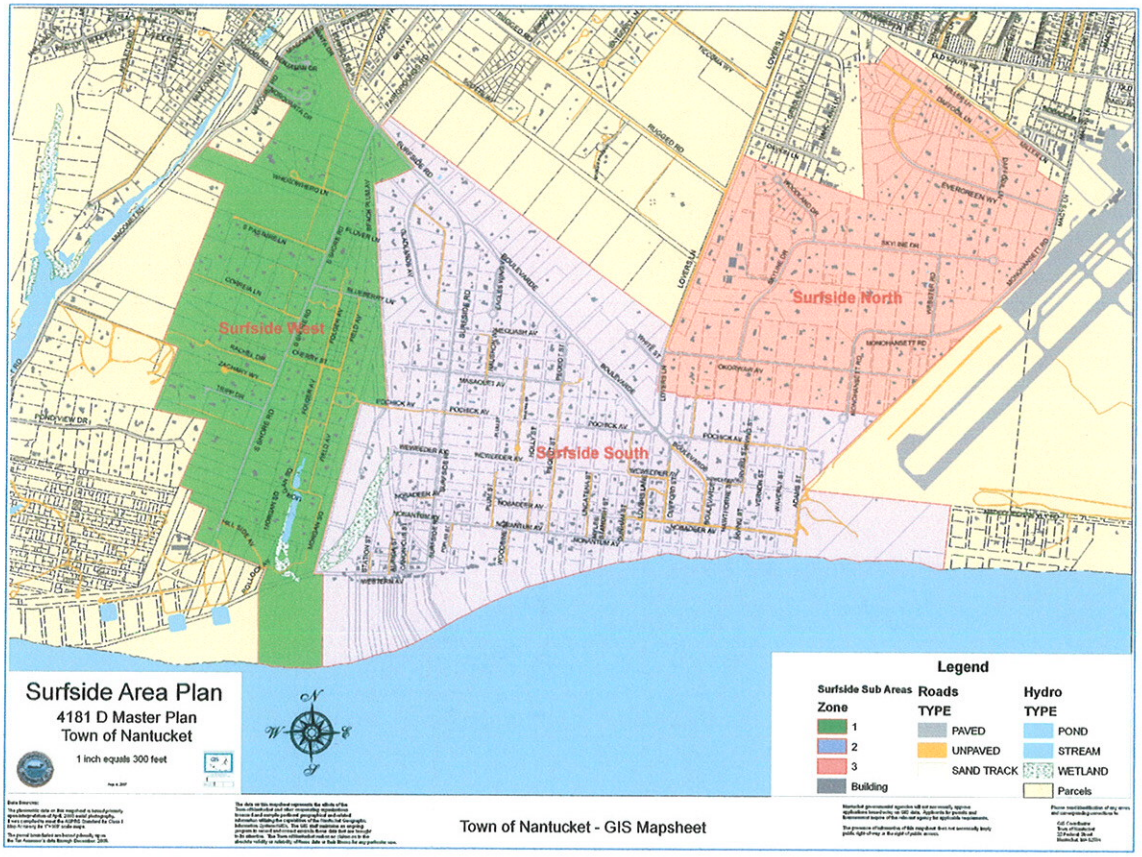
SURFSIDE AREA PLAN

NANTUCKET, MA



OCTOBER 6, 2008

Final Draft

(As revised and approved by the SAPWG)

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A special thanks to the staff of the NP&EDC, Andrew Vorce, Tom Broadrick, Leslie Woodson and Jeri Hicks for their support and assistance and to the Surfside Association for their funding support for mailings and travel expenses.

Introduction

As it began its study, the Surfside Area Plan Work Group realized that it was dealing with a complex section of the island and recognized three separate, distinct, and extremely diverse sub areas within our area; South Shore Road, near the Airport, and the beachfront. Some of us who have lived along the beachfront for many years have known the area for its impressive beaches and rural characteristics.

These beaches were historically important to the earliest inhabitants of the island as lookouts for whale hunting and ship rescues. In the nineteenth century the first rescue station and staff were located near the Point of Breakers (now at the end of Western Avenue where it is a popular low-priced hostel for island guests).

