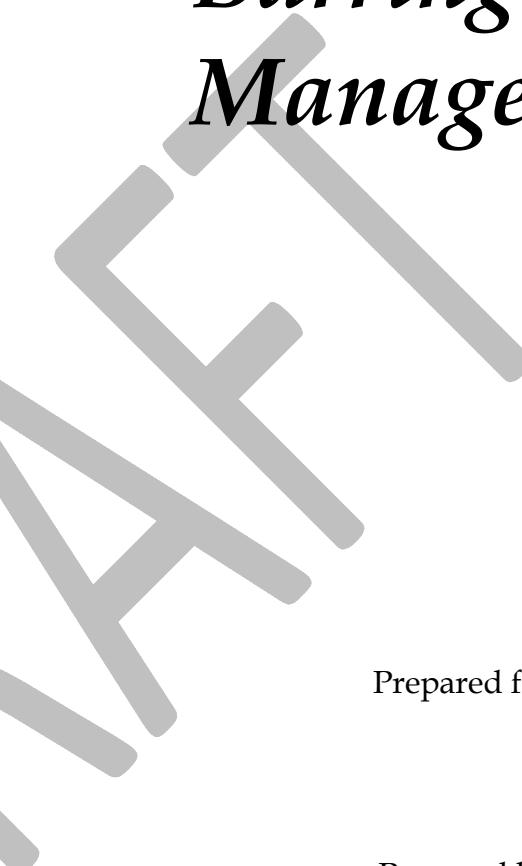


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# *Barrington Town Beach Management Plan*



Bay Road  
Barrington, Rhode Island

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Prepared for

**Town of Barrington  
283 County Road  
Barrington, Rhode Island 02806**

Prepared by

**VHB/Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.  
10 Dorrance Street, Suite 400  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903**

November 2010

**DRAFT**

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November 2010

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## **List of Acronyms**

CRMC	Coastal Resources Management Council
CRMP	Coastal Resources Management Program
DPW	Department of Public Works
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
RIDEM	Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
VHB	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Description of Barrington Town Beach

Barrington Town Beach, located at the terminus of Bay Road in Barrington, Rhode Island, is situated on a four-acre parcel of beachfront property overlooking Upper Narragansett Bay. Although Barrington contains nearly 20 miles of coastline, the Town Beach is the only public swimming beach available to community residents.

Current beach facilities available to visitors at the Town Beach include: parking for approximately 100 vehicles; a roped-off swimming area supervised by lifeguards between ~~late~~ June and mid August; a single-story cinderblock building containing restrooms and first aid care; a picnic table; benches; and temporary private boat storage and launching access for small recreational boats including Sunfish, kayaks, and canoes.

## 1.2 Beach Management Plan Goals

The goals for the Barrington Town Beach Management Plan are two-fold:

- ~~One, the first goal is~~ to provide an overview of current guidelines pertaining to beach use and management, including local, state, and federal laws, and,
- ~~Two, the second goal is~~ to develop a list of future goals and visions for beach management based on input provided by ~~the Town's~~Town advisory boards and administrative staff ~~—~~, including staff from the Department of Recreation, Department of Public Works, Department of Planning, and the Town Manager.

Ideally the Barrington Town Beach Management Plan will serve as a planning resource for a future master plan for this waterfront area.

# 2.0 Beach Management Roles and Responsibilities

The following departments of the Town of Barrington play a role in the management of Barrington Town Beach.

## 2.1 Department of Recreation

The Barrington Department of Recreation primarily handles seasonal use and recreation activities at Town Beach. The Department:

- Supervises lifeguards and restroom facilities during the summer season (late June through mid-August).
- Issues and checks parking stickers at the beach gatehouse during the summer season.
- Conducts twice-weekly water quality sampling during summer months to test for the presence of bacteria and other pathogens that may make water unsuitable for swimming.
- Erects signage indicating beach closure in the event of pollution or unsafe surf conditions.
- Enforces beach rules during summer season.
- Coordinates Barrington Beach Day (August).

