

Proposed Amendment to the Baldwin Shoreland Zoning Ordinance

The proposed amendment would create a process for the Planning Board and CEO to determine shoreland zone boundaries based on field data provided by a wetland scientist. Under the current ordinance, the Planning Board and CEO do not have the authority to correct or refine the boundaries drawn on the Town's shoreland zoning map.

There are a few reasons why strictly following the shoreland zoning map can be a problem. The map is inaccurate. It only approximates the location of wetlands based on satellite imagery. The scale of the map is big and there is a large margin of error when placing boundaries on the ground. The definition of wetlands used to create the map is not the same as the definition of wetlands in the Baldwin Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed amendment would give landowners, applicants and the town the option of using precise field data instead of relying on the imprecise shoreland zoning map to establish the boundaries of the shoreland zone. Under the amendment, landowners, applicants or the town can still rely solely on the shoreland zoning map if they want to.

Amendments to the shoreland zoning ordinance need to be approved by the DEP. The proposed amendment has been reviewed and deemed acceptable by the Attorney General's Office and the DEP.