



# The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21- 24, 2003

# Table of Contents

Introduction..... Page 3

The Sapelo Principles.....Page 4

What is a Charrette?.....Page 5

Objectives.....Page 6 - 7

Circulation and Conceptual Master Plan.....Page 8 - 10

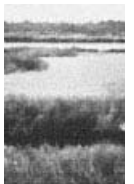
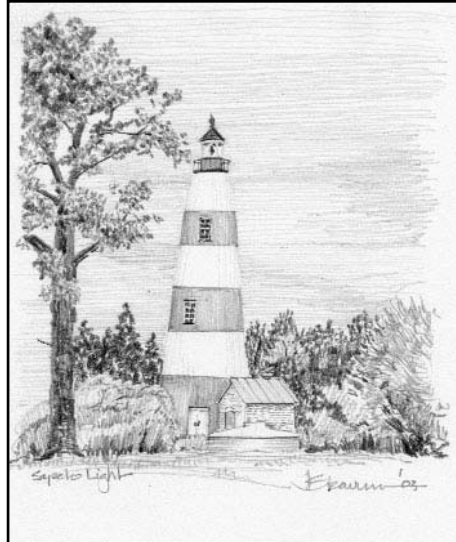
What Will the Changes Look Like?.....Page 11

Architecture.....Page 12 - 17

Environment.....Page 18 - 21

Future Directions.....Page 22

Acknowledgements.....Page 23





University of Georgia  
College of Environment and Design  
School of Environmental Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation

#### **UGA Faculty and Staff**

Pratt Cassity - Director Public Service and Outreach  
Brian LaHaie - Professor of Landscape Architecture  
Jennifer Lewis - Local Government Coordinator CCDP

#### **UGA Campus Architects**

Paul Cassity - Architect  
Kevin Kirsche - Landscape Architect  
Scott Messer - Historic Preservation Planner

#### **Graduate Students**

Vanessa Bernstein - 3rd year MLA, Tybee Island, Georgia  
Jessica Buesching - 3rd year MLA, Columbus, Ohio  
Janet Coleman - 2nd year MLA, Fayetteville, Arkansas  
Jason Ellerbee - 2nd year MHP, Charleston, South Carolina  
Monica Hayden - 2nd year MHP, Santiago, Chile  
Liz James - 2nd year MHP, Fayetteville, Arkansas  
Melissa Knauer - 3rd year MLA, Washington, DC  
Yoon Lee - 3rd year MLA, Seoul, South Korea  
Joy Long - 3rd year MLA, Sugar Loaf, New York  
Steve Mitchell - 3rd year MLA, State College, Pennsylvania  
Evan Thibeault - 3rd year MLA, St. Louis, Missouri

# Introduction

Two graduate design studios, one in landscape architecture and the other historic preservation, joined forces to tackle preliminary master planning issues associated with the Marine Institute at Sapelo Island. The group focused primarily on the academic quad, which was formerly the agricultural, residential, office and mechanical complex built by R.J. Reynolds, Jr. in the early 20th Century. The complex was needed to keep the functions of the Island running smoothly. The Marine Institute still provides that function but in scientific and ecological terms now. The buildings were designed by August Constantine and, together with the famous Turkey Fountain designed by Fritz Zimmer, provide a beautiful canvas on which to conserve, enhance and perpetuate Sapelo's handsome legacy.

Our task was easy when given the directive to work in paradise.

Our work is conceptual and our ideas are malleable. This work is a first step. Now the journey begins.

## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



# The Sapelo Principles

*Primum non nocere*

First, Do No Harm

## 1. Development & maintenance must be prudent and reasonable.

- ☐ Increase functionality
- ☐ Use existing structures
- ☐ Employ green building practices

## 2. Maintenance goals and objectives must be better defined.

- ☐ Conserve architecture
- ☐ Conserve the environment.
- ☐ Maintain sense of place (sense of place defined by existing features, including architecture, landscapes, and ecology)
- ☐ New construction should be compatible with existing features



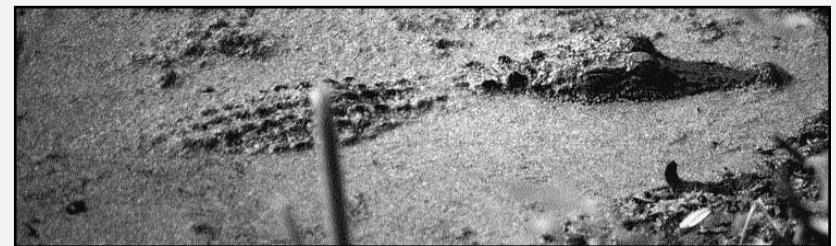
*Today there is no pull, no press of the clock on Sapelo. In this quiet heartfelt place it seems even the ravagers of time have laid down their arms, and walked away in peace.*  
from *Sapelo Sojourn* by Sandy Jones

## 3. Improve the experience for visitors and residents alike.

- ☐ Improved sense of arrival
- ☐ Clarified circulation and transportation
- ☐ Consistent sign standards

## 4. Always reinforce academics & collaboration.

- ☐ Encourage further student participation on site
- ☐ Schedule ongoing design charrettes, studios and visual assessments for the entire Island



The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



# What is a Charrette? Why does Sapelo need one?



The French word, *Charrette* means "cart" and is often used to describe the final, intense work effort expended by art and architecture students to meet a project deadline. This use of the term is said to originate from the École des Beaux Arts in Paris during the 19th Century, where proctors circulated a cart, or *charrette*, to collect final drawings while students frantically put finishing touches on their work.

