

## Section 1

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### PLAN SUMMARY

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee's Five Year Action Plan focuses on the protection of water resources to provide for safe and abundant drinking water for the community; preserving and protection significant historic and natural resources in the community; supporting the Fields Master Plan to provide organized recreation opportunities; and most significantly maintaining and improving open space and recreation resources already owned by the Town.

The Town of Walpole draws on its aquifers to provide its residents with safe drinking water. In order to maintain the high standards for clean drinking water the Town's land use regulation must address Best Management Practices (BMP) for clean water to infiltrate into the ground and discharging clean water to our water bodies. The Open Space and Recreation Plan committee supports land use regulations at both the local, state and federal levels which work to protect the Towns surface and groundwater.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan addresses several areas of the Town where there are unprotected large parcels of land which are historically, culturally and/or environmentally significant and should be protected in the future. These areas range from the agricultural lands of the Norfolk Agricultural School, the Buttimer Farm, Traphole Brook, parcels along the Neponset River corridor, and historically significant areas within or adjacent to the Town Forest, South Walpole, Plimptonville and East Walpole. These areas are priority areas for future protection efforts.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee recognized the need for new and expanded fields for the organized sports groups in Walpole. The Committee did not conduct its own survey or research into this need because the Fields Use Committee with the Recreation Commission had recently drafted a "2008 Fields Use Master Plan". The recommendation of this study was incorporated into the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan survey responses indicated that many of the people who responded to the survey were unaware of existing open space sites in the Town. Responders either did not know where sites were or they were under utilized because of the need for access. Signs, access, trail maintenance, and educational opportunities are needed so existing site can be used up to their potential. The Five-Year Action Plan includes programs to address these issues.

In summary, the Five Year Action Plan seeks to: preserve and protect significant natural and historic resources for environmental and cultural values; to provide additional areas for all Walpole citizens to recreate; and to expand and/or maintain to a higher standard existing open space resources so that they may be used to the best they have to offer.

## Section 2

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### INTRODUCTION

#### ***Statement of Purpose***

The Town of Walpole is a spirited community with a small town feel and community-oriented values. Walpole like many New England communities has changed over time adjusting to changes in industrial and commercial needs, transportation needs, and residential needs however parts of Walpole have changed little. The new and the old, the contemporary and the historic, are parts of Walpole's charm.

Walpole's resources are diverse and so are its needs. Walpole has always sought to balance the need to acquire and preserve its natural resources with its needs to be fiscally responsible. The 2011 Open Space and Recreation Plan seeks to maintain this balance and respond to the needs of the Town by preserving its historic, cultural, and natural treasures, by maintaining open space areas already owned, by protecting groundwater for drinking water, and by thinking ahead to provide opportunities for residents to enjoy both open space areas and recreational facilities in the future.

#### ***Planning Process and Public Participation***

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee met at least once a month from June 2008 to July 2011. All meetings were posted and included on the Conservation Commission Agendas. Two of the meetings were advertised in the Walpole Times October 10, 2010 and June 22, 2011. The Committee and/or Staff met with representatives from the following committees: *Trails Committee, Master Plan Committee, Water and Sewer Commission, Recreation Commission, Historic Commission, Ponds Committee, Town Forest Committee and the Board of Selectmen* during this time. Letters asking for input were sent out to all of the Town Departments to collect comments and information.

An *Open Space and Recreation Survey* was developed and posted on the Town of Walpole and School websites in March-June 2010. Notices advertising the website were placed around Town and key locations as well as Town Hall. Notice of the survey was also posted on Wicked local and the Walpole Times newspaper.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee members visited existing open space and recreation areas to review them for access and facilities during May-June 2011. Inventory sheets were filled out and this information was reviewed to determine what the existing open space in the ownership of the Conservation Commission needed in order to make them more accessible.

## Section 2

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The Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee consisted of the following:

Jack Wiley, *Chair Conservation Commission*  
Al Goetz, *Conservation Commission*  
Betsey Dexter Dyer, *Conservation Commission*  
Dick Adams, *Conservation Commission and Town Forest Committee*  
Roger Turner, *Conservation Commission, Ponds Committee, and Water and Sewer Commission*  
Jim Finnegan, *Conservation Commission*  
Sean Sparks, *Conservation Commission*  
John Murtagh, *Planning Board*

Staff:

Landis Hershey, *Conservation Agent*  
Pam Smith, *Conservation Board Secretary*  
Don Johnson, *Town Planner*  
Josh Cole, *Director of Recreation*

## Section 3

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### COMMUNITY SETTING

#### Regional Context

The Town of Walpole is located about 19 miles south of Boston and 26 miles north of Providence. U.S. Route 1 and Interstate 95 pass through the southeast edge of Town. Clockwise from the northwest corner of town, Walpole is surrounded by the towns of Dover, Westwood, Norwood, Sharon, Foxborough, Norfolk, and Medfield, all within Norfolk County. State Routes 1A and 27 bisect the Town in opposite directions and intersect in the Town Center, and regional access is provided by US Route 1 and I-95, which cross the southeastern and eastern parts of town. The Franklin-Boston commuter rail line passes through Walpole with a station in the Town Center, and a CSX freight line runs perpendicular to the commuter line (**see Map 1**).

Walpole's Town Center is a hub of economic and social vitality, offering many retail, medical, recreational, financial, and professional services to the residents of Walpole and many of its neighboring towns, as well as providing a Town Campus setting associated with the Town Hall, Senior Center, Public Safety services, and, in the near future, the Library. Walpole also has both commercial and industrial development along Route 1, including the recently revitalized Walpole Mall. East Walpole, South Walpole and Plimptonville constitute significant villages within the Town, and represent distinct components of the Town's character. East Walpole can be classified as a minor business center in the Town as well. Walpole is the host Town of the Cedar Junction state correctional facility as well as Norfolk County Agricultural High School, both of which include large open space parcels.

The residential neighborhoods near the Town Center are relatively dense, and help contribute to the Center's vitality. The same can be said for the East Walpole area. The remainder of the Town still retains much rural character, particularly in the northern part of town, which, although significant housing development has taken place over the past 10 – 15 years, has remained rural in character because, in part, of the Town's acquisition of Adams Farm and the significant amount of land held by the Agricultural High School in that area.

Many of the characteristics discussed above contribute to a desirable quality of life. Therefore, like many of its neighbors, Walpole has seen increased residential growth in recent years.

## History

While there are no documented sites of native habitation in Walpole, there is evidence that the productive fishing and hunting grounds at the headwaters of the Neponset River were used by Massachusetts Bay coastal tribes. The rocky uplands and cedar swamps provided a natural buffer between the Neponset tribes on the east and the Wampanoag and Narragansett tribes to the south and west. Artifacts have been found near Plimptonville and Hilltop Farm, and a native village site has been located along the river in South Walpole (Town of Walpole, 1987).

The first European settlers arrived between 1660 and 1670 to live on the high ground between the Neponset River and Spring Brook. They harvested cedar from the cedar swamps, or were subsistence farmers. During the Colonial Period (1676-1776) the population increased to nearly 1000 people, most of who were engaged in agriculture during the summer and lumbering in the winter. Mills were built on the Neponset and other streams to process local products. Forges and smelters were also constructed to process bog iron. Several two-story central chimney houses and Cape Cod cottages that were built during this period still remain. A lime kiln from this era has also been excavated in West Walpole (Town of Walpole, 1987).

During the Federal Period (1775-1830), the small mills developed into established industries, producing cotton and wool, paper, and Stetson agricultural implements. Villages were created in South Walpole and East Walpole, while the Town center continued to develop (Town of Walpole, 1987).

As railroads developed, commercial and industrial activities grew, as did the population. Trolleys at the turn of the century fostered suburban development (Town of Walpole, 1987), as did the automobile for the remainder of the twentieth century and into the early part of the twenty-first century. The relatively easy access afforded by I-95 and Route 1, and the regional access afforded by Route 1A, have to this day been contributing factors to the suburban development of Walpole in this Post-WWII period.

## Population Characteristics

### Population Growth

As shown in Table 1, the Town of Walpole grew rapidly from 1920 to 1970. With the exception of the 1930's, the percentage of population growth per decade was well into double digits. The biggest growth spurt occurred during the 1950's when the Town grew by 54.44%, an increase of nearly 5,000 residents. Another 4,081 residents were added in the 1960's for an increase of 29.01%. Thus the Town just about doubled in population between 1950 and 1970.

Growth slowed considerably in the 1970's to just 3.91% for the decade. The rate of growth picked up in the 1980's, increasing by 7.17% to 20,212, accelerated in the 1990's, increasing by

12.93% to 22,826 in 2000, and slowed again in the 2000's, increasing by 5.46% to 24,070, according to the U.S. Census.

**TABLE 3-1**  
**WALPOLE POPULATION GROWTH, 1920 TO 2000**

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| <u>Year</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Change</u> | <u>% Change</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1920        | 5,446             | NA            | NA              |
| 1930        | 7,273             | 1,827         | 33.55%          |
| 1940        | 7,443             | 170           | 2.35%           |
| 1950        | 9,109             | 1,666         | 22.38%          |
| 1960        | 14,068            | 4,959         | 54.44%          |
| 1970        | 18,149            | 4,081         | 29.01%          |
| 1980        | 18,859            | 710           | 3.91%           |
| 1990        | 20,212            | 1,353         | 7.17%           |
| 2000        | 22,826            | 2,614         | 12.93%          |
| 2010        | 24,070            | 1,254         | 5.46%           |

NA= Not Applicable

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, various years

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Table 3-2 illustrates that population growth has increased moderately in the 2000s in comparison to previous decades. The population growth of 1,140 persons from 2001 to 2009 is significantly less than half of the growth of the decade of the 1990s but somewhat comparable to the growth during the 1970s and 1980s. The significant increase in population in 2006 is likely due to The Preserve apartment complex coming on line. Three of the years of the 2000s actually show a decrease in total population, with the greatest decrease in 2009, likely being due to the transfer of inmate population from the Cedar Junction complex to that in Shirley.

**TABLE 3-2**  
**WALPOLE POPULATION GROWTH 2001 TO 2010**

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| <u>Year</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Change</u> | <u>% Change</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 2001        | 23,139            | NA*           | NA*             |
| 2002        | 23,181            | 42            | .18%            |
| 2003        | 23,162            | -19           | -.08%           |
| 2004        | 23,301            | 139           | .60%            |
| 2005        | 23,254            | -47           | -.20%           |
| 2006        | 24,014            | 760           | 3.27%           |
| 2007        | 24,096            | 82            | .34%            |
| 2008        | 24,396            | 300           | 1.24%           |
| 2009        | 24,279            | -117          | -.48%           |
| 2010        | 24,301            | 22            | .09%            |

2001 - 2010

1,160

5.02%

NA= Not Applicable \*Not compared with 2000 because figure is from different source.

Source: Walpole Town Clerk, various years

**Population Density**

Change in population density in Walpole is presented in Table 3-3, while Table 3-4 compares Walpole's 2010 population density with that of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) district of 101 cities and towns, and the MAPC sub-region of 12 communities known as the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC). As Table 4 illustrates, Walpole's population density is nearly twice that of the State as a whole, but lower than its MAPC sub-region (TRIC) as a whole, and slightly less than half that of the MAPC district as a whole. This attests to the significant open space and rural character that still remains in Walpole.

**TABLE 3-3  
OVERALL POPULATION DENSITY IN WALPOLE, 1950 - 2010**

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Area</u> <sup>1</sup> | <u>Density</u> <sup>2</sup> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1950        | 9,109             | 20.99                    | 434                         |
| 1960        | 14,068            | 20.99                    | 670                         |
| 1970        | 18,149            | 20.99                    | 865                         |
| 1980        | 18,859            | 20.99                    | 898                         |
| 1990        | 20,212            | 20.99                    | 962                         |
| 2000        | 22,826            | 20.99                    | 1,087                       |
| 2010        | 24,070            | 20.99                    | 1,147                       |

<sup>1</sup> Square miles      <sup>2</sup>Persons per square mile

Source: Computed by authors.

