

(Note: includes 2007 draft Conclusions & Recommendations)

PROTECTING RIVERS AND WATERSHEDS

Protect all waterbodies. (Mattabeset, Coginchaug, Sumner, Laurel Brook...)

Protect land along river corridors by acquiring or placing an easement upon the land.

Place conservation easements on former CVH (Dept of Mental Health Services) watershed land (would be done by state Dept of Environmental Protection).

Adopt recommendations in the city CT River Harbor Management Plan (2003).

Require development in river corridors to implement low-impact design techniques (LID) (i.e. keep more water on site rather than moving it off-site).

Protect slopes in excess of 25% from disturbance in order to protect large wetland systems.

Create greater protection buffers around our water supplies.

Maintain vegetation along streams and other waterbodies.

Restore stream habitat (stabilize eroding banks, slow runoff, filter pollutants, prevent flooding)

Remediate impairments of waterbodies now listed on state Impaired Waterbodies list.

Implement watershed management plans.

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY

Protect watercourses using best management practices such as biofilters, grass swales, detention ponds.

Reduce impervious surfaces.

Implement NPDES [Nat'l Pollution Discharge Elimination System] stormwater management plan. (The Clean Water Act permit administered by the state.)

Inspect sites for erosion during construction.

Educate the public about best management practices for lawn care for private yards and handling of used motor oil and other hazardous waste.

Address use of fertilizers at the agricultural scale. [Must write policy.]

Reduce e.coli bacteria loads in the Mattabeset River Basin by _____.

URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT

Prevent flood damage to the built and natural environment, inundation of dwellings and stormwater damage to properties.

Contain nuisance flows and ensure that the street system operates safely during and after storm events.

Ensure stormwater discharge does not degrade the quality of surface and underground receiving waters, including aquifers.

Maximize opportunities for local on-site stormwater storage.

Avoid adverse alteration to water balance and groundwater depth.

Minimize disturbance caused by draining or filling wetlands and natural streams.

Provide for efficient urban water management through multiple use systems where feasible.

Review storm drain management plans annually to ensure city maintenance cleaning out catch basins and street sweeping.

FARMING

Farming is a critical resource, and is a priority of the Plan of Conservation & Development. The following recommendations are taken from the city contracted from the Farm Viability Study (April 2008).

Establish an agricultural commission, created of local farmers, to develop a comprehensive farmland preservation strategy.

Acquire development rights to preserve working farms.

Evaluate the effectiveness of current zoning regulations in supporting farming., addressing in particular regulations allowing operations to adapt when market conditions change

Review land use within 500' of farms to identify their long-range affects on farming viability.

Recommend expanding agricultural uses on city lands.

Brainstorm ways to reduce taxes on farmland in order to discourage development of land.

Work with the city to establish a fund to preserve farms, fund improvements and agricultural projects.

Create an annual budget to support farming.

Establish a fund for startup and capitol improvement grants for new farms.

Assist farmers in applying for state grants.

Track annual loss of farmland.

With the agricultural commission, establish a rating system to rate the most at-risk properties. [Define risks.]

Establish agricultural corridors and identify areas of the city as potential areas of scenic corridors, agri-tourism, and economic development to support agricultural uses.

Create a farming committee as part of the Chamber of commerce.

Explore the possibility of creating a vineyard, aquaculture, and other innovative techniques to expand the economic opportunities for farming and agriculture..

Hold events on farms to highlight them such as the dinner and biking events around the state.

Offer a series of workshops to brainstorm how city departments can support farming.

Encourage community gardens in every city neighborhood.

Educate neighborhood about nuisances (noise, odor).

OPEN SPACE

Protect ever-diminishing wetland ecosystems and environmentally significant open space by encouraging redevelopment of already degraded land (already serviced by water and sewer) rather than developing the countryside.

Fund and contract a thorough, professionally-written Plan of Conservation DOCUMENT to accompany the existing 2010 Plan of Conservation MAP.

Focus new open space acquisitions on the prime natural resources identified in the 2010 Plan of Conservation & Development, including areas with prime agricultural soils, and key geological and geographic features as Higby and Lamentation Mts, Sumner Brook and other brooks.

Percentage of space the city aims to preserve (long-range goal): _____

Adopt land use regulations that protect open space.

Adopt conservation-oriented design guidelines.

Open space acquisitions and conservation easements should be made where land abuts other open space so as to maintain continuity, which is beneficial to natural environment and wildlife.

Create more small parks. Invest in Veteran's Memorial Park.

Encourage the creation of greenways (linear parks or corridors) along brooks and within areas containing special natural resources.

Create a conservation overlay district for Maromas and other natural priority areas.

Adopt ridgetop protection requirements. Map areas for which these regulations would apply.