Today the term has come to describe an intense creative period that is combined with public workshops and articulated community goals. The charrette is a collaborative planning process that harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a plan. It is an insiders view expressed visually by outside experts.

It has been called a creative "tornado in reverse." The process begins with a multitude of information scattered about and, with a flurry of activity, concludes in a coherent vision for a real place.



Sapelo Island's UGA Marine Institute needs design assistance and preservation planning concepts. Who better to provide that than the College of Environment and Design? A charrette experience was born.

## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



# Objectives

## Circulation

- ☐ Benefit the core users of UGAMI while accommodating locals/visitors/island administrative staff
- ☐ Get rid of clutter
- ☐ Diminish eyesores and increase gateway opportunities
- ☐ Decrease amount of blacktop surfaces
- ☐ Better utilize "dead space" for consolidation of materials and facilities
- ☐ Increase "campus feel" (defined linear paths within quad, signage)
- ☐ Encourage use of space between apartments and old dorm for recreational use
- ☐ Reduce the number of vehicles to those that are purely essential
- ☐ Establish a primary vehicular entrance
- ☐ Establish a formal entry

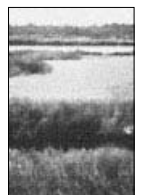


## Historic Preservation

- ☐ Conserve remaining tile roofs
- ☐ Perpetuate traditional construction techniques
- ☐ Better utilize existing buildings for UGAMI needs
- ☐ Return UGAMI to 1950's and 60's concept of natural outdoor conference facility
- ☐ Phase out temporary buildings from the last 25 years
- ☐ Restore tennis courts and replace fencing with black vinyl coated chain link

## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003





## Development

- ☐ Make safety a priority and respond to needs for emergency care access and environmental education (snake bites/poison ivy/rip tide....)
- ☐ Provide detached residential replacements for mobile homes
- ☐ Improve overall physical appearance of the island, beginning with UGAMI
- ☐ Better integrate resources at UGA Athens in Sapelo programs (adult education/ecology/tourism/environmental design....)
- ☐ Interpret "zones" which are defined by natural landscape (smells, discoveries made when rounding corners)
- ☐ Continue to coordinate DNR's visitor management plan with UGAMI and Hog Hammock
- ☐ Phase improvements to better utilize labor and budgets
- ☐ Respect layers of history - palimpsest
- ☐ Explore alternative transportation options (bikes/hybrids/etc...)

## Environment

- ☐ Develop policy for limiting or perpetuating invasive ornamental and exotic species that were used historically (bamboo, wisteria, etc.)
- ☐ A mowing management plan should decrease acres mowed and frequency
- ☐ Identify and use "deer resistant" plants
- ☐ Encourage friendly co-existence among all living things on the island
- ☐ Practice eco-friendly initiatives, especially relating to water and energy
- ☐ Protect the night sky
- ☐ Screen and/or relocate propane tanks
- ☐ Create a connection to the water garden
- ☐ Do not interrupt views to the marsh
- ☐ Relate buildings and trees through design (framed views)

