

Town of Hampton

Plan of Conservation  
And  
Development

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*Town of Hampton  
Plan of Conservation & Development*

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1.0 What is a Plan of Conservation and Development?**

Hampton's Plan of Conservation and Development is the Town's vision of its future. It is a statement of its residents' policies and goals for Hampton's development, and it strives to promote coordinated development of the town and the welfare of its residents. The Plan recommends the highest and best use of its land for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes, and the most desirable density of population. It makes provisions for housing for all of its residents, including for low and moderate income households.

### **1.2.0 Why write a Plan of Conservation and Development?**

In Connecticut towns with a Planning (or Planning and Zoning) Commission, the Commission is required to prepare a Town Plan of Conservation and Development. The law also requires that the Town review its Plan, and make revisions as needed, at least every ten years.

By state statute, before finalizing the Plan, the Town shall consider: the need for affordable housing; protection of drinking water supplies; the use of cluster and other housing development patterns instead of conventional development patterns; the state and regional Plans of Conservation and Development; its citizens' needs for housing, health, recreation, social services, utilities, safety, transportation, and cultural and personal communications; and energy-efficient patterns of development.

Hampton adopted Planning and began to regulate subdivision of land by a Town Ordinance passed on December 3, 1960. The Town's first Plan was adopted in 1970 and a new Plan was adopted on April 20, 1992. In 1995, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the existing Plan of Development and found it to still be an accurate representation of the vision that Hampton residents have for its future. When adopted by approval of the Commission, this document will be Hampton's third Plan.

### **1.3.0 What's changed in Hampton?**

Much has changed since the first Plan was written in 1970, and even since the adoption of the second Plan in 1992.

Hampton is still a small town, and it has the second lowest population density in the Windham region. Its population has climbed slowly but steadily, rising from 1129 in 1970 to 1322 in 1980, to 1578 in 1990, and to 1758 in 2000.

But more than population growth, it is the way people in, and out of, Hampton live that has changed dramatically during this period. Perhaps the biggest changes are the continuing evolution in how people work and shop and in how they communicate. These changes result in distinct pressure on the Town's cultural, economic and physical landscape.

When Planning was adopted in Hampton in 1960, the Town was still leaving behind its agricultural roots. In that year, 67% of Hampton women over the age of fourteen did not work outside of the home, and about 15% of adults still worked on a farm. Hampton's labor force was working primarily in traditional blue-collar occupations and trades, and the Willimantic thread mill factory was still a major source of employment.

As the Town has grown and the years gone by, Hampton has become a commuter town. In 2000, 70% of Town women over 16 years old were employed outside of the home, and 64% had all parents in the household in the labor force. Like many small New England cities, the nearby hubs of Willimantic and Danielson have failed to provide significant employment opportunities, and residents drive further and further to work, with such cities as New London and Hartford having become viable commutes.

During the economic boom of the middle and late 1990s, housing starts were high in many Connecticut towns. Development pressures spilled over to Hampton, most directly from the Hartford metropolitan region, the casinos in Ledyard and Montville, and due even to refugees from the extreme housing costs in Massachusetts. But Hampton continues on as island in a sea of development seen in some nearby communities, in part due to some of its policies and practices regarding open space taxation and home businesses.

### **New Construction - Single Family Dwellings in Hampton**

|      |    |      |    |
|------|----|------|----|
| 1994 | 19 | 2000 | 9  |
| 1995 | 9  | 2001 | 7  |
| 1996 | 10 | 2002 | 14 |
| 1997 | 15 | 2003 | 7  |
| 1998 | 10 | 2003 | 14 |
| 1999 | 8  | 2005 | 14 |

Still, Hampton is a Town of 25 square miles (16,000 acres) with only about 700 housing units and a few commercial and municipal structures. If each household takes up approximately 1 acre, then 15,300 acres of land remain. Although much of this land could not be developed

because of constraints of the land such as wetlands or steep slopes, or commitment to another land use such as designated state forest, it is inevitable that Hampton will be the subject of scrutiny by people looking to buy land or to build a home because so much of the Town is still undeveloped.

**2000 Population Density in Surrounding Towns**  
(source: US Census)

|              | 2000<br>population | Land Area<br>in square miles | Population<br>per square mile |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ashford      | 4,098              | 39.5                         | 106                           |
| Chaplin      | 2,250              | 19.6                         | 116                           |
| Columbia     | 4,971              | 21.9                         | 232                           |
| Coventry     | 11,504             | 38.3                         | 305                           |
| Hampton      | 1,758              | 25.4                         | 70                            |
| Lebanon      | 6,907              | 55.2                         | 127                           |
| Mansfield    | 20,720             | 45.6                         | 465                           |
| Scotland     | 1,556              | 18.7                         | 84                            |
| Union        | 693                | 29.8                         | 23                            |
| Willington   | 5,959              | 33.5                         | 178                           |
| Windham      | 22,857             | 27.8                         | 843                           |
| <b>State</b> | <b>3,405,565</b>   | <b>4,845.4</b>               | <b>703</b>                    |

### **The 2001 Hampton Community Survey**

In 2001, the Planning & Zoning Commission undertook a community survey of opinions about how the Town should grow. The 2001 survey was modeled after an earlier survey in 1992, so it was possible to compare and contrast responses to evaluate changing attitudes. Two hundred and seventy-three people or 16% of the population responded. The questions covered general attitudes about town character and growth, and specific questions about such topics as lot sizes, multi-family housing, and expansion of the business districts. Some of the most significant views expressed in the 2001 survey were that:

- Residents resoundingly did not favor population growth nor change from a rural character toward a more suburban one, with a higher percentage expressing this view than in 1992.
- By about 2 to 1, more residents favored expansion of business development, especially along Routes 6 and 97, *than those who* wanted no additional business-development at all, reflecting a small decrease in those who want some additional business development.
- About half of respondents said the Town should use every known strategy to protect open space, up somewhat from 1992, with another fifth favoring using every strategy short of outright purchase of open space using Town funds.
- Very few residents favor multi-family dwelling complexes except those exclusively for the elderly and disabled.

These expressions provided community input to the Commission and were thus integrated into this new Plan. The 2001 Community Survey is available for review in the PZC files in the Town Hall.



## **2.0 Housing**

### **2.1.0 Background**

There are approximately 700 dwellings in Hampton, and 90% are owner-occupied single family dwellings. Some 300 were built before 1940, and this high proportion of historic homes contributes to Hampton's classic New England appearance. Many of the old homes have been upgraded in recent years, although it was not until the 1990s that all households reported modern (indoor) plumbing systems. Hampton participates in the federal Small Cities housing program, which provides loans for basic house repairs to qualifying households, as a means of keeping housing in good condition.

### **2.2.0 Status and Trends**

New housing options are shaped by the Town Zoning Regulations. Currently, Hampton's Regulations allow the construction of single family dwellings, two family dwellings, accessory apartments in free-standing structures, and over 55-only housing.

Construction of single family dwellings in Hampton continues at a steady pace, due to falling interest rates in the 1990s, moderate lot prices, and widespread acceptance of a commuter lifestyle which has been encouraged by the low price of gasoline. As the northeastern U.S. becomes ever more congested and expensive to live in, new-home construction can be expected to continue. Recent subdivisions of land on North Brook Street, Windy Hill Road, and Estabrook Road were developed within months after their approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission, a strong indicator of the desirability of residency and home ownership in Hampton.

It is a requirement of State Statutes that this Plan promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate-income households. The existing Zoning Regulations do so by allowing two- family and accessory units, which provide diversity of housing opportunity by providing a supply of smaller-sized rental units. And Hampton is unusual among local Towns in its treatment (in its Zoning Regulations) of mobile homes as legal dwelling units, which provides another low-income housing option. Property owners may choose to place a mobile home on their lots instead of a conventionally built one. In 2000, the US Census counted 35 mobile homes in Hampton, or about 5% of Hampton's total dwelling units.

### **2.3.0 Goals**

Provide a range of housing opportunities to serve the needs of Town residents of all ages and of all economic levels that is compatible with the rural nature of the Town. (PZC) \*

### **2.4.0 Action/Implementation**

1. Review and revise the Zoning Regulations so that the Regulations provide the greatest possible range of housing opportunities, including consideration of opportunities for accessory dwelling units, both attached and detached, two family dwellings, and elderly housing. (PZC) \*
2. Support an elderly housing advisory committee, which will continue to survey housing needs and opportunities for seniors, and which will seek and implement programs and services which will enable the elderly to remain in their homes for as long as possible when they wish to do so. (Board of Selectmen, PZC, Elderly Housing Advisory Committee) \*
3. Review the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for development of open space (cluster) housing layouts 1) as a means for providing an alternative residential opportunity, and 2) to encourage preservation of open space and minimize the impact of housing on the environment. (PZC) \*
4. Make available and publicize existing programs and develop new programs to assist property owners in maintaining their homes in good condition. (Elderly Housing Advisory Committee, Social Services Administrator) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

### **3.0 Traffic and Transportation**

#### **3.1.0 Background, Status & Trends**

Hampton residents rely on private automobiles for transportation. Although the population is growing, it isn't growing fast enough to begin to degrade the free flow of traffic that the roads now provide.

U.S. Route 6 carries traffic east-west traffic across Hampton. It was widened in the early 1990s to accommodate interstate as well as intercity traffic between Hartford and points in Rhode Island after it was decided that an interstate to Providence would not be built. Due to these improvements, Route 6 will retain its ability to carry high volumes of long distance, interstate traffic without interfering with local traffic flow for the foreseeable future.

Connecticut Route 97 is Hampton's north-south artery, but carries primarily local and inter-town traffic. Route 97 has retained its local road character and is bordered by many historic homesteads, notably in the village, which is a nationally designated Historic District. The Connecticut Department of Transportation has undertaken routine maintenance of Route 97 between Route 6 and Route 14 in Scotland, including pavement and drainage improvements.

Other than these two arteries, Hampton relies upon its Town road system. Over the past ten years, only one new road, Bennett Drive, has been built.

Standards for new Town road construction are provided by the Town Subdivision Regulations. The Regulations require that, where a new road is needed to provide access to newly created building lots, the developer must bear the costs of construction. Following construction, the road is deeded to the Town.

