IMPLEMENTATION

The following is a brief description of the tasks and schedule needed to implement this Plan. Estimates of capital costs are provided but do not reflect the costs of staff time/salaries, with the exception of the Town Solicitor, who is on an hourly rate contract. Additional discussion is presented in the Recommendations/Implementation section of each element. Numbers are for reference only.

5-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Ordinances

1. **Amend zoning and subdivision regulations to comply with Zoning Enabling Act requirements that take effect January 1, 1992:**

   - Define the stage in the development process at which developers' rights are vested (i.e., at which the development is "essentially complete").

   - Change zoning language to allow single household residential uses, family day care, and community residences in all zones except: Industrial and certain Commercial for health and safety reasons, and publicly owned Open Space/Conservation/Recreation districts. Consider allowing accessory apartments in all districts except Industrial, Open Space/Conservation/Recreation.

   Time Frame: Immediate

   Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Building Official, Town Solicitor, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Review, Town Council.

   Estimated Capital Costs: $5,000

2. **Develop a reproduceable zoning map with clearly marked dimensions and boundaries and revise the zoning ordinance to incorporate the changes described generally below.**

Note: The zoning boundaries, definitions, and standards will be defined specifically during the process of amending the zoning map and ordinance. The process of revising the Town's zoning involves a series of public workshops, at which participation by the business community, interest groups, and all concerned residents is encouraged. The town should consider involving the CPCAC regularly or a newly developed bipartisan citizens group in developing and reviewing proposed changes.

The zoning revisions should incorporate the following:

- Develop overlay districts in which to specify aesthetic design standards or natural resource protection standards.

  - Groundwater protection overlay - 2 districts: high protection (mapped reservoirs and recharge areas) and moderate protection (rest of town) using land use controls and performance standards.

  - Aesthetic design standards must be reasonable and objective.

- Village districts - designate districts around current villages in which design standards reflect village character. (Unobtrusive signage, sidewalks or pedestrian ways, buildings in keeping with surrounding village in regard to roof line, building materials, architectural style, ornamentation, etc.)

- Roadsides (major collectors and arterials) - require vegetated screening across part of frontage, buildings in keeping with character of the neighborhood, encourage preservation of important views.

- Scenic roads - standards would include vegetated buffers, preservation of stone walls, preservation of narrow, winding roads where possible from a safety standpoint, with a possible reduction in speed limits.

- Historic districts: Shannock, Carolina, Cross Mills.

• Planned Development district. Re-zone the Research & Development/Industrial zoned land west of Route 112 and current Planned Business district to Planned Development, which would include standards to address the town's concerns for aesthetics, open space, overall density, and environmental protection. The purpose would be to allow a low intensity mixture of uses, providing developers more flexibility in selecting the types and location of uses while providing the Town with control over the ultimate development of a large parcel. Development in the Planned Development zone would be reviewed as a master plan by the Planning Commission.

  Some uses that are not considered appropriate include raising livestock, trade schools or colleges, hospitals, funeral homes, automobile repair shops, gas stations, airports, freight terminals, or manufacturing.

• Commercial Zones. Focus general business commercial zoning in the existing commercial zone east of the historic Cross Mills area and the eastern side of Route 2 at its intersection with Route 1. Encourage village/neighborhood commercial uses in existing GB zones in the Cross Mills Area and along Routes 2, 91, 216 and 112. Encourage tourist/visitor related commercial uses in existing GB zones along Route 1.

• Consider deepening commercial zones, to encourage the use of vegetative screening and parking in the rear of the buildings.

• In order to encourage commercial development that is appropriate to the surrounding areas, develop 3 commercial zones:

  - Commercial 1. This district is characterized by businesses that depend mainly on local vehicular and pedestrian traffic and that are compatible with a village or neighborhood area, such as but not limited to, retail, professional, and service businesses. The district is designed to provide convenient local shopping services, to promote public safety for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and to have minimal adverse impact on neighboring residential properties or the character of residential areas. Such districts are most appropriately located in the current GB zones in the Cross Mills area, along Routes 2, 91, 216, and

112, and other areas currently zoned GB north of Route 1 and its contiguous properties.