*The Department of Recreation is located ~~in the~~ in the lower level of the Barrington Peck Center, at 281 County Road. For more information call 401-247-1925, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, May through August; and 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, September through April.*

## 2.2 Department of Public Works

The Barrington Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for maintenance of the beach and associated infrastructure. The DPW:

- Handles preparations related to opening the beach for the summer season, including maintenance of the lifeguard building/restrooms, guard rails, and swimming area, patching the parking lot, and other necessary repairs.

- Grooms the beach approximately three times per week during the summer season.
- Is responsible for vegetation management, including lawn mowing.

*The Department of Public Works is located on Upland Way. For more information call 401-247-1907, 7:00-4:00 Monday through Friday.*

## **2.3 Fire Department**

The Barrington Fire Department is responsible for emergency and safety needs at the beach. The Department:

- Responds to emergency calls and provides Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

*The Barrington Fire Department is located in the Public Safety Complex, at 100 Federal Road. For non-emergencies call 401-437-3940.*

## **2.4 Office of Building Official**

The Building Official addresses physical property and buildings of the Town and assures that codes and zoning regulations are met, including coastal developments. The Building Official:

- Approves the building plan for the new beach house.

*The Building Inspector is located in Barrington Town Hall, at 283 County Road. For more information call 401-247-1900 x325, 8:30-12:30 Monday through Friday. Afternoons are spent on site inspections.*

## **2.5 Police Department**

The Barrington Police Department assists with enforcing the Town's rules and regulations for the Town Beach. The Department:

- Patrols the Town Beach year round to ensure compliance with Town ordinances and state laws.
- Responds to emergency calls on the beach.
- Secure the entrance to the gate at 9 p.m. each evening.

*The Barrington Police Department is located in the Public Safety Complex, at 100 Federal Road. For non-emergencies call 401-437-3935.*

## **2.6 Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk is responsible for issuing licenses to vendors requesting permission to sell food or drinks to beachgoers at Town Beach.

*The Town Clerk is located in Barrington Town Hall, at 283 County Road. For more information call 401-247-1900, 8:30-4:30 Monday through Friday.*

## **2.7 Town Manager**

The Town Manager is responsible for overseeing other Town departments and coordinating with them as appropriate to identify and implement goals for the beach, and to ensure that proposed plans and programs fulfill the needs of the residents of the Town of Barrington. The Manager:

- Coordinates with the Department of Recreation and approves programs for the Town Beach.
- Approves the format of beach parking stickers.

*The Town Manager's office is located in Barrington Town Hall, at 283 County Road. For more information call 401-247-1900, 8:30-4:30 Monday through Friday.*

## **2.8 Town Planner**

The Town Planner oversees a number of large-scale planning projects for the Town, including development of master plan improvements at Town Beach and other public spaces. The Planner:

- Develops and implements the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- Drafts the annual Capital Improvement Program, working with the Planning Board.
- Develops grant applications.
- Clear all sidewalks town wide of snow and ice.

*The Town Planner is located in Barrington Town Hall, at 283 County Road. For more information call 401-247-1900 x343, 8:30-4:30 Monday through Friday.*

## **2.9. Appointed Commissions and Town Council**

The following Below is a description of the roles of the Town Council and commissions are appointed by the Town Council and in the development of provide guidance regarding regulations, goals, and community plans that affect Barrington Town Beach. The Town Council is elected by the residents of Barrington.

## ■ 2.9.1 Park and Recreation Commission

The Barrington Park and Recreation Commission serves as an advisory board to the Town Council regarding a variety of parks and recreation issues pertaining to the Town Beach. The Commission meets on the fourth Thursday of every month. The Commission:

- Reviews monthly progress reports provided by the Department of Recreation.
- Is responsible for suggesting new rules, or changes to existing rules and regulations, as they pertain to Barrington Town Beach.
- Is responsible for recommending to the Town Council specific rule changes and additions on which the Council should vote.
- Provides feedback and input on master plans and programs proposed for Town Beach.

