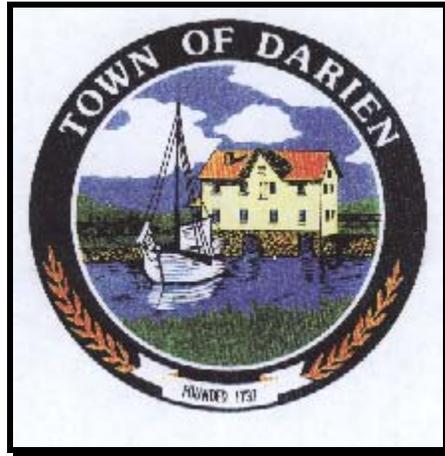


**DARIEN, CONNECTICUT
2006
TOWN PLAN OF
CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT**



Effective June 25, 2006

Darien Town Plan of Conservation & Development



Adopted: May 23, 2006

Effective: June 25, 2006

Planning & Zoning Commission Members:

Patrick J. Damanti, Chairman

Frederick B. Conze, Vice-Chairman

Joseph H. Spain, Secretary

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URS Corporation

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Graphics work in Chapter 9:

Wesley Stout Associates

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION'S STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that local planning commissions prepare a Plan of Conservation and Development (“Plan” or “Town Plan”) at least once every ten years. The Town of Darien has been creating and implementing such plans for over 40 years.

The Town Plan is just that - a plan/a vision/a roadmap. The Town Plan offers various projects and directions, many of which can be implemented on a variety of levels and scopes. The Plan has specifically been developed without a cost/benefit analysis and without a priority list of projects. The development of the costs, affordability, priorities, and other issues are left to the involved private sector parties and the appropriate town boards at the time that the projects are recommended for implementation.

The fundamental goal has been, and continues to be, the preservation and enhancement of an attractive suburban living environment, but within those broad parameters are numerous factors which must be addressed to best assure achieving that goal. This Plan is the Town's most recent attempt to guide private and public participants toward this goal.

It is important to recognize that, by itself, the Plan will accomplish nothing. It is similar to a road map - it must be followed carefully and intelligently in order to reach the desired objectives. Implementation of the Town Plan as presented herein, and as modified from time to time, will require the cooperative action of the many people and agencies involved in this decision-making. All interests, whether public or private, have a stake in the attractive, economical and orderly conservation and development of this Town.

Adoption of the Town Plan

The Plan, once adopted, does not in and of itself change any zoning regulations or assure an implementation of any of its proposals. It sets forth the recommendations of the Planning and Zoning Commission and is designed to be a guide that will assist all public agencies and private individuals and groups in making proper decisions related to orderly Town growth.

Meaningful action must be taken by the private and public sectors of the Town to ensure that the Plan's provisions are substantially implemented. Unless the Plan is used continuously as a reference for decisions on land use, zoning, construction, and other public actions, healthy development will not move forward as intended.

The 2006 Town Plan

The development of the 2006 Plan occurred over a three-year time frame. Two “roundtables” sponsored by the League of Women Voters were held in 2003 and 2004. These exercises enabled the general public and RTM members to give input to Commission members in their Plan preparation. It also benefited the roundtable participants, who were able to define what they liked about Darien, better understand what makes their community desirable, and learn more about the Town Plan process in general. Questions and comments were also solicited and received from the community at various times during this development phase.

The 2006 Plan is divided into nine separate chapters, each of which sets forth policies and recommendations a distinct subject area. Each Chapter has an associated Appendix, directly placed after the Chapter, which provides additional background information which may be helpful to the reader to better understand the basic studies and data which were used to develop the policies and recommendations.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S VISION STATEMENT

The Town Plan serves as a flexible blueprint for the continuing development of our community. It identifies enhancements and additions to our infrastructure and provides the basis for maintenance of our existing resources.

The future of Darien rests on the following important fundamentals:

- Darien continues to be primarily a single-family dwelling community.
- The Town Plan is compatible with the existing ecosystem on which our future depends, i.e. the Long Island Sound, our streams, ponds, wetlands and open space.
- Market incentives are important for our business community to assure long-term viability as a vital component in serving the needs of our citizens.
- Total citizen involvement, including our elected, appointed, and volunteer groups, are critical to effective planning and successful implementation.

The Town must adopt and implement high quality public policies promoting long-term growth and development. Thoughtful, dynamic leadership continues to be necessary to ensure our community implements the blueprint this Town Plan represents.

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CHAPTER 1
PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



DEMOGRAPHICS

Overview

According to the 2000 US Census, the population of Darien was 19,607, which was an increase of 7.7% over 1990. This growth in population has had effects on the community, including a need from 1995-2005 to increase the size of all five elementary schools, the middle school, and the high school. The changes taking place in Darien's population have and will continue to influence the recommendations of this Town Plan. Younger families will have certain types of requirements concerning schools, recreational facilities, library services and social services. Meanwhile, older citizens may have different needs for recreational facilities, library services, as well as possible transportation needs, and other social service programs.

Meeting the needs of all of the age segments of the population is a goal of the Town Plan.

Policies

The policies of the Planning and Zoning Commission are summarized in the Darien Zoning Regulations. Change in the Town's demographics may have an influence on the Darien Zoning Regulations. Zoning regulations conversely may also affect demographics. For example, changes in housing policy through the Zoning Regulations, such as allowing accessory apartments, or rezoning portions of the Town, may result in subsequent population increases as a result of new and/or different types of housing units being allowed and constructed.

Recommendations

Continue to monitor changing demographics in Darien from Board of Education projections, real estate estimations, local and regional projections and other available sources. When considering changes in Zoning Regulations, or changes in overall Town policies, the Planning and Zoning Commission and other local boards and commissions must continue to be mindful of the demographic ramifications of such changes.

APPENDIX A1

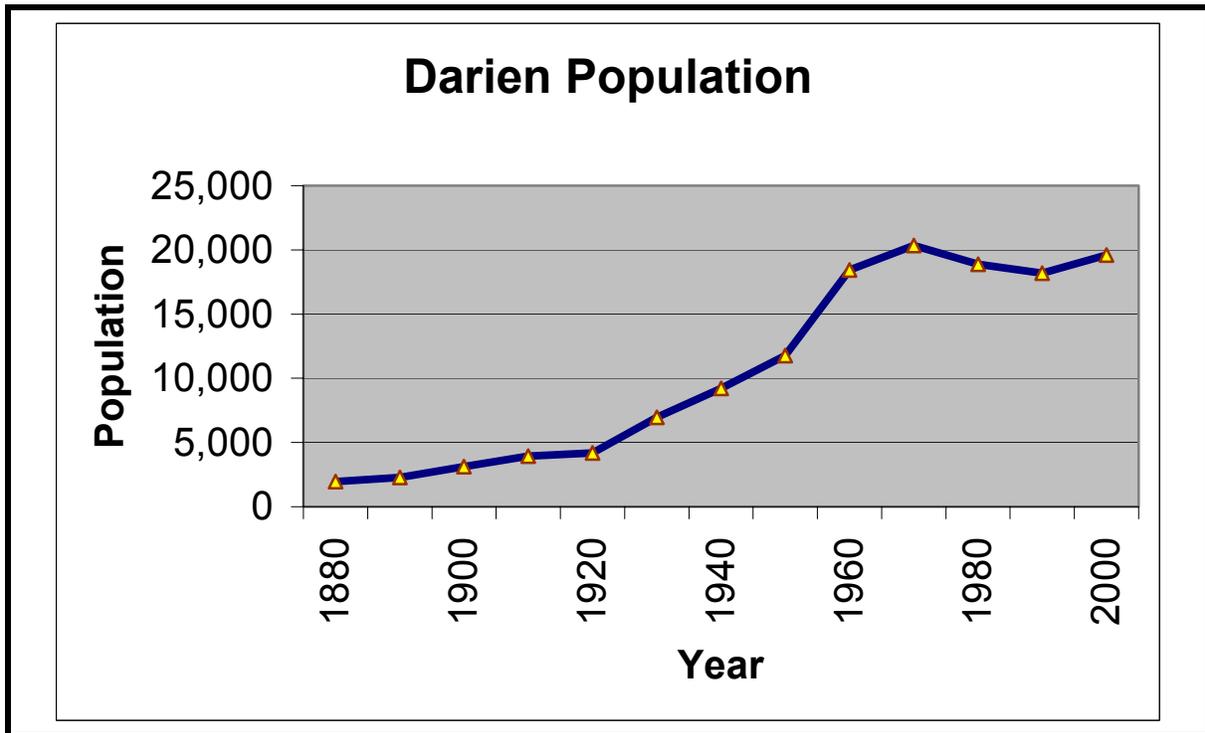
DEMOGRAPHICS



Population Change

The population of a community changes in one of two ways—1) a change in the net number of births over deaths, and 2) a net change of in-migration over out-migration. Although Darien is nearly "built-out", "teardowns" and new subdivisions still account for added housing units (see also Page A6-14). As the number of housing units gradually increases throughout Town, net in-migration becomes more likely, as more dwelling units become available.

**EXHIBIT 1-1
DARIEN POPULATION, 1880-2000**



Exhibits 1-1 and 1-2 show the changes in Darien's population between the years 1880 and 2000. The general population loss from 1970-1990 may be attributed to smaller household sizes rather than a reduction in the number of dwelling units or any other factor. The number of persons per housing unit declined from 1970-1980 and 1980-1990. From 1990-2000, the number of persons per housing unit increased from 2.85 to 3.00.

Exhibit 1-3 sets forth the general population change in the Southwestern Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) communities from 1960-2000.

**EXHIBIT 1-2
 DARIEN POPULATION CHANGE 1880-2000**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>POPULATION CHANGE BY:</u>	
		<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
1880	1,949	-	-
1890	2,276	327	16.8%
1900	3,116	840	36.9%
1910	3,946	830	26.6%
1920	4,184	238	6.0%
1930	6,951	2,767	66.1%
1940	9,222	2,271	32.7%
1950	11,767	2,545	27.6%
1960	18,437	6,670	56.7%
1970	20,336	1,899	10.3%
1980*	18,892	-1,444	-7.1%
1990	18,196	-696	-3.7%
2000	19,607	1,411	7.7%

**Note: Change in Census Bureau procedures, e.g. students and military personnel counted as residing at their school or base rather than at their home.*

Source: U.S. Census of Population

**EXHIBIT 1-3
 POPULATION CHANGE IN
 SWRPA COMMUNITIES 1960-2000**

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Darien	18,437	20,336	18,892	18,196	19,607
Greenwich	53,793	59,755	59,578	58,441	61,101
New Canaan	13,466	17,451	17,931	17,864	19,395
Norwalk	67,775	79,288	77,767	78,331	82,951
Stamford	92,713	108,798	102,453	108,056	117,083
Weston	4,039	7,417	8,284	8,648	10,037
Westport	20,955	27,318	25,290	24,410	25,749
Wilton	8,026	13,572	15,351	15,989	17,633
Southwestern Region	279,204	333,935	325,546	329,935	353,556

*Source: US Census Bureau, US Census of Population and Housing, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000.
 See note in Exhibit I-2.*

Population by Age

The age distribution data set forth in Exhibit 1-4 illustrates the changes in population composition. This chart reflects the age distribution of the population, may be used to assist the community in determining what types of facilities and programs need to be provided for its residents.

The increase in the population of 75+ year-olds is due to increased life expectancy as well as other factors. One other factor may be the construction of Sterling Glen of Darien, an assisted living facility. Built in 1998, this facility has 86 private residential units. To a lesser extent, certain other housing developments built in the 1980s, such as Clock Hill Homes and Old Town Hall Homes provide housing for those in the 75+ age cohort. Clock Hill Homes is a moderate income development with a mix of seniors and non-seniors. Old Town Hall Homes is a 30-unit Town-owned development restricted to age 62 and above.

**EXHIBIT 1-4
 POPULATION BY AGE
 1980-2000**

<u>AGE</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL</u>
0-4	844	4.5%	1,413	7.8%	2,028	10.3%
5-9	1,303	6.9%	1,209	6.6%	2,059	10.5%
10-14	1,928	10.2%	1,099	6.0%	1,578	8.0%
15-19	1,855	9.8%	1,090	6.0%	931	4.7%
20-24	996	5.3%	921	5.1%	349	1.8%
25-29	785	4.2%	991	5.4%	489	2.5%
30-34	1,161	6.1%	1,393	7.7%	1,251	6.4%
35-39	1,563	8.3%	1,538	8.5%	1,891	9.6%
40-44	1,381	7.3%	1,547	8.5%	1,897	9.7%
45-49	1,316	7.0%	1,544	8.5%	1,553	7.9%
50-54	1,417	7.5%	1,121	6.2%	1,280	6.5%
55-59	1,287	6.8%	981	5.4%	1,145	5.8%
60-64	1,010	5.3%	987	5.4%	720	3.7%
65-69	728	3.9%	805	4.4%	603	3.1%
70-74	539	2.9%	615	3.4%	628	3.2%
75+	779	4.1%	942	5.2%	1,205	6.1%
TOTAL	18,892	100.0%	18,196	100.0%	19,607	100.0%

Source: SWRPA Data Memo #4, June 1983 and #91-21, July, 1991, 2000 US Census.

Population by Census Tract

The Town's five Census Bureau-defined census tracts are shown in Exhibit 1-5. (Census Tract is defined in the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations). Exhibit 1-6 sets forth the populations within these five census tracts and compares the changes among the last three Census counts. The only growth area between 1980 and 1990 is a minor increase in tract 302, which may be attributed to the development of condominiums in this area during the mid to late 1980's. Each of the five census tracts increased in population by at least five percent from 1990-2000. The largest increase was in tract 301. Exhibit 1-5 shows the changes in household size between 1970 and 2000. Note the decrease in size in census tract 302 from 1980-1990, which may also be attributed to the amount of multi-family housing/condominium development in this area between those years (Villager Pond, Sedgwick Village, Pine Brook and Old Town Hall Homes) and the smaller household population generally attributed with condominiums.

**EXHIBIT 1-5
 POPULATION PER OCCUPIED HOUSING UNIT**

CENSUS TRACT	1970	1980	1970-1980 % CHANGE	1990	1980-1990 % CHANGE	2000	1990-2000 % CHANGE
301	3.45	3.21	-7.0%	3.04	-5.3%	3.43	12.8%
302	3.24	3.14	-3.1%	2.87	-8.6%	3.06	6.6%
303	3.32	2.92	-12.0%	2.79	-4.5%	2.94	5.4%
304	3.29	3.00	-8.8%	2.71	-9.7%	2.67	-1.5%
305	3.42	2.98	-12.9%	2.85	-4.4%	2.99	4.9%
TOTAL	3.35	3.04	-9.3%	2.85	-6.3%	3.00	5.3%

Source: South Western Region Planning Agency, 1990 U.S. Census Data, 2000 US Census.

As shown in Exhibit 1-7, Census Tract 301 is generally the R-2 (2 acre minimum lot size) Zoning District. Thus, the dwelling units in this area are generally larger than those in other Zoning Districts in Town, and those units can accommodate more people per unit.

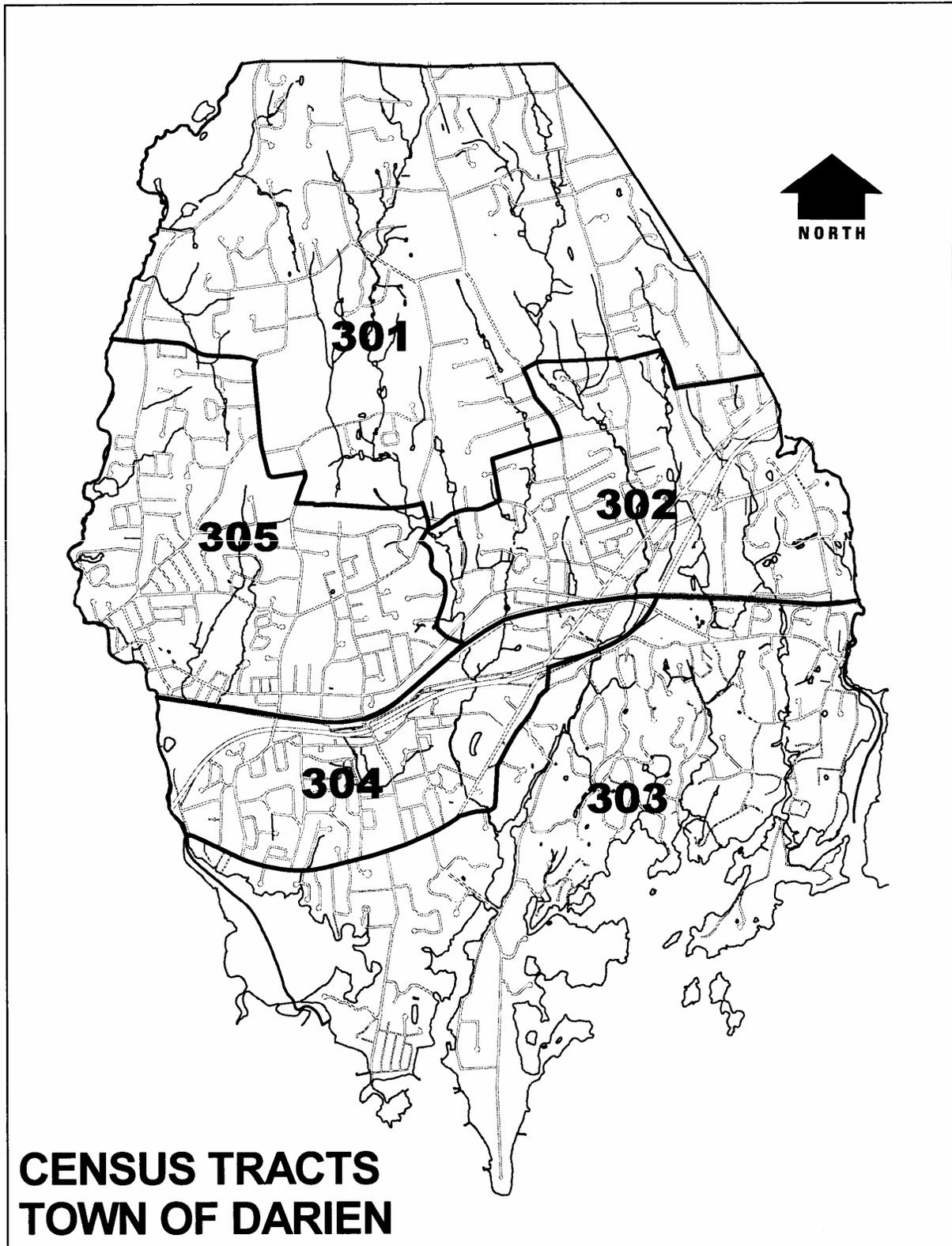
While Darien has limited land left for new residential development (except for the “Club-owned” properties—the three Country Clubs, the Ox Ridge Hunt Club, and the Middlesex Swim Club), and there are no current proposals for major changes in zoning policies, over 86 percent of the Town's housing stock has three bedrooms or more and over 37 percent have four or more bedrooms. Consequently, there is capacity within the existing residential units in Darien to accommodate additional population growth in terms of family or household size. For example, consider that this community's population was 18,437 in 1960 with a total of 5,263 housing units at that time compared to the 1990 population of 18,196 residing in 6,657 units. The highest population counted in the Census was 20,336 in 1970.

**EXHIBIT 1-6
 POPULATION BY CENSUS TRACTS**

CENSUS TRACT	1970	1980	1970-1980 % CHANGE	1990	1980-1990 % CHANGE	2000	1990-2000 % CHANGE
301	2,992	3,094	3.40%	2,983	-3.60%	3,451	15.69%
302	3,239	2,992	-7.60%	2,994	0.10%	3,378	12.83%
303	4,278	3,962	-7.40%	3,859	-2.60%	4,057	5.13%
304	3,785	3,315	-12.40%	3,177	-4.20%	3,392	6.77%
305	6,042	5,190	-14.10%	5,022	-3.20%	5,329	6.11%
Subtotal	20,336	18,553	-8.80%	18,035	-2.80%	19,607	8.72%
Group Quarters	0	121	----	161	33.10%	178	10.56%
TOTAL	20,336	18,674	-8.20%	18,196	-2.60%	19,785	8.73%

Source: South Western Region Planning Agency, 1990 U.S. Census Data, 2000 US Census

**EXHIBIT 1-7
DARIEN CENSUS TRACTS (2000)**



Population Density

Darien continues to be the third most densely populated community within the SWRPA area, behind only the Cities of Norwalk and Stamford. Exhibit 1-8 shows a population density comparison of Darien with the other communities in the South Western Region between the years 1980 and 2000. The Exhibit is contrary to the perception of some that Darien is a low-density community. As discussed in both the Housing and Land Use Chapters, the Town has a mix of single-family residential zoning districts ranging in size from 1/5-acre minimum lot size to 2-acre minimum lot size, and a range of higher-density zoning districts which allow condominiums and apartments.

**EXHIBIT 1-8
 POPULATION DENSITY
 DARIEN AND SWRPA PLANNING REGION
 1980 TO 2000**

	TOTAL AREA (SQUARE MILES)	PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE:		
		1980	1990	2000
Darien	12.85	1470.2	1415.9	1525.9
Greenwich	47.86	1244.8	1221.2	1277.5
New Canaan	22.12	810.6	807.4	876.5
Norwalk	22.80	3410.8	3435.8	3637.3
Stamford	37.71	2716.9	2865.4	3101.9
Weston	19.79	418.6	436.9	506.9
Westport	20.00	1264.5	1220.3	1286.7
<u>Wilton</u>	<u>26.95</u>	<u>569.6</u>	<u>593.5</u>	<u>654.3</u>
TOTAL	210.08	1500.0	1570.5	1682.6
SWRPA AREA				

Source: U.S. Census of Population and SWRPA.

The number of births from 1991-2004 is listed in Exhibit 1-9. Births have generally been around 300 per year since 1993. When performing long-range planning, the Darien Board of Education has found that the number of births in Darien correlates well with the expected number of schoolchildren expected by grade. Over the past few years, the Board has found that they can predict the number of schoolchildren to within 5%, based upon birth data received.

**EXHIBIT 1-9
DARIEN BIRTHS BY YEAR
1991-2005**

YEAR	TOTAL
1991	282
1992	259
1993	305
1994	309
1995	333
1996	316
1997	322
1998	319
1999	295
2000	313
2001	299
2002	283
2003	277
2004	300
2005	271

Note: Includes births to Darien residents, not necessarily births that occur in Darien.
Source: Darien Town Clerk

The number of housing units and type of housing units constructed has had a significant effect on the Town's population. This may be the result of changes in Zoning Regulations. For example, in the 1980s, changes in the Zoning Regulations allowed the construction of condominiums, and over 150 condominium units were subsequently built. As of the year 2000, there were 792 occupied rental units in Darien. With the construction of Avalon Hollow in 2003-2004, 189 new rental units were constructed, together with other rental units constructed throughout the community, increasing the number of rental units available by over 25%. The increase in one bedroom units are likely attributable to condominium construction. The occupancy of these units has increased the overall Darien population. The adjacent vacant Duhaime property on Hollow Tree Ridge Road has been zoned for multi-family housing, which may result in 15-22 apartments being constructed on that 3.7+/- acre property.

**EXHIBIT 1-10
 NUMBER OF BEDROOMS
 PER OCCUPIED HOUSING UNIT
 1990, 2000**

	1990	%	2000	%
Owner-occupied housing units	5,491		5,800	
No bedroom	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
1 bedroom	21	0.4%	95	1.6%
2 bedrooms	375	6.8%	402	6.9%
3 bedrooms	1,808	32.9%	1,757	30.3%
4 bedrooms	2,208	40.2%	2,341	40.4%
5 or more bedrooms	1,079	19.7%	1,205	20.8%
Renter-occupied housing units	913		792	
No bedroom	14	1.5%	40	5.1%
1 bedroom	158	17.3%	187	23.6%
2 bedrooms	248	27.2%	206	26.0%
3 bedrooms	286	31.3%	159	20.1%
4 bedrooms	166	18.2%	166	21.0%
5 or more bedrooms	41	4.5%	34	4.3%

NOTE: 2000 Figures do not include Avalon Hollow's 189 units, which include 77 1-bedroom units; 80 2-bedroom units; and 32 3-bedroom units. Also not included are 10 rental apartments on Grove Street constructed in 2004-2005.

Source: 1990 & 2000 US Census

Population Projections

In the past, the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) prepared population projections. The last projections were done in 1995. Although it is acknowledged by that agency that the projections are in need of updating, that agency has no plans to update them. OPM's 1995 projections are not shown here for two reasons—1) because they do not reflect any information from the 2000 Census (which is generally considered to be the most reliable source of population information) and 2) because they are outdated by over 10 years. As noted earlier, the Darien Board of Education projects the number of schoolchildren. However, the Board of Education does not project the other age cohorts of the Town. Their projections are shown in Exhibit 1-11. This Exhibit shows the need for the construction of a new Darien High School to accommodate the increase in students from 814 in 2000-2001 to 1,336 in 2014-2015. One caveat is that as the projections go further into the future, they are generally considered to be less reliable, as there is a greater possibility for interim change and for the emergence of new or differing trends.

Because of the lack of vacant land in the community (refer to the Existing Land Use Chapter for further details), it is likely that the population will not change significantly in the future. However, for a variety of reasons as noted throughout this document, Darien has the capacity to continue to grow, and there will continue to be development pressure upon it. It is expected that the population will continue to climb very slowly. As noted in the 1995 Town Plan, Darien has the capacity to grow without adding any new housing units, as many of the existing houses due to their size, have the ability to accommodate large families. This is reflected in Exhibit 1-10. In 1990 over 86% of the Town's housing stock had three bedrooms or more, and over 37 percent had four or more bedrooms. Again in 2000, over 86% had three or more bedrooms. However, the number of housing units that had four bedrooms or more had increased to over 56%. Nearly all new single-family house construction from 1990-2000 was for residences of 4 bedrooms or more.

The Board of Education prepares an enrollment report annually. This report estimates the number of school children by grade. Exhibit 1-11, which is from the October 1, 2005 report, shows that the projected peak of elementary school students (K-5) is projected to be in 2006-2007; the peak of middle school students (grades 6-8) will be in 2009-2010, and the peak of high school students (grades 9-12) will be in 2014-2015. The Board of Education is expected to continue to monitor and estimate the number of school children. This information is used for planning purposes for bus routing, classroom size estimates, and to assist in determining when and where school expansions may be needed.

**EXHIBIT 1-11
 DARIEN ENROLLMENT 1990-2005
 AND
 PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2006-2016**

SCHOOL YEAR	BIRTH YEAR	BIRTHS	K-5	6-8	9-12	TOTAL
1990-91	1985	262	1,388	555	733	2,686
1991-92	1986	216	1,454	577	677	2,717
1992-93	1987	224	1,518	584	666	2,768
1993-94	1988	251	1,577	625	676	2,878
1994-95	1989	248	1,644	622	676	2,957
1995-96	1990	293	1,765	633	704	3,125
1996-97	1991	314	1,863	642	747	3,269
1997-98	1992	299	1,861	684	751	3,327
1998-99	1993	346	2,006	718	749	3,512
1999-00	1994	355	2,079	790	769	3,676
2000-01	1995	374	2,158	805	814	3,799
2001-02	1996	354	2,149	878	873	3,927
2002-03	1997	365	2,216	955	911	4,116
2003-04	1998	365	2,303	982	958	4,284
2004-05	1999	334	2,331	1,065	951	4,378
2005-06	2000	351	2,310	1,054	1,091	4,455
	BIRTH					
PROJECTED	YEAR	BIRTHS	K-5	6-8	9-12	TOTAL
2006-07	2001	337	2,330	1,080	1,125	4,576
2007-08	2002	299	2,271	1,095	1,208	4,614
2008-09	2003	303	2,222	1,105	1,271	4,637
2009-10	2004	319	2,178	1,148	1,236	4,601
2010-11	2005	309	2,152	1,126	1,292	4,611
2011-12	2006	300	2,091	1,139	1,298	4,567
2012-13	2007	300	2,051	1,116	1,319	4,527
2013-14	2008	300	2,051	1,078	1,332	4,500
2014-15	2009	300	2,046	1,021	1,336	4,442
2015-16	2010	300	2,025	1,002	1,328	4,395

**Note that the number of births in this Exhibit does not correspond to Exhibit 1-9. The source of Exhibit 1-11 birth numbers is the State of Connecticut, and the source of the birth numbers in Exhibit 1-9 is the Darien Town Clerk. Births reflect children born in the birth year, five years previous who may have moved to Darien and are eligible to go to school in Darien. This number typically is higher than that in Exhibit 1-9, usually by 10-15%.*

Source: Darien Board of Education, and State of Connecticut.

CHAPTER 2
PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



HISTORIC RESOURCES

Overview

The Town of Darien has a wealth of historic resources including houses more than 300 years old, and many other historic features such as New England stone walls, cemeteries, monuments, trees, non-residential structures, and open spaces, which may not be historic *per se*, but do have significance to the Town. All of these contribute an important part of the community character, and together, they create a sense of continuity with our agrarian origins. In addition to the Town Historian, there are a number of Town Boards, Commissions, and Departments which are responsible in the area of historic resource protection: The Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Selectmen, the Architectural Review Board, the Monuments and Ceremonies Commission, the Beautification Commission, and the Public Works Department. Moreover, there are a number of tools available to protect the many different historic resources.

Policies

Continue the use of the following preservation tools:

Protected Town Landmark Status

Under Section 1051 of the Darien Zoning Regulations, the Planning and Zoning Commission specifically recognizes that certain structures and land areas have value as Town landmarks, and that value can transcend the ordinary application of the standards incorporated in the Zoning Regulations. Therefore this section allows the Planning and Zoning Commission to waive certain regulations and standards for a particular structure or site in order to preserve it and conserve the values and appropriate uses of its environs. A list of Protected Town Landmarks is set forth in Exhibit 2-1. This shows that a number of buildings have been given that designation. In 1979, six heritage trees were given the Protected Town Landmark designation. An Historic Tree Inventory was completed in 2001, and is set forth in Exhibit 2-2.



*Protected Town Landmark,
Little Red Schoolhouse, 21 Tokeneke Road.
(Darien's oldest public building)*



The beech tree on Allen O'Neill Drive.

Demolition Delay Ordinance

Chapter 12 of the Town Code of Ordinances was adopted in 1991 and provides for up to a 90-day demolition waiting period for certain older structures. This period allows the Town Historian and/or the Darien Historical Society time to analyze the structure, and if appropriate, explore methods to preserve, relocate, and/or document its significance.

National Register of Historic Places

There are now three buildings within Town which are on the National Register of Historic Places. They are: the Darien Community Association building at 274 Middlesex Road; the Mather-McPherson homestead on Stephen Mather Road; and the Bates-Scofield Homestead on Old King's Highway North.

There is now one National Register Historic District within Darien, called the Boston Post Road National Register Historic District. It is located generally along Boston Post Road and Brookside Road, from Academy Street to just east of Brookside Road (see Exhibit 2-3 on page A2-7).

Cemetery Preservation

Section 19a-315 of the Connecticut General Statutes defines "Ancient Burial Grounds" and sets out regulations regarding their preservation. Within the Town there are a number of cemeteries and Ancient Burial Grounds. Some of these are privately owned, and several are Town owned. Others are small, scattered and on private property. Some of these may not be visible from a street and may be out of general sight so it is important to clarify who is responsible for their maintenance. Exhibit 2-4 shows the location of all cemeteries in Darien. They are listed with further details about each of them, in Exhibit 2-5.



Two of the many cemeteries located throughout the Town of Darien.

The Natural and Architectural Preservation Survey (NAPS)

The Junior League completed this 500 building survey in 1980 for the State of Connecticut Inventory of Historic Resources, and it can provide a starting point for analyzing resources and designating historic structures. This includes historic and architectural buildings of importance.

To make use of the following available preservation tools when applicable and practical:

Village Districts

Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes states in part “Such districts shall be located in areas of distinctive character, landscape or historic value that are specifically identified in the Plan of Conservation and Development of a municipality”. Potential Village Districts are shown on Exhibit 2-6 in the Appendix.



Prospect Avenue.



Ring's End Road.

Local Historic Districts

Section 7-147b of the Connecticut General Statutes addresses the specific procedures for establishing such a district. Similar to Village Districts, local Historic Districts would only be appropriate in limited neighborhoods where there are a number of historic structures in the same area. Parts of the areas listed in Appendix A2 under Village Districts would also be appropriate for consideration for a Local Historic District.

Scenic Road Designations

Section 7-149a of the Connecticut General Statutes specifically authorizes communities to designate scenic roads. This may regulate future changes such as widening, removal of stone walls and tree cutting on such designated roads. Examples of roads that may be appropriate for such a designation are Hollow Tree Ridge Road, Old King's Highway South, Stephen Mather Road, Brookside Road, and Ring's End Road.



Hollow Tree Ridge Road.



Rings End Road.



Old King's Highway South.

Recommendations

With the assistance of the Town Historian and/or the Historical Society, the Planning and Zoning Commission should identify additional Town Landmarks that are worthy of the Protected Town Landmark designation.

The Building Official and Town Historian should analyze the Demolition Delay Ordinance to determine if this ordinance could be improved.

Within the ten-year time frame of this Plan, it would be valuable to update the 1980 Natural and Architectural Preservation Survey (NAPS). The Geographic Information System (GIS) could be used as a tool in this project, and could reflect changes that have occurred since the original study.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should consider establishing setback requirements for development near cemeteries/ancient burial sites.

Continue to publicize existing historic resources.

Study the use of tools, noted in the above policies section, which may help preserve neighborhoods, including “tax benefits” for historic preservation and/or other regulatory accommodations.

Include clear signage at all cemeteries, and continue to maintain existing monuments.



The monument on Old King's Highway South.



The Frate Park Monument.

APPENDIX A2

HISTORIC RESOURCES



**EXHIBIT 2-1
 PROTECTED TOWN LANDMARKS
 DESIGNATED BY THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
1 & 2	William Edgerton	241 Long Neck Point Road
1A	William Ota	249 Long Neck Point Road
3	Six Heritage Trees: (now five trees)	80 Nearwater Lane, 25 Highfield Lane, 22 Old King’s Highway South, 41 St. Nicholas Road, a red oak at the First Congregational Church, and a black oak at Deerfield Road, which has since died.
4	Post Road Associates	1950 Boston Post Road
5	Abercrombie McKiernan	581 Boston Post Road (torn down)
6	Thomas Golden	70 Old King’s Highway North
7	Little Red Schoolhouse	21 Tokeneke Road

Source: Darien Planning & Zoning Commission files.

Under Section 1051 of the Darien Zoning Regulations, the Planning & Zoning Commission has the authority to designate Protected Town Landmarks.



One of the six Heritage trees—a red oak.



The plaque for that red oak at the First Congregational Church.



Protected Town Landmark, Little Red Schoolhouse, 21 Tokeneke Road.

**EXHIBIT 2-2
 HISTORIC TREE INVENTORY, 2001**

<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>TREE</u>
Allen O'Neill	beech
Contentment Island Road	swamp oak
8 Cross Road	8 trees
14 Cross Road	sweet gum
17 Cross Road	red oak
17 Cross Road	white oak
130 Goodwives River Road	hickory, maple
1 Heather Lane	sugar maple
89 Hollow Tree Ridge Road	European beech
379 Hollow Tree Ridge Road	American Linden
379 Hollow Tree Ridge Road	sycamore
814 Hollow Tree Ridge Road	tulip or yellow poplar
188 Long Neck Point Road	European beech
Long Neck Point Road	sycamore
272 Mansfield Avenue	
286 Mansfield Avenue	white ash
274 Middlesex Road	European weeping birch
114 Nearwater Lane	
21 Old Farm Road	sycamore
45 Old King's Highway North	oak
1 Peach Hill Road	white oak
73 Rings End Road	sycamore
Ring's End Road	sycamore
Stephen Mather Road	white ash
3 Tokeneke Trail	copper beech
Woodland Park	American Beech

Source: Historic Tree Inventory, 2001.

**EXHIBIT 2-3
 SOME STRUCTURES WITH
 HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

<u>BUILDING</u>	<u>YEAR BUILT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
First Congregational Church of Darien	1837	14 Brookside Road
“Little Red Schoolhouse”*	1832	21 Tokeneke Road
Bates-Scofield House	1736	45 Old King's Highway North
Nathan Weed House	1749	80 Nearwater Lane
Bell Mansion	1806	114 Goodwives River Road
Gorham House	1789	85 Ring's End Road
Nathan Selleck Jr. House	1767	18 Old Farm Road
Jonathan Bates House	1705	148 Old King's Highway North
Pond-Weed House	1696	2591 Boston Post Road
Mather Homestead & adjoining property	1778	19 Stephen Mather Road
Jeremiah Andreas House	1700	105 Leroy Avenue
Henry Davis Weed House	1868	65 Nearwater Lane
The Garden Gate	1855	2265 Boston Post Road
Original Town Hall	1872/1875	859 Boston Post Road
Companion to Town Hall	1872/1875	863 Boston Post Road
Former Darien Review Bldg.	c1895	988 Boston Post Road
Calvery Baptist Church	1851/88	1083-1060 Boston Post Rd.
Darien Movie Theater	1928	Boston Post Road
Delafield Block	1928	
Austen Block	c1850	879 Boston Post Road
Noroton Presbyterian Chapel	1866	
Darien Book Aid Building		Boston Post Road

*21 Tokeneke Road was designated as a Protected Town Landmark in 2001, Center District School c. 1832-1878

Source: Town of Darien Historical Society.

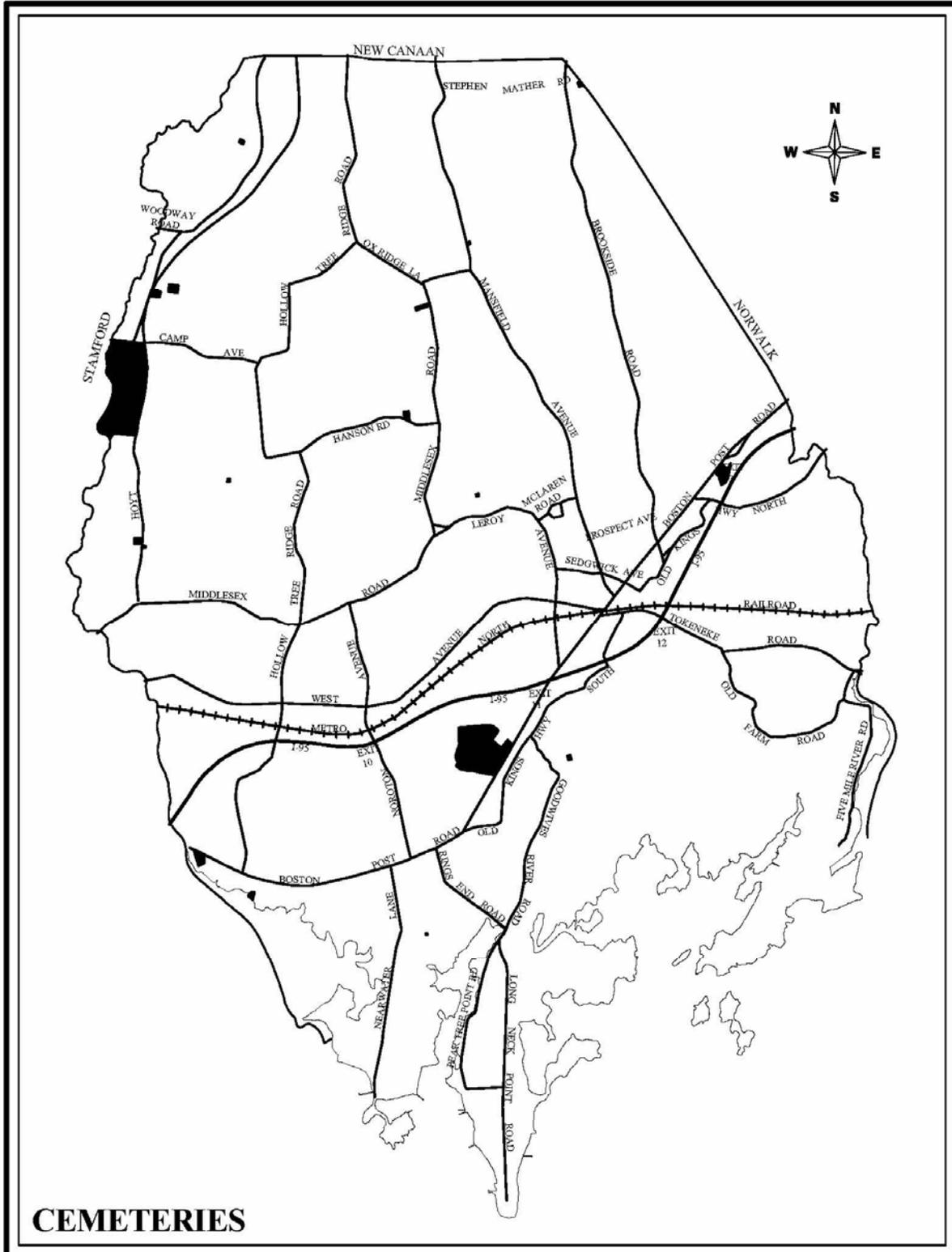


*The First Congregational Church,
 14 Brookside Road*



*The Mather Homestead,
 Stephen Mather Road*

EXHIBIT 2-4 LOCATION OF CEMETERIES IN DARIEN



**EXHIBIT 2-5
 CEMETERIES IN DARIEN**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>NUMBER OF GRAVES</u>	<u>DATE RANGE OF STONES</u>
Andreas-Hoyt	Middlesex Road, south of Ox Ridge Lane		90	1823-1928
Andrews Cemetery	Middlesex Road	0.5		
Bates Cemetery #1	East Lane	0.872	98	1800-1913
Bates Cemetery #2	Christie Hill Road near Hollow Tree Ridge Road	0.16	17	1828-1873
Bell Cemetery	Off Midbrook Lane		21	1825-1884
Fitch's Soldier's	Boston Post Rd/Hecker Ave.			
Hebrew Independent League Cemetery	Hoyt Street	2.93		
Hebrew Independent League Cemetery	Hoyt Street	2.93		
Howe Cemetery	Near Middlesex Middle Sch.		1	1804
Lawson Cemetery	Hanson Road	0.6	190	1811-1933
Leeds Cemetery	Hoyt Court	0.61	138	1787-1930
Mather Cemetery	Stephen Mather Road	0.31	165	1830-1959
Midbrook Cemetery	Midbrook Lane	0.11		
Raymond Cemetery	Morley Lane		6	1813-1880
Spring Grove Cemetery	Boston Post Road/Hecker Avenue	39.72		
St. John's Catholic Cemy.	Camp Avenue	39		
Steven's Cemetery	Hoyt Street	0.39	4	1804-1879
Town Cemetery	Boston Post Road	1.311		
Waterbury Cemetery #1	Hoyt Street west side near Echo Drive		27	1835-1932
Waterbury Cemetery #2	Mansfield Avenue	1.34		
Weed Cemetery #1	Pasture Lane	0.2	9	1798-1838
Weed Cemetery #2	Boston Post Road	0.45	96	1763-1944

EXHIBIT 2-6 POTENTIAL VILLAGE DISTRICTS

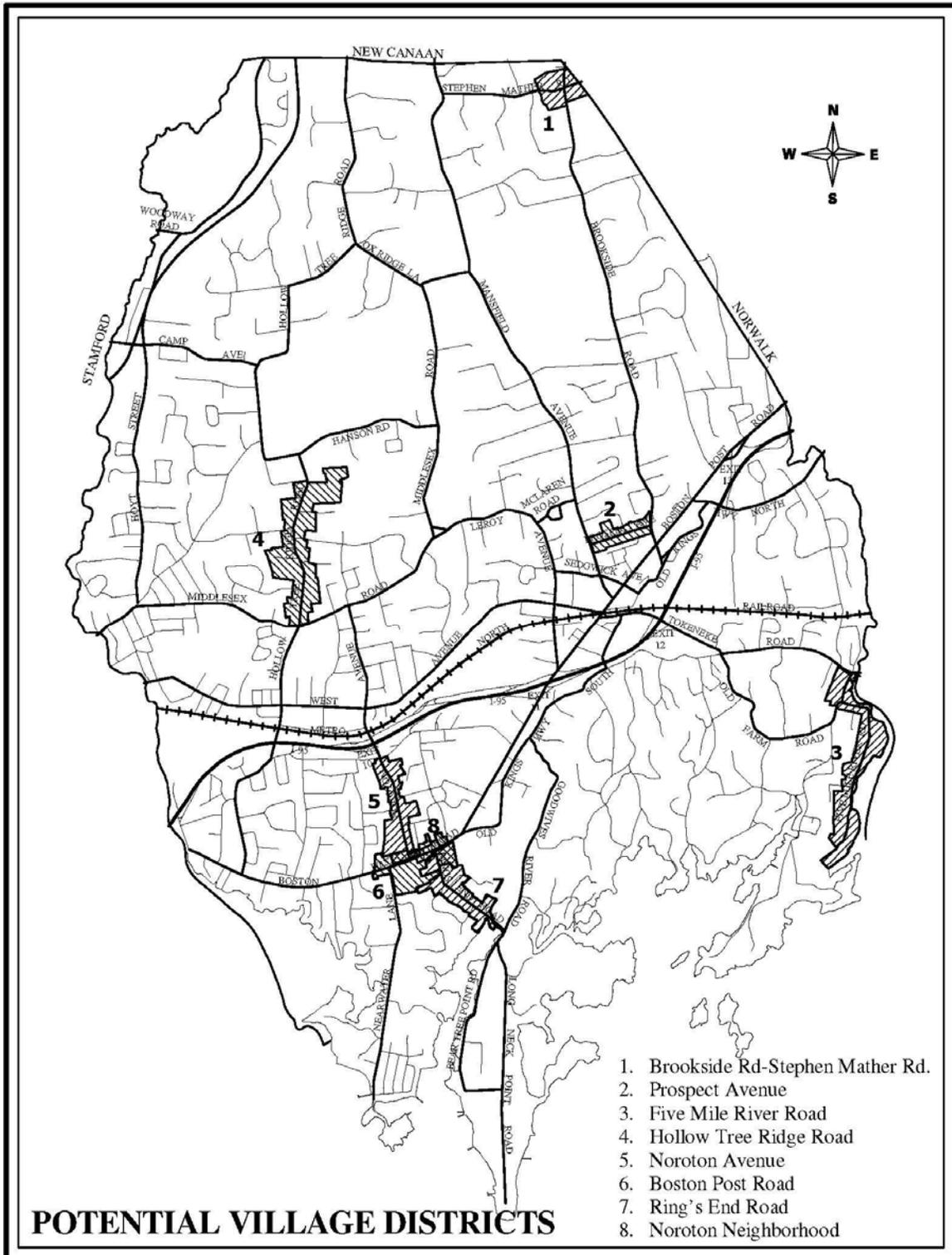
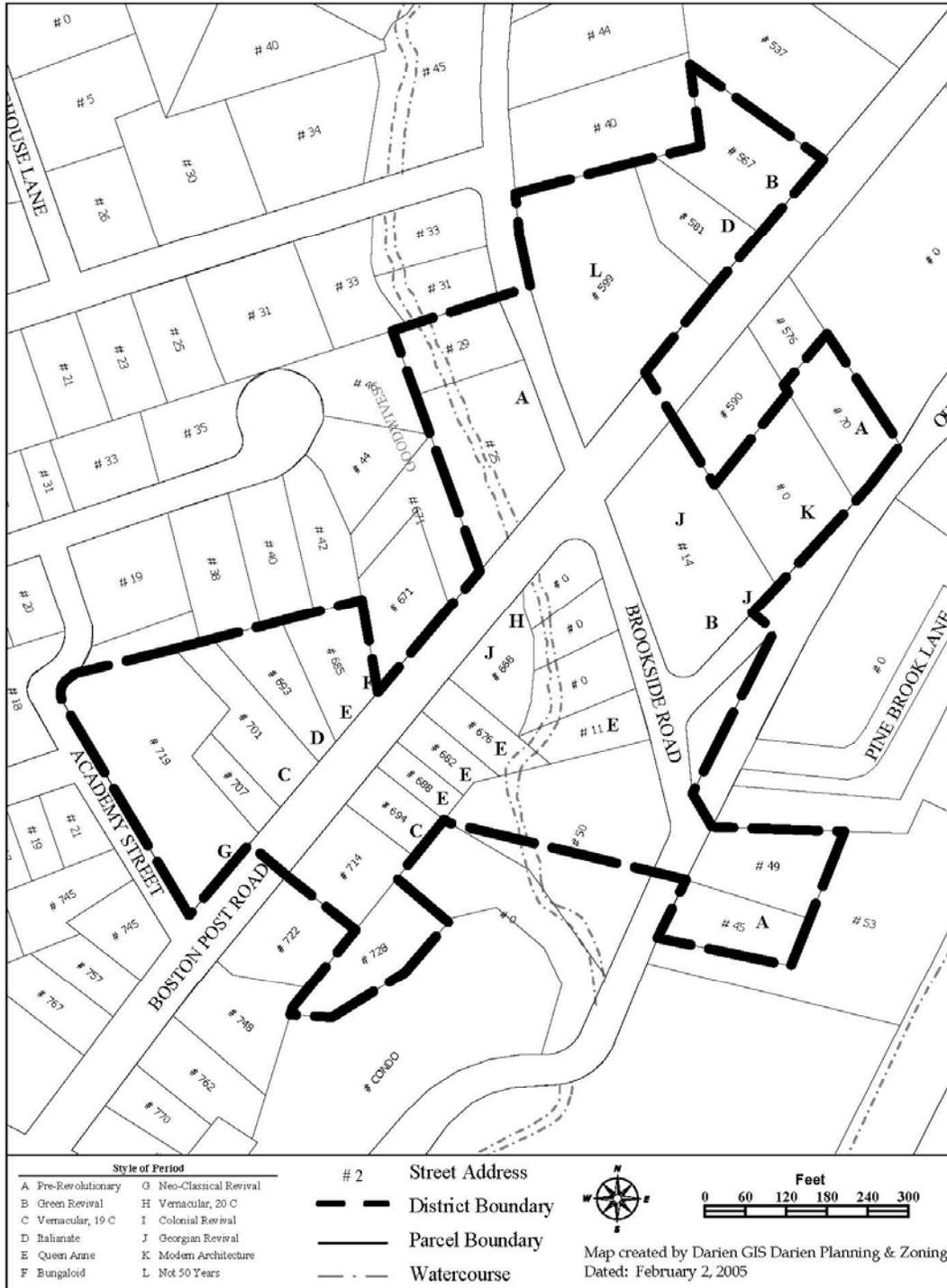


EXHIBIT 2-7 BOSTON POST ROAD NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

Boston Post Road National Register Historic District: Darien, CT



CHAPTER 3
PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Overview

The Town of Darien seeks to preserve the ecological integrity and sustain all natural resources within the town. These resources have intrinsic value and are also critically important to the quality of life in Darien and, to a significant extent, in nearby communities. While Darien is nearly fully developed, all future land use activity must still be sensitive to encroachments and effects, both direct, and indirect, on valued resources. Development must be reasonably related to the carrying capacity of the land and mindful of its compatibility with the desired community character as expressed in this Plan, without creating harmful and unnecessary environmental impacts.

