

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND WATER USE PLANS FOR THE OUTER HARBOR*

Within the overall boundaries of Norwalk Harbor, the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan* designates an Inner Harbor and Outer Harbor for harbor management purposes. The Outer Harbor Planning Area is that part of the Harbor (excepting the Five Mile River Harbor) outside the mouth of the Norwalk River and including the Norwalk Islands, Wilson Cove, the Farm Creek intertidal area, the Village Creek area, the Canfield Island intertidal area, and a section of the Federal entrance channel to the Inner Harbor.

This chapter contains harbor management guidelines and water use plans for each of four “harbor management units” within the Outer Harbor. These guidelines and plans add more specificity to City’s harbor management goals, objectives, and policies set forth in chapters two and three of the Harbor Management Plan.

The four Outer Harbor management units are:

- 1) Rowayton — Wilson Cove;
- 2) Village Creek;
- 3) Calf Pasture Beach — Sprite Island; and
- 4) Norwalk Islands.

The guidelines are numbered for reference purposes; not to denote priority. Management guidelines and water use plans for the Inner Harbor are contained in chapter four of the Harbor Management Plan.

* This chapter includes the 2009 amendments to the City of Norwalk’s Outer Harbor management guidelines as established in chapter five of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan* adopted by the Norwalk Common Council in 1990 and amended by the Council in 1993. (The Plan’s guidelines were not amended in the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan 1997 Plan Addendum* adopted in 1998.) The 2009 additions to the previously adopted and amended guidelines are shown in **bold type**; the 2009 deletions are shown as “~~struck out~~.”

OUTER HARBOR PLANNING AREA

The Outer Harbor planning area contains all water and waterfront areas subject to the jurisdiction of the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission and outside of the Inner Harbor described in chapter four of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*. Defined in §69-2 of the Norwalk Code, the boundary between the Inner Harbor and Outer Harbor is “a line extending south from the Coast Guard Auxiliary station at Calf Pasture Point to the center of Round Beach thence southwest to light No. 10, then northerly to Keyser Point at the southwestern corner of Manresa Island.” (See figure 5-1.)

For planning and management purposes, the Outer Harbor is divided into four “management units” for establishment of water-use plans and/or management guidelines consistent with the City’s harbor management policies contained in chapter three of the Harbor Management Plan. The management units are: 1) Rowayton — Wilson Cove; 2) Village Creek; 3) Calf Pasture Beach — Sprite Island; and 4) Norwalk Islands. These are shown on figure 5-1 along with the major water access areas and facilities in the Outer Harbor.

A number of different boating and water-based activities take place in the Outer Harbor and all vessels traveling to and from the Inner Harbor, including pleasure craft, commercial fishing boats, and barges carrying construction materials and fuel oil, must pass through the Outer Harbor. Navigation channels in the Outer Harbor include the Federal Norwalk Harbor entrance channel as well as privately maintained and natural channels. Privately dredged channels provide access to Long Island Sound from recreational boating facilities in Wilson Cove and Village Creek. A natural channel known as the “East passage” provides access to the Harbor from the east.

Major features of the Outer Harbor shoreline are the rocky promontory of Bell Island, the inlets at Wilson Cove, Village Creek, and Canfield Island, and the Norwalk Islands. Many of the City’s most important coastal resources, including tidal wetlands, intertidal flats, sandy and rocky beach areas, islands, and other resources, are found in the Outer Harbor. (See figure 5-2 which shows the general location of coastal resources.) These valuable resources were evaluated by the City in the course of developing Norwalk’s Coastal Area Management Program. The resource maps prepared by the City are available for review in the Planning and Zoning Office and should be consulted to identify the more precise location and extent of coastal resources in the Outer Harbor. In addition, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection has prepared “Tidal Wetlands” maps that identify wetlands subject to State jurisdiction and regulation.

The Norwalk Islands were formed by glacial deposition thousands of years ago and are a unique feature of Connecticut’s western Long Island Sound shoreline. The islands create a buffer zone that protects the City’s shoreline and Inner Harbor from the forces of waves and high water. The islands also provide an important natural environment that supports marine fish and wildlife as well as significant recreational opportunities.

Shellfish resources in Norwalk’s Outer Harbor are perhaps the most valuable shellfish resources found in the State. Described in chapter one, three different “types” of shellfish grounds can be identified in the Outer Harbor. These are: 1) natural grounds for public use; 2) “Town” grounds designated for private use; and 3) State leased or franchised grounds.

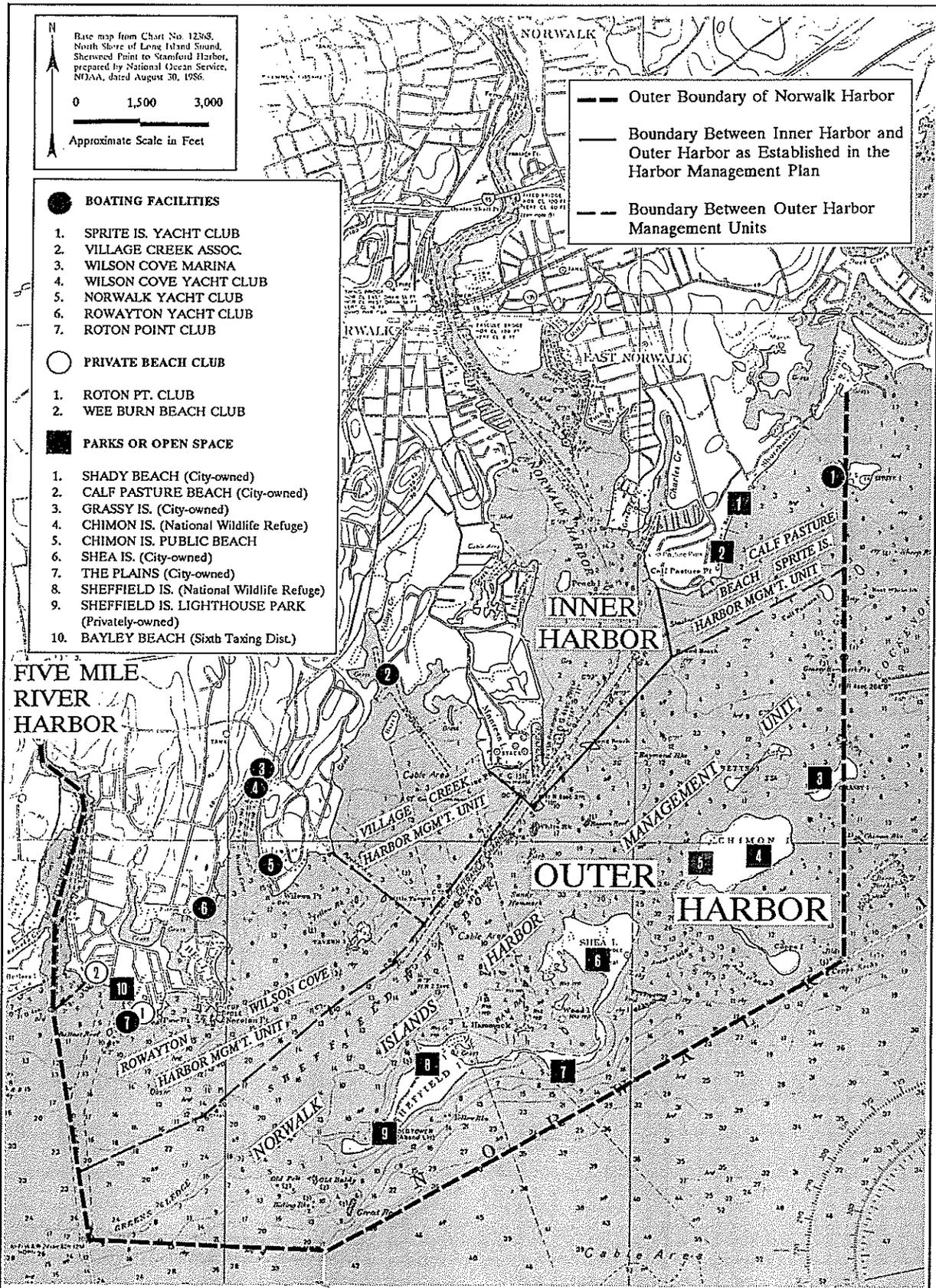


Figure 5-1: Outer Harbor Management Units and Water Access Facilities and Areas.

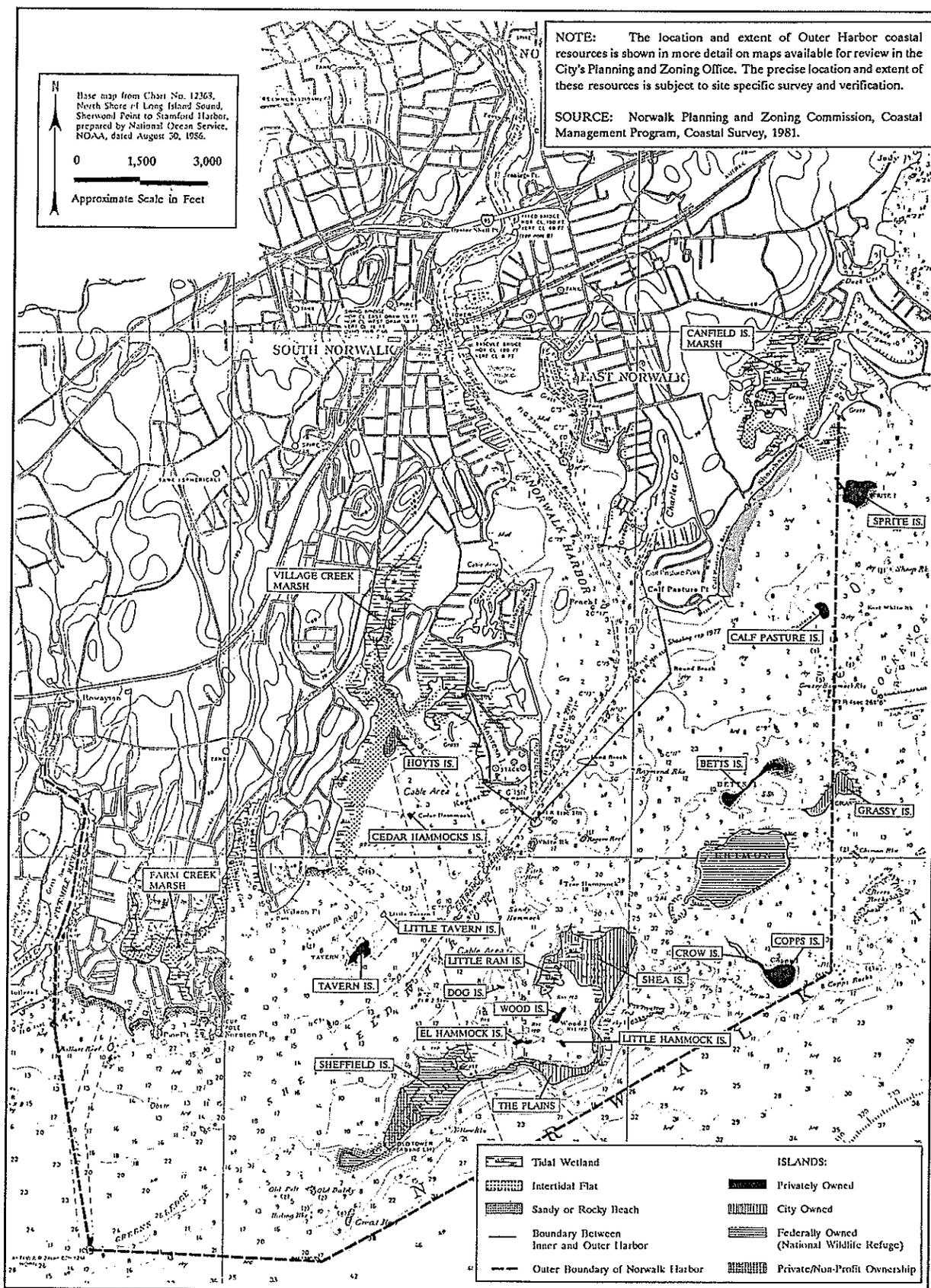


Figure 5-2: Outer Harbor Coastal Resource Areas.

Boating facilities in the Outer Harbor in 2008 include four private yacht clubs: the Rowayton Yacht Club, Norwalk Yacht Club, Wilson Cove Yacht Club, and Sprite Island Yacht Club. The Rowayton, Norwalk, and Sprite Island clubs operate large mooring fields for their members. The mooring fields of the Norwalk Yacht Club and the Rowayton Yacht Club are established in Wilson Cove; the Sprite Island Yacht Club's mooring field is in the eastern part of the Outer Harbor. The individual mooring locations in the yacht club fields are determined by the clubs but each location requires a mooring permit issued by the Harbor Master pursuant to the Harbor Management Commission's adopted "Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels." Other mooring locations in the Outer Harbor are found primarily in the Bell Island area and around several of the privately owned islands and are all managed by the Harbor Master in accordance with the mooring rules and regulations.

