

Bridgewater

Our Town Vision



Plan of Conservation and Development

2012

Adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission - 07.01.2012

Town of Bridgewater, Connecticut

**BRIDGEWATER'S 2012
PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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With appreciation to the following groups who participated in sharing their views: Bridgewater Board of Finance, Bridgewater Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission, Bridgewater Fire Department, Bridgewater Land Trust, Bridgewater Recreation Commission, Bridgewater Senior Center, Bridgewater Town Crew, Burnham Elementary School, Burnham Library, Community Caring in Bridgewater, Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club, St. Mark's Church, Sunny Valley Preserve of the Nature Conservatory

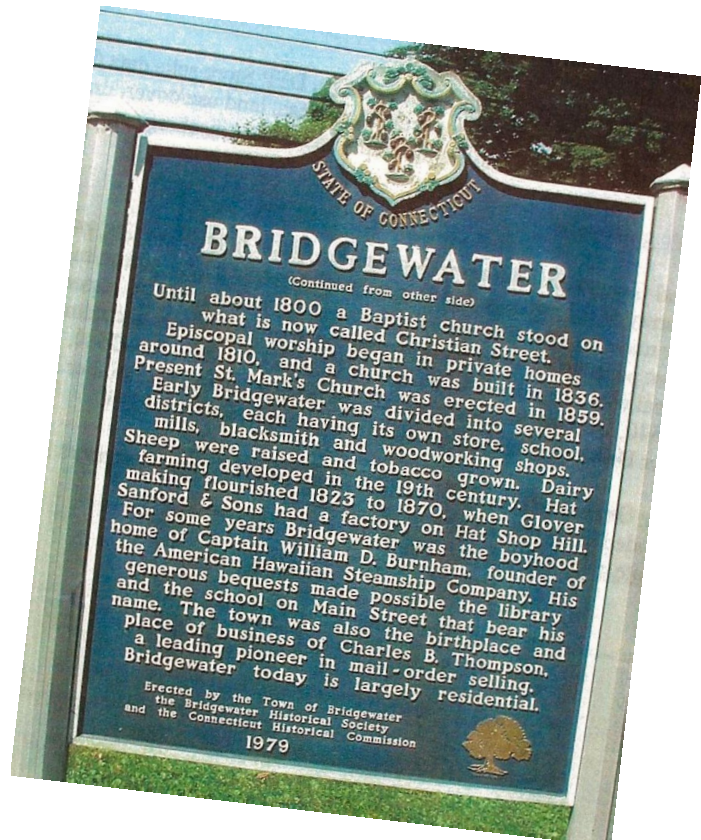
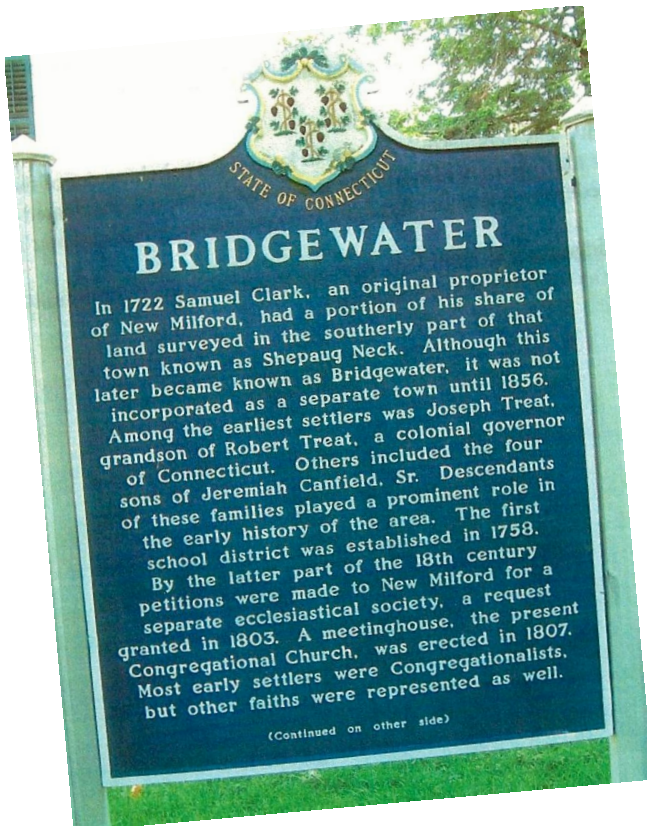
And with gratitude to all the residents of Bridgewater who responded to our 2010 survey on Bridgewater's assets, concerns and priorities.

We are indebted Jean Kavanek and Julie Stuart for the photos, to Bernadette Allingham and Audrey Wilkicki for the historical material, to Denise Pinter for poring over land use records with us, and to Jerry Ronan for digitalization.

And with special thanks to the staff of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials and especially Jonathan Chew, David Hannan and George Blake for their help, support and professionalism.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2012 Bridgewater Plan of Conservation and Development builds on the Town's natural assets of scenic beauty, dedicated residents, and core values of neighborliness, stewardship of the environment, and maintaining a rural, small town community.

The Bridgewater Planning and Zoning Commission developed a survey of community residents and met with town commissions and civic groups to elicit community opinions. We reviewed past plans and related material, studied land regulations, land use files and drafted new maps, determined the recommendations and wrote the Plan. Bridgewater residents played an invaluable role by formally and informally presenting their views.

The Plan reflects many recommendations from past plans of conservation and development. We are committed to retaining our rural character, safeguarding our natural beauty and open spaces, maintaining safe country roads, conserving our natural resources, and providing housing for diverse populations.

The 2012 Plan also introduces new topics. For instance, we recommend forming a subcommittee or special committee focused on energy and resource conservation to gather state of the art and best practices, to assess needs, and to make recommendations.

There is an emphasis on safety, handicapped accessibility and emergency preparedness for town facilities, activities, and community groups.

To assure that housing meets diverse needs, we recommend forming a housing committee to survey needs, assess the feasibility and desirability of a senior housing complex, and to consider ways to attract young families. We also recommend that the Planning and Zoning Commission evaluate housing regulation to increase accessory apartments and encourage permitted home businesses.

The Plan offers a background of historical, present day, and future perspectives on Bridgewater. To achieve our vision for the future, each of the subsequent eight sections – Bridgewater Community, Conservation and Natural Resources, Open Space, Housing, Community Facilities, Transportation, Village Center, Future Land Use Plan – summarizes the relevant recommendations from past plans, provides a background, indicates current issues and concerns, and makes recommendations. The final section suggests proposed implementation measures for the recommendations, noting tasks, lead responsibilities and time lines.

INTRODUCTION



A Plan of Conservation and Development offers a map which reflects where the community is at present and indicates where it wishes to go in the future.

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that the plan be prepared, adopted, and reviewed at least once every ten years, and amended as necessary. Consideration is to be given to address the following topics:

- Affordable housing
- Protection of water supplies
- Use of cluster and other development patterns
- State and regional plans of conservation and development
- Physical, social and economic trends
- Health, housing, recreation and other needs
- Development and conservation of energy
- Protection of agriculture

The plan is a statement of “policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality”; a series of items is to be included in the plan in order “to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people”. These items include:

- The most desirable use of land for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes;
- The development of housing opportunities, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity for all residents promoting housing choice and economic diversity;

- The inconsistencies with growth management principles of redevelopment, housing diversity, transportation, environmental, cultural, historical and farmland conservation.

In preparing the new Bridgewater Plan of Conservation and Development for 2012, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed Section 8-23, the town's 1967, 1988 and 2001 past Plans of Conservation and Development, the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) 2009 Regional Plan, and current conditions and trends.

Additionally, the Commission conducted a survey of Bridgewater residents on their interests, concerns, and priorities. This survey was distributed in the *Our Town* newsletter and at the Village Store, Senior Center, Town Hall, and Library. The Commission also wrote to town and community groups asking about their current activities and future needs; many groups responded with letters and comments and others met with us in person for detailed discussions.

This 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development reflects Bridgewater's past plans. It strongly affirms the goals of preserving the rural character of the Town, protecting its natural resources, preserving farm and open land, and promoting community facilities and services.

To meet new requirements, address changing conditions, and respond to new needs and interests, the 2012 Plan widens both the scope and the focus of previous plans and offers an enlarged map locating where Bridgewater is now and providing the direction of where it hopes to go in the future. It also offers a compass to set a consistent direction and milestone markers for significant progress.

Any plan is an advisory map; revisions are inevitable as obstacles are encountered, new destinations are added, and alternate routes are charted. To begin the implementation journey requires the continued commitment of town officials, commissions, boards and all residents of Bridgewater.



BRIDGEWATER IN PERSPECTIVE

The Topographical Perspective:

Rural Bridgewater, located in Litchfield County, is bordered on the north and west by New Milford, on the east by Roxbury, and on the south by Brookfield. Convenient to larger towns and to Danbury, residents also commute to Stamford, New York City, and Hartford.

The Town encompasses an area of 16.23 square miles - 10,136 acres - of varied topographies and soils. Elevations range from 150 feet above sea level on the Housatonic River to 941 feet at the top of Second Hill Road.

