Matunuck

Village Plan Report
Town of South Kingstown, RI
October 2015

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The Matunuck Village Plan

Executive Summary

South Kingstown is a community made up of many villages and special places. The unique identity of each village hearkens back hundreds of years and provides a foundation for the Town's future. To ensure the continued success of these different villages, the residents, business owners and local officials of South Kingstown continue to develop village plans. The Matunuck Village Plan was completed in 2015 and had four basic goals:

1. Celebrate Matunuck

Matunuck is like no other place in Rhode Island. Rarely can one find such a diversity of interests and activities in such a small, sometimes sleepy village setting. Matunuck's connection to the ocean lies at the core of its identity and remains at the center of everyday life for residents and visitors. Celebrating and raising community awareness of Matunuck's assets has been, and remains, an important goal for this project.

2. Create a Community Discussion

The people of Matunuck were engaged during the planning process through interviews and public forums. Over a dozen interviews were performed and three public forums were held at key points in the process. Mapping exercises, a visual preference survey, presentations and open discussions were used to elicit feedback from the community.

3. Articulate a Vision

A Vision Statement was developed for the Village that projects decades into the future:

Matunuck Village is a thriving seaside village that supports a local culture and economy that is unique among Rhode Island's coastal communities with venues for theater, music, dining, surfing, fishing, and visits to the beach. Preserved landscapes and agricultural uses ensure the continuity of the visual gateway into the Village, a source of comfort and pride in the community.

Key elements important to the future of Matunuck include:

- A local culture that fosters creativity and fun
- A mix of local businesses that provides tourist-based and basic year-round services in small, neighborhood scale buildings
- A picturesque rural landscape that serves as a gateway to the seaside community
- An eclectic mix of housing styles that provides opportunity for people with a diverse range of incomes to live in the area
- Ongoing dialogue among residents, business owners, and government officials regarding continued impacts related to erosion, storm impacts, and future shoreline change
- Achieving a regulatory environment that is clear and workable, and that balances issues related to environmental change with considerations of history and heritage
- Development and activities that are in harmony with dynamic coastal processes

Executive Summary

4. Chart a Course for the Future

A series of actions are presented to address key issues of development, preservation, and community character. Below is a sample from the 22 action items identified for Matunuck. The complete list of recommendations is summarized on page 25.

- Explore the application of an historic overlay designation for the Village to reinforce and enhance the aesthetics indicative of its rich history as a summer, seaside community.
- Convene a "summit" focused on coastal erosion and sea level rise to build trust, communication and make steps towards consensus among the various parties of interest. This summit could assist in consensus building by bringing all the perspectives and potential options to the table.
- Work with Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) to improve the maintenance of the 30 parking spaces located at Deep Hole and signage (presence and visibility of parking), as well as the feasibility of parking at the Town Beach as a priority.
- Consider the expansion of sidewalks along the east side of Matunuck Beach Road north to the Elementary School, where available shoulder widths can accommodate them.
- With the completion of various projects, including the Town beach pavilion relocation, continue to implement approved projects for the relocation of the water main and the installation of the sheet pile seawall along Matunuck Beach Road.
- Consider incorporating green infrastructure elements within regulatory updates and future projects within the Village.

The Town will continue to work toward implementation of these initiatives based on the availability of resources, the direction of the Planning Board, and the emergence of partnerships with property owners, state regulators, or other key stakeholders. The input and support from residents and business owners in Matunuck will be critical to the success of this plan and the Town hopes the conversations that began with this process will continue.

Goals of the Project

GOALS

The Matunuck Village Plan is part of a larger vision for the Town of South Kingstown as a whole. Village planning is a regular practice in South Kingstown and recognizes the role these areas play in the larger fabric of the community. The Town has a history of long-range planning with the underlying belief that strategies must account for and strengthen the unique character of each village. To that end, the Town performed a number of focused planning efforts to examine opportunities and challenges related to distinct village areas. Studies for West Kingston, Peace Dale, and Wakefield were completed between 2010 and 2015, and the Town's Healthy Places by Design initiative looked closely at opportunities related to several villages throughout the Town. In continuing this tradition of village planning, this plan has the following basic goals:

1. Celebrate Matunuck

Matunuck is like no other place in Rhode Island. Rarely can one find such a diversity of interests and activities in such a small, sometimes sleepy village setting. Like many of South Kingstown's villages, Matunuck has a rich history that provides an important backdrop to the unique setting enjoyed by so many people today. Many of the buildings, landscapes, neighborhoods, and businesses provide a living connection to the past that helps to shape local land use policies moving forward. Matunuck's connection to the ocean lies at the core of its identity and remains at the center of everyday life for residents and visitors. Celebrating and raising community awareness of Matunuck's assets has been, and remains, an important goal for this project.

2. Create a Community Discussion

South Kingstown has always worked to engage the community in its village planning efforts. The Planning Board and Planning Department believe that in order to fully appreciate the complexity of issues facing South Kingstown's villages, the voices of residents and business owners must be heard. This belief is particularly important for Matunuck with the wide range of stakeholders affected by issues related to sea level rise and coastal erosion. An important goal of this project was to engage the people of Matunuck in a broad community discussion through a variety of techniques and events.

3. Articulate a Vision

A Vision Statement was developed for Matunuck that is grounded in the numerous assets that make this Village a truly unique destination and place to live. The Vision Statement looks decades into the future, with the understanding that South Kingstown must work to sustain Matunuck for generations to come. A direct connection between town-wide policy and the smaller village plan is established here by adopting the Vision Statement directly into the Comprehensive Plan.

"Each village in South Kingstown is unique and planning efforts should seek to acknowledge and account for these unique environments."

- SK Comprehensive Plan

4. Chart a Course for the Future

To achieve the Vision Statement articulated for Matunuck, the community will need to address a series of issues specific to the area. During the community discussion, issues related to the community character, pedestrian safety, arts and culture, and coastal hazards were identified as critical to the future success of the Village. Each of these issues is described in this plan with a series of recommendations for implementation.

Celebrate Matunuck

A Brief History

Matunuck is generally located south of the Charlestown terminal moraine, which parallels Route 1 to the north, on the flat, relatively rock-free glacial outwash plain. It was settled and farmed for centuries with farmers using seaweed and marsh grass from the shore as fertilizer and debris from shipwrecks as building material. Nineteenth century maps show only a handful of farmhouses, most set back from the road, near Segar Cove on Potter Pond. Early settlements occurred predominantly around the salt pond area, most likely because they provided food (fish and shellfish), and contributed directly to the economic livelihood of farm families.

By the mid-19th century, word had spread to the surrounding region about the recreational opportunities in Matunuck. Evidence is seen in local tourist guides listing hotels and inns as well as newspaper articles discussing the local beaches as popular destinations for Providence residents. According to one newspaper account, summer life at Matunuck was "dull and stupid" compared to Narragansett Pier, but it offered the Matunuck residents rest and health. Historic maps also indicate the location of bath houses in the area.

The summer colonization of the South Kingstown shore continued to accelerate in the early 20th century as these areas became increasingly more accessible from other parts of the state by automobile. Houses were built at scattered sites along the coast, and several settlements became heavily populated. At Matunuck Beach, there were several hotels and cottages to accommodate visitors. Through the decades that followed, most of Matunuck Beach became densely built up but in a few places, such as the Matunuck Point summer colony, lots were larger and allowed for the construction of more spacious homes. A Roman Catholic chapel, St. Romuald's, was erected as a place of worship for summer residents.

The two Carpenter family summer colonies, Carpenter's Beach Meadow (Mary Carpenter) and Roy Carpenter's Beach (often considered "rival camps" by residents), also flourished during this time and continue to do so. Many residents in these camps grew up in Matunuck, worked in the Village, met their spouses there, and still remain today. One resident stated, "Long time friends don't often see each other over the summer…they are all busy with their family and friends. Once the Village clears out at the end of the summer, it seems they all reconnect." Many folks interviewed for this plan speak fondly of the relationships they have established and maintained over the years within the Village.

Historic Postcards Courtesy of Michael McKenna

While the summer colonies continued to draw people to the southern shore throughout the summer season, Matunuck's recreational and cultural assets continued to provide unique opportunities as regional destinations for day-trippers during the same time. The South Kingstown Land Trust, Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, Willow Dell Historical Association and Matunuck Community Association maintain their missions, as well as their presence within the Village through a variety of annual and seasonal activities and events. Recent land acquisitions continue to strengthen and expand the Village's cultural opportunities, with the Land Trust securing and restoring Cedar Swamp and Lily Pond, former sites of artist Anna Richards Brewster (over 40 acres in total). Both sites have been restored and programmed with instructional signage overlooking the ponds. Programming on both Land Trust and Pettaquamscutt Historical Society land holdings continues to significantly contribute to the cultural element of the Village. Preserve RI will provide management and support services to the South Kingstown Land Trust for Hale House.

More recently, the book entitled *Matunuck: Not Just a Place But a State of Mind* (Willow Dell Historical Association) speaks to recapturing a sense of community and, more specifically, highlighting the Matunuck artistic movement. The oral histories project begins with interviews of people with deep historical roots and experiences in Matunuck, documented to add to the existing accounts of Matunuck history. The first list of people interviewed included the names Browning, Tucker, Waterston, Carpenter, and Ferry. Earlier volumes describe the day the 1938 Hurricane arrived, recollections of the expansive fields from Matunuck Hills to the sea, and the divide between "pond people" and "beach people" created by paving Route 1 in the 1960s. The third volume introduces Matunuck artists, including the watercolors of Elizabeth Gibson Ferry, the photographs of Mathias "Mo" Oppersdorff, and the acrylics of Jeffrey Gardner – who still lives and paints in the Village.

Matunuck Today

Matunuck today is still primarily viewed as a seaside neighborhood and the core of activity lies by the beach where sunbathing, swimming, fishing, dining, surfing, strolling, and good music come together. The entry into the Village via Matunuck Beach Road from Route 1 is highlighted by preserved open space and agricultural uses, open field environments with hedgerows, and neatly stacked stone walls at the edge of the public right of way. This view remains much the same today as it was in the past and will endure going forward given the significant amount of preserved parcels flanking Matunuck Beach Road. Buildings and roads along the beach show the weathered, sun-baked character common to village areas exposed to the ocean year round.

Many of the notable landmarks that emerged in the 20th century remain including both Carpenter camps and St. Romuald's Chapel. The South Kingstown Town Beach, Deep Hole Fishing Area, and Theater by the Sea still draw visitors from across Rhode Island and beyond, feeding into the often festive atmosphere in the Village over the summer months. The expansive shallow reef at Deep Hole provides a significant number of unique recreational uses that contribute to the Village's distinctive character, adding to the regional draw during the high season and when the surf is up. The Town Beach offers two picnic areas, a playground, and a volleyball court, and also features a 22-acre leased farm parcel which ties this recreational resource back to the agricultural heritage of the area. Finally, the Ocean Mist and Tara's Pub continue to anchor the social scene in the Village. Both serve as "check points" for residents and visitors, where people can be sure to eventually connect with friends over the course of an evening.

Matunuck's Theater by the Sea

Firehouse at Roy Carpenter's

Just outside of the core beachside area, Matunuck is home to several residential neighborhoods with scenic views of Potter Pond, Segar Cove, and the agricultural lands further north such as the nearly 40-acre Carpenter Farm. Areas that historically contained summer cottages have become year round residential neighborhoods. Small quaint summer cottages, once desired by many, continue to be torn down and re-built as multi-story high-end residences. Neighborhood scale commercial operations heading north on Matunuck Beach Road provide essential goods for residents and visitors. The Matunuck Elementary School on the same roadway also provides an institutional anchor for the Village. Active agricultural operations within this area of the Village include the town-owned property (leased to a local farmer for hay/feed production), and Carpenter's Farm. Carpenter's Farm is a significant agricultural operation protected under the "RI Agricultural Land Preservation Commission."

Temporary Relocation of Cottages

While social and recreational aspects of Matunuck are usually the focus for the seaside village, the natural features that shape the landscape and provide habitat are also integral to the experience of Matunuck. For example, the maps of critical and environmentally sensitive areas developed by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Natural Heritage Program (RINHP) highlight areas around Trustom Pond, Card's Pond, the Town Beach, and south-easterly corner of Potter Pond. Most recently, however, larger forces have become the center of attention as ocean currents and storms are working to reshape Matunuck in more dramatic ways than ever before, particularly the coastline.

