Booklet #5
May 20, 2014

POSSIBLE CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Orange

5

Overview

This booklet provides a general overview of possible "conservation" issues and strategies for Orange to consider as part pf preparing the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development. Conservation resources addressed in this booklet include natural resources, open space, community character, and sustainability / resiliency.

These resources contribute to the character of Orange and the overall quality of life in the community. Identifying conservation priorities early in the planning process is essential to ensuring that significant local resources are preserved or conserved.

Identifying conservation priorities early in the planning process is essential to ensuring that significant local resources are preserved or conserved ...

Natural Resources

Open Space

Community Character

Sustainability And Resiliency

NATURAL RESOURCES

Conserving natural resource helps preserve environmental functions, enhance community character, and enhance the overall quality of life ...

Protect Important Natural Resources

Conserving natural resource helps preserve environmental functions, enhance community character, and enhance the overall quality of life. Orange should continue to protect important natural resources:

- Watercourses and waterbodies, wetlands, and floodplains,
- Steep slopes,
- Sensitive habitats and natural diversity / unique resource areas, and
- Coastal resource areas.

Conservation priorities in Orange should be based on:

- the value or function of the natural resource,
- the sensitivity of the resource to development, and/or
- the degree of constraint to development.

This philosophy ensures that important resources and functions are preserved and remaining areas are used at appropriate densities.

Protect Important Natural Resources		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to protect watercourses, wetlands, floodplains, and other important water resources.		
2. Continue to discourage development on steep slopes and other sensitive landforms.		
3. Continue to protect sensitive habitats and other natural diversity areas.		
4. Continue to protect important coastal resources and manage activities within the coastal boundary area in accordance with the		
5. Continue having the Conservation Commission monitor overall conservation issues in Orange.		
6. Seek to coordinate resource protection activities with adjacent communities and regional organizations.		

Natural Resources Map

Orange, CT

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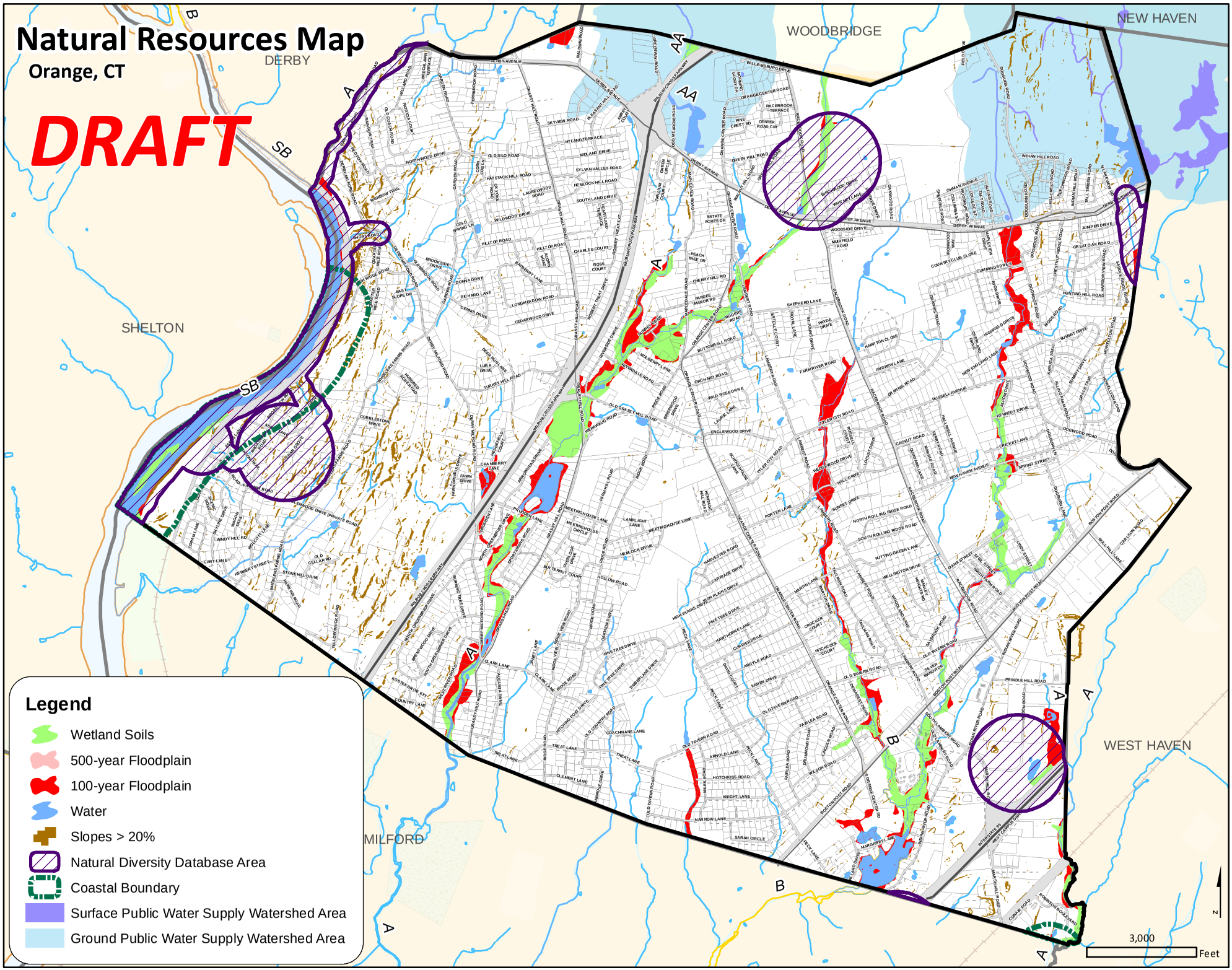

Major Watercourses

- Housatonic River
- Wepawaug River
- Indian River
- Two Mile Brook
- Race Brook
- Silver Brook
- Oyster River
- Cove River

Sensitive Water Resources

The South Central Regional Water Authority manages several high-quality water bodies located in the northern portion of the Town of Orange:

- Wepawaug Reservoir and upstream segment of the Wepawaug River,
- Maltby Lakes and upstream segments of Silver Brook and the Cove River.

Activities upstream of these resources are closely managed since they occur in areas which are designated for existing or potential public supply of water.

