
Conservation & Open Spaces

ISSUES FOR THE NEXT DECADE

Open space is most often thought of as land set aside for municipal uses, particularly passive and active recreation. However, the conservation and preservation of open space serves a handful of typical functions – ecosystem, aesthetics, economics, recreation, and public health and safety – for which the Town is always working to strengthen.

Natural areas are reserved for the purpose of protecting natural resources, including plants, animals and water. The maintenance of the quality of natural resources depends on abolishing the threats sometimes associated with development, such as pollution, invasive plant species, and detrimental human activities. All of these threats have the potential for destroying, fragmenting, and degrading wildlife habitat. Water, air, light, and noise pollution can alter a landscape and its inhabitants to favor nuisance species. Nuisance species often out-compete native flora and fauna for food and shelter and exchange species diversity with single species populations.

In Old Saybrook, a significant part of the character of the town is its natural resource base. Its forested upland ridge systems, its lakes, ponds and streams, its wetlands, both tidal and inland, and its connection to Long Island Sound and the Connecticut River not only characterize its historical and cultural development but also differentiate it from other shoreline towns. Conservation of



these open spaces has far broader implications than the protection of the habitat and wildlife that it supports; continued preservation of open space furthers the town’s overall goal of enhancing the New England small town character for which it is known. For instance, the prohibitions against “clear cutting” land within the Gateway Conservation Zone, which overlays the Connecticut River from ridgeline to ridgeline, meets the desire of Old Saybrook to preserve the traditional riverway scene.

In addition to enhancing the quality of air and water, there are real economic reasons to protect a community’s landscape. The costs of community services (roads, safety, schools, and infrastructure) associated with developing our open spaces are in many ways higher than the costs of leaving them undeveloped. It has been taken for granted that residential development brings tax dollars to a municipality. Recent studies suggest that such development can actually cost the town tax dollars in increased services, such as road maintenance, police and fire services, school facility expansion and other related costs. While one overall goal of this Plan of Conservation & Development is to provide housing for its citizens, balancing the impacts of residential development with the preservation of the town’s character and natural resources has become a priority to safeguard the features that keep people coming to town.

Recreation in open spaces increases the quality of our lives through the recreational benefits of leisure and exercise. The Town maintains playgrounds, playing fields, beaches and boat launches for active recreation throughout Old Saybrook, as well as parks, trails and scenic overlooks for passive recreation. Recreation in open spaces supports economic functions by promoting “eco-based tourism” and complementing its historical attractions. Additionally, visitors and residents alike learn the value of open space in its protection of ecosystems through the series of educational storyboards placed throughout the years at the parks, trails and scenic overlooks.

Open space is least often thought of in terms of its ability to protect the public health and safety, but the legal authority to do so coincidentally and most generously provides for the previous functions of open space. Regulations regarding building within the Flood Hazard Zones of the low-lying elevations of Old Saybrook not only act as a natural buffer preventing loss of life and property due to flooding but also preserves floodplain habitat for osprey and provides fields for the cultivation of salt hay. Other examples of public health-related regulations include the Aquifer Protection Zone, the purpose of which is to avoid degradation of the quality of groundwater used as a public water supply resource; the Coastal Management Zone, the purpose of which is to conserve soil, vegetation, water, fish, shellfish, wildlife and other coastal land and water resources; and the Connecticut River Gateway Conservation Zone, the purpose of which is to prevent deterioration of the natural or traditional riverway scene.

Open Space Acquisition

For almost thirty years, open space conservation and preservation policies and goals were a part of Old Saybrook’s overall planning strategies. Although these goals have been

articulated and pursued, it was not until 1999 that the town took a major step in the pursuit of these goals with the acquisition of the 320-acre parcel now known as the Great Cedars Conservation Area located in the area of Ingham Hill Road. The acquisition of this large parcel contributes to creating a greenway in Old Saybrook in the area north of the Interstate, a recommendation in the 1994 Old Saybrook Conservation Plan. The parcel, purchased in part with a grant from the CTDEP, provides passive recreational opportunities to Old Saybrook citizens while preserving important resources such as upland woods, ponds, streams and wetlands, as well as rare plant and animal species. Acquisition of the property was also important because of its connection to the existing town park facilities including Clark Community Park on Schoolhouse Road. Open space acquisition remains important to Old Saybrook as we look forward to attaining, if not exceeding, the State goal for Connecticut towns of 21% open space.