Alternatives to travel by private automobile are few. Walking and bicycling on Town roads are still possible because traffic volumes are low enough that safety is adequate. But, as new houses are completed, safety on the roads, especially roads that feed into Routes 6 and 97, will decline.

Hampton is a member of the Windham Region Transit District (WRTD), a public transportation provider that operates various transit services in the ten-town Windham region. WRTD's Dial-A-Ride service is available to all Hampton residents, with priority given to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Trips must be scheduled in advance and a fee may apply. Long distance bus connections can be made in Willimantic and Danielson. Train connections can be made in New London for Amtrak and the Shore Line East service to New Haven, and the MTA Metro-North commuter line to New York City can be boarded in New Haven. Both New London and New Haven stations are adjacent to parking garages.

### **3.2.0 Goals**

1. Maintain a Town road system that continues to deliver safe conditions and unimpeded flow of traffic. (Board of Selectmen, PZC) \*
2. Manage Town roads so that their impact to the environment is minimized. (Board of Selectmen, Inland Wetlands Commission) \*
3. Participate in any state planning for improvements to Route 6 and Route 97 to the greatest possible extent. (Board of Selectmen) \*
4. Preserve and/or develop some walking and bicycling opportunities. (PZC, Board of Selectmen, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission) \*
5. Monitor and develop transportation options for the elderly who may no longer be capable of driving. (Board of Selectmen, Elderly Advisory Committee) \*

### **3.3.0 Action/Implementation**

1. Identify and review the status of any Town roads that are not maintained, and consider formal discontinuance of these roads in order to avoid unintended reconstruction of these roads. (Board of Selectmen, PZC) \*
2. Review, and update as needed, the Subdivision Regulations that address Town road construction and improvements, such as: road width requirements; the desirability of and specifications for cul-de-sac and loop roads; road drainage systems, with consideration for using non-engineering measures for dealing with storm water runoff; road construction specifications; aesthetic requirements such as preservation of stonewalls and preserving and planting street trees; and improvements along frontage when new lots are created along existing Town roads. (PZC, Board of Selectmen) \*
3. Continue to work with state and regional authorities to encourage and enhance 1) bus service on Route 6 to Danielson and Willimantic and long distance destinations and 2) car-pooling. (Board of Selectmen) \*
4. Identify the location of a future footpath along at least one side of Route 97 on Hampton Hill and an extension to the Hampton School. (PZC) \*
5. Review and revise storm water design and road maintenance practices to reduce the impact of sand, salt and other pollutants to the environment. (Inland Wetlands Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **4.0 Community Facilities**

Hampton owns facilities and properties that provide a range of Town functions and services: the Town Hall, garage, school, roads and bridges, etc. In order to budget to maintain and to expand these facilities as needed, assessment of the adequacy of existing facilities and future needs must occur on a routine basis. Without assessment of special needs and planning for its capital expenditures, the Town will not be able to develop fiscally optimal annual budgets and may not be able to afford the services it desires.

### **4.1.0 Hampton Town Hall**

The Town government has been housed in many locations around Hampton village over the years, even, at one time, in an out-building at the home of the Town Clerk. In 1993, the Town Hall was relocated from West Old Route 6 to the current location on Main Street, in what was formerly the Consolidated School (the old elementary school). This building was the first modern school in Hampton, replacing the old system of small, independent schoolhouses.

The Town government occupies the entire upper level of the building. The Town Hall houses all administrative functions and has a meeting room for Town and community boards as well as room for senior activities and other community functions. The Town Hall should continue to provide sufficient space for necessary Town functions for the foreseeable future by the eventual expansion into the lower level.

Due to increased usage of the Town Hall and the adjacent ball fields, the adequacy of the Town Hall parking lot should be reviewed. When games are played on the adjacent ball fields, the existing parking lot is at times insufficient to service both the players and Town Hall needs.

### **4.2.0 Senior Center**

The Hampton Seniors Club uses the handicapped accessible “Community Room” in the Town Hall for senior-related functions. It is outfitted with a small kitchen area and furnished so that seniors may gather comfortably for social, informational and health events. As the population grows, it can be expected that the number of seniors who participate in these programs will increase. However, there are no plans to expand the area utilized by the seniors at this time.

#### **4.3.0 Grange Building**

The Town took ownership of the historic Little River Grange building, next to the Town Hall, in February, 2002. Since then, a committee has convened to determine the best uses of the building, and a fund for its reuse has been started by donations. Ideas for future use include a facility for community and cultural events, a theater since it has a stage, and a senior center. The hundred year old building must be fitted with an adequate septic system and provided with a reliable well before any new use begins. In addition, there are various other repairs needed, including a new roof, as well as alterations for handicapped accessibility. A parking area that meets handicapped accessibility requirements will need to be developed to satisfy the parking needs of the new use, perhaps in coordination with or shared with the development of additional spaces for users of the ball field and Town Hall next door.

#### **4.4.0 Town Recreation Facilities**

Hampton is a small town, and it has limited Town-sponsored recreational facilities. These include a ball field and tennis courts at the Town Hall, and outdoor basketball courts and playfields at the Hampton Elementary School. None is lighted, and at times the parking at the Town Hall is insufficient for both the Town Hall users and those present for ballgames.

As the population grows and becomes less active at work and at home, there is an increasing demand for recreational opportunities near home. The Town Recreation Committee has expressed interest in developing a bigger recreational area elsewhere in Town that could host more, and more diverse, recreational activities. The Committee envisions using a large tract of land to build ball fields and to also provide for more passive recreational options, such as picnic grounds with a shelter. Funds would need to be appropriated or obtained through grants for purchase of land for this purpose, as well as the funding needed to develop the facility.

#### **4.5.0 Library**

The first Hampton Library was begun in 1827. After about three years it was given up, but in 1856 an effort was made to revive it, and a new association was formed. Today, the Fletcher Memorial Library on Main Street is a privately endowed institution that functions as Hampton's public library. The library is housed in an historic Italianate structure dating from 1860. Originally a private house, the building was donated to the Library in 1924. The Library is run by its own Board of Directors with a volunteer staff. Funds to operate the library and to buy books come from an endowment, Town funds, Friends of the Fletcher Memorial Library Fundraisers and the State of Connecticut. Although there has been some interest displayed in construction of a new library that could provide for the needs of a multimedia facility, including both paper and electric media, with more floor area, no changes to the library are planned at this time. The lack of parking is a limitation of the current location.

#### **4.6.0 Hampton Elementary School**

The Hampton Elementary School was built in 1992 to accommodate 250 students in grades K-6. Today, it continues to satisfy the needs of the Town with a first rate facility. The School has added Internet access to all classrooms as well as a computer lab. There are recreational opportunities at the school, including baseball, basketball, and soccer, as well as a nature trail. To date there are no plans for major capital improvements, and only routine maintenance is needed.

#### **4.7.0 Regional District 11: Parish Hill High School**

Parish Hill High School is located in Chaplin on Parish Hill Road and serves as is the middle and high school for Regional District 11, a school district serving grades 7-12 for the Towns of Hampton, Chaplin and Scotland. The High School was built in 1967 to accommodate the students of these Towns locally, instead of tuitioning them out to schools in other area towns. Currently, there are about 340 students from the 3 member towns.

In 2002, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges identified deficiencies in the facility that may impact teaching and learning. These deficiencies have caused the members of the Board of Education and the residents of the three Towns to study the school building and to develop a plan for correcting these deficiencies. At this date, various alternatives are being considered, and a final course of action has not yet been approved.

#### **4.8.0 Waste Disposal /Transfer Station**

Residents can dispose of their solid wastes and recyclables at the Town transfer station for a minimal fee. The transfer station is located next to the former landfill on Landfill Road off Windham Road, just north of the boundary with Scotland and is operated jointly by the Towns of Hampton and Scotland. In addition to household garbage and construction waste, the transfer station accepts items for recycling, including used oil, paper and cardboard, scrap metal, car batteries, propane tanks, appliances, and tires. Hampton's garbage is transferred to a trash to energy (burn) plant and other waste is sent to out-of-state landfills, while recyclables are transported to respective markets. Hampton occasionally participates in a household hazardous waste day, which gives residents the opportunity to dispose of such hazardous materials as leftover garden chemicals, cleaners, and oil-based paints and stains, in a more environmentally sound way than throwing them into the trash.

Hampton and Scotland together lease the transfer station property from private owners, but there has been an interest in Town purchase of the transfer station property, with the possible relocation of the Town Highway Garage to this site.

#### **4.9.0 Public Works, Highway Garage and Town Roads**

The Town's steady growth, adding about a dozen new single family dwellings annually over the past decade, will increasingly press on the resources of the public works department for maintenance of the Town road system, necessitating increased funds for equipment purchase and maintenance.

The Hampton Highway Garage is located in a 50 year old structure on West Old Route 6 on a parcel of about one half acre. The building is far too small and out-of-date for the times, lacking even a well and septic system, and the land area is too small to meet the demands for a septic, well, parking, and building expansion. The Town had planned to expand and improve the building, but has recently abandoned these plans. Instead, Town officials are considering the purchase of a new site elsewhere that would be large enough to accommodate a modern facility to house public works functions. Without an adequate structure to store and maintain trucks and equipment, the public works staff will be hampered in its efforts to do its job effectively and efficiently. The Town has accumulated funding in a capital account for land acquisition and will need to continue to accrue sufficient funds for the land and building.

#### **4.10.0 Public Water Supply and Public Sewer Facilities**

Each home and commercial enterprise in Hampton is served by its own on-site water supply and sewage disposal system. The state public health code requires that a water supply be developed on each lot before a certificate of occupancy may be issued to occupy either a commercial or residentially developed property. Likewise, each development must be served by an on-site sewage disposal system that meets the state health code. No new lot may be developed that does not accommodate the requirements of the health code.

Public water supply systems and sewage disposal facilities will not be developed in Hampton until there is need for such facilities due to water pollution or high population density. So long as the population remains sparsely settled, public water and sewer infrastructure can be avoided.

