner of the State Park site as a field office to consolidate DRED staff. Such a facility is estimated to cost \$38,880. In addition, the present pedestrian tunnel under Route 1A linking the State Park to the State Fish Pier parking lot should be examined for safety and adequacy for use during periods of parking overflow (during large, special events). If this is not adequate, a new underpass should be considered -- such a facility is estimated to cost \$59,650.

C. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

To implement each of the recommendations outlined above, the Hampton Beach Area Chamber should undertake the following steps as outlined in Table 2:

- o Initiate an active dialogue with DRED, OSP and the local legislative delegation to achieve agreement and commitments as soon as possible regarding implementation of the bath house and special events structure projects. This effort should build upon the relationship established with these groups during evaluation of these projects. The Chamber should continue to play the role of active supporter, in keeping these projects on the top of DRED's and the legislature's list of improvements to be funded. This is an immediate priority.
- o Establish the cedar playground as a priority special project of the Chamber. It is important that the Chamber undertake this immediately to demonstrate to the Legislature and DRED its commitment to improving the State Park site. The Chamber should begin a fund raising drive to finance the materials; and establish a volunteer committee to donate labor to build the playground. The construction of the playground (placement, size, etc.) should be coordinated with DRED within the context of the overall State Park improvement plan (Figures 6 and 7).
- o Work with the Hampton Conservation Commission, DRED and OSP to evaluate the environmental sensitivity of the dunes, the impacts on the dunes of State Park improvements, and determine appropriate wooden boardwalk path configurations and other mitigative measures. The dunes are a vital natural resource of the State Park, and an immediate priority of the overall improvement plan will be to undertake the steps necessary to assure their preservation. The Chamber should initiate efforts to address this priority, drawing upon the environmental expertise of the Conservation Commission, OSP and DRED.

TABLE 2

STATE PARK COST, FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Improvement	Estimated Cost *	DRED Funding **	Other Sources of Funding	Suggested Role for Chamber and Other Groups
Bath House Demolition and New Construction	\$ 255,750	\$ 250,000	Increased State Budget Allocation	Chamber initiate proposal; work jointly with DRED, OSP
Open-air, special events structure	\$ 64,800	0	Increased State Budget Allocation	Legislative delegation to gain approval
Cedar Playground	\$ 10,000-15,000 plus labor	0	Chamber--raised donations, member-volunteered labor	DRED to implement and fund; Chamber and DRED to share scheduling responsibility.
Wooden Paths through Dunes	Unknown (depends on design, configuration)	--	--	Chamber to sponsor project, raise donations, purchase materials, establish committee of member volunteers to donate labor to build facilities
Administration Building	\$ 38,880	0	Increased State Budget Allocation	Chamber to work jointly with DRED, OSP and Conservation Commission in examining needs and determining action
Under-highway Pedestrian Tunnel	\$ 59,650	0	Increased State Budget Allocation	Chamber to work jointly with DRED and OSP in considering the priority of these improvements and recommending action
Miscellaneous (paving, sidewalks, contingency)	\$ 53,200	\$ 37,500	Increased State Budget Allocation	

Source: Arthur D. Little, Inc., and Kimball Chase Company, Inc., 1984.

* Estimates of DRED funding are based on budget allocations for FY 1985-86.

** Cost estimates are preliminary only, to be utilized for the purposes of decision-making and planning.

- o Work jointly with DRED and OSP to determine the priorities associated with other State Park improvements (pedestrian tunnel, administration building, pavement and sidewalks). Within the context of overall improvements, the Chamber should consider the extent to which these improvements enhance the State Park facilities given the costs associated with each.

IV. MARSHES AT HAMPTON BEACH

A. SITE DESCRIPTION

The Marsh Area, indicated as Site C in Figure 1, is the least "tangible" of the three sites and is generally defined to include the marshes in the vicinity of St. Patrick's Church. The land is, for the most part, privately owned in widely ranging parcel sizes -- one acre to 50 and up.

Precedents exist in which marsh areas have been sold for a small amounts or given by the owners to the State or Town (in Rye and North Hampton). The challenge here would be to assemble a parcel of significant size and with access and to determine use that are acceptable to conservationists and environmentalists. Alternatives include nature walks (board walks and educational signage), and nature programs for children. Such programs have been successfully pursued at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on nearby Plum Island, Newfound Lake and in Princeton, Massachusetts (in conjunction with the Audubon Society). The Plum Island nature walk is the closest to Hampton Beach geographically. However, the vastness of this reserve combined with a location more "remote" from retail and residential facilities distinguish Parker River from any nature walk that might be established at Hampton Beach.