**TABLE 3-4  
COMPARATIVE 2010 DENSITY, WALPOLE AND VARIOUS REGIONS**

|                                    | <u>Population</u> | <u>Density</u> <sup>1</sup> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Walpole                            | 24,070            | 1,147                       |
| Three Rivers Interlocal Council    | 248,521           | 1,416                       |
| Metropolitan Area Planning Council | 3,161,712         | 2,365                       |
| Massachusetts                      | 6,547,629         | 620                         |

<sup>1</sup>Persons per square mile

Source: Bureau of the Census, 2011; MAPC, 2011; Computed by authors

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Table 3-5 presents the amount of land in various land use categories in 1971, 1985, and 1999 (the most recent data available). It shows that acreage in urban land uses increased by 45.3% from 1971 to 1999. During this period, acreage devoted to agricultural land declined by 43.2%, open land acreage was reduced by 24.1%, forest land acreage decreased by 18.8%, and land classified as “water” (including wetlands and open water) remained relatively stable at a modest decrease of 1.6%. Overall, undeveloped (including agricultural) land and recreation land totaled 9,553 acres (71% of the total) in 1971. By 1985, it totaled 8704 acres (64% of the total). Over this period the amount of acreage in agricultural use declined significantly and steadily from 789.6 acres in 1971 to 667.2 acres in 1985 and to 448.8 acres in 1999.

Table 3-6 compares the amount of land used for residential purposes in 1971, 1985, and 1999 with the population in those years. In 1971, a total of 3,010 acres was used for the residences of 18,220 people. This represents a density on the residential land of 6.05 persons per acre. This overall density of persons per acre on residential land decreased to 5.39 in 1985 and decreased further to 4.99 by 1999.

Table 3-7 compares changes in the residential land acreage and number of persons per residential acre between 1971 and 1985 and between 1985 and 1999 to the changes in population over those time periods. The changes in persons per residential acre increased from 2.14 between 1971 and 1985 to 3.38 between 1985 and 1999.

TABLE 5: LAND USE CHANGES IN WALPOLE, 1971 TO 1999 (in acres)

| Category                         | 1971<br>Acres  | 71-85<br>Change | 1985<br>Acres  | 85-99<br>Change | 1999<br>Acres  | 71-99<br>Change | %<br>Change<br>71-99 |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 'agriculture - crop'             | 616.2          | -94.9           | 521.3          | -160.9          | 360.5          | -255.7          | -41.5%               |
| 'agriculture - pasture'          | 139.7          | -15.7           | 124.0          | -47.1           | 76.9           | -62.8           | -45.0%               |
| 'agriculture - perennial'        | 33.7           | -11.8           | 21.8           | -10.4           | 11.4           | -22.3           | -66.1%               |
| <b>AGRICULTURE TOTAL</b>         | <b>789.6</b>   | <b>-122.4</b>   | <b>667.2</b>   | <b>-218.4</b>   | <b>448.8</b>   | <b>-340.8</b>   | <b>-43.2%</b>        |
| <b>forest' (TOTAL)</b>           | <b>7003.7</b>  | <b>-641.4</b>   | <b>6362.3</b>  | <b>-677.9</b>   | <b>5684.4</b>  | <b>-1319.4</b>  | <b>-18.8%</b>        |
| <b>open' (TOTAL)</b>             | <b>772.0</b>   | <b>-156.6</b>   | <b>615.4</b>   | <b>-29.8</b>    | <b>585.6</b>   | <b>-186.3</b>   | <b>-24.1%</b>        |
| 'recreation – participation'     | 186.8          | 90.5            | 277.4          | 6.6             | 284.0          | 97.2            | 52.0%                |
| 'recreation – spectator'         | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0%                 |
| 'recreation – water'             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0%                 |
| <b>RECREATION TOTAL</b>          | <b>186.8</b>   | <b>90.5</b>     | <b>277.4</b>   | <b>6.6</b>      | <b>284.0</b>   | <b>97.2</b>     | <b>52.0%</b>         |
| 'urban - commercial'             | 128.8          | 58.2            | 187.0          | 37.7            | 224.7          | 95.9            | 74.5%                |
| 'urban - industrial'             | 199.3          | 86.9            | 286.2          | 60.5            | 346.7          | 147.5           | 74.0%                |
| 'urban - mining'                 | 238.2          | -16.0           | 222.2          | -84.6           | 137.6          | -100.6          | -42.2%               |
| 'urban - public or transitional' | 173.2          | 19.7            | 192.9          | 71.3            | 264.2          | 91.0            | 52.5%                |
| 'urban – residential - multiple' | 23.3           | 38.2            | 61.5           | 96.4            | 158.0          | 134.7           | 577.7%               |
| 'urban – residential - dense'    | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0%                 |
| 'urban – residential – medium'   | 1642.3         | 335.9           | 1978.2         | 356.0           | 2334.2         | 691.9           | 42.1%                |
| 'urban – residential - sparse'   | 1344.0         | 240.4           | 1584.3         | 442.4           | 2026.7         | 682.7           | 50.8%                |
| 'urban - transportation'         | 79.8           | 6.7             | 86.4           | 3.1             | 89.5           | 9.8             | 12.2%                |
| 'urban - waste disposal'         | 64.7           | 57.4            | 122.1          | -47.6           | 74.5           | 9.9             | 15.2%                |
| <b>URBAN TOTAL</b>               | <b>3893.4</b>  | <b>827.4</b>    | <b>4720.8</b>  | <b>935.3</b>    | <b>5656.1</b>  | <b>1762.7</b>   | <b>45.3%</b>         |
| 'water - fresh wetland'          | 531.6          | -10.6           | 521.0          | -11.9           | 509.1          | -22.4           | -4.2%                |
| 'water - new ocean'              | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0%                 |
| 'water - open water'             | 330.8          | 13.0            | 343.8          | -4.0            | 339.8          | 9.0             | 2.7%                 |
| 'water - salt wetland'           | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0%                 |
| <b>WATER TOTAL</b>               | <b>862.3</b>   | <b>2.5</b>      | <b>864.8</b>   | <b>-15.9</b>    | <b>848.9</b>   | <b>-13.4</b>    | <b>-1.6%</b>         |
| <b>TOTAL AREA (acres)</b>        | <b>13507.8</b> |                 | <b>13507.8</b> |                 | <b>13507.8</b> |                 |                      |

**TABLE 3-6**  
**DENSITY ON LAND USED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES**

| Year | Population <sup>1</sup> | Residential Acres | Density of Persons Per Residential |
|------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1971 | 18,220                  | 3,010             | 6.05                               |
| 1985 | 19,536                  | 3,624             | 5.39                               |
| 1999 | 22,565                  | 4,519             | 4.99                               |

**TABLE 3-7**  
**CHANGES IN POPULATION AND RESIDENTIAL ACREAGE**

| Years     | Population | Residential Acres | Changes in Persons Per Residential Acre |
|-----------|------------|-------------------|---|
| 1971-1985 | 1,316      | 614               | 2.14                                    |
| 1985-1999 | 3,029      | 895               | 3.38                                    |

<sup>1</sup>The 1971, 1985, and 1999 population figures were estimated by increasing the 1970, 1980, and 1990 figures by the average annual increase for the respective decades (from Table 3-1).

Source: Computed by authors.

Perhaps the most noteworthy data inferred from these tables are the changes in population and residential acreage, in terms of the amount of land used for residential purposes compared to the growth in population. Between 1971 and 1985, the population increased by 1,316 people, yet 614 new acres were added to the residential total. Of this increase, 38.2 acres of "multi-family" were added. Most of the new development was "medium residential" (335.9 acres) while "sparse residential" increased by 240.3 acres. The change in density for this new development averaged 2.14 persons per acre. By contrast, between 1985 and 1999, 442.4 of the 895 new residential acres were in the "sparse residential" category. While 96.5 acres were in the "multi-family" category, 356 acres were developed as "medium residential". This overall change in density averaged 3.38 persons per acre. While the population increase from 1985 to 1999 was 2.3 times the increase from 1971 to 1985, the increase in the amount of residential land developed to accommodate that growth was 1.5 times as much as that developed during the earlier period, with slightly less than half of that land being devoted to sparse residential development. This is in contrast from the previous period, when slightly more than half of the increase in developed residential land was for medium density residential. Thus it is evident that more recent residential development is consuming more land per person than that in previous times, leading, consequently, to a correspondingly greater loss of undeveloped land in proportion to the amount of land consumed by the population increases over the period from 1985 to 1999 in comparison to the period from 1971 to 1985.

## Education

Table 3-8 compares the education level in Walpole with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Norfolk County, using the latest available data, from the U.S. Census Bureau 2005 – 2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. As can be seen, Walpole has a significantly higher percentage of high school and college graduates than the Commonwealth as a whole, but essentially the same numbers as Norfolk County as a whole.

**TABLE 3-8  
COMPARATIVE 2009 EDUCATION LEVELS**

| Area           | High School or More <sup>1</sup> | College or More <sup>1</sup> |
|----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Walpole        | 95.4%                            | 47.3%                        |
| Norfolk County | 96.0%                            | 43.9%                        |
| Massachusetts  | 88.4%                            | 37.8%                        |

<sup>1</sup>Includes persons 25 years old and older

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Income

The income level in Walpole compared to Norfolk County and Massachusetts as a whole is shown in Table 3-9, using the latest available data, from the U.S. Census Bureau 2005 – 2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. As can be seen, estimated median household income in 2009 was substantially higher than that of Massachusetts as a whole, as was the case for per capita income, but estimated median household income was somewhat higher than and per capita income was nearly identical to that of Norfolk County as a whole.

**TABLE 3-9  
2009 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD AND PER CAPITA INCOME**

| Area           | Median Household Income | Per Capita Income |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Walpole        | \$89,782                | \$41,513          |
| Norfolk County | \$80,127                | \$41,510          |
| Massachusetts  | \$64,496                | \$33,460          |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Employment**

Table 3-10 presents employment by occupation for Walpole and the other regions. Walpole's occupational profile is somewhat similar to that of MAPC, with a lower level of white collar and a higher level of blue collar residents than the TRIC sub-region as a whole. The Town has somewhat higher levels of white collar and somewhat lower levels of blue collar residents than the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a whole.

**TABLE 3-10  
1999 EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, IN PERCENT**

|   | Walpole | TRIC  | MAPC  |       |
|---|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Massachusetts</b>                          |         |       |       |       |
| Management, professional, & related Service   | 44.5%   | 50.6% | 47.2% | 41.1% |
| Service                                       | 13.5%   | 10.4% | 13.0% | 14.1% |
| Sales & office                                | 27.1%   | 6.1%  | 25.7% | 25.9% |
| Farming, fishing, & forestry                  | 0.0%    | 0.1%  | 1.4%  |       |
| 0.2%  |         |       |       |       |
| Construction, extraction, & maintenance       | 7.6%    | 6.5%  | 6.1%  |       |
| 7.5%  |         |       |       |       |
| Production, transportation, & material moving | 7.3%    | 6.2%  | 7.9%  |       |
| 11.3%   |         |       |       |       |

Sources: Metropolitan Area Planning Council, 2003

**Age**

As Table 3-11 illustrates, based on 2000 census data, Walpole has a generally similar population age profile to the TRIC sub-region, and, similar to TRIC, slightly higher levels of school-age children and over-55 population than MAPC and the Commonwealth as a whole. While this indicates a tendency for a greater need for youth activities, it should be noted that the 55 to 74 age range in Walpole was of a higher percentage than either of the other regions. Since the bulk of those persons would now be in the 65 plus age range, this is an indication for a potential coming need for greater services or facilities for those over 65 during the next five years. This is further verified by the population counts by age groups for the Town of Walpole from the 2010 U.S. Census found in Table 3-12.

