

SECTION II

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

This section contains a list and discussion of significant coastal conditions upon which the Cape Vincent Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is based. It is divided into three broad categories: natural resources; community/cultural resources; and current land and water uses.

In addition to field observations and meetings with local officials and the LWRP committee, numerous sources were consulted in the preparation of this section. Information sources include the NYS Coastal Atlas, NYS-DEC publications, and St. Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission studies and publications.

## I. NATURAL RESOURCES

### A. Water Resources

The Village of Cape Vincent is the most westerly village in New York State on the St. Lawrence River, located near the junction of Lake Ontario.

The shoreline has been developed for commercial, recreational and residential uses. Marine development potential (marinas, docking, etc.) is somewhat restricted by the natural limitations of the shoreline. The river is heavily used for recreational boating and fishing, and commercial freight shipping. The St. Lawrence Seaway channel is approximately 1,500 feet from the village shoreline. Depending on spring and fall weather conditions, the shipping season is approximately April through December. A 1,400 ft. long breakwater built in the late 1890's protects the village shoreline from ship waves and northerly wind waves. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made extensive repairs to the breakwater in 1982 and 1983. The breakwater is currently in good condition and affords adequate protection to the harbor area.

The village's harbor areas are illustrated on Plate 3. The main harbor area contains the Wolfe Island Ferry dock and five commercial marina's. A secondary harbor area at the village park at the eastern edge of the village has been created by the completion, in 1986, of a new village boat ramp. See Plate 7 for the exact location of these facilities. Small private docking facilities are also located along most of the village's shoreline.

DEC has rated the river quality in the Cape Vincent areas as "Class A", suitable for primary contact recreation and for drinking (if subject to State approved treatment). The St. Lawrence River is the water supply for the Cape Vincent municipal system.

The Strategic Plan for Economic Development through Expansion of Waterway Access to the Great Lakes, prepared in 1982 by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, identified Cape Vincent as a site under consideration for development in 1990-2000. Development of projects listed include a pier and parking for an estimated cost of \$335,000.

### Analysis

Maintaining and protecting the quality of the river is essential. Without it, the area's recreational tourism would suffer. Although the quality of the river in the Cape Vincent area is generally good, water quality should be monitored carefully and new shoreline uses assessed for potential impacts on the water. This is particularly important as recreational use of the river increases and shoreline development intensifies. Adequate facilities for boat pumpouts and subsequent disposal of wastes is important for maintaining acceptable water quality conditions. Two commercial marinas provide these facilities.

With the river as the basis for much of Cape Vincent's recreational tourism, access to the river, especially publicly provided access, should be maintained and improved. New development should be reviewed in light of the LWRP's overall goals, particularly to prevent conflicting uses and loss of valuable public access and recreation opportunities on the river.

The harbors of the Village of Cape Vincent provide access to the St. Lawrence River for both commercial and recreational boating which are vital to the economy of the village. Development of sailboat moorings within the breakwater is recommended in order to enhance the harbor's usefulness as a site for recreational boating. (See Section Four, Proposed Projects.) The Wolfe Island Ferry should also be maintained for the sake of the village's tourist economy. (See Section Two, Community and Cultural Resources.) In order to ensure the continued usefulness of the harbor and its facilities, particular attention should be paid to the Policies regarding erosion and ice management. (See Natural Resources, Flooding and Erosion).

The village has reviewed the DEC stream classification of the St. Lawrence River and finds the "A" classification to be compatible with the existing and proposed land and water uses put forth in this program.

#### B. Fish and Wildlife (Plate 3)

The NYS Coastal Atlas identifies no fish and wildlife habitats of statewide significance in the St. Lawrence River off of Cape Vincent. Fish and wildlife are a major component of the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River environment and the village's economy for the recreational fishing and tourism industries -- and they directly relate to other significant issues of the area.

A number of fish species are found in the Cape Vincent coastal area: muskellunge, smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye and yellow perch. Smallmouth bass is the most highly prized species of the area and is thus very important to the sport fishery and associated businesses. Northern pike support a substantial winter sport fishery. The annual Cape Vincent ice fishing derby attracts

500 to 1,000 people -- ice conditions permitting. The muskellunge fishery is most noteworthy in the autumn, when guides and sportsmen concentrate on that species. The presence of the NYS-DEC fisheries research station and aquarium in Cape Vincent substantiates the importance of the fisheries resources in this area of the lake and river. The fisheries station provides educational opportunities and serves as an information source concerning area resources.

A number of waterfowl and water-oriented bird species concentrate in the area during the spring and fall migration periods and also during the summer nesting and rearing period. A listing of species that may be found in the area surrounding Cape Vincent is provided in Appendix E. Species listed as "threatened" or "of special concern" that may be found in the Cape Vincent area include common loon, black tern, common nighthawk, and Cooper's hawk (species of special concern); as well as common tern, northern harrier, and osprey (threatened species). The breakwater offshore from the village is a popular resting area for migratory birds. The terms "threatened" and "of special concern" are defined in Appendix A.

There are no wetlands or areas of unique vegetation within the village coastal area.

#### Analysis

Given that the economy depends, in part, upon the quality of the river and associated resources, sound management of these resources is essential, especially for the area's fishery, tourism and scenic resources. Care should be taken to review any nearby development plans for compatibility.

#### C. Scenic Resources and Visual Quality (Plate 8)

Scenic resources are one of the major attractions of the region and contribute to the area's seasonal home, marina, tourism, and recreational facility development. Due to the nature of its historical development, Cape Vincent has maintained more visual access to the river than many other St. Lawrence River villages. These open views to the river are important to the overall visual quality of the community.

A 1983 U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service study recognized the St. Lawrence River-Thousand Islands area as one of the greatest landscapes in America. Significant cultural and landscape elements were identified (historic sites, views of the river, commercial shipping, etc.). The NPS report describes the visual quality of the corridor as unique and worthy of revitalization and preservation efforts.

In 1984, SUNY Syracuse completed a St. Lawrence River Scenic Access Study which assessed all scenic views to the river in a five-town area along NY Route 12E. The report established criteria and methodology for assessing scenic access resources and outlined



methods for preserving scenic access of significant quality. The study identified two high quality viewsheds from the village outward to the river (see Plate 8). The view from the eastern end of the community along Route 12E contains an unobstructed view to the river. The view from the central portion of the village is segmented by some structures. The general characteristics and landscape elements which occur within these areas include:

- High amount of water visible
- River appears in foreground
- Enframed or segmented view with little or no obstruction from vegetation or man-made structures
- Foreground vegetation acts primarily as canopy
- Virtually no land area affecting views of the River
- Normal viewer position

Within these areas, seven locally significant scenic access points were identified. Two additional points further west along the shoreline were also cited. From east to west these include:

- 1) Village Park. The open expanses of the village park provide an unobstructed view of the shoreline and river from Rt. 12E and throughout the park. Public ownership of the park insures public access to this site.
- 2) Marina. The village's largest commercial marina, which contains a renovated railroad depot converted to a store and office, provides a picturesque setting for viewing the landscape from both land and water.
- 3) Murray Street. This village street ends approximately 100 feet before the shoreline, with a grassed area extending to the river. This right-of-way provides a scenic view of the harbor area inside the breakwall and of the historic DEC fisheries building.
- 4) Esselstyne Street. The street terminates with a concrete bulkhead at the Village's public dock. While the view from shore is constricted by surrounding marina structures, a linear corridor provides a view of the harbor area inside the breakwall.
- 5) James Street. The James Street/Club Street area is an active waterfront area due to the ferry dock and tourist facilities. Ferry passengers benefit from scenic views of the Cape Vincent waterfront. Club Street area structures are in need of renovation and detract from the scenic quality of this area.