Other boating facilities in 2008 include the docking and mooring facilities of the Village Creek Harbor Association, the Wilson Cove Marina, the Roton Point Club's small boat launching and docking area, and the Norwalk Seaport Association's docks at the Sheffield Island Lighthouse Park.

Shorefront development is mostly residential. Much of the shoreline in the Village Creek and Rowayton — Wilson Cove area is developed for residential uses. Wilson Point and Bell Island contain two of the older shorefront communities in the City. In addition to the private waterfront clubs, several public parks and parcels of publicly owned land are found in the Outer Harbor.

ROWAYTON — WILSON COVE MANAGEMENT UNIT

The shoreline of the Rowayton — Wilson Cove Management Unit extends from the Five Mile River Harbor on the west to the "knob" on the eastern shoreline of Wilson Point on the east. The management unit encompasses the nearshore waters north of the Norwalk Harbor Federal entrance channel that passes through the Outer Harbor. (See figure 5-3.) Prominent features include the Bell Island shoreline, the Farm Creek area, and Wilson Cove as well as Tavern and Little Tavern Islands. Water-dependent uses in 2008 include five private clubs. The Rowayton and Norwalk Yacht Clubs maintain a large number of boat moorings in two designated mooring fields in Wilson Cove.

The Wee Burn and Roton Point Clubs have sandy beaches and provide swimming and other recreational opportunities as well as small boat sailing programs.

The Sixth Taxing District Beach (Bayley Beach) is located between the Wee Burn and Roton Point clubs. This beach provides swimming, picnicking, and other recreational opportunities for residents of the City's Sixth Taxing District which encompasses the Rowayton area.

The navigation channel in Wilson Cove was originally established as a Federal navigation project in 1892 and served the commercial port facilities that were then located in the Cove. The channel is no longer used for commercial purposes and is not Federally maintained; it now serves the large number of recreational vessels that are berthed or moored in the Cove.

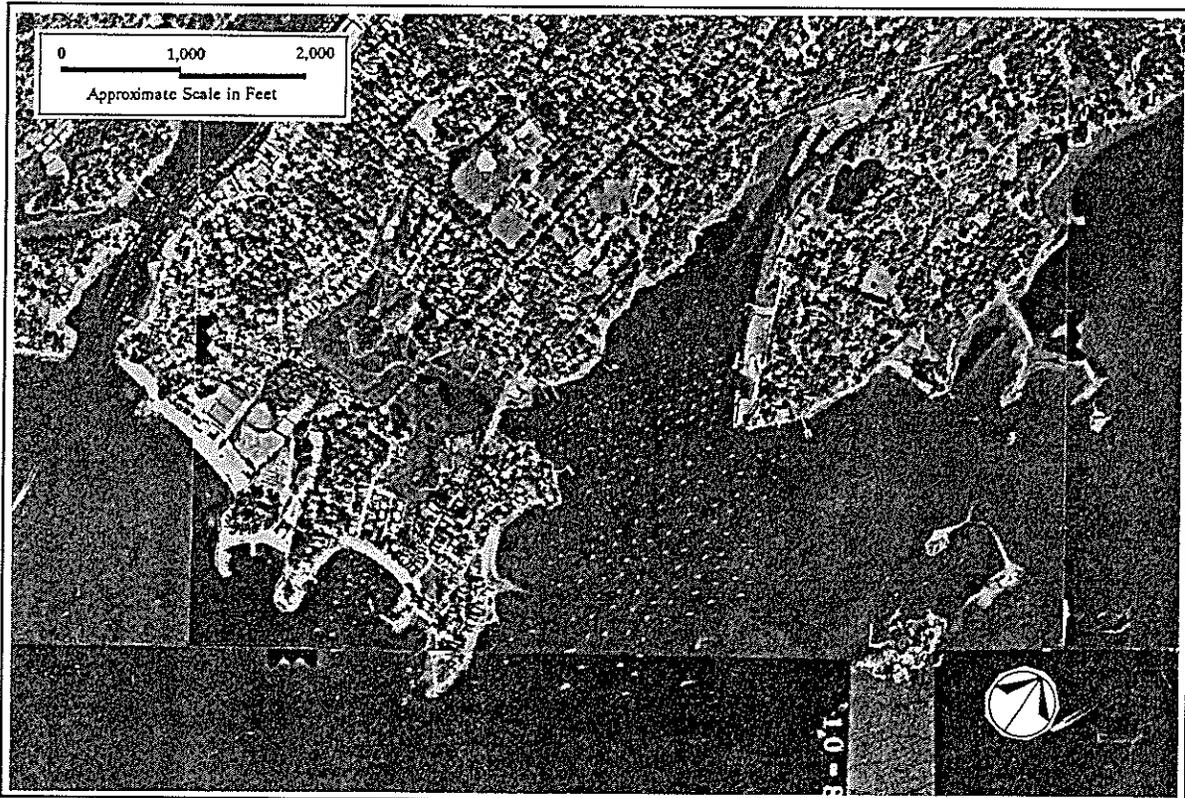
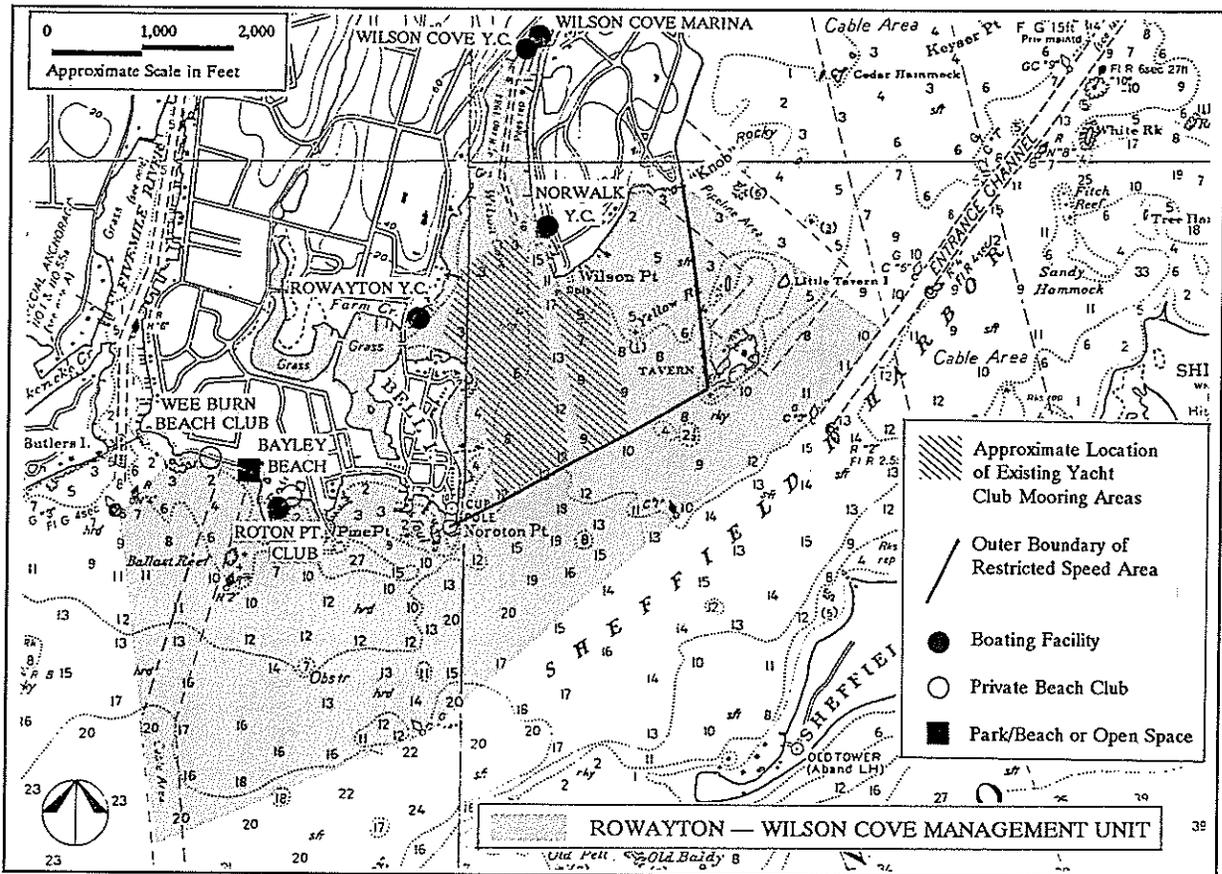


Figure 5-3: Rowayton — Wilson Cove Management Unit.

The currently used channel has a controlling depth of six feet at mean low water (MLW) and is 100 feet wide as it passes through the mooring area of the Norwalk Yacht Club. That mooring area is operated in accordance with permits issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that provide for 152 mooring locations. The moorings are used by club members and transient boaters and have been removed in the fall for maintenance and replaced in the spring. This annual removal allows local shellfishermen to work oyster grounds in Wilson Cove during the winter months.

The Rowayton Yacht Club also maintains a large number of moorings in the Cove, to the west of the Norwalk Yacht Club's moorings. The Rowayton Yacht Club mooring area is operated in accordance with permits issued by the USACE and the DEP that provide for 125 mooring locations. These moorings are rented on a seasonal basis to club members and, when requested to do so by shellfishermen, the club removes the moorings during the winter to allow commercial shellfishing to take place in the Cove. In addition to the moorings of the two yacht clubs, there are a number of individual-private moorings in this management unit, most of which are maintained by residents of the Bell Island area. Many of these moorings are found in the cove at Crescent (South) Beach on the south side of the island and to the east of the island near the Rowayton Yacht Club mooring area.

The Wilson Cove Marina and Yacht Club are located at the head of Wilson Cove and provide boat slips and services for members and other boat owners.

A public water access area including a small parking area as well as a waterfront walkway provides opportunities for visual and physical access to the northwest part of the Cove from Wilson Avenue.

Much of the shorefront character of this harbor management unit is established by the residential neighborhoods found here. The Bell Island area is one of the oldest and most historic shorefront communities in the City. Residential areas are also found at Pine Point, Wilson Point, and on the western shoreline of Wilson Cove. The Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development proposes that the waterfront be zoned for single family residential use. Current waterfront zoning is "A Residence" (Wee Burn and Roton Point clubs, Bayley Beach, and most of the western shoreline of Wilson Cove), "B Residence" (Bell Island), "AAA Residence" (Wilson Point), and "Island Conservation" (Tavern Island). (See "Building Zone Map of the City of Norwalk" revised to June 25, 2004.)

Significant coastal resources include the sandy beaches at the Wee Burn and Roton Point clubs and Bayley Beach as well as the beaches at Bell Island. At Bell Island, Crescent (South) Beach and East Beach are owned by the Bell Island Improvement Association and used by residents of the island. The Farm Creek Marsh is an especially valuable intertidal area consisting of State-regulated tidal wetlands and intertidal flats. (See figure 5-2.) Fringe wetlands and intertidal flats are found along both shores of Wilson Cove. At the head of the Cove, the City of Norwalk is pursuing a marsh restoration project known as the Wilson Cove Tidal Wetland Restoration Project.

Wilson Cove itself, as well as Farm Creek, the nearshore area east of Bell Island, and all of the area west of Bell Island to the Five Mile River is a designated natural shellfish ground. Private shellfish grounds (“Town grounds”) are also found in this management unit.

Tavern Island and Little Tavern Island, two of the Norwalk Islands, are included in this management unit. Tavern Island (about 2.9 acres) is privately owned and dominated by a large private home. Much of Little Tavern Island is submerged at high water and its ownership is not recorded on the City’s tax records.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. NAVIGATION PROJECT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1(a) **Wilson Cove Navigation Fairways:** Navigation fairways of appropriate widths to be kept free of obstructions should be maintained ~~in to ensure free and safe passage of vessels to, from, and through the Wilson Cove mooring fields and navigation channel.~~ (See Navigation Policies in Chapter Three.) ~~These fairways should be maintained to the satisfaction of the Harbor Master, and in accordance with the following guidelines:~~
- i. A navigation fairway ~~to be kept free of any fixed and floating structures is designated in Wilson Cove~~ should be maintained through the mooring field of the Norwalk Yacht Club ~~to the head of Wilson Cove, to ensure free and safe passage for vessels between Long Island Sound and the boating facilities at the head of the Cove.~~ **The navigation fairway is defined by the boundaries of the navigation fairway delineated in State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection certificate of permission no. COP-2005-044-SJ issued to the Norwalk Yacht Club. This fairway is known as the Wilson Cove channel (see 1(c) below).**
 - ii. A navigation fairway should be maintained through the mooring field of the Rowayton Yacht Club to ensure free and safe passage for vessels between Long Island Sound and the Rowayton Yacht Club.
 - iii. All moorings should be set back from the boundaries of the navigation fairways a distance sufficient to ensure that the moorings and any vessel attached to a mooring do not encroach on the fairways.
- 1(b) **Farm Creek Navigation Fairway:** A navigation fairway of an appropriate width should be maintained within the natural channel of Farm Creek to enable unobstructed passage of small craft in the Creek, including passage of small craft to and from private docking facilities in the Creek.
- 1(c) **Wilson Cove Channel Dredging:** Maintenance dredging of the Wilson Cove channel to a depth of at least six feet at MLW, ~~should be carried out by private interests in~~

the most timely manner necessary to ensure navigation safety and the continued viability of existing boating facilities, **is encouraged and supported.**

- 1(d) **Dredging of Nonchannel Areas.** Dredging outside of the Wilson Cove channel should, where consistent with all City, State, and Federal requirements, be limited to historically dredged areas and to dredging necessary to maintain existing berthing and docking facilities. It is recognized that historically-dredged areas **outside of the Wilson Cove channel** may re-establish themselves as productive subtidal and intertidal resources worthy of protection.

