

OPEN SPACE CORRIDOR PROTECTION STRATEGIC PLAN

NORFOLK PLANNING BOARD

April 2003



I.	INTRODUCTION	2
II.	LEVEL OF PROTECTION/SUBDIVISION TRENDS	3
III.	PRIORITIES	5
IV.	OPEN SPACE LINKS	6
	Overview	6
	Norfolk Airport	7
	Longobardi Farm at Main Street	9
	City Mill Pond to Comey’s Pond	11
	Foley Dairy Farm to Bush Pond & Cranberry Bogs	11
	Maple Street Forest to Spruce Street Wellhead Protection area	11
	Spruce Street WellHead Protection area to Packard Property	11
	Packard Property & Field at the intersection of Union and Diamond to Stoney Brook Wildlife Area and the Bristol Blake State Reservation	11
	Phillips, Coolidge, & Harlow Ponds to Charles River Reservation	11
V.	CHARACTER-DEFINING INTERSECTIONS	11
	Overview	11
	Intersection of Main & Myrtle Streets - Holmes Property	11
	Intersection of Myrtle & Hanover Streets	11
	Seekonk Street, near the Medfield Town Line	11
	Intersection of Fruit & Cleveland Streets, near Jane & Paul Newton’s Farm	11
	Intersection of Shears & North Streets	11
	Intersection of North and Pond Streets	11
VI.	OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS	11
VII.	APPENDIX	11



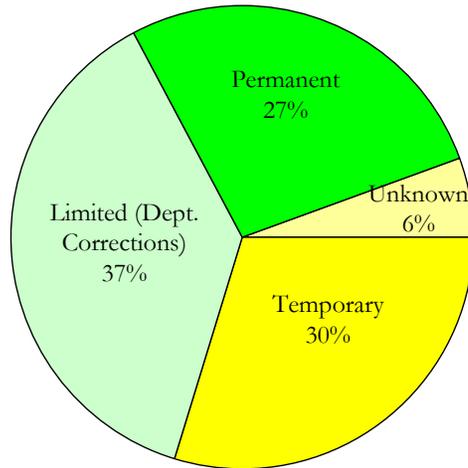
I. Introduction

As stewards of the Town's subdivision regulations, including its "Open Space Residential Development" bylaw, the Norfolk Planning Board works with applicants to ensure that new residential development complements the Town's established character to the maximum extent possible, and is designed to meet Town-wide goals.

As part of its Growth Management Study, the Board identified the need to focus attention on the Town's remaining open land in an effort to shape future growth in a way that will preserve the appearance and connectedness of its natural resources. The first step towards this goal involves using available resources, such as the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Town's digital mapping data, to develop a detailed plan that the Board can consult in its future regulatory processes.

The following pages examine Norfolk's open space system and its relationship to potential future development, highlighting areas where opportunities exist to preserve views, recreational uses, and links between resources. Recommendations made herein should provide a solid basis from which to craft specific responses to proposed developments.

Norfolk Open Space Acreage -
Level of Protection



Recent Subdivisions:

Christina Estates	52
Gordon Road	1
Maple Park Estates	23
Maple Valley Estates	17
The Preserve	50
Sandy Knoll Estates	5
Stony Brook Estates	4
Norfolk Commons 1&2	16
Canterbury Estates 2	16
Ferne Ridge	8
Pine Creek	16
Saddle Ridge	6
Spruce Acres	3
Avoca Village	<u>17</u>
Total	234

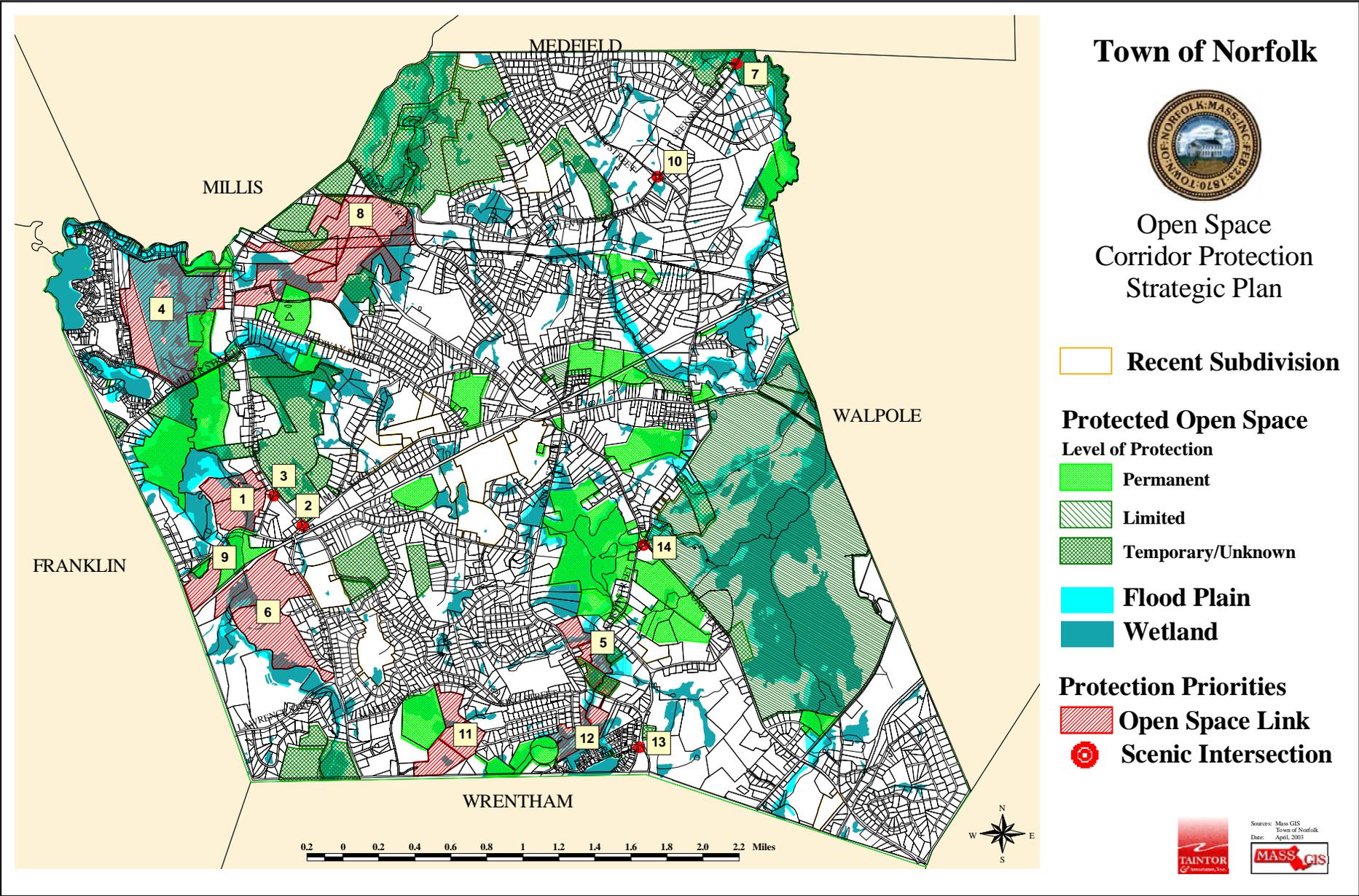
Source: Norfolk Planning Web Site

II. Level of Protection/Subdivision Trends

According to information obtained from Mass GIS updated in December 2002, Norfolk has approximately **2,691 acres** of protected and unprotected open space. This represents approximately 28% of Norfolk’s land area of 14.84 square miles, and includes land that is owned by the federal, state, and local government, non-profits, and privately held land that is subject to conservation restrictions, the Chapter 61 program, and other types of encumbrances. As shown in the pie chart to the left, 27% of this open space is permanently protected through public ownership and deed restrictions, 30% is protected via participation in the 61 program, and 37% is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections.