Resources included are aquifers; watercourses and watersheds; wetlands; floodplains; coastal resources; and air quality. Appendix A3 contains more details regarding these resources, including maps showing their various locations within the community.

Policies

To preserve the quantity and quality of drinking-water aquifers and protect primary and secondary aquifer recharge areas.

To preserve and protect watercourses in their natural state through establishment of appropriate river buffers and by strictly regulating the location of structures and activities in order to prevent encroachments near or within these resources and wherever possible, prevent the filling or grading of watercourses and their banks. When practical, encourage and promote restoration of watercourses and watersheds.

To minimize further loss of inland and tidal wetlands, to protect and enhance the quality of wetlands in the community, and to restore degraded and/or filled wetlands wherever possible.

To preserve and enhance public use and enjoyment of the Town's coastal resources as well as to ensure current and future ecological integrity of those resources.

To reduce the potential for loss of life and property resulting from flood conditions, both for existing and future development, and to protect the natural flood carrying capacity of all floodplains.

To improve local air quality when possible and practical.

Recommendations

1. Regulatory Changes-Consider recommendations regarding regulatory changes in four areas: Zoning Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations, and Harbors Ordinances.

Zoning Regulations

The Planning and Zoning Commission should consider, review, or study:

- Adding design standards for the required erosion and sedimentation control measures and stormwater management facilities to supplement the graphics currently provided.
- Acknowledging the need to comply with the Inland Wetlands Regulations within the Zoning Regulations.
- Requiring the submission of grading, drainage and erosion control plans for all construction projects which involve site disturbance.
- Amending the manner for calculating Lot Area to exclude sensitive environmental resources such as wetlands, watercourses, and steep slopes.
- Amending the definition of Building Coverage to include all impervious surfaces, including all accessory buildings and impervious driveways, parking areas, walks, and terraces, or alternately create a maximum Developed Site Area within all residential zones.
- Adding a requirement for a 100 foot buffer between all new development and tidal wetlands
- Amending the section of the Zoning Regulations regarding *Exempt Activities Not subject to Coastal Site Plan Review* to make construction of, addition to, or modification of any structure constituting an increase in lot coverage of more than 25 percent subject to coastal site plan review.
- Formalizing the pre-application review process to strengthen opportunities for town planning and zoning professional staff to guide applicants in protecting environmental resources when preparing site development plans.
- Using native species, or those adapted to New England, for all vegetated stormwater management systems, such as grass swales or vegetative buffers. Prohibiting non-native invasive species as defined by the Connecticut DEP.
- Consider requiring an upland tidal wetlands application to the Environmental Protection Commission as part of the Coastal Site Plan Review.

- Considering an ordinance or other regulatory initiatives protecting trees.
- Considering establishment of an Aquifer Protection Ordinance.
- Amending the Zoning Regulations to strengthen floodplain regulations by limiting the number of improvements occurring below the “substantial improvement” threshold by placing a time frame on individual improvements.
- Adding provisions to the Zoning Regulations on parking to provide incentives for creation of shared parking lots and use of pervious parking materials, internal landscaping, and natural stormwater management structures.
- Referencing the need for an erosion and sedimentation control plan and stormwater management features in the section on site plan requirements.
- Add provisions for fugitive dust control for development or redevelopment projects where dust control may be a concern.



Subdivision Regulations

Consider or study:

- Amending the Subdivision Regulations to increase required open space as part of any subdivision from 10 percent to 15 percent or greater.
- Considering allowing the imposition of fees in lieu of open space, which may provide funds to acquire land to assist in creating open space corridors (“greenways”) throughout the community, rather than scattered open space pockets.
- Amending the Subdivision Regulations to prohibit the permanent establishment of any new private roads as part of any subdivision or residential development without first requiring the granting of a drainage easement in favor of the Town.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations

- Amending the Inland Wetland Regulations to note that a review by staff will occur as part of the application process.
- Formalize the pre-application review process to strengthen opportunities for town inland wetlands professional staff to guide applicants in protecting environmental resources in preparing site development plans.
- Consider expansion of the regulated upland review area to 100 feet from wetlands and watercourses.
- Consider establishment of flood and erosion control regulations.

Harbors Ordinances

- Update Boats and Harbors Ordinances for stronger and broader controls on activities that can lead to coastal water degradation

2. Protection Measures – Continue to develop ways to protect open space by caring for environmentally sensitive areas, identify opportunities to reduce impervious surfaces and coordinate with neighboring towns to protect shared local watersheds.

- Consider the adoption of a Darien stormwater ordinance that includes an illicit discharges prohibition and language referring to the best management practices as described in Connecticut's stormwater guidance manual.
- Consider revising site and subdivision plan submission requirements to require stormwater management plans.
- Town of Darien should consider the establishment of a separate Conservation Commission.
- Develop a Greenways/Open Space Plan for Darien and propose any identified Greenways to become part of the State's officially designated Greenways System. Coordinate with non-profit land trusts in developing such a Plan. Specific opportunities which should be pursued (in no particular order) include:
 - Integrate the Greenways/Open Space Plan with resource protection tools to maximize the viability of creating greenways.
 - Develop a Town-wide map depicting environmentally sensitive areas, including potential wildlife corridors.
 - Survey Town of Darien properties to identify opportunities to reduce impervious surface areas used for parking, recreational facilities, and school facilities. Also, identify existing

private properties with potential for yielding reductions in impervious surfaces, such as large parking lots, and seek voluntary cooperation of owners.

- Develop written watershed management strategies and coordinate with neighboring towns for cooperative approaches for shared-local watersheds to improve water quality, especially with Stamford regarding the Rewak Well.



- Identify coastal watershed resources within the coastal boundary to protect against any adverse impacts on such resources.
 - Consider establishing an invasive species program.
 - Create a list of fugitive dust control measures to be given to developers and contractors.
 - Develop a specification for Diesel Equipment Emissions Controls for developer's construction contractors. Encourage this voluntary specification for medium to large construction projects.
 - Establish a Developer of the Year Award program and/or Conservationist of the Year Award to recognize individuals or firms that have voluntarily adopted desired conservation and preservation measures.
- 3. Monitoring – Monitor condition of environmentally sensitive and endangered areas. Coordinate monitoring activities with appropriate agencies such as the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP), the Aquarion Water Company, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation.**
- Document, monitor and bring into compliance Town-owned conservation easements.

Specific opportunities which should be pursued (in no particular order) include:

- Initiate a study to address flooding issues in the Heights Road and Lower Stony Brook areas and encourage active involvement by the CTDEP, Connecticut Department of Transportation (contribution of and to I-95) and affected homeowners during the study process.



- Explore hiring an environmental officer to perform environmental resource coordination and monitoring activities
- Coordinate regularly with Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP) on contaminated properties within Darien
- Periodically coordinate with Aquarion Water Company to monitor changes in drinking water demand and quality provided to Darien residents
- Monitor sedimentation trends in Darien's ponds, coastal areas, and watercourses
- Catalog existing stormwater management on private roads and large scale private developments
- Establish an inventory and assessment of vernal pools
- Monitor issues surrounding vernal pools and any state legislative actions relative to EPC or Conservation Commission jurisdiction to regulate
- Monitor development within areas identified by the CTDEP as areas containing Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern species to assess individual and cumulative impacts that could put the affected species at risk and to allow a proactive stance on protection or mitigation.
- Develop a water quality monitoring program, taking advantage of the Darien Nature Center and/or high school science classes or groups and Project Search (CTDEP program).
- Conduct a land use/build-out analysis to determine the potential for increase of impervious surfaces.

4. Education - Develop methods to educate the community as to “best management practices” for natural resources.

- Work in concert with non-profit education and other government organizations.
- Develop a series of brochures promoting ‘best management practices’ for natural resources targeted to homeowners. Mail these brochures to all Darien homeowners annually and/or in concert with other mailings. Topics to be covered in the brochures include:
 - Sound landscaping practices and stormwater management
 - Recognition and avoidance of invasive species
 - How to protect wetlands (i.e. not dumping leaves, lawn clippings, or other debris in wetland and buffer areas)
 - Understanding tidal wetlands
 - How and why to minimize use of impervious surfaces for driveways, parking areas, pool areas, and outdoor patios
 - Sound handling practices for small quantities of hazardous waste.
- Take advantage of Darien’s web site to disseminate information to residents (<http://www.ci.darien.ct.us>). Press Releases can be another means of disseminate information.



- Explore hiring an environmental officer to:
 - Help residents identify and eradicate invasive plant species on their property
 - Provide guidance to homebuilders and other contractors for environmentally sensitive home construction practices
 - Help residents identify valuable resources on their property including wetlands, vernal pools, and tidal wetlands.
- Take advantage of the University of Connecticut’s Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Program. NEMO offers free workshops and educational materials on natural resource-based planning to local land use commissions
- Establish a practice of distributing recommended ‘best-management-practices’ for water resource protection brochures to all applicants for subdivision, zoning, and building permit approval.

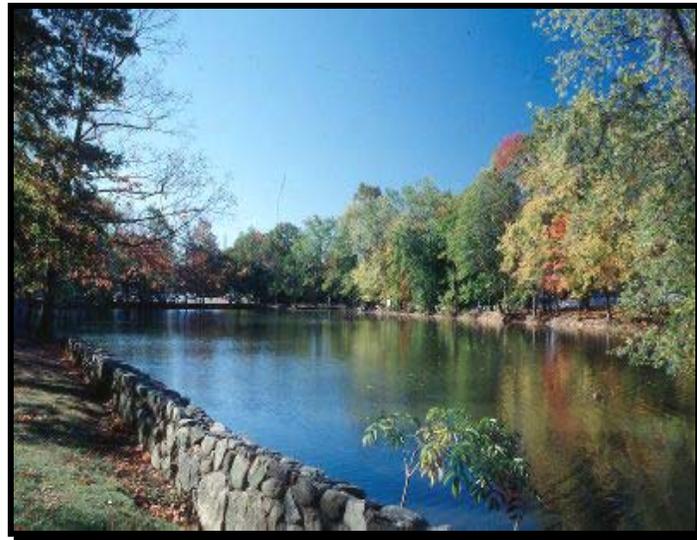
- Highly encourage and provide incentives to homeowners to use environmentally friendly design during renovation of their properties (techniques such as increased non-lawn landscaping for stormwater management and maintaining water resource buffers with native vegetation)
- Work with homeowners associations to enhance stormwater management on private roads



- Work and coordinate with the Darien Nature Center to seek ways to implement some of the Town's environmental educational initiatives.
- Work with the Board of Education and school bus operators serving within the Town of the recent state law that prohibits stopped school buses from idling their engines for more than three minutes. Also, inform the Department of Public Works of the three minute regulation to ensure compliance for town maintenance vehicles

APPENDIX A3

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES



Introduction

The appendix reviews six environmental subject areas: 1) aquifers; 2) watercourses and watersheds; 3) wetlands; 4) floodplains; 5) coastal resources; and 6) air quality. Within each of these subject areas, current conditions are identified; issues and opportunities are explored; and current protection tools used are outlined.

1. Aquifers

Darien has several aquifers of coarse-grained sand and gravel (stratified drift), which typically yield more water than finer-grained bedrock aquifers. These notable aquifer formations are associated with the Noroton River, Holly Pond, Stony Brook, Five Mile River, Tokeneke Brook, and the Goodwives River (see Exhibit 3-1).

There is one public drinking water supply aquifer in Darien associated with the geologic formation along the Noroton River. The water supply comes from the Rewak Well, which is owned and managed by Aquarion Water Company and supplies 15 percent of Darien's population with potable water (for more information on Aquarion Water Company, and Water Supply in general, see Chapter 7: Public Facilities and Services). The remainder of Darien's drinking water comes from a regional system of reservoirs and aquifers located outside Darien.

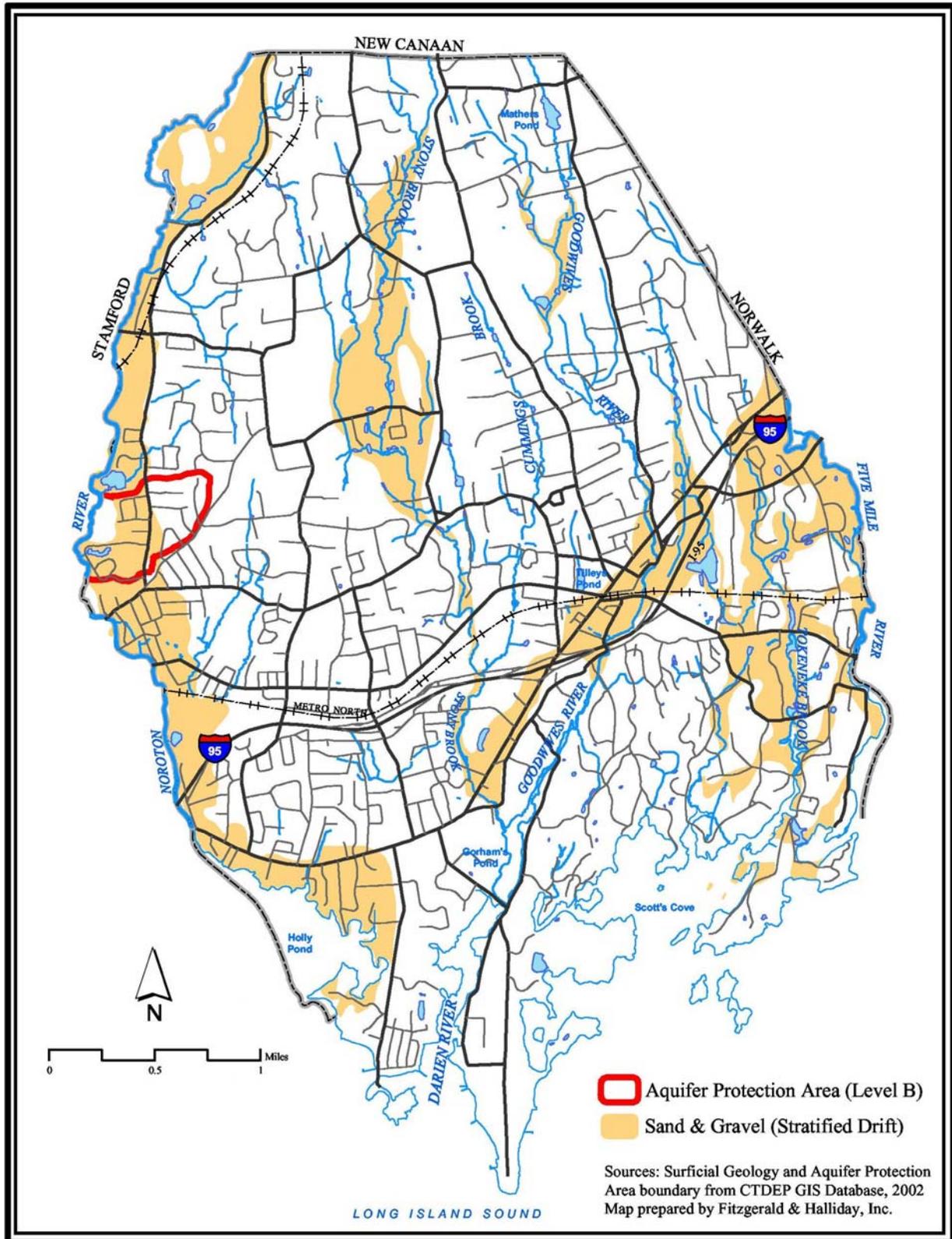
Aquifer Protection Areas

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP) has designated an aquifer protection area (APA) around this active well (see Exhibit 3-1). The 221-acre APA straddles both Darien and Stamford, with approximately 131 acres lying within Darien. Currently, the Rewak Well has the capacity to provide between 300,000 and 400,000 gallons of drinking water per day. In 1989, the State enacted APA laws requiring municipalities to identify important drinking water aquifers and adopt land use regulations to protect water quality. The CTDEP has been developing a model land use regulation for municipalities to implement aquifer protection locally. Darien does not have any regulatory measures in place specifically relating to aquifer protection. However, the Town must weigh regulatory protection measures with the size of the APA and the fact that the APA is already developed within a stable residential neighborhood.

Issues & Opportunities

The groundwater quality of the aquifer serving Darien is very high. This high quality should be protected from contamination both from point sources of pollution such as leaking underground storage tanks and non-point sources such as fertilizers and pesticides used on lawns. The potential for non-point source contamination of the groundwater supply or aquifer in Darien is the greatest concern due to the predominantly residential character of the community.

EXHIBIT 3-1 AQUIFER RESOURCES



Water Quality

The APA ground water quality is classified as “GA” (Groundwater quality rated A), except for the “area of contribution” (area within the 500-foot radius of the well), which is classified as “GAA-Well-Impaired”. The GA and GAA classifications mean the water quality in the APA is generally high enough that it is suitable as a drinking water supply. The “GAA-Well-Impaired” classification is due to volatile organic compounds (VOC) detected in the Rewak Well in the early 1980s. The primary source was the Stamford industrial land uses across the Noroton River. An air stripper was installed that works continuously to remove VOCs and the problem is being corrected.

The Rewak Well aquifer protection area (APA) spans both Darien and Stamford. Consequently, issues of quality and quantity affect a larger geographic region than just Darien. Since the well and water supply system is privately owned and managed, the Town has no authority to directly manage water quality, water usage, and adequacy of the supply system, or to control land uses in Stamford that may affect the APA. For Water Quality Classifications within Darien, see Exhibit 3-2.

For a variety of reasons, the potential for direct groundwater contamination is low. Potential non-point sources of water pollution in Darien include a variety of residential activities and contaminated stormwater runoff from roadways. These may pose the greatest threat to groundwater quality over time.

Darien gets the bulk of its public water supply from sources outside the community via a regional system of reservoirs and aquifers. However, the APA still provides a key resource. The need to draw water from this aquifer will continue into the foreseeable future, and could grow, as water demands increase. Indeed, although much of Darien is fully developed, there is a recognized development trend of replacing older smaller residences with larger residences having more bathrooms and water amenities such as lawn sprinklers and swimming pools. This redevelopment results in direct increased use of water as well as the indirect effects of larger building footprints. Increases in building footprints result in a higher percentage of impervious surface within the APA, reducing groundwater recharge rates and potentially reducing a well’s yield. A reduction in aquifer recharge rates may impact both public drinking water wells and any private wells still in use by some residences in Darien.

Protection Tools Currently Used In Darien

Within Darien, the zoning within the APA is for single-family residences. This area of Town is dominated by older, well-established subdivisions. The lots are small with the exception of the Middlesex Swim Club at the terminus of Echo Drive, the Darien Land Trust property at the end of Heather Lane, and two parcels on Hoyt Street containing Holmes Elementary School. This zoning and land use pattern protects against potentially hazardous uses such as gas stations from locating within the APA.

Darien regulates and monitors the installation and removal of underground storage tanks from a fire safety perspective. However, no comprehensive inventory of residential underground home heating oil tanks has been developed.

2. Watercourses and Watersheds

Generally, watercourses such as rivers and streams in Darien flow in a north-south direction and drain into Long Island Sound (see Exhibit 3-2).

Within a watershed, impervious surfaces contribute to water pollution by transporting pollutants into receiving water bodies and/or watercourses, impacting aquatic integrity and coastal resources. This type of water pollution is typically called “non-point source pollution.” Water quality is also impacted by discharges from “point sources.” See Exhibits 3-1 and 3-5 for more information about impervious surfaces.

Darien’s watercourses are an integral part of the Town’s natural resources in that they support other important natural resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, recharge of groundwater/aquifers, coastal resources, and wildlife habitat and corridors. The health and integrity of watercourses are linked to overall watershed and adjacent land use conditions.

Natural soil erosion potential is based on soil characteristics, vegetative cover, and topography, which lead to sedimentation loading of stream (watercourse) beds and ponds. Sedimentation of ponds and other waterbodies impact wildlife habitat, flood storage capacity, and the chemistry of the water body, which can hasten degraded water quality. Several dammed ponds within Town are prone to continual sedimentation. In particular, Darien River, Gorham’s Pond, the Town Hall pond (along Stony Brook, which was created to serve as a sedimentation basin), upper Gorham’s Pond (or Upper Pond), and an artificial sedimentation basin associated with Tilley’s Pond are water bodies generally dredged due to sedimentation loading.

Erosion and sedimentation has resulted in the need for both the Town and private entities to dredge ponds. The Town dredges only a small number of ponds located within town-owned property. Private groups have dredged other ponds, such as Gorham’s Pond, Darien River, Holly Pond, and various smaller ponds within the Goodwives River watershed.

Preservation of native vegetative buffers is critical for holding soils in place, filtering out pollutants, providing shade (to maintain cooler water temperatures), contributing plant and insect foods to the stream system, and preventing invasive species from moving into streamside habitats.

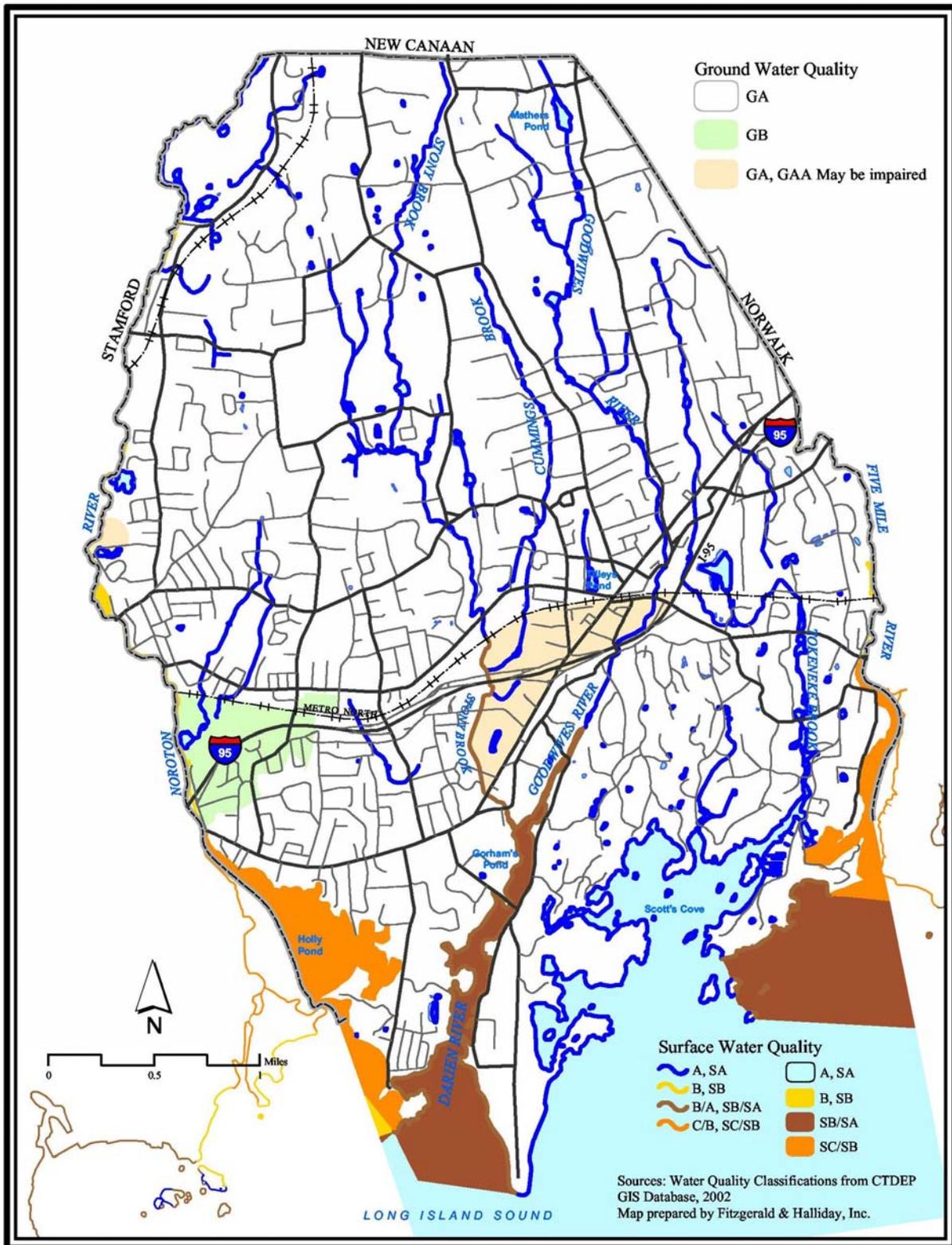
Issues and Opportunities

The primary issues for watercourses and watersheds in Darien are:

- *Non-point Source Pollution*

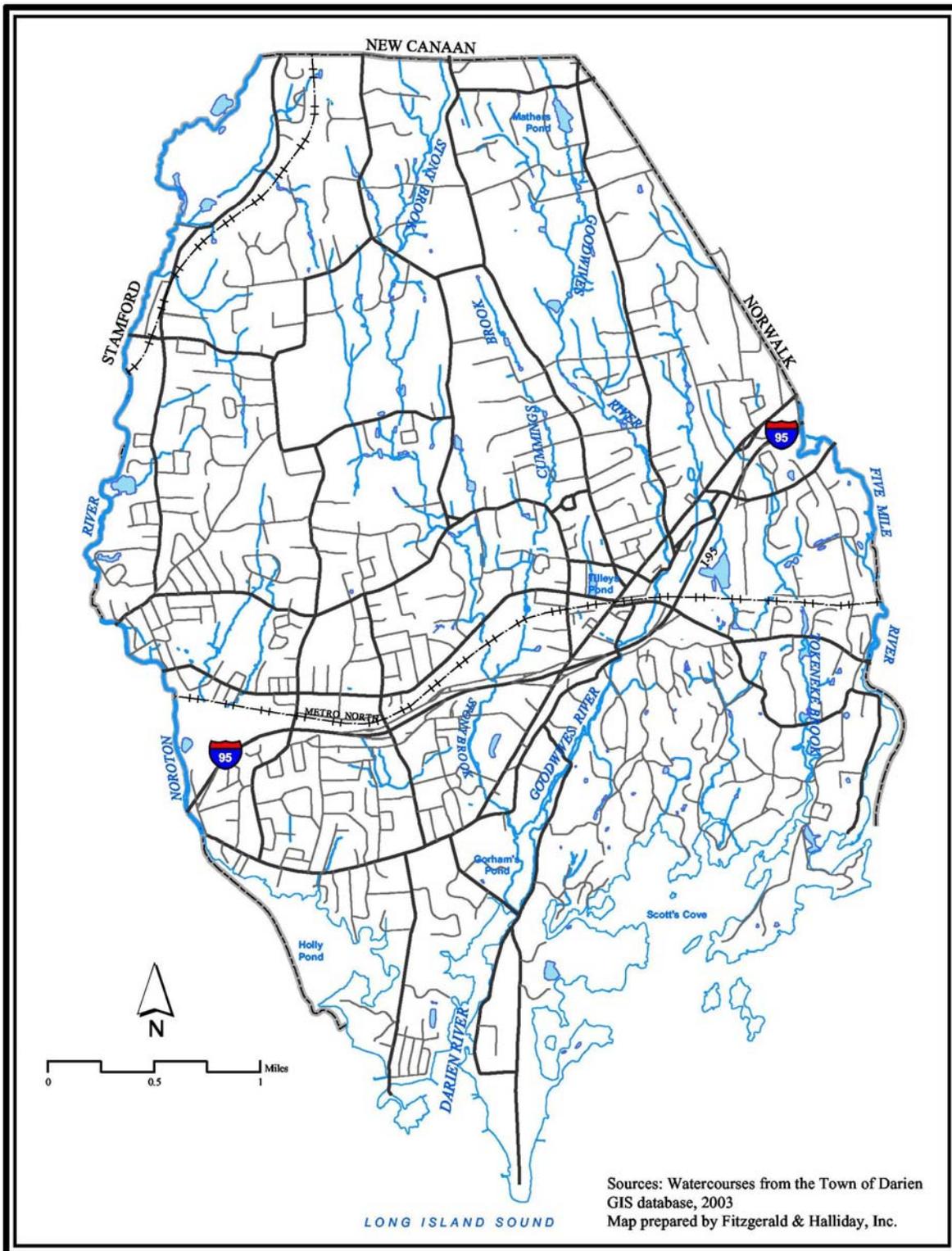
Approximately 27 percent of local roads in Darien are under private ownership. This limits the Town’s ability to ensure proper road sweeping practices and use of other tools to minimize potential contaminants in stormwater runoff from roads in all areas. The potential for non-point source contamination of streams, rivers, and ponds in Darien is a concern due to the predominantly residential character of the community.

EXHIBIT 3-2 WATER QUALITY



See Page A3-3 for more details on the water quality classifications.

EXHIBIT 3-3 WATER RESOURCES



- *Watercourse Buffer Areas*

Water quality in rivers, streams, and ponds in Darien is impacted by ongoing loss of sufficient naturally vegetated buffers between development and these watercourses.

- *Stormwater Management/Erosion and Sedimentation*

Since about 27 percent of local roads in Darien are under private ownership, the Town's ability to manage stormwater runoff is limited.

Darien land use regulations lack adequate provisions to control the amount of impervious surface created in the course of development.

Current land use regulations do not require applicants to provide sufficient information on stormwater management plans to ensure adequate erosion and sedimentation control.

Sedimentation of ponds and lakes in Darien is a concern, as several dammed ponds are prone to continual sediment buildup and there has been a need for both the Town and private entities to conduct dredging.

- *Invasive Species*

The spread of the invasive species such as *Phragmites* along Darien's watercourses and into wetlands is a concern.

There is a close correlation between the percentage of imperviousness in each local watershed within Darien and level of intensity of development (zoning). Two key mechanisms for improving water quality of watercourses within impacted and degraded watersheds are minimizing the creation of new impervious surface area and using vegetative buffers where development is adjacent to a watercourse. The preservation of naturally vegetated buffers has been an issue in Darien as property redevelopment occurs. Another important mechanism would be managing stormwater runoff from roads. However, many of Darien's town roads are under private ownership. This greatly limits the Town's ability to ensure proper road sweeping and/or management of drainage impacts.

Protection Tools Currently Used in Darien

The Inland Wetland and Watercourses Regulations (IWW) for Darien are intended to protect both wetlands and watercourses. Regulated activities include the prohibition of any earth disturbing activity within 100 feet of Holly or Gorham's Pond, or the mean high water line of the Noroton, Five Mile, or Goodwives River, or within 50 feet of inland wetlands. There are also 150 and 200 foot setbacks for subsurface waste disposal systems (septic systems).

The Zoning Regulations include a provision allowing the Planning and Zoning Commission to require conservation easements as part of development. Such easements can be used to create protection between development and watercourses.

The Zoning Regulations do include some provisions limiting area of a lot covered by impervious surfaces (building lot coverage and developed site area).

The Zoning Regulations include sections on Land Filling, Excavation, and Earth Removal (Section 850) and Soil Erosion and Sediment Control (Section 870) that requires provision for managing stormwater runoff and erosion and sediment control in the course of development. However, no specific standards for these activities are provided.

The Subdivision Regulations include requirements to provide information on erosion and sedimentation control and storm drainage management as part of a site development plan. The Subdivision Regulations for Darien also include requirements for preservation of existing topography and irreplaceable environmental features.

The Subdivision Regulations require 10 percent of open space.

The Zoning Regulations include limited requirements for set-aside of open space for some higher density residential zones. Preserved open space can be used as a tool to protect sensitive natural resources, including watercourses.

The Zoning Regulations include a provision requiring the preparation of an environmental impact analysis and plans to offset or mitigate anticipated impacts as part of the development process within the Hollow Tree Ridge Road affordable housing zone. The Subdivision Regulations also have a provision requiring the preparation of an environmental impact analysis under certain conditions.

Section 840 of the Zoning Regulations allows the clustering of development on a lot (“conservation subdivision”) in order to protect “significant natural, special, and/or man-made features” including watercourses, in the course of the subdivision or resubdivision of land.

Phase II of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Storm Water Program is soon to be implemented statewide. This will require amendments to local stormwater management practices and positively impact stormwater management on local roads and for Town owned properties.

EXHIBIT 3-4 DESCRIPTION OF SUBREGIONAL WATERSHEDS

Noroton River Subregional Watershed

- *The total Noroton River subregional watershed drains approximately 11 square miles and extends from Holly Pond up into New Canaan; only 25 percent of the watershed is within Darien*
- *The Darien portion of the subregional watershed contains relatively dense residential development (R-1/2, R-1/3, R-1/5, and DMR [designed multifamily residential] zoning along Noroton River extending north from Holly Pond) along the river, small commercial and transportation uses within the I-95 corridor area, and less dense, larger residential lots (R-1 and R-2) upland from the river*

Darien River Subregional Watershed (Stony Brook and Goodwives River)

- *The Darien River subregional watershed drains approximately 6.2 square miles and extends from the Ring's End Bridge at Gorham's Pond up to Waveny Park in New Canaan; approximately 89 percent of this watershed is contained within the Town.*
- *The watersheds of Stony Brook and its tributaries, Cummings Brook and an unnamed stream make up the majority of the Darien River subregional watershed (65 percent). The remainder is the Goodwives River watershed area.*
- *The upper Town portion of the watershed contains large-wooded residential lots (R-2), transitioning to denser residential zoning (R-1/2, 1/3, 1/5), the I-95 and railroad corridor, the commercial business area, downtown and most of Heights Road, and then to R-1 around Gorham's Pond*

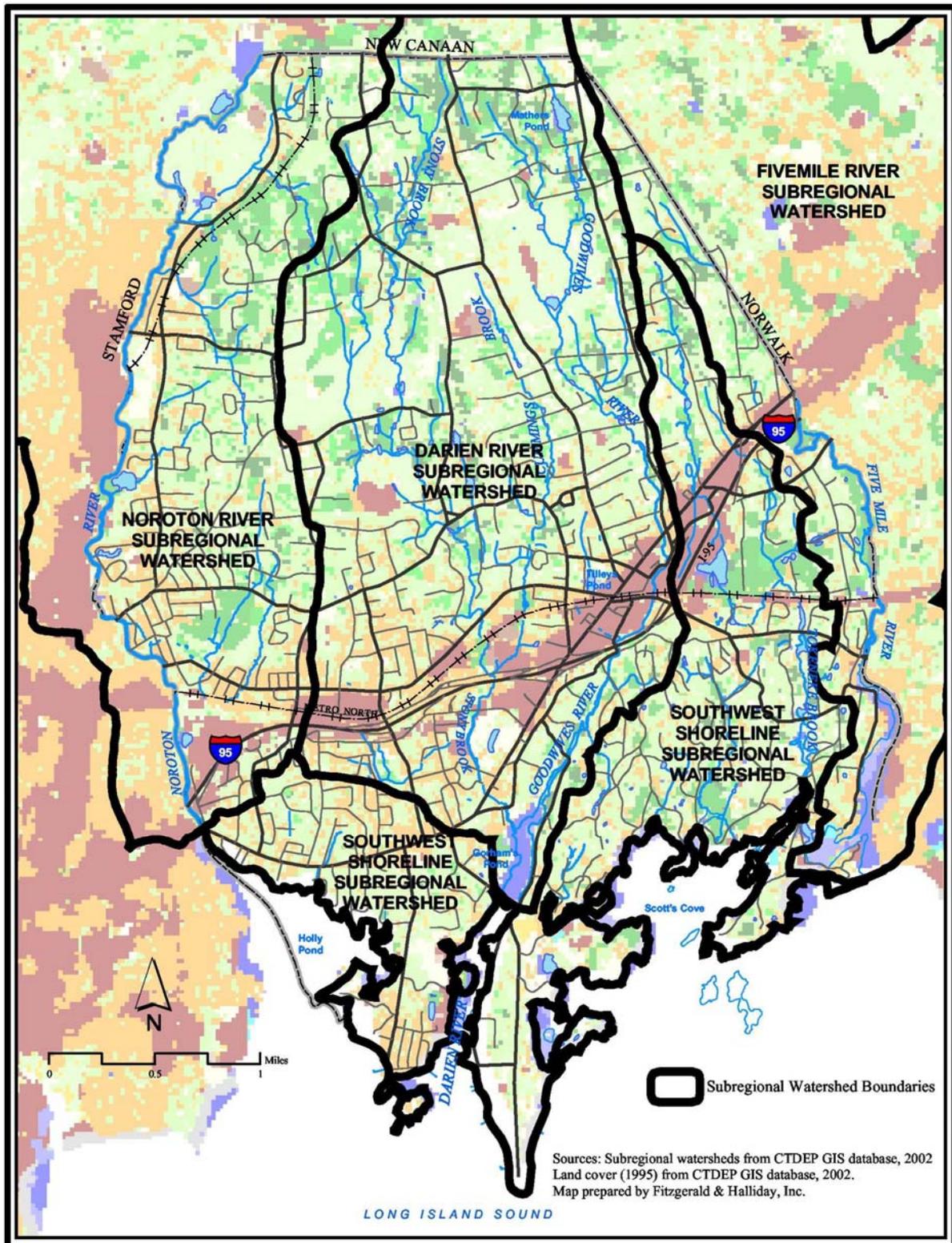
Five Mile River Subregional Watershed

- *The total Five Mile River subregional watershed drains approximately 12 square miles, however, only 7 percent of the watershed, 0.8 square miles, is within Darien*
- *The predominant land use within the Darien portion of the subregional watershed is residential (R-2, R-1, R-1/2, R-1/5), with a small section of the I-95 commercial corridor in Darien*

Southwest Shoreline Subregional Watershed (East and West)

- *The Southwest Shoreline subregional watershed drains approximately 3.6 square miles and all of the watershed is within Darien*
- *The subregional watershed is comprised of two geographical areas, an eastern section and western section*
- *The eastern section drains Tokeneke Brook, unnamed streams, and half of Long Neck peninsula into Scott's Cove; the other half of Long Neck peninsula drains into Darien River*
- *The western section drains into Darien River, Holly Pond, and Cove Harbor*

EXHIBIT 3-5 SUBREGIONAL WATERSHEDS



3. Wetlands

The majority of Darien's inland wetlands are located north of I-95 along major stream corridors. The most extensive wetlands are associated with the Goodwives River, Stony Brook and their tributaries. The broad wetlands along these watercourses are primarily forested wetlands on residential sites and/or properties dedicated to recreation and conservation purposes. Tidal wetlands fringe much of Darien's coastline, providing significant productive habitats, shoreline stabilization, water quality purification, and aesthetic quality.

Most of Darien's land base is built out, so significant acreages are not likely to be developed and/or subdivided. Hence, direct wetland losses are minor on an annual basis. However, due to the shortage of developable land, existing land uses (primarily residential) are intensifying. This is occurring through the enlargement of existing residential structures, replacement of existing modest homes by larger homes, addition of amenities such as porches, tennis courts, pools, and outbuildings, the removal of trees and other natural areas to create larger lawn areas, and the paving over of previously grassed or gravel areas. This trend toward more intense development adversely impacts wetlands in two primary ways: 1) through continual increases in non-point source runoff inevitably caused by the increase in impervious surfaces; and 2) continual reductions in vegetated buffers as the cumulative footprint of development expands. These effects impair both inland and tidal wetlands in the same ways.