#### **4.11.0 Fire and Ambulance Services**

The Hampton Fire Company, Inc. is an all-volunteer fire company with about 25 active members. It was organized in 1929 and provides emergency response to fires, motor vehicle accidents, and downed wires and trees across roads, among other emergency incidents. Funding of the Company is obtained through grants from the Town and other sources, fundraisers, and donations. The Company is housed on West Old Route 6, in a site that is centrally located within the Town. The firehouse was originally constructed in 1961, and the



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3 tenths acre parcel is not large enough to accommodate much expansion, if it is needed. In order to bolster its communications system, the Company has placed a repeater antenna on the existing tower at the station. The Fire Company obtained funding in 2005 for a new truck to upgrade its current holdings and improve services.

The Hampton-Chaplin Ambulance Corps, Inc. was established in Hampton in 1954. It is housed entirely within the Hampton firehouse on West Old Route 6, where it leases space. Members of the Corps are volunteers. They serve as drivers and provide emergency medical services to both Chaplin and Hampton. Each Town provides funding to the Ambulance Corps in lieu of funding separate municipal ambulance services. Service is provided regardless of ability to pay; fees for services are offset by insurance company payments, but ambulance service is provided for no charge to the uninsured.

**4.12.0 Action/Implementation**

1. Develop a master plan for a municipal “campus” at the Town Hall parcel, including parking, lighting, landscaping, recreational uses, reuse of the Grange building, consideration of elderly housing, etc., in order to concentrate Town services in one location. (Board of Selectman, PZC) \*
2. Assess spatial needs of each Town Hall Department over the next ten years. (Board of Selectman) \*
3. Develop and implement a plan for reuse of the Grange Hall. (Board of Selectman) \*
4. Construct a new Town public works garage on a parcel that is sufficiently large to house and service all Town equipment and staff. (Board of Selectman) \*
5. Evaluate the possible development of a consolidated site for community recreational facilities, including ball fields, a shelter for picnics and community functions and seek funding if it is determined to proceed. (Board of Selectman, Recreation Committee, Conservation Commission, PZC) \*
6. Develop a plan for environmentally sound disposal of household hazardous waste, including small amounts of hazardous waste from home businesses, on a regular schedule. (Board of Selectman, Conservation Commission) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **5.0 Business & Industry**

### **5.1.0 Background**

Hampton was a typical New England town in the 1700s and early 1800s, with agriculture as its economic mainstay and supporting businesses in scattered shops. Small scale industrial activities powered by streams and rivers followed, but Hampton never saw the development of large mills that gave rise to the extensive mill housing and commercial growth seen in some other area Towns. Ultimately, the mills closed down and agriculture stagnated, both unable to compete with more successful operations elsewhere.

Today, Hampton is a residential community with a rural character. With only about 1850 persons over 25 square miles, the population is too sparse to support retail enterprises to meet the needs of the inhabitants. Residents leave town to find employment and to make almost any type of purchase. The Hampton General Store on Main Street closed for business in 2001 and reopened in 2006

Hampton has no industrial base at present, and little can be expected in the foreseeable future. This is true for a variety of reasons: unavailability of water and sewer connections; distance from a viable commercial hub and distance from an interstate highway; and lack of appropriately zoned land. However, based on information in the 2001 Community Survey questionnaire, most Hampton residents do not favor efforts to encourage industrial development within Town, and, even if they did, it is dubious whether or not efforts to attract industry would succeed in the near future.

Agriculture is arguably the most important economic activity in Town and is treated in its own section of this Plan.

### **5.2.0 Zoning**

**Business Zone.** Hampton has two small areas zoned for business activities. Both are on Route 6: one on the west end of Route 6 at the boundary with Chaplin, and the other on the east end of Route 6 near the Brooklyn town line. The western business zone has had a small increase in activity in the last decade, with the construction of an automotive garage, the conversion of a former residence to a hearing clinic, and the conversion of a former retail shop to the offices of a service enterprise. The eastern zone, at Hampton Springs, was rezoned to business from residential in 1998.

**Home Businesses.** In 1996, the Planning and Zoning Commission greatly expanded the activities that can be permitted as home businesses and has approved such diverse activities as a wholesale bakery, a cooking school, and an acupuncturist. The nonconforming businesses

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located on Main Street on Hampton Hill remain as legitimate commercial entities, with a right under the law to continue as businesses in a residential zone. However, except for home businesses, zoning laws prevent the development of new businesses on Hampton Hill or anywhere outside of the business-zoned property on Route 6.

### **5.3.0 Trends**

As the cost of supporting schools for the Town's children increases, some residents have expressed an interest in encouraging business in Town to offset the taxes paid by homeowners. However, about one third of the responses to the August 2001 Community Survey stated that no new land should be added to the business zones. Another third believed that the Town should enlarge the existing business zones on Route 6, and the remaining third felt that more should be done to encourage businesses in Hampton.

The most likely locations for additional commercial activities in Town are adjacent to the two existing business zoned districts on Route 6. Very small-scale commerce may be conducted from new homes businesses, which can be run from any home with the approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission. But with virtually no sites available for commercial development on land already zoned for business, with a recent surge in commercial development a few miles west on Route 6 in North Windham, and with the low population in Town, there is little likelihood of major commercial development. And as there are no plans for major changes to the transportation network that provides access to Hampton, nor to the availability of water and sewer lines, it is not at all likely that there will be pressure for industrial development in Hampton in the foreseeable future.

### **5.4.0 Goals**

1. Encourage business within town that does not disrupt the Town's semi-rural character, with particular consideration of future commercial development opportunities on Route 6. (PZC)\*

### **5.5.0 Action/Implementation**

Update the Zoning Regulations and zone map as needed so that the Regulations reflect, and continue to reflect, the interest of Town residents in encouraging business and industrial activities in Town. (PZC) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

Continue to require and enforce aesthetic standards for business enterprises in the designated business zones that are compatible with the Town's goal of retaining a small-town, rural atmosphere. (PZC) \*

Continue to encourage home occupations throughout Town, so long as these do not disrupt the visual quality of the landscape, the quiet enjoyment of one's property, and do not harm the environment. (PZC) \*

Review and revise Zoning Regulations to encourage the reuse of large and/or historic rural/agricultural properties for contemporary, economically viable uses, such as educational opportunities, art and craft production and sales, tourist opportunities, recreational opportunities, etc. (PZC) \*

Study the existing business zoned properties to determine the extent of additional business opportunities there. (PZC, Conservation Commission) \*

Study the areas surrounding the existing business zoned property to determine the potential for expansion of the business zones. (PZC, Conservation Commission) \*

Review Zoning Regulations for the Business Zone and the Planned Business-Industrial District Zone to determine if these Regulations are still viable, with consideration given to the types of uses allowed and to the potential location of such zone, which can currently be proposed for any part of Town. (PZC) \*

Identify a liaison between any economic development committee established by the Town and the Planning and Zoning Commission, preferably a Planning and Zoning Commission member. (PZC, Board of Selectman) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **6.0 Cultural and Historic Resources**

### **6.1.0 Background**

Cultural resources are the creations of peoples' lives, including such diverse objects and entities as buildings, the tools of daily life and industry, fine art, and the landscapes that people have shaped. Cultural resources are the material expression of who we are, and we both create cultural resources and are shaped by them. They show us our past and guide the future.

Hampton's beauty is legend, and this is in large part due to its extraordinary cultural resources, especially the many historic buildings set in a classic rural New England landscape. Following the longtime presence of Indians, European settlers began the purchase of land in Hampton around 1710. Settlers came from elsewhere in Windham, but the majority arrived from Massachusetts. In 1786, Hampton was incorporated from the towns of Pomfret, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Mansfield, and Windham. The Congregational Church is the second oldest church building on its own site in the state, with portions of the structure dating from 1754.

Hampton's population reached 1,379 in 1800, and then it declined steadily to only 475 in 1920. After that date, it began to grow again, slowly, but it was not until about 1982 that the population surpassed what it was in 1800. A consequence of this decline and slow rebound is a high proportion of historic structures. There was little new construction for many years, and it was not until the 1970s that 20th century houses outnumbered pre-20th century houses.

The earliest houses in Town are found in Howard Valley, on Hampton Hill, and in scattered sites elsewhere in Town. Many of the historic houses can be traced to two periods of development that occurred around 1750 and 1830. A survey conducted by the Windham Regional Planning Agency in 1979 recognized 171 notable historic Hampton buildings. The National Park Service includes the Hampton Hill Historic District in its National Register of Historic Places, and the Connecticut Historic Commission recognizes forty-nine structures and sites in Hampton on the State Register of Historic Places.

Besides this wealth of historic structures, there are other historic features and landscapes that contribute to Hampton's classic look. The historic houses were almost always farmsteads and around them grew up barnyards and dooryards, well houses, outhouses, and small shops, all surrounded by stonewalls and shade trees that grew up on the edges of fields and along roadsides. Hampton's road system itself is a historic feature, following the old wagon roads which were ultimately paved with macadam in the twentieth century. Roads today are still very narrow, stonewall-lined, and shaded, with simple ditches for drainage. Hampton has four cemeteries dating to the eighteenth century: North Cemetery, South Cemetery, Old Litchfield Cemetery, and Grow Cemetery. There are numerous mill site ruins from the nineteenth century

along the Little River, notably at Reilly Road and Brooklyn-Windham Turnpike and at Hemlock Glen on Old King's Highway. And Indian sites can be found at the Cowhantic ledges on Route 97 and at Sand Hill in Howard Valley.

### **6.2.0 Status and Trends**

To effectively foster the Town's cultural resources, the Town should devise and promote strategies for their preservation and also for protecting both visual and physical access to the resource. Some cultural resources continue to exist but cannot be visited or even seen, such as an historic farmstead at the end of a long private driveway, while others may be seen, visited and used, such as mill ruins on Town-owned land. At issue, too, is whether or not a resource exists intact under current ownership but is without any kind of permanent protection.

Although Hampton's historic dwellings are generally well-cared for by their current owners, the look of the Town as a traditional New England farm community, the landscape, is being very gradually overtaken by the look of New England-style suburbia: single family dwellings on two acre lots with two hundred feet of frontage along the Town roads. The historic structures are still there but are not so readily seen. After so many years without change, Hampton's traditional rural landscapes are now at risk of disappearing behind new houses and land division. Almost every resident would like to see the rural landscape retained to the greatest possible extent, but how to accomplish this is at best complex.