This acreage, however, does not include privately held land that is open and without restriction, and which has been and will continue to be subject to residential development activity. Recent subdivisions are listed in the table to the left and outlined on the map on the following page. Therefore, it seems likely that the large, “white” parcels on the following map will experience the heaviest development pressure, especially those areas near already developed land.

Remaining development potential in Norfolk has been estimated to be between 875 and 1,900 units. In 1999, a detailed build out prepared for the Town’s Growth Management Strategy predicted that zoning would allow for approximately 875 additional dwelling units. In spring 2001, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs estimated that over 1,900 additional building lots exist. For reference, the GIS maps created as part of this process are appended.



Town of Norfolk



Open Space
Corridor Protection
Strategic Plan

Recent Subdivision

Protected Open Space

Level of Protection

- Permanent
- Limited
- Temporary/Unknown

Flood Plain

Wetland

Protection Priorities

- Open Space Link**
- Scenic Intersection**



Source: Mass GIS
Town of Norfolk
Date: April, 2003



III. Priorities

According to Norfolk's 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan, several criteria have been used in the past to rank open space acquisition priorities. These included: "Is the land...

- Along one of three greenbelts (Stop River, Charles River, Town Circle)?
- Contiguous to other Conservation Commission land?
- Important to water supply protection?
- A significant wildlife habitat of home to a unique natural resource?
- Farmland that would be developed unless protected?
- Home to significant scenic landscapes or vistas?
- A potential location for active recreational facilities?
- A potential location for passive recreational facilities?

Prepared for the Norfolk Planning Board, this document focuses on creating and preserving connections between the Town's significant open spaces, and the contribution of highly visible parcels to the Town's character. In addition, the ranking below takes into consideration some speculation regarding the level of development pressure various properties may experience in the near term, and the related need for immediate action vs. which may, for various reasons, be less subject to imminent development. Using the information gathered from Town-wide maps, site inspections, Assessing information, and the World Wide Web (particularly the Town of Norfolk site), these priorities emerged; if additional information about these sites is obtained, priorities may be shifted.

HIGH

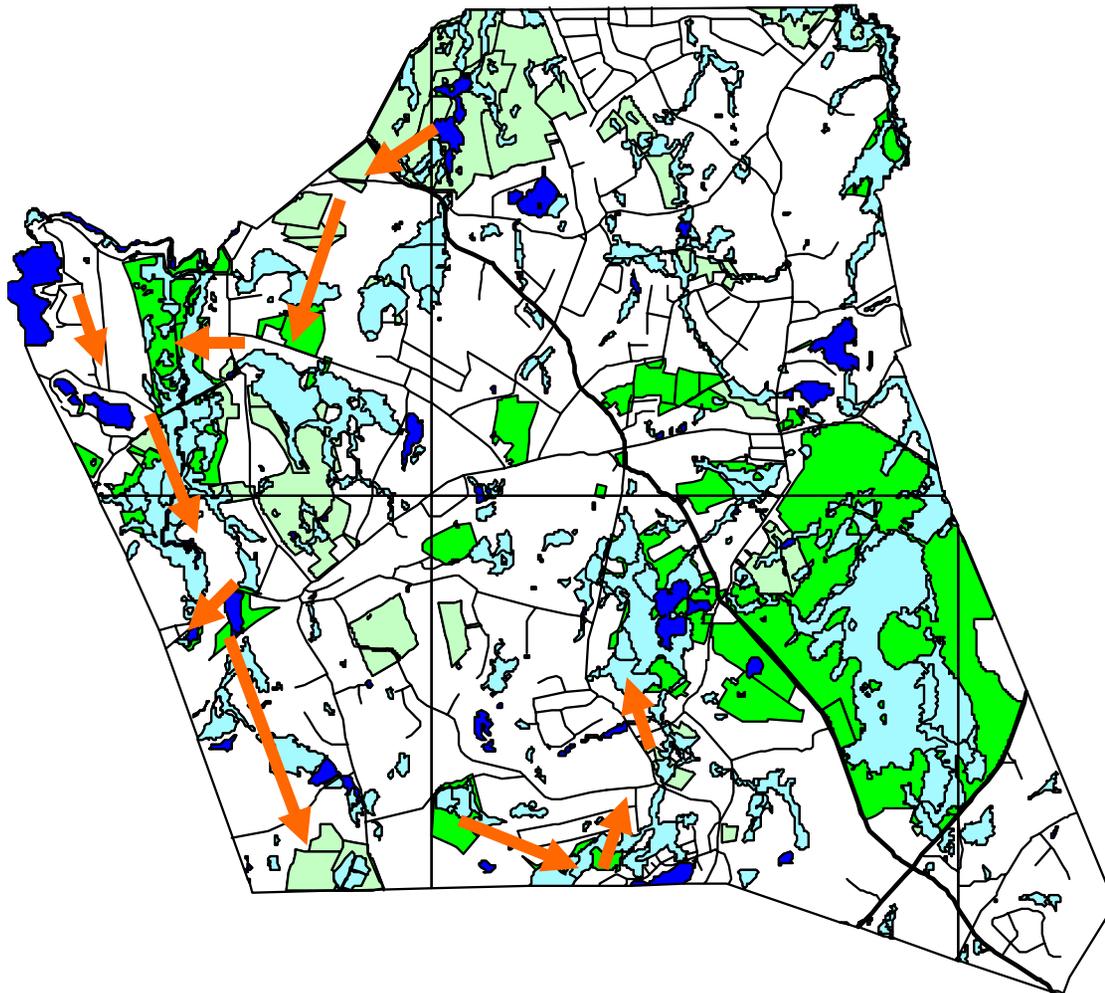
1. Longobardi Farm at Main Street (p. 9)
2. Intersection of Main & Myrtle Streets-Holmes Property (p.11)
3. Intersection of Myrtle & Hanover Streets (p. 11)
4. Norfolk Airport (p.7)
5. Packard Property (p.11)

MEDIUM

6. Foley Dairy Farm to Bush Pond and Cranberry Bogs (p. 11)
7. Seekonk Street, near the Medfield Town Line (p. 11)
8. Phillips, Coolidge, and Harlow Ponds (Trout Club, Upland Game Club, Bentley Property) to Charles River Reservation (p.11)

LOW

9. City Mill Pond to Comey's Pond (p.11)
10. Intersection of Fruit & Cleveland Streets, near Jane & Paul Newton's Farm (p. 11)
11. Maple Street Forest to Spruce Street Well Head Protection area (p. 11)
12. Spruce Street Wellhead Protection area to Packard Property (p.11)
13. Intersection of Shears & North Streets (p. 11)
14. Intersection of North and Pond Streets (p. 11)



IV. Open Space Links

OVERVIEW

According to its Open Space Plan and a 1999 map of buildable parcels, Norfolk has a significant, nearly continuous green corridor encompassing its perimeter, comprised of both protected and unprotected parcels. A look at the relationships between large, undeveloped tracts of land and existing open space resources reveals the scope of opportunities that will be important to consider as future development occurs.

