

# TOWN OF FRANKLIN 2023 OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN



Prepared by:  
Franklin Conservation Commission with the assistance of:  
Franklin Department of Planning & Community Development

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Town of Franklin Conservation Commission would like to acknowledge the efforts and interest expressed by the residents of Franklin during the preparation of the 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The input provided through responses to the citizen questionnaire, attendance at public meetings and conversation with the Conservation Agent provided valuable information to the Commission, which was used as the basis for completion of this document.

In addition, the Commission would like to thank other Town Departments including, the Department of Planning and Community Development, School Department, Department of Public Works, Building Department and the Recreation Department as well as the various non-profit organizations that supplied data for the preparation of this Plan.

This Plan would not have been possible if it weren't for the citizens of Franklin. The Commission thanks its community for their advocacy and support in developing an Open Space and Recreation Plan that is as comprehensive as it is inclusionary.

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## SECTION 1: PLAN SUMMARY

*“We need the tonic of wildness...At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be indefinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature.”*

— Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Every seven (or so) years, the Town of Franklin reexamines and updates its Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). Required by Massachusetts, the OSRP is a comprehensive plan for the Town’s many Conservation and Recreation Areas and other public and publicly accessible Open Spaces, and serves as a framework to guide policy decisions by the Town around the management, maintenance and enhancement of existing Open Spaces and Recreational Areas, as well as potential investments in and development of new Open Spaces and Recreational Areas. Each update of the OSRP is intended to memorialize past achievements, to highlight efforts that are ongoing, and to provide a roadmap for the implementation of the Town’s Open Space and Recreation goals and priorities over the succeeding seven-year period – in other words, “where are you, where you would like to go, and how might you get there.”<sup>1</sup>

Franklin’s initial OSRP, from 2001, encompassed Franklin and two other communities, Bellingham and Blackstone, and addressed the region as well as each community. That plan was subsequently updated in 2008 and, most recently, in 2016. That most recent OSRP update, from 2016, laid the groundwork for the Town’s adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in November of 2020, and the subsequent acquisitions by the Town of the Maple Hill Conservation Area and Schmidt’s Farm, totaling approximately 200 acres, using CPA funding. The 2016 OSRP update had the foresight to prioritize the health of the Town’s surface and groundwater resource areas, while protecting priority habitats and enhancing biodiversity amidst the rapidly accelerating effects of climate change. It called for investing in updates to the Town’s playgrounds, fields and athletics facilities with a particular focus on promoting greater accessibility.

However, for all of its virtue and vision, Franklin’s 2016 OSRP update could not have predicted the onset of a global pandemic. In the dark days of the coronavirus pandemic, the Town’s Open Space resources were a vital tonic, and lifeline, for those looking to escape the isolation of their homes. It is fitting, then, that as the federal state of emergency was lifted in May of 2023, and amidst a renewed appreciation for the outdoors, the Town was well into the process of reviewing and updating its OSRP – assessing where we are since the 2016 update, where we would like to steer the Town’s Open Space and Recreation priorities over the next seven years, and how to accomplish those new and renewed goals.

The Franklin Conservation Department and Franklin Conservation Commission set out to address those questions over the course of two dozen public hearings and information

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<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts Open Space and Recreation Planner’s Workbook, last revised March 2008 (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-space-and-Recreation-plan-workbook/download>).

sessions held from January through June of 2023, including bi-weekly stakeholder meetings, bi-weekly office hours, and three public hearings. More than 100 stakeholder groups were invited to participate in the OSRP update, and many were active participants throughout. The Franklin Recreation Department was a key partner in the preparation of this 2023 OSRP update, and the Conservation Department and Commission were also assisted by Franklin's Department of Planning and Community Development, Building and Inspectional Services, the GIS Department, Public Works Department, Franklin Public Schools, and the Franklin Senior Center, among others who were instrumental in the OSRP process. Representatives of Franklin's Agricultural Commission, Commission on Persons with Disabilities, and Town Council were also actively engaged throughout the public process and have helped to shape the 2023 OSRP update. Lastly, state and nonprofit organizations, including representatives of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Metacomet Land Trust graciously lent their expertise and input. More than 700 residents provided detailed feedback via a citizen participation questionnaire that was initially distributed in February of 2023. The 2023 OSRP update is truly the product of community-wide input and the community's vision for the future of Franklin's Open and Recreational spaces.

Based on that collective feedback, the Conservation Department and Commission have developed the 2023 OSRP update, including updated goals, objectives, and an action plan for the succeeding seven-year period. In addition, a re-evaluation of the accessibility of the Town's Open Space and Recreation facilities was conducted (see Appendix D), an inventory of the Town's Open Space, Recreation, and Conservation properties (see Appendix C) was updated, and descriptions of the Town's substantial resources were compiled, updated and included in the 2023 OSRP update.

Since the 2016 OSRP update was approved, substantial progress has been made on the goals and objectives that were highlighted in that plan. Among them are:

- a. Acquired the Riverbend Open Space Area, and converted other Town-owned parcels to the Conservation Commission for designation as Conservation lands.
- b. Adopted the CPA in 2020, and utilized CPA funding to (1) acquire and preserve the Maple Hill Conservation Area as forest area and public Open Space; and (2) acquire and enable the continued agricultural use of Schmidt's Farm, one of Franklin's legacy farms, in addition to potential future community uses.
- c. Partnered with DCR to improve and extend the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) to Grove Street in Franklin, and separately constructed a shared use path along portions of Grove Street, with an additional phase of the Grove Street shared use path currently underway.
- d. Revitalized the DelCarte Conservation Area through the successful treatment of invasive species within DelCarte's north and south ponds, the implementation of the Biodiversity and Buffer Zone Restoration Project in 2022-23, and through increased community engagement and improved signage throughout DelCarte.
- e. Installed and updated signage and recycling receptacles at all public fields and Open Space areas.

- f. Performed a parking analysis of Open Space areas.
- g. Added sidewalks along portions of Chestnut Street, Pleasant Street, Beaver Street and Lincoln Street.

Additionally, the following projects and improvements to the Town's Recreational facilities have been completed since the 2016 OSRP update:

- a. Installation of new playground at DelCarte Conservation Area (2017).
- b. Improvements made to King Street Memorial Playground (2019), with master plan for King Street Memorial Park currently underway.
- c. Installation of new playground equipment (Vendetti Playground, 2021) and fitness course (2023) at Beaver Pond, along with resurfacing of Beaver Pond athletic fields.
- d. Installation of new playground at Henry "Ski" Faenza Memorial Playground (formerly Nason Street Tot Lot)
- e. Improvements to Fletcher Field Playground (anticipated in 2023).

The 2023 OSRP includes numerous goals, objectives and proposed actions that are the result of feedback and input received over the course of the above-referenced public stakeholder sessions, informal office hours, public hearings and other meetings with Town personnel; through letters, emails, and other outreach from residents and stakeholder groups; and through the responses to the citizen participation questionnaire.

The goals, objectives and proposed actions resulting from the Open Space and Recreation planning process are oriented around three principal themes: inclusivity and connectivity, growth, and sustainability. The Conservation Department and Commission believe these goals reflect the priorities of the Town's residents:

**(1) Inclusivity & Connectivity:** As the Town looks to enhance its existing open and Recreational spaces and plan for future improvements to those spaces, the Town should do so with a particular emphasis on expanding access to and awareness of those spaces, especially for the elderly, persons with disabilities and families with young children. Along those same lines, the Town should develop strategies to promote walkable and bikeable connections between existing open and Recreational spaces, particularly with respect to spaces where there is little available parking, so as to facilitate the use of those spaces by individuals who don't live in the immediate neighborhood.

**(2) Growth:** The Town should identify opportunities to grow participation and involvement in the Town's open and Recreational spaces, including by providing space for individuals and activities that may be currently underserved. For example, this may include space for community agriculture and associated educational opportunities, as well as for up-and-coming sports such as pickleball and cricket, which are growing in popularity in the region but lack adequate space relative to regional demand for facilities.

**(3) Sustainability:** During periods of the summer and fall of 2020 and the summer of 2022, the Town was experiencing a “critical drought” as classified by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. As the effects of climate change continue to be felt more acutely, the Town should continue to promote sustainability and prioritize the protection of the Town’s natural resources, including conservation areas, wetland resource areas and forests, all of which serve as a bulwark against global warming.

The OSRP’s implementation, and achievement of the above goals, will require the commitment of a broad variety of organizations and individuals, including non-profit organizations, state agencies, resident volunteers, and Town departments, boards, commissions, and committees. Through the combined efforts of all parties mentioned above the Town feels confident that the OSRP can be implemented to meet the prescribed goals over the seven-year planning period.

## SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

### A. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this Open Space and Recreation Plan is to ensure that the Open Space and Recreation resource of Franklin are protected and enhanced as the Town continues to face rapid development pressures and the impacts of sprawl. This community planning document is an update to the 2016 Plan, and has been developed through a substantial public participation process that reflects the needs of its community members. The document outlines the strategies that will protect our community's natural green infrastructure, preserve important environmental and ecological functions, improve our Recreation resources and provide additional places for Recreation, and enhance quality of life and equity for the Town's residents.

Significant efforts to manage, acquire, preserve and plan for Open Space preservation in Franklin began by the mid-1980s. Work included preparation of six Open Space and Recreation Plans, the first being completed in 1985. In October 1986, representatives of Bellingham, Blackstone, and Franklin organized the Tri-Town Open Space Committee. This group worked on several important Open Space protection planning projects for the three communities; these efforts eventually led to the establishment of the Metacomet Land Trust. In the 1980s and 1990s, concerned with the substantial rates of development, the Town conducted various studies and a buildout analysis, and implemented growth management strategies that included rezoning a substantial number of undeveloped residential parcels to Industrial, added an Open Space Development zoning bylaw (Section 185-43) to Town Code leading to eighteen Open Space subdivisions and preservation of over 235 acres of Open Space, and adoption of a Growth Management bylaw at Section 185-46.

Franklin's residents are fortunate that the Town has made substantial investments in Open Space and Recreation in recent decades and will continue with Community Preservation funding well into the future, but additional funding options are always needed. Cities and Towns in Massachusetts are required to prepare an Open Space and Recreation Plan once every seven years to maintain eligibility for DCS grant programs.

Open Space protection planning efforts are ongoing in Franklin; based on data collected and refined from the 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), the Department of Planning and Community Development with the assistance of other Town staff undertook assessments of Open Space parcels that were either protected Conservation properties or privately owned parcels that could be developed. Three separate projects, the *Chapter 61 Parcel Evaluation* and the *Conservation Commission Managed Properties Study* in 2018, and the *Privately Owned Five+ Acre Parcel Evaluation* in 2019, identified properties that should be prioritized for either protection or Recreation use. The planning efforts have helped the Administration gain a greater understanding of which parcels the Town should invest its limited resources.

Franklin is currently in the process of updating its 2013 Master Plan. The newly formed Master Plan Committee will work with Town staff and consultants over the next 18 months to conduct a substantial public input process and create a plan update. A substantial portion of this Open Space and Recreation Plan will be used by the Town's Master Plan Committee as it works to update the Town's 2013 Master Plan, including the Open Space and Recreation Element.

## **B. Planning Process and Public Participation**

In 2023, the Franklin Conservation Commission assumed the task of overseeing and preparing the update of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Input was solicited from a large number of Franklin residents via twenty focus group meetings, three public hearings, a citizen questionnaire, Google Form, in addition to Town personnel and non-profit organizations.

Over one hundred focus groups were identified in the 2023 OSRP planning process including, but not limited to, all Town supported commissions and boards; scout groups; parent communication councils; Recreational sport teams; school sport teams; land trusts; and tribes. The representative of each focus group received an email every other week highlighting current OSRP events and communicating opportunities to get involved, such as the bimonthly focus group meetings. Each focus group meeting was posted on the Town webpage, and fliers were distributed, as necessary. Focus group meetings occurred one hour prior to the regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meetings and Friday mornings. Each meeting was themed and utilized an engaging storyboard map to help orient residents to specific Open Space and Recreation spaces across Town. Themes included, but were not limited to, "Sports and Recreation Programs", "Schmidt's Farm", "Maple Hill", "Habitat Protection, Ecosystem Restoration, Other Conservation Lands", "Open Space Accessibility, Trails, Bike Paths, Town Connectivity", among others. Each focus group meeting was available via Zoom, televised and recorded via FranklinTV All-Access channel (Channel 8 Comcast/Channel 26 Verizon), and YouTube Live. Each recording of the focus group meetings was then linked on the Town of Franklin OSRP Webpage. In the event focus groups were unable to make the evening, an additional Friday morning meeting was held. Examples of the civic engagement materials, including the stakeholder list, can be found in Appendix F.

In addition to the focus group meetings, the Conservation Commission hosted three public hearings for all residents and stakeholders to provide feedback. The first public hearing, held on February 21, 2023 at Town Hall, was a review of the 2016 OSRP and current priorities; the second hearing, held on April 25, 2023 at the Senior Center, was to discuss the goals and objectives for the 2023 OSRP; and the third public hearing, held on June 20, 2023 at Town Hall, was a review of the draft 2023 OSRP. Each public hearing was available via Zoom, televised and recorded via FranklinTV All-Access channel (Channel 8 Comcast/Channel 26 Verizon), and YouTube Live. Each recording of the public hearings was then linked on the Town of Franklin OSRP Webpage.

Supplemental OSRP participation opportunities include a Senior Center presentation on April 2023, Town Council presentation on April 26, 2023, one interview with a citizen

reported from FranklinMatters radio; publication in the Town newsletter; and an article in the Town Pages.

Ancillary staff involvement included six working group meetings to discuss Town priorities and departmental objectives as they relate to Open Space and Recreation. Members included the Town Administrator, DPCD Director, Town Planner, Conservation Agent, Assistant Town Engineer, Highway and Grounds Superintendent, Assistant Highway and Grounds Superintendent, GIS Director, GIS Specialist, Stormwater and Environmental Affairs Superintendent, Superintendent of Schools, Director of Curriculum, Recreation Director, and the Senior Center Director.

Feedback from the general public and Town officials was a critical component of this Open Space and Recreation Plan. Residents and staff have first-hand knowledge of the needs of the Town, and where opportunities for improvement lies. Knowledge of resident desires is also necessary to establish goals and objectives, and to ensure that any recommendations are feasible and will draw sufficient support to warrant a reasonable chance for implementation.

As part of the 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Conservation Commission and Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) developed one seven section Citizen Participation Questionnaire and a general Feedback Form. The Questionnaire was conducted in order to understand the desires, needs and concerns of the residents of Franklin as they relate to Open Space preservation and Recreation opportunities. The Questionnaire was distributed and available from February 13, 2023 through April 30, 2023. The Questionnaire was advertised via a postcard and QR code posted in public places such as the Library, Town Hall, School Department, Senior Center, Police Department, Department of Public Works, various park kiosks, and online. The questionnaire generated 714 responses. It should be noted that the 2016 and 2023 questionnaires contained the same questions so as to allow comparisons in the responses to those same issues over a seven year time span.

The Questionnaire, included in Appendix A, was comprised of general demographic questions, in addition to other Open Space and Recreation themed inquiries. Subsequent questions solicited thoughts on residential growth policy and support for Town acquisition of Open Space, improvement of Conservation Land, and Recreational Facilities. The current use of existing Recreational activities was queried followed by types of facilities needed in Franklin, with room allowed for comments. Residents were asked to denote satisfaction of types of Recreational facilities, and opinions solicited for various Open Space preservation options and how they should be prioritized by the Town. Results of the questionnaires are summarized in Section 7 of this Plan.

The input from the above sources was then used to produce a "public draft" Open Space and Recreation Plan that was distributed to the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, Board of Health, Town Council, MAPC and DCR. In addition, the draft document was made available for review on the Town website, at the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Public Library and the

Recreation Department. A list of comments received is included in Appendix B. In addition to distribution of the public draft, an advertised and posted public hearing was held on June 20, 2023 where the Commission accepted public comment pertaining to the draft OSRP. Copies of the minutes from this meeting can be found in Appendix B. Accommodations were made at the public hearing to assist persons with disabilities and those in need of an interpreter to ensure all residents were given ample opportunity to provide comments.

## **SECTION 3: COMMUNITY SETTING**

### **3.A. Regional Context**

The Town of Franklin is a suburban industrial community located 35 miles southwest of Boston and 20 miles north of Providence, Rhode Island in southeastern Massachusetts. The Town is within the Charles River and Blackstone River Watershed and an eager participant in both Watershed Associations. Franklin borders Norfolk to the east, Medway to the north, Wrentham to the south, and Bellingham to the west (Map 1, Regional Context).

In an effort to continue to facilitate regional planning and stay current, Franklin is a member of the Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP), Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA). These organizations generally meet monthly to discuss a wide variety of topics, including regional Open Space topics. The Town of Franklin remains active in keeping up-to-date on other Open Space and Recreation planning initiatives of surrounding communities. Through these regional and local communications, the Town is able to find ways through which the Town can partner with other communities to provide even greater opportunities to its residents.

The Town of Franklin is easily accessible via Route 140, including two exits off Interstate-495, and convenient access to other major routes such as the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90), Route 126, Route 1 and I-95. In addition to serving as a commercial corridor, these roadways serve as links to Milford and Bellingham in the north and Wrentham; and Foxboro and Mansfield to the southeast.

In addition to this well integrated roadway system, Franklin is host to two MBTA commuter rail stations. This accessibility has attracted increasing levels of residential, commercial, and industrial development. The Town's industrial parks house a variety of businesses from research and development to manufacturing and distribution companies. This growth results in a decrease in Open Space, changes in the character of the area, and strains on the capacities of Recreational (and other) facilities. Despite this growth and changes in the community, Franklin is still the home to many regional resources and is able to offer many Recreational opportunities to its residents. Franklin has managed to maintain the quintessential New England small-town feel with its old fashioned downtown of locally owned small businesses. Franklin is a large family-oriented community currently with approximately 33,261 residents in 2020.

One regional resource located within Franklin is the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT), a 22-mile trail that originates in Franklin near the Franklin State Forest and passes through Bellingham, Millville, Uxbridge, and Blackstone, terminating at the Douglas State Forest. The Franklin Conservation Commission recently permitted accessibility improvements to the section of the trail from the Bellingham/Franklin line to Prospect Street in Franklin. Locals can also enjoy the Franklin Town Forest, DelCorte Conservation Area, Sculpture Park, Indian Rock, Maple Hill, and Schmidt's Farm, among other destinations.

The Charles River is another resource of regional importance and it should be noted that a significant portion of the Charles is protected as Open Space within Franklin. The

Riverbend Conservation Area, totaling approximately 40 acres, lends opportunities for residents to kayak, canoe, hike, and enjoy other passive Recreational endeavors.

The above discussion is certainly not a complete picture of all the regional opportunities or issues the Town maintains; rather, it provides some examples to illustrate the point that many issues, particularly environmental ones, have impacts beyond municipal borders and must therefore be addressed in a regional context.

### **3.B. History of the Community**

The Town of Franklin was first settled in the early 1600's, as part of the Puritan Town of Dedham. Like most early Massachusetts towns, religion played a significant part in the Town's formation. Changes in religious beliefs and the establishment of the Congregational Church soon prompted the separation of Franklin and Wrentham from Dedham in the late 1600's. As political beliefs were formed and new religious ideologies were followed, Franklin outgrew its connection to Wrentham and seceded, incorporating as an independent town in March of 1778.<sup>2</sup>

Franklin was originally designated as the Town of Exeter until the Town's founding fathers decided they would ask Benjamin Franklin to donate a bell to the Town and in turn, honor Mr. Franklin by naming the town after him. When asked to donate a bell, Franklin responded with an offer of books for the town's residents, acknowledging that "sense" was preferable to "sound".<sup>3</sup> In 1786 Ambassador Franklin sent the town 116 books that were overseen by the Congregational Church minister. These volumes are currently housed in the Town's Public Library for all to view, as the Town's first selectmen wished, thus forming the nucleus of "America's First Public Library", known today as the Ray Memorial Library.

Franklin's past is full of events that span many eras and form the rich history of not only the Town but also of the Region. One major event was the Battle of Indian Rock that occurred during Metacom's Rebellion. During this war, Franklin was abandoned until Metacom and his followers were defeated. In 1823, Franklin held its 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration at the site of the battle at Indian Rock, located on Jordan Road.<sup>4</sup>

While there have been several important figures born in Franklin, the most notable person in American history to be born in Franklin was Horace Mann, the father of American public education. Today the middle school honors Mr. Mann with his name.

The Franklin Historical Museum, under direction of the Franklin Historical Commission, houses artifacts of town history, including the Brick School scrapbooks. The Brick School, a National Historic Landmark, was built in 1833. The school was once recognized as the oldest one-room schoolhouse in continuous operation in the United States. In August of 2008, the Red Brick Schoolhouse, which was operating as a kindergarten, was closed and declared surplus as a result of School Department budget cuts and turned over to the Town. The schoolhouse is now leased by the Metrowest Robotics Club.

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<sup>2</sup> James C. Johnston, Jr., Images of America, Franklin (Dover, Arcadia Publishing, 1996), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> James C. Johnston, Jr., Images of America, Franklin (Dover, Arcadia Publishing, 1996), p. 10-11.

The Town's earliest settlers were involved in small scale farming and grazing. Early on Franklin's industrial development was limited to a forge, four saw mills, and two grist mills at the time of its separation from neighboring Wrentham in 1778, but the town's abundant waterpower and railroad access ensured substantial industrial development. With the exception of one grist mill located on Mill Brook, all eighteenth-century industrial enterprises were concentrated along Mine Brook in order to take advantage of the stream's descent north towards the Charles River.

Hat making, specifically the manufacture of straw bonnets, was very important to the Town's industrial history. This industry was prominent from the late 1700's and Franklin remained a dominant presence in straw hat manufacturing through the 1960's. The first major factory to be built in Franklin was erected in 1812 to manufacture straw braid and bonnets. This was quickly followed by another straw manufacturer. In 1837 there were 93,173 straw bonnets manufactured in Franklin, the value of which was \$160,186. In comparison, during the same year there were five small cotton mills that manufactured 323,000 yards of cotton goods, valued at \$31,140. Another important industry in Franklin during the 18th and 19th centuries was boot and shoe manufacturing. Straw bonnets remained a staple of Franklin's manufacturing economy throughout the nineteenth century, but it was textile production that spurred local industrial growth from mid-19<sup>th</sup> century through World War I and beyond. The Mine Brook Falls area on the southern edge of Unionville saw continuous change over the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of the 1875 State Census "there were 21 manufacturing establishments in Franklin where goods were made, many of which were along Mine Brook

Many Franklin residents established textile related businesses in Franklin in the mid nineteenth century, including Joseph W. Clark, who established a factory in 1841 for the manufacture of carding and shredding machines used in the textile industry throughout the country. But the Ray family was by far the most dominant textile manufacturer in the region. Colonel Joseph Ray moved his family to the Unionville section of Town in the 1830s. Colonel Ray was a partner of Paine and Ray, builders of textile mills in Woonsocket and throughout the Blackstone River Valley, and by some accounts the first to produce cloth in Franklin. Over the next several decades the Rays built numerous mills along Mine Brook and in neighboring communities, establishing a virtual monopoly on textile production in the region of Blackstone, Unionville, and Franklin. The Rays continued to expand the family's holdings in textile production, operating some fourteen mills in Franklin alone by the late 1880s.

Franklin's population increased substantially with the steady increases in the number of manufacturing businesses. In 1837 the Town had a population of 1,696 residents. The Town's population increased to 1,810 by 1850, and 4,051 by 1880. A substantial number of new Franklin residents were Irish, Italian and Russian immigrants coming to the United States for work in the mills. By 1900 the Town's population was at 5,017.

The Ray family's impact on local history and development was not limited to its mill buildings; the Rays constructed one of the first business blocks in Franklin at the corner of Main and Depot Streets. In 1885 James and Joseph Ray constructed imposing identical Empire mansions on Dean Avenue. Joseph Gordon Ray's daughters (Mrs. Arthur Peirce and Mrs. Adelbert Thayer) donated both the Ray Memorial School and the Ray Memorial Library in memory of their father. The Ray family also donated the Joseph

Gordon Ray Fire Station in Franklin in recognition of the Ray Brothers' long-standing commitment to fire safety and of Joseph's particular passion for equipping the town with the most up-to-date firefighting technology. Joseph Ray founded a model farm and dairy business in Franklin, importing one of the first herds of Holstein cattle in the state. The Ray family business held an important role in New England Commerce well into the late twentieth century.

Few examples of Franklin's extensive mill history remain, but one good example is the so-called "Brookdale Mill", which was erected in 1883 and originally home of the former Franklin Cotton Manufacturing Company. Although it changed ownership several times during its history, the building continued to be used for textile production for 120 years. During its first 35 years the mill produced fancy cotton goods, cotton twine, bags, and wipers, plain and fancy toweling, and wool blankets and other war material during World War I. After the war the major product line was bedspreads made of a mixture of silk, rayon, and cotton, which were woven, cut, and finished on site. The mill employed up to 150 hands on a twenty-four-hour schedule. By 1944 new owners were producing braided and hooked rugs; the braiding business continued until 2004, at which time it was renovated for use as a restaurant.

Dr. Oliver Dean, a native of Franklin, established Dean Academy in 1865 as a residential school educating boys and girls from New England and beyond. During World War II, Dean transformed significantly by adding a Junior College, which ran alongside the Academy until 1957, when the Academy was phased out. During the 1950s and 1960s the college expanded substantially with four new dormitories, gymnasium, library, science center, and campus center. In the 1990s the institution evolved again becoming Dean College, and soon began offering bachelors as well as associate degrees. Recent expansion included a new dormitory on West Central Street, new dining and performance facilities, and purchase of a mixed use building on East Central Street where students are housed in the upper floors. The College's 150+ years in Franklin has heavily influenced the development and character of Franklin center.

Between 1900 and 1950 the Town's growth was relatively slow but steady, with no ten-year period having a population increase of 1,000 residents. During this period manufacturing continued and began to diversify. After World War II the development patterns began to change; a greater percent of residents owned cars, and single family homes were being constructed farther from the Downtown core. Between 1950 and 1960 the Town's population increased by 31 percent to 10,530. With construction of Interstate 495 and its two Franklin exits development patterns continued to change. Substantial areas of undeveloped land were turned into residential subdivisions; between 1960 and 1970 the Town's population increased by 69.3 percent to 17,830.

Interstate 495 positioned Franklin as a major regional distribution center for goods and as a regional employment center. In the 1980's, the Town rezoned former farmlands lying immediately outside Interstate 495 for industrial uses. Since that time the Town has rezoned additional residential property to industrial several times. In the late 1980's, the Town established itself as a regional transportation hub by lobbying successfully for an extension of commuter rail to an Interstate 495 terminus in Franklin and for major improvements to State Route 140 connecting the Town's extensive commercial areas.

Franklin has had a steady increase in commercial and industrial development since 1980. Approximately three million square feet of commercial and industrial space was constructed between 1982 and 1992. By 2001 there was approximately 7,200,000 square feet of commercial and industrial space, and currently there is over 10,400,000 square feet of commercial and industrial space in use or available and more under construction.

The Town's industrial parks house a substantial number and variety of businesses, including research and development and manufacturing companies. The Town's current manufacturing sector includes food processing, measurement devices, fiber optics, nanotechnology, data storage equipment, electronic equipment, metal fabricators, specialty materials and life sciences. In recent years Franklin has been attracting companies within the medical device and biotechnology industries

By the 1980s Downtown Franklin was no longer the focus of the community's economic activity and had become run down and undesirable to the business community. Starting around 2001 the Town of Franklin made revitalization of Downtown a major priority. The *Franklin Center Plan* was developed in 2002 and 2003 to provide Town officials with a vision and basic strategy for revitalization of Downtown Franklin.

An additional residential building boom occurred in the 1990s; between 1990 and 2000, Franklin's total population increased by 33.8%. The Town currently has over 200 residential subdivisions. Commuting into Boston and other employment centers became more and more common. Additional details of the Town's growth and history is included in Section 3.D. Growth and Development Patterns.

Today many of the buildings and areas that are significant sites in Franklin's historic background remain intact. Several areas of historic significance have been placed on the Massachusetts Register of Historic Places, including the National Register. These places include, but are not limited to, the Dean College Historic District (10 properties), the Franklin Common Historic District (95 properties), the Red Brick Schoolhouse, Ray Memorial Library, and Aldis Homestead. A complete list of all 416 historic places located within the municipal boundaries of Franklin can be found on the State Register of Historic Places.

The accumulation of all of the aforementioned events and places paint a picture of a historic Franklin. Today, Franklin is home to over 33,000 residents who enjoy and treasure the vibrant history of the Town (See Map 2A and 2B, Historic Community Maps).

### **3.C. Population Characteristics**

The Town of Franklin is 26.64 square miles and has a population density of 1,248.6 persons per square mile;<sup>5</sup> According to the US Census Bureau, Franklin saw continual growth in its population between 1980 and 1990 with a population of 22,095. Since then, the population has grown steadily, increasing from 29,560 in 2000 to 30,778 persons in 2005. Growth continued through 2007 to a population of 31,381 persons and finally to 33,656 in 2020. In total, this amounts to an approximate 66% increase in population between the years of 1980 to 2020.

According to MAPC (2014), “slow growth is in store if the region keeps losing population to other states. [If nothing changes, the metro Boston] region will grow an average of 2.1% in each of the next three decades, one third more slowly than population growth [between 2000 and 2010]. Loss of population to other states is a major contributor to slow growth. Historically, more people move out of the region to other states or other parts of Massachusetts than the reverse...”

#### ***Population Under 18***

In 2022, the percentage of the population under 18 was 21.9%, or approximately 7,371 persons. Given this, it is important for the Town to provide and maintain areas where children can exercise or participate in an organized sporting team such as youth soccer or baseball, or simply play on a playground. The considerable number of young children in Franklin is a clear indication that the Town should continue to maintain and provide Open Space and Recreation Areas and opportunities for the children and young adult populations of Franklin.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education, total enrollment for Franklin public schools between 2022 and 2023 was 4,711 students and the total Tri-County Regional Vocational School enrollment in 2022 to 2023 was 957. These figures represent a decrease of 922 and 3,754 students, respectively, for a total decrease of 4,676 students since 2016. <sup>6</sup> From 2022 to 2023, 4,781 students enrolled in the Franklin Public Schools were enrolled in Special Education and had a disability. Franklin recognized the need to provide accessible areas to individuals of all ability levels and over the past several years, has been successful in upgrading all the Public School playgrounds to meet ADA compliancy requirements. In addition, over the past seven years, the Town has renovated its park and Recreation Areas (described in Section 5) making them ADA compliant.

#### ***Population Over 65***

In 2022, the percentage of the population over 65 was 13.0%, or approximately 4,375 persons. According to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Franklin is projected to increase in the number of residents 65+ years of age by approximately 7,714 persons by 2030<sup>7</sup>. As the population ages, it is important for the Town to ensure the needs of priority populations are met. Please see Maps 3 and 4 which highlight the distribution of the current 65 plus population and the projections to 2027.

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<sup>5</sup> Bureau of the Census, State and County Quick Facts, Franklin City, Norfolk County, Massachusetts.2023 <http://www.census.gov/>

<sup>6</sup> Massachusetts Department of Education, . <<http://www.doe.mass.edu/>>

<sup>7</sup> Population and Housing Demand Projections for Metro Boston, MAPC, January 2014, Appendix A, p. 8.

To enhance the independence and quality of life for Franklin's aging population, the Franklin Senior Center, available to Franklin and neighboring residents ages 55 and over, offers a variety of programming and services including, but not limited to, exercise classes, educational lectures, social events, day programs, health and wellness opportunities, social services, veteran service, a Café, and more.

### ***Population with Disability Under 65***

From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of the population with disabilities under 65 was 6.9%, or approximately 2,322 persons.

### ***Labor and Workforce***

From 2017 to 2021, the total percent of the civilian labor force (16 years and older) was 71.5%, or approximately 24,064 persons. As of April 2023, the unemployment rate for the Town (2.3%) is lower than the State (2.6%)<sup>8</sup> and National (3.4%)<sup>9</sup> averages. As of 2022, the total percent of persons in poverty was 5.5%, or approximately 1,846 persons.

According to MAPC (2014), "attracting more young people to the workforce is critical to a growing economy. Over the coming decades, [those born between 1945 and 1970] will be reaching retirement age, depleting the supply of our region's most critical asset: a skilled, well-educated workforce. By 2030, nearly one million workers now over the age of 40 – 39% of all workers in the region – will have left the labor force. The current population of young adults is barely sufficient to fill the positions vacated by retiring [individuals], much less provide the labor force needed for robust economic growth. If the region stems the loss of population to other states and achieves a small net inflow, the labor force could grow by 175,000 over the next 30 years, an increase of almost 7%."

### ***Annual Income***

Median household income (in 2021 dollars) from 2017 to 2021, was \$127,608, which is significantly higher than the statewide median household income, which was \$89,026.

### ***Housing***

From 2017 to 2021, there were approximately 12,118 households, with approximately 2.63 person per household. According to MAPC (2014), a "new housing demand will outpace population growth due to a declining household size. Despite relatively slow population growth under the [current trends], the region will see substantial demand for new units. With more single-person households (especially seniors), more divorced households, and fewer children per family, average household size is likely to decline 10% by 2040...In other words, an average group of people will form 10% more households and require 10% more housing units...and declining household size alone will result in approximately 86,000 additional households...this new phenomenon will

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<sup>8</sup> Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, April 2023 Labor Force and Unemployment Data. <<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMIDataProg.asp>>

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic, Unemployment Rate as of April 2023 <<http://www.bls.gov/>>

cause a number of suburban communities to experience population declines even as new housing units are constructed.

A “senior sell-off” may provide most of the single family homes needed by younger families. While the aging of [the previous] generation will cause the number of seniors in the region to swell considerably, over time the same generation will need fewer homes – especially single family homes – than it does today as its members downsize, move elsewhere, or pass away...As a result, nearly two-thirds of [housing] demand would be for multifamily housing.”

To alleviate development pressure on the local ecosystem, in 1987, Franklin enacted the “Open Space development” amendment (Chapter 185 Section 43) of the Zoning Bylaw (Chapter 185). While this amendment encourages development of single-family residential housing patterns, it is ultimately designed to accommodate the physical characteristics of a site and provide Open Space for active and/or passive Recreation for all.<sup>10</sup> To date, there have been 18 Open Space subdivisions constructed and preserving, although not necessarily permanently, hundreds of acres of significant wetlands, wooded areas and green areas in Town.

While the Town of Franklin does not have any designated Environmental Justice populations or neighborhoods, it does take pride in the fact that it offers a significant amount of Open Space and Recreation Areas evenly throughout the Town to all of its residents. A review of Maps 10 and 11 indicate that the existing Open Space and Recreation facilities are not concentrated in any one area of the community, but are otherwise spread out throughout the community promoting equity among all residents. Over the course of many years, Franklin has been proactive in providing Open Space and Recreation opportunities to residents. The Town will continue to work to maintain and establish new Open Space and Recreation opportunities to its residents to ensure a better quality of life for those of all levels of ability and economic attainment.

### **3.D. Growth and Development Patterns**

*Patterns and Trends:* As discussed in the History section above, Franklin began as an agrarian community. The access to waterpower initially, and to railroads later, led to the development of mills and other industry in town. In recent years, the location of industrial and commercial development has been influenced primarily by highways, particularly by I-495, but also by Route 140. Residential growth initially occurred adjacent to the industrial and commercial growth, but now occurs in all parts of Town (see Map 5).

The center of Franklin developed at the intersections of Route 140 and Union Street with the railroad tracks in proximity to mills located on Mine Brook. Today, Downtown Franklin is home to many small businesses and restaurants. Ongoing development plans include the reconstruction of roadways to improve circulation and pedestrian ways through the Downtown, in the hopes that redevelopment will help to revitalize the Downtown and turn the area into a vibrant commercial district.

In addition to the Downtown commercial area, the entirety of the Route 140 corridor serves as a commercial center; and there are major industrial parks at each of the two

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<sup>10</sup> Chapter 185-43. Open Space Development from the Zoning Code of the Town of Franklin.

interchanges with Interstate-495. Grove Street, which parallels I-495, is the other major center of industrial growth within the Town.

Residential Development in Franklin began to boom in the 1960s and continued through the 1990s resulting in the development of over 200 subdivisions. The construction of the subdivisions encroached on many of the scenic areas of Franklin, leaving residents to be fearful of over development. In response to this growing concern, the Town enacted an Open Space Development Bylaw to promote preservation of Open Space in subdivision development. Additionally, in 1997, the Franklin Town Council voted to implement a Growth Management Bylaw. The Growth Management Bylaw was implemented to ensure the Town's infrastructure and services (i.e., police, fire and schools) could keep pace with the rapid growth of the Town. <sup>11</sup> During the past few decade, Franklin has seen a substantial reduction in the number of large subdivisions being constructed due in part to a poor economic climate and fewer large parcels of undeveloped land.

Infrastructure elements are described in depth below.

#### Transportation:

Franklin has become a major center for commercial and industrial growth. With the two I-495 interchanges in Franklin, the Town provides many opportunities for jobs, goods and services, and Recreational opportunities for residents of the Town. These amenities also continue to attract new residents. Growth has continued with Franklin's easy access to Boston, Providence, Worcester and Cape Cod. There are also two commuter rail stops in Franklin that go between Franklin and South Station in Boston.

The Town has been working with a private consultant since 2012 on the development and maintenance of a Pavement Management Program (PMP). Street inspection data is updated every several years and new data is currently being collected. This information helps the Town keep the roadway system in the best possible condition with the most efficient use of available funds. The PMP is currently being updated, and will also include an assessment of sidewalks and curb ramps throughout Town that will be used in completing an ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan. This Plan will help identify ways to maximize connectivity and accessibility in Town.

In addition to completing numerous roadway reconstruction projects since the last Open Space Plan in which the Town has upgraded sidewalks and pedestrian curb ramps to current accessibility standards, the Town has also completed dedicated pedestrian improvement projects including three miles of new sidewalks along Pleasant and Chestnut Streets, a new sidewalk on Beaver Street connecting West Central Street to the Chilson Park Recreation facility on Beaver Street, and a new sidewalk on Panther Way connecting West Central Street to the High School. The Town has also installed pedestrian safety measures such as Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) at crosswalks in higher speed, highly trafficked areas. Other planned projects include a multi-use path along Grove Street connecting to the trailhead of the SNETT (the Southern New England Trunkline Trail).

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<sup>11</sup> Chapter 185-46. Growth Management from the Zoning Code of the Town of Franklin.

As mentioned in the 2016 Master Plan, Franklin has now developed and passed a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan. In 2022, Franklin was awarded funding through the Complete Streets Program for the first time. The project is to include two Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) and five bike racks throughout the Town to enhance pedestrian safety and encourage biking. Projects for the Complete Streets Plan aim to improve pedestrian and cycling opportunities in the Town. Franklin is hoping to continue to apply for grants through this Program.

As the Town has grown, the need for maintaining the infrastructure of roads, facilities, and utilities has increased. In an effort to protect the investment in the infrastructure, the Town has enacted a ban on road cuts in newly reconstructed roadways for a period of 5-years unless a special waiver is granted by the Franklin Department of Public Works. This process has been implemented to ensure residents have the best infrastructure available to them for a longer period of time.

Railroads also are an important transportation mode in the area. There are two commuter rail stations in Franklin which serve commuters from adjoining towns in travel to Boston. Those riding the train from Franklin can utilize one of the MBTA commuter parking lots for the day for a fee of \$6.00 Monday through Friday, and \$2.00 Saturday and Sunday. A monthly pass is available for purchase for \$105.00. To assist with community connectivity, the Depot Street Town lot is \$3 a day and free on weekends. Freight rail, and these commuter lots, serve the Town and local industry immensely.

The community can also choose to use Franklin's GATRA bus service for a fee of \$2.00, with reduced rates for children and Wheaton College community members. The GATRA route runs from the Franklin Municipal Building to various points throughout Franklin, such as the library, Franklin Senior Center, and the downtown. Weekday service begins around 6:00AM and ends as late as 7:30PM. Service schedules are dependent on specific routes.

Franklin does not have a municipal airport, but there are two regional airports close by in Hopedale and Mansfield. Franklin is fortunate to be within a reasonable distance to several major airports, including, TF Green International Airport in Warwick, Rhode Island; Logan International Airport in Boston, Massachusetts; and the Worcester Regional Airport in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Industry: The 2013 Franklin Master Plan, in the section on Economic Development, outlines in great detail the industrial base of the community. It states:

*In the 1980's, the Town rezoned former farmlands lying adjacent to I-495 for industrial uses. Since that time, the Town has rezoned additional residential property to industrial several times, including approximately 110 acres in 2007.*

*Currently, approximately 2,334± acres of land in Franklin are industrially zoned. In addition, the Town contains over 630-acres of commercially zoned land (Commercial I, Commercial II, Business, and Office). 660± acres of the Town's industrially zoned land are located within the Town's two largest industrial parks; Franklin Industrial Park and Forge Park. Other areas in Franklin that contain large amounts of industrially zoned land are along the Grove Street Business Corridor,*

where there are numerous established manufacturing industries, as well as the Town owned Nu-Style property, which is a Brownfield site.

Most of Franklin's commercial and industrial stock is post-1980 construction. Approximately three million square feet of commercial and industrial space was added between 1982 and 1992. Franklin has had a steady increase in commercial and industrial development. As of 2001 there was approximately 7,200,000 square feet of industrial and commercial space in use or available. Between 2002 and 2005 another 2,700,000 square feet of industrial and commercial space was added, including seven buildings in Franklin Industrial Park during 2004. The continued annual increase in commercial and industrial construction has assured that Franklin's tax rate stays at a reasonable level, and that the Town will continue to be attractive to developers. During the last five years, commercial and industrial development has slowed, but even with the downturn in the economy and lessening in available industrially-zoned property, Franklin's commercial and industrial stock increases each year. Currently (FY2013) the Town has approximately 2,575,900 square feet of Commercial space and 7,870,500 square feet of Industrial.

Franklin's industrial and office parks house a substantial number and variety of businesses representing many industry sectors, including metal fabrication, food processing, data storage equipment, software development, fiber optics, electronic equipment, measurement devices, bio-storage, metalized paper, and distribution. In recent years Franklin has attracted new innovative technology companies performing research and development and manufacturing in a variety of areas, including nanotechnology, robotics, specialty materials, life science, medical devices, biotechnology, and pharmaceuticals. Many of these industries are located in one of the areas which are detailed below:

### **Franklin Industrial Park**

Franklin Industrial Park is a 300-acre master-planned industrial and office park located approximately 0.2 mile from Interstate 495 Exit 16. Twenty-two of the parcels are within the Franklin Industrial Park Economic Opportunity Areas (EOA), twenty of which are within the Franklin Industrial Park Priority Development Site (PDS). The additional 11 parcels are within the Town's Biotechnology Uses Overlay District. The park includes a substantial number of distribution and manufacturing companies, such as EMC, Franklin's largest employer. While all of the parcels within Franklin Industrial Park are built out, several properties are frequently available for lease and several parcels are in the process of redesign for expansion.

### **Forge Park**

Forge Park is a 360-acre master planned office and Industrial Park on Route 140, one mile from Interstate 495 Exit 17. Thirty-three of the parcels are within the Forge Park EOA, thirty of which are within the Forge Park PDS. Additionally, 28 parcels are within the Biotechnology Uses Overlay District. This park contains a wide range of office, research and development, and manufacturing companies. In addition, Forge Park is the site of Forge Park Commuter Rail Station, Marriott Residence

*Inn, and a YMCA fitness center.*

### Water Supply System:

The Town of Franklin is serviced by a municipal water supply that provides 95 percent of the residents with water that adheres to all State and Federal regulations, and maintains adequate water supply and pressures for fire protection. The Franklin water system includes thirteen wells; six water storage tanks located at Bald Hill (Tia Place), Franklin Industrial Park, Forge Hill Road, Hillside Road (two), and Pleasant Street; eight booster stations located at Berkshire Drive, Franklin Industrial Park, Iroquois Road, Jefferson Road, Lyons Street, Pleasant Street, Washington Street and Susan's Way. The Town also operates an Ultra Filtration treatment plant at Public Works Way and a new Greensand Plus water treatment facility on Grove Street to treat the water of Wells 6, 3, and 3A. No surface water is used to service the Town.

In the areas outside of municipal services, individual private wells are used to supply homes and other uses. The water system will be discussed further in Section 4: Environmental Analysis and Inventory.

In May 2021 the Grove Street Water Treatment Plant was brought online for iron and manganese removal at Wells No. 3, 3A, & 6. The water treatment construction started in the Fall of 2019 and the Town secured State Revolving Fund (SRF) funding to finance the project with a low interest loan. Having the Grove Street WTP online has been pivotal in the Town's ability to maintain supply and water quality.

The continued planning and implementation of the Water Capital Improvement Plan, specifically water main reconstruction. With the help of ARPA funding the Town was able to construct year 3 and 4 in 2022. Year 5 is being constructed in spring/summer 2023.

In 2020 Well 7/7A had detections of four of six regulated PFAs. From December 2020 to January 2022 sampling results showed an overall increase in PFAs, with an exceedance of the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) occurring in December 2021. Through the Town's Capital Budget money has been allocated for the Piloting & Design of a new PFAS treatment facility adjacent to the current building at the Well No. 7/7A site. Use of a Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) treatment system, a well-proven technology, is anticipated and will be tested/confirmed through the performance of a PFAS bench scale pre-design evaluation. The Town is also on the draft Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) intended use plan to obtain low interest loans and principal forgiveness on the estimated \$6.5 Million project.

The Fisher Street WTP is going to require a replacement of the obsolete Koch membrane equipment in use at the plant, replacement of the overall membrane system is expected to represent appreciable cost in 2024-2025. The Town reviewed its future options, namely a replacement zone/membrane-based system versus installation of a non-membrane treatment system featuring a pressurized media filtration system such as greensand

filtration, similar to the Grove Street WTP. To improve the system reliability, WTP safety of operations, reduce energy usage and provide operational consistency, the Town chose to proceed with the pressurized media filtration system option. Again through the Town's Capital Budget money has been allocated for Phase 1 of the Piloting & Design for the upgrade. Additional capital budget funds will be needed in FY 24 to finish the design under Phase 2 and then ultimately funds will need to be appropriated for the estimated \$14.0 million needed for construction.

The Town currently utilizes two existing, riveted steel tanks as the Hillside distribution storage facility, Hillside Tank No. 1 was originally constructed in 1888 and Hillside Tank No. 2 in 1928. The Town elected to pursue replacement of the two existing riveted steel tanks with one new welded steel tank with combined capacity of 1.7 million gallons. The new tank will be equipped with a mixing system. The design of the project will be finalized in 2023, with the construction depending on availability of funding (estimated at \$7.8 million).

#### Sewer Service:

The Town of Franklin owns and operates its own sewer system collection system consisting of 23 sewer lift stations, and approximately 122 miles of sewer main, 3,308 manholes, and 7,790 service connections. All sewage is conveyed to the Charles River Pollution Control District (CRPCD) for treatment. The system also includes over 18 miles of private sewer lines and more than 565 private manholes.

Most of the area in town northeast of Interstate-495 is served by municipal sewer. Notable exceptions include portions of Lincoln and Daniels Streets, most of Maple, Elm, Summer, Pleasant, and Chestnut Streets, and the far eastern edge of town. Additionally, southeast of I-495 is mostly not served by town sewer. However, the two major industrial parks, most of Grove Street, and a portion of Washington Street up to (and including) Dianna Estates are served.

The biggest investment for the sewer system over the next 3 to 5 years will be the construction of the Beaver Street Interceptor Repair and Replacement project. The 110-year old Beaver Street Interceptor, conveys over 70% of the Town's raw sewage to the Charles River Pollution Control District. The location of the pipe is a major challenge to the construction as it goes through wetlands, the MBTA tracks, Franklin Village Mall and Route 140. The Town Council authorized \$33 million borrowing for the project and the construction of the project is approved for Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) low interest loans and principal forgiveness due to the Federal Infrastructure Bill. Construction will start in the summer of 2023 with the hope of as little disruption to the Town as possible. This will be one of the Town's largest construction projects ever outside of a new school, but is critical to the health, safety, and prosperity of the community.

Long-Term Development Patterns: The primary land use control for the Town of Franklin is its Zoning Bylaw. The Zoning Bylaw is supplemented by the enforcement of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Local Wetlands Protection Bylaw and corresponding Regulations by the Conservation Commission; Franklin has also

implemented a Water Resource District Bylaw<sup>12</sup>. These Districts are overlay districts that help protect the water supply through measures such as limiting the percentage of the lot that can be rendered impervious, prohibiting the underground storage of hazardous materials, strictly regulating above ground storage, limiting the use of septic tanks, and more.

Franklin also has "Cluster" or "Open Space" Development Bylaws.<sup>13</sup> These Bylaws retain the same density as existing zoning would permit, but allow the lots to be reduced in size and located on only a portion of a developable parcel in order that the remainder of the parcel can be dedicated as conservation land. This policy has resulted in the preservation of hundreds of acres of Conservation lands in Franklin.

According to data from the US Census Bureau, Franklin's population continues to increase at a steady rate; and in order to accommodate continued growth, the town will need to continue to utilize the above-mentioned growth management Bylaws and implement new growth management techniques that are broad enough to maintain the Town's development initiatives and New England landscape.

### **3. E. Environmental Justice**

Franklin currently does not have any Environmental Justice areas.

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<sup>12</sup> Zoning Chapter 185-40. Water Resource District From the Code of the Town of Franklin (Added 5-12-1986 and amended 3-3-1994)

<sup>13</sup> Zoning Chapter 185-43. Open Space Development From the Code of the Town of Franklin (Added 11-4-1987 and amended 7-5-1995)

## **SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.A. Geology, Soils and Topography**

The Town of Franklin is comprised of over 50 different soil types with a myriad of hydric components. Situated on bedrock, underlain principally by Dedham and Quincy granite, Franklin has a small band of diorite (dark, granite-textured rock) and diabase (dark, fine igneous rock) dikes and sills at its eastern point and a strip of Wamsutta Formation (rhyolite and mafic volcanic rocks) along its southern border adjacent Wrentham. The Bellingham-Franklin line is straddled with a strip of the Blackstone Group (quartzite, schist, phyllite, marble and metavolcanic rocks) on its northern half and of Mattapan Volcanic Complex to the south of the Blackstone Group (see Map 6 in Section 13, Soils and Geologic Features). The southwest and northwest portions of Town consist of the Woodbridge-Paxton-Montauk soil, which is classified as prime and important farmland soil.

Repeated advances of glacial ice are primarily responsible for the current topography of the area, which is characterized by low, rounded hills and open valleys. The bedrock throughout the area is generally covered by stratified glacial deposits of sand and gravel at lower elevations comprised of Hinckley, Merrimac and Windsor soils, while the hills have a veneer of glacial till comprised of mostly Charlton, Paxton and Montauk soils. As the glacier retreated to the north, glacial lakes drained and subsequent river systems developed on the new land surface. Alluvium, consisting mostly of organic matter, fine sand and silt, but including fine gravel in some areas, was deposited along these rivers and streams.<sup>14</sup>

The topography of Franklin varies widely, ranging from 150 feet to 470 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). Franklin generally slopes from the south to the north, toward the Charles River, with the highest elevation occurring at its southern reaches, and the lowest elevation occurring along Mine Brook as it flows to the Charles River.

Remaining undeveloped lands are being developed but with greater costs and constraints due to environmental factors, such as wetland resource areas. Other constraints to development are the availability for public sewer and water connections. However, there have been almost no instances in the last seven years where soil conditions have prevented the alternative use of on-site septic systems.

Since the last iteration of the OSRP, development of Recreation Areas, such as the Beaver Pond Expansion Project, has been positively influenced by native soils. The soils proved to be advantageous given their sandy nature and ability to drain well.

### **4.B. Landscape Characteristics**

Franklin offers a rich diversity of landscape character including urban, suburban, small town and rural/agricultural areas. The Town has hills, farm lands, pastures, scenic roadways lined with large trees and stone walls, lakes, rivers, streams, marshes and swamps - all of the unique features for

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<sup>14</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services, Web Soil Survey <<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>>

a picturesque landscape that serves a variety of lifestyles and creates a pleasant environment for residents to live and work. The downtown commercial district and outlying business and industrial districts create pocket urban areas that connect to rural feeling residential neighborhoods and agricultural lands and forests. The mixed-use commercial area and business districts include retail, single and multi-family residential mixes, schools, parks and Recreation Areas, a college campus and two train stations. The industrial areas in Franklin include industrial, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, research and development facilities and office space. Many of Franklin's new houses are located within large subdivisions but there are still many older homes located on rural scenic roadways that have views of pastures and agricultural lands still in production.

Since World War II (~1945), the majority of development in Franklin has been suburban in character. Most residential development has been in subdivisions located off major streets containing lots of 20,000 to 80,000 square feet total. Commercial development is in the form of strip malls and shopping complexes while industrial areas contain large manufacturing and industrial buildings. This type of development has infringed upon much of the rural landscape and character; however, there are still areas of undeveloped farmlands and forests throughout the Town. Residential subdivisions prove to be the greatest agent of change to the character of the landscape of Franklin.

During the past three decades, significant roadway improvements have occurred. All of these improvements have fostered substantial commercial and business expansion and development in the area, further changing the landscape character into that of a sprawling suburb. Despite these increases in residential areas the Town has been able to maintain many of its rural scenic roads. Narrow, winding, large tree and stonewall-lined streets pass by farms and woodlands providing access to newly developed residential subdivisions. Supported by the Scenic Road Bylaw (Town Code 170-50-56), roads must remain scenic despite development. Developers are required to maintain the character of the roads by replacing any disturbed stone walls and planting new street trees to replace any that were removed during construction and development.

Over the years, increased development has impacted the characteristics of what was once rural farming community. While many of the picturesque farmlands have been developed into sprawling residential subdivisions, the Town has been able to maintain its traditional New England character while growing as a prominent business, commercial and industrial area along the I-495/MetroWest Corridor.

#### **4.C. Water Resources**

Franklin is located within two watersheds, the Charles River and Blackstone, respectfully (see Map 7). It should be noted, however, that only a small portion of southern Franklin is located within the Blackstone Watershed Area. Additionally, Franklin has both Zone I and II Wellhead Protection Areas, including Interim Wellhead Protection Area, within its municipal boundaries. As Map 7 illustrates, most of the aquifers are associated with and are in close proximity to surface water bodies. There are several surface water resources located within Franklin, none of which serve as a source for drinking water. Franklin sources its public water supply from wells that tap aquifers associated with these water

bodies, therefore it is critical that these watershed and wellhead areas are protected. Significant surface water bodies located in Franklin include Beaver Pond (great pond), Uncas Pond (great pond), Populatic Pond (great pond), Spruce Pond, Ray's Pond, Joachim Pond, Green Pond, DelCarte Reservoirs Uncas Brook, Shephard's Brook, Mine Brook, Dix Brook, Miscoe Brook, Miller Brook, and the Charles River.

There are two major types of aquifers in the area, a sand and gravel mix and a bedrock formation aquifer. The most crucial type for public water supply is the sand and gravel mix aquifer, which was formed by melting glaciers at the end of the last ice age. It is only the sand and gravel aquifers that are capable of producing the hundreds of gallons of water per minute that are expected from municipal wells. Such wells range in diameter from 10 to 24 inches and in depth from 20 to 80 feet with an average depth of about 50 feet. The wells capacity averages approximately 500 gallons per minute. Sand and gravel wells are not very deep and are located near surface water bodies which furthers the need to protect watershed and wellhead areas. Aquifers are afforded protection by the Water Resource District Bylaw enacted in Franklin and wellheads are provided with at least a 400-foot radius Wellhead Protection Zone.

Additional resources within the Town of Franklin include FEMA approved flood hazard zones, such as the Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area, and wetland resource areas. Both areas, including their respective buffer zones, are jurisdictional under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.00) and the local Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Chapter 181) and associated Regulations. The Town maintains a 25-foot "No Touch" Zone from every wetland resource area, of which Applicants must seek a variance to disturb or alter the landscape 25 feet from a wetland resource boundary.

Whenever a development is proposed within the Town, these resources are consulted and if indicated, a wetland delineation is required to accurately ascertain if permitting under the Wetlands Protection Act or local Bylaw is required. It should be noted that many of the flood hazard zones are located with land owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers or is adjacent to Mine Brook, Shepard's Brook and Uncas Brook.

#### **4.D. Vegetation**

The Town of Franklin consists of a variety of soil types and hydrologic conditions which support a wide variety of vegetation. Native forests of the area are dominated by a coniferous and hardwood tree mixture. Canton and Charlton soils and Woodbridge and Walpole soils, which are common in Franklin, are well suited for oak and pine growth thus making the forests in Franklin abundant with oaks, white pines, and red maples.

Black choke cherry, witch hazel, swamp azalea, highbush blueberry, swamp dewberry, cinnamon fern, sphagnum moss, and skunk cabbage are some common examples of the vegetation found in the upland and wetland areas of Franklin. Other wild herbaceous plants and fruit-producing shrubs include big bluestem, goldenrod, beggartick, quackgrass, ragweed, gray dogwood, autumn olive and crabapple. Some additional

wetland plants found in the area are smartweed, arrowhead, burrweed, pickerelweed, cordgrass, rushes, sedges and reeds.<sup>15</sup>

To further protect its botanic community, pursuant to Chapter 300.13.E.(2), Plantings of the Subdivision Regulations and Chapter 185-30, Tree Plantings of the Zoning Code, the Town requires shade trees, as detailed in the Town's Best Development Practices Guidebook, be planted to provide coverage and beautify the area. Trees recommended in the Best Development Practices Guidebook are native, drought resistant species that will provide shade for all residents. Both the Zoning Code and the Subdivision Regulations indicate that trees must be replanted by the owner if they do not survive the first year of seasons. Map 9 indicates where there are shade trees existing within the public right-of-way.

The Conservation Department, in collaboration with the Conservation Commission and Department of Public Works, is very active in maintaining the various forested and Conservation Areas throughout Town. Franklin has several Forest Stewardship Plans in place that recommend various activities including, but not limited to, trail maintenance, stand thinning, and restoration to improve habitat, biodiversity, climate resiliency, and the human experience within these areas. In addition to maintaining these areas, the Conservation Department and Commission are also working on beaver related projects (i.e., flow devices), designing biodiversity areas, and designating turtle nesting habitats throughout Town.

#### **4.E. Fisheries and Wildlife**

Due to the large variety of habitats situated within the municipal boundaries of Franklin, many wildlife species call Franklin home. Habitats ranging from open fields to water resource areas to densely wooded areas make Franklin attractive to a wide variety of wildlife. The kind and abundance of wildlife depends to a large extent on the amount and distribution of food, cover and water.

The Charles River, plus the numerous other streams, lakes and ponds in Franklin provide habitat for a plethora of fish species. Among the species found in the area are brown, brook and rainbow trout, pickerel, perch, pumpkinseed (also known as sunfish, kibbie and sun bass), redbreast sunfish, smallmouth bass, white sucker, carp, golden shiner, fallfish, creek chub, yellow bullhead and brown bullhead.<sup>16</sup>

Open areas such as croplands, pastures, meadows and areas of grasses, herbs, shrubs and vines tend to attract kestrel, meadow vole, mice, bats, cottontail, red fox and woodchucks. Woodland areas provide habitat for nuthatches, ruffed grouse (pheasant), woodcock, thrushes, woodpeckers, gray and red squirrels, chipmunks, gray fox, raccoon and deer. Wetlands attract many varieties of water fowl including ducks, geese and herons, and also provide a home to muskrats, turtles and frogs. Like forested and open

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<sup>15</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services. Plants Data Base. <http://plants.usda.gov/>.

<sup>16</sup> Hartel, K.E., D.B. Halliwell, and A.E. Launer, An Annotated Working List of the Inland Fishes of Massachusetts. Harvard Museum of Contemporary Zoology, 1996.

areas, even urbanized areas of Franklin can support raccoon, opossum, skunk, nighthawks, and bats.

The variety of available habitats are attractive to various species of birds including, but not limited to, hawks, kestrel, screech and great horned owls, grouse, pheasant, woodcock, and numerous varieties of songbirds including meadowlark, field sparrow, wrens and warblers.

Common reptiles and amphibians found in Franklin include, but are not limited to, gartersnake, milksnake, red-back salamander, painted turtle, and snapping turtle. Unfortunately, the number of spotted salamanders found in Franklin are declining due to the impact of acid precipitation, development, and climate change.

The Town of Franklin has four National Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) delineated priority habitats of rare species and also estimated habitats of rare wildlife. The locations are described as follows:

1. The area around Beaver Pond and Mine Brook from the railroad tracks just south of Route 140 across Interstate 495 to and including Spring Pond on Washington Street.
2. The area located primarily within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Charles River Natural Valley Storage area.
3. The area encompassing Wampanoag Drive up to Concetta Way located on the border of Norfolk and Wrentham.
4. The area surrounding Miscoe Brook on the southwestern portion of Town within proximity of Washington and South Street.

According to National Heritage and Endangered Species (NHES), Franklin provides habitat for several endangered, threatened and species of special concern. Table 4-1 details the one bird, two reptiles and two plants that are on the NHES list.

**Table 4-1: Endangered, Threatened or Species of Special Concern in Franklin**

<b>Taxonomic Group</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>State Listed Status</b>	<b>Most Recent Observation</b>
Bird	<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>	Least Bittern	Endangered	1992
Reptile	<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle	Special Concern	1982
Reptile	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Eastern Box Turtle	Special Concern	1997 recorded/2023 observed
Vascular Plant	<i>Linum medium var. texanum</i>	Rigid Flax	Threatened	1886
Vascular Plant	<i>Ranunculus micranthus</i>	Tiny-flowered Buttercup	Endangered	1910

The NHES also identified 110 Potential and 7 Certified Vernal Pools within the boundaries of Franklin.

#### **4.F. Wildlife Corridors:**

There are two potential terrestrial wildlife corridors in Franklin and both are located within the right-of-way for National Grid transmission lines. One of the right-of-ways spans primarily from Medway to Norfolk along the northern Town boundary close to the Charles River and the other spans from Bellingham to Wrentham in the central to southwest portion of Town. The implementation of the prospective “Emerald Necklace” of Franklin has the potential to dual as a terrestrial wildlife corridor.

Aquatic wildlife corridors include Dix Brook, Mine Brook, Shephards Brook, and the Charles River. These corridors are impeded by low quality culvert designs and stream crossing, and are in need of upgrade to function fully as wildlife corridors.

#### **4.G. Scenic Resources and Unique Features**

Franklin has countless scenic and unique features to offer its residents and visitors, as shown on Map 10. Scenic vistas found throughout Town include the renowned Charles River to quaint, winding, stonewall lined scenic roads, to active farmlands, including farms on Daniels Street, Lincoln Street and Koshivas Drive. Residents, as well as those from around the region, are able to enjoy many of the unique features Franklin has to offer.

Whether visiting or presiding in Franklin, individuals have the opportunity to access over 1,075 acres of Open Space and Recreational Areas. Through interagency collaboration, this acreage is an accumulation of Department of Conservation and Recreation, Metacomet Land Trust, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Town owned land. Accessible properties include, but are not limited to, the Franklin State Forest; Franklin Town Forest; conservation land owned by the Metacomet Land Trust; the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT); Chilson Beach and Beaver Pond, both of which have swimming access; Fletcher Field, King Street Memorial Park, DelCarte Conservation Area, Riverbend Conservation Area; and Dacey Field. Historic areas such as the Franklin Town Common, Dean College Campus and Indian Rock, a battle site during Metacom’s Rebellion provide a place for people to learn about Franklin’s unique past. Another area of interest includes the Union Street cemetery where many old graves dating back to the 1700’s remain intact.

All these scenic resources and unique features combine to provide the community with the quintessential New England landscape, that so many of Franklin’s residents enjoy.

#### **4.H. Environmental Challenges**

A major environmental concern in Franklin is both the quality and quantity of its water supply. Stormwater management is a critical component to conserving, protecting, and preserving the quality and quantity of its potable water supplies. The Department of Public Works actively maintains the current system, makes necessary upgrades, and constructs new infrastructure to accomplish the goals set for by the MS4 Permit. As Franklin draws all of its drinking water from groundwater wells - a major focus of Franklin’s Stormwater program is the capture and temporary storage of stormwater in rain gardens and

detention basins. By doing so, stormwater that is collected by these structures is treated before it replenishes the aquifer. These structures are also a crucial component regarding Franklin's compliance with the MS4 permit. Detention basins benefit the ecosystem of the Charles River Watershed by capturing phosphorus; a naturally-occurring byproduct whose quantities must be significantly reduced from Franklin's stormwater discharge, as designated by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Franklin has also implemented a Water Resource District to protect, preserve and maintain the existing and potential ground and surface water resources that provide water supply to Franklin. The State's efforts to encourage keeping wastewater local and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Stormwater Phase II Rule also ensures that more water is returned to the ground to recharge aquifers in a way that maintains quality. Preservation of Open Space and education efforts regarding the use of fertilizers and pesticides are a key component in addressing water quality in Franklin. Utilizing funds from a 2014 Sustainable Water Management grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, in 2015, the Town modified three existing detention basins to allow for greater ground water recharge. These redesigned basins have been shown to be working as intended.

Another issue of concern is the challenges presented at the DelCarte Conservation Area (459 Pleasant Street). There are six dams constructed in the 1940s located at this property that pose an environmental concern as they are leaking water and are structurally unstable. The Town has studied the feasibility of partial or full removal or repairs at this site to improve the deteriorating conditions. In addition to problems with the dams, the beaver population at the DelCarte Conservation Area are significantly impacting the waterways at this location. A sustainable maintenance plan is being developed to manage the beaver population at this Area, including flow devices and educational initiatives.

Further environmental challenges Franklin faces is the cleanup and reuse of Brownfield and Superfund Sites. Franklin is currently in the site assessment at one of its most significant Brownfields Sites on Grove Street. Completing remediation at this site will help to remove the threat to the surrounding groundwater and surface water supply, specifically Mine Brook. Additionally, redevelopment of Brownfields Sites not only returns the site to productive use but also reduces the need to expand infrastructure and develop greenfield sites.

The only Superfund Site within Franklin, BJAT, was added to the National Priorities List (NPL) in September 2015, making it eligible for long-term cleanup action under the federal Superfund program. Following the demolition of structurally deficient buildings at the Site in 2018, the Environmental Protection Agency initiated Remedial Investigations (RI) and a Removal Action (RA) conducted by the property owner. The RA included the removal and management of hazardous substances present in soil and drum waste to eliminate the imminent risk to human health and the environment. During the RI, data was collected to characterize site conditions, determine the nature and extent of contamination, and assess risk to human health and the environment. A phased approach was taken to the investigation with the first phase being completed in 2020 and the second phase just recently wrapped up in 2022. This phased approach encouraged the continual refinement

of the site characterization effort, which minimized the collection of unnecessary data and maximized data quality. The findings of the investigation will be provided in an RI report that includes a risk assessment. This report is anticipated to be completed in 2023 along with a Feasibility Study (FS). The FS includes the development, screening, and detailed evaluation of remedial alternatives (cleanup actions) being considered for the BJAT Superfund Site.