Deep Hole Fishing Area

The geology of Matunuck's coastline is characterized by a combination of headlands and barrier beaches. The barrier beaches lying parallel to the coast are composed of sand and gravel deposits and enclose the salt ponds that lie north of them. These deposits and this configuration, thousands of years old, set the stage for one of Matunuck's most pressing challenges today. In response to coastal storms and sea level rise, barrier beaches are presently migrating landward as sand eroded from the ocean beach is transported by storm surge "over wash" to the back barrier and coastal lagoon. It is noteworthy that significant portions of Matunuck's headland area east of the Town Beach property have been "hardened" with revetments of varying composition, creating a patchwork of natural features and man-made improvements at the shoreline. Several of these installations predate the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) and some were permitted under its aegis or installed without the benefit of a CRMC assent. Notwithstanding, these accelerated coastal processes increase the need for more advanced and innovative building technologies and codes. They also necessitate the consideration by regulators to permit creative approaches for erosion mitigation and management, including a broad continuum of options that may consider managed retreat and physical improvements to infrastructure.

Mary Carpenter's seasonal beach community (Carpenter's Beach Meadow) and Roy Carpenter's beach both remain as do several shops, bars/restaurants and a neighborhood market. Looking back on the recent history of Matunuck, although many of the iconic commercial establishments have been fixtures for generations, residents and officials recognize the unique threat larger forces represent to these icons and the future of the Village as a whole.

Matunuck Beach Road

Create a Community Discussion

To set the stage for engaging residents and business owners in Matunuck, municipal staff, members of the Planning Board, and the Matunuck Village project consultant developed an Existing Conditions Assessment (Appendix A). This included a review of important documents and studies, the development of maps, and a review of local regulations. During the development of the Existing Conditions Assessment, the project consultant also conducted a number of key stakeholder interviews, including local officials, residents, small business owners, and representatives from various boards/land trusts within the Village. The project consultant also reviewed *Matunuck: Not Just a Place But a State of Mind*, an oral history project produced by the Willow Dell Historical Association and the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society.

After the initial assessments and interviews were completed, an outline of the Village's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) was assembled. This SWOT Analysis identified the preliminary list of key issues for Matunuck and was presented during the first public workshop on April 23, 2013. This first workshop was designed to be introductory in nature and was used to share these early findings, and primarily to listen to local stakeholders discuss their own hopes and concerns for Matunuck. Public feedback was integrated into the analysis and helped to expand on key issues and guide the early development of recommendations. Two additional public workshops were held on August 27, 2013 and August 25, 2015, and were used to further refine (and confirm) the defining issues associated with the Village. The workshop process included facilitated work groups, and requested that participants identify both specific threats/potential solutions and opportunities/strategies for issues affecting the Village.

Importantly, while these discussions were specifically designed to build the content of this plan, participants felt strongly that the discussions should be the start of an ongoing community conversation. Implementation of many strategies identified in this plan will require time, resources, community consensus and actions that seek to balance the various perspectives and interests that define the heritage and future of Matunuck. A vital part of this planning process is to build some level of consensus around strategies and policies toward implementing a vision for Matunuck.

Town Beach Summer 2015

Carpenter's Farm Stand

Residential Neighborhood

Beach House Architecture

View of Potter Pond

Atlantic Avenue Residence

Articulate a Vision

The community discussion developed for this project was used to create a Vision Statement for Matunuck. This vision statement describes what Matunuck might look like 20 years from now. The statement describes the Town's aspirations for the area and should be used as a tool to measure policy decisions moving forward:

Matunuck Village is a thriving seaside village that supports a local culture and economy that is unique among Rhode Island's coastal communities with venues for theater, music, dining, surfing, fishing, and visits to the beach. Preserved landscapes and agricultural uses ensure the continuity of the visual gateway into the Village, a source of comfort and pride in the community.

Key elements important to the future of Matunuck include:

- A local culture that fosters creativity and fun
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- Ongoing dialogue between residents, business owners, and government officials regarding continued impacts related to sea level rise and coastal erosion
- Achieving a regulatory environment that is clear and workable, and balances issues related to environmental change with considerations of history and heritage
- Development and activities that are in harmony with dynamic coastal processes

Matunuck Elementary School

Chart a Course for the Future

The Town of South Kingstown must carefully consider a wide array of complex issues and uncertainty when considering the future of Matunuck Village. The neighborhoods, businesses and institutions that comprise this Village are eclectic and the landscapes are diverse. To preserve and strengthen those parts of Matunuck that are so valuable to the community, residents, business owners and officials at many levels will need to coordinate efforts. The public process and project research raised five key issues that require short, medium and long-term efforts to address:

"Broad View" Residence

Sea View Market Place

Important Issues

- Managing Change and Preserving Community Character
- Coastal Erosion
- Parking
- Pedestrian Circulation/Safety
- Public/Private Infrastructure

View of Potter Pond

Key Issues for Matunuck's Future

Managing Change and Preserving Community Character

The Challenge

The gradual alteration of Matunuck's character as a seaside summer colony becomes more evident each year. One of the primary drivers of this change is the trend of quaint summer cottages being converted to year-round residential structures, often razed and reconstructed at a much larger scale. The commercial establishments synonymous with Matunuck (Ocean Mist, Tara's, and the Vanilla Bean) remain vibrant and popular although increasingly vulnerable to damage from coastal storms and erosion. Cultural operations like Theater by the Sea and the B&B at the historic Admiral Dewey Inn continue to draw people from near and far, maintaining and building their customer base. Accelerated coastal processes have significantly impacted the aesthetics and 'neighborhood character' of both Mary and Roy Carpenter's summer colonies, and also require more advanced and innovative building technologies along the coast and within the Village. It should also be noted that compliance with flood zone building requirements (e.g., raised structures, etc.) will inevitably change the character of the area and the Town will need to anticipate these changes to the best of its ability.

South Kingstown's seasonal leased-land cottage and trailer communities are reflective of the Town's summer resort heritage and important components of the Village's history. These residential sites do not conform to existing zoning regulations, with "split" zoning designation of CN (Commercial Neighborhood)/R20 (Medium High Density Residential District) for Mary Carpenter's and Blackbeard's and R200 (Rural Very Low Density District) for Roy Carpenter's Beach. The structures are typically very small, low-slung, one-story cottages and trailers in close proximity to one another and vary in terms of condition, style and finishes – a diversity which is a valued component of the history and feel of these communities. These communities are also situated in sensitive environmental settings close to the ocean, salt ponds and coastal wetlands. Infrastructure upgrades to the on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) and water facilities at Roy Carpenter's, Mary Carpenter's, and Blackbeard's have mitigated (or will mitigate) environmental impacts. Moving forward, additional regulatory guidance and options are needed to address proposals to expand, change, or otherwise modify individual structures located within these communities.

Many other parcels within the Village are subject to multiple regulatory jurisdictions for modifications, alterations, or improvements to their property including requirements of the CRMC's "Red Book," CRMC's Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the Salt Pond Region and RIDEM for issues relating to upgrade or replacement of OWTS. Property owners require support and guidance from the Town when dealing with multiple entities regarding work on their properties.

Moving Forward

Recommendations for managing growth and preserving community character start with efforts to preserve the essence of Matunuck. The Town should consider exploring the notion of applying an historic overlay designation for the Village (or portions thereof) to reinforce and enhance the aesthetics indicative of its rich history as a summer, seaside community. An overlay would work with the underlying zoning, not replace it, and would assist in the preservation and enhancement of the historic character and scale of the Village. The process to consider such a designation would require a more focused, technical planning effort to define the physical boundaries of the overlay district. It would also involve a dialogue with property owners to help determine what the overlay would entail and to develop local property owner consensus and support to move in this direction.

The Town is currently exploring the feasibility of a "Leased-Land Community Overlay District" for the "campground" facilities along the Town's south shore area in Matunuck and East Matunuck. The intent of the overlay district would be to manage change for the traditionally seasonal residential communities reflective of South Kingstown's summer resort heritage. Property improvements over time would allow for grandfathered uses to continue in a manner that respects the historic use of the sites and is mindful of scale, bulk, height, and environmental/neighborhood setting. This overlay district would also establish an administrative process to allow minor changes to properties without having to secure a Special Use Permit from the Zoning Board of Review each time another alteration or intensification of the use is proposed. A less intensive review process for small changes will serve to encourage faster repair and aesthetic upgrades to properties within the campground areas over time.

All three represent parcels located with the Commercial Neighborhood (CN) zone along the north side of Matunuck Beach Road. The latter two represent legal, non-conforming situations.

As noted above, a number of parcels associated with the leased land communities are split-zoned (CN on the road frontage with R20 residential inland). This characteristic coupled with the legal, nonconforming residential units comprising the campgrounds complicates the improvement and permitting process for the land owners and the owners of individual cottages. A review by municipal officials to reconcile these parcels via zoning amendments should be considered.

In the public discussions conducted as part of this project, the notion of design guidelines was raised relative to the village core. The primary concern was the need to address preservation of the essence, or aesthetics of the Village. Designing for aesthetics generally includes buildings and other various architectural elements that help to maintain and reinforce the traditional summer resort heritage of Matunuck.

Design guidelines for building aesthetics typically include recommendations for:

- Building size, height and scale;
- Entranceways;
- Windows;
- Roofline articulation;
- Dormers; and
- Building materials.

Of particular concern within the core area of Matunuck is the regulation of building size, height and scale (massing) in order to maintain the traditional essence of the Village. Design guidelines should also consider site design and the location of buildings, parking, utilities and landscaping. Design guidelines could provide a book of ideas and guidance as an educational tool for redevelopment that will be consistent with the heritage context particular to Matunuck Village.

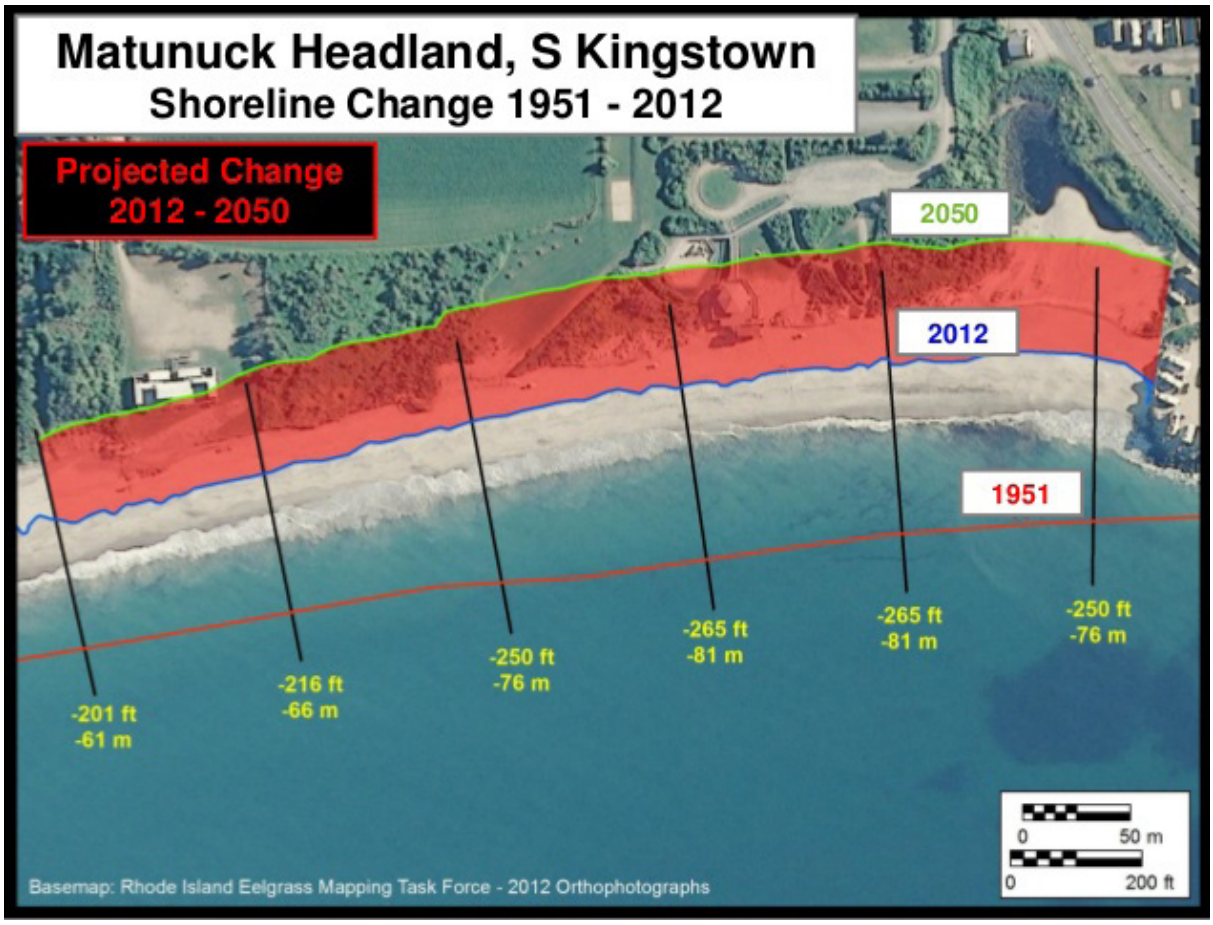
The complexity of multiple entities having jurisdiction over a parcel's development or redevelopment often leaves property owners frustrated and confused. With so many regulatory levels, property owners could benefit from the support of and education by municipal officials to better understand the permitting process, including preparation and filing of applications and coordination across multiple state agencies. The Town should consider developing a program to educate and support property owners along the south shore with property under multiple jurisdictions (Municipal/CRMC/SAMP/DEM/RIEMA). It is also of great importance that any new land use policies and/or regulations considered for Matunuck be cognizant of the existing layers of jurisdiction from Town, State and Federal entities. Revised or new regulations on the local level must provide clear, understandable and useful guidelines and options that provide flexibility for local property owners. Adding complexity to the current regulatory scheme would be a step backward and would very likely be opposed by local property and business owners.