## ■ 2.9.2 Conservation Commission

The Barrington Conservation Commission serves as an advisory board to the Town Council regarding applications seeking variances for projects in or near wetlands and water bodies. The Commission meets on the second Tuesday of every month. The Commission:

- Provides recommendations to the Town's Zoning Board of Review to accept or deny applications requesting wetland setback variances.

## ■ 2.9.3 Zoning Board of Review

The Zoning Board of Review hears and makes decisions regarding relief from regulatory requirements for structures and for special use permits. The Zoning Board meets on the third Thursday of every month. The Board:

- Hears requests for relief from dimensional requirements relating to lot area, frontage, building coverage, setback, and building height, including nonconforming structures.
- Hears appeals regarding the decision of the Building/Zoning Official.

## ■ 2.9.4 Harbor Commission and Harbormaster

The Barrington Harbor Commission serves as an advisory board to the Town Council and the Town Manager-appointed Harbormaster works with the Commission to enforce the provisions of Town Ordinance, Chapter 148, Public Use of Waters, and the recently approved Harbor Management Plan. The Commission

meets on the second Wednesday of every month. The Harbormaster's office is located in the Public Safety Building, 100 Federal Road.

The Harbormaster has jurisdiction over a number of issues in the waters at and in the vicinity of the Town Beach, including:

- Managing the defined mooring field,
- Approving any moorings or swimming area demarcations
- Providing input to CRMC for any proposed residential boating features or changes to shore side features of structures
- Enforcing speed zones and any State-mandated regulations pertaining to environmental or coastal matters
- Overseeing compliance with all the provisions of the Harbor Management Plan.

## **2.9.45 Town Council**

The Barrington Town Council is the legislative body for the Town, and is elected every four years. The Town Council meets on the first Monday of every month. The Council:

- Enacts, amends, or repeals ordinances for the preservation of the public peace, the health, safety, comfort and welfare of the inhabitants of the Town and for the protection of persons and property.
- Liaisons with the Barrington Website Committee and with municipal departments to determine overall goals and major decisions on content for the Town's official website. The Website Committee meets on the third Wednesday of every month.

# 3.0 State Entities Involved in Town Beach Management

## 3.1 Coastal Resources Management Council

The Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) is the Federally designated Coastal Zone Management entity and is also responsible for implementing the State's coastal regulatory program. The CRMC's jurisdiction extends from the territorial sea limit, three miles offshore, to 200 feet inland from any coastal feature or contiguous freshwater wetland. CRMC:

- Reviews all permit applications pertaining to coastal development and implements the Coastal Resources Management Program (CRMP).
- Determines water use categories of coastal waters.

## 3.2 Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) is responsible for managing marine and wildlife resources throughout Narragansett Bay. RIDEM:

- Establishes and monitors compliance with water quality standards.
- Ensures compliance with state laws regarding fishing, shellfishing, and hunting.
- Identifies coastal waters unsuitable for shellfishing due to poor sanitary conditions, and issues closures and re-openings of closed areas.

## 3.3 Rhode Island Department of Health

The Rhode Island Department of Health is responsible for licensing and regulating the state's bathing beach facilities, and oversees the state's Beach Monitoring Program. The Department of Health:

- Is responsible for ordering beach advisories and closures due to high bacteria levels and/or other pathogens, and re-opening closed beaches.

## 3.4 U.S. Coast Guard

The U.S. Coast Guard provides emergency water rescue services at Barrington Town Beach.

## 4.0 Environmental Statutes and Regulations

Barrington Town Beach and its environmental resources are protected by a number of statutes, regulations, and bylaws at the federal, state, and local level. This section provides a brief overview of the most pertinent of these environmental safeguards.

### 4.1 Federal Jurisdiction



#### 4.1.1 Coastal Zone Management Act (1972), amended 1990

This Act developed a national program overseeing the Coastal Zone Management Programs of member states, including Rhode Island.



#### 4.1.2 National Environmental Policy Act (1970), amended 1984

This Act requires assessment of environmental impacts from federally sponsored projects with significant impacts and may result in the preparation of an environmental impact statement by the federal agency.



#### 4.1.3 National Flood Insurance Act (1968)

This Act, implemented by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), requires structures placed within the mapped 100-year floodplain to be built in accordance with federal standards and state building code regarding elevations and flood proofing.