Impaired Water Resources

Some portions of the following water resources are considered impaired, generally due to urban runoff and similar types of pollutants:

- Housatonic River (both salt- and freshwater sections),
- Wepawaug River,
- Race Brook,
- Twomile Brook,
- Indian River, and
- Silver Brook

Protect Water Resources

Protection of water *quality* is the most important natural resource protection issue in Orange. Many Orange residents obtain their drinking water from wells and there are several public water supply sources which serve residents of Orange and other communities served by the South Central Regional Water Authority. The management of water runoff *quantity* is also an important consideration for overall environmental health.

Development can adversely affect water resources since impervious surfaces:

- reduce groundwater infiltration and flow (reducing the water supply to wetlands and aquifers),
- accelerate runoff (leading to channel scouring and siltation of watercourses and waterbodies), and
- transmit pollutants more directly to watercourses and waterbodies.

The majority of development in the Town of Orange occurred prior to the adoption of modern-day stormwater management standards. Most of the existing drainage infrastructure consists of traditional storm drains and catch basins that discharge directly to surface waters without treatment, other than detention to maintain peak rates of discharge. Urban stormwater runoff from developed land uses (i.e., impervious cover such as roads and parking lots) is a significant contributor to water quality impairments in the Town's major water bodies.

Water Quality

Water Quantity

Water Quality Protection

Protecting water *quality* can be furthered by the following types of strategies:

- Managing land use activities, especially in public water supply watersheds, to reduce and minimize pollutants
- Implementing "low impact development" practices which use vegetation and infiltration to better manage stormwater quality
- Reducing the amount of effective impervious coverage (road widths, parking requirements, etc.) to reduce pollutants and allow for the use of some areas for implementing LID practices
- Allowing for the use of permeable surfaces along roadways and in parking areas (e.g., porous asphalt, pavers, etc.)
- Conserving vegetated buffers along streams and rivers
- Eliminating curbing along roadways and in parking areas, where appropriate, to allow runoff to discharge and infiltrate into the surrounding natural ground surface or into an LID practice such as a roadside swale

Improperly operating septic systems are a potential threat to water quality and public health. While there has been no indication of widespread septic failures or problems in Orange, Orange may wish to consider adopting a septic management program to help identify possible septic problems and avoid potential pollution. Communities with such programs typically:

- require that all properties be walked over at least once every three years to inspect for system failures,
- require that information on septic tank pumping be reported to the Town, and/or
- sponsor programs to educate property owners about septic operation and maintenance.

Two additional programs which can be effective in protecting water quality include:

- Educating residents about threats to water quality (lawn fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide, etc.)
- Ensuring appropriate erosion and sediment controls.

No Curbing / Rain Garden

Permeable Pavers

Water Quality Protection

For many years, water quality protection focused on eliminating "point" sources of pollution (such as industrial discharges).

With the progress that has been made in reducing or eliminating pollution from these sources, attention has now turned to "non-point" sources. This includes storm drainage discharges, lawn fertilizer, septic systems, agricultural runoff, and similar sources.

Water Quantity Management

Managing water *quantity* (maintaining base flow and reducing peak flow) can be furthered by the following types of strategies:

- Seeking to minimize the impact of impervious surfaces which accelerate runoff and pollutants
- Reducing the amount of runoff discharged directly to watercourses
- Replicating the runoff characteristics of the natural environment instead of accelerating and concentrating the flow
- Replenishing groundwater flows to wetland and watercourse areas
- Implementing "low impact development" practices which use vegetation and infiltration to better manage stormwater runoff and quantity

The map on the facing page shows the Hydrologic Soil Group classifications for different parts of Orange. These categories have been established by the Natural Resource Conservation Service based on historical soil surveys. This information reveals:

- Type A soils (soils having high infiltration rates) are not prevalent in Orange.
- Type B soils (soils having moderate infiltration rates) are generally more prevalent in the western half of the Town.
- Type C soils (soils which have slower infiltration rates and are less conducive to infiltration) are generally more prevalent in the eastern half of the Town
- Areas of Type D soils are distributed throughout the municipality and are generally associated with wetlands. Type D soils have very slow infiltration rates and are not recommended for infiltration.

Dry Detention Basin

Water Quality Basin

Hydrologic Soils Groups

Orange, CT

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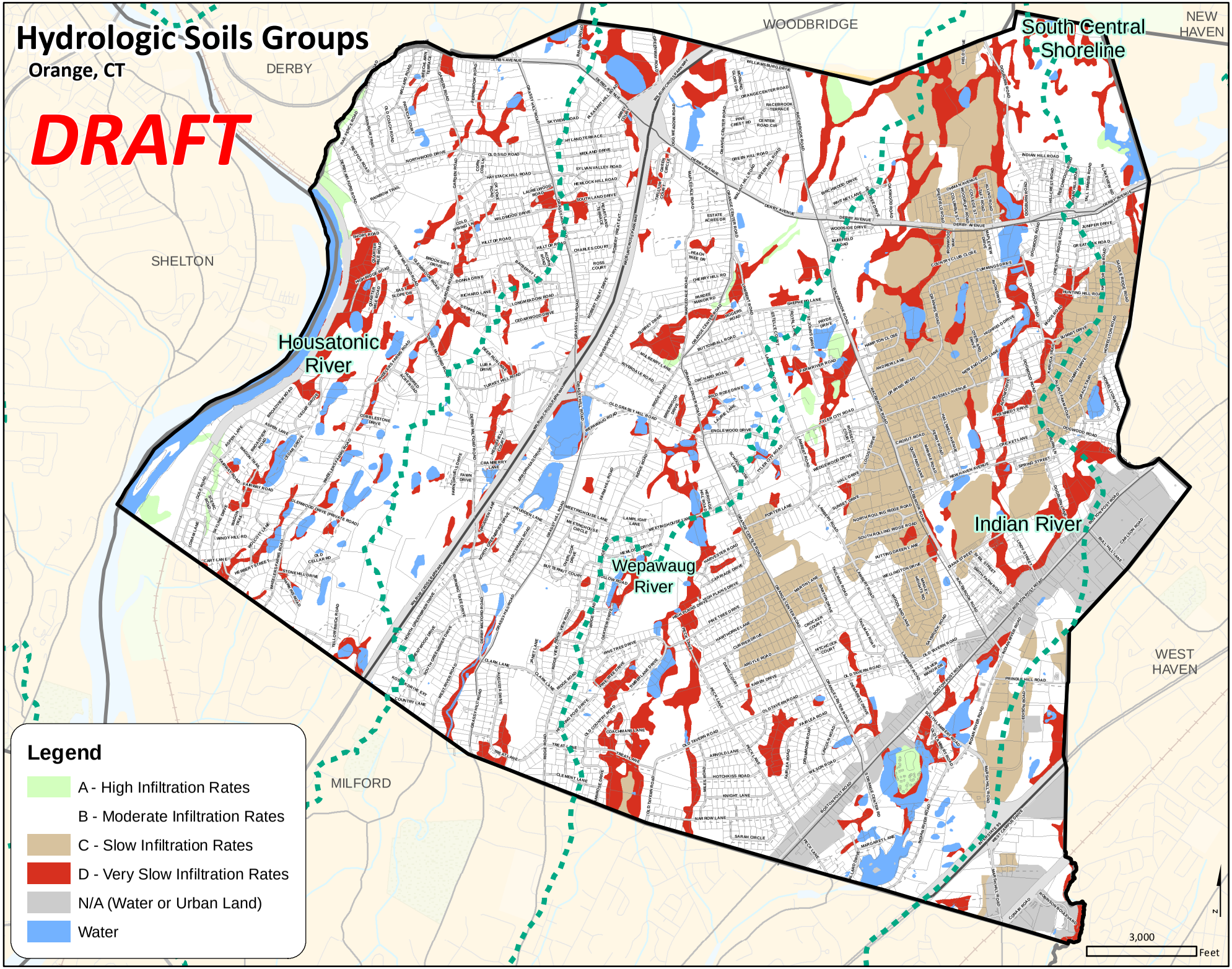

