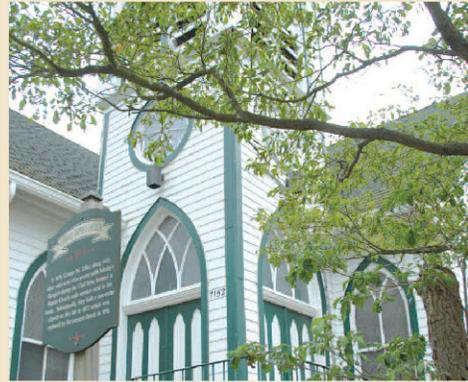


# *The Town of Clifton, Virginia*



## *Comprehensive Plan 2009*

ADOPTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL ON AUGUST 4, 2009

Prepared by the Town of Clifton Planning Commission  
Town of Clifton, Va

With assistance from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission

Brought before a joint Public Hearing of the Town of Clifton Planning Commission and Town Council  
on May 26th 2009.

Adopted by the Town of Clifton Town Council on August 4th, 2009

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**TOWN COUNCIL**

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# INTRODUCTION

All towns in the Commonwealth of Virginia are required to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan. The Town of Clifton (hereinafter referred to as “the Town”) adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1980 and amended it in 1996. This update is the second major revision to the Town’s comprehensive plan. The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to create a guide that will stipulate goals and objectives regarding the future land use and development of the Town for the next five to ten years. Clifton’s Town Plan will do so, based upon an understanding of the past, the present conditions, and the anticipated

future needs and desires of the Town residents and business owners.



Recognizing the importance of periodically updating the comprehensive plan, the Town Planning Commission determined that factors such as the addition of three new housing developments, aging public infrastructure, and concerns regarding transportation and the environment contributed to the need for a full revision to the Town Plan. The plan will also aid in implementing the goals of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. The Town plan

is a guide for residents and businesses of the Town and will also be used by the Planning Commission and Town Council when considering all development proposals, as well as with respect to planning for the provision of public services and for capital improvements, and developing annual budget recommendations.

The Town Plan, in conjunction with Town Ordinances, helps protect those qualities of life held important by the citizens of the Town of Clifton and to encourage future development

that enhances and complements its small town character of the Town and ensures valuable natural and historical resources are protected.

In order for this Town Plan to be user-friendly and easy to follow, the descriptions of existing conditions and data are grouped together by subject matter: Our Town, Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities and Services, Environment-Natural Features and Resources, Environmental Protection and Sources of Degradation and Community Appearance. Each section includes a Goals, Objectives and Actions component that addresses future development and projects.

- **Goals** express the Town’s visions and values, and provide a context for the more specific objectives and policies. They are broad tools used to provide direction for future planning.
- **Objectives** outline specific methods to achieve individual goals, and detail strategies within the context of a goal. Objectives may also set a time frame for accomplishment.
- **Actions** are a set of tasks to accomplish the objectives.

The final part of the Town Plan contains the Implementation Strategies necessary to accomplish the Town’s planning goals and objectives.

## **LEGAL BASIS FOR PLAN**

The Comprehensive Plan is a mechanism to prepare for growth and change in a way that reflects the demands and needs of a locality and its people. Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia requires “the local planning commission to prepare a comprehensive plan for the physical development of its territory and every governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan.” The State Code (“the Code”) stipulates that the plan “shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory, which will, in accordance with present and probable

future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants”.

The Code specifies what elements must be addressed in local comprehensive plans. It states that the “comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature...” and it “shall show the locality’s long range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan.”

Section 15.2-2223-2229 of the Code sets forth the requirements and authority for the Town Council and Planning Commission to formulate and adopt comprehensive plans and any subsequent amendments to the plan.

Section 15.2-2230 of the Code requires that at least once every five years the comprehensive plan be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan. The Town Plan should continue to be re-evaluated for new or changed goals, objectives, and actions. For the Town of Clifton, a primary focus is to preserve its history and small town atmosphere, and remain a viable and desirable community in which to work and live.



# OUR TOWN

A major component of a Town Plan is the examination of past and present conditions in order to knowledgeably affect future environmental, economic and community planning. This section involves a collection of data concerning the history and development of the Town of Clifton, the historic resources, the structure of the Town's government and finances, economy, and population and housing characteristics.<sup>1</sup>



## TOWN HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The Town of Clifton is an incorporated town in the southwest quadrant of Fairfax County, approximately 20 miles west of Washington, DC. The Town is a small community with about 260 residents. It is 160 acres in size and is located along Popes Head Creek nearly two miles upstream from Bull Run.

Town property was used initially as Indian hunting grounds and then in the 1700's settled as a plantation. The establishment of the Orange and Alexandria railroad in the mid-1800s led to the development of the area. The railroad provided an important supply line and a means for transporting troops during the Civil War. In 1863, Devereaux Station, as it was known, became a supply depot. The name was changed to Clifton Station in 1868 when it became a passenger station. The train station was a catalyst for development

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<sup>1</sup> Resources used in compilation of the Our Town section include Clifton: Brigadoon in Virginia, Second Edition (Nan Netherton with an update by Lee Ruck, 2007).



# Town of Clifton

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government

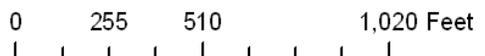


Figure 1: Town of Clifton.



Figure 2: Town of Clifton, 2007 Aerial Photo by Aero-Metric, Inc.

and one year later, a Post Office was established. The “post village” started growing with stores, hotel, schools, and a community feeling.

On March 10, 1902, Clifton was established as a town by Charter by the Virginia General Assembly. “The boundaries of said town shall be as follows, namely: Beginning at sign post corner Chapel and Main Streets in said town, measuring four hundred and forty yards in opposite directions parallel with Main and Chapel Streets, forming a square of one-half mile on each boundary, containing one-fourth square mile of territory” (Charter 1902). The great extent of the Town was developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Today, the Town continues to be the same shape and size as described in the original Town charter with a clustering of homes, churches, quaint shops, an inn and restaurants. Despite the intense development pressures of the surrounding region of Fairfax and Prince William Counties, the Town has retained its small town character reminiscent of a Norman Rockwell painting. The Town experienced an era of renovation and restoration that began in the 1970s and still continues today.

Several major factors have defined the limited development of the Town. Initially, the proximity to the railroad characterized growth. The Town became more popular and grew during the expansion of the railroad in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The greatest extent of the Town was developed during this timeframe. Since that time, the greatest current restriction on continued development in the Town is the lack of sanitary sewer facilities. Like similarly sized communities throughout Virginia, town buildings and homes were originally built with septic fields and pit privies. In the mid 1960’s, Fairfax County (“County”) constructed a pump-and-haul facility at the end of Chapel Street to serve the wastewater needs of the Town. The pump-and-haul facility has limited capacity and serves only those homes and businesses that access the existing sewer lines. The County restricted any new development from using the pump and haul station. New development within the Town must meet current septic field standards.

The Town has been able to further resist development pressures as a result of a major downzoning of the geographic area surrounding the Town within Fairfax County. The County rezoned approximately 44,000 acres in the 1980’s to protect the region’s drinking

water supply which is drawn from the Occoquan reservoir. This area has a minimum lot size of five-acres and is planned to never be served by public water or sewer.

The designation of the Town as an Historic District in 1985 significantly contributes to its unique development pattern. In 1979, the Town adopted the Historic Overlay District Ordinance and created an Architectural Review Board. This overlay zoning district applies to all parcels within the Town and was created to preserve and perpetuate the Town's historic and architectural integrity.

Each of these factors have contributed to the fact that the Town of Clifton of today, has much the same scale and character as the Town of Clifton of the past. Although the train hasn't stopped in Town since 1958, the Town of Clifton has retained its turn of the century appearance and feel.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

The Town has many historic residences, churches, and commercial buildings that were constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Approximately 42 acres of the Town was placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) on April 16, 1985 as the "Clifton Historic District". The boundaries of the Clifton Historic District are shown on Figure 3. The VLR is the state's official list of properties important to Virginia's history and is managed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR). The Clifton Historic District was accepted on August 15th, 1985 by the National Park Service to be included on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP is the official list of structures, sites, objects and districts that embody the historic and cultural foundations of the nation. A description of the properties within the Historic District are identified in Appendix A. This national historic district designation is designed to preserve the flavor of late nineteenth century rural community life. The historic character of the Town's frame buildings and narrow streets are essential elements of its National Register status.

The National Register designation is an honorary recognition of the architectural and historical significance of buildings or structures. It imposes no architectural controls or property restrictions unless federal funds or actions are involved. Qualifying properties

may be eligible for federal historic preservation funding and/or federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation.

In addition to the Town's National Register status, several structures are listed individually in Fairfax County's Inventory of Historic Sites. Inclusion on this inventory is also an honorary designation and does not impose restrictions or limits as to what an owner can do with the property. These structures are also shown on Figure 3 and include the following:

- Beckwith House, 12752 Chapel Street
- Buckley Brothers Store, 7145 Main Street
- Clifton Baptist Church, 7152 Main Street
- Clifton Hotel, 7134 Main Street
- Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane
- Clifton Primitive Baptist Church, 7200 Main Street
- Quigg House, 7150 Main Street

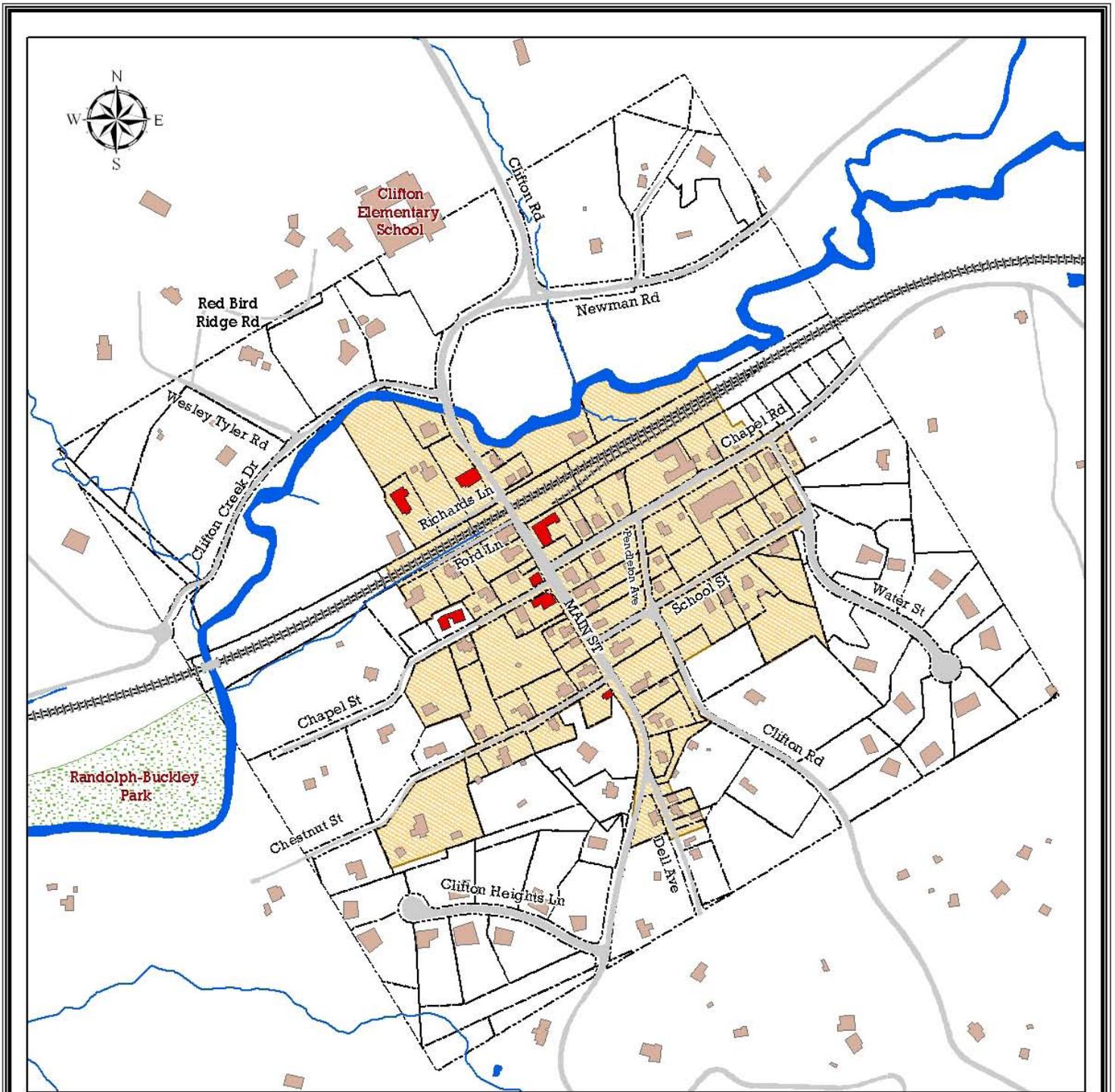
All of the structures included in the Clifton Historic District are designated historic and worthy of protection in the Town. Historic resources are fragile and irreplaceable and must be preserved. While most of the historic structures in Town have been preserved or restored, some of the Town's historic resources have been lost due to lack of maintenance.

Overlay historic district zoning is the primary tool available to the Town for local regulatory protection of historic properties. The Historic Overlay District provides additional protection and imposes design standards in addition to whatever underlying zoning requirements are already enforced by a locality's zoning regulations. In 1979, the entire Town was placed under the Historic Overlay District Ordinance. This ordinance was created to promote the general welfare, educational, and recreational pleasure of the public through the perpetuation of the historic nature of the Town and to maintain its historical, architectural and cultural significance.

When the Town adopted the Historic Overlay District, it also established an Architectural Review Board (ARB). Pursuant to the State Code, the Town Council has authorized the

ARB to review and decide upon applications within the historic district for the erection, construction, reconstruction, remodeling, exterior alteration, restoration, demolition, or relocation of a building or structure, or the erection or modification of any signs, fences and retaining walls. The ARB has developed standards and recommendations as set forth in the “Architectural & Planning Guidelines, Clifton, Virginia” which are used by the ARB to evaluate applications.

Key to a successful historic preservation program is a strong local network of organizations interested in promoting and preserving the historic properties and increasing public awareness of the history of the Town. These organizations include the Clifton Betterment Association (CBA), Clifton Community Woman’s Club, Clifton Lions Club, and Clifton Gentlemen’s Club. These efforts include acquisition of historic structures for renovation and/or preservation, walking tours of historic structures in Town, annual tours of historic homes, and monetary contributions to assist the Town in promotion and preservation of it’s Historic District.



# Clifton Historic District National Register of Historic Places

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government

-  Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites
-  Federal Historic District Boundary

See appendix A for a description of properties in Historic District

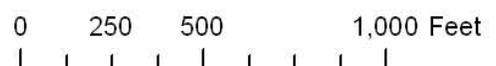


Figure 3: Clifton Historic District and Historic Homes.

## TOWN GOVERNMENT AND FINANCES

The Town of Clifton is one of three incorporated towns in Fairfax County. The present charter was granted by the General Assembly on March 10, 1902 and has since been amended. The Town is governed by the Clifton Town Council, its legislative body. The Town Council has the authority to set Town taxes and budget, can apply for grants, apply zoning, and issue use permits. The Town Council is composed of an elected mayor and five elected council members who are elected for two-year terms on the first Tuesday of May of every even-numbered year. Administrative appointments by the Council include a Treasurer and Town Clerk. Legal and engineering services are obtained on a contractual basis.

The Town also relies on the Clifton Planning Commission as an advisory body that makes recommendations to the Town Council on planning matters including zoning, land use planning, use permits, site plans, the comprehensive plan, ordinances, and long-range budgetary planning. The Planning Commission is also delegated the authority and power to administer the Town's subdivision ordinance. The commission is composed of at least seven members and is appointed by the Town Council. The Architectural Review Board (ARB) administers the provisions of the Historic District and is an approval body to review applications for construction, restoration, alterations, relocation or demolition of structures as well as signs within the Town. The ARB has five or seven members appointed by the Town Council. The members are residents of the Town with a demonstrated knowledge of and interest in the preservation of historical and architectural landmarks. At least one member of the ARB should be a certified architect. The Town also has a Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) which has the power to grant variances to the specific requirements of the zoning ordinance if the applicant can show undue hardship unique to his property in accordance with state code. The BZA has five or seven members appointed by the Circuit Court of Fairfax County. The Town also relies on the input of several committees created to represent different aspects of the Town. Currently, the committees consist of Beautification, Clifton Business Coalition, Communication, Environmental,

Historic Preservation, Revenue and Finance, Special Projects, Town Property and Traffic/  
Parking/Safety.

Unlike cities, which are independent governmental entities, a town is a part of a county in Virginia. While counties exercise the broadest range of powers granted to local governments by the General Assembly, the Town is only granted specific powers. The Town may impose real estate, personal property or excise taxes, but these taxes would be in addition to similar taxes imposed by the County. In return for real estate and personal property taxes paid by Town residents to the County, Town residents receive many County services such as: Health and Welfare (Health Department, Family Services, etc.), Judicial Administration (courts), Parks/Recreation, Libraries, Public Safety (Fire & Rescue, Police), Public Schools, and Public Works (pump-and-haul, solid waste disposal, building code & inspection services). Town residents are eligible to vote in both County and Clifton elections. The Town of Clifton is located within the Springfield Magisterial District of Fairfax County and is represented on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors by the Springfield District Supervisor.

It is important to understand the financial structure of the Town in order to determine the financial resources available so that the proposed goals and objectives of the Town Plan can be placed in a realistic framework. Town revenues are generated by taxes and special events sponsored by the Town. A Business, Professional and Occupational License (BPOL) Tax is imposed on all businesses that operate within the Town, including home businesses. The tax is paid to the Town, and the businesses do not have to pay a similar tax to Fairfax County. Currently, the Town does not levy a real estate, personal property or excise tax. Other tax and permit revenues at this time are from sales tax, Alcoholic Beverage Control tax, motor vehicle tags, Cox/Verizon communication sales and use tax, cigarette tax, railroad tax, utility user tax, and Planning Commission and ARB fees. In addition, the Town receives income from renting Town facilities such as the Town meeting hall and Town parks. The 2008 budget for the Town reflects approximately 40% of the Town's revenues from taxes, permit fees and town facility rentals. Also essential to the Town's revenue stream are the many special events in the Town. The Halloween Haunted Trail, Wine Festival and Holiday Homes Tour are some of the Town events for

which proceeds go directly to the Town. The revenue from these and other types of special events comprise approximately 50% of the Town's revenue according to the budget.

## **ECONOMY**

The Town currently has 16 properties zoned for commercial/industrial uses which contain a number of business enterprises. Several of these buildings have undergone major restoration within the last five years. In addition, a few home businesses and professional offices operate in existing residences as authorized by the Town Council. This type of commercial use is restricted to prevent any adverse impacts upon the residential character of the area.

Although there is some local employment, the majority of the working population in Town commute to other areas in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. Recently, there has been a resurgence of commercial uses serving as a mini-employment opportunity for the residents of Clifton and the surrounding area. These uses include a coffee shop and ice cream shop, and adjacent office uses and retail shops with a number of individual businesses in residences.

In addition to Town sponsored events which bring in significant revenue and customers to the local businesses, supporting organizations sponsor events which also draw customers. Events such as Clifton Day, Twilight Caboose Run, and the Spring Homes Tour, while not raising funds directly for the Town, do have a positive financial impact on many of the businesses and non-profit organizations in Town.

## **POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS**

According to the Fairfax County Demographic Reports 2007, the Town of Clifton was home to 260 residents in 2007. The population of Clifton has increased from 170 residents numbered in the 1980 census. According to the *Fairfax County Population and Housing Survey*, the population of the Town was as high as 273 residents as recently 2002. Though the population has increased since 1980, it has grown slowly in comparison to surrounding Fairfax County. Recent increases are due to two new residential developments, totaling 20 new homes. The Town is almost completely built out and may not experience much population growth in the future, unless zoning ordinances change significantly.

## **HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

According to the Fairfax County Demographic Reports 2007 data, there were 87 total housing units in the Town, averaging 3.17 members per household. All housing within the Town continues to be classified as single family detached. The average number of rooms for housing units within the Town was 5.67. The number of housing units within the Town has grown slowly; only 22 new homes have been built since 1998, the majority of which were a result of two new housing developments.

These newest housing developments within Clifton are located on Water Street and Clifton Heights Lane. The Frog Hill development consists of one existing home and ten new homes, and was completed in 2002. The Clifton Heights Community consists of nine new homes. Though each of these developments is located within the Historic District they both have Home Owners Associations as required by the County. In 2006, the historic Hetzel house, located in the Historic District, was demolished and a new home was constructed. Two additional homes have been constructed on Redbird Ridge adjacent to Clifton Elementary School. All of the new homes were constructed with respect to the historic district regulations, and were subject to approval by the Architectural Review Board.

## OUR TOWN GOALS OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### *Historic Resources (HR)*

#### **HR Goal 1 - Protect and enhance the Town's historic and cultural resources for present and future residents.**

#### **HR Objective 1.1 - Preserve and promote the Town's historic resources.**

##### **Actions:**

**HR 1.1.1 - Maintain and restore historic structures and sites.** Ensure all publicly owned historic properties are maintained and respectfully restored. Encourage private owners of historic properties to take appropriate maintenance measures and restore properties according to the Town Code and "Architectural and Planning Guidelines for the Town of Clifton". Amend Town Code to include a property and site maintenance section which would prohibit the deterioration of a property or structure due to owner neglect.

**HR 1.1.2 – Monitor and protect the Town's valuable historic resources.** Provide legislative protection for properties in the Historic Overlay District. Amend Town Code to require a Use Permit and approval by the Town Council to raze or demolish any part of a structure in the Historic District as State Code allows. Encourage respectful adaptive reuse of historic properties.

**HR 1.1.3 - Promote public awareness of the Town's historic resources.** Establish and/or support programs and events to encourage public awareness of the Town's culture and history by encouraging visitors to visit the Town's museum and historic sites.

**HR 1.1.4 - Establish and maintain an effective partnership with state and federal agencies for historic preservation activities.** Submit a Certified Local Government (CLG) application to the State Historic Preservation Office as soon as possible. CLG status means the Town meets State and Federal historic preservation standards. CLG status provides access to federal grants for historic preservation activities.

**HR 1.1.5 – Obtain additional sources of funding and technical assistance for historic preservation activities.** Designate an individual, knowledgeable in historic preservation, who would provide information to the Town government and become knowledgeable about historic preservation pertaining to the Town, including applicable historic preservation statutes and programs and public and private funding and technical assistance resources.

**HR 1.1.6 – Provide historic preservation information to property owners living in the Historic District.** Seek information on public and private programs that assist owners in the maintenance and upkeep of Historic District houses and structures, including federal and state tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic structures and make this available to all property owners in the Historic District.

**HR Objective 1.2 - Preserve and promote the Town’s cultural resources.**

**Actions:**

**HR 1.2.1 - Improve and manage the Town Museum.** Make improvements to the present museum site at the Old Town Hall so artifacts can be inventoried, collected and/or displayed. Manage the museum to protect, interpret and collect artifacts relating to Clifton’s history. Create a viable public outreach and educational program which includes museum activities, tours, public meetings and presentations for Town residents, visitors, and the Northern Virginia community.