~~Maintenance dredging of all channels, docking facilities and berthing areas should be undertaken in compliance with all applicable State and Federal regulations and in a manner that will minimize adverse impacts on coastal resources.~~

- 1(e) **Aids to Navigation:** In accordance with State and Federal permit requirements (see ~~Navigation Policies in Chapter Three~~), private aids to navigation, including appropriate speed limit signs, may be placed to increase boater awareness, mark navigation fairways, and help improve enforcement of vessel speed limits. **All regulatory and navigational markers shall be properly authorized in accordance with the requirements set forth in Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 15-121-A5.**

2. PUBLIC SAFETY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2(a) **Restricted Speed Zones:** In accordance with the City of Norwalk's restricted speed zone requirements established by §69-3 of the Norwalk Code, the speed of all **power-propelled** vessels in the area bounded by a straight line extending from the southern tip of Bell Island to the south end of Tavern Island and then by a straight line to the "knob" of Wilson Point (see figure 5-4) ~~shall should~~ not exceed six miles per hour with **minimal** wake. **This area is known as the Wilson Cove—Tavern Island restricted speed zone.** In addition, ~~vessel~~ the speed of any **power-propelled vessel shall should** not exceed 6 miles per hour with **minimal** wake within 100 feet of any moored or anchored vessel and within 100 yards (300 feet) of shore in the **restricted speed zone** area extending from the Five Mile River to the tip of Bell Island, in accordance with Sec. 15-121-B14 of the ~~RCSA Connecticut General Statutes~~ and §69-3 of the Norwalk Code.
- 2(b) **Harbor Watch Program:** Establishment of a volunteer "Harbor Watch" program ~~should be encouraged~~ whereby observant citizens can report violations of vessel speed regulations, as well as actual or apparent violations of other laws and regulations, to the Norwalk Police Department and help to discourage thefts from moored vessels **is encouraged and supported.**

3. BOAT MOORING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3(a) **Mooring Plans**: The location of all moorings in Wilson Cove should be carefully planned and controlled to ensure: a) continued navigation safety; b) orderly and efficient distribution of moorings to optimize the use of available mooring space; c) equitable use of public waters by the general public, shorefront residents, private waterfront clubs, commercial shellfishermen, and others; and d) protection of coastal resources.
- 3(b) **Mooring Administration and Allocation**: Administration and allocation of all individual-private and “commercial” moorings will be in accordance with all applicable provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, the Norwalk Code, the Connecticut General Statutes, and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council.
- 3(c) **Mooring Tackle and Buoy Standards**: All mooring buoys and ground tackle shall conform to the “Minimum Standards for Mooring Tackle” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council. ~~individual private and commercial mooring tackle used in this area should meet minimum mooring tackle guidelines and be subject to periodic inspection to help ensure public safety and reduce possible damage to other vessels and shorefront property caused by mooring tackle failure.~~ All buoys designating areas where boats may be anchored or moored shall comply with standards established in RCSA Section 15-121-A5. ~~(See Recreational Boating Policies in Chapter Three.)~~
- 3(d) **Removal, Inspection, and Reinstallation of Mooring Tackle**: In accordance with the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council, and in accordance with agreements between the owners/lessees of private shellfish grounds and the private yacht clubs, all moorings should be removed during the non-boating season as needed to allow for inspection, repair, or replacement of mooring tackle and for commercial harvesting of shellfish.¹ Reinstallation of mooring tackle following mooring inspection, repair, or replacement should be in accordance with duly established mooring plans and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Commission and approved by the Council.
- 3(e) **Mooring “Set-Backs”**: No moorings shall ~~should~~ be located within the ~~Wilson Cove channel and~~ designated navigation fairways **including the Wilson Cove channel**. All moorings should be set back from the channel and fairways a distance sufficient to ensure navigation safety.

¹ When requested to do so by commercial fishermen, the yacht clubs have removed their moorings during the non-boating season (November 1 to April 15) to allow commercial shellfishing to take place in Wilson Cove.

- 3(f) **Separation Between Moored Vessels:** Adequate separation should be maintained between all moored vessels to help ensure public safety and reduce the risk of property damage caused by normal and abnormal marine conditions.
- 3(g) **Yacht Club Moorings:** Moorings maintained by the Norwalk Yacht Club and the Rowayton Yacht Club ~~shall~~ be in accordance with “commercial” mooring **field** permits issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Those permits should not be issued for an indeterminate period of time but should be subject to periodic review and renewal. Permits from the Norwalk Harbor Master ~~shall~~ also be obtained for “commercial” mooring areas. Any ~~“commercial”~~ mooring permits issued by the Harbor Master **for moorings in those areas shall** be issued in coordination with “commercial” mooring **field** permits from the Corps of Engineers and the DEP.
- 3(h) **Balancing Individual-Private and “Commercial” Moorings:** An appropriate balance should be ~~maintained~~ established between use of Wilson Cove for “commercial” moorings maintained by the private yacht clubs and use of the Cove for individual-private moorings **used** by waterfront property owners and others with access to the Cove. This balance should be ~~maintained~~ established in accordance with the following guidelines:
- i. The nearshore areas of Bell Island should continue to be used for the placement of moorings by **waterfront property owners**, members of the Bell Island Improvement Association, and others with permission to reach these moorings through property owned by the Bell Island Improvement Association.
 - ii. The private yacht clubs and waterfront property owners in the Wilson Cove area should work cooperatively to **maintain** ~~establish~~ equitable use of the Cove for “commercial” moorings for use by club members and individual-private moorings for use by shorefront property owners and others.
 - iii. No expansion of existing “commercial” mooring areas should be approved unless **any concerns that may be raised** with regard to potential impacts on coastal resources, navigation safety, use of the Cove by the general public, and use of the Cove for individual-private moorings, are adequately addressed.
- 3(i) **Placement of Moorings on Shellfish Grounds:** In accordance with **Sec. 26-157a(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes** ~~State law~~ and ~~existing~~ agreements between **the owners/lessees of private shellfish grounds** ~~commercial shellfishermen~~ and the private yacht clubs, no mooring ~~or other structure~~ should be placed on any private shellfish ground (“Town ground”) without the approval of the owner/lessee of that ground. Such approval should be based on reasonable and specific criteria consistently applied to all by the owner/lessee.

4. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 4(a) **Water-Dependent Uses:** The continued beneficial operation of water-dependent facilities, including the boating facilities maintained by the private boating and beach clubs, should be encouraged and supported, consistent with all other provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, the *Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development*, *Norwalk Coastal Area Management Program*, and the *Norwalk Building Zone Regulations*. ~~in this area should be recognized as important water-dependent uses.~~ The authority and provisions of the *Harbor Management Plan*, *Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development*, *Norwalk Building Zone Regulations*, and *Connecticut Coastal Management Act* as well as appropriate special incentives should be applied to ~~City~~ **encourage and support** the continued operation and maintenance of these **water-dependent** facilities.

No expansion of existing boating facilities, including channels and berthing areas, should be approved unless it is shown that such expansion will not have significant adverse impacts on natural coastal resources, navigation, boating safety, water-dependent uses, and public rights to use Public Trust waters. Any expansion of existing boating facilities should be consistent with the capability of natural coastal resources to support such expansion.

- 4(b) **In-Water Structures:** The littoral rights of waterfront property owners for **reasonable access** to reach navigable water should be protected. Consistent with these rights, new or extended **floats, docks, and piers, and other in-water structures**, should **not cause significant adverse impacts on natural resources, public access opportunities, visual quality, and traditional water uses.** ~~be designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on coastal resources and water activities.~~ **In all cases, alternatives to the construction of fixed structures to reach navigable water should be considered, including floating docks and individual-private moorings.** Floats, docks, and piers should be of the minimal length necessary to reach navigable water. **The appropriate extent to which in-water structures should extend seaward to reach navigable water will be evaluated by the Harbor Management Commission taking into consideration the littoral rights of waterfront property owners, existing Harbor conditions such as distance from shore to navigable water, public access requirements, the presence of coastal resources such as intertidal flats, shellfish beds, other aquatic habitats including nesting habitats, and other conditions.** ~~The use of long docks or piers to provide permanent docking facilities should be discouraged. Short piers or small floats to facilitate small craft access to moorings are preferred.~~ Construction of **floats, docks, and piers** by groups of littoral property owners for shared use should be encouraged to reduce potential adverse impacts on water uses and coastal resources. ~~(See Waterfront Land Use and Development Policies in Chapter Three.)~~ The construction of new or extended **floats, docks, and piers** should not infringe on the littoral rights of adjoining property owners or interfere with navigation.

To reduce potential adverse impacts on navigation resulting from the construction of new or extended **floats**, docks, and piers, design guidelines established by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (and which have been adopted as guidelines by the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission) for the placement of fixed and floating structures in navigable waters² **will should** be considered by the Harbor Management Commission in its review of proposed docks and piers. (See “**Guidelines for the Placement of Fixed and Floating Structures in Navigable Waters of the United States Regulated by the New England District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**” July 1996.) In the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary, including the need to protect valuable coastal resources, new or extended docks and piers should be consistent with the USACE’s guidelines.

- 4(c) **Neighborhood Protection**: The existing character and quality of life associated with the shorefront residential areas, including **but not limited to** the residential areas at Bell Island, Pine Point, Wilson Point, and the western shoreline of Wilson Cove, should be protected.

5. WATER ACCESS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 5(a) **Access Through Private Facilities**: Physical access to **Norwalk Harbor, including Wilson Cove, and to the waters of** Long Island Sound from upland areas should continue through the private boating and beach clubs and by means of the water access facilities maintained by waterfront residents. The private boating and beach clubs should be recognized as important water-dependent uses providing significant water access opportunities **for members and guests**. City planning and zoning requirements should support the continued operation of these clubs.
- 5(b) **Public Access**: The right of the general public to use and have access to **Norwalk Harbor, including the waters of** Wilson Cove, and to Long Island Sound in accordance with the Public Trust Doctrine should be protected. Public access to public waters should be encouraged but **must be consistent with** ~~should not violate~~ the **littoral/riparian** rights of shorefront property owners, ~~including littoral rights for~~ **reasonable access** to reach navigable water.
- 5(c) **Balancing Public Access Rights and Private Mooring Rights**: Public rights to use the waters of Wilson Cove for navigation and other purposes should be balanced with use of the Cove for “commercial” moorings maintained by the private yacht clubs.
- 5(d) **Car-Top Launching**: The **Harbor Management Commission** ~~City~~ should evaluate **the feasibility of establishing a public launching and landing facility** and ~~pursue any existing and future opportunities to provide a public launching site in the Wilson~~

² See “**Guidelines for the Placement of Fixed and Floating Structures in Navigable Waters of the United States Regulated by the New England Division U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,**” 2 April 1991.