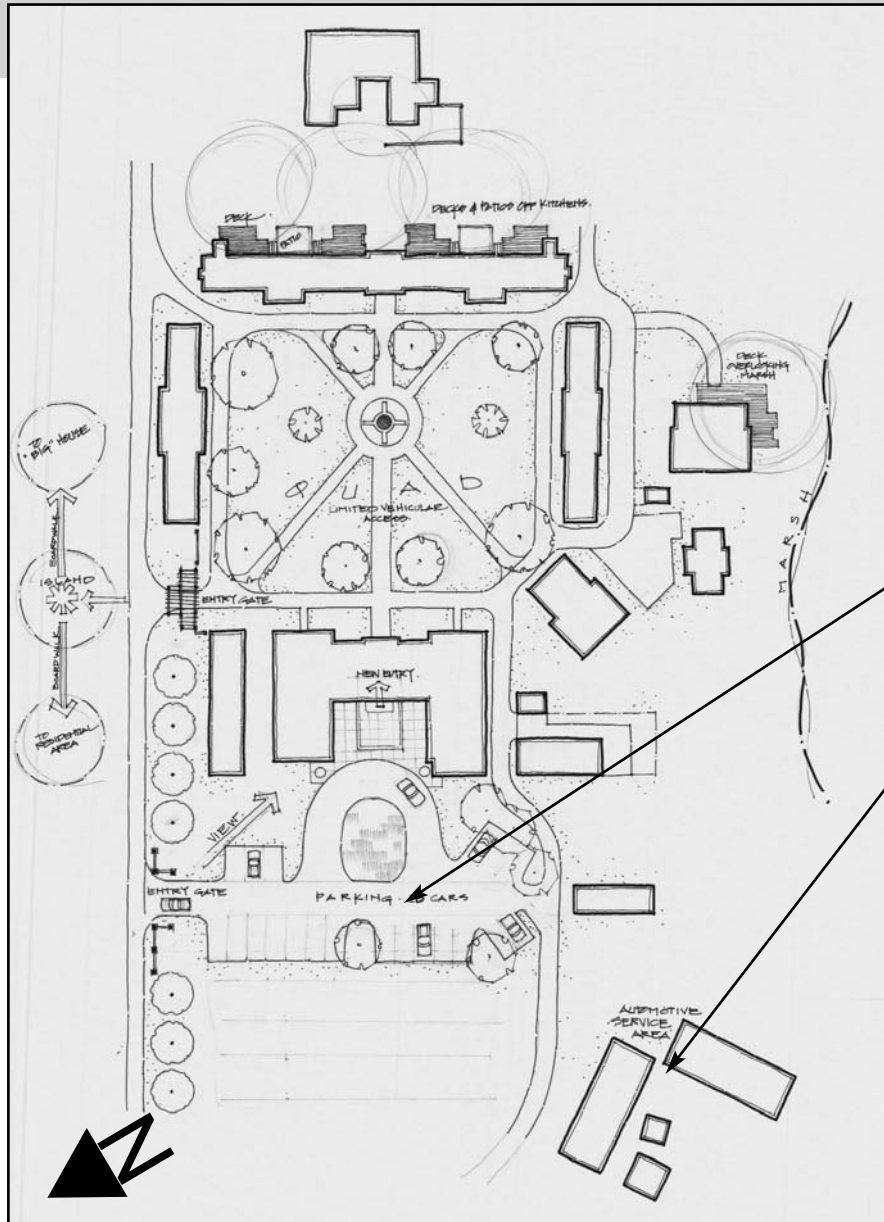


## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



# Circulation and Conceptual Master Plan



## General

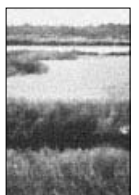
*These are 'first-glance' observations and studies taken from November 21-24, 2003. We encourage that many of these recommendations should be explored and implemented over time. We consider this the first step of many.*

## Vehicles

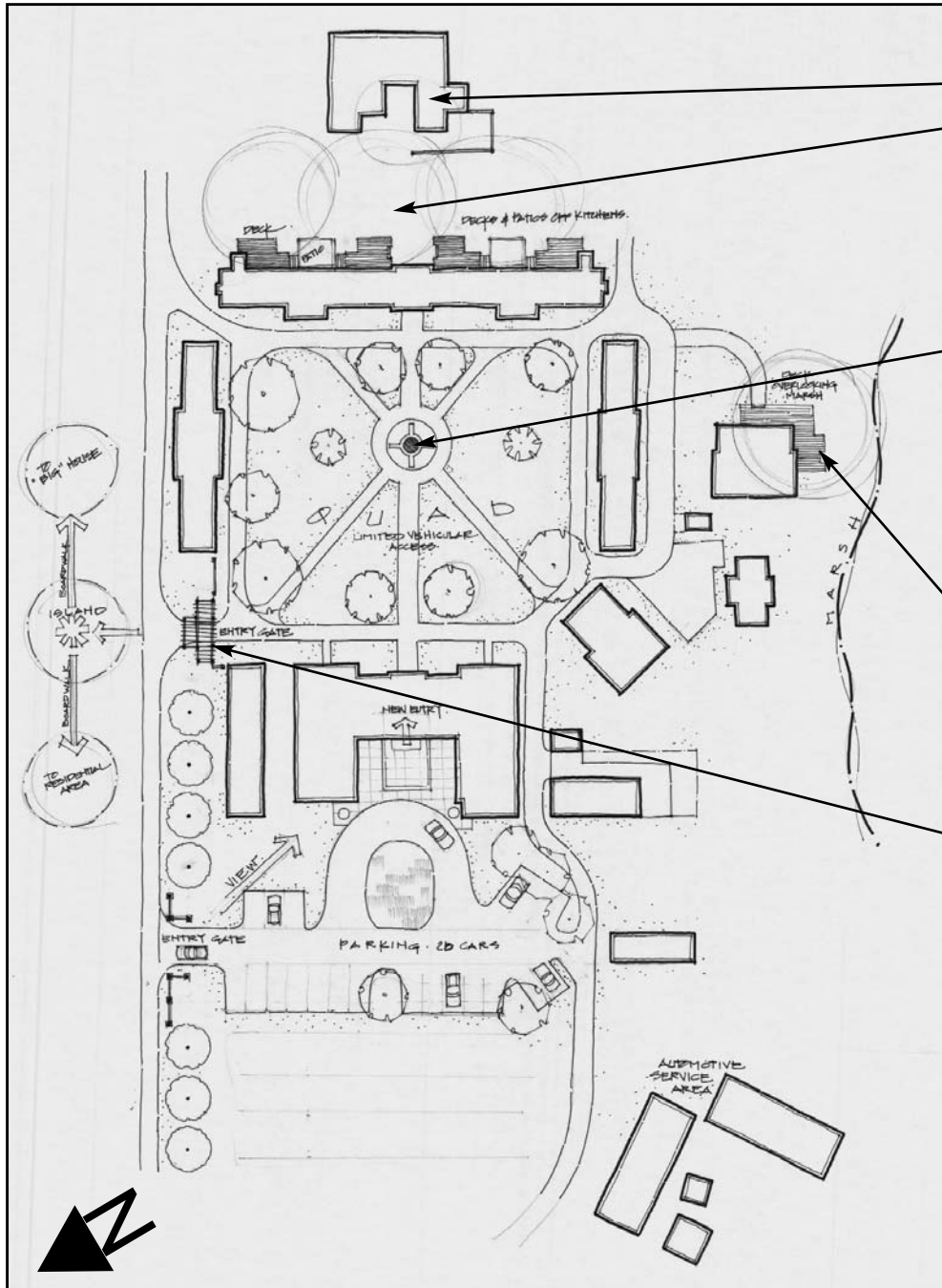
- ▣ Park and store all vehicles in a new parking area northwest of Dairy Barn
- ▣ Reduce fleet to only the ESSENTIAL and operational vehicles (15-20)
- ▣ Consolidate all auto repair to one area that is located adjacent to the 'Main Campus'
- ▣ Limit vehicular traffic in Center Quad to drop-off/pick-up/loading ONLY-parking should be in newly-established parking area
- ▣ Vehicles should never be parked close to or under trees
- ▣ Consider use of alternative transportation (i.e. electric/low-impact/hybrid vehicles, bicycles)