**HR 1.2.2 - Develop an archaeological preservation program.** Work with the County and State to conduct an archaeological reconnaissance survey and identify areas of low, medium and high archeological potential. Depending on survey results, create a Town Preservation Program.

**HR 1.2.3 - Protect Town historic and memorial markers.** Adopt a policy or amend Town Code to protect present and future historic and memorial markers, e.g. Devereux Station marker, Hetzel House marker, Earl H. Lee Gazebo memorial marker. Protect historic and memorial markers from being removed, changed, altered or obstructed from view.

## ***Town Government and Finances (TGF)***

### **TGF Goal 1 - Improve Town government and financial management.**

#### **TGF Objective 1.1 – Strengthen the quality of Town government through professional management.**

##### **Actions:**

**TGF 1.1.1 - Evaluate the need for a Town manager.** Evaluate the need for a town manager to implement and manage approved programs, policies and public funds. Investigate opportunities offered by local educational institutions for providing town management.

**TGF 1.2.2 – Provide training for elected officials, town employees, and members of Town boards, commissions, and committees.** Identify training requirements for selected Town jobs. Seek low/no cost training forums and materials that can be adapted to meet the Town's needs.

**TGF 1.2.3 - Improve financial management of the Town.** Ensure income streams are reliable and sufficient to cover annual expenses. Identify and develop additional or alternative revenue sources to alleviate dependence on Town sponsored events. Maintain a Finance Committee according to approved resolutions, providing clear priorities, guidance and direction to this committee. Recommend that at least one member of the Finance Committee have significant expertise in government budget and financing. Ensure an annual audit of town financial records by a certified CPA.

**TGF 1.2.4 - Organize public and historic records at one location.** File, catalogue and record public records, to include those from Town Council, Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, Special Projects, committees, and Town-sponsored events, so that they are preserved, easily accessible by the public, and managed using professional document control methods in accordance with the requirements for record retention and disposition set forth in the State Code.

**TGF 1.2.5 - Update the Town Code.** Conduct a periodic review of the Town Code, recommending updates and changes for Town Council approval.

**TGF 1.2.6 – Improve communications between Town government and residents.**

Enhance the Town web site and utilize other methods of communication (i.e. social networking sites) to provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and essential information used by Town residents, businesses, visitors, partners and community groups. Recommend elected officials host regular Town Hall Meetings to discuss issues of vital interest to Town and local area citizens.

***Economy (EC)***

**EC Goal 1 - Create and stimulate a favorable climate for economic growth and development.**

**EC Objective 1.1 – Support existing businesses and community groups.**

**Actions:**

**EC 1.1.1 – Actively support the Clifton Business Coalition (CBC).** Assist CBC in promoting and building a viable business community by working together to identify and satisfy government-related needs of the business community. Provide funds to offset the cost of Town brochures, posters and advertisements developed by the CBC.

**EC 1.1.2 – Promote and support Town businesses.** Increase community awareness of business products, services and activities through the web site and other public communications. Provide new business owners with a comprehensive introduction to Town government requirements. Develop materials for visitors, e.g. a walking tour brochure, which includes information about Town businesses.

**EC 1.1.3 - Support community groups.** Promote community group events through the web site and other public communications. Provide limited Town support for various events, such as Clifton Day.

**EC Goal 2 – Actively seek new businesses, which fit the historic nature of the Town.**

**EC Objective 2.1 – Create an outreach program to attract new businesses to the Town.**

**Actions:**

**EC 2.1.1 – Coordinate with the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA).** Build a working relationship with FCEDA to help promote Clifton as a location of choice for new businesses.

**EC 2.1.2 – Seek innovative ways to promote Clifton as a business location.** Consider submitting articles or advertisements to appropriate trade and specialty magazines and consider providing incentives to new businesses.

**EC 2.1.3 – Ensure business-related government information, processes and requirements are easy to find and use.** Add a business section to the Town web site that is one-stop-shopping for any and all information needed by any business owner, whether prospective, new or existing.

**EC Goal 3 – Support and expand the Cultural Arts Program as a contributor to the Town’s identity and economy.**

**EC Objective 3.1 - Bring an awareness and appreciation for the cultural arts to Town residents.**

**Actions:**

**EC 3.1.1 – Enhance the Cultural Arts Program.** Host a variety of different forms of artistic expression at public forums.

**EC 3.1.2 – Find funding and technical resources for the Town’s Cultural Arts Program.** Seek both public and private resources to support a well planned, consistent, and invigorating program.



## LAND USE

The Town grew in a natural and unregulated manner before the Town's first zoning ordinance was adopted. Therefore, the majority of the Town's existing land uses are characterized by its historic pattern of development.

### CHARACTER OF TOWN



Clifton's character is easier felt by residents and visitors than described. It is a close-knit community of active and engaged citizens who are dedicated to keeping the Town special and unique. As a direct result of greatly increased development and commercialism in western Fairfax County, Town residents are passionate about maintaining the small town character. The past decade has seen a large increase in through-traffic because of development occurring in outlying areas. A primary goal of the Town is to place strong emphasis on maintaining an appropriate balance between residential and

commercial uses in order to preserve its existing small town identity and historic value.

### EXISTING LAND USE

The Town of Clifton has developed along Main Street, with a few secondary streets. The Town has a development pattern influenced by a time when pedestrian access was essential; therefore, it is a collection of single family homes and businesses close to the streets and to each other. Many of the businesses exist both in buildings that were historically

commercial, as well as in converted historic homes. There are a number of public uses in the Town, including parks and open space as well as community buildings.

The following provides a brief description of the general nature of existing land uses within the Town limits drawing from current zoning as a guide. As evidenced by the Town Zoning Map, the current and the planned land use within the Town has changed little over the past ten years. It is still largely residential. Agricultural zoning comprises the second largest land use. There are two areas of the Town zoned for agricultural land use. Both are located primarily within the confines of the Popes Head Creek floodplain. Agricultural activity on these areas is currently limited to pasture.

Land zoned as commercial and industrial comprises a small fraction of the Town's land use. The Town's commercial and industrial districts are concentrated at the intersection of Main Street and the Norfolk Southern Railroad near the center of the Town. Commercial activity also spreads to the north side of Chapel Road and, to a lesser extent, along Ford Lane and Chapel Street. The industrially zoned area of the Town is constrained to the area of land in the northeastern quadrant of the intersection of Norfolk Southern Railroad and Main Street. However, no industrial land uses or structures presently exist or are planned on these parcels.

One of the most important land use categories in any land use analysis is the availability of vacant land for development. The amount, nature, and suitability of vacant land is a major determinant of future growth. The Fairfax County Real Estate Assessment records show 29.3 vacant acres within the Town limits. Of those 29.3 acres, only 7.5 are buildable.

## **ZONING**

Land use within the Town is governed by the Town's Zoning Ordinance. The present Zoning Ordinance became effective on January 7, 2000 and has been amended through December 2003. The Zoning Ordinance serves as a primary tool for implementation of the goals, objectives and actions contained in the Comprehensive Plan. It is essential to have congruency between the Zoning Ordinance and the vision for future development. Two primary components of the Zoning Ordinance, which are instrumental in natural

resources protection, are the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance (adopted 1995) and the Flood Plain Ordinance.

The Zoning Ordinance established Zoning Districts in which certain land uses are restricted or prohibited in order to maintain an orderly and desirable pattern of growth within the Town, to buffer incompatible land uses, and to protect environmentally sensitive features from adverse effects of urban development. The Zoning Map (Figure 4), provides a graphic representation of the Town's Zoning District boundaries. However, in the case of any conflict between the Zoning Map and the text of the ordinance, the text prevails. The Zoning Ordinance should be consulted for detailed descriptions and requirements for each district.

In addition to the base zoning districts, the Town has adopted a Historic Overlay District which encompasses all the land within the Town boundary. This Overlay District requires that all new structures or additions to existing structures, and any buildings proposed to be demolished must receive a certificate of appropriateness from the Town's appointed Architectural Review Board. This is to maintain the historical, architectural and cultural significance of the Town. Other relevant ordinances for the Town affecting land use include the Floodplain Overlay Zoning District, Subdivision Ordinance, Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, and the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

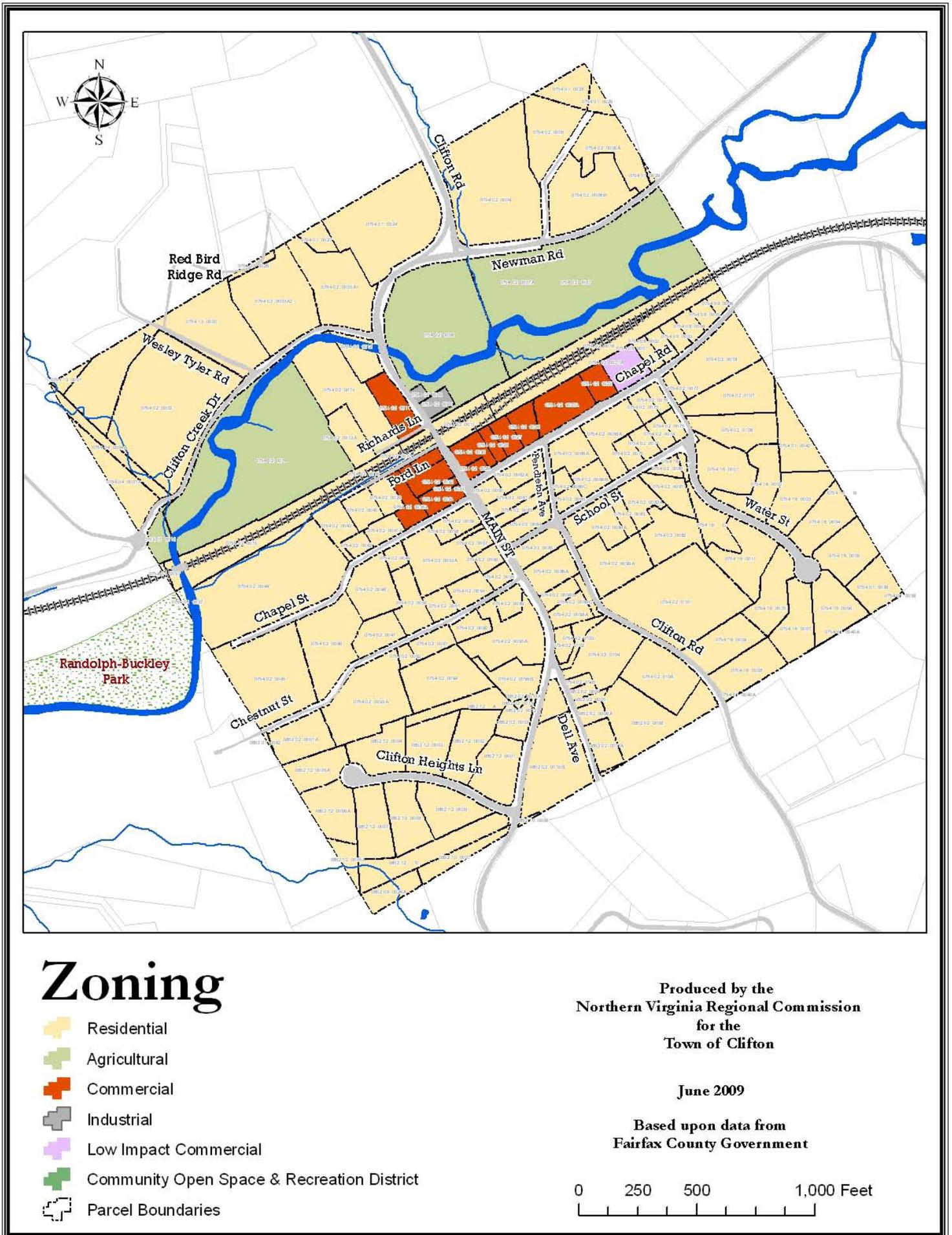


Figure 4: Zoning Map.

## **LAND USE GOALS OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

**LU Goal 1 - Achieve a balanced pattern of land use which preserves the Town's historic identity, and protects the historic significance and integrity of the Town's historic properties.**

**LU Objective 1.1 - Maintain Clifton's historical integrity as a National Register of Historic Places district.**

**Actions:**

**LU 1.1.1 - Update the Historic Overlay District ordinance.** Review and revise the design standards for development in the Town as set forth in the "Architectural & Planning Guidelines, Clifton, Virginia" adopted July 2, 1997. Enhance enforcement and broaden review of this ordinance to include Town Council approval.

**LU 1.1.2 - Promote adaptive re-use of vacant buildings and historical structures.** Ensure re-use is in a form compatible with the needs of the Town and the architectural and historic integrity of the structure.

**LU 1.1.3 – Participate in the Virginia Certified Local Governments Program.** Revise ordinances to comply with this program.

**LU 1.1.4 - Revise the zoning ordinance.** Ensure government has the authority to provide for property and site maintenance, to prevent property and structure deterioration, to avoid blight or hazardous conditions, and to provide remediation thereof.

**LU Goal 2 - Achieve a balanced pattern of land use which preserves the character of our small town, protects residential areas and enhances the commercial vitality of the Town.**

**LU Objective 2.1 – Create and enforce land use policies and practices that protect and enhance its existing small community and quality of life.**

**Actions:****LU 2.1.1 - Maintain the well defined residential and commercial areas of the Town.**

The commercial area is defined as those currently zoned for commercial or low-intensity commercial uses.

**LU 2.1.2 - Encourage the use of buffers between residential and new or redeveloped commercial areas.** Minimize impacts through the provision of additional open space or landscaping buffers and/or barriers.

**LU 2.1.3 - Legislate a non-extension policy for dead end streets.**

**LU 2.1.4 - Provide appropriate signage for visitors.** Direct visitors to commercial businesses, historical sites, and public parking locations.

**LU 2.1.5 - Create additional public parking locations.** Explore locations for overflow parking for commercial uses and Town events, which minimize impacts on surrounding residential uses.

**LU 2.1.6 - The Old Town Hall should be limited to low impact community functions such as a town office and/or museum or a place of small group meetings/gatherings as a result of its location near established residences.** The property will allow for parking on-site rather than on-street. Such parking should be scaled to accommodate the sole needs of the activities occurring at the Old Town Hall property. As an option, the Old Town Hall property may be considered for development of low impact commercial uses as defined in the zoning ordinance so long as the existing Town Hall is restored to the greatest extent feasible in conjunction with any new development. Any new development should be designed to minimize impacts on established residences across Chapel Road and to future residential uses to the east of the property.

### **LU Goal 3 - Achieve a balanced pattern of land use which protects the natural environment.**

#### **LU Objective 3.1 – Revise or develop zoning ordinances that encourage balanced land use and the protection of natural resources in a manner consistent with the Natural Resources Goals, Objectives and Actions.**

##### **Actions:**

**LU 3.1.1 - Continue the Town’s policy of one dwelling unit to a minimum lot size of five acres.** Minimize impervious areas and reduce the effects of non-point source pollution by requiring a minimum lot size for all new development.

**LU 3.1.2 - Eliminate the Industrial Zoning District.** Rezone existing industrially zoned properties to a commercial zoning designation, and/or Community Open Space and Recreation District, in order to protect Pope’s Head Creek and prevent activities which may produce hazardous fumes, odors, wastes, runoff, or noise from operation, production or manufacturing activities.

**LU 3.1.3 - Revise the Town of Clifton Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.** Comply with recent updates to State Code and improve conformance with Fairfax County Code.

**LU 3.1.4 - Revise the Town of Clifton Flood Plain Ordinance.** Determine what constraints and requirements best protect the flood plain and any development in the flood plain.

**LU 3.1.5 - Review public use and future public use properites that should be included in the Community Open Space and Recreation zoning district.** Consider rezoning Town parks and other open space areas to Community Open Space zoning.

**LU 3.1.6 - Evaluate and consider the continued protection of parks, open space, and public use property presently used as such, that abuts or is adjacent to Town boundaries.**

**LU 3.1.7 - Remove the Agricultural zoning category.** Transition agricultural land into residential or the Community Open Space and Recreation Districts. No land is presently used for agricultural purposes within the Town. Land which is presently zoned agricultural is located within the floodplain and Resource Protection Area and presently allowable agricultural activities would have a negative impact on water quality given its proximity to Pope's Head Creek.

**LU 3.1.8 - Coordinate land use and development issues with Fairfax County for properties adjacent to the Town.**

## FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Town's Future Land Use Plan consists primarily of the goals, objectives, and actions outlined in the Town Plan and the Future Land Use Map identified as Figure 5. The Future Land Use Map reflects the land use changes required to achieve the goals, objectives, and actions defined in the Town Plan. It should be noted that the Future Land Use Plan is to be used only as a guide and holds no regulatory status. In case of a conflict between the Plan text and the Plan map, the text shall govern.

The Town's Future Land Use Plan reflects certain patterns of growth for the future that will further enhance the Town's small-town character and provide desired amenities to its residents. Changes in land use patterns, if any, are not intended to occur immediately, but rather over time and revisions to the Future Land Use Plan should be made to reflect new concerns and changing community characteristics.

The Future Land Use Map (Figure 5) is based on the following underlying principals: 1) to protect the Town's residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses; 2) to maintain appropriate buffers between residential and commercial land uses with the Town; 3) to develop adequate public facilities and to ensure that open space, community facilities, and parks and recreation facilities are available to the public; 4) to preserve the historic character of the Town; and 5) to protect environmentally sensitive areas of the Town from inappropriate land uses.

The Future Land Use Map, in general, is more specific than the Zoning Map in its land use designations. The Future Land Use map reflects the following land use designations:

**Residential** – Single family detached housing has been, and will remain, the predominant land use in the Town.

**Commercial** - Commercial uses generally include offices, retail and restaurant uses.

**Low-Impact Commercial** - This new land use category reflects the new zoning designation for office use.

**Developed Public Use** - This land use category recognizes the existing publicly-owned buildings such as the Clifton Town Meeting Hall/Fire Station and Clifton Elementary School.

**Developed Quasi-Public Use** –The term “quasi” is an important qualifier in that it indicates a property or building which is used by the community even though it is not publicly owned such as the churches, and Acacia Lodge.

**Community Open Space and Recreation** – This new land use category indicates uses such as public parks, open space, playgrounds and stream valley parkland. This designation is reflective of the new zoning district adopted by the Town in order to preserve community open space.

**Open Space – Private** – This area includes a large portion of the Popes Head Creek floodplain. This environmentally sensitive area warrants protection even though it is privately owned. A portion of this area is currently zoned for Agricultural use although not used for that purpose. Consistent with the 1996 Town Plan, the “Agricultural” designation has been omitted and is now part of the “Open Space-Private” designation.

Consistent with the 1996 Town Plan recommendation, the Future Land Use Plan eliminates the area currently zoned as “Industrial” due to the potentially negative impacts that such a land use would have on local water quality and the environmentally sensitive Pope’s Head Creek ecosystem. The industrially zoned area of the Town is now planned as a mix of “Commercial,” “Developed Quasi-Public Use,” and “Community Open Space and Recreation” land uses.

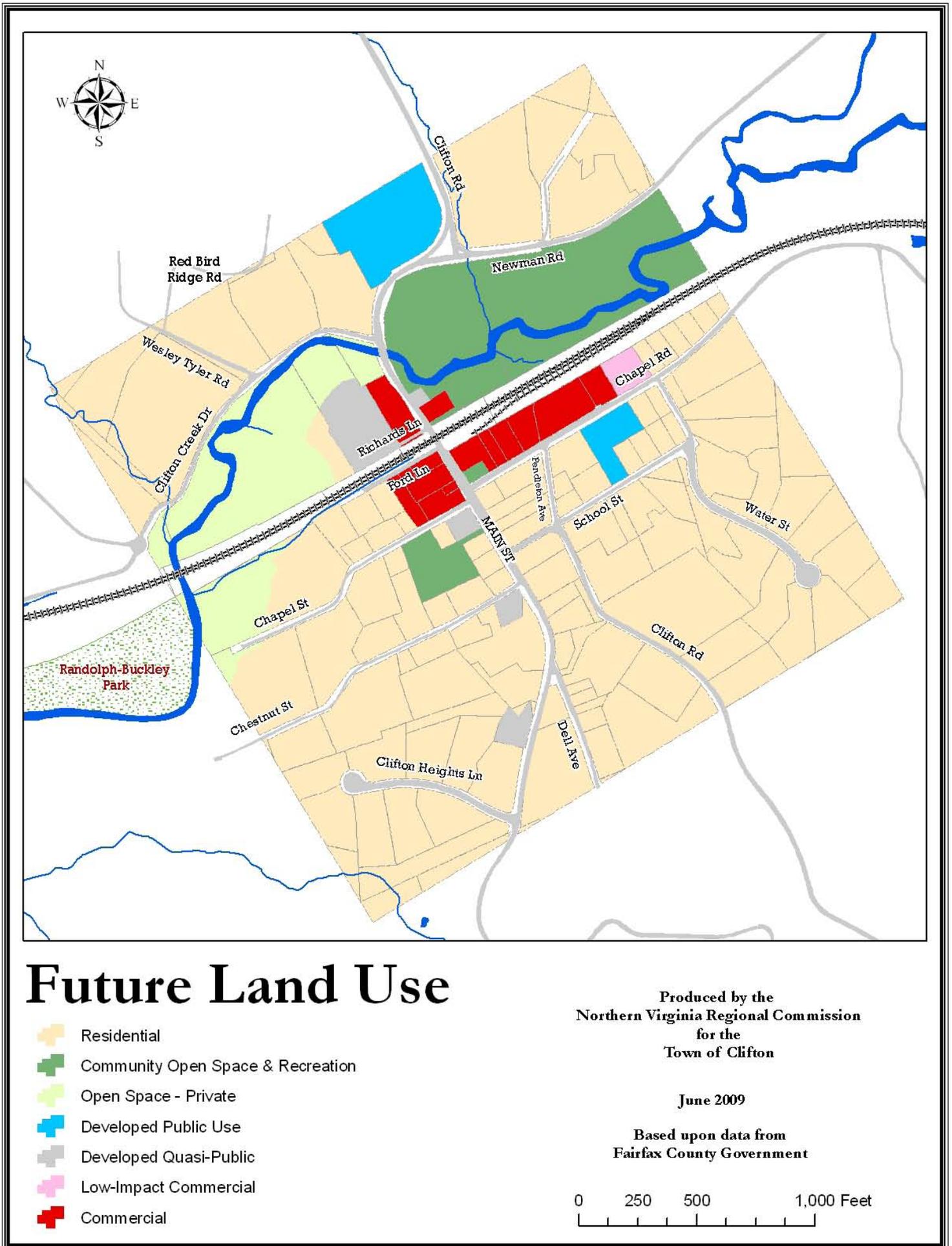


Figure 5: Future Land Use



# TRANSPORTATION

Similar to other development in Clifton, the transportation network grew incrementally based purely on needs, thus it is composed of small two-lane roads, minimal parking, and some pedestrian accessibility.