Most of the Town is rolling country side with an average elevation of 500 feet, while the southern third of the town has rough terrain, steep slopes and shallow to bedrock soils. The 1967 and 1988 Plans of Conservation and Development (PCD) note that 58% of the land has slopes of 15% or more. Ridgetop lands can be seen throughout the Town and scenic Wolf Pit Mountain is one of the natural landmarks.

Bridgewater has many permanent and seasonal watercourses and regulated inland wetlands. As the 1988 Plan notes, approximately 7% (750 acres) of the town consists of wetlands, with 27 miles of brooks and streams.

The combination of terrain, wetlands, and permanently protected lands suggest that there is limited acreage suitable for future development and that even this acreage has clear restrictions for home sites, septic fields, water supply, and safe driveways.

The Historical Perspective:

Bridgewater was first surveyed in 1722 for Samuel Clark, a merchant, followed by other settlers who began to populate “The Neck”, “Shepaug Neck”, or “New Milford Neck” as it was referred to in early deeds. The residents pursued their own ecclesiastical society separate from New Milford in 1802. There was opposition to this move and it took a resolution by the General Assembly in 1803 to resolve the issue, set off Bridgewater from New Milford, and to establish the present boundaries.



In 1823, Glover Smith, a hat factor in Salisbury, came back to his home town to start a hat factory. The hat business flourished and precipitated the moving of the center of town from Platts Corners, at the intersection of Northrop and Christian Streets, to its present location on Main Street. The town was incorporated in 1856.

By 1870, the hat business had moved to Bridgeport for better access to railroads. The population dropped as a result and Bridgewater remained an agrarian town with self-sufficient residents who only purchased at the local country stores what they could not produce. There were blacksmith shops, tailors, cobblers and tanneries in town and in Southville, a village at the southern tip of Bridgewater.

While business left, businessmen and their families started summering in town. There was an inn, Shadyside, where people could stay and, later, Hilltop Farm. Others rented cottages in the center of town or purchased property. By the mid 20th century this growth included many artists and writers looking to escape the rigors of urban life. The influx of part-time residents required services – such as landscaping, caretaking, and contracting – that the local residents provided.

The roads and rivers bordering the town saw changes mid-century. Lake Lillinonoah was created when the Shepaug Dam was opened in 1955 and submerged Southville which had become a shadow of the previously prosperous village. In 1957, work was completed on the new Route 67 connecting Roxbury and New Milford that bypassed Bridgewater Center and enabled easier access to New Milford for area residents



In the later part of the twentieth century, old farm families moved away and their farms were sold off and some subdivided. A few farms still remain and many large land tracts have been conserved as open space to preserve the town's rural fabric.

Present Day Perspective:

Bridgewater today retains its small town, rural character, with wooded roads, mostly one family homes, fields and open areas; it still has small farms and a limited commercial, business area. There is a blend of full and part-time residents representing a variety of professions with many commuting to Fairfield County or New York. The important changes are in population, household numbers and composition.

Population: Historically, the Town's population has followed fairly steady arcs, with decreases from 1880, when it was incorporated, until 1930, and then consistent growth from 1930 through the end of the century.

Primarily due to in-migration, this growth reflected both a desire to live in the country and greater ease in commuting to work in larger towns. The peak growth period of 1960-70 showed a 42% population increase. Many other towns in the Danbury area also saw large population increases during this decade, due in part to the construction of I-84. (Based on this trend, the Bridgewater 1967 PCD projected that by 1980 the town would show the highest growth rate in the area with a population of nearly 5,000. However, as pundits note, predictions, especially about the future, are often wrong.)

The 2010 Census shows that in the first ten years of the new century, Bridgewater's population decreased by 97 people, or by 5.3% percent from the 2000 Census and now totals 1,727.

BRIDGEWATER POPULATION BY DECADE

1860	1,048
1870	877
1880	708
1890	617
1900	649
1910	600
1920	481
1930	432
1940	537
1950	639
1960	898
1970	1,277
1980	1,563
1990	1,654
2000	1,824
2010	1,727

(2010 US Census, Summarized by HVCEO, Table P1)

This recent population decline reflects the recession, decreased in-migration due to limited employment opportunities in surrounding areas and rising costs for land and housing. It also indicates some out-migration as residents moved and the inevitably higher death rate among older residents.

Composition: The most significant population change is the aging of Bridgewater's residents. Although the median age of all towns in the area has risen over the past 40 years, Bridgewater started with an older population than most towns and now has the oldest median age in the region, going from 34.6 years of age in 1970 to 51.3 years of age in 2010.

BRIDGEWATER MEDIAN AGE

1970	34.6
1980	36.5
1990	41.3
2000	44.6
2010	51.3

2010 U.S. Census, Summarized by HVCEO. Table P13

A breakdown by age shows the decline in children in all age groups, of young adults, and most noticeably in the 26-44 year old groups, and then the increases in ages 60 to 75.

BRIDGEWATER POPULATION BY AGE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	65-74	75+
1970	6.3	9.5	9.9	8.5	5.4	10.9	12.4	12.8	4.6	4.6	10.1	5.0
1980	6.0	6.5	9.0	8.1	5.6	12.4	15.4	13.1	5.5	5.6	6.7	6.1
1990	4.6	6.5	6.8	4.4	4.4	13.5	17.7	17.5	5.9	5.6	7.1	6.0
2000	4.2	5.8	7.7	6.2	3.2	6.9	16.9	19.3	10.1	6.5	7.9	5.4
2010	3.5	4.9	6.4	5.8	2.0	4.9	10.8	19.4	8.0	10.1	14.4	9.6

2010 U. S. Census: Summarized by HVCEO Table P14

Marital Status: Although the 2010 census data on marital status has not yet been published for Bridgewater, it is anticipated that the separation-divorce trend will continue and, despite fluctuations, that the widowed population will increase.

BRIDGEWATER 15 YEARS AND OLDER BY MARITAL STATUS

	Single	Married	Separated	Widowed	Divorced	Total
1980	286	797	7	79	57	1,226
1990	276	888	13	89	93	1,359
2000	287	989	16	84	122	1,498

U.S. Census Summarized by HVCEO Table P24

Housing Data: The 2010 census shows that the number of households - defined as housing units that encompass one person, a number of unrelated persons, or two or more families - rose over the past 40 years and in 2010 stood at 737. The number of family households - defined as units consisting of a householder and one or more other people related to the householder - now numbers 525. (Many of the 737 household units are singles, a few may be two families, and others probably reflect partnerships and same sex marriages, not captured in the definition of family household.)

BRIDGEWATER NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD UNITS AND FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

	Households	Family Households
1970	421	357
1980	552	426
1990	654	481
2000	703	526
2010	735	525

U.S. Census: Summarized by HVCEO Tables P9 and P10

Equally important, the average household size has shrunk from 3.12 in 1960 to 2.34 in 2010, the smallest in the region.

BRIDGEWATER'S AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
3.12	3.03	2.83	2.52	2.55	2.34

U.S. Census: Summarized by HVCEO Table P11

These changes reflect new living patterns, fewer children per family, and an aging population with deceased partners. They have important implications for the Bridgewater community, for its revenue and for services to all the Town's residents.

Future Perspective and Vision:

Residents cherish the rural, scenic and small town features of Bridgewater and wish to preserve these qualities. Survey respondents noted that it was the country aspects, natural beauty, and village atmosphere that drew and kept them here. Trees and woodlands, farm land, pastures and fields, hills and wetlands all contribute to an appreciation of nature. Country roads, varied and well kept homes, limited commerce, friendly neighbors all contribute to village life. It is these features that Bridgewater is determined to protect and preserve.

This does not mean that residents wish the town to be frozen in time like a quaint Brigadoon. New needs, changing conditions, and economic bumps require planned remedies; agricultural shifts, environmental advances, and emerging technologies necessitate innovative responses.

Bridgewater residents favor a diverse, friendly, and vibrant community, with a mix of ages, occupations, and backgrounds. Residents include talented artists, craftsmen and writers, small entrepreneurs, farmers, builders, construction workers, landscapers, lawyers, teachers, accountants, and professionals. Bridgewater welcomes a balance of full-time and weekend residents, some of whom decide to stay permanently.

The 2010 Census data highlights the growing populations of retirees, ages 65-74, and of elderly, 75 and older, many of whom live alone. There will be an increased need for senior



services, including the recreation, socializing and referral services at the Senior Center and the volunteer help at the Community Caring in Bridgewater.

To promote feasible ‘aging in place’, strong support services are essential to meet the diverse needs; these services may include: training and a roster of volunteer and paid home helps, assistance to family caregiver assistance, such as day-time respite care, regular telephone reassurance and check-up, communal dining, and intergenerational aid as tutoring and life stories.

Additionally, without active efforts to retain and to attract young adults and families, the Town will become a less diverse and vibrant place, with a small school enrollment, limited services for children, teens, and young families, and with fewer volunteers and funds to support necessary town and civic activities. Some residents are particularly wistful that their children are priced out of the Bridgewater housing market and many urge educational, recreation, and family support services such as housing and child care.

Residents also highlight the historic and current creative atmosphere for artists, writers and craftsmen; it is hoped that the town will continue to attract these valued residents.

