



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

June 23, 2021

Ms. Melissa Cryan
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Division of Conservation Services
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Re: Walpole Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Ms. Cryan:

MAPC has received your DCS letter of review and compliance for the Walpole Open Space and Recreation Plan with the current Open Space and Recreation Plan Requirements dated January 27, 2021. On behalf of the Town of Walpole, we are pleased to submit this final plan with the review comments incorporated as outlined below.

DCS Comment 1) There were many times throughout the OSRP that the OSRP Planner's Workbook format was not followed. In future plans that you may work on, please follow that format as it makes it far easier for the review and has been set up in a particular way after much thought by EEA.

Response: Acknowledged.

DCS Comment 2) Introduction – the Planning Process and Public Participation section should discuss how the public survey was advertised.

Response: On page 9 the following description was added, "The public survey was advertised on the town website, Facebook page, and Twitter account. The survey was also advertised at Town Hall and announced at Conservation Commission meetings.

DCS Comment 3) History of the Community – please update the "turn of the century" verbiage as I'm presuming you mean the turn of the 20th century, not the 21st century.

Response: On page 14, "turn of the century" has been replaced with "at the beginning of the twentieth century."

DCS Comment 4) Population Characteristics – information on the town's population density needs to be included.

Response: On page 15 added, "At a total of 21.0 square miles of area, the population density of the town is 1,186 residents per square mile."

DCS Comment 5) Growth and Development Patterns – the Transportation section should include information on cycling options.

Response: On page 21, a discussion of bicycle infrastructure was added: “Currently, the Town of Walpole does not have on-street bicycle accommodations or infrastructure. The town does have some off-street bicycle path options that are natural surface paths, parts of which may be appropriate for an off-road bicycle, such as the Bay Circuit Trail. As discussed later in this plan, several expanded rail trails are proposed that would strengthen multimodal connections to surrounding communities. The town has also recently undertaken a Complete Street prioritization process that has identified several locations for bicycle infrastructure improvements.”

DCS Comment 6) Fisheries and Wildlife – a general inventory must be added.

Response: On pages 35 and 36, an expanded discussion of fisheries and wildlife was added with information from BioMap2, a general wildlife inventory, and inventory of fishing locations and common fish.

DCS Comment 7) Environmental Challenges – please add sections on landfills, erosion, chronic flooding, development impact, and environmental equity. Environmental equity refers to looking at the distribution of open space and recreation resources in the town and identifying any areas that are lacking in them.

Response: On pages 38, 39, 40, and 41 subsections for Erosion, Chronic Flooding, Landfills, Development Impact, and Environmental Equity have been added.

DCS Comment 8) Section 5 – the condition column in the table of town-owned conservation and recreation properties should be filled in for conservation properties as well (“not applicable” isn’t an answer that makes sense here). Article 97 is not a type of grant and shouldn’t be used to fill in that column. Please note that this information is only required for town-owned conservation and recreation properties. Any Conservation Restrictions or Agricultural Preservation Restrictions in the town should be listed in Section 5, as well as any land trust properties.

Response: The condition of town-owned conservation properties has been added to the inventory table. Article 97 has been removed from the “public grant accepted” column. All known conservation restrictions, agricultural preservation restrictions, and land trust properties in the town are listed in the Section 5 inventory table.

DCS Comment 9) Analysis of Needs – the Community’s Needs section should include the needs of special groups, such as teens.

Response: On page 65, an additional sub-section for “Special Group Needs” has been added to highlight the needs of special groups, including teens, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities.

DCS Comment 10) Goals and Objectives – redate the plan to start in 2021 since it was not submitted until 2021 (it’s currently dated 2020-2027).

Response: The cover date of the plan has been edited to June 2021. On pages 65, 69, 70, and 73, the date references have been edited to be 2021-2028.

DCS Comment 11) Seven Year Action Plan – the goals and objectives should be listed in some sort of priority order.

Response: The Action Plan Goals are listed in priority order based on the Community Survey results, Community Forum notes, and discussion with the OSRP Core Group. The final community forum in October 2020 asked participants to prioritize the OSRP goals. In this prioritization Goal 2 was the highest priority, followed by Goal 3, and then Goal 1. However, this was based on a relatively low number of meeting participants, so the priority order has not been changed. Throughout the OSRP process, priorities have focused on Goals 1, 2, and 3. This explanation has been added to the top of the 2021-2028 Action Plan Table on page 75.

DCS Comment 12) Letters of Review – a letter from the planning board is needed.

Response: A letter from the Planning Board has been included in Appendix Section A page A9. A letter from the Conservation Commission has been included in Appendix Section A page A8.

DCS Comment 13) Maps – the Water Resources map should include wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, and the town’s watershed(s). The Unique Features map must include scenic landscapes, unusual geologic features, and cultural and historic areas. The Inventory map should denote ownership (federal, state, local, etc.) include conservation restrictions and agricultural preservation restrictions, and have a key. I understand that the table that lists town-owned conservation and recreation properties has a column with the number that correlates to the map, but the map should include a key as well for ease of reading.

Response: Map 5: Water Resources on page 29 has been updated to include wetlands in the legend (wetlands were previously included on the map), added aquifer areas (high yield and medium yield aquifers), and annotated the town’s watersheds (Charles River Watershed, Boston Harbor Watershed, and Taunton Watershed). Map 7: Unique Features on page 34 has been updated to include scenic landscapes with five notable locations from the Conservation Agent,



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

unusual geologic features have been added to the legend, and cultural and historic areas from the MassHistoric Commission Inventory have been added. Map 8: Open Space Inventory on page 55 has been updated to include ownership (federal, state, county, local, land trust, non-profit, or private), include conservation restrictions, and a legend. No agricultural preservation restrictions are present.

The DCS review letter received January 27, 2021 and this response letter have both been included in Appendix 1 of the final plan.

Sincerely,

Josh Fiala, AIA AICP LEED AP
Principal Planner