Importance of LID

Although most of the Town of Orange is fully developed, the potential exists for new development on undeveloped land throughout the Town and infill / redevelopment of currently developed areas.

If Orange continues to manage stormwater the way it has, drainage issues may get more urgent in the future because we are already at or near the margin of what can be accommodated.

New approaches, such as Low Impact Development (LID), are necessary to mitigate water quality and quantity impacts of future development and to protect high-quality water resources in the Town of Orange.

Opportunities exist for the implementation of LID for new development and redevelopment projects throughout the Town.

Reportedly there is currently one green infrastructure best management practice (BMP) in the Town of Orange – a rain garden at the Old Tavern Road Recreation Area. This BMP was installed during a Town funded parking lot expansion project.

This is significant because it coincides with areas which have historically experienced localized flooding (Wepawaug River, Indian River, and several smaller tributaries). Soils in these areas of Orange do not allow rainfall to infiltrate quickly and the resulting runoff can result in flooding.

Some other flooding issues in the community are the result of undersized drainage culverts or other issues:

- Wrights Pond / Old Grassy Hill (undersized culvert)
- Coachmans Lane / Old Country Road (undersized culvert)
- Margaret Drive / Mallard Drive (lake flooding due to outlet structure)
- Surrey Drive (flooding from the Wepawaug River)
- Prudden Lane (flooding from the Wepawaug River)

If the frequency and severity of large storms increases in the future (as is expected), flooding is expected to become more severe as well.

Section 382-26 of the Subdivision Regulations (Stormwater Management) provides standards to address water quantity issues:

- no increase in the rate of runoff for up to the 100-year storm event (at the discretion of the Town Engineer/Director of Public Works),
- detention systems shall be designed to capture at least the first one inch of rainfall of any storm event,
- direct stormwater discharges to watercourses and wetlands are discouraged,
- if site conditions permit, post-development stormwater *volumes* should remain the same or be less than pre-development volumes,
- the Town the authority to perform maintenance on stormwater facilities that are not being properly maintained at the expense of the owner.

Still, implementation of "low impact development" (LID) approaches is recommended in order to be able to address the water resource issues of today and the future.

Protect Water Resources		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Protect water quality by managing stormwater runoff and other sources of pollution.		
2. Manage water quantity by seeking to replicate the natural water cycle in terms of infiltration and runoff.		
3. Protect public water supply watersheds.		
4. Implement "low impact development" practices to help manage water quality and water quantity issues.		
5. Seek to reduce the amount of effective impervious coverage to reduce pollutants and runoff		
6. Conserve vegetated buffers along streams and rivers through conservation easements and other means.		
7. Maintain upland review areas adjacent to wetlands and watercourses in order to protect these resources.		
8. Anticipate and address flooding issues in the community.		
9. Consider managing water resource issues on a watershed basis.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
10. Review existing land use regulations and policies to remove impediments to implementing LID in Orange (road widths, parking requirements, curbing requirements, etc.).		
11. Incorporate LID stormwater management standards into existing town land use regulations.		
12. Educate design professionals and homeowners about LID tools and techniques.		
13. Consider establishing a septic management program to identify possible septic problems and avoid potential pollution.		
14. Conduct public education about protecting water quality (including reducing fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide use).		

OPEN SPACE

Open space can help protect community character, enhance the quality of life, conserve important natural resources, provide wildlife habitat, provide fiscal and economic benefits, shape development patterns, and preserve lands for recreational use …

Continue Open Space Preservation Efforts

Open space can help protect community character, enhance the quality of life for residents, conserve important natural resources, provide wildlife habitat, provide fiscal and economic benefits, shape development patterns, and preserve lands for recreational uses.

In recent years, Orange has been extremely active in acquiring land and preserving it as open space. The land use tabulation found that approximately 21 percent of Orange (2,375 acres) can be categorized as dedicated or managed open space. The open space which has been preserved is a significant accomplishment and will provide substantial community benefits for years to come.

Orange residents understand and support these efforts. In a community meeting conducted early in the planning process, residents identified preserving open space and enhancing community character as the top two issues of importance to them.

As a result, the focus of this Booklet is to suggest ways for the community to integrate and extend these efforts into a geographically specific open space action plan for Orange.

Turkey Hill Preserve

Turkey Hill Preserve

As indicated previously, the land use tabulation found that approximately 21 percent of Orange (2,375 acres) can be categorized as dedicated or managed open space. This includes land owned by the Town of Orange, the Orange Land Trust, the State of Connecticut, the South Central Regional Water Authority, and similar organizations. It also includes land owned by local golf courses and philanthropic organizations.