As whaling declined, the broad beaches attracted tourists. A railroad was built from the Town to Surfside on the way to 'Sconset and a hotel was built offering tourists many attractions. Unfortunately, erosion rapidly undercut the foundations of both the hotel and the railroad causing their ultimate demise. During this period, developers marked out hundreds of small lots for sale along the shore. Some of these lots still exist today.

Since the early sixties two other neighborhoods back of the beachfront began to house a large year-round working population as well a summer rental population, one in the South Shore Road area and another near the airport. In the 1980's the Braun Estates lots abutting the Boulevarde and Lovers Lane became available for development. On two and three acre lots, the houses erected were large and two-story, in contrast with the older one story houses along the shore. Recent developments have continued to expand and modify each sub-area.

In the Area Plan following are recommendations addressing the nine elements of the 41-81D Master Plan. These proposals will point the way to changes that Surfside needs to improve its community for the future.

Draft as approved 10-06-08

1. Goals and Policy Statement:

The goals and policy of the Surfside Area Plan are to articulate a vision for the Surfside area as a unique area of Nantucket, comprised of at least three diverse neighborhoods with their own areas of concern and unique features. The goal of the Surfside Area Plan Work Group is to preserve the diversity and character of these distinct neighborhoods, while addressing the issues facing each one individually and as a large area with common concerns. Our recommendations support this goal and endeavor to be as comprehensive and inclusive as possible.

The objectives laid out in the Nantucket Comprehensive Plan as well as the nine elements specified in the 41-81D Master Plan, as endorsed by the Nantucket Planning Board, were considered when developing this area plan. The Surfside Area Plan took into account comments from a written survey to the area's residents specific to their own neighborhoods as well as various meetings to which all were invited. In addition, the Work Group took into consideration information obtained from various Nantucket Town departments and other expert sources.

2. Land Use:

The Land Use plan element identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.

1 The Surfside Area Plan Work Group (SAPWG) recommends establishing zoning specific to the Surfside Area, similar to that which has been adopted in the Siasconset Area, which would create specific SFR-1, SFR-10, SFR-2, SFLUG-1, SFLUG-2 zones, with the future goal of creating zoning districts with requirements that would more accurately reflect the existing underlying development patterns and to further protect the Surfside Area's unique neighborhood characteristics.

2 Based upon the foregoing, the SAPWG recommends that a perimeter beachfront zoning district be established that would encompass properties within a prescribed distance from the beach area, within which a maximum height of 25 feet for structures would be allowed and an allowance for increased ground cover would be available for construction of single-story structures. The goal would be to maintain the smaller summer cottage characteristics of the original beach community proximate to the beach area as well as public sight lines to the ocean.

3 Based upon the foregoing, the SAPWG recommends that ground cover allowances be reduced for sub minimum lots. Sub minimum lots with a lot size from 5,000 to 7,500 square feet of lot area would be allowed a maximum ground cover of 20% rather than 1,500 square feet as is currently a matter of right. This would avoid overbuilding of small nonconforming lots within the largely rural context.

4 The SAPWG recommends the clean up and "rationalizing" of the areas where zoning district boundary lines within the Surfside Area are inconsistent with property boundary lines and in some cases, bisect individual parcels. Such realignment of zoning district boundary lines to more appropriately follow property boundary lines would eliminate individual properties from the imposition of different zoning district requirements within one parcel's lot lines.