There have been no significant erosion or sediment deposition issues in Franklin. All of the land use commissions are very stringent in controlling erosion from sites undergoing development.

Of note, the Town of Franklin, the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation are in the process of completing a 'land-swap' of the former Beaver Street Landfill in Franklin. Currently, the Town has submitted its ANR plan to the State; and all entities will continue to collaborate toward completing the project. The Town-owned portion of this site presently serves as the Recycle Center for Franklin residents - offering an avenue to exclude "hard-to-recycle" items from the waste stream.

Franklin also has a large area of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area within its borders. This system provides a passive means of avoiding flooding within Franklin and upstream municipalities along the Charles River Watershed by allowing flood waters to be stored on low lands that have been kept free of development in lieu of constructing a large system of floodwalls, pipes, dams and other such measures. In addition to flood protection, the Storage Area has the added benefits of providing Open Space and Recreation lands, scenic views, wildlife habitats and more. This philosophy serves as a guiding principle that should be followed as development continues in the area.

Lastly, the Town of Franklin has been experiencing rapid growth for many years now. With climate change looming, The Town needs to be conscious of the potential for over development. Franklin needs to enact development measures that will ensure growth management that protects the New England character and biodiversity of the community well in to the future.

#### **4.I. Environmental Equity**

A review of Maps 11, 12, 13 & 14 indicate that the Open Space and Recreation facilities of the Town are distributed throughout the community and not concentrated on any one area. There are no Environmental Justice designated areas in Franklin.

## **SECTION 5: INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST**

Open Space is a term often used to describe public and private conservation lands; Recreation Areas; forest and agricultural lands; parks and greenways; and lands owned by groups with a conservation interest. "Open Space" also considered direct and passive Recreational lands, such as fields or courts, and areas utilized for walking or biking. The term also considers undeveloped or contaminated land with potential to be acquired for an Open Space or Recreational purpose.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, the term "protected" is defined in this Plan as lands that are not developable given the ownership and management status of the land.

Open Space and Recreation properties are categorized in Franklin as either publicly or privately owned, or respectfully as permanently protected or unprotected areas. The Town of Franklin contains over 5,000 acres of public and private Open Space and Recreation Areas, a substantial amount of which is open to the public. The Town owns approximately 1,075 acres of protected Conservation areas or lands which are maintained through DPCD and the Conservation Commission. In addition to protected conservation lands, the Town owns and operates eight Recreation Areas. No lands within the Town are permanently protected by a conservation restriction, but some, such as those that were created as part of an Open Space subdivision, are deed restricted.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts owns approximately 835 acres of Open Space within the community between the Franklin State Forest and SNETT. Additionally the United States Army Corps of Engineers owns 478 acres of Open Space primarily used water conservation and flood plain control. This land, while publicly owned by the federal government, is not open to the public to utilize.

Several non-profit organizations also maintain ownership of Open Space and Recreation Areas within Franklin. The YMCA, for example, is a private, non-profit organization which owns multiple areas for Open Space and Recreation. While this organization is a public entity, the lands owned by this organization are not available for public use without a membership to the YMCA (see Table 5-1.). Alternatively, the Metacomet Land Trust, also a non-profit organization, owns several acres of Open Space and allows the public to use their lands for passive Recreation, such as hiking and non-motorized biking. There are many additional acres of privately owned Open Space and Recreation lands throughout Town. Several private Recreation Areas, including the Adirondack Club and land at the Franklin Rod and Gun Club, also a non-profit, are active Recreation Areas but not open to the public without a membership.

Some lands such as Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands, which are private lands currently used for private Recreation or agricultural uses, have a semi-protected status. These lands are described in greater detail in the next section.

The following section provides a detailed description of the lands of conservation and Recreation interest within the Town of Franklin. The inventory of the all Open Space, Conservation, and/or Recreation lands includes public, private, and non-profit properties.

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<sup>17</sup>Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services. 2008 Open Space Planner's Workbook.

Map 11 and Appendix C provide additional geographic information. Please note that some of these parcels are already protected as Open Space or Recreation Areas. Other parcels identified are sites that may be favorable for the Town to consider for future acquisition or protection; or have been identified by residents as parcels of special interest. Parcels included in this section have been divided into two types of land categories. These categories are defined as:

Private Lands:

1. Private Recreation Areas;
2. Lands under special taxation programs, Chapter 61 (Forestry), 61A (Agriculture), or 61B (Recreation); and,
3. Other non-protected, private parcels.

Public Lands:

1. Town owned Conservation and Recreation Areas;
2. Non-profit lands; and
3. Federal- and State-owned lands.

It is important to protect Open Space within Town for a myriad of reasons. Protecting Open Space helps maintain a town’s character and provides residents with opportunities to utilize Recreation Areas and land in its natural state for passive and active Recreation. Protecting Open Space is a way for the town to ensure that natural landscapes and Recreational areas will be preserved for future generations to utilize. Most importantly, in light of the changing climate, protecting Open Space ensures that future ecosystem services are maintained, fostered, and supported; and that our natural neighbors also have a safe, secure, and healthy place to live.

**5.A. Private Parcels**

**Private Recreation Areas:** There are approximately 678 acres of private Recreation Areas in Franklin, some of which are detailed in Table 5-1. This list considers private Recreation Areas in Franklin that require a membership, dues or enrollment in a program for use and may not be free for use by the public. A complete list can be found in Appendix C.

**Table 5-1: Private Recreation Areas<sup>18</sup>**

Property Name	Street Address	Parcel Size (Acres)	Existing Uses/Facilities
Harborwood Association Playground	21 Paliament Drive	2.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational courts (basketball)</li> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball, softball)</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Public and Private Recreation Sites in Franklin. Provided by Ryan Jette, Director, Franklin Recreation Department on May 23, 2023

Franklin Country Club	372 East Central Street	119.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golf course</li> <li>• Pool</li> <li>• Clubhouse</li> </ul>
Camp Haistan	722 Summer Street	98.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family camping</li> <li>• Cabins</li> <li>• Recreational courts (tennis, basketball)</li> <li>• Boat launch</li> <li>• Swimming area</li> <li>• Summer camp</li> </ul>
Franklin Rod & Gun Club	51 Florence Street	2.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beach</li> <li>• Picnic area</li> <li>• Fishing area</li> </ul>
YMCA	45 Forge Hill Road	7.80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Indoor/outdoor pool</li> <li>• Recreational courts (basketball, tennis)</li> <li>• Weight room</li> <li>• Indoor track</li> <li>• Skateboard facility</li> <li>• Summer camp</li> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Programming</li> </ul>
Planet Fitness	166 Grove Street	6.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational courts (basketball)</li> <li>• Weight room</li> <li>• Aerobic room</li> <li>• Family karate center</li> <li>• Daycare</li> </ul>
NRG Labs	100 Franklin Village	0.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight room</li> <li>• Aerobic room</li> <li>• Crossfit studio</li> <li>• Cardio center</li> </ul>
Adirondack Club	800 Chestnut Street	11.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Indoor/outdoor pools</li> <li>• Weight room</li> <li>• Lounge</li> <li>• Recreational courts (tennis)</li> <li>• Daycare</li> </ul>
Dean College Fields (Longley Field)	169 Maple Street	76.89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational fields (soccer, baseball, softball, football)</li> <li>• Concessions</li> </ul>

**Chapter 61, Chapter 61A & Chapter 61B Lands:** Parcels taxed under the Chapter 61 (Forestry), Chapter 61A (Agriculture), and Chapter 61B (Recreation) tax classification are in private ownership and are not protected Open Space areas. The tax classification enables the lands to be taxed at their use value rather than the full fair market value. The

Town has the right of first refusal if the parcels are sold prior to the expiration of the tax-abated status. Owners of land classified under Chapters 61, 61A, and 61B must notify the Town before selling or converting the land to another use. The Town has 120 days to decide whether to exercise the option to purchase the land. This allows the Town to protect individual Open Space parcels as they enter the market or become threatened by development.

As of May 2023, approximately 1,107 acres of land in Franklin is under this tax classification. Parcels taxed under Chapter 61/61A/61B are listed in Appendix B. The largest of these properties totals approximately 115 acres at the Franklin Country Club. These lands and several other large parcels currently classified as Chapter 61/A/B lands would be of interest for acquisition should they become available for sale. As shown by Table 5-2, there has been an approximate 285 acre decrease in Chapter 61/A/B acreage since 2008. These lands are shown in further detail on Map 12.

**Table 5-2: Chapter 61, Chapter 61A & Chapter 61B Lands**

Type	Total Size (Acres)		
	2008	2016	2023 (rounded to the nearest tenth)
Total Acres Chapter 61 Land	92	13	0
Total Acres Chapter 61A Land	670	556	299.3
Total Acres Chapter 61B Land	530	540	569.3
<b>Total Chapter 61, 61A &amp; 61B Lands</b>	<b>1,292</b>	<b>1,109</b>	<b>1,007.3</b>

**Other Private Parcels:**

In addition to the private lands classified above, there are a significant amount of lands that are privately owned, but not classified in any of the aforementioned categories. These parcels are privately owned, but considered non-protected parcels. Parcels that fall into this category are lands that are 10-acres or more and containing no structures. The impact of development is potentially detrimental to the visual character and ecological function of the landscape should these large parcels be sold for a purpose other than conservation. Parcels such as these are of potential interest to the Town for future acquisition to ensure they remain in their current state.

**5.B. Public and Non-Profit Parcels**

The Town of Franklin owns and operates numerous Open Space and Recreation Areas. These parcels are essential to the vitality of the Town as they offer residents a variety of Recreational opportunities ranging from swimming areas and playgrounds to forest lands for hiking and passive Recreation. Franklin also contains hundreds of acres of tax-exempt property. These parcels include non-profit organizations, private Recreation land and major institutional holdings. Tax-exempt parcels are privately owned, and in most cases, not protected Open Spaces. Alternatively, some of these lands are publicly owned, but not publicly accessible, such as the 487 acres owned by the federal government, of which

nearly 100% are used for water resource protection and flood storage. Below is a summary of these resources. A complete list can be found in Appendix C.

**Town Owned Park and Recreation Areas:** The Town of Franklin owns and manages several quality park and Recreation Areas. All of the Town playgrounds were built as or updated to be handicapped accessible and present challenges to children 2-12 years old. The ADA Compliance inventory is included in Appendix C. It should be noted that all land that is managed by the Franklin Conservation Commission and used for Recreation is included in this compliance inventory, with one exception and that is the Indian Rock Area which is used for hiking throughout wooded areas and is not strictly handicapped accessible. Below is a summary of the playgrounds and fields in Franklin:

King Street Memorial Park: The 25± acre park at King and Forest Street has a baseball field, soccer field, football field, and basketball Recreational courts, as well as exercise stations, 2 bocce Recreational courts, a bathroom and concession facility, and an ADA compliant playground. The playground was renovated in 2005 and has two new structures and a glide board. One structure is designed for 5-12 year olds and a smaller one for 2-5 year olds.

Dacey Community Field: At 95.65 acres, Dacey Community Field is the largest Town of Franklin park property. It has one disk golf course, a dog park, one large soccer field, two small soccer fields, baseball field, softball field, playground, as well as a large multi-purpose (football, lacrosse, soccer) field. At the lower section of the field is access to some nature trails that are very good for hiking. Dacey Community Field's playground was updated and made handicap accessible in 2007 and was designed with children (2 to 12 years old) with special needs in mind. It is 77' X 92', making it the largest ADA accessible playground in the State of Massachusetts.

Fletcher Field: The 13+ acre park area a couple blocks south of Downtown Franklin near Peck and Wachusett Streets offers the neighborhood and community in general substantial Recreational facilities. Fletcher Field has two small baseball fields, one senior baseball field, basketball Recreational courts, bathroom, concession facility, and an ADA compliant playground. There are some benches and picnic areas adjacent to the playground. Fletcher Field's playground was renovated in 2004 and features separate areas designed to meet the challenges of two separate age groups (2-5 and 5-12 year olds). A tot lot was constructed in 2015.

Henry "Ski" Faenza Memorial Playground (Nason Street Tot Lot): Faenza Memorial Playground, previously known as the Nason Street Tot Lot, was renovated in 2003 into a new ADA compliant Tot Lot for 2 to 5 years old. There is a small picnic area adjacent to the playground.

Beaver Pond Recreation Area: The 28.9 acre Recreation area is on Beaver Street at Beaver Pond adjacent to over 60 acres of Franklin Water Department property. It contains an artificial grass turf field used for soccer, football, and lacrosse. Within the Recreation area is Chilson Beach, which contains the Joseph and Mary Vendetti Playground, a public beach, picnic tables, hibachis, boat launch area, swim dock, and soccer fields. Vendetti Playground, updated in 2005, is an ADA compliant tot lot for children ages 2-5 years old.

DelCarte Recreation Area: The 94± acre DelCarte Recreation area is a series of interconnected water bodies that is a prime fishing area in the town. There is also a children’s playground, constructed in 2014, which is age appropriate of 5-12 years olds, canoe launch facilities and hiking trails throughout the area. The Town has completed a study of these waterbodies to determine the ecological make-up so as to better manage the overall area and maintain the high quality amenities currently available. The Town has appropriate funds to implement recommendations from this study.

**Table 5-3: Town Owned (Public) Recreation Areas (Excluding Schools)<sup>19</sup>**

Property Name	Street Address	Parcel Size (Acres)	Existing Uses/Facilities
King Street Memorial Park	740 King Street	25.87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground with zipline</li> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball (2), soccer)</li> <li>• Recreational courts (basketball, pickleball (2), sand volleyball, bocce)</li> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Picnic tables</li> <li>• Bathroom and concession facility with covered pavilion</li> <li>• 58 community garden bed</li> </ul>
Fletcher Field	45 Peck Street	13.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational fields (tee ball (3), baseball (2), senior baseball)</li> <li>• Recreational courts (basketball (2), street hockey (2))</li> <li>• Batting cages (3)</li> <li>• Concessions</li> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Picnic area</li> <li>• Bathroom</li> </ul>
Dacey Community Field	661 Lincoln Street	95.70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball (2), soccer (1 small, 2 large))</li> <li>• Batting cage</li> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Picnic tables</li> <li>• Disc golf</li> <li>• Dog park</li> </ul>
Henry “Ski” Faenza Memorial Playground (Nason Street Tot Lot)	22 Nason Street	0.54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Picnic tables</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Sculpture Park	353 Panther Way	3.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paths</li> <li>• Picnic tables</li> <li>• Benches</li> </ul>
Town Common	200 Main Street	4.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community stage/bandstand</li> <li>• Memorials</li> <li>• Paths</li> <li>• Benches</li> </ul>
Chilson Beach	420 Beaver Street	26.90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational field (multi-use)</li> <li>• Artificial turf obstacle fitness course</li> <li>• Lacrosse rebound wall</li> <li>• Beach</li> <li>• Boat launch</li> <li>• Swim dock</li> <li>• Picnic tables</li> <li>• Bathroom</li> <li>• Concessions</li> </ul>
Beaver Pond Recreation Area	420 Beaver Street	2.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational field (turf) (soccer, football, lacrosse)</li> <li>• Bleachers</li> </ul>
Pisani Field (formally Theron Metcalf)	38 Peck Street	3.70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation fields (softball (2))</li> <li>• Bathrooms</li> <li>• Concessions</li> <li>• Batting cages (2)</li> </ul>
Pirelli Veterans Arena	910 Panther Way	6.70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice skating/hockey rink (indoor)</li> <li>• Bathrooms</li> <li>• Locker rooms</li> </ul>
DelCarte Conservation Area**	459 Pleasant Street	106.41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Canoe/kayak launch</li> <li>• Boardwalk</li> <li>• Fishing dock</li> </ul>
Meadowlark Lane Complex	39 Meadowlark Lane	2.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball, soccer)</li> <li>• Concessions</li> </ul>
Riverbend Conservation Area**	900 Lincoln Street	14.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails</li> </ul>

\*Pirelli Veterans Arena is State owned; however the Town of Franklin maintains a small park at this site.

\*\*Areas marked with an \*\* dual as Conservation Areas

**Public Schools with Recreation Areas within Franklin:** The Town contains 11 school properties, nine of which are Town-owned, that contain Recreational areas and/or facilities for public use. All schools that have playgrounds are ADA compliant. Table 5-4 summarizes the public schools and their associated Recreation Areas and facilities. Please note that public schools and their associated Recreation Areas and facilities are not permanently protected areas.

**Table 5-4: Public Schools with Recreation Areas within Franklin**

Property Name	Street Address	Parcel Size (Acres)	Existing Uses/Facilities
JFK Elementary	551 Pond Street	15.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreation field (baseball)</li> <li>• Court (basketball)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
Parmenter Elementary	235 Wachusett Street	20.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational field (baseball)</li> <li>• Court (basketball)</li> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
Keller Elementary	500 Lincoln Street	14.56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational fields (softball)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
Annie Sullivan Middle	628 Washington Street	47.03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational fields (soccer, lacrosse)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
Jefferson Elementary			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball, football)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
Remington Middle	224 Oak Street	71.90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational fields (soccer, softball (2))</li> <li>• Court (basketball)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
Oak Street Elementary			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational field</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
F.X. O'Reagan Early Childhood Development Center			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>
Franklin High School			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stadium with bleachers</li> <li>• Track</li> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball (2), softball (2), soccer- turf (2), football - turf (2))</li> <li>• Recreational courts (tennis)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> <li>• Walking track</li> </ul>
Tri County Regional Vocational Technical High School	147 Pond Street	60.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational fields (baseball, softball, soccer, football)</li> <li>• Track</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School	500 Financial Park	22.03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Recreational fields</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
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**Protected/Partially Protected Public Open Space:** Within Franklin there are approximately 2,000 acres of land reserved for uses such as hiking, biking, passive recreation, including uses such as water resource protection and flood control. Of this, approximately 1,100 acres is protected Conservation and Open Space areas. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts owns approximately 838 acres of protected land, of which just over 758 acres comprise the State Forest. Metacomet Land Trust, a non-profit conservation organization that is dedicated to the protection of Open Space and natural resources, owns approximately 63 acres of public Open Space. Table 5-5 details some of the more significant protected public Open Space parcels, but a complete list is found in Appendix C.

**Table 5-5: Protected/Partially Protected Public Open Space**

Property Name	Street Address	Property Owner	Parcel Size (acres; rounded to the nearest tenth)	Current Use(s)
Town Forest	Summer Street	Town of Franklin	181.9	Hiking, trails
DelCorte Conservation Area	459 Pleasant Street	Town of Franklin	106.5	Hiking, biking, cross country skiing, trails, fishing
State Forest	Beaver and Grove Street	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	843.0	Hiking, biking, cross country skiing, trails, horseback riding, hunting
Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT)	Grove Street	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	22.0	Hiking, biking, trails
Reid Memorial Conservation Area	Daniels Road	Metacomet Land Trust	14.5	Hiking, trails
Lady Bug Trail	Coronation Drive	Metacomet Land Trust	1.76	Hiking, trails, outdoor nature classroom
Dawn Marie Circle	Dawn Marie Circle	Metacomet Land Trust	10.50	Hiking, trails
Franklin Woods	Lincoln Street	Metacomet Land Trust	41.8	Hiking, trails
Maple Hill	Bridle Path	Town of Franklin	69.7	Hiking, biking, trails
Schmidt's Farm	215 Prospect Street	Town of Franklin	155.0	TBA
Indian Rock	King Philip Road	Town of Franklin	75.9	Hiking, trails

Unnamed	Addison Ave, Mulberry Lane, Silver Fox Road	Town of Franklin	67.1	Hiking, trails
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## **SECTION 6: COMMUNITY VISION**

### **6.A. Description of Process**

This 2023 update of Franklin's Open Space and Recreation Plan is the product of extensive public input and conversations among various stakeholders, including Town officials, community organizations, and residents.

Planning for the Town's 2023 OSRP update began in the fall of 2022, with the Franklin Conservation Department and Franklin Conservation Commission collectively serving as the lead agency in the OSRP update, in partnership with the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Recreation Department.

The process of collecting input proceeded along two parallel tracks. On one hand, the Conservation Department and Commission engaged the public, including more than 100 community organizations and stakeholder groups, through a series of communications, a citizen participation questionnaire, and approximately two dozen public meetings (which were held both in person at Franklin Town Hall and the Franklin Senior Center, and via Zoom and YouTube), beginning in December of 2022 and continuing through June of 2023.

- Public meetings included bi-weekly stakeholder meetings that were held in conjunction with the Commission's regular hearings and organized around particular themes, bi-weekly office hours intended to address questions and gather input on the OSRP process in a more informal setting, and three public hearings, which were structured around (1) the Town's progress since the 2016 OSRP update, (2) the goals of the 2023 OSRP update, and (3) a review of the draft 2023 OSRP update. Themes of the above-referenced stakeholder meetings included a review of Recreation programming and enrollment and existing Recreation facilities; a review of the Franklin Public School facilities and anticipated needs in the coming years; discussions of certain key Open Space and conservation areas, such as Schmidt's Farm, Maple Hill, Riverbend, and DelCarte; discussions around accessibility, including facilities that are not fully accessible and strategies for promoting increased accessibility, particularly to persons with disabilities and families with young children; and discussions around protecting and sustaining the Town's conservation areas, wetland resource areas, and forests.
- Additionally, more than 700 residents provided detailed feedback in response to the Citizen Participation Questionnaire, which was distributed via email, through the Conservation Department's website, and at select locations including Franklin Town Hall, the Franklin Public Library, and the Franklin Senior Center. These detailed responses are in addition to many written comments and suggestions that were received via email and through a Google form that was made available through the Conservation Department's website.

Simultaneously, Town officials and staff met regularly to discuss and identify goals, objectives and action items for the 2023 OSRP update based on their understanding and analysis of existing and future Town needs, and based on public input received throughout the OSRP process. The OSRP staff working group included representatives of the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Recreation Department,

the Public Works Department, Building and Inspectional Services, the GIS Department, and Franklin Public Schools, among others.

Attention was given to the goals of the 2016 OSRP update as well as the Town's Master Plan. The goals, objectives, and action items were reviewed to determine which ones had been accomplished, which ones had not, and which ones were no longer germane.

## **6.B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals**

The overall Open Space and Recreation vision for the Town of Franklin was developed through public input and guidance from Town officials and community groups. Throughout the process of gathering public and staff comments, input and feedback, several themes emerged, including:

- a. Many of the Town's Open Space and Recreation facilities are not fully accessible, particularly for people who use wheelchairs and people with strollers and young children. For example, at several locations, wheelchairs are unable to move about due to surfacing materials (e.g., wood chips and gravel, which are not accessible surfaces), steep grades, or narrow entrances. Likewise, it was noted that several locations are not conducive to strollers and at other locations, there are not adequate safety barriers between play areas and parking areas/drive aisles. Relatedly, many of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Areas lack permanent, accessible restroom facilities, posing a challenge for visitors to those areas.
- b. Residents are not generally aware of all of the Town's Open Spaces, and there may be a need for broader methods of communication to better educate residents about the various Open Spaces, as well as for improved signage to direct residents toward areas that are not as prominently located.
- c. The Town's Recreational facilities (including those that are located on Franklin Public School grounds) are typically at capacity almost every day of the week. This poses a challenge for Recreation Department staff in managing the various groups and individuals looking to utilize those facilities, particularly given the lack of available space for expanding existing Recreational facilities. For example, the Recreation Department does not have enough indoor gym space to accommodate all of the requests from various organizations looking to reserve space. The lack of available facilities also inhibits the ability of new activities, such as pickleball or cricket, to expand in Town.
- d. The Town has recently acquired two significant parcels of land through the use of Community Preservation Act funding: Maple Hill, and Schmidt's Farm. Both represent unique opportunities and come with their own sets of challenges. For example, Maple Hill is inhibited by a lack of public access points and parking, and is integrated within existing residential neighborhoods. Schmidt's Farm is one of the Town's last large, predominantly agricultural parcels. Residents, stakeholders and Town staff highlighted the need for separate master plans for both of these areas to ensure that any future use of Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm are inclusive of Town residents while also respecting the existing neighbors, in the case of Maple Hill, and the legacy of the Schmidt family and the historic agricultural use of Schmidt's Farm. Relatedly, residents are broadly in favor of continuing to utilize

CPA funding in furtherance of future opportunities like Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm.

The collective comments, input and feedback of residents, participating stakeholder organizations and Town staff helped to generate objectives and proposed actions for the 2023 OSRP update, which are oriented around three principal goals:

- (1) Inclusivity and Connectivity** – emphasis on expanding access to and awareness of the Town's open and Recreational spaces in the course of planning for the operation, maintenance and future improvements to existing spaces (as well as in the potential creation of new spaces). This goal includes identifying specific accessibility improvements to Town facilities and Open Spaces, as well as taking a holistic look at the Town's Open Spaces and opportunities to increase connectivity (especially pedestrian and bicycle connectivity) between and among different spaces and neighborhoods.
- (2) Growth** – emphasis on identifying individuals, organizations and activities that are currently underserved by the Town's existing open and Recreational spaces. This goal includes creating strategies to enable new activities at the Town's existing facilities, and to adapt and/or create new facilities where the existing facilities cannot accommodate activities that are growing in popularity and in which Franklin has an opportunity to become a regional leader.
- (3) Sustainability** – emphasis on balancing the utilization of the Town's existing open and Recreational spaces, and on new development in Town, with the need to preserve and strengthen the Town's natural resources, particularly existing conservation areas, wetland resource areas and forests. These resources play a critical role in insulating and mitigating the effects of climate change and global warming, and absent proactive sustainability measures, these areas will progressively become less effective and more prone to natural disasters such as drought and disease/invasive species.

We envision a Town that meets the needs of its residents by providing a safe and healthy environment in which to enjoy the Town's Open Space and Recreational opportunities. We also hope to maintain the community character that makes Franklin a desirable town to live in and also to visit.

## **SECTION 7: ANALYSIS OF NEEDS**

The needs of this Open Space and Recreation Plan were developed based on input gathered from three public hearings, twenty focus group meetings for over 100 identified stakeholder groups, a Citizen Participation Questionnaire, a citizen feedback form, and emails received by Town staff over the course of eight months. The following are the needs that resulted from the input gathered during this public engagement process of the 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan. All questionnaire results can be found in Appendix A and a comprehensive list of public comments, meeting minutes, and review letters be found in Appendix B.

### **7.A. Summary of Resource Protection Need**

The landscape of Franklin contains many valuable natural resources in need of preservation and continued protection. Landscapes such as wetlands, rivers, streams, fields, pastures and forestlands should be prioritized for protection. These areas provide insurmountable ecosystem services such as but not limited to, climate change mitigation; carbon sequestration; heat island reduction; natural hazard regulation; neutralization, filtering, and buffering of pollutants; water and air quality improvement; water storage and flood protection; erosion control; habitat; biodiversity and genetic resources; and opportunities for Recreation, education, and cultural enrichment. Waterbodies most in need of ongoing protection include the Charles Rivers and Mine Brook, in addition to several other large bodies of water including, Beaver Pond and Uncas Pond. These areas require specialized attention as they are utilized as sources for public drinking water and home to priority habitats for threatened and/or endangered species.

Common themes for resource protection identified throughout the public engagement process include, but are not limited to, trail maintenance, trail and boundary markers, habitat improvement, invasive species management, tree protection, and aquatic connectivity.

Since the last iteration of the Franklin Open Space and Recreation Plan (2016), approximately 200 acres have been acquired as Open Space through funds provided by the Community Preservation Act. Most notably, the Town of Franklin acquired Schmidt's Farm and adjacent properties (approximately 130 acres) off of Prospect Street and a property called Maple Hill off of Bridle Path (approximately 70 acres). Potential uses, managing organizations, and objectives for each property will be finalized during the 2024 Master Plan process, however in an effort to mobilize the community these properties were discussed in length during the public engagement process for this Open Space and Recreation Plan. Notable comments regarding both of these properties can be found below in Table 7A-1 and 7A-2. Additional comments can be found in Table 7A-3.

Another notable theme that presented itself throughout the entirety of the public engagement process was that of a municipal wide wildlife (aquatic/terrestrial) and Recreational corridor, colloquially known as an "Emerald Necklace". This concept mirrors that of the Emerald Necklace in Boston, with a distinct focus on habitat and trail connectivity, especially between neighborhoods and schools. Internal discussions are underway to expand the Open Space and Recreational areas connectivity within the

Town of Franklin, specifically discussions to acquire more land adjacent existing publically accessible land. Details of the Franklin Greenway are to be considered in the upcoming Master Plan process. .

While the need to protect the natural resources of Franklin appears to be largely understood and supported (see Table 7A-4), educational and regulatory measures are still needed to help preserve the natural environment as a whole and to encourage conservation for resource protection and all of the ecosystem services therein.

Table 7A-1: Memorable comments throughout the public engagement process regarding Schmidt's Farm

<p><b>Comment 1:</b> "I applaud the town of Franklin for saving this property from development, however, I would strongly suggest that the property (or the majority of it) remain in agricultural production. Massachusetts loses farmland at an alarming rate, and once gone, there is nothing to replace it. Our state has a good number of young farmers that cannot afford to purchase land, by leasing the property it would give the town a return on its investment while making farming more affordable to the next generation. I respectfully ask that you consider this option for the property's future use."</p>
<p><b>Comment 2:</b> "I'm not sure what the plan is for the farm mentioned in the 2023 video, but I would love to be able walk fields/Open Space similar to that of the Leland Wild piece of conservation land in Norfolk. There are birdhouses lining portions of the path there. The Open Space is awesome."</p>
<p><b>Comment 3:</b> "I would love to see a dog park on the new property acquired by the Town of Franklin formerly known as Schmidt's Farm at 215 Prospect St. Also some kind of Community Farm, as like the one in Medway, Mass. Hiking trails for nature walks. If you do plan to save the barn, it could be another community center that could offer classes for artist, crafts and assorted workshops. (Kite making to fly in the field). Also when my daughter was younger she would fly model rockets off in the fields. We had a blast doing this."</p>
<p><b>Comment 4:</b> "I think the purchase of Schmidt's Farm opens up almost an endless amount of opportunities for everyone no matter what they are into there could be something for everyone"</p>
<p><b>Comment 5:</b> "Develop Schmidt's Farm into a town used property for learning about conservation and agriculture. We develop multiple trails on the property of varying ability levels. These trails could skirt gardens showing a rain garden vegetable garden and help people learn and understand how care for and take care of land, grow vegetables for themselves. Trails could be made for the schools to hold cross country meets at saving bus fees to places like Borderland park in Easton, or Franklin Park in Boston. If the barn was rehabbed it could be used for education and even rented out to town's people for private functions. This could also possibly happen on Maple St property as well."</p>
<p><b>Comment 6:</b> "Community barn or farm idea would be neat. Somehow work with the food pantry on this- could be a very interesting project. More nature trails would be great maybe a long the Charles River, outdoor areas for the schools to use for field trips and local learning."</p>
<p><b>Comment 7:</b> "Preserve it as a WORKING farm"</p>
<p><b>Comment 8:</b> "I met the owner of the property and understand that the farm had historically been a hay field farm. I would like to preserve this tradition, and utilize this land as a valuable resource for growing grass and hay production. I was told that the children love the field for flying kites as a Recreational sport. I love this concept of using this field for Open Space and Recreation. As you know I am a member of NEMBA and would also be very interested if feasible, to construct and build mountain bike trails and bridges on the property. Otherwise maintain the property as passive Recreation, and active hay production would be desirable."</p>
<p><b>Comment 9:</b> "To be able to save the barn for use by the town as a functioning meeting space as well as a learning center"</p>

- This could be as a rentable space for functions, small rooms for a learning center, storage for equipment for onsite property maintenance>
- Pollinator beds could be planted and maintained by the agricultural commission around the base of the barn not only as learning aspect but also to enhance the beauty of the structure.
- A pervious parking area with an area to expand it needed.

A small community garden could be prepared for Franklin residents who want a larger patch of garden than offered at the King Street grounds.

Some of the fields could be hayed by local farmers to preserve the boundaries of such fields.

Small sections of fields could be rented out to local farmers for crops or start-up farming.

Several trails could be planned, built, maintained, all with various clubs or residents.

- Currently the cross country teams are bused to some of their meets to Borderland Park in Easton or Franklin Park. If they had a cross country trail at Schmidt’s Farm meets could be held there saving on busing fees.
- Exercise trails with different stops to exercise.
- Informative walking trails with info plaques describing plants, wetland.

Find a use for the property which would keep it in Agricultural use.

- Possibly by leasing to a farm this could be done.
- Developing a forestry plan and selling some of the logs could help fund projects on this land.

As stated at previous OSRP meeting someone, (Manager, Director, and Department Head) needs to be created to control new and existing Open Space in Town.”

**Comment 10:** “I really liked the idea of the community farm and giving kids a chance to learn how to grow the nutritious food that we all should be eating. The Food Pantry was another winner too. I also thought about the reference of the Norfolk Aggie, since my father was a 1934 graduate and learned so much about farming...I liked the idea of the wildlife release program since there are coyotes, deer, wild turkeys, and always lots of birds...I also thought of another activity for anyone who likes to look at the night sky. It is a good place to check out because of the limited amount of light sources. The shooting stars that they have at all different times of year are amazing.”

Table 7A-2: Memorable comments throughout the public engagement process regarding Maple Hill

<b>Comment 1:</b> “Maple Hill could use a organized group to maintain the existing trail network and maybe improve the main loop for families and seniors by putting down a gravel walkway”
<b>Comment 2:</b> “Please keep Maple Hill natural – just trails for walking/jogging with separate trails for biking”
<b>Comment 3:</b> “Maple Hill needs parking and trail maintenance, marking”
<b>Comment 4:</b> I look forward to seeing what the town would like to do, hopefully keep it natural. If you can kind of get away, get some fresh air and a little exercise, and we have been talking a little bit about just having it be an educational opportunity with the wetlands and vernal pools, maybe we have another vernal pool back there that we got to figure out. There’s just a lot of nature going on, and things, it’s all going to be very interesting to watch too, because quite a big chunk of it was logged, which you guys were probably aware of, and it’s already coming back. My trees are coming back.
<b>Comment 5:</b> My wife and I enjoy the natural trails that already exist around Franklin. We haven’t had the chance to see the Maple Hill area yet, and I just want to voice our opinion that the natural beauty of that parcel is maintained, and try to keep it as close to natural as possible.

**Comment 6:** So, there are some wonderful trails there, there's a lot of small trails, so I think there's just great opportunity for peaceful type of trails. I also do walk the Metacomet, which is kind of adjacent, and it would be wonderful to keep those connections.

**Comment 7:** I would like to help do some improvements back there, but I'm not sure what improvements are acceptable. Some improvements might be trail signage that points (to a) path number 1, or give it a name, that it goes this way and you're on that path, and if you want to branch out to a different path, you're now on that path, because there are different loops that are in there. There's in my mind, really two 1-mile loops that are in there inside the same property that were sort of side-by-side loops. One was the main route, and the others were secondary routes. There's also other routes, some I've never been on but they're out there. So, some of the standing practices of 'what's acceptable use' and 'what's acceptable to do'. Right now, we sort of do things because it's out there, and the deer don't bother us and we don't bother them, and we go for our walk and we come back and we have a smile on our face, and we hope that's okay. So, if there's a way to understand how we can help, and what practices are acceptable, and which paths and properties we can go on. The first gentleman talked about the Conservation Land; I don't even know if they like us walking on it or not, it would be nice to know. Those are my thoughts and questions.

Table 7A-3: Other remarkable comments throughout the public engagement process relating to resource needs

**Comment 1:** "In regard to conservation areas, we need to put effort into removing invasive plants and replacing them with native species. This has to be an ongoing effort as the invasive plants will simply come back if there is no mechanism to keep them from doing so. Please consider volunteer opportunities to help with this, led by people who are experienced in this process."

**Comment 2:** "Pollinator Pathway - Franklin would benefit from participating in the Pollinator Pathway program. It could be a great opportunity for a conservation-minded volunteer group to concentrate their efforts. There are many ways to participate, from labor intensive removal of invasive plants to basic education efforts. Existing groups that might be interested: Schools, Senior Center, Community Garden, Girl/Boy Scouts, Garden Club... this program could dovetail nicely with the rain garden program, especially with the new stormwater utility fees going into effect"

**Comment 3:** "Better trail markings in Franklin Forest"

**Comment 4:** "Longer walking trails, water trails showing wetlands restoration"

**Comment 5:** "Get rid of dirt bikers or at the very least Franklin can make access on their conservation land more difficult by repairing fences, posting signage, encouraging police enforcement. By the land adjacent to the State Forest on Spring and Grove Streets to preserve those lands."

**Comment 6:** "Since the town has shown no interest in this land, the neighborhoods have taken it on themselves to maintain and mark the trails. As a town we really lack a clear point of contact for who is in charge of the trails in town. Even this committee is very vague on if it is part of the charter. I suggest forming a distinct group that handles the creation and maintenance of the trails in town."

**Comment 7:** "Clear some more shore line to create space to accommodate more fishing spots."

**Comment 8:** "Replace invasive plants with native species."

**Comment 9:** "Invasive species management (e.g. oriental bittersweet)"

**Comment 10:** "Adopt a park for clean up and improve public awareness for Leave No Trace"

**Comment 11:** "Town Forest needs beautifying and signage. Very neglected."

**Comment 12:** "Establish programs that encourage younger folks to participate in outdoor activities at town parks and playgrounds."

**Comment 13:** "Management program to control Deer population. Allowing residents to Bow hunt to reduce deer numbers. Archer hunting is a safe practice the state of Massachusetts and other locals have used to control a growing deer numbers in the state of Massachusetts."

**Comment 14:** "Trail markers & plant IDs."

**Comment 15:** "Clean up of waters edge"

**Comment 16:** “Stop chopping trees around Beaver Pond! Organize regular trash cleanups, esp along I495 embankment, put a cage around end of water intake pipe so beavers can’t block it, provide educational signage about the wildlife at Beaver’s pond, reduce size of parking lot and restore to natural state (there is twice the parking area needed).”

**Comment 17:** “Active efforts to address invasive bittersweet,”

Table 7A-4: Number of Residents Identifying How Important Each Resource Is to Preserve

\*The highlighted cells indicate the highest survey response per category

	Not at all important	Less important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Very important
Historic buildings	19	47	83	266	278
Historic or scenic landscapes	10	25	58	239	359
Land containing archaeological resources	14	32	98	245	299
Woodland/forested areas	5	12	26	136	515
Undeveloped land for future generations	11	17	80	155	424
Undeveloped land for future Recreational needs	12	30	91	252	301
Land for protection of water resources	5	8	33	123	521
Land for protection of wildlife habitat, ecosystem functions, and climate resiliency	6	11	35	130	511
Land for groundwater protection	8	4	46	133	501
Land for landscape connectivity/connections to other land	14	30	138	202	297
Land abutting existing Conservation Areas	14	24	111	226	313
Land for farming or that is in active agricultural use	13	25	109	208	329
Land that is important to mitigating the effects of climate change (e.g., floodplains, river corridors)	18	21	50	160	435
Land provides public access to waterbodies	18	27	96	200	342

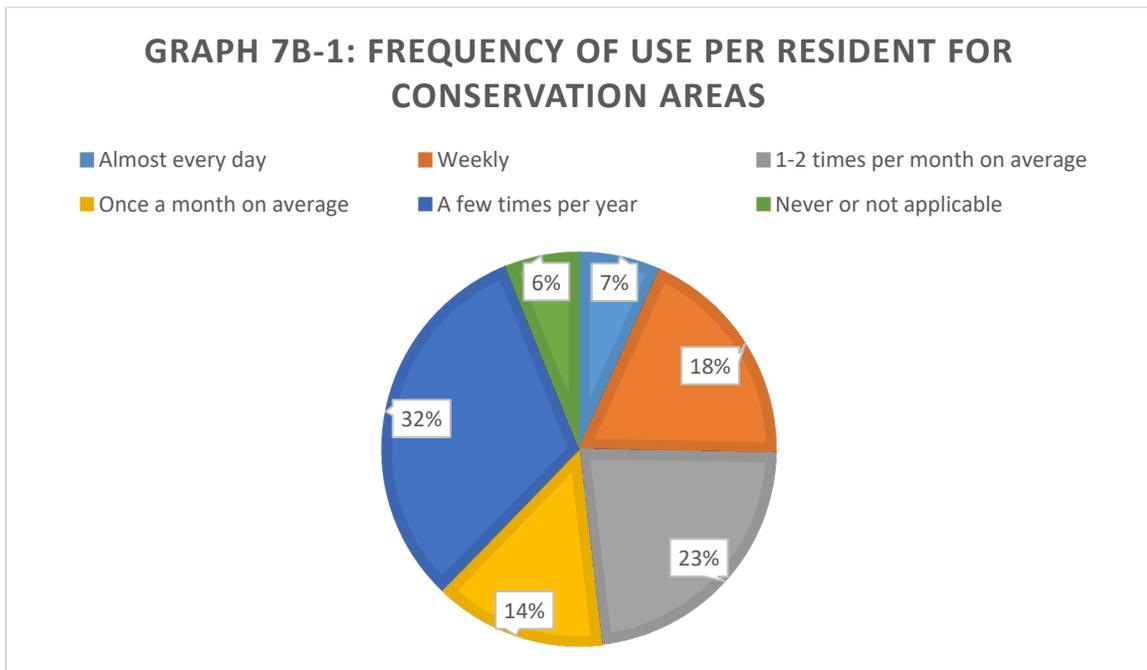
## 7.B. Summary of Community Needs

Results of the public engagement process were extremely helpful in identifying what Franklin residents maintain are the biggest Open Space and Recreation needs for the Town.

A total of 713 residents responded to the Citizen Participation Questionnaire. Demographic information showed that 44% are over the age of 65 and 6% of respondents require access accommodations to Open Space and Recreation Areas. Likewise, 64% responded that it is “very important” that Open Space and Recreation Areas are accessible, specifically by walking or biking (see Graph 7B-3). This correlates strongly to the 66% and 56% of respondents that believe there are sufficient sidewalks or walkways within their immediate neighborhood and that major roads should be striped for bike lanes, respectively.

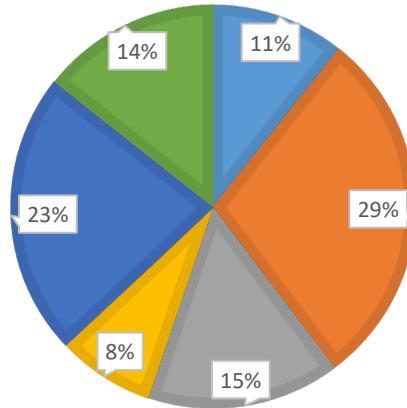
The majority of respondents are presumed to be well acquainted with the existing Open Space and Recreation Areas. Of the 713 respondents, 77% stated that they have previously participated in a Town sponsored Recreation activity or recreated at a Town Open Space or Conservation Area. Only 6% of respondents do not use Conservation Areas, and only 14% do not use municipal or school owned Recreation facilities (see Graph 7B-1 and 7B-2).

When asked what Open Space and Recreation facilities the Town needed most, respondents requested more Conservation Areas, trails, and bike paths were the three most popular responses. An expanded community garden was a close fourth. Based on the survey responses, there appears to be a strong desire for additional passive Recreation facilities. Overall, the majority of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of places to recreate (see Graph 7B-4). Resident desires for improvement and expansion of passive Recreation activities and facilities are consistent with regional and national trends.



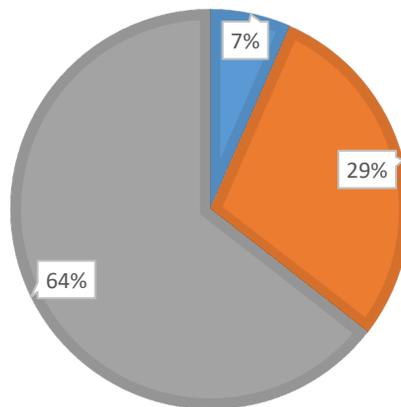
**GRAPH 7B-2: FREQUENCY OF USE PER RESIDENT FOR MUNICIPAL OR SCHOOL OWNED RECREATION FACILITIES**

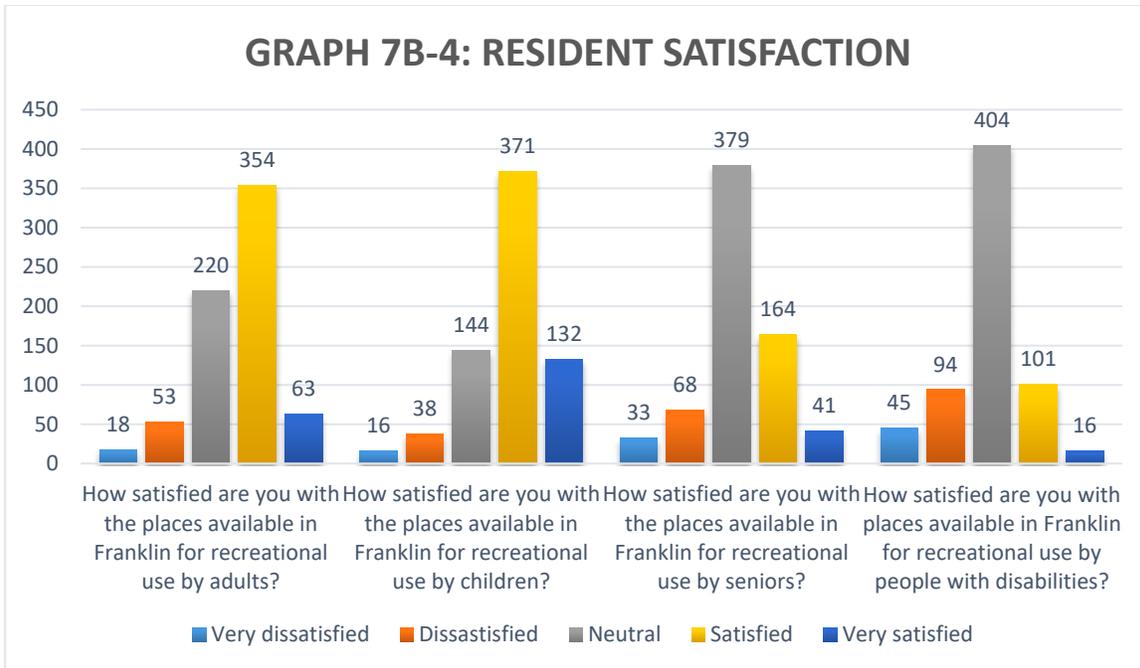
- Almost every day
- Weekly
- 1-2 times per month on average
- Once a month on average
- A few times per year
- Never or not applicable



**GRAPH 7B-3: IMPORTANCE TO RESIDENTS ON ACCESSIBILITY TO OPEN SPACE, NATURAL AREAS, AND/OR RECREATION DESTINATIONS BY WALKING OR BIKING**

- Not important
- Moderately important
- Very important





Analysis of survey data show that a respondent’s opinion of which facilities the Town needs have shifted since the 2016 Plan. For example: the most popular activities from respondents with individuals 65 years and over in their households from 2016 were visiting state parks and swimming. The most popular activities from respondents with individuals 65 years and over in 2023 were pickleball, nature photography, picnicking, and fishing. For those households with residents less than 18 years, the 2016 Plan identified the most popular activities as ball field sports, playground activities, and swimming. Surprisingly, the most popular activities in 2023 for households with residents less than 18 years are basketball, soccer, picnicking, and nature photography. Based on these results, it can be assumed that more residents are spending time appreciating and passively recreating in Open Space Areas than prior years.

In an effort to represent all community members of Franklin and provide an equitable experience of the natural world, environmental education and accessibility were two key concepts discussed throughout the public engagement process. The community felt strongly that there was an opportunity to educate citizens not only about the need for protection of natural resources but also the location of Open Space and Recreation Areas within the community, as well as their habitats and ecological function. In addition many residents wanted to see a greater availability of materials that described Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Areas in Franklin and the uses allowed within. The topic of accessibility was preeminent, however.

Throughout the focus group meetings and public hearings, concerns over the true accessibility of the Open Space and Recreation Areas became a common theme. Several noteworthy critiques of Town accessibility include:

This is so exciting! Great work! As someone who navigates the world with disability, my top awareness is to develop spaces that are inclusive and accessible. There are a few main considerations to make this possible.

**One:** Paved pathways and trails. Surfaces such as stone dust and compacted dirt are not accessible. Someone trying to navigate those surfaces with devices such as a walker or wheelchair face the issue of wheels getting stuck, as well as a very bumpy trek - imagine driving down a street full of potholes and that's what it feels like for someone in a wheelchair to be pushed on stone dust or compacted dirt. In addition, someone with balance challenges would fall over within a few steps due to the uneven surface. Please consider having paved pathways and trails.

**Two:** Accessible entrances. Some locations, such as Del Carte in Franklin, are beautiful, but unfortunately are not inclusive, because it's impossible to get to the trail through the woods, or down/up the hill at the parking area, for someone with physical challenges. I tried accessing it in a wheelchair, and it did not go well. Please consider having paved, properly inclined paths leading from parking to any Recreational areas.

**Three:** Bathrooms. This benefits anyone, but especially those who have any challenges neurologically or other, with needing to use a restroom frequently.

**Four:** Playground surfaces and structures. Mulch, rubber pellets, and sand present barriers to those using mobility devices, have balance issues, or physical limitations. Please consider playground surfaces that are something such as the flat rubber type. Please also consider inclusive playground equipment.

**Five:** Seated areas. It's important to consider that many people will enjoy going for a walk around a park, but may need a break occasionally. Whether it's benches, picnic tables, or bleachers at a ball field, it's important to have seating options that are accessible from paved pathways. If there are benches or bleachers on grass, stonedust, compact dirt, etc, they are not accessible for someone with a wheelchair or walker, as well as present a challenge for someone with balance issues. Please consider seating areas that are accessible via paved pathways.

Other specific accessibility issues discussed included handicap parking at the DelCarte Conservation Area; accessible steps and/or handrails at the DelCarte and Riverbend Conservation Areas; parking and/or walkways to and from DelCarte Conservation Area, Riverbend Conservation Area, and Dacey Field; and sensory (i.e., braille) trails.

### **7.C. Management Needs, Potential Change of Use**

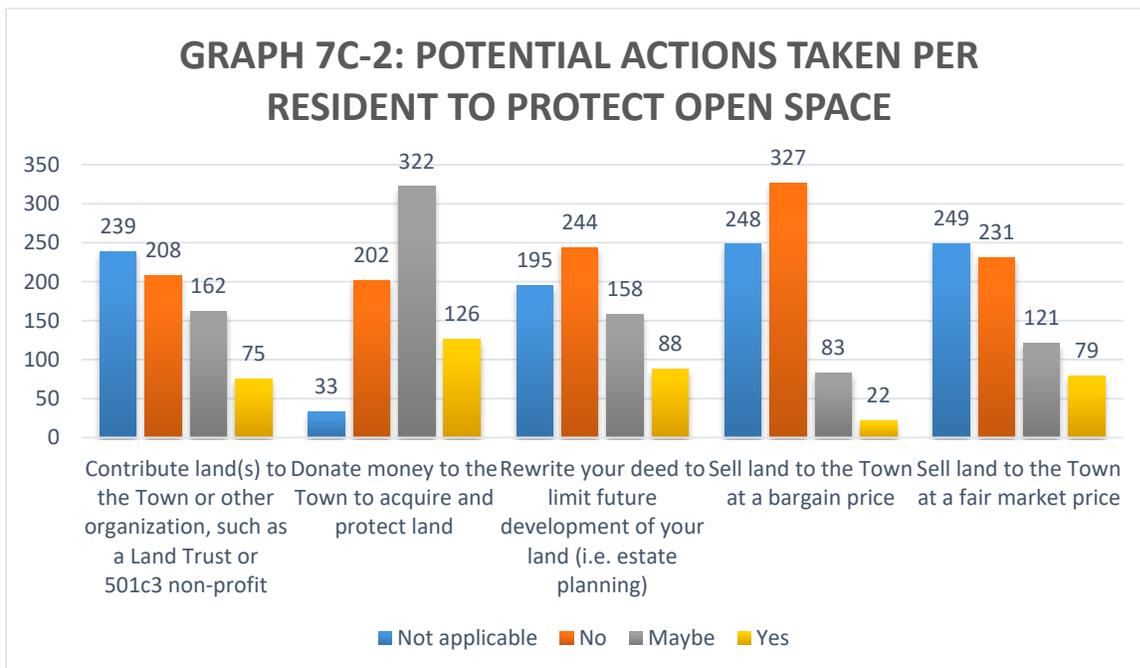
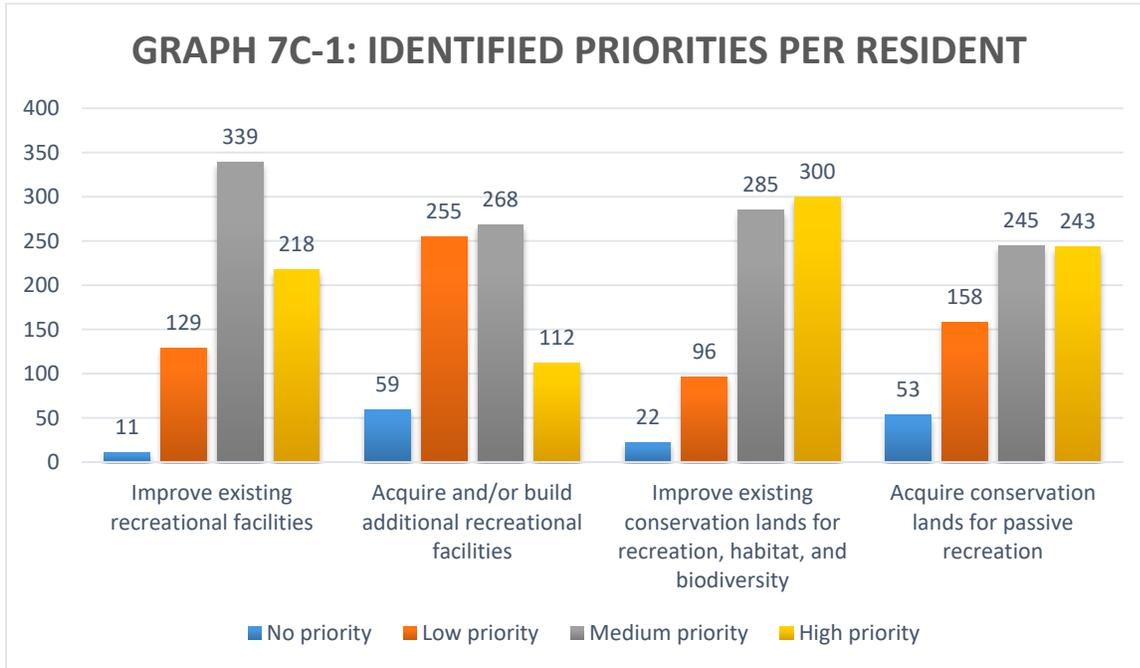
There is a great need for additional Town resources to effectively and efficiently manage existing Conservation and Recreation Areas (see Graph 7C-1). With the recent acquisition of additional property, there is a potential for a third-party managing organization to assist with this need. Of late, the Town has pursued Forest Stewardship Plans and other grants to offset these resource needs and costs. Unfortunately however, these funding sources are not sustainable long-term and additional sources are necessary if the Town wishes to continue to expand and evolve its Open Space and Recreation goals.

As reinforced by the Citizen Participation Questionnaire, 88% of respondents are in support of Town appropriations for acquisition or construction of additional Recreational facilities and 88% are in support of Town appropriations for acquisition of Open Space. When asked what they would do to preserve Open Space, respondents generally appealed to donating money to the Town to acquire and protect land.

One option to achieve long term management and additional acquisitions, sans resident donations, is to increase in the Conservation Preservation Act (CPA) fund from 2% to 3%. When asked if an increase in the CPA would be supported, 44% of respondents said yes,

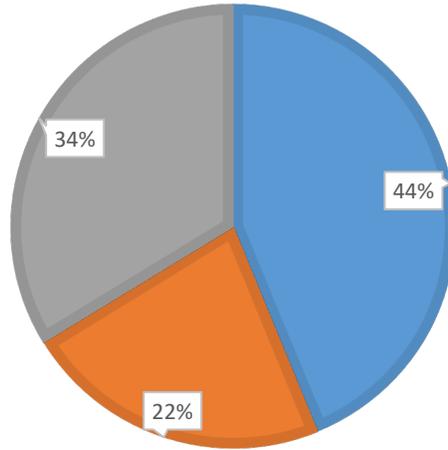
while 34% said maybe (see Graph 7C-3). Alternatively, when asked if they would support seasonal or annual user fees to support Recreational facilities or Conservation Areas, 55% of respondents said no.

Overall, community needs support resource needs and Town priorities.



**GRAPH 7C-3: RESIDENT SUPPORT FOR TOWN TO INCREASE THE CONSERVATION PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) FUND TO 3%**

■ Yes ■ No ■ Maybe



## SECTION 8: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives for Franklin's 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan are the product of extensive public input and comments, as well as close coordination and extensive planning by Town staff, led by the Conservation Department and also including the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Recreation Department, the Public Works Department, Building and Inspectional Services, the GIS Department, and Franklin Public Schools, among others.

In particular, the OSRP goals and objectives reflect an analysis of the results of the Citizen Participation Survey, which provided the Conservation Department and Commission with data on the current usage of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Areas, and residents' viewpoints on issues such as conservation and protection of the Town's natural resources; the availability, accessibility and condition of passive and active Recreation Areas and Open Spaces; and the need for improved connectivity between and among the Town's Recreation Areas and Open Spaces.

Information gathered from the survey helped the Commission Department and Commission formulate goals and objectives that address residents' desire for things such as **improved accessibility** (for example, a greater number of respondents (139) responded that they were "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with availability of Recreational spaces for persons with disabilities than those who responded as being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with such availability (117)), **better connectivity** (64% of respondents rate accessibility to Open Space, natural areas and/or Recreation destinations by walking or biking as "very important"), **improving existing conservation lands for Recreation, habitat and biodiversity** (83% of respondents rate this as either a medium priority or high priority), and **acquiring conservation lands for passive Recreation** (70% of respondents rate this as either a medium priority or high priority). A slight majority of respondents (55%) rated the acquisition or construction of additional Recreation facilities as a medium or high priority, whereas a significant majority (80%) rated improving existing Recreational facilities as a medium or high priority.

The survey responses, as well as feedback generated during the course of the Conservation Department and Commission's bi-weekly stakeholder meetings, office hours, and public hearings, were compiled, assessed and used to formulate the goals and objectives of the 2023 OSRP update, centered around the three central pillars of inclusivity and connectivity, growth of existing passive and active Recreational opportunities, and sustainability and protection of natural resources. These goals and objectives, broken out into specific categories of action items below, are meant to be cohesive and complementary of each other and created to address the desires, needs and concerns of the residents of the Town of Franklin regarding Open Space and Recreation.

The goals and objectives of this Plan are not designed to operate in a vacuum, but rather to be pursued in conjunction with the goals and objectives of other land use documents especially the Town's forthcoming 2023-24 Master Plan update.

The following goals and objectives are identified to improve the quality of life for residents at neighborhood, town and regional level:

**GOAL 1:** Increase public awareness of Open Space and Recreation opportunities in Franklin.

**Objective 1.1:** Install maps and directional signage at Open Space and Recreation Areas, including signage identifying and directing visitors to walking/hiking trails, bike paths and bike lanes, and interconnected or nearby Open Spaces and Recreational areas, as well as signage (to the extent not already installed) which can identify characteristics of Open Spaces including unique flora and fauna, legacy trees, native animal species, and other pertinent information.

**Objective 1.2:** Create educational and/or outdoor programs to educate citizens about the environment and natural habitats in Franklin, as well as to promote agricultural engagement with the community, including through partnerships with Franklin High School, Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School, Norfolk Aggie, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, Franklin Future Leaders, local sports teams, and other organizations.

**Objective 1.3:** Assist schools and other organizations with environmental science, conservation and sustainability education.

**Objective 1.4:** Create a “Friends of Franklin Conservation” organization to encourage volunteer efforts to steward natural resources and sponsor town events to promote appreciation, awareness and utilization of Open Space to foster a community sense of identification with the land and resources.

**GOAL 2: Promote, preserve and enhance existing Town Open Space resources.**

**Objective 2.1:** Create a plan for prioritization and acquisition of Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B properties, and ensure the availability of adequate CPA and Open Space funding for the acquisition and preservation of such properties if and as they become available to the Town.

**Objective 2.2:** Prioritize land owned by the Town and managed by the Conservation Commission for development of resiliency improvements, improved trails and walking paths, increased public access (with a particular emphasis on accessibility to persons with disabilities), and approval of conservation restrictions to ensure the land will be permanently protected.

**Objective 2.3:** Create a master plan for the Maple Hill parcel, which should at minimum include the following: identifying and constructing appropriate and accessible trail heads and corresponding parking facilities and locations; promoting public awareness (including through off-site directional signage); balancing public access with the private property

rights of adjacent neighborhoods; assessing the existing trail network; and promoting forest management best practices.

**Objective 2.4:** Create a master plan for Schmidt's Farm, which should at minimum include the following: preserving the legacy agricultural use of Schmidt's Farm, including studying the implementation of a town-managed community garden (similar to King Street Memorial), and/or town-leased agricultural plots (see, e.g., Norfolk Community Organic Farm); studying and identifying appropriate public access to Schmidt's Farm, including studying existing trails and implementing new trails where appropriate; restoring the existing barn, and assessing potential future uses, including as an educational/community engagement facility (e.g., in collaboration with programs at Norfolk Aggie and Tri-County Regional), while celebrating and preserving the Schmidt Family legacy; and assessing potential partnerships with governmental and nonprofit organizations around preservation and wildlife management at Schmidt's Farm (including potentially providing for wildlife resettlement).

**Objective 2.5:** Explore the creation of an independent, nonprofit land trust comprised of Franklin residents to hold conservation restrictions on Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm, and to have a role in the oversight and day-to-day management of Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm.

**GOAL 3: Maximize Recreational opportunities to meet the community's evolving needs by maintaining current inventory of facilities and programs and by providing new facilities and programs for both active and passive Recreation.**

**Objective 3.1:** Maintain and improve current Recreation Areas and provide new Recreation opportunities for residents of all ages and levels of ability. In particular, as the Town continues to implement capital improvements at facilities such as Henry "Ski" Faenza Memorial Playground and Beaver Pond (currently underway/recently completed), Fletcher Field Playground (est. in 2023), King Street Memorial Park (est. in 2024), Dacey Playground (est. in 2025), and as the Town/Recreation Department assesses future needs, the Town should prioritize accessibility improvements such as improved surfacing, playground equipment that is designed to be inclusive to persons with disabilities, and the construction of permanent, accessible restroom facilities.

**Objective 3.2:** Increase usage of existing Recreational spaces and modify existing Recreational space as the needs of the Town require and evolve. In particular, the Recreation Department should assess the demand for its existing programming and for programs/sports that are currently not served or are underserved, or where demand is anticipated to increase over the next seven years, which assessment should inform the development of potential new facilities or modifications to existing Recreational facilities.

**Objective 3.3:** Assess the feasibility of additional/improved access points for canoes, kayaks and boats to utilize the Charles River and Mine Brook and work with the Charles River Meadowlands to facilitate and promote awareness of these access points.

**Objective 3.4:** Increase connectivity to and between Franklin's Recreation Areas, conservation areas, and Open Space including safe walking and bicycle linkages through the creation of a cohesive "Emerald Necklace" linking and promoting access to the Town's Open Spaces and conservation areas. Connectivity and access improvements should place a particular emphasis on improved access for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and families with young children.

**Objective 3.5:** Work with DCR and others to continue to increase access to and improvements of the SNETT and State Forest Trail, in particular by assessing the feasibility of extending the SNETT from Grove Street into downtown Franklin through the potential acquisition of property rights over the balance of the former CSX right of way, which has since been acquired by the MBTA/Massachusetts Department of Transportation. Any such expansion of the SNETT should prioritize the construction of surfacing that is accessible to wheelchairs.

**Objective 3.6:** Assess opportunities for the development of a youth center to provide a meeting place for teens to congregate and participate in indoor sports, gaming and conversation, and for additional indoor Recreational facilities to ease the lack of available indoor facility space. This may include exploring the feasibility of expanding and/or replacing the existing Recreation Department gymnasium, as well as through partnerships with other municipalities and private organizations to increase access to indoor facilities in the region.

**GOAL 4: Protect natural, historical and cultural resources and maintain Franklin's New England character.**

**Objective 4.1:** Preserve natural resources for the protection of priority habitats so as to enhance biodiversity which will help sustain native plant and wildlife species and improve the quality and health of natural infrastructure, including through the implementation and completion of Forest Stewardship Plans for app qualifying Open Space areas.

**Objective 4.2:** Seek the approval of Franklin voters to expand Community Preservation Act funding.

**Objective 4.3:** Implement growth management techniques that will help to preserve the Town's natural, historic and cultural resources, including through the adoption of updated bylaws addressing/expanding the protection of trees and water resources, and by promoting the sustainable design of public facilities and improvements.

**GOAL 5: Preserve and Protect the Town's Water Resources.**

**Objective 5.1:** Prioritize water bodies in Town for ecological studies to determine overall health of the water body and long term management strategies and programs.