## ROADWAYS AND TRAFFIC



Primary access to the Town is provided via Clifton Road, Newman Road, and Chapel Road. Clifton Road is an improved two-lane facility north of the Town. The other roads are narrow, hilly and winding. Together with Main Street, these roads constitute the core of the Town's transportation network. In addition, there are several connecting or outlet roads servicing the Town and providing access to the surrounding area. The majority of the Town's roads are paved, public streets. There are two private roads: Ford Lane and Richards Lane. Due to the Town's historic development patterns that retained turn-of-the-century homes adjacent

to public roads with right-of-way, all roads in the Town maintain narrow pavement widths with little curbside parking. The Town's residential side streets are narrower than the two main streets. Curbside parking on these streets is much more constrained, in part to the rural ditches paralleling the roads. These roads make two-way vehicular travel difficult. It is common for one vehicle to pull off the pavement in order to let other vehicles pass. Currently, there are no plans by either Fairfax County or the Commonwealth of Virginia to alter significantly any of the access roads to the Town.

Traffic through the Town has increased dramatically over the years. In 1989, there were nearly 6,000 vehicles traversing Main Street on a normal work day based on a count conducted by the Fairfax County Police Department. The traffic along Main Street

increased to 7,200 averaged annual daily trips based on a VDOT count in 2002. In 2007, the VDOT counts reflected an increase to 9,500 average daily trips for that segment. The most recent counts from March 2009 indicate a slight decrease to 9,382 average annual daily trips on that segment. However, other road segments in Town experienced a slight increase in average annual daily trips. The traffic counts performed by VDOT are detailed in Table 1.

*TABLE 1: AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRIPS (AADT) ON KEY ROAD SEGMENTS\**

<b>Roadway</b>	<b>Segment</b>	<b>AADT 2007</b>	<b>Raw Data 2009</b>
Main Street	North Town limits	9500	9,382
Chapel Road	Main Street to Town limits	990	1,049
Newman Road	Clifton Rd to Town limits	1700	1609
Pendleton Avenue	Chapel Rd to School Street	640	678

*\* Info obtained from Virginia Department of Transportation Daily Traffic Volume Estimates 2007, and VDOT 2009 raw data.*

The high volume of traffic constitutes a safety risk to Town residents, who regularly express concerns for the safety of their children playing in and/or crossing the busy streets. Congestion caused by the substantial increase in commuter traffic through Main Street also remains a concern. As a consequence, vehicular traffic turning in and out of residential and commercial parking areas is difficult during peak commute periods. The two primary causes for this traffic continue to be:

- The rapid residential and commercial growth of western Fairfax County.
- The extensive population growth in Prince William County (e.g. Occoquan, Lorton, Dale City and Lake Ridge), which coupled with the inadequate area transportation infrastructure, has resulted in a large volume of cut-through traffic as commuters drive through Clifton to reach office parks and employment centers near Dulles Airport, Centreville and Chantilly. Currently, the route through Clifton via Main

Street and Clifton Road is the only crossing of the railroad tracks between Manassas (at Fairview Avenue) and Ox Road (Route 123) in Fairfax.

Clifton Road, between Braddock Road to Route 123 has been designated as a Scenic and Historical Byway. All public roads in the Town are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Town has requested and received increased traffic signage, including several stop signs. Several “rumble strips,” also have been installed to slow the speed of traffic entering the Town. The Town has requested the Fairfax County Police Department to substantially increase its visibility and traffic control in the Town.

## **OFF-STREET PARKING**

Parking availability is limited by the historic pattern of development. Most residential and commercial properties were developed prior to automobiles and lack space for off-street parking. Since many homes on Main Street do not have driveways or garages, residents utilize curbside parking along the narrow roadways. There are two major concerns: 1) that there is limited availability of off-street parking for homes on Main Street, and 2) that there is little public parking available for business patrons and visitors in the Town.

The Town has attempted to reduce safety hazards and congestion on public streets by initiating off-street vehicular parking requirements for residential and commercial uses. Most existing commercial uses have managed to accommodate necessary parking on-site. The Town has a lease agreement with Norfolk Southern Railroad to use its property near Buckley Store (Tax Map 75-4 (2) 17) for public parking. The Town has negotiated another lease agreement with Norfolk Southern Railroad to expand this area to provide additional public parking.

## **PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY**

Over the years, the Town has installed sidewalks along portions of Main Street and Chapel Road. However, several incomplete sidewalk connections remain, and some existing sidewalks are in disrepair. The Town has provided sidewalks incrementally based on the availability of funds. However this approach has resulted in an incomplete pedestrian network throughout the Town. Therefore, the Town has decided to pursue development of a streetscape master plan for Main Street. One element of the plan will

be to recommend modifications and/or enhancements to the road, sidewalks, drainage system and landscaping features as well as to evaluate traffic calming measures that best suit the historic nature of the Town. The first phase of the plan will include an existing conditions survey of Main Street. The Town of Clifton plans on creating a welcoming, safe and pedestrian-friendly, and beautiful Main Street streetscape. Existing pedestrian walkways are presented in Figure 6.

## TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

**TR Goal 1 – Provide a road network that compliments the Town’s historic, small-town character and is safe for all users.**

**TR Objective 1.1 – Enhance the road network to ensure that the streets are safe and comfortable for both pedestrians and motor vehicles in and through the Town and is based on an established theme and design standards.**

### **Actions:**

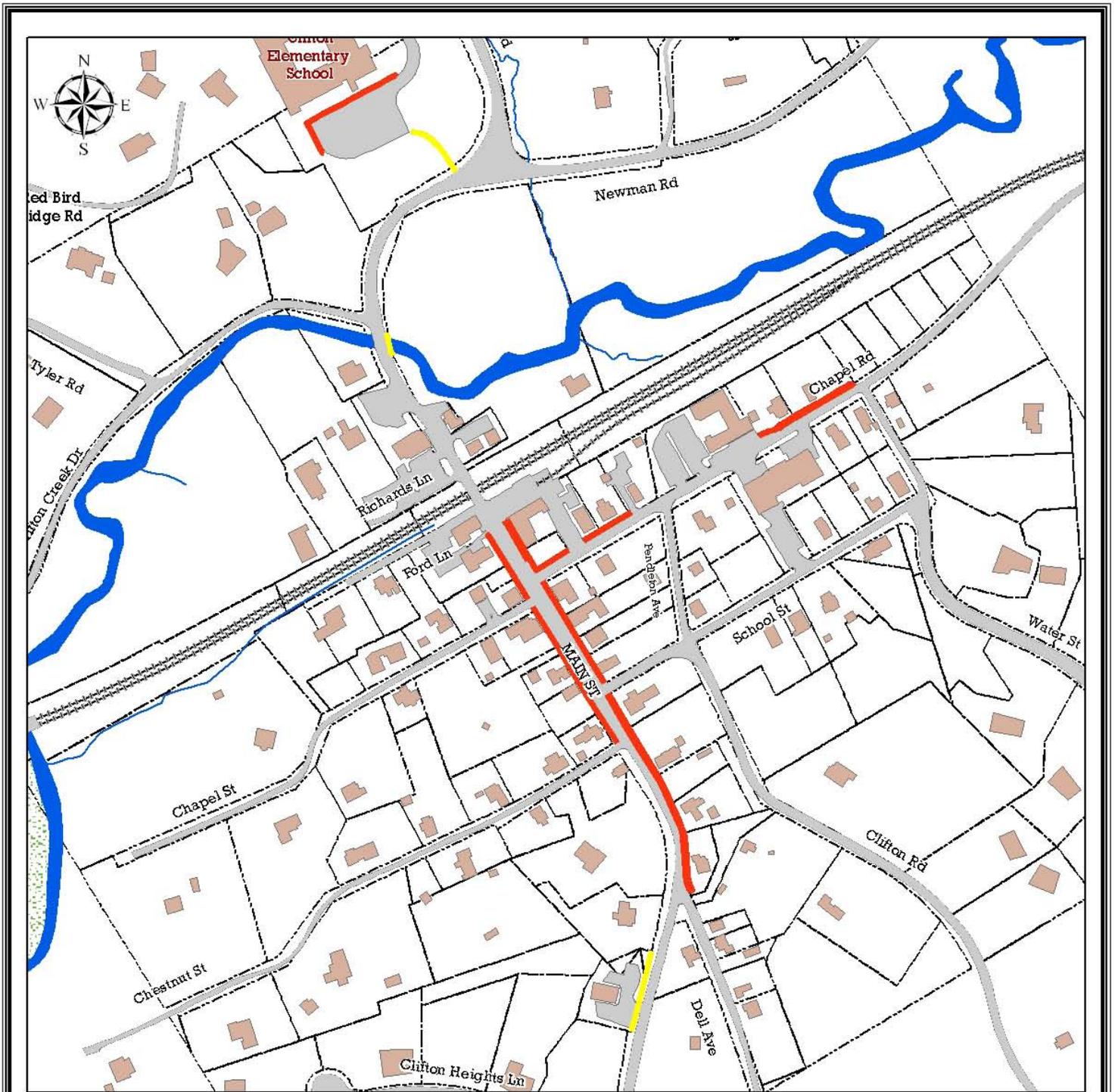
**TR 1.1.1 – Keep streets small, narrow, two-lane facilities.** Maintain low speed limits to protect citizens and eliminate the need for deceleration and turning lanes. Work with VDOT to ensure streets and sidewalks continue to reflect the Town’s historic character.

**TR 1.1.2 – Encourage development that is consistent with Streetscape Master Plan and community appearance goals.** Address elements such as pavement design, defined public parking, pedestrian circulation, traffic signs, and adequate sight distance at intersections.

**TR 1.1.3 - Provide additional public parking for visitors.** Expand the public parking lot located within the railroad right of way and explore creating additional low-impact parking solutions in the planned park within the floodplain. Provide unified signage identifying public parking areas.

**TR 1.1.4 - Construct or improve sidewalks, paths, and trails, which connect all Town residential, commercial and open space areas.** Develop a pedestrian circulation plan to identify where additional sidewalks, paths and trails are preferred. Determine which improvements are located within the VDOT public right-of-way and which are considered new improvements.

**TR 1.1.5 – Find and evaluate funding sources to construct or improve sidewalks, trails and paths.** Consideration should be given to VDOT and Fairfax County programs, Safe Routes to School Program and Transportation Enhancement Program.



# Existing Pedestrian Walkways

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government

- Sidewalks
- Unimproved Walkways

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Figure 6: Existing Pedestrian Walkways.

**TR 1.1.6 – Provide well-marked crosswalks at major intersections.** Work with VDOT to ensure paving materials for crosswalks blend with the historic character of the Town. Consider adding street signs at Town entrances reminding drivers to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks per State statute.

**TR Objective 1.2 – Implement traffic calming measures to slow traffic and promote a pedestrian friendly environment.**

**Actions:**

**TR 1.2.1 – Identify suitable traffic calming measures along major roadways.** Consider the fragile condition of historic structures, best location for calming measures, and effectiveness of different measures. Incorporate recommendations in the streetscape master plans for Main Street and Chapel Road.

**TR 1.2.2 - Remove the speed hump on Main Street near Chapel Road.** Coordinate its removal with improved crosswalks.

**TR 1.2.3 – Evaluate converting Pendleton Avenue to a one-way street.** Pendleton Avenue is used as a short-cut during morning rush hour. Work with VDOT, Clifton Fire and Rescue Station 16 (Fairfax County Fire & Rescue), and Pendleton Avenue residents to determine impact of this change.

**TR 1.2.4 - Provide minimum signage to meet safety and regulatory requirements.** Work with VDOT to select signage that is appropriate for the historic character of the Town (“children at play”, “pedestrian crossing”).

**TR Objective 1.3 – Modify roadways to improve storm drainage and ensure maintenance of the roadway network.**

**Actions:**

**TR 1.3.1 - Work with VDOT to develop a maintenance plan for the Town’s public roadways, sidewalks, and storm drainage system.** Include requirements to properly mill

streets prior to repaving, upgrade the storm drainage system to current standards, and improve sidewalks for a safer, more functional, uniform transportation system.

**TR Objective 1.4 - Encourage the County and State to develop mass transit and alternate commuter routes outside the Town limits, to reduce vehicular traffic within the Town.**

**Actions:**

**TR 1.4.1 - Designate a Town transportation representative to coordinate and monitor regional and local transportation planning efforts.**

**TR 1.4.2 – Monitor the status of the planned western bypass alignment (Tri-County Parkway).** Evaluate whether this planned north-south transportation link, which runs from Route 50 to the Route 234/I-66 Interchange, will reduce vehicular traffic through the Town.

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

## PARKS AND RECREATION

The Town has access to several parks and trails that are open to the public and widely used. The properties consist of the Clifton Town Park and Randolph Buckley Park. The Clifton Town Park is the most accessible and widely used of the parks. It commonly is used for Town events and informal gatherings. Buckley Park, an eight-acre parcel abutting the



Town, has a hiking trail, horse trail and a camping site. This park is accessed via a pedestrian bridge over Pope's Head Creek, which was originally designed and built primarily by Clifton residents. The bridge east abutment and the wood decking and railing were damaged by flooding in 2006, and restored to its original condition in 2007 using Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds.

Undeveloped park properties used by the public include the Ayre Square (leased by the Town from a private owner) as well as several properties that are owned by the Clifton Betterment Association (CBA) Town Improvement Fund. In 1993, the CBA Town Improvement Fund purchased property located along Main Street north of the railroad which consists of the floodplain associated with Popes Head Creek and a barn. The barn is used for CBA events and is available for rental for private functions. In 2005, the Town and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust purchased the adjoining 8.6 acre property using Federal Enhancement funding. This property was acquired so that the Town and the CBA could jointly pursue the development of the entire 14 acres as a passive recreation park. The conceptual plan includes trails that potentially could connect to a planned county wide trail network.

## **PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

Public buildings in the Town consist of the Old Town Hall, and the Fairfax County Fire Station #16 /Clifton Town Meeting Hall.

The Old Town Hall located in the Historic District on Chapel Road is owned by the Town. Once a residence, this building was used for Town committee meetings until early 2000. The building is currently used as a storage site for Town property. The structure is in need of significant renovation/restoration.

The Firehouse and Clifton Town Meeting Hall is owned by Fairfax County. The new facility provides the Town and surrounding area with enhanced fire fighting capability as well as a modern Clifton Town Meeting Hall. The Town is responsible for the operation and interior and exterior maintenance of the Hall.

Through a lease agreement with the County, the Town is responsible for the management of the Clifton Town Meeting Hall. The Town also is responsible for the cost of utilities and total maintenance of the Meeting Hall. The County is responsible for any structural maintenance. The lease is for a 25 year term expiring in 2019. The use of the Meeting Hall is expected to generate enough revenue so that it is self-supporting. Furthermore, these uses are not expected to negatively impact the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhood.

A Post Office is located within a commercially used building in the the Town. The Town also contains several quasi-public developed properties. These consist of the Clifton Presbyterian Church, the Clifton Baptist Church, the Clifton Primitive Baptist Church, the Second Baptist Church, and the Acacia Masonic Lodge. The Acacia Masonic Lodge is undergoing major renovations to raise the building foundation above the 100-year flood level and reorient the building to Main Street. It is anticipated that the Acacia Lodge will include a museum.

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

According to the 2000 Census, the Town had 35 children between the ages of five and nineteen. School facilities are provided to the Town by the Clifton Elementary School, and Robinson Secondary School, which are part of the Fairfax County Public School System.

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The elementary school is within the Robinson Secondary School district. All students attend both middle school and high school at Robinson. Renovation funds were approved for Clifton Elementary School in the 2005 and 2007 County Bond Referenda. The FY 2009-13 Capital Improvement Program for Fairfax County Public Schools includes \$17.1 million for renovation (planning phase) of Clifton Elementary School with a completion date of 2013-14 school year. Construction funds need to be included in a future bond referendum. There are no funded projects for Robinson Secondary School at this time.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES**

### ***Sanitary Sewer***

Prior to the late 1960s, the Town's waste water disposal needs were served through individual septic systems. Due to poor soils, high water table, and slow percolation rates within the most populous areas of the Town, Fairfax County agreed to provide a sanitary sewer system and treatment plant for a maximum of 600 people. The sewer trunk lines for the system were completed in 1968. However, the sewage treatment plant was never constructed due to the establishment of the Upper Occoquan Sewer Authority and more stringent environmental guidelines. The cost of upgrading the planned facility was prohibitively expensive, so a compromise was reached in 1968 and a "pump and haul" waste water system was constructed at the end of Chapel Street. At that time, Fairfax County adopted a policy for sewer service for the Town and identified specific properties that may be allowed to connect to the sewer system. This policy was reaffirmed by the Board of Supervisors in 1991.

An upgraded pump-and-haul system was completed by Fairfax County in 2007 to replace part of the original system. The upgrade replaced the three sanitary sewer collection tanks which were installed at different times over the past 40 years. The new facility has one concrete sanitary sewer collection vault and a new pumping system. The system currently serves 61 properties including a number of businesses and the Clifton Elementary School. It has capacity for several other eligible properties situated adjacent to the sewer line in accordance the County's approved policy. Hook-ups for eligible properties may be allowed administratively by Fairfax County in the event of septic failure. All other properties in Town rely on septic systems for their wastewater disposal. The pump-and-haul facility has a holding capacity of 35,000 gallons, including the overflow reservoir. The new facility

is designed to be virtually waterproof from any flood event. The facility is designed with capacity to hold effluent from the annual events, such as Clifton Day, and the additional hookups allowed for the Town. Currently the facility is hauling approximately eight loads of 2,500 gallons per day (20,000 gallons) from the facility. Sewage is pumped and hauled away for disposal at the Burke facility for onward transmission to Norman Cole Pollution Control Plant<sup>2</sup>. Figure 7 identifies properties served by public sewer and properties that have individual septic systems. Established residential hook-ups may be converted administratively to commercial or industrial hook-ups, provided that the total number of fixture units does not exceed 30 and effluent generated does not exceed 370 gallons per day. No other sewer service connections will be permitted unless approved by the Town Council and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Properties remaining eligible to connect to public sewer include<sup>3</sup>:

- 12800 Richards Lane 075-4-/02/0014
- 7203 Main Street 075-4-/02/0088 (now parcel 86A)
- 7200 Main Street 075-4-/02/0089
- 7178 Clifton Road 075-4-/02/104
- 12817 Chapel Street 075-4-/02/45

Properties that are not included in the pump-and-haul facility are served by individual septic systems. Fairfax County provides those owners notification of the requirements for septic pump-out of their systems every five years.

It should be noted that the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan states that “...except for this existing pump-and-haul system, public sanitary sewer should not be provided for the Town until a satisfactory method of serving the Town is found without opening up the surrounding area for development.” This is an effort to protect the Occoquan River watershed. Until such time arrives, development within the Town is confined to improvements to existing structures and lots which are able to support the state minimum requirements for septic systems.<sup>4</sup>

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2 Conversations with Ifty Khan, Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, January 2008.

3 The County approved Sewer Policy for the Town prevails if discrepancies exist herein.

4 Fairfax County Planning Commission, (adopted by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 1991), Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan for Area III. 2007 edition, Pohick Planning District

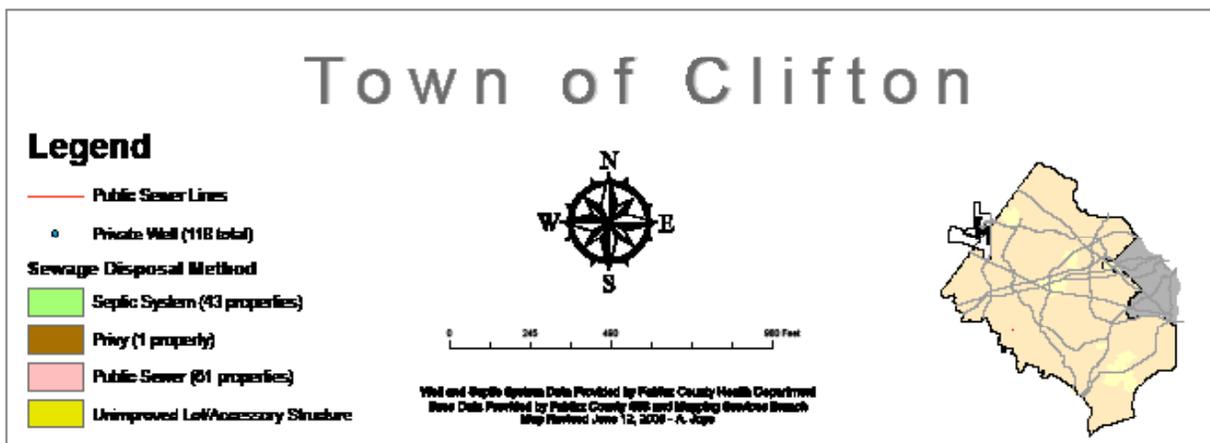
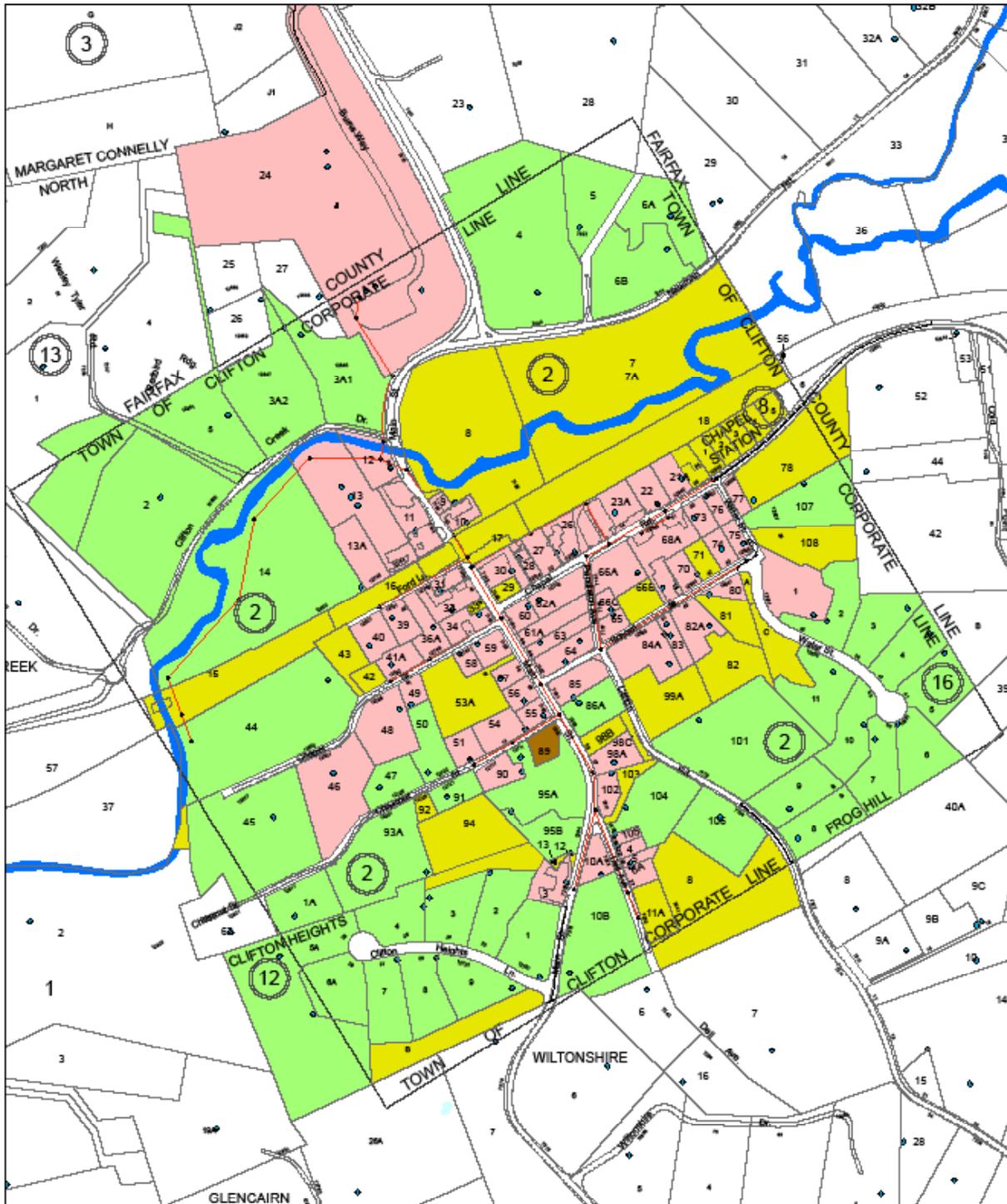


Figure 7: Well/Sewage Map, prepared by Fairfax County Health Department

## ***Solid Waste***

Town residents and businesses contract independently with private companies or take their trash and recycling directly to a Fairfax County solid waste facility located in Lorton or Fairfax.

