

# **Town of Wakefield**

# **Open Space and Recreation Plan**

## ***FY 2005 - 2010***



**June 15, 2004**

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*Prepared by:*

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## Section 1 – Plan Summary

As part of the [Town of Wakefield's](#) efforts to create a comprehensive and contemporary Master Plan, the Town contracted the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to develop the 2004 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The OSRP was originally developed in 1986 by the Wakefield Conservation Commission and was subsequently updated by the Conservation Commission in 2000. The 2004 plan updates the work done previously using new data, public comments received during public meetings, and through discussion and meetings with Town departments, boards, and officials.

The OSRP provides background information about the Town in terms of its history, demographics, development patterns, present land uses, natural features, and important resources. The open space inventory in section 5 describes the present status of large areas of both Town-owned and privately owned undeveloped land. Further, the OSRP lays out the community's open space goals and objectives. It also discusses community, resource, and management needs, identifying residents' concerns and desires regarding the Town's open space and recreation facilities and programs. These needs are incorporated into an action plan, which provides a year-by-year time table for the Town to work towards achieving the stated goals and objectives. Finally, the OSRP provides a self-assessment of the accessibility of the Town's open space and recreational facilities to handicapped persons.

The goals identified in the 2004 Open Space and Recreation Plan are:

- *Increase the amount of and improve the Town's open space and "green areas";*
- *Increase the number and quality of active recreational areas and facilities;*
- *Protect watershed and water resources;*
- *Step-up efforts to coordinate with and participate in local and regional planning efforts;*
- *Seek funding to maintain and increase the amount of active and passive recreational areas;*
- *Continue to use zoning and other land use regulations to create and protect open space.*

The key recommendations of the Five-Year Action Plan are as follows:

- *Obtain funding to create design plans for a town-wide greenway system;*
- *Develop a comprehensive list of lands of conservation and recreation interest;*
- *Review the inventory of tax-title and town-owned lands to identify the best uses of the lands;*
- *Determine how many certifiable vernal pools exist in Wakefield and where they are located;*
- *Hire a consultant to assess where to locate and how to develop and upgrade playing fields, athletic areas, and tennis courts;*
- *Review the Weston & Sampson bikeway proposal and the Wakefield Bike Committee bikeway proposal. Have a meeting to reconcile differences;*
- *Create a local land trust;*
- *Ensure that the Conservation Commission receives Chapter 61 right-of-first refusal notices concurrently with the Board of Selectmen;*
- *Develop a plan for the expansion of Mapleway Playground;*
- *Maintain greenbelts around Lake Quannapowitt and Crystal Lake; enhance them through further acquisition either of properties, rights of way, or easements;*
- *Revisit the Community Preservation Act and educate decision-makers.*

## **Section 2 - Introduction**

**Web links in this report:** If you have a copy of this plan on a disk or you are viewing the plan on-line, the text that appears highlighted in blue indicates a direct web link. If you click on one of these links, you will go directly to a web site with more information on that topic. If you are reading a paper copy of this report but would like to access the web information, the full report can be found on the Town of Wakefield website at [http://www.wakefield.ma.us/public\\_Documents/WakefieldMA\\_Depts/planner](http://www.wakefield.ma.us/public_Documents/WakefieldMA_Depts/planner). In addition, a list of the web site addresses can be found in the references section of this document.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The principal purpose of the Open Space and Recreation Plan is to set goals and objectives for the preservation and enhancement of the Town's natural resources and recreational facilities. The goals and objectives and the action plan of the OSRP will be incorporated into the policies and planning objectives of the Town's Master Plan. Approval of the OSRP enables the Town to take advantage of many state and federal aid programs available to communities.

The Town's earliest planning efforts consisted of Master Plans that were prepared in 1925, 1961, and 1987, which advocated to varying degrees for improved and expanded recreation facilities in Wakefield. The 1961 Plan advocated for the creation of a Conservation Commission and in 1982 it was established. In 1986, the State's Division of Conservation Services developed an Open Space Plan for Wakefield, in which the larger open space parcels throughout the Town were inventoried and key parcels for acquisition or stewardship were identified. This plan was updated in 2000. The 2004 update builds on these previous efforts by incorporating the 2000 Open Space and Recreation Plan with the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs' (EOEA) Division of Conservation Services Open Space Plan requirements and through review of the existing conditions in Wakefield in order to create a comprehensive document that addresses the open space and recreation needs and goals of the Town.

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

In order to facilitate the update of the Town's open space and recreation plan, the Town of Wakefield contracted with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to prepare an updated plan. The 2004 update for Wakefield's Open Space Plan is part of the community's efforts to appropriately plan for the future and is funded through the state's Executive Order 418 (EO418) initiative. Through EO418, the state made all cities and towns eligible for funds for technical assistance and planning services to assist in the preparation of a Community Development Plan, a comprehensive plan that addresses housing needs, open space, economic development, and transportation.

To begin the process of updating the plan, MAPC met with the Town Planner on February 11, 2004. MAPC then held public meetings at Town Hall to obtain information from residents and interest groups regarding the plan. These forums were held on May 4 and June 3, 2004. The results of an interactive dialogue with Town residents and decision makers about the goals and objectives of the Open Space Plan, the community needs, and discussion about the open space map and parcels of conservation interest are incorporated throughout this plan and form the basis for the Action Plan items.