



CHAPTER 1 PLAN SUMMARY

“Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now.”

Alan Lake in
Time Management Expert

A. Statement of Purpose

This document is the seven-year update of the City of Beverly’s Open Space and Recreation Plan, as required by the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services (DCS). It replaces the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Mission Statement

The mission of the City of Beverly Open Space and Recreation Committee is to preserve, maintain and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Beverly by developing and maintaining an open space plan. The plan will identify and recommend open space acquisitions and will identify other creative strategies to preserve open space based on public input and in consideration of City government policies and actions and the City’s Master Plan.

B. Planning Process and Public Participation



The Beverly Open Space and Recreation Committee (OSRC) has carried out this updating of the City’s Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Committee started working on the plan in the fall of 2014. Various components of the plan have been discussed at the Committee’s monthly meetings, which are open to the public. In addition, the Committee held a public meeting on January 7, 2015 to get input from citizens of Beverly. A public survey was made available online with hard copies available at City Hall, all public libraries, and Senior Center. The process includes comments and feedback from the Mayor, the Conservation Commission, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Planning Board. Finally, the plan is presented to the Massachusetts DCS within the Executive office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for their approval.

C. Structure of the Plan

The structure of the plan, as reflected in the Table of Contents, is based on the information requirements set out by the Massachusetts DCS (available on their website).

Chapter 1: Plan Summary (this chapter).

Chapter 2: Introduction: A general introduction to the planning process.

Chapter 3: Community Setting: This chapter describes the long history of Beverly from before colonial times until the present and then discusses the demographic characteristics and recent growth trends as well as the present city infrastructure.

Chapter 4: Environmental Inventory and Analysis: This chapter describes the geology, plants and animals that characterize Beverly and the major environmental issues the city is facing.

Chapter 5: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest: This chapter is an accounting of existing protected land and unprotected land of open space interest.

Chapter 6: Community Goals: This chapter presents the community’s vision for open space.

Chapter 7: Analysis of Needs: This chapter lists priority open space parcels for the next seven years as well as needs of the community and management needs.

Chapter 8: Goals, Objectives and Actions: This chapter is a statement of open space goals and objectives as well as actions to accomplish in the next seven years.

Chapter 9: Seven-year Action Plan

Chapter 10: Public Comments

Chapter 11: References

D. Open Space Goals and Objectives

The Beverly Open Space and Recreation Committee (OSRC) identified the following six goals:

1. Protect and acquire land in Beverly of high natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural, community and urban gardening, and environmental value.
2. Increase and enhance the public's opportunities to enjoy open space and recreation activities in Beverly.
3. Protect and acquire land in more urbanized areas of the city (including downtown, Ryal Side, Goat Hill and North Beverly).
4. Create a regional trail network.
5. Increase opportunities for public engagement in environmental issues.
6. Coordinate with local public and private entities to increase opportunities for shared active and passive recreation and to also increase visibility and public awareness of the Committee and its actions in the community.

The following objectives were associated with each of those six goals:

1. Protect and acquire land in Beverly of high natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural, community and urban gardening, and environmental value.
 - a. Acquire and protect lands with high natural, environmental and agricultural values including but not limited to:
 - lands in the Wenham Lake and Longham Reservoirs watershed and the Water Supply Protection Overlay District (WSPOD),



- wildlife habitats, which include lands supporting exemplary, rare or uncommon natural communities and land supporting species of conservation concern,
 - lands identified on the CAPS Index of Ecological Integrity, areas with high potential for passive outdoor recreation,
 - lands that provide scenic vistas,
 - lands with soils suitable for farming and community gardening.
- b. Ensure that any proposed development is consistent with the Open Space Plan and the Master Plan.
 - c. Integrate open space planning into the City's planning and budgeting process.
 - d. Ensure that all City-owned properties with high passive recreational value, potential future active recreational value and environmental value are protected from development.
 - e. Ensure adequate resources for stewardship, maintenance, and management of Beverly's open space and recreational lands.
2. Increase and enhance the public's opportunities to enjoy open space and recreation activities in Beverly.
 - a. Increase public access to the waterfront.
 - b. Create a trail network throughout the city.
 - c. Increase the number of playing fields within the community.
 - d. Increase awareness and promote use of open space for a variety of recreational opportunities within the community.
 - e. Increase awareness and promote use of conservation areas and the waterfront for passive recreation, i.e. hiking, walking, birding, nature study, etc.
 - f. Create accessible trails and recreation opportunities that comply with ADA requirements.
 3. Protect and acquire land in more urbanized areas of the city (including downtown, Ryal Side, Goat Hill and North Beverly).
 - a. Increase open space and recreation opportunities in the more urbanized areas of the city, including pocket parks, urban garden plots and play areas.
 4. Create regional trail network.
 - a. Work with local, regional and state officials and land-holding organizations in developing plans for a regional trail network.
 5. Coordinate with local public and private entities to increase opportunities for shared active and passive recreation and to also increase visibility and public awareness of the Committee and its actions in the community.
 - a. Work with local colleges and private schools to increase opportunities for shared facility usage for active recreation and to increase opportunities for passive recreation on their privately owned land.
 - b. Work with public and non-profit entities to increase awareness of the OSRC and its efforts.
 6. Increase opportunities for public engagement in environmental issues.
 - a. Increase environmental awareness within the community.
 - b. Provide opportunity for ongoing public input and engagement.