## SECTION 9: 7-YEAR ACTION PLAN

DPCD: Franklin Department of Planning and Community Development  
 DPW: Franklin Department of Public Works  
 FSD Franklin School Department  
 FRD Franklin Recreation Department  
 DCR: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation  
 FBRTC: Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee  
 CC: Franklin Conservation Commission

### GOAL 1: Increase public awareness of Open Space and Recreation opportunities in Franklin.

**Objective 1.1:** Install signage at Open Space and Recreation Areas that have not yet been addressed including, but not limited to, signage identifying unique flora and fauna, both native and invasive; walking and/or hiking trails; bike paths and bike lanes.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
<b>1.1a</b> Identify Open Space and Recreation Areas where signage is needed.	Town Administration, CC, FRD	Ongoing
Determine verbiage, design & materials for each sign (wooden plaque, metal, plastic) and placement for each designated Open Space & Recreation area		Ongoing
Approve signs		Ongoing
Create signs- Funding: General Fund/ Gift Account	DPCD; Private Contractor	Ongoing
Install signs- Funding: General Fund/Gift Account	DPW, CC, DPCD; Private Contractor	Ongoing

**Objective 1.2:** Create educational and/or outdoor programs to educate citizens about the environment and natural habitats in Franklin.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
<b>1.2a</b> Complete flora and fauna inventory of Recreation Areas in town, and examine history of the areas development and create program based on this information	DPCD, CC	Ongoing

**Objective 1.3:** Assist schools and other organizations with environmental science, conservation and sustainability education.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
<b>1.3a</b> Compile list of Open Space areas, and classify the areas (i.e. wetlands, forest, etc.) that would provide good educational opportunities	CC in conjunction with DPCD	Ongoing
<b>1.3b</b> Find a knowledgeable instructor to develop an overview description summary of each type of habitat example. Funding: Conservation Fund	Science instructor in Franklin Public School system; knowledgeable Franklin resident, consultant	Ongoing
<b>1.3c</b> Set up Wilderness class through Lifelong Learning and/or Scout groups	DPCD, Franklin School Department, Recreation Department	Ongoing
<b>1.3d</b> Apply for grant money to develop environmental and/or natural habitat educational program	DPCD, Franklin School Department	Ongoing
<b>1.3e</b> Develop environmental and/or natural habitat educational program for citizens such as, but not limited to, a community garden	Franklin School Department, Recreation Department	Ongoing

<b>1.3f</b>	Schedule educational programs – monthly, quarterly.	Franklin School Department, Recreation Department	Ongoing
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**Objective 1.4:** Encourage volunteer efforts to steward natural resources and sponsor town events to promote appreciation, awareness, and utilization of Open Space to foster a community sense of identification with the land and resources.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
1.4a Formalize partnerships with local public schools to secure student interns for general help and outreach coordination	FSD. CC. FRD,	2023 - Ongoing
1.4b Develop a volunteer program to undertake activities such as coordinated clean ups and reporting trail conditions in Open Space and Recreation Areas, such “Friends of Franklin Conservation”	CC, FRD, DPW	Ongoing

**GOAL 2: Preserve and enhance existing Town Open Space resources.**

**Objective 2.1:** Create a plan for property acquisition of Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B properties.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
2.1a Catalog, evaluate, and prioritize Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B lands in order of priority for acquisition by Town for preservation	CC, DPCD, Assessor’s	Ongoing
2.1b Contact and work with relevant organizations regarding acquisition of available Chapter 61 properties.	CC; DPCD	Ongoing
2.1c Contact owners of Chapter 61, 61A and 61B properties to ascertain future plans for properties.  Example: Converse and Conserver Workshop	CC; DPCD, Agricultural Commission	Ongoing
2.1d Purchase priority Chapter 61, 61A and 61B properties	CC; DPCD; Metacomet Land Trust	Ongoing
2.1e Continue to fund the Open Space Fund to ensure money is available for the purchase of Open Space properties.	Town Council	Ongoing

**Objective 2.2:** Prioritize land owned by the Town and managed by the Conservation Commission for development and approval of conservation restrictions to ensure the land will be permanently protected.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
2.2a Create a list of significant land parcels that may be lost as Open Space if not permanently protected	CC; DPCD	Ongoing
2.2b Establish procedures and guidelines to use to prioritize protection of significant land parcels.	DPCD; CC	Ongoing
2.2d Transfer Town owned tax title and unresolved parcels to Conservation Commission for designation as conservation lands and permanent protection	DPCD, CC	Ongoing

**Objective 2.3:** Master Plan the Maple Hill parcel

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
2.3a Catalog, evaluate, and prioritize existing and/or new trail systems	Master Plan Committee, CC, DPCD,	Ongoing
2.3b Develop and solicit RFQ/RFP for possible third party manager	DPCD, Town Administrator	Ongoing

2.3c	Develop and install area improvements, such as, but not limited to, parking areas, signage, and kiosks	Master Plan Committee, DPCD, DPW, CC	Ongoing
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<b>Objective 2.4:</b> Master Plan Schmidt's Farm			
<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
2.3a	Catalog, evaluate, and prioritize existing and/or new trail systems	Master Plan Committee, CC, DPCD,	Ongoing
2.3b	Develop and solicit RFQ/RFP for possible third party manager	DPCD, Town Administrator	Ongoing
2.3c	Develop and install area improvements such as, but not limited to, parking areas, signage, and kiosks	DPCD, DPW, CC	Ongoing
2.3d	Restore the existing barn, to the best extent practicable	Town Administration, DPCD, DPW, Building Department	Ongoing
2.3e	Develop and design resident activities and/or education opportunities such as, but not limited to, community gardens, agricultural education programs, and a CSA program/food pantry/school curriculum	Town Administration, DPCD, DPW, FRD	Ongoing

**GOAL 3: Maximize Open Space and Recreational opportunities to meet the community's evolving needs by maintaining current inventory of facilities and programs and by providing new facilities and programs for both active and passive Recreation.**

<b>Objective 3.1:</b> Maintain and improve current Recreation Areas and provide new Recreation opportunities for residents of all ages and levels of ability.			
<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
3.1a	Assess and increase ADA compliance at all publically owned school areas, as applicable	FSD	2023
3.1b	Assess and increase ADA compliance at all Recreation Areas	FRD	2023
3.1c	Increase handicap accessibility at Recreation Areas that are currently not handicap accessible or ADA compliant	DPW, CC, FRD	Ongoing
3.1d	Provide recycling receptacles at all Recreation Areas to encourage green initiatives.	DPW; FRD	Ongoing
3.1e	King Street Memorial Park, Davis-Thayer Park, and Washington Street Ski Hill renovations, including trail design	DPCD, DPW, FRD, CC	Ongoing
3.1f	Improve and develop a vision for expanded river access, boat launch, hiking trails, pollinator pastures, and wildlife habitat at the Riverbend Conservation Area	DPW, DPCD, FRD, CC	2023-2030

<b>Objective 3.2:</b> Increase usage of existing Recreational space and modify existing Recreational space as the needs of the Town require and evolve.			
<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
3.2a	Create shaded areas at existing playgrounds, preferably utilizing native vegetation	DPW, FRD, CC	Ongoing
3.2b	Establish a second community or cooperative garden	DPW, FRD, CC	Ongoing

3.2c	Construct bathroom and concession facilities at all applicable Open Space and/or Recreation Areas, as needed	DPW, FRD, CC	Ongoing
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**Objective 3.3:** Identify potential access points for canoes, kayaks and boats to utilize the Charles River and Mine Brook.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>	
3.3a	Post signage along roads where waterways can be accessed.	DPW, FRD, CC	Ongoing
3.4a	Develop a vision for expanded river access and boat launches	Master Plan Committee, DPCD, DPW, FRD, CC	2023-2030

**Objective 3.4:** Increase connectivity to and between Open Space and Recreation Areas, including safe walking and bicycle linkages

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>	
3.4a	Identify areas where bike lanes would be appropriate and construct bike lanes	DPCD; FRD, DPW	Ongoing
3.4b	Assess properties to determine suitability for future Conservation land or additional Recreation area.	DPC, FRD, DPW, CC	Ongoing
3.4c	Prioritize lands that have been determined as suitable for future use as Conservation land or additional Recreation land.	DPC, FRD, DPW, CC	Ongoing
3.4d	Acquire land adjacent to existing Recreation Areas that may be suitable for future Conservation land or additional Recreational area.	Town Council; DPC, FRD, DPW, CC	2023 - Ongoing
3.4e	Master Plan the “Franklin Greenway” including, but not limited to, developing a comprehensive “Emerald Necklace/Freedom Trail” style map of Open Spaces, trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian-friendly network throughout the community, maintaining connectivity between the Town Common, Downtown, Crossing, and National Register of Historic Districts  A 20-year community vision of complete streets, acquisitions, easement, bike lanes, and connectivity points	Master Plan Committee, DPCD, DPW, FRD	2023-2043

**Objective 3.5:** Work with DCR and others to continue to increase access to and improvements of the SNETT trail and State Forest Trail. .

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>	
3.5a	Limit/restrict use of motorbikes.	Franklin Police, DCR	Ongoing
3.5b	Advocate for and obtain resources including public and private funding, materials, and volunteer hours required to plan, design and engineer, and construct the SNETT, Franklin State Forest trails, and related Recreational and alternative transportation resources.	FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	Ongoing
3.5c	Advocate for and obtain support for the SNETT Trail from Town residents, agencies and officials, community organizations, State and Federal agencies, and others to assure incremental development of the SNETT and related Recreational resources.	FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	Ongoing

3.5d	Develop a phased approach to plan, design and engineer, permit and construct the SNETT, Franklin State Forest trails, and related Recreational and alternative transportation resources.	FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	Ongoing
3.5e	Prepare preliminary cross section of trail, and other presentation materials for marketing and information purposes.	FBRTC, DPCD, DCR	Ongoing
3.5f	Design and install safety and informational signage and additional safety elements at crossing on Grove Street near entrance to SNETT.	FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	2023 - Ongoing
3.5g	Identify points of historical interest along SNETT and adjacent trails (e.g., Wadsworth Farm, Wadsworth diaries), and create and install signage and interpretive markers and displays to highlight.	FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	Ongoing
3.5h	Develop preliminary plans for the acquisition and use of adjacent properties in order to expand the regional trail network. These properties include, but are not limited to the CSXT property between the Downtown area and the entrance to the SNETT at Grove Street, and the CSXT property between Union Street and Grove Street.	Town Administration, FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	Ongoing
3.5i	Develop and implement plans to install interpretative and wayfaring signage for the SNETT	FRD, DPW, DPCD, FBRTC, CC	Ongoing

**Objective 3.6:** Seek out a site and develop a youth center to provide a meeting place for teens to congregate and participate in indoor sports, gaming and conversation. .

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
3.6a	Determine ways to raise alternative funds to utilize for the development and operational functions for a youth center	FRD	Ongoing
3.6b	Develop indoor programs for youth and teens to be implemented at the youth center	FRD	Ongoing

**GOAL 4: Protect natural, historical, and cultural resources and maintain Franklin's New England character.**

**Objective 4.1:** Preserve natural resources for the protection of priority habitats so as to enhance biodiversity which will help sustain native plant and wildlife species and improve the quality and health of natural infrastructure.

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
4.1a	Complete Forest Stewardship Plans for all applicable and qualifying Open Space and Recreation properties	DPCD, CC	2022 - Ongoing
4.1b	Request information from Division of Wildlife and Fisheries regarding priority habitats in Franklin.	DPCD, CC	2023 – Ongoing
4.1c	Plan list of actions needed to protect priority/unique habitat areas in Franklin.  Implement actions needed to protect priority/unique habitat, including installing barriers/fences if warranted.  Example: Designated turtle habitat at the DelCorte Conservation Area	DPCD, CC	2023 - Ongoing

<b>Objective 4.2:</b> Seek Further Adoption of Community Preservation Act		
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
4.2a Educate community regarding Community Preservation Act (CPA) via public meetings, press releases, CPA related fact sheets, public access station, and the Town's website.	Town Administration	Ongoing
4.2b Work to have CPA increase (3%) on Town ballot.	Town Administration	Ongoing

<b>Objective 4.3:</b> Implement growth management techniques that will help to preserve the Town's natural, historic and cultural resources.		
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
4.3a Update zoning regulations to incorporate growth management techniques into the local bylaws	DPCD	Ongoing
4.3b Incorporate the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Smart Growth/Smart Energy and Sustainable Development Principles as part of Franklin's Best Development Practices	DPCD, all Town entities	Ongoing
4.3c Promote mixed-use development in commercial and Downtown areas to ensure best use of properties in these areas.	DPCD	Ongoing

**GOAL 5: Preserve and Protect Town Water Resources.**

<b>Objective 5.1:</b> Prioritize water bodies in Town for ecological studies to determine overall health of the water body and long term management strategies and programs.		
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
5.1a Identify water bodies and secure owner's permission for study	CC	Ongoing
5.2b Secure capital funding	Town Administration	Ongoing
5.2c Develop and solicit RFQ/RFP for necessary work	CC	Ongoing
5.3d Conduct environmental studies	CC	Ongoing
5.3e Minimize the use of pesticides and salt to maintain the health of the surface and groundwater resource areas	DPW	Ongoing

## **SECTION 10: PUBLIC COMMENTS**

While developing the 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Conservation Commission received comments in a wide variety of ways. For the purposes of this Section, comments are divided into three main categories:

1. Comments submitted during the civic engagement process, including the citizen questionnaire; and
2. Comments regarding the Draft OSRP
3. Required Review Letters

### **1. Public Comments Submitted Throughout the Civic Engagement Process, Including the Citizen Participation Questionnaire**

Public comments throughout the civic engagement process were obtained through email, citizen questionnaire, Google form, and 20 focus group meetings.

Focus group meetings ran from January 12 to May 18, and were conducted four times a month to garner feedback for the OSRP. Topics for these meetings ranged from “Sports and Recreation Programs” to “Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Restoration”. All of the focus group meetings were available for viewing via Franklin TV, Zoom, and YouTube. Throughout the entirety of this process, residents were able to participate and provide feedback either during the meetings, via email, or via Google Form. Public comments, meeting minutes, and review letters from these focus group meetings can be found in Appendix B. Please note that due to technical difficulties at the June 21 Public Hearing, there are no meeting minutes provided.

The citizen questionnaire, comprised of 30 questions, was available for resident input from February 13 to April 30. A copy of the citizen questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

### **2. Public Comment on Draft Plan**

The Draft OSRP was distributed on June 12, 2023, and the corresponding public comment period officially began on June 12, 2023 and concluded on June 10, 2023. In order to obtain input on the draft plan, the Conservation Commission held a Public Hearing on June 20, 2023. The following comments were received as a result of the Public Hearing Comment Period and can be found in Appendix D:

### **3. Required Review Letters**

The Conservation Commission has requested the required review letters from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Franklin Town Council, and Franklin Planning Board. The review letters can be found in Appendix B.

## SECTION 11: REFERENCES

### Federal Resources

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census 2020 Summary Files 1 and 3.  
<<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic. Unemployment Rate <<http://www.bls.gov/>>

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Natural Resource Conservation Service-Soils.  
<<http://soils.usda.gov/>>

National Register of Historic Places. –Massachusetts, Norfolk County, Franklin.

<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/ma/Norfolk/districts.html>

### State Resources

Department of Housing and Community Development. Franklin Community Profile.

<<http://www.mass.gov/DHCD>>

Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. Economic Data.

<<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMIDataProg.asp>>

Massachusetts Department of Education. <<http://www.doe.mass.edu/>>

Massachusetts Historical Commission. Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System. <<http://mhc-macris.net/>>

### Local and Regional Resources

Christine Doyle-Burke, M.A., Maureen Dunne, M.B.A., Donald MacRitchie, M.A., Martha Meaney, M.A., Mary Phelan, M.B.A., C.P.A. and Sherry Wurtzel, TriCenter Region Cohesive Commercial Statistical Area Economic Profile 2002 Metrowest Economic Research Center, Framingham State College, December 2002.

Ryan Jette, Director, Franklin Recreation Department. Public and Private Recreation Sites in Franklin.

Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Population and Housing Demand Projections for Metro Boston, January 2104.

## **SECTION 12: APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Citizen Participation Questionnaire and Results**

**Appendix B: Public Comments, Meeting Minutes, and Review Letters**

**Appendix C: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest**

**Appendix D: ADA Access Self-Evaluations**

**Appendix E: Maps and Figures**

**Appendix F: Civic Engagement Materials**

**APPENDIX A  
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

# 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan Citizen Survey

Thank you for participating in the 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) Citizen Survey. By participating in this survey you are helping guide activities related to future parks and Open Space land acquisitions, management, and activities programming throughout the Town of Franklin. For more information about the ongoing 2023 OSRP, please visit: <https://www.franklinma.gov/conservation/pages/2023-open-space-and-recreation-plan-update>

## What to Expect?

In this survey, we will ask you a series of questions about the demographics of your household, and Open Space and Recreational areas. All questions are optional and your responses are kept anonymous. Thank you for taking the time to guide the future of Franklin!

**This survey takes approximately 10 minutes.**

1. On what street do you live?

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2. Are you a renter or property owner?

**Mark only one oval.**

- Renter  
 Property owner  
 Both

3. How long have you lived in Franklin?

**Mark only one oval.**

- Less than 5 years  
 5 to 10 years  
 10 to 20 years  
 More than 20 years

*Skip to question 4*

4. Which of the following best describes your living situation?

**Mark only one oval.**

- Single adult - living alone  
 Single adult - sharing living quarters  
 Single parent with young children (i.e., primary school)  
 Single parent with older children  
 Couple - no children  
 Family with young children (i.e., primary school)  
 Family with older children  
 Family, children no longer at home  
 Senior couple or family  
 Senior living alone  
 Multigenerational family

5. What is the number of people in your household?

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6. Number in household requiring access accommodations due to mobility impairment and/or disability?

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7. Number in household under the age of 18?

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8. Number in household over the age of 65?

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9. How often do you use designated Conservation areas\*\* in Franklin?

Conservation areas include: DelCarte, Town Forest, Indian Rock, Maple Hill, Riverbend, and Schmidt Farm

\*\*Conservation areas are defined as Town-owned properties left largely undeveloped for the permanent protection of ecosystems and their functions with passive recreation permitted.

Mark only one oval.

- Almost every day
- Weekly
- 1-2 times per month on average
- Once a month on average
- A few times per year
- Never or not applicable

10. How often do you use municipal or school owned Recreation facility, such as a ballfield or park, in Franklin?

Mark only one oval.

- Almost every day
- Weekly
- 1-2 times per month on average
- Once a month on average
- A few times per year
- Never or not applicable

11. In your opinion, are there sufficient sidewalks or walkways in your immediate neighborhood?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

12. In your opinion, should major roads in Franklin be striped for bike lanes?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

13. Has anyone in your household ever participated in a Town of Franklin sponsored recreational activity or recreated at a Town Open Space or Conservation Area?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

14. Do you foresee opportunity on any lot around Town to be purchased as Open Space for permanent protection?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

15. If yes, please describe:

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16. Would you support the Town increasing the Conservation Preservation Act (CPA) fund to 3%?

The Franklin Town Council voted to put the CPA on the ballot on November 3, 2020. The adoption of the CPA would add a surcharge on real estate tax bills for both residential and commercial properties. The CPA enables the Town to raise a local, dedicated fund for Open Space preservation, historic preservation, affordable housing, and recreation and ball fields. The surcharge is based off of the assessed value of a property. Money cannot be used for general fund expenditures such as schools, police, fire, etc. CPA revenue is a combination of local contributions and State matching funds.

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

17. Would you support Town appropriations for acquisition or construction of additional recreational facilities\*?

\*Recreational facilities are defined as Town-owned park properties, Town-sponsored recreation activities, or other public or private properties used for active or passive recreation.

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

18. Would you support seasonal or annual user fees to support specific recreational facilities\* or conservation areas\*\*?

\*Recreational facilities are defined as Town-owned park properties, Town-sponsored recreation activities, or other public or private properties used for active or passive recreation.

\*\*Conservation areas are defined as Town-owned properties left largely undeveloped for the permanent protection of ecosystems and their functions with passive recreation permitted.

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

19. Would you support Town appropriations for acquisition of Open Space\*?

\*Open Space is defined as any private or publicly owned undeveloped lands. These properties may be permanently protected or unprotected. They may be owned by non-profit organizations, corporations, private citizens, the Town, the State, or other entity.

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

20. What should be the Town's priority?

*Recreational facilities are defined as Town-owned park properties, Town-sponsored recreation activities, or other public or private properties used for active or passive recreation.*

*Open Space is defined as any private or publicly owned undeveloped lands. These properties may be permanently protected or unprotected. They may be owned by non-profit organizations, corporations, private citizens, the Town, the State, or other entity.*

Mark only one oval per row.

	No priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
<b>Improve existing recreational facilities?</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Acquire and/or build additional recreational facilities?</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Improve existing conservation lands for recreation, habitat, and biodiversity?</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Acquire conservation lands for passive recreation?</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. Indicate approximately the number of times you or a family member participate in each recreational activity during an average year.

Only answer for the activities that you participate in.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Zero times per year	A few (1-3) times per year	4-10 times per year	Many (10+) times per year
Use of playground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of ball field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boating (motorized and non-motorized)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Street hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice skating - rink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cross country skiing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Swimming - private recreational pool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Swimming - public beach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bird watching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ATV/Dirt bike/Motorcycling/Snowmobiling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor concert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sightseeing (historical locations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rollerblading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bicycling - pavement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bicycling/mountain bike - trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature walk/hiking or similar use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking - pavement or similar use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running/jogging - pavement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running/jogging - trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skateboarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Mark only one oval per row.

	Zero times per year	A few (1-3) times per year	4-10 times per year	Many (10+) times per year
Lacrosse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frisbee golf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Baseball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Softball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basketball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Football	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soccer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hunting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Archery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnicking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Golf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bocce	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Field hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paintball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature photography	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pickleball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. In your opinion, what does Franklin need more of for recreational programs, facilities, or Open Space?

Common answers are provided, but please submit any idea, vision, or notion you have in the same below.

Common answers: additional conservation areas, amphitheater, soft/baseball fields, bike trails, pocket park, track, picnic areas, hiking trails, playgrounds, ice skating rinks, soccer fields, tennis courts, campground, public swimming pool, canoe/kayak launch, cross country trails, motorized boat launches, basketball courts, skateboard parks, town beach, golf courses, bocce courts, youth center, hunting areas, handball courts, "parcourse", community garden areas, community barn, bridle paths, etc.

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24. Please enter the number corresponding to your choice.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied
How satisfied are you with the places available in Franklin for recreational use by adults?	<input type="radio"/>				
How satisfied are you with the places available in Franklin for recreational use by children?	<input type="radio"/>				
How satisfied are you with the places available in Franklin for recreational use by seniors?	<input type="radio"/>				
How satisfied are you with places available in Franklin for recreational use by people with disabilities?	<input type="radio"/>				

25. To preserve Open Space in Franklin, would you:

Mark only one oval per row.

	Yes	No	Maybe	Not applicable
Contribute land(s) to the Town or other organization, such as a Land Trust or 501c3 non-profit?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Donate money to the Town to acquire and protect land?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rewrite your deed to limit future development of your land (i.e. estate planning)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sell land to the Town at a bargain price?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sell land to the Town at a fair market price?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sell or contribute conservation restrictions to protect your land from future development?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vote for Town supported land acquisition if it can be done without raising taxes?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vote for Town supported land acquisition if it meant an increase of 25 cents (increase of approx. 2% from FY23 rate) to 50 cents (increase of approx. 4% from FY23 rate) on the present assessed value of real estate per \$1,000?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approve zoning changes to guide growth in areas that are less suitable for development, but better for habitat protection, biodiversity, and ecosystem services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. How important is it to you to protect and preserve:

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all important	Less important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Very important
Historic buildings?	<input type="radio"/>				
Historic or scenic landscapes?	<input type="radio"/>				
Land containing archaeological resources?	<input type="radio"/>				
Woodland/forested areas?	<input type="radio"/>				
Undeveloped land for future generations?	<input type="radio"/>				
Undeveloped land for future recreational needs?	<input type="radio"/>				
Land for protection of water resources?	<input type="radio"/>				
Land for protection of wildlife habitat, ecosystem functions, and climate resiliency?	<input type="radio"/>				
Land for groundwater protection	<input type="radio"/>				
Land for landscape connectivity/connections to other land	<input type="radio"/>				
Land abutting existing Conservation Areas	<input type="radio"/>				
Land for farming or that is in active agricultural use	<input type="radio"/>				
Land that is important to mitigating the impacts of climate change (e.g., floodplains, river corridors)	<input type="radio"/>				
Land that provides public access to waterbodies	<input type="radio"/>				

27. How important is it for you to be able to access Franklin's Open Space and Natural areas, trails, and/or recreation destinations by walking or biking?

Mark only one oval.

- Not important
- Moderately important
- Very important

Untitled Section

28. How do you receive information about Open Space and Recreation Opportunities in Franklin?

Check all that apply.

- Town website
- Recreation Department newsletter
- Conservation B(l)og
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- Friends/word of mouth
- Local newspaper
- Other websites or organizations
- I don't, - I just explore!

29. What is your favorite public Open Space and/or Recreation area in Franklin and why?

Examples: DelCarte, State forest, Town forest, SNET trail, Riverbend, Indian Rock, Schmidt Farm, Maple Hill, King Street Playground, Dacey Field, Beaver Pond

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30. Do you have any suggestions for how this favorite place can be improved?

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Google Forms

**APPENDIX B  
PUBLIC COMMENTS  
MEETING MINUTES  
REVIEW LETTERS**

**Google Form Responses**

Timestamp	Please provide your suggestions and feedback below.
1/6/2023 8:55:44	You're doing amazing Breeka-Lil Best conservation agent in the history of ever (which is a long time)
1/17/2023 14:48:02	<p>I would love to see the following:            Additional public pickleball and tennis courts.            Another disc golf course.            Wind/Solar energy to transfer electric savings to residents            Residents-only rec center that promotes activity during the winter when it's hardest to get outside.            Sidewalks added throughout town and additional crosswalks in dangerous and popular crossing areas (Chestnut Street for example to Acorn Pl)            Access to more scenic areas through trails.            Paved bike trails.            Additional parking for busy recreation areas that overflow.</p> <p>Thanks! Keep up the great work.</p>
1/18/2023 6:21:25	In regard to conservation areas, we need to put effort into removing invasive plants and replacing them with native species. This has to be an ongoing effort as the invasive plants will simply come back if there is no mechanism to keep them from doing so. Please consider volunteer opportunities to help with this, led by people who are experienced in this process.
1/18/2023 18:53:48	More spaces for sports
1/18/2023 18:54:55	I applaud the town of Franklin for saving this property from development, however, I would strongly suggest that the property (or the majority of it) remain in agricultural production. Massachusetts loses farmland at an alarming rate, and once gone, there is nothing to replace it. Our state has a good number of young farmers that cannot afford to purchase land, by leasing the property it would give the town a return on its investment while making farming more affordable to the next generation. I respectfully ask that you consider this option for the property's future use.
1/18/2023 18:56:54	Franklin Community Garden - where resident can rent plots of land to grow vegetables. Follow link for reference: <a href="https://patch.com/massachusetts/medfield/medfield-community-garden-sign-now">https://patch.com/massachusetts/medfield/medfield-community-garden-sign-now</a>
1/18/2023 20:00:50	I'm not sure what the plan is for the farm mentioned in the 2023 video, but I would love to be able walk fields/open space similar to that of the Leland Wild piece of conservation land in Norfolk. There are birdhouses lining portions of the path there. The open space is awesome.
1/18/2023 20:19:46	It would be great to have another turf field to alleviate the issue of town and high school teams continually vying over the one field at Beaver.
1/18/2023 22:52:57	<p>I think this is all fantastic! I would love to see the property used for hay (I would be a customer!) and I think it would be excellent to offer more gardening spaces to the community. I think there needs to be more encouragement to self-sustainability, and that would be a great way to support it. Walking trails would also be a wonderful addition!</p> <p><del>This is so exciting! Great work! As someone who navigates the world with disability, my top awareness is to develop spaces that are inclusive and accessible. There are a few main considerations to make this possible.</del></p>
1/19/2023 8:55:32	<p>One: Paved pathways and trails. Surfaces such as stone dust and compacted dirt are not accessible. Someone trying to navigate those surfaces with devices such as a walker or wheelchair face the issue of wheels getting stuck, as well as a very bumpy trek - imagine driving down a street full of potholes and that's what it feels like for someone in a wheelchair to be pushed on stone dust or compacted dirt. In addition, someone with balance challenges would fall over within a few steps due to the uneven surface. Please consider having paved pathways and trails.</p> <p>Two: Accessible entrances. Some locations, such as Del Carte in Franklin, are beautiful, but unfortunately are not inclusive, because it's impossible to get to the trail through the woods, or down/up the hill at the parking area, for someone with physical challenges. I tried accessing it in a wheelchair, and it did not go well. Please consider having paved, properly inclined paths leading from parking to any recreational areas.</p> <p>Three: Bathrooms. This benefits anyone, but especially those who have any challenges neurologically or other, with needing to use a restroom frequently.</p> <p>Four: Playground surfaces and structures. Mulch, rubber pellets, and sand present barriers to those using mobility devices, have balance issues, or physical limitations. Please consider playground surfaces that are something such as the flat rubber type. Please also consider inclusive playground equipment.</p> <p>Five: Seated areas. It's important to consider that many people will enjoy going for a walk around a park, but may need a break occasionally. Whether it's benches, picnic tables, or bleachers at a ball field, it's important to have seating options that are accessible from paved pathways. If there are benches or bleachers on grass, stonedust, compact dirt, etc, they are not accessible for someone with a wheelchair or walker, as well as present a challenge for someone with balance issues. Please consider seating areas that are accessible via paved pathways.</p> <p>*It could be very beneficial for those involved in this exciting project to actually borrow a wheelchair and a walker from the Senior Center and visit various recreational areas in Franklin to try using them themselves and see what it's like... like research! Try to access DelCarte in a wheelchair (without anyone helping you, and with help). Try to walk across grass while blindfolded and recognize that balance challenge. Try to use a walker and a wheelchair on the SNET trail. Try to move through the Fletcher playground with a walker or in a wheelchair. This will be very beneficial for being able to relate to what individuals such as myself face on a daily basis. I'd be happy to go with you too!</p>
1/19/2023 13:11:55	Pump Track for Bikes (kid friendly)
1/24/2023 13:55:04	I would love to see a dog park on the new property acquired by the Town of Franklin formerly known as Schmid's Farm at 215 Prospect St. Also some kind of Community Farm, as like the one in Medway, Mass. Hiking trails for nature walks. If you do plan to save the barn, it could be another community center that could offer classes for artist, crafts and assorted workshops. (Kite making to fly in the field). Also when my daughter was younger she would fly model rockets off in the fields. We had a blast doing this.
1/27/2023 8:52:04	Pollinator Pathway - Franklin would benefit from participating in the Pollinator Pathway program. It could be a great opportunity for a conservation-minded volunteer group to concentrate their efforts. There are many ways to participate, from labor intensive removal of invasive plants to basic education efforts. Existing groups that might be interested: Schools, Senior Center, Community Garden, Girl/Boy Scouts, Garden Club
2/3/2023 12:55:51	Pollinator Pathways - this program could dovetail nicely with the rain garden program, especially with the new stormwater utility fees going into effect
2/14/2023 13:41:11	Hi, This is Sathish, a Franklin Resident. I would like to discuss about possibilities of getting a field allocated for the game 'Cricket'. There are number of kids in and around our community (Brookview) who are interested in the game and there are lot of cricket leagues happening in and around Massachusetts. Each town have their own cricket field, which can be used for various format of cricket games. I would like to have an appointment to discuss in person and share our thoughts on how we can expand the knowledge of the game and promote the same. Please let me know the best available time for a discussion. Thanks!
2/21/2023 18:22:36	NEMBA would suggest opening up more recreational land for mountain biking trails, where we are proactive in constructing trails and bridges for use.

## Town Administrator Open Space Plan Priorities

- Redo overall open space land use map (Kate, Natalie)
- Reevaluate Chapter 61 inventory, parcels and reorder purchase priorities (Kevin Doyle)
- Increase CPA surcharge to 3% (future ballot)
- Master Plan the Maple Hill parcel
  - Trail plan with Metacomet and Town land around Lincoln Street/Maple Hill area.
  - Find a third party land management requirement of CPA
  - Parking, signage, kiosk, nature education.
- Master Plan the Schmidt Farm Parcel
  - Parking, signage, kiosk, nature education, access points.
  - Minimize parking and pavement (if any).
  - Community Garden - more individual plots (Ryan Jette, Ag Comm)
  - Restore the Barn (no weddings, not enough parking), into a small venue.
  - Education priorities for agriculture.
  - Lease out parcels for the CSA program/Food pantry/Schools.
  - Potential viewing tower
  - Find a third party land management requirement of CPA
  - Acquisition of Daznell Property; Adjacent Thayer property (TBD, active now)
- King Street Memorial Park Renovation (See the latest design from Pare)
- Franklin Greenway Master Plan
  - Develop a comprehensive “Emerald Necklace/Freedom Trail” style map of open spaces, trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian-friendly network throughout the community and linking up with the Town Common, Downtown, Franklin Crossing and National Register Historic Districts.
  - A 20-year community vision of Complete Streets, acquisitions, easements, bike lanes, connectivity points.
- Washington Street Ski Hill Park(349-003-000-000 area parcels) park development.
  - Trails and conservation area.
- Riverbend Park (Lincoln Street)
  - Acquire part of Dellea property to add to the Chalres River access.
  - Develop a vision for expanded river access, boat launch, hiking trails, pollinator pastures, and wildlife habitat.
- Expansion of pickleball courts (town needs to be mindful of noise issues, and seasonal issues, possibly an indoor facility)
- Grove Street to Union Street CSX railbed acquisition and development.
- Davis-Thayer Fields and playground.

## 2/23/23 OSRP Schmidt Farm

- To be able to save the barn for use by the town as a functioning meeting space as well as a learning center.
  - This could be as a rentable space for functions, small rooms for a learning center, storage for equipment for onsite property maintenance.
  - Pollinator beds could be planted and maintained by the agricultural comm. around the base of the barn not only as a learning aspect but also to enhance the beauty of the structure.
  - A pervious parking area with an area to expand it needed.
- A small community garden could be prepared for Franklin residents who want a larger patch of garden than offered at the King St grounds.
- Some of the fields could be hayed by local farmers to preserve the boundaries of such fields.
- Small sections of fields could be rented out to local farmers for crops or start-up farming.
- Several trails could be planned, built, maintained, all with various clubs or residents.
  - Currently the cross country teams are bused to some of their meets to Borderland park in Easton or Franklin Park. If they had a cross country trail at Schmidts farm meets could be held there saving on busing fees.
  - Exercise trails with different stops to exercise.
  - Informative walking trails with info plaques describing plants, wetlands.
- Find a use for the property which would keep it in Agricultural use.
  - Possibly by leasing to a farmer this could be done.
  - Developing a forestry plan and selling some of the logs could help fund projects on this land.
- As stated at previous OSRP meeting someone, (Manager, Director, Department Head) Needs to be created to control new and existing open spaces in town.

~~Letter - DRAFT FOR YOU, CALL RATE IF~~  
~~YOU WANT BEFORE THE MEETING~~  
DRAFT FOR POSSIBLE MLT COMMENT ON OPEN SPACE/REC PLAN UPDATE PERTAINING TO  
MAPLE HILL: COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR MAPLE HILL MARCH 22 ~~STAN~~

MLT is a 501-c-3 charitable conservation organization which protects open space, habitat for native animals and plants, and environmental education. We were founded in 1988 by conservation advocates in Franklin, Bellingham and Blackstone and currently own several parcels of open space around town.

Metacomet is also an abutter to the Maple Hill property in three spots – so MLT is very glad the Town was able to purchase this wonderful opportunity to offer a corridor of open space which connects other Town land as well as MLT's property.

There are several key questions which the Town will need to decide when considering the future of this property. These questions can be informed by a wide-ranging public process that will hear from those who live close to the property, residents who already know and use the area for walking, and attention to the natural resources and how to manage passive recreation and simultaneously attend to the forest, soil, and water which support a woodland of nearly 70 acres.

I believe there are three major categories which might be relevant to the OSRP update:

**Natural Resources Inventory:** it is critical to document existing conditions before plans for improving access and use are decided. This work – commonly referred to as a Baseline Documentation Report -- will also be needed for the eventual Conservation Restriction in the chain of title. The formal CR is a state requirement of the use of CPA funds. The Conservation Commission is a logical body to oversee this work, which could be carried out by town staff or an experienced conservation consultant.

**Public Access:** where to establish trail heads with street access, small parking areas, kiosks with maps, etc. It will be critical to include the perspective of residents near the current access points “early and often” in the process.

**Management of Trails:** mapping of history land use, both old and recent informal trails, consideration of potential new trails to connect the access points, trail width and construction standards, and accessibility of some trails. Slope, runoff, and ease of maintenance are some of the issues to be considered, with an eye to future climate impacts. The Town will also want to address how to respond to emergencies and violations of trail use standards.

There are templates for most of these topics. As others have commented in previous focus groups, we believe it will be helpful to have a common trail use policy for the large open space areas the town owns and confirm management responsibilities and response coordinators as our residents begin to enjoy these natural areas.

Last, just a note for the record, that the eventual Conservation Restriction on CPA land does require a third-party conservation entity (not the Commission itself) to hold the permanent deed restriction. Metacomet is qualified to serve in this capacity and currently is responsible for CRs on municipal land in Bellingham, Mendon and Upton. There is no statutory deadline for this document, but it normally takes one to two years to complete the process.



Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

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**[franklinma] Dirt Bikes around Beaver Pond Area (Sent by David Kujawski, dkujawski02038@gmail.com)**

1 message

---

**Contact form at franklinma** <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
Reply-To: dkujawski02038@gmail.com  
To: bgoodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Wed, Mar 8, 2023 at 10:20 AM

Hello bgoodlander,

David Kujawski ([dkujawski02038@gmail.com](mailto:dkujawski02038@gmail.com)) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.franklinma.gov/user/11596/contact>) at franklinma.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.franklinma.gov/user/11596/edit>.

Message:

Hello,

I was wondering if there is anything that can be done to repair the cut fence between Beaver Pond and 495 to prevent dirt bikers from riding illegally in that area. The hole has been there for quite sometime and the riders then ride along beaver pond near the parking lot and then cross over Beaver Street to access the State Forest that is off limits to them. DCR has installed a guardrail to prevent them from accessing, but based on the tracks it appear that that isn't stopping them. What would stop them is preventing them from accessing the area in the first place by repairing the fence or putting up other methods to deter them, such as, signs, guard rails, stronger fences, boulders...they would all help. Also putting up a guard rail on the other side of Beaver St. adjacent to the new guard rails that DCR just installed would further help limit their access to the area. We have such a great natural resource and it is sad that it gets overrun by illegal activities. Some relatively minor repairs or steps to prevent their riding would make the area more enjoyable and safer for all users.

Thanks for listening,  
Dave Kujawski



---

**[franklinma] Maple Hill Property (Sent by Stephen Dombroski, s.dombroski@comcast.net)**

1 message

---

**Contact form at franklinma** <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>  
Reply-To: s.dombroski@comcast.net  
To: bgoodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Thu, Mar 2, 2023 at 10:22 AM

Hello bgoodlander,

Stephen Dombroski ([s.dombroski@comcast.net](mailto:s.dombroski@comcast.net)) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.franklinma.gov/user/11596/contact>) at franklinma.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.franklinma.gov/user/11596/edit>.

Message:

Hi Breeka

I live on Kimberlee Ave adjacent to Maple Hill property.

A number of us regularly walk the many trails that have been slowly maintained or rejuvenated since the Town purchased the property last year.

I was wondering if you'd have time to speak regarding a few ideas to keep the space natural, but still accessible to all to enjoy and learn about our environment.

We also have concerns that there are at least 3 Deer Stands on or on the edge of the Towns land.

Thanks

Steve  
508-944-1988



---

**2/21/23 OSRP meeting statement from Rog Trahan**

1 message

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**Roger Trahan** <rtra228@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 22, 2023 at 9:05 AM

To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Good morning, I wanted to send along what I spoke about last night for your note taking.

- Continue to add signage and trail markings thus opening more conservation lands and trails to the general public. Also add parking to the same areas allowing easy access.
- Continue to build on the current teaching opportunities while at the same time to engage the public on how to not only to use open space but how to enjoy it without damaging the same.
- The 2016 plan calls for protecting the town's drinking water supply, but it is my belief the amount of salt in our drinking water is very high. Perhaps looking at the amount of salt used on our roads needs to be reviewed.
- With the town obtaining over 200 acres this past year alone I feel it is time to look into creating a new department to oversee the planning, building, maintenance of these areas.



Breeka Li Goodlander &lt;bgoodlander@franklinma.gov&gt;

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**Becoming a right to Farm community**

1 message

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**Melanie Hamblen** <mjhamblen@verizon.net>  
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Fri, Mar 31, 2023 at 6:59 AM

Dear Agent Goodlander,

I would like to add a comment to the OSRP.

It is imperative to protect our family farms. I am writing to support the efforts of the Franklin Agricultural Commission for Franklin to become a Right to Farm community.

The struggle as a nation with food insecurity was intensified by the pandemic. The lessons learned highlight how important local food and our local farmers are in our community's survival. We must protect those that feed us. We should adopt the "Right to farm" bylaw and become a community where farmers feel welcome and appreciated.

Thank you for your time,

Melanie Hamblen  
[70 Daniels st](#)  
[Franklin Ma](#)

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)



Breeka Li Goodlander &lt;bgoodlander@franklinma.gov&gt;

## Maple Hill thoughts

1 message

**Cobi Frongillo** <cfrongillo@franklinma.gov>

Wed, Mar 22, 2023 at 1:54 PM

To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Cc: PGallagher@goulstonstorrs.com, Jamie Hellen <jhellen@franklinma.gov>

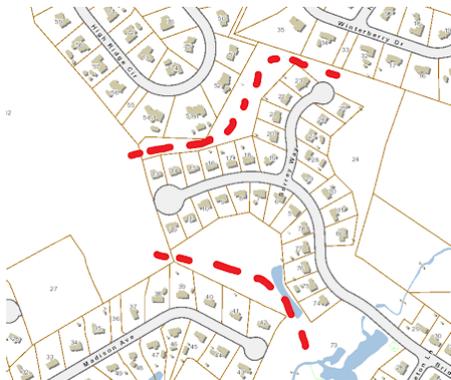
Hi Breeka,

Ran into Pat on the train this morning and found out that the Maple Hill discussion is tonight (not tomorrow). I'll be in our EDC meeting so wanted to pass on my thoughts on Maple Hill! I grew up exploring the property; it's my Franklin happy place :)

- **Connectivity with existing trails.** The trails connect neatly with existing adjacent Metacomet Land Trust and Town-owned trails. However, there's a small stretch of trail that crosses private property which has led the landowners to put up no-trespassing signs and successfully advocate for the removal of the stretch from the posted trail maps.
  - The landowners (Lalliers) biggest concern is liability. I would love to see the Town pursue some agreement/purchase with them to re-introduce the 100-yd stretch of trail. It'll open up easier access to and from Keller/Sullivan.



- There's also an opportunity to connect the new property more directly with Metacomet trails, which would avoid the need to walk down Bridle Path.



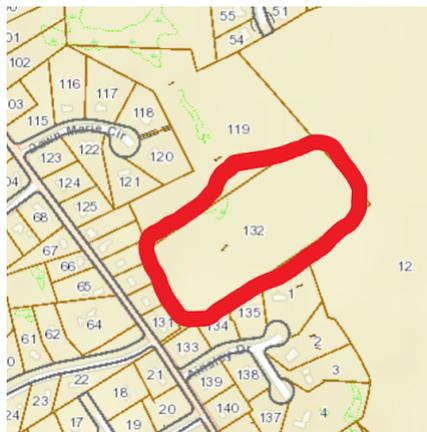
- **Opportunities for expansion.**
  - We should continue pursuit of the Fitzgerald property at the end of Kimberlee, which would ensure *legal* trail connectivity to the Kimberlee/Madison neighborhoods.



- Dean College leadership has expressed openness to exploring use of their properties between Longley field and the Town trails off Eric Drive. The Town should pursue conversations about extending the trail network in that direction, allowing Longley field to become a new trailhead (with abundant parking).



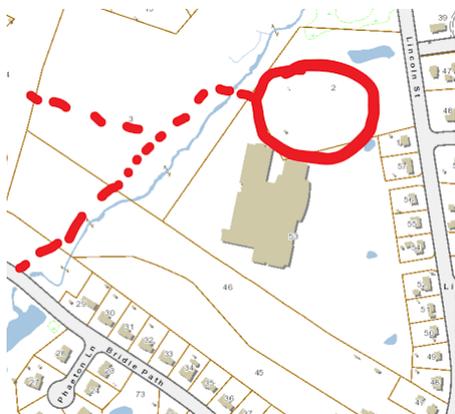
- There's a random abutting Raneiri-owned property off Maple Street that should be pursued to ensure continued open space and avoid trespassing concerns.



- Of lower priority, but the Town-owned right-of-way (across Cranberry) connects the trails to the Dacey Fields property. Expanding the trails in that direction would open safe Dacey access for community families and children. It could also open another trailhead with existing parking.



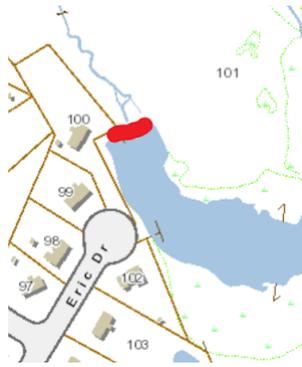
- **Parking locations.** Frankly, I'm not interested in dramatically expanding parking locations. It's a tight-knit community trail network (running very close to many backyards) that doesn't need to become a major town attraction. But...
  - Keller/Sullivan offers the best current trailhead for advertisement and parking. We'd just need to do a little improvement on trail connectivity.



- The Town should consider pursuit of the remaining Labastie property on Maple Street. The historic barn would be a terrific community space and more public trailhead.



- **The basics.** As with all properties, the trail network could use some maintenance, clear markings, consistent maps, and trail signs.
  - Of special interest, there are two bridges that need urgent maintenance:
    - 1. Off Eric Drive, crossing a stream next to the pond. It has a weird gravel half-bridge thing that is dangerous for dogs, children, and elders.



- 2. To the right from the Madison entrance. It's a wooden bridge constructed by Boy Scouts that is falling apart.



- Let the trees grow! I know it's obvious but the major loss of trees on the old Labastie property has been very sad and makes the space feel much less enclosed.

Perhaps my favorite thing about this trail network is that it is not only recreational, but it's also *useful* in that it allows neighborhood children to safely access the school, connect with friends, and get closer to Dacey without adult supervision. Franklin hosts a few of these pedestrian pathways around town and should continue seeking opportunities for more - especially as they relate to connecting neighborhoods with safe routes to schools.

Ok, I think that's all I have for now. Thanks again for all your hard work on this!!

--

**Cobi Frongillo** (he/him/his)

Town Councilor | Town of Franklin, Massachusetts

[cfrongillo@franklinma.gov](mailto:cfrongillo@franklinma.gov) | c: (774) 571-1303



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**Open Space Meeting**

1 message

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**Stacey Cobb** <naturesnursewildlife@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 21, 2023 at 7:30 PM

To: bgoodlander@franklinma.gov, "rjette@franklinma.gov" <rjette@franklinma.gov>

Hi Breeka & Ryan,

I've spoken to you both before, my name is Stacey Cobb, I run Nature's Nurse Wildlife Rehabilitation & The Wildlife Initiative here in Franklin. I was trying to join the meeting tonight but got a late start, however I did listen in for most of it.

I have a lot of interest in The Open Space Plan for the town. Mainly because I am always looking for releasable land for local wildlife & hope to eventually obtain land through my non-profit for this purpose. I created The Wildlife Initiative for the purpose of environmental cleanups, education & improvements, etc. I have many volunteers signed up for these purposes, along with my daughter belonging to the local Girl Scouts. I would be thrilled to take upon this task in the area and believe I could also facilitate trail maintenance & construction.

Also, Ryan, I still have those dog waste bins for Del Carte that we can install this Spring.

Thanks for your time,  
Stacey Cobb

## Open space off Parliament

1 message

**Cobi Frongillo** <cfrongillo@franklinma.gov>  
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Thu, Apr 27, 2023 at 10:17 AM

Hi Breeka Li,

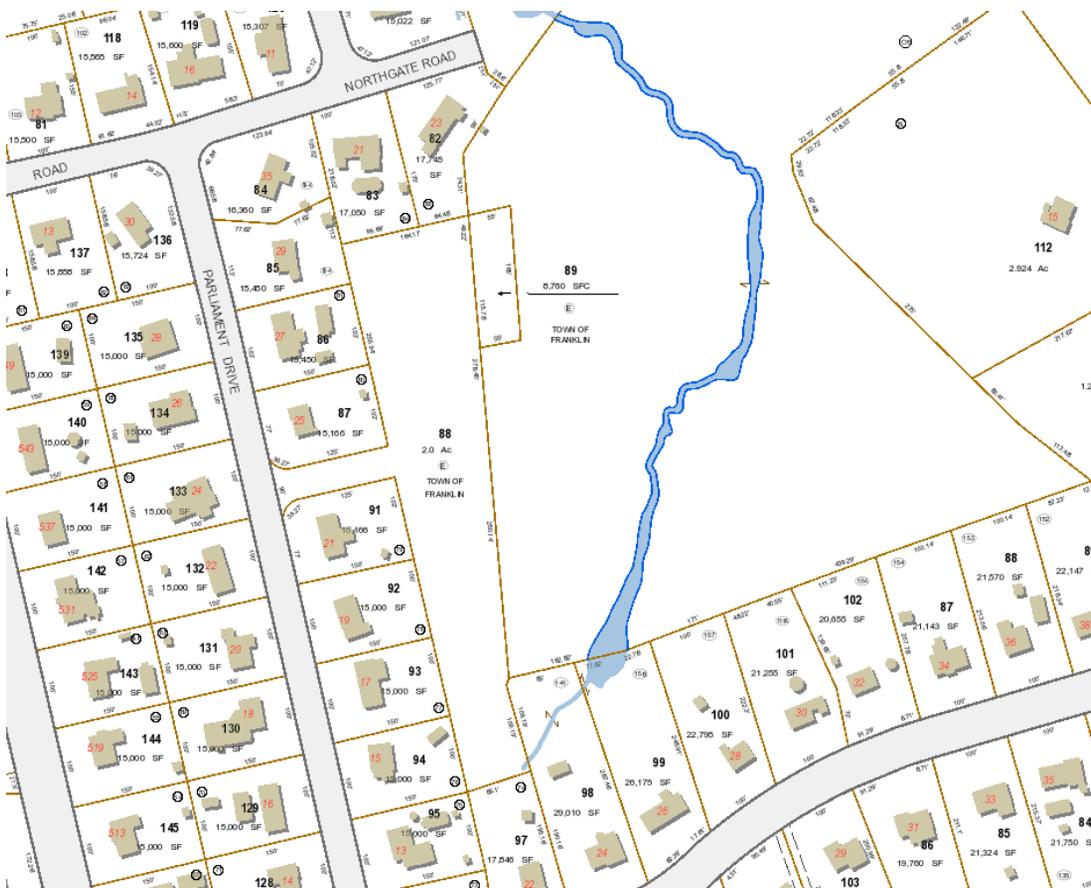
Thanks again for last night's presentation! (Special thank you for pointing out the demographics before getting into the responses.)

As mentioned, the Town acquired the Parliament Drive parcel (236-088-000-000) from the defunct homeowner's association in 2010. It has become long ingrown but once featured a baseball diamond, tennis court, basketball hoop, and even lights for neighborhood children. It also featured makeshift trails through the abutting wetlands, also owned by the Town.

My dad and his siblings grew up in the neighborhood, alongside many other still-involved residents (inc. Paul Vicario), if you're interested in hearing more about what it used to be and maybe tracking down some photos! One local tale: an old baseball player used to go down and play catch with the kids; Hollywood turned his story into [The Natural!](#)

I don't think it needs to become a heavily-trafficked recreation area, but I love the idea of revitalizing it as a neighborhood asset. I also would love to clear up trails for the families of Maple Tree, Tanglewood, Evergreen, Hemlock, Laurel, and Sierra to safely access nearby neighborhoods and the Kennedy School. (More pedestrian connectivity between siloed neighborhoods and safe routes to schools!)

Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!  
Cobi





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**Cobi Frongillo** (he/him/his)  
*Town Councilor* | Town of Franklin, Massachusetts  
[cfrongillo@franklinma.gov](mailto:cfrongillo@franklinma.gov) | c: (774) 571-1303

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Re: Town of Franklin - Schmidt's Farm - 2023 OSRP Update

1 message

Marc Cohen <mdc3327@gmail.com>
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Wed, Feb 22, 2023 at 4:44 PM

Thank you so much Breeka! It was a pleasure to meet you and the ConCom last night. I will not be able to attend the Schmidt farm meeting tonight, but wanted to provide some comments.
I met the owner of the property and understand that the farm had historically been a hay field farm. I would like to preserve this tradition, and utilize this land as a valuable resource for growing grass and hay production.
I was told that children love the field for flying kites as a recreational sport. I love the concept of using this field for open space and recreation.
As you know I am a member of NEMBA and would also very interested if feasible, to construct and build mountain bike trails and bridges on this property.
Otherwise maintaining the property as passive recreation, and active hay production would be desirable.
Thank you again for being so proactive and allowing me to comment on this farm's plan for the future.
Sincerely,
Marc D. Cohen

On Wed, Feb 22, 2023, 4:18 PM Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov> wrote:



Happy Peak of the Week Franklin,

We're scheduled for another OSRP focus group meeting - this time about the recently purchased Schmidt's Farm!

As a brief recap, the FCC held the first OSRP public hearing last night, February 21, at Town Hall. Participating residents were able to learn about the OSRP, its process, benefits, and how to get involved. In case you missed the meeting, a recording can be found here. The FCC also held a focus group meeting held on February 9 - School Recreation Facilities and Parks (ADA Compliance Included) - which can be found here. Feel free to watch these recordings at your convenience and provide any comments or questions via this Google form.

I'll keep the rest of this email brief! The next focus group meeting is on Schmidt's Farm tomorrow February 22 from 6-7p in Council Chambers at Town Hall. We know this is a big ticket item for the community so start brainstorming ideas now. In the interim, please feel free to utilize this OSRP map to become familiar with Schmidt's Farm digitally or review the below screenshot. Town property, including Schmidt's Farm, is shown in gray.

Come learn about the history of Schmidt Farm, its potential, and provide input on what you would like to see - the sky's the limit for your ideas!



The next focus group meeting is on the Riverbend Conservation Area on March 9.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Town of Franklin. Includes contact info for Breeka Li Goodlander and two tables: Focus Group Meetings and Office Hours. Focus group meetings include dates from Jan 12 to May 18. Office hours include dates from Jan 13 to Jun 10. A public hearing notice is also present.

See you tomorrow and don't forget to take the OSRP survey!



Breka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

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## Smith Farm?

1 message

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**Mike** <mbernier56@gmail.com>  
To: bgoodlander@franklinma.gov

Fri, Jan 27, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Saw your video. A few years ago, my veterans group reached out to me with the idea of creating a place to have a coffee at some farm house that was being restored. We should talk!



Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

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**Re: [franklinma] Introduction and Inquiry: Helping with Local Open (Sent by Dan Brown, dan@kapitolphotography.com)**

1 message

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**Dan Brown** <dan@kapitolphotography.com>  
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Tue, May 16, 2023 at 10:32 PM

Hi Breeka,

No worries — I totally understand as I'm someone who often responds to emails where a letter via the Pony Express may have arrived at a quicker pace.

I would love to join you all this Thursday but I am actually participating in a [panel discussing the foundation of Boston's Walking City Trail](#). I don't mean to humblebrag, only to explain that part of the discussion is about the accessible outdoors in one's own backyard and it's one of the major reasons why I reached out to you in the first place as I'd love to assist, as noted below, in any way I can with Franklin's Open Space and its multitude of uses.

So while I can't join you all Thursday unfortunately, I'd be happy to meet up at any future group discussions or volunteer projects with either my camera in hand or a trail building tool.

Best,  
Dan

On May 16, 2023, at 1:29 PM, Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov> wrote:

Afternoon Dan,

My apologies for the late response. I was out of the state.

I am tickled that you reached out with interest in volunteer work. I think it would be worthy to meet in person and discuss your future vision/goals and where the Town could best use some help. What are you doing this Thursday? We will be having our final OSRP focus group meeting and would love to have you join!

Breeka LÍ (Bree-kah Lie)

Breeka LÍ Goodlander, CWS, PWS, CERPIT  
Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager  
Town of Franklin  
Office: 508.520.4929  
[bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)

Subscribe [here](#) to receive all the latest Conservation and OSRP news.  
Visit [here](#) to stay up to date on the OSRP update process and provide public comment.

*Before printing this e-mail, consider whether it is necessary. **Think Green.***

On Thu, May 11, 2023 at 4:44 PM Contact form at franklinma <cmsmailer@civicplus.com> wrote:

Hello bgoodlander,

Dan Brown ([dan@kapitolphotography.com](mailto:dan@kapitolphotography.com)) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.franklinma.gov/user/11596/contact>) at franklinma.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.franklinma.gov/user/11596/edit>.

Message:

Dear Ms. Goodlander,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Dan Brown, and I'm a resident of Franklin. I wanted to reach out and introduce myself as someone interested in getting involved with the local efforts surrounding recreation in our town's open spaces, particularly in addressing trail issues in Franklin State Forest.

To give you some background, I've been actively engaged in the outdoor industry as a photographer for over 15 years, primarily capturing winter action sports. However, my passion for outdoor activities has grown in recent years, and I've become an enthusiastic mountain biker. As part of my involvement in the community, I've joined the Blackstone Valley chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA).

Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in NEMBA's Trail School, where I learned about designing, building, and maintaining sustainable mountain bike trails. This hands-on course covered important aspects such as tool and group safety, trail design, assessment, and bench cutting.

With my background and passion for outdoor recreation, I'd love to contribute to the conservation efforts and sustainable recreation in Franklin — I understand the significance of preserving our natural resources and maintaining the ecological balance while enjoying these spaces responsibly.

I'm reaching out to inquire about any potential volunteer opportunities or projects where I can lend a hand. If you have any suggestions or recommendations, I'm all ears.

Best regards,

Dan Brown  
508 989 0931  
[dan@kapitolphotography.com](mailto:dan@kapitolphotography.com)  
@kapitolphoto

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Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

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## Franklin Greenway

1 message

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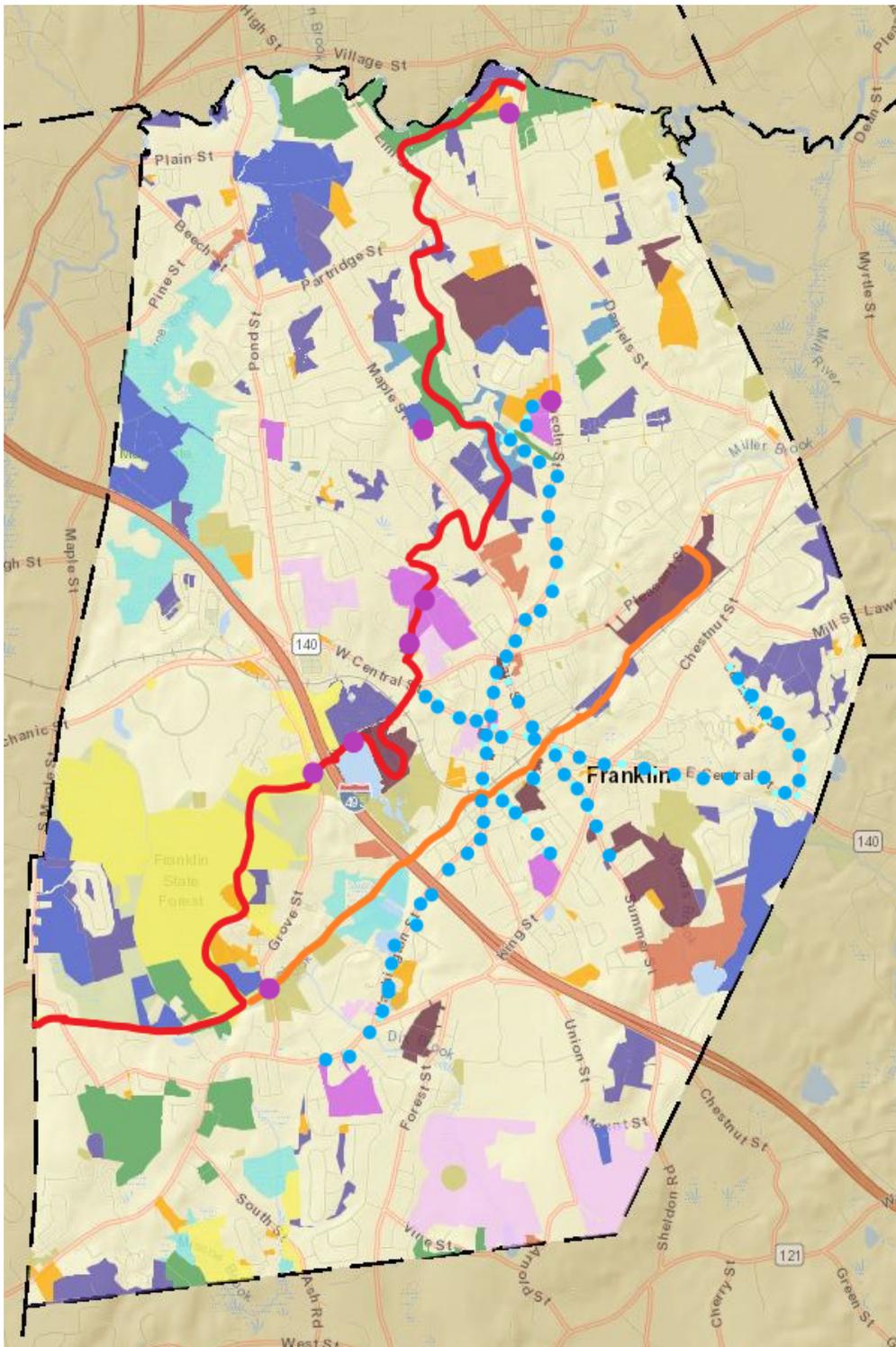
**Cobi Frongillo** <cfrongillo@franklinma.gov>

Fri, Apr 21, 2023 at 11:49 AM

To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Hi Breeka,

This is the *rough* sketch I threw together a few years ago of a potential "Franklin Greenway" (**red on the map below**), using the [Open Space](#) map to maximize the amount of trail/public land usage.



Pros:

- connects trails at Riverbend, Maple Hill, Keller-Sullivan, High School, Sculpture Park, Beaver Pond, Franklin Forest, and SNETT
- there are 7 existing town-owned parking lots (**purple dots**) along the route
  - ignore the one at Labastie

Problem areas:

- need to purchase the Dellea property
- need small cut-throughs on property owned by Masto Drive LLC (220-055-000-000) and John Donovan (220-015-000-000)
- need a cut-through under the power lines (294-008-000-000)
- Worst stretches (all under half a mile):

- Dellea property to DPW property on Elm
- Crossing 140 to the start of the Beaver Pond rec area
- end of the Beaver Pond rec area to the Franklin Forest parking lot

Other colors on map:

- **Orange:** ideal would still be to have the option to turn onto a Rail Trail that extended to the Crossing and down Cottage, and then even that connected through the woods from Downtown to Del Carte
- **Blue dots:** other key areas of existing/future connectivity

Other properties that weren't on my mind at the time (blue on attached map):

- Schmidt's Farm (could get off SNETT over to the farm)
- Lincoln St Farm (could avoid neighborhood stretch by going toward Dacey instead of Maple Hill)
- Dean College forest off Lincoln (could avoid neighborhood stretch and add parking by getting closer to Town property on Maple)

Let me know if you have any thoughts or would like to discuss!

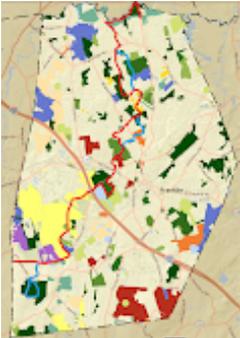
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**Cobi Frongillo** (he/him/his)

*Town Councilor* | Town of Franklin, Massachusetts  
[cfrongillo@franklinma.gov](mailto:cfrongillo@franklinma.gov) | c: (774) 571-1303

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**greenway\_update.png**  
742K



**FW: State Technical Urban Agriculture Meeting Follow Up**

1 message

**Downey, Michael (DCR)** <michael.downey@state.ma.us>  
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Thu, Feb 16, 2023 at 1:29 PM

Good day,

Although municipalities are not eligible—this may be of use to some in the community, you personally, or if there will be a leaseholder involved in the new town farm.

If you want more details or background—let me know.

[Trails & Walkways Information](#)

Delaware Urban Farm and Food Resources, [here](#) and [here](#).

Our NRCS MA [Page](#)

Michael Downey

Forest Stewardship Coordinator & Service Forester

DCR / Bureau of Forest Fire Control & Forestry

[355 West Boylston Street](#)

[Clinton, MA 01510](#)

413.212.3039 (mobile)

[Service Forestry | Mass.gov](#)

[Foresters for the Birds \(arcgis.com\)](#)

**From:** Loomis, John - NRCS, Amherst, MA <[John.Loomis@usda.gov](mailto:John.Loomis@usda.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2023 1:12 PM

**To:** Loomis, John - NRCS, Amherst, MA <[John.Loomis@usda.gov](mailto:John.Loomis@usda.gov)>

**Subject:** State Technical Urban Agriculture Meeting Follow Up

CAUTION: This email originated from a sender outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mail system. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello all,

Thank you very much for joining earlier. Your feedback is much appreciated! Please join us once more on June 6<sup>th</sup>, invite to follow (no action required).

Attached, please find the slides with relevant resources embedded.

Also, please find the local working group resources courtesy of Austin (Austin Miles [amilesmacd@gmail.com](mailto:amilesmacd@gmail.com)) and Michael ([mieffmacd@gmail.com](mailto:mieffmacd@gmail.com)).

Here are the links that were shared in our chat:

[Trails & Walkways Information](#)

Delaware Urban Farm and Food Resources, [here](#) and [here](#).

Our NRCS MA [Page](#)

Stay in touch and have great days!

Best,

-Jack

**Jack Loomis (He/Him) | Outreach Coordinator**

[451 West St #1 Amherst, MA 01002](#)

**USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

[jack.loomis@usda.gov](mailto:jack.loomis@usda.gov) | 413-230-2494 | [www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov)

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**2 attachments**

**Urban STAC FEB 16.pptx**  
9523K

**LWG Fact Sheet.pdf**  
195K

**Re: OSRP Launch Inquiry**

1 message

**Roy Batchelder** <schmidtsfarm@verizon.net>  
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Fri, Feb 24, 2023 at 5:41 PM

Hi Breeka Li,

We watched the program last night. Looked like you had some people that are very much interested in helping out in sharing ideas for use of the property.

I really liked the idea of the community farm and giving kids a chance to learn how to grow the nutritious food that we all should be eating. The Food Pantry was another winner too. I also thought about the reference of the Norfolk Aggie, since my father was a 1934 graduate and learned so much about farming. I found some of his books from school back then. There are also records of the poultry and dairy operation also that they raised in the early years. It feels like I am walking in my father's footsteps as I am going through his tax records that I found in the attic.

I liked the idea of the wildlife release program since there are coyotes, deer, wild turkeys and always lots of birds. Like she said, she couldn't release them from her apartment building.

I also thought of another activity for anyone who likes to look at the night sky. It is a good place to check out because of the limited amount of light sources. The shooting stars that they have at all different times of year are amazing.

The photos seemed to go over really well too.

Linda Batchelder

On Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 10:00:36 AM EST, Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov> wrote:

Great, thank you! I knew I didn't remember the story right so I'm very glad I reached out for clarification.

Breeka Li Goodlander, CWS, PWS, CERPIT  
Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager  
Town of Franklin  
Office: 508.520.4929  
[bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)

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On Thu, Feb 23, 2023 at 9:59 AM Roy Batchelder <schmidtsfarm@verizon.net> wrote:

Hi Breeka Li

Roy said that my dad didn't find it. The Hale Reservation was a project that the Soil Conservation Commission was involved in as part of the WDCC (Westwood/Dover Conservation Commission).

My grandfather and dad were members of the Norfolk Soil Conservation District that was based in Walpole, Mass. They were recognized in by the Commission in 1955 as Outstanding District Cooperators. They were awarded a Certificate of Merit at their Annual Election Meeting.

Hope you have a good turnout at your meeting tonight.

Linda Batchelder

On Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 08:45:41 AM EST, Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov> wrote:

Morning Linda,

Thanks so much for the photos! I have them all scanned in so I can return them to you asap.

Quick question - what was the Conservation District that your father founded again? Wrentham Conservation Commission?

