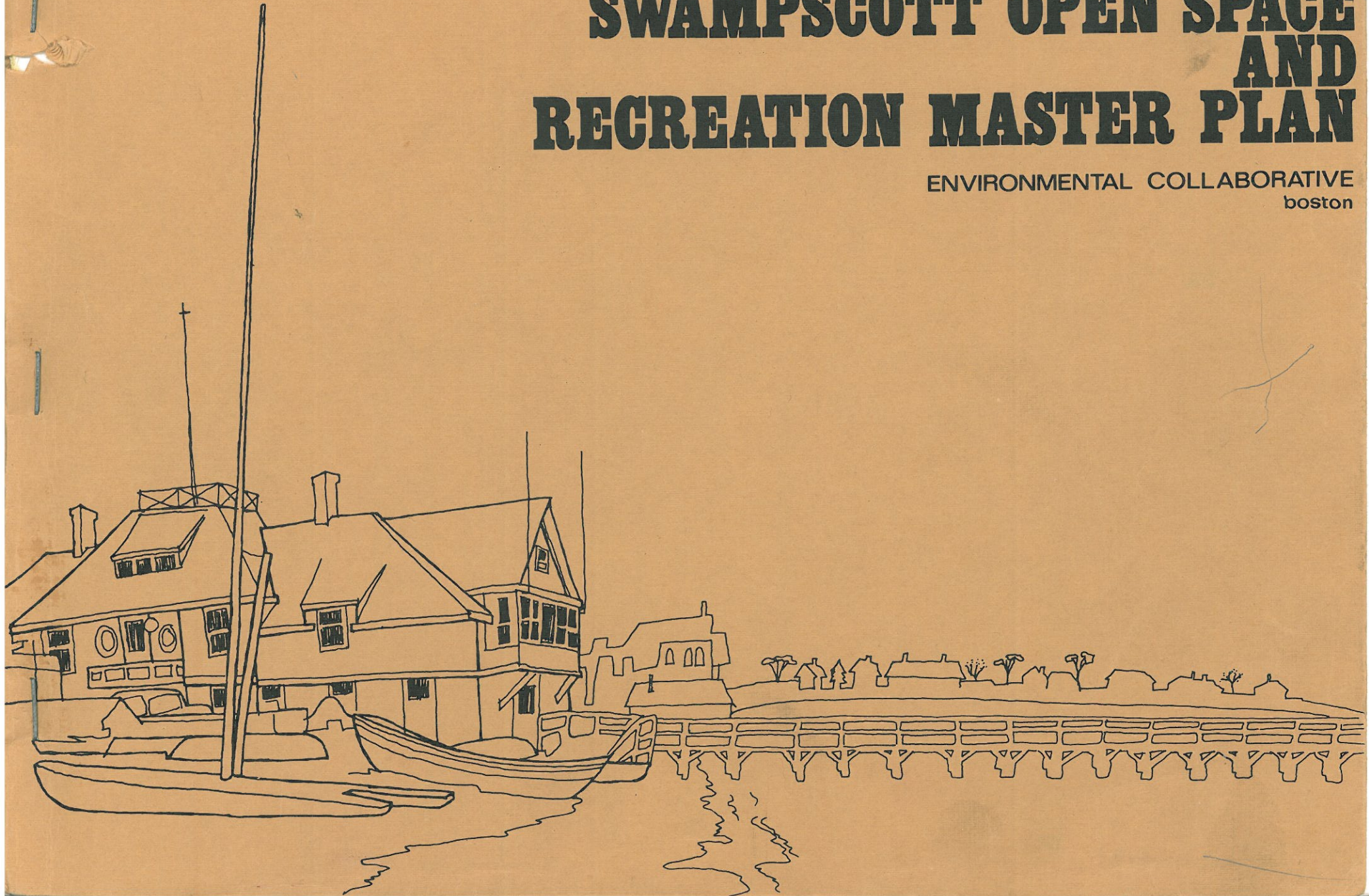


SWAMPSCOTT OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATIVE
boston



SWAMPSCOTT OPEN SPACE
AND
RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Alfred J. Lima and Associates
Environmental Collaborative
Boston, Massachusetts

August, 1983

Alfred J. Lima & Associates
Environmental Collaborative

COMMUNITY PLANNING
EVALUATION SERVICES
SOCIAL RESEARCH
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

10 MILK STREET, SUITE 1428, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108 (617) 482-2018

August 15, 1983

Mrs. Esther S. Ewing and
Mr. John A. DeCamp, CoChairmen
Swampscott Conservation Commission
Swampscott, Massachusetts 01907

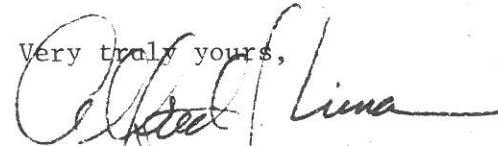
Dear Mrs. Ewing and Mr. DeCamp:

In accordance with the terms of our agreement with the Town of Swampscott, we are pleased to present to the Swampscott Conservation Commission 100 copies of this Open Space and Recreation Master Plan.

This report represents the culmination of many months of effort and consultation between our firm and the Conservation Commission, other town boards, and many town residents. We wish to express our thanks to all of those citizens of Swampscott who have contributed their time to assure that this plan represents the aspirations of the town in protecting its natural resources and in providing for its recreational needs. These efforts show that Swampscott does not lack dedicated citizens willing to see that these goals become a reality.

We have enjoyed working for the Town of Swampscott and for the Conservation Commission. We hope that this plan helps to advance Swampscott's open space and recreation goals, and wish you success in its implementation.

Very truly yours,



Alfred J. Lima, President
Environmental Collaborative

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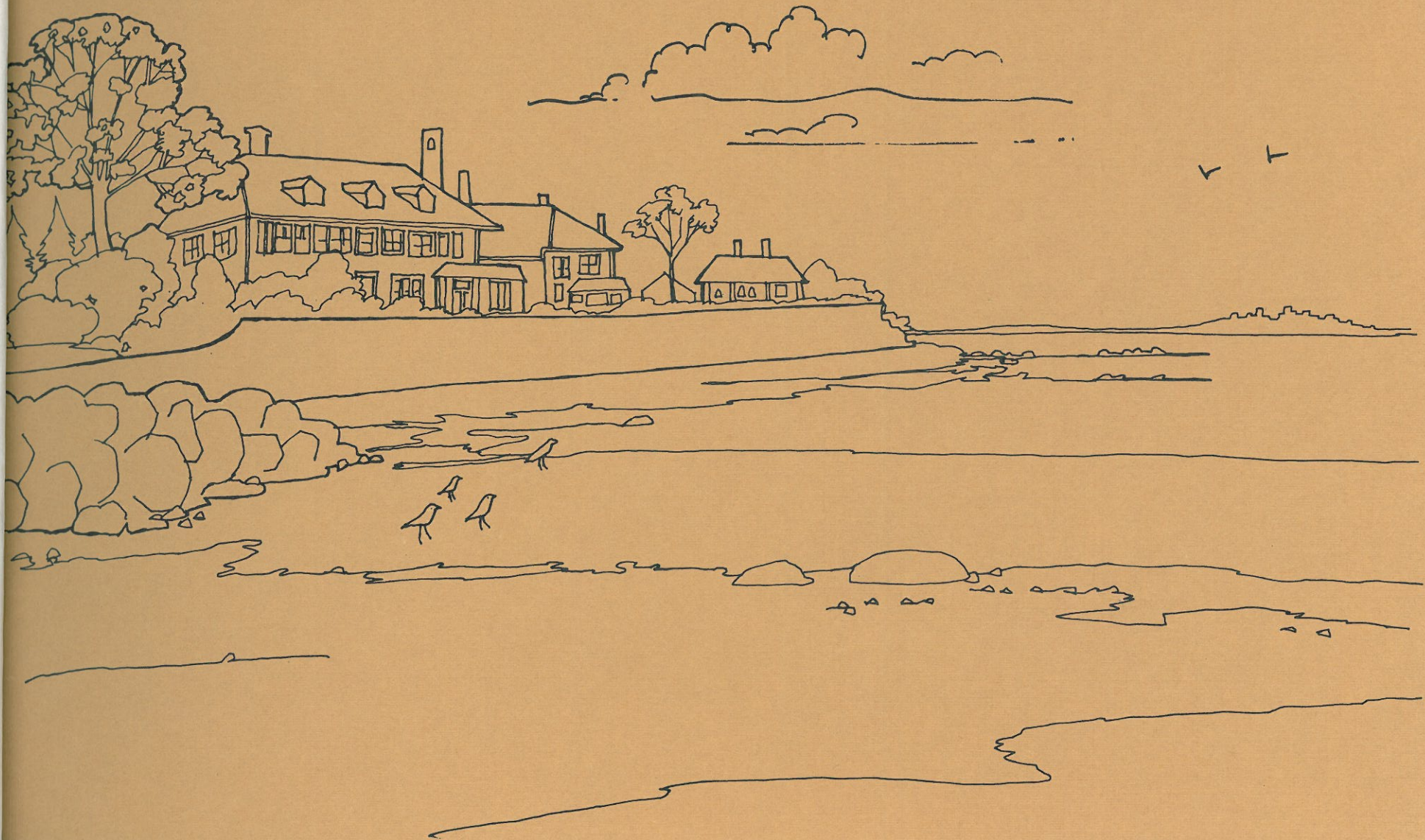
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1 COMMUNITY SETTING



INTRODUCTION

Conservation - the preservation of open spaces and protection of natural resources - requires long range planning. As in any other field of endeavor, it is important to formulate goals, and then plans of action to achieve these goals. Succeeding members of the Conservation Commission, other town boards and the residents of Swampscott must all be aware of the objectives of a conservation plan. For this to succeed, all must be in general agreement with it.

An important element in the achievement of open space goals in Massachusetts is eligibility of funding by the Massachusetts Self-Help Program and the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. The former provides matching funds for open space land acquisition; the latter, for that and also for development of outdoor recreational facilities. Eligibility for both programs is dependent on a comprehensive open space and outdoor recreation plan drawn up according to the exacting specifications of the Massachusetts Office of Environmental Affairs. It is in the fulfillment of this requirement and for furtherance of long term conservation and recreational goals that the following Open Space and Recreation Master Plan is submitted.

Making the Plan

To develop the present plan, successor to the outdated "Swampscott Environment: Now or Never" published in 1970, the Conservation Commission, along with the Recreation Commission and its Director of Recreation, has spent many months and tapped many sources of information and opinion.

Meetings were held with representatives of various town boards and the general public to discuss conservation and recreation issues that should be included

in the plan. Invited to these meetings were members of the Recreation Commission, other town boards, representatives of the Swampscott Foundation, and representatives of several civic and recreational organizations. During these meetings and during followup discussions with individuals, goals were established for open space protection and recreational improvements.

A public opinion survey form was published in the Swampscott Reporter to determine the public's perception of open space and recreational needs.

On August 1, 1978, the Conservation Commission entered into an agreement with Environmental Collaborative, Consultants, to provide technical services to the Commission in the preparation of an updated open space plan. The consultant has prepared two drafts of the plan for review by the Commission and other boards. Subsequent comments on these drafts have been incorporated into this final plan.

The survey and meetings that were conducted during the preparation of the plan and the review of drafts have resulted in the plan representing a consensus of opinion on open space and recreation issues in Swampscott. This consensus will be an important factor in realizing the goals of this plan.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

It was the practice of Colonial settlers to locate and bound their towns on the basis of the domain of Indian chieftains. The area of Swampscott, in the Indian times, was the domain of Sachem Poquanum and included about fourteen hundred acres extending along the shore from the outlet of Stacey Brook, just west of Black Will's Cliff, to Beaver Brook now Hawthorne Brook at the Marblehead line and inland to Essex Street. The village of Sachem Poquanum, who was sometimes referred to in early records as Black Will and Duke William, is approximately the area of the grant of land voted by the General Court in 1632, and confirmed in 1638, to John Humphrey. He was the first Deputy Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony and one of the most active members of the Dorchester Company, one of the six patentees of the Bay Colony.

Two important Indian trails pass through the town. They are Essex Street, or Marblehead Lane of Colonial days, laid out as a highway in 1673, and Humphrey Street, which extended along the shore to Marblehead and Salem. The latter was extensively used by the Indians and the settlers, and on July 5, 1659 was officially laid out, as a public highway, probably the first in the Colonies.

The first English settlers were William Witter, Samuel Smith, and Francis Ingalls, who in 1629, had received permission from Governor Endicott to settle where they wished but without grant or title of land. The original settlement of Swampscott lay within a radius of a few hundred yards from Lady Moody's beach, now King's Beach, at Monument Square and adjacent to the traditional site of Poquanum's hut or dwelling on Black Will's Cliff. Thus for more than three hundred years this area has been the historic and civic center of the town.

* This summary is excerpted from the Centennial report, "Swampscott: The Town Beautiful," and other sources.

When the Town of Swampscott was incorporated, May 21, 1852, the Humphrey Grant was increased by 653 acres taken from the City of Lynn. In 1867 a small strip of land, of approximately 68 acres, was taken, by an act of the General Court, from the City of Salem and added to Swampscott at the northern boundary. This brought the total area of the town to the present 1951 acres.

Swampscott remained a quiet village for a number of years following incorporation. Principal occupations of its residents at the time were farming, shoe-making (a local cottage industry), and fishing. In 1855 there were 39 vessels owned by Swampscott fisherman. Cod and mackerel were the principal catches of the day.

In 1838, the first passenger train arrived in Swampscott, an event that stimulated the town's growth as a summer tourist resort. In 1873, the Marblehead Branch was completed.

With the advent of the railroad came the building of the grand resort hotels for which the town became renowned. These included the Taft, once located on Galloupes Point; the Hotel Preston, at the Marblehead line on Phillips Beach; the Lincoln House, on Lincoln House Point; the Hotel Bellevue, near Bellevue Road; and the Ocean House and its successor, the sprawling New Ocean House, on Whales Beach.

One of Swampscott's greatest legacies is its Monument Mall and surrounding residential area, designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, the landscape architect. This graceful entranceway into the town serves as an excellent example of the virtues and value of timely environmental planning.

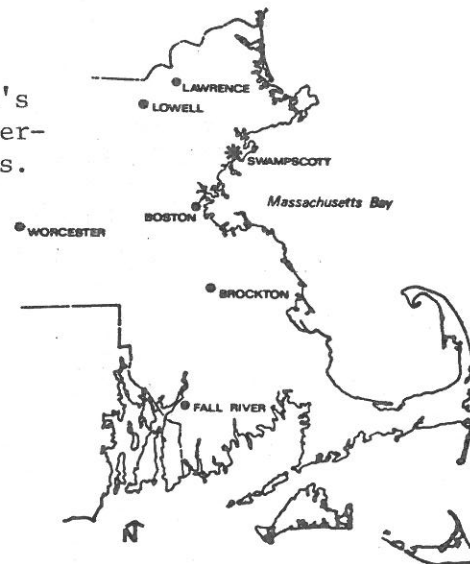
REGIONAL SETTING

Swampscott is located thirteen miles northeast of Boston and is situated in Essex County. It is bordered by Lynn on the west, Salem and Marblehead on the north, and Massachusetts Bay to the south. The town's land area is 3.07 miles, with a tidal shoreline of 4.3 miles.

The Boston and Maine Railroad provides Swampscott with regular commuting passenger service to Boston and to communities to the north. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority provides regular bus service in the town that connects with the regional MBTA network. State routes 1A and 129 pass through Swampscott. Route 1A is a Federal Aid Primary road and Route 129 is a Federal Aid Urban road.

Climate

Seasonal extremes in temperature in Swampscott are modified by the town's coastal location. Normal temperature in January is 30.7 F, normal temperature in July is 70.3 F, and normal annual precipitation is 41.28 inches.



LAND USE

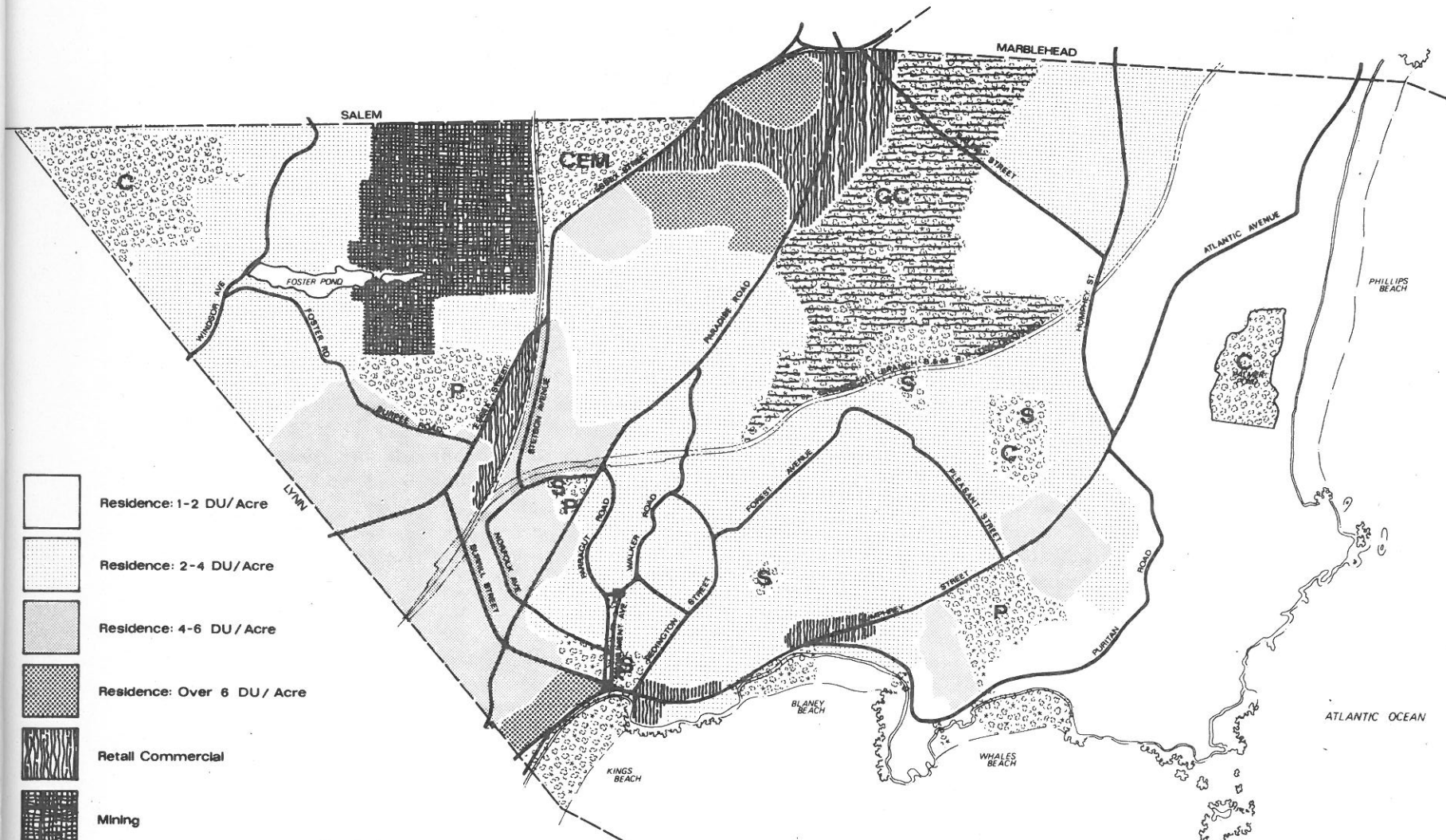
Development in Swampscott has, until quite recently, been traditionally concentrated in the coastal areas of the town, where the principal economic activities of fishing and tourism were concentrated. Except for fishing, the town's economic base was primarily one of providing services. With both fishing and tourism all but gone, employment of townspeople has been oriented towards the urban employment centers within the Boston Metropolitan Area.