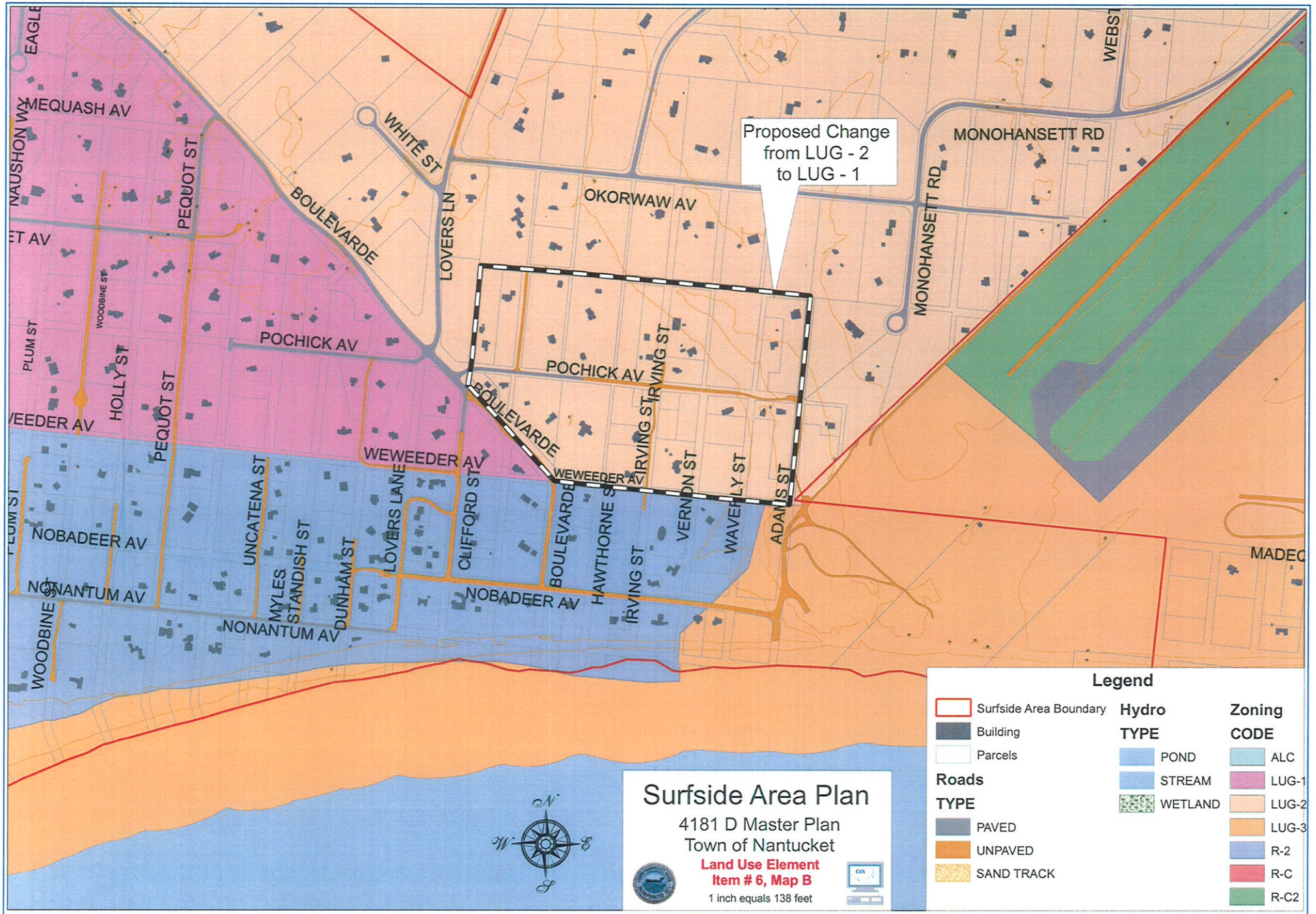
Land Use – continued:

5 The SAPWG recommends that the area serviced by South Shore Road within the Surfside West plan area be assessed for rezoning from LUG-2 to LUG-1, should that be supported by the residents as a viable option. The SAPWG notes that the area already contains Sherburne Commons with 40 units and Abram's Quarry, a 40B development with 28 units and a possible future 40B extension, and that one interior area has already been re-zoned from LUG-2 to LUG-1. Therefore rezoning to LUG-1 would more accurately reflect the underlying development pattern and existing lot sizes.

6 The SAPWG recommends that the area bounded by a north line running in an east-west direction along the rear property lines of those properties that front on Pochick from Lovers Lane on the west to Adams Street on the east, bounded on the west by a line beginning at the intersection of the northerly line mentioned above, southerly on Lovers Lane to the intersection of the Boulevarde then southeasterly along the Boulevarde to the intersection of Weweeder Avenue, bounded on the south by a line along Weweeder Avenue from the intersection of the Boulevarde easterly to Adams Street, bounded on the east by a line running north and south along Adams Street from the intersection of Weweeder Avenue to the previously mentioned northerly boundary line of those properties fronting on Pochick , be re-zoned from LUG-2 to LUG-1 in order to have the overlying zoning district more accurately reflect the existing lot sizes and development pattern. **See attached Map B**

7 The SAPWG recommends that the status of all paper roads throughout the Surfside Area be assessed. Those that provide a clear public benefit or that may be required for emergency vehicular access should be maintained and improved to minimum standards. Those that do not have a public benefit should be disposed of as part of the Town's "yard sale program".