There is a difference between being rural and looking rural, and the actions taken to protect Hampton's cultural resources would best foster both. Staying rural means fostering agriculture as an economic activity, keeping large tracts of contiguous open space, and encouraging home industry. Keeping a rural look means preserving such features as stonewalls, shade trees, especially along roads, narrow and winding roadways, and dark skies.

Hampton's 1970 Plan of Development identified two areas, Hampton Hill and Howard Valley, for possible future designation as local historic districts. This locally approved type of historic district is created by a vote of the affected property owners only, and it does much to control renovations to structures within its boundaries. Federal historic districts are nominated locally but they are created by action of the National Park Service, and federal designation provides national recognition of the significance of the designated district but does little to control changes to included structures or even their demolition. Hampton Hill gained recognition as a National Historic District in 1982. Hampton's 1992 Plan of Development echoes the 1970 Plan's goals and added Clark's Corners as a possible third state historic district.

Almost half of those who participated in the June 2001 community survey supported doing "everything possible" to preserve historic character, and fewer than 10% of the responses to the 2001 survey felt it unnecessary to do anything to preserve Hampton's historic character.

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**6.3.0 Goals**

1. Protect and preserve Hampton’s historic structures to the greatest possible extent, including: dwellings, outbuildings, churches, schools, bridges, mill sites and dams, stonewalls, and cemeteries. (PZC, Antiquarian and Historical Society)\*
2. Protect and preserve key elements of the traditional rural landscape to the greatest possible extent, including groupings of structures, roadside trees, open fields, agricultural views and vistas, dark skies, and the historic roadscape. (PZC)\*

**6.4.0 Action/Implementation**

1. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to delete regulations which degrade traditional landscapes and insert regulations which uphold and strengthen the traditional landscape patterns along roads, in the village and hamlets, and on the farmsteads. (PZC) \*
2. Review and revise Zoning Regulations to foster reuse of historic dwellings, barns, and other structures as well as farms, by implementation of zoning regulations that are flexible enough to find new uses of these structures when their original uses are no longer economically viable, such as bed and breakfasts and inns, social function establishments, and art, recreation and educational institutions. (PZC) \*
3. Review Town Ordinances and Regulations that control new road construction and improvements to existing Town roads, so that the traditional roadscape is preserved to the extent possible, including consideration of road widths, drainage features, protection of roadside stone walls and trees. (Board of Selectmen, PZC) \*
4. Develop an educational program for owners of historic properties to encourage the preservation of exterior features that contribute to the historic integrity of the property, including a uniform signage program to identify historic structures. (Antiquarian and Historical Society) \*
5. Consider nomination for federal historic district recognition of Clark’s Corners, Howard Valley, and Hemlock Glen, Old King’s Highway, and reconsideration of Hampton Hill for designation as a state historic district. (Antiquarian and Historical Society) \*
6. Adopt a Town scenic road ordinance to allow municipal recognition and protection of scenic, historic Town roads and support for State scenic road designation for Route 97 in Hampton. (Board of Selectman, PZC, Antiquarian and Historical Society, Conservation Commission) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **7.0 Natural Resources**

This Plan of Conservation and Development was originally simply a Plan of Development, intended to guide Town growth. But in 1995, Connecticut General Statutes were changed to require that Towns produce a Plan of Conservation and Development. By this mandate, the legislature recognized the unprecedented ability of humans to alter, and to degrade, the natural environment, and therefore the unprecedented need to take responsibility for conservation of the natural world: soil, water, air, animals and plants. The wise use of natural resources is at the least a practical act, since doing so serves to protect our own health and welfare.

The Hampton Conservation Commission, formed in 1974 and reestablished in 2002, is a Town sponsored group with the charge of conserving natural resources. The Commission will be a strong force in the protection, regulation and development of the Town's natural resources, with such tasks as maintaining an inventory of these resources, monitoring their status, and advising the Planning and Zoning Commission on the impact of proposed development.

The Hampton Conservation Guide of 1977, found in the Town Clerk's Office, presents detailed information and recommendations on natural resources in Town.

### **7.1.0 Soils**

Soil in Hampton is a precious and scarce commodity. The surface of Hampton's 15,872 acres is a product of the glaciers that left behind a stony land, poorly drained with an irregular, broken topography. Modern development, including excavation by heavy equipment for septic systems, foundations, and road construction, has been thwarted by these conditions. Overall, it is a landscape that has been unreceptive to human efforts to use it for economic advantage.

The soils can support septic systems but with restrictions in some locations due to high water tables and bedrock. Neither do the soils easily lend themselves to tillable fields and crop style agriculture, because the topsoil is very shallow over subsoil and bedrock, and the soils in many areas are very stony and drain slowly. Long developed farmlands and wetlands are the only places where topsoil more than about 6 inches deep will reliably be found. The best of Hampton's soils are found in the Little River Valley, to the west of Murphy Brook, and in the northeast corner of Town, and scattered in pockets throughout the Town, making it possible to support some small scale commercial agriculture. Native soils support pastures for grazing but only so long as they are grazed enough to suppress tree growth. Bands of sand and gravel paralleling the Little River have a significant and increasing value for use in construction where they are still accessible under undeveloped land.

From an ecological, recreational and aesthetic standpoint, though, this land has much to offer.



The soils support a continuous canopy of mixed hardwood species with some conifers. In Connecticut wetlands are defined as soils that are poorly drained. Wetland soils are found throughout the Town in low-lying areas, along streams, and wherever the water table is very high. Although wetlands are protected by state law and often therefore thwart development plans, they have important functions that are the basis for their protection: water storage in times of heavy rains and snow melt, natural filtration of storm water percolating through, and habitat for all kinds of flora and fauna.

#### **7.1.1. Soils: Status and Trends**

The landscape was static in Hampton for many years, since all of New England fell into a period of decline following the years of development for agriculture and then small-scale industry. Today, the landscape is changing, as the Town is subdivided and developed for residences. The excavation for foundations, septic systems and driveways, and the clearing of the native forest for lawns, disturb the thin layer of productive topsoil.

Sand and gravel deposits lining the river valleys are valuable in the construction industry but are becoming increasingly difficult to mine due to local opposition, especially where there is a nearby residential neighborhood, and due to the costs of meeting regulatory requirements and reclamation following the mining period. Hampton has no commercial gravel operations at this time, but there may be valuable gravel resources still lying underground.

#### **7.1.2. Goals**

1. Protect the quantity and quality of the topsoil from potentially damaging activities such as mining and removal of topsoil for sale, burial during development, and contamination from such pollutants as salt, petroleum, chemicals used in businesses, etc. (PZC)\*
2. Preserve the deep soils found primarily under farmland and in the Little River Valley, where topsoil has developed that will support field crops and hay. (PZC)\*

#### **7.1.3. Action / Implementation**

1. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to protect topsoil during development activities and disallow its export from the site, especially where topsoil is shallow. (PZC) \*
2. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to prevent the loss of developed farm soils and prime agricultural lands to other uses. (PZC)

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

3. Review the sand and gravel regulations to determine whether they sufficiently and effectively reflect the wishes of the community regarding such operations, and revise accordingly. (PZC) \*
4. Review the Zoning Regulations to determine if they are sufficient to protect soils from contamination by pollutants, and revise accordingly. (PZC) \*
5. Ensure that all Townspeople have a practical means of disposing of solid and hazardous wastes, and that this means is adequately publicized. (Board of Selectmen) \*
6. Educate citizens on how to conserve and improve soils. (Conservation Commission)

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **7.2.0 Water Resources**

Water resources are most easily considered by where they are found: on the ground, called surface water, and under the ground, called groundwater.

### **7.2.1. Surface Water**

Surface water is supplied by the rain, and rainfall is ample here. An average of 45 inches of rain falls annually, and it is evenly distributed throughout the year. The surface waters of Hampton are found in its lakes, ponds and swamps and the rivers and streams. The largest in Town are both reservoirs: Pine Acres Lake in Goodwin State Forest, and Hampton Reservoir. The Town is dotted with small ponds. Most of the Town streams ultimately drain into the Little River and its tributaries or to Merrick Brook, and both of these drain into the Shetucket River; about 10 percent of the eastern side of Hampton drains to the Quinebaug River. Rivers, streams and their associated wetlands belts compose about one quarter of Hampton's area.

### **7.2.2. Ground Water**

Groundwater is supplied by waters from the surface of the ground that percolate down through the soil. The most important sources of groundwater, aquifers, are typically found in deep gravel deposits in river valleys, and Hampton is no exception. Hampton's only significant aquifer is found along the Little River. Aquifers that have public water supply wells are required to be regulated by the State and are typically controlled through Zoning Regulations. Groundwater is also found in cracks and pores in bedrock in a complex pattern that is difficult to impossible to map. Volumes of water in bedrock are relatively low, insufficient to support public water supplies but enough to support individual wells. Water yields in wells range widely from lot to lot, and yields on one lot do not predict well yield on the adjacent lot. However, water supplies in Hampton are abundant and all lots can attain a water supply sufficient to support a household when a well is drilled. Groundwater levels in shallow, dug

wells, though, can drop in droughty years, and these residents may have to resort to drilling a new, deep well.

### **7.2.3. Water: Status and Trends**

Hampton has little commercial and industrial activity, so its water supplies are relatively safe from pollution. But water quality should not be taken for granted. Water from anywhere upstream in the watershed can negatively affect water quality in Hampton. Both types of wells, shallow (dug) and deep (drilled) wells, can be affected by contaminants such as road salt and gasoline. These come from a wide range of sources, and activities and materials originally thought to be harmless have sometimes been later found to be harmful to the water supply.