The Town is included in the Fairfax County Solid Waste Management Plan, as are other towns and cities within the County. The Commonwealth of Virginia established a requirement for solid waste management planning to ensure adequate provisions are made throughout the state for the proper management of solid waste generated by Virginia's citizens. The County's solid waste management plan identifies and plans for all aspects of a high quality integrated solid waste management system. Solid waste includes almost everything thrown away or recycled, including yard waste, brush, household trash, recyclables, commercial trash, industrial waste, and construction debris. An integrated management system controls everything that happens to solid waste: collection, transfer, recycling, and disposal.

In July 2007, Fairfax County extended its recycling requirements which are applicable to Clifton residents and businesses since the Town is part of the County's Solid Waste Management Plan. All residents who receive curbside collection are required to recycle newspaper, container glass, mixed paper, flattened cardboard, plastic bottles, and metal food and beverage cans. All residents are required to recycle yard waste (leaves, grass, and brush). All businesses are required to recycle cardboard and mixed paper waste. Depending on size, some companies may be required to recycle their principal recyclable material. If not contracting with a private hauler, Fairfax offers a fee for service for solid waste drop off at the Lorton and Fairfax facilities. Chapter 109.1 of the Fairfax County Code specifies the new requirements for businesses, multifamily dwellings, and residents. Fairfax offers recycling drop off centers for a number of materials for both residents and small businesses throughout the county.

## ***Fire and Rescue – Police***

The Clifton Fire and Rescue Station 16, Clifton Station, provides safety and emergency services to the Town and the surrounding area. It is part of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Clifton Station was reconstructed in 1994 in conjunction with the

Clifton Town Meeting Hall and is located on Chapel Road. The station has a brush truck, a boat, an engine, and a tanker truck. The station uses dry hydrants which are located on Clifton Creek Drive and at the end of Chapel Street, and hose hookups to draw water from Popes Head Creek. The rescue squad operates one ambulance. The Clifton Station is one of 41 stations in the Fairfax County fire and rescue system and works cooperatively with them to aid the local area.

Fairfax County Police Department provides law enforcement services to the Town and the surrounding area. The Town is within the boundaries of the Sully District station of the department. The department regularly provides patrols to the Town, primarily to regulate vehicle speed. Additionally, the Virginia State Police have jurisdiction throughout Fairfax County.

### ***Emergency Preparedness***

The Town of Clifton is included in Fairfax County's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) required in the County Code (Section 14-1-5). The EOP:

- Is a tool and a set of guidelines in order to have a formulated method for action in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.
- Meets federal and state standards and outlines a legal and organizational basis for dealing with emergencies.
- “Provides clear guidelines, definitions, and operational concepts for the effective mobilization of county resources in responding to and recovering from all disasters and emergencies regardless of cause” (Fairfax County EOP, pg 15).

The major risks to Clifton are characterized by the proximity to a railroad, low-lying topography (including structures within the floodplains), and to Washington DC. In the event of an emergency the Town follows mandates and advisories issued by the Fairfax County, State, and Federal, Governments.

## UTILITIES

### *Electricity*

Electricity is provided to the Town by Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC). Distribution for most of the Town is from poles and overhead lines except for the underground utilities constructed within the two new subdivisions. In 1992 a new Dominion Virginia Power substation was approved by the State Corporation Commission and constructed adjacent to the Town boundaries along Clifton Creek Road.

### *Water Supply*

Water is supplied by private groundwater wells, with the exception of five non-community public wells. The location of existing wells are shown on Figure 7. Water yields to date have not been a constraining factor for growth within Clifton, although regional growth and changing weather patterns may indicate a need for greater conservation. According to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) – Water Division, groundwater yields within the area of Clifton should be adequate for the limited growth that is expected in the Town. Water quality is considered good, though only new wells are regularly sampled by Fairfax County Health Department.

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (§ 10.1-2107), as part of its water quality program, calls for the promotion of water resource conservation in order to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of present and future citizens of the Commonwealth. In addition, the Uniform Statewide Building Code (§ 36-99.10) provides localities with the authority to require water conservation devices as part of their building code. The Town could benefit by examining ways in which it can promote water conservation through the use of public education.

In November 2005, the Commonwealth of Virginia enacted the local and regional water supply planning (WSP) regulation (9 VAC 25-780-10). The WSP regulation was developed largely as a result of droughts experienced in 1999 and 2002. Its purpose is to “(I) ensure that adequate and safe drinking water is available to all citizens of the Commonwealth; (II) encourage, promote, and protect all other beneficial uses of the Commonwealth’s

water resources; and (III) encourage, promote and develop incentives for alternative water sources, including but not limited to desalinization.”

All cities, counties, and towns in the Commonwealth are required to submit a local WSP or participate in a regional WSP with other local jurisdictions. In 2006, the Clifton Town Council resolved to participate in the development of a regional water supply plan being developed by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. The deadline for submission of the regional WSP is November 2, 2011. The Town will be required to adopt the regional WSP and incorporate it into the Town Plan and any other relevant ordinances as may be appropriate. The WSP must be reviewed by the Town every five years as necessary and resubmitted to the state for review every ten years.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

### *Parks and Recreation (PR)*

**PR Goal 1 - Ensure Town parks and recreational properties and facilities, including natural and built resources, are significant contributions to general quality of life, including the safety, health and welfare of citizens.**

**PR Objective 1.1 - Preserve, protect and enhance park and recreation facilities and properties to ensure their availability and sustainability for the enjoyment of current and future generations.**

#### **Actions:**

**PR 1.1.1 - Determine recurring costs for park and recreation facilities and properties.** Include recurring costs for maintenance and repair in annual Town budgets.

**PR 1.1.2 - Recognize the volunteer efforts of town neighbors.** Create a recognition program to honor volunteers who preserve, protect and enhance Town parks and recreation facilities and properties.

**PR 1.1.3 - Work with the Clifton Betterment Association Town Improvement Fund (CBA) to help restore their barn.** Contribute by supporting fund raising, volunteerism or management support as this barn, located on Parcel 8, contributes to the Clifton Historic District and is used for community events.

**PR 1.1.4 - Maintain the Clifton Town Park (Parcel 53A) for community gatherings.** Enhance park entrances with appropriate landscaping and signage. Enforce requirements to prevent overcrowding, excessive noise and other excessive states that negatively impact residential properties bordering the park.

**PR 1.1.5 - Consult with a certified arborist to inventory trees of significance.** Require an analysis of general health, quantity, and species as well as recommendations to ensure continued health of trees on public lands.

**PR 1.1.6 - Plant new trees.** Ensure the sustainability and improvement of our forested habitat by planting new trees on public lands and encouraging the same on private lands.

**PR 1.1.7 - Connect proposed trail networks with existing and planned sidewalks.** Specifically, connect trails planned for Parcels 7, 7A, and 8 to sidewalks and other trails.

**PR 1.1.8 - Limit on-site vehicular parking at parks.** Create safe pedestrian accesses to Town parks and recreation facilities and properties.

**PR Objective 1.2 - Acquire and develop additional lands for public open space as lands become available.**

**Actions:**

**PR 1.2.1 – Create an Inventory of open space opportunities to foster future acquisitions of open space.**

**PR 1.2.2 – Develop a public open space, on Parcels 7, 7A, 8 (approx. 14 acres).** Include some passive recreational areas and nature trails. Preserve and protect the conservation values of the property in accordance with the conservation easement on the property. Work with

the CBA Town Improvement Fund, and Northern Virginia Conservation Trust to accomplish this action.

**PR 1.2.3 - Seek Town ownership of Ayre Square (Parcel 29).**

**PR 1.2.4 – Evaluate and consider methods for the protection of Randolph Buckley Park as a Town Park which while owned by the Town is outside of the jurisdiction of the Town.**

### *Public Buildings (PB)*

**PB Goal 1 - Restore the Old Town Hall to preserve its historic character.**

**PB Objective 1.1 -The Old Town Hall should be restored by 2010. It may be either restored by the Town, restored under a public/private agreement, or sold outright with the provision that it be restored by a private owner.**

#### **Actions:**

**PB 1.1.1 – Determine the most feasible restoration option.** Obtain grant funding if the Town is to restore the Old Town Hall; or Select a private partner if the Town is to restore the Old Town Hall through a private/public partnership; or Find a buyer who agrees to restore the Old Town Hall and preserve its historic character, if the Town chooses to sell the Old Town Hall.

**PB Goal 2 - Maintain an appropriately scaled community serving Post Office within the Town.**

**PB Objective 2.1 - Support the Post Office being located in an existing structure, that has adequate access and parking to support the flow of traffic.**

**Actions:**

**PB 2.1.1 - Work with the United States Postal Service, as necessary, to maintain a Post Office within the Town.**

***Public Services (PS)***

***Sanitary Sewer***

**PS Goal 1 – Ensure the existing public sewage disposal system efficiently services all connected property owners.**

**PS Objective 1.1 – Maintain and continue to enforce the County’s sewer policy.**

**Actions:**

**PS 1.1.1 – Request the County safety check all feeder sewer piping on a scheduled basis.**

**PS 1.1.2 – Work with the County on new sewer service requests and issues relating to the existing pump and haul program.**

***Solid Waste***

**PS Goal 2 - Increase recycling efforts in the Town.**

**PS Objective 2.1 - Promote participation in recycling efforts to meet requirements as set forth in Fairfax County’s solid waste management plan.**

**Actions:**

**PS 2.1.1 - Educate Town residents and businesses by providing information on recycling requirements on the Town website.**

**PS 2.1.2 - Develop recycling programs for Town owned buildings and parks.**

**PS 2.1.3 - During the annual Earth Day celebration provide recycling services to residents.** If possible include electronics and hazardous waste.

**PS 2.1.4 - Request Town businesses and event sponsors to develop recycling programs.**

### *Fire and Rescue – Police*

**PS Goal 3 – Support the Clifton Fire and Rescue Station 16 (Fairfax County Fire and Rescue) to encourage the maintenance and effectiveness of the equipment.**

**Action 3.1.1 - Request information on the status of dry hydrants and other firefighting equipment.**

### *Emergency Preparedness*

**PS Goal 4 – Prepare Town residents and business owners for emergencies, both manmade and environmental, by becoming familiar with the County’s Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).**

**PS Objective 4.1 - Ensure the Town is connected with the County’s Office of Emergency Management and has an emergency response system in place to respond to local and regional emergencies.**

#### **Actions:**

**PS 4.1.1 - Coordinate emergency operations planning, testing and implementation.**

Assign a town resident to coordinate with the County Office of Emergency Management to plan, test and implement emergency operations that may impact Town residents and business owners.

**PS 4.1.2 - Increase public awareness about potential emergencies and emergency response.** Issue public notices and offer educational opportunities to increase public awareness about potential local and regional emergencies.

**PS 4.1.3 - Plan and conduct a simulation of a high-impact emergency which could effect the Town.** Working with the County and periodically involve Town citizens in a simulation of a high-impact emergency (e.g. train derailment, flash flood, environmental contamination).

**PS 4.1.4 - Create a link to the County EOP from the Town web site.**

### *Utilities (UT)*

**UT Goal 1 – Ensure Town residents have a safe and adequate water supply.**

**UT Objective 1.1 – Proactively engage in water supply and quality programs.**

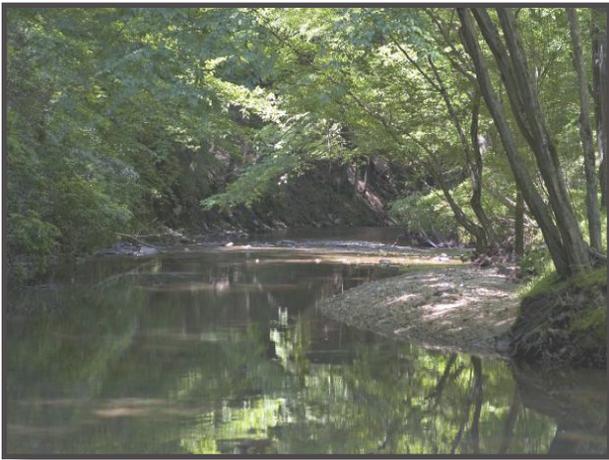
#### **Actions:**

**UT 1.1.1 – Continue participating in the development of a regional water supply plan (WSP) with other local jurisdictions.** Ensure the Town’s needs and constraints are considered during the current assessment so that, once this plan is approved by the State, the Town can quickly adopt it and incorporate it into Town ordinances. Review the WSP every five years, as necessary, and resubmit a WSP to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) every ten years as required by State Code.

**UT 1.1.2 – Provide information on how and where to get well water tested.** Encourage residents and business owners to share the results of water tests, to help protect the community at large.

# ENVIRONMENT - NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

A wealth of natural resources lie within Town boundaries. They are an integral part of the Town's character and the quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. To ensure that future development is compatible with the natural environment, the following section provides an overview of the Town's natural features and the unique characteristics associated with each resource. Included in this section are descriptions of the Town's climate, topography, geomorphology, soils, Popes Head Creek Watershed, non-tidal wetlands, floodplains, groundwater, tree cover and significant woodlands, and wildlife.



To plan for growth in an environmentally-sensitive manner, the Town currently imposes constraints based on proximity to important natural resources, such as streams, wetlands, soils, and steep slopes.

## CLIMATE

The Town's climate is temperate, with an average annual precipitation of 41.8 inches<sup>5</sup>. The wettest month of the year is May, with an average of 4.22 inches of precipitation, while the driest month is February, with an average of 2.77 inches of precipitation. The average annual temperature is 54.2° Fahrenheit, with a daily average high of 65.2° and a daily average low of 42.5°. The hottest month of the year is July with an average daily high of 87.4°, while the coolest month of the year is January, which has a daily average high of 41.4°. The hottest day on record occurred in July, 1988 at 104°, while the coldest day on record occurred in January, 1984 at -18°. According to data recorded for the City of Manassas<sup>6</sup>, the average winter snowfall is 13.7 inches and the greatest depth of snow at any one time was recorded at 24 inches. Records from Dulles

5 National Climatic Data Center, Local Climatological Data Summary with Comparative Data, Washington D.C. Dulles International Airport, Asheville NC 2006

6 National Climatic Data Center, Local Climatological Data Summary with Comparative Data, Washington D.C. Dulles International Airport, Asheville NC 2006

International Airport indicate an average seasonal snowfall of 23 inches. The average relative humidity at mid-afternoon is 54 percent. Humidity is higher at night, and the average at dawn is about 75 percent.

It is increasingly important to consider the likelihood of long-term climate change. With imminent rising temperatures and sea levels, serious consideration must be made for the effects on Virginia's population, wildlife, and economy. There are several regional initiatives that include improving conservation and energy efficiency, and many recommendations outlined in detail in the Virginia Energy Plan (2007). It is in the best interest of the Town to be aware of these initiatives and recommendations.

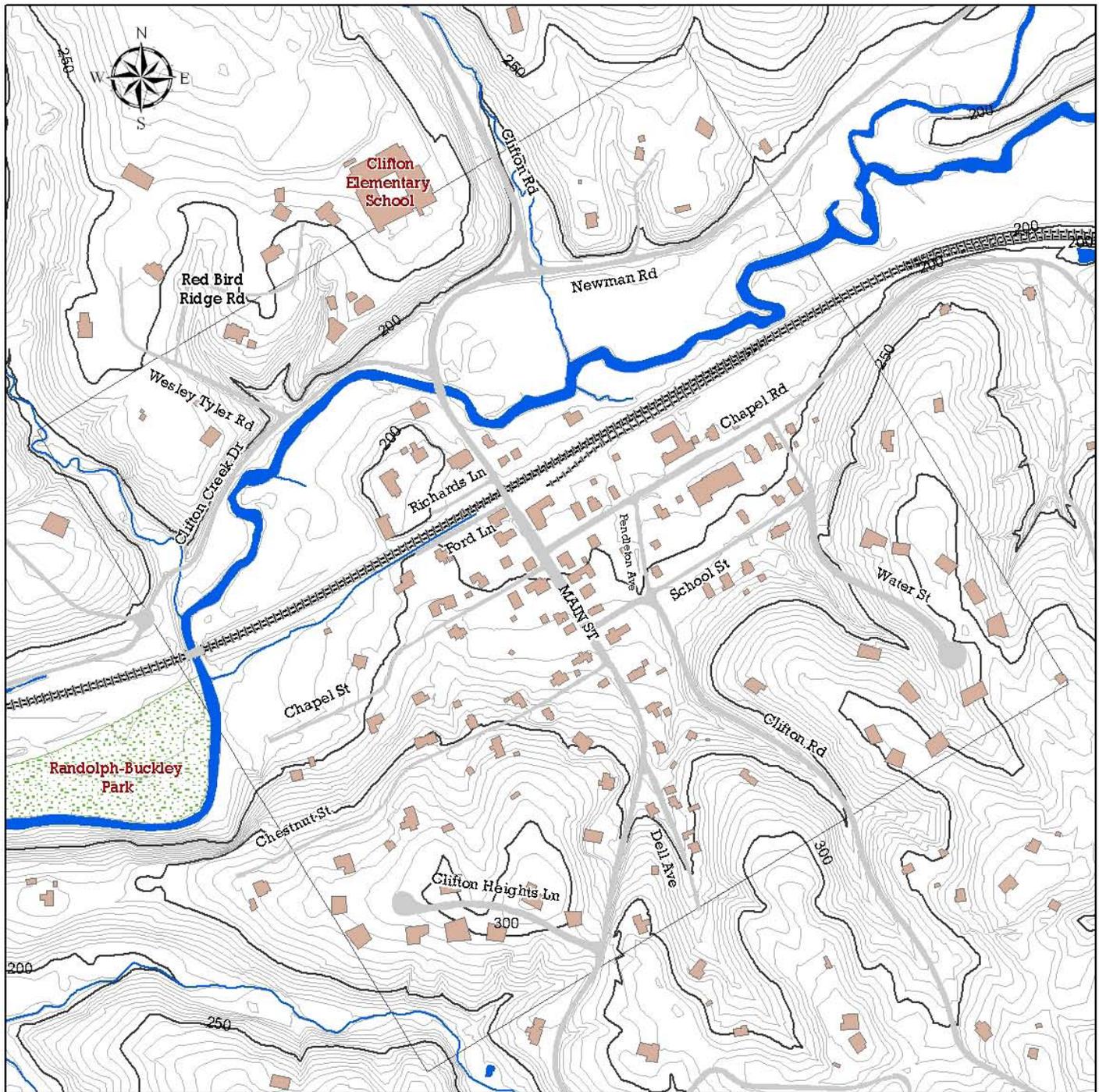
## **TOPOGRAPHY**

The heart of the Town of Clifton lies within the lower Popes Head Creek floodplain and is framed by the steep slopes to the north and south. Gullies carved by intermittent streams dissect the higher elevations of the Town. Elevation within the Town ranges from a low between 160 and 170 feet above sea level where Popes Head Creek exits on the southwestern border of the Town to a high between 310 and 320 feet above sea level on a knoll in the southern corner of the Town and also on a knoll in the eastern corner of the Town. Figure 8 presents a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map for the Town.

Flat areas of the Town, with slopes from 0-2 percent, are located primarily within the floodplain of Popes Head Creek. These flat areas comprise approximately 25 percent of the Town's land area. The area of the Town with the highest concentration of the population and buildings are located in areas with slopes between 2-7 percent. These areas consist of an additional 25 percent of the Town's land area and are located adjacent to the floodplain and also at the tops of ridges and knolls within the Town. Steeper slopes ranging from 7-14 percent and 14-25 percent, comprises approximately 17 percent and 10 percent, respectively and are generally located along intermittent stream valleys as well as ridge tops and knolls. The most severe slopes are shown on Figure 9 and are defined as steep slopes which are greater than 25 percent. These areas comprise slightly less than 24 percent of the land area and are generally located on gully faces and steep

slopes bordering the floodplain. The steep slopes provide a sharp distinction between the floodplain and the surrounding topography.

The topography of a land area (i.e., its shape and slope) exerts a great amount of influence on the volume and rate of stormwater runoff. As both the slope length and the gradient of the surface increases, the volume and rate of surface water runoff also increases, thus magnifying the potential for erosion. Further, steep slopes also may be prone to slippage and slump which has the potential to result in structural damage to homes and businesses. Steep slopes that are over 25 percent in grade comprise almost a quarter of the Town's land area. Steep slopes should not be developed without the use of water quality protection measures. To protect property, infrastructure, and water quality, the Town deems lands with slopes of 25 percent or greater as Resource Management Areas under the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. These lands are therefore subject to the water quality protection controls subscribed within the Ordinance and the Town's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.