Swampscott's development pattern in recent years has been mainly residential in character. Except for some two and three unit structures in the older southwest part of town, most residential units, approximately seventy percent, are single family dwellings. Paralleling housing trends in the metropolitan area, however, a high percentage of housing units recently constructed in town are multi-family high-rise units. These new units, mixed rental and condominium, are concentrated in the Vinnin Square area.

Much of the residential development in the coastal area near Whales Beach and Phillips Beach is on subdivided old estates or summer hotel properties. Dwelling units here tend to be spacious and located on sizeable lots ranging approximately between one-half to one acre in area. In older developed areas and in new development to the west, lots average 10,000 square feet in area and dwelling units are more modest in size. Since most areas which are likely to be developed are now zoned for small lot sizes, future development will probably be concentrated in character. It is in these more densely populated areas of town that neighborhood active recreational facilities such as courts, fields and children's play areas are most needed.

Because of its densely built-up residential areas (town average density in 1970 was 4,408 persons per square mile), Swampscott is more urban than town-like in character. The only remaining sizeable open spaces are (1) the Tedesco Country Club, (2) the Foster Pond





-  Residence: 1-2 DU/Acre
-  Residence: 2-4 DU/Acre
-  Residence: 4-6 DU/Acre
-  Residence: Over 6 DU/Acre
-  Retail Commercial
-  Mining
-  Public Land
-  Semi-Public Land

- Symbols**
- S School
 - P Park
 - C Conservation Land
 - GC Golf Course
 - CEM Cemetery
 - DU Dwelling Units

Note: There are no agricultural land uses in Swampscott

LAND USE

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SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



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area with the town forest, Jackson Park, and the quarry site, and (3) Palmer Pond and its marsh. Development is encroaching on all three areas, and the degree to which at least some of the now private land is reserved for future generations depends in part on defining clear objectives now for conserving them and formulating measures for their protection. One of the objectives of this plan is to assist in that process.

POPULATION TRENDS and COMPOSITION

Swampscott's population has remained remarkably stable in recent years; however, the construction of 583 new housing units in the Vinnin Square area coupled with the fact that future residential development will be mostly in small lot zoning districts indicates that population increases can be expected in the near future. State and regional planning agencies predict that the 1990 population of the town will remain stable at the 1980 population of 13,837 persons. The population of the town has remained stable during the last decade, with only a 1.9% increase from the 1970 population of 13,578 to the 1980 population of 13,837. This population stability, however, was due principally to smaller household size in 1980, a result of a decrease in birth rates that began in the late 1950's. Stabilized birth rates in the 1970's, coupled with the continuation of the trend towards multi-family construction, could result in another sharp increase in the town's population by 1990.

In keeping with the national trend in declining birth rates, Swampscott's median age is steadily increasing. By 1980, it had reached 36.9, or 5.6 years older than the median age for the Boston Metropolitan Area as a whole. This suggests that Swampscott's elderly residents should be given special consideration when planning for the recreational needs of the town.

Family Income

Not surprisingly, average income levels for Swampscott families are considerably higher than the metropolitan average, reflecting the employment of many heads of households as highly salaried professionals and managers. While median household income in the Boston Metropolitan Area was \$18,694 in 1980, in Swampscott it was \$24,065.

Income averages, however, should not conceal the fact that a considerable number of Swampscott residents are not in higher income brackets and therefore deserve the benefits of public open space and recreational facilities.

Household income in Swampscott in 1980 was distributed as follows:

Incomes under \$5,000	7.0%
From \$5,000-\$10,000	10.0
From \$10,000-\$15,000	12.5
From \$15,000-\$20,000	12.0
From \$20,000-\$25,000	10.7
From \$25,000-\$30,000	10.1
From \$30,000-\$35,000	10.6
Over \$35,000	<u>27.1</u>
	100.0%

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Sewage

The public health questions surrounding water supply and sewerage disposal became an issue for the town as early as 1890. This was the year in which the town meeting first began consideration of installing a town sewer system. Previous to this time and up until 1916, when the first residence finally tied into the new system, on-site storage of sewage was the norm, with private contractors removing the effluent periodically.

As the historian Frank L. Mansur describes it in Swampscott: The Beginning of a Town, this method was fraught with public health hazards:

With the steady growth of population, it must have been evident for some years that the necessary common cesspools might become a menace to the water supply in some areas. For many years, town bylaws had dictated that sink and cesspool waste must be taken to a remote part of the town in a covered vehicle and disposed of in the ground as directed by the board of health. In spite of this, as late of 1893 the town meeting had to advise the board of health to deal as the law provided with those who continued to empty the contents of cesspool carts on the beaches for the tide to wash away.

Ultimately the public sewer system disposed of effluent in a similar, though more discreet, fashion by way of discharging sewage into the ocean through 2 deep water pipes beyond Dread Ledge. In the early 1970's, as a result of the Massachusetts Clean Waters Act, the town installed facilities for processing sewage before dumping it in the ocean. This primary sewage treatment plant on Humphrey Street, opposite Millet Road, became operational in 1974 and

now treats all of the town's sewage.

At the present time Swampscott leads the state in the scientific management of its sewage plant residue. The Departments of Public Works and of Health have initiated an aerated sludge composting operation which will not only solve the sludge disposal problem, but will supply mulch for the town's park system.

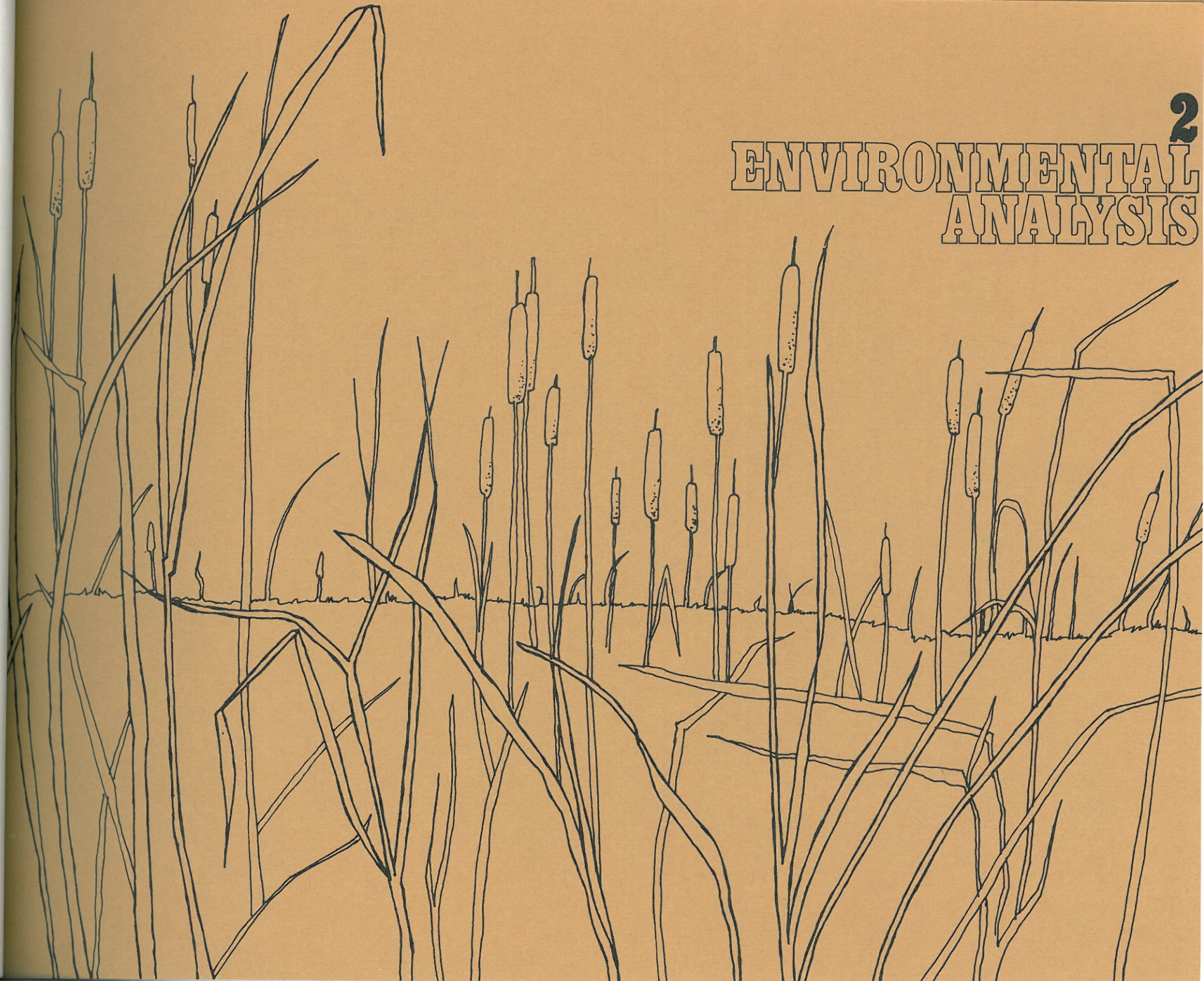
Water

All the sections of town have access to the municipal water supply. Swampscott's water comes from the MDC system, and pressure is derived from a recently replaced standpipe on the high lands off Paradise Road.

Trash Collection

Swampscott has no town dump, but provides trash collection once a week and a periodic collection of leaves and of large articles. A recycling program for newspapers is no longer in operation.

2
**ENVIRONMENTAL
ANALYSIS**



INTRODUCTION

Since the greater part of Swampscott (approximately 70 percent of its area) has been developed, one might logically ask if an analysis of natural resources has any reasonable planning function in this case. It does, for the following reasons.

Development pressures continue to exist in town and, while the ideal would be to preserve all of the remaining open space in Swampscott, realistically only a part of the town's remaining open areas will be protected from development. Natural resource analysis can, therefore, provide criteria for determining which areas are most valuable from a resource, wildlife, and recreational perspective. From this information, an analysis can be performed to determine which areas deserve highest priority for protection.

Open spaces in town mitigate the impact of urbanization; those areas that are most important in this regard should be identified. These "buffering" functions include storm water drainage catchment, flood modification and absorption, pollution abatement, and ground water recharge. Natural resource analysis can therefore provide guidance to town boards in determining the most appropriate patterns of future development and assist these boards in controlling municipal costs resulting from this development.

SURFICIAL GEOLOGY

Swampscott's landscape is best understood by an analysis of its origins. The flow of watercourses, type of soils, direction and steepness of slopes, and even types of vegetation and wildlife have all been determined by the geologic history of the region.





The surficial geology of New England is the result of the advance and retreat of glacial ice sheets during the Pleistocene epoch. During this time the preexisting mantle cover of soil and weathered rock was removed by the glacial ice and the bedrock abraded and scoured. As the glacial ice melted and retreated, it deposited this debris in new patterns: (1) deposits laid directly over bedrock; (2) sedimentary deposits which were transported by glacial streams and which formed various terrace or delta formations on the edges of glacial lakes; and (3) finer sedimentary deposits which settled to form the flat bottoms of glacial lakes and ponds. Swampscott's geologic history includes variations of all three formations.

Glacial Till Formations

As shown on the map of surficial geology, glacial till over bedrock occurs most prominently as an irregular spine that bisects Swampscott in a north-west/southeast direction. These bedrock/glacial till formations constitute the southeastern tip of a massive formation that extends northwesterly into Salem, Peabody, Lynn, and beyond. Glacial till consists of unconsolidated (not in layers) sand, gravel, clay and silt deposits which were laid directly over bedrock by the receding glaciers. In Swampscott, this layer is very thin in most locations and exposed bedrock outcroppings are common.

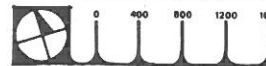




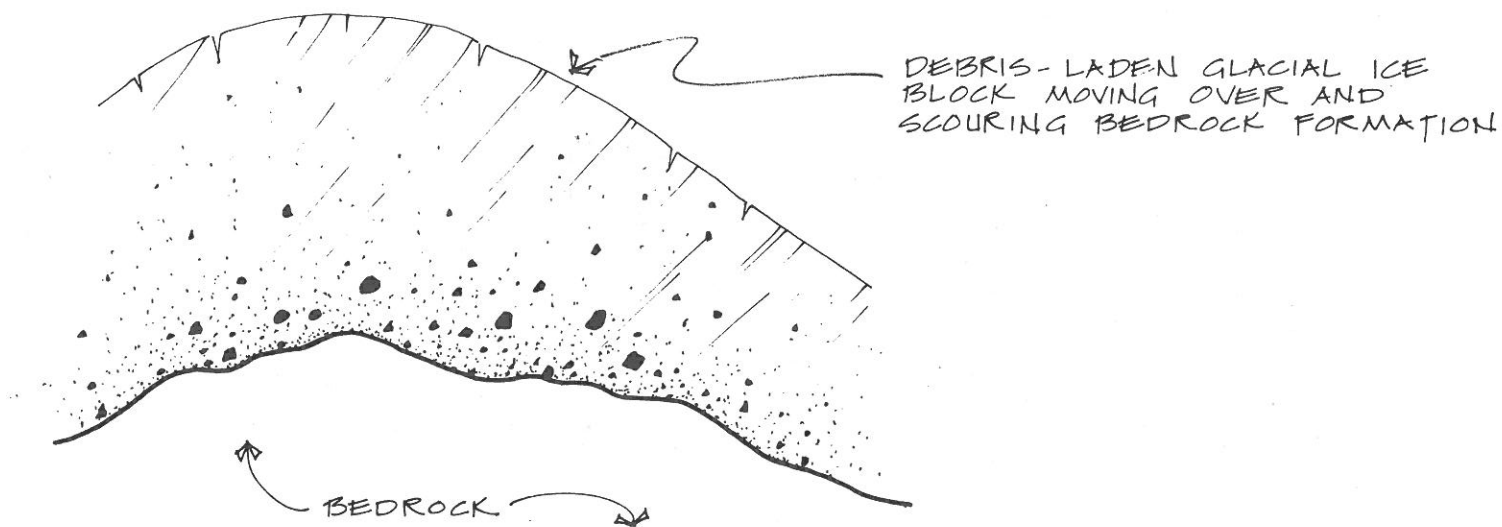
-  Glacial till formations
-  Outwash deposits
-  Muck and peat deposits
-  Original Pleistocene shoreline

SURFICIAL GEOLOGY

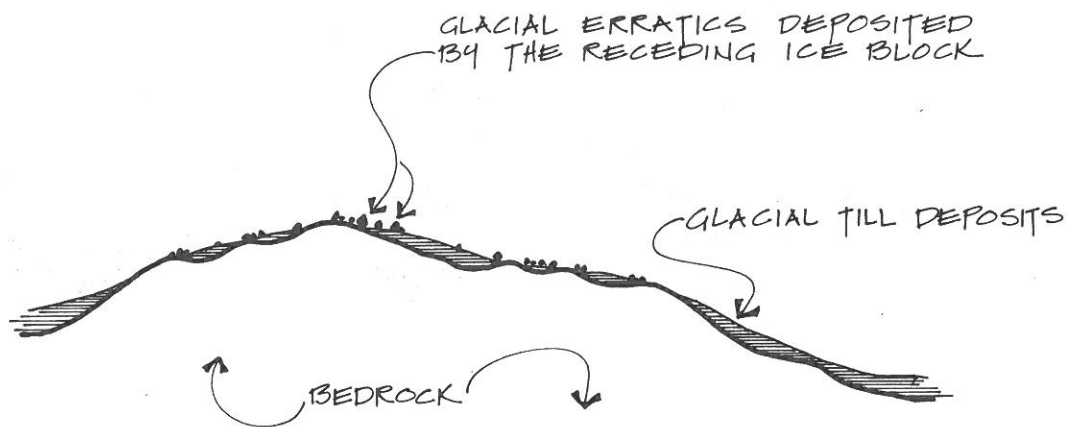
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SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



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1 GLACIAL ORIGINS OF SWAMPSCOTT'S GLACIAL TILL FORMATIONS



2 POST-GLACIAL SWAMPSCOTT TILL FORMATIONS

In the Harold King Town Forest there exists extensive evidence of a "terminal moraine": a mass of large boulders left standing as the ice sheet melted. These large boulders deposited directly by the glacier are known as "glacial erratics." The accompanying cross-sections illustrate current geological theory of how glacial till landscapes -- such as those found in the upland areas of Swampscott -- were formed many thousands of years ago.

Because of the high silt and clay content of till and because bedrock is close to the surface in the till areas of Swampscott, the internal drainage of these soils is very poor. Surface drainage from these soils tends to be faster, as rain water is not as easily absorbed as it is in more permeable soils.

Outwash Deposits

Outwash deposits occur in Swampscott along the base of till deposits. They were formed by the depositions of glacial streams which carried sand and gravel from the glaciers and deposited them in graded layers in fan-shaped or delta formations at the base of these ice blocks.

