

ABINGTON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN UPDATE 2014



October, 2014



**Abington Conservation Commission
Old Colony Planning Council
70 School Street
Brockton, MA 02301**

Table of Contents

<u>Item</u>	<u>Page</u>
Section 1: Plan Summary	I-1
Section 2: Introduction	II-1
A. Background, Statement of Purpose	II-1
B. Planning Process and Public Participation	II-2
Section 3: Community Setting	III-1
A. Regional Context	III-1
B. History of the Community	III-3
C. Population Characteristics	III-3
D. Growth and Development Patterns	III-6
Section 4: Environmental Inventory and Analysis	IV-1
A. Geology, Soils and Topography	IV-1
B. Landscape Character	IV-2
C. Water Resources	IV-2
D. Vegetation/Habitat	IV-6
E. Fisheries and Wildlife	IV-9
F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments	IV-12
G. Environmental Challenges	IV-14
Section 5: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest	V-1
A. Inventory of Unprotected Private and Nonprofit Parcels of Conservation and Recreation Interest including Land Under Chapters 61A and 61B	V-3
B. Protected Public Holdings	V-8
C. Inventory of Partially Protected Land	V-26
Section 6: Community Vision and Goals	VI-1
A. Description of the Process in Updating the Town's Vision and Goals	VI-1
B. 2006 Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals	VI-2
C. 2013 Open Space and Recreation Goals	VI-3
Section 7: Analysis of Needs	VII-1

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs	VII-1
B. Summary of Community Needs	VII-2
C. Management Needs	VII-3
Section 8: Goals and Objectives	VIII-1
Section 9: Seven year Action Plan:	IX-1
Section 10: Public Comments	X-1
Section 11: References	XI-1
Appendix A - Handicapped Accessibility	A-1
Appendix B - Results of the 2006 Open Space Plan Recommendations	B-1
Appendix C - DOT Endorsement of Rail-Side Bike Trails	C-1

SECTION I: PLAN SUMMARY

The need to restore and maintain the Wilson Memorial Bridge and Arch in Island Grove Park remains one of the long term needs and highest priorities of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The bridge and arch have deteriorated over the years and are in serious need of restoration. The historic bridge spans Island Grove Pond and, with the arch, is the centerpiece of the Park. This is the town's most heavily used recreation site and attracts families and individuals from the town and nearby communities to its summer activities. The bridge, arch, and stone work have deteriorated over the years and need restoration. Interim repairs have maintained the safety of the Bridge and \$300,000 has been received for near term work restoring the commemorative arch. Preliminary engineering estimates indicate that much more will ultimately be needed for combined repair and restoration. The Town must seek funding assistance for the total repair and restoration and the project would be a prime candidate for grant funds under the PARC program (Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities - ex Urban Self-Help Program) assisting communities in acquiring and developing park and recreation land and facilities, or for Community Preservation Act funds if the town accepts the act. The application would be by the owner of the bridge. **Most likely the Board of Selectmen acting for the Town.**

The acquisition as open space of some of the remaining Pohorecky Farm adjacent to and partially within the Ames Nowell State Park is a **recommended high priority for state action**. This valuable open space resource was voted to be acquired by a Special Town Meeting in November, 1999. At the time, the Town authorized borrowing 1.4 million dollars and voted to exercise its right of first refusal to acquire the property under the provisions of M.G.L. C 61B, S9. The farm became tied up in legal issues between private parties and the vote was subsequently rescinded. **Major town acquisitions of Pohorecky property are no longer under consideration. Several Form A lots on the southern side of Chestnut St. have been sold for new housing construction and a major 38.88-acre tract between Chestnut Street and the town line, north and east of pond is proposed for a 24 lot subdivision. A more modest Town acquisition of the 7.4 acre parcel including the western portion of Cushing Pond could have protected that portion of the pond and enhance the abutting 5.5-acre town holdings north of the pond by giving them some pond frontage but parcel has been purchased by the owner of the eastern portion of the pond.** This land could possibly have been acquired with 50% State assistance under LAND (Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity) program supported by the Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (P.L.88-578) The town's share of any joint acquisition could probably draw on any future Community Preservation Act funds. **The state's interest in the Ames Nowell Park inholding continues but is inactive.**

State acquisition of the remaining southern portions of the valuable resource which extend into the park would still help to enhance, protect, and expand the state holdings there. (The slightly smaller adjacent Henrikson Ch.61B property also extending into the park has already been acquired by a local tree nursery firm.) **In the meantime, the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (ex DEM and MDC) remains**

interested in acquiring the remaining land particularly that south of Chestnut Street which includes inholdings in Ames Nowell State Parks. .

As noted in 2006 plan, the town's last acquisition was the 60-acre former Carista property off of Vineyard Road, a Ch. 61B site. This was purchased from its interim owners, the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Foundation (MFBF). The Foundation acquired the property on behalf of the Town with the town's later purchase authorized by Town Meeting in late 2004. This is a major natural open space and habitat resource for the Town. It abuts a small portion of the 40-acre Blueberry Hill land off of Old Farm Road and a larger connecting acquisition is proposed below. However, there are no signs identifying the Carista land as town land for public use and there are no apparent public access points. **See photo in Chapter V of the signless dead ending of Hjelm Street into that land.**

With the Carista acquisition Abington now has approximately 1,707.25 acres of fully or partially protected open space as discussed in Chapter V.

Beyond these major achievements, a continuing need is to protect the remaining open spaces in otherwise developed areas. Examples for study would be a portion of the partly developed 8.4 acres (Map 44/Parcel 51) at the Corner of Hancock and Lincoln Streets, or the smaller 4.4 acres (21/109) north of Rockland Street and surrounded by single-family house lots. Protection of such local unprotected open spaces through acquisition of development rights, deed restriction, or outright purchase of such significant land in developed or developing areas of the town is a recommended high priority.

Recommendation: Initiate a continuing neighborhood-based effort to identify such valuable parcels and appropriate protection measures, and to advocate for the needed actions.

In this spirit, the Seven Year Action Plan calls for implementing important, achievable open space preservation and recreation projects over the next seven years.

As shown in Appendix I, "Results of 2006 Plan Recommendations," very few of the 2006 plan proposals have been achieved. Many of these proposals, major or minor, local or regional, still deserve attention over the next seven years.

Noteworthy among these continuing proposals are acquisition of the remaining Pohorecky Farm land and its integration with local and regional/state resources; development of a plan for connecting trails through Diane Circle to nature trails within the Beaver Brook Reservation and local conservation lands, and laying out bicycle routes tying the town's recreational assets together and linking them to such facilities which bridge adjacent communities including the new rail trail.

In all, the Plan makes major and minor recommendations, some carried over from the 2006 plan, and some newly identified through the update process. Efforts should be made

to acquire this resource, possibly with 50% State assistance under LAND (Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity) program supported by the Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (P.L.88-578). The town's share of any joint acquisition could probably draw on any future Community Preservation Act funds.

SECTION II: INTRODUCTION

A. Background, Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Abington 2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan update and of this 2014 Update is to guide the efforts of the Town's various bodies to preserve locally and regionally important open spaces, to protect related resources, to provide settings for diverse recreation activities; and, in order to implement the Plan, to gain Division of Conservation Services (DCS) approval and certification of the Plan. This would allow state aid under the Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity (LAND) and Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Programs. These concerns and purposes remain.

The Park and Recreation Commission led the preparation of the November 2000 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) with input from the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission. Then the Planning Board and the Town Planner prepared the 2006 Plan with the cooperation of the Park and Recreation Commissions, the Conservation Commission, and the Open Space Committee, and with input from local organizations and the general public. The present (2014) plan has been developed under the leadership of the Conservation Commission with support from the same bodies and assistance from the Old Colony Planning Council. The Plan continues to reflect the needs to preserve, enhance, and expand open space and recreational resources in Abington, and to protect natural resources in accord with the public's support for these goals.

The Conservation and Recreation Commissions and the Planning Board recognize the need for effective land use controls and environmental protection regulations for the proper development of the Town. The three also advocate a proactive approach to the acquisition of open space. This reflects the town's stewardship of its existing open space; including land use planning that preserves, protects, and enhances the remaining public and private open space. The principal objective of the Plan is to preserve and enhance Abington's natural and recreational resources.

The Planning Board's involvement helps to assure that the Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan are consistent with the policies and objectives of the Town's 1999 Master Plan and its 2004 Community Development Plan (CD Plan), and with that plan's Open Space and Resource Protection Element.

This 2014 OSRP Update describes the town's natural features, important resources, and present land uses, and discusses the significance of resources shared with adjacent communities.

The open space inventory reviews the status of large areas of both publicly and privately-owned undeveloped land. It then reviews Abington's needs and opportunities, identifying residents' desires for more open space, for enhanced existing open spaces, and for increased recreational facilities and programs, and the recommends appropriate actions. This report also closely reviews the level of protection given to the town's open space, recreation, and natural resources, and goes on to evaluate the accessibility of the open space and recreation resources under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

B. Planning Process and Public Participation

As noted above, the Abington 2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan was prepared by the Abington Planning Board in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Commission, the Conservation Commission and the Open Space Committee working as a Joint Committee. The present 2014 effort lacks the Joint Committee, but has drawn upon the concerns of the 2006 plan guided primarily by the Conservation Commission and citizens participating in public sessions. Thus this effort draws primarily on the Conservation Commission as the effective Open Space Committee, on the Recreation Commission, and on the interested citizens.

The process involved reviewing past planning efforts including the 1999 Master Plan, the 2000 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the 2004 Community Development (CD) Plan.

The 2004 CD Plan was produced with Massachusetts' Executive Order 418 funds administered by an Inter-Agency Working Group. The intent was to produce an "image-based, action-oriented" document, highlighting work needed in the key areas of housing, resource protection, open space/recreation, and economic development. The Plan included work needed to gain Division of Conservation Services (DCS) approval of the then forthcoming update to the 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

The CD Plan focused on opportunities and needed actions in the three key areas. It built upon these and on the comprehensive plan elements of community facilities, transportation, development of goals and objectives, and implementation techniques drawn from the 1999 Master Plan. The CD Plan examined the town's natural resources, identified the overall suitability of the remaining vacant land for various uses and produced a map of Open Space and Recreation Suitability among others, along with an overall Community Development Plan. In accord with the DCS review of the 2000 Open Space Plan, the effort evaluated the accessibility of the town's open space and recreation resources, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and discussed the significance of resources shared with adjacent communities.

The Town Planner's work preparing the 2006 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan was supported by the Joint Committee and drew on the 2000 Plan and the 2004 CD Plan in consultation with the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Park and Recreation Commission, the School Department, grass roots organizations and the general public, with assistance from the Old Colony Planning Council and oversight by the Town Manager's Office. The resulting 2006 Plan in turn is the basis of this 2014 update as it seeks to set a course for the future.

To acquire current values and concerns, staff distributed the "Results of the 2006 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan Recommendations" to Conservation Commission members and was prepared to provide copies for other interested boards and citizens at a September 2012 "Kick-off Meeting." It would then solicit comments on which proposals should be retained in the current

plan and what should be added. However the Commission was undergoing a major reorganization, the Kick-off meeting was postponed, and none of the marked up summaries of past proposals were returned.

Later, to ensure that the updated plan reflected current concerns, the staff distributed copies of the 2006 Summary of Recommendations to all Commission members, and had copies of the 2014 Proposed Open Space and Recreation Goals and the Seven Year Action Plan available at a widely advertised October 8, 2013 Community Meeting. Staff presented a large map showing the 2006 recommendations and the suggested 2014 additions and modifications for comments.

Residents' comments included:

- Strong support for maximum agricultural re-use of the Griffin's Dairy land, including use for grazing of young cattle from a Hingham-based dairy operation using Agricultural Preservation Restriction land in Norwell.
- Skepticism about recommendations for camping and swimming in Ames Nowell State Park
- Enthusiasm for maintaining a natural habitat area along Beaver Brook and possibly including foot bridges allowing hiking on the Brockton side above and below Diane Circle and on the west side in Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation.
- Strong support for completing the Abington portion of the Hanover Branch Bicycle Trail
- Support for selective cutting or trimming of trees and brush to open up scenic vistas **possibly around some water bodies and as suggested by residents.**
- Support for ongoing efforts to repair /restore the Island Grove Park Bridge and Memorial Arch.
- Skepticism about neighbors' acceptance of a short pedestrian /bicycle connection between the Hancock Street area and the nearby Civic complex **despite acknowledgement of its value in giving pedestrian to the facilities and reducing local driving trip.**
- Support for increased recreation use of the filled in and leveled former Sewer Beds.
- General acceptance of the Open Space and Recreation Goals and the Action Plan pending time for a closer review of the specific proposed actions.

Subsequently, the Commission scheduled an October 22, 2013 session to identify the 10 highest priorities among the 29 proposed actions without ranking them. These are marked on the Seven Year Action Plan Table in Chapter Nine with an asterisk. The un-ranked first priorities, which are more specific on the table, are:

1. Increasing conservation holdings
2. Protecting water resources and other resources
3. Expansion/Improvement of Ames Nowell State Park
4. Improving access to the Walnut Street Conservation Area
5. Developing scattered community gardens
6. Encouraging new small scale agriculture
7. Improved Access to Reilly Field from the west
8. Educating the public on water quality protection measures
9. Creating a Lower Shumatuscacant Trail system
10. Extend the lower Shumatuscacant River Trail system

In addition members favored the proposed Rockland/Hanover Rail Trail though it was not on the initial table.

SECTION III: COMMUNITY SETTING

A. Regional Context

Abington is a relatively small suburban town (2010 population - 15,985) adjacent to the City of Brockton and the towns of Holbrook, Weymouth, Rockland, and Whitman. It is a suburb of both Brockton and Boston, and the recently-restored commuter rail service to Boston has made it a desirable location for many Boston commuters. The Regional Location Map, III-1 shows that State Routes 18, 58, 139 and 123 connect Abington to surrounding communities and to the region's limited access highways, Routes 3, 24, and 128, (which are all one-town distant) making the Town reasonably accessible by road as well as by rail. Abington is 10.14 square miles in area and had a 2000 population of 14,605 which grew by 9.4% to the 15,985 of 2010.

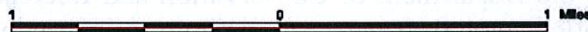
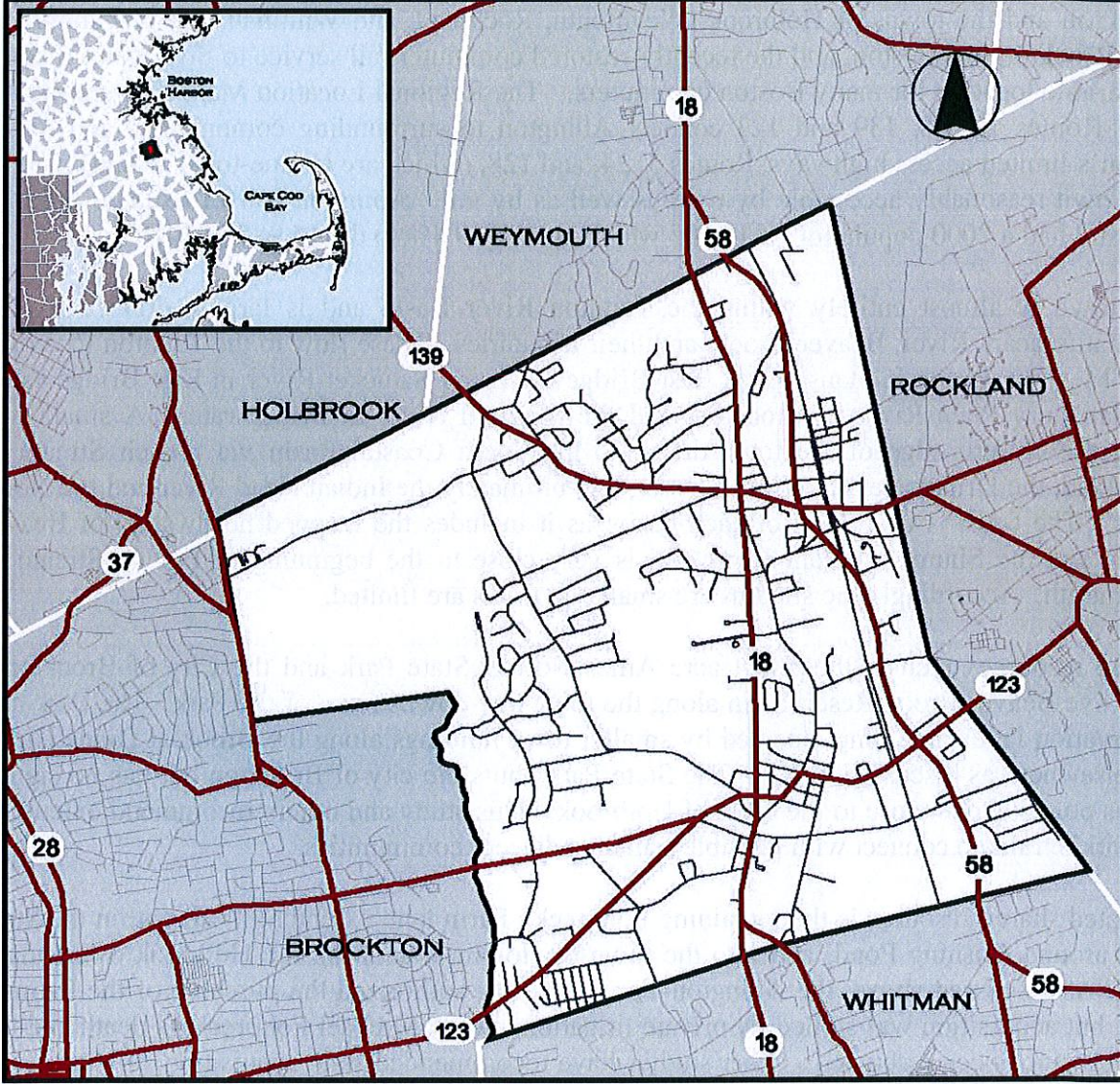
The town is almost entirely within the Taunton River Basin and is largely drained by the Shumatuscasant River, Beaver Brook, and their tributaries. These flow to the Taunton River via Poor Meadow Brook in Hanson and East Bridgewater, the Satucket River in East Bridgewater, the Salisbury Plain River in Brockton, and the Matfield River in Bridgewater. A small area along the eastern edge of the town drains to the South Coastal Basin via French Stream in Rockland, the Drinkwater River in Hanover, and ultimately the Indian Head River and the North River. The town is at the top of each basin, as it includes the mapped headwaters of Beaver Brook and the Shumatuscasant River and is very close to the beginning of French Stream in Weymouth. Accordingly the streams are small and flows are limited.






Shared resources include the 607.4 acre Ames Nowell State Park and the City of Brockton's extensive Beaver Brook Reservation along the town line downstream of the Park. The Park and Reservation lands are complemented by smaller town holdings along the Brook at Diane Circle and elsewhere as discussed below. The State Park abuts the city of Brockton but has no signed access points and is close to the town of Holbrook. This study and others recommend extending the Park's trails to connect with possible trails in adjacent communities.


A related shared resource is the remaining Pohorecky Farm land extending from within the State Park, around Cushing Pond, and into the town of Holbrook abutting the Holbrook Sportsmans Club. As discussed above, the Abington Town Meeting authorized the purchase of the Farm in 1999, but acquisition was stalled by private litigation and by Michael Pohorecky's death and the vote has since been rescinded. Other studies have recommended state acquisition, at least of the in-holdings in the Park, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation remains interested and has pursued purchase options with the trustees of the Pohorecky estate.

The large Cleveland Pond in the Park currently prohibits swimming, reportedly due to excess algae, though it occasionally occurs. A nearby popular resource also used by other communities is the excavated, enclosed, spring-fed swimming area at Abington's jewel, Island Grove Park on the Shumatuscasant River. The pedestrian bridge reaching this Park from Lake Street in Abington is a popular approach, but needs significant repairs as noted earlier.

MAP III-1 REGIONAL LOCATION MAP



	MAJOR HIGHWAYS
	ROADWAYS
	ABINGTON
	SURROUNDING ROADWAYS
	SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

	OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL, 70 SCHOOL STREET BROCKTON, MA 02301
	GIS DATA SOURCES: MASSGIS, MHD, TOWN OF ABINGTON
APRIL, 2006	

The streams and water bodies include Beaver Brook and the Shumatuscacant River, and their tributaries and impoundments. The major impoundments on Beaver Brook are the small, very scenic Cushing Pond just north of Chestnut Street and south of the Holbrook line, the large Cleveland Pond within the State Park, and the small, tranquil, secluded Hunt's Pond on the Abington / Brockton border, just above Mill Street (See the discussion of the Valatka Conservation Land in Chapter V). The ponds outside of the Park have some public frontage, but limited access as is discussed below.

Impoundments on the Shumatuscacant River include a small pond with two apparent control structures between the Frolio School and the Mount Vernon Cemetery, and the much bigger downstream Island Grove Pond and its spring-fed swimming area. From here the River flows freely through the Abington – Rockland Joint Water Board's Meyers Avenue well field and on to Whitman's Hobart Pond. The many impoundments offer possibilities for coordinated storm water management and groundwater recharge for future study, while the general lack of fish ladders suggests opportunities for restored anadromous fish runs.

B. History of the Community

The Town of Abington was founded in 1712 and was predominantly agricultural until the mid-1800's when it became an important center for shoe manufacturing. With the decline of the shoe industry, the population of the town varied little until after World War II. Abington was affected by the rapid post-war residential growth and development into the 1970's, growing by 72 percent from 1950 to 1970. Growth slowed from the 1970's to the late 1990's, despite the availability of 1 million gallons/ day sewage treatment through Brockton. It then accelerated when sewage treatment was joined by restored commuter rail service on the Old Colony Line and a new rail station was built.

The restored rail service has particularly spurred residential growth, in the form of condominium and apartment construction, much of it west of Route 18 and north of Rockland Street. This growth has strained the Town's infrastructure and placed heavy demands on governmental services. The inability to offset residential development with commercial and business development has led to a continuing heavy reliance on the residential property tax base.

The longer-term growth is in the form of large lot suburban development off of Hancock Street in the former country part of the town. While this has cost previously recommended open space opportunities, residents still find Abington to have a comfortable small town atmosphere.

Today, Abington is a small bedroom community of almost 16,000 people with a number of small and medium sized businesses. Its primary residential character is a distinct departure from its more self-sufficient manufacturing and agricultural past.

C. Population Characteristics

The U.S. Census found the town's population at 13, 817 in 1990. By 2000, it had grown to 14,605, a 5.7 percent increase, and by 2010 it had reached 15,985, with the previously noted 9.4% increase. Projections by the Old Colony Planning Council, the Town's regional planning agency, call for a population growth of 15.5% from the 14,605 of 2000 to 16,638 by 2020.

The projected growth implies considerable pressure on the town's remaining open spaces, particularly if it continues at the recent rate of about an acre per household. Such low-density large lot growth may leave some backland untouched and lessen the perceived need for local open space, but the large lots leave little wild land. The growing population will increase demand for recreation resources, while the increasingly low-density development will consume natural areas and require greater open space holdings.

Age Patterns

Age group patterns have been changing. Town-wide, the youngest and oldest age groups grew the most. From 1990 to 2000 the young population (under age 17) grew by 17.5%, increasing by 698 persons from 3,468 to 4,076 and represented 27.9 percent of the total population. Over the same period from 1990 to 2000, the population age 60 and over increased by 850 persons or 38% percent to 3,083 and represented 21.1% of the town's population. This growth compares with an overall increase in the Town population of only 5.7 percent during the same ten-year period.

Then by 2010 the both trends reversed; the slightly larger population 19 and under declined (according to the 2010 US Census) from over 4,076 or 27.9% of the population to 4,028 or 25.2% of the total while the population 60 and over declined from 21.2% of the population to 16.2% or from 3,083 to 2,590 persons according to the Census. This may partly reflect older persons moving to retirement developments in other communities **or to communities with lower property taxes**. In the long run, the population over 60 is expected to continue growing with the aging of early Baby Boomers.

The reversed recent trends suggest slightly greater needs for facilities for the middle population of 20-60 years old. Yet facilities for all age groups will continue to be needed, and most open spaces serve a wide range of ages.

Distribution of Age Groups within the Town

The difference in ages is slight at the scale of census tracts. For example, the 1990 population under 18 years of age ranged only from 21.5% in Tract 5202.1 (the northeast corner of the town) to 26.0% and 26.5% respectively in Tracts 5201 (the Southeast corner) and 5202.2 (the western end of the town). Since each tract has diverse neighborhoods, the slight difference in the proportion of youth does not change the locational pattern of youth-oriented facility needs.

Similarly, the proportion of the population over 65 years of age in 1990 ranged from only 10.2% in 5201.01 to 13.1% in 5201, to 14.3% in 5202.02. Tract 5202.2 had both the greatest proportion of youth (26.5%) and of the elderly (14.3%). This is because this diverse area includes both new neighborhoods with relatively young families and the town's low-cost housing for the Elderly. In all, the large diverse Census tracts are expected to continue to contain such diversity that tract data alone will not suggest patterns of needs for age-focused facilities.

Occupations and Incomes

Although recently the Town has attracted an influx of new residents who commute to commonly higher-paying jobs in the Boston area, Abington remains a moderate income community - though one with rising income levels. Median family incomes have exceeded state and regional levels, while per capita incomes have remained below the state levels.

US Census income statistics for 1990 and 2000 indicate that Median Family Income (MFI) for Abington residents was higher than that for the state and the OCPC Region in both years. In 1990 the Median Family Income (MFI) was \$48,889, versus \$47,273 for the OCPC region, and \$44,367 for the state. In 2000 the town's MFI was \$68,826 versus \$67,331 for the region and \$61,664 for the state. Abington's MFI had increased by 40.8% while the state's MFI had increased by a slightly lower 38.9%. By 2009 the estimated median household income had risen from \$57,000 to \$72,156 in comparison to \$64,081 statewide. The OCPC region of which Abington is a member also out-paced the state MFI in both years.

In contrast to MFIs, local per capita incomes have lagged behind the state and region. In 1990 Abington's per capita income was \$16,379 versus \$17,224 for the state and \$16,710 for the OCPC region. Similarly, in 2000 Abington's per capita income was \$23,380, below the state's \$25,952 and the region's \$24,032. By 2009, the town's estimated per capita income was \$31,854.

These statistics indicate that Abington continues to be a strong middle-income community, but not an extremely affluent one. It has good-sized working families, resulting in lower per capita incomes. The question, discussed below, is whether these differences in income and age are useful in anticipating differing interests in, or needs for, open space and recreation land.

Employment

From 1990 to 2000 employment data showed the continuing decline in manufacturing from 566 to 432 jobs; the growth in non-manufacturing from 2,334 to 3,227 jobs; and the growth in government employment from 406 to 544. The total growth in local employment was from 3,306 to 4,203, a 27.13% increase.

By 2004 the State Department of Employment and Training found 345 establishments in Abington employing 3,985 persons, while by 2012 the Census-counted local employment had dropped slightly to 3,812. This statistic does not include Town employees or others in government service. The largest employers in Abington, given only as ranges, are Wal-Mart (250-499), and Lowes, Stop and Shop, and Target, all between 100-249 workers.

Of the total employed Abington workforce of 8,511 in 2010, 2888 (34%) were in management, and professional occupations; 2,763 (32%) were in sales and office jobs reflecting the major retail operations; 1207 (14%) were in service jobs; 929 (11%) were in construction, extraction (e.g., **mining of sand and gravel**) and maintenance, and 724 (8.55%) were in production, transportation and material moving, showing the great decline in traditional manufacturing.

The January to December unemployment rate was 7.7 %, slightly higher than the state rate of 7.6 %, but lower than the regional rate of 7.8%. So the town is predominantly white collar and its unemployment, while serious, is less than in many nearby communities.