- Commercial 2. This district is characterized by businesses that depend on a great volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, such as but not limited to, businesses that primarily provide for the retailing of commodities and furnishing of services. The district is designed to concentrate services for the convenience of the motoring and pedestrian public, to prevent an unsafe mixture of commercial uses and inappropriate residential uses. Such intensely used areas should be buffered from residential areas and other low-intensity areas. Such districts are most appropriately located in the current GB commercial areas east of Cross Mills and the eastern side of Route 2 at its intersection with Route 1. Current GB areas north of the Route 1 properties are not considered appropriate for Commercial 2 uses due to the residential nature of the nearby properties.

- Commercial 3. This district is characterized by businesses that depend on a large volume of vehicular traffic and proximity to major highways, such as but not limited to retail establishments, restaurants, gasoline stations, transportation firms, and motels. The district is designed to concentrate such services for the convenience of the motoring public, to prevent an unsafe mixture of commercial and residential uses. Such uses should be buffered from residential uses and other low-intensity uses. Such districts are most appropriately located on U.S. Route 1 (Post Road) in current GB zoned areas, with the exception of the eastern side of the intersection of Routes 1 and 2, described above as appropriate for a Commercial I area. The current GB districts north of the Route 1 properties are not considered appropriate for Commercial 3 uses due to the residential nature of surrounding properties.

Design standards would apply to each according to the overlay district in which they are found.

- Eliminate the following "spot" zones, which may allow redevelopment that is inconsistent with surrounding land uses and natural resources:

  - Industrial zones along Biscuit City Road, and Route 216;

  - Easternmost portion of commercial zone at eastern end of Matunuck School House Road;

  - Commercial zone on Shannock Road.

  Note: The existing uses would be allowed to continue and expand to a certain extent.

- Re-zone the 5-acre residential zone located in the Ross Hill Road area to 3-acre residential.

- Change the zoning along Route 2 south of its intersection with Route 112 to 2 acre lots.

- Create municipal use zones to apply to town-owned parcels, which would allow uses that meet the town's goals, including provision of services, recreation, affordable/alternative housing, and natural resources protection.

- Rezone all recreation, open space and conservation lands held by public agencies to open space/conservation/recreation.

- Define the seaward setbacks along the barrier beach communities to be the most severe erosional dune scarp (edge), i.e., the erosional scarp from the blizzard of 1978 or more severe erosion after 1978.

Time Frame: Adopted by July 1, 1993.

Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Building Official, Town Solicitor, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Review, Town Council. Outside assistance probably needed for mapping and possibly drafting of zoning language. Administered by Building Official, Zoning Board of Review, Town Planner, Planning Commission.

Estimated Capital Costs: Map - $5,000-$50,000; Zoning ordinance - $10,000-$30,000

3. Develop and implement a soil erosion and sediment control ordinance based on the recent State Enabling Legislation.

- The ordinance will require examination of natural features such as wetlands, slopes, and soils for most developments (even frontage development) and will provide means to collect fees for evaluation and to enforce the requirements of the ordinance.

Time Frame: 0-2 years

Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Building Official, Town Solicitor, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Town Council. Administered by Building Official/or designee (Must meet qualifications specified in Enabling Act. Agent may become qualified by attending Soil Conservation Service training course.) Plans may be reviewed by Planning and Conservation Commissions and appropriate department heads.

Estimated Capital Costs: $5,000

4. Develop a land trust for conservation purposes.

- Consider the use of a land transfer fee or other measures to fund land trust purchases.

Time Frame: 3-5 years

Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Town Council. Administered by Board of Directors (to be determined.)