There also is growing support and increased emphasis on environmentally friendly techniques furthering the advances in energy conservation, green technologies, and organic farming. This commitment is based, in part, on the economic motivation to reduce long-term costs and meet new consumer demands; it also reflects the wish to conserve natural resources and protect the environment. The Town and some individuals already have begun some steps and this progress should continue.

Bridgewater’s vision for the future includes preserving its rural, small town features, promoting a vibrant, diverse population, providing adequate support services, and protecting the environment.



THE BRIDGEWATER COMMUNITY

Past Plans: Previous Plans of Conservation and Development did not explicitly address community issues, although the 1967 Plan provides a background on the Bridgewater community.

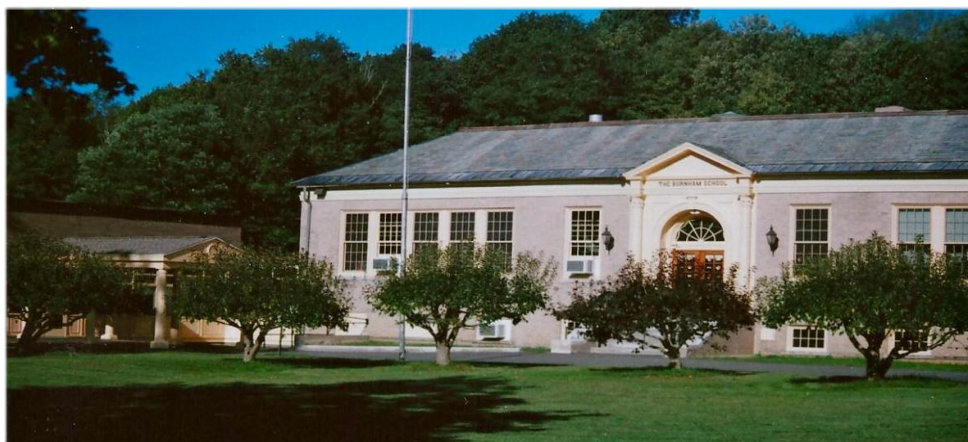
Community Background: Bridgewater considers itself a safe, friendly, neighborly small town.



Residents include those with deep roots in the community spanning three or more generations to those who came in the late 20th or early 21st centuries.

There are many important sites where community life in Bridgewater may flourish. The Town Green, with the village store and Post office is the traditional center of informal socializing at the northern end of town. The Convenience Store and gas station, at Route 67, provides another opportunity to shop and eat. Town Hall is the locus of official town business. The two churches, Saint Marks Episcopal Church and the Congregational Church, in addition to Sunday worship and activities, offer concerts, special events and dinners. The Grange has monthly membership meetings and, in the summer, roast-beef suppers for all.

Residents of all ages consider the Burnham Library a treasured resource for books, children's activities, book clubs, and a meeting space for organizations. The Historical Society houses historical artifacts and hosts the traditional Memorial Day refreshments. The local Burnham School is a strong educational force for children and their parents. It has been strongly supported in past elections as residents have voted to retain the local elementary school in town.



Besides its fire, rescue and emergency services, the self-supporting volunteer fire department organizes the annual Bridgewater Country Fair. The fair is a highlight of the summer and the residents turn out to man gates, prepare and sell food, enter exhibits, and run programs.

The recreation area includes a playground, tennis courts, ball fields, and pavilion for social events. The newest addition, the Hill Top Senior Center offers a variety of socialization and craft activities, computer and exercise classes, luncheons and trips.

In addition to the salaried selectmen, and the staffs at the town hall, library, Burnham school, senior center, and town crew, Bridgewater relies on many volunteers; these include:

- Board of Trustees for Town investments, 5 appointed members,
- Board of Finance, 6 elected members,
- Planning and Zoning Commission, 5 members and 3 alternates, all elected
- Zoning Board of Appeals, 5 elected members
- Board of Education, 3 elected members
- Lake Authority, 3 appointed members
- Recreation Commission, 7 appointed members
- Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission, 7 appointed members
- Scholarship Committee, 5 appointed members
- Emergency Management Director, 1 appointed member.

Also vital to the community are the volunteers in nongovernmental organizations which include:

- St Marks Episcopal Church and Bridgewater Congregational Church groups
- Burnham Library Trustees and the Friends of the Burnham Library
- Friends of the Senior Center
- Community Caring in Bridgewater
- Volunteer Fire Department
- Women's Auxiliary of the Fire Department
- Burnham School Parent Teacher Organization
- Bridgewater Land Trust
- Sunny Valley Nature Conservatory
- Bridgewater Historical Society
- The Bridgewater/New Milford Grange
- The Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club





Present Issues, Concerns, Interests.

Volunteering: Bridgewater residents volunteer at and attend Grange suppers, library parties, church dinners and concerts, Garden Club plant sales, and the Fire Department Bridgewater Country Fair. However, nearly all of the volunteer organizations surveyed noted their resource concerns of limited funds and volunteers, especially younger adults.

Much time and effort, by a diminishing cadre, goes into organizational maintenance activities to raise money. This reflects the current economy, changing demographics, and increased pressures of daily life.

It may also reflect a lack of awareness of volunteer opportunities and a sense of diminished appreciation for past service.

Recently, Bridgewater, as other towns, voted a tangible appreciation to active volunteer firemen by a real estate tax reduction. While impractical for other volunteers, some survey respondents note the need for non-monetary volunteer morale building.

Survey responses highlight suggestions for encouraging new approaches and activities and promoting communication among groups. Many organizations, particularly volunteer ones, have started innovative service activities and new fundraising events, such as the Halloween Trunk and Treat and the all-town tag sale, which are successfully institutionalized; new proposals, such as a Community Garden by the Garden Club and summer concerts by the Fire Department, are worthy of consideration.

The number of official town groups and the variety of local organizations can also lead to insularity with a lack of awareness of what others do and a sense of isolation.

Accessibility, health and emergencies: Accessibility, health and emergency planning are important, ongoing considerations. Respondents suggest that all groups review their facilities and activities for safety and handicapped inclusion and assess their training protocols for handling safety issues and emergencies. Emergency plans, for both inevitable power outages and unanticipated national crises, should be developed and distributed.

As with many Connecticut towns, Lyme's disease and other tick related diseases are epidemic in Bridgewater and residents are hopeful that methods can be found to mitigate, if not eradicate, their prevalence.

Civic Participation: Finally, many survey residents hope for greater planning, community involvement and information. Although proactive planning will not resolve all contingencies, without consideration of new needs and challenges, a community is rapidly overtaken by events.

In terms of information, Bridgewater publishes a quarterly newspaper - *Our Town*, maintains a web site, www.bridgewater townhall.org, which includes minutes of Town Commissions, and sends email alerts on town meetings and other events. Nevertheless, a number of surveyed residents urge greater advanced planning, more information, and fuller participation on present and future issues facing the town, such as cell towers, energy conservation, and open space. Some also expressed a need for more information on issues prior to town meetings.

Recommendations for the Bridgewater Community

The Bridgewater 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development recommends three parallel approaches regarding community life for promoting volunteerism, ensuring safety, and encouraging informed residents.

To Strengthen and Enhance Volunteerism

1. Develop and regularly update a booklet on town organizations and volunteer activities for newcomers, with a tear-out sheet so that organizations may contact interested individuals; place also on the town's website.
2. Provide a variety of service appreciation approaches highlighting the crucial help that volunteers provide on Town boards and groups.
3. Encourage and support new proposals to generate income and offer new services.
4. Build coordination through informal joint meetings among related groups.

To Ensure a Safe, Accessible, Prepared Town

1. Assess facilities, policies, programs and training needs to ensure safety and handicapped accessibility and institute any needed remedies.
2. Provide information for coping with town emergencies and national crises.
3. Plan and implement a feasible program to minimize the prevalence of tick related diseases.

To Encourage Informed Participation:

1. Strengthen information and both formal and informal participation regarding present and future issues and proposals affecting the town, as cell towers, energy conservation, and open space.
2. Provide advanced informational materials on issues and elections at town meetings.
3. Develop fact-sheets and website information energy and water conservation, recycling, organic gardening.

