

2016 Comprehensive Plan Chapter Topic Review

Topic: **Recreation** (our plan combined Open Space and Recreation in one chapter)

Summary of What Chapter Topic Needs to Cover:

- What recreation places do we have (public and private, indoor and outdoor), and where is the access location?
- What types of recreation places do we need? (what is missing now and what is needed for the future?)
- (Does our Town specialize in or have a preference for a particular type of recreation?)
- What areas in Town need what types of recreational areas? (what locations are missing opportunities?)
- Identify areas for potential expansion of recreational facilities

Details about what Chapter Topic Needs to Cover: (from standards manual)

- Analysis of existing and future recreational needs (inventory and assessment)
- Assess whether there are any neighborhoods or districts within the Town that do not have enough recreational resources
- Discuss whether the existing recreational options suit the needs of current and future residents
- Determine and discuss whether any existing recreational area are in need of improved access
- Identify appropriate areas for potential development or expansion of recreational facilities
- Include goals that embody the State's goals
- Include implementation actions that address
 - 1) the protection and management of existing recreational resources and acquisition of additional resources, if appropriate; and
 - 2) meeting identified recreational needs
- Relationship of Recreation Resources to the other Topic Areas, such as: Land Use, Natural Resources, Economic Development, etc.
- What opportunities do we have to expand or enhance the existing recreational outlets?

Basic State Goals for Recreation:

- 1) Preserve existing recreational resources and access to those resources
- 2) Improve access to natural areas that are suitable for recreation
- 3) Meet the identified recreational needs of our expanding population
- 4) Expand and strengthen the recreational and open space system

Are WG's existing Goals consistent with State Goals?

Sort of, in a very generic way. We could and should be more specific. Lots of mention about natural resources and less about pure recreation, especially if not in conjunction with open space. There should be something specific to recreation that is not association with natural resources. No mention of protecting or improving access to recreational or open space areas. No mention of meeting identified needs. Indications of expanding and strengthening the open space system though the GREENWAY notion, but still ignores the protection or improvement of pure recreational outlets.

Are existing Goals complete? No, we can be more specific.

Analysis of Amount and Quality of Inventory/ Baseline Information (existing Plan):

Plan provides a good start for inventory. Section needs to be updated, which should not be difficult to do. An assessment should be provided with each location that notes the condition and usage/popularity of each recreation facility/space.

Plan covers the following Recreation Topic Requirements:

- **Inventory and Analysis:**

- **On-going Conservation Efforts:**

- **Farm, Forest, and Open Space Act** (this is just a short term thing, and more of a tax relief than a means of protecting recreation or open space)
 - **Open Space Zoning** (this is a means of protection- to add a layer of zoning on top of ownership or easements)
 - **Interior Building Lots** (concept that was never truly implemented; this is not a means of protecting recreation or open space and is no longer applicable)
 - **Youth Litter Corp** (a litter clean up program for teenagers; this is not a means of protecting recreation or open space, though it helps beautify it and prevent pollution; discussion does not belong in this section; also, this program is no longer in place and therefore no longer applicable, though the Town may want to consider implementing something similar for various reasons.)
 - **State Greenways Program** (for developing a regional greenway system with abutting towns; I don't know much about this program, but there is a State guide plan for it; we should look into this and see if it is still relevant)
 - **Scenic Roads** (for designating and thereby protecting roads with landscapes of historic or scenic value; no roads in Town have been designated and my understanding is that the issue is fear of added regulations that would restrict people and businesses from doing what they want; we should have a serious discussion about this and determine if this is something that we want or don't want to keep in our Plan—some research and education/outreach would be needed to make this determination; however, this has nothing to do directly with recreation, but may indirectly support recreation such as biking or walking on the scenic roads to enhance that experience)

- **Public Lands- Inventory and Management Areas:**

- **Arcadia Management Area** (lists recreation uses that take place in this area and how many acres it is; specifies who owns it and who manages it; specifies access points; describes the natural resources on the property; all information needs to be verified and updated;
 - **Wickaboxet Wildlife Management Area** (includes access, acreage, and description of the natural resources; needs to state explicitly what the recreation opportunities available are and who owns and is responsible for management.)
 - **Liberty Tract** (part of Arcadia, not contiguous; site access is noted and recreation of walking trails noted.)
 - **Big River Wildlife Management Area** (needs clarification when talking about the river vs. the land of the management area; access points and

