



Appendix

Status of the 2004 Open Space Plan Recommendations

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The 2004 Open Space Plan listed 15 major recommendations, from high-priority actions to be completed quickly to medium-priority actions that are recognized as necessary ongoing processes. Those recommendations and an update on their status are as follows:

1. **INCORPORATE THE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN IN TOWN & COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING**

All Town boards and committees that deal with open space issues should be briefed about Open Space and Recreation Plan 2004. One member of each group should be designated to be informed about and provide advice on open space issues and opportunities. The Natural Resources Commission should sponsor a meeting of interested persons in the fall to consider open space issues and opportunities.

Status:

Boards and committees present updates to the Board of Selectmen. The OSRP has been used for all major land acquisitions, Chapter land acquisitions, and when assessing major developments. Some recommended committees established in relation to open space planning.

2. **THINK REGIONALLY & WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH TOWNS IN CONCORD'S REGION**

The Town should join with neighboring towns to request a planning grant to examine the potential benefit of integrating open-space protection efforts in Concord's region. Town leaders should be up to date on land-use changes and protection throughout the region, with appointed representatives meeting annually with those of the other towns, and reporting to the Town and residents on regional land-use changes and open-space protection issues. Neighboring towns should be familiar with and encouraged to use Concord's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Status:

Concord is a member of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination, and the Massachusetts Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals. Additionally, the Town has worked with surrounding communities to develop the Battle Road Scenic Byways and Healthy Communities Acton/Carlisle/Concord Regional Accessibility Plan. Regional land management issues have been addressed through collaboration with the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition, the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, Sudbury Valley Trustees, OARS, and the SuAsCo CISMA.

3. **PROTECT CONCORD'S LARGE NATURAL AREAS**

High priority should be given to protecting, by conservation acquisition or restriction, the remaining core parcels needed to sustain the integrity of the Town's large natural areas. Ongoing management of these areas and uses adjacent to them should be consistent with the goals of biodiversity, wildlife movement, clean groundwater, flood control and diverse compatible recreational activities.

Status:

Efforts to properly manage and conserve land in the large natural areas are ongoing where feasible. Recent conservation restrictions in the Estabrook Woods area include Pippin Tree Trust and a portion of the Middlesex School land.

4. **PROTECT CONCORD'S LARGE AGRICULTURAL AREAS & FARMING**

High priority should be given to the protection of the remaining core parcels needed to sustain the integrity of the large agricultural areas. Farmers should be supported on issues such as drainage, worker housing, product outlets and ecologically and economically sustainable farming methods. An agricultural committee should be established to provide information for farm programs, regulations, best practices and issues.

Status:

Protection of core agricultural parcels is an ongoing process. Recent acquisitions include Rogers land, Chick land, 335 Walden, Hubbard Brook lands, and McGrath farm. The Agricultural Committee was established. The Right to Farm Bylaw was passed in 2011. The first Agricultural Day took place in 2006 and continues annually. Additionally, *Building Local Food Connections*, a local food systems study, was completed.

5. **PROTECT MAJOR WILDLIFE- & WATER-PROTECTION CORRIDORS**

High priority should be given to the protection,

by conservation acquisition or restriction, of land in the key corridors linking large natural and agricultural areas. Landowners should manage the corridors to enhance wildlife movement, clean water and fish populations. Where possible, a route for walkers should be encouraged.

Status:

Efforts to protect these corridors are ongoing where feasible. Four wildlife underpasses along Route 2 have been constructed and a fifth is in the planning stages.

6. **STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOODS IN TOWN**

Neighborhoods should be encouraged and supported in local land stewardship and in efforts to create common protected land conveniently accessible by walking and bicycling.

Status:

Neighborhood improvements include one new community garden, improvements to Rideout Playground and Emerson field, along with creating a Senior Walking Program. A West Concord Master Plan was also completed.

7. **MANAGE WATER-RELATED ISSUES TO PROTECT THE TOWN'S GROUNDWATER & SURFACE WATER**

Conservation of water and the elimination or replacement of septic systems that do not meet current standards should be accelerated, as especially effective ways for residents to protect the Town's groundwater and surface-water systems. For the same reason, the Town should continue to reduce sand and salt applications to roads, increase the use of permeable rather than impermeable surfaces, and, where possible, divert stormwater flows into vegetated swales, etc. Near Town wells, these solutions should be implemented at the highest practical level and combined with continued land acquisition.

Status:

The Comprehensive Wastewater Management plan is under way. An infiltration/inflow control plan was initiated in 2006 and annual reports are submitted to the EPA in accordance

with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System issued to the Town. Low Impact Development techniques are employed in construction improvements and upgrades to the stormwater system. A Twenty Year Stormwater/Drainage Management Plan to address backlog of deferred repairs is in place. And efforts are made to collect household hazardous waste and unwanted pharmaceuticals/personal care products.

