Town of Weymouth

Community Preservation Committee

Community Needs

The community needs enumerated herein in the areas of open space, recreation, historic resources and affordable housing largely reflect recommendations contained in the Town of Weymouth Master Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Capital Improvement Plan, the Historic Preservation Plan, the Five Year Consolidated Plan and other planning documents that have received wide scrutiny and input. Additionally,comments and recommendations have been received from individual Weymouth residents, groups, Town officials, Town organizations such as the Conservation, Historical and Recreation Commissions, the Housing Authority, the Planning Board, the Town Council and Community Preservation Committee members.

This study of community needs is intended to be a dynamic document that will be reviewed on a regular basis and is designed to serve as a frame of reference in the project approval process. It is purposely left, in the large part, general in nature, although some specific projects are listed. Some examples are:

Open Space

- Increase public access and activities on the Fore and Back Rivers.
- Consider options for the undeveloped property at East Bay.
- Improve Town and State park lands.
- Develop a new pedestrian/bicycle crossing between Great Esker and Abigail Adams Park to a pedestrian/bicycle pathway extending the length of the Back River and down the Herring Run with open space links that extend into Jackson Square consisting of both on- and off- road components.
- Obtain, by easement or acquisition, additional links between open space parcels within Wemouth or immediately adjacent to it and link those parcels to residential areas and active and passive recreational areas.
- Develop a link using Beals and Sullivan Parks, the Wessagussett School and Great Hill to the beaches.
- Develop management plans for the Town's conservation lands. Consider using the Massachusetts Audubon Society's methodology for management planning.
- Develop standards and regulations for use and enjoyment of the Town's conservation lands, and initiate the program by starting on the coastal parklands under Town ownership.
- Seek assistance from regional land trusts such as the Audubon Society and the Trust for Public Lands. Support regional initiatives to acquire open space and work with adjacent communities to jointly purchase valuable open space areas that extend across political boundaries.
- Work with Hingham, Quincy, Braintree, Rockland and Abington on watershed protection strategies for the shared rivers.
- Develop a resource management plan for the Back River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Seek shared funding from the State Coastal Zone Management or the Department of Environmental Protection for this purpose. Work with the Waterfront Committee and Hingham on this plan.

- Protect the use of the Herring Run as a resource and improve the water quality within the Herring Run while improving access to and enjoyment of it. Include the park under applicable public land management plans which may be developed. Consider seeking Urban Self-Help funds for improvements at the Herring Run.
- Use deed restrictions, conservation restrictions, easements and purchases to preserve land and protect the water quality around Whitman's Pond, the Mill and Old Swamp Rivers and the coastline.
- Obtain or identify additional links by easement or acquisition between the Fore River and the adjacent public roads.
- Protect and expand options for access to shorefront properties and make the area walkable and bikeable.
- Seek shared funding from the State Coastal Zone Management or the Department of Environmental Protection for funds to improve the Fore River water quality.
- Develop comprehensive management plans for inland wetland areas and the coastal and harbor areas. Update the Waterfront Plan for conformance with MGL Chapter 91.Participate in the State's wetland restoration program.
- Develop a riverwalk or preservation corridor along the major rivers within Weymouth.
- Improve access, including handicap accessability, to the natural resource and open space areas throughout the Town.
- Develop comprehensive management plans for the open space parcels including standards for use and enjoyment of the Town's conservation lands.
- Improve public accessability to Cavern Rock Park.
- Highlight the Torrey Bird Sanctuary as a key area in resource plans.
- Establish connections to the Boston Harbor Islands from coastal lands.
- Protect views along and from the coastline. Develop viewshed protection regulations to control the impacts of new development. Propose identification of Ocean Street, Regatta Road and Fort Point Street as a scenic waterfront route.
- Establish clearing and vegetation management plans for public properties.
- Ensure protection of the drinking water supply watersheds that extend across municipal boundaries.
- Preserve and protect ecologically sensitive areas within the Town.
- Rehabilitate and increase areas near all water resource areas for the purpose of appropriate recreation and conservation.
- Commence a dredging project for the Fore River. Include options to dredge an area wherein a marina may be located.
- Commence a dredging project at the Wessagussett boat ramp at George Lane Beach and then maintain and preserve the boat ramp.
- Purchase additional land to expand Pond Meadow Park.
- Work with Braintree to initiate a weed harvesting project in the pond at Pond Meadow Park.