While wetlands are often thought of as natural filtration systems for purifying water, their capacity can be easily overwhelmed in developed areas by excessive pollutant loads contained in runoff. Direct stormwater discharges into a wetland, such as from stormwater outfalls, result in erosion and sedimentation that reduces water quality, harms the native community of plants and animals, reduces flood storage capacity and/or cause the alteration of watercourses, and provides a foothold for invasive species. These impacts are the primary sources of risk to the quality and functions of Darien's wetlands, both inland and tidal. Impacts to inland wetlands and watercourses in Darien are regulated to the extent made possible by the Town's Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) through its Inland Wetlands and Watercourses (IWW) Regulations. Designated tidal wetlands are regulated by the State of Connecticut through the Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Long Island Sound Programs, and Darien Planning and Zoning Commission.

Issues & Opportunities

Given the existing land use scenario in Darien, issues for protecting and enhancing Darien's wetlands (both inland and tidal) include:

- Darien has limited undeveloped lands. Remaining land tends to have more wetlands and other features that make development more challenging. As remaining land is developed, the potential for encroachments on wetlands becomes more pervasive.
- As new individual residential lots are developed or redeveloped, wetlands and their buffers may be impacted by removal of native vegetation, landscaping, and accessory recreational use of the property.

- Currently, Darien regulates earth-disturbing activities within 50 feet of an inland wetland, or 100 feet of a named watercourse. This may not be sufficient to adequately protect wetland integrity.
- Potential impacts to vernal pools in the course of development are a concern.

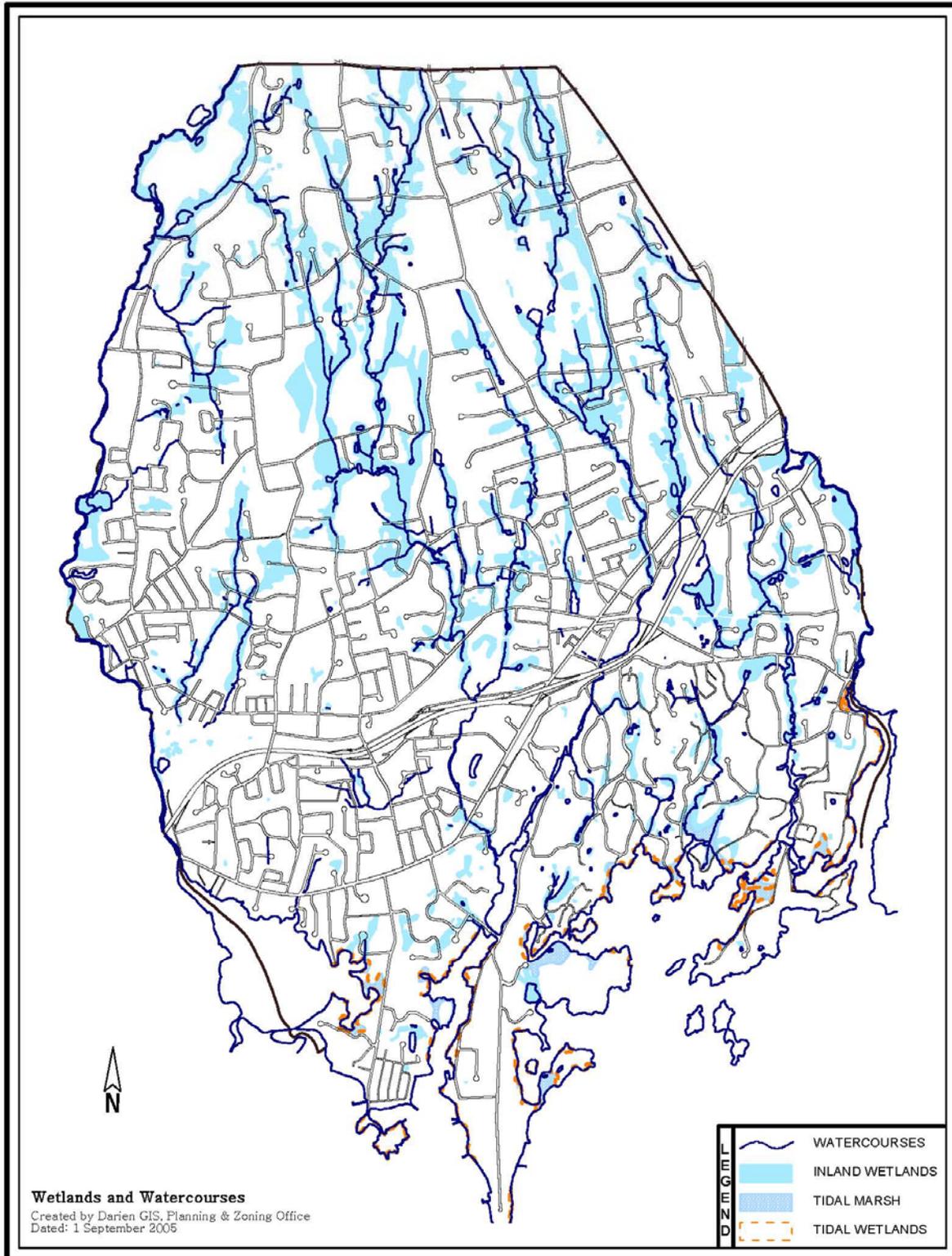
Protection Tools Currently Used in Darien

The IWW Regulations for Darien prohibit earth-disturbing activities (including vegetation removal) within 50 feet of an inland wetland and/or within 100 feet of Holly or Gorham's Pond.

The Zoning Regulations include a section on Land Filling, Excavation, and Earth Removal (Section 850) and Soil Erosion and Sediment Control (Section 870) that limits the area of impact within 50 feet of a wetland and requires applicants to include provisions for managing stormwater runoff and erosion and sedimentation in proposed site development plans.

The zoning, subdivision, and IWW provisions noted in the previous section on watercourses also apply generally to the protection of wetlands.

EXHIBIT 3-6 INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES



4. **Floodplains**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) manages the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The main components of the NFIP are flood insurance, floodplain management, and flood hazard mapping. The Town of Darien participates in the NFIP by adopting and enforcing floodplain management ordinances to reduce future flood damage. In exchange, the NFIP makes federally backed flood insurance available to homeowners, renters, and business owners in Town. The Town's participation in the NFIP is voluntary.

Regulated floodplains (A and V Zones) and floodways occur along most of Darien's major rivers and streams, as well as along substantial areas of the coast (see Exhibit 3-6). However, flooding can occur adjacent to water bodies even where there are no regulated floodplains. Properties in Darien containing regulated floodplains or water bodies prone to flooding have essentially been subdivided and already contain structures. Most are older lots with structures built prior to flood protection regulations.

The amount and density of impervious surfaces within a local watershed directly affects floodplains within the Town. As described under *Watercourses and Watersheds*, the estimated percent of imperviousness in Darien's watersheds range from 0-9 percent (protected), 10-24 percent (impacted) and greater than 24 percent (degraded). With more runoff from impervious surfaces, flooding becomes more frequent and extensive/extreme.

When a watershed becomes more urbanized, the existing stormwater drainage can become inadequate and unable to handle increases in runoff volume. An example of this problem within Darien is the Heights Road area. During heavy and prolonged rains, the street collects water, essentially becoming a detention basin. The local watershed is small in size (0.5 square miles) and is estimated to be about 40 percent impervious.

The concentration of development north of Heights Road drains to one culvert (which is not under the Town's jurisdiction) located just north of the I-95 Interchange 10 southbound on-ramp and was not designed to handle the cumulative increases in impervious surfaces. Furthermore, some residents south of I-95 along Maple Street and Relihan Road abutting an unnamed tributary of Stony Brook have voiced concern over flooding problems.

Floodways are designated within Town and are associated with sections of Noroton River, Stony Brook, Gorham's Pond, Goodwives River, Tokeneke Brook, and Five Mile River. A floodway is the area of the floodplain that should be reserved (kept free of obstructions) to allow floodwaters to move downstream. The placement of fill or buildings in a floodway may block the flow of water and increase flood heights, which can lead to a greater potential of property damage. Floodway management and prevention of encroachment within the floodway is critical to the Town's overall floodplain management.

The Town regulates designated floodplains (A Zones or special flood hazard areas and floodways) through Zoning Regulations and through Coastal Site Plan review for projects within coastal hazard areas (A and V Zones) within the Coastal Area Management

boundary. New construction and substantial improvements are permitted within these areas provided they meet floodplain standards.

Issues & Opportunities

The primary issues for floodplains in Darien are:

There is an ongoing accumulation of impervious surface area in Darien that impacts stormwater flows. This increase is not monitored or adequately managed through Darien's regulations to prevent adverse impacts from excessive impervious land coverage over time.

The municipal stormwater conveyance system is inadequate to handle stormwater flows in the Heights Road and Lower Stony Brook areas of Darien.

Not all storm drains, catch basins, and outlets are controlled and managed by the Town of Darien, which hampers the ability of the Town to correct problems associated with improperly sized stormwater system components.

Darien is nearly built out and as such the requests for new subdivisions are limited each year. Consequently, the Town must rely heavily on Zoning Regulations (Section 820) for floodplain management. A recent trend has been that the majority of building permits have been for residential alterations, especially where older residences are being sold and replaced with larger residences. This trend eventually leads to increases in impervious surfaces as developed footprints expand.

Darien's floodplain regulations only apply to new construction or substantial improvements. While existing Town regulations define "substantial improvements", there is no time frame associated with those improvements. This can essentially allow a homeowner to apply for a building permit below the substantial improvement threshold, and then subsequently apply for another permit for the remaining improvements, thereby avoiding having to comply with some major floodplain protection standards.

As noted earlier, current Zoning Regulations lack adequate limitations on the creation of new impervious surfaces in Darien. Excess impervious surface area contributes to volume and velocity of surface water runoff, thereby increasing flooding potential. Also, the section of the Zoning Regulations on accessory uses and the definition of an accessory use contained in the regulations do not include parameters with regard to size or placement within areas deemed to be environmentally sensitive.

There is significant and documented flooding of Heights Road caused by increases in impervious surfaces over time within its watershed and the large amount of stormwater being funneled into one storm drainage outlet. This outlet is inadequate but is associated with a private property and therefore not within the Town's authority to upgrade or improve it.

Protection Tools Currently Used in Darien

The Zoning Regulations include a provision allowing the Commission to require conservation easements as part of development. Such easements can be used to create protection between development and floodplains.

Section 820 of the Darien Zoning Regulations is dedicated to the control of land use within high hazard, flood prone areas.

The sections of the Darien Zoning Regulations dealing with conservation subdivisions (Section 840), land filling and excavation (Section 850), and soil erosion and sedimentation control (Section 870) all have provisions to minimize flooding potential and require applications to include provisions for managing stormwater runoff. However, no specific standards for these activities are provided.

The Zoning Regulations do include some provisions limiting area of a lot covered by impervious building surfaces (Building Coverage and Developed Site Area, in some commercial zones).

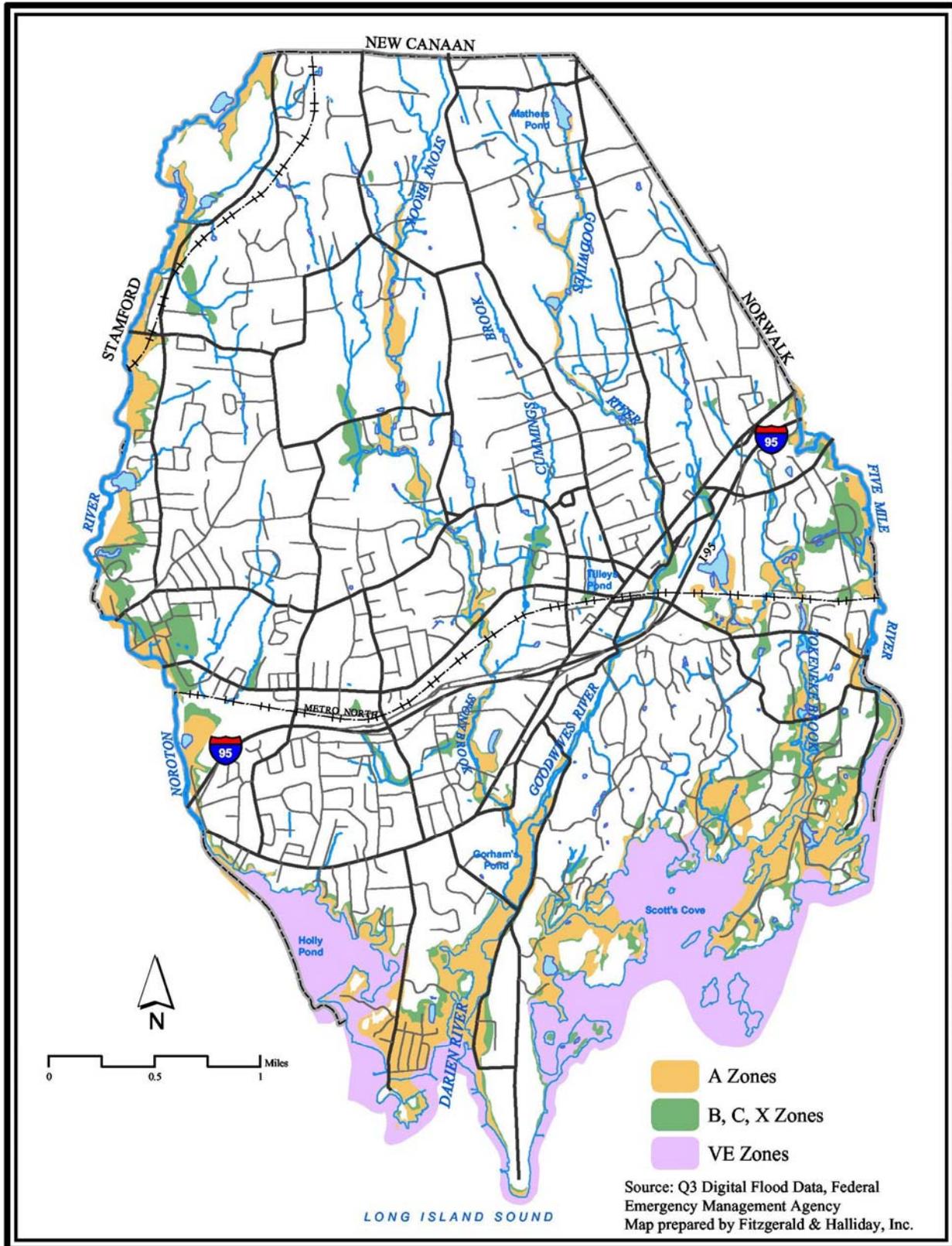
The Zoning Regulations include a provision requiring the preparation of an environmental impact analysis and plans to offset or mitigate anticipated impacts, including potential flooding, as part of the development within the Hollow Tree Ridge Road affordable housing zone.

The Subdivision Regulations also have a provision requiring the preparation of an environmental impact analysis under certain circumstances.

Section 840 of the Zoning Regulations provides for clustering development on a lot in order to protect “significant natural, special, and/or man-made features” including floodplains, in the course of the subdivision or resubdivision of land.

The Subdivision Regulations for Darien include requirements to provide information on erosion and sedimentation control and storm drainage management plans. The Subdivision Regulations for Darien also include requirements for preservation of existing topography and irreplaceable environmental features to the extent possible.

EXHIBIT 3-7 FLOODPLAINS



5. Coastal Resources

Darien's adopted Municipal Coastal Program (Planning and Zoning Commission, 1984) is still relevant in terms of goals, policies, and objectives. While Darien is located within the highly urbanized area of Fairfield County, its coastal resources have not been substantially degraded and still offer generally high quality and diverse recreational and ecological opportunities. Integral with the Town's quality of life, these resources offer public beaches, shellfishing, boating, and scenic views.

Darien's shoreline is a very valuable and fragile natural resource. It extends in an east-west orientation only 2.7 miles, but the actual shoreline is some 16.5 miles in length. Darien has two Town beaches, Pear Tree Point Beach and Weed Beach that are the Town's primary public access points offering both active and passive recreation. Beach erosion has not been a major issue, but the Town adds sand annually. The Town has six designated harbors.

Much of Darien's coast has rocky shorefronts that are not well suited for public access and recreation within the intertidal zone. Public beach areas offer sufficient public access to coastal waters, as does the Rings End Bridge. However, seawalls, revetments, groins, and docks continue to be built along the shoreline that can hinder or limit public access to coastal resources.

There is increasing evidence that tidal wetlands are becoming increasingly degraded. The invasive common reed (*Phragmites communis*), which forms monocultures with low habitat value, is present in many locations. Due to its invasive nature, the possible increase of *Phragmites* in Darien's coastal zone is a concern, like it is all along the Connecticut coast. The risk of *Phragmites* invasion is especially high whenever tidal hydrology is altered or tidal wetlands are disturbed, even minimally such as through increased sedimentation.

Boating occurs throughout the coastal and estuarine waters of Darien. Boat moorings shall be concentrated in the Darien Harbor. It shall be the policy of the Town to increase the boating capacity and safety of the Darien Harbor; maintaining an anchorage control system for other harbors and areas of the Darien shoreline to protect them from overuse and abuse, in order that coastal resources may be best protected. Dredging is needed periodically at the Darien Boat Club, the Noroton Yacht Club, and at individual properties in the Harbor to maintain boating operations. The main channels of the Darien Harbor, and the public boat launching ramp have also been dredged by the Town and by private property and boat owners to maintain safe boating passage. Five Mile River is maintained by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Views of the shoreline and waters of Long Island Sound are important in the quality of life of Town residents. Scenic views are being gradually diminished as redevelopment of lots in the coastal area continues, larger residences are built with more formal landscapes and the construction of docks, fencing, and tree alterations. Shoreline buffers and habitat, such as heron rookeries are lost or disturbed by such lot clearing development.

Unlike other areas along Connecticut’s coast, Darien has not had problems with septic failures, so on-site wastewater disposal is still an option and does not appear to be a factor in coastal water quality.

All buildings, uses and structures fully or partially within Darien’s designated coastal boundary are subject to the Town’s Coastal Site Plan Review process. A variety of activities beyond 100 feet from the mean high tide line may be exempted from site plan review where no potential adverse effects can be determined. Activities within tidal wetlands are regulated by the State of Connecticut.

Darien’s coastal waters have large areas of soft and hard clam beds and oyster beds. According to the Aquaculture Division of the State Department of Agriculture, shellfishing is “prohibited” within Holly Pond, extending along the coast to Pratt Island Two, the lower portions the Goodwives River, and Five Mile River, north of Butler’s Island. The oyster bed south of Butler’s Island and east of the Fish Islands is classified as “conditionally-approved.” The hard clam and oyster beds east of Nash Island within Darien River are classified as “restricted A3-relay.” The only “approved” shellfish waters are within Darien’s natural shellfish bed Scott’s Cove.

Areas where channels and boat anchorages exist should be maintained by periodic dredging. Otherwise, dredging should be limited in order to preserve the integrity of shoreline wildlife and aquatic habitats.

The prohibited areas are primarily due to runoff polluted by, fecal coliform from septic systems. The conditionally-approved areas are monitored by the State Bureau of Aquaculture. Harvesting is prohibited in these areas during and after rainfall events, as the result of polluted runoff. The Town Health Department authorizes harvesting for personal use, while the State issues licenses for commercial harvesting and for bed leasing. Coastal resources are inherently “downstream” of all other lands and are therefore affected by upstream events, land uses, and activities. While various coastal uses can be controlled through provision of facilities and access points, the long-term quality of some resources is dependent upon control, modification, or enhancement of activities affecting water quality and runoff throughout all of Darien’s associated watersheds. In this regard, long-term maintenance and protection of key values such as water quality and ecological integrity of tidal wetlands will necessarily involve similar issues as watercourse and wetland protection.

Issues & Opportunities

The primary issues for coastal resources in Darien, are:

- *Water Quality Degradation in Long Island Sound*

Land based activities have had both a direct and indirect impact on water quality in Long Island Sound. Impacts to the quality of coastal resources and enjoyment of them by Darien residents are a concern.

- *Invasive Species*

Due to its invasive nature, the spread of *Phragmites* in Darien's coastal area is a concern. The risk of *Phragmites* invasion is especially high wherever tidal wetlands are disturbed.

- *Shoreline Preservation*

Dredging activities along or near the shoreline poses a hazard to preserving the integrity of shoreline wildlife and aquatic habitats.

The long-range objectives of the Town include continuing to improve the capacity and safety of the Darien Harbor for boats; maintaining an anchorage control in other Darien waters in order to protect them from overuse and abuse from temporary mooring activities; and improvement of the regulatory procedures governing construction of individual docks and other structures in order that coastal resources may be best protected.

Protection Tools Currently Used in Darien

In addition to the zoning and subdivision tools previously noted in this chapter that provide some controls on creation of impervious surfaces, erosion and sedimentation, stormwater management, and flooding potential, the Zoning Regulations also include specific provisions (Section 810) for the control of activities within the designated Coastal Boundary in Darien.

Darien has a Harbor Waters Charter. This controls the allowed speed of boat operations and mooring and anchoring gear, protection of channels, prohibition of garbage dumping, law enforcement, and Harbor Master reports.

Darien also has a Boats and Harbors Ordinance that includes Darien Harbors descriptions, operation of boats in beach areas, boat speed limits, mooring tackle and gear, interference with channels, Harbor Master authority in Darien waters.

The Darien Board of Selectmen, working with the advice of the Advisory Commission on Coastal Waters and the Darien Harbor Master, administer the Harbor Waters Charter. The Harbor Master has authority in accordance with State Statutes.

6. Air Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six criteria pollutants to ensure the protection of human health and public welfare. NAAQS were established for: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), lead (Pb), ozone (O₃), and particulate matter (PM), which now includes PM₁₀ (PM with a diameter of 10 microns or less) and PM_{2.5} (PM with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less). The Clean Air Act of 1970 and subsequent amendments required states to monitor air quality to determine if regions meet the NAAQS. If a region shows violations of any of the NAAQS, that part of the state is classified as nonattainment for that pollutant, and the State must develop an air quality plan, called a State Implementation Plan, to bring that area into compliance.

Issues & Opportunities

Regions or counties throughout the state are designated as either attainment or non-attainment for each criteria pollutant. Fairfield County (and therefore Darien) is in attainment for CO, PM₁₀, NO₂, Pb, and SO₂. However, Fairfield County, with the exception of Shelton, is designated as severe non-attainment for the 1-hour O₃ standard.

Cumulative impacts to air quality can result from collective impacts of traffic volume increases, idling of diesel-powered vehicles such as buses and construction vehicles, long-range pollutant transport, and stationary sources, in addition to continual increases in vehicle emissions. For example, Darien has Interstate 95 and two major truck stops, which both are significant sources of air pollution. Air quality impacts also arise from construction activities that create fugitive dust from demolition of buildings or exposure of soil.

The EPA and the CTDEP regulate air quality standards within the state; therefore, local control over air quality is very limited. However, the Town can embrace the following measures to enhance local air quality:

Ensure compliance with Section 22a-174-18(a)(5) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, which requires that idling of mobile sources be limited to three minutes. This applies to school buses and town maintenance vehicles.

For intersections that could experience a drop in level of service and therefore more congestion (and increased vehicle emissions -- elevated CO) as a result of new development, the Planning and Zoning Commission can require reasonable traffic mitigation. Mitigation would aim to ensure that level of service is greater than D (congested flow) as estimated by standard traffic engineering methods).

The Planning and Zoning Commission can request a dust control plan for certain projects to minimize fugitive dust.

Request that construction contractors use diesel oxidation converters to reduce particulate matter adjacent to sensitive public areas during construction.

CHAPTER 4

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Overview

The Town recognizes the relationship between its residential character and the adequacy of its street system. It is the preservation of that residential character, and not merely the physical capacity of the existing roadway system, that should guide future land use decisions. This chapter of the Town Plan discusses roadway, parking issues and public transportation as the basis for possible future improvements.

Virtually all of the major arteries in Darien are State highways. By their very nature, their primary function is to link other major corridors together and to serve the regional needs of the State. A secondary function is that of serving local needs. As will be noted, traffic volumes on the arteries have grown appreciably since the last Town Plan was prepared in 1995. Use of these major arteries today clearly reflects their prominence in the Town's street system. But as traffic has increased, so has the inclination of motorists to find and use alternate (local) routes to bypass "trouble spots". As a consequence, the use of certain local roadways has transformed them into the arteries of choice – both by residents and regional commuters.

The Town of Darien cannot control all traffic problems within its borders. Many problems exist due to outside factors beyond the Town's control. For example, increasing I-95 and Merritt Parkway traffic is a by-product of development activities in the adjacent towns of Stamford and Norwalk as well as development on a more regional basis.

The Town Planning & Zoning Commission recognizes that traffic and transportation is the number one concern as identified in the League of Women Voters roundtable sessions held in late 2003 and early 2004 as part of the development of this Town Plan.

Although some local improvements to the roadway network have occurred recently, such as intersection changes, signalization to improve capacity and safety, and bridge widenings undertaken by the State, no major changes have occurred since 1995.

Policies

Recognize downtown parking needs for shoppers, employees, and commuters, while balancing the growth of the downtown business district. Continue to monitor the supply and demand for parking spaces amongst these groups.

Create a pedestrian-friendly downtown where people park once and walk, instead of driving from one store to another.

Continue to manage access to developed land while preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road systems (access management) as fully as possible--both on major arterials as well as on other arteries within the community.

Move traffic as efficiently as possible, especially along arterial and collector roads.

Improve intersections and sightlines where possible to minimize accident rates.

Support and coordinate the provision of public transportation (rail, bus, taxi). This may occur through a variety of regional planning mechanisms.

Achieve all of the above while preserving the residential character of the community and not compromising on safety.

Reduce excessive speeding and improve safety for cars, walkers and bicyclists.

Recommendations

Safety and Capacity

Consider safety and/or capacity improvements where needed. The improvements itemized herein address three basic issues - high accident occurrences; the need for improved traffic flow; and the need for improved intersection sightlines, including more attention to the enforcement of the existing rules.

Consider methods for reducing truck traffic using Tokeneke Road as a “cut-through” (see Appendix A4, page A4-7).

The Town may wish to consider the possibility of acquiring an off-street parking area close to the Darien Post Office if it becomes the only postal facility in Town.

The Parking Authority should evaluate the possibility of increasing usage of the Mechanic Street parking lot by commuters by means of pricing adjustments.

Over time, eliminate the off-street parking spaces which requiring backing into public streets within commercial areas.

Consider revising sightline requirements within the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations at new street intersections and curb cuts. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) guidelines provide a starting point for Town consideration (see page A4-26).

Parking Improvements

Study and consider the relaxing of parking regulations.

Because the municipal parking lots are mostly not visible from Boston Post Road, there is a need for better signs indicating their location. On street parking needs better defined parking spaces.

1. Improve Signage and Visibility of Municipal Parking Lots

- a. There is a lack of consistency in signing – by location and format. To better provide accessibility to the existing lots, a consistent look, style and format of signage needs to be established and adhered to. The following is suggested: Directional signing to municipal parking lots should have a distinctive sign (logo) that would stand out and not become part of the urban clutter of other signs along the Boston Post Road. Existing parking signs should be removed and replaced with new signing. All municipal lots should have a sign at their primary entranceways indicating the name of the facility. Existing unsigned municipal lot parking areas need to be posted. See pages A4-30 through A4-34 for more details.

- b. Parking lot signing should be provided, in both directions, at Mansfield Avenue leading to the Mechanic Street Lot and/or the Tilley Lot, and other locations as needed.
- c. Eastbound traffic on Boston Post Road should be directed by signage to the Center Street Lots via Corbin Drive and Old Kings Highway South to Center Street.

2. Improve On-Street Markings/Signage

- a. Individual parking spaces shall be clearly marked. This will increase the efficiency of on-street parking.
- b. Existing unsigned on-street parking areas need to be posted.
- c. As downtown activity increases, consider providing more municipal parking.
- d. Reallocate parking space distribution between shoppers, employees, and commuters in the most efficient manner possible. (see page A4-30)

Sidewalk Improvements

1. Increase efforts to repair existing sidewalks, and construct new ones where needed and appropriate. (see page A4-37)
2. Consider placing funds in the Capital Improvement Program on an annual basis to improve, renovate, and construct sidewalks.

Public Transportation Improvements

1. Consider the acquisition of the private Koons Lot to provide more commuter railroad parking near the Darien train station and to facilitate the coordination of all available public transportation.
2. Consider instituting a shuttle van service that would offer, at peak commuter hours, home-to-station service. During mid-day times, these vans could be used to transport senior citizens or others for shopping, medical or for personal trips around town. This option, including its cost ramifications, should be explored more fully.
3. In order to encourage the use of Connecticut Transit bus services, existing schedules and route maps should be prominently posted at bus stops, rail stations, and at other municipal facilities.
4. Consider regrading the steep entrance and exit from the Darien train station via the Boston Post Road in order to flatten the hill. Occasionally, buses get stuck at the entranceway due to the vertical grade and the abrupt change in grade.

APPENDIX A4

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION



Existing Roadway System

Typically, roadways are classified by function. As shown in Exhibit 4-1, the degree to which roadways are intended to provide mobility versus land access forms the basis of their classification. Three broad categories are identified – arterials, collectors and local streets. Within each of these categories, roadways are sometimes further subdivided in major or minor groupings. Such a classification system can be applied to the Darien street system. In Exhibit 4-2, the Town of Darien street system is shown.

Interstate major arterials are those roadways where mobility is paramount. Service to abutting land uses is minimal or non-existent. I-95 and the Merritt Parkway are examples where regional and national movements are solely intended and access/egress is controlled by a limited number of interchanges.

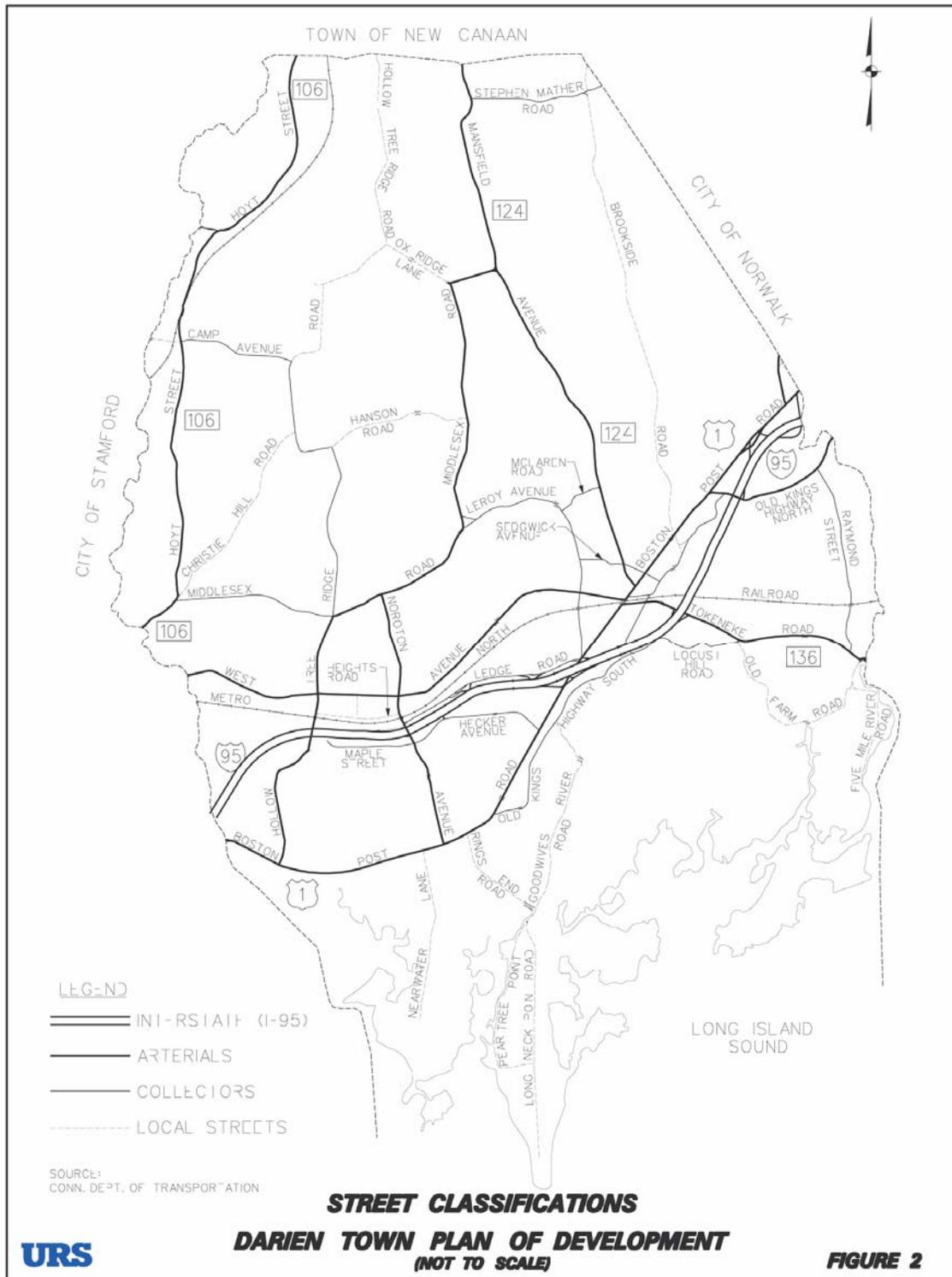
Major arterials are roadways that serve the major centers of activity within a Town. These roadways carry most of the trips entering and leaving the major centers, as well as most through traffic within the community. They serve trips of moderate lengths with a high mobility priority, and typically provide access to the interstate major arterials. The Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) is an example of a major arterial as are Hoyt Street (State Route 106) and Mansfield Avenue (State Route 124). Within this category, of course, the most important thoroughfare is the Boston Post Road because of its heavier volume levels and its regional connections to other Connecticut municipalities. Its role in Darien also consists of local access to abutting properties. The Town will need to continue to exercise access management tools (managing access to developed land while preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road systems) as fully as possible on this major arterial as well as on other arteries within the community.

Minor arterials are roadways that supplement and interconnect with the major arterial system. They serve trips of more limited lengths and at a lesser mobility priority. These roadways could connect communities within a town and provide some degree of access to abutting properties. Tokeneke Road (State Route 136) is an example of a minor arterial as are Noroton Avenue, West Avenue, Old King's Highway North and portions of Hollow Tree Ridge Road and Middlesex Road.

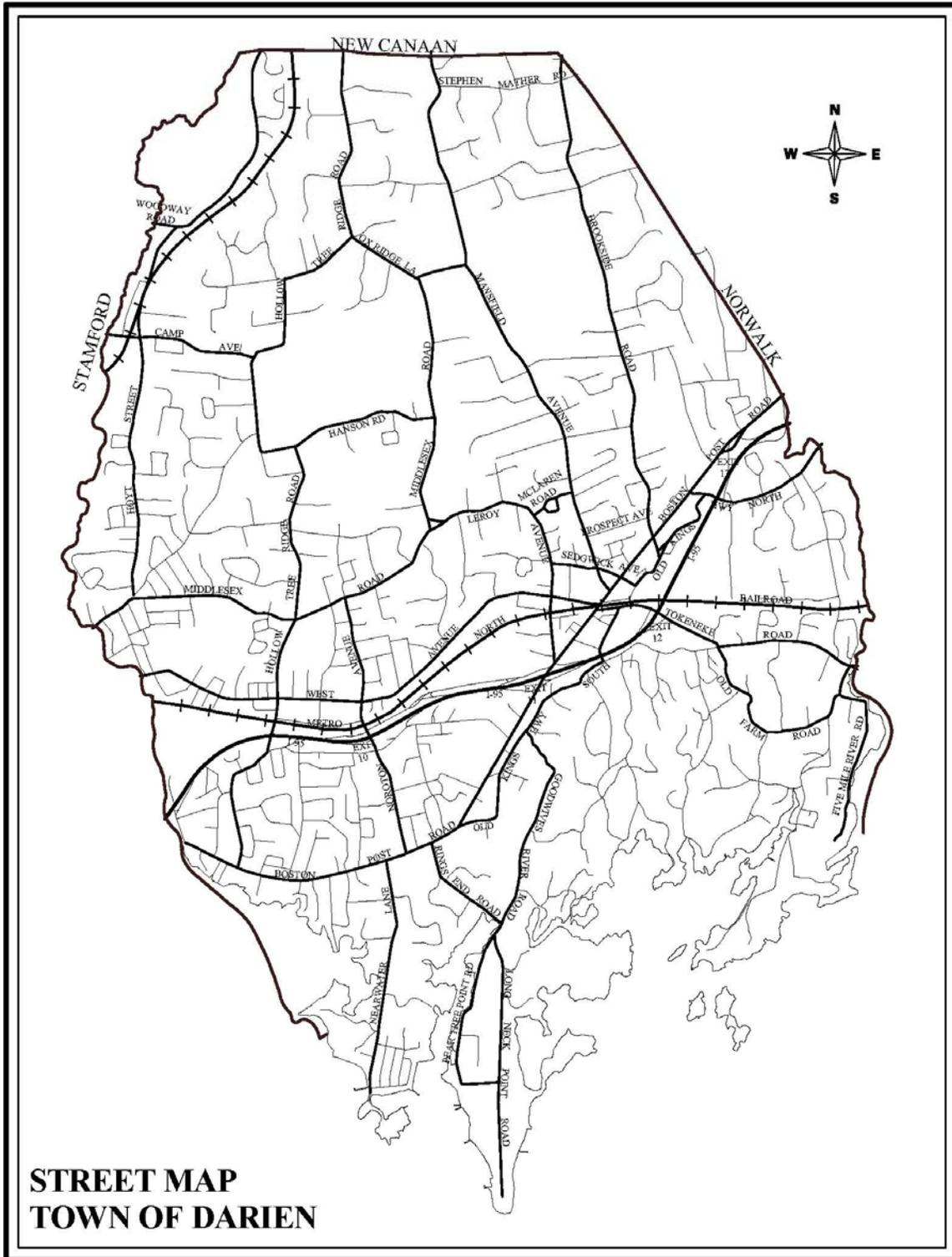
The Darien collector street system is one that serves both traffic circulation and local access. Additionally, these roadways typically feed into arterial streets. Leroy Avenue, Sedgwick Avenue, and Old King's Highway South are examples of collector streets. Volumes on these types of collector streets are usually significantly less than the arterial thoroughfares. They may also access residential neighborhoods.

Local streets comprise the remaining roads in the Town. Their role is primarily providing local access to abutting properties with mobility only a minor role.

**EXHIBIT 4-1
 STREET CLASSIFICATION MAP**



**EXHIBIT 4-2
STREET MAP OF DARIEN**



Traffic Volumes

The 2002 traffic data for the Town of Darien is highlighted in Exhibit 4-3. The Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) carries the heaviest daily flows within the Town, excluding I-95. As noted, 24-hour volumes range from 12,200 to approximately 27,000 vehicles. As a point of reference, I-95 between Interchange #9 and #10 carried 148,300 daily vehicles in 2002. The aggregate change on roads over this ten-year period ranged from -16% to +42%.

Hoyt Street carries the next heaviest magnitude of traffic as volumes approach 15,100 daily vehicles near the New Canaan Town Line and about 11,000 vehicles near the Middlesex Road/Christie Hill Road intersection to the south. This represents a 0-16% increase in traffic on Hoyt Street over the past ten years. This is on top of a 30-70% increase in traffic between 1980 and 1993. It is apparent that a significant portion of this traffic utilizes Woodway Road to enter Stamford and this intersection may need consideration for signalization in the future.

Daily volumes on Mansfield Avenue range from 5,200 – 10,400 vehicles with the heaviest activity north of the Middlesex Road intersection. Middlesex Road is a bypass route for some motorists on Mansfield Avenue as volumes on this corridor steadily decrease as it approaches the Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) intersection. This corridor has 24-hour volumes between 5,100 and 10,400 vehicles per day.

Shown in Exhibit 4-4 is a comparison of the daily volumes for 1992-94 and the 2002 time periods.

As noted later within this Chapter, it is expected that there will be potential increases in traffic flow in the Hollow Tree Ridge Road/Heights Road area due to the Avalon residential project and potential development on the adjacent Duhaime parcel. Also affected may be the Hollow Tree Ridge Road/West Avenue intersection. The complete listing of work trip information, and a comparison to 1990 Census data is found in Exhibits 4-6A and 4-6B.

Indicated are volume increases over this 8-10 year time span ranging from -16 to +71 percent on the measured segments with an average increase of +13%. One factor affecting growth since 1992 has been the significant development of office space and employment in the nearby municipalities of Stamford and Greenwich and retail development on Connecticut Avenue in Norwalk. It would be expected, as a result, that commuter and retail vehicular trips through the Town of Darien should substantially increase.

**EXHIBIT 4-4
 REPRESENTATIVE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUME GROWTH (1992-94 to 2002)**

ROADWAY LOCATION	1992-94	2002	CHANGE
Hoyt Street, south of New Canaan Town Line	13,000	15,100	16%
Hoyt Street, north of Camp Avenue	8,900	10,300	16%
Hoyt Street, south of Camp Avenue	9,500	10,500	11%
Hoyt Street, north of Middlesex Road	11,000	11,000	0%
Middlesex Road, south of Hanson Road	5,600	6,400	14%
Middlesex Road, east of Hoyt Street	5,860	5,100	-13%
Middlesex Road, east of Hollow Tree Ridge Road	6,500	6,500	0%
Boston Post Road, west of Hollow Tree Ridge Road	11,440	12,200	7%
Boston Post Road, east of Noroton Avenue	11,300	13,500	19%
Boston Post Road, west of Route 136 (Tokeneke Road)	16,500	15,500	-6%
Boston Post Road, east of Route 136 (Tokeneke Road)	20,100	17,500	-13%
Boston Post Road, east of Brookside Road	15,700	18,600	18%
Boston Post Road, west of Norwalk City Line	19,000	27,000	42%
Mansfield Ave., north of Boston Post Road	5,200	5,200	0%
Mansfield Ave., south of Middlesex Rd.	8,700	7,500	-14%
Mansfield Ave., south of New Canaan Town Line	12,400	10,400	-16%
Tokeneke Rd., west of Norwalk City Line	10,400	13,300	28%
Tokeneke Rd., east of I-95	11,300	13,200	17%
Hollow Tree Ridge Road, north of Boston Post Road	2,800	4,800	71%
I-95 Between Exits 9 and 10	124,000	148,300	20%
<u>TOTAL</u>	329,200	371,900	13%

Source: Connecticut Department of Transportation

Lessening Truck Traffic on Tokeneke Road

Concern has been expressed by residents of Darien about the number of trucks utilizing Tokeneke Road between the City of Norwalk and I-95 Interchange #12. It appears that many of these vehicles originate from companies located in South Norwalk. To foster commercial development of this area, the City of Norwalk constructed Martin Luther King Boulevard, a four lane artery, southerly from West Avenue and Washington Street. This artery, it was assumed, would provide the vehicular linkage to I-95 (at Interchange #14 and #15) for those businesses in the new commercial zone. For some of these businesses, however, access to I-95 is both faster and shorter via Tokeneke Road if the orientation of the truck trips lie to the west of Norwalk.

Tokeneke Road is a State highway (Route 136). As such, it is currently maintained by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT). Therefore, possible actions by the Town of Darien to limit or restrict the use of this roadway by truckers would need State approvals given DOT's current jurisdiction.

Options which the Town of Darien can explore to reduce or limit truck traffic include the following:

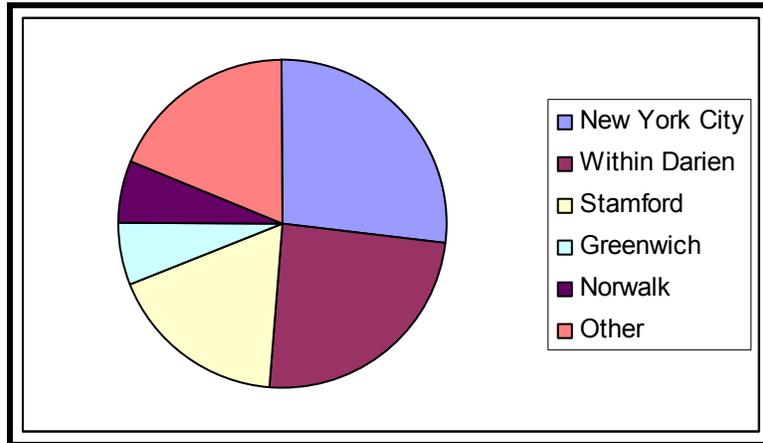
1. Quantify the number of truck movements between the Norwalk town line and vehicle original/destination locations via I-95 Interchange #12.
2. Quantify truck accident history on Tokeneke Road.
3. Determine what conditions of approval, if any, were imposed on the South Norwalk business – by Norwalk Planning & Zoning and/or the State Traffic Commission relative to truck routings.
4. Meet with City of Norwalk officials to discuss truck movements through the Tokeneke section of Darien.
5. Meet with CDOT representatives to determine if any actions can be undertaken under their jurisdiction including lowering the speed limit from its present 35 miles per hour.
6. Evaluate the possible closure of one or both of the I-95 Interchange #12 ramps.
7. Evaluate whether the Town of Darien would be prepared to “take-over” Tokeneke Road as a town roadway in order to impose truck restriction measures.