Implications

How much can age, income, ethnicity, and occupational differences tell us about probable recreational interests or needs? A major question is whether white collar and blue collar workers have significantly different recreation preferences, e.g., bicycling, swimming, sailing, gardening, “passive” tent camping and hiking versus hunting, organized team sports, power boating, skate boarding, RV camping and ATV riding. Some activities such as camping may appeal to a wide range of people, suggesting exploiting such opportunities in Ames Nowell State Park or on chance town holdings.

Changes in labor force participation and journeys to work indicate that the vast majority of residents commute to jobs outside of the town, with commuting time possibly leading to a preference for weekend activities over daily ones. Yet many parents do get to their children’s after school games.

The changing population characteristics in Abington have elusive implications for the town in trying to meet the diversity of recreational and open space facility needs. For example, the diversity of the population within census tracts, combined with continuing growth and change make it more important to provide some open spaces near most existing or growing neighborhoods, than to try to meet every localized need suggested by age or income levels or other social patterns. These factors also make it important to site one-of-a-kind facilities where they are generally accessible town-wide, and to take advantage of one-of-a-kind opportunities even if not centrally located.

The increased number of elderly in the general population and the demand for a broader range of elderly programs and services led to a proposed Senior Center at the former Griffin Dairy property. However a former church at the southern edge of the town just past the commuter rail station and close to the Whitman town line became available and the center was developed there. This location has led to preliminary proposals to share the center with Whitman which has a large staff but no comparable building, but nothing has resulted.

In all, it is probably better to provide diverse opportunities and experiences than to try to target particular neighborhoods and interest groups. The exceptions might be where particular sports like Bocce are popular in particular ethnic enclaves.

D. Growth and Development Patterns

1. Patterns and Trends

The town’s primary land use is housing and most of this is in the form of detached single family houses. Abington’s town-wide sewerage system allows development in areas which were previously constrained by soils that were unsuitable for on-site septic systems. See the following Land Use and Zoning Districts Map from the 2004 Abington Community Development Plan.

This shows the town's development pattern which is predominantly residential clustered around the major arterial streets. The town has two older established commercial districts; Abington Center and North Abington Center, plus larger scale big box/strip commercial development along Routes 123 and 18.

Information developed as part of a 1997 buildout analysis by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and MASSGIS in 1997 showed that the development from 1991 to 1997 had been mostly in the form of subdivisions on land adjacent to older established neighborhoods. In addition, the 1999 Abington Master Plan found that this trend had continued and that there was a potential for 1,335 to 1,550 additional new single-family houses and up to 7,987,000 sq. ft. of non-residential space under the present zoning. The potential residential development could add up to 10,300 persons under full build-out.

Recent development in Abington has been more intensive and includes the 192-unit Woodlands at Abington Station apartment complex near the Commuter Rail Station and the recently approved 180-unit Abington Woods apartment development. With the restoration of commuter rail service, Abington has become a popular location for people commuting the Boston/Cambridge core area.

Commercial uses in Abington are found in the two established town centers of North Abington and Abington Center and along Routes 18, 139 and 123 as noted above. Wal-Mart selected a site on Route 123 on the west side of town at the Brockton line for a new store. Stop and Shop located its super store on the east side of town on Route 123 adjacent to the Rockland town line and next to a new Target store. Similarly, a recent Lowes store is on Route 18 in the geographic center of the town at the former Ames Plaza and the relocated, expanded Cape Cod Lumber is in Groveland street off of Rte. 123. **Thus the major new commercial areas are on four different regionally accessible, highway oriented sites, and apart from the traditional centers.**

2. Infrastructure

a). Transportation System

Abington has a good network of state numbered routes and local roads allowing north-south and east-west travel through the town. Four state numbered routes pass through the town. Routes 18 and 58 are the major north-south arterials while Routes 139 and 123 are the major east-west routes. Residents also use moderate capacity arterials and local streets for alternative paths to regional destinations. The state highways and town streets are in generally good condition with sidewalks available for pedestrian traffic throughout most of the town.

The Town is served by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Kingston/Plymouth Branch of the Old Colony Commuter Rail line. The rail line is located on the eastern portion of town with the commuter rail station south of Centre Avenue (Route 123) near the intersection with Plymouth Street (Route 58). There is parking at the station for 385 vehicles and additional private parking nearby. There is no fixed route bus service in Abington; however, the Brockton Area Transit (BAT) system serves the Wal-Mart store and provides DIAL-A-BAT Para Transit service to the town. The latter is available to the elderly

and disabled persons through human service agencies or on an individual basis. JBL Bus Lines provides commuter bus service from Abington Center and North Abington to Boston.

b). Water Supply System

The town of Abington obtains its water from the Abington/Rockland Joint Water Works (ARJWW) established in 1885. The ARJWW is governed by a Joint Water Board of six commissioners, three from each town. The Board manages the water supply sources and pumping-filtration system while the two towns operate and maintain their local distribution systems.

The ARJWW system has 9,649 hook-ups serving 14,683 residents in Abington and 17,236 in Rockland. In addition there are a few hundred **out of district** customers in Hanson, Hingham, Weymouth and Pembroke raising the total population served to just over 32,000 customers.

The system is unusual in having water sources in three towns and two basins, Abington in the Taunton River Basin, and Rockland and Pembroke in the South Coastal Basin. The oldest source is the Great Sandy Bottom Pond wells in Pembroke. There is a treatment plant on site designed for 4 million gallons per day (MGD) with a peak flow of 6 MGD. In Abington Center there are three gravel packed wells at the end of Myers Avenue with their own 2 MGD treatment plant. The third source, the John F. Hannigan Water Treatment Facility and reservoir in Rockland is both a source and a storage facility. The recently enlarged reservoir holds about 380 million gallons when full. The treatment facility is designed to treat a maximum of 2.0 MGD but can pump up to 3.5 MGD from its 2.0 million gallon clear well.

The ARJWW distribution system uses cast iron, ductile iron and PVC pipe, ranging in diameter from 2 to 16 inches, totaling approximately 57 miles. The system consists of two service areas, the Main Service Area which provides water to all of the Town of Rockland and most of the Town of Abington, and Abington's Lincoln Street High Service Area, created in 1982 when development at a higher elevation near the Brockton line required a booster pump.

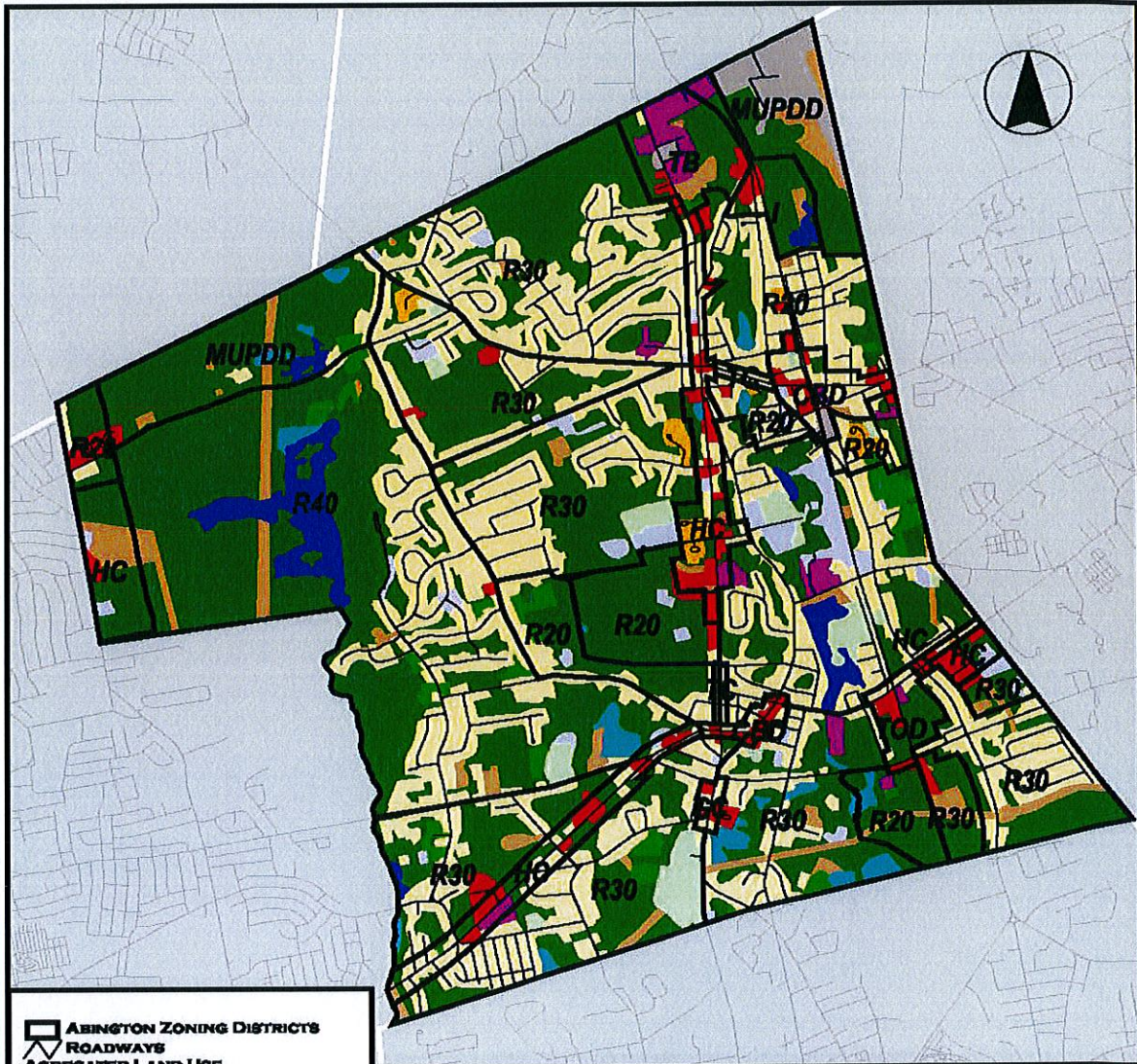
The system delivered 998,288,676 gallons in 2010, a decrease of 12,006,928 gallons from 2009 (-1.25%). This followed an even greater decrease of 63,198,834 gallons from 2008-2009. Recent consumption has averaged 2.77 MGD year round, ranging from 2.36 MGD in February to 3.44 MGD in July, with peak days at close to twice the annual average.


Storage is provided by two standpipes, three elevated storage tanks, and two clear wells for a total capacity of 5.15 million gallons. The two Rice Avenue elevated storage tanks in Rockland hold 0.5 million gallons each. The new Lincoln Street standpipe in Abington holds 1.25 million gallons and the new Chestnut Street elevated tank in Abington holds 450,000 gallons, thereby increasing on total capacity and helping to maintain water pressure in the higher neighborhoods.. (However the total capacity of the standpipes may not be useable due to differences in elevation). In addition, the concrete Hannigan Water Treatment Facility and the Great Sandy Bottom clear wells hold 2 million gallons at the former and 0.4 million gallons at the latter.

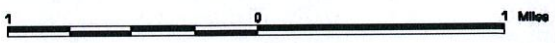
The tanks and standpipes alone, if usable for their full volume, would provide 2.7 million gallons, close to the recent average day's consumption of 2.77 Million Gallons. The clear wells increase this to 5.1 Million gallons or 94% of twice annual average use. However, even this provides

relatively little reserve capacity if demands double during summertime peak periods. In addition, to this storage capacity, the Abington water system has emergency connections to the Weymouth, Brockton, Avon, and Whitman water systems. The Rockland system has connections to the Weymouth and Norwell systems.

MAP III-2 LAND USE & ZONING DISTRICT MAP



-  ABINGTON ZONING DISTRICTS
-  ROADWAYS
-  AGREGATED LAND USE
-  RESIDENTIAL
-  MULTI-FAMILY
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  RECREATION
-  URBAN OPEN
-  AGRICULTURE
-  FOREST
-  ABANDONED & MINING
-  TRANSPORTATION
-  WASTE DISPOSAL
-  WETLANDS
-  SURFACE WATER
-  SURROUNDING ROADWAYS
-  SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL
70 SCHOOL STREET
BROCKTON, MA 02301

GIS DATA SOURCES:
MASSGIS, MHD,
TOWN OF ABINGTON

APRIL, 2006

The biggest recent capital improvement was the 2007 expansion of the Hingham Street Reservoir from a capacity of 95 million gallons to 380 MGD. Other continuing improvements include upgrading/replacing older pipes as well as expanding service and maintaining existing structures and related facilities. Currently the system is operating at or near its safe yield. In addition, there is a water conservation program requiring new water hookups to save two gallons for each gallon to be used. Given sufficient overall supplies, these are probably slight constraints on the continuing development that has consumed much of Abington's open space.

c). Sewer Service

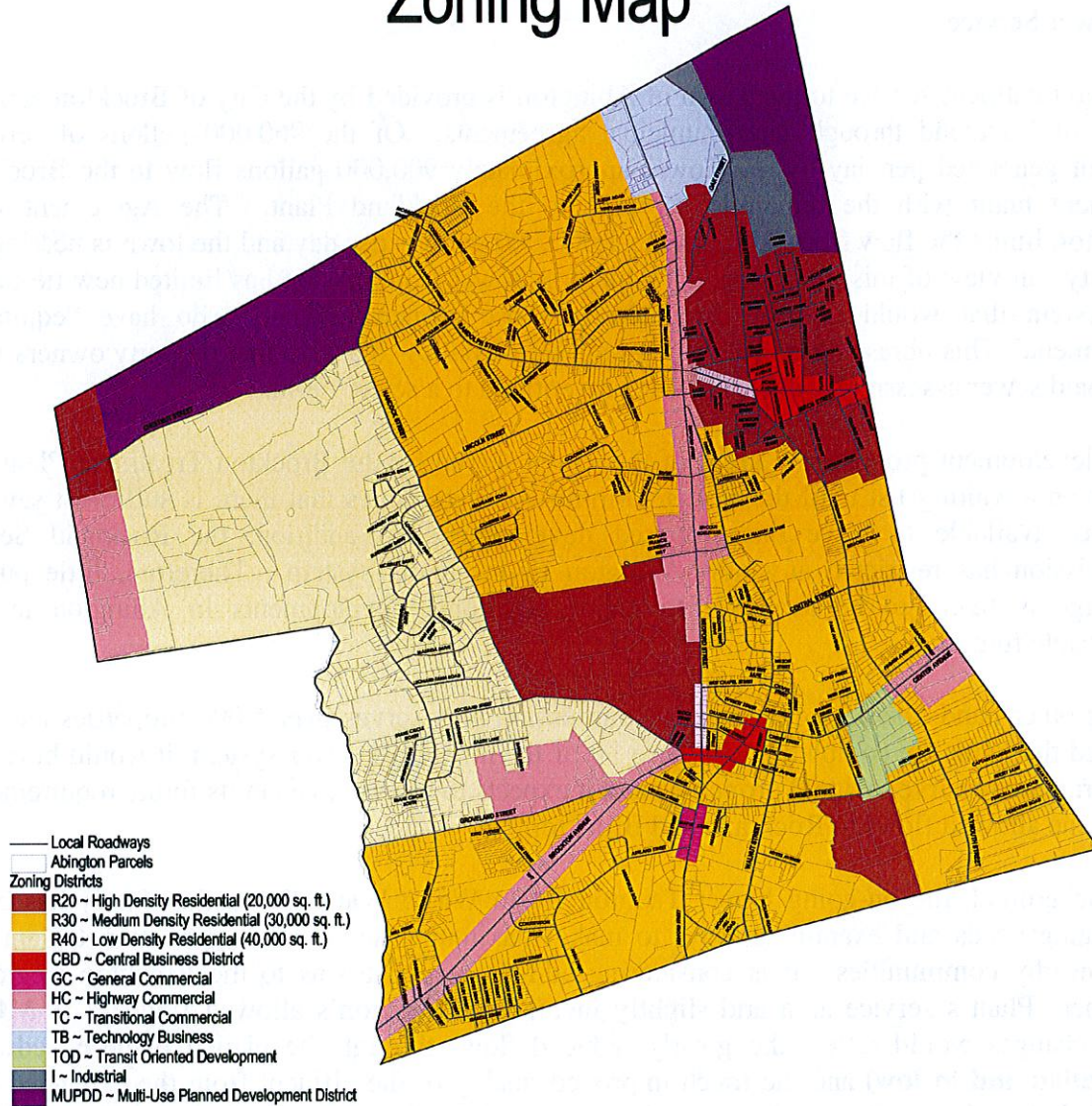
Sewage treatment service to the Town of Abington is provided by the City of Brockton and the Town of Rockland through inter-municipal agreements. Of the 960,000 gallons of sewage effluent generated per day by the Town, approximately 900,000 gallons flow to the Brockton treatment plant with the remainder flowing to the Rockland Plant. The Agreement with Brockton limits the flow from Abington to 1,000,000 gallons per day and the town is nearing its capacity. In view of this limitation, the Abington Sewer Commission has limited new tie-ins to the system that would flow to Brockton to those property owners who have "equitable entitlement." This phrase describes the Commission's policy to assure that property owners who have paid sewer assessments over the years are entitled to a sewer tie-in.

New development proposals in areas of the Town served by the Brockton Treatment Plant are placed on a waiting list until the Sewer Commission determines that there is sufficient sewage capacity available to serve the proposed development. In addition, the Rockland Sewer Commission has restricted any new Abington tie-ins to its system. Therefore, little public sewerage is likely to be available to major additional developments in Abington in the foreseeable future.

On the other hand, the Abington Sewer Commission now serves over 5,000 properties and has reported that with the completion of Phase IV of the municipal sewer system, it would have the infrastructure to serve to 6,000 properties and it expects to be able to meet its future requirements within the allowed flows to Rockland and Brockton.

For background, the on-going Upper Taunton Basin Waste Water Evaluation Study has been calculating needs and examining ways to make maximum use of existing treatment plants to serve nearby communities. It is considering adding several towns to the Brockton Regional Treatment Plant's service area and slightly increasing Abington's allowed flow **by .1 MGD**. These changes would reflect the greatly reduced flows through the plant (**through reduced infiltration and inflow**) and the much improved quality of the effluent from the expanded and upgraded plant documented in the respective Notices of Project Change. They would also reflect a lifting of the present Consent Decree limiting plant operations, and a proposed increase in allowed discharges under the City's future National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

Town of Abington, Massachusetts Zoning Map



Prepared by:
Old Colony Planning Council, 70 School Street, Brockton, MA 02301

Dated February 3, 2003

GIS Data Sources:
MassGIS, MassDOT Road Inventory, and the Town of Abington

Amended April 6, 2005, April 25, 2007, April 4, 2011

3. Long Term Development Patterns

The long term development pattern of the community is largely dictated by land use controls, most significantly by the Zoning By-Law and Map and by physical and natural features such as wetland areas and the roadway system. The Abington Zoning Map (following) shows that because of natural and physical location characteristics and public policies, Abington is likely to remain a predominantly residential community with limited space for commercial and business development.

The town significantly changed its Zoning By-law in 2003 by adding several new districts including a Transit Oriented District, a Central Business District, a Transitional Commercial District, and a Multiple Use Planned Development District. These districts are discussed below and shown on the accompanying Zoning Map. These 2003 Zoning By-law changes are expected to allow a population level close to the 24,900 persons projected in the Abington Master Plan given such changes.

Recent studies indicate that the ecological impacts of development largely reflect the resulting neighborhood density. While land is being consumed at an increasing rate, the density within the town's typical new neighborhoods is declining largely because of the prevalent 20,000 sq. ft. to 40,000 sq. ft. large lot zoning. As a result the town is converting land to housing at a faster rate than present population growth. For example, from 1960 to 2000 the population grew by 37.7 percent (from 10,607 to 14,605) while in a slightly shorter 35 year period from 1962 to 1997 residential land increased by 125 percent (from 1,030 to 2,316 acres). In all, the large lot zoning is requiring consumption of more land and loss of more wildlife habitat for a given population while higher density zoning would require less land for a given population increase. It would allow needed growth, along with greater land preservation.

During the 1962-1997 period, the Town's developable vacant land decreased from 3,922 acres to 1,982 acres further reducing the town's development options. Furthermore, the original EOEA build out analysis found a potential population of 19,275 at full build out under these regulations. In contrast, the 1999 Master Plan saw the possibility of more dense development and projected a build out population of 24,900 persons under the same regulations and initial land resources, but with a greater use of the higher density provisions. The latter projection appears to be the more reasonable in view of recent higher density development in the Town. More recently, the present OCPC Buildout study has found fewer developable acres, thereby reducing potential growth given unchanged development controls.

Map III-2, above shows the relationship between present zoning and actual land uses. However it does not show causal relationships, as **some zoning basically reflects present uses, while in less developed areas the zoning is intended to guide the future character of the area. Though new development will reflect the zoning, the area will be largely unchanged with many continuing legal "non-conforming" uses.**

The following describes Abington's zoning districts shown on Map III-3.

Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection District (FW)

The Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection Overlay District offers a measure of protection to the ecology of the Town. The District's regulations are intended to protect and preserve the marshes, bogs, ponds, water courses and their inclusively-defined adjoining wetlands. The district also reduces the hazards of flooding and gives protection to the occupants of the flood plain by providing the means for the land to absorb, transmit and store runoff and to assure retention of sufficient floodway areas to convey probable water flows.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District

The purpose of the TOD District is to encourage more intensive development near the Abington commuter rail station. It encourages land uses that complement the existing commuter rail line and the established nearby neighborhoods. It does so by allowing a mix of small uses on well buffered sites to support and serve commuters and adjacent residential development, to encourage the continued use of rail service, and to increase the number of pedestrian and bicycle trips, while decreasing the number of local automobile trips.

Central Business District (CBD)

The Central Business District allows the reasonable use, enhancement, expansion and redevelopment of the North Abington business district and Abington Center. These are the town's two older established business districts that are currently developed in an intensive manner with on-street parking as well as shared scattered off-street lots. The provisions allow new buildings to be set close to the sidewalk or street line to encourage pedestrian access, to maintain pedestrian connections to adjacent properties, and to allow off-site or shared parking. They also provide for residential uses in mixed use developments.

Multiple Use Planned Development (MUPD) District

The Multiple Use Planned Development District was designed to set standards for the overall planned mixed-use development of the land in two largely undeveloped areas of the town. The District attempts to accommodate low-impact activities in an overall "campus" setting. The new uses would be in compact, intensive clusters, using natural features, vegetation, screening and setbacks to retain an open space character from the road. Thus it would have minimal impacts on surrounding land uses such as the Ames Nowell State Park. The regulations support a more flexible planned development process than is possible through conventional zoning.

Transitional Commercial District

The Transitional Commercial District seeks to preserve the existing residential character along major thoroughfares that are under pressure for commercial development by allowing a transition to more intensive, but compatible uses. It emphasizes the preservation and adaptive reuse of existing structures; provides for buffers and uses compatible with nearby residential areas; and gives property owners an additional opportunity to use their land without severely diminishing the amenity and residential value of nearby properties. It seeks to minimize congestion on major streets, and to protect the character and appearance of areas that are the key elements of

the Town by allowing limited, low-traffic generating non-residential uses which can operate in adapted/expanded existing houses or in compatible new small-scale office/ retail buildings.

High Density Residential R-20

The R-20 District permits single-family detached houses as of right on 20,000 sq. ft. lots. In contrast, specially permitted two family houses, single family attached houses (townhouses) in groups of up to four units, and apartments and multi-unit condominium buildings require 40,000 sq. ft. lots. Despite being called “High Density” the District’s highest density, which is slightly larger than 10 units per acre, is about the same as single-family lots in older close-built suburbs.

Medium Density Residential R-30

The District requires minimum lots of 30,000 sq. ft. to provide a spacious single-family detached environment. It excludes two-family or attached dwellings along with apartments and multi-unit condominiums. Various health, social service and recreation facilities are allowable by special permit.

Low Density Residential R-40

This district is intended to provide particularly spacious neighborhoods with lots of at least 40,000 square feet. Although the R-40 Residential District does not allow two-family homes, attached houses, or multi-unit dwellings per se, it does allow Accessory Apartments. It also allows various health, social service "and recreational facilities" by special permit.

General Commercial (GC)

The GC District is intended to accommodate centrally located, compact, accessible business centers, which have adequate vehicular access, exclude noxious or land-expansive uses and are as pedestrian friendly as possible. It allows diverse retail and service use as-of-right or by special permit and excludes most industrial uses. It allows one and two family houses as-of-right. It excludes attached and multi-unit housing.

Highway Commercial (HC)

The HC District is intended to accommodate businesses catering to auto-oriented markets or needing relatively large sites which would be inappropriate downtown. It allows varied retail and service uses as-of-right or by special permit. It also allows single-family and two-family houses, apartments, and motels by special permit. The District requires 20,000 sq. ft. lots for most uses, but Section 7-3 again calls for 40,000 sq. ft. lots for any attached or multi-unit housing. Coverage is limited only through yard and parking requirements.

Recently, the town accommodated a new Target Department Store and a bank in its HC Highway Commercial District along Route 123 and a Lowe’s Home Improvement Center in the HC Highway Commercial District on Bedford Street, Route 18. **These facilities are accessible individually, but they do not create one unified center. Instead they divert investment from**

the existing centers, weaken them, and require more auto trips for multi-stop shopping or comparison shopping.

SECTION IV: ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

A. Geology, Soils and Topography

1. *Geology.* The geology of Abington was formed by glacial ice sheets that blanketed much of southeastern Massachusetts. As the glaciers began to melt and recede, the landscape formed and a basin was created in the present Hockamock Swamp (known to geologists as the Leverett Sea). As the ice continued to retreat it revealed the region's characteristic north-south drumlins formed by the moving ice while the Hubbard Uplift eliminated much of the Leveret Sea and created the present north-south drainage pattern found in Abington.

2. *Soils.* The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service lists two major soil associations in Abington. Since these can contain very different soils which are found together, the functional characteristics depend on the actual mix and patterns.

- a. The Scituate - Essex-Merrimac Association covers the southern two-thirds of the town. It includes deep, nearly level to moderately steep, well-drained and moderately drained soils formed in glacial till, and nearly level, somewhat excessively-drained soils formed in sand and gravel.
- b. The Hollis - Charton-Essex-Muck Association covers the northern one-third of the town. It includes rolling, somewhat excessively drained and well-drained soils, deep and shallow to bedrock that formed in glacial till, and level, very poorly-drained organic soils. This would suggest that much of the town would accept water readily, and be suitable for septic systems though the very tight muck areas and those with considerable hardpan would exclude such systems. However the limitations are greater because many of the soils have a seasonally high water table that commonly limits the use of on-site waste water disposal systems even in porous soils, and because some of the "excessively drained" very coarse soils give inadequate treatment to the effluent.

The accompanying Map IV-1, Abington Soils and Geologic Features, shows that a good portion of the town has severe limitations for on-site waste water disposal systems. In the past it was thought that these areas mapped with severe septic limitations would be very difficult to develop. However, actual development patterns indicate that with large lots (3/4 acre or more) many areas mapped with septic limitations can be developed with approvable on-site systems. Still, local development experience demonstrates that those areas with the most severe soil limitations had constrained development, led to disposal problems and required relatively large lots for on-site disposal systems. However, with the introduction and availability of a town-wide sewerage in most areas, the soil conditions that previously influenced the development pattern are less relevant so long as the town stays within the applicable daily flow limits.

3. *Topography.* Abington's land forms are typical of Southeastern Massachusetts, with a gently rolling landscape draining to the South, primarily along the Shumatuscasant River in the east and along Beaver Brook on the Brockton line. Elevations range from valleys of 80' MSL along the River south of Summer Street to a 200'+/- knoll near Lincoln and Hancock Streets, and a peak of 250' along the Brockton line at the edge of the state park (hence the nearby town water tower.)

A major, but very subtle, feature is a shallow drumlin rising to over 200' MSL along Hancock Street. Elsewhere low-lying areas are dominant in the meandering floodplains of the streams and brooks.

B. Landscape Character

Abington's landscape character is best described as rolling and wooded with some remaining open fields. Many of the natural areas are blocked from view by roadside business and housing developments. A major exception is the woodland on the north side of Chestnut Street across from Ames Nowell State Park.