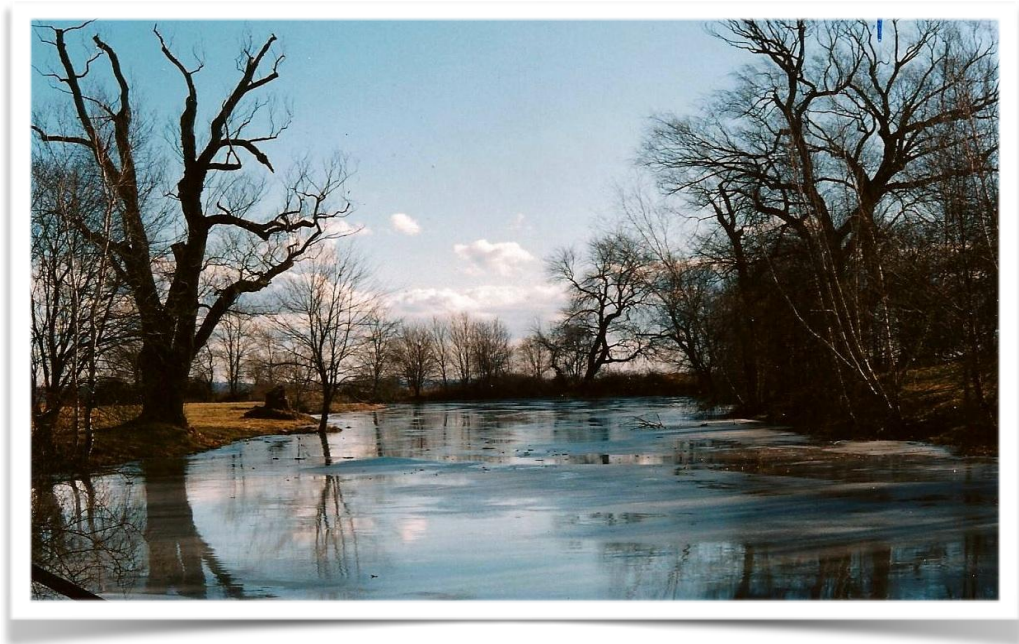


CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Past Plans:

The 2001 Plan of Conservation and Development set six objectives to protect and conserve natural resources; these covered:

- protection of surface and ground water
- protection of flood plains, wetlands, streambelts and waterways
- use of scenic easements and open space acquisition to protect environmental features as ridges and scenic vistas
- discouragement of development in fragile environmental areas
- use of environmental impact studies for major development or land use activity
- encouragement of conservation and preservation efforts



Standards were set by type of soil and grade of slope and implementation measures included:

- increasing open space requirements,
- developing buffer zone requirements for land adjacent to water
- developing an open space acquisition program
- inspecting septic systems near the lake and river

Conservation Background:

Bridgewater residents treasure the town's natural resources and aspire to be good stewards. Our resources include the Shepaug River and Lake Lillinonah, wetlands, open spaces, woods, and vistas. The river and the lake provide unique scenic beauty, relaxation and recreation.

The wetlands, monitored by the Conservation and Inland Wetland Commission, account for 750 acres or 7% of Bridgewater's land and are an irreplaceable natural resource. These wetlands are essential to the adequate supply of surface and ground water, to the control of flooding and erosion, and to the existences of animal, aquatic, and plant life.

Present Concerns and Issues

Water conservation: Protection of the river and lake and inland wetlands remains a priority issue. As the town is dependent on private wells, the purity and capacity of the water supply is an ongoing concern.

Environmental conservation: There is also growing interest in other environmental initiatives including alternate forms of energy and energy conservation, recycling and composting, and environmental efforts. In recent years, there is a dramatic growth of expertise, state of the art knowledge, and interest in earth friendly techniques.

Currently, with the help of a grant from the State of Connecticut, the Town installed standing solar panels at the Bridgewater Senior Center and two private homes have also added solar panels; the Community Caring in Bridgewater has assisted 30 senior homes in energy analysis and conservation tips. Residents hope these initiatives will continue.

Recommendations for Bridgewater's Conservation and Natural Resources:

Affirming the objectives of past plans, Bridgewater's new 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development recommends a continued commitment for protecting water resources, including waterways, wetlands and ground water and adds a new category for promoting energy and resource conservation.

Because a coordinated approach is essential, we recommend regular consultation between the Commissions and interested groups on shared conservation and environmental concerns; thus, as zoning regulations are reviewed, consultation with the Inland Wetlands Commission is appropriate.

To Protect and Preserve Water Resources

1. Review and, where necessary, revise the zoning regulations to ensure protection of water courses and wetlands.
2. Review regulations to incorporate 2002 DEP guidelines encouraging storm water retention where appropriate.
3. Monitor erosion and runoffs and institute environmentally friendly remedial action where needed.
4. Investigate the desirability and feasibility of permeable road surfaces for driveways.
5. Provide information on septic maintenance to all residents.
6. Consider a proactive septic approach for critical areas such as Lake Lillinonah, either by inspection, sanitary survey, or by verification of septic tank cleaning.
7. Monitor and maintain the potential that runoff from the Shepaug River Watershed, in Eastern Bridgewater, can be used as a supply source for other areas, therefore, currently mandating the State's strictest environmental standards in that watershed.

8. Ensure that the storage of materials meets legal requirements and does not damage ground water.

To Promote Energy and Resource Conservation

1. Establish an energy- natural resource conservation committee with knowledgeable residents, either as part of the Conservation and inland Wetlands Commission or as a separate committee. Initially, the energy-natural resource focus would be on knowledge building, information sharing, and conservation recommendations.
2. Continue to develop energy saving priorities for public facilities.
3. Provide information to town residents on energy conservation and alternate energy resources, on best practices in farming and gardening, composting and recycling.

OPEN SPACE

Past Plans

Bridgewater's 1967 Plan classified open space as:

- public and semi-public land that is available for walking and outdoor recreation
- cemeteries, swamps, wild life sanctuaries not usually available for recreation but kept open and undeveloped
- steep, rugged, or wetland that is unfit for development

It noted that open land comprised 64.6% of Bridgewater's entire area and recommended that new development be planned with open space priorities, as grouping residences around a loop or using dead ends leaving "a substantial area natural and free of building lots".

Subsequent plans implicitly promote open space objectives. The 1988 Plan notes that new regulations help to protect open space by allowing private gravel roads for subdivisions and using set-asides of land to be protected. The 2001 Land Use objectives include protecting and maintaining as much of the natural landscape as possible, encouraging development which results in a larger percentage of open space, and protecting designated scenic areas with a required site plan review.

Open Space Background:

Open spaces, which cover over 2,500 acres, are managed by four conservancies: the Bridgewater Land Trust, Sunny Valley of The Nature Conservancy, Weantinog, and the Audubon Society, along with some woodlands and vistas which remain in private hands as do some ridgelines.

Our review of the Bridgewater land records on open space shows the following ownership and acreage:

<u>Total Land owned by Exempt Organizations</u>	
<u>Organizations</u>	<u>Number of Acres</u>
Audubon Society	83.37
Bridgewater Land Trust	186.85
Connecticut Light & Power	265.29
First Light Hydro Generation	70.63
Nature Conservancy	1,442.14
Roxbury Land Trust	2.48
Weantinogue Heritage	196.23
Total Land Owned: 2,246.99	
<u>Total Easement Land by Exempt Organizations</u>	
Bridgewater Land Trust	114.91
Weantinogue Heritage	144.02
Total Easements:	258.93

BRIDGEWATER CONSERVATION RESOURCES MAP

TO VIEW:

Please select the following link to the appropriate map on the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials web site:

http://www.hvceo.org/images/2012_Plan_Bridgewater_Open_Space.jpg

Present Issues, Concerns and Interests

Residents consider the natural, undeveloped open spaces as essential to a rural town and a major asset to be preserved. There is great concern that future development may erode existing open space and that development and private homes may transform open fields.

Residents have also expressed interest in greater public use of open space and particularly in developing trails for walking, hiking and cross-country skiing.

Recommendations for Bridgewater's Open Space:

Recommendations focus on a planned approach for maintaining and extending open space and for developing funding approaches to acquire new land.

To Preserve and expand open space, vistas, and scenic areas

1. Institute a plan to map vulnerable land, vistas, ridgelines, and arterial roads that are appropriate for open space and walking or hiking.
2. Prioritize open space needs on arterial and main roads and for scenic areas and vistas.
3. Coordinate with land trusts and conservancies on goals, strategies, and plans.
4. Research the concept of a small dedicated fee, one percent or one-half percent, of a land sale, to be held in trust for the purchase of open space; if recommended, this plan should be introduced as the economy and housing market improves.



HOUSING

Past Plans

The 2001 Plan housing objectives included:

- Creating a healthful, safe, attractive environment in new residential development
- Encouraging the development of housing to meet specific needs
- Locating most multi-family housing near the Town's center as consistent with soil types and terrain

Housing Background:

Bridgewater's housing stock is varied and generally reflects its rural roots. Some houses are historic, dating back to the 1700's, and others very modern. There are farm houses, small cottages, ranch houses and large estates. With the exception of Bridgewater Commons, a 17 unit condominium on Main Street North, 96.8% of Bridgewater's houses are single family homes.

Similar to all towns in the region, the number of Bridgewater households has risen over the past years, but at a smaller rate than elsewhere. As noted previously, the 2010 Census reports that, there are 735 household units in Bridgewater and of these 525 are family households. The average household size has decreased over past 50 years, going from 3.12 in 1960 to 2.34 in 2010. This decrease reflects changed living patterns, fewer children, and an aging population living alone. Bridgewater now has a population density of 106 per acre, the lowest in the region.

As a rural town, Bridgewater's residential zoning regulations require that all housing lots be able to meet its water and septic disposals on-site, as certified in the past by the Town's sanitarian and currently by the Newtown Health District.

In the past three years, there was only one new housing start and all recent housing permits have been for remodeling and enlarging. Sales have flattened and are primarily in the upper price range. Connecticut Economic Resource Center reports that of the 11 houses sold in 2009, three were in the \$200,000 range, three in the \$300,000 range and five at \$400,000 or more. The 2009 CERC profile of Bridgewater also notes that that 71% of dwellings are owner occupied, a 10% decrease from 2008.