Journey to Work Patterns

The U. S. Census Bureau, as part of its survey in the year 2000, obtained information about work trip destinations for those who reside in the Town of Darien as well as those who commute to the Town. Overall, approximately 8,200 work trips by Darien residents were identified. The primary destinations for these trips were as follows:

New York City	-	27 percent
Within Darien	-	24 percent
Stamford	-	18 percent
Greenwich	-	6 percent
Norwalk	-	6 percent

**EXHIBIT 4-5
2000 PLACE OF WORK FOR PERSONS
RESIDING IN THE TOWN OF DARIEN**



For work trips **into** the Town, the primary locations where these trips originated were as follows (of approximately 9,469 trips):

Stamford	-	19 percent
Norwalk	-	17 percent
Bridgeport	-	4 percent
Westchester County	-	5 percent
Greenwich	-	3 percent

**EXHIBIT 4-6A
 JOURNEY TO WORK, 1990-2000: PLACE OF WORK FOR PERSONS
 RESIDING IN THE TOWN OF DARIEN, CONNECTICUT**

AREA NAME	STATE	WORKERS		CHANGE 1990-2000	
		2000	1990	NUMBER	PERCENT
Darien	CT	2,002	2,392	-390	-16.3%
Greenwich	CT	532	485	47	9.7%
New Canaan	CT	127	227	-100	-44.1%
Norwalk	CT	530	579	-49	-8.5%
Stamford	CT	1,472	1,930	-458	-23.7%
Weston	CT	5	6	-1	-16.7%
Westport	CT	146	105	41	39.0%
Wilton	CT	62	56	6	10.7%
South Western Region Total	CT	4,876	5,780	-904	-15.6%
Brookfield	CT	13	14	-1	-7.1%
Danbury	CT	78	22	56	254.5%
New Fairfield	CT	13	0	13	N/A
Newtown	CT	14	0	14	N/A
Ridgefield	CT	17	14	3	21.4%
Housatonic Valley Region Total	CT	135	50	85	170.0%
Bridgeport	CT	53	74	-21	-28.4%
Easton	CT	7	0	7	N/A
Fairfield	CT	72	74	-2	-2.7%
Monroe	CT	5	0	5	N/A
Stratford	CT	12	37	-25	-67.6%
Trumbull	CT	62	30	32	106.7%
Greater Bridgeport Region Total	CT	211	215	-4	-1.9%
Valley Region Total	CT	39	13	26	200.0%
Connecticut Total	CT	5,368	6,134	-766	-12.5%
Kings County (Borough of Brooklyn)	NY	107	23	84	365.2%
Nassau County	NY	49	46	3	6.5%
New York County (Borough of Manhattan)	NY	2,250	2,068	182	8.8%
Queens County (Borough of Queens)	NY	32	78	-46	-59.0%
Rockland County	NY	0	14	-14	-100.0%
Westchester County	NY	300	250	50	20.0%
New York State Total	NY	2,762	2,520	242	9.6%
Grand Total		8,239	8,953	-714	-8.0%

Source: Refer to Table 2B

**EXHIBIT 4-6B
 JOURNEY TO WORK, 1990-2000: PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PERSONS
 WORKING IN THE TOWN OF DARIEN, CONNECTICUT**

AREA NAME	STATE	WORKERS		CHANGE 1990-2000	
		2000	1990	NUMBER	PERCENT
Darien	CT	2,002	2,392	-390	-16.3%
Greenwich	CT	300	225	75	33.3%
New Canaan	CT	233	253	-20	-7.0%
Norwalk	CT	1,640	1,601	39	2.4%
Stamford	CT	1,811	1,388	423	30.5%
Weston	CT	37	59	-22	-37.3%
Westport	CT	129	97	32	33.0%
Wilton	CT	96	126	-30	-23.8%
South Western Region Total	CT	6,248	6,141	107	1.7%
Brookfield	CT	24	24	0	0.0%
Danbury	CT	101	57	44	77.2%
New Fairfield	CT	29	36	-7	-19.4%
Newtown	CT	116	36	80	222.2%
Ridgefield	CT	100	68	32	47.1%
Housatonic Valley Region Total	CT	568	293	275	93.9%
Bridgeport	CT	404	280	124	44.3%
Easton	CT	30	22	8	36.4%
Fairfield	CT	274	173	101	58.4%
Monroe	CT	48	39	9	23.1%
Stratford	CT	174	171	3	1.8%
Trumbull	CT	193	133	60	45.1%
Greater Bridgeport Region Total	CT	1,123	818	305	37.3%
Valley Region Total	CT	140	108	32	29.6%
Connecticut Total		8,629	7,695	934	12.1%
Kings County (Borough of Brooklyn)	NY	20	0	20	N/A
Nassau County	NY	0	59	-59	-100.0%
New York County (Borough of Manhattan)	NY	52	104	-52	-50.0%
Queens County (Borough of Queens)	NY	73	17	56	329.4%
Rockland County	NY	7	7	0	0.0%
Westchester County	NY	479	194	285	146.9%
New York State Total	NY	775	473	302	63.8%
Grand Total		9,469	8,270	-17	-0.2%

Prepared on August 4, 2003 by the South Western Regional Planning Agency.

Note: This table includes only those municipalities and planning regions in Connecticut, and those counties in New York and New Jersey, whose residents worked in this municipality in either 1990 or 2000.

Sources: U.S. Consensus Bureau, 2000 Minor Civil Division/County-to-Minor Civil Division/County Worker Flow Files and 1990 County-to-County Worker Flow Files.

Accident History

Accident information has been obtained from the Darien Police Department for a three-year period from mid-2000 to mid-2003. In addition, accident information has also been obtained from the Connecticut Department of Transportation for the years 2000 to 2003 (see Exhibit 4-7).

Several locations stand out in terms of accident frequency including:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number of Accidents</u>
Boston Post Road at West Avenue (including the intersection with Tokeneke Road)	49
Boston Post Road at Corbin Drive	36
Boston Post Road at Sedgwick Avenue	30
Boston Post Road at Brookside Road	25
Boston Post Road at Mansfield Avenue	24
Heights Road at the U.S. Post Office	23
West Avenue at Noroton Avenue	18

Accident locations are also shown in Exhibit 4-5 for the Town as a whole.

Suggested improvements for some of the high accident intersections within Darien are noted later in this Chapter.

The highest accident location of the three-year period was on the Boston Post Road at West Avenue (including the intersection with Tokeneke Road). This is also the location where traffic volumes on the Boston Post Road are near their heaviest (17,500 vehicles). The Boston Post Road and Brookside Road intersection continues to experience a high number of accidents. The Brookside Road approaches are slightly skewed, forcing motorist to position their vehicles at a potentially dangerous point in the intersection when turning left from any approach.

An additional indication of a high accident location is inclusion on DOT's Suggested List of Surveillance Study Sites (SLOSSS). The SLOSSS lists State Highway intersections and roadway segments with high accident rates and a high promise of accident reduction. In Darien, the following six locations appear on the SLOSSS:

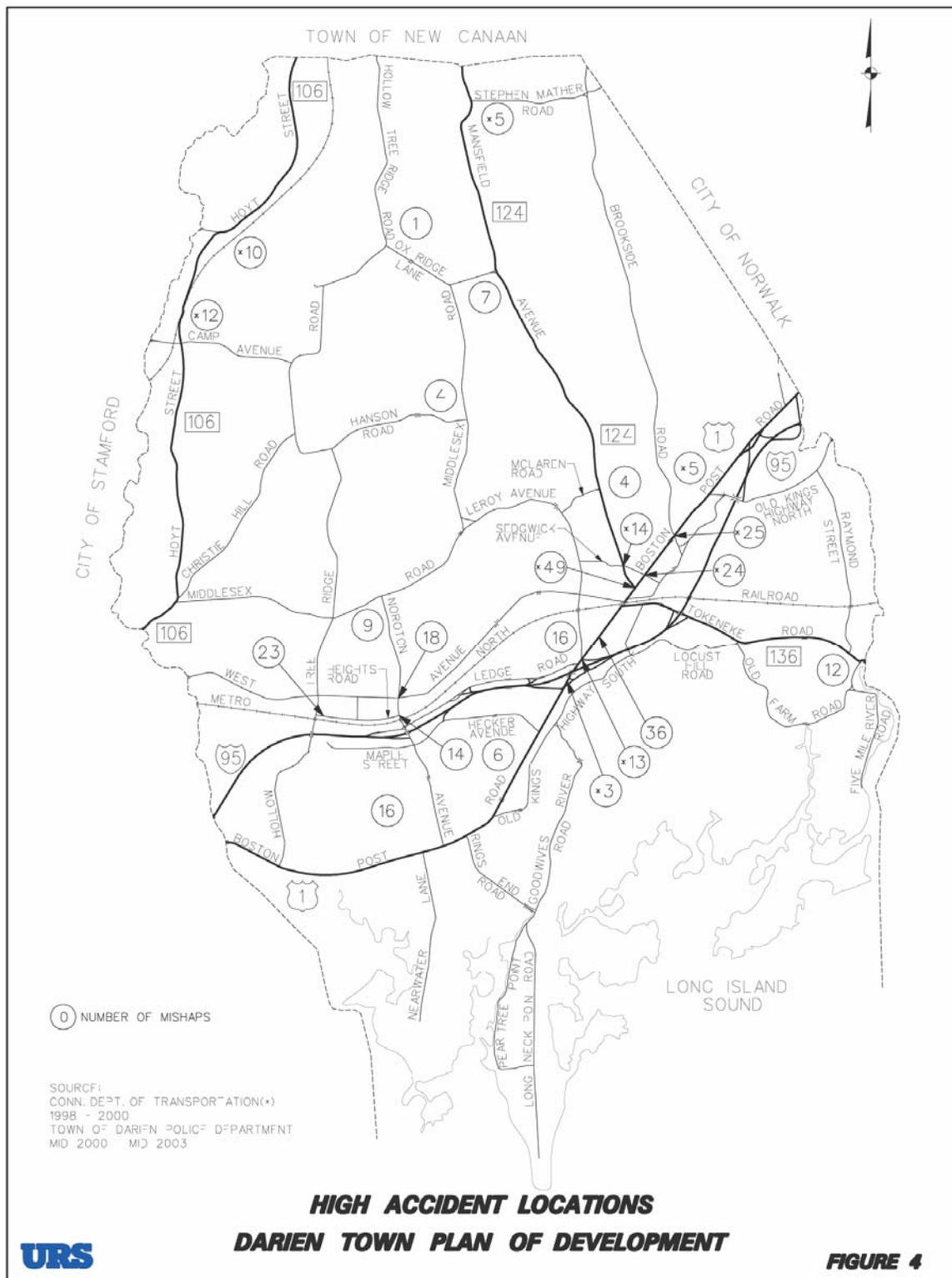
1. Boston Post Road at Ledge Road
2. Boston Post Road between Leroy Avenue and Corbin Drive
3. Boston Post Road between Day Street and Center Street
4. Boston Post Road at Center Street, Tokeneke Road, West Avenue and Mechanic Street
5. Boston Post Road between Mansfield Avenue and Sedgwick Avenue
6. Boston Post Road at Sedgwick Avenue

**EXHIBIT 4-7
 HIGH ACCIDENT LOCATIONS**

INTERSECTION	1991 - 1993 THREE YEAR TOTAL	Mid 2000 – Mid 2003 THREE YEAR TOTAL
Boston Post Rd. & Noroton Ave.	12	16
Boston Post Rd. & Renshaw Rd.	N/A	6
Boston Post Rd. & Rings End Rd.	9	4*
Boston Post Rd. & Old Kings Hwy. So.	11	5*
Boston Post Rd. & Thorndal Cir.	9	7
Boston Post Rd. & I-95 Exit 11, NB Entrance Ramp	10	3*
Boston Post Rd. & Ledge Rd.	13	16
Boston Post Rd. & Leroy Ave.	14	13*
Boston Post Rd. & Corbin Drive	18	36
Boston Post Rd. & Day St.	8	13*
Boston Post Rd. & West Ave.	14	49**
Boston Post Rd. & Mansfield Ave.	28	24*
Boston Post Rd. & Sedgwick Ave.	13	30*
Boston Post Rd. & Brookside Rd.	24	25*
Boston Post Rd. & Old Kings Hwy. No.	15	5*
Boston Post Rd. & Birch Rd.	12	10*
Boston Post Rd. & I-95 Exit 13, SB Entrance Ramp	16	7*
Hoyt St. & Camp Ave.	18	12*
Hoyt St. & Woodway Rd.	12	10*
Mansfield Ave. & Sedgwick Ave.	21	14*
Mansfield Ave. & Stephen Mather Rd.	21	5*
Mansfield Ave. & McLaren Rd.	11	4
Middlesex Rd. & Mansfield Ave.	9	7
Middlesex Rd. & Hanson Rd.	N/A	4
Noroton Ave. & Ledge Rd.	16	14
Noroton Ave & West Ave.	20	18
Noroton Ave. & Middlesex Rd.	N/A	9
Heights Rd. (in vicinity of Post Office)	N/A	23
Tokeneke Rd. & Raymond St., Five Mile River Rd.	N/A	12
Hollow Tree Ridge & Ox Ridge Lane, Hancock Lane	N/A	1

Note: Number of accidents based on Town of Darien Police Accident Records, except as noted below:
 * 1998-2000 ConnDOT accident records
 ** ConnDOT data includes the combined intersections of West Avenue and Tokeneke Road.
 Bolded items discussed in detail in chapter

**EXHIBIT 4-8
 MAP OF HIGH ACCIDENT LOCATIONS**



High Accident Locations

1. Heights Road (in vicinity of the Post Office)

The westbound approach of Heights Road should be widened to provide separate left and right turn lanes. This improvement would eliminate the queuing for the majority of motorists who turn right onto Hollow Tree Ridge Road. At the same time efforts should be made to improve safety along Heights Road in the vicinity of the Post Office. This is a high accident location, with 23 accidents recorded over the last three years. A review of the accident reports revealed that 16 of the 23 accidents involved vehicles accessing/exiting the perpendicular parking spaces located off Heights Road in front of the Noroton Heights shopping plaza. To improve safety it is recommended that the roadside parking be either eliminated or reconfigured. Eliminating the roadside parking is the safest alternative. As part of this option, it is strongly recommended to open customer access to the retail establishments from the rear and to upgrade the façade to make the back of the building more attractive from the rear parking area (refer to Exhibit 4-9A). However, two alternative front parking reconfigurations have also been developed. Exhibit 4-9B shows parking spaces being reconfigured in a parallel fashion and Exhibit 4-9C shows a reconfiguration with angled parking along Heights Road. The design shown in Exhibit 4-9C still results in vehicles backing into Heights Road.

The AvalonBay residential development, as well as the future potential development of the 3.7 acre Duhaime property, both on Hollow Tree Ridge Road, could measurably increase traffic at the Heights Road intersection and on Heights Road and adjacent roadways. One consideration to help reduce accidents in this area would be to offer “development bonuses” to the property owners on Heights Road to eliminate perpendicular parking fronting on this artery. Alternately, the Planning & Zoning Commission could support parking variance request(s) to eliminate those parking spaces. It is important that local land use boards work closely with property owners to resolve this situation. Any future development (or redevelopment) of the properties should certainly include elimination of this type of parking configuration.

EXHIBIT 4-9A
CONCEPT PLAN – HEIGHTS ROAD/HOLLOW TREE RIDGE ROAD

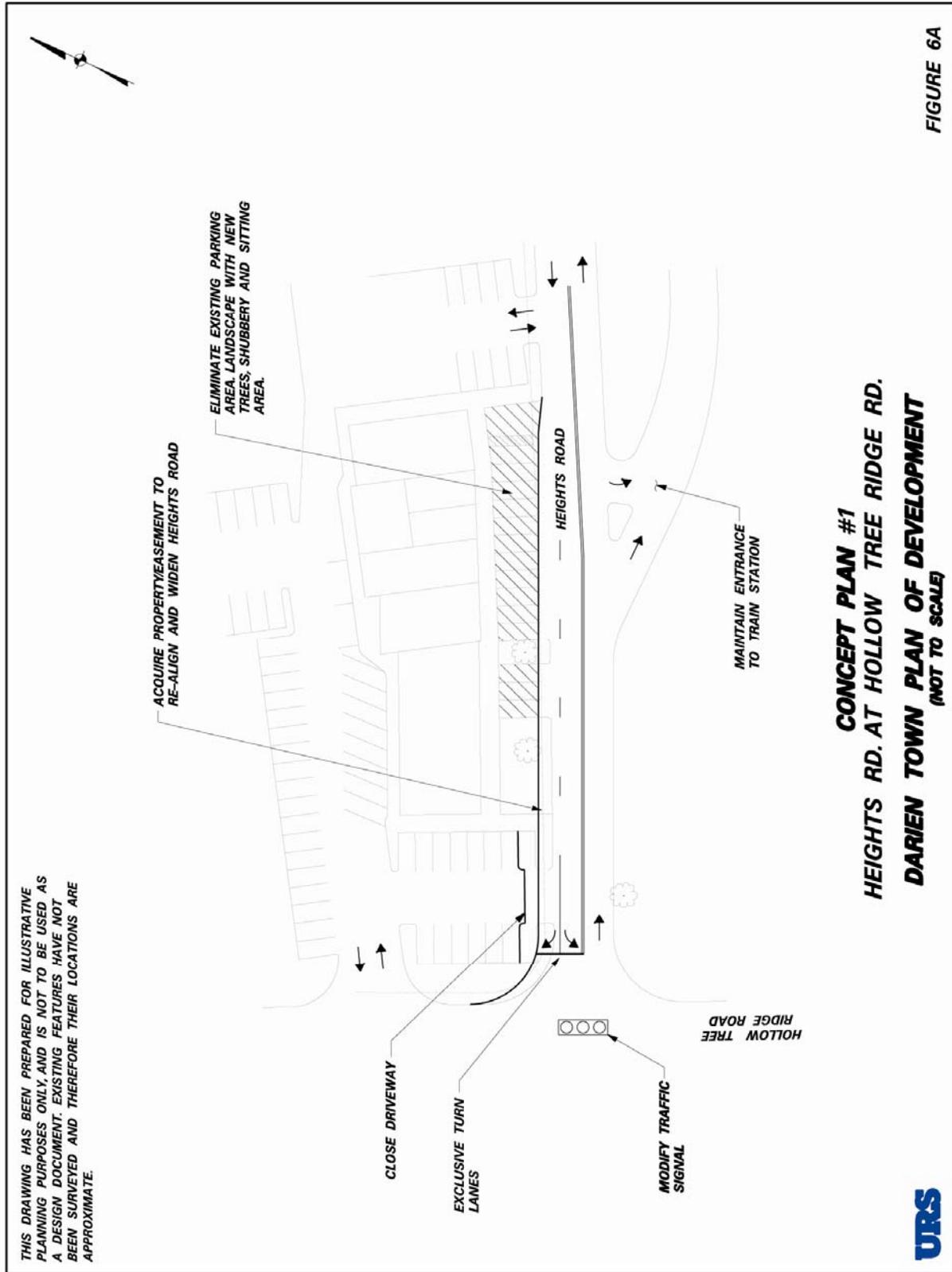


EXHIBIT 4-9B
CONCEPT PLAN – HEIGHTS ROAD/HOLLOW TREE RIDGE ROAD

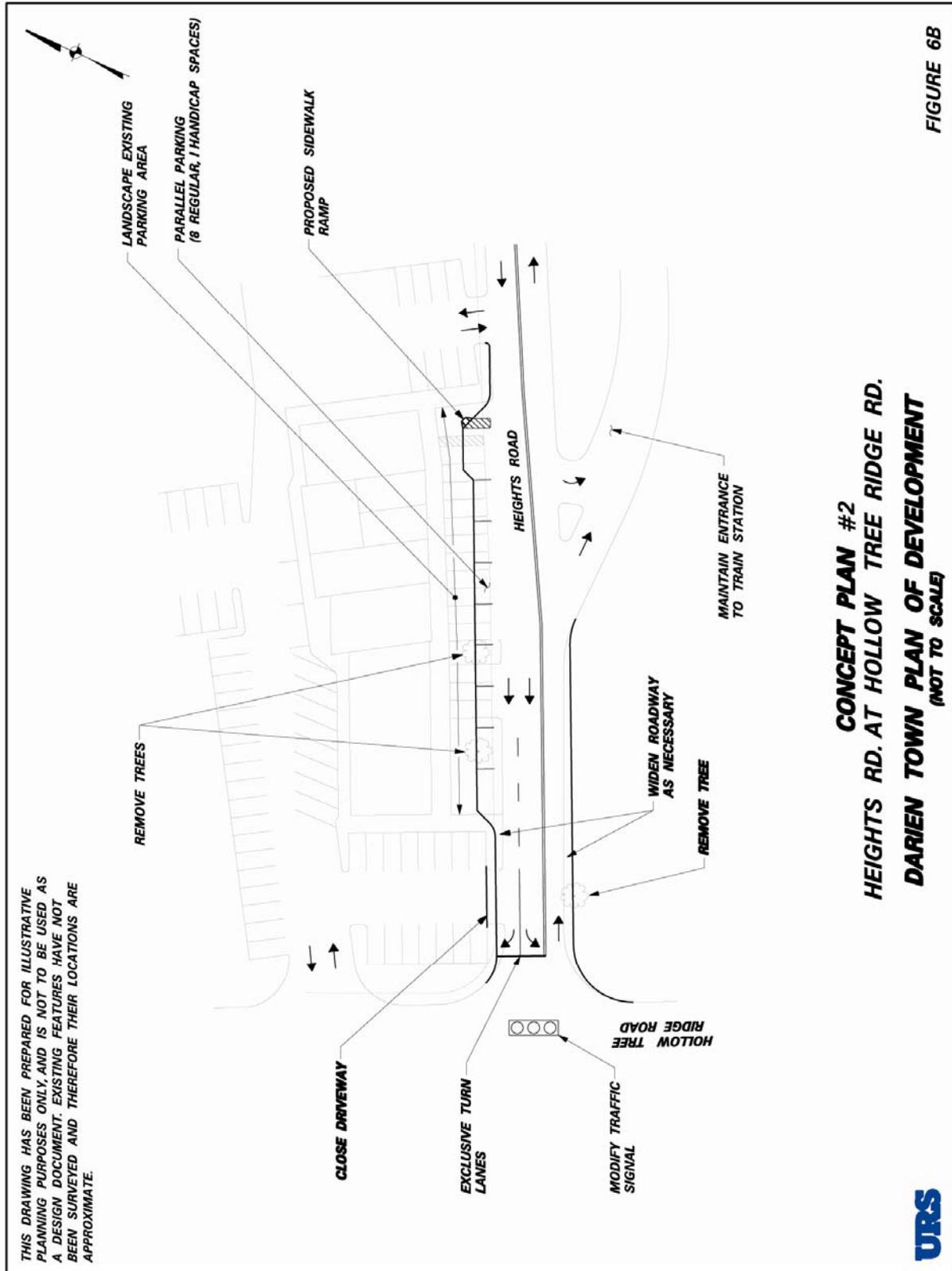
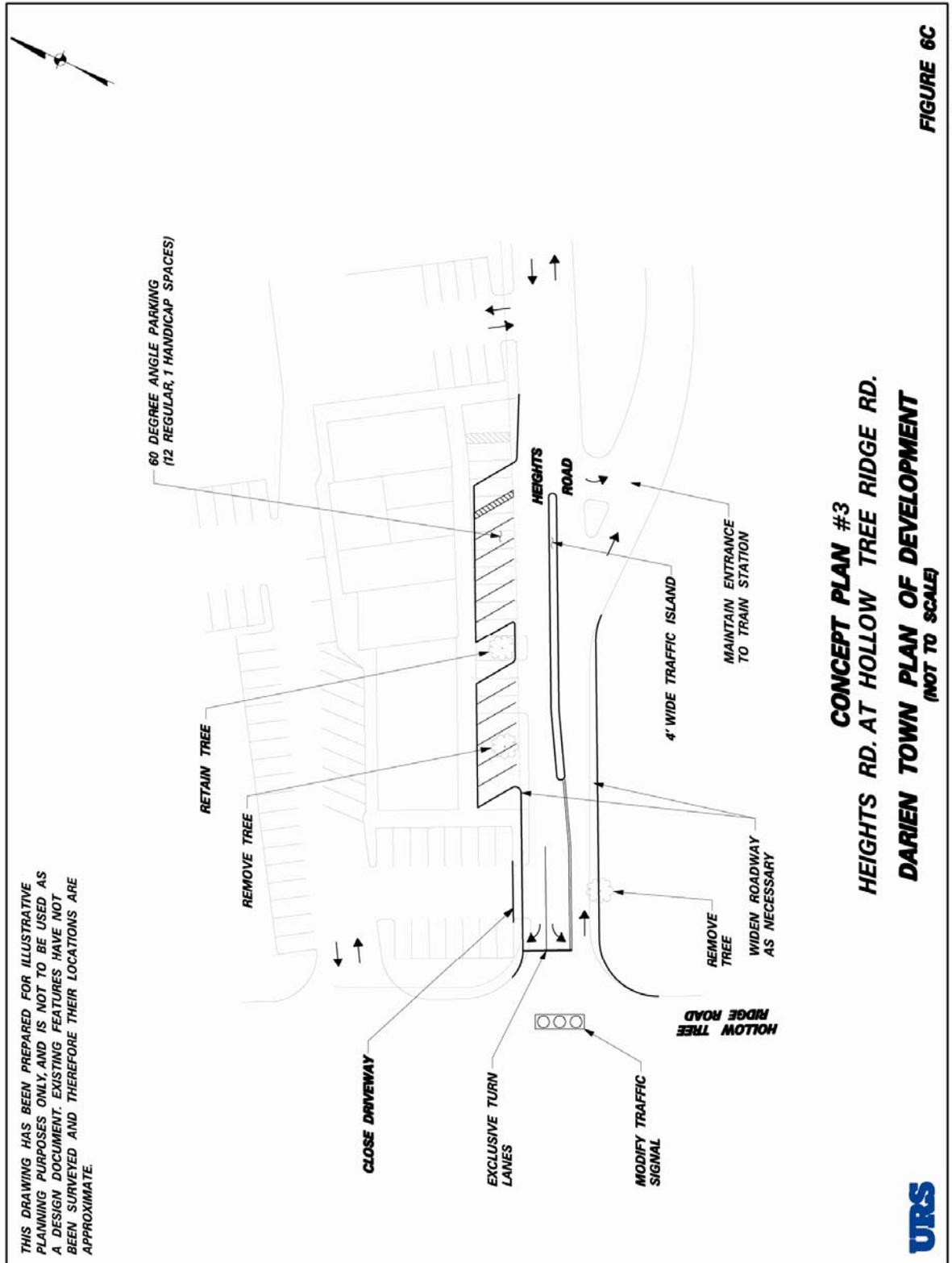


EXHIBIT 4-9C CONCEPT PLAN – HEIGHTS ROAD/HOLLOW TREE RIDGE ROAD



**2. Boston Post Road @ Ledge Road
Boston Post Road @ Leroy Avenue/I-95 WB Off-ramp (Interchange 11)**

Leroy Avenue and the I-95 Westbound Off-ramp at Interchange 11 are located almost opposite each other along the Boston Post Road. Approximately 230 feet to the west, Ledge Road forms another signalized intersection with the Boston Post Road. These two signalized intersections are coordinated to function as one; however, safety and operational movements at this location continue to be issues of concern.

As noted earlier, the Boston Post Road/Ledge Road intersection appears on DOT's Suggested List of Surveillance Study Sites (SLOSSS), which lists locations with high accident rates and high promise of accident reduction. Indicated is that 12 of the 16 accidents (mid-2000 through mid-2003) involved vehicles approaching the intersection on the Boston Post Road westbound. A pattern of rear-end and angle mishaps were prevalent, where westbound motorists appear not to be stopping in time for the traffic signal. Field observations corroborate that these motorists, originating from Leroy Avenue and the I-95 off-ramp, routinely run the Boston Post Road/Ledge Road light at the beginning of its red phase. It is possible that the closely spaced signal is not expected, but it also appears that many motorists are simply too impatient to stop after just clearing the adjacent intersection.

The dividing island on the westbound I-95 off-ramp approach to the Boston Post Road also creates safety concerns. There is no indication, and it is not clear by the island's alignment, which side should be utilized by motorists proceeding straight onto Leroy Avenue. Also, the one lane on the left (west) side of the island is wide, and vehicles regularly stack two abreast. When these dual left turners combine with right turning vehicles from Leroy Avenue, three lanes of traffic vie for the two available westbound Boston Post Road lanes. Complicating matters, many vehicles from the off-ramp are bound for Ledge Road, which requires a short weave to the right.

At a minimum, the I-95 off-ramp should be redesigned to clarify intended lane use, and the traffic signal's timing/phasing should be adjusted so that southbound vehicles from Leroy Avenue and the I-95 off-ramp can clear both the Boston Post Road/Leroy Avenue/Ledge Road intersections on their signal phase. The entrance to the former Howard Johnson's Restaurant on the Boston Post Road should be closed to improve safety and traffic flow. Consideration should also be given to providing a second approach lane on Ledge Road. Another solution would involve the complete redesign of both the intersections and the traffic signal location. Increasing queuing space between the intersections and clarifying the I-95 off-ramp lane use should be a consideration depending on the geometric changes. Again depending on the geometric changes, the signal could possibly be modified so that Ledge Road and Leroy Avenue traffic progress in the same phase and stack between the two intersections. The I-95 off-ramp would then operate on its own phase followed by the Boston Post Road through movements. The need for additional approach lanes on Ledge Road and the I-95 off-ramp should also be assessed recognizing potential future redevelopment of the Howard Johnson's property. Exhibits 4-10A and 4-10B, depict two alternative geometric options.

EXHIBIT 4-10A
CONCEPT PLAN – BOSTON POST ROAD/LEDGE ROAD/I-95 EXIT 11

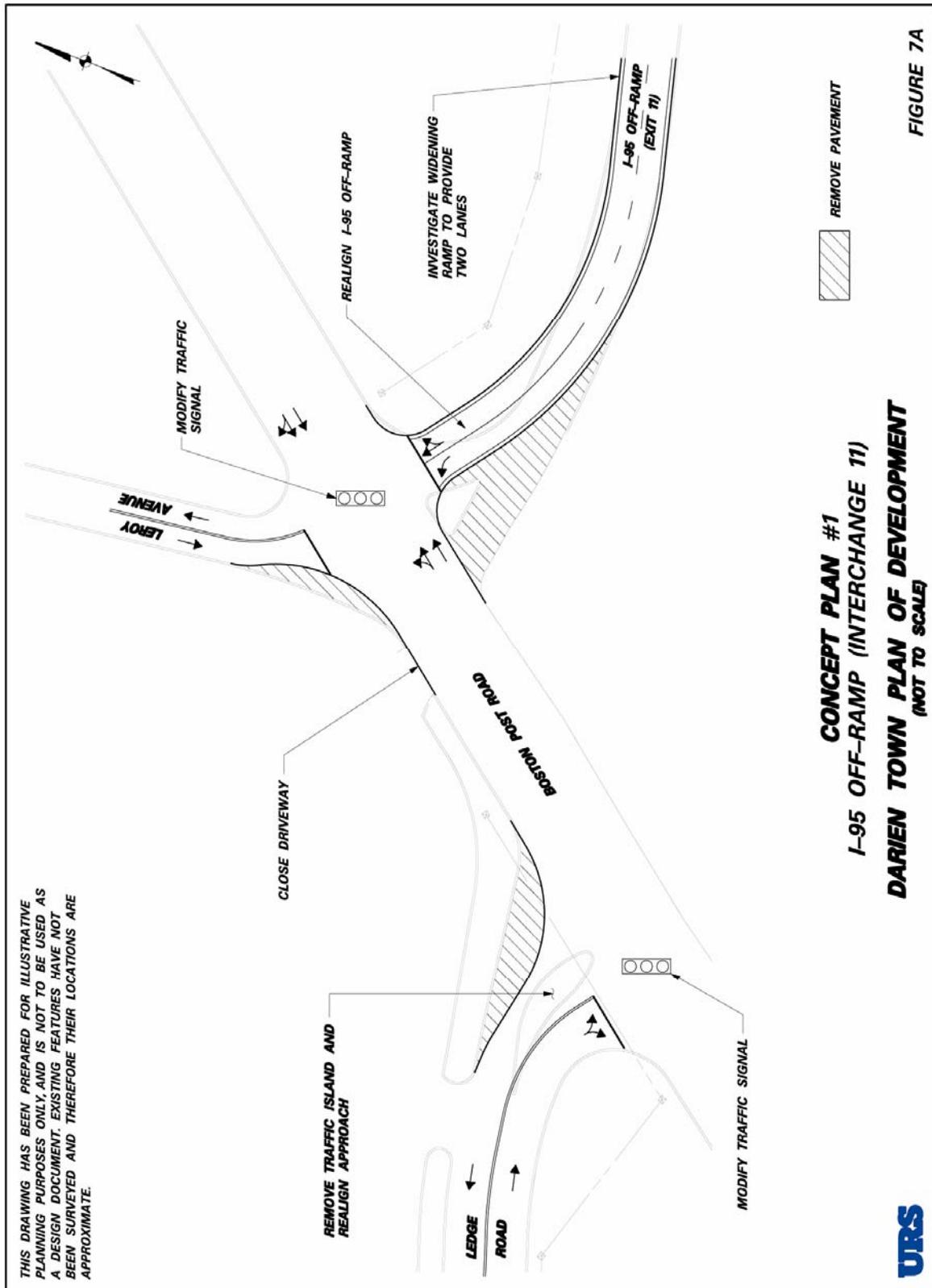
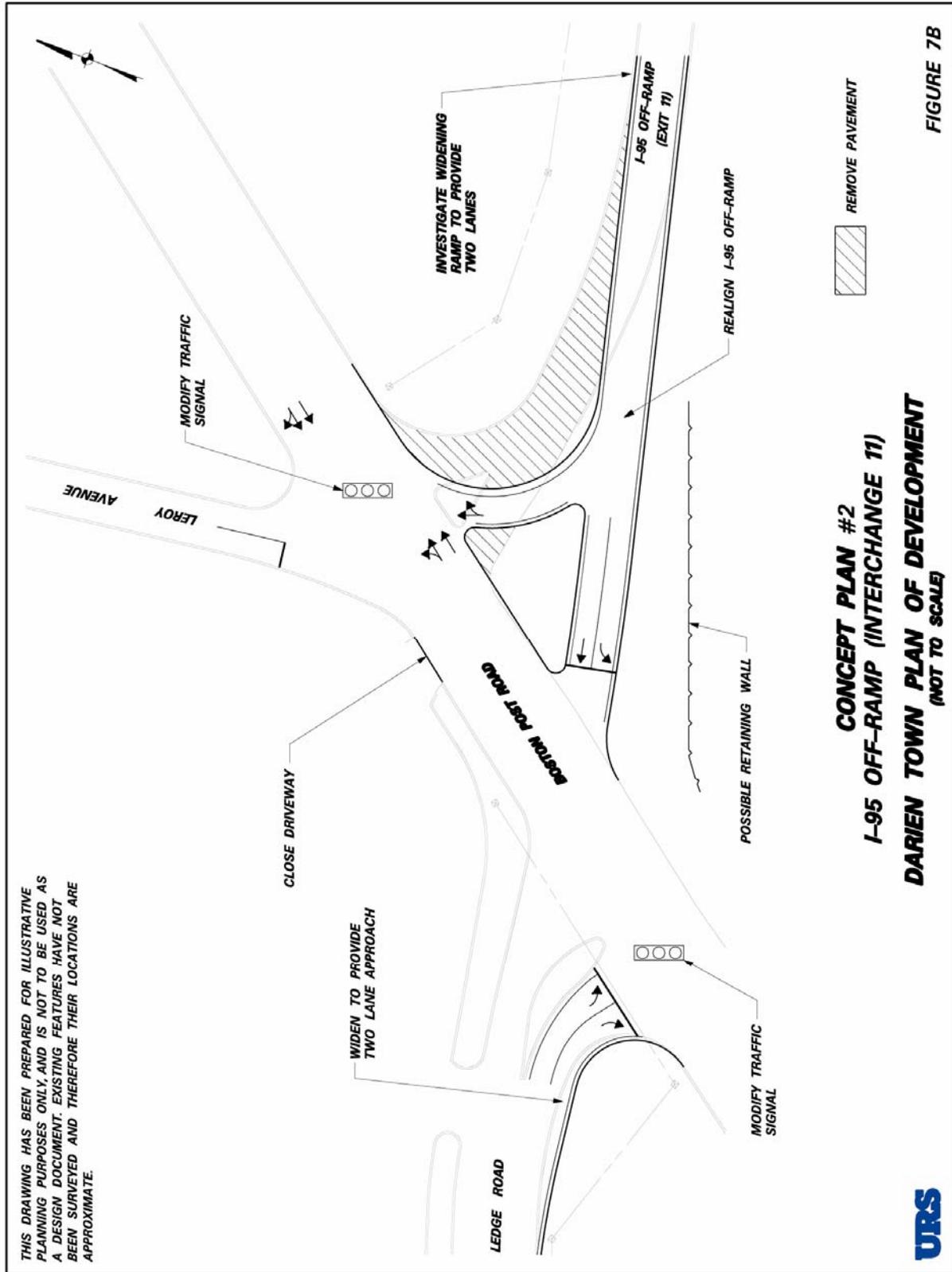


EXHIBIT 4-10B
CONCEPT PLAN – BOSTON POST ROAD/LEDGE ROAD/I-95 EXIT 11



3. Boston Post Road @ Corbin Drive

Corbin Drive intersects the Boston Post Road east of the I-95 interchange Exit 11. Long delays can occur for south/westbound motorists turning left out of Corbin Drive. During peak commuter hours these delays are understandable; however, during off-peak hours, the signal cycle length should be reviewed for possible reduction to minimize the delay time. On the Boston Post Road approach to Corbin Drive (eastbound), an exclusive right turn lane is designated by signing and pavement markings for movements onto Corbin Drive. At commuter peak hours of the afternoon, problems arise as motorists merge into the remaining eastbound single lane on the Boston Post Road through downtown Darien. On-street parking, on both sides of U.S. Route 1, is permitted during the commuter hours. At issue here, therefore, is the balance that the Town of Darien is trying to achieve between serving the need for mobility on the street system versus that of parking for adjacent land uses. (The railroad bridge over the Boston Post Road, only a short distance to the east of Corbin Drive, also limits the Boston Post Road to a single lane in each direction.)

4. Boston Post Road @ Noroton Avenue

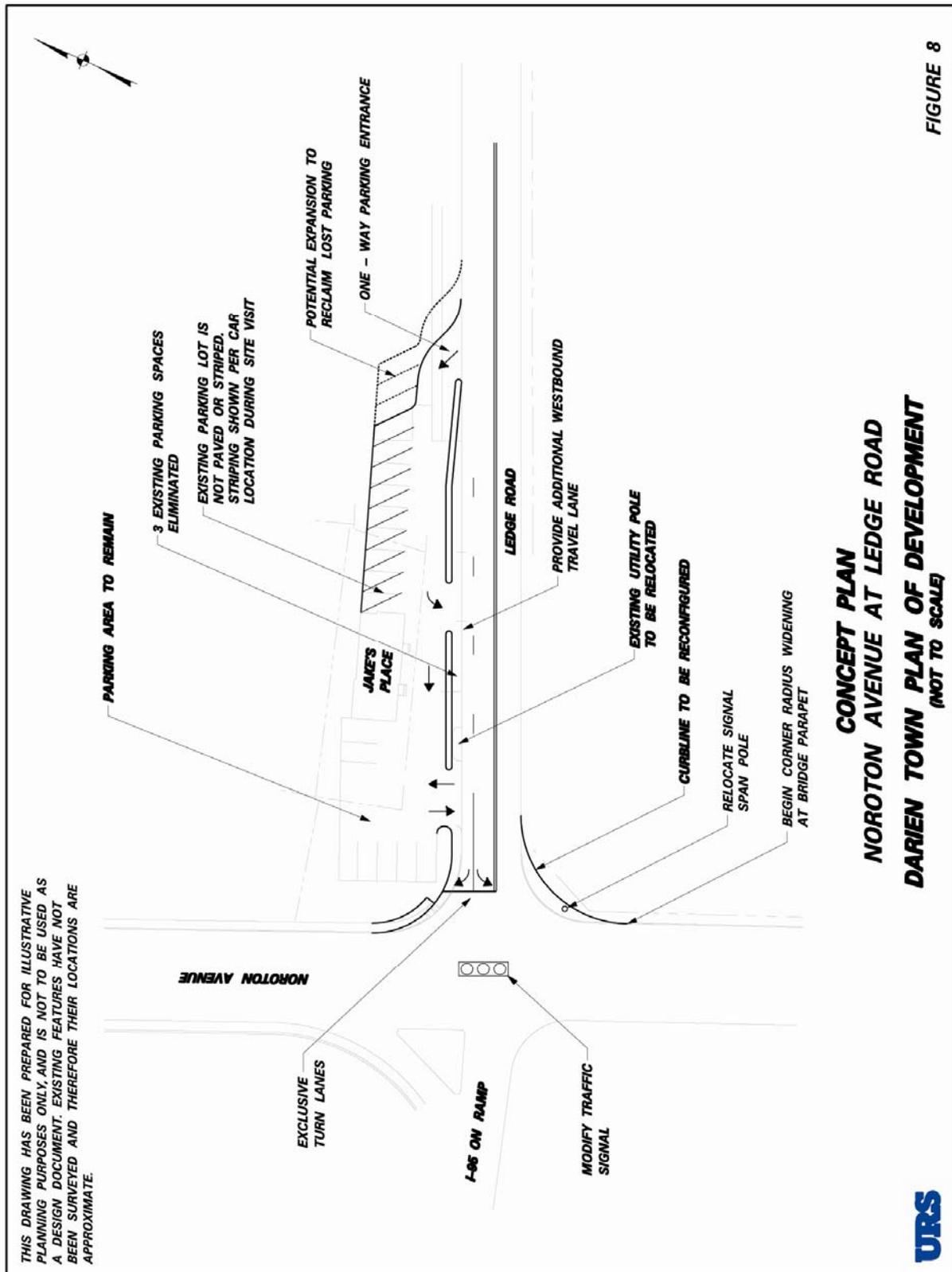
This signalized intersection accommodates turning movements between two important town arterials, the Boston Post Road and Noroton Avenue. Currently, vehicles making left turns into Noroton proceed on a permissive green against two lanes of westbound Boston Post Road traffic. Of the sixteen accidents reports, four involved vehicles attempting to make the left turn. To improve safety and operations at the intersection, the signal could be modified to provide an eastbound advance phase along with a left turn arrow. This would help clear left turners from the inside eastbound travel lane. It is also recognized that there is a balance between providing on-street parking and traffic flow in the area of this intersection. Currently, the existing on-street parking limits the directional flow roadway width to about 1-1/2 lanes in each direction.

Improved Traffic Flow

1. Noroton Avenue @ Ledge Road

Ledge Road runs east-west along the north side of I-95 and forms a four legged intersection with Noroton Avenue, a north-south arterial. East of the intersection, I-95 westbound off-ramp terminates at Ledge Road (Interchange 10). West of Noroton Avenue, Ledge Road becomes an I-95 west-bound entrance ramp and an entrance to the south side of Noroton Heights railroad station parking area. At Noroton Avenue, the intersection serves heavy commuter and truck traffic and experiences congestion during peak commuter hours. To ease congestion, roadway widening for a second westbound approach lane is recommended. Sufficient right-of-way exists, but businesses located on the northeast side of the intersection utilize some of the roadway right-of-way for parking. Exhibit 4-11 shows a concept plan that provides a second westbound lane along with a potential reconfiguration of the parking lot intended to mitigate parking impacts. It is also suggested that an evaluation be made to determine the need for a left turn signal for vehicles heading south on Noroton Avenue and turning onto Ledge Road

**EXHIBIT 4-11
 CONCEPT PLAN – NOROTON AVENUE/LEDGE
 ROAD**



2. Noroton Avenue @ West Avenue

To the extent possible, the northbound Noroton Avenue approach to the intersection should be widened to provide for a separate left turn lane, together with a straight through/right turn lane. This will require some widening at the northeast corner to taper back to the existing roadway width. Alternatively, if capacity permits, a northbound advance phase could be incorporated into the signal phasing pattern. In addition, the radius at the southwest and northeast corners of the Noroton Avenue/West Avenue intersection should be enlarged to facilitate turning movements.