- Initiate a weed harvesting project for Whitman's Pond and Elias's Pond to enhance water quality and recreation opportunities.
- Identify historic and environmental interpretive opportunities along the Back River Trail and provide a framework for telling these stories that will unify and be identified with the Trail.
- Provide clear, efficient links along the Back River Trail to recreation facilities and conservation areas.
- Improve accessibility and safety along the existing Back River Trail segment within Great Esker Park.
- Provide design guidelines for the Back River Trail including trail surfacing, site furnishings and alignment criteria.
- Ensure that most portions of the Back River Trail system meet the current accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the State Architectural Access Board (AAB), recognizing the topographical challenges of the esker.
- Provide designs for key Back River Trail key park nodes and gateways that will create opportunities to bring attention to the Trail and highlight the local history that makes Weymouth unique, including the Durante property, the Herring Run and Iron Hill Park.
- Pursue the acquisition of vacant parcels, or easements, conservation restrictions or deed restrictions, of open space parcels.
- Upgrade the Herring Run for public use to ensure its continued enjoyment as an historic activity and resource. Urban Self-Help grants obtained from the State could provide additional funds for improvements.
- Initiate improvements to the Pond Meadow Conservation area, presently owned and managed jointly by Braintree, Weymouth and a non-profit organization, through more intensive management and additional protections to maintain the resources therein.
- Demolish the inactive Town incinerator at Wharf Street to create open space or recreation space and link that space to the pedestrian/bicycle pathway proposed from Abigail Adams Park to the Jackson Square area.

Recreation

- Create a town-wide biking system that may include bike lanes along Green, Front and Commercial Streets to provide a safe bikeway system that links the community to Weymouth's parks and natural resources.
- Develop an expanded or new marina at East Bay, between the Sithe Energy northern parcel and King's Cove and along the Fore River.
- Provide clear, safe on-road links to Hingham and Boston Harbor to expand ridership of the Back River Trail.
- Identify historic and environmental interpretive opportunities along the Back River Trail and provide a framework for telling its stories that will unify and be identified with the Trail.
- Identify potential locations for more play fields throughout the Town. Provide, restore, or enlarge neighborhood-based park or recreation areas.
- Construct new active field and play areas for residents to meet current and future demands, particularly for handicap accessability.
- Expand the range of recreational opportunities available to all residents.
- Develop the boat launch on Whitman's Pond at the Middle Street Park.

- Install public restrooms at Town parks and playfields.
- Develop a signage plan and signage to identify Town parks and playfields.
- Reopen the beach at Lake Street.

Historic Resources

- Preserve and rehabilitate buildings, districts and landscapes of significant historic value with a special focus on Weymouth's four villages as unique historic areas that define the Town as a diverse, village oriented community.
- Preserve significant historic artifacts.
- Ensure that the historic aspects of Legion Field are restored and preserved.
- Rehabilitate historic structures to comply with handicap accessability laws and standards.
- Develop a signage plan and signage to identify Town historic structures and areas.
- Preserve the Abigail Adams House as a Weymouth site unique in the nation.
- Preserve the Old North Cemetery as a historic part of Weymouth's unique history.

Affordable Housing

- Develop additional units of affordable housing, senior housing, assisted living units, and units for handicapped and disabled individuals.
- Secure the greatest possible number of affordable housing units in new multi-family developments.
- Work towards attaining the 10% goal of affordable housing units within Weymouth.
- Preserve and rehabilitate current affordable housing units in Weymouth.
- Increase the number of affordable housing units that comply with handicap accessability laws and standards.