Each of these objectives has actions associated with them that will be carried out within a seven year time period. These are summarized in Chapters 8 and 9 of the plan. Some examples of the major actions we have proposed over the next seven years include the following:

1. Maintain a list of priority parcels for open space acquisition within the city and develop plans to acquire land rights to these parcels.
2. Maintain a list of priority parcels for conservation restrictions within the city and develop plans to implement them.
3. Develop and maintain a list of properties that have potential suitability for community and urban garden sites.
4. Consult with the Beverly Salem Water Supply Board on priority parcels for acquisition to protect Beverly's water supply.
5. Develop and enhance partnerships with land trusts, including ECGA, MAS, TTOR, and BCLT for land acquisition and for promotion of CRs.
6. Monitor changes in zoning regulations to ensure community gardening and urban agriculture are allowed uses in appropriate zoning districts.
7. Identify specific parcels, from list of priority parcels, for acquisition or protection. Identify potential funding sources, including CPA funds.
8. Work with the Mayor, City Councilors, Parks and Recreation Commission, and City Solicitor to develop CRs for ConCom land and other city lands of conservation interest as appropriate.
9. Work with appropriate stakeholders to purchase the land and easements identified on the maps to create a comprehensive open space network.
10. Develop a cohesive trail system for existing and proposed open space areas within the community.
11. Support efforts of the Planning Department and Beverly Bicycle Committee to establish and implement a Complete Streets policy in order to establish clearly designated walking and bicycle trails on streets providing linkages between open space parcels.
12. Develop water related recreational amenities on public land.
13. Improve maintenance of existing recreational facilities to ensure public safety.
14. Coordinate with ADA Coordinator and City's Disabilities Commission on requirements for trail accessibility.



15. Increase utilization of local public media outlets (newspapers, BevCam, websites, etc.).
16. Support schools in increasing opportunities for environmental education programming.
17. Develop and conduct surveys to obtain public input on open space and recreation needs and possibilities.
18. Coordinate fundraising activities with the Recreation Department and local non-profit groups with a portion of the proceeds to fund OSRC activities.
19. Identify and seek funds to acquire easements and properties to create trail networks linking Beverly with surrounding communities of Manchester, Wenham, Danvers, Salem.

E. Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

Land of conservation and recreation interest in Beverly includes lands owned by both public and private entities. Several non-profit organizations, most notably the Essex County Greenbelt Association and The Trustees of Reservations protect a total of 309 acres in the City. The Beverly Conservation Commission has ownership of 423 acres, much of it in the Beverly Commons woodlands in Beverly Farms. The City of Beverly owns 418 acres of parkland and playgrounds. This includes 98 acres that are under the care and custody of the Parks and Recreation Department, 160 acres of the Beverly Golf and Tennis Club, and 160 acres under the general ownership of the City. The latter includes 120 acres bordering Norwood Pond, an open space priority that is currently protected under a special zoning ordinance of the City Council, called the Municipal Open Space and Recreation (OSR) district.

In determining what the next set of open space priorities should be, the OSRC asked the City's GIS Administrator to extract a list of all parcels greater than five acres throughout the City. This list included 200 privately owned parcels. The OSRC also asked for a list of parcels greater than 0.5 acres in Wards 1, 2, and 3, the more urbanized part of the city. This included 18 parcels.