Estimated Capital Costs: $0

5. Prepare and institute a Town Personnel Ordinance.

Time Frame: 3-5 years

Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Town Solicitor, Town Council.

Estimated Capital Costs: $5,000

Programs

New

6. Implement Wastewater Management District:

- Compile existing water quality data into single source of information, regularly maintain this database;

- Intensive water resources management survey in densely developed areas, especially south of Route 1 and in historic villages in north (Shannock, Carolina). This is a crucial step to determine what the specific problem areas and issues are. The study should include surveys of water quality of well water and nearby surface water, shoreline surveys to identify single sources of pollutants, lot by lot surveys of water useage, water-using appliances, and age and condition of septic treatment facilities;

- Investigate and develop solutions based on results of the above study, including regular septic system pumpout, upgrading current systems, multi-family wastewater treatment options. Provision of public water should be investigated. This task could be included in above study;

- The town should use the services of URI (e.g., Planning or Natural Resources interns or studios) as much as possible to minimize costs in performing time-intensive studies.

  Time Frame (studies): 0-3 years

  Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Building Official, Department of Public Works Director, Town Administrator. Outside assistance from student interns or studio classes, volunteers, or private firms is required.

  Resources Needed:

  Funding for private firm/student interns to perform studies;

  Staff/intern time to compile existing water quality information;

  Staff time to direct and review studies.

- Critically review and amend existing draft wastewater management ordinance as appropriate in light of the above studies and this Comprehensive Plan;

- Develop wastewater management function in town government, either based on subwatershed or individual homeowner responsibility, depending on results of the above study.

  Time Frame: 3-4 years or earlier as studies are complete.

  Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Building Official, Department of Public Works Director, Town Administrator, Town Solicitor, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Town Council.

  Resources Needed:

  Staff/Board/Commission time for development, review of ordinance;

  Staff time to administer/enforce ordinance;

  Physical improvements/upgrades to septic systems to be paid for by homeowners or assessed on a watershed basis.

  Estimated Capital Costs (studies and implementation): $15,000-$60,000

7. **Become familiar with the requirements and definitions of the state Low and Moderate Income Housing Act.**

   - The state Housing Board will be determining how many residences in each community qualify as "subsidized" toward the 10 percent minimum.

   - The Housing Board will also be developing regulations to implement the Act, including definitions of the types of development that will be considered "subsidized" for future reference.

   - The Act requires that review of proposed subsidized housing projects be consistent with each municipality's Comprehensive Plan.

   Time Frame: Immediate and on-going

   Parties Responsible: Town Planner, Building Official, Department of Public Works Director, Zoning Board of Review, Planning Commission.

8. **Develop a planner's database, combining environmental/cultural resource and constraints maps with lot information to be used as a "red flag" in reviewing developments.**

   - Map accuracy of constraints maps and lot maps would allow town staff and developers to identify likely resource or constraint areas, requiring verification by site visit. (Burden of proof on developer to prove constraints not on site.) Information should be included in development reviews.

- Natural resources mapping developed in this Plan will provide graphic data base. Eventually, a computer database should be developed that incorporates lot numbers with natural and cultural resource and constraint information.

Time Frame: 0-5 years

Responsible Parties: Town Planner, possibly with assistance from student intern.

Resources Needed:

Natural resources/constraints mapping;

Town's database management system;

Staff/intern time to analyze lot maps versus constraints maps and enter data.

Estimated Capital Costs: $0-$10,000

9. **Fund special studies in the short-run to address critical service/facility concerns:**

   - Water resources management study (Discussed above);

   - Landfill facility plan to address future needs, capacity and expansion potential for municipal solid waste disposal, material recycling, and septage treatment/disposal;

   - Hurricane damage impact study/contingency plan for coastal floodplain area;

   - Community Center feasibility study.

Time Frame: 0-5 years

Responsible Parties: Landfill plan - Department of Public Works Director; Hurricane study - Police Chief, Town Administrator; School study - School committee; Community Center study - Parks and Recreation Department Director. Each study may require input from citizens, other department heads, boards and commissions.