- acreage noted; natural resources within the property are listed; ownership and management entities noted (needs to be updated); brief mention of the recreation opportunities- needs to be updated; history of the land acquisition and purpose is briefly stated; today there are still issues that exist that need to be discussed in the plan)
 - **URI W. Alton Jones Campus** (ownership and maintenance responsibility noted; size/acreage given with description of the natural features; on-site facilities described—conference center, etc.; needs to be updated)
- **Quasi-Public Open Space & Recreation Sites:** (section needs to be updated)
 - **Audubon Society Fishersville Brook Wildlife Refuge** (gives ownership and maintenance, access, recreation provisions; to my knowledge, Audubon is a private entity, not quasi-public, and that while this property is open to the public, Audubon holds properties that are not open to the public.)
- **Private Open Space Conservation Easement**
 - **Pysz Farm** (ownership and history of the preservation effort given; management plan noted; not a recreation opportunity and should be moved to natural resources section).
- **Private Association Open Space & Recreation Property**
 - **South County Rod and Gun Club** (acreage, location, and facilities noted)
 - **RI Fish and Game Protective Association** (acreage, location, facilities, and type of recreation noted)
 - **RI Coon Hunters Association** (acreage, location, and type of recreation noted)
 - **Wickaboxet Camp Association** (access and location given with hint of the type of recreation available)
 - **The Saddle Rock Association** (private scenic view easement- not a recreation opportunity; move to natural resources section)
 - **Mishnock Beach Association** (private maintenance for beach access; acreage, location, and type of recreation noted)
 - **Mishnock Terrace Beach Association** (private beach maintenance; acreage and general location noted)
- **Privately Owned- Accessible to the Public:**
 - **Steppingstone Ranch** (acreage and recreation type noted; location not included)
 - **Oak Embers Camp Grounds** (camping; needs to be re-evaluated)
- **Town Hall and/or School Recreational Facilities**
 - **Town Hall/Library** (public spaces for gathering; plans for expansion of public use discussed, as well as sports fields; needs to be updated)
 - **Transfer Station** (the land is noted as open space- this is not a recreation facility and this should be removed and/or discussed in the facilities section)
 - **Lineham School Area** (ballfields)
 - **Exeter – West Greenwich Regional School District Facilities** (lists the type and number of recreation facilities available at each of the 4 schools in the district)

- **Recreation Organizations** (lists the sports league organizations and the summer recreation program; needs updating and contact information (websites?))
- **Recreational Facility Development – Needs Assessment**
 - **Town Hall Site** (notes a Master Plan and that this site was the priority identified by the Town Council for recreation.)
 - **Mishnock Area** (identified a need for a public playground in this area, which would need land acquisition- no source was given so maybe this is something that was voiced at a public meeting during development of the Comprehensive Plan.)
 - **Bailey Pond Area or Western Area** (discusses need to develop a public-oriented active recreation site in this area; discusses need to improve public access facilities (changing room and bathroom) for this area.)
 - **North-South Trail** (why wasn't this listed in the inventory section?; discussion on possible linkages to other trails within Town; discusses potential for GREENWAYS, but does not go into any description of what a greenway is;

Recreation Topic Requirements Missing:

- For On-going conservation efforts, the section needs to be cleaned up and updated; should note recreation group efforts, active Land Trust, Open Space Grants from RIDEM, active TNC (trails), DEM actively protecting land and adding to their assemblages, etc.
- For Inventory of Management areas, the section needs to be updated with all the new holdings for open space and recreation locations.
- Explicit discussion on how the needs were identified. We need to go through this needs assessment process.
- Discussion on whether the existing recreational options meet the needs of current and future residents. We can learn this through the needs assessment process (by flat out asking people this question.) During this process we should consider the spatial distribution of the recreation needs. (Address the question: Are there any areas in Town that do not have enough recreation outlets?)
- Find out if any recreation areas or potential recreation areas need improved access.
- Do any recreation areas need other improvements (parking, signage, waste facilities, etc.)
- Any other areas appropriate for development or expansion?
- What legal protection is in place to preserve existing recreational resources, and the access to those resources? (also, we should talk about what threats exist that could take away these resources)
- Discussion on Relationship of Recreation Resources to the other chapter topics.
- Current, specific implementation actions.

Existing Plan Discusses:

- Good introduction recognizes that late development of the Town has resulted in most of it being undeveloped today, and the 'sense of openness' due to the large amount of areas dedicated to public use.
- Table of State-owned properties provided, showing discrepancy between acreage data from the Town records and from the State records. Needs to be updated.