3. Noroton Avenue @ Middlesex Road

This location is a standard four legged signalized intersection with one approach lane in each direction. Significant left turn volumes exist on Middlesex Road's westbound approach during morning commuter hours. The traffic signal is phased to give this approach an advance green light; however, during the remainder of green time, through and right turning vehicles can be blocked by vehicles waiting to turn left. To solve the problem, the approach could be widened to allow though vehicles to bypass left turners. A defined left turn lane is optimal. Widening for a left turn lane will impact utilities, trees, and sidewalks and would likely require right-of-way acquisition. Reallocating lane width from the eastbound departure lane to the westbound approach lane is not recommended due to the minimal space currently provided for turning movements.

4. Middlesex Road @ High School Lane

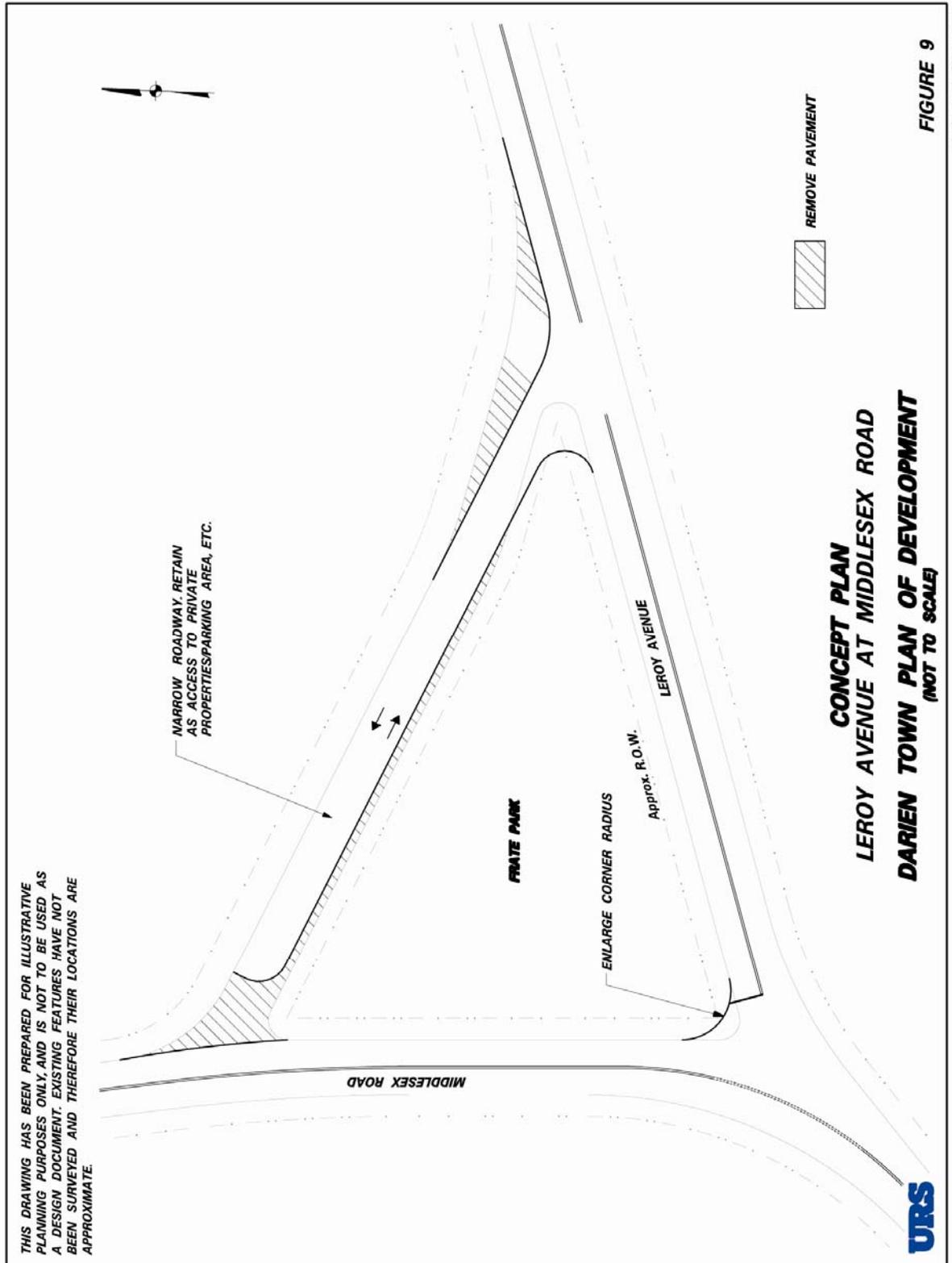
Along with the recent expansion of the High School, there is interest in improving access between Middlesex Road and High School Lane. Currently, both roadways have one lane approaches to the intersection. High School Lane is stop sign controlled with sight distance limited by the trees adjacent to Middlesex Road. Middlesex Road's northbound approach could be widened to provide either an exclusive left turn lane or room to bypass left turning vehicles. At the same time, efforts could be made to clear sightline obstructions. It appears that there is adequate right-of-way on Middlesex Road for widening; however, utilities would likely be impacted.

5. Middlesex Road @ Leroy Avenue (Frate Park)

Approximately 375 feet east of Middlesex Road, Leroy Avenue Connector and Leroy Avenue split and continue west to intersect Middlesex Road approximately 300 feet apart. Located between the three roadways is Frate Park. This configuration results in three unsignalized intersections where one may be sufficient. Dependent upon traffic count information (currently not available), the northerly Leroy Avenue Connector could possibly be eliminated, resulting in the consolidation of the intersections. The eliminated roadway right-of-way could be reconfigured to provide park access and parking, existing driveway access, and/or additional green space (see Exhibit 4-9). If the northerly Leroy Avenue Connector approach leg is closed, sightlines along Middlesex Road southbound could be improved to provide southbound motorists additional distance to stop for vehicles waiting to turn left from Middlesex Road onto Leroy Avenue; and the

westbound lane of Leroy Avenue should be widened to allow for right turning vehicles to bypass left turners particularly during morning commute hours.

EXHIBIT 4-12 CONCEPT PLAN – MIDDLESEX ROAD/LEROY AVENUE



Improved Sightlines

1. Mansfield Avenue @ McLaren Road

Sightlines at this location, as motorists exit McLaren Road, are poor in both northbound and southbound directions. In addition, the upgrade further impairs the ability to move onto the main artery in a timely fashion. It is suggested that discussions with the adjacent property owners be initiated to improve sightlines. It is also suggested that the roadway grade be leveled on the approach to Mansfield Avenue. Note that both are needed – not just one or the other. Additionally, consideration should be given to relocating utility poles to improve sightlines.

**EXHIBIT 4-13
 SUGGESTED SIGHTLINE GUIDE**

INTERSECTION TRAVEL SPEED ON MAIN ROADWAY	SIGHTLINE	
	<u>MINIMUM (FT.)</u>	<u>DESIRABLE (FT.)</u>
20 miles per hour	150	170
25 miles per hour	175	230
30 miles per hour	210	310
35 miles per hour	285	400
40 miles per hour	365	505
45 miles per hour	455	630
50 miles per hour	565	770

Source: Connecticut Department of Transportation

2. Tokeneke Road @ Raymond Street, Five Mile River Road

Physical improvements described in the 1995 Town Plan, indicating the need to eliminate the Jacob Street approach to the intersection, have been implemented. Sightlines to the right from both Five Mile River Road and Raymond Street are poor. As indicated in the 1995 Town Plan, requirements for signalization at the intersection should be explored. If signalization is still not warranted, consideration should be given to relocating the storefront parking that blocks sightlines from Raymond Street to the west, and the removal of the tree located at the southeast corner of the intersection, which obstructs sightlines from Five Mile River Road to the east.

The Police Department applied for and received a State grant from the Southwestern Regional Planning Agency that allowed a traffic study to be conducted in 1997 to determine ways in which to improve the safe movement of traffic at this location. There was concern as to whether or not any of the necessary warrants could be met for the installation of a traffic signal. Their findings were that neither traffic volumes nor vehicular accidents were high enough to meet the warrants. At that time, one of their recommendations was to close the old Route 136 bridge, which has since occurred.

3. Middlesex Road @ Hanson Road

Hanson Road is controlled by a stop sign at its approach to Middlesex Road. Sightlines from Hanson Road to the south are poor, and only slightly better to the north. To improve sight lines, trees to the south would need to be removed, as would a fence to the north. To this end, it is suggested that discussions with the adjacent property owners be initiated. If sightlines cannot be improved, installation of additional stop signs on Middlesex Road may be necessary.

4. Middlesex Road @ Holly Lane

Sightlines to the left are poor exiting Holly Lane. Shrubbery and low lying tree limbs appear to be the main obstructions and should be cleared as appropriate.

5. Hollow Tree Ridge Road @ Ox Ridge Lane, Hancock Lane

Both Hancock Lane and Ox Ridge Lane approach Hollow Tree Ridge Road from the east and both are under stop sign control. The sharp apex between the two roads creates an intersection with a large amount of wide open pavement. Consequently, stop signs are far removed from the intersection resulting in poor sightlines. Because of the poor sightlines, Hollow Tree Ridge Road's northbound approach is also under stop sign control.

To improve sightlines and create a more conventional intersection, the two approaching roadways to Hollow Tree Ridge Road could be reconfigured into two "T" intersections as shown in Exhibit 4-10. The concept shows the Hancock Lane approach being realigned to the east (on new right-of-way) to form a "T" intersection with Ox Ridge Lane. The resulting Hollow Tree Ridge Road/Ox Ridge Lane intersection would also be a standard "T" configuration with the stop bar relocated to improve sightlines. To help determine the viability of this concept, the extent of wetland impacts related to the Hancock Lane realignment should be assessed.

EXHIBIT 4-14
CONCEPT PLAN – HOLLOW TREE RIDGE ROAD/OX RIDGE LANE

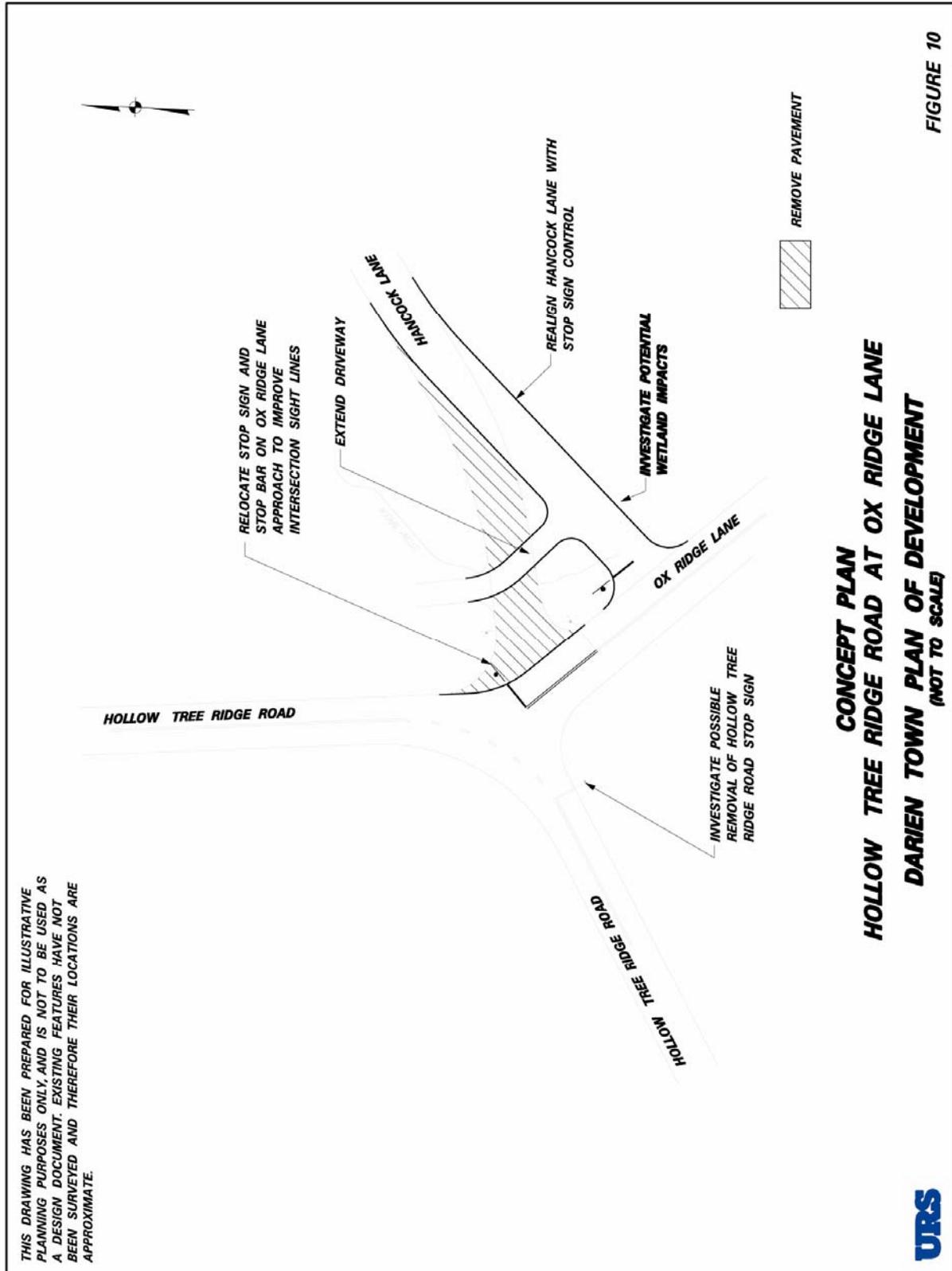


FIGURE 10

CONCEPT PLAN
HOLLOW TREE RIDGE ROAD AT OX RIDGE LANE
DARIEN TOWN PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT
(NOT TO SCALE)

THIS DRAWING HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY, AND IS NOT TO BE USED AS A DESIGN DOCUMENT. EXISTING FEATURES HAVE NOT BEEN SURVEYED AND THEREFORE THEIR LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE.

6. Boston Post Road @ Thorndal Circle

The Thorndal Circle approach to the Boston Post Road is under stop sign control. The stop bar is located appropriately in relation to an expanded Boston Post Road cross-section west of the intersection. From the stop bar, sight lines to the east are restricted by both shrubs and vehicles parked in the adjacent car dealership lot. Motorists must creep beyond the stop bar to adequately see oncoming Boston Post Road traffic. To improve sight lines, a uniform cross-section should be created by narrowing the Boston Post Road west of Thorndal Circle, and the stop bar should be moved closer to the Boston Post Road.

7. Boston Post Road @ Renshaw Road

Sightlines from this stop controlled intersection are restricted. Turning movement count data is needed to perform a traffic signal warrant analysis. A traffic signal is recommended if traffic signal warrants are met.

Roadway Conclusions

The Town of Darien has a number of roadway locations in need of safety and/or capacity improvements. Locations along the Boston Post Road, Noroton Avenue and Middlesex Road, as well as other locations mentioned herein and in the 1995 Town Plan, need to be addressed. Volume increases on these roads and on town roadways since 1995 will continue with the region's growth, and the areas of high accident rates and traffic flow deficiencies will continue to worsen. The Town, in conjunction with the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), should strive to make necessary roadway improvements including those detailed in this chapter, to ensure the safe and efficient movement of traffic now and for the future. Enforcement of sight line requirements in the Zoning Regulations (height of vegetation within set distances of an intersection) is important.

On state highways, coordination with ConnDOT could result in state support, project initiation and funding for the roadway improvements, especially at SLOSSS locations. Likewise, many of the improvements may qualify through SWRPA for Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding.

Downtown Parking

Parking surveys were conducted in the latter half of October, 2003 in the downtown area of Darien. Their purpose was to determine the demand for parking spaces and the adequacy of the existing supply relative to use by downtown business patrons and employees. Included in the surveys were five municipal lots and on-street parking for selected streets. Not included were private parking areas and most municipal spaces specifically designated for railroad commuters/users, such as Leroy West, parking at the railroad station or the privately owned Koons lot. The Town should review the inventory of parking and consider the use of well-designed structured parking in certain circumstances where necessary and appropriate.

There are five municipal lots, and their associated supply of parking, are itemized below:

Center Street Lot North	-	109 total spaces
Center Street Lot South	-	132 total spaces
Mechanic Street Lot	-	121 total spaces
Tilley Lot	-	144 total spaces
Grove Street Lot	-	77 total spaces

Within each of these lots, various user designations and/or time limitations are posted.

To obtain an indication of usage, surveys were conducted both on a weekday and Saturday. For the weekday, counts began at 8:00 AM and were made on an hourly and two-hour basis until 6:00 PM. The Saturday count, made in a similar fashion, spanned the period 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM. Recorded by location and by user designation/time designation were the number of spaces occupied. Due to the restricted use of the Center Street Lot South on Wednesday, October 22nd, resulting from the Farmers Market, both Center Street Lots were recounted on the Tuesday of the following week. These additional surveys, therefore, provide a comparison of a “typical” day versus that of a special event occurrence.

In several instances, the number of parkers exceeded the supply within a certain area or lot designation. In these cases, vehicles are either parked illegally (not in designated areas) or were “half-in/half-out” posted areas. A brief narrative of each parking area is provided below:

Along the Boston Post Road, existing signage in either direction is posted for the Grove Street Lot at Brook Street. Signage is found westbound on the Boston Post Road directing motorists to the Center Street Lots via Center Street. There is no signage in either direction on the Boston Post Road to the Tilley Lot, the Mechanic Street Lot and in the eastbound direction to the Center Street Lots. A sign is posted, eastbound, on Old King’s Highway South to the narrow secondary driveway leading to the Center Street Lot South. An older green colored sign, double faced, is found on Center Street, pointing to the Center Street Lot North.

Municipal Lot Parking

1. Center Street North

This lot contains four designated components – permit spaces, 3-hour spaces, unsigned spaces and reserved spaces (for specific businesses/customers). The unsigned spaces (5) were fully occupied on both weekdays for the entire day. The permit spaces (21) were

the next most heavily used spaces on a weekday, ranging from 16-18 spaces occupied at times during the two days. Overall, the supply of spaces on a Saturday well exceeded demand.

2. Center Street South

This lot contains three designated components – permit spaces, 3-hour spaces and 1-hour spaces. The 1-hour supply of spaces (62) was near or at capacity at times during each of the weekday survey days as well as on Saturday. Only during the Farmers Market event did the permit and 3-hour areas become fully used as the existing supply was reduced.

3. Mechanic Street

This lot has permit and 3-hour designations. On a weekday and Saturday, utilization of both areas was well below the existing supply of spaces.

4. Tilley

This lot comprises three different but interconnected areas. The upper level/back area is adjacent to a bank. Five designations are found – unsigned, 2-hour spaces, 1-hour spaces, 15-minute bank customer parking and two separate handicapped spaces (adjacent to West Avenue). With the exception of the handicapped spaces, no shortage of spaces was found either on a weekday or Saturday. The middle level is designated for 2-hour parking and is used as an overflow area for the lower level of spaces. Just over half of these spaces were occupied on both a weekday and weekend. The lower level, behind the retail shops along the Boston Post Road, contains 2-hour and 1-hour designations. Both these areas were near capacity at times on a weekday and were at capacity for extended periods of time on a Saturday.

5. Grove Street

This lot has permit and 3-hour designated spaces. The former spaces (55) are primarily used by railroad commuters. As such, the supply was near or at capacity on a weekday and minimally used on a Saturday. Use of the 3-hour supply was near capacity only at times on a weekday.

On-Street Parking

1. Boston Post Road

On the north side of this artery, between Leroy Avenue and Sedgwick Avenue, approximately 31 1-hour spaces are found. In addition, 2 spaces are designated for 15-minute parking. With the exception of the area between Leroy Avenue and Brook Street, the available supply of spaces was very heavily used on both weekdays and on Saturday. In general, utilization of these spaces was at-capacity. On the south side of the artery, 25 1-hour spaces are found in the two blocks between Corbin Drive and Tokeneke Road. Surveys indicated hourly utilization of these spaces was heavier on Saturday (almost at near capacity).

2. Corbin Drive

The east side of the street contains approximately 18 2-hour spaces. Utilization of spaces was heaviest near the Post Office. On the west side, 9 2-hour spaces and 4 15-minute spaces (fronting the Post Office) are provided. At times, the west side spaces were near or at capacity utilization.

3. Center Street

There are approximately 18 3-hour spaces (some diagonal parking) and 2 15-minute spaces along the one-way section of this street. The 3-hour spaces were heavily utilized approaching near or at capacity at times during weekdays and Saturdays. West of the municipal lot, both unsigned and 2-hour designations are found along the two-way section of Center Street. Minimal use of both of these designations was recorded.

4. West Avenue

The four 1-hour spaces on the street near the Boston Post Road were never fully utilized during the survey periods.

5. Tokeneke Road

There are approximately 25 2-hour diagonal spaces fronting the retail businesses between the Boston Post Road and Old Kings Highway South. Usage was heaviest on the Saturday with 21 spaces occupied at noon-time. Fronting the railroad tracks, on the east side of the roadway, 33 spaces are provided with 2-hour designations. Both on the weekdays and Saturday, peak utilization in this area varied between 55-60 percent of the supply.

6. Mechanic Street

Parking is found on both sides of this one-way road. Along the railroad embankment, about 14 2-hour spaces are provided (unmarked) between the Boston Post Road and the gravel area to the south. Most of the vehicles found parked were located close to the Boston Post Road. A maximum of 5 vehicles were recorded at any one time period during the survey days. On the other (east) side of the street, 4 unsigned spaces are found. These spaces were fully occupied at times on both survey days.

Closer to the municipal lot entrance on Mechanic Street, an off-street area is designated containing 10 usable diagonal spaces by permit only. At times, on both a weekday and Saturday, 8 vehicles were recorded in this area.

7. Brook Street

Operating one-way northbound (from the Boston Post Road), approximately 12 2-hour parking spaces, in total, are provided on both sides of the street. These spaces were fully utilized at times during a weekday and Saturday.

8. Day Street

Operating one-way southbound (towards the Boston Post Road), parking is found along both sides of the street. A total of about 13 2-hour spaces are found. These spaces were fully utilized at times during the weekday.

9. Grove Street

Between the private lot serving the Darien Theatre/Darien Sport Shop and Grove Street, this two-way street accommodates about 10 vehicles. The north side has 7 2-hour spaces and the south side 3 unsigned spaces (unmarked). Between Brook Street and Day Street, a total of 9 spaces are found on this one-way (now two-way) section of the street. The north side (including along the then-present construction fencing) is unsigned and unmarked for about 5 spaces. The south side has 4 2-hour spaces. On both the weekday and Saturday, portions of the two-block section were near or at capacity utilization at various times of the day.

Parking Overview Summary

In general, the basic approach to parking that the Town of Darien has followed is to designate both on-street and off-street spaces closest to retail establishments as 1-hour duration zones. The further removed from these businesses, 2-hour and then 3-hour or permit zones are posted. This philosophy recognizes the value of close-in parking spaces and the desire to have as many vehicles in these prime locations over the course of a day as possible. Also recognized is that the longer the parking duration, the greater the walking distances parkers should be willing to assume. Lastly, this philosophy discourages downtown employees from parking in prime locations.

Only with some exceptions, the parking supply in the municipal parking lots exceeds the demand for spaces today. In the Center Street Lot South, the 1-hour zone is effectively at capacity. Since the adjacent 3-hour zone on a typical day is not fully used, this situation is not a problem as it just means a slightly longer walk to the retail establishments. In the Tilley Lot on the lower level, both the 1-hour and 2-hour zones function at capacity – particularly on a Saturday. The 2-hour spaces in the middle level area are not fully used. In this instance, the issue is to make parkers more fully aware of the additional parking that is available nearby. (Signage may assist in this task). Similarly, the Mechanic Street Lot, with its vehicular access/egress onto the Boston Post Road, has under-utilized 3-hour spaces available for the same merchants that the Tilley Lot serves. The drawback for the Mechanic Street Lot is only a slightly longer walk to these businesses and the crossing of the Boston Post Road (at a crosswalk under traffic signal control). In the Grove Street Lot, virtually all of the permit spaces (for railroad users) are occupied on a weekday.

On-street parking is heavily used along portions of the Boston Post Road, Brook Street, Day Street, and due to Post Office related activity, sometimes on Corbin Drive.

Potential for Increased Parking Demand

The Post Office on Corbin Drive may, in time, become the only postal facility in Town. If it does, additional short duration parking demand will increase on Corbin Drive and is likely to exceed the availability of on-street spaces. It is suggested, therefore, that the Town explore the possibility of acquiring an off-street area, close to the building, to handle this potential future demand for parking.

Redevelopment of properties on the north and south sides of the Boston Post Road, between Day Street and Center Street, is highly likely over the next few years. The redevelopment of the "Fairbanks" block (south side of the Boston Post Road) between Exit 11 and Corbin Drive may also assist in Post Office parking as customers may combine trips.

Parking Conclusions

The Darien Parking Authority should consider some re-allocation of parking spaces within the municipal lots or take steps to encourage greater usage of spaces. Any action must recognize the balance between the need of serving local businesses versus that of commuters. Improved signage for the municipal lots is a must throughout the downtown area.

For the Mechanic Street lot, in particular, the Authority may want to evaluate the possibility of increasing its usage by commuters by offering permit stickers at a discounted rate for the area in the rear of the lot. To encourage greater use of the 3-hour spaces by retail patrons, as a means of lessening the parking demand on the lower level of the Tilley Lot, signage and publicity options should be explored.

Existing off-street parking spaces that front onto the public thoroughfare and which require parking maneuvers that create safety and operational hazards for those traveling on the public street, including pedestrians, should be eliminated over time. This applies to existing areas on Heights Road and along the Boston Post Road, among other streets.

Possible Street Directional Changes

The possibility of altering flow patterns, to lessen the amount of traffic on portions of the Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) and to provide alternative circulation options within the downtown area of Darien, is discussed herein. Involved would be Tokeneke Road, Center Street, and Corbin Drive, with Tokeneke Road and Corbin Drive becoming one-way streets. Each of these roadways is currently two-directional. Left turns from southbound Boston Post Road onto Tokeneke Road are prohibited today. Instead, left turns are designated at Center Street for routings to Old Kings Highway South back to Tokeneke Road (State Route 136). The intersections of the Boston Post Road at Tokeneke Road, at Center Street and at Corbin Drive are signalized. Stop signs control movements from Center Street and Corbin Drive onto Old Kings Highway South and a stop sign controls movements on Old Kings Highway South onto Tokeneke road.

The intersection of the Boston Post Road with Tokeneke Road is four legged with a one-way egress from the Darien Railroad Station lot (two lane discharge – left and through/right). The other intersections are all “T” type of configurations.

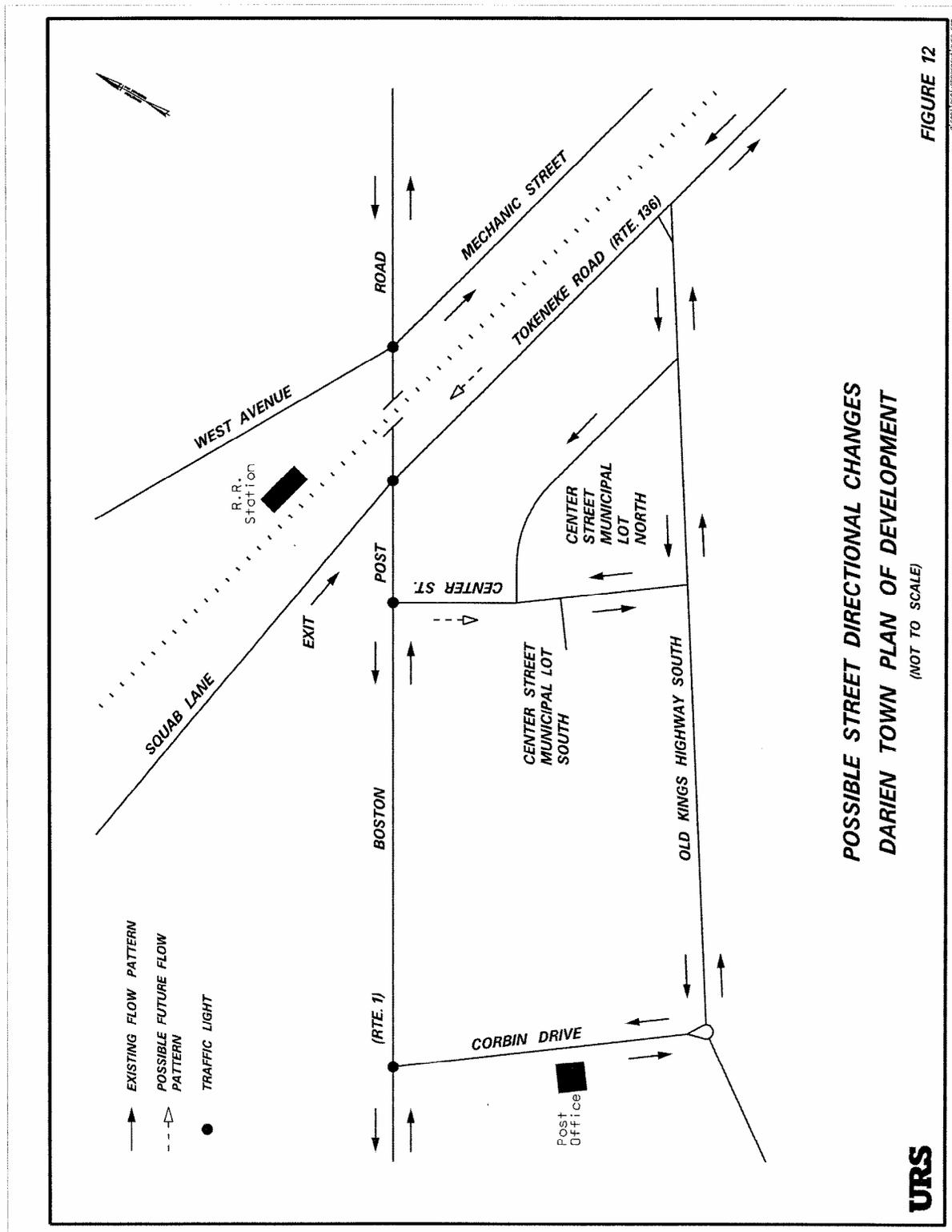
Peak hour turning movements at each of the area intersections are not known. From visual observations, however, it is noted that the primary movement on the Corbin Drive approach to the Boston Post Road is the left turn. On the Old Kings Highway South approach to Tokeneke Road, the right turn appears to predominate.

Use of Corbin Drive, again based on observations, can be moderately heavy at times and includes both automobile and truck traffic. Conversion of this street to one-way flow southbound (towards Old King’s Highway South) would force northbound traffic wishing to get to the Boston Post Road to use either Center Street (if left status quo) or Tokeneke Road. The end result would be increased traffic on Route 1 (and congestion) in the downtown area past the retail shops and the on-street parking zones. This type of flow pattern does not seem desirable at first glance.

Perhaps a more meaningful change would involve converting a portion of Center Street to one-way flow southbound and Tokeneke Road to one-way northbound (between Old King’s Highway South and the Boston Post Road). The portion of Center Street along the east side of the Center Street Lot North would remain one-way northbound as it does today. With the elimination of the Center Street approach to the Boston Post Road, additional green time could be allotted to the U.S. Route 1 through movements and/or the southbound left turns onto Center Street. Under this revised flow pattern, motorists exiting the railroad station could no longer enter Tokeneke Road directly but would have to make a right turn and then a left turn onto Center Street. The number of affected vehicles is not known. Of critical importance is the extent of any additional left turn queuing on U.S. Route 1 at the Center Street traffic light.

Conversion of Tokeneke Road to one-way operation may require the State to designate Center Street and the Old King’s Highway South link back to Route 136 as a State thoroughfare. It is suggested, therefore, that if the Town of Darien believes that clear benefits could ensue with directional street changes, a more detailed traffic analysis should be undertaken with State input, including the gathering of current traffic data.

**EXHIBIT 4-15
 POSSIBLE STREET DIRECTIONAL CHANGES**



Sidewalks

In the late 1980s and 1990s new sidewalks were placed in downtown Darien and in Noroton along Boston Post Road. Gaps remain along certain portions of those areas. As redevelopment of properties occurs, those sidewalks should be upgraded as well. Sidewalks along the north side of Heights Road should be installed as part of development of those commercial properties.

As noted in the 1995 Town Plan, the Town should create a sidewalk map, identifying where there is a desire to have construction of new sidewalks to enhance pedestrian safety and use.

Public Transportation

Public transportation for the Town of Darien is available via rail, bus and taxi services.

1. New Haven/Metro-North Railroad

Two stations on this commuter line, linking New York City and New Haven with intermediate station stops within Connecticut and New York State, are located in the Town. The Darien station, found in the downtown area of the community, is situated just off the Boston Post Road. Within close proximity of the station area, and in other adjacent areas, approximately 860 parking spaces are provided in numerous lots. The supply of parking is in both public and private lots and includes permit and daily designated spaces. The private parking, found in the Koons lot, is located at the intersection of Leroy Avenue and West Avenue and contains about 322 spaces.

The second station is in the Noroton Heights section of Town. It lies just north of I-95 between Noroton Avenue and Hollow Tree Ridge Road. Approximately 770 parking spaces located both north and south of the railroad tracks, are provided.

Fees for station parking generally approximate \$235.00 for an annual permit and \$2.25 for daily use. Occupancy of designated station spaces tends to be near or at capacity on a typical weekday. The Town of Darien maintains a waiting list for a parking permit which now approaches a five year wait.

The proximity of Darien with the New Canaan branch of the Metro-North Railroad allows some residents to also utilize station stops at Talmadge Hill (in New Canaan); and at Springdale and Glenbrook (in Stamford). The Rowayton station, along the main line of the railroad in Norwalk, is also used by some Darien residents.

2. Connecticut Transit Company Bus Service

Two Connecticut Transit routes run through or into the Town. The first route, Bus No. 41, connects the Stamford Transportation Center (and downtown Stamford) with Norwalk's downtown business area around Wall Street, and runs in both directions. Within Darien, buses on this route transverse the Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) with stops en route – including the Darien train station. Service is provided seven days a

week. During weekday commuter hours, buses generally run at 15-minute intervals. At other times, service is at ½ hour intervals. Saturday service is every ½ hour and Sunday service is hourly. Buses do not run late into the night or into the early morning hours.

Bus No. 42, also beginning at the Stamford Transportation Center, traverses West Avenue, Hollow Tree Ridge Road, Heights Road, Edgerton Street and back to West Avenue within Darien. Stops are made at both train stations with the Darien station being the last stop on the route, and then a return to Stamford. Weekday service is every ½ hour. Saturday service is hourly. No Sunday service is provided on this route. Similarly, buses do not operate late at night or very early in the morning.

Ridership on the two Darien routes, as provided by Connecticut Transit, approximate:

	<u>Passengers Per Day</u>		
	<u>Weekday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
Route #41:	2,800	1,800	800
Route #42:	600	300	---

3. Taxi Service

Taxi service is operated by the Darien Eveready Cab Company. It is located at the Darien railroad station (1 Squab Lane).

CHAPTER 5

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



REGIONAL ISSUES

Overview

The Town of Darien, located in Fairfield County, is part of the Southwestern Connecticut region. The Town is located between two of the largest cities in Connecticut, Norwalk and Stamford, and is bisected by I-95 and Route 1/Boston Post Road. Its location between these two major cities provides both opportunities as well as challenges.

Darien is a member of the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA), which consists of eight towns/cities: Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, New Canaan, Norwalk, Weston, Westport, and Wilton. Darien shares a common interest with these communities because of: their general location within the State; impacts of I-95 and the Merritt Parkway; Route 1 (Boston Post Road); and, the Metro North Railroad. Other shared regional issues include: telecommunications, housing, and environmental protection. The latter encompasses, but is not limited to, aquifer protection; flooding and storm water control; air quality concerns due to industries in the region and transportation facilities as well as externally generated problems; protection of fresh water resources for recreation and drinking; and most importantly, Long Island Sound and the coastline (all of which are covered in further detail in the Regional Issues Appendix).

The policies listed herein reflect the necessity of working with other communities and State agencies to accomplish these goals.

This Chapter concludes with a review of this Plan's consistency with both the Regional and State Plans of Conservation & Development.

Policies

Support and coordinate the provision of public transportation (rail, bus, taxi). This may occur through a variety of regional planning mechanisms.

Encourage placement of telecommunication antennas within church steeples, flagpoles, or other inconspicuous locations throughout the community.

Encourage co-location of telecommunication antennas.

Work with SWPRA to study housing issues at a regional level.

Consider a variety of housing options within the parameters of the Darien Zoning Regulations.

Protect and enhance Long Island Sound.

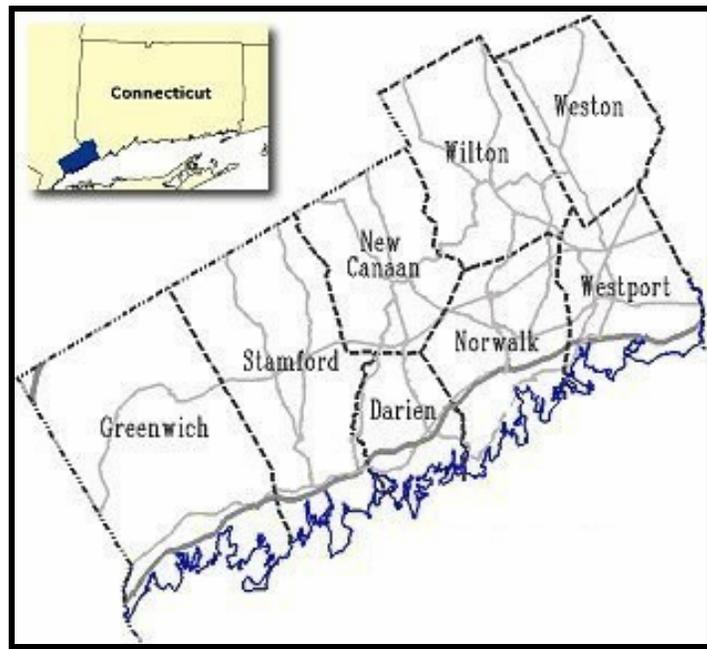
Work with and lobby our State and Federal Legislators to address air quality and emission problems.

Support local, regional and State efforts to provide protection and preservation of groundwater aquifers.

Recommendations

1. Continue to work with SWRPA on increasing the attractiveness of alternative transportation including, but not limited to, car pools, van pools, and ridesharing.
2. Institute programs that require small scale storm water detention systems in new developments, and where appropriate, encourage installation of neighborhood detention systems in existing developments.
3. Work with appropriate agencies to encourage improvements to the train service, train stations, and the areas around the stations (sidewalks, lighting, etc).
4. Institute educational programs to address stormwater as part of NPDES Phase II.
5. The Town should continue to maintain strong participation in the SWRMPO (Southwestern Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization), through the First Selectman's office.
6. Continue to work with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the adjacent cities regarding the exit ramps on I-95.
7. Establish a traffic ombudsman, who is responsible for regional traffic issues relative to Darien.
8. Continue to encourage State representatives to work for changes in the affordable housing Statutes.
9. Work with SWRPA to establish Regional Emergency Response system.

APPENDIX A5
REGIONAL ISSUES



Telecommunications. In the past several years, telecommunications antennas and towers have become prolific, as cellular phone use and the number of personal communication systems have increased exponentially. Sufficient antennas need to be placed throughout any region to provide seamless coverage, the Federal Communication Act of 1996 requires each community to process applications for antennas and towers in accordance with State and Federal regulations. Communities on a regional basis should cooperate to provide the most efficient and least impacting placement of these utilities. The Connecticut Siting Council has jurisdiction over most types of new towers, and in the past, they have required, or strongly recommended that the developers of proposed towers obtain local approvals before seeking State permits.

Darien has strongly encouraged antenna placement in existing towers such as within church steeples or other inconspicuous locations throughout the community, flagpoles at country club properties, or antennas on top of existing tall buildings. Co-location, the process of multiple carriers sharing a single tower or facility location, is strongly encouraged as well. Because building heights in Darien are not as tall as those of neighboring Stamford and Norwalk, it may be more cost effective and aesthetically pleasing to have antennas on the larger buildings in those communities rather than large towers constructed in Darien. Telecommunications companies should continue to use ingenuity in providing aesthetically pleasing yet essential services to the Darien community. Section 950 of the Darien Zoning Regulations, adopted in 1999, regulates Wireless Telecommunications.

Housing. Housing is a regional issue that affects all of the local communities. More information on housing is included in the Housing Chapter of this Plan (Chapter 6).

Environmental Issues

Long Island Sound. The region contains many miles of shoreline, 16.5 miles of which are within Darien. There are a number of environmental issues that have regional importance. One of these is the protection and enhancement of Long Island Sound. Some people consider Long Island Sound to be this region's greatest resource. It is incumbent upon all of the regional communities to preserve and protect that resource. The Town should continue to work with SWRPA, the adjacent communities, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and other groups interested in preserving, protecting and enhancing Long Island Sound.

Aquifer Protection. Aquifer protection has significant impacts to the Region and Town, and as noted within the Environmental Resources Chapter of this Plan. Residences with well water have tapped into one of several underground water sources located throughout our community. Much of the public water supplied to Darien residents and businesses comes from out-of-Town and out-of-region aquifers and reservoirs. Just as it is important for those communities to protect their ground water and surface water resources, it is critical that Darien take actions to protect the Rewak Well, and Noroton River aquifers as discussed in the Environmental Resources Chapter. The State has passed legislation mandating local aquifer protection programs, but the implementation of those requirements has been delayed for a variety of reasons. Most likely, the protection program in Darien would take the form of prohibiting certain commercial uses (that are high risks to cause ground water pollution) from being within designated aquifer recharge areas, and to require water company review of other proposed development within those areas. Special criteria for development within the recharge areas (such as underground fuel storage tanks) would lessen the likelihood of accidental contamination of the aquifers. The possible development of aquifer

protection ordinances in Darien and the surrounding communities should be strongly encouraged, even before it is mandated by State Statute. **Chapter 3, Environmental Resources**, also refers to environmental issues. **Exhibit A3-1 in the Environmental Resources Appendix** shows Aquifer Resources within Darien, and **Exhibit A3-5 in the same Appendix** shows Watersheds within Darien.

Flooding and Storm Water Quality. As development and re-development of property continues, the proper management of storm water runoff is an increasingly important problem. At the local level, the changes in the amount of impervious area (roofs, parking lots, streets, etc) results in a dramatic increase in the rate and speed of runoff compared to pre-development site conditions. This can result in neighboring properties being inundated with more water than ever before. On a larger scale, or watershed basis, more development will result in much larger volumes of storm water flow reaching the lower portions of watersheds much more quickly. These concentrated flows result in more land being temporarily flooded and the flood levels being higher. This is critical to Darien because the community is at the bottom of the watershed areas of the Noroton River, Goodwives River and the Five Mile River.

Darien and other communities within or neighboring the watersheds that are partially or entirely within Darien, should institute programs to require small-scale storm water detention systems, where appropriate, be installed for every project and that neighborhood detention systems be encouraged for existing developments. These systems are designed to delay (or temporarily detain) the surge of storm water runoff. The water would not necessarily be permanently retained. It would be released at a predetermined rate to correspond to the pre-development site conditions. In that way, the downstream areas would not be inundated with any more water at any given time and the potential for flood damage would be greatly reduced or eliminated.

Storm water detention areas can also serve an important function with respect to water quality. As the water is temporarily stored on site, eroded soil particles and contaminants will have an opportunity to settle out. If vegetated detention areas are utilized, many of the biodegradable contaminants can be processed out. Natural wetlands should not be used as the primary storm water detention areas because these areas are fragile and can be unexpectedly altered due to the greater influx of water and pollutants and the extended storage time of the water. Areas adjacent to wetlands are more suitable for this function. Whether structural systems (like underground galleries) or vegetated systems (like artificially created wetlands) are used, continued monitoring and maintenance will be necessary.

Fresh Water for Drinking and Recreation. Storm water management systems and designs to protect groundwater aquifers and to minimize flooding can and should also serve to protect the surface waters for drinking supplies and for recreation uses. While Darien does not have any reservoirs or large publicly accessible freshwater recreation areas, other communities in the region do have such facilities. Darien residents should be reminded of the importance of those water bodies and should support local, regional and State efforts to provide protection and preservation whenever and wherever possible.

Air Quality. Much of the air pollution evident in the region is from our dependence on motor vehicles for personal and commercial transportation. Automobiles and trucks traveling on Interstate Route I-95, or stuck in jams, are a major source of the air pollution. State officials from the Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Protection are trying to

address these issues on a Statewide and regional basis. SWRPA and the communities along the I-95 corridor must work together to develop and implement reasonable solutions to these concerns.

The other source of pollution in our air is from emissions originating in States to our west. The predominant winds from the west carry these particulate and chemical pollutants to our region and seriously impact our air quality. Darien residents need to work with and lobby our State and Federal Legislators to deal with these emission problems.