Another landscape asset is the town's system of streams and ponds. Abington is at the head of three river basins and though limited by small water catchment areas, they have scenic, recreation and wildlife value, and are potentially important for flood control.

C. Water Resources

Abington's water resources are shown on the accompanying Map IV-2 and described in the following:

1. Drainage Basins. Abington is divided into six drainage areas or watersheds within three river basins: the Taunton River, North River, and Weymouth Back River Basins. However, most of the Abington (87%) is within the Taunton River Basin and Meadow Brook, Beaver Brook, Stream River and the Shumatuscacant River flow southerly to the Taunton River and then on to Mt. Hope Bay. The Shumatuscacant River serves the central watershed area of the town and flows through the recharge area for the Abington-Rockland Joint Water Works Myers Avenue wells. The recharge the Shumatuscacant River offers to this ground water supply can be affected by upstream development and activities.

The Three Basins and Drainage Areas:

Taunton River Basin

Central Abington - 5.48 square miles drains into Stream River and the Shumatuscant River into Whitman.

Southwest Abington - 0.40 square miles; drains into Meadow Brook in Whitman.

West Abington - 2.82 square miles; drains into Beaver Brook in Abington.

North River Basin

Northeast Abington- 0.91 square miles; drains into French Stream, Rockland.

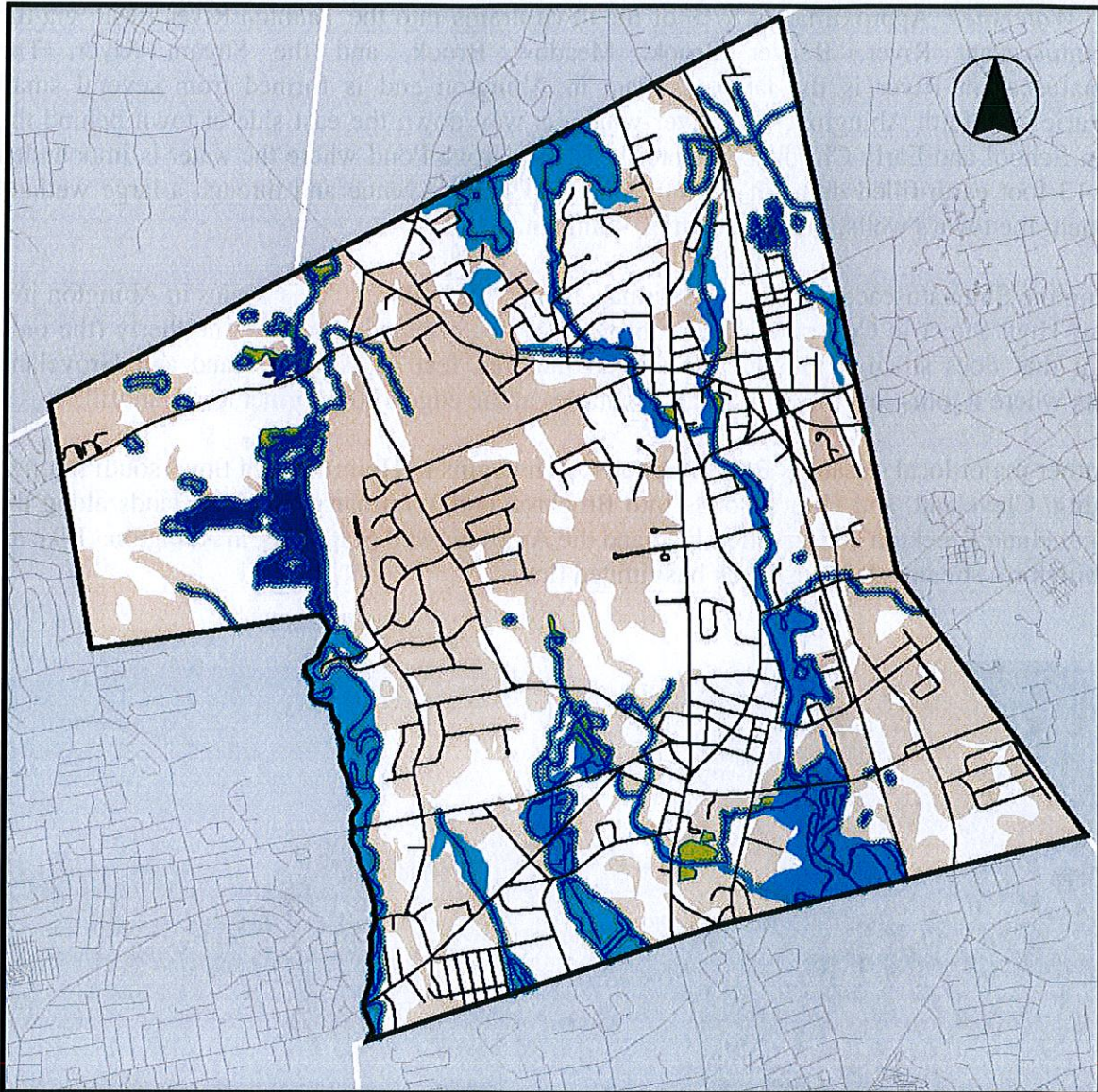
Southeast Abington- 0.29 square miles; drains into Beech Hill Swamp, Rockland.












Weymouth Basin

Northwest Abington- 0.07 square miles; drains into Holbrook via Trout Brook.

As noted previously, the Central Watershed with its 5.48 square miles is the largest in Abington. The most significant hydrologic aspect of this watershed is that it is the drainage area for the wells located off Myers Avenue in the southern part of the town; that is, the aquifer that supplies

MAP IV-1 ABINGTON SOILS & GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES



-  ROADWAYS
-  HYDROGRAPHY
-  100' STREAM BUFFER
- FLOOD ZONES A & AE**
-  A
-  AE
-  SURFACE WATER
-  WETLANDS
-  SOILS WITH SEVERE SEPTIC LIMITATIONS
-  ABINGTON
-  SURROUNDING ROADWAYS
-  SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

1 0 1 Mile



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL
70 SCHOOL STREET
BROCKTON, MA 02301

GIS DATA SOURCES:
MASSGIS, MHD,
TOWN OF ABINGTON

APRIL, 2006

the Myers Avenue wells is under this watershed. To protect this recharge area from pollution and from development that would inhibit recharge, the Abington Rockland Joint Water Works owns over 60 acres of land in the vicinity of the wells.

2. Surface Water, Rivers and Streams. Most of Abington lies at the headwaters of the Taunton River Watershed. Approximately 87% of the town drains into the Taunton River Basin via the Shumatuscacant River, Beaver Brook, Meadow Brook, and the Stream River. The Shumatuscacant River is the largest stream in Abington and is formed from several small tributaries in North Abington. The river winds its way down the east side of town behind the Frolio School and Early Childhood Center to Island Grove Pond where the water is impounded by a 13-foot earth-filled dam. It continues below Centre Avenue and through a large wetland area near the town's wells, into the town of Whitman.

Joining the Shumatuscacant River in Whitman is the Stream River. This begins in Abington just east of High Street in Conservation Commission-owned wetlands. It flows northerly (the only stream that does so in Abington) for several hundred feet crossing Ashland and Groveland Streets where it joins several other small tributaries at the edge of the former town landfill.

The other major local stream is Beaver Brook which begins in Holbrook and flows south through Cushing, Cleveland, and Hunt's Ponds into Brockton and Whitman. Protected lands along the brook include Brockton conservation land and the Ames Nowell State Park in Abington. Like all of Abington's streams, Beaver Brook has limited flows.



Scenic Cushing Pond on former Pohorecky land and other private land, with town holdings to the rear beyond the pines. Note informal hockey rink laid out on ice to the left.

3. *Ponds, the town is fortunate in having a number of ponds.* Three are on Beaver Brook. The largest is Cleveland Pond, (88 acres) in Ames Nowell State Park, bordered by woods, a park access point, swamp land and the pond's bridged control structure. Although swimming is reportedly prohibited because of shallow depths and algae, some people swim anyway. Boating and fishing are allowed.

Just north of Cleveland Pond and visible from Chestnut Street is the very beautiful and scenic privately-owned 10-acre Cushing Pond with town land to the north and **west but no public pond frontage except along Chestnut Street.**

Hunt's Pond (6 acres) off of Mill Street is the smallest of the three Beaver Brook ponds. It is bordered on its eastern edge by protected agricultural land. (See discussion of the Valatka Conservation land.)

The Shumatuscacant River has two impounded ponds. The larger and most popular pond in Abington is the town-owned Island Grove Pond (35 acres) located between Washington and Plymouth Streets in the center of Abington. Island Grove Pond has an enclosed swimming area fed by well water that flows through the swimming basin into the pond itself. While access to the western side of the pond is limited by residential development, the eastern side is reached by the Wilson Memorial Bridge. This is the town-owned Island Grove Park.



A little known pond formed by a Shumatuscacant River impoundment, largely on Mount Vernon Cemetery land between the Frolio School and Cemetery, north Hamil Lane

A third pond, Thompson's Pond, is located between the railroad tracks and the former naval air station, just north of Savine Street, and a much smaller un-named pond to the north, are unusual in being natural ponds rather than impoundments.

Thompson's Pond drains to the uppermost portion of French Brook flowing to the South Coastal drainage basin.

4. Wetlands and Flood Hazard Areas. Abington's streams and ponds with their extensive wetlands and floodplain areas form a complex pattern that constitutes the town's drainage system. This natural drainage system not only channels water and storm water runoff, but provides holding areas for excess water. The wetlands near the Abington wells also allow groundwater recharge. These three functions, drainage, flood protection and groundwater replenishment, are three critical roles for the town's floodplain/wetlands system.

Areas within the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection Zoning District make up almost one half of the land area of the town. These are subject to seasonal or periodic flooding or have severe limitations for housing. The flood hazard areas are limited because Abington is at the headwaters of the Taunton River Basin and has limited stream flows. In addition, there is little impervious development upstream that would increase storm flows and downstream flooding in Abington.

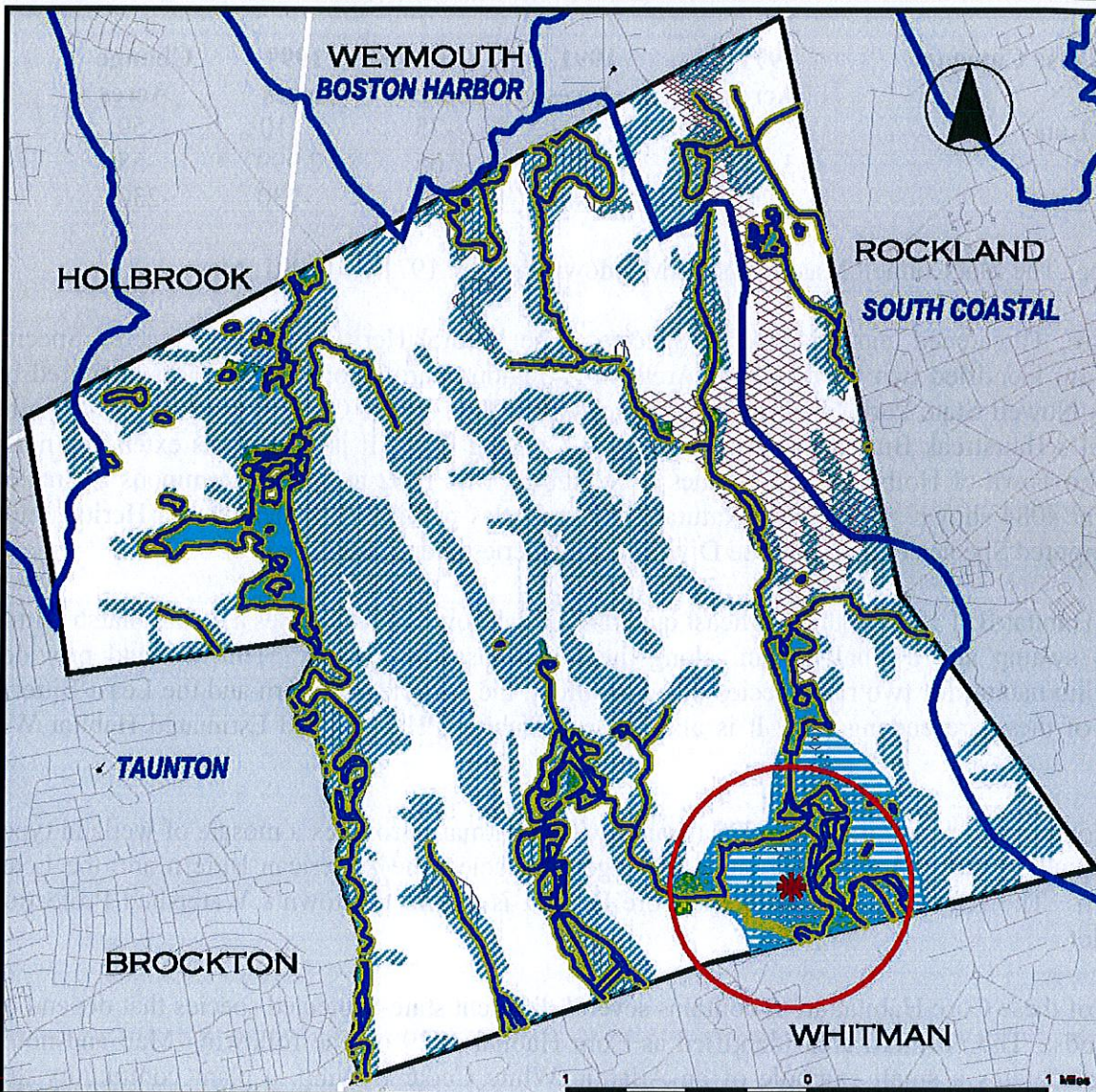
5. Aquifer Recharge Areas. The town's aquifer recharge areas are shown by the Aquifer areas and the interim Wellhead Protection Areas (Zone II) on the Water Resources Map, above and by any delineated Zone II areas. The Abington Zoning By-Law has a Watershed Protection District to protect these aquifer recharge areas. It is mapped around the Myer's Avenue town water wells and is bounded by Routes 18 and 58, Centre Avenue, and the Whitman town line.

D. Vegetation/Habitat

1. *General Inventory.* Abington's undeveloped land is primarily woodland, with much of it being wooded swampland. In 1971 and 1991 the MacConnell Massachusetts Mapdown Project in its "Twenty Years of Change" reports inventoried forest, farmland, open land and other undeveloped and developed sloped land and land uses, and noted changes over the previous 20 years, with the first covering 1951 to 1971. It can be seen from Table IV-1 that Abington experienced large losses from 1971 to 1991 in all three of the undeveloped land categories, but the most significant loss was the 565 acres of forested land.

Then, by 1999 the Department of Revenue found that half of the open land and a third of the remaining farmlands had been lost in the eight years since 1991, though the decline in forest (only 58 acres lost) was much reduced. The reduced loss of forest may reflect reforestation of previous open land or cropland taken out of production, as well as possible changes in definition and study methods.

MAP IV-2 ABINGTON WATER RESOURCES



- PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY
- INTERIM WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREA
- MAJOR DRAINAGE BASINS
- HYDROGRAPHY
- 100' STREAM BUFFER
- EXISTING WATERSHED PROTECTION DISTRICT
- FLOODPLAIN & WETLAND PROTECTION AREAS
- WETLANDS
- SURFACE WATER
- FEMA ZONES A & AE
- AQUIFERS
- 100-300
- >300
- ABINGTON
- SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

SOUTH COASTAL DENOTES MAJOR DRAINAGE BASIN



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL
70 SCHOOL STREET
BROCKTON, MA 02301

GIS DATA SOURCES:
MASSGIS, MHD,
TOWN OF ABINGTON

APRIL, 2006

The changes in land use from 1971 to 1999 are shown in the following table.

Table IV-1

Town of Abington Acreage by Land Use Category, 1971-1991

Land Use Category	1971 Acres	1991 Acres	Change Acres	1999 Acres	Change Acres
Farm Land	244	169	-75	110	-59
Forest	3,622	3,057	-565	2,999	-58
Open Land	702	460	-242	-230	-230

Source: The MacConnell Massachusetts Mapdown Project, 1971 and 1991; Mass.

2. Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program identified two Core Habitat Areas in Abington. Core Habitat BM1029 is anchored by Ames Nowell State Park. It includes unprotected Atlantic White Cedar Swamp (habitat for the Hessel’s Hairstreak Butterfly) in the vicinity of Cushing Pond. It is mapped as extending north into the Town of Holbrook. It includes Core Habitat BM 1062 and the coterminous Estimated Habitat 4084 shown on the 2003 Natural Heritage Atlas published by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Core Habitat BM 1090 in the southeast quadrant of the Town encompasses a cattail marsh with a shrub swamp and a small stream along the Shumatuscacant River. This wetland provides breeding habitat for two rare species of marsh birds, the American Bittern and the Least Bittern. Both of these are endangered. It is also Priority Habitat PH 1137 and Estimated Habitat WH 293.

The southern Core Habitat BM 1090 (shared with Whitman) provides a mosaic of wetland types and valuable habitat for the two state endangered species, the American Bittern and the Least Bittern. The Abington portion of the Core Habitat is within the town’s Watershed Protection District.

Each of these Core Habitat areas contains several different state-protected species that depend on wetlands. The northern area identified as Core Habitat 1029 on the following Map and noted above contains a small example of an Atlantic White Cedar Swamp, a plant community that occurs predominately in Southeastern Massachusetts. This plant community provides a valuable habitat for both rare and common species found in the wetland and adjacent uplands and is located largely in the Pohorecky holdings discussed earlier.

These areas are particularly valuable in ecological terms according to the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Fortunately, they are both at least partially in public ownership. However, protection is needed for any remaining unprotected land in these areas and in adjacent areas.

In addition, the statewide BioMap 2 shows the third Core Habitat area in the northeastern corner of the town west of Bedford Street and north of Spruce and Pine Streets. It is mapped as Estimated Habitat WH 7499 and Priority Habitat PH 985 in the 2003 Atlas. This site includes Thompson Pond and largely unprotected land on the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station (now the new community of Southfield) and extends well into portions of the base in Rockland and Weymouth.

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program suggests that "A proactive approach to wetland conservation is necessary in order to ensure that the wetlands maintain their natural water regime, including normal fluctuations and connections with the uplands and other wetlands. Moreover, protecting streams in the vicinity of each of these wetlands is crucial since streams act as conduits of the water and for movements of upland and wetland species. Water quantity and quality are thus ongoing issues for wetlands, and these are particularly important in areas such as Abington where rare species are concentrated in the wetlands."

E. Fisheries and Wildlife

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, BioMap and Living Waters, Report for the Core Habitats of Abington, dated 2004 notes the occurrences of rare species in the Town and is the source of the information shown in Table IV-2.

Table IV-2

Abington Rare Species

Species	Taxon*	Status
American Bittern (<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i>)	Bird	E
Least Bittern (<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>)	Bird	E
Hessel's Hairstreak (<i>Callophrys hesseli</i>)	Lepidoptera	SC
Grasshopper Sparrow (<i>Ammodamus savannarum</i>)	Bird	T
New England Blue (<i>Enallagma laterale</i>)	Dragonfly Damsel	SC

* Taxon: A taxonomic category or group, such as a phylum, order, family, genus, or species.

The status definitions are:

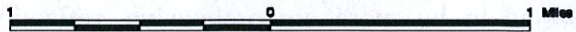
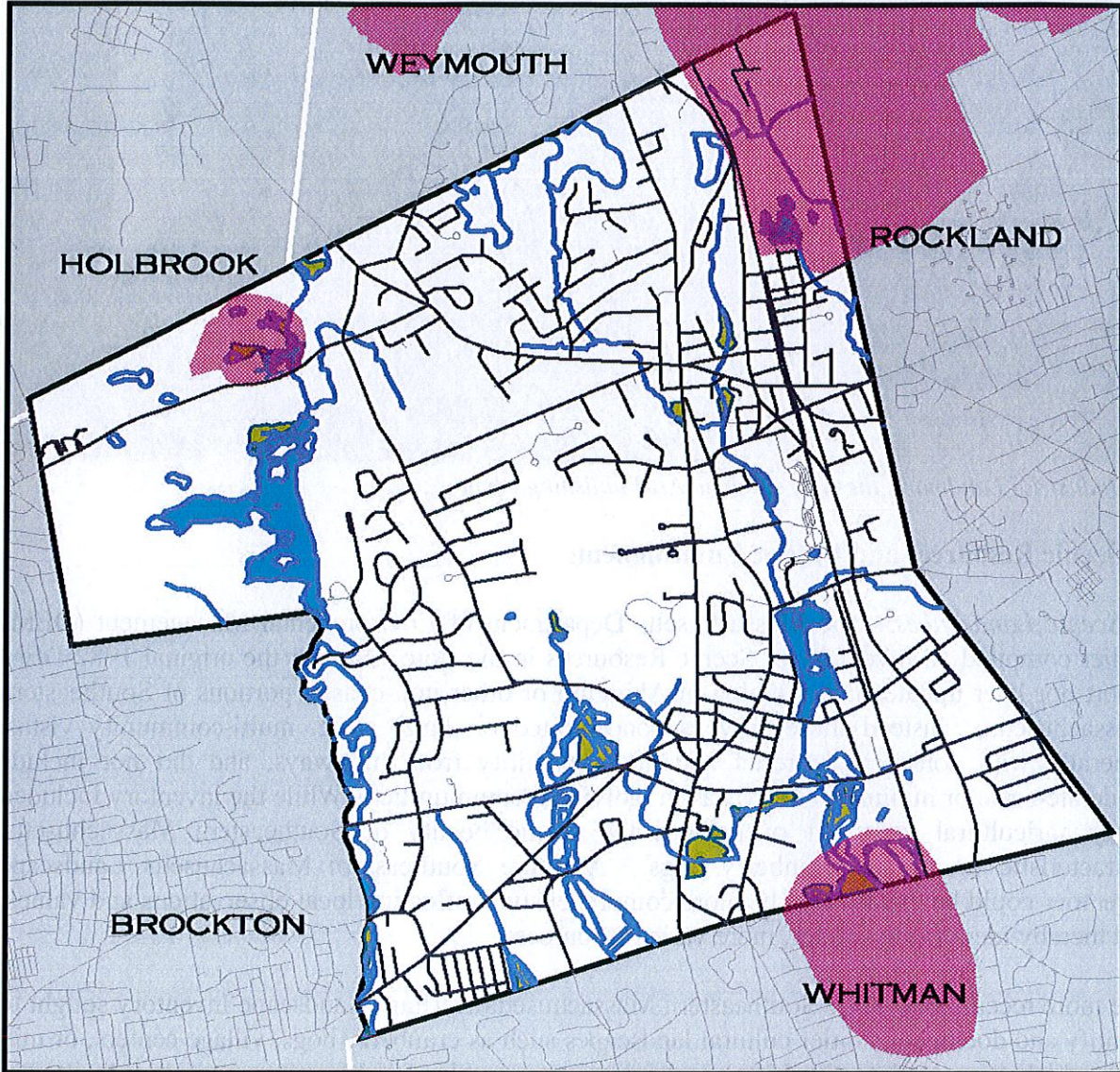
E = Endangered: In danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range or in danger of extirpation as documented by biological research and inventory

SC= Special Concern: Documented by biological research and inventory to have suffered a decline that could threaten the species if allowed to continue unchecked, or potentially threatened in Massachusetts because it occurs in small numbers or with a very restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements.


T = Threatened: Any species of plant or animal likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range, and any species declining or rare as determined by biological research and inventory and likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.

Abington's network of small tributary streams, ponds, and swampy areas provide good habitat for native Black Duck and other water fowl and muskrats. The brushy borders of such areas provide food and cover for the ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit and hare. Most of the wooded sites in town are small and surrounded by housing. Despite increased development, observations indicate that Abington now has a varied wildlife. This would include raccoons, opossums, skunks, coyotes, turkey, fox, woodchucks, squirrels, chipmunks, possible mink and deer.

**MAP IV-3
 ABINGTON PRIORITY, ESTIMATED, AND
 CORE HABITATS OF RARE SPECIES**

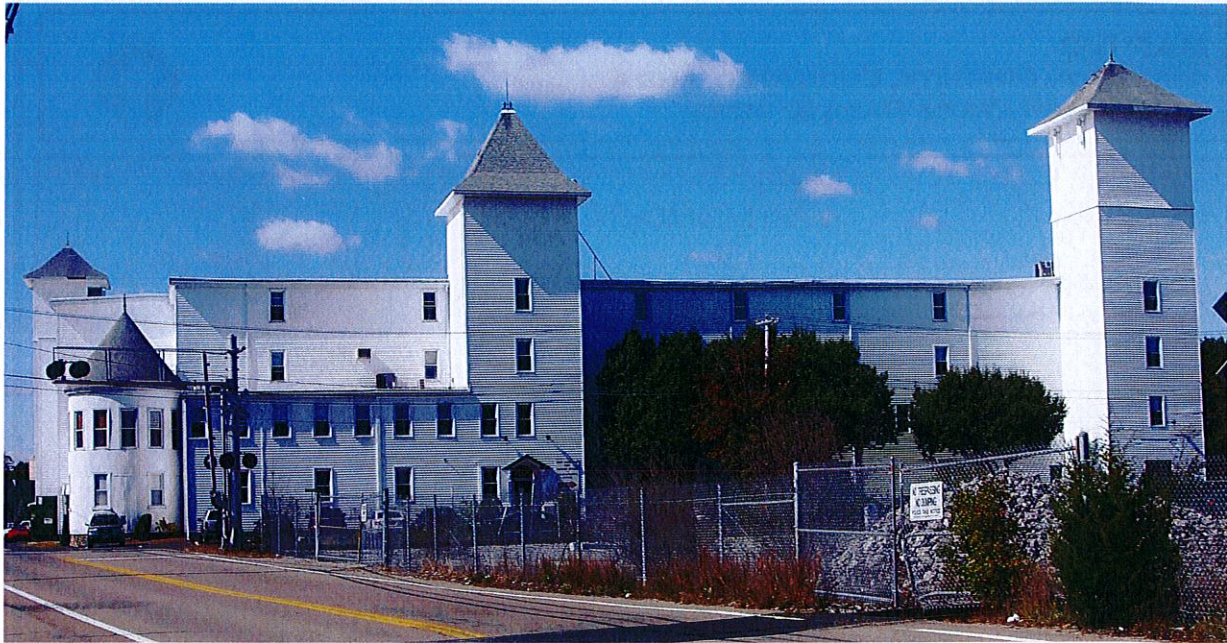


- ROADWAYS
- PRIORITY HABITAT OF RARE SPECIES
- HYDROGRAPHY
- WETLANDS
- SURFACE WATER
- SURROUNDING ROADWAYS
- ABINGTON
- SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

 **OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL**
 70 SCHOOL STREET
 BROCKTON, MA 02301

GIS DATA SOURCES:
 MASSGIS, MHD,
 TOWN OF ABINGTON

NOVEMBER, 2012



An Industrial Landmark, the New England Art Publishing Plant

F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

1. Scenic Landscapes. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (DEM) earlier compiled an Inventory of Scenic Resources in the state. Neither the original 1982 DEM report nor later updates list anything in Abington or other non-coastal portions of Southeastern Massachusetts. Instead these surveys concentrated on large scale, multi-community vistas, generally with considerable relief and good visibility from highways, and did not include moderate-scale or minimal relief vistas in individual communities. While the inventory included many agricultural vistas, it overlooked the scenic beauty of Southeastern Massachusetts' characteristic ponds and cranberry bogs. A future Southeastern Massachusetts Landscape Inventory could be expected to be more comprehensive, reflecting local observations and values, and thereby identifying subtler, more varied resources.

The more recent 2000-2001 Southeastern Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory sought to identify and document subtler cultural landscapes such as cranberry bogs, village centers, or mill sites which “are vital to the history, character, and quality of life of communities.” It was expected to be more comprehensive, reflecting local observations and values, and thereby identifying subtler, more varied resources. Unfortunately, Abington is not known to have been included in the initial survey of 15 communities used to develop the program. However the staff of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (Successor to the DEM) is available to help communities do local inventories.

