

Town of Hampton, Connecticut

2016-2026 Plan of Conservation & Development

Working Draft – September 26, 2016

Hampton Planning & Zoning Commission
[Date]

INTRODUCTION

Hampton's Plan of Conservation and Development is the Town's vision of its future for the coming ten years.

It sets forth goals and actions to guide and coordinate growth of the Town for the best possible outcome for all residents. The Plan makes recommendations as to:

- how land should be used for housing, commerce, recreation, agriculture and open space;
- how land and natural resources should be conserved; and
- how densely land should be settled.

Why write a Plan of Conservation and Development?

Connecticut law states that, if a Town has a Planning and Zoning Commission, then the Town must also write a Town Plan of Conservation and Development. The task of preparing the Plan is assigned to the Planning and Zoning Commission. State law requires that the Town review its Plan, and make revisions as needed, at least every ten years.

Hampton began to regulate the division of land by a Town Planning Ordinance approved on December 3, 1960. The Town's first Plan of Development was adopted in 1970 and a new Plan was adopted in 1992. The last Hampton Plan was revised and adopted in 2006. When adopted by approval of the Commission, this document will be Hampton's fourth Plan.

In each Plan, we are required to consider: the need for housing, health, recreation, social services, utilities, safety, transportation, and communications; the need for affordable housing; protection of drinking water supplies; the use of clustered and other housing development patterns instead of conventional development patterns; the state and regional Plans of Conservation and Development; energy-efficiency and energy conservation; protection and preservation of agriculture; and physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends, in general.

What's changed in Hampton?

Much has changed since the first Plan was written in 1970 and especially since the last Plan in 2006. The population growth that we have come to expect, and which served as a guiding influence when past Plans were written, has come to a near standstill.

Hampton began to grow steadily starting around 1930, with the most rapid growth in the post war years between 1940 and 1970. Population growth continued more slowly after that and has come to a near halt since the economic downturn in 2007. In absolute numbers, the population is still small and its density is low; with only 70 people per square mile, it is the third lowest in the **area**.

Ever-evolving employment options, broader social choices for families and individuals, escalating cost of energy, and changes in how we communicate information are major influences that will continue to alter the Town's cultural, economic and physical landscape. When Planning was adopted in Hampton in

1960, the Town was still leaving behind its agricultural roots. In that year, most Hampton women did not work outside of the home, and fifteen percent of adults still worked on a farm. Local factories were a major source of employment. Today, commuting patterns show that, as is the case across much of New England, the small industrial hubs nearby, e.g. Willimantic and Danielson, have failed to provide significant employment opportunities, and many residents drive further to work in all directions.

During the economic boom of the middle and late 1990s, housing starts were high in many Connecticut Towns and development pressures spilled over to Hampton. A second housing boom occurred in the early 2000s and then abruptly halted with the economic recession of 2007-2008. There has been little new housing construction since then. For a variety of reasons, Hampton continues to be a more rural community than most of its neighbors, as measured by population density.

2010 Population Density and Change in Surrounding Towns

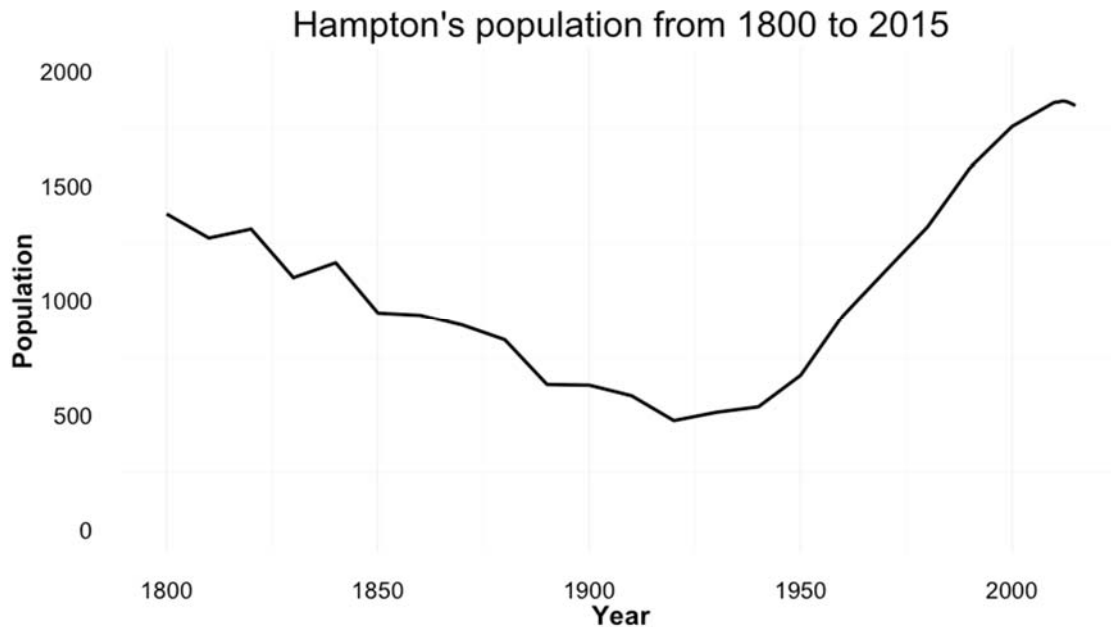
Town	Population 2000	Population 2010	Pop. change 2000-10	Land Area in square miles	Population/ square mile, 2000	Population/ square mile, 2010
Ashford	4098	4317	5%	39.5	106	109
Brooklyn	7173	8210	14%	29.0	247	283
Canterbury	4962	5132	3%	40.2	40.2	123
Chaplin	2250	2305	2%	19.6	116	118
Columbia	4971	5481	10%	21.9	232	250
Coventry	11504	12434	8%	38.3	305	324
Eastford	1618	1749	9%	28.9	60	61
Hampton	1758	1863	6%	25.4	69	73
Lebanon	6907	7316	6%	55.2	127	133
Pomfret	3798	4247	12%	40.3	94	105
Scotland	1556	1726	11%	18.7	84	92
Union	693	854	23%	29.8	23	29
Willington	5959	6041	1%	33.5	178	180
Woodstock	7221	7964	10%	60.5	119	132
State	3,405,565	3,577,845	5%	4,845.4	703	738

From a regional perspective, the population of Hampton reflects trends that characterize the northeastern United States, whose population has grown slowly over the past 15 years. Hampton's population grew at a rate of about 2 percent per year over the 1970 to 1990 period, slowing to 1 percent per year in the 1990s and about 0.6 percent per year from 2000 to today; after the economic recession of 2008, growth essentially came to a halt in Hampton.¹ According to U.S. Bureau of the

1

American Community Survey (ACS), 2014.

Census estimates, Hampton's population has remained at approximately 1,860 residents since the 2010 Census.²



Several other important trends in population-- aging, slower population growth, ethnic diversification, and urbanization-- will also have a continued impact on the residents of Hampton and surrounding towns, as well as most regions of the U.S. (and other high-income countries around the world). The most important of these trends for our expectations about population change in the near future is population aging.

“Population aging” refers to an increase in the proportion of the population in the older ages, which occurs when the older population grows faster than the younger population. The population of Hampton is already old relative to the national averages: Hampton's median age is 46 years old, compared to 40 years old in Connecticut and 37 years old in the U.S.³ These average ages are expected to increase over the coming decades, according to the most recent population projections available.⁴

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U.S. Census. “Subcounty Resident Population Estimates: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015.” Online: <https://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2015/SUB-EST2015.html>

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ACS 2014.

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Connecticut State Data Center at the University of Connecticut Libraries Map and Geographic Information Center – MAGIC. (2012). *2015-2025 Population Projections for Connecticut at State, County, Regional Planning*

Nationally, people ages 65 and up represent 14.7 percent of the U.S. population in 2014, and this share is projected to increase to 21.7 percent by 2040. Hampton's population over 65 will increase from 19 to 32 percent of the population between 2015 and 2025. Over the same period, it is expected that the population under age 19 will fall from 19 to 14 percent of the town's overall population (see figures 1-3, below).

With respect to ethnic and racial diversity, Hampton stands as an outlier relative to the state and the nation. The share of minority Americans (who are Hispanic or a race other than white) has increased in the Northeast from 16.6 percent in 1980 to 26.6 percent in 2000. Hampton's population is largely white non-Hispanic (94.5 percent), with very small numbers of Hispanic, Asian, black and other residents. By contrast, the share of whites in Connecticut is 68.2 percent (and 60.2 percent in the United States). This reflects differences across U.S. regions in terms of urban versus rural and age structure, with older and rural populations having higher shares of white Americans than urban and younger populations.

A third key trend for Hampton and the surrounding towns is the continuing urbanization of the American population. Over 80 percent of the United States population lives in urban areas, as do 88 percent of Connecticut inhabitants.⁵ The urban population of the U.S. grew by 12.1 percent from 2000 to 2010, while the rural population grew by 9.7 percent. Urbanization is expected to continue through 2050.^{6 7} In part, this reflects the preference for cities among 'millennial' young adults, ages 20 to 34, who are attracted to dense, walkable neighborhoods and the amenities of urban life.

In Windham County, the urban population accounts for 50 percent of the total – the lowest among the eight counties in the state. Hampton is sparsely populated even by regional standards, with just one-tenth the population density of the state (73 residents per square mile in Hampton, compared to the Connecticut average of 738 per square mile). The nationwide trend is for slowing growth among small towns, and six in ten rural counties have seen population decline since 2010.⁸ For Hampton, these

Organization, and Town levels – November 1, 2012 edition. Retrieved from http://ctsdc.uconn.edu/2015_2025_projections/.

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U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

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U.S. Census Bureau, 2012. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010_census/cb12-50.html

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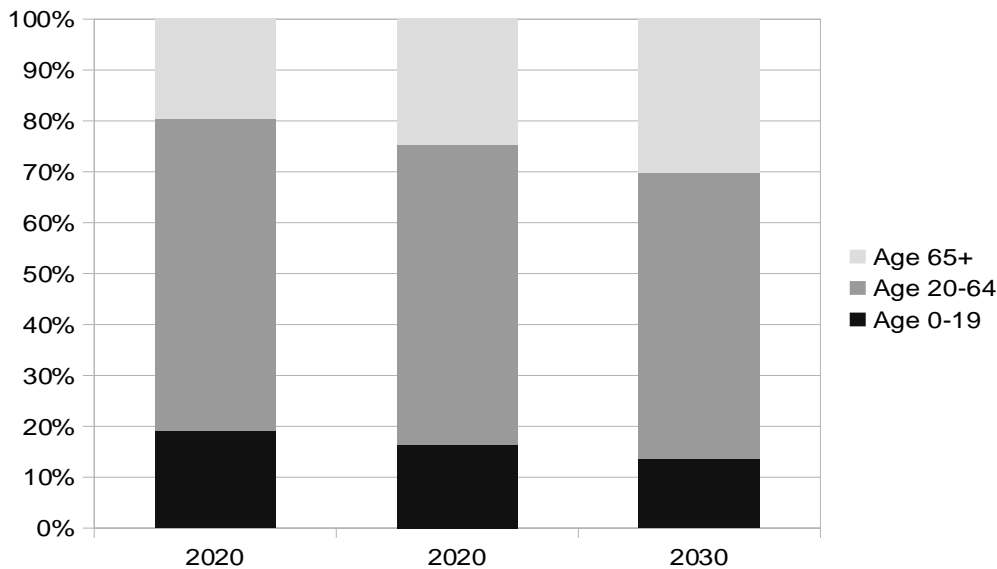
Pack 2013. "Increasing Density: A Small-Town Approach to New Urbanism." St. Louis, MO: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. Online: <https://www.stlouisfed.org/Publications/Bridges/Fall-2013/Increasing-Density-A-SmallTown-Approach-to-New-Urbanism>

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Frey, W. 2014. Brookings Institute. Online: <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/a-population-slowdown-for-small-town-america/>

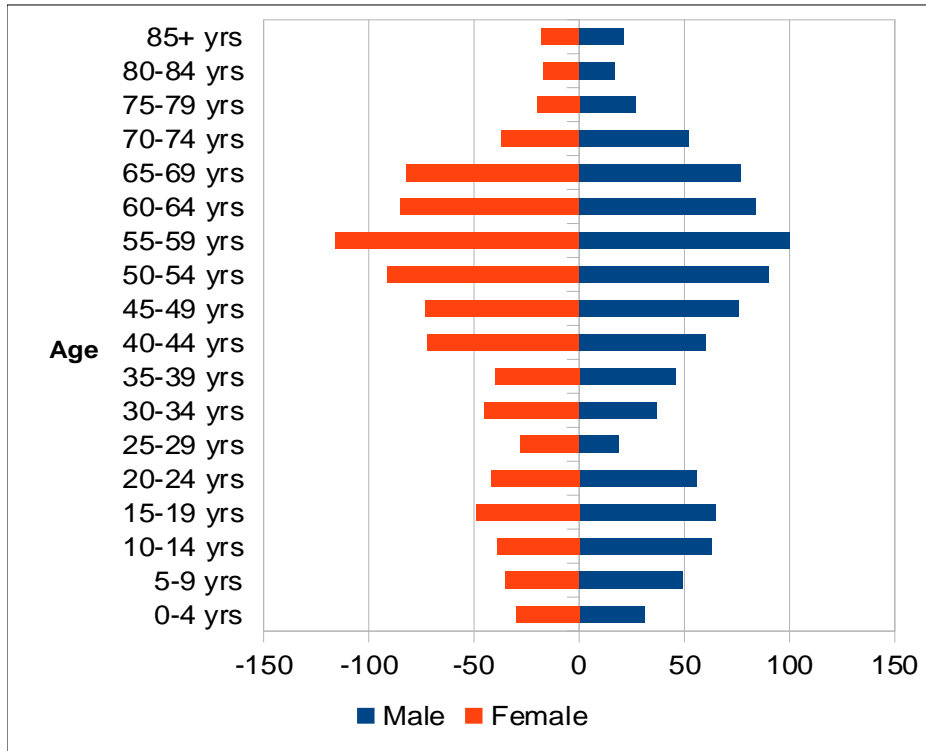
patterns suggest that, if the town wishes to increase its attractiveness to young people and families with children, one option would be to study the examples of other small towns that have chosen to develop their town centers as dense, walkable commercial districts with multi-family housing units (see e.g. Pack, 2013).