**TABLE 3-11  
2000 AGE GROUPS COMPARISON, IN PERCENTAGES**

| Age Group         | Walpole | TRIC  | MAPC  | Massachusetts |
|-------------------|---------|-------|-------|---------------|
| Under 5 years     | 6.8%    | 6.6%  | 6.4%  | 6.3%          |
| 5 to 9 years      | 7.6%    | 7.3%  | 6.8%  | 6.8%          |
| 10 to 14 years    | 7.5%    | 7.4%  | 6.6%  | 6.8%          |
| 15 to 19 years    | 5.6%    | 5.8%  | 6.3%  | 6.5%          |
| 20 to 24 years    | 3.6%    | 3.9%  | 6.5%  | 6.4%          |
| 25 to 34 years    | 11.9%   | 11.8% | 15.6% | 14.6%         |
| 35 to 44 years    | 18.7%   | 17.8% | 17.1% | 16.7%         |
| 45 to 54 years    | 14.7%   | 15.2% | 13.6% | 13.8%         |
| 55 to 59 years    | 5.1%    | 5.3%  | 4.8%  | 4.9%          |
| 60 to 64 years    | 4.1%    | 4.1%  | 3.6%  | 3.7%          |
| 65 to 74 years    | 7.3%    | 7.3%  | 6.4%  | 6.7%          |
| 75 to 84 years    | 5.0%    | 5.4%  | 4.5%  | 5.0%          |
| 85 years and over | 2.1%    | 2.2%  | 1.7%  | 1.8%          |
| Median Age        | 38.8    |       |       | 36.5          |

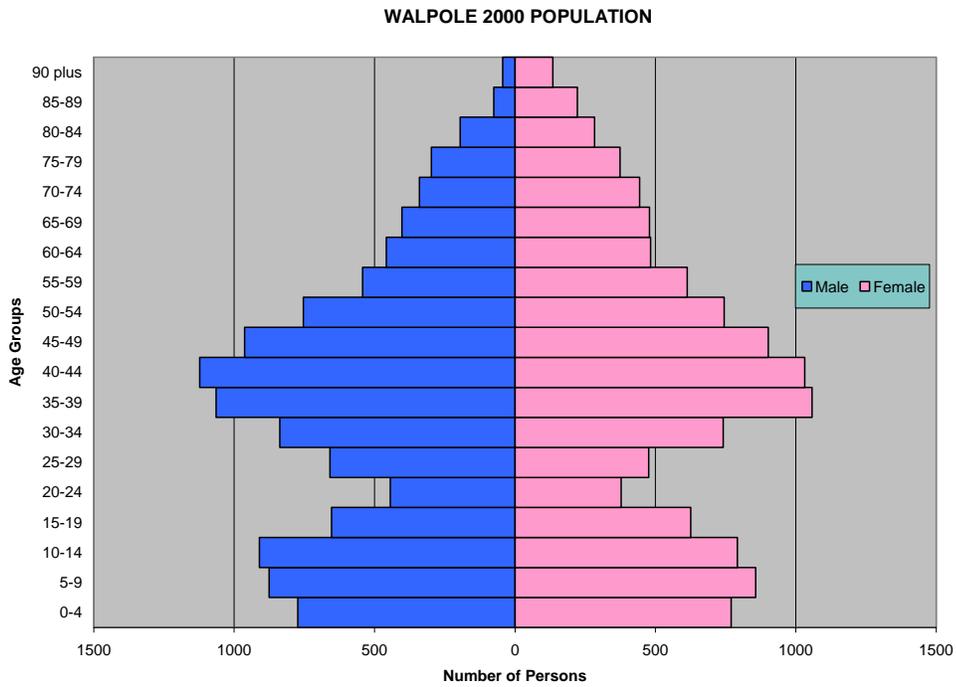
Sources: Metropolitan Area Planning Council, 2001; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

As for future population characteristics, in 2003 the Massachusetts Institute of Social and Economic Research (MISER) projected Walpole's population by age group and gender for the year 2020 based on the 2000 U.S. Bureau of the Census figures. The actual 2000 and 2010 population figures from the Bureau of the Census and the 2020 projections, using MISER's high-range projections, are presented in Table 3-12 by age group and are illustrated by age group and gender in Figures 1, 2, and 3. The 2003 data used in MISER's population projections predicted a total population of 24,113 persons by 2010 and projected age and gender groups that are similar to the actual 2010 Census population figures, and a total population of 24,946 persons by 2020. Along these lines, if trends continue, it might be inferred that the 2020 population projection figures are keeping in line with recent population growth, and therefore present a viable guideline for the planning purposes of the update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan over the next five years.

**TABLE 3-12**  
**EXISTING AND PROJECTED POPULATION BY GENDER AND AGE**  
**GROUPS**

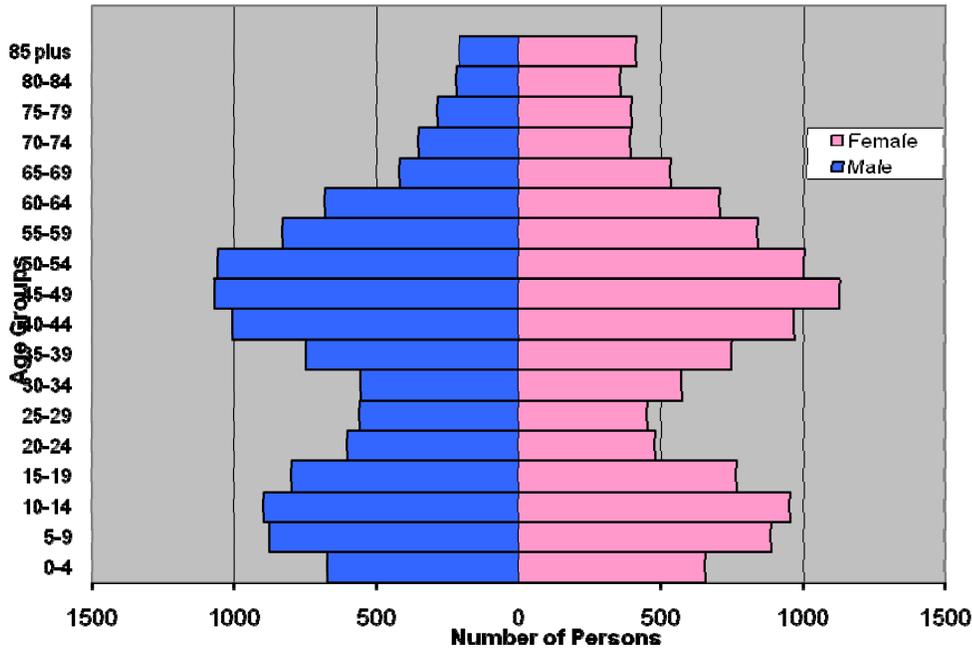
| <b>Gender</b> | <b>Age Group</b> | <b>2000 Census</b> | <b>2010 Census</b> | <b>2020 Projection</b> |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Male          | 0-4              | 773                | 675                | 754                    |
| Male          | 5-9              | 875                | 876                | 753                    |
| Male          | 10-14            | 910                | 897                | 983                    |
| Male          | 15-19            | 653                | 796                | 748                    |
| Male          | 20-24            | 444                | 600                | 765                    |
| Male          | 25-29            | 659                | 559                | 857                    |
| Male          | 30-34            | 837                | 554                | 796                    |
| Male          | 35-39            | 1,064              | 747                | 759                    |
| Male          | 40-44            | 1,123              | 1,003              | 509                    |
| Male          | 45-49            | 963                | 1,068              | 680                    |
| Male          | 50-54            | 754                | 1,054              | 841                    |
| Male          | 55-59            | 543                | 828                | 961                    |
| Male          | 60-64            | 458                | 683                | 926                    |
| Male          | 65-69            | 403                | 417                | 693                    |
| Male          | 70-74            | 340                | 351                | 505                    |
| Male          | 75-79            | 298                | 284                | 362                    |
| Male          | 80-84            | 195                | 221                | 247                    |
| Male          | 85 plus          | 120                | 209                | 253                    |
|               |                  |                    |                    |                        |
| Female        | 0-4              | 770                | 658                | 724                    |
| Female        | 5-9              | 857                | 886                | 724                    |
| Female        | 10-14            | 792                | 954                | 861                    |
| Female        | 15-19            | 626                | 765                | 678                    |
| Female        | 20-24            | 378                | 479                | 633                    |
| Female        | 25-29            | 476                | 451                | 652                    |
| Female        | 30-34            | 742                | 571                | 700                    |
| Female        | 35-39            | 1,058              | 748                | 735                    |
| Female        | 40-44            | 1,032              | 969                | 561                    |
| Female        | 45-49            | 902                | 1,131              | 703                    |
| Female        | 50-54            | 745                | 1,002              | 852                    |
| Female        | 55-59            | 614                | 839                | 1,057                  |
| Female        | 60-64            | 483                | 707                | 899                    |
| Female        | 65-69            | 479                | 533                | 749                    |
| Female        | 70-74            | 444                | 392                | 587                    |
| Female        | 75-79            | 374                | 395                | 474                    |
| Female        | 80-84            | 283                | 357                | 355                    |
| Female        | 85 plus          | 357                | 411                | 590                    |
|               |                  |                    |                    |                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |                  | <b>22,824</b>      | <b>24,070</b>      | <b>24,946</b>          |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; MISER



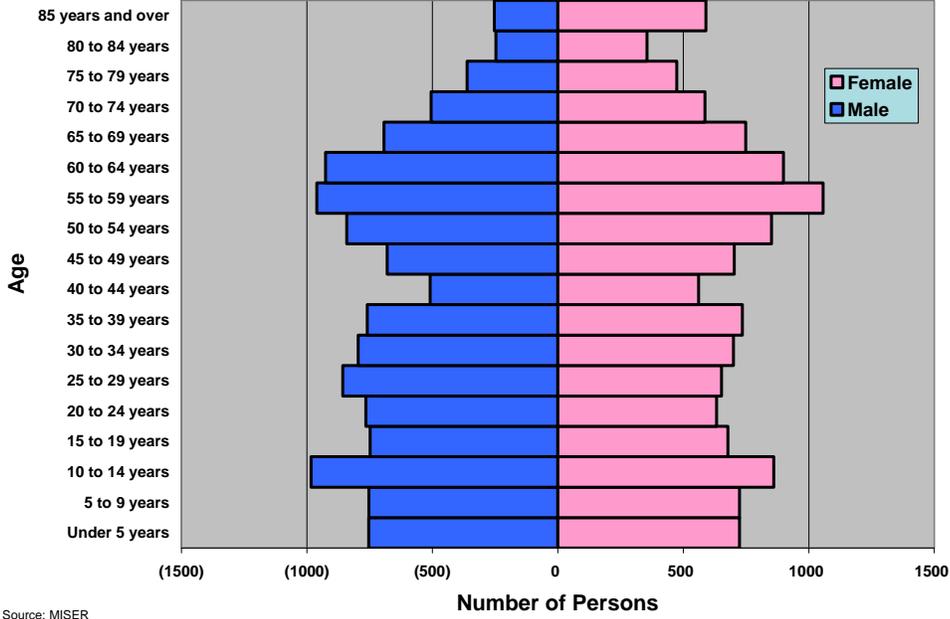
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; MISER

WALPOLE 2010 POPULATION



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

### Walpole Population Estimates 2020



Source: MISER

Source: MISER

As Tables 3-1 and 3-2 indicate, overall population growth has been on the increase over the past decade, albeit at a slower rate than during the 1990s. This is also reflected in the number of residential building permits issued since 2000, as shown in Table 3-14.

