ISLAND PLAN
CHARTING THE FUTURE OF THE VINEYARD

Natural Environment Work Group Core
Meeting Notes of February 8, 2008, 1:00 P.M., MVC Offices

Present – Core Members: Tom Chase, Judy Crawford, Matt Pelikan, Dick Johnson, Leah Smith and Tim Boland
Present – MVC Staff: Jo-Ann Taylor, Mark London, Chris Seidel, Bill Veno

Mark London noted that the 4 subtopic maps for Working Landscapes, Natural Character, Recreation and Minimum Viable Areas (for Biodiversity) will be combined to form a Natural Environment map that will be presented to the Development and Growth Group, along with a Built Environment map, in order to assess existing land use and to propose various growth scenarios.   The Core reviewed drafts of the maps for the 4 subtopics:

1. Working Landscapes

- Existing farms are the highest priority, so should be the strongest color, say dark brown.
- Only show farms in 1971 if not already an existing farm, say lighter brown. Eliminate already developed ones (perhaps already done).
- Show fields as the third highest priority, either a lighter brown or using the same color as 1971 fields but overlaying a pattern on the fallow farms.
- The Ag Soils should eliminate already developed areas, and not be quite as graphically strong.

2. Biodiversity

- Chappy should be shown as split so most of it is part of the Dry Moraine, and the southern part is part of the Sandplain. This would probably result in the largest area of core habitat in the Dry Moraine, which otherwise would only have small patches.
- We still need to promote or downgrade various areas, namely:
    - - Medium priority areas within the core get upgraded to higher priority,
    - - Low priority areas within the core get upgraded to medium priority,
    - - High priority areas outside the core get downgraded to medium priority.
- The color for all the core areas could be the same, with a subtle distinction of the critical core – either a bit darker, or with an overlay pattern.
- Open areas with natural vegetation should be shown as core, even if not listed by NHESP. Also, there should be a (pretty faint) overlay showing NHESP priority habitat for people who want to reference this (we may still want to omit the NHESP layer).
- We had previously agreed to use a single code for both the dense areas of housing in the middle of core areas, as well as for areas of priority habitat outside the core areas. However, perhaps they should be shown somewhat differently. An area like the Southern Woodlands is very different from the dense subdivisions south of the West Tisbury – Edgartown Road.
- We could try another way of identifying the ecological systems. We could use a different range of colors for the Sandplain. On the whole Moraine, there should be better demarcation between sub-

regions. Also, there could be fine arrows in the water coming from the names showing the extent of each sub-region.
- The boundary between the ecological zones (dry moraine, moist moraine, sandplains, etc.) should stand out more clearly.
- The boundaries between the core areas and the "linkage" areas should stand out more.
- Since most of the "core of the core" falls within already conserved land, we may want to simplify the map's message to highlight more what remains to be protected, realizing that the strategies for the already protected land will involve better stewardship of those already protected areas.

3. <u>Recreation</u>

- Bill Veno (M V Land Bank) should go over the missing links and add more.
- Even with simpler graphics, it is quite a complex network. As we discussed, it would be useful to do a simpler concept plan to communicate to the public where the main corridors are and will be . . . to be done later.
- Beaches should be indicated more clearly. In principle, having a priority area coming down to the edge of the water means public access to the water's edge, though not necessarily a public beach. How about putting an arrow in the water opposite each beach and next to the name, showing the extent of the beach? These could be color-coded to distinguish between public and semi-public (e.g. residents only).

4. <u>Character/Scenic</u>

- For the views from the road in the natural environment map, we can show the all-natural areas a higher priority, the natural/settled areas a lesser priority, and leave out the town areas.
- We have to figure out how we can extend this to the other main roads (probably pretty easy with only two categories) and to the coast (a bigger undertaking).
- Also, taking all the Island's perimeter roads and indicating how much of the water is visible would be a useful analysis, but at a later time.
- In some cases, the narrow glimpses are very important, such as peeks to the water.
- It will be important to identify the 3 categories of need: areas where we want to preserve open vistas, areas where we want to restore open vistas, areas where more screening wouldn't be a bad idea.

It was determined that with some very minor revisions, the maps are nearly ready to compile for a Natural Environment map.

Notes by Jo-Ann Taylor and Mark London