- 6) Point Street. This village right-of-way provides good pedestrian access to the riverfront and an excellent view of the St. Lawrence Seaway shipping channel.
- 7) Market Street. Several park benches and a small beach area augment the waterfront termination of this village street. The area has good visual access with an unrestricted view of the shipping channel.
- 8) Real Street. This street provides a visual corridor to the St. Lawrence River. The village pumphouse and a deteriorated breakwall detract from the scenic quality of this area.
- 9) Kanady Street. Park benches and an attractive site create a high quality viewing area at the river end of this street.

The NYS Coastal Atlas does not identify any scenic vistas of statewide significance in Cape Vincent.

#### Analysis

The Cape Vincent waterfront offers a great deal of visual access to the St. Lawrence River and the Thousand Islands, and is, itself, a source of scenic beauty both from the St. Lawrence and from within the village. Dead end streets with grassed areas and benches, harbors and marinas, and the Village Waterfront Park provide excellent views of the St. Lawrence River. The tree lined shores and the harbor area of Cape Vincent provide boaters and ferry passengers with picturesque views from the river. Within the village there are a number of beautiful and impressive examples of historic architecture ranging from early 1800's Georgian to late 1800's Victorian and a touch of New Orleans. The village's function as a point of entry from Canada, its historic French influence, and its residential nature give it a look and feel that is quieter and less commercial than many other resort towns along the St. Lawrence.

Maintaining scenic views to the river is essential to the tourism industry. Future development should not block visual corridors and should be designed to maintain or enhance the scenic quality of the waterfront. The deteriorated waterfront areas merit improvement and could directly enhance recreational and public access resources as well. Town and village leaders in cooperation with private property owners, developers and community organizations like the Cape Vincent Improvement League and the Chamber of Commerce, have the potential to foster needed efforts to enhance and protect the scenic resources and overall visual quality of the waterfront area. The small coastal village charm and appearance is an asset to the community and should be maintained.

Several areas in the village have potential for improving overall visual quality. The waterfront area between Esselstyne, James and Gouvello Streets -- more commonly known as the Club Street block --

is a mix of commercial, residential and recreational land uses. This one-block area has the largest concentration of structures in deteriorated condition in the village. It is a highly visible area to tourists because of the location of the commercial ferry dock on James Street. The presence of the ferry supports a few businesses in the immediate vicinity; the remainder of the block is primarily residential. A proliferation of commercial signs is unattractive. Simple changes in sign composition, size, and number could help to greatly improve the overall appearance of the area. Traffic congestion near the ferry entrance also presents problems. Opportunities exist for public and private development including improved recreational uses and rehabilitation of residential and commercial buildings to create an aesthetically pleasing and functional mixed use area. Efforts to enhance this area would have positive benefits for residents, businesses, and the general public.

The Town of Cape Vincent garage, which is an historically significant structure, is located near the waterfront on James Street. The building is used for a town storage facility, Chamber of Commerce offices and public restrooms. However, it is underutilized due to its poor condition and lack of parking space. Being close to the ferry, the building has potential for further uses, especially in terms of tourism. Basic improvements such as parking, landscaping, and interpretive signs could bolster the facility significantly.

Other areas in need of improvement include the Village Park where vestiges of former commercial piers and a coal dock are unattractive and a threat to public safety; submerged deteriorated remnants of a pier at the end of Market Street; and a broken up breakwall at the end of Real Street. The village is working to have the Coast Guard remove the Market Street pier. These three areas have valuable opportunities for passive or active recreation facility development. Visual quality as well as public safety would be enhanced by rehabilitation of these areas.

The village's linear orientation to the river and the presence of several scenic vistas contribute to the community's special character. Other factors enhancing the village's character include several historically and architecturally significant structures, a low scale built environment which blends well with the surrounding natural resources, and several water based recreational facilities which lend a distinct maritime flavor. Improvement and maintenance of Cape Vincent's quaint appearance and scenic resources is vital to its tourist-based economy.

#### C. Soils and Topography, Flooding and Erosion, and Air Quality

##### 1. Soils and Topography (Plate 3)

Soils vary within the village but the primary soil types are the Kingsbury and Covington silty clays. These tend to be

poorly drained, have a very shallow depth to the seasonal water table, and have development limitations requiring extreme management and design considerations.

The coastal area is generally level, with elevations ranging from approximately 250'-260'.

## 2. Flooding and Erosion (Plate 8)

Flooding along the riverfront is not a significant problem. Areas prone to flooding have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on a Flood Insurance Rate Map dated April 17, 1985. Designated flood hazard areas coincide with St. Lawrence River shoreline areas affecting most of the water dependent uses shown on Plate 7. Development in the village is subject to flood damage prevention regulations as part of the village Development Code.

Two areas of potential erodibility within the Village of Cape Vincent, and one additional area nearby within the town, have been identified in the Evaluation of Shore Structures and Shore Erodibility, St. Lawrence River, New York State (SLEOC, 1977). An area of Very High Potential for Erodibility occurs on a low bluff area with no beach near the western edge of the village. On the very eastern edge of the village, within the Waterfront Park, is an area of Low Potential for Erodibility. A third area of Low Potential for Erodibility occurs on the low bluff along the Village's coastline between Elm Street and William Street. Another area of Low Potential for Erodibility occurs on a low bluff just west of the village within the Town of Cape Vincent. Although coastal erosion is addressed by the State Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas Law of 1981, ECL Article 34 (CEHA), which sets up a development permit system and requires DEC to map all Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas, DEC has stated that they do not have plans to identify Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas in the Village of Cape Vincent. However, the Village of Cape Vincent has identified the three areas mentioned above (mapped on Plate 8) as erosion hazard areas of local concern.

Ice movement, wind-driven wave action and waves from the Seaway shipping channel damage boat houses, piers and docks along the river. These structures often need stabilizing and strengthening in areas exposed to northern winds, ice damage, or wave disturbance.

Policies regarding the siting of structures within the village have been developed in order to minimize the damage to structures due to erosion and flooding. (See Section Three, Policy 11.) The Town of Cape Vincent should be aware that the same hazards due to erosion and flooding exist along the coastline within the town. Policies adopted by the Town in regard to such hazards would not only mitigate problems within the town but, also help prevent subsequent, adverse effects on

the village.

### 3. Air Quality

The NYS Coastal Atlas does not identify any Air Quality Maintenance Areas in the Cape Vincent area. Poor air quality is not a problem and there are no apparent immediate threats.

#### Analysis

Soil conditions in the coastal area may be limiting due to permeability, prolonged wetness and depth to bedrock. A thorough on-site investigation of soil conditions is recommended for any major development. Topographical features pose few development constraints.

Commercial shipping, wave and ice damage, and high water levels create problems for property owners and adverse impacts upon the resource base. Development should be compatible with such conditions.

