

Section 2: Summary of Issues and Recommendations

Coastal Issues

1. Encroachment of man-made uses into environmentally sensitive coastal resource areas.
2. Degraded water quality of the Hammonasset, Indian and Hammock Rivers and the Inner Harbor.
3. Small shellfish populations.
4. Degraded tidal wetlands.
5. Degraded groundwater quality in regards to the impacts of septic systems and non-point sources.
6. Poor physical access to the coast through State or Municipally owned properties and through the coastal site plan review process.
7. Poor visual access to the coast.
8. Over-development of the harbor area while needing to provide for continued economic growth.
9. Lack of maintenance of historic and architecturally significant buildings.
10. Poor economic vitality of the Central Business District.
11. Lack of a balanced, developed shorefront.
12. Lack of strict regulations that result in the loss of property from natural disasters.
13. Lack of public awareness that results in the loss of property from natural disasters.
14. Lack of maintenance plans that result in the loss of property from natural disasters.
15. Impassible roadways during 100-year storm events.
16. Lack of an open space plan that provides for the acquisition of specific parcels for open space.
17. Encroachment into the 50' Tidal Wetlands Buffer.

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Proposed Revisions to the Clinton Plan of Conservation and Development

Coastal Goals and Policies

The coastal goals and policies established by the Connecticut Coastal Management Act are included by reference and municipal coastal policies are as follows:

Municipal Goals and Policies

1. Avoid and discourage non-essential encroachment of man-made uses into environmentally sensitive coastal resource areas.
 - a. Encourage owners of sensitive resource areas to donate land in fee-simple or to dedicate conservation easements to the Town of Clinton.
 - b. Discourage development immediately adjacent to tidal wetlands and other sensitive coastal resources through the development of buffers.
 - c. Encourage the use of tax abatement provisions to lessen economic pressures on property owners for development of sensitive lands.

2. Improve water quality in the Town's rivers and harbors.
 - a. Upgrade water quality in the Indian and Hammock Rivers to SA classification.
 - b. Establish a sewer minimization program that will discourage or prohibit development in wetlands and other areas where on-site sewage disposal is inappropriate. The program should require upgrading existing inadequate systems to current standards and address the impacts of septic systems and non-point sources to improve groundwater quality.
 - c. Reduce erosion and sedimentation through appropriate regulatory controls such as the establishment of vegetative buffers between development and wetlands and watercourses, provision of adequate erosion and sedimentation control measures as part of any development, and monitoring of construction activities.
 - d. Require appropriate disposal of all waters from boats using Clinton Harbor.
 - e. Require the incorporation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) for stormwater treatment in all development proposals.

3. Renew the shellfish population and concentration areas.

4. Maintain and improve the quality of existing tidal wetlands and provide rehabilitation and restoration of degraded tidal wetlands.

5. Increase physical access to the coast.
 - a. Identify areas appropriate for public access.
 - b. Encourage development of a long-term program of public acquisition of selected waterfront and wetland areas.
 - c. Develop public walkways along portions of the Hammonasset, Indian and Hammock Rivers.
 - d. Improve vehicular traffic flow to and from the harbor by improving street conditions on existing access roads.

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6. Increase visual access to the coast.
7. Continue periodic maintenance dredging of the existing Federal Navigation Channel.
8. Restrict, through appropriate regulatory measures, the expansion of marinas and boats using the harbor to a level that will not overtax land support facilities, including existing transportation routes.
9. Discourage new, non-water dependent uses along the Hammonasset, Indian and Hammock Rivers and Clinton Harbor.
10. Reduce the density of new developments within the Coastal Area.

Land Use Changes

1. Indicate undeveloped portions of Cedar Island as proposed open space on the Future Land Use Plan and the Open Space and Public Facilities Plan.
2. Areas identified in the Sewer Minimization Program as potentially requiring development of a community sewer system shown on the Open Space and Public Facilities Plan.
3. A long-term plan to acquire the additional beach and park areas shown on the Open Space and Public Facilities Plan should be prepared. This plan should indicate priorities and method of acquisition.
4. The two town-owned beaches should be retained in their present use.
5. Coastal high hazard areas (V-zones) as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Clinton, should be maintained as open space and developed areas should be monitored and/or controlled to reduce losses of personal property and to ensure the safety of all occupants in this area.
6. The number of permitted slips/moorings in the harbor should be limited to between 1,400 and 1,700 provided that water quality in the harbor is maintained or improved.
7. Traffic movement on Main Street through the Central Business District should be improved by coordinating signal lights, eliminating or restricting on-street parking and providing addition exclusive turning lanes.
8. Undeveloped parcels greater than ten acres should be zoned to reduce the density of development.

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Proposed Changes to Zoning Regulations

1. Establish provisions that permit flexibility in setback and area coverage requirements for all waterfront properties to allow the construction and reconstruction of permitted structures in such an orientation and position that they will have the least adverse impact on visual access to the waterfront while also not adversely impacting sensitive coastal resources.
2. Require that all slips and moorings for boats in Clinton Harbor must have adequate pump-out facilities available for waste discharge.
3. Revise the Flood Hazard Zone section of the Regulations to remove non-applicable portions and add new provisions reflecting current State and Federal requirements. Strengthen minimum requirements to reduce potential risks, promote the health and welfare of the Town's people and reduce losses to property.
4. Revise Regulations to discourage development within 100' of tidal wetlands similar to the language existing for Conservation Subdivisions.
5. Revise zoning designations for any tracts of undeveloped land within the Coastal Boundary Area greater than ten acres.
6. Revise Regulations to discourage the construction of jetties/groins and fences that prevent pedestrian passage below the mean high tide line, and encourage the construction of stairs over existing jetties/groins.
7. Revise Regulations to discourage the construction of fences and/or walls that block the view from the public way of marshes and open water.
8. Develop stricter regulations for construction standards in high hazard areas that enhance the current codes through the Zoning Regulations.

Non-Regulatory Recommendations

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission should prepare an existing land use map (for the entire town). This should be updated at least every two years, and annually if feasible.
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Harbor Management Commission should jointly maintain an up-to-date inventory of slips and moorings and on-shore storage capacity for boats as an aid in future planning efforts.
3. The Town should undertake a program aimed at long-term restoration of all degraded tidal marshes.

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4. The Water Pollution Control Commission should proceed with a Sewer Minimization Program.
5. The Harbor Management Commission should update the Harbor Management Plan.
6. Any future dredging of the channel in Clinton Harbor or the Hammonasset River should be coordinated with the Shellfish Commission at least two years in advance of the time of the proposed dredging.
7. The Shellfish Commission should create a management program for improving the shellfish production in the rivers and harbor.
8. The general public should be made aware of the Regulations pertaining to the areas that are subject to potential natural disasters.
9. The town's infrastructure, especially Beach Park Road, Hammock Road, Shore Road, Causeway, and Meadow Road, should be carefully looked at or improved to ensure that they are passable during a major storm event.
10. Construction and Development Standards should be updated to include criteria for construction in the high hazard areas.
11. The Board of Selectmen and the Public Works Commission should develop a plan for periodic inspections of infrastructures within high hazard areas, recommend repairs or upgrades and set a time table for such repairs or upgrades.