The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003







## Main campus (including Center Quad)

- ▣ Rehabilitate old dormitory building
- ▣ Create gathering area between apartments and rehabilitated dormitory building with additional patio and grilling space. Consider creating gathering areas off the back doors and kitchens of the apartment building
- ▣ Use native plants resistant to deer around Center Quad and building surroundings
- ▣ Rehabilitate turkey fountain
- ▣ Walkway around edge of Center Quad green should be 8'-10' wide. Paths crossing the green should be between 6'-8' wide
- ▣ Investigate alternative materials for new and existing pathways in Center Quad and new parking area (crushed shells or possibly a porous concrete)
- ▣ Remove dead tree in Center Quad. Additional trees should help anchor corners, frame views of buildings
- ▣ Create gathering area around rehabilitated old power building, possibly including a shaded area and with a view to the marsh
- ▣ Provide directional signage as necessary, in keeping with architectural and natural materials
- ▣ Create 'gateway' feature as primary pedestrian entrance, helping to establish a strong 'sense of identity' for the campus
- ▣ Across from 'gateway' provide boardwalk onto center island of water garden. Additional boardwalk from center island to residential area should be considered.
- ▣ Paths inside Center Quad should be linear, but paths outside Quad should be sinuous

The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
 University Architects  
 College of Environment and Design  
 Center for Community Design and Preservation  
 November 21 - 24, 2003





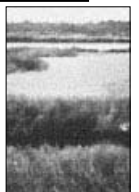
## Approach to Main Campus

- ☐ Create sense of arrival with oak trees on right side of road and entrance signage
- ☐ The primary vehicular entrance (leading to the parking lot) should be established; this includes the establishment of a formal entry sequence of spaces leading up to the dairy barn
- ☐ Live oaks should be spaced to frame view of barn and screen stored/parked vehicles

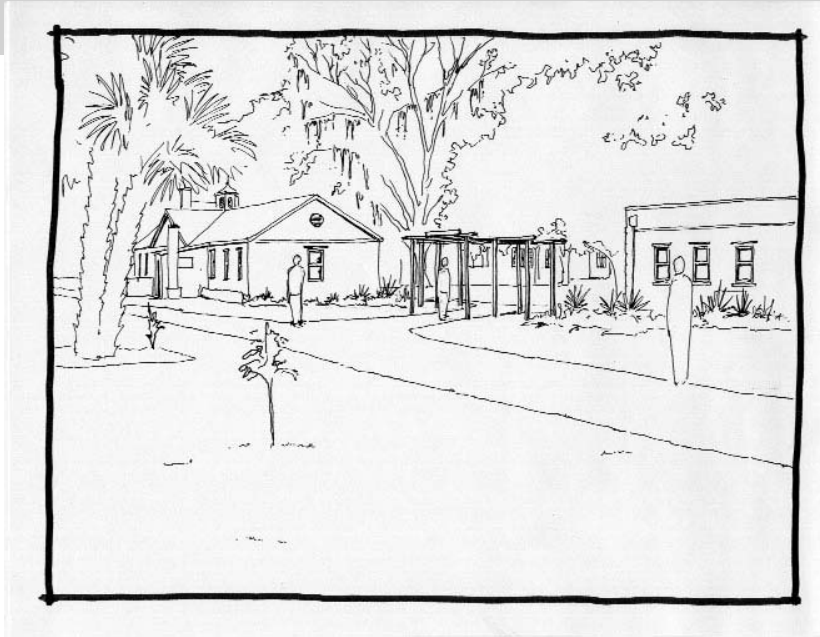


## The Sapelo Island Charrette

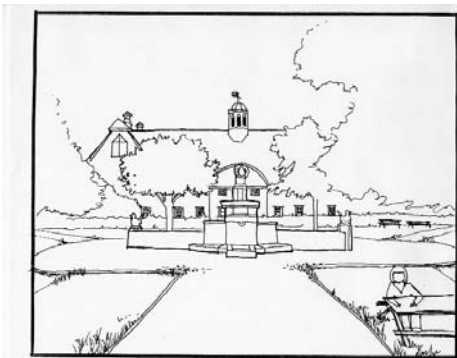
University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



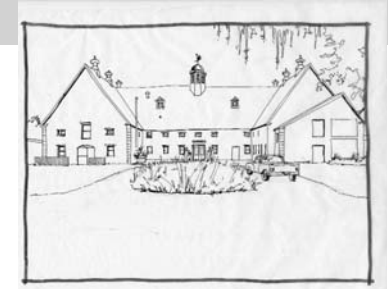
# What Will the Changes Look Like?



