

# REAL ESTATE VIEWS<sup>©</sup>

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## Coastal Buffer Zones:

# Water Types vs. Shoreline Features (Part Two)

In my last article, I focused on the six "Types of Water" set forth in Section 200 of The Red Book.

This week, the focus is on "Shoreline Features" or "Shoreline Types", which although interrelated to Types of Water, are separate and distinct. In reviewing the Shoreline Types set forth in Section 210 of The Red Book, reference is made to seven different types:

Beaches (most susceptible to erosion), e.g. Matunuck Beach, Barrier Islands/Beaches. South shore barriers, e.g. Barrington Beach, Briggs Marsh Barrier, etc. These are islands of sand and gravel parallel to shore and separated by a pond, coastal wetland or tidal waters. There is usually a "foredune zone" associated with a barrier island/beach.

Coastal Wetlands. These include salt marshes, contiguous freshwater wetlands, contiguous brackish wetlands, high and low salt marshes Coastal Headlands, Bluffs and Cliffs. These can range

from low bluffs to dramatic cliffs, e.g. Cliff Walk, Newport, Narragansett (northeast of Pt Judith) and Briggs Point, Little Compton.

Rocky Shores. Natural bedrock, ledge or boulders, often with tidal pools. Important to storm damage, habitat and scenic value, e.g. Beavertail Point, Jamestown; Ocean Diver, Newport.

Manmade Shorelines. Shoreline protection structures, e.g. seawall, bulkhead. 25% of Bay was identified in 1978 as being "sheathed by manmade structures" as erosion control attempt. Major impact, including adverse public access impact, possible negative impact on accretion.

Dunes. High sand hills, mounds, ridges. The inland edge of "foredune zone" controls setbacks and coastal buffer zones.

Rhode Island enjoys a diverse shoreline and our Bay "supports different mixtures and intensities of use." By definition, shorelines

are "dynamic" as they can change their physical characteristics dependent upon weather, seas and other factors. One of the major concerns is erosion and flooding during storms or hurricanes. Based on one's location, "susceptibility of any length of shoreline is determined by its type." An interesting footnote is that there have been 73 hurricanes in Rhode Island in the last 350 years!

*Editor's Note: Coastal regulations are very complex. The Red Book is available on-line at <http://www.crmc.ri.gov/> or you may pick up a copy CRMC's Wakefield office, located at the Oliver Stedman Center in Wakefield on Route 1.*