



WINDMILL PARK CONSERVATION AREA

■ Introduction

The Windmill Park Conservation Area is comprised of two parcels; Lot 2 and Lot 1. Lot 2, the 1-acre parcel to the north was acquired from Iver Johnson on December 1, 1982 for \$143,000. Lot 1, the 1.2-acre parcel to the south, formerly owned by the Cravenhos, was acquired on February 22, 1985 for \$210,000.

In accordance with the November 4, 1982 Special Town Meeting Article 32 for the Proposed Land Acquisition states: Voted standing vote, *For - 305, Against - 100, motion carries 2/3rd that the Town purchase or take by eminent domain, for conservation purposes, to be held in the care and custody of the Conservation Commission... a parcel of land in Orleans ...shown as Lot 2 on a plan of land recorded with Barnstable Registry of Deeds at Plan Book 319, Pg. 57, containing one acre more or less...*

The quit claim deed in Book 3619 Page 174 states: *that the property is to be managed and controlled by the Conservation Commission of the Town of Orleans for the promotion and development of the natural resources and for the protection of the watershed resources of said town.*

In accordance with the May 8, 1984 Special Town Meeting Article 78 for the Proposed Land Purchase states: Voice vote, *motion carries that the Town purchase for convenience purposes, to be held in the care and custody of the Conservation Commission... a parcel of land in Orleans ...shown as Lot 1 containing 1.2 acres on a plan of land ... recorded at said Registry in Plan Book 319, Pg. 57.*

The quit claim deed in Book 4431, Page 308 states: *that the property is to be managed and controlled by the Conservation Commission of the Town of Orleans for the promotion and development of the natural resources and for the protection of the watershed resources of said town.*

Both properties are subject to a State Highway easement recorded at the Barnstable County Registry of Deeds in Book 525, Page 341.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services awarded the Town two Self-Help Grants totaling \$264,800 to help fund the purchase of these lots. On February 16, 1984, \$100,000 was awarded toward Lot 2 and on May 16, 1985, \$164,800 was awarded toward Lot 1.

Management

- The Orleans Conservation Commission is responsible for the overall management of the property, including periodically reviewing usage, issues and problems and recommending improvements.
- The Orleans Parks and Beaches Department provides maintenance on the building and property. Money has been appropriated in a Town fund for the Windmill for structural repairs to the windmill, utility costs, etc. The Windmill Park Conservation Area requires considerably more maintenance than our naturalized conservation areas. The building must be maintained as well as the cultivated grounds around it. This property provides picnic facilities with trash pick-up.
- The Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services is the State agency that regulates the care and use of land purchased for conservation, open space and recreational purposes.



■ **Site Description**

This Conservation Area is maintained as a park with the Jonathan Young Windmill as its focus.

Entrance



The Windmill Park Conservation Area located at 27-33 Route 6A features a historically significant Windmill and affords a wide view of Town Cove. From Route 6A, near the border with Eastham, is a spectacular view of both the Windmill and Town Cove across this property. There is approximately 375' of frontage on Route 6A and 380' of shoreline on Town Cove.

The entrance to the Windmill Park Conservation Area is over the property of the neighbor to the north, a restaurant, the Orleans Inn. There is a small gravel parking area for 6 cars and one paved handicapped space. The parking lot and entranceway are outlined with boulders and a retaining wall. The park is separated from Route 6A by a split rail fence.

Windmill

History

This windmill is approximately 300 years old and has stood on 3 other properties before being erected on this site. The windmill was originally built before 1720 in South Orleans for the grinding of grain and also sea salt. It has separate grinding stones for grain and salt. It was moved in 1839 to 66 Route 6A where it was a working mill owned by Jonathan Young, William Mayo, Joseph Gould, Francis Young and David Young. In 1897, the windmill was transported to Hyannisport by barge to the property of Captain Henry Hunt. Jonathan Young was the name on the bill of sale.