## ■ 4.1.4 Rivers and Harbors Act (1980)

This Act authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to regulate structures below mean high water as well as work in navigable waters of the U.S.

## ■ 4.1.5 Submerged Lands Act (1953)

Under this Act the Federal government relinquished to the states all of its claims, rights, and ownership of the lands and resources beneath navigable waters within the territorial limits of the State's mean high water line.

## ■ 4.1.6 Water Pollution Control Act (1972)

This Act, known as the Clean Water Act, requires applicants to obtain a certificate or waiver from the RIDEM before the Corps issues a permit for discharge of dredge or fill materials into waters and wetlands of the U.S.

## ■ 4.2 State Jurisdiction

### ■ 4.2.1 Coastal Resources Management Plan (1983)

The CRMC administers its coastal regulatory program primarily through the CRMP, commonly known as the "Redbook." The CRMP identifies development or other activities that trigger CRMC review and require approval based in part on a system of coastal zones dictated by the waterbody type and the coastal feature.

Coastal waters off Barrington Town Beach are identified as Type 1 waters, which are described as Conservation Areas in Section 200.1 of the CRMP. The coastal feature is identified as a Coastal Beach, described in Section 210.1 of the CRMP. Specific activities that trigger regulatory review are described in detail in the CRMP.

### ■ 4.2.2 Dredging and Dredged Material Regulations (2003)

These regulations are administered by the RIDEM and ensure that dredging in the marine environment and management of the associated dredged material is conducted in a ~~manner which~~manner that is protective of the environment.

## ■ 4.2.3 Fish and Wildlife Regulations (various dates)

The RIDEM is responsible for managing, protecting, and restoring Rhode Island's wildlife resources through regulating the taking of fish and other wildlife through quantities, size, season, location, and methods of taking. The agency is authorized to administer these policies through a variety of regulations.

## ■ 4.2.4 Oil Pollution Control Regulations (1990)

These regulations are administered by the RIDEM and are intended to prevent the discharge, escape, or release of oil into the waters of the State, and to preserve and protect the quality of the waters of the State, consistent with the purposes of the Clean Water Act.

## ■ 4.2.5 Water Quality Regulations (2006), amended 2009

These regulations are administered by the RIDEM and establish water quality standards for the State's surface water.

## ■ 4.3 Local Jurisdiction

### 4.3.1 Town of Barrington Code of Ordinances

Barrington's coastal resources are protected through a number of the Town's Code of Ordinances, including ordinances on parks and recreation (Chapter 134), use of public lands (Chapter 144), use of public waters (Chapter 148), zoning (Chapter 185), and land development and subdivision (Chapter 200).

### 4.3.2 Town of Barrington Harbor Management Plan

With the recent Town Council adoption of the State-approved Harbor Management Plan, the Town has local regulatory control over the tidal waterways and contiguous shoreline areas of the Town.

# 5.0 Public Use and Prohibited Activities

This section describes activities and uses permitted or prohibited at Barrington Town Beach.

## 5.1 Public Use Activities

The following activities and uses are permitted at Barrington Town Beach as identified in the Town's Code of Ordinances (Chapter 134, Part 2, Articles VII and VIII, and other relevant ordinances).

### ■ 5.1.1 Swimming

Swimming at the Town Beach is permitted within the designated buoied area set aside for this purpose (Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-43). Distance swimmers should swim inside the buoys. Although not specifically mandated in the Town ordinances, lifeguards are on duty in the swim area from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the beach season, which traditionally extends from ~~late~~ June to mid-August. Swimming when lifeguards are not on duty, or in the area outside the buoys, is done at the risk of the individual.

### ■ 5.1.2 Boat Launching, Moorings

Boat launching is permitted only at the extreme eastern edge of the beach and is limited to boats no larger than a Sunfish (Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-41). Although not expressly permitted via ordinance, small recreational boat storage is available at the western terminus of the Town Beach, adjacent to the parking lot. The Town ordinance on the abandonment of vessels on a beach or public right of way provides an exception for storage of boats at Barrington Town Beach between April 1 and December 1 (Chapter 148, Article V, §148-30)

Boat storage is administered by the Barrington Harbormaster.