- Table of Quasi-Public properties, easements, and private opens space or recreation facilities provided, showing Plat and Lot numbers along with acreage.
- Table of Town-owned and Privately owned open space or recreation facilities, showing acreage and comments on the type of recreation features provided.
- Mentions that there was a Master Plan by a consultant for the Town Hall area that included recreational facilities (find out if there was a report, or only a picture); noted that this plan did not intend to address/determine recreational needs
- The Spatial distribution of recreation needs are stated for the east side, west side, and center of Town (Bailey Pond area, Mishnock Area, and Town Hall area). For this update, there should be an explicit needs analysis that considers if there are any other areas in need of certain recreation types.

Plan Needs:

- The tables for the inventory could be merged into one table and streamlined with the same data (right now they are inconsistent with the type of information presented in each table).
- The Inventory and Analysis section does not actually give any analysis
- The Needs Assessment section identifies areas of priority, but does not link to any indication of what the need is. What was the process that they used to come to those statements? There needs to be an explicit exercise to determine what our recreational needs are. This can be done with a survey and/or public workshop(s)—we need to find out if people are satisfied with what is here or not and what they feel we should focus our efforts on to develop, expand, or improve recreation in Town.
- May be worthwhile to go through a SWOT analysis for this chapter topic (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Implementation Section:

This section needs a complete overhaul. Some policies and implementation items are good and should be evaluated for the updated plan. Not all goals have an implementation action (so how do you ever work towards that goal?). Some policies might actually be implementation actions. Many implementation actions are not specific enough.

The Policies section also needs an overhaul-- weeding out of irrelevant policies, relocation of some off-topic policies to the appropriate chapters, and new fresh policies that will support what we want to achieve (support the new improved goals).

Amount/Type of Information Required to Bring Topic Up to Date and Meet the Current Data Requirements:

- We can look up conservation land and recreation land through our maps and Tax Assessor Database.
- We can brainstorm with the Conservation Commission, Land Trust, and School Department (and any other stakeholders) for the recreation areas that are missing in the inventory, and for information pertaining to the condition and usage of the areas.
- We can do an internet search for West Greenwich recreation/ things to do/ etc. (can also see people's comments in reviews on-line)

Evaluation of access to information and ability to perform required/ thorough analysis:

Access to information for an updated inventory is available and should be easy to do. More effort will be required to gather information on and assess what the needs are, though this can be easily worked out with a survey or public meetings/workshops.

Consideration if a consultant is needed to perform update of this topic:

We should be able to do all of this ourselves.

Other available resources:

Interview our past Recreation Directors

Relevant Documents to be Reviewed:

- State Outdoor Recreation Plan (Guide Plan Element 152)
- Recreation Survey I filled out back in 2001 for the State
- Recreation Conservation Open Space Plan for West Greenwich, RI, by the WG Planning Board, 1976
- RIDEM's website for State Management Area information

Stakeholders/Who should be involved for this Chapter Topic:

- (do we have a recreation director anymore?)
- Residents/ general public (community engagement needed- survey, workshop, etc.)
- Department of Public Works
- Land Trust
- Conservation Commission
- The Nature Conservancy
- The RI Audubon
- E/WG School District Department
- Sports leagues (adult and children)- EWG Soccer, football, baseball, softball, etc.
- Horse Club, stable owners
- Mountain Bikers Association
- Rhody Rovers (events)
- Sportsmen/Gun Clubs
- Gym owners
- Blueways/Greenways (RI Land Trust Council see www.exploreri.org)
- Lake Mishnock Beach Association
- (knitting clubs? the model airplane group, etc.)
- (Louttit Library – Community Room)

Effort Needed for Issues under this topic that the community needs to learn more about:

People generally understand and support various recreational activities and can assess easily what they want for recreation. No educational outreach needed for this topic.