A Legacy of Conservation

In Old Saybrook, there is wide acceptance of a fundamental truth – conservation of open space significantly contributes to the overall preservation of the town’s character by tempering the impact of development. Conservation of open space was important to the goals of the 1969 Conservation Plan, 1970 Plan of Development, 1990 Plan of Development, 1994 Conservation Plan, and the 2003 Plan of Conservation & Open Space. Each of the conservation plans to date provided the Town with recommendations for conservation measures and activities with the principal focus being protection of Old Saybrook’s natural resource areas. This Plan of Conservation & Development continues Old Saybrook’s legacy of conservation as the long-range strategy

by which the Town institutes its intentions to strengthen the ecosystem, aesthetics, economics, recreation, and public health and safety through conservation of open spaces.

In 1969, the Conservation Plan recognized the critical importance of one of the town’s most important natural resources – approximately 1,335 acres of tidal marsh – and made recommendations for preservation of three types of open space. The three types of open space were tidal wetlands, streams, and specific resource areas with characteristics of particular conservation importance. At that time, statewide recognition of the importance of tidal wetlands resulted in the passage of the State’s Tidal Wetlands Act in 1969, later modified in 1971, which provides a considerable degree of protection for marshes today. In 1972, the State General Assembly passed Public Act 155, the Connecticut Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Act, which addressed many of the concerns identified in the 1969 Plan. This Act, in addition to underscoring the importance of tidal wetlands, streams, and watersheds, identified additional areas of conservation interest for the entire community. These areas were highlighted for their scenic value, recreation potential, and importance to the natural resource base. A recommendation was made to acquire additional open space in the beach areas to offset the high density of housing.

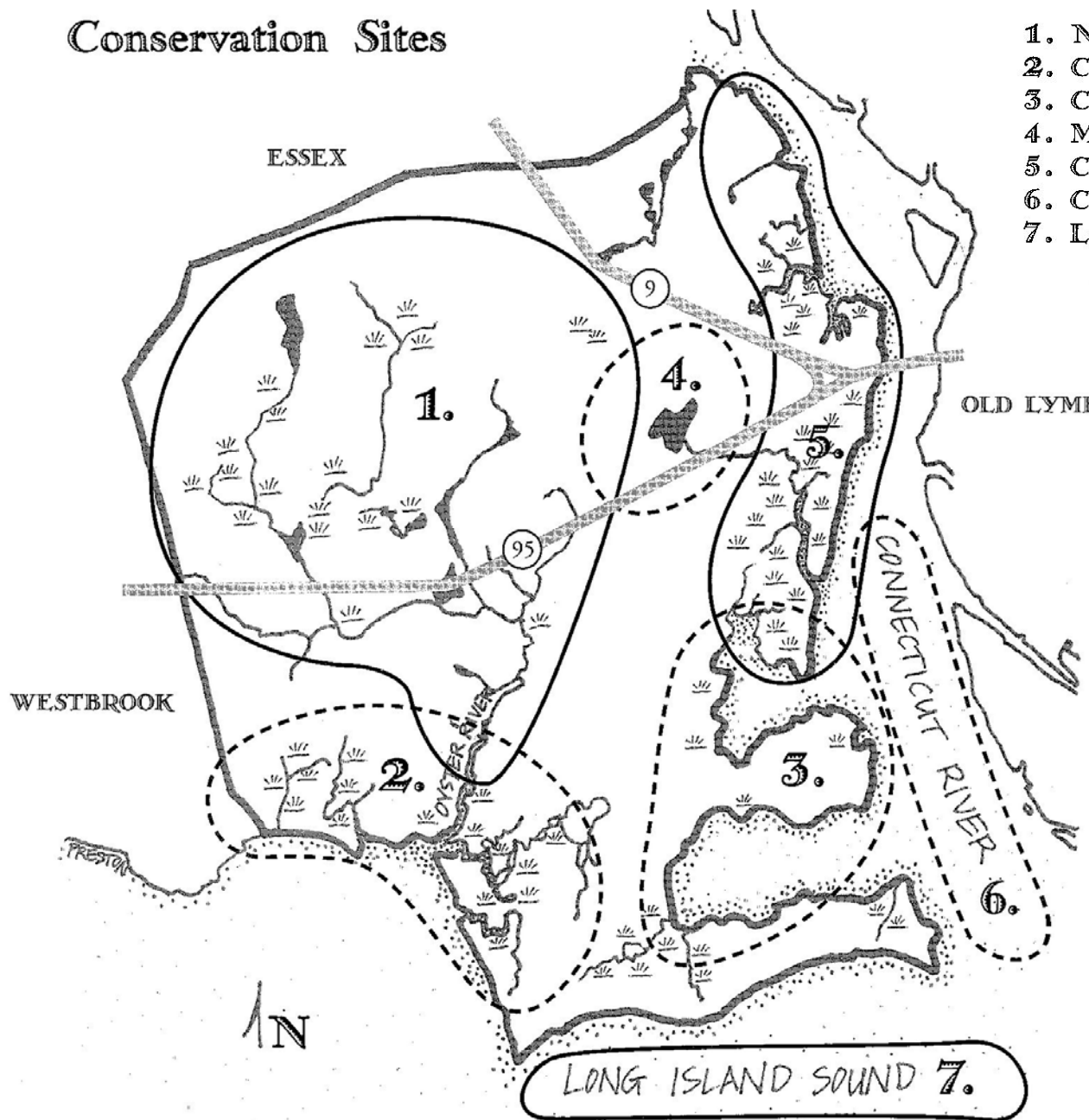
Since 1994, there have been many changes in Old Saybrook. Many goals of the Conservation Commission’s 1994 Conservation Plan have been achieved. Of the forty-one recommendations that the 1994 Conservation Commission developed for the future of the town, close to one half have been successfully implemented.