Present Housing Issues, Interests and Concerns

Housing needs: Bridgewater residents remain committed to maintaining a small, rural town; surveyed residents liked the town's single family, well kept homes and the typical New England style architecture; they felt that development should be limited and not intrusive.

Elderly housing has long been on the Bridgewater agenda and residents expressed strong interest in addressing the housing needs of both the elderly, so that they might remain in the community, and of young families, including children who had grown up in town but now were priced out of the market.

Our suggested approach is to initiate a committee to assess needs, develop housing plans, propose recommendations and implement remedies. A parallel effort is to expand the use of accessory apartments.

The 2009 HVCEO Regional Plan notes that accessory apartments can be a small, yet important technique to expand the housing supply and is particularly appropriate for Bridgewater due to declining household size and ability to use existing on-site water and septic systems. An accessory apartment in a home owned by an elderly person offers an income supplement and promotes independent living and support.

Home Business: Additionally, survey responses to an item on home business indicated approval of home businesses provided these were permitted and not intrusive or damaging to the neighborhood. Respondents saw home business as an economic benefit to both the worker in terms of income and to the town through the collection of permit fees. Currently, existing regulation does not define a home business and limits it to the first floor and to less than 20% of that floor.

The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials 2009 Regional Plan noted that 8.5% of Bridgewater's workforce reported working at home, which is the second highest percentage after Redding. The Report lists some of the positives of home business:

- it covers increasingly varied work due to the internet and telecommuting;
- it eliminates the worker's commuting costs of time and money and reduces the environmental costs of pollution, congestion, and energy;
- it allows flexibility for child-care and other responsibilities. And, in difficult economic times, it can be a source of added income.



Finally, a review of all regulations is deemed appropriate to assess changed conditions, needs, and consequences, especially those regarding additions on small lots.

Recommendations for Bridgewater Housing:

The 2012 Plan for Bridgewater reflects both the emphasis in Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes on specific housing needs including affordable housing and the expressed wishes of the Bridgewater community; maintaining the small town features, addressing diverse housing needs for seniors and young families, encouraging safe, nonintrusive home business, and evaluating all residential zoning regulations.

To Maintain Bridgewater's Small Town, Rural Qualities:

1. Review set-back and frontage regulations and consider increasing the requirements.
2. Evaluate methods, in addition to setbacks, to ensure house and lot size are compatible. A possible option is the "floor-area ratio" (FAR) comparing the total living area of the building to the lot area.
3. Encourage the screening of buildings by natural buffer zones compatible with a rural area.
4. Ensure that permanent and semi-permanent machinery, equipment, dumpsters and garbage cans are adequately screened.
5. Promote conservation and open space designs for individual houses and subdivision developments; suggestions include a) siting a home at one side of the lot, rather than in the center, to preserve a larger continuous open area and b) using a conservation design for subdivision development so that a large portion of land, particularly along roads, is in open space.

To Address Diverse Housing Needs:

1. Establish a committee focused on the diverse housing needs of the community to review relevant factors and make recommendations.
2. Evaluate and revise regulations to increase accessory apartments for the elderly and their families, ensuring safety and minimal neighborhood impact. Provide information on apartment conversion.

To Encourage Equitable, Safe Home Businesses

1. Evaluate and revise home business regulations to provide a definition, zoning criteria on safety, traffic, noise, nuisance and other neighbor impacts.
2. Require an inspection before an initial permit is issued and update regularly

To Evaluate, Update, and Publicize all Zoning Regulations

1. Review all zoning regulations to ensure conformity to State requirements, address issues, and reflect best zoning practices.
2. Provide clear, accurate information to residents through application, regulations, forms and briefings.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

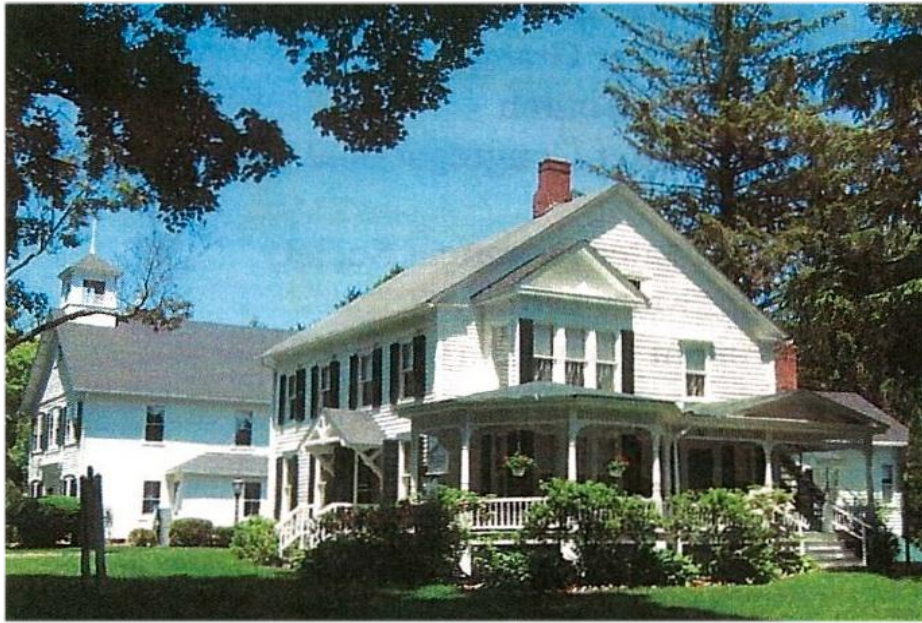
Past Plans:

The 2001 Plan of Conservation and Development lists five objectives regarding town facilities:

1. Locating all public facilities except the Town Garage and park in the town center.
2. Insuring sufficient land is available in advance of need
3. Designing attractive, efficient public buildings
4. Planning for expansion in advance of need
5. Encouraging additional recreational facilities

Standards were set in terms of the size of the site per population. The implementation measures included:

- Developing plans to expand the library;
- Preserving land adjacent to Lake Lillinonah as undeveloped open space
- Providing additional space at the Town Garage for storage, maintenance and recycling



Town Facilities Background:

Currently the facilities maintained by the town include:

- Bridgewater Grange
- Bridgewater Historical Society
- Peck House and Captain Burnham House
- Burnham School Playground
- Bridgewater Hill Top Senior Center
- Bridgewater Town Hall
- Bridgewater Recreational Center – including pavilion, kitchen and rest rooms, soccer field, tennis courts, playground, walking trail;
- Bridgewater Town Park.
- (The Bridgewater Fire Department provides its own upkeep and maintenance of the Fire House.)



Since the 2001 Plan, the major changes have been the construction of the Bridgewater Senior Center, built in 2008, and the resurfacing of the tennis courts in 2011. The Senior Center, with restroom facilities, kitchen, large meeting room and three other rooms provides both ongoing services for the elderly and a community shelter during hot or cold weather and power outages. The resurfaced tennis courts allow full use during all weather.

Current Town Facilities Issues, Concerns and Interests:

Capital Budget Planning: Survey respondents and community groups support the goal of planning ahead to maintain, renovate and expand community facilities. There is a need for a comprehensive, itemized capital budget to set priorities and facilitate planning.

Appropriate Building: Other suggestions noted that renovation, repairs, and new construction should be appropriate to the building's historical and architectural features as well as functional needs. The Fire House, which maintains itself, may need expansion.

Safety, Accessibility: Safety and accessibility for all are both legal requirements and essential for an inclusive community. Progress has been made in handicapped accessibility, with good compliance for access and rest rooms at the Senior Center and access at the Library. The Town Hall's back-entrance ramp has been reworked; further work is needed to meet requirements. Additional efforts are needed to ensure safe access to Town Hall and to rest room facilities and meeting rooms.

Energy: Residents note the importance of energy conservation in all town facilities; the solar panels at the Senior Center are deemed a good first step; greater efforts at recycling and composting were also suggested.

Community Facilities Recommendations

Bridgewater's 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development endorses prior planning objectives. It supports the concept of planning "in advance of need" and recommends a clear process for maintaining and developing facilities. To enhance the facilities, the Plan details specific recommendations on accessibility, safety, renovation, energy and recycling.

To Provide Well-maintained, Accessible, Safe, and Environmentally-friendly Facilities

1. Develop a rolling Five Year Capital Budget which is based on a review of the community needs, conditions and requirements and which enumerates and prioritizes the items, costs, and funding.
2. Ensure that all town facilities meet code requirements and are handicapped accessible
3. Provide new construction and renovation that is consistent with historical, architectural, aesthetic and functional needs.
4. Promote energy conservation in town facilities.
5. Determine the desirability and feasibility of expanded recycling and composting.
6. Ensure storage for equipment and supplies at the Town Garage that is consistent with Federal and State guidelines.
7. Continue to review the recreational needs of residents, especially children and teenagers.