**TABLE 3-14  
BUILDING PERMITS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DWELLING UNITS, 2000 – 2009**

| <u>Year</u>  | <u>Single Family Dwelling Permits</u> | <u>Condo Units</u> | <u>Apartment</u> |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 2000         | 73                                    | -                  | -                |
| 2001         | 74                                    | 6                  | -                |
| 2002         | 67                                    | 44                 | -                |
| 2003         | 68                                    | 40                 | -                |
| 2004         | 57                                    | 74                 | 300              |
| 2005         | 78                                    | 10                 | -                |
| 2006         | 31                                    | -                  | -                |
| 2007         | 31                                    | 2                  | -                |
| 2008         | 33                                    | 16                 | 5                |
| 2009         | 42                                    | 5                  | -                |
| 2010         | 54                                    | 1                  | -                |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>608</b>                            | <b>198</b>         | <b>305</b>       |

**GRAND TOTAL: 1,111**

Source: Annual Town Reports, 2000 – 2008; Building Department Records, 2009 and 2010; Assessors’ Office Records, May 2010

## Growth and Development Patterns

### Patterns and Trends

Walpole has developed as a town of several villages with a substantial Town Center as a core and a variety of land uses. Despite having a four-lane highway (U.S. 1) and a six-lane Interstate Highway (I-95) passing through town, Walpole has maintained a viable downtown area and substantial undeveloped areas; as Table 5 demonstrates, nearly half (48%) of Walpole consisted of forests and wetlands in 1999. The Town also has a range of residential types (primarily of light and medium density, with some of high density and multifamily) as well as significant amounts of commercial and industrial uses. Residential development in recent years has been primarily of low density, resulting in some blurring of the edges between the traditional villages and neighborhoods of the Town. Walpole has become a relatively more affluent community as demonstrated by Table 9, which shows that both the 1999 median

household income and per capita income levels were significantly higher than the statewide levels.

## Infrastructure

Walpole has substantial networks of the three infrastructure elements that substantially impact development -- transportation, sewer, and water. Each of these is discussed below:

### Transportation

In addition to U.S. 1 and I-95, State Highways 27 and 1A each bisect the Town and intersect in the Town Center. The Town also has an extensive system of town roads (approximately 119 miles). There is also both MBTA commuter rail service to Boston via the Franklin line, which is fully available at the downtown commuter rail station and with limited service at the Plimptonville stop, and MBTA bus service from downtown Walpole to Boston along fixed routes. A freight rail line also bisects the Town and intersects the commuter line near the Town Center; it is important to note that a suburban belt commuter rail service, which could eventually link the downtown MBTA commuter rail station to the station at Patriot Place in Foxborough and onto the Providence/Stoughton line, is presently being studied for this freight line. Truck lines also operate between Walpole and the Port of Boston as well as Logan International Airport. Both Norwood Municipal Airport and Norfolk Airport are also readily accessible to Walpole.

### Sewer

About 70% of the Town's population is served by the sewer system. The system of sewer mains is municipally owned, but the sewage flows into the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) regional system for treatment and disposal. A sewer plan prepared in 1981 by a consultant, recommended expanding the sewer through the central portion of Walpole, but did not recommend extending it to the rural areas of the Town. The first three phases of the recommended expansion have been completed.

### Water

Virtually all of Walpole is served by Town Water. Walpole's municipal water supply is comprised entirely of groundwater from three major aquifer systems. These are School Meadow Brook (which has eight wells), Mine Brook (eight wells), and the Neponset River (two wells). Another aquifer, Traphole Brook, has been determined to be unsuitable as a public water supply due to contamination and poor hydrogeologic properties. The Neponset River and School Meadow Brook Aquifers have been completely developed. All future development will be in the Mine Brook Aquifer. This will include the development of Mine Brook #4. Over the past decade the Town of Walpole greatly enhanced its water treatment, storage, and distribution infrastructure, creating a system that has the capacity to safely provide

a water supply of 4.25 million gallons per day (mgd). This is sufficient to accommodate the projected residential population and small-scale non-residential growth. At this time Walpole is currently permitted to withdraw an average of 3.34 mgd of water, an amount that may be significantly reduced upon expiration of the Town's Water Management Permit in 2013.

## **Long-Term Development Patterns**

The primary land use management tool in Walpole is the Zoning Bylaw (see **Map 3**). The Zoning Bylaw provides for four residential districts with minimum lot sizes and frontages ranging from 15,000 square feet and 100 feet to 40,000 square feet and 200 feet respectively. It also designates three commercial districts, two industrial districts, and two special purpose overlay districts for water resource and flood plain protection. The Zoning Bylaw also provides for both Open Space Residential Development and development phasing for single family developments. The Open Space Residential Development provision, which requires a Special Permit from the Planning Board, allows lot sizes to be smaller than normally required in the R, RA, and RB Districts while providing open space and thus maintains the same overall density as normally required; additionally, a density bonus is available for additional open space beyond the minimum amount required. The development phasing provision requires the timing for total buildout for certain development projects to be spaced over a period of up to 10 years depending on size, and other factors.

The Conservation Commission administers the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act, the Town of Walpole Wetland Bylaw, and the Town of Walpole Land Disturbance Bylaw. A part-time Conservation Agent assists the Commission in its enforcement and technical duties.

## **Consistency with Metrofuture**

## Section 4

### Environmental Inventory and Analysis

#### *Introduction*

Walpole is located in Norfolk County in eastern Massachusetts. It is bordered by Dover on the north, Norwood and Sharon on the east, Medfield and Norfolk on the west, Foxboro on the south, and Westwood on the northeast. It shares many characteristics of other New England towns, including varying soils, much forest land and wetlands, and a system of rivers and streams. These characteristics will be discussed in more detail below.

#### *Geology*

Walpole lies within the Eastern Plateau (also known as the Coastal Hills) subregion of the Lower New England Physiographic Province. This subregion is characterized by gently rolling hills with low relief and subtle breaks between major landforms (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1989).

**Figure 3** illustrates the generalized bedrock geology of Walpole along with Norfolk and Suffolk Counties. Most of central Walpole consists of Wamsutta Formation, while the north and south portions of town are underlain by Dedham Granite. There are several areas in Town with examples of “roxbury pudding stone” a conglomerate. **Figure 4** presents surficial geology which indicates that most of the Town consists of sand and gravel while the northern part of town is primarily glacial till.

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#### *Topography*

The topography of Walpole is characterized mainly by the Neponset River, which flows northerly through the town, and by several of the wetland areas adjacent to the river. For the most part, the land in south Walpole is fairly flat. The elevation of the river varies from a high of 198 feet above mean sea level at Rucaduc Pond in South Walpole to an elevation of approximately 180 feet in the town forest. Rapidly, the topography changes as the river meanders through the center of the town to an approximate elevation of 150 feet at Stetson Pond. Farther south, the elevation drops to 101 feet at Bird Pond and 86 feet at Hollingsworth and Vose Pond. In the northerly section from the town center, the river has steep banks and a more rapid gradient. The largest continuous wetland within the town boundary is Cedar Swamp located between Main Street and the rail road in South Walpole. Water from Cedar Swamp enters the Neponset River just north of the old Bird Machine complex. Most of the westerly sections of the town depend on Mine Brook, Cobb Pond, and Willett Pond for their drainage. (ref: 1996 Open Space and recreation Plan).

## **Soils**

**Map 4** illustrates, most of Walpole's soil is of the Hinckley-Merrimac-Urban variety. These soils are very deep, and range from nearly level to steep. They are excessively drained and somewhat excessively drained soils formed in sandy and loamy glacial outwash overlying stratified sand and gravel, and areas of urban land. They are generally found in major stream valleys and on coastal plains. These soils are generally well suited for buildings as well as roads and streets. However, because they are well drained they can pose a water pollution hazard when used for septic systems since they readily absorb, but do not adequately filter, the effluent (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1989).

North Walpole consists almost entirely of Woodbridge-Paxton and Canton/Charlton Series soils (C series Hydrologic group). These are also very deep and range from nearly level to steep. They are moderately well drained and well drained soils formed in friable, loamy glacial till overlying a firm substratum. These soils are well suited for cultivating crops, as pasture, and as woodlands because of smooth slopes and high productivity. They are poorly suited for septic systems because the firm substratum does not readily absorb the effluent (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1989).

## **Water Resources**

The majority of Walpole is located within the Neponset River watershed which includes the Neponset River, seven tributary brooks and streams, sixteen small to large named ponds, Cedar Swamp, and other bordering vegetated wetlands associated with the surface waterbodies. The Stop River located along the westerly boundary of Walpole with Norfolk is located within the Charles River watershed. **See Map 6 of Water Resources.**

## **Surface Water**

The majority of the Town of Walpole is located within the Neponset River watershed, only a small western corner is located within the Charles River watershed.

The Neponset River flows south to north from the Town of Foxboro through the center of Walpole and into the Town of Norwood. The river has influenced the development of the Town and there are still several dams along its reach, remnants of the past relationship between Walpole and the river. The Neponset River is fed by seven tributaries in Walpole: Spring/Diamond Brook, School Meadow Brook, Bubbling Brook, Mine Brook, Cedar Swamp Brook, Cobbs Brook, and Traphole Brook.

The sixteen public and private named ponds in Walpole are Allen Pond, Bird Pond, Clark's Pond, Clark Pond, Cobb's Pond, Diamond Pond, Ganawatte Pond, Hollingsworth and Vose pond, Memorial Pond, Plimpton Street Pond, Rainbow Pond, Rucaduc Pond, Stetson Pond,

Turner’s Pond, Walpole Country Club Allen pond, and Willett Pond/ Pettes. The majority of the ponds are man-made created by dams.

| <b>TABLE 4-1: WALPOLE PONDS</b>   |
|---|
| <b>PUBLIC PONDS</b>   |
| <p><b><i>Allen Dam Pond</i></b> (6 acres): Town pond built for flood control located off of Washington Street. Town owned earthen dam. Public access and limited parking is available. Fishing, ice skating and non-motorized boating. Pond is bordered by wetland and forested land. Impoundment of the Spring Diamond Brook.</p>  |
| <p><b><i>Clark’s Pond</i></b> (man-made 11 acres) Town pond:<br/>                     Located off Stone Street and part of the Spring/Diamond Brook. Clark’s pond has two basins connected by two culverts. The small basin is three acres and the main basin is 8 acres. Clark’s pond is managed by the Town and periodically treated to control aquatic vegetation. The pond is bordered by town land and private land. Dam is maintained by town at Stone Street. Flows into Diamond Pond. Public access and parking is available. Fishing, skating and non-motorized boating.</p> |
| <p><b><i>Cobbs Pond (24 acres)</i></b><br/>                     Located off of Main Street and Fisher Street. Pond Management Plan 2001. The pond is management by the town and periodically treated to control aquatic vegetation. Limited public access from Main Street, and Cobb Terrace.</p>   |
| <p><b><i>Memorial Pond</i></b> (4-5 acres): Town pond located of off School Street. A Pond Management Plan was drafted in 1998 to enhance water quality and control nuisance aquatic vegetation. Pond is treated periodically for nuisance aquatic vegetation.<br/>                     Public access and parking is available on School Street. Fishing, ice skating and non-motorized boating.</p>  |
| <p><b><i>Turners Pond</i></b> (13.8 acre impoundment): Town owned and managed pond located off of Elm Street. Flows to Stetson Pond. Pond management plan allows town to treat for nuisance vegetation when needed. The pond is bordered by residential dwellings.<br/>                     Public parking and access available on Elm Street. Fishing, ice skating and non-motorized boating.</p>  |