# Topography

Contours shown  
at 5-foot intervals

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government

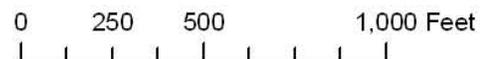
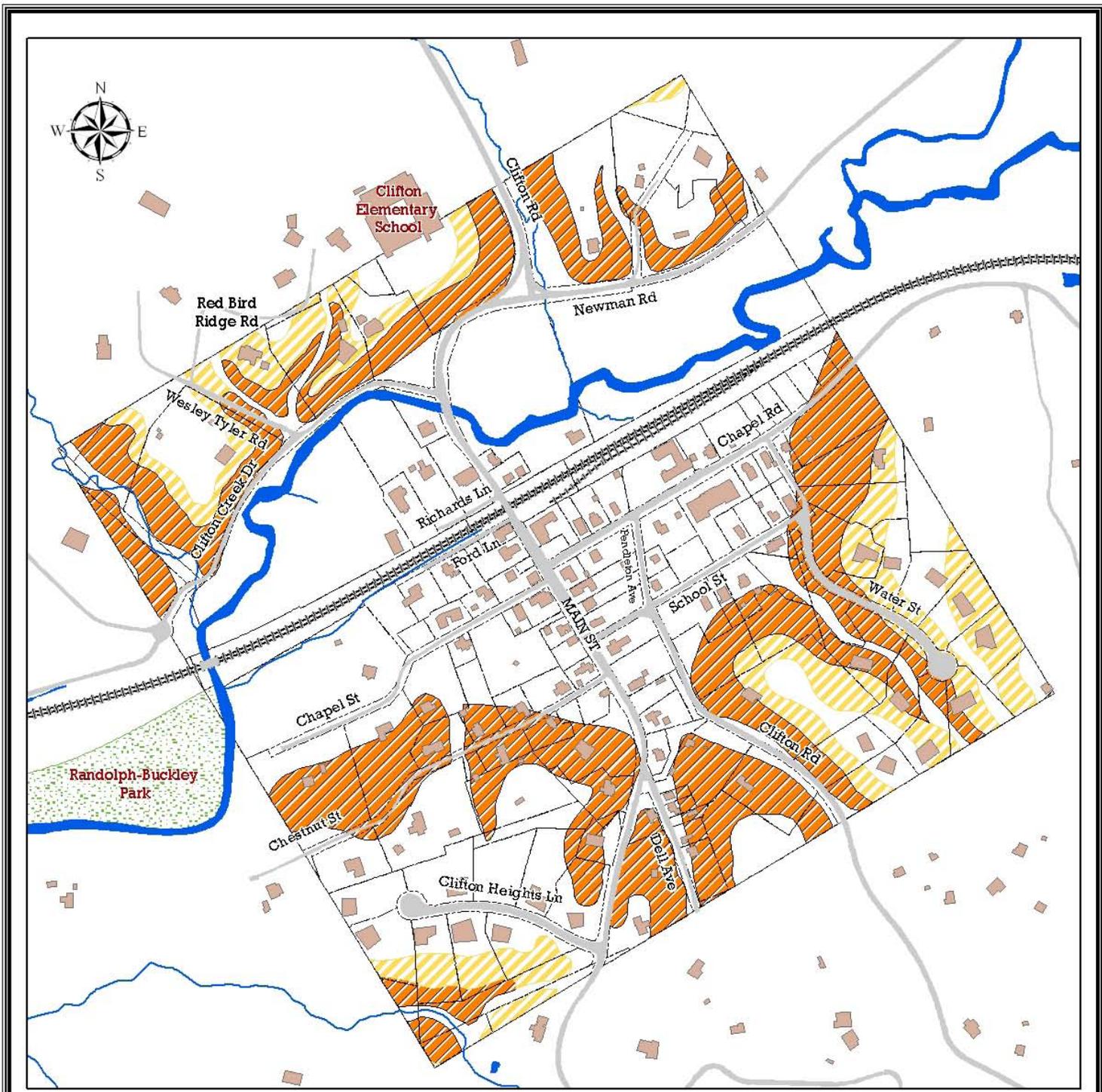


Figure 8: Topographic Map.



# Restrictive Topography

-  Slopes 14% to 25%
-  Slopes 25% or Greater

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Erosion information taken from the Soil  
Survey of Fairfax County, Virginia, 1963.

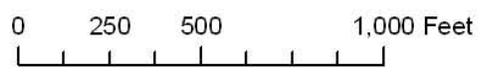


Figure 9: Steep Slopes Map.

## **GEOMORPHOLOGY**

The Town lies within an area known as the Upper Piedmont Geological Province. The Piedmont consists of an assemblage of plutonic (subterranean igneous) and metamorphic (highly deformed and folded materials due to heat and pressure) rocks. When exposed, the Piedmont rocks that underlay the Town are primarily light to dark gray phyllite, which is lustrous, foliated, and interbedded with gray metasiltstone and dark gray slate. The saprolite generally is more than three meters thick, is gravelly and contains abundant platy fragments.<sup>7</sup> The soils that have resulted from the Piedmont rocks are Manor Silt Loam, Glenelg Silt Loam, Fairfax Silt Loam, and Glenville Silt Loam. These areas primarily are in the steep or gullied areas, knolls, and ridge tops in the northwest and southeast areas of the Town. One soil within the Town, Meadowville Silt Loam, is colluvial in nature and consists of deposits of rock fragments and coarse soil materials near the base of steep slopes. The deposits have accumulated as a result of soil creep, slides, and/or local wash.

A large area of exposed soils within the Town are alluvial in nature. These are located primarily in the floodplains of Popes Head Creek. The alluvium overlays the Piedmont rocks; however, the source material for the alluvium is sand, silt, clay, gravel, and boulders transported and deposited by Popes Head Creek from other parts of the Piedmont. Therefore, alluvial soils may represent a wider variety of parent materials. Soils in the Town which are alluvial in nature are Chewacla Silt Loam and other mixed alluvial soils. Soil plays a key role in how land can handle development.

## **SOILS**

The specific physical properties and location of a soil will greatly affect the type of land use and the intensity of development that land area can support. Factors affecting soil development include the parent material, climate, and topography. These in turn will determine a soil's erodibility, permeability, hydric nature and slope.

Soils within the Town are part of the more general Manor-Glenelg-Eloiak association. Soils in the association are chiefly shallow and micaceous, rolling, hilly, and steep soils

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<sup>7</sup> United States Geological Survey, Surface Materials Map of Fairfax County and Vicinity, Virginia. Washington, D.C.: 1978.

over quartz sercite schist. Most of the association outside of the Town is forest or pasture, uses to which these soils are best suited. Many of these soils are too steep for building sites; however, other characteristics make some of these soils favorable as construction material.<sup>8</sup> The Manor-Glenelg-Elioak association generally range from moderately deep to very deep, well drained to somewhat excessively well drained, and has a loamy to clayey loam subsoil.

Soils in the Town are classified as “silt loam” by the Soil Survey of Fairfax County, Virginia. The term “loam” refers to a mixture of sand, silt, and clay particles. The terms light and dark refer to the relative ease in which a soil can be worked. Most soils of agricultural importance are some type of loam.<sup>9</sup>

There are four major groups of soils within the Town of Clifton. These are Manor Silt Loam (35.16 percent of the Town), Chewacla Silt Loam (24.23 percent of the Town), Glenelg Silt Loam (19.32 percent of the Town), and Meadowville Silt Loam (11.08 percent of the Town). Other soils which occur within the Town, but with less overall significance include Glenville Silt Loam (8.70 percent of the Town), Fairfax Silt Loam (.67 percent of the Town), unmapped disturbed areas (.55 percent of the Town), and mixed alluvial deposits (.28 percent of the Town).<sup>10</sup>

Within each of these major families, soils are defined by the slope and the level of erosion which has taken place. The location of specific soils in the Town of Clifton and related properties is presented in Figure 10. Each soil category is designated a number by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) which indicates the soil type. For example, Manor Silt Loam is assigned the number “21.” In addition, each soil type has a modifier letter added to each number which indicates the slope of the land on which the soil is located. The letter (A) refers to a nearly level slope while the letter (E) refers to a slope of 25 percent

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8 United States Department of Agriculture, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, and Fairfax County, Virginia, Soil Survey of Fairfax County, Virginia. Washington, D.C.: 1063

9 Buckman, Harry O. and Nyle C. Brady, The Nature and Properties of Soils, Seventh Edition. The Macmillan Company, New York, New York: 1969

10 NVPDC planimeter of Soil Identification Map of Fairfax County, Virginia. Fairfax, Virginia: 1991

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or greater. The level of existing erosion is identified as “+” to indicate an accumulation of soils to a range of “3” which represents severe erosion.

The Town’s Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance categorizes highly permeable soils and highly erodible soils as Resource Management Areas. These soils are subject to more stringent water quality protection controls as provided for in the Ordinance. The Soils Survey of Fairfax County (NVSWCD, 2007) identifies highly permeable and highly erodible areas which are shown in Figures 11 and 12.

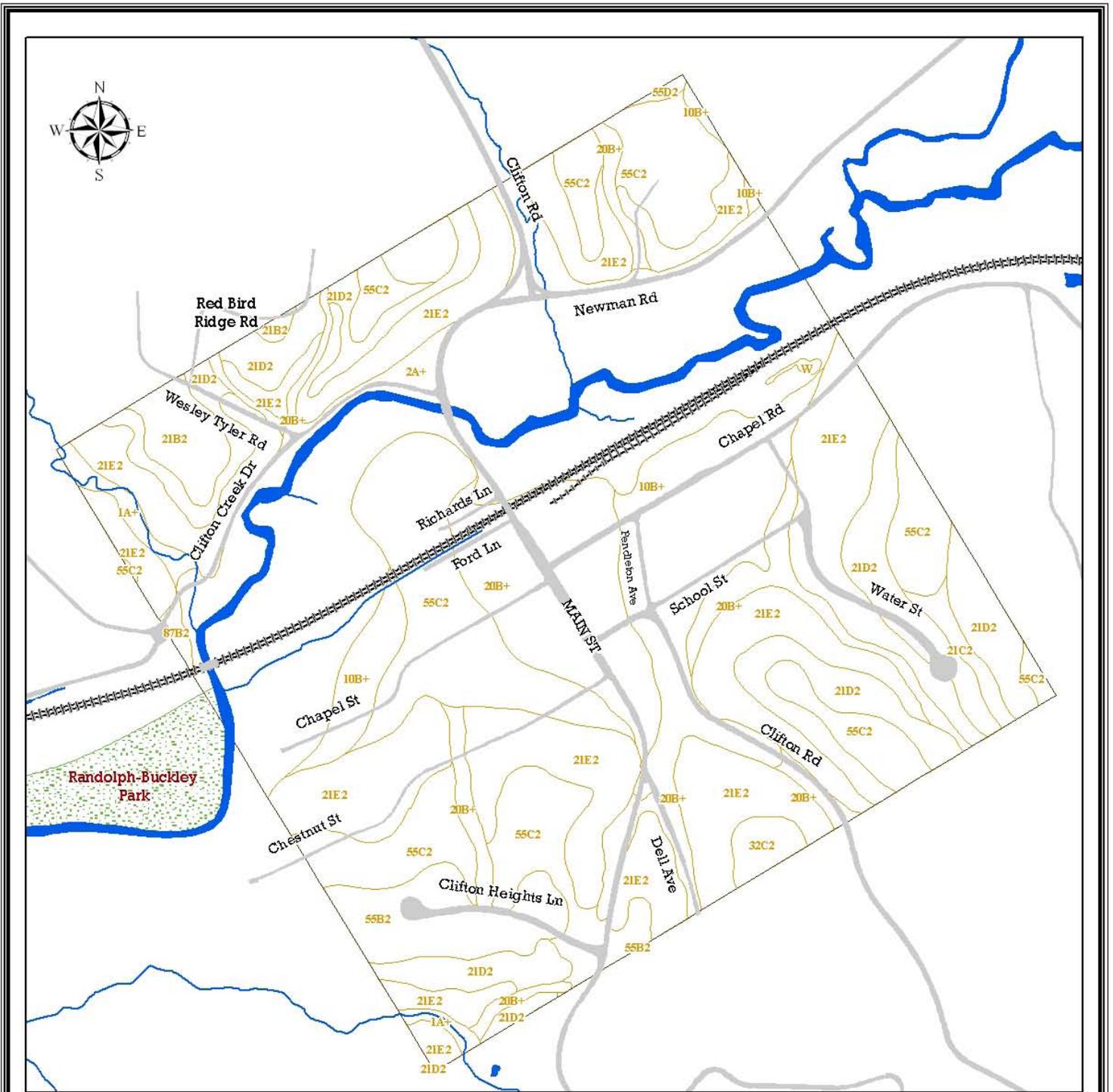
In addition to permeability and erodibility, shrink-swell potential, wetness, flooding, depth to bedrock, and high water table are soil characteristics that limit development opportunities. These characteristics impact whether the soil can adequately support a single family home footing and septic field. In regards to permitting the establishment of new septic fields, the Town conforms to the minimum Virginia state regulations (12 VAC 5-610-10 et seq.)

According to a 1985 report produced by Fairfax County, several soil types exist within the Town that have problem engineering characteristics, requiring the preparation of a geotechnical report. In Fairfax County, a geotechnical report is required for construction on Chewacla, Meadowville, and Glenville soils.

Table 2 provide the suitability of soil types found within the Town for the construction of septic fields and single family dwelling footings, respectively. Since these are general parameters, the Town requires specific site tests during the planning phase of development as would be required under the standards and criteria of the Fairfax County Public Facilities manual. Figure 13 presents the areas within the Town that are poorly or marginally suitable for septic tanks.

**TABLE 2: SOIL SUITABILITY AND CONSTRAINTS FOR SEPTIC FIELDS IN CLIFTON AND FOOTINGS FOR SINGLE FAMILY DEVELOPMENTS.**

Soil Type	Percentage of Town	Suitability for Septic Tank Adsorption Fields	Constraint for Septic Tank Adsorption Field	Suitability for Footings for Single Family Dwellings	Constraints for Footings for Single Family Dwellings
Manor Silt Loam (21B2), (21C2), (21D2), and (21E2)	35.16%	Good	None	No Unfavorable Features	None
Chewacla Silt Loam (2A+)	24.23%	Poor	Floodplain, High Water Table	Unsuitable	Floodplain
Glenelg Silt Loam (55B2), (55C2), and (55D2)	19.32%	Good	None	No Unsuitable Features	None
Meadowville Silt Loam (20B+)	11.08%	Poor	High Water Table	Not Suited for Basements	Footings should extend below organic topsoil
Glenville Silt Loam (10B+)	8.70%	Poor	High Water Table	Not Suited for Basements	High water table
Fairfax Silt Loam (32C2)	0.67%	Marginal	Has Fragipan	No Unfavorable Features	None
Mixed Alluvial Land (1A_)	0.28%	Poor	High Water Table	Unsuitable	Floodplain



# Soils

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government



Soil Group

- 1 - Mixed Alluvial Land
- 2 - Chewacla Silt Loam
- 10 - Glenville Silt Loam
- 20 - Meadowville Silt Loam
- 21 - Manor Silt Loam
- 32 - Fairfax Silt Loam
- 55 - Glenelg Silt Loam
- 87 - Wickham

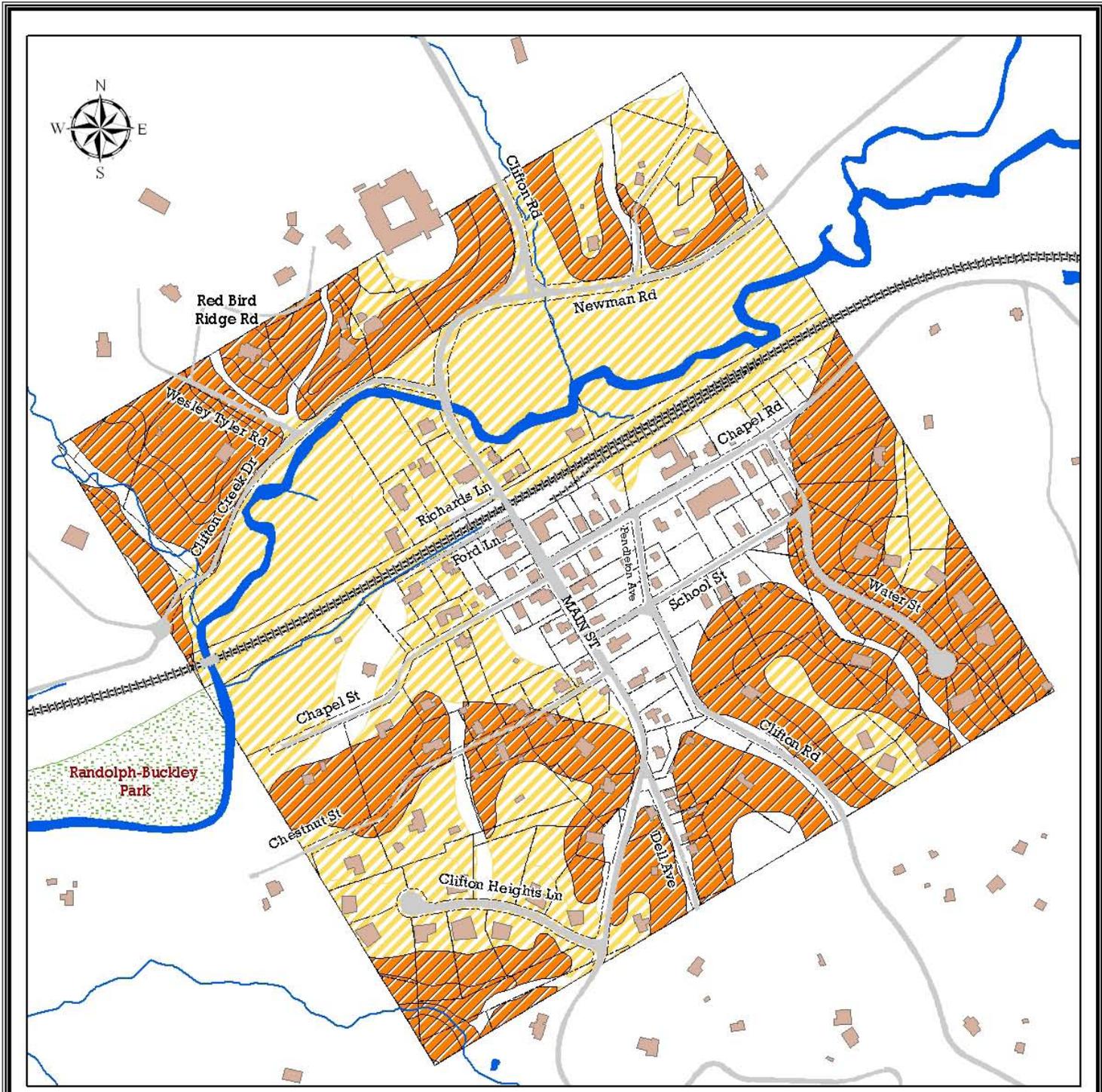
Slope

- A - 0 - 2%
- B - 2 - 7%
- C - 7 - 14%
- D - 14 - 25%
- E - 25 + %

Soil Erosion

- + - Accumulation
- 1 - Slight
- 2 - Moderate

Figure 10: Soils Map.



# Highly Permeable Soils

-  Rapid to Very Rapid
-  Moderately Rapid to Rapid

Produced by the  
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for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Permeable soils definitions taken from the Soil  
Survey of Fairfax County, Virginia, 1963.

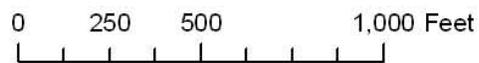


Figure 11: Highly Permeable Soils.

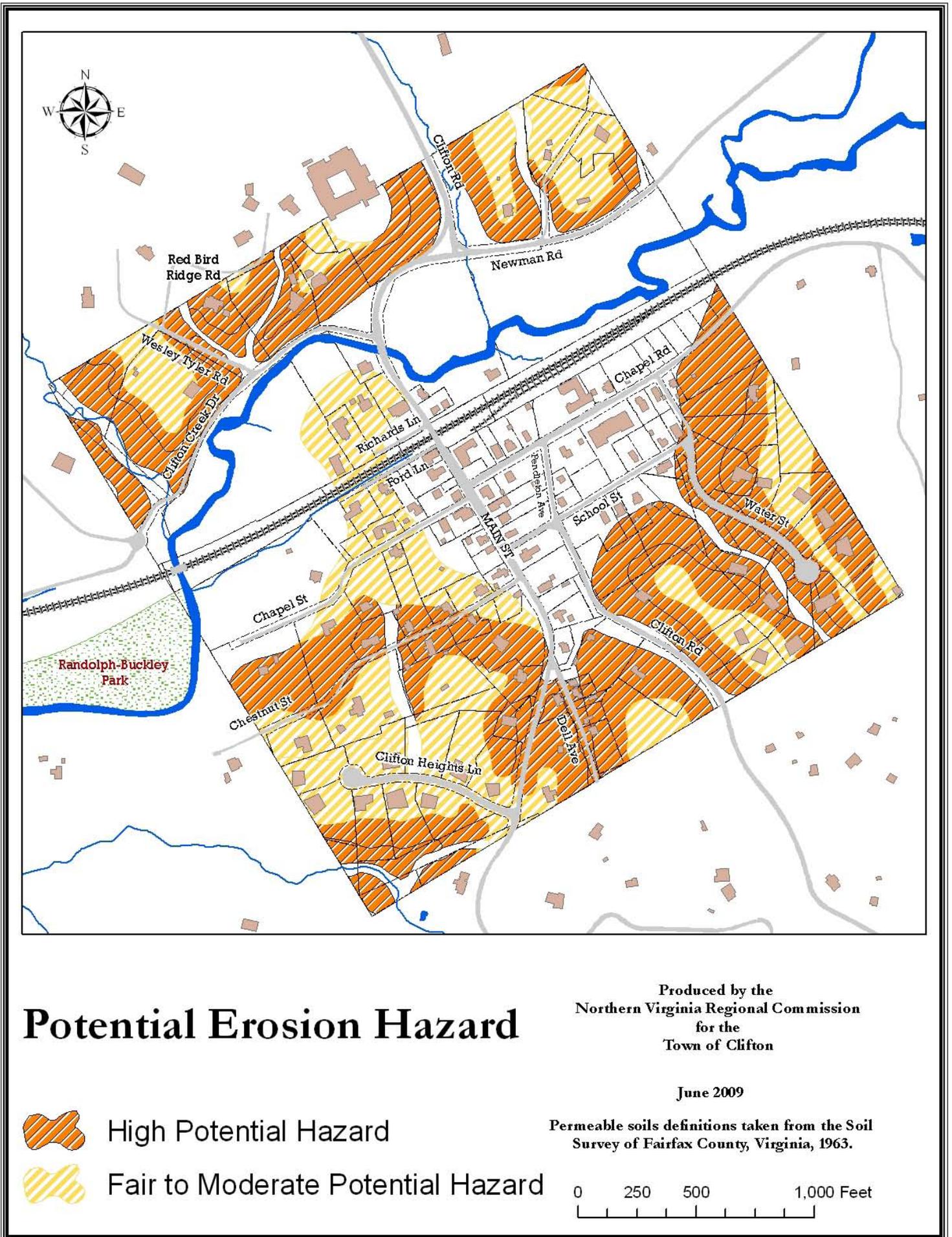
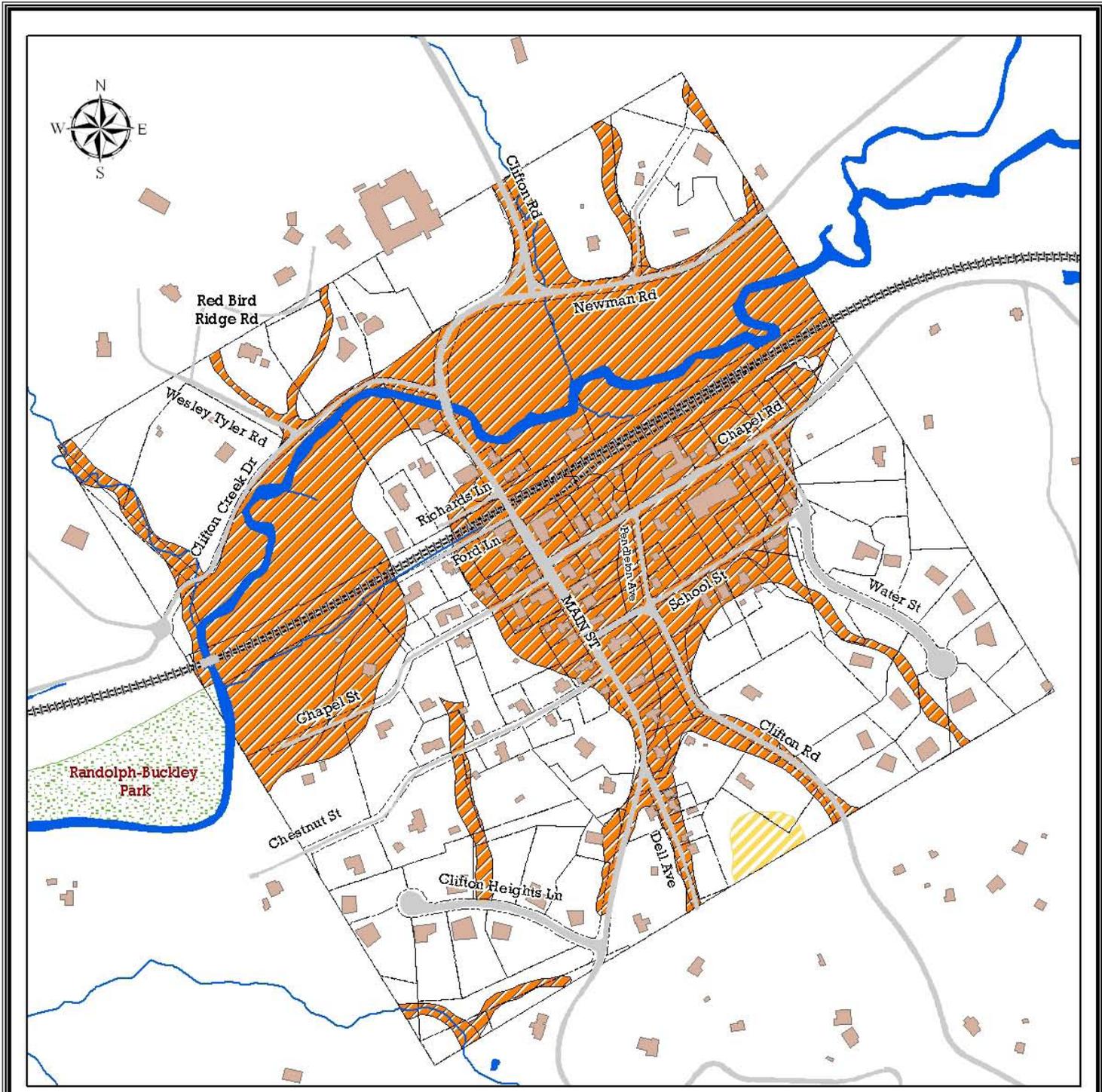


Figure 12: Erosion Hazard Map3



# Septic Field Soil Restrictions

-  Marginally Suitable
-  Unsuitable

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Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government

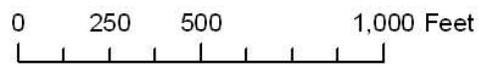


Figure 13: Soils Suitable for Septic Tanks.

