

SECTION 6

COMMUNITY VISION

A. DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

The Town of Wendell's open space and recreation goals were developed through the following planning process:

- In 2008, an Open Space and Recreation Survey was prepared and sent to all the households and landowners in Wendell. Of these, 53 surveys were returned from Wendell residents, which represented a five percent return rate (See the survey form and an analysis of the responses in the Appendix).
- Beginning in September 2008, the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee and developed this Open Space and Recreation Plan with the assistance of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Planning Department. The following methods were used to foster public participation in the planning process:
 - The 2008 Open Space and Recreation Survey results were used as the basis for the development of Section 8: Goals and Objectives, as well as the overall open space and recreation goals or vision.
 - Three residents in their early 20's assisted with the initial collection of information for the Plan during the summer of 2008.
 - A total of 12 public meetings were held by a volunteer Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee between September 2008 and December 2010.
 - Two to three drafts of each section of the plan were mailed to a broad range of reviewers representing key town boards, community groups, and non-profit organizations for their comments and suggestions for revisions. This process was followed both in 2008 and in 2010.
 - Several sets of the Open Space and Recreation Plan maps have been displayed during regular meetings of the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee, in map review sessions held at the Town Offices, as well as at the Public Forum. All comments have been incorporated into the Plan.
 - A public forum was held in November 2010, where 17 people reviewed and discussed the inventory, analysis, community goals, objectives, and

seven-year Action Plan, including assisting with the prioritization of action items. All public comments have been recorded and incorporated into the Plan.

- There was table with information about updating the Plan with an emphasis on the goals and objectives at the Earth Day Celebrations in both 2009 and 2010.
- There was information about the planning process in the Town newsletter and at Old Home Day in 2010 focusing on the objectives and proposed action steps including opportunities for community feedback.
- The Chair of the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee met with the Planning Board, Agricultural Commission, and Selectboard in 2009 to review the goals and objectives and gather action steps. In 2010, the Chair met with the Selectboard, Conservation Commission, the Tree Warden, and the Open Space Committee to discuss their concerns and review the new draft Action Plan.
- The Planning Board and Agricultural Commission reviewed the Action Plan at their meetings in 2010 and provided valuable feedback that was incorporated into the Plan.

B. STATEMENT OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL GOALS

People live in Wendell because they like its rural, small town character. On the whole, Wendell residents value peace and quiet, clean air and water, and open fields, forests, and trails. According to the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Survey, 75% of respondents felt that these aspects of Wendell were the most important factors influencing their decision to move to and/or live in Wendell. In addition, large majorities of survey respondents identified clean air (89%), clean drinking water (89%), lakes/streams/ponds (83%), rural character (81%), and forests (81%) as well as its open fields, wildlife habitat, wetlands, and wilderness (all at 75%) as important and worth conserving. Significant majorities also identified the Town's farmland (68%), scenic views (67%), historic structures (63%), dirt roads (62%), and stone walls (60%) as worthy of conservation.

According to the Open Space and Recreation Survey and the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee, the ideal Wendell would have managed to conserve the majority of its uninterrupted forests and with that ensure the presence of diverse wildlife habitats, the purity of its water and air, and the use of an easily accessed trail system connecting public and privately owned open space. People would be living lightly on the land so that groundwater, wetlands, aquifers, and drinking water would be able to support all of life in Wendell. The dark night sky in Wendell would be free from light pollution. Though the majority of residents would live far apart they would gather through the seasons at popular recreation sites around town: Fiske Pond, Lyon's Brook, Wendell State Forest, Ruggles Pond, and Wickett Pond. The Town Hall, Town Offices, Wendell Free Library, and the Recycling and Transfer Station would continue to be places where

residents would catch up on local events. Wendell would encourage local entrepreneurship and a sustainable local economy by providing a rural setting and strong sense of community, which would attract and nurture home businesses and agricultural enterprises through the natural interactions of people who want to spend time in the Town and environment of their choice.