

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PATHWAYS PLAN

Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York

The LA group, PC
40 Long Alley
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

April 2007

TOWN OF WILTON

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND PATHWAYS PLAN

April 2007

**Town of Wilton
Saratoga County, New York
22 Traver Road
Wilton, New York 12831
(518) 587-1939**

**Prepared for:
Wilton Town Board**

Arthur J. Johnson, Supervisor
Raymond F. O'Connor, Councilman
Larry S. Gordon,
Ian McGaughey
Charles Gerber

Prepared by:
The Open Space Committee
Larry S. Gordon, Peter Litchfield, Steve Porto, Chuck Gerber, Bob Rice, Ian
McGaughey, Keith Manz

With Assistance From:



the LA group

Landscape Architecture
and Engineering, P.C.

40 Long Alley
Saratoga Springs
New York 12866
518/587-8100
Telefax 518/587-0180

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VISION STATEMENT

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Open Space
2. Recreation
3. Pathways

Page

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1	Open Space, Connectivity, and Recreation for Future Generations	1
1.2	Relationship to Other Plans	4
1.3	Open Space Accomplishments.....	6
1.4	Public Outreach	7

SECTION 2 COMMUNITY SETTING

2.1	Regional Context	8
2.2	The Wilton Setting	9
2.3	Population Characteristics	11
2.4	Growth and Development Patterns.....	12
2.5	Environmental and Land Use Regulations	13
2.6	Vision Statement.....	14
2.7	Goals and Action Steps	15
2.7.1	Open Space Action Steps.....	15
2.7.2	Recreation Action Steps	15
2.7.3	Pathways Development Action Steps	16

SECTION 3 OPEN SPACE

3.1	General	17
-----	---------------	----

3.2	Natural Resources	18
3.2.1	Biodiversity.....	18
3.2.2	Water Resources	21
3.2.3	Scenic Vistas	24
3.3	Historic and Cultural Resources	27
3.4	Agricultural Spaces.....	30
3.5	Prioritization of Spaces.....	32
3.5.1	Physical Composition.....	33
3.5.2	Natural Resources	35
3.5.3	Locational and Relational.....	36
3.5.4	Historic Value.....	37
3.5.5	Management.....	37
3.5.6	Priority Areas	41
3.6	Methods for Space Preservation	42
3.6.1	Acquisition.....	42
3.6.2	Financing Methods.....	46

SECTION 4 RECREATION

4.1	General.....	50
4.2	Existing Facilities	51
4.2.1	Town Facilities	51
4.2.2	School District Resources.....	55
4.2.3	County Forests.....	56
4.2.4	Other Open Space Resources.....	57
4.3	Methodologies for Establishing Recreational Need	58
4.4	Recreational Analysis	60
4.5	Funding Recreation	62
4.6	Implementation	63

SECTION 5 PATHWAYS

5.1	General.....	65
5.2	Priority Pathways	68
5.2.1	Users.....	68

5.2.2	Destinations	68
5.2.3	Trail Types	69
5.2.4	Recommended Trail Locations	73
5.3	Methods for Pathway Enhancement	78
5.3.1	Linkage and Connectivity	78
5.3.2	Site Plan Review Integration	79
5.3.3	Greenways	79
5.4	Implementation	81
5.4.1	Immediate Actions	81
5.4.2	Long-Term Actions	82
5.4.3	Maintenance	82
5.4.4	Funding	83

REFERENCES

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4-1	Public Access Lands
Table 4-2	Projected Recreation and Open Space Needs

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1	Parcels and Land Uses
Figure 3-1	Sensitive Environmental Areas
Figure 3-2	Historic Resources
Figure 3-3	Existing Open Space Areas
Figure 4-1	Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park Study Area
Figure 5-1	Pathways Plan

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance
Appendix B	Listing of Historic Resources
Appendix C	Saratoga County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program Description and Application
Appendix D	Open Space Land Assessment Forms

Vision Statement

“The Town of Wilton’s combination of natural resources, rural and suburban character and recreational opportunities are integral elements to the quality of life of the Town’s residents.

It is the goal of the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan to set forth a compelling strategy for preserving these elements for the enjoyment of future generations.”



SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS



1 OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

Open Space Management:

- To facilitate a rational approach to understanding open space management, a comprehensive management strategy is recommended. The management strategy would inventory and catalogue each open space parcel in the real property tax mapping system for the Town, taking into consideration required investment, desired uses and activities for open space lands, the specific attributes and constraints of the open space areas existing in the Town, what management techniques are appropriate, what funding resources are available and what human resources are available to undertake day-to-day management of the parcels inventoried and catalogued.
- Adopt the following process for determining whether the Town should accept open space parcels that are being offered for donation:

At the point of application for subdivision, an Open Space Evaluation Form shall be prepared for each parcel. This process will be utilized to make decisions on whether the lands qualify for consideration and should ultimately be accepted. The Town shall have the first option to accept land donation throughout the Town. Should the Town reject a parcel offered for donation, The Nature Conservancy, New York State, or WWPP, some other entity will have the opportunity to take ownership. Open space lands outside the WWPP Study Area shall be considered for management by the Town. The Town shall develop a management plan that includes ongoing and sustained methods of funding for the long-term management of these open spaces. Each plan will identify the history, proposed uses, and the management objectives for individual parcels.

- On lands within the WWPP Study Area, the WWPP Board of Directors shall be consulted regarding acceptance of open space parcels. The Town Board shall recommend a set of criteria for guiding the decisions for the future ownership and management of open space lands in the WWPP Study Area. Such criteria shall include that a parcel contribute to a public purpose, have habitat preservation value, and/or provide a vital trail link to a local, regional or statewide trail system. Management of lands in accord with these guidelines, unless otherwise determined by the Town Board, shall then be the responsibility of the owner.

Acquisition:

- Develop a set of criteria from which an educated determination can be made by the Town Board as to the open space value of the parcel based on the objectives as listed in this plan.. Such criteria will be used for decisions relating to land acquisition, utilization of covenants or some other preservation measures. See Appendix E for the recommended Open Space Land Assessment Form.

Fee-simple ownership of property and ownership of easements are two potential methods for addressing the goal of long-term, effective preservation of open space. Opportunities for preservation may occur through the administration of the conservation subdivision regulations. Therefore, an ongoing dialogue between the Planning Board and Town Board will be required as parcels are presented for open space preservation.

Consideration of fee simple purchase of lands or easements should be made on a case-by-case basis. Acquisition by the Town is recommended when a determination has been made by the Town Board as to the parcel's usefulness and value to the overall open space preservation effort.

Once a determination has been made that the parcel under consideration meets the criteria for priority open space, a method for owning, managing and financing the acquisition must be established prior to the final decision on acquisition. Factors to consider are cost, method of funding, means of ownership, the cost of upkeep, the approach to maintenance, and the long-term source of funding to cover maintenance and management costs.

Financing:

- Consider the establishment of a revolving capital account within the Town budget dedicated to acquisition and proper management of priority open space areas. Ensure sufficient funds are budgeted for existing and continuing program management. Furthermore, it is recommended that multiple funding sources be prioritized, and pursued.
 1. First priority should be given to applying for available federal, County and State programs as listed in this strategic plan to match funds in the Town reserve account.
 2. Second, encourage priority private donations to fund preservation efforts.
 3. Third, the special district option is recommended for further consideration. This option will provide a long-term and consistent source of funding to the preservation effort.

Further review would include analysis of the specific mechanisms needed to properly effectuate district formation and operation.

Habitat Protection:

- Identify areas of sensitive habitat on the Town's geographic information system (GIS) for early avoidance of these features. This information would illustrate general locations of areas with favorable conditions for threatened or endangered species. Known locations of vernal pools should also be designated. This will require the Town to install ARC Reader software and apply the information as a data layer to the real property base layer. This system would enable habitat information to appear on individual parcels much like wetlands and steep slopes are presently shown.
- Prepare a conservation overlay map to cover sensitive habitat areas and develop appropriate and specific standards to mitigate potential environmental impacts.

Water Resources:

- Adjust the present stream buffer standard so measurement is made from the shoreline rather than the center of the waterway. The buffer should maintain a constant and uniform dimension between the shoreline and areas of disturbance. The standards for the buffer should focus on the quality of the stream corridor, steepness of slopes, erodibility, and habitat value.
- Update the conservation overly map to include all wetland areas identified and qualified as meeting the wetland standards of NYSDEC and/or USACOE.
- Areas with characteristics of a vernal pool should be reviewed on an individual basis during subdivision of site plan review. Consideration should be given to application of preservation measures over areas constituting vernal pools of significant size and ecological importance.
- Classify commercial timber harvesting on large tracts of land as a land use which requires site plan review by the Planning Board. Consideration should be given to a minimum acreage threshold requiring review and an exemption for timber harvesting for personal use or construction of a single-family dwelling.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to adopt silo-cultural and timber harvesting standards.

Scenic Resources:

- The Planning Board currently assesses visual impact during subdivision and site plan review. For major projects, the visual assessment standards as set forth by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation are useful tools to guide this assessment process.

Historic Resources:

- The assessment of potential impacts on historic resources should be expanded to require that any plan will not alter the distinguishing qualities of the original building, site or structure as identified by the Town Historian. The Town's historic resources have been identified and catalogued by the Town Historian. This information has

been digitally mapped and exists as a data layer in the Town GIS mapping system. A cross-reference by the tax map parcel number can be used to identify individual parcels with a catalogued historic resource.

Agricultural Spaces:

- Actively promote Saratoga County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program which offers cash in exchange for the development rights of productive farmland.



RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to expand Gavin Park's recreational facilities in a manner consistent with the Gavin Park Master Plan. The first priority was the construction of "minor" and "major" baseball/softball fields. The fields have been constructed and are now complete. The Town recently developed plans for a handicapped accessible playground, picnic pavilion, and perimeter fencing. The next priority is the development of a combination field complex including baseball and soccer field, and the relocation of the maintenance center.
- Incorporate guidelines into the subdivision regulations for the provision of recreation land and facilities within future developments. Consider requiring minimum recreation facility standards for active and passive recreation related to the size of individual development projects. Such standards may include guidance on playground equipment, courts and fields which conform to the overall goals of the Town Recreation Department.
- Develop a management plan for the recreational use and development of the Camp Saratoga property that permit a compatible but diverse set of uses.
- Acceptance of suitable land for open space should include its potential to provide recreation needs, and trail links. Consideration should also be given to land maintenance and management requirements.

- Fill out an inventory form for each parcel identified in the plan as open space (see recommended form in Appendix E). Catalog each parcel for its attributes and potential utility in the open space system.



PATHWAYS RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a bike and walking trail system throughout the Town that links parks, subdivisions, open space parcels, service providers, shopping areas and natural areas. Trails should be a variety of types of trails, such as on-road bike paths, and off-road multi-use trails.
- The design and routing of the trail system is to improve functional use of the trail system as infrastructure to facilitate alternative forms of travel between destinations that meet the day-to-day needs of the residents in addition to accommodating increased recreational use.
- Adopt a trail maintenance strategy.
- Investigate and research funding sources to offset costs of pathways construction and maintenance.
- Inform NYSDOT of the need to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian pathways at Exit 16 to safely connect the trail opportunities on both sides of the Northway.
- Consider and prioritize paving projects to improve on-road pathways.
- Consider and prioritize the creation of off-road multi-use trails.
- Negotiate access agreements with property owners at key connectivity points, and to trail destinations such open space, park, and recreation lands, and, eventually to destinations such as schools and shopping and employment centers.

- Using the parameters in the existing agreement between the County and the WWPP Board as a model, negotiate rights to use county forestlands for the development of special purpose trail such as cross-country skiing.
- Develop a set of use guidelines and/or regulations for the trail system.
- Develop brochures and trail maps, which illustrate the extent of the trail system, rules and regulations, and the location of different types of trail and attractions.
- Utilize assistance from Mt McGregor Correctional Facility or from volunteer and conservation groups for labor to clear brush and perform other trail development tasks.
- Establish an annual operating budget for long-term maintenance of the trail system.
- Work with private developers to include trail improvements and connections to the system in future subdivision and development plans.
- Work with Saratoga County to develop a long-range management plan for the recreational use and development of county forests in Wilton. Incorporate new uses such as hunting and trails that link with the Pathways Plan and eliminate uses that are not compatible with passive recreational use of these areas.



SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 OPEN SPACE, CONNECTIVITY AND RECREATION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Town of Wilton Open Space Recreation and Pathways Plan (OSRPP) is the fulfillment of one of the priority recommendations from the Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2004.

The purpose is to establish a realistic and purposeful strategy for preservation of the diverse agricultural, historical, recreational, and scenic open space lands that strongly influence the quality of living in the Town of Wilton. The residents of the community, through expression in the adopted Comprehensive Plan, have acknowledged and endorsed the role of open space and the contributions these resources make to daily life in the Town. In consideration of the expanding population in the Town, now is the time for thoughtful consideration to a balanced approach to towards future use of land in the Town. Proper and appropriate measures implemented now will allow for managed growth and preservation of the Town's natural resources in the future.

According to population statistics from the 1980, 1990 and 2000 census, population growth in Wilton has been strongest among households with school-aged children. One outgrowth of this population dynamic is an increased demand for recreation facilities for accommodation of active forms of recreation and recreational competition. Examples include additional fields for baseball, softball, soccer, field hockey and football; additional courts for tennis and basketball; and additional playgrounds and unstructured open space. This Plan provides an assessment of the specific needs and a long-term strategy for additional facilities and areas to keep pace with the need. It is with these intentions that the OSRPP has been developed.

The intent of the pathways plan is to provide a means of connecting open space areas, residential areas, recreation areas, service providers, and commercial areas with a town-

wide system of pathways that allow for alternative forms of transportation (pedestrians and bicyclists) to move effectively and safely throughout the Town.

The strategy has been developed among three general categories; open space, recreational opportunities, and pathways.

Open Space:

Open space is a broad and complex consideration. Within the context of the preservation goals for Wilton, open space includes natural features such as terrestrial features including meadows, steep slopes, forested areas; aquatic features including lakes, streams, ponds, and wetlands; heritage areas including historic landmarks and buildings; geological features including hydric soils and aquifer recharge areas, vernal pools; and consideration of scenic views. The values of open space are as diverse as the types of open space listed above. Open spaces, while enjoyed for their characteristics of serenity, airiness, and tranquility also serve as habitat for a variety of wildlife and vegetation. The physical setting and climate are supportive of a varied mix of amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish, trees, shrubs, and groundcover. The recommended strategy identifies areas that meet these criteria as well as methods for preserving these lands and features over the long-term.

Recreational Opportunities:

The Town has experienced a comparatively strong increase in population. This is true both in comparison to past trends in population increases in the Town as well as comparison to similar towns in the region. As a result, the Town has a significant number of pre-school and school-aged children. According to the 2000 Census, over 30 percent of the Town's population is 19 years of age or younger. This statistic indicates a strong need for recreation facilities of both an active and passive nature. Furthermore, it is a stated goal of the Town's Comprehensive Plan "to provide sufficient opportunities and facilities for both active and passive recreation activities." Active recreation includes types that require support equipment and facilities such as fields, courts, or tracks for the conduct of an organized game or match. Passive types are activities that are less reliant on structured facilities or competitions and include walking, jogging, cycling, hiking, etc.

Under the above categories, the strategy provides a comprehensive and cohesive set of activities that will fulfill the general goal of open space preservation, pathways connectivity, and enhancement of opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Pathways:

The pathway system envisions a town-wide series of trails that effectively links open space areas, residential areas, recreation areas, points of interest, service providers, and commercial areas. The strategy relies on a long-term, phased approach to piecing the links together through timely consideration during the development review process and optimal use of relevant state and federal transportation and funding programs. When complete, the Town's recreation and open space will have meaningful connections to residential and commercial areas via multiple and alternative transportation routes affording seasonal access and movement for walkers and bicyclists.



1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

As outlined below, the OSRPP is a planned implementation measure that is referenced in a number of past Town-sponsored efforts as well as county and statewide initiatives.

2006 Town of Wilton Traffic Planning Study Update

This study outlines a five-year plan to prioritize and generate estimate costs for potential short-term improvements recommended for 2005-2015. Fees for traffic mitigation, as outlined in the report, are projected to adequately cover identified improvement projects.

2006 Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan

Saratoga County has completed and adopted a Countywide open space plan which will identify and prioritize an intact network of open space resources, trails, and natural resources.

2005 Gavin Park Master Plan

This Plan has been updated and is primarily a design project that illustrates a full build-out of the remaining sections of Gavin Park. The suggested fields, courts and other improvements were based directly on input from Town residents.

2005 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan

This document provides guidance for the spending of state funds for priority projects throughout the state. Priority projects identified in the Town of Wilton include the Mid-County Trail System – a trail link along Route 9 – Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park (WWPP), and several Karner blue butterfly recovery units nearby and including the WWPP.

2005 Open Space for Tomorrow: A Capital District Sprawl and Open Space Action Strategy

This document, prepared by the Open Space Institute, supports the open space preservation goals of Wilton. Wildlife Preserve and Park citing it as a “high priority environment.” Priority habitat area also is extended to the Saratoga sand plain’s Karner Blue Butterfly Unit which overlaps part of WWPP. The document also highlights the west side of Route 9 as a “high priority trail corridor” linked to the Saratoga County Heritage

Trail System. This system is envisioned to provide a continuous trail from the Mohawk-Hudson and Hudson River Greenway.

2004 Town Comprehensive Plan

The Wilton OSRPP represents an important implementation step from the Town Comprehensive Plan. During the development process for the comprehensive plan, residents expressed strong interest in open space, recreation, and expansion of pedestrian and bicycle pathways as a key element to the rural character of the community. Therefore, the OSRPP is intended to provide a specific strategy for preservation of open space, expansion of recreational opportunities, both passive and active, and development of a pathways network that provides meaningful connections and linkages to key destinations throughout the Town through alternative means of seasonal transportation.

2003 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

SCORP provides a focus on recreation and presentation mandates throughout the State. The 2003 ASCORP will serve as a status report and overall guideline for recreation and resource preservation, planning and development through the year 2007. Projects listed in SCORP receive priority funding. Both WWPP and the Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Units are listed as priority projects. This Plan is therefore consistent with the recommendations for open space and recreation in the SCORP.

2001 Wilton Wildlife and Open Space Plan

This Plan introduced the concept of open space protection and was focused on the fiscal implications and advantages of long-term preservation of land. The Plan went on to suggest optional methods for preserving open space in general manner.

1998 Town of Wilton Multi-use Trail System Master Plan

This Plan provided an inventory and analysis of land use and circulation data, identified the opportunities and constraints for construction, outlined goals and objectives for a trail system, and mapped conceptual locations for trails, trailheads, parking areas, picnic areas, and signage. This document serves as the foundation for the pathways section of this document.



