

These policies and actions are listed in the order discussed in the Plan of Conservation.

OPEN SPACE

Protect environmentally significant open space by encouraging redevelopment of already degraded land (already serviced by water and sewer) rather than developing countryside.

Continue to acquire open space and farm land to work toward the city's long-range goal) of preserving 25% (confirm) of the total city land.

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.

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

Focus open space acquisitions and conservation easements in areas where land abuts other open space so as to maintain continuity, to benefit the natural environment and wildlife.

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

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

Adopt land use regulations that protect open space.

Adopt conservation-oriented design guidelines.

Increase access to 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 Natural Diversity database 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.

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 rights-of way
- 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.

Create a thorough, well-written Plan of Conservation (single document) to accompany the existing 2010 Plan of Conservation Map.

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 committee, 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 effects on farming viability.

Recommend expanding agricultural uses on city lands (community gardens, etc).

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

Establish a fund to preserve farms, fund improvements and agricultural projects.

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

Assist farmers in applying for state and federal grants.

Track annual loss of farmland.

With the agricultural committee, establish a rating system to rate the most at-risk properties, such as properties for sale or most likely to be developed.

Monitor 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 Middlesex Chamber of Commerce.

Explore economic opportunities for expanding farming and agriculture (specialty farms such as vineyard, aquaculture, etc).

Hold events on farms to educate people about the benefits of preserving farmland (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 city neighborhoods.

Educate neighborhood about nuisances (noise, odor).

PROTECTING RURAL CHARACTER

Require parking areas to 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 scenarios per existing regulations and approximate taxes from new development (specifically, determine likely locations for new development, building footprint).

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).

Promote the vision of a 2000-3000 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 Metacomet-Mattabeset-Monadnock Trail and a surrounding buffer through the I-3 zone to protect scenic views.

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 city-wide "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 Mattabeset Trail (both the hiking and river trails) on private lands by easements and stewardship through outreach and public education.

Promote the newly designated National Scenic Trail which makes the Mattabeset Trail part of the New Hampshire-to-Long Island Sound Metacomet-Mattabeset-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 locations and wind generators so as to not compromise scenic vistas or interrupt bird flight patterns.

LAWN CARE PRACTICES

Encourage alternatives to grass lawns. by educations citizens and city personnel about sustainable (organic) lawn care practices.

Commit city to organic lawn care on city properties.

BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION

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

Update city native specimen tree survey and specify which trees are native.

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.

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.

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

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.

URBAN FORESTRY & FOREST MANAGEMENT

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

Plant more street trees in city streets.

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 low-impact design techniques (LID) for development in river corridors (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 bacterial loads in the Mattabesset River Basin and all city river basins.

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.

AIR QUALITY

Require the state DEP to monitor our air quality around the city in order to establish a city database.

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.)

TO BE DISCUSSED AT MARCH 30 MEETING

NEW ACTION STEPS (2):

Winter road maintenance: phase out use of sand and use _____ (liquid) instead

Strictly enforce inland wetland regulations and decisions.

OTHER TOPICS still needing to be addressed in the Plan of Conservation

Light pollution

Recreational opportunities:

Make approx. 50% of all open space accessible for recreation?

Energy use and conservation