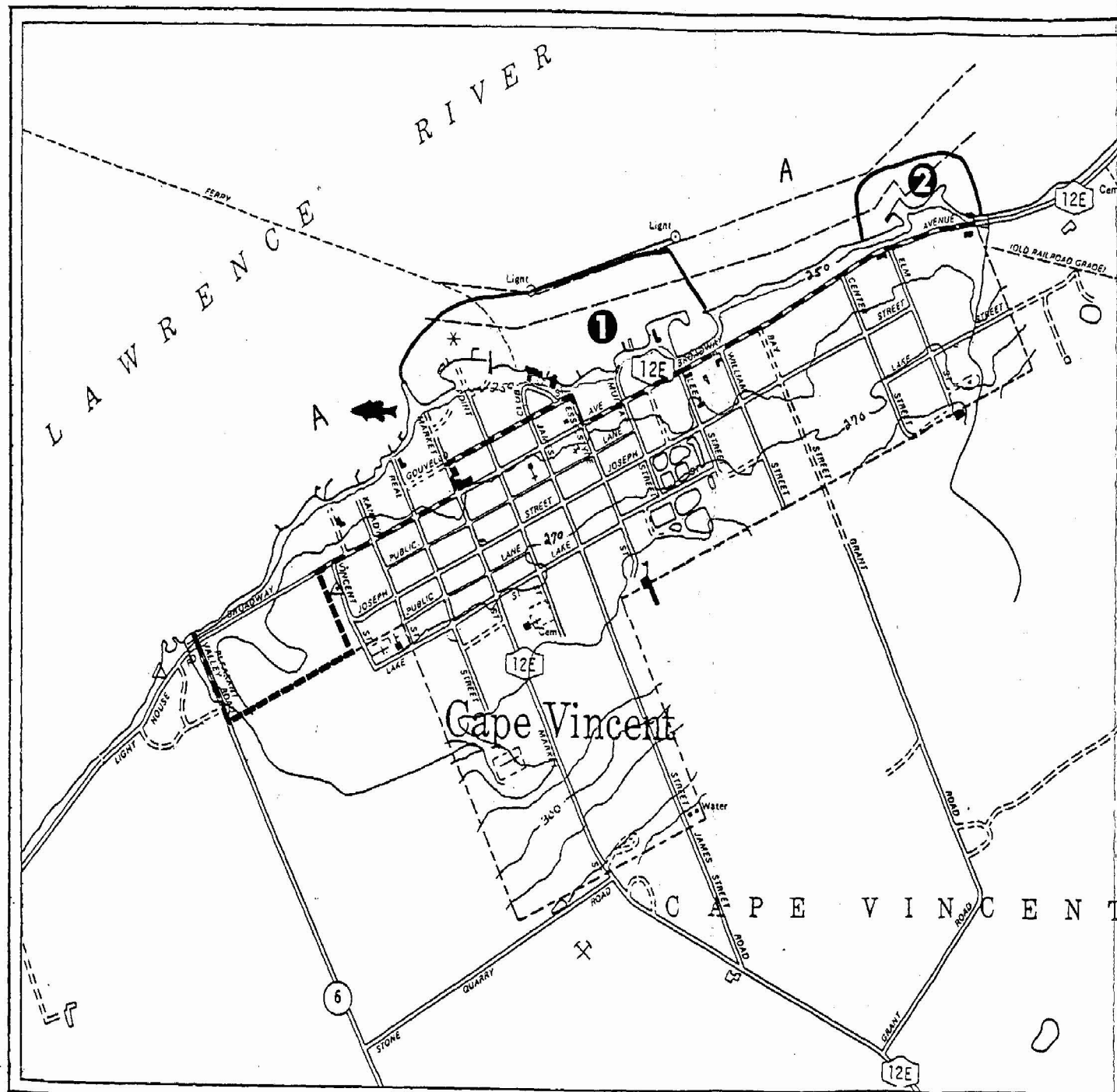
## II. COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### A. Public and Semi-Public Facilities (Plate 4)

Most significant are the publicly provided river access and water-related recreation facilities. The village and town have formed a joint Park and Recreation Commission which will be responsible for all such public recreation facilities. The following list describes the public recreation facilities and river access sites in the village coastal area.

#### 1. Cape Vincent Village Park (Plate 4, Site 1)

- a. Partially developed 7-acre waterfront park, east of the village center between NY Route 12E and the river.
- b. Excellent view of the river.
- c. Within walking distance of the village district.
- d. Gravel parking area and limited picnic facilities.
- e. Provides access for fishing: off the bulkhead on the west end and off the old coal dock at the east end.
- f. The village has plans for developing the park for expanded fishing, boating, and scenic access opportunities.
- g. During the summer of 1986, a boat ramp and parking area will be built, as of joint village, town, and DEC project.



VILLAGE OF  
CAPE VINCENT

PLATE 3







Water Resources,  
Fish & Wildlife Resources,  
Topography

PREPARED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE-EASTERN ONTARIO COMMISSION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Scale 1" = 800'



### LEGEND

- ~~250~~ - Land Contours
-  Depression Contours
-  DEC Water Quality
-  Birds Classifications
-  Fish
-  Main Harbor Area
-  Secondary Harbor Area

== Coastal Area Boundary

There is an unrestricted view of the shipping channel, several park benches, and a small beach (no lifeguard on duty; swimming not encouraged by village due to liability problems). As noted earlier, a submerged pier is a navigational hazard.

- 6) Real Street: This area has a park bench and picnic table, limited parking, and good pedestrian access to the village. The site is adjacent to the village library and includes the village water supply pump house. The site includes a deteriorated breakwall but holds potential for further development.
- 7) Kanady Lane: The overall visual appearance of the site is good, and it has a high quality view of the river. There are two park benches on the waterfront; no parking area is available.

Other public facilities in the coastal area include:

- . the village pump station on Real Street
- . the sewage treatment plant at the end of Elm Street
- . The DEC fisheries research station and aquarium on Broadway Street
- . the U.S. Customs and Immigration Office for the Wolfe Island ferry port of entry (Plate 4, Site 6)
- . the Town of Cape Vincent garage which is used for storage, Chamber of Commerce offices, and public restrooms (Plate 4, Site 7)
- . The Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation Upriver Operations Office. Leasing the former U.S. Coast Guard Station located at the end and to the east of Point Street. (Plate 4, Site 8)

Community facilities such as schools and the central business district are not within the coastal area.

### Analysis

The existing publicly provided dock and water-related recreation facilities are heavily used. Deficiencies such as lack of parking space, and no restrooms at the waterfront park present opportunities for improvement with multiple benefits. Several riverfront dead-end streets that provide public access to the river would also benefit from improvement. (See Plate 4.)

The Village's public dock - known as the "Town Dock" - is located off the northerly end of Esselstyne Street. (see Plate 4, Site 5) It was built around the time of World War I ( 16' x 220') and repaired in the early 1970's with a new concrete cap. In recent years, the Village has observed that seams in the concrete cap have opened and sections of the cap have begun to sink and tilt. An inspection of the dock's timber cribs during the Summer of 1986

2. Municipal Dock (Plate 4, Site 5)

- a. Located on Esselstyne Street, with an excellent view of the harbor.
- b. Approximately 12' wide and 200' long with 21 mooring cleats. Because of deteriorating timber cribs, the dock is in need of reconstruction.
- c. Drinking water is available.
- d. The dock is heavily used and lacks adequate parking facilities.
- e. A parking lot for vehicles is provided two blocks away, on Joseph Street.

3. The DEC Fisheries Station Dock (Plate 4, Site 3)

- a. Located on Broadway with excellent view of harbor.
- b. Primarily for DEC Fisheries Field Unit's use.
- c. Provides limited public boater use of the facility, with minimum regulation, on a first-come, first-served basis.
- d. Restrooms, picnic tables and cooking grills are available for public use.

4. Waterfront End of North-South Streets (Plate 4, Sites 4a-4g)

- a. A number of streets provide direct access to the river:
  - 1) Murray Street: The street ends about 100 feet before the waterfront, and a grassed area extends to the river. There is one wood and concrete bench by the waterfront. The area provides a good view of the entire harbor inside the breakwall and of the historic DEC fisheries building.
  - 2) Esselstyne Street: The street terminates with a concrete bulkhead at the public dock. The area includes 'veterans park,' a small linear strip of land containing memorials and shrubs.
  - 3) James Street: This is an active waterfront access site because of the ferry to and from Canada. Parking space is limited, and the general area appears deteriorated. The area has a considerable amount of undeveloped potential.
  - 4) Point Street: The street terminates with a concrete bulkhead and railing. A park bench is provided. This location has an excellent view of the shipping channel and could be developed further for passive recreation. However, there is very limited potential for parking so the area is limited to pedestrian access.
  - 5) Market Street: As an extension of NY Route 12E, this is an active area with good visual access to the river.



showed them to be separating and settling. The condition of the cribs has raised serious concerns for the safety of the public dock.

