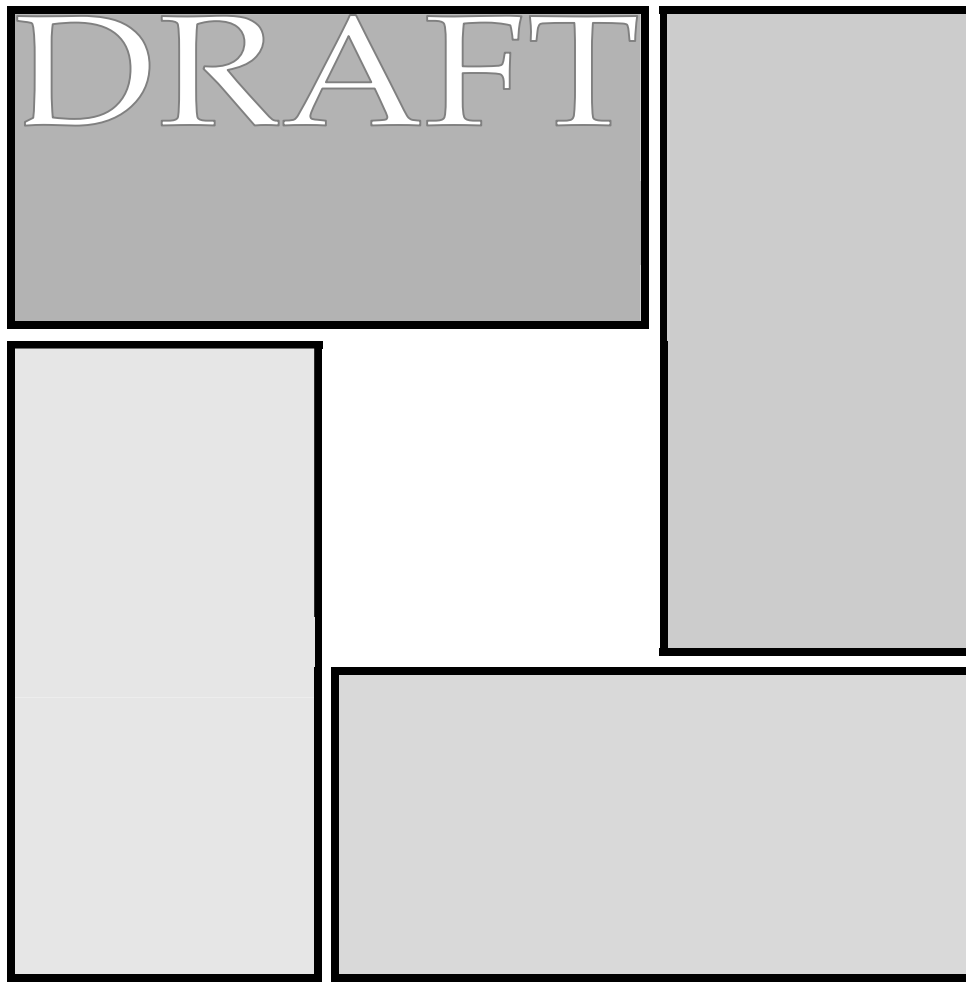


# OPEN SPACE PLAN



**Town of Stonington, Connecticut**

DRAFT - NOVEMBER 27, 2006

# Introduction

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Approximately 30 percent of the Town of Stonington's land is currently *perceived* as open space including public recreation areas, reservoirs and associated watershed lands, publicly and privately owned preserves, undeveloped or privately owned properties with no public access, and working farms. But how permanent is this open space? We currently see the potential for public utility watershed lands to be sold and farms turning into housing developments. Even Town-owned properties may not remain open space forever due to the need for generation of increased tax revenues.

