

Ashby Open Space & Recreation Plan
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SECTION 9 - Five Year Action Plan

Goals and Objectives - Open Space Committee Responsibilities for Tasks									
		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 ➤	Year4 ➤	Year5 ➤			
Preserve Rural Character									
Educate Residents About the Financial, Ecological and Personal Value of Open Space Preservation									
	Establish working relationship with regulatory boards and local land trusts	Assemble/create literature about the financial values of open space	Assemble/create literature about the advantages of the state Chapter 61 laws and their tax advantages	Education about the tax advantages of deed restrictions					
	Assemble/create literature about the conservation easements - what they are, how they work, why use them	Assemble/create literature about land use options and alternatives to sale of land to developers							
				Locate and rate scenic views					
Protect Natural Resources Through Land Acquisition and Protection									
	Maintain an active log of all land under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B and when the plans expire.	Work with Conservation Commission and Land Trust to create an informational program for Ashby land owners							
	Analyze and rate parcels for potential acquisition with emphasis toward providing the selectmen and the townspeople the information they need to make reasoned decisions.								
	Assemble/create literature about the financial values of open space	Identify lands trusts and other organizations that may be able to help in acquisition of Chapter 61 lands	Create literature about Ashby and its character for use in presenting Ashby's applications for financial assistance in acquisition of lands	Continue education					

Goals and Objectives - Open Space Committee Responsibilities for Tasks (continued)						
		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 ➤	Year4 ➤	Year5 ➤
Protect Natural Resources Through Water Resource Protection						
						Identify known or potential aquifer areas
Increase Availability and Variety of Recreation Programs and Facilities For Passive Recreation						
						Write, mail, and evaluate survey of Ashby Residents re: recreation and open space progress and priorities

Goals and Objectives - Board of Selectmen Responsibilities for Tasks									
		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 —➤	Year4 —➤	Year5 ➤			
Preserve Rural Character									
	Protect fields and ensure they are kept open wherever possible.	Explore protection of old Lyman and Allen Road fields							
Protect Natural Resources Through Land Acquisition and Protection									
	Pursue acquisition of Western Middlesex Stock Farm and abutting parcels	Work with other boards to assist interested landowners in property protection	Support Department of Fisheries and Wildlife to acquire Mt Watatic	Support other land acquisition and protection priorities					
Educate Residents About the Financial, Ecological and Personal Value of Open Space Preservation.									
	Lend expertise to OSR Committee								
Protect Natural Resources Through Maintenance and Stewardship of Land									
		Establish a fund to support stewardship efforts	Encourage increased state maintenance of the three bridges along Valley Road.						

Goals and Objectives - Conservation Commission Responsibilities for Tasks							
		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 —➤	Year4 —➤	Year5 ➤	
Preserve Rural Character							
	Keep rate of growth moderate through land acquisition	Establish clear procedures for land acquisitions					
	Protect fields and ensure they are kept open wherever possible						
Protect Natural Resources Through Land Acquisition and Protection							
	Develop sources for funding for acquisition	Apply for self-help grants	Apply for self-help grants	Apply for self-help grants	Apply for self-help grants	Apply for self-help grants	
		Establish funding for land acquisition from Chapter 61 rollovers	Request matching funds from the town for land acquisition	Request annual budget for land acquisition	Request annual budget for land acquisition	Request annual budget for land acquisition	
	Identify and contact land trusts and other organizations whose purpose is to preserve open space to make them aware of land in town that may meet their criteria	Attend Land Trust meetings at NRWA	Attend Annual Conference of Mass Coalition of Land Trusts				
	Assist owners of large parcels to the explore possibilities for limiting development in sensitive areas of their property	On going through standard meetings with applicants		Identify Chapter 61 owners and create information plan	Extend information to other land owners	Continue education	
Protect Natural Resources Through Water Resource Protection							
	Educate residents about the function and maintenance of wells and septic systems	Guidelines on the town web page					

	Consider a wetlands protection bylaw for the town	Review reasons for a bylaw - if positive, move to next year's agenda	Organize support and submit bylaw on warrant for annual town meeting - 2001
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Protect Natural Resources Through Protection of Strategic Habitat

	Inventory Streams in Ashby	Willard Brook	Trapfall Brook and Locke Brook	Pearl Hill Brook and Fallulah Brook	Other minor streams	Beaver ponds and fire ponds
	Institute water testing of all streams	Receive training from NRWA	Establish stream teams for all major brooks	Continue testing	Continue testing	Continue testing
	Identify vernal pools	Guidelines for certification on web page	Certify 1 pool	Certify 1 pool	Certify 1 pool	Certify 1 pool

Goals and Objectives - Conservation Commission Responsibilities for Tasks (continued)

		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 —➤	Year4 —➤	Year5 ➤
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Protect Natural Resources Through Maintenance and Stewardship of Land

	Acquire lands	Establish clear procedure for accepting lands by the town in conjunction with the Conservation Commission					
		Establish funding for acquisition from Chapter 61 rollover funds					
	Acquire first property	Acquire additional properties	Acquire additional properties	Acquire additional properties	Acquire additional properties	Acquire additional properties	
	Establish Cons Comm subcommittee for trails	Cut and maintain trails	Cut and maintain trails	Cut and maintain trails	Cut and maintain trails	Cut and maintain trails	
	Establish Cons Com subcommittee for land stewardship - walking bounds	Maintain binder on each property					
	Establish Cons Comm subcommittee for land maintenance	As needed, provide for maintenance - i.e. hay mowing, brush removal, etc.					