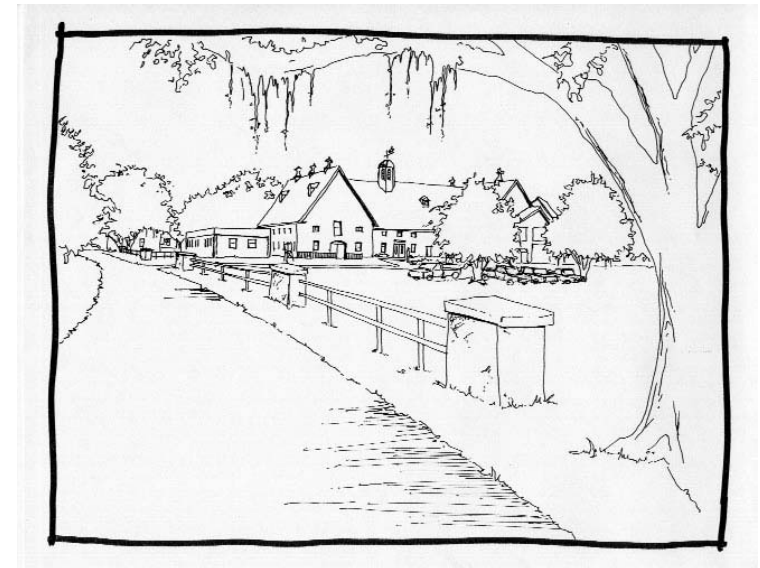
A new pedestrian entry pergola or arbor better defines a visitor's entrance into the quad.



A restored fountain and strong horizontal axis gives the academic quad a renewed sense of balance.



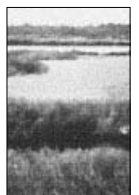
An enhanced entrance from the new parking area gives a new fresh face to UGAMI.



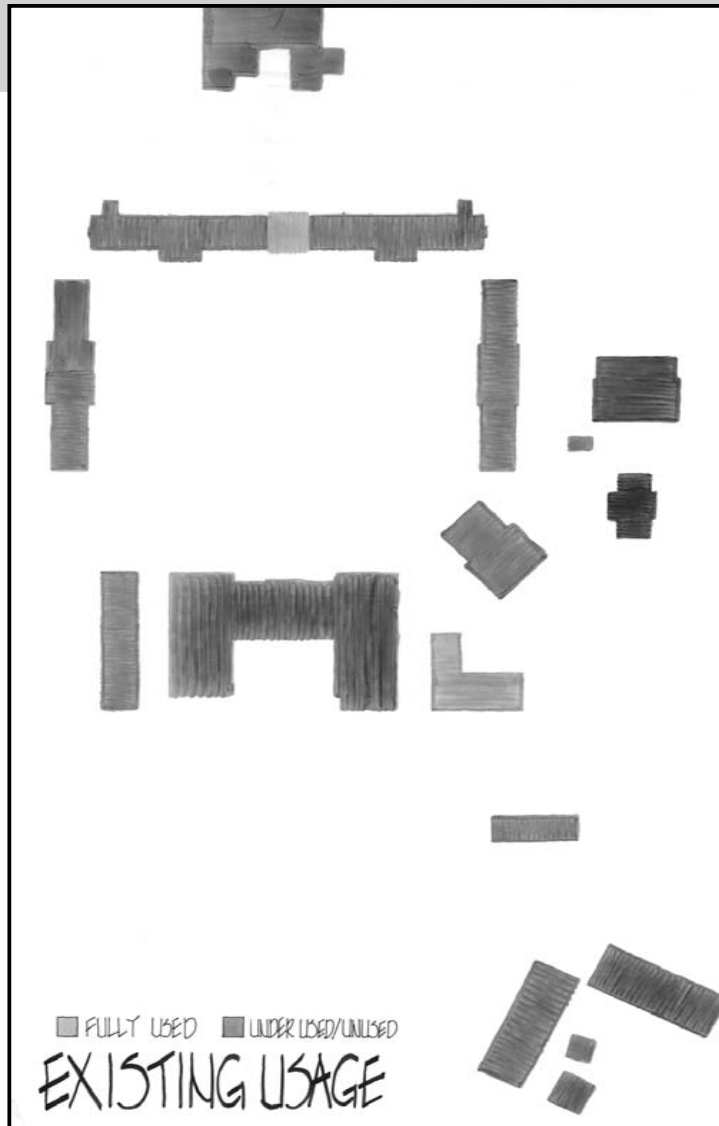
The new parking area can be defined with simple vernacular fencing to direct and contain vehicular traffic.

