

**DRAFT**

**2009 REVISED AND ADDED MATERIALS  
TOWN OF NEW SHOREHAM  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

As prepared by Herr Associates in response to letter from RI DOA October 7, 2008

February 8, 2009

Following possible revision and approval of these materials, the 2008 Update adopted March 19, 2009 will be revised by dating it “2009 Update,” by inserting the added material for elements 5, 6, and 9, and then joining them with the unchanged elements 1 and 3 and the Housing Element Supplement to comprise the 2009 Update to the *Comprehensive Plan*.

**5. Natural and Cultural Resources (added material only)**

**6. Services and Facilities (added material only)**

**9. Comprehensive Plan Implementation (added material only)**

## 5. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES (2009 additions)

### BACKGROUND

(Added at end of Background section)

New Shoreham is steadily moving towards its objective of having half of the Island's land area permanently protected and managed as open space, whether by deed or regulation (element 7. Open Space, Recreation and Leisure). As a result, a major portion of the Island is assured of continuing to have a substantial tree cover.

Little of that treed area is categorized formally as "forest land." None shows as "Forested Lands" in the Statewide mapping of such areas (figure 4 in the States' "161 Forest Resources Management Plan"). None is classified as "Forest" under the State Farm, Forest and Open Space law that allows such land meeting certain standards to enjoy taxation based on use rather than potential value. 28 parcels, some of them wooded, do enjoy that status classified as "open space," which involves lesser management requirements.

However, preservation and sound management of such wooded areas, whether designated "forest" or not, in this community serve many of the same forestry goals as do more formally designated forest management efforts Statewide, as discussed below.

(Omission)

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

(Added at the end of this section)

In serving the above, it is important that forestry goals be served, as well, in order to protect the health of forested areas so that they in turn can contribute to the protection of water resource quality and sufficiency, support recreation and tourism objectives, and provide a resource for community education and information about forest and related resources and, where consistent with other values, support the contribution of forest products to the Island's economy.

## IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

(Added at the end of this section)

NC 7. To ensure that the Island's forest resources, both public and private, are being managed in ways which are consistent with the goals cited above, conduct an annual assessment of accomplishments that have been made towards them, identifying any needed actions, and indicating who should take them.

The assessment is to include reporting accomplishments that serve forest resources through such related actions in this *Plan* as OR 3 encouraging use of the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act to keep land open and forests well managed, LU 9 encouraging owners voluntarily keeping land open, NC 5 working together with property owners and occupants in the sensitive management of forest and other open lands, LU 7 supporting open space acquisition and thus reducing open space and forest fragmentation, and SF 3 promoting resource conservation.

**6. SERVICES AND FACILITIES  
(2009 additions)**

**BACKGROUND**

(Omission)

A. Town Water

(Added at the end of A. Town Water)

Adequacy of water supply in the event of severe drought is a matter of public concern that goes beyond service to those connected to the Town system. It also includes those not so served, who occupy about 90% of the Island's structures and whose water consumption is about two-thirds of the Island total.

As described above, the Water District has planned carefully for emergencies, including drought, and has a well-considered system of primary sources with redundant back-up sources in the event of emergency need. When installed, the individual water supply systems distributed across the Island typically are designed with location and depth that should assure continued adequate supply even in droughts of historic severity provided that the pattern of human occupancy and resource management across the Island do not over time change the water balance that makes Island occupancy feasible.

Islanders have a keen awareness of the concern over water supply reliability, including under drought conditions. Over time that has led to a carefully designed relationship among the public water system, where it provides service and the sources of that supply, how land is used across the Island, including the design of zoning and other regulations to assure that the level of human occupancy will not, even in the long run, exceed the limits reflected in the

sustainable capacity of the island's hydrogeology. It has led to nationally-recognized initiatives in resource management to assure that the management of on-site disposal systems, underground storage tanks, water use restrictions, and other measures that the Town has authority to take will fully protect against, among other things, any unserviceable needs in the event of severe drought.

Taken together, these efforts represent a robust approach that is fully consistent with the goals of the State's Element 724: *Drought Management Plan* in reducing the Island's vulnerability in periods of low precipitation, and minimizing its effects on public health and safety, economic activity, and environmental resources.

**IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS:  
SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

(Added at the end of this section)

SF 17 To assure a well-managed response to unanticipated levels of drought, develop and from time to time update a simple but well-considered Island Contingency Water Supply Plan, to be prepared with the involvement of both Town and private interests through discussion and joint resolution.

**9. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
IMPLEMENTATION  
(2009 additions)**

**5. NATURAL AND CULTURAL  
RESOURCES**

(Omission)

NC 7. To ensure that the Island's forest resources, both public and private, are being managed in ways which are consistent with the goals cited above, conduct an annual assessment of accomplishments that have been made towards them, identifying any needed actions, and indicating who should take them. [Ongoing – Town Manager]

**6. SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

(Omission)

SF 17 To assure a well-managed response to any unanticipated level of drought, develop and from time to time update a simple but well-considered Island Contingency Water Supply Plan, to be prepared with the involvement of both Town and private interests through discussion and joint resolution. [Ongoing – Town Manager]