

TOWN OF BARRINGTON, RHODE ISLAND

**COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN**

*AS AMENDED, 2002 and 2004*

FOREWARD

This document is an amended version of the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan, originally developed and adopted by the Planning Board and the Town Council in 1992. It has undergone extensive review at the state level and following some changes and additions, been certified consistent with the goals and policies of all reviewing state agencies. The amendments were adopted by the Barrington Planning Board and the Barrington Town Council at respective public hearings held on April 23 and May 6, 2002. The changes include some modifications in the text of each element and the stated goals, policies and recommendations. The changes do not include extensive updated background material or a discussion of current issues. This updated information will be provided when the plan undergoes a major revision, an effort which will result in the development of a new document that responds to the changes Barrington has experienced since 1992. Since the 2002 update, the Comprehensive Community Plan has been amended once. On November 29, 2004, the Council amended the Housing Element to reflect the adoption of the Affordable Housing Plan.

**BARRINGTON COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN**  
*AMENDED 2002*

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# **BARRINGTON COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN**

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SEPTEMBER 1992

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NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES  
OPEN SPACE and RECREATION  
SUMMARY and IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

# BARRINGTON COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN

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## INTRODUCTION

The Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan 1992 was prepared under the direction of the Barrington Planning Board, in accordance with the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act. Funding was provided by the State of Rhode Island as administered through the Office of Municipal Affairs, Rhode Island Department of Administration. The plan contains seven elements regarding life in Barrington. Each section of the plan dealing with a particular element contains a description of existing conditions, a discussion of issues, and general goals and policies to guide the Town's future actions. Each of the functional elements also concludes with a discussion of specific recommendations.

The present report is the Barrington Town Council version of the comprehensive plan, as adopted by the Council on July 13, August 11, and September 8, 1992. A Town Council public hearing was held on June 17, 1992, in which the final Planning Board version of the plan was presented. The public input received during the Town Council hearing and at the later council meetings resulted in some modifications to the plan presented on June 17 by members of the Planning Board. The final Planning Board draft resulted from input received during a workshop and public hearing sponsored by the Board on March 16, 1992, in which the first published draft of the plan was presented.

The recommendations contained in the plan include those developed by the Planning Board through the work of several citizen committees who dealt with the various elements, as well as those modified or developed by the Town Council. With adoption by the Town Council, the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan is the official policy document of the Town, one which includes recommendations having both policy and regulatory implications.

The plan begins with a brief description of the history of Barrington. This is followed by the seven elements, which are:

- \* **Land Use and Population**
- \* **Housing**
- \* **Economic Development**
- \* **Circulation**
- \* **Community Services and Facilities**
- \* **Natural and Cultural Resources**
- \* **Open Space and Recreation**

Several maps are also included which illustrate existing conditions and features in Barrington, as well as many proposed improvements.

The final section of this document, **Summary and Implementation Plan**, contains a summary of the recommendations for each element, as well as a schedule and assignment of responsibility for implementing these recommendations. A map which depicts all proposed zoning changes which are contained within the recommendation sections of the various elements is also contained in the summary chapter.

While all of the goals and policies are reflective of the plan's long term, or twenty year focus, the recommendations developed to achieve these goals and policies are more specifically defined in terms of their implementation. The schedule for implementation is broken down into three phases: Phase 1, eighteen months to two years; Phase 2, two to five years; and Phase 3, five to twenty years.

Following State approval, the Town Council, Planning Board, other boards and commissions, and town departments will undertake its implementation. This will include changes in Barrington's zoning and subdivision ordinances, the development of new procedures and regulations, and the undertaking of additional plans and studies. The development of the comprehensive plan is only the first step in undertaking changes in Barrington that will strengthen and improve the community -- to prepare it for the future in a way that both provides for its citizens and protects its important resources.

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF BARRINGTON

Barrington today is the result of hundreds of years of human activity that made use of its lands, waters and natural resources. At the onset of European colonization in the mid-seventeenth century, the Town's two peninsulas were within Sowams, the homelands of Massasoit, Chief Sachem of the Wampanoag Tribe. The precise location of Massasoit's village has not been determined, although it most likely was in either Barrington or Warren. The Wampanoag Indians used the lands of Barrington for hunting, fishing and cultivating crops. The same physical resources that supported the Wampanoags had also attracted their ancestors. Archaeological discoveries within Barrington have demonstrated that Native Americans were active here four to ten thousand years before the present.

European colonization in the second half of the seventeenth century initiated a decline in Native American fortunes. By 1667, enough English settlers from the Plymouth and Massachusetts colonies were drawn to the fertile Sowams lands to incorporate the Town of Swansea. Tensions between the English colonists and Native Americans produced by this English encroachment broke into the open hostilities of King Philip's War here in 1675. By the following year the Wampanoags' hold on their native land was broken, and the colonists began to rebuild their largely destroyed settlement.

From these colonial origins, a farming society developed in the eighteenth century and prospered into the nineteenth century. In this agricultural period of development, the lands of Barrington were parceled into pasture, cropland and homesteads with a simple network of roads linking farmers to their holdings and to neighboring communities. Barrington's equivalent of a town center developed in the eighteenth century around the Congregational Church still in place along the north end of County Road. At the junction of the Barrington and Warren Rivers, a second water-oriented settlement developed around a number of shipyards and traders' wharves and warehouses. By the early nineteenth century these maritime activities had moved across the river to Warren, and Barrington's history as a seaport was over.

As industrialization transformed Rhode Island in the nineteenth century, Barrington was affected, although not in a typical way. Lacking suitable water-power sites or a working waterfront, the Town was largely bypassed in the extensive development of water and steam-powered factories. When industry did arrive, it was in 1840 in the form of brick manufacturing. In the process of working claybeds in the Nayatt area, the brick manufacturers transformed Mouscochuck Creek into a barge canal and created the claypits, now flooded and known as Brickyard Pond and Echo Lake. This industry which persisted until the 1930's, also transformed the Town's social landscape; large numbers of Italian immigrants joined the workforce in the late nineteenth century, and remained to develop their own neighborhoods along Maple Avenue and Middle Highway.

A second pivotal event occurred in the mid nineteenth century with the construction of the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad across town in 1855. At a time when Providence was becoming the region's commercial, financial and industrial center, the railroad brought Barrington within the City's sphere and initiated the trend of suburban residential development which was to dominate the Town's future. A new neighborhood began to develop along the rail line at Drownville in West Barrington, and a new town center emerged where the railroad crossed County Road. At the same time, the Town began to draw the attention of those eager for relief from the City. At Nayatt Point resort hotels appeared while both vacation and year-round homes spread along the extensive shore- front. These developments included both expensive

building in prime locations, as well as more modest houses where conditions allowed.

The patterns established in the second half of the nineteenth century guided Barrington's growth into the twentieth century. The railroad also promoted the growth of a small industrial district in Bay Spring, where factories engaged in textile finishing and lace-making. The automobile, which first supplemented and then replaced the railroad as a means of transportation between Barrington and Providence, induced a broader pattern of development across the Town. The post-World War II era saw Barrington as a favored suburb absorbing still more residential development.

Today, this trend has reached a climax of sorts. While the once-predominant rural flavor is still apparent, Barrington's agricultural character has greatly diminished in the recent past and recreational boating now dominates over commercial fishing activities on the waterfront. The Town's industry, which was always limited, has gradually dwindled to its present minor status. Barrington is most readily identified as a commuter suburb typified by its extensive residential neighborhoods, yet more than three hundred years of history have indelibly stamped the Town's character and contribute powerfully to its distinctive and attractive appearance.

Richard Greenwood

## LAND USE AND POPULATION ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

A detailed look at the land use and demographics of a community provides the framework for the planning efforts which follow. Land use is a description of the physical characteristics of the community, while the age and ethnicity of the community's population presents a general profile of the people who live there. The use of land is also inherently tied to the other elements of the comprehensive plan, and the goals described for each of these elements is naturally a reflection of the goals and priorities of the people in the community.

As part of the comprehensive plan, a 1991 Existing Land Use Map was prepared of Barrington. The map is based upon a use and density survey done at the plat map level in 1989 which was updated by a review of tax records regarding both use and ownership of many parcels of land, as well as an analysis of aerial photographs, field visits and review by committee members. The land use map is consistent with all other maps prepared as part of the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan in the designation of all public land, private protected land, commercial areas, recreational areas and wetlands. The need to define the locations and extent of these various areas for other elements of the comprehensive plan assisted in the completion and resulting accuracy of the land use map.

The inventory of existing land use is complemented by a review of Barrington's present zoning designations, development trends over the past three decades and the Town's tax base. Total population from the 1990 Census and projections from the R.I. Department of Administration are also included in this first section of the comprehensive plan document. This introduction to the community is followed by goals and policies identified for overall land use in Barrington. Recommendations developed as part of the comprehensive plan are contained within the other elements of the plan -- housing, economic development, circulation, community services and facilities, natural and cultural resources, and open space and recreation.

## LAND USE

Included within this section is a breakdown of the Town's overall land use by type and zoning designation. This is followed by a review of building permits over the last three decades and the classification of the Barrington tax roll by property type.

### Land Use Inventory

Figure 1 illustrates Barrington's existing land use (1991). Although it is perceived to be nearly completely developed, Barrington has significant amounts of open land. It is primarily a residential community and much of the undeveloped land not in public ownership includes large institutional and organizational holdings such as St. Andrews School, the Rhode Island Country Club and Rhode Island School of Design (R.I.S.D.) land, as well as various commercial agricultural operations scattered around town. Commercial land in Barrington is primarily along lower County Road and Maple Avenue, but also includes some smaller retail areas around town, and a number of marinas. Industrial use is limited to two large parcels along Bay Spring Avenue in West Barrington.

The summary of land use in Barrington, by category, is shown in the following table:

Table 1

BARRINGTON LAND USE 1991

<u>Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Residential	2,949.8	53.3
Commercial	82.5	1.5
Industrial	13.7	0.3
Public Institutional	149.5	2.7
Private Institutional	187.4	3.4
Public Recreation	112.1	2.0
Private Recreation	182.5	3.3
Agriculture	214.8	3.9
Public Undeveloped*	384.0	6.9
Private Undeveloped	349.2	6.3
Wetlands	623.3	11.3
Inland Water Bodies	215.7	3.9
Bicycle Path and Wampanoag Trail	<u>67.9</u>	<u>1.2</u>
Total	5,532.4	100%

\* Also includes private land that cannot be developed due to its ownership (Barrington Land Conservation Trust, Audubon Society), or conservation easement.

While residential is clearly the dominant land use in Barrington, comprising more than half of the Town's land area, commercial and industrial land uses are the two smallest categories. Only 1.5 percent of the land in Barrington is used commercially, while 0.3 percent is used industrially, and much of this industrial land is actually vacant or underutilized. While the area measured for the

East Bay Bicycle Path and the Wampanoag Trail (which is a divided highway) shows a greater acreage than industrial land use, in actuality these two travel corridors represent just a fraction of the land area in Barrington which is used for transportation.

Following residential, the next largest category is wetlands, which have been mapped for Barrington based on a 1987 wetlands survey (see Natural and Cultural Features Element). During the development of the land use map, wetlands, while not an actual land use category, were considered to be the dominant use wherever they appeared. If a wetland is part of a park or institutional land, is being farmed or is perhaps even developed residentially, it is still designated as wetland because this represents its primary function and physical characteristic. On the land use map, wetlands are broken down by ownership -- either public or protected (owned by the Barrington Land Trust or the Rhode Island Audubon Society), or private (in individual ownership). Of the total 623.3 acres of wetlands, (11.3% of the land area in Barrington), approximately half is in public or private-protected ownership. Much of the Town's significant forestland is also associated with these protected wetlands (see Open Space and Recreation Element).

Land uses which are designated public are public institutional, (municipal buildings, schools and cemeteries), public recreation and public undeveloped. Public undeveloped land includes public open space and wooded land, as well as that private land which is protected through its ownership by the Land Trust or Audubon Society, or by means of a conservation easement which prevents its further development. The public undeveloped category is the largest of the three public land uses, comprising 384 acres, or 6.9 percent of the Town's total area. Together the public and private-protected land areas add up to 645.6 acres, or 11.7 percent of the Town.

While there is significantly more land in the private institutional and private recreation categories than either the public institutional or public recreation categories, respectively, this is again due to the large land holdings of such institutions as the Zion Bible Institute, St. Andrews School and R.I.S.D., as well as the R.I. Country Club. Much of the private institutional and recreation land could be considered undeveloped, or rather potentially developable land. This is true as well for most of the agricultural land in Barrington, of which there are 214.8 acres; only approximately ten of these acres are permanently protected as part of the Johannis Farm Wildlife Preserve, a large parcel recently acquired by the Barrington Land Conservation Trust.

Private undeveloped land is the fourth largest category in terms of total area, following residential, wetlands and public undeveloped land. The 349.2 acres of private undeveloped land includes all the open undeveloped (not built upon) land in town that is neither a wetland nor in agricultural, institutional or recreational use. It represents the land most likely to be developed. Although there is some undeveloped land zoned for business and manufacturing in western Barrington (Bay Spring) and some undeveloped lots zoned for business along Maple Avenue, the bulk of this land is within one of Barrington's three residential zones (see Figure 2, Zoning Map). The only exceptions to this are some open land near Allins Cove, and along the east side of County Road adjoining Hundred Acre Cove, both of which are within the Town's Open Space District, a zoning designation which allows residential use by special use only.

The final category, water bodies, constitutes all the open water within the Town's land area, including those within the low-lying marshland around Hundred Acre Cove. The largest interior water body in Barrington is Brickyard Pond which is about 112 acres, more than half of the total acreage for all water bodies. Brickyard Pond is followed in size by Echo Lake (22 acres), and Prince's Pond (13 acres).

Shown on the land use map are three designations for residential use. These are low density (less than one unit per acre), medium density (one to 3.9 units per acre) and high density (4 or more units per acre). Table 2 provides a breakdown of residential land use acreage by housing density:

Table 2

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE BY DENSITY IN BARRINGTON

<u>Residential</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Residential</u>	<u>% of Total Area</u>
Low Density	506	17	9.1
Medium Density	2,120	72	38.3
High Density	<u>324</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>5.9</u>
Total	2,950	100%	53.3%

The single largest category of land use in Barrington is medium density residential, which is nearly three quarters of all residential land, and 38.3 percent of the total area of the Town. A much smaller amount of land designated as low density residential includes several areas around town, but predominantly in the Nayatt, Rumstick and Adams Point areas. High density areas are primarily in western and central Barrington with some areas located near Barrington Beach and around Hampden Meadows. Much of the high density residential land is in older developed sections of town.

In summary, Barrington is primarily a residential, medium density developed town, with significant amounts of wetlands and public open space and recreation land. Of the private open land, not including that designated as private undeveloped, approximately 170 acres are used as a golf course, 215 acres are in agricultural use, and 60 acres are wooded or undeveloped land which is part of property owned by one of the large private institutions in town.

***2002 Update: Very little residential development has occurred over the past decade (in terms of new subdivisions); commercial redevelopment has occurred without the expansion of the amount of land area in commercial use; all industrial land has been converted to residential (elderly housing complexes); and additional open space has been protected.***

## Zoning

Figure 2 depicts the current zoning designations for Barrington. The Town's zoning ordinance presently has three residential zones: R-40, R-25, and R-10, with single family cluster developments allowed within the Residence 40 and Residence 25 Districts. Barrington also has a Business (B), Waterfront Business (WB), Manufacturing (M) and Open Space (OS) District. The bulk of the land in Barrington is zoned residential (approximately 4,190 acres) with the Residence 25 District encompassing the most land area among the three residential districts. Following residential, the largest zoning category in terms of land area (1,100 acres) is the Open Space District, which is the zoning designation for public park land and open space, as well as wetland areas along the Palmer River. For the remaining designations there are only approximately 162 acres of land zoned for business, 32 acres zoned for waterfront business and 14 acres zoned for manufacturing.

The areas covered by the Waterfront Business and Manufacturing Districts are nearly fully developed. This is also true of the majority of the areas covered by the Business District, with the exception of the commercially zoned area between Maple Avenue and the bicycle path, which includes a few large parcels of undeveloped land; and one vacant parcel in Bay Spring (see Economic Development Element, Figures 1 and 2).

***2002 Update: The OS District has been replaced by four districts, Wildlife Refuge (WR), Conservation (C), OS-Passive (OS-P), and OS-Active (OS-A); there are three additional districts, Recreation and Education (RE), Neighborhood Business (NB) and Elderly Housing (EH); and Manufacturing is now referred to as Limited Manufacturing (LM).***

## Development Trends

Figure 3 is a thirty-one year representation of residential growth in Barrington from 1960 to, and including, 1990. During that period, 1,659 residential building permits were issued in the Town, or an average of 53.5 per year. Two significant growth periods are shown. During the first half of the 1960's, 35 % (585 houses) of the total units were constructed. The other growth period was during 1986-87, when 173 units (10 %) were constructed, a period when the State as a whole was perceived to be undergoing a major development boom. For the remaining non-boom years, new housing construction ranged from as low as 17 units to a high of 67 units, with an average of 39 units per year. Higher than average growth is seen at the end of the mid 1960's growth period, and on both sides of the 86-87 peak, while lower than average growth occurred in the mid 1970's to the early 1980's.

***2002 Update: In the period from 1991 to, and including, 2001, there were 292 residential building permits issued, or an average of 26.5 per year over the eleven year period. The three peak years were 1992, 1993 and 1994, when 44, 41 and 36 permits, respectively, were issued. The least active year was 2001, when only 14 permits were issued. The other years ranged from 19 to 28 permits. The total number of new houses constructed over the past decade is considerably less than even the more conservative estimate made in 1992, as discussed below.***

### **Figure 3**

Future growth will continue to be a function of the State's economy with average levels of new construction expected until the next surge in the area's economy. Based upon a continuation of the overall growth rate of the previous thirty years, Barrington may experience an addition of approximately 535 homes over the next decade. However, because there is a limited amount of land area available for residential development, the increase may be closer to that based upon the average for the non-boom years, or about 390 homes. Given that the total number of dwelling units in Barrington is currently around 5,822 (1990 Census), these numbers represent an overall increase of 7 to 9 percent for a ten year period.

#### Tax Base

That Barrington is predominantly a residential community is shown by the relatively high percentage of its tax base consisting of residential property. Barrington is consistently listed, along with Little Compton, Charlestown and Jamestown, as having one of the State's highest percentages for the residential share of a town's total assessed property. Statewide, the residential percentage ranges from around 89 percent for Little Compton to as low as 50 percent for East Providence. The state average of the residential percent of a community's total tangible property is around 65 percent.

Shown in Table 3 is a summary of Barrington's tax base for three recent years. Although the figures show a slight reduction in the residential percentages of its total tax base, Barrington retains a significantly high percentage of residential, and low percentage of commercial and industrial components.

Table 3

PROPERTY CLASS PERCENTAGES OF BARRINGTON TAX ROLL 1988-1990

Tax Roll <u>Year</u>	<u>Res.</u>	<u>Com.</u>	<u>Ind.</u>	<u>Utility</u>	<u>Motor Vehicle</u>	<u>Other</u>
1988	84.36%	5.29%	0.20%	0.84%	8.85%	0.46%
State Average	65.00%	18.95%	4.60%	2.20%	8.75%	0.50%
1989	83.61%	5.37%	0.22%	0.83%	9.47%	0.50%
State Average	65.21%	18.52%	4.61%	2.07%	8.98%	0.61%
1990	82.94%	5.60%	0.21%	0.82%	9.98%	0.45%
State	Average Not Available					

Source: Office of Municipal Affairs, R.I. Dept. of Administration

DEMOGRAPHICS

Included within this section is a summary of the 1990 Census for Barrington, and a review of projections done by the State Department of Administration to the year 2020.

1990 Census

Barrington was one of only five communities in Rhode Island that lost population in the last decade; the others were the more urbanized communities of East Providence, Newport, Warwick and Woonsocket. However, like East Providence and Warwick, the change is so small (2 percent or less) that it can be concluded that the Town's overall population has remained constant.

Figure 4 shows the population changes in Barrington over the past thirty year period as measured by the U.S. Census. The largest change occurred between 1960 and 1970, which was also the only decade shown in which Barrington experienced a population increase. During this period, the population grew by 3,728 persons to reach the peak count of 17,554, an increase of 29 percent. Somewhere between 1970 and 1980 Barrington began to lose population, a trend which continued between 1980 and 1990. While the development period of 1960-65, in which approximately 585 houses were built, did contribute to a significant increase in population for Barrington, the development boom of the mid-1980's served only to partially offset an overall decline in population. Despite new home construction, the population of Barrington has not sustained itself; what can be

concluded by the Census figures is that the Town has experienced an out-migration in recent decades.

#### **Figure 4**

Table 4 contains a breakdown of the 1990 Census by ethnic group for Barrington, Bristol County and the State. Barrington's 15,849 residents are 98.5 percent White, 0.33 percent Black, 0.96 percent Asian and 0.21 percent other. These are approximately the same percentages as all of Bristol County, but vary from those for the State which has a lower percent of White (91.4%) and higher percentages of the other ethnic groups. Not shown in the table is that among the total population of Barrington, primarily within the White ethnic group, are 125 people of Hispanic origin.

As shown in Table 4, the Town's population is nearly a third of Bristol County's but only 1.6 percent of the State's population. In terms of its age distribution, Barrington has a slightly younger population (0-17) than either Bristol County or the State as a whole, indicating that it has a larger proportion of families with minor children. This is likely due to the fact that its housing stock consists primarily of single family dwellings.

Table 4

BARRINGTON 1990 CENSUS SUMMARY

Population Projections

Population projections done by the Office of Municipal Affairs of the State Department of Administration in 1989 estimated that the 1990 Barrington population would be 16,216 persons, an increase of 42 persons from the 1980 level: this is in contrast to the actual count of 15,849 which was a loss of 325 persons. This represents an error of only 2.3 percent, small enough to not affect the general validity of the population projections done for other future years. Shown in Table 5 are the population projections done for Barrington in five year intervals to the year 2020.

Table 5

## BARRINGTON POPULATION PROJECTIONS 1995-2020

Age Group	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>
0-19	3,857	4,001	3,933	3,721	3,465	3,332
20-39	5,166*	4,975*	4,201	3,800	3,907	4,054
40-59	3,870	3,943	4,604*	4,971*	5,065*	4,848*
60+	<u>3,551</u>	<u>3,749</u>	<u>3,967</u>	<u>4,325</u>	<u>4,398</u>	<u>4,604</u>
Total	16,444	16,668	16,705	16,817	16,835	16,838

\* dominant age group

Source: Office of Municipal Affairs, R.I. Dept. of Administration

What the projections show is that Barrington is expected to grow very little over the next two decades, not even reaching its 1970 population level. The projections also show an aging of Barrington's population. However, both the slow growth and the overall aging indicated by these figures are a function of the projection model used. The model cannot predict future growth in residential units, nor does it account for the fact that Barrington's housing stock, along with its excellent public school system, makes it a community which is more attractive to families with school-aged children than to single or retired people.

***2002 Update: The 2000 Census shows Barrington with a population of 16,819, very close to the figure projected (and still below the 1970 level). This is a gain of 970 persons (a significant portion of whom are likely to be residents of the Town's two elderly housing complexes), an increase of 6%. The ethnicity has shifted slightly, with the population now 96.4% White (down from 98.5%).***

***Bristol County, on the other hand, only gained a total of 1,789 persons (from 48,859 to 50,648), an increase of 3.7%. Barrington is now 33% of the total county population (up slightly from 32%). The total population of the state, now 1,048,319, increased 4.5%. Barrington remains 1.6% of the total state population.***

## GOALS AND POLICIES

The picture that emerges of Barrington upon review of its land use and demographics is one of a stable residential community experiencing moderate housing growth at the same time its overall population remains fairly constant. The Town's predominantly residential nature is complemented by significant amounts of undeveloped, open space and recreational lands. Many of the issues that are inherently tied to this picture, such as housing opportunities, the limited commercial tax base, the need to protect natural features and the desire to balance open space protection with development, are more completely discussed in the remaining elements of the plan. The following goals and policies were developed in consideration of the Town as a whole, and in an effort to unite all those elements contributing to life in Barrington.

### Goals

1. Preserve the predominantly single family residential character of land in Barrington, while providing open space and limited commercial, industrial and institutional land uses to serve the needs of town residents.
2. Protect valuable existing natural features, important open space and agricultural land in Barrington, and reclaim areas for environmental restoration, including wetlands and waterways, when appropriate.
3. Insure that future development is compatible with adjoining land uses, the natural environment, available or planned community services and existing historic and cultural features.
4. Plan for land uses to meet the needs of the future residents of Barrington, including those for housing, recreation, transportation and other necessary services and facilities.

### Policies

1. Designate land for residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, recreation, mixed and open space uses, as well as protected natural and fragile areas.
2. Control or prevent development which could adversely affect wetlands, floodplains, sensitive shoreline locations, aquifers and other valuable natural features.
3. Support techniques for land development that address the land use goals of Barrington, while establishing progressive methods to review and regulate the impacts of development.
4. Insure compatibility of the land use plan with the goals of the housing, economic development, circulation, community services and facilities, natural and cultural features and the open space and recreation elements of the comprehensive plan, and insure the consistency of the town zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations with the land use plan.

# HOUSING ELEMENT

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## HOUSING ELEMENT

This section of the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan is dedicated to the memory of Robert T. Meeker, Planning Board member and Co-chair of the Housing Committee. Much of this project unfolded under his direction, and the resulting document would not have been possible without his substantial input. It has been a privilege to work with him.

Sarah McLeod, Chair  
Edward Correia  
John H. Davis

**"We believe that Barrington is a special community because it is an essentially unspoiled picturesque garden suburb, in the best American tradition, and few communities can make such a claim. Richly wooded, endowed with an abundance of public parks and open spaces for recreation and conservation, surrounded by water, filled with many distinctive neighborhoods, and served by excellent schools and public facilities, Barrington residents may be justly proud of their community. We would do well to protect and preserve our town's excellent character and quality-of-life. As committee members, we have striven to reflect the will and desires of the community".**

Robert Meeker

## INTRODUCTION

The Housing Element of the Barrington Comprehensive Plan includes a description of the Town's existing housing stock, and an assessment of its future housing needs. Both of these involved extensive survey work which was undertaken to accurately portray the range of housing styles and values in Barrington, and to determine majority opinion on the provision of alternative housing types. More specifically, a description of Barrington's existing housing stock was done by means of a survey using every tenth valuation card in the Tax Assessor's Office. The survey was broken down by school district -- Hampden Meadows, Primrose Hill and Nayatt. Representative houses from neighborhoods within each school district were also photographed and described. In addition, to assist in determining housing needs from the perspective of the town residents, a questionnaire was developed and mailed to every tenth name on the tax roll.

This work is complemented by information available from the U.S. Census and from previous survey work done regarding elderly housing in Barrington. By analyzing the results of the housing survey, the housing needs questionnaire and the neighborhood descriptions, as well as the Census data, the Housing Committee was able to draw conclusions and propose goals, policies and recommendations regarding Barrington's future housing.

In accordance with Rhode Island General Laws Title 45, Chapter 53, the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (as amended through July 2004), the Town of Barrington has prepared and adopted an Affordable Housing Plan containing implementation and production strategies to provide 10% low and moderate-income housing. The Plan was prepared by the Barrington Housing Committee in consultation with Daylor Consulting Group, Inc. The Town of Barrington Town Council and Planning Board began a joint public hearing on November 18, 2004 which was continued to November 29, 2004. On November 29, 2004, the Plan was adopted as an Appendix to the Housing Element of the Town of Barrington Comprehensive Plan together with the following amendments noted as '2004 Update'. *See Chapter 1 of the Affordable Housing Plan (hereinafter referred to as the AHP) for the AHP study methodology and report organization.*

## HOUSING IN BARRINGTON

This section of the Housing Element contains a description of the existing housing in Barrington. It includes that information available from the 1990 U.S. Census, and the results of the survey work done by the Housing Committee.

### 1990 Census

As recorded by the 1990 U.S. Census, Barrington has 5,822 housing units. This is an increase of 423 units (7.8 percent) from the 1980 census count of 5,399 units. Table 1 summarizes the census counts for housing units over the past two decades for Barrington, Bristol County and the State. According to the Census, Barrington has maintained a fairly steady growth in the number of new housing units over the past two decades, but it has not matched that of either Bristol County or the State in terms of the overall rate of increase. As a result, Barrington's percentage

share of housing in Bristol County has gotten smaller.

Table 1  
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS, U.S. CENSUS 1970-1990

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Increase</u> <u>70-80</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>Increase</u> <u>80-90</u>
Barrington	5,044	5,399	7.0%	5,822	7.8%
Bristol Co.	14,106	16,373	16.0%	18,567	13.4%
Town % of Co.	35.8%	32.9%	-2.9%	31.4%	-1.5%
State of R.I.	317,689	372,672	17.3%	414,572	11.2%
Town % of R.I.	1.6%	1.4%	-0.2%	1.4%	0%

Barrington's slower growth rate in the number of housing units corresponds to its lack of population growth, actually slow decline, over the same period. This slight loss of population in combination with a modest increase in the number of housing units (single family dwellings) has resulted in a trend towards smaller households. Barrington's trend of a decreasing average household size is matched by a similar trend statewide; in general the rate of housing growth in Rhode Island has not been matched by its overall population growth rate. However, it is interesting to note that Barrington consistently maintains a higher than average household size when compared to Bristol County and the State. This is shown in Table 2 which is a comparison of the census counts of housing units with the population counts for the same years.

Table 2  
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE 1970-1990

	<u>1970</u> <u>Pop./# in d.u.</u>	<u>1980</u> <u>Pop./# in d.u.</u>	<u>1990</u> <u>Pop./# in d.u.</u>
Barrington	17,554/3.5	16,174/3.0	15,849/2.7
Bristol Co.	45,937/3.3	46,942/2.9	48,859/2.6
State of R.I.	949,723/3.0	947,154/2.5	1,003,464/2.4

d.u. = dwelling unit

Most of the growth in the County has occurred in Bristol, the town with the largest land area. The number of additional housing units built in Bristol has been more than that for Barrington and Warren combined for the total twenty-year period. Between 1970 and 1990 Bristol gained an additional 2,440 housing units, a 44 percent increase. In Warren, the growth rate has also been much greater than that of Barrington, about one and a half times the number of units, or approximately twice the growth rate.

The larger household size for Barrington is a reflection of its predominantly single family housing

type, and reaffirms the Town's image as a family oriented suburban community.

***2002 Update: The 2000 Census shows Barrington with 6,199 housing units, an increase of 377 units, or 6.5%. The average household size dropped slightly from 2.77 persons to 2.73. In Bristol County, Bristol experienced the greatest increase in the number of housing units, 746 units, which represents a 9.4% increase, while Warren had the smallest increase, 191 units, or 4%. Overall the number of housing units in the County grew by 7%.***

***2004 Update: For history of residential building permit activity from 1980 to 2004, population growth, characteristics and projections, see Chapter 3 of the AHP.***

### Housing Values and Types

Barrington has consistently been among the top few communities in Rhode Island in terms of residential real estate values. In 1989 it had the fourth highest average home price, \$225,645, behind Jamestown, East Greenwich, and New Shoreham. According to the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, it requires an annual household income of \$90,047 in order to purchase the average home for sale in Barrington. In contrast, the 1989 average purchase price for a home statewide was \$140,878, requiring an income of \$55,972.

In terms of new home sales, Barrington has again been among the highest in the State for its average purchase price in recent years. Although New Shoreham is usually the highest because of the exceptionally high value of island land, Barrington is most often compared to East Greenwich in terms of its desirability as a place to live (location, quality of life and public school system) and near equivalent new housing values.

As previously stated, the total number of housing units in Barrington counted during the 1990 Census is 5,822; this is the total number of households that are included within all residential structures: single and multi-family dwellings, apartments and dormitories. The types of units are broken down as follows:

Single Family	5,455
Multi-Family:	
Two	230
3 or 4	68
5 to 9	10
10 to 19	17
20 to 49	25
50 or more	0
Mobile Home	0
Other	<u>17</u>
Total	5,822 Units

The category listed as other is defined as a non-standard housing unit such as a single room,

houseboat or recreational vehicle; according to the census, Barrington has seventeen of these unconventional units. While it is clear that Barrington has no large structures containing fifty or more units, those forty-two units identified as being within a structure of more than ten units are most likely those contained within the two boarding schools in town (Zion Bible Institute, St. Andrew's School). There is one apartment building in Barrington -- that containing the ten units. The remaining multifamily units are those contained within a three or four family structure, or a two family structure. If one excludes the non-standard and dormitories units, the percentage breakdown of Barrington's residential units by type is as follows:

Single Family	5,455	94.7%
Multi-Family	298	5.2%
Apartment	<u>10</u>	<u>0.1%</u>
Total	5,763	100%

The 94.7 percent for single family houses is very close to that which came out of the Housing Committee's 1990 random housing survey, discussed in the following section. The census count also showed that among the total 5,610 units occupied, 89 percent (4,995) of these units are owner-occupied, with 11 percent (615) renter-occupied. Among the single-family dwellings, the percentage is of course higher; 94 percent of the single family occupied units are owner-occupied, or 4,898 units from a total of 5,264 units.

***2002 Update: Barrington now has additional multi-family units due to the construction of two elderly housing projects, one a 60 unit low and moderate complex, and the other a 134 unit assisted living complex. The percentage of units which are owner occupied is now 88.4%.***

1990 Housing Survey

To obtain a description of the existing housing stock, the Housing Committee conducted a random sampling of approximately 10 percent of the homes in Barrington using data from the Tax Assessor's office. The Town's school district boundaries were used to divide Barrington into three large neighborhood areas (see Figure 1). The sample size of the three districts is as follows:

Hampden Meadows	142 homes	27.9%
Primrose Hill	175 homes	34.4%
<u>Nayatt</u>	<u>192 homes</u>	<u>37.7%</u>
Total	509 homes	100.0%

Each house in the survey was categorized by size, ranging from one to two and a half stories and by construction type, including wooden frame (F); frame and aluminum (F&A); frame and brick (F&B); and brick (B). The condition was defined as one of the following:

- Excellent = intended only for buildings recently built, rebuilt or completely modernized.
- Good = for buildings which are well maintained and repaired when needed.
- Fair = for buildings having indifferent maintenance.

Poor = for buildings in rather dilapidated condition.