## **POPES HEAD CREEK WATERSHED**

Land within the Town lies completely within the Pope's Head Creek watershed (Virginia hydrologic Unit A12), which is part of the larger Occoquan River watershed. The headwaters of Pope's Head Creek are located just south of western Fairfax City. The Creek meanders through south-central Fairfax County, which consists primarily of forested and low density residential land, and runs directly through the Town from the northeast to the southwest border. Several tributaries drain to the Creek throughout the Town. Pope's Head Creek drains to Bull Run, which flows directly into the Occoquan Reservoir – the primary water supply source for over 800,000 Northern Virginians. The Occoquan River is a major tributary of the Potomac River. Both of these systems are part of the area encompassed by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act; therefore, future development within the Town must observe appropriate water quality measures as mandated by the Commonwealth. Effective waste water treatment, land use planning and management, and the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for storm water runoff are necessary so that headwater supplies of these watersheds remain clean and available for the whole region.

### ***Stream Description***

According to Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) records, Pope's Head Creek is approximately 1-2 feet wide and six inches deep at its intersection with Braddock Road to the north and gradually widens to approximately 6-10 feet wide and 12-16 inches deep at the Town. The stream bed of Pope's Head Creek consists of gravel and some silt and clay. Within the Town, the stream flows through land zoned for agricultural, industrial, and residential uses. Pope's Head Creek is lined with an indigenous tree canopy including willow, sycamore, elm, red birch, red maple, white oak, box elder, and tulip poplar.

### ***Physical Stream Conditions***

According to Fairfax County's Popes Head Creek Watershed Management Plan (October 2005), "the Lower Popes Head Watershed exhibits fair stream habitat quality. In general, the main stem of the stream has stable stream banks and a large riparian buffer, ranging from 50 feet to greater than 100 feet wide. Several areas of significant erosion are observed around the Town of Clifton, and the stream reaches that flow through Clifton are turbid and brown in color. Velocities produced by the 2-year rainfall event in Lower Popes Head were higher than average when compared to those in the other sub-watersheds (average

6.9 feet per second). Both the 2 and 10 year peak discharges overtop the channel banks along Popes Head Creek and the 2-year is confined to the channel in the upper reaches of Popes Head Tributary 5. The Lower Popes Head sub-watershed has an average sediment loading rate when compared to other sub-watersheds. The predicted sediment load exceeds the target Tributary Strategy level. It has an average pollutant loading rate for total phosphorous and total nitrogen when compared to the other sub-watersheds. The total phosphorous load exceeds the target Tributary Strategy level and the total nitrogen load is just below the target Tributary Strategy level.”

Citizens at the March 2004 Community Watershed Forum identified the following problems located within the Town’s borders:

- Severe erosion along Popes Head Creek occurs downstream of Clifton Road and Randolph Buckley Park;
- The Town of Clifton contains leaking fuel tanks; and
- Main Street was overtopped by water during Hurricane Isabel.

Since 2004, Popes Head Creek has experienced significant flooding to the extent that Main Street and the bridge crossing have been closed for an extended period on four different occasions.

Several areas located along Popes Head Creek have been identified by having stream bank erosion problems. These areas generally are located at bends in the natural stream course and areas where the stream course is confined by culvert structures. Possible causes for the erosion may be increased water volume due to upstream development as well as the natural meandering of the water course. Two of the problem areas are located along Clifton Creek Drive. Additional problem areas have been identified where the stream intersects with the Norfolk Southern Railroad and where it bends near the Masonic Lodge. Existing erosion control structures include two streambank areas, one behind the Masonic Lodge and the other along Clifton Creek Drive, which have been overlain with large concrete blocks.

There currently are several projects proposed in the Popes Head Creek Watershed Management Plan to improve the creek within the Town. The stream restoration projects

are identified as Clifton Creek #1 and #2. They are located side by side, along Clifton Creek Drive, west of Wesley Tyler Road. Clifton Creek #1 stretches 415 feet along the creek and uses spot stabilization to reduce property loss. Clifton Creek #2 is 300 feet long and proposes bank stabilization to reduce erosion and prevent road failure. The project's cost total \$210,000. There is also a Road Crossing Bridge Project proposed for the Main Street Bridge. The project aims to reduce road flooding and will cost a total of \$1,850,000. There is also a Debris Removal Project proposed for the creek, off of Kincheloe Road, that would cost \$4,000. Another project is proposed at the Clifton Elementary School to implement a Low Impact Development bioreduction filterra site, which would reduce pollutants. The project costs \$90,000.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Water Quality***

Ambient water quality of Popes Head Creek is monitored by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VADEQ) at station 1APOE002.00 where the creek intersects with Route 645 (Clifton Road). Pope's Head Creek is designated as a Class III water body by the Commonwealth of Virginia, which refers to any non-tidal water body in the Piedmont or Coastal Plain. Under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), all state waters are expected to be maintained to support recreational use and the propagation and growth of all aquatic life reasonably expected to inhabit them. These are known as the CWA fishable and swimmable goals. Because the station does not monitor for the presence of fecal coliforms, data is only available for the CWA fishable goal. The parameters used to determine the CWA goals are minimum and daily average dissolved oxygen content, pH and maximum temperature. Table 3 provides the minimum standards for water quality for Class III waters. Based on this data, Popes Head Creek meets the minimum state standards for the water quality.

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11 [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/popeshadecreek\\_docs.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/watersheds/popeshadecreek_docs.htm)

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**TABLE 3: VIRGINIA WATER QUALITY STANDARDS FOR CLASS III WATERS (NON-TIDAL WATERS COASTAL AND PIEDMONT ZONE)**

Water Quality Component	Virginia Water Quality Standards (2007) <sup>1</sup>	Popes Head Creek Water Quality (1989)	Popes Head Creek Water Quality (November 2006 – November 2007) <sup>2</sup>
Minimum Dissolved Oxygen Content (mg/l)	4.0	> 4.0	> 4.0 (5.9)
Daily Average Dissolved Oxygen Content (mg/l)	5.0	> 5.0	> 5.0 (10.3)
pH (su)	6.0 – 9.0	≈ 6.7	≈ 7.3
Maximum Temperature (°C)	32	< 32	< 32 (24.9)

<sup>1</sup> 9 VAC 25-260-50. Numerical criteria for dissolved oxygen, pH, and maximum temperature (§62.1-44.15 3a of the Code of Virginia).

<sup>2</sup> Data collected at VADEQ's ambient water quality monitoring station 1APOE002.00 Popes Head Creek at Rt. 645 (Clifton Road).

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) released the Final 2006 305(b)/303(d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report (Integrated Report) on October 30, 2006. The 2006 Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report is a summary of the water quality conditions in Virginia from January 1, 2000, to December 31, 2004. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality develops and submits this report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on even-numbered years. The goals of Virginia's water quality assessment program are to determine whether waters meet water quality standards, and to design and implement a plan to restore waters with impaired water quality.

Water quality standards designate uses for waters. There are six designated uses for surface waters:

- aquatic life
- fish consumption
- shellfish consumption
- swimming
- public water supplies (where applicable)
- wildlife

Based on data collected by VADEQ between 1994 through 2005, 4.9 miles of Popes Head Creek are listed for benthic (aquatic life use impairment) and E. coli (swimming and fish consumption use impairments) impairments.

### ***Non-Tidal Wetlands***

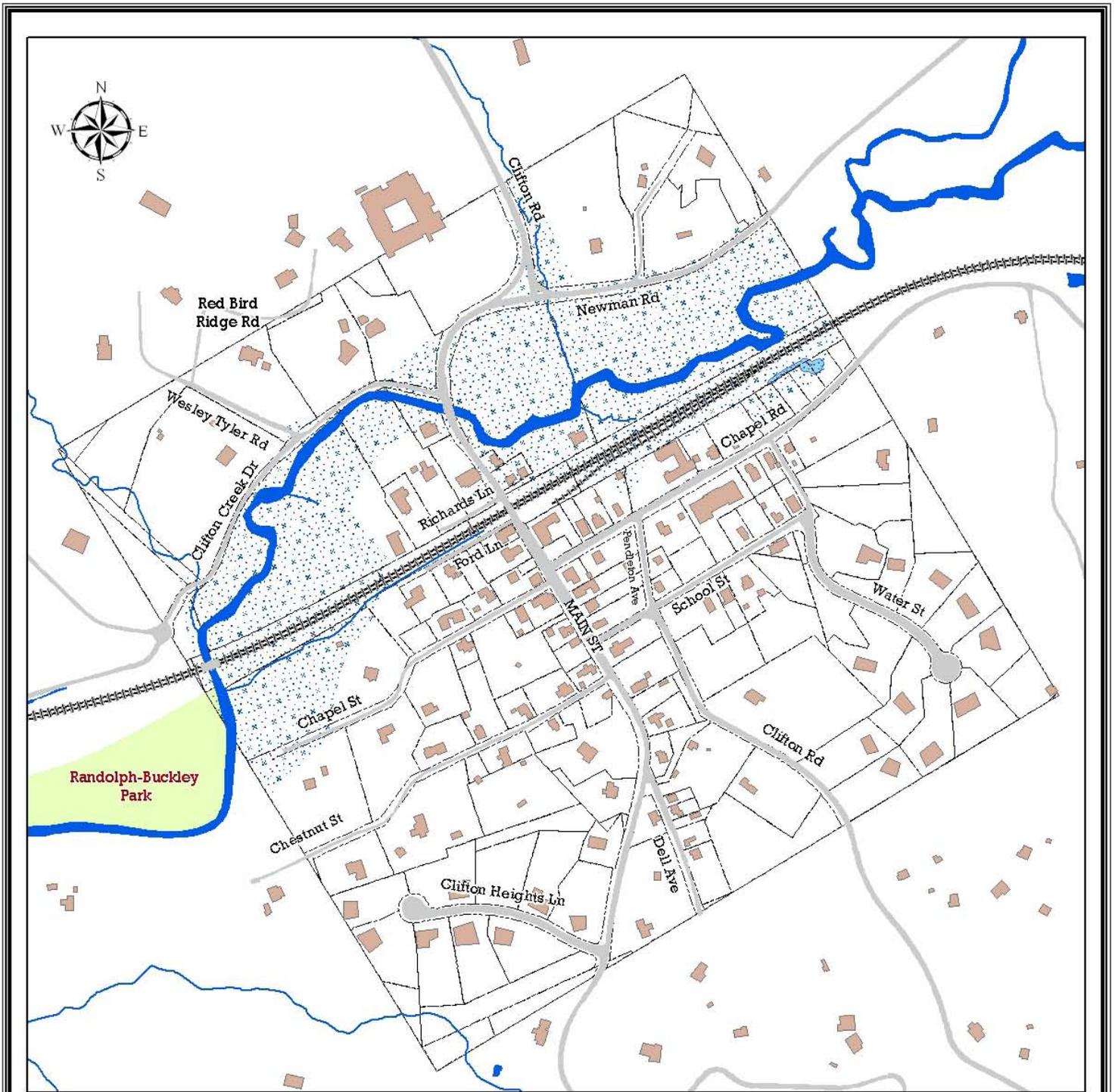
The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) map for the Manassas Quadrangle, as well as the Fairfax County Soils Map, indicate the presence of one non-tidal wetland in the Town. The wetland is located to the south of the Norfolk Southern Railroad near the intersection of Chapel Road and Water Street and is identified in Figure 14. The wetland is classified as a type POWZ, which indicates a palustrine, open water/bottom unknown, permanently flooded non-tidal wetland.

Another indicator of potential wetlands is the presence of hydric soils. According to the Fairfax County Soils Science Office, the only area within the Town of Clifton that may have hydric soils is the Pope's Head Creek floodplain, which is represented by Chewacla (2A+) soils. According to the Fairfax County Wetland Probability Map, Chewacla soils are rated as Class II with a wetland probability of 40 to 80 percent. A field reconnaissance by the Soils Science Office revealed the presence of several limited areas of hydric soils which supported sedges and other plant species suspected of being hydrophitic. These areas are scattered within the floodplain and are not marked on the soil map.<sup>12</sup>

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12 Written correspondence, Ross J. Fugill, Fairfax County Soils Science Office, Fairfax, Virginia: September 2, 1992.

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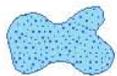


# Non-Tidal Wetlands

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government



NWI Mapped Wetlands



Potentially Hydric Soils

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Figure 14: Non-Tidal Wetlands Map.

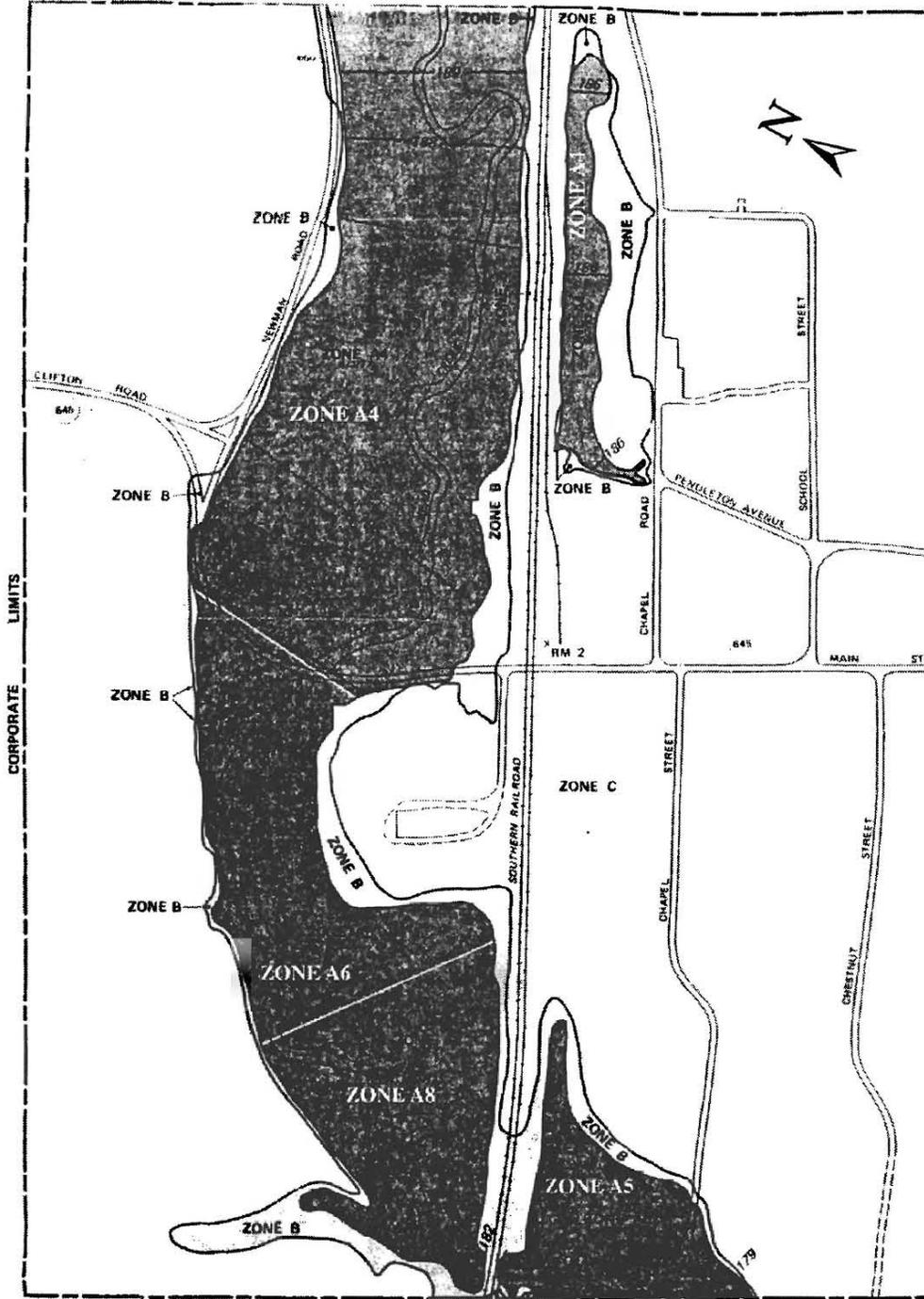
## ***Floodplains***

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the only floodplain within the Town of Clifton is that which is associated with Pope's Head Creek. The floodplain is constrained by steep slopes to the northwest and higher elevations and the railroad grade to the southeast. FEMA floodway maps indicate that a 100-year flood would not impact on the most heavily populated area of the Town with the exception of an area between Chapel Road and Norfolk Southern Railroad. The 500-year floodplain does not differ significantly in scope to the 100-year floodplain due to the nature of the topography. Refer to Figure 15 for floodplain boundaries within Clifton.

The Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and designated Flood Plain District (Article 7 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance) restrict development within the major and minor floodplains of Popes Head Creek. Due to poor soils and a high seasonal water table, areas within the floodplain are unsuitable to septic fields. Figure 15 designates the flood frequencies within the Town of Clifton.

Section 9-29 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance lists the permitted uses and use limitation within the Flood Plain District. The ordinance suggests that the location of any commercial, industrial, or government building or structure within the floodplain district is detrimental to the best interest of the Town. Floodplains may be used for agricultural, parking, recreation, residential gardens, or other similar uses. However, the location of newly constructed buildings or structures within the floodplain is undesirable.

The FEMA maps for Fairfax County were created in 1990. Currently, there is a new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) under review. The Town should consider adopting the updated FIRM into its Ordinance upon its approval. In Clifton, four properties have flood insurance policies, and only one claim has been made since 1978.



# Flood Hazard

-  Zone A
-  Zone B

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the Town of Clifton

August 2009

Map Copied from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Federal Insurance Administration Flood Hazard Boundary Map H-01 and Flood Insurance Rate Map 1-01, effective May 2, 1977. This map is subject to change as the D-FIRM FEMA maps are expected to be approved in 2010. This map represents a delineation of the 100-year floodplain and is not to be used as a survey for design modifications or construction of improvements on property.

Figure 15: Flood Hazard Map

## ***Groundwater***

Potable water is supplied from individual private wells located throughout the Town. While the quality of groundwater resources will not have a direct impact on future growth and development of the Town, it is important to protect the groundwater from contamination in order to protect the existing wells.

The groundwater unit from which Clifton draws its water is the Piedmont Geological Province, with the local groundwater aquifer consisting of phyllite. According to a USGS report entitled *Chemical Quality of Groundwater in Fairfax County, Virginia*,<sup>13</sup> water quality within the County is generally excellent. According to USGS monitoring during the 1970s (USGS station 384335077194701 located at the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority near Hampton Road), groundwater in Clifton is considered soft, with a CaCO<sub>3</sub> concentration of less than 60 mg/1. Groundwater around Clifton also contains less than 100 mg/1 total solids. The lower the amount of total solids (which consists of dissolved minerals such as iron), the better the water quality is likely to be. The water bearing yield capacity of rock in the Piedmont region, according to the USGS, is fair to good.

Periodic testing of local groundwater by the Fairfax County Health Department has revealed levels of total coliforms in some well water that exceed drinking water standards. Coliforms have primarily been detected in shallow or improperly protected wells constructed before Fairfax County adopted strict well construction standards in 1962. Many wells within the Town were constructed prior to 1962 and have insufficient grouting or casing. Deeper and more recently-constructed wells have, in general, been devoid of coliform contamination problems. For those wells experiencing contamination, the addition of chlorine or other disinfectants has been necessary.<sup>14</sup>

Groundwater contamination also has taken place in the recent past as a result of a benzene spill from an underground storage tank at the Clifton Store. While the tank has been removed and the site remediated in 1995, a plume of benzene spread northwest

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13 Larson, J.D., United States Geological Survey, *Chemical Quality of Ground Water in Fairfax County, Virginia*, Reston, Virginia: 1978

14 Personal communication, John Milgram, Fairfax County Health Department: February, 1993

towards Pope's Head Creek. This groundwater contamination required that area wells were monitored for contamination.

Groundwater protection should be a major consideration when evaluating the proper land use for a site. While groundwater supplies generally have been sufficient and of good quality to meet the potable water needs of the Town in the past, use of water conservation techniques will help ensure that an adequate supply of potable water will be available to the residents of the Town in the future.

## **TREE COVER AND SIGNIFICANT WOODLANDS**

Clifton is fortunate to contain significant areas of mature forest vegetation. The Town recognizes the value of protecting these trees as well as retaining undisturbed tree cover on a piece of property after it has been developed for erosion control, watershed protection, reduction of noise and air pollution, aesthetics and wildlife habitat. The largest Town-owned stand of vegetation is located within the Randolph Buckley Park which consists of 8.3 acres, most of which is covered in native vegetation.