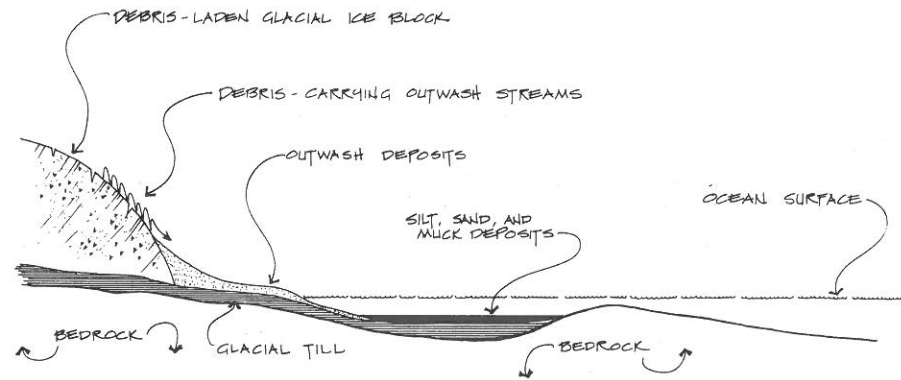
Because the washing action of streams has removed the silt and clay from outwash deposits, the remaining layered coarser material comprises the most permeable soils. These are the soils which are the most productive aquifers and have the highest ground water yields.

Muck and Peat Deposits

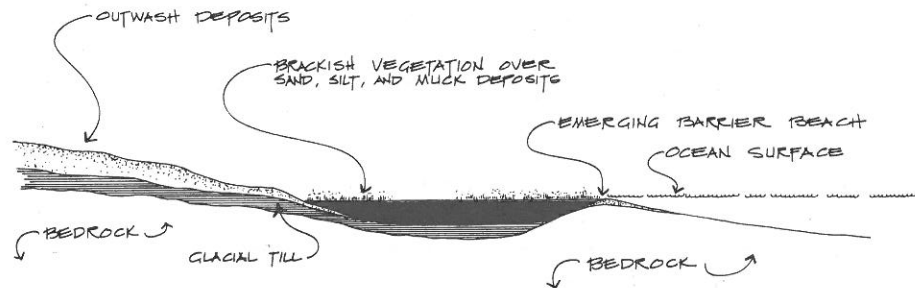
These deposits are the result of the final stages of eutrophication of small glacial ponds in Swampscott. Today, these prehistoric ponds are the town's wetlands. Most of these are covered with standing water only during the wet spring months. The various types of Swampscott's wetlands are explained more fully in the section on wetlands.

Surficial Geology and Resource Conservation

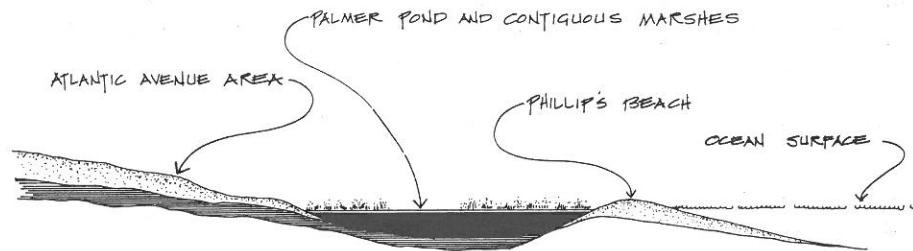
Because it allows us to see the landscape in historical perspective, a study of surficial geology can assist us in recognizing the interrelationships of environmental elements. The drainage characteristics of a landscape, for



1 GLACIAL ORIGINS OF SWAMPSCOTT'S COASTAL MARSHES



2 THE EMERGING COASTAL MARSH LANDSCAPE



3 SWAMPSCOTT'S POST-GLACIAL COASTAL LANDSCAPE

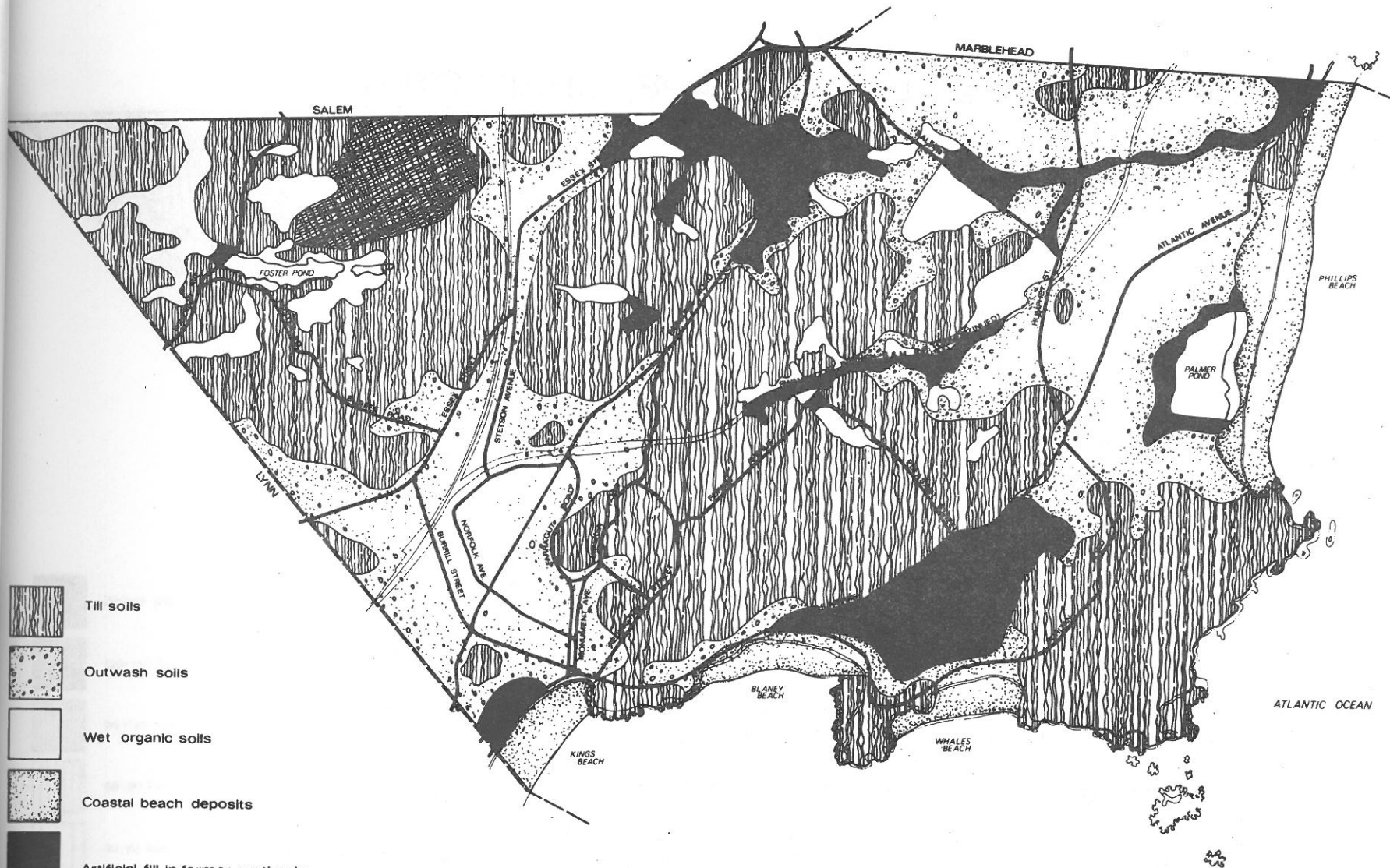
example, are not only apparent in the course of streams but are a function of soil permeability, slopes, vegetative cover, locations and types of wetlands. By recognizing the limits imposed by the dictates of natural forces, man's negative impact on the landscape can be minimized, with beneficial results to both man and the environment.







SOILS

Available soil classification information for Swampscott is not current and consists primarily of a 1928 soil survey of Essex County prepared by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. This information has been combined with U.S. Geologic Survey information to arrive at the three major soil classifications for Swampscott: till soils, outwash soils, and wet organic soils, whose characteristics have been described under "Surficial Geology."

Except for wetland areas, which are protected by town ordinance, all of the remaining open land in Swampscott has the potential for development. Soil characteristics are not a hinderance to development of these areas because of the availability of public water and sewer service and because high land values in the town often justify costly site preparation, as some of the recent development in Vinnin Square demonstrates.

Soil criteria therefore cannot be expected to inhibit or direct growth in Swampscott. It is conceivable that, except for wetland areas, all of Swampscott's remaining open space areas will be developed eventually if no action is taken to preserve them in the public domain. Soils, however, can serve as one criterion among many in developing a natural resource protection and acquisition program that is ecologically sound and which can win town acceptance.



-  Till soils
-  Outwash soils
-  Wet organic soils
-  Coastal beach deposits
-  Artificial fill in former wetlands
-  Excavated gravel area

SOILS

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SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



environmental
collaborative
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TOPOGRAPHY and LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

As shown on the accompanying map of topography, Swampscott's land forms below the 50 foot contour are relatively flat. This lower-lying area approximately defines the extent of outwash soil deposits in the town.

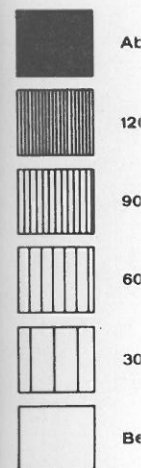
Above 50 feet in elevation, land forms become much more erratic and uneven, due to the underlying bedrock, thinly covered with till deposits. These bedrock formations also account for the steep slopes that rise up above Humphrey Street, continuing in an irregular pattern to the west.

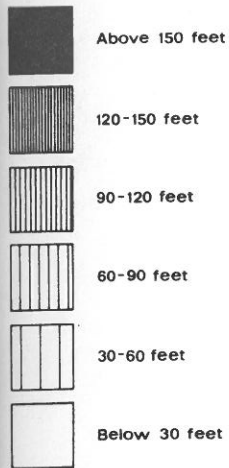
Swampscott has a great variety of landscape which can be divided into three main categories based on the town's geologic history: the upland rock area, the outwash area, and the coastal area.

Upland Rock

The upland rocky till area, in comparison with the outwash and coastal areas, has a smaller, more intimate scale due to its many small hills and valleys. In the upland area west of the railroad, this quality is reinforced by the extensive woodland growth. Even the open expanse of Foster Pond, because of its high embankment, has a narrow, constricted appearance. The area generally has a feel of remoteness, and the large wetland areas and glacier boulder fields add a distinctive quality to the landscape.

Most of the remaining upland area east of the railroad is built up but still retains a feeling of enclosure. On the hills nearest the shore, however, the landscape suddenly opens up to reveal the ocean below and a breathtaking view of Nahant Bay, Nahant, and beyond it the large sweep of Massachusetts Bay.

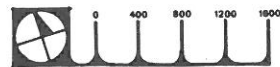




Note: Elevations signify feet above mean sea level.

TOPOGRAPHY

PREPARED FOR THE SWAMPSCOTT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



environmental
collaborative
Boston, Massachusetts

Outwash Plain

The outwash plain area is relatively undifferentiated in comparison. In the Humphrey Street area the plain is walled in by the steep cliffs of bedrock on one side and the unseen ocean on the other. In fact the ocean is hardly visible within the greater part of the plain area, for small changes in elevation, vegetation, and residences are enough to block it out; and only at the opening on Salem Street passing through the Tedesco Country Club does the gently rolling character of the plain become apparent and its particular virtues enjoyed. All other major areas of the plain in town have been built upon.

Coastal

The plains end abruptly at the beaches along the coast, or rather, the series of beaches, for each section of beach is framed by rock outcroppings at either end at intervals along the town's coastline.

Blaney or Fisherman's Beach has a special character, because it is used as the main boat harbor and is the site of the town's fishing pier. It also is adjacent to Humphrey Street and the main commercial district of town. Because of the central location and the park above the seawall, it is perhaps the most accessible beach, both for oceanfront activities and for visual enjoyment. The feeling of enclosure produced by the small scale and crescent shape of Fisherman's Beach is enhanced by the upland cliffs of ledge and till rising directly behind it. These qualities, combined with the bustle of fishing, commercial and pleasure boating activities, make it one of Swampscott's most attractive beaches for sitting and walking.

King's Beach, to the west, presents a wide and open aspect, continuing, as it does, for twice its Swampscott length into Lynn. Like Fisherman's Beach, it lies alongside the town's central artery and is easily accessible to both Swampscott residents and out of town bathers. Directly across the street is Linscott Park, with its spacious lawn, and picnic tables in a grove of shade trees.

East of Fisherman's Beach, around Lincoln House Point, is Whales Beach. This shore area was the location of the New Ocean House, the famous resort hotel which burned down in 1969.

The extensive Phillips Point rock outcroppings occur east of Whales Beach and are perhaps the main barrier to traversing the entire length of Swampscott's coastline. The walk across the rocks is hazardous.

Extending northeasterly from Phillips, or Little's Point is the mile long expanse of Phillips Beach. Except for Palmer Pond, the entire area is built up with larger single family homes.

WETLANDS and WATER RESOURCES

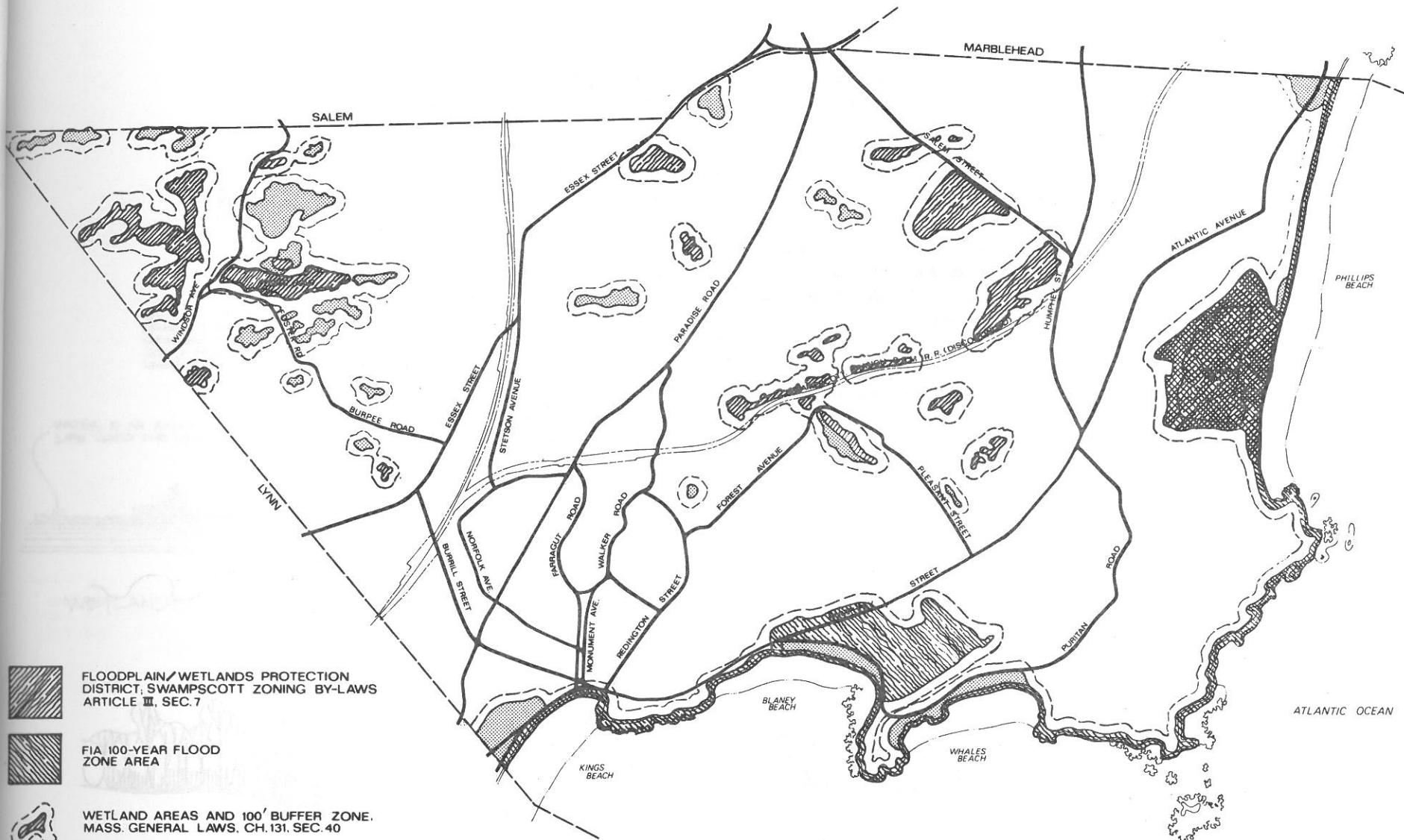
One of the main goals of environmental planning is to encourage the preservation of those landscape elements that cushion the negative impacts of urbanizing development.

Wetlands are among the most important of these landscape elements. In the past, wetlands have commonly been treated as useless, undevelopable "swamps", to be drained or filled. With a growing realization of the importance of wetlands, the General Court in 1965 created the Wetlands Protection Act (Ch. 131, Sec. 40), the first in the nation, to provide some legal basis for the protection of wetlands in the Commonwealth.