1.3 OPEN SPACE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Town of Wilton has developed and implemented a number of significant projects to preserve open space, protect of natural resources, and provide its citizens with ample and diverse recreational opportunities. A sampling of these efforts is presented below:

- Adoption of a Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance (CSD) for all subdivisions of ten or more lots. The Town has reviewed and accepted over 100 acres of open space from subdivisions developed under CSD since its adoption in 2005. See Appendix A for a copy of the ordinance.
- Integration of the MS-4 NYS Stormwater Rules into Zoning Ordinance.
- Establishment of long-term partnership with the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park, Inc (WWPP). The Town, working with New York State, established the WWPP Study Area to pursue assemblage of parcels with complementary ecological features.
- Development and implementation of hydro-geological standards of subdivision development.
- Development and implementation of a construction checklist for subdivision development.
- Development of Master Plan for Gavin Park.
- Initiation of first phase of expansion of playing fields for Gavin Park.
- Development of a town-wide multi-use trail system master plan.



1.4 PUBLIC OUTREACH

The OSRPP is directly supported by public comments made during the development of the Town Comprehensive Plan and is closely associated with other recent open space preservation and recreation planning efforts. To oversee development, the Town appointed an advisory committee consisting of Town Board members, Town officials and residents. They were instrumental in the plan development process including formulating strategic actions to achieve the desired results of permanent preservation of natural resources and unique features.

Prior to adoption by the Town Board, a public hearing will be held to gather remaining comments regarding the actions suggested in the OSRPP.



SECTION 2 – COMMUNITY SETTING

2.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Wilton is conveniently located in the north central Saratoga County between the Capital District and the Adirondack Park. Sharing of a municipal border with the City of Saratoga Springs, Wilton is a highly desirable place to live. The geographic location affords convenient access to recreational opportunities, community services, employment centers and shopping.



2.2 THE WILTON SETTING

The Town of Wilton is comprised of 22,066 acres; approximately 36 square miles in area. The landscape consists of generally flat to moderately sloping and rolling topography. The Palmertown Ridge, located to the northwest, is steeper in slope and provides vertical backdrop to flatlands in the central and southern sections of the Town (see Figure 2-1, “Parcels and Land Uses”).

Surface water features include lakes, ponds, and streams, many of which originate in the Palmertown Ridge. Two of the largest surface area water bodies in Wilton are Loughberry Lake in the southwest and Lake Elizabeth in the central portion of the Town. The prominent streams include the Snook Kill, Little Snook Kill, Delegan Brook, Bog Meadow Brook, the Little Snook Kill tributary, and various tributaries and sub-tributaries to Loughberry Lake. All the streams listed above, with the exception of the Little Snook Kill tributary, are classified trout streams by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC).

Due to a four-season climate and relatively uniform soil types, which range from well-drained sandy soils to silt loam, the terrestrial areas support a varied range of wildlife and vegetation. The terrestrial environment is comprised of forested and open meadows and grasslands. Saratoga County manages four forest areas and the State of New York owns several larger parcels in the northern section of the Town. The WWPP Study Area is located in the central eastern area of the Town. The WWPP has an ecology consisting of oak-pine savannah with occasional pine barren vernal ponds. It encompasses regionally significant wetland complexes with many vernal ponds. This area provides habitat for the federally and state endangered Karner blue butterfly, the state-threatened frosted elfin butterfly and Blanding’s turtle, and special concern species eastern hognose snake, eastern Spadefoot toad, and blue-spotted salamander.

This physical setting provides the basis for a keen interest in an open space and recreation strategy that balances development and continued growth with long-term preservation of these natural features and settings.

Natural Ecosystem:

Existing within the framework of this physical setting is a diverse population of varying wildlife and vegetative species that complete a generally open and serene natural setting. Wildlife species include amphibians and reptiles such as the spotted salamander, the gray tree frog and the painted turtle; mammals such as the white-tailed deer, red fox and raccoons; and breeding birds such as the red-tailed hawk, wild turkey, and the northern mockingbird. These habitats and the associated wildlife are basic contributors to the value of preserving open space. Another successful planning initiative has been setting aside valuable habitat and ecological areas in a large expanse of land to the east of Interstate Route 87 (the Northway). Through a cooperative effort among the State of New York, Saratoga County, the Town of Wilton, and the Nature Conservancy, a goal of preserving up to 3,000 of land known as the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park (WWPP) Study Area has been established. According to the Nature Conservancy, approximately 1,600 acres spanning 14 parcels have been protected to date. Feature parcels include 310 acres associated with “Camp Saratoga”, the Old Gick Farm (135 acres), the Neilmann Parcel (140 acres) and the Opdahl Farm (35 acres) and including Saratoga County lands.

Manmade Environment:

Wilton has been proactive in its approach to community development. Over the course of years, the Town has directed commercial growth in a concentrated manner at interstate interchanges and along limited sections of the state highways. Employment centers are concentrated in a similar manner. Residential development has been concentrated in predominantly west of the Northway and is now moving eastward.



2.3 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The Town of Wilton is experiencing unprecedented growth. From 2000-2004, the Town issued 962 building permits for single-family homes for an average of 192 permits per year. Assuming a lot size of 1.5 acres per house built, 1,443 acres or 6.3 percent of the Town's total area of approximately 23,040 acres were converted to residential use during the five-year period. Additional lands were allocated to road construction, drainage, and utility installations. In addition, there is a considerable pool of lots in approved subdivisions that are not built upon. The capacity to grow at an accelerated rate is only enhanced by this factor.



2.4 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Single-family houses are the dominant form of housing in Wilton, comprising 68 percent of Town housing stock in 2000. Should this ratio carry forward to the anticipated 2,750 new households, 1,870 would reside in single-family houses. At 1.5 acres per dwelling, an additional 2,805 acres would be developed for single-family houses.

Commercial and industrial growth has been strong as well. Through the last five-year period, the Town has seen substantial commercial growth in the form of a second regional retail distribution center, two new commercial shopping centers, an expanded super center, construction of several stand-alone, national fast-food and sit-down restaurants and a new motel.

However, the Town continues to have vast expanses of open, undisturbed areas. Therefore, the opportunity exists at this juncture to shape and direct future land uses so that consideration is given to preservation of open space, expansion of recreational opportunities and provision of useful and practical pathways network.

2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL AND LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Town currently provides a program of regulatory protection over its natural resources. One provision occurs through the Conservation Overlay (CO) District. The overlay district provides additional standards for lands that are considered environmentally sensitive including: “NYSDEC regulated wetlands, a 300 foot buffer around Loughberry Lake, significant habitat, pine barrens, rare plant/animal/natural communities, and unique physical features.” However, the CO District is in need of updating in terms of more specificity regarding measures of preservation and applicable geographic areas where its application would provide additional benefits. The OSRPP sets forth specific recommendations to improve the Conservation Overlay District.

Open space conservation is addressed in the newly adopted conservation subdivision design law. This provision makes it mandatory for developers to utilize a conservation approach when subdividing lands of ten (10) or more lots. The new subdivision regulatory process will provide a set aside for open space lands, water bodies, wetlands, sensitive habitat areas, unique environmental settings, steep slopes, etc.

Open space along either side of the Northway is protected from development through the Northway Corridor Overlay District (NCOD).

Another mechanism for preservation is through the Timber, Soil and Stream Regulations. These regulations require site plan approval and standards for timber harvesting, vegetation cutting, soil disturbance, and stream resource protection. While existing standards for drainage, wetlands, and stream protection are adequate, land clearing and timber harvesting regulations need to be updated.

The Town recently enacted a regulation that gives consideration to historic resources. In cases where the Town Historian has identified a building or site as a historically significant feature, upon notification, the Town Historian shall be given a 30-day opportunity upon notification to review and catalogue the site for inventory purposes.



2.6 VISION STATEMENT

Wilton's combination of natural resources, rural and suburban character and recreational opportunities are integral elements to the quality of life of the Town's residents. It is the goal of the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan to set forth a compelling strategy for preserving these elements for the enjoyment of future generations.

2.7 GOALS AND ACTION STEPS

The goals for open space preservation, recreation enhancement, and pathways development have been generally stated in the Town Comprehensive Plan. As an implementation tool, the action steps associated with the OSRPP are more focused and oriented towards specific outcomes.

2.7.1 OPEN SPACE ACTION STEPS

- Set a target amount of land area to be preserved and protected.
- Identify areas of the Town landscape that are suitable for open space preservation. The areas identified should be based on prioritized considerations that reflect the public's enjoyment and ecological function of the space preserved.
- Develop a set of practical and effective measures for preservation of land and natural resources.
- Provide review tools for making decisions for land preservation.
- Provide an enhanced set of environmental regulations that address timber harvesting and land clearing practices.

2.7.2 RECREATION ACTION STEPS

- Meet the active and passive recreational facilities needs of the community as defined by input from the residents and accepted standards for the Town's population profile.
- Identify areas that would be suitable as sites for future recreational facilities.
- Monitor the funding of the acquisition, installation, and maintenance of identified facilities to insure that public demand is met.
- Maximize the potential for recreation on County forestlands.
- Promote the development of open space and recreational opportunities for all age groups.

2.7.3 PATHWAYS ACTION STEPS

- Develop a safe multi-use pathways and trail system for use by Town residents and visitors that provides linkages to major use areas, historic, cultural, and recreational destinations within the Town, connects to neighboring trail systems, provides multiple forms of recreation, enjoyment and exercise, and provides connections for alternative modes of transportation.
- Set forth the methods by which sections of the pathways can be developed and constructed.



SECTION 3- OPEN SPACE

3.1 GENERAL

A widely publicized definition of open space occurs in *The Job of the Practicing Planner* by Albert Solnit.

“Land with no development or minimum development types of uses (examples: golf courses, agricultural uses, parks, low density residential development) or land left undeveloped for aesthetic [or environmental, health, welfare, or safety] reasons (examples: greenbelts, floodways, steep unstable slopes, or wetlands).

Open space can also be classified based on ownership: (1) privately owned open space — the yards or acreage associated with private homes or farms; (2) common use open space — land designated at the time of recording a plat or site plan as open space for the common access and use of the residents of the development; (3) public open space — publicly owned land for the active or passive recreation use of the public.”



3.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

3.2.1 BIODIVERSITY

It is important to identify and understand the diversity of biological communities or “biodiversity” in the Town of Wilton as a basis for preservation and protection of the native species, and not allow new development to have a negative impact on the habitat of endangered or threatened species. Much of the ecologically sensitive habitat plant and animal species are found in the area east of Interstate-87, where significant large and undisturbed parcels remain. Development of this land could alter existing wildlife habitat areas and their travel corridors. The Town of Wilton is home to a wide variety of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, and amphibians. Whitetail deer, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, and a variety of songbirds, hawks, owls, moles, mice, skunks, raccoon, woodchuck, red and gray squirrels, chipmunks, fisher, and porcupine have been found primarily in the undeveloped and rural areas of the Town. In marshes, wetlands or other water areas, wood ducks, mallards, black ducks, beavers, otters and muskrats are plentiful. The vegetation of the Town of Wilton is typical of most communities in Saratoga County, featuring a combination of farmed areas, fields, wetlands, and forested or re-forested areas, and residential areas dominated by lawns.

A search of the New York Natural Heritage database identifies three (3) wildlife species with sensitive status may be found within the Town. These include the Blandings Turtle, listed as threatened; the Frosted Elfin, listed as threatened; and the Karner blue butterfly, listed as endangered. One classification of forest was noted as unlisted, the Hemlock-northern hardwood forest. A copy of the letter from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation concerning the NY Natural Heritage Report is in Appendix B, “Correspondence.” Furthermore, the US Fish and Wildlife has also identified the presence of the Karner blue butterfly as an endangered species and the federally listed endangered Indiana bat may be present as well. See Appendix B, US Fish and Wildlife letter.

The primary objective of the WWPP is to protect the habitat of the endangered Karner blue butterfly as well as provide recreational and educational experiences. The WWPP

study area is situated on an area that was once the basin of a large glacial lake, evident by the very sandy soils and dunes. As such, this area presents geologic qualities different from the western part of the Town. These plants and trees include pitch pine, little bluestem grass, and wild blue lupine. The WWPP Study Area consists of public and private lands designed to manage and sustain the proper ecosystem of the Karner blue butterfly, and encourage the growth of wild blue lupine, an important food species for the Karner blue caterpillar. Blue lupine requires specific conditions to grow especially open field areas. The Nature Conservancy combined with town, state, county, and federal organizations, uses best science methods to restore and manage the Karner blue's habitat. Currently approximately 1,600 acres are under management to be preserved. The WWPP study area also includes regionally important wetland complexes that provide habitat for a suite of important reptile and amphibian species.



**Recommendations for
Habitat Protection:**

- 1. Identify areas of sensitive habitat on the Town's Geographical Information System for early avoidance of these features. This information would illustrate general locations of areas with favorable conditions for threatened or endangered species. Known locations of vernal pools should also be designated. This will require the Town to install ARC Reader software and apply the information as a data layer to the real property base layer. This system would enable habitat information to appear on individual parcels much like wetlands and steep slopes are presently shown.**
- 2. Prepare a conservation overlay map to cover sensitive habitat areas and develop appropriate and specific standards to mitigate potential environmental impacts.**

3.2.2 WATER RESOURCES

The most notable water resource in the Town of Wilton is the Snook Kill. The Snook Kill originates at Perry's Pond near Northern Pines Road, flows in a northeasterly direction through the Snook Kill runs northeast to the Town of Moreau where it outlets into the Hudson River. The terrain around the Snook Kill features deep ravines that have served as a natural barrier for the waterway. Several small streams flow into the Snook Kill, including the Little Snook Kill and Delegan Brook. Other open surface waters in the Town include Lake Elizabeth, located adjacent to Worth Road, and Loughberry Lake located near the southwestern border of the Town of Saratoga and City of Saratoga Springs. Several ponds and designated wetlands areas exist throughout the Town especially in the area east of Interstate 87. Approximately 2,910 acres in the Town of Wilton are comprised of wetlands, nearly 7.5 percent of the Town. Both federally listed and New York State wetlands exist, with many located along stream corridors and waterways. Refer to Figure 3-1, "Sensitive Environmental Areas," for locations of water resources in the Town.

Loughberry Lake is a critical resource since it service as the primary water supply and as a visual gateway feature for the City of Saratoga Springs along the Route 50 corridor. Although approximately two-thirds of Loughberry Lake is located in the Town of Wilton, Saratoga Springs owns the lands on the bottom of the lake as well as the entire shoreline and City property. The Town protects the lake by requiring a critical review of any development along the shoreline. It abides by the City of Saratoga Springs's Watershed Rules and Regulations, which do not permit recreational use of the lake or its shoreline. In the future, should the City change these requirements, there may be an opportunity to utilize portions of the buffer area or a part of the lake for swimming and other non-motorized recreational uses.

In order to protect the stream courses and waterways, the existing Town Zoning Code requires a buffer of non-disturbance of various widths depending on grade and measured from the center of the stream course or water body. This standard applies to

the Snook Kill, Little Snook Kill, Delegan Brook, Bog Meadow Brook, and the tributaries leading to Lake Elizabeth and Loughberry Lake, as well as the water bodies themselves.

Another water resource of ecological importance are vernal pools. A vernal pool is a confined basin with no outlet stream where water stands on average for several weeks, usually in the spring and early summer. During periods when water collects, these small, intermittent pools may serve as breeding and feeding sites for several amphibian species such as salamanders and frogs. To date, NYSDEC has identified one vernal pool in the Town. There may be others of equal importance, however, no survey of this resource has yet been conducted.

Vernal pools are difficult to identify during their drier seasons of the year, and are therefore difficult to protect. Because they may be visible only during the spring months, they are often not taken into consideration during the review and permitting process. However, the data relating to areas of terrain with 15 percent or greater slope reveals “pockets” of steep slopes throughout Wilton, especially in the southeast quadrant of the Town (see Figure 3-1). The presence of these pockets may be indicators of potential sites for vernal pools and may require further review during a subdivision or site plan review process. Land use decisions that permit the laying of roads, tree cutting, and building construction in these areas may have a significant adverse impact on the biological integrity of vernal pools.



**Recommendations for
Water Resources:**

1. To better protect the identified waterways in Wilton, it is recommended that the stream corridor buffer standard be adjusted to measure from the shoreline, rather than the center of the waterway. This will add a more defining measuring point and increase the amount of protected areas. Standards should focus on the quality of the stream corridor, steepness of the slope, conditions which may contribute to erosion, and habitat value. Buffers and lot clearing restrictions around areas with physical constraints may be warranted and should be established on a case-by-case basis.
2. On individual projects requiring stormwater detention structures, establish standards for their location. The highest priority should be the Town's need for appropriate access to maintain such facilities. The means for access and maintenance require that adequate land be available for these purposes. Fee ownership is the preferred method for adequate access and maintenance.
3. Formulate a set of standards for the timber harvesting and land clearing for lands outside stream buffers. Such standards should consider the special protection of ridgeline areas, large areas of forested lands, and important identified habitat corridors. Utilize resources such as the NYS Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality for guidance. Address the potential issue of clear cutting practices followed by subdivision application. Also, address stormwater runoff issues created from land clearing activities. Consider developing a forestry permit system. Amend the zoning ordinance to adopt silo-cultural and timber harvesting standards.

3.2.3 SCENIC VISTAS

The rural, pastoral nature of the northern half of Wilton is a characteristic that many residents attribute to the Town's high quality of life. Many of Wilton's corridors offer expansive views of the Town's natural resources. Wide views of the Town's open space, woodlands, and former farmlands can be seen along Route 9, Wilton-Gansevoort Road, and Dimmick Road. The Palmertown Range is visible to the west and views to the east display Vermont's Green Mountains. The rural nature of the Town is highly visible from these roads and differentiates it from the highly residential and commercial centers of the Town.

Future open space preservation initiatives ensure that development in the northern half of the Town is sensitive to the scenic and unique character of the area. Over time, poorly managed development can cause a negative impact on the rural character of the Town. Implementation of the conservation subdivision design process and attention to view shed protection during the site plan review will aid the Town in preserving locally important views.

According to the NYSDEC, aesthetic impact occurs when there is a detrimental effect on the perceived beauty of a place or structure. Significant negative impacts occur to the visual environment when the impact affects an area perceived to be beautiful or a noteworthy structure. However, due to the subjective nature of what is perceived as special, thresholds must be established to avoid reviewing projects in a manner that may be deemed arbitrary and capricious. The NYSDEC has developed a procedure for visual impact assessment primarily based on a visual assessment of an inventory of designated statewide significant resources including: property on or eligible to be on the National or State Register of Historic Places; State Parks; Urban Cultural Parks; NYS Forest Preserve; National Wildlife Refuges; National Natural Landmarks; the National Park System; Rivers designated as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational; a site, area, lake, reservoir, or highway designated or eligible for designation as scenic; a state or federally designated trail; Adirondack Park Scenic Vistas; State Nature and Historic Preserve Areas; Palisades Park; and Bond Act properties purchased as Exceptional Beauty or

Open Space . Since the Town of Wilton does not feature any of these resources, scenic resources should be identified if they have one or more of the following attributes: a rise in elevation providing a focal point of a vista or elements of a panoramic view; an open field that provides a unique and distinct landscape scenery that also displays the agricultural history of the Town; or a reservoir, pond, lake, or permanently running stream that provides an scenic view.