The Village's public dock is a vital marine facility for tourism in the Village. Each year hundreds of visitors come to Cape Vincent by water. For transient boaters, the public dock provides a safe and convenient point of arrival with depths adequate for large cruisers and sailboats. It's popularity - especially during events such as the French Festival - is considerable.

With tourism and recreation as the vital component of the village's economy, further development of public and private recreation facilities will enhance the stability of the economy -- if balanced with appropriate protection for the valuable natural and cultural resources which give Cape Vincent its character and identify as a resort area.

The stationing of the 10th Infantry Division at Fort Drum northeast of Watertown will be an added pressure on local resources. Substantial population increased (estimated to exceed 20,000 people with growth beginning in 1985) will heighten the demand for and use of public access and water-related recreation facilities.

Management of resources between all levels of government is essential for effectively dealing with these issues and opportunities. Development proposals involving or in close proximity to publicly-owned waterfront parcels must address the potential impacts upon public access and recreational opportunities.

#### B. Historic Resources (Plate 8)

Historic and architectural resources in the coastal area reflect the influence of early French settlers and the residential and commercial expansion of the nineteenth century village. These resources contribute to the charm and attractiveness of the village as a resort area. Resources in the village that are of local, state and national significance were identified in a 1980 survey conducted by the St. Lawrence-Eastern Ontario Commission. The significance of these structures is based in part on their architectural style, age, and condition.

Most of the significant structures were built between 1810 and the 1880's. The predominant architectural styles include Greek Revival, Italianate and vernacular limestone farmhouses. French immigrants who settled in Cape Vincent after the Napoleonic wars built and occupied several homes in the area.

The survey indicated that due to modern alterations and intrusions in the area, the commercial area is not a potential historic district. However, a joint Town and Village Multiple Resource

Nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places was approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior on September 27, 1985. The nomination included several individual structures in the village and an historic district at the west end of Broadway. Nominated structures located within the coastal area include:

- |  |      |   |
|--|------|---|
| 1. DUVILLARD MILL<br>(DEC Fisheries Station)<br>Broadway                           | 1856 | 4½-story vernacular limestone mill with multi-gabled stick style porch and stepped cornice decoration and finials added mid to late 19th c.                               |
| 2. ERASTUS K. BURNHAM HOUSE<br>565 Broadway (Route 12E)<br>Village of Cape Vincent | 1870 | 2-story Italianate style brick residence, hipped roof with belvedere, projecting cornice with corbelling brackets, frieze windows and window hood moldings.               |
| 3. LEWIS HOUSE<br>Market Street<br>Village of Cape Vincent                         | 1875 | 1½-story vernacular frame residence, 3½-story engaged tower with mansard roof pedimented dormers.   |
| 4. CORNELIUS SACKET HOUSE<br>Broadway (Route 12E)<br>Village of Cape Vincent       | 1900 | 1½-story Colonial revival style frame residence, side wing added pre-1935, gambrel roof with 3 hipped and 1 pedimented dormers, recessed porch with fluted Ionic columns. |

The Broadway Historic District contains three estate properties, built between 1815-1840 by prominent French emigres. The 22 acre district contains five residences as described below:

- |                                      |               |  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--|
| 1. VINCENT LERAY<br>STONE HOUSE      | 1815-<br>1817 | 2-story limestone Georgian style residence, original limestone quoins, watertable and door and window arches, balastraded hipped roof. |
| 2. STONE HOUSE<br>SERVANT'S QUARTERS | 1820          | 2-story frame French Colonial style residence, original flared front and rear porch, stuccoed end walls and casement windows.          |
| 3. MAPLE GROVE                       | 1838          | 2-story frame Greek Revival style residence, original denticulated pedimented 2-story portico and entry with sidelights.               |
| 4. BEECHWOOD                         | 1840          | 2-story brick and frame Greek  |

Revival style residence,  
denticulated pedimented 2-story  
portico added 1930.

5. BRAGDEN HOUSE

c.1840

2-story frame residence,  
L-shaped plan, porch and  
porte-cochere added 1890,  
contributing early 20th century  
stable and gazebo, originally  
part of the Stone House  
property.

Locally significant historic resources include and town-owned limestone garage on James Street. The garage is a one and one-half story, foundry building originally constructed in 1845. It is one of the town's two remaining limestone industrial structures and is a prominent feature within the village.

No sites of archaeological importance are shown on the NYS Archaeological Site Locator Map.

Analysis

Historic and cultural resources are a key element in the village's unique character. Although there are no specific threats to any historic structures within the waterfront area, any future development proposals should be scrutinized for their potential impact on these resources. (See Section Three, Policies 23, 25 and 25A.) The history and culture of the area should continue to play an important role in the life of the community. For example, incorporating new compatible uses for old buildings into development plans, especially in the downtown district and along the waterfront, would help these resources endure while strengthening the local economic base. The historic preservation tax incentive program provides opportunities for citizens to maintain these irreplaceable resources by utilizing historic preservation as a means to achieve economic development. The historically significant town garage was noted earlier. Although it is not eligible for listing on the State and Federal Registers, it occupies a prominent location in the community, the building's potential for improved use should be seriously considered by the town and village. (See Section Four, Proposed Projects.)

C. Commercial Facilities and Important Economic Activities

There are no industrial facilities in the village waterfront area. Commercial facilities are generally of a service nature. The major commercial enterprise in the village and the coastal area is a privately owned, seasonal automobile and passenger ferry running from Cape Vincent to Wolfe Island, Ontario. A second ferry connects Wolfe Island to Kingston, Ontario. Due to the presence of this ferry, U.S. Customs maintains a port of entry and customs office in Cape Vincent.

Four lake and river pilot boat crews operate out of the Cape Vincent Seaway Pilot Station located on Broadway. The crews operate twenty-four hours a day during the shipping season, under contract with the Seaway Development Corporation, to help ships navigate the Seaway.