TRANSPORTATION



Past Plans

The 2001 Plan of Conservation and Development set the following goals for transportation and circulation:

- provide a differentiated system of maintainable streets
- work with the Connecticut Department of Transportation in improving highway safety;
- create a varied, attractive landscape with rights of way
- preserve the rural character of local streets
- provide adequate off-street parking
- provide safe pedestrian circulation in the village center

It also recommended the following implementation measures:

- continue to eliminate traffic hazards
- continue preventive maintenance and repairs
- improve circulation in the village center
- identify scenic roads

Transportation Background:

The Bridgewater street classifications are:

1. State Highways: Route 133, Route 67, Route 867 (old Route 67A)
2. Town Collector Streets which distribute traffic from highways and connect to local traffic as Clatter Valley, Hat Shop Hill. Hut Hill, Christian, Northrop.
3. Town Local Streets for residential traffic

Bridgewater residents appreciate the rural, tree lined streets and roads. For both motorists travelling through Bridgewater and town residents, the highways offer scenic vistas of trees, fields, and wildlife habitat. The local town streets, estimated at 38,6 miles, are consistent with a small, rural town.

Travel to, from, and within Bridgewater is basically vehicular, as there is no public transportation. The new senior van promotes shared transportation and provides access to facilities in other towns. To promote safety on high traffic State routes, a blinking light was installed at the Intersection of Routes 133 and 67. The Connecticut Department of Transportation has worked to improve guard railings on Route 133.

Present Transportation Issues, Concerns and Interests

The Gateway: A major concern is to preserve the rural gateway to the town along Route 133 to the Village Green. To improve safety, the Connecticut Department of Transportation has developed alternative plans to widen and straighten the stretch of Route 133 north of the bridge.

The alternate plans vary in construction time, environmental impact, and, of course, cost. The longer the construction time takes, the more the residential, collector streets face heavy, potentially dangerous, traffic; the more land is cleared, trees are cut, and retaining walls are erected, the greater will be the loss of rural features and wild life habitat. Residents hope that construction methods can be adopted to mitigate collector street traffic and to maintain the rural beauty.

The open fields, trees and countryside north of the proposed construction repair on Route 133 also constitute a continued gateway to Bridgewater and must be preserved.

Town Traffic: Traffic, particularly on Route 133 at Main Street and potentially on Northrop Street, remains a major concern both in terms of volume, at the morning and afternoon commuter and school peak times, and velocity, at any time. Noting that increased speed enforcement is difficult to maintain, the 2008 HVCEO Bulletin, entitled “Bridgewater Center Pedestrian Plan”, suggests “traffic calming measures” between Clapboard Road and the Fairgrounds and recommends different pavement treatments at crosswalks.

As discussed in the Village Green/Town Center section, the 2008 HVCEO Bulletin developed a detailed plan to meet safety concerns, preserve the town’s rural character, and reflect cost effective installation and maintenance methods. The aim is to offer safe and economical pedestrian links from the village green center to the Recreational Center and the Senior Center.

The Pedestrian Plan includes:

- adding crosswalks (at St. Mark’s church and Center Street/Clapboard intersection)
- removing crosswalks (school)
- realigning crosswalk (Town Hall)
- increasing shoulders (Clapboard, Hut Hill)
- restricting Center Street to one way traffic from Route 133
- improving or adding pathways, trails and informal walkways

Bridgewater Traffic Recommendations:

The Bridgewater 2012 traffic recommendations affirm past recommendations to inspect, maintain and repair all roads, to promote safety, prevent damage and preserve our rural, natural features and to provide environmentally friendly circulation.

To Reduce Traffic and Preserve Rural, Scenic Beauty:

1. Review, assess, and implement feasible, desirable suggestions to slow Main Street traffic in the Village Green area
2. Develop and implement scenic road designations, especially along Route 133
3. With the State Department of Transportation, develop a construction plan for Route 133 that balances safety needs with environmental values
4. Preserve the open fields and vistas along Route 133 and Route 67
5. Encourage screening of property and enforce screening of all permanent equipment and dumpsters

To Promote Ecological Circulation and Transportation:

1. Provide greater pedestrian (and bicycle) links from the Town center to the outlying Recreational Center and Senior Center
2. Encourage shared carpools
3. Research effective, efficient ecological road and driveway surfacing and provide information.

VILLAGE CENTER AND TOWN GREEN

Past Plans:

Every Bridgewater Conservation and Development Plan unanimously supports the concept of the Town Green area as the center of town life. In 1967, Bridgewater's first Plan of Conservation and Development recommended that the Town Green Area be developed as the "functional center of community activities" with "architectural and landscaping controls".

Subsequent Plans recommended that the area be "the center for Town facilities and the central location for essential services" (1988) and that the Town center be maintained as "an attractive, convenient, safe and comfortable place in which to shop, visit worship, and live" and that "public facilities which serve the entire community, except the public works complex and parks" be located in the Town center. (2001) Under the Circulation heading, it also recommended providing "safe pedestrian circulation in the village center".



Village Center/Town Green Background:

The Village Center/Town Green area remains the heart of Bridgewater. Historically, like many towns, Bridgewater's Town Green was common land for the winter pasturing of livestock;

currently, it remains the hub of the town. Today, the Town Green has been greatly expanded, extending from the northern cemetery to the southern firehouse, from western Main Street to the senior center on the south and then to pavilion area, covering over 260 acres.



The central area is bordered by old New England homes, including the Van Wyck house, the Congregational Church and St Marks Episcopal Church, the Grange, a connecting building housing the post-office, bank,

and village store, the Town Hall. The post office, bank and village store are the center of daily

village life, offering both services and an informal place to visit; many survey respondents rate the village store as one of the best things about Bridgewater.

The area also includes the Bridgewater Historical Society Peck House and Captain Burnham House, the Burnham Library, built in 1926, and the Burnham School, built in 1929, both named for the generous legacies of a former resident. Continuing south on Main Street, the village center encompasses the Fire House and it extends eastward to the recreational facilities – tennis courts, playground, playing fields and pavilion - and it now includes the recently built Senior Center.

All of the facilities are used and appreciated. The Town Green and Main Street are also prominent in many village events, from the Memorial Day parade and observances, the Labor Day Tractor parade, the Halloween “trunk and treat” activities, and the holiday festivities of dinner at the Episcopal Church, tree lighting on the Green, cocoa at the Grange, and concert at the Congregational Church.

Present Issues, Concerns and Interests

Traffic: Traffic along Main Street, Route 133, is a major concern of many residents in terms of both volume and especially speed; there is also interest for measures to facilitate pedestrians and bicycling.

Responding to Bridgewater’s 2001 Plan of Conservation and Development recommendations for safe pedestrian circulation as well as the concerns over traffic, in 2008 the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials prepared a detailed study. The aim was to meet safety concerns, preserve the town’s rural character, and reflect inexpensive installation and maintenance; the plan suggested safe, economical and pedestrian links for the village green center to the recreational area and Senior Center which included:

- Instituting ‘traffic calming measures’;
- Providing new pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly between the Village Center and Fairgrounds and to the recreation area and the Senior Center;
- Restricting Center Street to one-way north bound;
- Realigning crosswalks.

Currently the Selectmen have applied for a grant to implement the suggestions.

Erosion: West of the Town Green, behind the Episcopal Church and store, there are drainage and erosion conditions.

Uses: Although space is limited in both the Town Green and extended Village Center areas, other suggestions focus on the potential of expanded and new uses, while still maintaining the small town, rural features. Some empty lots and existing large homes have the potential for multiple family use or a senior housing complex. Locating senior housing close to town activities, rather than in an isolated area, helps to foster intergenerational activities.

Town Green Recommendations

The Bridgewater 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development recommendations for the Village Center-Town Green focus on preserving its small town, rural features and strengthening its capacities by easing automobile traffic and promoting other means of locomotion, by remedying the threats of erosion, and by considering additional facilities in keeping with the needs and architecture of the village.

To Ease Traffic and Encourage Pedestrian/ Bicycling Access:

1. Review the comprehensive 2008 HVCE0 study and develop a feasible, appropriate plan to ease traffic along Main Street and Village Green and develop plans for pedestrian walkways and bicycle access around the Town Center;
2. Apply for full or partial funding from the State small grants program.

To Remediate Water Run Off and Erosion on Main Street

1. Institute a corrective plan for the run-off from the Fair Grounds
2. Coordinate with the State Department of Transportation for a resolution of erosion problems in the town center area.

To Maintain the Rural Village Green as Town Center

1. Assess the desirability of an historic designation for the Town Green.
2. Allow reasonable expansion of existing Town Green business when needed and consistent with a small town.
3. Consider revision of regulations to allow multiple family use in the village center.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Past Plans

Previous plans have detailed the zoning requirements and changes in Bridgewater and the 2001 Plan listed 11 objectives based on existing physical characteristics, development and requirements for on site sewage disposal and private water supply.

Historical Background

Founded in 1803 following its separation from New Milford, Bridgewater like most of the state was an agrarian society largely dedicated to farming. Land use slowly evolved into the 20th century as a combination of residential and farming uses. This continued until 1962 when Bridgewater adopted an ordinance creating the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The original Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, effective July 6, 1962 created four zones consisting of:

- A: Town Green
- B: Farming and residential
- C: Commercial
- D: Industrial

Most of the town was in the B zone which allowed a broad range of uses beyond farming and residential. Examples of such uses include boarding houses, hotels, golf courses, gravel pits, hospitals, garden apartments and camps. The minimum lot size was established at one acre.