Estimated Capital Costs:

Landfill plan - $20,000-30,000

Hurricane study - $5,000-10,000

Community center study - $10,000-20,000

10. **The town should evaluate whether to remain in the Chariho district** based on the costs of remaining in the district, the costs of

constructing and operating a new school, and the residents' goals for their educational system.

Time Frame: 0-1 year

Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Tax Assessor, Department of Public Works Director, Town Council, School Committee members, voters

Estimated Capital Costs: $0-$5,000

11. **The Town should evaluate alternative sites for a new school in the town, should the need for new facilities be identified.**

    - Additional facility space is likely to be needed in the short-term for fifth grade students or early elementary students.

      Time frame: 0-5 years

      Responsible Parties: Chariho School Department; if Charlestown withdraws from District, the Town Administrator, Department Heads, Town Council and Planning Commission would be involved, possibly with outside assistance from a private firm.

      Estimated Capital Costs: $0-$10,000

On-Going Programs

12. **Maintain the high level of professional expertise which currently exists among municipal employees, through salary review and adjustments and development and adoption of a personnel ordinance. This high level of expertise will help to ensure the cost-effective, successful implementation of other Plan recommendations.**

    Time Frame: 0-2 years for salary review and adjustments, on-going periodically afterward. 3-5 years for ordinance.

    Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Town Solicitor, Town Council.

13. **Continue to support on-going town programs, and improve them in accordance with municipal finances and local needs. In particular:**

    - The town should continue to fund the Parks and Recreation Department programs. ($0 cost - self-sustaining revenue producer).

    - Provide adequate funding and staff for the town to maintain and improve its roads.

    Responsible Parties: Department heads, Town Administrator, Town Council.

- Continue to attract visitors through festivals at Ninigret Park. Consider other festivals and events, e.g., arts, antiques, July 4 celebration, or concerts. (Revenue producer)

Responsible Parties: Parks and Recreation Department Director, Chamber of Commerce, volunteer groups.

14. **As municipal financing allows, maintain and upgrade staff, facilities, and equipment to meet needs of growing population.**

    - Additional staff are likely to be required in the short-term:

      2 - 4 police officers;

      2 - 4 Public Works employees;

      2 EMTs for daytime ambulance duty (private service);

      1 - 2 library workers (private service).

    Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Town Council, Department Heads

Liaison/Educational

15. **Develop an understanding with the Narragansett Tribe of Indians regarding the role of police and fire protection on Tribal lands.**

    Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Department heads, Town Council, volunteer fire and rescue service Chiefs, Tribe officials.

16. **Work with neighboring communities, including the Narragansett Tribe, to ensure that land uses along the common borders of communities are compatible.**

    Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Town Administrator, Planning Commission, Tribal land use planner and other officials.

17. **Continue to cooperate with agencies such as the Wood Pawcatuck Association and pond watcher groups in educational activities and preservation of undeveloped parcels.**

    Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Land Trust and/or other volunteer groups.

18. **Develop a liaison function to work with RIDOT regularly in discussing upcoming projects and their impact on the town, and the town's needs. This should be instituted as a regular (e.g., yearly or quarterly) memo to the Planning Board and Town Council, with requests for input. Possible liaisons would include Town staff from Public Works and Planning Department.**

Responsible Parties: Town Planner, Department of Public Works Director, Planning Board, Town Council, RIDOT staff.

Resources Needed:

Staff time

19. **Continue educational efforts and group activities that raise awareness of environmental protection, e.g., septic system brochure, Conservation Commission sponsored clean-ups, or activities for schoolchildren.**

    Responsible Parties: Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, Town Planner, volunteers/interns.

    Estimated Capital Costs: $5,000

20. **Promote and recognize volunteer efforts:**

    - to improve village and rural aesthetics (e.g., landscaping, litter patrol, brush removal);

    - to encourage cooperation among businesses, e.g., with reciprocal coupons for local businesses.