Coastal Erosion

The Challenge

Coastal erosion and recurring storm damage have emerged as the most urgent and complex issues impacting the Village today. Matunuck has experienced significant erosion as a result of coastal storms, hurricanes and winter storms. Approximately 50 percent of the beach width has eroded since 1951 and adjacent development has greatly stressed the natural carrying capacity of the land. The coastal erosion in Matunuck is such that the integrity of Matunuck Beach Road, the only access/egress/evacuation route for over 500 seasonal and year-round dwellings, is at risk of being compromised. The impacts of erosion have also encroached upon the reaches of the commercial business district, residential dwellings, and recreational buildings/areas. At Carpenter's Beach Meadow, the "Sea View" community hall was razed in 2009 after being undermined by erosion from storm events.

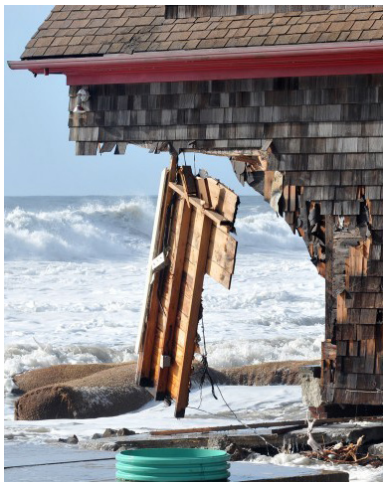
These natural hazard storm events are increasingly exacerbated by impacts from climate change and sea level rise as documented in CRMC's Ocean SAMP. Rising sea levels, as a direct result of warmer temperatures and glacial ice melt, threaten low-lying coastal areas through coastal flooding, coastal erosion, wetland inundation and saltwater intrusion. The Coastal Resources Center (CRC), Rhode Island Sea Grant, and scientists from the University of Rhode Island have been working to assist the CRMC on policy implications of climate change and sea level rise.



The image above is from Dr. Jon Boothroyd (State Coastal Geologist and geology professor emeritus at URI). It depicts the loss of approximately 50% of the beach over the last 60 years (from 1951 to 2012), as well as the projected additional loss of beach by 2050.

CRMC's response to climate change and sea level rise includes this policy adopted March 2008 (Section 145 CRMC Regulations):

- "The Council will integrate climate change and sea level rise scenarios into its operations to prepare Rhode Island for these new, evolving conditions and make our coastal areas more resilient."
- "The Council's sea level rise policies are based upon the CRMC's legislative mandate to preserve, protect, and where possible, restore the coastal resources of the State through comprehensive and coordinated long-range planning."
- "For planning and management purposes, it is the Council's policy to accommodate a base rate of expected three to five foot rise in sea level by 2100 in the siting, design, and implementation of public and private coastal activities and to insure proactive stewardship of coastal ecosystems under these changing conditions. In addition, this long-term sea level change base rate will be revisited by the Council periodically to address new scientific evidence."



Damage from Superstorm Sandy

The impacts of Superstorm Sandy (October 2012) exacerbated erosion processes and the urgency of this issue by pushing the shoreline back into residential and commercial areas within the Village. The front row of cottages at Roy Carpenter's Beach sustained heavy damage during Superstorm Sandy with three cottages completely lost to the storm. The remaining front-row cottages were relocated inland to a new "street" at the backside of the campground (under approvals granted by the South Kingstown Zoning Board of Review). At Mary Carpenter's structural damage and significant flooding resulted while businesses along Matunuck Beach Road remained closed throughout the following week having experienced storm surge inside their buildings. A bit further west at Browning's Beach, only three of the Victorian-era cottages comprising the Browning Beach National Register District remain; two of the cottages have been moved inland or elevated in the wake of Superstorm Sandy.

A direct result of accelerated erosion is also evident at the small, privately held coastal pond southeast of the Vanilla Bean. As coastal processes continue to "roll the dunes back," this pond is increasingly filled in with sand and debris from the shoreline further restricting the holding capacity of the pond. Approximately 200 seasonal dwelling units are vulnerable to periodic, temporary flooding events while Matunuck Beach Road itself is prone to flooding during larger storm events raising public safety and accessibility issues.

Matunuck has weathered many severe coastal storm events over time. These events are always followed by rebuilding and repairs by residents and business owners. The Town continues to repair the concrete stairs to East Matunuck Beach (William George Stairs). Additionally the Town moved the pavilion back (approximately 150 feet) and its on-site wastewater treatment system (approximately 450 feet) inland from its previous location – a true testament to the Village's resilience. The Town remains vigilant in documenting shoreline changes over time and recently conducted research for those private properties located on the seaward side of Matunuck Beach Road. This research indicates that since 1997 the State has issued more than one hundred (100) permits that specifically address shoreline protection repairs and other related mitigating actions.

One unsuccessful CRMC application included the Town's request for shoreline reclassification from Type 1 "Coastal Headlands, Bluffs, and Cliffs" to Type 2 "Man-made Shoreline" along over 1,200 feet of Matunuck Beach Road starting at the Matunuck Trailer Park Association and affecting 11 lots on the seaward side of the road. The reclassification request was prompted by the erosion rates on the Matunuck Headland, which range from fairly low at the cobble terrace (Deep Hole) to very high (Town Beach). The reclassification would have allowed for a broader range of by-right remediation alternatives, but was denied.

Moving Forward

Recommendations for coastal erosion remediation efforts include the Town's continued support of various agencies, institutions, and organizations working on these issues. The Rhode Island Climate Change Commission worked with a range of stakeholders from Rhode Island's public and private sectors and released its report in November 2012. The report is a summary of the risks of climate change to the State, including points of weakness in infrastructure – critical for State and local officials to make thoughtful and informed policy decisions. Today the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) through its legislative authority is leading efforts to develop an action agenda and prioritize initiatives and making progress to address both adaptation and mitigation.

Rhode Island Sea Grant, collaborating with scientists from URI and other institutions, continues to better understand the science and policy implications of climate change. The group developed fact sheets to highlight impacts to the built environment, public health and welfare, and natural resources. These documents include: *Precipitation and Storms in Rhode Island: Trends and Impacts*; and *Sea Level Rise in Rhode Island: Trends and Impacts.* RI Sea Grant also developed the climate change science summary: *Climate Change: Rhode Island's Coasts* while gathering additional climate data by conducting two municipal projects in North Kingstown and Newport. Finally, URI, as part of the CRMC SAMP process, developed STORMTOOLS, online mapping resources (beachsamp.org), which depicts potential impacts from varied storm and sea level rise scenarios.

First photo, Browning Cottages Historic District, moved to the active beach following Superstorm Sandy. Next photo, Roy Carpenter's front row cottage teetering on the edge of the dune in the aftermath of Sandy. Third photo, Town Beach pavilion, boardwalk and septic compromised following Sandy. End photo, small coastal pond that continues to fill in as a result of accelerated erosion and overwash.

The CRMC's Climate Change and Sea Level Rise policy is intended to guide the state in its adaptation efforts and assist with coastal resiliency. The coastal monitoring and modeling work of Dr. Jon Boothroyd and Dr. Malcolm Spaulding, professors emeritus at URI, is helping to provide the science needed to plan for future changes in the coastline and address coastal erosion and storm surge. CRMC adopted Shoreline Change maps in 2007 and is working on the Shoreline Change (Beach) SAMP which focuses on obtaining the scientific data and information necessary to support policy decisions around coastal erosion and inundation events. In anticipation of new policies and standards (Beach SAMP under development), CRMC will consider allowing experimental coastal erosion measures (Section 980 CRMC Regulations) in some areas (see map on page 21) only after review by the CRMC and after the applicant satisfies the following conditions:

- It is feasible on an engineering and ecological basis that the proposed experimental erosion control technique will minimize coastal erosion;
- The proposed experimental coastal erosion control technique will not result in any long-term increased erosion on adjacent or downdrift properties; and
- The proposed coastal erosion control technique will not detrimentally impact coastal habitat or public access to or along the shore.

It is recommended that the Town continue to work collaboratively with CRMC and private property owners to identify a comprehensive approach for the remediation of coastal erosion along those parcels that are eligible. Experimental controls were developed and efforts should continue in a collaborative manner with CRMC's approved technologies.

A potential next step for this effort and more globally would be to convene a Matunuck "summit" or mediation effort intended to build trust, improve communication, and generate possible consensus among the various parties of interest. At a minimum this summit would be valuable to all stakeholders by gathering the perspectives of area residents, businesses, and regulatory entities into a single organized discussion. Potential options could be vetted alongside each other and evaluated in a more comprehensive manner. Communications between the State/Federal regulators and the Town has not fostered a shared understanding and broader awareness of any regulatory requirements and long-term issues around climate change, sea level rise, increasing storm frequency, and erosion threats. In general the goals of this summit would include:

- Identification and inventory of the area's natural and cultural assets;
- Identification of risks to the area's natural and cultural assets;
- Discussion of needs, alternatives, opportunities and barriers to success moving forward; and
- Agreement on a process to address these issues going forward.

This Village Plan report may provide a good basis (primer) for framing the discussion at the summit. The results of a consensus building effort would potentially allow for more efficient and effective remediation actions to occur. Working with private property owners and State regulators, the Town could help to identify remediation measures that would mitigate periodic flooding and sand overwash into the coastal pond while also increasing the storage capacity of the pond.

It is also very important for the Town and Matunuck property owners to fully participate in the development of the Beach SAMP as it will ultimately result in policies and regulations that will affect land use decisions in the coastal zone areas. Failure to maintain engagement in this process would result in Matunuck's voice not being heard in a meaningful fashion, and the resultant policy and regulatory directions may be contrary to the vision of the Village noted herein.

