
COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Goals, Objectives and Policies

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PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Florida Statutes (Statute 163.3177) require the Coastal Management Element address the principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies to guide the local government's decisions and program implementation regarding the following objectives:

- Maintain, restore, and enhance the overall quality of the coastal zone environment, including, but not limited to, its amenities and aesthetic values.
- Preserve the continued existence of viable populations of all species of wildlife and marine life.
- Protect the orderly and balanced utilization and preservation, consistent with sound conservation principles, of all living and nonliving coastal zone resources.
- Avoid irreversible and irretrievable loss of coastal zone resources.
- Use ecological planning principles and assumptions in the determination of the suitability of permitted development.
- Limit public expenditures that subsidize development in Coastal High-Hazard Areas.
- Protect human life against the effects of natural disasters.
- Preserve historic and archaeological resources, which include the sensitive adaptive use of these resources.
- A redevelopment component with principles that must be used to eliminate inappropriate and unsafe development in the coastal areas when opportunities arise also known as Perils of Flood provisions.

COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOAL CM 1 PROTECT COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

Goal CM 1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall enhance its natural character by protecting, conserving, and maintaining its coastal ecosystems while safeguarding human life, property, and public expenditures in areas susceptible to destruction by natural disasters.

OBJECTIVE CM 1.1 PROTECTION THROUGH LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Objective CM 1.1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to conserve, appropriately use, and protect the quality and quantity of floodplains, drainage, all current and projected water sources, and waters by continuing to enforce its Land Development Regulations which include standards that protect upland buffers, protect wetland vegetation, and require that each development provides adequate drainage to reduce the risk of flooding and water pollution.

Policy CM 1.1.1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point’s Land Development Regulations shall include standards aimed to protect natural, historic, and cultural resources from the impacts of sea level rise.

Policy CM 1.1.2 – The Town of Sewall’s Point’s Land Development Regulations will guide development and redevelopment with standards aimed to reduce flood risk due to:

- a) High-tide events
- b) Storm Surge
- c) Flash floods
- d) Stormwater runoff
- e) Related impacts from future projected sea-level rise\

Policy CM 1.1.3 – The Town of Sewall’s Point’s Land Development Regulations will include setbacks from shoreline areas which minimize the impacts from man-made structures.

Policy CM 1.1.4 – The Town of Sewall’s Point’s Land Development Regulations will require a natural vegetated buffer between the Indian River and shoreline.

Policy CM 1.1.5 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will review, revise, and continue to enforce Land Development Regulations which at a minimum require a buffer zone of native upland (i.e., transitional) vegetation to be provided and maintained around wetland habitats.

Policy CM 1.1.6 – The Town of Sewall’s Point’s Land Development Regulations will include the requirement for all applications for new development and redevelopment, which have the potential to impact the quantity or quality of natural resources, obtain the necessary permits from all applicable state and/or federal agencies (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, South Florida Water Management District and/or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) prior to the authorization of a building permit by the Town.

Policy CM 1.1.7 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to monitor the best and most reliable data available related to climate change and consider the direct and potential effects this may have upon the Town’s coastal and natural resources. Based upon this data, the Town will evaluate and update the resource protection standards of the Land Development Regulations and other related planning documents, as necessary.

Policy CM 1.1.8 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to protect estuarine beaches and shoreline vegetation through the establishment and enforcement of Land Development Regulations and construction standards that minimize the impacts of man-made structures on beach vegetation, shoreline vegetation, or coastal wetlands.

Policy CM 1.1.9 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to protect the natural resources of the coastal area by implementing and strengthening existing environmentally related criteria in the Land Development Regulations and providing for mitigation of potential development impacts.

Policy CM 1.1.10 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to enforce regulations which prohibit the alteration of estuarine beaches located within the Town and require restoration of degraded beaches as part of the site plan approval process for all new development and redevelopment.