The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



# Architecture



## Existing Use of Buildings

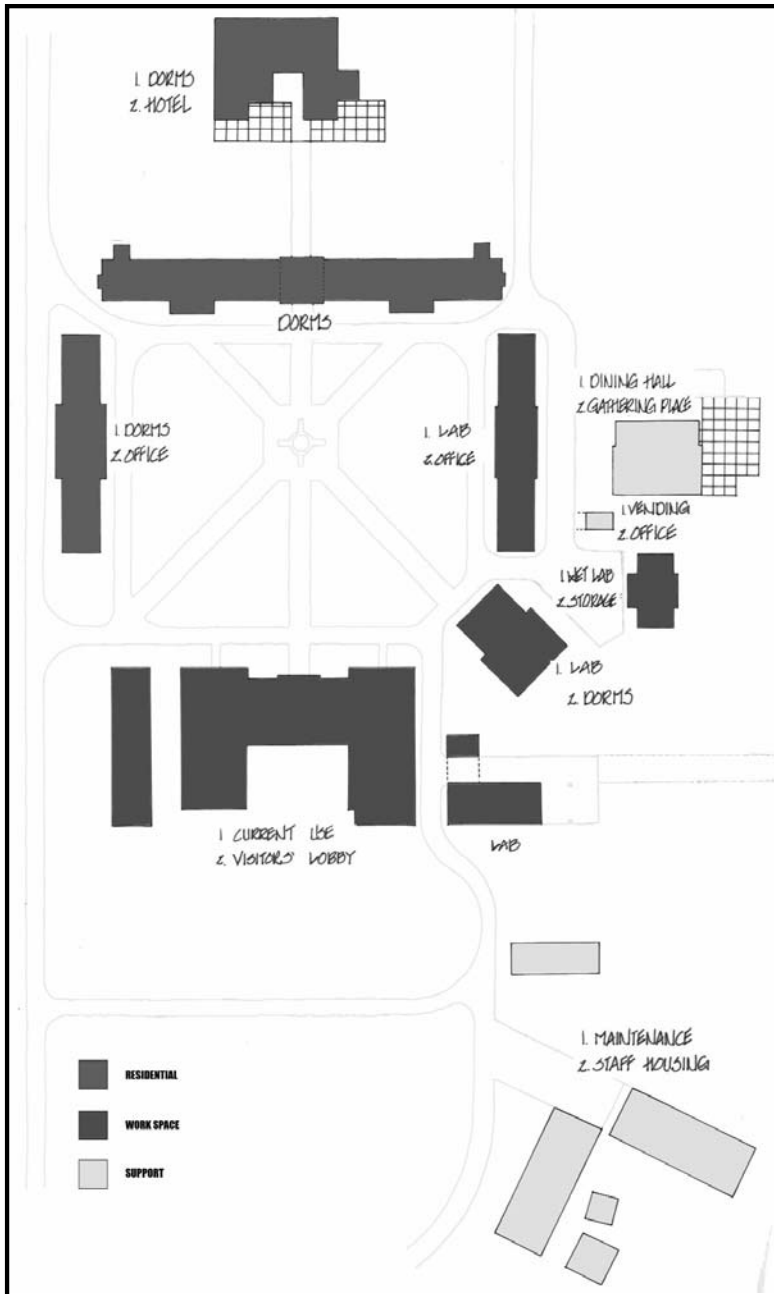
In preparing for a property renovation, the first step is to evaluate the current use of the buildings. Often, facilities are found to be underused or misused and "new" space can be found without new construction. The UGAMI campus is no exception to this rule.

The charrette team took a complete inventory of the buildings on the main campus and evaluated each for historic use and current use. Ultimately, each facility was judged as either "fully utilized" or "underutilized." A map of this breakdown is shown in the illustration.

The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003





# Proposed Use for Buildings

With this information in hand, the team set to the task of determining the ideal use for each building, focusing on those that are currently underused and taking into consideration UGAMI's space needs. Careful attention was paid to circulation patterns and logical groupings by use type. The result is shown in the drawing.

To improve clarity and simplify planning, the buildings are divided into three use types: residential, work space, and support facilities. The residential component includes both staff and visitor housing, work space includes scientific and office facilities, and the support facilities include leisure and dining areas, storage and mechanical/repair structures.

The breakdown the team came up with is a logical arrangement, but it will benefit from evaluation by the end users: the UGAMI staff. Some buildings could be used in more than one capacity or be changed altogether. Primary uses are labeled "1" and alternatives are labeled "2".

## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
 University Architects  
 College of Environment and Design  
 Center for Community Design and Preservation  
 November 21 - 24, 2003





The underutilized end buildings need to be rehabilitated to reflect large door openings. Plate glass with an interior hallway can achieve sensitive conversion for additional dormitory space or office space.



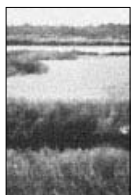
Inappropriate infill of openings has compromised the architectural integrity of the historic carriage buildings

The former power house can easily be transformed into a new dining hall and meeting spaces.



## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
 University Architects  
 College of Environment and Design  
 Center for Community Design and Preservation  
 November 21 - 24, 2003



# Building Reuse Strategy for Old Dormitory



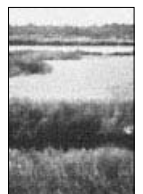
ALTERNATIVE USES	Degree of intervention	Benefits	Drawbacks
Continued use as dormitory space without changing building components	<b>Low</b> Shore-up failing structural system and devise new roof system	Original function, easy and true interpretation	Expense
Extension and enhancement of (for profit) Reynolds Mansion facility, retain many significant historic/architectural features	<b>High</b> Retention of original historic fabric	Income stream from rentals can pay for building maintenance, and guesthouse space can be shared as dormitory space	Does not advance the academic mission of UGAMI
Remodel interior to house new dormitories	<b>Medium</b> Maintain exterior "shell," gut and re-work inside	Exterior architectural integrity remains	Complete loss of interior significant features

Continued on next page ...



## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003

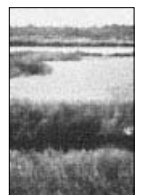


<b>ALTERNATIVE USES</b>	<b>Degree of Intervention</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Drawbacks</b>
Demolish and reconstruct based on original plans	<b>Very High</b> Reconstruction enables complete story being told	Site interpretation remains clear and straightforward	Expense, and difficulty in finding craftsmen and materials
Construct compatible new structure on original footprint, with massing, scale and materials related to the site's context	<b>Very High</b> No historic fabric is retained, original building's history lost and only feature remaining is the building's footprint	No loss of visual character	Expense and complete loss of historic fabric
Demolish existing structure, no replacement, moving dormitory function to another location on site	<b>Extremely High</b> No historic character is retained	New contemporary dormitory space	Expense, new ground disturbance and abandoned infrastructure of original site



## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003





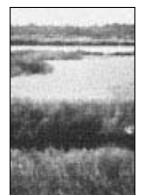
# Advocacy Ideas for Retention of Historic Dormitory

- ▣ The dormitory predates the UGAMI complex and tells a unique story about the development of the Island. It plays an important role in the total interpretation of the district, and its loss would severely compromise an accurate and authentic experience for visitors.
- ▣ The possibility of creating a space that can be shared by both the UGAMI and the Reynolds Mansion is a positive aspect emphasizing collaboration between DNR and UGA, and can serve as an income generating mechanism to help defray rehab and maintenance costs.
- ▣ The effort to save the dormitory can coalesce supporters for the retention and restoration or rehabilitation of the structure, and other historic structures on the island.
- ▣ Get a "second opinion" to reassess the numbers and strategy with a more sensitive rehabilitation that does not involve the "gutting" of the historic building.
- ▣ A partnership with DNR (and others) to save the building will further a positive interaction between state agencies, no matter the cost, based on the structure's historic significance, not bare budget considerations.
- ▣ The renewed preservation fervor for the old dormitory can undergird a fundraising strategy to seek outside investment for the building's continued existence.



The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



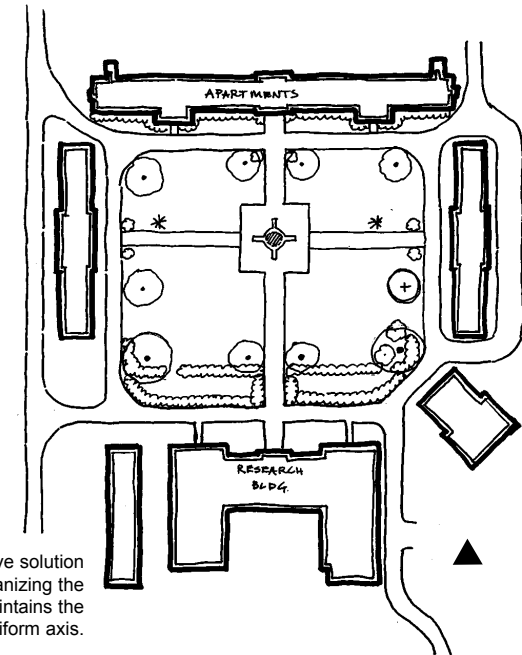
# Environment

## Landscape Management Recommendations

### Academic Quad

The quad should serve as an outdoor gathering space for researchers. The strong central axis directs pedestrians across the quad and unites the architectural units through a symmetrical planting design. The space possesses an appropriate scale for meeting informally as well as walking easily from building to building.

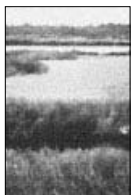
- ▣ **Provide shade**
  - Plant two live oaks on southern side to complete symmetry of shade trees within the quad
  - Underplant live oaks for future replacement of older trees
- ▣ **Supply movable furniture**
- ▣ **Decrease vehicular presence**
- ▣ **Maintain current axis**
- ▣ **Define edges of quad with hedge material between the main house and the academic quad.**



This alternative solution for reorganizing the quad maintains the cruciform axis.

The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



## Water Garden

The water garden represents a historically significant landscape designed by Howard Coffin in 1923. It is an extension of the west axis from the Reynolds Mansion that provides a connection between the main house and the academic quad. Given the historic value and the linkage between the architectural features, restoration is recommended.

- ▣ Repair existing bridges (2)
- ▣ Clear path of debris and overgrown vegetation
- ▣ Move picnic table from central walkway
- ▣ Repair arbor and expose paving surface
- ▣ Remove vegetation so views of quad are visible
- ▣ Add bridge to connect to adjoining island with arbor to UGAMI quad
- ▣ Adjoin one of the existing bridged islands to another pond island not currently accessible
- ▣ Leave existing bamboo except at bridge entrance
- ▣ Replace and create additional educational and safety signage
- ▣ Address aquatic vegetation through professional consultation
  - Duckweed (*Lemna minor*)
  - Dollar weed (*Rhynchosia reniformis*)
  - Cattails (*Carex typhina*)



Pergola



Cattails

## Live Oak Grove

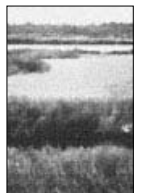
The live oak grove is an integral cultural landscape feature of the Reynolds Mansion estate. The grove requires routine maintenance to retain its aesthetic and historical appearance.

