



Shore and Harbor Planning Grants

Town of Stonington

***Improving coastal waterfront climate resilience and access along Main Street
(Fiscal Year 2024, project awarded 2023)***

“With commercial float space at a premium in our busy, tight, and productive harbor, we are always seeking ways to expand access and to provide both working and residential access. The acquisition of the Odd Fellows property, and its development, is one step in the right direction.”
–Selectman Evelyn Duncan, Stonington Harbor Committee



Stonington Harbor from the Odd Fellows Property, with the fish pier and existing dingy dock on the right. Photo: Melissa Britsch

Project Description

Stonington has three harbors that serve a wide variety of recreational and commercial users, and maintaining public access and managing demand for harbor spaces are consistent challenges. The town was recently able to purchase the Odd Fellows Property on Main Street, which is

adjacent to the town fish pier. This purchase increased the amount of waterfront property in public ownership and provides opportunities to improve public access to the harbor.

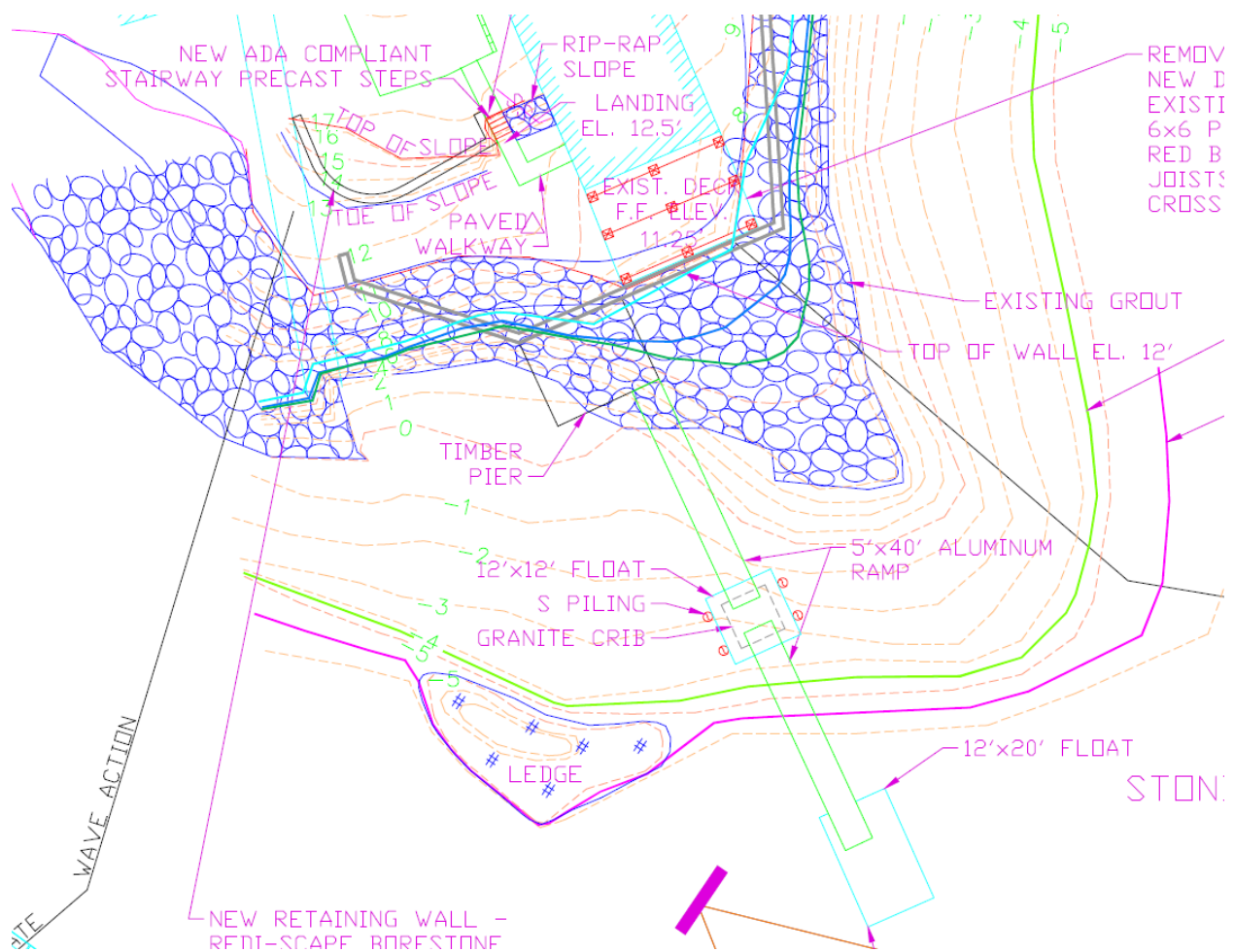
The town applied for and received a Shore and Harbor Planning Grant to do design work to improve the resilience of the property and provide additional public float space in the harbor. The project included a site survey, the creation of engineering plans, and the preparation of permit applications for future construction. This project is part of Stonington's town-wide effort to increase the resilience of Main Street and other low-lying roads that are vulnerable to sea level rise. The town partnered with McCullough Engineering Consultants, and the final plan includes a new retaining wall, a ramp, and two new floats for increased dinghy space; all of which will have ADA-compliant walking access.



Downtown Stonington, with the Odd Fellows property circled in red. Photo from Google Maps.

Project Results

The project had several phases including a field survey, creation of site plans and engineering designs, public engagement about the potential plans, sediment and erosion control planning, preparation of permit applications, adjustment of the engineering plans after the permits were reviewed, and preparation of bid documents for future construction of the resilience improvements and new float. The designs, outreach, and permitting process were completed, and the town is searching for implementation funding.



Section of the proposed site design for the Odd Fellows Hall, taken from the project plan set, 2025.

Future Plans & Lessons Learned

The town is searching for funding to implement the resilience designs created in this project, as well as those for the rest of Main Street and in several other vulnerable locations. They have found that it is a lengthy and expensive process to create resilient solutions, and feel that they are moving slower than the pace of climate change. Improving the speed of the permitting process and having more engineering resources available would be helpful.

Thanks to Linda Nelson for helping to prepare this summary.

This project was funded by award CZM NA22NOS4190151 to the Maine Coastal Program from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or the Department of Commerce.