This study has earlier noted that “With its moderate relief and limited open landscape Abington’s scenic views are generally water related”. See Map IV-4, “Abington Unique Features and Scenic Resources”. These views include:

- (a) The view into Ames Nowell State Park from Linwood Street
- (b) The long view across Cleveland Pond from its eastern shore
- (c) The Stunning view across Cushing Pond from Chestnut Street
- (d) The scenic view of surrounding lands from the highest point in the Strawberry Valley Golf Course
- (e) The views across Island Grove Pond from Central Street and Centre Avenue
- (f) The view north from the top of Hancock Street hill across Chestnut Street
- (g) Much of Mount Vernon Cemetery
- (h) The prominent wooden New England Art plant.

2. *Cultural, Archeological and Historic Areas.* The town’s major sites of cultural, archeological or historic interest include:

- (a) The North Abington Railroad Depot - the only local building on the Federal List of Historic Places, now a restaurant
- (b) Island Grove Park - a protected Historic Landscape and site of early Abolitionist meetings.
- (c) Mount Vernon Cemetery - a protected Historic Landscape used as a burial ground for early residents.
- (d) The great concentrations of historic properties in the western part of town (such as the handsome colonial house at the southern end of Linwood Street). These reflect the town’s agricultural past, but few intact farmsteads remain.
- (e) Victorian homes along Washington Street near Abington Center, along Adams Street from Washington Street to the North School and along Adams Street from Wales Street to Pine Street. These reflect 19th Century Prosperity.
- (f) The archetypical small New England mill just north of Arnold Park.

In all, the Abington Historic Commission’s 1984 town-wide inventory of historic and archeological resources lists over 200 such historic places in the town.

G. Environmental Challenges

1. Hazardous Waste and Brownfields Sites. The town’s most potentially significant documented environmental problems are those requiring clean-up of hazardous materials. As shown in Table IV-3 below, most of these have been successfully resolved with no significant remaining hazards, or are under way, and there is only one in which “the responsible party has not responded.”

2. *Landfills.* The Town of Abington has one previous landfill site. The unlined former 13-acre Abington Landfill is on Groveland Street. It served the town's solid waste disposal needs from 1940 to 1975. The landfill was closed and capped in 1984 when the Town entered into a solid waste disposal contract and no longer disposed of refuse in town. However, the capping was unsatisfactory and the Town is under an Administrative Consent Order from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to re-cap it with the work done by 2009. The work was delayed by limited funds, but the town contracted with SEA Engineering who have monitoring wells at the site and prepared plans for the capping the landfill in accordance with DEP requirements, FY 2015. Subsequently the Board of Selectmen voted in early 2014 to seek a No Action ruling from the DEP. This would indicate that over time the landfill has ceased to be significantly hazardous and no further capping is required. The town anticipates such a response, as there has been no sign of disapproval.

Table IV-3

Abington Environmental Cleanup Sites

Type of Site/Status of Cleanup by Maas DEP Categories		Number
	Adequately Regulated, Phase II Remaining Risks being determined	1
DEPNFA,	Old sites requiring No Further Action	6
LSPNFA,	Phase II, Risks determined by Licensed Site Professional, (LSP) no further action required	1
DPS	Down-gradient Property Status, affected by flows from upslope	1
Tier 1 C1	Phase IV, Serious requiring a DEP Permit, but under way under LSP supervision	1
Tier 1 D	Responsible party has not responded	1
Tier 2	Moderately Hazardous, LSP may respond w/o DEP Permit	1
Tier 2	Phase II, Risks are being determined	2
Tier 2	Phase IV, Cleanup I completed	1
Tier 2	Phase V, Longer term treatment, maintenance, and monitoring	1
RAO	Remedial Action Outcome, a statement of no remaining significant risk or at least removal of all substantial hazards	2
RAO A-1	Permanent solution achieved; reduction to background levels or no threatened release.	18
RAO A-2	Permanently solved though contamination is not reduced to background	32
RAO A-3	Permanently solved though contamination is not reduced to Background levels, with activity/use limitation	14
RAO B-1	No action, as no significant risk exists	4
RAO C	A temporary cleanup with no significant risks, re-evaluated every five years	1

RAO	Phase II, Risks are determined	3
REMOPS	Phase V (Remedy Operation Status) an active operation in use and being monitored	1
RTN	Closed, being followed under another number	9
Unclassified		1

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup.

3. *Erosion.* There are currently no major problems associated with soil erosion in Abington due to the relatively flat to rolling topography and slow flowing streams and water courses.

4. *Chronic Flooding.* There are no chronic areas of flooding in Abington, but there are a few areas that are prone to flood during a 100 year storm event. These flood prone areas are primarily located adjacent to or along Route 18, the major north/south state highway in town. The flooding is mainly due to inadequately sized storm water culverts in Route 18 near the Shumatuscacant River crossing at **Washington Street** that prevent the flow of storm water under the roadway and result in water back-up and flooding.. With the widening and improvement of Route 18 as part of the redevelopment of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station, most of these problems will be rectified. Conversely, further efforts might find low-lying areas above troublesome culverts which could be modified to be temporary detention areas limiting downstream flooding. The culverts would be altered to allow normal flows, but to retain flood flows until the point of overtopping.

5. *Sedimentation.* Sedimentation has not proven to be a significant problem given the tight soils and limited relief and is closely monitored and controlled during construction projects. The Town Highway Superintendent indicates that the Public Works Department periodically clears sediment from inlets and outlets to storm water drains to permit good water flow.

6. *Development Impacts.* A primary concern of Abington residents is the gradual changes that are taking place in the community due to development, and how these changes have and will over time affect the character of the community. Most of the recent development has been residential although there have been some significant commercial developments including the Wal-Mart and Target Department stores, Stop and Shop, and the expanded, relocated Cape Cod Lumber Co. that have consumed developable land. A build out analysis completed by EOEa in 1998 calculated a potential population of 19,275 at full build out under the present development regulations. Another analysis done as part of the 1999 Master Plan update assumed the possibility of more dense development and calculated a build out population of 24,900 persons. The latter projection appears to be the more reasonable in view of recent development in the Town.

7. *Ground/Surface Water Pollution.* As of this writing, there are no identifiable or documented ground and or surface water pollution problems in the Town of Abington.

8. *Environmental Justice.* The equitable or inequitable distribution of community resources or problem facilities can be judged by comparing the distribution of these resources/facilities with

the distribution of minority and low income populations. In Abington's case the major amenity, Ames Nowell State Park, is at the edge of town near relatively affluent large lot newer neighborhoods along Hancock Street, but it is accessible to all residents town-wide by car, foot and bicycle. It also adjoins moderate income Brockton neighborhoods though there are no identifying signs or clear access points.

At the same time, the older, higher density, more moderate-income neighborhoods in the eastern part of the town along Adams Street and Washington Street have good access to the town's jewel, Island Grove Park, and to the educational and recreational opportunities around Ralph G. Hamlin Lane. **Being central, these neighborhoods also include** inactive railroad tracks, the MBTA commuter rail line, and scattered long-established industries such as a greeting card plant, and careful planning is required to keep the mixed uses compatible.

Other amenities at the Town Hall/Library/Reilly Field Recreation Area complex are central to the whole town, though they are remote from the traditional centers, and have no direct connection to the Hancock Street "Country" neighborhoods.

Conclusion: Though some neighborhoods are more or less affluent than others, Abington has no significant concentrations of minority or low income populations leading to spatially defined Environmental Justice issues. That is, there are no concentrations of such populations near noxious or hazardous uses or uniquely distant from physical amenities.

SECTION V: INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST

Open space resources, including conservation land and recreation areas are important to the Town of Abington for providing active and “passive” recreational opportunities and offering visual relief from the built environment. Accordingly, the Town recognizes the importance of preserving and protecting threatened or vulnerable open spaces from development. Failure to protect these threatened properties may degrade the quality of life of the town.

The amount and distribution of open space in a community does much to shape its character. Lack of protection may allow incompatible land uses; result in unwanted changes in the appearance of the town; reduce the quality of life of residents; and degrade the town’s natural resources in a relatively short time. By protecting open space and planning for compatible development the Town can assure residents and prospective newcomers that the features, policies, and practices that attracted them to Abington will continue to shape its future.

The town has significant open space and recreation resources including an array of publicly and privately owned land that is used for both “active” and “passive” recreation. In addition, considerable open space is owned by the Abington Rockland Joint Water Works for regional water supply protection. As of this writing, the Town has approximately 1,886 acres of fully or partially protected open space. Of these, 1,640 are publicly-owned and 183.91 are privately-owned (with the recent sale of the golf driving range). Of the public holdings, 607.36 acres are at Ames Nowell State Park and another 178.75 acres are within the Abington part of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station (SWNAS) property.

Most of this land within Abington’s portion of the base is publically owned by the US Navy, the National Park Service, the new Southfield Redevelopment Authority or the overall developer, Starwood Corp. It is likely to remain as open space in the successor Master Plan given its low, wet nature. The town might want to acquire it to have the surest control of its future use but that probably is not necessary.

Overall, this inventory serves to identify existing open space and recreation resources and offers a baseline against which to evaluate existing and future needs.

Abington’s Open Space and Recreation resources consist of private, public and semipublic holdings and facilities, and natural and scenic assets which give Abington its unique character. Some resources can be protected by partial or full acquisition or CRs. Others, such as a scenic landscape or an historic development pattern, may be difficult to protect in the face ongoing development without changed perspectives on approaches to land use.

This section presents an inventory of all protected, under-protected or unprotected parcels in Abington of conservation and recreation interest. The unprotected properties of special interest in private and nonprofit ownership are listed in Table V-1.

Protected open space and recreation lands in public or non-profit ownership are listed on Table V-2A and unprotected or minimally protected public or nonprofit lands are listed on Table V-2B.

The narrative following the tables provides site specific information regarding parcel(s) location and access; acreage; zoning; restrictions; uses; ownership and management; degree of legal protection for preservation as open space; and, recommendations for action. In addition, Map V-1 “Abington Protected and Unprotected Recreation and Open Space Lands” presents the inventory visually.

The inventory is categorized according to the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services definitions for protected and unprotected lands. Protected lands are public or semipublic parcels that are permanently committed for conservation and recreation purposes, and may include permanent deed restrictions. These do not apply to all public land. The unprotected lands are a mixture of Town-owned land not committed to conservation purposes; and similar unprotected state-owned and private-land of recreational or open/green space value.

There are several degrees of Resource Protection. Ownership by a public agency for open space, recreation, and natural resource protection is the most protective if the purpose of the agency ownership is stated and if the sites are dedicated to such use in the deed or by a Conservation Restriction (CR).

The deed stipulation can be important because recent history has shown that a town meeting vote to acquire land for open space purposes does not always prevent a change in use or later sale. In addition, such a deed triggers further protection under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution which requires local votes plus a 2/3rds vote of each house of the General Court to change the use of public land acquired for such purposes. The town meeting article should apply to any land held for open space recreation and resource protection by an agency with such purposes, but dedication in the deed strengthens this protection.

Protection under Article 97 applies to lands held for open space purposes by state agencies such as the new Department of Conservation and Recreation (including the former Department of Environmental Management and the Metropolitan District Commission) and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife; and by local bodies such as Conservation Commissions, possibly Water Departments, and Recreation Commissions.

While Article 97 refers only to the power of the General Court to provide for acquiring land for such open space and recreational purposes, the Attorney General interprets it as also applying to acquisitions by individual communities since they are creatures of the state.

In contrast, other land held by the Selectmen for general municipal purposes or by the School Department for educational purposes (including playgrounds) is not protected unless under a conservation restriction or otherwise limited to such a use. That is because backland or playground land on a school site may be converted to other uses unless specifically committed to open space or recreation uses, e.g. by a Conservation Restriction.

In addition, land acquired with aid from the State Division of Conservation Services is also protected by a requirement that such land converted to other uses (most commonly schools) has to be replaced with land of similar size and value. This is often difficult in land-short communities.

Land taxed according to current use under current use taxation programs, Chapter 61 Forest, 61A Agriculture, and 61B Recreation, rather than at a higher speculative development value, is not protected per se, but it is under reduced development pressure and therefore may remain as open land much longer than otherwise likely. This relief lessens the tax pressure to sell, but does not prevent a very profitable sale for a more intensive higher-value use. Thus, land held privately for open space or recreation use such as a private golf course or sportsman's club is not protected unless covered with a Conservation Restriction. In any case, an owner may always take the land out the respective chapter by paying a portion of the taxes saved, so long as the land is not also offered for sale and /or use conversion. Beyond this, land can come out of "Chapter" protection if the owner fails to annually file to continue that status.

If the land is offered for sale for a different use, the Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Board of Selectmen must be notified. Then the town (or an agency acting for it e.g., a non-profit land trust or the Department of Conservation and Recreation) has, at best, 120 days in which to meet the private purchase offer.

Land held for open space or recreation use by private entities under CH. 61B, (Recreation) e.g. private golf courses or a sportsman's club, are not protected unless covered by a Conservation Restriction. Presently, the Town of Abington Assessor's Office has one property classified under Chapter 61A, and one property classified under Chapter 61B. The 61A property contains 13.89 acres in the area and is known locally as the "Beal Farm" and identified on Table V-1 and Map V-1 as P-3. The sole 61B property is 39.16 acres on three parcels of former Henrikson Dairy property identified as P-5. (One former 61B property, the Golf Driving range has been sold to Cape Cod Lumber and rezoned to allow businesses, and has been converted to a retail lumber operation.)

A. Inventory of Unprotected Private and Nonprofit Parcels of Conservation and Recreation Interest Including Land under Chapters 61A and 61B

Table V-1 presents an inventory of significant private and nonprofit land holdings in the Town of Abington.

Pohorecky Farm

The listing includes the 16 acres of holdings of the Holbrook Sportsmen Club; and the remaining 105.54 acres known as the Pohorecky Farm. The Farm is a valuable open space resource that was voted to be acquired by a Special Town Meeting in November, 1999. At the time the Town authorized borrowing of 1.4 million dollars and voted to exercise its right of first refusal to acquire the property in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c 61B, s9. The potential acquisition was been tied up in legal wrangling between private parties since that time and the town subsequently rescinded the vote..

The present area reflects the sale of several Form A lots along Chestnut Street and of the 49.12 acre western half of Cushing Pond and surrounding land. In addition a 38.88acre portion between Chestnut Street and the town line is proposed for subdivision Thus most of the avialable land is that south of Chestnut Street and partially surrounded by Ames Nowell State Park.

The acquisition of this valuable resource would still enhance, protect and expand the state land holdings in the Ames Nowell State Park and the limited Town holdings on the edge of Cushing Pond. Fortunately, the Department of Conservation and Recreation is still interested in the farm and has discussed related overdue property tax issues with the town and acquisition possibilities with the Pohorecky Estate trustees.

Carista (“Vineyard Road”) Property

In 2006, the Town of Abington acquired the 60.5 acre Carista (“Vineyard Road”) property that was formerly in the list of private and non-profit land holdings. This was with the cooperation of its interim owners, the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Foundation, as describes elsewhere. The land comes very close to the Conservation Commission’s Blueberry Hill Property but does not appear to touch it on the Assessors’ Maps. The holding land forms a wooded backdrop for the surrounding houses, when viewed down driveways or surrounding streets (Harrison Court, Hjelm Street, and Beaver Lane), but there are no signs identifying it as public land.

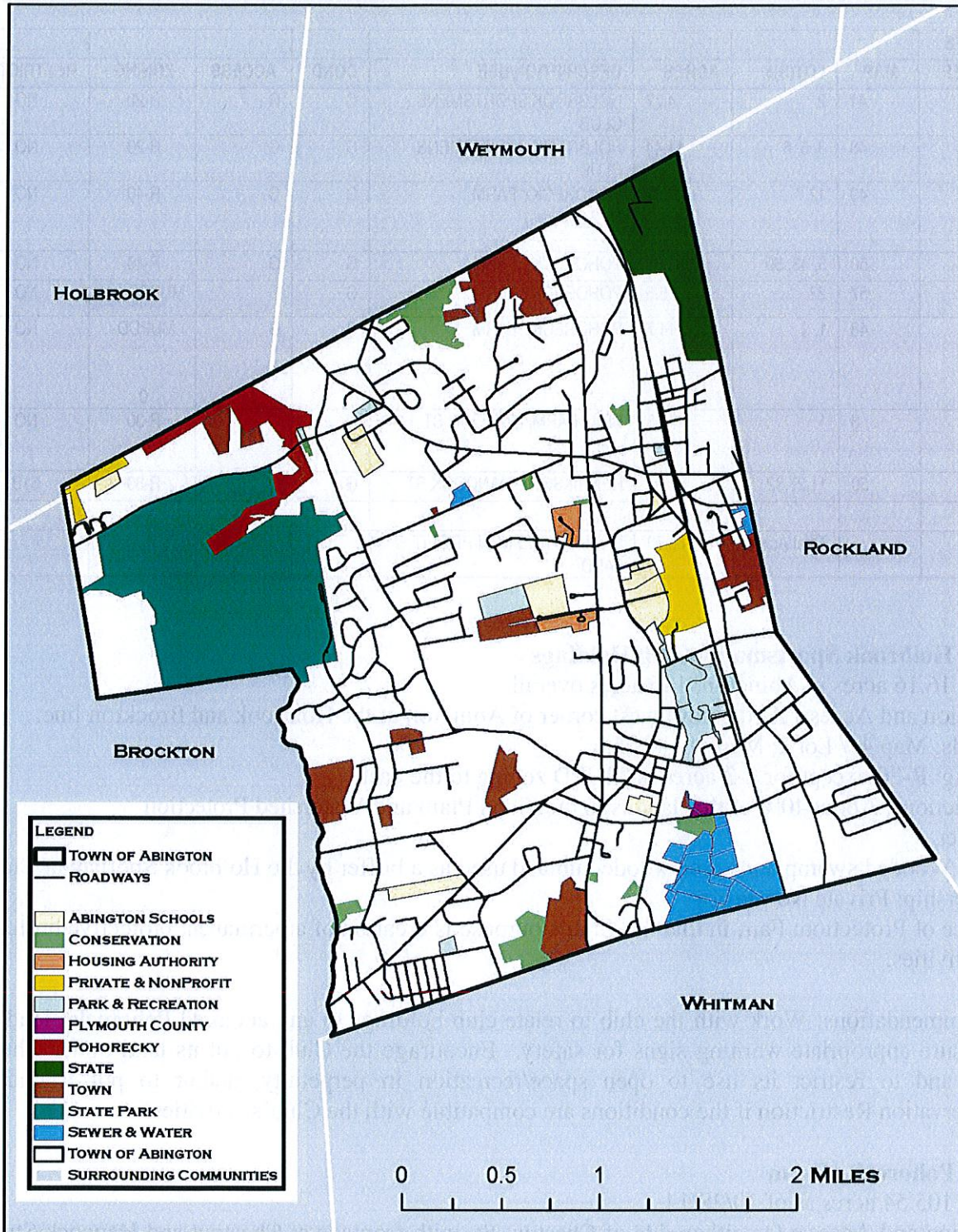
With this significant land acquisition the Town has approximately 1707,25 acres of fully or partially protected open space. Of these, 1,461.25 acres are publicly-owned and 246 are privately-owned. Of the public holdings, 607.36 acres are at the Ames Nowell State Park. In addition another 178.75 acres within the Abington part of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station (SWNAS), now called Southfield, are largely protected with different portions being owned by the National Park Service, the US Navy, the Southfield Redevelopment Authority and the overall developer, the Starwood Corporation. Thus the total publically-owned land in Abington’s portion of Southfield is slightly less than 178.75 acres.

The land in Abington’s portion of Southfield was to be permanent open space as an integral part of the Village Center Plan approved for reuse of the base by the South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation and the Towns of Abington, Weymouth and Rockland. However, that corporation has been dissolved by the Legislature, the former master plan and reuse plan have been rescinded, and the successor Southfield Redevelopment Authority has not yet developed a new plan for the entire base.

The unprotected Private and Non-profit Parcels of great interest are also described in the narratives following Table V-1 and shown on Map V-1; Protected and Unprotected Open Space and Recreation Lands. The table’s column titled COND or condition pertains to the use of the land for recreation or open space use and is expressed as being good (G); fair (F) or poor (P). The column titled Access refers to the site’s accessibility as good (G), fair (F) or inaccessible (I) in terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and is more fully described in Appendix A of this report. The land taxed under special current use taxation programs, i.e., Chapter 61A Agriculture or 61B Recreation, is shown in the Restricted column.

FIGURE 5 - I

**ABINGTON PROTECTED AND UNPROTECTED
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION LANDS**



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL, 70 SCHOOL STREET, BROCKTON, MA 02301
GIS DATA: MASSGIS, TOWN OF ABINGTON, OCPC

JANUARY, 2014

**Table V-1
Inventory of Abington Unprotected Private and Non-Profit Land Holdings of Special Interest**

PRIVATE								
MAP REF	MAP	LOT(S)#	ACRES	DESCRIPTION/USE	COND	ACCESS	ZONING	RESTRICTED
UP-1	41	2	4.77	HOLBROOK SPORTSMENS CLUB	G	G	R-20	NO
UP-1	48	3, 5, 6	11.44	HOLBROOK SPORTSMENS CLUB	G	G	R-20	NO
UP-2	49	12	8.57	POHORECKY FARM (112.65acres)	G	G	R-40	NO
UP-2	50	5, 43, 59	83.88	POHORECKY FARM	G	G	R-40	NO
UP-2	57	22	5.5	POHORECKY FARM	G	G	MUPDD	NO
UP-2	48	1, 9	14.7	POHORECKY FARM	G	G	MUPDD-0	NO
UP-2	8	1	573	BEAL FARM, LINWOOD ST	G	G	R-30	NO
UP-5	50	11,27,32	31.86	HENRIKSON , HANCOCK ST	G	G	R-30	61B
		Total Acres	168.90	PRIVATE AND NON-PROFIT LAND				

UP-1 Holbrook Sportsman’s Club Holdings

Area: 16.16 acres in Abington, 136 acres overall.

Location and Access: At the northwest corner of Abington at the Holbrook and Brockton line.

Parcels: Map 41/ Lot 2; Map 48/ lots 5.6

Zoning: R-20 except for 2-3 acres of MUPD zoning to the east.

Restrictions: About 40% of this land is in the Flood Plain and Watershed Protection District

Uses: Wooded swamp and some wooded upland used as a buffer by the Holbrook Sportsman Club.

Ownership: Private Non-Profit

Degree of Protection: Fair, in that the Club’s purpose is creation of a permanent protective buffer for its activities.

Recommendations: Work with the club to relate club holdings to any acquired Pohorecky land and to ensure appropriate warning signs for safety. Encourage the Club to put its land under Chapter 61B, and to restrict its use to open space/recreation in perpetuity, and/or to put it under a Conservation Restriction if the conditions are compatible with the Club’s activities.

UP-2 Pohorecky Farm

Area: 105.54 acres as of 10/28/14

Location and Access: On either side of Chestnut St. with frontage at Chestnut and Hancock Streets, and on Chestnut Street, west of Cushing Pond. Until recently it included the westernmost portion of

Cushing Pond, since sold. The southernmost portion extends about half a mile into the State Park and the northern portion runs along the Holbrook line with more land in that town.

Parcels: Map 48/ Lot 9; Map 50/ Lots 5, 42, 51a; and Map 57/ Lot 22.

Zoning: Multiple Use Planned Development District north of Chestnut Street and R-40 Low-Density Residential south of Chestnut Street.

Soils /Vegetation: Mix of meadows, woods and a portion of Cleveland Pond.

Restrictions: About 60% of the land is in the Flood Plain and Watershed Protection District.

Uses: Was agriculture, growing hay, produce, fruit and flowers; now inactive since death of owner and sale of the house. Since the planned town acquisition was understood to be for municipal purposes rather than for open space alone, portions could be separated for a school site with the rest then dedicated to open space use.

Ownership: Private. The town voted \$1,400,000 of local funds for acquisition and had a Purchase and Sale agreement but legal issues delayed the purchase. The vote has since been rescinded and there is no active town effort to acquire it. However DCR is understood to still be interested in acquiring all of the parcels thereby expanding the Park by 22%. After the owner's death, the estate's trustees sold some frontage house lots and paid taxes on those lots, but not on the rest and the main property is in Tax Title. Hence DCR has been in negotiations with the trustees and the Town around the question of full acquisition and resolution of the overdue taxes issue.

Degree of Protection: Limited, since the land is no longer under Ch. 61 and trustees have been selling the buildable frontage lots. It would be better under some combination of town and state purchase as open space with DCR and Conservation Commission management.

Recommendations: Encourage DCR purchase of remaining portions, especially south of Chestnut Street within or next to Ames Nowell State Park, and possible acquisition of the privately-owned western portion of privately owned of Cushing pond.

UP-3 Beal Farm (Former Sun Rae Lea Dairy)

Area: Earlier reported as 13.89 acres, Assessors now lists it as only 5.7 Acres due to sale of Form A Lots.

Location and Access: On Linwood Street north of the intersection of Mill Street.

Parcels: Map 8/ Lot 1, 5.73 acres

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: None

Uses: Open pasture/Agriculture

Ownership: Private, Classified Agriculture under Ch. 61A

Degree of Protection: Poor, as owner's purpose could change with the site being taken out of Ch. 61A and sold for development.

Recommendation: Reconsider the acquisition by the town and/or the state.

UP-4 Henrikson's

Area: 39.16 acres

Location and Access: Located on Hancock Street south of the intersection of Chestnut Street and adjacent to the Woodsdale Elementary School.

Parcels: Map 50, lots 11, 12, 27, 32l

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: A majority of the property is located in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Wooded swamp and wooded upland. The site has been considered for a possible junior high school.

Ownership: Private, Classified Recreation under Ch. 61B.

Degree of Protection: Poor, as owner's purpose could change with the site being taken out of Chapter 61B and sold for development.

Recommendations: Acquire to expand school grounds integrated with open space



Henrikson's Ch. 61B land fronting on Hancock Street and backing onto the Woodsdale School Grounds

B. Protected Public Holdings

Table V-2 is divided into two parts (V-2A and V-2B) which together present a complete Inventory of Publicly Owned Land in Abington. Table V-2A lists the parcels managed by the Abington Park and Recreation Commission, the Abington Conservation Commission and the state DCR for open space and recreation purposes. It can be seen from the tables, that these town holdings amount to 353.63 acres and the state's Ames Nowell State Park adds another 607.36 acres of protected land.

As it was noted previously, if town owned parcels are not specifically restricted to open space and recreation use they could be converted to another use.

Table V-2B lists the parcels used for school grounds, water supply and water supply protection, sewer commission, town hall and library, etcetera, accounting for 1,286.33 acres of public land.

Publicly owned properties are grouped by ownership/management. Those properties owned by the Town are commonly assigned to specific town boards and commissions for oversight responsibility to assure open space or resource protection, but many remain as general town holdings under the Selectmen.

Although town owned land not specifically identified as protected open space, recreation and/or conservation land could be used for other municipal purposes such as a school, it would require a town meeting vote with the support of residents. And, as noted above, such land acquired with state assistance would have to be replaced with similar land. This could be quite difficult in a built-up community. Public lands not needed or not important for open space or other municipal purposes (such as some tax-title lands) can be declared surplus and made available for sale. But in such cases a land disposition agreement and/or land transfer would also require town meeting action.

With the stressful local fiscal situation due to the reduction in local aid there may be pressure on the town to sell some land for house lots for the revenue, or to dispose of land acquired for other public purpose to pay for new open space or other investment.

To allow such mixed-use development when and where appropriate, it would be best to acquire the land for general municipal purposes, then to separate the municipal land, and transfer the rest to the Conservation or Recreation Commissions or a land trust so that Article 97 applies only to the land to be saved.

The Conservation Commission reports few if any transfers of town-owned land to its jurisdiction over the past several years, so these opportunities remain. The properties proposed for such transfers, primarily to the Conservation or Park and Recreation Commissions, are shown on Map V-1, Protected and Unprotected Open Space and Recreation Lands, and listed along with any special recommendations in Appendix One.

