

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
January 30, 2013**

Present: Mark Gluesing – Chairman, Janet Bernardo – Vice Chairman, Carol Boulris, Gary Crossen, Reg Foster, Mike Retzky, Lita Young

Absent: Sam Warner, Paul Siegenthaler

Guest: Connie Barr, Needham School Committee
Patricia Barry, Director of Conservation

Town Staff: Patricia Carey – Staff Liaison
Nicole DiCicco – Recording Secretary

The meeting convened at 7:35PM in the Highland Meeting Room located in Town Hall.

Chairman's Updates: Mr. Gluesing had no update on the project priorities list, but had spoken to the Town Manager, who is currently working on completing an updated version for the Committee to review.

Review of New Proposals

FY2013-6, Open Space and Recreation Plan: Mr. Crossen met with Conservation Director Patty Barry and Ms. Carey on the proposal and was given an overview of the five-year plan update schedule to the current Open Space and Recreation Plan, of which a copy was provided to each member of the Committee. *[see Addendum 1.a & 1.b]* This update is highly recommended by the State, and allows for state grant money to be applied for and used by the Town. Ms. Barry gave the example of the HUD funds most recently used as part of a Charles River Center housing project as one of these grants and explained how Needham would not have been eligible for that money if this Open Space and Recreation Plan was not already in place, along with other plans.

FY2013-7, Reservoir Trail Design; Ridge Hill Loop Design: Ms. Young met with Conservation Director Patty Barry and Ms. Carey on the proposal and gave an overview of Reservoir use and the idea to hire a designer for both trails, as the combined funds are likely to provide a better selection of designers. *[see Addendum 2.a & 2.b]* Ms. Barry showed the locations of the trails on the Proposed Trail Connections Map created as part of the Trails Master Plan. *[see Addendum 2.c]*

FY2013-8, Newman Fields & Eastman Conservation Trails: Mr. Crossen met with Conservation Director Patty Barry and Ms. Carey on the proposal and was given an overview of the Newman School field use and connected access to Eastman

Conservation as well as the Carol/ Brewster and Anna Volante Conservation Properties. *[see Addendum 3]*

The combining of these two projects has allowed for an ideal arraignment where the Conservation Commission, Park and Recreation Commission and School Department each have a stake in the completion of these projects, that are dependant on one another and are mutually beneficial in completion as well as during the bidding, consult and construction phases.

FY2013-11, Mills Park Design: Mr. Foster met with Ms. Carey and was given an overview of the history of the Mills Field property, including its current neighborhood parking problems, baseball diamond's grub infestation and other general field renovation ideas. *[see Addendum 4]*

Ms. Boulris seemed surprised that "widening of street" would be included in the project description, but Ms. Carey explained that street property wouldn't be taken for park land, but rather the park perimeter would be used to extend the parking area for Mills field users, only.

FY2013-4, Community Housing Specialist: Ms. Bernardo met with project contacts Planning Director Lee Newman and Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick to review the project proposal. Ms. Young asked why the Town now needed this position but is not funding it through the operating budget. Ms. Bernardo explained how while this has always been a requirement, the Town only just recently absorbed the responsibility of hiring this specialist when the non-profit organization Needham Opportunities, Inc. (NOI) disbanded recently. Ms. Foster noted that the Housing Authority had discussed this proposal with the Town Manager and is in support. *[see Addendum 5]*

Ms. Bernardo also spoke in support of CPC providing enough funds for this Specialist position for the entire five-year period, instead of CPC having to review the same project proposal annually for five years.

FY2013-9, Newman Pre-School Surfacing: Ms. Carey explained to the Committee how the narrow site layout at the Newman Pre-School playground limits the options for changing the surfacing. Once the MA Architectural Access Board provides guidance on the type of surfacing they are requiring at all school playgrounds, she will have more detail on the final choice of surfacing available for the Committee. The current surfacing is considered compliant throughout the country, so MA Architectural Access Board is developing a more stringent requirement, but has not provided guidance to communities.

FY2013-12, Community Farm Soil Quality Improvements: Mr. Retzky met with Community Farm representative Debbie Schmill and explained to the Committee how there are several factors prohibiting the Community Farm volunteers from having

optimum growing conditions.. The area presently being used as the primary plant bed area is excessively wet, so plants are not growing. Fill cannot be added from the RTS, as Needham fill and compost are not certified organic and without that certification the farm would lose credentials. So fill and compost must be purchased and transported, increasing the cost of the project. *[see Addendum 6]*

Mr. Retzky's main concern for this project is that if the CPC authorizes the funding, there is no current guarantee that the lease will be extended for a certain amount of years.

Next Steps: Lee Newman, Director of Planning and Community Development and Debbie Schmill of the Needham Community Farm will be asked to attend the February 13th meeting in order to present their respective projects, FY2013-4 and FY2013-12 to the Committee. Ms. Carey will also send a memo to the Town Manager notifying her of these presentations.

Update of CPC Plan: No additional information.

Minutes – January 9, 2013: Ms. Bernardo made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2013 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Retzky and was approved unanimously.

Upcoming Schedule:

- Meeting, Wednesday, February 13th, 7:30PM – Highland Room, Town Hall
- Meeting, Wednesday, February 27th, 7:30PM – Highland Room, Town Hall
- Public Hearing, Wednesday, March 13th, 7:30PM – Highland Room, Town Hall

Adjournment: Ms. Boulris made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05PM. Mr. Retzky seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 9:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DiCicco
Recording Secretary

FY2013-6 Open Space and Recreation Plan

Liaison: Gary

Primary Contacts: Patty Barry and Patty Carey

- The last plan was not issued in final form. Is this a finalizing of the original plan or an update to the draft or both?
 - **The last plan was done in draft in 2007. It was never finalized. This will update and finalize that document.**
- Are costs for completing the last plan part of this application?
 - **No. The last plan was done in-house and there are no outstanding costs for it.**
- How do we assure timely completion of the updated plan?
 - **Patty Carey and Patty Barry plan to prioritize this plan for a 2014 completion.**
- Will Beals & Thomas be able to do this update or does the work need to go out to bid?
 - **Beals & Thomas is fully qualified to do this plan, but it will need to go out to bid.**
- Was Beals & Thomas involved in the draft Plan?
 - **No.**
- Who requires the 5 year update?
 - **The state.**
- How will the final plan be made available for public use?
 - **Hard copy and posting on the website.**
- Is the prior plan available for review by the CPC?
 - **Yes.**
- What was the actual cost for completing the prior plan/
 - **The 2007 draft cost \$25,000.**



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

*Town of Needham,
Massachusetts*

July 2007

6 SECTION SIX: COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS

6.1 Description of Vision and Goals Process

The process used to develop the vision and goals for the Open Space and Recreation Plan was based on the participatory processes used to develop the 1996 and 2003 Needham Open Space and Recreation Plan Drafts. The vision and goals outlined in these earlier drafts were examined and expanded at a series of meetings with Town boards including the Board of Selectmen, the Park & Recreation Commission, the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board. Public input was solicited at well-attended meetings held in April and June of 2006. The information generated at these meetings was compiled and incorporated into a new vision statement and a revised set of goals that are set forth below.

Vision Statement

Needham has long recognized the importance of open space for conservation and recreation purposes. While the Town is a largely developed metropolitan suburb, Needham's municipal officials and residents are committed to balancing continued pressure for development with the need to protect our natural resources and to provide recreational opportunities and facilities for people of all ages. Careful planning and stewardship, along with cooperation between Town Departments and coordination with other towns and agencies, are critical to achieving an appropriate balance between competing priorities. Needham will continue to rely on these practices as it works towards a future in which:

- *The Town remains an attractive residential community with a broad mix of permanently protected open spaces that support a diversity of wildlife, protect our water supply, and provide opportunities for passive recreation.*
- *Open space and recreational opportunities exist throughout Town in every major neighborhood.*
- *Residents enjoy active recreation at a set of diverse facilities including outdoor fields and courts, indoor facilities, and well-maintained parks.*
- *Recreational resources – including playgrounds and playing fields – are maintained and expanded in a manner that is consistent with the needs and interests of the community.*
- *A well-documented, interconnected network of trails is available.*
- *The Charles River is recognized as a unique natural and recreational resource and is widely accessible for both walking and boating.*

Achieving this vision will take a concerted effort over a long period of time, but there will be many benefits for each individual.

- ❖ Generations of families will continue to enjoy the natural forests, meadows, ponds, and wetlands that help determine the character of Needham.
- ❖ Residents will be able to walk or bike to commercial centers, schools, conservation lands, and recreational facilities on a network of safe and attractive trails and walkways.
- ❖ Individuals will be able to enjoy the *re-creation* of the spirit obtained from quiet contemplation and enjoyment of quality environments.