Finally, the age of each house was identified as either recent (1975-1990); post World War II (1945-1975); turn of the century to World War II (1900-1945); pre-1900; or historic (researched and plaqued by the Barrington Preservation Society). Plaqued houses in Barrington date from 1707 to 1888.

The results of the survey, which are shown in Table 3, indicate that 45 percent of the homes are one-story, 32.2 percent are two-story, 16.3 percent are one and a half story, 6.1 percent are one and three quarter, and the remaining 0.4 percent are two and a half story. Among the homes in the survey sample, 90 percent are frame, while the remaining 10 percent consist of frame and aluminum, frame and brick, or brick. The majority, 90.4 percent, are reported in good condition, with the remaining homes being either in excellent or in fair condition; no homes in poor condition were found.

The age of the homes in the sample are broken down as follows: 1 to 25 years - 12.0 percent; 26 to 45 years - 57.2 percent; 46 to 90 years - 26.1 percent; and over 90 years - 4.7 percent. Although the random sample revealed only one plaqued home, records indicate that there are eighty such houses in Barrington.

The primary occupancy status of homes surveyed is single-family, 98.4 percent, with two-family and multi-family homes making up the other 1.6 percent. Not shown by the survey is the fact that there are six state-operated group homes in the Town, with approximately six residents per home.

**Based on the survey, the typical home in Barrington is a one story wooden single family dwelling in good condition, built during the post World War II building boom.** According to 1986 assessments of structures only, the mean (average) value of an assessed home in Barrington is \$67,667.00, while the median (middle) value is \$64,333.00.

### Neighborhood Descriptions

This section contains a general description of the variety of homes within each of the school districts shown in Figure 1. These descriptions and accompanying photographs are based upon field work done by Housing Committee members.

#### Primrose Hill School District:

The Primrose Hill School District is the northwest portion of Barrington. It is bounded on the north by East Providence, on the east by the Barrington River, on the south by an irregular line composed of Lincoln Avenue, Upland Way, Northwest Passage and North Lake Drive, and on the west by Narragansett Bay. In addition to its elementary school, Primrose Hill includes the High School and Middle School. It also contains Haines Memorial State Park, the largest recreational facility in town, and a number of other parks and conservation areas. Along the bay side are two marinas, and along Bay Spring Avenue are three large mill complexes and some scattered commercial establishments. The Primrose Hill neighborhoods are the Lincoln Avenue area, Roberta Plat, the Alfred Drowne

area, Bay Spring, Haines Park, Sherwood Lane and the College Hill-Grassy Plain area. Representative houses of the Primrose Hill neighborhoods are shown in Figure 2.

Hampden Meadows School District:

Hampden Meadows School District:

Hampden Meadows, the smallest of Barrington's three school districts, is situated in the northeast part of Barrington. It is bounded on the north by Swansea, Massachusetts, on the east by the Palmer and Warren Rivers, on the south by Tyler Point and on the west by the Barrington River and Hundred Acre Cove, including the Nockum Hill conservation area. It has a few scattered commercial properties, primarily along Sowams Road, some small farms and nurseries, and three marinas and a yacht club in the Tyler Point area. There are two elementary schools, and one volunteer fire company. Despite being the smallest of the school districts, it has the largest amount of undeveloped land. The Hampden Meadows neighborhoods are the Martin Avenue area, the Robbins Drive-Old Forge Road area, Chantilly Woods, the North Sowams Road area, the South Sowams Road area, the Meadowbrook-Plymouth Drive area, and the Bowden Avenue area; representative houses are shown in Figure 3.

Nayatt School District:

The Nayatt School District is the largest of the three school districts in terms of land area. It is bounded on the north by an irregular line composed of Lincoln Avenue, Upland Way, Northwest Passage and North Lake Drive, on the east by Warren River and on the west and south by Narragansett Bay. While it has only the one elementary school, Nayatt includes the Town Hall and Barrington Public Library, and what could be described as the Town's commercial center along lower County Road and Maple Avenue. It has several parks and recreational areas, including Veterans Memorial Park, and the private Rhode Island Country Club. The police station and the main fire station are also located in Nayatt.

The Nayatt neighborhoods are the Washington Road-Nayatt Point area, Devonshire Drive, the Town Beach area, Rumstick Point, Ferry Lane, the Country Club Plat and Maple Avenue; representative houses are shown in Figure 4.

### Housing Needs Questionnaire

As part of the comprehensive plan, the Housing Committee undertook the development of a questionnaire to obtain public opinion on present housing opportunities and needs for Barrington residents, and attitudes regarding possible housing assistance for residents. The town tax roll, which lists owners of real estate and motor vehicles in Barrington, was used as a basis; every tenth name was selected, with businesses and names with post office or out of town addresses not counted. The questionnaire was divided into four parts: a respondent profile section; a section regarding housing needs; a section regarding who should qualify for housing assistance; and a section regarding specific types of housing assistance.

Table 4 contains a sample questionnaire with total numerical results, as well as percentages filled in

for all of the questions. Of a total of 608 questionnaires mailed, there were 265 responses which were filled out properly and received by the specified deadline. A summary of the respondents is as follows: 140 (53%) were male and 123 (46%) were female with 2 no answers; 66 (25%) were between 21 and 39 years of age, 115 (43%) were between 40 and 61 years of age and 82 (31%) were older than 62, with 2 no answers; 37 (14%) have lived in town 4 years or less, 37 (14%) between 5 and 10 years, 33 (12%) between 11 and 15 years, 26 (10%) between 16 and 20 years and 130 (49%) 21 years or more, with 2 no answers; 37 (14%) have a household income under \$20,000, 75 (28%) have a household income between \$21,000 and \$49,000, 91 (34%) have a household income between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and 44 (19%) have a household income over \$100,000, with 18 no answers. The three school districts - Primrose Hill, Nayatt and Hampden Meadows - were fairly equally represented and the majority (254 respondents or 90%) own their own home. Finally, 44 (17%) of the respondents live alone, 90 (31%) live with one other person and the remaining 130 (49%) are part of a family.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the results of the questionnaire, as reflected by the majority opinion in response to particular questions:

- \* Barrington's present housing will not continue to meet all needs for the future; more affordable housing should be provided. This need can be met by the construction of condominiums and apartments (Section B).
- \* Barrington does not want a public or private agency to build, rent or sell affordable housing units (Section B, D).
- \* Barrington residents should be able to buy or rent affordable housing, but should not receive mortgage or repair assistance for their present homes from the Town (Section D).
- \* Barrington's essential appearance as a community of single family homes should be maintained. Therefore, affordable housing should resemble single family homes and could include duplexes or triplexes (Section B, D).

After the results were compiled, certain questions were sorted according to the answers given by respondents of different demographic makeup. These sorts are graphically represented in Figures 5 to 7. The following questions were chosen:

**Question D-5:** "Barrington should amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit the construction of more owner-occupied duplexes and triplexes in selected areas" was sorted by neighborhood (Figure 5).

**Question B-2:** "Barrington should provide more affordable housing opportunities" was sorted by income, age and sex (Figure 6).

**Question B-6:** "For Barrington, certain types of apartments and condominiums may be appropriate as affordable housing opportunities" was sorted by income, age and sex (Figure 7).

## **INSERT PAGE 8 from Document**

**Figure 5**

The responses to question D-5 show that although a slight majority of persons who responded to the question about multi-family housing are in favor of allowing its construction, there is a difference in opinion according to neighborhood. The largest group of respondents in both Hampden Meadows and Primrose Hill agreed with the concept of new multi-family units in Barrington (43% in both cases). Despite a somewhat strong response in both neighborhoods in the disagree and strongly disagree categories, combining the two affirmative responses as well as the two negative responses gives a small majority to the affirmative (51% and 50% for Hampden Meadows and Primrose Hill, respectively). In the Nayatt area, however, a small majority (49%) are opposed to such housing, with the largest group of respondents (32%) disagreeing strongly.

The responses to questions B-2 and B-6 show that people in the lower income groups, over 62 years of age and females of all ages, feel most strongly about the provision of affordable housing in Barrington. Therefore, it can be concluded that these are the population groups in Barrington primarily interested in housing alternatives. In all cases, however, there is a slightly less affirmative response regarding question B-6 than question B-2, meaning that people are less enthusiastic about a specific proposal than the general concept of providing affordable housing.

## HOUSING ISSUES

The evolution of Barrington from a summer and farming community to a garden suburb did not include the development of extensive services such as public transportation, business and industrial centers providing jobs, or varied housing opportunities, particularly multi-family housing. Over the years, the major housing issues in Barrington have revolved around maintaining a community of primarily single-family homes and naturalized open spaces, while providing some affordable housing alternatives, particularly for the elderly.

### Affordable and Special Needs Housing

The Housing Needs Questionnaire results show that 58 percent of the respondents thought Barrington should provide more affordable housing opportunities, but historically Barrington residents have been vocal in opposing development proposals that deviate markedly from single family subdivisions (see following section on multi-family housing). In addition, the affordability of single-family homes is lessened by the fact that much of Barrington is developed, and the land that is available for residential development has a relatively high value.

Barrington has families receiving federal rent subsidies (Section 8), but presently low-income housing is owned or occupied primarily by the elderly. There are 38 families below the poverty level in Barrington, as listed in the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) report prepared by the RI Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, with 17 assisted family units (from a total of 50 assisted units which includes group homes and community residences). The report indicates that only 1.77 percent of Barrington's population has an income below the poverty level, the lowest percentage in the state.

Similarly, the number of special needs residents is relatively low in Barrington: the number of supplemental security income cases, which include the needy aged, blind and disabled to which cash payments are made (under Title XVI of the Social Security Act), was 79 cases for Barrington in 1990 (as reported in the Housing Data Base published by the RI Department of Administration, Division of Planning); the number of such cases has remained somewhat constant since the mid-1980's.

The general housing affordability issue in Barrington, however, is reflected in its average rental rates and the impact this has on the moderate income resident. The mean (average) rental rate for housing in Barrington in 1990 was \$613 for a one bedroom unit, \$675 for a two-bedroom unit and \$795 for a three-bedroom unit (RI Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation survey of classified advertisements). Based upon the median renter income in Barrington, these figures represent an average rent burden of 35 percent. A rent burden in excess of 30 percent of income is generally considered to be unaffordable; the state average for 1990 was 28.7 percent.

Barrington has made efforts to address the issue of housing affordability. The Town provided rehabilitation grants in the 1980's as a member of the East Bay Housing Consortium, but the program was discontinued after several years of increasingly diminished applications. Barrington has also

made an effort to keep shut-ins and elderly in the homes they already own through tax concessions, and the provision of volunteer food, transportation and other assistance by the police and fire departments, the churches and the umbrella service Tap-In. There is a need however, to make Barrington residents working to retain, upgrade or purchase a house aware of the assistance provided through the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (R.I.H.M.F.C.). The creation of a housing authority or involvement in a non-profit agency, to purchase single family houses for rental to low and moderate income families and individuals, can also be a means of both maintaining and increasing affordable housing options in Barrington. Such a housing authority or agency could also address the housing requirements of the relatively small special needs population living in the Town.

In regards to special needs housing, Barrington has a number of state-operated group homes throughout town. As part of its annual budget it also provides funds to the East Bay Mental Health Center, which provides housing resources and services for special needs populations.

In 1986, Barrington made major revisions to its zoning ordinance. These revisions included the addition of a single-family cluster residential district that can be established in R-25 and R-40 zones for areas greater than seven and ten acres, respectively. Since the provision of cluster, the ordinance has been amended three times to allow for such development, although one, Lion's Head, was changed back to conventional zoning following partial development at the request of the developer.

The second major revision in 1986 reintroduced the R-10 zone which had been eliminated nearly twenty years before. The more densely developed areas of town (particularly West Barrington, the area north of Maple Avenue and large portions of Hampden Meadows) were designated R-10, primarily to reduce the number of applications to the Zoning Board for deviations, as homeowners sought to remodel aging housing stock. However, the zone change also brought an unexpected building boom on what previously had been substandard lots. Concerned with the resulting density and lack of public open space to serve the residents in some of the areas, the Housing Committee is recommending that certain R-10 areas revert to R-25.

One option for providing alternative and more affordable housing without changing the visual character of Barrington is to allow apartments over storefronts in some commercial areas. While this arrangement presently occurs along Maple Avenue, the zoning ordinance does not allow it within new commercial structures, or existing commercial buildings without grandfathered apartments. Another option is to allow apartments within existing single-family dwellings; this was done by an amendment to the zoning ordinance in 1990 in response to the need for alternative living arrangements for the elderly (see section on elderly housing).

***2002 Update: The Barrington Zoning Ordinance was revised in 1994 to be in compliance with the State Zoning Enabling Act and to implement many of the comprehensive plan recommendations. At that time, a Neighborhood Business (NB) zoning designation was added which includes much of Maple Avenue. Within the NB District, mixed use residential (residential and commercial in one structure), is allowed by right.***

***2004 Update: See Chapter 2 of the AHP for a description of Low and Moderate Income Housing in the Town of Barrington.***

### Multi-Family Housing

There have been numerous times over the last twenty-five years when a variety of multi-family developments have been proposed in different parts of Barrington. In all cases, the success of the development depended upon changes in the zoning, requiring approval of the Town Council.

In the mid 1960's Wright Farm, which abuts the town owned Walker Farm between County Road and Hundred Acre Cove, was proposed as a site for low-rise luxury apartments. Shortly after the proposal died, the Town purchased the 29-acre parcel for open space and conservation purposes with assistance from the State Green Acres program. Osamequin Park, as it is now known, contains a significant area of wetlands, and lies entirely within the 100-year flood plain and velocity zone. In 1976-77, luxury condominiums were proposed for Lighthouse Point, a 35-acre parcel between Washington Road and the Providence River. Several years later, the land instead was developed into very high value single family homes on large lots. A conservation easement along the adjoining coastal wetlands (approximately seven acres) was granted to the Town.

In 1980, the Town Council directed the Planning Board to undertake a study and recommend several sites in town where apartments could be located. The Planning Board presented six sites at a well attended and volatile public hearing at the Barrington High School. As a result of the public opposition, the Town Council rejected the Planning Board's report.

The 1980's brought two large proposals for alternative housing that many felt were out of character for Barrington. In 1981, a proposal was presented to develop a portion of Barrington College land in West Barrington into two hundred rental units in three story detached buildings. A group of residents organized as "Citizens for Responsible Land Use" successfully defeated the proposed zoning change that would allow the development to go forward. Barrington College was later bought by the Zion Bible Institute, who then sold off the proposed apartment site to a major developer. This area is now known as Lion's Head, a partially completed medium density development, originally approved as a cluster. The other major proposal that occurred in the 1980's was a congregate health care facility, which is discussed in the following section on elderly housing.

***2002 Update: The 1994 revisions to the Barrington Zoning Ordinance included the allowance of two-family dwellings by special use permit within the Neighborhood Business District; three-family dwellings and apartment complexes are still prohibited, but this provision represented a break from the historical restriction to only single family dwellings in Barrington.***

### Elderly Housing

The residents in Barrington who are aged 60 years and older comprise approximately 20 percent of the Town's population, and this percentage is expected to increase in the future. Addressing the

housing needs of this segment of the population has become the dominant housing issue in Barrington since there have been relatively few housing alternatives to single family homes. By and large, efforts have focused on the needs of the moderate and upper income elderly, since Barrington has historically had very few low income or special needs elderly. For example, the number of elderly residents at the poverty level in Barrington, as listed in the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) report prepared by the RI Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, was 93 persons. While of concern to the Town, this number represents less than 3 percent of the total persons aged 60 years and older living in Barrington.

The first major development proposal in Barrington that dealt specifically with the provision of housing for the elderly was the Tockwotten Home Congregate Health Care Facility. In 1986, Tockwotten Home purchased the closed West Barrington school site on Washington Road from the Town, and succeeded in getting an amendment to the zoning ordinance to allow congregate health care facilities within commercial zones. The proposal was for over two hundred one and two bedroom elderly apartments, in conjunction with a nursing care facility. Tockwotten Home was unsuccessful in marketing and pre-selling sufficient units to build the facility, and in 1988 proposed an even larger health care facility in partnership with the Episcopal Diocese. The proposed development site was on St. Andrews School property off Middle Highway which was being used agriculturally. This proposal was withdrawn prior to the Town Council public hearing because of overwhelming public opposition, both to the size of the project and the high cost of its units. As a result of the Tockwotten proposal in West Barrington, the old school building was knocked down, but the site remains vacant. The St. Andrews School site, however, is still being farmed.

In 1988, recognizing a need to address the issue of elderly housing, the Town Council appointed a Elderly Housing Task Force. The Task Force was created as a result of a 1987 questionnaire ("Senior Citizen Survey Analysis") which showed that the 1,395 respondents, all 60 years of age or older and in all income groups, wanted some alternative to single family homes in Barrington. The Task Force presented the following recommendations in late 1989:

- 1) Create a housing authority to build and rent moderate income elderly housing units.
- 2) Amend the zoning ordinance to allow private developers to build middle and higher income elderly housing in business and manufacturing districts.
- 3) Amend the zoning ordinance to allow auxiliary (accessory) apartments within existing single-family homes.

Despite special state legislation that would limit the housing authority to providing alternative housing for the elderly only, the first recommendation was defeated at a referendum vote in November 1990, 3,608 votes against to 3,385 votes for. The two proposals for zoning amendments were presented at a public hearing the month prior; the Town Council voted down the elderly housing proposal for business and manufacturing districts, but approved the auxiliary apartment amendment. Allowed by special exception in R-25 and R-40 zones, the ordinance requires that the auxiliary units be a minimum of 450 square feet, but no greater than 900 square feet (in an effort to gear them towards the elderly), with a separate entrance and one additional parking space per

bedroom. The single-family house must have a minimum of 2,000 square feet of living space and be on a conforming lot. Since the amendment was passed in October 1990, eight auxiliary apartments have been approved by the Zoning Board.

In 1990, the Town Council increased the Town's elderly circuit breaker tax exemption to help those elderly stay in their homes, and in 1991, the Council appointed a five member Housing Commission to find sites and develop proposals for elderly housing in Barrington. The major recommendation of the Elderly Housing Commission was to allow the construction of twenty to twenty-five elderly housing units in one to four scattered sites throughout town. This would be implemented by means of an elderly housing overlay zone to be applied to all Business and Manufacturing Districts, and to selected residential areas which are readily accessible to commercial services and/or public transportation.

***2002 Update: In November 1992 a separate article was added to the Barrington Zoning Ordinance to allow the establishment of an Elderly Housing District within the Business or Manufacturing Districts, as an amendment to the zoning map. The article set minimum standards of development as well as a review procedure that includes approval of the site plan and proposal by the Planning Board. Since that time two proposals (and subsequent map amendments from a Limited Manufacturing to an EH District) have been approved, both in West Barrington. The first was the conversion of the Piling Chain Mill on Bay Spring Avenue to sixty low and moderate units for the elderly. This project gained final approval in March 1996 and is now completed and fully occupied. The second was the development of a 134 unit assisted living complex for the elderly and handicapped at the site of the Lace Works Mill on Bay Spring and Narragansett Avenues. This project gained final approval in June 1997, and has since been constructed and occupied.***

***2004 Update: See Chapter 4 of the AHP for a Housing Needs Analysis based on 2000 census and CHAS data and current housing inventory.***

## GOALS AND POLICIES

As a result of the extensive survey work, and also in recognition of the history of alternative housing proposals in Barrington, the Housing Committee developed certain goals and policies: which are hereby amended to be consistent with new goals and implementation strategies developed by the reconstituted Barrington Housing Committee in 2004 and adopted by the Town as part of the Affordable Housing Plan for the Town of Barrington contained in the Appendix to this Chapter. In the AHP “[t]he Committee established two major goals for the creation of affordable housing: (1) to enable people who work or have been raised in Barrington to live in their community thereby maintaining income diversity, and (2) to assist the town in complying with the state’s requirements by encouraging new development that is consistent with the town’s goals.”

## Goals

1. Insure that future residential development is done in a manner that preserves Barrington's character and quality of life, including sensitivity to important open space areas and significant natural resources.
2. Maintain the Town's development pattern by retaining the detached single-family dwelling unit, on reasonably sized lots, as the predominant housing type and encourage development of affordable housing over scattered sites.
3. Provide housing alternatives to meet the needs of all segments of Barrington's population, including residents of low and moderate income, the elderly and disabled.
4. Maintain the present affordability, high quality, and good physical condition of the housing stock in Barrington.

## Policies

1. Insure that new residential development addresses Barrington's housing goals by providing the flexibility to develop affordable housing and alternatives to single-family housing through well-defined subdivision and zoning regulations.
2. Allow mixed-use within buildings in commercial and business areas of town, to help meet the need for rental housing, while remaining consistent with existing character and scale.
3. Provide specific housing options for elderly residents.
4. Encourage the development of housing for residents with physical and mental disabilities, support programs that encourage independent living, and support alterations of current housing stock to achieve compliance with the Rhode Island Civil Rights of individuals with Handicaps Act and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).
5. Encourage the private sector participation in addressing the affordable housing needs of Barrington's residents, and pursue public-private partnerships.
6. Support the innovative re-use of vacant or under-utilized buildings and land parcels in Barrington for the construction of affordable housing alternatives.
7. Pursue and encourage the use of funds available under housing rehabilitation and other subsidy programs to improve and maintain housing conditions and to stop the destruction of affordable homes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The specific housing recommendations that were developed are based upon the goals and policies, and are designed in a way to produce practical tangible results in Barrington. They deal primarily with changes in the town zoning ordinance as it relates to residential development.

### 1. Convert Certain Parcels of Land Zoned R-10 to R-25

To maintain the Town's desirable residential density on certain significant parcels of land if and when development occurs, it is recommended that the zoning designation of two areas within Hampden Meadows be converted from a Residence 10 District to a Residence 25 District. These two areas are as follows: the neighborhood lying between Martin Avenue and Massasoit Avenue; and the area along the east side of Sowams Road south of Orchard Avenue. The first area has one large parcel of undeveloped land, but is mostly developed as medium density residential; it abuts an R-25 District to the east. Much of the second area is in agricultural use, with the remainder consisting of medium and low density residential and wetland; it abuts an R-25 District to the west and the south.

***2002 Update: This zoning map amendment occurred in June 1994.***

### 2. Allow Apartments Over Stores in Commercial Areas

In addition to maintaining the auxiliary apartment amendment passed in 1990, it is recommended that the zoning ordinance be amended to allow mixed use within certain commercial areas of town. This would be done by allowing apartments over stores within a new zoning district, the Neighborhood Business District, which is recommended for the commercial areas beyond the center of town (see Economic Development Element Recommendations section).

***2002 Update: Neighborhood Business allowing mixed use was established as part of the revisions to the zoning ordinance and map in 1994.***

### 3. Involvement in the East Bay Community Development Corporation

The East Bay Community Development Corporation, a non-profit corporation whose principal office is located in Bristol, was established to provide decent and affordable housing, either through rental, home ownership, home repair programs, or other means, to low and moderate income families and individuals initially in Bristol, and later throughout Bristol County (amendment of by-laws, May 1996).

It is recommended that the Town become actively involved in the Corporation, including representation on the Board of Directors, and work specifically toward the purchase, repair and rental of single family homes in scattered areas of Barrington. There are various loan programs available through R.I.H.M.F.C. for non-profit organizations to acquire, build or rehabilitate affordable homes. The resulting units could qualify as low and moderate income housing under the

recently enacted Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I.G.L. 45-53).

The Corporation can also serve as a source of information on the various housing assistance programs available for individuals through R.I.H.M.F.C. These include the home equity conversion mortgage program (reverse mortgages for older homeowners), low interest loans for the creation of accessory apartments and for repairs, and mortgage assistance programs for first homes or older homes in need of repairs.

***2002 Update: Barrington is now represented on the Board of the East Bay Community Development Corporation.***

4. Establish an Affordable/Special Needs Housing Task Force

To further explore options for establishing affordable housing in Barrington, it is recommended that the Town Council establish a task force of local citizens active or knowledgeable in housing issues and matters. The task force could work in conjunction with the East Bay Community Development Corporation and undertake specific tasks such as a town-wide inventory of land suitable for development of scattered site affordable housing. It would also identify other active steps the Town could undertake to increase affordable housing for its citizens.

The task force could also evaluate programs to assist in the development of housing for the disabled. These could include loan programs for retrofitting homes for the disabled, retail estate exemptions for the permanently disabled, and cooperative ventures with the East Bay Community Development Corporation and East Bay Mental Health Center to develop additional units for mentally and physically disabled persons.

***2004 Update: The AHP redefines the proposed 'Task Force' as a chartered Housing Trust 'charged with exploring affordable housing alternatives for Barrington's families and seniors.' The Housing Trust is identified in the AHP as an 'Enabling Policy' and will be an integral part of the implementation of several of the proposed strategies.***

5. Support Conversion of The Bay Spring Mills to Elderly Housing

The condition and future of the mills along Bay Spring Avenue in West Barrington is described more thoroughly in the Economic Development Element of the comprehensive plan. However, the mills have often been identified as possible future sites for an elderly housing complex. This type of re-use proposal for the mills does appear to have wide support among Barrington residents, as indicated by the response to such a question in the housing needs questionnaire. Conversion of one or both of the Bay Spring Mills was also one proposal considered by the Elderly Housing Commission. It is included in the plan as a recommendation, should it be found to be a feasible option for either mill.

If the Bay Spring Mills are not feasible for elderly housing, it is recommended that other sites, such as the vacant West Barrington School parcel, be targeted for elderly housing development. This

could be done as public-private partnership. However, any new development of multiple elderly units requires a change in the Town's zoning regulations.

***2002 Update: The Piling Chain Mill on the south side of Bay Spring Avenue has been converted to elderly apartments; the wooden complex on the north side of Bay Spring Avenue has since burned and been removed; and the Lace Works Mill has been razed to allow for the construction of an assisted living complex.***

***2004 Update: Specific enabling policies and strategies to reach the Town's low and moderate income housing goals are set forth in Chapter 3 of the AHP. An analysis of how each of the strategies will contribute to the low and moderate income housing goals is tabulated in Chapter 5.***

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

In Barrington, economic development has meant maintaining the existing balance between residential and non-residential land use, rather than additional commercial and industrial growth. Barrington is a bedroom community with a loosely defined commercial center which provides goods and services primarily for its residents. There are also a few small scattered commercial areas in the Town, various marine recreation facilities and a small pocket of under-utilized mills in West Barrington. The bulk of the developed land in Barrington, however, is residential (see Land Use and Population Element).

Prior to the development of goals and policies, the Economic Development Committee sponsored a public forum in the Fall of 1990 to discuss such issues as commercial expansion and aesthetics, particularly along County Road, and the re-use of the mills along Bay Spring Avenue. This committee also worked closely with the Circulation Committee to address such common concerns as traffic impacts of existing and proposed commercial developments, and the design, safety and aesthetic improvements to lower County Road and the adjoining shopping center (see Circulation Element).

This element of the comprehensive plan begins with a description of Barrington's economic base, followed by a discussion of the economic development issues which shaped the focus of the committee's work. The resulting recommendations include specific proposals for the three major business and manufacturing areas of town, including changes in zoning designations, as well as general recommendations to improve the overall appearance of these areas in Barrington.

## LOCAL ECONOMIC BASE

The description of Barrington's economic base which follows includes commercial and industrial land use and zoning, commercial development trends and employment within Barrington.

### Commercial and Industrial Land Use and Zoning

As described in the Land Use Element, only 1.5 percent of the land area in Barrington is in commercial use and an even smaller amount, 0.3 percent, is in industrial use, the smallest category of land use. In comparison, the total area zoned for business and waterfront business (194 acres) comprises 3.5 percent of the town area, while that zoned for manufacturing (14 acres) comprises 0.25 percent. While there are some commercial uses in Barrington outside of the areas zoned for business (see Land Use Element, Figure 1), much of the area within the three Business Districts in the Town is actually in residential use. However, there is also considerable undeveloped land in these districts which is available for commercial expansion. In addition, there is a small amount of land available for industrial expansion; although the amount of land zoned for manufacturing closely matches that amount in actual use, one of the industrial sites along Bay Spring Avenue is actually within a business district. In contrast, the three Waterfront Business Districts are fully

developed with appropriate uses (marinas).

Figures 1 and 2 in the following section depict the County Road- Maple Avenue commercial areas, and the Bay Spring Avenue commercial and industrial areas, respectively; they show in more detail the land use and zoning of these two areas of Barrington, including the parcels of presently undeveloped land. However, even with full development occurring under the present zoning, and assuming some residential conversion to commercial within these districts, not much more than 2.5 or 3 percent of Barrington's total land area would be used for commercial and industrial activity.

### Commercial Development Trends

Shown in Table 1 is the total square feet of industrial and commercial construction in Barrington on an annual basis from 1980 to 1990, as recorded by the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development. The construction figures do not include projects under \$50,000 in value, and do not measure the amount of residential building area which is converted to commercial use.

Table 1

#### NON RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION IN BARRINGTON 1980-1990

<u>Year</u>	<u>Commercial Sq Ft</u>	<u>Industrial Sq Ft</u>	<u>Total Sq Ft</u>
1980	14,748	3,000	17,748
1981	6,000	0	6,000
1982	6,000	0	6,000
1983	2,062	0	2,062
1984	9,944	0	9,944
1985	12,080	0	12,080
1986	10,360	0	10,360
1987	6,677	0	6,677
1988	10,544	0	10,544
1989	9,360	0	9,360
1990	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	87,775	3,000	90,775

Source: R.I. Dept. of Economic Development

What is apparent from viewing Table 1 is that Barrington has not had any industrial construction in over ten years, since 1980, the year when a greater than average amount of commercial construction took place as well. Since that time, the amount of commercial construction on a yearly basis has been anywhere from none (1990) to over 12,000 square feet (1985), with an average for the decade of approximately 8,000 square feet per year. The highest activity years were 1984 to 1986, and

again in 1988 and 1989.

***2002 Update: There has been no industrial development in Barrington since 1980, but the Town has experienced steady commercial construction in recent years through the redevelopment of the Barrington Shopping Center and major underutilized commercial parcels along County Road.***

To determine the significance of this non-residential development, the total construction value was compared to the value of commercial and industrial properties in Barrington, taken from the 1989 classification of the tax role done by the Tax Equalization Division of the State Department of Administration. These two sets of figures are presented below for general comparison purposes:

Barrington 1989 Tax Roll Total Property Values:

Commercial and Combined Properties:	\$25,272,800
Industrial Properties:	<u>\$ 1,495,400</u>
Total	\$26,768,200

Construction Values of New Development 1980 - 1989:

Commercial:	\$ 5,194,563
Industrial:	<u>\$ 90,000</u>
Total:	\$ 5,284,563

Commercial growth in Barrington, although fairly consistent throughout the past decade, has been moderate in comparison to the existing commercial tax base. While commercial growth may be expected to continue at modest levels in the next decade, the recent closing of the Rhode Island Lace Works (see following section) may signal the beginning of the end of manufacturing in Barrington. The mill areas along Bay Spring Avenue are the only industrial land in Barrington, and with the exception of approximately 2.4 acres near Allins Cove, these parcels are fully developed. Therefore, any new industrial development would likely be in the form of re-construction, and would not result in an increase in the amount of land in industrial use.

Employment

The R.I. Department of Economic Development provides figures of the total labor force made up by residents, and of employment levels within the community itself, for all cities and towns in the State. A comparison between these figures for Barrington, shown in Tables 2 and 3, clearly indicates that the typical working resident is employed outside of town. In addition, an unknown percentage of the available jobs in Barrington are held by non-residents.

Table 2 shows the total labor force in Barrington from 1981 to 1990; it includes total numbers of employed and unemployed. During the decade, Barrington's total labor force increased slightly despite a drop in population; in 1980, the labor force represented 49 percent of the Town's

population, while in 1990 it represented 53 percent of the population. In general, the Town's unemployment levels follow the same pattern as the overall state levels of unemployment, although the percentages are lower, indicating that the Barrington work force is more insulated from downturns in the economy.

Table 2  
BARRINGTON LABOR FORCE 1981-1990

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Employment</u>	<u>Total Un-Employment</u>	<u>% Unemployment Barrington/State</u>		<u>Total Labor Force</u>
1981	7,454	435	5.5%	7.6%	7,889
1982	7,230	594	7.6%	10.3%	7,824
1983	7,418	462	5.9%	8.2%	7,880
1984	7,866	303	3.7%	5.3%	8,169
1985	8,073	281	3.9%	5.0%	8,354
1986	8,264	238	2.8%	4.1%	8,502
1987	8,444	236	2.7%	3.8%	8,680
1988	8,640	169	1.9%	3.0%	8,809
1989	8,477	221	2.5%	4.0%	8,698
1990	8,111	352	4.2%	6.8%	8,463

Table 3  
EMPLOYMENT IN BARRINGTON BY INDUSTRY

<u>Industry Group</u>	<u>1982</u>		<u>1986</u>		<u>1990</u>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Agriculture & Fisheries	26	1.3%	33	1.4%	28	1.4%
Construction	78	4.0%	167	7.2%	70	8.6%
Manufacturing	325	16.5%	331	14.3%	158	7.9%
Communication, Transportation & Utilities	39	2.0%	72	3.1%	67	3.4%
Wholesale Trade	35	1.8%	54	2.4%	46	2.3%
Retail Trade	478	24.2%	555	24.0%	435	21.9%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	62	3.1%	82	3.6%	60	3.0%
Service Industries	478	24.2%	564	24.4%	569	28.6%

Government (Town)	<u>453 22.9%</u>	<u>453 19.6%</u>	<u>455 22.9%</u>
Total	1974 100%	2311 100%	1988 100%

Source: R.I. Department of Economic Development

As indicated by Table 3, which shows average annual employment by industry group within Barrington for three recent years, the bulk of employment occurring in the Town is in the retail trade, service industry and government categories. Throughout the 1980's, the employment levels of all the industry groups have either increased or remained steady; 1990 represents a reversal of this trend of modest commercial growth. The most significant loss is in the number of manufacturing jobs, primarily due to the closing in 1990 of the Rhode Island Lace Works mill, which once provided about 180 jobs in Barrington.