OBJECTIVE CM 1.2 PROTECTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective CM 1.2 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will limit the use of public funds that subsidize new, private development, or redevelopment in the Coastal High Hazard Area. Public funds shall not be used for infrastructure expansion or improvements in areas designated high hazard coastal areas unless such funds are necessary to:

- a) Provide services to existing developments;
- b) Provide adequate evacuation in the event of emergency; or
- c) Provide for recreational needs

Policy CM 1.2.1 – No public infrastructure or public buildings shall be constructed east of the Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL), with the exception of ~~apart from~~ minor structures such as those provided to support recreation and open space activities, ~~and~~ pedestrian access facilities, ~~and~~ infrastructure and roadway improvements within already developed public rights-of-way will be maintained as required to meet minimum level of service standards.

Policy CM 1.2.2 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall coordinate, as needed, with area service providers to replace and mitigate damaged infrastructure within the Coastal High Hazard Area.

Policy CM 1.2.3 – The Town shall consider relocation, mitigation, or replacement of infrastructure in the Coastal High Hazard Area as appropriate and when funding becomes available.

Policy CM 1.2.4 – The Town shall consider hazard mitigation initiatives when determining capital improvement expenditures.

OBJECTIVE CM 1.3 PROTECTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

Objective CM 1.3 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will preserve and protect the environmental quality of estuarine environments by restricting development or by limiting the impacts of development or redevelopment ~~in away from the~~ Coastal High Hazard Areas (CHHA). This policy is not intended to prohibit or discourage maintenance or replacement of existing development within the CHHA.

Policy CM 1.3.1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to support the permitting requirements and guidelines of county, state, and federal agencies applicable to dock and seawall construction, channel and canal dredging, filling of wetlands, and mangrove alteration. The Town shall exercise diligence in informing Town property owners of the need to observe all such requirements and guidelines, and the need to obtain required permits.

Policy CM 1.3.2 – No marina shall be located within the Town of Sewall’s Point.

OBJECTIVE CM 1.4 PROTECTION OF WATER

Objective CM 1.4 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall implement stormwater best management practices to divert runoff from surface water bodies or decrease the velocity of runoff for purposes of improving the condition of the Indian River Lagoon, the St. Lucie River, and the Atlantic Ocean. This will assist in the restoration to the natural recharge of the underlying surficial aquifer.

Policy CM 1.4.1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will implement context sensitive drainage and stormwater solutions in its public projects, when possible. These may include but not be limited to:

- a) Rain Gardens
- b) Littoral Zone Plantings
- c) Bio– Retention Swales
- d) Vegetative Filter Strips
- e) Rock Soaking Areas
- f) Floating Vegetated Mats
- g) Inlet Screens, Baffles and Sumps
- h) Baffle Boxes
- i) Stormwater Filters
- j) Sand Filters
- k) Tree Box Filters

Policy CM 1.4.2 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to encourage the Army Corp of Engineers to reduce or eliminate the releases of fresh water from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie River. These releases disturb the river’s delicate balance of salinity leading to toxic algae blooms that pose a health risk to Town residents and reduce their quality of life. The Town will look for opportunities to join local and state elected officials in this effort.

GOAL CM 2 PROTECTION FROM THE PERIL OF FLOODS

Goal CM 2 – Development and redevelopment within the Town of Sewall’s Point shall be permitted only when consistent with sound planning practices that shall protect life and property from the effects of coastal erosion, flooding, sea level rise, or damage to environmental systems.

OBJECTIVE CM 2.1 PLANNING TO REDUCE RISK AND LOSSES DUE TO FLOODING

Objective CM 2.1 – Development and redevelopment in the Town shall be planned and managed to reduce risk and losses due to flooding resulting from high-tide events, storm surge, flash floods, stormwater runoff, and the related impacts of sea level rise.

Policy CM 2.1.1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point designates the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) as “the area below the elevation of the Category 1 storm surge line” as defined by the Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model.

Policy CM 2.1.2 – The Town shall utilize best management practices, where feasible, to minimize the disturbance of natural shorelines, which provide stabilization and protect landward areas from storm impacts.