- ❖ Residents of all ages will derive both physical and mental health benefits from being able to walk, run, ski, bike, swim, and play sports.
- ❖ Seniors will choose to stay in Town because of these facilities, walking opportunities, and programs catering to their interests.
- ❖ The future supply and quality of drinking water will be protected.

Perhaps one of the most universally held visions at both meetings with boards and the public was that Needham retains and cares for its natural areas—those already protected and those that may be in jeopardy.

6.2 Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

The following four goals, along with the supporting narratives, reveal the broad ambitions of the community with respect to the provision of open space and recreation opportunities. *The sequencing of the goals is not intended to reflect priority order as each is considered to be of primary importance.*

Goal I: Acquire / Protect Additional Open Space

Goal Amplification:

Previously approved Plans and recent drafts of the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, along with input provided by the Open Space & Recreation Advisory Group and the public at large, confirm a broad-based commitment to permanently protecting more open space. This protection can be achieved through various avenues. For instance, while the price of land in Needham is extremely high, certain parcels will likely warrant consideration for outright purchase, while less-than-fee interests may be appropriate for protection of other properties. In addition, subdivision control under the Planning Board and permit review by the Conservation Commission can result in the permanent protection of sensitive parcels through conservation restrictions and/or easements. Both Boards have used their permitting authority in the past to protect significant amounts of open space, and these approaches should continue to be utilized and refined to protect natural areas. On another front, efforts to solicit voluntary donations of land, conservation restrictions and/or conservation easements could be intensified. In order to make such donations more attractive to property owners, the possibility of granting tax incentives for such donations could be explored.

Prioritization of properties for potential acquisition or protection is critical to achieving the stated goal. Recently, the Board of Selectmen articulated the need to actively seek out and protect land in the more developed areas of Town, in order that all Needham residents will have access to the benefits and quality of life improvements that open space affords. In addition to this recent policy, the Town has historically sought to protect land that abuts existing open space holdings, including, but not limited to, Ridge Hill, Town Forest, and the Eastman Reservation. This approach contributes to several Town priorities, such as developing a trail network, protecting water resources, and maintaining a diversity of wildlife habitat, and should continue to be a dominant principle when assessing the protection of various parcels. Beyond proximity to large tracts of protected land, emphasis should be placed on protecting those parcels with multiple conservation values, such as those identified in Section 5, regardless of their location. Finally, promoting public access and knowledge about open space and its benefits is critical to building the public support for land protection that will be needed when a specific project relating to land acquisition and/or protection is proposed. Consequently, efforts to promote public awareness of existing open space and the values it provides should be an integral component of any land protection strategy.

Goal II: Enhance and Expand Recreational Facilities**Goal Amplification:**

Needham has a long-standing tradition of providing a range of “active” recreational opportunities including soccer, baseball, football, lacrosse, tennis, and swimming. The high rate of participation in these sports has resulted in overuse of the existing fields and facilities and limited maintenance funding cannot overcome the effects of overuse. Recognizing the safety and other issues associated with stressed fields, the Town undertook a Field Study in the winter of 2005. While the study is an ongoing project, one of the preliminary recommendations involves the installation of synthetic turf playing fields at existing recreation areas, specifically DeFazio Park and Memorial Park.

Implementation of this, and other, recommendations generated by the Field Study will be a priority for the Town and the various sport-specific associations. Furthermore, as high levels of involvement in organized sports continues, the Town should seek innovative ways to meet the growing demand for fields and facilities including exploring options for recreational use of the Nike Site.

Beyond the need to accommodate organized sports, the various Boards, Committees and officials within the Town of Needham understand and appreciate that theirs is a community comprised of young families, single professionals, baby-boomers, senior citizens and every demographic in between. They are also sensitive to the fact that some areas of Town enjoy greater public amenities than others, and that many of the existing facilities are difficult to reach and enjoy for those with physical limitations. Providing safe, well-maintained and accessible fields, playgrounds, open space, and parks throughout the Town – and increasing these opportunities in the more developed portions of Needham – will therefore continue to be a high priority.

On a specific note, the Needham Golf Course – as a large parcel of land dedicated to open space and recreational use – warrants acknowledgement in this report. The Golf Course currently occupies 58.5 acres of Town-owned land under a ten-year lease set to expire in 2009. Development of this parcel would significantly limit future decisions pertaining to recreational opportunities. Consequently, the use of this land for purposes other than outdoor recreation should be actively discouraged. This plan recommends continued lease of the property to a local non-profit entity for use as a golf course on terms favorable to the Town and its residents.

Goal III: Expand Access, Promote Awareness and Support Responsible Stewardship of Needham’s Natural Resources**Goal Amplification:**

A recurring theme throughout the public meetings and advisory group sessions held in conjunction with the preparation of this report has been improving accessibility to Needham’s considerable array of natural resources. Of particular interest in this regard is enhancing access to the Charles River that runs along Needham’s border for a total of 13.4 miles. The Town should explore opportunities to either increase the portion of the riverfront that is publicly owned (currently 5.5 miles) or to pursue public access through other means such as easements and/or conservation restrictions. Included in this goal should be efforts to increase the amount of riverfront trails and walking paths (presently about 3 miles); to improve existing access for small boats and canoes; and to identify additional locations for providing scenic overlooks and or boat launching facilities.

Enhancement and promotion of existing passive recreational opportunities throughout Town should remain a high priority. The 16.3-acre McCracken Camp Property just outside the Town Center suffers from a lack of clear access. Though used by those living in the neighborhood, its trail access around Rosemary Lake should create more opportunities for visits by residents. Heading towards the west side of Town, opportunities for walking, birding, cross-country skiing, and other such

pursuits abound at both Ridge Hill and the Town Forest. While the Town offers trail maps for these areas, public knowledge of these resources is still limited. Moreover, the trail networks in many areas are inadequately marked and some are in need of maintenance. The Town took a major step towards resolving the issue of access and awareness when it funded, through Community Preservation Act dollars – a Comprehensive Trails Master Plan to get underway in the winter of 2007. When the Trails plan is completed, the Town will possess clear guidance on trail-related needs from signage, to opportunities for nature interpretation, to linkage possibilities and beyond.

Effective land management requires an understanding of both the ecological value of a property and the human uses it supports. Therefore, responsible stewardship should start with the development of management plans, at least for the major open space land areas. Once a management plan is defined, the volunteer possibilities proliferate: trails require ongoing monitoring and maintenance; habitat value can be enhanced with plantings or by removing invasive vegetation; interpretive signs can be designed and installed to call out interesting or unique natural features, and the list goes on...

Goal IV: Protect Water Resources

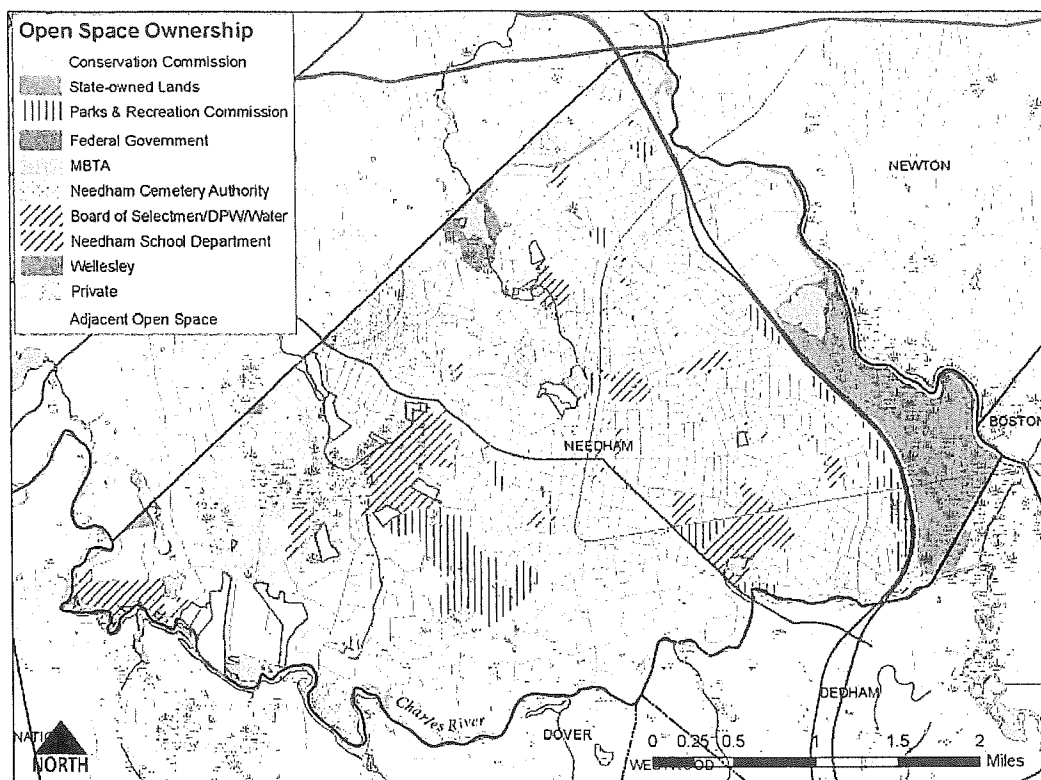
Goal Amplification:

Water is a critical natural resource. The Town of Needham derives most of its water supply from groundwater sources within the Town boundaries. The Town has taken several precautions to protect both the quality and quantity of the water supply, including the adoption of an Integrated Pest Management Policy for Town-managed lands and the implementation of policies that promote groundwater recharge. Furthermore, the Town is in the process of developing a Watershed Management/Forestry Plan for the well-field land on Charles River Street to improve conditions in that area.

