

Booklet 4: Conservation Topics

Overview

This booklet is the first in a series of Strategy Booklets. These strategy booklets will guide discussions with the Planning and Zoning Commission about goals and strategies for the Plan of Conservation and Development.

This Conservation Booklet will guide discussions at our March 27 meeting as we create **overall goals** for each topic and determine the general direction for types of **strategies** to achieve the goals. “Conservation” focuses on those things in South Windsor that should be protected or enhanced. “Conservation” topics include:

- Community Character
- Natural Resources
- Open Space
- Farmland
- Historic Resources

The Scope of Work assumed that many of the goals and strategies for Natural Resources and Open Space are already well-developed due to efforts by the Commission and others, such as the Open Space Task Force. Therefore those two sections contain less background and analysis than the other topics.

“Conservation” focuses on those things in South Windsor to protect. **Strategies** for protecting things often fall into the following spectrum:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Less aggressive | | More aggressive | |
| | | | |
| Education / Information | Incentives / Assistance | Regulatory / Restrictions | Purchase / Ownership |

The strategic approach will differ for each topic. As you review each topic think about whether more aggressive or less aggressive strategies are appropriate.

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■ — — — — — ■

■ The dashed boxes indicate homework to fill in prior to our meeting.

Community Character

Natural assets, the appearance of buildings, the people, and community traditions all contribute to South Windsor's "community character." Community Character is important to enhance and protect because it:

- Instills pride in residents and businesses.
- Conveys an image or identity in the greater region / lets people know what is unique about South Windsor.
- Contributes to the overall quality of life.
- Can draw new businesses and residents to South Windsor.

Community character means different things to different people. At the public workshop and the subsequent online survey, the following emerged as important elements of South Windsor's character:

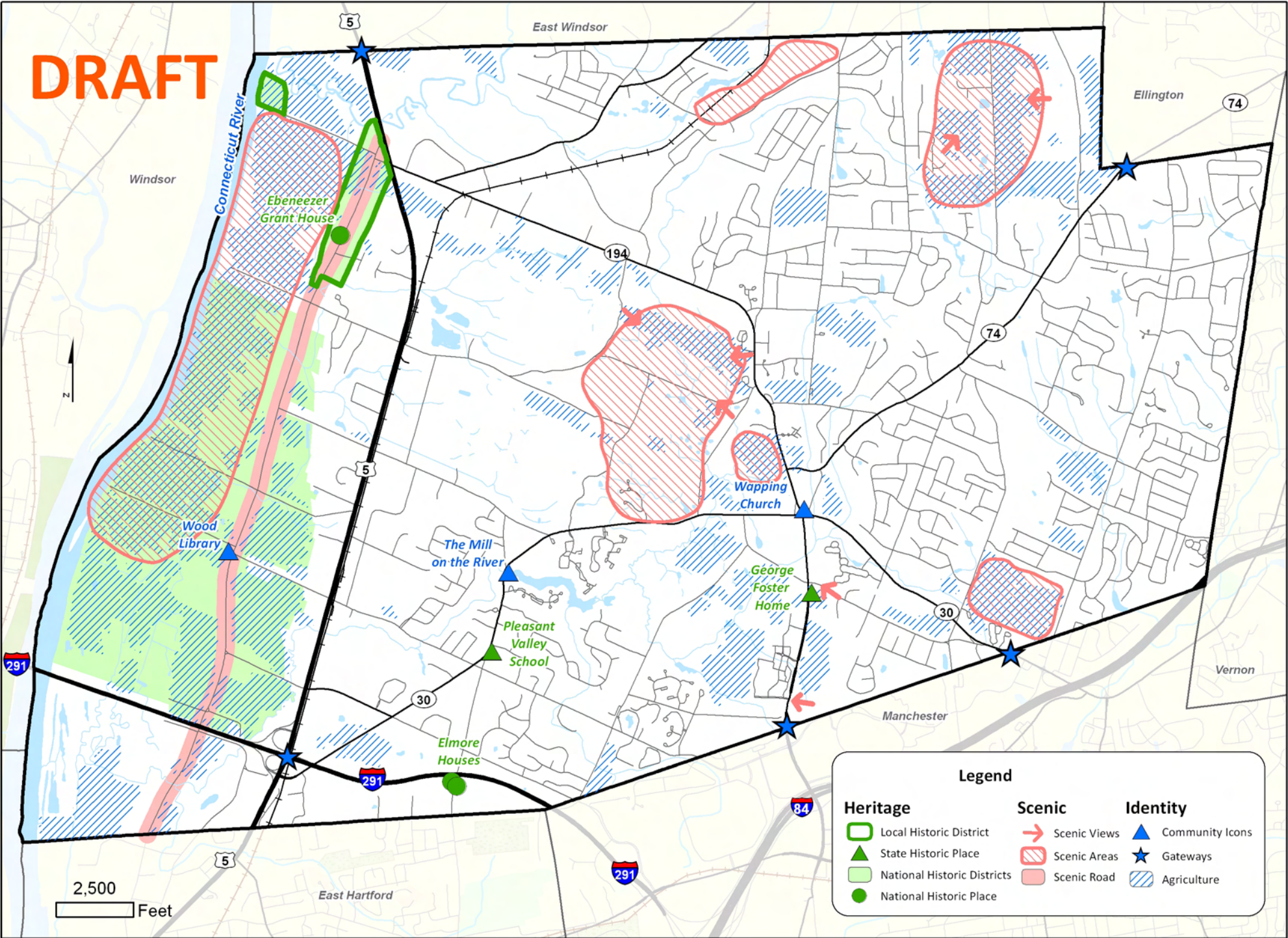
| Physical Assets | Community Spirit |
|--|------------------------------|
| Country / small town | People overall |
| Blend of natural areas and development | Neighbors |
| Historic areas | Businesses |
| Gateways to town | Volunteers |
| Appearance of built environment | Community events |
| Scenic areas and views | Community icons |
| | Town image / identity |
| | Quality town services |

Items in bold are covered in this section. Other items are either covered elsewhere in this booklet, will be covered in a future booklet, or (in the case of people overall and neighbors) are not addressed in a POCD. Some of these elements are depicted on the draft Character Resources Plan map.