Aside from manufacturing, the impacts of the present recession on employment are most evident in the retail trade category. The employment levels of the remaining industry groups show a slight reduction to those of the early 1980's. In general, despite Barrington's stable population and general community desire to stay predominantly residential, there was a steady increase in commercial activity over the past decade. This has only recently been reversed due to the regional economic climate.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

As identified through the comprehensive planning process, the major economic development issues facing Barrington include the general issues of whether or not to promote additional commercial and industrial development in town, and how to improve the appearance and functioning of these areas, both existing and future. With the assistance of local business people, the Economic Development Committee also identified the specific concerns related to the major commercial and industrial areas of town -- County Road, Maple Avenue and Bay Spring Avenue. All of these issues were the subject of a public forum on economic development in Barrington sponsored by the committee in September 1990. Much of the resulting discussion was used in the development of goals and policies, and ultimately the recommendations relating to economic development.

#### Expansion of Commercial and Industrial Activity

Given the relatively small percentage of land in Barrington that is both in commercial and industrial use and is zoned for such, one issue to be addressed is whether the Town should actively promote their expansion. One benefit to having more commercial and industrial activity is a broadening of the tax base, which would reduce the relatively high residential tax rate. Other benefits include a provision of more goods and services, and employment opportunities for Barrington residents. Related to the question of expansion is whether the Town should provide more opportunities for such by increasing the amount of land zoned for business and manufacturing, or whether the existing areas are adequate, or used efficiently for these purposes. Finally, in direct contrast to the

concept of expansion, is the concept of containing or even discouraging additional non-residential growth.

In addressing the growth versus no-growth issue, and in supporting the existing balance of residential to commercial and industrial land use, the Economic Development Committee relied on a number of factors. These included the goals and policies of the other comprehensive plan committees which reflect this position, particularly the Land Use Committee's primary goal to preserve the predominantly single family residential character of Barrington. This in turn, is reflective of a widespread feeling among residents to keep the Town as it is, a community with limited commercial and industrial development. Although this results in a greater tax burden on the residential property owner than most other towns in Rhode Island (see Land Use and Population Element), land and housing values are also greater (see Housing Element).

In addition to community resistance to the concept, there are other practical reasons for not promoting additional commercial and industrial development in Barrington. The existence of a major regional commercial strip development along Route 6 in nearby Seekonk, Massachusetts, as well as considerable commercial activity in East Providence, makes it unlikely that Barrington could support additional growth beyond that serving Barrington and Warren. In terms of industrial development, a review of the overall land use pattern in the Town shows that industrial growth could not occur without impacting residential areas.

The decision to not expand the amount of land area within the business and manufacturing districts in Barrington is also based upon a review of the types of uses, and general utilization of land within these areas. With the exception of the three Waterfront Business Districts, all of the other business and manufacturing districts have undeveloped land available for commercial or industrial expansion. The Town may need to consider the expansion of the boundaries of the Waterfront Business District (with use restrictions) as the need arises. In the case of the Bay Spring area, however, there are under-utilized and empty industrial buildings. In addition, there is a considerable amount of residential land in the County Road-Maple Avenue Business District which can be converted to commercial use.

The committee also considered the possibility of allowing additional commercial activity, in the form of office space conversion, within the residential areas along County Road which are presently outside of the commercial district. Although there have been requests in recent years to extend the business district boundary along County Road further east toward the Barrington River Bridge, the committee focused on the area between the Massasoit Avenue intersection and the edge of the present business district near Hilltop Avenue. This area of County Road was considered for office space conversion because it is not within the high accident section of the roadway (see Circulation Element). Although the proposal was to allow such conversion only with strict design review, it was eliminated due to the objections of several property owners. This again, is reflective of the community's desire to preserve its residential character.

However, while aggressive expansion of commercial and industrial activity is not a policy that

Barrington will ever likely adopt, there is a need for the Town to take a more pro-active role in maintaining its existing commercial and industrial base, particularly commercial. There have been several recent closings of major commercial establishments in Barrington, and while these are primarily a function of the economy, there is a long standing feeling among local retailers that the Town should do more to support its business community. There is a need to both offset the recent loss of commercial activity, and to better utilize the areas available for commercial development. For the industrial areas of town, the issue is more basic -- whether manufacturing as an activity will continue in Barrington. A first step to strengthening the Town's commercial and industrial base is to determine the retail and service needs of the community. While this would identify the types of businesses that will succeed in Barrington, a stronger relationship between town government and the business community should also be developed.

#### Aesthetics of Commercial Areas; County Road

Despite the recent closing of several business establishments in Barrington, commercial development at some level is expected to continue in the Town. The primary concern is not the development itself, but rather where and how it occurs. During the planning process, the issue of commercial development in Barrington became one primarily of design and aesthetics. The major issue which arose from both public and committee discussions was the need to better define the Town's commercial center -- to allow commercial expansion in a compact rather than linear fashion, and to improve pedestrian circulation in these areas.

The concept of a central commercial district in conjunction with a town center which includes the government buildings on County Road (see Figure 1), is seen as a way of strengthening the Town's commercial base. The general appearance and functioning of the Barrington Shopping Center and adjoining commercial areas, including access, signs, parking areas, circulation patterns (auto and pedestrian) as well as the overall layout and use of land are in need of considerable improvement. Such improvements in design and aesthetics are seen as integral to enhancing the overall health of the area by encouraging people to shop, as well as creating incentives for business people to locate and invest in the area. Improving the appearance of the County Road commercial area, to both support the local business environment and to enhance community pride, has been a long standing issue in Barrington. During the development of the comprehensive plan, it became the dominant economic development issue.

Because of the resulting traffic impacts of commercial development, and especially in light of the proposed design and aesthetic improvements that the Rhode Island Department of Transportation is proposing for lower County Road (see Circulation Element), the Economic Development Committee coordinated their work with that done by the Circulation Committee. The result is an endorsement by both committees of a plan to improve the functioning and appearance of both the road and the shopping area.

#### Commercial Zoning; Maple Avenue

The concept of developing a compact commercial center, as opposed to allowing commercial strip development, is also an issue when considering the future of Maple Avenue. Because of its business zoning designation and mixed commercial-residential use, Maple Avenue serves as a linear extension of the County Road commercial area. As illustrated in Figure 1, Barrington's largest business district extends from County Road to Middle Highway; all but the last two blocks include the entire area between the East Bay Bicycle Path and the north side of Maple Avenue. The issues that arose during discussions regarding Maple Avenue, were not only the physical nature of the commercial development which this zoning designation encourages, but also the appearance of the street and the traffic impacts resulting from its eventual conversion from a mixed use, but predominantly residential area, to a mostly commercial area.

More specifically, the linear nature of the existing zoning designation discourages pedestrian movement between commercial destinations. This results in increased traffic volumes, a situation that will worsen as more commercial development occurs. In addition, more commercial development, particularly larger-scale development involving new building construction rather than conversion of existing houses, will change the ambiance of the street. Under existing zoning, what is presently a neighborhood business area can be converted to another major commercial strip development in Barrington. By not providing a distinction between a central or downtown business district, and smaller scale or neighborhood business districts, Barrington is allowing two things to potentially happen. One is that the other areas zoned for business, particularly that along Maple Avenue, compete with the area the Town hopes to strengthen as its commercial center, and the other is that any kind of commercial use -- all those that are allowed under the present zoning regulations -- can intrude upon these mixed-use areas.

#### Re-Use of Industrial Land; Bay Spring Avenue

Figure 2 depicts the only industrial area of Barrington. Bay Spring Avenue, which runs from Washington Road to the Providence River, includes several residences and a number of commercial establishments as well as three separate mill complexes. Most of the businesses, as well as one of the mills, are within the Business District east of the East Bay Bicycle Path. The other two mills are the Rhode Island Lace Works, which abuts Haines State Park, and the mill known as Pilling Chain, which abuts Allins Cove. The buildings and surrounding land which make up these two sites are the only areas zoned for manufacturing in Barrington. Also shown in Figure 2 are two marinas which are within areas zoned for waterfront business.

Bay Spring Avenue is a densely developed mixed-use area. The exceptions to this are three fairly significant parcels of undeveloped land, which are all primarily within one of the manufacturing or business districts. The largest undeveloped parcel is that off Washington Road, which was once the site of the West Barrington Elementary School. Now owned by Tockwotten Home (see Housing Element), this eight acre site is now vacant.

The major issue for this area of town, however, is not the eventual development of vacant land, but rather the ultimate fate of the three mill complexes on Bay Spring Avenue. The most visible of

these is the Rhode Island Lace Works mill. After seventy years of producing weaver's lace, the 300,000 square foot brick building has had its lace machines removed and sold, and now sits empty. Before it closed it employed about 180 people, although most came from Warren and Bristol.

The Pilling Chain mill, which lies between the bike path and Allins Cove, sits on a beautiful 7.8 acre parcel of land with a stone-lined pond and brick pump house. The western half of the parcel between the pond and Adams Avenue, which also includes some frontage on Bay Spring Avenue, is undeveloped. The mill presently is an underutilized building. The largest manufacturer, the Pilling Chain Company, which produced zipper components, certain metal stampings and miniature zinc die castings and employed about twenty-five people, recently closed. The other businesses include a small wire drawing company and a packaging company. The mill across Bay Spring Avenue from Pilling Chain is under the same ownership. It is a rambling wooden building that was once used for storage and assembly, and is now virtually empty.

All three of the mill complexes, but particularly the Lace Works and Pilling Chain mills, present a challenge to the Town and to their owners in determining their best future use. The two brick mills are substantial structures and are on valuable parcels of land, although the Lace Works building lies within the 100 year floodplain. This area of Barrington also has reasonably good access; Bay Spring Avenue intersects with Narragansett Avenue and Washington Road, both collector roads with direct access to Willett Avenue in East Providence and County Road in Barrington, respectively. There is general support for keeping the manufacturing zoning designation of these parcels until a specific proposal for re-use is put forth, and also for the preservation of the buildings in any future utilization of these sites.

***2002 Update: The wooden mill was destroyed by fire in the early 1990's and the land, part of the Business District, remains vacant. The Piling Chain Mill was expanded and converted to a 60 unit low and moderate income elderly housing development (Barrington Cove Apartments). The Lace Works Mill was razed in 1997 and the site redeveloped into a 134 unit assisted living complex (Bay Spring Village). Both mill sites were changed from Limited Manufacturing (LM) zoning to Elderly Housing (EH). The only land remaining in the LM District is the undeveloped 5.4 acre parcel across Allin's Cove from Barrington Cove Apartments. The Town is considering converting this to R-10, and eliminating the manufacturing district altogether.***

## GOALS AND POLICIES

Based upon the above described issues, and on the input of the business people, other committee members, town officials and the general public, the Economic Development Committee developed the following goals and policies:

### Goals

1. Maintain the present composition of residential to non-residential land use in Barrington, while recognizing that commercial and industrial land uses serve to both broaden the tax base, and provide

the residents with employment opportunities and goods and services.

2. Achieve the full development of land designated for business and industrial use, particularly the reuse of vacant developed land, while preserving the predominantly residential character of the Town.
3. Develop a better defined commercial center for Barrington, utilizing the Barrington Shopping Center and surrounding commercial areas, as well as the nearby town government center.
4. Provide the best possible circulation system to, from and within Barrington's commercial areas.
5. Achieve visually appealing commercial development in Barrington, and insure that new economic development is compatible with surrounding residential land use.

### Policies

1. Support and promote desirable economic development within Barrington.
2. Allow mixed residential and commercial development, in the form of neighborhood business, within appropriate areas of Barrington.
3. Support the R.I. Department of Transportation in the upgrading of County Road, and the property owners and businesses in design and aesthetic improvements to the County Road commercial areas.
4. Provide incentives for aesthetic improvements to existing businesses, and establish design guidelines and regulations for future commercial development, and the expansion and/or improvement of existing commercial structures.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been developed by the Economic Development Committee for specific areas of town, and also to address the general issues of the appearance and use of commercial and industrial land in Barrington.

1. Establish A Neighborhood Business District

It is recommended that a new neighborhood business district replace the existing business district throughout Barrington, with the exception of the County Road area and a portion of the Bay Spring area. Its purpose is to down-scale commercial activity where it co-exists with neighborhoods, while serving to strengthen the Barrington Shopping Center and surrounding area as the Town's central business district. Also proposed in conjunction with this is an elimination altogether of some of the commercial zoning along Maple Avenue (see recommendation below).

In general, the Neighborhood Business District would allow less intense commercial and retail activity than is allowed in the Business District, and would restrict the total size of an individual business establishment. For example, supermarkets and auto sales would be prohibited, and certain other activities allowed by special use permit only. However, this district would also have less restrictive lot coverage and parking requirements than the present business district. The Waterfront Business District would not be affected.

The specific areas of Barrington impacted by this proposal include not only Maple Avenue but also Bay Spring Avenue in West Barrington, and Sowams Road in Hampden Meadows. In regards to Bay Spring, it is recommended that only the commercial zone on the south side of the road, and on the north side as far west as the Barrington Lumber property be converted to Neighborhood Business; the lumber company, the site of the mill building and the empty Tockwotten lot would remain as a Business District. In regards to the Hampden Meadows area of Barrington, where there are scattered commercial uses outside of the area zoned for business, it is recommended that no further commercial development be allowed to occur along either New Meadow or Sowams Road.

***2002 Update: The Neighborhood Business District was established and applied to the commercial areas described above as part of the rewrite of the zoning ordinance and revisions to the zoning map in 1994.***

## 2. Develop A County Road Commercial Center

To assist in the development of a more cohesive and better defined commercial center for Barrington, a number of specific recommendations for the lower County Road area are made. The key component of the plan for a commercial center is the Barrington Shopping Center; it is the location of many of the major retail establishments serving Barrington, and significantly impacts the area's circulation system, including automobile, bicycle and pedestrian. The revitalization of the shopping center is necessary to achieve the concept of an attractive commercial core area for Barrington. The specific recommendations for the County Road commercial area are as follows:

- a. Develop a site plan for an improved shopping center and commercial district, to complement the design and aesthetic improvements developed as part of the upgrade to County Road from Sullivan Terrace to Rumstick Road. The site plan should be developed with the support and involvement of the impacted property owners.
- b. Consider the placement of all overhead utilities underground as part of the design improvements for County Road to further improve the aesthetics of the commercial area, or provide for future burial by means of a conduit in the new road.
- ~~c. Convert the remaining residential zone along Anoka Avenue and Wood Street to business, specifically neighborhood business.~~

*2002 Update: Redesign and upgrade of the shopping center has occurred through the private development process with the Town providing review of building and site plans under the development plan review ordinance (see below). Improvements include the demolition of the old Almacs store and construction of a new Shaw's supermarket; demolition of an old gas station and one of the older multi-tenant buildings and construction of a new building with CVS as the main tenant; and improvements to the storefronts of another building (the north building). Redevelopment of the center is ongoing. Utilities were not placed underground as part of the road project, completed in 2000.*

### 3. Convert Maple Avenue Zoning Designations

To both strengthen the County Road commercial area, and preserve the general residential quality of Maple Avenue, a number of zoning changes are recommended. Specifically, it is proposed that the existing business district on the south side of Maple Avenue between Barrington Avenue and Middle Highway, ~~and on the north side of Maple Avenue between West Street and Barrington Avenue~~, be converted to residential; and that the business district on the north and south sides of Maple Avenue, between West Street and Barrington Avenue, be converted to a neighborhood business district.

The conversion to residential zoning would be to a Residence 10 District (R-10) to match that of the surrounding area. The concept behind the recommended zone changes is to maintain the smaller scale commercial activity which presently exists along Maple Avenue, as well as to preserve those areas which are essentially residential.

~~Keeping a business designation along most of the south side of Maple Avenue, as opposed to the north side, is recommended for a number of reasons. These include the fact that there are more established businesses on the south side (see Figure 1); the lots are deeper and can support more parking; and the area abuts the East Bay Bicycle Path, which has been shown to be an enhancement to adjoining commercial activity. The bicycle path also provides another means of access to the existing (and future) businesses along Maple Avenue. Finally, concentrating commercial activity on one side of Maple Avenue also enhances the safety of pedestrian movement. To improve the safety and functioning of the street, however, it is recommended that the Town undertake a sidewalk reconstruction program, possibly in conjunction with the R.I. Department of Transportation, and develop a plan for better parking as well.~~

***2002 Update: This zoning change was done as part of the rewrite of the zoning ordinance and revisions to the zoning map in 1994.***

### 4. ~~Develop a Bay Spring Mills Re-Use Plan~~

~~The existence of the under-utilized mill buildings and vacant industrial land along Bay Spring Avenue represents an opportunity as well as a challenge for Barrington. A formal feasibility study needs to be undertaken to define appropriate uses for these sites. It is recommended that a plan be developed specifically for the re-use of the vacant Rhode Island Lace and Pilling Chain mill buildings. This project should be initiated by the Barrington Town Council and involve both the property owners and neighborhood residents. The plan should include a detailed approach to development with specific steps for implementation. It could include such uses or concepts as light industry, incubator space for small businesses, office park development and senior housing. The only zoning change recommended as part of the comprehensive plan for the Bay Spring area would be the conversion of the existing business district along Bay Spring Avenue and Washington Road to neighborhood business.~~

4. Establish Site Plan Review for Commercial and Industrial Developments

To improve the overall quality, appearance and functioning of its commercial and industrial areas, it is recommended that Barrington require site plan review of future commercial and industrial developments. New development, or the expansion or conversion of the use of existing buildings such as the Bay Spring mills, would be reviewed under a new development plan review ordinance. This regulation would allow the Planning Board to consider such impacts as traffic, and to have control over such site features as access and parking, landscaping, signage and general aesthetics. As part of its implementation, the requirements and standards under development plan review would be specifically defined.

5. Establish Design Review for Commercial and Industrial Buildings

Another recommendation relating to commercial and industrial aesthetics is for the establishment of new regulations related to design review of buildings within all business and manufacturing zoning districts. This review would give the Town a means of control over the design and general appearance of new buildings, as well as that of buildings undergoing rehabilitation or a change of use within these districts. Implementation of this type of regulation requires either the establishment of a design review commission made up of qualified residents, or a committee of the Planning Board, to apply specific design standards when reviewing development proposals. Design review would be a component of the development plan review ordinance, as it is applied to commercial and industrial areas. The establishment of design review procedures would also be done in conjunction with a revision of the existing sign ordinance to provide for aesthetically consistent signage in commercial areas, and to require the phase out of non-conforming signs.

***2002 Update: A development plan review ordinance, which requires building design and site plan review of all commercial redevelopment, as well as site plan review of major residential developments, was first adopted by the Town in 1993. It remains a part of the zoning ordinance (Article XXIV), which was rewritten in 1994. Advance review on behalf of the Planning Board is performed by the Technical Review Committee. A design manual, the "Barrington Village Design Study and Design Guidelines" was adopted by the Town in 1995. The regulations and the design guidelines, along with modified and strengthened sign regulations, provide the principal basis for the high quality commercial construction that has occurred in the Town since 1992.***

6. Establish Barrington Chapter of County Chamber of Commerce

In order to promote and strengthen the Town's commercial (and industrial) base, it is recommended that a Barrington chapter of the Bristol County Chamber of Commerce, or a more active business association involving local business people, be established. To foster a mutually beneficial relationship between the Town and its business community, this group should also include a member of the Town Council, or its designee, to act as a liaison. The chamber group or business association should have a process for marketing Barrington as both a site for new or relocating businesses, and as a place to shop for Barrington residents.

## CIRCULATION ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

The Circulation Element of the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan is an inventory and analysis of the Town's roadway and other transportation systems, as well as a presentation of some specific concepts that relate to issues common to other elements of the plan -- the appearance of the community, the safety of its residents and the use of land, particularly where it is commercial. A number of factors, including Barrington's bayside location, the success and heavy usage of the recently constructed East Bay Bicycle Path and the plans to widen and improve County Road (Route 114) through the Town's commercial center, have all influenced the development of the circulation component, including its emphasis on a balanced transportation system.

Following a description of the Town's overall circulation system is a discussion of transportation issues affecting Barrington, largely devoted to the circulation and safety of lower County Road and adjoining commercial areas, particularly the Barrington Shopping Center. The goals, policies and resulting recommendations reflect the concern with automobile and pedestrian movement around this area of town, as well as the Circulation Committee's interest in a safe, diversified circulation system for Barrington.

## EXISTING CIRCULATION SYSTEMS

Barrington's present circulation system is made up of several components which are described in the following pages. They include the roadway system, bikeway system, mass transit and sidewalks.

### Roadway System

According to the Barrington Department of Public Works, the Town has 97.08 miles of roadways. This total, which does not measure separately the divided sections of Wampanoag Trail, is broken down in Table 1 according to the following classifications:

Principal Arterial - A roadway carrying the major portion of longer distance trips through an area, generally serving the major movement of traffic not served by freeways.

Minor Arterial - A roadway which forms the network of cross-travel within a community, generally serving shorter length trips and parallel to a principal arterial.

Collector - An auxiliary or through roadway which serves to collect and distribute traffic between arterials and local roadways.

Local - A roadway (street) which serves only to provide access to abutting properties.

Table 1

CLASSIFICATION OF BARRINGTON ROADS

<u>Type</u>	<u>Miles</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Principal Arterial	4.93	5.1%
Minor Arterial	7.81	8.0%
Collector	12.25	12.6%
Local	<u>72.09</u>	<u>74.3%</u>
Total	97.08	100 %

Depicted in Figure 1, the Transportation Facilities Map, are the roads in Barrington which are classified as principal arterials, minor arterials and collectors; all other roadways are local streets. Barrington's major artery is Route 114, (Wampanoag Trail and County Road) which is a heavily traveled north-south through route, linking Barrington with Providence and the other East Bay communities. Annual average daily traffic (AADT), the average number of vehicles passing a specified point during a 24 hour period, averaged over one calendar year, is estimated to be 21,000 vehicles for County Road. This figure is based upon actual counts in 1988 along County Road between Lincoln Avenue and Bosworth Street.

Congestion along the section of County Road between Lincoln Avenue and the Barrington River Bridge and south into Warren, is the major transportation issue facing Barrington. The high accident frequency in this area is the motivation behind the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (R.I.D.O.T.) plans to widen the road and add a turning lane between Sullivan Terrace and Rumstick Road (see following section).

Barrington's other major roadways include Route 103, which is the section of County Road running east-west from Willett Avenue in East Providence to Route 114, and a number of minor arterials. These include most of Middle Highway and Nayatt Road, as well as Massasoit Avenue, New Meadow Road and Sowams Road (see Figure 1). A number of lesser traveled roads mostly running east-west, with the major exception being Washington Road which runs north-south through western Barrington, are considered collectors which feed traffic from local streets into the arterials. Counts that were done in 1988 on these roads resulted in the following AADT's:

- \* Middle Highway, between Route 103 and Old County Road; 5,500 vehicles.
- \* New Meadow Road, a section between Sowams Road and Kent Street; 3,650 vehicles.

- \* Nayatt Road; just east of the intersection with Rumstick Road; 2,850 vehicles.
- \* Sowams Road, a section between New Meadow and Kent Street; 2,500 vehicles.
- \* Washington Road, a section between the bicycle path and Nayatt Road; 1,850 vehicles.

Among the Town's major roads, there are two which historically have had high accident rates -- County Road and Massasoit Avenue. The high accident area of County Road includes the entire section between Hill Top Avenue and the Barrington River Bridge, and the intersections with Massasoit Avenue and Lincoln Avenue. These high accident areas are designated in Figure 1. The County Road and Lincoln Avenue intersection was the site of twelve accidents in 1990, making it a dangerous intersection according to the D.O.T., which identifies such intersections as those having ten or more accidents in a given year. Of these twelve accidents, four involved personal injuries and eight involved property damage. In 1989, Barrington's major accident site was the intersection of County Road and Rumstick Road; three of these accidents involved personal injuries, and seven involved property damage. While this intersection will be addressed as part of the overall improvements planned for County Road in this area, both the Lincoln Avenue and Massasoit Avenue intersections with County Road require separate consideration. One other intersection in town, Maple Avenue and Middle Highway, is also considered a particularly dangerous intersection requiring specific consideration in the comprehensive plan.

As part of the D.O.T.'s ongoing Highway Improvement Program, the County Road and Massasoit Avenue intersection is scheduled for improvements, with construction taking place in 1993. The improvements include a redesign of the intersection to add left turning lanes on County Road. The D.O.T. has approved the installation of a blinking caution light at the County Road and Lincoln Avenue intersection, and town officials have also recommended that the D.O.T. remove a large tree within the state right-of-way to improve sight distances. Specific design improvements proposed for these intersections are included in the Recommendations section. Other roadways in Barrington scheduled for improvement by D.O.T. include New Meadow Road from Meadowbrook Drive to the Massachusetts border, Maple Avenue, and Bay Spring Avenue, with construction scheduled in 1994 for New Meadow Road, and in 1995 for the other two roadways. The improvements include general reconstruction including sidewalks, and addition of a drainage system for New Meadow Road.

There are currently only five signalized intersections in town, all of which involve state roads. These are the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Middle Highway, and the following intersections with County Road: Middle Highway, Federal Road, the East Bay Bike Path and Rumstick Road.

Barrington's roadway system also includes three state owned bridges. They are the Massasoit Avenue Bridge, and the Barrington River and Warren River Bridges, the latter two of which are designated as historic bridges by the Department of Transportation (see Natural and Cultural Resources Element). Both built in 1914, these multi-span concrete bridges are part of Route 114, linking Barrington to the rest of the East Bay. All three bridges are also scheduled for rehabilitation under D.O.T.'s 1990 Comprehensive Bridge Improvement Plan. The Route 114 bridges are

scheduled for construction in 1992; the work will include a complete rehabilitation of both the substructure and superstructure of each bridge. Repairs will be made to the arches, piers and retaining walls; all work will replicate the existing structures to insure that the bridges will be visually unchanged. The improvements will also include the roadway approaches as required. Improvements to the Massasoit Avenue Bridge are scheduled for design in 1992, and construction in 1995.

***2002 Update: Improvements to the County Road and Massasoit Avenue intersection were undertaken in 1999. Reconstruction of the Barrington River and Warren River Bridges is underway as a single contract, with completion expected in 2004.***

### Bikeway System

Like the three other East Bay communities, Barrington is host to the first state built and maintained bicycle facility -- the East Bay Bicycle Path. Built as an alternative transportation system with funds from the Federal Highway Administration, the East Bay Bicycle Path now ties together Bristol, Warren, Barrington and East Providence. It will also link the East Bay with the City of Providence via the Route 195 bridge, when it is completed in 1992. Because it is built on the bed of a deactivated rail line, the flat grades and long sight distances provide an ideal environment for commuting by bicycle, as well as an exceptional recreational opportunity due to its scenic bayside location.

In Barrington, due to its east-west rather than coastal location, the East Bay Bicycle Path is more centrally located, and therefore more widely accessible than in the other communities (see Figure 1). It is also directly connected with Haines State Park, the Bay Spring mill complex, Bicknell Park, the YMCA and Veterans Park, the Barrington Shopping Center and the police station.

The bike path was designed and built according to federal standards; it consists of ten feet of pavement with a minimum of two foot grass shoulders on either side. Since the first sections were built in East Providence and Barrington in 1988 and 1989, the bike path has been heavily used by many types of people -- walkers, joggers and various wheel-propelled travelers, as well as bicyclists. The success of the bike path is in contrast to many residents' initial fears of loss of privacy, reduction in property values, increased crime and an improperly maintained facility. The general community support that now exists for the bike path, and the interest in bicycle travel its presence has generated, has prompted a renewed interest in expanding the bike system into other areas of Barrington. This was a concept that failed to materialize in the mid 1980's after considerable local opposition. The local bike/trail system, however, could be built to lesser standards than the East Bay Bicycle Path, with an emphasis on providing the residents of Barrington with safe access to the state bike path, or to other destinations within the community.

### Mass Transit

Barrington's original mass transit facility was the Bristol Secondary Track, now the site of the East Bay Bicycle Path. Although the State Department of Transportation is reserving the entire right-of-way for potential future commuter rail services, as well as bicycle travel, the only present (and immediately foreseeable) means of mass transit serving Barrington is the R.I. Public Transit Authority (R.I.P.T.A.) bus service. The locations of the bus routes through Barrington are also shown in Figure 1. Associated with the major bus route along Route 114 is the D.O.T. maintained park and ride lot near the intersection of County Road and Massasoit Avenue, at the Congregational Church parking lot. It is among twenty-two park and ride lots statewide, but is one of only two or three that is used to capacity. According to D.O.T. records, this lot, which has a capacity of 93 vehicles, was used at 100 percent capacity on an average daily basis in 1990, and in recent years has gone over capacity. In contrast, park and ride lots in the other East Bay communities only range from 10 to 30 percent capacity use. One reason for the high usage of the Barrington lot, however, may be that its location marks the end of a fare zone.

According to a R.I.P.T.A. ridership survey done for 1990-1991, the Providence - Barrington - Newport bus service carries a daily average of 25.7 passengers per trip. In contrast, the daily average ridership per trip for the State as a whole is 14.7 passengers. This East Bay - Aquidneck Island line continues to be one of the best utilized bus runs in Rhode Island.

In a concept related to mass transit, the D.O.T. Division of Planning has undertaken a water transportation study to determine the feasibility of developing water transportation services for the State, primarily utilizing Narragansett Bay. The study, to be completed in 1992, will determine projected traffic volumes on specific water routes, and will develop a master plan for the development of such services. Because of its bayside location, Barrington is within the study area and will be potentially impacted by the results of the study. Because of the Town's demonstrated demand for commuting alternatives, the Circulation Committee has endorsed the concept of adding water transportation services for Barrington residents.

### Sidewalk System

Barrington presently has 80,420 feet (15.2 miles) of existing sidewalks. As shown in Figure 2, these are presently along major thoroughfares and in the vicinity of the schools, commercial areas, the government center and the Town Beach. The Barrington Public Works Department also has a two phase program of new sidewalk construction for those areas of town where pedestrian activity requires it. The following table contains a summary of the existing and proposed sidewalks in Barrington. Whenever possible, the Town should coordinate the construction of sidewalks with the D.O.T., making use of state and federal funding. With the construction of all sidewalks as proposed, Barrington would have a total of 109,760 feet (20.8 miles) of sidewalks.

Table 2

### SIDEWALKS IN BARRINGTON

<u>Roads</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Phase I (1-5 Yrs)</u>	<u>Phase II (6-10 Yrs)</u>	<u>Total Sidewalks</u>
Town	16,920 ft.	10,480 ft.	2,260 ft.	29,660 ft.
State	63,500 ft.	<u>10,500 ft.</u>	<u>6,100 ft.</u>	<u>80,100 ft.</u>
Total	80,420 ft.	20,980 ft.	8,360 ft.	109,760 ft.

## CIRCULATION ISSUES

The issues which the Circulation Committee addressed during the comprehensive planning process included some which have been issues for many years in Barrington. Several revolved around lower County Road, including its traffic conditions, general appearance and the proposed R.I.D.O.T. design improvements; the East Bay Bicycle Path crossing; and access to the adjoining shopping center. Because of the relationship between the functioning and aesthetics of the roadway and other circulation systems and the success of adjoining commercial areas, particularly along County Road and Maple Avenue, much of the Circulation Committee's work was done in conjunction with that of the Economic Development Committee.

In addition to County Road, the circulation issues facing Barrington include specific safety and traffic concerns with other roadways in town, as well as expansion of the bike path and development of other alternative transportation systems.

### County Road Traffic Volume and Design

With 21,000 vehicles a day, County Road is clearly Barrington's busiest roadway. The consequences of this large volume of traffic have made this state owned principal arterial a major issue in Barrington. Much of the total traffic volume consists of through traffic, which has resulted in travel conditions which are less than desirable during peak commuting hours, specifically in the area between Massasoit Avenue and the Barrington and Warren River Bridges. Traffic volumes, and the related high frequency of accidents, are the reasons for the R.I. Department of Transportation's design improvements plans for County Road in the section between Sullivan Terrace and Rumstick Road.

These plans include the widening of the road by six feet (from 36 to 42 feet, curb to curb) to add a middle turning lane. It also includes a change in some curb cuts, new sidewalks and a redesign of the Rumstick Road intersection. These plans have been underway for some time as part of a design process which has included D.O.T. sponsored public hearings in recent years. However, the initiation of work on the more broadly focused comprehensive plan resulted in a renewed interest on the part of the Town regarding the future of County Road. The Circulation Committee began a major promotional campaign to incorporate aesthetic improvements into the design plans for the road (see Recommendations section). Along with the Economic Development Committee, they have addressed the issue of access to the Shopping Center, as well as the overall circulation of the lower County Road area, which accesses the government center as well as the Town's major commercial area.

Related to the concerns with traffic volumes along County Road is the East Bay Bicycle Path crossing, which presently has a pedestrian actuated signal allowing bicyclists to stop traffic in order to cross safely. The bike crossing is located just north of the shopping center, and the addition of a traffic light in this area has added to the traffic flow problems along lower County Road, as well as

delays and safety concerns for the users of the heavily traveled bike path. As a result, D.O.T. is undertaking design and construction of a bicycle and pedestrian bridge, to be done in conjunction with the County Road improvements.

Access between County Road and Barrington's major shopping center has also been an ongoing concern for the Town, and was considered by the Circulation Committee to be one of the major issues related to the overall circulation problems of lower County Road. The entrance is poorly designed (and signed), and the layout and parking arrangement of the shopping center has resulted in a confusing circulation pattern not conducive to safe pedestrian movement. While access to the shopping center will be improved with new curb cuts when the road improvements are undertaken, the issues of circulation within the shopping center, as well as its overall appearance, remain to be addressed.

### Bosworth Street versus Wood Street Proposed Extensions

In addition to concern with access to the shopping center from County Road, the Town of Barrington has, in recent years, considered the possibility of creating alternative access to the center. This would be accomplished by the construction of a new road which would tie into the mixed residential-commercial area to the west, thereby giving Barrington residents access to the shopping area without having to travel on County Road. The other objective of this second access is to help alleviate congestion on County Road in the area between Maple Avenue and Rumstick Road.

Two alternatives for additional access, both involving extensions of existing streets, have been proposed and studied by the Town (see Figure 3). The first involves extension of the existing Bosworth Street which adjoins the shopping center to the south; a number of different alignments were analyzed by a professional engineering firm to connect the end of Bosworth Street with West Street, which presently ends at the Y.M.C.A. on the south side of the East Bay Bicycle Path. The preferred alignment involves construction through private undeveloped land, a situation that gives the roadway construction added significance in a couple of ways: first, it requires the Town to acquire property to build the road, and second, once constructed, the road would open up additional land for commercial development. The area between Bosworth and West Streets is also within the recharge area for the Nayatt wellfield (see Natural and Cultural resources Element) and contains extensive wetlands, the locations of which were a major factor in selecting the preferred alignment.