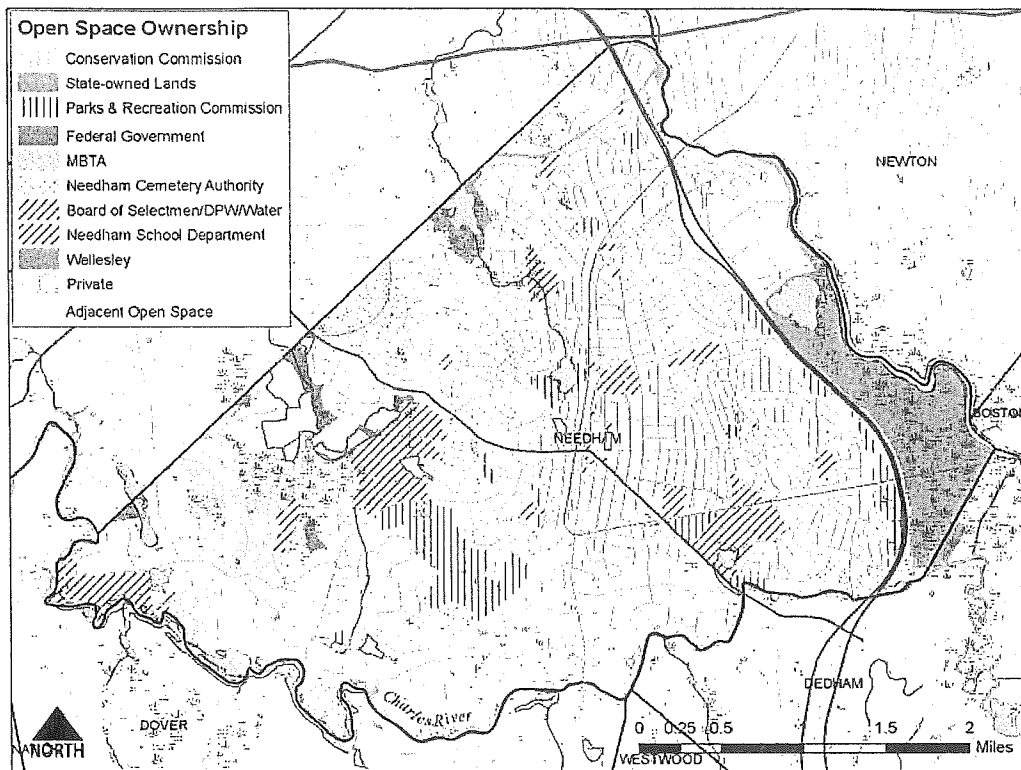
While the Town limits the application of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer to those situations when their application is deemed critically necessary, the same cannot be said of many private property owners and landscapers. Educating the public and landscaping service companies about the impacts of excessive use of these products and available alternatives is the next major step towards protecting water resources. Along with an education and outreach campaign, expanded regulatory measures such as heightening recharge requirements and limiting impervious surfaces within aquifer recharge areas and Zone IIs could be explored. Finally, the water resource protection value of remaining unprotected open space, noted in Goal I, should figure prominently in decisions regarding land protection or acquisition. The Town as a whole must continue to seek an appropriate balance between use of water for aesthetic and recreational purposes and protection of water resources.

6.3 Achievements

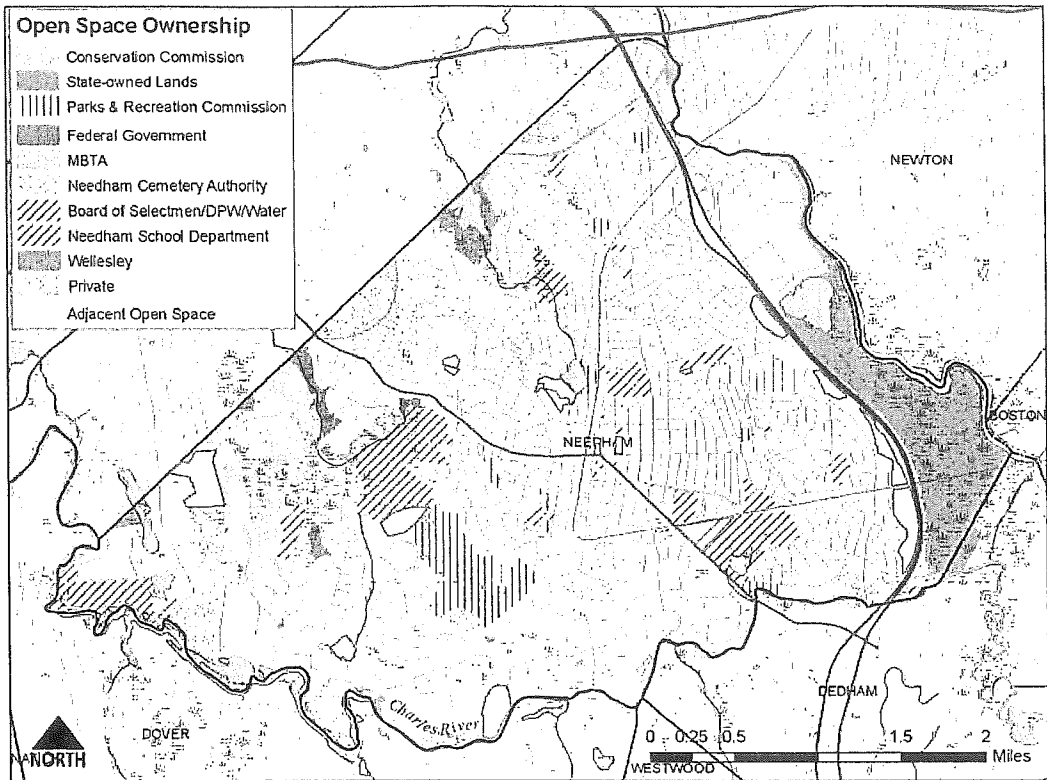
Needham has a record of many achievements based on goals and objectives articulated in prior Open Space and Recreation Plans. The following series of maps show many of those achievements and a list of achievements is included in Appendix A.



Map 6-1: Achievements 1979 to 1988 (Shown in Yellow)



Map 6-2: Achievements 1988 to 1997 (*Shown in Yellow*)



Map 6-3: Achievements 1998 to Present (Shown in Yellow)

8 SECTION EIGHT: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In Section 6, the community goals and guiding principles pertaining to the provision and protection of open space and recreation areas and opportunities were stated and amplified. The following list of succinct objectives relating to those broad goals is based on past Open Space & Recreation Plans (1979 and 1988) and draft updates (1996 and 2003) as well as input from Town boards and residents gathered at a series of subcommittee meetings and public hearings. *It should be noted that order of the following goals and objectives is not intended to reflect any prioritization.*

Goal I: Acquire / Protect Additional Open Space

Objectives

- I-A. Acquire/Protect Open Space with Multiple Conservation Values
- I-B. Acquire/Protect Open Space in the More Developed Areas of Town
- I-C. Explore All Approaches to Protecting Open Space
- I-D. Preserve Unique Features

Goal II: Enhance and Expand Recreational Facilities

Objectives

- II-A. Preserve and Improve Existing Athletic Fields and Facilities
- II-B. Expand “Active” Recreational Resources to Meet Residents’ Needs
- II-C. Improve Handicap Accessibility

Goal III: Expand Access, Promote Awareness and Support Responsible Stewardship of Needham’s Natural Resources

Objectives

- III-A. Expand Access To and Along the Charles River
- III-B. Provide Linkages To and Between Open Space and Recreation Areas and with Points of Interest such as Schools, Town Center, etc.
- III-C. Improve and Expand “Passive” Recreational Opportunities
- III-D. Educate and Inform the Public About Existing Open Space and Natural Resources
- III-E. Understand and Appropriately Manage Large Tracts of Open Space

Goal IV: Protect Water Resources

Objectives

- IV-A. Minimize Contamination of Ground and Surface Waters
- IV-B. Discourage Excessive Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides
- IV-C. Encourage Water Conservation

SECTION NINE: FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan presented in the following tables represents both short- and long-term strategies for achieving the stated goals (see Section 6) over the period 2007 to 2011. Many of the action items are assigned to the “Plan Sponsors” a group that includes the Board of Selectmen, the Park & Recreation Commission, the Conservation Commission, and the Planning Board. For such action items, the plan sponsors will be asked to designate a representative from their Board to undertake the steps necessary to bring the goal to fruition. In order to centralize the process, actions assigned to “Plan Sponsors” will be coordinated through the office of the Town Manager. Other items have been assigned to the Steering Committee/Plan Sponsors, a group comprised of the Town Manager, Park & Recreation Director, Planning Director, Parks & Forestry Superintendent and Conservation Officer who have been involved in plan update process since its inception. A legend defining each of the boards or committees listed below as well as their membership as of the publication date of this plan can be found in Appendix B.