Breeka Li Goodlander, CWS, PWS, CERPIT  
Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager  
Town of Franklin  
Office: 508.520.4929  
[bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)

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On Wed, Feb 22, 2023 at 4:21 PM Roy Batchelder <schmidtsfarm@verizon.net> wrote:

Hi Breeka,

I would be glad to share our family history with you anytime. My dad passed away in 1992 due to heart trouble and my mom died in 1995 in an accident on Route 140. The property was under the care of the three of us children. We are equal shareholders and in was decided to keep farming until John, who is the oldest would be ready to quit. We have been Schmidt's Farm, Inc. since 1997 and continued to harvest various vegetables which we sold to some customers and sold construction hay to developers. This all was fine until they started to use the tube system for soil erosion and called it quits in 2016. Since the farm was our only source of income, it was time to look into put it up for sale. After working with three different developers, and waiting six long years with nothing but promises, we decided to take the town's offer which will preserve my grandfather and father's dream of open space and possibly a community farm. There was kite flying and snow tubing in the winter with her cousins. Going way back in time when I was a kid we did use the pond for ice skating in the winter and swimming in the summer.

I have some older pictures of the barn being built in 1945-6 in sequence. I also have some pictures of my dad with his friends playing baseball in the field behind the barn. They had picnics in the field when their Latvian family and friends came to visit from the Boston area. Many of them would come out to buy eggs, apples and other produce several times a year.

I have a lot of family history done on Ancestry which I will be using to create a book of our family history at some point in time. Maybe I can get this done by the end of summer. I have the title in mind already "The Legacy of the Schmidt Family Farm". I have been cleaning out the attic and my father had boxes of old tax returns and books for the hay that was made and books on the chickens and milk that was produced. There were names of people that helped out on the farm too.

Give me a call at 508-528-2718 and we can talk about meeting up again.

Thanks

Linda Batchelder

On Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 11:10:25 AM EST, Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov> wrote:

Morning Linda,

I hope you are doing well! I was wondering if we could talk sometime today about the farm and its history? The Commission has a meeting tomorrow from 6-7p tomorrow and I'd love it if you could attend (perhaps with your father?) to speak to this history of the property and/or if you are unable to attend I was wondering if you could share more of the history with me so I can present the property honorably?

Breeka LÍ Goodlander, CWS, PWS, CERPIT  
Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager  
Town of Franklin  
Office: 508.520.4929  
[bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)

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On Wed, Jan 18, 2023 at 11:47 AM Roy Batchelder <[schmidtsfarm@verizon.net](mailto:schmidtsfarm@verizon.net)> wrote:  
Hi Breeka,

We met last week when you were out at Schmidt's Farm. I want to mention that I would love to see a dog park developed on the property.

When will the video that you were recording be shown to the public? I would love to see it.

If you would like to know more about the history of the property, just ask.

Thanks

Linda Batchelder

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**Re: OSRP - Schmidt Farm - Thursday, February 23**

Susan Speers <susanspeers@gmail.com>  
To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

Thu, Feb 23, 2023 at 9:30 AM

Hi. I assume there will be a link on the town's website today... I will log in from home.

I have realized that I will be out of town on March 23, when Maple Hill will come up. I am asking others on our Board to be sure to at least appear virtually and possibly in person for that focus group. And, we are likely to submit a written comment on MH, and perhaps on Schmidt also, but we'll wait to decide about that.

Are you hearing within the building that MLT is still the #1 candidate to eventually hold the CR on Maple Hill? I have not heard from anyone about Schmidt. Also not sure if Con Com itself wants that big a role in future management of either -- which of course is something that came up in general terms in the hearing Tuesday. Any open space property of this size (i.e. both) will need careful planning and management by the Town.

Hope to stay in contact. Your process looks good!

Susan Speers  
Board of Directors (one of 13, Breeka, not "THE director"!!)  
:O

On Wed, Feb 22, 2023 at 5:58 PM Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov> wrote:  
Good Evening Everyone,

It's come to my attention that there is a typo in the email I sent earlier today. My apologies for any confusion! Please note that the OSRP focus group meeting for Schmidt's Farm is **tomorrow February 23**.

See you then,

Breeka Li Goodlander, CWS, PWS, CERPIT  
Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager  
Town of Franklin  
Office: 508.520.4929  
[bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)

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Breeka Li Goodlander &lt;bgoodlander@franklinma.gov&gt;

## Fwd: Open Space and Recreation

1 message

**Ryan Jette** <rjette@franklinma.gov>

Mon, Nov 28, 2022 at 5:48 PM

To: Breeka Li Goodlander <bgoodlander@franklinma.gov>

### Some ideas "wishlist" for capital improvements are: (in no particular order)

- Nason Street Tot Lot- **New playground equipment for 2-5 year olds which is completely ADA compliant with a poured in place surface.**
  - Fletcher Field Playground (front structure and surfacing)- **New playground equipment for 6-12 year olds which is completely ADA compliant with a poured in place surface.**
  - King Street Memorial Park Master Plan- **New concession/restroom building, field lights on soccer field, parking with lighting in lot, new playground equipment, a small splash pad, 4 additional pickleball courts**
  - Dacey Field playground- **New playground equipment for 6-12 year olds which is completely ADA compliant with a poured in place surface.**
  - Horace Mann Fields and track improvements (behind school)- **New field event area with shot put, discus and poured in place javelin run up area, playing field to be leveled, loamed, graded and seeded with irrigation.**
  - Beaver Pond scoreboard and press box- **New Daktronics scoreboard with elevated 20' X 8' container pressbox**
  - Remington basketball courts (post tension concrete)-
  - FHS Baseball/softball restroom facility- **Small pre-fabricated concession/restroom building for the 4 ballfields at FHS**
  - FHS stadium bleachers (visitors side)- **Remove existing and erect new bleachers for 500-1000 seats on visitors side**
  - Dacey Field restroom facility- **Small pre-fabricated concession/restroom building for the fields at Dacey Field**
  - Front turf at FHS resurfaced- **Front turf field at FHS will need to be resurfaced in 2026**
  - FHS Tennis courts resurfaced (post tensioned concrete)- **Courts will need to be resurfaced in 2026**
  - BMX pump track **Dreaming**
- That is all I can think of now. Carlos, Mike or Lucas?

Brian, I'll work on a current list of programs we run at Franklin Rec. It is an extensive list so it may take some time. Thanks, see you all on December 7, at 1:00pm.

Ryan Jette  
 Director of Recreation  
 Franklin Recreation Department  
 275 Beaver Street  
 Franklin, MA 02038  
 Office: (508) 613-1667  
 Mobile: (508) 400-4099  
 Email: [rjette@franklinma.gov](mailto:rjette@franklinma.gov)  
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 **ADA self-evaluation 2016.pdf**  
 247K

## Open Space

### General Ideas

- Make short term, mid term, long term goals under schedule?
- Create a website showing what is planned and completed

### Idea Ideas

- Expand community garden
- Splash pad – for urban heat island effect
- Green infrastructure internships? Resident volunteer? Adopt a raingarden or CB? For raingarden maintenance issues
- Walking tour of Franklin – history, pictures of what places used to look like (work with historical society or Alan Earls has a book?)
- New “friends” of Franklin group
- Community tree planting events
- Information on local climate change impacts and steps residents can take to prepare, for example how to prepare for more rainfall
- Beer garden in public parks (with igloos in winter), canoe for rent – not a lot to do for adults per last year’s resident survey
- Trail around Beaver Pond – issue with water department?

### Land Acquisition Development

- Develop open space acquired by the Town at the end of Bridle Path
- Develop open space acquired by the Town on the Schmidt’s Farm, Inc. parcel off Prospect Street
- (I am not sure if this has been fully acquired yet) Develop open space acquired by the Town at the Dellea Property – off of Elm St

**FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**OSRP MEETING Minutes**  
**JANUARY 12, 2023**  
**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

**TOPIC: SPORTS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS**

Due to the concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

**Comments from the Public / Answers**

Mark LePage (00:15:26) How do you feel the current field availability to support the programs is? There are a lot of programs.

/

Ryan Jette (00:15:36) Yes, it is, our population at the elementary level is declining. I can't predict the future, I know Franklin is a busy town and a lot of kids are participating in the programs. I will say that, right now, I think we have adequate fields to support these programs. We don't need a whole new complex. My goal would be to improve our current facilities. We have a lot of great facilities in town, but some of them are aging. King Street Memorial Park, the building is aging, the roofing is starting to deteriorate, the façade is crumbling, and they have had to replace the roof already. We house our summer camp there, so that would be the next big project I see coming down the pipe. We have Community Preservation Funds now in town, I think some of these renovations will tap into those funds to restore some of our existing facilities. I don't think we need to provide a whole new recreation facility; I think improving our existing facilities first, and then maybe thinking about branching out and building a new large facility.

Pat Gallagher (00:17:06) Wondering if there are any particular programs where, in terms of participation, you are seeing a lot of growth, or if you are seeing contraction, or what the next pickle ball is.

/

Ryan Jette (00:17:40) Regarding pickle ball, I think you hit the nail on the head. Right now we need to address that quickly. There are a lot of residents who are now into pickle ball. When we offer a class and instructional program, it sells out in minutes. We are constantly trying to create new offerings of pickle ball, but it's so popular that we just can't keep up. If you ask anyone in any other community, finding quality instructors to teach the program is really challenging. We've got two great instructors; Terry Mello and Harold Benson who is starting to help out as well. But really, keeping up with the

courts, we need to build four new courts minimum. You go to King Street Saturday morning, there is a line of people waiting to play. We built this cool little thing where if you're waiting you can put your paddle in a little slot, and you just take them in the order they were placed in, and we will put that up in the spring and see how it goes. We have seen a little bit of surge in our tackle football program. Soccer is always going to be popular; it's a sport you can start when you're young, and you don't need sticks or equipment to buy. Boys' lacrosse is doing good; girls' lacrosse is doing good. Our flag football program is starting to creep back up. Pre-covid we had 575 kids, and then we took a bit of a nosedive into the 400s, and we are starting to see that number come back up. I think the pandemic had a bit to do with participation, but I think the other big thing that's happening now is e-sports (video games) and is one of the fastest growing programs across the country. You are starting to see colleges now giving scholarships to kids to come in and play video games. I think it has now surpassed the NFL in terms of revenue.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:20:53) Are you guys doing anything in the e-sport area?

/

Ryan Jette (00:20:58) Yes, we have a mobile gaming truck coming to the Rec Department tomorrow (January 13) set up in the parking lot from 12:30 to 2:30 for the kids. So, you will see a large truck parked in our parking lot and pizza and drinks for the kids, we will have 16 kids showing up, it sold out. They will go into the truck, there are monitors throughout the truck, and different games going on and kids playing against each other. It's pretty cool to see.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:21:30) Another area I was wondering about, I think there is a lot of focus on the youth side, the e-sports plays into this, compared to middle-high school and adults. Right now, is there enough bandwidth to focus on older kids and adult programming, or is your focus primarily on youth? I know in middle and high school, I hear anecdotally about how travel programs are becoming much more prevalent right now, and the middle and high school programs are much more competitive, so you have a lot of kids left without an opportunity to join a team. It seems like the Rec. Department would be a great place for them if you have the bandwidth, but I think that is the question.

/

Ryan Jette (00:22:30) I think every community struggles with, specifically, the high school kids. In Franklin we have a large school, so for instance, I have 160 kids in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade basketball. Say, 80 of those kids are trying out for the team next year. There are 15 spots on that freshman basketball team, and 65 kids who will be disappointed not to make the team and continue playing. So, we provide an intramural program for basketball, but that's just one sport and because our numbers are so high. Basketball is a 5 on 5 sport, so it is pretty easy to divide 40 kids into teams and have your own league for them, but a lot of other towns don't have those numbers. It is hard, because you can't run a league with small amounts of kids, you need volume. I would love to run a baseball league, but Franklin Youth Baseball is doing that already. I would also love to be able to offer girls softball, because there are a lot of girls who play softball. We have tried to offer adult programs in the past, but for some reason adults just

want to show up and play. They don't want to sign up and register for anything like a league. They just do pickup, so we do pickup leagues where they show up and play at King Street Park, Fletcher Field, we have street hockey league on Saturday and Sunday mornings at Fletcher field at the new rink. Those are all adults, it's not run by us but we make the courts available, the nets available, reserve it for them, and paint the lines for them, but they do not want us to run the program. They would rather just show up, do it themselves, not have to pay a fee and be obligated. So, it is just a challenge to get adults to register. We do have seniors who are playing pickle ball at the Rec. Department, and I know the Senior Center has a whole slough of programs they are running too. The adult programming is very tricky, especially when you don't have a full size facility. We have a small facility-gym at the Rec. Department. I know Adult Education is also doing basketball for adults, and that is a great program that's been run forever. That goes back to my idea that I think if it's already being run, we shouldn't be duplicating services. If people have suggestions about programs they would like to see us run, I am always open to new suggestions and to running things and offering new programs. We love to do that, we have just done it and been denied so many times before by low enrollment. I have been talking with one of our new tax-workoff employees—Steve Scazza—he's still in touch with a lot of parents of kids who went through our programs. He wants to get back the coaches we used to have and start a men's adult basketball league at the Rec. Department in the springtime.

Jeff Milne (00:26:24) Do you have any programs for the seniors or the Senior Center?

/

Ryan Jette (00:26:40) We don't run programs for the Senior Center, they run a whole slough of programs on their own. We have worked with them to offer up some of our space that they can use. We do community tennis, we will put the lights on all the way through Halloween of every year that they can use. Once the spring starts you will see the lights on every night until 9:00-9:15pm. I have a small group of people that call me and say they are going to play tennis there and ask if the lights can be left on later, and I work with them. Other than that, the Senior Center does their own programs that I try not to get involved with stepping on their toes on, but we are happy to support them with anything they need from us.

Pat Gallagher (00:28:50) How are you seeing, in terms of demand, how often are people and events needing to reserve field and court space. Are you finding that there is enough availability, or has it become harder to reserve a space for people who might need it or want it for one-off types of events?

/

Ryan Jette (00:29:10) Yes, it's a challenge. In the fall and in the spring, Monday through Friday from 5:00 to 9:00, you are not going to find an open field in town. On Saturdays from 8:00 in the morning to 5:00 in the afternoon, you are probably not going to find an open field. Sundays, there might be some availability, but boys lacrosse and girls lacrosse play on Sundays. So I would say seven days a week our fields are being used, so there is always going to be a need. Indoor space I think is the real crunch, in wintertime especially. There's just not enough open gymnasiums, and we use all the school gyms for MetroWest and CYO basketball 6 days a week, and then on Saturdays I am using it

all day for the rec basketball league. So, I think open gym would be something that's needed in town. We tried to offer that during the winter break for high school and college kids at our gymnasium; we got quite a few kids that booked hours at our gym and come into to just shoot hoops. So, I think indoor space is the real need, and then grass and turf fields are being used by our youth sports groups. So, if you're just a dad with a couple of kids and want to go down to play with them, you can always find a patch of grass, but all the premium fields are going to be pretty much booked up with the youth sports groups, so I think that's the tough one. But, in terms of facilities, basketball courts are at a premium, you got Fletcher, and we've got Remington-Jefferson with one court, and King Street has one court, and then there is a bunch of hoops at various schools that are not considered full court basketball, but if you are just going to shoot around you can certainly find hoops at Horace Mann or Keller-Sullivan and even Davis Thayer still has a hoop even though the school is not open. Parmenter has a basketball hoop, so I think finding courts is a little challenging, especially during the summer months when all the kids are home and they are looking to do pickup basketball. I don't think Franklin is any different than any town though; if you go to any town in Massachusetts and ask about weeknight and Saturday times, you are going to struggle to find open fields just because of the youth sports programs.

Meghann Hagen (00:32:12) Circling back to Pat's question, do you foresee yourself having enough bandwidth/manpower in your staff to get through any growing sports that we will have over the next seven years or so?

/

Ryan Jette (00:32:32) Yes, I do; we are very lucky because it was just me and one employee before, and so now we have four of us. In the 24 years I have been here, this is the best it's ever been. I'm grateful to Jamie for allowing us to have more staff, and I think the demand really drove that. The numbers of people coming out to play and use facilities has really sparked a lot of interest and brings in a lot of revenue so we are able to support the extra staff. So, I am very confident that our staff can handle the next five years and beyond.

Jeff Milne (00:33:10) There was talk about the town acquiring new facilities, but are you eyeing any space for new programs?

/

Ryan Jette (00:33:18) The one large space that I have been looking at, obviously it would take a lot of funding to build, would be behind the Elks Hall by the Country Day Camp, I think the Town has about 80 acres there that would be nice for passive recreation. But, I think improving existing facilities would be my top priority right now rather than going and spending a lot of funding on a new one. I am very conservative by nature, I like to be choosy on how we spend the town's funding. We certainly want to improve the existing facilities before we go and construct a whole new facility, and also I would want to consult with our DPW, because ultimately they are the ones who are going to have to mow the grass and take out the trash and do all the work, so we want to be mindful of that as well so that we don't build something we can't maintain. I think focusing on our existing facilities, that being King Street Memorial Park; we are looking at putting in a brand new playground at Nason Street Tot Lot at the end of March as soon as the weather

breaks. We are going to be adding new grass facilities behind the Beaver Pond area there, putting in a new irrigation system to finish that off. We are going to be looking to put a restroom facility at Dacey Community Field. Right now we are using portable toilets and it doesn't work too well. We are getting a lot more volume of people right now and playing disk golf, using the dog park at all the facilities down there, so we are going to be looking to put a restroom facility there. In addition, the Franklin High School baseball and softball fields don't have restrooms, so we are going to be looking to put a restroom facility there. Again, this is all just improving our existing facilities and not really constructing a whole new complex if you will.

Michael Rein (00:35:38) I know that Franklin Lifelong Learning offers adults some adults sports like volley ball, basketball, yoga, are you affiliated with them at all?

/

Ryan Jette (00:35:45) No, that's run by the School Department. They have been doing those programs since I have been here. I would not be looking to try to offer those programs and conflict with them, they do a great job with those programs. I have had many discussions with the directors over the years who run those programs and always supported them. I am happy to support them any way I can.

Mark LePage (00:36:28) Question on Youth Football, if Pop Warner still there?

/

Ryan Jette (00:36:35) It is not, it is American Youth Football now. AYW is the new league that all of the hockomock teams have adopted. The reason why is Pop Warner football was more age and weight based, and heavier kids couldn't play and older lighter kids could play down. So, American Youth Football is all done by age, or what grade they are in, so they have a second grade team, third grade team, fourth grade team, a fifth grade team and so on.

/

Mark LePage (00:37:12) So do they need help contributing anything to field maintenance or anything like that? They're collecting dues for their organization, are they helping with that?

/

Ryan Jette (00:37:24) So none of the youth sports organizations in Franklin pay a user fee. They all contribute in other ways, they pay to do the trash and recycling. If something needs to be done at one of the fields, most of the organizations in our town are very generous. They'll put in fencing, or they'll fix irrigation, or they'll share cost with DPW on our field rehab. So we found it much more effective to work with them and not fee them to death. I know a lot of other towns charge a \$5 or \$10 per player fee, and I feel that the goodwill goes away. I mentioned this at a Town Council meeting, but one of the things I didn't realize is that, when you start charging a fee, you are liable. You are responsible for any injury that occurs. If you are not charging a fee, I don't think you are liable, that's from Mark Cerel anyway. We have always floated the idea of charging youth sports groups a user fee, and I always thought it was a bad idea because they are actually contributing to help with projects. So, if you start charging everyone a fee, then next time that something happens to a field or the area around in, like irrigation or a fence breaks, then those people who are paying a fee will be telling the Rec. Department that

the town bears the full responsibility of fixing it. This way that we have now, it's a lot more effective to work together collaboratively to build the program and make sure we maintain the facilities. I know Carlos feels the same way at the DPW, and they work well with them.

Pat Gallagher (00:39:25) In terms of programming, I don't think you mentioned anything about swimming. Are there any swimming programs that are run either through you guys, or that you help maintain?

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Ryan Jette (00:39:48) Swimming is something that we used to do, but lifeguards are not cheap. They are hard to find, and it's hard to convince college and high school kids to work at some place like Beaver Pond for seven weeks when they could be working in a pool in a temperature controlled environment, and where they might not have to worry about cancellation of their shift due to rain. I'm on board with all the MetroWest Recreation directors, and it is a constant struggle for them to find lifeguards that provide swimming lessons, and the LSO swimming teaching certification is very expensive to get. So, it is a money loser to run a swimming facility, and we have got some great ones in town. You have the YMCA, the Adirondack Club, and I know a lot of people at our last Open Space and Rec Plan suggested to open a town pool. That is something to consider. I think it is a lot of maintenance and, given our water bans and whatnot, might be a drain on our resources a little bit. But, we have done the swimming lessons thing. We open Beaver Pond up to swim, but we don't offer lessons. We had a number of facilities that are offering swimming lessons, and they do a good job of it, so I didn't feel like the town itself should get into that business.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:41:35) Could you explain how the Open Space Plan actually helps the Recreation Department, facilities, programs, how of is a benefit to your department?

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Ryan Jette (00:41:50) It is a big benefit. I read that from cover to cover and I take all the suggestions and read all the surveys and react to them. I was the one who did the ADA assessment of all our parks and playgrounds and went out there saw what it was like to try to access playgrounds and all the areas of our parks. I use that information every day of my work experience to try to make things better here. I really appreciate feedback from people, I don't think I know everything in terms of recreation in town. I have been here a long time so I know a lot of history, and if there is something we can be doing better or more efficiently I am all ears and I love to hear feedback from the town.

Mark LePage (00:45:10) Do you see a big draw for disc golf/ Frisbee golf?

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Ryan Jette (00:45:16) Absolutely, if you go to Dacey Community Field on Saturdays, you will see a group of them on the fields. We have a pretty good group of volunteers there too that help out with bringing out the trash. It's a big thing right now, and there are a lot of residents there, but there are a lot of non-residents, and I'm sure they are somewhat stimulating our businesses. But, if there was a way that we could somehow charge a fee to those groups who are from out of town. It does not bother me that we

have non-residents, but it bothers me that the volume of non-residents that come into the park that are not taxpayers and do not pay a fee. We have a great group of guys out there though; if there is a blowdown or something dangerous or blocking trails, they will let us know and we will let DPW know and they will address it. It is a real big draw, one of the top three courses in the state, and the fact that it's free attracts a lot of people.

Meghann Hagen (00:47:07) I would love to see the footing and playground at Dacey's be updated. I think the woodchips are really hard for disabled persons in a wheelchair or walker to get around.

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Ryan Jette (00:47:30) Dacey is #4 on my list of capital projects, so Nason Street Tot Lot will be finished this spring, Fletcher Field Playground, we will be going to the Community Preservation Committee this spring to ask for funding to finish it. We just got a state grant for \$50,000 to fix that front structure that is very outdated. We have King Street Memorial Park Master Plan; we are working on the new building, some field lighting, fixing the parking lot and playground there, possibly putting in a splashpad—would all be recycled water—and then pickle ball courts. After that, then we have Dacey Field, so that is on the list of things that's going to be fixed.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**JANUARY 26, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: MUNICIPAL RECREATION FACILITIES AND PARKS (ADA COMPLIANCE INCLUDED)**

Due to the concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Jeff Milne (00:16:06) Are we meeting the town's needs. What more do we need to give for the town for planning to build over the next ten years or so?

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Ryan Jette (00:16:14) I feel that we are meeting the needs. I have a list of activities that are currently available throughout the town and it is quite lengthy. I feel like we are meeting the needs with our facilities, it is just maintaining and keeping up to date with all of the parks and playgrounds to make sure we are fixing anything broken or out of compliance. So, that is what we are doing right now, looking around town at our existing facilities to maintain or improve them to make them better.

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Pat Gallagher (00:17:06) It sounds like for current town projects, it is mainly around the King Street Memorial, Fletcher, and Nason Street lots. Are those the ones that are being worked on?

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Ryan Jette (00:17:21) In this order, I would say Nason Street Tot Lot would be the first one you will see done; Fletcher Field Playground will be the second one done (just the front structure, the rear structure is fairly new). We just got a \$50,000 grant from the state to do that, and I am going to be going to the Community Preservation Committee in about a month to ask for an additional \$150,000. We want to put in a rubberized surface and a new playground in front. After that, we are looking at King Street Memorial Park, who as I said before are working on a new master plan to do a new building, splash pad, lights, parking, some additional playground equipment, and new pickleball courts. After that we will be looking to do the Dacey Field Playground over, that one is aging and was built back in 2007. At Horace Mann, behind the school, there is an old abandoned field, which we used as a staging area for building the High School, and when the High School

was done the Horace Mann lot was stripped of the loom and now needs to be redone. We would like to fix it up to make it better for field events. Then, at beaver Pond we are looking to replace the scoreboard and install a press box, so our high school students can use the sports recruiting app Huddle with it. Then, there is Remington Jefferson basketball courts which are going to need to be redone soon. Franklin High School Softball Field has no restrooms there, so we are going to be looking to install some there. Dacey Community Field also does not have restroom facilities, so we will be looking to get some built there. The stadium field at the High School, the bleachers on the visitor's side are falling apart and need to be done over. The front turf at Franklin High School will eventually need to be resurfaced. The tennis courts at the High School are also showing stress cracks in the asphalt and we would be looking to do post-tension concrete.

Meghann Hagen (00:20:54) I know from some answers we have received back so far, one thing that came up was a request for additional tennis courts. Looking at the fact that you are putting in pickleball courts, I have seen courts that are both tennis and pickleball, would that be something we could look at for King Street as a possible solution?

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Ryan Jette (00:21:15) I am not sure where you heard that concern that we don't have enough tennis courts, I have seen them full but I have also seen them empty at many times. So, if there is a need, I would hope that people, when they are filling out their Open Space and Recreation surveys, would include that. If we did, I don't think King Street Park would be the location for it, we don't have enough space there. The little space that we do have between the community garden and the little league baseball field is where we are looking to put the four additional pickleball courts. It is not set in stone yet, and we did hear of one complaint of pickleball in that location, but that would be my choice only because we already have two courts there. Pickleball is like a community event, and we get a lot of people who want to play each other in that one location, so that would be ideal. If there was a need for tennis courts, we could possibly look at Franklin High School behind the tennis courts next to Conservation Land, and see if we could use that location.

Meghann Hagen (00:23:05) Regarding some of the ADA compliance and some of the playgrounds, especially the new playgrounds coming in, and looking at what we are qualifying as ADA compliant vs. really accessible, what plans do we have in place for accessibility and inclusion in the playgrounds going in? For example, Dacey's community playground is technically ADA compliant, but speaking to some of my friends with small children in wheelchairs and walkers, they still can't use that playground. So, what sort of plans are we looking at to be more inclusive with our playgrounds?

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Gus Brown (00:24:00) Starting with what our Architects Access Board needs for playgrounds in Massachusetts, they have specific rules for how you put in a brand new playground. Sometimes the topography may not allow us to put in everything we need to put in. There was some talk years ago about whether or not mulch would allow a wheelchair to traverse over it, and we found it made traversal very difficult without help. I think Ryan's goal over the years is to do the best he could with the facilities, and if we

put in a new facility, it should be 100% accessible to the extent of what a playground requires. That is our goal and our hope. Sometimes the topography makes it difficult to completely do that. Ryan has done a fantastic job with what facilities we have now, but in the future we want to try to get where we need to be, and specifically, you could help out by providing specific locations where it might be a challenge to traverse, and we will look into it. Maybe a grant for pavement will be needed, but you try not to put asphalt at a playground besides access. I don't want to say it is an unfriendly atmosphere there with the asphalt, but if someone is in a wheelchair you want to give them every opportunity to use the facility, and if that involves putting asphalt down we will look into that as well.

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Pat Gallagher (00:26:19) To echo that, from a design and architectural standpoint, playgrounds have come a long way in the past few years. One example in Medway comes to mind where the surface they use is a combination of asphalt and rubberized, things are spaced out more for wheelchairs and strollers even. Do you know if there are any state grants or resources available to upgrade accessibility options?

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Gus Brown (00:27:25) I think that's the goal of this, we are trying to get to that point where we can look at these types of things. I would be all for seeing what they have at the Medway playground.

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Ryan Jette (00:27:55) It is called Poured-In-Place. Any playground that we do in the future is going to use that Poured-In-Place material. The new acceptance is that mulch is not good, but served its purpose when these playgrounds were built years ago. The thing they are doing now is putting in these rubberized mats down so that you have accessibility to the transfer deck, which are where the access point for anyone with mobility issues can enter the playground, and then they keep the rest of the playground mulch. We can certainly look at that, there was a need to do that at existing playgrounds, but I see Dacey, Fletcher, and Nason Street getting completely done over in the next five years with Poured-In-Place so that people with mobility issues will be able to traverse the whole playground.

Emma Martins (00:29:44) I am a resident in Franklin, I have two small children. I was wondering if we could talk a little bit about fencing? The importance of that, Nason was my favorite and that was a small, contained space, and I see the fencing is still up. I was wondering if fencing was considered for Fletcher moving forward? How can we incorporate that for young kids, for kids with developmental disabilities, who maybe can't understand the importance of parking lots, cars, etc.?

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Ryan Jette (00:30:19) Fencing at Nason Street is a definite. You have the busy road right there, and it's a playground for young children so it's a no-brainer. At Fletcher Field we do have a guardrail there. It's not the same as a fence, but the problem with fencing is that it is extremely expensive. A commercial fence in that tiny area of Fletcher is probably going to be \$30,000. It's something that a lot of times takes away from the value that you are putting into the playground, and I'm not trying to minimize the value of having a fence around a playground. The belief is that when you have a guardrail system, it's going to take a lot of effort to get out into that parking lot if their parents are

with them. I am not ruling out putting a fence in there, just giving the reasons why we don't put fencing around that type of location. Dacey Field, we put fencing around that because it's a hill there and a huge playground and you can't be with that child at all times to make sure they are not going to run up that hill away from that playground. We could talk to DPW to see if they would be interested in helping us with the funding on that one, but there isn't a plan to fence Fletcher Field or that playground.

Meghann Hagen (00:32:00) In addition to Emily's comments, part of our parents park group does make decisions in going onto playgrounds based on if there is a fence around it because it is a safety concern, especially if you have children with developmental delays etc. to be able to have a safe big place for them to play without the extra stress of being out and about, so I do appreciate that point Emily.

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Ryan Jette (00:32:46) We do consider it, and any location that we see poses a risk, we will put a fence in; DelCarte, Nason Street, we will do it at locations where we think there will be a risk.

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Pat Gallagher (00:32:44) I would echo for Fletcher Field, my kids have not yet figured out that they need to look for cars that are coming through the parking lot, so kids just aren't paying attention so we need to make sure we are designing for kids primarily, so I appreciate that comment as well.

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Ryan Jette (00:33:10) I think that, just looking at the Fletcher Field layout, it would not be putting a fence right around the playground, it would be putting a fence along with a gate near where the Field meets the parking lot. Right now you have a fence over near where the dumpster is located, so that corner by the DPW straight over to the baseball field concession area. That would be my suggestion to put a fence along that guardrail and put a gate in there at the entrance where they go out to the parking lot at both locations, I think that would solve it.

Ali Rheume (00:34:06) I have a couple points to consider. 1: As someone who has disability myself, so there are times where I use a wheelchair or mobility device at these locations, and I always choose where I am able to go in town according to the accessibility, like the Farmers Market because there are paved pathways. There are a few parks where the paved pathways do not go all the way to the entrances or to a seating area. At the Pisani Fields, there is the parking lot and then the rest is all grass and I am unable to walk or use a wheelchair on grass and unable to get to the bleachers or anywhere else on that field. So, one point to consider in these plans would be how far a paved pathway goes, and ask how far can one go with a paved pathway, because to someone like me, anywhere without a paved pathway would not be accessible. 2: How accessible the entrances themselves are. For example at DelCarte, the top playground is great, but I can't get down to the pond because there is that hill and it is impossible in a wheelchair to get back up, even when trying to have someone assist me. So, I am unable to use that facility unfortunately. You touched on bathrooms, which is great. The sculpture park has no bathroom though, so that could be a place to consider building one. The sculpture park is paved, which is great though. 3: Along with the

playground surface conversation that has taken place, I am unable to walk on uneven surfaces on those. The way I understand ADA compliance is, if you can pick up the material a surface is composed off (mulch, stone dust, rocks) then it is not compliant and wheels don't really work. So, the consideration for rubberized surfaces would be amazing. 4: Last is awareness for seated areas, and any facility that ends up having a longer path should consider having more benches and seating to help those with a disability. One additional thing would be encouraging anyone on the Committee or otherwise involved to try borrowing a wheelchair and touring the facilities to see how accessible they really are, and I think they might find it to be an eye-opening experience.

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Gus (00:39:00) You bring up some great points. I know Ryan and I talked about visiting facilities in the near future and having the disability Chairwoman, Mary O'Neil, go with us so I think if you could maybe write some of these things down, then when we make that trip we can address some of the concerns you brought up tonight.

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Ryan Jette (00:40:00) I just want to point out that back in 2016 we did the self-evaluation and transition for the ADA as part of Open Space and Recreation. We did bring the Chair of the Disability Commission along with us then, and members of that Commission were involved in the process as well. You bring up a good point about Pisani Field, because the parking lot in the back where you access the area behind, I will talk with the DPW to see if we can get a paved walkway to the seating area and restroom facility. The second part of that was that DelCarte hillside was more than a 1 in 12 ratio to go down there. So, I believe there is a handicap accessible parking spot down at the bottom of the hill and a handicap accessible sign, so you can drive down that hill and park down there. I know that hill is pretty steep and you wouldn't be able to get back up, but I thought we had put in a little spot where you could drive down and park, but if not, I will speak with DPW to see if we might be able to add one down there. I don't think we would be able to get that 1:12 ratio otherwise, it would be really tough to navigate that hill. All excellent points, and when you do fill out your surveys make sure that you mention all of these things, because we do take those seriously.

Pat Gallagher (00:42:25) Regarding the inventory, I know that a lot of the properties are part of the school district. When it comes to making changes to them, are those under the school's ownership/stewardship, or is it DPW, or how are those properties managed from the standpoint of making improvements?

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Ryan Jette (00:42:56) Our facilities Director Mike D'Angelo is the one tasked with maintaining the playgrounds and school property.

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Pat Gallagher (00:43:10) From a budget standpoint, if we are making recommendations to address these concerns, I know there is a school budget and a town budget and I just want to make that distinction.

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Gus Brown (00:43:40) It's something that, if you put in a new facility, you have to make it handicap accessible and there is no deviation from those rules.

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Pat Gallagher (00:43:50) The existing facilities, from a legal compliance standpoint, don't need to be brought up to current code necessarily, but if there are any that need to be, should they be brought up to current code or beyond what current code requires?

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Gus Brown (00:44:10) The way I look at it is if you touch it, you own it. If you start to do work at a new facility, sometimes it is impossible to do it with topography, it just will not work, and there are variances given out by the Board as well. But, if something is refigured or remodeled or a new facility goes in, it has to be accessible. The challenges are not a great excuse, but we do our best.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:45:38) The DelCarte handicap sign is something that can be fixed just like that, so that is something I will coordinate with the grounds superintendent to get that put up. Fixing the substrate on that slope, that is something that will take some time but it is something I can definitely look into, which brings me back to funding. Not so much for ballfields, Bryan is more of the expert for that type of content, but for Conservation-type areas there is MassTrail Grants that help bolster accessibility, the Forest Stewardship Program, so there are opportunities to help make them more accessible through funding of the trails, maintenance, etc. and that helps piggyback on making sure the existing facilities are up to date.

Michael Rein (00:46:47) A few thoughts. Restrooms at the Sculpture Park and DelCarte would benefit both of them. Otherwise, has there been consideration for the need for more parking at DelCarte, as the town has grown?

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Ryan Jette (00:47:10) We knew when we built DelCarte that parking space was going to be an issue, but you are dealing with wetlands as you move beyond the side of the parking lot. I know a lot of people park across the street to use DelCarte. There just is not a lot of space there.

Mark LePage (00:47:40) I think Ryan mentioned when going through the inventory that he has access to a Community Preservation Fund. Is that something that you have access to for these improvements, or does that figure into any or all of this?

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Ryan Jette (00:47:55) Yes, the Community Preservation Fund does, and Recreation is one of just three that can utilize those funds, so we can tap into that to work on some of these improvements.

Michael Rein (00:48:10) Davis Thayer may be repurposed. Do you depend on those facilities as part of the inventory?

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Ryan Jette (00:48:30) We do depend on them, our baseball program uses it. It is also where we do our Challenger Program for kids with mobility issues, they play there on Sunday afternoons. They're coached by some of the Franklin Youth Baseball players. I know families use the playgrounds and surrounding grass space and basketball courts, so it is something that we use.

Ali Rheume (00:49:10) Is the SNET Trail part of this? The stone dust is not accessible.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:49:24) The SNET Trail is a state owned property, so it is and isn't part of this. The OSRP is for town-owned properties like Chapter 61, but I will say that DCR will be coming to a few of our Focus Group meetings. I can let you know when they are coming and that is a great question to raise to them. For DelCarte, the question of whether or not there is or can be a handicap spot will be a question that will take some time to answer. The use of a special type of substrate, especially since we are in environmental jurisdictions; change of grade, fill, all sorts of things, but I will get the handicap sign up and we can work from there.

Cobi Frongillo (00:50:26) As Ali Rheume highlighted, any opportunities for certain parks to have full connectivity with paved pathways would really help our wheelchair users around town. Also, I am in a household where the number one thing I hear about around town is when the lighting on King Street will be done, so I would like to place some urgency on that. Third, just in case it hasn't been spoken yet, huge thank you and appreciation for Ryan Jette being responsive in putting a cricket pitch together, so as we are moving along and looking for more feels, they are currently behind Kennedy School where it is a very tight space for cricket. There is a high and growing demand for cricket in town, so as we are looking at opportunities for different parcels of land, opportunities for cricket would be fantastic.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**February 9, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES AND PARKS (ADA COMPLIANCE INCLUDED)**

Due to the concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Pat Gallagher (00:11:35) I just wanted to highlight if you have any particular priorities, especially in the nature of capital-type work that you are looking at over the next few years?

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Lucas Giguere (00:12:10) I would say our away/visiting bleachers at the Franklin High School Stadium are not ADA compliant as far as allowing people to access those on the visitors' side. We do have compliance on our home bleachers, even up to our press box there is a ramp that allows for that. That is one area that I would point to, the other thing is Facilities has been really dedicated to helping us with our playground equipment to make it more accessible as we continue to evolve. We have been chipping away at this, when you think about our elementary schools where we primarily find our playground equipment, looking to try to create spaces like at Jefferson and the E.C.D.C., and Helen Keller; trying to create the rubberized pads that make it easier for mobility. Some of our spaces in the future I would prioritize would be to try to create more accessibility to the degree that is possible, and that's less about compliance but more about accessibility for the people who want to access those places. Right now they might be woodchipped or rubberized but that is an area, so definitely the away bleachers would be an investment as well in that beautiful stadium that we have. Those bleachers predate the high school that we have built. That would be what I would prioritize most if I was asked that question.

Jeff Milne (00:14:00) Losing Davis Thayer School, how does that affect your facilities, does it create a gap for you?

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Lucas Giguere (00:14:10) Since the closure of Davis Thayer, the students have been moved; most attend Helen Keller now. The facilities themselves, I don't know of an

impact on the playgrounds or the usage, I know that we have made accommodations for the students so that they get their education they need, but as far as the Davis Thayer project there is a nice playground there. I know that, from my own travels, that people still utilize that as a playground, and on the weekends if you drive by you will see people out there. It is not an outdated playground, so I know that it does get some use, so I don't think there's necessarily an impact to us with regard to that equipment.

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Mark LePage (00:15:01) Do you know what they are going to do with that building, because I think they have a gymnasium there too. Does that fall under the Department of Education?

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Lucas Giguere (00:15:10) It falls under the Town at this point. I know that they are going to be making some decisions and studying and exploring what the use may be, but it's under the Town purview, and there is a gym downstairs that exists in the building.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:15:28) There is a subcommittee being formed, I am sure they will meet the public can attend.

Pat Gallagher (00:15:45) So I know the redistricting is currently going on, studying what makes sense in terms of redistricting particularly based on the closure of Davis Thayer, and I wanted to get your thoughts on in facilities need to be replaced in addition to Davis Thayer. What would that look like, and are there areas that, for example, five; ten; twenty years down the road? If you need to close Kennedy and replace that, would you be looking to do that, and what do you need to think about if there are particular open spaces open for development that the Town control? I just wanted to get your thoughts on that, I think it's one of the things we want to keep in mind as we are looking at all of the available open space right now.

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Lucas Giguere (00:17:10) You are correct, we are in the process of conducting a redistricting analysis. The closure of Davis Thayer lead to us shifting some students around and we're in the process right now of engaging the community, and will be working with families to get some feedback in a forum next month on that. So, we are not yet at that point, and the School Committee will have the final vote on the next stage. I will say, when it comes to school buildings, in concert with us looking at enrollment and seeing where there the numbers climb back up after falling, we are trying to be really thoughtful in this process and not rushing to a decision that ends up hindering us in the future, where you don't account for the growth that you need. I don't have an answer for how that might impact open space with regard to this discussion, but we are in the process of studying that work. This spring will be sharing a recommendation with the School Committee, who ultimately will vote on next steps, but before that we are engaged in this process.

Mark LePage (00:19:55) Are the tennis courts in good shape?

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Lucas Giguere (00:20:00) From my understanding, they are fairly new in the context of spaces, because if you think about when the school was built, the courts were put in right

after. I do need to touch base with Ryan Jette because I am not sure if he brought up that there is some work that needs to be done, but I can find out and report back.

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Michael Rein (00:20:35) I think he may have mentioned some cracks were showing. Would you say that facilities are sufficient for the needs of your school sports and whatever else they are used for?

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Lucas Giguere (00:21:00) Yes, I want to advocate for the spaces we use in the district and say we should continue to look at our playgrounds and find ways to upgrade them over time, and I think we have started to do that in certain areas. Jefferson has a fairly new upgraded playground, with some accessible playground equipment, that's definitely the trend in towns that are mindful of it. It's something I would recommend and support. It doesn't happen overnight. As we are continuing to look at refreshing playgrounds and see not just that they are safe and compliant, but also when is there an opportunity to refresh the playground and is it an opportunity to upgrade them. So, the facilities that we have in each of these buildings in our complexes, short of our basketball court at Remington that I think Ryan Jette was going to talk about, but ultimately I feel that, with maintenance and some of these projects taken care of, the high school is the biggest one. I think if you take a look at the way bleachers are, that would be a glaring area that is not the standard in Franklin for that piece. We do hear about it from visiting fans who come to the stadium, and I understand there is nostalgia with the press box that is there or whatnot. Overall, I think we are fortunate in town to have nice facilities that we can use in open space and share with our community.

Mark LePage (00:22:40) Do you find sports participation by students is pretty stable, or does it grow—I'm sure it varies by student population—or is it static?

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Lucas Giguere (00:22:50) It is (static), we have a pretty healthy sports participation in this town, we are fortunate to be pretty successful in our sports across the board. Just thinking about it from the youth up, and certainly at the high school level we are DALD Award winners, which means we have the highest winning percentage of all varsity sports combined, we've had that award multiple times. We have a phenomenal facility with regard to the high school and the athletic department, and an excellent athletic director who leads that group and we have phenomenal coaches—whether they are new, just high quality, or have been with us for years—we are really fortunate to have people in town who are leading and growing and helping our athletic department. So, I would say in that regard we have a very healthy athletic program in town and we are very fortunate for that.

/

Mark LePage (00:23:45) It's good.

Pat Gallagher (00:23:52) One of the things we talked about with Ryan Jette was the number of programs and programs where they were seeing more interest or less, but that focus was just mainly youth sports programs. Are there any areas or new sports where you envision trying to get involved, if the district isn't already?

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Lucas Giguere (00:24:20) We offer a lot of sports, we are a pretty large school so we were fortunate to have that. I know it's been proposed around alpine skiing, but we don't have a facility around town and nothing has been formalized around that, as far as new. As far as existing programs, we offer a variety of fall, winter and spring sports; all the typical ones, certainly. We sustain our own programs, we don't need to co-op necessarily, we have girls and boys varsity hockey, we have really strong swimming programs, and we have a lot of the more traditional sports that you may be familiar with. So, we are fortunate.

Gus Brown *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:25:30) After speaking with Mike D'Angelo from Facilities and Ryan Jette from Recreation, Kennedy and Parmenter Schools are the only two schools to have challenges with having mulch in place to get to playgrounds. That was something they identified as an ADA compliance issue, otherwise all other schools aside from the FHS visitor-side bleachers are ADA compliant.

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Lucas Giguere (00:26:00) At ECDC we invested in plastic rollout pieces, and we have put something similar out for the raised beds in the community gardens. Each of our schools has ways of handling it, and that's one way we have had success with that as well. So, I am wondering about looking into those types of ideas that are not necessarily a big investment, but I also recognize the town wants something sustainable and not temporary, but that's the direction we went for that.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:27:31) I think that's a really great idea, especially when bringing it back to our last meeting, where there were concerns about access to some of our conservation areas, which would be difficult to pave next to a wetland or a pond, etc. But, having these other avenues to do that would be actually really helpful, I think. Contractors actually use that to mobilize through our wetland areas.

/

Lucas Giguere (00:28:10) I am happy to update that document just to make sure we include the walking trail and the tennis court. I will make sure I check with Breeka Li, and we can go from there, and I am happy to answer questions along the way. If you want to past them through Breeka Li or whatever is more convenient. Once again, I appreciate the time and being involved in this process, and I am excited as a superintendent but also as a resident for the future in Franklin and what ends up becoming of this all this, so thank you.

Denise Spencer (00:29:30) If we can be of any other help answering other questions, or addressing any concerns, please feel free to reach out.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:29:45) Same with what Lucas said about if anything comes up, and we would love to have the Committee involved in the process.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:30:00) I did ask Lucas to send me information on the mats, because that would be something, either through our department or a collaboration with Ryan Jette, would be easy to knock out of the park.

/

Jeff Milne (00:30:18) Do you think the mats will solve the problem with the parks?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:30:22) Yes and no. I think it would help with deeper access. I receive, maybe about once a month, letter from residents writing in about the slopes, and I understand and we are doing the forest stewardship plan. But, as we all know too, being a permitting agency, it is really difficult to permit for stabilizing or mowing down those slopes, since they're hills at this point. So, trying to navigate on that, I think this is a good idea. Something I had thought about would either be the Senior Center or Recreation Department, Fish and Wildlife Services have fat-tire wheelchairs so that people can rent them to go out to national parks, things like that. So, it is within the realm of possibility, I like the idea of mats. Going back to what Ali Rheaume had mentioned at the last hearing, even just changing out the substrate or keeping up on the substrate at DeICarte so she can even just get down to the water's edge, those are really easy things that can be accomplished. Whether, through the open space plan, through the forest stewardship plan, or just in general.

/

Meghann Hagen (00:32:00) Do we know what the mats are made out of?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:32:04) No, I am assuming that, if they are rolling them out, that they are made of some form of plastic. Using it as an example here, one of our open projects, Franklin Heights, their mats are recycled tires, and they are just stitched together and they just roll them out. So, if they make the in large sizes like those for big cranes and all sorts of other equipment, I am sure there is something smaller.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:32:30) Breeka Li, do we have a landscape architect, or anyone who would have more specialized background in things like techniques on the cutting edge that we could have come in and talk? If not, I am happy to try to reach out to folks to get some of those perspectives.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:33:00) I don't know anyone off the top of my head. I am not entirely sure if I can suggest anyone anyways, but I think that's a great idea. I would love to try to find one, and I can talk with Gus brown and look into our network and see who is around and who does what.

/

Mark LePage (00:33:17) **[Hard to discern]** Did he say who went Beaver Pond for the sand?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:33:24) He didn't explicitly say that. I'm assuming though, that it's probably here.

/

Michael Rein (00:33:34) There's a boardwalk that goes down a pretty nice way towards the water.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:33:50) All things to think about. I think it would be cool if the Conservation Commission had something. I would love for the Conservation Department

to have programming. Nature photography, nature painting, winter foraging, vernal pool surveys, frog calls, batbox building classes, the list goes on and on.

/

Jeff Milne (00:34:13) We had a Commissioner a couple years ago who was going to do a night tour of some cart listed for owls, but that never happened.

/

Mark LePage (00:35:00) How does something like the batbox get started?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:35:06) The batbox, I had already reached out to Mass WildLife, who actually had a batbox program that ended during Covid-19 unfortunately where they would donate batboxes to municipalities and residents, who would then become ‘citizen scientists’ and they would go out, survey and do everything that I do to track species of bats and whitenose syndrome, things of that nature. Unfortunately, they lost the funding, and so those batboxes are not available. I reached out to see if we built our own batboxes here in Franklin, if we could be a part of that program. They said yes, but our boxes would have to be stamped by Mass WildLife, and we would have to travel somewhere here in Massachusetts to get them stamped, so I thought we could just make our own program.

/

Meghann Hagen (00:36:29) I wonder if we are having a big enough event, that we could request someone to come out for it to stamp them, if we have enough people coming to make batboxes that it would make it worth their time.

/

Meghann Hagen (00:36:39) That’s a really good idea. The State Herpetologist is coming out to DelCarte to look at the turtle-nesting habitat this spring, so Mass WildLife, National Heritage—he tows that line—so I can ask him at the same time.

Michael Rein (00:37:12) I would love to get a natural perspective to do regular walks through DelCarte and even Franklin State Forest.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:37:16) I have asked, prior to Mark and Meg joining, if the Commission wanted guest speakers, talks, things of that nature, and you all seemed very receptive to that. So it’s still in the realm of possibility, I just figured not while we have all this stuff that we have going on right now.

/

Meghann Hagen (00:37:40) I would love to see and be part of, after OSRP, a monthly community education program for conservation. I think that would be awesome to put together and get the community, especially the kids, involved and it would be awesome.

/

Mark LePage (00:38:04) Mike Downey, from Forestry, he has a lot of cool knowledge.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:38:21) He is actually watching Franklin for the Beaver Deceivers, as he is a Commissioner out in Natick where they are quite inundated with beavers, so he is very excited to see that Franklin is doing something. Also, as we are talking about Open Space, DelCarte, and all the things we have planned, he did approve the Forest Stewardship Plan, so that is in effect as of this week. He is really excited about

all of the things we have going on in Franklin. He even called me this week to see if there is a Forest & Soil Health Conference, if I knew of any such conference. I said I didn't, and he said Schmidt Farm would be a really good place to host it. So, we have people from DCR looking at Franklin as a place to come to learn, to teach, to all of these events. TBD, since it is not official.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP Public Hearing Minutes**

**February 21, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

### **PUBLIC HEARING 1**

Due to the concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Responses**

Vince Brotcher (00:26:35) I live in Franklin, have for two and a half years. Love being part of this town and thrilled with everything that's going on with development, especially with a town that cares so much about Open Space. I am actually here tonight as part of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA), the Blackstone Valley Chapter. We are here because we want to help, there is so much potential for biking in this town and there is already a lot of it. The Dirt Diggers, a youth mountain bike league, was founded in Franklin, there's a lot of history for it, and use going on some of the trails there. So I am here to see what the town's appetite is for development of some of the trails. I know it was part of the presentation, that it was part of the 2016 plan, so to continue to grow upon that, we certainly don't want to come in and be like 'we want to take over this', no, we want to help. We want to help clear out downed trees, we want to be a part of the town to continue to help develop things, open up certain spots, and—I think Pat had mentioned earlier—the idea of linking a lot of the parts out there, a so-called emerald nexus, that a lot of towns have. There is so much potential for it, so I just want to say thank you for letting us be a part of this.

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Meghann Hagen (00:28:07) Where do you guys tend to mostly use as your recreation areas within town?

/

Vince Brotcher (00:28:17) I can only speak for myself, but I know the two key spots would be the Franklin Town Forest, and Franklin State Park. Of course the SNETT is a spot that people are going to be riding on a lot, and because of the geographical location of Franklin, a lot of the spots do blend in to other towns, especially the Norfolk side as well.

Mark Minnichelli (00:28:35) I have got a couple of comments for Ryan as you were going through the plans for the fields and so forth. I recalled that the Fletcher Field,

some of the ball stands (bleachers, as clarified by Ryan Jette at 00:29:40) that overlook the Fletcher Field. I noticed some of past couple of years there that some of the railings are pretty wide, and I know that when I was bringing my granddaughter toddler up onto those stands, I was thinking about how dangerous the railings at the very top of those stands are. So, is that something you can look at? I am concerned that a young child could easily slip off the back of some of those stands. And then, I don't know if this fits in with this Committee or not, but I am a cyclist who tends to ride more on the roads than on the trails, and I would like to suggest that Franklin put up a few signs reminding drivers that they should be sharing the road with cyclists. I have seen in other communities there are signs that say there should be 3 feet between the cyclist and the passing car, just some reminders to people to pay attention to the cyclists that are on the road.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:30:45) Thanks Mark. I would just add, that Franklin is a town that the P.M.C. (Pan Mass Challenge) runs through, and there is a lot of folks in town who, between mountain biking and road biking and whatnot, think that's a point of interest.

Mark Cohen (00:31:10) I am a former chairman of the Conservation Commission, and I am a member of NEMBA as well. I think you asked where we go mountain biking; I go to Upton, West Hill Dam, and Adams Farm in Walpole, but it would be great if we could integrate some of the trails here in Franklin. We don't necessarily have to connect with these other towns, but it is such an amazing sport. My girlfriend and I have been doing it for about three years now. We became members two years ago with NEMBA, and it's such a voluntary, communal type of operation making trails, I'll be on them building bridges, and it is so much fun. I never thought I was going to get up there and do it, but I am in my 50s now. It was ten years ago that I was up on that Conservation Board, so we appreciate open minds, and if we can help out making some more trails out there, beyond Franklin State Forest, it would be really great. We appreciate it.

Mark LePage (00:32:20) I have a question for Ryan Jette. I don't know if we talked about this, but this was kind of interesting in the notes here from 2016, this 'Developing Access Points for basically boating on the Charles River.' Is that something the Recreation Department gets involved in, or is that independent of that?

/

Ryan Jette (00:32:42) Specifically, where on the Charles are you speaking about?

/

Mark LePage (00:32:49) Specifically, it was a general goal for the 2016 Plan to develop more access points for canoes and boats on the Charles River. My question is, do we even have an inventory of that somewhere? Is that something we should research and see how we did on it. It just seems like an interesting opportunity, I didn't know if the Recreation Department was involved with that. If not, I will look into it separately.

/

Ryan Jette (00:33:04) Recreation Department was not involved with that. I think there was some initial discussions, if I remember correctly way back, about off the end of where Beech Street meets Pyne Street? There was a brick warehouse-type building that was taken down, and we did have a small access point in the back behind it, but at that

time the Conservation Agent didn't think so because there was a steep hill that dropped into the Charles River, and there was a lot of glass that needed to be cleaned up around there. So, there was some talk about that location, and then also there was some talk about the location off of Oak Street Extension, but that land is owned by the Army Corp. of Engineers, so, if there are any other locations that you are familiar with, I'm happy to discuss it.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:34:05) Are there kayaks at Beaver Pond now?

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Ryan Jette (00:34:09) We have a boat launch, yeah, to the far right. Right now I'm researching a company, I think it's called Fun-Rentals, and we're looking at potentially putting in a kayak kiosk where you would put in a code and unlock it with a code and be able to rent kayaks.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:34:25) Yeah, I think we've talked a little bit about that, and maybe DelCarte as well if there's opportunities to have kayak rentals there, because, to the point of can we increase access, if not to the Charles River, there seems like there are certain areas in town that would be suitable for that.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:34:42) I did receive a comment last week about the kayak launch at DelCarte. So, that right now, is pushed back and is inaccessible, so that would actually be a very easy lift at least to reattach that and bring it in.

/

Ryan Jette (00:35:00) Is that because of the receding water, or a maintenance issue?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:35:05) It's just a maintenance issue. There was a board that was placed at the bank to the kayak launch that has just sunk.

/

Ryan Jette (00:35:20) I will bring them out to repair that then, I'll have them come down in the springtime when the weather gets better.

Mark LePage (00:35:45) Do we know what water bodies we will prioritize for ecological studies?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:35:55) So there was a vulnerability study done—it's actually a pretty comprehensive binder that I have in my office and I have two copies, so if anyone would like to look at it you are welcome to—and it rates vulnerability of water bodies in Franklin. The previous Open Space Plan had on its list a goal to make this Open Space Plan super-comprehensive, so that is where I come in.

Roger Trahan (00:36:45) I did the 2016 Open Space Plan, and it looks like we have been moving forward at a nice pace on it. I did note that Open Space awareness is a lot more **(COULD NOT MAKE OUT WORD)** than it used to be. However, I'm hoping with Maple Street open now, that we could make it so I could know where exactly it is I walk into to access without going on to other peoples properties. That would be one comment I would have. Another one that I have seen roaming recently, especially with the

Conservation Commission, would be just citizens awareness, trying to educate and be more use friendly. I know the Agricultural Committee is also trying to present different opportunities. I did read the water preservation, and I thought I read somewhere that the amount of salt in Franklin's water has gone up dramatically, but I would like to see that continue to be looked at. Lastly, I just think that we are making such strides, we picked up 200+ acres this year alone that seems to be doing more and more with Open Space Plans. I think it's time that we may start to look at possibly including in the budget, almost like the DCR, I think that you are going to get to a point where you are going to need to get someone to overlook the planning, maintenance, and preserving of all the open space in town, so I would hope that could become a part of the Open Space Plan as well.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:39:03) To that last point certainly, I think a lot of other towns have a Conservation Trust (or something like it) but a separate municipal or corporate entity that is doing the day-to-day, and I certainly think getting into the plan update and how we are going to address those things, because as a Conservation Commission we have stewardship over DelCarte, but I think it's very different when it's come to these really dynamic areas. Especially Schmidt Farm, I think, because Maple Hill is a little bit of a separate that will be maintained I think as a Forestry-Conservation area, and I don't there's quite as much to that as there could be at Schmidt Farm, and the opportunities that are over there. So, I think certainly figuring out what is the right device to be managing those properties and working through the CPA Committee, and we are going to be mapping out what the vision is for those properties, but that has to be implemented such that.

Michael Rein (00:40:30) Under the third 2016 goal, there is a couple of subgoals: "increase connectivity to and between Conservation areas of open space, and then work with DCR to increase access to SNETT and Forest Trail." That brings to mind, for me, extending the SNETT to the center of town. I'm just wondering if that comes under the purview of this plan, or could it? Is there any work being done in that area?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:41:10) Yes. So Ryan, I believe you mentioned that a few meetings back if I recall correctly, yes?

/

Ryan Jette (00:41:21) That is correct, yes, it is in the works. It's a long process because it involves the rail companies, I think it's CSX that owns the property. So it is in the works, I know that Mr. Hellen has been in communication with that rail company. It just takes a long time, so I think within time that will get done.

/

Michael Rein (00:41:40) That would be incredible, thank you.

Mark Minnichelli (00:41:46) I just wanted to take the opportunity, since we are talking about these greenspace acquisitions, to thank all of you who are on this Commission and anybody else who had involvement in those large purchases of greenspace. I have been calling in to some of the Mass Forest webinars recently, and there are not too many municipalities that are ready and able to take advantage of these Chapter 61 opportunities

when they become available, and I think that Franklin and all of you who are involved deserve, so thanks and congratulations for being able to pull off those two purchases over the last couple of years.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:42:45) I think that underscores the importance of these plans, that the plan is the roadmap for what you are prioritizing, like what you saw for Maple Hill. It was probably the first time that Franklin had exercised its ability to purchase land through the Chapter 61 read at first offer, and so I think they are not necessarily the same land areas that we are looking at now in terms of 'can these be acquired', certainly not 100 acre tracts that are potentially out there for the town to look at. But I think, now that you have these two incredible opportunities and plenty of smaller opportunities as well, how do we make those accessible? Maple Hill right now is not really publicly accessible, it's an 85-90 acre tract that's behind residential lots, so a big piece of that is find out how do you enable the public to access those trail networks without disturbing the folks own properties and the residences back there. How do you do it in a way that is going to be minimally intrusive, how do we maintain the character of that forest, because I think that is a pretty incredible resource for the town. We are going to try and be balancing the accessibility piece of this, and I think we saw in 2016 that accessibility was a major goal of the 2016 update. I would certainly put that in the ongoing category of areas that we can always do more to increase accessibility, both to playgrounds and fields, and the more developed recreation areas as well as areas like DelCarte and Maple Hill. A lot of that is small things, being able to go out and widen entryways, clear paths of fallen trees and branches, and a lot of that is a community effort to make those accessible to hiking or biking or whatnot, it's getting folks to participate in that effort.

Meghann Hagen (00:45:40) So, Ryan, I am seeing that you and Lucas Giguere are going to be going out to do that ADA self-evaluation, will you be looking at just the school properties, or are you looking at all the recreation areas?

/

Ryan Jette (00:45:55) Correct, yes, all of those sites that are public and private on the calendar that you can see there, anything that's at a school, there are 23 site that we will be visiting. We will be looking at every avenue of that, whether it's accessibility, the height of doorways, and bathrooms, and handles, and all of that. It's a pretty extensive self-evaluation, I did it back with Don Netto \*(name spelling unclear)\* many years ago, and then we did it again with Mike Ferullo, and Gus Brown will be involved. So yeah, we will be doing all the town and school facilities, yeah.

Pat Gallagher (00:47:13) To that point, just to reiterate something that came up a couple weeks ago when we talked about this, when we (and the town) looked at this through the lens of ADA accessibility, I think for our purposes, the plan update can be more aspirational than that, and not only what is required under the ADA, but as a practical matter. Are these areas truly accessible, and what more can be done to address that, so I think the more folks we have participating and giving a voice to that, the better the end product is going to be.

Susan Speers *chat comment read by Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:48:03) Appreciate the attention to maintenance of trails, support for good accessibility by all residents, and staff support. Also - some attention will be helpful to informing trail users of actual trail guidelines... when they become posted?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:48:20) I think that's something definitely I have heard in my day-to day, and that we've all heard when you have public hearings and we are talking about Conservation areas. Not to double down on the Open Space Plan, but this will definitely help with that trail maintenance, not just with getting the word out or identifying problematic areas/areas that could use more signage or accessibility, but even allowing us to apply for MassTrails grants. Also, Forest Stewardship programs, like for Maple Hill, so that will help with creating a lot of those boundary markers and trail maintenance all the way down to volunteer site visits. The possibilities are there.

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Ryan Jette (00:49:13) If I could add to that, just before Covid I reached out to the Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, Eagle Scouts, to see if we could form and adopt a trail program in town. One troop could take an entire trail system, like the Indian Rock, and go out a couple times a year and clean trails, remove blown down trees, etc., but we haven't really connected with them since Covid. Now that we're heading out of this, it is something I would like to see the town adopt, maybe reach out to some of these volunteer organizations, a lot of these kids need to get community service hours to earn badges. Susan is right, we do need to do some maintenance in there, and I think it puts a lot of pressure on our DPW to put that work on to them. So I would like to see if we can get volunteers to do that, so if anyone listening has a son or daughter in one of the scout groups, to maybe reach out to us so we can see if we could organize that.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**February 23, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: SCHMIDT FARM**

Due to the concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Melanie Hamblen (00:19:48) This is a dream come true for me, just six years of working and hoping to get to this point. I think one of the things I think about a lot is the barn, and how it could be used as a history of Franklin farming, and to keep the Schmidt's stuff there, but also other farms, like CJ's Farm which is a century farm on the other side of Franklin. Also, just to keep some of that hayfield hay by a local farmer, and areas where we can teach the kids in the schools, so they can go to a farm in Franklin and learn about farming. But, I'm sure there is a lot of other things people want to talk about, so I want to thank you for having us tonight.

Susan Spears (00:21:35) I agree with Melanie 100%. I'm a member of the Board of Directors for Metacomet Lane Trust, and I first became aware of the Schmidt Farm many years ago when I served on an Open Space Committee that the town had in 1988. I had a question first. Can you confirm that, when we purchased this land, we purchased it for open space and recreation for the CPA (Community Preservation Act), and we did not purchase it for any other municipal purpose?

/

Pat Gallagher (00:22:27) I think that would be a question for Mark Cerel, who unfortunately is not with us tonight, but it was purchased through the CPA using CPA funds. So, to the extent that that restricts usage, those restrictions would apply here as well.

/

Susan Spears (00:22:33) Right, I think that's good to remember that when people begin to think about what you do with 260 acres in a town of our size. That being said, I believe it is intended to be open space and passive recreation, I very much hope. I think there are some size constraints, which, although the CPA might allow active recreation—I'm not saying we don't need it as our population grows—but I do think there are a lot of site constraints; and respecting the history, the land, the landscape and the slopes and the

wetlands. I think that it should be preserved primarily as open space and passive recreation, and I would second Melanie Hamblen's comment that I'm very interested in preserving the farm with an agricultural component; and, just to go more into one of the points in the slide presentation: properties like this that have been bought by other communities in Eastern Massachusetts for the purposes of preserving the land and landscape and community character, all of which Schmidt Farm clearly speaks to for all of us that know it, that there are many ways to preserve and agricultural component there so that the town is not trying to actually trying to maintain a pumpkin field or orchard, or grow the pumpkins all year long so that, when the schoolkids come by on a field trip, there are pumpkins for them to take home. You can lease property that is owned by the town, and there are agricultural organizations throughout southeast and central Massachusetts and statewide who will help the town find an interested farmer. We have a lot of farmers in town and we have some people who are still looking for more land to farm. I think the history of that property means the soils are probably pretty good, and it was sustainable for a small family operation for generations, and I think that those two pieces together means we should respect the landscape and the ability of the land to provide for certain things of public benefit and not assume that we are going to convert it to some other use. The town has many many needs, but I believe the Town Council, the Community Preservation Committee, and every other body in town wanted this to be Open Space and Recreation. That does not preclude agriculture, education, etc., it does preclude other things the town needs, and we'll have to fund those in a different way, but we can because now we have CPA (Community Preservation Act). I hope that this project moves through a public process so that what's finally decided has the support of a large number of people including the people who are closest to it.