One of the goals that has been accomplished, is stated in the

plan as: “Create and maintain a map showing areas of special conservation interest within the town to assist the Planning and Zoning Commissions, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and other town agencies and officials in making land use decisions which will best preserve the special qualities of such areas.” The Conservation Commission prepared this map in 2003 when it was working on achieving another goal from 1994 to “review and update the town’s conservation plan at intervals of no more than ten years.” The remainder of the goals of the 1994 Conservation Plan are embodied in the continuing activities of the Conservation Commission and expanded upon in the 2003 Plan of Conservation & Open Space.

The 2003 Plan pulled together the information and analysis necessary to define seven “conservation sites” – geographic areas (Figure entitled “Conservation Sites”) that contain critical, varied and extensive natural resources in Old Saybrook and for which the Town has specific goals supporting not only open spaces, but other conservation concerns, as well. This Plan also identified the existing or potential impact of various threats (Figure entitled “Assessment of Threats to Conservation Sites”) to their ecosystems. These areas consist of the northwest forested uplands and Oyster River; coastal salt marshes; coastal embayments; mature coastal hardwoods and aquifer wetlands, Connecticut River brackish tidal wetlands; Connecticut River estuary; and Long Island Sound. Each contributes to the town’s unique character. The last two areas, the Connecticut River Estuary and Long Island Sound, which Old Saybrook significantly embraces (“where the Connecticut River meets Long Island Sound”), have the additional distinction of having been identified nationally and internationally as worthy of protection.

Conservation Sites



- 1. Northwest Uplands and Oyster River
- 2. Coastal Salt Marshes
- 3. Coastal Embayments
- 4. Mature Coastal Hardwood/Aquifer Wetlands
- 5. Connecticut River Brackish Tidal Wetlands
- 6. Connecticut River Estuary
- 7. Long Island Sound

ASSESSMENT OF THREATS TO CONSERVATION SITES				
Conservation Site	Greatest Threats	Urgency	Priority	Sources
NORTHWEST UPLANDS AND OYSTER RIVER	Loss of habitat Alteration of habitat Fragmentation	High	High	Development (predominantly residential) Watershed hydrologic modification Roads, openings in forested canopies, dams
COASTAL SALT MARSHES	Invasive Species Loss of habitat Alteration of habitat	Low	Medium	Phragmites overtaking native salt marsh diversity Docks, shoreline hardening (bulkheads) impact or replace marsh Watershed hydrologic modifications; stormwater modifications as watershed develops
COASTAL EMBAYMENTS	Alteration of habitat Pollution Disturbance	Low	Medium	Phragmites replacing native salt marsh plant diversity in fringing marshes Nitrogen from non-point source pollution; origins include fertilizer, septic outflow from bordering development Wildlife habitat disturbance from water-based recreational activities
MATURE COASTAL HARDWOODS / AQUIFER WETLANDS	Loss of habitat Invasive Species	High	High	Development (residential and commercial) Increasing edge habitats; domestic pets
CONNECTICUT RIVER BRACKISH TIDAL WETLANDS	Invasive Species Alteration of habitat Pollution	Medium	Medium	Phragmites Docks, shoreline hardening Nitrogen and other toxins from bordering septic and stormwater
CONNECTICUT RIVER ESTUARY	Pollution Invasive Species Disturbance	Low	Medium	Nitrogen from non-point source pollution; origins include fertilizer, septic outflow from bordering development Predominantly phragmites; also mute swans Water-based recreational activities
LONG ISLAND SOUND	Pollution Disturbance	Medium	Medium	Nitrogen from land use; sewage, septic, landscaping Endocrine disrupters; pharmaceuticals from sewage that interfere with biological development of marine species