Parking

The Challenge

Depending on the day of the week and the season, parking at Deep Hole and on-street parking within the Commercial Neighborhood district is at capacity, with overflow spilling out into the residential neighborhoods and "no-parking" restricted areas. There is limited on-street public parking associated with the smaller commercial district (Seaview Market) as well as several off-street parking spaces associated with the small commercial multi-unit building immediately south of the Seaview Market. In the past, Mary Carpenter's vacant lot, which fronts on the north side of Matunuck Beach Road, has been used for fee-based parking through Carpenter's Beach Meadow or through private arrangement with local business owners. This same area functions as the drain field for Carpenter's Beach Meadow's new septic system which has been designed to accommodate parking as previously utilized (Phase 1 of the OWTS). In the off-season a portion of this field area provides winter storage of trailers moved from the lower west side of the campground which historically is vulnerable to flooding in storm events.

Roadside Parking Restrictions

Moving Forward

The accessibility of both safe and convenient public parking is a critical concern when planning for the Village. The limited size of the Commercial Neighborhood district and the Village's business base, compounded by limited available land area for the provision of off-street parking, exacerbates the issue. Taking the time to comprehensively look at the existing parking issues, consider realistic and viable alternatives, and reconfigure parking options within the Village could not only improve vehicle use and circulation, but also its sense of place. It is important to acknowledge that the parking demand in Matunuck during special events and during high beach season outstrips the available permitted on-street parking resource. This results in illegal parking on the easterly end of Matunuck Beach Road and in and around the Prospect Street neighborhood. This situation leads to complaints from area residents and represents a potential public safety and accessibility problem for residents and visitors.

Parking on Matunuck Beach Road

It is noteworthy that strategies and projects to increase or make the existing parking resource more efficient are limited by the available land and infrastructure resources present in the Village. While improvements should be evaluated and certain steps taken to mitigate this issue, the popularity of the area leads to the conclusion that parking in the Village will remain as an issue of concern over the short- and long-term planning horizons.

Parking in Neighborhood Commercial Area

1. *Consider Town Beach parking as a secondary resource for special events within the Village, potential revenue generator.*
2. *Encourage business owners to contract with Mary Carpenter's for large events.*
3. *Evaluate the potential to expand on-street parking along north side of Matunuck Beach Road approximately 240 feet towards the intersection of Prospect Road (possbily an additional 12 parking spaces). Maintain two-hour limit 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., but add June 15th - September 15th.*
4. *Work with RIDEM to improve signage and to develop a better, more consistent maintenance plan at Deep Hole.*

Recommendations for parking improvements within the Village of Matunuck fall under two categories: short term – those projects that require minimal municipal investment in staff time and money; and long term – those projects that may require some level of financial and staff investment.

Short-term recommendations:

- Consider striping existing on-street parking to better define individual parking spaces and promote more efficient use of this limited resource;
- Improve signage for designated parking areas on Matunuck Beach Road;
- Work with RIDEM to improve the signage (presence and visibility of parking) and maintenance (gravel surface) for the approximately 30 spaces located at Deep Hole Fisherman's Access;
- Encourage businesses to contract with Mary Carpenter's for large events, or at a minimum, require they identify a parking strategy for events over a certain number of people;
- Coordinate with the Police Department for more consistent enforcement of parking regulations during weekday and weekend periods;
- Investigate the feasibility of the Town Beach parking lot, or portion thereof, as a secondary resource (satellite parking facility) and revenue generator, potentially restricted to special events. After hours use will require additional personnel, maintenance and security provisions;
- Evaluate the potential for increased parking allowances on Matunuck Beach Road westerly of Carpenter's Beach Meadow and westerly of Prospect Road.

Long-term recommendations:

Under the aegis of the Town's Traffic and Transportation Review Committee conduct a comprehensive review of parking and transportation issues in the Matunuck Village core area. This would include an analysis of existing conditions, definition of the physical capacities of the public and private parking resources in the area, identification of problem areas and opportunities for improvements and discussion of the physical limitations present. Such analysis would also review the feasibility and desirability of the items below as potential long-term recommendations to mitigate parking issues and improve accessibility issues in the Village.

- Consider the creation of a small municipal lot at the two parcels purchased by the Town (to the west of the Ocean Mist) as part of the plans to install the proposed sheet pile wall; and
- Consider the potential for use of the Matunuck Elementary School campus as a satellite parking resource for the Village (confined to summer months).

Pedestrian Circulation/Safety

The Challenge

Concerns for pedestrian circulation and safety throughout the Village continue, particularly during the peak summer months. Only one network of sidewalks exists within the Village, beginning at the Matunuck Surf Shop and continuing into the heart of the Village ending at Prospect Road (along the north side of the roadway). Limited crosswalks and accommodations for bicyclists, and the lack of pedestrian amenities (shelter, shade trees/structures, benches, and lighting) pose safety concerns for residents and visitors. On busy summer days or during special events pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists can find themselves sharing space in places not designed for that purpose. Conflicts or concerns can include significant safety issues associated with pedestrians sharing space with cars or can be simple nuisances such as dog owners not picking up after their pets. Shoreline access and walking along the shore on foot is limited given the high-velocity wave environment and strong tidal currents coupled with the presence of shoreline revetments.

Bicyclists on Card's Pond Road

Moving Forward

Recommendations for improving the pedestrian environment begin with suggestions for installing additional pedestrian amenities throughout the Village such as crosswalks, benches, signage and bike racks. Residents also agreed that dispensers for pet waste bags would be a useful addition for heavily traveled pedestrian areas. An earlier proposal for the expansion of the existing sidewalk network was met with mixed reviews (and opposition) during community discussions; however, there is merit in considering the expansion of sidewalks along the east side of Matunuck Beach Road north to the Elementary School, where available shoulder widths can accommodate them. Additional crosswalks further into the village core at Prospect Road and Deep Hole Fishing Area, all high foot-traffic locations, are also recommended. An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/universal access audit should be considered with transition plans developed for improved conditions.

Recommendations for bicycling to/from and within the Village include the provision of bike racks within the village core, as well as supporting a recommendation from the recent Healthy Places by Design study/report of designating Card's Pond Road (and Matunuck Schoolhouse Road) as a signed-shared roadway. It is also recommended that the Town should evaluate the travel lane alignment along Matunuck Beach Road, traffic calming measures in the area of the Vanilla Bean, and the adequacy of sight distance for traffic exiting Holden Road at Matunuck Beach Road. The existing topography of Holden Road as it rises to and intersects with a curving portion of Matunuck Beach Road and existing vegetation and fencing all contribute to this concern. Measures to mitigate this circumstance might include better control of existing vegetation, signage, and/or evaluation of the existing fence line at the southeast corner of the intersection.

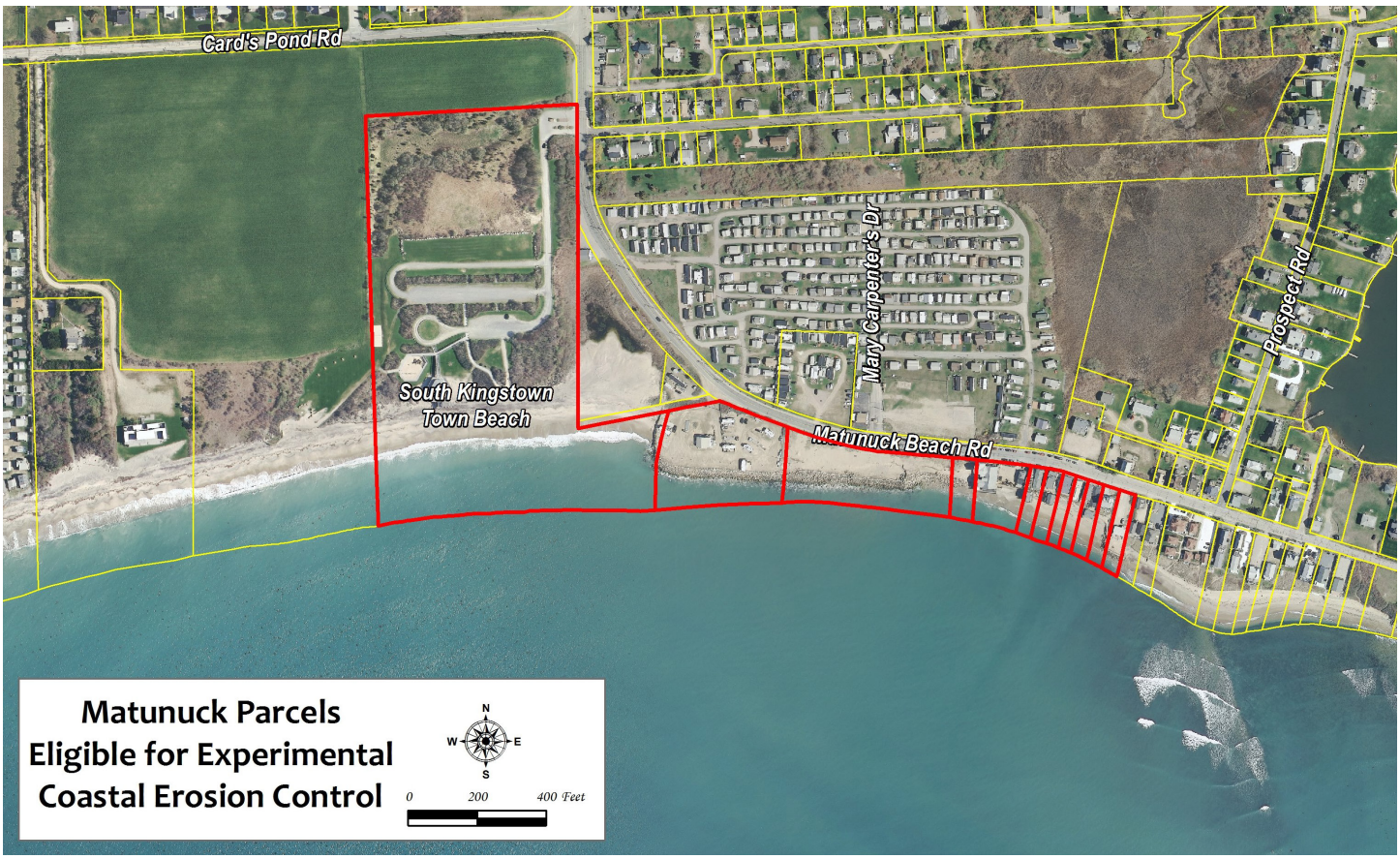
Lastly, on two parcels purchased in 2013 by the Town (as staging areas) and following the completion of the installation of the sheet pile wall there is an opportunity for the Town to incorporate a small, vest-pocket park with additional amenities such as benches/picnic tables/public parking and possibly interpretive/educational panels describing the rich history and resiliency of the Village.

Public and Private Infrastructure

The Challenge

The impacts of coastal erosion, storm surge, and sea level rise, particularly within the area of the Matunuck Commercial Neighborhood district have significantly increased and continue to progress in an easterly direction. The vulnerability of the 12-inch water main within the Matunuck Beach Road right-of-way remains a concern, particularly the portion of the water main located between East Matunuck State Beach and Ocean Avenue that is extremely vulnerable to being undermined from storm surge induced shoreline erosion. In fact, the Town's water main located on the barrier beach was exposed and damaged as a result of severe coastal erosion associated with Hurricane Sandy. Loss of this water main would result in the loss of potable water and fire protection for over 1,850 properties situated to the west of the barrier beach.