Western area

- Norfolk Airport to Charles River Reservation land
- Charles River Reservation to City Mill Pond
- City Mill Pond to Comeys Pond
- City Mill Pond to Bush Pond and the Slattery Property (cranberry bogs)

Southern area

- Maple Street Forest to Spruce Street Well Head Protection area
- Spruce Street Well Head Protection area to the Packard Property
- Packard Property & Field at Union and Diamond Streets to Stony Brook Wildlife area and Bristol Blake State Reservation

Northern area

- Phillips, Coolidge, and Harlow Ponds (Trout Club, Upland Game Club, Bentley Property) to Charles River Reservation



NORFOLK AIRPORT

Priority HIGH

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
4	13	50	168	Steve Marszalkowski

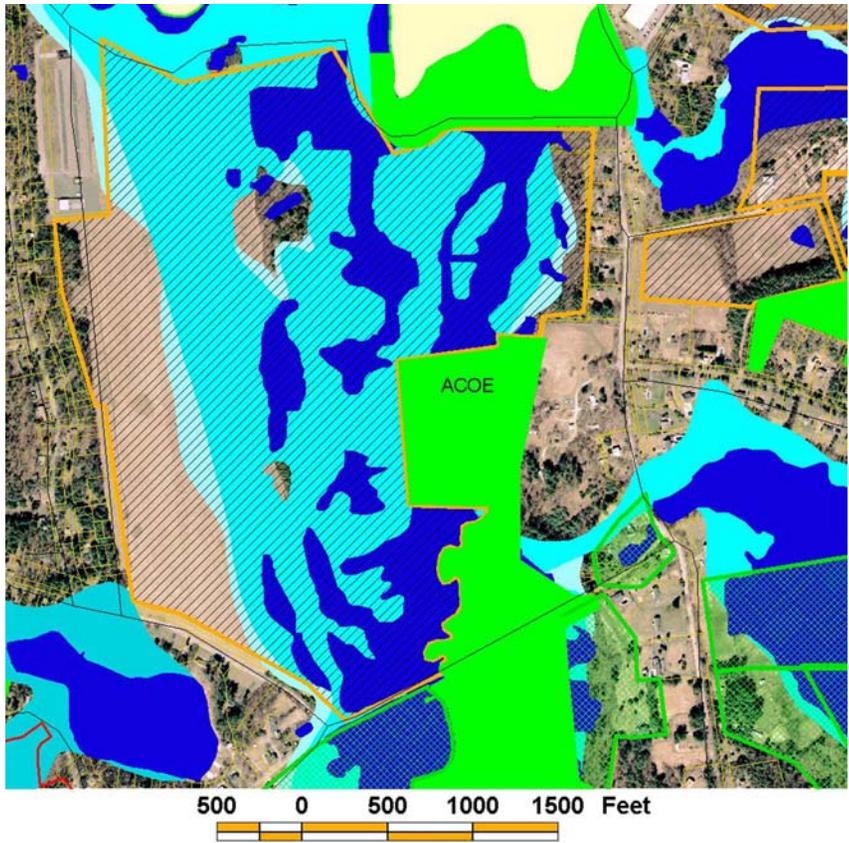
Status

Formerly a commercial airport, now used for recreational flying, this land is maintained by the Norfolk Aero Club, Inc. and is adjacent to the Charles River Recharge Area owned by the federal government (Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction).

Analysis

An expansive, peaceful open space, a plan for its permanent protection should be developed. This property abuts a large area of Charles River conservation/recharge land to the east and south. Much of the area lies within the 100-year flood plain, and is therefore restricted from development.

This area has been proposed for development of a 26-lot “residential airpark” (see www.airparks.com/32m/), but this proposal appears to be dormant. Still, this site appears to offer near 15 acres of developable land.¹



¹ Based upon GIS analysis. EOEAs buildout study considered the Airport land as “developed,” and therefore deemed it to be “absolutely constrained” from additional development; however, the small-scale, open nature of this airstrip lends itself to future reuse.

Recommendations

The Town should carefully consider how this land might be developed in the near future. Its size, visual character, and proximity to a vast natural resource area make it a high priority.

Preservation of this area should be first focused on the southern end of the parcel where it abuts the recharge area (east and south) and provides a vista looking northeast from Leland Road.

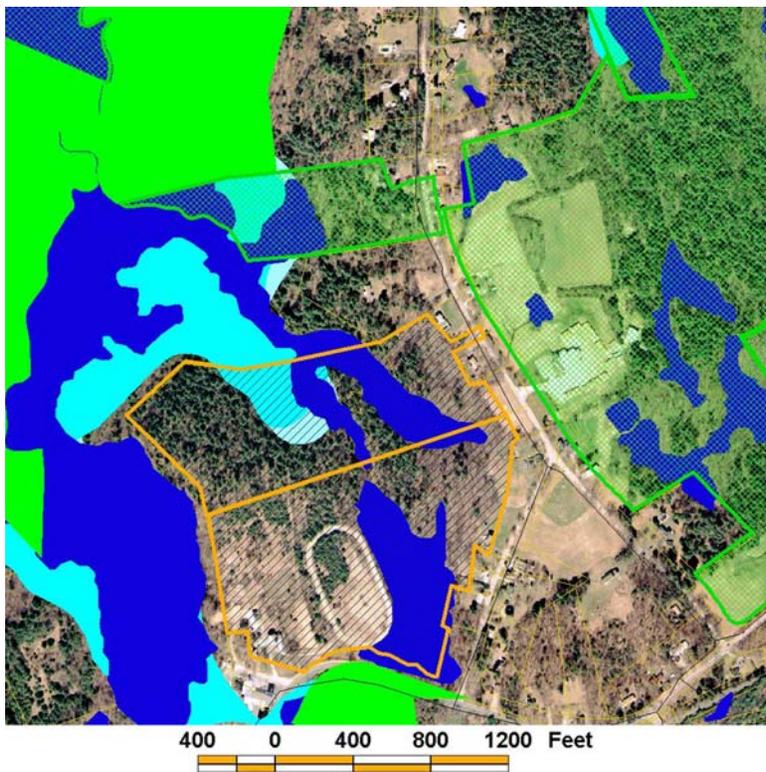


LONGOBARDI FARM AT MAIN STREET

Priority HIGH

Ownership and Area

Judith Longobardi owns the 40 acres parcel that fronts on Main Street, and does not participate in the Chapter 61 program. To the west is a Town-owned well protection area, while the large parcel to the north of the Longobardi farm with access from Myrtle Street is owned by the Longview Realty Trust.



Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
2	6	3	40	Judith Longobardi
3	6	53	26.44	Longview Realty Trust
3	6	56	5.85	Town of Norfolk
2	6	19	7.63	Town of Norfolk
2	6	25	1.9	Longview Realty Trust
			81.82	

Status

Privately-owned horse farm, and adjacent vacant land

Analysis

Along a very busy section of Main Street, this highly-visible farm is critical to Norfolk’s agricultural heritage. In addition, it abuts Charles River conservation land to the north, and Mill River runs through this land to City Mill and Comeys Ponds.

Considering that a realty trust owns substantial acreage adjacent to the farm, it would seem that this land may experience development pressure in the short term. As illustrated, a good portion of the site to the east is wetland

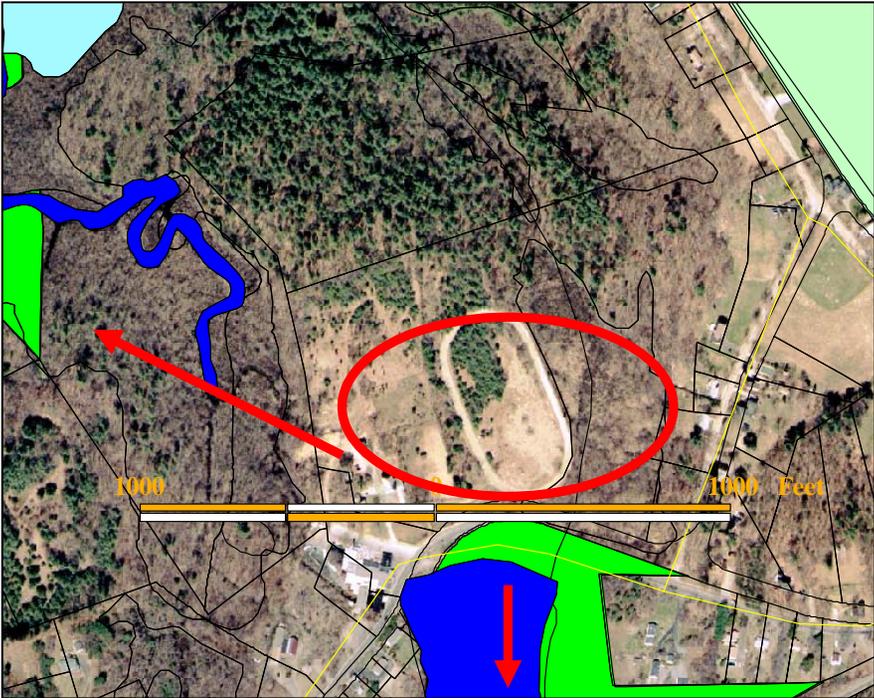
LONGOBARDI FARM AT MAIN STREET – *continued*

(royal blue), but the flood plain (light blue) is generally to the west and north of the farm.

Recommendations

The Town should work to preserve open space along Main Street, and make connections to land to the northwest and south to City Mill Pond.

The Town should investigate the potential to acquire a right of first refusal on this property by encouraging Ms. Longobardi to take advantage of the tax reduction offered by the Chapter 61 program if possible. At a minimum, an effort to communicate the importance of this land to the Town’s character to its owner should be made, and the Town could request to be kept abreast of any plans to change the use of this land.





CITY MILL POND TO COMEY’S POND

Priority LOW

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
7	3	20	2	Cucci Family Realty Trust
2	3	1	18.63	Ron Vozzella
			20.65	

Status

These two privately-owned, vacant parcels separate two picturesque Town-owned properties at City Mill Pond and Comey’s Pond.