Taken as a whole, these trends reflect a reality that is, as mentioned earlier, not limited to the eastern Connecticut region. School-age populations are expected to decrease, and indeed have already begun to decline in many nearby towns. Among other factors, this is a result of fertility rates among U.S.-born women that have been near or below replacement rate since the 1970s, and are not expected to increase significantly in the near future. Immigration from other countries has driven most population growth in the past few decades. As a result of this and many other factors, especially limits to employment opportunities, rural areas in particular will face new challenges in planning for the well-being and quality of life of an increasingly senior-dominated future, and for an increasingly diverse society.

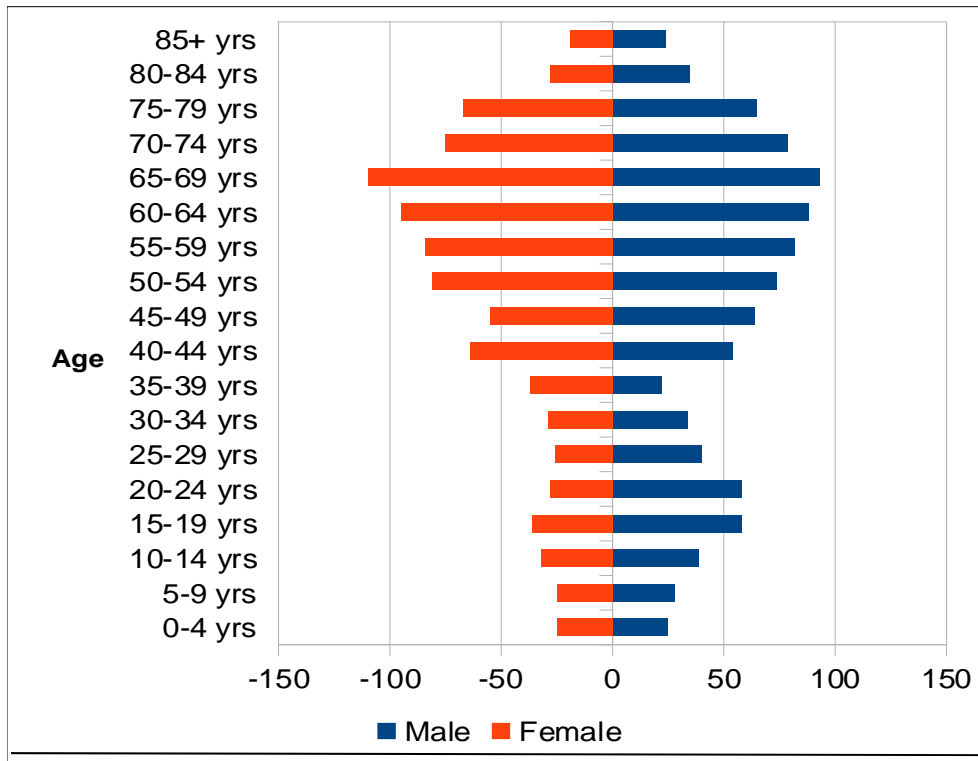


Projected share of young, working-age and retirement-age residents of Hampton, Connecticut, 2015 to 2025.

Source: UConn 2012.



Population age distribution of Hampton, CT, 2015



PROJECTED population age distribution of Hampton, CT, 2025

Source: Connecticut State Data Center, UConn MAGIC. (2012).

Households

Although population growth is restrained, the way we arrange our households has changed a great deal during the past few decades. Among the 750 households in Hampton, 71 percent are families and 29 percent are non-family households (including single householders). Most people in Hampton live in families composed of a married couple (59 percent), while families with children under 18 account for an additional quarter of all families. Among families with small children, 81 percent are two-earner households, as are 87 percent of families with older children. About half of householders moved into

their current residence since 2000, and half have lived there longer. The average household size is 2.5 individuals, while the average family size is 2.9.⁹

Hampton's Labor Force - Where We Work

Hampton residents generally leave Town for work. Major employers in Town are EastCONN, the Hampton Elementary School, and the Hampton town government. Some others work from home either operating home businesses or by telecommuting.

Overall, two thirds of the Hampton population is in the labor force. This is a similar proportion to the Connecticut average. Unemployment in Hampton stood at 3.4 percent in 2014, somewhat lower than the state (6.4 percent) and national averages (5.8 percent). Hampton residents are most often employed in the fields of education, health care and social services, which together employ just over one in three working residents of the town. Following that, the most common workplaces are in manufacturing, professional/management, retail, and construction.

Where We Work, by Industry.

INDUSTRY	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, mining	40	4.1%
Construction	71	7.3%
Manufacturing	130	13.4%
Wholesale trade	28	2.9%
Retail trade	88	9.1%
Transportation, warehousing, utilities	30	3.1%
Information	18	1.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate	25	2.6%
Professional, scientific, management, admin.	89	9.2%
Education, health care, social services	342	35.3%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, food services	52	5.4%
Other services (except public)	20	2.1%
Public administration	35	3.6%
Civilian employed population, 16+ years	968	100.0%

Source: American FactFinder. "2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates."

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U.S. Census: 2010 Census

How will Land Be Used?

There are many factors influencing the use of land that are not in the Town's direct control. A landowner may decide to divide his property into house lots. Or may decide to protect it with a conservation easement. A new technology, such as solar energy cell phone equipment, may be sited by the State on a local property. But like every Connecticut town (excepting Bethlehem and Eastford), Hampton relies on zoning regulations to regulate land use.

There are other laws and codes that influence the use of land, such as health and building codes, inland wetlands and watercourses regulations, and regulations governing the subdivision of land. But zoning directly controls how land may be used and where buildings may be located. Each parcel of land in Hampton is located in one of two zones, according to an official Town Zone map: the Residential-Agricultural 80 Zone (minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet/1.8 acres), or the Business Zone (minimum lot size of 50,000 square feet/1.2 acres). The two Business Zones are on Route 6 and together comprise only about 66 acres. That is, almost the entire Town falls into a single zone classification.

It is the task of the Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission to adopt Hampton's Zoning Regulations. The Commission revises its Regulations whenever the need arises to address evolving trends in the economy and the will of the Town's people. With a new Plan of Conservation and Development written, the 2015 Community Survey, and population and economic trends considered, the Planning and Zoning Commission will shape its work and decisions, and revise its Zoning Regulations, accordingly. In fact, the PZC cannot change the Zoning Regulations without evaluating the consistency of any proposed change with the goals and objectives stated in this Plan of Conservation and Development.

Most people who choose to live in Hampton do not want much change. A Townwide Survey of preferences regarding quality of life and development has been conducted three times, in 1992, 2001 and 2015. The survey results have consistently shown that, overall, people say that they like the Town as it is and would not like to see its population grow. They enjoy ruralness: the quiet, the privacy, and the natural beauty. If there could be some commercial amenities — a store, a restaurant, small offices — they would be welcomed, but only if they do not disrupt the nature of the Town.

But we know, and the census tells us, that the population is aging and the school population is falling. This trend changes the Town's character, like it or not. Children gravitate to one another and knit the community's families together. With fewer children, some will find it hard to get to know one another and the community may feel less neighborly and cohesive. For a small town, Hampton tries hard to reverse this anonymity. The Hampton Recreation and Community Activities and Library sponsor a wide range of events and activities, and residents produce two popular monthly newspapers. Yet, it is clear that the characteristics of the Town's population are changing, and the direction of the Town's planning and development must evolve to reflect these changes.

The history, facts, trends and ideas examined here provide the backdrop for decision making by the Town's Commissions and Boards, especially the Planning and Zoning Commission: how will land be used in Hampton, going forward? By conducting a Town Survey and then writing this Plan of Conservation

and Development, a vision for the next ten years, supported by goals and objectives, has been drafted to guide growth, development, and conservation of land and natural resources according to the wishes of the people who live here.

AGRICULTURE

Background

The town of Hampton has a long history of agricultural land use, dating back to the land burned for planting and deer hunting by native Americans, perhaps members of the Nipmuck or Mohegan tribes. In the 18th and 19th centuries Hampton's economy was mainly agricultural, with dairy farming an important industry until the early 1900s. But Hampton's agricultural economy began a long downturn many score of years ago.

In 1970, the Town's Plan of Development listed 2,500 acres of farmland, accounting for 16 percent of the total land in the town or twice the amount of developed land. By 1985 agricultural lands made up 1,600 acres, or 10 percent of the total land in Hampton. The most recent statistics, from 2006, indicate that the amount of agricultural land has stabilized. Developed land has remained at about seven percent of the total land in town for the past forty years, while deciduous forests cover nearly 70 percent of the land.

In May of 2011, Hampton approved a town ordinance to establish an Agricultural Commission, composed of 5 members. Its stated purpose is to foster agricultural viability and preservation of agricultural land, to support agricultural education, to promote existing and new farm operations, as well as improve communication between the town's departments, farmers, and other residents. The Commission meets periodically in the Town Hall and maintains a webpage on the Town's website.

At the same time in 2011, Hampton adopted a Right-to-Farm Ordinance, Town recognition that:

"Agriculture plays a significant role in Hampton's heritage and future. The Town officially recognizes the important of farming to its rural quality of life, heritage, public health, scenic vistas, tax base, wetlands and wildlife and local economy. This Right to Farm ordinance encourages the pursuit of agriculture, promotes agriculture-based economic opportunities, and protects farmland within Hampton by allowing agricultural uses and related activities to function with minimal conflict with abutters and Town agencies."

The Town Ordinance **seeks to** protect farming operations from complaints by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be considered a nuisance with regard to odor, noise, dust, chemical use and water pollution.

Unlike most of the surrounding Towns, Hampton's Zoning Regulations continue to support agriculture by allowing all property owners, except in the Business Zones on Route 6, to keep any type of farm animal without restrictions. Direct sales of agricultural products and small farmstands are allowed without obtaining a zoning permit. Larger farm stores and farmer's markets are authorized by PZC approval. **allow any protected by others.**

Agricultural Land Preservation

It is a goal of the Town Ordinance that formed the Agriculture Commission to preserve farmland from development.

Farmland can be lost, essentially permanently when land is subdivided for house lots or otherwise developed, or it can fall out of production and revert to forestland -- a form of agriculture, itself.

The PZC, when it reviews and approves subdivisions of land, uses measures provided by the zoning and subdivision regulations to preserve farmland. Since it adopted conservation subdivisions about ten years ago, the economic recession and changing demographic trends have resulted in much reduced development pressure in Town; since adoption of the last POCD, there have been no major subdivisions of land in Hampton. Going forward, any new proposal for subdivision will be designed so as to conserve natural resources and farmland to a much greater extent than could have previously been possible.

In addition to local efforts, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture funds programs for agricultural land preservation. The programs meet the needs of those who want to continue to farm but might otherwise find it unaffordable.

- The Farmland Preservation Program was established to build a protected land base to ensure that agriculture remains a component of the state's economy. The Department of Agriculture purchases the rights to develop the land from the farmer. It places a restriction on the deed to the property while the land continues to be owned by the farmer, who can use it (only) for agricultural uses. The farmer will continue to pay some but much reduced taxes to the Town.
- The Joint State-Town Farmland Preservation Program provides for the joint purchase of development rights by the State and a Town, so long as the Town has a policy in support of farmland and has an agricultural land preservation fund.
- The Community Farms Preservation Program protects small farms of local economic importance that may not qualify for the traditional Farmland Preservation Program.

State funding is available sporadically, so interested landowners may have to wait for funding to become available. Department of Agriculture has funded agricultural land preservation as follows:

CT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FUNDING OF AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION IN HAMPTON

Original Owner	Farm Address	Acres	Closed Date	Price
Stone	1135 Pomfret Road	160.84	9/15/1987	241,700
Geer	1135 Pomfret Road	178.3	12/24/1987	290,558
Jaworski	125 Route 97	115.15	2/10/1988	179,200
Loew	985 Pomfret Road	138.71	5/26/1988	246,500

The American Farmland Trust prepares an extensive survey of options for preserving farmland in Connecticut. Its publication "Conservation Options for Connecticut Farmland" is online.