Conservation Sites

NORTHERN WOODLANDS & OYSTER RIVER WATERSHED

Located in the northwestern portion of Old Saybrook, these woodlands lie between the bordering residential developments along Westbrook Road in the town of Essex (to the north), Schoolhouse Road (to the west), Bokum Road (to the east) and following the main stem of the Oyster River (to the south) to its confluence with Long Island Sound.

The most rugged area of Old Saybrook, the northern woodlands, contain our highest elevations – rocky summits, many with vernal pools interspersed between – and our fresh waterbodies. Pequot Swamp is a vegetated marsh surrounded by ledge and upland; this area of town is interspersed with red maple, cedar swamps, and evergreens. Within the northern woodlands there exist natural and augmented bodies of inland waters, such as Crystal Lake, Goose Pond, Ingham Pond, Lake Rockview, and Chalker Mill Pond. The Northern Woodlands also contain the headwaters of the Oyster River – connecting cold springs, intermittent streams and narrow, winding brooks to Long Island Sound. This watershed is home to migratory fish species, including alewife and blueback herring, which travel thousands of miles from their life at sea to spawn in the upper reaches of the Oyster River. The Oyster River contains a complete suite of healthy tidal marshes, from salt to freshwater, that supports a great diversity of wildlife, including birds, fish, and shellfish.

COASTAL SALT MARSHES

Located in the south central portion of Old Saybrook, these salt

marshes lie between the commercial developments along the Boston Post Road and the residential developments bordering Long Island Sound, as well along the marsh north of Chalker Beach; along the coast including Hagar and Mud Creeks, the mouth of the Oyster River and the extensive marshes surrounding the Back River behind Great Hammock / Plum Bank Roads.

These are the small-scale salt and brackish tidal wetlands along our town’s southwestern coastline. They feed directly into Long Island Sound and are surrounded by multiple homes. Most are under stress from water quality degradation and invasive species, particularly where natural water exchange with the ocean has been blocked or reduced – there are opportunities here for restoration. Despite these pressures and the small size of these wetlands, they continue to harbor a surprising diversity of species, including egrets, herons, and osprey.

COASTAL EMBAYMENTS

Located in the southeast portion of Old Saybrook, these embayments of South Cove lie between Lynde Point and Saybrook Point; Beamon Creek and its marshes feed into South Cove; and North Cove lies between Saybrook Point and Ragged Rock Creek and the old railroad bed where it opens to the Connecticut river.

These protected coves – including North and South Cove and the inner marshes of Beamon Creek, are important migratory stopover sites for birds, as well as refuges for wintering ducks that seek protection from the rougher waters of Long Island Sound. Birders from across the state seek out these quiet coastal waters for the large rafts of wintering ducks and occasional rare bird

hidden among the others. Extensive mud flats at low tide provide access to important food – clams, worms, and crustaceans. These coves are popular fishing and crabbing spots, reflecting their abundance of life.

MATURE COASTAL HARDWOODS & AQUIFER

Located on either side of Middlesex Turnpike northeasterly from Bokum Road, these large tracts of intact woodland and swamp lie behind the commercial development of this corridor.

A large, although threatened, area of mature coastal hardwood forest – tall, straight-trunked trees and a noticeable absence of vegetation in the understory – make this woodland a unique place to observe what some of the original relatively undisturbed forests along our shoreline looked like. This area includes a large red maple swamp along the northern boundary of Route 154 that is in close proximity to our town’s aquifer.