The Town also considered the extension of Wood Street as a second access to the shopping center; this would involve the continuation of Wood Street from Waseca Avenue in a southerly direction to meet the paved end of Bosworth Street. This extension would also involve right-of-way acquisition and in addition, would require a new crossing of the bicycle path, which separates the shopping center from the mixed-use area to the north. The Wood Street extension would open up land for development as well, by providing road frontage to some presently vacant parcels, and would likely increase traffic along primarily residential streets.

Due to the potential development impacts of both road extensions, the Town does not recommend active pursuance of either option. However, Bosworth Street extension is the preferred second access, but only in response to further development of the adjoining land.

***2002 Update: The undeveloped land between the shopping center and the Y.M.C.A. has been purchased by the Town as protected open space, meaning Bosworth Street will never be extended. Private commercial land between Wood Street (Avenue) and the shopping center has been redeveloped (new Brooks Pharmacy) but a bicycle/pedestrian connection to the bike path and the center was constructed as part of the redevelopment.***

### Maple Avenue Circulation

Maple Avenue is addressed as a circulation issue primarily because of its mixed land use. Due to its business zoning designation and scattered commercial uses, Maple Avenue functions as a linear extension of the County Road commercial area, as well as being a collector road connecting County Road with Middle Highway. While the land use and zoning along Maple Avenue is considered more thoroughly in the Economic Development Element of the comprehensive plan, the concern here relates to the circulation aspects of its commercial use. Specifically, there is a concern with the traffic generated by the businesses located along Maple Avenue, and with the corresponding need to encourage pedestrian movements by improving the existing sidewalks and parking. The intersection with Middle Highway is one of the high accident intersections in town, making safety also an important issue relating to Maple Avenue.

### Massasoit Avenue Safety Conditions

Traffic conditions and safety of Massasoit Avenue have been a long standing issue in Barrington, one which resulted in the formation of a residents' group called the Massasoit Avenue Neighborhood Association. Massasoit Avenue is a state owned minor arterial which serves to connect County Road with the Hampden Meadows area of Barrington. The specific concerns of the neighborhood group are the speed of the cars traveling along the road, as well as the excessive number of trucks which use it as a through route between County Road and New Meadow Road (which connects with Route 6 in Seekonk, Massachusetts). The entire roadway, from County Road to New Meadow Road, is also a high accident area.

The neighborhood group has requested a number of improvements and modifications, which require efforts on the part of both the Town and the R.I. Department of Transportation. These include the addition of stop signs at specific intersections; the addition of chatter strips and speed limit and other warning signs; the elimination of all school bus stops; exclusion of all truck traffic; and regular police enforcement during commuter hours. Because it is a state road, any addition or changes in traffic control (stop signs, exclusion of trucks) would require the approval of the D.O.T. Also considered was the addition of sidewalks where there are none, and curbing to give the street a

more confined feeling to motorists. The Circulation Committee reviewed the neighborhood concerns, as well as the concerns of the State and the Barrington Public Works Department, prior to endorsing a set of recommendations for Massasoit Avenue in the comprehensive plan.

## East Bay Bicycle Path Expansion

When the East Bay Bicycle Path project was in the planning and preliminary design phase in the early 1980's, Barrington was the only one of the four communities to actively study and promote a local system of bikeways. In the resulting plan developed by the D.O.T., Barrington's local bikeways were shown to connect in several places with the state bike path. As the project was entering the design phase, an auxiliary system known as the Hampden Meadows Connector was to be included as an extension of the state facility. This was later eliminated due to local opposition. In light of this history, and particularly due to the Town's long standing policy of supporting bikeways and trails, the Circulation Committee has reconsidered the concept of a townwide local bike system. The overwhelming success and popularity of the East Bay Bike Path supports the committee's proposal in a couple ways: it will likely change the dynamics of neighborhood feelings toward public bikeways, and it demonstrates that supporting alternative transportation systems makes good long term planning sense. A suggested local bike system developed by the committee is described in the Recommendations section.

## Provision of Additional Commuter Services

The final issue addressed by the Circulation Committee was the need to provide more options for commuters. This is apparent due to the heavy usage of the single park and ride lot established in Barrington, and simply due to the high volumes of traffic along County Road during commuting hours. As a result of this apparent demand, and also in support of the general concept of providing commuting alternatives, the Circulation Committee recommended the establishment of an additional park and ride lot in Barrington.

## GOALS AND POLICIES

Based upon present conditions and transportation issues affecting Barrington, the following goals and policies were developed:

### Goals

1. Achieve a balanced transportation system for Barrington, including opportunities for mass transit and water based systems.
2. Provide a safe, well maintained and well designed road system throughout the Town.
3. Preserve the existing bikeway system, and increase future bicycle transportation opportunities in Barrington.
4. Provide a safe pedestrian environment wherever necessary, but particularly within commercial

districts and in the vicinity of schools.

5. Insure that traffic and circulation patterns are not adversely affected by commercial and residential development.

6. Improve wherever possible, the traffic flow within existing commercial areas, and along major roadways serving Barrington.

### Policies

1. Improve dangerous roads and intersections in Barrington through redesign and/or the addition of traffic controls.

2. Coordinate with the State Department of Transportation to better maintain state roads in Barrington, and continue with the current Department of Public Works program of maintaining town roads through an annual street inventory and paving plan.

3. Support the R.I. Department of Transportation in the establishment of an additional park and ride lot for bus commuters, and in the potential future development of water taxi landings.

4. Provide for the design of new roadways compatible with the desired character of the Town.

5. Identify areas for the lateral expansion of the East Bay Bicycle Path, and support an increase in its width to three lanes to provide a passing lane, as a part of its future maintenance and/or potential replacement.

6. Provide sidewalks along major roadways within a half mile radius of all school and commercial areas in Barrington.

7. Require traffic impact studies for commercial and large residential developments or proposed land use changes, including identification of mitigating measures.

8. Support the Department of Transportation in the upgrading of County Road.

9. Work with the adjoining East Bay communities to improve traffic flow conditions along major arteries, specifically County Road.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations developed by the Circulation Committee all relate to either improving the design and safety of existing transportation systems, or with expanding transportation opportunities for Barrington residents. Several of these are illustrated with drawings or maps.

Because it is addressed as the major transportation issue in town, most of the recommendations deal with County Road, or with related issues.

1. Undertake Improvements to County Road and the Shopping Center

The following are the recommendations specifically proposed to improve the overall design of the County Road commercial area, both in terms of circulation patterns and area aesthetics:

- a. Incorporate aesthetic elements into the Department of Transportation design plans for the upgrade of County Road from Sullivan Terrace to Rumstick Road, including street trees, period lighting, specially marked pedestrian crossings and a green strip along the west side of the road.
- b. Expand the proposed aesthetic improvements along County Road to town owned land on the east side of the roadway, to better facilitate pedestrian movement around the government center.
- c. Develop a plan to improve auto and pedestrian circulation in and around the Barrington Shopping Center, as part of an overall site plan to improve the design and appearance of the Town's commercial center.
- d. Undertake construction of the Bosworth Street extension if the land between the shopping center and the Y.M.C.A. becomes developed.
- e. Cooperate with the D.O.T. in the construction of a non-vehicular bicycle bridge over County Road at the East Bay Bicycle Path crossing, to both improve traffic flow along the roadway and enhance bicycling safety.

Illustrated in Figures 4 and 5 are the aesthetic improvements recommended for County Road and the town owned land around the government center. The aesthetics of the roadway have been a great concern to the local community since the initiation of the project's design. While the reconstruction and widening of the roadway certainly is disruptive and results in more pavement, it also presents an opportunity to make major improvements in the appearance, as well as the functioning and safety, of County Road.

As a result of the combined efforts of committee members working on the comprehensive plan, town officials, the R.I. Department of Transportation and the R.I. Historical Preservation Commission, the street amenities have now been included within the design plans for reconstruction of County Road, as has been the proposal to construct the bicycle bridge. A special concrete pavement that appears similar to historic brick paving has been approved by D.O.T. for use in the middle turning lane, as well as at crosswalks. Street lamps and trees will be placed along the entire length of the project. Low evergreen hedges will be planted between sidewalks and parking lots to soften the visual impacts of the vehicles, and prevent the sidewalks from being used as parking

spaces. In addition, the new curbing and better organized curb cuts will assist in both vehicular and pedestrian safety by eliminating the current confusion of where County Road ends, and parking lots and sidewalks begin.

The major improvement, however, will be the burial of the overhead utility lines. The sense of blight often associated with County Road can be attributed mostly to the numerous utility poles and congestion of the overhead wires and transformers. The removal of this visual pollution will greatly enhance the aesthetic character of County Road, and promote the roadway upgrade as not only a necessary safety improvement, but the first step to creating a town center of which Barrington can be proud. The next phase will be for the Town to undertake the improvements alongside the Town Hall and cemetery, and to work with property owners and businesses to implement the necessary design improvements to the Shopping Center.

***2002 Update: The County Road Project, including the widening of the road and all amenities, was completed by the D.O.T. in 2000. Unfortunately underground placement of utility lines was not included in the road reconstruction. Circulation within the shopping center was revised and improved to coordinate with both the road reconstruction and upgrading of the center. Plans for a bicycle/pedestrian bridge over County Road were abandoned by the state primarily due to cost.***

## 2. Undertake Design Improvements to Dangerous Intersections

Designated in Figure 6 are three of Barrington's more dangerous intersections (as previously identified). Illustrated in Figures 7, 8 and 9 are design changes that are recommended to improve the functioning and safety of each of these intersections. The design improvements are presented in a conceptual manner; as such they represent long term or ideal improvements whose actual construction would require D.O.T. involvement, and would be a function of design and regulatory constraints as well as available funding.

Figure 7, Proposed Design Improvements to the County Road and Massasoit Avenue Intersection, recommends reducing back-up along both roadways by providing additional turning lanes. Specifically, the addition of a right turning lane from Massasoit Avenue onto County Road will ease traffic congestion during the morning commuting hours, while the addition of a left turning lane from County Road onto Massasoit Avenue will reduce back-up along County Road during the afternoon commute.

Figure 8, Proposed Design Improvements to the County Road and Lincoln Avenue Intersection, shows a number of recommended improvements to change the dangerous configuration, and lack of adequate sight distances. They include creation of a left turning lane from County Road onto Lincoln Avenue, realignment of the intersection and removal of sight obstructions.

Figure 9, Proposed Design Improvements to Maple Avenue and Middle Highway Intersection, recommends that this intersection be improved by reducing the area of asphalt, better defining the travel lanes, and realignment of the intersecting streets to a 90 degree angle.

3. Improve Circulation along Maple Avenue

It is recommended that the safety, circulation and appearance of Maple Avenue be improved by the provision of curbs, reconstruction of sidewalks and planting of street trees, and by minimizing future traffic volumes through the reduction of the amount of area in commercial zoning (see Economic Development Element).

4. Add Safety Improvements to Massasoit Avenue

After review of the requests of the Massasoit Avenue Neighborhood Association for specific improvements and modifications to Massasoit Avenue, and determination of what was feasible from a town policy point of view, the following is recommended: addition of sidewalks and curbs, placement of signage to discourage speeding, elimination of school bus stops, and regular police enforcement of the speed limit.

5. Amend the Road Design Standards in the Subdivision Regulations.

In order to provide for flexibility in the application of design standards for new road construction, it is recommended that these be reviewed and updated to allow for a reduction in the pavement width and sidewalk and curbing requirements for smaller subdivisions. This would be done to provide a more rural character in newer developments, and to eliminate excessive pavement which adds to site drainage requirements.

*2002 Update: Road width standards were adjusted when the subdivision regulations were rewritten in 1995, allowing for a reduction in width from 26 feet to 22 feet for roads in minor subdivisions (five or fewer lots).*

6. Develop a Townwide Bike System

It is a general recommendation of the Circulation Committee to provide bicycle and pedestrian paths that connect with the East Bay Bicycle Path to serve as alternate travel routes between neighborhoods and the schools and recreation areas. A proposed local bikeway system for Barrington is shown in Figure 10. It designates both independent routes separate from the street system, and bike routes marked along roadways. At a minimum, the local bikeway system should connect with most schools, major parks and commercial areas. While Figure 10 depicts this, a future bikeway system for Barrington could be expanded beyond these areas.

7. Expand Commuter Programs

It is recommended that an additional park and ride lot be provided in the Town, preferably along County Road. If it is located in the vicinity of the Barrington Shopping Center, impacts on

congestion should be considered, as well as an extension of the bus fare zone from the existing park and ride lot to the location of the new lot.

***2002 Update: Barrington was the successful recipient of a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program grant from D.O.T. which will provide for various transportation-related site improvements at a town-owned parcel off County Road (adjoining the vacant police station) including a bikeway connector and new RIPTA bus stop.***

8. Require Traffic Analysis under Development Plan Review

This recommendation is to require site plan review of large developments, specifically in regards to traffic and circulation impacts, under a new development plan review ordinance. Site plan review is recommended for commercial and industrial developments in regards to a number of factors; this recommendation relative to circulation would also include larger residential developments.

***2002 Update: A development plan review ordinance, which includes traffic analysis of commercial developments along with building design and site plan review, was first adopted by the Town in 1993. It remains a part of the zoning ordinance (Article XXIV), which was rewritten in 1994.***

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

Probably no other element of the comprehensive plan involves review of so many major issues that affect life in Barrington than this element dealing with public services and facilities. Certainly no other committee has dealt with as many controversial topics as the Community Services and Facilities Committee. This element also deals with many matters which are regional in nature, whether it be the actual provision of the service, or the potential solution to a particular issue. In many cases, it requires Barrington to communicate effectively with its neighbors, East Providence and Warren, or to consider itself as one of the three East Bay communities which make up Bristol County -- Barrington, Warren and Bristol.

In general, the quality of the services Barrington provides to its citizens is very high, among the best in the State. Its strong public school system is one reason why Barrington maintains relatively high real estate values. Unlike most communities, Barrington provides for town pick-up of solid waste through its Public Works Department, and was the first community to set up its own recycling program, independent of state requirements and involvement. The Town became fully sewerred in 1975 and is connected to the East Providence sewage treatment plant.

The major issues are those that have been building long before the comprehensive planning process began. The two most visible of these are the construction of the proposed cross-bay pipeline to carry Scituate Reservoir water to the East Bay area, and the high cost of public safety services in Barrington, particularly for fire protection. Resolution of the controversial pipeline proposal has an impact on the future water supply of all of Bristol County, as well as the City of East Providence. It is an issue similar in nature to a recently discussed concept of regionalization of public schools, in that it requires two or more communities to work together in the provision of a necessary public service. The results of Barrington's efforts to reduce the operating costs of its fire department, on the other hand, may or may not have regional implications. Finally, other concerns, particularly in the areas of wastewater and solid waste disposal, are clearly most efficiently handled by working in conjunction with East Providence and Warren, respectively.

## EXISTING COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

This section contains a description of the community services and facilities provided to Barrington residents. These include the public school system, police and fire protection, public works, water supply and wastewater treatment, and the public library and senior center. The Town also prepares a six year capital budget on an annual basis which provides a framework for funding of public facilities.

### Barrington Public School System

The Barrington public school system consists of a high school, grades 9-12; a middle school, grades 6-8; an upper elementary school, grades 4 and 5; and three primary schools, grades k-3. The names and locations of all schools are shown in Figure 1.

The High School, accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, has a strong curriculum (graduation requirements exceed state levels) with an emphasis on preparation for higher education. The ratio of students to staff, including teachers, counselors and special educators, is eleven to one. The average class size is nineteen students. Graduation rates are very high, around 92%. In addition to a full curriculum (advanced placement, independent study, regional vocational programs), the High School offers a complete program in interscholastic sports.

The Middle School, which contains grades 6-8 and the upper elementary school, grades 4 and 5, share the same building. In September 1992, the Hampden Meadows School (presently K-3) will contain grades 4 and 5. The three lower grade elementary schools are located within Barrington's separate neighborhoods (school districts) -- Primrose Hill, Nayatt and the Sowams School in the Hampden Meadows district. Class sizes average twenty-five students for grades 6-8, twenty-two for grades 2-5 and eighteen for K-1.

Table 1 shows public and private school enrollments of Barrington resident students over the past five years. The private school enrollments are those of Barrington children at the three private schools in town (St. Andrew's School, grades 6-12; St. Luke's Parochial School, grades K-8; Barrington Christian Academy, grades K-8) and other private schools in Rhode Island.

Table 1

SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS OF BARRINGTON STUDENTS 1987-1992

Grades	87-88		88-89		89-90		90-91		91-92	
	Pub	Pri								
K-3	724	91	749	86	805	118	862	121	896	111
4-5	340	48	359	49	371	55	350	68	364	61
6-8	518	55	518	51	531	100	533	87	546	100
9-12	833	na	755	na	732	66	690	72	698	69
Spec.Ed.	32	--	15	--	10	--	14	--	18	--
Total	2,447	194	2,396	186	2,449	339	2,449	348	2,522	341

What the five year trend clearly shows is an increase in the number of younger children attending public schools in Barrington. With the exception of the 1991-92 school year, the total public school enrollment has remained fairly constant; a steady increase in elementary age children has corresponded with a drop in the high school population. The growth in the younger grades is the reason for the reopening of the Sowams School in the Hampden Meadows School District, which had been closed for a decade. This burgeoning elementary population likely means a much larger high school within the next ten years. The 1991-92 enrollment for grades 6-8 shows a modest increase from that of the previous year, while the enrollment for grades 9-12 indicates a reversal of the previous trend of a reducing high school population.

As the U.S. Census figures and the population projections developed by the R.I. Department of Administration show (see Land Use and Population Element), the population of Barrington has been fairly constant over the past couple decades, and is expected to remain so for the next few. However, as noted in the Demographics section of the Land Use and Population Element, the projections of a gradual aging of Barrington's population probably do not reflect the actual dynamics of a community which has a housing stock geared towards families with minor children. Shown in Table 2 are the public school enrollment projections to the year 1997, based on the work done by the New England School Development Council of Sudbury, Massachusetts (NESDEC).

Table 2

BARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS 1992-1997

<u>Grades</u>	<u>School Year</u>				
	<u>92-93</u>	<u>93-94</u>	<u>94-95</u>	<u>95-96</u>	<u>96-97</u>
K-3	946	966	989	988	1,001
4-5	383	427	459	461	476
6-8	556	581	605	682	708
9-12	723	738	734	745	783
Spec.Ed.	<u>20</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>27</u>
Total	2,628	2,735	2,812	2,901	2,995

Not surprisingly, the projections done by NESDEC, which have historically been very accurate, show a steady increase in public school enrollment over the next five years. The total increase from the 91-92 school year to the 96-97 school year is estimated at 473 students, or an increase of 18.8 percent. With close to 3,000 students, the enrollment by 1996 will exceed that of the early 1980's, when a nearly decade-long decline in enrollments began.

This growth will present a challenge to Barrington, who recently spent \$3.5 million in an ambitious school building and renovation project, involving three schools and fourteen new classrooms. These improvements, however, were in response to present classroom needs; a growth of nearly 19 percent will require some additional capital improvements in the Barrington schools.

***2002 Update: Renovations and additions to the high school, including new classrooms, music rooms, offices and a computer lab, were completed in 1999. A bond issue passed in April 2002 will fund repairs and upgrades at all schools, including new classroom space at the Hampden Meadows School.***

## Public Safety

Barrington has both a full-time municipal fire department and police department. There are presently twenty-four sworn police officers and thirty-four trained firemen. The Police and Fire Chiefs are assisted by an assistant police and fire administrator who provides administrative and supervisory support in the daily operations of each department.

The Barrington Police Department, in addition to traditional police functions, is involved in crisis intervention, counseling and referral services, including an elderly affairs contact program and a drug abuse education program for youth. It also has crime prevention education programs for both businesses and residents, and is involved in animal control, boating safety, and underwater search and rescue as needed. The Barrington Police Athletic League (P.A.L.) was established in 1987 as a way of fostering a positive relationship with the Town's youth; it offers such activities as wrestling, weight lifting, road races, little league sponsorship, tennis, a track club and a track and field tournament.

Despite the recent occurrence of a crime of regional, even national significance, Barrington is considered a low crime community. Aside from the recent tragedy, there have only been two homicides in the last twelve years. A summary of activities of the Police Department for the previous two years is shown in Table 3:

Table 3

### BARRINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES 1989-1991

	<u>FY 1989-90</u>	<u>FY 1990-91</u>
Criminal Complaints	1,699	1,543
Arrests	485	397
M.V. Citations	1,825	3,359
M.V. Accidents	524	431
Stolen Property Value	\$164,308	\$336,827
Recovered Property Value	\$ 61,031	\$ 82,277

The Barrington Fire Department is presently housed in two buildings, Fire Station 1 on Rumstick Road and Station 2 on Middle Highway (see Figure 1). The paid department is assisted by the Hampden Meadows Volunteer Department, located on Sowams Road.

***2002 Update: The fire department now resides in the new public safety building on Federal Road. Both stations are now privately owned: station 1 is a residence and station 2, a non-profit school.***

The Fire Department provides emergency medical services as well as fire protection; in actuality, approximately 90 percent of the calls to the Fire Department are for emergency medical services or medical transport. In addition, they provide services in the areas of marine fire and rescue, ice

rescue, underwater recovery and emergency support for large gatherings. Firemen also provide assistance to homeowners in such matters as flooded basements, lock-in and lock-outs and inspection of oil heating systems.

In the area of fire prevention, the Fire Department inspects all commercial establishments twice a year and schools once a year. The firemen also conduct fire safety talks, station tours for school and scouting groups, and blood pressure clinics and fire safety demonstrations at the Senior Center. A summary of fire and emergency related incidents for the previous two years is shown in the following table:

Table 4

BARRINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES 1989-1991

	<u>FY 1989-90</u>	<u>FY 1990-91</u>
Structural Fires	65	30
Non-Structural Fires	68	79
Vehicle Fires	11	12
Medical Aid	893	937
Marine Rescue	24	16
Fire Loss Property Value	\$147,000	\$171,960

In the area of civil defense, Barrington, like all Rhode Island communities, has an Emergency Management Director who is responsible for the development of the local emergency management program, and in directing and coordinating the program in the event of an emergency. The Emergency Management Director, who is appointed by the Town Manager, maintains the Town's Emergency Operations Plan and serves as a general liaison for the community on emergency management matters. During an emergency he assumes overall responsibility for the operation of the local emergency operating center (the Town Hall) and for advising the Town Manager on local government emergency operations. The Public Works Director serves as Deputy Emergency Management Director and both the Fire Chief and the Police Chief serve as their respective department's operations officer during an emergency. All of the public schools in Barrington would become public shelters during an emergency. The Emergency Operations Plan includes information on hazardous material usage and threats.

Barrington Public Works

The Barrington Public Works Department is responsible for a number of services, including the collection and disposal of garbage and other refuse; maintenance, repair and operation of all public buildings and properties; maintenance of public parks and the Town Beach; and maintenance of town streets and sidewalks. The Public Works Department is also responsible for maintenance of the town wide sewer system including the force mains, laterals and pumping stations, as well as that required for the town storm drainage system.

Weekly refuse collection is presently undertaken by two 32-yard refuse trucks, each collecting from approximately 600 houses on a daily basis. Approximately 5,400 houses are collected from on a weekly basis. In addition to the two front-line trucks, a 20-yard truck is used as a backup. This vehicle is also used the day after holidays and for leaf collection in the fall. An additional recently purchased 32-yard truck is used as needed to haul waste to the final disposal site, the Central Landfill in Johnston, owned and managed by the R.I. Solid Waste Management Corporation. Most of the Town's waste is trucked directly to the landfill, although a small amount is sent to the solid waste transfer station in the neighboring Town of Warren, prior to being hauled by their private operator to the state facility.

The Town of Barrington presently collects about 8,500 tons of refuse per year, and minimizing the cost of its disposal is a continuing effort. Barrington once had four local landfills; with the closure of the last one in 1982, the Town is totally dependent upon the Central Landfill for disposal of its non-recyclable wastes, and must pay the "tipping fees" set by the Solid Waste Management Corporation. To date, state law has mandated that these fees be lower for municipalities than for commercial generators of trash. Municipalities presently pay \$15.03 per ton, or about one third of the commercial rate, which is \$49.00 per ton. The cheaper tipping fee for municipal waste presently applies to a set tonnage of waste generated by the community, known as the municipal cap. This figure has been calculated by the Solid Waste Management Corporation as the acceptable level of trash generated by a community on a per capita basis. Barrington's cap is presently 8,274 tons per year. With the almost certain occurrence of a substantial increase in the municipal tipping fee due to shrinking landfill space, communities will be forced to look at ways to reduce the amount of waste generated. Recycling is a major component of achieving this goal.

Barrington presently has curbside collection of newspaper, glass (sorted by color) and aluminum cans. Recycling of these products is by mandatory local ordinance. In addition to these items, mixed paper, plastic and tin cans, and motor vehicle oil and assorted metal may be deposited at the town recycling center on a voluntary basis. The Town also picks up metal at curbside by appointment. Yard wastes are recycled as much as possible, and brush, including Christmas trees, is chipped at curbside for twenty weeks of the year. The resulting chips are used for bedding and roadside vegetation control.

***2002 Update: In 1998 Barrington joined the state maximum (expanded) recycling program which is managed by the R.I. Resource Recovery Corporation.***

Leaves are also recycled by drop-off at Walker Farm (between County Road and Hundred Acre Cove), or by collection in paper bags at curbside during the late fall. The leaves are composted at the Walker Farm site, and the resulting material mixed with loam to enhance and bulk out the loam for town projects, such as renovation of playing fields and roadside repairs. The Town is not presently part of the state recycling program, as the local program achieves a more than 25 percent reduction in the Town's waste stream. The following table summarizes the Public Works Department's activities, including street maintenance, over the last three calendar years:

Table 5

BARRINGTON PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES 1987-1991

<u>Activity</u>	<u>FY 87-88</u>	<u>FY 88-89</u>	<u>FY 89-90</u>	<u>FY 90-91</u>
Snow Plowing	6,469 Mi	1,498 Mi	6,780 Mi	2,391 Mi
Salting & Sanding	3,144 Mi	2,524 Mi	4,404 Mi	2,757 Mi
Street Sweeping	1,213 Mi	1,171 Mi	2,279 Mi	1,970 Mi
Grass Cutting	1,055 Ac	1,950 Ac	3,497 Ac	2,104 Ac
Brush Chipped	1,967 CY	1,740 CY	1,927 CY	1,594 CY
Refuse Collected	8,732 Tn	9,089 Tn	8,423 Tn	7,814 Tn
Recyclables	1,437 Tn	1,655 Tn	2,137 Tn	2,176 Tn

Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment

Barrington's public water supply, along with that of the Towns of Warren and Bristol, is provided by the Bristol County Water Authority, a public water authority which has been operational since 1984. The Authority is managed by a board of directors, with three members from each community appointed by their respective town councils. In 1986, it acquired the present water supply system from the private Bristol County Water Company. Since this time, the Water Authority has had essentially two mandates: first, to improve the distribution system acquired from the private water company, and second, to construct a cross-bay link to the Providence water supply system. The Water Authority is also responsible for the development of the water supply quality management plan as required by state law and administered by the DEM Division of Water Supply Management.

The present system operated by the Authority consists of two separate production and distribution systems. The Bristol-Warren system receives its water from four reservoirs -- the Swansea Reservoir in Swansea, Massachusetts, the Shad Factory and Anawan Reservoirs in Rehoboth, Massachusetts and the Kickemuit Reservoir in Warren. All but the Anawan Reservoir are owned by the Water Authority. The water from the reservoirs is treated at the Child Street treatment plant in Warren, and is primarily distributed to Warren and Bristol. This system constitutes approximately 80% of the Authority's total water supply.

The Barrington system receives its water from two gravel packed wells off Nayatt Road. This water is treated for iron and manganese removal only, and is pumped to a storage tank off Washington Road. It is connected to the Bristol-Warren system in the northern end of Barrington. The Nayatt wells, providing approximately 20% of the total water supply, are able to support Barrington's water supply needs under low demand conditions; under high demand, water from the Child Street plant is pumped into the Barrington system. The two systems are normally operated together, but are able to operate independently. In addition, the Bristol County system has two emergency connections to

the East Providence water system, which can be activated during emergency drought situations upon approval by the City.

The Child Street plant, built in 1908, is a conventional filtration treatment plant with a rated daily capacity of 4 million gallons per day (mgd). The plant requires rebuilding or considerable upgrading to meet federal (E.P.A.) standards for water treatment. In addition, most of the 190 miles of water mains are unlined cast iron or cement lined cast iron; replacement of water mains to reduce leakage is presently underway. Overall, the Water Authority has replaced or rehabilitated over thirty miles of water main, and in Barrington specifically, replaced six and a half miles.

Aside from the antiquated condition of the treatment plant and distribution system, the major concerns with the present system are the poor condition of the transmission line from the Shad Factory and Anawan Reservoirs, as well as the low yield and poor quality of water from these reservoirs. The ownership and unprotected condition of the reservoir watersheds is also a concern. The current controversy over the proposed cross-bay pipeline centers on whether or not it is economically and politically feasible to make improvements to these reservoirs and reconstruct the transmission line, as well as undertake the necessary upgrade of the treatment plant. The other major issue is whether the present system, even with these improvements, can meet all of Bristol County's future water supply needs.

The present yield of the existing system averages about 4.0 mgd. The Nayatt wells in Barrington supply about 0.7 mgd; although the treatment plant there has a rated capacity of 2 mgd, the pumping rates have been reduced (from a high of 1.5 mgd in 1976) due to saltwater intrusion. The bulk of the water comes from the Shad Factory Reservoir which has a yield of 2.2 mgd, or 55% of the total water supply. The current water demand in Bristol County is close to the safe yield of the present system, although the East Providence emergency connection can provide an additional 1 to 2 mgd. The Water Authority and those groups who have opposed the pipeline disagree over the accuracy of estimates which give a projected future demand of 7 mgd (by the year 2020), and also whether the yield of the reservoirs in Massachusetts can be cost effectively increased. The controversy over construction of the cross-bay pipeline as a solution to the County's future water supply needs is discussed more thoroughly in the Issues section.

At the other end of the pipe, the situation is less critical. Barrington was entirely sewerred (with the exception of the Nockum Hill area) in the mid 1970's, and connected into the City of East Providence's Pomham Terrace sewage treatment plant near Sabin Point, not far from the town line. In general, wastewater from the Hampden Meadows area flows by gravity to an interceptor under the Barrington River, while that from the northern portion of town west of Wampanoag Trail, and that from the southern portion of town, flow by gravity to a number of pump stations in the central and western portions of town (see Figure 1). The pump stations at the Police Station, off County Road near Prince's Pond (which receives the flow from Hampden Meadows), and on Freemont Avenue off Nayatt Road all pump into a single station at Brickyard Pond. This station and two others in the western part of town (one off Walnut Road near the East Bay Bicycle Path, and one off Bay Spring Avenue) all pump directly into a force main running along the bicycle path right-of-way. This force main connects to the treatment plant in East Providence. In addition, there are

forty homes that connect directly into the East Providence system by gravity, eliminating the need for an additional pumping station in Barrington.

Although the sewers were extended throughout Barrington by the late 1970's, it was not until the end of 1987 that the majority of structures in town were connected. There are a very small number of structures which remain to be connected; the Town is pursuing these connections.

Barrington pays the City of East Providence for a portion of the operating costs of the treatment plant based on its percentage contribution to the total wastewater flow. A separate fee per house (\$200) is charged to the Town for those homes which tie in directly. The costs which Barrington shares includes not only that for the operation and maintenance of the plant, but also for the cost of sludge disposal.

East Providence is presently in the process of reducing inflow of stormwater to its collection system which will decrease the total flow into the treatment plant. The impact of this will be to increase the percentage of the total wastewater volume which is attributed to Barrington, thereby further increasing the Town's annual payment to the City. This payment is presently around \$750,000, up approximately 40 percent from just two years ago (\$537,903 for FY 89-90). The Town presently has a sewer use charge system whereby each connecting property owner pays a fee based on annual water use. These fees must rise to cover the increased operational costs of sewage disposal. Aside from operational costs, the Town has an ongoing maintenance program for its sewer lines and pumping stations, at a cost of about \$20,000 a year.

### Barrington Public Library

The Barrington Public Library is located at the Town's government center off County Road. It is a renovated early 1900's school building near Town Hall, which also houses the Barrington Senior Center as well as the Barrington Preservation Society and the Recreation Department. The Barrington Library once functioned as a regional center of the statewide library network, providing for centralized information and materials exchange for the East Bay area from Barrington to Newport; a recent elimination of state funding resulted in a loss of its regional status.

The library's collection consists of over 96,000 volumes and 190 periodical titles. The present circulation (check outs) is about 330,600 a year, a number which has been increasing steadily over the past decade. The library offers a number of programs for children, including story hours, films, live performances and a full summer reading program. For adults, it offers films, speakers, discussion groups, and play and poetry readings. It is governed by an independent board of trustees, with a staff of fourteen full-time and sixteen part-time people.

The library presently has on-line public access terminals as an automated version of its card catalog, and a fully computerized circulation control system which is tied into the statewide network of more than thirty public libraries. The Barrington Library can also communicate with college and special libraries through a national online network of cooperating libraries, and the fax system. For the future, both the computerized public libraries network and electronic mail network are expected to

expand. In general, the Board of Trustees expects a gradual increase in services and materials offered, as well as an increase in the hours of service, the number of staff and overall sophistication of its operation. However, as with the public school system, the increasing demand for library services and long term plans for continued improvements in these services, must be weighed against the current budget difficulties, both local and state.

### Barrington Senior Center

The Senior Center, located on the ground floor of the library building, provides a variety of services and programs for Barrington's seniors (sixty years of age and older). There is a full-time director and two part-time staff members, with a seven member governing board. The activities include a weekday home meal program, and trips, presentations and classes. The Senior Center also provides a van to transport seniors on local trips and health services, which consist of regular nurse and social worker visits for blood pressure and cholesterol checks, flu shots and general mental and physical health counseling. The senior informational and entertainment programs are organized by a considerable volunteer force who are also responsible for the production and mailing of a monthly bulletin.