A description of each parcel on Table V-2A follows the table and there is a key to locate the parcels on the map. The Table shows whether the parcels are restricted or protected as well as the condition of the property for use for recreation and/or open space. This is expressed as good (G); fair (F) or poor (P). Access is indicated as being good (G), fair (F) or inaccessible (I) in accordance with the facility's handicapped accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. These accessibility findings are described in Appendix 2.

Table V-2B then shows properties which are partially protected or unprotected.

*

**Table V-2A
Inventory of Protected Public and Nonprofit Land in Abington**

ID/ Map/Lots	Acres	Name/Use	Condition	Access	Zoning	Restrictions
Park and Recreation Holdings						
PR-1 4/34	3.9	Green St. Playground	Good	G	R-30	None
PR-2 53/172	2.5	Arnold Park /Wales St.	Good	G	CBD	None
PR-3 24/20	35	Island Grove Park	Good	F	R-30	None
P3-3 24/30	17.22	Island Grove Park	Good	F	R-30	None
PR-4 57/47	3.4	Laidler Field Rec. Area	Good	G	R-30	None
PR-5 32/45	20	Plymouth St. Rec. Area	Good	F	R-30	None
PR-6	22	Reilly Field Rec. Area	Good	G	R-30	None
Sub-total	104.02					
Conservation Commission Holdings						
C-1 5/17, 18, 19	29.74	High Street Cons. Land	Good	I	R-30	None
C-2 16/79	4.0	Wright's Meadow	Good	I	R-30	None

C-2 17/34	3.77	Wright's Meadow	Good	I	R-30	None
C-3 63/24	5.25	Thicket St. Cons. Area	Good	I	R-30	None
C-4 63/12	40	Blueberry Hill Land	Good	I	R-30	None
C-5 60/50	4.22	Hamilton St. Cons., Land	Good	I	R-20	None
C-6 52/122	8.1	Tim's Pond	Good	I	R-30	None
C-7 10/37	2.7	Walnut St. Conservation Area	Good	I	R-30	None
C-8 7/21	.92	Valatka Cons. Land	Good	F	H-C	None
C-9 1/1	2.8	Beaver Brook/ Brockton Ave.	Good	I	R-30	None
C-9 1/12	.43	Beaver Brook/ Davis Street	Good	I	R-30	None
C-9 1/29	1.09	Beaver Brook/ Madison St.	Good	I	R-30	None
C-9 1/32	.41	Beaver Brook/ Madison St.	Good	I	R-30	None
C-9 3/81	.34	Beaver Brook/ Madison St	Good.	I	R-30	None
C-9 3/85	.40	Beaver Brook/ Davis St.	Good	I	R-30	None
C-9 3/8	1.26	Beaver Brook/ Laurie Ave.	Good	I	R-30	None
C-10 10/5	1.30	Washington St/ Bicknell Brook	Good	I	R-30	None
C-11 52/60	1.0	100 Bedford Street	Good	G	HC	None
C-12	.25	Cleveland Pond Island Town owned but in State Park	Good	I	R-40	None Known;
C-13	.92	Ashland St. Conservation Area	Good	F	R-30	None"

State Holdings

S-1	607.36	Ames Nowell State Park	Good	FG	R-40	State Land
-----	--------	------------------------	------	----	------	------------

As labeled on the Assessor maps it includes:

Open Space

28/1, 2, 3, 4, 7B, 34/12, 17, 18, 35/1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7a, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 36/57, 59, 60, 41/11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 27, 42/1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 43/1, 2, 49/19, 19a, 42

**Table V2-B
Inventory of Partially Protected Land**

School Department Holdings

AS-1 16/33	13	Center School and Playground	Good	G	R-30	None
AS-2 38/10, 11,22	27	Abington High School (Housing Authority)	Good	G	H-C	None
'AS-3 39/55, 56, 58 61, 64, 65, 66	12.76	Beaver Brook Elem School (ex Earlier Childhood Learning Center)	Good	G	R-30	None
AS-4 39/68, 69 46/42, ,	12.1	Frolio JHS playfields	Good	G	R-30	None
AS-5 50/12 57/31, 32,44	17.81	Woodsdale Sch. Playgrounds and fields	Good	G	R-30	None
AS-6 53/67	2	North School School is closed; no play area	NA	NA	R-20	None
AD-7, 16.83		Potential School site on Brockton Ave.	Good	G	H-C	None

Town Sewer and Water Lands

SW-1 10/60	.01	Walnut St., Sewer	Good	I	R-30	“ “
SW-2 16/89	5.33	Walnut St., Sewer	Good	I	R-30	“ “
SW-3 57/25	.02	888 Hancock St., Sewer	Good	I	R-30	“ “
SW-4 17/8	.79	350 Summer St., Sewer	Good	I	R-30	“ “
SW-5 50/12	.03	312 Chestnut St., Sewer	Good	I	R-30	“ ”
SW-6 11/1	52.3	Myers Ave., Wells	Good	I	R-30	None
SW-7 17/33	52	Summer St. Water Lands	Good	I	R-30	None
SW-8 17/36	13.69	Myers Ave., Well	Good	I	R-30	None
SW-9 17/37	17.67	Walnut St., Water Dept.	Good	I	R-30	None
SW-10	.18	168 Bank St., Water Dept.	Good	I	R-30	None

23/172							
SW-12	1.42	Walnut St., Water Dept.	Good	I	R-30	None	
10/63							
SW-13	16.98	Walnut St., Water Dept.	Good	I	R-30	None	
10/73							

Inventory of Partially Protected Land, Continued

Housing Authority

HA-1	14.20	71 Shaw Ave. Blanchard 45/115 Gardens	Good	G	R-30	None
HA-2	21.18	100 Lincoln Blvd. Leavitt Terr.	Good	G	HC	None
38/1,17, 18						
HA-3	1.19	210 Green St.	Good	G	R-30	None
4/37						
Ha-4	.28	36 Dorsey St.	Good	G	R30	None

Other Town Holdings

T-1	25.56	Town Hall/library	Good	G	R-30	None Known
38/13, 15						
T-2	1.0	Fire Station, 1040 Bedford St.	Good	G	HC	None Known
59/151						
T-3	.59	Fire Station, 5 Rockland St.	Good	G	R-20	None Known
22/77						
T-4	27	930 Washington, Highway Dept.	Good	G	R-30	None known
39/36						
T-5	.80	Hancock St., Highway Dept.	Good	G	R-30N	None Known
37/41						
T-6	5	225 Central St., Highway Dept.	Good	G	R-30	None Known
21/79A						
T-7	2.1	Police Dept., 215 Central St. (inc. two basketball courts)	Good	G	R-30.	None Known
31/79						
T-8	6.32	Charles St., Former Sewer Beds	Good	G	R-20	None Known
47/62						
T-9	35	Former Griffins Dairy	Good	G	R-20	None Known
						to north;
						R -30
						to south
T-10	.12	15 Brighton St. Parking Lot	Good	G	CBD	None known
53/122						
T-11	50.46	Strawberry Valley Golf Course	Good	G	R-30	None known
9/43 5/20/17						
T-12	7	Vineyard Rd. Former Carista Property (60.5acres)	Good	G	R-30	None known
63/135						
64/14, 34	50.5	Vineyard Rd.	Good	G	R-30	None known

68/2	3	Vineyard Rd.	Good	G	R-30	
T-13	.2	Shumatuscasant River Strip	Good	G	R-30	None
16/77						
T-14		Diane Circle	Good	G	R-40	None
13/37,						
62						
20/1-13,						
44-59						
21/70-						
72,109	73.32					
T-15	12.18	Groveland St. former landfill	Fair	F	R-40	None
21/70						
T-16	4.17	Groveland St. Former landfill	Fair	F	R-40	None
15/40-42						
T-17	4.26	Groveland St. Former landfill	Fair	F	R-40	None
5/32-38						
T-17	.92	Rockland St. Cons. Area	Good	G	R-40	None
21/70						
T-17	1.1	Rockland St. Cons. Area	Good	G	R-40	None
21/71						
T-17	.91	Rockland St. Cons. Area	Good	G	R-40	None
21/72						
T-17	5.93	Rockland St. Cons. Area	Good	G	R-40	None
21/109						
T-18	.75	North Quincy St. Next to State Park	Good	I	R-40	None
34/16						
T-19	16.90	500 Chestnut St. next to Pohorecky land	Good	I	MUPD	None
49/13, 16						
T-20	5.5	Chestnut St. next to Pohorecky and Town parcels	Good	I	MUPD	
56/4						
T-21	.17	Fairview Ave.	Good	I	CR-20	
61/31,						
32						
T-22	3.29	Linwood St.	Good	I	R-40	None
14/7						
T-23	.84	Lincoln St.	Good	G	R-30	
44/29						
T-24	.51	Lincoln St. Cons. Land	Good	G	R-0	
44/17						
T-25	.12	Walker Lane	Good	G.	R-40	
29/77,101						
T-26	.93	Old Country Lane Cons. Land	Good	G	R-40	
28/26						
T-27	3.8	Linwood St, Beaver Brook	Good	G	R-30	
28/11						
T-28	.75	No. Quincy St. Next to Ames Nowell State Park	Good	F.	R-40	
T-29	22.4	Chestnut Street North Adjacent to Pohorecky land	Good	F	MUOD	
49/13,						
16, 52/4						
T-30	.17	18 Fairview Avenue Good	Good	I	CR-20	
16/32						
T-31	.99	Shumatuscanat River Strip	Good	I	R-30	

16/ 60; 77						
T-32	6.0	Town Lands, to the south of The Sportsmen's Club	Good	I		MUPDD
48-11, 12						

Plymouth County Holdings

CT-1	2.16	Plymouth County Land On Shumatuscacant River	Good	I		R-30
17/75						
CT-2	3.0	Plymouth County Land Along Shumatuscant River near Summer St.	Good	I		R-30
17/1						

State Holdings

Inventory of Partially Protected Land, Continued

ST-2	1.49	Birch St. MBTA	Good	G		CBD
53/72						
53/73	1.85	Monroe St.	Good	G		CBD
53/79	.20	Birch St. MBTA	Good	G		CBD
54/113	.11	Monroe St. MBTA	Good	G		CBD
ST-3	4.08	Old Colony RR Station	Good	G		TOD
24/113						
ST-4	178.75	South Shore Tri-town Development Corp.	Good	G		MUPD

Non-Profits

NP -1	61.44	Mount Vernon Cemetery	Good	G		R-20
47/90						
NP-2	16.2	Holbrook Sportsmans Club Land locked	Good	G		MUPD
31/2						
41/2						
48/3, 5, 6						

Private Holdings of Special Interest

UP-2	112.65	Pohorecky Farm	Good	Over-grown		MUPD
48/9.1	14.7					
48/12	8.57					
50/5	38.88					
50/ 43, 59	45.0					

Descriptions of Well-Protected Public and Nonprofit Land in Abington

Park and Recreation Commission Land

This includes land used for park and/or recreation purposes and held or managed by the Park and Recreation Commission.

PR-1 Green Street Playground

Map 4/Parcel 34

Area: 3.91 acres

Location and Access: On Green Street across from the Green St. neighborhood and east of the mapped (but not evident) Meadow Brook.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: About 85% of the land is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: One youth league field, a playground and tot-lot with swings and slides, and two basketball courts making this a valued asset for this high-density neighborhood.

Ownership/Management: Park and Recreation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being under the Park and Recreation Commission.

Recommendations: Continue present management, but add adult facilities for parents watching kids.

PR-2 Arnold Park /Wales St.

Map 52/Parcel 172

Area: 2.5 acres

Location and Access: On Wales Street prominently sited across from the Abington Inc. building and next to the commuter rail tracks.

Zoning: Central Business District (CBD).

Restrictions: None

Uses: One Youth League field, basketball court, playground and tot-lot.

Ownership/management: Park and Recreation Commission.

Degree of Protection: High, being under the Commission.

Recommendations: Continue present management, but add facilities for parents watching kids.

PR-3 Island Grove Pond Park

Map 24/Parcel 20, 30

Area: 52.22 acres.

Location and Access: The Park fronts on Central Street and Park Avenue

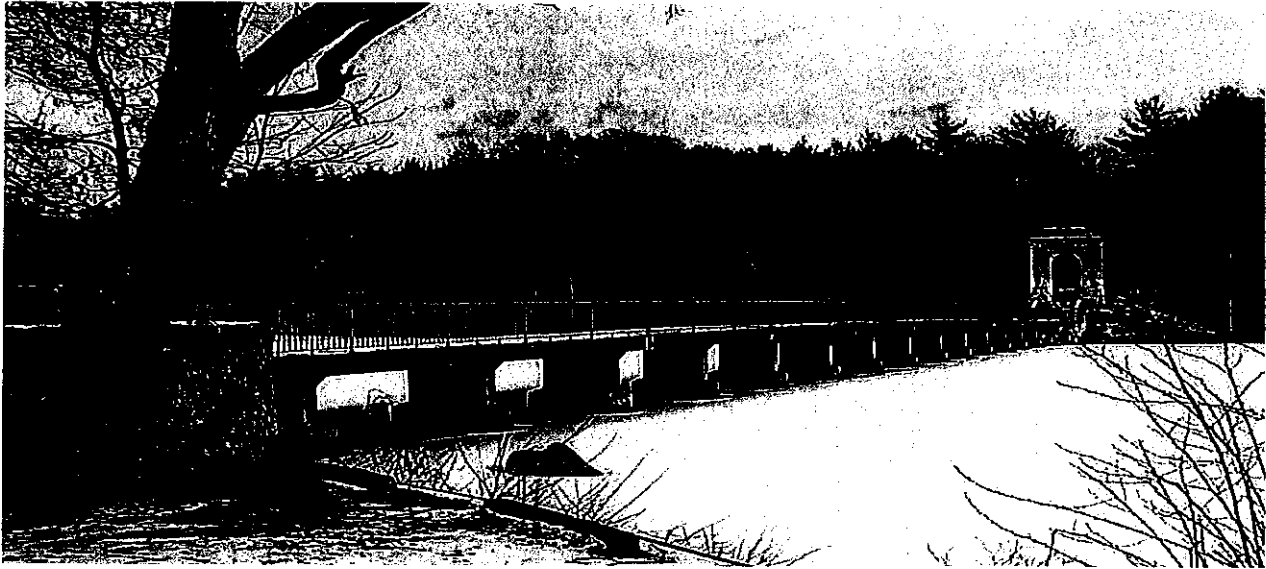
Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: Eighty percent of the land is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: The community's most heavily visited recreation site, it attracts families from the town and nearby communities to its summer activities. It includes a bath house and spring-fed swimming area, playground/tot-lot with reportedly outdated and deteriorated equipment, picnic tables, skating facilities, concession stand, gazebo, space for the Eager Beaver Program and Girl Scout camp, a popular, but deteriorated pedestrian bridge across the Pond from Lake Street and decorative 19th Century stonework on the bridge abutments and related arches along the edge of the pond. The bridge needs extensive repair, as does much of the stonework. Work has begun on the bridge and is expected to start soon on the Arch, on the stonework at the Bridge, and around the edge of the pond. The town is seeking funds for total repair and restoration.

Ownership/management: Owned by the Town, managed by the Park and Recreation Commission.
Degree of Protection: High, being under the Park and Recreation Commission and very visible.

Recommendations: Seek recreation and historic preservation funds and other resources to complete needed work. Make the park the keystone of a Weymouth to Whitman River Corridor



Wilson Memorial Bridge and Arch at Island Grove Park- Beautiful, Historic but Deteriorated.

PR-4 Laidler Field Rec. Area

Map 57/Parcel 47

Area: 3.4 acres

Location and Access: On Chestnut Street diagonally across from the Woodsdale School entrance.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: None

Uses: One multi-purpose field (soccer, baseball), playground and tot-lot.

Ownership/Management: Park and Recreation Commission.

Degree of Protection: High, being under the Park and Recreation Commission.

Recommendations: Improve the tot-lot by complementing the improved play structures with previously recommended game tables and a possible exercise circuit for adults.



Laidler Field Recreation Area- new equipment for children, but little for accompanying adults

PR-5 Plymouth Street Recreation Area

Map 32/Parcel 45

Area: 20 acres, 2 acres actively maintained

Location and Access: Parcel fronts on Plymouth St., backs onto Island Grove Park, and is divided by RR tracks

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: None

Uses: Multi-purpose fields, Concession Stand, Batting Cage and Off-Street Parking lot complementing the Park

Ownership/Management: Park and Recreation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being under the Park and Recreation Commission.

Recommendations: Examine opportunities to better complement the Park

R-6 Reilly Field Recreation Area

Map 38/ Parcel14

Area: 22 acres.

Location and Access: Adjacent to Abington High School, Town Hall and Library with access from Gliniewicz Way.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: None

Uses: One multi-purpose field, track and field facility, bandstand, utility building, concession stand & restrooms

Ownership/Management: Although technically on School Department land the fields are a community asset and are maintained by the Park and Recreation Commission.

Degree of Protection: High, being a major community facility, managed by the Park and Recreation Commission.

Recommendations: Continue present management

Sub-total 104.02 Acres

Conservation Holdings

This listing includes land in conservation or open space use held or managed by the Conservation Commission as well as any land clearly held for such purposes by other Town agencies and the County.

C-1 High Street Conservation Area

Map 5/ Parcels/17, 18, 19

Acreage: 28.76 acres.

Location and Access: The property has frontage on High Street and the Whitman town line and abuts the town-owned Strawberry Valley Golf Course fronting on Washington St.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The eastern portion of land along the headwaters of the Stream River is wooded swamp in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation: The westerly portion of the land is comprised of Essex coarse sandy loam on moderate to steeply sloping terrain. (EsB, EC). Much of the original land surface within two hundred feet of High Street is covered by tall grasses and farmland that marks the limit of this particular soil group. The remainder of the parcel, about twenty acres, is comprised of shallow muck (MU) covered by red maple and scrub oak. This area is generally wet year round.

Uses: The area is part of the watershed of the Shumatuscacant River and is suitable for multi-use, especially cross-country skiing given the extensive rolling open land at the adjacent Strawberry Valley Golf Course.

Ownership/Management: Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission

Recommendations: Sign, seek improved access from High St. and the Golf Course.

C-2 Wright's Meadow

Map 16/Parcel 79; Map7/Parcel 34

Acreage. 7.77 acres.

Location and Access: The Meadow fronts on Summer St., brackets the Shumatuscacant River, and abuts extensive joint Abington-Rockland water supply protection holdings on both sides of the river to the south.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: Most of the property is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation: Shallow Muck (Mu) with a cover of red maple, shrub oak and grassy meadows.

Uses: This is part of the watershed of the Abington-Rockland Water Works' Meyers Ave. well. It is used for hiking and nature study and is linked to the Shumatuscacant River Strip north of Summer Street.

Ownership/ Management: Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission.

Recommendations: Sign, seek integrated management with the water land to the south with access for appropriate non-polluting recreational uses like hiking.

C-3 Thicket Street Conservation Land

Map 63/Parcels 24 and 22 attached small parcels

Acreage: 5.25 acres

Location and Access: This land is on the Weymouth/Abington boundary and abuts the large Blueberry Hill land. It is accessible by a town-owned right-of-way from Thicket Street.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The land is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation: The soil is peat (Pe) with a cover of red maple and white cedar. This land is generally wet year round.

Uses: This land and the adjacent wooded swamp are in the headwaters of the Shumatuscacant River and provide flood storage during heavy rain. Being very wet most of the year it has little active recreation potential but provides wildlife habitat. It could well be merged with the adjacent Blueberry Hill land.

Ownership/Management: Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission.

Recommendations: Sign and improve access.

C-4 Blueberry Hill Land

Map 63/Parcel 12

Acreage: Approximately 40 acres

Location and Access: Located off Ekstrom Circle adjacent to the Thicket Street.

Conservation Land with access from the end of that site and from a corner of Ekstrom Circle.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The property is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation: The dominant soil is peat (Pe) with a partial cover of red maple and cedar.

Uses: This wooded swamp is in the headwaters of the Shumatuscacant River and provides flood storage. Being very wet most of the year it has little active recreation potential, but provides wildlife habitat. It has potential for trail development or nature study. It could well be merged with the adjacent Thicket Street land.

Ownership / Management: Under the management and care of the Conservation Commission as per Ch. 40, Sec. 8c. according to the deed.

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission.

Recommendations: Sign it, merge with site C-3, and improve access

C-5 Hamilton Street Conservation Lane

Map 60/ Parcel 50

Acreage: 4.22 acres

Location and Access: The parcel is behind developed property along Hamilton Street, Adams Street and Wales Street. The parcel is landlocked with access only through the surrounding residential and commercial lots. However acquisition of contiguous streamside woodland to the north as far as Hemlock Lane off of Adams Street or Bay State Circle off of Oak Street, and almost to Wales Street might create a wildlife preserve and streamside trail along any upland with access via easements along the edge of large residential or commercial lots.

Signage: None

Zoning: High Density Residential (R-20).

Restrictions: Areas with muck soil located in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District along a tributary to the Shumatuscacant River.

Soils and Vegetation: Hinckley gravely loam sand (HaE) with a cover of mature white pine and some open marsh on the eastern portion. To the west there abruptly is shallow muck (Mu) with red maples over the rest of this site.

Uses: This land is suitable for nature trail, picnicking and vista development.

Ownership/Management: Conservation Commission.

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission.

Recommendations: Sign and explore further acquisition of stream-side woods north to the area behind Bay State Circle or Chestnut Lane and develop access points to the north, south, or west via easements around nearby houses or businesses.

C-6 Tim's Pond

Map 52/Parcel 122

Acreage: 8.1 acres

Location and Access: The parcel fronts on Lincoln Street.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The property is within the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District along the upper Shumatuscacant River.

Soils and Vegetation: A mixture of open land and woodland next to a tiny pond evolving to a meadow

Uses: Minimal skating, nature observation. Potentially combined with 7-acre lot 5 to the south allowing walking from School and a ROW of off Shaw Avenue.

Ownership/ Management: Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission.

Recommendations: Sign and improve access and examine opportunities to combine this with land to the south as noted above.

C-7 Walnut Street Conservation Land

Map10/Parcel

37

Acreage: 2.7 acres.

Location and Access: The parcel has frontage on Walnut Street and is on the south side of Bicknell Brook.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The parcel is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation: The soil is Scarboro Sandy loam.

Uses: A good potential nature study area, or if passable, part of a streamside trail connecting town-owned site on Washington St. with land on the Whitman line.

Ownership/Management: Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission

Recommendations: Sign, improve access and explore walking trail potential



Power Line Right of Way Gate blocking access to an unimproved trail into the unsigned Walnut Street/Bicknell Conservation Area.

C-8 Valatka Conservation Land

Map7/Parcel 21

Acreage: 0.92 Acres

Location and Access: Between two branches of Beaver Brook flowing from Hunt's Pond dam at Mill St. on the Brockton line. The small isolated site may be approached from the Brockton side of the stream by wading through the dam's spillway or stepping over its sluice. A footbridge crossing the deep, stone-lined Brook (approached across a sliver of private land on Mill St.) would allow direct access.

Signage: None

Zoning: HC Highway Commercial

Restrictions: The site is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District

Soils and Vegetation: The site is covered by pines and shrubs.

Uses: Viewing scenic Hunt's Pond and dam, picnicking, access to Pond

Ownership / Management: Conservation Commission in cooperation with the Brockton Conservation Commission, plus a deed restriction requiring the City to keep the site natural and regulating management of the stream banks

Degree of Protection: Very High, combining Conservation Commission jurisdiction and the deed restriction

Recommendations: Sign it, gain an easement and build a footbridge from Mill St.



Visitor Pondering Access to Valatka Conservation land by wading across spillway from an adjacent private yard (right) or; by leaping over the Control Structure Outlet from Brockton side of the dam (left).

C-9 Beaver Brook Conservation Land

Map 1/Parcels 1,12,29,32, Map 3/Parcels 8, 81, 85

Acreage: 6.43 acres in assorted parcels along Beaver Brook in the southwest part of Abington at the Brockton line.

Location and Access: These scattered parcels are located along the east side of Beaver Brook and are for the most part inaccessible.

Signage: None

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: The land is in the Floodplain and Watershed Protection District

Soils and Vegetation: Tight soils with the hardwood cover typical of wooded swamp.

Uses: Properties are too wet to be used for active trails.

Ownership / Management: Conservation Commission.

Degree of Protection: Good, being under Conservation jurisdiction.

Recommendations: Work with Brockton to coordinate access along the adjacent Beaver Brook Reservation.

C-10 Washington Street/ Bicknell Brook

Map 10/Parcel 5

Area: 1.3 Acres

Location and Access: The parcel fronts on Washington Street and is adjacent to Bicknell Brook.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The southern portion of land along Bicknell Brook is wooded swamp in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation: The land is comprised of Essex coarse sandy loam on moderate sloping terrain. (EsB, EC). Much of the land surface is comprised of shallow muck (MU) covered by red maple and scrub oak.

Uses: The area is part of the watershed of the Shumatuscacant River.

Ownership/Management: Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, being managed by the Conservation Commission

Recommendations: Sign the parcel and clear an entrance into the land.



Unsigned, inaccessible South Bedford Street /Washington Street property C-10 on Bicknell Brook

C-11 Bedford Street/ Shumatuscacant River

Map 52/Parcel 60

Area: 1 Acre

Location and Access: This one-acre town-owned parcel is on Bedford Street, includes a portion of the Shumatuscacant River, and is in the floodplain and wetlands protection district.

Zoning: Highway Commercial (HC).

Restrictions: In the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District

Soils And Vegetation; Parcel is partly wooded.

Uses: Parcel is accessible from Bedford Street and is in its natural open space state.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington Conservation Commission according to the deed restriction.

Degree of Protection: Good

Recommendation: Land is unsuitable for development; leave as local open space .

C-12 Cleveland Pond Island

Map 42/Parcel 2

Area: 0.25 Acre

Location and Access: This town owned-parcel is in Cleveland Pond in Ames Nowell State Park and is inaccessible except by boat or (prohibited) swimming.

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-40).

Soils and Vegetation: The Island is wooded.

Ownership: Town of Abington

Degree of Protection: High, being within a State Park.

Uses: Parcel is wooded and in its natural open space state.

Recommendation: Land is well suited to its present open space/conservation use, although uses could be expanded. Consider allowing swimming and camping

C-13 Ashland Street Conservation Land

Map 9/Parcel 38

Area: 0.92 Acre

Location and Access: This town-owned parcel is on Ashland Street and is accessible from the street.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Soils and Vegetation The land is wooded and in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Restrictions: It is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Parcel is wooded and in its natural open space state.

Ownership: Town of Abington Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: Good

Recommendation: No change in management

State Holdings

S-1 Ames Nowell State park

As labeled on the Assessor maps it includes:

Map 28/Parcels 1, 2, 3, 4, 7B

Map 34/ Parcels 12, 17, 18;

Map 35/Parcels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7a, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15;

Map 36/Parcels 57, 59, 60

Map 41/Parcels 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 27

Map 42/Parcels 1, 3, 4, 5, 6

Map 43/Parcels 1, 2

Map 49/Parcels 19, 19a

Map 42/ Parcel 1

Acreage: 607.36 acres.

Location and Access: The Park fronts on Chestnut Street and Linwood St. in Abington and has frontage on North Quincy Street via one small parcel just south of Boundary Street where a power line on private industrial land may offer a tempting off-road access – as does a much larger powerline easement running north of Chestnut Street. There are identifying signs only on Linwood Street in Abington. The park abuts Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation to the south

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-40).

Restrictions: Approximately one fifth of the Park is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: The Park's rugged terrain and undisturbed stands of virgin white pine and hardwood attract hikers, horse/bike riders, nature enthusiasts and fisherpersons during the warmer months and cross-country skiers in the winter. The pond is considered to be too shallow and algae filled for swimming so it is prohibited though informal swimming has been observed near the dam. The Park's trails rarely connect with surrounding areas. There may be an unmet potential for camping.

Ownership/Management: Comm. of Mass., DCR, Div. of Forests and Parks.