|  |
|--|
| <b>WALPOLE PONDS</b>   |
| <b>PRIVATE</b>   |
| <b><i>Bird Pond:</i></b> Privately owned dammed pond located along the Neponset River in East Walpole. Flows under Washington Street into the Hollingsworth and Vose pond.   |
| <b><i>Diamond Pond:</i></b> Privately owned. Two basins: the main basin and small basin. Part of the Spring Brook system Clarks Pond flows to Diamond pond and Diamond flows to Memorial Pond.                     |
| <b><i>Ganawatte Pond:</i></b> Privately owned pond located off of Pine Street and bordering the Town of Foxboro. School Brook Meadow flows in a northerly direction from the pond into Walpole.                    |
| <b><i>Hollingsworth and Vose Pond:</i></b> Privately owned dammed pond located on the Neponset River and managed by the Hollingsworth and Vose company.  |
| <b><i>Post Office Pond (Clark Pond)</i></b> Privately owned pond drains to the Neponset River from Foxborough.   |
| <b><i>Plimpton Pond:</i></b> Privately owned dammed pond located on the Neponset River flows into Bird Pond in East Walpole.   |
| <b><i>Rainbow Pond:</i></b> Privately owned pond located on the property of the Royal Crest Country Club.  |
| <b><i>Rucaduc Pond.</i></b> Privately owned manmade pond associated with the Neponset River spillway system on the old Bird Machine site in South Walpole.   |
| <b><i>Stetson Pond:</i></b> Privately owned dammed stretch of the Neponset River located between Main Street and Robbins Road.   |
| <b><i>Walpole Country Club Pond (Allen Pond):</i></b> Privately owned pond located on the grounds of the Walpole Country Club. Fed by Spring Brook and drains to the larger Allen Pond dam.                        |
| <b><i>Willett Pond/ Pettes Pond:</i></b> Predominantly owned and managed by the Neponset River Land Holdings Association. Located along the boundary with Norwood and Westwood. Earthen dam fed by Bubbling Brook. |
| Resources: 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan, 1996 Spring Brook Study by Lycott Environmental, Inc. and ESS study, 2004.   |

**WETLANDS**

Wetlands in Walpole range from deciduous and/or coniferous forested wetlands (dominant by woody vegetation 20-feet or more), scrub-shrub wetland (dominant by woody vegetation under 20-feet), emergent marsh, meadow or fen (dominant by herbaceous vegetation), and aquatic deep or shallow marsh associated with Walpole’s streams, rivers and ponds.

## **Cedar Swamp**

The largest wetland in Walpole is Cedar Swamp located in South Walpole. Cedar Swamp is a forested wetlands characterized by Atlantic White Cedar trees and red maple swamp. Cedar Swamp is listed as a Priority Habitat by the Natural Heritage Program. This area is within the Town's primary recharge area therefore it is an important resource for the Town's drinking water. At the northerly end of the swamp the land use is dominated by industrial uses located along Main Street and within the industrial park. The southerly end of the swamp is mostly residential uses. A tributary from the swamp drains to the Neponset River in the area of the old Bird Machine factory (closed and currently vacant).

## **Mine Brook**

Another significant wetland system borders Mine Brook, a tributary to the Neponset River. The Mine Brook Aquifer is the Town's public water source with where several of the Town's public water wells are located. This area extends from the border with Medfield to Robbins Road. This wetland system consists of floodplain, red maple swamp, open water and emergent swamp areas. It is bordered predominantly by residential subdivisions.

## **Other Riparian wetland systems**

There are also considerable bordering vegetative wetlands along the Neponset River, School Meadow Brook, Spring Brook, and Traphole Brook. Several other Town wells are located along School Meadow Brook between South Street and the border with Sharon.

## **FLOODPLAIN**

The FEMA flood Insurance maps are used to determine the 100-year floodplain in Walpole. The main flood plain areas are along the Neponset River and its tributaries. Floodplain areas are protected in Walpole by the Walpole Wetlands Protection Bylaw and the Town's Zoning Bylaw in addition to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act There has been a recent review by FEMA of Walpole flood maps however the revisions are not out yet. There is little change to the maps which will affect the Federal Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for Walpole (see **Figure 5**).

## **GROUNDWATER**

The Town of Walpole obtains its drinking water from ground water aquifers. Three major ground water aquifers - the School Meadow Brook Aquifer, Mine Brook Aquifer and the Neponset River Aquifer- are the sources of Walpole's drinking water supply. The Town's Zoning Bylaw's Water Resource Protection Overlay Districts regulate uses within these areas. The Water Resource Protection Overlay Districts consist of Zone 1- 400-foot well radius, Area 1 – Area of Pumping Influence, Area-2 Potential Water Supply, Area-3 Primary Recharge Area and Area-4 Secondary recharge Area (see **Figure 6**)

## **VEGETATION**

According to a study undertaken by Norfolk County of the Diamond Brook Watershed 3, there are five major plant communities which can be found within Walpole, particularly in the watershed area of the town. These communities include: upland -oak- hickory, upland northern hardwood - softwood, coniferous, and the bottom or wetland hardwoods.

Among the upland - oak - hickory community are: white, red, and scarlet oak and hickory. Often scattered within the community is pitch pine while the understory vegetation includes flowering dogwood, sassafras, and greenbrier.

The upland northern hardwood family includes sugar maple, northern red oak, black cherry, American beech, white ash, white birch, quaking aspen, basswood and red maple. The understory vegetation consists of arrowwood, wild raisin, sarsaparilla, sprouts of American chestnut, spicebush, witch hazel, and greenbrier.

The mixed - hardwood - softwood community consists of mixed stands of deciduous and coniferous trees. White pine, American beech, red maple, red oak, pitch pine, sugar maple, eastern hemlock, white ash, grey birch, American elm, and basswood compose this mixture. The understory plants common in this community are: arrowwood, honeysuckle, wild raisin, spicebush, greenbrier, wild grape, shining clubmoss, partridge berry, sassafras, sarsaparilla, wintergreen, and witch hazel.

Within the coniferous community are: white pine, eastern hemlock, scotch pine, pitch pine, Norway spruce, red pine, and white spruce. This community has very few understory plants which occasionally consist of greenbrier and honeysuckle.

American elm, red maple, swamp white oak, green ash, and an occasional black willow comprise the bottom land hardwood community. Scattered understory plants consist of highbush blueberry, greenbrier, witch hazel, silky dogwood, northern arrowwood, spicebush, honeysuckle, and speckled alder. Other vegetated areas consist of wet meadows, shallow marsh and deep marsh communities dominated by pickerelweed, northern arrowhead, cattails, Joe-pye-weed, sweet flag, woolgrass, sedges, and varied bulrush.

### **Atlantic White Cedar Swamp**

A forested wetland community with a dense primarily evergreen canopy, a deciduous shrub layer, and a sparse herb layer dominated by mosses. The Atlantic white cedar is the dominant tree. The inland Atlantic white cedar swamp located in Walpole is mixed with hemlock, red maple, and yellow birch, a shrub layer of sweet pepper bush, and winterberry and an understory of cinnamon fern, starflower, and common mayflower. Listed as a Priority Habitat and Estimated Habitats of Endangered Species by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program. (source: NH&ESP fact sheet)

## ***FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE***

Walpole has several important wildlife corridors such as the Neponset River that runs from Foxboro to Norwood, several rail road and electrical ROWs, Willet Pond, Norfolk Agriculture School land and Adams Farm to the north, Mine Brook that connect to the Charles River watershed, and Cedar Swamp (a Priority Habitat and Estimated Habitat designation through the NHESP). Traphole Brook located in Norwood and in Walpole is a cold water stream and core Habitat area.

Pipeline and transmission line corridors connect School Meadow Brook with the Neponset River and beyond to an old railroad bed. This railroad bed then passes through Cedar Swamp, and then on to Wrentham creating links to other core habitat areas and both Crocker Pond and Lake Pearl.

Another pipeline corridor links both Cedar Swamp and the Cedar Hill area with sites in Medfield north of Noon Hill and the Charles River watershed. Willett Pond is linked to core habitat areas in Dover and Westwood south of Noanment Pond. The preceding are just a few examples of existing wildlife corridors. Maintaining such corridors should be a consideration in planning and evaluating development projects and open space acquisitions.

### **Rare and Endangered Species**

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife since 1996 has removed several areas from the Walpole Priority Habitat and Estimated Habitat mapped areas. The only area now mapped in Walpole is Cedar Swamp.

### ***Scenic Resources and Unique Environments***

In 2008, the Town of Walpole received a Survey & Planning Grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission to conduct an intensive survey of historic and cultural resources in the Town, the following information is from the surveys final report (**see Appendix**).

Unique scenic and environmental resources of Walpole(**see Map 5**) identified in the study were the Walpole Town Forest (1914-1916), Memorial Park (1923-24) and the Francis William Park (1924) all projects designed by Planner/landscape designer John Nolan. John Nolan was retained by a five member planning committee headed by Charles S. Bird, Jr. to draft a town plan. The committee adopted the plan in 1914 to beautify the community and secure open space for the future.

Another scenic resource located in north Walpole is the 97 acres of the Norfolk County Agricultural School established in 1916. The school property includes a campus and pond located at Main and Fisher Streets, and pasture and farmed land.

The Neponset River, its tributaries and ponds such as Bird pond in East Walpole, Rucaduc Pond in North Walpole and Clarks pond on Stone Street played important roles in the development of Walpole in the industrial period. The remnants of the old mills and dams are a part of the cultural landscape of Walpole.

## **Early American Resources**

According to an unpublished research project (McGowan, 1996); there is evidence of extensive Native American activity in Walpole. McGowan cites Dr. Curtiss Hoffman (professor of archeology at Bridgewater State College) in stating that tribes such as the Ponkapoags and Neponsets gathered and traded at the elbow of the Neponset River near Plimptonville. In this location they collected fish at the falls, made stone tools and ground corn in stone mortars. There is also evidence that the area may have been a Native American burial ground (*taken from 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan*).

## **Scenic Roads**

Walpole designated a number of Scenic Roads, under the Massachusetts Scenic Road Act. These include North Street, High Street, Lincoln Road, Pine Street, Peach Street, Baker Street, and Lewis Avenue. It should be noted that scenic road designation does not guarantee protection of the scenic views. It simply requires that a public hearing be held prior to any changes in the stone walls and large trees that are located within the road right-of-way.

## ***ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS***

The significant environmental problems in Walpole are pond sedimentation, invasive vegetation, degradation of Cedar Swamp and the Brownfields.

### **Pond Sedimentation**

Several of the Town's ponds are shallow due to many years of sedimentation. The sedimentation of the ponds created shallower ponds with little deep water. The shallow ponds warm up faster and have more nuisance vegetation and less open deep cold water areas. Resolving this problem is difficult because it is both costly and a time consuming permitting process. The Town has made progress with addressing the on-going sedimentation of ponds by installing a variety of stormwater structures.

### **Invasive Plants**

Invasive plant species such as purple loosestrife, glossy buckthorn, bitter-sweet vine, grape vine, and bambo are prominent along Walpole's rivers and ponds. The ponds have a variety of

nuisance aquatic vegetation ranging from water chestnuts, fanwort, watershield, coontail, watermilfoil, and white and yellow water lilies. Nuisance aquatic vegetation have choke up many of the Town's Ponds such as Clarks and Memorial Ponds causing problems for fishing and ice skating. Invasive plants like purple loosestrife, bamboo, and buckthorn are on-going maintenance issues to rid the nuisance vegetation along the Town's rivers, ponds and streams.

## **Brownfields**

Walpole has been actively pursuing redevelopment and cleanup activities for existing Brownfield sites (abandoned, idled, or under used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination).

Since 1999, we have stimulated and/or supported numerous Brownfields redevelopment projects on priority sites identified by the Brownfields Committee. These efforts have been initiated through the Town's existing EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Grant Pilot, a grant through the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, and by a brownfield's tax exempt by-law that the town has created.