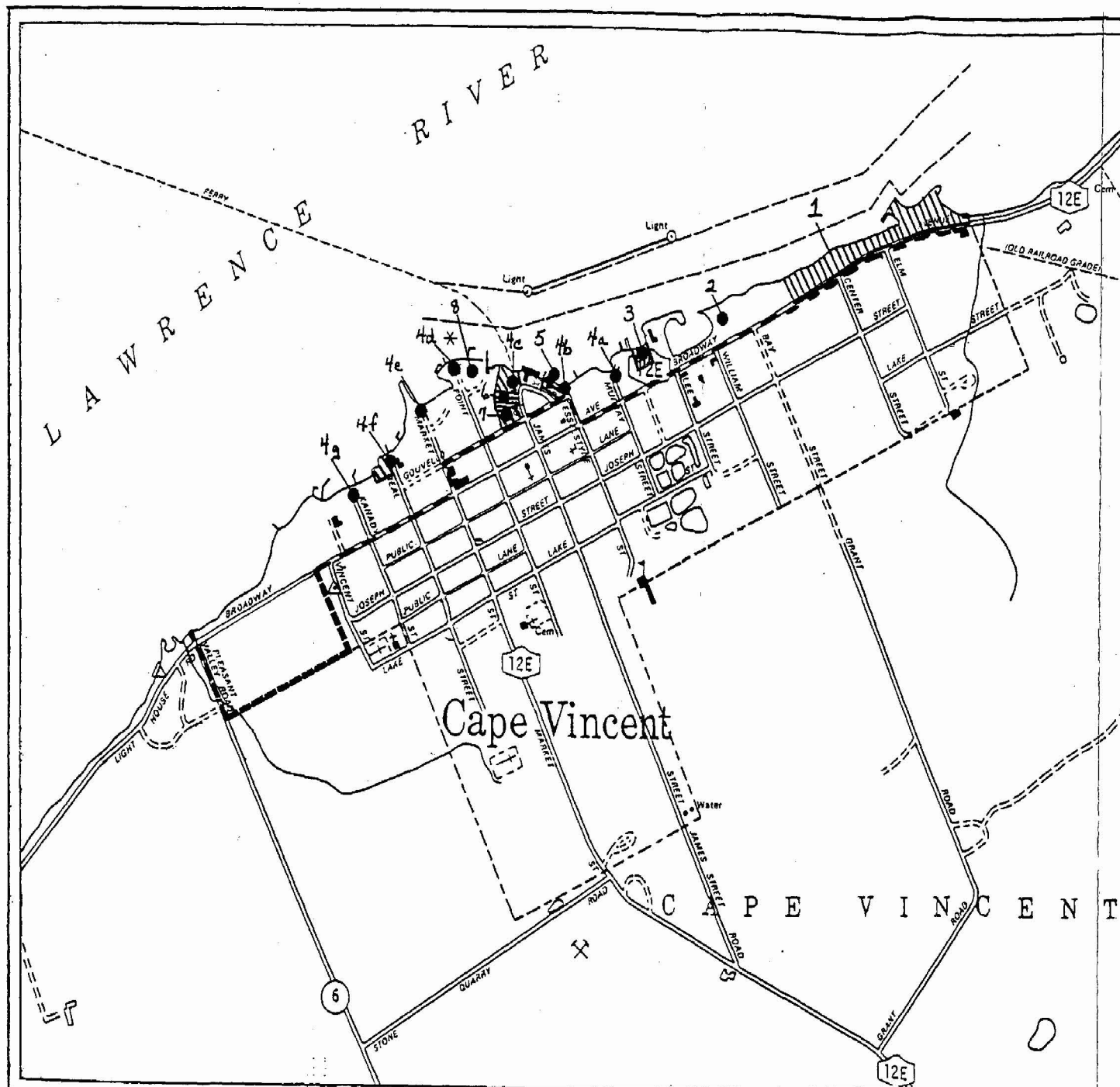
With tourism and recreational fishing and boating as the principal economic activities, a large share of business activity and local employment in the village depends on this activity (marinas and related businesses, motels, rental cottages, restaurants, etc.). Other indirect benefits are garnered in the banking, real estate and business communities.

Commercial water-related recreational facilities provide significant points of access to the river. Five commercial marinas offer a range of services including dockage, mooring, ramps, fuel and repair, sales and rentals. Fishing guides, bait and tackle, and charter services are also available.

Promotional activities of the Cape Vincent Chamber of Commerce, service organizations and individual entrepreneurs help to increase the level of tourism. Annual events such as the French Festival and ice fishing derbies draw thousands of visitors. Sales taxes and property taxes resulting from tourism activities are important sources of municipal revenue.

#### Analysis

Generally, the local tourist industry is strong. Given the seasonal demand and influx of tourists and people interested in fishing and boating, considerable potential exists for additional commercial facilities. The Fort Drum expansion will most likely be a catalyst for some growth. All levels of government, and local organizations and private business should work together to implement improvements to the village's commercial facilities.



# VILLAGE OF CAPE VINCENT

PLATE 4

Significant Community/  
Cultural Resources

PREPARED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE-EASTERN ONTARIO COMMISSION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Scale 1" = 300'



## LEGEND

- 1) Village Park
- 2) Seaway Pilots Station
- 3) DEC Fisheries Station and Dock
- 4) North-South Dead End Streets w/  
a) Murray Street Public Access  
b) Esselstyne Street  
c) James Street  
d) Point Street  
e) Market Street  
f) Real Street  
g) Kanady Street
- 5) Municipal Dock
- 6) U.S. Customs and Immigration
- 7) Town Garage/Chamber of Commerce
- 8) St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corp.  
Office



Village Property



New York State Property



United States Property

--- Coastal Area Boundary

#### D. Infrastructure

Water supply for the Village of Cape Vincent is pumped from the St. Lawrence River through an offshore intake near the filtration plant at the end of Real Street. Generally, the entire system is in excellent condition (treatment, pumping, storage and distribution) and serves residential and commercial users throughout the village. The primary water main is 10" and most distribution lines are 8", while others are 4" and 6". The storage tower has a capacity of 200,000 gallons and is expected to meet likely future demands. Several areas outside the village boundary are serviced by the village system: Pleasant Valley Road, Tibbetts Point Road, the east end of NY Route 12E, and the south end of Elm and Center Streets.

The secondary sewage treatment plant is located at the east end of the village at the end of Elm Street outside the coastal area. Constructed in 1976, it operates at approximately 60% capacity. The storm sewers were separated from the sanitary sewers when the new system was built. On occasion, stormwater runoff is forced into the river when the capacity of the system is taxed by seasonal storms.

Cape Vincent's location is somewhat remote from the region's main traffic arteries -- Interstate 81 and NY Route 12. The major transportation route serving Cape Vincent is NY Route 12E, a part of the NYS Seaway Trail. This two-lane road approaches the village from the southeast, passing through the village via Market Street and Broadway. It continues east, parallel to the river, to Clayton, where it rejoins NY Route 12. Secondary access is acquired by way of Pleasant Valley Road, a county highway that connects with Broadway at the westerly village limit. The village street layout is a geometric grid pattern with a number of north and south streets that dead-end at the river. Limited parking presents problems at the various waterfront destinations: the dock/ramp area, the ferry, the waterfront park, and several dead-end streets.

The other major transportation facility serving the village is the international ferry noted earlier. A 1983 study of all federal agencies by the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control recommended elimination of the U.S. Customs and port facilities at Cape Vincent as a cost saving measure. This action would force the ferry out of business (after 165 years of service) and in turn, have a devastating affect on the village. Approximately 45,000 to 47,000 passengers are expected to enter the United States at Cape Vincent during the 1986 season. The loss of this traffic would be felt by all of the village's restaurants, stores, marinas, gas stations, motels and related facilities. The City of Kingston, Ontario, Canada would feel a similar impact on its tourist trade with the loss of ferry traffic from the U.S. To date, the proposal has not been implemented.

### Analysis

The water and sewer system is adequate and is likely to meet future demands.

Existing roads provide adequate access to the village waterfront. The distance from major transportation routes could be considered a problem, especially in relationship to potential tourism growth. However, the village's location gives it the small town, quaint, and somewhat isolated characteristics that many vacationers are looking for.

The problem of lack of parking facilities for trailored boats at the municipal dock and launch site will be alleviated somewhat by the construction of parking facilities at the village waterfront park. The village, the Town of Cape Vincent and DEC implemented the first phase of the waterfront park development during the summer of 1985 with the construction of a new boat ramp. As part of the plans for development of the waterfront park, parking facilities for trailored boats will be provided as well as general park use parking facilities. Parking arrangements have been finalized and construction has begun on general park use parking facilities. The village has received an ANCA Community Beautification Project grant for Phase II of the park's development.