Research conducted while developing this Plan indicates that Stonington actually has only 9 to 10% of its land in a permanently protected status, illustrated by the "Committed Open Space" map, Appendix A. While the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection aims to preserve 21% of state land as open space by the year 2023, this Plan sets an ambitious goal of 30+% by the year 2020. Though some of our open space parcels are of significant size, overall, preserved parcels are very fragmented. Therefore, it is important to acquire more land to connect parcels and to create wildlife corridors and green belts. In addition, it is desirable to seek out properties that provide passive recreational opportunities, such as a town beach. A system of ranking and prioritizing critical open space parcels was developed for this Plan and owners of several high-ranking parcels have approached the Conservation Commission with interest in preserving their land as open space.

Land can be viewed as being available or unavailable for development. Land available for development includes previously developed land that is currently without use or vacant land, undeveloped land that is appropriate for development, and managed (unprotected) open space. Land unavailable for development includes land that is already developed, environmentally protected land such as wetlands, and committed open space (land protected from development by ownership or easements). Publicly owned areas such as Barn Island Wildlife Management Area and Spellman Park, privately held tracts such as Avalonia Land Conservancy properties, and land upon which conservation easements have been placed are permanently protected. In the absence of specific designation or public recording of a binding agreement to keep land in its natural, undeveloped condition in perpetuity, neither public nor privately owned property is protected. In recognition of this, the Town classifies its open space as *committed open space* or *managed open space*. The distinctions between committed and managed open space are outlined in the following paragraphs.

*Responsibility for Open Space planning and preservation in Stonington lies with the Conservation Commission, established by Connecticut State Statute, and codified in the Town of Stonington by Ordinance adopted December 17, 1962. The Commission has developed this Open Space Plan (the Plan) to guide future acquisition and development of Open Space parcels and corridors. The Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan contained in this document are directly connected to the Town of Stonington Plan of Conservation and Development as revised 2004.*

## **Committed Open Space**

Committed open space is undeveloped land that is legally protected and preserved to ensure it will remain undeveloped and includes:

- Federal, State, Town and Borough-owned lands specifically designated as open space;
- Open space set asides through subdivision, and protected by deeds or covenants;
- Open space owned by public or private land trusts, and committed to remain undeveloped;
- Agricultural and forest lands with development rights held by public or private land trusts;
- Private lands subject to conservation easements.

## **Managed Open Space**

Managed open space has no special protection that ensures that it remains open space. These lands contribute to the quality of life, to the tax base, and provide potential for desired economic development in the Town of Stonington. Examples of Managed open space properties include:

- Golf courses, cemeteries, and private clubs;
- Agricultural and forest lands not otherwise protected, including PA490 reduced-tax lands;
- Municipal properties, either undeveloped/undesignated or utilized for schools, utilities, or support services;
- State-owned properties not developed or protected by open space deed or covenant;
- Private lands containing important view corridors or bordering waterfront lands, but without specific protection;
- Private recreation facilities and private lands with public accessibility;
- Privately or publicly owned vacant land.

## **Five Functional Open Space Categories**

Open spaces can be characterized by five broad categories:

1. Natural Resource Protection  
Unique and fragile areas, rare and endangered habitats, aquifer recharge areas, and riparian buffers.
2. Resource Management  
Working landscapes where renewable resources are protected: farms, forests, fisheries, and aquifers.
3. Outdoor Recreation

- Active recreation including parks and playgrounds, passive recreation including preserves.
4. Areas Kept Open to Protect Public Health and Safety  
Steep slopes (greater than 25%), shallow depths to bedrock (less than four feet), flood prone areas, and soils with high water tables (less than 24-inches).
  5. Areas that Define Community Character  
Historic sites, scenic vistas, stone walls, tree-canopied roads, village center, Town green, waterfalls, and babbling brooks.

## **Open Space Creation by Regulation**

The Town of Stonington subdivision regulations require the preservation of open space as part of the subdivision review process through two methods. The Conservation Commission reviews subdivision applications and determines whether to recommend the set aside of 15% (proposed to be increased to 20% by Stonington's 2004 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)) of the total acreage being subdivided, or to assess a Fee-in-Lieu of Open Space. This determination will be based on the goals and objectives discussed in Chapter 4 of the POCD. The Conservation Commission recommends the manner of preservation of open space to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). The recommendation is incorporated in the review and permitting process completed by the PZC.