Experience demonstrated, however, that this Act was not altogether effective in preventing the destruction of wetlands. To provide more effective protection, the annual town meeting of 1976 amended the town's zoning by-laws to create a Flood Plain/Wetlands Protection District. The purpose of this zoning, as described in Article III, Section 7 of the zoning ordinance, provides an excellent brief description of the reasons for preserving wetlands and floodplains:

1. To provide that lands in the Town of Swampscott subject to seasonal or periodic flooding as described hereinafter shall not be used for residence or other purposes in such a manner as to endanger health or safety.
2. To protect, preserve and maintain the water table and water recharge areas within the Town so as to preserve present and potential water supplies for the public health and safety.
3. To assure the continuation of the natural flow pattern of the water courses within the Town of Swampscott in order to





FLOODPLAIN/WETLANDS PROTECTION DISTRICT, SWAMPSCOTT ZONING BY-LAWS ARTICLE III, SEC. 7



FIA 100-YEAR FLOOD ZONE AREA



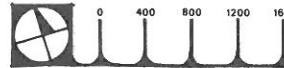
WETLAND AREAS AND 100' BUFFER ZONE. MASS. GENERAL LAWS, CH. 131, SEC. 40



WETLAND OR FLOOD-PRONE AREAS NOT SUBJECT TO SWAMPSCOTT'S WETLANDS OR FLOOD ZONING BYLAWS BUT WHICH ARE SUBJECT TO MASS. G.L., CH. 131, SEC. 40

WETLANDS/FLOODPLAIN

PREPARED FOR THE SWAMPSCOTT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS

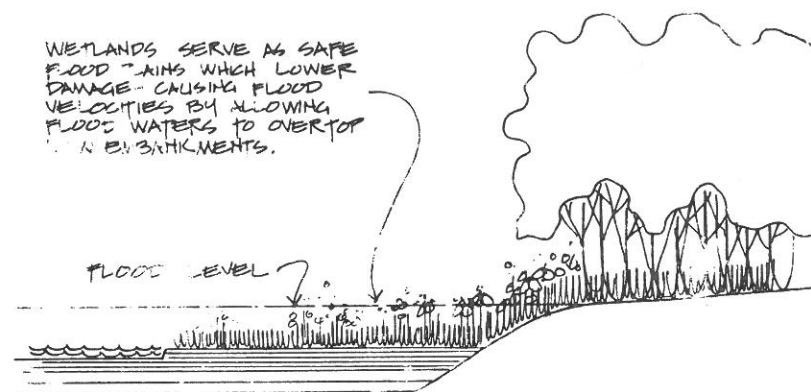


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Cambridge, Massachusetts

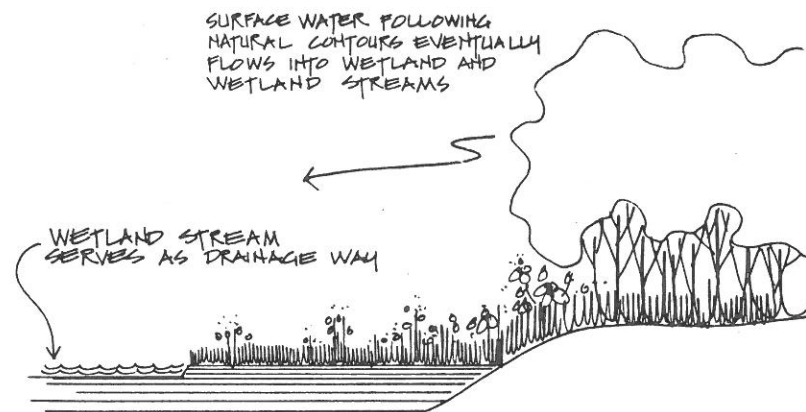
provide adequate and safe flood water storage capacity to protect persons and property against the hazards of flood inundation.

4. To protect the Town against the costs which may be incurred through the unsuitable use of wetlands.
5. To conserve natural conditions, wildlife, open space and generally the amenities of the Town, and otherwise to preserve, protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Wetland areas are defined by Ch. 131, Sec. 40 of the General Laws as marshes, swamps or lowlands where groundwater is at or near the surface for at least 6 months of the year or which have wetland vegetation as described in the Act.



WETLANDS AS FLOOD PLAINS

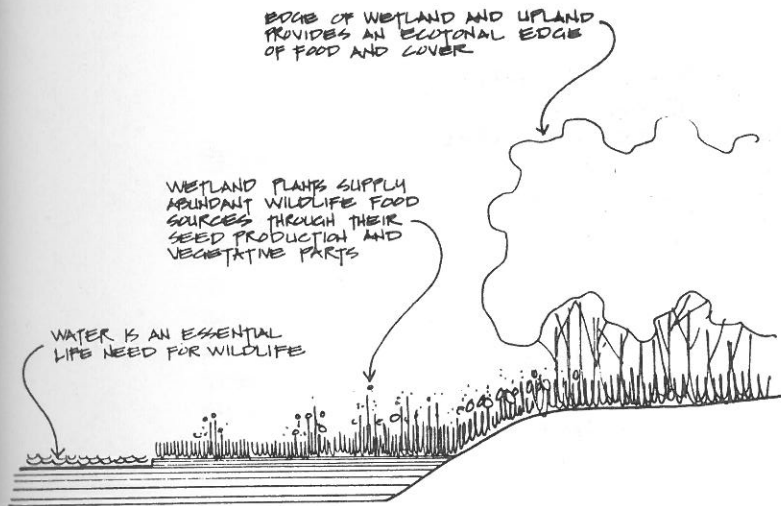


WETLANDS AS DRAINAGE WAYS

EDGE OF WETLAND AND UPLAND PROVIDES AN ECOTONAL EDGE OF FOOD AND COVER

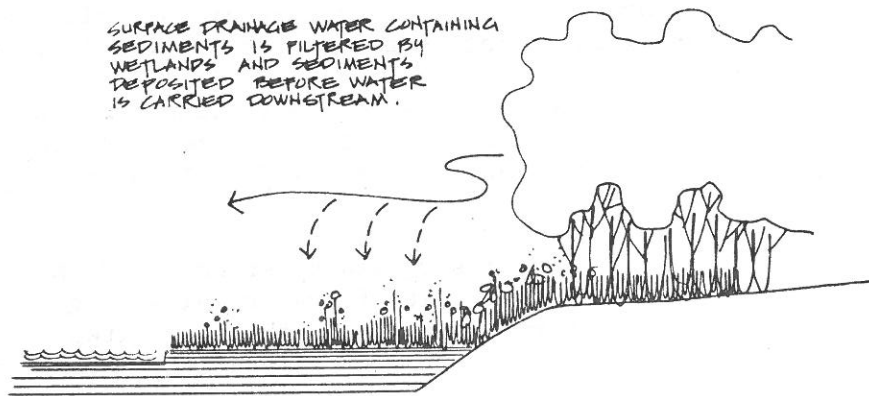
WETLAND PLANTS SUPPLY ABUNDANT WILDLIFE FOOD SOURCES THROUGH THEIR SEED PRODUCTION AND VEGETATIVE PARTS

WATER IS AN ESSENTIAL LIFE NEED FOR WILDLIFE

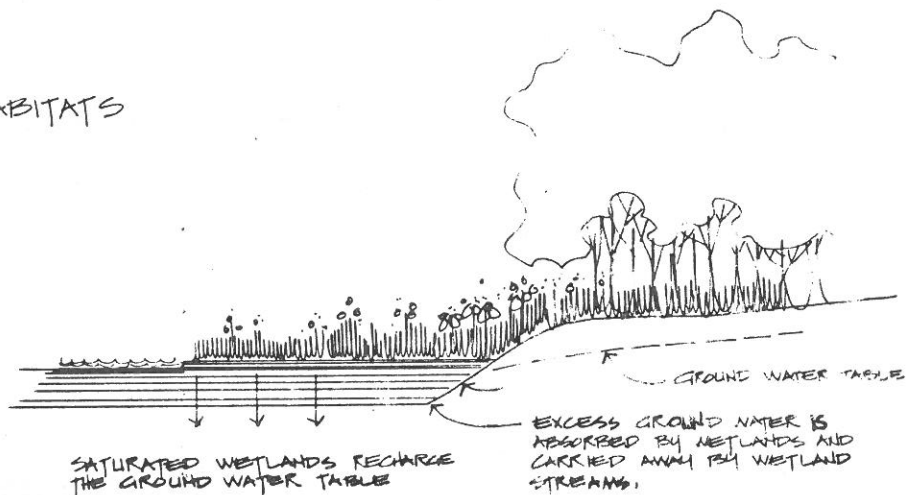


WETLANDS AS WILDLIFE HABITATS

SURFACE DRAINAGE WATER CONTAINING SEDIMENTS IS FILTERED BY WETLANDS AND SEDIMENTS DEPOSITED BEFORE WATER IS CARRIED DOWNSTREAM.



WETLANDS AS SILTATION SETTLEMENT AREAS

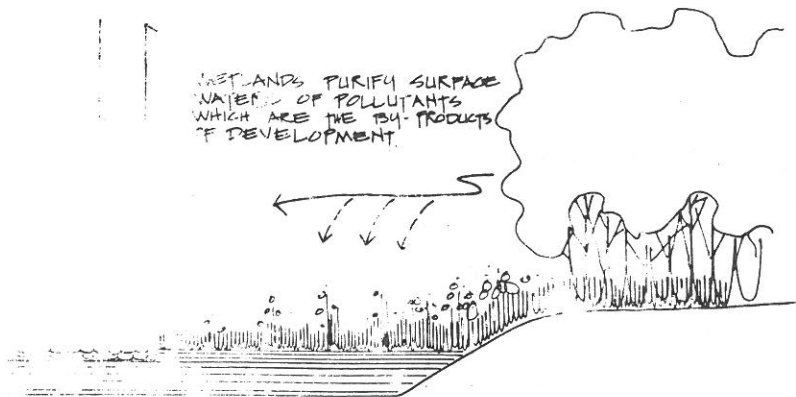


WETLANDS AS GROUND WATER RECHARGE AND DISCHARGE AREAS

For a community of such small geographic size, Swampscott has a wetlands network with an interesting variety of geologic origins. These include:

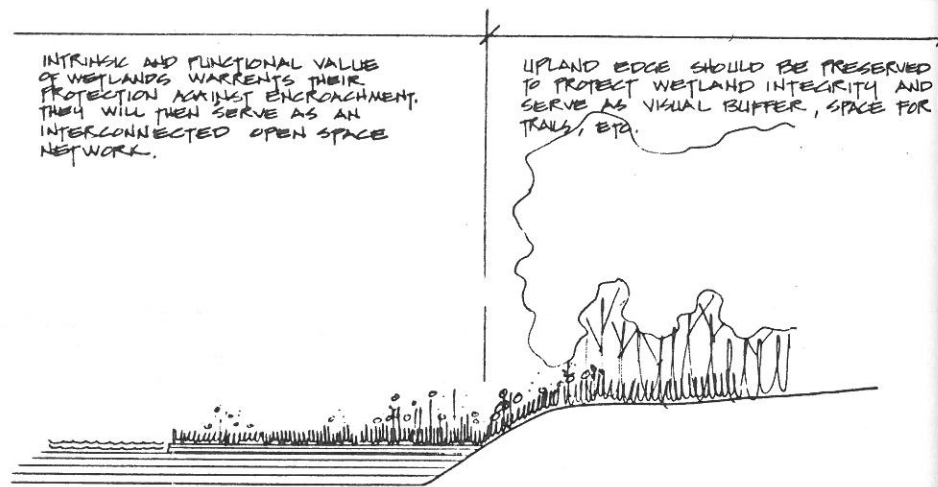
- Wetlands remaining following the draining and eutrophication of glacial ponds that became impounded in depressions. The largest wetland of this kind in town is within the Harold King Town Forest.
- Wetlands formed by streams and their flood plains that occurred as a result of the draining of glacial ponds or upland ice formations. When the ice melted and the ponds drained out, these streams became seasonally intermittent, as they are now. An example of such a stream system is the one that extends easterly parallel to the railroad bed on town-owned, Tedesco Country Club, and One Salem Street property.
- Wetlands formed by depressions left when slow-melting glacial ice blocks were surrounded by till debris. When the ice block finally melted, an isolated depression was left containing a pond that gradually eutrophied. Examples of these "kettle

WETLANDS PURIFY THE AIR OF EXCESS NITROGEN OXIDES AND PRODUCE AN AMOUNT OF OXYGEN AS PART OF PHOTOSYNTHESIS.



WETLANDS AS POLLUTANT MODIFIERS

INTRINSIC AND FUNCTIONAL VALUE OF WETLANDS WARRANTS THEIR PROTECTION AGAINST ENCRoachment. THEY WILL THEN SERVE AS AN INTERCONNECTED OPEN SPACE NETWORK.



UPLAND EDGE SHOULD BE PRESERVED TO PROTECT WETLAND INTEGRITY AND SERVE AS VISUAL BUFFER, SPACE FOR TRAILS, ETC.

WETLANDS AS NATURAL OPEN SPACE NETWORKS

holes", as they are sometimes known, can be found in the upland area above Paradise Road and adjacent to Foster Road.

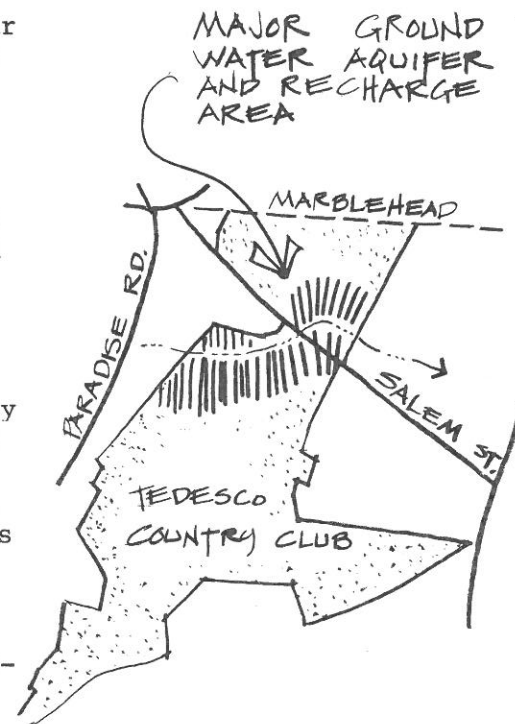
- Wetlands formed when coastal marshes became isolated from the sea through the accumulation of barrier beaches. Palmer Pond is a classic example of such a wetland. The low-lying area west of Phillips Park below Humphrey Street, once known as Cedar Swamp but gradually filled and developed, is another example of such a (former) wetland.

Ground Water

Swampscott has two major subsurface soil conditions which govern the extent of subsurface water: bedrock overlaid by glacial till deposits and outwash sedimentary deposits. Till deposits in this area are undifferentiated and have a high silt and clay content and generally serve as a poor aquifer. An aquifer is a permeable rock mass, usually sand or gravel, which can transmit water; the more permeable the material the better aquifer it is. Outwash sedimentary deposits, on the other hand, have excellent permeability and thus are good aquifers. In Swampscott, the Merrimack soils association consists of these sedimentary deposits. Most of the Merrimack soils have been built upon except in the area of Tedesco Country Club and Palmer Pond. These remaining undeveloped areas deserve consideration as aquifer resources for potential future needs.

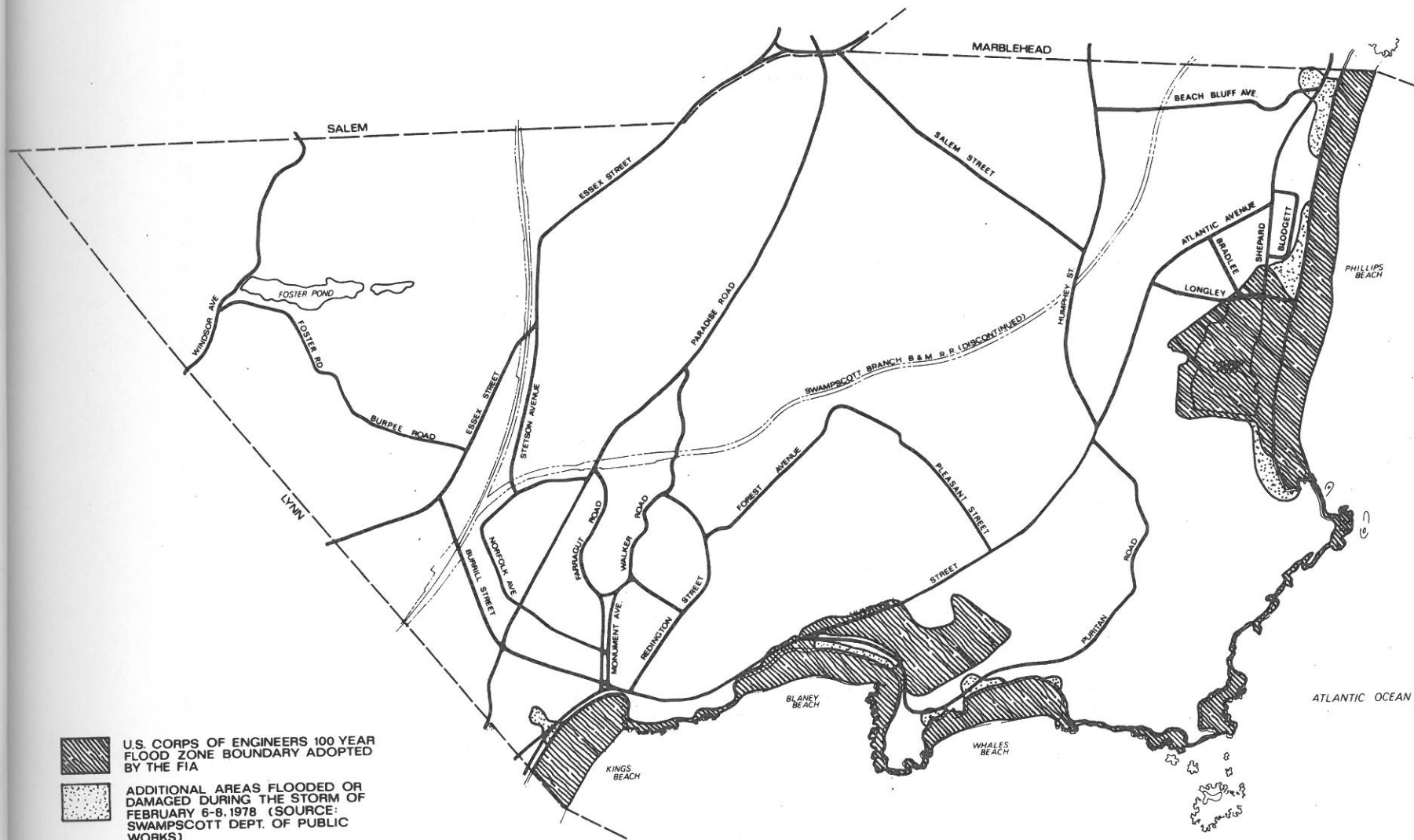
The need to protect the town's aquifers is important to Swampscott because the Metropolitan District Commission's water supply system is severely over-taxed. Even if the MDC system increases its capacity by implementing the Northfield Mountain project, the Massachusetts Office of Environmental Affairs estimates that the continually increasing demand for water will result in the MDC overdrawing 20 million gallons of water a day in 1990, as it is doing today. If the Northfield project is not implemented by 1990, the MDC system will be overdrawing even more than it is today.

Because of MDC's critical water supply problem, the state is encouraging all cities and towns within the MDC system to preserve existing local water supply systems and to protect aquifers that have high ground water yield potential.




Surface Salt Water

The Atlantic Ocean, alongside Swampscott's four miles of coastline, is undoubtedly the town's greatest asset. It has its liabilities, too, however, among which is a periodic tendency to overflow its bounds. The Army Corps of Engineers has mapped the areas in Swampscott which can be expected to be flooded in a 100-year storm (and for which special building regulations apply). The storm of February, 1978, which was judged to be of 80-year frequency, flooded areas and caused considerable damage well beyond the Corps' 100-year flood zone.