8 The SAPWG recommends that all Town identified beach access points be clearly marked and that any attempt by adjoining neighbors to encroach on the access paths or limit public use of these paths should be dealt with promptly by the appropriate Town enforcement agencies.



Data Sources:

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Nantucket, MA 02554

Land Use – continued:

9 The SAPWG recommends that property owners be encouraged to use existing roadways to access their properties and not open new paper roads where access is already provided from an existing roadway. Those portions of roadways that are not currently used for access to properties and where access is already available from other points, should be extinguished.

10 The SAPWG recommends that the Surfside Area should remain residential in character and no commercial zoning district be imposed upon any part of the area covered by this document except as otherwise permitted.

3. Housing:

The Housing Element identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives, including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.

1. The SAPWG recommends the establishment of a Surfside Planning Committee to coordinate efforts to maintain the unique characteristics of the three distinct neighborhoods and represent the interests of the Surfside area before Town entities.

2. The SAPWG recommends that an island perimeter beachfront zone be adopted that would limit building height to a maximum of 25 feet for primary structures and 22 feet for ancillary structures, including secondary dwellings.

3. The SAPWG recommends the establishment of standards to be used as a guideline for determining appropriate residential development within the defined areas. There are three distinct neighborhoods that comprise the Surfside area. The Surfside Area Planning Committee will assist in delineating areas where houses are similar in style, mass, and height, and, in some cases, history.

4. The SAPWG recommends that the standards for determining existing development patterns in these individual neighborhoods be codified by a database developed by the Surfside Planning Committee. The findings would be helpful to Town Boards and Committees, such as the Historic District Committee. Any new development would then be consistent with existing patterns and styles.

5. The SAPWG recommends that a framework of communication be established between neighbors of proposed affordable housing sites and any agency involved with affordable housing prior to the approval of such proposals.

Housing- continued:

6. The SAPWG supports the use of selected Town-owned property for affordable housing as a joint venture between the appropriate entities and the Surfside Planning Committee. The SAPWG also supports the offering of existing Town-owned land with high value "in trade" for other lands to avoid clustering of affordable housing lot sites within one neighborhood.

7. The SAPWG supports the Town's yard-sale program to abutting property owners of Town parcels that cannot be developed in order to maintain the character of a particular neighborhood and to increase the tax base.

4. Economic Development:

The Economic Element identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.

1. The SAPWG recommends that the Surfside Area remain residential in character and no commercial zoning district be imposed upon any part of the area covered by this plan other than that which is otherwise permitted, such as home or cottage industries.

5. Natural and Cultural Resources:

The Natural and Cultural Resources Element provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural and historic resources of the Surfside Area.

1. The SAPWG supports preserving the rural, natural character of the Surfside area and the importance of maintaining dirt roads as opposed to unnecessary paving of these roads.

2. The SAPWG supports the preservation efforts to maintain open land in the Surfside area and any Native American habitats either existing or still unknown in the area, particularly where artifacts have been discovered, such as the Native American cemetery on the Housing Authority property along Surfside Road as well as the large deposit of Native American artifacts found at Sherburne Commons.

6. Open Space & Recreation:

The Open Space and Recreation Element provides an inventory of recreational and resources and open space areas of the Surfside Area, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas.

Open Space:

1 The SAPWG recommends the setting of a maximum height for structures, to preserve the rural character and sense of open space, sited within a prescribed distance from the coastal dune. We recommend the establishment of a perimeter beachfront zoning district along the shore line, to preserve scenic ocean views and public access to open space in the Surfside area.

2 The SAPWG supports Land Bank acquisitions specifically within the Surfside area for purposes of preserving open space and beach access for recreational use and passive enjoyment by the public.

3 The SAPWG supports the use of conservation restrictions and use of other conservation tools as a means to preserve open space situated on private property.