Degree of Protection: High, being a State Park.



Private land at North Quincy and Chestnut Streets abutting Ames Nowell State Park; Recommended for acquisition to give presence and a potential access point on this major street and to preclude incompatible uses backing onto the Park

Recommendations: Increase visibility from Chestnut St. and North Quincy St. Seek to expand trails and integrate them with open spaces in adjacent communities

Acquire inholdings and of any available property along North Quincy Street and Chestnut Street

Increase presence with a signed access point on the North Quincy Street frontage

Explore opportunities for swimming and camping

Explore any potential joint programs with Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation to the south,

C. Inventory of Partially Protected Land

School Department Holdings

AS-1 Center School and Playground

Map 16 /Parcel 33

Area: 13 acres total; playground is an actively maintained 2.5 acres

Location and Access: In Abington Center with street frontage on Washington and Walnut Streets and a commonly owned lot on Thaxter Street.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30) and Central Business District (CBD).

Restrictions: None

Uses: Basketball courts, a small playground and tot-lot with swings and slides, and a Youth League baseball field.

Ownership/Management: School Department/Park and Recreation Commission.

Degree of Protection: Good, since recreation activities are an important part of the school facility.

Recommendation: Continued valuable neighborhood recreation use, even if use of the building changes.

AS-2 Abington High School

Map 38/Parcels 10, 11, 12

Area: 27 acres

Location and Access: The school site is accessible by Gliniewicz Way off Bedford Street.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30) and Highway Commercial (H-C).

Restrictions: A large portion of the site is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Town-wide use: 4 Soccer fields, 1 field hockey/lacrosse field, and 5 softball fields. In recent years the tennis courts have been abandoned. The present school is to be replaced by a new combined middle school/high school built to the rear of the present school. Displaced athletic facilities will be replaced on the site of the present school.

Ownership/Management: School Department/Park and Recreation Commission

Degree of Protection: Good, as other uses are not anticipated and recreation activities are an important use of School land.

Recommendations: Continued use after construction of the new school and replacement of the athletic areas.

Seek an acknowledged bicycle/pedestrian connection with Hancock Street neighborhood and the rest of the western part of the town.

AS-3 Beaver Brook Elementary School - (Ex Early Childhood Learning Center)

Map 39/Parcels 55,56,58,61,64,65,66

Area: 12.76 acres

Location and Access: Ralph G. Hamlin, Jr. Lane

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: None

Uses: Facilities include 3 softball fields and a playground and tot lot with swings and slides including age-appropriate multi-purpose playground equipment. The site adjoins extensive facilities at the Frolio School described below a small pond on the Shumatuscasant River, and the park-like Mt. Vernon Cemetery.

Ownership/Management: School Department/Park and Recreation Commission

Degree of Protection: Good, unless other uses are anticipated, since some of the recreation activities are essentially guests of the School Dept. and could conceivably be converted to other uses without a vote under Article 97.

Recommendation: Consider transferring the expected long-term recreation area to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

AS-4 Frolio Junior High School and Memorial Field

Map 39/Parcels 68, 69; Map 46/Parcels 42,43

Area: 12.1 acres

Location and Access: The site fronts on Washington Street just north of Beaver Brook Elementary School

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

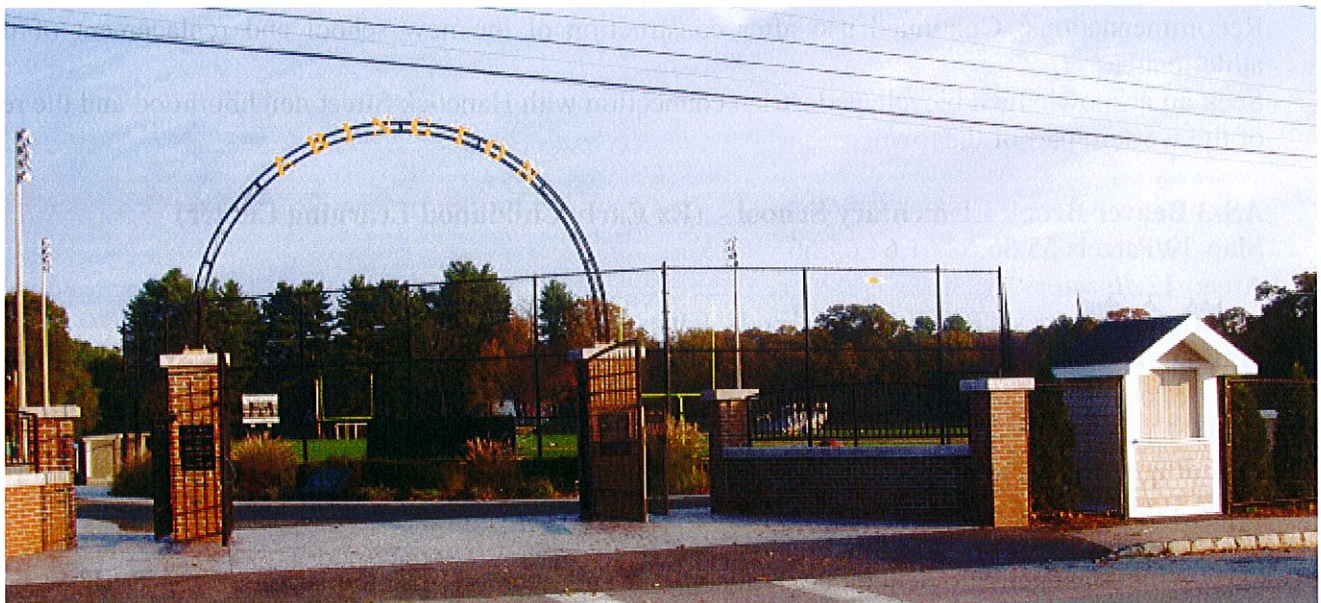
Restrictions: The eastern fringe is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Because of its central location, this is a major recreational complex. Facilities include 2 softball fields; one lighted, two lighted baseball fields, one football/soccer field with track and field sport facilities, three lighted tennis courts, one basketball court and the “Beaver Brook” Playground featuring a very extensive, imaginative wooden play structure on the edge of an impoundment of the Shumatuscacant River.

Ownership/Management: School Department/Park and Recreation Commission for the school grounds. The American Legion Trustees own the Beaver Brook Playground site and part of the athletic fields. The town does normal maintenance of all facilities, but the Beaver Brook Playground Committee which raised \$100,000 to build the playground hires a landscape contractor periodically for major work out of the remaining funds.

Degree of Protection: Good, as other uses are not anticipated and recreation activities are an important part of the School Department land.

Recommendation: Continue as is.



Entrance to Memorial Field built to commemorate the town’s 300th anniversary in 2012 Photo: B.Hughes

AS-5 Woodsdale School/Playground/Playfields

Map 50/Parcel 12; Map 57/Parcels 31, 32, 44

Area: 17.81 acres

Location and Access: The School's main access is from Chestnut Street though it also has a pedestrian connection to the end of Blanchard Terrace offering a slight "Safe Routes to School" alternative to walking/riding on Chestnut Street.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: Twenty-five percent of the site is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: One multi-purpose field, one little league field, several basketball courts, a playground featuring long rows of swings and slides, and one play structure, with potential for a more varied, attractive layout.

Ownership/Management: School Department/Park and Recreation Commission.

Degree of Protection: Good, since recreation activities are an important part of the School Department's programs

Recommendations: Add other facilities and make the layout more informal.

Acquire abutting Henrikson Ch.441B land to west offering site expansion, permanent neighborhood open space, and an improved shorter, safer route to school from the south and west.



Swings behind the Woodsdale School

AS-6 North School

Map 53/Parcel 67

Area: 2 acres

Location and Access: At the intersection of Adams, Birch, and Plymouth Streets.

Zoning: High Density Residential (R-20).

Restrictions: None

Uses: School has been closed and converted to office space for the School Department and the North River Collaborative, and the facilities, two basketball courts, and one playground with a small tot-lot with swings and slides have been removed .

Ownership/Management: School Department/Park and Recreation Commission

Degree of Protection: Limited as future open space or recreation uses are not anticipated.

Recommendations: Keep it as a potential neighborhood asset depending on ultimate reuse.

AS-7 Potential Future School Site

Map 8/Parcels 13, 21

Area: 16.83 acres

Location and Access: At the northeast corner of the intersection of High Street and Brockton Avenue with frontage on High Street, Brockton Avenue and Linwood Street

Zoning: Highway Commercial (HC) and Medium Density Residential

Restrictions: A portion of the site is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Acquired by the School Department as a potential future school site but a recent study of school needs discounted the use of the site for a Junior High School. The land is wooded and in its natural open space state.

Ownership: School Department

Degree of Protection: Fair as other uses are not anticipated.

Recommendation: Turn site over to the Town and retain a portion as open space, with the Brockton Avenue frontage potentially sold for private development

Town Sewer and Water Sewer lands

Abington Sewer Commission and Abington-Rockland Joint Water Board Holdings

The Abington Sewer Commission and Abington Rockland Joint Water Board have extensive land holdings throughout the Town totaling 166.1 acres. These properties and their acreage are listed on Table V-2B above and shown on Map V-1, "Abington Protected and Unprotected Open Space and Recreation Lands."

Recommendation: They should be reviewed for possible Open Space and Recreation value compatible with water and sewer needs.

Major Holdings

Most of the Water Department parcels are in the southern part of town protecting the Meyers Avenue Well field. The land fronts on Myers Avenue and Walnut Street and is bounded by Wright's Meadow (C-2) to the north, the Whitman town line to the south side, and the railroad tracks, or vacant land just west of the tracks on the east. Access is restricted by a surrounding fence. Ninety percent of the land is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District. The soils and vegetation consist of shallow muck soil (Mu) with a red maple cover. The property is part of a corridor of protected parcels along the Shumatuscacant River that also includes Wright's Meadow, the Plymouth County Land and the Shumatuscacant River Strip.

Most of the scattered Sewer Dept. holdings are small parcels accommodating facilities such as pumping stations. The exceptions are the 5.33-acre "Walnut Street Sewer Land" north-west of the Meyers Avenue Wells and listed as sewer land in the 2006 Open Space Plan; and the 6.32 acre former sewer beds just north of the Griffin's Dairy land described below. It fronts on Charles Street and is just north of the Griffin's Dairy land.

The Meyers Avenue complex includes the following parcels:

SW-2	5.33 acres (Walnut St Sewer)	Map 16/Parcel 89
SW-12	1.42.Acres (Mapped)	Map 10/Parcel 63
SW-6	52.3 acres	Map 11/parcel 1
" "	Included in above	Map 11/Parcel 2
SW-14	" " " " " " "	Map 11/ Parcels 3,4
SW-7	52 acres (Summer St.)	Map 17/Parcel 33
	Part of 52 acres above	Map 17 Parcel 31
SW-8	13.69 Acres ,	Map 17/ Parcel 36
	Included in 17-36	Map 17/ Parcel 31
SW-9	17.67 Acres (Walnut St.).	Map 17/ Parcel 3
	Combined with Map17/Parcel 37	
	Map 17 / Parcel 30	
SW-13	16.98 acres south of the well	Map 10/parcel 73

Meyerws Avenue Complex

SW-14	Included in	
C-2	3.77Acres (Wright's Meadow)	Map 17 Parcel 34
C-2	4.0 Acres (Wright's Meadow)	Map 16/Parcel 79

Potential Additions:

7.81 Acres	(All) An in-holding?	Map 16/ Parcel 86
4-5 acres of a multi-parcel holding	35.1-acre	Map 11 /Parcel 5

As can be seen on Figure V-1, the map of Protected and Unprotected Open Space and Recreation Lands, the Meyers Avenue complex abuts some Conservation land especially site C-2, Wright's Meadow bracketing the Shumatuscacant River north of the wells. In addition, the major parcel on Map 16/Parcel 86 between Map 16/79 (Wright's Meadow) and Map16/ Parcel 89 ("Walnut St. Sewer Land") divides these holdings. Its acquisition might expand the Wrights Meadow holding and allow more open space use, near but not on, the Water Department land to the South and East.

Another sizable free-standing Water Department site is SW-11, the 5.68-acre Water Tank site on Lincoln Street.

Recommendations:

The Conservation Commission and the Selectmen should work with the Joint Water Board to explore opportunities to acquire Map 16/ Parcel 86 for a combination of open space and resource protection purposes.

Work with the Joint Water Board to explore acquisition of the approximately 4 to 5-acre western-most portion of Map 11/Parcel 5 within an estimated seven hundred feet of the wells.

Examine the function of the 5.33-acre “Walnut Street Sewer Land” located just north of Meyers Avenue.

Explore the sensitivity of the Summer Street/Meyers Avenue/town line holdings to water quality threats from various forms and degrees of use, regardless of ownership. Then work around these to develop use regulations allowing compatible open space uses while protecting the well field.

Examine any potential local Open Space /Recreation use of the 5.68-acre grounds around the Lincoln Street Standpipe.

Other Sewer and Water Holdings

SW - 15 The Former Sewer Beds

Map 47, Parcel 62

Location and Access: East of Charles Street with frontage on that street, north of the northern end of the Griffin’s Dairy land.

Zoning: R-20 High Density Residential

Restrictions: Site is in the Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Grassland and woods formerly used for sewage disposal beds; backdrop for houses along Charles St..

Ownership: Town’s Sewer Commission

Decree of Protection: Fair as town-owned but not restricted; subject to various reuses.

Recommendations: Plan for possible mixed uses or open space in conjunction with adjacent Griffin’s Dairy land. Transfer any land committed to open space or recreation to the respective commission

Abington Housing Authority Holdings

The Housing Authority’s properties primarily hold public housing but there are two sizable vacant sites.

HA-1, the 14.2-acre Blanchard Gardens at 71 Shaw Ave. (Map 45, Parcel 115) holds 70 elderly/handicapped housing units largely surrounded by woodlands. However the northern portion of the site is open land and might have some potential for appropriate recreation facilities and/or Community Gardens. Where residents could grow some of their own food.

HA-2, the 40-unit Leavitt Terrace development has one 6.2-acre parcel (Map 38/Parcel 1) holding the housing and two vacant parcels. These are - Map 38/Parcel 17 with 4.98 acres immediately to the

west on Gliniewicz Way, and Map 38/Parcel 18 with 3.12 acres roughly behind Town Hall with only pedestrian access to the Thayer Street private development to the South. The Authority staff report no present plans for either parcel due to the lack of funds

The potential of the largely wooded mapped open areas is unclear. However, if cleared, some of the land to the south of Leavitt Terrace might have some potential for community gardens, pending its long term use.

The other Authority-owned parcels, the long thin HA-3 (Map 4/ Parcel 37) with 1.19 acres at 210 Green St. and HA- 4 (map 51/Parcel 64) with .28 acres at 36 Dorsey St., are single-family house lots holding rental single family houses acquired under the state's chapter 705 program.

Other Town Holdings

Within the category of other town-owned properties are several sites of significant present or potential open space or recreational interest. These are the Strawberry Valley Golf Course, the former Griffin Dairy property, the unbuilt portions of Diane Circle, the Carista (Vineyard Road) acquisition, and possibly the former town landfill, along with the afore-mentioned former sewer beds. The Golf Course is a successful town enterprise managed by an elected Strawberry Golf Committee while the Griffin Dairy property was selected as a Senior Center or a possible new Junior High School and sports fields but has been used for neither. (Instead the new Senior Center center is in a former church south of Summer Street). These and other selected sites are discussed in the following narrative and shown in Table V-2 and Map V-1.

T-9 The Former Griffin's Dairy

Map 40/Parcels 90, 71; Map 47, Parcels 47, 43

Area: 35.32 acres in Abington and a comparable amount in the Town of Rockland

Location and Access: This irregularly shaped holding has frontage on Plymouth Street and Pattison Street and wraps around three sides of the partially built Bellows Circle subdivision, and is south of the former sewer beds.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential R-30, to the south; R-20 to the north.

Restrictions: Portions of the property are in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: The former dairy farm and milk distribution facility was acquired by the town in 2000 for municipal purposes, not explicitly for open space. It has been partially used for a golf training school and was formerly considered for a Senior Center, Middle School and sports fields.

Ownership: Town of Abington

Degree of Protection: Fair, having been acquired with local funds implicitly as open space according to some observers, but with no protective provisions and potentially subject to partial development for public facilities or housing. It was recently considered for a revived dairy operation by Hornstra's Farm with fields in Norwell and milk distribution in Hingham. It has considerable potential for community gardens and a farmers market.

Recommendations: Complete planning for possible compatible uses in conjunction with the former sewer bed land to the north, and in cooperation with the owners of the golf course to the east in Rockland; then transfer land planned for permanent open space, recreation, and/or agricultural uses to the Conservation and/or Recreation Commissions.



Griffins Dairy land - Farmland Proposed for many uses. Foreground was proposed for a Senior Center now located close to the Whitman line.

T-11 Strawberry Valley Golf Course

Map 9/Parcel 43; Map 5/parcels 17,20

Area: 50.46 acres

Location and Access: The Course fronts on Washington Street and abuts Abington and Whitman Conservation land.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: A portion of the property is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District

Uses: A nine-hole municipal golf course also used for x-country skiing and sledding in the winter

Ownership/Management: Town owned and managed by the Strawberry Valley Golf Committee.

Degree of Protection: High by the nature of its use and management.

Recommendations: None except to consider applying a Conservation Restriction (CR) for further protection, and to examine opportunities for cooperation with adjacent public open space in Whitman,

T-12 Vineyard Road (Carista Property)

Map 64/Parcels 14, 34; Map 68/Parcel 2

Area: 60.5 acres

Location and Access: Located north of the Vineyard Rd., Hjelm St., and Beaver Lane, west of commercial uses along Bedford St. and south of the Weymouth line. The western-most parcels include the upper Shumatuscasant River and abut the eastern end of the Blueberry Hill wetlands.

The site is totally unsigned as none of the surrounding roads, even those ending at the property's edge, have signs identifying it as public land for residents' use.

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: A majority of the property is located in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.



Unsigned and undeveloped access to the Carista Property located at the end of Hjelm Street. Surrounding roads just end at park line and some neighbors do not know that it is town land.

Uses: Wooded swamp, apparent headwaters of the Shumatuscacant River. Site is suited for use as open space for the surrounding neighborhoods in Abington and Weymouth, as a greenbelt between the two communities, and as an extension of the Thicket St (C-3) and Blueberry Hill (C-9) holdings to the west. Usefulness partly depends on the availability of enough dry upland for hiking, and related activities.

Ownership: Owned by Town of Abington, not by Conservation Commission

Degree of Protection: High, considering the Farm Bureau Federation's role in the acquisition, but not complete without a CR with management by the Conservation Commission or Recreation Commission.

Recommendations: Examine site's potential and explore the possibility of a trail from Thicket Street land to Bedford Street.

Add signs and trails, if needed, at possible entrance points.

Transfer ownership/management to Conservation Commission

T-14 Diane Circle

Area: 73.32 acres.

Map 13/Parcels 37-62; Map 20/Parcels 1-13, 44, 59; Map 21/Parcels 70-72,109

Location and Access: These parcels are located between Beaver Brook and the rear lot lines along Jennings Drive. The lots were acquired by the Town through tax title and many proved to be unsuitable for development because of poor soil conditions. The undeveloped lots abut Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation conservation land. Despite the R-40 zoning, the Town has maintained the

20,000 sq. ft. lots through a variance process and has sold a few house lots. Thus all of Jennings Drive is in single-family housing, while the land near the Brook remains in informal open space use.

Zoning: Low Density Residential R-40

Restrictions: Part of this is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Informal streamside open space and graded, but undeveloped upland from the foreclosed subdivision. Two streets (portions of Diane Circle and Jennings Drive) were built and developed at the eastern edge of the parcel.

The stream-side lots, protected by the Rivers Protection Act and the Wetlands Protection Act, should remain natural habitat except for a walking trail. However, varied combinations of house lots and usable open space may be possible on the intervening land between the Brook and the existing housing. Past studies for the Board of Selectmen suggested natural habitat along the Brook, mixed market and affordable housing on some of the upland lots, and varying amounts of managed open space and small-scale recreation areas between the Brook Corridor and the housing. The recreation area might fit well along the graded, but un-built Jeremiah Sullivan Drive.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington guided by its Surplus Land Committee, and potentially by the Conservation Commission.

Degree of Protection: Fair, if the Town continues to value these parcels as important open space and natural habitat. But with public sewerage available near the southeast corner of the site, it may be possible and tempting to sell off some of the upland lots for single-family housing.

Recommendation: Consider mixed market and affordable housing use of a small portion of the site and transfer the rest to the Conservation Commission to manage the upland as recreation land under the Park and Recreation Commission, and the lower as stream-side open space in cooperation with Brockton's adjacent Beaver Brook Reservation. Acquire unidentified land between northern portion of Diane Circle and the Brook and integrate it with the streamside open space. In particular, consider adding foot bridges allowing hiking between the two sides of the Brook.

T-15, 16 Groveland Street (Former Town Landfill)

Map15/ Parcels 32-38, 40-42; Map 22/ Parcels 15-20, 24, 33

Area: 20.61 acres

Location and Access: This land fronts on Groveland Street, comes almost to Rockland St., and abuts the former private Golf Driving Range recently developed as a major lumber yard.

Zoning: Rezoned from Low Density Residential (R-40) to Highway Commercial.

Restrictions: Site is no longer used as a landfill. Portions are in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District

Soils and Vegetation; Soils would be altered by past landfill uses. Area is partly heavily wooded and partly grasslands.

Uses: Used only for municipal composting. Though reportedly too flat for sledding or skiing it could be developed as an active recreation site, and/or part of a north-south trail system, and might offer community garden space.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington

Degree of Protection: Fair, since the site has no present open space role, general town ownership is appropriate. As discussed in Chapter IV, the landfill was closed and capped in 1984 but problems with the capping led to a Department of Environmental Protection Administrative Order calling for a recapping and SEA Engineering has had monitoring wells on the site. Six months ago the Board of

Selectmen sought a “No Action”(required) finding from the DEP, since the site seems to pose no risks and the Board hopes for a favorable finding that no further capping is needed.

Recommendation: If an open space/recreation use is chosen, transfer respective parts of the site to the Conservation or Recreation Commission.

T-17 Rockland Street Conservation Area

Area: 8.83 acres

Map 21/Parcels 70, 71, 72,109

Location and Access: These four parcels front on Rockland Street; the first three on the south side and the largest, the 5.93-acre fourth parcel, on the north side.

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-30 and R-40)

Restrictions: The property is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Soils and Vegetation; Tight soils with the hardwood cover typical of wooded swamp.

Uses: Natural open space.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington

Degree of Protection: Fair. Since the site has no present open space role, general town ownership is appropriate, but not fully protective.

Recommendation: Land is unsuitable for development but combined with 4.25 acres of rear woodland, the parcels on the south side could create a valuable neighborhood reserve allowing many houses to back onto a natural area, while the parcel on the north side could do the same for its abutters, jointly lessening the impact of the neighborhoods’ large lot subdivisions.

Recommendation: Transfer the lots to the Conservation Commission and acquire and integrate adjacent Map 21/Parcels 74B and 74 C.

T-22 Linwood Street

Map 14/Parcel 7

Area: 3.29 Acres

Location and access: Landlocked behind lots facing on Linwood and Catherine Streets, but on a right-of-way from Linwood Street to Parcel 14/15

Zoning: R-40

Restrictions: Located in the Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Partially wooded, and offering informal local open space, mostly for abutters, and wildlife habitat

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington

Degree of Protection: Fair. Since the site has no present open space role, general town ownership is appropriate, but not fully protective.

Recommendation: Investigate possible integration with nearest part of 13.1-acre parcel 14/15 to the east. Examine any needs to screen surrounding neighborhoods from the new Cape Cod Lumber facility on former golf driving range to the east.

T-24 Lincoln Street Conservation Land

Map 44/Parcel 17

Area: 0.84 acre.

Location and Access: This land on the north side of Lincoln Street gives access to the larger 3.36-acre parcel 44/20.

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-40).

Soils and Vegetation: The land is wooded.

Restrictions: It is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Parcel is partially wooded and in its natural open space state.

Ownership: Despite the name, this is owned by the Town, not by the Conservation Commission.

Degree of Protection: Good

Recommendation: Examine the potential of this land, combined with parcel 44/20, to give the neighborhood a permanent open space backdrop, particularly if also combined with some portions of lots 51/31, 51/54 and 51/95 or the rear portion of the adjacent Water Department standpipe site.

Put the land under Conservation Commission management.

Consider developing a trail from the Water Department driveway through to the Crossley Street neighborhood.

T-26 Old County Lane

Map 26/Parcel 28

Area: 0.93 Acre

Location and Access: This is on Old Country Lane between two developed house lots and has much frontage.

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-40).

Soils and Vegetation: The land is wooded and in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Restrictions: It is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Parcel is wooded natural open space preserving a low-density feel and giving children a place to play that is not in anybody's yard.

Ownership: Town of Abington Conservation Commission.

Degree of Protection: Good

Recommendation: Land if not developable is well suited to open space conservation use and should be kept largely as it is.

T-27 Linwood Street, Beaver Brook

Map 28/Parcel 11

Area: 3.8 acres

Location and Access: This 3.8 acre parcel is located off of Linwood Street very close to the Brook and could be connected to it by the state-owned parcel 28/11.

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-40)

Restrictions: Located in the Floodplain and Wetland Protection District

Uses: Parcel is partially wooded and in its natural open space state.

Ownership: Town of Abington.

Degree of Protection: Good

Recommendation: Land is suitable for open space use as a connector to Beaver Brook and Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation in conjunction with the adjacent state-owned 5.2-acre brook side parcel 28/7B.

Place it under Conservation Commission management.

If not present, develop a trail from Linwood Street through the state parcel to the Brook and north to Cleveland Pond in the State Park

T-28 North Quincy Street Adjacent to Ames Nowell State Park

Map 34/parcel 16

Area: 0.75 Acres

Location and Access: The parcel is landlocked between the Park and a private commercial development (an insulation company)..

Zoning: Low Density Residential (R-40).

Use: Vacant woodland buffering the park from the nearby insulation company, but management as part of the Park could allow more intensive planning to better buffer the park from the firm's activities.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington

Degree of Protection: Fair. Since the site has no present utility for other than open space use, town ownership is appropriate, but transferring it to the State Park would allow better use as a buffer area.

Recommendation: Donate the land to slightly expand and protect the State Park.

T-29 Chestnut Street North Adjacent to Pohorecky Land

Map 49/Parcels 13, 16; Map 56/Parcel 4

Area: 22.4 acres.

Location and Access: This property north and west of Cushing Pond is landlocked, but it is on the shore of a Great Pond, and under Massachusetts Colonial Ordinance a Great Pond (over 10 acres in its natural state) is accessible through intervening private land (so long as the user "does not tread on any man's corn"); or perhaps from Chestnut Street via an Edison Co. power line right-of-way which divides the parcels. In addition, the two parcels are adjacent to Pohorecky Farm land fronting on Chestnut Street.

Zoning: Multiple Use Planned Development (MUPD).

Restrictions: The land is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District and a tributary to Beaver Brook (protected under the Rivers Protection Act) runs through part of the land towards Cushing Pond.

Soils and Vegetation: Vegetation is wooded swamp and upland.

Uses: Though landlocked, the parcels give access to the Pond and protect it.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington.

Degree of Protection: Fair. Since the site has no apparent utility for uses other than open space, town ownership is appropriate, but the land could be sold.

Recommendation: Put the land under Conservation Commission ownership or support state management as part of the State Park.

T-30 Fairview Avenue

Map 16/ Parcel 32

Area: 0.17 Acres

Location and Access: These two small town-owned parcels are located in a floodplain and wetlands protection district on an unimproved section of Fairview Avenue.

Zoning: High Density Residential (R-20).

Restrictions: In the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District.

Uses: Parcels are in their natural state and abut other vacant parcels which in turn appear to abut the Rockland Town Forest.

Ownership/Management: Town of Abington.