In 2006, the Town replaced its Cluster Subdivision regulations with an Open Space Development (OSD) alternative that requires a minimum of 50% of the parcel be preserved as Open Space. The OSD design first and foremost takes into consideration the landscape of the parcel and directs development to areas best able to support it. The OSD design also preserves community character, reduces environmental impacts, protects the rights of property owners, and enables the developer to benefit from a high-quality project.

## **Management of Open Space Acquisitions**

Another suggestion discussed in Chapter 4 of the POCD is the formation of a Stonington Land Trust. A not-for-profit land trust, complimenting the regional Avalonia Land Conservancy (ALC), could serve as a vehicle to both acquire and manage committed open space. A private Stonington Land Trust might encourage interested landowners to donate land or development rights as part of their estate planning. Landowners may be more receptive to solicitations for donations of land, development rights, and easements if they trusted that the organization to which the donation was made would not develop or sell the land for any reason. A private land trust could outright own properties, hold conservation easements on pieces that the Town owns, hold open space set-asides within subdivisions, and police and maintain all of the above.

# **Goals and Objectives**

This Plan provides guidance to the Town for decisions it must make when selecting areas for open space protection. These goals and objectives



embrace the quality of life desires of the Town residents, most recently expressed at public meetings held October 29, 2002, July 1, 2003, and November 18, 2003, and through surveys related to the 2003/2004 review of the Town of Stonington's 2004 POCD. The objectives, and the associated Action Plan, provide an implementable strategy to achieve the Conservation Vision outlined in the Town of Stonington's 2004 POCD.

## **Goal 1: Preserve Town Character and Enhance Economic Sustainability**

### *Objectives:*

- Maintain and enhance viewsheds and scenic roads;
- Preserve historic and cultural resources;
- Preserve farmland, forestland, and undeveloped coastal areas;
- Maintain and enhance areas that define and shape community character;
- Provide attractive sites for new economic developments that will maintain community character and sustain economic viability;
- Establish a Stonington Land Trust to manage open space.

## **Goal 2: Protect Natural Resources to Ensure Public Health and Safety**

### *Objectives:*

- Protect streambelts, surface waters, and associated wetlands;
- Protect watersheds and natural drainageways;

- Preserve and enhance farmlands and productive forestlands;
- Protect the quality of the groundwater and the Town's aquifers.
- Establish a comprehensive plan for the preservation of streambelts.

### **Goal 3:        Protect Wildlife Habitats and Natural Resources**

#### *Objectives:*

- Preserve open space corridors for wildlife movement;
- Protect habitats, particularly those necessary for rare and endangered species;
- Prohibit development on steep slopes, poor soils, and other critical natural areas that are unsuitable for development.

### **Goal 4:        Maintain and Enhance Recreational Areas**

#### *Objectives:*

- Provide sites for both active and passive recreation;
- Create a system of greenways to connect village centers via open space corridors;
- Encourage pedestrian use of greenways through signage and educational guidance;
- Maintain, enhance, and augment public access to inland and tidal wetlands, and coastal areas;
- Maintain recreational opportunities for residents as well as visitors.

#### **Goals and Objectives Strategies**

1. Limit development to areas capable of supporting it.
2. Establish guidelines to incorporate conservation design principles into land use regulations so as to ensure that residential and commercial development is sensitive to the natural characteristics of the area.
3. Encourage and permit open spaces associated with commercial as well as residential development.
4. Develop regulations that require open space considerations during redevelopment along rivers, streams, and watersheds.
5. Preserve and manage committed open space areas through a Stonington Land Trust.
6. Convert *managed* open space parcels critical to sustaining natural resources to *committed* open space areas by acquiring land or easements.