Roger Trahan (00:26:17) I did put together a few thoughts on Schmidt's Farm. I am a lifelong resident of Franklin and went through the school system with one or two of the Schmidt children from there. We at the Agricultural Committee, a couple of weeks ago, had a couple of members who were present that night put together a couple of ideas and tried to brainstorm so that we could all agree upon our thoughts. So, one of the first things that came up is the importance to preserve that barn, bring it back up to a functioning barn that could be used for a public space, a rental for functions, could have classrooms in it for agricultural or conservation events, with walking paths throughout the property with different placards, if you will, that would identify wetlands, open fields, gardens, and what could be grown there as well. Around the barn, we thought maybe pollinator gardens or vegetable gardens close to it but still try to bring the beauty of that barn out with the plants that were there. We also thought, as far as the parking lot, obviously you want it to be pervious and not impervious out there to try and protect things. We also talked about garden beds, and what came up was that, on King Street there are small rental beds there, but there are people in town that would like slightly larger beds. So, we thought we could start small, turnover maybe an acre, and rent out larger spots to families from town who wanted to grow a garden, with guidelines obviously. Some other fields we thought would be good to be hayed by local farmers. We tried to keep it so that we would give it at least first preference to a local farmer versus someone from out of town. That being said, we are not against a farmer from out of town beginning an incubator farm, but we would like to make it available first to a

local person, maybe with a one year lease but options to reapply and re-rent the same piece because, obviously they would be working this land and trying to make it better. They would not want to work on a piece of land for two or three years and then lose that particular piece, so that is what we thought about that. Then, we started talking about trails through the woods. I believe, currently, the cross country team in Franklin would have to be bussed into several different parks throughout the state for cross country track meets. So, if we could partner with the high school, maybe make a few trails through the woods, then we could not only save on the bussing costs but also make it more available for cross country teams. Then, my wife and I visit a park down in PA every year, and it's similar to this; it's an old farm and a field, wetlands, and there different trails everywhere, and everything is marked off as far as 'this is a wetland' and 'this grows here, these are the flowers that grow here.' When you get up into the woods, there's a century park for the kids, and different drums and different things that they can touch and make noise, basically. It's well-used by the public down there. Whenever I go there, there are three parking lots and they're all full. You could also, obviously, do exercise trails and then there are information trails. Find the use to keep at least part of this land agricultural use, possibly part of it into a forestry plan, where you could log part of it and sell some of that logging to pay for other things on this land. So, those were a few of the thoughts that we had. I said the other night, when you get into this kind of volume in town, sooner or later the town is going to want to put someone over all these lands—a partner or director or whatever—but that's not for Schmidt Farm in particular, but it's something I think should be included in the Master Plan as well.

Stacey Cobb (00:32:07) I live at 11 Eagle Drive, I run Nature's Nurse Wildlife Rehabilitation here in Franklin. I did feel the need to reach out for the Open Space Plan here in Franklin. I agree that the land should be preserved, and I am constantly looking for spaces to release wildlife. The more building that's going on, it's becoming more difficult, so I would like to see more land conserved for wildlife. I am also looking for a plot of land for my non-profit where I can release wildlife. Currently, I live in a residential neighborhood where that is not possible. I run the Wildlife Initiative as well, which, we're a group that works on environmental cleanups, etc. and I would love to help the town out on that as well.

Ed Szymanski of 529 Pleasant Street (00:33:40) I actually participated as a guest in that Agricultural Commission meeting where we talked about those things, and I agree that it would be great to use this property for agricultural purposes, educational purposes, leasing land to local farmers and all too. One of the things that I feel very strongly about is that I do a lot of hiking and nature photography, and there are a number of designated wildlife management areas in the state. I don't know what exactly the guidelines are for that, but along the lines of what Stacey said as far as her rehabilitating wildlife, I had a vision of walking a clearing trails, and planting trees and shrubs and so forth, and birds and pollinators and things like that, and also incorporating that into trails, but sort of a more official wildlife management area, if that fits in the guidelines. But, I think with the wetlands areas that this would be a perfect use for something like that.

Frank Goulet (00:35:18) I've been a resident of Franklin for thirty years or so, served on a few different committees here and there, and my kids have been pretty active in doing some great projects around town. My daughter Hailey built a dog park; my other daughter worked on DelCarte putting up signs and such. I commend all of you for working so hard on this, because this is great. So many good ideas are not necessarily mutually exclusive here; walking trails, farming, using the barn for civic activities, they can all coexist I think to some extent. I think those are all wonderful things, I use the DelCarte property all the time to walk my dog. I think that would be fabulous to have some more trails like that that we could use. But, I would also like to give a plug for this idea of community supported agriculture. I don't know if you have seen the model, but Natick Community Farms is a pretty interesting place. My daughter works there. I don't know much about the organization, I'm certainly no expert of it, but when I see what they do and how they run things, I think 'Man, that is a pretty cool model. Wouldn't it be nice to see something in Franklin like that.' With a really small piece of land, they really managed to have CSA production for flowers, for vegetables, and now for wheat and livestock. You know, I don't think they are particularly profit-driven, part of their mission is to educate, so they keep kids busy with afterschool programs, jobs in the summer, and just—generally speaking—provide a way for people to learn about agriculture. So, you look at a model like that, and again I'm no expert at this, but I think 'boy, that looks pretty attractive to me' when I imagine what this property could be. I see a vibrant farm that is part of the fabric of the community and can educate and produce goods for the town.

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Haley Goulet (00:38:17) I am the livestock manager over at Natick Community Organic Farm right now, and I wanted to tune in to hear the plans, because it is a really interesting model. So Natick Community Farm is owned by the town, and it is a non-profit, so we have town positions and we have non-profit positions, and we do a little bit of everything with only two acres of production space. It was created with the main goal of education, which, me personally, that's huge. Agricultural education is something that we really miss in our communities right now for sure. We provide the community with about 40 CSA shares right now, about 20 meat shares, and 20 flour shares every year on just two acres of production. So the capacity to feed the community is really huge, and do honestly a little bit of everything, educating and providing working opportunities for youth especially.

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Frank Goulet (00:39:57) One thing I forgot to mention is that, from what I know about what it takes to be a farmer every day, we should probably think a lot about whether or not we want to tear the house down, because if you really do need a caretaker for the property, it can be a full time job. Having a living space is something you really want to think about, if someone ends up being the caretaker for the property.

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Pat Gallagher (00:40:24) I appreciate that. I think that particular decision is probably going to be made by the Building Department and Gus Brown, and I think it will be 'what's needed to maintain it' and the cost and all of that. But, point certainly taken that I think that part of this strategic plan and what we'll be looking at for Schmidt Farm in particular – and the Schmidt Farm conversation is going to far outlive this plan update—

but it's going to be looking at comparable organizations and comparable spaces like this, and I think there's going to be a lot of learning about 'what are some models that work' and 'what might be a good fitting', so definitely an ongoing process, so thank you.

CJ Koshivas (00:41:33) I live at 87 Lincoln Street, I'm also a part of the Agriculture Commission. I have also talked to a lot of other farms that are either in Franklin or in close proximity, and I think that this is a great opportunity for a lot of these things to coexist, like walking trails and wildlife rehabilitation spots, gardens and such. Those types of things, I think are absolutely awesome and I think about that amount of land and what we can incorporate within it. Obviously, as the manager and owner of Fairmount Farm, I have a vested interest in the farm aspect and agricultural aspect, so I have talked to other farms in Norfolk, Medway and also in Franklin, and the biggest concern that I hear is community CSA type of ones, is that there is a type of competition. At some places, I know that, like Natalie from Night Owl Farm, she is in very close proximity and then that goes into direct competition with her. That being said, I love the knowledge from the community to go and participate in the garden aspect of it, but I think if you add a portion of an educator type of way to start your own farm, start a small plot, participate in that level. I have known people in the past five years that can't start their own small farms, or small little bird gardens, or essential oil things because they don't have glade here. Maybe that's an avenue, because I know some people who have had to leave Massachusetts in general because space is just too valuable, just too hard to come by. So, that is my only hesitation in that route. Obviously I am one side, I have a different viewpoint, but that was where I was coming from, and I thought because I loved it, I love involving the community, I think that is absolutely the number one goal of this is to include the community in general, in growing, in how to learn, those types of things. But, I don't want to see other farms, especially young farms, farms that just need that room to grow, come into such a force that could be right next to them.

Mark (00:44:41) One model we haven't discussed is preserving it just the way it is, having the hayfields, passive recreation, the barn as a venue, but I would like to see that there has to be some agricultural component to it, and some kind of educational purpose for children to understand how and why it's so important for farming in this community.

Pat Gallagher (00:46:35) CJ and Roger and other Agricultural Commission folks in the room, if in an incubator type model, what is the right amount of land do you think would be the minimum?

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CJ Koshivas (00:46:51) I think, within the small discussions that we had, starting off smaller is better. Little chunks that you can handle, and then seeing how those work and if it is successful, expand that. So we were taking the community garden examples, like you start with the plot, a small section, and if that's doing really well with the demand, then you can break off another chunk. That's what we were thinking, is start small, make sure we do it right, make sure it is well maintained, and then we can always put that amount of acreage, see what the community wants or desires and what we're able to develop at a good pace and have an efficient well-maintained place.

Cobi Frongillo *via comment read by Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:47:55) I would like to echo everything previously said. Community farming, historic agriculture education in the barn, water management education by the wetlands, walking trails, leased ag management. The only piece I'd add would be to leave the center of the barn so it can be flexibly used for various events.

Haley Goulet *via comment read by Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:48:20) I recommend looking to new entry for incubator models.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:48:30) Just one regulatory component to this because it's now a town-owned property. So, previously it's been able to have agriculture exemptions for its use around wetland resource areas, but now that it's a town property we have to be mindful that those agriculture exemptions do not apply, so that means that those buffer-zone requirements are now in place.

Roger Trahan (00:48:53) I believe Night Owl Farms, there is about six acres of land there that she farms and I think that started a couple years ago, and then there's another farm in Wrentham that's about six acres also, and she has quite an operation over there. So, it doesn't have to be big acreage to start up.

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Melanie Hamblen (00:49:41) I think there's this great potential to connect this farm with students at the Norfolk Agricultural School, and I think when we talk about sizes of plots for young persons started, a quarter-acre is pretty big. I have one myself, and it's really a lot of work. So, I think you could lease quarter-acre lots to kids from the Agricultural School, or people like Haley Goulet, or like there's so many people who want to do things but can't afford the land, and that's why—as CJ says—people leave Massachusetts. We need more smaller farms for food security.

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Pat Gallagher (00:50:30) I think that illustrates the planning and long-term component of this, because I think it seems like some of this is going to need to be in small increments of physical space, and making sure we are not going to plan for 100 percent of the area right away. It's going to be a plan for a very small portion of the area, knowing that we want to give it time and let it simmer a little bit.

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Meghann Hagen (00:51:10) Going off of Melanie's comment about food security for our community. I wonder, as we are talking about farming, if looking at how this land could support the Franklin Food Pantry along the way, I think that's some good food for thought. The other thing we've talked about in other weeks on the previous projects is how we can bring accessibility on to our different open spaces within town. So, I think that would be a challenge with a big piece of farming property here, but I think it's worth thinking about how we can make this an inclusive space for people within our community.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:51:53) Ryan Jette and I, right now one of their access trails go through the wetland, one of their exceptions was that. But, Ryan and I talked about how we need to lift that up, as a boardwalk, so it can still connect both of the fields, and we

were talking about having it be wide enough so everybody can go through, so we are on it.

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Meghann Hagen (00:52:10) And I'm thinking about placards, and we're thinking about doing things along the boardwalk, things that are at a height where someone in a wheelchair would be able to use, read, and be educated as well. I think that's a good opportunity to make this inclusive for everybody.

Jeff Milne (00:52:35) One other thought, the number of scouting organizations in this town, and I notice that part of this is a wooded area, and we're not going to be making sure this is a camping training, cooking training, etc.

Stephen Sherlock (00:52:57) As one who uses the Community Garden which was referenced, the Food Pantry has ten to fifteen beds there that provide some of the fresh fruit, vegetables etc. for the food pantry. If that is an option to continue and/or expand into either the plots as we already have, or as mentioned tonight, making some larger plots available, I think the Food Pantry would be looking to expand accordingly. The one caveat with that though is it also takes people to help volunteer, but with the turnout tonight, I expect that would not be a problem once we have the great opportunity to make it happen. So, thank you for the opportunity to make it happen.

Jeff Milne (00:54:08) Got a question for Haley Goulet, just wondering what kind of staff you have there?

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Haley Goulet (00:54:16) We do a lot of education, so we have a lot of education staff. For the production team, it's me, the flower manager, and the veggie manager, and we pretty much run on volunteers.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**March 9, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: RIVERBEND**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Jacob Berry (00:05:18) I've used this particular area for years. Just hiking, it's a wonderful area as far as river access—which is pretty rare in Franklin, to have access to the river. A couple comments on it; one, there is a tremendous opportunity with open parcels to add onto this parcel all the way over to Shaw Street, which would be fabulous. A couple of things I see for improving this area; one, there is illegal ATV access in this area, it's been going on for years. It's become very clear that it's coming from one property over on Amy's Way. I don't know how to deal with it or stop it, certainly open to ideas and happy to contribute to those. Another issue is that a lot of the trails have been built by ATV's and there's a serious design issue with the trails that leads to flooding and mud with the trails, it's just getting worse and degrading the trails over time. A lot of the main trails, including the access in from the parking lot, could really use a redesign or some water rerouting, or just ways to get the water off the trails. More of the trails for hiking down towards the river are less prone to those problems with the water, probably because they are designed with it in mind.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:07:12) So I am a previous consultant for NGrid and Eversource, and ATVs are not allowed under the R.O.W. for obvious safety reasons, but if you do see that—it's out of my jurisdiction, for what you can do for a R.O.W.—but you can always call them. So they're pretty responsive and pretty receptive to that. It's hard to police, for example the R.O.W. by the WMCA I get hit the first month I worked here by a dirtbiker, no fault of his own of course, but they installed gates. Obviously not something we can do to Riverbend, since it's open access, but they are responsive so I would suggest you call them. Thank You.

Stephen Sherlock (00:08:40) I'll second the prior comment first. There's a number of folks, at least from a senior center, tend to be part of a walking group and visit there frequently. They tend to avoid it from time to time, because of the water. It tends to impede on the trail, however it's caused. So if it's truly wetlands and that prone to water,

and at some point in time—it would obviously take some money—but some sort of planking/boardwalk etc. to protect both the wetland and allow for access, it would both protect the wetlands and also allow for handicap access to the wetlands, I would think.

\*Unnamed Remote Participant *via Tyler Paslaski* (00:10:17) Riverbend is a great piece of land - would love to see more access down to the river, somehow. Also, if the town would ever be willing to look at sidewalks in that area so local people can walk and not use the limited parking, that would be amazing.

Cobi Frongillo (00:10:27) Riverbend, I give it two superlatives; it's both our most underappreciated asset, and—possibly related—our worst-marked trail network. We finally got a sign on the road to at least indicate it was there, which is fantastic and kudos to the town for doing that, but every single time I go, including with people who hike frequently, we have a very difficult time trying to follow the intended marked path. So, I think every trail in Franklin needs a little work, but in particular Riverbend. The other two comments have been said; water issues are certainly a problem, and then there are opportunities to potentially extend the trail network through some open-space resources if people are potentially willing to sell, so we should keep an eye particularly on the Delea property, which extends our ability to have a trail along the river.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:11:50) So, as an update, many folks know I'm sure that we did the forest stewardship plan at DelCorte, so this week I called Mike Downey at DCR to see if we could get a forest stewardship plan in place at Riverbend, which also will help with a lot of grant funding for those trail networks, will help with boundary markers, will help with signage, things of that nature. So, that's definitely something that I'm ruminating on and I actually met with Ryan Jette about it because he was really jazzed about forest stewardship plans, so that's something that I hear about definitely quite a bit. I also had thought how cool it would be to have some signage, so we actually have four tribes which call Franklin home, and to try and connect with them to get their historic utilization of the Charles, and then to do some signage to do a nice homage to historical practices with the Charles. There is a great history component there.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:13:04) I think two things; signage is tied into one of these. I think it's not necessarily apparent from the road that there's parking if you go in, and so I think folks who drive by it and want to stop might not know there's parking down that gravel drive. So, maybe some sort of signage indicating parking is out there, and the other I think is a little more challenging. In addition to being pretty wet, the trails do get steep going down to the river. That's obviously a feature of the land, but I think certainly anyone who has accessibility needs, but even kids, I think, could have a really hard time just getting down to the riverside. I don't know if there are ways that can mitigate that kinda steep slope, because I think getting down to the river is a neat spot there, but to do that is a pretty steep incline.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:14:21) We could look at some wooden rails, that would be nice, or even building in steps, so not truly excavating but putting something in there so

it's a little bit easier to go down.. Ryan Jette and I were talking this weekend about that for DelCarte, for accessibility issues.

Ali Rheume *via Tyler Paslaski* (00:14:46) I've never been there, but I watched a YouTube video tour haha - I don't have any accessibility feedback because it's not a location that is fit for someone with mobility needs and that's okay.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:15:10) So Ali, there is opportunity, if the Town were to acquire adjacent parcels, that we could have a 'top of the slope' sort of trail network. So, that's something that's been discussed and something that's hopefully in the future, but not on the table at the moment, but we're hopeful.

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Ali Rheume *in Zoom chat comment* (00:16:35) Neat!! Thanks!!

Patrick Gallagher (00:15:52) Do you know, since we have some time, the comment came up earlier on extending sidewalks, and right now the sidewalks don't really go much further than Elm and Daniel Street and maybe a couple of other houses. But, do you know if there's any kind of funding or project in the pipeline?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:16:10) Not that I've heard, no. I think most of it is going on Grove Street right now, and towards the SNETT. I know you picked up my plug for extended parking, so that is something I know is in the works. I have not heard anything on Lincoln, but Brooke will be here later.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:16:38) It might be worth looking into, because depending on how far you can extend the sidewalk, and this gets to be on the Riverbend, if you could bridge it up into Medway, I think there's a lot of walkability options. That's a more ambitious thing that just extending it to a river.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:17:10) I'd probably be more apt to walk it.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:17:13) People drive fast down that road, so it's a tough road to just be walking on.

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Stephen Sherlock (00:17:19) I will second that notion on the sidewalks, there are a number of roads, that one certainly being key, where they are fairly narrow. So, it is rather dangerous for an individual—whether they are walking or running— and I have run many of those roads, to be considered safe. To try and provide both the accessibility as the safety aspects and access to our facilities, I think, would be key. Through this process and ultimately to the master plan, by all means that's where I will continue to help. I do a lot of walking reporting by walking around, and there are some places that I am much more comfortable walking in, particular in day but even in night. In some spots—specifically in nighttime—I will not venture far off.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:19:55) A question for the residents here, and it's a broad topic, but what would your access to the Charles River be? What do you define that as? Would

it be viewing? Would it be wildlife viewing? Would it be kayaking? What would access to the Charles River be to you?

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Marc in Zoom chat comment responding to Breeka Li Goodlander's 00:19:55 question (00:23:01) Access for kayaking or canoeing!

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Ali Rheume in Zoom chat comment responding to Breeka Li Goodlander's 00:19:55 question (00:23:03) Access for kayaking would be great! I would love to fish there, or even just sit on a bench and view it.

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Jacob Berry (00:20:24) So, as I previously mentioned, I think Riverbend is one of our only shots at public access to the Charles River in town. When I want to access the river for on-water, I go to Norfolk. There is two reasons for that; One, it's easy access, you can dump your kayak or canoe in right there, whether you are going to Populatic or down the right a little. I think, also here, we are dealing with a dam on the river, which limits how much we can use there, and I don't know if there's any talk there ever about removing that dam. I know the state has been actively removing them in some places where they are not needed, but it would be great to have access in Franklin to have on-water sports, whether that's canoeing or kayaking. Even fishing, there is fishing and I do see people fishing in Riverbend if they can make it down that steep trail, which could be redesigned. You could take that trail out and just make a switch back there, which would make it much easier for, of course not people with mobility issues, but for other people to safely access and get down to the river.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:21:51) I think part of what this plan is going to yield, in terms of recommendations, is we might not have a resource we can really tap into in Franklin, and so maybe the answer to that is trying to make folks more aware of where they can access the Charles River. Even if it's not right, I think it's definitely worth investigating as much as we can. The dams is above our paygrade, but as a former rower on the Charles, I'm a big proponent of seeing if we can get more access.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:22:30) Actually, since we are on the Charles River Watershed Association, I am the liaison for that with the Town. So, it is something, but it's a lot of funding, a lot of grant money because that would come from a grant, and a lot of permitting and PR work.

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Stephen Sherlock (00:24:40) I think Breeka Li cover it, because the CRWA had prior meetings looking into the removal of that dam. I don't know if there are future meetings, but if there are I'll certainly share those out through Franklin Matters. Certainly go to the Charles River Watershed Association, and sign up to their alerts. They do have a number of dam removal proposals in the works, and as Breeka Li mentions, they're complicated and going to take time. But there are efforts underway, and at least from what I understood from the first one, there were more naysayers—people who were fearful of the removal of the dam—than folks looking for the possible improvement.

Marc in Zoom chat comment (00:20:35) Are there any wetlands near Dacey field? Just wondering if we can construct any bike/mountain bike trails in that area.

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Breka Li Goodlander (00:23:11) So, it's very feasible to have a trail network in there, there would be some minor stream crossing since we can't actually go all the way around those wetland complexes. So, the two wetlands, the north and then this isolated one (to the south) so there's intermittent streams that connect those and then drain offsite. So we would have to have some sort of stream crossing, however we can definitely at least make partial trails throughout there and do singular loops throughout that southwest corner or something like that. If there's need for that, that's something I would absolutely talk to Ryan Jette about. I have no problem with that, I'm sure he would love that too.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**March 22, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: Maple Hill**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Stephen Dombroski (00:03:19) I'm on with (unable to hear names) and we all live on Kimberlee Avenue. First of all, we appreciate the Town purchasing the land. We were directly in line to being with the big development that was going to be in there, and were surprised—happy, I don't know—for this to turn out this way. Personally I am a direct beneficiary of what happened, because I get back in the woods once or twice a day to walk my dog and things like that. So, I look forward to seeing what the town would like to do, hopefully keep it natural. If you can kind of get away, get some fresh air and a little exercise, and we have been talking a little bit about just having it be an educational opportunity with the wetlands and vernal pools, maybe we have another vernal pool back there that we got to figure out. There's just a lot of nature going on, and things, it's all going to be very interesting to watch too, because quite a big chunk of it was logged, which you guys were probably aware of, and it's already coming back. My trees are coming back. So, if you want to pick our brains for ideas, I think keeping it as much natural as we can—and we understand we have to have access to it somehow—might be one of the challenging things, because there is only one access point now that I am aware of that's a trail that goes from the public street to a difficult land—otherwise, we have a few private ways. We were talking today a little bit about it, but just knowing the access points, and a few things—there's a lot of dead trees out there that are hazards.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:05:33) I was just about to ask, what's the condition of the trail network? Who brings up things like that?

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Stephen Dombroski (00:05:47) I'm not sure of it, but there's the main loop that's been there for years, and a lot of it is kind of in disrepair, and a lot of rocks and roots that can be troublesome. I think about how it could be graded to make it nicer, to make it easier for the average person. There's also a mishmash of smaller hiking trails back there that have been around for years, but the group that regularly walks back there have been

cleaning them off and getting them in this pretty good condition. So, it would be nice to address it the median in that respect.

Lawrence Rettman (00:06:51) I'm on the Board of Directors for the Metacomet Land Trust, and the Metacomet Land Trust owns some parcels around town. We own, abutting Maple Hill in three spots, we own 43 acres abutting Maple Hill. Natural resources and inventory, it's critical to document existing conditions before plans for improving access for use. This work comes in reference to what's known as a baseline documentation report, that will also be needed for the eventual Conservation restriction in the changing of the title. The formal C.R. is a state requirement for use of CBA funds. The Conservation Commission is a logical body to oversee the work which could be carried out by town staff or experienced conservation consultants. Public access, we're to establish trailheads with street access and small parking areas, kiosks with maps. It will be critical to include the perspective of residents near the current access points early and often; management history, both old and recent of formal trails; consideration of potential new trails to connect the access points trail with construction standards and accessibility of some trails; slopes, runoff and maintenance are some of the issues to be considered with an eye to future climate prospects. The Town will also have to address how to respond to emergencies and violations of trail use standards, and just a note for the record, that the eventual conservation restriction land does require a third party conservation entity—not the Commission itself—to determine the deed restriction. Metacomet Land Trust is qualified to serve in this capacity, and currently is responsible for C.R.s on the municipal land in Bellingham and Upton. There is no statutory deadline for this document, but it would normally take about two years. So, I want to let the Commission know that **I am reading these comments (audio seems to have cut out, not 100% certain this is what he said)**, and I also served on the Conservation Commission here from 1970 until 2000, and I am an original founder of the Metacomet Land Trust which has been around for about 32 years now, and we are in the business of preserving land.

Mark Minnichelli (00:11:16) I am going to probably just be singing the same tune that's already been discussed. My wife and I enjoy the natural trails that already exist around Franklin. We haven't had the chance to see the Maple Hill area yet, and I just want to voice our opinion that the natural beauty of that parcel is maintained, and try to keep it as close to natural as possible. The only other subject that I would like to bring up is ADA accessibility. There are some recreational areas around Franklin that are more suitable probably, or easier to give ADA accessibility to. I'm not sure what the topology of the Maple Hill area is, but if that could be a consideration, we feel that's important as well to give everyone a chance to enjoy the natural beauty of the resources we have.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:13:00) I agree, and I think it's going to be something we are going to need to look at the feasibility of.

Darren Marino (00:13:16) I live on 26 Madison Avenue. I also abut the purchased land. So, I walk these trails all the time also, and does anyone know what the process is for trail development and trail markings? It is a large piece of property, and amazingly no matter

how many times I walk it, with all of the little small trails, it's easy to get "lost". I have gotten wise and bring a flashlight now to see in the dark. So, there are some wonderful trails there, there's a lot of small trails, so I think there's just great opportunity for peaceful type of trails. I also do walk the Metacomet, which is kind of adjacent, and it would be wonderful to keep those connections. What I see is two entry points, there's the one on Kimberlee, which I think was mentioned in the chat. Right now it's a very steep drop to get down there from Bridle Path. I don't know if there's any connection points to Cranberry Street. In that neighborhood, you kind of go along High Ridge and those houses. It would be great if there was also an entry point in that spot. I don't know what the process is for trail development, I don't know if there's the opportunity for committee or citizen committee involvement to help do trail development. There are a lot of existing trails, as was mentioned. There is a main loop, but there is also small trails that I think are enjoyable to walk on and would hate to lose that. I think the neighbors are keeping them up, and the deer are also doing a good job keeping the trails going. Just wanted to see what opportunities there are to be developed in that trail development.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:15:45) I think that's a question we have our selves too, and that also came up at the last meeting in the context of the Riverbend Recreation Area, particularly around making sure trails are clearly marked and having trail maps so folks can find their way around, so I think it's definitely top of mind for how we are approaching the plan.

Erin Letcher *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:16:14) I live at 35 Kimberlee Ave, right on the cul de sac. I am hoping that whatever is done with the land, the access from our street is made safer. The curb was broken by the previous potential developers and there is a steep drop down that can be challenging to go up and down safely.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:16:32) I know that Kimberlee Avenue has been brought up a few times. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but that property is actually private property and is not Town-owned. So, while I agree walking there today that it is definitely not accessible-friendly, unfortunately it is private. So we had talked about the process for the Town acquiring that property and easements of that nature, but in any master plan, it would have to be for Town property.

/

Jeff Milne (00:17:05) So you are saying that land immediately adjacent to Kimberlee cul de sac is private, so there's no access to Maple Hill from there?

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Stephen Dombroski (00:17:12) Right, there's four acres there

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:17:17) So it can be in the Open Space process, definitely a parcel of interest to be considered for purchase for rights.

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Jeff Milne (00:17:35) So where is public access today?

/

Stephen Dombroski (00:17:36) The only place that I know is in Bridle Path, where there is Town Lands next to Town Road. Everything else goes to private property. The other

exception might be Kimberlee Ave, but there's no trail there. There was years ago, but now it's overgrown, and there's some wetlands near it. I haven't been down there to really have a look at it, but I mean there's a lot that are being used today. People are cutting through private land, most people don't even know they are doing it, I suppose, but I'm hoping we can keep doing it but I don't know what the Town would say.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:18:09) Right, I think from our perspective, as Breeka Li said, we are trying to identify from Town-owned property/Town controlled property how do we provide for access over and through those areas, and are there opportunities for the Town to acquire additional rights and the trying to look at those. I think as far as any private access, that's probably not something the Open Space Plan would get into, except to the extent of 'we think this is an access that is currently private that the Town may have an opportunity to look at.' But, we certainly wouldn't be venturing into the area of someone's private property and people accessing their private property. I think the goal is for the public to really funnel them towards, if there is one specific trailhead in that area, or however many trailheads.

/

Stephen Dombroski (00:19:22) There's one opportunity, which is Metacomet Land, which abuts Towns and properties. I'm thinking of the two down Bridle Path, so I don't know if they could access that way, or if there's an actual trail there.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:19:41) So, that would roll back into the master plan process, or grants, off an open space survey, our post cards are over there. So, there's an open-ended question here; are there any open parcels around that residents feel would be great for the Town to purchase.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:20:09) Right, and I think it's balancing. I'm a real estate attorney and in representing property owners, we'll advise property owners to, oftentimes, do things to prevent trespass on their land, because there's all sorts of things that come into play. Trespass is kind of seen as a bad word, and even if it's not any ill intent, but there's liability concerns, there's all sorts of things around that. So, I think we want to, not necessarily prevent trespass—I don't know that that's really our job here—but we want to provide for public access, I think is the key.

/

Stephen Dombroski (00:21:00) So there really isn't a way around the residence at this point? People have been doing it for years and years and years, and it's a really interesting question, I don't know.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:31:10) I think, as far as the public is concerned, and talking much more about the folks who live right up against Maple Hill, I think to be able to identify public access, or access points if there are multiple points of access, that that's the ideal. Not to say that you can't keep using it as you have been using it.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:21:32) You can contact whoever owns that property, using GIS you can find out who owns that property and how to contact them. So that's something you can take up on your own as a neighbor.

The Groves *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:21:55) It would be nice to have the Maple Hill property connected with other conservation property for a nice continuous trail system.

Karla Boudreau *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:22:10) I agree with the last neighbor, keeping the trails natural but improving safety along the main route that was affected by cutting would be great. Any neighbors using the trails for the first time, there are great trails being formed by foot traffic that are enjoyable to discover and hike.

MPD *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:22:32) What are the access points again?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:22:39) The Town access point is off of Bridle Path.

Karla Boudreau (00:22:49) I just had a question about buffers, you know we would love to see more neighbors and members of the community access the woods back there. It is a very special place in Town to discover there. I was just wondering if there was some sort of buffer that is implemented for those who have their houses right along the main trails that are existing right now. Certainly wouldn't need to be changed if it's more neighbors using it; however as more access is made available, just going back to the safety point, how close would those trails be to our backyard?

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:23:27) It's a good question, and certainly something we will take a look at, especially in the event that there would be any new trails. But, also for existing trails, one of the solutions we talk about a lot is signage and just identifying where is the trail and where is private property just so folks understand where those boundaries are.

/

Jeff Milne (00:23:59) Is there any parking today on Bridle Path at the actual head?

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Stephen Dombroski (00:24:00) No, in fact it's like you have to go over some rocks, and it's not graded out or anything like that. It's pretty natural either way,

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:24:21) So, parking is definitely something for open space. How we get that parking in.

/

Stephen Dombroski (00:24:24) One interesting thing since the Town bought the land, we are getting more people parking in Kimberlee, it's becoming more popular. So, these cars will have to go some place, something to think about.

Lawrence Rettman (00:24:50) Just a few comments. We should restrict, no motorized vehicles on this land, they seem to make their own trails. No hunting, no camping, no fires should be some of the rules on the use of this land.

Stephen Dombroski (00:25:26) I have identified three deer stands back there, one clearly done on Town property. I think it's been abandoned, really, but it's padlocked and chained, and would be nice to address that even though it's not a hunting season.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:25:40) That one can be done, but it's the other one that's questionable if it's on private property or not. Which is something, once the master plan process is surveyed out, will say whether or not it's on Town property or private. Regardless, if there's a trailhead that goes right up to your property, they have another setback that they need to need to be mindful of.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:26:15) For the trail-grading, I would ask just that existing community members stay on the trails that are already there. Folks going off-trail, you can have vegetation and soil erosion, so you can actually do more harm than good, and I know you have been taking care of it. We did talk about the leaves and the trees, and who's going to be maintaining it for the most part. The leaves right now, since it's vernal pool season, just an option for blowing those off of what the existing footpath is. Then we did talk about how he volunteered, if trees fell onto the trails, to move them off. I did ask if they could send me emails, we are in this weird limbo between having a definitive plan, or who's maintaining the property; Conservation or DPW, Land Trust, etc. So, we are in that limbo. If it's in a resource area, that adds a whole nother level of permitting, which I would suggest you let default to the Town.

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Stephen Dombroski (00:27:36) So, there's a lot of precarious trees in there that are clearly dead and are about to crack and fall over the trails, and it gets scary back there when it gets windy, because you can hear stuff cracking.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:27:45) I think it's always safe, just in playing it safe to snap a picture of it, email it to Breeka Li. If you can email it, a picture is great because you can easily see where it is on the trail, Derek Adams at DPW has also been grating a helping manage some of the trails and such.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:28:15) Yeah, he's volunteered his experience to help Conservation, which is good.

Andrew (00:28:24) So I'm appreciating all of the comments that are made, and I live on 2 Hancock Road, which is not directly abutting but is at the end of the neighborhood where some of this property is. I guess my question is, generally speaking for the acquisition of open space by the Town; is it a requirement to have all of these sub-requirements, or is there some notion of preserving open space for a variety of reasons, not the least of which would be global warming and not having everything developed. This may be a naïve question, but I just wanted to pose it and ask the Committee what the thought is on that.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:29:15) There are areas around Town that are open space, that are one acre plots, single plots just around town, they don't have trails. They are, strictly speaking, open space for our 'other neighbors' that are not human. So, that is around, a lot of Conservation areas do have recreational trails. We want to support our community, and that leads into us doing what we do. Additionally, with properties purchased by CPA funds, it is a requirement that they have some sort of human benefit, recreational or passive recreation benefit, of which Maple Hill is a property purchased with CPA funds.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:30:00) So a lot of that depends on who, a household head required, what funds are used, if it comes under Article 97 of the State Constitution, which provides requirements around publicly owned land, including municipal land, and the current use, and proposed change in use. So, there are a lot of requirements around when the Town goes to acquire open space, or Conservation space, how can it be used subsequent to the acquisition.

The Groves (00:30:57) I just have a couple of comments and a couple of questions. I'm on 28 Kimberlee Avenue, and we walk back there and have for years and have really enjoyed the open space. I know that, with the shift of the last cycle of potential development and foresting that they did back there, there are trees that are half-down or blown into other trees and leaning, so there are safety issues back there. There's a lot of trails, besides the main path, and a lot of those trails have to do with the neighbors who do dog-walking and things like that. I know that one of the people on the call mentioned that sometimes it is a little confusing which path or which part of the trail system that you're on. I do know that there's a mobile app that one of my neighbors has logged some of the paths in there, so that there is some documentation of where you can walk. I also know that a lot of the paths that wander on and off the Maple Hill piece onto Conservation land, onto private land that's undeveloped, and it's sort of hard to tell which part's which. So, it's not clear sometimes, I know when I'm done if I'm on somebody else's property, but I don't know if it's okay or not okay to be honest. I know that one person's land that I walked onto today, at the end I stopped by and asked if they mind that I walk on their path that ends out on Lincoln, and it wasn't a problem for that situation. But, it would be nice to know what would be good practices. The other thing is, I would like to help do some improvements back there, but I'm not sure what improvements are acceptable. Some improvements might be trail signage that points (to a) path number 1, or give it a name, that it goes this way and you're on that path, and if you want to branch out to a different path, you're now on that path, because there are different loops that are in there. There's in my mind, really two 1-mile loops that are in there inside the same property that were sort of side-by-side loops. One was the main route, and the others were secondary routes. There's also other routes, some I've never been on but they're out there. So, some of the standing practices of 'what's acceptable use' and 'what's acceptable to do'. Right now, we sort of do things because it's out there, and the deer don't bother us and we don't bother them, and we go for our walk and we come back and we have a smile on our face, and we hope that's okay. So, if there's a way to understand how we can help, and what practices are acceptable, and which paths and properties we can go on. The first gentleman talked about the Conservation Land; I don't even know if they like us walking on it or not, it would be nice to know. Those are my thoughts and questions.

/

Patrick Gallagher (00:34:42) All good comments. I would just reiterate that, before doing any sort of things you would think of as improvements, to certainly reach out to the Town and make sure, just as we are navigating around different resource areas on the site, and any kind of question around that, it would be best to just reach out before doing anything that you would consider outside the realm of how you would typically walk around and enjoy the trail.

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The Groves (00:35:18) Do you have a technique of how we should reach out? I did actually call one of our Town Councilors with these questions, and was directed to this Committee, but I'm not sure who and how to ask.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:35:31) They directed you right. So, I'm the Conservation Agent, and I will put my email and phone number in the chat for you.

Meghann Hagen (00:36:31) Just a quick comment in response to Karla's comment about concerns for buffers along neighboring properties. From what I have seen along the Holliston Rail Trail, which is where I run a lot, it goes pretty close to people's homes. There is signage out there just to remind people to be respectful of the neighbors and keep their noses down in that specific area. So, maybe while we are assessing things, we could get signs out there just to help the neighboring community and add that in.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:37:05) A good idea for Schmidt.

Darren Marino (00:37:13) Just one comment. I do walk the trails a lot. Most of the trails, luckily, don't really go along property lines, and there are some, but for the most part you are kind of inside the property and you don't really get great views of a lot of the houses. Just the way the property naturally goes and the existing trails doesn't really put you along many houses, on the trails I've walked.

Mark LePage (00:39:02) Just a quick question for Lawrence Rettman. So, would Metacomet be open to a deal where we could build some trails together to gain more access to Maple Hill? Would you guys be open to that?

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Lawrence Rettman (00:39:09) Yeah, I would like to do that. Franklin has about a three or four car space of the Summer Street parcel. But, you're going to contact the neighbors about where the parking spaces are going to be, but the parking space should only be for two-three-four cars at the most.

/

Stephen Dombroski (00:39:41) I think the best opportunity for parking would be at the end of Bridle Path, but having a nice gravel road going thirty yards in, and then it gets thick in the woods, and you really cut down on the visibility of having parking out there.

Lawrence Rettman (00:40:08) Right now, on the Metacomet Land is a small pond on the property which is used for ice skating and is a very shallow pond, it's a manmade one only about two or three feet deep. Some winters, we've had as many as fifty days of ice skating on that pond, and the neighbors there were maintaining it and keeping snow off of it and so forth, and that's all accessed off of Bridle Path.

Stephen Dombroski (00:40:48) This is a lot of property between end of Maple and Metacomet and towards the Dean College property. That could all be connected. One other big problem we have is, where we live there is no sidewalks on Maple Street. It's a problem, because people run and walk and stuff, and it would be nice if we could connect

all of these neighborhoods around Maple Hill, and have a nice integrated trail that leads to the Dean College property if they would ever allow that, and then you could put a sidewalk up to the little red schoolhouse. Then it could lead into town. There's wetlands there, but I'm sure you could get around it.

MPD *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:41:38) Bridle Path is a long street on which cars can park without having to build a parking lot.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:41:40) I think there's a balance, right? Between providing for access, providing for opportunities for people to park, but it gets back to accessibility. Particularly, we're trying to enable people to have more mobility to get close to the trail, balancing where do you put parking in the path, putting in a parking lot.

Lawrence Rettman (00:42:20) I mentioned some of the things you shouldn't have in there. So, what can you do? Well, walking of course, horseback riding, dog-walking, wildlife viewing, bird-watching, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, things that are all non-invasive activities.

Andrew (00:43:56) I realize you are doing this on a volunteer basis, and I just want to say thank you very much for giving your time to the Open Space Committee.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**April 6, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: DelCarte and Beaver Pond**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Michael Rein (00:10:15) Walking around the ponds sounds awesome. I always thought there might be a problem because of the drinking water wells, but you think that would be okay?

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Ryan Jette (00:10:29) Yeah, the drinking water wells are a little bit closer down near, I think there is a building back there that DPW maintains as well. Right now it goes all the way around, as it is, there is a lot of dirtbikes that ride back there and try to come across the beach as well. But yeah, it goes like three quarters of the way around, and especially this time of year where it's wet, it's real muddy around that area so you can't get through. It would be nice if we could complete it, then people could walk around the whole park.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:11:00) Is all of that area—if we were to think about something like a boardwalk then there would be a lot of wetland and other concerns as well—but is that Town-controlled land, or is some of it Army Corp.?

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Ryan Jette (00:11:17) I'm not a hundred percent sure on that. When I look at an abutters list of Beaver Pond, there seems to be a little bit of National Grid, a lot of Town of Franklin, and Army Corp. of Engineers.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:11:30) And then D.O.T. for I495, so they have their own right of way. I know that because I got a complaint about dirtbikers, and I followed it up the chain with DCR and they sent me to D.O.T.

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Ryan Jette (00:11:43) I mean, you could, if you wanted to put in a boardwalk, they have boardwalks that are pretty gentle with the environment like the one we have down at DelCarte.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:12:00) Well, and I think too that, the boardwalk you'll see all over the place where it almost dead-ends, and you just stop. Even if it wasn't a full circle around the pond, just having something a little bit more structured, I think that would help improve access for folks, especially during wet times of the year.

/

Ryan Jette (00:12:22) I mean, there are some trails that are still there from years ago, if you go into the second entrance of Beaver Pond, where some people park, we have a couple of containers over there. There's a trail that actually snakes through the woods, and it links up all the way in the back, almost halfway down the pond, and it's really nice there in the fall, it's a great walk so.

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Michael Rein (00:12:41) Is that where we connected the SNETT Trail to the Town, does it go right through there?

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Ryan Jette (00:12:56) No, the SNETT doesn't quite get that far. If you go all the way out back by Beaver Pond, there's a little dirtbike path that goes up to I495, then it kind of comes back and you can go underneath I495, and that's the SNETT. So, it is further back, though it doesn't as far as Beaver Pond. If you were to park on the Grove Street SNETT parking lot, and walk the opposite direction of where everybody else walks, it goes right to Downtown Franklin, there's a rail there. Right as you get underneath the I495 bridge, if you take a left, there's a steep hill and that connects to Beaver Pond best.

Ed Szmanski, 529 Pleasant Street (00:14:34) I just wanted to say, since you talked about making it accessible to walk all the way around, because I walk down there a lot because I'm a nature photographer. But, you can't walk to the left of the main pond, down the road there where it goes to the end of the paved road at the end. To the left, there's one body of water, if you go to the right, there's a locked gate. So, that's so nobody can drive down there, but it would preclude people from being able to walk around the pond that way. So, I don't know if there would be any plans at least for –and it's got little pieces of fence through the sides so you can't step through it –but maybe if people could go around the side as long as you couldn't drive your car down.

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Ryan Jette (00:15:09) I'm sure that was installed because DPW doesn't want anybody messing around with their building back there. If we got access around the whole pond, we could probably put up some bollards so vehicles couldn't get back there and you could still walk it.

Michael Rein (00:15:28) I know there's nice restrooms there, how often are they open?

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Ryan Jette (00:15:34) Well, that's a touchy subject. I would like to have them open all the time, but right now they're key operated, so we would love to put on timers where they're unlocked in the morning and automatically close at night. We're working on getting some technology in there that can do that. Mike D'Angelo, our Facilities Director, had a conduit brought into the building, and we just need to get it hooked up with our IT people and the Facilities. Once we have that capability, we'll be able to put in some timers to keep the building open. Right now, it's basically whoever permits the

field—if it's used for lacrosse or youth soccer—we get them the code, there's a key right there and we unlock them for events, and a lot of times if I'm driving by I'll just unlock them in the morning in the summer time when people are there, and then just lock it up at night. It really depends on who has the key at the point, but it would be really nice to get them unlocked electronically, all bathrooms in Town really. Fletcher Field, King Street, we'd love to have them all open. A lot of people don't understand that we don't have just a key person who drives around all the fields and unlocks all the bathrooms and locks them up every night, it's really dependent on who's permitting the field.

--DelCarte presentation from Breeka Li Goodlander--

Jeff Milne (00:24:19) Any thoughts on access to the Condominiums that are going to be built next door by the church?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:14:27) Yeah, so they did come in to Tech Review, and when they came before the Conservation Commission, they mentioned potential trails—237 Pleasant Street, the church—but they haven't officially filed, so they can't yet legally. They are not finished anyways with their entire permitting process with other boards. But, I do think it's still on their radar, so I think that would be great. If you recall, your Chair and all of you wrote a letter highlighting that it would be great if there was trails and public parking.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:25:04) I think, and this is apart from the forestry plan mostly, but I think one of the big challenges with DelCarte is that there is not a lot of parking, so during high volume times or whatever, we don't want to be in a position where people are getting turned away from DelCarte, but there's also the challenge of there not being a readily available place to put in parking. So, I think there would be a good synergy if that's something that the 237 Project would be open to, and that's a little bit of a separate conversation. But, I think, if through the permitting process that's something they are open to, we would love to work with them on providing use of parking spaces and connecting that route's new trails through and into the existing trail network.

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Jeff Milne (00:26:07) There is a second entrance to DelCarte where there's a small parking area. Could that be expanded?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:26:14) So that parking lot, to me, is easier to permit and expand than the other parking lot. The un-vegetated turnaround spot at DelCarte at the parking lot actually should be just for Town staff, so that parking is so the trash truck can get to it. There is a basin, a rain garden there, there is also a stormwater basin. So, that turnaround spot—and I know a lot of people park in it, if people could avoid parking next to the trash can that would be great—that right behind that turnaround is all wet.

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Mark LePage (00:27:08) Is there signage at that second entrance?

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(Breeka Li Goodlander (00:27:13) There is a sign, but not for overflow parking. I don't think it's called out as well as it could be.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:27:18) I think we could certainly do with more signage at the primary parking lot saying “Overflow parking is 500 feet this way” or something like that.

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Meghann Hagen (00:27:33) Would we have capability to do a crushed gravel sort of path up along the road connecting the two parking lots? I was thinking of families with young children who might not be parking able to park at the other parking lot. I know the path goes that way, but you would not be able to get a stroller down the hill and across the path there. So, that might provide a point of different access for young families.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:28:00) Just looking at it, I think one of the challenges would be the grade. It looks like it slopes away from the road a little bit. There is a sidewalk across the street, I know it’s not the same as having it on the same side. There is crosswalk from the overflow parking lot to across the street. It’s not a short distance, it’s probably a quarter-mile just looking at it, but I think it’s something preexisting there that we could work with, as opposed to creating an entirely new parking area.

/

Michael Rein (00:29:09) Halfway between the two, there is an access road. Would it be possible to expand that into a parking lot, too?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:29:22) Possible, but it’s an access road to the dams, so it’s more closed off for service vehicles to get in to service the dams. It’s also what SOLitude Lake Management uses, so it’s highly utilized. I know it doesn’t seem like it, I know it’s probably closed every time someone drives by.

/

Michael Rein (00:29:47) I’m not saying to open it, I’m just saying if there’s already a turnoff point, so if there is just a way to put a parking lot near there.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander *in response to Richard Johnson pointing to a location he suggested could be good for parking on a map of the surrounding DelCarte Area* (00:30:10) I do apologize to any residents across the street, but there is on-street parking across the street. Not on Pleasant, but you have to go Northwest, on the side streets.

/

Richard Johnson (00:30:52) That probably won’t be popular with the neighborhood.

/

Michael Rein *referencing a displayed map of DelCarte* (00:30:56) I know when you park in the overflow parking lot and you go down, the trail basically goes left. You can go right, but the sign says ‘don’t go right’ because that’s not a part of the trail, but yet should it be part of the trail? It looks like it is on this picture.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:31:23) So there are actually two signs at that are at that overflow parking lot location, and one of them shows the trail network. That may be an old map. The other one is a ‘no littering’ sign. Those are the only two signs that are right there. This is something that Natalie just GPS’ed. She went off-parcel, so there is a private trail on there, but that is our current trail network.

--Continued DelCarte presentation from Breeka Li Goodlander--

Patrick Gallagher (00:33:34) Breeka Li, is there any space in your bulletin to put some materials on the Biodiversity Project? I think people would be interested to read about it if they're coming down.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:33:55) That's a really good idea, thanks. So we can do that, and Ryan Jette is usually the leader of all of the Eagle Scout projects. I know that recently we had CIV-E (check for spelling/pronunciation) come in and he did the 'no littering' signage, but I think historically there were batboxes, some trail maintenance, additional signage. The dams are routinely maintained, the Town is actually due for another inspection of the dams, they'll come down and look at the dams. The water levels are maintained, so it is altered for sure. There is a beaver at the Northeast portion that keeps damming everything up, so Derek and I are out there all the time seeing what we can do.

/

Mark LePage (00:35:14) Have you thought of putting in a Beaver Deceiver?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:35:11) Something, I don't know. If you go by there now, there is actually a nesting pair of Mute Swans, so they have some really nice bed and cattails. You approved two cameras as part of the biodiversity project, so those will be purchased and we will put those out. I will take any information. I have never utilized solar cameras, so I'm trying to do some research to find out which solar cameras is the best to put out there. To your point, Michael, I just wanted to let you know that you're right about the current trail map, it cuts off at the right, so it is a very unfortunate discrepancy between public information. I can get it fixed.

/

Michael Rein (00:36:24) I think we might need some bridges. You can see (referencing a DelCarte Map) at the top, I don't know if you can get across the water there.

/

Michael Reign (00:36:35) Personally, it would be my recommendation to daylight that trail, so to remove it. There is a dam, it's dilapidated, it's broken, so you're right; it's caved in, so it's hard to get across. Derek and I usually jump across, that's what we routinely cross and it's very wet back there. To me, it's a very nice resource area. If people want to access back there, it's fine.

/

Michael Rein (00:37:34) On the other end, there's a break, you can't get all the way to the train tracks without getting wet. Something for us to think about.

Meghann Hagen (00:37:45) Where did we land on accessibility at DelCarte? I know that we had looked at the handicap parking space down the hill, and maybe possibly looking at some maps to go down towards the crushed gravel area?

/

Ryan Jette (00:38:15) We are actually looking at trying to get an accessibility study done for all of our playgrounds, parks, whatnot. One of the goals I think I would like to see

this Commission focus on is to make at least one of these trails down there accessible. As you get over the dam on the lefthand side, there is a short loop, and it would be great if we could somehow make that accessible for people with mobility issues. Longterm, as a Town, I think we need to do an accessibility study on all of our parks. I'll let you know about that, we've been talking with Jamie about that and it's something that we're going to have to probably have to bid out, but we're working and meeting with a firm next week to get some preliminary estimates.

/

Michael Rein (00:38:53) That's a great idea.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:39:04) I think too, and this is not the same as ADA accessibility, but even getting a stroller through that gap is difficult. So, I think, given that the Storywalk is over there, and I think that's a great spot, but if you can't get a stroller through, that makes it tricky.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:39:30) Out of curiosity, that trail that hugs the water and is real close, would you keep the trails as is for accessibility? Would you choose one or the other? Or would you cut the middle and create a new trail?

/

Richard Johnson (00:40:20) You would destroy a lot of vegetation building a new trail through there.

/

Michael Rein (00:40:22) Also, you could just keep on going by the shoreline and it takes you to a dock, and it does not have an official trail to it. So, if we do remove the trail, we are going to need to put up signage that says "too close to the water."

/

Richard Johnson (00:40:46) I don't think you are going to want to close it without giving them an alternative, you're not going to make them go out through east overbush over there. It may be nice, but it may not be the way you want to go. Everybody over there goes off their own way, it's well beaten-down and there are tons of roots sticking up from the ground.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:41:20) The trail braiding is extensive over there.

/

Michael Rein (00:41:23) It's actually treacherous. You sort of just can't get down without slipping and sliding.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:41:34) Two comments. The boat launch/kayak launch has been fixed. That did happen since the last time we spoke about DelCarte. Second, about the treacherous area, I think they're leftover spoil piles from the MBTA personally, like they excavated. You could install stairs. I was at the golf course the other day for an unrelated project, and they have stairs over there in their hill, just nestled pieces of granite or block over there.

/

Richard Johnson (00:42:57) We just inherited the docks?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:42:58) Ryan, the dock that's next to the boardwalk, did the Town install that?

/

Ryan Jette (00:43:14) In 2015, when we did the playground, we marked all the trails, The kayak launches were all provided.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:44:13) I know Pat and I were talking about having a friends group –but if it's a friends group, they can't fundraise, they can't take in money if they are volunteering for the town—but if someone that has a non-profit or has their own organization, then they can just get it moving. But generally, right now, it's maintenance of the trails. It comes from residents, writing in to myself or Ryan—a lot of people write to Ryan –or DPW, and inevitably we just end up all three of us talking, and DPW is the one that does the work.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:45:04) It definitely sounds like, just going back to a point that Ryan made, that if it's possible to do an accessibility study, looking at what makes sense and maybe marrying that with the Forestry Plan, and trying to look at what are the different options in terms of enhancing existing trails, creating new trails. I think it would be worthwhile just seeing what the options are, and making a decision based on that. I know that's a little ways down the road, but I think that's the best approach.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:45:55) And we can also identify where we can receive funding under the Forest Stewardship Plan.

Marian Szymanski (00:46:14) I live at 529 Pleasant Street, which abuts the DelCarte property. My husband and I are also beekeepers, we have eleven hives of ours that are kept on the backyard of our property. We see our bees all the time down at DelCarte, we see them on the clethra and the goldenrods and the wildflowers, but we also see them in the water, getting water for themselves, but also on the lilies. Last year, especially during the drought that was a huge source of nectar and pollen for our bees, because all of ours dried up in the gardens and the areas around us. So, I'm a little concerned about some of the treatments that you are doing on the water—also the loosestrife, honeybees love loosestrife, it's a big source of food for them as well—and I'm just concerned that some of the treatments might be used when these plants are flowering. I'm just concerned about the health of our bees, really, so I thought you could answer some questions about that?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:47:15) Yes. So, as you know, I only started a year ago. When I first started, it was actually the first hearing that this treatment contract, which is year by year, came up. It went through. Now that the contract is due again, and we have had visible success with the eradication of the invasive plants, and this is way ahead of any permit filing, I am planning to do a way deeper dive into those herbicides. I do know that those that are treating, they are certified. Take that for what you will, let's hope they are not spraying when it's windy. To that point, there is one other comment that I wanted to make about your loosestrife. I don't know if you saw recently, but Mass put out a publication that they are now accepting loosestrife. It's still considered invasion and non-

native, but they have changed their metrics for monitoring that as long as it's not the dominant plant in the ecosystem, it's okay to leave it. It's acceptable for ecosystem restoration, or general ecological health to leave it. So, I wanted to let you know that as well. DelCarte is not being treated for the loosestrife, so it's only for the water chestnut and milfoil. I do know, and this is going to be unsettling, that some of those herbicides can impact water lilies. So, they generally tend to attack any plant that has that structure.

/

Marian Szymanski (00:49:41) Do you know what herbicides those are?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:49:44) I can find that out. I don't know off the top of my head, but it's all public information and I can definitely follow up with you and let you know.

/

Marian Szymanski (00:49:49) Do they check to see if they are safe for use with water lilies?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:50:01) They do, they should and have been including sdf sheets as well, and then, additionally they sample and go out twice a year to sample. Again, they focus right on the aquatic ecosystem, so they don't go into the upland and test the insects, but for the aquatic system it's been maintained within normal parameters and levels. I will follow up with you.

Eric Steltzer (00:50:24) I live at 7 Mercer Lane. I had a similar question, because as you were talking about the Forester and their input, I heard that they drew attention to stormwater management at that site. So, I was just thinking if there was other options that the Town was looking at to consider stormwater mitigation methods that might minimize the chemicals that might need to be used on the ponds. Especially thinking about climate change, and the severity of the storms that are going to come, and knowing that the retention ponds that might be put in there with natural vegetation might be able to absorb some of those nutrients to avoid them going into the aquatic environment.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:51:20) That's a good comment.

Marc Cohen (00:51:46) I live at 36 Pearl Street. So I like to fish for largemouth bass at the DelCarte ponds. When I hear water chestnuts, I recall going on canoes on the Charles River, spending eight hours with this whole voluntary crew, and that stuff just grows right back. It was unbelievable how thick those are and strong they are and how much you have to pull to see the root and get them out. I went back to Waltham Coves last year, and it looked like we hadn't done anything, and it was only five years later. So, that gets me a little worried, is that becoming an issue with the water chestnuts, in terms of fishing and having open water for that type of sport?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:52:42) That's a good comment. So, in the SNE (Southern New England) Region, water chestnut is becoming a really big problem in the Blackstone Watershed. The Blackstone Watershed has been putting out a lot of educational material about water chestnut and outreach to put that information out there to get volunteer

groups like that. So, they recently had an event on the Blackstone River for handpulling. That was a super-neat idea, I would love to do something like that here, but I don't know if I would suggest it if we are already treating, and we don't have a nice fancy kayak rental set up at DelCarte, and there's liability concerns that I would have to work out with Mark Cerel. So that's something that I have thought of, but to Marc Cohen's point, and to my comment earlier, those seeds are lasting for twelve years, so unless you are continuously going and continuously removing those plants, and you would have to make sure you are removing those seeds, and it's fruitless.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:54:25) I know every year, when the contract comes up and we are talking through what's the right treatment for DelCarte, I think there's no right answer. I think it's a complicated question on whether to continue treating, or the same regiment of treating, or what the right approach is. I do think every year we have been doing this, we have a little bit more data to work with, so that's certainly helpful too and it takes time to marinate and make sure it's working how it's supposed to be working or is there a better method or whatnot.

# FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION

## OSRP MEETING Minutes

April 20, 2023

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

### TOPIC: Forests, Trees, Green Space, and other Conservation Lands

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### Comments from the Public / Answers

Jeff Milne (00:02:16) Have specific pieces of land been identified that would be part of our 'Emerald Necklace'?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:02:31) One of them that I received, other than Maple Hill, was actually by DelCarte. **\*highlighting parcel addressed at 23 Longobardi Drive\*** You will guess pretty quickly why it's undeveloped. It's undeveloped because it's wet, and a resident included in the survey that they thought this would be a great property to buy because it has connectivity to Town Land over here **\*highlighting abutting Town owned parcels.\*** There is this bit of open space left over here, left as open space as part of the subdivision install. So, lots of subdivisions have open space left on the back end, which is part of the Planning Department permit. So, this property was identified as an access to go through, perhaps purchase this property here **\*referencing parcel ID 280-004-001\***.

/

Michael Rein (00:05:13) So, you're saying the land adjacent to those parcels is already Town-owned land?

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:05:20) **\*Corrects Michael Rein on which parcels are Town-owned and which are not using a displayed map\*** I just learned today that when is no data linked with this parcel, that usually means there is a property ownership or tax problem. TBD I would have to check with the Assessor's Office for this. Then, this one is privately owned **\*referencing 23 Longobardi Drive\***. So this is an identified parcel owned by a resident on Longobardi that the Town could purchase. In our survey as well, there is a question posed to all residents if they know of any parcels around Town that could be acquired, and that's open to all ballfields, playgrounds, conservation areas,

things of that nature. So, there is a small easement that abuts Maple Hill that was identified as a possible acquisition to allow access to Maple Hill.

Cobi Frongillo (00:07:27) There's the end of Kimberlee Avenue.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:07:40) That is not the one I am talking about, but that's a really good one Cobi. So, the Kimberlee Avenue one is a really important one, so—if everyone that was here during the Maple Hill Open Space Meeting—we were talking about access, and where is access to Maple Hill, right? Kimberlee Avenue was brought up, but unfortunately or fortunately for the people who own it, this is not owned by the Town **\*referencing parcel ID 242-027\***, so this would be a great parcel to be wired—if I do say so myself, without speaking out of line for the current property owners—so then we would have access here, we would have access off of Bridle Path to up here.

**\*Displaying an easement (Parcel ID 234-055) previously referenced prior to Cobi Frongillo's comment\*** So this was another easement which I imagine was put in place to protect another access to the proposed subdivision, so there's that. As I said, in the Open Space survey there is a question posed to all participants that can they identify any properties around Town that the Town may acquire, or open space or recreation or otherwise. There was another one near the Charles, which we talked about, near Riverbend, so that was a big one too.

Michael Rein (00:10:40) So, is there an idea of what the Franklin Greenway/wildlife corridor/Emerald Necklace would actually be?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:10:51) So there are several maps out there. I don't have one in front of me. Natalie and I are working on including one of existing Conservation areas and trails in the Open Space plan, and then trying to tabulate a proposed, or several options of a proposed (plan). I know that it is going to be a topic for the Master Plan for sure, and I know that there are stakeholders involved.

/

Michael Rein (00:11:29) I know you can maybe get to Schmidt's Farm from the SNETT Trail, and if you connect the SNETT Trail into Downtown, now you can get to Schmidt's Farm from Downtown, and you can also go along the sidewalks from Downtown to bridle Path and get to Maple Hill. Adjacent to Maple Hill is the Metacomet Land, and then that connects with Dean College Land, so maybe you could get all the way out to Lincoln Street, almost, and the forest.

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Jeff Milne (00:12:21) And by the same token, along Grove Street you can go to DCR property all the way to the WMCA.

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Michael Rein (00:12:31) Yeah, with that new path that's being permitted into the Franklin State Forest.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:12:40) This, what I have here **\*referencing a displayed map\*** is all Town land, and then I also have all resources turned on, so you could imagine connecting as much as you can, in some manner it's close.

/

Cobi Frongillo (00:13:28) I have mapped out a full greenway in my proposal, and the properties that we would need to acquire to get us there, but my thought is SNETT to Riverbend, or SNETT to State Forest, down around Beaver Pond. You can get across West Central—that's probably the worst stretch—but you can get through the Sculpture Park and Town properties. There's a walking path that cuts over to Maple Street and gets you onto the Metacomet and Maple Hill pass. You can follow those all the way down to Partridge Street, where we have some DPW properties that get us to Riverbend if you acquire that one piece off of Elm Street. You can get sort of North-South Franklin with just a few small pieces. I feel like a cross-Franklin Trail would be a pretty cool asset.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:14:40) Did you put that in the survey at all? Like that iteration identifying step 1, step 2, step 3, step 4 with all those streets? If not, could you send me an email and CC appropriate parties with that so I can stick it into the comment section?

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Cobi Frongillo (00:14:58) Yeah definitely. I think all I did in the survey was identify the properties that would need to be acquired, but I probably did not provide the appropriate context. I'll show you the actual map.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:15:16) You actually reminded me of something too. Another property that was brought up is right next to Dacey **\*referencing parcels 228-002 and 227-015\***.

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Melanie Hamblen (00:16:01) It's got a really nice stream through it. It's got this old rock bridge, a couple of rock bridges in it, it's a really pretty property. It abuts right up to Dacey Solar Field, but also the disc golf area.

Cobi Frongillo (00:17:05) The other one that sort of fell under this was the idea of trees in general, and what I have been thinking about recently is "how do we put regulations around just maximizing the saving of trees, or at least compensating for the removal of trees?" I found some strong bylaws, from Lexington, Concord, Wellesley, they're certainly all regulations that allow you to become an official Tree City USA.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:17:50) Which we are now, by the way, as of last week.

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Cobi Frongillo (00:18:10) So at this point, we know most of where we have lots of opportunities to develop to sort of in-fill places that have already been developed, and very little need/desire to further take down substantial tree coverage, and I would say that's across the Town. It just seems like one of the biggest tools that we have is putting regulations around when you can take down trees and the opportunities to avoid that. I'm sure that you have already looked into this, but I wanted to voice my support for such a move.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:19:16) I am glad that we have that support from you. There are a few things that I can answer for your question. One, MassDEP is coming out with a new iteration of the Wetlands Protection Act, which will likely have regulations around

trees within jurisdiction, so there is that. After talking with the Conservation Commission, and with myself being a new agent to the Town and bylaws and regulations should change, especially when state regulations and handbooks and guidebooks change and things like that. We have Massachusetts soil action plan, we have the 2050 Climate Change Plan, the Decarbonization Action Plan, so that is definitely something on my docket. I'm sure we will be talking about that more once Open Space is done and finished. Moving on, not sure if you know, but I—in conjunction with Derek and Kate from DPW have been trying to get a Legacy Tree program up and running in Franklin. Legacy Trees don't have any legal protections within the State of Massachusetts, nationally they do. Unfortunately, I doubt that Franklin has any nationally-prized trees. However, we have been trying to do grassroots organizing to start people thinking about the trees they have on their property. So, we actually have a Legacy program where we have a running list of entries for people to write in that they have a tree of a certain size. Kate Derek and I will go out, we'll GPS it, we'll take our field notes, and we can submit this data to Massachusetts and we can be on a state database for legacy trees. Franklin is not on there. Franklin has never been on there, so I think it would be really interesting and encouraging to have Franklin on that list. Again, no legal protections, but at least it's something there to get people thinking about it. Lastly, regarding trees, the Conservation Commission and some people here know of the Forest Stewardship Plan put on DelCorte. I have mentioned that I met with other Town staff and I would really like to get forest stewardship plans on all of the conservation properties and recreation properties that qualify. So, Cobi, that is a management plan for managing for habitat climate change, down to T&E species, down to ecological function and timber value. Clearly, we are not going to cut our town-owned properties, but those plans last for ten years and then help us get grant funding to support those ecosystems and support passive recreation, do boundary markers, do trail things, things of that nature. So, it is something worth thinking about for Conservation Commission and Open Space in general. Obviously, we are bound by State jurisdictional areas. I have a bit more leeway, since obviously I am the Natural Resource Protection Manager, so I can push those boundaries a little bit more than what the Conservation Commission can. But I think, in summary, it is something that is on the horizon. It's definitely something we should be thinking about. Timing is very important, especially when we have nesting birds. Northern long-eared bat just became listed as endangered in the State of Massachusetts, they need shreddy bark over a certain DBH (diameter at breast height) for trees. We want to make sure we are leaving our snags, we want to make sure we are leaving our trees. Conservation Commission requires that all rootfals be left in place so that we don't have soil degradation, that soil processes is left. The carbohydrates in treestumps can be left to give back to the soil, all sorts of things, and every time I am on a site visit with someone that wants a tree removal, I always put in a good plug for just topping the tree and putting a batbox on it.

Robert Kearns, CRWA (00:24:18) Thank you for having this meeting. Just wanted to offer ourselves as a resource, and we do have a lot of online tools, a flood model. It could be an opportunity to see which locations are currently flooded, in current day but also in 2070 and future flooding, and that could be a good opportunity for parcels to get for Conservation or flood storage. I know we have natural valley storage area from the Army Corp of Engineers easements in Town, but also thinking about how we can add on

top of that. We're doing more analysis on the flood model, but there's not currently plans to look at which parcels by parcel level are undeveloped and could be developed, but are going to flood in the future but are not necessarily flooding today. That's something that I know, internally, that's what we are interested in looking at and helping towns, so that's a good resource. The other thing, thinking about corridors and real life corridors, thinking about the rivers and the streams, tributaries in town as corridors. I know the Town has done a lot of work upgrading culverts and stream crossing, but adding something to that in the plan could be helpful for getting funding opportunities, potentially in the future to look at upgrading public safety for the roads, but also thinking of these corridors as ways for fish and wildlife to get through. We are a resource, and would love to help the Town in any way to help with Open Space, Recreation. The other thing, anywhere you can put the stormwater, I know the Town's doing a lot of stuff, DPW's very active. But, thinking about if there's any Recreation or Open Space areas to do any raingardens or that could be another thing to add. But, it's probably on the radar already with the Town's great work there.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:26:37) I have been meeting with Derek and Kate routinely every other week. We have been having phosphorous nutrient loading meetings, we have an outside consultant that we have been working with to get stormwater infrastructure up to date and looking at phosphorous removal. I suggested that we incorporate our phosphorous mapping with the NAACC map so we can prioritize culverts that need better aquatic connectivity. NAACC stands for North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Connection, so it's a compilation of volunteers that go out, and they rate culverts based on their habitat functionality. I brought up the question to Kate and Derek that, if we are already going to be looking at these stream crossings for phosphorous and we are going to be retrofitting, we could see if there's overlap, so that's a great comment Robert, thank you.