Traffic & Transportation Issues

Rail. Train service through Darien is primarily for commuter service into and out of New York City (interstate service). There are two stations that service the community; the Darien Station in the downtown area at the intersection of the Boston Post Road and West Avenue, and the second station at Noroton Heights – located on the south side of Heights Road between Noroton Avenue and Hollow Tree Ridge Road. The Darien Station was renovated in 2001 and made handicapped accessible.



the Darien Train Station

To a lesser extent, the local railroad stations are for intrastate service (by persons taking the trains to Darien, and local residents taking trains from Darien to other locations in the region). Amtrak trains travel through Darien, but do not stop here; Stamford is the closest stop for Amtrak service. Increased usage of rail services and the stations should continue to be encouraged. Certain improvements to the facilities (especially the Noroton Heights station) should be studied and implemented where needed, appropriate, and cost-effective. Such improvements may include: better lighting; better security; landscaping; smoother and expanded sidewalks in the areas around the stations; improved taxi service and local bus service to work sites; and securing long term agreements to keep existing parking areas as they are.

A single, commercial railroad siding in Darien is used by Rings End Lumber Company on West Avenue.

I-95. The interstate highway system, and in particular, Route I-95 has profoundly impacted the development of Darien and the region in the latter half of the 20th century. It will likely continue to be both a source of problems and a valuable resource for the foreseeable future. Approximately 134,000 vehicles per day use this six lane, limited access roadway through Darien each weekday. It provides interstate access for both commerce and personal use. It also is heavily used by commuters both into and out of the region.

Consistency with SWRPA Regional Plan. The SWRPA Regional Plan, entitled, the Fourth Plan of Conservation & Development, 2005-2015, is in draft form as of November 10, 2005.

The Plan's guiding principle is centrality—which is the planning alternative to sprawl. Other basic goals of this plan are: encouraging municipal land use planning; preserving open space; improving public transportation; providing for energy needs; encouraging housing alternatives; encourage preservation of historic structures; fostering cooperation for emergencies; planning for an aging and diverse population; protecting quality of life; and maintaining a strong business climate.

Consistency with State Plan. The State Plan entitled, “Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2004-2009” was approved in 2005. That Plan contains six basic Growth Management Principles, which serve as the basis for the various chapters within the plan. All of those Principles are consistent with this Plan.

Growth Management Principle #1

Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure

Growth Management Principle #2

Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs

Growth Management Principle #3

Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options

Growth Management Principle #4

Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands

Growth Management Principle #5

Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety

Growth Management Principle #6

Promote Integrated Planning Across All Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis

CHAPTER 6

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



HOUSING

Overview

Darien continues to be primarily a single-family residential community. Preservation and enhancement of an attractive suburban living environment should be continued. In recent years, the Town has made efforts in providing a wide-range of housing, both affordable and market-rate. This has resulted from a number of policies and Regulations that have been adopted which allow such uses as condominiums, apartments on upper floors of buildings in downtown and in other zoning districts, assisted living facilities, and apartment complexes that include affordable units (see Appendix A6 for more information).

The Planning and Zoning Commission generally views a variety of housing options as an enhancement to Darien. The provision of various types of housing may allow opportunities for Darien residents who wish to “downsize”; may provide housing for those who want to rent; who need special kinds of housing; or who need housing assistance.

When considering any change to the Zoning Regulations, the Planning and Zoning Commission takes into account the short and long-term results on the community and the impact on existing neighborhoods as a result of the change.

Overall, Darien should continue to be a residential community, with primarily single-family residences. It should continue to have higher density housing located near transportation facilities such as train stations, and within walking distance to local shopping both in Noroton Heights and downtown Darien. A diversity of housing types should continue to be provided where appropriate for the specific property and the neighborhood in general.

Policies

Ensure that Darien continues to be mainly a residential community.

Ensure that all new housing fits within existing neighborhoods, and is appropriate for the specific property.

Provide for a variety of housing needs, including but not limited to, condominiums of varying sizes.

Preserve historic residences within the community when possible.

Recommendations

1. Consider expanding the current size restrictions for condominiums.
2. Continue to evaluate and consider amending the existing building coverage and height restrictions to maintain the character of the community.
3. Consider establishing regulations regarding impervious surfaces coverage restrictions to maintain the character of the community.
4. Continue to preserve historic residences within the community by working with the Historical Society and using available methods such as the National Register, Village Districts or Historic Districts when possible. (see Historic Resources Chapter for more information).
5. The Town should work with the Darien Housing Authority to ensure the viability and availability of affordable housing where and when possible. Also, consider the adoption of mechanisms which would facilitate the continued maintenance and operation of the Housing Authority's residential units.
6. Investigate the feasibility of allowing in-law/accessory apartments. Not only should the feasibility of allowing market rate in-law accessory apartments be investigated, but they should be considered to help the Town meet its affordable housing goals.
7. Develop incentives to encourage greater apartment construction in critical areas such as the CBD, Noroton Heights and adjacent areas.
8. Study legalization of illegal apartments in Darien.
9. Identify specific parcels that should be considered for affordable housing, as for instance the present library site on Leroy Avenue.
10. Adopt density incentives for congregate/cluster and condominium housing providing significant open space.

APPENDIX A6

HOUSING



Introduction

Existing housing in Darien can be distinguished into two types: single-family and multi-family. Since affordable housing can be one or the other, that topic is treated separately.

Housing by Type

Single-family housing

Over 90% of the dwelling units in Darien are in the form of single-family housing detached units (6,213 out of 6,792 overall units). This is a lower percentage than in past years (see page A6-2 for details on housing by type). The percentage will continue to decrease over time, as condominium units were built in the 1980s and apartment units such as the recently constructed Avalon Darien were completed. Issues related to the construction of single-family residences are covered in the Housing Chapter.



Two examples of single-family houses built in the late 1990s in the R-2 Zone in Darien.

Exhibit 6-1 shows the number of Zoning Permits issued for new single-family residences.

EXHIBIT 6-1 ZONING PERMITS FOR NEW SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES BY YEAR

YEAR	PERMITS
1997	21
1998	24
1999	28
2000	45
2001	43
2002	28
2003	30
2004	41
2005	54

Source: Darien Planning & Zoning Department records.

Exhibit 6-2 shows housing by type in Darien and surrounding communities. Except for the cities of Stamford and Norwalk, most housing within the Southwestern region consists of one unit detached (single-family) housing.

**EXHIBIT 6-2
 HOUSING BY TYPE, 2000**

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>TOTAL HOUSING UNITS</u>	<u>1 UNIT, DETACHED</u>	<u>1 UNIT, ATTACHED</u>	<u>2 UNITS</u>	<u>3 OR 4 UNITS</u>
Darien	6,792	6,213	183	120	57
Greenwich	24,511	15,651	1,310	2,556	1,451
New Canaan	7,141	5,339	584	494	285
Norwalk	33,753	16,670	1,971	4,127	2,769
Stamford	47,317	19,017	2,958	3,849	4,758
Weston	3,532	3,463	62	7	0
Westport	10,065	8,755	408	334	196
<u>Wilton</u>	<u>6,113</u>	<u>5,403</u>	<u>238</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>90</u>
Southwestern Connecticut Region	139,224	80,511	7,714	11,507	9,606

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>5 TO 9 UNITS</u>	<u>10 TO 19 UNITS</u>	<u>20 OR MORE UNITS</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME</u>	<u>BOAT, RV, VAN, ETC</u>
Darien	79	25	109	6	0
Greenwich	1,002	614	1,912	9	6
New Canaan	124	98	201	16	0
Norwalk	2,567	2,384	3,160	86	19
Stamford	3,523	2,350	10,835	27	0
Weston	0	0	0	0	0
Westport	139	55	97	81	0
<u>Wilton</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>245</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Southwestern Connecticut Region	7,530	5,547	16,559	225	25

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Demographic Profile, DP-4. Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics.

Housing Complexes

Multi-family housing exists both as complexes, whether it be condominiums or apartments, and “scattered” multi-family housing, such as apartments above downtown buildings or grandfathered multi-family structures. Darien currently has five condominium complexes, one large apartment complex (Avalon Darien), and two Town-owned moderate-income multi-family complexes (see Exhibit 6-3, below).

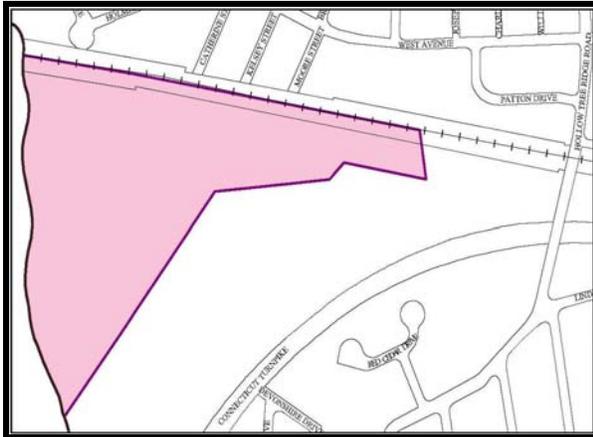
Condominiums were allowed by zoning in Darien starting in the mid-1980s. Since that time, approximately 200 condominium units were constructed. At the time, the Commission put restrictions on the size of the units partially with the expectation that this would help keep the units affordable. Recently, those restrictions were reduced (ie. the units could become larger).

**EXHIBIT 6-3
 LARGE MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING PROJECTS**

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	NUMBER OF UNITS	SITE ACREAGE	ZONING DISTRICT
<u>Apartments</u>				
Avalon Darien	<i>Hollow Tree Ridge Road</i>	189	32+/-	DMR
189 apartment units in 24 buildings				
<u>Condominiums</u>				
Pine Brook	<i>Old King's Hwy. North</i>	20	5.2	DBR/DB-1
Middlesex Commons	<i>Hale Lane</i>	60	10.5	DBR/DB-1
Villager Pond	<i>Boston Post Rd.</i>	37	4.4	DBR/DB-2
Includes 2 income-restricted units				
Sedgwick Village	<i>Old King's Hwy. North</i>	22	3.2	DBR/DB-1
Darien Close	<i>Old King's Hwy. North</i>	21	2.7	DBR/DB-1
<u>Darien Housing Authority-owned multi-family housing</u>				
Old Town Hall Homes	<i>Academy St./Post Rd.</i>	30	2.5	DBR/DB-1
20 one-bedroom units; 10 efficiencies--moderate income senior housing				
Allen O'Neill	<i>Allen O'Neill Drive</i>	53		R-1/3
41 houses; 1 twelve-unit apartment building				
<u>Town-owned projects</u>				
Clock Hill Homes	<i>Gideon Lane</i>	30	2.2	DBR/DB-1
(moderate-income condominium units)				
TOTAL		462	30.73	

Source: Darien Planning & Zoning Department, and 1995 Town Plan of Development.

**EXHIBIT 6-4
REVIEW OF ZONING DISTRICTS
WHICH ALLOW MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING COMPLEXES**



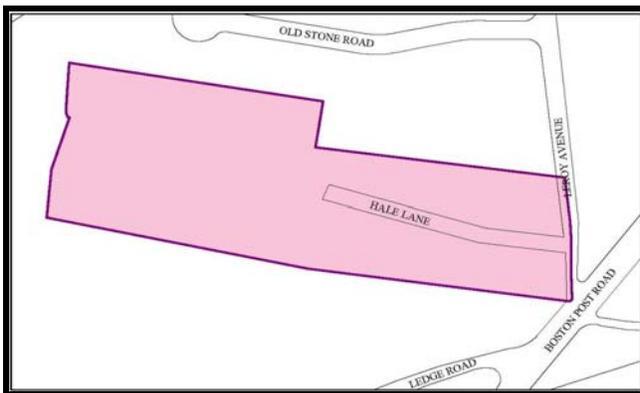
Designed Multi-Family Residential (DMR) Zone

Total: ±31.52 acres Properties: 1 Status: fully developed—no vacant land.
Avalon Darien 189 apartment units, including 42 affordable units



***3.7 acre Hollow Tree Ridge Road Small
Acreage Zone for Affordable Housing (3.7AH) Zone***

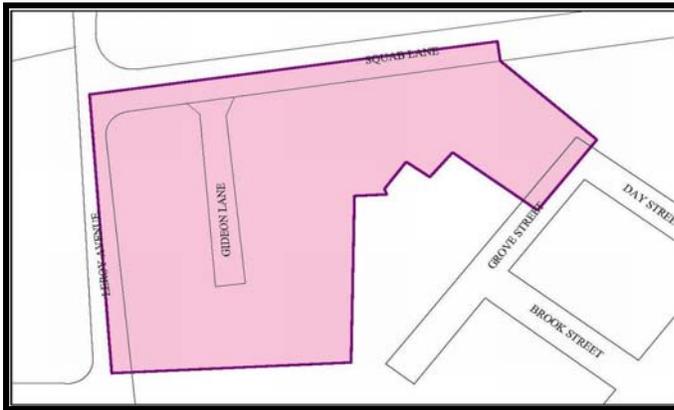
Total: ±3.7 acres Properties: 1 Status: Vacant
Development Potential: 33 housing units, including affordable units



DBR Zone - Hale Lane

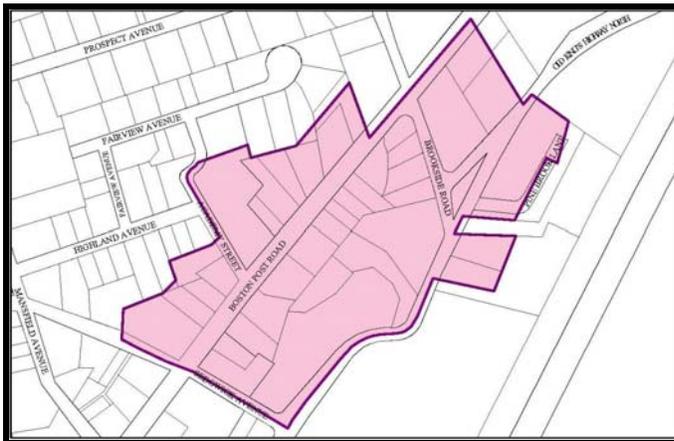
Total: ±10.17 acres Properties: 2 Status: fully developed—no vacant land.
Development: Middlesex Commons, 60 condominium units

EXHIBIT 6-4 continued



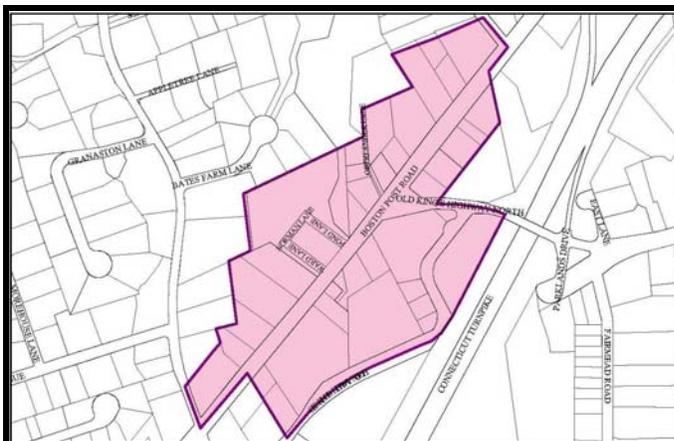
DBR – Gideon Lane

Total: ±3.4 acres Properties: 2 Status: fully developed
Clock Hill Homes, 30 condominium units



DBR – Boston Post Road (DB-1 Zone)

Total: ±24.9 acres Properties: 39 Status:
Old Town Hall Homes, 30 units; Pine Brook, 20 condominium units;
Sedgwick Village, 22 condominium units



DBR – Boston Post Road (DB-2 Zone)

Total: ±39.9 acres Properties: 39 Status:
Villager Pond, 37 condominium units, including 2 affordable units
Darien Close, 21 condominium units

Other forms of housing

Section 405e of the Darien Zoning Regulations specifically allows, as an accessory use requiring a Special Permit, “living accommodations and/or dwelling units in conjunction with a Special Permit use where the applicant clearly demonstrates a reasonable safety, security or similar need to have an employee or specified number of employees reside on the premises”. This provision, or similar wording, has been in the Darien Zoning Regulations since 1957. The current Section 405e of the Regulations gives the Planning and Zoning Commission the ability to permit such housing.

This provision has been used to construct housing for workers at the three local Country Clubs, the Noroton Yacht Club, and for other Special Permit uses such as the Darien Community Association (DCA) and some of the local churches. Because of the cost of housing in Darien and the Southwestern Region in general, providing on-site housing in these situations results in on-site security for these facilities as well as taking commuters off the road, as these workers live on the same premises where they work.

These facilities generally fall into three categories—apartments; dormitory style housing; and single-family residences. Apartments over existing buildings such as the Darien Community Association and the Noroton Yacht Club allow for on-site maintenance and security. The Country Clubs have a mix of housing, much of it “dormitory style”. This allows co-workers to live together in one building, usually with one shared kitchen facility. Many of the churches have one or more single-family residences on their property. This allows the clergyman to live on the premises.

Exhibit 6-5 shows that there are over 100 of these types of units throughout the community. These are all “affordable” units, as the facilities usually do not charge rent, but rather include the housing in the benefits package for working at the facility. In the cases of the three country clubs, most of the housing is seasonal, and that many of the units are not inhabited during the winter months. There is the possibility that these units could be counted towards “Affordable Housing” as outlined in Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes in the future. However, certain restrictions would need to be filed with the Planning and Zoning Commission and in the Darien Land Records to formalize this conversion. However, at the current time, all of these units function as affordable housing within the community, although they do not count towards the “goal” as outlined in the State Statutes.

**EXHIBIT 6-5
 HOUSING ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIAL PERMIT USES**

USE	HOUSING TYPE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Darien Community Assoc.	apartment on 3rd floor of building	1
Darien YMCA		2
Noroton Yacht Club	apartment above Club	1
Ox Ridge Hunt Club	4 living facilities including "corn crib". 16 bedrooms total--15 employees maximum	15
Tokeneke Beach Club		1
Pear Tree Point School	caretaker cottage on westerly portion of site two faculty apartments on 2nd floor of admin. building	1
Country Clubs		
Country Club of Darien	staff housing in middle of site (18) housing above pro shop (10)	28
Wee Burn Country Club	staff housing in middle of site	24
Woodway Country Club	staff housing constructed year 2000	24
Churches		
Noroton Presbyterian Church	house at 23 Noroton Avenue this second parsonage was approved in 1997 house at 2075 Post Road built in 2001 for musical director	3
St. Luke's Church	rectory	2
St. Thomas More	rectory for pastor and his family	1
First Congregational Church	parsonage	1
St. John R.C. Church	rectory (addition in 1998)	1
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	rectory and sexton's house (addition in 1977)	2
TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES HOUSED:		107

Source: Darien Planning & Zoning Office, October 2004.

Other housing allowed in Darien

Section 650 of the Darien Zoning Regulations allows as a permitted principal use, dwelling units located on upper floors in the Central Business District Zone (the CBD Zone, which is downtown Darien). They are also allowed by right in the SB and SB-E zones (except above automotive service uses). They are also allowed in the DC Zone (Noroton Heights), NB Zone, DB-1 Zone, DB-2 Zone, by Special Permit. Thus, there is opportunity for additional housing to be built in these areas. The Grove Street Plaza project consists of two mixed-use buildings with apartments on the upper floors. This project provides 10 new residential units in the middle of Downtown Darien across from the Darien Train Station. This is the first new housing constructed downtown since Clock Hill Homes back in the early 1990s.

In 2004, the Grove Street Plaza project was constructed in the CBD Zone. It consisted of two mixed use buildings on the north side of Grove Street in downtown Darien. The upper floors on each of the buildings will have residential apartments of various sizes—a total of 10 in all. As noted in the 1995 Town Plan, apartments in downtown may provide “desirable housing alternatives for childless households, both young and old, who may work in the business area or who desire the convenience which such a location offers. It also has the advantage of introducing a night-time population that add to the security as well as the variety of life in the business areas.”

In the late 1990s, the Planning and Zoning Commission amended the Darien Zoning Regulations to allow Assisted and Independent Living Facilities in the Service Business (SB) zone (Section 667 of the Regulations). This resulted in the constructed of an assisted living facility on Ledge Road, a facility with 86 units.

Another related issue is group homes. It is likely that in the future, requests will be made to allow group homes in Darien. These may consist of a group of supervised developmentally disabled adults who live together in a house. Such a use may be affordable housing, or may not be. Such uses should be located within walking distance of public transportation facilities such as the train or bus.

Affordable Housing

Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes gives special treatment of affordable housing within certain communities in Connecticut, including Darien. According to the Department of Economic and Community Development, as of 2003, only 29 of the 169 communities in Connecticut are exempt from Section 8-30g. Although the Planning & Zoning Commission has reviewed and approved a number of projects that have been submitted under that Statute, the only one actually constructed was a project on Hollow Tree Ridge Road. That project includes 42 affordable units amongst the 189 apartments constructed. A future site that can also accommodate affordable housing is the adjacent Duhaime property. That property is 3.7 acres in size and can accommodate about 33 apartment units, with the possibility of 11 of those being affordable.

Subsidized Housing

It is likely that within the 10-year planning period, a decision will need to be made regarding the Allen O'Neill housing. As these units become in need of more repair, it may be more cost-effective for the Darien Housing Authority to demolish and rebuild, rather than to renovate. It is possible that the existing cape-style houses will be replaced with a different type of unit, such as a townhouse, creating a more land-efficient design. The apartment building (shown below, converted into apartments in the 1940s) is likely to stay. The use of the existing soldiers' field should be preserved if it is determined that it has historical value.



Allen O'Neill housing owned by the Housing Authority of the Town of Darien.

Old Town Hall Houses at 719 Post Road, the location of the Old Town Hall, will not likely need significant renovations over the 10-year period.

Housing by Value

Housing values have increased at a rapid rate in Darien over the past 10 years. Further details are shown in Exhibits A6-6 and A6-7. Much of the costs associated with housing in Fairfield County and the Southwestern Region are the land costs, which in Darien can reach over a million dollars an acre in some cases. Exhibit 6-7 shows the average price of houses sold in 2003. Note that this Exhibit shows average value, which can be skewed with one or two high values. Median value, as shown in Exhibit 6-6, is the median price of all houses sold, and would not be as skewed by the sale of one very-high priced property.

**EXHIBIT 6-6
 HOUSING BY VALUE, 1980, 1990, 2000**

COMMUNITY	1980 MEDIAN VALUE	1990 MEDIAN VALUE	2000 MEDIAN VALUE
Darien	\$156,700	\$462,500	\$711,000
Greenwich	\$165,800	\$500,000+	\$781,500
New Canaan	\$186,700	\$500,000+	\$831,000
Norwalk	\$90,100	\$241,300	\$270,100
Stamford	\$108,800	\$295,700	\$362,300
Weston	\$164,900	\$458,900	\$633,900
Westport	\$149,000	\$422,400	\$625,800
Wilton	\$149,200	\$408,000	\$561,100
Southwestern Connecticut Region			\$469,500

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Demographic Profile, DP-4. Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics, and SWRPA 1992 Planners Data Book.

**EXHIBIT 6-7
 HOUSING BY AVERAGE VALUE, 2003**

COMMUNITY	AVERAGE VALUE
Darien	\$ 1,190,297
Greenwich	\$ 1,757,020
New Canaan	\$ 1,415,462
Norwalk	\$ 522,131
Stamford	\$ 668,714

Source: Stamford Advocate, September 2004.

Housing Density

The Exhibit below shows Darien having the third highest housing density in the Southwestern Region, behind only the two cities—Norwalk and Stamford. It is somewhat surprising to compare Darien with New Canaan—a community of generally the same population. It shows that New Canaan’s housing density is nearly ½ that of Darien’s.

**EXHIBIT 6-8
 HOUSING DENSITY, 2000**

COMMUNITY	TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	AREA (SQUARE MILES)	HOUSING DENSITY
Darien	6,792	12.8	528.3
Greenwich	24,511	47.8	512.5
New Canaan	7,141	22.1	322.7
Norwalk	33,753	22.8	1,480.0
Stamford	47,317	37.7	1,253.6
Weston	3,532	19.8	178.3
Westport	10,065	20.0	502.9
Wilton	6,113	26.9	226.8

Source: US Census Bureau. 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1.

Housing by Tenure

Most of Darien’s housing is owner-occupied. This is reflected in the accompanying Exhibit. Again, the construction of Avalon Darien, which consists of 189 rental units, has changed the percentages, so that rental units now comprise approximately 14% of the housing stock.

**EXHIBIT 6-9
 HOUSING TENURE, 1990 and 2000**

HOUSING TENURE	1990 NUMBER	1990 PERCENT	2000 NUMBER	2000 PERCENT
Occupied housing units	6,399	100%	6,592	100%
Owner-occupied housing units	5,480	86%	5,799	88%
Renter-occupied housing units	919	14%	793	12%

Source: US Census Bureau. 1990 and 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1.

See the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations for a definition of tenure.

**EXHIBIT 6-10
HOUSING TENURE, BY NUMBER OF BEDROOMS, 2000**

TENURE BY BEDROOMS	NUMBER	PERCENT
Owner-occupied housing units	5,800	100
No bedroom	0	0
1 bedroom	95	1.6
2 bedrooms	402	6.9
3 bedrooms	1,757	30.3
4 bedrooms	2,341	40.4
5 or more bedrooms	1,205	20.8
Renter-occupied housing units	792	100
No bedroom	40	5.1
1 bedroom	187	23.6
2 bedrooms	206	26
3 bedrooms	159	20.1
4 bedrooms	166	21
5 or more bedrooms	34	4.3

Source: US Census Bureau. 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1.

Housing by Age

The chart below shows housing stock by age, as of the 2000 Census. One notes that although substantial development still occurs, there are only 30-40 new single-family residences built annually in Town. This is because of the very limited amount of vacant land. Only a fraction of the 30-40 new houses are on vacant land. Most of them are “teardowns”—a term explained on the next page.

**EXHIBIT 6-11
 HOUSING UNITS BY YEAR BUILT, 2000**

<u>AREA NAME</u>	<u>TOTAL HOUSING UNITS</u>	<u>1999 TO MARCH 2000</u>	<u>1995 TO 1998</u>	<u>1990 TO 1994</u>	<u>1980 TO 1989</u>	<u>1970 TO 1979</u>	<u>1960 TO 1969</u>	<u>1940 TO 1959</u>	<u>1939 OR EARLIER</u>
Darien	6,792	23	224	114	452	453	819	2,595	2,112
Greenwich	24,511	129	519	875	2,038	2,522	3,383	7,360	7,685
New Canaan	7,141	136	281	218	692	979	1,321	1,918	1,596
Norwalk	33,753	201	869	1,069	4,032	4,522	5,317	10,607	7,136
Stamford	47,317	583	1,917	1,647	5,995	7,129	8,870	12,921	8,255
Weston	3,532	77	187	106	492	561	908	817	384
Westport	10,065	121	286	180	1,045	813	1,818	3,454	2,348
<u>Wilton</u>	<u>6,113</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>275</u>	<u>173</u>	<u>1,135</u>	<u>938</u>	<u>1,332</u>	<u>1,223</u>	<u>943</u>
Southwestern Connecticut Region	139,224	1,364	4,558	4,382	15,881	17,917	23,768	40,895	30,459

Source: US Census Bureau. 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Demographic Profile, DP-4, Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics.



One of the oldest houses in Town—the Mather Homestead.

“Teardowns”

The phrase “teardowns” has come into use recently, as the trend towards building larger houses continues in the region. The concern with teardowns is that the new structure is always larger than the structure being demolished. Neighborhoods can change or be greatly impacted through this type of activity. One example is on Brush Island Road, where in a five year period, three houses on the street were demolished, and new, larger houses constructed. Because of the very limited amount of vacant land remaining in Darien, teardowns will continue. Issues related to teardowns include drainage, and view impacts. The Exhibit below shows that over 75% of all new single-family residences constructed in the past two and a half years was a “teardown”.

**EXHIBIT 6-12
 “TEARDOWNS” BY QUARTER
 2003-2005**

<u>DATES</u>	<u>TOTAL PERMITS</u>	<u>"TEARDOWNS"</u>	<u>VACANT LAND</u>
2003 Jan.-March	8	6	2
2003 April-June	6	5	1
2003 July-Sept.	8	4	4
2003 Oct.-Dec.	8	6	2
2004 Jan.-March	17	14	3
2004 April-June	6	6	0
2004 July-Sept.	3	2	1
2004 Oct.-Dec.	15	13	2
2005 Jan.-March	11	7	4
2005 April-June	17	10	7
2005 July-Sept.	11	9	2
2005 Oct.-Dec.	15	13	2
TOTAL	125	95	30

“Total permits” reflect the total number of zoning permits issued for new single-family residences. The “vacant land” column indicates the number of zoning permits issued for new single-family residences on vacant properties.

Source: Darien Planning & Zoning Department records.

An issue often related to the teardown issue is the “Monster House” or “McMansion”. These are considered to be very large houses, and will be referred to as such in this Plan. Oftentimes, large houses can be over 9,000 square feet in size. Darien has no overall restriction on the square footage of a residence, but rather, has limits on building coverage and building height. Together, along with basic yard setback provisions, houses are restricted in size. However, in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts, some houses have been constructed which exceed 9,000 square feet in size, and are out-of-scale for the neighborhood.

CHAPTER 7

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Overview

This chapter focuses on the Town's various public-facilities and services exclusive of public parks which are discussed in Chapter 10. These include: the Town Hall/Government Center; the seven existing public schools, Emergency Services—including Police Protection, Darien Emergency Medical Services (Post 53), and the three all-volunteer Fire Departments, Library, the Senior Activities Center, the Town Garage, Sewer Services and the pump stations, Water Supply and the Teen Center.

Since expansions to these facilities are major capital projects, it is imperative that the Town consider and understand what is needed over the next 10 years. Since the last Town Plan, a number of projects were undertaken--expansion was completed at Middlesex Middle School and a new high school is in the process of being constructed. Interior renovations and improvements have occurred at the library, Town Hall, and the sewer pump stations, and additions completed at the Post 53 (EMS) building on Ledge Road. A number of sewer extensions have been completed throughout the community, while others are currently under consideration.

Appendix A7 outlines needs for additional space for the Police Department, and notes that a recent 600 square foot addition to the Post 53 building on Ledge Road met their need for enlargement of existing bathrooms and the establishment of sleeping quarters. The Appendix also outlines a similar need for sleeping quarters at the various firehouses.

The largest new facility now in the planning stages is a new Tokeneke elementary school to replace the existing school. The second largest project will be the construction of a new Darien Library, which will use primarily private funds to complete construction.

Policies

To ensure that space needs and the need for community services are adequately met for the planning period. This may include: upgrading or renovating existing buildings; adding on to existing buildings to meet demonstrated needs; and/or constructing entirely new buildings where appropriate.

To ensure that speed humps and other traffic calming devices do not cut significantly into response times for the three Fire Departments.

To maintain the Senior Activities Center in its existing building, or establish a permanent alternative site.

To provide the community with an adequately sized library with adequate parking for library activities.

To ensure well-defined, and consistently and fairly implemented sewer policies relative to future sanitary sewer extensions.

To ensure adequate water supply, and improvement of the current system relative to distribution, pressure, quality and related factors.

Recommendations

As noted in Appendix A7, a number of other facilities are in need of replacement, renovation and/or expansion over the next ten years, including the Police Station, Darien Library, one or more of the Fire Stations, the Town Garage, and Town Hall. With this in mind, the following are recommended:

Encourage a comprehensive analysis of the space needs at Town Hall. Grants should continue to be pursued to offset the costs of improving this facility.

Consider the purchase or lease of the present Darien Library property as it plans its move to a new site.

Study the existing Senior Center facility, and make a determination on how to proceed—whether to continue repairing and renovating the existing building, or whether to consider alternate locations for a new Senior Center. The Appendix lists some of the repairs that are needed to the existing building.

Monitor the capacity of the existing sanitary sewer system with respect to approval of any future extensions, whether Sewer Commission or developer initiated. If the existing system is at capacity, no further sewer extensions should be approved.

Continue to make necessary repairs and improvements at the various pump stations throughout the community.

Sell or give away the pump station that is surrounded by the Avalon Darien property off of Hollow Tree Ridge Road.

APPENDIX A7

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES



Introduction

The Town's public facilities and services include a number of building locations and related services. They are: Town Hall/Government Center; Town Schools; Emergency Services including Police Protection, Emergency Medical Services, and Fire Protection; the Darien Library; Darien Senior Activities Center; Town Garage; Utilities--Sewers Services and Water Supply; and the Depot—the teen center.

Town Hall/Government Center

The Town Hall which moved into the former Darien High School and Mather Junior High School building on Renshaw Road in the 1980s, is used for a variety of purposes, nearly 16 hours a day on many weekdays, and on a substantial number of weekends throughout the year. The building includes Town Government and Board of Education Offices, the Darien Arts Council, and a gymnasium. Recently, Youth Options and the Darien Housing Authority have moved into the basement of the building. The building also has an auditorium, which provides a large meeting space for Committees and Boards such as the Representative Town Meeting (RTM), as well as for various theater shows.

In recent years, a number of offices within the building have been refurbished. These include the Parks and Recreation Department/Youth Commission, Health and Social Services, and the Assessor's Office. Scheduled next are renovations to the Town Clerk's Office. The combination of certain Departments such as the Health Department and Social Services Department, as well as the need for more office space for more personnel has resulted in a reduction in the number of conference rooms. There are tentative plans to combine the office space of the Building Department and Planning and Zoning Department. This may limit the use of the conference room now known as room 213. To compensate, there are plans to convert the balcony of the auditorium for a replacement conference room.

As space needs have increased, the Town has moved two functions into the basement, areas, which had been previously been used for storage only. The Housing Authority moved into the basement in the late 1990s, and Youth Options moved into the basement in 2002. This space provides the required confidentiality necessary for Youth Options. It is likely that any future space needs could require finishing of additional space in the basement, however, then there will be a need for additional storage space.

Other improvements have occurred to the building within the past few years, including but not limited to the following:

- Wireless internet access was established in rooms 206, 119 and the auditorium.
- The roof on the small gym will be repaired/renovated in 2005.
- All new chairs and tables were placed in the front of auditorium, which also received new shades, wireless microphones, and new paint.

Improvements which are needed to the building within the next ten years include:

- The main gym needs to be done in 2006.

- The main Town Hall roof will need to be replaced.
- The two entrances at the arts center need to be completely replaced (all new glass and new doors).
- The three garage doors in the back of Town Hall need to be changed.
- The elevator needs to be updated.
- Renovations are needed to the Room 119 meeting room. New furniture and a quieter air conditioning unit will improve this facility, which will get increased use as the number of meeting rooms decrease.

The Town should continue to pursue State grants, where available, to complete these renovations/improvements.



This photo shows the three existing garage doors that need to be replaced. It also shows a possible area of expansion of the Town Hall, which would be a second story addition over the garage.



The Arts Council occupies a portion of the Town Hall building. There is a need to replace the existing windows and doors in the atrium area.

Town Schools

Darien has seven public schools—five elementary schools; Middlesex Middle School; and Darien High School. In the late 1990s, changes were made to a number of Elementary Schools. That was followed by an addition to Middlesex Middle School a few years later. The Town is currently in the process of constructing a new Darien High School, and the existing high school was demolished in the summer of 2005, with the students attending the new school in early September 2005. Recently, private funds have financed a new multi-purpose turf field adjacent to the new school.

Issues

The Board of Education needs to ensure that schools are adequately sized to meet enrollment demands over the next ten years. Further information on projected enrollment is included in the Demographics Chapter of this Plan.

Improvements Needed

Recently, the Board of Education determined that it is more cost-effective to construct a new Tokeneke Elementary School and demolish the existing school, rather than renovating the existing school. The new school is currently in the design stages, with an expectation to be open by September 2007. Obviously, various approvals will be needed to construct the new school from the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Environmental Protection Commission.



The new Darien High School opened in September 2005.

Police Protection

The Darien Police Department, located at 25 Hecker Avenue, is a two-story brick structure, originally constructed in 1932 to house Police Headquarters and the Circuit Court. The Department presently consists of 51 sworn officers and a staff of seven civilians, including a full time fleet mechanic. The Department handles in excess of 20,000 calls annually, not including the dispatching of all three fire departments and Post 53, which is also done through the Police Communications Center. Demands placed upon Communications officers continue to increase and the need for additional personnel in Communications remains an issue.



The Darien Police Department is located on Hecker Avenue.

Issues

Police Headquarters was extensively renovated and somewhat expanded in 1987. While this renovation was a vast improvement over previous conditions, the Department still has outstanding needs. The rapid development and incorporation of technology into the daily operations, while offering a wide range of benefits, presents an ongoing challenge to present space configurations and utilities infrastructure. These technologies require utilization of space not configured for it. A previous funding request for renovations to the Detective Bureau to address some of these concerns was not funded and was submitted again for consideration in FY2006/2007. Storage of evidence requires dedicated space capable of being secured in an appropriate manner; current evidence storage areas are at or nearing capacity. Present configurations of interior space should be reviewed and altered as needed to maximize efficiency.

Improvements Needed

Female locker facilities, although presently adequate, could become an issue as the Department can reasonably be expected to hire additional female officers in the future. In addition, the current training classroom should be expanded and updated to accommodate current training methods and the extensive use of computer assisted training methods. This training room also serves as the town's Emergency Operations Center and needs to be updated to fulfill that role in the manner expected. The Department's exercise facility, used on a nearly daily basis by various officers, is in need of updating to encourage expanded usage geared toward promoting overall officer fitness.

Indoor and outdoor storage remains a pressing need. Present interior space is fully and intensively utilized. Serious consideration should be given to expanding the present building over the existing garage area and reconfiguring space to accommodate present and future needs. It is also recommended that a suitable storage facility be erected within the fenced in outdoor range area to store found bicycles, seized vehicles, bulk maintenance items such as tires and fluids, traffic signs, as well as the outdoor shooting range supplies currently housed in a small metal shed. The outdoor shooting range, used on a regular basis for firearms qualifications, is in need of rehabilitation to meet present training methods and needs. The cellblock needs to be upgraded to modern standards.

As stated in the 1995 Plan, the adjacent vacant property to the east of Police Headquarters offered the only viable method of expanding beyond the existing property lines. With the recent acquisition of this property by the Darien Library, and plans to build a new library there, this option has been rendered moot. The last remaining alternative to extensive renovation and additions to the present building is the relocation of Police Headquarters to a new site.

Darien Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical care in Darien is a team effort involving police, ambulance and fire personnel - all working together with the single goal of providing the highest possible level of pre-hospital care for the town's citizens.

When citizens call 911 for a medical emergency they activate a coordinated, tiered level of response. First on scene within 2-3 minutes is a trained medical First Response Darien police officer followed shortly by a Darien EMS--Post 53 Advanced Life Support EMT-Intermediate (EMT-I) in a fly car and then one of the three Post 53 ambulances. The fire department responds when needed, providing additional trained medical response personnel as well as scene protection and extrication expertise, especially at motor vehicle accidents. In potentially life-threatening situations, paramedics are dispatched simultaneously, arriving on scene within minutes of a 911 call.

The core of Darien Emergency Medical Services is the nationally known, award winning young adult organization, Post 53, composed of 50 highly trained Darien High School students who, with their adult Advanced Life Support advisors, deliver free round-the-clock emergency ambulance service to the citizens of Darien. Career paramedics from Stamford Emergency Medical Services (SEMS) provide drug and advanced airway interventions when needed. Paramedics respond to approximately 40% of all emergency ambulance calls in Darien following rigid, hospital-approved dispatch criteria.

Issues

Extensive and continuing training is crucial to the high quality of patient care at every level. Membership in Post 53 is highly competitive with 15 members selected from each high school class. The young adults then receive approximately 150 hours of training to become certified at age 16 as Emergency Medical Technicians. Adult member EMT-Is receive another 80 hours of training and are certified to provide an advanced level of cardiac, airway management and shock treatment. Darien Police are trained and certified as medical First Responders by Post 53 Instructors. Since March 1998 they have been equipped with and trained in the use of the Automated External Defibrillators (AED) which, when applied early in some cases of cardiac arrest, can reverse potentially fatal heart rhythms.

Post 53 is a 100% volunteer organization not supported financially by the Town of Darien or the United Way. Post 53 members earn a portion of their annual operating budget through fundraising events such as the Fall Art Show and the Memorial Day Food Fair. When patients need the services of paramedics, they are billed at a State approved rate for services.

The Darien EMS headquarters is located at Zero Ledge Road at the corner of Noroton Avenue and Interchange 10 entrance to the Turnpike. The original 7,400 square foot facility, built in

1989, was expanded in 2002 by approximately 600 square feet to enlarge the existing first-floor bathrooms, enlarge the two existing “studies” to provide separate sleeping quarters for male and female high school EMT crews, and create a third private room and bathroom for an adult EMT supervisor. The original building and the expansion were paid for by private donations. No further expansion of the building is projected. The building will require normal maintenance and replacement of key components such as air conditioners, furnaces and roofs. Costs for these replacements are expected to be covered by fundraising events (described above) and annual giving by the residents of the town. Other operating expenses continue to increase due to escalating equipment costs, and new requirements established by the Occupational Safety and Health Department and the Connecticut Department of Health Services.

In 2004, the Town of Darien began implementing an enhanced 911-priority medical dispatch system to provide ambulances with additional information about a patient’s condition prior to their arrival on scene and to provide pre-arrival instructions to bystanders at the scene in skills such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation.



The Post 53 building on Ledge Road was added onto in 2002.

Working together as an efficient, highly trained team within the statewide EMS system, Darien Emergency Medical Services responded to 1177 calls in 2003. Exhibit 7-1 shows the breakdown of calls by type

**EXHIBIT 7-1
 DARIEN EMS CALL STATISTICS 1999-2004**

	<u>1999-2000</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2003-2004</u>
Medical	616	620	620	620	667
Trauma	556	550	550	550	510
<u>Combination</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>30</u>	
Total # of Responses	1205	1200	1200	1200	1177

Note: Time frames are based on the July 1-June 30 Fiscal Year.

Source: Town of Darien Annual Reports

Fire Protection

Darien's fire protection is provided by three highly trained, all volunteer staffed fire departments. Located in center of town is Darien (founded in 1895), along the southern section is Noroton (founded in 1896) and western part of Darien is Noroton Heights (founded in 1903). In addition, a Fire Training Facility, used by all three departments, is located on Ledge Road to the rear of the Refuse Disposal Center. The three departments are each administered independently. There also is a nine member Board of Fire Commissioners whose function is to establish policy and coordinate fire protection services. In addition, they are supported to a minor degree by a career staffed Fire Marshal's Office located in Town Hall.

Each volunteer fire company owns the land and building which it occupies and receives an annual appropriation from the Town for equipment maintenance, partial operating expenses and insurance. The equipment is not entirely owned by the Town, as some ownership is by the fire companies themselves.

The fire stations occupied by these departments are all post-war brick structures in sound condition. One floor in each firehouse is used for fire-fighting equipment and the other floor is used for meeting rooms and other accessory functions. All three departments report that the location and size of the respective headquarters sites will be generally adequate for the foreseeable future, with the exception of additional storage areas for equipment, and the desire to build sleeping quarters (as noted below).

Issues

All three fire stations are already limited on space, and some equipment is being housed outside in their respective parking lots. This may result in the need to seek additional storage space for apparatus and equipment. Over the next ten years, there may be a need for additions to one or all of the three fire houses in order to accommodate sleeping quarters for the volunteers.

The fire companies have noted certain impediments to fire emergency response in Town. Speed humps and bumps and road barricades, for instance, were minor distractions in some private roads in years past, and they continue to be a hazard for apparatus and personnel as the humps have been installed even on public roadways recently to attempt to calm traffic. The continuing request from residents for these and other traffic calming devices can and will lead to longer response times. The restricted heights of the railroad underpasses at Raymond Street and Leroy Avenue continue to be barriers to some of the larger equipment, and alternative response routes are used when necessary. The pre-emption system used by the Fire Departments for the traffic signals on the Boston Post Road and the West Avenue-Noroton Avenue intersection has occasional technical problems.

Improvements Needed

Most importantly, the water service provided by the Aquarion Water Company of Connecticut has recently seen some minor improvements to water flows through some of their capital projects. They have worked on some improvement in terms of volume and available pressure in some of the known localized problematic areas. Existing main sizes must be upgraded in various parts of Town and an improved pumping station must be provided at the Chestnut Street facility. This increased pumping capacity is critical to the maintenance of pressure. Increased pipe

diameter is critical in transmitting greater volumes of water. The Water Company is replacing outdated systems and components, and is currently addressing several of these problems.

Other improvements needed in the area of fire protection are: ensuring interoperability with our neighbors in the region (Stamford, New Canaan and Norwalk); and having the three fire departments establish a computer-aided dispatch system with mobile terminals to improve efficiency and response time.

Recognizing the above-mentioned issues and needed improvements, each of the three volunteer departments provides excellent fire protection for the Town. This translates into the best insurance rating for communities served wholly by volunteer departments.



Possibility for adding on to existing Noroton Fire House is an addition over the existing flat roof. There is no basement, and thus, there is a need for storage. An elevator will need to be installed to meet current handicap accessibility requirements.

Darien Library

The current Darien Library is located on the west side of Leroy Avenue between Hale Lane and Old Stone Road. Although this structure had additions constructed in 1974 and 1988, the activity at the Library has proven that the Library has outgrown this location.