In addition, another 17 percent of Orange (1,898 acres) is undeveloped or partially developed. This land can be characterized as "perceived open space."

The fact that about 38 percent of the land area in Orange appears undeveloped has a significant impact on the perception of the community. However, if this 17 percent of the land which is undeveloped were to be developed in the future, it could have an impact on the overall perception of the community.

As a result, Orange should continue efforts to preserve open space as opportunities present themselves. The most important function of the open space component of the Plan of Conservation & Development will be to identify those areas that appear most worthy of preservation. Then efforts can be devoted to implementing the open space plan.

In other words, while Orange has done a great deal to preserve open space, much of what residents perceive today as open space is actually undeveloped land that may be developed in the future. For this reason, Orange should continue efforts aimed at preserving open space in the future.

Continue Open Space Preservation Efforts		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to preserve open space as opportunities present themselves.		
2. As appropriate, strive to convert managed open space and perceived open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or the land trust.		
3. Continue to coordinate open space preservation efforts with the Orange Land Trust and similar organizations.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
4. Consider clarifying "allowed uses" of Town parcels in order to determine which parcels are "dedicated" open space.		

Terminology

In the Plan, "dedicated open space" is used to describe land that is typically owned by a public or non-profit entity and is expected to remain as open space in perpetuity. It typically allows for public use of the land.

The term "managed open space" includes land that is used for another purpose but provides the community with some open space benefits (such as land owned or used by private schools, golf courses, cemeteries, and excess land at municipal facilities). Since such land may not allow public use of the land or may be sold or developed in the future, it is not considered dedicated open space.

Finally, "perceived open space" is private land that is presently vacant or partially developed. While this land may appear to be "open space", nothing prevents this land from being sold or developed at some time in the future. This includes land presently assessed under the Public Act 490 program as farm or forest land.

Greenbelts and Greenways

A greenway is a corridor of open space that:

- may protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources or offer opportunities for recreation or non-motorized transportation,
- may connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors,
- may be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway, along a man-made corridor, including an unused right-of-way, traditional trail routes or historic barge canals, or
- may be a green space along a highway or around a village.

CGS 23-100

Open Space Guide

The Orange Land Trust prepared a guide to local open spaces with locations, brief descriptions, trail maps, facilities, and hours.

Strive To Create An Open Space System

While the amount of open space is an issue, the utility of open space is more important in the long term. If open spaces can be interconnected into a cohesive overall system, the value of open space to residents and the impact on community grow exponentially through:

- increased accessibility for all residents,
- enhanced quality of life for residents,
- improved wildlife corridors, and
- more opportunities for active or passive use.

One way to enhance the utility and the quality of an open space system is to establish a system of greenways and trails. Trails and greenways add to the character of the Town and provide safe and relaxing recreation.

Efforts to create a system of trails in Orange should continue. Some communities have obtained easements over private property to create trail connections or have used former rail/streetcar corridors or electrical or sewer rights of way to create greenways and trails.

Strive To Create An Open Space System		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Strive to establish an open space system in Orange by interconnecting open space areas into a comprehensive greenbelt system with trails.		
2. Promote public use of, and access to, open space.		
3. Continue to create a trail system within and between open spaces.		

Note: Priority open space parcels or other open space recommendations (from the Conservation Commission or other agencies) have not yet been included on this map. Past open space objectives include:

1. **Protect stream belts and water resources**
2. **Add to existing open space areas**
3. **Establish open space corridors / greenways**
4. **Preserve farmland**
5. **Protect scenic views and vistas**
6. **Protect historic sites**
7. **Protect fragile natural resources**
8. **Properly maintain existing open space parcels**
9. **Protect and care for trees**
10. **Protect coastal area resources**

Open Space

Orange, CT

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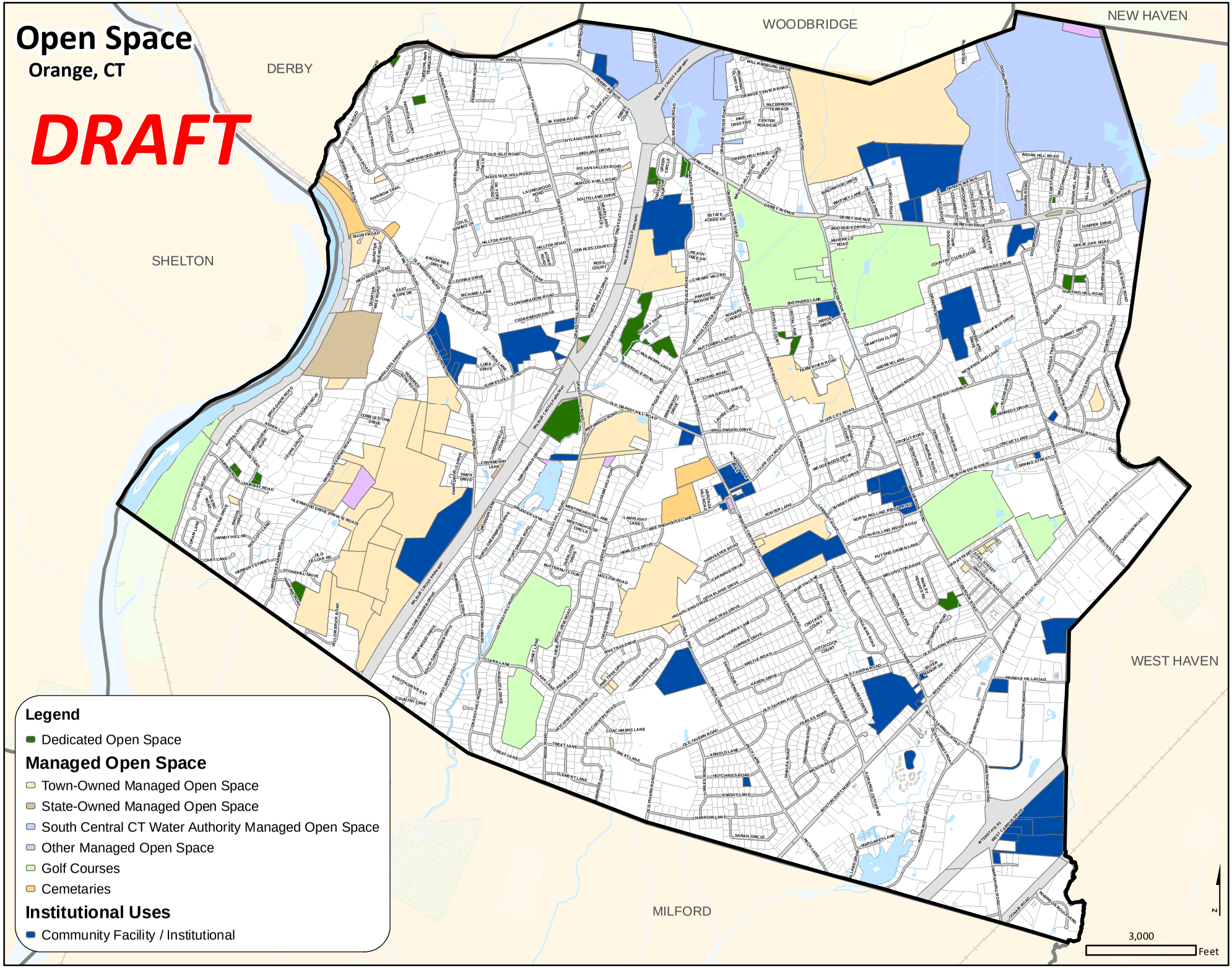