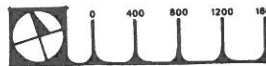


 U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS 100 YEAR FLOOD ZONE BOUNDARY ADOPTED BY THE FIA

 ADDITIONAL AREAS FLOODED OR DAMAGED DURING THE STORM OF FEBRUARY 6-8, 1978 (SOURCE: SWAMPSCOTT DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS)

FLOODING

PREPARED FOR THE SWAMPSCOTT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



environmental
collaborative
Boston, Massachusetts

VEGETATION and WILDLIFE

All living environmental systems exist in groupings or "communities." This occurs because each plant and animal species has a range of variation in environmental factors under which it will survive. This is called its "environmental gradient" (the tolerance range of a plant to soil moisture is an example of such a gradient). The various combinations of soil, water, and topography form a variety of sub-landscapes to which different plant and animal species are adapted. The distribution of vegetative and wildlife communities is governed by these physical conditions.

Vegetation

The existence of vegetative cover has the important effect of moderating environmental extremes, particularly of temperature ranges and of water flow. While climatic and geologic conditions influence the types of vegetative and wildlife communities that exist in any one environment, vegetation (once established) in turn influences climate and geology. It does this by modifying surface erosion from precipitation, moderating extremes in temperature, building up soil from decaying matter, and providing greater relative humidity.

In addition to their purely functional values, vegetation types provide the most striking element in most landscapes. The feeling of openness or enclosure, color, texture, and seasonality is determined largely by vegetation.

Wildlife

Wildlife is to be found wherever specific plant communities provide a hospitable habitat: one with food, cover, and water.

Different types of wildlife require different habitats; thus wherever there is more than one plant community or a variety of vegetative growth, the wildlife tends to be more varied. Such a variety is often found at the edge of a field or forest, or shoreline or marsh. This edge is known as a landscape "ecotone"; and its tendency to have a greater variety of wildlife is known as the "edge effect."

Sometimes a species of wildlife needs more than one habitat, particularly birds which feed in one environment, and rest or breed in another. Swampscott has a great diversity of environmental communities. Following is a list of some of these areas:

Ecological Community

Forest/Streambed

Locations in Swampscott:

Harold King Forest and contiguous private property, Tedesco Country Club and portions of One Salem Street.

Vegetation:

Oak, Maple, Pine, Hemlock and Birch, Sumac, Alder, Cherry and Dogwood.

Wildlife:

Songbirds, Hawks and Owls; Fox, Grey and Red Squirrels, Rabbit, Raccoon, Mink and Skunk.

Wildlife Food Sources:

Hardwood sprout growth, seeds, bark and shrubs; rodents and other small mammals for carnivores.

Ecological Community

Woodland/Field

Locations in Swampscott:

Edgest of Tedesco Country Club and adjoining areas; and edges of town's athletic fields where they abut woodlands.

Vegetation:

Oak, Hickory, Maple, Pine, Hemlock and Birch; Serviceberry, Cherry and Dogwood.

...continued

- Wildlife: Pheasant, Kestrel, Songbirds, and many of the small mammals of the forest/streambed habitat.
- Wildlife Food Sources: Various weed seeds, vegetative parts of woody plants, small mammals, insects and worms.
- Recommendations: Allow edges between cleared areas and woodland to develop shrub growth.
- Ecological Community Swamp
- Locations in Swampscott: Swamp in the Harold King Forest and small swampy areas north of Foster Pond and in the Tedesco Country Club and One Salem Street.
- Vegetation: Alders, Azaleas, Buttonbush, Hemlock, Highbush Blueberry, Sumac, Red Maple, Skunk, Cabbage, Spicebush, Sweet Pepperbush and Willow, among others.
- Wildlife: Songbirds, Kingfishers, Killdeer, hawks, and mammals mentioned in the forest/streambed habitat, turtles, frogs and fish.
- Wildlife Food Sources: Songbirds and Killdeer subsist on a great variety of seeds, insects and worms. Other birds and mammals subsist principally on small mammals or aquatic life and fish.
- Recommendations: In protecting swamps, the woodland edges surrounding the swamp should also be protected in order to preserve the woodland/swamp ecotone, so valuable to wildlife.

Ecological CommunityMarsh/Open Water

Locations in Swampscott:

Palmer Pond

Vegetation:

Burreeds, Cattails, Duck Weed, Hydrophylic Grasses, Pond Weeds, Bayberry, Rosa Rugosa and Alders.

Wildlife:

Waterfowl such as Mallards, Black Ducks, Coot, Pied-billed Grebe and Teal; Herons, Rails, Snipe, Bitterns and other migrating water birds. Mammals such as Muskrats, Raccoons and small rodents; turtles, frogs and small fish.

Wildlife Food Sources:

Aquatic vegetation, seeds, insects, worms, fish and other aquatic life.

Ecological CommunityRocky Shore/Beach/Ocean

Locations in Swampscott:

Coastal shoreline consisting of four beaches and rocky shores at Black Will's Cliff, Lincoln House Point, Galloupe's Point and Little's Point.

Vegetation:

Seaweeds: Blue-green Algae, Green Algae, Brown Algae (rockweed, bladderwrack and various kelps) and Red Algae.

Wildlife:

Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Sandpipers; waterfowl such as Scoters, Common Goldeneye, Eider Ducks, Loons, Cormorants, Grebes, Bufflehead, Greater Scaup, Mergansers. Common commercial Fish include Winter Flounder, Cod, Mackerel, Haddock, red Hake, Dogfish, Whiting, Pollack and Monkfish. Other seafoods include Squid and Lobsters. Small beds of shellfish are found offshore but are not taken commercially.

Wildlife Food Sources:

Vegetative foods consist of various algae. Animal foods include fish, shellfish and other marine invertebrates.



UNIQUE FEATURES

A. The Coast

Swampscott's coastal environment is unquestionably its most valuable asset and resource. It is important to the town for its economic, recreational, and aesthetic values.

Fishing, one of the town's earliest economic activities, is still actively pursued from Swampscott harbor. The coastal area off the town is an excellent lobster and fish nursery and maturation area. The Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program has defined critical ocean resource sanctuaries in the state; Swampscott is within the South Essex sanctuary, which extends from the New Hampshire border south to Nahant.

Activities such as swimming and boating are popular forms of recreation for Swampscott. The town has four major beaches, three of which are public and one which has public access. In addition to docking facilities for commercial fishing and pleasure boats, the harbor provides many mooring spaces for small craft.

Coastal Zone Management

During the preparation of the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Plan, surveys were conducted and regional advisory committees were formed to assure that the plan accurately represented the desires of coastal communities. The Lower North Shore Citizens Advisory Committee included representatives of Swampscott. Some of the more critical issues raised by the survey and the advisory committee are:

1. Preservation of remaining open coastal areas in conservation use.

The survey of a sample of lower north shore coastal residents demonstrated a strong concern that remaining scarce open coastal areas be protected and preserved in open conservation uses. Recreational facilities, specifically beaches and boating facilities, were given second priority. Other uses, such as housing and commercial/industrial facilities were given much lower priority; marine-related commerce and tourist facilities were preferred. It is clear that residents of the lower north shore are gravely concerned about the "disappearance" of the coastal environment and its degradation and inaccessibility. For Swampscott, this issue is particularly relevant as it relates to public access of the .74 miles of Phillips Beach and the strengthening of environmental controls over the dunes that abut the beach.

2. Protection of fishing resources.

The lower North Shore Advisory Committee was particularly concerned about protecting regional lobster and fish nursery and maturation areas. These areas are threatened by the prospect of oil spills during energy resource exploration on the ocean floor, by offshore gravel mining and dredge disposal and by the general degradation of these areas through other sources of pollution. They are also concerned that ecologically significant resource areas, such as salt marshes and shellfish beds, be conserved for their contribution to marine productivity. Swampscott's concern in this area includes the contamination of shellfish off Blaney Beach (as shown on CZM plans) and the expressed interest of the City of Lynn in locating support facilities there for Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas exploration.

3. Resolution of private vs. public access issues.

For Swampscott, this issue is most acute on Whales beach, where there has been a longstanding disagreement on whether the townspeople have access rights to a certain sections of the beach.

4. Resolution of use conflicts along the coastal zone.

The advisory committee was particularly concerned over the potential for recurring conflicts between conservation goals and commercial or recreational needs. They recommended that one approach to resolving such conflicts would be to form regional bodies with some scientific knowledge to advise both conservation commissions and the CZM office on proposed projects. Use conflicts in Swampscott are generally among various types of recreational users or between recreational users and commercial fishing operations. Most of these conflicts are centered on Blaney Beach, between beach users, boaters, and recreational fisherman.

5. Pollution issues.

The CZM plan shows that Blaney Beach is an area of contaminated shellfish and that Kings Beach is subject to pollution from sewage effluent from an unknown source. Pollution also occurs when decaying seaweed accumulates on the town's beaches and renders them less acceptable for recreational use.

B. Palmer Pond

The Palmer Pond section of Phillips Beach is the only area in Swampscott where the natural sandy shoreline has been left relatively undisturbed. Originally quite probably a tidal inlet, since enclosed by lateral sand drift, this quiet cattail marsh behind the sand dunes offers a dramatic contrast to the adjacent shore.

Known as Long Pond in earlier times, Palmer Pond was listed as a Great Pond of the Commonwealth, and as such enjoys special protection. It is a favored spot for nature lovers, bird watchers and ice skaters, and the dunes and beach nearby offer attractive, though limited, opportunities for picnics and swimming.

C. Glacial Moraine

An extensive field of huge boulders deposited by the receding glacier is one of the outstanding features of the Harold A. King Town Forest.

D. Foster Pond

This man-made pond in the northwest corner of town is the largest body of open water in Swampscott. Although privately owned, it is accessible to the public and offers opportunities for boating and fishing. (See Sites Inventory.)

E. Tedesco Golf Course

This open stretch of rolling hills is a great asset to the town of Swampscott. Whether or not we belong to the club, we can appreciate the view, the open space, and its beneficial effects on the air we breath. In winter the golf course is one of Swampscott's favorite spots for sledding and skiing.

F. Boston & Maine Railroad Bed

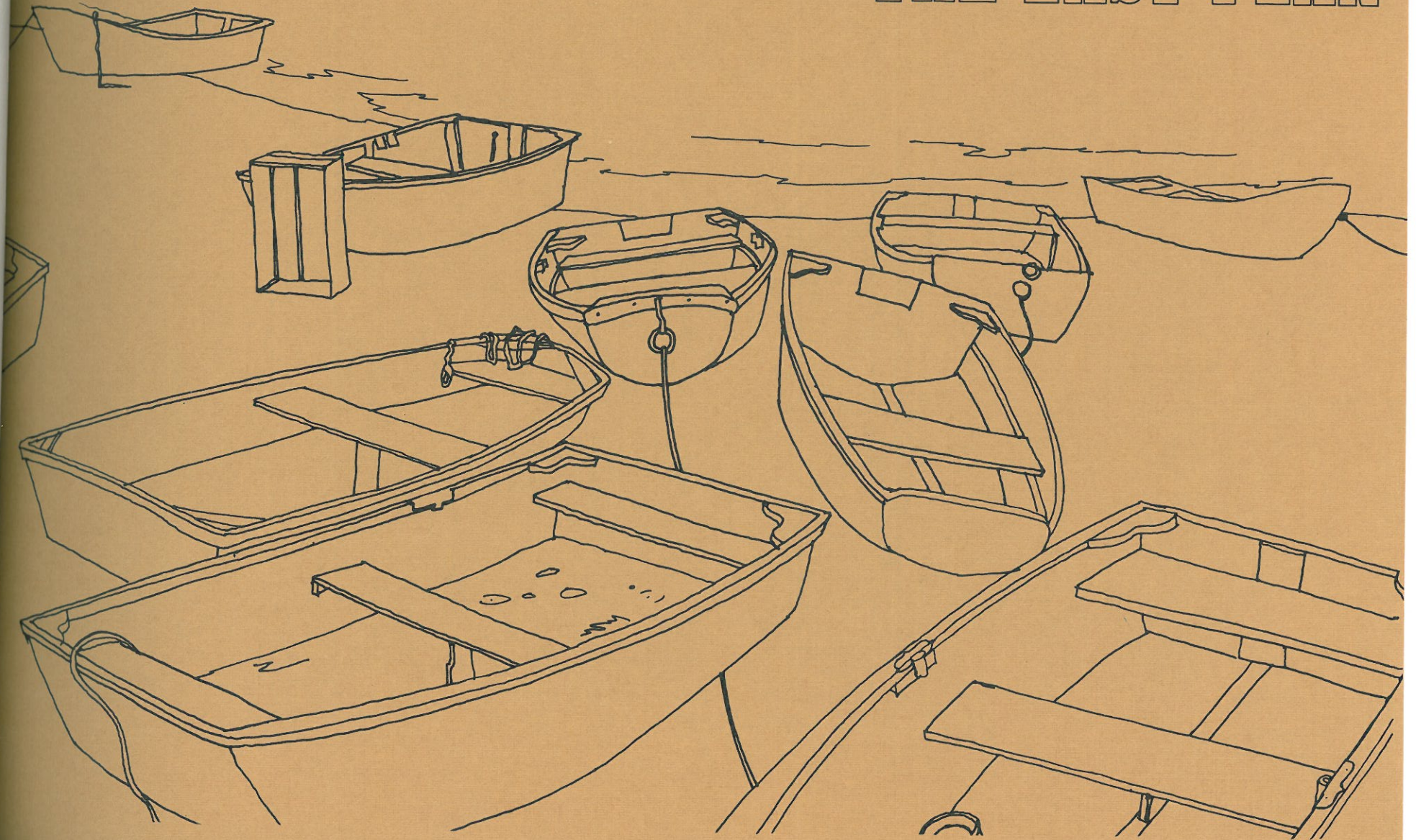
This abandoned railroad bed, now used by the New England Power Company for its power lines, provides an access to the high school and its athletic facilities, and also offers an excellent opportunity for conversion to a bike path.

G. Quarry

A large area of the bedrock in the northwesterly section of Swampscott is made up of Salem Gabbro, a rock highly valued for construction work. Lynn Sand and Stone has quarried this rock since 1922. It is expected that quarrying operations will continue for an indefinite number of years.

Most of these features, of special importance in Swampscott's open space and recreation planning, are treated in greater detail in later sections.

PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST PLAN



PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST PLAN

Since the publication of the last open space plan, "Swampscott Environment: Now or Never" in 1970, a number of its recommendations have been implemented. These include:

Land Acquisitions

1. The Harold King Forest has been expanded from 22 acres to its present size of 47 acres. This was accomplished with the aid of 50% state funding, not only on the original purchase price appropriated by the Town in 1971, but on the damages awarded by the court in 1976 as well.
2. The Town has acquired valuable ocean-front property along Whales Beach, with additional recreational and parking space in the area once occupied by the New Ocean House.

This land, named for Richard B. Johnson, longtime town moderator, abuts the beach deeded to the residents of Swampscott by Ebenezer Phillips in the 19th century, which is probably the most popular swimming area for local residents.

3. Open space in the Stanley School area proposed for preservation in the 1969 Plan was purchased by the Swampscott Foundation in 1972 to forestall subdivision, and offered to the town at cost. The town purchased about one-half the area (roughly 7 acres), again with 50% state funding obtained by the Conservation Commission. Town meeting voted to name this area in memory of Charles M. Ewing, one the original trustees of the Swampscott Foundation.

4. The acquisition of the Harry D. Linscott Park goes a step beyond the proposals of the 1969 Plan. This two-acre public park adjacent to the Hadley School extends Olmstead's classic open space system in the town center, and its recreational value complements the beach and school activity nearby. Purchased by the Swampscott Foundation and acquired by the town through the efforts of the Conservation Commission with the help of 75% state and federal open space funding, this urban park is proving to be one of the most heavily used of Swampscott's conservation areas.

Protection of Wetlands

The Swampscott Conservation Commission, in 1972, was one of the first Conservation Commissions in the Commonwealth to undertake a scientific mapping of the town's wetlands. The work was done by an experienced firm of environmental consultants, and the map has been a useful tool in planning, and in administering the Wetlands Protection Act.

In 1976 the Conservation Commission in conjunction with five other town boards, finally succeeded, after five unsuccessful previous attempts, in persuading the town to enact a wetland zoning by-law. The Flood Plain/Wetland Protection District, where recreational uses are encouraged and building is prohibited, was voted in unanimously by town meeting.

Additional protection for two large wetland and open space areas on the One Salem Street property was secured in July, 1981 through a permanent conservation restriction granted to the town by the developer of the property.

Environmental Protection through Zoning By-Laws

The Conservation Commission proposed, and the 1974 Town Meeting adopted, an amendment to the town's zoning by-laws which requires developers to submit an Environmental Impact Statement for town boards' and public inspection before subdivision or use permits are granted. This requirement has already provided the basis for improving some development plans and rejecting others. It is helping to generate an environmental awareness in developers and town officials alike.