Increase Availability and Variety of Recreation Programs and Facilities For Passive Recreation

	Develop a trail system that will connect protected parcels	Work with state program to identify potential for inter-town trails	Identify parcels that will complete trail segments	Educate landowners about trail easements	Acquire easements	Acquire parcels
		Collect maps of existing trails in town	Create and publish town map of trails in time for national trails day - June 2000			
	Investigate the feasibility of using old road right of ways for winter and summer trails	Collect maps of existing trails in town	Create and publish town map of trails in time for national trails day - June 2000			
	Publicize, map and use signs to identify existing trails	Create trails subcommittee	Establish working relationship with highway department and state park			

Goals and Objectives - Conservation Commission Responsibilities for Tasks (continued)

		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 —➤	Year4 —➤	Year5 ➤
	Work with existing organizations to maintain	Utilize expertise and experience of long	Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts	Work with DEM to cut and maintain	Work with AMC and Friends of the Wapack	

	trails and construct new trails	time residents, outdoorsmen, and others		trails	
	Improve public access to waterways		Encourage Fish and Wildlife to acquire access to Lower Wright's pond		
Regional Integration					
	Coordinate with Fisheries and Wildlife and DEM to provide wildlife corridors and contiguous protected parcels	Begin to identify Commission as agency to work with	Establish credibility through trails work	Suggest lands for acquisition	
	Work with Nashua River and Souhegan River Watershed Associations to improve communication and protect streams in the watershed	Establish Commission representatives to attend watershed meetings	Attend meetings		
			Work on joint projects		
	Work with Montachusett Regional Planning Commission and abutting towns to coordinate land use and protection	Establish Commission representatives to attend greater Gardner Sustainable Growth Committee	Work with MRPC to complete mapping for the town		
		Establish Commission contacts in Townsend and Ashburnham			
	Work with DEM and other state agencies to provide expertise to assist in achieving goals				
	Promote inter-town collaboration for trail systems	Work with state program to identify potential for inter-town trails	Invite adjoining towns to participate in seasonal hikes on Ashby trails	Coordinate inter-town hikes with AMC and Friends of the Wapack Trail	

Goals and Objectives - Planning Board Responsibilities for Tasks						
		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 ➤	Year4 —➤	Year5 ➤
Preserve Rural Character						
		Analyze the impact of existing zoning on rural character.		Establish a site plan review district around the Ashby Historic District to maintain the scale and form of the area.	Restrict development on steep slopes through a change in zoning bylaws.	
	Use more creative approaches to ensure that development occurs in ways compatible with the rural character.	Consider creative zoning tools such as reduced frontage, large-acreage lots, open space zoning and others to manage overall development in Town.		Investigate and implement scenic roads bylaw to protect the area immediately adjacent to the roadway.	Use building envelopes to protect views, areas of significant vegetation, or historic importance	
					Keep rate of growth moderate through growth rate controls and land acquisition.	
Protect Natural Resources Through Water Resource Protection						
		Establish and coordinate policy and the exchange of information between regulatory boards regarding work to be performed in or near wetland buffer districts.			Protect identified aquifer areas.	
Increase Availability and Variety of Recreation Programs and Facilities for Passive Recreation						

	Encourage developers to set aside part of land for parks, playgrounds or open space and to provide easements for trails.
Regional Integration	
	Work with Montachusett Regional Planning Commission and abutting towns to coordinate land use and protection
	Work with Department of Environmental Management and other state agencies to provide expertise to assist in achieving goals

Goals and Objectives - Ashby Land Trust Responsibilities for Tasks (Private Organization)									
		Year 1 ➤	Year 2 ➤	Year3 —➤	Year4 —➤	Year5 —➤			
Preserve Rural Character									
	Encourage agriculture by assisting farmers to take advantage of federal and State Department of Agriculture programs that are designed to help maintain family farms.								
	Encourage agricultural preservation zoning to allow farmers to preserve prime agricultural land while they continue to get value from their land.								
	Campaign on the value of wetlands and surface waters.								
Protect Natural Resources Through Land Acquisition and Protection									
	Assist owners of large parcels to the explore possibilities for limiting development in sensitive areas of their property.	Sponsor presentations about the financial values of open space							
		Sponsor presentations about the conservation easements - what they are, how they work, why use them							
		Sponsor presentations about the advantages of the state Chapter 61 laws and their tax advantages							
		Sponsor presentations about land use options and alternatives to sale of land to developers							
	Develop sources for funding for land protection and acquisition	Develop network of land trusts and other organizations with funding opportunities	Develop short list of grant opportunities						
		Undertake first membership drive							
Protect Natural Resources Through Water Resource Protection									
	Assist Open Space Committee in value assessment of lands for Acquisition		Protect parcels around Valley Road						
Protect Natural Resources Through Maintenance and Stewardship of Land									
	Create a set of procedures for ensuring maintenance and stewardship of lands								

Goals and Objectives - Parks Department Responsibilities for Tasks

	Year 1 →	Year 2 →	Year3 →	Year4 →	Year5 →
Protect Natural Resources Through Maintenance and Stewardship of Land					
	Establish a maintenance schedule for existing facilities and a capital plan for increasing facilities as population increases.	Renovate Allen Field	Refurbish tennis and basketball courts.		
Increase Availability and Variety of Recreation Programs and Facilities for Passive Recreation					
		Coordinate recreation programs with the school programs to gain greater synergy.	Improve public access to waterways.	Add winter sports facilities to existing summer facilities especially low cost facilities such as outdoor ice-skating and cross-country skiing.	Acquire flat land for future active recreation needs.

Goals and Objectives - Historic Commission - Responsibilities for Tasks					
	Year 1 →	Year 2 →	Year3 →	Year4 →	Year5 →
Preserve Rural Character					
	Identify and map the town's historic sites. Consider other historic sites for preservation				

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