Use All Available Tools To Preserve Open Space

Since open space preservation is so important to residents, the Town should use all available tools to help preserve open space

Open Space Action Plan - An Open Space Action Plan will help coordinate and guide local open space preservation activities. This can be part of the Plan of Conservation and Development. Once adopted, the Open Space Action Plan can provide:

- a unifying action strategy to guide open space preservation efforts,
- policies and recommendations for identifying, funding and acquiring land for open space, and
- a basis for obtaining state and/or federal grants for open space acquisition.

Orange should also consider adopting a Greenway Trail Plan.

Regulatory Strategies – While State statutes allow communities to preserve open space at the time a property is developed, Orange may not be making effective use of this authority:

- while CGS Section 8-25 allows a planning commission to *require* an open space "set-aside" as part of a subdivision, Orange's regulations (Section 382-31) seem to indicate that an applicant may *provide* open space as part of a proposal,
- CGS Section 8-25 allows a planning commission to *require* a fee-in-lieu-of open space as part of a subdivision and Orange has not provided for this, and
- density regulations that promote more flexible subdivision arrangements with more open space preservation.

In addition to purchasing open space, the Town should consider requiring open space dedication to the Town or the Land Trust as part of development proposals.

Fiscal Strategies - In the past, the Town has supported open space acquisition through the annual operating and capital budgets. Some communities have bonded open space funds in advance of a specific purchase in order to have funds available when opportunities arise. The Town may wish to consider this approach.

In the future, the Town should also take advantage of state and federal grant programs for open space acquisition. Adoption of the proposed Open Space Plan and pursuit of its recommendations will increase the likelihood of obtaining funding.

Use All Available Tools To Preserve Open Space		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Use all available tools to help preserve open space.		
2. Use the Open Space component of the adopted POCD as a unifying strategy to guide open space preservation efforts.		
3. Strive to obtain open space (or a fee in lieu of open space) at the time of development.		
4. Continue to support open space acquisition through the annual operating and capital budgets.		
5. Consider bonding open space funds in advance of a specific purchase in order to have funds available when opportunities arise		
6. Take advantage of state and federal grant programs for open space acquisition		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
7. Prepare, adopt, and implement an Open Space Action Plan.		
8. Prepare, adopt, and implement a Greenway Trail Plan.		
9. Adopt an open space "set aside" requirement as part of the Subdivision Regulations.		
10. Adopt a "fee in lieu of open space" provision as part of the Subdivision Regulations.		
11. Consider allowing for more flexible residential development patterns which will help preserve open space.		

Woodland Trail

Paved Greenway Trail

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is a core value of the community and an important element of the Plan ...

Community character is a core value of the community and an important element of the Plan. Yet, the term "community character" really has no accepted definition.

In the broadest sense, community character includes those features that contribute to the overall quality of life for residents by enhancing the quality of the overall physical environment. Community character essentially consists of physical resources that make Orange special to its residents.

Encourage Farmland Preservation

Over the course of its history, Orange has been a rural and farming community. However, agriculture uses in the Town are challenged due to farm economics, generational transfer issues, and other factors. To enhance the rural character of the community, Orange should continue to seek ways to support agriculture locally:

- Continue support for reduced local tax assessment on agricultural lands (PA-490 farm assessment)
- Continue to lease Town land to farmers, as appropriate.

Encourage Farmland Preservation		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Seek to preserve existing agricultural lands and lands that have potential for agricultural use, including purchase of development rights.		
2. Continue to seek ways to support local farms and farmers.		
3. Continue with reduced local tax assessment on agricultural lands (PA-490 farm assessment).		
4. Continue to lease Town land to farmers.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
5. Consider adopting a "right to farm" policy.		

A map showing Farms and Farmland Soils is in the process of being updated to reflect information recently received from the Assessor's database.

Use Assessment (PA 490)

The use assessment program (PA 490) enhances the perception of open space in Orange since it helps land remain undeveloped longer and it reduces the pace of growth.

The program contains three major components:

- Farm land (designated by the assessor if an active farm),
- Forest (designated by the assessor or the state forester), and
- Open space (eligible land must be identified in the Plan of Conservation & Development and adopted by Town Meeting).

Preserve Undeveloped Land

Community character often comes down to the perception of the amount of undeveloped land in a community. As a result, Orange may wish to promote policies that help retain undeveloped land as long as possible.

Section 12-107 of the Connecticut Statutes allows a community to assess land by its use value (farm, forest, or open space) rather than its market value. The use assessment reduces the tax burden on the properties and reduces the possibility that land will be put into development if people cannot afford the taxes.

As indicated in the sidebar, the "farm" assessment program and the "forest" assessment program are both administered by the assessor in accordance with statutory provisions. The only municipal decision relates to the assessment values used for farm and forest property.

While the State provides guidelines, Orange should consider using the lowest values reasonable in order to make undeveloped land cheaper to own and help preserve undeveloped land longer.