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Robert Kearns (00:27:44) That's great. Just to add off of that, I think other towns are putting that stuff in for their hazard mitigation plans. I don't know if Franklin's put that in their hazard mitigation plan. Not just assessments, but thinking about capital, when you look at culverts—especially because Franklin has Dix Brook and Shepard's Brook—so all of the coldwater fisheries, where there are a potential for trout, are trout. Resources are pretty competitive at the state and federal level for fish passage. Thinking about how we can work with you all, I know other communities out in western Mass and the State are doing partnerships with watershed groups to look at floodmodels and assessing them, but also finding opportunities for the community. I know Franklin has got some funding to do the work to make them larger to let the floodflows come through, but also for the fish and wildlife. But, making sure all these different plans, the Open Space Plan, the Hazard Mitigation Plan, are talking to each other can help you guys be in a good opportunity for that grant funding, so just plug that too.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:29:22) Just a reminder, I am the liaison of the CRWA, so we meet monthly.

Michael Rein (00:29:47) I had a couple thoughts, piggybacking off of what you and Cobi were saying. So, there is a state Legacy Tree Program, but I wonder if we have some trees in Franklin like the one at Schmidt Farms that may not qualify for a state level program, could we have our own Franklin legacy trees?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:30:10) Yep, that's what I am trying to get off the ground. So, if you come to our Conservation webpage, lefthand side it's "flora and fauna management" and "report a legacy tree." So, there is a Massachusetts Legacy Tree Program, but we would love to have our very own Legacy Tree Program. So, I was brainstorming with Kate and Derek, is it something we could get little placards for people to have on their property? Is it something we could get a gold star or certificate, something from us that says "wow, you have a legacy tree! This is great, this is why it is important." Especially at Schmidt's Farm, because there is the elm tree. There's that area, there's the Carriage House, the beech tree there is a legacy tree.

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Jeff Milne (00:31:19) So what defines a legacy tree?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:31:20) Age, height, diameter. Sometimes they correlate, sometimes they don't.

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Jeff Milne (00:31:31) So not necessarily the type of tree?

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Breeka LI Goodlander (00:31:32) Correct, so age-height-diameter, and then the second bracket is your biggest maple, your biggest sycamore, or oldest. Which one takes the cake from those initial parameters.

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Michael Rein (00:32:10) Also, I like the idea about protecting trees that Cobi brought up, and having something in the bylaws. But, we might even be able to be stronger about townlands. We could put a very strong rule in; "don't cut down any trees in the town land without talking to the Natural Resource Director" or something like that.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:32:30) We do. In our general duties as ConCom, we ruled our order of conditions for trees already. So, for example in 585 King Street, in those order of conditions for the replication areas, we discussed that, during construction, they would avoid trees of a certain size. They just needed to be identified, so they would come back to me and then through me to you, at the time they are designing those replication areas, so that they can avoid and minimize impacts to trees of a certain size. So we left their design of the replication area open—they still have to get X amount of square feet—they can instead of making it kidney shaped, for example, they can instead move it this way or this way to avoid a tree here and there. So, we do afford protection already, but to Cobi's point, it would be nice to have it in the bylaw. Medway for example, in their wetlands protection bylaw, has "a tree over DBH, I'm sorry but it's protected. You need a variance."

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Michael Rein (00:34:05) Exactly, because we can recommend it, but they don't have to agree to it.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:34:18) Right, there is that. I will say, again though, with the handbook delineating BVW just coming out, we just got a new guideline for replicating in the wetlands. I know the WPA is coming out, it was supposed to come out last year, so it's overdue. So, just before we jump into that, I think it would be smart to wait instead of like Medway, who just updated theirs in 2020. Now, here we are in 2023 and there's already three new regulation handbooks coming out. So, they will have to revisit it, I think it will be best for us to wait and then go a step further that way. And, we have a 2-to-1 replication, and the 25-foot no-touch zone, so that inadvertently allows tree protection.

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Melanie Hamblen (00:35:32) I'm on the Town Council, when we were talking about protection trees, it reminded me I'm also on the Massachusetts Municipal Association Policy Committee for Environment and Energy, and Senator Creem from Newton came and spoke with us, and she has a bill that she's trying to protect the canopy across the State. It's a very interesting bill, and I think she just needs more support, so maybe everyone who's listening could contact their State Senator and Representative in the House, and ask them to join her in supporting this canopy bill that she has.

Robert Kearns, CRWA (00:36:26) We definitely agree with tree protection, and can be a resource there as well. We have some information on some other towns in the Watershed on our website, so we can definitely connect with folks if they have interest in any tree protection best practices, and we're helping other communities. So, we can definitely be a resource with trees as well.

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Melanie Hamblen (00:37:00) It's also really important with climate change, we really need to have our cooling canopy.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP Public Hearing Minutes**

**April 25, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

### **PUBLIC HEARING 2**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM and YouTube platforms. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Franklin Senior Center.

#### **Comments from the Public / Responses**

Meghann Hagen (00:07:13) What I've really heard back from the community is our need to look at accessibility going forward, looking at accessibility for our current open space and recreation areas as well as accessibility for any new areas we are looking at, such as Schmidt Farm and Maple Hill, making sure that our areas are accessible for all ages and abilities, so for me I think that's been a big take-home point and that something we hope to keep throughout.

Mark LePage (00:07:51) Just a couple of things I saw, one is what a variety of great Open Space we have throughout the town, with a lot of different options to provide a lot of different types of access and maybe even recreation. I think there's also some really good potential partnerships out there, we had the Metacomet Land Trust at one of our meetings, they have some open space that abuts some properties that's owned by the Town. I think there's some good opportunities to collaborate a bit with them. A lot of good developments so far, a lot of good trail network building has been out there, to Meg's point a lot of good options for improvements and work that could be done. So, good to get the input, a lot of people have showed up at a lot of different stakeholder sessions and provided some really detailed input. The other thing I was going to throw out, in addition to the survey, we do have two more stakeholder sessions. One is a week from this Thursday, next Thursday from the 4<sup>th</sup> and then two weeks later on May 18<sup>th</sup> in the Council Chambers. So, anybody who isn't able to make it tonight, there's two other options to come and participate in the process. We would love to hear what you have to say, so thanks a lot.

Jeff Livingstone (00:09:40) So one of the things we talked about is, basically, public awareness, but really that's a big thing. So I mean the point that we have all these different and diverse places that people can go and do things, which is great, but people don't really know about them. We did a really good job back in the day of promoting the enhancements we were doing at Beaver Pond. Ryan's done a great job with Recreation,

an amazing job in terms of public awareness, which is really something to be looked at, I think, like a poster child. You know, perfectly ideal. Then we did DelCarte as well, but other things we haven't really promoted so much, and also what I've run into is people coming up and saying "wow, it's really great that you guys did this project, we didn't know anything like that was happening, we didn't know about it, we just kind of fell upon it by accident, or drove by it" or someone said they just happened to be hiking there, etc. right? So there was a lot of that going on, so I think we as a group are interested in open space and Conservation can do a much better job laying out the public awareness for things before they happen, and getting people excited about how they might be able to use them. I think that's really important.

Jeff Milne (00:11:06) So I think there was a lot of excitement about the future plans for both Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm, those seem to get the most audience participation and people are really excited for what those two projects could mean and how they could possibly be developed in the future.

Pat Gallagher (00:15:55) So we have a list here of preliminary goals, so I would like to go through them a little bit and have a conversation among the Commission and anyone who's here with us. I think we kind of envision this as a chance to mark up our list a little bit, and to sharpen it up, so I think that might make sense. And, I apologize for those of you who are on Zoom or YouTube, you will be able to watch the first 15 to 20 minutes of our session tonight, the entirety will be posted on YouTube. But, we're also available to answer any questions that you may have. So, I think that would make sense to go through the goals and then we'll take feedback from the Commission, and it can be about our goals, it could be about something that isn't included, you know, we're wide open here for discussion. So I think four top-end goals, and a lot of subheaders under each of them.

(00:17:07) The first is to promote accessibility and connectivity by making individual spaces more accessible to people of all ages and abilities, and underneath that goal we would include things such as improving restroom facilities where they currently exist. For example, by adding electronic unlocking timers instead of needing to have folks manually unlock doors, and by also exploring the addition of new permanent restroom facilities in highly trafficked areas where they do not currently exist. Accessing existing trails, such as at DelCarte, Riverbend, Maple Hill, and the Town Forest, to determine if enhancements can be made to widen entrances, lessen grades, and expand accessibility. Improving signage and trail markings, both at entrances to and within open space and recreation areas, and I would include in that directional signage for where these facilities aren't necessarily off the main road. Reviewing existing parking facilities and exploring opportunities to add parking where little or none is provided: I would look at this as being similar to the recent addition of parking on town-owned land that's located near the SNETT Trailhead. So even opportunities to a space or two spaces or three could be an important resource. Reviewing safety barriers and fencing at parks and playgrounds: One of the things that we've heard, and this is specific to Fletcher Field, is that the playground is not currently fenced in, and so there's some concerns with parents of young children that kids can run out into the parking areas, and so if there are opportunities like that to enhance safety, specifically at parks and playgrounds where we have young children.

And then identifying areas that would be candidates for sidewalk construction or shared use paths, and for which state or matching funds are available. We'll look at this as similar to the work that's currently ongoing on Grove Street, where for more than a year now, there's been a sidewalk expansion and shared use path going in, and that's being accomplished through state funding. So I think if there are more opportunities to do that, that would be a welcome improvement. So I think all of these things fall under that first category of promoting accessibility and connectivity.

(00:19:50) The second category is promoting resilience and sustainability in connection with management of open space and recreation facilities. Under this category, we would include promoting forest management best practices. For example, through the forest stewardship program, which Franklin is participating in and was selected for, by promoting sustainable design of new facilities and improvements to existing facilities. This can include with regard to permitting and construction techniques. So for example, promoting the design of a playground in a way that it was dual purposes of having that active use, but also serving perhaps as infiltration or as a stormwater barrier. A lot of construction and design techniques today are really favoring that dual purpose design, so that it also satisfies and fulfills resilience goals. Identifying opportunities for engagement with existing organizations that promote sustainability efforts, one example that we've talked about is the Metacomet Land Trust and the work they do in Franklin. Also, exploring the creation of a Friends of Franklin Open Space type of organization to help promote trail maintenance, trail cleanup, and really the kind of day-to-day keeping our parks and open space facilities looking in good shape. Identifying opportunities with students to promote educational opportunities, environmental sciences, and Conservation, and this could include scout groups and other organizations that are really trying to promote educational engagement with our youth. Lastly, exploring the adoption and implementation of a tree protection bylaw. This is something I think that would cover the town's open space, but that would also be a goal for perhaps the Conservation Commission and others to be thinking about "how do we focus on resilience and sustainability outside of maybe the scope of the Open Space Plan here. So that's all under the second category of promoting resilience and sustainability.

(00:22:15) Then the third major category is to provide for master plans for Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm, and this Open Space Plan is in many senses a plan for a plan. When you have such large parcels that have recently been brought into town control, you know, it's just outside of the scope of what we're doing to be able to really specifically provide details for what to do at Maple Hill, and what to do at Schmidt's Farm. But, one of the goals of this Open Space Plan update will be to provide for master planning and provide some parameters around that from Maple Hill and Schmidt Farm. So, for Maple Hill, the master plan could include things such as identifying and constructing appropriate and accessible trailheads and corresponding parking facilities, promoting public awareness including through on-an-off site directional signage, balancing public access with private property rights of adjacent neighborhoods—Maple Hill is obviously in the unique situation of being surrounded by many existing neighborhoods, and so we want to respect the folks who have been using that area for a long time against all the public's rights to use that area—assessing the existing trail network and promoting forest management best practices. Then, with respect to Schmidt's Farm, the master plan could include things such preserving the legacy agricultural use of Schmidt's Farm, including the studying the

implementation of town-managed community gardens, similar to what we have at King Street Memorial Park and/or town-leased agricultural plots. That's something that we talked about, and I think again a lot of detail needs to go into that and a lot of consideration needs to go into that, but this can kind of be the starting point for that conversation. Studying and identifying appropriate public access to Schmidt's Farm, including studying any existing trails or the implementation of additional trails; restoring the existing barn and assessing potential future uses, including as an educational or community engagement facility—for example, in collaboration with Norfolk Aggie—and the restoration of that barn and the property in general should really respect and preserve the Schmidt family legacy. That was something that was important to us that we heard through the process. Lastly, assessing potential partnerships with governmental and non-profit organizations around preservation and wildlife management at Schmidt's Farm, including potentially providing for wildlife resettlement. Then, in conjunction with the master planning process, the town could explore the creation of an independent non-profit land trust to hold Conservation restrictions on Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm, and to have a role in oversight and the management of those two properties.

(00:25:05) Then lastly, the fourth top-line goal would be promoting and enhancing the Town's existing recreational facilities. These include things like continuing the ongoing and planned capital improvements—such as at Nason Street Tot Lot and King Street Memorial Park—exploring additional indoor recreational facilities, including through the potential expansion or replacement of the Recreation Department gymnasium to accommodate additional larger activities than the existing facility and/or through collaborations with other municipalities and private organizations to assess availability of indoor recreation facilities in the region. This was one of the things that we heard that, you know, among the constraints on recreational space, we are very limited on indoor recreation space that we currently have and that's available. We heard from Ryan and his staff that the priority right now is to really emphasize existing facilities and maintaining and improving existing facilities, but if we can be creative in looking at areas we can get access to or use of additional indoor facilities, we should try and pursue those. Then lastly, to assess opportunities to incorporate and promote additional outdoor activities—including kayaking for example—at DelCarte or Beaver Pond or the Charles River, subject to availability and future acquisition of property rights there; swimming, which could be through partnerships with the Y, Adirondack Club, or others to provide more accessible and affordable options for swimming and swimming lessons; and biking, including mountain biking where appropriate, and that's something that we heard from folks as well, that there's a lot of interest in the Town's trail networks.

(00:26:56) So those are the four areas, and I'll read them again: Promoting accessibility and connectivity; promoting resilience and sustainability; providing for master plans for Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm; and then promoting and enhancing the Town's existing recreational facilities. Again this is a collaborative process, and we're interested to hear folks' comments, and open it up to you to comments questions from the Commission or public.

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Mark LePage (00:27:32) One thing I was thinking, particularly when we were talking about DelCarte, there is one trail that runs right along the water line, and we talked about does something like that need to be redone. Maybe we need to, as part of the

preservation piece, look at the trails we have, are they the right trails in the right place, I mean that was a trail that I think we all clearly felt is probably not in the right place—roots, right next to the water—so that might be a sub-bullet point there that just popped in my mind, as well as something to think about.

Audience Member 1 (00:28:15) How can the general public be made more aware of where these places are exactly. I have lived in Franklin for years, and I have never heard about the places that you mentioned, and I have no idea where they are or what's there. Is it some sort of a field, or a forest, or is it a lake?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:28:44) So we actually have trail maps at the Conservation Department, we have all trail maps for all Conservation areas on one single big sheet that we hand out to residents. We also have it all available digitally, so if you wanted to look and see aerials, if you wanted to see if there's water or forest land, I can always manipulate those maps and give you a hardcopy with an aerial image overhead. All that information is also available on our Conservation webpage, so there's actually a booklet available on our webpage that has 'Walking around Franklin' and there are trail maps hand drawn out, and you can look at it just like you would a book and you can go out around town. A goal of the Open Space Plan, internally, is to revamp that book and to make that book more accessible for residents. But, you can walk into my office today and I can hand you all of the trail maps, at the Town Hall.

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Meghann Hagen (00:29:52) Can I pose a question back to you? Where would you look for information? Where for you would be the best place to find information like that?

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Audience Member 1 (00:29:58) Periodically, there's information that comes out in the newspaper, and I forget what it's called, but it's a Franklin publication and I think it comes out once a month. Local Town Pages. If you put the information in that, everybody gets that publication, it's delivered everywhere. So, if there was information in there about where to look and where these offices are, and accessibility online, etc.

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Mark LePage (00:30:38) It's a good idea, thank you.

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Audience Member 2 / Melanie Hamblen (00:30:41) Libraries

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Meghann Hagen (00:30:41) Thanks what I was just thinking too, is libraries. They have a lot of our things as well, so they're routinely on the front counter.

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Audience Member 2 / Melanie Hamblen (00:30:47) Senior Center.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:30:48) Yes, she has our stuff as well.

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Jeff Livingstone (00:30:51) You know, one of the things that other towns do that Franklin does not do—and again this is a price thing—for those interesting vista points or recreational centers, you occasionally have signs in the middle of town or pointing to where that is. Like "Conservation Area/DelCarte Area this/that way" so people don't

know what they are, they'll say—especially new people—“What is that? I'd like to go check that out” Because they don't know what they don't know. They don't know that it exists, right, so they have to go searching to find it and find out more about it. More than likely, they're going about word of mouth from someone else before that happens, to be honest. So it's great to have all these things in the Library and Senior Center, but honestly, it's mostly word of mouth. I mean DelCarte, we have people coming from Rhode Island because of word of mouth, right? But if you just drove through Franklin, then unless you drove by DelCarte, you would never know that it's there, there's no signage anywhere telling people that that's where it is. We put up signs everywhere about the downtown Cultural District, Arts District, Historical District, but we don't have anything for the Conservation sites.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:32:15) You know, bad PSA here, but we don't have a town newspaper, Local Town Pages is not sponsored by the Town. So just for anybody listening, that is the answer to that question that was not asked. There are plenty of freelance free public reporting officials out there that can do it.

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Meghann Hagen (00:32:33) It might be interesting, if we can do it, if we could get something on the Town Common. Like there's other informational pieces that maybe we have a big sign that lists some of our highlights with a few pictures, and like a comment on the bottom of where to get more information. That might be interesting. Like a kiosk or placard of some type?

Melanie Hamblen (00:33:09) I'm on the Town Council, Economic Development Subcommittee, and one of the things we are trying to do on the Economic Development Subcommittee is creating wayfinding signs, and so we're trying to brand the Town. We're trying to get information about the Town out there, and this wraps perfectly within it, so I'm getting really excited about it, because it's definitely one of the things that makes Franklin wonderful and a great place to be, because we have all these places but nobody knows where they are. So, we have to do all the different things so we can find out information, so you guys can help support me too with that wayfinding signs, but that's exactly what you're saying Jeff. We need something somewhere, and even a kiosk, and we talk about a kiosk all the time to let people know “there's food this way”; there's all that economic development stuff, but this is a really important piece, and I'm really glad I'm here.

Len *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:34:24) Please consider low vision/blind accessibility also where possible, thank you. Example, a sensory trail. Facebook is good for some seniors, so that is another option, there is all social for the town.

Ali Rheume (00:34:39) Thank you for all the hard work with this. Listening to the accessibility pieces in particular, I don't recall hearing any summary about consideration for resurfacing playgrounds with something like rubber. Stone dust, mulch and pebbles are not accessible. Is that something on the list still?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:34:57) I will speak for Ryan Jette and say, yes that is still a part of the ADA compliance portion of the Open Space.

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Jeff Livingstone (00:35:00) One of the things, just speaking of ADA compliance because I actually wrote that down here, accessibility like at DelCorte from the parking lot to the major trails. We had to be very, very careful about the slopes, because there's people like in wheelchairs and stuff basically could not get down, or in some cases, could not get back up. So, I wondered if that was the kind of thing that we would be looking at in terms of accessibility.

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Meghann Hagen (00:35:40) I think that is something that came up when we talked about DelCorte, about how there is actually an accessible parking space down the bottom that we just needed better signage for, and we talked about different platforms and footings that could be used to get down to the pond area to make it more accessible, and I think part of our accessibility platform there—for point number one—in the plan talks about accessibility. I think what we need to add as a subpoint is—because we talked a lot about this—not only being ADA compliant but actually truly being accessible, that sometimes just ADA compliant isn't enough. We really need to look at each site and I know that Ryan is working quite closely on that, and they're doing a whole audit on all of the open spaces and recreation facilities in Franklin to look at what is accessible and what needs to be done. So I'm excited to see what comes out of that audit and what we can do going forward there.

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Jeff Livingstone (00:36:37) One of the things that has come up, and several people have complained to me, is the parking at DelCorte. There just isn't enough of it, especially if in the middle of the day when people are using the playground. We have that upper lot, I'll call it, that at one point we were talking about turning into some sort of Lot 2, and then making some sort of accessible—maybe you couldn't do ADA because it's up higher, but actually making some log/timbers or some railroad ties, that are like basically having steps down to the existing trail that wraps around it. Just something like that, so at least you had an alternate place to park to get into the site.

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Meghann Hagen (00:37:22) And I think, too, it had come up is that we were talking about that lot as well, which is a great idea, and we were talking about a pathway from Lot 2 to Lot , but the grade of the land may not go with that, because it really is quite high up. But, there are crosswalks on both sides, so technically people could park at Lot 2, use the crosswalk to get to the sidewalk on the other side of the street, go down the street and cross over, but I think it then comes back to our signage issue. Like, no one would think to do that unless they know.

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Jeff Livingstone (00:37:50) That's a little awkward, my personal preference would be to actually build something into the lakeside to get down to the trails. Again, I think there's no way you could make that idea, it's just too high, but at least you would have some access, and some alternate parking, right?

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Pat Gallagher (00:38:11) I think too it's a combination of things that we can do to address. So in that area, for example, you could put in better access for the second parking area down to the lake and trails, you could look at whether from an engineering standpoint, it's feasible to do enhanced sidewalk along Pleasant Street. If so, maybe there's an opportunity like with Grove Street to do some work there. You could do additional signage, and I think where DelCarte is located, you could have people walking conceivably from the Town Common. So, having that signage and pointing people in that direction, I think it's kind of a combination of all of those things.

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Jeff Livingstone (00:38:58) Wouldn't it be amazing if we had like a little GASTRA bus that would just go around and drop people off at DelCarte, the Town Forest, stuff like that?

Audience Member / Patricia (00:39:20) I'm a Franklin resident, I've been here for 12 years. This is my first time ever coming to something like this, so kudos for even thinking about open space, because it really is important to me and I think everybody in the Town. I think it's a great job that there's sort of a plan, if somebody can help me after I will try and share on my Facebook and get more people to do the survey because I am on this border between 'I know how to use a computer, but only for what I need it to do for my job at work'. So, my son showed me paths that I had no idea were in Franklin and yes, I know there's a way to Google or find it online or whatever, but I'm one of those people that straddles. I can use the internet, but I don't think all of the information needs to be distributed that way, so if there can be a way to more broadly distribute to all sorts of age groups and accessibility,, because it also makes me crazy to think everybody has the internet and everybody has a computer and knows how to use it. Second, I know you guys have probably already talked about this, but two out of three of my kids went to Tri-County, so when you're talking about Schmidt Farm and the barn, and preserving the barn, I immediately thought to my son did electrical, and his girlfriend did carpentry, and they had this great program. Can that somehow be tied in, and you may have talked about that already, but if you haven't, Tri-County is an amazing resource for that type of thing. So, that's my first suggestion in the master plan. I did hear Boy Scouts, I was very involved with the Boy Scouts in Wrentham. I know one of the Eagle projects was at Birchwood Farm for doing signage on those paths in that, so yay. Make sure that sort of thing is happening, because there's always kids that are looking for Eagle projects or volunteer projects, so I hope that stays in the system. Thirdly, maybe a little controversial, I don't know, so there's a new huge development of condos down off of Pond Street, which is near the area of town where I live. I remember see the developer was keeping paths open as part of that development plan, and I think there was a little tiny sign, and I never actually went to the path, so I'm not really sure if there are paths there or not. So if that was part of the developer plan, can somebody put some pressure back on them for whatever was negotiated for that development?

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Jeff Livingstone (00:42:35) Can I just say, that with information retrieval, there is this concept of push versus pull. So, you can either push the information to the intended recipients, or you can wait for them to essentially pull it, like from online. So it's much, much more effective to do a push strategy instead of a pull. I think for a lot of this, it's

great. When I think back, even five years, of what Conservation as a Department has done to increase the level of information and availability on its site, etc., but you have to go to the Municipal Building to pick it up. You have to go online to grab it as it's not something that's actually pushed to you. So, like local papers, signage, things of this, this is more of a push as opposed to a pull. So I think that we should start thinking about that, like how do people actually get the information? And as you said, not just the kids who live on Google.

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Audience Member / Patricia (00:43:39) Even if they're younger than me, I have the Town paper, and I go through it page by page, and it sticks in my brain better than anything I'm going to see online, and I know I'm older, that's fine, but even friends of mine that are younger, we miss the Gazette. Everybody kind of misses the Gazette.

Audience Member 1 (00:44:20) I heard you mention something about Franklin Town Pages, that you can't use it?

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Breeka LI Goodlander (00:44:36) What I was saying is that Franklin does not have a Town Paper. So all the information is readily available, but on paper, you just have to come to me. I just need help on the other side to be able to get that information to you.

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Meghann Hagen (00:44:50) What newspapers do you get that you prefer to read local news out of?

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Audience Member 1 (00:45:05) Franklin Town Pages.

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Audience Member / Patricia (00:45:05) And see, I would have thought that was a Franklin Town-sponsored paper.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:45:22) On Pond Street, by the way, there is a small easement owned by the Town to get back in there, and should be some public parking for that development. If there's not, you want to contact the Planning Department.

Melanie Hamblen (00:45:45) You know, there is a Town Monthly Newsletter, and I think about how do we get that sent out to everyone. Do we do it in a mailing? We do email because you can sign up for the newsletter online, but it costs money to do that, but it would be great to highlight an open space every month. But how do we get it to people without computers? And that's really difficult because it costs a lot of money to do that.

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Meghann Hagen (00:46:49) I would even say, I love this concept, and we have some good ideas here of what we can look at, but like Conservation isn't on social media, and that's where the younger generations get a lot of their information. So maybe that's something we need to look at, and we could do the same thing, like once a week we highlight something, like a native species, or I think there's a lot we could do on social media for the younger generation as well to pull them within our resources in town.

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Jeff Livingstone (00:47:24) Coincidentally, I recently joined a Board of MACC, and one of the things that we decided to do at the last Board meeting is create a group to study how do we use social media to make MACC more accessible to younger people, so it was interesting.

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Mark LePage (00:47:47) One other thought too, at the other end of the spectrum, I'm thinking if we had something at the trailheads of existing properties, if you go to one, to your point there's others. At first, I was thinking "do we put something in paper?" but that can get expensive to your point, but even if we put the website, a QR code, to check out our other open space—like I didn't know about Riverbend until I started attending these meetings, you know. So you could access the other ones and get indication by going to another one. That might be a way to help.

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Audience Member 1 (00:48:34) Usually, the people in town who have the most time to go to these places are retired people, older people who don't do social media. They don't do computers, they don't do anything like that.

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Meghann Hagen (00:48:49) I would say you're tied with the younger generation of at-home parents, because we actually have a pretty large population of at-home parents who are with their kids and looking for things to do. So I think, I absolutely agree there's a need to look at a generation that's not going to be on social media and what to do, but we also need to look at both ends of the spectrum too.

Len *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:49:14) The Senior Center Newsletter is well read.

Shaun Walbridge *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (00:49:20) Something that we could do that would improve knowledge for our open spaces is a well-designed map, which would be at all of the open space locations. This provides a united identity for public spaces, and lets people might know about, say, DelCarte about the many other properties.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:49:43) My comments to that is that we absolutely have those maps available, they are in my office, they are available online, they can go out to these areas. I would need a location to put them, so it's easily done, but I would need to put in a purchase order request to put those kiosks, because not every location has a kiosk. Second, for social media, I have already been kicking around the idea. It would have to be Department-run, so we can talk about it.

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Pat Gallagher (00:50:22) The other thing, we've talked about the idea of having kind of a Friends of Franklin Conservation areas, and I think we've talked about it in the context of trail care and maintenance. But, I think that could also be that they do their own social media, if we had that type of organization, and we could set something up that is not under the official umbrella of the Town of Franklin, but that could be used to help spread awareness among other things. But I also like the idea of having maps and resources at all of our open spaces, because everyone is going to have their one place, and that's their spot and they go there regularly and they might not necessarily know all of the other resources, but to use our open spaces for cross-marketing. To be able to say, if it's

crowded when you get there on a particular day, “here are some other areas that you may want to look into.” Having maps on site may be a way to get around the question of doing a mailing to everyone that would be really expensive.

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Len (00:47:40) Yes, use social media.

/

Audience Member 3 / Rahbi (00:51:38) I have been in Franklin for the past four years, I live in Brookview. We have been talking to Breeka, and she’s been very nice on the Open Space Plan, so while Breeka was talking to us about a cricket ground. Cricket is one of the fastest growing sports in the U.S., and there’s a lot of interest coming into cricket, but there’s no cricket ground in the town. So number one, I think we would like Franklin to encourage and promote this sport. You look at the other towns up north and even south, trying to play a similar role, we are helping promote this game, and we have cricket coaches, 75 cricket coaches, who live in the same company as we do. They played international level or below in India, and moved here for studying and things like that. So they are conducting cricket sessions for youth, both girls and boys, in Woburn and international, so they travel out two days every week, and go out and give them the business, and it will be awesome if we can have the space here and promote youth cricket to their friends, where they have two areas to go to once they come out and blossom in the space, right? One is representing USA for the first time, and the other is that there’s a few things like the National Football League, you know, a few cricket leagues that run around as the Indian Premium Caribbean League and there’s some 100 Australian, which produces a lot of energy. So we are basically giving avenues for these kids to go to one of these two areas, and at the same time there’s a lot of investment coming into the country as well. So you know, Franklin being a part of the journey is what we would like to do.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:53:39) Thank you, I think that’s something we’ve heard from some others, and I believe Ryan had mentioned maybe at JFK that they have cricket, but I think the sentiment may have been that that’s not an adequate space. I don’t even know, is there a particular season where cricket leagues are starting up, or a time of year?

/

Audience Member 3 / Rahbi (00:54:14) Cricket leagues usually start at the end of March, goes about eight months **\*Discussion of usual cricket team schedules\***

/

Jeff Livingston (00:55:01) So much easier than pickleball, and much lower cost.

/

Audience Member 3 / Rahbi (00:55:08) The spot would be where King Street, I think there’s a soccer ground there, that would be an amazing spot

/

Pat Gallagher (00:55:24) Right, so are other youth leagues or towns running them in the spring-summer-fall throughout? Because if we were trying to coordinate with other towns’ leagues, for example?

/

Audience Member 3 / Rahbi (00:55:35) So I think, as with everybody else, **\*discussion of Cricket associations in the region\***, and there’s something called the Massachusetts

Cricket League, and the New England Cricket Association, which runs Cricket right from April to October. There's a lot of interest and a lot of teams in Massachusetts predominantly.

/

Pat Gallagher (00:57:25) Thank you, it's definitely something we'll look at, and I know Ryan has it on his list as well.

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Meghann Hagen (00:57:30) Just a quick question, so I love this idea. I'm from Massachusetts originally, but via Australia I have thoroughly missed being in cricket. What do you see for other towns? How are they putting in their cricket pitches? Are they using local soccer fields, have you seen anything else they have been using?

/

Audience Member 3 / Rahbi (00:57:50) The soccer fields are mostly fine, and basically you can have a circular field, and you would have a rectangular pitch, and the radius is going to be somewhere around 80 feet. **\*Further details about required dimensions for cricket fields discussed\***

/

Meghann Hagen (00:58:55) Thank you both for coming.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:58:59) I remember one school, can't remember which school it was in town, but they set up a league **\*detailed what the school set up a league for\***

Jeff Livingstone (00:59:35) One of the comments was for Maple Hill and Schmidt's Farm, and basically they were talking about things like using some of the land as an educational community engagement facility, and for example, in collaboration with Norfolk Aggie you had mentioned, and I was just saying what would be really interesting is to go to the Norfolk Community Organic Farm. The reason I'm saying this is because they have a huge agricultural educational program, actually multiple programs, and they've been doing it for about 45 years. I know this because my daughter used to work there, actually spent about five years working there. She didn't work with the educational programs, but she worked conjunctly with them. They're really, really good and they're well done, so that might be something we could learn from.

/

Pat Gallagher (01:00:48) One thing I think, in the conversation around awareness, if we're involving Tri-County or involving Norfolk Aggie, getting all these schools and institutions, you get students involved, you get parents involved, people learn more about the area. I think that's a good kind of backdoor way to get people aware and active in these spaces.

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Jeff Livingstone (01:01:16) I don't think we have any Audubon-specific properties in Franklin, correct? I was just wondering if that was another group that would be interesting to partner with.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (01:01:35) Working on it.

/

Jeff Livingstone (01:01:45) Again, we talked about this before, and for some reason we couldn't get traction on this and I was shock—this was several years ago—we thought that maybe through the local High School, this was right after the new Franklin High School was built. We approached the science department there and asked them if they do have units on Conservation, which they do on environmental. We wondered if there was some way to work into their units, speaking of field trips, to places like DelCarte or some of the Town Forest, things like that, and we were basically just told like “no, not interested, sorry, go away” and I was shocked by that. Because, here's an incredible resource, and the Conservation group here is one of the best in the State as I'm often told at these annual meetings by the way, so it's really surprising that the local schools don't want to work—at least that's what we were told—with Conservation groups here.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (01:02:41) It's already changing. So right now, I'm working with a junior to get him on an internship this summer. I'm working with an eighth grader to talk about wildlife and habitat loss. Tri-County came out and did a career fair last Thursday, so I'm hoping to get a few interns out of that, and then I do work with a science teacher from the High School at taking water samples at the Sculpture Park. I think it's an accumulation of more people, new people, you do have Lucas now. We have a full-time Agent, so not just me, but my position has more of a presence than what I think it has had in the past, so then that's making the rounds. And Franklin Future Leaders, I forgot about that, it's not really a school but yeah.

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Melanie Hamblen (01:03:30) Before it was part-time, and now with full-time, it makes a big difference.

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Meghann Hagen (01:03:50) I think too, you know, Breeka Li for a different matter go me in touch with the Green Team at the Franklin High School, and I think they seem pretty keen to work on some things in Conservation. So, I think there's some good leads there to do things going forward.

Jeff Livingstone (01:04:04) Just another comment again, one of the things when you talked about access and parking, the trail system behind the Franklin Dog Park is used by the Frisbee golf people, because that's where their course is, but nobody else really knows about it because you have to go all the way to the end by the playground and go down and around, and there's no signage. But, there's a pretty substantial trail system there, and the fellow who used to be here—I don't think he's here anymore but the one that did all the engineering work, he made all those little walkways and things like that, and they're really nice—but nobody knows. So, you're basically in the Dog Park, and you talk to people about them and they look at you like you have three eyes, like they've never even known that there's anything back there. So what I would propose, because we originally talked about the Dog Park—again this is way back when we were using Medway, which was the first Dog Park we ever had access to as the model, and then Franklin came along and said we want one—originally it was going to be much bigger, and then it got carved out. But also, there's was going to be a gate in the back, not just the front but the back, with a little walkway, again kind of like he took timbers or steps or something down to the trail system, and that was done to promote that fact that you had

access, and people would then take the dogs and walk the trails and then come back through. All of that got nixed in the final design, unfortunately, and it's really cut off the trail system. So, my personal opinion is that should be revisited, or at the very least there should be some sort of paving that goes around the side of the dog park, maybe down to an entrance to the trail system, or at the very least some signage over by where they have a vehicle access point for vehicles to get back there and do property management. At least something to tell people there are trails back there, because unless you accidentally run into someone who's coming out of them, or you talk to the Frisbee golf people, or you just happen to find out about it one day because your dogs run back there, you would never know that there's a pretty extensive trail system back there.

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Melanie Hamblen (01:06:40) You know, I talk about outreach, I think it reminds me of Shop Franklin. We did the Shop Franklin Bingo, and so we made it so you had to go to all these different places, and in the middle square there was "go to a new outdoor space" and at the bottom of this Bingo card, I put "this is the website that you can find where all the outdoor spaces are", and so people had to post pictures of where they went to get a point for that square. So on Shop Franklin, when it existed, it could be on anything, right? So that another way, you make it a game, it's fun. That just reminded me of that.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (01:07:30) Natalie, the other day, was at the Sculpture Park taking photos, to be in front of you soon, but she noticed somebody had the Bingo from last fall for DelCarte. So, we have a whole PDF of children's activities on our Conservation page that people can just print off.

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Jeff Livingstone (01:07:52) Melanie, how did the Bingo card play out? What did you do with it, did you give it out at a specific function, and then you would turn it in again?

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Melanie Hamblen (01:08:00) So the Bingo card was actually so that people would go to these different places and fill it out. So, it would be like "go to a place and buy a coffee", didn't matter where, you just had to go there and do it and then you get somebody to sign it, and it was sponsored by all the different stores in town, and nobody had to pay because I developed the Bingo card myself. Then, people actually just donated gifts, so that when people would turn in a Bingo; if you had one Bingo, you got a certain level of a gift; if you got three Bingos, then you would get into the drawing for the three-Bingo gift. But I think people loved that open space free spot. That was the thing that made it, people loved that, and people found different places. So I would go out and be like "I'm here today and guess where I am" and so to get people out, I was down at the park on Acorn Street. People were like "where are you?" and there's trails in there and everything, and I would take Rosie with me because people loved to follow wherever Rosie went. But, that got people excited about going to find new places, and that needs to be done on a regular basis, you know like at DelCarte. Maybe we all need to do it together, or we all need to pitch in and put it on Franklin TV, or talk to Steve Sherlock about it, you know? There's different ways you can get this information out, but they have to make it fun.

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Jeff Livingstone (01:09:45) I'm just thinking, and this might be too big an idea, but let's say you have maybe three or four different Bingo cards, and you had a certain amount of

time—and this could take place over maybe a couple months or so—where people could basically could run around town and open space. Maybe you do a partnership like a student partnership, Downtown Partnership and all the shops and every other place else, right? But at some event, like the Strawberry Festival or something, is when you give out the prizes, like you make a big deal out of it. So, it all culminates on one day, like during a festival, I think that would be like a great idea.

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Melanie Hamblen (01:10:45) Or the Farmers market? There's a big gazebo there, and music now, and all kinds of stuff, and Ryan has his movies there, and the Agricultural Commission has a zucchini race, it's like the coolest thing. You get more people there, you get more people to find out about the events and what you're talking about, because that's when people come up and say "what are you doing? Well, I'm going to do it next year".

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (01:12:03) I don't know if the Commission recalls, I got a table for the Commission at the Farmer's Market, I just need volunteers. Lauren was kind enough to give us one of the two tables for Community, so that is whenever the Conservation Commission can attend.

Meghann Hagen (01:13:53) I have one last comment, just as a thank you to all of the Franklin Residents who have shown up, because I have been quite impressed to see the amount of people who are willing to put in work on our trail systems and to actually participate once we have our plan to move forward, and I think looking at our Friends of Franklin Open Spaces will be a great opportunity for an avenue for people to get their hands dirty and help make our Open Spaces great. So, I'm excited for everyone to be able to help.

Len *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (01:14:24) Yes, partner with Audobon for sensory trail.

Len *via Breeka Li Goodlander* (01:14:28) I respect the need for public awareness, but I fear some of Franklin's quiet and open spaces will be lost.

/

Pat Gallagher (01:14:40) Well I think part of that too, is getting people aware, like how many people could find Maple Hill, for example? I think promoting awareness to all the open spaces is going to spread people out, if anything.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**May 4, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: Habitat Protection, Ecosystem Restoration, and Other Conservation Lands**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Breka Li Goodlander (00:03:28) I know there has been a lot of comments about invasive species removal. A lot of residents wrote into the survey that they would like the invasive species removed/checked. This is my general shoutout to anybody that would like to go and remove invasive species; you have my full backing, please just give me a call and I will guide you in that process and make sure that you are doing it in a manner that does not cause adverse impact. But I think I speak for everyone when I say we would fully support that, and would love the public initiative. And, we have talked about daylighting, but also retrofitting culverts or wildlife crossings, as in stream crossings, Michael that I think you really liked. I think it was you that liked the fisheries and streams?

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Michael Rein (00:04:25) Might have been.

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Breka Li Goodlander (00:04:30) So, there's definitely that, that would fall under the umbrella for habitat protection. Ecosystem restoration, being a little bit of a foreshadower here into the rest of the evening, several residents have approached me looking to restore their property, and we don't have an official permit for that. We do and we don't, so planting of native species, conversion of impervious to pervious ground cover, pruning, things of that nature are all exempt under the wetlands protection act, but not necessarily under our local bylaw. Additionally, a lot of our restoration work—which I think you have learned or already knew—does occur within that no-disturb zone, because you want to get right down to that bank/slope/boundary line. So, our permits, specifically the MBZA and our regulations, don't encourage restoration, but it also doesn't discourage it either. So, we do have two residents so far that have approached me that want to restore their property, and I have suggested they file an MBZA but the fee is

waived. That way, that fee can go into actually buying plants, doing the work, since it's positive.

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Jeff Milne (00:06:01) What exactly do they want to do?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:06:08) So one resident wants to plant native species—which you will hear later tonight—and another who just moved here and is learning about invasive species. She had a very nice, wholesome thought process that she was going to remove all the fragmites in her wetland that she shares with her neighbors, which is a nice thought, but definitely a really, really big burden for one resident to take on.

Especially, because eradication of fragmites isn't as easy as handpulling. Usually, you have to burn it repeatedly, year after year after year.

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Jeff Milne (00:06:50) You could use some interns.

/

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:06:54) That's exactly right. So, in her case we're doing what I have talked to her about anyways—she'll be on the next public hearing—is pulling out what she can on the boundary line, and then replanting with some other aggressive native species to at least curb the fragmites from climbing up her slope. Then, she will plant up that slope going away from the boundary too. So that's something that the Conservation Department is looking to mitigate, probably after the Open Space Plan. We get together with Mark Cerel, especially when we are redoing bylaws and regulations, and things like that.

Robert Kearns, CRWA (00:08:25) Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Commission about the Open Space Plan. We are very interested in ecological restoration and the culvert work. Actually, we were just in town today doing some assessments by the flood model, looking at some of the coldwater streams, the trout stream, it's called Shepard's Brook by the Town. The culvert replacements by the Town, we definitely want to support the Town in those efforts to help increase aquatic connectivity and habitat connectivity for fish and wildlife. Additionally, any opportunities for restoration of streams, dam removal when feasible, we're definitely interested. And wetlands restoration, I don't think there's any cranberry bogs in town, but that's another option the State does. But, the other thing, speaking of invasive species, we do have a program where we can definitely be a resource, we do a volunteer program for corporate groups and other volunteer groups to remove invasive bittersweet and other invasive plants. So, if there's any places in town that are a priority, you can let me know and we can be a resource there. I know we've done some in other communities, I don't know if Franklin specifically, but we've worked with Conservation Commissions in the south to help facilitate this, because we have groups who like to do some polls. So, just offering to be a resource, and I think that's it, but just very interested in all of the stuff you guys are doing. DelCarte I'm not as familiar with, but I know there's been a lot of talk around there for work. So, save our resources, and thank you for all you guys are doing at the Town, and love to support your guys' work.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:10:47) You actually reminded me, being from CRWA, I don't know if you know this but last year we had a really bad drought. I was at Charles River, just checking on some things, and on the Franklin Medway line, you could just walk it, and there were car batteries, tires, there were a lot of things actually in the river. Not that we can fully make it a positive, when we have a drought, but at the same point that lends us an opportunity to at least pick up our river. So I had that idea last year, and I was tentatively waiting to see if we have another drought, and would love to coordinate with you, Robert, to see if we could get something going for that.

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Robert Kearns, CRWA (00:11:35) Yeah, keep me posted, we normally do cleanups in the springtime. We're getting some new staff for a volunteer coordinator, so could be a good opportunity, so thank you.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:12:10) *Reading Open Space survey results for Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Restoration until (00:17:08)*

Jeff Milne *commenting on the results of "How often do you use designated Conservation areas of Franklin?" Answers were 31.6% saying "A few times per year"; 22.9% "1-2 times per month"; 18.6% said "weekly"; 14.1% said "once a month"; 6.7% said "almost every day"* (00:17:09) I guess I'm kind of surprised by the weekly and the daily numbers.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:17:15) Yeah, so people tend to go weekly versus daily, and they go two times a month versus one time per month.

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Jeff Milne (00:17:22) I normally drive by DelCarte, a lot of times that parking lot is full.

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Michael Rein (00:17:40) It was half-full today, when it's cold and rainy.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:17:46) I'm still working on getting those signs up. DPW is making signs for our Tree City, because we need to plaster that around town, so I'm on the list.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:17:58) So those were the questions that directly relate to Habitat Protection or Ecosystem Restoration, sans people identifying actual parcels around town that they would like to see protected.

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Jeff Milne (00:18:15) Have we actually identified parcels?

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Breeka LI Goodlander (00:18:17) Yes, I still have to look through the responses. A lot of responses were properties that were already under contract or have already come in front of Conservation Commission for approval or Planning Board. So, unfortunately we can't consider those ones, but there are plenty that have been vacant lots indefinitely, that are really too wet to develop on, which is why they're undeveloped, which I think we know that is why it becomes Conservation areas, generally.

Robert Kearns, CRWA (00:18:59) The signage thing pops up in my head, I have just an idea—and I don't remember if Franklin has any—but other towns I've seen have signs at the stream crossings. I don't know how many stream crossings there are in Franklin, so it could be potentially a significant expense, but other communities have done signs labeling streams at the road crossings. In my hometown they did it, but it's just another idea that popped up in my head when we're talking about signage, because people don't know all of these little ones.

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Jeff Milne (00:19:50) There's two other streams in town that are so minor, I bet most people probably don't know where they are.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:19:55) Yeah, Shepard's; Mine; Mill; Dix Brook; and then a bunch of unnamed tributaries, we're a floodplain to the Charles River, so it all drains. But Robert, you bring a really good point up. When I met with Stephen Sherlock for the Climate Change Podcast, he brought up how, once he started to talk to me, earlier that day he was driving and started noticing how wet it was on either side of the road, and he had never seen that before. So, I really like that idea, and that sounds like a great P.R. project for DPW to do—they do the signs which is why I'm bringing them up—or an intern, or an Eagle Scout project, or even grant funding through some organization. I like that a lot, and then it will get people thinking about it when they're out and about. I think it's very important for people to have a connection to the land, because then they will start to care about it and foster it. Otherwise, if it's just buildings, well you have other people that take care of that. So, that's a good idea.

# **FRANKLIN CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

## **OSRP MEETING Minutes**

**May 18, 2023**

**6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

### **TOPIC: OPEN SPACE ACCESSIBILITY, TRAILS, BIKE PATHS, TOWN CONNECTIVITY**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting was available to be attended in person and via the ZOOM platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens were able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens could participate by copying the link on the agenda or calling 929-205-6099. For those wishing to attend in person, the meeting is held in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

#### **Comments from the Public / Answers**

Ryan Jette (00:03:14) I just wanted to give a quick update on the Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan that I have been working on. Myself and Gus Brown, the Building Commissioner, and Mary O'Neil, who is on the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, and Victoria Strand went out last Wednesday. We did our first round at all of the town ballfields and playgrounds, and we'll be finishing up the last three tomorrow, starting with DeCarte, Dacey, and Meadowlark Lane. So, we should be complete by tomorrow. I'll write up the report and get it over to Breeka Li by the end of next week.

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Pat Gallagher (00:04:00) That's great, thanks for the update.

Ali Rheame (00:04:04) Hello everyone, how exciting is it that this is the last one? My goodness, it's been a journey. I've already voiced perspective on accessibility a bunch of times throughout the whole thing. I think the thing for me, the thing that stands out the most as someone who does navigate life with disability here in Franklin, is the playground surfaces, a goal to get them switched over to that resilient rubber surface. Actually, my sister, Jennifer Williams, she was unable to make it to the meeting tonight because of her little kids and has asked me to speak on her behalf as well. She's also a Franklin resident, and she said she also agrees with switching over the playground surfaces, but also even toddlers learning to walk have a hard time on things like mulch, or strollers are hard on mulch, and how toddlers can eat mulch. But, she mentioned how there's a couple surrounding towns that have great examples like Choate Park in Medway, and things like that. I think that would be my number one thing, but there's two, one more. So second to that, actually because of the whole connectivity thing, I know like the SNETT Trail just redid that section, and it's really exciting. I'm really excited for those who can access it, but it can be really frustrating as someone with disability that stonedust is just not accessible. So, if that trail in particular, or any others

in town start to get changed, asking for consideration of pavement instead of stonedust, because again, anything that you can pick up off the ground as a surface isn't really accessible. Wheels get stuck, and it's hard to walk on if you have balance issues and stuff, so I guess my thing is surfaces. But, thank you all so much for your efforts on this, and really appreciate it.

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Patrick Gallagher (00:06:27) Thanks for being such an active participant. I think your perspective and input has been really, really important to us going through and hearing them, so thank you.

Cobi Frongillo (00:06:54) Hi everyone, I've also said many things and sent many emails over the course of this, so I'll restrict my comments to just a few new ones. One of the things I'm always looking for is opportunities to connect neighborhoods with trails. I think we think about trails often as being a place that we can drive to and do on a weekend with your family, but there's a whole bunch of trails that just connect neighborhoods that allow Franklin's kids to connect with other kids in a much safer and really more enjoyable way. We know this was true with Maple Hills—that was true around me—there are a whole bunch of these, and there are a whole bunch of opportunities where we have massive parcels between neighborhoods, and just having little right-of-ways and making sure that the trails connect are really good ways to increase the accessibility and connectivity of town. One such that I just explored recently, and shot over to Breeka Li, is off Parliament Drive. If you didn't know, Parliament's this small residential area that used to have a homeowners association that controlled this; There was a basketball court, a tennis court, and a baseball field that now all have been grown in, and now it has some trails that some kids use for biking. But, it's a potential opportunity to do something cool, and the fun fact about that that I learned recently, is the movie *The Natural* the guy the movie was based off of used to play baseball there and throw the ball around with kids, so that's kind of dope. Other than that, the last one is putting my hat on as the President of the Franklin-Bellingham Rail Trail Committee. We are very, very lucky to have the Southern New England Trunkline Trail start in Franklin, we've made a ton of improvements with the bridge and the surface improvements, and we're still making more. But, keeping that as a radar, and really one of our primary—if not our primary recreational trails asset—is huge. So, some of the big things that we're looking at are the crossing across Grove Street, the parking lot at Grove Street—I think both of those have plans to be addressed, but making sure they remain priorities—further surface improvements as touched upon by Ali, seating options along the way, and then your big ticket item—which I think should really be Franklin's #1 trails priority—is extending that railtrail through to the rest of the mostly-unused rail track, that takes us all the way to downtown. That has the opportunity to really make Franklin a destination for the entire area to come and visit our businesses, and start and end their day in the middle of Franklin, and invite people there, and really just open that trail up to people to be able to walk to and bike to more. So, keeping the SNETT is a top priority. Thank you so much for all that you've done, and all the time you've put into these meetings.

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Pat Gallagher (00:10:47) Just coming off of Cobi's comments, Ryan have you come across any surfacing that –because I think oftentimes for trails especially—there's this wanting to keep the trails pervious. But then, there's the accessibility concerns as well, and what Ali was saying around how that's not accessible for someone who is in a wheelchair or has mobility needs. So, I wonder are there any surfacing materials that you've come across that balance being semi-pervious or get a little beyond what is currently out there?

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Ryan Jette (00:11:32) Well I actually happen to live along the SNETT railroad bed, it's right behind me—like 15 feet—so I'm very familiar with the Rail Trail. I thought that surface was a pretty good balance, quite honestly. I have heard from Victoria that there's a section from the parking lot to get to the actual packed-down material that they currently have that is stonedust and is very cumbersome to get to. But, right outside where I live, I know they had a steamroller, like a two-ton steamroller, that went up and down with vibrations upon it that really, really packed it down, so you could literally drive a truck down these trails. I know there are some areas that are challenging, but I really thought that was a good middle ground. As you said, it's impervious. The next best thing is what we've done at Nason Street Playground, which is poured-in-place rubber. It's super-expensive, but it gives you both that shock absorbency for when children fall on it, but also it gives you a good planarity where you can roll wheelchairs or bikes or strollers down it. I think the SNETT is pretty good. Again, I haven't seen anybody really try to go down there with strollers or wheelchairs, but just seeing what I saw, I know they packed it pretty good.

Victoria Strand (00:13:27) I did have the privilege of going to the self-evaluation, and that was really eye-opening, I loved it, but I do have some other comments. We're talking about the Rail Trail, so Milford and Holliston, to my knowledge, all have asphalt, which we do use. We go visit family nearby, and that is just so much easier. So a little bit about myself, my son has cerebral palsy. He's almost 10, he's in a wheelchair and the wheelchair is about 70 pounds and TJ is 100 pounds. So if you can imagine a little bump, we hit shins, all sorts of things happen. So unfortunately, I understand we want to keep it as natural as possible, but it's inaccessible for TJ, so we do go to other towns to utilize that type of thing. While I have the podium here, I would just like to piggyback off Ali. My comments would be that I think surfaces are a big thing, the mulch is again the same type of issue that we have, and I would also like to compliment Ryan. When we went to this evaluation he was really great, every park bench we saw that was not paved, he said “we need to get a way to it” and I was really impressed, and that really felt great to know that it wasn't me that had to say that. Somebody from the Town sees that, we need this improvement and let's work together and this is good. So I was really happy to be a part of that, and happy to give my input, but we love pavement.

Jake Berry (00:15:00) Everything Cobi said, I want to echo. He took the words right out of my mouth. I think the extension of the SNETT into the center of town, or at least to Union Street, would be really valuable and just extend the accessibility of the Rail Trail to many more people so that they can walk to it from their neighborhoods. Also kids, I'm a giant proponent of getting kids on bikes, getting kids outside, getting kids exercising in

any way that we can provide them with access to that in town I think is important. I think that echoes Cobi's comment about connecting neighborhoods, and connecting neighborhoods with trails, and we've done that really successfully between Brandywine and Daniels with a bunch of trails. You know, short ones that would, if a kid was to ride his bike he would have to go all the way down Skyline and up Daniels, and Daniels is not a great road to ride a bike on. But now they can cut in between those two neighborhoods within 500 feet. It gives them a safe way to transport between neighborhoods, we see this on Bridle Path as well, at the end of Bridle Path. So, I think there are a lot of examples of that in town, and a lot more that we could probably utilize, you know, different town-owned parcels to try and attain that connectivity. Lastly, I would throw out the idea of, dovetailing the kids on bikes, a lot of towns are starting to put in kid pump tracts. You know, those are small areas where they have what I would call little bumps or something, where kids can ride around in a circle and really get joy out of their bikes and get bike-handling skills, and at the same time being outside.

Tom Christensen (00:17:12) I'm honored to be able to join your effort tonight. I'm a former Massachusetts resident, and I'm on the Board of the New Hampshire Rail Trail Coalition, but a member of your Rail Trail group as well. I want to compliment you on all the discussion so far, particularly the aspect of mobility for those who are handicapped, but here's my point: What we're trying to do in New Hampshire is to create what we call knowledge nuggets, because time and time again we have these discussions, and people who are very professional and very articulate—and often in their work use Powerpoint presentations and are very comfortable to create them—speak and a few minutes later, that knowledge is lost. So I encourage you to take the comments that are being made tonight, and put them onto some Youtube video or something, or even just a simple Powerpoint so the ideas don't get lost. Again, I want to compliment you on this effort, it's just been wonderful listening to it, and I'll be quiet just sitting in the background enjoying it. Thanks a lot.

Randy Jay (00:18:58) I've been in Franklin on Country Way for about 33 years now, I'm a member of the Disability Coalition for about 5 years now. I don't know what to expect from this meeting, but I've been told about it at our meeting last week or so. So a friend of mine who is disabled, in case you need to get involved in this group in town here, because it's what he did in North Attleboro until they kicked him off the Committee, because he raised a lot of ruckus and we have persons with disabilities. But what he often spoke of was the importance, and guidelines in place already on playground surfaces and pathways and accessibility. I was just wondering, does the Building Commission or the Town incorporate the guidelines from the Americans with Disabilities Act?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:20:28) They do, so every new development, they have to be ADA compliant. Town-owned facilities do as well, the evaluation that Ryan was mentioning is led by Recreation Department and the Building Commissioner. So they have been going out. I don't know Ryan how many years, but pretty repetitive, it's rinse and repeat. So every few years, they have to go out and make sure it's all up to code. It tends to fall in line with the Open Space Plan as well, because a component of the Open

Space Plan is ADA compliance. I'm paraphrasing for everyone, but I think what we found is that there's the guidelines and then there's reality. So, that's where this Open Space Plan is really focused on the accessibility and mobility and just being available to everybody.

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Randy Jay (00:21:30) I think it's hard to step back and see the big picture sometimes, where there's accessibility to the parking lot and there's a handicap parking spot, but then how do you get to the spots over there? But it sounds like you've got the right checklists.

Ryan Jette (00:21:56) If I can just chime in real quick, just so people are aware, Massachusetts law on playground surfacing has just recently changed. It's not something that has been 20 years old and we have just ignored it. Mulch surfacing was an accepted form of playground surfacing up until a couple years ago. So all of our new playgrounds, we intend to use this poured-in-place rubber. I want to make sure everybody understands that we're not going to be building new playgrounds with mulch surfacing going forward. So, and also I think everybody that's concerned about ideas coming up and us forgetting about them, I would urge you to read the self-evaluation and transition plan, because the nuts and bolts of all of our parks and playgrounds, we're going around tomorrow with Victoria and Mary and myself and Gus again, to go through every single bathroom facility, concession facility, and playground, and we're looking at everything. We're doing measurements, we're looking at van accessibility, we're looking at how to get to and from every part of that park so it's a very thorough self-evaluation. So I don't want everybody to just think we're going to forget about this tomorrow. This is something that's going to be in writing, it's going to be in the 2024 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and then we're going to make that transition. You know, funds are limited, but we're going to do our best to try to get up to speed but things take time, you know. We have a lot of parks and sites in town, and we will do our best to try to meet that accessibility.

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Pat Gallagher (00:23:27) And Ryan, it might just be helpful, because I know in addition to Nason Street, there are plans over the next few years for a few other playgrounds in town. Would you be able to just refresh, for folks who haven't been involved in those conversations?

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Ryan Jette (00:23:47) Well, Nason Street Tot Lot was recently done, that's going to be opening up on May 31. We have our ribbon cutting at 5:30pm, so everybody's encouraged to come and check out the new playground. We have pictures on our website of it as well, and the surfacing is just great there, we're really happy with it. Fletcher Field will be our next playground improvement. The back playground at Fletcher Field was done in 2016, and the front playground is still 2007 I want to say is when that was done, so we're going to be doing that over. We got a state grant of \$50,000 and I'm going to be going to the Community Preservation Committee for more funding, an extra \$150,000 to bring the swingset closer to the playground and put poured-in-place rubber in that whole front area, and then also provide walkway access to the picnic tables and to the rear playground. So that will be the next one. The following year, we're going to be working on King Street to make improvements to that playground. Then, I believe three

years down the road, Dacey Field will be next on the list. So, we have a plan in place over the next five years to upgrade most of those playgrounds.

Kit Brady (00:25:21) I live on Kimberlee Avenue, I abut the Maple Hill property, and the nice thing about Maple Hill is that it's a blank slate. I think there's some great opportunities, obviously money is always an issue, to build specific purpose-built trails within the Maple Hill parcel. Some that could be more specific for walking, some that could be more specifically built for accessibility, wheelchair accessibility, to help distribute the cost of pavement as a more impervious surface versus another trail for mountain biking. So, with respect to accessibility, I think Maple Hill is yet to be kind of conceptualized as to what it's going to be, and might be a great opportunity to take all of these comments into account when you are designing what you are planning to do with that space. That's all I have to say.

Ali Rheume (00:26:34) Two things have come to mind as we have been talking here. One is when it was mentioned with the SNETT Trail not having seen people with strollers and wheelchairs there. I think that tells us something in of itself, we would see more people with strollers and wheelchairs there if it were more accessible. I wanted to add that perspective in there, but the other thing that I haven't mentioned yet to date, is the thought surrounding—and I know keeping woodsy trails natural is very important, and I'm all for that—I'm just kind of wondering if there's a spot in town that, even if it wasn't a trail that was paved. If maybe there was just sort of like a common area near a woodsy or water-included space where you could just sit and be more in nature. So it may not be a park, or you may not be walking all through the woods, but a little paved area before a trailhead, or near a lake or something, just with a bench, paved from the parking lot to that, and then just everything else kept natural sort of thing. I'd love that, I love just going and sitting and hanging out. So, just another consideration for us.

Fitch Proctor (00:28:21) Good evening, I'm part of the New England Mountain Bike Association here in Franklin. Just on the topic of some of the new trail pieces, just speaking about Maple Hill, if there is a desire to do anything in the woods, obviously NEMBA would be happy to help out with it. What I did want to call out attention to is we were recently contacted by a gentleman who represents some adaptive mountain bikers. For those who don't know what adaptive mountain biking is, you may have seen it before. It's for disabled riders who still want to pursue mountain biking, it's handcranks, four wheels that are very complicated and pretty awesome machines, but we've been working with some of our local trail networks to make sure we're documenting where adaptive riding can take place. Contrary to popular belief, these guys can definitely ride, so they aren't looking necessarily dumbed down places, but I think Franklin does have some great parcels to it. So on the accessibility side of that, I would be happy to go through with some of our adaptive rider friends and note-take on the Town's behalf of where adaptive riding is currently set up. There's currently certain places where obviously there's going to be certain scenarios where simply you can't get past on a four-wheeled vehicle—hand powered of course, not motorized—so it still falls under all the same environmental use friendliness that mountain biking entails. But I

think it's a great opportunity for Franklin too, because everybody's so positive about accessibility and making sure that everyone can enjoy the Town.

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Pat Gallagher (00:29:48) That would be awesome, just to sit down at some point and go through where there might be good opportunities to look at, and I think this is a conversation that has come up in other contexts. Talking about, for example, Riverbend, and some of the other conservation areas where I think, in general, are not so wide or as accessible even to people who do not have accessibility challenges. So, I think generally we'd love to be looking at trails and if there are ways to widen them and make them more accessible to everybody, but that sounds like a really great opportunity.

Breeka Li Goodlander (00:31:05) Ali, I know sometimes you hang out on Zoom and wait for the regularly scheduled Commission Hearing. You may enjoy the Sculpture Park Minor Buffer Zone Activity tonight. We got a long agenda, so I don't blame you if you don't last, but you may enjoy it.

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Ali Rheume (00:31:20) Thank you, I am definitely going to stay then, because that is my favorite spot to go to in town, so I will stay.

Michael Rein (00:31:38) I'll just add one, talking about connectivity and the SNETT. In addition to connecting it to downtown, you know on the other end it's not that far to Schmidt's Farm, so maybe there's something we can do to connect Schmidt's Farm to the SNETT.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:31:57) So for the SNETT, CSX and MBTA have been doing a purchase agreement, so the Town was already seeking approval way back in the 2016 Open Space Plan to extend it, and I know that I'm sure we've all heard this before but just in general. So now that MBTA has finally purchased it, we need to contact MBTA to see if we can purchase it from them. So that's why it's taking a while, it hasn't left the radar, it's just taking a while because that's the way things are.

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Pat Gallagher (00:32:41) Breeka, do you know if it's envisioned that DCR would take that over, or would the Town be interested in trying to acquire that land?

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:32:46) I'm not entirely sure, I know that Mike Maglio, the Town Engineer, he's the point of contact for that. I don't know. I would imagine it could very well be DCR, but even still, even though the SNETT is owned by DCR, the Town is a really big stakeholder in it. Even myself, I dictate what they plant out there. It's a good question, I can ask.

Jake Berry (00:33:32) This discussion about accessible trails, particularly strollers, kind of jogged my memory that, when the Town sold the sewer bed that is now Brookview, I believe there was discussion because there is town property kind of past that right on Mine Brook. I feel like there was discussion about a trail being built just like that and for that purpose, with access from Brookview. Does anyone else remember that? I know that was many years ago.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:34:12) Doesn't ring a bell to me, but I haven't been here very long. But, I can also ask, again I have no problem asking questions.

Ryan Jette (00:34:34) I just want to comment on the connectivity to Schmidt's Farm. I don't believe the SNETT railroad bed goes anywhere close to there. You would have to access it by a small trail that goes off by where Bubbling Brook meets up with Prospect Street, or you could go to the bridge and I believe the Town has a right-of-way kind of driveway that goes up onto Prospect Street. But, there's no sidewalks there, it's very dangerous if anybody was to try to walk down that street. So, I'm not sure if that's something that would require us putting sidewalks or some kind of bike path in, but I do know that there is no direct offshoot of the SNETT to Schmidt's Farm.

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Breeka LI Goodlander (00:35:18) Piggybacking off of you, Ryan, I did want to mention that I'm already talking to Bellingham to see if there's trails and connectivity to Schmidt's Farm. Just FYI, since they have Conservation Land on the other side.

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Ryan Jette (00:35:37) That's great. I knew we didn't own it, but that's great if you are talking to Bellingham.

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Jake Berry (00:35:45) They do actually, between Silver Lake and Prospect, there's a pretty good trail network in there that ends up right across the street from Schmidt's Farm.

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Breeka Li Goodlander (00:35:55) And we just purchased the two western properties to Schmidt's Farm as well, so there's this whole parcel/property now.

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Meghann Hagen (00:36:13) I love the idea of that, being able to connect it all and getting people easy access to both the SNETT and Schmidt's Farm. That would be amazing.

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Pat Gallagher (00:36:30) Right, I think it's a good thought just to be saying how do we, whether it's there, or it's out by Maple Hill, I think in that area there's a lot of potential to connect between Bridle Path, Maple Hill, Dacey, Keller-Sullivan, the Metacom, like there are a lot of existing trails in that area that you could probably—with a few additional connections—reach even more neighborhoods and folks. So, I think we've had some interest in looking at the map and figuring out where those are and what else would be needed, but all good opportunities to be thinking about.

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Ryan Jette (00:37:20) Pat, the concept art already exists on somebody's computer, and it is actually called the Emerald Necklace, and it was a concept to try to connect all these Open Space plots. It's just there's a lot of difficulty with sidewalks and main roads and whatnot, but I think that if we start small—now that we've acquired some land over in Maple Hill—starting small in that area would be a great goal of ours, so I think that will happen in time.

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Pat Gallagher (00:37:51) I agree, and even if it's to the point of main roads and you have intersections and crossings, and you see more and more of the flashing pedestrian lights and just ways to make intersections a little bit safer. We've thought about that with DelCarte as well, making sure it's easier for folks to get around and get in between neighborhoods that way. So it's definitely something to take a look at.

Meghann Hagen (00:38:25) I just wanted to say thank you to everybody to everyone who's participated for tonight. I think some great ideas have come about from tonight, specifically looking at accessibility around town, and I'm excited to see where we go from here.