### **7.2.4. Goals**

1. Keep surface and groundwater free from contamination. (Inland Wetlands Commission)\*
2. Protect the aquifer along the Little River from contamination, as this is the probable source of drinking water should public water supply wells ever be needed. (PZC)\*

### **7.2.5. Action/Implementation**

1. Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to protect water quality, with consideration for contamination from not only industrial and commercial activities but also from agriculture, home businesses, and road salt. (PZC) \*
2. Review storm water discharges from all sources, including from existing and proposed roads and residential development, so that pollution from contaminants carried in storm water is minimized. (PZC, Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Inland Wetlands) \*
3. Require that all businesses, including home businesses, have a plan for the legal and sound disposal of all wastes they generate. (PZC) \*
4. Prevent the burial of wood in land clearing activities to prevent water contamination, as is required by state law. (PZC, Building Official) \*

Encourage the use of conservation easements so that streams and wetlands are protected from activities and uses that may degrade water quality. (Board of Selectmen, PZC, Conservation Commission, Inland Wetlands) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

5. Keep the public educated about measures that can be taken to protect surface and groundwater. (Conservation Commission) \*
6. Obtain Greenway designation for the Little River from the Greenways Council. (Conservation Commission) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

### **7.3.0 Forest**

Much of the native forest ecosystem of the northeastern U.S. has been consumed by development between Washington and Boston; northeastern Connecticut is a notable exception. Most of Hampton is covered by a canopy of forest, and Hampton would be entirely forested except in bogs and marshes if not for human activities that clear the woods and then prevent them from returning. An unmowed and ungrazed area will begin its return to forest within only one or two years.

Forests provide wildlife habitat, keep streams cool, and are an integral component of the water and oxygen cycles necessary for life on earth. From an economic standpoint, forests provide timber for construction and firewood and provide attractive residential and recreational opportunities. Hampton contains two State Forests: Natchaug and Goodwin, totaling 2347 acres, and many thousands of acres of privately held forest.

#### **7.3.1. Forest: Status and Trends**

Since almost all of the land is covered by forest, residential development requires logging before construction. Typically, builders clear about three-fourths to one acre of land for development of each new residence, leaving the balance of the lot wooded. As house construction continues, Hampton's woodlands will become increasingly more patchy and less continuous, and this pattern will ultimately have an impact on the local wildlife.

The large landholders can undertake forest management and "farm" their woods for timber production by thinning and logging. But as large tracts become broken into small ones, timber harvesting will become less viable since loggers find their work less profitable on small tracts of land. Firewood can be a byproduct of land clearing, and the value of firewood will fluctuate with the cost of heating oil and labor costs. At this time, felled wood that is not large enough to saw into boards is still so abundant as to be virtually free for the taking.

**7.3.2. Goals**

1. Keep forests in large, unfragmented blocks to the greatest extent possible. (PCZ, Conservation Commission) \*
2. Ensure that environmental damage from logging is minimized. (PZC, Inland Wetlands Commission, Conservation Commission) \*
3. Keep forest habitat healthy by minimizing deleterious impacts (PZC, Inland Wetlands Commission, Conservation Commission) \*

**7.3.3. Action/Implementation**

1. Review the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations and revise accordingly to maximize the protection of large blocks of woodland. (PZC) \*
2. Keep residents informed about the state program for reduced taxation of forestland so that all who wish to take advantage of this program can do so. (Assessor, Board of Selectman) \*
3. Study the adoption of Regulations to control logging operations, and revise the Regulations as needed. (PZC, Inland Wetlands Commission, Conservation Commission) \*
4. As a component of open space planning, identify prime forestlands for their conservation and preservation by the use of conservation easements, acquisition, or additions to the State Forests. (Conservation Commission, PZC) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

**7.4.0 Wildlife**

Because much of Hampton is still undeveloped, the Town is rich in wildlife habitat. There is a rich mix of wildlife species and, like all of southern New England some species have reestablished themselves after years absent or in decline. Sustaining a variety of habitats in Town will foster a variety of wildlife species. An inventory of Hampton's wildlife was presented in the Hampton Conservation Guide of 1977.

#### **7.4.1. Wildlife: Status and Trends**

The comeback of certain species such as fox, coyote, turkey, and fishers, seems to indicate that many wildlife species are more adaptable than previously thought. The success of some species, however, does not mean that ALL species have the ability to adjust to human neighbors and major habitat changes; encroaching development uses will have a deleterious effect on some local wildlife populations. To an increasing extent, a primary wildlife protection goal will be managing wildlife populations that live with and amongst human populations, and not just wildlife habitat preservation.

#### **7.4.2. Goals**

1. Conserve numerous and diverse wildlife populations. (Conservation Commission)\*

#### **7.4.3. Action/Implementation**

1. Institutionalize the contribution of the Conservation Commission to the decision-making, actions and activities of the PZC, Inland Wetlands Commission, and Board of Selectmen, as well as the Public Works Department. (Conservation Commission, PZC, Inland Wetlands Commission) \*
2. Identify prime wildlife habitat protection areas and develop methods for their protection through easements, wise development patterns, and public education. (Conservation Commission, PZC) \*
3. Develop an open space plan for the Town that will aid in the conservation of wildlife. (Conservation Commission, PZC) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

#### **7.5.0 Air**

Air quality in Hampton is largely controlled by activities that take place out-of-town, upwind to the west. Our air is degraded mainly by ozone and by microscopic particles (particulate) in the air, and these are clearly linked to health problems, especially respiratory system illnesses and heart disease.

Naturally occurring ozone in the upper atmosphere protects us from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, but "bad" ozone is formed near the earth's surface when pollutants from cars, power plants, refineries, and other sources react chemically in the presence of sunlight. Harmful ozone is declining in Connecticut due to emission reduction programs, but at the end of 2004, Windham County, like all Connecticut counties, was designated a nonattainment area for the federal EPA's health-based standards for ground-level ozone pollution. Particle pollution, known as particulate, is a mixture of microscopic solids and liquid droplets suspended in the air. Particulate is made up of components including acids (such as nitrates and sulfates), organic chemicals, metals, soil or dust particles, and allergens such as pollen or mold spores.

Although the sources of these pollutants are overwhelmingly from outside Town boundaries, there are still measures that individuals can take to help reduce air pollution, such as reducing energy consumption at home by the choices we make for heating, cooling and home appliance selections, and by reducing gasoline consumption.

#### **7.5.1. Goals**

1. Air quality in Hampton will comply with the standards set by EPA. (Conservation Commission)\*
2. Hampton residents will not further degrade air quality. (Conservation Commission)\*

#### **7.5.2. Action / Implementation**

1. The Town government will minimize air pollution from its buildings and vehicles. (Board of Selectmen) \*
2. Town residents, including children and adults, will be kept informed about measures they can take to minimize air pollution, including such things as using clean burning woodstoves, carpool opportunities and reducing the use of gasoline powered appliances such as leaf blowers and lawnmowers. (Conservation Commission) \*
3. Town residents will support legislative efforts to improve air quality and the positions of legislators and legislative candidates on clean air issues. (Conservation Commission, Board of Selectman) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

### **7.6.0 Energy**

Energy sources are not in the control of Hampton residents, with certain exceptions such as production of firewood and collection of solar and wind resources. Energy consumption in Hampton takes place primarily in the private sector through basic daily, residential activities. Strategies that will encourage energy conservation, therefore, are limited and should seek to minimize energy consumption by residents engaged in usual residential activities as well as easier-to-influence activities such as energy consumption in public buildings.

#### **7.6.1. Goals**

1. Town- sponsored activities will minimize energy consumption to the greatest possible extent. (Board of Selectmen)
2. Zoning and subdivision regulations will encourage energy conservation and minimize energy consumption to the greatest possible extent. (PZC)
3. The Town shall encourage pedestrianism and bicycle transport. (PZC, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission)
4. The Town shall encourage development that is compact and transit-accessible, with pedestrian-oriented development patterns. (PZC, Conservation Commission)

#### **7.6.2. Actions/Implementation**

1. Town buildings will be evaluated for energy consumption properties and for future modifications that will reduce consumption. (Board of Selectmen)\*
2. All proposed Town building programs shall include an energy conservation component. (Board of Selectmen)\*
3. Subdivision applications as well as other types of PZC applications shall not be approved until the applicant has demonstrated compliance with Zoning Regulations Section 6.8, Energy Efficiency, to the satisfaction of the Commission. (PZC)\*
4. New roads shall be shortened and narrowed to the extent possible to reduce pavement and reduce driving (PZC, Board of Selectman)\*
5. The Town shall encourage pedestrianism and bicycle transport by supporting paths along Route 97 and Route 6 as well as along secondary Town routes. (PZC, Board of Selectman)\*



## **8.0 AGRICULTURE**

### **8.1.0 Background**

Throughout New England, full-time family farming is in decline. In Hampton, only one active dairy farm remains.

The consequences of this change are dramatic. As soon as farming stops, the look of the land changes because fields soon revert to native woods. The view of patch-worked farms and fields gives way to a blanket of trees with few views or vistas. The loss of farm fields is economically significant, because development of a fertile field from woodland is labor intensive and time consuming. Timber production for saw logs and firewood will remain a viable if inadvertent agricultural activity so long as tracts remain large enough for profitable harvests.

In addition to state programs that allow a property owner to apply for reduced taxes on farm and forestland, Hampton adopted an ordinance in order to reduce taxes on undeveloped land (“open space”). The reduced taxation programs have made it possible for residents to keep larger tracts of land than they could otherwise afford, leaving enhanced opportunities for agriculture.

### **8.2.0 Trends**

There is significant pressure on farmland and large tract owners to sell off excess acreage due to the value of the land for house lots. Because Hampton is within commuting distance of several cities, because land is relatively inexpensive, and because of the appeal of the still relatively rural character, there is a near instant market for anyone who wants to sell land.

To keep agriculture a viable economic activity in Town, it must take other forms than traditional full-time family farming. Horse farms are one viable reuse of former food-producing farms. There are at least two large horse farms in Hampton, as well as several small ones. These provide a source of revenue and recreation for the respective owners and users, and they benefit all Town residents by keeping fields open. Other landowners maintain fields that produce a viable hay crop for sale. Hampton’s Zoning Regulations do not restrict the keeping of farm animals, and many households keep small numbers of animals either for food or for recreation. In addition, there are some horticultural operations, including Christmas tree growers and vegetable farming, whose products are brought to local and regional markets. Maple syrup production is another option.