**Recommendations for
Scenic Resources:**

1. Require that all projects describe the potential impact on any locally significant visual resources that are identified in this document. During the site plan review procedure for review of commercial and industrial projects the Planning Board shall utilize best practices to lessen the visual impact. These practices shall include, but not be limited to screening, relocation on site, disguise, low profile, and lighting. The Zoning Board of Appeals shall utilize similar standards in the review of variances, particularly variances relating to signs.
2. Improved compliance with the Northway Corridor Overlay District is sought by the Town. The intent is to protect natural areas on either side of the Northway from development. A set of compliance guidelines should be compiled and imposed during subdivision and/or site plan review by the Planning

Board. These guidelines should include realistic enforcement and penalties with requirements for rehabilitation, reclamation, and restoration of said lands.



HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Wilton features over one hundred buildings that are still intact and were homes to some of the Town's early founders, as well as its residents during the 19th century.

According to "Saratoga County Communities: An Historic Perspective," the Town of Wilton was settled between the French and Indian War and Revolutionary War, when the area was known as Palmertown. Prior to European settlers, Indians farmed the land and hunted in the vast forests, especially along the western part of the Town, along the Palmertown Range. After the Revolutionary War, the families of Stiles, King, Phillip, Laing, Perry, Dimmick, Johnson and McGregor moved into the area, and many of their original homesteads are still intact



(see Appendix C, "List of Historic Resources"). Also, many of the small hamlets in the Town still feature the names of the founders, such as King's Station, Stiles Corners, Dimmicks Corners, Emerson's Corners, and Mt. McGregor. The Town of Wilton was founded in 1818, taken from a portion of the Town of Northumberland after it was realized that several small were hamlets needed to

form a government. The area where the Wilton-Gansevoort Road meets Ballard Road, and near the intersection of Parkhurst and Woodard Roads is the original settlement area of Palmertown. It also forms the original hamlet of Wilton and still features many of the original buildings.



From the original Indian settlements to modern times, the Town of Wilton has developed primarily around its travel corridors. The north-south passageway from Saratoga Springs to Glens Falls slowly began to develop and the Wilton Hamlet featured many businesses such as the Wilton hotel, stores, a blacksmith, wagon shop, Wilton

Academy, and several homes. The completion of the Adirondack Northway had a profound impact on the businesses along Route 9, and today commercial growth is centered on the two Northway exits within the Town, Exits 15 and 16.

Although many of the buildings have been identified (see Figure 3-2, “Historic Resources”) and are still intact, many other buildings and sites have been burned, torn down, or are in disrepair. Future consideration of the historic value of the remaining significant buildings and sites as catalogued by the Town Historian is recommended during development review. The table in Appendix C details the location, year built, and significance of each site in the Town’s history. Historic sites have been marked and identified in Figure 3-2.

Wilton recently enacted Zoning Provision 129-173 Historic Provisions. This new law states that in cases where the Town Historian has identified a building or site as a historically significant feature, the Town Historian be given a 30-day notice for the opportunity to review and catalogue the site for inventory purposes. This will ensure that historic sites and buildings are appropriately evaluated and photographed before a building permit is granted, and, if plausible, the building be preserved in some fashion, or portions of the building preserved for possible display by the Wilton Heritage Museum.



**Recommendations for
Historic Resources:**

The new 129-173 provision should be expanded to require that any plan will not alter the distinguishing qualities of the original building, structure or site as identified by the Town Historian.



3.4 AGRICULTURAL SPACES

Historically, rural, open space was the dominant land use in the Town of Wilton. Soil types do not provide for more than a few active farming areas. Small population centers existed in areas known as Gurn Spring, Wilton Hamlet, Travers Corners, Kings Station Dimmick Corners and Ballard Corners. However, population growth has significantly diminished the extent of open space. Only 17 parcels are identified as agricultural in the real property tax database. Of these parcels there are a total of four working farmsteads.

In total, agricultural lands or farms in the Town of Wilton equal 1,097 acres (5 percent of the total Town acreage). The agricultural and farms listed are comprised primarily of poultry farms, Christmas trees, hobby farms, farm raised meats, deer farms, and field crop areas. Agricultural and farm activities represent an important component to the economy of Saratoga County, and offer scenic farm landscapes and provide a sense of place that attracts people to the economy.



**Recommendation for
Agricultural Spaces:**

The remaining farms in Wilton are likely to face increased development pressure that could further eliminate the practice of farming. Existing farms are encouraged to take part in one of the agricultural protection programs in Saratoga County. Saratoga County offers a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program through the Cornell Cooperative Extension. The PDR program offers cash in exchange for the development rights of productive farmland. Although specific criteria must be met to qualify, the program offers an opportunity to preserve the use of the land as a farm, and maintain the agricultural tax assessment. Considerations under this program include agricultural soils evaluation, percent of the property as cropland, and location criteria including proximity to other easements, other active farmlands, agricultural districts, and scenic, historic or environmental qualities. Potential threats of conversion to non-farm use, and the chances of farm succession are also given

consideration. A copy of the program description and application can be found in Appendix D.



3.5 PRIORITIZATION OF SPACES

In order to bring the concept of open space preservation to reality, the motivations and reasons cited to date need to be organized into a logical and consistent system for evaluating and selecting opportunities as they arise. The Town Comprehensive Plan sets forth broad goals for growth management, open space preservation, and conservation of natural resources. As a means to effectuate these goals, the following system of prioritization will allow for Town officials and involved private entities to evaluate the attributes for potential spaces as they become available. This system should be arranged so that each individual parcel proposed for Town acquisition is evaluated utilizing one set of criteria.

The Town of Wilton Open Space preservation initiative is envisioned to be a system of natural, connected landscapes that fosters resource protection, biodiversity of plant and wildlife habitat, recreational use and provides for permanent retention of the rural and scenic aesthetic qualities of the community. A proposed set of criteria can be found in Appendix E, "Open Space Land Assessment Form."

To achieve this vision, the Town will need to implement a preservation strategy that focuses on four major components:

- *Set forth a system for prioritizing lands that meet the stated criteria for preservation protection; and*
- *Identify key parcels of land and corridors for consideration and prioritization; and*
- *Set forth realistic, alternative methods for securing desirable open space areas; and*
- *Establish a plan for stewardship and management of lands secured for open space preservation.*

The considerations for evaluating the importance of land for permanent preservation need to be diverse in order to adequately address the varying factors associated with the potential natural ecological and human ecological value of a given area.

Therefore, the following system of prioritization is divided among five (5) categories of considerations. These categories include physical composition, natural resources, locational and relational, historic value, management, and priority areas.

3.5.1 PHYSICAL COMPOSITION

The parcel should be of sufficient size and configuration to meaningfully advance the preservation of open space. The Town Comprehensive Plan sets an interim goal, until open space plan is developed, of preserving fifty percent (50 percent) open space through existing subdivision and zoning regulations. While the benefits associated with an interim target of 50 percent is certainly desirable, it is not clear whether permanent protection of that much property is necessary or sustainable. Furthermore, a number which is too high can appear unrealistic or too aggressive and can destabilize the cooperative environment that will be needed to initiate and continue long-term land protection in Wilton.

It is recommended that the Town preserve thirty-five percent (35 percent) of the Town's remaining vacant land and water as permanent open space. The 35 percent goal is a minimum level of protection that is intended to serve as a target for preservation strategies to follow.

The 35 percent goal is not a product of a scientific formula. Rather this level reflects a balance between two complementary considerations- the ecological importance of the land and the need to accommodate an expanding population of residents with reasonable and well-planned areas for development. The 35 percent goal is achievable. It is respectful of the political and economic realities associated with implementation measures to achieve this goal. Reaching this goal will be challenging as it will require more stringent land use planning, a new approach to land use regulation and more in-depth review of subdivision and development proposals coming through the Town review process.

The shape and placement of open space is equally as important as its overall area. Open space shape and size is often dictated by the shape of the wetland or the extent of a steep slope. However, the 35 percent goal, if implemented as the standard, is intended to be in addition to areas with environmental constraints. Therefore, careful consideration is needed as to how preserved land can maximize benefit and yield optimal long-term value to the environment and the community. Such consideration for placement and shape of lands to be preserved include, but is not limited to:

- Buffer between environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, wildlife habitats, unique landforms, etc. and areas proposed for disturbance and/or development.
- Separation between developed areas and/or highway corridors.
- Preservation of scenic views or unique natural settings.
- Planned or proposed pathways and recreation areas.

The decisions regarding the location and shape of areas targeted for preservation should be made on a case-by-case basis, as the setting and the surrounding uses will influence each site. Therefore, the resulting shapes and locations may vary between larger, consolidated shapes and linear shapes occurring through a narrower expanse.

The physical composition of a preserved area also involves the physical attributes relating to topography, the presence of hydrologic elements (i.e. wetlands, streams, ponds, lakes, etc.), riparian values and soil composition. These physical elements can play a key role in the environmental sensitivity and uniqueness of a desirable area for preservation. Therefore, wetlands, streams, ponds, lakes, shoreline areas, hydric soils, soils with hydric inclusions, flood zones, and slopes over 15 percent are core features that have proven environmental values and/or are not conducive to development. As such, these areas are a fundamental consideration when determining areas appropriate for preservation.

Within the context of these sensitive areas, the Town Comprehensive Plan mentions three specific areas within Wilton that are worthy of preservation. These are the Appalachian oak-pine forest, Pine Barrens vernal ponds, and Snook Kill Gorge. The oak

pine forest generally extends from I-87 (the Northway) east to the Town line and from Loudon Road in the south northward to Ballard Road. The Pine Barrens vernal ponds are largely found bounded by Scout Road, Cole Brook Road, Ruggles Road, Loudon Road, and Edie Road. This area encompasses and expands around the area identified as the WWPP. Much of the area remains undeveloped due to a lack of municipal water and sewer service,. Proper planning at this juncture can effectuate a balance of open space preservation and limited development.

3.5.2 NATURAL RESOURCES

The Wilton setting has varied and abundant natural resources. Placing emphasis on natural resources as a principal consideration for open space recognizes the wealth of biological resources throughout the Town of Wilton. Priorities associated with natural resources are based on ecological boundaries, blocks of productive habitat, habitat linkages and rare natural communities and species. Areas to be preserved should reflect ecosystem function, watershed and riparian value, quality of the resource, and the number and frequency of resource known to be present.

The natural resources to be considered as priority concerns include biological diversity or “biodiversity” and habitat protection.

Conserving areas that support multiple plant and animal species is the optimal method for preservation of biodiversity and prevention of the further decline of species in the Town. The preservation of biodiversity encompasses conservation efforts targeted to larger tracts of land as well as individual species. The Town is host to 51 species of mammals; 110 species of breeding birds; 18 species of reptiles; 21 species of amphibians; and numerous species of hardwoods and hemlocks. Of these resident species, the Karner blue butterfly is a state and federally-designated endangered species, the Frosted Elfin butterfly is a state-designated endangered species, and three others are state designated species of special concern- the Eastern Spadefoot toad, the Eastern Hognose snake, and the Spotted salamander. Land preservation and acquisition efforts should focus on conserving sites with multiple species and plant communities particularly those, which are protected or endangered.

3.5.3 LOCATIONAL AND RELATIONAL

In addition to benefits of habitat protection, open space as a fundamental attribute provides separation between structures, neighborhoods, and land uses. Therefore, the connectivity of open space is important to the continuing functions of open space as a means to protect habitat and provide spatial separation between developed areas. By connecting open space expanses, critical links can be maintained between habitats, trail systems can be logically extended, and the aesthetic impact of uninterrupted open space is improved.

The connectivity of open space areas can be achieved through proper planning and design review when development proposals are submitted for the Town's plan review process. Therefore, consideration of the location of a proposed area for open space protection and its relationship to adjoining open space areas or its potential for filling voids or providing links to other open space areas is a priority consideration. Awareness of connectivity and linkages will build an integrated and functional system of open spaces over time. These linear spaces and expanses can also provide areas for trail links in the town-wide pathways plan. Vital sections of a Town-wide trail network should be considered as development proposals are reviewed for individual parcels identified on the pathways plan.

Expansive and uninterrupted expanses of open space are often critical to sustaining wildlife habitat. Placing priority on the provision of connection and linkages between open space areas will aid in the preservation of surface water resources, food resources, and nesting areas, etc. that are fundamentally important to the protection of plant and wildlife species.

Lastly, preservation of the rural and aesthetic quality of the Town will be further advanced with the existence of continuous and uninterrupted open space areas.

3.5.4 HISTORIC VALUE

Open space in Wilton inherently has strong ties to the Town's heritage. As stated in the Town Comprehensive Plan, there are numerous historic sites in Wilton. Residents have expressed support for the preservation of the Town's historic resources. These sites are comprised of historic structures and places that have local, regional and national significance.

For the purpose of inclusion as priority consideration in the Town's subdivision and site plan review processes, the historic sites have been inventoried, located, and mapped.

3.5.5 MANAGEMENT

Much of the land area within the Town of Wilton is under a dedicated form of open space preservation both public and private (see Figure 3-3, "Existing Open Space Areas). The Town of Wilton, New York State, Saratoga County and the City of Saratoga Springs, share public ownership of these areas. NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Fishing Rights Easements along the Snook Kill provides further public access.

Private ownership includes lands of The Nature Conservancy as well as lands of various homeowner associations.

The final items for prioritization are management and operational considerations on lands dedicated to open space. These considerations focus on practical issues relating to ownership, maintenance, management, management cost, and special needs that may be associated with preservation of a site.

Depending on the physical and structural characteristics of a given site proposed for preservation, these are varying considerations, which will affect the feasibility of long-term, permanent preservation. Therefore, a system of management alternatives is needed to assure that appropriate measures are taken to properly preserve a site or area.

Specific considerations affecting the preservation from a management perspective are as follows:

- Ownership – publicly owned federal, state, county, or town; non-profit land trust; preservation group; homeowners' association; private developer.
- Expenses– insurance and liability; budgeting, annual costs, and revenue sources; experience and staff capacity with property and preservation management; public accessibility restricted, limited, or open; in house staff or contracted, etc.
- Maintenance – clean up and trash removal; habitat maintenance; facility maintenance, trails, restrooms, and bridges, etc. and structural, historic restoration and upkeep, painting, plumbing, electrical, etc.



**Recommendations for
Open Space Management:**

1. To facilitate a rational approach to understanding open space management, a comprehensive management strategy is recommended. The management strategy would inventory and catalogue each open space parcel in the real property tax mapping system for the Town, taking into consideration required investment, desired uses and activities for open space lands, the specific attributes and constraints of the open space areas existing in the Town, what management techniques are appropriate, what funding resources are available and what human resources are available to undertake day-to-day management of the parcels inventoried and catalogued.
2. Adopt the following process for determining whether the Town should accept open space parcels that are being offered for donation:

At the point of application for subdivision, an Open Space Evaluation Form shall be prepared for each parcel. This process will be utilized to make decisions on whether the lands qualify for consideration and should ultimately be accepted. The Town shall have the first choice for land donation throughout the Town. Should the Town reject a parcel offered for donation, The Nature Conservancy, New York State, or WWPP, some other entity will have the opportunity to take ownership. Open space lands outside the WWPP Study Area shall be considered for management by the Town. The Town shall develop a management plan that includes ongoing and sustained methods of funding for the long-term management of these open spaces. Each plan will identify the history, proposed uses, and the management objectives for individual parcels.

3. On lands within the WWPP Study Area, the WWPP Board of Directors shall be consulted regarding acceptance of open space parcels. The Town Board shall recommend a set of criteria for guiding the decisions for the future ownership and management of open space lands in the WWPP Study Area. Such criteria shall include that a parcel contribute to a public purpose, have habitat preservation value, and/or provide a vital trail link to a local, regional or statewide trail system. Management of lands in accord with these guidelines, unless otherwise determined by the Town Board, shall then be the responsibility of the owner.

3.5.6 PRIORITY AREAS

In consideration of the above factors, certain areas within the Town have been identified as priority areas for utilization of open space techniques. The areas are shown in Figure 3-1 and represent priority areas based on the presence of unique environmental (wetlands, steep slopes, habitat, hydric soils, etc.) and large expanses with opportunity for connectivity among spaces. In that regard, Figure 3-1 represents a tool for guidance as future development proposals are reviewed under the Town's site plan and subdivision review procedures.

There are several large tracts of vacant lands within the study area boundary of the WWPP. A map of the study area is depicted in Figure 4-1, "Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park Study Area." Within the vacant land category there are numerous parcels depicted in Figure 4-1 are representative of priority areas for open space preservation as they meet many of the criteria associated with physical composition, natural resources, and location and relationship to other open space areas.

3.6 METHODS FOR SPACE PRESERVATION

Methods for preserving open spaces can take many forms. The menu of methodologies include:

- Acquisition; and
- Management of Publicly-Owned Lands; and
- Development or Density Transfer; and
- Regulatory

The above list represents a general categorization of methods. Each of these general methods includes more specific methods for permanent, long-term land preservation. Critical to the evaluation for identifying preferred methods is consideration of practical resources that will work in the Town of Wilton. The management considerations listed above are fundamentally important considerations attempting to gauge practicality and workability of a successful preservation strategy.

3.6.1 ACQUISITION

There are a variety of approaches under New York State Law to acquire open space. Section 247 of General Municipal Law (GML) authorizes local governments to expend public funds to acquire interests or rights in real property to preserve open space. This section of the GML also provides that after acquisition, the valuation of open space areas for real estate taxation purposes will be limited by the restriction of the future use of the parcel to open space.

There are basically two forms of acquisition: fee simple and partial interests or rights by easement. An owner may own all the rights associated with a given parcel or some of them. A third option is leasing. These acquisition options are explained as follows:

A. Fee Simple

This form of acquisition involves the purchase of the fee title interest in a parcel of land.

Types of fee title acquisition include:

- Purchase at fair market value.
- “Bargain Sale.” This involves acquisition of real property by a conservation organization or a municipality below market value.
- Installment Sale. This involves sale of real property over a period of years. This method allows the seller to defer, and possibly reduce, the tax burden by spreading income from the sale over a number of years.
- Real property can be sold with an option that allows the seller continued use of the land during his or her lifetime. Income from the sale is received at the time of sale but actual land transfer occurs upon the death of the seller.

Preserving land through fee simple acquisition allows for a high degree of protection.

The principal drawbacks associated with this method are the expense of acquisition and ongoing management and maintenance.

B. Purchase of Rights Through Acquisition of Easements

The purchase of certain rights to a property through easements can be used to effectively preserve open space qualities of the parcel. Under this approach, the owner voluntarily offers rights to the land for sale. The current landowner retains ownership and a conservation easement is placed on the land and recorded in the deed. The buyer, usually a local unit of government, pays the difference between the value of the land as restricted and the value of the land under its “highest and best use,” which is generally residential or commercial, depending on the local zoning plan. The parcel remains on the tax rolls. The real property tax paid, therefore, contributes to the tax base, but at a reduced level. The restricted level of use on the parcel becomes a stabilizing effect on the future assessment on the parcel.

Leasing is another available option and generally, is one of the least expensive options. Leases may be short-term or long-term and can vary in terms of rights and preservation activities. However, leases provide the least control in terms of permanency of preservation activities.