## **Neponset River**

A *dam* built on a waterway obstructs the movement and migration of aquatic wildlife, like fish. It also slows down water, causing the water to drop its load of sand, dirt, pebbles, nutrients and contaminants, yielding "sedimentation" behind the dam. This can cause an imbalance in nutrient load - too much above the dam and too few below. The slow-moving water also has more time to sit beneath the sun and warm up, decreasing the amount of oxygen it can carry. *Less* oxygen in the water can stress and kill aquatic organisms in the stream.

*Sedimentation* (or "siltation") in a waterway can cause the water to become turbid (e.g., cloudy, or not clear), which makes it more difficult for aquatic organisms to catch prey. Sedimentation also can cover and kill the eggs of aquatic organisms. *How does sedimentation happen?* Sand from nearby roads can travel down into the stream, or, fast-moving stormwater, flowing from the street or perhaps from a nearby parking lot, can erode the streambanks as it joins the stream. Dams also cause water to slow down and drop its load of silt, sand, etc.

Application of *road salts* during the winter affects waterways and their aquatic organisms, too.

*Removal of native vegetation (including mowing)* from the edges of a waterway reduces shading of the water, thereby causing the water to warm up and not be able to hold as much dissolved oxygen, which can stress or kill the organisms in the waterway. Also, when there is less vegetation bordering a waterway, water runoff from the surrounding landscape is not as well filtered. Therefore, the waterway receives more pollutants. Less vegetation along the waterway also means that less organic debris falls into the water, decreasing the food supply for small, aquatic organisms.

*Adjacent malfunctioning septic systems, cracked sewer pipes, or incorrectly piped homes and businesses* can leak untreated wastewater and sewage into streams, either through over-the-ground flow or through the ground and its groundwater. This waste acts like fertilizer, potentially leading to excessive growth of algae and plants and then to the corresponding dearth of dissolved oxygen as the vegetation dies and is broken down by bacteria. Raw sewage also adds viruses and bacteria to the water. Toxins in the wastewater also can affect the inhabitants of the stream.

*Excessive water use and groundwater withdrawal* in the surrounding community can lower a stream's water level significantly - even dry the stream bed, leading to poor water quality and wildlife habitat and eventually to the death of aquatic species. (Source: Neponset River Watershed Association website)

## Section 5

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### Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Interests

#### *Introduction*

The Town owned lands under general Town, recreation facilities, School fields and Conservation Commission properties were inventoried for this section. Records were obtained from the Assessors records and documents were reviewed for conservation restrictions and easement to obtain the most recent information. Other public lands owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, MBTA, Bureau of land management, and Norfolk County which were all or mostly vacant were also inventoried. Lands within Walpole which are all or mostly vacant and are under the ownership of a non-profit group such as the Neponset Land Holding Association were also included in the inventory. The final groupings of lands were those which are owned privately and are mostly vacant and have a significant environmental interest. **See Map 7** for the location the open space parcels identified in this section.

In addition to specific groupings of parcels, this section includes descriptions of unique areas in Walpole considered to be significant for either recreation, water quality protection, or cultural and environmental resources. These include the Neponset River corridor, Mine Brook, Spring Brook, School Meadow Brook, Traphole Brook and Cedar Swamp areas.

#### **Since 1996**

The most significant purchase of open space since the 1996 Open Space and Recreation plan was the Adams Farm Preserve in 1999 which included the purchase of 293 acres. Of the 293 acres, 121.8 acres was set aside as conservation only. The Town was awarded a Self Help Grant from the Division of Conservation Services for a portion of the cost, the remaining came from the Town.

There are several properties in Town with conservation restrictions. The most recent since the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan is a 70 acre conservation restriction on the former Bird property which is now the Estate of Walpole. The Conservation restriction and deed to the Conservation Commission of 13 acres was part of a Tripartite Agreement to develop the remaining land into a 300 lot subdivision.

There are two conservation easements which are part of the Town's Open Space subdivision provisions allowing greater density of lots for setting aside a portion of Open Space. These developments are Wisteria Way II located off of East Street and Christina Drive off of Mylod Street.

**PRIVATE PARCELS**

This grouping of parcels includes private parcels listed as an Agricultural use (pasture, tillage, or cropland), Forest or woodlands, and recreational land use by the Assessor's records. In each category, those parcels listed with a chapter 61 tax designation, and/or a conservation restriction, and/or large (over 10 acres in size) are highlighted in the table below. The total Pasture lands acreage is 145.91, Tillage 112.16 acres and other 34.55 acres. A list of all the parcels is included in the appendix.

**TABLE 5-1: PRIVATE PARCELS**

| <b>Owner</b>                      | <b>Location</b>            | <b>Zoning</b> | <b>Use</b>                        | <b>Acres</b> | <b>Protection</b>    |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Bancroft/Swain                    | North/High                 | RA            | Forested                          | 98.03        | 61/CR to NEEF        |
| Buttimer Family Trust             | North Street               | RA            | Agricultural Land                 | 47.06        | 61A                  |
| Buttimer Farm                     | North Street               | RA            | Single family House + Agriculture | 29           | 61A                  |
| Ellis, George & Jeanne            | Fisher Street              | RA            | Tillage                           | 12.10        | 61A                  |
| Glengreen Farm/ Cynthis Green Tr  | Lincoln Road               | RA            | Horse Farm                        | 49.32        | 61A/CR to Land Trust |
| Kennedy, Catherine Mahoney, Frank | North Street Winter Street | RA            | Cropland Animal farm              | 18.31<br>23  | 61A                  |
| SM Lorusso & Sons                 | Industrial Rd              |               | Recreation                        | 113.21       | 61B                  |
| Tracy Firth                       | North Street               | RA            | Horse Farm                        | 24           | 61A                  |
| Warren, Jassamine                 | North                      | RA            | Pasture                           | 12.10        |                      |
| Walpole Sportman Club             | Lincoln Rd                 | RA            | Gun Club/large wooded area        | 100.3        | 61B                  |
| Walpole Country Club              | Baker Street               |               | Golf Club                         | 28.21        | 61B                  |
| Westwood Gun Club                 | County Street              | RA            | Gun Club                          | 36.27        | 61B                  |

Source: 2011 Assessors Records

## ***Significant and Unique Areas***

### **Mine Brook River Corridor**

The Mine Brook River which flows from Medfield into Walpole is within Area 1 with several wells which supply Walpole's public drinking water. Most of the parcels along the river have been acquired in the past by the Town or Conservation Commission for protection of the water supply. Mine Brook flows into Turner's Pond and then into the Neponset River.

### **School Meadow Brook**

School Meadow Brook flows from the Town of Sharon and discharges into the Neponset River northwest of Washington Street significant within Area 1 with several of the Town's public water supply wells located in this area. The land on either side of the River is owned by the Town.

### **Spring Brook**

Spring Brook is located just north of School Meadow Brook and flows from Sharon into several of the Town's important ponds (Allen Dam Pond, Clarks Pond, Diamond Pond and Memorial Pond) before discharging to the Neponset River.

### **Neponset River Corridor**

The Neponset River flows through South Walpole from the Town of Foxboro through the Town Forest, through downtown into East Walpole and into Norwood at Bird Pond. The river is both a significant water resource and historic resource which played a significant role in the history of Walpole. There are several areas along the corridor which are protected by Town or Conservation Commission land and other portions of the riverfront already developed. The main problem with the portions of the river within the developed areas is dumping, trash, sedimentation and degraded banks. The old Bird Machine Company in South Walpole is currently vacant and should have some level of resource protection to the Neponset River corridor. The overwhelming issue with the river is to treat stormwater discharge prior to entering the river.

### **Cedar Swamp**

Much of Cedar Swamp is owned by the Conservation Commission and the Town. The main issue with Cedar Swamp is the water quality discharging into the swamp from adjacent lands and roadways. Cedar Swamp is listed on the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Priority Habitats and Estimated Habitats Map. Access to Cedar Swamp trail is needed along the old rail way (assessors map/lot 46-54).

## **Traphole Brook**

The section of Traphole Brook in Norwood is listed as a cold water stream on the BioMap Living Waters map. The portion located in Walpole runs through undeveloped land off of Coney Street. This section is not listed as a cold water stream but probably should. It is a beautiful and unique area of Walpole.

### ***Conservation Restrictions***

**Glengreen Farm** (2009) of Lincoln Road has a Conservation Restriction on 49 acres to the Trustees of Land Preservation.

**Bancroft/Swain** (1995) property in North Walpole has approximately 98 acres in a Conservation Restriction to the New England Forestry Foundation.

**Bird Estates Limited Partnerships (2010)** granted a Conservation Restriction on 70 acres of land within the riverfront of the Neponset River to the Conservation Commission within and adjacent to the Estates of Walpole subdivision.

**Hilltop Preserve Limited Partnership (2004)** granted a Conservation Restriction on 18.36 acres including a portion of Ganawatte Pond to the Conservation Commission.

**Sharon Country Day Camp** (1998) granted a Conservation Restriction on approximately 4.375 acres to the Town of Walpole for the protection of water resources.

**Christina Drive** – (1993) 13 acre conservation restriction on lot 25 to the Neponset Farm Homeowners Trust from Zoning Bylaw Open Space development (sec 10-D).

**Keaney Estates off Moosehill Rd** (2008) - Conservation restriction (50 years) on 405,100 acres of land.

## **CONSERVATION EASEMENT**

**Sterling Lane Condominiums** on Oak Street conveyed a conservation easement of 61,710 sq ft to the Conservation Commission.

**Wisteria Way II subdivision** – 38.68 acres of Open Space provided under the Zoning Bylaw Open Space development (sec 10-D).

**Ganawattee Farm Preserve Open Space** 14.31 acres of open space provided under the Zoning Bylaw Open Space development (sec 10-D) with a trail.

**2040-2050 Main Street** conservation easement for access to cedar Swamp Conservation Commission land (LCC #109424).

**Falcone Easement to Adams Farm (Book 26206, page 367)** trail easement in Adams Farm area.

## ***Other significant or Unique Resources***

**Blackburn Union Superfund Site**, South Street: This is a brownfield site of 22 acres under EPA's directive for expedited clean up. The Neponset River with associated wetlands and riverfront area is located on site.

**Siemans Healthcare Diagnostics, Inc.** owns an undeveloped parcel of 19 acres with forested land Traphole Brook, its tributaries and associated wetlands and riverfront area.

**Baker Hughes** off of Washington /Neponset Streets includes 147 acres of land which includes portions of the Neponset River, riverfront area, a pond, forests and wetlands. The Baker Hughes site is the site of the old Bird Machine Company and there has been site remediation of the old buildings.

**Cofsky** property is adjacent to Baker Hugh off of Washington Street and includes 30 acres of forest and wetlands.

**Cedar Swamp** – There are portions of Cedar Swamp in private owners located off of Industrial Road and Main Street which are partially developed or undeveloped.

## ***Public and Nonprofit Parcels***

### **Town and Conservation Commission Owned Parcels**

These are parcels which have been acquired by the Town and the Conservation Commission and are used for the purpose of conservation and passive recreation. Many of these parcels are not accessible and were acquired mainly for conservation purposes, specifically the Cedar Swamp and Mine Brook Parcels. Below are descriptions of the main parcels accessible and used for passive recreation:

#### **Adams Farm**

Adams Farm acquired in 1999 is one of the largest Town owned open space areas which is used for passive recreation with trails for walking, dog walking, and cross country skiing; a community garden; and a barn for community meetings and gatherings.

#### **Turners Pond, Clarks Pond, Allen Pond, and Memorial Pond**

Turners, Clarks, Allen, and Memorial Ponds are all Town owed ponds used for fishing, ice skating and boating activities. All four of the ponds have access and public parking.

#### **Pinnacle Point**

Pinnacle Point is another Town owned property with a trail that is consistently used with two access points from residential areas. Pinnacle Point offers a great view of Bird Pond and the Neponset River and connects to a larger trail system.

