

PROTECT

Environmental Stewardship

Canton will protect, enhance, and restore natural ecosystems and landscapes that support clean air and water, and contribute to life in Canton.

Support Canton's Stormwater Management Program

Managing stormwater and runoff has multiple benefits to the community, such as improving water quality, managing flood waters, connecting habitat, and adding green space. The Town should be diverse in its approaches and partner with local organizations. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Find opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure on Town properties and in existing or planned infrastructure. Develop a policy to prioritize green infrastructure wherever practicable to manage stormwater as part of public projects and investments.
2. Explore ways to financially support the Town's efforts to meet the requirements of its federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit and implement town-wide stormwater best management practices. Consider the use of an enterprise fund or stormwater utility.
3. Continue involvement in regional collaborations to help meet common stormwater management goals and objectives.
4. Educate residents, property owners, and businesses about benefits and different ways of stormwater management on their properties. Promote the use of rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable pavers for driveways and walkways, as well as limiting the use of fertilizers and cleaning up pet waste, among other approaches.
5. Continue to evaluate standards for stormwater management in local regulations to ensure that best practices are required in proposed development.

Give Residents and Businesses Opportunities to Make a Difference

Residents and businesses must recognize their role in protecting the natural resources. The Town can be a common place where ideas are shared and people can learn about what's happening in the community. The Canton Sustainability Committee can play an important role in these efforts. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Explore new services and programs or expand existing efforts to improve recycling rates and reduce the costs of waste being landfilled. Examples might be pay-as-you-throw trash program, weekly recycling, community composting program, setting up a community "swap shed" where residents can exchange unwanted, still-usable items, or establishing a self-service drop-off center to dispose of electronics, household hazardous waste, scrap metal, or other items.
2. Support residents and businesses who want to organize their own projects that have environmental and community benefits. The Town can provide a platform either online or at Town Hall (something as simple as a bulletin board) to connect residents with similar interests and ideas.

Use Development Standards and Other Local Policies to Protect and Improve the Natural Environment

Development is important to the future of Canton but should be done in a way that reduces the impact on the natural environment and, in some cases, improve degraded resources. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Require the use of low impact design standards in areas near significant natural resources and encourage them town-wide wherever possible.
2. Prioritize acquisition of properties that abut existing open space and recreational properties.
3. Develop policies that protect the Town's tree canopy. This might include a tree ordinance that regulates various aspects of tree planting, removal, and maintenance on public and/or private property.
4. Provide standards and guidance for the installation of landscaping that is beneficial to the natural environment.

Protect Groundwater Sources and Build Capacity

Because the Town relies on groundwater sources for drinking water, protecting these resources is critical. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Contribute to regional initiatives on water quality and groundwater protection (for example, Neponset Valley Watershed Association, MWRA, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection).
2. For commercial, industrial, mixed use, and multi-family housing, require landscaping practices that are drought tolerant.
3. Develop educational outreach programs and incentives that encourage efficient water use by residents and business owners.
4. Continue to maintain and upgrade the municipal water supply infrastructure and capacity.

Manage Local Conservation Areas

The Town has master plans for some local recreation and open space properties that establish a vision for their use and management strategies to encourage public access and sustainable usage of the site. Moving forward, the Town will:

1. Continue to implement recommendations of existing master plans for the Earl Newhouse Waterfront property and Pequitside Farm, as well as others that may be developed.
2. Identify and prioritize other town conservation/recreation properties that need master plans to establish clear management needs and strategies.



Photo by JamesWoodward

What's missing?