Policy CM 2.1.3 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will maintain shoreline protection and erosion control by:

- a) Facilitating the installation and maintenance of native shoreline vegetation along appropriate areas of beaches, and
- b) Considering hard structures, such as seawalls, only when alternative options are not feasible

Policy CM 2.1.4 – All development and redevelopment plans and proposals (not just that in the coastal high hazard area) shall be reviewed for compliance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and other appropriate plans and references, including the Town’s National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS) Program.

Policy CM 2.1.5 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall seek grant funding to prepare a Vulnerability Assessment Sea-Level Rise Study which provides mapping and other important data to develop a Comprehensive Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Policy CM 2.1.6 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall be consistent with, or more stringent than, the flood-resistant construction requirements in the Florida Building Code and applicable flood plain management regulations set forth in 44 C.F.R. part 60 Criteria for Land Management and Use.

Policy CM 2.1.7 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall require that any construction activities seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) established pursuant to section 161.053, F.S., will be consistent with chapter 161.

Policy CM 2.1.8 – The Town of Sewall’s Point shall continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System administered by FEMA to achieve flood insurance premium discounts for residents.

Policy CM 2.1.9 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will develop policies to improve resilience to coastal and inland flooding, saltwater intrusion, and other related impacts of climate change and sea level rise in the Stormwater Master Plan.

Policy CM 2.1.10 – By 2030, the Town of Sewall’s Point will pursue funding and seek a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a Coastal Storm Risk Management Study to better understand the potential impacts of sea level rise on the Town.

GOAL CM 3 PREPARE FOR NATURAL DISASTERS

Goal CM 3 – To the greatest extent possible, the Town of Sewall’s Point will be prepared for natural disasters.

OBJECTIVE CM 3.1 PRE-DISASTER PREPARATION

Objective CM 3.1 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will prepare and maintain a disaster plan to implement when there is a declared emergency.

Policy CM 3.1.1 – For regional coordination, the Town of Sewall’s Point shall provide all hurricane evacuation studies and plans it develops to the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) for review and comment prior to adoption and implementation.

Policy CM 3.1.2 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will collaborate with Martin County Emergency Management and neighboring communities aimed to improve communication and facilitate safe, efficient evacuation during a declared emergency.

Policy CM 3.1.3 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to complete roadway improvement projects identified in the Capital Improvements Priorities Report (developed in 2021) to protect roads from the risk of flooding and facilitate efficient hurricane evacuations.

Policy CM 3.1.4 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will continue to advocate for funding resiliency projects on State roadways in the Town through its affiliation with the Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

OBJECTIVE CM 3.2 DAMAGE ASSESSMENT, POST-STORM RECOVERY, AND PREPAREDNESS EVALUATION

Objective CM 3.2 – Following a major storm event, the Town of Sewall’s Point will systematically assess storm damage, implement post-storm recovery efforts (as soon as it is safe to do so), and evaluate the preparedness of its plan.

Policy CM 3.2.1 – Soon after a major storm event, but before re-entry of the population into evacuated areas, the Town Commission will meet to hear preliminary damage assessments, prioritize recovery efforts, and consider a temporary moratorium on building activities other than those for the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Policy CM 3.2.2 – The Town of Sewall’s Point will coordinate the prompt repair and cleanup actions needed to protect the public health and safety of the community to include repairs to potable water, wastewater, and power facilities; removal of debris; stabilization or removal of structures about to collapse; and minimal repairs to make dwellings habitable. These actions shall receive priority in permitting decisions. Long-term redevelopment activities shall be postponed until the initial recovery efforts have been completed.

Policy CM 3.2.3 – Post-recovery of a major storm event, the Town of Sewall's Point may:

- a) Review and decide upon emergency building permits;
- b) Coordinate with state and federal officials to prepare disaster assistance applications;
- c) Analyze and recommend to the Town Commission hazard mitigation options including reconstruction or Relocation of damaged public facilities;
- d) Develop a redevelopment plan; and,
- e) Recommend amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and other appropriate policies and procedures.