Ryan Jette (00:40:55) I just wanted to publicly thank Breeka, she's done an amazing job with this. This is my fourth Open Space and Recreation Plan since being an employee, and by far this is the most thorough. I feel like we've gotten a lot of input, I would've liked more surveys to come in but I'm not going to complain. This has just been a real eye-opener, and we've got a lot of people involved in the Commission. You guys have done a great job, and I'm just really happy with the direction the Town's heading in, so thanks to everyone.

**APPENDIX C**  
**INVENTORY OF LANDS OF**  
**CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST**

**Chapter 61, 61A & 61B Lands - Private**

**Total Area = 1007.27212 Acres**

Parcel ID	Parcel Size (Acres)	Property Name	Address	Property Owner	Manager	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Accessible	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Grant Source	Deed Restriction	Land Use Code
204-005-000	20.021543		LINCOLN ST	KOSHIVOS JOHN / KOSHIVOS CATHERINE											714
206-020-000	3.201342		LINCOLN ST	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											037
206-032-000	1.033413		6 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-033-000	1.010786		10 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-034-000	1.731502		14 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-035-000	1.216953		18 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-052-000	1.005187		17 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-053-000	0.950962		9 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-054-000	0.920732		5 KOSHIVAS DR	KOSHIVOS CHARLES J / KOSHIVOS ELIZABETH											718
206-076-000	10.275346		250 BENT ST	LYON REALTY LLC											037
207-014-000	8.923856		LINCOLN ST	DELLEA ANDREW J											713
208-009-000	71.631318		ELM ST	DELLEA ANDREW J											073
208-012-000	9.999465		ELM ST	DELLEA ANDREW J											073
208-019-000	36.930926		ELM ST	DELLEA ANDREW J											717
212-025-000	27.718288		1221 POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST RICE, SUSAN L TR											018
212-026-000	47.515994		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
213-045-000	9.611048		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
222-046-000	48.091863		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
222-047-000	15.634518		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
222-049-000	5.831303		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
222-050-000	2.803741		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
222-054-000	11.43472		POND ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
222-063-000	13.999909		PARTRIDGE ST	LEMBO GAIL V TR / GAIL V LEMBO LIVING TRUST											803
227-015-000	12.739971		LINCOLN ST	CALNAN JOHN W JR / C/O JASON W CALNAN											803
228-002-000	34.614004		LINCOLN ST	CALNAN JOHN W JR / C/O JASON W CALNAN											081
229-003-002	15.579635		HOFFMANN FARM RD	HOFFMAN NICHOLAS F / HOFFMAN JEANNINE M											712
232-047-000	8.685066		70 DANIELS ST	WHITE NEAL E / HAMBLEN MELANIE J											018
232-048-000	5.976616		DANIELS ST	WHITE NEAL E / HAMBLEN MELANIE J											803
235-142-000	13.370139		469 MAPLE ST	LABASTIE KATHLEEN A TR / KATHLEEN A LABASTIE TRUST											138
237-036-000	19.4844		160 MAPLE ST	WINTERS SALLY TR / MAPLE GATE REALTY TRUST											38
239-009-000	3.316784		MAPLEGATE	WINTERS SALLY TR / MAPLE GATE REALTY TRUST											805
239-010-000	83.307145		MAPLEGATE	WINTERS SALLY TR / MAPLE GATE REALTY TRUST											805
239-012-000	10.587871		MINE BROOK	WINTERS SALLY TR / MAPLE GATE REALTY TRUST											38
243-045-000	6.253265		444 LINCOLN ST	GARCIA JOEL I RUIZ / FISHER CARLY C											017
254-009-000	16.751955		MAPLEGATE	WINTERS SALLY TR / MAPLE GATE REALTY TRUST											805
255-001-000	2.342698		MAPLEGATE	WINTERS SALLY TR / MAPLE GATE REALTY TRUST											805
292-004-000	18.827246		PROSPECT ST	HENO FLOYD V											803
292-006-000	13.759131		PROSPECT ST	HENO FLOYD											803
300-002-000	115.225918		672 EAST CENTRAL ST	FRANKLIN COUNTRY CLUB INC											38
308-076-000	71.477346		PROSPECT ST	HENO FLOYD											0873
311-006-000	17.774454		235 GROVE ST	ROSSETTI STEVEN J & DALE M, TRS / CEDAR HILL FARM REALTY TRUST											018
323-039-001	1.148866		SPRING ST	MORSE PATRICIA											712
323-041-000	25.401569		SPRING ST	MORSE PATRICIA L TR L/E / WADSWORTH FARM REALTY TRUST MORSE, DANIEL W TR											0837
323-046-000	41.7505		SPRING ST	MORSE PATRICIA L											0138
323-049-000	11.275511		11 SPRING ST	HEHN ROBERT S & SUSAN E TRS / 11 SPRING ST FUNDING TRUST											017
326-001-000	42.968214		WASHINGTON ST	COOK MARILYN E											712
326-003-000	7.830283		WASHINGTON ST	COOK MARILYN E											712
326-033-000	6.284157		49 PROSPECT ST	GARBOSKI TIMOTHY J / VALANTINE DARCY J											017
330-012-002	8.426497		4 MOUNT ST	HEARN KERRY B / HEARN ELENA											018
331-028-001	1.485604		MOUNT ST	HEARN KERRY B / HEARN ELENA											803
337-006-000	3.754656		45 SOUTH ST	DEL SIGNORE PETER / HAYES LYNNE M											017
337-007-000	2.466576		41 SOUTH ST	DEL SIGNORE PETER / HAYES LYNNE M											017
343-018-000	4.693695		40 VINE ST	MORSE JONATHAN A&MARGARET W TRS / MORSE FAMILY LIVING TRUST											017
343-022-000	0.810046		VINE ST	MORSE PETER W / MORSE BENJAMIN K											720
343-022-001	6.269393		VINE ST	MORSE PETER W ETAL TRS / BIG APPLE TWO REALTY TRUST											714
348-002-000	5.947157		WASHINGTON ST	COOK WARREN HOWARD											720
348-003-000	15.191037		SOUTH ST	COOK WARREN H / COOK MARILYN E											717

**Federal Owned - Public**

**Total Area = 465.866558 Acres**

Parcel ID	Parcel Size (Acres)	Property Name	Address	Property Owner	Manager	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Accessible	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Grant Source	Deed Restriction	Land Use Code
224-040-000	27.009691		PINE ST	US OF AMERICA ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS	ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS						SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-041-000	0.211767		MINE BROOK	US OF AMERICA & ARMY	US ARMY						SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-042-000	0.981684		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-043-000	5.406414		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / USA	USA	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-044-000	0.795923		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / USA	USA	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-045-000	2.101279		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-046-000	2.551938		PINE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
224-047-000	2.098276		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / USA	USA	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
224-048-000	14.639542		PINE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY CORP	US ARMY CORP	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
225-029-000	12.45751		POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
225-039-000	8.422558		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
237-023-000	13.006849		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
237-024-000	6.320178		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / USA	USA	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
237-025-000	9.916215		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
237-026-000	1.114094		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
237-027-000	6.639163		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
237-028-000	2.586771		MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900

237-030-000	2.995557	RICHARD LN	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
237-033-000	25.693698	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
237-034-000	4.55546	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / USA	USA	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
237-035-000	2.05404	OAK ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
239-001-000	5.929967	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
239-002-000	0.891501	OAK ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
239-003-000	5.638786	OAK ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
239-004-000	1.247633	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
239-005-000	4.151667	OAK ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
239-006-000	7.240743	OAK ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
239-007-000	5.860631	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
239-008-000	7.664183	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
240-033-000	0.366353	OAK ST EXT	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY						SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
253-011-000	0.295539	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
254-001-000	0.441548	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-002-000	2.430865	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY CORP	US ARMY CORP	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-003-000	2.487742	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-005-000	5.275115	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY CORP ENG	US ARMY CORP ENG	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-006-000	0.011479	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-007-000	0.345527	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY CORP	US ARMY CORP	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-010-000	3.226711	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-011-000	1.536769	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY CORP ENG	US ARMY CORP ENG	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
254-013-000	5.766601	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
254-014-000	1.558532	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
254-016-000	21.483897	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
254-017-000	5.947669	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
254-018-000	5.4589	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-001-000	0.789498	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-002-000	14.406845	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-003-000	4.630143	POND ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-004-000	16.027558	CONLYN AV	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-005-000	16.458051	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-006-000	20.462998	WEST CENTRAL ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
257-090-000	0.665107	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
258-001-000	1.70448	WEST CENTRAL ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY	US ARMY	Flood Plain			No		OFFICE	Permanent			900
258-002-000	13.287086	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / US ARMY CORP	US ARMY CORP	Flood Plain			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			900
305-005-000	1.382922	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-006-000	16.323258	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-008-000	0.778986	GROVE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-009-000	3.336937	GROVE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-011-000	26.526577	WASHINGTON ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-012-000	6.697526	MINE BROOK	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-015-000	6.187132	GROVE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-016-000	4.797269	GROVE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-017-000	1.123753	KENWOOD CIR	U S OF AMERICA	U S OF AMERICA						INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
305-018-000	7.11223	GROVE ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS	Flood Plain			No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			900
336-009-000	7.035835	SOUTH ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
336-010-000	27.192071	SOUTH ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / USA ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS	USA ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS	Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
336-011-000	3.105251	SOUTH ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
336-012-000	2.594226	SOUTH ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
340-002-000	2.056504	WASHINGTON ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
340-007-000	10.03118	WASHINGTON ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
340-008-000	0.696301	WASHINGTON ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900
341-002-000	3.639869	SOUTH ST	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		Flood Plain			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			900

**Metacomet Land Trust - Public Recreation**  
Total Area = 63.1419 Acres

Parcel ID	Parcel Size (Acres)	Property Name	Address	Property Owner	Manager	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Accessible	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Grant Source	Deed Restriction	Land Use Code
229-005-000	12.682258		DANIELS ST	METACOMET LAND TRUST INC					No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			950
229-007-000	2.303233		DANIELS ST	METACOMET LAND TRUST INC					No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			950
234-024-000	10.403349	Bridle Path	BRIDLE PTH	METACOMET LAND TRUST INC		Hiking Trails			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			950
235-119-000	10.538559		MAPLE ST	METACOMET LAND TRUST INC		Hiking Trails			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			950
240-155-000	1.770072	Nature Classroom	CORONATION DR	METACOMET LAND TRUST INC		Outdoor Nature Classroom			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			950
242-073-000	25.444429		BRIDLE PTH	METACOMET LAND TRUST INC		Hiking Trails			No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			950

**Other - Private Parcels of Interest**  
Total Area = 508.310245 Acres

Parcel ID	Parcel Size (Acres)	Property Name	Address	Property Owner	Manager	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Accessible	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Grant Source	Deed Restriction	Land Use Code
259-004-000	60.145937	Tri-County Reg. Voc	147 POND ST	TRI-COUNTY REG VOCATIONAL	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	ADA accessible playground, playing fields			Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	None			989
269-065-000	11.216727		175 BEAVER ST	ROMAN CATHOLIC / ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				963
269-066-000	11.346538		175 BEAVER ST	ROMAN CATHOLIC / ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				963
269-095-000	0.287279		DANIEL MCCAILL ST	ROMAN CATHOLIC / ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				963
269-097-000	0.119348		MCCAILL DR	ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP /							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				963
270-017-000	0.155404		OLD WEST CENTRAL ST	TRI-COUNTY REG VOCATIONAL							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				988
278-010-000	12.127684		150 WEST CENTRAL ST	RAY MEMORIAL CEMETERY / C/O WALTER JACKSON							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				953
279-002-000	0.174673		WEST ST	FIRST METHODIST / EPISCOPAL SOCIETY							GENERAL RESIDENTIAL V				963
279-053-000	0.407337		167 MAIN ST	FRANKLIN FEDERATED CHURCH INC							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				963



218-010-000	3.910663	Tanglewood Estates	BERKSHIRE DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
218-049-000	10.829636		SKYLINE DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				932
219-174-000	2.005913		LINCOLN ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
220-020-000	11.911406		DOVER CIR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
221-013-000	19.243914		PARTRIDGE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			930
221-023-000	25.181512		BLUE JAY ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
222-008-000	1.845181		BEECH ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
225-067-000	13.517257	Partridge Woods I &	EVERGREEN DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
226-028-000	11.399354			FRANKLIN TOWN OF										932
226-061-000	30.78281		HANCOCK RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				932
232-001-000	15.026151		DANIELS ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
232-013-000	0.68713		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
232-014-000	0.889152		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
232-015-000	1.646486		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
234-012-000	68.307541			FRANKLIN TOWN OF										932
234-012-001	0.739103			FRANKLIN TOWN OF										932
234-041-000	0.201467		HIGH RIDGE CIR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
234-042-000	0.273873		HIGH RIDGE CIR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
234-043-000	0.854247		HIGH RIDGE CIR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
236-028-000	0.733865		DURAND DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
236-029-000	2.040669		DURAND DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
241-015-000	0.936456		BOGASTOW BROOK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
242-012-020	0.46506			FRANKLIN TOWN OF										932
242-069-000	6.001909		LILY WAYE	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				932
242-071-000	13.293057		MAPLE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				932
242-072-000	1.153595		MAPLE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				932
243-002-000	12.146864		CLARA LOUISE DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
243-081-000	0.818967		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
243-082-000	2.053966		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
243-083-000	1.081953		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
243-084-000	1.274938		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
243-085-000	0.454834		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
243-086-000	0.49812		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
243-087-000	0.86924		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY III				930
244-015-000	0.081869		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
244-016-000	0.435799		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
244-017-000	0.251541		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
244-028-000	0.474533		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
244-029-000	0.59908		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
244-030-000	0.74667		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
244-031-000	0.546029		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
244-032-000	0.510609		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
244-033-000	0.497906		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
244-034-000	0.500926		DAVID RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
244-040-000	0.182279			FRANKLIN TOWN OF										932
247-007-000	7.551843	Acorn Woods I & II	42 MEADOWLARK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			931
247-008-000	24.915122	Acorn Woods I & II	MEADOWLARK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
250-009-000	5.314467		LINCOLN ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
251-028-000	0.713118		EDMUNDS WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
251-029-000	0.947401		EDMUNDS WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
251-030-000	0.656942		EDMUNDS WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
251-038-000	3.382319		MAPLE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
251-101-000	20.635243		MAPLE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				932
252-062-000	0.940477		OAK ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
252-068-000	1.665345		OAK ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
252-119-000	12.513048		BOGASTOW BROOK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
254-012-000	11.34779		POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						INDUSTRIAL				932
257-012-000	7.333446		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			930
257-013-000	0.342674		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-014-000	0.344508		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-015-000	0.342555		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-016-000	0.343376		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-017-000	0.344116		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-018-000	0.335625		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-021-000	0.350769		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-022-000	0.345208		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF						SINGLE-FAMILY IV				932
257-045-000	0.347865		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
257-046-000	0.354906		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
257-047-000	0.338351		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
257-048-000	0.350322		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
257-049-000	0.345317		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
257-050-000	0.34024		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
257-051-000	0.339398		ANTHONY RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
260-060-000	6.00163		MAPLE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			932
262-094-000	104.948792	DelCarte Conservati	459 PLEASANT ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	Conservation/Open Space	Yes	Yes		SINGLE-FAMILY III	Permanent			932
265-040-000	10.890999		INDIAN LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
265-041-000	24.129537		LOST HORSE TRL	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
266-073-000	7.582417			FRANKLIN TOWN OF										932
266-089-000	9.101806		JORDAN RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
266-090-000	24.945651	Indian Rock Estates	INDIAN LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932
272-051-000	0.372059		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
272-052-000	0.345512		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
272-053-000	0.53195		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF				No		SINGLE-FAMILY IV	Permanent			932
277-006-000	20.715068	Recycling Center	BEAVER ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	Recycling Center	Yes	Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				931
277-007-000	33.103467		BEAVER ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space		No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			932



296-211-000	1.096324		FISHER ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
298-002-000	13.348795		EAST CENTRAL ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
298-003-000	13.969044		EAST CENTRAL ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
298-004-000	28.285028		EAST CENTRAL ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
298-009-000	3.841189		LEWIS ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
298-046-001	0.01264			FRANKLIN TOWN OF															939
306-009-000	0.04108		GROVE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										INDUSTRIAL				931
311-005-000	23.81084		GROVE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										INDUSTRIAL				938
312-021-000	17.748035		312 GROVE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										INDUSTRIAL				938
319-022-000	0.198327		855 UPPER UNION ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space				No					INDUSTRIAL	Permanent			939
320-003-000	3.70176		LIBERTY WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										INDUSTRIAL				938
321-041-000	0.133241		JEFFERSON RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
322-001-000	8.87967		GROVE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										INDUSTRIAL				938
322-093-000	4.380991		GROVE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
329-003-000	0.86486		LIBERTY WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										INDUSTRIAL				938
334-013-000	11.526939		VINE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
336-014-004	1.583245		GRACE LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
338-036-000	2.794555		TIA PL	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space				No					RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			939
339-025-000	4.221909		5 BELL CIR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Conservation/Open Space				No					RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	Permanent			938
339-062-000	0.983226		WASHINGTON ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938
349-009-000	0.88859		WASHINGTON ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS										RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				938

**Town Owned - Franklin Public Schools  
Total Area = 189.799125 Acres**

Parcel ID	Parcel Size (Acres)	Property Name	Address	Property Owner	Manager	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Accessible	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Grant Source	Deed Restriction	Land Use Code
233-002-000	6.417097	Keller-Sullivan Midd	500 LINCOLN ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS			Yes	Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				933
240-169-000	15.046642	JFK Elementary Sch	551 POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	JADA accessible playground		Yes	Yes		SINGLE-FAMILY III	None			934
243-053-000	14.621056	Keller-Sullivan Midd	500 LINCOLN ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	JADA accessible playground		Yes	Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	None			934
260-003-000	49.817862	Franklin High School	218 OAK ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	JADA accessible playground, playing fields		Yes	Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	None			934
268-016-000	0.267456	The Brick School	LINCOLN/MAPLE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS			Yes	Yes		SINGLE-FAMILY IV				934
269-110-000	35.050774	Horace Mann School	224 OAK ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	JADA accessible playground		Yes	Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	None			934
269-111-000	1.042621	Horace Mann School	OAK ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS			Yes	Yes		SINGLE-FAMILY III				934
297-050-000	20.497686	Parmenter School	235 WACHUSETT ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	JADA accessible playground		Yes	Yes		SINGLE-FAMILY III	None			934
328-037-000	47.037931	Remington Jeffersor	628 WASHINGTON ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF	FRANKLIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	JADA accessible playground		Yes	Yes		RURAL RESIDENTIAL I	None			934

**Town Owned - Possible Future Conservation/Open Space  
Total Area = 275.431354 Acres**

Parcel ID	Parcel Size (Acres)	Property Name	Address	Property Owner	Manager	Current Use	Condition	Public Access	Accessible	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Grant Source	Deed Restriction	Land Use Code
205-011-000	0.4445904		FULLER PL	MEDWAY TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				980
205-030-000	0.161243		FULLER PL	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
206-077-000	1.032154		FULLER PL	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
211-019-000	0.96769		PALOMINO DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
212-011-000	2.660341		POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				936
212-012-000	2.01546		POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				936
212-014-000	0.175495		POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
212-015-000	0.347187		POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
213-001-000	15.075161		POND ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
216-047-000	12.173405		MECHANIC ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
220-001-000	14.350177		ELM ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
220-002-000	5.723672		STEPHEN WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
220-056-000	0.782013		PARTRIDGE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
226-093-000	0.591429		HEMLOCK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
226-094-000	0.025004		HEMLOCK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
229-027-000	18.051162		DANIELS ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
229-045-000	30.75582		DANIELS ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
233-003-000	21.419944			FRANKLIN TOWN OF											930
233-038-000	3.778207		LINCOLN ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
234-086-000	0.177183		CRANBERRY DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
236-088-000	1.989335	Playground	PARLIAMENT DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF		Basketball court, playground equipment			No		SINGLE-FAMILY III	None			936
236-089-000	0.201115			FRANKLIN TOWN OF											930
240-165-000	0.296554		CORONATION DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				930
241-045-001	0.046638		CHARLES RIVER DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL II				930
244-173-000	0.428543		OLD FARM RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				930
245-096-000	1.676716		13 GREEN ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				930
248-056-000	0.457066		GRIFFIN RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				930
252-063-000	3.418541		MAPLE BROOK LN	FRANKLIN TOWN OF					No		RURAL RESIDENTIAL II	Permanent			930
253-107-000	0.103405		OAK ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				930
253-121-000	0.216848			FRANKLIN TOWN OF											930
257-033-000	0.159724		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				930
257-082-000	0.138372		CONLYN AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				930
258-011-000	9.720035		CROSSFIELD RD	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				936
262-048-000	0.532077		MUSKET WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY III				930
265-016-000	2.360962		WAMPANOAG DR	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				936
265-056-000	2.442906		CONCETTA WAY	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							RURAL RESIDENTIAL I				936
268-064-000	0.370866		SQUIRE ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				930
268-085-000	0.162649		WOOD ST	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							SINGLE-FAMILY IV				930
269-044-000	0.657286		PONTON AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							COMMERCIAL II				936
269-045-000	0.337432		PONTON AV	FRANKLIN TOWN OF							COMMERCIAL II				930



**APPENDIX D**  
**ADA ACCESS SELF EVALUATIONS**

# Memorandum

**To:** Breeka Li Goodlander, Conservation Agent  
**CC:** Bryan Taberner, Director of Community Planning  
**From:** Ryan Jette, Director of Recreation  
**Date:** June 2, 2023  
**Re:** Town of Franklin ADA Self Transition Plan

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1. Attached is a copy of the updated Town of Franklin Americans with Disabilities Act Self Evaluation and Transition Plan for all Town recreation areas. This document was prepared to serve as a supplement to the regional Open Space & Recreation Plan for 2024. This document was produced to exemplify the continuing progress toward handicapped accessibility for all town fields and playgrounds.
2. Gus Brown, Disability Coordinator and Building Commissioner, along with Mary O'Neill and Victoria Strand from the Franklin Commission for Persons with Disabilities was instrumental in helping set the guidelines for this self-evaluation and transition plan. Their participation and input were vital in determining the immediate needs of the disabled people within the community. During our self-evaluation, the group used AAB (Architectural Access Board) guidelines to determine compliance. The Architectural Access Board develops and enforces regulations designed to make public facilities accessible to, functional for, and safe for use by persons with disabilities.
3. A copy of this document will be forwarded to Town Administrator, Jamie Hellen, Franklin Public Schools Superintendent, Lucas Giguere, and Chairperson Mary O'Neill from the Franklin Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

Site to be evaluated	Actual size	Required	Pass/Fail	Recommendations	Code
<b>*See Parks &amp; Recreation Facilities</b>					
<b>Chilson Beach</b>					
Parking Lot	5	4	Pass	Parking lot has 175 spaces; therefore 4 HP parking spots are required. 5 Exist and are marked with adequate signage and 2 spots are van accessible. Need to check if every spot needs a sign or 2 spots on the end with arrows facing each other is adequate. Currently 7 ½' to the middle.	1
Pathway to Water	59" wide	34" wide	Pass	Walkway is 54" wide with a handrail half way down upper beach area. Lower beach area is accessible by portable walkway to the water edge. Lower walkway has no handrails.	1
Shoreline Accessibility		Accessible	Pass		1
Women's Bathroom			Fail	HP restrooms exist with access to and from. Sinks and stalls are all HP compliant but will require protection for hot water on pipes. Need grab bars in stalls.	1
Men's Bathroom			Fail	HP restrooms exist with access to and from. Sinks and stalls are all HP compliant but will require protection for hot water on pipes. Need grab bars in stalls.	1
Playground					
Entrance	48" wide		Pass	Gate is sufficient	
Equipment	Accessible		Pass	Need adaptive seat on Vendetti playground	
Picnic Area	5 tables		Fail	Surface around one picnic tables is accessible. Two others are satisfactory, but two are not accessible. Need international symbol of access logo on accessible bench	
Boat Ramp	10' wide		Pass		

Questions for Gus

- Do we need a sign @ every handicapped parking spot?
- 6' or 7' wide van accessible stripping?
- Toilet paper holder in women's room, seems high (check height) Suggestion for motion sensor dispensers instead, like the soap dispenser
- Paint international symbol of access logo on concrete near accessible bench seat.

<u>Site to be evaluated</u>	<u>Actual size</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Pass/Fail</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Code</u>
<b>Fletcher Field</b>					
Parking Area	76-100 spots	Need 4	Fail	Required signage needed at playground spots and entrance near restrooms. No van accessible spots marked, add one near playground and one near restrooms, add signage too.	2
<i>Spaces (83 spaces)</i>	2 accessible	See note	Fail	Recommendation is to add one van accessible space near restrooms and add ISA, one near playground with striping no parking in front of entrance to playground.	
Entrance	52'		Fail	Required accessible entrance to play area should have a gate.	
Playground Area	Equipment is accessible		Pass	Back playground was built in 2016 and is perfectly compliant, however the surface is wood fiber. Front playground is compliant but out of date and needs to be replaced.	2
<i>Surfacing</i>	Surface is non-compliant Wood fiber	Unitary	Fail	Currently wood fiber surface. Surfacing must include access to transfer deck, front playground is not compliant, 4-6" drop off onto surfacing.	
<i>Swing set</i>	Surfacing area is not large enough	Twice the height to and fro	Fail	Recommendation are to remove swing set and erect new set closer to the playground and provide handicap access to the swing set.	2
Picnic Area			Fail	2 picnic tables have paved access. Recommendation is to pave walkway to the back transfer deck passing by all picnic tables. Remove one seat on the bench closest to the transfer deck.	2
Ball Field Gate	37"	>32"	Pass	No changes needed	
Men's Bathroom					
<i>Door Entrance</i>	36"	34"	Fail	No men's sign exists	1
<i>Toilet</i>	19"	17-19"	Pass		
<i>Sink</i>			Fail	Hot water exists, need to provide protection for hot water pipes	1
<i>Soap Dispenser</i>			Fail	Needs to be mounted to the wall at proper height	1
<i>Towel Dispenser</i>			Pass	Should be automated soap and towel dispensers	1
<i>Mirror</i>	1 exists	1 needed	Pass	Added in 2020	1
<i>Grab Bars</i>	Yes	Yes	Pass		1
Women's Bathroom					
<i>Door Entrance</i>	36"	34"	Fail	No women's sign exists	1
<i>Toilet</i>	19"	17-19"	Pass		
<i>Sink</i>			Fail	Hot water exists, need to provide protection for hot water pipes	1
<i>Soap Dispenser</i>			Fail	Needs to be mounted to the wall at proper height	1
<i>Towel Dispenser</i>			Pass	Should be automated soap and towel dispensers	1
<i>Mirror</i>	1 exists	1 needed	Pass	Added in 2020	1
<i>Grab Bars</i>	Yes	Yes	Pass		1
Snack Bar	Counter height	28-34"	Pass		3
Play Area's	Assessible		Fail	Path from restroom/concession area to the bleachers, and to playground needs to be installed.	1
Wachusett St. Entrance	24+ car lot with 1 HP spot	1 HP van spot	Fail	Van accessible spot needs to be closest to entrance by painting ISA van access with signage at the front of space. Must read, "van accessible". Should add an additional HP spot next to it.	2
Pathway from Parking Area			Pass	Walkway is provided to field 3, but bleachers were recently moved, so paving needs to be extended.	2
Restrooms on Wachusett Street			Pass	HP port-a-potty exists on Wachusett Street side during spring.	

<u>Site to be evaluated</u>	<u>Actual size</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Pass/Fail</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Code</u>
<b>King Street Park</b>					
Walkway Gate	53"		Pass		
Parking Area	4 Spaces		Fail	Designated handicapped parking is required. At least 4 spaces are needed. Proper signage is required. Need van accessible near fields.	1
Field Area			Pass	Accessible to all fields and playgrounds	2
Playground surfacing			Pass	Wood fiber	2
Playground Equipment			Pass	2 Adaptive swings are provided and play structure is accessible	1
Men's bathroom			Fail	Restroom is not large enough, fix sheetrock under sink	
Doorway	34"	32"	Pass		
Light switch	46"	<48"	Pass		3
Toilet	18 ½	17-19"	Pass		
Handrails	None exist	33-36"	Fail	Handrails need to be installed	1
Paper Towels	46"	No>48"	Pass	Recommend motion activated	
Soap Dispenser	46"	No>48"	Pass	Recommend motion activated	
Sinks	Hardware		Pass	Are usable with a closed fist.	1
Women's bathroom			Fail	Restroom is not large enough	
Doorway	34"	32"	Pass		
Light switch	46"	<48"	Pass		3
Toilet	18 ½	17-19"	Pass		
Handrails	None exist	33-36"	Fail	Handrails need to be installed	1
Paper Towels	46"	No>48"	Pass	Recommend motion activated	
Soap Dispenser	46"	No>48"	Pass	Recommend motion activated	
Sinks	Hardware		Pass	Are usable with a closed fist.	1

<b>DelCarte Recreation Site</b>					
<u>Site to be evaluated</u>	<u>Actual size</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Pass/Fail</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Code</u>
Entrance	35"	32"	Fail	Entrance to playground is not accessible. Possibly mobi-mat to transfer deck.	
Picnic Area			Pass	6 accessible picnic tables exist.	2
Canoe/Kayak Launch			Fail	No accessibility to the launch from the parking area. Should install a permanent HP parking spot near the launch with accessible path.	2
Playground Equipment			Pass	Apparatus is accessible.	1
Swing Area			Pass	An adaptive swing was added and chains were lowered	1
Trails			Fail	Not accessible to any trails	1
Playground Surfacing			Pass	Wood fiber	2

<b>Nason Street Tot Lot</b>					
<u>Site to be evaluated</u>	<u>Actual size</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Pass/Fail</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Code</u>
Entrance	35"	32"	Pass		
Picnic Area			Pass	Accessible picnic tables exist.	2
On-street Parking			Fail	At least one handicapped parking area is required with signage on street.	2
Playground Equipment			Pass	Apparatus is accessible.	1
Swing Area			Pass	An adaptive swing was added and chains were lowered	1
Walkway			Pass	Firm ground serves as accessible pathway.	1
Playground Surfacing			Pass	Wood fiber	2

<b>Pisani Field –Formally Theron Metcalf Field</b>					
<b>Site to be evaluated</b>	<b>Actual size</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Pass/Fail</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Code</b>
Entrance			Pass	Handicapped accessibility to the ball park is provided.	1
Sidewalks			Fail	New sidewalks exist. None exist to the bleacher area.	1
Peck Street	44”	42”	Fail	Curb cuts are present at the crosswalk. On street parking. Recommend off street Handicap Parking space be provided behind backstop.	1
Entrance			Fail	Handicapped accessibility to the field is blocked by parking spot, need to move spots to left and stripe 5’ wide in front of curb cut.	2
Parking	1	2	Fail	Signage should say van accessible, not “only”	
Concession stand			Pass	Accessible walkway exists, recommend to paint yellow on edge, significant drop off with no railings.	
Rest Rooms	2		Fail	Both are fully accessible. Knee protection for hot water. Dispensers need to be motion activated.	

<b>Dacey Field</b>					
<b>Site to be evaluated</b>	<b>Actual size</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Pass/Fail</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Code</b>
Parking	140 spots exist	Need 5	Pass	Need van accessible signs for 5 parking spaces. 2 @ little league field, 1 @ playground, 1 @ multi purpose field, 1 @ upper soccer field.	
Picnic Tables	3	0	Pass	Need to be moved to the playground designated area	
Playground			Pass	Accessible playground with 2 adaptive swings.	
Port-a-potty	4	0	Pass	HP port-a-potty supplied during spring and fall.	
Fields			Fail	All fields and playgrounds are accessible besides lower soccer field. Should pave walkway to corner near disc golf entrance with bleachers.	

<b>Meadowlark Lane Recreation Complex</b>					
<b>Site to be evaluated</b>	<b>Actual size</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Pass/Fail</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Code</b>
Parking	32 spots	2	Fail	Need one additional spot for van accessible with signage for 26-50 spots	
Picnic Area/Playground	Grass	Paved	Fail	Playground and picnic area require hard packed surface for access	
Restroom/Concession Stand					
Men’s bathroom				Need signage outside restrooms	
Doorway	35”	32”	Fail	Need ramp level with threshold to access restroom	
Light switch	35”	<48”	Pass		3
Toilet		17-19”	Pass		
Handrails		33-36”	Fail	Handrails need to be installed less than 6” off back corner	1
Paper Towels	50	No>42”	Fail		
Soap Dispenser		No>42”	Fail		
Sinks			Pass		1
Women’s bathroom				Need signage outside restrooms	
Doorway	35”	32”	Fail	Need ramp level with threshold to access restroom	
Light switch	35”	<48”	Pass		3
Toilet		17-19”	Pass		
Handrails		33-36”	Fail	Handrails need to be installed less than 6” off back corner	1
Paper Towels	50”	No>42”	Fail		
Soap Dispenser	46”	No>42”	Fail		
Sinks	Hardware		Pass	Are usable with a closed fist.	1

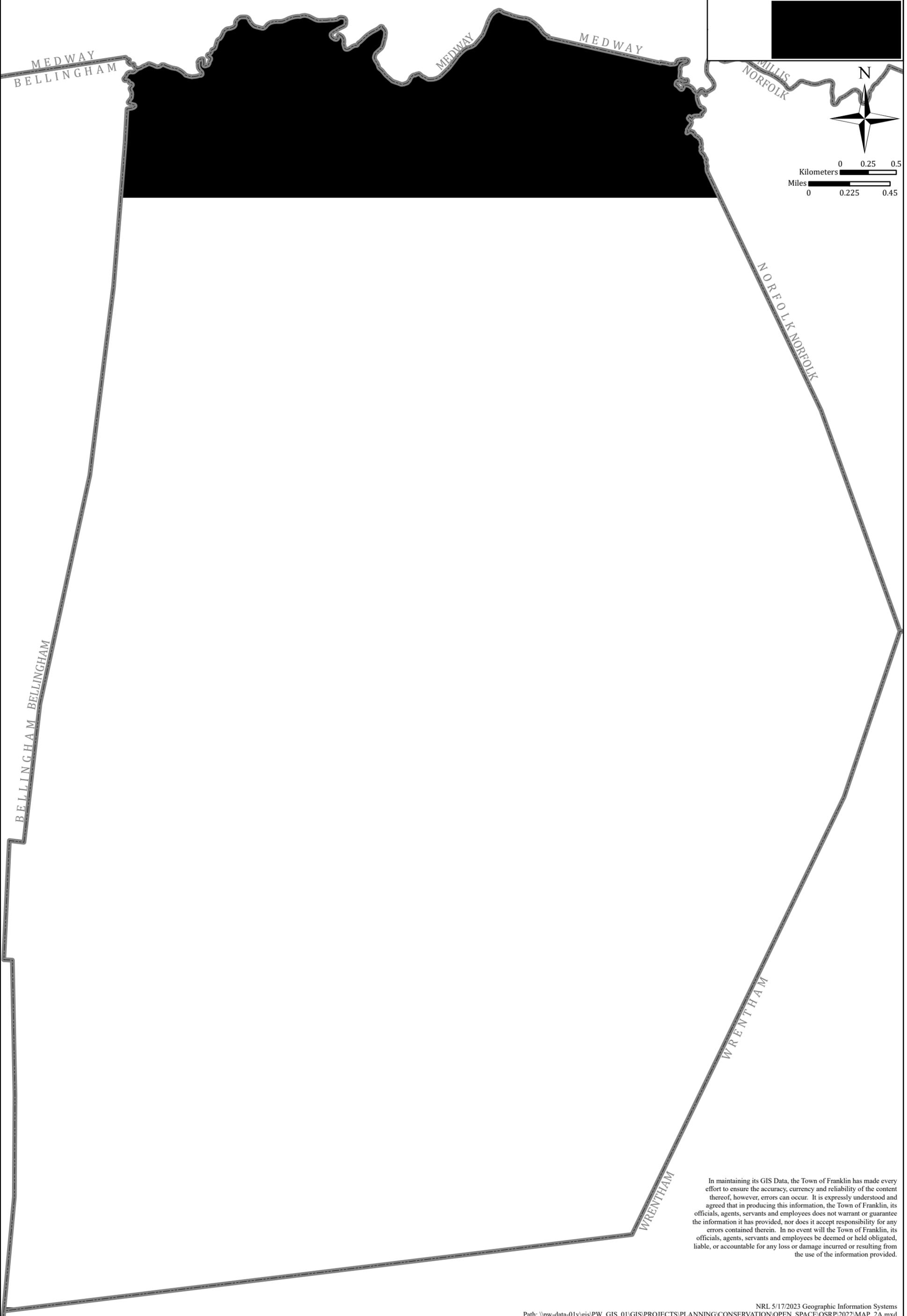
This information contained the section below is under the jurisdiction of the School Department. The evaluation was done from the perspective of Don Netto, Disability Commission Chairman. Any transition to meet ADA code, should be updated by the School Department.

<b>Tri County Regional Vocational Technical High School</b>					
<b><u>Site to be evaluated</u></b>	<b><u>Actual size</u></b>	<b><u>Required</u></b>	<b><u>Pass/Fail</u></b>	<b><u>Recommendations</u></b>	<b><u>Code</u></b>
Picnic Facilities	Tables/Benches			Locate adjacent to the accessible paths. Allow access to open spaces. Back and Arm rests should be present. Adequate number of accessible seating.	
	Grills			Height of cooking surface should be adjusted	
	Trash Cans			Located adjacent to accessible paths	
	Picnic Shelter			Located adjacent to accessible paths. Located near accessible water fountains, trash can, restrooms	
Trails				Surface material should be accessible. Dimensions should be wider, railings should be in place where needed. Signage (for visually impaired)	
Swimming Facilities	Pools			Entrance, location from accessible parking	

**APPENDIX E**  
**MAPS AND FIGURES**

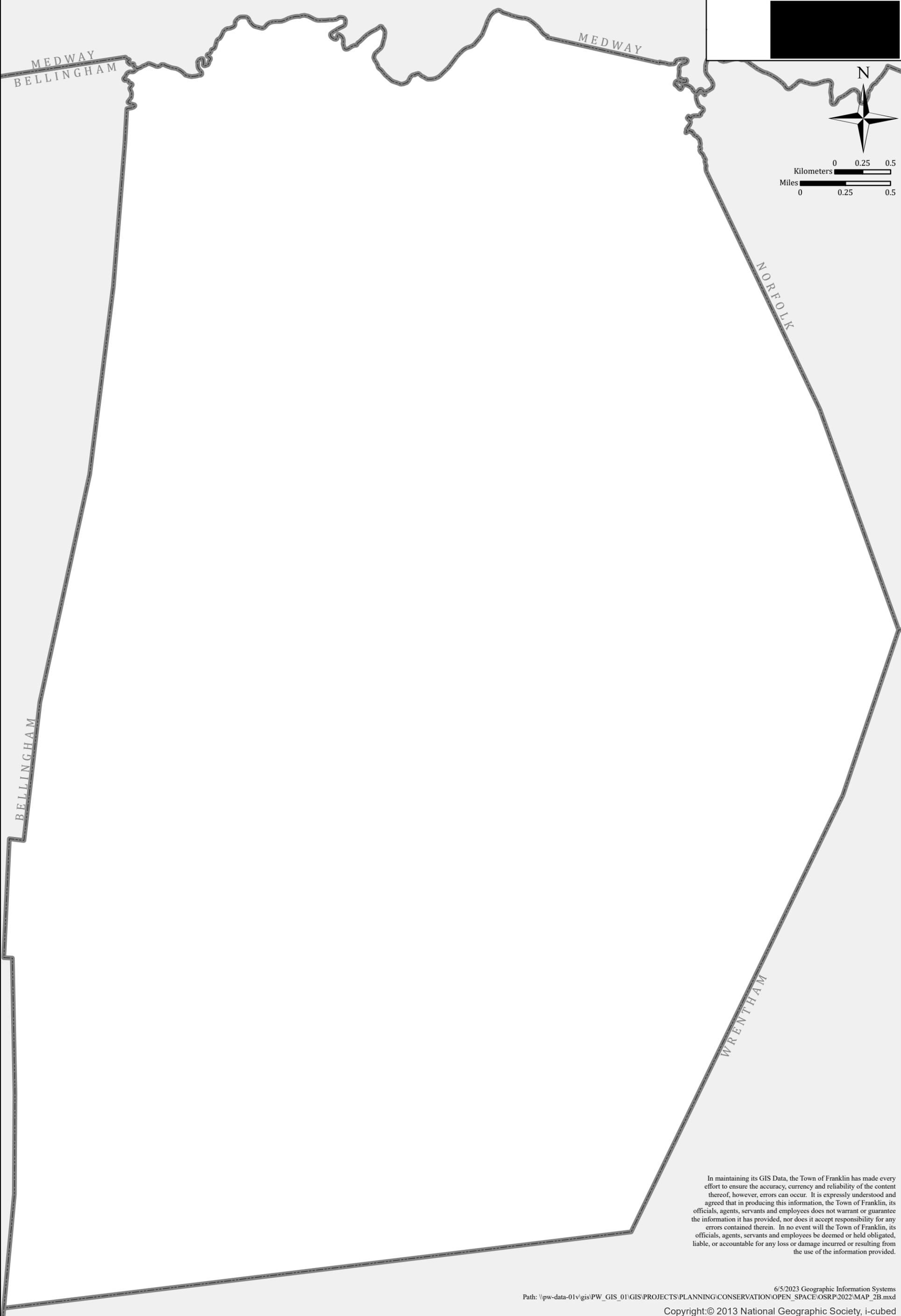


# OPEN SPACE US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY 1942 - 1946



In maintaining its GIS Data, the Town of Franklin has made every effort to ensure the accuracy, currency and reliability of the content thereof, however, errors can occur. It is expressly understood and agreed that in producing this information, the Town of Franklin, its officials, agents, servants and employees does not warrant or guarantee the information it has provided, nor does it accept responsibility for any errors contained therein. In no event will the Town of Franklin, its officials, agents, servants and employees be deemed or held obligated, liable, or accountable for any loss or damage incurred or resulting from the use of the information provided.

# OPEN SPACE US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY 2013



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# OPEN SPACE

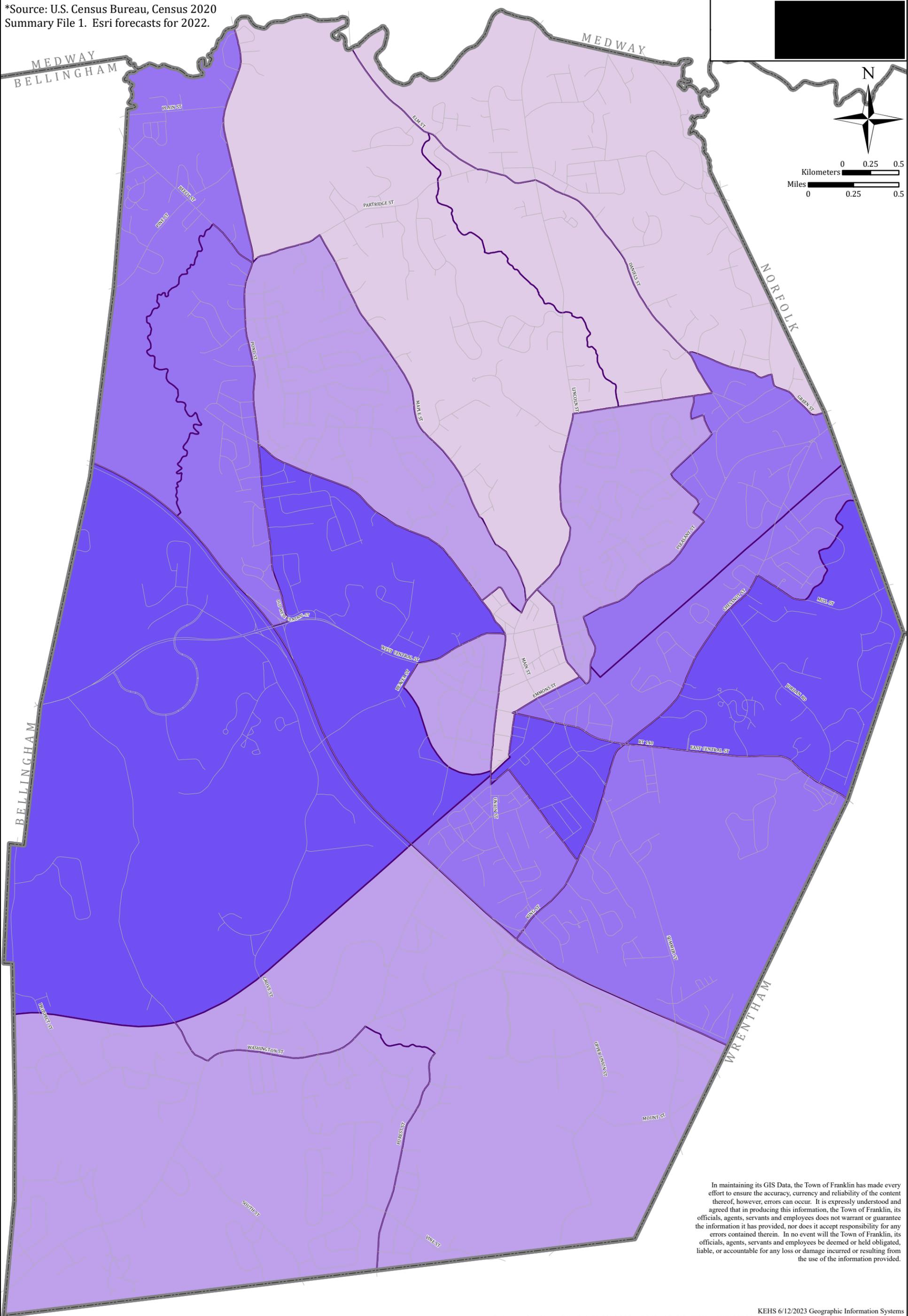
## 2022 POPULATION PERCENT AGE 65+ (by block group)

### 2022 Age 65+ (%) by Block Groups\*

-  15.12% to 20.00%
-  13.32% to 15.11%
-  9.83% to 13.31%
-  6.00% to 9.82%

-  Street
-  Municipal Boundary

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2022.



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# OPEN SPACE

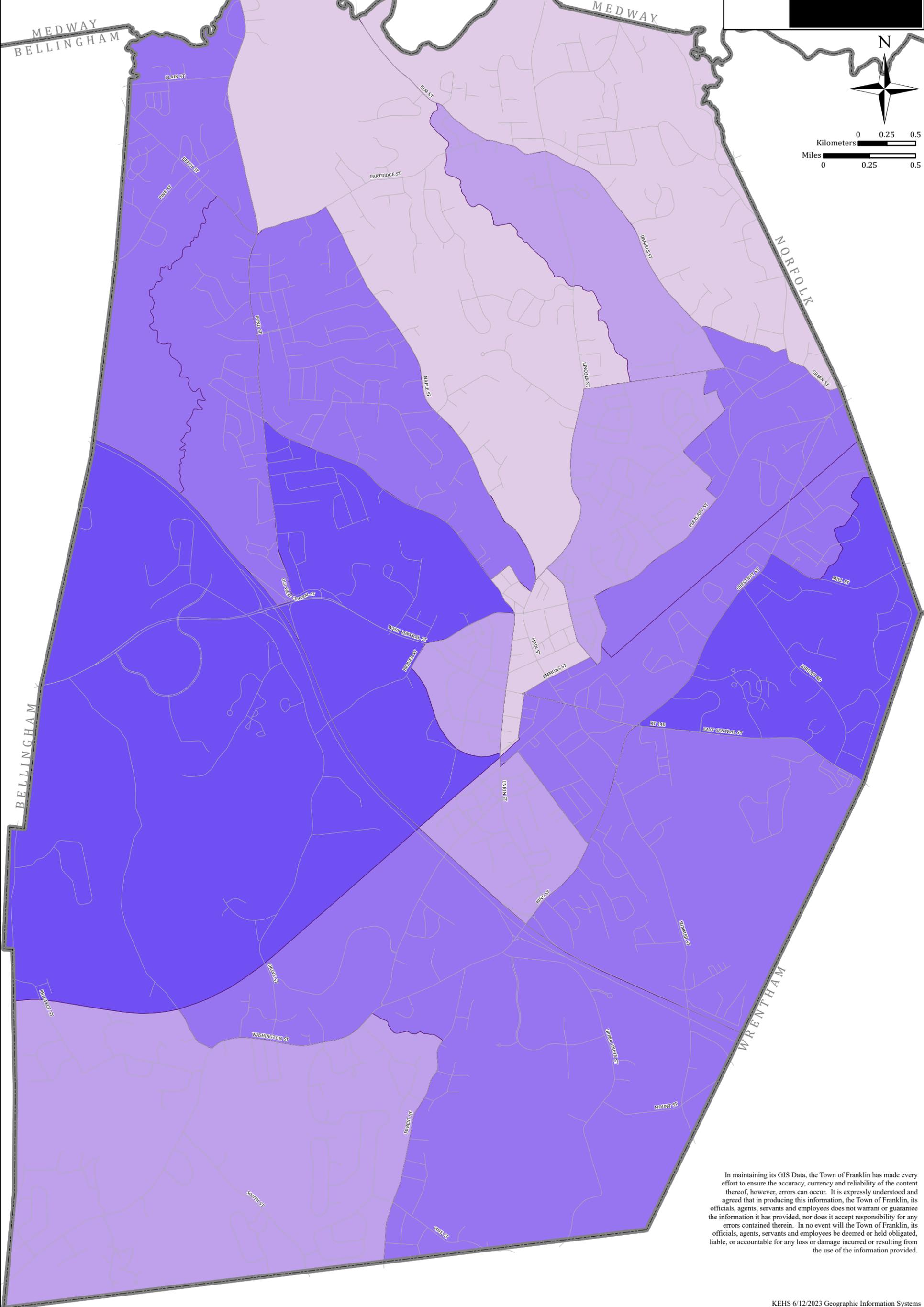
## 2027 POPULATION PERCENT AGE 65+ (by block group)

### 2027 Age 65+ (%) by Block Groups\*

- 18.86% to 22.00%
- 15.45% to 18.85%
- 10.61% to 15.44%
- 7.00% to 10.61%

- Street
- Municipal Boundary

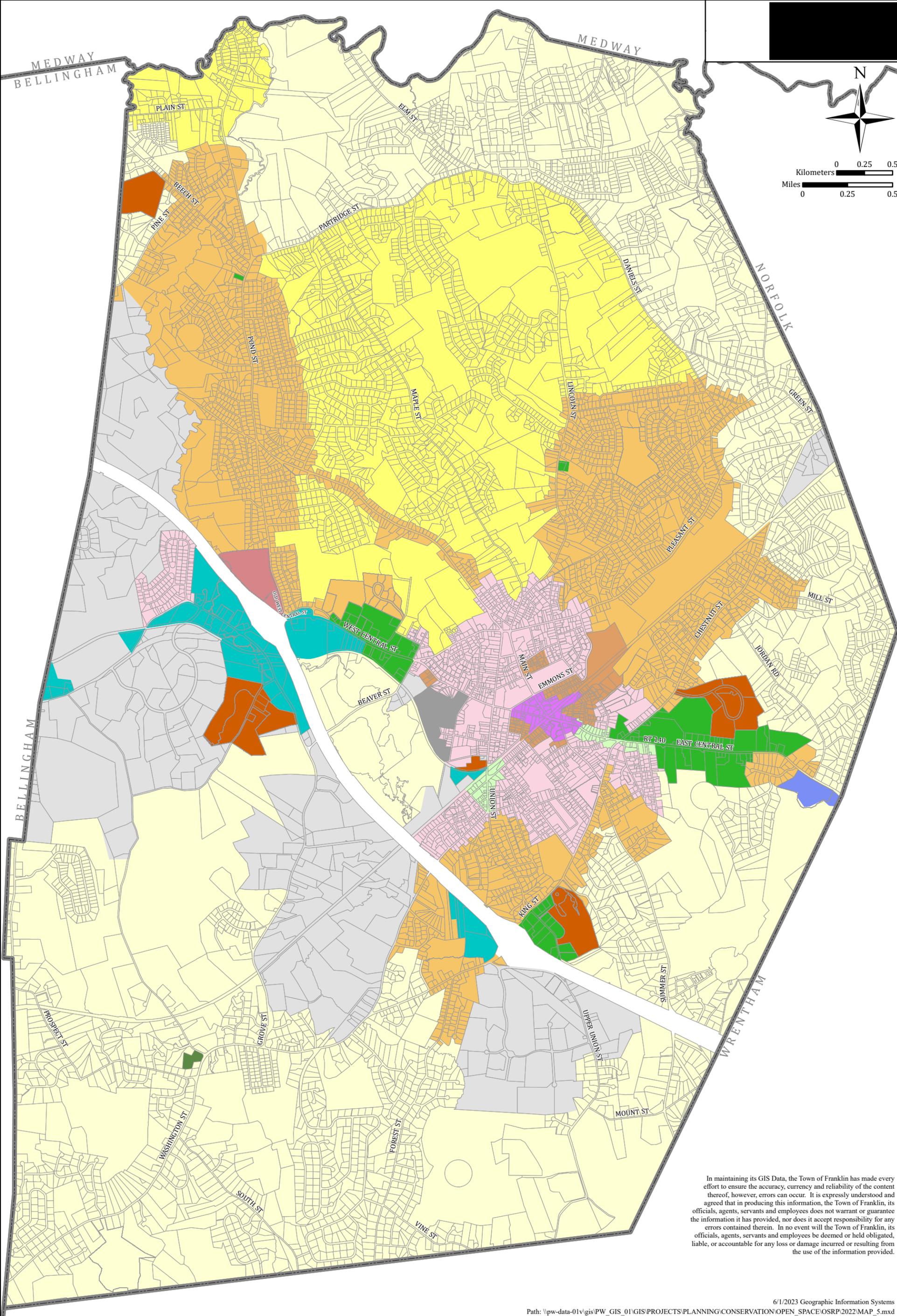
\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2022.



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# OPEN SPACE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Business
- Commercial I
- Commercial II
- Downtown Commercial District
- General Residential V
- Industrial
- Mixed Business Innovation
- Office
- Residential VI
- Residential VII
- Rural Business
- Rural Residential I
- Rural Residential II
- Single-Family III
- Single-Family IV



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# OPEN SPACE SOILS & GEOLOGIC FEATURES

### Slope of Landscape

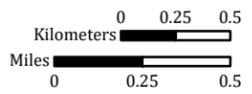
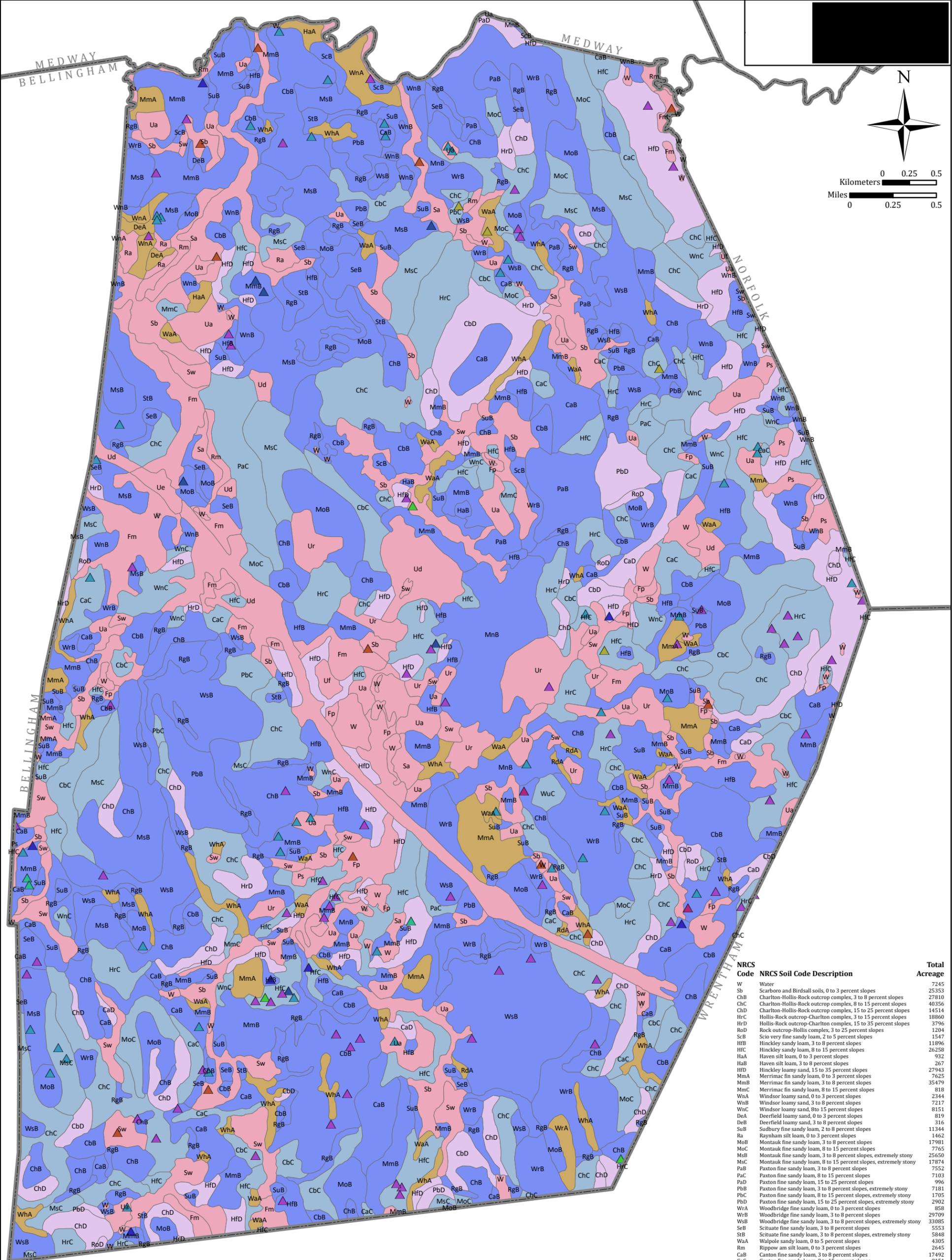
- Water or No Slope
- 0-3%
- 3-8%
- 8-15%
- 15-25%

### Special Feature

- Wet Spot
- Very Stony Spot
- Stony Spot
- Spoil Area
- Sandy Spot

- Rock Outcrop
- Marsh or Swamp
- Gravel Pit
- Dry Spot

Municipal Boundary

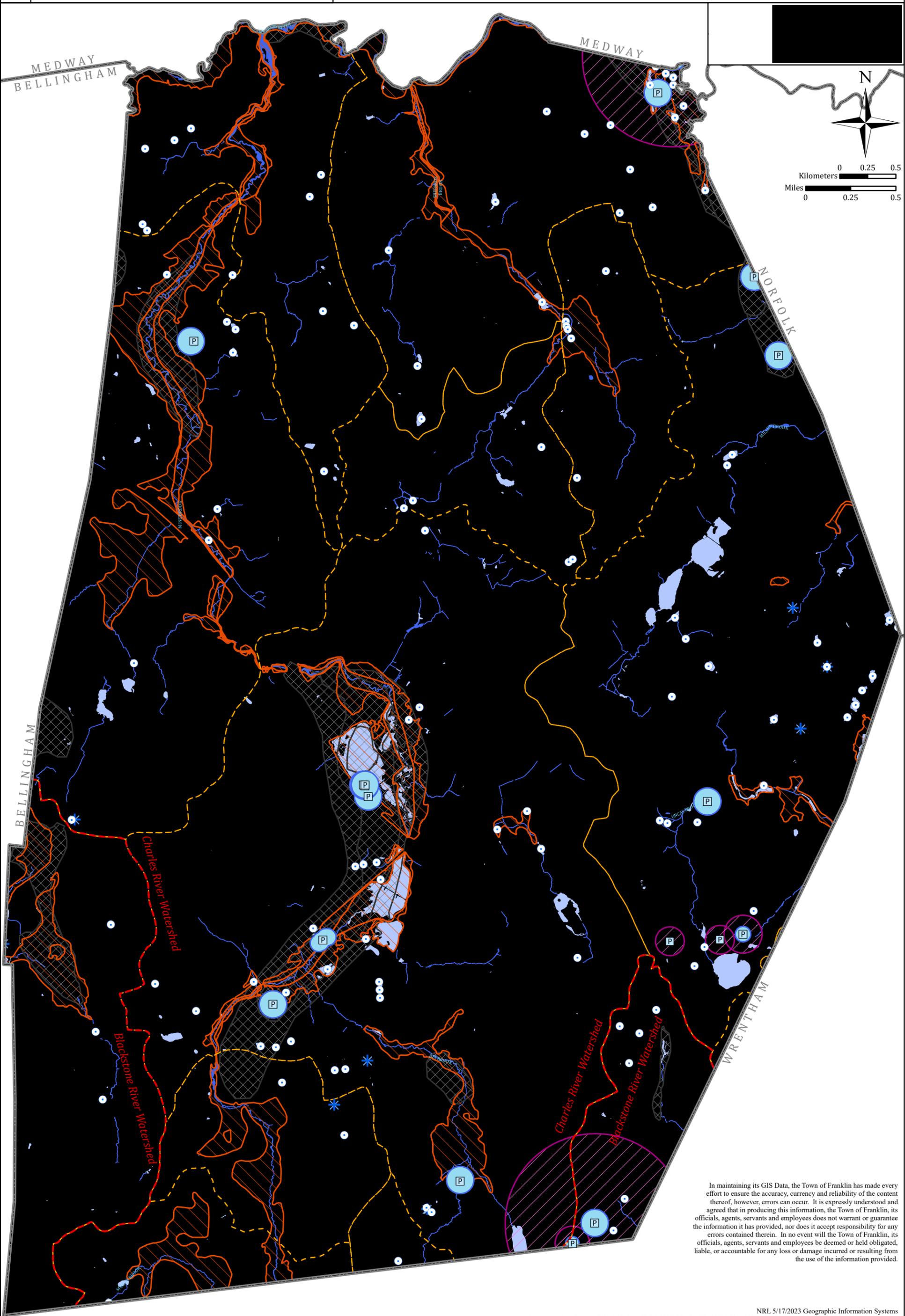


NRCS Code	NRCS Soil Code Description	Total Acreage
W	Water	7245
Sb	Scarboro and Birdsall soils, 0 to 3 percent slopes	25353
ChB	Charlton-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	27810
ChC	Charlton-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	40356
ChD	Charlton-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	14514
HrC	Hollis-Rock outcrop-Charlton complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	18860
HrD	Hollis-Rock outcrop-Charlton complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes	3796
RoD	Rock outcrop-Hollis complex, 3 to 25 percent slopes	1204
ScB	Scio very fine sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes	1547
HfB	Hinckley sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	11896
HfC	Hinckley sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	26258
HaA	Haven silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	932
HaB	Haven silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	267
HfD	Hinckley loamy sand, 15 to 35 percent slopes	27943
MmA	Merrimac fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	7625
MmB	Merrimac fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	35479
MmC	Merrimac fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	818
WaA	Windsor loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	2344
WnB	Windsor loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	7217
WnC	Windsor loamy sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes	8151
DeA	Deerfield loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	819
DeB	Deerfield loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	316
PaB	Paxton fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	13344
Ra	Raynham silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	1462
MoB	Montauk fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	17981
MoC	Montauk fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	7765
MsB	Montauk fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	25650
MsC	Montauk fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	17874
PaB	Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	7552
PaC	Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	7103
PaD	Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	996
PbB	Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	7181
PbC	Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	1705
PbD	Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, extremely stony	2902
WaA	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	858
WnB	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	29709
WnB	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	33085
SeB	Sciuate fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	5553
StB	Sciuate fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	5848
WaA	Walpole sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes	4305
Rn	Rippowam silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	16431
CaB	Canton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	17492
CaC	Canton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	8151
CaD	Canton fine sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes	3229
CbB	Canton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	35002
ChC	Canton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	16410
ChD	Canton fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, extremely stony	8281
Sa	Saco silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	9031
Sw	Swansea muck, 0 to 1 percent slopes	17007
Fm	Freetown muck, 0 to 1 percent slopes	16573
Fp	Freetown muck, ponded, 0 to 1 percent slopes	7078
Ps	Pits, sand and gravel	2419
Ur	Urban land, 0 to 15 percent slopes	10431
WuC	Woodbridge-Urban land complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	723
MnB	Merrimac-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	15690
Uf	Udorthents, refuse substratum	592
Ua	Udorthents, sandy	15477
Ud	Udorthents, loamy	17520
Ue	Udorthents, wet substratum	811
RdA	Ridgebury fine sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes	492
RdB	Ridgebury fine sandy loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	25733
WhA	Whitman fine sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes, extremely stony	8424

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# OPEN SPACE WATER RESOURCES

- Public Water Supply Wellhead Location
- DEP Approved Zone I Wellhead Protection Area
- DEP Approved Zone II Wellhead Protection Area
- DEP Approved Interim Wellhead Protection Area (IWPA)
- Aquifer
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams
- DEP Wetlands
- Potential\_Vernal\_Pools
- Certified Vernal Pools
- Major Watershed Basin
- Minor Watershed Basin
- FEMA Flood Zones A & AE
- Streets
- Municipal Boundary



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# OPEN SPACE

## FEMA FLOOD ZONES & DEP WETLANDS



FEMA Flood Zone (A & AE)