*These strategies are set forth to achieve the goals and objectives, recognizing the importance of sustainability achieved through thoughtful conservation planning and careful economic development.*

7. Enhance and maintain important aesthetic Town characteristics through preservation of viewsheds, scenic roads, and important public access locations.
8. Require the amount of constrained land (i.e., wetlands) within an open space set-aside be proportional to the amount of constrained land within the overall development, unless waived by the PZC for good cause.
9. Educate residents about the benefits of open space donation and sale of development rights.

# **Open Space & Critical Resource Analysis**

An inventory of important conservation factors was compiled to assist with the prioritization of future open space protection. Map overlays were then prepared based on the presence and location of the Town's critical environmental resources. These maps are included in Appendix A.

The Stonington landscape was evaluated using 10 natural resource *conservation criteria* of importance to the Town. Using a factor of 1 for each of the criteria, a *composite conservation factor* resulted for each area of Town. For example, an area with a riparian buffer over unfragmented forest and an aquifer receives a rank of three since that is the sum of the criteria present on that area. The maximum composite factor possible for any area in Town is 10, although in practice, no area in the analysis received more than seven conservation criteria.

The analysis utilized 10 conservation criteria individually mapped by layer. Each layer was overlaid with the other layers, resulting in the composite map included in this plan. The individual conservation criteria maps are included, as well as maps that group conservation criteria according to their categorical similarities.

The data layers containing *conservation criteria* are grouped into categories as follows with sources noted:

## **Surface Water Resources**

1. Wetland Soils (Inland and Tidal);
2. 100 Foot Riparian Buffer of Streams and Watercourses;
3. FEMA Flood Hazard Areas (Federal Emergency Management Agency, MAGIC).

## **Drinking Water Resources**

4. Public Water Supply Wells, buffered to 1000 feet;
5. Wellhead Protection Areas;
6. Aquifer and Reservoir Watershed Areas;

## **Natural Resources, Habitats, and Ecologically Valuable Lands**

7. Unfragmented Tree Cover (Town of Stonington GIS);
8. Trail corridors, buffered to 100 feet (Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center);
9. Natural Diversity Database (State of Connecticut DEP);
10. Prime Farmland Soils (NRCS Soil Survey Geographic Database from MAGIC, and Natural Resources Conservation Service).



In addition to the 10 natural resource conservation criteria, the Conservation Commission may address preservation and cultural/quality-of-life resources in their review of a proposal. These resources may include:

- Trails, pedestrian greenways, and open space connections;
- Scenic views and archeological sites;
- Architectural and historic resources;
- Viewsheds, scenic views, and public access to waterways and waterfronts.

Additionally, the Conservation Commission will complete a Conservation Rating Sheet during the initial site walkover of a subdivision parcel. This rating sheet contains 20 conservation and preservation factors. Each factor is weighted numerically based on the existence and value of the factor. While the maximum weight a primary (most significant) factor can receive is three, the maximum weight a tertiary (least significant) factor can receive is one. Zeros are assigned to factors that do not exist or are compromised. Once the persons conducting the site walk complete the sheet, the factor ratings are totaled. A rating sheet example is included as Appendix B.

The following additional maps included with this plan (Appendix A) highlight important information that should be considered with the conservation criteria and factors discussed when making decisions regarding open space protection:

- Undeveloped parcels over 25 acres, cemeteries;
- Potential greenway and open space connections;
- Current inventory of committed open space as researched.

*Note: Most data used in this analysis came from the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), University of Connecticut Map and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC) and the Town of Stonington Geographic Information System (GIS).*

*The analysis was developed using ArcView 3.2a GIS Software from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI).*



# Implementation Resources

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Stonington's Open Space Plan is implemented using a variety of conservation resources. Currently the mechanisms available to the Town of Stonington for the protection of open space include:

## *Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and/or Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)*

### *Acquisition*

- Stonington's Land Acquisition Fund
- State open space grants
- Federal grants
  - Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

### *Tax reductions*

- Public Act 490

### *Conservation Partnerships*

- Trust for Public Land (TPL)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Avalonia Land Conservancy (ALC)
- Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center (DPNC)