8. **PROTECT AND MONITOR CONCORD'S STREAMS, RIVERS, PONDS, & WETLANDS**

The Town should adopt its own wetland-protection by-law with criteria and procedures, including increased minimum setbacks, that provide effective protection of Concord's wetland resources. Comprehensive water-quality sampling programs that build on existing programs should be developed throughout the Town, and should be implemented for Concord's ponds, streams and rivers to evaluate the presence of, and establish a baseline for, pollutants that degrade the Town's aquatic ecosystems.

Status:

A Wetlands Bylaw was passed in 2009 and amended in 2013. Efforts are ongoing to certify potential vernal pools. The Town continues to work with OARS and the SuAsCo Community Watershed Council to monitor Concord's major rivers and some streams for pollutants and invasive species. Invasive species management initiatives are in place. The Warner's Pond Watershed Management Plan was completed in 2012 and the White Pond Watershed Management Plan is underway.

9. **MONITOR WILDLIFE & BIODIVERSITY, AND PROTECT KEY HABITATS**

A wildlife and biodiversity committee should be established to accumulate, make available, and highlight information on key species and their distribution in Town and its region. Collaboration with neighboring towns to maintain viable natural connections for wildlife movement across the region should be encouraged. Habitats of state-listed rare species in Town should

be actively protected.

Status:

Four conservation restrictions were established on Monsen and Lowell Roads to protect endangered species habitats, and restoration work has taken place at Old Calf Pasture. Events that celebrate biodiversity such as the Christmas Bird Count and Concord area butterfly count continue. Biodiversity Days took place in 2004 and 2006. And the Spring Migratory Bird Walk receives strong participation.

10. **REDUCE THE MAJOR IMPACTS OF ROUTE 2**

A sequence of carefully designed and located structures that restore frequent crossings by key wildlife, in addition to safe attractive crossings for walkers and bicyclers, should be incorporated in Route 2 planning and construction at the earliest opportunity. Solutions to reduce the propagation of road salt and traffic noise (consistent with wildlife crossing, safety and aesthetics) should be identified and incorporated in planning and construction of the highway

Status:

Four wildlife underpasses have been constructed, with a fifth to be constructed in the near future.

11. **MEET INTENSIVE-USE RECREATIONAL NEEDS CONSISTENT WITH CONCORD'S OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK**

A number of small informal playing fields convenient by foot or bicycle for children and neighbors, plus a small number of regulation playing fields, should be created in locations where they do not lead to significant impacts on Concord's most important conservation areas.

Status:

The Beede Swim and Fitness Center was completed in 2006. The Ripley baseball field was improved.

12. **SOLIDIFY THE LOCAL/REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK FOR TRANSPORTATION & NATURE-BASED RECREATION**

Six additional local walking trails should be developed in Town. A trails committee should be formed to evaluate and make recommendations on diverse trail patterns, issues, and policies. Planning should proceed for providing access for residents to walk or bicycle north/south across the Town and to neighboring towns and countryside in Concord's region.

Status:

A Trails Committee was established in 2007. A Trail Stewards program was also developed in 2011. The Emerson-Thoreau Amble was opened in 2013. Efforts are underway to map and blaze all publicly accessible trails. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail continues to advance. The Town acquired easements over two properties to provide over one mile of trail access along and above the Assabet River. CLCT placed new conservation signs on their properties. Trail conservation efforts include the Riverwalk, 335 Walden, and the Rogers land. And the Bay Circuit Trail continues to be rerouted off of roadways where feasible.

13. **PROVIDE HANDICAP ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE RESOURCES**

Six existing or planned trails should be made at least seasonally accessible to wheelchair users. Also a few special trails should be designated as "Assessed" (i.e., trails offering a more rugged experience for handicapped users), and one or two trails should be made universally accessible to accommodate individuals with disabilities other than mobility impairments.

Status:

A handicap assessed trail was created at the

Town Forest along with a handicapped-parking area. A wheel chair accessible path was created at Rideout Playground and a new ADA path is proposed at the Concord-Carlisle High School.

14. **MANAGE ALL LAND IN TOWN CONSISTENT WITH THE OPEN SPACE OBJECTIVES**

The Town should invest in the management of its open-space resources by dedicating sufficient conservation-land-management funds for personnel and other needs in the annual operating budget. The Town and other interested organizations should maintain and publicize a list of diverse land management techniques and encourage their use by all landowners, which will cumulatively contribute to achievement of Concord's major open-space and stewardship objectives.

Status:

The Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee was established in 2004. And a system for monitoring these lands was developed. Outreach and education efforts continue with organizations such as CISMA, OARS, and SuAsCo.

15. **SECURE FUNDING & PARTNER WITH OTHER ENTITIES FOR OPEN-SPACE LAND PROTECTION**

The Town should pass the Community Preservation Act to create a funding source for conservation acquisitions, and should partner with land trusts, government entities, and individuals to make full use of available government funds and programs, as well as laws and regulations, to acquire and/or protect important land parcels.

Status:

The Community Preservation Act was passed in 2005 at 1.5% and has since funded many conservation and recreation projects (See Appendix H). A study grant was received for the Healthy Communities Regional Accessibility Plan. Additional funding was allocated in conjunction with Concord Public Works in 2012. And the town continues to partner with regional conservation and protection agencies as discussed in number one above.