DEP Wetlands

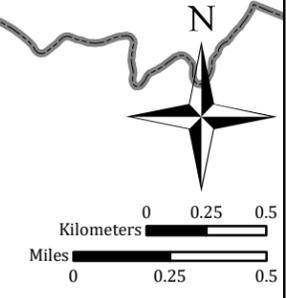
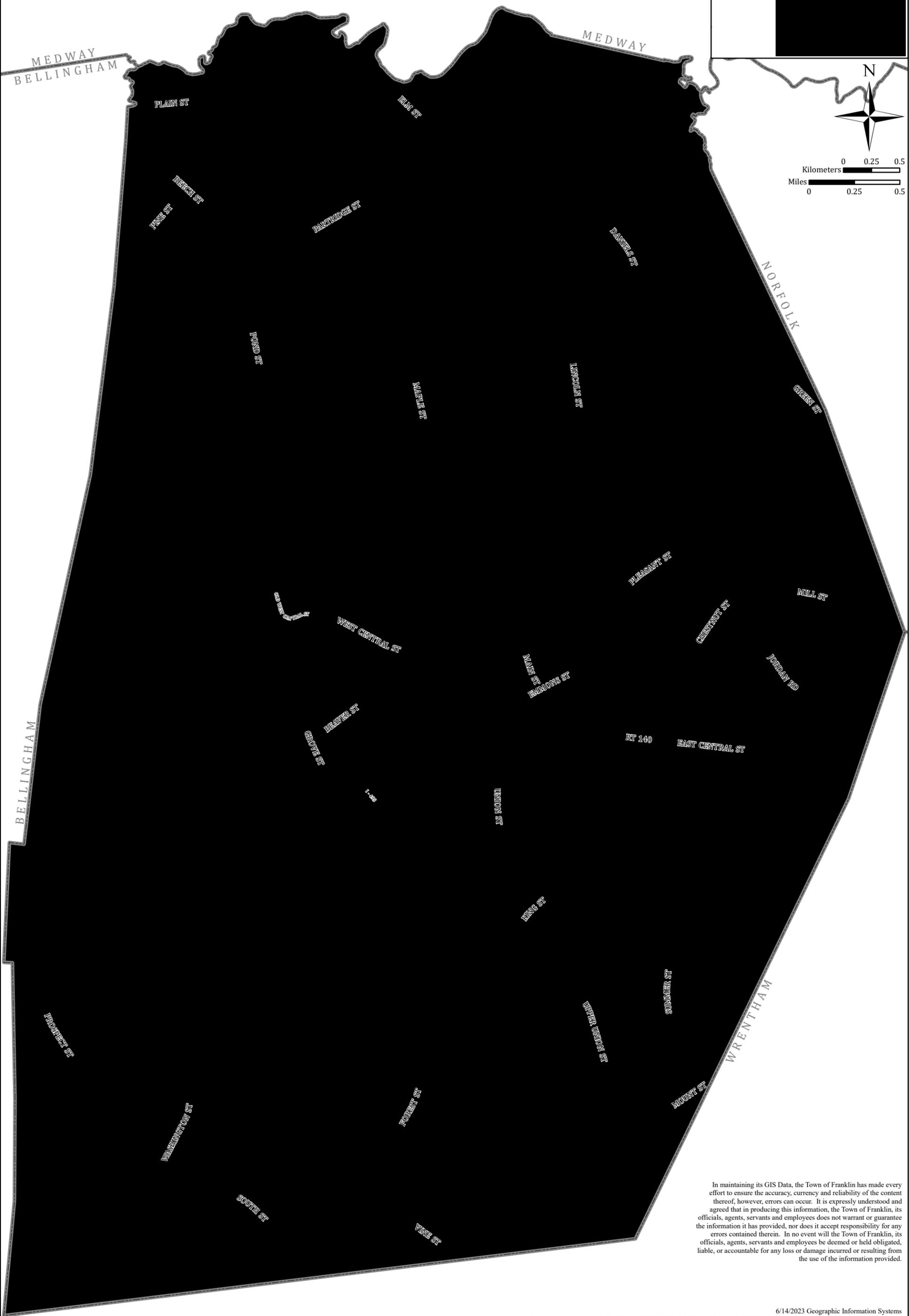
Municipal Boundary



Interstate Highway

Main Road

Secondary Road



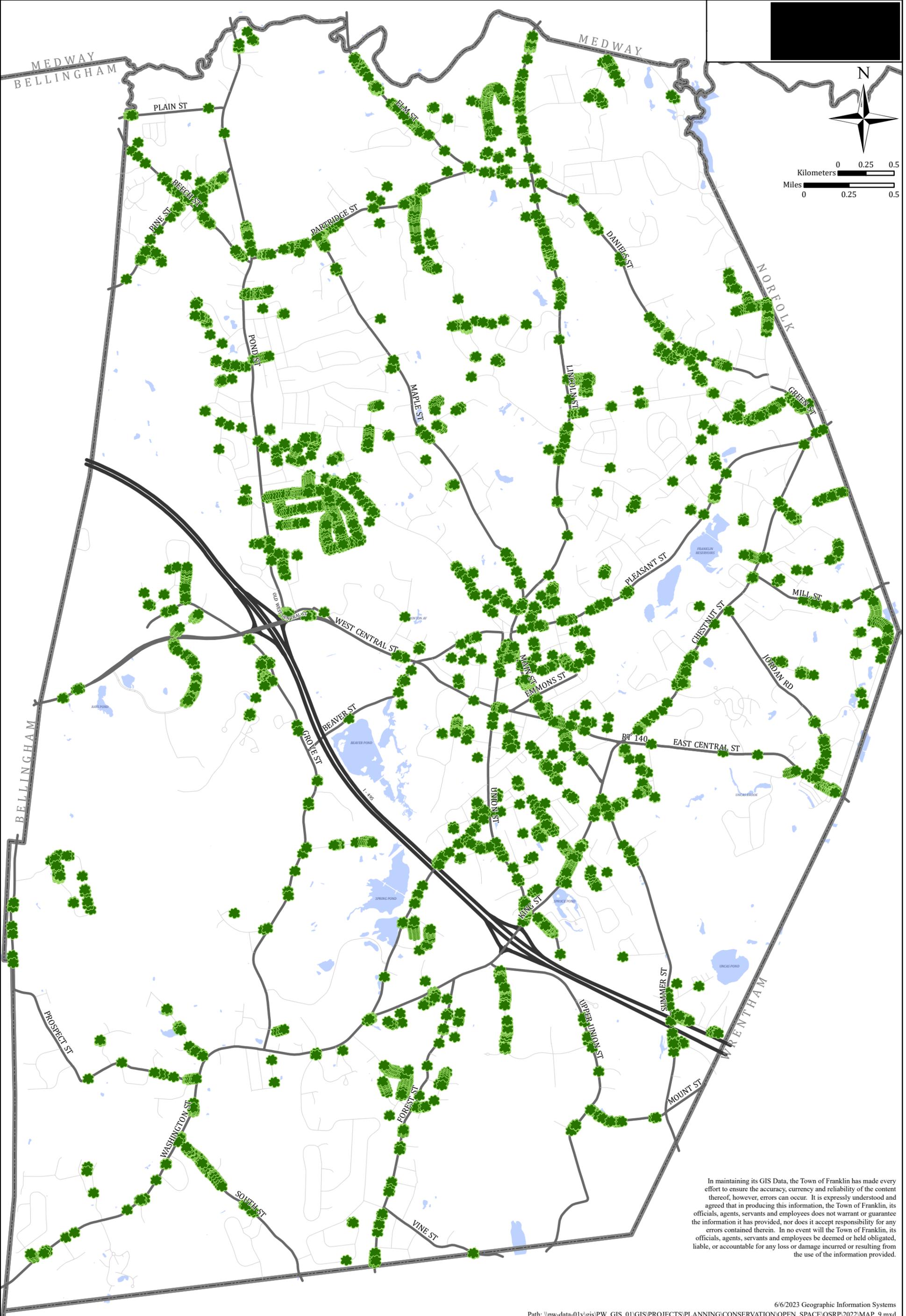
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# OPEN SPACE

## SHADE TREES WITHIN PUBLIC ROW & TOWN LAND

-  Shade Tree
-  Water
-  Municipal Boundary

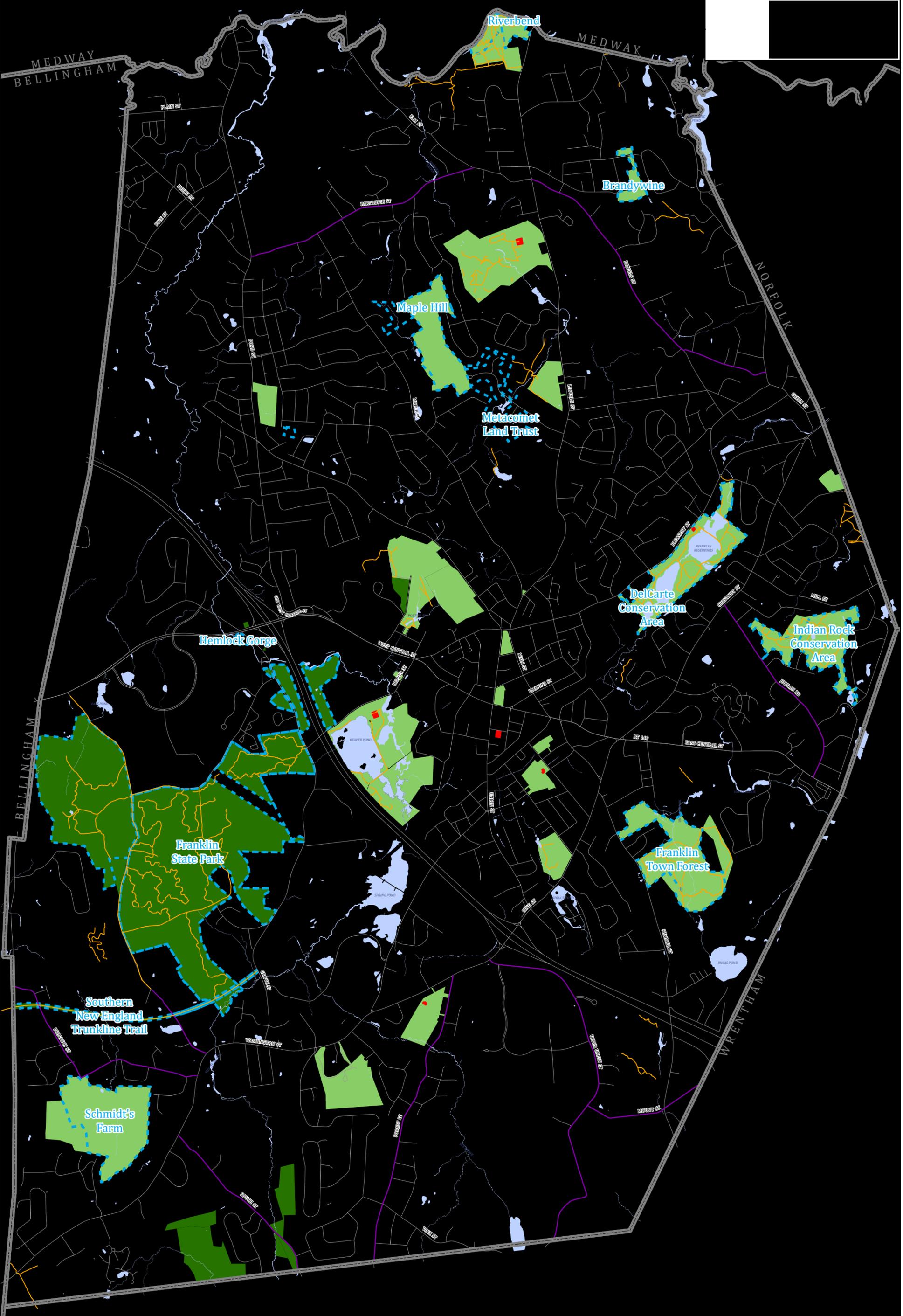
-  Interstate Highway
-  Main Road
-  Secondary Road



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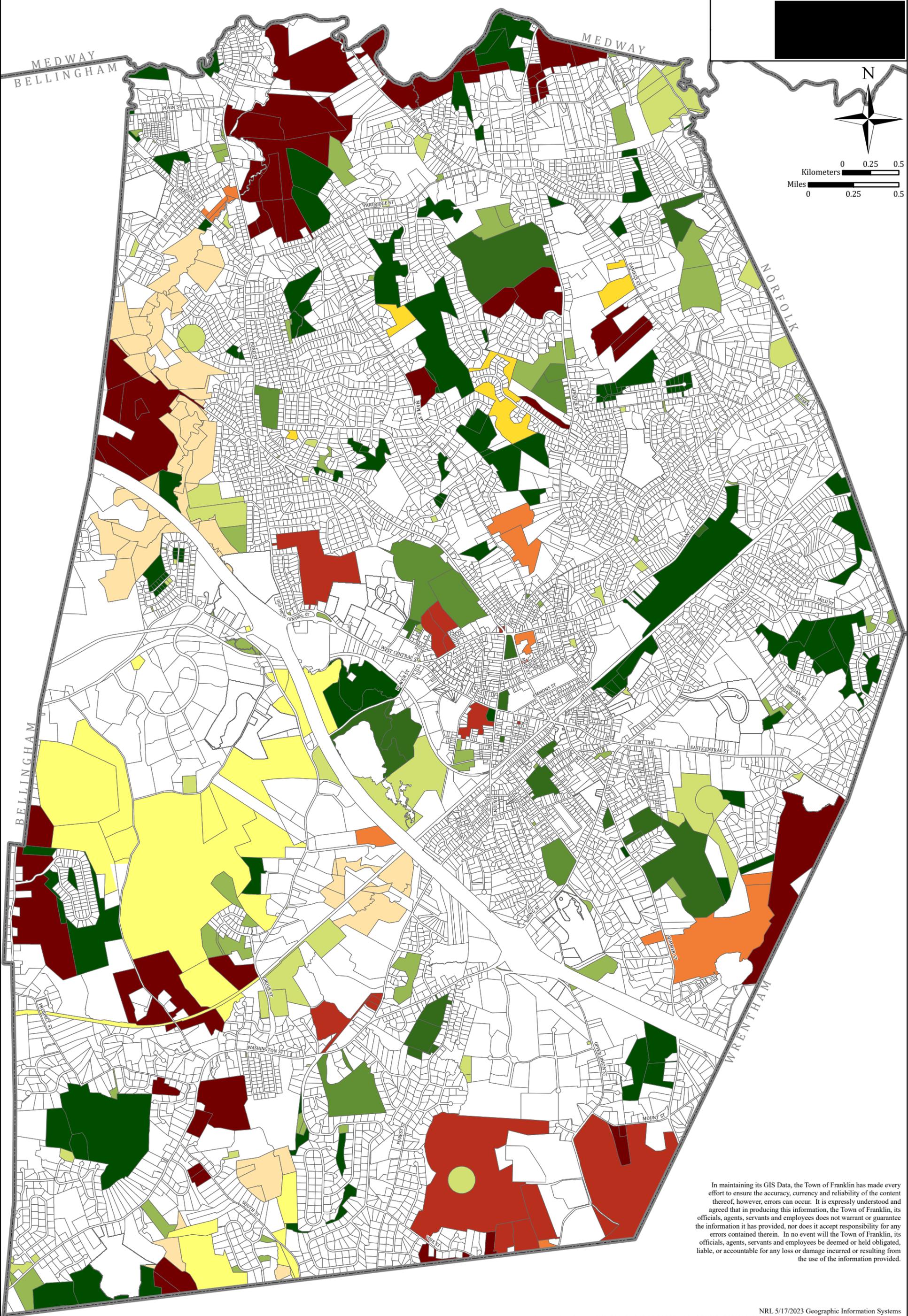
# OPEN SPACE UNIQUE FEATURES

- Trails
- Scenic Road
- Street
- Municipal Boundary
- Unique & Open Space
- Franklin State Forest
- Town Park
- Playground
- Private Recreation Area
- Golf Course
- Cropland
- Water



# OPEN SPACE LANDS OF CONSERVATION & RECREATIONAL INTEREST

-  Parcel Line
-  Other - Private Parcels of Interest
-  Private Recreation
-  Federal Owned - Public
-  Metacomet Land Trust - Public Recreation
-  State Owned - Public Recreation
-  Town Owned - Conservation/Open Space
-  Town Owned - Public Recreation
-  Town Owned - Franklin Public Schools
-  Town Owned - Possible Future Conservation/Open Space
-  Town Owned - DPW
-  Chapter 61 Lands



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# OPEN SPACE

## OPEN SPACE & CHAPTER 61, 61A & 61B LAND

 Open Space Parcels

 Town Owned Parcels  
Acquired Since 2016

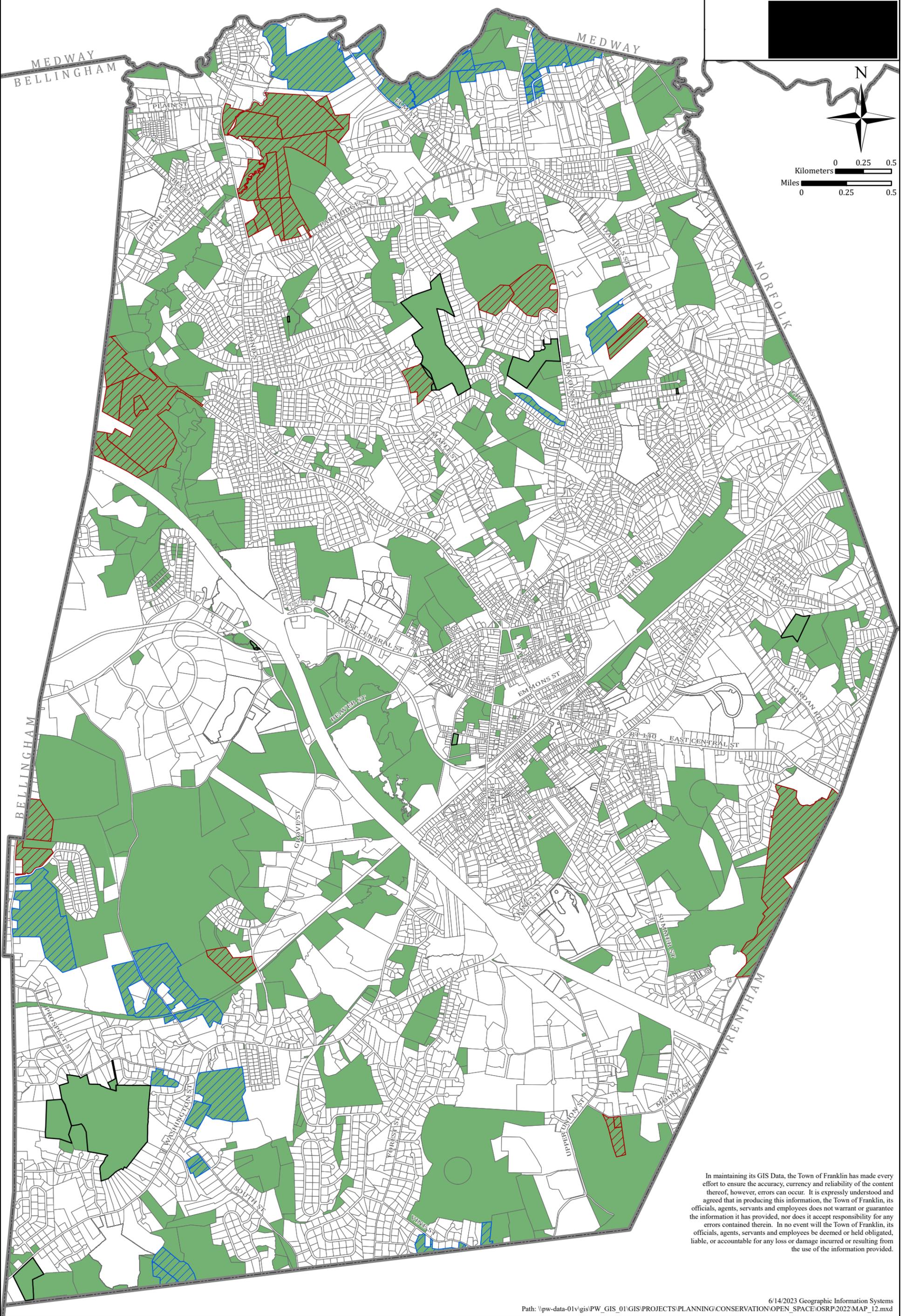
 Chapter 61

 Chapter 61A

 Chapter 61B

 Parcel Line

 Municipal Boundary

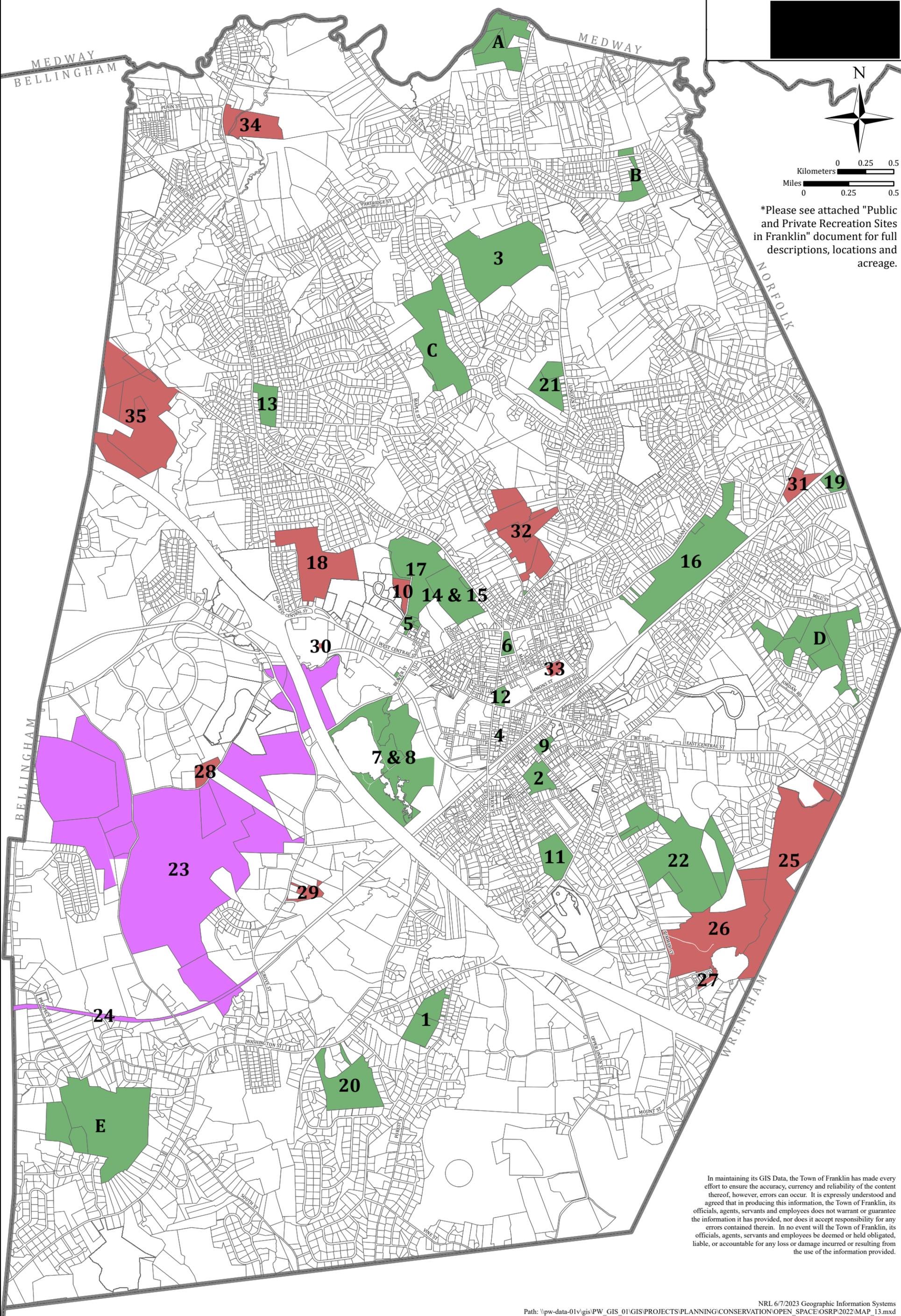


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# OPEN SPACE RECREATION FACILITIES within THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN

- Town Owned Recreation Area\*
- Other Public Recreation\*
- Private/Other Recreation Area\*

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Line



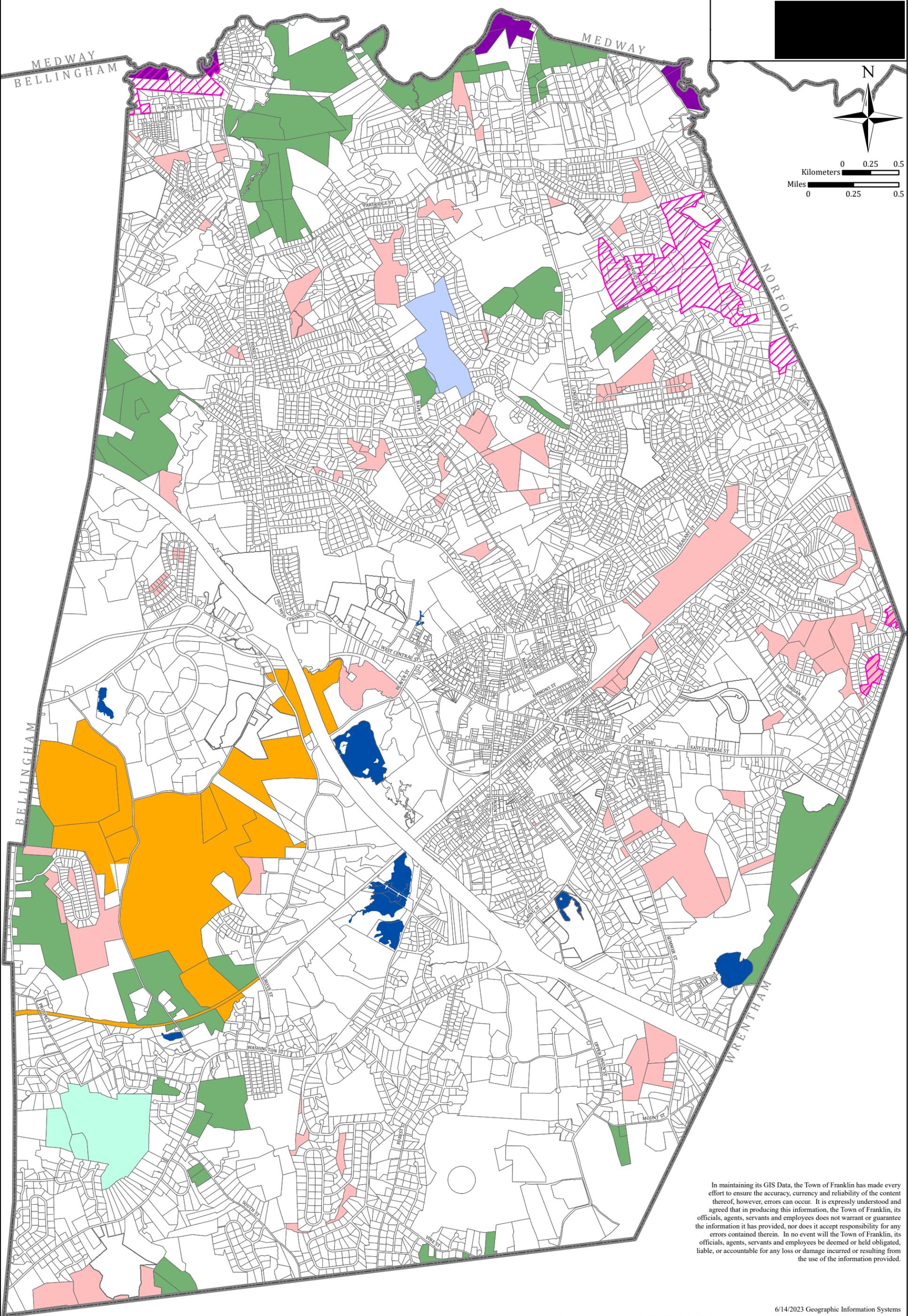
\*Please see attached "Public and Private Recreation Sites in Franklin" document for full descriptions, locations and acreage.

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# OPEN SPACE OBJECTIVES

- Objective 2.1
- Objective 2.2
- Objective 2.4
- Objective 2.3
- Objective 3.3
- Objective 3.5
- Objective 4.1
- Objective 5.1

-  Parcel Line
-  Municipal Boundary



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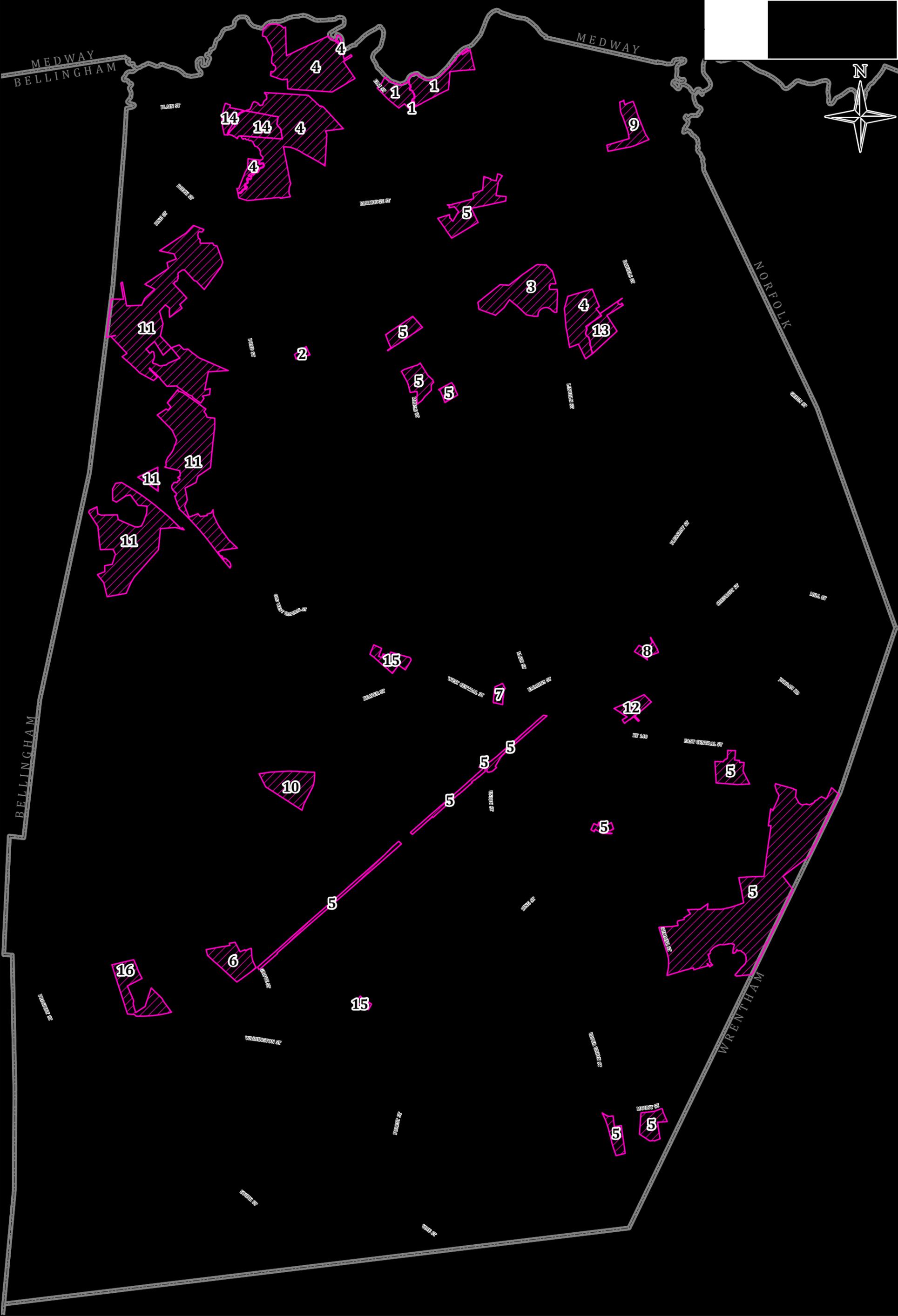
# OPEN SPACE AREAS IDENTIFIED via PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### Open Space Parcels

-  Town Owned - Conservation/Open Space
-  Public Recreation
-  Town Owned - Other

-  Other - Private Parcels of Interest
-  Private Recreation
-  Federal Owned - Public

-  Chapter 61 Lands
-  Survey Comments
-  Parcel Line



**APPENDIX F**  
**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS**

Public Stakeholders Identified
Agricultural Commission
Annie Sullivan PCC
Ben Franklin PCC
Board of Assessor's
Board of Health
Boy Scouts Troop 126
Boy Scouts Troop 29
Boy Scouts Troop 99
Charles River Pollution Control District
Charles River Watershed Association
Commission on Persons with Disabilities
Community Garden Committee
Community Preservation Committee
Council on Aging
Cub Scouts Pack 29
Cub Scouts Pack 126
Cub Scouts Pack 17
Cub Scouts Pack 92
Cub Scouts Pack 99
Cultural Council
Cultural District Committee
Darby Soccer
Design Review Commission
Dean College
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Downtown Sports
Farmer's Market
Finance Committee
Franklin Area Moms
Franklin Art Association
Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee
Franklin Boy's Youth Lacrosse
Franklin Girl's Youth Lacrosse
Franklin Chargers Football
Franklin Cultural Council
Franklin Downtown Partnership
Franklin Garden Club
Franklin High School PCC
Franklin Men's Baseball
Franklin Metrowest Basketball
Franklin Newcomers & Friends
Franklin Panthers Youth Football
Franklin Rod & Gun
Franklin Rotary Club
Franklin Track Boosters
Franklin Youth Baseball
Franklin Girls Ice Hockey
Franklin Panthers Boys Ice Hockey
Franklin Youth Hockey
Franklin Youth Soccer
Girl Scout Pack 92
Helen Keller PCC
Historical Commission
Horace Mann PCC
Jefferson PCC
Franklin SEPAC
John Kennedy PCC
Jr. Girl Scout Troop 861
Metacomet Land Trust
Moms Club of Franklin
Norfolk County Pacers
Oak Street PCC
Parmenter PCC
Recreation Commission
Remington School PCC
Tri-County Athletic Director
Franklin High School Athletic Director
Amego School
Girl Scout Troop 64036
Girl Scout Troop 77229
Girl Scout Troop 67231
Franklin July 4th Coalition
Charles River Meadowlands
St Johns Climate Change Group
Franklin HS Girl Soccer Booster
Franklin HS Track and Field
American Legion Post 75
Franklin Dog Park
Franklin Elks Lodge
Franklin Freedom Team
Franklin Housing Authority
Franklin LGBTQ Alliance
Franklin Lions
Franklin Neighbor Brigade
Franklin Odd Fellows
YMCA
Adirondack Club
Franklin Life Long Learning Institute
Sunrise Montessori School
Random Smile
SAFE Coalition
Temple Etz Chaim
Working Mom Social Club
Early Childhood Development Center
Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook - Abenaki People
Franklin High School - Green Team
Nipmuc Nation
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag
Pokanoket Tribe



Open Space  
and Recreation Plan  
Town of Franklin



# What is the Open Space and Recreation Plan?

- Open Space and Recreation Plan = “OSRP”
- “A tool through which a community plans for the future of its conservation and recreation resources.” (Mass.gov, 2022)
- A plan for plans
- Accumulation of public participation, stakeholder engagement, goals and objectives
- Source of funding: approved OSRPs are eligible for grant programs for up to 7 years
- A way to connect with residents about local conservation and recreation issues



# Overview and Benefits of the OSRP

- Provides a snapshot of community priorities from stakeholder feedback and public engagement
- Guides policy decisions for open space, climate resiliency, natural resources, and recreational issues
- Maintain public spaces and recreational facilities
- Protects open spaces, habitat, and biodiversity
- Develops and implements a capital improvement program
- Improves public access and awareness
- Source of funding



# OSRP Requirements

1. Plan summary - *overall aspirations of the community*
2. Introduction - *statement of purpose, planning process, and public participation*
3. Community setting - *regional context, community history, demographics, etc.*
4. Environmental inventory and analysis - *water resources, fisheries, wildlife, etc.*
5. Inventory of Lands - *ownership, use, condition, and potential of parcels*
6. Community vision - *description of how the community vision was obtained*
7. Analysis of needs - *summary of resource protection, community, and management needs*
8. Goals and objectives - *comprehensive set of goals and objectives identified*
9. Action Plan - *year-by-year timetable for specific actions to accomplish*
10. Public comments - *all public comments submitted during the OSRP process*
11. References - *all reference documents used*



# What is “Open Space”?

## Private Lands

- Private recreational areas
- Lands under special taxation programs (Chapter 61/A/B)
- Other non-protected, private parcels

## Public Lands

- Town owned “Conservation” and “Recreation” lands and resources
- Non-profit lands (i.e. Metacomet)
- Federal and State owned lands (i.e. State forest)



# What is Recreation?

- Indoor and outdoor facilities
- Parks
- Playgrounds
- Multi -use fields
- Courts



# Summary of the 2016 Survey

- 88.2% of households reported they were supportive of Town appropriations for acquisition of Open Space
- 85.3% of households reported they were supportive of Town appropriations for additional recreational facilities
- Households were equally in agreement that the Town should prioritize improving existing recreational facilities, acquiring/building additional recreational facilities, and acquiring conservation lands for passive recreation
- Walking was the most reported recreational activity amongst all age groups (639 households)
- Bike trails were identified ranked as the most needed recreational facility needed among residents
- 60.7% of residents reported that they would sell land to the Town at a fair market price to preserve Open Space
- Water resources and wildlife habitat ranked highest in important for preservation



# Accomplishments since the 2016 OSRP

- Acquired the Riverbend Open Space Area
- Improved the surface of the SNETT system
- Signage at every field and open space area
- Parking analysis at open space areas
- Recycling receptacles at all recreation areas
- Constructed shared use path to a portion of Grove Street and sharrows to some side streets
- Increased the Open Space Fund
- Secured capital funding
- Sidewalks were added to portions of Chestnut Street and Pleasant Street, Beaver Street, and Lincoln Street



# Accomplishments since the 2016 OSRP

- Transferred Town owned tax title and unresolved parcels to the Conservation Commission for designation as “Conservation” lands and permanent protection
- Evaluated local fee and tax structures to create a permanent revenue stream
- Acquired land adjacent to existing (circa 2016) recreation areas that were suitable for future “Conservation” land or additional recreation areas
- Conducted community outreach for the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and had the CPA on the Town ballot





# OSRP Update Process (Jan 2023 - Aug 2023)



- Bimonthly focus group meetings
- Digital citizen survey
  - February 2023 - April 2023
- Three public hearings
  - February 2023 – 2016 OSRP Review and Current Priorities
  - April 2023 – Goals & Objectives for 2023 OSRP
  - June 2023 – Draft 2023 OSRP review
- Comment period
  - Month long public comment period to gather input regarding the draft Plan
- Conservation, Council, and State approval



# Get Involved

- Visit the OSRP Webpage
    - <https://www.franklinma.gov/conservation/pages/2023-open-space-and-recreation-plan-update>
  - Sign up for Conservation news alerts
    - [franklinma.gov/subscribe](https://www.franklinma.gov/subscribe)
  - Conservation calendar
    - <https://www.franklinma.gov/node/24/events/month>
    - Office hours: alternating Fridays 10a - 11a in Room 326A at Town Hall
  - Provide input by Google Form, email, or survey
    - Google Form: <https://forms.gle/GLJ88MHhykuCmw4y6>
    - Email: [bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)
    - Survey to be posted on all digital platforms Feb 2023 - April 2023
      - Contact Breeka Li Goodlander for more information or a hardcopy
  - Attend the public hearings
    - Paper comment
    - Digital comment
    - Public comment
- Schedule an OSRP presentation for your group or organization
- Contact [bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov) for more information

# Get Involved



OSRP Google Form



Subscribe



Contact webpage



Event Calendar

Breka Li Goodlander, CWS, PWS

[bgoodlander@franklinma.gov](mailto:bgoodlander@franklinma.gov)

508 - 520 - 4847



OSRP Webpage



# Open Space and Recreation Plan

## Town of Franklin

### FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

THEME	DATE
SPORTS & RECREATION PROGRAMS	JAN 12
MUNICIPAL RECREATION FACILITIES & PARKS	JAN 26
SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES & PARKS	FEB 9
SCHMIDT FARM	FEB 23
RIVERBEND CONSERVATION AREA	MAR 9
MAPLE HILL	MAR 22
DELCARTE AND BEAVER POND	APR 6
FORESTS, TREES, GREENSPACE, AND OTHER CONSERVATION LANDS	APR 20
HABITAT PROTECTION, ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION, OTHER CONSERVATION LANDS	MAY 4
OPEN SPACE ACCESSIBILITY, TRAILS, BIKEPATHS, TOWN CONNECTIVITY	MAY 18

ALL FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS ARE FROM 6-7P IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS OR ON ZOOM.

ALL OFFICE HOURS ARE FROM 10-11A IN ROOM 326A OR ON ZOOM.

SEVEN ADDITIONAL MEETINGS AND OFFICE HOURS TO BE DETERMINED

PLEASE SEE THE POSTED AGENDA FOR THE ZOOM LINK.

### OFFICE HOURS

THEME	DATE
SPORTS & RECREATION PROGRAMS	JAN 13
MUNICIPAL RECREATION FACILITIES & PARKS	JAN 27
SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES & PARKS	FEB 10
SCHMIDT FARM	FEB 24
RIVERBEND CONSERVATION AREA	MAR 10
MAPLE HILL	MAR 24
DELCARTE AND BEAVER POND	APR 7
FORESTS, TREES, GREENSPACE, AND OTHER CONSERVATION LANDS	APR 21
HABITAT PROTECTION, ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION, OTHER CONSERVATION LANDS	MAY 5
OPEN SPACE ACCESSIBILITY, TRAILS, BIKEPATHS, TOWN CONNECTIVITY	MAY 19

### PUBLIC HEARINGS

THEME	DATE
2016 OSRP REVIEW AND CURRENT PRIORTIES	FEB 21
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2023 OSRP	APR 25
DRAFT 2023 OSRP REVIEW	JUN 20

PUBLIC HEARING TIME AND LOCATIONS TO BE DETERMINED.

DATES, TIMES, AND THEMES FOR ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE SUBSCRIBE TO [FRANKLINMA.GOV/CONSERVATION](https://www.franklinma.gov/conservation) FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION.



# Open Space and Recreation Plan

Town of Franklin



Take this survey to help craft the vision for the future of our Open Space and Recreation areas!

Hardcopies available upon request from the Conservation Department



## Get involved!

Public Hearing 1: February 21  
Public Hearing 2: April 25  
Public Hearing 3: June 20  
OSRP Comment Period: June - July

"Open Space and Recreation Plans allow a municipality to maintain and enhance all of the benefits of open space that together make up much of the character of the community and protect the "green infrastructure" of the community. Planning this "green infrastructure" of water supply, land, working farms and forests, viable wildlife habitats, parks, recreation areas, trails, and greenways is as important to the economic future of a community as planning for schools, roads, water, and wastewater infrastructure."(OSRP Workbook, 2008)

For more information or to request hardcopy surveys please contact:  
bgoodlander@franklinma.gov/(508) 520-4847



# Schmidt's Farm

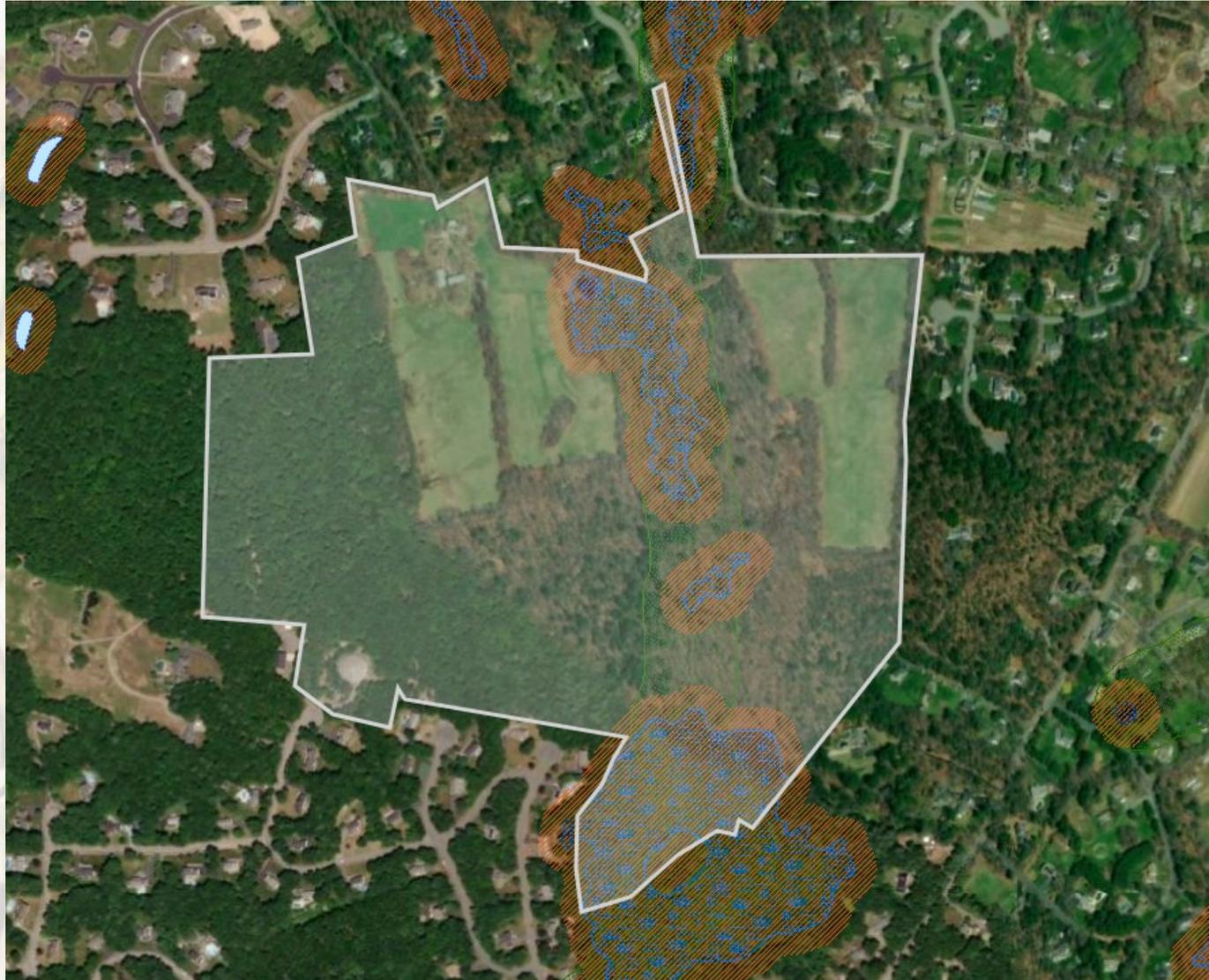
2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update

# Schmidt's Parcel: "What it is"

- 2016 Open Space Master Plan top priority
  - Goal 2, Objective 2.2
  - 2017 Chapter 61 Analysis
- Transition period: current owners have until July 1, 2023 to maintain residence in the current structure
- Additional 60-day option
- Will maintain property in the interim



# Schmidt's Parcel: "What it is"



# Schmidt's Farm: "What it was and continues to be"

A legacy

A family

A memoir

A testimony

A culture

A memory (many!)

# NORFOLK SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1955



Conservation Farmers of 1955,  
Arthur Schmidt and Son, Arwid

## OUTSTANDING DISTRICT COOPERATORS OF 1955

Arthur and Arwid Schmidt, a father and son team were awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Norfolk Soil Conservation District at their Annual Election Meeting in Walpole and the Certificate of the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture at the Union Agricultural Meeting in Worcester for outstanding accomplishments in soil and water conservation.

Arthur came from Latvia to Boston in 1905. His first job in the U. S. was that of a machinist even though he was farming in Latvia. In 1914 he bought the 115 acre farm on Prospect Street in Franklin and began the slow process of converting it to a productive enterprise. The newly bought land consisted of 17 acres of rocky pasture and 98 acres of woods.

His first operation was land clearing and wood harvest cutting. Some chestnut harvested was used to build the present homestead.

Little by little Arthur and Arwid cleared enough land to begin dairying, later adding poultry and planting apple trees.

When the Soil Conservation District came into being Arthur and son utilized its services; in 1950 he signed an agreement with the District and began on a planned soil and water conservation program.

For the outstanding work done on improvements and in using the resources of the farm wisely and without waste, taking into consideration the land's capabilities, the Schmidts are recognized both by the District and the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture.

Construction began near the end of 1962, as confirmed by then-executive-director Lon Smith's late-October statement to *The Westwood Press*. He announced that the U.S. Soil Conservation Service<sup>5</sup> and Norfolk County Soils Conservation District would support the design and construction of the 1,200-foot dam. Great care was taken to perform water drainage studies for the 60-acre pond, and engineer Henry Ritzer was personally commended for generously lending his time and expertise to the endeavor.







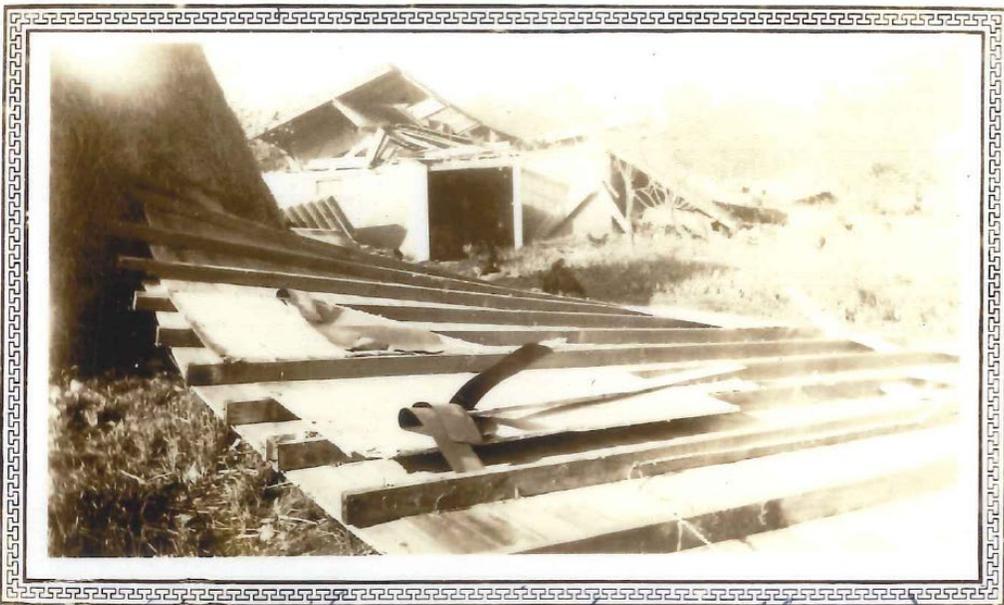
1936 Brooder House



9/21/1938 Hurricane Damage



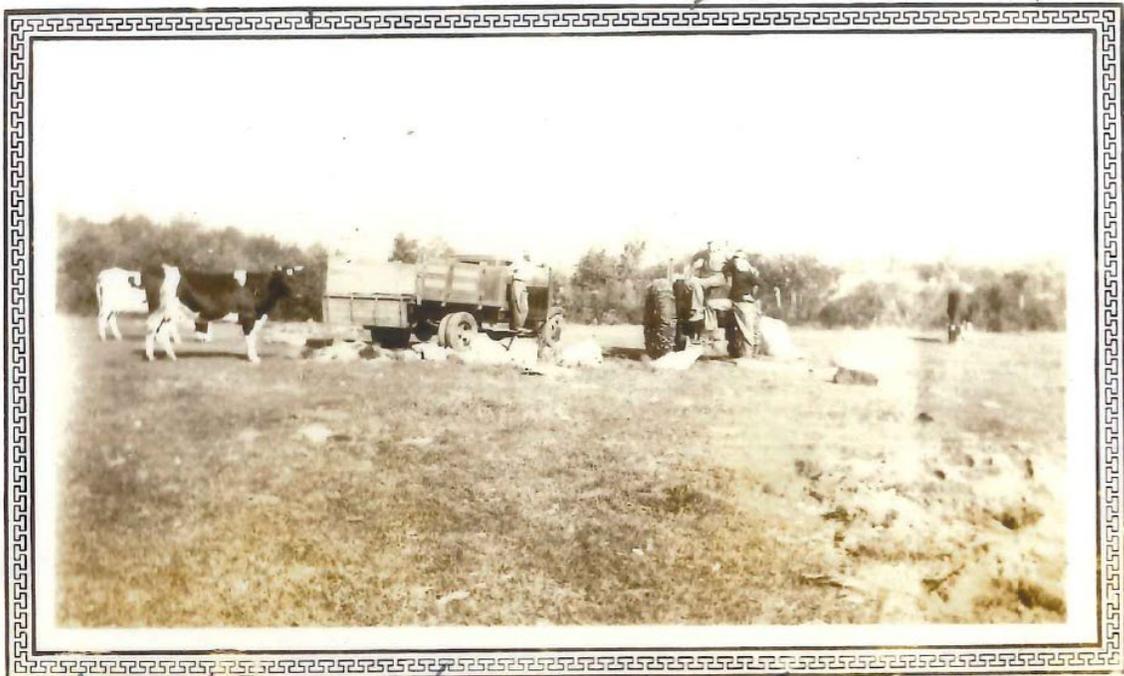
Roof off 36 House Rooster Range



9/21/1938 Hurricane (1936 House)



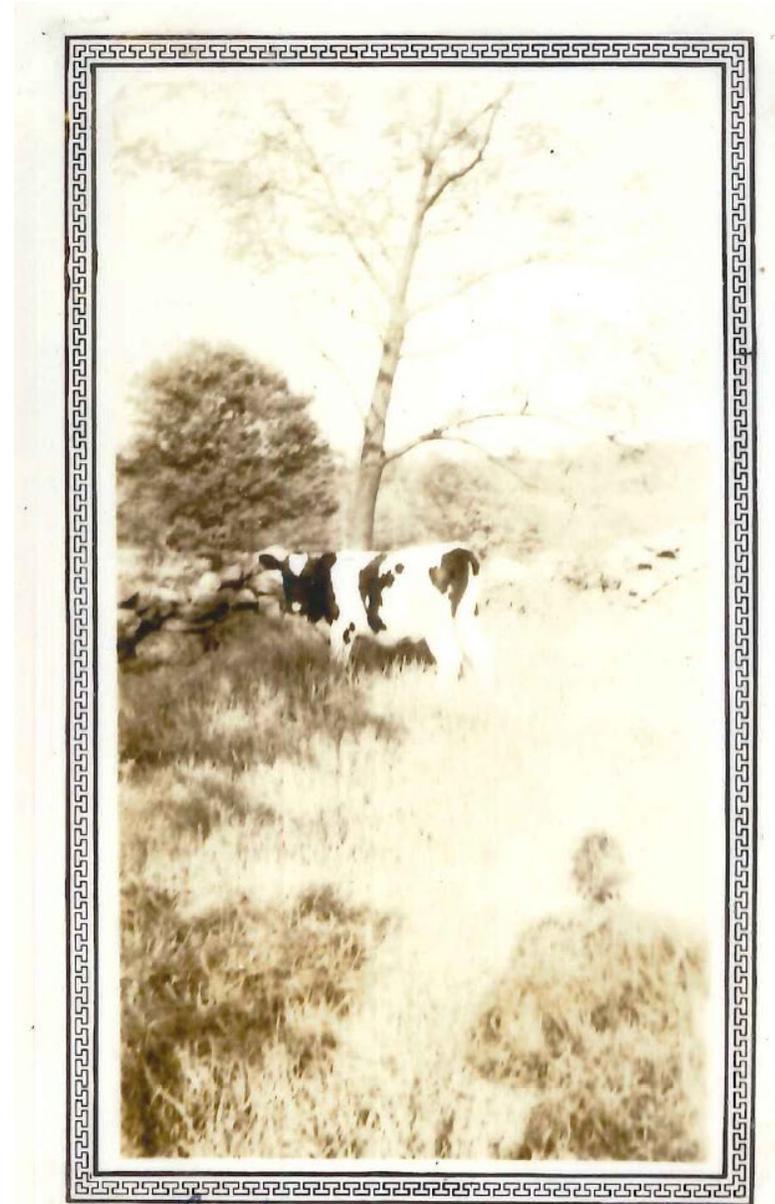
9/21/1938 Damage to Colony Houses



Working on stones Elm Field 1937



Haying time 1937 Wald & Arby



"Baby" 1937



The Bar 9/26/1937



Picnic on farm 9/26/1937



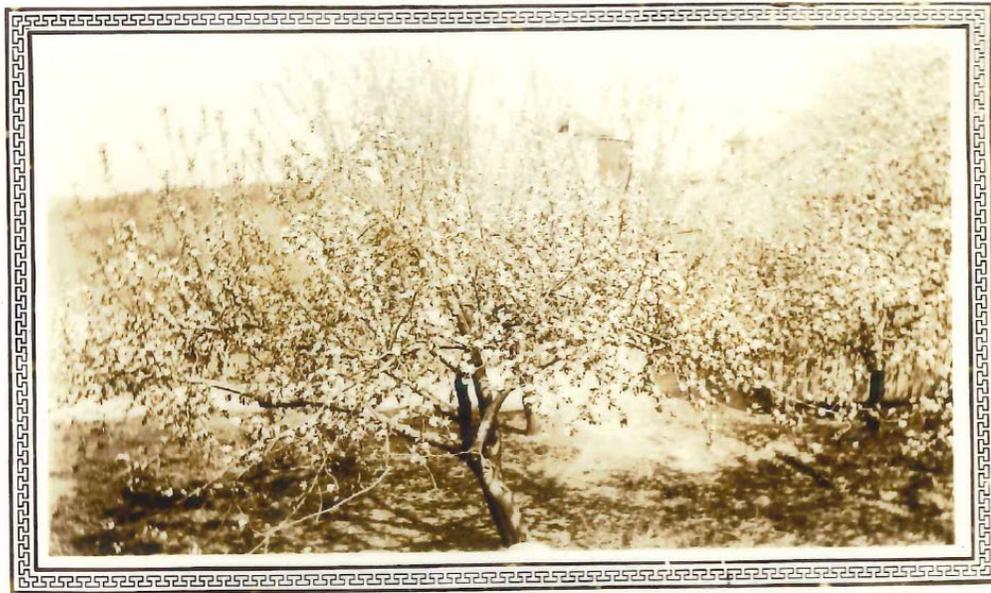
Sweet Corn for Market 1934



Free Range Chickens 1937



Bob, Arwid & Bud in Rye Field 1936



Apple Blossom 1936



Bruno June 1932

5/30/1936 Art & Julia's Wedding



Art, Julia, Margaret, Charlie





1932 Buddy

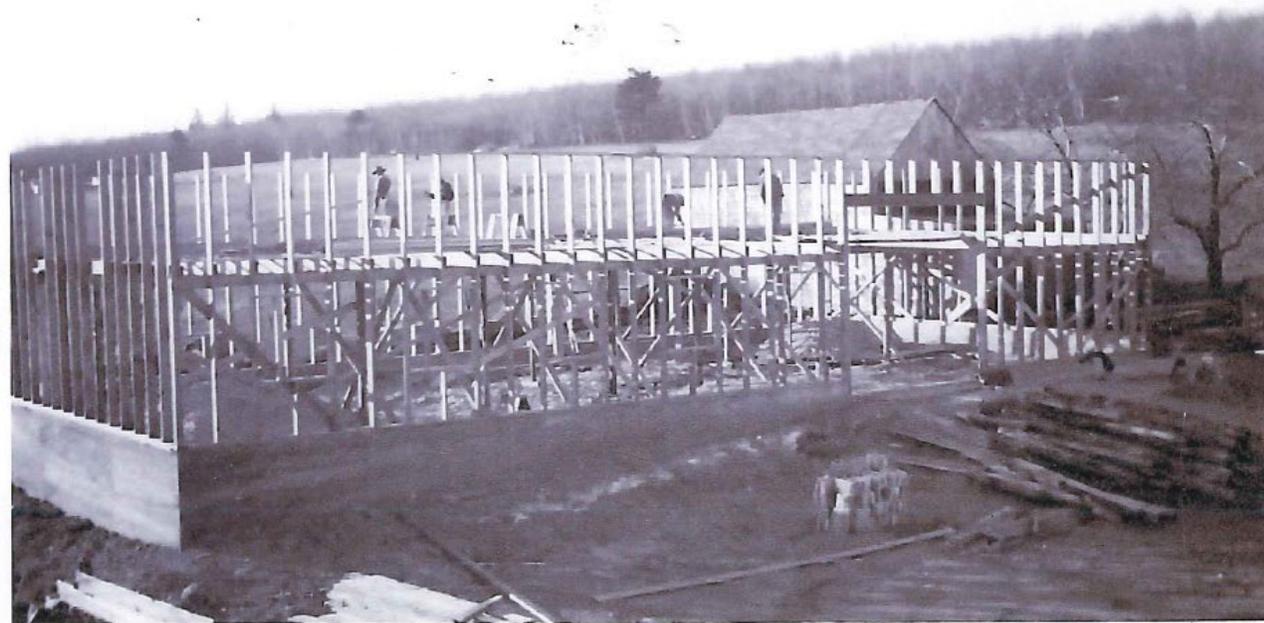
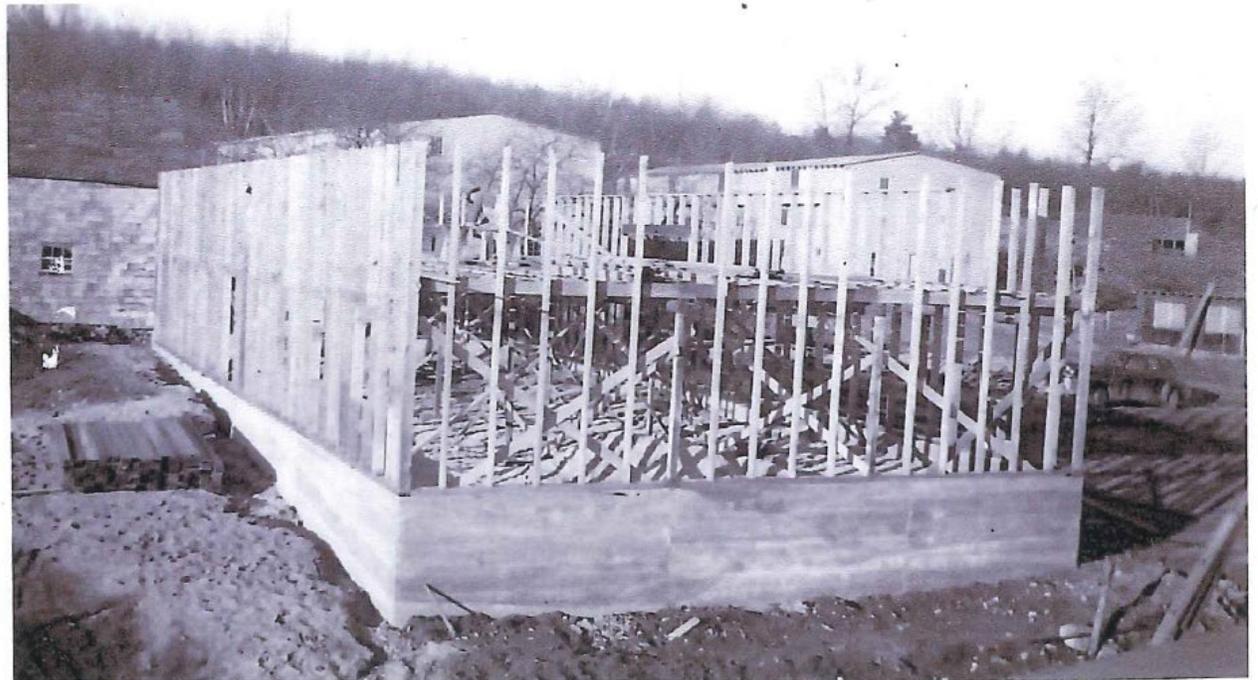


1935 Prince

One of the largest farm barns in the district is being completed at the Arthur Schmidt farm on Prospect street, and the shingling and lightning protection to be completed within a few weeks will finish the construction.

The barn, 74 by 34, is 32 feet high, and upon completion, will house 20 cows, a large apple cold storage system, grainery, and 74 tons of hay.

Birds find the strongest

















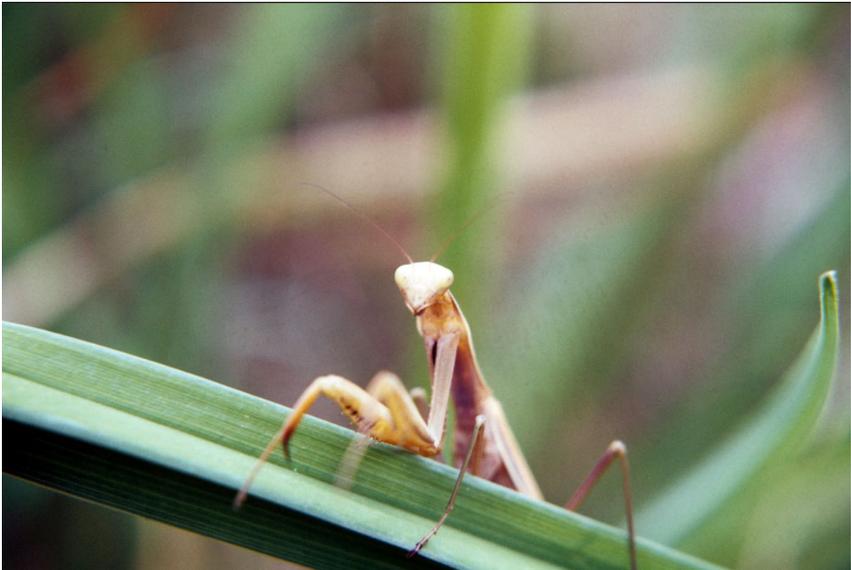






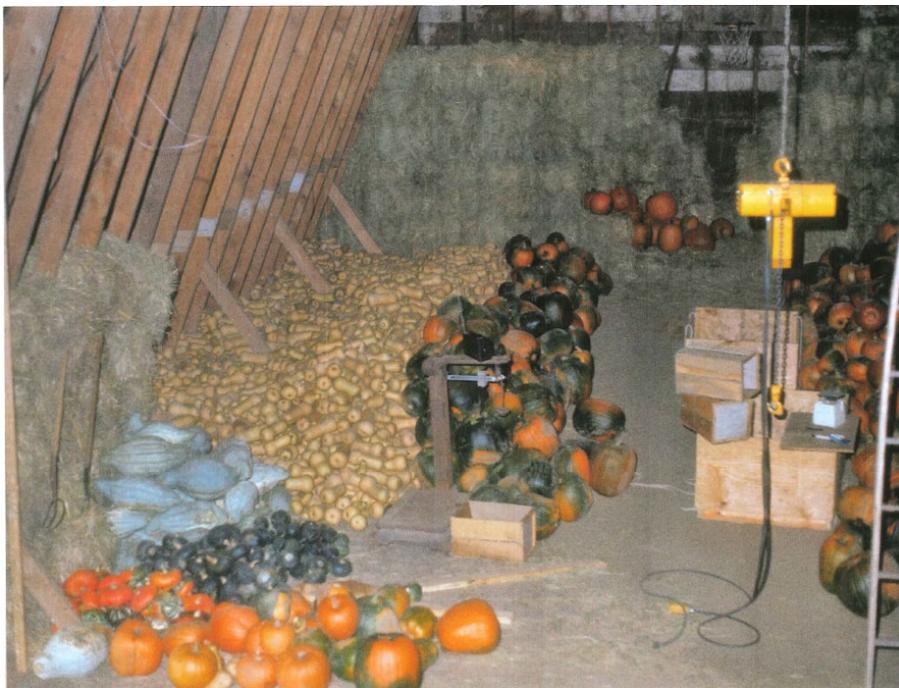












# Schmidt's Farm: "What it could be"

- Schmidt Farm is one of the last and largest contiguous parcels of Open Space in Town – along the Pan Mass Challenge Route
- While management decisions are far from complete, one can envision a dedicated part-time caretaker position
- Potential leasing opportunities
- Potential CSA opportunities
- Potential community garden
- Potential for pollinator pastures, meadows, hiking trails, etc.

# Schmidt's Farm: "What it could be"

- Connection to additional 26 acres
- Town will attempt to keep the barn
- Town to demolish the existing home
- Potential access routes (starred) include Oakridge Drive, Tia Place, Bald Hill Drive, Prospect Street, and Nicholas Drive
  - All would require private negotiations with passive recreation only at this point
  - Nothing definitive