The parking problem associated with the Wolfe Island Ferry has been addressed by the widening of the James Street approach to the ferry facility and the creation of a designated parking/waiting lane on the side of the street. Additional parking may be provided with the development of a parking facility behind the Town Garage/Chamber building. (See Section Four, Proposed Projects.)

If the closing of the U.S. Customs at Cape Vincent becomes an issue again, communication with federal agencies and expression of local concern on this matter will be essential to the continued existence of Cape Vincent's commercial harbor and economic well-being.

### III. CURRENT LAND AND WATER USES (Plate 5)

#### A. Current Land Uses

The predominant land use is single-family residential. Many of the structures for permanent year-round use in Cape Vincent date from the nineteenth century and lend the village an aura of tranquility and charm. The commercial areas are centrally located, along Broadway and Market, Point and Club Streets. As noted earlier, most commercial activities are retail and service establishments related to tourism and recreation. There are several public/semi-public facilities in the waterfront area, and the major recreational parcel in the waterfront area is the village park. There are no agricultural or industrial land uses in the village coastal area.

## B. Current Water Uses

As described previously, the village exercises jurisdiction over a very limited amount of riverfront land, and none over adjacent coastal waters. For further discussion of this issue, see Subsection IV, Village/Town Corporate Boundary. Water uses relevant to the village's coastal area are illustrated on Plate 5.

### Analysis

The vast majority of year-round homes appear to be in good condition. There are very few seasonal rentals, mobile homes or vacant lots within the waterfront area. Riverfront areas available for new development are limited because of existing development. As noted earlier, public access to the river, public and private water-dependent uses, and necessary support facilities are important to the village. The use of undeveloped river frontage for water-dependent or water-enhanced uses should be encouraged when appropriate. Development plans should be reviewed for potential impact on the river's resources.

## IV. SIGNIFICANT COASTAL RESOURCES AND CONDITIONS

### A. Deteriorated and Underutilized Waterfront Areas (Plate 6)

While most of Cape Vincent's coastal area is in good condition, the inventory and analysis revealed a few underutilized, abandoned, and deteriorated areas. These areas include the following:

1. Village Park. This underutilized 7-acre waterfront park is partially developed for recreational purposes. The site currently contains a boat ramp, gravel parking area, fishing access, and limited picnic facilities. Additional facilities planned for the park include an expanded parking area and picnic facilities, walkways, benches, restrooms, landscaping, etc. See Section Four, pp. IV-3, for further detail on this project.
2. Club Street Area. The Club Street area contains the Wolfe Island International ferry dock, U.S. Customs and Immigration Service office, the Village Chamber of Commerce office, and the Village's Public Dock. Consequently, this area is a highly visible location to visitors. The area also includes a mixture of commercial and residential uses, many of which are in various stages of deterioration. Parking and traffic access in this area is congested when ferry traffic backs up. Also, the Village's public dock, located at the end of Esselstyne Street, is a vital marine facility for tourism in the Village. Each year hundreds of visitors come to Cape Vincent by water. For transient boaters, the public dock provides a safe and convenient point of arrival with depths adequate for large cruisers and sailboats. Revitalization of this area would greatly enhance the village's coastal area. The area is



bordered by, and includes the streets of Esselstyne, James and Gouvello Streets. See Section Four, p. IV-6 , for further description on this project.

3. Town of Cape Vincent Garage/Chamber of Commerce. This limestone structure is located on James Street, in the Club Street area. While not eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, it is a structure of local significance and should be protected from further deterioration. Currently owned by the Town of Cape Vincent, the building is used mainly for storage, with one section devoted to the Chamber of Commerce office and tourist information center. The building is underutilized and in need of rehabilitation. Due to its close proximity to the Wolfe Island ferry, several opportunities exist for use as a tourist-related facility. The town and village should work closely on this issue to ensure the proper reuse of the structure. See Section Four, p. IV-6, for further discussion on this building.
4. Public Access Areas at Market, Point, and Real Streets. These three dead-end streets are village-owned right-of-ways and provide public access to the St. Lawrence River. Of the seven village streets which dead-end at the river, these three provide the best opportunities for improving access to the river. These streets are described in detail in Section Two, p. II-13 and II-14, and in Section Four p. IV-7.

B. Water-Dependent Areas (Plate 7)

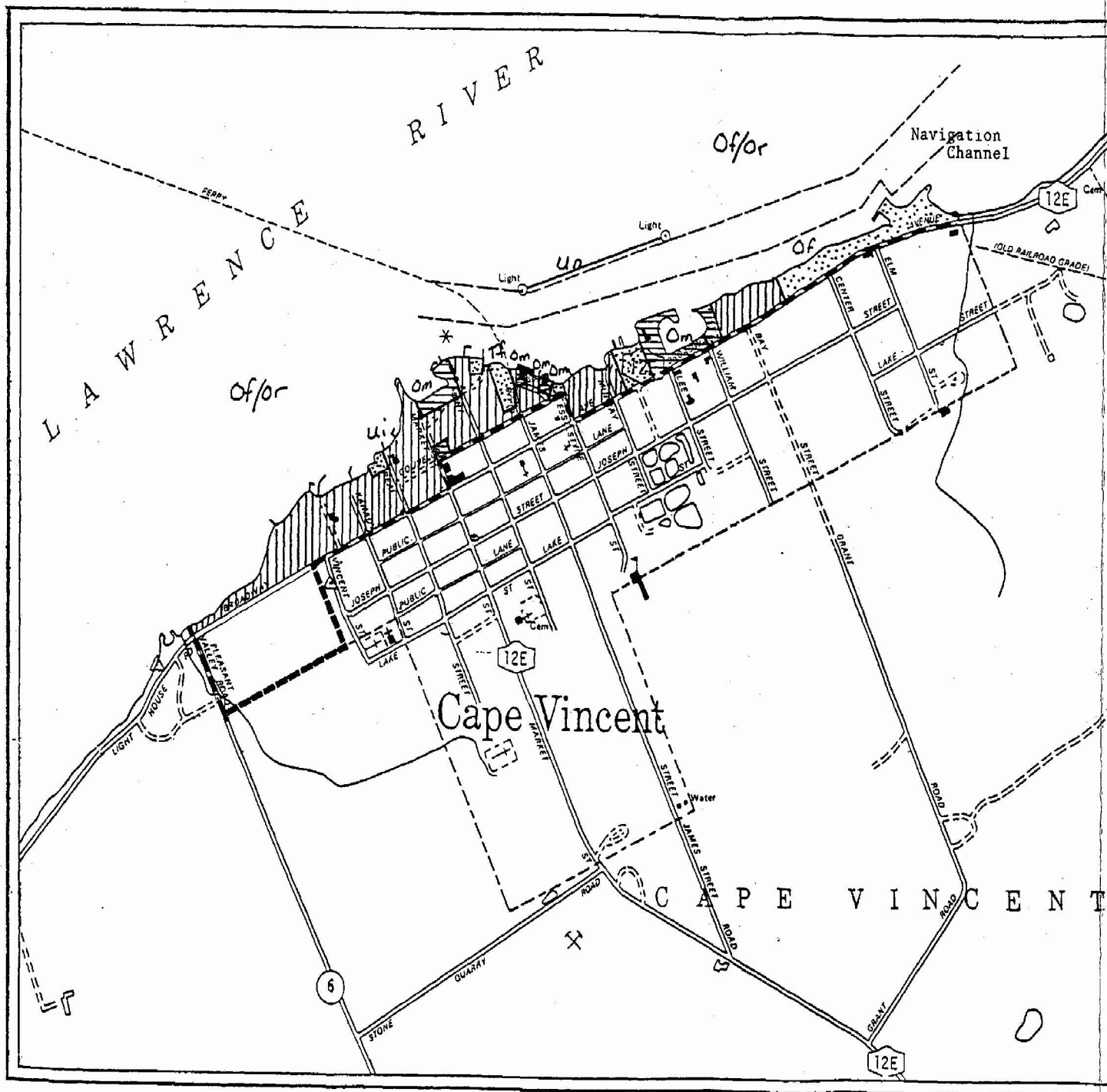
There is a small amount of waterfront space available for development, and certain areas are more appropriate for water-dependent uses than others. Undeveloped land is committed to public access to the river. Other forms of water-dependent uses would occur as redevelopment of existing underutilized or deteriorating facilities. The village has identified several areas for development which are listed below.