The Senior Services Governing Board has identified future goals in the provision of their services. These include the addition of a permanent outreach worker, the development of a computer based census of seniors living alone and those that are housebound or at some risk, and the development of a referral database for the variety of services available to seniors. They also wish to expand the activities of the Senior Center, including a public relations program and regular educational and service programs. Finally, the board wishes to make some minor improvements in the building and to get involved in such issues as senior housing, transportation and companionship.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES ISSUES

As presented in the introduction to this element, there are a number of issues facing Barrington in the provision of basic services to its citizens. The solutions to all of these are either regional in nature or have the potential to be. With the exception of the public water supply, the issue is not so much the quality of the present service, but its present cost and the challenge of providing both high quality and cost effective services into the future. The issues discussed below include the concept of regionalization of the school system, the cost and functioning of the fire and police departments, the cost of solid waste disposal and wastewater treatment, and whether the construction of the cross-bay pipeline is the best solution to Bristol County water supply problems.

### Regionalization of School System

The concept of regionalization of the public school system throughout the State was proposed by the Governor in May 1991, as a way to reduce the costs of public education, while maintaining and improving its overall quality. While there are presently three regional school systems in Rhode Island, the proposal was to reduce the present thirty-seven school districts to just six. For

Barrington, this would mean being part of a Bristol County school system, which could also include East Providence. The Towns of Warren and Bristol have already undertaken the initial efforts required for a merger of their school systems.

Historically, discussions or plans to regionalize public schools in Rhode Island have met with considerable local opposition. School boards and parents are often concerned with local control over their school's operation, and particularly with the transport of their children to schools outside of the neighborhood or town. There is also a fundamental argument over whether consolidation as opposed to decentralization provides the most cost effective approach to public education.

A state commission studying the concept of statewide regionalization (21st Century Education Commission) concluded that consolidation of school districts needs to be evaluated on a case by case basis before any cost savings can be determined. Interdistrict collaboration in such areas as purchasing of supplies, busing of private school students and provision of adult education and summer programs, as some school districts presently do, was found to be the best means of providing a cost savings. Statewide regionalization was not recommended, but other areas for collaboration were identified: service contracts (for equipment repair); purchase of health care and other benefit programs; and provision of specialized high cost programs.

In Barrington, the issue is one of maintaining the high quality of public education in the face of considerable cut backs in state aid to education -- approximately \$700,000 reduction from fiscal year 90-91 to fiscal year 91-92, and an even greater reduction proposed for fiscal year 92-93. The Town relies on residential property owners to generate the bulk of its municipal tax revenue, and there is a growing resistance, primarily among the older taxpayers, to compensate for the cuts in state education aid by paying significantly higher taxes. Barrington's school budget for the fiscal year 1991-92 is over \$15 million, out of a total budget of \$26,776,000. It is estimated that the school budget will continue to increase 6 to 7 percent annually. Regionalization of purchasing, transportation and special programming functions is seen as one way to counter the impacts of rising costs, without impacting the educational service provided to the children.

### Cost of Fire and Police Services

For the past decade, both the Police and Fire Departments in Barrington have experienced a continuous decline in their operating and capital expenditure (non personnel) budgets. On the other hand, the Town has seen the personnel and related benefit budgets of these departments continue to rise. While it is difficult to accurately determine the actual percentage (because of the way pension and medical benefits are accounted for), it is safe to say that approximately 90 percent of the police and fire budgets go to personnel, and 10 percent to operations and capital expenditures. The net effect of this trend is that needed capital improvements have been neglected; both the Police Station and the Fire Station, as well as some fire trucks, will soon be in need of upgrading.

While the cost of providing fire fighting and police services is becoming a major issue in the budgeting process for the Town, an underlying issue is one of control; who exercises control over

how these services are provided, and who controls how much money is to be spent in doing so? This issue of control over how public safety services are to be provided, and how much they should cost, is at the heart of the challenge which faces the Town.

The management-employee relationships between the Town and its fire fighters and police officers are very tightly controlled by their annual collective bargaining agreements, and by the set of Rhode Island labor laws, particularly those dealing with arbitration. The bargaining agreements are extensive, and cover many of the typical management-labor issues such as salaries and overtime, duties, fringe benefits and vacations. However, several provisions of the state law, as well as historical trends in arbitration, have resulted in labor contracts which are essentially beyond the control of the Fire and Police Chief, the Town Manager or elected officials.

Specifically, provisions in the Fire Fighters' contract which effect the Town's ability to exercise control over how the Fire Department is operated, include manpower requirements, which specify a minimum number of employees (35 firemen) and a minimum shift manning (6 firemen); and detail to other departments, which is prohibited. The manpower and detail to other department provisions in the contract prevent the Town from effecting any changes regarding personnel. While town management may feel that Barrington would benefit from streamlining or restructuring the Fire Department, the right to do so is expressly denied. When state law requiring binding arbitration, and historical trends regarding the resolution of grievances and contract negotiations through arbitration are considered, it is evident that the Town is not only unable to reduce the personnel budget, but also has little control over how fast these personnel costs will increase.

Barrington is one of the few suburban residential communities in Rhode Island which has a full-time, paid fire department. This fact, combined with a very strong and centralized union leadership, strong pro-labor attitudes in the State Legislature, and an arbitration procedure which has historically provided the Fire Fighters' Union with a strategic advantage, has left the Town in a position of having no control over approximately 90 percent of the Fire Department budget. As the State's major cities and larger more industrialized communities accept contract provisions and benefit structures which may be deemed appropriate for their fire departments, these same contract provisions and benefits ultimately find their way into the contract negotiations between Barrington and the local Fire Fighters' Union.

The benefit packages included in these contracts can be especially costly. Some benefit requests by the Barrington Fire Fighters which were part of the previous year's contract discussions include: Blue Cross and Blue Shield for retiring fire fighters paid until age 65 (currently paid for five years); retirement at 50 percent of average pay of last three years of service after twenty years (currently twenty-five years of services required); a cost of living adjustment for pension benefits; and an additional longevity pay increase for personnel with more than twenty years of service. Provision of these types of benefits in the Fire Fighters' contract will significantly impact the Fire Department budget and effect Barrington taxpayers far into the future. The historical realities of the negotiation process indicate that these same items will be re-introduced each year the contract is negotiated, until they are provided to the local union through the arbitration process. To determine what is in

store regarding future negotiations in Barrington, one can look to the contracts currently in force for Rhode Island's cities and larger communities.

The situation is similar in regards to the Town's contract with its Police Officers. Contracts in effect in one community with a set of benefits ultimately ends up in the contract of another community, despite differences in population and development patterns. Benefits similar to those requested by the Fire Fighters were requested by the Police Officers in the previous year's contract negotiations: minimum staffing, twenty year pension and extended payment for Blue Cross and Blue Shield for retired officers. The twenty year pension (and a five percent raise) were granted to the Police Officers as a result of arbitration.

The problems Barrington faces with increasing budgets from the personnel side will be compounded by the fact that improvements will be needed to both the Fire and Police Stations. The Police Station is close to one hundred years old; it is said to be the oldest operating police station in Rhode Island. The Fire Stations are both over fifty years old. While these facilities could be considered adequate at present, it is not likely that their useful life will extend much longer. Although the Town for many years has been able to avoid large capital expenditures related to public safety, at some point this will no longer be possible. If building new facilities or major renovations of the present ones are expected in the near future, it is crucial for Barrington to develop a comprehensive plan, one which will set the stage for the delivery of public safety services for the next few generations.

#### Solid Waste Disposal Costs

Barrington has always provided for municipal pick-up of its trash, as opposed to contracting out this service. With the investment of the necessary equipment, this has historically been a very cost effective method of trash collection. The Town plans to continue this, as well as its successful municipal recycling program, into the foreseeable future. However, like other communities in Rhode Island, Barrington faces a challenge in limiting the costs of the ultimate disposal of its solid waste. The present rate for disposal of municipal waste at the Central Landfill in Johnston is \$15.03 per ton. Barrington presently has two choices for delivery of its wastes to the landfill. One is direct delivery, which involves transportation costs and the tipping fee costs. The other is use of the Warren transfer station, which involves a fee per ton for the private operator, an additional fee to the Town of Warren as well as the final disposal fee. This fee, presently totaling \$39.50 per ton, far exceeds the costs of direct haul.

Barrington now delivers a minimal amount of trash (600 tons) to the Warren transfer station in exchange for accepting Warren's white good (used appliances), which Barrington markets under its recycling program. While the transfer station was built with a Housing and Urban Development grant as a regional solid waste depository, the Town of Barrington has no voice in the operation or setting of fees. The dramatic increase in disposal fees at the transfer station was a factor in Barrington's decision to purchase an additional truck for use in direct haul to the landfill.

With municipal tipping fees at the Central Landfill possibly rising to \$37.00 per ton in the near future, Barrington is continuing to look for ways to control the costs of its solid waste disposal. One method the Public Works Department has pursued is the expansion of its recycling program. The Town now mandates that leaves and yard waste be collected separately and composted, and has recently instituted a new recycling program for mixed paper. In fiscal year 1990-91, Barrington's recycling program resulted in a revenue of \$20,000 in the marketing of its glass, aluminum and white goods. More importantly, however, the Town avoided approximately \$82,000 in landfill costs. By increasing the percentage of its waste stream which is recycled, Barrington will continue to increase its savings in disposal costs. However, the Town remains open to the concept of regionalization of solid waste disposal, and is prepared to utilize the Warren transfer station more completely at such time it becomes beneficial from a cost point to do so.

### Cross Bay Pipeline Proposal

The subject of construction of a 10.4 mile pipe from the Scituate Reservoir through the City of Cranston, and under Narragansett Bay into East Providence as a means of providing a new source of water supply for Bristol County, has been the most publicized controversy throughout development of the comprehensive plan. Although it is generally perceived that the majority of Bristol County residents are in favor of the pipeline (based on the results of the voter initiative activating the Bristol County Water Authority and on a recent informal poll done by the local newspaper), the consistent and well organized efforts of the opposition group has kept the proposed project in the public eye. The two opposing sides, the BCWA, and the Bristol County Citizens for Better Water Management in conjunction with the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, Save the Bay and other groups, have done battle in the media and at public forums. The forceful presentations of both sides -- in light of a very real water quality and quantity problem in the region -- have made the task of the committee difficult.

In an effort to evaluate the merits of opposing positions on what has been a long standing issue for Barrington residents, as well as to address it in a manner consistent with the general public interest, the committee sponsored a debate in January 1991. They also reviewed considerable material distributed by both sides. Based on assimilation of the available information, the committee concluded that resolving the controversy hinged on a few major issues: the cost of the pipeline versus the cost of upgrade and repair of the existing water supply system, including transmission and treatment; the ownership and protection of the existing supply, specifically the reservoirs and their watersheds; and the long term water supply versus future demand.

The cost of the pipeline is presently estimated at \$41 million. The design work is nearly completed and all state agency approvals have been secured with the exception of that from the Coastal Resources Management Council. There is no disagreement over the need to substantially upgrade the present system. An estimate for doing so has come from the Bristol County Water Authority, who have given a figure of \$64 million. This includes \$8 million for reconstruction of the Shad Factory transmission line, \$14 million for construction of a new treatment plant and \$42 million to purchase about thirteen square miles of watershed land in Massachusetts that is now privately owned. Figures presented by the R.I. Audubon Society are close to these, except that they replace

the land acquisition costs with a cost for a full service interconnection with the East Providence system (\$6 million).

Clearly, the Water Authority's position that the pipeline is the most cost effective option is based on the premise that the purchase of this land is an absolute necessity. This issue of ownership of the reservoirs and their watershed is really one of control and how to achieve it. Without condemnation powers or a legislative mandate in the State of Massachusetts, the Water Authority lacks the legal ability to both site and construct a new transmission system, and to regulate activities within the watershed of the Shad Factory and Anawan Reservoirs. They conclude that their only option to both expand the storage capacity of the reservoirs, and to protect the water quality, is outright purchase of land, conservatively estimated at \$42 million.

The other pivotal issue is one of future water supply versus demand. The present demand for water in Bristol County is less than four million gallons per day (mgd), which is close to the capacity of the existing system. Projected maximum demand into the next century (2020) for Bristol County is given by the Water Authority to be 7 mgd, based on a study done by Camp, Dresser & McKee, Inc. in 1987 (and confirmed by Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. in 1988). The safe yield of the Scituate Reservoir, 92 mgd, is assumed to be more than adequate to meet the water supply needs of Bristol County, while not impacting the supply provided to Providence County. However, the figure given as the average system demand over the last five years for the Scituate Reservoir (72.8 mgd) was not projected into the future; it was assumed that considerable growth in demand (75%) would occur in Bristol County, but that no growth in demand would occur in the existing service area. This would leave an excess of 3 mgd in the safe yield of the Scituate Reservoir, after subtracting an additional 9 mgd which is the average downstream release into the Pawtuxet River.

The safe yield of the four reservoirs is given by the Authority to be 3.3 mgd, with the remaining 0.7 mgd made up by the yield from the Nayatt wells in Barrington. The Shad Factory/Anawan watershed is characterized as flat and swampy with the reservoirs themselves being shallow and eutrophic. The Kickemuit is described as being subject to saltwater contamination. Expansion of the reservoirs would provide only a minimal increase in capacity. Finally, the shallow nature of the reservoir also makes them drought sensitive.

There is, however, some dispute over the projected demand figure of 7 mgd, especially in light of the gradual loss of industry in Bristol County. While the same study which estimated this maximum demand also estimated an average demand of 6.2 mgd by 2020, a state water supply study done by Arthur D. Little, Inc. in 1990, concluded that water use in Bristol County will remain at or less than the present levels (an average of 3.7 mgd by the year 2010). It appears that there is not a future water supply demand figure that proponents and opponents of the pipeline agree on. However, Bristol County residents presently consume water at a rate of about half the state average because of conservation efforts. This means that present water usage is probably at a minimum level; therefore, relying totally on the existing system, which is presently at capacity, leaves no margin to provide for any increase in water demand in Bristol County.

A full service connection to the City of East Providence, which presently receives Scituate Reservoir water, is another option for providing Bristol County with an adequate and high quality water supply. This option would be considerably cheaper than a separate pipeline under Narragansett Bay. However, East Providence has consistently rejected the concept of a permanent connection of their water supply system to all of Bristol County, primarily due to the limited capacity of the transmission main, and the need to maintain adequate reserves for high elevation areas of the City.

Other issues which have come up regarding the pipeline are the environmental impacts of construction on Narragansett Bay (despite the issuance of a water quality certification by the Department of Environmental Management); the disruption of the East Bay Bicycle Path, which is also the proposed route of the pipeline through a portion of East Providence and Barrington; the protection and preservation of the existing system; and the long term development impacts on Bristol County of importing what may be an excessive water supply. Specifically regarding the preservation of the existing system, it is a state water supply policy that existing sources of water supply should not be abandoned as new sources are accessed, as long as their continuation is feasible.

Recent action by the state legislature, however, has determined the fate of the cross-bay pipeline. With the support of the Governor, the legislature passed a bill that mandates a full service water supply connection with East Providence, as well as the upgrading of the existing system. This includes reconstruction of the Shad Factory transmission line and construction of a new treatment plant. The full service connection will involve construction of a pump station in East Providence, a new transmission line from East Providence to Warren, and possibly additional storage capacity within the City as well as the rebuilding of a portion of the existing pipeline along Allens Avenue in Providence. The cost to provide the full service connection is estimated to be between \$13 and \$28 million.

Committee members addressing the issue in Barrington had always conditioned support for the pipeline on building it at a reasonable cost, and also upon maintenance of the existing water supply system. The East Providence connection provides an outside water supply source, but at a lower cost than the proposed cross-bay pipeline. Improvements to the existing system (\$22 million not including land acquisition) will insure that Bristol County does not rely totally on the Scituate Reservoir for its water supply, a situation which would be of concern to citizens on both sides of the Bay.

In keeping with policy of protection and maintenance of the existing system, the Water Authority has also developed a proposed watershed management program for the four reservoirs, as well as the recharge area for the Nayatt wellfield. The program includes monitoring of surface water quality, patrolling the watershed area and establishing a liaison with property owners, municipalities and agencies in both state and environmental groups, in regards to land use activities. It also includes drafting of a number of protective ordinances and regulations to be submitted to the municipalities for their consideration.

*The cross bay pipeline was completed in late 1998 at a cost of \$34 million, preceded by the full service connection to East Providence. Bristol County receives between 3.3 and 3.5 mgd from the Providence water supply system. The treatment plant is currently being upgraded; work has not yet been initiated on the reconstruction of the Shad Factory transmission line.*

### Sewage Treatment Costs

The last major issue in the area of community services and facilities also deals with the cost of a service provided to the Town. In this case, the charging of an annual fee by the City of East Providence for treatment of Barrington's sewage is one in which the Town has no formal mechanism for input. As stated in the previous section, Barrington now pays the City approximately \$750,000 for this service. The cost for fiscal year 92-93 is expected to be in the range of \$875,000. In addition, Barrington is expected to share in the costs of capital improvements to the treatment plant when it is expanded to tertiary treatment.

In addition to operation and maintenance of the treatment plant, the cost to East Providence for sludge disposal is reflected in Barrington's annual fee. At one time Barrington provided a composting site for the sludge generated by the treatment plant. Since the closure of the Nockum Hill site in 1982 by the R.I. Department of Environmental Management, the City pays for disposal of the sludge at an incinerator in Woonsocket. With the high cost of this disposal method, East Providence is actively seeking a new sludge composting site. It is anticipated by the Town that assisting the City in this effort to reduce sludge disposal costs will also result in a significant reduction in its annual fee.

### GOALS AND POLICIES

Based upon the present conditions and various issues related to community services and facilities in Barrington, the following goals and policies were developed:

#### Goals

1. Provide the present and future school age population in Barrington with high quality public educational services.
2. Maintain the present high quality level of service, in an efficient cost effective manner, in the areas of public safety and public works.
3. Insure that the residents of Barrington have access to an adequate supply of high quality drinking water to meet their needs on a long term basis.
4. Maintain and improve the Barrington Public Library and its materials, services and programs.

5. Further expand the services of the Senior Center to meet the needs of the community.

### Policies

1. Work with adjoining East Bay communities in the areas of public education, public safety, water supply and wastewater and solid waste disposal to achieve efficient and cost effective solutions to regional concerns.
2. Support water conservation measures, the preservation and maintenance of the existing water supply system, and the importation of new water sources as necessary to meet Barrington's drinking water supply needs.
3. Explore and evaluate alternative methods of providing and funding public services, while making optimum use of existing public facilities and land.
4. Support the School Department, Library Board and other departments providing essential services to Barrington residents, in the development of facilities and programs to meet present and future needs.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In keeping with its stated goals and policies, a general recommendation of the Community Services and Facility Committee is for the Town of Barrington to continue to improve communication with its neighboring communities in areas of overlapping concern. An additional recommendation of a general nature is to encourage more cooperation between town departments in the provision of basic services to Barrington's citizens.

In regards to five major issue areas -- public education, public safety, solid waste disposal, water supply and wastewater treatment, more specific recommendations were developed.

1. Institute Methods of Controlling Public Education Costs

In an era of reducing state aid for education, in combination with a growing taxpayer resistance to increased property taxes to pay for services, particularly for the public school system, it is imperative that the Town make a strong effort to control the costs of public education. The concept of regionalization is now one of collaboration. It is recommended that Barrington continue to be active in the East Bay Collaborative to pursue ways of saving money in purchasing and other areas by coordinating with the other East Bay school districts. More fundamentally, however, Barrington needs to gain more local control over its school budget. Specifically, the Town should evaluate the following:

- \* state mandates, in response to dramatic cuts in state aid

- \* the collective bargaining process with the teachers' union
- \* the over-reliance on property taxes to fund education

2. Undertake Restructuring of the Barrington Fire Department

Reducing the cost of public safety services involving fire fighting, emergency rescue and police protection, while at the same time preserving a high quality and adequate level of these services, is the Town's stated goal. While there exist a number of other models which Barrington could conceivably adopt in providing public safety services, all of them would demand a significant departure from the status quo. These alternative models, primarily dealing with the reduction of the size and related high expense of the Barrington Fire Department, include the following:

- \* Natural attrition of the present force, in conjunction with the reorganization and training of the Hampden Meadows Volunteer fire Department.
- \* Contract out for fire and rescue services.
- \* Move to an entirely volunteer force similar to Warren and Bristol
- \* Cross-train town employees and compensate them on a per call basis.
- \* Consolidate the fire and rescue with the police force to form one public safety department; this would include the construction of a new public safety building in Barrington.

It is recommended that the Town retain a municipal fire department, but only if it can regain control over the management and destiny of the department, reducing costs and staffing in keeping with the needs of a predominantly residential community with a low incidence of fires. In addition, the resources of the volunteer force should be more effectively used, as well as consideration given to use of town employees. A combination of the options mentioned could also be considered, such as retaining some municipal firefighters but contracting out for rescue services.

Because these changes would be difficult to implement under current contract conditions, one of two things must happen before a successful restructuring of the Barrington Fire (and possibly Police) Department can occur: an improvement in the relationship and communication between the local unions and the Town's administration, with serving the needs of the community being the first priority; or implementation of radical measures to bring the expenses, and methods for the delivery of public safety services back under local government control.

It is also recommended that at the same time the Town evaluates alternative means for providing public safety services, the need for a new building (or buildings) to house both the Police and Fire Departments be addressed. This effort should make use of work done in the past which evaluated both the merits, cost and possible locations of a central station.

***2002 Update: A new public safety building which houses both departments was constructed in 1999-2000 on land purchased by the Town off Federal Road.***

3. Maintain Town Control of Solid Waste Disposal

Barrington's present system of town pick-up and direct haul to the state landfill, in combination with an aggressive local recycling program, has resulted in an efficient cost-effective method of solid waste disposal. Use of the transfer station in Warren will occur at such point in the future that it is cost beneficial for Barrington to do so. It is specifically recommended, however, that this occur as a result of Barrington and Warren together managing a municipality operated transfer station. The Town presently recycles approximately 25 percent of its total trash volume; likewise, involvement in the state recycling program will be considered when it would result in a further reduction of disposal costs for Barrington.

4. Support a Full Service Connection to the East Providence Water System

It is recommended that Barrington's and all of Bristol County's future drinking water needs be provided by both:

- a. Construction of a full service connection with the City of East Providence to provide the East Bay area with water from the Scituate Reservoir.
- b. Maintenance and protection of the existing system owned by the Bristol County Water Authority, including the Nayatt wellfields in Barrington.

***2002 Update: A full service connection to East Providence was completed prior to the construction of the cross bay pipeline. The Nayatt wells are still in active production, providing the principal source of Barrington's drinking water.***

5. Reduce Wastewater Disposal Costs

To assist in reducing the annual cost of services provided by the City of East Providence for sewage treatment, it is recommended that town officials work actively with the City of East Providence officials to find an alternative to sludge incineration, specifically the location for a sludge composting facility.

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

Natural and cultural resources are abundant in Barrington, and are a major reason why the Town is considered to be a beautiful community by residents and visitors alike. Breath-taking views across Hundred Acre Cove, the unaltered facades of colonial homes and the steeple of the white Congregational Church are all images from County Road, the main artery through town. However, these represent just a portion of Barrington's natural resources, scenic landscapes and historic sites. With the exception of its boundaries with East Providence and Swansea, Massachusetts, Barrington is surrounded by water bodies. They include the Providence River, Narragansett Bay, Hundred Acre Cove and the Barrington, Palmer and Warren Rivers. Much of this coastal land is important marshland and wildlife habitat. Barrington is also significant for an unseen resource -- the only groundwater aquifer in the entire East Bay - Aquidneck Island area of Rhode Island. Finally, Barrington's numerous outstanding historic buildings, including the Town Hall, give it a special distinction.

The committee members who considered these various resources were committed to continuing Barrington's history of providing for their protection and enhancement. In addition to a town government which over the years has purchased and protected numerous large parcels of open space and wetlands, Barrington has a private land trust which has also been active in acquiring land for preservation purposes, most of it coastal. Recommendations developed by the committee reflect both this combined public and private approach to the protection of certain valuable land in town, and the concern with proper stewardship of land in town ownership. Other recommendations were developed in response to the need to protect resources which are part of land presently in private (and unprotected) ownership.

This element begins with a description of all natural and cultural resources in Barrington, including wetlands, floodplain and velocity zones, groundwater resources, wildlife habitats, coastal features, and scenic and cultural resources. This is followed by a discussion of the various issues regarding protection of certain significant resources. Goals, policies and recommendations deal primarily with the need to protect these resources, and the methods for doing so.

While this element contains a description of Barrington's important physical resources, the following Open Space and Recreation Element describes more completely the ownership and status of much of this land, specifically that in public ownership or owned by a private conservation organization. The work of the Open Space and Recreation Committee complements that of the Natural and Cultural Resources Committee by considering the need to protect certain town owned open space and undeveloped land.

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES

This section describes Barrington's existing natural, cultural and scenic resources, and their importance to the Town. Many sources were used in acquiring all of the information, including

several maps done for Barrington through the Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS). Numerous maps were developed as part of the comprehensive plan to show locations and extent of these features.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are those areas which are saturated or inundated for a period of time sufficient to support vegetation typically adapted to hydric conditions. Shown in Figure 1 are wetlands and hydric soils in Barrington. The wetland areas were transferred from a detailed wetland map done in 1987 by the Natural Resources Department of the University of Rhode Island, under the direction of Professor Frank Golet. The map was based upon interpretation of aerial photographs, as well as extensive field work. Although this work involved classification of all wetlands by associated water body, degree of inundation and vegetation type, the wetlands in Figure 1 are categorized as either freshwater or estuarine (coastal) wetlands. Hydric soils were taken from the RIGIS soils map of Barrington, and are defined as soil types where the groundwater is within one foot of the surface. These hydric soil areas are primarily associated with open water bodies and surface wetlands, and like wetlands, are generally not suited for development.

As measured from the Land Use Map (see Land Use and Population Element, Figure 1), wetlands constitute over 11 percent of the land area in Barrington. Coastal wetlands are prominent in the low lying areas along the northern portions of Hundred Acre Cove, along the Palmer River, at Rumstick Point and between Rumstick Point and Adams Point. There are also smaller areas of coastal wetlands -- along Narragansett Bay west of the Barrington Beach, along the Providence River west of Echo Lake, and around Allins Cove. The major freshwater wetland area lies in the Hampden Meadows section of Barrington, between New Meadow Road and Sowams Road. Much of this extensive wetland is publicly owned as part of the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt. Another large inland wetland lies in the area between the East Bay Bicycle Path and Nayatt Road, west of Brickyard Pond. The remaining inland wetlands, which are scattered around the western half of town, are all associated with water bodies or stream systems. The exception to this is a large wetland area on both sides of County Road, near the East Providence border.

### Floodplain and Velocity Zone

Shown in Figure 2 are significant natural features in Barrington, including the 100 year floodplain and the velocity zone. The flood plain is that land in Barrington which would have a 1 percent or greater chance of inundation in any given year, while the velocity zone is the coastal area within the floodplain which would be affected by a wave surge during hurricanes. These zones are both defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. They designate areas which present a safety hazard to existing and potential development, but also provide for necessary flood water retention.

Because the floodplain follows a contour of a given elevation, it covers virtually the entire shoreline of Barrington. The exceptions are those areas where there are steep slopes along the water's edge,

such as Nayatt Point. While the floodplain covers all of the coastal wetlands, and all of the major inland wetlands that are associated with stream systems (which carry stormwater), it also goes beyond these areas. One striking example of this is the Bay Spring area in west Barrington; while the wetlands are confined to the land around Allins Cove, because of the area's low elevation, most of the neighborhood seaward of the East Bay Bicycle Path would be covered during a hundred year storm.

The velocity zone also covers much of Barrington's shoreline. This wave surge would travel inland the farthest along the three south facing points -- Rumstick, Adams and Tyler Points and across the wetland area to the west of Barrington Beach. It would also cover all of the Walker Farm - Osamequin Park area lying between County Road and Hundred Acre Cove, the Hundred Acre Cove wetland lying east of Nockum Hill, and a major portion of the floodplain along the Palmer River. The velocity zone does cover some areas which are developed, the most prominent examples being along the eastern side of the Adams Point peninsula, and all of Tyler Point. There are other smaller areas of development within the velocity zone, specifically in west Barrington, and in Hampden Meadows on the north side of the Barrington River. With the exception of these areas, however, the velocity zone along Barrington's shoreline is within areas of undeveloped coastal wetlands.

To address the special hazards of flood and velocity zones, a section of the Barrington zoning ordinance applies to construction or other development within these areas. The regulations prohibit reduction in flood storage capacity, as well as storage of materials or equipment which could cause damage under flood conditions. In addition, construction occurring within the velocity zone must take place above mean high tide, the limit of private property ownership.

### Groundwater Resources

Figure 2 also delineates four areas in Barrington which have been mapped as groundwater aquifers, as defined by the Department of Geological Sciences of Brown University, in conjunction with the R.I. Statewide Planning Program. The report, which was published in 1983 and titled "The Hydrogeology of Barrington, Rhode Island" (Prell, Swann), analyzed the potential groundwater resources of the Town. The study team used approximately 1,500 shallow boring logs taken during the design of the townwide sewer system to interpret geologic formations and water table information. In addition to identifying specific areas as sites of potential groundwater aquifers, the report also defined the boundary of the recharge area of the principal aquifer --- that containing the active wellfields off Nayatt Road operated by the Bristol County Water Authority (see Community Services and Facilities Element). The recharge area is also delineated in Figure 2.

Using the boring logs, the researchers were able to construct a map of bedrock elevation (relative to mean sea level) and maps of the depth to water table and water table elevation (also relative to mean sea level). A map of saturated thickness, or the thickness of an aquifer below the water table, was then generated by calculating the difference between the bedrock elevation and the water table elevation. Another critical map, that of transmissivity, or the rate at which water is transmitted

through unit width of an aquifer, was also constructed. This map was based upon use of a formula which takes into account sediment type and thickness (information also available from the borings).

The Rhode Island Water Resources Board defines a groundwater reservoir as an area where saturated thickness is greater than 40 feet, and transmissivity exceeds 4,000 square feet per day. While the maps provided in the hydrogeology report should be referred to in order to identify specific areas, a large portion of Barrington (approximately 50 percent) qualifies as a groundwater reservoir. The area of greatest saturated thickness is in the central portion of town, between Nayatt Point and the Rumstick Point peninsula, and running northward (where there is a significant amount of glacial deposits collectively called stratified drift). The higher transmissivity areas include most of the northern portion of town above Brickyard Pond, and the area south and to the east of Brickyard Pond, between Nayatt Point and the Rumstick Point peninsula.

The areas mapped in Figure 2 as groundwater aquifers are those specific sites within the reservoir which have the highest potential yield. These areas all have transmissivities calculated to be in excess of 20,000 square feet per day, which make them suitable or potentially suitable for commercial development. It is not surprising that the largest such area includes the Nayatt wellfield, owned and operated by the Bristol County Water Authority. This wellfield has been active since 1949, and presently supplies about 0.7 million gallons per day, or approximately 20 percent of Bristol County's water supply. Although additional drilling would be required to accurately assess the potential for commercial development, the other sites shown as groundwater aquifers include an area on both sides of Wampanoag Trail near the East Providence border, and a wishbone shaped area west of Middle Highway and intersecting Upland Way. The fourth site is a small area near Nayatt Point within land owned by the Rhode Island Country Club. This area includes a well drilled by the Country Club in 1979.

The recharge area, that land area which serves to replenish the groundwater of the principal reservoir through precipitation or subsurface inflow, was defined using elevation and slope of the water table, which generally followed the surface topography as well. By defining the recharge area, the researchers identified an area to target for protection in future planning efforts. As shown in Figure 2, this large area extends north of Maple Avenue and south of Nayatt Road, primarily between Middle Highway, and County Road and Rumstick Road.

### Wildlife Habitat Areas

The last feature delineated in Figure 2 are four areas of Barrington which have been identified by the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program as rare or endangered species habitat areas. The Natural Heritage Program, a joint venture of the R.I. Department of Environmental Management and the Nature Conservancy, has prepared a statewide inventory of such sites. In Barrington, the largest and most important area includes the town owned Nockum Hill and marshland to the east. This land, bounding the north side of Hundred Acre Cove, serves as the only known nesting habitat in Rhode Island for the Northern Diamondback Terrapin, (*Malaclemys terrapin*). The Northern Diamondback Terrapin, a Rhode Island threatened species, inhabits saltwater and brackish

marshland and coves, while nesting in adjacent open sandy areas. The combination of the shallow brackish cove waters, mudflats and salt marsh with associated sandy uplands which make up the Hundred Acre Cove - Nockum Hill area of Barrington, provides the ideal habitat for the turtle, as well as a number of other animals. These include salt marsh animals, and coastal and migratory bird species.

Nockum Hill includes about 77 acres of town owned upland and 48 acres of adjoining privately owned farmland. The bulk of the town owned land is also in agricultural use. Extensive marshlands along the edge of Nockum Hill, to the west extending into Swansea, Massachusetts, and within the cove itself, comprise more than 160 additional acres. Roughly half of this marshland is either owned by the Town or State, or is permanently protected through ownership by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. Land use within the area defined as turtle habitat includes wetlands and agricultural land, with a small amount of residential use.

The second largest habitat area in Barrington lies along the Palmer River, and includes marshland and adjacent upland. This habitat area extends from the state line southward for approximately one mile. It consists of a combination of tidal flats and emergent marsh as well as shrub thickets, forested swamps and upland, including cleared fields. The site supports at least five state listed species of plants, including the salt marsh bulrush (Scirpus maritimus) and the colicroot (Aletris farinosa). It also serves as a nesting site for the Seaside Sparrow (Ammodramus maritimus) and habitat for numerous other bird species.

Much of the Palmer River site also lies within the floodplain and velocity zone area, making it virtually undevelopable. Permanent protection is provided to several scattered marshland parcels through ownership by the Barrington Land Conservation Trust or the Audubon Society. The largest parcel owned by the Land Trust is the recently acquired Johannis Farm off Sowams Road. The property includes twenty-eight acres in Barrington, and four in Swansea. Approximately ten acres are to remain in agricultural use, while the rest of the land will be kept as a wildlife preserve. Although the bulk of the Johannis land does not abut the Palmer River (much of this marshland between the farm and the river is of unknown ownership), it is a key parcel in the Land Trust's goal of creating a band of protected land along the river.