Use the Guiding Questions from the Guidance Manual for the Stakeholders to answer in order to develop the discussions needed to be had in the plan:

- Assess the geographic distribution of recreational resources by answering the following:
 - Which recreational resource-types are intended to serve the entire municipality?
 - Which resource-types are intended to serve only the surrounding neighborhood?
 - Are any residential neighborhoods lacking playgrounds or ball fields?
 - Which areas of the community are underserved by passive recreational options, such as walking paths and community parks?
 - Which commercial and/or mixed-use areas are lacking parks and/or plazas?
 - Are there any areas of the community for which greater levels of development are being targeted?
 - Are any recreational areas likely to be impacted by natural hazards over the 20-year planning horizon?
- Determine the suitability of existing recreational options for meeting the needs of existing and future residents:
 - Have there been any repeated requests for a certain type of recreational area or facility?
 - Does one type of recreational facility have a long waiting list for access (e.g. are soccer games booking 3-months in advance?)
 - Have there been any changes to the recreational options that have limited the availability of certain types of recreation?
 - Are the demographics of the municipality changing in a way that would place more of an emphasis on certain types of recreational resources? For example, an aging population may require more passive recreational opportunities, whereas an increasing family population may require more playgrounds and sports fields.
- Determine whether existing recreational areas are in need of improved public access, and whether these needs are likely to remain the same, worsen, or be alleviated in the future:
 - Are there any large open space areas or other natural resource areas that are intended for recreation, but have no or very few public access points?
 - Are there any recreational areas with very low usage rates that would otherwise seem suitable for use?
 - Are there any recreational areas where parking shortages are causing overflow parking on local streets?
 - Are any recreational areas missing bicycle racks?
 - Are any recreational areas cut-off from surrounding neighborhoods due to poor sidewalk conditions or lack of sidewalks?
 - How can the municipality better link its existing recreational areas?
 - Are there any current programs that would affect the future accessibility of the community's open spaces?
- Discuss whether there are any specific usability concerns related to the function and/or maintenance of recreation areas:
 - Is the vegetation and pavement well maintained?
 - Is the area well lit for nighttime activities?

- Is the recreational equipment run-down or in need of repair or replacement?
- Is the area designed in a way to allow multiple users and/or types of recreation to occur simultaneously?
- If the area is designed for use by children, are there areas for parents to sit and monitor their children's activities?
- Are there shaded areas?
- Are there other public amenities, such as benches, trash cans, water fountains and restrooms?
- Are walking paths clear of vegetation and other types of debris?
- Identify areas in Town where expansion of outdoor recreational facilities and open space would be feasible.
- Develop goals that further the State's goals of expanding and improving recreational resources and access to those resources:
 - What level of recreational access is appropriate for your municipality?
 - What types of recreational areas are most appropriate for the municipal context?
 - How can the municipality achieve a variety of recreational options in every neighborhood and district?
 - How can the municipality better support the continued protection of recreational areas and open spaces?
- Develop policies and implementation actions that work towards achieving the stated local goals and further the two State goals:
 - What is the protection status of municipally-owned recreational areas? How can the municipality preserve into perpetuity areas that are not currently preserved?
 - What programs are currently in place to assist with open space conservation? How can these programs be better utilized? How can these programs be adjusted to ensure permanent protection?
 - Are there organizations within the municipality that could become partners in recreational preservation efforts?
 - Which natural resources and open space areas that are not currently being utilized for recreation would be suitable for recreation uses?
 - How can the community better support land owners who may want to make their open space areas accessible by the public?
 - Are there any ordinances or regulations that could be strengthened to increase public access to natural areas and open spaces?
 - Are any existing access points currently being overwhelmed by visitors? Is there a need to increase access to any particular natural areas?
- Include policies and implementation actions that address meeting identified recreational needs that are of the greatest importance to our Town:
 - How can the municipality work to improve the condition of recreational areas?
 - What design standards can be put in place to improve the usability of recreational areas?
 - Is there a program in place to maintain recreational areas? If so, how can the program be made more effective? If not, how could a program be implemented?

- Are there any “easy wins” that the municipality could implement to meet identified needs, such as adding public amenities or fixing sidewalks?
- How can the municipality begin to better geographically distribute recreational opportunities throughout the community?
- What policies can be implemented to require new development to set aside recreational area?
- Can any existing recreational areas be retrofitted to accommodate resources in high demand or to allow use by multiple types of recreation?
- How can existing barriers to access be overcome? What policies can be put in place to support better access to recreational areas?

Attachments:

1. State Goals and Policies for Recreation- excerpt from the RI Comprehensive Planning Guidance and Standards Manual (pages 96-97)
2. Sample Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions for Recreation, from GM (p. 108)
3. Excerpt from WG Comp Plan, Open Space and Recreation Goals and Policies

Goals + Policies - Recreation

FROM THE STATE GUIDE PLAN

Provide a diverse, well-balanced system of public outdoor recreation facilities.

Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, Objective 2C, page 5-9

Avoid the loss of recreation and open space system land through conversion to alternative uses, and enhance open space recreation values, where possible, through the management of public lands.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 3, Policy RCOS-29, page 4.44

Promote recreational activity among the population as a means of improving their health and general welfare.

Goals and Policies, C. Goals and Policies for Facilities and Services, Goal 6, Policy 8, page 14

Rhode Island will improve its system of outdoor recreation facilities and conservation areas to meet the needs of its residents and visitors.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, page 4.22

Insure a system that is accessible to all potential users.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 3, Policy RCOS-25, page 4.40

Strengthen and expand opportunities for open space and outdoor recreation for urban residents.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, Policy RCOS-20, page 4.36

Strengthen and expand community-based recreation facilities and open spaces to meet close-to-home needs.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, Policy RCOS-21, page 4.36

Preserve and expand public access to the shoreline.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, Policy RCOS-13, page 4.27

Preserve and expand access to the state's, rivers, lakes, ponds, streams, and other inland waters for recreational use, while maintaining water quality.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, Policy RCOS-16, page 4.31

To provide statewide recreational activities and promote tourism in forested recreation areas.

Forest Resources Management Plan, Forest Recreation and Tourism FRT Goal, page 6.39

Maintain and expand the state's network of trails and pedestrian paths, in natural and built areas.

Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, Policy RCOS-19, page 4.34

FROM THE RHODE ISLAND GENERAL LAWS

To promote the preservation of the open space and recreational resources of each municipality and the state.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL section 45-22.2-6(b)(4)

The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

1) Providing land for public recreation and the conservation of natural



For more information on the goals and policies contained in State law, see Freedom to Fish and Marine Conservation Act, RIGL section 20-3.2-2; Metropolitan Park District, RIGL section 32-2-2; Towns Parks and Recreation Systems, RIGL section 32-3-2; Green Acres Land Acquisition, RIGL subsection 32-4-2(1); Natural Heritage Preservation Program, RIGL section 42-17.5-2; Preservation of Open Space, RIGL section 42-17.9-1; and Rhode Island Greenways Act of 1995, RIGL subsection 42-125-2(b).

resources promotes the public health, prosperity, and general welfare, and is a proper responsibility of government;

(2) The lands now provided for those purposes will not be adequate to meet the needs of the expanding population in years to come;

(3) The expansion of population, while increasing the need for those lands, will continually diminish the supply thereof and will tend to increase the cost to the public of acquiring lands suitable and appropriate for those purposes; and

(4) The state should act now to acquire and to assist local governments to acquire substantial quantities of those lands now available so that they may be used and preserved for future use for those purposes.

Green Acres Land Acquisition, RIGL subsection 32-4-2(1)

The general assembly recognizes that open land with scenic, natural, and ecological value is important to the character of Rhode Island and provides opportunities for passive recreation.

Natural Heritage Preservation Program, RIGL § 42-17.5-2

SIGNIFICANCE FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

The goals and policies of the State related to recreation collectively affirm the importance of recreational resources for the health and welfare of Rhode Island's residents and the value these resources provide for tourism and community character. As such, the State's goals and policies call for the expansion and improvement of recreational resources and access to said resources to meet the needs of the State's population.

To be consistent with the State's many goals for recreation and to receive State approval, comprehensive plans must include goals, policies and implementation actions that address the following topics:

- Preserving existing recreational resources and access to those areas;
- Improving access to natural areas that are suitable for recreation; and
- Meeting identified recreational needs.

The section of this chapter entitled [Develop Policies and Implementation Actions beginning on page 104](#), provides additional detail on addressing these three topics.

A NOTE ON RECREATION AND "OPEN SPACE"

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act references "open space" and outdoor recreation together within the same section of the law ([RIGL subsection 45-22.2-6\(b\)\(4\)](#)). This guidance manual has purposefully stayed away from using the term "open space" as it seems to be a bit confusing.

The Act defines "open space" as "any parcel or area of land or water set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or

SAMPLE GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS FOR RECREATION

SAMPLE GOAL

- Our community will have recreation facilities that are state-of-the art and meet the needs of all residents.