In 1983, the windmill was given to the Orleans Historical Society by the Groves Family. The mill was considered historically significant because its early machinery was unusually intact. The Historical Society, recognizing the importance of the mill, decided to retain as much of the original mill as possible even though this would preclude the restoration of the mill as a working mill. The fragile condition of the building required that it be completely dismantled before it could be moved by truck in 1985. The frame of the windmill was erected on this site in 1987 and two years later the restoration of the windmill had been completed.

Maintenance and Running of Windmill

There is money appropriated in the Town budget under the Parks Department for the care of the windmill. This fund supports repair of the building including such activities as shingling and Terminix applications. Salaries for tour leaders that open the windmill through the summer are dependant on the availability of funding.

Landscaping

The Windmill Park Conservation Area has been landscaped to showcase the windmill. The area directly around the windmill was flattened to accommodate the wheel that supports the location of the sails. A low split rail fence surrounds this area with two benches, ornamental flowerbeds, and mowed lawn. The sails are stored over winter in the grove of trees on the southwestern border of this property. Steps lead down to the beach where there is another viewing bench and a picnic table.



Except for the trees on the north and south boundaries, the majority of the upland on the property is kept as a naturalized open field area mowed occasionally to keep out woody growth. There is a clump of locusts with another bench on the northern boundary. The locusts grow across the coastal bank but are kept thinned out. There is a border of native roses near the beach. Below the windmill and to the southern boundary are some non-native invasive species, Japanese knotweed and Norway maple. The Japanese knotweed has been treated to discourage its growth. The Norway maples are being removed and replaced when feasible. There is brushy woody growth and trees along the southern border. There is a salt marsh community to the east of this property.

Salt Marsh Community

Following the “Classification of Natural Communities in Massachusetts” the shoreline of this property would be classified as Estuarine Intertidal: Salt Marsh. This property fronts on Town Cove, a sheltered bay area. Salt marshes form in tidal areas protected from heavy surf. Bands of vegetation form depending on the exposure to the salt water. 3 foot tall *Spartina alterniflora* grows closest to the water between the low and mean high tide. Above the mean high tide in the area usually flooded in the spring tide, or storm surge, is a much lower grass community of *Spartina patens* often mixed with *Distichlis spicata* or spike grass. A rush, *Juncus gerardii*, is common on the outer edge. Salt tolerant flowers such as sea-lavender and seaside goldenrod, and succulents such as glasswort, *Salicornia* spp. and saltwort, *Salsola kali*, grow throughout this area. Salt tolerant groundsel shrubs grow at the edge of this zone toward the upland.

Wildlife

Wildlife generally associated with this habitat includes many species of birds that forage in salt marshes from sandpipers to the larger wading birds such as herons. In fall and winter short-eared owls, snowy owls and northern harrier, hunt in salt marshes. A few terrestrial mammals such as meadow voles forage in salt marshes but retreat to dryer areas during high tides. Fiddler crabs are a common invertebrate. Associated rare animals include the osprey, and the spartina borer.

Drainage from Route 6A

In the spring 2005, runoff from Route 6A was funneled into retention basins on this property to reduce the runoff going directly into Town Cove from the pipe at Jeremiah’s Gutter.

■ **Land Uses, Limitations and Prohibitions**



These properties were purchased for the promotion and development of the natural resources and for the protection of the watershed resources of the Town.

The area features:

- Scenic viewing
- Historical features
- Bird watching
- Picnicking

There are **limitations** on hours of use of the property and use by groups as follows:

- The area is closed from sunset to sunrise.
- Groups of more than 10 people require a permit from the Conservation Department

In addition, certain activities **are prohibited** at all areas under the management of the Conservation Commission, including:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Littering
- Domestic trash disposal
- Unrestrained dogs
- Open fires and cooking
- Storing of small boats
- Erection of tents or camping
- Use of soaps, detergents or shampoo
- Discharge of firearms
- Damaging any structure or landscape
- Harassing wildlife

■ **Implementation Actions**



Action Required:
Maintenance of site
Town budget funding

Party Responsible:
Parks Dept.
TA/BOS