At this time, strategies to take full advantage of the PA-490 "open space assessment" program are being considered.

Preserve Undeveloped Land		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to encourage the retention of undeveloped land.		
2. Continue with reduced local tax assessment on forest lands (PA-490 forest assessment).		
3. Consider using the lowest possible land values for the PA-490 program in order to preserve undeveloped land.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
4. Implement a program to offer a reduced local tax assessment for oversize residential parcels (PA-490 open space assessment).		

Protect Scenic Resources

Orange has a number of scenic areas and resources that help define the character of the Town and enhance the overall quality of life. Stone walls, barns, farm-type fences, and other "rural" features that contribute to community character should be preserved where appropriate. Threats to scenic areas and resources include insensitive siting of development, installation of privacy fences, and indiscriminate tree cutting.

The fact that Route 34 is a relatively undeveloped road corridor (compared to Derby and West Haven) is a point of local pride. The community has indicated it would like to see the scenic nature of Route 34 maintained in order to maintain community character along this busy thoroughfare.

While roadways are only about 10 percent of Orange's land area, they can have a disproportionate impact on the perception of community character. For this reason, Orange may wish to consider:

- adopting a scenic road ordinance to preserve the character of existing scenic roads, and
- amending current road construction standards to ensure that new roads become the scenic roads of the future.

Protect Scenic Resources		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Seek to preserve and protect scenic areas and resources.		
2. Seek to preserve or relocate scenic resources such as stone walls, barns, fences, and other scenic resources that are visible from public streets.		
3. Maintain the low intensity nature of the Route 34 corridor.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
4. Adopt regulations to consider scenic areas and resources as part of any land use application.		
5. Consider adopting a scenic road ordinance.		
6. Review current road construction standards to ensure that new roads become the scenic roads of the future.		
7. Consider establishing an "adopt-a-road" program with local organizations in order to promote litter control and enhance community character.		

National Register of Historic Places

National Register Districts

- Orange Center Historic District

National Register Places

- Rising Sun Tavern
- William Andrew House
- Henry Miller House
- Co. Asa Platt House

State Register of Historic Places

Properties on the National Register are also automatically listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

Local Historic Districts

- Orange Center

Protect Historic Resources

Orange contains a number of historic resources and such resources contribute to the overall character of the community. Some of the main resources are listed in the sidebar.

The main organizations involved with historic preservation include the Orange Historical Society (a non-government organization), the Orange Center Historic District Commission, and the Municipal Historian.

The most effective means of protecting historic resources include:

1. Responsible ownership or sensitive stewardship,
2. Local historic districts with regulatory boards,
3. Village districts overseen by a Planning and Zoning Commission,
4. Use of historic overlay zones and adaptive re-use provisions in zoning regulations.
5. Adoption of tax abatement programs.
6. Designation on the State or National Register of Historic Places.

Overall, it appears there are appropriate provisions in place to protect historic resources.

Protect Historic Resources		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to identify and protect historical and archeological resources.		
2. Continue to promote sensitive ownership of historical and archeological resources.		
3. Promote educational programs so that people are sensitive to the value of historic and archeological resources.		
4. Encourage awareness of historic and archeological resources through the use of appropriate signage and displays.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
5. If desired in the future, consider adopting a demolition delay ordinance that will provide time to explore and review alternatives to demolition (for structures of a certain age).		

Character Resources

Orange, CT

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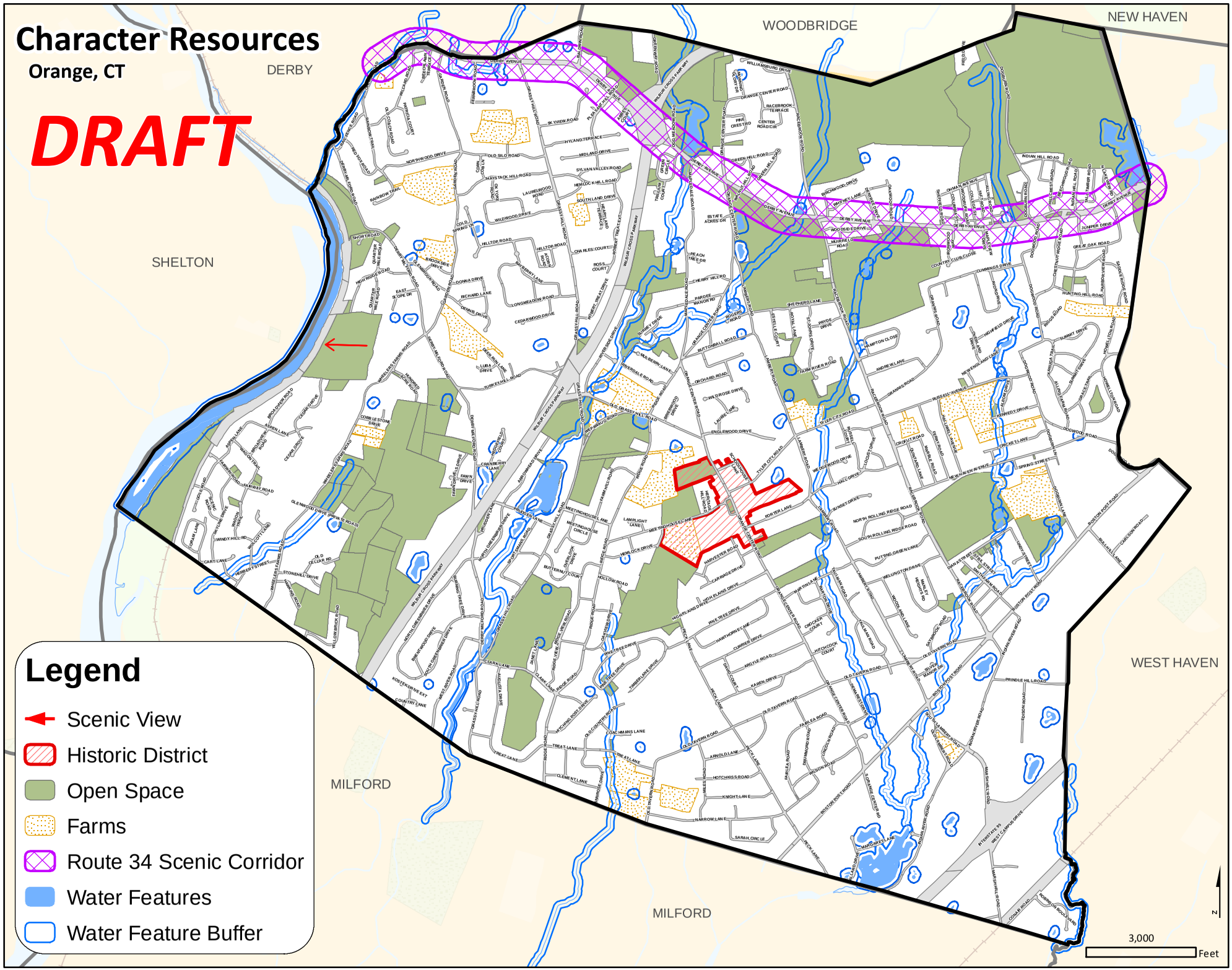


Design Review

New development should enhance local architectural style and character.