**8.3.0 Goals**

1. Encourage agriculture as a viable economic enterprise and a way of life for Hampton families, including small, part-time farming. (PZC)\*
2. Preserve and protect farmland and existing farm operations. (PZC, Board of Selectman)\*
3. Encourage the development of new farm operations, including managed forestry, horticultural production, horse farming, and fruit and vegetable production.(PZC)\*

**8.4.0 Action/Implementation**

1. Review Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and revise accordingly to ensure that they encourage and sustain agriculture, including agritourism and ecotourism. (PZC) \*
2. Retain zoning that permits keeping of livestock on all lot sizes. (PZC) \*
3. Formulate zoning regulations that support horse farms, horticulture, and the sale of agriculturally related and derived products, such as pumpkins, vegetables, hay, maple products, etc. (PZC) \*
4. Develop Subdivision Regulations that will preserve farm fields. (PZC) \*
5. Support state funding for the purchase of development rights of farmlands. (Board of Selectman, Conservation Commission) \*
6. Support state and local efforts to publicize and market farm products for sale. (Board of Selectman, Conservation Commission) \*
7. Disseminate information on managed woodlands to property owners. (Conservation Commission) \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **9.0 RECREATION**

### **9.1.0 Background and Status**

Even with few organized activities available in Town, Hampton residents have many recreational opportunities out their doors. The woods, hills, streams and ponds offer walking, fishing, hunting, swimming, horseback riding, skating and cross-country skiing. Almost everyone lives on a lot large enough for gardening, keeping of farm animals and pets, and some outdoor sports. These opportunities are abundant, and they are free. They contribute to the high quality of life enjoyed in Hampton, and they have attracted many of Hampton's newer residents to Town.

The opportunity to do many of these things relies on access to streams, ponds, and expanses of woodlands. Fortunately, Hampton offers guaranteed public access to these landscapes on both public and private properties: Goodwin and Natchaug State Forests, the Airline Trail State Park, the Teale Preserve, and the Ostby Preserve, among others. In addition to these, and not to be underestimated, are the informal and unspoken recreational options allowed by owners of large parcels of land who give their neighbors access to their properties.

There are ballfields available for use at the Town Hall and Hampton School, and the School gym is used by the community for various sports. Tennis courts are located at the Town Hall. The Town of Hampton Recreation Committee organizes youth sports, and many Town children participate in softball, baseball, basketball and soccer.

The Hampton Seniors Club organizes various social, informational and health events at the Hampton Town Hall, as well as out of town trips.

### **9.2.0 Trends**

Both recreational demands and recreational opportunities are in flux. With a move away from the rural, agricultural economy to a suburban, commuter lifestyle, how people choose to spend their free time is changing, too. People in sedentary occupations want more active recreational opportunities when they are not at work. And not only what they want to do is changing; what they CAN do in Town is changing, too.

The growing population, by its very presence, alters the recreational opportunities in Town. More land is developed, and lot sizes are shrinking. Typically, new lots are much smaller than the old, and many are the minimum size required by zoning: 80,000 square feet (1.84 acres). As the population grows and lot size shrinks, some of the traditional recreational options, such as hiking and hunting, become harder to do. As residents become more and more anonymous to each other, the freedom to pass across each other's land tends to be withdrawn. And as traffic on town roads increases, the enjoyment of walking and biking on the road diminishes, especially on through roads.

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The profile of the newcomer will increasingly be a suburban-style commuter who will seek recreation opportunities in and around Town at night and on weekends. As young adults have children, there is an increased demand for organized sports such as basketball, baseball, soccer, etc. These require equipment, space, and a group that will organize the activities. On the other hand, following the national trend, there will be increasing numbers of seniors, and organized recreation for social purposes becomes increasingly important.

The ages of Town residents will have a great deal to do with the sought after activities; senior citizens, families with young children, and childless adults will have very different recreation interests, and the need to provide for these interests will wax and wane with the rise and fall of the respective populations.

**9.3.0 Goals**

1. Develop a plan for addressing the recreational interests of all residents. Recreational opportunities for teens and seniors are especially critical quality-of-life issues, and these should be given due consideration. Opportunities for children and teens after school should be considered. (Board of Selectman, Recreation Committee) \*

**9.4.0 Action / Implementation**

1. Survey the recreational interests of all Hampton residents, young and old, every five years or frequently enough to accurately assess interests. (Board of Selectman, Recreation Committee) \*
2. Establish a permanent contact between the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Recreation Committee to assure that Zoning Regulations and Planning & Zoning Commission decisions maximize recreational opportunities. (PZC, Recreation Committee) \*
3. Establish a permanent contact between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Conservation Commission to ensure input by the Conservation Commission on zoning regulations and decisions affecting recreational opportunities. (PZC, Conservation Commission) \*
4. Study and implement opportunities for permanent walking trails, especially along the

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Little River. (Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, PZC) \*

5. Evaluate access to available public buildings for a range of recreational choices, such as gym sports, pool, ping-pong, cards, exercise classes, educational classes, and art. (Board of Selectman, Recreation Committee) \*
6. Revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to obtain open space and recreational easements from subdivisions, as is authorized by Connecticut State Statutes. (PZC, Conservation Commission) \*
7. Survey the current permanent, dedicated river access by the public for fishing and swimming, and develop a plan for enhancing permanent access. (Conservation Commission, PZC) \*
8. Inventory and publicize existing recreational opportunities, including organized activities by the Recreation Committee, seniors, Goodwin Forest, and public schools, and nonorganized activities such as hiking, skating and swimming spots, and horseback riding opportunities, as well as recreational options in nearby towns and special events such as holiday parades, Walking Weekend, etc. (Recreation Committee, Conservation Commission) \*
9. Develop a plan for acquiring land for additional ball fields, with the goal of consolidating Town ball fields at one consolidated location. \*

*\* Town Boards that will be lead for implementation of goal/action item.*

## **10.0 OPEN SPACE**

### **10.1.0 Background**

“Open space” has no single definition, but as it is used in this Plan, it means simply land without buildings. By this definition, open space is not necessarily protected from future development.

Hampton is a town of 15,872 acres or 25 square miles. The 2000 census counted 1757 inhabitants, and in 2004 the estimated population was about 1800 or 72 people per square mile. Relative to much of southern New England, and most other eastern Connecticut towns, Hampton is very sparsely settled. It still has a great deal of open space, even though the population is slowly and steadily growing.

With the exception of the small commercial zones on Route 6, the entire Town is under Residential-Agriculture-80 zoning. This zone establishes that the minimum lot size that can be created from a larger parcel of land is 80,000 square feet or 1.84 acres, and the primary land uses are residential and agricultural. Although smaller lots do exist, these were created before the Town adopted zoning in 1971. A new lot must also have 200 feet of road frontage, so the typical new lot is at least 200 feet wide by 400 feet deep. Rear lots, which are 80,000 square foot lots set back from the road accessed by a narrow strip of land, are allowed by the Subdivision Regulations in limited numbers. This zoning scheme, which is common throughout rural Connecticut, will therefore allow the land to be carved up into lots of just under two acres, so long as each has road frontage.

### **10.2.0 Status and Trends**

Hampton property owners are under continuous pressure to sell land to builders and land developers, who find a steady demand for new homes. There is every reason to think that the appeal of Hampton will continue to draw would-be residents to Town.

The question often arises: why not zone the Town to much larger lots so that open space is protected? The answer is that this cannot be readily done because the legal basis for zoning, provided under Connecticut state law, allows a Town to set lot size to protect health, safety, and welfare, not to limit the population. It is clear that the potential for a great deal more residential development exists. Questions to be considered are: what CAN the Town do about encroaching development and loss of open space? what does it WANT to do about it?

As the Town identifies areas to be left sparsely settled or undeveloped, and other areas to be more thickly settled, it is critical to recognize that residents have different reasons for wanting

to protect certain areas from development, including:

1. Low population density. Hampton residents enjoy and want to protect the rural quality of life here, in large part for the peace and quiet and independence afforded by having lots of space between neighbors. Even though a lot need only be 1.84 acres, much of Hampton is divided into much, much larger parcels, and many parcels are still not developed at all.
2. Habitat Protection. Living with nature just outside the door is another much-treasured aspect of living in Hampton. People move to Hampton to enjoy plants, animals, woods and clean waters, all ever harder to find between Washington and Boston. Open space can preserve habitat by leaving it alone.
3. Recreation. The recreational options afforded by extensive open space are obvious. Large house lots means opportunities for pets, gardens, camping, sports, and keeping farm animals. Large, continuous or adjacent open space parcels provide opportunities to hunt, fish, horseback ride, hike, cross-country ski, etc.
4. Farms/agriculture. Leaving land free from buildings means leaving opportunities for agriculture to continue as an economic activity. As dairy farms die out in Hampton, agriculture continues in the form of horticulture, Christmas tree farms, fruit and vegetable farms, horse farms, and forestry management for cordwood and lumber production.
5. Views and Vistas. Hampton is well known for being beautiful; it's views and vistas are a major amenity. These cannot be taken for granted and need specific protection if they are to survive. There is a considerable amount of land in **protected** open space in Hampton already, in the following categories:

Hampton maintains many open space parcels already protected from future development, including:

- State owned lands. State lands in Town (excluding Bigelow Pond and the Little River) comprise 2713 acres, including:
  - Goodwin State Forest – 1194 acres
  - Natchaug State Forest – 1439 acres
  - Airline Trail State Park – 80 acres
- State owned development rights. The State has purchased the development rights to 639 acres of prime farmland, and these acres cannot be developed.
- Private Open Space Lands Open to Public. Privately owned open space available to the

public includes:

- Edwin Way Teal Sanctuary (Connecticut Audubon Society) - 168 acres
- Preston Sanctuary and the Fuller parcel (Joshua's Tract Land Trust) – 122 acres
- Ostby Preserve (Wolf Den Land Trust) - 80 acres

In addition, there is much open space that is not protected from future development, including lands in programs for reduced tax assessment on forestland, on farmland, and on open space. These programs provide temporary but not permanent open space preservation. The Town of Hampton itself owns several parcels of land, including:

- Main Street/School property 30 acres
- Main Street/Town Hall and Grange 8 acres
- Windy Hill Road 61 acres
- Windy Hill Road 5 acres
- Kimball Hill Road 24 acres
- West Old Route 6/Town Garage 0.5 acres

There are various mechanisms for protecting and preserving open space, some more permanent than the others, including the following:

- Open space land may be owned by the Town, the State, a land trust, or some other entity and it may be restricted by deed or other means from being sold or developed.
- Open space may be preserved by conservation easements, which keeps the land under private ownership but prevents its development. Such open space may or may not be open to the public, depending on the exact language of the easement.
- The State program for purchase of development rights preserves farmlands from development by purchase of the rights to develop land while leaving that land in the ownership of the farmer for agricultural use, only.