Potential problems with "development" of this site include: assembling a series of contiguous parcels (by purchase, or through use of easements, or as gifts) so that a meaningful nature walk can be assembled; dealing with the presence of insects at low tide, dusk, and potentially at other times; establishing a program that is acceptable to adjacent home owners who have been accustomed to a pristine view. Ownership is a serious constraint. The area that is identified as a possible site for a nature walk is commonly referred to as "Spring Marsh." Twenty-three owners were listed under Spring Marsh, including the Audubon Society, the State of New Hampshire, and the Town of Hampton. The remainder were private individuals, each with lots assessed at about \$100. However, there are presently no owners of record for the western-most portion of the marshes under consideration. Ownership records do not list size of plots. Ownership boundaries have been non-existent for many years, so that although the owners may be known, the boundaries of their land almost certainly are not. This uncertainty stems from the land having been passed through generations of families over the past 300 years.

Nature walk approval at the Hampton Beach marsh area must be provided by U.S. Corps of Engineers and the State Wetlands Board. Key elements of the wetlands guidelines of the State of New Hampshire Wetlands

Board include recommendations on materials, structural design, height of structures over marshes. (For additional details, vendors are referred to Sections Wt. 606.13 and Wt. 607.01 of the New Hampshire Wetlands regulations.)

B. RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

Two alternative improvements should be put forth by the Chamber to provide a means for nature-oriented recognition and use of the marsh areas indicated as Site C in Figure 1.

- o Construction of a nature viewing platform. Under this alternative a viewing platform would be constructed on the town-owned property adjacent to the marsh at the end of Island Path or on the church-owned property adjacent to the marsh on the north side of Church Street. At this platform, information and educational materials could be displayed describing the wildlife habitat of the marshes and illustrating the environmental relationships between rivers and oceans. The advantage of this alternative is that at \$30,000 to \$50,000, it is lower in estimated cost than a boardwalk. In addition, the complex land ownership of the marsh would not be a constraint.

- o Construction of a boardwalk nature trail through the Marshes. Under this alternative, an elevated boardwalk would be constructed through the marsh as a nature trail. Signage would be established along the trail to convey the type of information noted with the first alternative, however in this case, real examples of natural wildlife, habitats, and river ocean relationships could be demonstrated. This alternative would go considerably further than the first as an educational and nature experience, however, it is more costly and requires establishing access rights as to privately owned land. Based on the construction guidelines followed at other similar nature walks and likely to be required here, this alternative is estimated to cost \$199,000 for a five-foot wide, quarter mile path with benches, signage and bike rack.

Either of these alternatives will serve to enhance the recreational environment at Hampton Beach, establishing an alternative activity for those who have "had enough" of the beach or seek variety. In addition, it will be an important opportunity to achieve a recognition among visitors of Hampton's natural environment -- its most important resource. Finally, once established, this nature trail or platform can be a "natural laboratory" for local school children, as the destination of science class field trips in the spring and fall.

C. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Hampton Beach Area Chamber should put forth these recommendations for consideration by the Hampton Conservation Commission. Specifically, as summarized in Table 3, the Chamber should take the initiative to work on a regular basis with the Conservation Commission to evaluate the alternative improvements. Both groups should look to OSP and DRED for assistance in environmental and other technical considerations.

The Chamber should provide active support to the Conservation Commission in implementing the desired alternative by establishing a special committee dedicated to the project. This committee should provide active support in fundraising. As in the case of the playground at the State Park, it may be cost effective for the Conservation Commission to purchase materials and solicit volunteer labor for construction. (This has been a successful approach by other communities in building nature walks.) If this approach is taken, the Chamber Committee should be encouraged to volunteer labor. Efforts by the Chamber to actively support this project will go a long way towards building an effective partnership between the Chamber and the Conservation Commission, which will be important in the pursuit of other enhancement projects at Hampton Beach.

TABLE 3

MARSH AREA COST, FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

<u>Alternative Improvement</u>	<u>Estimate Cost *</u>	<u>Possible Funding Source</u>	<u>Suggested Role for Chamber and Other Groups</u>
Nature Viewing Platform	\$ 30,000	Conservation Commissioner Fund Raising Drive assisted by Chamber	Chamber to initiate proposals, offer to work with Conservation in determining most appropriate alternative and in implementation
Raised Boardwalk Nature Trail	\$ 199,000		

Source: Arthur D. Little, Inc., and Kimball Chase Company, Inc., 1984.

* Cost estimates are preliminary only, to be utilized for the purposes of decision-making and planning.