Cove area to serve for small vessels such as canoes, dinghies, and kayaks that can be transported without trailers. **To the extent feasible, establishment of such a facility should be encouraged and supported.**

6. COASTAL RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

~~Improvement of Water Quality. The City should vigorously pursue all feasible measures to maintain and improve water quality in the Rowayton — Wilson Cove management unit. All feasible measures to correct, reduce and/or eliminate sources of pollution, including improvement and repair of nearby sewerage facilities, reduction of non point sources of pollution, and reduction or elimination of sources of pollution caused by boating activities, should be pursued and supported. [Note: This section is deleted because it repeats the Plan's basic water quality policy which applies to all of the management units.]~~

- 6(a) **Intertidal Resources:** Consistent with City, State, and Federal laws and regulations, the ecological values of the intertidal flats and tidal wetlands found in the Farm Creek area and along the east and west shorelines of Wilson Cove should be protected. (See figure 5-2 which shows the general location of these resources. See also the resource maps available in the Norwalk Planning and Zoning Office.) Limited **water-dependent** uses and structures that would affect intertidal resources may be considered if the resource impacts are minimal and there are no feasible alternatives that would have less significant environmental impacts. Before any uses or structures are considered, a site-specific survey may be required to precisely identify the location and extent of potentially affected intertidal flats and tidal wetlands **and the extent to which they may be affected.**
- 6(b) **Farm Creek Marsh:** The Farm Creek Marsh should be recognized as an intertidal resource area of special **ecological** significance. Within the Farm Creek area, the protection of natural resource values, including values related to fish and wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance, flood protection, and esthetic quality, should take precedence over the development of new structures such as docks and piers to provide boating access.
- 6(c) **Wilson Cove Tidal Wetland Restoration Project:** **Restoration of tidal wetland resources and associated ecological functions near the head of Wilson Cove (see figure 5-2) is encouraged and supported in accordance with specific plans prepared by the City of Norwalk and based on best available scientific information. This wetland restoration project, involving restoration of tidal circulation and intertidal elevations necessary to support a healthy marsh ecosystem, is known as the Wilson Cove Tidal Wetland Restoration Project.**

- 6(d) **Shellfish Resources:** Shellfish resources, including **shellfish habitat and populations associated with** the natural shellfish grounds in Wilson Cove and private **shellfish** grounds (“Town grounds”), should be protected and, to the extent possible, enhanced.
- ~~6(e) The City should work closely with State and Federal agencies for eventual implementation of the Norwalk “no discharge” zone as authorized by State law and for inclusion of Wilson Cove in this zone.~~
- 6(e) **Water Quality Monitoring:** The City should maintain a regular program of water quality monitoring in the vicinity of the beaches **recreation areas** and in Wilson Cove to identify **any existing and potential** any water quality problems that may exist and ~~to help identify~~ sources of pollution **and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.**
- 6(f) **Vessel Waste Pump-Out Facility:** Establishment of a **vessel waste sewage pump-out facility or service** ~~for vessel holding tanks should be encouraged~~ in Wilson Cove **is encouraged and supported.**

7. COMMERCIAL SHELLFISHING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7(a) **Commercial Shellfishing:** ~~The City should support~~ Continued commercial shellfishing in conjunction with existing boating and other **water-dependent** recreational uses and in a manner that does not **unreasonably** conflict with existing land and water uses **is encouraged and supported.**

VILLAGE CREEK MANAGEMENT UNIT

The Village Creek Management Unit (see figure 5-4) encompasses the embayment bounded by Wilson Point on the west and Manresa Island on the east, and includes the nearshore waters north of the Norwalk Harbor Federal entrance channel that passes through the Outer Harbor. Prominent features include: the Village Creek marsh; the substantial wetland northwest of Manresa Island; the extensive intertidal flat along much of the eastern shoreline of the Wilson Point peninsula; Hoyt’s Island; and Cedar Hammock Island. The Village Creek Harbor Corporation maintains a navigation channel and private docking facility. Seabed electric transmission cables from the Norwalk Harbor Power Station to Long Island pass through this management unit.

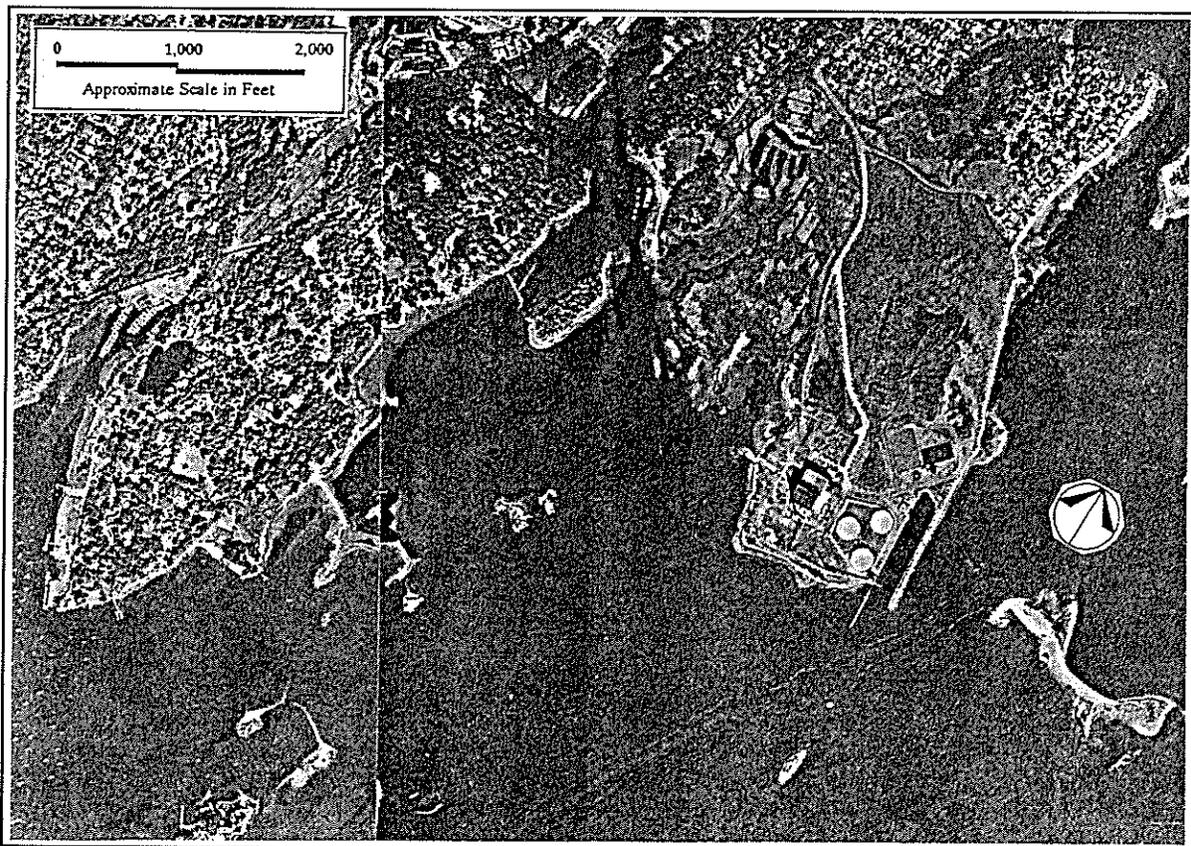
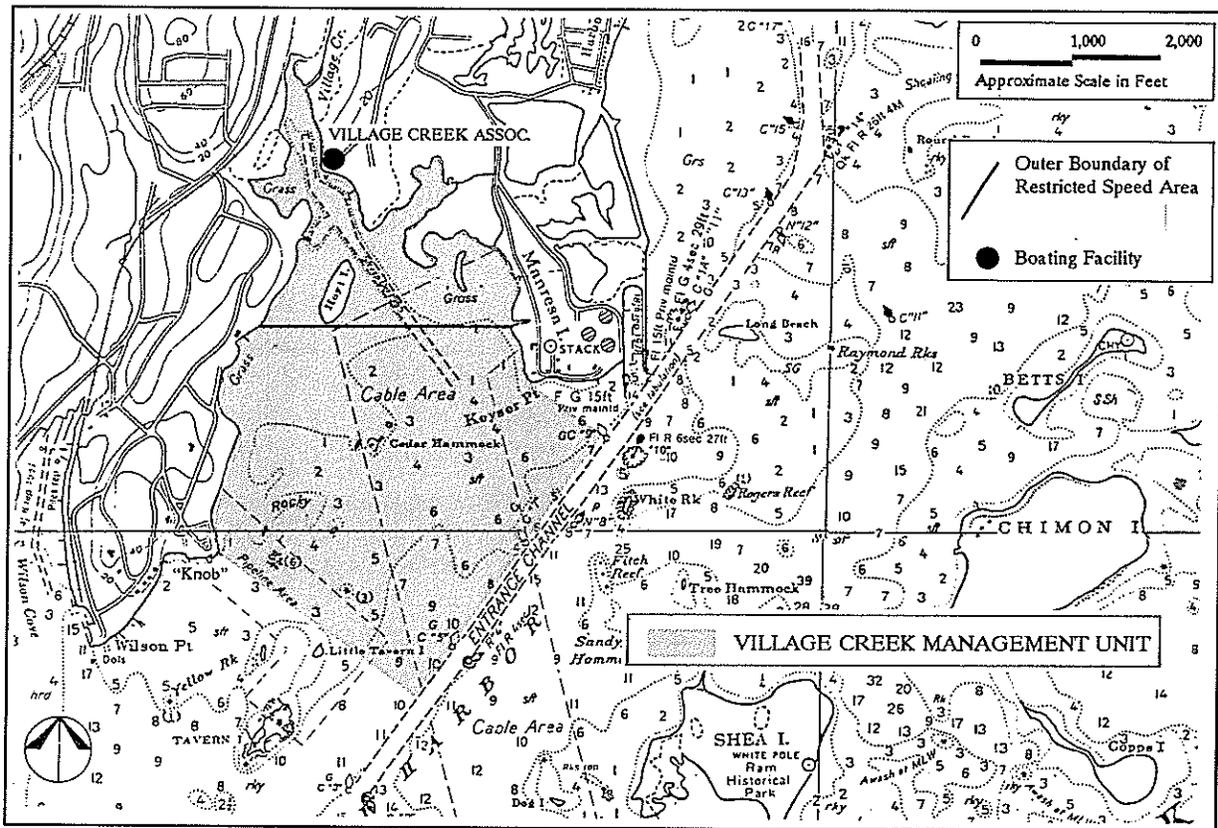


Figure 5-4: Village Creek Management Unit.

There are no commercial boating facilities in the Village Creek area but a privately maintained channel has served recreational boating in this area for many years. Approximately 50 boats, most owned by nearby residents, are berthed or moored in the area and the Harbor Corporation maintains a private docking facility on the east side of the Creek. The channel, periodically dredged to maintain adequate navigable depths, was last dredged by the Harbor Corporation in 2004. The channel's permitted depth as authorized by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection is six feet at mean low water.

The Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development proposes that the waterfront be zoned for single family residential use. Current waterfront zoning is "B Residence" (Manresa Island and Village Creek residential area), "AAA Residence" (eastern shoreline of Wilson Point), "Heavy Industrial" (upper reaches of Village Creek), and "Island Conservation" (Hoyt's Island). (See "Building Zone Map of the City of Norwalk" revised to June 25, 2004.)

One of the most distinguishing features of this management unit is the large intertidal area that includes the Village Creek Marsh (estimated at 93 acres), the 63-acre wetland northwest of Manresa Island, and the extensive intertidal flat along much of the eastern shoreline of the Wilson Point peninsula. The intertidal area in this management unit was identified as an area of concern in the Norwalk Coastal Area Management Program because of the negative environmental impacts historically caused here by industrial uses surrounding Village Creek and because of concerns over the potential for oil spills from the fuel terminal at the Norwalk Harbor Power Station on Manresa Island. Much of the Village Creek area is designated as a natural shellfish ground.

Hoyt's Island (about 3.6 acres) at the mouth of Village Creek is mostly wooded and its ownership by the Norwalk Land Conservation Trust ensures its future preservation as a natural area. Cedar Hammock Island is privately owned, undeveloped, and a little further offshore.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. NAVIGATION PROJECT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1(a) **Village Creek Navigation Fairway:** A navigation fairway to be kept free of any obstructions is designated in the Village Creek management unit. The navigation fairway is defined in part by the boundaries of the six-foot maintenance dredging area authorized by State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection certificate of permission no. COP-2003-111-KB issued to the Village Creek Harbor Corporation, excluding the basin area at the head of the authorized maintenance dredging area. The fairway extends through the basin area upstream within the natural channel of Village Creek and is of an appropriate width to enable unobstructed passage of any vessel of a size and type that can navigate in the Creek. This fairway is known as the Village Creek channel. The water-dependent facilities of the Village Creek Harbor Corporation should not present an unreasonable obstruction to any vessel of a size and type that can navigate upstream of those facilities in Village Creek.

~~An appropriate width navigation fairway should be maintained between Long Island Sound and the Village Creek boating facilities to ensure free and safe passage for vessels entering and leaving the Village Creek area.~~

- 1(b) **Village Creek Channel and Basin Dredging:** Maintenance dredging of the Village Creek channel and basin berthing area **to a depth of six feet at MLW, should be** carried out by private interests in the most timely manner necessary to ensure navigation safety and the continued viability of boating facilities, **is encouraged and supported.**
- 1(c) **Dredging of Nonchannel Areas:** Consideration of dredging outside of the Village Creek channel and basin should, where consistent with all City, State and Federal requirements, be limited to historically dredged areas and to dredging necessary to maintain existing berthing and docking facilities. It is recognized that historically-dredged areas **outside of the Village Creek channel** may re-establish themselves as productive subtidal and intertidal resources worthy of protection.

~~All maintenance dredging should be undertaken in compliance with all applicable State and Federal regulations and in a manner that will minimize adverse impacts on coastal resources.~~

- 1(d) **Aids to Navigation:** In accordance with State and Federal permit requirements (see ~~Navigation Policies in Chapter Three~~), private aids to navigation, including appropriate speed limit signs, may be placed to increase boater awareness, identify areas where water skiing is not permitted, and help improve enforcement of vessel speed limits. **All regulatory and navigational markers shall be properly authorized in accordance with the requirements set forth in RCSA Section 15-121-A5.**

2. PUBLIC SAFETY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2(a) **Restricted Speed Zones:** In accordance with the City of Norwalk's restricted speed zone requirements established by §69-3 of the Norwalk Code, the speed of all power-propelled vessels in the Village Creek area north of a line extending in an east-west direction from the eastern shore of Wilson Point across the south edge of Hoyt's Island to the outfall of the power plant on the shoreline of Manresa Island (see figure 5-4) ~~shall should~~ not exceed six miles per hour with **minimal** ~~no~~ wake. **This area is known as the Village Creek restricted speed zone.** Outside of this restricted speed area and within 100 feet of shore or of a dock, pier, float, or anchored or moored vessel, ~~vessel~~ **the speed of any power-propelled vessel shall should** also be limited to six miles per hour with **minimal** ~~no~~ wake, in accordance with RCSA Section 15-121-B14 ~~of the Connecticut General Statutes~~ and §69-3 of the Norwalk Code.