SAMPLE POLICIES

- Promote, maintain, and enhance a broad range of community-wide and neighborhood recreational facilities to meet the needs and desires of residents.
- Create a sustainable, high-quality parks and recreation system that reflects the unique identity of our community.
- Provide the necessary resources to build and maintain a park and recreation system that offers a diversity of recreational opportunities for all residents.
- Connect neighborhoods and open spaces through a network of bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets and trails.
- Increase access to park and recreation facilities.
- Ensure the success of public spaces by involving the community in planning and maintenance efforts.

SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Strategically acquire parcels to link open spaces.
- Expand and diversify park use opportunities.
- Establish consistent park signs.
- Amend local ordinances to permit enclosed off-leash dog parks.
- Explore opportunities to create new open spaces along waterways (rivers, ponds, streams) where none currently exist.
- Encourage community ownership of

neighborhood parks and other civic and public spaces through “friends of...”, “park watch dogs” and similar programs.

- Provide opportunities for community input in park and recreation facility renovation efforts.
- Maintain a database of open space parcels, public parks, boat launches, and beaches within Special Flood Hazard Areas and projected sea level rise areas to monitor impacts to these areas from storm events and incremental sea level rise, and develop strategies to preserve the availability of these areas for continued public use.
- Incorporate sea level rise projections and data into criteria for acquisition, easements, protection and restoration of open space, recreation, and public access areas.

SECTION III OPEN SPACE & RECREATION GOALS & POLICIES

A. GOALS

- G#1 Identify, inventory, and protect significant open space and recreation areas that promote the preservation of natural resources and the rural identity of the community
- G#2 Promote the preservation and conservation of public and private open space areas
- G#3 Protect, preserve, and manage natural resources and those environmentally-sensitive areas deemed worthy of preservation for open space and active/passive recreational needs
- G#4 Adopt regulatory measures to guide and manage development activity that threatens to degrade valuable natural resources and severe constraints to development
- G#5 Promote conservation, preservation, and enhancement of family farming/agricultural opportunities to protect large tracts of open space from subdivision and to further enhance the rural identity of the Town
- G#6 As the Town is located amidst adjacent communities that have formed a large Greenbelt separating urban areas, it is recommended the Town be promoted as a regionally-significant GREENWAY by encouraging "Greenway Corridor Connections" that link various state-owned properties with abutting communities
- G#7 Plan and implement GREENWAYS and greenspace as part of community development and as a means of utilizing the potential aesthetic benefits thereof
- G#8 Develop strategies through educational activities to inform, enhance, and elevate public awareness of the contributions that GREENWAYS, Scenic Highway designation, Flexible land use techniques, and the State Farm, Forest, & Open Space Act have on preserving the rural quality of life in the Town
- G#9 Develop strategies to guide efforts to protect open space resources and to provide varied recreational opportunities
- G#10 Provide opportunities for both active and passive recreational facilities to service various neighborhoods in the Town

B. POLICIES

- P.1** The Town shall implement policies to preserve the rural character and scenic/visual resources of the community
- P.2** Emphasis shall be placed on the management of growth and development to enhance the traditional rural landscape and natural environment. Flexible land use regulations and techniques should be considered and adopted to guide growth and development in a direction that complements and preserves the inherent rural landscape and land use patterns of the Town
- P.3** To achieve natural & cultural resources preservation and prohibit compromise of existing sensitive areas, the Town supports the premise that land owned by the State and other quasi-public organizations be maintained as management areas
- P.4** Adopt a Scenic Road ordinance that includes appropriate measures to preserve and protect the rural character of the Town
- P.5** The Town should adopt measures designed to ensure protection of existing natural/cultural resources and open space. Future growth should be directed only to limited areas classified as "slight-moderate" constraints to development-- as shown on the "Composite Constraint Map" (see Natural and Cultural Resources Element)
- P.6** The Town shall utilize a variety of conservation techniques designed to promote preservation or management of environmentally-sensitive areas by promoting regulations and/or programs that discourages development of those areas labelled as "severe" constraints as shown on the "COMPOSITE Constraint Map" (see Resource Element)
- P.7** Preserve the capacity of the land for wildlife habitat, agriculture, wetlands and groundwater protection, and other town resource needs to the fullest extent possible by promoting use of Flexible development options and alternatives or land acquisition programs
- P.8** Encourage Flexible "Building Envelopes" through the use of a zoning overlay/ordinance or increase minimum residential building front yard varying setback standards ranging between 50-foot depth to 100-feet (in the RFR-2 district)