See Action Plan Map at the end of this section for a summary of the following.

GOAL I: ACQUIRE / PROTECT ADDITIONAL OPEN SPACE

Objective I-A. Acquire/Protect Open Space with Multiple Conservation Values			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Seek funding for intern or retain senior volunteer corps member to research and prioritize parcels with multiple conservation values, identified in section 5, for review by the Plan Sponsors.	Department appropriation, Senior Corps funding	Conservation	2008
Work with property owners to protect priority parcels with multiple conservation values through conservation restrictions, easements, purchase, and other possible options.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Ask relevant Town Boards to discuss potential policy statement discouraging the conversion of Town-owned land that has conservation or recreation values.		Plan Sponsors	2008
Seek a permanent conservation restriction on property adjacent to Town Forest owned by the Boston Council of the Boy Scouts of America.	CPA, Conservation Fund	Conservation	2008
Identify and certify vernal pools throughout Town.		Conservation	Ongoing

Develop and maintain tracking system to follow status of Chapter 61 and 61A lands and other priority parcels.		Assessors	2008
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Objective I-B. Acquire/Protect Open Space in the More Developed Areas of Town			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Identify parcels with potential to serve as neighborhood parks, tot-lots, or green spaces in Needham's more developed areas.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Identify parcels adjacent to centrally located open space, such as McCracken Camp Property, Sweet Wildlife Reserve, for potential acquisition/protection.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008
Work with private sector to encourage inclusion of parks, picnic areas, walking opportunities as part of proposed development/redevelopment in heavily populated areas of Town.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Accept May property at 1336 Great Plain Avenue.		Conservation, Selectmen	2008
Accept Schneider property to rear of 159 Marked Tree Road.		Conservation, Selectmen	2008

Objective I-C. Explore All Approaches to Protecting Open Space			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Develop and submit to Town Meeting new zoning regulations that will encourage the protection of natural areas and expansion of or connections to existing open spaces where appropriate.		Planning Board	2008
Develop and submit to Town Meeting new zoning regulations that will require a conservation restriction on wetlands and other areas, including portions of		Planning Board	2008

buffer zone, as part of subdivision plans.			
Review the costs and benefits of offering additional tax incentives for conservation restrictions and/or easements.		Town Manager	2009
Explore opportunities to promote the formation of a local land trust to help protect open space.		Steering Committee	2008
Explore the possibility of permanent conservation restrictions or transfer of development rights to protect land in agricultural use.		Conservation	2008
Explore possibility of reinstituting annual appropriation to Conservation Fund.	CPA	Conservation, Selectmen	2008
Establish protocol for evaluating/accepting land donations.		Steering Committee	2007

Objective I-D. Preserve Unique Features

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Work with City of Newton, MWRA, state agencies and private organizations to rehabilitate Echo Bridge at Hemlock Gorge.	CPA	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Pursue a Conservation Restriction on Devil's Den, located on private property on Gatewood Drive.	CPA, Conservation Fund	Conservation	2008
Establish clear access and develop a maintenance plan for <i>High Rock</i> in the Town Forest.		Park & Recreation	2009

GOAL II: PRESERVE, ENHANCE & EXPAND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**Objective II-A. Preserve and Improve Existing Athletic Fields & Facilities**

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Implement Field Study recommendations including the installation of synthetic turf at	Private funding, capital improvement	Park & Recreation, Selectmen &	2007

Memorial and DeFazio Parks.	plan appropriation	Memorial Park Trustees	
Review potential use of herbicides and pesticides on limited number of fields to address hazardous conditions created by weeds and grubs.		IPM Committee	2007
Develop a practical strategic plan for improving maintenance of Rosemary Pool/Lake and related facilities.	Existing capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation	2008
Collaborate with community sports associations to leverage funds for athletic field improvements.	Private funding	Park & Recreation	Ongoing
Continue lease of the current golf course land to a local non-profit entity for use as a golf course under terms favorable to the Town and its residents.	Private funding	Selectmen	2008
Replace bleachers at Memorial Park.	Capital improvement plan appropriation	DPW, Memorial Park Trustees	2008
Replace bleachers at DeFazio Park.	Capital improvement plan appropriation	DPW, Park & Recreation	2008
Rebuild Tennis Courts at High School and Mills Field.	Capital improvement plan appropriation, grant (ex. Land & Water Conservation Fund)	Park & Recreation	2008
Restore athletic fields at High School.	Existing capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation	2008

Objective II-A. Preserve and Improve Existing Athletic Fields & Facilities (continued)

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Replace playground equipment at	Donations,	Park &	2009

Greene's Field.	department appropriation	Recreation	
Explore the construction of an outdoor basketball court at DeFazio Park.	Department appropriation	Park & Recreation	2009
Replace playground equipment at Claxton Field.	Donations, department appropriation	Park & Recreation	2009
Replace playground equipment at Mills Field.	Donations, department appropriation	Park & Recreation	2009
Implement stormwater & drainage improvement at DeFazio Park.	Department appropriation	DPW	2010
Explore the development of an irrigation plan for the Golf Course and DeFazio Complex using water from the Reservoir on Dedham Avenue.		DPW	2010

Objective II-B. Expand "Active" Recreational Resources to Meet Residents' Needs			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Develop a plan and identify funding opportunities for future active and/or passive recreational use of the Nike Site.		School Committee, Park & Recreation, Selectmen	2008
Explore potential for "active" recreational uses of Ridge Hill that are consistent with the conservation purposes of the property.		Selectmen, Conservation	2008
Construct a Senior Center in a location that allows for use and enjoyment of natural resources, such as the Morse-Bradley Estate at Ridge Hill.	Capital improvement plan appropriation, donations	Selectmen, Council on Aging, Conservation	2008
Determine future recreational area needs and acquire land to fulfill these needs.	Donations, department appropriation	Park & Recreation, Selectmen	Ongoing
Develop inventory of undeveloped or partially developed private lands adjacent to existing recreation sites and		Park & Recreation	2008

explore possibility to expand recreation areas.			
Identify potential private funding for rehabilitation of fitness trail at Ridge Hill and subsequently undertake replacement.	Donations	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009

**Objective II-B. Expand “Active” Recreational Resources to Meet Residents’ Needs
(continued)**

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Explore interest in and feasibility of constructing a Skateboard Park.	Donations	Park & Recreation	2008

Objective II-C. Improve Handicap Accessibility

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Pursue funding for handicapped accessible water bubblers at the larger athletic field complexes.	CPA	Park & Recreation	2007
Install handicapped accessible playground structures at Greene’s Field.	Donations, Disabilities Commission grant	Park & Recreation	2009
Install handicapped accessible playground structures at Claxton Field.	Donations, Disabilities Commission grant	Park & Recreation	2009
Install handicapped accessible playground structures at Mills Field.	Donations, Disabilities Commission grant	Park & Recreation	2009
Install handicapped accessible bleachers at Memorial Park.	Capital improvement plan appropriation	DPW, Memorial Park Trustees	2008
Improve handicapped access to fields and facilities at DeFazio Park.	Donations, Capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation, DPW	Ongoing

Improve handicapped access to fields and facilities at Memorial Park.	Donations, Capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation, DPW, Memorial Park Trustees	Ongoing
Identify appropriate areas to install handicapped accessible trails and pursue funding for construction.	Department appropriation, seek grants	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008

GOAL III: EXPAND ACCESS, PROMOTE AWARENESS AND SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF NEEDHAM'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