- 2(b) **Separation Among Vessels, Facilities, and Water Activity Areas:** Adequate separation should be maintained between moored vessels, berthing facilities, and water activity areas to help ensure public safety and reduce the risk of property damage caused by normal and abnormal marine conditions.

3. BOAT MOORING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3(a) **Mooring Administration and Allocation:** A limited number of individual-private moorings may be placed in the Village Creek area with appropriate permits from the Harbor Master. **Administration and allocation of all moorings shall be in accordance with all applicable provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, the Norwalk Code, the Connecticut General Statutes, and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council.**
- 3(b) **Mooring Tackle and Buoy Standards:** All mooring buoys and ground tackle shall conform to the “Minimum Standards for Mooring Tackle” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council. All buoys designating areas where boats may be anchored or moored shall comply with standards established in RCSA Section 15-121-A5.

4. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 4(a) **Water-Dependent Uses:** The continued beneficial operation of the water-dependent facilities of the Village Creek Harbor Corporation should be encouraged and supported, consistent with all other provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, the Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development, Norwalk Coastal Area Management Program, and the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations.

No expansion of existing boating facilities, including ~~the Village Creek channel and basin channels and berthing areas~~, should be approved unless it is shown that such expansion will not have significant adverse impacts on natural coastal resources, navigation, boating safety, water-dependent uses, and public rights to use Public Trust waters. Any expansion of existing boating facilities should be consistent with the capability of coastal resources to support such expansion.

- 4(b) **In-Water Structures:** The littoral rights of waterfront property owners for **reasonable access** to reach navigable water should be protected. Consistent with these rights, new or extended **floats, docks, and piers, and other in-water structures**, should **not cause significant adverse impacts on natural resources, public access opportunities, visual quality, and traditional water uses**. ~~be designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on coastal resources and water activities.~~ **In all cases,**

alternatives to the construction of fixed structures to reach navigable water should be considered, including floating docks and individual-private moorings. Docks and piers should be of the minimal length necessary to reach navigable water. **The appropriate extent to which in-water structures should extend seaward to reach navigable water will be evaluated by the Harbor Management Commission taking into consideration the littoral rights of waterfront property owners, existing Harbor conditions such as distance from shore to navigable water, public access requirements, the presence of coastal resources such as intertidal flats and shellfish beds, and other conditions.** ~~The use of long docks or piers to provide permanent docking facilities should be discouraged. Short piers or small floats to facilitate small craft access to moorings are preferred.~~ Construction of floats, docks, and piers by groups of littoral property owners for shared use should be encouraged to reduce potential adverse impacts on water uses and coastal resources. (See ~~Waterfront Land Use and Development Policies in Chapter Three.~~) The construction of new or extended floats, docks, and piers should not infringe on the littoral rights of adjoining property owners **or interfere with navigation.**

To reduce potential adverse impacts on navigation resulting from the construction of new or extended floats, docks, and piers, design guidelines established by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (and which have been adopted as guidelines by the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission) for the placement of fixed and floating structures in navigable waters ~~will~~ **should** be considered by the Harbor Management Commission in its review of proposed floats, docks, ~~and~~ piers. (See “**Guidelines for the Placement of Fixed and Floating Structures in Navigable Waters of the United States Regulated by the New England District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**” July 1996.) In the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary, including the need to protect valuable coastal resources, new or extended floats, docks, and piers should be consistent with the USACE’s guidelines.

- 4(c) **Neighborhood Protection:** The existing character and quality of life associated with shorefront residential areas should be protected. The development of commercial boating facilities should be prohibited **in accordance with the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations.**

5. WATER ACCESS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 5(a) **Access through Private Facilities:** Physical access to Norwalk Harbor and the waters of Long Island Sound from upland areas should continue through the private boating facilities of the Village Creek Harbor Corporation Homeowner’s Association and boating access facilities maintained by waterfront residents. The boating facilities of the Village Creek Harbor Corporation Homeowner’s Association should be recognized as providing important water access opportunities for members and guests of the Corporation. ~~Association.~~ The City **planning and zoning requirements** should support the continued operation and maintenance of these facilities.

- 5(b) **Public Access:** The right of the general public to use and have access to **Norwalk Harbor and Long Island Sound** ~~the waters of the Village Creek management unit~~ in accordance with the Public Trust Doctrine should be protected. Public access to public waters should be encouraged, but must be consistent with the littoral ~~not~~ ~~violate~~ the rights of shorefront property owners for reasonable access to navigable water. ~~, including littoral rights to reach navigable water.~~
- 5(c) **Car-Top Launching:** The Harbor Management Commission City should evaluate the feasibility of establishing a public launching and landing facility and pursue any existing and future opportunities to provide a public launching site in the Village Creek area to serve for small vessels such as canoes, dinghies, and kayaks that can be transported without trailers. To the extent feasible, establishment of such a facility should be encouraged and supported.

6. COASTAL RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

~~Improvement of Water Quality.~~ The City should vigorously pursue all feasible measures to maintain and improve water quality in the Village Creek management unit. All feasible measures to correct, reduce and/or eliminate sources of pollution, including improvement and repair of nearby sewerage facilities, reduction of non-point sources of pollution, and reduction or elimination of sources of pollution caused by boating activities, should be pursued and supported. [NOTE: THIS SECTION IS REMOVED BECAUSE IT REPEATS THE PLAN'S BASIC WATER QUALITY POLICY FROM CHAPTER THREE WHICH APPLIES TO ALL OF THE MANAGEMENT UNITS.]

- 6(a) **Intertidal Resources:** Consistent with City, State, and Federal laws and regulations, the ecological values of the intertidal flats and tidal wetlands found in the Village Creek area, including the Village Creek marsh, the tidal wetland west of Manresa island, the extensive intertidal flat along much of the eastern shoreline of the Wilson Point peninsula, and the intertidal area between Hoyt's Island and the Wilson Point peninsula, should be protected. (See figure 5-2 which shows the general location of these resources. See also the resource maps available in the Norwalk Planning and Zoning Office.)

The Village Creek Marsh and adjacent intertidal areas should be recognized as an intertidal resource area of special **ecological** significance.

The protection of natural resource values, including values related to fish and wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance, flood protection, and esthetic quality, should take precedence over recreational boating activities and boating facility development in the Village Creek area. Limited **water-dependent** uses and structures that would affect intertidal resources may be considered if the resource impacts are minimal and there are no feasible alternatives that would have less significant environmental impacts. Before any uses or structures are considered, a site-specific survey may be required

to precisely identify the location and extent of potentially affected intertidal flats and tidal wetlands.

- 6(b) **Wetland Restoration:** ~~To the extent possible, the City should encourage~~ The restoration and/or enhancement of degraded intertidal areas, including wetlands previously impacted by oil spills in the Manresa Island area, **is encouraged and supported to enhance the overall quality of natural coastal resources through improvement to water quality, scenic quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and other natural values. Any project for wetland restoration should be in accordance with a detailed plan based on best available scientific information, formulated with input from potentially affected parties, and duly approved by the responsible City, State, and Federal agencies.**
- 6(c) **Shellfish Resources:** Shellfish resources, including **shellfish habitat and shellfish populations associated with** natural shellfish grounds, should be protected and, to the extent possible, enhanced.
- 6(d) **“Shell Walk”:** The “shell walk” between Hoyt’s Island and the Wilson Point peninsula should be preserved as a significant historic resource.
- 6(e) **Hoyt’s Island:** Hoyt’s Island should be maintained as a natural open space area with the provision of wildlife habitat as a priority use.
- 6(f) **Vessel Waste Pump-Out Facility:** ~~The City should work closely with State and Federal agencies for eventual implementation of the Norwalk “no discharge” zone as authorized by State law and for inclusion of the Village Creek area in this zone.~~ **Establishment of a vessel waste pump-out facility or service to serve boats docked and moored in Village Creek is encouraged and supported.**
- 6(g) **Water Quality Monitoring:** The City should maintain a regular program of water quality monitoring in Village Creek and the **vicinity of Manresa Island area** to identify any **existing and potential** water quality problems that may exist and ~~to help identify~~ sources of pollution **and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.**

Special measures should be established to guard against water pollution caused by runoff and seepage from upstream commercial and industrial areas adjacent to Village Creek **in the vicinity of Wilson Avenue and Meadow Street.** Potential upstream sources of pollution should be regularly monitored by the City.

- 6(h) **Planning for Fuel Spill Emergencies at the Norwalk Harbor Power Station:** In coordination with City, State, and Federal government agencies, **the owner/operator of the Norwalk Harbor Power Station on Manresa Island** ~~Northeast Utilities~~ should maintain an appropriate fuel spill contingency plan for **operation of the Norwalk Harbor Power Station. on Manresa Island.** This plan should be periodically reviewed

by the City and updated by **the owner/operator** ~~Northeast Utilities~~ as needed. Equipment necessary for the control of fuel spill emergencies should be properly maintained on Manresa Island and periodically inspected to ensure continued readiness for responding to fuel spill emergencies.

- 6(i) Seabed Electric Cables: Maintenance, repair, and replacement, as necessary, of the existing seabed electric transmission cables running from the Norwalk Harbor Substation at Manresa Island across Norwalk Harbor and Long Island Sound to Northport, New York is encouraged and supported, consistent with the following guidelines:**
- i. All work should be planned, conducted, and maintained in accordance with best available technology to avoid, or otherwise mitigate, any significant adverse impacts on environmental resources including, but not limited to, finfish and shellfish resources and water quality.**
 - ii. All work should be planned, conducted, and maintained in accordance with best available technology to avoid, or otherwise mitigate, any significant adverse impacts on:**
 - a) navigation, including navigation in the Norwalk Harbor Federal navigation channel and the privately maintained Village Creek channel; and**
 - b) the ability of the Federal Government and private interests to conduct maintenance dredging as necessary to maintain the duly-authorized dimensions of the Federal channel and Village Creek channel, respectively.**
 - iii. When considering potential adverse impacts on navigation and maintenance dredging, as well as opportunities for avoiding those impacts, the applicant for any necessary cable maintenance, repair, and replacement should consult with the Harbor Management Commission and Harbor Master.**

CALF PASTURE BEACH — SPRITE ISLAND MANAGEMENT UNIT

The shoreline of the Calf Pasture Beach — Sprite Island Management Unit extends from the west shoreline of Calf Pasture Point on the west to the Norwalk/Westport boundary on the east. (See figure 5-5.) Prominent features include the City's principal beach recreation areas at Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach, the extensive marsh and intertidal area known as the Canfield Island Marsh, shorefront homes, and the large mooring field maintained by the Sprite Island Yacht Club.

The sandy beach at Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach is listed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a Federally authorized shore and beach protection project. The project, authorized in 1958, provided for the widening of approximately 2,200 feet of beach to 125 feet by direct placement of sandfill and the lengthening of two existing riprap groins to 400 feet. The project was completed with assistance from the State of Connecticut in 1959. The beach is used for recreational purposes by City residents and others. On the average, 25,000 beach stickers are distributed free to City residents each year.

Swimming and picnic facilities, ballfields, a public fishing pier, and two small boat launching ramps are found in the Park. One of the launching areas is near the Coast Guard Auxiliary building and is used primarily by sailboards; the other, to the east of the Coast Guard building, is used by nonmotorized craft such as sailboards, small car-top and trailered sailboats, canoes, and kayaks. These launching areas provide the public with opportunities for small craft access to the eastern part of the Outer Harbor. There are currently no similar facilities in the western part of the Outer Harbor.

The facilities at Calf Pasture Beach and Shady Beach are open to City residents free of charge. Nonresidents may also use the areas but must pay a daily entrance fee. Recreational shellfishing takes place offshore and summer concerts and other activities are held here.

Current shorefront zoning is "AAA Residence" from and including Calf Pasture Park to the Norwalk/Westport town line. (See "Building Zone Map of the City of Norwalk" revised to June 25, 2004.)

In addition to the beach at Calf Pasture Park/Shady Beach, other distinguishing features of this harbor management unit are the extensive wetland and intertidal area known as the Canfield Island Marsh (see figure 5-2) and the mooring field maintained by the Sprite Island Yacht Club.

Canfield Island Marsh is the largest tidal wetland in the Norwalk-Westport area. This expanse of State-regulated tidal wetlands, intertidal flats, and smaller areas of tidal pools is a highly productive natural environment that supports large numbers and varieties of marine life. It also serves as a nesting area for migratory birds. The marsh is bounded on the west by the golf course of the Shorehaven Country Club.



Figure 5-5: Calf Pasture Beach — Sprite Island Management Unit.