Trends

After a long decline, Connecticut has seen an increase in agricultural activity over the past fifteen years. Connecticut led all of New England with a 22 percent increase in the number of farms created since 2007, adding about one thousand additional farms for a total of 6,000. Nationally, it was second only to Maine for increased acreage in farms:

State	Increase in farm acreage
Maine	7.9 %
Connecticut	7.6 %
Florida	3.4 %
Rhode Island	2.6 %
Virginia	2.4 %

Source: *US Farm Census of Agriculture*

Employment data shows that 4.1 percent of the employed residents in Hampton work in agricultural industries, compared to just 0.4 percent in Connecticut overall. According to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Hampton is currently home to over forty licensed farmers, up from fewer than 30 in 2007. (Licensure provides farmers with certain tax benefits.)

The nature of farming has changed, moving away from large dairy farms to smaller farms producing a broad range of agricultural products including horse farms. In Hampton:

- Twelve operations produce vegetables and nine produce fruit. Five produce organic fruits or vegetables, and two of these are USDA certified organic growers.
- Ten operators provide equine services (horse sales, lessons, boarding, training).
- There are four plant nurseries and greenhouses.
- There are four Christmas tree growers.
- Four farms sell hay.
- Three sell honey and two sell maple syrup.
- Others raise livestock: sheep, dairy and beef cattle, chickens, turkeys and swine.

The number of horse farms has surged, and Connecticut has the highest horse density per square mile in the United States, with some 50,000 horses. Each horse eats about 20 lbs. of hay and grain daily, so horses are an important contributor to the farm economy as well as providing recreational value for children and adults.

A study by the American Farmland Trust (2007) suggests that farms help to stabilize municipal budgets; farms require just 31 cents worth of municipal services per dollar of property tax revenue, whereas residential development, on the other hand, costs \$1.11 in services per tax dollar collected. Increased

public interest in organic and locally grown produce and farmer's markets has benefitted the economy of Hampton. The continued use of land for farming also has benefits for those residents who wish to preserve the rural character of the town.

GOALS

1. Encourage agriculture as a viable economic enterprise and a way of life for Hampton families, including small, part-time farming. (PZC)*
2. Preserve and protect farmland and existing farm operations. (PZC, Board of Selectman)*
3. Encourage the development of new farm operations, including managed forestry,
4. horticultural production, livestock production, horse farms, and fruit and vegetable production.(PZC)*
5. Encourage production of value added agriculture commodities.

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and revise accordingly to ensure that they encourage and sustain agriculture, including agri-tourism and ecotourism. (PZC) *
2. Retain zoning that permits keeping of livestock on all lot sizes without restriction. (PZC)*
3. Formulate zoning regulations that specifically support horse farms, horticulture, and the sale of agriculturally related and derived products, such as pumpkins, vegetables, hay, maple products, etc. (PZC) *
4. Develop Subdivision Regulations that will preserve farm fields. (PZC) *
5. Assist and support property owners in preparation of applications for funds that will purchase development rights and preserve farmland (Conservation Commission, PZC)*
6. Support state and local efforts to publicize and market farm products for sale. (Board of
7. Selectman, Conservation Commission) *
8. Disseminate information on managed woodlands to property owners. (Conservation Commission) *

** Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

COMMERCE AND ECONOMY

Background

For all intents and purposes, Hampton has always had a rural nature. Early in its years as a Town, Hampton's economy could be characterized as family-farm based with supporting small businesses in scattered shops. Small scale industrial activities powered by streams and rivers followed, but Hampton never saw the development of large mills that gave rise to the extensive mill housing and commercial growth seen in some other area Towns. Ultimately, the mills closed, population declined and agriculture stagnated.

Today, Hampton is a residential community albeit with a rural character. With only about 1850 persons over 25 square miles, the population is too sparse to support retail enterprises to meet the needs of the inhabitants, and most working residents commute to employment opportunities in all directions.

Consequently, Hampton has little commercial/industrial base at present, and not much change can be expected in the coming ten year period. This is true for a variety of reasons: population projections that show a stagnant population; unavailability of water and sewer connections; distance from a viable commercial hub and distance from an interstate highway; nearby commercial development to the west in Windham and to the east in Brooklyn and Killingly; and little business-zoned land. Besides educational services at the Hampton Elementary School and EastCONN, agriculture is the single most important economic activity in Town and is treated in its own section of this Plan.

In 2014, the PZC rewrote the entire business zone section of the Zoning Regulations in order to reflect current conditions and trends and specifically, the dominance of big-box stores such as Wal-Mart and Home Depot that has weakened the likelihood of for small retail enterprises in Town. The original vision for the Business Zone was based upon the belief that the Town would continue to suburbanize and there would a commensurate need for retail opportunities. In the new regulations, the business zones are envisioned as suitable and likely locations of a broader range of activities, including light manufacturing.

Hampton has two small areas zoned for business activities, and the boundaries of these zones have remained the same for many years. Both zones are on Route 6. One is on the west end of Route 6 near the boundary with Chaplin and is composed of approximately 62 acres in 19 parcels. This area was at one time referred to as "Clark's Corners" and was a small commercial village in the early twentieth century. The other business zone is a single four acre parcel on the east end of Route 6 near the Brooklyn town line which has been used commercially for many years and in times past was known as "Hampton Springs". Neither of these districts has seen major change over the last decade. The only significant development has been a major expansion of EastCONN, a nonprofit regional educational services entity, in the western business zone. The eastern tract and a portion of the western tract remain underutilized, especially the south side of the western tract where much of the Route 6 frontage remains completely undeveloped.

In addition to commerce on Route 6, there are businesses throughout Town in the residential zone that are home-based. While many of these home businesses have been approved by the Commission, others pre-date the Zoning Regulations and were never officially sanctioned. Zoning requirements in Hampton are intended to encourage home businesses while minimizing their impact to surrounding properties. In a 2015 survey by the American Community Survey (US Census Bureau), 13% of Hampton residents over 16 report that they are self-employed.

Trends

The Town-wide community survey of 2015 showed a clear majority of residents would like to see more retail opportunities in Town (65% in favor), more offices (65% in favor), and more light manufacturing (62% in favor). Regarding the possibility of more business in the Village Center, the response was positive but by a smaller margin (50% in favor, 40% opposed).

But with a surge of commercial development a few miles west on Route 6 in North Windham, and with additional commerce on Route 6 to the east in Brooklyn, and in view of the sparse population in Town, there is little reason to expect major commercial development in the Business Zone on Route 6. Additions to the Town's commercial base are most likely to come from business and personal services, and retail establishments will likely be limited.

The beauty and rural amenities of Hampton have the potential to attract visitors to the Town.

Many rural New England towns have successfully marketed themselves as tourist destinations, and there are as yet untapped opportunities to attract day-trippers to food, farm, historic and nature related-venues. This may best be achieved through a multi-town effort to concentrate and publicize tourist opportunities.

As a Town that seeks to retain its rural quality of life, home business is a key ingredient of this identity. Rural towns are distinct from suburban ones characterized by emptying out of working adults on weekdays. "Rural" has always included home shops and entire households whose economy is rooted in the home. The character of the community depends on having adults in Town during the daytime, and the volunteer fire department and ambulance services require it. With more people working from home due to technology and entrepreneurial start-up businesses, the Town can take steps to encourage home business and thereby retain a day-time adult population within Town.

With evolving technology and demand for alternative/renewable energy, a renewable energy enterprise purchased a 100 acre parcel on the south side of Route 6 in 2016 for development as a solar power generation facility. The activity is regulated by the State of Connecticut, and with the support of the Board of Selectmen and Planning and Zoning Commission, an application to generate 6 megawatts of energy has been conditionally approved for construction.

GOALS

1. Encourage new commerce within Town that will enhance the Town's small town and semi-rural character. (BOS, PZC)*
2. Provide support to local business community so as to retain and expand existing businesses. (BOS)*
3. Encourage the reuse and/or redevelopment of existing commercial sites and structures, including old farms. (PZC, BOS)*

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Evaluate the creation of a new village zone in the village center with opportunities for limited small-scale retail business and offices. (PZC) *
2. Evaluate the areas surrounding the existing business zones to determine the potential for their expansion. (PZC, Conservation Commission) *
3. Review and update the zoning regulations governing home occupations throughout Town to maximize the ability to conduct such a business, so long as these do not disrupt the visual quality of the landscape, the quiet enjoyment of one's property, and do not harm the environment. The extent of regulation should be commensurate with the impact to the property and surrounding properties, neither more nor less. (PZC) *
4. Review and revise Zoning Regulations to encourage the reuse of large and historic agricultural properties for contemporary, economically viable uses, such as educational opportunities, art and craft production and sales, tourist opportunities, recreational opportunities, large event venues, etc. (PZC) *
5. Review Zoning Regulations so as to foster and enhance the economic contribution made by agriculture and value added agricultural products. (PZC) *
6. Enhance the appearance of the Business Zones on Route 6. (BOS, PZC)*
7. Market Hampton's commercial enterprises, including the use of the Town's website to support local business, including agriculture. (BOS)*
8. Market Hampton's amenities: its scenic, historic, and agricultural and cultural resources. (BOS, Agriculture Commission, Rec Commission, Conservation Commission)*
9. Evaluate the ability to utilize existing business zoned parcels for optimal economic development and revise zoning regulations as needed. (PZC)*

** Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Hampton owns facilities and properties to provide the community with a range of services and functions: the Town Hall, Hampton Elementary School, the Community Center, etc.

Most Town facilities are centrally located in and around the village. The Town Hall, Community Center, and Library are located on Main Street, and the Town Garage and Fire Department are located side by side and around the corner on West Old Route 6. Hampton Elementary School is located just north of the village on Route 97. Hampton has made great strides in the condition of its facilities over the past ten years, with major improvements to the Town Hall, transfer station, and new Public Works facility.

A routine assessment of the adequacy of these facilities, now and for the future, is warranted in order to budget to maintain, modify and expand these facilities as needed. Without doing so, it is difficult to develop optimal annual budgets and thus may be difficult or impossible to afford desired services.

Hampton Town Hall - 164 Main Street

The Town government has been housed in many locations around Hampton village over the years, even, at one time, in an out building at the home of the Town Clerk. In 1993, the Town Hall was relocated from West Old Route 6 to the current location on Main Street, in what was once the Consolidated School (the old elementary school). This building was the first modern school in Hampton, replacing the small, independent schoolhouses.

The Town Hall is a multi-use building. Its primary function is for the Town government, which occupies the entire upper level of the building. All the town government offices are housed here, except public works functions. It is used as the Town's Emergency Shelter during power outages, extreme weather, etc., and it is the polling place for elections and referenda.

The Town has invested significantly in recent improvements to the building:

- an energy efficient central heating and cooling system
- insulation
- new roof
- outdoor lighting for energy efficiency
- a solar photovoltaic system
- modernization of the lower level (6380 square feet) (underway)

The lower level provides significant additional space for expansion of Town functions as they are needed.

Exterior improvements are also in the works. A walkway has been built to link the Town Hall and the adjacent Community Center immediately to its north, and wiring has been installed so that the new emergency generator can service the Community Center as well as the Town Hall. Parking at the town

hall is insufficient, and the Board of Selectmen with the Planning and Zoning Commission have planned for some additional parking at the rear of the building.

Hampton Community Center - 178 Main Street

The Hampton Community Center is a welcome addition to the Town's facilities. Located in the renovated "Little River Grange" building, this historic building was a grange, a national organization of farm families, for almost one hundred years. In 2003, the Grange members voted to donate the building to the Town.

The Town accepted this generous offer, and in 2006 the state awarded a \$299,000 grant to renovate the building. With great excitement, the community center was formally opened on Memorial Day, 2008. Since then, the Community Center has housed all kinds of community activities: holiday festivals, music events, theater, yoga classes, and social gatherings. The Center has a large kitchen licensed by the Department of Public Health and is for rent for those needing a space for large private parties. The Board of Selectman is considering improvements to the adjacent space to support outside functions in good weather, such as a picnic shelter and barbecue area.



Hampton Community Center was formerly the Little River Grange

Active Recreation Facilities

Hampton is a small town, with limited Town-sponsored recreational facilities. These include a ball field, a playscape and tennis courts at the Town Hall, and outdoor basketball courts and playfields at the Hampton Elementary School. The ball field has uncertain status regarding eligibility for organized Little League games, and at this time the number of children are too few to support ball field upgrades.

Fletcher Memorial Library - 257 Main Street

The first Hampton Library was begun in 1827. After about three years it was given up, but in 1856 an effort was made to revive it, and a new association was formed. Today, the Fletcher Memorial Library on Main Street is a privately endowed institution that functions as Hampton’s public library. Originally a private house, the building is a historic Italianate structure dating to 1860 and donated to the Library in 1924. The Library is run by its own Board of Directors with a paid librarian and a volunteer staff. Funds to operate the library and to buy books come from an endowment, Town funds, and the State of Connecticut. The Library has continued to thrive by expanding its offerings and has added a parking lot and garden off of Cedar Swamp Road.

Hampton Elementary School - 380 Main Street

The central issue for Hampton's Elementary School is the declining school population and whether or not the School will continue to serve Hampton's children in its current capacity.