Degree of Protection: Good

Recommendation:

Combine with abutting vacant land for management by the Conservation Commission consistent with the abutting Town Forest.

T-31 Shumatuscacant River Strip

Map 16/Parcels 60; 77

Location and Access: These long, narrow parcels bracket the River north of Summer Street and south of Centre Avenue, but do not run as far as either road, and are bounded by Plymouth County land to the west and south.

Signage: None

Zoning: Median Density Residential (R-30)

Restrictions: The land is the Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection District and is subject to the Rivers Protection Act.

Soils and Vegetation: Shallow muck (Mu) with a cover of woody Shrubs

Uses: Natural setting and informal trails. With comparable limited acquisitions upstream to Centre Street and downstream to Summer Street there is a good potential for a multi-use trail extending north to Island Grove Park and south to Wright's Meadow. Some of the stream-side land is low and wet, but other areas are passable for a trail, and a pine and oak hillock near the east bank appears to be a popular destination for informal socializing.

Ownership: Board of Selectmen

Degree of Protection: Good, barring an unlikely need for the land, but management by the Conservation Commission or the Abington-Rockland Joint Water Board would be more secure.

Recommendation: Transfer property to the Conservation Commission

Sign it from Summer Street and the commercial property on Center St. Rte. 123) Seek improved access.

T-32 Senior Center, South of Summer St. at

Map 17/Parcel 21

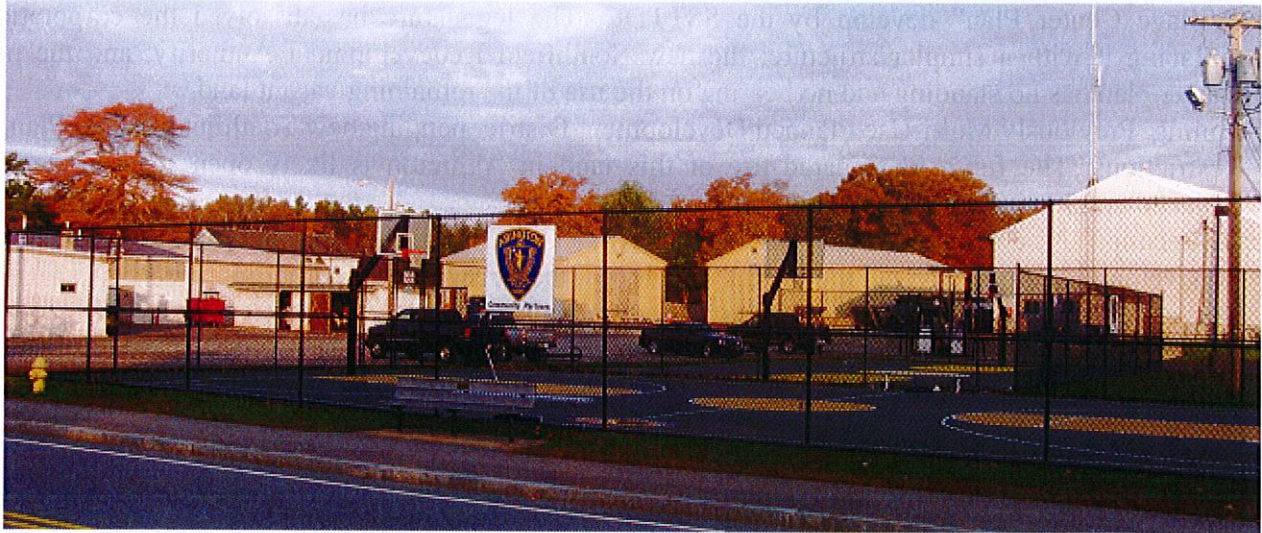
Area:5.82 acres

Location and Access Site is a former church just south of the Abington Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District. Site accommodates Senior Center and parking with negligible recreation or open space potential

Zoning: R-30 Medium Density Residential (30,000 sq.ft. lots)

Other Recreational Facilities

Police Station Basketball Courts In addition to the recreation facilities noted above, two basketball courts have been built in front of the Police Station on Central Street as town recreation asset.



New basketball Courts at Police Station on Central Street.

Photo: B. Hughes

Hanover Branch Rail Trail

This starts in North Abington at the beginning of the former Hanover Branch rail line and extends 1700 feet along that line in Abington and then through Rockland to the Hanover town line. The tracks have been removed and the surface graded but not yet paved with the expected stone dust.

State Public Land Holdings

State land holdings in Abington include:

- The Ames Nowell State Park, described above as protected site ST-1
- Minor MBTA properties listed as ST-2, Map 53/Parcels 72, 73, 79 and Map 54/Parcel 113
- The Old Colony railroad station listed above as ST-3, Map 24/Parcels 113, and Map 65/Parcel 123
- The land of the state-sponsored South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation, ("Southfield") since replaced by the Southfield Redevelopment Authority listed as ST-4 and described below.

ST-4 South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation (SSTTDC) since abolished and replaced by the Southfield Redevelopment Authority.

Map 65/Parcel 123

Area: 178.75 Acres.

Location and Access: The land in Abington, north of Spruce Street in Rockland and east of the rail road tracks that was part of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station and was proposed to be used and maintained as open space and a golf course in accordance with the former base re-use "Village Center Plan" developed by the SSTTDC. The legislature has dissolved the corporation, replacing it with a simpler structure; the new Southfield Redevelopment Authority, and the past master plan has no standing and no bearing on the use of the remaining vacant land.

Zoning: Previously Multi-Use Planned Development District pending new Southfield Master Plan.

Restrictions: The future designated use of this land in Abington is likely open space under the replacement Southfield Master Plan

Ownership: A combination of the US Navy, The National Park Service the Southfield Redevelopment Authority and the overall developed, the Starwood Corporation.

Degree of Protection: To be high as part of an adopted plan.

Recommendations: Support and monitor implementation the future plan's open space, recreation, and habitat protection proposals, e. g, preservation of grassland nesting sites for birds as recommended in a report by the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Plymouth County Commission Holdings

PC-1.Plymouth County Commission Shumatuscacant River Land

Map 16, Parcel 75; Map 17/Parcel 1.

Acreage: 2.16 + 3.00 =5.16

Location and access: The land partially brackets the Shumatuscacant River Strip (T-31) and includes the downstream river channel fronting on Summer Street.

Signage: Nonesince epalecby te Southfeild Redvelopme Authority

Zoning: Medium Density Residential (R-30).

Restrictions: The land is in the Floodplain and Wetlands Protection District

Soils and Vegetation: Shallow muck (Mu) with a cover of red maple

Uses: The property may be too wet for a trail along the immediate stream's edge, but is suitable for nature study.

Ownership/Management: Plymouth County

Degree of Protection: Good, baring unlikely conflicting needs for the land, but a conservation restriction or other protective deed provision would be more secure, as would management by the Abington Conservation Commission or Abington–Rockland Joint Water Board.

Recommendations: Sign it, Petition County Commissioners to transfer this to the Conservation Commission, improve access.

Non-Profit Entities

NP-1 Mount Vernon Cemetery

Map 46/Parcels 66 (?) and 107

Acreage: 61.44

Location and Access: East of Washington St; West of Plymouth Street and east of the Frolio School /Beaver Brook Elementary School with Frontage on Central Street and a direct connection from Washington Street via Ralph Hamlin Lane. An extensive linked walkway system spans the site, offering scenic walks from Central Street or Washington Street to Plymouth Street via a short distance on Morton Avenue.

Signage: Appropriate identifying signs

Zoning: R-30 Medium Density (30,000 sq. ft.)

Restrictions: Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection District runs through western side of the Cemetery along the Shumatuscasant River.

Soils and vegetation: Cemetery is attractively landscaped with groups of plants breaking up the expanse and giving a park-like character.

Uses: A very attractive well-landscaped cemetery offering a calm contrast to the busy adjacent school/recreation complex. A large privately owned pond on the Shumatuscasant River abuts the northwestern corner of the site.

Ownership/Management: Mount Vernon Cemetery Corporation

Degree of Protection: High considering purpose of Corporation and commitment of land to burials.

Recommendation: Continue present management. Examine the interests of the owners of the abutting pond and propose appropriate actions to preserve or enhance the Cemetery's beauty and attractiveness to walkers, particularly at the Hamlin Lane entrance. Incorporate the Cemetery in the proposed Shumatuscant Greenway.

SECTION VI: COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS

A. Description of Process in Updating the Town's Vision and Goals

This plan has evolved over time with gradual changes in the overall goals and related objectives reflecting the vision for the community. As noted in the Introduction, the Park and Recreation Commission was the lead agency in the preparing the November 2000 Abington Open Space and Recreation plan with input from the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission and assistance from the Old Colony Planning Council

Subsequently the Planning Board and the Town Planner took the lead in preparing the 2006 Plan update. This had the cooperation of the Park and Recreation Commission, the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission, with these agencies working in effect as joint committee. The 2006 Update identified residents' desires for enhanced/expanded open space and recreation resources. At the same time the Planning Board's involvement helped to keep the Goals and Objectives and Action Plan consistent with those in the town's 1999 Master Plan and its 2004 Community Development Plan (CD). Thus the Planning Board observed that the 2006 Plan represented the needs, desires, and concerns of residents and was the product of the concerted effort of many individuals and boards and commissions.

The Plan's analysis of needs for sites and facilities, and for varied open spaces was key in defining related goals and objectives. Yet different interest groups place varying emphases on varied needs and have differing priorities. Thus the 2006 needs analysis drew on earlier input to the Master Plan and the CD Plan processes and reflected the views of many groups.

The resulting 2006 implicit vision was of a moderate-density, moderate-income community with varied housing and well-planned commercial areas set off by well-distributed nearby open spaces integrated with major resources like Ames Nowell State Park, Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation, and the Shumatuscancant River system. This led to the following 2006 Open Space and Recreation Goals.

B. 2006 Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee considered the above issues and the goals adopted in the 1999 Master Plan and the 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan. These remained reasonable community goals and were broadly stated in the 2006 Plan as follows:

- Overall - To preserve diverse open space; to protect natural resources, scenic landscapes, wildlife habitat and water resources; and to provide a system of permanent open spaces accessible from, or abutting/framing most neighborhoods.

- To serve a diverse population by providing a range of high quality recreational opportunities and facilities for varied interest/ability groups
- To create an integrated open space system involving Ames Nowell State Park, Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation/Washburn Meadow, and Abington's related land at Dianne Circle and Cushing Pond
- To develop a permanent natural open space setting for most housing
- To preserve/protect cultural, natural, and visual resources
- To ensure water resource protection
- To link key inter-community resources
- To protect farm land, forest, and water resources
- To preserve, protect and expand a major asset, Ames Nowell State Park.

The town's Goals and Objectives for this plan update shown in Section 8 draw on these previously stated goals for open space and recreation and go on to reflect the changing conditions and current needs discussed with the Conservation Commission serving as the Open Space Committee. The results follow as 2013 Goals.

C. 2013 Open Space and Recreation Goals

The proposed 2013 Goals Statement reflecting changes to the 2006 statement (**shown in bold face**) follows:

- Overall - To preserve diverse open space; to protect natural resources, scenic landscapes, and wildlife habitat and water resources; and to provide a system of permanent open space accessible to, or abutting/framing most neighborhoods
- To serve a diverse population by providing for a range of recreational opportunities and facilities
- To create an integrated open space system involving Ames Nowell State Park, Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation/Washburn Meadow, and Abington's related land at Diane Circle and Cushing Pond

- To develop a permanent natural open space setting for most housing and integrate open space and housing **through cluster or open space residential development**
- To preserve/protect cultural, natural and visual resources
- To ensure water resource protection **while allowing selective compatible open space use of water resource protection lands**
- To link key inter-community resources **such as the Griffin's Dairy land and the Abington-owned land across the line in Rockland**
- To provide high quality recreation facilities and programs for diverse interest/ability groups, **for example having games tables or exercise circuits for adults watching their children at playgrounds, or adding a roller blade/skateboard park for the most active users, preferably located near related activities for viewer pleasure and casual surveillance.**
- To protect farm land and forest **and to recruit new farmers and forest managers to use the protected land**
- To increase recreation opportunities in the State Park **by allowing activities such as swimming and camping**
- To develop safe useful bike trails, for example, a trackside bike trail alongside the fenced off Commuter rail track giving safe, level access to the station as is endorsed in an April 3, 2013 letter from MassDOT Secretary and CEO, Richard A. Davey in Appendix 3.
- To preserve, protect and expand a major asset, Ames Nowell State Park **by acquiring in-holdings and contiguous woodlands along North Quincy Street and across Chestnut Street**

SECTION VII: ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

In analyzing the data in the Environmental Inventory (Section IV) and the inventory of lands of interest in Section V of the 2006 plan, the Joint Committee determined that the townspeople clearly want their open space and recreation resources to be maintained and protected along with their water resources. In order of priority these were stated as:

- Town-owned recreation land and facilities
- River banks and flood plains
- Town-owned conservation land (already well protected)
- Unprotected open spaces in developed areas and conservation land
- An implicit concern with ground and surface water resources.

These broad priorities have remained unchallenged through this update.

Town ownership is no guarantee that properties will remain protected since land not specifically identified as open space or recreation land (“park land”) under Article 97 of the state constitution can be sold and/or converted to other uses by local votes if approved by 2/3rds of the General Court - and this is apt to be a courtesy vote if supported by the local representative.

The temptation to sell or convert such land may be strong in communities having a hard time providing local services under tight budgets, so it is important that it be owned by the respective bodies and preferably be under a Conservation Restriction (CR).

The town has some parcels acquired over time through tax foreclosure, and other properties in the “Tax Title” process which may become town-owned if not redeemed. Many are marginal for development (hence allowed to be taken), but valuable for wetland protection, conservation or natural resource protection. They should be evaluated for these purposes consistent with the town’s goals and objectives.

One major resource protection need is the restoration and maintenance of the Wilson Memorial Bridge and Arch which are the center pieces of Island Grove Park. The park is the town’s most heavily used recreation site attracting families and individuals from Abington and surrounding communities. The town has budgeted some funds for this and has begun some aspects of it. The project would be a prime candidate for funds from the state’s PARC (ex Urban Self Help) program or for Community Preservation Act funds if the town adopts that program.

Another continuing high priority is acquisition of the 143-acre Pohorecky Farm next to and partially within Ames Nowell State Park. (This area has been reduced by the some Form A lots along Chestnut Street and the western portion of Cushing Pond is reportedly under agreement.)

The town voted \$1,400,000 to buy the farm under its first refusal rights under Chapter 461B in 1999, but Mr. Pohorecky's death and complex legal issues delayed any action and the vote was later rescinded. The state's Department of Conservation and Recreation is still interested given the farm's effect on Ames Nowell State Park, and has worked to resolve various issues with the town and the estate's trustees, as noted earlier.

In 2004 the town acted quickly to protect another major open space, the 60-acre so-called Carista or Vineyard Road property. The town assigned its first refusal rights to the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation which acquired the land and later transferred it to the town - but not to the Conservation Commission. The property is important for itself and for its proximity to the Blueberry Hill and Thicket Street properties. However it is totally unsigned and, as of late 2012, was not evident to the public except for knowledgeable neighbors.

Beyond these pending and accomplished major projects, Abington's continuing priority is to protect remaining open spaces in otherwise developed areas in order to give local housing direct access to some open space. Protection of such areas through acquisition of development rights, deed restrictions, donations, or outright purchase is a continuing high priority.

B. Summary of Community Needs

Analyzing Abington's needs for recreation resources, for open space land and for natural resource protection is a key to identifying/evaluating its goals and objectives and implementing a 7-year plan. These are the collective desires of the citizenry to preserve natural resources, protect recreation opportunities, or save open space, but different interest groups have differing preferences and priorities. The 2006 analysis therefor relied heavily on discussions with many community groups and on their previous input into the 1999 Master Plan and the 2004 Community Development Plan.

Many methods can be used to measure local needs for recreation and open space land. These all draw on the relationship where demand minus supply equals need. As noted above, the difficulty has been in establishing a community's demand in measurable terms that can be compared with the supply, especially where there is limited demand due to limited exposure to some opportunities.

One approach used in 2006 and in this update is to compare local supplies with the standards in the Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) shown on Table VII-1. At the time of the Master Plan, the town's extensive facilities met the standards except for tot lots and ball fields. Subsequently the John Reilly Memorial Field north of Town Hall has lessened the latter deficiency. Yet, the table suggests that Abington is still short by four acres of playfields and seven acres of tot lots. However, given the town's suburban character, low overall density, and the availability of land for informal play, the need to tot-lots may be overstated.

TABLE VII-1

ABINGTON RECREATION NEEDS BY SCORP STANDARDS

Facility Type	Supply	Population (2010)	Standard	Need
Playfields	44 Acres	15,985	3 acres/1000 population=48.	Four acres
Playgrounds	7.5 acres	1,419 (5-11years) (pro-rated from 2010 Census age groups)	1 acre/250 pop. 5-11 years= 5.7	1.8 acre surplus
Tot Lots	7 acres ?? <i>(MISSING DATA)</i>	15,985	.5 acre/1000 = 8 acres	1 acre ??
Tennis Courts	11 courts	15,985	1 court/2000 pop.=8 courts	One court

An alternative to these possibly arbitrary uniform standards is to poll park and/or recreation supervisors as to such demand indicators as an activity's popularity, and facility usage.

In this regard, Abington's Recreation Superintendent identified several needs including two baseball fields, two softball fields, and two soccer/lacrosse fields. This is consistent with, but exceeds the identified need for four more acres of playfields.

C. Management Needs

Since 2012 most of Abington's open space and recreation facilities have been maintained by the Highway Department which now includes the Park and Recreation Department. Under the direction of the Park and Recreation Commission, the Park and Recreation Department operates the programs through a part-time seasonal Recreation Director and up to 26 other seasonal staff. The Commission notes a need for a full-time Recreation Director (missing since the death of the late Mark Chirokas), and additional part-time staff to meet seasonal program needs, and the needs of expanding recreational programs (such as indoor and outdoor winter activities). The growing needs will include a person to operate a boating program since the Friends of Island Grove raised money and donated three kayaks to the Department.

In addition, if the recommended transfers of property to the Conservation Commission are made, that Commission may need field staff to oversee the holdings and to maintain any trails or other facilities. The Commission might also consider adding a professional Conservation Officer to enforce the Wetlands Protection Act rather than relying on intermittent use of consultants.

SECTION VIII: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Town’s Goals and Objectives as presented here consolidate the many goals from Section 6, Community Vision and Goals, into the program’s three over-riding goals. These, continued from the 2006 Open Space Plan, are:

- 1- To preserve, protect, and expand the Town’s Open Space System and Green Areas, and to improve access to these resources
- 2- To increase the number and quality of Active Recreation Areas and Facilities
- 3- To protect Watersheds and other water resources, along with farm land and other natural resources

The Plan then builds on the 2006 Plan’s grouping of many implied objectives under the three over-riding goals. These reflect and expand on the Objectives chosen by the Joint Committee and the public in the 2006 effort. Though all objectives cannot be achieved in a seven year period, this compendium of goal-based tangible objectives is a source for the subsequent Seven-Year Action Program.

Goals	Objectives
Goal - 1: To preserve, protect and expand the Town’s Open Spaces and Green Areas and to improve access to these Resources	Objective 1.1: Acquisition of remaining parts of the Pohorecky Farm by the state Department of Conservation and Recreation
	Objective 1.2: To increase conservation land through acquisition, conversion and acceptance of conservation restrictions.
	Objective 1.3: To make the town’s open spaces accessible to all with special needs guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards
	Objective 1.4: To accomplish achievable open space and recreation projects
	Objective 1.5: Planning and creating a nature trail within the Beaver Brook Conservation land with connections to Diane Circle and Brockton’s adjacent Beaver Brook Reservation
	Objective 1.6: Planning and building bicycle routes connecting recreational assets and other destinations, and allowing passage through Ames Nowell State Park, and on to Brockton or Holbrook
	Objective 1.7: Connecting the Plymouth Street Conservation land to the adjacent Island Grove Park across the RR – possibly with a pedestrian underpass

	Objective 1.8: Completing the Abington portion of the Hanover Branch Bike Trail beginning in North Abington
	Objective 1.9: Exploring and implementing any remaining opportunities for a track-side bike trail offering level, safe, straight access to the commuter rail station. Such trails are now encouraged by MassDOT.
	Objective 1.10: Expansion of Ames Nowell State Park by DCR acquisition of abutting private woodland land on North Quincy Street, and of the remaining Pohorecky land within and across from the Park
	Objective 1.11: Acquisition of the estimated 31.3-acre Oakland Road Upland largely west of the Shumatuscacant River and the Carista land and east of the Blueberry Hill Conservation Land and the Old Farm Road neighborhood with a potential of 8.2 additional acres depending on their degree of development
	Objective 1.12: Accomplishment of the Beaver Brook Acquisitions west of Old Country Lane, and Diane Circle and near the southern Beaver Brook Conservation Land, and coordinated management with Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation potentially allowing foot bridges linking the two sides of the Brook
	Objective 1.13: Acquisition of the 5.7-acre Beal Farm Ch. 61A land for open space and farming use
	Objective 1.4: Well-placed clearly-signed access points to the Thicket St. Conservation Land, the Carista Property, and the Blueberry Hill Land.
	Objective 1.5: The transfer of many de-facto conservation, open space, and recreation areas from general town ownership to the Conservation or Recreation Commission
	Objective 1.6: A town-wide integrated, connected open space and trail system.
Goal - 2. Increase the number and quality of active Recreational Areas and Facilities	Objective 2.1: Move to restore and maintain the Wilson Bridge and Arch in Island Grove Park
	Objective 2.2: Creation of a list of sites suitable for improved recreational areas or facilities

	Objective 2.3: Near universal accessibility of open space and recreation resources by ADA standards or other solutions, e, g, a foot bridge to the Valatka Conservation Land.
	Objective 2.4: An inventory of properties suitable for new recreation areas and facilities
	Objective 2.5: Accomplishment of a general upgrade of recreation facilities
	Objective 2.6: Creation of a trail system along the lower Shumatuscacant River consistent with water resource protection
	Objective 2.7: Permitted/enhanced swimming opportunities at Cleveland Pond in Ames Nowell State Park
	Objective 2.8: Provision of a canoe/kayak rental operation on Cleveland Pond
	Objective 2.9: Improved access to the Reilly Field Recreation area and Civic Complex with a bike/pedestrian trail from the west, perhaps from the end of Broadmeadow Lane.
	Objective 2.10: Completed reuse planning for the Griffin's Dairy land in conjunction with the 6.3-acre (47/62) former sewer beds to the north and transfer of any portion planned for permanent open space, recreation or agricultural use to the Conservation and/or Recreation Commission
	Objective 2.11: Development of a set of community gardens on former agricultural land and/or on the periphery of larger open space holdings and recreation areas, on the former landfill, and in neighborhoods, such as south of Isabelle St. in the Green Street neighborhood.
	Objective 2.12: Implementing a program leasing portions of new and existing farmland holdings like Griffin's Dairy to new or prospective farmers.
	Objective 2.13: Improved playgrounds like that at Laidler Field across from the Woodsale School by adding more varied items like "adventure" building materials, and exercise circuits and game tables for visiting adults
	Objective 2.14: Acquisition of adjacent Henriksons Dairy Ch.61B land to expand the Woodsdale School's site and give frontage for

	future trails to reach Hancock Street
Goal - 3. Protection of Watersheds, ground water resources and other natural resource	Objective 3.1: Creation of an updated Watershed and Wetlands Protection Zoning District focusing on the most sensitive areas
	Objective 3.2: Improved water quality at Island Grove Park
	Objective 3.3: Creation of a more informed, active constituency for local water quality
	Objective 3.4: Adopting/enforcing Low Impact Design (LID) principles in the Subdivision Rules and Regulations and elsewhere covering all new development or redevelopment
	Objective 3.5: Identification and removal of any illicit discharges to streams
	Objective 3.6: Identification of any public land of agricultural value for possible lease to growers subject to protective management.

SECTION IX: SEVEN YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Seven Year Action Plan presented here and on Map IX-1, Abington Seven Year Action Plan, suggests the appropriate timing for major actions listed in Section 8, Goals and Objectives. It assumes that the Town can accomplish these with support from citizens and assistance from the Commonwealth's grants program. It assumes that the town will have no unexpected demands for emergency capital projects over the next seven fiscal years. It does not assume assistance from the Community Preservation Program used in many communities since, to date, Abington has not adopted the Community Preservation Act.

The overall goals discussed in Section 7 and referred to below are:

1. To preserve, protect, and expand the Town's Open Space system and Green Areas and to improve access to these resources
2. To increase the number and quality of Active Recreation Areas and Facilities
3. To protect Watersheds and other Water Resources along with Farm land and other Natural Resources

Potential actors and their abbreviations are:

ABA - Abington Board of Assessors

ABS - Abington Board of Selectmen

ACC - Abington Conservation Commission

AP - Abington Park Dept.

APB - Abington Planning Board

ARJWB - Abington-Rockland Joint Water Board

AS - Abington Schools

AT - Town Treasurer

BCC/PD - Brockton Conservation Commission and Park Dept.

DCR - Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

EOEAE-DCS - Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and Energy-Division of Conservation Services (Source of LAND and PARC assistance).

HD - Abington Highway Department

OCPC - Old Colony Planning Council

RC - Abington Recreation Commission

TM - Town Meeting

WD - Abington Water Dept.