**Recommendations for
Acquisition:**

Develop a set of criteria from which an educated determination can be made by the Town Board as to the open space value of the parcel based on the objectives as listed in this plan. Such criteria will be used for decisions relating to land acquisition, utilization of covenants or some other preservation measures.

Fee-simple ownership of property and ownership of easements are two potential methods for addressing the goal of long-term, effective preservation of open space.

Opportunities for preservation may occur through the administration of the conservation subdivision regulations. Therefore, an ongoing dialogue between the Planning Board and Town Board will be required as parcels are presented for open space preservation.

Consideration of fee simple purchase of lands or easements should be made on a case-by-case

basis. Acquisition by the Town is recommended when a determination has been made by the Town Board as to the parcel's usefulness and value to the overall open space preservation effort.

Once a determination has been made that the parcel under consideration meets the criteria for priority open space, a method for owning, managing and financing the acquisition must be established prior to the final decision on acquisition. Factors to consider include cost, method of funding, means of ownership, the cost of upkeep, the approach to maintenance, and the long-term source of funding to cover maintenance and management costs.

3.6.2 FINANCING METHODS

Closely associated with acquisition considerations are methods of financing to provide funding for purchase or leasing and ongoing management and maintenance of the land. The available alternatives are as follows:

A. Private Programs

These include funds raised from private donations or contributions to accomplish local preservation objectives. Community foundations and philanthropic organizations are also sources of private funding. In-kind service or donations of materials can also play an important role in meeting various needs for administrative, legal, surveying, and accounting services and building and maintenance materials.

B. Gifts and Donations

Gifted or donated property, materials and/or services are important components to the overall preservation effort. Gifts and donations of land, in fee or easement, can be made to qualified non-for-profit and local, state, or federal governments. Gifts of funds for acquisition of lands can also be made or targeted to specific acquisition proposals. This method could be effective in the purchase of parcels within the WWPP Study Area.

C. Federal Programs

The relevant programs through the federal government include:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- Pittman-Robertson Program
- Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
- Sport Fish Restoration Program
- Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21)
- Farm Security and Rural Investment Act including Wetland Reserve Programs, Forest Legacy Programs, Farmland Protection Program, Forest Stewardship Program, Forest Land Enhancement Program, Conservation Security Program,

Urban and Community Forestry Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, and National Flood Insurance Program.

D. State Programs

The principal means by which the state provides funding for preservation efforts is through the programs funded through the 1993 Environmental Protection Act. Through this act, the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) was established to meet pressing environmental needs including preservation of open space. The EPF is currently funded at approximately \$125 million on an annual basis. Other programs include the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The Town of Wilton has received funds in the past through these programs. In 1998, New York State provided \$50,000 for the WWPP. An additional \$18,000 has been allocated to the Preserve through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

E. Local Programs and Sources of Funds

Dedicated sources of funding for open space preservation at the local level are limited.

- The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors allocated \$500,000 in 2005 and again for 2006 and 2007 to fund a matching grant program to purchase development easements or a fee interest in agricultural lands or open space areas. In order to qualify, priority areas must meet the following considerations and criteria: have proximity to other easements, be under development pressure, be consistent with a local open space plan, and leverage a high value in terms of acres per dollar. County funds used for acquisition of lands subsequently purchased by the Town should be dedicated to a revolving account for future acquisitions.
- Sources at the local level include allocation taxes, fees, or bonding. State law permits local governments to create a tax on the transfer of real property to purchase open space lands or easements. However, this process involves passage of a local law requesting the State Legislature to adopt a bill authorizing the municipality to

impose the transfer tax (Municipal Home Rule Law §40). These programs usually require a mandatory referendum and establishment of a community preservation fund and advisory board to administer the fund.

- Local governments, pursuant to passage a local referendum, can bond for funds to acquire and preserve lands for open space. The bonding option was considered and put to a vote in June of 2001. The measure envisioned a three million dollar bond to fund open space acquisition efforts in Wilton, but was not successful. In consideration of this outcome it is unlikely that future bonding is a feasible option.
- Special districts. Municipalities can create special districts for funding local initiatives and capital improvements. This is most commonly done for municipal sewer and/or districts, lighting districts, etc. The advisory committee overseeing development of the OSPRR Plan has discussed the option of special districts encompassing the dedicated open space lots resulting the subdivision process. The tax imposed on these districts could be allocated to a reserve account dedicated to the management and maintenance of these open space lots.
- Recreation fees in lieu of land dedication. The Wilton Town Board has authorized an increase in recreation fees from new residential building lots approved in the Town. The funds are allocated to a dedicated account for capital improvements to the Town's recreation park facilities.
- Other sources of funding are derived from the Town of Wilton Recreation Department. According to the 2005 to 2007 Town Budget, Wilton has averaged nearly \$1,000,000 each year for capital improvements and administration of its recreation programs.



**Recommendations for
Financing:**

Consider the establishment of a revolving capital account within the Town budget dedicated to acquisition and proper management of priority open space areas. Ensure sufficient funds are budgeted for existing and continuing program management. Furthermore, it is recommended that multiple funding sources be prioritized, and pursued.

- First priority should be given to applying for available federal, County and State programs as listed in this strategic plan to match funds in the Town reserve account.**
- As a next priority private donations to fund preservation efforts would be possible.**
- Thirdly, the special district option is recommended for further consideration. This option will provide a long-term and consistent source of funding to the preservation effort.**

Further review would include analysis of the specific mechanisms needed to properly effectuate district formation and operation.



SECTION 4 RECREATION

4.1 GENERAL

In recent years the Town of Wilton has experienced significant growth primarily from families with young children. Consequently the Town has come under increased demand for quality recreational facilities and playing fields, particularly for youth athletics. The Town has responded accordingly by funding the development of a Master Plan for Gavin Park, the Town's only park facility. About the same time, the Christopher Dailey Foundation made a commitment in 2004 to build a new gymnasium in Gavin Park dedicated to the memory of a young Wilton athlete.

4.2 EXISTING FACILITIES

4.2.1 TOWN FACILITIES

Wilton presently has one primary park area, Gavin Park, comprised of approximately 30 acres plus a 17-acre area that is leased from the Saratoga Springs City School District, referred to as the “Annex.” Recently, the Town’s water and sewer authority purchased an additional parcel of approximately 21 acres located between the Northway and the Dorothy Nolan Elementary School. These lands could be used to upgrade water distribution to Gavin Park and other areas and may have potential for limited recreational use. Complementing these facilities are the facilities owned by the Saratoga Springs School District and located in the Town of Wilton. These include the Dorothy Nolan Elementary School, the Maple Avenue Middle School and the Ballard Road Elementary School in the South Glens Falls School District. The Town’s resources are augmented by the WWPP, which is comprised of an estimated 1,000 acres of lands owned by The Nature Conservancy, Saratoga County and New York State. These resources are described in more detail in this section.

Gavin Park has the following recreational components:

- Multi-Purpose Gymnasium (2)
- Meeting Room and Kitchen
- Picnic Pavilions (2)
- Walking Paths and Track
- Baseball Fields (5) – 2 dedicated
- Playground
- Basketball Courts (2) – expansion potential to 4
- Soccer/Multi-Use Fields (12)
- Tennis Courts (2) – expansion potential to 3
- Open Green Space

The annexed area, situated in the far back of Dorothy Nolan Elementary School, contains 9 full size soccer fields of various sizes that were developed by the Town from

2001 to 2007 and which are also used by the school district. These are included in the count above. The Town controls approximately 25 acres adjoining the School and during 2006 has prepared the site for multiple field-based recreation.

The Town completed the Gavin Park Master Plan in 2005 to review existing facilities and the resident's demands for future programs, equipment and facilities, the key improvements for Gavin Park are outlined below:

1. Improved Vehicular Circulation (completed)
 - Parking expanded by ±75 spaces.
 - Improved drop off loop.
 - 4-way intersection at Lewis Drive.
 - Added parking lot lighting.
 - Ceremonial plaza at terminus.

2. Maintenance Area
 - Consolidate vehicle/equipment storage.
 - Location convenient to offices/gyms.
 - Less visible to public.

3. Improved Play/Picnic Area
 - Consolidate picnic facilities.
 - Relocate existing pavilion.
 - Allow for a third pavilion.
 - Allow for possible splash park.
 - Extend perimeter fencing.
 - Improved drop off.

4. New Combination Field
 - Large soccer/multi-use field.
 - Baseball field with two infields.
 - Both fields could have lighting.
 - Bleachers for approximately 200 people.

- Concession stand/restrooms/storage.
 - Portable home run fencing.
 - 25 car gravel parking lot.
5. Soccer/Multi-use Fields (completed)
 - Formalize the field locations.
 - Relocate one baseball field.
 - Allow for fields of various sizes/uses.
 6. Improved Baseball/Softball Fields
 - Fields fully fenced.
 7. Court Expansion
 - Allow for 2 basketball courts.
 - Allow for 1 tennis court.
 - Allow for 25 car parking expansion.
 - Expanded gravel path.
 8. Improved Lighting and Perimeter Trail
 9. Annex Area - owned by the School District (completed)
 - Continue use as permitted by the District.
 - Possibly extend perimeter trail.

There is significant public benefit to be realized through this project. Increased population is putting additional pressure on the facility and the Gavin Park facility must expand and diversify its recreational opportunities to meet this growing demand.

Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park has the following recreational elements owned by various partners:

- New York State – The Old Gick Farm (135 acres) – 4 trail segments representing 1.6 miles of hiking trails.
- Town of Wilton (23 acres) – historic camp facilities.

- New York State (proposed) – Camp Saratoga off Scout Road (310 acres) – 7 trail loops representing 4.7 miles of hiking trails. Groomed cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on much of site.
- The Nature Conservancy – The Opdahl Farm (35 acres) – 0.73 miles of hiking trails. Groomed cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on site.
- Town of Wilton – Neilmann Parcel off Ruggles Road (140 acres) – 2 trail loops representing 2 miles of hiking trails.
- The Nature Conservancy – Fox parcel (89 acres) – 1.25 miles of hiking trails.
- Saratoga County – County forest lands (530 acres).

The WWPP represents a partnership between the Town of Wilton, The Nature Conservancy and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Its objectives are to protect open space resources, protect and restore the endangered Karner blue butterfly and provide opportunities for recreation and environmental education.

The WWPP itself is comprised of approximately 867 acres of land owned in fee simple by the Nature Conservancy, the Town of Wilton, or New York State. Table 4-1 illustrates the distribution of ownership for the parcels with public access. The WWPP Study Area is comprised of lands that by nature of their composition size and location to Karner blue butterfly habitat require protection from development. The centerpiece for WWPP is Camp Saratoga (Boy Scout camp). Camp Saratoga has been developed to date for passive recreational uses including hiking and fishing. The Town annually stocks Scout Pond.

**TABLE 4-1
PUBLIC ACCESS LANDS**

Ownership Entity	Total Acreage	Acreage in WWPP Study Area Only
Town	530	145
County	530	308
State	981	475
City	90	0
TNC	342	247
Others *	639	67
	3,112	1,242

Source: Saratoga County Real Property Tax Office

**Includes Saratoga Plan, schools, rod and gun club, but not lands part of the Northway overlay.*

The Town of Wilton is renovating a building it owns on Scout Road within the WWPP Study Area for the on-site management of WWPP. The “Town Annex” will be comprised of WWPP offices, intern training site, meetings, and environmental education center.

In the WWPP Study Area, the state is the largest landowner. County forests comprise a total of 308 acres. A total of 1,242 acres is devoted to open space in the WWPP Study Area. It is clear from Figure 4-1 that there are only a few additional parcels that may be appropriate for land purchase or donation within the study area.

4.2.2 SCHOOL DISTRICT RESOURCES

Dorothy Nolan Elementary School has the following recreational components:

- Playground Climbing Gyms (3)
- Swing sets (4)
- Baseball Backstop (1)
- Climbing Wall
- Tetherball (4)
- Trails (4) – link to Gavin Park
- Open Green Space

Maple Avenue Middle School has the following recreational components:

- Tennis courts (6)
- Soccer/multipurpose fields (4)
- Softball (1)
- Football/multipurpose (1)
- Baseball field (1)
- Nature trails through woods, pond, and creek.

Ballard Road Elementary School has the following recreational components:

- Playgrounds (2)
- Basketball court (1)
- Ball field (1)

4.2.3 COUNTY FORESTS

There are approximately 580 acres of County forestland in the WWPP Study Area. Two additional county forest areas exist in the Town, one just west of Wilton Mall, the other in the southeast corner of the Town. County forests are selectively harvested approximately every ten years and are accessed via existing logging roads. Individual sites have timber management plans that were developed in the mid 1980s. There is no written policy regarding recreational use of county forests, however, County Law Section 219, County Reforestation, sets some parameters in this regard. Recreational uses permitted include "kindred" recreational uses. Hunting is permitted, however snowmobiling, 4-wheel vehicles and overnight camping are not permitted. County forests that are part of the WWPP have established agreements with the Town of Wilton in 2003 that no pre-existing uses may be extinguished. The agreement calls for the development of a management plan for all county forest parcels in WWPP.

Wilton recently renewed a contract with Saratoga County to undertake habitat protection, plan and manage trail construction, and establish recreational uses on county forests. County forest parcels may be sold only through an act of the State Legislature. Present regulations call for DEC to have first refusal on any of these lands proposed for

divestiture. Numerous opportunities for trail connections are possible through county forest, particularly the parcel along Route 50 near the Wilton Mall.

4.2.4 OTHER OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

The cluster provision of the subdivision process has yielded numerous private, common areas of open space. The majority of these lands is held in common by residents and is managed by homeowner's associations. While these lands are not available to the public, they represent important open space in private ownership. It is important to provide trail linkages to these lands whenever possible.

Conservation Easements:

The Saratoga Plan has a number of conservation easements in the Town. The Orra Phelps Preserve is an eighteen-acre preserve with a trailhead off of Parkhurst Road. The Saratoga Plan also holds conservation easements to lands associated within the Mulberry Estates and Kings Mills open space subdivisions. These easements protect approximately twenty-five acres and ninety-seven acres respectively.

Northway Corridor Overlay District:

A 100-foot no-build buffer provides a continuous linear green buffer between all development and the Northway. This natural corridor not only protects neighborhoods from vehicle noise but also provides an attractive driving experience from the Northway. Presently, the regulation does not allow for any activity within the buffer area. The Town would like to amend this rule to permit recreational uses on Town-owned parcels adjacent to the Northway. Additionally, the Town will focus on improved enforcement of the buffer.



4.3 METHODOLOGIES FOR ESTABLISHING RECREATIONAL NEED

There are several methodologies in which to measure whether the Town has the capacity in its existing park and recreation facilities to meet the growing demand of new residents and businesses: standard-based, demand-based, or resource-based.

A combination of these approaches will more accurately assess community needs. The standard-based approach uses established standards to determine facilities and park areas needed to meet the needs of a given population size. The standards may be based on demand studies, the professional judgment of park and recreation planners and governmental agencies. The demand-based approach relies on information gathered from participation rates, surveys, and other information that indicates how much of the population wants certain types of facilities. The resource-based approach examines the assets and resources of the area for open space, parks and recreation facilities, and defines how these resources can be utilized.

Standards-based Approach:

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provide widely used industry standards for recreation. Until recently, NRPA recommended that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a total of 6.25 to 10.50 acres of developed open space for every 1,000 residents. This standard has stood virtually unchanged since 1981 and is believed by professionals to be significantly substandard under today's conditions. The minimum average standard has since been refined by NRPA with specific recommendations for different types and sizes of parks. See the table below for a summary of these standards, which advocate a total of 21.25 – 30.5 acres per thousand residents. NRPA stresses that park standards should be viewed as a guide that addresses minimum, not maximum, goals. The Urban Land Institute concurs with NRPA and recommends a general overall standard of 25.5 acres of parkland per thousand residents.

NRPA shifted its traditional needs assessment approach in 1995, now advocating that municipalities use an individualized "level of service" or "systems" approach. In 1995 NRPA guidelines made it the community's responsibility to determine how they want to

develop their parks and suggested that communities shift from the application of a blind national standard to an assessment of real time demand in the context of the local community. This view takes into consideration the popular concept of looking at parks and recreation land as an integrated system. This approach is a grassroots process where residents and recreation advocates formulate minimum acreage and development criteria for park and recreation resources and apply locally identified level of service guidelines.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) derives much of their recommendations for recreation facility design guidelines from NRPA; therefore the Town is consistent with this planning document.

Demand-based Approach:

The demand-based approach utilizes the systems methodology, which seeks to achieve more stakeholder involvement. This offers a custom approach to park planning that places a greater emphasis on cultural resource planning and the addition of more green space for aesthetic balance and the good health and well being of residential and corporate citizens. This approach establishes a set of individualized standards for the community. An example of this approach is the improvements recommended through the Gavin Park Master Plan Update, which integrated the needs and desires of the numerous participating sports interest groups.

Resource-based Approach:

The resource-based approach identifies parklands and open space for their resource value. Lands that are valuable for preservation of natural resources or that would serve a particular recreational purpose for the community are identified through this process. A perfect example of this type of approach is the WWPP, which diligently protects the habitat of the Karner blue butterfly while providing a network of trails for public use.

4.4 RECREATIONAL ANALYSIS

Wilton presently has one primary multi-purpose park area (Gavin Park) comprised of 47 acres. The Town's resources are augmented by WWPP, which is comprised of an estimated 620 acres of lands utilized for trails. Together these two resources provide a total 667 acres of parkland to residents. On a purely demographic view it would appear that Wilton presently has a generous surplus of over 600 acres of open space thanks to the development of WWPP. The Town, however, has deficient acreage in the small community park and large community park categories. Natural recreation standards recommend that a town the size of Wilton should have approximately 75 acres for a large park, however, Wilton currently has only 55 acres. Standards also call for the Town having one or more smaller parks totaling roughly 30 acres. There are presently no parks in this category; however, the potential exists for the additional acreage with land conveyed from conservation subdivisions particularly in the north end of Wilton. This is important since, in terms of geography, there are no parklands in this region yet there is substantial growth anticipated in the near future. Table 4-2, "Projected Recreation and Open Space Needs," illustrates the location of some of these opportunities. These opportunities are listed in Section 4.2.1. In addition, the original Wilton State Development Center will provide an important trail link between town-owned lands and state-owned lands.

According to population estimates developed by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, the population will increase by an additional 3,000 by 2010 and to 9,000 by 2020. These projections may be low. Based on building permits for new units over the past five years, the Town is increasing residential units at the average rate of 210 per year. The 2000 Census reports the average Wilton household at 2.91 persons per unit. Considering these numbers, the Town is gaining approximately 611 new residents every year. Projecting that out to the year 2010 results in an increase of 6,110 residents by 2010. This represents an increase of 40 percent rather than the 19 percent increase projected by CDRPC. Should this projection become the reality, the Town could be facing a deficit of over 100 acres of parklands by 2010. The open space lands at WWPP do not make up for this deficit since they are dedicated to passive recreational use. The

Town will need to continually plan and dedicate new lands for active recreational use for its residents.