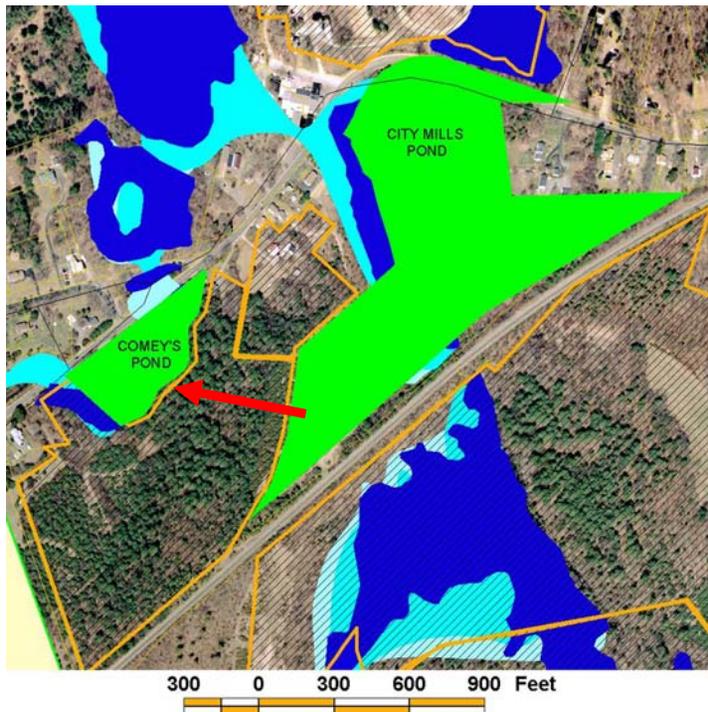
Analysis

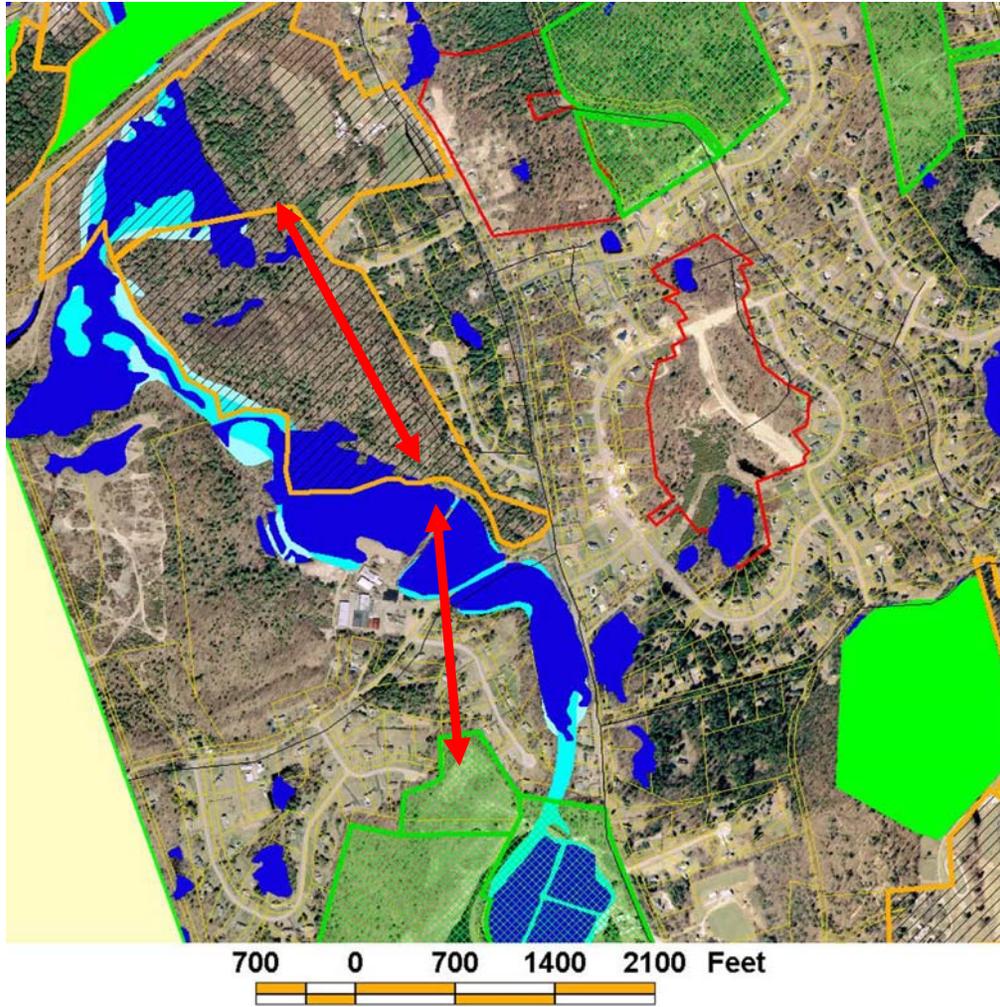
From the aerial photography, it appears that informal trails between these two sites exist, passing over the Vozzella tract located at 387 Main Street. The 2 acre parcel owned by the Cucci Family Realty Trust is currently participating in the Chapter 61A program.

Although future development appears constrained by limited access and may be highly unlikely, a plan to preserve a link between these two sites is nevertheless desirable.

Recommendations

A trail connection near the rear of the two properties may be made, as indicated on the map. Consulting with Vozzella (whose address is in Franklin, MA) should be initiated.





FOLEY DAIRY FARM TO BUSH POND & CRANBERRY BOGS

Priority HIGH (Foley Farm)

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
7	42	2	42.86	Foley Farm
6	2	3	140.73	Buckley & Mann
6	2	14	31.6	Lorusso & Sons
			215.19	

Status

Several large tracts of open space are potentially developable, with access via Park Street and/or Lawrence Road. The Buckley Mann property located off Lawrence Road is planned to accommodate 24 houses; the land at the eastern part of this development will be preserved as open space with trails located near the pond.

In addition, the cranberry bogs have been proposed for development.



FOLEY DAIRY FARM TO BUSH POND & CRANBERRY BOGS - *continued*

Analysis

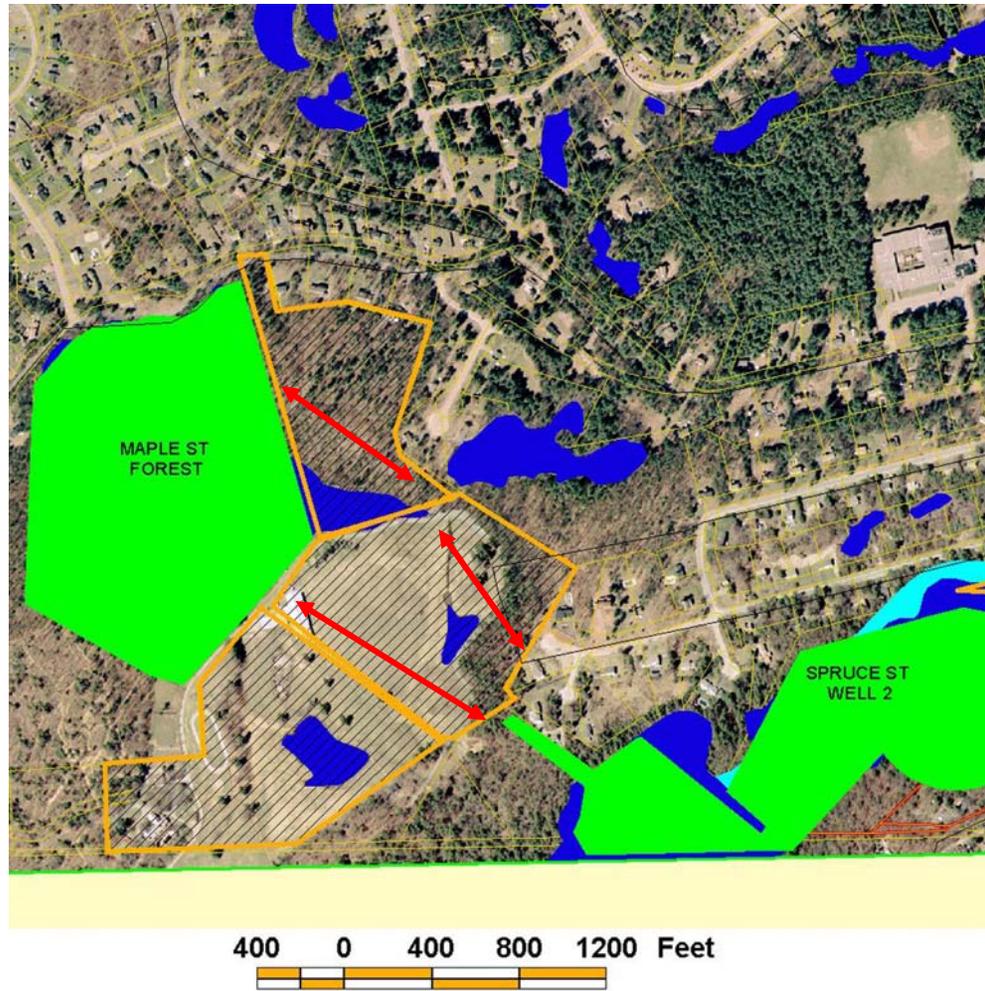
The Foley Dairy Farm, on Park Street, offers a vista of open fields to a tree line approximately 300 feet from the street. The property does participate in the Chapter 61A program.

This area represents one of the largest tracts of open land remaining in Norfolk, and additional analysis of site-specific characteristics (wetlands areas, water quality issues, hazardous material remediation, etc.) should be conducted to refine recommendations in this area.

Recommendations

Preserving the vista of farmland, along with possible trail connections to the preserved open space associated with the planned subdivision, should be explored.

If the Foley Farm is withdrawn from the Chapter 61A program, the Town should exercise its right of first refusal to protect its important scenic and recreational qualities.