Policy CM 3.2.4 – For any structure that suffers damage from a natural disaster that equates to more than fifty percent of its appraised value, it shall be rebuilt to comply with all current requirements including those enacted since construction of the structure.

Policy CM 3.2.5 – Following a hurricane or other natural disaster, the Town of Sewall's Point will evaluate its preparedness and utilize this information to recommend changes in its plan to prepare for future events.

Policy CM 3.2.6 – Following a hurricane or other natural disaster, the Town of Sewall's Point will prepare a post disaster redevelopment plan which may include but are not limited to, abandonment, repair in place, relocation, and reconstruction with structural modifications. Future options should at a minimum consider the following:

- a) History of and potential for future recurring damages;
- b) Impacts on land use, the environment, and the public sector;
- c) Consistency with federal, state and other applicable provisions; and
- d) Consideration of structural integrity and safety.

Policy CM 3.2.7 – The Town of Sewall's Point shall continue to identify areas in need of redevelopment (including unsafe conditions) to reduce exposure of risk for public and private property and human life.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

44 C.F.R. Part 60 Criteria – Criteria for flood plain management found in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations governing Emergency Management and Assistance.

Climate Change – A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer.

Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) – Such lines shall be established so as to define that portion of the beach-dune system which is subject to severe fluctuations based on a 100-year storm surge, storm waves, or other predictable weather conditions. However, the department may establish a segment or segments of a coastal construction control line further landward than the impact zone of a 100-year storm surge, provided such segment or segments do not extend beyond the landward toe of the coastal barrier dune structure that intercepts the 100-year storm surge. Such segment or segments shall not be established if adequate dune protection is provided by a state-approved dune management plan. Special siting and design considerations shall be necessary seaward of established coastal construction control lines to ensure the protection of the beach-dune system, proposed or existing structures, and adjacent properties and the preservation of public beach access. (Reference 161.053(1)(a), Florida Statutes)

Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) – The area below the elevation of the category 1 storm surge line as established by a Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) computerized storm surge model (Reference 163.3178(2)(h)9, Florida Statutes)

Coastal Storm Risk Management Study – A study to investigate solutions to reduce risks from future coastal storm events, especially storm surge, specifically to reduce economic damage, as well as risk to life and safety.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – The policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. MPOs are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas (UZAs) with populations over 50,000, as determined by the U.S. Census. MPOs are designated by agreement between the governor and local governments that together represent at least 75 percent of the affected population (including the largest incorporated city, based on population) or in accordance with procedures established by applicable state or local law.

National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System – Voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). According to the Community Rating System's (CMS) Coordinator's Manual, over 22,000 communities participate nationwide.

Perils of Flood – From Section 163.3178(2)(f) Florida Statutes The 2015 Florida Legislature directed jurisdictions that have a Coastal Management Element as a part of their comprehensive plan to include a redevelopment component with principles that must be used to eliminate inappropriate and unsafe development in the coastal areas - when opportunities arise.

Sea Level Rise – Caused primarily by two factors related to global warming: the added water from melting ice sheets and glaciers and the expansion of seawater as it warms.

SLOSH Model - The Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model is a computerized numerical model developed by the National Weather Service (NWS) to estimate storm surge heights resulting from historical, hypothetical, or predicted hurricanes by taking into account the atmospheric pressure, size, forward speed, and track data. These parameters are used to create a model of the wind field which drives the storm surge.

State of Emergency –An emergency announcement will be made when there are imminent threats to life, health, and safety for residents and visitors of Martin County. This can include, but is not limited to, severe weather events, hazardous material emergencies, or evacuation orders.

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) – Organization created by and for local governments to provide planning and technical assistance services and assist in carrying out Florida’s growth management programs. TCRPC was established in 1976 through an interlocal agreement between Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach counties. Membership includes all four counties and 52 municipalities.