HOMEWORK: List 2 to 3 Overarching Goals for South Windsor's Community Character.

Character Resources Plan

South Windsor, CT



Appearance of Gateways

Gateways listed in order of highest to lowest traffic levels. Traffic data is the average daily in both directions based on 2008-2010 data from CT Department of Transportation.

Green = Generally doing well.

Orange = Could be improved.

Route 5 from the South (roughly 22,000 cars per day)



Assessment:

- The subtle Welcome Sign cannot compete with the more prominent private signs.
- Issues raised related to appearance of buildings (Route 5 will be addressed in detail in a later booklet).

Opportunity:

- There is highly visible open land (where current welcome sign is located).
- Maybe a bold approach (e.g., creative “placemaking”).

Route 5 from 291 East-Bound Off-Ramp (roughly 21,000 cars per day)



Assessment:

- Highly visible and unique sign.
- Open, landscaped grounds convey a corporate feel.

Route 5 from 291 West-Bound Off-Ramp (roughly 21,000 cars per day)



Assessment:

- There is no welcome sign.

Opportunity:

- A welcome sign might be possible on other side of road, adjacent to off-ramp.

Buckland Road (roughly 21,00 cars per day)



Assessment:

- One the most-noted “prouds” is Evergreen Walk, yet visitors have no way of knowing that it is located South Windsor (no signs).
- Gateway Zone addresses issues related to appearance of streetscape and frontage.

Opportunity:

- Identify that this is South Windsor with a bold, unique public welcome sign (creative “placemaking”).
- Encourage incorporation of “South Windsor” into new private signs.

Route 5 from the North (17,800 cars per day)



Assessment:

- The adjacent site is agricultural, giving an immediate introduction to South Windsor’s agricultural heritage.
- Welcome sign is clearly visible, although utilities slightly detract.



Opportunities:

- Other communities have added touches to Welcome Signs further convey their agricultural heritage (e.g., East Windsor).
- As development occurs, retain “open” feel along the road (*Route 5 will be addressed in detail a later booklet*).

Route 30 from the South (13,100 cars per day)



Assessment:

- Simple, yet visible welcome sign
- Narrowing of road and trees along road signify transition from commercial area in Manchester to a residential area in South Windsor.
- Maintaining the trees along the road and a narrower road width are key to retaining the appearance of this gateway.

HOMEWORK: Additional observations or suggestions for any of the Gateways?

Aesthetics of the Built Environment

We will address the appearance of Route 5, the Town Center, and the appearance of abandoned / blighted properties in a later booklet. Here we focus on architecture, landscaping and lighting.

South Windsor's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations do include detailed landscaping requirements. The Zoning Regulations also require new lighting fixtures for business uses to be cut-off fixtures (to avoid upward lighting of the sky) and include provisions for reducing off-site light spillage.

Building architecture can be more challenging to address since communities have limited ability to require or deny development applications solely based on architecture (unless it is in a local historic district, a village district zone, or part of an incentive housing zone). Therefore most communities address design by providing expert guidance to applicants. South Windsor takes this approach by requiring review by the Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) for Site Plan applications for commercial and industrial buildings and for high density housing.

The following issues have been raised about architectural review:

- Lack of design guidelines / agreed upon standards to help guide applicants, the ADRC, and PZC.
- Protocol / enforcement if applicant does not abide by approved design.
- Are there opportunities to engage the expertise of the ADRC to projects beyond land use applications? E.g., town improvement project.

HOMEWORK: What strategies can further improve the appearance of the built environment? What additional issues exist?

Scenic Areas, Roads and Views

The Character Resources Plan Map indicates notable scenic areas, scenic views and the one designated Scenic Road in South Windsor. Possible approaches to preserve these areas are:

- Where possible, preserve scenic areas as open space.
- Ensure that new development and road improvements enhance the scenic value of areas.
- Avoid or discourage development that would block scenic views from public vantage points.
- Designate additional local scenic roads.

HOMEWORK: What strategies would help preserve scenic areas, roads, view:

Community Spirit

Local government relies on elected and appointed volunteers who serve on boards and commissions. These volunteers make tremendous time commitments to ensure that South Windsor remains an attractive place to live, work and visit. Volunteers are also actively involved in civic groups, religious organizations, and other non-profit groups or clubs. The Town should continue to publicize these volunteer groups and promote their events. The Town Council sponsors a recognition event for board and commission volunteers every two years.

Town Events celebrate the community, build pride, and bring residents together. The Town should continue to regularly sponsor community events and support events by others. One issue raised is that there is a lack of outdoor event space in the Town Center. There is a large, attractive private green at the Stop and Shop plaza. The Town could explore arrangements with the landowners for holding town events here and look for other options elsewhere in this area (we can examine this in more detail later when we focus on the Town Center).

Residents expressed a concern that South Windsor does not have a clear identity or reputation within the larger region. Spirit and pride is evident within the community and the Town's logo "One Town One Future" reflects that strength. Efforts to better understand how outsiders perceive South Windsor and create a stronger "brand" could help overcome this concern.

Residents recognize certain buildings and structures as being uniquely South Windsor. The Character Resources Plan map identifies some of these icons, including the Mill on the River, Wood Library and Wapping Church. Since these icons are well-recognized and cherished, the Town should work with the owners to ensure their continued presence in South Windsor and capitalize on their presence by using their images (and those of other community icons) when promoting or branding the Town.

HOMEWORK: What strategies can help promote community spirit in South Windsor:

Natural Resources

Natural resources include air, water, land, and biological resources. South Windsor's natural resources can:

- Contribute to the overall town character and provide aesthetic value.
- Contribute to the ecological well-being of the Town, Region and State.
- Help protect public health.
- Help meet our everyday needs (such as drinking water).
- In some instances provide recreational value (fishing, boating, hunting).