The establishment and maintenance of privately owned open space is encouraged under the provisions of Title 12, Section 107(e) "Classification of land as open space land" of the Connecticut General Statutes. The PZC recommends that the town continue to reduce assessment of open space land as follows:

- For a tract, lot, parcel or plat of land with an area greater than 80,000 square feet which has been developed for nonagricultural purposes, or for which a building permit has been issued for nonagricultural purposes, only the land area in excess of 80,000 square feet shall qualify for designation as open space land.
- The entire area of any undeveloped tract, lot, parcel or plat of land shall qualify for designation as open space land.

In 2002, the Hampton Conservation Commission was reestablished, and it is already actively



working to conserve Hampton's natural resources and open space. State law charges the Conservation Commission with, among other things, keeping an index of all open space areas. It may acquire easements and land in the name of the Town and develop rules for using and managing this land and other town-owned open space and parks. In addition, the Conservation Commission assists in the implementation of this Plan by providing recommendations to the Planning and Zoning and Wetlands Commissions on land development proposals before those boards.

### **10.3.0 Goals**

1. Permanently protect additional open space in Hampton.
2. Establish and implement a plan for open space preservation.

### **10.4.0 Actions / Implementation**

1. **The Conservation Commission**, serving as the Town's open space committee, will:
  - Compile and disseminate up to date knowledge of funding sources and acquisitions mechanisms, with recommendations on funding mechanisms to the Board of Selectmen.
  - Develop a selection process for identification of parcels and areas to be protected and preserved which accounts for ALL the goals of open space preservation, including recreation and habitat protection.
  - Implement the open space acquisitions plan.
  - Maintain an inventory of the Town's open space, including the extent to which it is preserved in perpetuity, including map and text.

2. **The Planning and Zoning Commission** will review and revise the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to maximize their enhancement of open space protection and preservation, including such items as:
  - Open space dedication or fee in lieu of open space dedication during subdivision of land, as allowed by state statutes.
  - mandatory feasibility study of open space subdivision layout of lots for every proposed subdivision
  - use of conservation easements in subdivisions.
  - increased setbacks from property lines where developments abut preserved tracts of land.
  - Specific measures that will protect views and vistas.
  
3. **The Board of Selectman** will:
  - Acquire in-house electronic mapping capability to enable Town commissions and departments to more readily track development and open space preservation throughout Town.
  
  - Continue to authorize reduced tax assessment on undeveloped land as an important tool to preserve open space, by minimizing sales of such open space for development due to unaffordable high taxes. Such open space fosters and maintains the rural character of the Town, which is a central goal of this Plan.

## **11.0 Consistency with State and Regional Plans**

### **11.1.0 Consistency with Connecticut's Conservation and Development Policies Plan for 2004-2009**

The Hampton Plan of Conservation and Development is generally consistent with the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2004-2009, which is Connecticut's plan for the state's growth, natural resources management and conservation, and public investment policies.

The State Plan identifies Hampton's village on Main Street as a "rural community center". Such designation is given to areas of existing mixed uses that **may** be suitable for future clustering of intensive housing, shopping, employment and public services outside of urban development areas. Such centers are considered areas that may be suitable for future community water supplies, waste disposal systems and public services on a small scale only.

Although Town governmental services have clustered in the village on Main Street, this Hampton Plan of Conservation and Development does not recommend consideration of increased opportunities for commerce, employment, or community water or waste disposal systems, and neither does it recommend a denser housing pattern, in the village area. As such the Hampton Plan is not entirely consistent with the State Plan.

### **11.2.0 Consistency with the Windham Region Land Use Plan 2002**

The Hampton Plan of Conservation is generally consistent with the Windham Regional Land Use Plan 2002, which provides a land use plan for the 9 member towns of the Windham Region Council of Governments.

The regional plan names Hampton Village as a Rural Community Center and describes such centers as appropriate locations for commercial and residential redevelopment and development, with the intent to encourage development in these areas that preserves and reinforces the character of the rural community centers. Hampton's Plan of Conservation and Development makes no recommendation or provision for additional density of development in the village and seeks to preserve the village character. As such, the Hampton is partially inconsistent with this component of the Regional Plan. However, the Regional Plan identifies Hampton's western business zone on Route 6 as a "rural commercial/industrial node", which the regional plan defines as an area most appropriate for compact, medium-scale commercial-retail and industrial-enterprise development in rural areas without public utilities. Such designation is consistent with this (Hampton) Plan's recommendations for possible future expansion of commercial opportunities within the Town.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Hampton's History, as told in the 1992 Plan of Development**

Before white settlers arrived, Hampton, like all of Northeastern Connecticut, was inhabited by Nipmuck and Mohegan Indians. Neither tribe had an actual settlement in Hampton, although the Nipmuck path, which extended from Woodstock to the sea, paralleled the Little River through Hampton. The Indians burned tracts of land for fields, and Indian artifacts have been found in a cave in the Cowhantic Rocks as well as in many Hampton fields.

Late in the seventeenth century, Uncas, chief of the Mohegans, left most of the land in what was to become Windham County to his oldest son, Owaneco, except for a tract bounded on the east by the Little River and on the west by the Willimantic River, which he left to his third son, Joshua. Owaneco's tract, including the eastern part of Hampton, was given to James Fitch of Norwich in 1684. Fitch had it surveyed and sold. Joshua's tract was likewise taken over by whites who opened it to settlement in 1685. What is now Hampton became the northeastern section of the new Town of Windham.

In January, 1709, David Canada, William Shaw, Robert Moulton, and Edward Colburn, all from Salem, Massachusetts, each purchased 100-acre plots of land near what is now Drain Street and South Bigelow Road. They moved their families and settled. In 1712, the land on "Chelsea Hill" – what is now called Hampton Hill – was opened to settlement, and a village was laid out on the hill. In 1716, the settlers were given permission to form their own religious society, the Second Society of Windham (often called Canada Parish), in what was called "Windham Village" until Hampton became a separate town. A Congregational minister, William Billings of Preston, was called to preach in 1722.

Until 1786, most of Hampton was part of the Town of Windham and governed by Windham Town Meeting. Hampton men served in all the important parts of the town government. A pound near the village was established in 1715, and periodically renewed in order to keep stray animals from destroying vital food crops. A cemetery, now the South Cemetery, was started the same year. The never ending process of establishing roads and keeping them up was also begun. A militia company was formed in 1724, and for nearly 150 years until the Civil War, Hampton took active part in the training, parade, election of officers, and occasional combat activities of the militia.

Inexpensive land for farming attracted numbers of families to Hampton, and the farms became productive and generally prosperous. Prosperity brought large families with children to educate. In 1763, school districts were established; school houses were built and teachers were hired by communities of committees of citizens to keep schools. Some Hampton farmers became merchants, collecting and selling Hampton produce for export in Norwich and Providence and Hartford, and importing goods Hampton families needed. A meeting house was built in the center of the village in 1752. The Congregational church, under the leadership of Samuel Moseley, its minister from 1736 to 1791, grew in membership, took in local Indians and Blacks as members, and successfully weathered the religious upheavals of the mid-eighteenth century. Hampton men fought and died in the French and Indian War (1754-1763), and Hampton people took leading roles in starting the movement of Connecticut people to

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the west – into the Wyoming and Susquehanna valleys in Pennsylvania.

Hampton people took an active part in the great crisis of the War for Independence from Great Britain and the American Revolution (1775-1787). Hampton's well-trained militia was part of the Connecticut militia which assembled under the command of Israel Putnam of Brooklyn and marched to Massachusetts as soon as the news came of the battles at Lexington and Concord in April, 1775.

Hampton men fought and died under Putnam at the battle of Bunker Hill, and under Washington in the Long Island campaign. During the long war, when many of the men were gone for months at a time, Hampton women ran the farms, worked in the fields, and kept the town – as well as their own families – going. A house still stands in Hampton which was built by women during the revolution.

After American Independence was achieved, Hampton won its own independence as a town. It was created a town in 1786, principally out of the town of Windham, but with parts from Mansfield, Pomfret, Canterbury and Brooklyn. The first town meeting was held in the fall of 1786, and Hampton people took on the responsibilities, for themselves, of electing their own officials, and providing for bridges, roads, schools, the care of the poor, and regulation of economic activity in the town. In 1787, the town elected a representative to go to a convention in Hartford to ratify the Constitution of the United States, and a committee of townspeople was appointed by Town Meeting to advise him on how to vote. There is no record of his vote – but representatives from several other northeastern Connecticut towns voted to reject the Constitution because it gave too much power to the Federal government.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Hampton achieved the largest population it would have until the 1980s – 1369 men, woman, and children. From the beginning of agricultural settlement, there had been sawmills in town to produce building materials from local trees and gristmills to make edible meal and flour out of locally grown grains. Skilled artisans in town (who were also farmers) made cloth and clothes, shoes, tools, houses, wagons, sleighs, plows, hats, and furniture to satisfy local needs for manufactured goods. The early nineteenth century saw the establishment of several small manufacturing mills on the Little River – part of the industrial revolution then slowly developing in America – using technology often developed or improved by Hampton people, several of whom patented their inventions, and financed by capital accumulated out of Hampton's agricultural production.

At one time or another in the nineteenth century, eye-glasses were made in Hampton, wooden buttons were manufactured, and silk was processed and spun. (Silk processing in Hampton was part of the development of the northeast Connecticut silk industry initially centered in Mansfield which ultimately bought the large-scale silk manufacturing for which Manchester became famous.) A hat factory operated for a while. The Little River was dammed in two or three different places at different times to provide water reservoirs for water-powered mills; a small cotton mill, a mill for weaving red blankets, and a woolen and satinet mill. One Hampton man Nathaniel F. Martin, a Revolutionary War veteran, patented an improvement on a mill water-wheel which he licensed for use in Hampton and in Mansfield. But the Little River was too small an energy-source to support large mechanized manufacturing. Hampton people who wanted to work in mills or become involved in big industries moved away. Industrial mills were very short-lived in Hampton.