Due in large part to the physical characteristics of Bridgewater, including its reliance on private wells and septic systems, relatively few of these allowed non residential uses were ever developed. By the 1980s such limitations on development potential led the Planning and Zoning Commission to adopt more restrictive regulations including creation of the R-1 one acre, R-2 two acre and R-3 three acre residential zones. Generally speaking, the R-1 zone was located closer to the Town Green Zone while the R-2 and R-3 Zones were, respectively, more removed. Most of the non residential uses were also eliminated.

Following a study of soil-based zoning as had been adopted by other towns, P&Z in 1986, in lieu of soil based zoning, revised its regulations increasing the minimum lot size in the R zones by one acre. Thus the R-1 zone became R-2, R-2 became R-3 and R-3 became R-4. This revamping of the regulations was in response to significant concerns regarding the availability of water as well as septic capacities.

The following map entitled “Constraints on Development Due to Soil, Slope and Floodplains”, as prepared by HVCEO, classifies land areas according to development constraints and depicts a majority of Bridgewater lands as primarily of the “More and Most Cautious” classifications.

BRIDGEWATER SOIL CONSTRAINTS DETAIL MAP

TO VIEW

Please select the following link for this map on the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials web site:

<http://www.hvceo.org/images/soilandslopebridgewater.jpg>

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BRIDGEWATER SOIL CONSTRAINTS OVERVIEW MAP

TO VIEW

Please select the following link for this map on the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials web site:

<http://www.hvceo.org/images/soilandsloperegional.jpg>

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These classifications feature steep slopes, rock outcroppings and wetlands which severely impact development potential. In effect, Bridgewater's land characteristics are the primary determinant of future land use potential.

The Town of Bridgewater consists of approximately 10,136 acres. An estimate of permitted land uses is as follows:

Commercial/Industrial Zone	65.64 Acres
Town Green Zone	294.77 Acres
RR2 (2 acre zone)	772.40 Acres-
RR3 (3 acre zone)	5,978.99 Acres
RR4 (4 acre zone)	3,024.34 Acres
Total residential zones	9,775.73 Acres

Clearly, Bridgewater is almost entirely dedicated to residential use which includes farming.

A review of the status and acreage of estimated current land uses within the residential zones indicates:

Existing single family homes	2,205 Acres	Developed
Town and State Roads`	300 Acres	Developed
Land Trusts Property	2,247 Acres	Permanently Protected
PA 490 land in Forest	2,036	
PA 490 land in Farm	1,114	
PA 490 Open Space	1,442	
Total PA 490	4,592 Acres	Temporarily Protected

From the total residentially zoned lands, an estimated 448 acres are unprotected and 4, 581 PA490 Properties are temporarily protected, for a total of 5,039 acres that are potentially available for development. This land area constitutes approximately one-half of the Town and must be the focus of all future development considerations and preservation efforts.

Future Land Use Plan

Introduction: The Future Land Use Plan illustrates the proposed pattern of conservation and development for Bridgewater. It recommends the most appropriate location and relationship of major land uses, including proposals for residential development; business development; community facilities, conservation and open space areas and civic uses. The Future Land Use Plan is a graphic presentation of the Town's vision for the future.

The Land Use Map provides a broad-based illustration of desired development patterns. It is based largely upon existing land uses and natural features, as well as zoning regulations and the community's view for the future.

Approximately 80 percent of Bridgewater's land area, including some environmentally sensitive areas (8 percent wetlands), is vacant land. Virtually all of this land area is zoned single family residential which includes farming.

The use and protection of these areas is of great importance to the future of Bridgewater. A balanced approach to development and conservation is essential in order to maintain the Town's resources and quality of life.

Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and the conservation of open space have been a major focus in the development of this plan update. A balance between conservation, preservation and development is a primary focus for future land use issues in Bridgewater. The achievement of a balance between these issues can be achieved by adhering to broad policies as well as specific goals and implementation strategies. The 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development goals and strategies will guide the Town's development over the next ten years and beyond.

Overview: The recommendations of each of the preceding chapters can be combined into a comprehensive plan, known as the Future Land Use Plan. This Future Land Use Plan consists of stated goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations focused on the future of Bridgewater.

Descriptions of Future Land Use Categories

Natural Resources

Land: Environmentally sensitive areas requiring significant conservation.

Water: Water availability, given our dependency on wells, is a critical resource that must be protected.

Open Space

Protected Open Space: Those areas of the Town owned or eased by land trusts.

Managed Open Space: Town owned lands which are dedicated to recreation. These sites contain a variety of recreation uses as well as undeveloped open space.

Residential Areas

Low Density: Residential zones requiring a four acre minimum lot size due to adverse development characteristics.

Medium Density: Residential zones requiring minimum lot size of two and three acres generally located closer to the center of town with more positive development.

Commercial/Industrial

Both areas are contiguous and are located by zoning entirely on Route 67. Uses include retail, office, light manufacturing, warehousing and distribution facilities.

Industrial: Areas suitable for small scale corporate and light industrial campuses with manufacturing, assembly, warehousing and distribution operations, all to be located on Route 67.

Community Facilities

Located largely in the Town Green Zone, community facilities include municipal, educational, religious and historic buildings as well as the senior center and town-owned parks and recreational areas.

BRIDGEWATER ZONING MAP

TO VIEW:

Please select the following link to the appropriate map on the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials web site:

http://www.hvceo.org/images/2012_Plan_Bridgewater_Zoning.jpg

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BRIDGEWATER GROWTH MAP – DETAIL VIEW

TO VIEW:

Please select the following link to the appropriate map on the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials web site:

http://www.hvceo.org/images/2012_Plan_Bridgewater_Growth_Map_Detail.jpg

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BRIDGEWATER GROWTH MAP REGIONAL CONTEXT

TO VIEW:

Please select the following link to the appropriate map on the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials web site:

http://www.hvceo.org/regionalplan_mapmain.jpg

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CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-23, The Plan of Conservation and Development was compared to the State 2005-2010 Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, the 2009 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (prepared by HVCEO) and the six State Growth Principles. Upon review, we found the plan to be essentially consistent with the State and Regional Plans.

Statewide Growth Management Principles

The following recommended action steps are examples of how the 2012 Bridgewater Plan of Conservation and Development is consistent with these growth management principles:

Principle 1: Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed-land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure. Ensure that future development and redevelopment is consistent with State and Regional planning and transportation management goals. Given Bridgewater's land characteristics, lack of "regional center" development and infrastructure, it seems unlikely that any conflict would develop.

Principle 2: Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs. Study affordable housing options including conservation subdivisions and senior housing development consistent with septic and well limitations.

Principle 3: Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse. Most municipal as well as commercial uses are located on the two state roads (Routes 133 and 67) which bisect Bridgewater.

Principle 4: Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands. Continue to support all Land Trusts. Connect existing open spaces along existing and proposed trails and stream corridors. Create conservation easements for Town-owned parks and open spaces. Review possible application of conservation subdivisions to encourage preservation of more contiguous open space.

Principle 5: Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety. Educate the public about threats to and strategies available to protect water resources. Review the definition of steep slopes and limit residential development on steep slopes.

Principle 6: Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis. Continue to collaborate with Regional, State and Federal officials and policymakers.



IMPLEMENTATION

The following implementation charts cover the sections on Bridgewater's Community, Conservation and Natural Resources, Open Space, Housing, Community Facilities, Transportation, and Village Center. Each chart lists the recommendations for each section and gives suggested starting tasks, lead responsibilities and start times.

Implementation: Bridgewater Community Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Start/Time line</i>
Strengthen volunteerism			
1. Develop informational booklet	Contact all groups, Develop format, collect, edit Publish, post Update	Town Clerk; BoS P&Z All Town and civic groups Web site manager	2013 2014 2015
2. Recognize volunteer service	Assess approaches: letters, awards, Town Volunteer Day; Recommend	All Town & civic Groups BOS	2014
3. Support new proposals	Develop, test initiatives to meet needs, raise income	All civic groups Residents	2013-on
4. Build coordination	Begin with informal meetings of related organizations	Chairmen of Town Boards, and civic groups to arrange; Assess in two years Town Officials: BOS, Town Commissions, Boards, Civic Groups	2013 2015
Ensure a Safe, Accessible, Prepared Town			
1. Assess facilities, policies, programs, training needs for safety, accessibility	Assess, Remedy where needed	BOS, TC. Town and civic groups As needed	2013-2014 2013-5
2. Develop, provide emergency information, Cirma Training	Town emergencies; national Research, write, publish/post	EMD BOS. Health Inspector	2013-4
3. Plan, implement Tick related disease program	Form Committee Assess approaches, Make recommendations	BOS, residents, Newtown-Health Inspector	2013-16
Encourage Informed Participation			
1, Strengthen information and participation	Encourage information on pending Town issues on news-letter, website	BOS All town/civic groups, individuals	2012-on Assess 2013
2. Provide advanced information for Town meetings	Provide and encourage information—Newsletter, website	BOS Town/civic groups, individuals	2013
3. Consider fact sheets on community issues	Offer fliers on energy, water conservation; organic gardening. Other matters	C&IW, all town/civic groups Key: BoS: Board of Selectmen EMD: Emergency Management Director C&IW: Conservation, Inland Wetlands TC: Town Crew	2013-on