The following areas at and near Barrington Town Beach have been allocated for mooring space: no more than 400 yards off any point on shore between Rumstick Point and Nayatt Point, excluding the area designated as a swimming area. (Chapter

## 5.1.3 Ball Playing

Ball playing is permitted on the beach and in the water so long as the lifeguard on duty does not find it creates a nuisance or danger to the participants or other persons (Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-46).

## 5.1.4 Floats

Air mattress, air-filled floats, and/or foam-type non-sinkable floats may only be used within the buoyed area if, in the opinion of the lifeguard on duty, it does not create a nuisance or danger to the participants or other persons (Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-45).

## 5.1.5 Parking

Parking at Town Beach is available for approximately 100 vehicles and is limited to Town of Barrington residents and taxpayers only, and requires an annual beach parking sticker (Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-39). Beach parking stickers are available for \$20 for the season (late June through mid-August) and may be purchased at the gatehouse in the beach parking lot. Barrington residents 65 years of age and over are exempt from the parking sticker fee. Beach stickers must be placed on the resident's vehicle, and are non-transferrable. Automobiles with trailers attached may not park in the parking lot. The parking area closes from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. and all vehicles must be removed from the area during this time.

# 5.2 Prohibited Activities

Activities specifically prohibited on Barrington Town Beach via ordinance are described below.

## 5.2.1 Alcohol

Possession and/or consumption of alcohol is prohibited at Barrington Town Beach, as it is on all public properties owned by the Town (Part II, Chapter 63, Article I, §63-1; and Part II, Chapter 134, Part 1, Article I, §134-4).

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## **5.2.2 ATVs/Motorized Vehicles**

Motorized vehicles of any type are prohibited at all times on Barrington Town Beach (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-47). This ordinance does not apply to emergency personnel such as fire and police officials.

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## **5.2.3 Dogs**

Dogs are prohibited from Barrington Town Beach from Memorial Day through Labor Day (Part II, Chapter 67, §67-11). During the remainder of the year dogs must be leashed and the leash must remain in the physical possession of the person having custody of the dog (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 1, Article I, §134-13).

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## **5.2.4 Fires/Bonfires/Grills**

Fires are specifically prohibited at Barrington Town Beach between June 15 and September 15 (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 1, Article I, §134-3.1). A permit from the Chief of the Barrington Fire Department or his representative is required for a fire during the remainder of the year, and fires are only permitted in a fireplace circle or other facility provided for that purpose. However, no such facilities currently exist on the premises at Town Beach. Bonfires are prohibited within the confines of Barrington Town Beach year round.

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## **5.2.5 Glass Containers**

The use of glass containers is prohibited on the Town Beach year round (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 1, Article I, §134-5).

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## **5.2.6 Horseback Riding**

Horses are prohibited on the Town Beach year round (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-47).

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## **5.2.7 Hunting**

Hunting and/or the possession of weapons is prohibited at the Town Beach year-round (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 1, Article I, §134-8).

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## **5.2.8 Underwater Devices**

Use of underwater breathing devices, including air-breathing snorkels, is not allowed unless properly supervised by a qualified instructor (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-44).

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## **5.2.9 Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited at Barrington Town Beach year round (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 2, Article VIII, §134-49).

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## **5.3.0 Littering**

Depositing of trash on any public beach in Barrington is expressly prohibited (Part II, Chapter 134, Part 1, Article I, §134-3). Each person is responsible for removing trash brought into the beach and associated parking area, as the Town has a "trash-in, trash-out" policy.

# 6.0 Beach Usage, Maintenance, and Restoration

This section describes current patterns of beach usage at Barrington Town Beach as well as current maintenance activities.

## 6.1 Current Beach Usage

Surveys conducted in July 2009 by the Barrington Department of Recreation staff suggest that on average, 65 cars are parked at Town Beach on a weekday in the summer, while an average of 85 cars are parked on a weekend day. Actual swimmers at the beach are fewer, with approximately 24 people swimming at the beach on a given weekday, and an average of 73 people swimming on any given weekend day.