However, regulating architectural design can be problematic because it can be a subjective issue. What qualifies as "good design" to some, others see as visually incompatible or inappropriate.

On the other hand, a well-developed design review process can foster an improved and deeper understanding of community design and mitigate the subjective nature of reviewing architectural design.

The design review process would generally be utilized for development of:

- multi-family uses,
- business uses,
- institutional uses,
- special permit uses, and
- other uses that could have a significant overall impact on the community.

Promote Architectural Character

Architectural design also influences the character of a community. Buildings that complement each other and are consistent with local architectural styles will enhance community character. However, when buildings do not reflect the established scale and style of local architecture they negatively affect community character.

Some communities have established a design review process with accompanying standards to help ensure that new and existing architectural styles are compatible.

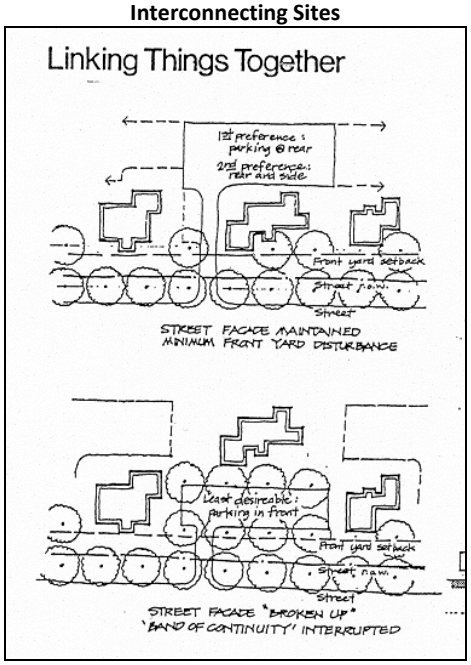
If Orange wanted to address architectural character, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission could consider establishing a design review board with members appointed from the community at large. This subcommittee would review plans for commercial uses and special permits in residential zones submitted to it by the Commission. The design review board would then provide formal comments to the Commission about how to improve the design of buildings and sites.

Since the design review comments occur during the time period between receipt of an application and action by the Commission, it should not extend the decision timetable for an applicant. In addition, since the comments from the design review board are advisory to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, the Commission could choose to not impose conditions that it considered impractical or unrealistic.

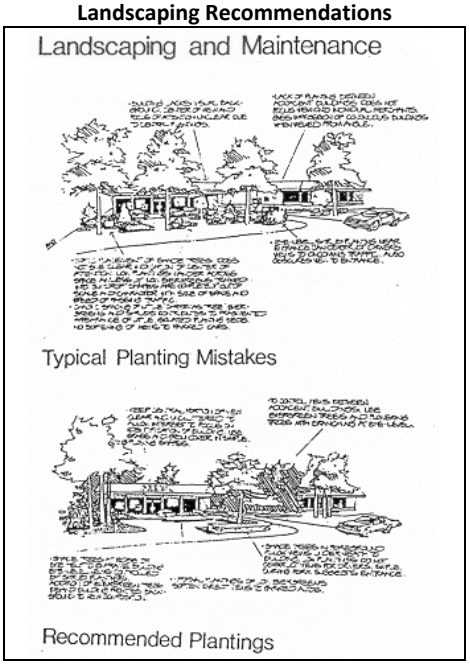
Promote Architectural Character		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Promote architectural character and community design as part of new development.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
2. To enhance community design, consider establishing a design review process for commercial uses and for special permit uses in residential zones.		
3. Encourage any design review committee to establish and maintain design guidelines to advise applicants of desirable and undesirable architectural treatments of buildings and sites.		

Sample Design Guidelines From Other Communities

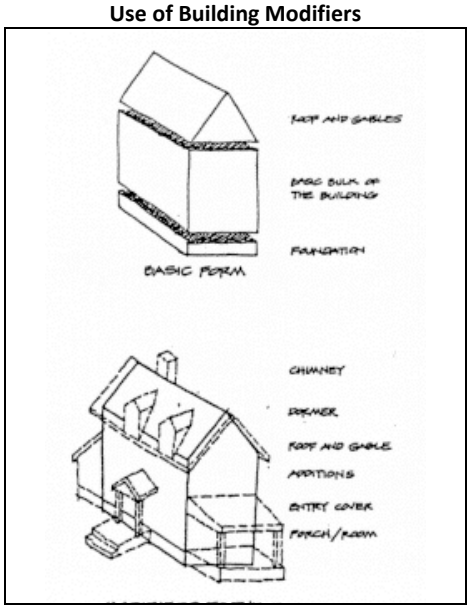
Interconnecting Sites



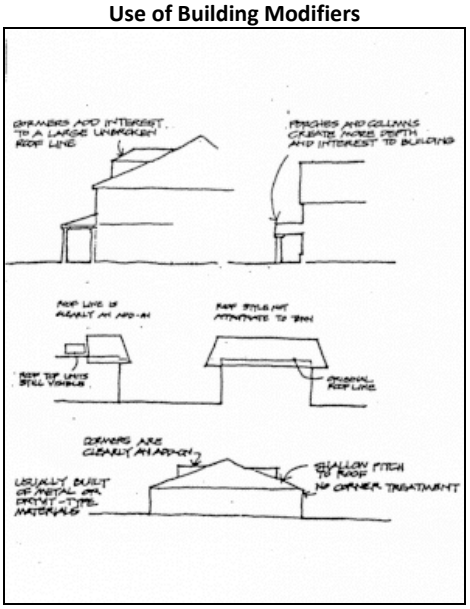
Landscaping Recommendations



Use of Building Modifiers



Use of Building Modifiers



Promote Community Spirit

Community spirit is another indefinable, but indispensable community element that contributes to the overall character of Orange.

