

SAVE THE BAY

allocate open space funds toward the purchase of Gray Craig
The address is:

Middletown Town Council
Town Hall
350 East Main Road
Middletown, RI 02840

March 20, 1989

Dear Save The Bay Member:

Since we wrote to you last month, quite a few Save The Bay members responded to our suggestion to send letters to the Coastal Resources Management Council and the Middletown Planning Board, requesting a careful review of the Gray Craig condominium proposal. As a result, I am pleased to report that the Coastal Resources Management Council has voted to refer the Gray Craig proposal to an ad hoc subcommittee. (The subcommittee's first meeting date has not yet been set.) Moreover, Middletown Town Planner Charlie Silvia has told Barry Murphy of the Norman Bird Sanctuary that he has been deluged with letters on Gray Craig, and will recommend to the Planning Board that the Board conduct a new preliminary review of the proposal. Unfortunately, we have heard that despite this recommendation, the Planning Board is likely to proceed with a final review when the Board next takes up the Gray Craig application.

We are writing now not only to bring you this news, but to suggest the next steps in the effort to preserve the open space character of Gray Craig. As mentioned in Save The Bay's earlier letter, a group led by the Norman Bird Sanctuary is negotiating with the developer for the purchase of an open space buffer zone that would separate Nelson's Pond and the bird sanctuary from a more limited condominium development, centered around the existing Gray Craig buildings. The two sides have met and drawn boundaries for the proposed buffer zone. Both sides are now having appraisals done on the value of the buffer zone, and will meet again in several weeks.

If and when the two sides reach agreement on a purchase price, funding for the purchase will have to be secured. Two foundations can provide some funding, and the state is likely to assist in the purchase as well, if the town of Middletown makes a matching commitment toward the purchase. Save The Bay understands that the town presently has \$884,000 in unallocated funds restricted for the purchase of open space in Middletown. Our suggestion is this: write to the Middletown Town Council to request that the town