When planning for future conservation and development, natural resources can be placed into two categories:

Resources to **PRESERVE**

So important to public health and environmental quality that alterations **should be avoided** to the extent feasible.

Includes:

- Watercourses
- Wetlands
- Very steep slopes (15% +)
- 100 year floodplain

In most cases these resources are protected by regulations.

Resources to **CONSERVE**

Resources that can continue to provide their important functions while compatible development takes place - provided that the **development is sensitive** to the presence of the resources.

Includes:

- Existing and future public water supplies and wellheads
- Unique or special habitat (from CT Department of Energy and Environment Protection Natural Diversity Database)
- 500 year floodplain

The draft Natural Resources Plan map illustrates these two categories of natural resources. The Water Quality Plan provides water quality classifications for ground and surface water. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) has established water quality standards and classifications (see their website for details). The classifications and standards set goals for surface and ground water and indicate the types of uses allowed, among other purposes. Watercourses are rated based upon their use, potential use and known or presumed quality:

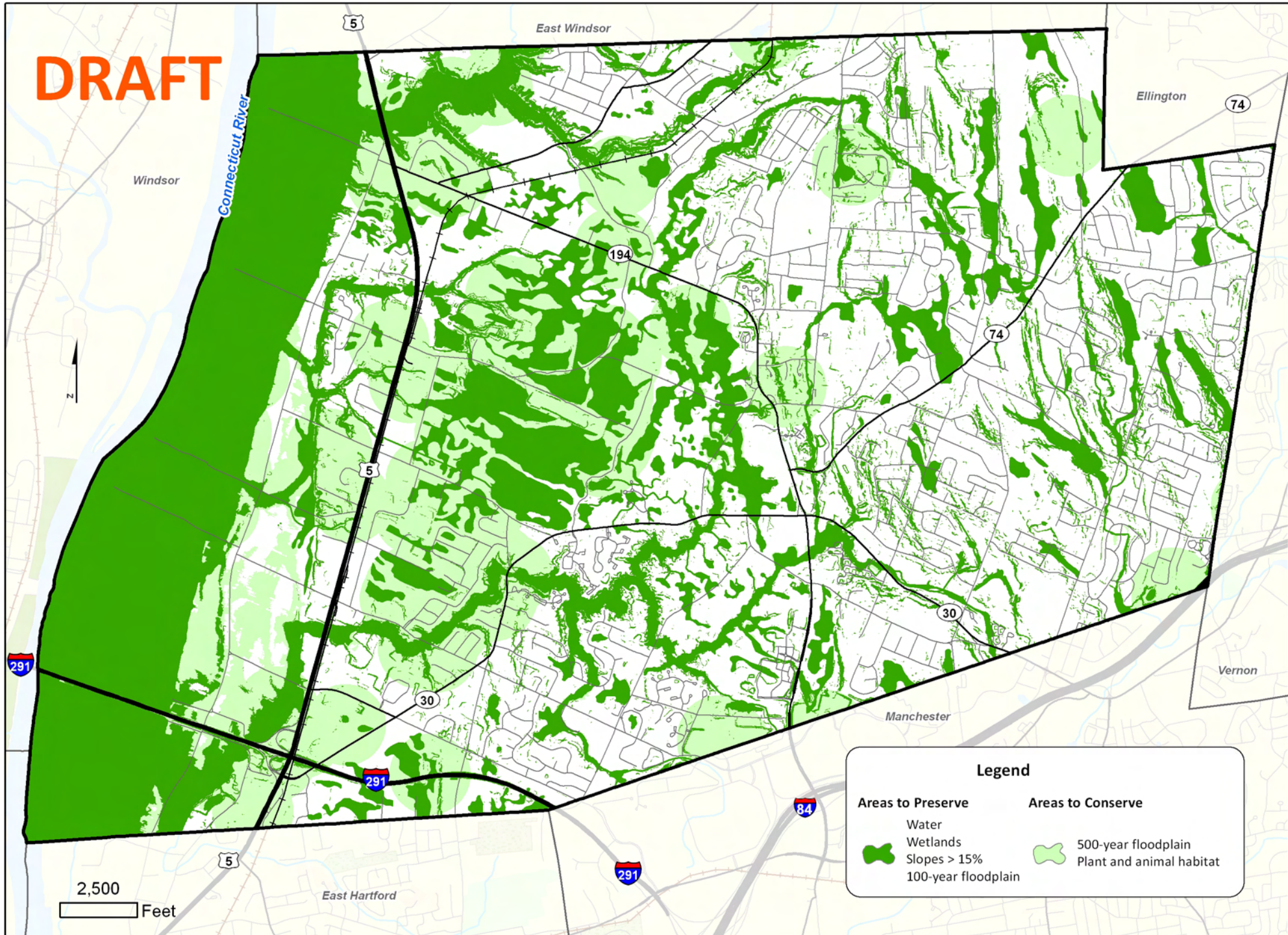
- Surface waters: ratings are AA (highest quality), A and B.
- Groundwater: ratings are AA (highest quality), A, B, and C.

The POCD might recommend maintaining the quality for AA and A water bodies and restoring or improving lower rated water bodies.

HOMEWORK: List 2 to 3 Overarching Goals for South Windsor's Natural Resources.