The Sprite Island Yacht Club maintains a mooring field in the nearshore area west of Sprite Island. A count from recent aerial photographs shows at least 85 boats moored in the area. Parking for access to the moorings takes place in a parking area on the mainland and water access is provided by the club's just west of the bridge to Canfield Island.

The Club's main facilities are located on Sprite Island which is located only about 400 yards off shore. Sprite Island is about 7.9 acres and is located within the jurisdiction of the Town of Westport. A large dock for the use of club members is located on the western shore and the island is used for various club activities from late April to mid-October.

The nearshore area of this harbor management unit, including the Canfield Island Marsh, is designated as a natural shellfish ground. The area west and south of Sprite Island, including the Sprite Island Yacht Club's mooring area, contains private shellfish grounds ("Town" grounds).

HARBOR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. NAVIGATION PROJECT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1(a) **Sprite Island Navigation Fairway**: A navigation fairway at least 100 feet in width ~~and~~ to be kept free of **any fixed and floating structures** ~~obstructions shall be should~~ be maintained generally parallel to the shoreline between the Sprite Island Yacht Club mooring area (**see no. 3(f) below**) and the **Calf Pasture Point — Sprite Island** restricted speed **zone** (**see no. 2(a) below**). ~~area to ensure free and safe passage of vessels. Vessel~~ speed in the navigation fairway should be consistent with water use (including **launch ferry** service between the mainland and the Sprite Island Yacht Club) and other **relevant** conditions in **this** ~~the~~ area.

1(b) **Dredging**. Dredging should, where consistent with all City, State, and Federal requirements, be limited to historically dredged areas and to dredging necessary to maintain existing boating access facilities. ~~It is recognized that historically dredged areas may re-establish themselves as productive subtidal and intertidal resources worthy of protection.~~

~~Any dredging should be undertaken in compliance with all applicable City, State, and Federal regulations and in a manner that will minimize adverse impacts on coastal resources.~~

1(c) **Aids to Navigation**: In accordance with State and Federal permit requirements (~~see Navigation Policies in Chapter Three~~), private aids to navigation, including appropriate speed limit signs, may be placed to increase boater awareness, identify areas where water skiing is not permitted, and help improve enforcement of **vessel** ~~marine~~ speed limits. **All regulatory and navigational markers shall be properly authorized in accordance with the requirements set forth in RCSA Section 15-121-A5.**

2. PUBLIC SAFETY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2(a) **Restricted Speed Zone:** In accordance with the City of Norwalk's restricted speed zone requirements established by §69-3 of the Norwalk Code, the speed of all power-propelled vessels within 100 yards (300 feet) of shore along the southerly and easterly side of Calf Pasture Beach and Shady Beach and easterly to the City line (see figure 5-5) shall ~~should~~ not exceed six miles per hour with minimal ~~no~~ wake. ~~in accordance with Section 15-121-B14 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Section 69-3 of the Code of the City of Norwalk.~~ This area is known as the Calf Pasture Point — Sprite Island restricted speed zone. In addition, outside of this restricted speed zone area and within 100 feet of shore or of a dock, pier, float, or any moored or anchored vessel, including vessels moored in the Sprite Island Yacht Club mooring area, vessel the speed of any power-propelled vessel shall ~~should~~ also be limited to six miles per hour with minimal ~~no~~ wake in accordance with Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Sec. 15-121-B14 ~~of the Connecticut General Statutes and §69-3 of the Norwalk Code.~~ of the City of Norwalk.
- 2(b) **Avoiding Conflicts in the Federal Channel:** Sailing classes and small craft training programs based at Calf Pasture Park should not occur within the nearby Federal navigation channel in a manner that poses a hazard or undue inconvenience to navigation. Similarly, boardsailing emanating from Calf Pasture Park should not occur within the Federal channel except as necessary to cross the channel in a manner that does not pose a hazard or inconvenience to navigation.

3. BOAT MOORING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3(a) **Mooring Plans:** The location of all moorings should be carefully planned and controlled to ensure: a) continued navigation safety; b) orderly and efficient distribution of moorings to optimize the use of available mooring space; c) equitable use of public waters by the general public, shorefront residents, private waterfront clubs, commercial shellfishermen, and others; and d) protection of coastal resources.
- 3(b) **Mooring Tackle and Buoy Standards:** All mooring buoys and ground tackle shall conform to the "Minimum Standards for Mooring Tackle" adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council. ~~mooring tackle used in this area should meet minimum mooring tackle guidelines and be subject to periodic inspection to help ensure public safety and reduce possible damage to other vessels and shorefront property caused by mooring tackle failure.~~ To ensure uniformity and avoid confusion among boaters, all buoys designating areas where boats may be anchored or moored shall comply with standards established in RCSA Section 15-121-A3.

- 3(c) **Mooring Administration and Allocation:** Administration and allocation of all individual-private and “commercial” moorings shall be in accordance with all applicable provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, the Norwalk Code, the Connecticut General Statutes, and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council.
- 3(d) **Removal, Inspection, and Reinstallation of Mooring Tackle:** In accordance with “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council, and with agreements between the owners/lessees of private shellfish grounds and the private yacht clubs, moorings should be removed during the non-boating season as needed to allow for inspection, repair, or replacement of mooring tackle and for commercial shellfish harvesting of shellfish from private shellfish grounds.² ~~from private shellfish grounds.~~ Reinstallation of mooring tackle following mooring inspection, repair, or replacement shall be in accordance with established mooring plans and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Council.
- 3(e) **Separation Between Moored Vessels:** Adequate separation should be maintained between all moored vessels to help ensure public safety and reduce the risk of property damage caused by normal and abnormal marine conditions.
- 3(f) **Yacht Club Mooring Area:** The nearshore area immediately west of Sprite Island should continue to be used for the placement of moorings used by members of the Sprite Island Yacht Club. Moorings maintained by the Yacht Club members shall ~~should~~ be in accordance with all applicable City, State, and Federal regulations. Any “commercial” mooring permits that may be issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for use of the Yacht Club mooring area. ~~These permits should not be issued for an indeterminate period of time but should be subject to periodic review and renewal. Permits A permit from the Norwalk Harbor Master shall should also be obtained for all moorings placed by Yacht Club members. the commercial mooring area and any commercial~~ All mooring permits issued by the Harbor Master shall ~~should~~ be issued in coordination with any “commercial” mooring permits that may be issued by ~~from~~ the USACE and the DEP. No expansion of the existing Yacht Club mooring area should be approved unless any concerns with regard to the potential impacts of that expansion on coastal resources, navigation safety, and use of nearshore waters by the general public are adequately addressed.

² When requested to do so by commercial fishermen, members of the Sprite Island Yacht Club have ~~has~~ removed their moorings during the non-boating season (November 1 to April 15) to allow commercial shellfishing to take place in the Sprite Island area.

- 3(g) **Placement of Moorings on Shellfish Grounds:** In accordance with **Sec. 26-157a(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes** ~~State law and existing agreements between the owners/lessees of private shellfish grounds commercial shellfishermen and the Sprite Island Yacht Club,~~ no mooring ~~shall~~ **should** be placed on any private shellfish ground (“Town ground”) without the approval of the owner or lessee of that ground. Such approval should be based on reasonable and specific criteria consistently applied to all by the owner/lessee.

4. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 4(a) **Water-Dependent Uses:** ~~The continued beneficial operation of water-dependent facilities, including the boating facilities of the Sprite Island Yacht Club, including the Club’s mainland docks and support facilities,~~ **beach recreation and water access facilities at Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach, small craft training facilities operating at Calf Pasture Park, and private boating facilities in the Canfield Island area, should be encouraged and supported, consistent with all other provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, *Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development*, *Norwalk Coastal Area Management Program*, and *Norwalk Building Zone Regulations*. ~~should be recognized as important water-dependent uses providing significant water access opportunities.~~ **The authority and provisions of the Harbor Management Plan, Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development, Norwalk Building Zone Regulations, and Connecticut Coastal Management Act as well as appropriate special incentives should be applied to City planning and zoning requirements should encourage and support the continued operation and maintenance of these water-dependent facilities.****

~~The continued City should continue to support the use of Calf Pasture Park for small craft training and education programs as well as launching for boardsailing and other nonmotorized small craft that can be transported without trailers should be encouraged and supported.~~

No expansion of existing boating facilities should be approved unless it is shown that such expansion will not have significant adverse impacts on natural coastal resources, navigation, boating safety, water-dependent uses, and public rights to use Public Trust waters. Any expansion of existing boating facilities should be consistent with the **capacity** ~~capability~~ of natural coastal resources to support such expansion.

- 4(b) **In-Water Structures:** The littoral rights of waterfront property owners **for reasonable access to reach navigable water should be protected.** Consistent with these rights, new or extended **floats, docks, and piers, and other in-water structures,** **should not cause significant adverse impacts on natural resources, public access opportunities, visual quality, and traditional water uses.** ~~be designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on coastal resources and water activities.~~ **In all cases, alternatives to the construction of fixed structures to reach navigable water**

should be considered, including floating docks and individual-private moorings. Floats, docks, and piers should be of the minimal length necessary to reach navigable water. The appropriate extent to which in-water structures should extend seaward to reach navigable water will be evaluated by the Harbor Management Commission taking into consideration the littoral rights of waterfront property owners, existing Harbor conditions such as distance from shore to navigable water, public access requirements, the presence of coastal resources such as intertidal flats and shellfish beds, and other conditions. The use of long docks or piers to provide permanent docking facilities should be discouraged. Short piers or small floats to facilitate small-craft access to moorings are preferred. Construction of floats, docks, and piers by groups of littoral property owners for shared use should be encouraged to reduce potential adverse impacts on water uses and coastal resources. (See ~~Waterfront Land Use and Development Policies in Chapter Three.~~) The construction of new or extended floats, docks, and piers should not infringe on the littoral rights of adjoining property owners or interfere with navigation.

To reduce potential adverse impacts on navigation resulting from the construction of new or extended floats, docks, and piers, design guidelines established by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (and which have been adopted as guidelines by the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission) for the placement of fixed and floating structures in navigable waters³ ~~will~~ **should** be considered by the Harbor Management Commission in its review of proposed floats, docks, and piers. (See “**Guidelines for the Placement of Fixed and Floating Structures in Navigable Waters of the United States Regulated by the New England District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**” July 1996.) In the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary, including the need to protect valuable coastal resources, new or extended floats, docks, and piers should be consistent with the USACE’s Guidelines.

- 4(c) **Neighborhood Protection:** The existing character and quality of life associated with the shorefront residential areas along Shorehaven Road and at Canfield Island should be protected.

5. WATER ACCESS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 5(a) **Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach:** Public access to the waters of Long Island Sound and Norwalk Harbor should be provided through Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach. **Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach should be managed and maintained as the City’s principal public beach recreation areas, providing opportunities for public access to Norwalk Harbor, including access for swimming, fishing, shellfishing, and nonmotorized boating activities such as board sailing, as well as opportunities for special waterfront events. Water access facilities to be**

³ ~~See “Guidelines for the Placement of Fixed and Floating Structures in Navigable Waters of the United States Regulated by the New England Division U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,” 2 April 1991.~~

maintained for public use and enjoyment include swimming and waterfront picnic facilities, a launching and landing area for nonmotorized vessels, a public fishing pier, and other amenities.

Continued development and enhancement of public water-dependent uses at Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach should be encouraged and supported, The City should continue to promote and encourage water dependent use and activities, including beach-related recreational activities, fishing (including shellfishing), launching of nonmotorized small craft, and small craft training and education programs available to the general public., at Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach. The City should evaluate and pursue Existing and future opportunities for improving public access, including physical and visual access, to the waters of Long Island Sound and Norwalk Harbor through Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach, should be evaluated and, to the extent feasible, pursued. Opportunities for launching small, nonmotorized vessels at Calf Pasture Park should be fully utilized and existing launching facilities improved to the extent possible.

The level of facility maintenance and City resources allocated for facility maintenance should be commensurate with the status of Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach as the City's principal public beach recreation areas.

The water access facilities at Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach will be managed and maintained in accordance with applicable provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, Norwalk City Code, and regulations adopted by the Norwalk Common Council. The Harbor Management Commission and Harbor Master will provide advisory assistance to the City's Recreation and Parks Department for the operation and enhancement of boating facilities.