Objective III-A. Expand Access To and Along the Charles River			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Identify and evaluate potential walking routes along Charles River.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009
Work with private property owners to expand trail network along Charles River through pedestrian easements, and other options.	CPA, Conservation Fund	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Identify additional public access points along the Charles River for activities such as fishing, canoeing and kayaking.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009
Work with State Department of Conservation and Recreation and The Trustees of Reservations to identify opportunities to provide increased pedestrian access and boating opportunities on the Charles River.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	Ongoing
Work with State Department of Conservation and Recreation and The Trustees of Reservations to develop/offer canoeing programs.		Park & Recreation	2009
Work with project proponent for the Charles River Landing Complex to develop and implement walking trail along Charles River.	Donation	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Provide more information about existing access to Charles River through brochures, web-site, and other	Department appropriation	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008

opportunities.			
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Objective III-B. Provide Linkages			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Develop a plan for the “Rosemary Loop Trail” to connect downtown with Rosemary Lake and the Library through Town-owned land and existing easements.	Department appropriation	Plan Sponsors	2008
Develop inventory of easements that allow access over private property.	CPA	Selectmen, Steering Committee	2008
Establish connections between existing conservation land and other open space areas to form loops or greenbelts, some with paths, throughout Town.	Department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	2008
Work with Algonquin Gas Transmission to design and construct pathway across Army Corps natural valley storage area, from Ridge Hill to Mary Chilton Road.	Donation	Conservation, Selectmen	2008

Objective III-B. Provide Linkages (continued)			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Develop a Town-wide pathway system that will link neighborhoods to open spaces, recreation facilities, schools, and shopping centers.	Department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	2010
Cooperate with agencies/organizations in the development of regional bike trails through Needham and pursue federal funding for same.		Selectmen	Ongoing
Work with Babson College and Olin College to formalize access to walking trails through campuses.		Conservation	2008
Work with Sportsmen’s Pond Association to create connection between Great Plain Avenue and High Rock Street, through May/Schneider properties and Rosemary Glen.	Donation	Conservation	2008

Objective III- C. Improve and Expand “Passive” Recreational Opportunities			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Hire consultant to develop Comprehensive Master Trails Plan, through CPA funds already awarded.	CPA	Conservation	2007
Establish Trails Master Plan Committee.		Selectmen	2007
Implement recommendations from Comprehensive Master Trails Plan.	CPA, department appropriations, seek grants	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008
Repair Bridges/Boardwalks along Swamp Trail at Ridge Hill.	CPA	Conservation	2007
Review current access to Farley Pond Conservation Area and propose alternatives if appropriate.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008
Explore possibility of modifying water levels at Farley Pond to improve skating conditions.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009
Work with the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and associated organizations such as the <i>Charles River Cutler Park to Commonwealth Avenue Protection Group</i> to identify and provide improved access to Cutler Lake.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2007
Establish a gift fund and solicit donations for maintenance of trails.		Plan Sponsors	2008
Collaborate with private sector to institute “clean-up” days at different areas throughout Town.	Donations, department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing

Objective III- C. Improve and Expand “Passive” Recreational Opportunities (continued)			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Establish a “Land Steward” volunteer program.		Conservation	2008

Continue to work with Scouting Groups to undertake trail and other improvements to Town-owned land.	Donations, department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Construct trail and sign system through Ridge Hill / Wiswall /Stare properties, in accordance with recommendations from Trails Plan.	CPA	Conservation	2010
Evaluate alternative methods for managing invasive species and improving water quality at Walker Pond.		Park & Recreation	Ongoing

Objective III- D. Educate and Inform the Public About Existing Open Space and Natural Resources

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Develop consistent signage to identify Natural Resources.	Department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	2008
Work with local civic associations and government agencies to fund the purchase and installation of signs.	Donations	Plan Sponsors	2008
Design and install signs/kiosks at multiple trail heads, including Ridge Hill, Town Forest.	CPA	Plan Sponsors	2008
Provide additional information about Needham's Natural Resources on the Town website.		Conservation	2009
Design and distribute, through various resources, brochures and trail maps for Ridge Hill and Town Forest.	Department appropriations	Park & Recreation, Conservation	2009
Organize guided trail walks.		Conservation	2008
Collaborate with Science Center to increase public knowledge about trails behind Newman School.		Conservation, School Department	2008

Objective III- E. Understand and Appropriately Manage Large Tracts of Open Space

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Develop ecological inventory and management plans for each of the		Conservation	2010

Town's major natural areas to assure good stewardship of resources.			
Maintain Tree City USA designation.	Department appropriation	DPW	Ongoing

Objective III- E. Understand and Appropriately Manage Large Tracts of Open Space (continued)

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Encourage ecologically sound management of open space by the private sector.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Complete Forest / Watershed Management Plan.	Department appropriation	DPW	2007
Implement recommendations from Forest / Watershed Management Plan.	Department appropriation, seek grants	DPW	2008
Update GIS system with information on trails and wildlife habitat.		Conservation, Technology	2010

GOAL IV: PROTECT WATER RESOURCES.
Objective IV-A. Minimize Contamination of Ground and Surface Waters

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Continue to implement Stormwater Best Management Practices.	Department appropriation, seek grants	DPW	Ongoing
Strategically identify parts of road network as low- or no-salt areas, and minimize, to the extent practical, the salting of roads.		DPW	2008
Continue to work with the MA Highway Department to complete steps necessary to revert control of Chestnut Street to Town, leading towards policy of reduced salting of road.	State funding	Selectmen, DPW	Ongoing
Work with Charles River Watershed Association to identify and remedy "hot spots" and sources of contamination.	Department appropriation	Board of Health	Ongoing

Continue monitoring stormwater outfalls in accordance with NPDES Phase II requirements.	Department appropriation	DPW	Ongoing
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Objective IV-B. Discourage Excessive Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Continue Integrated Pest Management Program on publicly-owned lands.		IPM Committee	Ongoing
Work with large landholders to encourage conservative use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer.		Board of Health	Ongoing
Educate public about impacts of and alternatives to conventional fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.		Board of Health	2009

Objective IV-C. Encourage Water Conservation			
Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Educate residents and the private sector about measures to advance water conservation.		Selectmen	2008

FY2013-7 Reservoir Trail Design

Liaison: Lita

Primary Contacts: Patty Barry and Patty Carey

- Is designer selection going to require a public bid process?

Yes, designer selection will have to go through public bid process. In addition, this trail will have to be made ADA compliant.

- Is this a project managed by the PPBC? If not, then who will manage it?

This project is NOT managed by the PPBC. Park and Rec (Patty Carey), Conservation Commission (Patty Barry), and DPW (Carys Lustig for procurement) will manage the project.

- Who currently uses the trail? Students, families??

The trail is currently used by neighbors for recreational activities, commuters accessing the Hersey station, Newton special needs programs, Easter Seals, fishermen, handicapped individuals (wheelchair bound), and many other Needham residents.

- What is the frequency?

The current trail is used all the time weather permitting. The Reservoir is even used for skating during the winter.

- What are the contemplated permitted uses or use exclusions: walking, hiking, running, bicycling, ATV, horse, dog sled, etc.?

The use exclusions are: NO motorized vehicles (e.g. ATV). Motorized wheelchairs are allowed. This will not be a mountain bike trail either.

Expect the trail to be used for walking, hiking, running.

- What programs are held at the Reservoir? Fishing derby...? Anticipate more?

The Fishing Derby is a formal program that has been held for a few years. The State stocks the reservoir with fish every year. Students from Pollard are asked to participate when stocking occurs.

There are many other informal programs held that do not need permits.

- Are there likely to be parking lot improvements required for accessibility?

No, the parking lot is already ADA compliant and has lights. The only projected improvement is a ramp from the parking lot to the trail for easy access by wheelchair.

- Is this to be an all-weather/year round trail?

Yes (will probably not plow due to resources). People can cross-country ski on the trail or snow shoe.

The trail is approximately 4,000 linear feet ~ ½ mile.

- What are the options for surfaces?

This will be determined through the design process. Right now not sure what surface to use. Economics, surface durability, maintenance, and ADA compliance will all come into play. Surfaces that might be considered are bonded wood fiber, multi-media, stone dust (requires too much maintenance though), porous pavement, and boardwalk for the ramp over the wetland areas.

- This type of trail and fishing dock is likely to require some level of maintenance, and CPA funds are not available for maintenance. Can the town take on the additional maintenance work and costs?

It will really depend on the surface chosen. One of the goals of the trail design is to make it as maintenance free as possible. Will also enlist volunteers to help with the project. Usually volunteer groups such as the Eagle scouts have helped with a lot of trail maintenance.

- Anticipated timing of design and hopeful construction?

If the project were approved by CPC, then it would go to the May Town Meeting for vote. If adopted, the public bidding process would be done during the 2013 fall season. Once the design firm is selected, the design work would be done over the 2014 winter season. With construction specs and estimates, the project would then be re-submitted to the CPC for funding. If the construction is approved, permitting could take a long time due to wetlands. Expect to start construction by Summer 2015.

- How was \$65K determined?

The cost was determined by reviewing the 2008 Master Trail Plan produced by Beals & Thomas Inc. Then Beals & Thomas was consulted to update the cost for this particular trail based on inflation for September 2012.