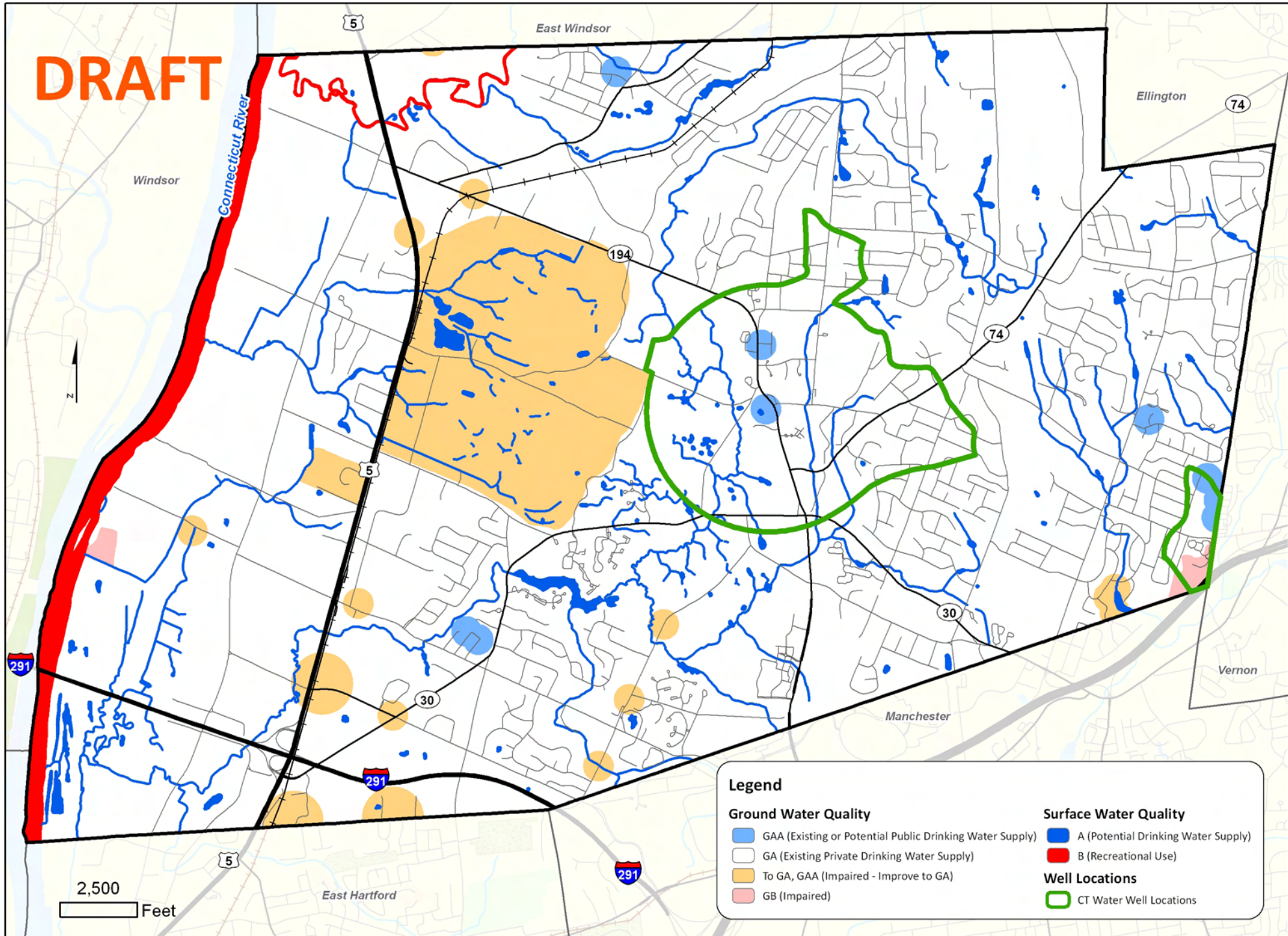
Natural Resources Protection Plan

South Windsor, CT



Water Quality Plan

South Windsor, CT



POCD CONSIDERATIONS

An overall approach to protecting natural resources in South Windsor might be 3-pronged:

| Approach | Strategies |
|--|---|
| 1 Where feasible, preserve sensitive natural resource areas as open space, especially “resources to preserve” | See goals and strategies for Open Space preservation in next section. |
| 2 Where preservation is not possible, reduce densities / development intensity. | <p>Should intensity for new development be further reduced on lots that have high percentages of Resources to Preserve? This can be achieved by 1 or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rezoning areas for lower densities ➤ Changing requirements in zoning regulations (e.g., lower coverage, greater setbacks, etc.) ➤ Subtracting natural resource areas from calculations when measuring lot size, coverage, or other standards. |
| 3 When development does occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design sites to avoid sensitive areas • mitigate impacts | <p>Allow flexibility in lot layouts / dimensional requirements so sensitive areas can be avoided on a lot and to minimize the clearing of vegetation.</p> <p>Improve water quality and reduce the amount of stormwater that runs off of properties by further controlling post construction runoff (e.g., through Low Impact Development techniques)</p> <p>Improve water quality through: education on impacts and best practices for fertilizer, pesticide use and other products that can impact water quality and eliminating or reducing their use on town properties.</p> <p>Better protect against intrusions into regulated areas post-construction.</p> <p>Need more information on possible future use of CT Water Company wellhead areas. If these are for future use, development standards may be needed.</p> <p>Address tree-clearing – preventing the clearing of lots before an application is submitted.</p> <p>Consider a no net loss of wetlands policy.</p> |

HOMEWORK: Does the 3-prong approach make sense for South Windsor?

Which strategies are most appropriate for South Windsor?

Additional Considerations

The concept of overall “sustainability” has been mentioned.

HOMEWORK: What does “sustainability” mean to you when thinking about the future of South Windsor?

Open Space and Greenways

A POCD might look at three types of open space, each described in this chart. The draft Open Space and Greenway Plan identifies these in addition to Desired Open Space (as determined by the Open Space Task Force).