F. Priority Open Space Projects for the Next Seven Years

The OSRC identified priority projects for the next seven years based on the goal of protecting land of high conservation value and enhancing recreational opportunities. The Committee first examined the list from the 2008 plan, and determined which projects had been completed and no longer needed to be on the list, and whether some areas had been lost to development and were no longer suitable as conservation or recreation land. We then examined new areas, using the same prioritization criteria that had been developed for the 2008 plan. Some of the priorities are new acquisitions or conservation restrictions. Others are intended to provide more permanent protection for existing publicly owned open spaces. Still other priorities are to ensure that open space interests are represented in redevelopment projects. The following are the results.



Ward 1

- Complete the walkway from Green's Hill around the river by acquiring the 1.3-acre parcel. (potential CPA funding)
- Acquire a parcel on Tanzella Avenue, comprising .52 acres, which would expand the existing 3.72 acres already preserved at Tanzella Hill. (potential CPA funding)
- Acquire parcel on Colgate Road, comprising a triangular, landlocked property located between Colgate Park and the golf course. (potential CPA funding)
- Transfer the newly acquired 27X property to either the Conservation Commission or the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Ward 2

- Maintain contact with owner of Ventron site, 12 and 16 Congress Street on development plans, make sure proposed walkway go in. And if the opportunity arises, consider acquiring for a waterfront park. This objective was raised by many residents in the public survey.
- Ensure that there is an open public walkway and city pier park in any waterfront development and redevelopment.
- Incorporate open space walkway along Bass River as part of any River Street and McPherson Drive redevelopment.

Ward 3

- Develop and implement a landscape plan for the walkway area between Colgate Park and Beverly Golf and Tennis Club.
- Place a Conservation Restriction (CR) on the Beverly Golf and Tennis Club (identified on CAPS Index of Ecological Integrity as highly significant) land to ensure permanent protection as open space.
- Develop and implement pocket parks and pocket gardens to enhance public welfare in the most urban areas of Beverly.

Ward 4

- There are several parcels that remain in private hands within and adjacent to Sally Milligan Park and should be acquired to maintain the park's integrity, including two near Bonad Road.
- Acquire 5.85-acre landlocked parcel, which could provide a trail link through Endicott College. (potential CPA funding)

Ward 5

- Continue to work with the owner of the Beverly Tree Farm toward obtaining a CR or APR.
- Work with current owners of 719 Cabot Street (Project Adventure and Moraine Farm) to ensure that these parcels continue to be protected.
- Continue to advocate for consolidation of open space areas around Moraine Farm where there are currently 8 or so buildable lots. (potential CPA funding if property is for sale)
- Acquire 4.09-acre parcel on Cabot Street, which would enlarge the Philips Reserve. (potential CPA funding)
- Protect city-owned open space land on the Hannah Elementary School property.
- Work with the YMCA for a CR on the remaining land at the Sterling Center.



- Consider redevelopment of the former municipal landfill off of Essex Street as playing fields.
- Work with City officials, the SBWSB, and private landowners to protect open space land from development in the watershed of the Wenham Lake Reservoir.

Ward 6

- Assist Beverly Community Garden Council in securing the use of lands on lot 58-1A (Standley Street gardens) for community gardens, enter into licensing agreement, and support Garden Council as requested for possible assistance with brush clearing, soil testing or mitigation, water provision, etc.
- Explore alternatives with owner of 36 Foster Street (Camp Mitchman) for continued protection as open space or recreation land. Access to this parcel will be available through a land conveyance per OSRD to be provided across an abutting property to Camp Paradise.
- Transfer ownership of city owned parcels in the Pole Swamp area to the Conservation Commission to ensure their permanent protection and to consolidate ownership under one city agency.
- Transfer ownership of City-owned parcels in the Beverly Commons area to the Con Com to ensure their permanent protection and to consolidate ownership under one city agency.
- Acquire back land of private property on Greenwood Avenue across from the vernal pool sited on land of Affiliated Managers Group, Inc. (AMG).
- Work with (AMG) on placing a CR on their property, as they promised in meetings to support a zoning variance they received for its current use as corporate headquarters.
- Create an open space linkage and a trail system in the land between Boyles Street, Thissel Street, Endicott College, and the MBTA light rail line. Obtain tax title of the owner unknown parcels to provide this link.
- Collaborate with both Endicott College and Landmark School on a trail behind both campuses.
- Establish a trail easement which would connect ECGA reservation west of Grover Street to Long Hill Reservation.