Spirit is the feeling residents have about their community and how it projects to the outside world. It is about community pride and positive impressions and fostering positive actions and results within the community. It is all about enhancing the overall quality of life in Orange.

The following table identifies some of the resources that have been identified as contributing to community spirit:

Resource	Description
Unique Events	Unique events (parades, fairs, and concerts) where residents join in a common activity add to community spirit.
Positive Recognition	Positive recognition of local events and activities helps build community spirit and pride.
Volunteers	Volunteers and organizations help make Orange a special place and help build community spirit.
Communication	Keeping people involved in community issues and priorities is helps maintain community spirit.
Shared Visions / Goals	Establishing and attaining shared visions and goals helps build community spirit and pride.

Memorial Day Parade

Orange Country Fair

Promote Community Spirit		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to encourage community and civic activities that promote and enhance community spirit.		
2. Continue to support local parades, Orange Country Fair, and other community events.		
3. Maintain a community calendar to inform people of upcoming events.		
4. Continue to use Orange Government Access Television (OGAT) to keep residents informed about community affairs.		
5. Continue and enhance programs to recruit volunteers.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
6. Recognize local volunteers through a picnic, a "volunteer of the year designation" or other means.		

Orange Country Fair

Community Concert

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY

Sustainability and resiliency are newer issues for Orange to consider as part of the Plan ...

Overview

For the purposes of this Plan, "sustainability" refers to the philosophy of encouraging activities that allow present generations to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The term "resiliency" refers to the community's ability to readily recover from sudden changes or adversity.

Much of Orange was built during a time when it was assumed that resources to support growth and development patterns were unconstrained and that major changes were unlikely to occur and that the environment would support such growth. While this still may be the case, it seems prudent to evaluate alternative scenarios and the possible implications of those scenarios. If we are to enhance the character and quality of life for present and future generations, being a sustainable and resilient community – able to adapt to possible future changes – may be especially important.

Sustainability

Resiliency

Promote Sustainability

Promote Energy Conservation / Sustainability

Energy availability and cost are likely to be more significant issues in Orange in the future. This has financial implications for all residents – whether for leading their daily lives or for supporting functions provided by the Town.

The Town should prepare and implement a Sustainability Plan. This could be prepared by the Conservation Commission or a Sustainability / Energy Task Force which could evaluate alternative approaches (space heating, electrical consumption, electrical generation, vehicles) and make recommendations to reduce energy usage, increase reliability, and save money.

Some of the key issues for the sustainability / energy task force to consider include:

- Prepare an energy conservation action plan to reduce operating costs, reduce lifecycle costs, and lower the carbon footprint of the Town / school buildings.
- Review municipal facilities for energy conservation opportunities (lighting, controls, equipment, building envelope, etc.).
- Investigate opportunities for energy generation (solar, wind, fuel cell, etc.) as a way to lower energy costs and enhance resiliency.
- Identify ways to involve the community in implementing energy conservation practices.
- Initiate transition to renewable energy for town vehicles (natural gas, electric, biofuels, and hybrids).

Residential Solar Installation

Rooftop Solar Installation

Promote Water Conservation

The United States has one of the highest rates of personal water consumption in the world (100 gallons of water per person per day for domestic purposes). Simple changes to some everyday activities can reduce most people's domestic water use by 10% or more. Orange should encourage water conservation especially since some areas of the community rely on groundwater for domestic use.

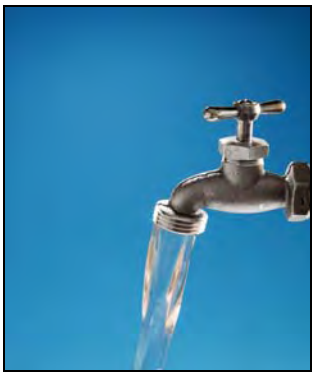
Promote Waste Reduction / Recycling

The overall waste stream and recycling is another potential area for investigation and education in Orange. Reducing the waste stream and promoting recycling should be promoted.

Educate Residents About Sustainability Concepts

Efforts should be devoted towards educating residents and school children about sustainability concepts.

Water Conservation



Recycling

Electric Vehicle

Promote Sustainability		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Promote energy conservation / sustainability.		
2. Promote water conservation.		
3. Promote waste reduction / recycling.		
4. Educate residents about sustainability concepts.		

Promote Resiliency

One of the lessons for Orange from Hurricane Irene in 2011, an unusual October 2011 snowstorm, Storm Sandy in 2012, and winter storm Charlotte in 2013 was the value of emergency response capability and emergency preparedness planning. In some of these situations, electrical power was lost to sections of the community and some residents were without heat or water.

The Town of Orange activated its emergency response procedures and was able to have emergency shelters, bottled water, and other supplies and services for people that needed it.

Orange should continue to review and improve hazard mitigation plans for recurring events, such as flooding. For example, Orange should assess the vulnerability of public and private infrastructure (e.g., utilities, transportation, structures) to climate change and increased frequency of extreme storms and develop adaptation strategies. This is a good example of a hazard mitigation approach which looks at how Orange might prepare for recurring events or respond to events when they occur.

Orange should also continue to review and improve emergency preparedness plans (single events) in order to be able to respond to these events in the future. Evaluating possible scenarios and preparing for unknown events before they occur is a useful exercise for a community. Such approaches help the community respond in a timely manner with the appropriate tools and resources.

This can also include protecting electrical lines by placing them underground as opportunities present themselves. This should also include establishing "smart grids" to identify the location of circuit interruptions and other problems as soon as possible.

Promote Resiliency		
Suggested Policies	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to review and improve hazard mitigation plans for recurring events, such as flooding.		
2. Continue to review and improve emergency preparedness plans.		
Suggested Initial Tasks		
3. Assess the vulnerability of infrastructure (e.g., utilities, transportation, structures) to climate change and increased frequency of extreme storms and develop adaptation strategies.		

Notes & Comments

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