- Village Park
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation dock
- Municipal dock
- Wolfe Island Ferry
- Five commercial marinas
- Public access points at dead-end streets
  - Murray Street
  - Esselstyne Street
  - James Street
  - Point Street
  - Market Street
  - Real Street
  - Kanady Street

C. Inventory and Analysis Summary

The Village coastal area's most important resources and conditions are tourism and water-dependent recreation, public access, and development of deteriorated and underutilized waterfront areas. The local economy depends on use and development of these resources (which also directly relate to others such as fish and wildlife, scenic and historic resources), so it is essential that the long-term quality of these assets be given top priority.

Overdevelopment could destroy the village's character. Development proposals must evaluate the potential impacts upon coastal resources to assure that common goals of the community are being pursued with sensitivity to the needs of the local residents and the area's natural, cultural and economic resources.



# VILLAGE OF CAPE VINCENT

PLATE 5

Existing Land and Water Uses

PREPARED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE-EASTERN ONTARIO COMMISSION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Scale 1" = 300'



## LEGEND

### LAND USES



Residential



Public/Semi-Public



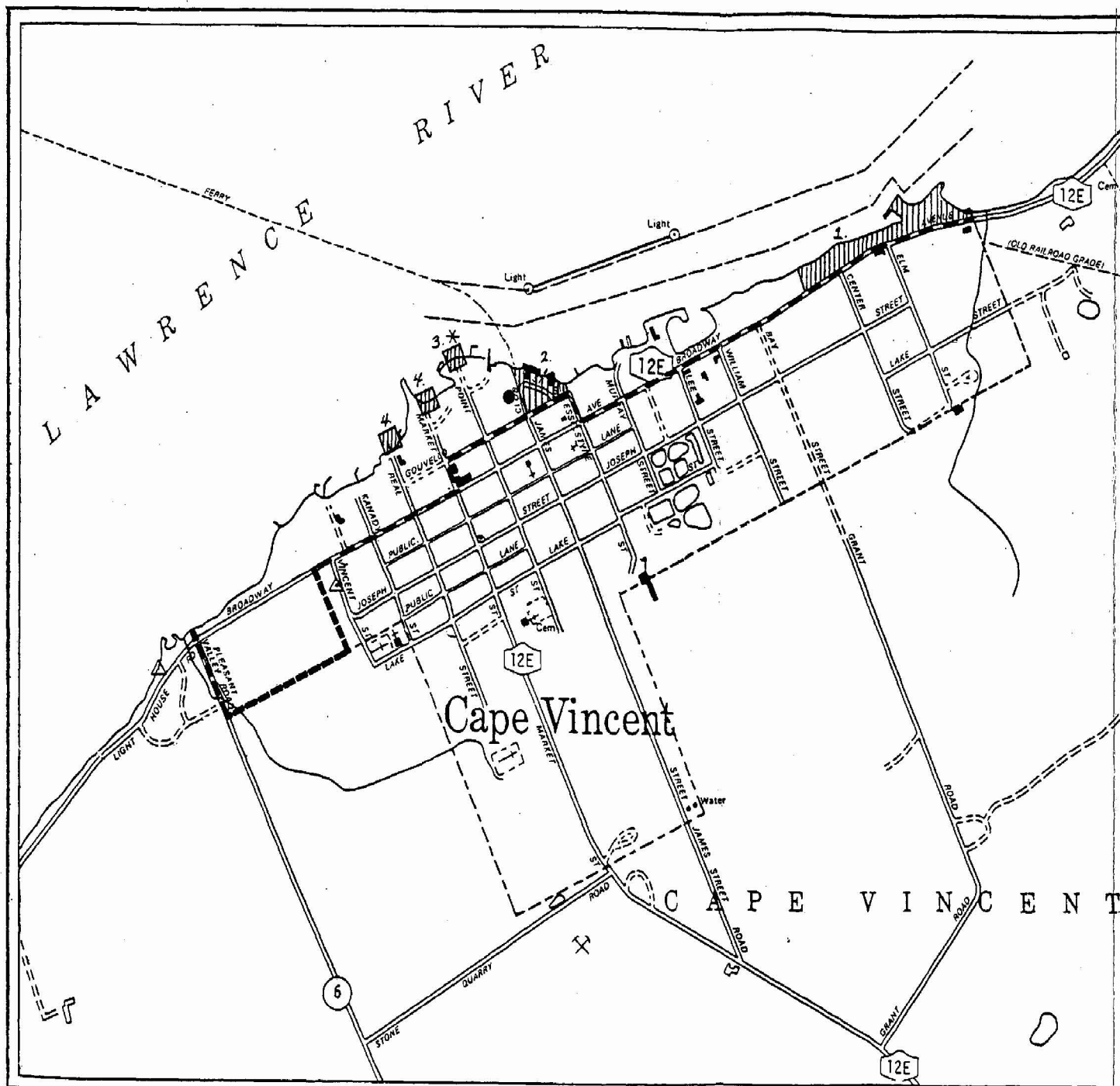
Commercial

### WATER USES

- Or - Boating
- Om - Mooring & Docking
- Of - Fishing
- Tf - Ferry
- Un - Navigation Aides
- Ui - Water Intakes

--- Coastal Area Boundary

II-27



# VILLAGE OF CAPE VINCENT

PLATE 6

Analysis Summary: Deteriorated  
and Underutilized Areas

PREPARED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE-EASTERN ONTARIO COMMISSION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