The Hampton Elementary School was built in 1992 to accommodate 250 students in grades K-6 and has a maximum capacity of almost 400. The Town has continued to maintain and improve the building with installation of a photovoltaic system on the roof; a solar thermal system to provide hot water; energy-efficient exterior lighting that reduces the nighttime glow into the sky as well as cost; and a dedicated monitoring system to track the energy created by these renewable resources.

But school enrollment in pre-kindergarten through Grade 6 has declined steadily since the last POCD was written and it is projected that it will continue to decline, based upon demographic information about the population of Hampton and the region.

HAMPTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POPULATION GRADES PK-6

Year	Students
2006-07	165
2007-08	166
2008-09	149
2009-10	143
2010-11	139
2011-12	126
2012-13	117
2013-14	112
2014-15	101
2015-16	
2021-22 projected	99

Source : Town of Hampton and Milone MacBroom

The "Comprehensive Enrollment Analysis and Facility Utilization Study" prepared by Milone & MacBroom in 2014, was commissioned with a Connecticut Regional Performance Grant. Its mission was Page 20 of 58

to determine how to continue to provide optimal school opportunities for children in Hampton, Chaplin and Scotland in the face of declining enrollments. The Study considered population trends in each of the 3 towns and evaluated a range of options that included redistricting, reconfiguring and school consolidation so as to use the school facilities as efficiently as possible. The continuing utilization of the Elementary School building as a school, or, if not, for some other purpose, is the fundamental issue for this town facility.

Regional District 11: Parish Hill High School - 304 Parish Hill Rd., Chaplin

Parish Hill High School is located in Chaplin on Parish Hill Road and serves as the middle and high school for Regional District 11, a school district serving grades 7-12 for the Towns of Hampton, Chaplin and Scotland. The High School was built on a sixty acre parcel in 1967 to accommodate the students of the three Towns near home in a community facility, instead of tuitioning them out to schools in other area towns.

Following national and regional trends for rural areas, the school population shows a steady decline and is projected to continue downward. (See the Milone & MacBroome Study cited above for a detailed treatment of population trends impacting school population.) Ten years ago there were about 400 Parish Hill students from the 3 member towns; today there are fewer than 300. And the projected student population of Parish Hill in 20121-22 is just 245 students. Again, the primary issue for the purposes of this Plan is the future of the building and associated infrastructure, which is owned by the three member towns. Will it continue to be used as a high school, or if not, what is the maximum return (or least liability) that can be gained (or incurred) from this investment?

Waste Disposal /Transfer Station - 35 Landfill Road

Residents can dispose of solid wastes and recyclables at the Town transfer station for a minimal fee. The transfer station is located next to the former landfill on Landfill Road off Route 97, just north of the boundary with Scotland and is operated jointly by the Towns of Hampton and Scotland. The facility operates under the authority of a general permit issued by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, which sets out the rules and requirements for its operation. Occasional modification will be needed as waste handling and management and legal requirements change over time. In 2007, the state awarded a grant of \$51,000 for upgrades to the facility.

The transfer station accepts waste and then transfers it to a solid waste facility elsewhere (not in Hampton). In addition to household and construction waste, the transfer station accepts items for recycling, including used oil, paper and cardboard, scrap metal, car batteries, propane tanks, appliances, and tires.

Household hazardous wastes such as pool chemicals, household cleaners, weed killers and pesticides can be brought to the Town of Willington's household hazardous waste facility on Hancock Road for safe disposal. The facility is open on the first and third Saturday of the month from May through the first Saturday in November between 9am and 2pm. Disposal is free.

Public Works/ Highway Garage - 182 West Old Route 6

Until a few years ago, the Hampton Highway Garage was located in a 50 year old structure on West Old Route 6 on a parcel of about one half acre. The building and grounds were small and out-of-date for the times, lacking even a well and septic system.

In 2009, the Town purchased a four and a half acre parcel at 182 West Old Route 6, next to the Hampton Fire Department. A house was demolished to make way for the 6000 square foot steel structure, erected using a state grant of \$250,000. The public works department moved over from the old facility across the street in 2012. Intended to blend in with the surrounding residential neighborhood, the garage was designed in a barn-inspired style and is set back from the road, adjacent to the fire department. The facility will provide adequate space for the public works staff to work efficiently and effectively for years to come.



The new Hampton Public Works Garage

Water Supply and Sewage Disposal

All homes and commercial enterprises in Hampton are served by their own on-site water supply and sewage disposal system; at this time there are no public, common facilities. The state public health code requires that a water supply be developed on each lot before a certificate of occupancy may be issued to occupy either a commercial or residentially developed property. Likewise, each development must be served by an on-site sewage disposal system that meets the state health code.

Public water supply and sewage disposal facilities will not be developed in Hampton until there is need for such facilities due to water pollution or higher population density. So long as the population remains sparsely settled, public water and sewer infrastructure can be avoided. If the need arises for community water wells, they would be located in the valley of the Little River, which is Hampton's only sand and gravel, water-bearing aquifer.

Fire and Ambulance Services - 190 West Old Route

The Hampton Fire Company, Inc. is an all-volunteer fire company with about 25 active members. It was organized in 1929 and provides emergency response to fires, motor vehicle accidents, downed wires and trees across roads, and to medical calls if needed. Funding of the Company is obtained through grants from the Town and other sources, fundraisers, and donations. The firehouse was originally constructed in 1961, and the 3 acre parcel is large enough to accommodate expansion, if needed.

The Hampton-Chaplin Ambulance Corps, Inc. was established in Hampton in 1954. It is housed within the Hampton firehouse, where it leases space. Twenty-five volunteer members serve as drivers and provide emergency medical services in Chaplin and Hampton. Each Town provides funding to the Ambulance Corps in lieu of funding separate municipal ambulance services. Service is provided regardless of ability to pay; fees for services are offset by insurance company payments, but ambulance service is provided for no charge to the uninsured.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a master plan for a municipal “campus” at the Town Hall parcel, including parking, lighting, landscaping, recreational uses, consideration of elderly housing, etc., in order to concentrate Town services in one location. In conjunction, evaluate the possibility and desirability of land acquisition from the abutter to the east. (BOS, PZC)
2. Assess spatial needs of each Town Hall Department over the next ten years. (BOS)
3. Evaluate evolving needs for recreation, both inside and outdoors, and develop a plan for their provision with timeframes and budgets. (Recreation Commission, BOS)*

CULTURAL RESOURCES - THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

What are cultural resources?

"Cultural resources" are everything around us that was created or altered by humans - as opposed to "natural" resources". Cultural resources are prehistoric, historic and contemporary objects and places:

- tools, clothing and art;
- structures such as buildings, roads and bridges; and
- landscapes that people have shaped: villages, farms, fields and ponds.

Cultural resources include "historic resources". Taken together, these are the physical expression of who we are and who we were, and the underpinnings of the future. Hampton's cultural resources - the prehistoric, historic and contemporary work of humans in the landscape -- may be fairly considered its greatest amenity.

Hampton's cultural resources are prized by residents and visitors. Residents enjoy the rural views all around: ponds, farms, fields and village, and historic relics such as stone walls and antique houses. These things taken together foster a sense of identity as a New Englander and a sense of belonging to a place that is good to call home. Such cultural resources as old farmsteads, stone walls, and tree lined roads, attract new residents to Town and keep them here. In a 2015 community survey, residents most often cited Hampton's greatest strengths as privacy, nature, quiet, and historic features, components of the rural landscape. Protecting Hampton's cultural resources and rural landscapes are integral to both quality of life and to property values.

And what, exactly, constitutes the rural landscape? Keeping the landscape rural means preserving the stonewalls, shade trees along narrow and winding roadways, and dark skies. Rural means a place where agriculture continues to be a meaningful economic activity, there are large tracts of open space, and there are businesses run from the home. There is a difference between being rural and looking rural, and the actions taken to protect Hampton's landscape as a primary cultural resource should foster both.

History of the Landscape

For thousands of years, Nipmuc and Mohegan Indians lived here. They cleared small areas of land for staple crops and used wood for constructing their homes, they cleared the forest understory and hunted game, but their imprint on the land was gentle. In Hampton, Indian sites have been found at the Cowhantic ledges on Route 97 and at Sand Hill in Howard Valley.

European settlers began the acquisition of land in Hampton around 1710. Settlers came from elsewhere in Windham, but the majority arrived from Massachusetts. In 1786, Hampton was incorporated from four towns: Pomfret, Brooklyn, Canterbury, and Windham. The population reached 1,379 in 1800 and then declined to only 475 in 1920. Hampton began to grow again, slowly, but it was

not until about 1982 that the population surpassed what it was in 1800. A consequence of this decline and slow rebound is a high proportion of pre-twentieth century structures.

Hampton's earliest houses are found in Howard Valley, on Hampton Hill, and in scattered sites around Town. Many can be traced to two periods of development around 1750 and 1830. The National Park Service added the Hampton Hill Historic District to its National Register of Historic Places in 1982. The Connecticut Historic Commission recognizes forty-nine structures and sites in Hampton on its State Register of Historic Places. In recognition of Hampton's historic industrial legacy, the Hemlock Glen Industrial Archaeological District was added to the National Register in 2007.



Hemlock Glen Industrial Archaeological District - National Register of Historic Places

Besides houses, there are other historic structures and landscapes that give Hampton its classic New England beauty. The historic houses were typically farmsteads; surrounding the houses were barnyards and dooryards, well houses, outhouses, small shops and ponds, encompassed by stonewalls and shade trees that grew up on the edges of fields and roads. There are three notable, historic churches in Town. The Congregational Church on Hampton Hill is the second oldest church building on the same site in the state, with its oldest parts dating from 1754. A second church in Howard Valley (south of Route 6) was built in the early nineteenth century and still stands. The Catholic church was erected on Hampton Hill in 1877 and remains actively used.

Hampton's road system itself is a historic feature, following the old wagon roads which were ultimately paved with macadam in the twentieth century. Roads today are still narrow, stonewall-lined, and shaded, with simple ditches for drainage. Four cemeteries date to the eighteenth century: North Cemetery, South Cemetery, Old Litchfield Cemetery, and Grow Cemetery. There are numerous

nineteenth century mill site ruins along the Little River, notably at Reilly Road and Brooklyn-Windham Turnpike and at Hemlock Glen on Old King's Highway.

The landscape that we see and cherish is a result of this settlement history.

Historic Preservation

Although the National Park Service has recognized Hampton Hill and Hemlock Glen as historic districts, federal designation does very little to control changes to recognized structures or even their demolition. A *local* historic district may be created by a vote of the affected property owners only; unlike a national historic district, it has significant control over renovations to structures within its boundaries. To date, Hampton has no local historic districts and none are planned.

The Hampton Antiquarian and Historical Society was founded in 1968 and continues its mission to document, preserve and promote Hampton's historic features. It is located in the Burnham Hibbard House at 185 Main St., which is maintained as a museum dedicated to the preservation of artifacts related to life in Hampton. The Society was founded to provide a venue for those people interested in history and especially in Hampton's history. It is always a challenge to maintain an old house, and the Museum is no different. Currently, the Society is conducting an assessment of its out buildings and will then develop a plan of use and restoration.

Status and Trends

There has always been a strong consensus, expressed through community surveys in 2001 and 2015, that residents would like to protect and preserve the resources which together comprise Hampton's rural landscape. But how to do so is complex. Changes in the landscape have come about as the result of the uncoupling of household economies from a farm-based economy, when almost everyone kept at least a small farm. Land that was formerly cleared and farmed has returned to a near continuous blanket of trees. And change continues as land is developed for residential subdivision lots.

As large tracts of land were divided into two acre lots over the past thirty years or so, the Town began to look a little more suburban, Connecticut-style: single family homes on two acre lots with two hundred feet of frontage along the Town roads. The historic structures are still here but less easily seen. After so many years, Hampton's traditional rural landscape patchwork pattern of farm and village started to fade away. In recognition of this change, the Planning and Zoning Commission adopted new regulations to more actively guide the division of land. In 2008, the Commission adopted Conservation Subdivisions as the usual pattern of land division in Town. Instead of cutting up a tract of land into 2 acre pieces, the Subdivision Regulations now authorizes land to be divided into smaller lots while setting aside a large portion of the original parcel as protected open space. This new layout will serve to protect the historic pattern of village and open space.

GOALS

1. Enhance awareness of the economic value of cultural resources to Town residents and Town staff.
2. Develop strategies for the protection of cultural resources.
3. Develop strategies for both visual and physical access to cultural and historic resources.
4. Protect and preserve Hampton's historic structures to the greatest possible extent, including: dwellings, outbuildings, churches, schools, bridges, mill sites and dams, stonewalls, and cemeteries. (PZC, Antiquarian and Historical Society)*
5. Protect and preserve key elements of the traditional rural landscape to the greatest possible extent, including groupings of structures, roadside trees, open fields, agricultural views and vistas, dark skies, and the historic roadscape. (PZC)*

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations accordingly to support protection of the traditional landscape pattern that distinguishes village/hamlet from open spaces/farms. (PZC) *
2. Review and revise Zoning Regulations to foster reuse of historic dwellings, barns, and other structures as well as farms, by implementation of zoning regulations that are flexible enough to permit new uses when their original uses are no longer economically viable, such as for social gathering/event function establishments, and art, recreation and educational institutions. (PZC) *
3. Review Town Ordinances and Regulations that control new road construction and improvements to existing Town roads, so that the traditional roadscape is preserved to the extent possible, including consideration of road widths, drainage features, protection of roadside stone walls and trees. (Board of Selectmen, PZC) *
4. Provide assistance to owners of historic properties to encourage the preservation of exterior features that contribute to the historic integrity of the property, including a uniform signage program to identify historic structures. (Antiquarian and Historical Society) *
5. Consider Hampton Hill for designation as a village district zone. (PZC) *
6. Adopt a Town scenic road ordinance to allow municipal recognition and protection of scenic, historic Town roads and support for State scenic road designation for Route 97 in Hampton. (Board of Selectman, PZC, Antiquarian and Historical Society, Conservation Commission) *
7. Develop a map of views and vistas to be protected. (PZC)*

* *Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

ENERGY

A Plan of Conservation and Development is required by law to promote energy conservation by considering (1) energy efficient patterns of development (2) use of solar and other renewable forms of energy, and (3) energy conservation, generally.