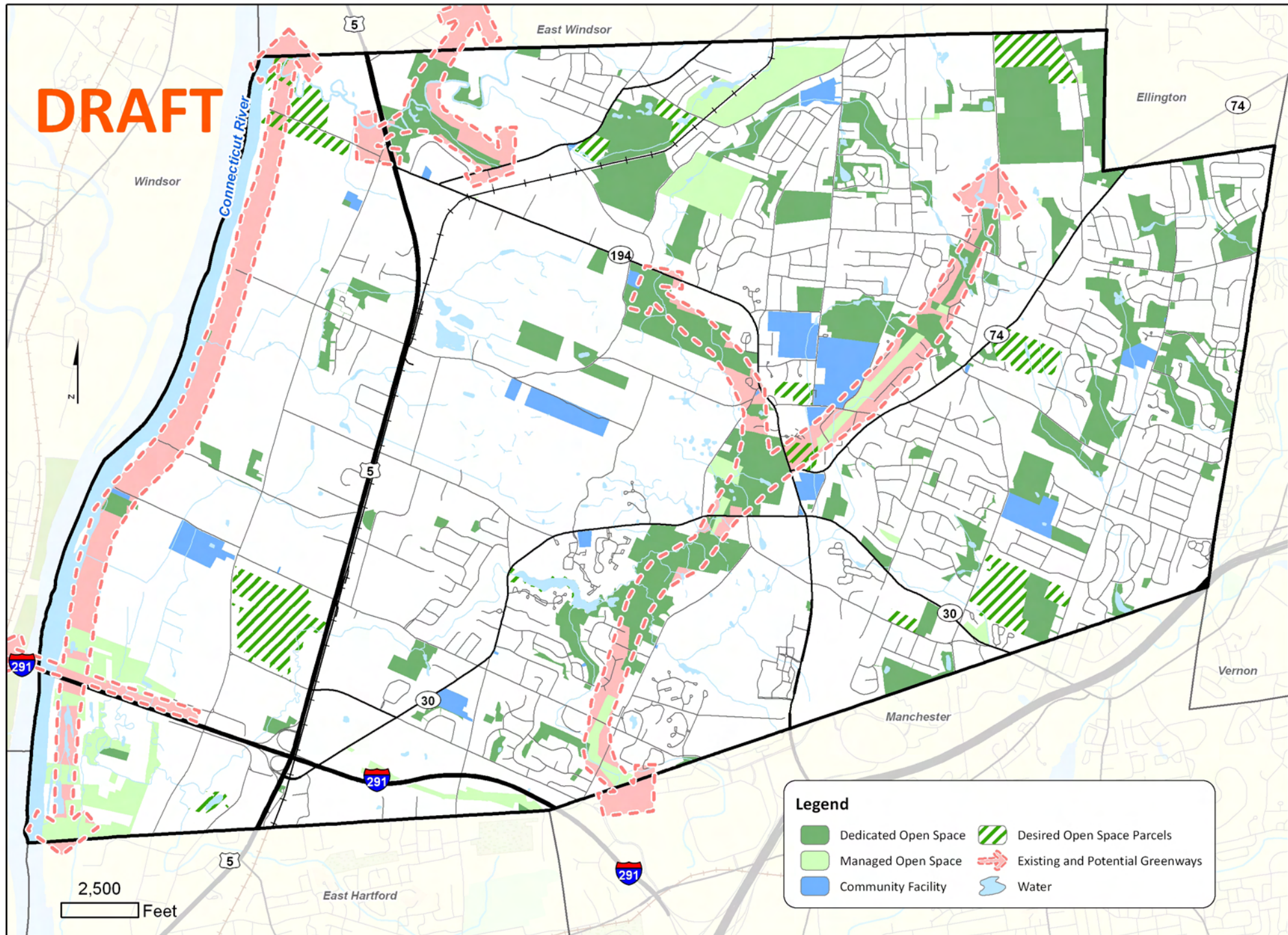
| | Definition | Examples | How much do we have? |
|-----------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| PROTECTED OPEN SPACE | Land that is permanently protected from development. | Donnelly Land Preserve, Priest Farm | 2,099 acres (11% of the Town) |
| MANAGED OPEN SPACE | Land that is used for open space purposes today but could be developed in the future. | Golf course, utility land, vacant publicly-owned parcels. | 569 acres (3% of the Town) |
| GREENWAYS | A corridor of open space and / or trails usually located along a natural corridor such as a river or along right-of-ways such as utilities or abandoned rail lines. Greenways are intended for recreational use or to protect natural resources. Greenways can be formal or informal. | State-designated Scantic River Greenway in north-west part of Town (a formal Greenway). | n/a |

It is assumed that the POCD will continue to support the goals and work of the Open Space Task Force and incorporate the Open Space Plan by reference. Open space acquisition is one tool for protecting natural resources. The earlier Natural Resources goals can incorporate goals and objectives in the Open Space Plan.

| OPEN SPACE PLAN Goals and Objectives | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide sites to protect surface and subsurface water resources 2. Add to existing committed open space 3. Assemble open corridors or greenbelts by adding to existing open space 4. Protect critical or threatened habitats 5. Protect groundwater within existing or potential public drinking water supply aquifers 6. Protect natural drainage ways 7. Protect lands of cultural importance | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Provide sites for active and passive recreation 9. Protect South Windsor's unique and significant natural features 10. Preserve farmlands and viable forest land/woodland 11. Preserve areas that shape community design and character 12. Protect steep slopes 13. Preserve areas that provide educational opportunities |

Open Space and Greenway Plan

South Windsor, CT



POCD CONSIDERATIONS

Address the **Management of Existing Open Space**. Approaches could include:

- Create Management Plans which clearly identify intended function (e.g., natural resource protection, farmland protection, recreation), use (walking, hiking, fishing, farming, etc.), and entity responsible for maintenance.
- Determine process for identifying and disposing obsolete open space parcels that do not serve a public purpose yet require public resources to maintain.
- Develop tools to better prevent encroachment.

For additional **Open Space Preservation**, determine if POCD should:

- Set a goal for the total amount of open space desired? If so, should it be a percentage or acreage goal? (*The Open Space Task Force recommends a goal of 200 acres over 10 years. Currently there are 4,091 acres of vacant land in residential zones. 200 acres is 5% of all vacant residentially-zoned land*).
- Indicate those parcels identified as Desired Open Space (see draft map)? Town Open Space Plan also identifies criteria for prioritizing parcels for acquisition.
- Indicate preferred tools when acquiring parcels? Or defer to the OSTF for those decisions?
- Contain a clear statement that fee-in-lieu of payments are for acquiring additional open space, not for maintenance.

For **Managed Open Space**:

- Is there a desire to turn permanently preserve Managed Open Space? If so, how?
- If Managed Open Space is developed in the future, is the current zoning appropriate?