WTSM - The Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts

Number/ Year	Goal	Objective	Action	Actors
❖ One of the top ten actions 1 Ongoing	1	1.1 Acquisition of the Pohorecky Farm	Cooperation with Mass. DCR in resolving tax issues, and determining the distribution of land between the town and the State Park	Cons. Com.
2 Ongoing	1	1.2 Increased conservation holdings	Cooperate with DCR in identifying and Prioritizing potential acquisitions	DCR, ACC, ABS EOEAE-DCS AT
3 Ongoing	1	1.3 Improved accessibility of all holdings	Review and resolve access needs, e.g, footbridge at Valatka land Achieve ADA compliance	ACC, ARC ABS (serving as Disabilities Commission)
4 Ongoing	1	1.2 Increased Conservation holdings	Determine which town properties best fit under the Conservation Commission or Recreation Commission and transfer them	ABS, HCC, RC and TM
5 Ongoing	3.	3.1 Protection of watersheds, groundwater resources and other resources	Generally work to protect local water resources.	HCC, BOH, ARJWB
6 2014	3	3.2 Improved water quality at Island Grove Park	Work to identify and correct contributions from run-off, fertilizer, failing septic systems etc.	HBOH,HCC,

7 2013	1	1.4 identify, rank and schedule achievable acquisitions and improvements	Detailed examination of proposed actions and schedule revision	HCC, RC, ABS, PB
8 2013	2	2.7 Increased opportunities at Ames Nowell State park	Treat algae or other constraints in order to permit swimming at the park, and establish areas for limited camping	ACC ,RC BOH, DCR
9 2014	2	2.2 Improved recreation opportunities at schools	Work with PB, RC and schools to identify needs and future recreation sites	HCC, RC, PB
10 2014	2	1.10 Expansion/ protection/ improvement of Ames Nowell State Park	Support state acquisition of frontage and signed access on North Quincy Street; acquire/protect remaining Pohorecky land	JHCC, DCR
11 2014	2	2.2 Improved Recreational facilities	Add new bathhouse and swimming docks at Island Grove Park	ARC, EOEEA-DCS,
12 2015	2	1.6 Continuous integrated open spaces.	Expand holdings at narrow neck of land between Carista Property and Blueberry/Thicket Street Conservation lands; add connecting trail; and acquire open land along (paper) Oakland Road	HCC, EOEEA-DCS, APB
13 2015	3	3.4 Standard use of LID to lessen flooding, re-charge ground-water & protect Water Quality	Work with PB, BOH, HD and OCPC to incorporate Low Impact Design (LID) principles in	PB, HD, BOH, OCPC & TM

			the Subdivision Rules and Regulations and elsewhere	
14 2015	3	3.1,3.4 Protecting Water Resources	Revise, focus Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection zoning by-law	APB,ACC,Town By-law Committee,OCPC
15 2015	2	1.4 Expanded Meyers Ave. holdings	Acquire all or in-holding portions of parcels 16/89 and 11/5 abutting water land and /or conservation land on three sides.	ARJWB,CC,RC EOEEA-DCS
16 2016	2.	2.9 Reuse of the Griffin's Dairy land	Complete reuse planning for the farm in conjunction with the adjacent 6.3-acre former sewer beds (47/62) and transfer any portion planned for open space, recreation and agricultural use to the Conservation and/or Recreation Commissions.	ABS,ACC,PB, RC
17 2016	2	2.3 Improve access to Walnut Street. Conservation area and riverside trails	Explore walking trail potential along Shumatuscant River, sign it from Summer Street and Route 123, and improve access.	ACC,RC,PB
18 ❖ 2116 -2118	2	1.6 Creating a town-wide bike system	Design and begin to build a town wide recreational/function al bike trail system serving recreational and open space areas and other destinations in cooperation with	PB,RC,AS, OCPC-

			the Safe Routes to School Program .	
19 2117-2119	2	1,6 Creation of Ames Nowell State Park trail system integrated with town-wide trails	Design and implement a trail system within the Park tied into trails in surrounding properties and communities, drawing on State trails funds if possible.	DCR, PB,RC,ACC
20 2118	2	2.10 Optimum use of former landfill	Study soils, grading, drainage ...to identify potential uses for the former landfill, such as recreation, ATV riding, community gardens, and part of north-south trail system	RC,CC,HD, PB
21 2118-	2	2.10 Development of scattered community gardens	Develop community gardens on former agricultural land or on the periphery of large open space or recreation areas, possibly on the former landfill and near high density neighborhoods such as Green Street.	ACC,PB,BOH,R C, HD,WD
22 2019 ❖	3	3.6 Encouragement of new small-scale agriculture	Review public land of agricultural value e.g. Griffin's Dairy for possible lease to growers.	ACC,PB,AT,ABS
23 2019 ❖	2	1.2 Hamilton Street Conservation Area expansion and improved access	Explore acquisition of low-lying wildlands north and south of this 4.22 acres of landlocked white pine and	ACC,RC,EOEEA -DCS, TM

			marsh along a Shumatuscacant River tributary and develop access easements from surrounding streets to the the north, south, and west.		
24 2019		2	2.8 Improved access to Reilly Field from the west.	Improve access from Hancock Street to Reilly Field and the civic complex with a bike/ pedestrian path, possibly from the end of Broadmeadow Ln.	ACC,PN,HD,ABS
25 2020	❖	3	3.3 Maintaining an informed public	Work with the Water Department to keep residents aware of protective practices such as installing rain gardens, and prohibiting disposal of oil etc. into catch basins	ACC,HD,BOH
26 2020	❖	2	2.6 Creating a Lower Shumatuscacant Trail system	Create a trail system along the lower portion of the river, consistent with water quality protection	ACC,RC,ARJWB
27 2020	❖	2	2.6 Extended Lower Shumatuscacant Trail System	Extend the Shumatuscacant River Strip north past an old industrial area to Centre Street and Island Grove Pond, and south to Summer Street, and	ACC,RC,PB

			transfer it to the ACC.	
28 2020	2	2.10 Beal Farm Acquisition	Consider a second attempt at buying the Beal Farm (Ch.21A) property for prospective open space and agricultural use.	ACC,PB,RC
29 2020 2020	2	Henrikson Dairy acquisition	Acquire Map 50/ Lot 11(11Ac). To expand westdale school site and reach Hancock Street.	CC,AS

In addition members favored completion of the Hanover/Rockland Rail Trail

Priorities

On October 22, 2013 the Commission met with OCPC staff to set priorities. After considering a complex approach ranking the priorities of all 29 action items, the members decided that it would be more useful in the face of very limited budgets to identify the top ten projects in terms of financial feasibility and near-term potential, as well as conformity to the Plan's Goals and Objectives. The hope was that the attractiveness of some of the proposals would lead to support from Town Meeting and other sources, and from local and state funds potentially available through future adoption of the Community Preservation Act.

As noted above, the top ten individual items were:

- ❖ Increasing Conservation Holdings
- ❖ Protecting water resources and other resources
- ❖ Expansion/Improvement of Ames Nowell State Park
- ❖ Improving access to the Walnut Street Conservation Area
- ❖ Developing scattered community gardens
- ❖ Encouraging new small scale agriculture
- ❖ Improving Access to Reilly Field from the west
- ❖ Educating in the public on water quality protection measures
- ❖ Creating a lower Shumatuscant River Trail System
- ❖ Extending the Lower Shumatuscant River Trail System

SECTION X: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Note: This draft Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan Update was distributed by the Conservation Commission for review by the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Park and Recreation Commission, the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Health, and Old Colony Planning Council - the Regional Planning Agency for the Town of Abington - the Board of Health, and the Abington Commission on Disabilities. The responses follow.

SECTION XI: REFERENCES

Documents and agencies consulted for this report include:

1. The Open Space Planner's Workbook available on line at www.state.ma.us/envir
2. The Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) available online at www.state.ma.us/envir
3. The Community Preservation Act, and Watershed Initiative, available on line from the Executive Office of Environmental affairs at www.state.mas.us/envir
4. 2003 Natural Heritage Atlas, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
5. Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan, November 2000
6. Abington Master Plan, 1999
7. Abington Community Development Plan, April, 2004
8. Abington Zoning By-law
9. Old Colony Planning Council Data Book
10. The Village Center Plan, LNR Property Corporation/Development Corp./Tri-Town Development Corp. 2004
11. Information from the following Town Agencies:
 - Abington Board of Assessors
 - Abington Treasure's Office
 - Abington Recreation Commission
 - Abington Highway Department
 - Abington Planning Board
 - Abington Water Department
12. Information from the following state agencies
 - Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management: www.state.ma.us/dem
 - Metropolitan District Commission: www.state.ma.us/mdc
 - Department of Conservation and Recreation (Combining former MDC and DEM)
 - Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement; www.state.ma.us/dfwele
 - Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
 - Department of Environmental Protection: www.state.ma.us/dep
 - Department of Food and Agriculture: www.state.ma.us//dfa

•

Appendix A

Handicapped Accessibility

Meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Requirements - The following is an assessment of the handicapped accessibility of the town's recreation, open space and conservation resources done for the April 2004 Abington Community Development Plan and updated for the 2006 Open Space Plan update by the Abington Commission on Disabilities, consultant staff, and the DEM's Universal Accessibility Group regarding Ames Nowell State Park. It is essentially unchanged for this 2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update

Recreation Facilities

The following summarizes a Recreation Commission survey of major facilities using the applicable elements on an ADA checklist.

Arnold Park

1. Parking Lots / Spaces N/A
2. Public Telephones, Drinking Fountains N/A
3. Elevators, Toilet / Bathing Facilities N/A
4. Picnic Areas N/A
5. Trails, Swimming Pools / Beaches N/A
6. Play Areas
 - A. Equipment Yes. Safe for the handicapped Yes
 - B. Equipment Access Yes.
Firm, Level path Yes
Sufficient Wheelchair maneuvering space Yes
7. Game Areas
 - A. Accessible by firm, level paths Yes
 - B. Accessible paths to / from parking areas Yes
 - C. Equipment Height and Dimensions Yes
8. Boat Docks, Fishing Facilities N/A

Green St. Playground

1. Parking Lots / Spaces
 - A Reserved Spaces / location / number No
 - B. Ramps / Curb Cuts N/A
 - C. Passenger Loading / Unloading N/A
2. Public Telephones, Drinking fountains. N/A
3. Elevators, Toilet / Bathing Facilities N/A
4. Picnic Areas, Trails N/A
5. Swimming Pools / Beaches N/A
6. Play Areas
 - A. Equipment Yes
Safe for the handicapped Yes
 - B. Equipment Access Yes
Firm, Level path Yes

- Sufficient Wheelchair maneuvering space Yes
- 7. Game Areas
 - A. Accessible by firm, level paths Yes
 - B. Accessible paths to / from parking areas N/A
 - C. Equipment Height and Dimensions Yes

Island Grove Park

- 1. Parking Lots / Spaces
 - A. Reserved Spaces N/A
 - B. Other Spaces
 - Location near Facility No
 - Vehicle Access / Clearance, Signage Yes
 - C. Ramps / Curb Cuts N/A
 - D. Passenger Loading /Unloading
 - Spaces, Signage, Location No
- 2. Public Telephones, Drinking Fountains N/A
- 3. Elevators N/A
- 4. Toilet / Bathing facilities
 - A. Number Location /Signage No
 - B. Doors, Fixtures, Dispensers, Stalls
 - C. Tubs, Showers, Lockers N/A
- 5. Picnic Areas
 - A. Tables & Benches Yes
 - Wheelchair Accessible, Level Paths No
 - Access to Open Space Areas Yes
 - Back and Arm Rests No
 - B. Grills, Cooking Surface Height Yes
 - Access by Level Paths No
 - C. Trash Receptacles
 - Access by Level Paths No
 - Safety and Facility N/A
 - D. Shelters N/A
- 6. Trails
 - A. Surface, Dimensions No
 - B. Rails N/A
 - C. Signage N/A
- 7. Swimming Pools / Beaches
 - A. Entrance, Ramps, Stairs, Dimensions N/A
 - B. Location, Accessible from Parking Lots No
 - C. Safety, Slip Resistant/Warning Surfaces N/A
 - D. Access to Beach, Pavement, Hand Rails etc No
- 8. Play Areas
 - A. Equipment Yes
 - Safe for the handicapped Yes
 - B. Equipment Access Yes

Firm, Level path No
Sufficient Wheelchair maneuvering space Yes

9. Game Areas
 - A. Accessible by firm, level paths Yes
 - B. Accessible paths to / from parking areas Yes
 - C. Equipment Height and Dimensions Yes
10. Boat Docks, Fishing Facilities N/A

Note: The Park has a unique, popular, pedestrian bridge giving access from most of the town to the west, but it is quite deteriorated and needs extensive repair. A preliminary engineering estimate is \$500,000 for the bridge structure alone. Another \$1,000,000 is estimated for overdue repair and restoration of the stonework at the Bridge abutments and related stonework around the edge of the pond. The town is seeking funds for the total repair and restoration.

Laidler Field

1. Parking Lots / Spaces N/A
 - A. Reserved Spaces, Ramps / Curb Cuts N/A
 - B. Passenger Loading / Unloading N/A
2. Public Telephones, Drinking fountains N/A
3. Elevators, Toilet / Bathing Facilities N/A
4. Picnic Areas, Trails N/A
5. Swimming Pools / Beaches N/A
6. Play Areas
 - A. Equipment Yes
Safe for the handicapped Yes
 - B. Equipment Access Yes
Firm, Level path Yes
Sufficient Wheelchair maneuvering space Yes
7. Game Areas
 - A. Accessible by firm, level paths Yes
 - B. Accessible paths to / from parking areas Yes
 - C. Equipment Height Yes
 - D. Dimensions No
8. Boat Docks, Fishing Facilities N/A

Plymouth Street Playfield

1. Parking Lots / Spaces
 - A Reserved Spaces N/A
 - B. Ramps / Curb Cuts N/A
 - C. Passenger Loading. /Unloading N/A
2. Public Telephones N/A
3. Drinking fountains. No
4. Elevators N/A
5. Toilet / Bathing Facilities No
6. Picnic Areas, Trails N/A

- 7. Swimming Pools / Beaches, Play Areas N/A
- 8. Game Areas
 - A. Accessible by firm, level paths Yes
 - B. Accessible paths to / from parking areas No
 - C. Equipment Height and Dimensions N/A
- 9. Boat Docks, Fishing Facilities N/A

High Street Conservation Land

Address: Very narrow frontage on High Street at the Whitman town line, abutting the town's Strawberry Valley Golf Course fronting on Washington St.

Signage: None

Facilities: The headwaters of the Stream River in wooded swamp on moderate to steeply sloping terrain covered by tall grasses and shrubs and a mature stand of white pine

Parking: Curbside

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. There is a stone wall along street and rough woodland behind it running between two houses, but no apparent path.

Wright's Meadow

Address: The Meadow fronts on Summer St., brackets the Shumatuscacant River, and abuts extensive joint Abington-Rockland water supply protection holdings on both sides of the river to the south.

Signage: None

Facilities: This is part of the recharge area of the Abington-Rockland Joint Water Board's Meyers Ave. well. Use are low impact hiking and nature study.

Parking: Curbside

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. There is no entrance. The stream is the only indicator of the site. A guard rail runs along the frontage blocking a steep, wooded slope going down from the street to level ground.

Thicket Street Conservation Land

Address: This land is on the Weymouth/Abington boundary and butts the large Blueberry Hill land. It can be reached by a town-owned right-of-way from Thicket Street

Signage: None

Facilities: This land and the adjacent wooded swamp are in the headwaters of the Schumatuscacant River and provide flood storage during heavy rain. Being very wet it has little active recreation potential but provides wildlife habitat.

Parking: Limited, on short gravel drive between two houses

Signage: None

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. Grassed right-of-way looks like private land. Adjacent private gravel drive makes the site visible but there is no useful pathway into it.

Hamilton Street Conservation Land

Address: The parcel is landlocked with apparent access only through surrounding private land

Facilities: Swampy area along a tributary to the Shumatuscacant River area suitable for a nature trail, picnicking and vista development.

Parking: None

Signage: None

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. There is no frontage. Nearby private woodland could offer possibilities for a trail to Hamilton St. just above Wales St., or, with major acquisitions, to Oak St. just below Bay State Circle.

Tim's Pond

Address: The parcel fronts on Lincoln Street just west of Warren Ave.

Signage: None

Facilities: Open land and woodland next to a very small pond evolving to a meadow and allowing minimal skating, nature observation.

Parking: Curbside

Signage: None

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. An overgrown steep bank drops down to the site with no apparent path to the vestigial pond.

Walnut St Conservation Area

Address: Parcel fronts on Walnut Street and is on the south side of Bicknell Brook.

Signage: None

Facilities: None; it could be a good location for a nature study area or possibly part of a streamside trail system as discussed above.

Parking: None

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. Can be entered from Walnut St., via gated powerline easement, but there is no wheelchair suitable path.

Shumatuscacant River Strip

Address: Both sides of Shumatuscacant River north of Summer St. abutting Plymouth County land fronting on Summer St.

Signage: None

Facilities: Low, informal streamside walkway

Parking: Curbside along Summer St.

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. Blocked by guard rail and reached by low, rough land with no visible access, trail, or wheelchair accessible paths. Powerline Right-of-Way Gate in Front of an Unimproved Trail into the Un-Signed Walnut St./ Bicknell Brook Conservation Area

Plymouth County Conservation Land

Address: Along Shumatuscacant River just north of Summer St.

Signage: None

Facilities: Low, informal streamside walkway

Parking: Curbside along Summer St.

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. Intervening guard rail; low, rough land with no access paths

Blueberry Hill Land

Address: Off of Ekstrom Circle which is off of Thicket St. near Weymouth line

Signage: None

Facilities: Low-lying swampy woodland contiguous with Thicket St. land (C-3)

Parking: Nothing developed, curb space at edge of site

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. Reached from site C-3 discussed above. No passable path through woods

Dr. Joseph A. Valatka Conservation Land

Address: North of Mill Street between two branches of Beaver Brook flowing from Hunt's Pond dam on the Brockton line.

Signage: None

Facilities: Picturesque stream-side site with stone-lined channels allowing view of scenic Hunt's Pond and dam, picnicking, access to Pond.

Parking: Curbside

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Inaccessible. No wheelchair-suitable path. The site must be approached from Abington side via a private yard and dam spillway or from the Brockton side by a rough path requiring a leap over open channel at dam's inactive control structure. A small footbridge crossing the deep, stone-lined brook (approached across a sliver of private land on Mill St.) could allow direct access, but would need gently-graded paths to the bridge and through the site.

Mills Farm Riverside Access Easement

Address: East side of Beaver Brook along lots on Lady Slipper Lane

Facilities: A 50' easement along the east side of Beaver Brook, through the Mills Farm Estates subdivision via Lady Slipper Lane.

Parking: Curbside

Signage: None

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: No passable physical access. Legal access is apparently only from within the lots or from across the Brook. It needs to connect with other easements or holdings along the Brook.

Abington-Rockland Joint Water Works Property

Address: The land fronts on Myers Avenue and Walnut Street and is bounded by Wright's Meadow (Parcel C-2) to the north, the Whitman town line to the south side, and the railroad tracks, or vacant land just west of the tracks on the east.

Facilities: Protected recharge area for town wells; part of a corridor of protected parcels along the river including Wright's Meadow, the Plymouth County Conservation Land and the Schumatuscacant River Strip

Parking: Curbside

Signage: None

Restrooms: None

Accessibility: Access to site only through low irregular Wright's Meadow land from Summer St. with no wheelchair-passable path. Access to land itself is restricted by a surrounding fence.

State Facilities

The following reflects findings of a survey by the Department of Environmental Management's (DEM's) Universal Accessibility group and field observations by project staff.

Ames Nowell State Park

Address: End of Linwood St. Park fronts on Chestnut St. and Linwood St. in Abington and on North Quincy Street in Brockton at a power line crossing, but has identifying signs only on Linwood St.

Signage: Direction signs on nearby major roads and Rte. 123 in Abington, none along bordering North Quincy St. in Brockton or Chestnut St. in Abington. Some signs in Park pointing to handicapped facilities

Facilities: Trails for horseback riding, hiking, biking and cross-country skiing, fishing in Cleveland Pond, but no allowed swimming. The trails rarely connect with surrounding areas and there is no camping. Fishing and boat access is by a very light duty metal dock.

Parking: A paved lot for cars at the entrance and informal parking near paths leading from entrance

Restrooms: At entrance

Accessibility: Limited Accessibility. The Department of Environmental Management's Universal Accessibility group noted limited accessibility along trails, at facilities or at the water's edge. It found: Contact Station: No Accessible Parking. Inaccessible building. Not fully accessible information display Comfort Station: Rough, ill-defined parking area. Inaccessible pathway, building, and facilities Picnicking and Picnicking and fishing areas are not fully accessible Fishing Areas: within acceptable distances from parking and toilets. Need drop-offs near picnic areas. Need new or improved pathways from drop-off and parking area Trails. The trails themselves were not evaluated, but DEM staff comments suggested that they are generally too rough for wheelchair use.

Project staff observations in June 2003 revealed that:

- The paved loop roadway from the contact station and the closer parking lot to the fishing area and dam came to within a few hundred feet of those destinations but the final access was by a rough, stony path.
- The roadway itself was gated shut at both ends with no staff available to open them. This precluded handicapped vans from getting near the water, and required canoers to portage from the parking lot to the pond.

- The small metal dock (given by the Holbrook Sportmens Club) was too narrow and shaky to give wheelchair-bound persons comfortable access to a boat
- The attractive new bridge just downstream from the dam was narrow and appeared inaccessible, given the rough path on either side of it.
- The few trails visited were too rough, root- crossed, stony, steep or wet to be wheelchair accessible.

Appendix B

Results of 2006 Plan Recommendations

A. Acquisitions

The Town Reports since 2005 show no open space or recreation space acquisitions since the 2006 plan. The only land acquisition was a .93 acre parcel (map 15/ Lot 43) off of Groveland Street next to the landfill. This was due to inadvertent impacts of town activities on the landfill.

Proposed Acquisitions

The Plan's Five Year Action Plan table proposes no specific acquisitions except for the **Pohorecky** land discussed later. However its stated objectives below do suggest further acquisitions.

Objective 1.2 To "Increase conservation land through acquisition, conversion, and conservation restrictions".

Objective 1.4 To "Plan and implement achievable open space preservation and recreation projects."

Objective 2.2 To "Identify properties within the town suitable for creating new Active Recreational Areas and Facilities."

These all imply further unspecified acquisitions.

More specifically, the Five Year Action Plan map shows recommended acquisitions between the Vineyard Road (Carista) land and Blueberry Hill land; at the Pohorecky Farm; and along lower Beaver Brook.

The first indicated acquisition is the **Oakland Road Uplands**, 49 acres of woods just west of the upper end of the Shumatuscant River - running along the mapped Oakland Road and north of Vineyard Rd. on the Carista property- and east of the present Blueberry Hill Holdings between Old farm Road and the Weymouth line. It is a designated Priority Protection Area (PPA) and would "complement the adjacent habitat and provide a major wildlife corridor between them" according to the 2010 Old Colony Priority Development & Priority Protection Areas report.

The second indicated acquisition, the 115.15-acre **Pohorecky Farm** is also a PPA. It includes much land on scenic Cushing Pond, some land running into Holbrook near the Holbrook Sportsmen's Club, and a strip running nearly half a mile into Ames Nowell State Park. Ideally, the land in the Park would become part of the Park, the land around the Pond would be combined with other Conservation holdings, and the Holbrook land would be planned with that town and the Sportsmen's Club. As noted below, the purchase approved by the 1999 Town Meeting has been delayed by local legal issues.

The third, **the Beaver Brook** acquisitions, would be west of Old Country Lane; at the west end of Diane Circle; and at the southernmost portion of Beaver Brook in Abington near the 6.64 acre Beaver Brook Conservation land. The intent would be to add holdings on Abington side of the Brook, possibly allowing joint management in cooperation with Brockton's Beaver Brook Reservation, e.g., by adding well-spaced footbridges allowing hiking on both sides of the Brook. Past Council studies for the Selectmen have suggested mixed market-rate and affordable housing on some town-owned upland lots; varying amounts of managed open space and small scale recreation areas between the Brook and the housing; and natural habitat along the Brook. To date, nothing has happened beyond the town selling a few lots for market rate housing and the open space use remains informal.

Previous studies such as the 2004 Community Development Plan have also recommended state acquisition or management of the 5.56 acre former Henrickson land (Map50/Lot 40) within the Park (now owned by Seone landscaping) or of the portion of the Pohorecky Land within the Park.

Chapter V, the “Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest,” suggests or recommends the following acquisitions in its discussion of specific holdings:

Beal Farm on Linwood Street (under Ch.61A) which the town was unable to purchase in 2006 due to “budgetary constraints” but which may still be of interest.

Hamilton Street Conservation Area A land-locked 4.22 acres of white pine and marsh proposed for “further acquisition of stream-side woods (along a Shumatuscacant River tributary) to the area behind Bay State Circle and development of an access there and/or via a stream-side easement from the southern end of Hamilton Street.”

Valatka Conservation Land with limited access by crossing a dam or jumping over a sluice proposed for acquisition of an easement allowing construction of a foot bridge from Mill Street

B. Transfers of town-owned land to the Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, or State.

Many transfers of town land to the Conservation Commission, e.g., of a portion off Dianne Circle, were recommended in the Plan, but none have occurred since 2006 according to the Commission.

The recommended transfers (listed by their 2006 Plan designation) involved:

The Shumatuscacant River Strip (C-8) .2acres bracketing the river north of the Plymouth County land.

Plymouth County Commission Land (C-9) 2.19 acres bracketing the River and north of Summer Street

Diane Circle (C-12) A portion of a town-owned subdivision between Beaver Brook and Linwood Street proposed partly for mixed-income housing and partly for open space in coordination with Brockton's adjacent Beaver Brook Reservation

The Former Landfill on Groveland Street (C-13) A former town landfill with open space /recreation potential recommended for transfer if such uses are chosen

Rockland Street Conservation Area (C-14) 8.83 acres of wooded swamp proposed for Conservation use

Early Childhood Center (AS-3) 12.76 acres of varied educational and recreation facilities. The Plan suggests transferring the recreation portion to the Park and Rec. Commission, if school uses change

Griffin's Dairy (TO-9) 35.32 acres of former dairy land proposed for varied civic uses. After the reuse is decided, transfer the open space/recreation/agricultural portion to the Conservation Commission or Recreation Commission

Unused Future School site (S-7) A long, narrow 16.83-acre site west of High Street and Brockton Ave. proposed for transfer to the town as open space with the Brockton Ave. frontage sold for development

Other Possible Transfers

Land next to State Park (C-16) .75 acres next to Park; isolated woodland recommended for Open Space use and implicitly suitable for transfer to the Commission or Park

Land off Linwood Street (C-20) 3.29 acres behind five houses adding to the local wooded ambiance. Consider transfer to Conservation Commission, as it is in open space use.

Vineyard Rd. (T-12) 60.5 acres, largely wetland with varied potentials abutting the 40-acre Blueberry Hill Conservation land. Consider transfer to Conservation Commission.

C. Other actions recommended in Section 8, Open Space and Recreation Objectives, beyond those reflected in the Five Year Action plan are:

- 1.3 To accommodate special needs in order to improve sites accessibility in accord with the ADA.
- 1.5 To plan and lay out a nature trail within the Beaver Brook Conservation Land
- 1.6 To plan and lay out bicycle routes tying together recreational assets
- 2.1 To restore and maintain the Wilson Memorial Bridge and Arch at Island Grove Park

- 2.2 To develop a multi-purpose Senior Center (Done)
- 3.1 To protect watershed and water resources by strengthening laws to do so
- 3.2 To protect Island Grove Pond water quality

D. Actions Recommended Site-by-Site in Chapter V

1. Planning for reuse of the Golf Driving Range in conjunction with planning re-use of the landfill. (Not done as site has been sold and developed)
2. Encouraging Holbrook Sportsmen's Club to put their land under C. 61Bor or under a conservation restriction and plan it in conjunction with the Pohorecky land. (Moot pending Pohorecky acquisition)
3. Make Island Grove Park the keystone of a Weymouth to Whitman River Corridor
4. Upgrade the Laider Field tot lot including related complementary adult facilities
5. Sign and seek improved access from High Street and Golf Course to High Street Conservation area.
6. Seek integrated management between Wright's Meadow and water lands to the south allowing appropriate non-polluting uses.
7. Sign and improve access to the Thicket Conservation land
8. Merge adjacent sites C-3 and C-4 and improve access.
9. Tim's Pond south of Lincoln Street - Sign and improve access and consider combination with land to south
10. Walnut Street Conservation Land - Sign, improve access explore walking trail potential along Shumatuscasant River Strip. Sign it from Summer Street and from commercial land on Rte. 123 and improve access
11. Valatka Conservation land - as above, sign it, acquire an easement, and build a footbridge from Mill Street
12. Diane Circle - as above, combine housing, recreation and natural open space and add foot bridges to Beaver Brook Reservation.
13. Former landfill - Study recreation re-use without adjacent former golf driving range
14. Early Childhood Center - As above, transfer recreation facilities to Park and Recreation Commission
15. Ames Nowell State Park - Increase visibility from Chestnut and North Quincy Streets, integrate trails with open spaces in Abington and adjacent communities, acquire in-holdings and include remaining open land along North Quincy Street in the Park, and explore opportunities for swimming and camping.
16. Griffin Dairy - Plan for compatible uses in conjunction with former sewer beds to the north and in cooperation with the adjacent Rockland Golf Course, and transfer land planned for open space, agriculture and recreation to the Conservation and Park and Recreation Commissions
17. Vineyard Road - Examine a potential trail from Thicket Street and Bedford Street.

Use of Land under Present Use Zoning

Portions of the Henrikson Farm (51/27 and 50/11, 27) and the Beal Farm (8/1) remain under Chapter 61. There has been no activity affecting these despite the town's favorable first refusal rights. The former Golf Driving range previously under Ch. 61B has been sold and developed as a Cape Cod Lumber store.

E. Status of Major Recommendations

The major proposed acquisition is the Pohorecky Farm of off Chestnut Street the November 1999 Special Town Meeting voted to exercise the town's rights of first refusal under Ch, 61B S. 9 and authorized a \$1,400,000 loan to act on it, but the property is tied up in private litigation. It has also been suggested for state acquisition for incorporation in Ames Nowell State Park.

Acquisition of the Farm, preferably with up to 50% state-administered Federal Land and Water Conservation funds, remains a major recommendation of the 2006 Plan. The Plan noted that the acquisition would benefit the enhancement, protection, and expansion of state holdings at Ames Nowell State Park, and the Town's land on Cushing Pond