Implementation: Bridgewater Conservation and Natural Resources Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Start /TimeLine</i>
Preserve and Protect Open Space			
1. Review, revise Zoning regulations re wetlands	Review Revise if necessary	P&Z C&IW	2013
2. Review regulations re: 2002 DEP guidelines	Review Revise if necessary	P&Z C&IW	2013-14
3. Monitor erosion, institute remedial action if needed	Monitor Remedy	C&IW, Town Crew, Residents	2013 and yearly
4. Investigate permeable roads for parking lots	Gather state of the art information, costs, recommend, publish	BoS, C&IW; Town crew Town crew, BOS, C&IW	As needed 2013-15
5. Provide septic maintenance information	Develop information Publish flier, web page	Newtown HD, C&IW Newtown HD, Town webmaster	2013 2014
5. Consider proactive septic approaches in critical areas	Review approaches, critical areas Recommendations	Newtown HD, C&IW Newtown HD, C&IW, BOS	2014 2014-5
6. Monitor Shepaug runoff	Implementation Monitor, respond to issues	Newtown HD, C&IW	2015 Ongoing
7. Ensure safe storage of materials for water	Review and Assess	Town Crew C&IW	2013 Ongoing
Promote Energy and Resource Conservation			
1. Establish special group on energy and conservation	Respond to complaints, problems Determine structure, composition of group Develop priorities, fact-finding, gather best practices information	C&IW, BoS, Interested residents	2013-4 2015
2. Energy Saving Town Efforts	Assess needs, review alternatives, set priorities, plan implementation	Energy/Resource group, C&IW, BoS,	2014 –5
3. Provide Information	Determine areas of interest, experts; write up, publish	Energy/Resource group webmaster	2014-6
		Key: P&Z: Planning & Zoning C&IW: Conservation & Inland Wetlands BoS: Board of Selectmen	

Implementation : Bridgewater Open Space Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Start/Time Line</i>
	Preserve and Expand Open Space		
1.Map vulnerable open space	Plan, determine areas, map	BoS, P&Z, Land Trusts	2013-15
2. Prioritize open space needs	Determine needs, priorities	BoS, P&Z, Land Trusts –BLT, SVNC,ALT. WH-C&IW, residents	2014
3. Coordinate with Land Trusts	Schedule informal, formal sessions with Boards and members	Land trusts: BLT, SVNC. ALT, RLT WH	2013- ongoing
4. Research dedicated fee on property sale for open space trust	Compile information on fees in MA and elsewhere, assess, determine if, when, what to levy	BoS; LUC. P&Z, C&IW, Land Trusts,	2014-16
		Key: BoS: Board of Selectmen P&Z: Planning and Zoning C&IW: Conservation & Inland Wetlands LUC: Land Use Coordinator BLT: Bridgewater Land Trust ALT: Audubon Land Trust RLT: Roxbury Land Trust WH: Weantinogue Heritage	

Implementation : Bridgewater Housing Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Start/Time Line</i>
Maintain Small Town, Rural Qualities			
1. Review setback and frontage requirements	Review regulations, assess increasing, make recommendations and changes	P&Z	2013-4
2. Evaluate methods to ensure compatible house & lot size	Evaluate methods as FAR	P&Z	2013-4
3. Encourage screening of buildings	Consider screening methods, methods of encouragement	P&Z, R/B Garden Club	2013-4
4. Ensure screening of machinery, dumpsters	Assess problems, revise regulations Enforce	P&Z Zoning Officer	2013-4 Ongoing
Address Diverse Housing Needs			
1. Establish a committee on housing	Form a representative committee Assess housing needs, research funding sources, examine alternatives make recommendations Implement	BoS, P&Z, Town representatives	2013-15 2015-16 2016
2. Evaluate regulations on accessory apartments	Review regulations, consider recommendations, precedents Revise if needed Encourage Equitable, Safe Home Businesses	P&Z, Housing Group	2013-4
1. Review, revise regulations	Review, consider definition, zoning criteria, safety, neighborhood impacts Revise as needed	P&Z	2013-4
2. Require permit, inspection	Monitor, inspect Review all Zoning Regulations	Zoning Officer	Annually
1. Review all Regulations	Review, revise for conformity, issues, problems	P&Z, town residents	2013-14
2. Provide clear information	Review application, consider briefing information	P&Z Key: P&Z: Planning & Zoning BoS: Board of Selectmen	2013-4

Implementation: Bridgewater Community Facilities Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Start/TimeLine</i>
Provide Well-maintained, Accessible, Safe, and Environmentally Friendly Facilities			
1. Develop a 5 year Capital Budget, Update annually	Assess needs, facilities, requirements; develop costs, prioritize	BoS, Town Crew, BoF, P&Z	2013 Each year
2. Ensure facilities meet code and handicapped accessibility	Evaluate facilities; prioritize, Implement any needed changes	TC, BoS, P&Z, TC	2013-4 2013-5
3. Ensure construction and renovation consistent with historical, functional, other needs	Consult with appropriate groups; consider architect panel	BoS, TC, P&Z, Town/civic groups	1913-on
4. Promote energy conservation	Assess needs-heat, electricity, water, refuse, Determine alternatives Prioritize, develop plan Implement Provide biannual review	BoS, TC, C&IW, users and groups	2013-4 2014 2016
5. Consider expanded recycling	Assess, weigh costs/profits, site, usage, implement if desired	TC, BoS, C&IW	2014-5
6. Ensure storage meets guideline	Evaluate, remedy if needed	TC, BoS	2013-4
7. Review recreational needs	Assess needs, services, gaps, (age groups, activities, requests); recommend as needed	RC, BoS	2013-ongoing
		Key: BoS: Boar of Selectmen P&Z: Planning and Zoning BoF: Board of Finance TC: Town Crew C&IW: Conservation and Inland Wetlands, RC: Recreation Commission	

Implementation: Bridgewater Transportation Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Start /TimeLine</i>
Reduce Traffic, Preserve Scenic Beauty			
1. Evaluate methods to slow traffic in Village Green area	Review HVCEO suggestions, Research costs and funding; Develop Plan—implement	BoS, TC, Residents, Ct DoT	2013 2014 2014 2012
2. Scenic Road Designation	Research, Evaluate, Prioritize, Designate, implement	Bos, TC, P&Z, Residents CTDEP	
3. Develop Plan for Route 133 meeting safety and environmental values	Continued consultation CT Department of Transportation	BoS CTDOT	2012-ongoing
4. Preserve open fields, vistas on Route 133 and Route 67	Map	P&Z, C&IW, BLT	2013-ongoing
4. Encourage screening of property, Enforce screening of equipment	Consult on screening alternatives Enforce	P&Z, RBGC LUC	2013-ongoing 2013-ongoing
Promote Ecological Transportation			
1. Provide greater pedestrian, bicycle links from Town Center	Review HVCEO plans, Research costs Develop plan Implement	BOS, TC, P&Z, residents	2012-3 2013-4
2. Encourage carpools	Assess needs, drivers Publicize Evaluate-recast as needed	BoS, SC, residents Webmaster	2013 2013 2014
3. Research ecological road surfacing	Survey, consult Determine costs, applicability Recommend	TC, BoS Key: BoS: Board of Selectmen CTDOT: Ct Dept Transportation CTDEP: Ct Dept of Environmental Protection TC: Town Crew BLT: Bridgewater Land Trust P&Z: Planning & Zoning C&IW: Conservation & Inland Wetlands RBGC: Roxbury Bridgewater Garnden Club	2014

Implementation: Bridgewater Village Center Recommendations

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Suggested Tasks</i>	<i>Lead Responsibilities</i>	<i>Time Line</i>
	Ease Traffic, Encourage Pedestrian Access		
1. Develop plans for non-vehicular circulation in Town Green area	Review HVCEO suggestions, Research costs and funding; Develop Plan	BoS, TC, RC, SC Residents input	2012 2013
2. Apply for funding , Implement plan		BoS	2012 2013
	Remediate Water-Run-Off, Erosion		
1. Institute corrections for run-off	Assess problem, consult, determine alternatives, recommend, Implement	BoS, TC, C&IW, FD	2013-4 2014-5
2. Coordinate with CT DoT to resolve erosion problems	Assess problem and causes Determine remedies Consult with Dept. of Transportation Implement	BoS, CTDoT, TC, C&IW, residents	2014 2014 2014-5
	Maintain Village Center		
1. Assess historic designation for Village Center	Research consequences Consult, Recommend, Implement	P&Z, HS, BoS, residents	2014
2. Assess reasonable business expansion	Evaluate proposals	P&Z	As indicated
3. Consider multiple-family use	Consult, evaluate sites Recommend	P&Z, residents, civic groups, BoS	2013-4
		Key: BoS: Board of Selectmen CTDoT: CT Dept Transportation TC: Town Crew P&Z: Planning & Zoning C&IW: Conservation & Inland Wetlands FD: Fire Department	