In addition, the Town owns the 8.6 acre property (Parcel 7 and 7A) immediately north of the railroad which includes the Popes Head Creek stream valley. This property was acquired by the Town and the Northern Virginia Conservancy Trust in 2005, so the Town could develop a passive stream valley park in conjunction with the adjacent 5.3 acre parcel (Parcel 8) located along Main Street, which is owned by the Clifton Betterment Association Town Improvement Fund. Both of these properties are subject to conservation easements and/or conditions to ensure the protection of the natural, ecological, and open space values of these properties. The entire 14 acres contains native vegetation.

The Town has not prepared an inventory of noteworthy trees (size, age, and significance of species). Nor does the Town Code currently include ordinances to encourage the preservation of open space or tree cover for new development.

## **WILDLIFE**

According to a July 1995 survey conducted by the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage, there are no rare or endangered wildlife or vegetative species known to be currently living within the Town. However, there is a wealth of flora and fauna that make Clifton their home and add to the ambience.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

### **NR Goal 1 – Preserve, enhance and promote the Town’s natural resources for future generations.**

#### **NR Objective 1.1 – Protect and improve the ecological health of Popes Head Creek.**

##### **Actions:**

**NR 1.1.1 - Reduce sediment contributions to Popes Head Creek.** Continue to work with Fairfax County on the enforcement of erosion and sedimentation control measures.

**NR 1.1.2 – Monitor stream bank stabilization projects.** Designate a Town representative to work with Fairfax County on the implementation of the stream bank stabilization projects for Popes Head Creek identified in the Popes Head Creek Watershed Management Plan. Work with the County and other state agencies on additional issues relating to the severe erosion and flooding of Popes Head Creek which pose a significant threat to private property and local roadways.

**NR 1.1.3 – Contribute towards environmental stewardship programs.** Participate in local community sponsorship programs established to benefit the Popes Head Creek watershed, e.g. “Friends of Popes Head Creek”.

**NR 1.1.4 – Protect the floodplain.** Enforce the floodplain ordinance in order to preserve the 100-year floodplain in its natural state, protect against floods, and function as an integral part of the Town’s open space.

## **NR Objective 1.2 – Protect and restore tree cover within the Town.**

### **Actions:**

**NR 1.2.1 – Develop a tree cover ordinance.** Incorporate open space, tree preservation, tree cover and landscaping requirements into Town Code.

**NR 1.2.2 - Support preservation of significant specimen trees.** Consult with certified arborist to inventory trees of significance on public properties and private property, with cooperation of property owners. Include an analysis of general health, quantity, and species as well as recommendations for continued tree health. Educate property owners on available federal/state conservation measures that provide protection of properties with significant natural resources.

## **NR Objective 1.3 – Encourage green building practices for new development and redevelopment.**

### **Actions:**

**NR 1.3.1 - Appoint a town representative to coordinate green building practice initiatives.** Seek information from Fairfax County and other private and public organizations which are involved with coordinating, developing, funding and initiating green building practice and conservation initiatives.

**NR 1.3.2 - Research grant funding opportunities to assist local governments in implementing “go green” initiatives.** Seek private and public business partners to participate.

**NR 1.3.3 - Incorporate incentives into Town codes to promote green building practices for new development or redevelopment.** Encourage the use of pervious paving materials for parking lots and driveways where feasible.

**NR Objective 1.4 - Promote habitats for flora and fauna which are indigenous to this area.**

**Actions:**

**NR 1.4.1 – Support the educational programs sponsored by the Audubon Naturalist Society – Webb Nature Sanctuary.**

**NR 1.4.2 – Create a nature walk brochure.** Highlight significant local flora and fauna in Randolph Buckley Park and Popes Head Creek stream valley.

# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SOURCES OF DEGRADATION

The impacts of pollution often are underestimated when considering the Town and its well-maintained, non-industrial, small town environment. Though the Town is devoid of industrial pollutants, urban development within the Town has contributed to both point and non-point source pollution within the Occoquan watershed. Point source pollution, which is traceable to a specific source, includes malfunctioning septic fields, underground and above ground storage tanks, illegal dumping, and sewage treatment.



Non-point source pollution originates from a range of diffuse sources and is generally carried to local water ways by stormwater runoff. A primary component of the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance is to reduce both point source and non-point source pollution during new development and redevelopment through the use of land use planning techniques, pollutant removal performance standards, and stormwater quality control measures known as best management practices (BMPs).

As a community, the protection of groundwater quality is of particular importance as Clifton residents rely solely on these resources for their potable water supply. The preservation and protection of natural features within the Town is also essential for preserving the aesthetic properties of the Town and for protecting surface and ground water resources from the adverse effects of improper development.

## **CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION ACT**

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, (Chapter 25, Title 10.1 of the Code of Virginia) establishes a program to protect environmentally sensitive features which, when disturbed or developed incorrectly, lead to reductions in water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. The Act provides a framework for local governments throughout the Tidewater region to identify these sensitive areas and to enact regulations to control land use activities on and around them. In order to implement these state regulations, the Town adopted its Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance in 1995 and revised it in December 2003.

As part of its Ordinance, The Town's policy is to avoid and minimize damage to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas from land use and development activities in an effort to achieve the following:

- Protection of existing high quality state waters and restoration of all other state waters to a condition or quality that will permit all reasonable public uses, and will support the propagation and growth of all aquatic life, including game fish, which might reasonably be expected to inhabit them;
- Safeguard the clean waters of the Commonwealth from non point source pollution;
- Prevention of any increase in non point source pollution;
- Reduction of existing non point source pollution; and
- Promotion of water resource conservation in order to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the present and future citizens of the Town of Clifton and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In accordance with the guidelines established by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas have been identified for the Town. These areas include Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) and Resource Management Areas (RMAs). The Clifton CBPA Map (Figure 16) shows the general or approximate delineation of the RPAs and RMA within the Town. Section 11-15 of the Town Code outlines the requirements of

delineating RPA boundaries for any proposed development within these areas. RPAs and RMAs are defined as follows:

### ***Resource Protection Areas (RPAs)***

RPAs consist of sensitive lands adjacent to water bodies with perennial flow that have either an intrinsic water quality value due to the ecological and biological processes they perform or that are sensitive to uses or activities such that the use results in significant degradation to the quality of State Waters. In their natural condition, these lands provide for the removal, reduction, or assimilation of non-point source pollution entering the Bay and its tributaries. RPAs include land characterized by one or more of the following features:

1. A nontidal wetland connected by surface flow and contiguous to a tidal wetland or water body with perennial flow; and
2. A buffer area consisting of any land within 100 feet of a feature listed in (1) above and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow.

The RPA within the Town includes the main branch of Popes Head Creek as well as several small streams that drain into Pope's Head Creek. This land is precluded from development in most instances and is protected under the Chesapeake Preservation Ordinance.

### ***Resource Management Areas (RMAs)***

Resource Management Areas are the components of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area comprising lands that, if improperly used or developed, have a potential to cause significant water quality degradation or to diminish the functional value of the Resource Protection Area. The RMA is generally characterized by the following land categories: floodplains, highly erodible soils, including steep slopes; highly permeable soils; and nontidal wetlands not included in the RPA.

Due to the preponderance of sensitive environmental features within the Town, and due to the belief that the water quality protection afforded by the use of Best Management

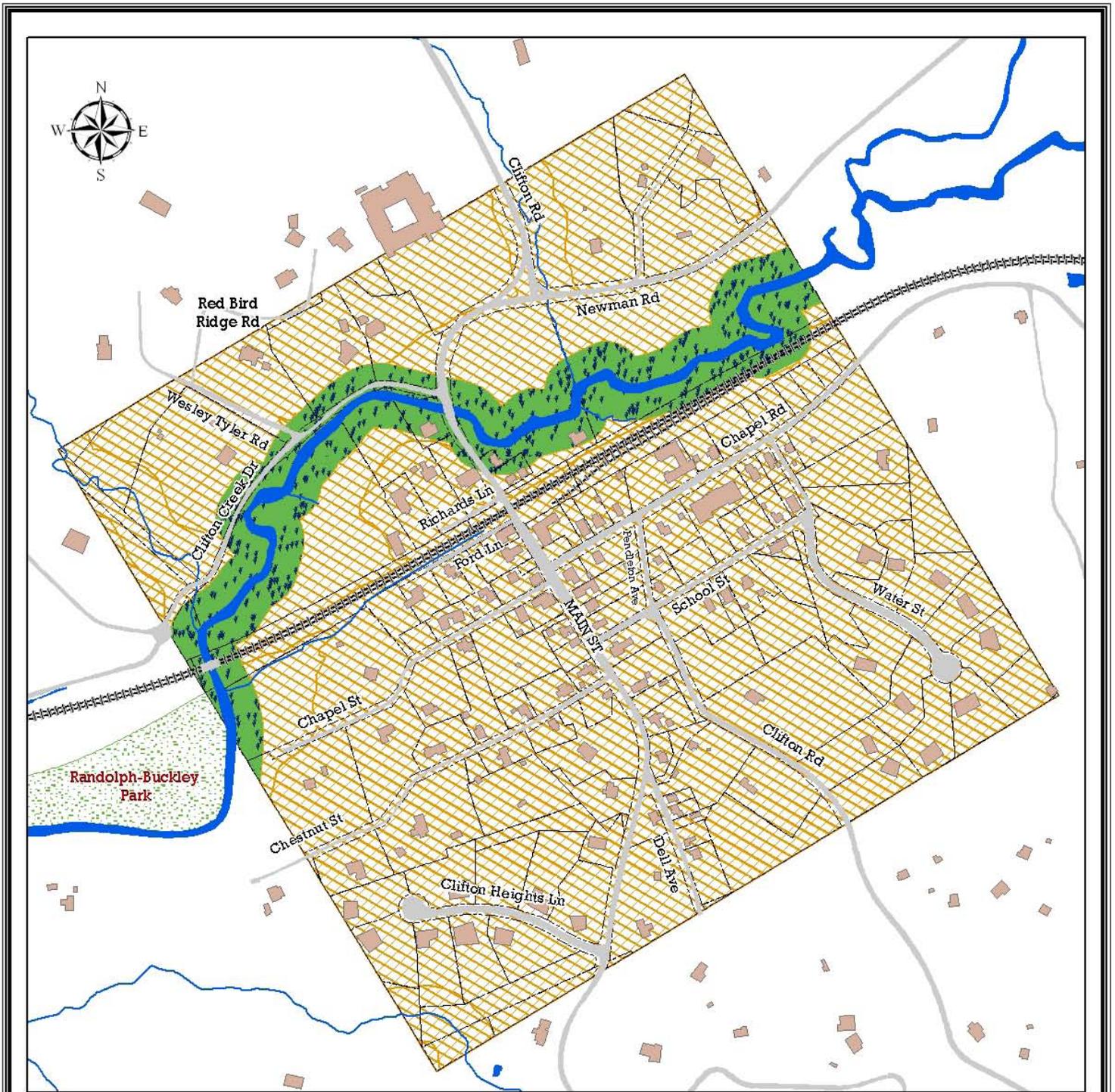
Practices constitutes good land use management, all land within the Town of Clifton has been designated as an RMA.

To minimize water quality impacts from land use and development, the Town of Clifton Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance includes performance requirements and development review criteria, requirements and evaluation procedures that apply to any development or redevelopment that propose to disturb more than 2,500 square feet of land that are in accordance with criteria established by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board. Sections 11-10 and 11-11 of the Town's CBPO provide explanations of development and permitted uses within the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas.

In the fall of 2007, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation conducted a compliance evaluation of the Town of Clifton's local Phase I program and recommended to the state board that the Town's implementation of its Phase I program complies with 10.1-2109 and 2111 of the Act and VAC 10-20-231 and 250 of the regulations. On December 10, 2007, the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board resolved that the Town's local Phase I program was in compliance with the regulations.

The Phase II compliance involves identification of RPAs. Clifton reached Phase II compliance with the update of the Town Comprehensive Plan in December 1996.

The Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board is currently in the process of developing the review program for Phase III that will assess the extent to which Bay Act localities are in compliance with ensuring that their local land development ordinances adequately address the protection of the quality of state waters. The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations require local governments to have provisions in their ordinances to ensure, that as land development occurs, three performance criteria are addressed: 1) land disturbance is minimized, 2) indigenous vegetation is preserved and, 3) impervious cover is minimized.



# Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas



Clifton Resource Protection Area



Clifton Resource Management Area

This map represents a general delineation of Resource Protection delineations and is not to be used as a survey for design modifications or construction of improvements on property.

Produced by the  
Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
for the  
Town of Clifton

June 2009

Based upon data from  
Fairfax County Government

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Figure 16: Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas.

## **NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION**

Non-point source pollution (NPS) is caused by stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces. The buildup of pollution can be significant in suburban areas. Pollution which would normally filter through soil is instead carried directly into local waterways. The increased sediment and pollution load can adversely affect the fish and animal life of the streams and increase erosion.

Identifying and controlling non-point source pollution are important aspects of this plan because the Town of Clifton lies within the Popes Head Creek sub-watershed which drains directly into the Occoquan Reservoir and subsequently the Chesapeake Bay. According to the Virginia Water Quality Assessment for 1992, the Virginia Division of Soil and Water Conservation designated the control of non-point source pollution as a high priority for the Pope's Head Creek watershed (DEQ-WD hydrologic unit A12).

The primary pollutants in non-point source runoff include soil sediments, nutrients (such as phosphorus and nitrogen), heavy metals, and hydrocarbons. Since urbanization renders much of the land surface impervious, during storm events, NPS pollution is often flushed directly into local waterways through the storm drainage network or into stormwater management facilities that allow for some of the pollutants to settle out. Impervious land cover increases the velocity of stormwater runoff which scours and erodes unprotected soils and streambanks, greatly contributing to the sediment load delivered to the local water body.

The major stressor for the two use impairments established for Popes Head Creek is sediment accumulation. In 2006, the USEPA and Virginia DEQ established an aquatic life use impairment (based on poor benthic macroinvertebrate community composition) and a primary contact use impairment (based on consistent elevated *E. coli* levels) along a 4.9 mile stretch of Popes Head Creek, beginning at its confluence with Piney Branch and terminating at its mouth, the confluence with Bull Run.

A reference watershed approach was used to estimate the necessary load reduction needed to restore a healthy aquatic system in the stream. Goose Creek was used as the loading

reference watershed. The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Popes Head Creek of annual and daily loads and per source are presented in Tables 4 and 5.<sup>15</sup>

**TABLE 4: SUMMATION OF SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF THE TMDLS**

Load/Limit	Pollutant	TMDL	Waste Load Allocation (Point sources)	Load Allocation (Non point sources)	Margin of Safety
Annual Load	Sediment (tons/yr)	1,773	1,594	1.7	177
Daily Limit	Sediment (tons/day)	4.85	4.36	0.004	0.484

**TABLE 5: LOAD ALLOCATIONS FOR SEDIMENT FOR POPES HEAD CREEK**

Source Category	Existing Load (tons/yr)	Proposed Load (tons/yr)	Proposed Load (tons/day)	Percent Reduction
Forest	0.0368	0.0368	0.0001	0
Agriculture	0.106	0.077	0.00021	28
Developed	0.121	0.060	0.00016	28
In-Stream Erosion	2.11	1.51	0.0041	78

Many of the non-point source controls to achieve the load allocations can be implemented through existing programs, such as Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, commonly referred to as the Non-point Source Program. Additionally, the Town of Clifton integrated erosion and sediment control requirements within the Town Code under the Zoning, Subdivision, and Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinances for all land disturbing activities.

According to the 1996 Comprehensive Plan, approximately 13 percent of the Town's land area is covered by impervious surfaces. It is estimated that this percentage has increased recently due to recent development in the Town. Additional sources of non-point source pollution include automobile wear and fluid leaks, fertilizer and pesticide use on lawns and gardens, pet waste, and naturally-occurring sources, such as contributions from

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15 USEPA, *Decision Rational for the Aquatic Life Use (Benthic) Impairment TMDLs for Bull Run and Popes Head Creek, Virginia*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 2006.

birds and deer. Agriculture is also a significant contributor of non-point source pollution through soil erosion, fertilizer and pesticide application, and livestock waste.

## **SEPTIC SYSTEMS AND WELLS**

Many of the residents within the higher elevations of the Town remain connected to septic systems. Sanitary waste is a pollution risk to groundwater resulting from failing or improperly closed septic systems. Currently there are 43 properties in Town that have septic fields. Figure 7 under the Public Services section identifies the properties served by septic systems. Chapter 68 of the Fairfax County Code requires that all owners have their septic tanks pumped out once every five (5) years and provide the Fairfax County Health Department with written notification within 10 days of pump out. Accumulation of solids and grease in the drain field is a primary cause for premature failure of the sewage disposal system. The Fairfax County Health Department provides notification to residents of the Code requirement for regular maintenance of septic fields. According to information provided by the Health Department, there are three properties in Town that have no records on file regarding regular maintenance of the septic field.

According to the Fairfax County Health Department, there is not a record of the closure for older septic systems in the Town. Many of the old systems were merely disconnected and tanks were not properly pumped and crushed after installation of the pump and haul system. It is not known to what extent these older septic systems are a pollution problem. Although there is no requirement for proper closure, the County requires notice of septic closure/failures.<sup>16</sup>

The County samples new wells prior to permitting approval. Well completion reports are required, with both depth to groundwater as well as some water quality information. The County will sample wells anytime at the owner's request for a \$20 fee. In general, the Health Department noted that water quality is relatively good, with some high iron. Properties serviced by public wells include the Community Hall, the Clifton House businesses, the Trummer's on Main Restaurant (Clifton Hotel property), the Presbyterian Church, the Heart-in- Hand (Buckley Store Building), and the Clifton Elementary School.

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16 Personal communication with Adrian Joye, Fairfax County Health Department, January 2008.

The public wells are managed by the Culpeper District Office of Virginia DEQ Office of Drinking Water as required by law.

## **REGULATED STORAGE TANKS AND KNOWN RELEASES**

Although over half of the Town properties use electric heat, many Town residents heat using fuel oil and natural gas stored in individual gas and fuel oil tanks. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality requires residences to comply with proper tank maintenance, but only larger aboveground and underground tanks are registered by the state. Underground and aboveground tanks have separate regulations governing maintenance and proper installation. Due to the safety hazards and environmental damage associated with fuel spills, residents must report all spills to the Northern Virginia Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Quality located in Woodbridge, Virginia. Registered owners must prove financial responsibility, and a fund is maintained to ensure the proper cleanup of fuel spills.

### ***Underground Storage Tanks***

According to the Virginia Water Quality Assessment for 1992, underground storage tanks are the primary source of groundwater contamination in Virginia. Underground storage tanks often are used due either to space constraints or for aesthetic purposes. Unfortunately, detecting leaks from underground tanks is difficult and often not detected until there is substantial contamination of the surrounding soils and perhaps the groundwater. If managed improperly, underground storage tanks pose an unwanted and potentially expensive liability on the individual property owner or the Town.

Underground storage tanks are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency under the authority of the federal Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1970, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976. The Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 extended and strengthened the provisions of RCRA. Subtitle I of RCRA addresses underground storage tanks. RCRA regulates underground storage tanks if the tank system, including its piping, has at least 10 percent of its volume underground and contains a regulated substance such as fuel oil or gasoline. Subtitle I excludes several different types of underground tanks including but not limited to the following 1) farm or residential tanks of 1,100 gallons or less storing motor fuel for noncommercial uses, 2)

tanks for storing heating oil for consumption on the premises where stored, and 3) septic tanks.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has adopted the EPA rules with the exception that Virginia regulates individual fuel oil tanks with the capacity to contain over 5,000 gallons in the same manner as other regulated tanks. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality – Water Division (DEQ-WD) is responsible for enforcing underground tank regulations in the Commonwealth. The enabling authority for the DEQ-WD is Article 11 of the State Water Control Law prohibiting any introduction of petroleum or other harmful products that could potentially affect state waters, including groundwater. Under these regulations, the DEQ-WD must keep track of and inventory all underground storage facilities within the state. The state deals with all aspects of underground storage tanks including design, construction, installation, compatibility standards, leak detection, record keeping, reporting, closure, corrective action and financial responsibility.

According to DEQ-WD records, the Clifton Fire Station is the only property that has a regulated underground storage tank.

### ***Aboveground Storage Tanks***

Within the Town, 21 housing units (approximately 31 percent of occupied households) rely on fuel oil or kerosene for home heating<sup>17</sup>. Ten residences rely on other fuel sources such as bottled, tank, or liquid propane (LP) gas; the remaining 34 properties rely on electric heating (56 percent). While any individual tank may not pose a significant environmental hazard, the aggregate number of tanks located within the Town may have the potential to pose a serious threat to the environment.

Individual tanks with a capacity of less than 660 gallons or multiple tanks with an aggregate capacity of less than 1,320 gallons are not currently regulated by the state or the federal governments. Most home fuel oil tanks are typically only 200 to 660 gallons and are not

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17 United States Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census Data Summary for Town of Clifton. Washington, D.C.: 1990

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regulated. It is therefore up to the individual owner to ensure that leaks and spills do not occur.

According to the DEQ-WD, approximately 90 percent of releases from individual tanks are as a result of overfill or the tipping over of the tank. Overfill can occur if the driver/filler is not paying attention or if the capacity of a tank is not known. To reduce the risk of an accidental spill, the homeowner or fuel oil company should inspect a tank before filling to ensure that it is sturdy and does not exhibit signs of corrosion. An owner should also have the capacity of the tank clearly marked on the tank and specifically indicate the filling cap location.

## **FUEL SPILLS IN CLIFTON**

The Town has experienced three incidents involving deteriorating underground storage tanks that have demonstrated the need for the Town to work closely with the DEQ-WD. These cases include the Clifton Store (DEQ-WD Pollution Control Number 1989-0112), the Old Clifton Fire Station (PC# 1992-2194), and the Clifton Fire Station (PC# 1993-1190). The leak at the old Clifton Fire Station involved a release of diesel fuel oil into the ground. Virginia DEQ-WD removed the tank and treated and removed contaminated soil, cleaning up the site to standards the state deems non-threatening. A spill also came from an underground gasoline storage tank at the Clifton Store and involved benzene. The area around the site was remediated in 1995 and the faulty tank was removed. This case remains open so that the DEQ is able continue to use funds for treatment at two properties: the Acacia Masonic Lodge and the Long and Foster Realty offices. In addition to these larger events, five other properties have undergone fuel spill reporting and remediation.<sup>18</sup>

Given the Town's reliance on groundwater for its drinking water source, electricity and alternate sources of heat should be considered as viable alternatives to the use of fuel tanks. The Department of Environmental Quality recommends a 100-foot distance between fuel tank locations and wellheads.

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<sup>18</sup> Personal communication with Cynthia Sale, VA-DEQ, January 2008, review of state spill release records. Secondary communication with Randy Chapman, Geologist DEQ, October 2008.

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## **AIR QUALITY**

Air quality is not measured solely for Clifton, but rather for the entire region. Air quality in Fairfax County and in the Washington, D.C. region has been improving gradually. However, the region has not yet attained federal air quality standards for ozone and fine particulate matter. In April 2004, the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area was designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a moderate non-attainment area for the eight-hour ozone standard, and in December 2004, the region was designated as a non-attainment area for fine particulate pollution.