Currently there are no organized activities or food vendors at Town Beach. Most beach visitors come to swim and relax by the water. During Barrington Beach Day, beach passes are not required to come to the beach.

Occasionally Barrington Town Beach is closed to swimming due to high levels of bacteria detected in the water. Closures are determined by the Rhode Island Department of Health and are based on water quality samples collected once a week at the beach by staff from the Department of Recreation. Beach closures generally occur after heavy rainstorms, and information posted on the Department of Health's beach closures website suggests that the Town Beach is closed on average two to three times a season due to bacteria.

Beach closure also occasionally occurs due to dangerous surf conditions, such as during hurricanes and tropical storms.

## 6.2 Current Beach Maintenance Practices

Currently, beach maintenance activities at Barrington Town Beach are limited to the beach season, which is considered to extend from ~~late~~ June until mid-August, when lifeguards are on duty. Although beach season in much of New England extends

from Memorial Day to Labor Day, Barrington has traditionally offered a shorter season based loosely on the school calendar.

Just prior to the start of beach season, the DPW initiates activities to ready the beach, the lifeguard building/restrooms, and the parking area, for use. These activities include performing any necessary infrastructure repairs, conducting landscaping activities, and cleaning and grooming the beach. During beach season, ~~DPW staff the beach is groomed by grooms the beach DPW staff~~ with a Barber Surf Rake approximately three times per week.

The beach and restroom facilities are open to swimmers daily during the season, with lifeguards on duty and restrooms available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The beach officially closes at 9 p.m. Due to a "trash in, trash out" policy, DPW is not responsible for trash removal at Barrington Beach. Rather, each individual is responsible for removing his/her trash from the beach. Thus no trash receptacles are provided. This policy has also virtually eliminated a bee and yellow jacket problem that previously existed on-site, and is typical of all State-owned and maintained parks and beaches.

At the end of the beach season the restroom facilities are closed, and beach and parking lot maintenance activities are limited to responding to extreme storm events. Regular maintenance activities begin again just prior to the start of the next beach season the following June.

# 7.0 Future Goals and Recommendations

The ~~planned~~ construction of a new public beach house in 2011 and plans for parking lot and drainage improvements presents an opportunity to expand the role of the Town Beach as a public space and to establish it as a centerpiece of Barrington. The construction of a new facility also marks a logical time to review existing rules and regulations, and develop new beach management guidelines as appropriate.

Discussions with various departments of the Town's Administration have highlighted a number of goals for the Town Beach that are outlined below, along with suggested objectives and tactics for accomplishing these goals. Because many of the particulars regarding the operation of the new beach house have not yet been finalized, and because many regulatory changes can only be determined by the Town's Administration or elected bodies, this document suggests a few broad goals rather than providing a step-by-step management plan. It is intended that this plan will serve as a springboard for ideas, and will later be amended as a more detailed guidance document on management and operation of Barrington Town Beach.

## 7.1 Public Use, Access, and Safety Goals



### 7.1.1 Goal 1 – Expand Safe Public Use of Beach

Current use of Barrington Town Beach has not reached its full potential for a number of reasons, including a truncated lifeguard season, limited amenities, and minimal organized activities in which Town residents can participate. In order to expand safe public use of the beach, the Town should consider addressing these limiting factors. Some of these issues, such as the amenities, will be improved or remedied through construction of the new beach house, which will provide space for potential vending machines and larger bathrooms with showers and changing areas. ~~It has been suggested that the office space within the building will provide a location for a satellite office during the summer season for the Recreation staff normally housed in the Peck Center.~~

#### Objective 1: Extend Beach Season

The beach season during which lifeguards are on duty and restroom facilities are open at Barrington Town Beach has traditionally occurred from late June to mid-

August. A longer season with visible staff members on-site and available restroom facilities would be more in keeping with other beaches around the state and would extend the period of use of Barrington Beach.