The integrity of Matunuck Beach Road is at risk of being compromised due to rapid acceleration of coastal erosion on the south side of the roadway. This not only creates risk for the previously mentioned water main, but also for the remaining utility lines that run along the southern side of the street. To mitigate these problems, the Town received a CRMC Assent to construct and maintain a 202 foot sheet pile wall (primarily funded with a grant to the Town from RIDOT) within the Town's right-of-way to protect the road against future undermining. In support of the planned sheet pile wall installation the Town secured a CRMC permit to relocate utilities on the south side of Matunuck Beach Road to the northerly side of the right-of-way. Eight telephone poles and associated utilities



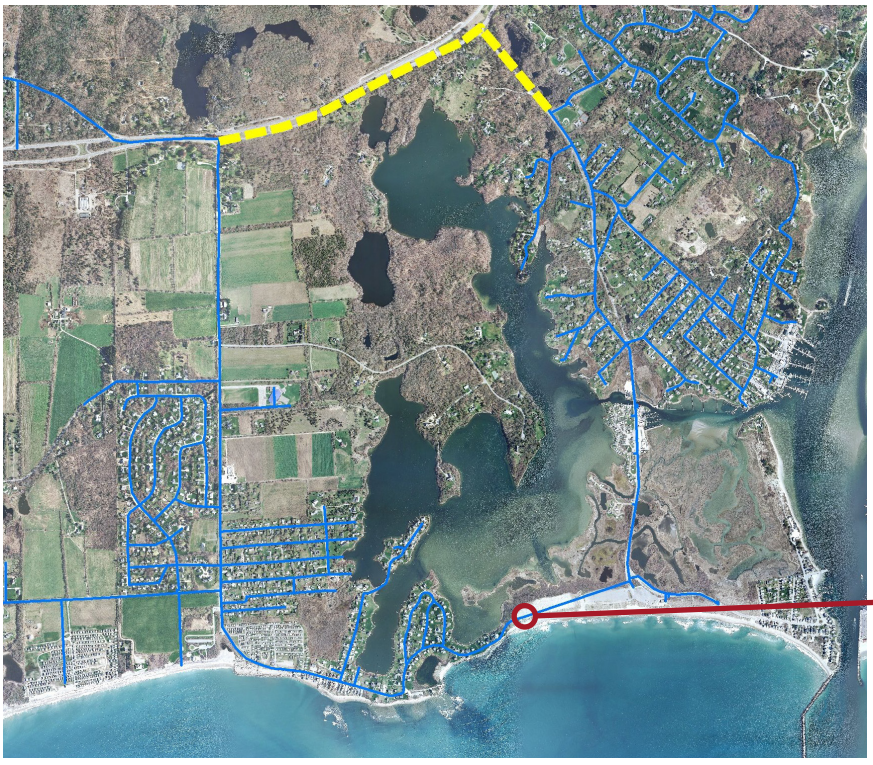
Parcels outlined in red denote those properties eligible for "Experimental Coastal Erosion Control" measures per Section 980 of the Salt Pond Region Special Area Management Plan adopted in September of 2013. Included in the eligible parcels is the main Town Beach parcel, AP 92-2, lot 43, at 719 Matunuck Beach Road. Going forward the Town might consider an application to CRMC under the provisions of Section 980 to address erosion issues along the easterly end of the beachfront, abutting the revetment at the Matunuck Trailer Association property.

were removed as part of that process. In the future additional relocation of overhead utilities along Matunuck Beach Road may be warranted due to erosion, sea level rise and specific storm impacts.

The South Kingstown Town Beach continues to experience periodic beach erosion and scouring particularly during the winter and early spring as a result of nor'easters. In addition, as a result of Hurricane Sandy, this recreational area lost a major portion of the boardwalk and seating area. These ongoing conditions required the community to relocate the beach pavilion and septic system inland. In planning this relocation, considerations were given to predicted inland migration of the mean high water line, consideration of anticipated sea level rise over time and the expected life cycle of the pavilion and supporting infrastructure. The Town's Beach Improvement Program also includes funding support for increasingly aggressive maintenance efforts to address coastal erosion at the Town Beach.

Moving Forward

The Town identified several projects and programs targeted at coastal erosion and storm hazard mitigation for the Matunuck area. The following discussion includes an update to the Town's proposed hazard mitigation remediation efforts. The Town has been planning the inland connection of the 12-inch water main, and has received partial funding for the project through the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) ($1,339,992). Said funding is to provide mitigation to this problem via a new water main loop located on the north side of Potter Pond as a means of permanent and safe water system connectivity that is not subject to coastal erosion. As of Summer 2015, the project design is completed, CRMC and RIDOT permits are in hand and the project is essentially "shovel-ready." To complete the project, the Town will also receive additional funding from the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) under the Disaster Recovery (DR) monies allocated to the State in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. The Town's pending award is for $944,822 from the CDBG-DR funding pool. The estimated total construction cost of this project is $2,284,814 (includes project contingency, construction management and supervision costs).

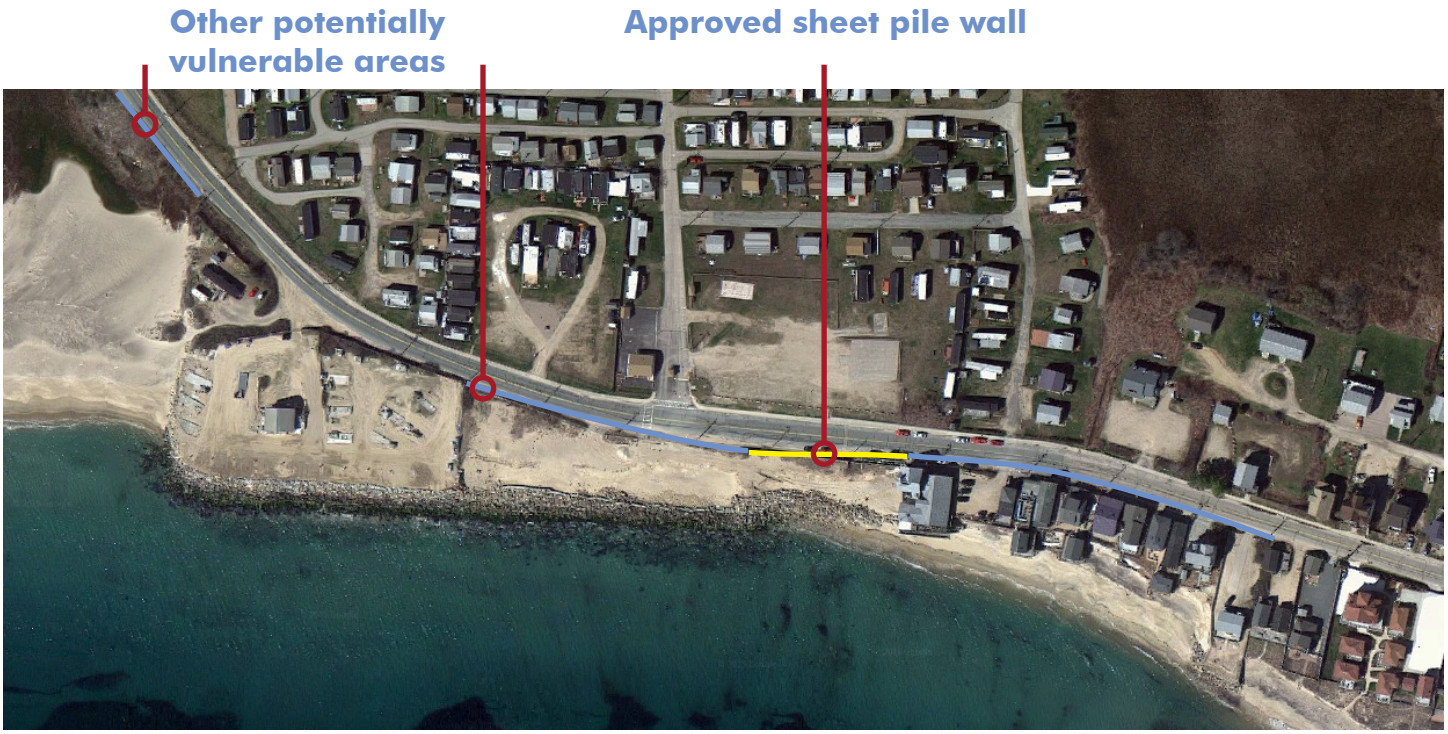


Relocation of water main

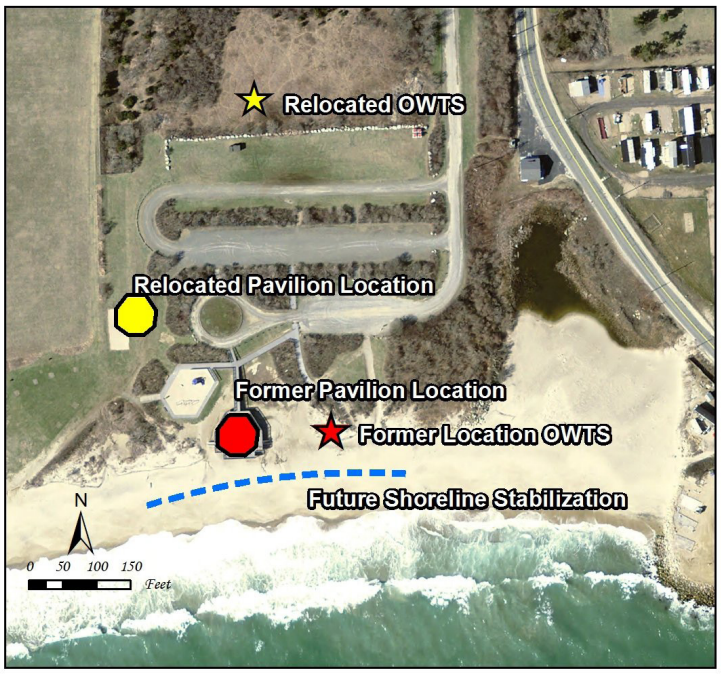
Two additional segments of pipe are required to create a new "loop." Over a mile of new water main will be installed along Route 1 and Succotash Road to provide a more resilient connection between different water service areas.

Existing, compromised 12-inch water main along East Matunuck Beach

Sheet Pile Wall



The planned sheet pile wall would be situated at the edge of the Town's right-of-way for Matunuck Beach Road beginning at the northwest corner of the Ocean Mist property and proceeding westerly for just over 200 feet. The sheet pile wall will be capped with a low concrete wall (3.5') similar to that in place at Narragansett Pier, and an armor stone toe will be located at the seaward side of the sheet pile with sacrificial sand graded on top to blend back into the small remaining headland. The project was put out to bid during the summer of 2013 and awarded in September of that year to HK & S Holding Company of Newport, RI. The bid award for the project was $1,198,534 (inclusive of a $200,000 contingency). The project had been delayed by legal challenges and the primary challenge was resolved in May 2015. The Town anticipates construction will begin in the Fall of 2015 and be substantially complete by May 2016. Two lanes of access will be maintained throughout the project. The work may result in the unavailability of parking in the work zone on a temporary basis.



As noted above, as part of the Town's Beach Improvement Program, the Town developed plans to relocate the Pavilion and OWTS inland at an estimated cost of $400,000. To support this project the Town received two grant awards under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grants Program and the Federal Stafford Act Hazard Mitigation Program, respectively, which funded approximately 70% of the estimated costs. This project was completed before the start of the 2015 beach season. The Parks and Recreation Department is also working with CRMC coastal geology staff to devise a best practices approach for restoration and maintenance of this area.

In addition, the Town is evaluating a potential application to the CRMC to utilize experimental erosion control measures permitted under Section 980 of the Coastal Resources Management Program at the Town Beach. The application would be intended to help mitigate the impacts of ongoing erosion especially at the east end of the municipal property. This effort could have the effect of increasing interest for eligible property owners to submit similar applications.

State regulations had required that residents use advanced OWTS due to the sensitivity of surface water resources and high water tables in the area. However, accelerated coastal erosion and coastal storm surges damaged many of these systems. The continued threat of contamination by failing septic systems and has necessitated the use of holding tanks for a number of commercial establishments south of Matunuck Beach Road (Ocean Mist, Tara's and the Vanilla Bean). This trend is viewed as an appropriate means to keep these businesses in viable circumstances and is viewed as a short-term mitigation measure. Longer term means to address septic handling and disposal in this vicinity must be evaluated and potentially viable infrastructure alternatives explored.

Summary Matrix

The table below summarizes the key issues facing Matunuck today and the recommendations from this study to address those issues. Many are cross-cutting and, if implemented, could address multiple key issues.