High ozone concentrations can adversely affect human health. The Washington, D.C. area has not met the EPA standard for ozone since that standard was established. In the region major sources of Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions include motor vehicles, utilities and other stationary sources, and non-road construction vehicles. Major sources of emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) include motor vehicles, lawn and garden equipment and small area sources such as surface coatings and solvent use.

There are many sources of fine particulate matter in the Washington, D.C. area, including motor vehicles, point sources (primarily power plants), construction sites, commercial/industrial businesses, tilled fields, unpaved roads and the burning of wood. Other fine particulate matter can form in the air from chemical reactions of gases released from motor vehicles and point sources. High concentrations of particulate matter can adversely affect human health, particularly for sensitive populations.

High carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations are also harmful to human health. While high CO concentrations potentially can occur in “hot spots” near points of traffic congestion, Fairfax County is considered to be in attainment of federal carbon monoxide standards. Other monitored air quality indicators in Fairfax County comply with state and federal standards.

The Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee is currently developing plans to identify emission control measures that will be necessary to bring the region into compliance with ozone and fine particulate matter standards. Transportation control measures designed to improve traffic flow, reduce vehicle miles traveled and/or reduce

vehicle trips have been incorporated into these strategies. Local actions can also benefit air quality but have not been incorporated into emissions reduction strategies. These actions include: “smart growth planning” that supports transit use and nonmotorized transportation; integrated pest management (which can reduce evaporative VOC emissions); transportation demand management efforts; enhanced bicycle and pedestrian access to transit stations; parking management; the application of “green building” practices; and urban tree canopy expansion efforts. Many of these practices can be applied during the land development process.<sup>19</sup>

## **RADON**

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. It is produced by a breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. Research has shown that high levels of exposure to elevated levels of radon can be associated with lung cancer.

Radon enters homes most commonly through cracks in foundations and walls; openings in sump pumps and drains; construction joints; and crawl spaces. In addition, radon can be released from well water when it is released into indoor air when the water is flowing from the tap. However, this is generally a small source of risk compared to radon entering homes from soil.

The Town is identified as being located within the “high” radon potential area according to the Fairfax County Radon Potential Map. According to a study by the Fairfax County Health Department in the late 1980s, 56 percent of the homes tested in the areas of high potential did not have radon levels.<sup>20</sup> Indoor air can be measured for radon with test kits that are readily available at home improvement stores or EPA-approved contractors can measure radon contamination. Radon by-pass systems are found in some Town residences.

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19 Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 Edition Policy Plan; Environment, Amended through 2-25-2008

20 Fairfax County Health Department Division of Environmental Health [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/air/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/air/)

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

The Virginia Stormwater Management Law and Virginia Stormwater Management Regulations implement stormwater management (SWM) programs. The Law is codified in Title 10.1, Chapter 6, Article 1.1 of the Code of Virginia and the Regulations are found at Section 4VAC3-20 of the Virginia Administrative Code.

These statutes specifically set forth regulations regarding land development activities to prevent water pollution, stream channel erosion, depletion of groundwater resources, and more frequent localized flooding to protect property value and natural resources. SWM programs operated according to the law are intended to address these adverse impacts and comprehensively manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff on a watershed-wide basis.

According to both the law and regulations, the term “stormwater” means precipitation that is discharged across the land surface or through conveyances to one or more waterways and that may include stormwater runoff, snow melt runoff, and surface runoff and drainage.

The Town’s stormwater management network consists of traditional practices including two stormwater detention facilities (dry ponds), which serve the Clifton Fire Station and the Frog Hill subdivision. Every five years, the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services inspect and maintain these facilities.

The remaining storm drainage network consists of roadside asphalt ditches, culverts, and grassy swales, which convey stormwater runoff directly to Popes Head Creek. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains any facilities located within the public right of way.

The Northern Virginia Regional Commission, in conjunction with other public and private partners, prepared a Low Impact Development Supplement to the Northern Virginia BMP (Best Management Practices) Handbook. The supplement provides technical guidance on the application of infiltration and other Low Impact Development practices applicable across the region. It does not preclude the revisions to the state’s Stormwater Handbook, which will eventually set the standard for the state.

The Town should continue to promote the use of infiltration practices, wherever feasible. Areas that do not perk should include underdrains which tie into the existing storm drainage network.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (EP) – GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

**EP Goal 1 – Protect the surface water quality of the Town and Chesapeake Bay from adverse affects of development including point and non-point source pollution.**

**EP Objective 1.1 - Enforce regulations consistent with the states' Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act in the form of the Town of Clifton's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.**

**Actions:**

**EP 1.1.1 - Cooperate with the Division of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) - Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board (CBLAB) to refine the Town's regulations.**

As necessary, ensure full consistency with the Phase III requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. Ensure continued compliance through subsequent program phases.

**EP 1.1.2 - Continue to implement the Town's Chesapeake Bay Preservation**

**Program and Ordinance.** Protect Resource Protection Areas (RPA) from development.

Develop a protocol between the CBLAB, Town engineer and Fairfax County, as appropriate, in regard to the Ordinance's administration, review, and implementation.

**EP Objective 1.2 - Reduce non-point source water pollution to Popes Head Creek, and subsequently to the waters of the Chesapeake Bay.**

**Actions:**

**EP 1.2.1 - Require frequent inspections to prevent benthic total maximum daily load (TMDL) and aquatic life use impairment on Popes Head Creek.**

**EP 1.2.2 - Educate pet owners on pet waste disposal laws.**

**EP 1.2.3 - Implement educational programs on proper lawn management techniques.** Include measures to reduce and eliminate the over application of fertilizers and pesticides. Use DCR as a resource for obtaining brochures and information to provide to the public.

**EP 1.2.4 - Protect environmentally sensitive features.** Ensure development does not negatively impact sensitive features, including highly erodible soils and steep slopes.

**EP 1.2.5 - Identify planning and design methods which will minimize the imperviousness of a site.** Establish ordinances that will limit new impervious surfaces in town and promote pervious surfaces, such as pervious concrete, stone, and grass webbing.

**EP 1.2.6 - Steer new development away from problem soils.** These include hydric soils, shrink-swell soils, soils with low strengths, and soils with wetness or saturation problems. If development occurs in areas of problem soils, ensure appropriate engineering measures are taken to sufficiently mitigate the problems.

**EP 1.2.7 – Avoid structural erosion control measures in the natural reaches of Pope’s Head Creek and its tributaries.** If significant amounts of property are threatened, structural erosion control measures should be aesthetically designed to blend in with the rural, forested nature of the stream environment.

## **EP Goal 2 - Manage and protect groundwater resources from contamination.**

### **EP Objective 2.1 - Prevent groundwater contamination from wells, septic systems, and above or underground fuel storage tanks.**

#### **Actions:**

#### **EP 2.1.1 - Develop and implement a cost-effective well-head protection program.**

Coordinate with the Fairfax County Health Department and Virginia DEQ to develop this program, which should provide data on the health of the groundwater supply, potential sources of groundwater pollution, and the physical condition of private and public wells in the Town.

#### **EP 2.1.2 - Promote public awareness of the availability of well water testing from the Fairfax County Health Department.**

Identify and encourage owners of wells which were built before 1962 to voluntarily test for contamination. Work with the Fairfax County Health Department to identify grant opportunities for upgrading contaminated wells.

#### **EP 2.1.3 - Locate and seal any abandoned wells which may serve as a conduit for groundwater pollution.**

Close or upgrade improperly constructed or failing wells. Coordinate this effort with the Fairfax County Health Department.

#### **EP 2.1.4 - Provide an annual update to the Town on the health of public wells.**

Coordinate with the DEQ-Office of Drinking Water-Culpeper District which monitors these wells.

#### **EP 2.1.5 - Ensure property owners with septic systems receive a 5-year notification to have their septic tank(s) pumped or inspected.**

Assign a town representative to work with the Fairfax County Health Department to ensure notifications are timely and to obtain information on older septic systems that are not registered.

**EP 2.1.6 - Identify malfunctioning septic systems.** Work with the Fairfax County Health Department to encourage the repair and maintenance of malfunctioning septic systems or improperly sealed or abandoned septic systems, which may be responsible for local groundwater contamination.

**EP 2.1.7 – Educate citizens on how to monitor existing underground fuel storage tanks.** Obtain educational information from the Department of Environmental Quality – Water Division (DEQ-WD) on such methods and on storage tank life expectancy, replacement, and spill prevention measures. Work with the DEQ-WD to detect, monitor, and clean up underground fuel storage tank leaks.

**EP Objective 2.2 - Encourage practices and policies which improve air quality.**

Actions:

**EP 2.2.1 - Support air quality improvement through tree preservation, tree planting, and landscaping.** Support development regulations that include requirements for these improvements.

**EP Objective 2.3 - Encourage Radon testing for air and water.**

Actions:

**EP 2.3.1 - Provide awareness to homeowners and commercial property owners on the health risks, tests, and mitigation of radon in indoor air and well water.** Provide links on the Town website to the Fairfax County Health Department, and Virginia Department of Health.

**EP Objective 2.4 - Reduce the quantity of stormwater runoff and encourage practices which improve the quality of stormwater runoff.**

**Actions:**

**EP 2.4.1 - Manage development and land use to reduce storm water runoff.**

Minimize impervious land cover, protect identified Resource Management Area components, and control non-point source pollution using appropriate land use planning strategies.

**EP 2.4.2 - Ensure that existing stormwater Best Management Practices and Low Impact Development Practices (BMD/ILD) are properly inspected by Fairfax County.**

Ensure maintenance agreements are in place so that these facilities continue to perform their water quality functions properly. Investigate and identify economically feasible and non-land intensive single-family BMP/LID measures for better stormwater management.



## COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

There are many features that are an important influence in the Town's character and appearance. The 19th century heritage reflected in the many historic structures throughout the Town is vital to its image. The commercial district with the quaint shops, churches, inn and restaurants also contribute to the visual image and economic vitality of the Town. The trains bustling through the Town are a reminder of the Town as a railroad village in its early days. The Popes Head stream valley that runs through



the Town provides a natural open space area that has a positive effect on the Town's appearance.

In addition to the stream valley, the Town has a substantial amount of open space with the Clifton Town Park and Randolph Buckley Park. All of these open space areas provide visual relief from the developed areas of the Town.

The Town recognizes the values of its past but also understands its responsibility to work to preserve its unique character. This is not only to benefit residents but also for the Town's appeal to visitors

who patronize businesses and attend the many annual events sponsored by the Town or other community organizations. First impressions by visitors are primarily a function of appearance and aesthetics.

Community appearance efforts relate to the enhancement, improvement and beautification of public and private spaces. Currently, the Town's Beautification Committee coordinates bi-annual clean-up days and planting/maintenance of some of the public spaces in Town. Over the years, Clifton has made incremental improvements to the physical environs of the Town to address specific problems and on the basis of the Town's available financial resources or with assistance by local or state agencies. However, many areas of the Town's public infrastructure are still in need of repair. Although Clifton has a public nuisance

ordinance, there are no other initiatives in place to encourage property owners to enhance or maintain the physical condition of their property.

The Town recently has initiated two major planning efforts which will assist in enhancing the physical and aesthetic environment of its public spaces. First, the Town has initiated the development of a Streetscape Master Plan for Main Street. Financing for this effort is from Congressional earmark funding obtained in 2005 by the Town. The purpose of this plan is to develop a coordinated vision and design standards for the Town's streetscape. One aspect of the plan is to improve the gateways to the Town to reflect an appropriate image of the Town of Clifton. In addition, the streetscape plan will develop modifications and/or enhancements to the roadway, sidewalks, drainage system and landscaping features associated with Main Street, as well as to evaluate traffic calming measures that best suit the historic nature of the Town. Although the streetscape plan is for Main Street only, it is envisioned that the plan could establish a theme that could be utilized for future streetscape planning efforts of other public streets in the Town.

Secondly, the Town is working with the Clifton Betterment Association Town Improvement Fund and other private partners to implement the development of a passive recreational stream valley park, "Clifton Floodplain Park," which includes a significant portion of Popes Head Creek. This entire 14-acre property is a valued, natural ecological resource for the Town, and is visible from the intersection of Clifton Road and Main Street, one of the major gateways to the Town. These current efforts on behalf of the Town will contribute significantly to the overall community appearance and enhance, improve and beautify the visual image of the Town.

The appearance of the Town in the future will be determined by the decisions being made now. Financial resources, development regulations, future development and investments on behalf of current residents and businesses all will influence the future appearance of the Town.

## COMMUNITY APPEARANCE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

**CA Goal 1 – Enhance the physical and aesthetic appearance of the Town and protect its historic character and small town atmosphere.**

**CA Objective 1.1 - Enhance the physical appearance and function of Main Street and Chapel Road as prominent gateways to the Town.**

**Actions:**

**CA 1.1.1 - Develop a streetscape master plan for Main Street.** Establish coordinated theme and design standards so that future improvements to Town streetscapes create a more unified and attractive community appearance for the Town.

- A streetscape master plan for Main Street should include the triangle at the intersection of Main Street, Clifton Road, and Newman Road up to the intersection of Main Street and Clifton Heights Lane.
- The streetscape master plan should address design elements such as pavement design, sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping, signage, drainage, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, etc. These design elements should create a sense of transition into the Town that will naturally slow traffic along Main Street.

**CA 1.1.2 - Plan for underground utilities.** Develop a plan to bury existing utility lines and require, to the extent possible, that new utilities be placed underground.

**CA 1.1.3 - Develop a streetscape master plan for Chapel Road once the streetscape master plan for Main Street is established.** Utilize a theme and design standards established for Main Street for all subsequent street improvements.

## **CA Objective 1.2 - Enhance the welcoming appearance of the public areas and gateways within the Town.**

### **Actions:**

**CA 1.2.1 - Develop a comprehensive design plan.** Address the visual aspects of areas beyond Main Street that are deemed to be key gateways or highly visible public focus areas. The plan should provide design guidelines for landscaping, signage and other design elements to establish a unified theme. As necessary, the Town should seek permissions and easements to provide landscaping and entry features at key gateway locations. Public focus areas include:

- Chapel Road at the eastern Town limits;
- Clifton Road where it intersects School Street and Pendleton Avenue;
- Ayre Square;
- Randolph Buckley Park;
- Entrances to the Clifton Town Park; and
- Caboose Plaza and landscaped areas within the railroad right of way.

**CA 1.2.2 - Maintain and improve the physical appearance and condition of Town-owned properties and historic and memorial markers.**

**CA Objective 1.3 - Encourage property owners to maintain the physical condition of their property and associated historic and memorial markers.**

Actions:

**CA 1.3.1 – Create incentives for property maintenance.** Encourage owners to keep their property free of trash, graffiti or other items which detract from the appearance and character of the town. Consider acknowledging owners' positive initiatives of property maintenance to encourage pride in the appearance of properties and the Town.

**CA 1.3.2 - Continue designating official Town clean-up days.** Encourage property owners to remove litter from the Town's most visible locations.

**CA 1.3.3 - Provide property owners information regarding federal historic preservation funding.** Include information on federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation of historic structures.

**CA Objective 1.4 - Develop and enforce regulations, in accordance with Town Code, that protect property values and the public's health, safety and welfare, as they concern the physical condition of buildings, properties, and signage.**

Actions:

**CA 1.4.1 – Enforce compliance with use permits, site plans and architectural review requirements for uses or changes approved by the Town Council, and/or Architectural Review Board (ARB).** Evaluate code provisions and current procedures to ensure they sufficiently provide for enforcement. Specifically, the ARB should develop a code requirement and establish procedures to guarantee conformity with an approved certificate of appropriateness.

**CA 1.4.2 - Develop a blight abatement ordinance and program.** As permitted by the Virginia State Code, the ordinance should address properties which are abandoned, dilapidated, or otherwise kept in an unsafe manner. This program should allow for the Town to remove derelict fencing, junked vehicles, and trash on property that impact the visual quality of the Town.

**CA 1.4.3 – Review and revise as appropriate the “Architectural & Planning Guidelines, Clifton, Virginia” adopted July 2, 1997.**

# IMPLEMENTATION

The Town of Clifton Comprehensive Plan (“Plan”) is a dynamic, living document written by citizens to guide the Town’s future improvements. The Plan’s goals, objectives and actions provide a “to do” list, which must be prioritized, planned, funded and implemented if this Plan is to improve the quality of life within the Town.



The Town Council has oversight for implementing the Comprehensive Plan and may choose to create an implementation team responsible for developing plans, prioritizing goals and managing implementation or may choose to directly task the Town’s Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, and committees to accomplish Plan goals. There are a number of mechanisms for implementing the Plan. Some of these are described below.

## **TOWN PLAN ACTION WORK PROGRAM**

Developing an action work program is a first step to Implementing the Plan's goals. An **action work program**:

- prioritizes goals and their related action items;
- determines what, if any, inter-relationships exist between action items;
- provides for the evaluation of selected high-priority or complex action items;
- identifies funding or partnerships for selected initiatives;
- identifies the commission, board or committee responsible for select initiatives;
- provides a tracking system to manage the implementation process; and
- identifies advocacy positions and relationships.

At the Town Council's direction either the Planning Commission or implementation team will coordinate Town commissions, boards and committees to develop an action work program from the Town Plan. Once this action work program is approved by the Town Council, work on specific initiatives can began in earnest.

## **THE TOWN CODE**

All implementation efforts cannot be accomplished by the action work program. There are many action items in the Town Plan that should be implemented through amendments to the Town Code. An example is the adoption of a Blight Ordinance.

In addition, the implementation of many of the actions contained in this Plan will require modifications to the land development regulations contained in the Town Code. Land development regulations consist of the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance and are the most frequently used implementation tools of the Comprehensive Plan. These ordinances regulate the use, density, placement, subdivision and construction of properties

on all parcels in the Town. The Planning Commission should make recommendations to the Town Council on proposed amendments to the land development regulations.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)**

Many of the Plan's goals, objectives and actions can be implemented through a CIP, a program similar to the action work program but specifically for capital improvements. This is the primary mechanism for funding most public facility improvements (parks, town buildings, etc.)

The Code of Virginia allows the local planning commission to “prepare and revise annually a capital improvement program based on the comprehensive plan of [the Town] for a period not to exceed the ensuing five years.” A CIP identifies what capital improvement projects are of highest priority and defines projects in terms of their scope, construction costs, and maintenance costs. The CIP allows the Town to plan for future revenues and capital expenditures through the annual planning process.

## **FEDERAL, STATE, AND NON-PROFIT FUNDING**

Federal and state government funding programs exist in the areas of historic preservation, transportation enhancement, and recreation. Several programs are identified in the Plan, but it is not a comprehensive list. Additionally, non-profit grant opportunities may be available to fund Town improvements. The Town should pursue the many available grant or cost-share opportunities to fund Plan goals.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

One of the most important aspects of this Plan is to involve Town citizens in implementing its goals, objectives and actions. This builds on the existing climate of citizen involvement in the Town through its government, committees, and community activities. There are specific actions in this Plan that call for citizen involvement to assist the Town with implementation strategies and formation of committees to accomplish specific tasks.

For example, it is recommended to designate a Town representative to coordinate and monitor regional and local transportation planning efforts for the Town. A citizen on the Transportation and Safety Committee could provide this role and advise the committee and Town Council.

Other actions in the Plan may be well suited as civic projects by local organizations or clubs. For example, in order to promote the Town's natural resources, the Plan recommends the creation of a nature walk brochure for Pope's Head Creek and Randolph Buckley Park. This might be an excellent project for a service organization or scouting project.

# APPENDIX A: BUILDINGS WITHIN THE TOWN OF CLIFTON HISTORIC DISTRICT

<b>Address</b>	<b>Date of Construction</b>	<b>Historical Name</b>
7126 Main Street	ca.1930	Detached House (demolished1989)
7134 Main Street	1869	Clifton Hotel
12744 Richards Lane	ca. 1918	Church Manse
12744 Richards Lane	1870	Clifton Presbyterian Church
12801 Ford Lane	ca. 1880	Ford House
12751 Ford Lane	ca. 1905	Ayre House
7140 Main Street	ca. 1930	Clifton Suprette
7144 Main Street	Pre-1900	Craftsmen bungalow
7152 Main Street	1896	The Quigg House
11746 Chapel Street	ca. 1870	Mayhugh Tavern
12755 Chapel Street	ca. 1907	Detwiler House
12751 Chapel Street	ca. 1915	Beckwith House (demolished 1985)
12743 Chapel Street	ca. 1911	Fulmer House
7152 Main Street	1912	Clifton Baptist Church
7156 Main Street	ca. 1880	The Harris House
7158 Main Street	ca. 1890	The Kidwell House
7160 Main Street	1896	The Kincheloe House
12714 Chestnut Street	1886	The Cross House
12718 Chestnut Street	1905	Adams House
12722 Chestnut Street	1919	Elmer Ayre House
12801 Chestnut Street	1908	Red Gables
12721 Chestnut Street	ca. 1904	Buckley House
12717 Chestnut Street	1910	J.B. Cross
7200 Main Street	ca. 1890	Primitive Baptist Church
7211 Main Street	ca. 1905	One and a half story frame and weatherboard structure

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Behind 7211 Main Street		one and a half story weatherboard building
7207 Main Street		Two story structure
7203 Main Street	1907	Miller House
7161 Main Street	1904	Wright House
12653 School Street	1908	Dorsey House
12651 School Street	1950's	Frame and aluminum structure
12649 School Street	1906	one and half story frame house
12641 School Street	ca. 1901	Spring Cottage
12638 School Street		one story bungalow
12640 School Street	ca. 1906	two story frame house
12644 School Street	1955	One story front gable structure
7157 School Street	1909	C.H. Wine House
7157 Main Street	1900	Kincheloe House
7155 Main Street	ca. 1935	Stone bungalow
7153 Main Street	ca. 1900	Originally a store, one story house
7151 Main Street	ca. 1903	Payne House
12705 Chapel Road	Late 1920's	One and half story bungalow
7151 Pendleton Avenue	1870	Hetzel House (Demolished 2006)
7155 Pendleton Avenue	ca. 1909	One and a half story house
12645 Chapel Road	1953	Fire house and Post Office (demolished 1991)
12639 Chapel Road	1882	Bradley House
12637 Chapel Road	ca. 1900	Two story house/mansard roof
12635 Chapel Road	ca. 1905	Fletcher House
12638 Chapel Road	ca. 1905	Clifton Town Hall
12642 Chapel Road	c. 1900	Turner House
12644 Clifton Road	1962	The Clifton House
12698 Chapel Road	ca. 1903	Payne's Kitchen
12712 Chapel Road	1904	Woodyard House
12704 Chapel Road	ca. 1900	Detwiler House
7145 Main Street	ca. 1900	Buckley's Store
7157 Main Street	1905	Pink House
Behind Main Street	ca. 1932	Barn
7135 Main Street	ca. 1900	Acacia Lodge
7222 Dell Avenue	Ca. 1903	Detached House
7219 Dell Avenue	Late 19th century	Detached House
7221 Dell Avenue	Late 19th century	Detached House
7223 Dell Avenue	Early 20th century	Detached House
7225 Dell Avenue	Late 19th century	Detached House