- 5(b) Access through Private Facilities: Private Access to Norwalk Harbor, including the nearshore waters of Long Island Sound, from upland areas should continue to be provided through private beach and boating facilities, including the boating access facilities of the Sprite Island Yacht Club. and the Norwalk Jewish Community Center. The boating facilities of the Sprite Island Yacht Club, including the Club's mainland docks and support facilities, should be recognized as important water dependent uses providing significant water access opportunities for members and guests. City planning and zoning requirements should support the continued operation of these facilities.**
- 5(c) General Public Access: The right of the general public to use and have access to Norwalk Harbor, including the nearshore waters of Long Island Sound in accordance with the Public Trust Doctrine should be protected. Public access to public waters is encouraged but must be consistent with should not infringe on the littoral rights of shorefront property owners, including littoral rights for reasonable access to reach navigable water.**

6. COASTAL RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 6(a) **Intertidal Resources:** Consistent with City, State, and Federal laws and regulations, the ecological values of the intertidal flats and tidal wetlands found in the Canfield Island Marsh area and along the shoreline of Calf Pasture Point should be protected. (See figure 5-2 which shows the general location of these resources. See also the resource maps available in the Planning and Zoning Office.) Limited **water-dependent** uses and structures that would affect intertidal resources may be considered if the resource impacts are minimal and there are no feasible alternatives that would have less significant environmental impacts. Before any uses or structures are considered, a site-specific survey may be required to precisely identify the location and extent of potentially affected **intertidal flats and tidal wetlands**. ~~coastal resources.~~
- 6(b) **Canfield Island Marsh:** The Canfield Island Marsh should be recognized as an intertidal resource area of special **ecological** significance. Within the Canfield Island Marsh area, the protection of natural resource values, including values related to fish and wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance, flood protection, and **scenic esthetic** quality, should take precedence over the development of new structures such as **floats**, docks, and piers ~~to that~~ provide boating access.
- 6(c) **Shellfish Resources:** Shellfish resources, including **shellfish habitat and populations associated with the** natural shellfish grounds in the Canfield Island Marsh and nearshore areas along Calf Pasture Point as well as private shellfish grounds (“Town grounds”) further offshore, should be protected and, to the extent possible, enhanced.

~~Improvement of Water Quality. The City should vigorously pursue all feasible measures to maintain and improve water quality. All feasible measures to correct, reduce and/or eliminate sources of pollution, including improvement and repair of nearby sewerage facilities, reduction of non point sources of pollution, and reduction or elimination of sources of pollution caused by boating activities, should be pursued and supported. [NOTE: THIS SECTION IS REMOVED BECAUSE IT REPEATS THE BASIC WATER QUALITY POLICY ESTABLISHED IN CHAPTER THREE THAT APPLIES TO ALL OF THE MANAGEMENT UNITS.]~~

~~The City should work closely with State and Federal agencies for eventual implementation of the Norwalk “no discharge” zone as authorized by State law and for inclusion of the Calf Pasture Beach — Sprite Island area in this zone.~~

- 6(d) **Water Quality Monitoring:** The City should maintain a regular program of water quality monitoring in the vicinity of the beaches **recreation areas** and in the Canfield Island area to identify any **existing and potential water quality problems** that may exist and to help identify sources of pollution **and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.**

- 6(e) **The use of suitable best management practices (BMPs) to manage, reduce where feasible, or otherwise control stormwater runoff into Norwalk Harbor from the parking area and other impervious surfaces at Calf Pasture Park should be encouraged and supported. Appropriate stormwater collection and treatment systems and technology should be employed and maintained in accordance with best available technology to reduce the potential for nonpoint source pollution to enter the Harbor.**

7. SHELLFISHING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7(a) **Commercial Shellfishing:** ~~The City should support~~ Continued commercial shellfishing in conjunction with existing boating and other recreational uses **and in a manner that does not unreasonably conflict with existing land and water uses is encouraged and supported.**
- 7(b) **Recreational Shellfishing:** Continued access to the nearshore waters of Long Island Sound from Calf Pasture Park and Shady Beach for duly permitted recreational shellfishing, in conjunction with other beneficial recreational uses **and in a manner that does not unreasonably conflict with those other uses, is encouraged and supported.**

8. MANAGEMENT COORDINATION AND PLANNING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 8(a) **Coordination with the Town of Westport.** To the maximum extent possible, the City should coordinate planning, management, and enforcement actions with the Town of Westport to address any common concerns that may affect this harbor management unit, including concerns for protection of the Canfield Island Marsh and regulation of boating activities in the Sprite Island area.

NORWALK ISLANDS MANAGEMENT UNIT

The Norwalk Islands Management Unit (see figure 5-6) includes most of the Norwalk Islands, including the three main islands (Sheffield, Chimon, and Shea) and over 20 smaller islands, including “hummocks” that are largely or totally inundated at high water. Some of the islands are privately owned and contain seasonal residences; others are in public ownership. Grassy, Shea, The Plains, and Little Ram Islands are owned by the City of Norwalk. Chimon Island and part of Sheffield Island are owned by the Federal government and are part of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. Also included in the management unit are the Federal entrance channel to Norwalk Harbor and the “East” and “middle” passages which also provide navigation access to the Inner Harbor.

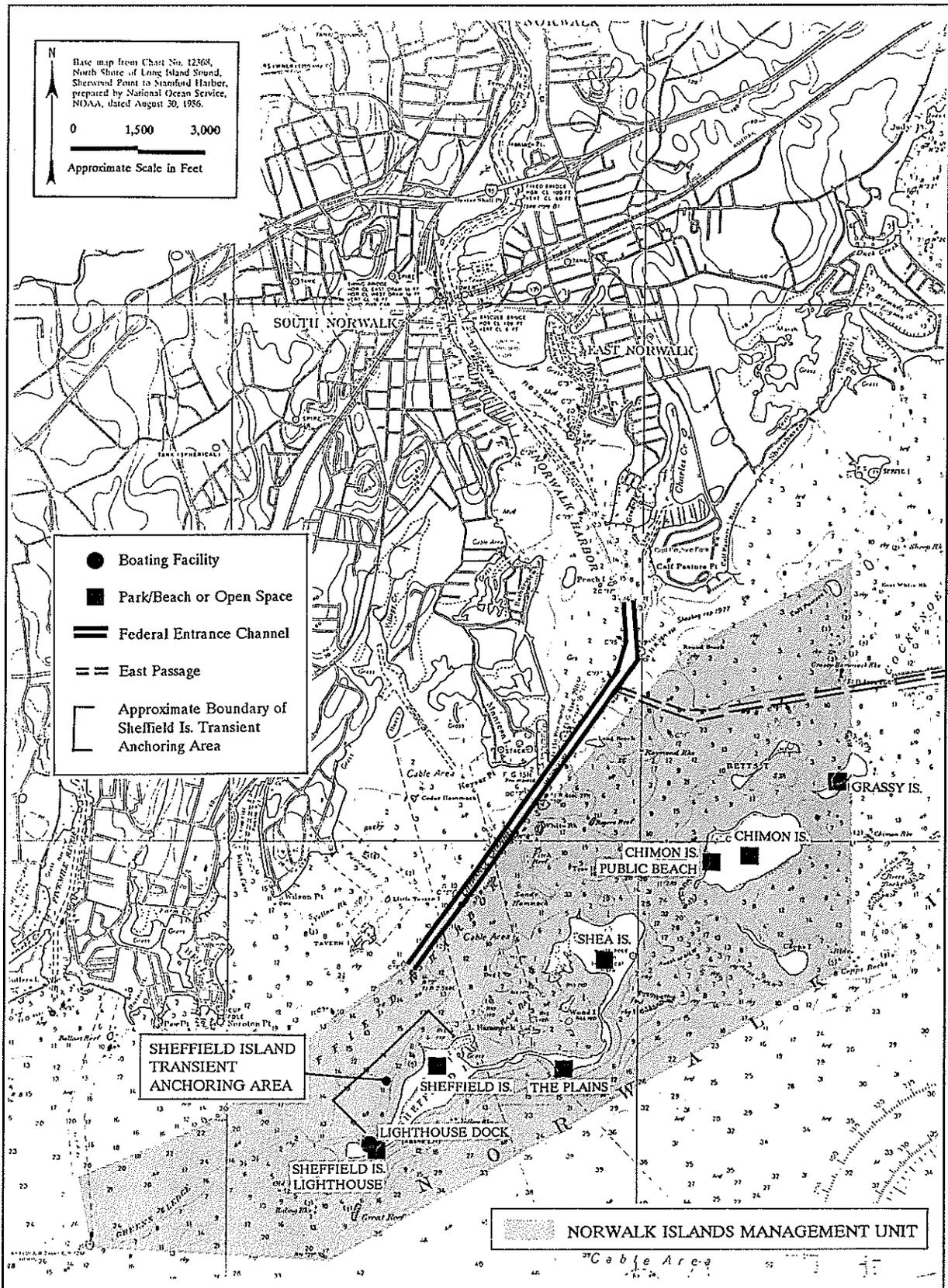


Figure 5-6: Norwalk Islands Management Unit.

The islands and surrounding waters support many types of recreational and other uses, including boating, fishing, and commercial and recreational shellfishing. Much of the area around the islands is designated as natural shellfish ground but private grounds also are found in the area and south of the islands are found State-leased and -franchised shellfish grounds (see chapter one). Sand beaches, gravel beaches, and interesting geological features such as spits and tombolos are found on the large outer islands. Wetlands and intertidal flats are found along the shorelines of several of the islands.

The Norwalk Plan of Conservation and Development proposes that all of the islands be zoned as “Island Conservation” and the existing zoning is consistent with this recommendation. (See “Building Zone Map of the City of Norwalk” revised to June 25, 2004.)

Chimon Island is the largest of the Norwalk Islands (about 66 acres). Its most distinguishing feature is the regionally unique habitat it provides for a large variety of bird species. The island has historically provided habitat for the largest nesting colony of herons, egrets, and ibises in the State and has supported one of the largest wading bird colonies along the Northeast coast. The island has also supported the largest and most diverse heron rookery in the northeast, and the only active rookery in the Long Island Sound area. Many songbirds have also been observed on the island along with ducks and pheasants.

To ensure protection of nesting birds, most of Chimon Island is closed to the public from April 1 through August 15 of each year. The beach on the western shore of the island, however, remains open for public use from sunrise to sunset throughout the summer boating season. This recreational beach is maintained by the City of Norwalk, under special use permit with the Fish and Wildlife Service. Under the permit’s conditions, the City, acting through the Police Department’s Marine Unit and the Recreation and Parks Department, is responsible for supervision and maintenance of the recreation area. During the summer months, a number of boats can be found moored off the beach on weekends and holidays. Picnics, swimming, fishing, and snorkeling are permitted here.

Sheffield Island is about 54 acres in size and is the second largest island. Connected to Shea Island by The Plains, Sheffield is actually part of the larger island complex that includes The Plains as well as Shea and Little Ram Islands. Ownership of the island is divided between the Federal government, the Norwalk Seaport Association, and private owners. The island has similar habitat characteristics to Chimon Island and therefore the potential to support similar colonial nesting water birds.

The Sheffield Island lighthouse on the western tip of the island is one of the City’s most important historic resources. The lighthouse was built in 1868 to mark the hazard of the Greens Ledge reef. The Norwalk Seaport Association bought the lighthouse and its 3.75 acre parcel of land in 1986. The lighthouse has been turned into a museum and the expressed goal of the Seaport Association is to preserve the character of the lighthouse and site, while enhancing its value to the public. Educational programs are provided for school children.

Shuttle trips to the Sheffield Island lighthouse from the Norwalk Seaport Association's Dock at South Norwalk are available for a fee. Visitors can also use their own boats to reach the island. A small bay on the north side of the island provides a sheltered area for anchoring and on a summer weekend it is not unusual to see numerous boats anchored here. The holding ground in this area is good, and the area has been used by transient boaters for many years. All types of recreational vessels with draft of up to 12 feet can be accommodated, with the deepest draft vessels furthest away from the shore.

Shea Island, connected to Sheffield Island by The Plains, has been owned by the City since 1960. Formerly known as Ram Island, its name was changed in 1971 to honor the memory of a Norwalk resident who lost his life in the Vietnam War. The island provides significant habitat for wading birds. A popular beach and camping area is found along the eastern shore.

Little Ram Island is a projection of Shea Island and was purchased by the City at the same time as Shea Island. Much of Little Ram Island is intertidal and there is an estimated 3.3 acres above high water. The Plains is a narrow band of mostly sand and gravel that connects Shea and Sheffield islands. Most of its estimated 12.5 acres is owned by the City; the section nearest Sheffield Island is part of the McKinney Wildlife Refuge. A large part of The Plains is inundated at high water but at low water one can walk across the area from Sheffield Island to Shea Island.

The sheltered bay known as Ram Bay north of The Plains and between Shea and Sheffield islands contains several small, privately owned islands.

The boundary line between Norwalk and Westport passes through Grassy Island which was purchased by the City of Norwalk in 1971. The island consists of about 8.8 acres and provides public camping sites managed by the Norwalk Recreation and Parks Department and open space for those who visit by boat. The island also provides important habitat for nesting birds.

The Norwalk Islands management unit also contains part of the Federal entrance channel to Norwalk Harbor. The authorized dimensions of the Federal channel in the Outer Harbor are 12 feet deep at mean **lower** low water and 200 feet wide. A natural channel known as the "East passage" is to the north of Betts Island and provides access to the Harbor from the east. This channel has a controlling depth of seven feet at **mean low water mlw**, is marked by Federal aids to navigation, and is used primarily by recreational boaters. A winding, unmarked, and more shallow passage is found between Chimon Island and Shea Island. Known as the "middle passage," it is sometimes used by those boaters most familiar with the area.

