



An Open Space Plan and Much More

By Nancy Coffey

Whether you are a new resident or an old timer, you probably have many questions about Beverly. Perhaps you have gone looking for the answers and, not finding them, become frustrated.

“I hear a lot about development in Beverly, but what is being done to protect open space?” “Why can’t I find a quick overview of Beverly’s history?” “Where are all those *other* parks and playgrounds I’ve heard about but never seen?” “Does Beverly have any places to hike or cross country ski?” “What’s being done to protect our drinking water?” “Is there anything written about the geology of this area?” “Where is Norwood Pond anyway?”

If you have ever wondered about some of these things, I have good news for you. You can find the answers to these questions and many more in the City’s new Five Year Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Committee expects formal approval of the draft Plan by the State Division of

Conservation Services within the next couple of months and bound copies will be available at the Beverly Public Libraries. In the meantime the draft Plan can be viewed and downloaded from your computer. Go to www.beverlyma.gov. On the main page click on “Boards and Commissions” and, then click on “Open Space and Recreation Committee”. The draft Plan can be found in the “Additional Links” section of the webpage. The Committee anticipates having copies of the final approved Plan available for purchase in the Planning Department.

The primary purpose of this document, developed by the Beverly



Open Space and Recreation Committee, is to lay out a five-year action plan to enable the City to meet three primary goals: to protect and acquire land in Beverly of high natural, scenic, and recreational value; to enhance

the public's opportunities to enjoy open space in Beverly; and to promote public education on environmental issues.

Following an introductory overview and explanation of the planning process, Chapter 3 of the plan provides a concise and fascinating account of Beverly's history, demographics, infrastructure, growth and development. Chapter 4 includes a broad overview of the city's natural environment. The geology section may seem a bit technical, but the rest of the chapter is rich with accessible information about the landscape and scenic environments, water resources, plants and animals in our community. A final section discusses the environmental challenges that we face including drinking water protection and dealing with historic hazardous waste sites.



Have you wondered about the undeveloped land in your own neighborhood and

what is being done to protect it? Chapter 5 offers an inventory of undeveloped land of conservation and recreation interest including City-owned property, parcels

protected by land trusts, and privately owned land.

The final chapters of the Plan include an analysis of needs and priorities in each ward, followed by specific goals, objectives and actions for the next five years. The appendix lists specific recommendations and includes very interesting maps.

The Open Space Committee has exciting plans that include land protection, the development of an informative website, new trail maps and kiosks, a continuation of Earth Day programs, and much, much more. We hope you will read the Plan. You will know a great deal more about Beverly when you are done.