As previously mentioned, NRPA has moved away from the simplified method of assigning acreage to an assigned number of people. The favored methodology is a more complicated view that produces a customized recreation plan anticipating growth and new demands for recreation. It combines some standardized planning with more subjective input from the public and professional analysis. It also allows and encourages the Town to distribute acreage into park classifications dependent on local needs and regional demand. Under this scenario, the Town would elect to increase its local standard for recreation and open space needs.

**TABLE 4-2
PROJECTED RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS**

Types of Recreation	Park Name/Size	Recreation Standards	2005 pop (15,000)*	2010 pop (18,000)	2020 pop (24,000)
Areas	Wilton Wildlife Preserve 620 a	No Industry Standards	-	-	-
Large Community Parks	Gavin Park 55 acres	5 Acres Per 1,000 Population	75 (-28)	90 (-43)	120 (-73)
Small Community Parks	None	2 Acres Per 1,000 Population	30 (-30)	36 (-36)	48 (-48)
Trails	3 WWPP 1 Town	1 System per Town	1	1	1
Total Acres Required Deficit/ Surplus in Acres**			105 (-58)	126 (-129)	168 (-121)

Estimated Population – Actual 2000 Population=12,541 Census

***Numbers may not match due to rounding*

NRPA Standards: National Recreation and Parks Association.



4.5 FUNDING RECREATION

Wilton funds much of the capital costs and maintenance related to recreation facilities through the imposing of recreational fees. These fees are presently collected at \$750 per lot or unit. The Town collected approximately \$ 514,250 in fees from 2005-2007. Other funding for recreation is privately donated. Recreational improvements for many of the future expansion and enhancement of facilities at Gavin Park have been applied for through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation.

4.6 IMPLEMENTATION

The community is already implementing many improvements at Gavin Park. A \$100,000 grant awarded to the Town from NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic preservation and matched with Town funds will begin implementation of planned improvements. An award for this grant will make possible the construction of all Phase I Gavin Park Master Plan elements, (the Town has negotiated for the annexation of additional property from the Dorothy Nolan Elementary School and new fields have been built that will benefit both the School and Town).

The Town of Wilton is continually exploring ways of incorporating new parklands (at little or no direct cost to the residents). It is anticipated that some of the new lands devoted to public parklands will occur through negotiating with private developers. Future conservation design subdivisions and Planned Development District's will all have open space components that will lend themselves to the development of public elements such as trails and trail connections, playgrounds for common use, and sports fields. A priority recommendation is the development of a set of forms, one of which can be used to inventory existing open space parcels for their recreation and environmental education potential, and the other to review potential open space lands using a fair and equal set of criteria.



**Recommendations for
Recreation:**

1. The Town is presently expanding Gavin Park’s recreational facilities to address the Town’s growing recreational needs. The project is developed into three priority construction frames. The first priority includes the construction of “minor” and “major” baseball/softball fields and a handicap accessible playground. Because of immediate need, the fields are under construction. The second priority is for a new picnic pavilion, and perimeter fencing. The third priority is for a combination field complex including baseball and soccer field, and the relocation of the maintenance center.
2. A new contract with the Dorothy Nolan School for additional land recently annexed to Gavin Park for the shared use of all residents was approved. Develop a master plan for the site that includes new playing fields and satellite parking which is under construction.
3. Incorporate guidelines for the provision of recreation land and facilities within future major developments into the subdivision regulations. Consider requiring minimum recreation facility standards for active and passive recreation related to the size of individual development projects.
4. A long-range plan for outdoor recreational uses at the Camp Saratoga property, which permits a compatible but diverse set of activities, is being reviewed by the Town



SECTION 5 PATHWAYS

5.1 GENERAL

An important component of making an Open Space and Recreation Plan successful is to establish pathways connecting open space, parks, and recreational areas. One of the priority recommendations of the Town's Comprehensive Plan is to develop an open space and trails plan.

The pathway system envisions a town-wide series of paths and trails to link open space areas, residential areas, points of interest, service providers, and commercial areas. The pathway system will provide for recreational use as well as a practical means for the day-to-day movement of people in fulfillment of their needs for goods and services. The strategy relies on a long-term, phased approach to piecing the links together through timely consideration during the development review process and optimal use of relevant state and federal transportation and funding programs. When complete, the Town's recreation and open space areas will have meaningful connections to residential and commercial areas via multiple and alternative transportation routes affording access and movement for pedestrians and bicyclists.

There are many benefits to be gained from the development of pathways and trail systems throughout the Town. Bicycling, walking, and other non-motorized means of transportation are healthy, non-polluting and energy conserving forms of transportation, recreation, and physical fitness, and they do not require costly infrastructure to support.

Pathways and trail systems facilitate use of alternative transportation, such as walking and biking. Encouraging alternative transportation use improves a community's overall

transportation system by reducing the use of energy, reducing automobile traffic and congestion. In addition, roadway improvements to accommodate bikes, such as the addition of paved shoulders, have been shown to reduce the frequency of certain types of motor vehicle accidents.

“Pathways” can be a combination of trails and linear parklands, on-road paths, sidewalks and subdivision walkways. Natural corridors and systems, such as stream banks, can also be used to develop pathways. Greenways along rail lines, public rights-of-way, power easements, and waterways produce educational, environmental, aesthetic and recreational benefits.

The Town of Wilton continues to be in a “growth” mode. Now is an appropriate time to incorporate pathways and trail systems into future development. Traffic congestion is a growing concern for residents of the Town (see the *2004 Town Comprehensive Plan*). It is exacerbated in areas with limited route choice, such as in the Exit 15 vicinity.

Development increases the number of vehicles on the roadways, as well as the number of conflicts (curb cuts, intersections) along arterial and collector roads that result in congestion. Vehicle-oriented transportation results in increased traffic, noise, air pollution, water pollution, and health problems. Pathways, trails, and links are needed to encourage people to use alternative methods of transportation. Potential locations for pathways and links to open space and recreation areas need to be identified.

Opportunities for constructing pathways between new and existing developments should be discussed during site planning stages. Town officials have already made a start. In 1998, they adopted a *Multi-Use Trail System Master Plan* (“1998 Trail Plan”) to be used as guidance for pathway establishment. That plan was reviewed and certain elements have been incorporated into this OSRPP. Some changes to that plan have been incorporated into this document, based on input from Town representatives, such as the trail types/categories.

Elements of the 1998 Trail Plan Include:

- Inventory and Analysis – of land use data including location of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural areas, open space, utility corridors, historic and cultural resources, recreation areas, and existing circulation systems.

- Goals and Objectives – of the trail system.
- Participation – of the Town officials, businesses, organizations, and citizens.
- Description of Opportunities and Constraints – such as crossings over major transportation routes like the Northway and railroad tracks.
- Preparation of Multi-Use Trail System Master Plan – the purpose of the Plan is to locate types of trails, trailheads, parking areas, and signage. Creating a system involves the development of connections that will link existing trails and potential corridors into the overall network.
- Implementation of an action plan that defines steps to be taken to make the pathways network a reality.

Additionally, under the Town's recently adopted rezoning and design standards for hamlets, some property owners may be required to provide access to any planned future adjacent multi-use trails.



5.2 PRIORITY PATHWAYS

5.2.1 USERS

In order to determine where pathways are most necessary and will be most heavily used, it is important to determine pathway and trail system users. Types of users include: bicyclists, pedestrians, runners, hikers, cross-country skiers, and equestrians.

5.2.2 DESTINATIONS

When considering pathways and trail locations, it is important to consider the destination interests of all users. Do common “user groups” such as residents, students, and visitors, have common recreational, utilitarian, or cultural destinations? Identifying destination types can provide a basis for further establishing where pathways should be built or expanded.

For instance, residential users are most likely recreational users, utilizing pathways and trail systems to access parks and open spaces. Therefore, it is important to identify the ways in which open spaces currently link to other open spaces and recreational areas, and to plan for pathways that provide additional connections. Some residents may also follow the pathway system to bike or walk to work or commercial and shopping areas. Over time, the new hamlet areas will develop into small commercial hubs that will become destinations in their own right.

Students are likely to use the pathways and trails systems to get to school, to ball fields and recreation areas, and to easily access other neighborhoods where friends may live, as well as to access commercial areas for shopping or part-time employment.

Visitors are most likely to use pathways and trail systems to access open space and recreational areas, to observe wildlife, natural areas, and scenic locations, to learn about local history or culture, or simply to exercise.

5.2.3 TRAIL TYPES

Refer to the Figure 5-1, “Pathways Plan,” for types and locations of existing and proposed pathways and trails.

The following types of trails are under consideration for the Wilton pathways and multi-use trail system. They are listed here for illustrative purposes, and do not reflect any formal classification system.¹

It should also be noted that the Town repaves approximately 5-6 miles of roadways per year. Possible improvements to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, such as adding paved shoulders, are always considered when planning for repaving.

On-road “Signed” Bicycle Route:

Located in higher use travel corridors, these routes are typically 4-6 feet wide, on-street, right-of-way lanes designated for the use of bicycles. A painted line on the roadway pavement on each side of the street and precautionary signs mark the routes for motorists, and designated and marked crossings. These bike paths are best suited for streets that have a minimum width of 32 feet, with each traffic lane measuring at least 12 feet. An example of an existing bicycle path of this type is the NYS Route 9 designated bike route.

¹ For a formal classification system, see the New York State Highway Design Manual, Chapter 18, *Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicyclists* at www.dot.state.ny.us/cmb/consult/hdmfiles/chapt_18.pdf for official classifications and design standards based on American Assoc. of State & Highway Transportation Officials “Green Book” (1999).



Route 9, NYS Bike Route

On-road, Shared Route - Some Improvements (i.e., paved shoulder):

These are local roads used by the biking and walking public, but that are not officially “designated” or improved as bike paths. These roads usually do not have designated, signed or painted bike lanes, but do have wide, paved shoulders. In some localized areas, they may be signed as bike routes. An example of a pathway of this type in the Town of Wilton is Ballard Road, east of Route 9 and Northern Pines Road.



Ballard Road, east of Northern Pines Road

On-road, Shared Route - No Improvements:

These are local roads historically used by the biking and walking public, but are not officially designated or improved as pathways. They become pathways because they provide natural corridors or connections, have low traffic volume, or are aesthetically pleasing. Examples of this type of pathway in the Town of Wilton are Gailor Road and Ruggles Road.



Gailor Road

Off-road Multiple Use Trails:

Ideally, the development of the multi-use trail system will eventually include many different types of trails to accommodate a variety of users, some of which are compatible with others, and some of which are not. These trails include footpaths, nature trails, bike paths, equestrian trails, cross-country ski trails, and, possibly, snowmobile trails. Many of these trails can be designed to be accessible to people with physical challenges. Multi-use trails will be developed within designated recreational areas such as the WWPP, or can be developed as connecting pathways between neighborhoods or destinations. Connecting off-road pathways or trails are completely separated from roads, and are usually located on publicly owned land such as parks, school sites, or along natural corridors (such as streams), abandoned railroad corridors, or utility easements. Examples of off-road, multi-use trails include the trails within the WWPP Study Area.

Types of multi-use trails include the following:

- Footpaths/Hiking Trails/Nature Trails – Pedestrians are generally the largest group of users and can use most of the trails designed for other users. This group includes walkers, hikers, joggers, bird-watchers, and nature enthusiasts. A trail width of 4-8 feet is required, with a vertical clearance of 8 feet. The trail surface can be packed gravel, stone dust, asphalt grindings, wood chips, or bare earth (provided that proper drainage exists).
- Bicycle Trails – Bike trails should be a hard surface, such as bituminous paving or compacted stone dust. The trail should be 10 feet wide and have a vertical clearance of 8 feet. Bike racks should be installed at the trailhead areas.
- Equestrian Trails – There are a significant number of equestrian enthusiasts within the Town who desire riding trails. Generally, horses need a soft surface (natural ground, turf, stone dust) free of large rocks and stumps. The trail width should be 10-12 feet, with 12 feet of vertical clearance. Since some horses frighten easily, the trail should be signed to give horses the right-of-way. Trail facilities should include adequate trailhead parking areas (large enough to park and maneuver horse trailers); water crossings reinforced with rock and gravel rather than bridges; trail facilities with access to water; and, hitching posts at trailheads.
- Cross-Country Ski Trails – Ski trails can vary in width, terrain, and degree of grooming required. Ski trails can be nothing more than the existing trails, which are used for pedestrians or equestrians and are signed for ski trail use in the winter months. Such trails can be un-groomed with trails “broken” by skiers, or can have a parallel track set. The trail would need to be 10 feet wide, with a vertical clearance of 12 feet. A varying terrain is desirable. Other trails to be groomed with surface rolled for skating lanes and track set for classic technique. The WWPP is providing number of trails for such skiing. Trails can be rated for beginner, intermediate, or expert.



Wilton Wildlife Park & Preserve Trail, off of Scout Road

5.2.4 RECOMMENDED TRAIL LOCATIONS

To see the locations of existing and proposed pathways and trails, please refer to Figure 5-1.

The identification of locations for open space conservation and recreational use will partially dictate pathway locations. Commercial and employment centers will also influence pathway locations, in order to encourage the use of alternative transportation throughout the Town.

North-South Corridors:

- US Route 9- is a New York State designated bicycle trail. It runs north and south through the length of the Town. The Route 9 bicycle trail traverses the Hudson and Champlain Valleys, running from New York City north to the Canadian border.
- Parkhurst Road- Existing On-road, no improvements. Parkhurst Road provides access to the Orra Phelps Preserve. This 18-acre preserve of open space is a plant and animal sanctuary and contains numerous walking trails.
- Northern Pines Road- Existing On-road, no improvements. Northern Pines carries a large amount of traffic from US Route 9 to McGregor Country Club, Traver Road, and to the central, most intensely developed residential area in Town. The shoulder is in good condition. Painted lines to delineate the bikeway and signage need to be

added. Signage should include cautionary signs alerting motorists to the bikeway, as Northern Pines Road is a very busy commuter road.

- Ernst Road- Existing On-road, no improvements.
- Ruggles to Ballard- Existing On-road, no improvement.
- A North-South off-road, multi-use trail was originally recommended along the National Grid (formerly Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation) gas easement parallel to US Route 9 (from Smith Bridge Road to Ernst Road). The proposed county water line will generally follow this route. An off-road multi-use trail along the route of the proposed county water line is recommended.
- A North-South trail off-road trail could also be developed along the site of the former Mt McGregor Railroad bed, parallel to Route 9, that once ran to Mt. McGregor from Saratoga Springs. These off-road trails would strengthen the north-south corridor, provide some off-road relief, and provide safety by separating bicyclists and pedestrians from automobile traffic.

East-West Routes:

Northway crossings provide the biggest obstacles for developing east-west pathways through Wilton. The following east-west routes provide Northway crossings.

- Jones Road- Existing On-road, some improvements needed. Jones Road provides a pathway connection between the residential areas in the central section of the Town to the WWPP. Sections of the road have been widened and paved by 3 feet on each side to accommodate bicyclists.
- Ballard Road- Existing, On-road, paved shoulder. The intersection of Ballard Road with Traver and North Roads is becoming increasingly difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross, due to rapid development at Northway Exit 16. However, Ballard Road provides a connection to Route 9, Ace Hardware, Ballard Road Elementary School, and the Target distribution center. Improvements to increase safety would be necessary for Ballard Road to be considered a desirable east-west crossing.
- Wilton Gansevoort Road- Existing, On-road, no improvements. This road provides an east-west pathway through the northern section of the Town.

Southern Area:

- Connections to Saratoga Springs are currently made via US Route 9 and Jones Road. Loughberry Lake Road provides a pleasant route for bicyclists, and connects to Saratoga Springs as well. An additional connection to Saratoga's North Broadway is possible, passing behind the Maple Avenue Middle School, and through lands owned by Skidmore College.
- Jones Road is an important route from NY Route 50 to major residential areas, Gavin Park, and Dorothy Nolan Elementary School. Currently, some sections of Jones Road have been upgraded with safer, widened shoulders, and pavement markings. All sections should be upgraded.
- A former railroad right-of-way exists parallel to NY Route 50, which may provide an opportunity for a multi-use trail linking commercial development at Exit 15. A trail would also provide a green strip through an area that will most likely continue to be developed commercially. Acquisition of the right-of-way should be explored.
- Old Gick Road also provides an opportunity to link to commercial development. A connection would also need to be made across private, undeveloped lands to connect Jones Road to the system.

Recreational Bicycle Routes:

The Multi-Use Trail System Master Plan recommends a number of routes to be designated as bicycle pathways. These "loops" include:

- Parkhurst Road to Ballard Road to Traver Road, then to Northern Pines, Route 9, and back to Parkhurst.
- Northern Pines Road to Travers Road, to either Ballard or Scout Road, and back to Northern Pines.
- Ballard Road to Ruggles Road to Loudon and Edie Roads. Open space and preserve lands can be accessed from Edie and Ruggles Roads. Route 50, northeast of Ingersoll Road, should possibly be included in this loop, since it provides access to open space lands as well.

Multi-use Recreational Trails:

Opportunities to provide additional multi-use recreational trail systems on lands of the WWPP Study Area, and also within Saratoga County forestlands should be explored. Some trails already exist in these areas and some need improvements (for example, although some limited trails currently exist in the Wilton Wildlife Preserve, there is no coordinated access. Public awareness, signage, and accessibility need to be improved). For a map of trails within the WWPP Study Area, see Figure 4-1.

Currently, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation is developing the Palmertown Ridge Trail, a multi-use trail that will connect Moreau Lake State Park with Saratoga Spa State Park. The trail will include existing trails with Moreau Lake State Park- the Western Ridge Trail and the Ridge Run Trail. The completed Palmertown Ridge Trail will not permit motorized uses.

Multi-use recreational trails are also recommended along the route of the proposed Saratoga County water line, and along the former Mt. McGregor railroad bed.



Possible area for a multi-use recreational trail, off Ballard Road



**Recommendations for
Pathways:**

1. Develop pathways to accommodate many types of uses, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.
2. Develop a variety of types of trails, such as on-road bike paths, and off-road multi-use trails.
3. Develop pathways to a variety of destinations, such as recreational areas and shopping areas.
4. Develop trails throughout the Town; provide access and links to as many areas as possible.



5.3 METHODS FOR PATHWAY ENHANCEMENT

5.3.1 LINKAGE AND CONNECTIVITY

Linkages are connections to other trail systems, key transportation routes, and origins and destinations within or adjacent to the Town. Both natural and manmade linear features, such as stream corridors, abandoned rail lines, or on-road bike paths, can be used to connect open spaces (see Figure 5-1, “Pathways Plan”). Opportunities to provide links and connections to open spaces, other trail systems, between new and existing development, and important locations throughout the Town need to be identified.

Implementation of trail projects should be coordinated with State, County, and other area trail and pathway improvements in order to improve linkages and connectivity.

Opportunities to link Town pathways to neighboring communities, such as Saratoga Springs, and nearby destinations, such as Moreau Lake State Park should be identified, and discussion among Wilton officials and the officials of adjacent municipalities should be encouraged to facilitate development of links to other local trail systems.

