



City of Beverly's
Open Space and Recreation
Plan
Executive Summary

The seal of the City of Beverly, featuring a central figure surrounded by the text "CITY OF BEVERLY" and "INCORPORATED 1866".

Prepared by:

The City of Beverly
Open Space and Recreation Committee



This document is the executive summary of the City of Beverly's Open Space and Recreation Plan, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Services (DCS). It replaces the 2001 Open Space and Recreation Plan, which was prepared for the City of Beverly by the Cecil Group as part of Beverly's Master Plan (1998).



View from West Beach

Open Space and Recreation Committee
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.

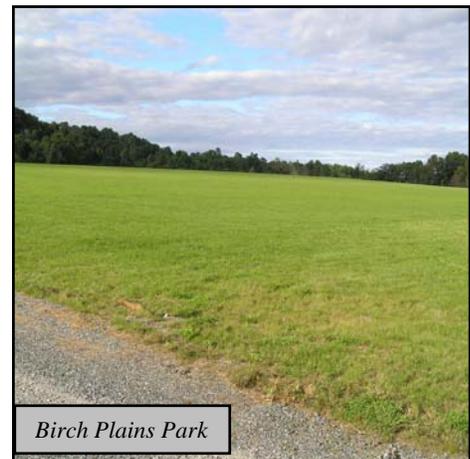
Planning Process and Public Participation



The Beverly Open Space and Recreation Committee ("the Committee") 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 2005 and has been focused on this task through much of 2006 and 2007. 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 in June 2007 and requested input from the Mayor, the Beverly City Council and residents and gave presentations to the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. A draft of the plan was also sent to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) for comment. Finally, the plan was presented to the DCS within the Executive office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for approval.

Structure of the Plan

- Chapter 1: Plan Summary
- Chapter 2: Introduction
- Chapter 3: Community Setting
- Chapter 4: Environmental Inventory and Analysis
- Chapter 5: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest
- Chapter 6: Community Goals
- Chapter 7: Analysis of Needs
- Chapter 8: Goals, Objectives and Actions
- Chapter 9: Five-Year Action Plan
- Chapter 10: Public Comments
- Chapter 11: References



Birch Plains Park

Open Space Goals and Objectives

Goal: Protect and acquire land in Beverly of high natural, scenic and recreational value.

- Acquire private lands with high natural values:
 - Watershed lands,
 - Wildlife habitat, such as lands supporting exemplary, rare, or uncommon natural communities and land supporting species of conservation concern,
 - Lands with high potential for passive outdoor recreation,
 - Lands that provide scenic views.
- Ensure that all City-owned properties with high open space and passive recreational value and potential future active recreational value are protected from future development.
- Ensure adequate resources for maintenance and management of Beverly's open spaces.
- Integrate the City's Master Plan with this Open Space and Recreation Plan and integrate open space planning into the City's planning and budgeting processes.

Goal: Enhance the public's opportunities to enjoy open space in Beverly.

- Increase public access to the waterfront.
- Create a trail network throughout the City.
- Increase public awareness of open space, park and recreation needs and opportunities.
- Increase the number of playing fields within the community.
- Promote awareness and use of conservation areas for passive recreation (hiking, walking, nature study, etc.)
- Increase and enhance recreational opportunities for Beverly residents.

Goal: Promote public education on environmental issues.

- Increase environmental awareness within the community.
- Create a webpage for the Open Space and Recreation Committee.



Actions

Major actions the Committee has proposed for the next five years include the following, a complete list of actions can be found in Chapter 7:

- Maintain a list of priority parcels for open space acquisition and conservation restrictions within the City and develop plans to acquire land rights to these parcels.
- Collaborate with the Planning Department to identify and write grants that fund open space acquisitions and conservation restrictions.
- Review and upgrade the Watershed Protection Overlay District.
- Organize forums for landowners on conservation giving, in collaboration with private non-profit conservation organizations.
- Work with city government to ensure maintenance of trails and signage at city parks.
- Collaborate with local and state officials to implement a Sea Path, or waterfront access way.
- Identify all existing public rights-of-way that lead to parks and other public open spaces. Install signage and publicize the existence of these rights of way.
- Identify parcels that would be appropriate for active recreation.
- Maintain and periodically update the Beverly Trails map.
- Create handicap accessible trails.
- Conduct regularly scheduled trail walks and continue the successful Earth Day walk series.

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 protect land in Beverly; most notable are the Essex County Greenbelt Association and The Trustees of Reservations. The Beverly Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, and the City protect several hundred more acres of open space and recreation land. The following table lists the ownership and acreage of Beverly’s open space:

Ownership	Acreage
Non-Profits	309
Conservation Commission	423
Beverly Parks and Recreation Department	98
Beverly Golf and Tennis Club, City-owned	160
Total Open Space (not all protected)	1,050
Total Land in Beverly	9,680

In determining what the next set of open space priorities should be, the Committee asked the City’s GIS Administrator to extract a list of all parcels greater than five acres throughout the City. This list included 202 privately owned parcels. The Committee 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. These lists can be found in Chapter 5.



Priority Open Space Projects

The Committee identified priority projects for the next five years based on the goal of protecting land of high conservation value and enhancing recreational opportunities. It examined new areas, using the same prioritization criteria that had been developed for the 2001 plan. The following represent priority projects, a complete list can be found in Chapter 7:

Ward 1	Complete the walkway from Green’s Hill around the Bass River by acquiring the “owner unknown” parcel 19-27X.
Ward 2	Ensure that there is an open public walkway and city pier park in any waterfront development and redevelopment.
	Incorporate an open space walkway along the Bass River as part of any River Street and McPherson Drive redevelopment.
	Transfer the newly acquired Green’s Hill property to either the Conservation Commission or the Parks and Recreation Commission
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 on the Beverly Golf and Tennis Club land to ensure permanent protection as open space.
Ward 4	Create an access trail from Tall Tree Drive to the Conservation Commission land located to the north.
	Collaborate with National Grid to establish a public trail easement on their property located at 89 Boyles Street to make a connection to the Conservation Commission land located to the East.
Ward 5	Place the City-owned land around Norwood Pond into a Conservation Restriction.
	Protect City-owned open space land on the Hannah Elementary School property.
	Collaborate with the YMCA for a Conservation Restriction on their land at the Sterling Center.
	Consider redevelopment of former municipal landfill on Essex Street as playing fields.
Ward 6	Transfer ownership of City-owned parcels in the Pole Swamp and Beverly Commons areas to the Conservation Commission to ensure their permanent protection and to consolidate ownership under one City agency.
	Acquire back land of Ball family property (parcel 35-11) on Greenwood Avenue across from the vernal pool.
	Work with Affiliated Managers Group, Inc. (AMG) on placing a Conservation Restriction 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 Boyle Street, Thissel Street, Endicott College, and the MBTA light rail line. Obtain tax title of the owner unknown parcels to provide this link.
	Work with Endicott College for a trail behind the College and Landmark School.
	Work with the Girl Scouts to place a Conservation Restriction on their land at Camp Paradise.