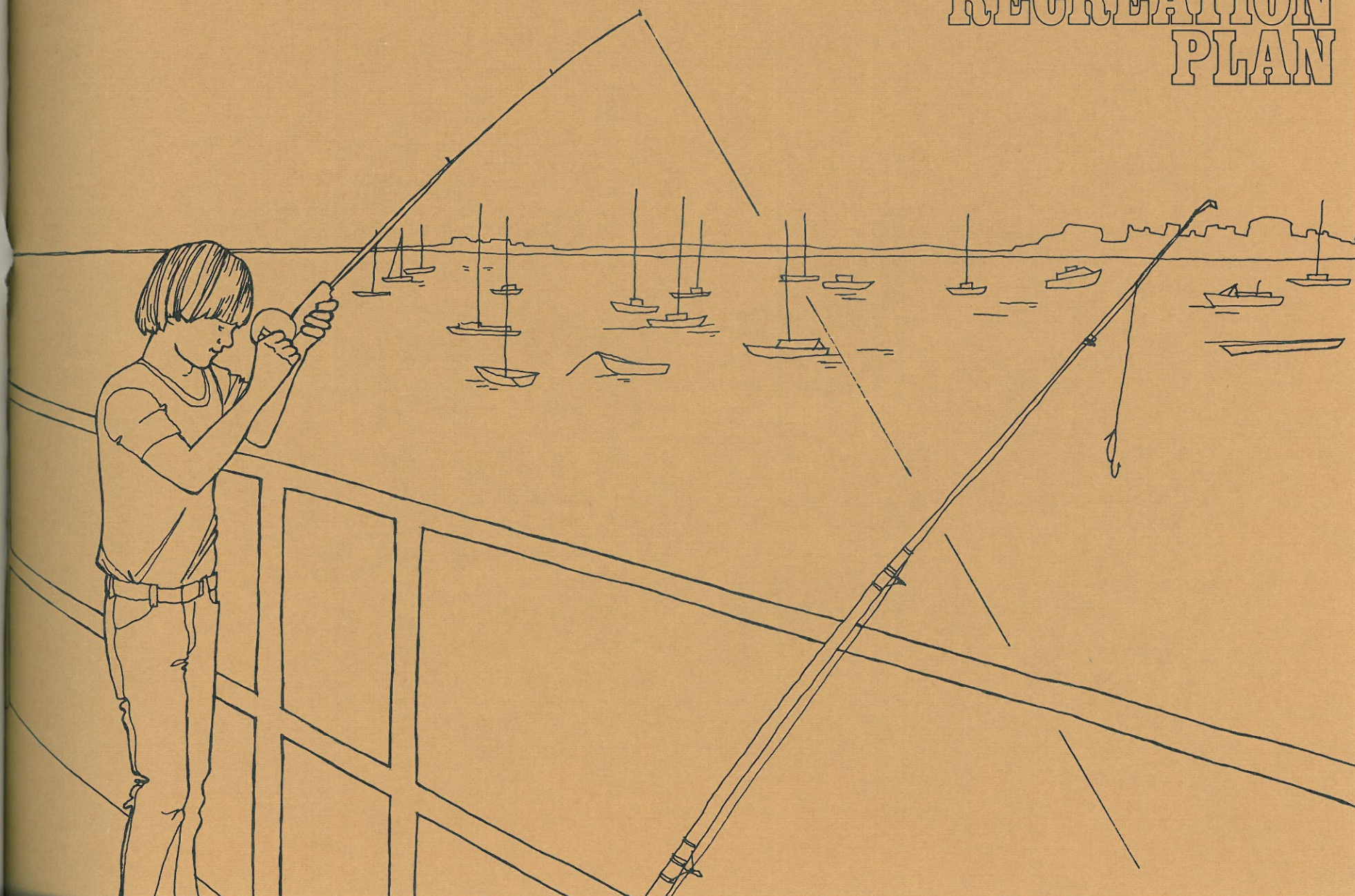
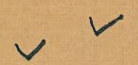
Another zoning amendment, sponsored by the Conservation Commission and passed in 1976, prohibits site preparation for construction projects until the necessary permits have been acquired. In this way, environmental impacts can be truly assessed, and fruitless scarring of the landscape should be eliminated.

Formation of Other Conservation-Oriented Groups

The formation of the Swampscott Foundation has itself been an important step forward for resource conservation in town. The Foundation's members are concerned townspeople who have pooled their resources with the aim of purchasing properties which are potentially valuable as conservation or recreation land but which are imminently threatened with development. Their efforts have helped the town to acquire the Chick Estate (now the Harry D. Linscott Park), the New Ocean House property (part of which is now the Richard B. Johnson Memorial Park), and part of the Hastings property near the Stanley School (which is now the Charles M. Ewing Woods). The Swampscott Foundation is open for membership to any Swampscott resident, and is a valuable ally in the effort to preserve open space in Swampscott.

Another conservation-oriented group, initiated by the League of Women Voters, was the Open Space Study Committee. This committee was very active in the acquisition of the New Ocean House property, and co-sponsored a number of environmental articles for Town Meeting over the years.

RECREATION PLAN



RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS and NEEDS

By analyzing the different types of recreation that are, or should be, available in Swampscott, we can get an idea of which programs or facilities need strengthening, and what the needs are for additional outdoor recreation areas. It should be noted here that this plan is concerned with outdoor recreational needs only. This is because it is oriented towards the preservation of open space and how open space can be used as a recreational resource by the public.

There are several types of recreational activity in Swampscott, each with its own participants, facility needs and program organization requirements. Following is a list of the most popular activities, with some suggestions for improvements. More specific recommendations for individual sites are made in the Recreation and Conservation Sites Inventory.

A. Recreation Leagues

The major outdoor recreation league organizations in Swampscott that are sponsored by the Recreation Commission and which use public recreational facilities include the following:

Youth Leagues:

Little League Baseball	Youth Hockey
Babe Ruth Baseball	Boy's Junior Basketball
Junior Boys Softball	Boy's Youth Basketball
Girls Softball	Youth Track and Field
American Legion Baseball	Youth Football

Boy's Senior Basketball
Girl's Basketball
Youth Soccer

Adult Leagues:

Men's Softball
Women's Softball
Men's Soccer
Men's Basketball

The locations of league play in the Town are shown in Table 1. Recommendations at each park site to improve the conditions for league play are presented in the Recreation and Conservation Sites Inventory section.

Table 1: Participants and Locations of League Play

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Where Played</u>
Youth Leagues			
Little League Baseball	8 & 9	360	Jackson, Stanley, Shaw, Phillips, Abbott
Babe Ruth Baseball	13 - 15	120	Jackson, Phillips
Girl's Softball	11 - 19	92	Phillips, Stanley
Boy's Youth Basketball	8 - 13	37	Abbott
Boy's Junior Basketball	13 - 15	30	Phillips
Boy's Senior Basketball	16 - older	79	Phillips
Girl's Basketball	8 - 16	38	Phillips
Youth Soccer	8 - 16	150	Phillips, High School
Pop Warner Football	8 - 13	70	Phillips
Adult Leagues:			
Men's Softball	-	150	Shaw, Stanley
Men's Soccer	-	70	Phillips
Men's Basketball	-	30	

B. Summer Programs Sponsored by the Recreation Commission

The Swampscott Recreation Commission sponsors a wide variety of summer programs at the town's parks and school facilities. In 1982, there was a total of 825 participants in these programs. The activities sponsored include:

- Youth supervised playground program at parks and schools
- Boys and girls sailing program
- Girl's softball program
- Girl's basketball program
- Tennis lessons for teens and adults
- Boy's basketball program
- Youth basketball program
- Women's fitness program
- Teen and adult fitness (at the High School)
- Road and track races: teen and adult
- Swimming lessons (at Whales Beach)
- Adult sailing lessons at Blaney Beach (evenings)

These programs provide a valuable source of recreational activity for a wide age spectrum of Swampscott residents. They are particularly important in that they offer ongoing activities in the absence of school recreational programs.

C. Informal Recreation

Informal Recreation encompasses a wide spectrum of activity and is most likely to be family participation sports.

1. Beach-related.

Swampscott has a superlative recreational resource in its coastal beaches. With the acquisition of the Town of several acres of land adjacent to Whales Beach, public access to the beach has been considerably expanded. Specific recommendations on improving the

recreational potential of these coastal areas are given in the section on Site Inventory.

2. Boating.

Swampscott's coastline and harbor provides excellent opportunities for recreational boating. This boating activity is now concentrated in Swampscott Harbor and around the town pier, although some craft are privately moored off Whales Beach.

3. Fishing.

Recommendations:

- a. Restrict fishing in the harbor to the pier only.
- b. Inquire into the possibility of restocking Foster Pond.

4. Court games.

There are six tennis courts at Jackson Park, two at Phillips Park and six at the High School, the latter two sites having lighting for evening play. Future demand may call for installing lighting at Jackson Park courts as well.

Another court game that is growing in popularity among adults is basketball. Existing courts at the school sites seem to be adequate to meet the expected demand for this game, at least for the near future.

5. Trail-related recreation.

An explanation of town trail needs is given in the next section of this report.

6. Picnicking.

The most popular picnicking spots in town are the beaches, where picnicking is a natural activity incorporated into "a day at the beach." Picnic facilities exist at Jackson and Linscott Parks. Specific recommendations are given for each park site in the sites inventory section.

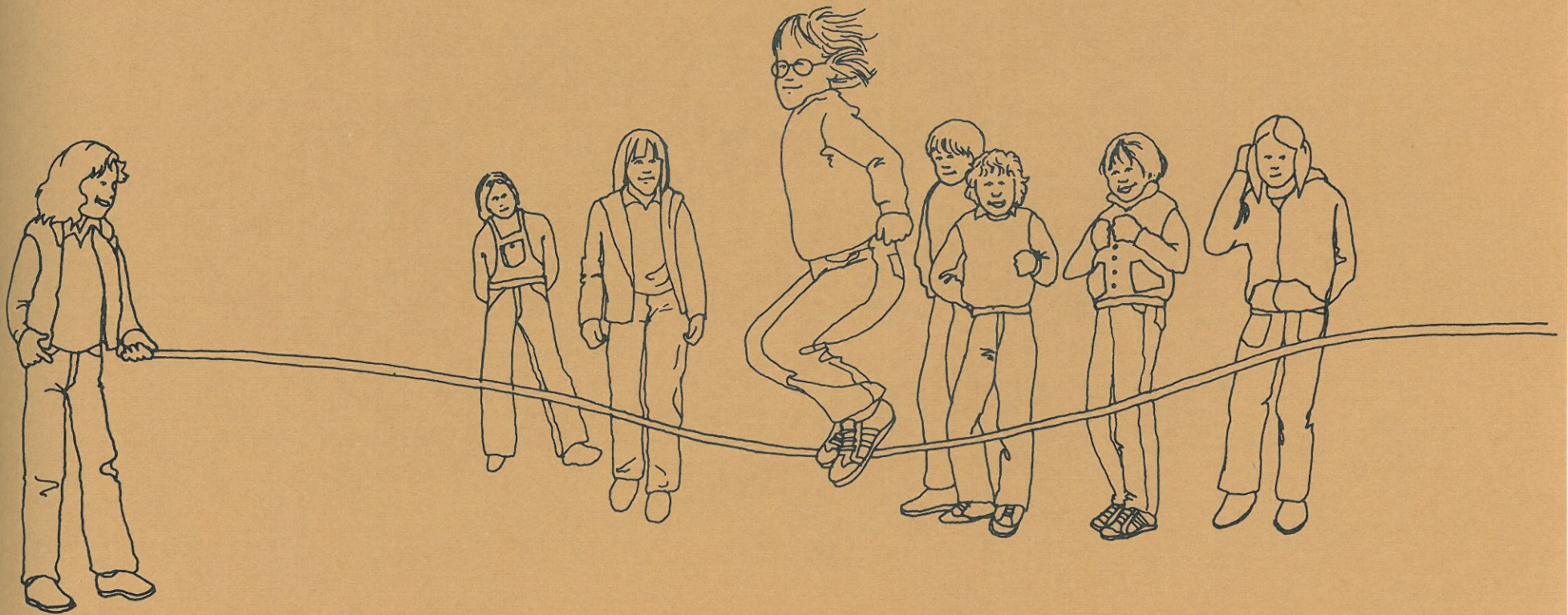
7. Winter Sports.

The Tedesco golf course provides an ideal area for sledding, tobogganing and beginner skiing and snowshoeing. The club has always been generous in permitting public use of its open land in the winter season.

Ice skating takes place on all of the town's ponds and flooded areas.



RECREATION AND CONSERVATION SITES INVENTORY



RECREATION and CONSERVATION SITES INVENTORY AND RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

The following inventory of public and semi-public recreation and conservation sites in Swampscott is one of the planning requirements of the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. It includes woodlands, water resource areas, scenic and recreation areas in public ownership or used by the public. Farmland, which would also belong in this list, does not exist in Swampscott.

Several of the site listings include plans for proposed improvements. These plans have been approved by both the Recreation and the Conservation Commissions.

Sites included in this inventory:

Conservation Areas

Harold A. King Town Forest
Harry D. Linscott Park
Charles M. Ewing Woods
Palmer Pond
Muskrat Pond

School-Related Recreation Areas

Phillips Park
Jackson Park
Abbott Park
Shaw High School Recreation Area
Stanley School Recreation Area
Hadley School Recreation Area

Beaches and Adjoining Parks

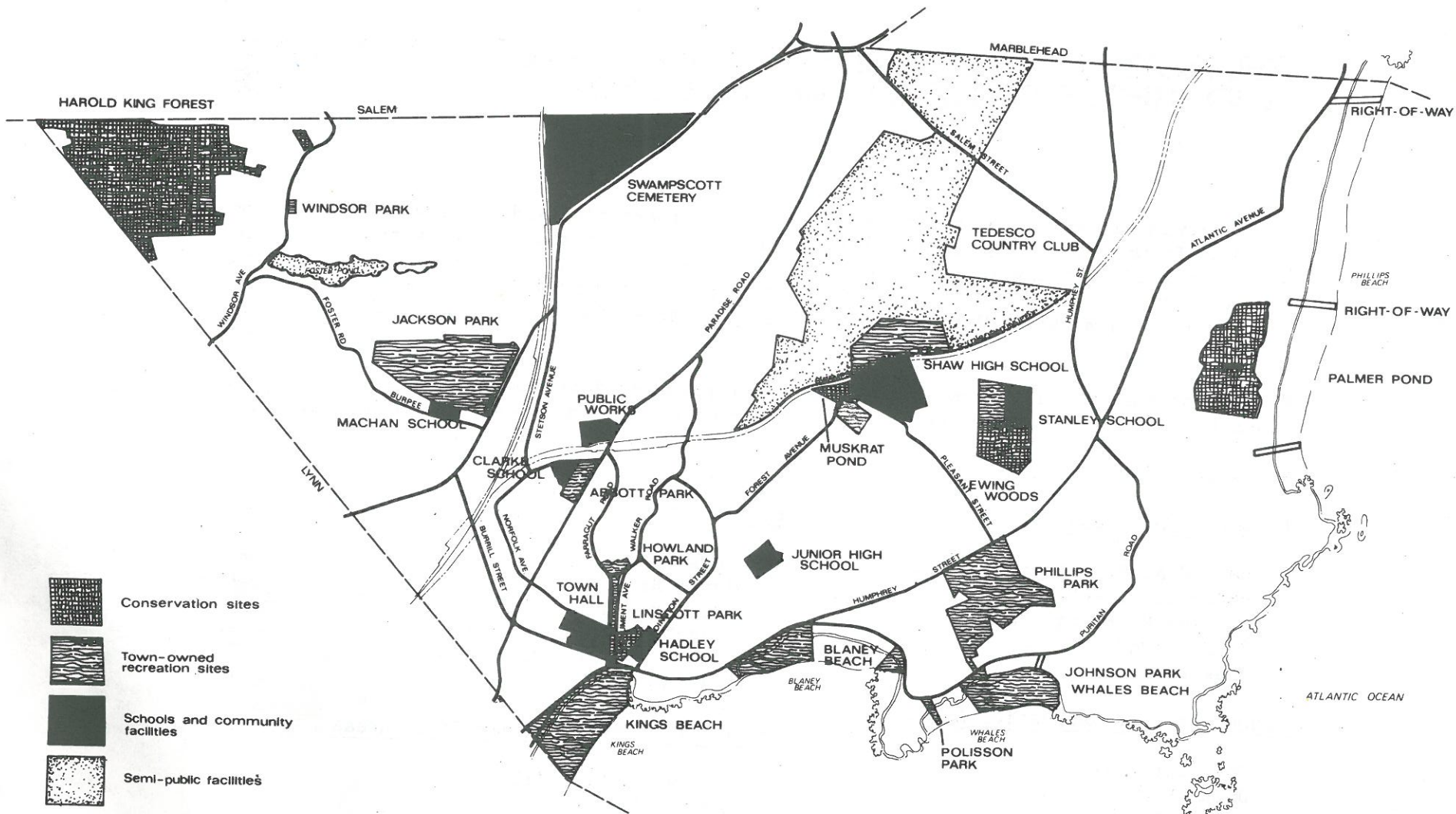
Kings Beach
Blaney Beach and Reservation
Whales Beach
Richard B. Johnson Park
Paul A. Polisson Park
Phillips Beach

Other Town Parks and Open Space Areas

Monument Avenue Mall
Windsor Park
Cemetery

Privately Owned Recreation Areas

Tedesco Country Club
Foster Pond



Note: Town residents have the right-of-way on part of Whales Beach.

PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC LAND

PREPARED FOR THE SWAMPSCOTT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



environmental
collaborative
Boston, Massachusetts

CONSERVATION AREAS

Swampscott has 73 acres dedicated to conservation purposes. Great variety of terrain is represented, from seaside marsh (Palmer Pond) to rocky woodland (Harold King Forest) to formal urban park (Linscott Park) but much of the town's natural environment remains unprotected, in private ownership.

SITE NAME: Harold A. King Town Forest: 47.04 acres

This is a wild and rugged forested area located in the northwest corner of Swampscott. From its highest point, commanding a view of Nahant and Boston, the land slopes down to an extensive swamp with its unique plant life. The area's outstanding feature is a terminal moraine which, coupled with a diverse growth of deciduous trees and shrubs, makes an ideal area for nature study.

OWNERSHIP

AND MANAGEMENT: Town-owned. Managed by the Conservation Commission.

ZONING*: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL

PROTECTION: Dedicated to conservation use.

*Zoning categories are as follows:

A-1: 30,000 square foot minimum lot requirements

A-2: 20,000 square foot minimum lot requirements

A-3: 10,000 square foot minimum lot requirements

B-1: Retail business

B-2: General Business

B-3: Shopping center business and apartment units

Note: Much of the A-1 and A-2 districts has already been subdivided into the smaller lots previously permitted.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

Parking area at Nichols Street entrance. Some trails.

USERS:

Used by informal visitors and nature study groups from schools and museums.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

Litter and illegal fires.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:

Development of nature trails.

SITE NAME: Harry D. Linscott Park: 1.97 acres

This park, located between the Hadley School and the Monument Avenue Mall, is a multi-purpose area. Aesthetically it balances the sweeping lawn of the Town Administration Building on the other side of the Mall. Recreationally it provides additional play space for Hadley School children, a quiet resting place with an ocean view for older residents, and a shaded retreat with picnic tables for swimmers at Kings Beach.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Town-owned, managed by Conservation Commission. Programs supervised by Recreation Commission. Maintained by Department of Public Works.

ZONING:

A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Dedicated as a public park and conservation area.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

1. Open multi-use lawn area
2. Tot lot
3. Picnic area
4. Benches
5. Shuffleboard
6. Horseshoe pitching pits
7. Surfaced play area
8. Swings
9. Summer parking permitted at Hadley School

USERS:

Hadley School children; Recreation Commissions' six-week playground program; general public, particularly little children and older residents; bathers from Kings Beach. Also occasionally used for non-commercial fairs, concerts and exhibitions. No ball playing is allowed except for supervised play by Hadley School children.

SPECIAL

PROBLEM AREAS:

Overuse because of inadequate size and maintenance of Hadley playing field; enforcement of use regulations; litter and vandalism.

RECOMMENDED

IMPROVEMENTS:

1. An underground sprinkler system to assure healthy turf growth.
2. Present benches allow easy removal of bolts and slats by vandals; they should be replaced.
3. Consideration should be given to lighting portions of the park to help stop vandalism.