- Why are recreation activities concentrated in the DeFazio area?

It just so happens that the reservoir is located near DeFazio. In addition, the DPW parking lot already exists for easier access to trail, and it would be easier and faster to work from this point.

FY2013-10 Ridge Hill Loop Design

Liaison: Lita

Primary Contact: Patty Barry

- How was \$20K determined?

The cost was determined by reviewing the 2008 Master Trail Plan produced by Beals & Thomas Inc. Then Beals & Thomas was consulted to update the cost for this particular trail based on inflation for September 2012.

- Will design go out to bid in conjunction with Reservoir? Is it more cost effective to do design phase in conjunction with the design of the Reservoir trail?

Yes, the design will go out to bid in conjunction with the Reservoir Trail, as this makes it more cost effective.

- Is there a topographic survey of this area?

Yes, a detailed topographic survey for this area exists.

- What are the trails surfacing options?

For the wetlands, boardwalks will be built to cross these areas. The trail surface will be the natural surface after the trail has been cleared. There will be no amenities.

Volunteers maintain these trails annually. Volunteers help clear the paths and/or the Eagle Scouts help repair boardwalks.

- What are the contemplated permitted uses or use exclusions: walking, hiking, running, bicycling, ATV, horse, dog sled, etc.?

The following will NOT be allowed on this trail: bicycling, motorized vehicles (e.g. ATV's), hunting. People will be able to use the trail for walking, jogging, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, etc.

- Any possibility of Eagle Scouts or others building bridge?

Because of wetlands rule/regulations, the bridge has to be properly constructed, requiring 10 ft. spans, railings, etc., so the Eagle Scouts and others might not be able to do this. The Eagle Scouts and others could help with maintenance. This part of the project will require building permits and most probably require a railing. After the design work is done we will know better.

- How do people use this trail now as far as returning to the start?

They have to turn around, or they go through private property to exit.

- What work is involved in designing a trail like this?

First, the width of the trail has to be determined. GIS is used to see where trees are, and the wetlands are delineated. A pathway is designed; including how to go up/down hills, making sure the path is mapped for erosion. After it is designed, Conservation Commission/Park and Rec walk the pathway. The design is then tweaked. A final plan is then produced.

Trail blazing might be able to do in house with volunteers, as long as it is permitted.

- Is it possible to develop trails in wetland areas?

Yes, it is possible to develop trails in wetlands, but this has to go through permitting process with the Conservation Commission. First there is a determination of applicability for a general trail. From the time the filing is done with the Needham Conservation Commission until a

decision is given is approximately 60 days. Then the State has 10 days to appeal the decision.

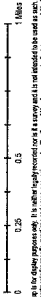
- Can the Conservation Commission or Conservation staff put together this design?
No, the Conservation Commission or its staff cannot put together the design for two reasons: first, conflict of interest since the Conservation Commission is the permitting agency over the wetlands, and second, they do not have Auto CAD or time to be able to develop this design appropriately.



Town of Needham
Massachusetts

PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS

••••• Proposed Town Land Trails	Water
••••• Proposed Private Land Trails	Town Lands With Trails
••••• Proposed Sidewalk Trails	State Land
••••• Existing Private Land Trails	Schools
••••• Existing Town Land Trails	DPW Facilities
••••• Other Trails	Park
— Driveways / Parking Area	Open Space
— Railroad	Town Boundary
P Parking	
② Proposed Trail Connection	



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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FY2013-8 Newman Fields & Eastman Conservation Trails

Liaison: Paul & Gary

Primary Contacts: Ed Olsen, Patty Barry, Patty Carey

- How frequently are fields closed because of wet conditions?
 - **Estimated that they are unavailable due to wet conditions about 2/3 of the time.**
- Are the fields currently part of the Park & Rec scheduling program?
 - **Yes; but due to the wet condition they are still unusable.**
- If so who is typically assigned these fields and therefore disappointed when they are closed?
 - **It is assigned for use by Needham Baseball and Softball. NEDP also uses it, when available.**
- Is there an existing survey for the land between Eastman and Brewster?
 - **No.**
- Will wetlands need to be flagged?
 - **Yes. The project will need to be fully permitted, including ZBA due to it being in the flood plain.**
- Is Weston & Sampson targeted for this work or does it have to go out to bid?
 - **Weston & Sampson is fully qualified to do the work, but it needs to go out to bid.**
- Is there actually enough time to complete the design and request construction funds in the Fall?
 - **The current request is only for design and engineering funds. Construction is likely to be a request for additional funds for 2014 or later construction. Construction may also involve an effort to get some grant funding.**
- Does the School Committee have any concerns?
 - **Connie Barr has reported that the School Committee does not have concerns.**
- Would the School Committee seek funds to supplement what is available from the CPC, in order to leverage the CPC funds?
 - **Connie Barr has discussed with the Superintendent. No plans to seek funds for this project separately: more in the realm of Park and Rec and, especially given the current financial situation, very low on our list of things to be done. We would love to see the issues of the fields solved, but have no money to participate. Eastman Trails are used by the schools.**
- Athletic field restoration seems quite different from wetland trail design. Why is this appropriate as a single project/single designer? Should it be two separate applications?
 - **The view is that this is an integrated project where the fields are eventually linked up to the Eastman Conservation trails. This will permit there to be an educational benefit for Newman students gaining ready access to the conservation trails. Because of the desire for integration, the design and construction needs to be coordinated by a single contractor or a general contractor in oversight of a subcontractor. Additionally, as conceived the project would involve a single permitting process. It will also be easier to get reasonable bids for the project in the larger form of a single project.**
- The funding request is for design money. Is there a source of funds for construction?
 - **No. There will likely be a future request for construction funds.**
- Is it possible to develop trails in wetland areas?
 - **Yes. There may need to be a bridge/boardwalk requested through the permitting process. It would not likely be impervious surfaces, but rather boardwalk and natural paths that would be recommended by the design phase.**
- Will non-government groups that use the facilities be involved in the design work?
 - **Yes; existing town interest groups and user groups.**
- Do the boards that oversee trail projects (Conservation, Park & Recreation) endorse the Eastman Conservation project? What is the priority of this project relative to other projects needing funding?
 - **The Board of Selectmen, Con Comm and Park and Rec support the project. It is considered high priority, but evolving. Newman is a high priority for the School Department.**

- What are the contemplated permitted uses or use exclusions: walking, hiking, running, bicycling, ATV, horse, dog sled, etc.?
 - **The conservation land would be used for walking, hiking, running, but not bicycling or ATV. It would be handicap accessible.**
- What are the trail surfacing options?
 - **The trails within wetlands cannot be filled, so the trail surfaces would likely be a mix of boardwalk and natural paths, not impervious surfaces.**
- Are there ideas for the use of the Carol/Brewster property?
 - **It is viewed to have use as a nature area for relaxation and for educational purposes for Newman students and others. It will likely need signs. It currently has benches.**
- Why is the connection of the Carol/Brewster properties and Eastman Conservation a priority? Are there simpler trail projects to do, i.e. Hillside School to Central Avenue through Sweet Conservation Reserve?
 - **Town officials/committees have prioritized the Carol/Brewster properties and the Eastman Conservation area as a priority. Whereas, the trail master plan does not prioritize the connection of Hillside School to Central Ave through Sweet Conservation Reserve as a project.**

FY2013-11 Mills park design

Liaison: Reg Foster

Primary Contacts: Rick Merson and DPW Superintendents, Patty Carey

1. **How was \$40K determined?** *The \$40K is for just the design work for the field upgrade, basketball court upgrade, landscaping upgrade, parking upgrade. As a rule of thumb, design costs are a certain percentage of overall projected construction costs.*
To come up with the projected constructions costs, Town departments have used construction costs from prior projects to estimate the construction cost for the Mills Field upgrades. DPW Parks and Forestry estimated the costs for diamond repairs, based on recent bids for similar work. DPW Highway/Engineering estimated the costs for the parking improvements within the park and on Hampton Avenue, as well as renovations to the basketball court.
The total construction costs for the work being contemplated ranges between \$200,000-220,000.
2. **What is current area used for?** *Mills Field is named after, Dr. Chester R. Mills MD, son of a Needham pioneer family who made the playground a reality. The little league field is dedicated to Owen Webb, who founded Needham's Little League in 1952. It was the home field for the one and only Needham team which made it to the Little League World Series in 1954.*
Mills Field is a park that serves multiple functions.
 - *The 60' diamond is used for baseball. It is one of the fields used for Little League Majors in the spring. In the summer, it is used by Needham Baseball and Softball (parent group of Needham Little League) or by Needham Summer Baseball. Needham Baseball and Softball also uses the diamond in the fall. Town's capital funding paid for improvements to the fencing and backstop at the diamond, last year*
 - *The tennis courts are used by Needham High School, Park and Recreation lessons and leagues, as well as residents with tennis badges. The tennis courts were recently rebuilt through capital funding.*
 - *The playground is designed for younger children, and is called the "Needham Rockets" playground, using the color scheme of the Needham High athletic teams, and displaying a "space" theme in honor of Suni Williams, Needham's own astronaut. Parent Talk raised the funds and donated the playground.*
 - *The basketball court is not permitted, but is open for use by any Needham resident, including neighbors of the park.*
 - *Unlike Greene's Field, Mills Field has extensive open space with large pine shade trees suitable for picnicking, dog walking etc.*
3. **How frequently is it used?** *The Park and Recreation Department characterizes Mills Fields "as moderately heavily used" for approximately 9 months per year. Many residents live within walking distance, and will come down to use various park assets, including the areas shaded by trees.*
 - *Mills Field is the principal park serving Precinct A, which consists of 1,606 housing units and an estimated 3,000 total residents.*
 - *The nearest elementary school is Eliot which has 387 kids enrolled this year in grades K-5.*
 - *As well as serving local neighborhood residents, Mills Field is the closest public park to the Housing Authority's family homes on Captain Robert Cook Drive (30 two, three and four bedroom units), and elderly/disabled homes Seabeds Way*