MAPLE STREET FOREST TO SPRUCE STREET WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREA

Priority LOW

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
6	62	202	19.52	Peter Tsimortos
12	62	236	21.54	Peter Tsimortos
12	62	191	5	Peter Tsimortos
12	62	201	13.96	Peter Tsimortos
12	62	121	21	Peter Tsimortos
			81.02	

Status

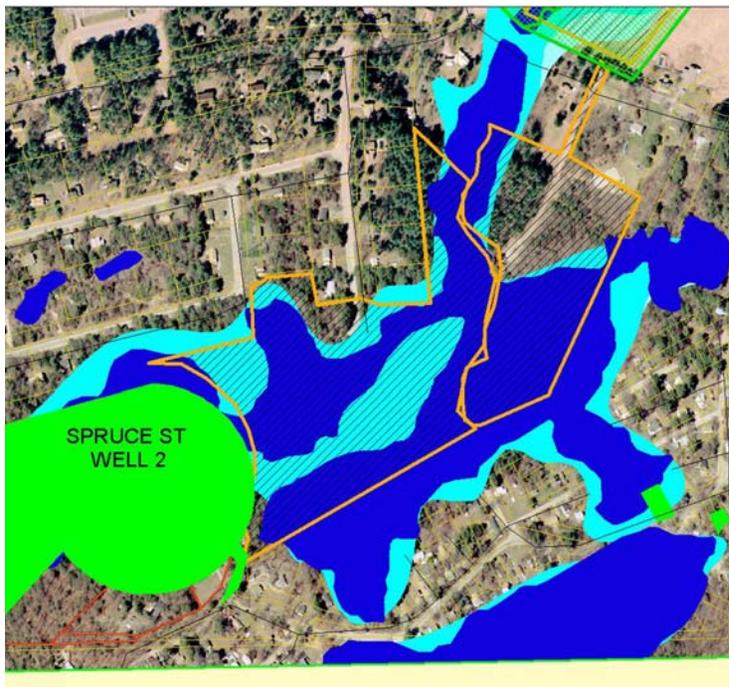
Five large parcels of land are situated between two protected open spaces.

Analysis

Should this land be developed in the future, an effort to preserve a visual and physical connection between Maple Street Forest and the Spruce Street Wellhead Protection area should be made.

Recommendations

A green corridor to connect these two sites can be located in a number of places. An existing pathway appears to run along the perimeter of the cleared parcel, and could easily function as this connection.



SPRUCE STREET WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREA TO PACKARD PROPERTY

Priority LOW (HIGH if State land is declared surplus)

Ownership and Area

According to Town Assessing records, the two parcels that extend northeasterly from the wellhead protection site are town and state owned.

Status

According to the Town’s May 1999 Map, the land adjacent to the Well Protection area has also been preserved as conservation land, with a connection to Union Street. The Packard Property remains under private ownership, though it participates in the 61B program.

Analysis

The green corridor that extends from the well protection area is in public ownership (Town and Department of Corrections) and enjoys a fairly high level of protection.

The Packard Property is a key piece of Norfolk’s open space system, acting as a link between several resources and providing a scenic vista along Union Street. Should it be removed from the 61B program and development proposed, it will be important to ensure these characteristics are preserved.

Recommendations

Trails along Stoney Brook can link these two areas. Initiate communication with the State to ensure protection for this land should it be declared surplus.

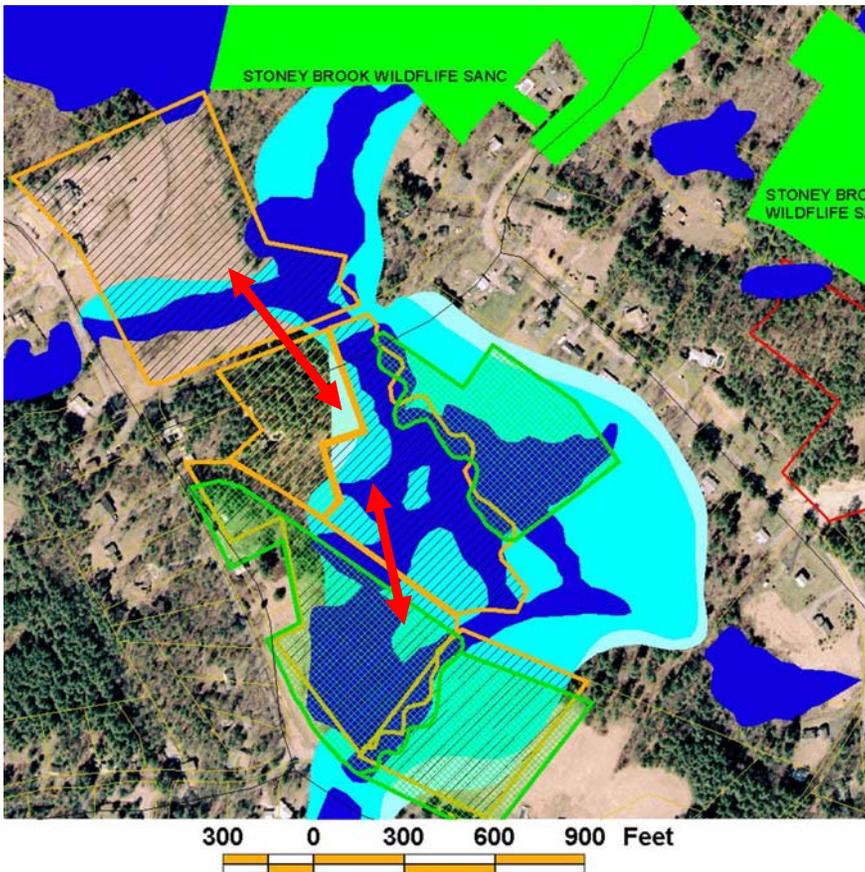


PACKARD PROPERTY & FIELD AT THE INTERSECTION OF UNION AND DIAMOND TO STONEY BROOK WILDLIFE AREA AND THE BRISTOL BLAKE STATE RESERVATION

Priority HIGH

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
12	61	1	7.36	Mark Edwards
12	61	21	5.4	Gary & Barb McLachlan
12	61	2	9	Medora Mower
13	60	1	12	David Gage
			33.76	



Status

The Packard Property is privately-owned, participating in the 61B program. The Field at Union and Diamond Street appears to be in farm use.

Analysis

Both properties can together link the Stoney Brook Wildlife area to a larger green space corridor. Proposed development should maintain the Packard property’s view from Union Street, and preserve an open vista/green corridor from Union and Diamond Streets. Significant areas of these sites are wetland and/or located within the 100-year flood plain.

Recommendations

A trail along the open brook that traverses these properties can guide location of the continuous greenway.