SITE NAME: Charles M. Ewing Woods: 7.3 acres

The Ewing Woods is a natural area of forested land along the southern boundary of the Stanley School and its athletic field. It contains wetlands, a varied terrain, and several fine specimens of mature oak, and is criss-crossed with paths created by many generations of school children.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT: Town-owned, managed by Conservation Commission

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION: Dedicated as a public conservation area.

EXISTING
FACILITIES: Extensive trail system.

USERS: Used informally for passive recreation by town residents, and as a nature study area by the Stanley School.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS: Litter and vandalism.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS: Regular clean-up program.

SITE NAME: Palmer Pond: 17.75 acres

This is an extensive cattail marsh, lying just behind the dunes along the southern portion of Phillips Beach. Small areas of open water are all that remain of a once sizeable open pond.

OWNERSHIP
AND MANAGEMENT: Town owned, managed by Conservation Commission.

ZONING: A-1

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION: Great Pond of the Commonwealth, deeded to the town in 1968 on condition it be maintained in natural state. Within town's Flood Plain/Wetland Protection District and Flood Hazard Area.

EXISTING
FACILITIES: Trails around perimeter, and path across.

USERS: Nature lovers, bird watchers, science classes, skaters.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS: Litter, dumping.
Siltation, eutrophication.
Maintaining drainage flow.
Contamination from road salt and sand.
Illegal trapping.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS: Recommend scientific study to determine the best management policy for health of the pond and the town drainage system, and for recreational potential.

SITE NAME: Muskrat Pond: .4 acres

A small pond off Forest Avenue, next to the Swampscott High School property, Muskrat Pond has long been used as an outdoor science laboratory for the adjacent school. It constitutes a segment of a small but attractive drainage system running through school property across Forest Avenue and emptying into the larger drainage way along the old railroad bed.

OWNERSHIP
AND MANAGEMENT:

Owned by town, managed by Conservation Commission.

ZONING:

A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Subject to the town's wetlands bylaws.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

None

USERS:

Students. Visual amenity to passers-by on Forest Avenue and the railroad bed.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

Litter, occasional stagnation.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:

More frequent cleanups.

BEACHES AND ADJOINING PARKS

SITE NAME: Kings Beach, length: 900 feet

This open expanse of beach at Swampscott's western boundary line continues along the Lynn shore to the Red Rock promontory. Public transportation and nearby eating places make this a popular swimming beach.

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Town-owned. Maintained by the Department of Public Works. Recreation Commission supervises the beach use.

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL PROTECTION: Dedicated as a public beach.

EXISTING FACILITIES: Swimming beach with lifeguard station and public park/sitting area above the sea wall.

USERS: Open to public use as a swimming beach and viewing area above the sea wall.

SPECIAL PROBLEM AREAS: Dead seaweed washed up on the shore decomposes and the resulting smell and aesthetic appearance tends to limit the attractiveness and use of the beach. In addition, the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Plan states that "the beach suffers from sewage pollution from an unknown source. . . ."

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: A concerted effort should be made to identify and stop the source of sewage pollution of the beach. Also seaweed pollution should be minimized by timely raking of the beach during the summer months.

SITE NAME: Blaney Beach, and Reservation
Length: 2300 feet
Area of upland: .9 acre

Blaney, or Fisherman's, Beach, with the adjoining Reservation above the seawall, is the center of Swampscott's coastal activity.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

The Reservation, including the western half and the eastern tip of the beach, is town-owned. Most of the eastern half of the beach is owned by abutters. Commercial fishing and recreational boating activities (mooring in the harbor and docking at the town pier) are managed by the Harbormaster. Recreational activity (swimming and sailing lessons) is managed by the Recreation Commission. The Department of Public Works maintains the site.

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Dedicated as a town park.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

- The Fish House, where commercial fishermen store their gear (a town facility, with public toilets).
- The town pier and moorings, both public and private, used by commercial fishing and pleasure craft.
- Three vehicle access ramps to the beach.
- Benches and parking in the upland area.
- Parking, and a convenient access for launching boats, are also provided at the small segment of town-owned beach at Martin Way, at the eastern extremity of Blaney Beach.

USERS: The commercial fishermen now use the docking and storage facilities here; these boats fish for lobster, flounder and other seasonal fish. Recreational fishermen, and pleasure boaters, both sail and power. Swimmers and sunbathers. The area is used by the Recreation Commission for both its sailing and its swimming programs.

**SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:** Use conflicts among bathers, boaters and fishermen.
Congestion of boats in the harbor and at the town pier.
Occasional pollution problems.

**RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:**

Boating

- Closer mooring supervision to assure an open approach channel in the harbor and to prevent property loss.
- Mooring regulation through the use of a differential fee structure, to reflect resident vs. non-resident and commercial vs. recreational users.
- Limit or control skiff and sailboat storage on the beach.
- Develop a launch service on weekends to provide more orderly use of the area. This could be privately run, as in Marblehead.
- Expand the town's sailing program to include adult classes, preferably during evening hours. A successful adult program would require adding "Lightnings" or "Day Sailors" to the town's six "Widgeons" now used for youth sailing classes.
- Avoid creation of fueling facilities at the pier. Such a facility would increase existing harbor congestion and further exacerbate the parking shortage.

Swimming

- If the pollution problem still exists, take town (or state) action to correct it.
- Improve the comfort stations at the Fish House.
- Provide flotation markers at Blaney Beach to define the limits of the swimming area and to avoid conflicts with boating activity.
- Acquire a public easement to allow public use of the now-private eastern half of the beach.

SITE NAME: Whales Beach, length: 1840 feet

Richard B. Johnson Park: 1.5 acres

Paul A. Polisson Park: .14 acre

This beautiful crescent of beach, terminated by the rocky promontory of Lincoln House Point on the west and Galloupes Point on the east, has long been considered Swampscott's own swimming beach. There is no conflict with boating or commercial activities, and it is not easily accessible for out-of-town swimmers. The Richard B. Johnson Park and the Paul A. Polisson Park both abut the beach and provide areas of retreat at high tide and vistas of great scenic beauty at all times.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Town owned, managed by Recreation Commission. Lifeguard services provided by Recreation Commission. Maintained by Department of Public Works.

ZONING:

A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Use of the beach for swimming and recreation was deeded to Swampscott residents by Ebenezer Phillips in 1873. The town purchased the two adjoining park areas in 1974 for open space and recreation purposes.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

Benches and lawn for sunbathing at both the park areas; parking for town residents at Phillips Park; toilet facilities at field house.

USERS:

Primarily used for summer swimming and sunbathing.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

There has been a dispute between the town and abutting property owners concerning the public's right to use adjoining beaches; a court case concerning one segment has been decided in the town's favor. Winter storms pose an upkeep problem at the two park areas.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:

Landscaping the Richard B. Johnson Park.

SITE NAME: Phillips Beach, length: 5260 feet

This beach lies between two rocky outcrops, Littles Point at the southern end and Flirtation Rock at the Marblehead line. There are two rights-of-way to the beach, one at Ocean Avenue and one at the foot of Beach Bluff Avenue. Thus the entire beach is accessible to the public.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Not town-owned, but managed by the Department of Public Works. Beach near Ocean Avenue access maintained by the Neighborhood Association in summer.

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

The dunes abutting the southern portion of the beach are protected by the Wetlands Protection Act, the Coastal Zone Management policy, and the town's Flood Plain/Wetland Protection District.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

Parking for members of the Neighborhood Association, open for membership to residents to Precinct 6.

USERS:

Swimmers and sunbathers.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

As Marblehead residents use the northern portion of the beach, they should be asked to help in maintenance.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:

None

SCHOOL-RELATED RECREATION AREAS

Most of Swampscott's schools are woefully undersupplied with space for outdoor recreation. Clarke, Machon and Hadley are dependent on the use of adjacent public parks, and Junior High School students must travel to Phillips Park for their athletic activities. Outside of one undersized playfield at Hadley, only Stanley and the High School possess school-owned athletic fields. School-owned or town-owned, however, they are all made available for the Recreation Commission's extensive after-school and summer recreational activities.

It is quite understandable that all of Swampscott's school-related recreation areas, particularly the playing fields, suffer turf-maintenance problems from overuse.

SITE NAME: Phillips Park: 15 acres

Phillips Park has been used over the years as the recreation area for Swampscott High School. It now serves the High School and the Junior High School, as well as a number of activities for younger children. After school and in the summer the park receives heavy use by the public.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Town-owned. Programs managed by the Recreation Commission and maintenance by the Department of Public Works.

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Dedicated as a public park.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

1 baseball field	2 softball/junior league fields	1 football field with fieldhouse
1 field hockey field	2 tennis courts (lighted)	2 football practice fields
tot play area	1 basketball field (lighted)	1 cinder running track (less than 1/4 mile)
	1 soccer field	

USERS:

Now used as the main high school field for practice and games of football, baseball, softball, and field hockey. Fields here are also used for Little League Baseball, junior boys softball, girls softball, American Legion Baseball, boy's youth basketball, boy's senior basketball, girl's basketball, and youth soccer. Adult games played here include women's softball, Pop Warner football, and men's soccer. Basketball and tennis courts are in constant use by the public.

**SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:**

Providing timely watering for these playing fields without an underground sprinkler system may be a problem and therefore turf quality may suffer. Shortage of summer DPW staff (because of vacations) particularly affects this town park because of its many fields.

**RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:**

Possible lighting of selected fields for more extensive use, particularly by adults. Constant turf maintenance program.

SITE NAME: Jackson Park: 24.4 acres

This spacious park off Essex Street and adjacent to Machon School is the most varied and versatile in Swampscott's park system. Besides accommodating the Machon School and many other athletic programs, as listed below, the park includes an extensive natural area of wooded hillside, and a small pond.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Town-owned. Program management by the Recreation Commission. Maintenance by the Department of Public Works.

ZONING:

A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Dedicated as a public park.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

6 tennis courts (unlighted)	1 junior league field	1 baseball field
children's play facilities	picnic area	1 basketball court
	parking for 30 cars	(lighted)

USERS:

Jackson Park includes the main little league field in town, is the site for Babe Ruth baseball, and the town's youth and adult tennis lessons and tournaments. The Recreation Commission also sponsors a 6-week summer playground program here. The wooded area is used for nature study.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

Recurring vandalism has been a problem here.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:

Refurbish the picnic area and add a tot lot nearby.

SITE NAME: Abbott Park: 2.1 acres

This small park on Paradise Road, adjacent to the Clarke School, serves all of that school's athletic needs as well as providing limited recreational facilities for the public in this densely built-up section of Swampscott.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Town-owned. Programs managed by the Recreation Commission. Maintained by the Department of Public Works.

ZONING: A-3

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Dedicated as a public park.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

2 softball/junior league fields children's play area
1 basketball court

USERS:

In addition to the 6-week summer playground program held at the park, the Little League practices and plays its game here. It is also the site for boy's junior basketball, Pop Warner football, and softball. In the winter, it is regularly flooded for skating under the direction of the Recreation Commission. The park is adjacent to the Clarke School and is used by the school for some of its outdoor recreation activities.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

Turf maintenance, vandalism.

RECOMMENDED
IMPROVEMENTS:

The park was recently renovated, using federal job-creation funds.

SITE NAME: Shaw High School Recreational Facilities: 12.1 acres

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Town-owned, managed by the School Committee. Programs organized by the School Department and the Recreation Commission.

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL PROTECTION: Dedicated for school purposes.

EXISTING FACILITIES:

1. 2 softball fields
2. 6 lighted tennis courts
3. soccer/football practice fields

USERS: For school recreational use. Also used by the men's softball league and the public.

SITE NAME: Stanley School Recreational Facilities: 10.6 acres (includes school site)

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Town-owned, managed by the School Committee. Programming is through the School Department and the Recreation Commission. Maintenance of the site is by the DPW.

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL PROTECTION: Dedicated for school use, including recreation.

EXISTING FACILITIES:

1. 2 softball fields
2. 1 basketball court
3. 1 tot lot

USERS: The School Department uses the fields for school recreational use and the Recreation Commission uses it for its 6-week summer playground program. Men's softball uses the site from June - August, and girl's softball uses it for practice.

SITE NAME: Hadley School Recreational Facilities: .49 acres (see also Linscott Park)

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Town-owned, managed by the School Committee.

ZONING: A-3

SPECIAL LEGAL PROTECTION: Dedicated for school and related uses.

EXISTING FACILITIES:

1. ballfield
2. tot lot

USERS: Used in conjunction with school recreational programs and by the Little League for practice.

SPECIAL PROBLEM AREAS: Site is too constricted to allow regulation play on ballfield. Tot lot is inadequate. Uneven, rocky ground and poor turf make for unsatisfactory play area.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: Upgrade the tot lot.
Reloam and seed the ballfield, repairing sprinkler system.

OTHER TOWN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AREAS

Swampscott's public parks are almost all related to either the beaches or the schools. There are a few tiny park areas scattered throughout the town, but none but the following are large enough to be of any recreational value.

SITE NAME: Monument Avenue Mall

This parkway was designed by the famed architect Frederick Law Olmstead and provides a handsome entranceway to the town. A series of central islands featuring war memorials, and shrubs and flower beds in season is flanked on one side by the spacious lawn of the Administration Building (former residence of Elihu Thomson and now a historic landmark) and on the other side by Linscott Park. It is capped at the inland end by Howland Park, a landscaped sitting area.

AREA: Islands: 2.2 acres
Howland Park: .9 acre

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT: Town-owned, managed by Department of Public Works

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION: Dedicated as public park and public way.

EXISTING
FACILITIES: Benches at Howland Park.

USERS: General public; mainly visual amenities.

SITE NAME: Windsor Park: .42 acres

This tiny "park" on Windsor Avenue, north of Foster Pond, is the only children's play lot in this area of Swampscott.

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Town-owned. Maintained by the Department of Public Works.

ZONING: A-2

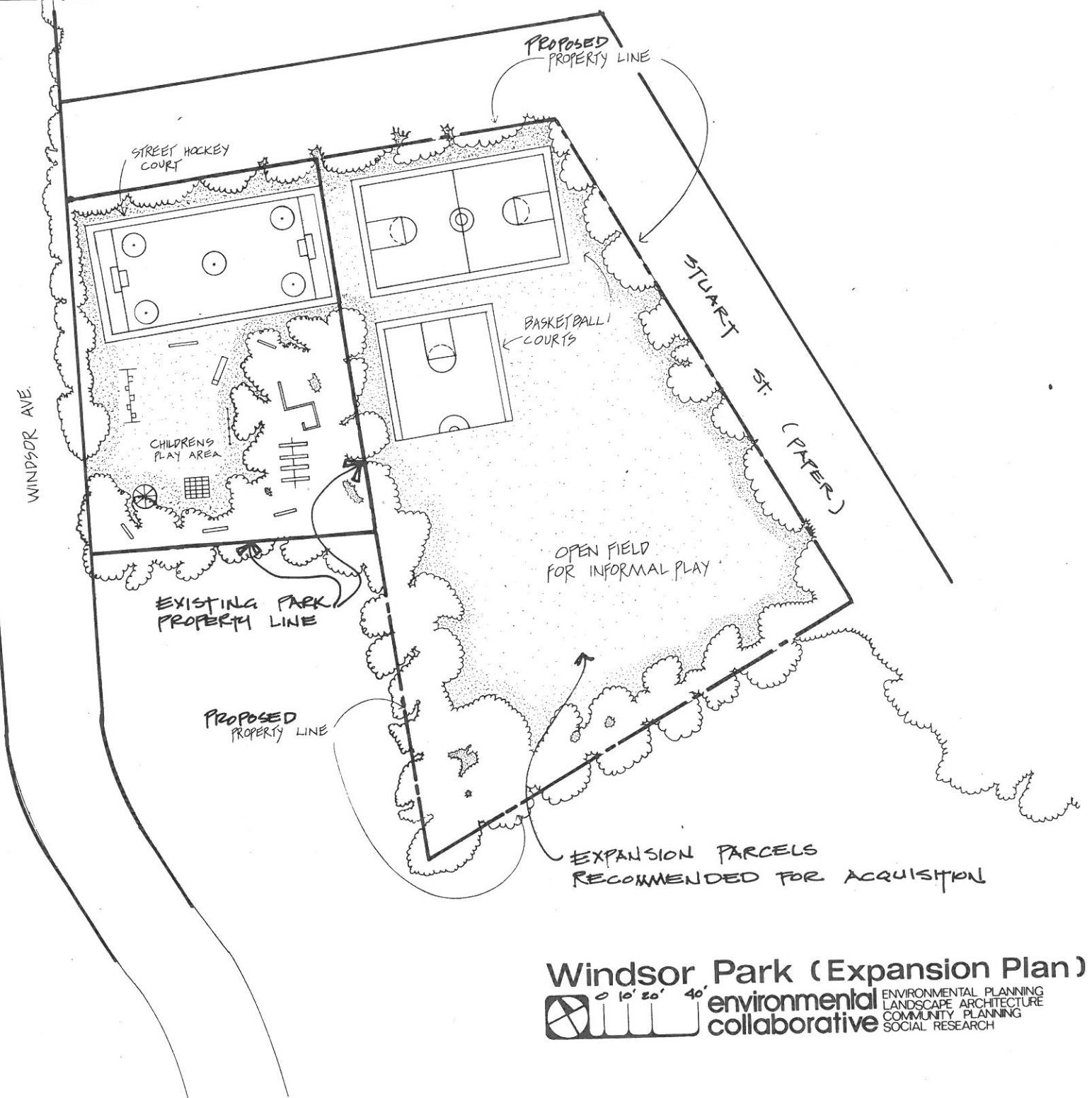
SPECIAL LEGAL PROTECTION: Not dedicated as a park.

EXISTING FACILITIES: Basketball court and tot lot.

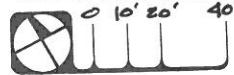
USERS: Used only for unorganized informal play.

SPECIAL PROBLEM AREAS: Older youths have tended to monopolize the facilities at the expense of younger children's play. Vandalism is also a problem.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: Expansion of the site to allow more facilities and more varied play in order to meet neighborhood demand. See accompanying site plan.



Windsor Park (Expansion Plan)



environmental collaborative

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
 COMMUNITY PLANNING
 SOCIAL RESEARCH

SITE NAME: Swampscott Cemetery: 30.25 acres

Location: between Essex Street and the railroad tracks. There are many trees and shrubs, both conifers and deciduous, planted throughout. At the rear of the cemetery is an open area used by the DPW for composting, dumping of leaf and wood material.

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Owned by town, managed by Department of Public Works.