- ▣ Preserve views to and from mansion, UGAMI, dormitory and water garden
- ▣ Regular mowing maintenance within designated perimeter
- ▣ Remove deadfall within perimeter boundary
- ▣ Remove selected plant species within perimeter boundary, including, but not limited to:
  - Cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*)
  - Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)
  - Bamboo (*Bambusa spp.*)
  - Grape vine (*Vitis spp.*)
- ▣ Continue to mow in areas outside perimeter that are currently maintained, but not as often as within perimeter boundary. Deadfall and native species such as cabbage palm and yaupon holly may remain
- ▣ Begin live oak replanting with deer cages
- ▣ Maintain vegetative swale along roadside
- ▣ Consult with professional arborist and urban forester



### The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



## Dormitory / Tennis Court

- ☐ The dormitory and tennis court are part of the historic architectural stock and should be maintained.
- ☐ Regular mowing maintenance around dormitory and tennis court, including removal of deadfall and selected plant species
- ☐ Continue to mow area between dormitory and apartment buildings



Remains of the Tennis Court

## Orchard / Allée

The orchard and allée represent historical landscape features built by Howard Coffin. The orchard is currently in poor condition with many snags and a majority of trees missing. The allée is no longer in existence.

- ☐ Discontinue mowing in the orchard area to allow natural succession
- ☐ Annually mow within the allée area with a regularly mowed pathway to the greenhouse complex



Historic cypress and palms



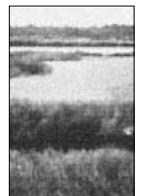
Remains of the Orchard



Former Allée

## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003

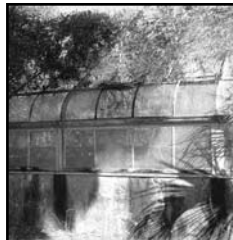


## Greenhouse Complex / Rock Garden

The greenhouse complex is a historically significant complex built by Howard Coffin in the 1920s. There may be a potential to restore this complex through funds provided by private garden clubs.



Interior of Greenhouse



Exterior view



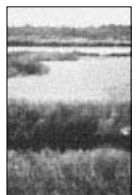
- ☐ The landscape leading to the complex should be maintained and possibly restored when the future of the greenhouses is determined (i.e. re-creation of the allée and designed plantings surrounding greenhouses). If additional funding were secured, restoration of the rock garden would be recommended.
- ☐ Maintain mow schedule around greenhouse complex.

### Large mowed grass areas beyond quad

- ☐ There are several large areas currently being mowed that may not require routine maintenance depending on the area's function. For example, these areas could be mowed less often or allowed to go into natural succession. Assessment of the current mowing regime is recommended.

## The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003





# Future Directions

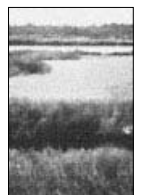
- ▣ Old Dormitory solution
- ▣ Greenhouse complex feasibility study, charrette and reuse plan
- ▣ What to do with agricultural fields?
- ▣ Creative approach to development and/or new construction with a semi-permanent design/build class similar to Auburn University's Rural Studio studio in central Alabama
- ▣ Restore the turkey fountain
- ▣ Integrate outparcels
- ▣ Restore tennis courts
- ▣ Restore all pools, water gardens and fountains
- ▣ Develop a permanent solution for trailer replacement and removal
- ▣ Design space between apartments and old dormitory
- ▣ Pay attention to the marsh with sensitive linkages and interpretation to campus (acknowledge and enhance)
- ▣ Maintenance of trees (have an arborist assess tree health), support and perpetuate tree replacement program started by DNR



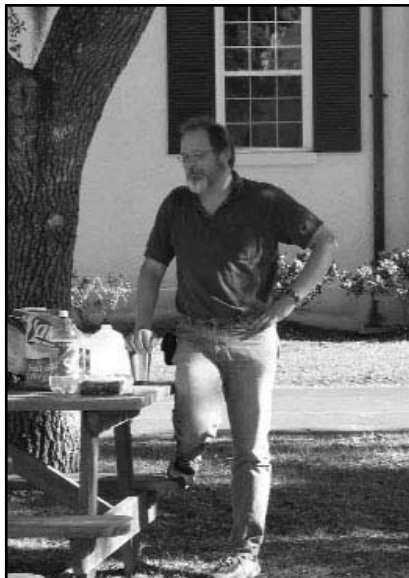
- ▣ UGA MLA thesis, BLA terminal project or Public Service and Outreach project to interpret water garden ("the continents")
- ▣ Expanded property management plan to define sensitive maintenance and green practices for selected historic, cultural and environmental resources
- ▣ Create sense of arrival on the island from the ferry
- ▣ Communication with and between island agencies and groups (DNR, UGAMI, Hog Hammock, UGA Athens departments)
- ▣ Preservation of building exteriors
- ▣ New construction for laboratories and replacement functions for former outdated laboratory space
- ▣ Cooperation with UGA's Art Department to provide artwork (drawings, paintings, photographs and sculpture) for buildings at UGAMI
- ▣ Assessment of permeability and storm water management for roadways and sidewalks

The Sapelo Island Charrette

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003



# Acknowledgements



We are so lucky to have been able to work in a beautiful place with such supportive folks. Jon Garbisch, UGAMI Outreach Director, and Scott Messer, Campus Architects, were terrific allies for us to complete our work quickly with great inspiration. The fine cooking at Lula's in Hog Hammock and the knowledge of DNR's Buddy Sullivan made all of us feel welcome. Paul Cassily and Kevin Kirsche, also from Campus Architects, were equally helpful and made great partners for producing these concepts and ideas.

**UGA Center for Community Design and Preservation**  
**Athens, Georgia**  
**December 2003**

**The Sapelo Island Charrette**

University of Georgia Marine Institute  
University Architects  
College of Environment and Design  
Center for Community Design and Preservation  
November 21 - 24, 2003