HOMEWORK: Are these approaches appropriate for South Windsor? Are there additional considerations?

Farmland and Farming

Farmland reminds us of South Windsor's heritage, provides attractive scenery, and is an economic activity.

It is important to distinguish between the appearance of the land and farming activity. Residents tend to speak highly of farming because of the scenic value it provides – with open fields, historic farm houses, barns, and animals grazing. Keeping the land actively farmed helps to preserve these scenic attributes and provides economic activity and a local food source.

Possible Overarching Goals

- Retain South Windsor's working farms.
- When it is no longer viable or desirable to continue farming the land, retain those features that add scenic and cultural value to South Windsor.

Retaining Farms

Farmers face many challenges. Some of these challenges were identified in the Preservation Plan prepared by the South Windsor Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Commission (SWALPAC). Many of these items are outside of a town's control, but town policies and actions can help address or alleviate some challenges as noted. See chart on next page.

How Much Farmland is in South Windsor?

There is no accurate inventory of land used for farming.

UConn's CLEAR 2006 data of agricultural land is shown on the Character Resources Plan. It is based on "areas that are under agricultural uses such as crop production and/or active pasture. Also likely to include some abandoned agricultural areas that have not undergone conversion to woody vegetation." Using this data, there are 3,150 acres of farmland in South Windsor.

| ISSUE | POSSIBLE TOWN ACTIONS |
|---|---|
| <p>Neighbors: Abutting residents may pressure local officials to curb farming activities due to noise and odors.</p> | <p>Prevent intense residential development of land adjacent to working farms (e.g., by acquiring as open space, reducing density).</p> <p>When residential development occurs adjacent to farms, require the new development to provide a buffer between the houses and the farm and allow flexibility in laying out the lots so the houses can be placed further from the farm.</p> <p>Adopt a Right to Farm Ordinance, which declares that the Town does not consider farms to be a nuisance and sets forth procedures for resolving nuisance-related disputes between farms and neighbors.</p> |
| <p>Market: Lack of markets or fluctuating markets, inability to sell products at a profit, competition with larger industrialized operations.</p> | <p>Help market locally-grown products (e.g., on website).</p> <p>Coordinate / promote using local produce in schools, restaurants.</p> <p>Continue to support the farmers market.</p> <p>Promote agri-tourism (farm activities, events, tours).</p> <p>Help develop a new “brand” for South Windsor’s agriculture products. While tobacco is still important, there may be additional branding opportunities.</p> |
| <p>Financial: Inheritance taxes, property taxes, overall costs of farming.</p> | <p>Continue to encourage farmers to participate in the PA 490 farm program so that their land is assessed for its current use rather than potential use if developed.</p> <p>Purchase (or encourage the State or non-profits to purchase) the development rights of farms or purchase the land and lease it back to farmers.</p> <p>Explore other creative programs such as a Homesteading Program where the Town (or other entity) owns the land and house and farmers can live and farm the land rent-free.</p> |
| <p>Local Regulations: Restrictions on some activities, signs, farm stands and other provisions.</p> | <p>Conduct a zoning audit to ensure that the zoning regulations do not unduly restrict farming activities.</p> <p>Allow farms to create value-added products on-site (via zoning).</p> <p>Adopt an Agricultural Overlay Zone, which allows additional agricultural uses that may not be suitable elsewhere in town and have additional requirements for non-farm uses that occur in the zone (such as providing buffers).</p> |
| <p>Labor: Age of farmer, lack of interest by next generation to farm, lack of farm labor.</p> | <p>Stay in communication with farmers to remain aware of these challenges.</p> <p>Help retiring farmers find possible buyers, convert to Community Supported Agriculture, or other options.</p> |

Retaining the Scenic Value

When the landowners decides to discontinue farming and develop their land, the Town can work to preserve portions of the farmland or retain those features that contribute to the farming appearance. The same tools used to preserve natural resources would apply such as outright purchase, conservation easements, and flexible lot layout to preserve scenic features. Maintenance should be well-planned, since the retention of open fields requires mowing and the preservation of barns of other structures requires regular maintenance and repairs.

HOMEWORK: Which strategies are most appropriate for South Windsor? Are there additional strategies to retain working farms and farmland?

Historic Resources

South Windsor's historic and cultural resources are important because they:

- Contribute to character and aesthetics.
- Remind us of our heritage.
- Provide educational value.
- Can absorb some growth by providing opportunities to re-use / re-purpose existing buildings versus building anew.

South Windsor's designated historic places and districts are listed in the following chart and shown on the Character Resources Plan map. Many additional historic buildings and structures have been or are being inventoried but not officially designated.

A recent Connecticut study found that houses in local historic districts not only retain their property values but that their values increased greater than non-designated houses.

| HISTORIC RESOURCES | NATIONAL | STATE | LOCAL |
|--|----------|-------|-------|
| East Windsor Hill Historic District / Local Historic District | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Windsor Farms Historic District | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Elmore Houses | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Ebenezer Grant House | ✓ | ✓ | |
| District #5 School House (Pleasant Valley School) | | ✓ | |
| George Foster Home | | ✓ | |

"National" means a building or district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"State" means a building or district listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

"Local" means a district designated by South Windsor as a local historic district.

Sources: State Historic Preservation Office files and National Register of Historic Places online database.

What do Historic Designations Mean?

Listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places generally provides recognition and some limited protection measures.

Designation on the National and State Registers affect activities with Federal and / or State funds and may prevent unreasonable destruction of important historic resources.

Pursuant to the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act, citizens can intervene in the proposed demolition of structures listed on the State and National Registers.

A Local Historic District designation provides the highest level of protection. The local historic district commission is given the authority to regulate the construction and demolition of structures and the alteration of architectural features.

Village Districts, as enabled by the State and adopted by a Planning and Zoning Commission, also promote the preservation of historic buildings and streetscapes. It allows for the protection of areas that have distinctive character, landscape and historic structures.

Additionally, South Windsor is home to many other historically-important buildings around the Town. While some of these are listed on the State and National Registers, many are not.