### Tactics:

- Conduct internal review of feasibility of extending beach season, including available budget, staffing issues, safety issues; value to public, etc.
  - *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; Town Manager; Planning; DPW; Police; Fire
- If feasible, provide lifeguard coverage from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation
- ~~If feasible, provide additional Recreation Department staff presenceMake office space in new beach building available to lifeguards during beach season. as scheduling permits and is determined appropriate.~~
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation
- ~~Consider utilizing the office in the new beach building to conduct routine beach management activities coordinate special programs at the beach, and to encourage registration by participants in beach recreation programs offered by the Town. The Town should consider posting beach season office hours – for example, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 1 to 3 p.m. – to be staffed by a Town Recreation Department employee or volunteer, to conduct the above listed items.~~
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation, Manager
- If feasible, keep restrooms open from Memorial Day to Labor Day or longer.
  - *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; DPW
- ~~Consider revising “Trash-In, Trash-Out” policy during the beach season. The Town has the option to use grant funds for purchasing solar-powered trash and recycling compactors that can handle 4 to 5 times the capacity of standard trash bins. The Town Beach could be a location for one or two of these systems.~~
  - *Responsible Departments:* DPW

### Objective 2: Review Size and Location of Swimming Area

The current demarcated swimming area covers a small portion of the beach on the eastern side, but many beachgoers elect to swim outside of the buoys on the western side of the beach. This represents a risk for the Town and for the swimmers. A larger designated swimming area may encourage more visitors to swim inside the supervised area and expand safe use of the beach.

### Tactics:

- Review state requirements to identify required lifeguard staffing for expanded swim area.
  - *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; Town solicitor

- Review health and safety information regarding water quality and potential hazards on western side of beach.
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation
- Identify financial options for covering increased cost of additional lifeguards such as raising beach pass fees or an annual fundraiser.
  - *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; Town Manager
- Suggest enlargement of swimming area limits if appropriate and financially feasible.
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation
- Post signs stating “Swim at Your Own Risk” outside of designated swim area.
  - *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; DPW

### Objective 3: Offer Organized Activities

Organized activities provide residents with additional reasons to visit the beach. The Department of Recreation is currently developing a list of potential activities to engage the public.

#### Tactics:

- Develop and promote list of public activities at Barrington Town Beach such as swimming lessons, sporting events, contests, concerts, etc.
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation; Webmaster (Website committee)

## 7.1.2 Goal 2 – Streamline Public Use and Safety Guidelines

There are several sources of information the public can consult regarding the rules and regulations for Barrington Town Beach, including the Town’s Code of Ordinances (available online), the Recreation Department and the DPW sections of the Town’s official website, and signs posted at the beach itself. Although the Code of Ordinances technically serves as the official source of regulatory information regarding the beach, people are more likely to consult the Town website or the signs posted at the beach. Both of these sources contain information that is inconsistent with the Code of Ordinances, which can create confusion. An effort to streamline rules would help beach goers better prepare for, and enjoy, their visits.

### Objective 1: Review and Update Relevant Town Ordinances

In light of the new beach facility and potential new activities and programs to be offered at the beach, current ordinances regarding Barrington Town Beach should be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

#### Tactics:

- Review existing ordinances; develop and recommend to Park and Recreation Commission a suggested list of ordinances that require updating and/or

propose new ordinances to be adopted that address new beach facility and new public activities at beach.

- *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; Town Manager
- Review proposed ordinances and revisions and make recommendations to Town Council regarding adoption.
  - *Responsible Department:* Park and Recreation Commission

## Objective 2: Review All Versions of Beach Rules for Consistency

Once the ordinance review has been conducted and any changes have been adopted by the Town Council, a thorough review and comparison of all other sources of beach rules such as posted signs, websites, etc., should be conducted and inconsistencies eliminated.