4. The SAPWG supports the strict adherence to, and acknowledges the critical importance of, the Nantucket Beach Management Plan for protecting the dunes and beach areas in Surfside. We further support the "Footprints Only", ACK Clean Team, and similar campaigns and recommend the Town formalize these efforts.

5. The SAPWG recommends that the Town-owned land along the former railroad bed be dedicated to passive recreational purposes as part of the "green belt" plan, either through restrictions on the use of the property placed by the Town as the owner or through transfer of title to an entity such as the Nantucket Land Bank for use consistent with that organization's goals and objectives.

6. Open Space & Recreation:

Recreation:

1. The SAPWG recommends that Town agencies provide regular maintenance and repair to the Surfside Beach concession stand and bathrooms, and other such access related areas as paths and stairways to the beach to ensure safe and adequate beach access. Further, we recommend that the appropriate entity install and maintain signage indicating access ways and any restrictions pertaining to beach usage. We further support the "Footprints Only", Clean Team and other similar campaigns for all Surfside area beaches.

2. The SAPWG supports the One Big Beach Plan and recommends that the Town, pursuant to the Beach Management Plan and acting through its Right of Way Committee and the NP&EDC, identify and secure access to public beaches, waterfront areas, or beaches with granted easements

3. The SAPWG supports the enforcement of existing leash laws with particular attention to the beach areas; and that it is the responsibility of owners to control and pick up after their pets.

4. The SAPWG supports controlled vehicular access in conjunction with the Beach Management Plan to designated Surfside Beach areas with appropriate restrictions and permits.

5. The SAPWG recommends a continuing education effort to encourage the removal of all trash and litter from our beaches. We further recommend that the Town adopt regulations with regard to trash disposal, which would include penalties, in order to curtail the wanton disposal of personal trash and litter along the roadsides in the Surfside area, particularly those areas immediately adjacent to the beach access points. The placement of additional appropriately designed trash receptacles at certain beach access points with a comprehensive plan for regular collection may be warranted.

6. The SAPWG recommends the creation of a playground area adjacent to the Surfside Public Beach area.

7. Services and Facilities:

The Services and Facilities Element identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.

1. The SAPWG supports the stringent enforcement of existing laws and regulations as to parking and speeding in the Surfside area, with particular emphasis during the summer months and at night in the parking areas adjacent to the beach access points. Parking enforcement would also ensure that roadways are left passable by emergency vehicles.

2. The SAPWG supports establishment of a "Neighborhood Watch" programs, particularly in areas that are largely inhabited on a year-round basis, in order to increase safety in the rural areas of Surfside.

3. The SAPWG recommends a feasibility study of creating water reservoirs to provide sufficient water reserves to be utilized by the Nantucket Fire Department in fire suppression in any area not currently serviced by municipal water and fire hydrants.

4. If water reservoirs can not be provided, the SAPWG recommends extending the municipal water lines to the Surfside area in order to provide an adequate system of hydrants to aid in fire suppression

5. The SAPWG recommends all traveled ways in the Surfside area be clearly marked with appropriate signage and supports enforcement of the Town Code that requires all houses to be clearly marked with street numbers.

6. The SAPWG recommends strict adherence to the noise abatement program as adopted by the Nantucket Airport Commission and asks there be consistent enforcement of appropriate penalties for infractions.

7. The SAPWG recommends relocation of the General Aviation jet ramp parking area to the northeast side of the airport property in order to minimize the negative impact from noise and fumes on the residential properties adjacent to the westerly side of the airport property.

Service and Facilities – continued:

8. The SAPWG recommends a regular outreach effort be undertaken by the Nantucket Airport Commission/Administration to the property owners proximate to the airport property in the Surfside area in order to improve communication and encourage public participation in airport related issues that affect the abutting residential properties.

9. The SAPWG recommends that the airport aircraft parking ramp lighting be redirected and diminished to prevent light pollution and light trespass to adjacent neighborhoods. Nantucket Ordinance Chapter 102 Outdoor Lighting should be used as reference and guidance.

10. The SAPWG opposes the implementation of a bulk fuel off-loading facility in the ocean off the south shore area, particularly the Surfside Beach area. Our concerns include the negative impact to the fragile environment, wildlife, and use of the beaches, should the beaches become fouled from a disastrous spill.