#### **Bird Estates Trail**

Bird Estates Trail is a trail on the other side of Bird Pond/Neponset River which was acquired through a tripartite agreement with the developers of the Estates of Walpole.

## Town Forrest

The Town Forest is the most well know open space area in town it is a combination of Conservation Commission and Town owned land. The Neponset River runs through the forest and there is an area on South Street to launch canoes. The Town Forest Committee manages the Town Forest.

**TABLE 5-2: TOWN AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION LAND**

| <b>Name</b>              | <b>Location</b>    | <b>Conservation</b> | <b>Town</b>   | <b>Total<br/>Acreage</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Adams Farm               | North Street       | 121                 | 157.83        | 298.83                   |
| Allen Pond<br>Dam/Spring | Washington St.     | 41.18               | 15.17         | 56.25                    |
| Bird Estates             | Endean Drive       | 30                  | -             | 30                       |
| Cedar Swamp              |                    | 263.36              | 133.35        | 396.71                   |
| Clarks Pond              | Stone              | 14.23               | -             | 14.23                    |
| Elm Street<br>Trails     | Elm Street         | 87.34               | 7.5           | 94.84                    |
| Cobbs Pond               | Main Street        | 32.8                | 20            | 52.80                    |
| Lincoln<br>Rd/West       | Lincoln<br>Rd/West | 163                 | 46.4          | 210.4                    |
| Memorial Pond            | School Street      |                     | 24.11         | 24.11                    |
| Mine Brook               | Elm street         | 170.2               | 40.45         | 210.65                   |
| Moosehill<br>Rd/Coney St | Coney street       | 32.3                |               | 32.3                     |
| Neponset River           | South Street       | 153.7               | 18.2          | 171.9                    |
| North Walpole            | varies             | 71.8                | 17.5          | 88.13                    |
| Pinnacle Point           |                    | 14.2                | 3.35          | 17.87                    |
| Turners Pond             | Elm Street         | 71.85               | -             | 71.85                    |
| Town Forest              |                    | 32.3                | 334.69        | 364.99                   |
| <b>Totals:</b>           |                    | <b>1328.46</b>      | <b>818.55</b> | <b>2147.01</b>           |

Source: 2011 Town Assessors Records

### ***Non-Profit Lands***

Lands in Walpole owed by nonprofits include the following: Willett Pond owned by Neponset River Land Holding which is managed for resource protection and use by those abutting the pond, Bird Park which is open and enjoyed by the general public for a variety of recreation and other programs, the NE Forestry Foundation which owns and manages forested lands for resource protection included in the Adams Farm Management area, and the Home for Little Wanderers which owns the land off of Lincoln Road known as Longview Farms.

**TABLE 5-3: NON-PROFIT LANDS**

| <b>Owner</b>                | <b>Location</b>   | <b>Acres</b> | <b>Use</b>      | <b>Zoning</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Neponset River Land Holding | Bullard Street    | 190.8        | Willett Pond    | Rural         |
| Trustees of Reservations    | Washington Street | 94.5         | Bird Park       | PSRC          |
| NE Forestry Foundation      | Adams Farm Area   | 66.18        | Forested        | Rural         |
| Longview Farm               | Lincoln Road      | 159          | Forested/School | Rural         |

### ***Other Public and Unprotected Lands***

The largest parcels in this grouping is the property owned by Norfolk County which includes the Agricultural School's agricultural lands located off of Fisher and North Street. This property is currently unprotected. The Bureau of land management adjacent to the Stop River Brook is located within the Charles River watershed and is wetlands and wooded. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts land is largely the land around the prisons, while the MWRA land is wooded and vacant and the MBTA land is a series of parcels adjacent to the railway and parking lots.

**TABLE 5-4 OTHER PUBLIC**

| <b>Owner</b>                      | <b>Location</b>        | <b>Acres</b> | <b>Use</b>                     | <b>Zoning</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Norfolk County Agriculture School | Fisher/North           | 382.32       | Agricultural fields and school | PSRC          |
| MWRA                              | Main Street            | 94           | Forested                       | Rural         |
| Commonwealth of MA                | Lincoln Rd/<br>Norfolk | 104          | Forested/prison                | Rural         |
| MBTA                              | Various                | 27.46        | Transportation                 | Varies        |
| USA                               | Norfolk Border         | 25.82        | Forested                       | Rural         |

**Recreation Areas and Facilities****TABLE 5-5: TOWN RECREATION FACILITIES**

| <b>Name</b>                 | <b>Use</b>  | <b>Location</b>             | <b>Acres</b> | <b>Access</b> | <b>Zoning</b> |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Bird Middle School          | Multi-use fields with middle school. Baseball, softball, and soccer.  | Washington and East Streets | 7.6          | Parking       | RB            |
| Boyden School               | Multi-use field and playground.   | Washington St               | 9.6          | Parking       | RB            |
| Elm Street School           | Nature Trails, Multipurpose fields  |                             |              | Parking       | R             |
| Fisher School               | Playground, pond, Multi-purpose field and Nature Trail  | Fisher St                   | .90          | Parking       | PSRC          |
| High School Turco Fields    | Multi use field (upper); Multi-use synthetic turf field with track and bleachers (main); Baseball, softball field; Multipurpose soccer, lacrosse and football field (lower) | Common St                   | 8.6          | Parking       | PSRC          |
| Johnson Middle School       | Multi-purpose fields.   | Robbins Road                | 5.5          | Parking       | PSRC          |
| Old Fisher                  | Multi-purpose field   | Main Street                 | .96          | Parking       |               |
| Old Post Road School        | Multi-purpose Baseball Field, Basket Ball Crt and Playground  | Old Post Road               | 1.5          | Parking       | RB            |
| Plimpton                    | Softball field  | Common Street               | .6           | Parking       | PSRC          |
| Blackburn Hall/ Stone Field | 1- Baseball and 1- Multi-purpose Fields, and Blackburn Hall   | Stone/School Street         | 2.1          | Parking       | GR            |
| Mylod Street Fields         | Soccer Field leased to Walpole Youth Soccer   | Mylod Street                | 13           | Parking       |               |

|                                |  |               |    |         |    |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|----|---------|----|
| Memorial Park/<br>Morgan field | Pond, Pool, Wading Pool, Trails, and Playground. Little league field | School Street | 20 | Parking | GR |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|----|---------|----|

**Trails and Passive Recreation Areas**

**Table 5.6**

| Name                                | Managed                      | Trails          | Description  | Access  | Zoning  | Protect                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|--|---|---------|------------------------|
| Adams Farm Management Area/Preserve | Adams Farm Committee         | 10+ miles       | Network of Trails, Community Garden  | North St. / Parking, gravel trails                      | PSRC    | CR/ART. 97/state grant |
| Allen Dam                           | Conservation/Town            | Trail           | Pod, fishing, skating, walking trail and flood control   | Washington Street, small gravel parking lot and trails. | PSRC    | Art. 97                |
| Bay circuit trail                   | Trails Committee             | Approx. 8 miles | Enters at Medfield line at High St., Robbins Rd to Town forest, Town Forest to Sharon line at Pine St. | Parking at: Johnson MS, Clarks Pond, Town Forest        | Various |                        |
| Boyden School Nature Trail          | Trails Committee/School      | 0.25 miles      | Natural Wooded trail.  | Parking at Boyden School                                | R       |                        |
| Clarks Pond                         | Conservation/Ponds Committee | 0.25            | Natural wood trail   | Stone Street Gravel Parking lot                         | RB      | Art. 97                |
| Cobbs Pond                          | Conservation/Ponds Committee |                 | Nature Trail at Fisher Sch., Trail Potential   | Fisher School Parking, Main Street no parking.          | PSRC    | Art. 97                |

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|                             |                                |               |  |   |        |             |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--|---|--------|-------------|
|                             |                                |               | around Pond, Fishing   |   |        |             |
| Endean Trail                | Trails Committee/ Conservation | 1 mile        | Trail marker at dog rock on Plimpton St., trail along Bird Pond. | Plimpton access, Endean Street Street Parking only  | RA     | CR/ Art. 97 |
| Elmm Street Sch/Goetz Trail | Trails Committee               | 1.5 mile      | Natural wooded trails.   | Elm street School Parking                           | R/PSRC |             |
| Francis William Bird Park   | Trustees of Reservation        | 3 miles       | Walking trails in park   | Parking Washington Street                           | PSRC   | Non-profit  |
| The Pinnacle                | Trails/ Conservation           | 2 miles       | Natural trail a long Bird Pond                                   | Misty Lane  | RA     |             |
| Walpole Town Forest         | Town Forest Committee          | 2.5-3.5 miles | Trail in forest and a long Neponset River.                       | Washington Street, South Street Parking at High Sch | PSRC   |             |
| No-Name                     | Trails Committee/ Con Com      | 1.5           | Johnson MS to Elm Street school.                                 | Robbins Rd Johnson MS                               | PSRC   |             |

## Section 6

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### COMMUNITY VISION

#### *Open Space and Recreation Plan Process*

The Open Space and Recreation Plan (plan) is the product of almost two years commitment of the Conservation Commission, a member of the Planning Board, Town Planner and Conservation Agent. The Conservation Commission met a least once a month before their regularly scheduled public hearings to discuss and gather information for the plan. During this time members of the Commission met with other Town boards such a the recreation Commission, Trails Committee, Ponds Committee, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Water and Sewer Commission, and Historical Commission. An electronic survey was sent out to the Schools and available on the Town of Walpole's website. The survey was advertised at local grocery stores, the library, and at Town Hall. In addition, the Staff reviewed existing documents such as the Fields Master Plan, Master Plan and Historical survey to incorporate these documents into the Plan. There were two public hearings advertised in the Walpole Times to inform citizen's of the Open Space and Recreation Planning process.

#### *Vision Statement*

Walpole's vision for Open Space and Recreation is a Town with a green Open Space network with walking and bike trails that connect a series of recreational fields, natural areas and access to the abundant ponds.

The vision includes an abundance of clean drinking water from our Town wells.

The vision includes an abundance of playing fields for youth and adults where overuse does not exist.

The vision includes clean water resources (rivers, ponds, streams, wetlands, and aquifers) for today and the future; where our ponds are clear and free of nuisance aquatic vegetation and available for fishing, boating, skating and other passive recreational uses.

This vision includes walking trails and canoe launches along the Neponset River; trails for dog walking and bird watching; and habitat for wildlife.

This vision includes a Walpole with a mixture of the new and the old; where our most significant historic and cultural resources are saved for future generations.

**Goals**

**Goal 1 – Protect Town’s Surface and Ground Water Resources**

**Goal 2 – Preserve Natural and Cultural Resources**

**Goal 3 – Protect unique and significant Open Space Resources**

**Goal 4-Maintain and Enhance Existing Open Space Resources**

**Goal 5- Expand the recreational fields**

## Section 7

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### **Analysis of Needs**

The following is a summary of the Town of Walpole's Open Space and Recreational needs based on information the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee and Staff collected, public hearings, the survey, the Fields Master Plan, and the Master Plan. The needs are grouped in three categories: resource protection, community needs and management needs.

#### ***Summary of Natural Resources Needs***

##### **Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater**

Walpole's source of drinking water is from aquifers drawn on by six public wells located within the Mine Brook River watershed and the School Meadow Brook watershed. The protection of the Town's existing and future water supplies is a primary need. The groundwater supply needs to be protected for both water quality and water quantity. Water protection and conservation has become more of a regulatory and educational effort to prevent poor water quality from entering the ground and the waterway. The Town will need resources to promote water education and conservation efforts and protective landuse measures. The Town will need to continue the illicit discharge identification and elimination program to address the issue of water quality.