To the north, links should be explored to connect Town pathways to Moreau Lake State Park and historical resources, such as Grant’s Cottage on Mt. McGregor. The State Park can be accessed from Wilton by way of the Route 9 NYS Bike Route, and by Old Saratoga Road. The Palmertown Ridge Trail, discussed in Section 6.2.4 will connect Moreau Lake State Park with Saratoga Spa State Park, and provide an important open space and recreational link.

To the south, links should be explored to connect Town pathways to areas of interest within the City of Saratoga Springs. For example, Ruggles Road and Ingersoll Road can be used to connect to the Bog Meadow Trail off of Route 29.

The trails of Skidmore Woods can be accessed from Wilton through the lands of the Maple Avenue Middle School. From Skidmore lands, downtown Saratoga is easily reached along North Broadway.

East and west links should also be encouraged to connect Town pathways to trails in Northumberland and Greenfield.

5.3.2 SITE PLAN REVIEW INTEGRATION

New development or redevelopment should be evaluated (during site plan approval) in terms of accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists and connection to destinations, service providers, private property crossings, and the need for acquisition or the need for agreements for easements or rights of crossing. For example, under the Town's recently adopted rezoning and design standards for hamlets, some property owners may be required to provide access to any planned future adjacent multi-use trails.

5.3.3 GREENWAYS

Wherever possible, "greenways" should be encouraged. A greenway is a linear open space, such as a path or trail, which links parks and communities around the Town, providing public access to parks, green spaces, preserves, and other destinations. A possible location for a greenway is along the Snook Kill, a New York State designated fishing stream.



**Recommendations for
Pathways Enhancement:**

- 1. Provide pathways linkages and connectivity.**
- 2. Integrate pathway consideration into site plan review process.**
- 3. Use a variety of tools, incentives, and regulations to acquire land for pathways and trails and to provide greater connectivity throughout the Town.**
- 4. Encourage use of “greenways” wherever possible.**



5.4 IMPLEMENTATION

Establishing a successful pathways and trail system should consist of integrating the *Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan* and the *1998 Multi-Use Trail System Master Plan* with a Comprehensive Transportation Plan, in order to integrate all forms of transportation and to demonstrate a strong commitment to system implementation.

The following is an outline of action items for trail system implementation:

5.4.1 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

- Consider and prioritize paving projects to improve on-road pathways.
- Consider and prioritize the creation of off-road multi-use trails.
- The Town Board will assist the Town Recreation Commission in maintaining and operating the trail system.
- Notify NYSDOT of the Town's need to incorporate pedestrian and guide paths in the re-design of Exit 16 (Ballard Road) over the Northway.
- Develop a bicycle and pedestrian access plan along the Route 50 commercial corridor.
- Negotiate access agreements with property owners at key connectivity points, and to trail destinations such open space, park, and recreation lands, and, eventually to destinations such as schools and shopping and employment centers.
- Negotiate rights to use county forestlands for the development of special purpose trail such as cross-country skiing.
- Develop a set of use guidelines and/or regulations for the trail system.
- Conduct a public outreach and education program to advise Town residents on the use of the trail system and safety regulations.
- Develop brochures and trail maps, which illustrate the extent of the trail system, rules and regulations, and the location of different types of trail and attractions.

- Negotiate assistance from Mt McGregor Correctional Facility or from volunteer and conservation groups for labor to clear brush and perform other trail development tasks.
- Apply for funding to construct trail segments from sources such New York State and the federal government.

5.4.2 LONG-TERM ACTIONS

- Establish an annual operating budget for long-term maintenance of the trail system.
- Work with private developers to include trail improvements and connections to the system in future subdivision and development plans.
- Petition for state or federal funding to implement the more costly trail system segments such as trail improvements to state roadways, bridges, and pedestrian crossings.
- Coordinate trail improvements with recommendations in the Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan.

5.4.3 MAINTENANCE

The Town must adopt a pathway and trail management strategy for off-road multi-use trails. A trail use ordinance can help the trail managing agency protect the trails. The ordinance should contain the rules and regulations of the trail system and should be posted at trailheads.

Prior to trail construction, a comprehensive budget and management plan should be put in place. A simple but necessary consideration is: If is built, it must be maintained. Maintenance costs include surface repair, drainage maintenance, signage, trailhead parking maintenance, weed control, and the costs of trail maps and promotional material.

The top priority for the trail management agency is trail safety. Unsafe situations, caused by conflicting uses, poor design, or lack of maintenance must be avoided. A second priority is protection of natural resources adjacent to trail areas. This can be

reinforced through proper design, signage, and an awareness program using interpretive/educational signage and brochures. Third, a high quality experience should be provided for the trail user. If all of the different types of users can be accommodated, accessible trails are provided, and educational and interpretive elements are provided within the trail system, the priority will be achieved.

For routine maintenance practices such as rubbish removal and brush clearing, a volunteer effort can be organized. Volunteers maintain over half of the trails in New York State. For example, 4-H clubs and Scouts are among organizations that may be able to provide maintenance assistance. Refer to the 1998 *Multi-Use Trail System Master Plan*, which provides detailed guidance regarding trail maintenance.

5.4.4 FUNDING

Several funding programs are applicable to the development of the Wilton Multi-Use Trail System. Programs and sources include:

- Transportation Equity Act (TEA-3): Federal transportation funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF): Federal funding for conservation projects.
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP): Federal funds administered by the Federal Highway Administration for recreational trail projects.
- Syms Act- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation.
- NYS Environmental Protection Fund- Provides annual funding for acquisition, development, and improvement of parks.



**Recommendations for
Pathways Implementation:**

- 1. Implement immediate, short-term, and long-term actions.**
- 2. Adopt a trail maintenance strategy.**
- 3. Develop funding mechanisms to offset costs of pathways construction and maintenance.**
- 4. Include part or all of these costs as ongoing budget items.**

REFERENCES

Calhoun, A.J.K. & M.W. Klemens. 2002.

Best Development Practices: Conserving Pool-Breeding Amphibians in Residential and Commercial Development in the Northeastern United States; MCA Technical Paper No. 5, Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, New York.

Daniels, K.H. and Sampson, D.S. 2005. Open Space for Tomorrow: A Capital District Sprawl and Open Space Action Strategy. Open Space Institute.

Edwards and Kelcey, January 2006, Town of Wilton Traffic Planning Study Update.

NYSDEC. November 2005. Draft New York State Open Space Conservation Plan.

The LA Group, November 1998, Town of Wilton Multi-use Trail System Master Plan.

Town of Wilton Open Space Task Force, April 2001, Wilton Wildlife and Open Space Plan.

Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan, 2004.

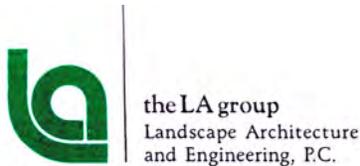
Zoning, Chapter 129, Town of Wilton, 2004.

APPENDIX A

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION DESIGN ORDINANCE

TOWN OF WILTON
CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION DESIGN LAW

ADOPTED OCTOBER 6, 2005
(Revised by Town Board November 10th, 2005 & 3/2/06)



CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION DESIGN ORDINANCE

Article XXII: Open Space Subdivisions will be amended so that Section 129-135 Policy; Legislative Authority, remains in the Zoning Code. The remaining sections, Section 129-136, 137,138, 139, 140, 141 are to be deleted. A new section, Conservation Subdivision Design (CSD), will be added to Chapter 109, Subdivision Regulations, Article III Review Procedure, Section 109.21-24.

A. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this regulation is to implement the recommendations in the Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2005). This regulation guides the design, review and approval process for developments that preserve open land, reduce sprawl, enhance visual character, and practice environmental conservation. This regulation shall be used as a tool to effectively manage the impacts of rapid residential growth on community character, quality of life, and natural resources. Conservation Subdivision Design is the required technique for residential subdivisions involving ten (10) or more lots, and regulations and related standards in this section shall apply. Subdivisions involving less than ten lots are encouraged to use the Conservation Subdivision Design.

B. Definitions

Conservation Subdivision Design (CSD)

Conservation subdivisions are characterized by common open space and clustered compact lots. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland, open space and natural resources while allowing for the maximum number of residential lots under current community zoning and subdivision regulations.

Density Calculation Area

The total area of land subject to the application minus the Regulated Lands. The lot density is derived by dividing the Density Calculation Area by the minimum lot size of the underlying zoning district, except in the R-1 zone when served by both municipal water and sewer – divide by 25,000 SF, when served by either municipal water or sewer – divide by 45,000 SF.

Dedicated Open Space

Lands within or related to a development that are intentionally set aside to be preserved as open space, and which are designed and intended for the common use of and often for the enjoyment of the residents of the development. These are lands intentionally set aside for the protection of unregulated open space such as woodlands, farmland, and scenic viewsheds. These lands may include complimentary structures and improvements and regulated lands. Public access may be permitted through easements or other means.

Regulated Lands

- Freshwater wetlands as mapped pursuant to federal and/or NYSDEC designated wetlands;
- Water sources as classified pursuant to NYSDEC stream classification system or delineated under the Town's stream resource management guidelines;

- Slopes in excess of 15%;
- Other areas of significance as may be identified by the Town of Wilton's Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan.

C. Planning Board Review and Waiver Authority

Review and permit authority is through the Planning Board. The Planning Board may waive the conservation subdivision design in the case where there are minimal environmental constraints including NYSDEC or ACOE wetlands, hydric soils or soils with high water tables, DEC classified streams, slopes greater than 15 percent, known ecologically sensitive habitats, and where there are no lands with other open space value as determined by the Planning Board. If the Planning Board determines that a conservation design is impractical, unfeasible or does not meet the objectives of this ordinance it may waive any further review required by this ordinance.

D. Procedural Elements

Each step of the design process must be discussed and approved of by the Planning Board with fees paid prior to Conceptual Design. Additional costs may also be levied for experts needed by the Planning Board.

1. Density and Open Space Area Calculations

a. Lot Density and Dedicated Open Space Calculation

Step One: Total area of land subject to the application/land owned by the applicant minus the Regulated Lands = Buildable Land

Step Two: Buildable land minus 15 percent = Density Calculation Area

Step Three: Density Calculation Area divided by the Zoning Density (or average lot size to be used for the appropriate R-1 zone case as spelled out in the Definitions section) equals Total Permitted Number of Lots

Step Four: Apply a minimum of thirty-five percent (35%) to the Density Calculation Area and this shall become the required Dedicated Open Space. Where Regulated Lands represent more than 50% of the total land area, a minimum of 15% of the developable land shall be reserved for the Dedicated Open Space.

See attached table for examples of conservation subdivision calculations.

2. Submittal Requirements

- a. A Pre-Application Review Conference is required. Attendees will include the applicant, a Town Board and Planning Board member, and any additional persons as determined by the Supervisor. The primary purpose of this conference is to introduce the potential applicant to the intent of the standards and procedures of this bylaw and to identify potential environmental concerns. Developers shall provide a map with only regulated lands and remaining lands identified plus an outline of the ownership, use and maintenance of the dedicated open space. Sections E, F and G describe the specific Dimensional Requirements, Design Process, Design Standards, and Ownership, Use and Maintenance of Dedicated Open Space Areas.
- b. Conceptual Subdivision Plan: The developer must meet with the Planning Board to discuss the proposed development and should do so before expending significant engineering funds. Materials needed for the discussion shall include:
 - 1) Site Context Map, which illustrates the parcel in relation to its adjacent neighborhoods. This map should be to scale and show various kinds of major natural resource areas or features as identified by the Town of Wilton, particularly if they cross parcel lines or adjoining lands. Also, it is recommended that a GIS aerial photograph with the parcel boundary overlaid be included, however, it is not required.
 - 2) Site Analysis Map, which locates and describes noteworthy resources that should be protected. This map identifies topography, boundaries, intended density and the location of special resources and features. Special resources and features include wetlands and steep slopes greater than 15%, mature woodlands, hedgerows, farmland, unique or special wildlife habitats, historic, archeological or cultural features, vistas, unusual geologic formations, and scenic views onto and off of the parcel. Water bodies, significant or endangered plant life (where readily definable), and probable soil composition should also be identified on the Site Analysis Map. Site context and analysis maps may be combined. All maps should be provided at a scale from 1"= 100 feet to 1" = 200 feet.
 - 3) Alternative layout(s) for the proposed development, as identified in the pre-application review conference.
 - 4) A written discussion of how the developer has addressed the intent of this ordinance as stated in paragraph A, Purpose and Intent.

- c. Preliminary Subdivision Design Plan: The preliminary design is a formalization of the conceptual design and shall be done by a certified professional. It shall be developed in the following manner:
- 1) Verify the extent of the Regulated Lands regulated by law. Graphically represent the limitations imposed by this regulation identified in the Site Analysis Map.
 - 2) Identify Dedicated Open Space areas including proposed improvements such as trails. Also identify the intended plan for the ownership, use and maintenance of the Dedicated Open Space in accordance with Section G.
 - 3) Locate the housing sites in a fashion that respects the intent of this ordinance, plus delineates the private yards and shared amenities so as to provide a rational integrated community.
 - 4) Align the streets and community pathways to adequately connect the previously established residential sites.
 - 5) Draw property lines so that no property is less than the required minimum lot sizes stated in section E of this section.
- d. Development of septic systems, roads, sidewalks and stormwater control must meet the Town standards. When planning for stormwater control, the Town may require access to certain areas of the Dedicated Open Space.
- e. The Final Subdivision Design Plan represents the project's final submittal and should contain the final, detailed engineering drawings of the agreed upon subdivision design. The plan shall include standard notations, plot plan, buildable areas for residences, restricted conservation lands, circulation roadway/pathway designs, stormwater control measures, landscaping, septic system designs, soil examination test results, water quality reports, and water quantity estimates.
- f. Residential cluster subdivisions (including Conservation Subdivision Designs) shall be approved by the Planning Board simultaneous with their approval of the subdivision plat pursuant to the "Town of Wilton Subdivision Regulations" or its replacement or update. Public hearings shall be held as required by Town law.

E. Dimensional Requirements

1. Minimum lot requirements for Conservation Subdivision Designs are set at the following levels:

- Lots with municipal **sewer and water**- no minimum lot size;
- Lots with municipal **water only** - 20,000 square feet per lot;
- Lots with municipal **sewer only** - 30,000 square feet per lot;

A hydrogeological study and associated testing shall be required for a subdivision of (10) or more lots that include any lot(s) with on-site water to determine the availability of reliable on-site water. A consultant from a list approved by the Town Board shall perform the hydrogeological study. The hydrogeological study may be waived at the discretion of the Planning Board.

- Lots with **on-site sewer and water**- 40,000 square feet per lot.

A hydrogeological study and associated testing shall be required for a subdivision of ten (10) or more lots with any lot(s) that include on-site sewer and water to determine the availability of reliable on-site water. A consultant from a list approved by the Town Board shall perform the hydrogeological study. The hydrogeological study may be waived at the discretion of the Planning Board.

2. Applicants are encouraged to modify lot size, shape, and other dimensional requirements for lots within a Conservation Subdivision Design, including applying average lot density, which increases design flexibility by permitting a wider range of lot sizes. Average density allows individual lots in a Conservation Subdivision Design to be a variety of sizes as long as the average density of all the lots equals the minimum density of the underlying zoning. All lot modifications are subject to the following limitation:

- All lots must meet the minimum standards set forth in E, above.
- At least 50% of the required road frontage and setbacks (**except R-1 side yard setback, which shall be no less than 20'**) for the underlying zoning district shall be maintained in the Conservation Subdivision Design unless the Planning Board otherwise authorizes a reduction.

F. Design Standards

The following Design Standards shall apply to all Conservation Subdivision Designs and shall govern the development and design process:

1. Any Dedicated Open Space, unless conveyed to the Town, shall include the Town's standard language for easements across Dedicated Open Space areas.
2. The Dedicated Open Space shall be perpetually preserved exclusively for the purposes set forth herein, and maintained in a manner, which will ensure its suitability for its intended purposes.
3. Dedicated Open Space shall be contiguous where practicable and possible. Contiguous shall be defined as being connected. These areas should, if possible, form a continuous whole that ties together with similar areas on similar sites, creating the potential for a network of green space extending throughout the community. Dedicated Open Space will still be considered connected if a roadway or an accessory amenity separates it. The Planning Board may waive this requirement for all or part of the required areas where it is determined that allowing non-contiguous Dedicated Open Space will promote the goals of this ordinance.
4. The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal. Any grade changes shall be in keeping with the general appearance of the adjacent neighboring areas. The orientation of individual building sites shall be such as to maintain maximum natural topography and cover. Topography, tree cover, and natural drainage ways shall be treated as fixed determinants of road and lot configuration rather than as flexible elements that can be changed to follow a preferred development scheme.
5. Streets and drainage facilities shall be designed and located in such a manner as to maintain and preserve natural topography, significant landmarks, and trees; to minimize cut and fill; and to preserve and enhance views and vistas on or off the subject parcel. Ownership of stormwater facilities such as detention areas will be at the discretion of the Town Board. Ownership shall be determined prior to final approval and noted on final plans.
6. The removal or disruption of historic, traditional or significant uses, structures, or architectural elements shall be minimized insofar as practicable, whether these exist on the site or on adjacent properties.
7. The Conservation Subdivision Design should be separated from neighboring development by a visual buffer consisting of natural and landscaped material, as determined by the Planning Board.
8. Pedestrian and bicycle trails shall, at the discretion of the Planning Board, be provided to link residences with parking areas, recreation facilities (including

parkland and public open space) and adjacent land uses where appropriate or in accordance with any other adopted Town planning document.

9. The location of stockpiles of demolition debris, fill material, topsoil, etc. shall be identified.

G. Ownership, Use, and Maintenance of Regulated Lands and Dedicated Open Space

Ownership, Use and Maintenance of Regulated Lands and Dedicated Open Space areas shall occur under one or more of the following conditions:

1. Through a homeowners' association (required to be reviewed and filed with the Town);
2. On individual lots with deed restrictions or conservation easements;
3. Conveyed to a private or public land trust or government entity; or
4. Conveyed to the Town for passive or active recreational use, public facilities, infrastructure, or other such uses as determined by the Town. The implementation of this option requires Town Board approval.

The Town of Wilton shall be consulted to determine their interest and needs prior to conceptual approval. The Town's implementation of this need may be in the form of an easement, regulation, restriction, or fee ownership of land.

Land identified in the Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan as valuable open space that is offered by the developer to the Town shall receive a ten (10) percent density bonus.

Dedicated Open Space areas can be used for a mix of activities such as wildlife habitat and conservation, historic preservation, education, outdoor education, recreation, park purposes, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, or a combination of these uses, and shall be served by suitable access for such purposes. Wastewater and stormwater management systems serving the Conservation Subdivision Design may also be located within the Dedicated Open Space area.

If the open space is to be owned and maintained by a homeowners' association, it is the intent of the Conservation Subdivision Design that the HOA own and maintain more uses than open space lands and stormwater drainage systems. The Planning Board will review what the HOA owns and maintains. Possible ownership considerations will be, but are not limited to, sidewalks, lighting, roadways, accessory buildings, recreational facilities and equipment, stormwater structures, utility components, etc.