### *Conservation Easements*

## **Regulatory Resources**

- The Town's Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) regulations protect water resources including primary aquifer areas, vernal pools, wetlands and streambelt areas by restricting development on land that is situated in key water resource areas.
- The State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OLISP) site plan reviews protect tidal wetlands and areas within the coastal boundary.
- The Town Conservation Commission's review is required on all new residential development proposals.
- The Town's Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) may permit the establishment of an Open Space Development (OSD) in all zoning districts where single family residences are allowed as a permitted use for one or more of the following purposes:

- 1 To preserve open space within the Town and to maintain the natural appearance, beauty and character of an area.
- 2 To protect and preserve the natural beauty of the terrain, and to encourage the wise use and sound management of natural resources throughout the Town.
- 3 To provide land for passive recreation purposes.
- 4 To permit the best possible design of a parcel of land after consideration of its particular topography, size, shape, soils or other unique features such as valuable trees, watercourses, water bodies, and historical, archeological and/or paleontological sites.
- 5 To avoid hazardous conditions and excessive damage from storm water runoff and stream flooding, to safeguard the groundwater table, and to protect streams and ponds from pollution.

### **Financial Resources**

- Through the Public Act 490 program, tax offsets are available for conservation of agricultural lands and key forestlands and are recorded in Assessor records. This program could be expanded to include eligible land that contributes to community character through the adoption of an “open space assessment.”
- Subdivision regulations, following State law, currently provide that Fees-in-Lieu of Open Space be paid when the subdivided property is sold. Liens will be placed on the subdivided properties until the fee is paid in full. The fees are deposited in the Land Acquisition Fund, and managed by the Conservation Commission.

### **Other Implementation Resource Strategies**

- Transfer of development rights and purchase of development rights are mechanisms available to the Town of Stonington, and should be further developed by regulation.
- The Land Acquisition Fund may be augmented through annual contributions in the budget and/or by bonding to have a more immediate effect.
- State and/or Federal Open Space Funds and grants may be pursued.
- Density-based zoning to encourage open space subdivisions may be adopted.
- During site-plan approvals, conservation easements or similar measures may be required.
- Off-site dedication and/or banking of open space may be permitted.

## **Preservation Examples**

In 2003, three significant properties were permanently preserved as open space. The methods used to protect these properties illustrate the range and diversity of mechanisms available to preserve and protect valuable open space.

### *Paffard Woods*

The Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. (ALC), a private land trust, successfully acquired the 62-acre *Paffard Woods* property, located along the west side of North Main Street. The parcel is a significant addition to the open space portfolio because of its scenic value, farmland soils, wetlands, tidal cove frontage, habitat for wildlife, and availability to the public for recreational purposes.

- The land was offered to the ALC by the owner at a bargain sale price in order to preserve the land as open space.
- The ALC prepared and submitted an application for State Open Space grant funds for half the acquisition price of the parcel. The Town of Stonington Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, and Planning and Zoning Commission all supported the grant application.
- A monetary and an in-kind contribution was approved on behalf of the Town of Stonington, to be added to over 300 private contributions solicited by members of the ALC.
- The landowner received significant tax benefit through the conveyance of the property to the ALC, and was thereby able to convey the property to the ALC at a substantial savings.

### *Barn Island Wildlife Management Area*

An addition to the *Barn Island Wildlife Management Area* was made when the State of Connecticut acquired an adjacent 144 acres, previously approved for construction of a golf course, and located alongside of the Amtrak right-of-way between Palmer Neck and Greenhaven Roads. Approval for development as a golf course was contingent on the successful provision of water necessary to golf course operations. Sufficient water was not available without diverting substantial amounts of water from neighboring wells. The State of Connecticut, through the Office of Long Island Sound programs, approached the owner of the property, and proceeded with acquisition for the fair market value of \$1.4 million.