In 2009, the Town established the Hampton Green Energy Committee with a charge to study and recommend an energy savings/green energy plan for the Town of Hampton. Since then, the Committee has organized energy audits for all municipal building and facilities upgrades including:

- Hampton Elementary School: installation of a photovoltaic system on the roof; a solar thermal system to provide hot water; energy-efficient exterior lighting that reduces the nighttime glow into the sky as well as cost; and a dedicated monitoring system to track the energy created by these renewable resources.
- Town Hall: extra insulation, a new energy efficient furnace, outdoor lighting improvements, and a solar photovoltaic system.
- Hampton Firehouse: a roof-mounted photovoltaic system.

In addition, the Committee has labored to find and publicize resources and opportunities to help home owners reduce their energy consumption. The Committee has organized energy fairs to disseminate information to the community on energy conservation, a light bulb exchange, and a brochure about reducing waste. It maintains a webpage at the Town of Hampton website where residents can find a wealth of information on energy conservation options, including the **Solarize CT** initiative to promote energy-savings solar installations for residents.

Many Hampton residents have taken the initiative to reduce dependence on petroleum-based energy sources at home by turning to alternative and local energy sources to power their households, using wood, solar, wind and geothermal energies. Since 2008, thirty-two building permits have been issued for solar energy producing equipment.

The Planning and Zoning Commission continues to incorporate measures to conserve energy through its zoning regulations. In 2008, the Hampton PZC amended its subdivision regulations to designate conservation subdivision design as the default layout for new residential development. This design will promote energy efficiency by shrinking lot sizes and reducing the amount of road and paved surfaces required to service new residential lots. The Zoning Regulations currently include an Energy Efficiency Section, which requires that applicants for zoning permits and subdivision approval demonstrate that they have considered site design and building construction so as to minimize energy consumption.

GOALS

1. Evaluate town facilities and town-sponsored activities to minimize energy consumption. (Green-Energy Committee, Board of Selectmen)
2. Evaluate and revise zoning and subdivision regulations, including permitting requirements, to encourage energy conservation and minimize energy consumption in new development. (PZC)
3. Keep public informed regarding opportunities to minimize energy consumption.

ACTIONS/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Evaluate town buildings periodically for improved energy efficiency. (Green Energy Committee, Board of Selectmen)*
2. Include energy conservation measures in all proposed Town building programs. (Green Energy Committee Board of Selectmen)*
3. Require compliance with Zoning Regulations Section 6.8, Energy Efficiency, in all applications to the PZC (PZC)*
4. Draft Public Improvements Standards for municipal construction projects to encourage pavement reduction.
5. Encourage walking and bicycling by seeking funding to support paths along Route 97 and Route 6 as well as along selected Town routes. (PZC, Board of Selectman)*
6. Keep residents informed of opportunities for commuting in vans, carpools and buses and other energy conservation measures at home. (Green Energy Committee)*

*Town Board that will lead implementation of goal/action item.

HOUSING

Background

Hampton's housing stock is composed almost entirely of single family dwellings and of these, about one third were built before 1940.

Of the 800 dwelling units in Hampton, 87% are owner-occupied single family dwellings and 13% are rental units. There is a current vacancy rate of 4.5%. There are no modern multi-family structures in Town, although some of the large houses on Main Street in the village have been divided into rental units. In addition, there are a limited number of small apartments for rent that are accessory to single family dwellings; these may be attached to the main house, located in garages and barns, or may be free-standing cottages.

Trends

New housing options are shaped by broad and local economic trends and by the Town Zoning Regulations. Currently, Hampton's Regulations allow the construction of single family dwellings, two family dwellings, and accessory apartments in free-standing structures on any residentially zoned lot of at least 80,000 square feet.

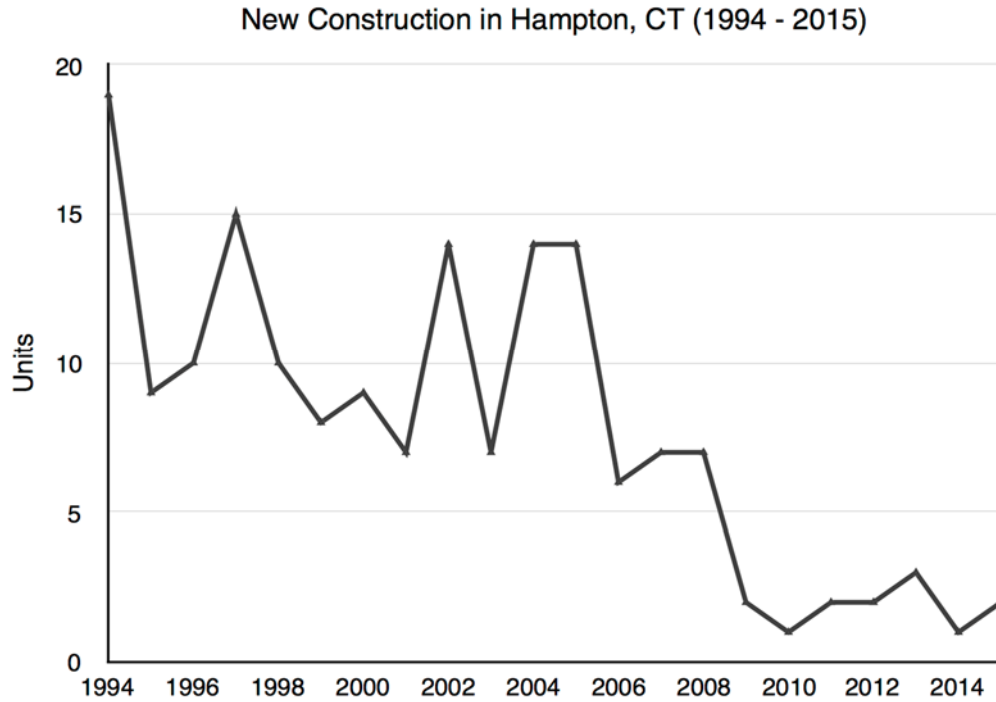
In 2008, the Commission adopted Regulations which allow a new type of subdivision layout, referred to as Conservation Subdivision. These Regulations allow smaller lot sizes and thereby reduce the amount of road and other infrastructure needed for the new development. The Conservation Subdivision layout will thus reduce the cost of lot development, resulting in a more affordable housing option.

It is a requirement of the Connecticut General Statutes that this Plan promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for low and moderate-income households. The existing Zoning Regulations do so by allowing construction of two- family and accessory apartments and cottages, which provide diversity of housing opportunity by providing a supply of smaller-sized rental units. At this time, Hampton does not provide any publicly owned housing, and none is planned. But it is unusual among area Towns in its treatment (in the Zoning Regulations) of mobile homes as legal dwelling units, which provides another low-income housing option. Property owners may choose to place a mobile home on their lots instead of a conventionally built one. As of 2015, there are at least 16 mobile homes counted as primary dwellings in Hampton.

Construction of single family dwellings in Hampton has fallen dramatically since the economic downturn in 2008 and so has division of large parcels of land into house lots. Over the past ten years, there have been no new roads laid out or constructed, and most of the new lots that have been created are for family members.

NEW CONSTRUCTION - SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS IN HAMPTON, 1994-2015.

Source: Town of Hampton



Dwelling Units - Certificates of Occupancy issued in Hampton, CT, 2002-2015

Year	CO issued
2002	17
2003	7
2004	9
2005	13
2006	10
2007	6
2008	8
2009	6
2010	1
2011	1
2012	3
2013	2
2014	3
2015	1

Source: Town of Hampton.

Hampton Regional Housing Rehabilitation Program

As Hampton's population ages and more of its residents live on fixed incomes, the Hampton Regional Housing Rehabilitation Program becomes increasingly important to the ability of residents to maintain their homes in good order. The Program is locally administered by an independent firm, Community Opportunities Group, Inc., and maintains an office in the Hampton Town Hall. The federal government, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the funding source.

The Program provides loans and technical assistance for the repair and maintenance of residential properties. Eligibility is limited to low or moderate income households. The Program provides a zero-interest loan that does not have to be paid back until the property is sold. Serious maintenance problems are a priority, but loans are also granted for preventative maintenance. Since 2007, the Hampton Program has provided financing for the rehabilitation of seventeen housing units, of which three were renter-occupied, with a total investment of about \$425,000. Applications and information are available during office hours at the Town Hall on Thursdays and the Program maintains a webpage on the Town's website.

Housing Affordability

The median household income in Hampton is \$73,300, slightly higher than the state average of \$68,900, and considerably higher than the Windham County average of \$59,200. In comparison to the county, the town has few residents who can be counted as poor by the federal definition: families living under the poverty line account for 2 percent of all Hampton families, whereas poor families make up 9 percent of all families in the county. The poverty figures show a decrease in poverty levels in Hampton since 1990, when 3.5 percent of families lived below the poverty level. Among individuals, 5.9 percent of Hampton residents live in households with income below the poverty level, while the proportion in Windham County overall is 11.4 percent.¹⁰ The median gross rent in Hampton is an estimated \$981 per month, the second highest among towns in Windham County (after Scotland). The median sales price in Hampton was \$185,000 in 2001, while the median value of owner-occupied units is estimated at \$237,900. Of the building permits for new construction issued in the period 1996 to 2013, none were for multi-family structures.

With the economic downturn, there has been an increase in housing affordability in Hampton. As of 2015, the State counted 4.67% of Hampton's housing units as affordable (as affordable is defined by state law), almost double the percentage of affordable units in 2006.

As of 2015, 37 single-family housing units were financed with CHFA or USDA mortgages, more than double the number that qualified in 2012. This has resulted in an increase from a low of 2.0 percent in 2011 to 4.67 percent of housing units (2015) that fall under the State's definition of affordable units.

10

U.S. Bureau of Census, Census 2000. Compiled by WINCOG.

Hampton has allowed construction of a free-standing, small dwelling unit in addition to the principal dwelling on residentially zoned lots since 2006. This has been an increasingly popular option for families who want to live in a multi-generational household. Given the trend towards an older population, there is also likely to be an increase in demand for more affordable senior housing over the next decade.

Housing Affordability in Hampton

Year	Total housing units per US census	Government assisted units	Tenant rental assistance	Single family units with CHFA or USDA mortgages	Deed restricted units	Totally assisted units	Percent affordable
2015	793	0	1	36	0	37	4.67%
2014	793	0	2	42	0	44	5.55%
2013	793	0	0	32	0	32	4.04%
2012	793	0	0	18	0	18	2.27%
2011	793	0	0	16	0	16	2.02%
2010	695	0	NA	17	0	17	2.45%
2009	695	0	NA	17	0	17	2.45%
2008	695	0	NA	18	0	18	2.59%
2007	695	0	NA	18	0	18	2.59%
2006	695	2	NA	15	4	17	2.45%

Source: State of Connecticut Department of Housing

GOALS

1. Provide a range of housing opportunities to serve the needs of Town residents of all ages and of all economic levels. (PZC, BOS)*
2. Provide a range of housing opportunities that are compatible with the rural nature of the Town. (PZC) *

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review and revise the Zoning Regulations so that the Regulations provide the greatest possible range of housing opportunities in support of the above goals. (PZC) *
2. Develop new and coordinate and publicize existing programs that can assist property owners in maintaining homes in good condition. (BOS)*
3. Provide seniors and special needs persons with services that allow them to remain in their homes. (BOS)*
4. Evaluate the ongoing economically viable use and reuse of large houses, with particular attention to village houses and revise zoning regulations as needed. (PZC)*

* Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.

NATURAL RESOURCES

This Plan was originally more narrowly construed as a Plan of Development, intended to guide Town growth.

In 1995, Connecticut General Statutes were changed to require that Towns produce a Plan of *Conservation and Development*. By this mandate, the legislature recognized the unprecedented ability of humans to alter, and to degrade, the natural environment, and therefore the unprecedented need to take responsibility for conservation of the natural world: soil, water, air, animals and plants. The wise use of natural resources is a practical act, since doing so protects our own health and welfare.

The Town's leading body for conserving its natural resources is the Hampton Conservation Commission, formed in 1974. The Conservation Commission meets regularly to fulfill its mission to protect and enhance the Town's natural resources. It maintains an inventory of natural resources and promotes their protection; acquires and manages protected open space; and advises the Planning and Zoning Commission on the impact of proposed development.