**TOWN OF WILTON EXAMPLES OF
CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION V. CONVENTIONAL SUBDIVISION**

Conservation Subdivision - Example A	Conservation Subdivision - Example B	Conventional Subdivision
Hypothetical Scenario: Lot Area = 100 acres Regulated Lands = 20 acres	Hypothetical Scenario: Lot Area = 100 acres Regulated Lands = 60 acres	Hypothetical Scenario: Lot Area = 100 acres Regulated Lands = 20 acres
Step One: Buildable Land Area	Step One: Buildable Land Area	Step One: Buildable Land Area
Lot Area minus Regulated Lands: 100 acres – 20 acres = 80 acres	Lot Area minus Regulated Lands: 100 acres– 60 acres = 40 acres	Lot Area minus Regulated Lands: 100 acres – 20 acres = 80 acres
Step Two: Density Calculation Area	Step Two: Density Calculation Area	Step Two: Density Calculation Area
Buildable Land minus 15%*: 80 acres – 12 acres = 68 acres	Buildable Land minus 15%*: 40 acres – 6 acres = 34 acres	Not Applicable
Step Three: Total Permitted Number of Lots	Step Three: Total Permitted Number of Lots	Step Three: Total Permitted Number of Lots
Density Calculation Area divided by Zone Density 68 acres ÷ 80,000 square feet = 37 lots	Density Calculation Area divided by Zone Density 34 acres ÷ 80,000 square feet = 19 lots	Density Calculation Area divided by Zone Density 80 acres ÷ 80,000 square feet = 44 lots
Step Four: Dedicated Open Space	Step Four: Dedicated Open Space	Step Four: Dedicated Open Space
Regulated Lands that represent less than 50% of total require 35% reserved for Dedicated Open Space: 68 acres x 35% =24 acres of Dedicated Open Space	Regulated Lands that represent more than 50% of total require 15% reserved for Dedicated Open Space: 34 acres x 15% = 5 acres of Dedicated Open Space	Not Required
Step Five: Land for Lot Layout	Step Five: Land for Lot Layout	Step Five: Land for Lot Layout
Buildable Land Area minus Dedicated Open Space: 68 acres– 24 acres =44 acres available for lot layout	Buildable Land Area minus Dedicated Open Space 34 acres – 5 acres=29 acres available for lot layout	Not Applicable 80 acres available for lot layout
Average lot size: 44 ÷ 37 = 1.2 acres (52,272 sf) avg. lot size	Average lot size: 29 acres÷ 19 lots= 1.5 acres (65,340sf) avg. lot size	Average lot size: 80 ÷ 44 = 1.8 acres (78,408 sf) avg. lot size
Subdivision Yields:	Subdivision Yields:	Subdivision Yields:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 24 acres of open space ▪ 44 acres developed ▪ 37 houses ▪ Shorter road – less cost for construction and maintenance ▪ Less disturbance, more vegetation preserved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6 acres of open space ▪ 34 acres developed ▪ 19 houses ▪ Shorter road – less cost for construction and maintenance ▪ Less disturbance, more vegetation preserved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20 acres of open space ▪ 80 acres developed ▪ 44 houses ▪ Longer road – more cost for construction and maintenance ▪ More disturbance, less vegetation preserved

* Allowance for internal roads and circulation.

APPENDIX B

LISTING OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

**Appendix C
Historic Resources**

Key Number	Name	Location	Building Type	Approximate Year	Significance
1	Davidson	Old Saratoga Road		100 years old or more	Duncan McGregor home, present home built in 1800's.
2	Jack Myers	Old Saratoga Road		100 years old or more	Apple and grapes farm in mid 1800's, Bush Dairy Farm, 1900's.
3	Jack Myers	Old Saratoga Road		One of first houses in Wilton	Myers family, early founders.
4	Green Tavern	Route 9		Early 1800's	Stage Coach Station
5	Myers Estate	Route 9	House and barn	1787	Duncan McGregor's farm, 1787. Later became Myers Estate.
6	Pine Inn			50 Years old or older	
7	McGregor Pub	Route 9		50 Years old or older	Ruby's Log Cabin, 1940's
8	Lindsey	696 Route 9		Property dates to 1773	George Morehouse, Stiles
9	Kubish	698 Route 9		100 years old or more	Original King's Station Store. Morehouse's Store and Cider Mill.
10	Small Gray (Kubish)	698 Route 9		Built circa 1800's	
11	Waghorn	726 Route 9		100 years old or more	Part of original Wishing Well parcel. Warren Lester Stile's property.
12	Wishing Well & Barn	744 Route 9	House and barn	100 years old or more	Restaurant since 1930's was property owned by Warren Lester Stiles (1823). Original barn.
13	Geslings	7254 Route 9	House	Built early 1800's	At Risk
13a	Geslings	7254 Route 9	Barn	Built early 1800's	At Risk

14	Burke	(Corner SE Worth)	House and Barn	100 years old or more	Carriage House
15	Weatherwax	770 Route 9	House and Barn	Built 1860 by George Ide	
16 & 17	King & Barn	803 Route 9		100 years old or more	Peppers Farm /Original Brill Farm
18	Katz (Brill House)	800 Route 9	House	One of first houses in Wilton, John Brill house 1827.	
19	Bougor	Parkhurst Rd		100 years old or more	Richard's 1800's
20	Wilton Heritage Museum	5 Parkhurst Rd		Built 1871, Methodist Church	Architecturally Significant
21	Vittenberg	6 Parkhurst Rd	House & Barn	Built 1810's	Tabor Reynolds home, local doctor and sheriff. Significant Architecture
22	Friedman	1 Parkhurst Rd		Built 1810's	Dr. Henry Reynolds home. Significant Architecture. Guesthouse, 1930s.
23	Boyer	3 Parkhurst Rd	House & Barn	Built 1800's	Bush farm
24	Pregent	19 Parkhurst Rd	House & Barn	Built 1800's	Built by Nathan Perry, grandson of Rowland Perry.
24 A	Felts	Corner of Parkhurst/Nichols Road	House		Built by son of Joseph Perry, son of Rowland Perry.
26	Sturm	41 Parkhurst	House	Built mid-1800's	Built by Aretmus Perry, son of Rowland Perry.
27	Butler	60 Parkhurst		Built circa 1830's	Colonel French/Philips * home. Home of Orra Phelps.
28 & 29	Willems	116 Parkhurst	Cottage & Barn	Built circa 1855	
30	Gabay	92 Parkhurst	House & Barn	100 years old or more	Parkhurst homestead
31	Klepeter	98 Parkhurst	House & Barn	100 years old or	Cleveland

				more	
32	Reed	136 Parkhurst	House & Barn	Built 1830's	Stone structure, family cemetery on site. King's Tavern.
33	Rice (Stiles Tavern)	177 Parkhurst	House	Built 1793s	Former tavern, now home. Former stagecoach stop.
34	LeCours House & Barn	200 Parkhurst	Barn & House	Built 1830's	Dr. James King House
35	Clark & Wells	Kings Road		Built 1858	#5 Kings Station School, last one room schoolhouse in Wilton.
36	Wm. Parker	44 Wilton-Greenfield Road		Built 1800's	Road stop for horse switching station
37	Ballistero & Spring	64 Woodard Road	House & Barn	Built pre-Revolutionary War.	Built by Harman Perry. Original Woodard Spring.
38	Lumnicki & Armstrong	56 Woodard Road	House	Built 1770	House and farm built by Rowland Perry.
39	Lis	30,32,34 Woodard Road	House & Barn	Built around 1800's	Built by Cornelius Perry
40	Everts	3 Woodard Road	House	Late 1800's	
41	Studenroth	1 Nichols Road	House & Barn	Built prior to 1870s.	Owned and farmed by John Nichols, civil war veteran
42	Mandigo	3 Nichols Road	House & Barn	Built circa 1930	Built by Harry Woodard
43	Al Clarke Jr.	1 Ernst Road		Built 1878	Former Dr. Lincoln House
44	John Rucinski	50 Ernst Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	Jerome Orton Homestead & garden.
45	Holden	55 Ernst Road	House	1800's	Woodard Residence
46	Woodruff	146 Ernst Road	House	100 years old or more	
47	Schmit	195 Ernst Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
48	Wilton Grange	437 Northern Pines Road	Grange	Built 1910's.	Now privately owned
49	Farone	390 Northern Pines Road	House	Originally constructed 1866	Farm and blacksmith house, 1866,

					Manufactured whiskey during Prohibition
50	HeleneL	384 Northern Pines Road	House & Outbuilding	100 years old or more	
51	McGregor Golf Course	Northern Pines Road	Golf Course & Club House—Colonial Style	Built 1920's	Original Kaydeross Patent
52	Burtens	274 Northern Pines Road	House	100 years old or more	
53	Clancy	180 Northern Pines Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	Remodeled
54	Campola	160 Northern Pines Road	House & Barn (on Gailor)	Originally built 1778.	Campola, Stafford Carr, 1778. Walter and Mary Gailor, 1900.
55	Speciale	Northern Pines Road	House	100 years old or more	Fowler
56	Fowler	90 Northern Pines Road	Bungalow	100 years old or more	
57	Scott Harrington	37 Northern Pines Road	House	100 years old or more	Cider Mills, 1800's
58	Fisk	35 Northern Pines Road	Farm House	100 years old or more	Metropolitan Farm Insurance, 1922. Moved from original location.
59		Northern Pines Road	House	100 years old or more	Former store (whites)
60	Doescher	23 Northern Pines Road	House	Built 1806	Dr. Roods
61	Shaw	24 Northern Pines Road	Apt. House	Built circa 1850	Former Wilton Hotel/Ryan's Tavern
62	Irish	14 Northern Pines Road	House		Tea House 1930's Greens
63	Rogers	Near Gansevoort Road	House		Sears Roebuck House?
64	Lattimer	12 Northern Pines Road	House	Built early 1800's	Van Rensselaer (1919-1958)
65	Sullivan	10 Northern Pines Road	House	100 years old or more	

66	Schoonover	7 Northern Pines Road	House & Barn	Built early 1800's	Abram & Sara Van Rensselaer early 1800's.
67	School #4	Wilton Gansevoort Road	Building	Built 1860.	Rebuilt, private residence
68	Deridder	550 Wilton Gansevoort Rd	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
69	Elmer Ellis	Wilton-Gansevoort Rd	House	100 years old or more	
70	Butler	442 Wilton-Gansevoort Rd	House	100 years old or more	
71					
72	Woodcock	Kings Lane	House	100 years old or more	Endangered, Brick structure
73	Oligny	390 Wilton-Gansevoort Rd.	House	100 years old or more	
74	Sarah Petteys	Blanchard Road	House	100 years old or more	Original structure, Blanchard homestead.
75	Bartlett	3 Dimmick Road	House	100 years old or more	
76	Keller	30 Dimmick Road	House	100 years old or more	
77	Coons	35 Dimmick Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
78	Samuelson's Farm	200 Dimmick Road	House, Barn, Farm	100 years old or more	Last dairy farm in the Town of Wilton.
79	Taylor Homestead	285 Dimmick Road	House	100 years old or more	Bebbe
80	Don Bishop	392 Gurn Springs Road	House	Built 1845	Chase Family
81	Johnson & Williams	393 & 397 Gurn Springs Road	House	100 years old or more	Former Chase Farm, converted barn.
82	Tom Fish	352 Gurn Springs Road	House	100 years old or more	Former Pettey's Home
83	J. Burns	338 Gurn Springs Road	House	100 years old or more	
84	Dickerson	255 Gurn Springs Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
85	Eddie's Grocery	85 Traver Road	Small Store	100 years old or	Bettes

				more	
86	Kilburn (Parsonage Brackett)	Traver Road			Built by NYS Senator, Brackett, founder Adirondack Trust
87	Craw	32 Traver Road	House & Barn	Built 1800's	Williams Farm
88	Brown	Traver Road	Barn	Built 1800's	Original beams in tact
89	Philips	66 Traver Road	Farm	Early 1900's	Original produce farm from Mt. McGregor
90	Shrock	84 Traver Road	House	Built early 1800's	Gurn Spring on property
91	Mosher	154 Traver Road	House	100 years old or more	
92	Haviland	122 Ballard Road	House	Original built 1860's.	Hill
93					
94	Perry-Mihaly	25 Ballard Road	House	100 years old or more	
95	Mihaly	Corner of Ballard Road	House	100 years old or more	
96	Zwirn	16/18 Ballard Road (9 Taylor Road)	House	Circa 1800's	Former Ballard Tavern and Stage coach stop
97	Former Ballard School	North of Ballard	House	Mid-1800's	Renovated as a private residence
98	So. Wilton Church		Business	100 years old or more	
99	School #6		House	100 years old or more	Renovated as a private residence
100	Christmas Gift Shop	Route 50	Store	100 years old or more	
101	Alsop	Smith Bridge Road	House	Early 1800's	Built by Warren Collamer, known as "Old Smith Homestead"
102	Vinceck	Jones Rd/Smith Bridge Road	House/farm	Early 1800's	
103	Vinceck	Jones Rd/Smith Bridge Road	House/farm	Early 1800's	
104	Jones	Jones Road			
105	O'Brien			Late 1800's	
106		164 Jones Road		100 years old or more	Original Dorothy Nolan home & farm

107	Heleneck			100 years old or more	
108		7 Jones Road			
109	Richmond	Scout Road	House	100 years old or more	
110	Wm Pettis Farm	Pettis Road	House/Farm	100 years old or more	
111		125 Louden Road	House	100 years old or more	
112	Brower	239 Louden Road	House/Farm	100 years old or more	
113	Smith	203 Louden Road	House	100 years old or more	
114	Old School	Louden Road		100 years old or more	Old School next to Baker Boice Cemetery
115	H. Buesing	239 Louden Road	House	100 years old or more	1812 Deed
116	Amo	359 Louden Road	Farm House & Barn	100 years old or more	
117	Harbor Hill	261 Louden Road	House	100 years old or more	
118	Hannah House	Arnold Lane-off Louden	House & Barn	Barn built 1868 Original house	Cemetery on site
119		94 Edie Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
120		105 Edie Road	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
121	LeBarron	129 Edie Road	House	100 years old or more	
122		148 Edie Road		100 years old or more	Endangered
123	Zwajk	Rt. 50 & Edie Road		100 years old or more	Endangered
124	K. Joyce	Ruggles Road		100 years old or more	
125	Boy Scout	Scout Road	Camp	Built 1930's	Bought from Gick Family

	Camp				
125 A	Sives	38 Worth Road		100 years old or more	Kaydeross Patent
126	Olsen	120 Gailor Road	Brick House	Built 1842	Stafford Carr owned 1842, donated land to Brick Church and Cemetery.
126 A	White	Gailor & Ernst Roads	House & Barn	100 years old or more	
127	Woodruff Barn	Wilton Wildlife Park & Preserve	Barn	100 years old or more	Perry Barn-Original founders of Wilton
128	Morris	Gick Road	House	100 years old or more	Original house
129	Putnam Farm	Putnam Lane/Old Greenhouse	House	100 years old or more	
130	Gallager	Loughberry Lake	House	Original House, 1800s.	House renovated, historic features not visible.
131	Sives	38 Worth Road	House	Original house, 1700's	Dr. Moriarta house, 1900's.

APPENDIX C

SARATOGA COUNTY FARMLAND/OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND APPLICATION

April 1, 2006

Dear Farmland/Open Space Applicant:

Attached is a copy of Saratoga County's Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program criteria and application form.

The Saratoga County Planning Staff are available to answer any questions you may have on the program or its subdivision requirements.

Please keep in mind that additional information will be required should your application for grant funds be approved. This would include the following:

- Purchase Agreement
- County Voucher
- Resolution of Legislative Board
- Appraisal
- Title Insurance
- Subordination Agreements (if applicable)
- Conservation Easement or Deed Covenant
- Monitoring Plan
- Environmental Audit
- Final Budget

It is essential that prior to submission you obtain the approval of your Town, Village or City Legislative Board.



Revised March
2006 SCPO

Saratoga County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program

Program Description:

In 2006 the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors has allocated \$500,000 to fund a matching grant program to purchase development or other rights or a fee interest in productive agricultural lands and open space land whose preservation is deemed to be of significant public benefit.

Grants up to 50% of an eligible project's cost or \$100,000 (whichever is less) shall be made directly to Saratoga County Municipalities. Grants of up to \$100,000 may be awarded with the understanding that any request for funding in excess of \$50,000 must show special circumstances as determined by the Saratoga County Farmland and Open Space Preservation Committee. Landowners, Not for profit Land Trusts and municipalities are eligible applicants but must all apply first to the municipality in which the land is located. Grants will be contingent on the applicant's demonstration of the commitment of matching funds from Federal, State or Local Funding Programs and private contributions. Private contributions may be in the form of an equity participation or "bargain sale".

Eligible Costs: Grant funds not to exceed 5% of the total approved county grant may be used towards the cost of appraisals, surveys, legal fees and other ancillary costs associated with the completion of the project.

Eligible Local Share: Local funds expended within 12 months of the submission of that application may be accepted as the required local match. Local funds utilized to purchase the Development Right or a fee interest in land may allocate those expenditures towards the required local match for a second parcel if the applicant can demonstrate a clear linkage between the prior acquisition and the application submitted to the county.

Eligible Farmland/Open Space:

To determine eligibility for funding under the County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program, agricultural land will be evaluated based on criteria adopted by the advisory committee (See attachment 1). Eligible open space may include sensitive environmental and natural resource such as wetlands, floodplains and stream corridors and other lands which serve a vital public interest such as watershed *protection* and wildlife habitat. Other lands by their character and location may be considered a fundamental element of a community's character worthy of preservation. Eligible open spaces may also include lands that *offer* a unique recreation opportunity to a community such as a nature trail, bikeway or public access to a waterway or waterbody. Examples include Bogmeadow Nature Trail through Bear Swamp, Saratoga Springs, Ballston Spa Bikeway/Walkway Town of Ballston, Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve, Town of Clifton Park, Woods Hollow Nature Preserve, Town of Milton, Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Town of Wilton & Park Lands identified on the land trust for Saratoga Region's "special places" are further examples of significant open spaces eligible for funding.

Lands identified in a local comprehensive plan or in an open space inventory would also be eligible.

Procedures

Applications (Attachment 3 and 3a forms) may be submitted to Saratoga County Planning 50 West High Street Ballston Spa, NY 12020 between April 1, 2006 and June 30, 2006.

Following the close of the application period, applications shall be reviewed and prioritized by the County's Farmland/Open Space Preservation Advisory Committee consisting of the following members appointed by the Board of Supervisors/Chairman.

Willard Peck, Supervisor, Town of Northumberland, Chairman
Philip Barrett, Supervisor, Town of Clifton Park
Arthur Johnson, Supervisor, Town of Wilton
Tom L. Lewis, Saratoga County Planning Board, Chairman
David R. Miller, Audubon New York, Clifton Park
Paul Sausville, Supervisor, Town of Malta
Lynn Schumann, Land Trust Alliance, Saratoga Springs

Upon completion of its review, the Advisory committee will vote on the applications and forward its recommendations to the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Law and Finance Committee.