- P.9 Consideration should be given to promote an Interior Building Lot (IBL) ordinance as means of ensuring preservation of open space in perpetuity
- P.10 Consideration shall be given to promote Open Space Cluster Development as a means of protecting valuable cultural/natural resources and scenic areas that contribute significantly to the rural character of the Town
- P.11 Continue to promote an incentive to landowners to preserve private open space through the use of the State Farm, Forest, & Open Space Act program pertaining to property value assessment and taxation
- P.12 Identify and protect natural/cultural resources through development plan review, design guidelines, and Flexible development siting (see Development Impact Statement and IBL preliminary ordinances in Appendix)
- P.13 Develop a system of Greenways/Trails
- P.14 Promote the creation of "Loop Trails" (Spur Trails) connecting the North-South Trail with the Wickaboxet Management Area and the URI Alton-Jones Campus
- P.15 The Town shall coordinate with the RIDEM Division of Planning any Greenway plans pertaining to the existing North-South Trail
- P.16 Collaborate with the URI Alton-Jones Campus to potentially develop a "destination" location for the North-South Trail hikers that promotes Greenway Corridor linkages and economic incentives
- P.17 The Town should collaborate with the Alton-Jones Campus to develop strategies to promote open space preservation, Greenways, environmental education, and trail linkage
- P.18 Proposed linkage of the Alton-Jones Campus to Big River Management area could effectively connect the eastern and western areas of town by way of a designated Greenway. Said linkage may be achieved by creating a COMBINATION TRAIL

(hiking/horseback riding) along one (1) side of a designated route within the street Right-of-Way often reserved for sidewalk purposes. Three (3) routes are recommended; one, via Sharpe Street and Weaver Hill Road; two, via Linden Lane to Regina Drive to Fry Pond Road to Robin Hollow Road; and three, via John Potter Road to Old Raccoon Hill Road to Tanglewood Drive to Robin Hollow Road

- P.19 Recommend the Town consider subsidizing either through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) or the open space recreation fund, the creation of said Greenway Combination Trail that connects the eastern and western areas of town via one 5-foot wide gravel base/stone dust trail or distinctive striping on paved roadways where necessary
- P.20 Recommend proposed subdivision roads--where practical--shall include Greenway Combination Trails on only one (1) side of the proposed roadways in the design of the Master Plan stage
- P.21 Promote the continuation of existing Subdivision Regulation policy requiring dedicated Open Space or "payment in lieu of dedication" in all major subdivision plans
- P.22 The Town recognizes the potential of three (3) major recreation areas away from school facilities: one; the Town Hall Site; two, Mishnock area; and three, the Bailey Pond or western area
- P.23 Promote the Town Hall open space/recreation site--which features the Town Hall and Library as destination points--as the Town Center
- P.24 Develop a non-profit West Greenwich Recreational Facility Committee to oversee and manage programs designed to provide for recreational opportunities for local residents at the Town Hall Site and Mishnock areas
- P.25 The Town shall follow the Gifford Master Plan study as a guide for of the Town Hall Site--dated December, 1993--recommending 6-Phases for development based on resource availability
- P.26 To further ensure open space land protection the Open Space & Public Land (OSPL) zoning district adopted by the Town is designed to further ensure protection of all OSPL owned by a public agency in the event of transference or sale

- P.27 Coordinate with the URI Alton-Jones Environmental Education program using a local Greenway as a field laboratory for use by schools, social clubs, and organizations
- P.28 The 38-acre Town Hall Site is recommended for Phased development as the priority site for servicing the recreational needs of the entire Town as the functioning Town Center
- P.29 Promote multi-purpose court development in Phase II of the Town Hall Site
- P.30 Continue to promote utilization of existing on-site school recreation facilities
- P.31 Locate resources to aid in financing and developing recreational facilities
- P.32 Recommend the Town acquire a land parcel (or seek donation thereof) in the Mishnock Area to service neighborhood public recreational needs
- P.33 The Town recommends and encourages the Bailey Pond area residents (Wickaboxet Camp Association) utilize, maintain, and seek grant funding for the existing Privately-owned open space/recreation area that serves neighborhood needs
- P.34 Consider employing a part-time Town Recreation Director to oversee open space/recreation issues
- P.35 Licensed campgrounds are encouraged in town where on-site facilities prove suitable to safely accommodate prospective clientele
- P.36 The Town should consider identifying and acquiring a land parcel in the western end of town to service neighborhood public active recreational needs or mandate future major subdivisions to provide said facilities