On the opposite side of town, the Providence River marsh site is the next largest important habitat area identified by the Natural Heritage Program. It includes the marshland and adjoining upland that extends northward from the mouth of Mouscochuck Creek. The bulk of this land, including more than half of the marshland, is protected through ownership by the Land Trust (which holds title to a large parcel extending westward from Middle Highway referred to as the Pic-Wil Nature Preserve), or through a conservation easement granted to the Town as part of an adjoining development along Middle Highway (Lighthouse Plat).

The last and smallest habitat area designated in Figure 2 lies along the east side of the Rumstick Point peninsula, across Smith Cove from Adams Point. On this site was found growing the leafy bulrush (Scirpus robustus) for which there are only six known sites statewide. Although only the

shoreline of this area is wetland, it does lie entirely within the floodplain and velocity zone. Most of this land is privately owned and undeveloped, although the northern portion is developed as low density residential.

### Coastal Features

Figure 3, the Coastal Features Map, illustrates various state designations relating to use and management of the Barrington shoreline. The first designation is the classification of coastal waters by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (C.R.M.C.). For each classification or type, the C.R.M.C. has defined acceptable uses, as well as those activities which should be prohibited or regulated within both the water body and a two hundred foot inland buffer area. The C.R.M.C. considers the coastal water type when reviewing applications for coastal permits. The classification of Barrington's coastal waters, and the goals for each are as follows:

**Type 1 Conservation:** Type 1 water areas are within the boundaries of designated wildlife refuges and conservation areas, or are water areas with undisturbed natural habitat or significant scenic values. These are protected waters; recreational boating facilities and potentially harmful activities such as filling, dredging, any shoreline alteration or point discharges are prohibited.

In Barrington, Type 1 waters include most of Hundred Acre Cove, with the exception of the area along the eastern residentially developed shoreline; approximately one mile along the Palmer River (the wildlife habitat area); Smith Cove and Narragansett Bay waters from Adams Point to Rumstick Point; along Narragansett Bay west of Barrington Beach; and along the Providence River from Nayatt Point northward to well past Mouscochuck Creek (also the wildlife habitat area). There are two smaller water bodies also defined as conservation waters in Barrington -- Allins Cove and Prince's Pond.

**Type 2 Low Intensity Use:** Type 2 waters are in areas with high scenic value that support low intensity recreational and residential use. These are waters which are scenic and have good habitat value; while residential boating facilities are permitted, new marina development, dredging and other alterations are prohibited.

Type 2 waters in Barrington include the eastern edge of Hundred Acre Cove; the entire Barrington River between the Massasoit Avenue bridge and the bicycle path bridge; the Palmer River from the end of the Type 1 designation south to the second bicycle bridge; along the east shore of the Adams Point peninsula (south of Ferry Lane); along Narragansett Bay, including the west shore of Rumstick Point and the Barrington Beach; and along Providence River, from the end of the Type 1 designation north to the entrance to Bullock Cove.

**Type 3 High Intensity Use:** Type 3 are waters in which recreational boating and other water dependent businesses are dominant. These areas are designated so as to preserve and expand recreational boating for the public; all related uses, such as marinas, mooring areas, boat launches and boatyard facilities are allowed.

In Barrington, Type 3 waters correspond to those areas where there are presently commercial boating opportunities; these include both sides of Tyler Point, where the Barrington and Palmer Rivers meet to form the Warren River, and within Bullock Cove. At Tyler Point, there are two marinas as well as the Barrington Yacht Club. There is also a smaller marina lying between County Road and the bike path. Along Bullock Cove there are two marinas, one of which adjoins Haines State Park.

**Type 4 Multi purpose waters:** Type 4 waters are the large expanses of open water in Narragansett Bay which support a variety of commercial and recreational activities, while maintaining their habitat value. Uses of these waters are generally limited to fishing and boat travel, with a goal of maintaining balanced uses while protecting fishery habitats. In Figure 3, Type 4 waters are shown as the open waters of Narragansett Bay and the Providence River, from the east side of the Adams Point peninsula to the mouth of Bullock Cove.

Also identified in Figure 3 are the designated street rights of way to the shore, and other areas of shoreline which are accessible to the public. There are twenty-five points of access, and three areas of accessible public shoreline shown on the map. Some of the rights of way are at obvious publicly owned locations, such as Nockum Hill, Osamequin Park, Walker Farm and behind the police station off County Road. Others are less obvious unimproved streets whose rights-of-way lead to the water's edge. The shoreline areas providing continuous public access include Haines State Park and Latham Avenue Park in West Barrington, and Barrington Beach, an area which includes not only the bathing beach but the shoreline to the west as well. This area is accessed from either the Town Beach or from one of four streets running perpendicular to the Bay (Water Way, Bluff Road, Clarke Road, Watson Avenue). While there may be other public access points along Barrington's shoreline, those shown in Figure 3 are ones which have been accepted by the Coastal Resources Management Council as legal rights-of-way.

While the C.R.M.C. has regulatory powers over activities within the coastal zone, based upon specific water use designations, the Department of Environmental Management has classified salt water areas according to their goals in terms of human use of these waters. Barrington's coastal waters are all designated as one of the three following D.E.M. water quality classification goals:

- SA: suitable for human consumption of shellfish
- SB: suitable for direct human contact, including swimming
- SC: suitable for wildlife, recreation and navigation

Water quality is highest for SA waters and lowest for SC waters, with shellfish consumption used as an indicator of the cleanest waters, and swimming as an indicator of intermediate quality waters. While activities listed under SC and SB waters could also occur in SB and SA waters, respectively, SB waters are not suitable for shellfish consumption, nor are SC waters suitable for swimming.

The D.E.M. regulations also recognize areas of exceptional ecological or recreational significance. These "outstanding national resource waters" (ONRW) are given the highest possible level of

protection. A proposed project potentially affecting an ONRW must demonstrate that it would not result in a degradation of water quality. Hundred Acre Cove merits such status through its extensive wetland areas and as a habitat for the Diamondback Terrapin.

In general, the water quality classification goals set by D.E.M. for Barrington waters are compatible with the water use designations established by the C.R.M.C. (see Figure 3). SA waters include Hundred Acre Cove, the Barrington River, the Palmer River, the Warren River from Adams Point to Rumstick Point, and Narragansett Bay from Rumstick Point to Nayatt Point. SB waters include Bullock Cove and the Providence River, and a small portion of the Warren River north of Adams Point. SC waters include the Warren River from the bicycle bridges south to the SB classification. Much of this area (Tyler Point) is designated by C.R.M.C. as Type 3 water, and the SC classification in turn, is reflective of the recreational boating activity in the area. The SB classification in the lower Warren River and in the Providence River are reflective of the more intense activities occurring in the waters flowing into these areas. On the other hand, the D.E.M. has set a goal for shellfish consumption within all of Hundred Acre Cove, the Barrington and Palmer Rivers and the open Bay waters; these water bodies are designated either Type 1 or Type 2 by C.R.M.C.

All of Hundred Acre Cove, and the Barrington and Palmer Rivers as far south as the County Road crossings, are all conditional shellfish areas; this designation means that following a rainstorm of one-half inch accumulation or more, these waters are closed to shellfishing. The lower waters of the Barrington and Palmer Rivers, as well as the waters of the Warren River are all closed to shellfishing, and are designated by D.E.M. as degraded SC areas. This area, referred to as Barrington Harbor, is currently over saturated in terms of boats with marine toilets. The absence of marine sewage pump-out facilities encourages inappropriate sewage disposal. According to D.E.M. regulations, no expansion of existing marinas will be allowed until pump-out facilities are made available. This issue and several others (boat operations, moorings, public access) are addressed in the Town's new Harbor Management Plan, a separate document from this report.

The Providence River is also closed to shell-fishing, and is designated as degraded SB water. One particular concern with the water quality of the Providence River is the presence of heavy metals. Finally, the Bay waters from Nayatt Point to Adams Point are also conditional shellfish areas.

### Scenic Areas

Barrington enjoys a wealth of scenic resources, where the beauty of the natural setting has been preserved or benignly modified by patterns of development. The Town's topographical character is set by the interplay between its land and waters, including the Bay, the various tidal rivers, several coves and a number of freshwater ponds. These large and small bodies of water provide vistas ranging from the expansive to the intimate that are enjoyed from both public and private land. Barrington also continues to benefit from scenic improvements made in the past, such as the extensive tree-planting program initiated by a group called the Barrington Rural Improvement

Association in the 1890's. Barrington's scenic attributes add immeasurably to its quality of life, and like its other important natural features, are worthy of preservation.

In January 1990, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management completed an inventory of scenic areas throughout the State. The Rhode Island Landscape Inventory is a comprehensive report which identifies and evaluates landscapes of high scenic, historic and cultural value. It is intended to be used by the communities when they are considering areas for acquisition, protection or some means of development control. The inventory focused on the more rural and traditional vernacular New England landscapes, and included large open tracts of land, twenty acres or larger, that are visible from the road.

Barrington was included within that portion of the State defined as the Narragansett Bay Area. Three areas in Barrington are identified in the state inventory, which are also designated on Figure 3. The first is Hundred Acre Cove, as seen primarily from Wampanoag Trail. The second is an area in the southwest corner of Barrington that includes Echo Lake, Mouscochuck Creek, which flows from Brickyard Pond to the Providence River, and a portion of the Nayatt Point area. This scenic area was described as a nice combination of open land, woodland and wetland. The last site in Barrington is identified as the Smith Cove Marsh, a wetland with varied vegetation. It includes all of the marshland and coastal area between Rumstick Point and Adams Point. Both the Echo Lake and the Smith Cove sites were defined as distinctive landscape areas, having the highest visual appeal and containing a great deal of variety in form. The Hundred Acre Cove site was defined as noteworthy, an area of lesser but important scenic value.

These three areas, in terms of their size and visual qualities, constitute scenic resources that are important on a regional and statewide level. As yet there has been no comprehensive survey of smaller scenic areas that are important on a townwide level. Such a survey would profitably focus on the East Bay Bicycle Path corridor, especially at Brickyard Pond and the Barrington and Warren Rivers; and along certain road corridors, including Mathewson, Adams Point, Rumstick, Chachapacasset and Nayatt Roads in the southern half of town. Other scenic areas are visible from lower New Meadow Road along the Barrington River, and along portions of Wampanoag Trail, Washington Road and Middle Highway.

### Farmland

As stated in the Land Use and Population Element, Barrington currently has approximately 215 acres of agricultural land. This includes land at Nockum Hill, land which is both part of and adjoins the Johannis Farm Wildlife Preserve, a number of areas used for growing nursery stock in Hampden Meadows, land being farmed off Route 114 south of the Devine Vargus parcel, land owned by St. Andrew's School off of Middle Highway and a portion of the Pic-Wil Nature Preserve off Washington Road (see Land Use and Population Element, Figure 1).

As mapped by the Soil Conservation Service, approximately half of the Town's land area consists of either prime or important farmland soils (see Figure 4). While some of the major areas of prime

farmland soils are in developed areas, such as the Nayatt, Rumstick and Adams Point areas, as well as portions of Hampden meadows, much of this land is undeveloped. Some of it is presently used for farming and some is protected as open space or conservation land. These areas protected from development include the Devine Vargus parcel, Haines State Park and land in Veterans Memorial Park on both sides of Brickyard Pond. The most significant parcels of prime farmland which are classified as privately owned undeveloped land include a significant area off Route 114 (south of Devine Vargus and north of Primrose Hill Road), most of the land owned by St. Andrew's School, most of the land owned by the R.I. Country Club and land off Sowams Road south of the Johannis Farm.

The most significant areas of important farmland soils include Nockum Hill and the other upland area off of Hundred Acre Cove in the northern part of the Town (including Johannis Farm). Clearly then, the protection of the areas of prime and important soils is linked to the preservation of Barrington's important natural and open space areas, as described further in this element and the Open Space and Recreation Element.

### Cultural Resources

The cultural resources of Barrington are essential elements of the Town's character. Landmark buildings and architecturally distinctive neighborhoods are the most apparent of these historic properties, but they also include landscapes that reflect both formal design efforts, as well as traditional patterns of land use that have their origins in the colonial past. The most subtle of all, but no less significant, are the archaeological sites which are the record of thousands of years of human activity on the two peninsulas that make up the Town's land mass. As each type of historic resource makes a unique contribution to Barrington's identity, they also require special planning considerations to preserve their positive qualities.

The patterns of Barrington's historical development have left the Town with a variety of cultural resources that enhance community life and are worthy of preservation. These resources are in public and private ownership and they include institutional, industrial, recreational and, in the largest category, residential properties. For the most part, these properties serve in the use for which they were built, and should continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Major exceptions to this include former agricultural land now used as public and private open and recreational space, and industrial buildings that are vacant.

The first comprehensive survey of the Town's historic resources is now being conducted by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission and a town-wide inventory exists in draft form. When complete, this inventory and historical narrative should provide an inclusive account of the Town's historic properties. Using this draft inventory as a base, the Natural and Cultural Resources Committee prepared a list of those historic resources which possess outstanding historical significance and integrity. The loss or mistreatment of these properties would adversely affect the Town's appearance and identity; as a result, the preservation of these resources was considered during the development of the comprehensive plan.

The properties identified are those which meet the standards used for evaluating properties for both the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Some of these properties are already listed on the State and National Registers; the rest appear to have the potential to be, but have not been fully researched or evaluated. This list was compiled with input from representatives of the Barrington Preservation Society, as well as the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission staff. It should not be considered final; additions and deletions may occur as a more detailed understanding of the Town's many resources develops. Descriptions of each property are contained on the following pages, and all are identified in Figure 4, the Cultural Resources Map.

Properties listed or formally declared eligible for listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places:

**Barrington Civic Center Historic District** - This historic district on the east side of County Road includes the Prince's Hill Cemetery established in 1728, the Town Hall (1887-8), the former Leander Peck School (1916-7), and Woods Pond.

**Barrington and Warren Bridges** - These concrete arch bridges, which carry County Road over the Barrington and Warren Rivers, were the first large project executed by the Bridge Division of the State Department of Public Roads. Completed in 1914, the bridges, with their graceful lines and structural durability, are important examples of the Bridge Division's pioneering work in the application of reinforced concrete technology.

**Belton Court** - Built in stages between 1905 and 1928, Belton Court was the country home of Frederick Stanhope Peck, one of Rhode Island's leading businessmen and political figures in the first third of the twentieth century. Now occupied by the Zion Bible Institute (Middle Highway), the house is a noteworthy example of Medieval-inspired architecture.

**Nayatt Light** - The Nayatt Light was established in 1828, the seventh lighthouse in Rhode Island, and continued in service until 1868. The structure, which is presently a private residence, includes the 1856 brick tower and cast-iron lantern, and the 1828 brick keeper's dwelling, which is the oldest surviving keeper's dwelling in the State.

Properties considered eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places:

**County Road Historic District** - This historic district encompasses most of the village that grew up around the Congregational Church at the north end of County Road beginning in the eighteenth century. Among the important buildings are the c. 1760 Samuel Allen House (499 County Road), the c. 1840 George Kinnicut Tavern and Stagecoach Office (509 County Road) and the c. 1707 Joseph Martin House (173 Massasoit Avenue).

**Barrington Brickworks Archaeological District** - The Barrington and New England Brick Companies have left a significant physical record of nearly one hundred years of brickmaking in the

Nayatt area of town. Resources include buried industrial sites in the vicinity of Legion Way, standing buildings such as the former Nayatt Hall on Middle Highway, and physical features such as Brickyard Pond, a flooded claypit, and Mouscochuck Creek, which was modified for use as a barge canal.

**Drowneville Historic District** - Drowneville was one of the earliest and most successful residential neighborhoods, platted after the railroad arrived in Barrington in 1855. The handsome Victorian architecture of its houses illustrates the character of the Town's initial suburban development.

**West Barrington (Lincoln Avenue) Historic District** - At the western end of Lincoln Avenue is a well preserved residential neighborhood containing houses in a variety of architectural styles from the late eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries. Significant buildings include the center-chimney Thomas Allen House and the Victorian stick style Anthony House.

**Nayatt Point Historic District** - The large and architecturally distinguished houses on Nayatt Road illustrate Nayatt Point's history from its development as a summer resort, complete with hotel, in the mid-nineteenth century, through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century construction of elaborate bayside summer houses, designed by the State's leading architects. Outstanding examples include the Benjamin Jackson House of 1910, designed by Norman Isham (115 Nayatt Road).

**Mathewson Road/Jenny's Lane Historic District** - In the second half of the nineteenth century, the area on the west bank of the Barrington River was transformed from a working waterfront into a picturesque suburban enclave, largely due to the efforts of Alfred C. Mathewson. The district contains many fine residences that illustrate the period's eclectic taste in architectural styles, from the bracketed Italianate Newell House (53 Jennys Lane) to the elaborate Queen Anne mansion at 17 Mathewson Road.

**Rumstick Road Historic District** - Rumstick Road has served as a major residential avenue from Barrington's earliest years, and the houses that line the street today include representatives from the early nineteenth century, such as the 1820 Nathaniel Adams House (29 Rumstick Road); the late nineteenth century, such as the c. 1885 William H. Hoffman House (53 Rumstick Road); and the early twentieth century, such as the c. 1914 William P. Sargent House (305 Rumstick Road). Although presented here and on the map as a single district centered on the north end of the road, the historic resources of Rumstick Road are extensive and may be best defined by upper and lower historic districts.

**Albert Peck House** - The Peck House (665 County Road) is a handsome bracketed Italianate dwelling, built c. 1865 for Albert Peck. The house with its barn and outbuildings, is an important landmark in the Peck's Corners neighborhood.

**Lucinda Richmond House** - The Richmond House (14 Brook Street), is a fine stuccoed bungalow with a cobblestone chimney built c. 1925. It is an excellent example of the arts and crafts style. A companion house on Park Street, and the William Seymour House (319 Washington Road) are two other well-preserved bungalows that should be considered significant.

**Rhode Island Laceworks** - Established here in a small complex of wooden buildings on Bay Spring Avenue in 1904, and enlarged with a reinforced concrete mill in 1920, the Rhode Island Lace Works was an important American producer of leavers lace, and a major local employer until the plant was closed in 1991. Pleasantly sited on lawn-covered grounds, the complex remains an important Bay Spring landmark. *Note: The mill was razed in 1997 to allow for the development of an assisted living complex. A portion of the front entrance was saved for use in an on-site tribute to the mill and its workers.*

**St. Andrew's School** - Founded as St. Andrew's Industrial School in 1893, this school complex on Federal Road includes a variety of architectural types on its campus, including the Colonial style Joshua Bicknell House (c. 1787), the Victorian Reverend Horton House (c. 1870), and the Tudor style McVicker Hall and Hardy Memorial Building (c. 1900).

**C.E. Smith House** - The Smith House (North Lake Drive) is a handsome two-story, cross-gable roof, brick Victorian dwelling with a brick stable in the rear. Built of locally made brick c. 1878, this house was the residence of a contracting mason and the Town's Superintendent of Highways.

**St. John's Episcopal Church** - This Gothic Revival red brick edifice (191 County Road) was designed by Providence architect Clifton Hall in 1858, enlarged once with a chapel in 1885, and again with a bell tower in 1888.

**Forest Chapel Cemetery** - Established in 1871, and modified in 1911-1912 by the nationally-renowned Olmstead Brothers' landscape architecture firm, the Forest Chapel Cemetery on Governor Bradford Drive is an important local example of romantic landscape design.

**Leroy Fales House and Tower** - This massive sprawling stone and shingle Queen Anne mansion (17 & 32 Lorraine Avenue) was built for Leroy Fales, a successful manufacturer, in 1890. Although the once large estate has been subdivided, its outstanding architectural qualities are still apparent in the thirty-nine room main house, and the windmill-like water tower.

**Rhode Island Country Club, Nayatt Road** - With the golf course designed by Donald Ross in 1911, and the grounds landscaped by the Olmstead Brothers between 1911 and 1923, the Rhode Island Country Club is significant as the work of nationally recognized masters of golf course design and landscape architecture. The Country Club also represents the late nineteenth and early twentieth century efforts of town residents, such as William Hoffman, to establish Barrington as a desirable suburban community.

In addition to the districts and individual properties listed above and located on the accompanying map, there are several additional properties that have been identified in the ongoing survey work that merit more detailed investigation. They include: the neighborhood around the intersection of County and New Meadow Roads; the Adams Point area in the vicinity of the Preston Richardson Farm; the Peleg Richmond House on Homestead Avenue; and the Old Salt Works Farm at 385 Washington Road.

With the exception of the Barrington Brickworks industrial archaeological site, the inventory map of historic properties does not include the Town's significant archaeological resources, since the sites are vulnerable to destruction through vandalism. The precise locations of these sites are on record at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, and are available for legitimate purposes. It should be noted that no comprehensive survey of Barrington archaeology has been conducted; therefore it is probable that more sites exist here than are presently documented.

## NATURAL and CULTURAL ISSUES

The issues relating to natural and cultural resources in Barrington all deal with protection and management of those features which could be impacted by further development. In addressing these issues, the committee members needed to determine what was the necessary and appropriate response at the local level, and how to involve town officials and the community in working towards protection of important natural and cultural features. The specific features identified are wetlands, particularly those not under state jurisdiction, the groundwater aquifer, Nockum Hill, Hundred Acre Cove, and cultural sites and historic areas.

### Protection of Wetlands

Wetlands perform a variety of functions. One of the more visible functions is as habitat for fish and wildlife. Estuarine wetlands, for example, play a vital role in sustaining commercial and sport fisheries. Many wetlands, both estuarine and freshwater, support migrating birds by providing important stop-over points, and breeding birds by providing vital food sources. Wetlands also retain or modify nutrients, pollutants and sediments, acting in essence as the landscape's kidneys. Some wetlands, such as those around Brickyard Pond, play a role in groundwater recharge. Other wetlands form at groundwater discharge points. A number of our inland wetlands also conduct flood waters away from developed areas. Many small wetlands around Barrington, for example, played a crucial role in preventing flood waters resulting from Hurricane Bob (August 1991) from reaching into neighborhoods and town streets.

Identifying these important sites for purposes of regulation often requires the input of a trained professional. It is apparent that a salt marsh or a freshwater marsh is a wetland; the vegetation is distinct, water is clearly present at some time during the year, and special hydric soils have developed. What is often not apparent is that these same factors -- hydrology, soils, and vegetation - - combine to form less obvious wetlands such as wet meadows, wooded swamps and shrub swamps. These actual wetlands are frequently misidentified as uplands because they are often dry at the surface.

Wetland alterations are currently regulated at both the federal and state level, although different standards for wetland definitions apply. The federal government, through the Army Corps of Engineers, regulates the discharge of dredge or fill material to all waters of the U.S. including

wetlands, and the erection of structures, such as docks or piers, in navigable waters. The Army Corps, however, gives standing approval for a wide variety of wetland alterations under its Nationwide Permit Program (NWP). Some activities which qualify under the NWP include road crossings, bridges, residential docks, and filling of up to ten acres of wetlands. While these activities might be viewed as insignificant on a national level, such projects, or the manner of their execution, could have a significant impact at the local level.

Under the Rhode Island Freshwater Wetlands Act, the State Department of Environmental Management (D.E.M.) also reviews projects with the potential to impact water bodies and wetlands, or occurring within their regulated setback zones. While the D.E.M. does give a more detailed review of proposals than does the Army Corps, many projects are deemed to be "an insignificant alteration," and so are given approval without an opportunity for local governments to comment. In addition, the state law only applies to ponds at least 0.25 acres in size, marshes of at least one acre and swamps of at least three acres (the exceptions to this are other biological wetlands which are recognized regardless of their size).

Many of the mapped wetlands in Barrington (shown in Figure 1) are not protected by the state regulations. According to the report done in 1987 in conjunction with the mapping of the wetlands by the Department of Natural Resources Science, U.R.I. (Golet), nearly all of the wetlands in the Town have been impacted by human activity. The majority of the estuarine wetlands, and about half of the freshwater wetlands have been ditched, primarily for mosquito control. Other wetlands have been encroached upon by development, and receive large volumes of runoff from highways and other paved surfaces. Finally, in terms of enforcement of the state wetlands regulations when violations occur, it has historically been difficult for the D.E.M. to respond in a timely and efficient manner because of staffing shortages. A community without local wetlands protection regulations does not have the ability to correct such violations, nor to control the impacts of development on the smaller water bodies and wetlands which are not protected under state law.

As described in the Land Use and Population Element, approximately half of Barrington's 623 acres of mapped wetlands are in private ownership. The bulk of these private wetlands are coastal or estuarine. They include extensive areas along Hundred Acre Cove, Palmer River, the Rumstick Point and Adams Point peninsulas, and along Narragansett Bay west of Barrington Beach. Although many of these areas would be difficult to develop because they also lie within the flood and velocity zones, they could be impacted by development of the adjoining upland. There are also several significant areas of freshwater wetlands in private ownership throughout town. The most prominent are those within the central portion of Hampden Meadows which are not part of the town owned Hampden Meadows Greenbelt, and those east of Brickyard Pond, which also lie within the recharge area of the Barrington Aquifer. There are undoubtedly other sites around Barrington which could be classified as wetlands, but have not yet been identified.

#### Protection of the Barrington Aquifer

The Barrington Aquifer supports the only commercially developed wellfield in the eastern portion of Rhode Island. In the midst of a region that has been plagued by water supply problems for many years, as well as being embroiled in the current controversy over importing water from the Scituate Reservoir by means of the proposed cross-bay pipeline (see Community Services and Facilities Element), Barrington is host to a very valuable natural resource. In addition, the Nayatt wellfield actually provides the bulk of the water which Barrington receives from the Bristol County Water Authority. As such, the Barrington Aquifer requires special attention in terms of future land use planning, as do the other areas of potential high groundwater yield.

Most of the land over the aquifer, particularly the area south of Nayatt Road, is residentially developed. There are wetlands nearby and to the east of the wellfield. Some of the aquifer land immediately adjacent to the wellfield, including all of the wetlands, is protected by means of a conservation easement granted to the Town as part of a cluster development (Glendale Acres). The land owned by the Water Authority is completely undeveloped except for the wellfield. Within the area designated as the aquifer recharge, much of the land is owned by the Town as Veterans Memorial Park, which consists mostly of Brickyard Pond and the surrounding wooded land. There are, however, a variety of land uses within the recharge area, including commercial (along Maple Avenue and County Road), residential, institutional, recreational and undeveloped. Most of the private undeveloped land lies between the Barrington Shopping Center and the YMCA, and consists of wooded wetlands and uplands.

The Town of Barrington has recognized the need to protect its groundwater resources for several years. The Barrington Conservation Commission in particular has identified potential threats to the aquifer. These include a variety of contamination sources: non-point stormwater runoff (including lawn treatment chemicals), leaking underground storage tanks, use of toxic and hazardous materials, and wetland filling. Most importantly, there are no regulations in place to provide specific protection for the aquifer.

As a matter of policy, the Town also needs to consider the potential fate of the other three areas in Barrington which were defined as potential aquifers by the hydrogeologic study (Prell, Swan). The most important of these may be the site along Wampanoag Trail. A portion of this land is protected through ownership by the Town as part of Osamequin Park (all that lying east of Wampanoag Trail). Approximately a third of it is presently in residential use. Most interesting is that the majority of the land lying west of Wampanoag Trail, or that which is not in residential use, is either undeveloped or in agricultural use. The other large aquifer site, that near Middle Highway and Upland Way, also contains mostly undeveloped and agricultural land. However, the presence of landfills in this area has led to concerns over potential groundwater contamination. The other site is the small area near Nayatt Point which is entirely within land owned by the R.I. Country Club.

### Management of Nockum Hill

Nockum Hill and the area along the upper reaches of Barrington River and Hundred Acre Cove consists of 77 acres of town owned upland (much of which is in farming use) and marshland;

approximately 48 acres of privately owned farmland; and approximately 160 acres of additional saltmarsh in a combination of public, private-protected (Audubon Society, Land Trust), private and unknown ownership. With the addition of 49 acres of town owned land on both sides of Wampanoag Trail at the East Providence border (the recently acquired Devine-Vargas parcel), and another 67 acres at Osamequin Park and Walker Farm east of Wampanoag Trail, this total of about 400 acres represents the largest natural area within Barrington. With the exception of the privately owned farmland at the Nockum Hill area, and the town owned land west of Wampanoag Trail, all of this land is within open space zoning designation.

Nockum Hill and Hundred Acre Cove are together a widely acknowledged special natural area with numerous valuable attributes. Its importance as a wildlife habitat area is key; it is the only known nesting site in Rhode Island for the Diamondback Terrapin, and provides an extensive habitat area for shellfish, various fish, and coastal and migrating bird species. It has considerable value as an undisturbed wetland, and unparalleled scenic value from Wampanoag Trail, and from within the cove waters itself.

Much of the marshland described is permanently protected through ownership by the State of Rhode Island, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and the Barrington Land Conservation Trust (see Open Space and Recreation Element for descriptions and locations of these areas). Much of the marshland is also protected by virtue of the fact that it is undevelopable land, some of which is of unknown ownership. Protection of the remaining sensitive coastal areas is a continuing effort; both the private Barrington Land Conservation Trust and the Barrington Conservation Commission have negotiated vegetated buffer protection in the form of acquisitions and easements from developers along the eastern shore of the cove. What has emerged as an issue to be addressed in the comprehensive plan is the proper management of the town owned Nockum Hill, much of which is developable upland.

Since the 1980's, efforts have been made by local citizens to provide for the long-term protection of Nockum Hill, particularly as a habitat area. A first step was the designation of the main turtle nesting area of the town owned portion of Nockum Hill as a conservation area under Ordinance number 85-10, which regulates public use of such areas. However, neither this designation nor the fact that the land is town owned provides permanent protection for Nockum Hill; without its recognition in the comprehensive plan as an important habitat area and the delineation of policies and recommendations for its protection, its status as a conservation area could be changed, and it could be subject to any number of uses or activities which town officials determine are appropriate or necessary, regardless of its habitat value.

Presently, about one-half of the area is leased for farming, the remainder being old fields in various stages of succession. In some areas, the topsoil has been removed to landscape various town projects. Dirt roads skirt the agricultural fields, some remaining only as walking trails. A building remains on the site of a previous trial sludge dump, only in operation for a few years. Several testing wells also remain in this area. A pistol range, used by the Barrington Police Department for practice shooting, is located in the southern section. In addition, there have been recent proposals to

develop Nockum Hill for recreational fields, and to use it as a composting site for sludge from the East Providence sewage treatment plant. In considering the present conditions and use of Nockum Hill, and in light of these various proposals for its future use, the committee members used the comprehensive planning process to re-evaluate Nockum Hill, and to identify proper management objectives. The major objective is to maintain Nockum Hill as a wildlife refuge, generally allowing natural events to occur undisturbed, but also to allow for farming and use of the trails for nature observation (see Recommendations section).

### Water Quality of Hundred Acre Cove

The closing of much of its waters to shellfishing is in contrast to most of Barrington's history. Until about 1950, oysters were harvested from beds off Barrington Beach to be processed in Warren, and shipped all over New England and New York. Hundred Acre Cove, once one of the most productive salt estuaries in southern New England, is in danger of being closed permanently to shellfishing. Most of the pollution entering Hundred Acre Cove is carried by the Runnins River, which drains the very densely developed commercial strip (Route 6) in nearby Seekonk, Massachusetts before emptying into the cove.

The Runnins River rises in the remote wetlands of Rehoboth, Massachusetts, and is a relatively clean river until it enters the Town of Seekonk. According to D.E.M. monitoring records, at the point it reaches the state line it shows highly variable coliform data; the impact of this on the upper Barrington River and Hundred Acre Cove is the continuous threat of permanent closure of these waters to shellfishing. Most of the pollutant loading is due to runoff containing high levels of bacteria, suspended solids and other contaminants. Another potential source of contamination is an abandoned coal distillation plant in East Providence. However, Route 6 in Seekonk, an unsewered densely developed commercial strip of motels, restaurants and stores, is considered to be the primary source of the pollution entering the Runnins River. Because many of the septic systems servicing the businesses along Route 6 are not adequate to prevent contamination of the groundwater, there have been proposals to connect this area of Seekonk into the East Providence sewer system. However, this solution has been rejected by East Providence because of concerns with the capacity of the treatment plant. What has emerged as an issue is the need for the two Rhode Island communities and Seekonk to work effectively together in addressing the problem.

In response to this need, a group of concerned citizens from both states formed the Runnins River Task Force (now the Pokanoket Watershed Alliance). This group has been active in monitoring the water quality of the river and in pursuing efforts to protect the river, including its designation as a federally - recognized scenic river and obtaining federal funds to study solutions to the water quality problems. One suggestion developed under a University of Rhode Island study undertaken by the Community Planning and Area Development Program ("The Hidden River", 1989) was for the establishment of a Massachusetts - Rhode Island watershed management district.

One recent success for those concerned with the future of the Runnins River and Hundred Acre Cove has been a recent E.P.A. grant of \$100,000 to the New England Water Pollution Commission

to oversee a water quality study of the river. All of the involved communities and both states, as well as local environmental groups, will be involved in a study to monitor water quality through an extensive sampling program, and develop recommendations to control the impacts of stormwater runoff.

There is also a need, however, to address the general problem of nonpoint source pollution within the Town of Barrington itself, to provide for the protection of not only Hundred Acre Cove, but all of its water bodies and wetlands. While failing septic systems are not an issue in Barrington, the impacts of development and other land disturbing activities which can cause erosion and stream sedimentation are.

### Preservation of Historic Areas and Cultural Sites

The preparation of the current plan represents the first time that the Town of Barrington has explicitly addressed historic preservation within its municipal plan. However, as the custodian of key resources, the Town has been active in preservation efforts; the resources which make up the Barrington Civic Center Historic District (Town Hall, Peck School, Prince's Hill Cemetery, Woods Pond) are all under town management, which has generally preserved their historical character. The Barrington Cemetery Commission, which has oversight over the Prince's Hill, Tyler Point, Forest Chapel, Watson, Allin and Burial Hill Cemeteries, performs commendably in maintaining these important historic properties.

Within the Town's park and conservation lands there are also important properties; the Osamequin Park - Walker Farm nature area constitutes an important landscape element in the County Road Historic District, while the majority of the Brickworks site is contained within Veterans Memorial Park. At present, the Town in its role as steward of these historic resources appears benign. However, an explicit acknowledgement of the historic preservation values of these resources should be incorporated into town policies, so that earlier errors, such as the wholesale demolition of the Brickworks, are not repeated.