### Tactics:

- Compare information on the Recreation and the DPW sections of the Town website with the Town Ordinances and revise website where information is inconsistent or vague. Known areas of inconsistency currently include, but may not be limited to: prohibition of dogs on the beach; location of designated boat launching area versus location of actual boat storage area; prohibition of smoking; prohibition of fires; and cost of fees.
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation; Webmaster
- Compare content of signage at beach with Town Ordinances and revise signage where information is inconsistent or vague. Known areas of inconsistency currently include, but may not be limited to: prohibition of dogs on the beach; location of designated boat launching area versus location of actual boat storage area; prohibition of smoking; prohibition of fires; and fees.
  - *Responsible Department:* Recreation;
- Review presence and placement of signs at beach and adjust as appropriate, including revised rules and a welcome sign.
  - *Responsible Departments:* Recreation; DPW

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## 7.2 Beach Management and Maintenance Goals



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### 7.2.1 Goal 1 – Provide More Consistent Beach Maintenance

While residents visit Barrington Town Beach year-round, maintenance of the beach and facilities is currently limited to summer months, which creates a greater maintenance burden when trying to ready the beach for summer use. Additional maintenance during the off-season may reduce this bottleneck and allow DPW staff to spread responsibilities throughout the year.

## Objective 1: Extend Beach Maintenance Schedule

### Tactics:

- If beach season is extended to Memorial Day through Labor Day, conduct monthly inspection of beach facility, parking lot, and associated infrastructure during the off-season, from October through April; if beach season is not extended, conduct inspections September through May; maintain list of needed repairs and issues and address them as they occur and are feasible to complete.
  - *Responsible Department:* DPW
- Sweep parking lot monthly in March and April or as required (weather permitting) to avoid buildup of sand in parking spaces and along hedgerow at northern edge of parking lot west of Bay Road.
  - *Responsible Department:* DPW
- Begin advance preparations as needed to open the beach by Memorial Day, including any necessary painting of buildings, lifeguard chairs, and guardrails, pavement repair, striping of parking lot, and tasks associated with opening the beach house such as plumbing, electrical, etc.
  - *Responsible Department:* DPW; Recreation
- Consider converting the former restroom building at the end of Bay Road for use as storage, including housing maintenance equipment.
  - *Responsible Department:* DPW

## 7.2.2 Goal 2 – Conduct Storm-related Beach Maintenance

Severe weather events such as nor'easters and hurricanes can cause damage to the infrastructure of Barrington Town Beach as well as deposit debris of varying sizes. Storm-related maintenance should occur in addition to routine maintenance and should take place as soon as possible after a major storm event.

### Objective 1: Conduct Post-storm Maintenance

#### Tactics:

- Survey beach house, parking lot, and associated infrastructure for damage and repair as necessary.
  - *Responsible Department:* DPW
- Survey beach and parking lot for debris and remove as necessary.
  - *Responsible Department:* DPW

## 7.2.3 Goal 3 – Develop Coastal Erosion Control Plan

Sea level rise, coupled with severe coastal storms has caused erosion along Barrington's shores over time. Shoreline change maps from CRMC suggest that the Town Beach has lost up to 0.16 feet of shoreline a year on average between 1939 and

2003. CRMC projects sea level in Rhode Island will rise an additional three to five feet by 2100. The Town should consider developing a comprehensive plan that addresses coastal erosion and sea level rise for the entire community, including the Town Beach, sooner rather than later.

## **Objective 1: Investigate Funding Opportunities for Plan Development**

### **Tactics:**

- Apply for a Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program Grant from FEMA.
  - *Responsible Department:* Town Planner

## **Objective 2: Investigate Erosion Control Methods for Town Beach**

### **Tactics:**

- As part of comprehensive erosion control plan, identify methods of protecting the Town Beach shoreline through discussions with CRMC.
  - *Responsible Department:* Town Planner

## **Objective 3: Develop Erosion Control Plan**

### **Tactics:**

- In addition to CRMC, identify and hold discussions with any additional state or federal agencies or non-government organizations that can provide guidance regarding long-term erosion control.
  - *Responsible Department:* Town Planner
- Develop comprehensive, long-term coastal erosion control plan.
  - *Responsible Department:* Town Planner

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## Figures

# Barrington Town Beach Management Plan



Figure 1. Existing Conditions at Barrington Town Beach  
Barrington, Rhode Island