- Grant applications were prepared and submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Fish and Wildlife Service National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, and to the Open Space

Fund for the State of Connecticut. The applications required support and participation from as many agencies and patrons as possible.

- The Town of Stonington, the Board of Education, the Conservation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center, and a variety of private citizens contributed cash and in-kind services, including educational services, to fully support the grant application.
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) partnered with the State of Connecticut in the purchase of the property prior to the approval of the federal grant funds. TNC transferred the property to sole ownership by the State of Connecticut in January 2004 for the purchase price less a \$150,000 contribution by TNC.
- The grant applications were successful, the partners were fully engaged in the process, and a variety of funding mechanisms were utilized to complete the acquisition.

#### *Manatuck Land Preserve*

Manatuck Farms LLC., the owners of the 205-acre Manatuck Land Preserve, donated a conservation easement to the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center (DPNC) to protect the Manatuck Land Preserve from development. The easement protects important grassland habitat (and two associated species of State-listed birds), farmland soils, woodlands, and a significant swath of the wetland watershed region. The easement covers the entire parcel except for a dwelling and a small area of road frontage. DPNC will manage the property as a private nature preserve for educational purposes. Under the terms of the easement, a portion of the property (existing fields) may be utilized for seasonal recreational purposes by Pine Point School, with restrictions. Access is permitted only by permission from DPNC.

These successful acquisition examples demonstrate creative and collaborative ways in which the Town can partner with private entities to achieve the goals and objectives of the Open Space Plan. These examples demonstrate the need for flexibility in approach as well as collaborative efforts among multiple public and private interest groups.

# Conclusions

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Open space provides serenity, a sense of place, opportunities for ecological restoration and natural reforestation, habitat for wildlife, and preservation of natural resources as well as providing a natural boundary surrounding developed areas. Whether used for recreational purposes or to protect an important environmental resource, open space provides value to the community by:

- Protecting wildlife habitats;
- Enhancing biodiversity;
- Maintaining farmland and forestland viability;
- Serving aesthetic purposes;
- Protecting natural and cultural resources;
- Providing recreational opportunities;
- Preserving community character;
- Providing an important attraction for new business;
- Enhancing economic viability within the community;
- Increasing adjacent residential and commercial property values.










# Action Plan

This Action Plan recommends specific actions to be taken to achieve the goals described by the Open Space Plan. The Action Plan includes a proposed completion date for each action item and designates one or more responsible party. The Stonington Conservation Commission's Open Space Committee, working with the Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee, will oversee the progress of the Action Plan and update and/or modify it as needed.


## Legend



<b>BOF</b>	Board of Finance
<b>BOS</b>	Board of Selectmen
<b>CC</b>	Conservation Commission
<b>PZC</b>	Planning and Zoning Commission
<b>SECOG</b>	Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
<b>NEMO</b>	Non-point Education for Municipal Officials (UCONN Extension)




## Modify Regulations

			Target Completion Date	Resources	Who	Done
	1.	Cap effective impervious coverage to 60% in new commercial developments.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2.	Design an enforceable regulation to protect properties and features adjacent to scenic roads.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3.	Adopt a buildable land regulation to reduce pressure on sensitive areas.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4.	Establish a comprehensive plan for preservation of streambelts.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5.	Develop Open Space Development Regulations.	2006	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	6.	Develop Open Space Development Design Guidelines and Standards.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7.	Add non-infringement area to RR-80.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8.	Convert some of the RR-80 to GBR-130 north of I-95 for new subdivisions.	2007	CC, SECOG	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9.	Require conservation easements or other measures during approvals.	Ongoing	CC	PZC	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Preserve More Open Space

			Target Completion Date	Resources	Who	Done
	10.	Increase committed open space Town-wide from 10±% to 30+%.	2020	CT DEP, BOF, BOS	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>