The Barrington Preservation Society is the Town's principal force for historic preservation. Through its museum, informational meetings, plaque program and initiatives such as the "adoption" of Mouscochuck Creek/Canal, the Society has heightened the community's awareness and understanding of Barrington's resources, and the need to preserve them properly. The Preservation Society has provided essential input into the formulation of this report, and will have an active role in the implementation of specific recommendations.

On the other hand, the threats to Barrington's historic resources are the same as to those within other Rhode Island communities. Development pressures can absorb open space, encroach upon historic settings and impact historic buildings. Within recent years, there have been several instances where cultural features on private lands, that were of importance to the Town as a whole, were lost to development. The most notable of these were the Karl Jones Rose Garden off Rumstick Road, and the park land associated with the Belton Court estate (now Zion Bible Institute). In a town where

property values are high, and the amount of developable land is small, the likelihood that future development will be proposed on open or "under-utilized" property is great. Without a process to identify and protect those properties which possess outstanding historical significance, Barrington will continue to suffer these kinds of losses.

A separate but related problem is the pattern of unsympathetic development adjacent to historic areas, which detracts from their setting. This is particularly apparent along lower County Road, where commercial development since World War II has severely eroded the village character which formerly enveloped the road from the Prince's Hill Cemetery south to Saint John's Church. It has not been the commercial development per se, but rather the lack of compatible architecture and site planning, that has left the Civic Center Historic District and the Church as two historic sites isolated within a modern strip development. Smaller scale but more pervasive threats are incompatible renovations and additions, which can leave a historic building standing, while destroying its architectural integrity. This can occur as a result of both high budget improvements and low budget maintenance work.

For the Town's archaeological resources, any land modification has the potential to destroy a significant site. Activities such as road construction, house construction, landscaping and other excavation can damage these sites, often without any indication to the untrained eye. The potential problem is heightened by the fact that most archaeological sites have not yet been discovered, although models have been developed based upon environmental factors which identify those areas where prehistoric occupations were likely. Although the R.I. Historical Preservation Commission archaeologists can provide information on known sites, and the archaeological sensitivity of different areas within town, it is only within the coastal zone that construction activities are presently reviewed regarding to impacts on archaeological resources.

In summary, in spite of possessing numerous outstanding historic resources, Barrington presently has no mechanism in place to provide for their protection.

## GOALS AND POLICIES

In recognition of Barrington's abundant natural and cultural resources, and of the need to protect those most critical to the Town in terms of preserving and enhancing its natural environment, character and quality of life, the Natural and Cultural Resources Committee developed the following goals and polices:

### Goals

1. Protect sensitive natural areas in Barrington, including wetlands, valuable wildlife habitats, groundwater aquifers, and the salt marshes around Hundred Acre Cove and the Barrington and Palmer Rivers.

2. Preserve the integrity of historic and cultural sites, districts and landscapes, and protect those areas which provide Barrington with its distinctive scenic qualities.
3. Continue and expand agriculture and shellfishing in Barrington as valuable economic activities which also contribute to the quality of life.

### Policies

1. Identify important open space and natural areas, and encourage their acquisition or protection by the Town or private conservation organizations.
2. Control or prevent development impacts which could adversely impact wetlands, critical wildlife habitats, groundwater aquifers, and sensitive shoreline locations.
3. Manage town owned property to insure protection of significant natural and cultural features, and develop regulations and/or techniques for the protection of such land which is privately owned, including scenic, historical and cultural sites.
4. Support land uses which provide valuable alternatives to those representing the highest economic return, including efforts to preserve Barrington's farmland.
5. Insure consistency of the Harbor Management Plan, and other policy documents and town regulations dealing with use of Barrington's important resources, with the comprehensive plan.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to the issues regarding protection of various natural and cultural resources in Barrington, specific recommendations have been developed for inclusion in the comprehensive plan. They relate to protection of wetlands and aquifers, management of town owned conservation areas, and protection of historic properties.

#### 1. Establish a Wetland/~~Coastal Velocity~~ Overlay District

In 1990, following the work of the Barrington Land Conservation Trust regarding the identification of wetlands in Barrington, and their relative need for protection, the Barrington Conservation Commission introduced a proposal for a wetlands protection ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance was to provide for town regulation over the impacts of development on all wetland areas. As proposed, it would control such matters as setback of structures, vegetation removal, dumping and filling, use of herbicides and pesticides, and general impact on the integrity of wetlands.

~~The present recommendation expands this concept to include areas within the coastal velocity zone as well. Shown in Figure 5, the Physical Constraints Map, are those areas in Barrington which would be generally impacted by this proposal. These areas, designated as having severe constraints to development, include all areas which are either wetland, within the coastal velocity zone, or both. Areas of moderate constraints to development are those areas which are neither of the above but are within the 100-year floodplain.~~

The proposed overlay would be done as a floating zone, an unmapped district applied to wetlands ~~and the coastal velocity areas~~, with associated regulations that are put into place when an application for development (or a clear violation) occurs. This floating zone approach is necessary because of the lack of sufficient accuracy regarding the delineation of wetland ~~and coastal velocity~~ boundaries, as compared to individual property lines. ~~While the coastal velocity zone is a function of elevation,~~ Wetland areas would be defined on the basis of soil, hydrology and vegetation.

The proposed ordinance could be administered through a site plan review process, involving a review board composed of representatives from the Conservation Commission, Planning Board and town staff. Projects having no impacts on wetlands ~~nor occurring within the coastal velocity zone~~ would be identified as such by the review board, while those projects that do would be reviewed, and potentially modified, according to the standards established in the ordinance.

***2002 Update: A wetlands overlay district was established as part of the zoning ordinance rewrite in 1994 (Article XXV). It requires the granting of a special use permit by the Zoning Board of Review, with advisory review by the Conservation Commission, prior to any development within 100 feet of either a coastal wetland or a freshwater wetland one-half acre or greater in size.***

## 2. Implement An Aquifer Protection Program

The importance of Barrington's groundwater resources is made apparent by the following facts:

- \* Water quality from the reservoirs providing drinking water to Bristol County is impaired.
- \* No other commercially developed aquifer, aside from the Nayatt wellfield, exists in eastern Rhode Island.
- \* The proposed cross-bay pipeline which would connect the East Bay with the Scituate Reservoir has not yet received all necessary permits.
- \* If the pipeline is not constructed, the production and integrity of the Nayatt wellfield will become even more critical than it is now.
- \* If the pipeline is constructed, the wellfield would continue to provide much of the Town of Barrington with locally derived drinking water, a supply which would also become critical to Bristol County in times of drought or other emergencies.

In addition to the above, the R.I. Department of Environmental Management has formulated requirements for communities to develop wellhead protection plans under its 1990 Rhode Island Wellhead Protection Program. While the work involved in the comprehensive plan resulted in identification of a clear need to provide for protection of Barrington's groundwater supply, a detailed plan, or wellhead protection program in line with the state requirements, is beyond its scope. A recommendation of the comprehensive plan is to undertake a separate but complementary study to develop a well-head protection plan, provide for required coordination and technical expertise, and implement the final wellhead protection recommendations.

In the Fall of 1991, the Town of Barrington was awarded a grant by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a wellhead protection demonstration project. Results of the study are to include a delineation of the wellhead recharge area and other critical zones; a survey of property owners in the wellhead recharge area to determine what contamination threats exist, and educational materials for these property owners; and an emergency contingency plan and a draft wellhead protection ordinance.

Because other communities have similar data compiled for their comprehensive plans, and are also facing the state requirement for drafting a wellhead protection plan, this study will serve as a demonstration project; the effort to protect Barrington's local drinking water supplies will benefit other communities in the state.

***2002 Update: The construction of the cross-bay pipeline was completed in 1998. The wellhead protection study for the Town was completed in 1994. It recommended the establishment of a groundwater protection overlay district and included a proposed draft ordinance, which has not yet been enacted by the Town.***

### 3. Develop Management Plans for Nockum Hill and Town Conservation Areas

Based upon study of Nockum Hill, its land-use, general characteristics, habitat value and potential threats, the following specific recommendations are made:

- a. Nockum Hill and Hundred Acre Cove should be managed for continuation as a nesting area for the Diamondback Terrapin.
- b. Nockum Hill and Hundred Acre Cove should be managed to allow for habitat diversity for other types of wildlife, including birds of "special concern" in Rhode Island, such as seaside sparrows, sharptail sparrows, common terns and ospreys.
- c. Farming should be allowed to continue on a lease basis in areas now allocated for that activity, with yearly monitoring by the Town regarding use of herbicides and pesticides, and erosion control measures.

- d. Trails should be kept open and maintained for people to observe and enjoy nature at Nockum Hill, but not so as to impinge on the habitat.
- e. If at all possible, use of the pistol range should be limited to members of the Barrington Police Department, and restricted entirely from June 1 to July 30 (the height of the terrapin nesting season). Efforts should be made to find an alternate site for practice shooting.

These specific recommendations will be contained in an overall policy document, or management plan, developed for Nockum Hill. Currently in draft form, the management plan will also designate how it is to be implemented and enforced to insure protection of Nockum Hill as a wildlife habitat area. Involvement of the Conservation Commission, the Barrington Land Conservation Trust, and the Barrington Public Works Department is envisioned, as well as support from the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, the Natural Heritage Program and the D.E.M. Division of Fish and Wildlife.

While the current Open Space District is proposed to be expanded to provide protection for those areas deemed to be wildlife habitat and/or conservation areas (see Open Space and Recreation Element, Recommendations section) management plans are necessary to guide town stewardship of some sites. Other town owned conservation areas for which management plans are recommended include:

- \* Osamequin Park and Walker Farm
- \* Currier Park
- \* Veterans Park
- \* Hampden Meadows Greenbelt

In general, each management plan will include a description of the area's significant characteristics and features, management objectives and implementation plan.

#### 4. Adopt Methods to Control Erosion and Stormwater Runoff

To address the potential impact of soil erosion and sediments on the Town's water quality, the following recommendations are made:

- a. The Town should consider the adoption of a soil erosion and sediment control ordinance based upon the model ordinance contained in the 1989 Rhode Island Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act. Under the provisions of such an ordinance, the Town would require that an application for a permit be made to the building official prior to the disturbance of any existing vegetation and/or contours for proposed developments involving more than one house, greater than one-half acre in area or within one hundred feet of a watercourse. Permit approval requires the submittal of an erosion and sedimentation control plan. Assistance in reviewing such plans is available from the Eastern Rhode Island Soil Conservation District

who can provide the services of a trained professional in exchange for a fee, which can be attached to either the local building permit fee or the subdivision application fee.

- b. The Town should review and revise its subdivision regulations as necessary to ensure that no net increase in run-off from the development of a site is allowed under certain storm conditions; that technique to both reduce total run-off and promote the infiltration of uncontaminated run-off are required; and that methods to prevent the contamination of the groundwater from parking areas are required as well, in appropriate situations.
- c. both the zoning ordinance and the subdivision regulations should be revised to increase the setback and buffer requirements for developments adjoining wetlands and water bodies.

5. Adopt Strategies for Protection of Scenic and Historical Resources

It is recommended that the Barrington Planning Board establish a register of important scenic areas, beginning with but not necessarily limited to, the three locales identified in the D.E.M. Landscape Inventory. This register should also include scenic highways and corridors within the Town. The Planning Board should also work with the Barrington Land Conservation Trust, the Barrington Preservation Society and other interested parties to insure that scenic qualities are taken into account when new construction is proposed within the vicinity of identified scenic areas.

Recommendations for preservation of historic properties are listed below in order of priority:

- a. Adopt a town register of historic properties worthy of preservation. The properties placed on this register would meet the criteria of the State and National Registers of Historic Places, either through formal listing, or evaluation by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. The properties on the town register would merit the special consideration in the Town's planning process discussed below.
- b. Appoint a town historic committee to work in conjunction with the Barrington Preservation Society on a study regarding the establishment of historic district zoning and related issues.
- c. Adopt a development plan review ordinance that includes measures to identify and avoid negative impacts on significant historical and archaeological resources. This process would be carried out by a new historic review committee, or a committee of the Planning Board, and would rely on both the town historic register and the state files, including zoning overlay maps that would identify archaeologically sensitive areas.
- d. Adopt a stop-work ordinance which would allow a reasonable grace period for historic preservation consultation when a significant historic property is threatened with whole or partial destruction. The town building inspector could have the authority to issue such orders.

*2002 Update: A development plan review ordinance, which requires building design and site plan review of all commercial redevelopment, as well as site plan review of major residential developments, was first adopted by the Town in 1993. It includes the consideration of the potential impact upon properties listed or formally declared eligible for listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. It remains a part of the zoning ordinance (Article XXIV), which was rewritten in 1994. Advance review on behalf of the Planning Board is performed by the Technical Review Committee.*

## OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

Open space and recreation land in Barrington constitutes a significant portion of the Town (see Land Use and Population Element, Figure 1). The amount of land which is either designated as conservation, is public open or undeveloped, or is in active recreation use reflects the community's emphasis on protecting open space and providing recreational opportunities for its residents. During the development of this component of the plan, the Open Space and Recreation Committee reviewed the entire town in detail. Through a number of specific recommendations for future use, the committee achieved a balance between protecting land for open space and conservation purposes, and developing it to meet the recreational needs of the various youth leagues. Much of the review focused on town owned land, but also considered was the ultimate fate of major parcels of private open space in Barrington.

Two documents served as a basis for the work done for the present report. They are the "Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan" for Barrington, completed in 1986 by the Barrington Planning Board, with assistance from the State Department of Administration, and a follow-up report the next year by the Barrington Park and Recreation Commission, titled "Parks and Recreational Needs for the Town of Barrington". These reports contain a complete inventory and description of the Town's open space and recreational areas, as well as a documentation of its recreational needs for the foreseeable future. This work is complemented by a strong conservation movement in town, which includes the private Barrington Land Conservation Trust, who have established priority areas for protection.

Included in this element is an inventory of existing open space areas and recreational facilities, and a description of recreational programs in Barrington. This is followed by a discussion of the related issues, goals and policies developed by the committee, and recommendations which deal with use of all town owned land, but particularly open space and recreation land.

## EXISTING OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Shown in Figure 1 are all public and private recreation and open space areas in Barrington. They are divided into four categories: publicly owned recreation, privately owned recreation, public open space, including publicly owned easements on private land, and private open space which is protected through ownership by the Land Trust or the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. A description of each area, including present facilities and available activities, is contained on the map.

### Active and Passive Recreational Areas

Listed in Table 1 are the public and private recreational facilities in Barrington, and their total approximate acreage; the areas given for the schools is the amount of land developed recreationally, rather than the total land area shown in Figure 1.

Table 1

## PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN BARRINGTON

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
<b>Public:</b>		
Haines State Park*	Regional Park	76.2
Sherwood Park	Park/Playfield	4.4
Primrose Hill School	Playfield/Ground, Playlot	5.3
Currier Park	Neighborhood Park	5.6
High School	Community Playfield	23.7
Latham Ave Park	Neighborhood Park/Playlot	3.1
Middle School	Community Playfield	14.7
Bicknell Park	Park/Playfield/Ground	8.0
Chianese Field	Playfield/Ground, Playlot	14.1
Town Hall	Playlot	0.2
Veterans Park**	Community Park	220.0
Nayatt School	Playfield/Ground, Playlot	3.5
Town Beach	Bathing Beach	0.3
Sowams School	Playground/Field, Playlot	5.8
Hampden Meadows School	Playfield	3.3
Kent Street	Neighborhood Park	<u>2.5</u>
Total Acres		390.7
*Includes portion of East Bay Bike Path		
**Includes Brickyard Pond		
<b>Private:</b>		
Baptist Church	Playfield	1.3
Cove Havin Marina	Marina	6.0
St. Andrew's School	Playfield/Rink	10 ±
Lavin's Marina	Marina	5.0
R.I. Country Club	Golf Course/Club	185 ±
YMCA	Recreation Center	3.6
R.I. School of Design	Activity Center/Beach	26.8
Private Beaches	Bathing Beaches	5 ±
Stanley's Boatyard	Marina	2.5
Striper Marina	Marina	4.4
Barrington Yacht Club	Yacht Club	<u>5.2</u>
Total Acres		254.8

In summary, there are approximately 390 acres of public recreation in Barrington, and about 255 acres of private recreation. When the area taken up by Brickyard Pond (112 acres) is subtracted from the acreage for Veterans Park, the total for public recreation land in Barrington is about 278 acres. The approximate total area by type of facility for the public recreational areas is as follows:

Playlot	1.2 Acres
Neighborhood: Playfield/ground and Park	54.6 Acres
Community: Playfield and Park	146.7 Acres
Regional Park	76.2 Acres

Playlots are located at each elementary school except Hampden Meadows, but are also located at Latham Park, Chianese Field and the Town Hall. Neighborhood facilities, in the form of playing fields, playgrounds and neighborhood parks, are also located at all the elementary schools and at several parks -- Sherwood, Currier, Latham Avenue, Bicknell, Chianese, Kent Street -- scattered throughout the Town. The total acreage, approximately 55 acres to serve a town of nearly 16,000 people, is just short of national standards, which recommend a total of four acres of such facilities for every 1,000 population. However, in terms of community recreational facilities -- the High School, Middle School, Veterans Park and the Town Beach -- Barrington has nearly double the standard of five acres per 1,000 population.

While the amount of private recreation land in Barrington is close to that of the public recreation land, the bulk of it is taken up by the Rhode Island Country Club, which is primarily a golf course. The other large parcel designated as private recreation is the R.I.S.D. land which, exclusive of the building, is primarily open space and marshland; there is little in the way of developed recreation here. With the exception of recreational boating at the various marinas and yacht club, active recreation is only provided at the Baptist Church, St. Andrew's School and of course, the Y.M.C.A.

### Open Space and Conservation Areas

Listed in the following table are the various parcels of publicly owned open space and undeveloped land in Barrington (see Figure 1). Most of this land is owned by the Town, but some is owned by the State, including some parcels of marshland within Hundred Acre Cove and the entire tip of Rumstick Point. A few parcels are privately owned, but are designated as public because the Town has secured conservation easements on the land, protecting it from further development. Also listed in Table 2 (and depicted on Figure 1), is land that is owned by the Barrington Land Conservation Trust and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. This land is permanently protected.

Table 2

## PUBLIC AND PRIVATE-PROTECTED OPEN SPACE IN BARRINGTON

<u>Area</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	
<b>Public:</b>			
Hundred Acre Cove Parcels	Conservation Land	30 ±	
Devine Vargas	Conservation Area	49.2	
Nockum Hill	Agriculture/Open Space	77.5	
Ormand Drive Park	Undeveloped	2.0	
Osamequin Park	Conservation Area	28.8	
Walker Farm	Gardens/Open Space	38.5	
Tall Cedars	Conservation Area	32.0	
Allins Cove Parcels	Marshland	3.8	
Prince's Pond/Landfill #4	Open Space	45 ±	
Washington Park	Undeveloped	9.2	
Landfill #3/Volpe Pond	Open Space		13.9
Town Hall	Undeveloped	7.4	
Conservation Easements	Conservation Land	20 ±	
Barrington Beach	Undeveloped Shoreline		4 ±
Smith's Cove	Marshland	5.1	
Rumstick Point	Marshland		34.0
Town Owned Parcels	Undeveloped Area	2.0	
Hampden Meadows Greenbelt	Conservation/Passive Recreation	<u>92.6</u>	
Total Acres		495.0	
<b>Private:</b>			
Land Trust Parcels	Conservation Land	64 ±	
Audubon Society Parcels	Conservation Land	60 ±	
Johannis Farm (Land Trust)	Agriculture/Conservation Area		<u>32.0</u>
Total Acres		156.0	

Although approximately 40 percent of the publicly owned or otherwise protected open space is wetland, Barrington nonetheless has an impressive amount of such land -- 651 acres. The most significant town owned parcels are Nockum Hill at the head of Hundred Acre Cove, the recently

purchased Devine-Vargas land off Wampanoag Trail, the Tall Cedars site, Osamequin Park and adjoining Walker Farm lying between Wampanoag Trail and Hundred Acre Cove, and the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt. The Devine-Vargas, Tall Cedars and Hampden Meadows Greenbelt parcels are also primarily forested, providing for the protection of a significant portion of Barrington's remaining forestland. With the exception of Nockum Hill, all of these parcels were purchased by the Town, with assistance by the State, for the purpose of protecting natural areas or otherwise providing open space. On the other hand, some of the smaller sites, such as Ormand Drive Park and the open land around Prince's Pond, are neither wetlands nor considered conservation land. These parcels have the potential to be developed for either passive or active recreation.

Both the Audubon Society and the Barrington Land Conservation Trust have targeted land around Hundred Acre Cove and coastal wetland areas for acquisition. The most significant of the Audubon holdings in Barrington is the large parcel to the north of Hundred Acre Cove which adjoins the town owned Nockum Hill; all of this area is marshland. The Audubon Society also owns a small parcel adjoining Haines Park, and a number of tidal areas along Palmer River. The Palmer River holdings are close to the Johannis Farm, a site recently acquired by the Barrington Land Conservation Trust, primarily with state and town open space bond money. Johannis Farm, now known as a wildlife preserve, is the Land Trust's largest single holding; it is a combination of working farm, woodland and marsh. Their other large holding is a sixteen acre parcel along the Providence River, referred to as the Pic-Wil Nature Preserve. This is a combination upland, which is partially farmed, and wetland that was donated to the Land Trust in 1987. The Land Trust also owns several parcels around Hundred Acre Cove and along Palmer River, as well as alongside Allins Cove, on both sides of the Adams Point peninsula, and at scattered inland sites around the Town.

***2002 Update: The Town's most recent open space acquisition is a ten acre parcel to the west of the Barrington Shopping Center and alongside the East Bay Bike Path. It was purchased in 2001 using both town and state open space bond monies. It is wooded with approximately four acres of wetland on the southern portion, and lies entirely within the recharge area for the Nyatt Wells, Barrington's drinking water supply. The Land Trust has continued working with property owners to protect sensitive land by acquisition and easement.***

#### Recreation Programs and Activities

Barrington presently has a Recreation Department, (previously referred to as the Community Activities Department) which sponsors a variety of recreational programs for residents of all ages. There are a number of summer programs which include a pre-school (ages 3-5) playground program; a structured playground program for children ages 6-12; an instructional tennis program, and a learn to swim program at the YMCA, both for children ages 6-12; a running program for residents of all ages; and a youth basketball league for boys ages 13-15. During the school year, the Recreation Department also provides shorter programs to coincide with school vacations in swimming, bowling and roller skating. The adult programs include a men's softball league, consisting of ten teams which play at Veterans Memorial Park through the late spring and summer,

and a men's basketball league (six teams), which play at the High School outdoor courts in the summer. The Recreation Department also sponsors both a junior and an adult tennis tournament at the High School in the summer, and an adult golf tournament at the Rhode Island Country Club in the fall. The Department also offers family recreation days at the Town Beach, and Sunday evening concerts on the Town Hall lawn during the summer. The Recreation Department is staffed by a part-time director and part-time secretary. The programs are provided on a fee basis.

In addition to the programs offered by the Recreation Department, Barrington has a number of organized league programs for youth which make use of the town recreational facilities. There are nine little league baseball and three softball leagues for boys and girls from ages six up to fifteen; three divisions of Pop Warner football for boys from ages nine up to fifteen; and a youth soccer association which includes five leagues for boys and girls from ages six and under up to sixteen. The Police Athletic League (P.A.L.) sponsored by the local police department, has a coed summer tennis tournament for ages 10-18, a basketball tournament for older boys and a wrestling program for boys ages 6-14 during the winter, and coed weight lifting program for ages 14 and up, also during the winter. The P.A.L. also organizes a 5k road race in the spring, and a track and field tournament in the summer. In addition, there is a Barrington Rugby Club for high school juniors and seniors, and regional activities which include baseball for East Bay boys, ages 16-18, sponsored by the American Legion; an East Bay Soccer Club for boys and girls; and youth hockey for boys in the greater Providence area.

## OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ISSUES

During development of the comprehensive plan, the Open Space and Recreation Committee dealt with a few general issues, relating primarily to proper stewardship of the Town's property and resources. The central focus was balancing the need to protect open space, with the need to provide more active recreation areas in Barrington. The issue of providing a more formal structure for recreational programs also surfaced, and is addressed as separate recommendation.

### Ownership and Protection of Open Space Areas

Depicted in Figure 2 is all land in Barrington which is in public ownership, or is owned privately but is protected as permanent open space. This map includes the land which is shown on the Recreational Facilities and Open Space Areas Map, with the exception of the private recreation areas. It is also different from Figure 1 in two significant ways: first, it breaks down the town owned land by its status (present use and degree of protection) and second, it shows all public land - - in addition to that owned by the Town of Barrington and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management -- as well as the various cemeteries throughout town. By displaying the ownership and status of public and quasi-public land in Barrington, Figure 2 serves as the basis for future open space planning.

Land owned by the Town of Barrington is shown in three separate categories. The first is town owned designated use; this is all land owned by the Town which is developed or used actively in some manner. It includes all of the schools, playing fields and other developed parks or recreational areas. It also includes the Town Hall and the Barrington Public Library, and all other municipal buildings. The largest such parcel of developed town owned land is the High School, which is followed in size by the Middle School. The other two categories both involve town owned undeveloped land. The second undeveloped land category, however, is also identified as protected. The distinction between what land is protected from further development and what is not -- and how to address the future of the great majority of town owned land which is not -- was a major point of discussion for the committee.

The undeveloped town owned land includes Nockum Hill, the Devine-Vargas land, Osamequin Park and Walker Farm, the Tall Cedars site, and the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt. It also includes the undeveloped portion of Veterans Memorial Park, all other undeveloped parks or open space areas, various smaller wooded parcels around town, and the undeveloped portions of school property. Some of the undeveloped parcels are designated by the Town to be conservation areas. This is land determined to be environmentally sensitive, as identified by a town ordinance regulating public use of such land. The ordinance (Number 85-10) simply states that no vehicles of any kind nor horses are allowed in conservation areas, and that such areas shall be used only in a manner consistent with their designation. It provides for an application process for groups wishing to make use of conservation areas, as well as other designated public areas. While the ordinance does not provide any form of legal protection to the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt, Nockum Hill and other such designated conservation areas, it is useful in determining what the Town considers to be its environmentally sensitive areas.

In reviewing the status of all of the town owned undeveloped land in Barrington, it was found that only the most recent acquisition, the Devine-Vargas land, is actually permanently protected from future development. However, because all of the other parcels that were purchased with outside funding do have some restrictions placed upon them, this protective status is a matter of degree. More specifically, the Devine and Vargas parcels were purchased by the Town in 1989, with 75 percent of the funding provided through the 1987 Open Space and Recreational Area Bond Program, administered by the Department of Environmental Management. This funding source required that the State hold a conservation restriction on the land, and that conversions in use be approved by the Director of D.E.M. A later open space grant (1991) from the State went towards the purchase of the Johannis Farm, but the recipient in this case was the Barrington Land Conservation Trust rather than the Town.

In previous years, the Town used a combination of federal, state and local funds to buy Walker Farm, Tall Cedars, Prince's Pond, Osamequin Park and most of the southern portion of the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt. In every case, one-half of the purchase price was provided by the federal funding source, one-quarter by the State (the old Department of Natural Resources) and one-quarter by the Town. The state source of funding was known as the Green Acres Program. Based on the R.I. Green Acres Acquisition Act of 1964, it provided money to communities to acquire land

for park, recreation and conservation purposes. Although similar to the recent open space bond program in that it required an encumbrance contract agreement with the State, as well as the approval of the appropriate department director prior to a conversion of use, it did not specifically prevent a town from taking land purchased for conservation purposes, and then developing it for one of the other uses allowed in the act, which includes active recreation.

While most of the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt and the Tall Cedars site are wetlands, as well as part of Osamequin Park and Walker Farm, thereby making them unlikely candidates for active recreational development, there was concern by the committee that these and other sensitive areas of town be protected from any kind of future development. In particular, the Nockum Hill parcel owned by the Town has no legal restrictions of any kind on its sale or development, and much of it does not have physical constraints to discourage development; this is a concern due to the importance of Nockum Hill as a wildlife habitat (see Natural and Cultural Resources Element). The comprehensive planning process was seen as a way of targeting certain areas, such as Osamequin Park and Nockum Hill, for permanent protection, and other areas as suitable for some type of passive recreation development. The remaining undeveloped areas owned by the Town were determined to be suitable for development for municipal purposes, specifically to meet the community's demand for more playing fields.

#### Zoning Designation of Town School Property

In addition to concern with the proper use and protection of the public open space parcels, the committee identified the current zoning status of the various town owned school parcels as an issue. More specifically, all of the six public school sites in Barrington are within an R-25 District. There was concern that having these areas within a residential district is not in keeping with their public education and recreation functions, and that such important public land should not be zoned in a manner that would allow its conversion to another use. This situation also applies to the land containing the government center. As the present Open Space District does not appear to be the appropriate designation for the school and government parcels, a need arose to define a suitable zoning category for these areas.

#### Need for Additional Playing Fields

In 1987, the Park and Recreation Commission, an advisory board whose role is to make recommendations to the Town Council concerning the development and use of public parks and recreation areas, prepared a report regarding the Town's park and recreational needs. The report included a general plan to meet these needs for the foreseeable future. Most of the recognized recreational needs, however, still exist today, particularly for additional playing fields. The Open Space and Recreation Committee has reaffirmed the need for these additional areas, and have incorporated most of the Park and Recreation Commission's previous recommendations into the comprehensive plan. One recommendation, the upgrading of Woods Pond near the Town Hall and library, has been completed, with one half the cost paid by a recreation grant from the Department

of Environmental Management. The improvements included dredging of the pond, construction of a gazebo and bridge, and landscaping.

As discussed in the previous section, there are numerous organized leagues for both youth and adults in Barrington, all of which put a heavy demand on the Town's facilities. This demand has resulted in a shortage of available playing fields for the various sports, making scheduling and long term proper maintenance of the fields very difficult. Currently, the need is strongest for additional little league, soccer and softball fields. For example, in 1991 little league in Barrington consisted of 78 separate teams with 1,027 players (boys and girls). The different levels of little league play also require different size fields. Enrollment is expected to increase by an additional 200 to 300 children by 1994. There is also a need to provide a field for rugby; although space is provided at both the High School and Middle School, this sport requires an area that can be allowed to regenerate. The need for additional playing fields to meet the demands of the various organized sports leagues in Barrington are as follows:

Little League -- nine additional fields; five regulation, two transitional (75 foot base paths) and two full (90 foot base paths)

Soccer -- eight additional fields; four regulation and four smaller

Softball -- two additional fields

Rugby -- one field

In determining the requirements for additional fields, both the need to allow the existing fields to rest and recover from constant use, and the need to accommodate school use of those fields on school property, were considered. None of the present fields in use are given adequate recovery time, and with the growth in the public schools (see Community Services and Facilities Element), it is anticipated that there will be an even greater demand for school sports in the future.

#### Need for a Formal Recreation Department

The last issue regarding open space and recreation in Barrington is one which has been discussed for the last few years -- whether or not Barrington should establish a full time recreation department to both coordinate the activities of the various leagues, and to offer new programming for the community. The Town currently relies on a part-time recreation director and on Public Works Department staff to coordinate the use and maintenance of the various playing fields. In 1988, the Barrington League of Women Voters recommended the establishment of a recreation and leisure activities department, with a full-time professional director.

Through various interviews the League found a need for informal non-competitive programming for all ages, and particularly for Barrington's youth. This has been reaffirmed by the Substance Abuse Task Force, which has identified a particular need for more indoor recreation. While there are considerable opportunities for organized sports in Barrington, there is less available in terms of non-athletic programs such as music, arts and dance. A recreation department is seen as one way of providing these activities, or of coordinating those that do exist through private organizations such

as the Community School and St. Andrews School.

In an era of budget constraints and cutbacks of non-essential services, establishment of a new full-time department is unlikely, at least in the short term. However, the proposal for a recreation department with a full-time recreation director should be considered as a potential means of improving an existing service, particularly one which is important to the overall quality of life in Barrington. A recreation department could also generate revenue through fees, which would help to offset some of the associated costs.

## GOALS AND POLICIES

Based upon the various issues relating to open space and recreation in Barrington, particularly regarding use and protection of the various open space areas and recreational facilities, the committee developed the following goals and policies:

### Goals

1. Provide a range of active and passive ~~outdoor~~ recreation facilities, that are both compatible with the natural environment, and satisfy the needs of the present and future population of Barrington.
2. Develop a system of greenways, connected where feasible, throughout the Town to protect natural features, provide open space for the general improvement of the visual environment, provide opportunities for passive recreational pursuit, and separate areas of urban development.
3. Make both active and passive outdoor recreational opportunities accessible to the group or area which they are designed to serve, and develop these in a safe and aesthetically pleasing way which is integrated into the existing land use pattern.
4. Provide a wide range of recreational and cultural program activities for persons of all age, income and abilities in Barrington.

### Policies

1. Balance the need to protect natural features with the provision of active recreational facilities, and provide a means for continued coordination between the conservation and recreation components of town government in Barrington.
2. Identify areas to meet present and future active and passive recreational needs, and develop a plan for their acquisition and development.
3. Increase public awareness of available recreational opportunities in Barrington.

4. Support the expansion of recreational opportunities in Barrington, and provide cost effective coordination of existing recreational facilities, resources and personnel.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations developed by the Open Space and Recreation Committee deal primarily with the future use of town owned undeveloped open space, recreation and school land in Barrington. To address the issues of proper use and management of these areas, the committee first developed a recommendation for the creation of several new zoning districts in Barrington. This was followed by recommendations for future use, including new zoning designations, for each parcel of land. The issues of the potential future development of private unprotected open space, and the need for a recreation department are also addressed.

1. Establish New Conservation and Recreation Districts

It is recommended that the existing Open Space District in Barrington's zoning ordinance be replaced with four new districts which better define appropriate uses for certain types of land. The proposed new districts are as follows:

### **Conservation District**

This district is proposed to replace the existing Open Space District where it is assigned to certain public lands, specifically all town and state owned wetlands, and other town owned land which would best be designated conservation land due to its environmental characteristics. It is also proposed for all land in conservation easement, owned by the Barrington Land Trust or Audubon Society, and other marshland along Hundred Acre Cove and the Palmer River, much of which is of unknown ownership. This district would be more restrictive than the existing Open Space District which allows residential, active recreation, cemeteries, schools, utilities and accessory uses by special use permit. The intent of the proposed conservation district is to prohibit any uses which would alter the natural state of certain sensitive land, but only that land which is presently publicly owned, privately owned and protected, or is tidal marshland which is virtually undevelopable, and primarily of unknown ownership.