Key Issues	Recommendations
Managing Change and Preserving Community Character	• Explore the application of an historic overlay designation for the Village to reinforce and enhance the aesthetics indicative of its rich history as a summer, seaside community. • Develop illustrated design guidelines specific to the Village. Address issues related to "raze and replace" development to keep smaller scale housing. • Continue to explore the feasibility of a Leased-Land Community Overlay District for the "campground" facilities along the Town's south shore area. • Consider developing a program to educate and support property owners along the south shore regulated under multiple jurisdictions (Municipal/CRMC/ SAMP/DEM/RIEMA).
Coastal Erosion	• Continue to advocate for Matunuck as a destination and an active village in all discussions related to hazard mitigation and coastal erosion. • Convene a "summit" or mediation effort to build trust, communication and possible consensus among the various parties of interest. This summit could assist in consensus building by bringing many perspectives and potential options to the table.
Parking	Short-term • Re-stripe the existing on-street parking. • Work with RIDEM to improve the signage (presence and visibility of parking) and maintenance of the 30+ spaces located at Deep Hole. • Encourage businesses to contract with Mary Carpenter's to use their field for large events, or at a minimum, require they identify a parking strategy for events over a certain number of people. • Coordinate with the Police Department for better enforcement of parking regulations. • Investigate the feasibility of the Town Beach parking lot as a secondary resource and revenue generator, possibly restricted to special events. • Evaluate the potential for increased on-street parking for Matunuck Beach Road. • Evaluate the Town Beach for over-flow parking. Long-term • Consider the creation of a small municipal lot or on-street angled parking at the two parcels recently purchased by the Town (to the west of the Ocean Mist) and include public "pocket park" space. • Consider the use of Matunuck Elementary School parking area as a satellite resource.
Pedestrian Circulation/ Safety	• Reconsider the expansion of sidewalks along the east side of Matunuck Beach Road north to the Elementary School, where available shoulder widths can accommodate them. • Continue to improve and expand upon existing crosswalks in the village core area. • Evaluate the potential to provide additional crosswalks in the village core at Prospect Road and Deep Hole Fishing Area. • Perform an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/universal access audit in the Village.
Public and Private Infrastructure	• Continue to implement the approved projects for the water main relocation, the sheet pile seawall, and the pavilion. • Continue to explore the movement of utility poles to the other side of Matunuck Beach Road. • Consider incorporating green infrastructure elements within regulatory updates and future projects within the Village.

Appendix A

Existing Conditions, Matunuck

Existing Conditions

The Village of Matunuck is largely characterized as a summer vacation community consisting of a number of small businesses, a church/chapel, approximately 1,000 seasonal and year-round residential units, various agricultural uses, open space holdings and salt ponds. Small farms, estate properties, historic homes, and modern residential development surround the Village. The Town of South Kingstown operates its Town Beach in this area, while the Deep Hole Fishing Area (a state facility managed by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM)) provides a variety of recreational opportunities. The influx of University of Rhode Island students into South Kingstown, followed by summer vacationers, significantly alters the Town's population depending upon the time of year, particularly in Matunuck.

This section provides an overview of existing conditions in the Village of Matunuck, organized into the following categories:

- Physical Environment
- Social and Recreational Components
- Infrastructure
- Regulatory Elements

Physical Environment

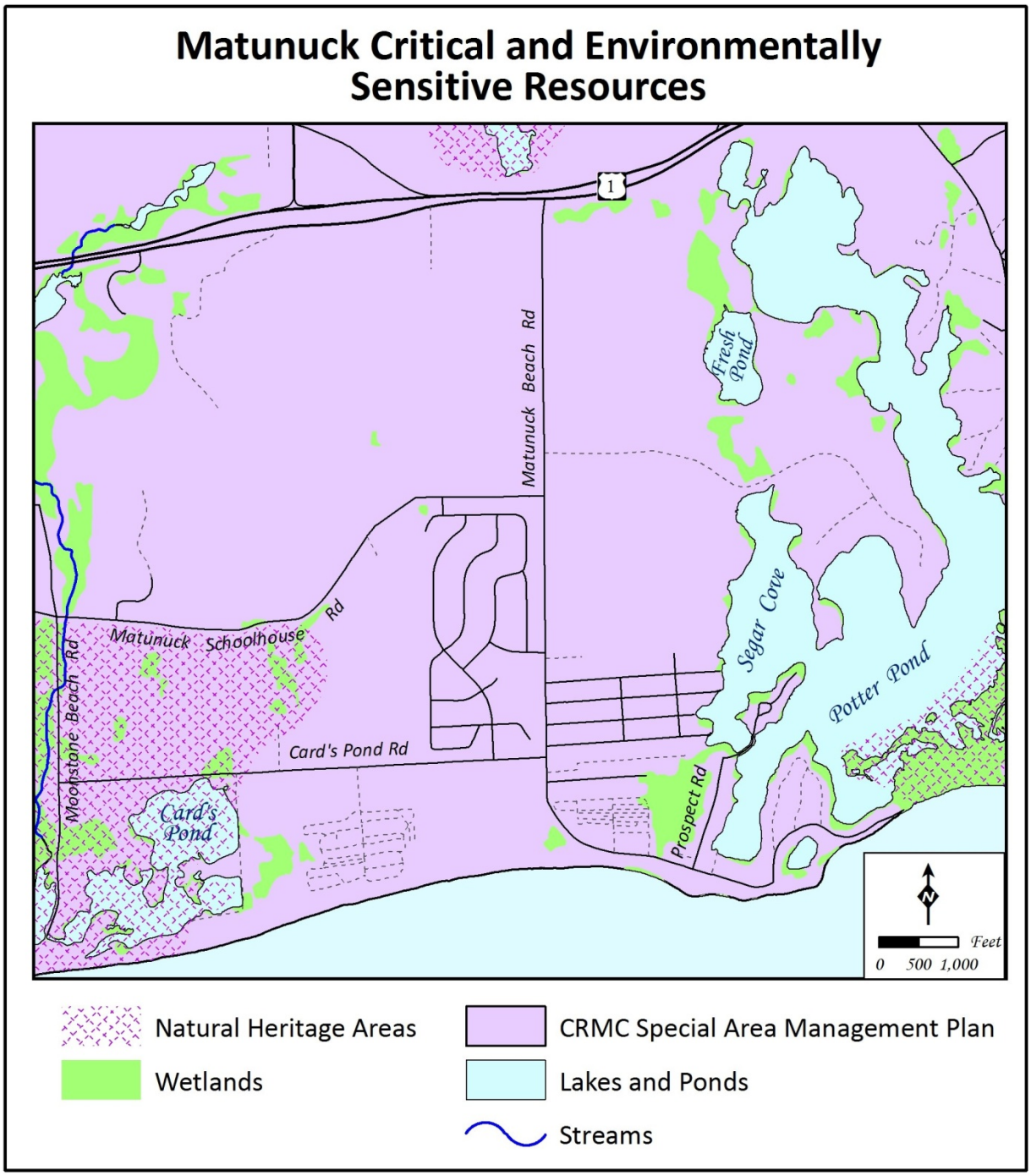
The geology of Matunuck's coastline is a combination of headlands and barrier beaches. The headlands are composed of glacial till or glacial river sand and gravel and are fronted by beaches (CRMC's Special Area Management Plan/ SAMP 1999). The barrier beaches lie parallel to the coast and are composed of sand and gravel deposited by waves and storm surges and enclose the salt ponds that lie behind them. The natural processes of erosion and deposition typically occur in cycles. The south shore beaches have been eroding steadily over a long period of time, leaving most beaches sediment-deficient with narrow, low profiles. A major function of barrier beaches is to provide protection to backshore properties through wave dissipation. They are meant to move back and forth with wave energy and storms. Matunuck's shoreline projects west to east, directly exposing it to the full force of coastal storm winds, high-velocity waves, and storm surges. In response to coastal storms and sea level rise, barrier beaches are presently migrating landward as sand eroding from the ocean beach is transported by storm surge "over wash" to the back barrier and coastal lagoon. The proximity of the built environment directly behind these narrow, low profiled beaches, coupled with the high wave velocity, places the Village at risk.

The Town of South Kingstown contains abundant natural resources including Block Island Sound beaches, salt ponds, estuaries and wetlands. These marine and estuarine resources benefit not only residents, but also attract tourists from throughout New England. South Kingstown has approximately 363 acres of coastal wetlands, with an additional 1,707 acres of salt ponds and estuarine rivers including the Pettaquamscutt River, Point Judith Pond, Potter Pond, Card's Pond, Trustom Pond, and Green Hill Pond. For the past ten years, the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council has designated Point Judith, Green Hill, and Potter Ponds as Shellfish Management Areas, while Point Judith and Potter Ponds support small operations for shellfish aquaculture. All of the ponds are within the general vicinity of the Village, with Potter

Pond and Card's Pond central to Matunuck. Due to its greater depth and predominantly soft bottom, Potter Pond supports a limited recreational shellfishery, primarily used by residents who live around the pond.

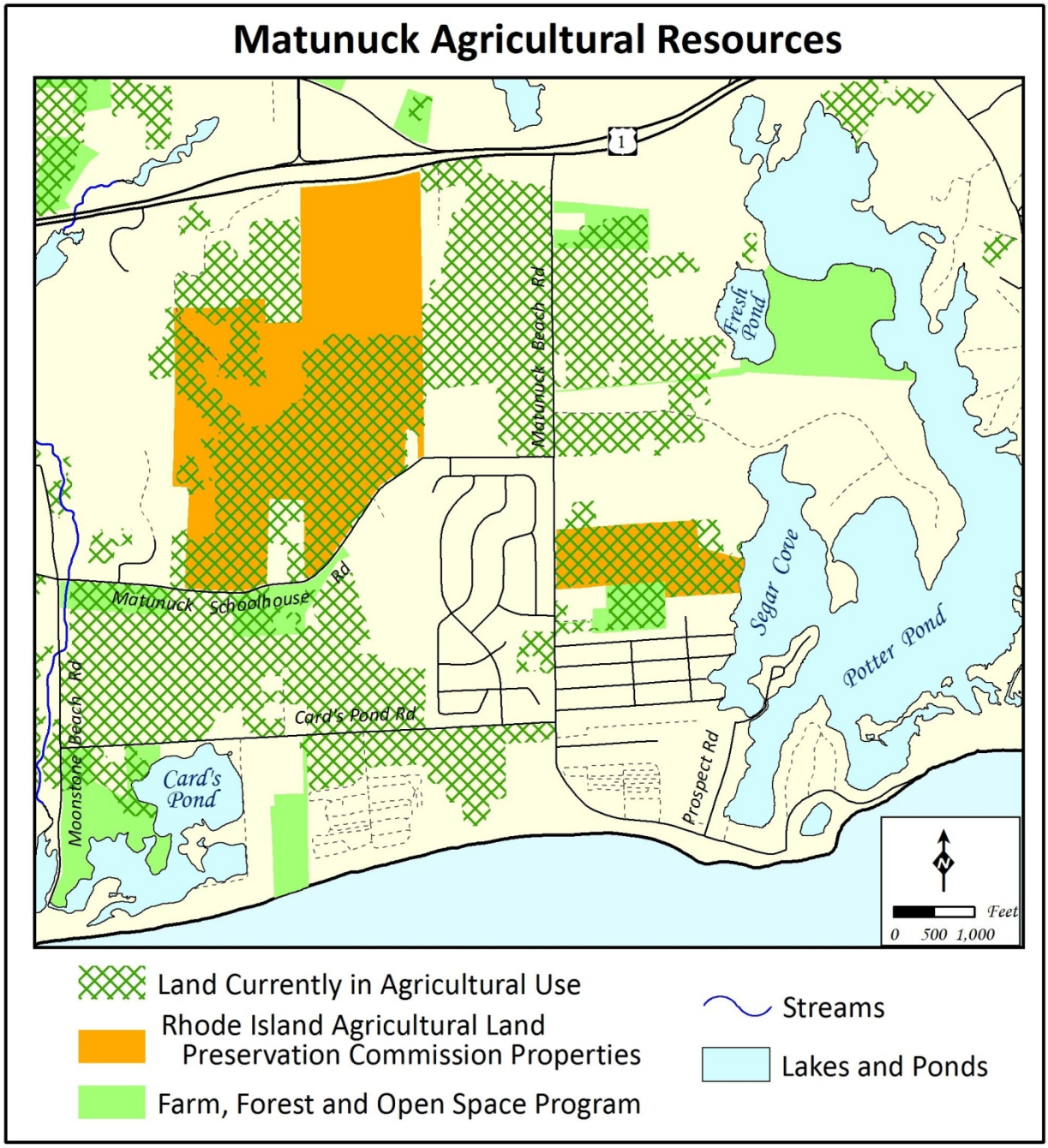
The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Natural Heritage Program (RINHP) maps of critical and environmentally sensitive areas show these features are concentrated around Trustom and Card's Ponds (also designated as distinctive, scenic landscapes), the Town Beach, and the south-eastern corner of Potter Pond. Active agricultural areas include town-owned property (leased to a local farmer for feed/hay production) and Carpenter's Farm, under Rhode Island Agricultural Land Preservation Commission protection.