Residents appear to appreciate historic Main Street and support preservation efforts in that part of town. While most of Main Street is located within a National Historic District, only a very small section of the Main Street area is a local historic district (see Character Resources Plan map). As the sidebar on p. 20 notes, a national designation does not afford much protection. In other words, most of the historic assets on Main Street are not protected.

Main Street is zoned as A-40 (minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet or slightly less than one acre). A build-out analysis was conducted to estimate the amount of and pattern of future residential development in residentially-zoned areas on Main Street. The analysis accounted for existing zoning requirements and wetlands, steep slopes and the 100 year floodplain. The analysis assumes that lots would be merged to maximize building potential. The results indicate that over 250 additional houses might be supported in this area under current zoning. Given the lack of sewers in this area, it is possible that a somewhat smaller number of houses would be supported. However, the pattern of new houses and high visibility (since the land is generally flat and open) would likely impact the character of the area.

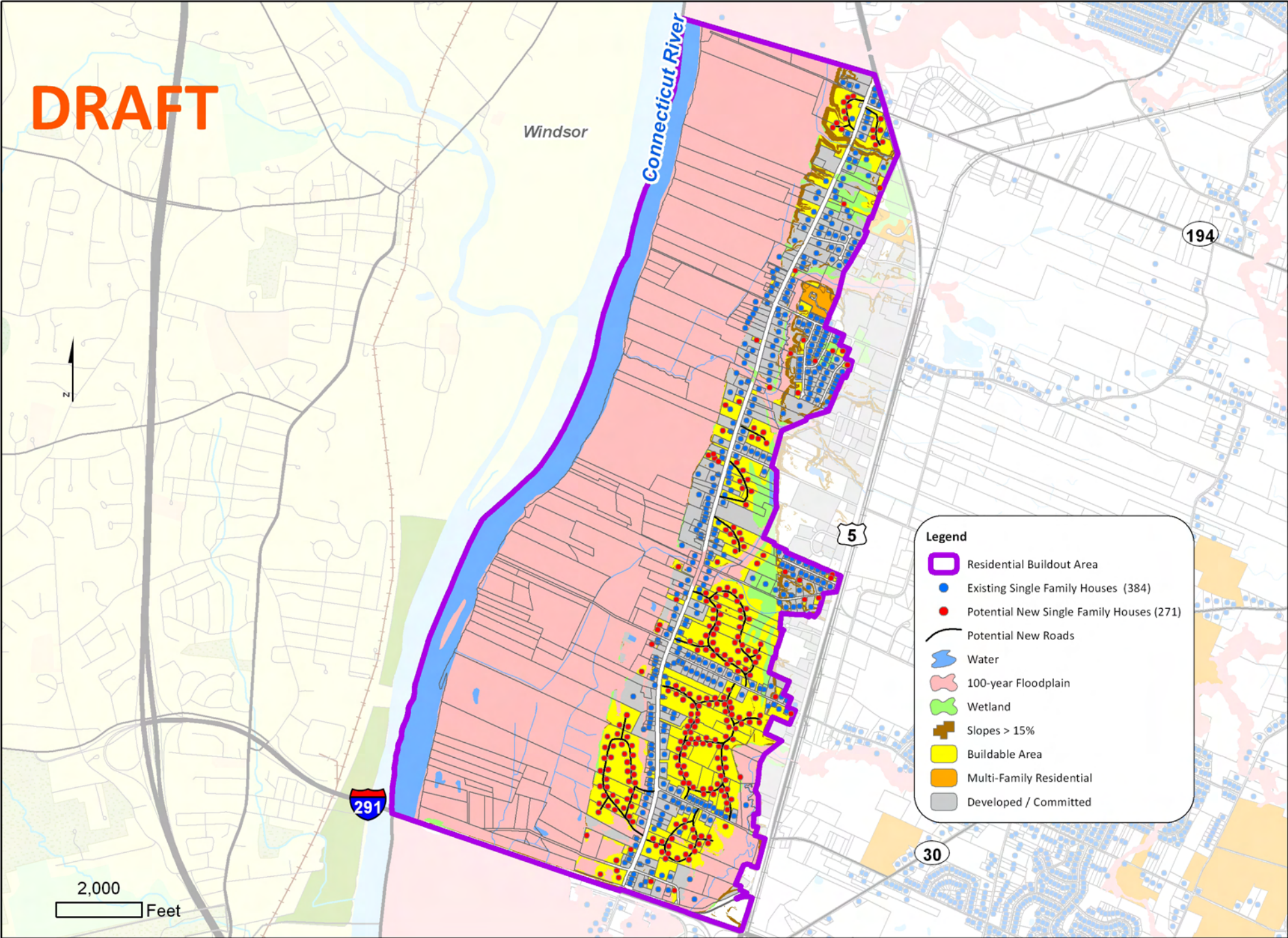
Outside of Main Street, local historic preservationists have expressed interest in having additional areas of town designated as Local Historic Districts, such as the Long Hill Road area and in raising overall awareness of historic resources located throughout the Town.

Challenges to preserving historic resources include:

- Balancing the preservation of historic structures and landscapes with property rights.
- Creating public awareness of historic resources and building public support for protection measures.
- Anticipating how new development might impact historic building patterns.
- Keeping historic buildings usable and livable (cost to maintain and update; meeting modern building and zoning requirements.)

Potential Buildout Scenario

South Windsor, CT



Possible Overarching Goal

- Preserve South Windsor's historic buildings, structures and landscapes.

Types of Approaches (text in [] indicates town is already doing or exploring):

| More passive | | More active | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | | |
| Education / Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaque on building <i>[do some already]</i> • Provide public information <i>[do some already]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominate for National & State Registers • Street plaques / kiosks <i>[do some already]</i> • Inventory historic structures <i>[have some, more underway]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Regular publicity / programs |
| Incentives / Assistance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For properties not in Local Historic District offer design review advice to interested owners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning incentives for owners to continue to use / maintain historic buildings • Become a Local Certified Government (opens up funding) <i>[looking into]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax incentives for owners (abatements, assessment deferrals) • Help owners identify / apply for federal tax credit programs |
| Regulatory / Restrictions | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition delay ordinance <i>[have, currently being updated]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate additional Local Historic Districts <i>[HDC looking into]</i> • Adopt Village Districts • Update dimensional requirements in zoning so new development is compatible in historic areas |
| Purchase / Ownership | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation easements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase by public or historic preservation entity • Homestead (owned by town or public entity; homeowners live in for free if they maintain structure) |

HOMEWORK: Which of these strategies are most appropriate for Main Street in South Windsor? Are there additional strategies?