    Resources Needed:

    Outreach by Town staff, boards and commissions, and Chamber of Commerce.

    Responsible Parties: Town Department heads, Town Council, Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce.

21. **Support local volunteer services to maintain these services at a reasonable cost to the community. Encourage and provide recognition for volunteerism in the fire, rescue and ambulance services, library, Chamber of Commerce, Parks and Recreation Department activities, town boards and commissions, and other volunteer services.**

    Responsible Parties: Town Department heads, Town Council, Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce.

22. **Support development of North-South Hiking Trail.**

<u>Capital Improvements/Improvements to Land</u>

23. **Provide adequate funding for the town to continue implementing the Department of Public Works road maintenance and improvement program.**

    Responsible Parties: Department of Public Works Director, Town Council, Town Administrator.

Estimated Capital Costs: $200,000-300,000 per year

24. **As local finances permit, the town should continue expanding its recreational base by:**

    - developing a community center;
    - developing additional playing fields (Columbia Heights, Ninigret);
    - making improvements to the Columbia Heights, and Schoolhouse Pond parcels to encourage the uses for which they have been acquired.

    Time Frame:

    Community center - 0-5 years

    Playing fields - 0-10 years

    Improvements to parcels 0-8 years

    Responsible Parties: Department of Parks and Recreation Director, Department of Public Works Director, Town Planner, Town Administrator, Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, Town Council

    Resources Needed:

    Funding for improvements (Capital improvements budget/municipal bond, federal/state grants, general fund, fund raising for specific improvements);

    Staff/volunteer time to make certain improvements, clear brush, develop trails, etc.

    Estimated Capital Costs:

    Community center - $200,000-1,000,000

    Playing fields - $10,000-100,000

    Improvements to parcels - $20,000-60,000

25. **Develop small scale access ways to the shore, which would allow a few visitors each, such as anglers, hikers, or people who wish to sit and look at the water.**

    - Use currently owned tax lots and easements to provide limited shore access.
    - Provide limited parking (if any) at or near each.
    - Notify residents of sites and any restrictions. For example, through regular town mailing or when they get their beach or landfill permits.
    - Investigate historic rights of way to the shore through deed research. Re-establish them as necessary.

- Investigate historic rights of way to the shore through deed research. Re-establish them as necessary.

- Continue to work with CRMC to identify rights of way to the shore.

Time Frame: On-going as possible

Responsible Parties: Conservation Commission, Town Planner, Parks and Recreation Department, Department of Public Works, with assistance from volunteers and/or student interns.

Estimated Capital Costs: $10,000-80,000

20-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

- Update Plan, revise zoning. Required every 5 years, optional at shorter intervals.
- Explore additional land use management/resource protection tools.
- Continue to develop mapping. Consider developing GIS or other computer mapping capability.
- Wastewater management district: Continue to investigate sludge disposal methods, alternative wastewater treatment technologies.
- Continue on-going tasks from 5-year plan, including liaison efforts; promoting educational and volunteer efforts; and funding departmental staff, space, and equipment needs.
- Continue development of recreational base: shore access ways, playing fields, play lots, lighting at ballfields, development of tennis courts.
- Identify areas for acquisition and promote acquisition by town/land trust/non-profit.
- Identify and develop bicycle and pedestrian routes as possible under budgetary constraints.
- Investigate diverting some beach-goers to other town-owned beach parcels or other beaches, possibly with use of beach shuttle.
- Investigate and promote opportunities for mass/para-transit.
- Explore use of town-owned land for alternative housing.
- Monitor and revise housing program as necessary.
- Continue to market recreational opportunities associated with special attractions of Charlestown, e.g., historic villages, bird-watching, sailing events, Pawcatuck River, arts or antiques festivals, etc.
- Consider allowing congregate care facilities.

- Develop pamphlet describing the Town's services and facilities.