Areas that once contained summer cottages are trending towards year round residential neighborhoods. The Village is anchored by two small commercial districts serving both the local and summer populations. Small quaint summer cottages, once desired by many, continue to be torn down and re-constructed as multi-story high-end residences. Accelerated coastal processes (coastal erosion, storm surge and sea level rise) continue to necessitate more advanced and innovative building technologies and codes. Mary Carpenter's seasonal beach community (Carpenter's Beach Meadow) remains, as do several shops, bars/restaurants and a neighborhood market. Looking back on the recent history of Matunuck, although many of the iconic commercial establishments have stood the test of time through generations; most residents and visitors agree that the 'beach community' character, in addition to the coastline, is increasingly changing.



Source: Town of South Kingstown, RIGIS

Critical and Environmentally Sensitive Resources are concentrated around Trustom and Card's Ponds, the Town Beach and southeastern corner of Potter Pond



Source: Town of South Kingstown, RIGIS

Agricultural Resources are reflective of the Village's farming tradition

Under Rhode Island law, property enrolled in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Program helps to conserve productive agricultural and forest land by reducing the chance it will have to be sold for development since it is assessed at its current use, and not its value for development.

Additional agricultural resources within the Village include the South Kingstown Land Trust property (97 acres, also *Land Currently in Agricultural Use*), the Duval property to the west (67 acres, also *Land Currently in Agricultural Use*), the Brent Estate property (11 acres, also *Land Currently in Agricultural Use*), and Mary Carpenter's property (38 acres, also under Rhode Island Agricultural Land Preservation Commission).

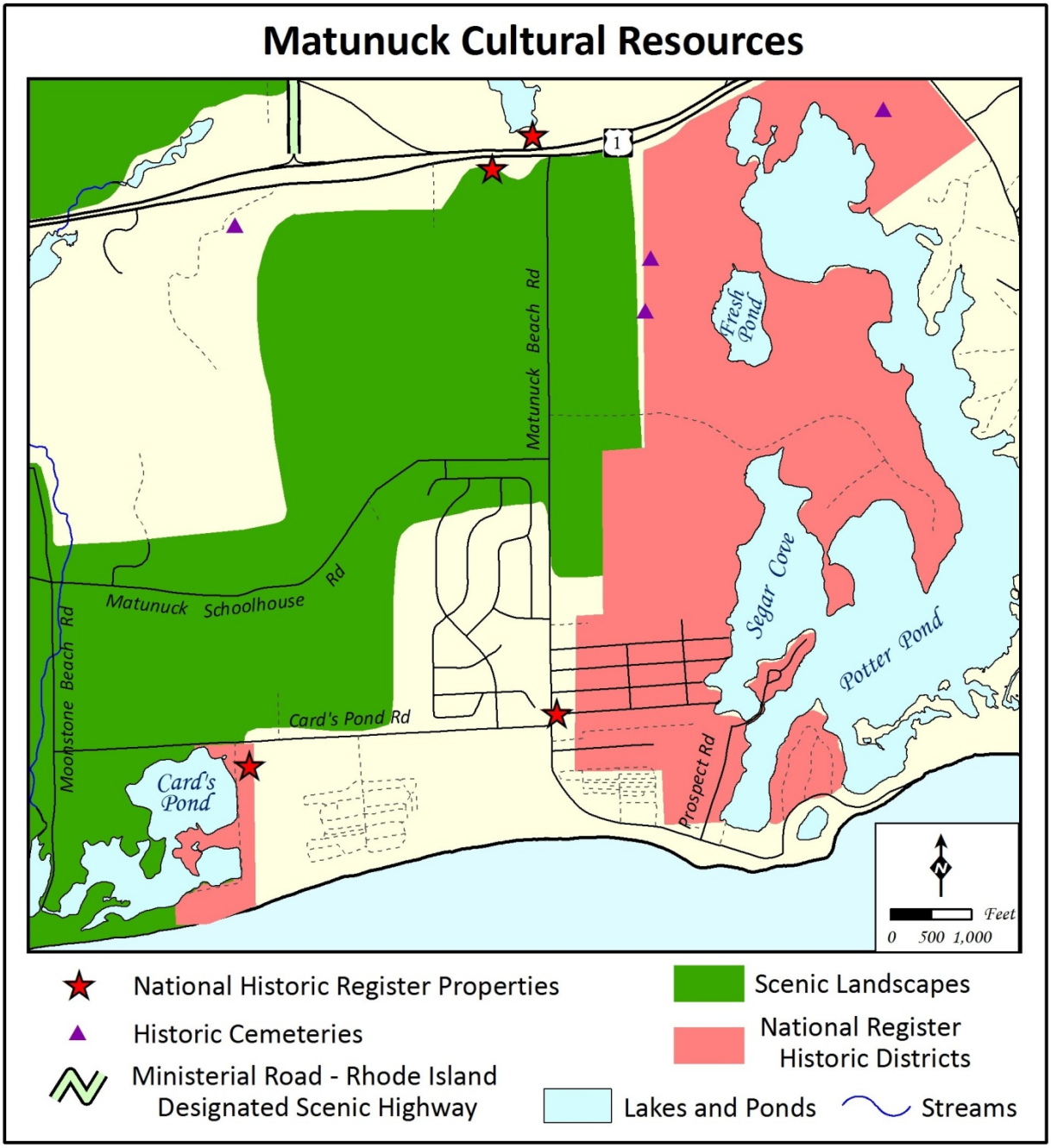
Social and Recreational Components

One of the most recognizable characteristics of Matunuck is its social component, such as its long-standing 'sense of place' and cultural tradition as a New England seaside summer colony. The Town Beach and Deep Hole Fishing Area provide varied recreational opportunities and serve as regional destinations. The few remaining commercial establishments provide a place for residents, visitors and college students to eat and socialize, and offer musical venues throughout the year. These venues also significantly contribute to the local economy, and are synonymous with Matunuck's distinct neighborhood character and sense of place. Both Carpenter (Mary and Roy Carpenter) family summer colonies, Theater by the Sea, Narragansett Salt Water Fishing Club, Matunuck Community Association, Matunuck Point Beach Club, and also St. Romuald's Roman Catholic Chapel round out Matunuck's sense of place.

The South Kingstown Town Beach and Deep Hole Fishing Area serve as both natural habitat and surge protection. Recent coastal storms have resulted in significant beach erosion and scouring, and additional damage to the remaining sections of the boardwalk at the Town Beach. Several years ago, the Town undertook the removal of the undermined sections of the boardwalk, cordoned off the dune system to facilitate the re-establishment of vegetation, and implemented an extensive beach nourishment program. Most recently, the Town has also completed the inland relocation of the pavilion and that facility's onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS). The Town Beach also offers two picnic areas, a playground and a volleyball court.

The expansive shallow reef at Deep Hole in Matunuck provides a number of popular recreational uses that contribute to its distinctive character, including:

- Surf fishing
- Kayaking
- Surfing/Wind Surfing
- Paddle/Kite Boarding



Source: Town of South Kingstown, RIGIS

These recreational activities are typically not allowed on beaches in the state, as they are often considered incompatible with bathing uses. Deep Hole's 'first come, first served' free public parking facility provides convenient shore-side access for recreational users from around the state. These users also support the local economy including shops, bars, hotels and the real estate market.

Since 1935, Mary Carpenter's Beach Meadow has been a major part of the social environment in Matunuck. Now at over 300 summer cottages, Carpenter's Beach Meadow remains much the same as it was decades ago, attracting people from all over Rhode Island, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Roy Carpenter's Beach has also been a place where Rhode Island families have gathered for many generations. Having suffered damages from many past coastal storms including damage to the beachfront store "Buds", loss of the roadway that paralleled the beach, and loss of the physical beach; Roy Carpenter's Beach community continues to adapt. The community consists of over 375 cottages standing today.

Theater by the Sea, an historic theater and playhouse founded in 1933 by Alice Jaynes Tyler experienced a long and fruitful 35-year run. This theater is synonymous with Matunuck and famous 'golden era' stars that played here include Marlon Brando, Carol Channing, Groucho Marx, and Shelley Winters to name a few. In 1967, Tommy Brent revived the Theater with a new tradition and future by completely producing shows on site for the next twenty-two years. In 1989, following multi-million dollar renovations, an entertainment company (ForeQuest) ran the Theater for fourteen years. From 2007 through today, the Ocean State Theater Company, Inc. typically produces four shows per season, plus another five shows as part of a children's festival.

Deep Hole Fishing Area

South Kingstown Town Beach

St Romuald's Chapel

Admiral Dewey Inn, National Historic Register

Infrastructure

The Village of Matunuck is located outside of the Urban Services Boundary designated by State Guide Plan Element, *Land Use 2025*, indicating the limited availability of services.

Sewer services are not provided within the Village, requiring residents to utilize onsite waste water treatment systems (OWTS). Accelerated coastal erosion and coastal storm surges, particularly for the commercial establishments south of Matunuck Beach Road, have damaged existing systems to the extent that holding tanks have been installed to mitigate failing/exposed septic systems. In addition, the Town Beach septic system was inundated, and thus replaced in 2015 with a new system located further inland. Water service to the area is provided via a 12-inch water main along Matunuck Beach Road that services a significant portion of the South Shore Municipal Water System. The portion of the water main located between East Matunuck State Beach and Ocean Avenue is located approximately four feet below the existing barrier beach. Given the increased frequency and magnitude of coastal storm events, the water line is extremely vulnerable to being undermined from storm surge induced shoreline erosion.

The impacts of coastal erosion, storm surge and sea level rise, particularly within the area of the Matunuck Commercial District, have increased to the point of potentially undermining Matunuck Beach Road. Matunuck Beach Road serves as the only access/ egress/evacuation route for over 500 seasonal and year round residences.

For most, the center of the residential component of the Village begins south of Carpenter's Farm Stand, while commercial development begins at the intersection of the Admiral Dewey Inn and Seaview Market. A small multi-tenant commercial building adjacent to the market, which includes the Matunuck Surf Shop, a laundromat, and a coffee shop, is a popular destination for locals as well as vacationers. There is a concrete sidewalk along the north side of the roadway from this area south into the heart of the Village along Matunuck Beach Road, ending at Prospect Road. Lack of pedestrian amenities (shelter/shade structures, benches, lighting or a connecting sidewalk network into residential areas) raises safety concerns

Recent construction of an onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) at Mary Carpenter's

A lack of sidewalks throughout the residential neighborhoods in Matunuck require people to walk in the street, the preferred alternative for many residents

On-street parking is limited to the Commercial /Neighborhood District (approximately 60 spaces)

Limited crosswalks and sight distance at intersections raise concerns of pedestrian safety

associated with high pedestrian and vehicular traffic volumes. This particularly is true during the summer months when seasonal rental populations peak and congestion is compounded by day-trippers visiting the area.

Although the Deep Hole Fishing Area provides free public access to Matunuck Point, lateral shoreline access is limited by the presence of shoreline revetments, compounded by the wave environment and strong tidal currents. The Town repaired the Matunuck Point steps after they were severely damaged during a March 2009 storm event. These steps provide continuous pedestrian access to East Matunuck State Beach.

A small coastal pond on private property east of the Town Beach and south of Matunuck Beach Road is filling in, which is reducing the holding capacity of the pond and compounding the shoreline impacts of coastal erosion and storm damage.

Parking, or lack thereof, in Matunuck is an ongoing concern. The Deep Hole parking lot is a state-owned facility managed by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) providing both shoreline access and access to the reef. The facility provides parking for approximately 30 vehicles and is fee-free 'first come, first served. There is limited on-street parking associated with the smaller commercial district (Seaview Market) and several off-street parking spaces available for patrons at the small multi-tenant commercial building adjacent to the market. Further into the heart of the Village, there is limited on-street parking adjacent to the primary commercial district.