Grant awards shall be made by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

Post Award: Prior to the release of grant funds the project applicant shall submit an appraisal of the property certifying the value of the development rights to be purchased with grant funds or the value of the land to be purchased in fee. Successful applicants will also be required to submit copies of all conservation easements and/or deeds prepared in conjunction with the awarded project. An environmental audit may be required if the proposed property's environmental integrity has the possibility of being compromised through a previous use or uses in the vicinity.

Attachment 1**Saratoga County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program****Ranking Criteria: Agricultural lands**

These criteria have been tailored to a conceptual local PDR program. The maximum score would be 100 points.

Agricultural Soils Evaluation (0 - 20 points)

Projects will be given priority that will preserve viable agricultural land. Using the Agriculture & Markets soil group worksheet, rate the soils for agricultural productivity. Ranges of scores will be assigned a value from 1 (lowest) to 15 (highest).

Percent of Property in Cropland (0 - 5 points)

A higher value is given to property that has a high percentage of ready-to farmland as opposed to woods or lands that would require greater investment to prepare for farming.

Locational Criteria (0 - 30 points)**Considerations include:**

Proximity to other easements: Concentrating limited PDR funds toward clusters of permanently protected farmland might help to maximize the long-term benefits of this substantial public investment. Instead of islands of protected parcels which may someday be surrounded by residential or commercial development, therefore limiting their productivity as farmland, focusing PDR efforts has the potential to create strong areas of agricultural activity for many years into the future. (0 - 5 points).

Proximity to other active farmland: Farmland in close proximity is much easier to farm and is more economically viable than separated parcels. It is important to focus limited PDR funds in concentrated areas of active farmland. (0 - 10 points).

Property is in an Agricultural District: Farmers may become part of an agricultural district either at its creation or during the review process that occurs every eight years. Agricultural districts provide incentives for farmers from unwanted or unwarranted interference with the business of farming. Location in an agricultural district is a strong indication of agricultural viability and intent to remain in farming as well as community support. Priority is given to property located in an agricultural district. (0 or 5 points).

Scenic, Historic or Environmental Significance: Farms which are part of a scenic vista or have historic significance are important components of a community's character and increase the attractiveness of the area to residents and tourists alike. Environmental Significant lands that serve as a buffer for a significant natural public resource-containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics. Proximity to significant natural areas, public lands, parks, or preserved lands will be considered. Stewardship Of Land: The implementation of soil erosion control, sedimentation control, nutrient management and other practices demonstrating good stewardship of the tract enhances the ability of the subject farm to sustain long-term soil productivity.(O-IS points)

Other Locational Criteria**Threat of conversion to non-farm use:** (0 - 20 points)

Lands that are located in areas facing significant development pressure. Farmland that is especially valuable but vulnerable due to existing development pressure (proximity to residential and commercial development), will be given special consideration. Identification of agriculture in the local comprehensive plan and zoning regulations, and site characteristics that serve as buffers would be important considerations in these cases.

Farm Succession (0 - 5 points)

What is the likelihood that the property will continue in farming in the future? How will this project aid in farm succession.

Consistency with Municipal Comprehensive Plan, Open Space Plan and County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan (0 - 10 points)

Intermunicipal benefits will receive added consideration.

Leverage (0 - 5 points)

An efficiency measure, expressed as acres preserved per dollar, projects will be considered for their potential to preserve as much viable agricultural land as possible using limited funds.

Attachment Ia
Saratoga County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program Ranking
Criteria: Open Space Lands

These criteria have been tailored to a conceptual PDR and open space preservation program. References to the state PDR program as well as incompatible criteria have been removed. The maximum score would be 100 points.

Priority Open Space

Passive recreation facilities such as nature trails, access to waterways, waterbodies stream corridor protection (stream classes CCt) or higher), watershed protection and sensitive environmental areas i.e., habitat. Public access may receive additional consideration.

Locational Criteria

Considerations include:

- **Proximity to other easements:** Lands held by the public or a land trust concentrating limited PDR funds toward clusters of permanently protected farmland/open space and/or help to maximize the long-term benefits of this substantial public investment. Instead of islands of protected parcels which may someday be surrounded by residential or commercial development, therefore limiting their value as open space by focusing preservation efforts, could potentially create strong areas of agriculture/open space for many years into the future. (0 - 10 points).
- **Scenic, Historic or Environmental Significance:** Open Space lands that are part of a scenic vista or have historic significance are important components of a community's character and increase the attractiveness of the area to residents and tourists alike. Environmentally significant lands that serve as a buffer for a significant natural public resource-containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics.(0-20 points)
- Proximity to Active Ag lands(0-10 points)
- Proximity to State and National Parklands(O-S points)

Proximity to significant natural areas, public lands, parks, or preserved lands will be considered.

- **Development pressure:** (0 - 20 points)

Lands that at a high risk for development that entails a high risk for the loss of potential public access and use of significant open space. Open Space that is especially valuable but vulnerable due to existing development pressure (proximity to residential and commercial development), will be given special consideration.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Plan, Open Space Plan and/or Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan_(O - 20 points)

Identification of the need to preserve open space in the local comprehensive plan and zoning regulations, and site characteristics that serve as buffers would be important considerations in these cases.

Intermunicipal benefits will receive added consideration

Stewardship applications that demonstrate a record of stewardship of the land or contain a stewardship plan. Stewardship is the active management of land with the intent to preserve and enhance its natural characteristics and functionality over time. (0-5 points)

Leverage An efficiency measure, expressed as acres preserved per dollar, projects will be considered for their potential to preserve as much open space as possible using limited funds, bargain sale or other grant funds state, federal or local. (0 - 10 points)



Attachment 3

Saratoga County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program

Agricultural Project Information

Applicant Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Project Contact:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Project Description:

Project Name _____

Street Address _____

Tax map parcel numbers(s) _____ Property Acreage _____

List any other land holdings in the immediate vicinity _____

Present use of acres broken into categories (# crops, # livestock, #woods, other)

Are there any wetlands located on property? _____ approximate wetland size _____

How many acres of prime or statewide important soils are on the property?

Is the property within an Agricultural District? _____

Does your property contain any lands identified in a local open space plan or municipal comprehensive plan that are considered to be sensitive and should be protected? Explain how your project is supported by the local plan.

Please describe the farm including years of operation, ownership, type and size of operation, any awards associated with the farm and any future plans for expansion and continuation of the farm operation. Would this project contribute to farm succession.

What is the subject property's proximity to protected farmland, and/or other lands subject to a conservation easements lands or natural resources (such as rivers, streams, national parklands, municipal parkland)? Please list the names of any of these resources.

What person, organization, or agency will be responsible for maintaining the property and monitoring an easement on the property? Please indicate involved parties expected to participate.

Please provide a budget summary for the project to include: Total cost, total amount of county funds requested, other funds applied for or committed, and the total

estimated value of development rights to be preserved.

Attachment 3a

Saratoga County Farmland/Open Space Preservation Program

Open Space Preservation Project Information

Applicant Information:

Name(property owner) _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Project Contact:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Project Description:

Project Name _____

Street Address/Location _____

Tax map parcel numbers(s) _____ Property Acreage _____

List any other land holdings in the immediate vicinity _____

Present use of the property and the public benefit _____

Describe the project's ability to be linked to an existing recreational/ open space facility or land.

What land trusts/conservation groups have been contacted regarding this property and its preservation?

Explain _____

Is this open space parcel specifically mentioned in the municipality's Comprehensive or Open Space Plans? Please attach a copy of the relevant section and attach it to the application. _____

Does this property have a scenic vista or have historic significance important to the community's character? Please List _____

Does the property have lands that serve as a buffer for a significant natural public resource-containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics such as wetlands, streams, woodlands, rare or endangered species habitat? _____

Please provide a budget summary for the project to include: Total cost, total amount of county funds requested, other funds applied for or commuted, and the total estimated value of development rights to be preserved. _____

Additional Project Information

- ./ Please attach tax parcel map clearly showing the subject parcel of land and any other protected or significant pieces of land in close proximity to the site .

- ./ Please attach the relevant section of the Open Space Plan/Comprehensive Plan that supports protecting open space/ag lands and any reference to the subject parcels and its uniqueness .

- ./ A letter of support from the landowner acknowledging their property's participation **in** this preservation program.

Please submit **10 copies of the application and materials to:**

Jaime L. O'Neill, Planner
Saratoga County Planning Department 50
West High Street
Ballston Spa, NY 12020
518-884-4705 518-884-4780(fax)

APPENDIX D

OPEN SPACE LAND ASSESSMENT FORMS

Town of Wilton
Open Space Land Assessment Form

Applicant Information:

Name (property owner) _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Project Contact:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Project Description:

Project Name _____

Street Address/Location _____

Tax Map Parcel Number(s) _____ Property Acreage _____

Date Property Purchased _____ Previous Owner _____

List any other land holdings in the immediate vicinity. _____

Present use of the property. _____

Indicate applicable land preservation or use restrictions providing public benefit:

Conserving Scenic Resources Promoting Farm/Timber Management

Enhancing Public Recreation Preserving Wildlife or Habitat

Describe the project's ability to be linked to an existing recreational/open space facility or land. _____

What land trusts/conservation groups have been contacted regarding this property and its preservation?

Explain _____

Is this open space parcel specifically mentioned in the municipality's Comprehensive, Open Space Plans, or Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan? Please attach a copy of the relevant section and attach it to the application _____

Does this property have a scenic vista or have historic significance important to the community's character? Please List _____

Does the property have lands that serve as a buffer for a significant natural public resource-containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics such as wetlands, streams, woodlands, rare or endangered species habitat? _____

Does the property contain lands that have recreational benefit to the Town? _____

Please provide a budget summary for the project to include: Total cost, total amount of county funds requested, other funds applied for or commuted, and the total estimated value of development rights to be preserved _____

Additional Project Information

- √ Please attach tax parcel map clearing showing the subject parcel of land and any other protected or significant pieces of land in close proximity to the site.
- √ Please attach the relevant section of the Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan, Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan, Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan, that supports protecting open space/ag lands and any reference to the subject parcels and its uniqueness.
- √ A letter of support from the landowner acknowledging their property's anticipation in this preservation program.

**Town of Wilton
Criteria for Open Space Land Assessment**

Local and Regional Support	Check Those That Apply
Local Regional Significance	
Land Access and Compatibility	
Recreational Opportunities	
Waterway Access	
Historic Preservation	
Resource Protection	
Scenic Resources	
Aquifer Recharge Area	
Water Supply Reservoir Protection	
Aquatic Ecosystem Protection	
Outstanding Forest or Plant Community	
Shoreline Protection	
Unique Areas	
Freshwater Wetlands	
Wildlife Habitat	
Biodiversity	
Agricultural or Timber Harvesting Significance	
Working Landscape	

- **Use the guide below to make determination of significance.**

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY AND EVALUATION GUIDANCE

LOCAL AND REGIONAL SUPPORT

Local and Regional Significance

- Priority established in Comprehensive Plan.
- Inclusion in state, county or local Open Space Plan.
- Inclusion in municipal, county or regional trail system.

Land Access and Compatibility

- Inholding. Proposed project eliminates conflicting use, encroachment or offers an operational advantage.
Inholdings are properties that are bounded on at least three sides by other protected or public lands; or
- Contiguous Property. Proposed project is needed for expansion of facilities or recreation services; or
- Proposed project would connect two parcels of protected or public land unconnected or meeting only on a common corner.
- Proposed project would provide or assist in providing access to public land which has no access or limited access due to geographic barriers; or
- Proposed project will allow an environmentally acceptable through route for a trailway vehicle access trail to public lands from an existing trail system or staging area; or
- Proposed project will reduce the length of a circuitous route taken by the public to access public lands.

- Proposed project provides resource or facilities use protection from non-compatible or potentially non-compatible adjoining land use.

Recreational Opportunities

- Proposed project contains natural, scenic or open space resources that are unique, rare, or of statewide or regional significance; and
- Proposed project is of usable/manageable configuration and has suitable access; and
- Proposed project has potential for active or passive recreational use and development consistent with the carrying capacity of its natural resources.
- The proposed project would consolidate or link together existing stream rights; or
- The proposed project must be legally and physically accessible to the public, or be a portion of an identified trailways project which, when completed, will be legally and physically accessible to the public; and
- The proposed project must be physically and environmentally developable as a trailway; and
- The proposed project must help close existing gaps in the statewide recreationway network, or connect a population center with public lands, public parks or historic sites.
- Proposed project links parks or other public lands within a broader linear corridor that includes parks, open space areas, trails and other public lands with urban, suburban and rural areas.

Waterway Access

- The proposed project is physically contiguous to a lake, canal, navigable river, marine or other coastal waterbody and provides for direct access; and
To the extent development is planned for, the proposed project is physically and environmentally developable; and
- The quality and extent of the water body is suitable for the contemplated use or development; and
- The proposed project must be accessible by the general public for recreational, cultural or educational purposes.

Historic Preservation

- The proposed historic or archeological project is listed on the state or national register of historic places and
- is of sufficient significance in New York State history to qualify for inclusion in the OPRHP's Historic Sites System; and,
- The proposed project is sufficiently usable in terms of access and other physical characteristics to warrant actual operation by OPRHP or under agreement with other parties, as a historic site; and
- The proposed project contains lands which comprise the historic view out from a historic property or archeological site listed on the state or national register of historic places; or
- The proposed project contains lands which comprise the view into a historic property or archeological site listed on the state or national register or the view from such a property or site; or
- The proposed project will control development, directly or indirectly, of lands contiguous to a historic property or archeological site listed on the state or national register of historic places; or
- The proposed project will comprise land which was part of either the original boundaries of a historic property or archeological site listed on the state or national register of historic places, or the boundaries of such a property or site in its historic period.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

Scenic Resources

- Exhibits outstanding arrangement of natural or man-made features (i.e., water features and/or land forms and/or vegetation patterns) that provide positive stimulation, hold interest and command attention of the viewing public; or
- Contributes to the public enjoyment and/or appreciation of any established scenic resource.

Aquifer Recharge Area

- The area to be protected must be part of an aquifer recharge area which is protected by local watershed rules and regulations, groundwater protection ordinances, zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, site plan review procedures, or other methods; and

- If not acquired in fee, the fee owner must agree to manage the acquired lands in a manner acceptable to the Town. A formal agreement with the Town must be executed at the time of acquisition; and
- The local government must either have applied or agree to apply for a water supply permit pursuant to section 15-1501 of the Environmental Conservation Law. Application must be made before the acquisitions are implemented. This requirement is waived if the primary purpose for the acquisition is not aquifer recharge.

Water Supply Reservoir Protection

- The proposed project lies within the watershed of a water supply reservoir; and
- The owner of the water supply reservoir must have enacted watershed rules and regulations pursuant to section 1100 of the Public Health Law; and
The owner of the water supply reservoir must apply for a water supply permit for the purchase of the project lands. This requirement is waived if the primary purpose for the acquisition is not watershed protection; and
- At the discretion of the TOWN, the owner of the water supply reservoir must agree to manage the lands acquired in a manner acceptable to the commissioner.
- The TOWN and the owner of the water supply reservoir may negotiate an agreement relative to public use of the reservoir and surrounding watershed land where appropriate.

Aquatic Ecosystem Protection

- Proposed project is within the watershed (and upstream of) of a water body that is classified no lower than C as per Title 6, Chapter X, Parts 700-705 of NYCRR.
- Proposed project encompasses a minimum of 50 acres of watershed. Proposals less than 50 acres, that contain critical features for protection of the water such as springs, tributary mouths or highly erodible land features also qualify.

Outstanding Forest Or Plant Community

- The proposed project is at least ten acres in size and contains old growth, defined as long lived native species where the average age of the dominant trees is at least 150 years; or
- The proposed project contains plants or a plant community (with or without associated buffer) that is rare or unusual or offers the potential for the reintroduction of extirpated species. Rare or unusual is defined as having less than 100 existing sites in New York.

Shoreline Protection

- Has a natural protective feature as defined in section 34-0103 of the Environmental Conservation Law; or
- Directly abuts the shoreline of any tidal water, or a river, stream or lake; or
- Has characteristics the alteration of which may result in reduction of the water quality of, or modification of the water discharge to, the receiving water bodies, or will degrade the scenic or fish and wildlife values of the water body.

Unique Areas

- The proposed project possesses at least one of the following elements- special natural beauty, wilderness character, geological significance, ecological significance, historical or archaeological significance; and
- The proposed project must be of a character suitable for inclusion in the State Nature and Historical Preserve; and

Freshwater Wetlands

- The proposed project is a freshwater wetland, with or without associated upland buffer, as defined in Article 24 of the Environmental Conservation Law; and by reason of the wetland benefits it provides, is clearly valuable when compared to the range of wetlands in the state; and
- The proposed project must possess two IS-point, or three 7-point, or one IS-point and one 7-point, substantially non-duplicative, wetland value characteristics as enumerated in the rating system for Freshwater Wetlands.

Wildlife Habitat

The proposed project contributes to the state's biological diversity as a rare, unique or exemplary natural community and requires special protection and management as part of a state-administered system of representative ecosystems; or

The proposed project, together with necessary buffer, is a biologically significant area in that it serves as a significant habitat for a species of interest or as a wildlife concentration area including, but not limited to, whitetail deer wintering areas, hawk migration sites, spawning/nursery areas for fish; or it is unusually productive or supports an exceptional assemblage of animal species, particularly rare or uncommon ones; or

The proposed project contains the minimum geographic area, together with associated buffer, vital to continued use by a threatened or endangered species as defined in section 11-0535 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

Biodiversity

- The proposed project contributes to the state's biological diversity as a rare, unique, exemplary or significant natural community requiring special protection.
- The proposed project is a biologically significant area in that it serves as significant habitat for a species of fauna or flora; is significant habitat based on its rarity, size, condition, landscape setting, or ecological function; or it is unusually productive or supports an exceptional assemblage of plant or animal species.
- The proposed project contains the minimum geographic area, together with associated buffer, vital to continued use by a threatened or endangered species as defined in section 11-0535 of the Environmental Conservation Law, or other species considered rare, of special concern or exploitable vulnerable under New York State Environmental Conservation Law.
- The proposed project contributes to an existing regional, state or multi-jurisdictional biodiversity conservation initiative, including, but not limited to Hudson River Estuary Management Plan, Open Space Institute, Biodiversity Research Institute, The Nature Conservancy, and other types of biological diversity initiatives. • The proposed project links similar and/or different habitat(s) together thereby creating a corridor and thus allowing for migration of fauna and flora species from one place to another.

AGRICULTURE AND TIMBER HARVESTING SIGNIFICANCE**Working Landscape**

- The project is within an area, identified as an area of concern, that has historic tradition as supported by identified historic sites, areas of archaeological significance, or local reference and recognition of historic associations, and other relevant factors; or
- has environmental protection significance as indicated by the presence of significant habitat, protected natural resources, aquifers, and other relevant factors; or
- has scenic objectives as demonstrated through local planning, documented public concern or state designations, or identification in promotional material based on scenic values, and other relevant factors; and
- has significant productive capacity due to high quality soils, micro-climatic conditions, topography, economic characteristics including site economics, proximity to markets, and other similar factors.