The Hampton Conservation Guide of 1977, found in the Town Clerk's Office, presents detailed information and recommendations on natural resources in Town. Today we use digital mapping, based on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, to find out where wetlands, deep soils, and streams and ponds may be found. Such information can be retrieved at the University of Connecticut's CLEAR website and at the website of the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Government.

In this section of the POCD, we consider the current and future status of Hampton's natural resources.

SOILS

Productive soil in Hampton is a precious commodity. The surface of Hampton's 15,872 acres is a product of the glaciers that left behind a stony and poorly drained land.

It is a landscape that has been fairly unreceptive to human efforts to use it for economic advantage. House lot development is constrained by limitations on septic system construction due to high water tables and bedrock. Neither are the soils well suited for tillable fields because topsoil is typically rocky and shallow over infertile subsoil and bedrock.

Bands of sand and gravel deposits paralleling the Little River may have value where they are still accessible under undeveloped land. Sand and gravel are necessary commodities in the construction industry but these have become increasingly difficult to mine due to local opposition, especially where there is a nearby residential neighborhood, and due to the costs of fulfilling regulatory requirements and reclamation following the mining period. Hampton has no commercial gravel operations at this time but it is a permitted use in the Zoning Regulations.

Long developed farmlands and low-lying wetlands are the only places where topsoil more than about 6 inches deep will reliably be found. The best of Hampton's soils are found in the Little River Valley, to the west of Murphy Brook, in the northeast corner of Town, and scattered in small pockets, making it possible to support some, mostly small-scale, commercial agriculture. Native soils support pastures for grazing livestock so long as they are grazed enough to suppress tree growth. The federal government classifies farmland soils according to their ability to produce food, feed, for forage, and for oilseed, as follows:

- "Prime farmland" is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber.
- "Unique farmland" is land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables.
- "Farmland of statewide importance" is land that does not meet the criteria for prime or unique farmland but includes areas of soils that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.
- "Farmland of local importance" is land that has been identified as of local importance for agriculture by local agencies.

ADD FARMLAND SOILS MAP OR REFERENCE MAP IN APPENDIX HERE

Hampton's soils do support a rich forest economy as well as a robust ecology. A near continuous canopy of mixed hardwood species with some conifers thrives where the land has not been cleared. Forest owners may choose to harvest timber for boards or firewood. Wetlands soils are found throughout the Town in areas with a high water table, in low areas and along streams. These provide highly productive biological habitat.

Soils: Status and Trends

As the land was divided into farms in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, forests were cleared away and the land supported row crops, hay and pasture. Grass cover builds soil, but when agriculture and the population declined, the forest canopy returned. Despite the period of residential growth from 1950 until the economic decline in 2007, most of the Town remains forested and undeveloped and soils remain undisturbed.

GOALS

1. Protect the quantity and quality of the topsoil from potentially damaging activities such as mining and removal of topsoil for sale, burial during development, and contamination from such pollutants as salt, petroleum, chemicals used in businesses, etc. (PZC)*

2. Preserve the deeper soils found primarily under farmland, in the Little River Valley, and as shown on soils maps. (PZC)*

ACTION / IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to protect topsoil during development activities.
2. Require retention of topsoil on sites being developed. (PZC) *
3. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to prevent the loss of developed farm soils and prime agricultural lands to other uses. (PZC)
4. Review the sand and gravel regulations to determine whether they sufficiently and effectively reflect the wishes of the community regarding such operations, and revise accordingly. (PZC) *
5. Review the Zoning Regulations to determine if they are sufficient to protect soils from contamination by pollutants, and revise accordingly. (PZC) *
6. Ensure that all Townspeople have a practical means of disposing of solid and hazardous wastes, and that this means is adequately publicized. (Board of Selectmen) *
7. Utilize the Conservation Subdivision regulations to protect farmland soils from development.

** Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

WATER RESOURCES

Water resources are most easily considered by where they are found: on the ground as "surface water" and under the ground as "groundwater".

Surface Water

The surface waters of Hampton are found in its lakes, ponds and swamps and the rivers and streams, recharged by ample annual rainfall of about 45 inches. The largest waterbodies are reservoirs: Pine Acres Lake in Goodwin State Forest, and Hampton Reservoir. Many small ponds dot the landscape. Most of the Town streams ultimately drain into the Little River or to Merrick Brook, and both of these drain into the Shetucket River; about 10 percent of the eastern side of Hampton drains to the Quinebaug River. Rivers, streams and their associated wetlands belts compose about one quarter of Hampton's area.

INSERT MAPS OF WATER RESOURCES

Ground Water

Groundwater is supplied by waters from the surface of the ground that percolate down through the soil. The most important sources of groundwater, aquifers, are typically found in deep gravel deposits in river valleys, and Hampton is no exception. Hampton's only significant aquifer is found along the Little River.

Aquifers that have public water supply wells are required to be regulated by the State and are typically controlled through Zoning Regulations. Groundwater is also found in cracks and pores in bedrock in a complex pattern that is difficult to impossible to map. Volumes of water in bedrock are insufficient to support public water supplies but enough to support individual wells. Water yields in wells range widely from lot to lot, and yields on one lot do not predict well yield on the adjacent lot. However, water supplies in Hampton are abundant, and all lots can attain a water supply sufficient to support a household when a well is drilled. Groundwater levels in shallow, dug wells, though, can drop in droughty years, and these residents may have to resort to drilling a new, deep well.

Water: Status and Trends

The Town's Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) works to protect Hampton's water resources and wetlands through its Regulations to control development that has the potential to damage water resources and wetlands communities. It meets on a regular basis to consider requests for permits to work near and within wetlands and watercourses.

Hampton has little commercial and industrial activity, so its water supplies are relatively safe from pollution. But water quality should not be taken for granted. Water from anywhere upstream in the watershed can negatively affect water quality in Hampton. Watercourses, ponds, and both shallow (dug) and deep (drilled) wells can be affected by contaminants such as road salt, oil and gasoline. These come from a wide range of sources, and activities and chemicals originally thought to be harmless have sometimes been found to be harmful to the water supply at a later date. Activities required for road maintenance may be the most frequent source of contamination to Hampton's water resources.

GOALS

1. Keep surface and groundwater free from contamination. (IWWC, PZC, BOS)*
2. Protect the aquifer along the Little River from contamination, as it is the only local source of drinking water should public water supply wells ever be needed. (PZC)*

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to protect water quality, with consideration for contamination from industrial and commercial activities and also from agriculture, home businesses, and de-icing chemicals. (PZC) *
2. Review storm water discharges from all sources, including from existing and proposed roads and residential development, so that pollution from contaminants carried in storm water is minimized. (PZC, Conservation Commission, BOS, IWWC) *

3. Require that all businesses, including home businesses, have a plan for the legal and sound management and disposal of all hazardous materials and wastes. (PZC) *
4. Prevent the burial of wood in land clearing activities to prevent water contamination, as is required by state law. (PZC, Building Official) *
5. Encourage the use of conservation easements so that streams and wetlands are protected from activities and uses that may degrade water quality. (BOS, PZC, Conservation Commission, IWWC) *
6. Inform residents about measures that can be taken to protect surface and groundwater. (Conservation Commission) *
7. Obtain Greenway designation for the Little River from the CT DEEP/Greenways Council. (Conservation Commission) *
8. Evaluate road maintenance practices and materials so as to use the least damaging options. (BOS)*

** Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

FOREST

Much of the native forest ecosystem of the northeastern U.S. has been consumed by development; northeastern Connecticut is a notable exception. Most of Hampton is covered by a canopy of forest, and Hampton would be entirely forested except in bogs and marshes if not for human activities that clear the forest and prevent its return.

Forests provide wildlife habitat, keep streams cool, and are an integral component of the water and oxygen cycles necessary for life on earth. From an economic standpoint, forests provide timber for construction and firewood and provide attractive residential and recreational opportunities. Hampton contains two State Forests: Natchaug and Goodwin, totaling 2347 acres, and many thousands of acres of privately held forest

Forest: Status and Trends

Since almost all of Hampton is forested, residential development requires logging before construction. Typically, about three-fourths to one acre of land is cleared for development of each new residence, leaving the balance of the lot wooded. As house-lot development continues, Hampton's woodlands become more patchy and less continuous, and this changing pattern has an impact on the local flora and fauna.

Large landholders can undertake forest management and "farm" their woods for timber production by thinning and logging. But as large tracts become broken into small ones, timber harvesting becomes less viable since logging is less profitable on small tracts. Firewood can be a byproduct of land clearing, and the value of firewood will fluctuate with the cost of other fuels and labor costs.

In 2008, the PZC revised its zoning and subdivision regulations to encourage development in clusters with surrounding protected open space. This subdivision pattern will serve to protect the continuous forest canopy which both provides the habitat required to support many animals and suppresses invasive plant species.

GOALS

1. Retain large and unfragmented blocks of forest. (PCZ, IWWC, Conservation Commission) *
2. Ensure that environmental damage from logging is minimized. (IWWC, Conservation Commission) *
3. Keep forest habitat healthy by minimizing deleterious impacts (PZC, IWWC, Conservation Commission) *

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations and revise accordingly to maximize the protection of large blocks of woodland. (PZC) *
2. Keep residents informed about the state program for reduced taxation of forestland so that all who wish to take advantage of this program can do so. (Assessor, BOS) *
3. As a component of open space planning, identify prime forestlands for their conservation and preservation by the use of conservation easements, acquisition, or additions to the State Forests. (Conservation Commission, PZC) *

** Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

WILDLIFE

Because much of Hampton is undeveloped and population density is low, the Town has abundant wildlife habitat. There is a rich mix of wildlife species and, like all of southern New England some species have reestablished themselves after years absent or in decline. Sustaining a variety of habitats in Town will foster a variety of wildlife species. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection tracks threatened and endangered species through its "Natural Diversity Database", updated annually and found at the DEEP website.

Wildlife: Status and Trends

The comeback of certain species such as fox, coyote, turkey, and fisher indicates that many wildlife species are more adaptable than once thought. The success of some species, however, does not mean that ALL species have the ability to adjust to human neighbors, major habitat changes, especially with the added pressure of climate change. Encroaching development can be expected to have a deleterious effect on some local wildlife populations. To an increasing extent, a primary wildlife protection goal will be managing wildlife populations that live with and amongst human populations as well as wildlife habitat preservation.

GOALS

1. Conserve numerous and diverse wildlife populations. (Conservation Commission, PZC)*

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Institutionalize the contribution of the Conservation Commission to the decision-making, actions and activities of the PZC, IWWC, and Board of Selectmen, as well as the Public Works Department. (Conservation Commission, PZC, IWWC) *
2. Identify prime wildlife habitat protection areas and develop methods for their protection through easements, wise development patterns, and public education. (Conservation Commission, PZC) *
3. Develop an open space plan for the Town that will aid in the conservation of wildlife. (Conservation Commission, PZC) *

** Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

AIR

Air quality in Hampton is largely controlled by activities that take place out-of-town, upwind to the west. Our air is degraded mainly by ozone and by microscopic particles (particulate) in the air, and these are clearly linked to health problems, especially respiratory system illnesses and heart disease.

Although the sources of air pollutants are overwhelmingly from outside Town boundaries, there are still measures that individuals can take to help reduce air pollution, such as: reducing energy consumption

at home by the choices we make for heating, cooling and home appliance selections; and by reducing gasoline consumption.

GOALS

1. Air quality in Hampton will comply with the standards set by EPA. (Conservation Commission)*
2. Hampton residents will not further degrade air quality. (Conservation Commission)*

ACTION / IMPLEMENTATION

1. The Town government will minimize air pollution from its buildings and vehicles.
2. (BOS) *
3. Town residents, including children and adults, will be kept informed about measures they can take to minimize air pollution, including such things as: using clean burning woodstoves and outdoor wood burning furnaces; carpool opportunities; and reducing the use of gasoline powered appliances such as leaf blowers and lawnmowers. (Conservation Commission) *
4. Town residents will support legislative efforts to improve air quality and the positions of legislators and legislative candidates on clean air issues. (Conservation Commission, BOS) *

** Town Boards that will lead implementation of goal/action item.*

OPEN SPACE

Open space is a key to maintaining Hampton's rural character - a central goal of this Plan and fundamental to the welfare of the community in many respects:

- it protects air and water quality;
- it conserves native plants and animals; and
- it contributes to our own health, both mental and physical.

Note that "open space" as it is used here is ANY undeveloped land, whereas "protected open space" is land protected from future development.

In this section, we consider the status and future of open spaces in Hampton: which lands are protected and which are open now but not protected from development? Which do we want to permanently protect? And how do we achieve the desired goals?

Background

Hampton is a rural town of 25 square miles or 15,872 acres with a population of only about 1850. Relative to most other eastern Connecticut towns and much of southern New England, Hampton is sparsely settled and heavily wooded place with much open space. The Town is fortunate to incorporate considerable state-owned land within its municipal borders in Goodwin and Natchaug State Forests, but owns little land itself and has not yet adopted a formal plan or process for future acquisitions.