This small coastal pond adjacent to the Town Beach driveway entrance is filling in

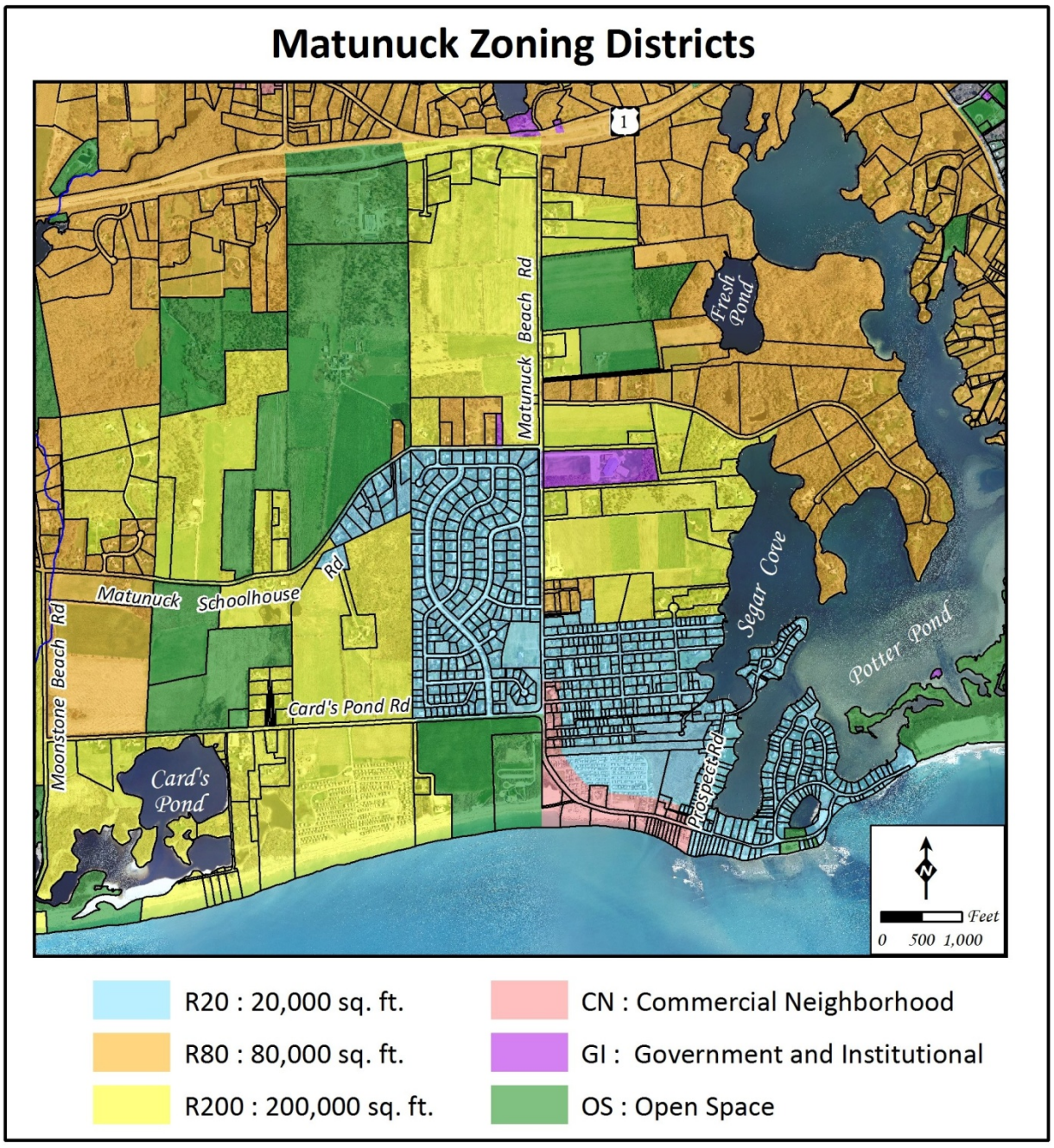
Regulatory Elements

The Village of Matunuck is predominately zoned Medium-High Density Residential District (R20), which has a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet and a maximum lot coverage of 25 percent. Approximately 46 percent of lots are non-conforming because they are less than 20,000 square feet. According to the Rhode Island Property Codes, nearly three quarters of these non-conforming lots contain a single family home, seven properties have multi-family dwellings, and almost 10 percent are seasonal homes.

The Village also falls within the Carrying Capacity Overlay District because the area has been classified as 'Lands Developed Beyond Carrying Capacity' according to *Rhode Island's Salt Pond Region: A Special Area Management Plan* (SAMP), prepared by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), dated November 27, 1984, including the September 1993 addenda. Due to this 'lands developed beyond carrying capacity' designation, the local ordinance prohibits accessory units. The SAMP reports that these lands are at a higher density and impact the sensitive salt pond environment of Potter Pond. High nutrient loading and contaminated runoff waters have resulted in increased evidence of eutrophic conditions and bacterial contamination in the salt pond. Most of the OWTS in this area predate RIDEM

regulations pertaining to design and siting standards, and, according to CRMC, have exceeded their expected life span.

CRMC policies and regulations outlined in the SAMP require nitrogen reducing technologies for all new installations or replacement of existing OWTS for activities within 200 feet of a coastal feature and all watershed activities in 'lands developed beyond carrying capacity'. Regular maintenance and upgrading of existing OWTS is the highest priority in unsewered areas like Matunuck. Buffer zones are required for existing development along the perimeter of Potter Pond. The CRMC Program requires a 25-foot buffer to the coastal feature for residential lot sizes less than 10,000 square feet and a 50-foot buffer for lots 10,000 to 20,000 square feet. New development must have a minimum buffer of 25 feet.



Source: Town of South Kingstown, RIGIS

In the northern portion of the Village study area, eight parcels are zoned Rural Residential Low Density (R80), with the minimum lot size for single-household detached dwellings at 80,000 square feet. Overall, these are not served by public facilities. While public water service may be provided, there are no plans to extend sewer service to this area.

A large portion of the developed village area encompasses the Medium High-Density Residential 20 (R20) designation.

Medium High-Density Residential 20 (R20) residence, Blackberry Hill area, Mary Carpenter's and residential neighborhoods to the north, and the Matunuck Point Beach Club

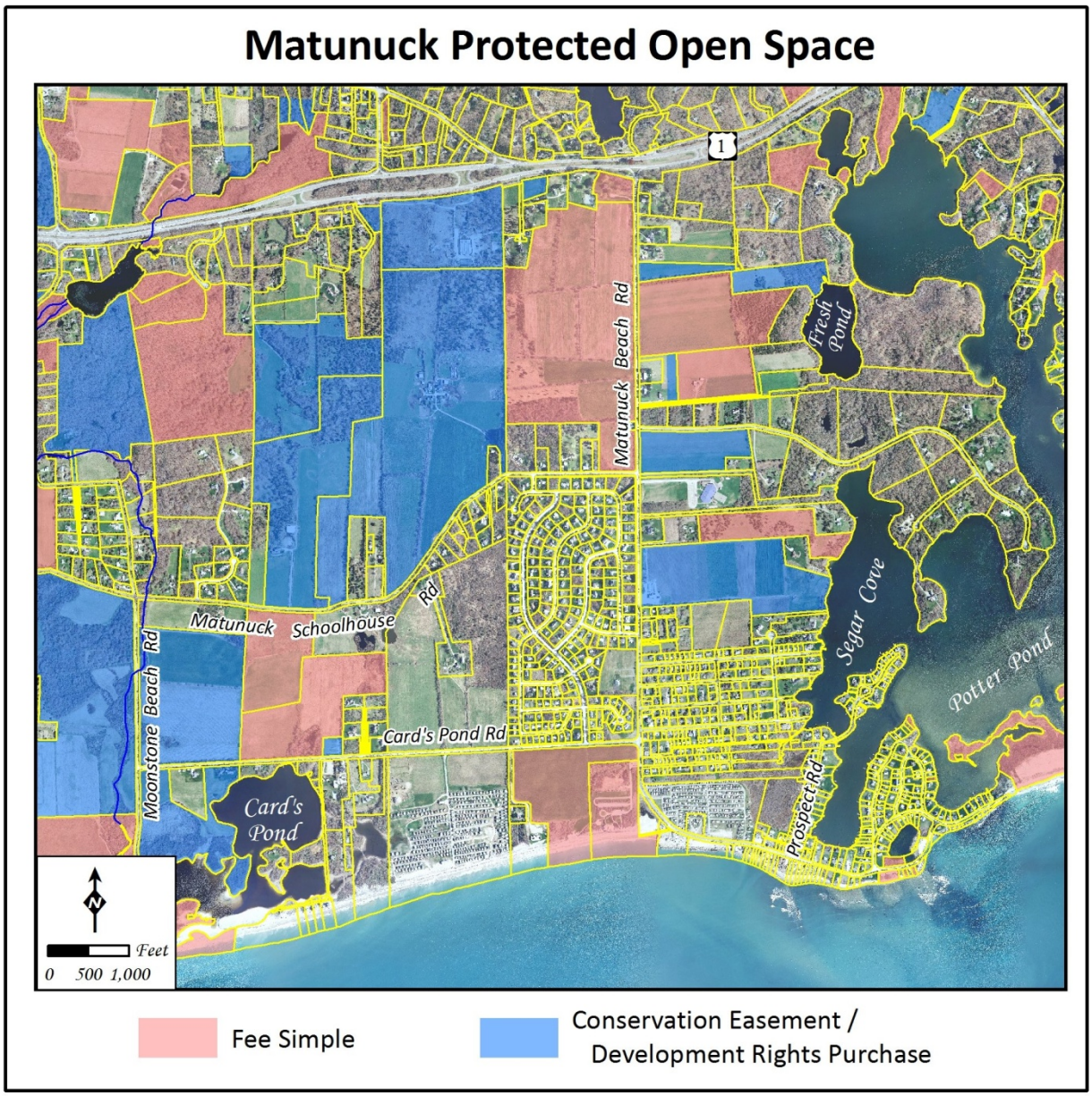
Several parcels along the southern side of Antique Road and Roy Carpenter's summer colony area are zoned Rural Very Low Density Residential (R200). The minimum lot size for single-household detached dwellings is 200,000 square feet. The primary purpose of this district is to provide protection to sensitive environmental resources, such as the groundwater reservoirs and recharge areas, and coastal pond watersheds. It provides a residential density low enough to discourage the conversion of open lands and farmlands to more intensive use, while still allowing reasonable economic use of the land.

The Union Fire District: Station 7-Matunuck (Matunuck Schoolhouse Road) and the Matunuck Elementary School (Matunuck Beach Road) make up the whole of the Government/Institutional zone within the village. The purpose of this district is to recognize the extent of public and semi-public land holdings and to provide guidance to utilization of these lands should they be sold or otherwise transferred to private ownership.

Along Matunuck Beach Road, there is a Commercial Neighborhood (CN) District, which allows small-scale retail establishments, single family homes, and multi-family homes. For multi-family household structures, the minimum lot size is 15,000 square feet for the first two dwelling units, then 5,000 square feet for each additional unit. For single and two-family buildings as well as other permitted principal uses, the minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet. The maximum lot coverage for these uses is 25 percent. The district allows mixed uses with specially designated retail areas, such as office or public/semi-public uses with single and multi-household residential development under special conditions and design and site plan requirements.

Rural Very Low Density Residential 200 (R200) parcels (Roy Carpenter's, Carpenter's Farm Stand and agricultural areas)

Open Space District (OS) zoning parcels are found north of the Village associated with the Browning property (132 acres, also under Rhode Island Agricultural Land Preservation Commission) and RIDEM property (32 acres, also under *Land Currently in Agricultural Use*). West of the Village there are OS parcels associated with U.S. Government Property/Trustom Pond (50 acres, also under *Land Currently in Agricultural Use*). Southwest of Matunuck Beach Road there are OS parcels associated with the Town Beach (15 acres, a portion of which also under *Land Currently in Agricultural Use*). East of the Village there are OS parcels associated with RIDEM property/East Matunuck State Beach (61 acres).



Source: Town of South Kingstown, RIGIS