ZONING:

A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Dedicated as cemetery.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

For cemetery use only.

USERS:

Bird watchers and strollers.

PRIVATELY OWNED RECREATION AREAS

A number of undeveloped areas in private ownership, such as the land between Palmer Pond and Phillips Beach, and the wooded area north of Foster Pond, are presently enjoyed by casual visitors. The two following deserve special mention.

SITE NAME: Tedesco Country Club: 152 acres

The Tedesco property, which includes an 18-hole golf course and an additional expanse of abandoned golf course, is a rolling and hilly area with woods and ponds which gets considerable use by the general public during the "off-season."

OWNERSHIP AND
MANAGEMENT:

Privately owned by Club members and managed under their direction.

ZONING:

A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL
PROTECTION:

Parts of the site are protected under the town's wetlands zoning bylaw.

EXISTING
FACILITIES:

Eighteen hole golf course and a clubhouse.

USERS:

The golf course and clubhouse are restricted to use by members and their guests. The club allows public use of the site for skiing and sledding in the wintertime.

SPECIAL
PROBLEM AREAS:

The possibility that the site might at some later date be sold and converted to a non-recreational use.

SITE NAME: Foster Pond: 6.2 acres

Foster Pond is a large open body of water in the northwest corner of town.

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Owned by abutters. Water level managed by Lynn Sand & Stone Co. (the major abutter) and the Department of Public Works.

ZONING: A-2

SPECIAL LEGAL PROTECTION: Within town's Flood Plain/Wetland Protection District. Lynn Sand & Stone drainage into pond is governed by an Environmental Protection Agency permit limiting pollution.

EXISTING FACILITIES: Access via right-of-way at terminus of Elwin Street.

USERS: Mainly local residents, for boating, fishing, birdwatching and ice skating. Some bathing, in spite of poor water quality.

SPECIAL PROBLEM AREAS: Pollution, both from nearby septic systems and from the industrial activities at the eastern end. Extension of the sewer system should clear up the former.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: Cover the hill of cement at the eastern end with loam and plant with grass and shrubs. Work for the improvement of water quality.

COMMUNITY NEEDS AND GOALS



GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

Swampscott has an unusually low percentage of public land dedicated for open space and recreational use. Of the town's total area of 1951 acres, only 148 acres, or 7.7 percent, is devoted to such use. This shortage of protected open space is an acute problem in view of the town's urban-like population density of 4,526 persons per square mile, and has become an increasingly important issue for Swampscott's residents.

The acquisition of additional land for open space and recreation use deserves the highest priority, and has been given such priority by town boards and such planning bodies as Swampscott's Growth Policy Committee, but the very scarcity of developable land within the town has made it extremely expensive. Because of this, many areas proposed for town acquisition in the 1970 conservation plan have had to be abandoned, among them the 35-acre Davenport property. Since every decrease in open space makes protection of the remaining open space more critical, the town must utilize all possible methods of preserving what remains of this fast-disappearing resource.

As the Growth Policy Committee stated in its report:

Swampscott zoning has encouraged in-migration and dense settlement for decades. It is time to look to other larger and more open communities for growth since, unfortunately, the town's small 3 square mile area is not flexible. Public and private open space has diminished rapidly until what little remains cannot provide the balance necessary for an attractive community. The happy accident of a seaside location, and not enlightened zoning, is responsible for what amenities and values remain.

The following are recommendations for preserving and protecting some of the remaining open space and environmental resources in Swampscott.

A. Preserve the More Valuable Remaining Open Space Areas in Public Ownership, if Necessary

The most important of these remaining open space areas are the Tedesco Country Club property and the open land in the upper Swampscott area around Foster's Pond and the Harold King Town Forest.

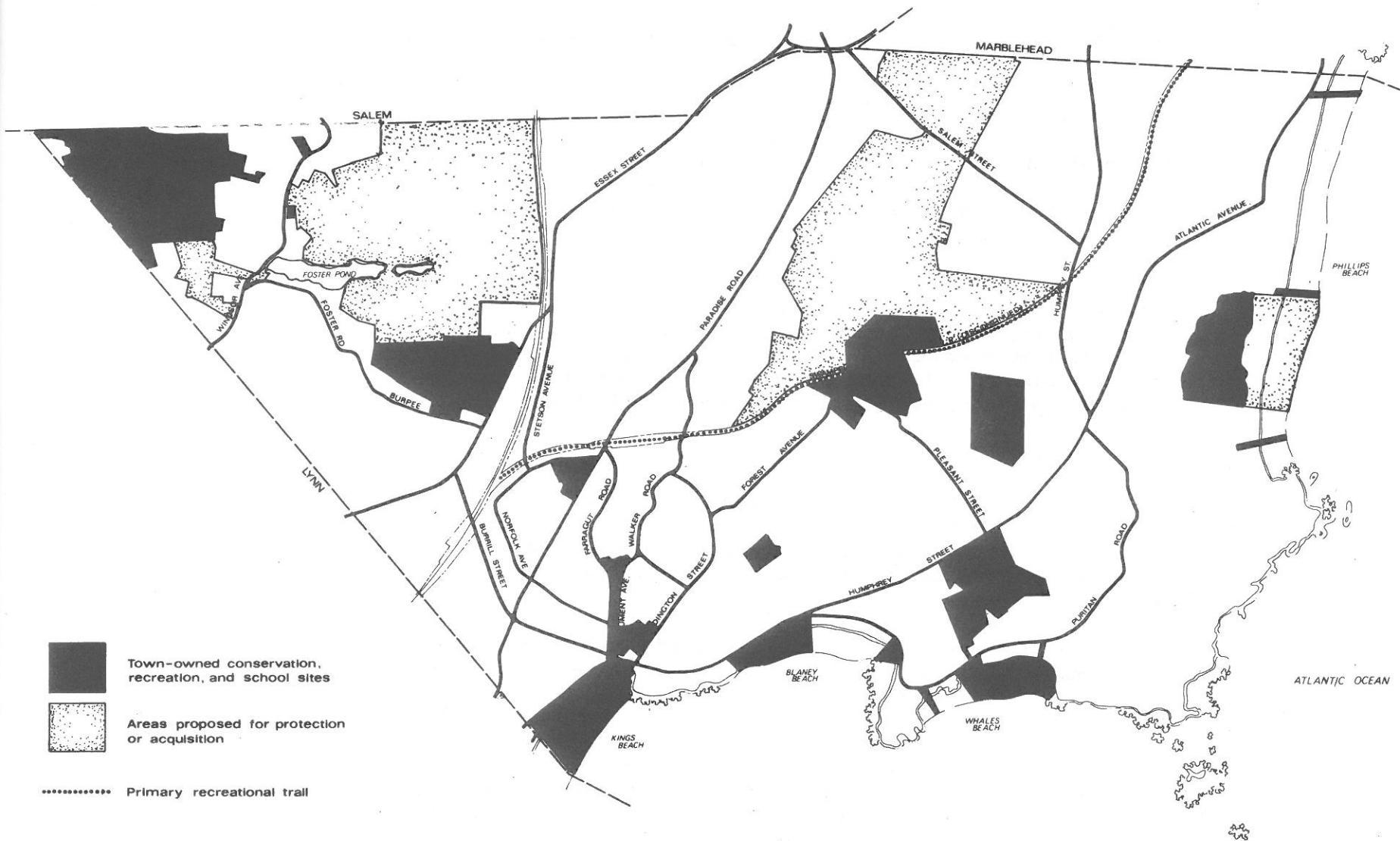
1. Foster Pond Area:

In the upper Swampscott area, action by the town should be directed towards preserving some of the open space that now exists and in acquiring land along the undeveloped periphery of Foster's Pond. This pond, Swampscott's only large body of fresh water, is subject to special environmental hazards. About one-half of its shoreline and contiguous upland is owned by Lynn Sand and Stone Company. The pond has been filled at its easterly end and the gravel company has been granted permission by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to discharge seepage water from the excavation area into the pond.

The future use of the pond and its shoreline depends on the future of the quarrying operations. As long as quarrying continues, the town must remain alert for adverse effects, such as pollution of the water, or dumping and filling in the pond.

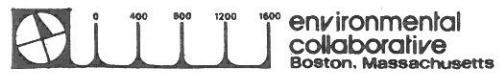
Residents of the area have long sought to have the pond protected for neighborhood recreational and conservation use. Fishing, ice skating, picnicking, and trails are potential short-range recreational development goals. The development of a swimming beach and related facilities will probably need to await the termination of gravel operations, unless seepage water can be treated before being discharged into the pond.

The plan recommends that access easements be acquired along the shoreline. It also recommends the purchase of land owned by Lynn Sand and Stone abutting



OPEN SPACE PLAN

PREPARED FOR THE SWAMPSCOTT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
 SWAMPSCOTT, MASSACHUSETTS



Jackson Park, which can serve as an integral part of the town's open space network.

2. Harold A. King Town Forest:

Additional land acquisition along the edge of existing wetlands contiguous to the forest is recommended as a means of linking up with proposed easements along the Foster Pond shoreline.

3. Tedesco:

With the development of the abutting Davenport Estate, the Tedesco Country Club as an open space and environmental amenity becomes extremely important. While the present owners of Tedesco do not now plan to sell the property for development, the town should consider possible alternative actions should this occur.

B. Protect Coastal Beaches

The ocean and its coastal interface is the major open space and environmental amenity in Swampscott. The town has 4.3 miles of coastal shoreline, with approximately 2 miles of rocky coast of limited recreational use and 2.3 miles of sandy beach. Approximately one-half of this sandy beach is in public ownership.

This plan recommends that any opportunity for further purchase of beachfront property be vigorously pursued. The Palmer Pond barrier beach, where development is prohibited by the Flood Plain/Wetland Protection District, may present such an opportunity.

Short of title acquisition, the town must keep a watchful eye over the public's rights of access and use, where they exist. And the Conservation Commission must exercise its authority under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Coastal Zone Management program to protect the beaches from environmentally unsound uses. In this way we can hope to bequeath to future generations the same opportunities for enjoyment of the seashore which we now possess.

C. Broaden Wetlands/Floodplain Protection

With the adoption of wetlands/floodplain zoning by the town meeting in 1976, Swampscott now has strong zoning protection over most of its wetlands and floodplain areas. Action should be taken to include all of the remaining wetlands under this zoning.

Where wetlands serve as a logical link in the proposed open space network and trail system, rights of passage should be acquired along the contiguous upland.

D. Enhance the Quality of the Urban Environment

Because of Swampscott's dense development, an important means of providing environmental protection and recreational activity is through improvements to the urban environment. There are various approaches possible in meeting this objective, among them:

1. Town beautification

Improving the visual quality of the town's built-up environment can include providing additional landscaped sitting areas in the center of town, landscaping traffic islands and design improvements such as sign control and special street lighting. Designation of the town center as an historic district would provide a strong legal basis for design controls in that area.

2. Greenbelts

Greenbelts should be incorporated into the developed landscape where a separation of uses or a buffer is desired.

3. Development controls

Zoning and subdivision ordinances can mandate design criteria that will moderate a development's adverse impact on the environment of the town. These can include:

- Requiring building setbacks from unique or landscape elements, such as wetlands, streams, tree stands, and steep slopes.
- Requiring public easements through areas of new development for path linkage or open space purposes.
- Providing common open land in new developments for open space or for the recreational use of residents.

E. Improve the Quality of Existing Recreational Facilities

Because of the limited available undeveloped land in Swampscott that might be acquired for recreational purposes, increasing recreational opportunity in the town will of necessity have to be through improving the quality and usability of existing recreational areas. Specific improvements for each recreational site are given in the section on Sites Inventory. General recommendations on improving the quality and usability of these areas should include:

1. Improvements to ease maintenance

Many improvements that can be implemented at recreation sites will not only improve the quality of the recreational use there but also help to ease maintenance costs. Several playing fields in the towns would benefit from automatic sprinkler systems, for example. Such systems would not only improve the quality of the turf but also drastically reduce the man-hours required for maintenance crews to set up and break down manual sprinkler systems.

2. Improvements to reduce vandalism

Foremost among such improvements should be security or floodlighting of vulnerable areas and replacing vandal-prone furnishing with structures and furniture which are more vandal-proof.

3. Correcting environmental pollutants

Kings Beach and Blaney Beach are especially vulnerable to sewage and seaweed pollutants that often severely constrict the usability and attractiveness of the beaches for swimming and even sunbathing. The source of the sewage pollution problem at Kings Beach needs to be identified and action taken to correct it. Timely raking of the beaches of seaweed on or near the shore would increase their recreational value.

4. Improved management to prevent user conflict

This is especially relevant to use conflicts at Blaney Beach between boaters, shore-sport fishermen, and swimmers.

5. Improvements to maximize use

An example of this would be lighting of fields and courts to extend their hours of use into the evening.

6. Improve quality of facilities to increase usability

Grading of playing fields to even them out and to cover rock outcroppings at the Hadley, Stanley and High School sites.

7. Refurbish intensively used passive areas

The picnic area at Jackson Park is one such area that could benefit from major repair work.

8. Upgrade landscaping for aesthetic and practical considerations.

The aesthetic and shade value of trees is an example of this.

F. Acquire More Land for Recreational Purposes

Because of the town's densely built-up character, Swampscott's opportunities for increasing its recreational land area are severely limited. Perhaps the only opportunity for such expansion is at the Windsor Park site, which bounds undeveloped acreage. That part of upper Swampscott also needs additional recreational resources, since the basketball court on the existing site is the only public recreational facility in that section of the town.

G. Develop Town-Wide Path and Greenbelt System

Paths and greenbelts connecting open space areas can serve the double function of protecting open space amenities in close proximity to densely populated areas and providing recreational opportunities for all segments of our population. Swampscott's existing recreational paths are now principally used for walking, jogging and bicycling. These uses could be greatly enhanced if the paths were interconnected with open space and recreation areas, where possible.

Swampscott's beaches are, of course, the most popular places for walking and jogging. There are paths in the area of Palmer Pond and Foster Pond, in the Ewing Woods and in the Harold King Forest, all of which lend themselves to nature study as well as recreation.

The abandoned bed of the Boston & Maine railroad has enormous potential as a recreational trail. It is ideally situated for a foot or bikepath, bisecting the town from east to west and providing access from both ends of town to the High School, which lies at its midpoint. The January 1975 Town Meeting authorized the town to acquire the total length of the right-of-way in Swampscott, but no funds were appropriated. Subsequent attempts to acquire easements for developing the railroad bed as a bike path have bogged down in legal complications. This project deserves to be carried through to completion.

The best opportunities for connecting open space and recreation areas are in the Foster Pond area of Upper Swampscott, but these possibilities are fast disappearing. Title acquisition is always the most satisfactory method of

preserving open spaces or greenbelts, but short of that, a right of passage can sometimes be purchased, at considerably lower cost.

In places where no opportunity for new paths exist, it is recommended that a section at the edge of streets or roadways be marked for bicycle use.

H. Cooperate in Regional Conservation and Recreation Objectives

Swampscott's resource conservation goals will be advanced considerably through cooperation with neighboring communities. Problems and opportunities in protecting Swampscott's landscape do not stop at the town line, and cooperative action with other communities can often spur in-town action which might otherwise not occur. Potential regional cooperation can include:

1. Salem

The wetlands and forest in the Swampscott Town Forest abut larger wetland and woodland areas in Salem. This is part of the Forest River Watershed that eventually empties into Salem Harbor. These wetlands serve a flood control and pollution abatement function for the river and deserve protection by both communities as a water resource and for its open space linkage function.

These wetlands in Salem extend through semi-public holdings in that town and to Highland Park. They could serve as the basis for an open space and trail network which would extend out from Swampscott's trail system.

2. Marblehead

Many Marblehead residents regularly use Phillips Beach for swimming. A cooperative approach to beach management, litter cleanup, etc., would be helpful. Also, the Tedesco Country Club now spans the two communities, and should the owners of the course decide to move and sell the land for development, the towns may want to pool their planning efforts to coordinate future use of the land as a golf course or some other open space use.

3. Lynn

By protecting its upland wetlands, Swampscott is aiding in holding peak rain water which cannot be absorbed by the overtaxed storm drainage system in eastern Lynn. Preserving these wetlands will assure that this problem is not worsened and that an open space buffer exists between two heavily built-up neighborhoods.

7

ACTION PROGRAM



FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

Year 1

1. Finalize an agreement with the School Committee and the Department of Public Works for continuing maintenance of Linscott Park.
2. Study wetland areas for additions to the Flood Plain/Wetlands Protection District Map in the Zoning By-Law.
3. Work with other town boards and committees to establish a bike path committee.
4. Establish a committee to cooperate with the School Committee for maintenance of the ponds and contiguous area around the High School.
5. Provide for a series of walks for the public at Harold King Town Forest, Palmer Pond and Ewing Woods.
6. Work with the Upper Swampscott Association on water testing of Foster Pond.
7. If advisable, open discussions with Lynn Sand and Stone for a water quality improvement program for Foster Pond and adjacent Lynn Sand and Stone retention Pond.

Year 2

1. Establish an Environmental/Conservation Corner (table) at the Library, Senior High School and Junior High School.
2. Develop basic trail markings in Harold King Town Forest for assistance in school nature walks.

3. Encourage continuation of Lynn Sand and Stone program of grading and seeding their spoil area at the southeastern end of Foster Pond.
4. Continue to seek funding sources for acquisition of property abutting Palmer Pond.
5. Form a groundwater study committee to locate aquifers and ascertain future water needs.
6. Initiate negotiations for donation or acquisition of Lynn Sand and Stone property in the Foster Dam area for enlargement of Windsor Park.

Year 3

1. Develop liaison with the Tedesco Country Club for long range planning of land use.
2. Consider the recommendations of the groundwater study committee for possible aquifer zoning regulations.
3. Prepare mapping of shellfish beds and work with the Harbor Study Committee; re: dredging of the harbor.
4. Pursue acquisition of remaining New Ocean House land for expansion of recreation areas.

Year 4

1. Continue to research funding sources for acquisitions.
2. Commence development of a bike path (consult the National Guard for manpower and equipment).

3. Initiate an update of a 5-year plan and master plan.

Year 5

1. Complete update of new 5-year plan and master plan.
2. Complete all previous uncompleted tasks from year 1 through 4.

Erratum

- Table of Contents: delete "The Economics of Open Space."
- P. 3, line 3, add "square."
- P. 33, fifth line from bottom, delete "t" from "edgest"
- P. 38, last line, delete "a".
- P. 47, under Youth Soccer participants, change 150 to 450.
- P. 67, second paragraph, first line, change "these" to "those."