(46 one bedroom units)

- The park is used by drop-in visitors throughout the year.

4. **Are neighbors involved with project? Are they in favor of the improvements?**

Unlike the Greene's Field projects, neighbors have not directly been involved in, nor complained about, recent improvements. This may be partly due to:

- *The lack of provocations (e.g. a playground being shut down for several years, night lights, etc.)*
- *Except for three abutting houses, all neighbors are well removed from any construction project impact of park upgrade projects.*
- *It is expected that the neighbors in general will be generally in favor of improvements, and the abutting neighbors have historically been very cooperative and appreciative.*

The one thing that neighbors have complained about is parking on Hampton Avenue, especially when there are "big" Little League" games, which causes the following problems:

- *Decrease in the ability to move more than one vehicle through on Hampton Avenue at a time,*
- *Difficulty with residents coming in and out of their driveways.*
- *A potential safety issue: limiting the ability of a fire truck to get down the street.*

The design funded by the CPA application will add a number of parking spaces by redesigning the existing drop-off circle and potentially widening Hampton Ave along the park, to allow for a significant increase in parking spaces.

5. **Will the design be bid or is there a consultant on board?** *The Town will probably use one of the prequalified consultants in the RFQ to do the design. It would require a contract with them, but we would not have to bid it.*

6. **The request is for design funds. Where will the funds from construction come from?** *It's likely the construction funds will be requested through the CPA. Though grants can be sought, it is difficult for Needham to be eligible when in competition for funds with other communities.*

7. **Does the Town Engineer have any comments or concerns?** *He has been involved in the concept, and his recommendations have been included in the CPA funding application, particularly in relation to the parking project.*

8. **Can the Town Engineer do the design work?** *At this time, his staff cannot include this project in their list of projects.*

9. **Is a new layout being considered, ie: picnic locations, access points, other activities?** *Only the parking areas will be altered. All other areas remain in their current locations.*

On Hampton Avenue, a small section of land will be taken from the park to create parallel parking outside of the traffic lane, allowing for two-way traffic on Hampton Avenue. Within the park, there is a circular drive that will be removed and replaced with actual parking spaces.

10. **Will non-government groups that use the facilities be involved in the design work?** *Needham Baseball and Softball has already met with DPW Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen and provided their input. Being a much larger park than Greene's Field, there aren't any dimensional compromises to the baseball diamond. The biggest outstanding issue is foul balls getting out over the backstop and landing on cars parked behind.*
11. **What is the potential of some of the funding being raised from private sources, similar to what happened at Greene's Field?** *At this time, no fundraising group has come forward to offer support.*
12. **Do you anticipate any unusual permitting requirements?** *The creation of an off-street parking area containing 5 or more spaces triggers a Planning Board permit requirement. Lately, the Planning Board has been interested in requiring attributes to parking areas above their standard requirements, and we'll need to determine those requirements. The proposed Lincoln Street/School Street parking lot design estimate was \$55,000, which is a larger lot.*
13. **Are there any other improvements being contemplated for the actual, other than what is in the CPA Application for design work?** *Small additional components are being considered, such as the picnic tables and grills, improvements to the commemoration plaques, etc.*
14. **What other problems are encountered at Mills Field?**
- *At present, there are no public bathrooms at Mills Field. Addressing this problem is not part of the current proposed design project.*
 - *The Police Department reports that Mills Field does not encounter any unusual number of incidents relative to other Needham parks.*
 - *Dog walkers are frequent visitors, and though they are allowed by the Town by-law if on leash and the owner picks up after the dog, there continues to be a problem with dogs off leash and not being cleaned up after them, especially within the fenced in areas (diamond, playground, and tennis courts.) From time-to-time, groups or individual citizens raise the question of establishing a fenced in dog run area, but this has never progressed to a serious proposal.*
15. **Liaison questions:**
- a. *Is parking lot development eligible for CPA funding? Yes.*
 - b. *Is the Restroom renovation eligible for CPA funding? Yes.*

FY2013-4 Community Housing Specialist

Liaison: Janet Bernardo

Primary Contact: Lee Newman, *Planning and Community Development Director*

- **Can we fund annually for 5 years or should we fund \$175K for one year?**

We are open to either approach at the discretion of the Committee.

- **Who currently serves this role?**

No single person is assigned to this position presently. However, the responsibilities relative to 40B development and its associated monitoring obligations still need to be met and have been assumed in large part by Kate and myself. This work has included LIP negotiations as 40B projects proceed through the review process, monitoring oversight to assure that affordable units are rented or sold to income eligible families, and Limited Dividend Certification to assure that developer profit does not exceed 20% of total development and site acquisition costs. Additionally, Alex Clee the Town's Assistant Planner and I handle the staffing needs required for Needham's continued eligibility for HOME program funds. Finally, select affordable housing unit monitoring has been provided on a consulting basis by Judi Barrett from Community Opportunities Group.

- **How much time/week is expected at this funding level?**

20-25 hours per week.

- **When would the person start?**

August 2013

- **Will this person be shared with another town?**

We are not currently planning to share the position with another town although we are open to the opportunity in the future.

- **What type of professional is qualified?**

Person having a bachelor's degree in planning or public administration or related field plus 3 years related training in affordable housing. The following expertise would be sought. Thorough knowledge of M.G.L. Chapter 40B and related housing and planning statutes. Thorough knowledge of state and federal programs and resources available for the creation of affordable housing. Expertise in the development of affordable housing from the initial application process, project management, through closing and sales. Strong communication and interpersonal skills to effectively interact with Town staff, local elected and appointed officials, state and federal officials and agencies, private developers and commercial interests and the public. It is recognized that we may not find a candidate with all these attributes and that some on the job training may be required.

What would happen if funds run out after 1 year or after 5 years?

It is our plan to transition the position to one funded under the Town budget provided the position delivers its anticipated benefit.

- **Why does Needham need this specialist?**

See CPC application for list of activities identified.

- **There seems to be some overlap with duties currently handled by the Housing Authority, such as monitoring units on the Affordable housing inventory. Is the HA legally responsible for those duties since they are the ones who select the tenants? Is it something that someone else can do?**

Presently, responsibility for monitoring the units on the affordable housing inventory is conducted by either the Town or the Housing Authority as mandated in the applicable Board of Appeals decision. Moving forward the Town will work with the Housing Authority to see if this responsibility can be centralized under the Housing Planner. As a legal matter the Town is responsible for assuring the continuation of the affordable units as contained within the 40B inventory.

- **How does this position compliment/collaborate/coordinate with the role/mission of the Housing Authority?**

Position would work with Housing Authority to maintain Town perspective in Needham Housing Authority projects and proposals. Person assigned to this position would work with the Housing Authority as it seeks to move forward with the redevelopment of the Linden-Chambers property either through improvements to the existing units and/or in its efforts to accommodate additional senior housing units.

- **Does the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners endorse this application?**

We met yesterday with the Housing Authority and they communicated to us their support for this position.

- **Does the Housing Authority have a calendar that outlines what they are doing?**

You will need to follow-up with the Housing Authority on this item.

- **Have we missed any opportunities in the past?**

Yes, we have been unable to effectively advance the recommendations included in the housing plan such as advancing efforts toward scattered site housing with non-profit developers and pursuing buy-down efforts to increase the number of affordable units within existing housing developments or proposed projects. Additionally, with the program changes anticipated under the HOME program and the move toward competitive grant applications by member communities not having a dedicated housing planner will place Needham at a competitive disadvantage in securing HOME program funds moving forward.

