

Section 2 - Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide an organizational and rational framework within which residents of Hanover may guide the future of natural resources by balancing the pressures of commercial and residential development with the demands for open space preservation and recreation opportunities. The Plan inventories available protected and unprotected open space in Hanover, and recommends a plan to target greenways for passive and active recreation. Criteria is established for acquiring open space and recreation lands based on municipal water supply protection needs and the results of a community wide open space and recreation survey.

The first Hanover Open Space Plan was prepared in July 1979 by the Conservation Commission. This plan provided a detailed history of the Town as well as conservation efforts within the Town. Six goals and their respective objectives were listed as part of this Open Space Plan. These goals were: 1) to protect the integrity of wetlands, watersheds, existing and potential aquifers, groundwater recharge areas, ponds, streams, and floodplains; 2) to fulfill current and future needs for recreation programs and facilities; 3) to preserve known historic sites; 4) to plan for the integration of open space uses with urban development; 5) to prepare for the continued growth of the community in a planned fashion that can accommodate the citizens' needs and maintain the resources that are attractive to residents; 6) to establish cooperation among all town boards and departments in preparing for future growth demands. A Five-Year Action Plan listed specific priorities for land acquisitions, site specific improvements to town-owned areas, additional studies and land use controls. The Open Space Plan also identified certain options available to the town to promote open space. These include: taxation, property takings, zoning and subdivision regulations.

The Hanover Open Space Plan was updated in 1987 by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Since the initial open space plan, Hanover Conservation Commission has acquired more land; enacted a local wetlands protection by-law which provides additional wetlands protection beyond that provided in the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act; and established several protective zoning districts. The goals established in 1987 included the goals identified in the 1979 Plan, but placed a greater emphasis on the need for recreational programs and facilities, as well as improving public access to open space areas.

The Hanover Town [Master] Plan dated 1963, prepared by Thomas Associates for the Planning Board, consisted of a list of long-range programs with certain target dates for various improvements within the Town. This list was in accord with the Master Plan objectives which were to anticipate growth; determine what the Town has and what it will need in the future; and how to cost effectively obtain the needs of the Town. The "desires" of the Town were to maintain the non-urban town character and integrate the various areas of Hanover. A supplement to the Master Plan was issued in 1969. By this time, Hanover was suffering from increasing development pressure which was pushing its way from the Boston area. The goals set by the Master Plan are to remain a medium to low density residential community with many amenities of country living, and to create a sense of town character. Action items from the updated Master Plan include the beautification of the town, including the town center; improving

recreational opportunities; addressing water shortage issues and the necessity for sewer; and improving refuse disposal.

B. Planning Process and Public Participation

Hanover's Open Space and Recreation Plan was developed by the Open Space Planning Committee (OSPC). In accordance with a vote of the 1995 Annual Town Meeting members were appointed by the Town Moderator in December 1995. Committee members include representatives from the Board of Selectmen, Board of Public Works, School Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Health, Capital Improvement Committee, Planning Board, as well as several citizens-at-large. The following individuals are members of the OSPC which volunteered their time and efforts in producing this Plan:

Deborah L. McKie, Conservation Commission (Chairperson)
George H. Lewald, Board of Selectmen
Benjamin L. Kruser, Board of Public Works
Frederick L. Briggs, School Committee
Arthur A. Ceurvels, Jr., Parks and Recreation Commission
Joseph F. Casna, Jr., Board of Health
D. Wayne Moores, Capital Improvement Committee
Maryann Brugnoli, Planning Board
Douglas T. Thomson
Donald J. Rogers
Christopher J. Glynn

The Open Space Planning Committee officially began its work in January, 1996. The OSPC was committed to developing the plan as a reflection of the needs and expressed concerns of the community. In March of 1995, an open space survey was randomly distributed to 990 Hanover households. Approximately 210 completed surveys were returned, which represented a response rate of approximately 21%. A copy of the survey with the results summarized is included as Appendix A. Additionally, the results were utilized in developing goals and action items for this plan. The OSPC also held two public meetings to assess the community's needs and goals regarding open space.

The first meeting was held in February, 1996. During subsequent meetings, the OSPC developed a mission statement and goals based on public input. A public forum was held on August 14, 1996 to discuss preliminary findings, goals, and to identify open space priorities. All the Town Boards and Committees as well as the public were invited to attend. A list of attendees of these meetings are included in Appendix B.

All of the Committee's meetings have been open to the public and representatives from a wide variety of organizations contributed to this plan. A partial list of involved public and private organizations includes:

- Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), Division of Conservation Services and Department of Environmental Management
- Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Division of Water Supply and Division of Water Pollution Control
- Natural Heritage Program
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- Massachusetts GIS
- Mass Bays Program
- North/South River Watershed Association
- North River Commission
- Various land trusts, including the Plymouth County Wildlife Trust
- Plymouth Conservation District
- Hanover Planning Board
- Hanover Board of Selectmen
- Hanover Department of Public Works and Water Department
- Hanover Conservation Commission
- Hanover Historical Society
- Hanover Assessor's Office
- Hanover Parks and Recreation Commission
- Hanover School Department
- Hanover Board of Health

The firm of Beals and Thomas, Inc. was hired to assist in the preparation of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, as well as to ensure that the plan is consistent with Division of Conservation Services (DCS) guidelines and other planning documents. Using survey results, goals and objectives and mapped information, Beals and Thomas, Inc. developed the first draft plan. The Draft Plan was submitted to Town boards and commissions and MAPC for review. In addition, copies of the Draft Plan were made available at the public library to encourage public understanding of the process and comment on the document. The plan was revised to respond to the concerns identified in the review process and a final draft will be submitted for approval to the Town and the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services for further comments.

Meeting minutes, memos and press coverage of the Open Space Plan Committee activities are included in the Appendix.