CONNECTICUT RIVER BRACKISH TIDAL WETLANDS

Located along Old Saybrook’s coastline with the Connecticut River, these wetlands lie along Watrous Point in Essex, Turtle Creek, Ayers Point at Otter Cove, Hyde Point Creek, Ferry Point, and Ragged Rock, Little Rock, and Parsonage Creeks.

The salt concentration of these marshes varies seasonally depending on the influences of the Connecticut River (freshwater snow-melt in the spring) and Long Island Sound (higher concentrations in late summer, particularly in dry years). Consequently, the vegetation is transitional and represents a broad spectrum of tidal marsh plants. Ragged Rock Marsh is one of the largest brackish tidal marshes in the state; it harbors abundant wildlife,

including rare and elusive species such as rails or bitterns.

CONNECTICUT RIVER ESTUARY

Located at the river’s confluence with Long Island Sound, these estuarine waters of the Connecticut River extend along the entire eastern boundary of Old Saybrook northerly to the river’s furthest tidal influence somewhere north of Hartford.

International, national, state, and local designations proclaim the biological significance of this important river estuary – the place where this New England river meets Long Island Sound. Estuaries are among the most productive ecosystems on earth; harnessing and exporting the sun’s energy through myriad life forms – many of which end up on our dinner tables! The River is also an essential migratory pathway for fish and birds; in particular birds coming up the eastern coast will follow the River northward, relying on the abundance of fringing wetlands for fuel and rest.

LONG ISLAND SOUND

Located along the southern coast, coastal marshes, beaches, rocky bluffs, and dunes are part of the Long Island Sound ecosystem.

Designated in 1987 as an Estuary of National Significance, Long Island sound supports countless species of fish, birds, mammals and invertebrates, many of which are economically significant. Just offshore, Saybrook has important shellfish beds. Our town has small but good examples of beach/dune/tidal marsh habitats, from the outer reaches of Lynde Point to the cobble beaches and glacial boulders at Cornfield Point – a uniquely preserved piece of the state’s glacial history.

PLANNING FOR THE NEXT DECADE

Goals

- Development, conservation, supervision, and regulation of natural resources. C.G.S. 7-131a(a)
- Management, stewardship, and proper use of open areas. C.G.S. 7-131a(b)
- Maintenance, improvement, protection, limitation of the future use of open space land. C.G.S. 7-131b(a)
- Conservation of wildlife and natural resources. C.G.S. 7-131d(b)(1)
- Protection of land that includes or contributes a prime natural feature of the Town's landscape, including a shoreline, a river, its tributaries and watershed, an aquifer, mountainous territory, ridgelines, an island or coastal wetland, a significant littoral, estuarine, or aquatic site or other important geological feature. C.G.S. 7-131d(b)(2)
- Protection of habitat for native plant or animal species listed as threatened, endangered, or of special concern. C.G.S. 7-131d(b)(3)
- Enhancement and conservation of water quality of the Town's lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. C.G.S. 7-131d(b)(5)
- Development of corridors of open space in "greenways", which protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources, offer opportunities for recreation or non-motorized transportation, connect existing protected areas, and provide access to the outdoors along a defining natural feature, a man-made corridor, or a highway, or around a village. C.G.S. 23-100.
- Acquisition of land for municipal purposes, including recreation, habitat protection, economic development, historical and cultural preservation, and the public health, safety, and welfare.
- Acquisition of not less than 11% of the town's land area held as open space land by the Town, water company, or nonprofit land conservation organizations. C.G.S. 23-8(b)
- Public education and outreach to the public and private enterprises concerning conservation of natural resources and open spaces.
- Implementation of an aggressive open space identification, acquisition and management program using outside funding sources to supplement town funds where feasible and appropriate, and in such a way so as to maximize the level of impact the Town will

have with respect to use of the acquired properties.

- Protection of important natural resources, including the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound, tidal and inland wetlands, streams, ponds and lakes, forested ridges and hills, as well as open fields and farms, from degradation due to inappropriate development.
- Maintenance of the diverse character of Old Saybrook by balancing new development with the preservation of scenic views, vistas, open green spaces and natural and cultural resources.