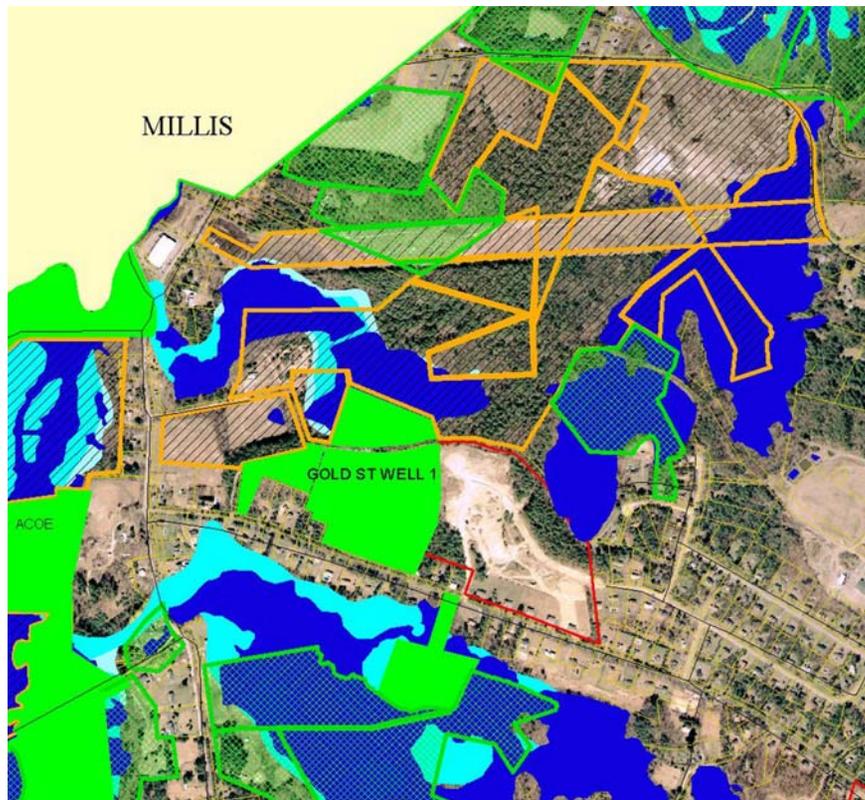


PHILLIPS, COOLIDGE, & HARLOW PONDS TO CHARLES RIVER RESERVATION

Priority MEDIUM

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
10	34	163	43.5	G. Bentley
10	34	133	105.76	Upland Game
10	32	8	35.12	Lorusso & Sons
10	32	7	20.76	DiPlacido Dev. Corp.
10	32	75	17.21	Riverview Realty Trust
10	32	15	12.36	Stan Stonionis
10	8	6	+	Sand & Gravel
			239.56	



Status

Several parcels in private ownership, some participating in the 61B program. Recent development proposals have been discussed for the Stonionis property (age-restricted housing) and for the Lorusso Sand and Gravel parcel (age-restricted housing and commercial/retail/restaurant along the roadway).

Analysis

Phillips, Coolidge, and Harlow ponds represent a sizable outdoor recreation area at Norfolk’s northern boundary. Open space borders both sides of Baltimore Street as it leads in and out of Norfolk, giving this area a rural feeling. In addition, large, undeveloped, contiguous tracts of land from Baltimore Street to Myrtle Street enable these areas to be linked by a greenway corridor, and may play an important role in habitat protection.

**PHILLIPS, COOLIDGE, & HARLOW PONDS TO
CHARLES RIVER RESERVATION - *continued*****Recommendations**

A closer look at this area is needed to determine how best to preserve natural habitat. Natural resource scientists and other environmental professionals should be consulted in this matter. The Town of Millis should be part of this examination, as its shared border with Norfolk appears to be largely undeveloped in this vicinity.

At a minimum, an opportunity exists to preserve trail connections between the Upland Game Club and Bentley Properties and the Charles River Reservation. The area close to the Town's northern boundary appears to offer the most potential for trail development, but a more detailed analysis of the topography and land characteristics in this area would better inform the Planning Board as to how best to shape planned development here.

In light of recent development proposals, the Planning Board needs to use its review role to coordinate site planning with several objectives in mind. Any development should be careful to respect the rural character of this gateway into Norfolk by preserving mature vegetation. At the same time, one or more greenway corridors crossing Baltimore Street should be maintained. One possible approach would be to encourage the clustering of development, thereby allowing for greater connectivity to the utility corridor. Preparing a preferred site plan for this overall area would enable the Planning Board to better address future proposed developments.

V. Character-Defining Intersections

OVERVIEW

Norfolk’s rural heritage is maintained, in part, by the views that can be seen when traveling through the Town on its roadways. As development occurs, Norfolk’s character can be preserved or eroded depending upon how roadside land is treated. Intersections play a particularly important role as places where drivers slow down or stop and observe the surroundings.

At the places listed below and further described herein, the landscape reveals vistas of farmland, wooded forest, recreational areas, or other natural resources that should be protected from development impacts.



1. Main and Myrtle Streets
2. Myrtle and Hanover Streets
3. Seekonk Street at Medfield Town Line
4. Cleveland and Fruit Streets
5. North and Shears Streets
6. North and Pond Streets



INTERSECTION OF MAIN & MYRTLE STREETS - HOLMES PROPERTY

Priority HIGH

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
8	37	14	108.7	Richard Holmes

Status

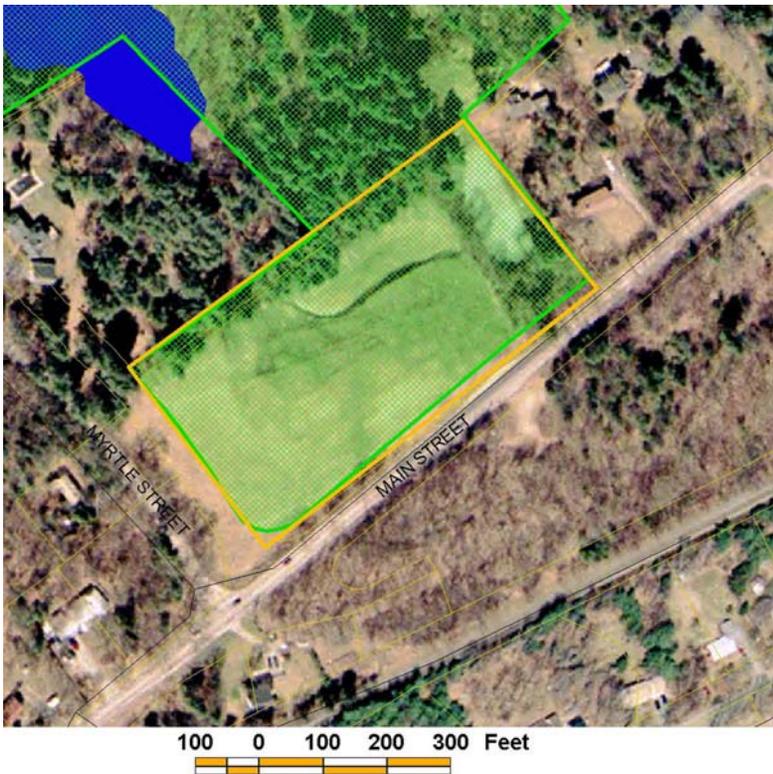
This property is currently participating in the 61A program, but lacks permanent protection.

Analysis

Located at a highly visible intersection, the Holmes property offers one of the most picturesque open vistas in Norfolk, and is part of a much larger Holmes property. This open field measures approximately 5 acres.

Recommendations

Part of a much larger parcel of farmland, any future proposed development should be located away from this intersection, preserving the open vista.





INTERSECTION OF MYRTLE & HANOVER STREETS

Priority HIGH

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
7	39	6	4.56	WT Holmes Family Trust

Status

This playing field is part of the Holmes family property; Michelle Holmes is the owner of record of the farmhouse seen in the distance.