11. The SAPWG recommends seasonal sanitary facilities at access points to Nobadeer Beach.

12. The SAPWG supports provision of an adequate budget for the Nantucket Parks and Recreation Department in order to provide sufficient funding to maintain the Surfside Public Beach concession stand and bathrooms, including regular painting and improved fixtures. We also recommend regular inspections of these bathrooms to ensure they are maintained and cleaned by the concessionaire per the terms of their lease.

13. The SAPWG recommends the burial of remaining utility service lines in the Surfside area, in order to protect utility service from the elements and lessen visual impact on the rural character of the area.

13. The SAPWG recommends that the NRTA provide regular and adequate service to the Surfside Beach area and further recommends the expansion of service to run earlier and later in the seasons.

8. Circulation:

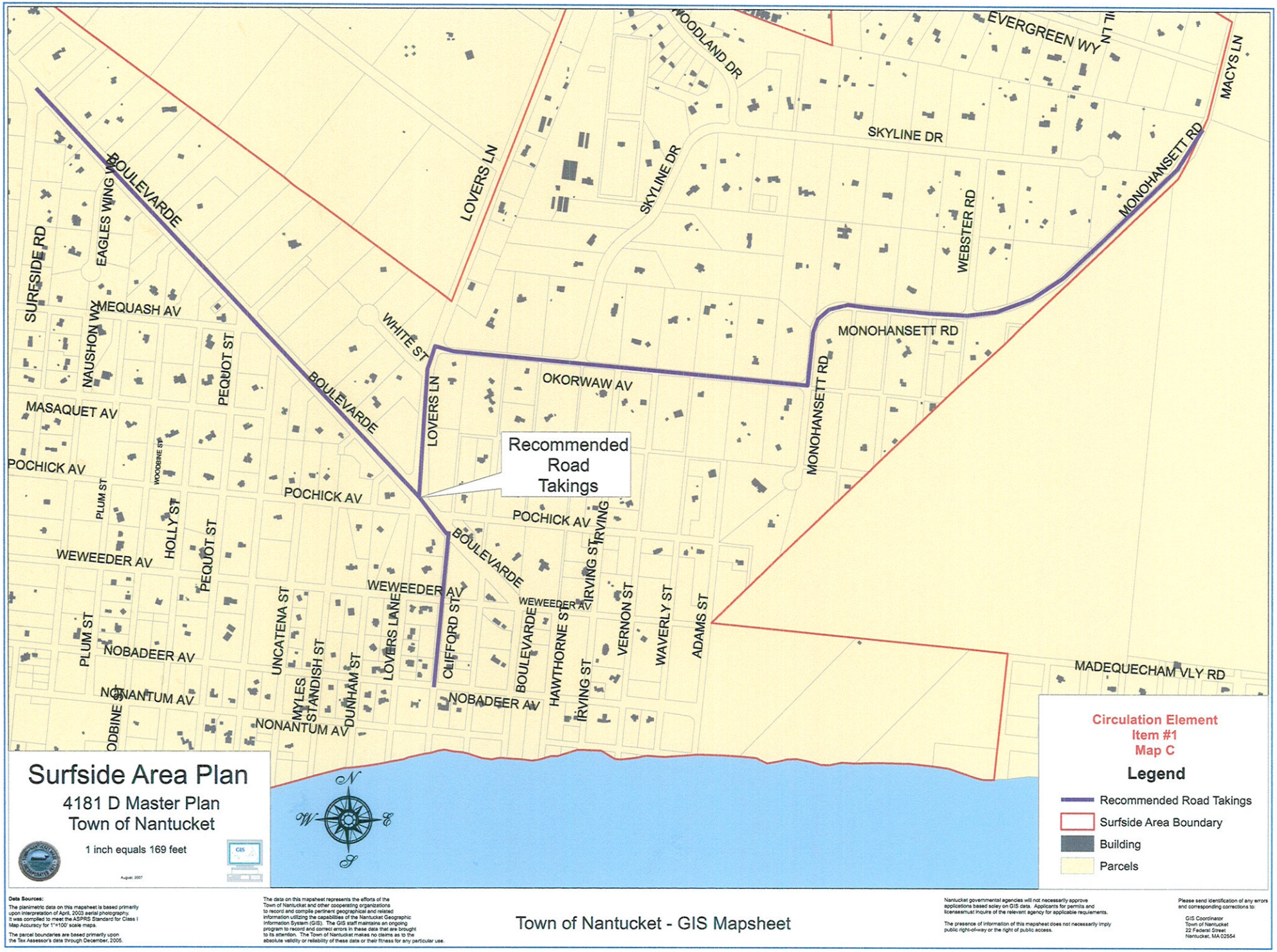
The Circulation Element provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.