In recognition of the value of open space and its precarious future, the Connecticut legislature enacted law in 1997 (Section 23-8(b) of the General Statutes) that sets a goal for protecting open space: by 2023, 21% of state land shall be protected from development. Ten percent is to be owned by the state and eleven percent by municipalities, nonprofits or water companies. The purpose was, and is, to provide Connecticut citizens with sufficient space for outdoor recreation and for conservation of natural resources before it is too late to do so due to sprawling land development across the State. In 2002, the Hampton Conservation Commission was reestablished and it continues to work actively to conserve Hampton's natural resources and open spaces.

Finding the right balance between developed land and open spaces will always be a challenge. But from the Community Surveys taken in 1992, 2001 and 2016, we know that privacy, nature and quiet are the most highly treasured values, and this Plan must seek to safeguard these, in part, through policies governing open space.

Open Space Status and Trends

Most of the open space one sees in Hampton, outside of the State Forests, is not protected from future development. The ultimate decision to develop land lies with the individual property owner, who weighs the value of open land against family/personal lifestyle needs and wishes. Since the last POCD

was adopted, an additional 333 acres of undeveloped land has been protected, 273 acres in private ownership and 60 acres of municipal property.

Land Division

If a property owner decides to divide or develop his property, the Town Subdivision and Zoning Regulations will govern land division and development through their requirements for the dimensions of new lots, placement of structures, and the uses that can be made of a property. Subdivision and development of land for new houses plays the central role in the landscape we see today in Hampton. Since zoning was first adopted in 1971, Hampton's Zoning Regulations have required that each new lot consist of at least 1.84 acres and a lot width of at least two hundred feet.

As the years passed, the PZC came to view the resulting development pattern as undoing the Town's rural look, despite the still small population. Instead of the traditional New England settlement pattern of village, hamlet and farm, we view a string of houses along the roads that looks more like suburbia than countryside. Since the last Plan of Conservation and Development was adopted in 2007, the PZC revised its Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to halt this 40 year old suburban-style development pattern. Going forward, subdivisions will be typically be designed to accommodate new residential development but also protect the rural look of Hampton, with greater opportunities for agriculture and conservation of natural resources.

With exception for family subdivisions, the current Subdivision Regulations require that there is some protected open space provided out of the original subdivision parcel. The "conservation subdivision" regulations give subdivisions a very different layout from the previous 1.84 acre lot pattern. The conservation subdivision design does not reduce the total number of lots permitted to be created from a parcel of land but it does reduce the minimum lot size, and it requires that a significant percent of the subdivided parcel is left undeveloped as permanently protected open space.

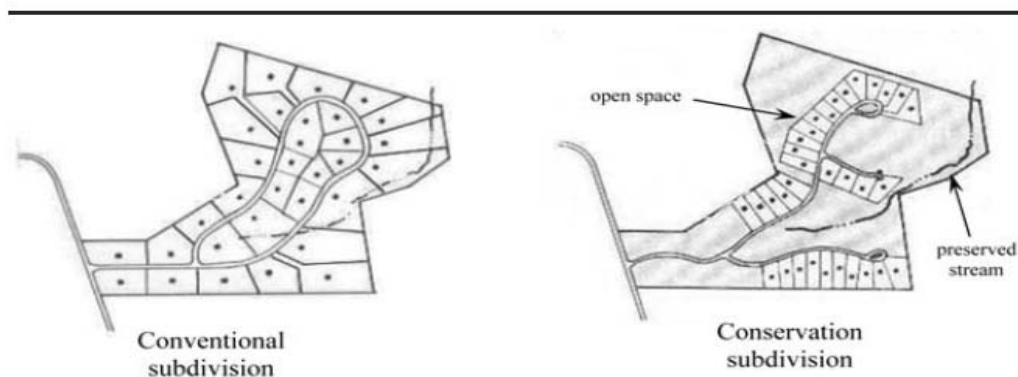


Figure 1: Generic Conventional and Conservation Subdivisions
SOURCE: Reprinted from Arendt et al. (1996).

Reduced tax assessment on undeveloped private property

Property owners pay property taxes based on the value of what they own (the "assessment"). But the Connecticut General Statutes in Section 107(e) provide Connecticut towns with the right to reduce the assessment on undeveloped land, should they choose to do so. In 1979, the Hampton PZC amended the Town's Plan of Development to state that it was in the town's interests to encourage privately held open space by reducing the property taxes due on undeveloped land. Ever since the adoption of this policy, Hampton has relied on reduced tax assessment of undeveloped land to encourage owners to leave their land in an undeveloped state as (unprotected) open space.

By using the Town's reduced tax assessment rate on open space and the State's program for reduced tax assessment on forest and farmland, many residents have qualified for reduced tax taxes on their land. These programs provide temporary, voluntary open space preservation. The reduced taxation program does not prevent the property owner from selling or developing the property if he/she chooses to do so.

The Plan of Development, now Plan of Conservation and Development, has continued to recommend reduced assessment of private open space since 1979. In August, 2002, the PZC approved the following language, still in place today: *Such open space fosters maintenance of the rural character of the Town of Hampton, which is a central goal of the Plan (of development). It is the recommendation of the Hampton Planning and Zoning Commission that, to qualify for open space designation and reduced tax assessment:*

- *For a tract, lot, parcel or plat of land in the Town of Hampton with an area greater than 80,000 square feet which has been developed for nonagricultural purposes, the land area in excess of eighty thousand square feet shall qualify for designation as open space land;*
- *The entire area of any undeveloped tract, lot, parcel or plat of land shall qualify for designation as open space land;*
- *For a tract, lot, parcel or plat of land in the Town of Hampton with an area greater than eighty thousand (80,000) square feet for which a building permit has been issued for non-agricultural purposes, only the land area in excess of eighty thousand square feet shall qualify for designation as open space.*

Legal Mechanisms for Permanent Protection of Open Space

There are various legal mechanisms for protecting and preserving open space, and some are more permanent than the others. These include:

- **Ownership of land by the Town, the State, a land trust, or some other entity.** Land use may be restricted by deed or other means to prevent it from being sold or developed. Ownership of land by a governmental agency is not necessarily equivalent to certain and

infallible protection unless the deed specifies such protection. Land owned by a conservation land trust may be more reliably protected.

- **Open space protected by easements.** A conservation or an agricultural easement typically keep the land under private ownership but prevent its development. A Conservation Easement is a legal agreement between a property owner and a conservation organization or a governmental agency. By the agreement (easement), a property owner places specific restrictions on the use of his property that will protect its natural resources and limit its development and the conservation organization or agency ensures that the property owner abides by the restrictions. An Agricultural Easement is similar but this Easement allows agricultural activities and otherwise limits the use of the land. The owner continues to own the property and use it for all other purposes than the ones restricted in the easement document, while the easement gives a conservation organization, town or other governmental agency the right to enforce the restrictions.
- **The State of Connecticut Department of Agriculture** runs programs that purchase and then extinguish the right to develop property. The programs preserve farmlands by State purchase of the rights to develop land. This arrangement leaves the land in private ownership but the (private) property may use the land exclusively for agriculture.

Protected Open Space Selection Process

The Conservation Commission is charged with leading the town in developing a plan for selecting parcels to be protected open space, and it also seeks the funding to do so. At this time, the Conservation Commission maintains and continually updates a list of recommended parcels for protection from development, should the Town determine it wants to make additional open space acquisitions and desirable parcels are for sale. The Conservation Commission also evaluates properties proposed for subdivision by making recommendations to the PZC regarding natural resources and habitat that warrant special protection.

The task of selecting open space for protection is challenging and made complicated by the fact that there are multiple and competing desirable qualities to be evaluated, such as: natural resource values, animal habitat, surface and ground water protection, recreational values, and views/vistas. Parcel selection is influenced by the availability of the selected land; the owner must be or become a willing seller.

Funding Sources

When the Town determines that it wants to protect certain land from development, it then must seek the funding to do so. Alternatively, when grant opportunities are available, the Town may decide to seek funds to acquire a parcel of interest.

The Board of Selectmen, with the Conservation Commission, leads this effort. The Town can purchase a property, or it can purchase a conservation or agricultural easement on a property instead, which will be cheaper. Following are the principal funding sources:

Grants. Grants are available from many sources. The most frequently used grant programs are available from Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. For the two acquisitions on Old Town Pound Road, the Town was awarded grants from CT DEEP's Open Space and Watershed Grant Program, which awards matching funds of about 50 percent of the purchase price with the Town contributing the balance. This is a competitive program, with limited amount of funding available in various amounts, typically once per year.

Town Open Space Fund. The Town may direct property tax revenues into a dedicated open space fund. Hampton has had such a fund since 2009. The Open Space Account may not be used for other purposes; money placed in the fund will remain until disbursed for an open space acquisition. The account can be used to provide matches when a grant is sought that requires Town matching funds.

Bonding. Many Connecticut Towns have issued general obligation bonds to fund open space acquisition. Any such bonding is contingent upon approval by referendum. An advantage of having readily available funds is that, when a desirable parcel is available from a willing seller, the Town can act quickly to make the purchase or to supply the Town's match for a matching grant program.

Protected Open Space Acquired by Hampton

The Town, through its Conservation Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Selectmen, has become active in protected open space acquisition activities in recent years.

- It has continued to contribute to its Open Space fund, which enables the Town to fund the purchase of land as protected open space.
- The PZC has obtained contributions to the Open Space fund from subdivision developers.
- Using grants from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Hampton has recently purchased two parcels: a 51 acre parcel between Cedar Swamp and Old Town Pound Roads; and an abutting 6 acre parcel on Old Town Pound Road. Together, these two form the Maurice and Rita Edwards Preserve.
- The Hampton Subdivision Regulations contain requirements for open space when land is subdivided. To date, the Town has acquired a small area between South Bigelow Road and Route 97, the Cohantic Ledges, and a conservation easement to protect a small pond on Calvin Burnham Road.

Inventory of protected open space

There is a considerable amount of land in Hampton that is protected from development today. The State and Town together hold the title to many acres of open space in Town. Other land is owned by land trusts. Individuals may voluntarily protect their open space by putting deed restrictions or conservation easements on all or a portion of their property. And the State owns the development rights to farmland on additional acreage.

CURRENTLY PROTECTED OPEN SPACE IN HAMPTON:

- **State owned lands.** State lands in Town (excluding Bigelow Pond and the Little River) comprise 2713 acres, including:
 - Goodwin State Forest – 1194 acres
 - Natchaug State Forest – 1439 acres
 - Airline Trail State Park – 80 acres

• **Total 2713**

- **State owned development rights for farmland.**

Address	Acreage	Date Acquired
1135 Pomfret Road	160.8	9/15/1987
1135 Pomfret Road	178.3	12/24/1987
125 Route 97	115.2	2/10/1988
985 Pomfret Road	138.7	5/26/1988

Total 593

- **Town lands**
 - Old Town Pound Rd. - Maurice and Rita Edwards Preserve - 57 acres
 - Rt. 6 south side abutting swamp/headwater Cedar Swamp Brook - 3 acres
 - Windy Hill Road - 61 acres
 - South Bigelow Road and Route 97 - Cohantic Ledges 1.5 acres
 - **Total 122.5**

- **Privately owned Protected Open Space Lands - Open to Public.** Privately owned open space available to the public:
 - Edwin Way Teal Sanctuary (Connecticut Audubon Society) - 168 acres
 - Preston Sanctuary and the Fuller parcel (Joshua’s Tract Land Trust) – 122 acres - Route 97 north of Hampton village
 - Ostby Memorial Forest (Eastern CT Forest Landowners/Wolf Den Land Trust) - 84 acres - East Old Rt. 6 and Sarah Pearl Rd.

- Blue Flag Meadow (Eastern CT Forest Landowners Assoc.) - 93 acres - Lewis and Kenyon Rd.

- Total 467

- **Privately owned Open Space Land Protected by Conservation Easements.**

Land owned privately and protected by conservation easements, which grant rights to protect the land to Hampton or to conservation organizations, with no public access, found along or adjacent to these roads:

Calvin Burnham Road

Kenyon Road

Station Road

Kenyon Road, Spicer Road and Route 97.

North Bigelow Road and Route 97

Estabrook Road - both sides

Edwards Road - both sides and OTPR

Route 6 and West Fisk Road

Route 6 and East Old Route 6

South Bigelow and Sand Hill Roads

Old Canterbury Road - both sides

Windham Road - north side

Windy Hill Road, bordering east side of Town property

Miscellaneous small tracts along the Little River

TOWN OWNED OPEN SPACE -- NOT PROTECTED

In addition, the Town of Hampton owns several tracts of undeveloped land that are currently not protected from development:

Kimball Hill Road	24 acres
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Drain Street	2 acres
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Town of Hampton

Plan of Conservation & Development

Pudding Hill Road/Route 97/Pudding Hill Woods 160 acres

Hammond Hill Road 2 acres

East Old Route 6 (#4-8 18 35 - parcel not mapped) 2 acres

• Total 30

GOALS

1. Develop a formal protocol for an open space selection process. (Conservation Commission)*
2. Establish and implement guidelines for protection of open space from encroachments and for stewardship and management of Town owned open space and conservation easements granted to the Town. (Conservation Commission)*
3. Provide assistance to property owners regarding protection of existing and proposed private open space. (Conservation Commission, PZC)*

ACTIONS / IMPLEMENTATION

1. Compile and disseminate information on funding sources and acquisitions mechanisms, with recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. (Conservation Commission) *
2. Develop a selection process for identification of parcels and areas to be protected and preserved which accounts for all the goals of open space preservation, including recreation and habitat protection, with reference to the 2015 Town-wide Survey and with input from the Town Recreation and Community Activities Commission. (Conservation Commission)*
3. Lead the open space acquisitions plan. (Conservation Commission)*
4. Maintain an inventory of the Town's open space, including the extent to which it is preserved in perpetuity, in both narrative and digitized (map) formats. (Conservation Commission, PZC)*
5. With the Historical Society, develop a guide to the Town's historic and cultural resources and places. (Conservation Commission, Historical Society, PZC)*
6. Review and revise the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to enhance open space protection and preservation, including the use of conservation easements in subdivisions and adoption of specific measures that will protect views and vistas. (PZC)*
7. Procure digital mapping capability to enable Town staff and citizens to track development and open space preservation throughout Town. (PZC, BOS)*
8. Continue to authorize reduced tax assessment on undeveloped land as authorized in Public Act 490. (PZC, BOS)*

RECREATION

Background

For a small town with a scattered population, there is plenty to do in Hampton.