Analysis

This field sits at the intersection of two of Norfolk’s scenic roadways, across the street from a horse farm.

Recommendations

According to the Norfolk Assessing database, this property participates in the Chapter 61 program. Should the property be withdrawn from the program and offered for sale, the Town should exercise its right of first refusal in order to ensure protection of this open corner.

Any development of this parcel should be directed away from this open corner (approx. 300’x 200’), and closer to the existing residences on Myrtle and Hanover Streets.



80 0 80 160 240 Feet

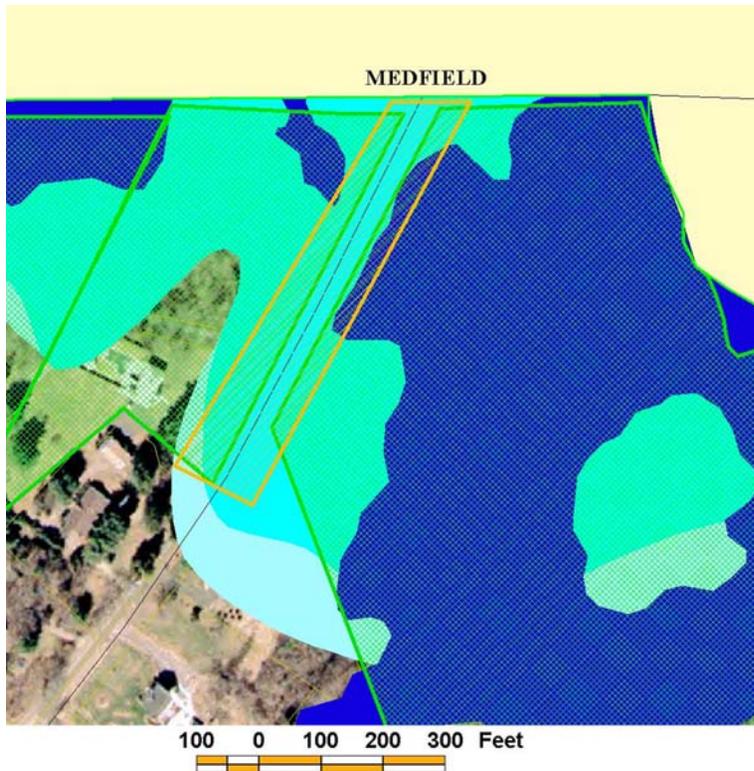


SEEKONK STREET, NEAR THE MEDFIELD TOWN LINE

Priority HIGH

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
24	55	128	4.74	Geo. Mullen
24	76	2	36.66	Arthur Clapp
24	55	130	7.56	Town of Norfolk
			48.96	



Status

According to the Mass GIS Open Space layer , these properties currently participate in the 61A program, but lack permanent protection. The Town owns a parcel to the rear of the Mullen property, which fronts on the western side of the street.

Analysis

Located on a well traveled roadway at a gateway to the town, Norfolk’s image is immediately established as the road moves from Medfield, where the roadway is wide and comparatively open, to Norfolk where an enclosed, rural feel is apparent. Flood plain occupies a good portion of this area, thus restricting it from development.

Recommendation

Should development be proposed in this area, a 50’ wide, forested buffer along the street should be preserved. If necessary, the Town should exercise its right of first refusal to achieve this.



INTERSECTION OF FRUIT & CLEVELAND STREETS, NEAR JANE & PAUL NEWTON’S FARM

Priority LOW

Ownership and Area

Map	Block	Lot	Acres	Owner
23	55	73	9.75	David Mann, Wyngate, PA
23	55	76	4.07	Gordo Realty Trust, Oslindale, MA
			13.82	

Status

This intersection is wooded on its four corners, with a farmhouse set back on the southeast corner.

Analysis

Near one of Norfolk’s historic and active farms, this intersection masks any hint of nearby development with thick woods. The parcel on its northwest corner appears particularly vulnerable to future development that could change the nature of the intersection.

Recommendations

If development is proposed in the vicinity of this intersection, the Town should pursue preservation of its wooded character, particularly on its northeast and southeast corners.





INTERSECTION OF SHEARS & NORTH STREETS

Priority LOW

Ownership and Area
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Status
Located at the entry to Norfolk from Wrentham, the northeast corner of this intersection is occupied by the Wikland Property, which is in the 61A program. The majority of this intersection, however, is owned by the State.

Analysis
Long, wooded views of both Shears and North Street characterize this location. According to the Town’s May 1999 “Buildable Parcels” map, development here appears unlikely.

Recommendations
Open communication with the State should be maintained to keep abreast of this property’s status. Should development be proposed here, protect the streetscape with a 50’ buffer a distance of 200’ from the intersection.



INTERSECTION OF NORTH AND POND STREETS

Priority LOW

Ownership and Area

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, MA Audubon

Status

Two corners of this intersection are protected parcels of open space, Stoney Brook Wildlife Sanctuary and Bristol Blake State Reservation; and a third corner is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections and thus has temporary protection. The fourth corner remains wooded, with a house located away from the intersection.

Analysis

Located at a highly visible intersection, the wooded corners of North and Pond Streets are part of a long corridor of forested land bordering both sides of Pond Street as it proceeds from this intersection to the Wrentham town line.

Recommendation

Protect the wooded, southeast corner by preserving a 50' buffer a distance of 200' from the intersection. Maintain communication with the State regarding the status of this Department of Corrections land.



100 0 100 200 300 Feet

VI. Open Space Preservation Strategies and Action Steps

To supplement the recommendations made in reference to the specific sites described above, there are several steps the Town can take in order to gain an advantage in the process of preserving these character-defining, linked areas.

In the Spring of 2001, Norfolk adopted the Community Preservation Act, and has established a Committee to determine priorities for expenditures of the funds collected. In October, the Town received its first allocation from the State of \$250,063 to be added to locally-collected taxes. The Planning Board should establish regular communication with the CPA Committee to share information and work cooperatively and strategically to preserve the Town's open spaces.

The following general recommendations apply to the sites listed herein:

- Initiate and maintain communication with the land owners to keep apprised of their properties' status;
- Investigate with the owners the possibility of purchasing/accepting donations of conservation restrictions on portions of the parcels discussed herein to preserve views, habitat, and trail access;
- Discuss the possibility of purchasing/accepting easements on land to incrementally create linked trails throughout Town;
- Develop site specific conservation and development plans for identified parcels and intersections:
 - Use CPA funding to provide necessary professional services, including site planning, engineering, environmental analysis, surveying, and preparation of legal documents.
 - Consider use of the Open Space Development option to preserve scenic views and habitat corridors.
 - Consider "limited development" strategy, under which a land trust or other non-profit partner acquire land, preserve a portion, and sells a development parcel to fund other acquisition.
- Prepare and adopt Scenic Overlay zoning providing for special permit authority over proposed development in designated priority locations. Such zoning would not prohibit development, but would give the Planning Board a stronger role in reviewing the location of development on the land. The Overlay district could also mandate use of the Open Space Development option within these designated areas.

VII. APPENDIX

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
BUILD OUT MAPS**