1. The SAPWG supports the Town's immediate taking of the following traveled ways currently used by the public extensively as thoroughfares in order to allow the Town to maintain an alternate public access to the airport area and beyond: See **Map C**

   - The Boulevarde from the intersection of the Boulevarde and Surfside Road, and running in a southeasterly direction to the intersection of the Boulevarde and Clifford.
   - Lovers Lane from the intersection of the Boulevarde and Lovers Lane, and running in a northerly direction to the intersection of Lovers Lane and Okorwaw Avenue,
   - Okorwaw Avenue from the intersection with Lovers Lane, and running in an easterly direction to the intersection with Monohansett Road.
   - Monohansett Road from the intersection with Okorwaw Avenue, and running in a north by northeasterly direction to the intersection with Airport Road and Miller Lane.
   - Nobadeer, portions of Dunham, Lovers Lane and Adams as proposed by the County Commisioners.
   - Clifford Street from Nobadeer to the Boulevard

2. After the aforementioned takings, the SAPWG recommends improving this route to increase visibility along the route, particularly along Monohansett Road. The route is already heavily trafficked by the general public and immediate steps should be taken to provide a uniform surface and greater lines of sight.

3. After the aforementioned takings, the SAPWG recommends that NRTA expand its commuter shuttle service to include a loop along this route and continuation to the airport area.



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Circulation - continued:

4. The SAPWG also supports the planned improvements to the Surfside Public Beach Parking lot.

5. After the aforementioned takings, the SAPWG recommends that the Town install child safety signage and impose appropriate speed limits on this route.

6. After the aforementioned takings, the SAPWG recommends that the Town construct a bike path following these routes to the Airport. A bike path along Nonantum Avenue should also be explored.

7. The SAPWG recommends the creation of an alternate means of access to the South Shore Road area, as there is currently one access point for the large year-round population. This would increase the access for emergency vehicles and provide for the safety of the residents of this area should access to South Shore Road be impeded.

8. The SAPWG recommends increasing the child safety signage on existing public roadways in appropriate areas in the Surfside area with specific emphasis on the roadways proximate to the beach access points.

9. The SAPWG recommends that existing rural roads remain rural in character. However, we support development of a clear policy statement as in the Rights of Way recommendations that dirt roads currently used for access to improved properties should be improved and maintained to minimum standards for providing emergency vehicular access.

10. The SAPWG recommends the installation of a stop sign at the intersection of the Boulevarde and Clifford Street, at the northeast corner.

11. The SAPWG recommends the extinguishment of currently unused paper roads where practical, with particular emphasis on those roads that abut properties that are currently serviced by alternate routes. No new paper road openings should occur where adequate access is provided and in use from a separate street or way.

12. The SAPWG recommends the provision and maintenance of the present existing walking paths to the beach access points as well as easements for a selected path or paths to be laid out along any specific paper roads determined to be extinguished.

Circulation - continued:

13. The SAPWG recommends that all public Surfside area roads and bike paths, drainage, sight lines, and markings be properly maintained. We urge all private road abutters to follow this recommendation as well.

9. Implementation:

The Implementation Program element defines and schedules the specific actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the area plan.

1. The SAPWG recognizes that planning is an ongoing process and recommends the creation of a Surfside Planning Committee, as outlined in item #1 of the Housing Element Section of the Surfside Area Plan. This Committee will work closely with and assist the NP&EDC and other Town Departments in the implementation of the Surfside Area Plan recommendations to Nantucket's 41-81D Master Plan. This Committee will consist of no less than six members equally representing all three sub areas of Surfside and its tasks and mission will be reviewed annually.