### **Conservation - Wildlife Refuge District**

This district is proposed for only the Nockum Hill area of Barrington, including the surrounding marshlands which adjoin Hundred Acre Cove. It would replace the existing Open Space District for the land owned by the Town, Audubon Society and Land Trust, but not that which is privately owned. A special exception would be allowed for agricultural use. The primary intent of this designation is to protect the habitat of the Northern Diamondback Terrapin (See Natural and Cultural Resources Element). This district would vary from the conservation district in the zoning ordinance in that it would have a different definition and purpose, and would vary in its allowed uses; uses that would interfere with its habitat potential would be prohibited, and public access would be restricted during the turtle nesting season.

### **Open Space-Passive and Open Space-Active Recreation Districts**

These two districts would be the new designations for land remaining in the present Open Space District which is not converted to one of the conservation districts, as well as some additional town owned land which is used institutionally, but is presently within a residential district. The distinction between the two in the use regulations of the zoning ordinance is that the Passive Recreation District would, in general, duplicate the existing Open Space District, while the Active Recreation District would still allow residential and utilities by special use permit only, but would permit active recreation and public and semi-public uses. The reason for keeping the Passive Recreation District the same as the present Open Space District (instead of being slightly more restrictive), is the existence of privately owned land near Nockum Hill, and along the Palmer River, which are presently in the open space designation.

In general, all of the town owned undeveloped land not designated conservation or set aside for development of playing fields, would be converted to passive recreation, including some land which is presently zoned residential. All of the active public recreational areas in town (including Haines park) and most of the public developed land (including the school property, the Town Hall and that containing the Public Works Department) would be converted from Open Space, R-25 or R-10 to the active recreation designation.

*2002 Update: The four districts described above were established and applied to the appropriate areas as part of the rewrite of the zoning ordinance and revisions to the zoning map in 1994.*

#### 2. Proposed Use of Town Open Space and Recreation Areas

To both address conservation and wildlife habitat concerns, and to meet the needs of Barrington residents for passive and active recreation, the following recommendations are made for all town owned open space and recreation areas:

**Devine Vargas** - Presently a conservation area purchased with state open space bond money; preserve conservation status (as required by the funding program).

**Ormand Drive Park** - Presently an undeveloped park; designate for passive and active recreation.

**Osamequin Park** - Presently a conservation area with nature trails; retain as a conservation area.

**Walker Farm** - Presently a passive use area with trails, boat launch, dock and community gardens; designate most of the parcel as a conservation area, with exceptions allowed for gardening and leaf composting, and the remaining southernmost waterfront portion as a passive recreation area, allowing for water based activities.

**Sherwood Park** - Presently an active recreation area with one little league field; retain present use.

**Tall Cedars** - Presently a conservation area consisting primarily of wetlands; preserve conservation status.

**Primrose Hill School** - Presently an active recreation area with one little league field, a play area and totlot; retain present use.

**Currier Park** - Presently a passive recreation area with picnic area and trails; retain present use.

**High School** - Presently an active recreation area with one football, one major league, two softball, one little league, two soccer and one hockey field, and one basketball and five tennis courts; retain present use.

**Latham Ave Park** - Presently an active recreation area with game areas and totlot; retain present use.

**Middle School** - Presently primarily an active recreation area with one football, one softball, one major league, two soccer and one hockey field, and two basketball and four tennis courts; retain present use of active areas and designate undeveloped northeastern and southern portions of the parcel as passive recreation areas.

**Bicknell Park** - Presently an active recreation area with one little league field and game area, adjoining an undeveloped area consisting primarily of wetlands; retain active use area, with the addition of one soccer field, and designate remaining portion as a conservation area.

**Washington Park** - Presently an undeveloped park consisting primarily of wetlands; designate as a conservation area, with an exception allowed for parking over the existing sewer easement adjoining the bike path for users of adjoining Bicknell Park.

**Prince's Pond/Landfill #4** - Presently an under-utilized recreation area, consisting of an eight acre pond and gravel bank adjoining a completed landfill with one hammer circle; designate as a passive recreation area, and retain the existing paths for hiking, maintain a vegetative buffer around the pond, and make use of the adjoining land for picnicking and access to the water for fishing and non-motorized boating. Prior to any development, the gravel bank area should be restored and top soil replaced by applying town generated compost. Plans for future use or development should involve input from representatives of the surrounding neighborhood.

**Landfill #3/Volpe Pond** - Presently an unused completed landfill adjoining a two acre pond; develop the landfill portion as active recreation including the addition of two soccer fields, while designating the area around the pond as passive recreation, including access to the water for fishing and skating.

**Chianese Field** - Presently an active recreation area with one little league and two soccer fields, one basketball and one tennis court and totlot; retain present use with the addition of two little league fields.

**Town Hall** - Presently an active and passive recreation area, with one totlot which adjoins an undeveloped section of waterfront along the Barrington River, and the recently restored Woods Pond along County Road; retain the active use area, while designating the riverbank and adjoining undeveloped upland as passive recreation.

**Veterans Park/Brickyard Pond** - Presently a primarily undeveloped passive recreation area including trails, picnic areas and boat ramp, with two areas of developed active recreation including a skating rink, one softball field and game areas; retain the present active use areas including the addition of another playing field, and retain the present passive use area along the eastern portion of Brickyard Pond (and of the pond itself), while designating the remaining portion of the park, much of which is wetland, as a conservation area.

**Nayatt School** - Presently an active recreation area with one little league and one soccer field, a game area and totlot adjoining an undeveloped area consisting primarily of wetlands; retain active use area while designating the undeveloped portion as conservation.

**Town Beach** - Presently an active-passive recreation area consisting of a bathing beach with a boat launch; retain present use, but provide for future site improvements, specifically by eliminating the back parking lot and planting grass, and by adding picnic tables, benches and landscaping.

**Smith Cove** - Presently a conservation area that is marshland; retain conservation status.

**Hampden Meadows Greenbelt** - Presently a wooded conservation and passive recreation area that consists primarily of wetlands; retain present use by designating most of the parcel as a conservation area, with the exception of that area along the sewer easement, which would be designated passive recreation, allowing hiking and dogs on leashes on the access road.

**Kent Street** - Presently an active recreation area adjoining Hampden Meadows Greenbelt with two tennis courts and a skating rink; retain present use.

**Hampden Meadows School** - Presently an active recreation area with one little league and one soccer field adjoining a wooded parcel of equivalent size; retain and expand the active use area, and designate the remaining undeveloped portion for passive recreation.

**Sowams School** - Presently an active recreation area adjoining the northern section of Hampden Meadows Greenbelt with two little league fields, one basketball court, a game area and totlot; retain active use area with the addition of one soccer field without encroaching upon adjacent wooded greenbelt area.

**Nockum Hill** - Presently an open space and agriculture area (no recreation) with adjoining marshland fronting Hundred Acre Cove; designate entire parcel as a wildlife refuge area with an exception allowed for use of a portion of the upland area for agriculture.

**Haines State Park** - Presently an active recreation area, a portion of which the Town will lease (and maintain) from the State. This portion includes one major league, one little league, one softball and two soccer fields; retain present use, which would include accommodating the need for a rugby field, and add two little league fields.

The recommended future use of all town owned open space and recreation land is shown in Table 3. The proposed new zoning districts would be applied to these sites in accordance with their proposed use (see Summary and Implementation Plan). With the fields available at Haines Park, and with the development of the other fields as proposed, most of the Town's identified needs for playing fields, including rugby, would be met for the foreseeable future. The summary of recommended additional playing fields is as follows:

Bicknell Park -- one soccer field

Landfill #3 -- two soccer fields

Chianese Field -- two little league fields

Veteran's Park -- one softball field

Sowams School -- one soccer field

Haines Park -- two little league fields, and use of the major league, little league, softball and two soccer fields

Total additional fields:

\* five little league fields (four to be constructed)

\* six soccer fields (four to be constructed)

\* two softball fields (one to be constructed)

\* one major league field

With the exception of four little league and two soccer fields, sites have been identified to meet Barrington's long term needs for additional playing fields. By designating as active recreation both land which is presently used as such, as well as some land which is undeveloped, the Town has developed a plan to protect those facilities now in place, and to meet most of the identified long term needs for active recreational areas. While the future recreational development of any site will be a function of available funding (all improvements to be funded locally would be included in the Town's capital budget), identification in the comprehensive plan of all town owned areas to be zoned for recreation, will help to prevent their loss by selling or conversion to another use.

*2002 Update: A more recent and thorough study of Barrington's recreational facilities was performed by the Recreation Land Use Committee, a committee established by the Town Council in June 2000. The committee prepared a final report in 2001 which addressed both the*

*maintenance of existing fields and the development of additional fields.*

3. Develop Contingency Plans for Private Land

There are several significant parcels of private undeveloped land in Barrington, currently zoned for residential use. Because the development of this land could have a significant impact upon the Town -- loss of open space and agricultural land, impact on groundwater resources, traffic generation -- it is recommended that a committee be established to: 1) identify these critical sites; 2) determine their potential for development; and 3) develop a contingency plan that would allow the Town some input into the process which determines their ultimate fate. While the contingency plans may consider possible acquisition, they would primarily deal with such factors as zoning designations, deed restrictions and tax liability. Among the land to be considered for contingency plans are the R.I. Country Club and St. Andrews School properties. Other important land would be identified by the committee.

4. Monitor the Need for a Formal Recreation Department

In response to the issue regarding a town recreation department, it is recommended that the Town Council monitor the need for better coordination of recreation and leisure activities through a self-sustaining recreation department.

Table 3

## USE OF TOWN OWNED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION AREAS IN BARRINGTON

<u>Site/Facility</u>	<u>Existing Use</u>	<u>Proposed Use</u>
Devine Vargas	Conservation	Conservation
Ormond Park	Undeveloped	Active/Passive Recreation
Osamequin Park	Conservation	Conservation
Walker Farm	Passive Recreation	Conservation/Passive Recreation
Sherwood Park	Active Recreation	Active Recreation
Tall Cedars	Conservation	Conservation
Primrose School	Active Recreation	Active Recreation
Currier Park	Passive Recreation	Passive Recreation
High School	Active Recreation	Active Recreation
Latham Park	Active Recreation	Active Recreation
Middle School	Active Recreation/Undeveloped	Active/Passive Recreation
Bicknell Park	Active Recreation/Undeveloped	Active Recreation Expanded/Conservation
Washington Park	Undeveloped	Conservation
Prince's Pond/ Landfill #4	Unused Recreation	Passive Recreation
Landfill #3	Unused Open Space	Active Recreation Developed/Passive Rec
Chianese Field	Active Recreation	Active Recreation Expanded
Town Hall lot	Active Recreation/Undeveloped	Active/Passive Recreation
Veterans Park	Passive/Active Recreation	Passive/Active Rec Expanded/Conservation
Nayatt School	Active Recreation/Undeveloped	Active Recreation/Conservation
Town Beach	Active/Passive Recreation	Recreation Improved
Smith Cove	Conservation	Conservation
Hampden Meadows	Conservation/Passive Recreation	Conservation/Passive Recreation
Kent Street	Active Recreation	Active Recreation
Hampden School	Active Recreation/Undeveloped	Active/Passive Recreation
Sowams School	Active Recreation	Active Recreation Expanded
Nockum Hill	Open Space/Agriculture	Wildlife Refuge

Haines Park

Active Recreation

Active Recreation Expanded

## SUMMARY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUMMARY

Throughout the development of the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan, one goal emerged from the work of all of the committees: to preserve the essential character of Barrington while planning for its future and the needs of its citizens. The results of the committees' work, from developing general goals and policies to specific recommendations, all reaffirmed the image of Barrington as a bedroom community with attractive neighborhoods, significant open spaces and natural resources, good access and high quality public services and recreational opportunities.

In addition to protecting the attributes that give Barrington a high quality of life, the comprehensive plan identifies and focuses on a few outstanding issues: providing more housing opportunities, particularly for low and moderate income persons and the elderly; improving the appearance and functioning of County Road and the Town's commercial districts; regaining town control over the cost of public safety services; protecting wetlands, groundwater resources and cultural features; and providing more outdoor recreational facilities.

There are several recommendations contained within each element of the comprehensive plan; they range from general or more conceptual in nature, such as development of a townwide bike system (Circulation Element) to specific, such as conversion of all town owned school property from a residential zoning designation to a new open space - active recreation district (Open Space and Recreation Element). A summary of the recommendations follows, with those involving new regulations or zoning districts highlighted; all proposed changes in zoning designations are depicted in Figure 1, contained in the following section.

An additional recommendation which was discussed by all the committees is presented here as a major recommendation having a positive impact on all the functional elements contained in the plan which address life in Barrington -- the hiring of a town planner to both address the daily planning needs of the Town, and to assist in the implementation of the comprehensive plan.

***2002 Update: The status of recommendations which have been acted upon are noted below the description of each; please see individual elements for more specific information.***

### Housing Element

The specific housing recommendations are designed in a way to produce practical tangible results in Barrington:

1. Convert specific parcels of land within Hampden Meadows from the present R-10 zone to R-25, in order to maintain a desirable residential density on certain large parcels of land if and when development occurs. These areas are as follows: the neighborhood lying between Martin Avenue and Massasoit Avenue, and the area along the east side of Sowams Road south of Orchard Avenue.

***Completed***

~~2. Change the setback requirements and maximum lot coverage for new construction in R-10 Districts to those of the R-25 Districts to provide for smaller more affordable houses in these areas. The present setback requirements in an R-10 District are 25 feet for the front yard, 20 feet for the back yard and 9 feet for the side yards; maximum lot coverage is 25 percent. In an R-25 District, the front and rear yard setbacks are 30 and 25 feet, respectively, with 14 feet for the side yards; maximum lot coverage is 20 percent.~~

2. Promote the availability of affordable housing units by allowing residential and commercial uses in the same building, in the form of apartments over stores, within the new **Neighborhood Business District** (see Economic Development Element recommendations).

*Completed*

3. Become actively involved in the East Bay Community Development Corporation, whose purpose is to provide housing opportunities for low and moderate income persons.

4. Establish an affordable housing task force to work in conjunction with the East Bay Community Development Corporation and undertake other efforts to promote affordable housing.

~~5. Allow elderly group homes within areas zoned R-25 and R-40, providing that the total area of each such home not exceed 3,600 square feet in size, in keeping with a residential area.~~

~~5. Allow congregate health care facilities, as defined in the zoning ordinance, within the Manufacturing District, as well as the Business District.~~

5. Develop a plan for an elderly housing complex, involving either conversion of one of the Bay Spring Mills, if feasible, or the selection of a vacant parcel for new development.

*No longer applicable; two elderly housing complexes have been constructed on former mill sites.*

Economic Development Element

The following recommendations have been developed for specific areas of Barrington, and also to address the issues of the appearance and use of commercial and industrial land in the Town:

1. Establish a **Neighborhood Business District** to replace the present Business District throughout Barrington with the exception of the County Road area, and a portion of the Bay Spring area. In general, the Neighborhood Business District would allow less intense commercial and retail activity than is allowed in the Business District, and would restrict the total size of an individual business establishment. However, it would also have less restrictive lot coverage and parking requirements. The specific areas of Barrington impacted by this include Maple Avenue (see #3 below), Bay Spring Avenue and Sowams Road.

*Completed*

2. Develop a County Road commercial center for Barrington by undertaking the following: a new site plan for an improved shopping center and commercial district to complement the design and aesthetic improvements developed as part of the upgrade to County Road (see Circulation Element recommendations); and consider the placement of all overhead utilities underground as part of the design improvements to the roadway. ~~and conversion of the remaining residential zone along Anoka Avenue and Wood Street to business, specifically neighborhood business.~~

*Redevelopment within the shopping center and along County Road is ongoing; utilities remain above ground.*

3. Convert Maple Avenue zoning designations by changing the existing business district on the south side of Maple Avenue between Barrington Avenue and Middle Highway to residential (R-10); and by changing the business district on the north and south sides of Maple Avenue between West Street and Barrington Avenue to a neighborhood business district.

*Completed*

~~4. — Develop a Bay Spring Mills re-use plan by means of a formal feasibility study to define appropriate uses for these sites, specifically the vacant Rhode Island Lace and Pilling Chain mill buildings. This project should be initiated by the Barrington Town Council and involve both the property owners and neighborhood; it could include such concepts as light industry, incubator space for small businesses, professional offices and senior housing.~~

4. Establish **Site Plan Review** for commercial and industrial developments to improve the overall quality, appearance and functioning of these areas, by enactment of a **Development Plan Review Ordinance**. New developments, or the expansion or conversion of the use of existing buildings, would be reviewed under this regulation, which would allow the Planning Board to consider such impacts as traffic, and to have control over such site features as access and parking, landscaping, signage and aesthetics.

*Completed*

5. Establish **Design Review** of commercial and industrial buildings within all business and manufacturing districts, to give the Town a means of control over the design and general appearance of new buildings, and buildings undergoing rehabilitation or a change of use within these districts. The establishment of design review would be done as a component of the **Development Plan Review Ordinance**. It could also be done in conjunction with a revision of the sign ordinance to provide for consistent signage in commercial areas, and the phase out of non-conforming signs.

*Completed*

6. Strengthen the Town's commercial base by establishment of a Barrington Chapter of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, or a more active business association. The chamber or business

group should market the Town to attract new and relocating businesses, and to encourage residents to shop in town.

## Circulation Element

The following recommendations all relate to either improving the design and safety of existing transportation systems, or with expanding transportation opportunities for Barrington residents:

1. In conjunction with the R.I.DOT, undertake improvements to County Road and the Barrington Shopping Center as follows: incorporate aesthetic elements into the design plans for the upgrade of County Road from Sullivan Terrace to Rumstick Road, including street trees, period lighting, specially marked pedestrian crossings and the addition of a green strip along the west side of the road; expand these proposed aesthetic improvements to town owned land on the east side of the roadway to better facilitate pedestrian movement around the government center; develop a plan to improve auto and pedestrian circulation in and around the shopping center; construct the Bosworth Street extension following development of adjoining vacant land; and construct a non-vehicular bicycle bridge over County Road at the East Bay Bicycle Path crossing, to both improve traffic flow and bicycling safety.

***Road improvements completed, shopping center redevelopment ongoing, Bosworth Street extension no long applicable and plans for the pedestrian bridge were rejected by D.O.T.***

2. Undertake design improvements to dangerous intersections including the County Road and Massasoit Avenue, the County Road and Lincoln Avenue, and the Maple Avenue and Middle Highway intersections.

***Improvements to County Road/Massasoit Avenue intersection completed***

3. Improve the circulation and appearance of Maple Avenue by installing curbs, reconstructing sidewalks, planting street trees, and by minimizing future traffic volumes through the reduction of the amount of land area in commercial zoning (see Economic Development Element recommendations).

***Zoning changes completed***

4. Add to the safety of Massasoit Avenue through the addition of sidewalks and curbs, placement of signage to discourage speeding, elimination of school bus stops, and regular police enforcement of the speed limit.

5. Amend the road design standards in the town subdivision regulations to establish reduced width requirements for smaller developments.

***Completed***

6. Develop a townwide bike system by providing bicycle and pedestrian paths that connect with the East Bay Bicycle Path to serve as alternate travel routes between neighborhoods, and the schools and recreation areas.

7. Expand commuter programs by the addition of a second park and ride lot in Barrington,

possibly along County Road.

***Ongoing***

8. Require **Site Plan Review** to address the traffic impacts of certain developments, including larger residential developments as well as commercial and industrial developments, as part of a new **Development Plan Review Ordinance**.

***Completed***

Community Services and Facilities Element

Specific recommendations related to community services and facilities are primarily made with the general goal of providing high quality cost-effective services to the citizens of Barrington:

1. Institute methods of controlling public education costs, including remaining active in the East Bay Collaborative to pursue ways of saving money in purchasing and other areas.

2. Undertake changes in the provision of fire fighting and rescue services, specifically to reduce the size and related high expense of the Barrington Fire Department, through one or more of the following methods: natural attrition of the present force, in conjunction with the reorganization and training of the Hampden Meadows Volunteer Fire Department; contracting out for fire and/or rescue services; establishment of an entirely volunteer force; cross-training of town employees; and consolidation of the Fire and Police Departments into one public safety department. Changes in public safety services should be done in conjunction with a plan for the construction of a new building (or buildings) to house the Police and Fire Departments.

***Public safety building completed***

3. Maintain town control of solid waste disposal by keeping the present system of town pick-up and direct haul to the state landfill, in combination with an aggressive local recycling program; plan for future use of the transfer station in Warren at such point it becomes a municipally operated transfer station.

4. Support a full service connection to the East Providence water system to provide for the future drinking water needs of Barrington and all of Bristol County, and maintain and protect the existing system owned by the Bristol County Water Authority, including the Nayatt wellfields.

***East Providence connection completed***

5. Reduce the annual cost of wastewater treatment by working with the City of East Providence to find a suitable site for sludge composting.

Natural and Cultural Resources Element

The following recommendations have been made in response to issues regarding protection of

various natural and cultural resources:

1. Establish a **Wetland/Coastal Velocity Overlay Zone** to provide for control over the impacts of development on all wetland ~~and coastal velocity~~ areas, under the provisions of a new ordinance. This would be done as a floating zone, an unmapped district applied to wetland ~~and coastal velocity~~ areas, with regulations that are applied when an application for development or a violation occurs.

*Completed*

2. Implement an aquifer protection program, to include: a delineation of the wellhead recharge area and other critical zones; a survey of property owners in the wellhead recharge area to determine what contamination threats exist, and educational materials for these property owners; an emergency contingency plan; and a draft **Wellhead Protection Ordinance**.

*Wellhead study completed*

3. Develop management plans for various town conservation areas, including Nockum Hill, Osamequin Park and Walker Farm, Currier Park, Veterans Park and Hampden Meadows Greenbelt. Each plan will include a description of the area's significant characteristics and features, management objectives and implementation plan.

4. Adopt methods to control soil erosion and sedimentation resulting from new development, including the consideration of a **Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance**; review of the subdivision regulations regarding stormwater management requirements; and increase in the setback and buffer requirements for wetlands and water bodies.

5. Adopt strategies for the protection of scenic and historical resources including the establishment of a register of important scenic areas; adoption of a town register of historic properties worthy of preservation; creation of an historic committee appointed by the Town Council to study, in conjunction with the Barrington Preservation Society, the possible establishment of an **Historic District Overlay Zone**; and adoption of a **Development Plan Review Ordinance** that requires measures to identify and avoid significant historical resources, including archaeological resources.

#### Open Space and Recreation Element

The recommendations developed for this element primarily deal with the future use of town owned undeveloped open space, recreation and school land in Barrington:

1. Establish new Conservation and Recreation Districts, by replacing the existing Open Space District in Barrington's zoning ordinance with four new districts which better define appropriate uses for certain types of land. The proposed new districts are: **Conservation District**, **Conservation-Wildlife Refuge District**, **Open Space-Passive** and **Open Space-Active**

## **Recreation Districts.**

### ***Completed***

2. Proposed use of town open space and recreation areas; this recommendation involves defining the future use and potential development of town owned land in a manner which balances the need to protect land for open space and conservation purposes, and developing it to meet active and passive recreational needs. It includes the following proposed additional playing fields:

Bicknell Park -- one soccer field

Landfill #3 -- two soccer fields

Chianese Field -- two little league fields

Veterans Park -- one softball field

Sowams School -- one soccer field

Haines Park -- two little league fields, and use of the major league, little league, softball and two soccer fields

3. Develop contingency plans for private land through the establishment of a committee to identify critical sites, determine their potential for development, and develop plans that would allow the Town some input into their ultimate fate.

4. Monitor the need for a formal recreation department by undertaking a study under the direction of the Town Council.

## **FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING**

This section of the comprehensive plan report presents a summary of the desired future allocation of land in Barrington, specifically as it relates to the Town's established zoning designations. Depicted in Figure 1, the Future Land Use/Proposed Zoning Map, are all of the various zone changes recommended within the various elements of the plan; it also delineates the existing zoning where no change is proposed. The zone changes include the conversions of particular parcels of land from one existing zoning designation to another, as well as the assignment of the various new zoning districts to other parcels of land.

The key in Figure 1 identifies all of the existing residential districts, which consist of Residence 40, Residence 25, Residence 10 and the Cluster zone as it applies to the R-25 District. It also lists the existing Business, Waterfront Business and Manufacturing Districts. Shown as a new zone is the Neighborhood Business District. The other significant change is the replacement of the existing Open Space District by four new open space and conservation designations.

The recommended changes in the application of the residential districts are also indicated on the map. They are the conversions of the two large areas in Hampden Meadows from R-10 to R-25, ~~and~~

~~the conversions along Maple Avenue from Business to R-10. The new Neighborhood Business District is shown for three areas which are presently zoned as Business: the Sowams Road area, the north and south sides of Maple Avenue between Barrington Avenue and West Street, and along Bay Spring Avenue, specifically that land on the south side of the street, and that land on the north side which is one lot deep and extends as far west as (but not including) property owned by the Barrington Lumber Company. Neighborhood Business is also shown for that land along Anoka Avenue in the center of the County Road Business District; this area is presently zoned R-10. The Waterfront Business and Manufacturing Districts as shown in Figure 1 are those which presently exist.~~

The proposed changes related to the Open Space District are more extensive. The new Conservation - Wildlife Refuge District is recommended for the Nockum Hill area of Barrington, including the surrounding marshlands which adjoin Hundred Acre Cove. It would replace the existing Open Space District for the land owned by the Town, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and the Barrington Land Conservation Trust and other marshland of unknown ownership. It would not include privately owned upland. As part of the use regulations for this district, the zoning ordinance would allow agricultural use as a special use permit. The intent of the wildlife refuge designation is to protect the habitat of the Northern Diamondback Terrapin.

The new Conservation District is proposed to replace the existing Open Space District where it is applied to all town and state owned wetland, and other town owned land which is best designated as conservation land due to its environmental characteristics. It is also proposed for all land in conservation easement, owned by the Land Trust or Audubon Society, or is of unknown ownership. The land of unknown ownership is all coastal (undevelopable) land. The Conservation District would be more restrictive in terms of uses than the existing Open Space District; this district presently allows residential, active recreation, cemeteries, schools, utilities and accessory uses by special use permit.

Town owned land included within the Conservation District would be the Devine-Vargas land, Osamequin Park, most of Walker Farm, the Tall Cedars site, Washington Park, a portion of Veterans Park and most of the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt. It would also include state owned marshland on the west side of Hundred Acre Cove, a section of Haines Park and Rumstick Point. Finally, it would be the proposed zoning designation for the Johannis Farm Wildlife Preserve and other land along the Palmer River.

The Open Space-Passive and Open Space-Active Recreation Districts would be the new designations for land remaining in the present Open Space District which is not converted to either of the conservation districts, as well as some additional town owned land which is used institutionally (school or park) but is presently within a residential district. The Passive Recreation District would, in general, duplicate the existing Open Space District, while the Active Recreation District would still allow residential and utilities by special use permit only, but would permit active recreation and public and semi-public uses.

The Passive Recreation District would be the designation for some cemeteries, and for all town owned undeveloped land not designated conservation or set aside for the development of playing fields. It would include some town owned land which is presently zoned residential (R-25), specifically those portions of the Middle School and Hampden Meadow School properties which are proposed to remain undeveloped. The other areas to be designated Passive Recreation include several parks -- Currier Park, Prince's Pond area, Volpe Pond, most of Veterans Park, the Town Beach and a portion of the Hampden Meadows Greenbelt -- as well as most private land within the present Open Space District. This private land includes a portion of Nockum Hill, land along the Palmer River, land around Allins Cove and the Nayatt wellfields owned by the Bristol County Water Authority.

The Active Recreation District would be the designation for all of the present and proposed active public recreational areas in town, as well as most public developed land. This includes the developed portions of school property, including all of the land containing the Primrose, Sowams and High Schools, and most of the land containing the Middle, Nayatt and Hampden Meadow Schools. The Town Hall and Public Works Department properties would also be converted from the R-10 and Open Space Districts, respectively, to the active recreation designation.

***2002 Update: All districts described above were established and applied to the appropriate areas as part of the rewrite of the zoning ordinance and revisions to the zoning map in 1994.***

#### IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The recommendations contained within the Barrington Comprehensive Community Plan are identified as those that can or should be implemented immediately, within the short term, or those by their nature, requiring a longer period for implementation. The implementation schedule which follows first identifies those recommendations which should be completed within an eighteen month to two year period (Phase 1). These include the more specific recommendations dealing primarily with town development regulations (zoning, subdivision), which must be updated to insure compliance with the comprehensive plan. The implementation schedule also identifies those recommendations having a two to five year schedule (Phase 2) and those having a longer term, or twenty year schedule (Phase 3).

Because many of the recommendations, aside from those involving new regulations, require a multi-phase implementation -- study, design, construction or carrying out -- they are identified in the implementation schedule accordingly. For example, development of playing fields at Haines Park first requires an identification by the Recreation Commission, and concurrence by the Town Council, regarding the project's priority and potential funding (as it relates to other projects on a townwide basis). This would be followed by site design for development of the area, which in turn would be followed by actual construction of the playing fields.

The implementation schedule is presented as a general guideline for the Town to follow in carrying out many of the comprehensive plan recommendations. Actual implementation may vary from the schedule as it will be a function of many factors. These include available funding, public demand or the urgency of meeting a specific need, and state or regional influences. All of the recommendations included in the plan address a particular need or issue affecting the Town of Barrington; this implementation plan presents a format for achieving these recommendations, while recognizing the somewhat uncertainty of the future, as well as the need to keep the comprehensive plan a flexible working document.

Implementation of the activities identified with an asterix require identification and funding through the town capital budget process. A six year capital budget is prepared on an annual basis. It is initiated by the Planning Board who review requests from all departments and send their recommendations to the Town Manager, who in conjunction with the Appropriations Committee and the Town Council, approves the resulting capital budget before it is presented to the voters at the annual town meeting.

**2002 Update: All recommendations which have been completed are so indicated**

**Phase 1; Eighteen Months to Two Years**

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Housing:	
Zoning Changes ( <i>Completed</i> )	Planning Board/Town Council
Economic Development:	
Zoning Changes/New District ( <i>Completed</i> )	Planning Board/Town Council
<del>Establishment of Bay Spring Mills Committee</del>	<del>Town Council</del>
Establishment of Local COC Chapter	Town Council/Businesses
Circulation:	
County Road Plans ( <i>Completed</i> )	D.O.T./Town Council/Manager/ County Road Committee
Intersection Designs	D.O.T./Manager
Community Services and Facilities:	
East Bay Collaborative Activities	School Department
Plan for Fire Dept. Changes/ New Public Safety Building ( <i>Completed</i> )	Town Council/Manager
Sludge Disposal Site	Manager/Public Works
Natural and Cultural Resources:	
Wetlands Protection Ordinance	Conservation Com/Town Council
Wellhead Protection Plan ( <i>Completed</i> )	Conservation Com/Town Council
Conservation Management Plans	Conservation Com/Town Council
Increase Wetland/Water Body	
Setback Requirements ( <i>Completed</i> )	Planning Board/Town Council
Creation of Historic Committee	Town Council
Scenic and Historic Registers	Historic Committee/Pres. Society
Open Space and Recreation:	
New Zoning Districts	Planning Board/Town Council
Plan for New/Upgrade of Existing Playing Fields ( <i>Completed</i> )	Recreation Commission
Creation of Contingency Plan Committee	Town Council

General:

Development (Site and Design)  
Plan Review Ordinance (***Completed***)

Planning Board/Town Council

**Phase 2; Two to Five Years**

Recommendation

Responsibility

Housing:

Involvement in East Bay CDC  
Affordable Housing Task Force

Private Groups/Town Council  
Planning Board/Town Council

Economic Development:

Shopping Center Plan  
Bay Spring Mills Study

Town Council/Owner/Businesses  
Bay Spring Mills Committee

Circulation:

County Road Improvements (*Completed*)  
Intersection Designs/Construction  
Construction of Maple Avenue Improvements  
Construction of Massasoit Avenue Improvements  
Amend Road Design Standards (*Completed*)  
Townwide Bike System Plan  
Establishment of Second Park and Ride Lot  
Sidewalk Construction\*

D.O.T./Manager/Town Council  
D.O.T./Manager/Public Works  
D.O.T./Public Works  
D.O.T./Public Works  
Planning Board/Public Works  
Recreation Commission  
D.O.T./Town Council/Manager  
D.O.T./Public Works

Community Services and Facilities:

Fire Department Restructuring  
Use of Warren Transfer Station

Town Council/Manager  
Manager/Public Works

Natural and Cultural Resources:

Aquifer Protection Program  
Subdivision Regulations Review  
Soil Erosion Ordinance

Conservation Com/Town Council  
Planning Board  
Conservation Com/Planning

Board

Historic District Zoning

Historic Committee/  
Planning Board/Town Council

Open Space and Recreation:

New Playing Field Designs/  
Upgrade of Existing Fields\*

Town Manager/Recreation Com/  
Public Works

Contingency Plans  
Recreation Department Study

Contingency Plan Committee  
Town Council

General:

Hiring of Town Planner

Planning Board/Council/Manager

**Phase 3: Five to Twenty Years**

Recommendation

Responsibility

Housing:

Availability of Low/Moderate Income Housing  
Elderly Housing Development (*Completed*)

Non-Profit Agency  
Town Council

Economic Development:

Construction of Shopping Center Improvements  
~~Bay Spring Mills Re-Use~~

Owner/Town  
~~Owner/Town~~

Circulation:

Expansion of Town Bike System\*  
Completion of Sidewalks\*

Public Works/D.O.T.  
D.O.T./Public Works

Community Services and Facilities:

New Public Safety Building(s)\* (*Completed*)  
Connection to E.P. Water System (*Completed*)

Manager/Town Council  
Bristol Co. Water Authority

Natural and Cultural Resources:

Permanent Protection of Coastal Saltmarshes

Land Trust/Town/Audubon Society

Open Space and Recreation:

Construction of Playing Fields\*  
Enactment of Contingency Plans  
Establishment of Recreation Department

Public Works  
Town Council  
Town Council/Manager