Policies

- To protect lands adjacent to and complementary to adjacent protected open space land. C.G.S. 7-131e(a)(A)
- To conserve open spaces in a manner that observes an equitable geographic distribution throughout the town. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(B)
- To consider proximity of a property to urban areas with growth and development pressures or to areas with open space deficiencies and underserved populations. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(C)
- To protect land particularly vulnerable to development incompatible with its natural resource values including the protection of a public water supply source. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(D)
- To seek consistency with the State’s Plan of Conservation & Development when applying for State funding. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(E)
- To give a high priority to multiple functions of conservation, such as water quality and supply protection, scenic preservation, and farmland preservation. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(F)
- To consider the extent to which the presence of already-constructed buildings or other manmade improvements diminish or overshadow the natural resource value of a proposed acquisition. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(G)
- To preserve forestlands and bodies of water, which naturally absorb significant amounts of carbon dioxide. C.G.S. 7-131e. (a)(H)
- To weigh criteria of purpose, proximity to properties with similar purposes or like-resources, and available funding in making any

decision to acquire land.

- To give priority to acquisition of land for active recreation, economic development, community facilities, or public health and safety.
 - To collaborate with or support other organizations in acquisition of land for passive recreation, conservation, or cultural and historical preservation.
 - To limit the Town's contribution of funds to purchases no greater than the highest appraised value of the property.
 - To limit commitments of refundable Town resources for joint acquisition to no greater than a year from the execution of and agreement to purchase.
 - To obtain title to any property for which the Town contributes funds towards the purchase price.
 - To enter into formal written agreements to purchase of land contingent upon standard due diligence research of clear title and physical conditions.
 - To avoid any appearance of conflict by forgoing offers to purchase land subject to action by the Town on any permit for development.
- To cooperate with and support private non-profit organizations dedicated to land preservation.
- To encourage applicants for subdivision of land to pay a fee to the Town or to pay a fee in lieu of any requirement to provide open spaces, parks and playgrounds if there is no place deemed proper by the pertinent Commission.
- To require developers to submit a land survey of land exacted for open space in conjunction with any subdivision of land, including wetlands boundaries and topography of the upland areas.
- To preserve ecologically viable habitat, meaning areas or environments in which an organism or biological population normally lives or occurs. C.G.S. §22a-41(c)

Municipal Improvements, Programs, and Standards

The Plan recommends implementation of the following actions with priorities, resources and responsibilities coordinated among the appropriate Town agencies, including the Architectural Review Board (ARB), Board of Selectmen (BOS), Conservation Commission (CC), Economic Development Commission (EDC), Harbor Management Commission (HMC), Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission (IWWC), Historic District Commission (HDC), Planning Commission (PC), Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC), Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), and Zoning Commission (ZC).

- PLAN OF CONSERVATION & OPEN SPACE.** Conduct research into the current land utilization of Old Saybrook. Maintain inventory of important natural and ecological resource areas delineated in the 2003 Plan of Conservation & Open Space. Continue to update local knowledge-based mapping of recreational resources and cultural resources, and as a part of on-going analysis of the overlapping functions of open spaces. C.G.S. 7-131a(b)
- GREENWAYS PLAN.** Plan, design, and implement a town-wide greenway that connects and provides access to existing open space areas. Create trailheads along a corridor of open spaces that provides recreation within an area of protected natural habitat – beginning at the Town Park extending from Crystal Lake along the Fishing Brook to Lake Rockview; following scenic Ingham Hill Road to Chalker’s Mill Pond and along the side of Prospect Hill (with a branch off to the scenic view from Jacob’s Peak) to Ingham Ponds; circling the hillsides to scenic views of Pequot Swamp Pond; continuing northerly around Pequot Swamp Pond to intersect with historic Ingham Hill Road and then southerly to Clark Memorial Park, completing the circuit. C.G.S. 7-131a(b)
- RECREATIONAL RESOURCES MAP.** Create a graphic inventory of open spaces offering opportunities for active and passive recreation.

ARB	BOS	CC	EDC	HMC	IWWC	HDC	PC	PRC	WPCA	ZBA	ZC
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Municipal Improvements, Programs, and Standards, continued

- MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR CONSERVATION SITES 1-7.** Analyze and plan for the different specific threats that exist for each of the Conservation Sites defined in the 2003 Plan of Conservation & Open Space.

 - o Create boundaries and a boundary map of the Conservation Sites
 - o Identify and locate key ecological attributes (vernal pools, ledge, wetlands, unique natural communities, etc.)
 - o Identify and prioritize key parcels of land for protection and adding to existing open spaces and greenway corridors, especially along streams
 - o Identify what measures of protection are needed (acquisition, easement, management, private stewardship, education)
 - o Identify stewardship needs: invasive species control, building or maintaining trails, outreach materials, resolve dumping issues, etc.