Issues

As of this writing, the Library has purchased the property at the corner of Boston Post Road and Hecker Avenue. This property is shown in Exhibit 7-2 on the next page.

Improvements Needed

The needs of the future library should include a room dedicated solely for teens, meeting space appropriate for the community to supplement meeting space which now exists in Town Hall, additional space for quiet study and traditional library pursuits, increased space for technology, full handicapped access, and a design that allows the library to continue its role as a comfortable space which invites the whole community. Parking should be adequate to accommodate both everyday use, as well as have overflow parking nearby for special events such as speakers and programs.

This relocation would then bring up the logical question of the status of the existing Library building, which is very close to downtown Darien. The reuse of this building could be used for providing for the expansion and needs of other current public facilities and services outlined within this Chapter, or other needs, as noted elsewhere within this document.

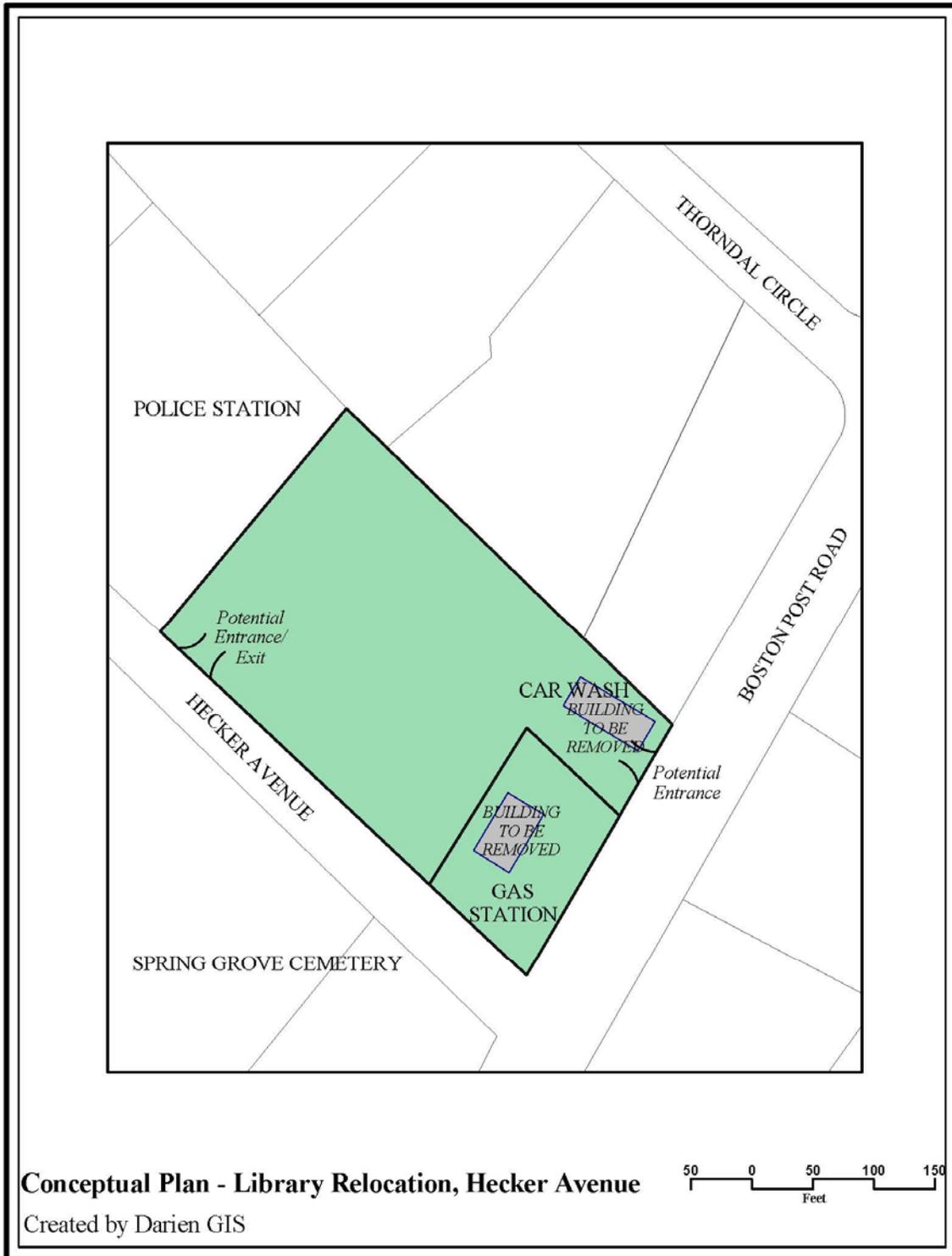


The existing Darien Library on Leroy Avenue.



The site of the new library on Hecker Avenue.

**EXHIBIT 7-2
PROPOSED LOCATION OF
NEW DARIEN LIBRARY**



Teen Center

The Depot is the teen center for Darien High School students and is located in the renovated 100-year old former Noroton Heights Train Station. It opened in 1990 and provides a safe, supervised, drug-free and alcohol-free environment where students can gather, socialize and participate in community activities. The Depot is governed by students and is open five days a week. The Depot was expanded in 1993 by incorporating a caboose into the facility and continues to enjoy strong community support. Safe Rides now bases its operations in The Depot.

Darien Senior Activities Center

For over 20 years, the former Hollow Tree Elementary School property located on Edgerton Street has been serving as the Town's senior activities center. The facilities have undergone substantial renovation to establish a well attended, functional facility.

Issues

Townspeople who are 62 years of age or older use the center for lunchtime dining, entertainment, charitable work, skill classes, and various forms of recreation. The dining facilities alone are oftentimes used at their full capacity of approximately 120 persons. The seniors also use the facilities to undertake contributions to the community such as repairing furniture for Person-to-Person, carrying out major mailings for local charitable agencies and producing items for charitable events. By all measures, the Senior Center has proved to be extremely successful.

An important policy decision facing the Town is whether to maintain this facility at its current location or establish an alternative site.

Issues

Significant repair work needs to be done to the Senior Center. A decision needs to be made as to:

- Whether to repair the building little-by-little;
- Whether to perform substantial renovations all at once;
- Whether to demolish the existing building and construct a new Senior Center—either in generally the same location, or elsewhere within the community.

Improvements Needed

The Senior Center is in need of significant roof repairs. This is regardless of whether the Center is moved to another location, as the roof repairs need to be done within the next year.



The Senior Activities Center is located on Edgerton Street.

Town Garage

The Town Garage facility is currently located on Ledge Road, and houses a variety of equipment and vehicles for Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Board of Education, and miscellaneous vehicles used by Town Hall employees.

Improvements Needed

The existing facility is full, and there is a need to create an empty repair bay, to allow for servicing and repair in-house of vehicles and equipment. The existing program of in-house servicing and repair results in significant costs savings for the community. Because the garage is also used for parking, limited space exists currently for a dedicated repair bay. Leaving vehicles and equipment outdoors rather than indoors subjects them to the weather and possible vandalism, and shortens their life span.



The Town Garage on Ledge Road has a number of bays for repair and for vehicle and equipment storage. It is shared by the Board of Education, Parks and Recreation Department, and the Public Works/Sewer Services Department.

Sewer Services

Over 70% of the Town of Darien is served by sanitary sewer system. Recent sewer extensions have occurred in one of two manners: 1) through the Sewer Commission's initiative; and 2) through private developers. As shown in Exhibit 7-3, below, recent Sewer Commission initiated extensions have included Tower Drive, Peach Hill Road, Ring's End Road and Harbor Road; Long Neck Point Road, Pear Tree Point Road, and Crane Road. Although Great Island and Coon Point Road received approval for sewer extensions, those were later removed from the plans. Developer's extensions have occurred on Mansfield Avenue, Boston Post Road, West Avenue, Andrews Drive, off of Hollow Tree Ridge Road (for the Avalon Darien project), Bishop's Gate, and along Hanson Road.

EXHIBIT 7-3 TOWN SANITARY SEWER EXTENSIONS SINCE 1996

YEAR	LOCATION
1996	Raymond Street, Tulip Tree Lane
1997	Circle Road
1998	Nolen Lane
1999	Fairmead Road, Swift's Lane, Nickerson Lane
2000	Pratt Island, Nash Island, Tower Drive, Tower Lane
2001	Peach Hill Road
2002	Tower Drive
2003	Ring's End Road, Harbor Road
2004	Long Neck Point Road, Pear Tree Point Road, Crane Road
2005	Coon Point Road, Great Island Road, Hanson Road

The existing pump station near the Noroton River on the edge of the Avalon Darien property should be formally abandoned, and the Town should consider selling or giving away the property to be used for green space or landscaping purposes. It now serves no useful purpose.

At this time, the Sewer Commission is considering sewer extensions to serve Five Mile River Road, Brushy Hill Road and Andrews Drive, St. Nicholas Road, and the Goodwives River Road area. The Sewer Commission should establish a formal policy on the criteria for approving sewer extensions including where developer's extensions should be allowed to occur.

The Sewer Commission is currently undertaking a capacity study of Stony Brook pump station which could lead to a new force main or new pumps in that vicinity. It should be determined whether existing capacity is adequate to handle additional proposed flow. Improvements have been made at a number of the sewer pump stations within Town. These include new paint, new doors, new windows, and safety and emergency lighting. Over the next ten years, there will need to be some updating at a few of the pump stations, and the Nearwater Lane and Stony Brook pump stations can be enhanced through new landscaping/shrubbery.

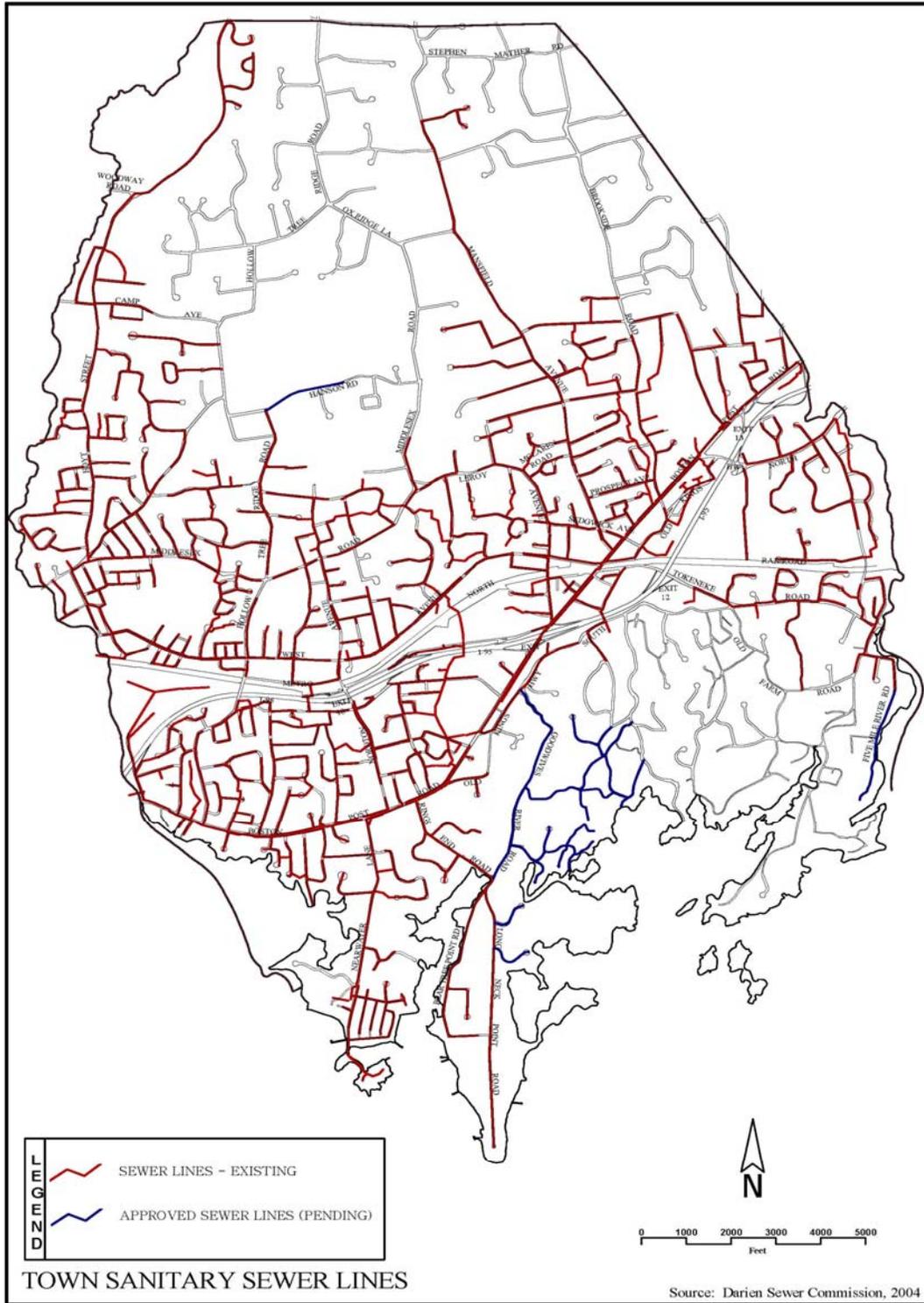
The location of existing sanitary sewer lines is shown in Exhibit 7-4, and a map showing sewer properties within Town is shown in Exhibit 7-5 on page A7-17. These maps reflect that the only remaining areas not served by the Town's sanitary sewer system are north Darien, Tokeneke, Delafield Island, and Goodwives River Road.

Water Supply

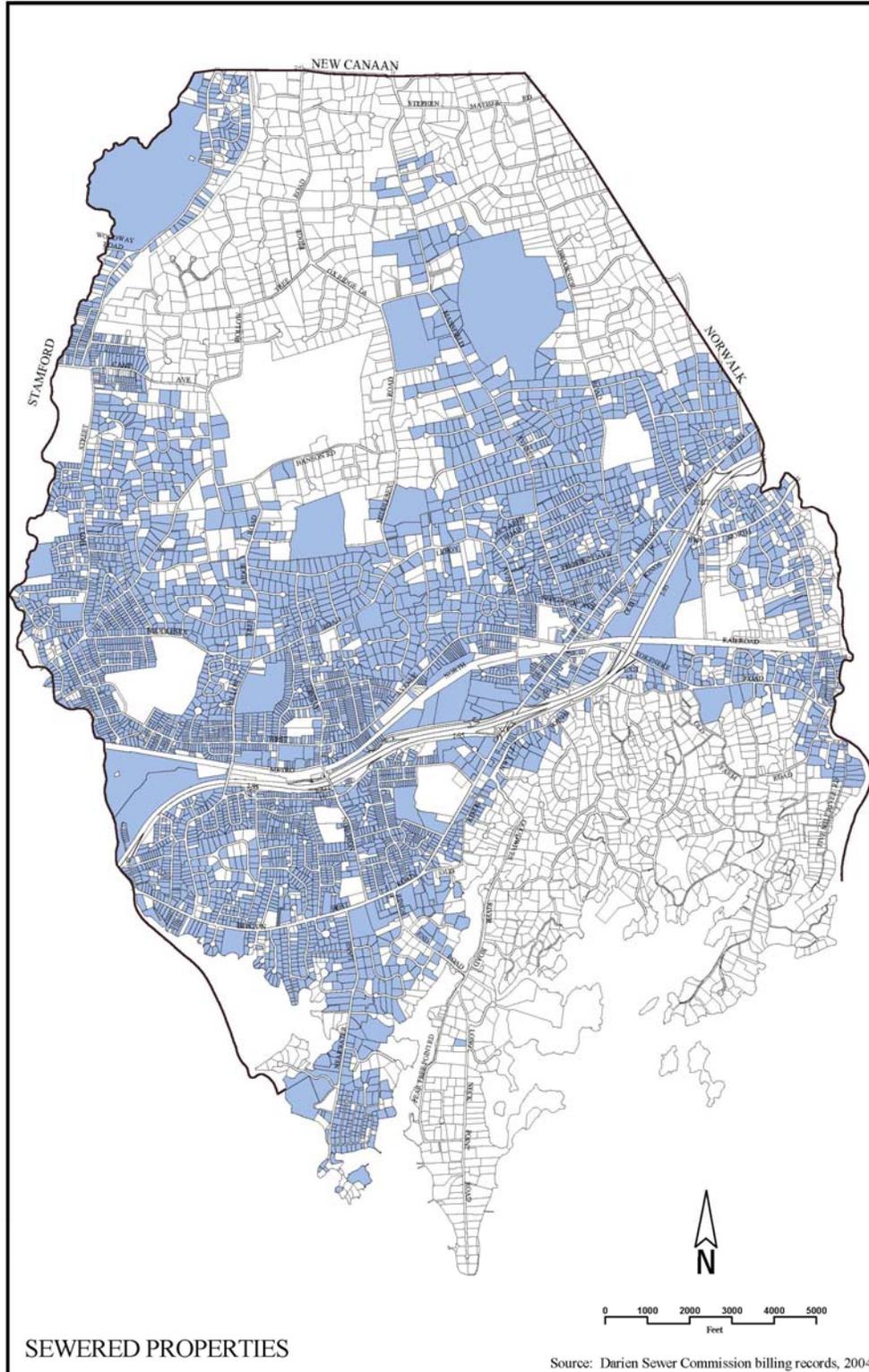
According to Aquarion, total gallons used per customer have been rising. However, Aquarion estimates that the overall demand for water in Darien will only grow about 1 percent per year over the next 20 years. According to Aquarion, about 10 percent of Darien's residents obtain their drinking water from private wells tapping into various aquifers in Darien.

In the early 1980s, volatile organic compounds (VOC) were detected in the Rewak Well with the primary source stemming from Stamford industrial land uses across the Noroton River. An air stripper was installed that works continuously to remove them and the problem is being corrected. Currently, sodium levels in the well are above acceptable levels (above 28 parts per million). However, since these levels do not pose a serious public health threat according to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, remediation efforts are not warranted. Residents are notified by the water company about the sodium levels for those people sensitive sodium intake (i.e. high blood pressure patients). According to Aquarion, the cause of the sodium is undetermined.

**EXHIBIT 7-4
SEWER LINES
AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2004**



**EXHIBIT 7-5
PROPERTIES SERVED BY PUBLIC SEWER
AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2004**



Source: Darien Sewer Commission billing records, 2004

CHAPTER 8

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



PARKS & RECREATION

Overview

This chapter reviews two interrelated issues—Parks and Recreation. The 1995 Town Plan of Development and the 1996 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan both provided a number of recommendations for short and long-range projected improvements. The Town has made strides since the adoption of these Plans in significantly improving its parks and recreation facilities. These include: modifications and improvements to Baker Field; the acquisition of property and construction of a new fieldhouse, ballfield and playground at McGuane Field; acquisition of property adjacent to Woodland Park; irrigation of a number of fields within the community; improvements to Cherry Lawn Park; and enhanced parking at Stony Brook Park.

This Plan focuses on improvements and enhancements of the Town's existing facilities, and properties, including those used for active recreation, those used for passive recreation, and those preserved as natural open spaces. This chapter will outline and describe policies related to parks, recreation and open space, and conclude with a list of recommendations. Appendix A8 explains the issues related to many of the existing parks and recreation facilities within the community, and provides tables and maps showing existing open space within Town owned by various entities.

Policies

To increase water-based recreation opportunities.

To protect Darien's waterfront resources.

To maximize existing park and recreation facilities.

To continue the high level of maintenance and enhancements at all parks.

To continue to use public-private partnerships, where appropriate, to provide recreation facilities for the community.

To preserve as much land as possible for parks, recreation and natural open space to maintain Darien's high quality of life.

Recommendations

Update the 1996 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan to reflect the changing needs and desires of the community.

Complete the Weed Beach Master Plan that would review, analyze, and prepare an efficient layout for that area.

Consider purchasing the lot(s) on Short Lane to allow for the expansion of Weed Beach.

Examine all opportunities to preserve land for public recreation and open space.

Consider purchasing properties contiguous to Town-owned properties if they become available.

Prepare a Master Plan for all Town Park properties (Tilley Pond Park, Cherry Lawn, Woodland Park, Pear Tree Point, Selleck's Woods, Baker Field).

Where appropriate, encourage "Friends of" groups to take an active role in park planning. This has worked effectively over the past few years.

APPENDIX A8

PARKS & RECREATION



Beaches

As noted within the roundtable sessions organized by the League of Women Voters in 2003 and 2004, the two existing beaches in Town are considered by many to be two of the most valuable community resources.



Darien's two beach areas provide water-based and non-water based recreational opportunities. As described herein, there is a need to make the most efficient use of these valuable resources, and perform long-range planning relative to their future. In addition, the community should consider the potential for adding onto the two beach properties, which will allow for flexibility for meeting future community needs. The Town must balance the need and desire to provide recreation facilities in these areas with the protection of the waterfront resources. The recommendations herein relate to the first two policies listed above relative to increasing water-based recreation activities, and protecting Darien's fragile waterfront resources.

Pear Tree Beach

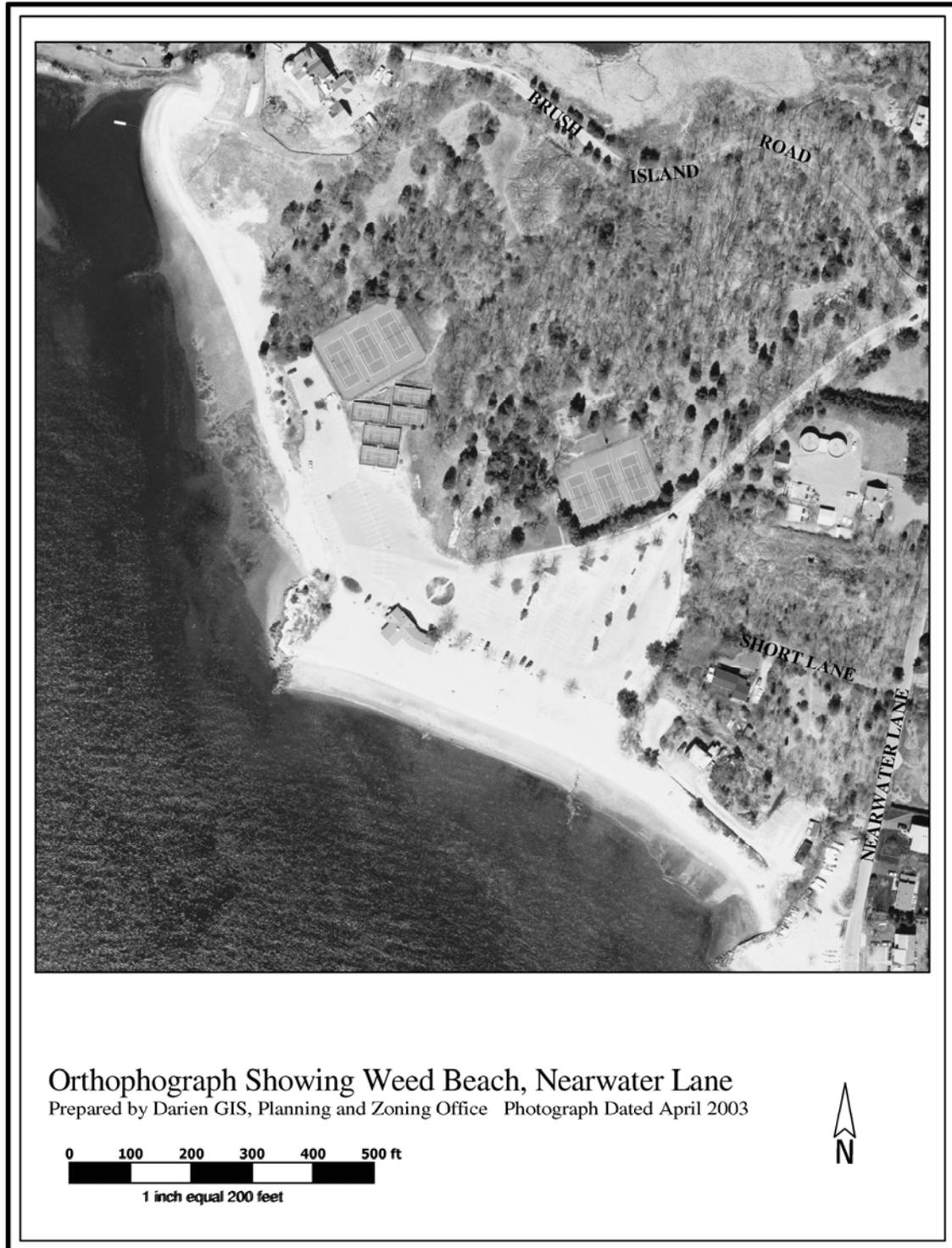
Within the 10-year time frame, it is likely that a new or renovated concession stand and bath house will be needed at this facility. The new stand and bath house should be ADA compliant. A fishing pier either here or at Weed Beach would provide for improved organization and safety for that activity. One idea would be to have an area along the rock jetty be used. This would be separate and distinct from the swimming and beach areas, leaving these areas undisturbed. The Town should consider purchasing adjacent properties, which may allow for future expansion of the beach and/or picnic area.

Weed Beach

Weed Beach has the most potential of any Town owned area for expansion and improvement. This is because the Town currently owns a number of properties in the Short Lane area and owns portions of Weed Beach that are currently under-utilized. It is imperative that a Weed Beach master plan be completed in the near future to explore a comprehensive improvement of this facility. Currently there are both water-dependent and non-water-dependent uses at the beach. Water-dependent uses include: a Junior sailing area, beach area, swimming, picnicking, bird watching, kayaking. Non-water dependent uses include: informal walking paths, tennis courts, paddle tennis courts, children's play area, parking area, and gatehouse. It is important as part of this comprehensive plan for Weed Beach to preserve the natural scenery and atmosphere of the beach while providing adequate public recreation facilities for the entire community. As specifically noted in the 1995 Town Plan, it is important for the Town to purchase the existing properties on Short Lane to allow for flexibility in design of the Weed Beach area. See Exhibit 8-1 for an air

photo of the area. Desired improvements could include a more formal walking/nature observation trail, defined sail and kayak launch area, reclaiming beach area by relocating parking, an improved children's play area and pavilion area. Preparing a Weed Beach Master Plan would review these issues in more detail, and provide a long-term plan for the property. It will also provide guidance for appropriate uses of the Beach, while addressing the sensitive environmental aspects of this unique location on the sound. It must address how to preserve and conserve this beautiful spot; how to increase water-dependent activities; and how to protect important habitats of animal species.

EXHIBIT 8-1 WEED BEACH



Existing Fields and Courts

Because of Darien's extremely high land costs, it is more costly than ever to obtain property to create or expand parks. Thus, the community should make the most efficient use of the space it has. This would include the following:

- Installation of artificial turf on select fields, which can allow for increased use, especially during rainy or wet weather.
- Irrigation, similarly
- Lighting in certain key locations that would allow for use during dusk and into the evening hours.
- Expansion of existing fields, to allow for increased flexibility of use. This may require relocating and/or modifying existing facilities to accommodate higher-demand activities.
- Continue proper maintenance of the existing facilities.

However, it is imperative that in each case, the specific site details and potential impacts of these changes be analyzed. By implementing these types of improvements, the Town may be able to meet increasing community demands, while minimizing the need to purchase additional property.

Other Parks and Recreation Facilities

Woodland Park

Woodland Park is the largest remaining natural public open space in Darien. It currently consists of a number of walking trails as well as a limited gravel parking area accessible from Middlesex Road. In order to provide better access, the construction of an 8 to 12 space gravel parking area off of West Avenue or from another access road should also be considered. The purchase of an adjacent property could assist in providing a limited number of parking spaces without disturbing the existing park. This could provide for enhanced use of Woodland Park, as no on-street parking is allowed on either Middlesex Road or West Avenue thereby limiting the number of people that can visit the park by automobile at any one time. Woodland Park should remain a passive park with no ball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts or the like. Turtle Pond and Old Maid's Pond, two of the main attractions at the park, may need to be dredged in within the 10-year planning period. This dredging may be a public-private partnership, with Friends of Woodland Park contributing funds to the effort. However, getting equipment into the area to be dredged may be difficult.

Frate Park

As described in the Traffic & Transportation Chapter, expansion of this park may be possible through some changes in the existing adjacent roadway system. See page A4-25 and Exhibit 4-9. By providing improved parking areas and expanding the park, increased use by residents is likely to result.



Frate Park



Tilley Park

Tilley Park

Tilley Park current consists of lighted paved walkways, green lawn area, bench seating for passive enjoyment of the site, and a stone pavilion located at the waters edge. The site is home to many interesting waterfowl and serves the community as a downtown “green space”. The northeast side of the park consists of treed woodland. Large-scale recreation events occur here, including the Post 53 Food Fair, and the Youth Commission’s regatta.

Diller Property

The 5+/- acre Diller property located on Nutmeg Lane adjacent to the Darien High School provides a limited possibility for either active or passive recreation. This site is severely constrained by not only the presence of regulated wetlands, but also by the location of those wetlands, which traverse down from one corner of the property to the other. Thus while some development of the property is possible, it is difficult and severely constrained. The Environmental Protection Commission should be consulted when designing possible development plans. This is dedicated parkland, and any possible sale of the property would require that it be replaced with a property of “comparable replacement land” (see page A8-8). One option for this property would be a walking path providing for a passive recreation area near the high school. Another development option would be for some tennis courts to be placed on each side of the brook that traverses the property. In any case, development will be difficult because of the wetlands issues. And this is not the optimum location for either active or passive recreation.

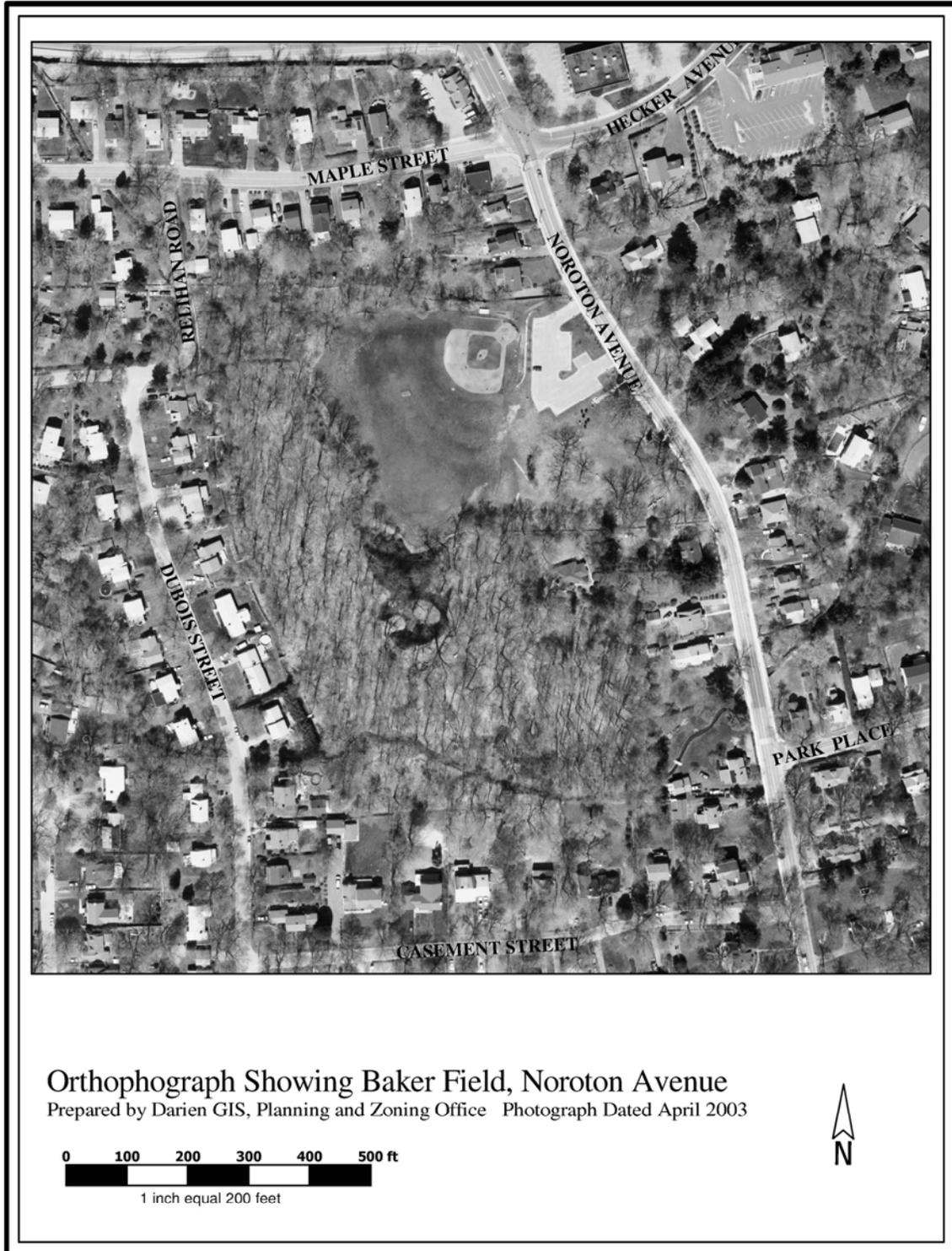
Cherry Lawn Park

Since the 1995 Town Plan of Development, a number of changes have occurred at Cherry Lawn Park, which have both intensified the use of the Park, and enhanced its surroundings. First, a new Nature Center with associated parking was constructed in the southwest corner of the Park, and the building that housed the Nature Center, storage facilities, and a tenant space was demolished. Casey Field was approved for expansion in 2004, thereby providing the opportunity for additional playfield space. The expansion of Casey Field was recommended in both the 1995 Town Plan of Development as well as the 1996 Parks & Recreation Open Space Plan. Over the next 10 years other possible changes to Cherry Lawn Park considered. This would include the possibility of adding public restrooms and monitoring parking (as is currently done at all parks) to determine if 10 to 15 additional parking spaces may be needed on the property. However there is a delicate balance between over-building parking and preserving the aesthetics of the Park. That should be considered first and foremost. At Cherry Lawn Park, as in other community parks, the overall need for tennis courts, basketball courts and paddle tennis courts should be considered, and the number of each should be carefully planned throughout the community and the location of one or the other should be done on an as-needed basis.

Baker Field and Woods

It is unlikely that changes will occur in Baker Field and Woods in the next ten years. However, the Town should continue to consider the possibility of purchasing the property adjacent to the field, to allow additional flexibility for design and expansion. Exhibit 8-2 on the next page better illustrates the location of that house relative to the existing field and woods.

EXHIBIT 8-2 BAKER FIELD



McGuane Park

In recent years, McGuane Field and Park has been expanded to include a fieldhouse; new playground; new special needs “Challenger” field; increased the size of one of the existing ballfields. It is unlikely that any changes will occur to the park within the 10-year planning timeframe, unless adjacent properties become available for purchase.

Procaccini Property

In 2004, the Town considered purchasing the Procaccini property off of Hoyt Street. Ultimately, a number of issues arose, and the purchase did not occur. It is therefore likely that this 15+/- acres will be residentially-developed in the near future, and should not be considered as a likely location for public parks, recreation or open space. It is probable that as any residential development of the property occurs, open space and recreation areas on the property will be set aside, however, those will be geared towards use by residents of the property.

Town Hall & Holohan Fields

The Town Hall site consists of active recreation such as baseball, softball, soccer and field hockey. The fields are utilized by preschool through adult age groups and serve as one of the Town’s major active recreation spaces. Little unused land on this property remains. Providing restroom facilities at this site for recreation users may be needed in the future.

Bike Paths



The 1996 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan contained the results of a survey showing that bicycle routes and trails were one of the facilities needed most within the community. Although bike paths are currently marked throughout Town, better publicity is needed. This may include better signage; and the possible addition of new paths throughout the community.

Walking/hiking Trails

Walking trails were also highlighted in the 1996 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan as “most-desired” facilities. Walking trails now exist in a number of Town-owned properties, as well as on three Darien Land Trust properties. The Town properties include: Stony Brook Park; Selleck’s Woods; and Woodland Park. The Land Trust properties include: Dunlap Woods, Traendly flood

plain property, and Olson Woods. Further work on existing trails and the addition of new trails would benefit the community.

Dedicated Parklands

The issue of dedication of parklands is important. Section 7-131n of the Connecticut General Statutes require that no land which was dedicated for park or other recreational or open space purposes can be sold, unless replaced with “comparable replacement land at least equal in value and per unit area size...”. Because of the limited amount of vacant land remaining in Darien, to find a piece of “comparable replacement land” to swap is a difficult task. The 1996 Parks and Open Space Plan recommended dedicating all of the properties listed in Exhibit 8-3. It was later determined that they had all been dedicated by use, and no formal action was needed by the RTM.

**EXHIBIT 8-3
DEDICATED PARKLANDS**

NAME	ADDRESS	ACREAGE
Baker Field & Woods	Noroton Avenue	11.7
Cherry Lawn Park	Brookside Road	27.5
Diller Property	Nutmeg Lane	5.0
Frate Park	Leroy Avenue	0.8
Holohan Field & Town Hall Fields	Renshaw Road	11.5
McGuane Field	Noroton Avenue	4.0
Pear Tree Beach	Pear Tree Point Road	7.9
Selleck’s Woods	Parklands Drive	28.1
Stony Brook Park	Ledge Road	11.3
Tilley Park	Lakeside Road	8.6
Weed Beach	Nearwater Lane	22.1
Woodland Park	Middlesex Road	64.7
(not including D’Acunto property)		

Note: Some properties are dedicated by use, some by deed, and some by formal resolution.

CHAPTER 9

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



LAND USE

Overview

Darien is primarily a single-family residential community, with some areas of Town specifically set aside for multi-family development. There are a number of commercial areas--Noroton, Noroton Heights, downtown Darien, and certain properties extending along the Boston Post Road east towards Norwalk. The Town is especially interested in maintaining its character in light of the development in the adjacent communities of Stamford and Norwalk. Darien needs to take the impact of this nearby development into account in its own planning. Furthermore, Darien has traditionally developed with higher density residential housing located in and around commercial areas and around the two train stations. As one goes further out to the north and south of the Town center, residential development density gets lower.

By their very nature, land uses are related to many aspects of daily life in the Town. Readers should refer to the various other Chapters in this plan for land use issues relating to Environmental Resources, Traffic and Transportation, Housing, Public Facilities, and Parks and Recreation.

Policies

Maintain a primarily low-density residential community.

Continue the commitment to upgrading all of the commercial districts within Town, including, but not limited to, Noroton Heights and downtown Darien to better serve the needs of the Town.

Preserve the Town's open character and scenic features as part of development and/or redevelopment of any property, whether residential or commercial.

Continue efforts to improve community appearance in all zoning districts.

Continue to encourage vibrant commercial areas.

Continue to encourage small business in the DB-1 and DB-2 Zones, encourage the preservation and renovation of existing older structures, and discourage parcel assemblage in these areas.

Maintain the existing zoning density pattern, which encourages higher density development near train stations, and to a lesser extent, near bus routes.

Continue careful monitoring of Special Use Permits to minimize impact on surrounding single family neighborhoods.

Recommendations

Residential-related

1. A sidewalk plan should be developed and implemented in phases over a period of years. Sidewalks near schools, train stations, and/or adjacent to commercial areas, should be given priority.
2. The Darien Zoning Regulations should be amended to specifically require addressing storm drainage as part of development and/or redevelopment of any property.
3. The Town should consider the establishment of large-scale flood control projects.
4. Re-examine home occupation regulations to ensure that they are consistent with changing times and community needs and desires.
5. The existing Darien Library is located in a residential zone. In the event of the Library's moving, efforts should be made to rezone this property to allow condominiums.
6. The Town should continue exploring possible locations for a community center/community pool facility.
7. Property owners should be encouraged to share docks and floats in order to minimize the impacts to Long Island Sound from a multitude of such facilities.
8. Over the next ten years, the Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to study and continue to consider amending the zoning map. This may be appropriate in areas where existing zone boundary lines split properties and are not a set distance from a street.
9. Some residential district boundaries follow streets rather than rear lot lines, split lots between different districts, or do not appropriately reflect existing lot sizes. In large measure, this is due to those lines having been established as measurements back from a street centerline or right-of-way, before a Town lot line base map existed. It is recommended that these residential zoning district boundaries be studied and carefully reviewed for possible adjustment. Some boundaries which follow streets which should be further considered for alteration include:
 - Hoyt Street properties north of Woodway Road, which are split zoned R-2 and R-1/2;
 - Holmes Avenue properties which are split zoned R-1/5 and R-1/3;
 - Fairmead Road properties which are split zoned R-1 and R-1/2;
 - Hecker Avenue properties near Frate Court, which are split zoned R-1/5 and R-1/3.

Commercial-related

1. As part of any future redevelopment of downtown Boston Post Road properties (south side), consideration should be given to providing a direct accessway to the Center Street Lot South from U.S. Route 1.
2. Keep future commercial development consistent with the existing small-town New England character of Darien.
3. Evaluate the Darien Zoning Regulations to determine if they encourage small storefront shops, while discouraging long blank walls.
4. Better publicize the Board of Selectmen's and Planning and Zoning Commission's policies which encourage outdoor dining.
5. Consider the ease of pedestrian access during the site plan review process. This would especially apply to pedestrian access from municipal parking lots to Boston Post Road and other businesses locations throughout downtown.
6. Consider amending the Zoning Regulations to allow perpendicular hanging signs along the front facades in downtown.
7. Create better signage directing people to downtown municipal parking lots. Adopt clearly defined standards for signs in all commercial zones. Expedite approval of conforming signs. Permit administrative approval of conforming sign applications.
8. Index signs in municipal parking lots showing business locations to direct visitors to businesses.
9. Encourage coordination between property owners/developers to minimize curb cuts, and encourage cohesive development in all commercial zones. Parcel assemblage is beneficial in downtown (the CBD Zone) and in Noroton Heights (the DC Zone) to meet these desires.
10. In large commercial districts, such as Noroton Heights and Downtown, one-stop shopping should be strongly encouraged. Shoppers should be encouraged to park once, and visit numerous businesses in the area.
11. Continue to establish sidewalks in all commercial areas and in front of all commercial properties and include other pedestrian amenities such as benches, trash cans, street lights, and crosswalks and pathways to encourage pedestrian access.
12. The Planning and Zoning Commission should work with the Traffic Authority and property owners to eliminate unsafe parking situations, such as backing into Heights Road or Boston Post Road.

13. As trends change through time, the Commission should consider methods to accommodate such in the Darien Zoning Regulations. Examples include, but are not limited to: the provision of day care; wireless telecommunications; home occupations, senior housing developments, cluster housing, hotels, and larger condominiums. The Zoning Regulations should continue to be reviewed to ensure that they meet the changing demographic needs of the community, while maintaining existing community character.
14. Continue to limit (in most circumstances) commercial and business impacts and intrusion on adjacent residential properties and streets.
15. In the Noroton Heights and downtown commercial areas (the DC and CBD Zones), the Planning & Zoning Commission should consider revising the Zoning Regulations to allow a full third floor especially if it would provide some form of housing, with the exception that such a third floor be set back off the road.
16. Encourage the installation/conversion of existing above-ground utilities to be underground.
17. Emergency planning should be continued. Zoning should accommodate this where necessary and appropriate.
18. Develop regulations to encourage redevelopment of the block opposite the movie theatre, to eliminate the 90° parking facing the buildings from Boston Post Road, to encourage parking behind the buildings and access off Corbin Drive.

Open space-related

1. The Planning & Zoning Commission should consider amending the Subdivision Regulations to require greater open space than the current 10% requirement.
2. The Town should work together with the Darien Land Trust to preserve and protect “natural” open space. This would include a proposal for partial town funding of these efforts introduced by the Board of Selectmen and structured by the Board of Finance that would help provide funding for these efforts. This would be modeled after some of the Private/Public Partnerships in town that have proven successful.
3. The Town should set up a Conservation Easement stewardship effort similar to the Darien Land Trust’s. This would be comprised of a formal list of all of the Town-owned properties to assure proper compliance of these easements.
4. The Town should focus on adding open space.
5. Seek legislative authorization for a conveyance tax to be collected by the Town and used solely for acquisition of land for municipal purposes.

6. Consider the establishment of bike paths and greenbelts.

Miscellaneous

1. Consider separating into a separate Planning Commission and Zoning Commission.

APPENDIX A9

LAND USE



Introduction

Planning is not a static, one time process. It requires professional input and policy re-evaluation by the Commission on a regular basis and continuing efforts to identify and resolve important issues.

The Town should continue to support and strengthen a professionally capable and adequately staffed Town Planning and Zoning Department. The Commission must be concerned with the day-to-day decision making which influences the specifics of this Plan and with the need to continually re-evaluate the Plan's long range objectives as development patterns and changes take shape.

Planning Tools

Zoning

One of the most effective ways to assure that Darien is developed as planned is through its zoning. Zoning Regulations control the way in which land is used. While Regulations cannot require that land be developed for uses proposed in the Plan, they can prevent land from being developed contrary to the Plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission will continue to periodically review the Zoning Regulations, and amendments to the Regulations can be made from time to time.