	11.	Enhance Land Acquisition Fund through annual contributions in the budget and/or by bonding.	Ongoing/ Annually	BOF, BOS	BOF, CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	12.	Promote Town bonding to fund open space acquisition.	Ongoing/ Annually	NEMO, TPL, BOF, BOS	CC, BOS, BOF	<input type="checkbox"/>
	13.	Continue to pursue state and/or federal open space grants.	Ongoing	TPL, CC	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	14.	Convert unprotected and perceived open space into committed open space by acquiring land or easements.	Ongoing	TPL, CC	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	15.	Establish a Stonington Land Trust.	2007	CC, NEMO, BOS	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	16.	Take a proactive approach to acquire a beach property for public use through land acquisition or donation.	Ongoing	CC	CC, BOF, BOS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	17.	Interconnect open spaces into a system of local and regional greenways and trails; encourage passive recreation.	Ongoing	CC, TPL	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Increase Public Awareness			Target Completion Date	Resources	Who	Done
	18.	Develop a directional signage program for publicly accessible open space.	2007/ Annually	CT DEP, TPL	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	19.	Develop an educational signage program for wildlife and natural resources areas.	2007/ Ongoing	CT DEP, TPL	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	20.	Educate residents about benefits of open space donation and sale of development rights.	Ongoing	CTDEP, TPL	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Legend

<b>BOF</b>	Board of Finance
<b>BOS</b>	Board of Selectmen
<b>CC</b>	Conservation Commission
<b>CTDEP</b>	Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
<b>TPL</b>	Trust for Public Land



# Glossary

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For the purposes of this plan, the Open Space Committee developed the following definitions:

**Greenway:** a conservation or recreation corridor connecting open space parcels for people and wildlife with public access points, neighborhoods, and commercial areas. Greenways may be developed with exercise trails, walking, biking, or riding trails.

**PA 490:** Since 1963, Public Act 490 provides for assessment of farm, forest, and open space land on the basis of its current use rather than market value. “Use value” is based on what the land is actually used for and not what it might potentially be worth on the market. Use value taxation is justified because the land requires little, if any, support from local government revenues (Source: NEMO Open Space Fact Sheet T6). Currently, Stonington has no provision to provide tax relief on eligible open space lands.

**Transfer of Development Rights (TDR):** TDR preserves open space by shifting development potential from one part of town to another. Developers are allowed to build at greater densities in the areas deemed suitable for development provided they purchase development rights from the areas deemed unsuitable for development (“preservation zones”). Once the development rights to a property have been sold, the land cannot be developed and is preserved for open space or agriculture. Landowners in the “preservation zone” are compensated for this development restriction by the issuing of development rights certificates that they can sell. (Source: NEMO Open Space Fact Sheet T3.)

**Purchase of Development Rights (PDR):** Voluntary, legal agreements that allow owners of land meeting certain criteria to sell the right to develop their property to a town or state government, or to a nonprofit organization. A conservation easement is then placed on the land and the agreement is recorded on the title to limit the future use of the land to agriculture or other open space uses (Source: EPA Smart Growth Policies Glossary).

**Streambelts:** The natural area along rivers, streams, wetland drainage creeks, and intermittent brooks. Streambelts may be publicly accessible, and may be incorporated in wildlife corridors, or in greenway development.

**Wildlife corridors:** Natural pathways for wildlife movement within and between important habitats. Wildlife corridors may be provided with

limited public access, and may be developed with educational signage or other educational program elements.

