

**Section 330.
Guidelines for the Protection
and Enhancement of the Scenic
Value of the Coastal Region**

A. General Guidelines

1. The primary goal of all Council efforts to preserve, protect, and, where possible, restore the scenic value of the coastal region is to retain the visual diversity and often unique visual character of the Rhode Island coast as it is seen by hundreds of thousands of residents and tourists each year from boats, bridges, and such public vantage points as roadways, public parks, and public beaches.

2. Every effort should be made to safeguard from obstruction significant views to and across the water from highways, scenic overlooks, public parks, and other vantage points enjoyed by the public.

3. The importance of the skyline as seen from tidal waters in determining the character of a view site must be recognized; it should, where possible, not be disrupted by visually intrusive structures.

4. On sites in or adjacent to historic features and districts, new structures should be designed to provide continuity with the existing scenic and historic character. Within historic districts, applicants shall consult with the Historic Preservation Commission to identify means for minimizing disruption and, where possible, enhancing the historic value of the area.

5. Excellent guidance for preserving the visual character and quality of coastal landscapes in Rhode Island are contained in "Building at the Shore: A Handbook for Residential Development on the Rhode Island Coast." Review copies are available at the Council's offices in Providence.

**B. In and Adjacent to Type 1, 2, and
4 Waters**

1. Structures along the water's edge should be screened by vegetation, preferably with native species typical to the area rather than exotic.

2. Trees that form the first line of visual definition as one looks landward from the water should be preserved.

3. In new developments, trees should be planted in the drifts that generally follow land contours and parallel the water's edge rather than in lines that cut across landscape contours.

4. Disruptions of natural landform and vegetation should be minimized.

5. New developments should not compete visually with such significant shoreline features as coves, peninsulas, cliffs, and bluffs; they should be set back and screened.

**C. In and Adjacent to Type 3, 5, and
6 Waters**

1. In all areas adjacent to Type 3 and 5 waters and, where appropriate, adjacent to Type 6 waters, the public should, where possible, be provided a sense of the water from within the townscape. Views to and across the water through yards, between houses, and from roadways should be preserved and, where possible, created.

2. When new structures are proposed adjacent to Type 3 and 5 waters, the character of new structures should be consistent and in character with existing buildings. The design of new structures should be based on an analysis of the patterns of existing buildings, including rooflines, roof slopes, building materials, colors, and window patterns. It is not necessary, however, to imitate pre-twentieth-century structures.