Hampton residents have a wealth of outdoor recreation choices literally out their doors. The woods, trails, streams and ponds offer walking, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. With few exceptions, everyone has room at home for a garden, farm animals and pets, and some outdoor games and sports. These opportunities are abundant, and they are free. These contribute to the high quality of life enjoyed in Hampton, and they have attracted many of Hampton's newer residents to Town.

It is Hampton's good fortune to have two Connecticut State **owned** Forests in Town.

- Goodwin State Forest offers three square miles for hiking and horse-back riding, a large picnic pavilion, gardens, and many organized educational and recreational programs.
- Natchaug State Forest lies to the north of Goodwin State Forest and extends into Eastford. Within the Natchaug is the Natchaug River, with good year-round flow for fishing and swimming. There is hunting in season and trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding.

The Town has recently acquired three parcels of open space: the 170 acre Loisselle parcel on Route 97 (unprotected), and two smaller parcels that abut Goodwin State Forest on its east side, together called the Edwards Preserve (permanently protected). These are open to hiking, and hunting is allowed in season on the Loisselle parcel by registering with the town (go to <http://hamptonct.org/hunting.htm>). There is also privately owned land that is open to the public for passive recreation, largest of which is the Edwin Way Teale property owned by the Connecticut Audubon at Trail Wood, on Kenyon Road.

Besides outdoor and self-directed recreation, the Town offers opportunities for organized and indoor activities. There are ballfields at the Town Hall and Hampton School, and the Hampton School gym is used by the community for various sports.

Organized games and sports require equipment, space, and a group that will organize the activities. The Hampton Recreation and Community Activities Commission meets regularly in the Town Hall to organize a range of recreational options to Town residents. It sponsors holiday events, concerts, yoga and exercise classes, community theater, arts and crafts, and family events.

In recent years the Hampton youth sports committee was formed and then disbanded.

Until the population grows again, opportunities for playing in organized sports will be satisfied by opportunities in nearby Towns, such as Brooklyn, Chaplin and Pomfret.

Hampton has an active library: the Fletcher Memorial Library is found at 257 Main Street. Besides its book collection, the Library houses many large print and audio books, special collections of comics and

graphic novels, and a history room. On its north side is a beautiful butterfly garden to enjoy. The Library also sponsors organized get-togethers: summer reading for kids, a program for toddlers and their parents, and arts & crafts groups for adults.

Trends

Most residents, as in years past, continue to pursue recreation that is related to the rural landscape: walking, fishing, hunting, and gardening. And children will always need opportunities to play together and learn new skills. But at the same time, recreational interests and needs follow changes in the way we live. With most of us working in a sedentary occupation, there is a ever-growing demand for fitness-related activities. And as Hampton's population ages, recreational options need to be reconsidered to address the needs of retirees. Following the national trend, there is a growing number of seniors, and organized recreation for social purposes is increasingly important to their well-being.

Hampton's households are more often adults only. With no children at home and work someplace out of Town, people living in the countryside can become isolated from one another. The role of recreation serves many needs: not just for fun and fitness, it provides the chance to know one-another. Recreation become a means for unifying the community and enhancing quality of life.

The ages of Town residents will have a great deal to do with the sought after activities; senior citizens, families with young children, and childless adults will have very different recreation interests, and the need to provide for these interests will wax and wane with the rise and fall of the respective populations.

The 2015 Community Survey polled resident about their current recreational activities and their wishes for new activities. Currently, the highest number of responses indicate that people are walking and enjoying their yards, followed by bicycling. Relatively few people said they were looking for more opportunities for walking trails, reflecting the many trail options already available. Regarding interests in future recreation interests, the greatest number said that they wished there were more opportunities for exercise and yoga classes, swimming, indoor gym activities, and art classes.

GOALS

1. Identify and provide for the recreational interests of all residents. Recreational opportunities for teens and seniors are especially critical quality-of-life issues, and these should be given due consideration. (Recreation Commission, BOS)*

ACTION/IMPLEMENTATION

1. Survey the recreational interests of all Hampton residents, young and old, every five years or frequently enough to accurately assess interests. (Recreation Commission, PZC)*
2. Ensure that recreational programming will be implemented, utilizing the leadership of Town committees and with assistance of paid staff if needed. (Recreation Commission, BOS)*

3. Maintain a permanent contact with the Recreation Committee to assure that PZC regulations and decisions maximize recreational opportunities. (PZC, Recreation Committee)*
4. Maintain a permanent contact with the Conservation Commission to ensure input by the Conservation Commission on PZC regulations and decisions affecting recreational opportunities. (PZC, Conservation Commission)*
5. Survey the current permanent, dedicated river access by the public for fishing and swimming in the Little River, and develop a plan for providing permanent access. (Conservation Commission, PZC)*
6. Inventory and publicize existing recreational opportunities, including organized activities by the Recreation Committee, Seniors, Goodwin Forest, and public schools, and nonorganized activities such as hiking, skating and swimming spots, and horseback riding opportunities, as well as recreational options in nearby towns and special events such as holiday parades, walking weekend, etc. (Recreation Committee, Conservation Commission)*
7. Publicize recreational opportunities in the region, especially addressing the activities noted in the Town Surveys, such as: swimming opportunities, organized sports teams for children, art and craft classes, exercise classes. (Recreation Committee, BOS)*
8. Evaluate regionalization of recreational programming with nearby Towns. (BOS, Recreation Committee)*
9. Develop a new special Town event that will be held annually. (Recreation Committee, BOS)*
10. Maintain exercise/recreation materials in good working order.

TRANSPORTATION

Background, Status & Trends

Hampton residents rely on private automobiles for transportation and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Major roads in Town are U.S. Route 6 and State Route 97. Route 6 carries traffic east-west traffic across Hampton. It was widened in the 1980s to accommodate interstate as well as intercity traffic between Hartford and points in Rhode Island after it was decided that an interstate to Providence would not be built. Due to these improvements, Route 6 will retain its ability to carry high volumes of long distance, interstate traffic without interfering with local traffic flow for the foreseeable future. Connecticut Route 97 is Hampton's north-south artery and carries primarily local and inter-town traffic. Route 97 has retained its local road character and is bordered by many historic homesteads. The Connecticut Department of Transportation continues to make minor improvements to Route 97, including pavement and drainage upgrades.

Other than these two state arteries, Hampton relies upon its local Town road system. The Town receives regular funding to support its roads through the State's Town Aid Road program as well as the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP). Together, these funds can be used for road construction, improvements and maintenance, snow removal, tree work, traffic control signals, and to support public transportation. With no subdivision activity, there has been no new road construction in Town over the past ten years. And with a small population that has grown little in recent years, any additional local traffic will do nothing to disrupt the free flow of traffic. Standards for any new Town road construction are provided in the Town Subdivision Regulations. The Regulations require that, where a new road is needed to provide access to newly created building lots, the developer must bear the costs of construction before deeding the road to the Town.

Alternatives to travel by private automobile are limited. Long distance bus connections can be made in Willimantic and Danielson. Commuter buses to Hartford can be boarded in Willimantic; information on routes and schedules are online at <http://www.cttransit.com/ExpressBusService/>. In addition, commuters may utilize established vanpools operating in the area, or may develop a new vanpool with assistance from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation. The CT DOT provides information on vanpools and carpools on its website at <http://ctrides.com/ways-to-commute/vanpool>. Train connections can be made in New London for Amtrak, while the commuter line MetroNorth to New York City can be boarded in New Haven. Both stations have easy nearby parking garages. Hampton is about one hour from two major airports: T. F. Green Airport in Providence, RI and Bradley Airport north of Hartford in Windsor Locks, CT.

Hampton has recently joined the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District, the public transportation provider for northeastern Connecticut. The District provides ride services for sixty

year olds and up and for the disabled, taking them door to door (by reservation) for all kinds of appointments and shopping for a one dollar fee.

Besides travel by vehicle, there is a need to plan for travel by bicycle and by foot. Many town roads have narrow or no shoulders and are relatively unsafe for pedestrians and children on bicycles. Meanwhile, the 2016 Community Survey reflects an increasing interest in walking and bicycling in Town. Although not all cycling and walking will take place along the town roads, there is a clear interest in increased opportunities for these activities.

GOALS

1. Maintain a Town road system that continues to deliver safe conditions and unimpeded flow of traffic. (BOS, PZC)*
2. Manage Town roads so that their impact to the environment is minimized. (PZC, IWWC)*
3. Participate in any state planning for improvements to Route 6 and Route 97 to the greatest possible extent. (BOS)*
4. Preserve and develop walking and bicycling opportunities. (PZC, BOS, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission)*
5. Monitor and develop transportation options for the elderly who may no longer be capable of driving. (BOS)*
6. Encourage development that is compact and transit-accessible, with pedestrian-oriented development patterns. (PZC, BOS)*

Action/Implementation

1. Identify and review the status of any Town roads that are not maintained. Evaluate their potential for future uses, including use for bicycles and pedestrians. (PZC, BOS)*
2. Review, and update as needed, the subdivision regulations which address Town road construction and improvements, such as: road width requirements; the desirability of and specifications for cul-de-sac and loop roads; road drainage systems, with consideration for using non-engineering measures for dealing with stormwater runoff; road construction specifications; aesthetic requirements such as preservation of stonewalls and preserving and planting street trees; and improvements along frontage when new lots are created along existing Town roads. (PZC, BOS)*
3. **Evaluate** the location of a future footpath along one or both sides of Main Street/Route 97 on Hampton Hill. (PZC)*
4. Review stormwater systems and develop a plan for maintenance that minimizes the impact of sand, salt, etc. to the environment. (IWWC, Conservation Commission, BOS)*
5. Develop a Town-wide cycling and walking map. (Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission)*

6. Seek funding to support walking and cycling paths along Route 97 and Route 6 as well as along selected Town routes. (PZC, BOS)*
7. Inform residents of opportunities for commuting in vans, carpools and buses on Town website. (BOS)*

*Town Board that will lead implementation of goal/action item.

Consistency with Connecticut's Conservation and Development Policies Plan for 2013-2018

The Hampton Plan of Conservation and Development is generally consistent with the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2013-18, the state plan for its growth, natural resources management and conservation, and public investment policies.

The State Plan sets out six growth management principles:

1. Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Infrastructure;
2. Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs;
3. Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options;
4. Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands;
5. Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety;
6. Promote Integrated Planning across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional, and Local Basis.

As a rural town with a slight population decline anticipated by the CT State Data Center at UCONN - MAGIC in its 2012 projections for 2020 and 2025, growth as increased population is an oxymoron here. However, it is evident from all demographic sources that the population Hampton IS changing -- by age distribution with a shift towards an aging population, if not a growing one. The evolving needs of this demographic, as well as the demands for facility maintenance and modernization, will serve as the core trend influencing this Plan and local decision-making, generally.

The PZC has recognized the changing housing needs of an aging population by the adoption of secondary dwelling units as an option on almost all Town parcels, to support a rental unit to bolster fixed incomes and to accommodate multi-generational families and groups, including caregivers.

The State Plan identifies Hampton's traditional village center on Main Street as a "village priority funding area". It is a nationally recognized settlement: "Hampton Hill Historic District" is on the National Register of Historic Places. The village center on Main Street is already densely settled, with little room for increased density except behind the Main Street lots to the west. With no infrastructure for water and sewer planned, this Plan does not designate specific areas for denser settlement patterns.

However, Hampton has taken some steps toward concentrating development:

- Most municipal facilities are sited in the Town Center so as to be centrally located and conveniently accessed by its residents. Should it be necessary to provide public water and sewer, these could be conveniently extended.

- The Town has adopted conservation subdivision regulations as the default design for new subdivisions of land, reducing lot area so as to concentrate development and conserving forty percent of the subdivided parcel.

This Plan proposes further concentration of development:

- It sets forth a goal for the examination of possible intensification and expansion of the existing Business Zone nodes on Hampton's principal artery, Route 6.
- Recognizing the national trend toward urbanization and away from suburban lifestyles, it proposes to examine the zoning designation and authorized uses in the village area for possible rezoning and/or inclusion of new and non-residential uses.

This Plan continues to recognize Hampton's cultural, historic and natural resources and its rural landscapes as amenities to be conserved. It supports continual review and adjustments to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations so as to protect and enhance these resources when development proposals are presented.