Access the CT River.

Maintain natural areas along the CT River outside of downtown.

Require pre-application meetings for all properties identified as containing or abutting a NDDB [state the full name of agency] location with corresponding requisite referral to the Dept of Environmental Protection.

Require completion of a biological survey for projects in excess of 10 acres.

Resolve issue of public access with regard to agricultural development rights.

Prepare management plan for city owned open space.

Promote open space by creating trail maps and advertising trails in city promotional material.

Plant new street tree immediately whenever an existing street tree is removed.

Plant more street trees in city streets.

Pursue inter-municipal open space planning to share the benefits of trails, and protecting important ecological areas.

The city's open space stewardship responsibilities shall include:

- identifying open space with signage and installing boundary markers
- maintaining passable ROW's
- demonstrating annual budgets from every city department that will play a role in its maintenance
- with every sale of open space to the city, submitting a statement from the assessor's office declaring reduction from city grand list
- assuring clean title to the land.

PROTECTING RURAL CHARACTER

Require parking areas be as small as possible and built with low-impact design (LID) techniques.

Adopt new rural road standards modeled on traditional rural roads (narrow, sometimes unpaved) and new rural subdivision regulations.

MAROMAS

Undertake a feasibility study of the I-3 zone to evaluate likely development per existing regulations (includes building footprints and locations). Study alternate strategies for development such as resource-based recreation.

Review permitted and special exception uses in the I-3. Eliminate unsustainable uses and add sustainable uses.

Require environmental impact evaluations for projects in excess of 50,000 sq feet (building size).

Improve access to Maromas.

Promote the vision of a 2000-acre open space corridor in Maromas.

Preserve the Northeast Utilities properties as public open space.

Pressure state to transfer Dept of Mental Health Services (formerly CT Valley Hospital) watershed lands to the state DEP as a part of Cockaponsett State Forest.

Monitor the Blue-Blazed Trail and a surrounding buffer through the I-3 zone.

SCENIC RESOURCES

Adopt a city scenic road ordinance.

Create policies for city maintenance within rights-of-way.

Adopt provisions to protect scenic viewsheds.

Initiate a "Big Tree" survey.

Adopt design standards for the residentially-zoned land along the CT river.

Nominate Middletown greenways for designation under state greenways program.

Designate River Road as a scenic route.

Promote the protection of the Mattabesset Trail (both the hiking and river trails) on private lands by easements and stewardship through outreach and public education.

Support the proposed designation of the National Scenic Trail proposal for the Mattabesset Trail as part of the regional Metacomet-Mattabesset-Monadnock Trail.

Promote the enhancement of Sumner Brook and other riparian ecosystem and fisheries habitats and assess efforts on a regular basis.

Complete a scenic resources inventory to identify views from public roads and other vantage points. Review the CT River Gateway Commission's Vision (2004) for approaches applicable to Maromas.

Regulate cell tower location so as to not compromise scenic vistas or interrupt bird flight patterns.

AIR QUALITY

Require the city health department to monitor our air quality around the city in order to establish a city database. (Note: only CVH monitored now.)

Review city regulations on clear-cutting.

Create more pedestrian and bicycle links so people can get to places in other ways beside cars.

Educate citizens about sustainable lawn care, for example, how to maintain a lawn without the need for a combustion engine lawnmower

Implement state regulations and educate re: school buses idling. (This is prohibited.)

LAWN CARE PRACTICES

Implement Project Green Lawn: education about conventional lawn care and organic alternatives.

Commit city to organic lawn care on city properties.

Encourage alternatives to grass lawns.

BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION

Complete a natural resources inventory for the city and connect to the city GIS (geographic information system) database.

Conduct a Bioblitz Day (biological survey) for every area with significant natural interest listed on the state inventory.

Conduct a native specimen tree survey in the city.

Complete a wildlife inventory of wildlife corridors in the city. Retain a wildlife conservationist to complete a biodiversity conservation survey and plan for priority preservation areas.

Remove invasive plants on public land and/or replace with native CT plants.

Educate the public about protecting imperiled species.

Create a management plan to eradicate invasive plants on city land and educate private property owners about management to increase biodiversity.

Update database annually of CT Dept of Environmental Protection Natural Heritage Program list of species and significant natural communities.

Host educational workshops for the public about integrating biodiversity into local land use decisions.

Require Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for all development projects in Maromas residential or I-3 zones.

Protect ever-diminishing wetland ecosystem and environmentally significant open space by encouraging redevelopment of already degraded land rather than developing the countryside.

OTHER TOPICS NEEDING TO BE ADDRESSED

Urban forestry

Light pollution

Recreational opportunities

Connectivity of natural areas

Energy use and conservation