## Referenced Materials

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- *Preliminary Open Space Plan*, New Haven: S. Spielvogel & Associates, July 15, 1967
- Ordinance Re: Conservation Commission, adopted 12/17/1962, amended 7/3/1967 and 12/21/1987 [http://www.stonington-ct.gov/Pages/StoningtonCT\\_Ordinances/concomm](http://www.stonington-ct.gov/Pages/StoningtonCT_Ordinances/concomm)
- *Natural Resource Data Maps and Open Space Commitment*, The Stonington Conservation Commission, prepared by Ann Moore, Connecticut College, May 1974
- *Conservation Plan for the Town of Stonington*, memo from Stanton W. Simm, Jr. Acting Chair of Conservation Commission to Town Planner, June 9, 1988
- *Stonington Plan of Conservation - Update for 1989*
- Comprehensive Land Acquisition and Preservation Programs for the Stonington Plan of Conservation Update, 1989
- *Draft Executive Summary*, Plan of Conservation and Development, May 16, 1998
- *Draft Open Space Plan*, Peter S. Thacher, Chair, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission, October 19, 1998
- *Revised Report of the Rights-of-Way Committee* [Stonington Borough], May 2002 <http://www.stoningtonct.com/row.html>
- *Plan of Conservation and Development*, Adopted June 29, 2004, Chapter 4, Protect Important Resources [http://www.stonington-ct.gov/Pages/StoningtonCT\\_Planning/ConservationPlan](http://www.stonington-ct.gov/Pages/StoningtonCT_Planning/ConservationPlan)
- *Plan of Development*, Adopted May 21, 1992
- Open Space Planning Workshops, 11/18/2002 and 11/27/2006, James Gibbons, Land Use Specialist, UCONN Cooperative Extension System, Non-point Source Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) <http://nemo.uconn.edu/>
- NEMO Fact Sheet 9 Conservation Subdivisions [http://nemo.uconn.edu/tools/publications/fact\\_sheets/nemo\\_fact\\_sheet\\_9\\_s.pdf](http://nemo.uconn.edu/tools/publications/fact_sheets/nemo_fact_sheet_9_s.pdf)
- NEMO Fact Sheet 10 Carving up the Landscape [http://nemo.uconn.edu/tools/publications/fact\\_sheets/nemo\\_fact\\_sheet\\_10\\_s.pdf](http://nemo.uconn.edu/tools/publications/fact_sheets/nemo_fact_sheet_10_s.pdf)

*Listed Website addresses Active as of 11/27/2006*

### Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Sources:

- University of Connecticut Map and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC), State of Connecticut <http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/>
- Town of Stonington Geographic Information System (GIS), 2002 (based on aerial photography, April 24, 1999, to be updated)
- Town of Stonington Conservation Commission GIS (1993-present)

- Connecticut DEP Environmental & Geographic Information Center  
<http://dep.state.ct.us/gis/>
- Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS)  
<http://www.edc.uri.edu/rigis/>
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soils  
<http://www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/>
- Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)  
<http://www.esri.com>

# **Appendices**

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## **Appendix A (Maps):**

Surface Water Resources  
Drinking Water Resources  
Habitat and Valuable Lands  
Overall Resource Ranking  
Committed Open Space  
Undeveloped Parcels over 25-Acres, cemeteries  
Potential Greenway and Open Space Connections  
Current Inventory of Committed Open Space As Researched

## **Appendix B:**

Parcel Rating Form

# Acknowledgements

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## Open Space Committee

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Jennifer Herbst Chairman  
Ben Baldwin  
Elena Pascarella  
Sheila Lyons  
Katharine Robinson  
Barbara Blycker Koll  
Lenny Bellet  
Al Brown

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## Conservation Commission

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Stanton W. Simm, Jr. Chairman  
Ben Baldwin  
Bertrand Bell  
Stuart Cole  
Robert Dewire  
Jennifer Herbst  
Sheila Lyons  
John Swenarton Alternate

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## Planning and Zoning Commission

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Charles Sneddon, Jr. Chairman  
Paul Altman Vice Chairman  
Lynn Young Secretary  
Alisa Morrison  
Julianne McCabe  
Paul Holland Alternate  
Joe Basile Alternate  
Rob Marseglia Alternate

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## Town Staff

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William S. Brown First Selectman  
Jason Vincent, AICP Director of Planning  
Keith Brynes, AICP Town Planner

The Conservation Commission welcomes feedback about the Plan. Please contact either Jennifer Herbst (jandk1003@sbcglobal.net) or Ben Baldwin (bhbaldwin@hotmail.com), members of the Conservation Commission and the Open Space Committee, c/o Town Hall, 152 Elm Street, Stonington, CT 06378.