HARBOR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. NAVIGATION PROJECT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1(a) **Federal Project Maintenance:** The existing Congressionally authorized width of 200 feet, depth of 12 feet at mean low water, and position of the Norwalk Harbor entrance channel should be maintained to meet the navigation requirements of commercial and recreational vessels. Maintenance dredging of the channel should be carried out by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the most timely manner needed to provide safe navigation, ensure the continued viability of water-dependent uses, and maintain the economic advantages of waterborne transportation.
- 1(b) **Aids to Navigation:** Aids to navigation, including any buoys, beacons, signs, and other markers maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard, City of Norwalk, and private interests, should be adequate for marking the Federal channel, navigation fairways, and restricted speed zones. All regulatory and navigational markers shall be properly authorized in accordance with the requirements set forth in RCSA Section 15-121-A.

2. PUBLIC SAFETY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2(a) **Navigation Safety:** All feasible measures to maintain and improve navigation safety for recreational and commercial vessels using the Federal navigation channel and other navigation areas should be pursued and supported.
- 2(b) **Restricted Speed Zone:** The speed of all vessels within 100 feet of shore or of a dock, pier, float, or moored or anchored vessel, including vessels anchored in the transient anchoring area north of Sheffield Island (see 3(e) below), shall ~~should~~ be limited to 6 miles per hour with **minimal** ~~no~~ wake in accordance with RCSA Section 15-121-B14 of the Connecticut General Statutes and §69-3 of the Norwalk Code. ~~of the City of Norwalk.~~

3. MOORING AND ANCHORING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3(a) **Mooring Administration and Allocation:** Individual-private moorings may be placed by island residents and others with appropriate permits from the Harbor Master. Use of these moorings should not result in any adverse impacts on coastal resources and navigation. (See Recreational Boating Policies in Chapter Three.) **Administration and allocation of all individual-private and any “commercial” moorings shall be in accordance with all applicable provisions of the *Norwalk Harbor Management Plan*, the Norwalk Code, the Connecticut General Statutes, and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the**

Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council.

- 3(b) **Mooring Tackle and Buoy Standards:** All mooring buoys and ground tackle will conform to the “Minimum Standards for Mooring Tackle” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council. To ensure uniformity and avoid confusion among boaters, all buoys designating areas where boats may be anchored or moored shall comply with standards established in RCSA Section 15-121-A3.
- 3(c) **Removal, Inspection, and Reinstallation of Mooring Tackle:** In accordance with “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Harbor Management Commission and approved by the Norwalk Common Council, and any agreements between the owners/lessees of private shellfish grounds and mooring permit holders, moorings should be removed during the non-boating season as needed to allow for inspection, repair, or replacement of mooring tackle and for commercial harvesting of shellfish from private shellfish grounds. Reinstallation of mooring tackle following mooring inspection, repair, or replacement shall be in accordance with established mooring plans and the “Rules and Regulations for Mooring and Anchoring Vessels” adopted by the Commission and approved by the Council.
- 3(d) **Placement of Moorings on Shellfish Grounds:** In accordance with Sec. 26-157a(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes, ~~State law,~~ no mooring or other structure shall ~~should~~ be placed on any private shellfish ground (“Town ground”) without the approval of the owner or lessee of that ground. Such approval should be based on reasonable and specific criteria consistently applied to all by the owner/lessee.
- 3(e) **Transient Anchoring Area:** A transient anchoring area (the general location of which is shown on figure 5-6) ~~is should~~ be designated in the sheltered area north of Sheffield Island and near the Sheffield Island Lighthouse **Park** for short term and overnight use by boaters visiting the **Sheffield Island** Lighthouse Park and for use by other transient boaters. **Use of the transient anchoring area is subject to control and management by the Harbor Management Commission and Harbor Master. Use of the transient anchoring area is open to all on equal terms with anchoring locations available on a first-come, first-served basis.** Other transient anchoring areas may be identified by the Harbor Management Commission **acting in consultation with the Harbor Master.**

4. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 4(a) **In-Water Structures:** The littoral rights of waterfront property owners for reasonable access to navigable water should be protected. Consistent with these rights, new or extended floats, docks, piers, and other in-water structures, should

not cause significant adverse impacts on natural resources, public access opportunities, visual quality, and traditional water uses. In all cases, alternatives to the construction of fixed structures to reach navigable water should be considered, including floating docks and individual-private moorings. Floats, docks, and piers should be of the minimal length necessary to reach navigable water. The appropriate extent to which in-water structures should extend seaward to reach navigable water will be evaluated by the Harbor Management Commission taking into consideration the littoral rights of waterfront property owners, existing Harbor conditions such as distance from shore to navigable water, public access requirements, the presence of coastal resources such as intertidal flats and shellfish beds, and other conditions. Construction of floats, docks, and piers by groups of littoral property owners for shared use should be encouraged to reduce potential adverse impacts on water uses and coastal resources. The construction of new or extended floats, docks, and piers should not infringe on the littoral rights of adjoining property owners or interfere with navigation.

To reduce potential adverse impacts on navigation resulting from the construction of new or extended floats, docks, and piers, design guidelines established by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (and which have been adopted as guidelines by the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission) for the placement of fixed and floating structures in navigable waters will be considered by the Harbor Management Commission in its review of proposed floats, docks, and piers. (See “Guidelines for the Placement of Fixed and Floating Structures in Navigable Waters of the United States Regulated by the New England District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.” July 1996.) In the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary, including the need to protect valuable coastal resources, new or extended floats, docks, and piers should be consistent with the USACE’s guidelines.

- 4(b) **Residential Use:** Any residential use and development of the privately owned islands shall be in compliance with all applicable City, State, and Federal requirements including the requirements of the City of Norwalk’s Building Zone Regulations and the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. The existing character and quality of life associated with residential use of the privately owned islands should be protected.

5. WATER ACCESS GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 5(a) **Recreational Use:** ~~The City should support~~ Continued recreational use of the publicly owned islands is encouraged and supported. Planning and management of recreational uses ~~This use should be coordinated with efforts to protect and manage island resources (see no. 6 below on the preceding page).~~ Recreational activities on the islands should be planned and undertaken in a manner consistent with the capacity

capability of island resources to: 1) safely accommodate those activities; and 2) accommodate those activities without significant adverse impacts on **natural** coastal resources and environmental quality.

Opportunities for **beneficial** recreational use of the islands should be fully utilized. Existing public recreation areas should be maintained **in a timely, effective manner as necessary to provide an attractive environment and safe and enjoyable public areas**. Existing public recreation areas should, to the extent possible, be enhanced for public use and enjoyment. **The Harbor Management Commission and Harbor Master will provide advisory assistance to the City's Recreation and Parks Department for operation and enhancement of City-owned and/or City-managed island facilities.**

- 5(b) **Chimon Island Recreation Area**: Public recreational use should continue on the western shore of Chimon Island on the beach maintained by the City of Norwalk under special use permit with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- 5(c) **Island Camping**: Designated island camping sites should be properly managed and maintained in a manner to provide an enjoyable recreational experience and to avoid any significant adverse impacts on natural coastal resources. Continued use of City-owned camp sites on Shea and Grassy islands is encouraged and supported, subject to control and management by the City's Recreation and Parks Department. Day-use and overnight camping should be in accordance with permits issued by the Recreation and Parks Department.
- 5(d) **Boating Access**: ~~Continued~~ Excursion boats should continue to provide public access to the islands via excursion vessels operated in coordination with uses and activities at the Maritime Aquarium Center at Norwalk and the Sheffield Island Lighthouse Park **is encouraged and supported**. Transient boaters ~~are~~ should be encouraged to visit the Sheffield Island Lighthouse Park **and to anchor in the designated transient anchoring area (see no. 3(e) above).**
- 5(e) **Data Base of Recreational Use**: A data base of information pertaining to recreational uses of the islands should be **maintained**. ~~established~~. This data base should be used to assess recreational needs and potential impacts and to develop an effective management plans for **publicly owned areas** the Norwalk Islands that will provide for recreational use **in balance with conservation** and the protection of ecological values.

6. COASTAL RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 6(a) **Island Resources**: The Norwalk Islands should be recognized as a unique **natural** feature of Connecticut's western Long Island Sound shoreline providing **significant** ~~important~~ ecological values and recreational opportunities.

- 6(b) **Intertidal Resources:** Consistent with City, State, and Federal laws and regulations, the ecological values of the intertidal flats, **tidal** wetlands, sandy and rocky beaches, and other intertidal resources in and near the Norwalk Islands should be protected. (See **figure 5-2 which shows the general location of these resources. See also** the resource maps available in the Planning and Zoning Office.) **Limited water-dependent uses and structures that would affect intertidal resources may be considered if the resource impacts are minimal and there are no feasible alternatives that would have less significant environmental impacts.** Before any uses or structures ~~that would affect coastal resources~~ are considered, a site-specific survey may be required to precisely identify the location and extent of potentially affected coastal resources.
- 6(c) **Nesting Habitat:** ~~Significant~~ **Important** nesting habitat used by shorebirds, wading birds, waterfowl, and songbirds should be protected and managed for nesting use through a cooperative effort by the City of Norwalk, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, relevant Federal government agencies, and private non-profit organizations. Management of nesting habitat should be coordinated with recreational use in a manner that does not result in significant adverse impacts on the nesting species and provides for continued recreational use. (See no. **5(a) above.** ~~on the following page.~~)
- Research should continue to be conducted on nesting bird populations and recreational uses to develop the information needed to most effectively manage the bird populations and provide for continued recreational use.
- 6(d) **Shellfish Resources:** The shellfish resources in the area of the Norwalk Islands, including **shellfish habitat and populations associated with the** “Town grounds” designated for private use, natural grounds for public use, and State-leased or franchised grounds, should be recognized as among the most valuable shellfish resources found in the northeast United States. These resources should be protected and, to the extent possible, enhanced.
- 6(e) **Open Space Acquisition:** The City, **acting** in coordination with private non-profit organizations **when appropriate**, should **pursue** ~~consider~~ the acquisition of **island land and easements (through purchase, donation, or other proper means)** and ~~protection of additional island property~~ when such opportunity may arise **and where such acquisition will enhance the overall beneficial value and usefulness of the City’s open space system.**

~~Maintenance of Water Quality. The City should vigorously pursue all feasible measures to maintain and improve water quality in the Outer Harbor and Norwalk Islands area. All feasible measures to correct, reduce and/or eliminate sources of pollution, including discharge of sewage from vessel holding tanks, should be pursued and supported. [NOTE: THIS SECTION IS DELETED BECAUSE IT REPEATS THE PLAN’S BASIC WATER QUALITY POLICY ESTABLISHED IN CHAPTER THREE THAT APPLIES TO ALL OF THE MANAGEMENT UNITS.]~~

~~The City should work closely with State and Federal agencies for eventual implementation of the Norwalk “no discharge” zone as authorized by State law and for inclusion of the Norwalk Islands area in this zone.~~

6(f) Water Quality Monitoring: The City should maintain a regular program of water quality monitoring in the vicinity of the islands to identify any **existing and potential** ~~water quality problems that may exist and to help identify~~ sources of pollution **and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.**

6(g) Enforcement of Regulations: The City as well as State and Federal government agencies should commit the resources necessary to ensure that existing environmental protection and public use regulations are adequately enforced.

7. SHELLFISHING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

7(a) Recreational and Commercial Shellfishing: ~~The City should support~~ Continued public recreational shellfishing and commercial shellfishing in conjunction with recreational boating and other recreational uses **and in a manner that does not unreasonably conflict with existing island and water uses are encouraged and supported.**

8. MANAGEMENT COORDINATION AND PLANNING GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

8(a) Interagency Cooperation: Effective planning and management for use and **conservation** ~~protection~~ of island resources should be carried out through a cooperative effort **among** ~~between~~ the different City, State, and Federal **agencies** ~~bodies~~ as well as private groups concerned with the islands. City entities to be involved should include the Mayor’s Office, Common Council, Harbor Management Commission, Recreation and Parks Department, Conservation Commission, Shellfish Commission, Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, **Fire Department**, and Police Department. State and Federal agencies to be involved should include the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Private organizations such as the Connecticut Audubon Society and the Norwalk Seaport Association as well as private island owners, concerned citizens, and the Town of Westport, should also be given an opportunity to participate.

Procedures for ~~formalized~~ and continuous coordination and cooperation among the different City, State, and Federal **agencies** ~~bodies~~ as well as private groups and individuals concerned with the islands should be established. These procedures should help to guide future planning, management and enforcement actions affecting the islands. An open forum should be established among all interested parties to maintain essential communication and to foster coordination.

- 8(b) **Management Plans:** The publicly owned Norwalk Islands should be managed in accordance with specific management plans that will ~~A comprehensive management plan should be prepared for the Norwalk Islands to~~ guide the long-term use and protection of island resources. The management plans should encourage a balance between recreational use of the publicly owned islands and conservation of nesting habitat and other sensitive island resources.
- 8(c) **Public Awareness:** Efforts to maintain and increase public awareness of the regulations applicable to island resource use and protection **are encouraged and supported.** ~~should be increased.~~