HOMEWORK: Which of these strategies are most appropriate for historic areas/ resources elsewhere in South Windsor?

Background Information - Current POCD

For your information, the following summarizes the goals and tasks related to natural resources, open space, community character, agriculture and historic resources found in the current POCD. Note that some items are repeated multiple times because they apply to more than one topic. Some items have been implemented.

Community Character

- Identify and promote the preservation of scenic value.
- Retain natural and historic characteristics and scale while accommodating future growth through new or revised zoning regulations incorporating design standards, performance thresholds, aesthetic guidelines or other methods.
- Submission of an Existing Conditions Analysis in specific areas of the Town where physical and/or cultural features are particularly prominent, including areas addressed by the Town's Open Space Master Plan. (for residential development)
- Submission of a Vegetation Preservation/Planting Plan (VPPP) (for residential development)
- Review yard requirements in order to achieve design objectives such as side-loaded garages, house orientation, preservation of site features. (for residential development)
- Require a buffer area of existing vegetation to remain on public rights-of-way along arterial and collector roadways (for residential development)
- Evaluate the provisions of Architecture and Design Review and generate specific recommendations that will lead to context sensitive design.
- Zoning regulations – review options for screening (fencing, stone walls, berms).
- Prepare a Gateway/Corridor Aesthetics Improvement Plan

Natural Resources

- Identify and promote the preservation of natural areas of natural value.
- Promote actions, programs and policies that encourage the wise use of resources including alternative means of transportation, energy conservation and development patterns.
- Encourage programs and activities, both public and private, that maintain or improve environmental quality.
- Low Intensity Land Use Areas in recognition of their value for environmental, educational purposes.
- Ensure that new development, especially in areas of severely limited or sensitive resources, avoids impacts to natural systems.
- Submission of an Existing Conditions Analysis in specific areas of the Town where physical features are particularly prominent, including areas addressed by the Town's Open Space Master Plan. (for residential development)
- Require evidence of checking the databases of the State of Connecticut Natural Diversity Database.
- Submission of a Vegetation Preservation/Planting Plan (VPPP) (res dev).
- Review yard requirements in order to achieve design objectives such as side-loaded garages, house orientation, preservation of site features. (res dev).
- Increasing the caliper and density of required vegetation for development of sensitive areas.
- Requiring an "Existing Vegetation to Remain"
- Creating disincentives for clear-cutting prior to submission.
- Use landscaping credits for developers that utilize non-structural methods of stormwater detention/retention.
- Update site plan review evaluation criteria to incorporate a number of protection provisions.
- Continue supporting public education efforts to control sources of non-point pollution including proper use of household materials, disposal of household materials, use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, use of integrated pest management, operation and maintenance of septic systems, control of runoff and erosion (including construction sites, disposal of trash and yard waste and control of animal and domestic wastes).
- Work closely with the Inland Wetlands Agency/Conservation Commission to develop a town-wide wetland mitigation plan, establish best management practices, and formulate policies that will further achieve resource protection efforts.

Open Space

- Encourage greenway and natural resource management linkages within the Town, as well as with adjoining communities and the region.
- Submission of an Existing Conditions Analysis in specific areas of the Town where physical and/or cultural features are particularly prominent, including areas addressed by the Town's Open Space Master Plan. (res dev).
- Conduct a joint workshop with the South Windsor Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Commission (SWALPAC) and Open Space Task Force (OSTF) to discuss implementation mechanisms and on-going responsibilities.
- Keep the Open Space Master Plan maps current as references for land use commissions during regulatory reviews.
- Continue to communicate with OSTF to identify parcels of land for potential acquisition, particularly parcels at risk for development.
- Contact the Trust for Public Lands, The Nature Conservancy and other land preservation organizations to determine interest/ eligibility of parcels.
- Work with adjoining communities and CROG to develop a regional network of protected open space.
- Encourage the PARC, OSTF and SWALPAC to consolidate their inventories, condition surveys, resource databases and recommendations into a common format and centralized location to facilitate decision-making.
- Encourage the PARC, OSTF and SWALPAC to work together to prepare an action plan to coordinate priorities in a comprehensive manner.
- Continue to work jointly with the Council and other commissions to complete the Chapel Road to East Windsor trail system.

Farmland

- Low Intensity Land Use Areas in recognition of their value for agricultural purposes.
- Conduct a joint workshop with the South Windsor Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Commission (SWALPAC) and Open Space Task Force (OSTF) to discuss implementation mechanisms and on-going responsibilities.
- Keep the SWALPAC Preservation Plan maps current as references for land use commissions during regulatory reviews.
- Consider regulatory options for agricultural land preservation.
- Continue to communicate with SWALPAC to identify parcels of land for potential acquisition, particularly parcels at risk for development.
- Develop criteria for minimizing conflicts between agricultural uses and other uses on neighboring properties.

Historic Resources

- Low Intensity Land Use Areas in recognition of their value for historical purposes.
- Protect the Town's remaining historically or architecturally significant structures, archaeologically sensitive sites, and areas of unique or exceptional physical beauty.
- Require evidence of checking the databases State Historic Preservation Office and the Office of the State Archaeologist.
- Minimize development impacts on the Windsor Farms (Main Street) and East Windsor Hill Historic Districts.
- Consider alternative building and bulk requirements to ensure that new development is consistent in scale, lot coverage and setbacks to adjacent properties to maintain the historic and aesthetic quality of the existing townscape.
- Preservation of historic structures should be emphasized in Town Center