- Work collaboratively with the Land Acquisition Committee to implement protection.

- GREAT CEDARS AND OPEN SPACE STEWARDSHIP.** Supervise and manage municipally owned open space or park property upon delegation of such authority by the entity that has supervisory or management responsibilities for such space or property. Continue to investigate the natural resources within the Great Cedars Conservation Area and to create opportunities for stewardship and education. C.G.S. 7-131a. (b)

- FISHWAYS PLAN.** Plan, design, and implement a series of fishways to allow diadromous fish to migrate between fresh water and the sea. Continue to monitor migration of anadromous fish and catadromous eels through the fish ladder at Chalker’s Mill Pond; construct fish ladders at Ingham Hill Pond and Crystal Lake.

ARB	BOS	CC	EDC	HMC	IWVC	HDC	PC	PRC	WPCA	ZBA	ZC
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Municipal Improvements, Programs, and Standards, continued

- LAND ACQUISITION INITIATIVE.** Assess all of Old Saybrook’s land needs, including land that should be acquired for open space protection, passive recreation, active recreation, and municipal facilities. In this regard, the Committee shall determine and recommend to the Board of Selectmen the desirability and feasibility of acquiring land, development rights, and conservation easements; prioritize properties for acquisition by the Town of Old Saybrook; and analyze properties for their present or future use.

- TOWN PARK EXPANSION.** Continue to expand the boundaries of Town Park properties where and when possible and appropriate, to include important nearby natural areas and to create new hiking trails for education and recreational purposes, as well as new active recreational opportunities where feasible.

- INDEX OF OPEN SPACES.** Continuously update the index of open spaces, publicly or privately owned, and expand the Index to include conservation and like easements. C.G.S. 7-131a(b)

- PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.** Provide information to the public and local commissions on the following subjects: vernal pools; aquatic invertebrates; notable trees; invasive plants; alternatives for landscaping; fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides; migratory birds; docks and their ecological impacts; phragmites control.

- NATURAL HISTORY TOUR.** Conduct an annual tour of the natural history of the town to orient municipal agencies, residents, and the public to the locations and relationships of Old Saybrook’s natural environment.

- WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN.** Formulate a watershed management plan. C.G.S. 7-131a(b)

- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT.** Address EPA Phase II Stormwater needs for the town of Old Saybrook. Partner with WPCA and other relevant commissions to implement.

ARB	BOS	CC	EDC	HMC	IWWC	HDC	PC	PRC	WPCA	ZBA	ZC
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Municipal Improvements, Programs, and Standards, continued

- ❑ **COASTAL AND RIVER VIEW PROTECTION.** Encourage development to enhance existing public vistas, especially across marshes, the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. Discourage inappropriate development and tree removal practices that negatively affect the Connecticut River viewshed from land as well as from the river. Provide for scenic easements and height restrictions of new structures where appropriate.

- ❑ **LAND USE REGULATIONS.** Identify the information requirements of Old Saybrook Land Use commissions to incorporate conservation and natural resource protection into their decisions. Gather or create tools for Planning, Zoning, Harbor Management, and Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commissions and the WPCA. Recommend natural resource consideration in regulations.

- ❑ **SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS FOR OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISIONS.** Update the zoning regulations to require application of the Open Space Subdivision throughout the entire northern half of Old Saybrook as an alternative to conventional subdivisions throughout the town, to create incentives to its application, and to reduce barriers that have typically deterred developers from its use.

- ❑ **ADVISORY CONSERVATION REPORTS.** Make recommendations for conservation to municipal agencies regulating proposed land changes and development. C.G.S. 7-131a(b)

- ❑ **SMART GROWTH.** Make every effort to influence the design of proposed development to conserve land and resources by advocating natural vegetation and buffering of wetlands and watercourses, native landscaping and greenery, reduction of impervious surfaces (NEMO principles), pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly transportation systems, and against vehicular dependence.

	ARB	BOS	CC	EDC	HMC	IWVC	HDC	PC	PRC	WPCA	ZBA	ZC
COASTAL AND RIVER VIEW PROTECTION	●		●				●	●			●	●
LAND USE REGULATIONS		●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●
SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS FOR OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISIONS						●		●				●
ADVISORY CONSERVATION REPORTS											●	
SMART GROWTH	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●