##### **Increase quality of water in ponds, rivers streams**

Walpole's many ponds are in need of maintenance from years of siltation and nuisance aquatic vegetation. The interest of the ponds has flourished within the past year and an effort has begun to work on cleaning up these vital resources. Areas where sediments and bacteria is entering the ponds needs to be identified and then eliminated.

The Neponset River's is under utilized in the Town of Walpole. In many areas one can hardly tell that it is there. The Neponsett River's main problems which impact it health and vitality are sedimentation, invasive species, and bacteria from failed septic systems, cracked sewer pipes and stormwater.

##### **Increase open space protection for areas significant for biodiversity and resource protection**

There are areas in the Town of Walpole which have been identified as significant for biodiversity and resource protection which should be protected either by public, nonprofit, and/or private resources. These resources included unique streams, large areas of wetlands, river corridors, and agricultural lands. Protection of key areas though-out the Town has always been a priority of the Town when opportunities arise. However in the existing tight economic environment fiscal responsibility is also a key priority.

## **Protect scenic and historic areas of significance**

Walpole's historic and scenic resources are important and methods to protect these resources need to be continued.

## ***Summary of Community's Needs***

### **Increase sports fields**

Walpole has a very active sport community and the need for fields for a variety of sports is on-going. The Fields Master Plan provides a detailed plan identifying need and implementation program. Additional field space is an on-going need for the town.

### **Develop signage, maps, programs, and publicity for existing areas.**

The Town has open space resources which are underused because people simply don't know that they are there. The survey helped identify this issue. Existing open space areas need signs, maps and programs which publicize that they are there. Many of the areas need to be maintained for access and parking.

### **Continue trail system to link existing facilities and natural areas.**

Walpole is fortunate to have the Bay Circuit Trail (a regional trail which goes through Walpole). This trail links together several of the Town's Open Space areas like Clarks Pond and the Town Forest. The Trails Committee is working on linking other smaller trail systems so that the Town has an extensive system of connected trails. There are some areas of trails where there are links which need to be acquired.

### **Increase field and trail maintenance programs**

There is a need for an ongoing commitment to maintain the fields that the Town already has and this can be a public/private partnership between multiple parties.

### **Accessibility**

There is a need to provide continued accessibility to Town owned lands. Members of the Conservation Commission surveyed all the Conservation Commission and Town owned existing open space areas for accessibility and general access. They found that the well known open space areas such as Adams Farm, Turners Pond, Memorial Pond and Clarks Pond have parking and sidewalks or gravel based access walkways which allow for limited wheel chair access. Fields at school facilities have paved parking areas and sidewalks.

***Management Needs Potential Changes***

**Communication**

The various Boards and Commission need to continue to communicate and work together to manage open space and recreational areas in Town.

**Brownfields**

The Towns efforts to work on the Brownfield areas for reuse should continue so that these areas can be used to benefit the Town.

## **Section 8**

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### **Goals and Objectives**

The following are a proposed new set of goals and objectives for the updated Open Space and Recreation Plan. They are based on the goals and objectives listed in the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and adjusted based on comments received in the 2011 Open Space and recreation Plan survey, 2008 Fields Master Plan, and public meetings held by the Conservation Commission and the Open Space and Recreation Plan committee. It should be noted this list is not presented in any particular order of priority.

#### ***GENERAL GOAL***

To preserve and enhance the overall quality of the natural and cultural environment within the Town of Walpole while providing a well maintained system of parks, recreation facilities and conservation lands, trails, town forest, ponds and other lands subject to land restrictions that meet the diverse needs of the community.

#### ***Conservation Goals***

##### **Goal 1 -- Protect and improve the quality of Walpole's surface and ground water.**

##### **Objectives**

- × Protect, preserve and maintain existing and potential groundwater supply, ground water recharge areas and watershed protection districts within the Town to ensure sufficient quantities and quality of safe drinking water.
- × Enhance the Town's ability to protect rivers, streams, ponds, floodplains and other land important for water quality and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities for passive and active recreational uses.

**Goal 2 -- Protect and encourage preservation of the Town's natural and cultural resources.**

**Objectives**

- × Preserve, through acquisition and/or regulatory strategies, unique and/or ecologically valuable and significant land areas.
- × Encourage the preservation and conservation of agricultural and large forested parcels.
- × Identify and protect wildlife habitats and corridors, particular those of endangered and threatened species.
- × Preserve the Town's heritage and character through the preservation of scenic areas, roads, and structures of historic significance.
- × Acquire additional conservation lands, easements, and restrictions, adjacent existing Town owned open space.
- × Work with Federal, State, Local and private parties to clean up identified Brownfields and other existing contaminated lands and ensure that future contamination does not occur.

**Goal 3 – Maintain and Manage existing Town Open Space land**

**Objectives**

- × Develop management plans for all Town ponds and other Town owned Open Space.
- × Develop a plan for educational programs and accessibility (specifically signage, maps, ADA accessibility, and awareness).
- × Provide a budget to maintain and manage existing Town Open Space lands.
- × Forge private, nonprofit and public partnerships to help with management and maintenance of Open Space lands including active and passive recreational areas.
- × Connect existing and potential Open Space with trails, sidewalks and bicycle paths.
- × Develop methods to restrict use of motorized vehicles from Town Open Space land and other than Town authorized vehicles.

## **Recreation Goals**

### **Goal 4 -- Expand the number of fields and facilities to provide a wide variety of active recreation opportunities.**

#### **Objectives**

- × Implement goals of the 2007 Trails Master Plan and revisions
- × Implement Goals of 2008 Athletic Fields Master Plan
  
- × Encourage public, nonprofit and private partnerships in planning and development of outdoor recreational facilities.
  
- × Encourage multiple use of recreation and conservation facilities through coordinated efforts of the schools, various Town departments and private organizations.

### **Goal 5 -- Maintain and manage existing recreation facilities.**

#### **Objectives**

- × Provide adequate resources and management for the maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.
  
- × Educate the public on outdoor opportunities currently available in Walpole.
  
- × Develop a plan for making existing as well as new playfields AAB/ADA accessible as required.

## Section 9

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### SEVEN YEAR ACTION PLAN

The following chart summarizes the recommended actions for the Town of Walpole to address its open space and recreation needs in the next Seven years. The chart also identifies the recommended lead agency and supporting agencies for each recommendation, indicates the recommended schedule for action, and changes since 1999 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

**See Map 8.**

**WALPOLE SEVEN-YEAR ACTION PLAN  
RECOMENDATIONS**

Goal 1

Protect and Improve the Quality of Town's Surface and Ground Water

| <b>YEAR</b>      | <b>RECOMMENDATION</b>  | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>                          | <b>OTHER AGENCIES</b>           | <b>SINCE 1999</b>   |
|------------------|--|---|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>2011</b>      | Develop Pond Management Plans for Clarks, Turners, Cobbs and Memorial Ponds.   | Conservation Commission/<br>Ponds Committee | Board of Selectmen              | Turners and Clarks Ponds have been treated some but no long term program. |
| <b>2012-2013</b> | Identify areas for Stormwater Management Structures  | Engineering/<br>Conservation Commission     | Board of Selectmen              | Work done under 2003 NPDES MS4 General permit.                            |
| <b>2014-2015</b> | Install Stormwater BMP's   | Engineering/<br>Conservation Commission     | Board of Selectmen              | Work done under 2003 NPDES MS4 General permit.                            |
| <b>2011</b>      | Review Bylaws and Regulations to conform with environmental BMPs for water resource protection and stormwater management | Planning Board                              | Conservation/<br>Engineering    | Work done under 2003 NPDES MS4 General Permit                             |
| <b>2012-2018</b> | Support green and renewable development initiatives  | Planning Board/<br>Board of Selectmen       | Economic Development Commission |   |

## Goal 2

Protect and encourage preservation of the Town's natural and cultural resources

| <b>YEAR</b> | <b>RECOMMENDATION</b>  | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>                                | <b>OTHER AGENCIES</b>   | <b>Since 1996</b>             |
|-------------|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 2011-2012   | Potential new Town Forest Parcels of interest (41-49, 33-137, 33-139, 33-120 RR, 41-53)  | Town Forest Committee/<br>Conservation Commission | Board of Selectmen  |                               |
| 2012        | Work with Norfolk County to protect Norfolk Agricultural School vacant lands with Conservation Restriction   | Conservation Commission/<br>Board of Selectmen    | Planning Board/<br>Board of Trustees/<br>State Representatives            |                               |
| 2011-2012   | Work with public, private and non-profit entities to acquire areas of Sunnyrock Farms.   | Conservation Commission/<br>Board of Selectmen    |   |                               |
| 2013        | Continue Historic Preservation study of areas as recommended in 2008 Historic Properties Study.  | Historical Commission/<br>Town Forest Committee   | Board of Selectmen  | Study conducted 2008          |
| 2011-2014   | Continue to work with federal, state, local and private parties to clean up, and/or acquire Brownfields such as areas adjacent to the Neponset River, Town Forest and other existing open space areas. | Conservation Commission                           | Board of Selectmen/<br>Brownfields Committee/<br>EDC/EDIC/Board of Health | Brown-fields Committee formed |

**Goal 3:**

**Maintain and Expand Existing Town Open Space**

| <b>YEAR</b> | <b>RECOMMENDATION</b>  | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>                            | <b>OTHER AGENCIES</b>   | <b>Since 1996</b>                                      |
|-------------|--|---|---|--|
| 2011        | Install signage, and maps at Town land areas.  | Conservation/Trails Committee/Ponds Committee | DPW/Boy Scouts  | Pinnacle Point, Plimpton, Bird Pond Trail, Adams Farm. |
| 2011        | Reinstall sand volleyball courts   | Recreation Department                         | Board of Selectmen  | Volleyball courts were lost due library 2010.          |
| 2011        | Develop Park along Spring Brook Down town  | Master Plan Implementation Committee          | Board of Selectmen/Conservation Commission                                    |  |
| 2012-2013   | Develop Memorial Pond Plan with trail access around pond and pavilion.                         | Ponds Committee                               | Board of Selectmen/Conservation Commission                                    | Stormwater structure installed                         |
| 2013        | Add trail off of Industrial Road into Cedar Swamp On old rail bed. Acquire assessors map 46-54 | Conservation/Trails                           | Board of Selectmen/DPW/Town   |  |
| 2013        | Develop access, trail and parking at Cobbs Pond  | Ponds Committee/Conservation Commission       | Board of Selectmen/Recreation department/Conservation Commission/Trails/Ponds |  |
| 2014        | Develop access ramps to Clarks, Memorial and Turners pond for non-motor boats                  | Ponds Committee                               | Conservation Commission   |  |

**Goal 4**

**Expand and Maintain Recreational Facilities  
(based on 2008 Field Master Plan Priority recommendations)**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Recommendation</b>                | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>           | <b>OTHER AGENCIES</b>                   | <b>SINCE 1996</b>     |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 2011        | Renovate Stone Field                 | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen/<br>Pop Warner       | Some renovations done |
|             | Old Post Road School Field Expansion | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen/Schools              |                       |
|             | Johnson MS Field Master Plan         | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen/Schools              |                       |
|             | Bird MS Fields Master Plan           | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen/Schools              |                       |
| 2011        | Morgan Field improvements            | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen                      |                       |
| 2011        | Fisher School Field Improvements     | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen/Schools              |                       |
|             | Boyden Field improvements            | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen/Schools              |                       |
|             | Adopt a Field user Policy            | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen                      |                       |
| 2011-2016   | Develop additional fields            | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen                      |                       |
| 2011-2012   | Expand Lacrosse Fields               | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Board of Selectmen                      |                       |
| 2012-2013   | Expand soccer fields at Mylod Street | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Walpole Youth Soccer/Board of Selectmen |                       |
| 2016-2018   | Maintain existing Resources          | <b>Recreation Commission</b> | Recreation Department                   |                       |