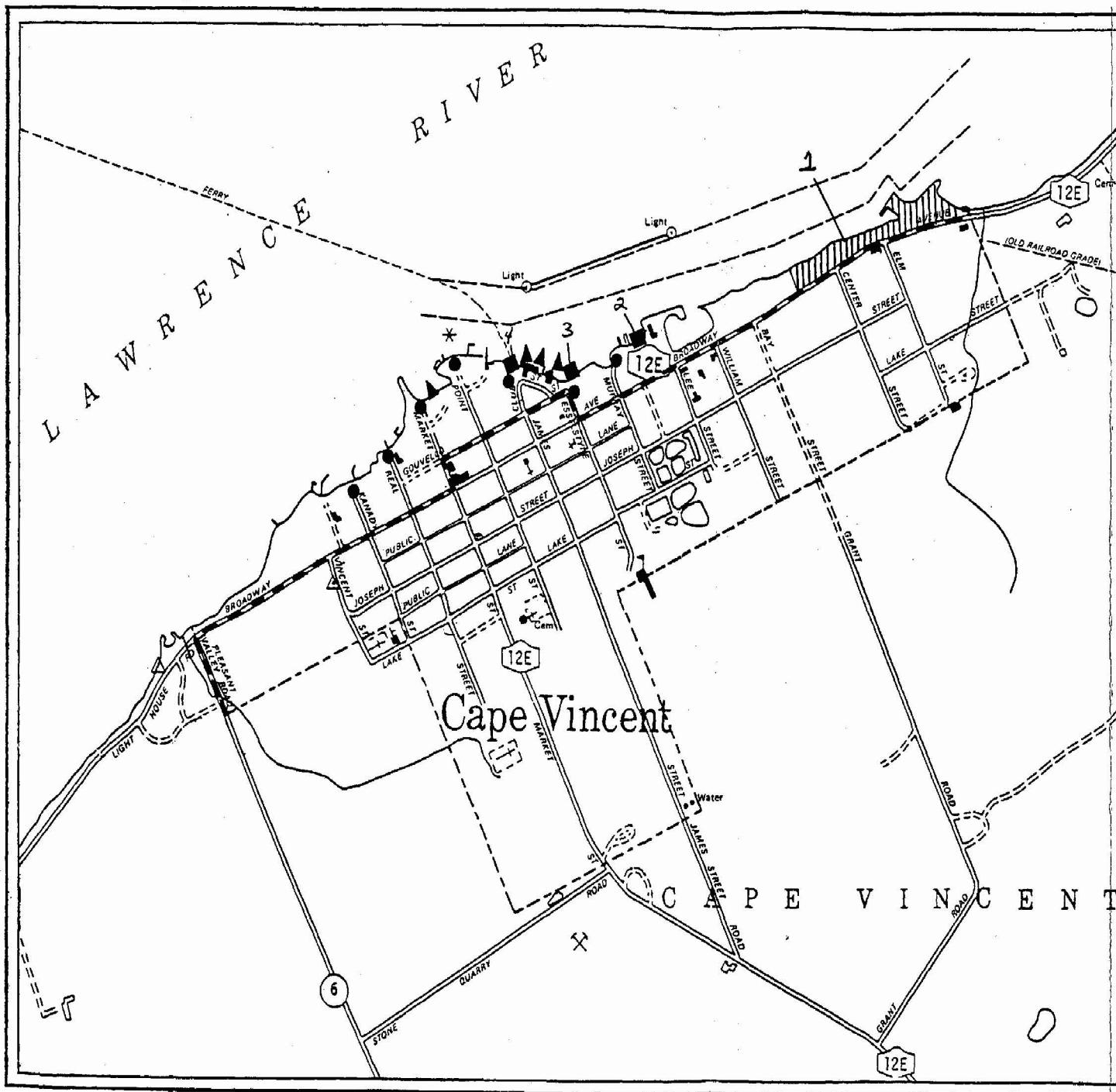
Scale 1" = 800'



## LEGEND

- (1) Village Park
- (2) Club Street Area
- (3) Town of Cape Vincent Garage/  
Chamber of Commerce
- (4) Market, Point and Real  
Streets - Riverfront Areas.

--- Coastal Area Boundary



# VILLAGE OF CAPE VINCENT

PLATE 7

Analysis Summary: Proposed  
Water Dependent Uses

PREPARED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE-EASTERN ONTARIO COMMISSION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Scale 1" = 800'

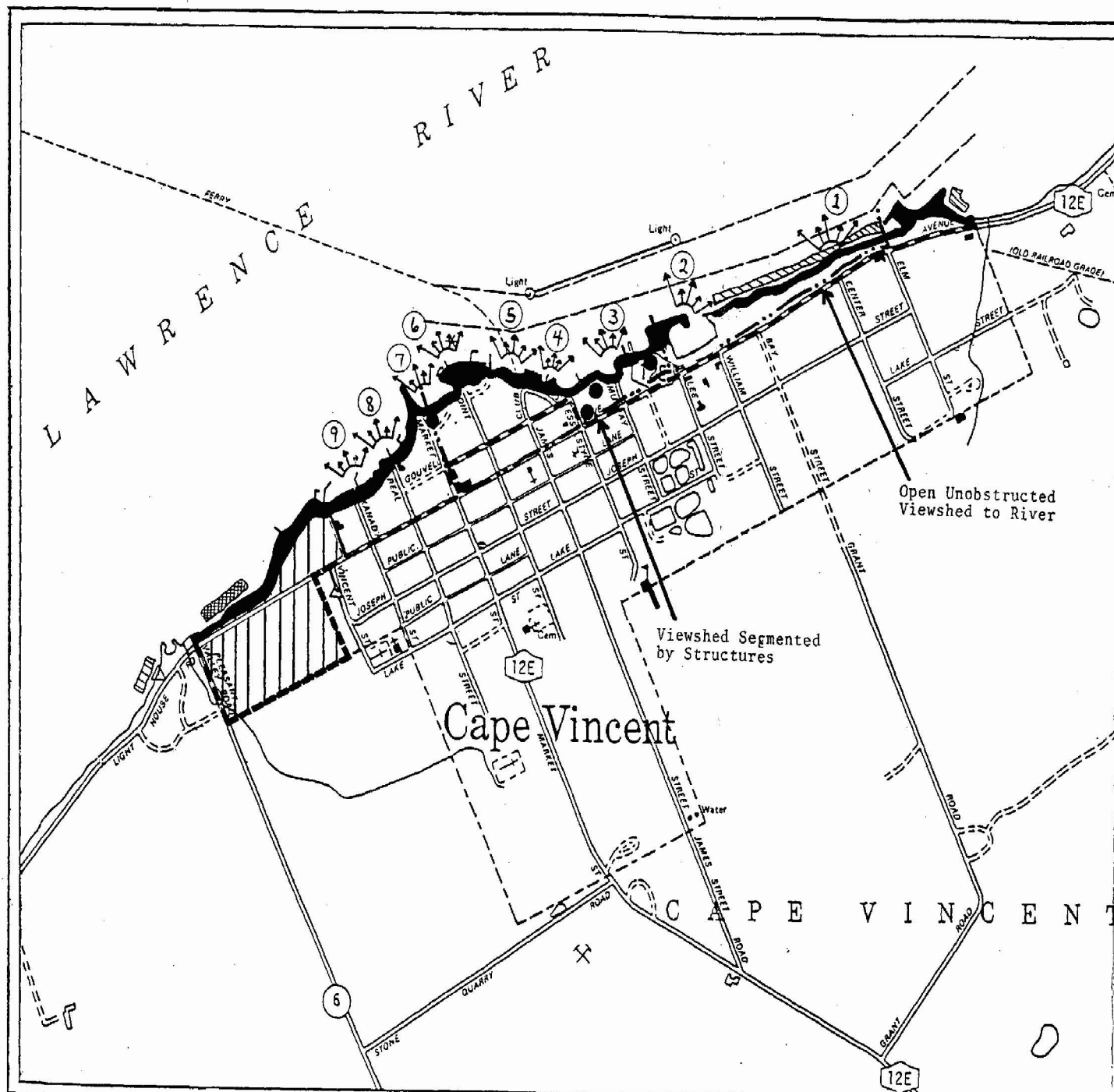


## LEGEND

- 1) Village Park
- 2) DEC Dock
- 3) Municipal Dock and Ramp
- 4) Wolfe Island Ferry
- ▲ Commercial Marinas
- Public Access at Dead End Streets

--- Coastal Area Boundary

II-31



# VILLAGE OF CAPE VINCENT

PLATE 8

Analysis Summary: Other  
Development Constraints

PREPARED BY THE ST. LAWRENCE-EASTERN ONTARIO COMMISSION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Scale 1" = 800'



## LEGEND

- Flood Hazard Area
- Very High Potential For Erodibility\*
- Low Potential For Erodibility\*
- National Register Historic Structure
- National Register Historic District
- Locally Significant Scenic Vistas
  1. Village Park
  2. Marina
  3. Murray Street
  4. Esslystone Street
  5. James Street
  6. Point Street
  7. Market Street
  8. Real Street
  9. Kanady Lane

Viewsheds

\* Local Coastal Erosion Hazard Area

Coastal Area Boundary