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As the population grew larger than Hampton farms could support, and families had more children than could expect to inherit or buy farms in town, people began to leave. In the first thirty or forty years of the nineteenth century, the population of the town remained relatively stable as young people moved west to find land and employment, or moved into the increasing number of mill towns and cities that were growing up in New England and elsewhere in America. Sometimes whole families moved out -- but often a brother or sister was left in Hampton, sometimes on the "family place" -- so that family names of original or early settlers continued in town. And some new people and new families moved into town; immigrants from Ireland and Canada began to appear in Hampton in small numbers in the 1830s. Some of them came to work as hired hands on farms and in homes, and some took up permanent residence.

Hampton's population declined steadily from the 1850s until 1920. The town however continued to have a lively social, religious, and political life. Hampton's roads had long provided easy movement in and out of town, scheduled stagecoaches traveled through or near town, and particularly after the establishment of a Hampton Post Office in 1820, communication with the world outside of town was efficient and frequent. Nationwide social movements of the early nineteenth century -- like temperance, welfare reform, abolition -- had powerful effects in Hampton. The religious revivals of the 1820s and 1830s came to Hampton -- and brought among other things, the turning and remodeling of the meeting house into the present Greek Revival Congregational Church. They also resulted in the building of another church building in town, the Howard Valley Church. Earlier, just before the Revolution, the Baptists had formed a church in the north end of town. Later in the century, the Catholic Church established a parish and built a church on Cedar Swamp Road.

In politics, Hampton political leaders had joined national political parties, but always paid more attention and gave more care to local issues and local concerns. Jeffersonian Democratic Republicans were strong in Hampton in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, but not strong enough to defeat the established federalists in Hampton on the issue of a new state constitution in 1818. Jacksonian Democrats dominated Hampton politics for a decade or two from the late 1820s, and produced Chauncey F. Cleveland, Hampton's only governor of the state (in 1842). There were Anti-Masons and Know Nothings in Hampton's politics, and by the late 1840s, a leading Hampton citizen Jonathan Clark, was a free soil, anti-slavery partisan. Clark erected a liberty pole which still stands at Clark's Corner (at the intersection of Brook Road and U. S. 6) to proclaim his stand against slavery. Hampton had been the birthplace and the site of the early education of one of the nation's leading abolitionists, Theodore Dwight Weld -- son of Ludovicus Weld, the Congregational minister from 1792 to 1821. The question of slavery and the abolition of slavery came to dominate Hampton's politics in the 1850s -- as it did the politics of much of the nation -- and brought the formation and rapid domination of the Republican party. By the beginning of the Civil War (1861 -- 1865), Hampton's national political allegiance to the Republicans was set. Although local Democrats remained active, local Republicans have dominated Hampton's politics ever since.

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Young men from Hampton went to fight in the Union Army during the Civil War, and the added taxes, the anxieties, and the horror of that war were an important part of Hampton's life. Because of the declining agriculture in Hampton and the great opportunities for land and jobs that opened after the Civil War in the rest of the country, few veterans spent the rest of their lives in Hampton. Railroads had come close to town in the 1840s, and 1872 saw the beginning of railroad service to, and through Hampton. The result was a rapid decline in demand for any of the products of Hampton's farms or manufacturers, and an equally rapid decline in the possibility of doing any profitable mercantile business in Hampton. The remaining farmers in Hampton became primarily subsistence farmers, who made some cash income selling milk shipped by train to big city markets. The several stores in town were reduced to one general store. At least one of the "public houses" -- the several inns and taverns that had operated since the mid-eighteenth century -- remained, but its ownership changed frequently until it finally closed its doors in the 1940s. In an effort to help keep alive the agricultural character and the rural values of Hampton life, several Hampton men and women joined the "Grange" movement late in the nineteenth century, and formed a local Grange, Little River Grange No. 36, of the national Patrons of Husbandry. The organization has been an important element in maintaining the vitality of the community in Hampton throughout the twentieth century.

Late in the nineteenth century and for much of the first half of the twentieth century, Hampton was a summer resort town. Many of the older houses in town, particularly those in the village, became summer residences. Some of them remained in the hands of Hampton families who were permanent residence elsewhere, and some of them were bought by people "out of town" who maintained them and spent summers in them. Bigelow Pond, the lake behind the dam in the valley along North Bigelow Road, was the site of fishing and boating, and of summer encampments of the Grand Army of the Republic (the Union Veterans' organization). Some of the big residences in town took in summer boarders, and the Chelsea Inn (now a private residence at 270 Main Street) was the center of summer social life.

Modern life in Hampton in the twentieth century came slowly. Rural free delivery of mail started in 1904, permitting Hampton consumers to have mail-order catalog goods. The town's first automobile was owned by Dr. Amos Avery, and the first improved highway came in 1910. The Hampton Volunteer Fire Company was established with a horse-drawn pump, and later with a fire-truck. In the 1920s, as the U.S. highway system developed, U.S. 6 (which runs still from Provincetown, Massachusetts to Bishop, California) came through Hampton and up "the hill" through the village. As roads and automobiles came, it became even more possible than it was on trains and trolleys for people who worked elsewhere to live in Hampton. There has only been a high school in Hampton once, briefly in the 1850s and 1860s. Twentieth-century high school students from town went to Willimantic, first by train and later by bus. In 1923, Austin Barklay Fletcher left an endowment fund -- and his house -- for a public library. On January 19, 1927, electric service to Hampton was established -- but it was many years before all the houses in town were "electrified".

Hampton sent some young men to war in World War I (1917-18) and World War II (1941-45). In World War II, an Army observation post - to help defend the aircraft industries around Hartford from air attack - was established in Hampton.

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After World War II Hampton saw rapid changes. The population grew as year round residents bought houses that had been long been summer homes. In 1947, the five remaining district schools in Hampton (first established in the 1760s) were closed and all the elementary school students were sent to a brand new Consolidated School in the village. (Most of the old school houses have since become residences.) The new school had central heating, running water, and modern plumbing. A volunteer ambulance corps was established to provide the kind of emergency medical assistance the volunteer fire company had long provided for fire emergencies. In the 1950s, the State Highway Department rerouted and rebuilt U.S. 6 through Hampton so that it no longer runs through the village. In 1955, the last passenger train stopped in Hampton, and in 1963 highway freight service also ended. In the 1960s, a Hampton Antiquarian and Historical Society was established, which was given a house by Louise Burnham Hibbard, which is now a museum of Hampton life. In 1957 Hampton joined Chaplin and Scotland in Regional District Eleven and helped build Parish Hill School to provide education for children in grades seven through twelve. And in 1990, Hampton is building a much larger elementary school at the north end of the village to replace the Consolidated School.

Hampton's population has tripled since 1920, to its present size of about 1550 people. Many of the farm fields in town, carefully fenced with stone walls, have become woods either by deliberate planting (Hampton is the site of James L. Goodwin's private forest, started in the 1920s and now the state of Connecticut's James L. Goodwin Forest and Conservation Center) or by the natural reforestation that resulted from abandoning fields. Many new houses have been built in town, some on the sites of long-disappeared houses, but most in places where houses have never been built. Although 133 people work in Hampton by the most recent count, it is not a place of primary employment. Income is imported into town by people who work elsewhere, but have chosen to live in Hampton. Hampton is a rural residential community in which the community institutions function by drawing on strong local connections to the town's past and by fostering awareness that it was the work and caring of the generations of men and women who lived in Hampton which made it the beautiful and functional modern New England town it is.

*Note:*

*Hampton and its history can be found in Ellen Larned's outstanding two volume history of Windham County, Connecticut, first published in 1874, and republished in 1976; in Clarence Webster's Town-Meeting Country (1945); in Susan Jewett Griggs's Folklore and Firesides of Pomfret, Hampton and Vicinity (1950); in Alison Davis's excellent oral history Hampton Remembers (1976); and in Edwin Way Teale's A Naturalist Buys An Old Farm. Katherine Holt contributed to and edited the original version of this history in the 1970 Hampton Plan of Development, and made many suggestions about its contents. The advice and suggestions of Professors Richard O. Curry and Richard D. Brown, of the Department of History in the University of Connecticut, Storrs, have been used in both versions. This version of Hampton's history was drafted by James Oliver Robertson, a Hampton resident and a professional historian.*



## **Appendix B**

### **Resources on CD**

| File Name                         | Description  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. AdbeRdr707_en_US_distrib.exe   | Acrobat Reader version 7                               |
| 2. Orthographic map.pdf           | Orthographic map of Hampton                            |
| 3. Land Use.pdf                   | Land use map showing roads and commercial zones        |
| 4. Hampton POCD January 2007 .PDF | Hampton Plan of Conservation and Development           |
| 5. Topographic map.pdf            | Topographical map of Hampton                           |
| 6. Land use overlay viewer.pdf    | Interactive PDF of land use overlays. (See appendix C) |

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Land use overlay viewer**

The “Land Use Overlay Viewer” is a single page PDF document that is intended to be used as an easy way to view the land and water resources in the Town of Hampton. The Land Use Overlay Viewer is provided on the CD in the back cover of this book. The same PDF file is also available on the Town of Hampton website at <http://www.hamptonct.org> .

When you open the CD on your computer you will find a file called “Land Use Overlay Viewer.pdf” just double click it. You will see a picture of the tax map and a series of buttons on both sides of the map. The initial view has the tax map turned on. Click the “Tax Map” button and you will notice that the map disappears. Click on it again to bring it back. As you click the other buttons on the screen more data is added to the map in the form of transparencies. Notice that when you put the cursor over a button on the screen and just leave it still without pressing the mouse button you get a more detailed description of that layer. The page is 11” x 17” so if you decide to print it on an 8 ½ x 11 page make sure to check fit to page in your printer dialog. Also notice that the buttons don’t print so you’ll have to make a note of the layers you had turned on in order to know what data your printout represents.

(Adobe Acrobat Reader version 6 or 7 is required to use overlay viewer. Version 7 is supplied on CD.  
If you prefer you can download the newest Adobe Acrobat Reader free at <http://www.adobe.com> )

## **Appendix D**

### **Maps**

Land Use Map  
Topographic Map  
Orthographic Map