



Sea levels reaching new heights - by Rick Kaplan

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After seeing the effects of our first major snowstorm of 2018, we could be in trouble. Sea levels are rising and developers are constructing buildings close to our coastline. The ocean and the coast have always been a great attraction and nobody wants to give it up, so how do we save the coastal properties from floating away? Many scientists and developers have worked on ideas that will protect the coast, existing properties as well as future projects.

UMass has a team that had studied some of the solutions, one being a barrier in Boston Harbor and the coastline from Winthrop down to Hull. Building a barrier has a couple of things that need to be considered one being the tremendous cost, the other is the ecological effects.

Another idea is to convert some of the city streets into waterways like Venice. Now that is a crazy idea, but it would be a nice way to tour around Boston!

The idea that has made the most sense for the coast and Boston Harbor is called the Metro Boston Dike Lands. Peter Papesch, AIA of the Boston Society of Architects says this could have great economic benefits. The dike would extend from Swampscott to Cohasset and could create new buildable land which will bring investors to help pay for the project.

I am sure there are many other ideas that could be researched, but whatever the solution, it must be in place to protect the coast for centuries and not just a temporary fix. The issue of rising sea levels and storm surge is not going away and we have no choice but to address it. If we don't solve the issue sooner than later all of us that live inland will have ocean view properties. In 20 years, that might increase my property value, maybe we should keep it the way it is!

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