- **Which comparable communities have a Housing Specialist on staff?**

Sudbury, Newton, Brookline, Watertown, Carlisle, and Bedford.

- **The application refers to working with 40B developers. These projects are generally contentious with the neighbors and ZBA, how will this person work in support of the projects if the town has objections?**

Needham has just completed a set of 40B guidelines which articulates the types of housing development which the community can support and which offers an expedited approval process for projects which meet community goals. It is anticipated that the housing planner could facilitate the review and approval of projects meeting these identified criteria.

- **What is the status of Needham's affordable housing plan and of the recent 40B/ Affordable housing review? Is there a completed report?**

Needham's affordable housing plan was completed in June of 2004 and was last updated in June of 2007. Although the plan was a good first step a significant number of its recommendations were not moved forward due in large part to the lack of dedicated staff and a Town committee dedicated to advancing the plans recommendations. The plans update would be one of the first tasks overseen by the new housing planner so that community consensus could be obtained on project priorities moving forward. The 40B Guidelines were completed in November of 2012 and are scheduled for presentation to the Selectmen at the end of this month.

FY2013-12 Community Farm Soil Quality Improvements
Community Preservation Committee Questions
Liaison: Mike Retzky
Primary Contact: Debbie Schmill

- How was \$15K determined? Breakdown of soil, plow, compost? Materials vs. labor?

See attached Budget

- How large an area is expected to be worked on?
About 2/3 of an acre.

- How do you intend to improve the soil?

Improving the soil will be a multi-tiered process:

- Subsoiling to help break up the compaction and improve drainage and aerate deeply.
- Soil amendments to get nutrients into deeper levels and get biological activity going again in soil.
- Deep rooting cover crop to help keep area that was subsoiled open.
- Compost to improve organic matter levels in soil and increase biological activity.

- How many years will enhanced soil be good for?

This is part one of a multi year process-the inputs should decrease each year, but the site has not been cared for in a beneficial way in years, so there will not be immediate results. We are trying to accelerate the natural process of soil restoration after the site was used as a missile site and a dumping ground for fill. We are looking at a 3-year process, with soil improving and more ground becoming useable each year.

Once we have healthy soil, we will maintain its health using standard organic practices such as crop rotation, mulching, cover cropping in the winter, and adding amendments when needed (based on soil testing

- Are you going to create all raised beds?

No. We already have 80 4'x12' raised beds on the site which we use for our educational programs and for pantry production.

- Do you have a source for organic soil? Cost estimate?
Yes, there are several sources in Massachusetts and NH including Agrisource in Ipswich, Ideal compost in NH, Bear Path Farm in Whatley MA, and Brick Ends Farm in South Hamilton. Unfortunately, we have not found one that is closer to Needham, but will continue to look for options. Costs are detailed in the attached budget.
- Have you considered using compost from transfer station?
Yes. We have used the RTS compost in the past because it has not been financially feasible for us to purchase organic compost. Unfortunately, the RTS compost is made up of yard waste which includes grass clippings from yards where pesticides and herbicides have been applied. While some of these will break down during the composting process, not all will. Our preference for the health of the soil and the quality of the vegetables we grow for the community (primarily the food pantry) would be to have organic soil.
- Is heavy equipment necessary for this work?
Yes. We will be bringing in a tractor for the subsoiling and compost spreading.
- Will this work be done with volunteers?
The farmer and volunteers will do everything except for the subsoiling and possibly the compost spreading. Our farmer is a part-time paid employee.
- How is garden currently funded?

The Farm is funded primarily through private donations and grants. A small percentage of our funding comes from our fee based community education programs. Our community programs are offered free of charge to low-income families and any programming we do with the NPS is also free of charge.

The other source of funding we had in 2012 was the sale of some of our produce at the Farmers Market. This was not significant and in future years our participation in the Market will be running educational workshops and kids activities rather than selling our produce. We plan to be donating all of our produce in 2013.

- Do you have other sources of financial support contributing to this project?

The only other source contributing to this project is Dedham Bank. They are providing \$1,000 for the bobcat rental.

- How many people actively participate in the Community Farm work?

The Farm has a very active Board of 11 people. Most of us do both administrative and physical work at the farm. We also have another 20 or so active committee members and regular volunteers.

In addition, we have a partnership with the Minuteman Regional High School. The horticulture students come to the Farm periodically during spring and fall to help us out and to get real life experience working for a "client"

We also have high school students who come out weekly as part of their community service work. These students work on the Farm and explore related global issues such as food justice and the environmental impact of sustainable vs. industrial farming.

In addition, we have a group from Charles River Arc that helps maintain our pilot site on a regular bases and are planning a partnership with one of the CRARC residential groups for this spring. We are also in the process of planning a program that will bring students from the Walker School out to maintain a few raised beds.

- As the property is leased from the School Committee, do they have any comments, ideas or concerns?

I believe Dan Gutekanst sent in a letter of support to the CPC. He has not made me aware of any concerns.

- How many years will garden be leased from the School Committee?

The NCF has a 3-year license agreement with an option for two additional years. We are heading into our 3rd season at the site and are not aware of any issues that would prevent us from having the 2 year extension. It is our understanding that after that, we would renegotiate the license.

- Is there a developed program coordinated with the School Department? If yes, what is the participation level?

We have worked with the School Department to develop four high school programs funded by the NEF. Two programs are special Ed. One is with the environmental Ed classes and one is our Green Team Community Service Internship. These programs are just being piloted. The Special Ed and Environmental Science programs brought out around 40 students in total. The Green Team pilot program currently has four students participating.

In addition to the high school programs, last year we had two KASE kindergarten classes visit and one school sent their fourth graders (to enhance insect unit). We are working closely with Mary Rizzuto at the Science Center to get more classes out to the Farm. 2nd grade does soil so we are hoping to pilot a program with them this year. The Farm is included in the Science Center brochure listing their offerings to teachers at all the schools. Any teacher can contact us and set up a visit to the Farm if they would like. The visits to the Farm or farmer visits to the schools are free of charge other than any bus transportation fees that the school charges.

Much of the impact of the Farm happens outside of the schools. Last year we donated about 500 lbs. of produce to the Needham Community Council Food Pantry, which serves approximately 180 families in Needham. The Farm donated over 50% of the fresh produce the Pantry received. In future years, we plan to expand our donations. This spring we are piloting a cooking workshop

series at the affordable housing areas to teach Pantry constituents how to cook what we donate. These workshops will be offered free of charge.

The NCF provides fee-based community education programs that are offered free to low-income families. Our signature program is the Family Gardening Program. Participants learn sustainable organic gardening methods including soil health, seed starting, planting and harvesting. Each family has their own 12'x4' bed to garden in at the Farm. Classes meet weekly from mid April until the end of August but participants have access to their bed until the end of the growing season.

Our family gardening classes are open to families and individuals and are designed so that participants will leave with the confidence and skills to create their own backyard garden in the future. Over the past two seasons, over 60 families have participated in this program.

The NCF offers workshops through Needham Continuing Education and a parent/child class through Park and Recreation.

Organic Compost	Cubic Yards	Cost per CY	Total
Compost	250	40	10000
Compost Delivery			2500
Equipment Rental (subsoiler)			1000
Soil Amendments (rock powder, kelp meal, fungi)			1,500
Total CPA Funding Request			<u>15000</u>

RTS Compost	Cubic Yards	Cost per CY	Total
Compost	250	12	3000
Compost Delivery			0
Equipment Rental (subsoiler)			1000
Soil Amendments (rock powder, kelp meal, fungi)			1500
Total CPA Funding Request			<u>5500</u>
Additional Costs Aready Funded			
Bobcat Rental (Funded by Dedham Bank Grant)			<u>1,000</u>
Total with RTS Compost			<u>6,500</u>



THE NEEDHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

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October 18, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

The Needham Community Farm has been, and continues to be, a significant contributor of the highest quality fresh produce to the Needham Community Council's Food Pantry.

As the only food pantry in the town of Needham, we regularly service over 185 families on a monthly basis. During the holiday season, the numbers of families using our services expands to over 200.

Donations of non-perishable foods are available from many sources, but fresh vegetables are not; and we are always thrilled to be able to offer these as healthy choices when we can. The Needham Community Farm is very generous to our customers as well as a wonderful resource for the entire Needham community.

We at the Needham Community Council fully support the Needham Community Farm's efforts to improve their infrastructure and continue to expand their production ability. We are always grateful for the produce we receive and any additional fresh produce is of great value to us and the families we serve.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any more information or details in support of their application for funding.

Thank you,

Deborah S. Winnick

Deborah S. Winnick
Director of Development and P.R.
Needham Community Council
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The Needham Community Council is a private non-profit organization which supports people in Needham who have under-met health, educational or social needs and promotes volunteerism, community and a sense of shared responsibility.