If zoning is to continue to be a valuable means of maintaining Darien as a highly desirable residential community, the Planning & Zoning Commission, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, the Building Official, the Environmental Protection Commission, and the Architectural Review Board must continue to maintain an effective relationship with one another. The integrity and enforcement of the zoning regulations, as they have been established by the Commission, must be paramount. The Zoning Enforcement Officer must have the strong support of all Town officials in order for this vital aspect of the program to be effective.

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision Regulations, last updated in 1992, are another important tool to control the proper development of the Town. While zoning regulates the use of land, the Subdivision Regulations guide the layout and design of new roads and lots, and ensure that all required improvements are properly accomplished. Subdivision review by the Planning and Zoning Commission makes it possible to continue Darien's long history of well planned development.

The subdivision process also offers the opportunity for implementing some of the Town's open space and recreation objectives. As a part of the approval procedure, the Planning and Zoning Commission requires a developer to set aside a minimum of 10 percent of the land for open space purposes in many of the larger subdivisions which it processes and requires that appropriate measures be taken to protect environmentally sensitive land.

Capital Improvements Program

How the Town of Darien spends money for public improvements (e.g. schools, parks, recreation facilities, open space, roads, sidewalks, and municipal buildings), and the design standards to which they are built, have a major effect upon the development of the Town. Since the authority to initiate and carry out these improvements is widely distributed throughout many agencies of Town government, it is important that the various recommendations for action by these agencies be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission as specifically required by Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes (Municipal Improvements/Mandatory Referral) so that they will conform to the overall plan for Town development.

The Town of Darien has had, and will continue to need, a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to guide the Town officials in careful scheduling and implementation of various public works and public land acquisitions that are needed over a period of years as the Town continues to develop and change. Each year the program is restudied and revised in light of changes in priorities required by changing conditions.

Such a CIP will provide the estimated future development needs and costs facing the Town. It will help to give greater stability to the tax rate by spreading improvement costs systematically over a period of years in closer accord with the Town's financial ability, and thus avoids the grouping of several expensive projects in one year with a consequent jump in the tax rate.

Private Development

The vast majority of development in Darien has been and it appears that it will continue to be carried out by private individuals and organizations. Therefore, it is private action that is the most important element in developing the community, guided and regulated by the Town as described above.

Neither the Town Plan, zoning or subdivision regulations, nor the Town agencies which administer these regulations, can force any private individual or agency to develop a particular piece of land for a particular use. However, the Plan provides an orderly framework for private development and related municipal service facilities and, therefore, can be helpful to private enterprises in determining the right type of development and the proper place for it. Where there is a good Town Plan, and it is followed on a continuing basis, private enterprise has a more reliable foundation upon which to plan and build. This not only encourages good development, but also helps to accomplish the Plan's specific recommendations.

Town Implementation

One of the most important aspects of the various proposals in the Plan is the acquisition of land needed for future public purposes within the Town's fiscal capability. If land is not reserved now, it simply may not be available when it is needed in the future.

1. **RESIDENTIAL ZONING (including Special Permit uses)**

As noted within the Chapter 7—Housing, and its related Appendix, there are a number of issues related to housing in Darien. It is likely that due to the high cost of land, subdivision of parcels will continue, and houses on oversized lots will seek possible subdivision or resubdivision approval as well. Variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals and applications to the Environmental Protection Commission will increase as more difficult parcels are developed and added on to, as property owners seek to develop their properties to the greatest extent possible.

Permitted Uses

Over the next ten years, the Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to study and continue to consider amending the zoning map. This may be appropriate where existing zone boundary lines split properties and are not a set distance from a street. The residential district boundaries recognize and preserve the character of areas which already have an established residential type of development.

In some areas, existing residential district densities do not match the prescribed density for residential development. This has the effect of making the use of private property difficult for both the homeowner and the Town, where any addition or modification to a single-family residential dwelling is not possible without a variance from the Zoning Regulations.

Special Permit Uses within Residential Zones

The Darien Zoning Regulations allow for a variety of uses of a non-residential nature within all residential zoning districts. This includes such uses as private clubs and places of worship.

Another type of Special Permit use is the Darien Historical Society building on Old King's Highway North. The Darien Historical Society should consider the acquisition of the adjacent property in order to provide for their storage needs and for the possible establishment of a museum-type facility. This will allow the Society to accept more historic donations, as they would have the additional necessary storage space. The museum-type facility would be a worthwhile educational opportunity for local students to learn more about Darien's history.

The Darien Community Association owns 8+/- acres on Middlesex Road. The Town should explore preserving that property. This may be through the use of easements, leases, public-private partnerships, or outright purchase. Similarly, the Ox Ridge Hunt Club is a property which has provided an aesthetic for northern Darien for many years, and the Town should explore preserving through easements or other means all or part of that property as well.

If Special Permit parcels become available, efforts should be made to protect the residential character of the neighborhood. Any future uses should be consistent with residential zoning,

and any succeeding Special Permit uses should be maintained as closely as possible to the prior existing use.

Commercial Development within residential zones (non-conforming commercial uses)

One of the few existing commercial businesses in a residential zone is a hardware store at the intersection of Locust Hill Road and Settler's Trail. Two possible uses could be another hardware store or single-family residences.

Another commercial use in a residential zone is a restaurant on Boston Post Road near the Stamford municipal line. This is a pre-existing non-conforming use, and should not be allowed to expand further into adjacent residentially-zoned properties.

The Commission has had a long-standing policy of not allowing additional commercial uses (as distinguished from Special Permit uses) or encroachment into residential zones. That should continue into the future in order to strictly protect these residential areas, which are the core of the Town community.

2. **NON-RESIDENTIAL ZONING (including Multi-Family Zones)**

Multi-Family Zones

According to the Darien Zoning Regulations, four zoning districts in Town allow multi-family housing. These zoning districts (DBR overlay, DMR, and 3.7AH) are technically considered non-residential zones because they are not exclusively single-family zones. The largest vacant parcel in these zoning districts is the 3.7 acre property on Hollow Tree Ridge Road. It is recommended that access to and from that property be from a shared driveway with Avalon Darien onto Hollow Tree Ridge Road, which is now signalized. This will eliminate conflicts any new curb cut may have with nearby roads, drives, and entrances. A more desirable option would be for development of this property to accommodate the relocation of a single shared driveway with Avalon Darien farther to the south to improve sightlines and safety.

Where logical, the Commission should consider rezoning properties for use as either senior housing or for condominiums. The Procaccini property off of Hoyt Street may be a logical site for such development, if access and wetland issues can be properly addressed.

Commercial Zones

The two largest commercial areas in Town are the downtown/central business district; and the Noroton Heights area (the Heights). There are also smaller commercial areas, such as several sections along the Boston Post Road, and scattered neighborhood business areas.

It is expected that during the next ten years, market forces will determine whether owners seek to convert existing commercial development within DBR overlay zones to multi-family housing. The Planning & Zoning Commission does not recommend expansion of these four non-residential zones into traditional single-family residential zones.

The Commission should be hesitant to rezone existing commercial properties for other uses. The amount of commercial property in Town is quite limited, and as noted in the goals throughout this document, there is a desire for the community to have a mix of zones, and not be entirely residentially zoned. While the Town community is and should remain primarily a residential community comprised mostly of single-family residences, the quality of residential life in such a community is enhanced by well-planned commercial and other "support" uses within the Town.

Downtown Darien is listed in the draft SWRPA regional plan as a Town Center—a “Historic Town Center with cultural and governmental facilities, retail development and service-oriented commercial development.” Substantial changes in this area have been implemented since the 1995 Town Plan. This includes: renovation of the Darien Playhouse additions to the Darien Sport Shop, and the Grove Street Plaza project.

Noroton Heights is listed as a “Local Center”, which is defined as “Established neighborhood centers, with local retail and service businesses.” That too, has seen significant improvements over the past 10 years.

Downtown

The Commission specifically notes that these concept plans do not show proposed development, but only development which represents the general design goals of downtown. Other designs not shown may be equally viable and desirable.

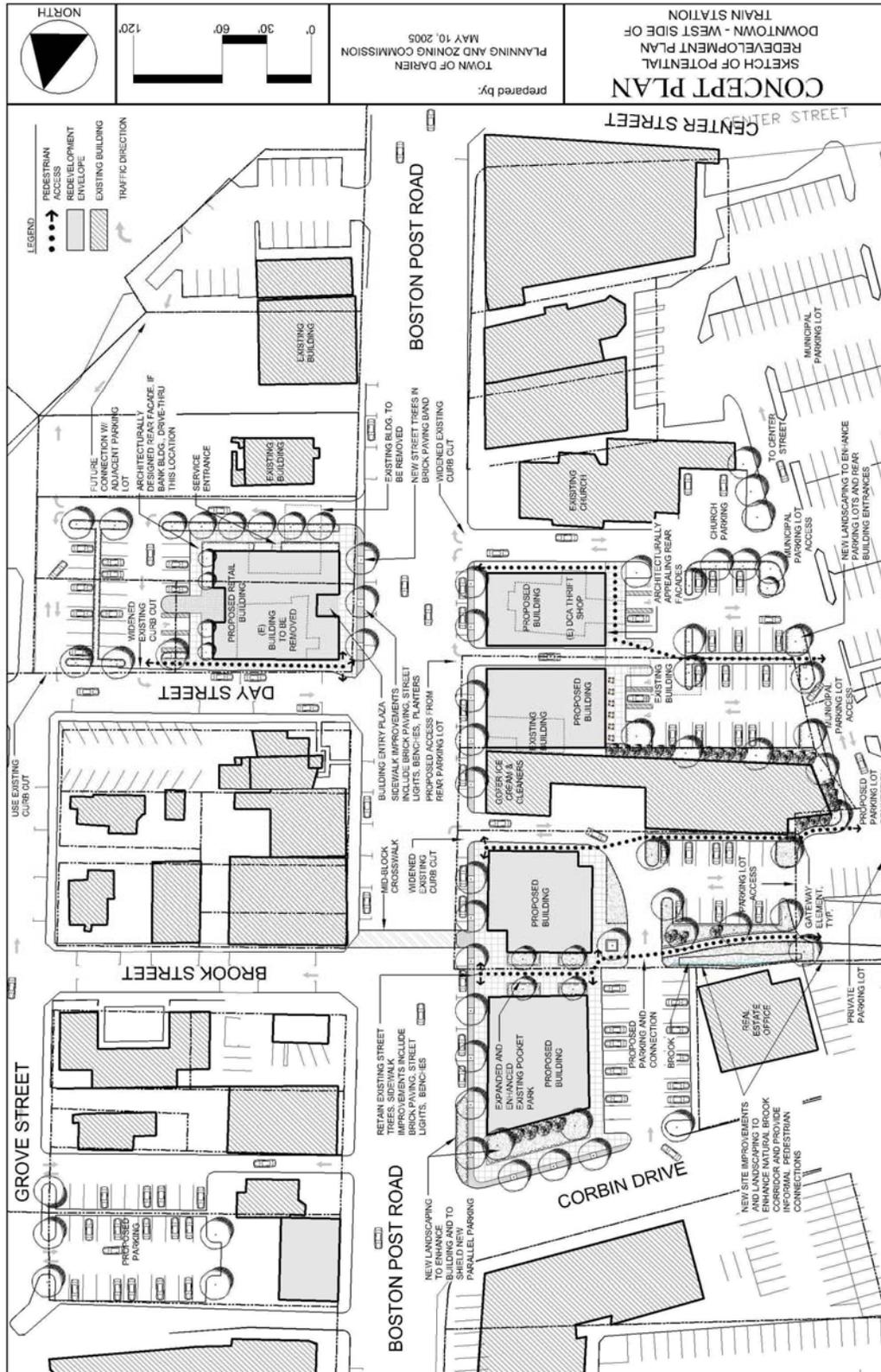
The concept plan on the page A9-11 (Exhibit 9-1) shows potential development and redevelopment on Boston Post Road in downtown, and in Noroton Heights. The concept plans provide guidance to planners, property owners, developers, and prospective investors. It also allows Planning and Zoning Department staff the opportunity to better guide developers, property owners and investors on the community’s desires and goals. These concept plans also reflect design views of the Planning and Zoning Commission, which include: sidewalks and improved pedestrian access; minimal curb cuts; shared driveways; small park/open space areas where appropriate; improved connections (both pedestrian and vehicular) to the municipal parking lots; and parking areas which flow into one another. In many, but not all cases, it would be logical to have buildings in these areas close to the road, with parking in the rear.

The concept plan for the north side of Boston Post Road shows the redevelopment of the northeast corner of Boston Post Road and Day Street. It shows the merging of three properties, demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of a new pedestrian-oriented commercial sales and service building, with a new sidewalk built to Model Block standards. It shows one ingress from Boston Post Road, in generally the same location as the existing curb cut, and uses the existing curb cuts to enter and exit via Day Street. The new building is closer to Boston Post Road and Day Street, in order to develop a consistent streetscape for direct pedestrian access to the area. Parking and traffic flow should be coordinated with adjacent properties. New landscaping will enhance the area. A design concern would be a long blank wall along Day Street which may be uninviting to pedestrians (eg. An existing example of this can be observed on both sides of Center Street near Boston Post Road). An open space plaza is not shown for this site, as there is no logical place for one in this area.

The concept for the south side of the Boston Post Road shows various property owners taking advantage of the special provision in the Darien Zoning Regulations which allows the establishment of rear building lines. Another important aspect of this concept is the new ingress into the Center Street municipal parking area. This may relieve some traffic congestion through downtown by getting motorists into the municipal parking with the least

amount of maneuvering. It also expands and makes more prominent the existing vest pocket park adjacent to the Exxon gas station, and preserves the existing brook corridor to the greatest extent possible. Pedestrian access from the municipal parking lot into Boston Post Road needs to be safe, convenient, and attractive. Buildings are located along the front property line to have direct access from the Boston Post Road sidewalk. The ground floor immediately adjacent to the Boston Post Road should be one story in height, and, in order to maximize sunlight in the area, should have the second floor recessed back at least ten feet. One potential option would be to have outdoor seating/dining on the second floor of one or more of the new buildings. Note that the concept shows both front and rear entrances to the buildings, with connections to the existing municipal parking lot in the rear, and also to other parking lots adjacent to it.

**EXHIBIT 9-1
 CONCEPT PLAN—DOWNTOWN DARIEN**



Although not shown on a concept plan, a vacant parcel now exists on the south side of Old King's Highway South, nearly across from Corbin Drive. Wetlands exist on this parcel, and it is located in the Office Business (OB) Zone.

The Noroton Heights Concept Plans (Exhibits 9-2 and 9-3) show a better flow between parking lots, added and/or improved sidewalks and pedestrian access, and combined curb cuts on Heights Road. Vehicular access and curb cuts from West Avenue should continue to be prohibited. Most importantly, this Plan also shows the elimination of parking spaces perpendicular to Heights Road, where vehicles now back into the Road. This will improve both vehicular and pedestrian safety. The general goal is for safe pedestrian access throughout the area, and a circulation system which encourages shopping in a variety of stores.

Exhibit 9-2 shows the block between Edgerton Street and Noroton Avenue. Exhibit 9-3 shows the block between Hollow Tree Ridge Road and Edgerton Street.

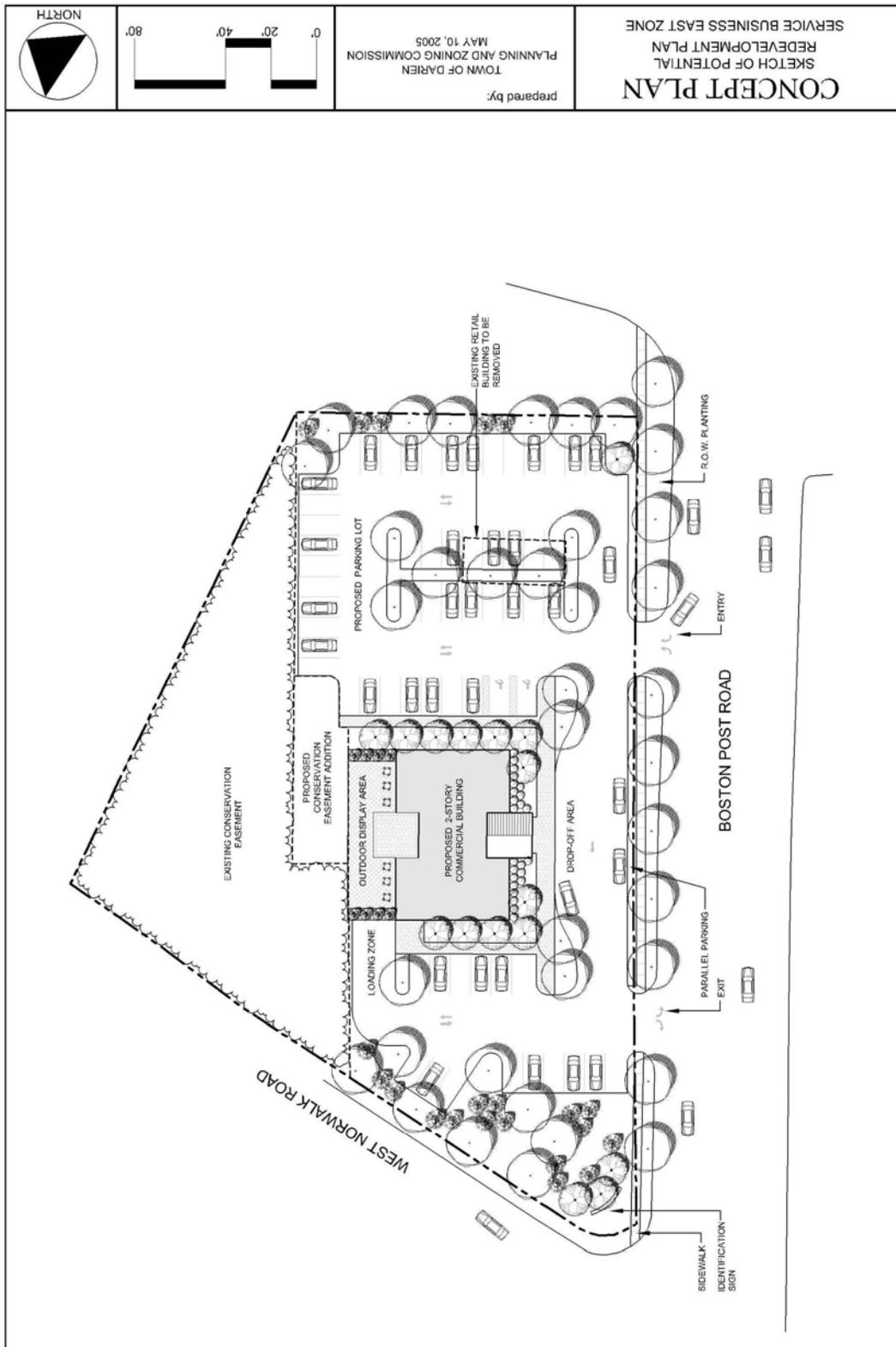
EXHIBIT 9-4 CONCEPT PLAN: NOROTON



Exhibit 9-5 shows possible redevelopment of the two parcels on Boston Post Road between West Norwalk Road and the Darien Town Line. This is at the “gateway” to Darien coming westbound from Norwalk. The Commission has recently approved a bank here with external activity—four drive-through lanes. As other redevelopment occurs from West Norwalk Road westward, (such as on the vacant lot to the east of Driftwood Diner) similar landscaping features and driveways will be imperative to minimize curb cuts, improve sight lines; and create an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere. Adjacent residentially-zoned properties to the north of the SB-E properties need to have proper protection via landscaped buffers as called for under existing regulations.

Another property which has potential for redevelopment is the Howard Johnson’s property at the intersection of Ledge Road and Boston Post Road. This property is now zoned Service Business (SB). The Commission has considered the concept of a new hotel and restaurant on this 5+ acre property, and found that concept to be logical. Any redevelopment of the property should relocate all curb cuts to Ledge Road, use strong architectural and landscaping features along the Boston Post Road frontage of the property which faces I-95 Exit 11. Sidewalks to connect this property to downtown are important to have a strong connection to this area for visitors. Although car dealerships are allowed in this zone, this may not be the most desirable use for this location, which is on the edge of downtown, and is deserving of a more pedestrian-friendly and downtown-compatible use. The other reason that this site is prime for a hotel use is that there are very few commercial properties that have the required five acre minimum lot size, and this is one of them. An assisted living facility would also be a viable use for this property. Rezoning the property to allow condominiums may also be given consideration and review by the Planning and Zoning Commission, albeit, a commercial use is the prime value of this parcel to the community.

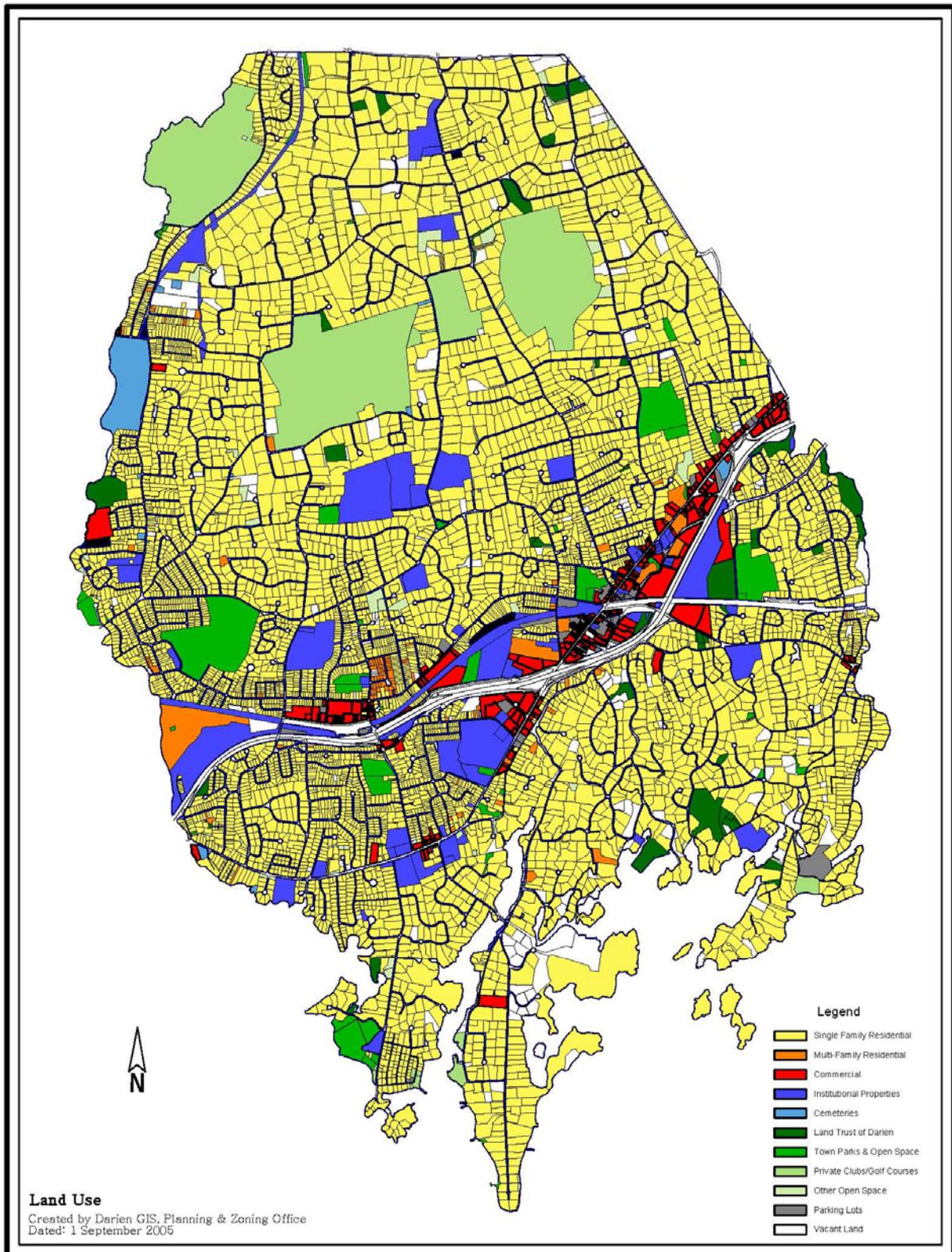
EXHIBIT 9-5 CONCEPT PLAN: SERVICE BUSINESS EAST ZONE



Outdoor seating/dining—In order to have more vibrant commercial areas, the Board of Selectmen and Planning & Zoning Commission have recently made a concerted effort to find appropriate locations for outdoor seating/dining. Said outdoor seating/dining may be on either privately-owned, or municipally-owned property, with the prior written authorization from the property owner. It is imperative that it be located in a safe area, properly away from traffic in the area and not obscuring or interfering with existing parking or with pedestrian flow or vehicle flow. Outdoor seating/dining shall have sufficient parking available nearby, and not cause a nuisance to other businesses or nearby residences. Trash pickup is important if there will be no wait service. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to develop written guidelines to assist property owners and commercial tenants about these uses.

Exhibit 9-6 shows existing land use in Darien as of September 2005. This Exhibit shows the limited amount of vacant land available in Town.

EXHIBIT 9-6 EXISTING LAND USE



3. **OPEN SPACE AND VACANT LAND**

Open Space

Chapter 8 and its related Appendix sets forth open space in Darien, and options for future acquisitions. The Town should focus its efforts on adding open space adjacent to existing parcels owned by the Town. Lands owned by the Darien Land Trust are also covered in Chapter 8--the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter.

SWRPA is currently analyzing open space throughout the region, and that report should be reviewed by the community when complete.

“Natural” open space plays an important role in Town, separate and distinct from “recreational” open space. This includes environmental/ conservation purposes, aesthetic purposes, and for passive enjoyment (passive recreation opportunities). “Natural” open space also includes woodlands; wetlands; and vacant property left in its natural state. It plays a critical role in community development unlike active recreation facilities such as ballfields, tennis courts, and playgrounds. The rare and unique characteristics of natural open space and their important contribution to our environment, aesthetics and appearance of Darien, and contribution to passive enjoyment must be recognized. These lands should continue to be preserved.

One important method used to preserve the open “feel” in Darien has been through the use of conservation easements. This tool can be used to maintain a natural buffer along a roadway in order to create a feeling of open space. The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to use this tool where appropriate, when approving subdivision applications.



Sign entering Woodland Park.

Fees In Lieu of Open Space

Because Darien is nearly “built-out”, obtaining small pieces of open space as part of each subdivision is not logical or efficient. A more efficient method of obtaining open space would be for the Planning and Zoning Commission to have the option to accept fees in lieu of open space as part of future subdivision approvals. This would establish a fund specifically designed for open space acquisition. Section 8-25b of the Connecticut General Statutes specifically authorizes payment of a fee in lieu of open space.

Also, the 10% open space requirement in the Darien Subdivision Regulations should be changed to 15% or 20% (see related discussion in Chapter 3--Environmental Resources). The fees in lieu of open space should be consistent with any future modified subdivision application requirement.

Darien Land Trust

No discussion of open space in Darien would be complete without a reference to the work of the Darien Land Trust (DLT). The mission of the Land Trust of Darien is to preserve and protect open space in Darien. Preservation of open space benefits the community by adding to quality of life values for the residents of the Town, maintaining precious natural habitats, and preserving the rural character of Darien.

As of February 23, 2004, The Land Trust now owns or has conservation easements on over 172 acres in 60 parcels in Darien (see Exhibits 8-5, 8-6, and 8-7 for these holdings). The DLT has permanently protected such diverse natural environments such as wetlands along the Five Mile River, tidal salt marshes at Scott’s Cove, and upland forests in Dunlap Woods. Their recent acquisition of the nine-acre Mather Meadows has allowed preservation of a meadow habitat with historical significance. Although the majority of the Land Trust properties are too wet or fragile for pedestrian access, the Land Trust owns three large parcels with hiking trails open to the public: Dunlap Woods, Traendly Flood Plain, and Olson Woods.

The Land Trust acquires property through donation, purchase, or conservation easement. Examples of property with a high priority of preserving include: properties contiguous to existing Land Trust property, buildable lots, and environmentally sensitive parcels.

**EXHIBIT 9-7
 DARIEN LAND TRUST
 CONSERVATION EASEMENTS**

DARIEN LAND TRUST CONSERVATION EASEMENTS			
(14.4 ACRES TOTAL)			
<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACREAGE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Three Lakes Park	9/28/1977	0.462	Denhurst Place (2 parcels) Locust Hill Road/Tokeneke Road
John A. Clarke	5/11/1978	0.5	
Jeffrey McClure	7/20/1979	0.623	Old Kings Hwy. So./Post Rd.
Neil Callahan	2/12/1982	0.563	Holly Pond Strip Brookside Road/Cherry Lawn Park
Darien Nature Center, Inc.	9/20/1993	3.5	West Avenue
Andrew Shaw Memorial Trust	12/2/1998	0.526	
Mather Meadows West B2 easement	3/13/2003	0.321	Brookside Road
Mather Meadows West B1 easement	3/13/2003	0.851	Brookside Road
	TOTAL:	7.346	

Source: Darien Land Trust

**EXHIBIT 9-8
 PROPERTY OWNED BY
 DARIEN LAND TRUST**

DARIEN LAND TRUST HOLDINGS

OWNED PROPERTIES

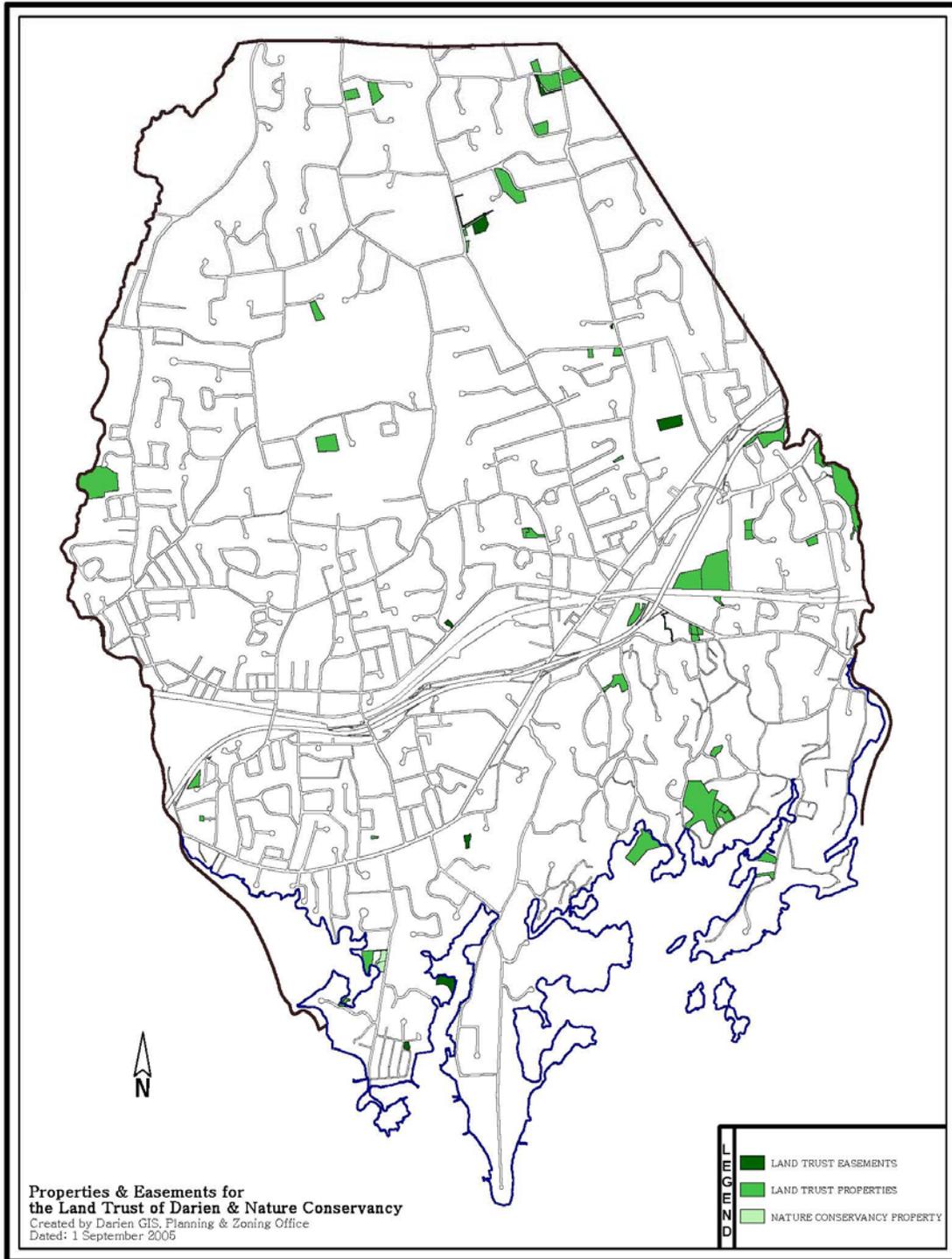
TOTAL Acres = 150.5

Total owned = 136.1 and total Conservation easements = 14.4

<u>GRANTOR</u>	<u>DATE FILED</u>	<u>ACREAGE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
1. Dunlap & Assoc., Inc..	7/13/1972	14.14	Fairmead Road
2. Joel Brooke et al	7/30/1973	0.56	Brush Island Road
3. Town of Darien	11/6/1974	1.55	Victory Drive
4. Norton, Inc.	12/2/1974	14.84	Scott's Cove
5. John A. Clarke	3/20/1975	0.30	Granaston Lane
6. Town of Darien	7/1/1975	6.0+	Fairmead Road
7. Town of Darien	7/1/1975	0.05	Devonshire & Turnpike
8. John A. Clarke	10/7/1975	1.10	Tulip Tree Lane
9. Corbin Development, Inc.	6/17/1976	1.86	Tokeneke Rd. (Dinner Theater)
10. James Rickard	10/26/1976	0.54	Buttonwood Lane
11. Georgena Dunphy	10/26/1976	0.83	Buttonwood Lane & Brookside Rd.
12. John P. Howland	12/20/1976	2.01	Dorchester Road
13. Corbin Development, Inc.	3/15/1977	See No. 14	Tokeneke Rd. (Dinner Theater)
14. Corbin Development, Inc.	3/22/1977	See No. 13	Tokeneke Road (Dinner Theater)
15. Ruth L. Lloyd	7/23/1977	4.98	Hanson Road
16. Calve Enterprises, Inc	9/7/1977	13.22	Traendly Flood Plains
18. John Oldrin	12/29/1977	1.80	Tokeneke Trail
19. John Oldrin	12/29/1977	1.21	Tokeneke Trail
20. Estate of E. S. Austin	1/23/1978	0.98	Locust Hill Road
22. Louis DeSilvestro	5/15/1978	0.54	Silver Lakes Drive
23. Kyra Bothwell	6/27/1978	2.86	Hoyt Street
24. Joseph R. Mygatt	9/6/1978	0.12	Stonewall Lane
25. Kenneth Mouncastle	12/26/1978	2.17	Indian Spring Trail
26. Kenneth Mountcastle	7/2/1979	2.00	Indian Spring Trail
28. Katrina A. Mygatt	8/15/1979	5.91	Mansfield Ave./Keewaydin Hilltop (4 parcels)
29. Clifton N. Cooke	12/27/1979	1.00	Contentment Island

30. John Oldrin	12/2/1980	1.07	Tokeneke Trail
			Locust Hill Rd./Tokeneke Rd.
32. Estate of E. S. Austin	2/15/1982	0.80	(2 parcels)
24a. Joseph R Mygatt	6/16/1983	see #24	No change in acreage
33. Sidney L. Murray	8/16/1983	0.25	Hillside Court
34. Samuel Dorrance	5/18/1984	2.+	Juniper Road/Gilbert's Island
36. Nature Conservancy of CT.	11/21/1984	20.+	Scott's Cove/Delafield Island
37. John Oldrin	12/6/1984	1.16	Tokeneke Trail
38. Helen B. Fawcett	12/12/1984	0.19	Brush Island
39. Briar Land Company	12/27/1984	1.88	Nature's Way
40. Mansfield Greens	3/21/1988	1.60	Mansfield Avenue (4 parcels)
41. Mansfield Greens	4/6/1988	6.37	Salisbury Road
42. Arthur Olson	12/29/1989	13.10	Heather Lane
43. Arthur Olson	12/29/1989	3.08	Old Kings Highway North
44. Neil Callahan	3/9/1990	0.23	Post Road
45. John B. & Donna B. Ogilvie	7/8/1993	2.35	Circle Road (2 parcels)
47. Avery Brooke	12/28/1995	2.59	Nearwater Lane/Holly Pond
48. Est. of Bertha M. McPherson	12/17/1997	1.25	Stephen Mather Road
49. Daniel A. Walker	9/24/1998	2.367+ 0.48	Delafield Island Road
51. Richard Hokin	7/2/1999	0.58	Shipway Road
52. PG Properties Lmted	11/15/1999	1.01	Hope Drive
53. Nancy H. Glanville	12/19/2000	2.00	Contentment Island Road
TOTAL:		116.80	
<i>Source: Darien Land Trust web site. 2/23/2004.</i>			

**EXHIBIT 9-9
PROPERTIES & EASEMENTS OWNED BY
DARIEN LAND TRUST**



Public-private partnerships

A recent phenomenon within Darien has been the use of public-private partnerships for to the provision of recreation facilities and services.

Recent examples include the field house, batting cages and special needs field at McGuane Park by the Darien Little League; the Cherry Lawn playground replacement; private fund-raising for artificial turf and a new scoreboard at the Darien High School; the dredging of Darien's harbor channel, and the construction of the Darien Nature Center within Cherry Lawn Park. It is likely that these types of partnerships will continue into the future. However, the Town needs to work closely with their partners to ensure that these private groups meet community needs and desires with projects that are consistent with all local plans, and the results do not burden the community with long-term costs that are not fiscally responsible.

Vacant Land

Much of the privately-held vacant residential land in the community carries some environmental constraints—wetlands, steep slopes or ledge. This has made it difficult to develop. It is likely that any future development of these parcels will result in tight building envelopes, and possibly necessary approvals from the Environmental Protections Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and/or the Planning and Zoning Commission. In recent years, applications to these land use boards have increased by over 30%, as land has increased in value, the amount of vacant land in Darien has decreased, and responsible development upon the more difficult lots starts to become more economically feasible.

Being a nearly fully-developed community, remaining vacant land is in scattered parcels.

Substantial vacant properties include:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Procaccini, Hoyt Street (3 adjacent properties)	15+/-
Waterbury Lane (3 Building lots)	5+/-
Stephen Mather Road (1 building lot)	3+/-
Morehouse Lane (4 building lots)	3+/-
Long Neck Point Road (5 building lots)	5+/-
Coon Point Road (6 building lots)	10

There are a number of properties that are not vacant, but are oversized for the zoning district in which they exist. This might provide for future subdivision of such property into a number of building lots. In recent years, the Planning and Zoning Commission has seen a number of such proposals, including on Phillips Lane, Boston Post Road and Long Neck Point Road. Those types of applications are expected to continue; and, as they do, insight is gathered as to possible improvements in the Subdivision Regulations.

Utility-owned lands

It is important to understand those properties owned by utilities, as they may be available for purchase by the Town in the future. There are a number of parcels in Town owned by various utility companies (Aquarion Water Company, State of Connecticut DOT, Connecticut Light & Power). Some of these have active uses on them, such as water towers, while others are just vacant. It is incumbent upon the Town to be prepared to respond to inquiries by the utilities on whether the Town is interested in potentially acquiring the land. Moreover, the Town should make its interests known to the current owners and request that it receive such inquiries before the owners place these properties on the market.

Conclusion

The Town is likely to see redevelopment in both residential and commercial areas within the upcoming ten year planning period. Overall, however, the general policies of the Planning and Zoning Commission have served it well in the past, and the Commission should give strong consideration and deliberation prior to deviating from the current land use system within the community.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Access Management: Providing and managing access to developed land while preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system.

Algal Blooms: are caused by warm water, plentiful plant nutrients, and shallow water depth that encourage excessive plant growth, in this case algae. Algae blooms can shut off sunlight, killing submerged plants. Eventually, the blooms rob oxygen from the water, which in turn kills fish.

Aquifer: a geologic formation, group of formations, or part of a formation that contains sufficient saturated, permeable materials to yield significant quantities of water to wells and springs. (CGS Section 22a-354h[6])

Aquifer Protection Area (APA): An APA is an area delineated by a water utility company encompassing the groundwater recharge area for an active public drinking water supply well or for well fields serving more the 1,000 people that are set in stratified drift deposits.

Arterial road: A roadway carrying large traffic volumes specifically for mobility, with limited or restricted service to local development.

Base Flood Elevation (BFE): is the height of the base flood, usually in feet, above the ground surface.

Census Tract: Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county. Tracts are delineated by a local committee of census data users for the purpose of presenting data. Census tract boundaries normally follow visible features, but may follow governmental unit boundaries and other non-visible features in some instances; they always nest within counties. Designed to be relatively homogeneous units with respect to population characteristics, economic status, and living conditions, census tracts average about 4,000 inhabitants.

Coastal resources: the coastal waters of the state, their natural resources, related marine and wildlife habitat and adjacent shorelands, both developed and undeveloped, that together form an integrated terrestrial and estuarine ecosystem. (CGS Section 22a-93 [7]) (A detailed list and definitions of coastal resources are included in the Town's Coastal Management Program document [1984])

Collector Road: A street whose function is equally divided between mobility and access, linking local streets to arterials.

Floodplain or Flood-prone Areas: any land susceptible to being partially or completely inundated by water from any source (Town of Darien Zoning Regulations).

Floodplain Zone A (100-year floodplains) are areas subject to flood with a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. No Base Flood Elevations or depths are shown

within this zone. Zones “AE” and “A1-A30” (where the number indicates flood elevation) are zones where the BFE is known.

Floodplain Zones B, C, and X (500-year floodplains) are areas subject to floods that have a 0.2 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. No BFEs or depths are shown within these zones.

Floodplain Zone V (100-year coastal floodplains) are areas that have additional hazards associated with storm waves. No BFEs are shown within this zone. “VE” Zones are areas where the BFE is known.

Floodway is the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land area that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height (Town of Darien Zoning Regulations).

Geographic Information System (GIS): a combination of computer software, hardware and data used to create maps and analyze and present data.

Hypoxia: a condition of low dissolved oxygen concentrations in the waters of Long Island Sound that impacts up to half of the Sound's bottom waters each summer.

Imperviousness: paved surfaces such as roads, driveways, parking lots, outdoor patios, and building footprints.

Invasive Species means non-native plant or animals that exhibit an aggressive growth habit and can out-compete and displace native species.

Local Street: A street whose primary function is to provide access to a residence, business or other abutting property.

Mean Water Line: the average height of water observed over time.

Pathogens: are disease-causing microorganisms, such as bacteria and viruses, that come from the fecal waste of humans and animals.

Point Sources: are fixed sources such as industrial facility wastewater outlets. For example, the inactive and former Town sewage treatment plant within Noroton Neck, used to discharge directly into Cove Harbor.

Public Beach: the portion of the shoreline held in public fee ownership by the state or that portion of the shoreline below the mean high tide elevation that is held in public trust by the state (CGS Section 22a-93[6]).

Shellfish Classifications:

Approved areas conform to strict criteria for the growing and harvesting of shellfish for recreational and commercial use and direct consumption.

Prohibited areas are closed for the harvesting of shellfish (except licensed aquaculture operations) at all times.

Restricted-relay means shellfish may not be directly harvested for market or consumed prior to a minimum purification period of 14 consecutive days after being relayed to Approved or Conditionally Approved "open" areas with a water temperature of 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius) or greater.

Conditionally Approved area is designated "open" for shellfishing when it conforms to management criteria for the area as well as the standards for an Approved classification when the status is designated "open".

SWRPA: means the Southwestern Regional Planning Agency, consisting of the following communities: Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

Tenure: As defined by the Census Bureau, A housing unit is "owned" if the owner or co-owner lives in the unit, even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. A cooperative or condominium unit is "owned" only if the owner or co-owner lives in it. All other occupied units are classified as "rented," including units rented for cash rent and those occupied without payment of cash rent.

Watercourses: means rivers, streams, brooks, waterways, lakes, ponds, marshes, swamps, bogs and all other bodies of water, natural or artificial, vernal or intermittent, public or private, which are contained within, flow through or border upon this state or any portion thereof, not regulated pursuant to CGS Sections 22a-28 to 22a-35, inclusive of the General Statutes, as amended. (Darien IWW Regulations Section 2.1 [ii])

Wetlands: land, including submerged land as defined in Section 2.1 (dd) of the Town Inland Wetlands and Watercourses (IWW) Regulations, not regulated pursuant to Section 22a-28 through 22a-35, inclusive, of the CGS, which consists of any of the soil types designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial and flood plain by the National Cooperative Soils Survey, as it may be amended from time to time, of the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Such areas may include filled, graded, or excavated sites which possess an aquatic (saturated) soil moisture regime as defined by the USDA Cooperative Soil Survey. (Darien IWW Regulations Section 2.1 [jj])

ABBREVIATIONS

APA—Aquifer Protection Area

CGS—Connecticut General Statutes

ConnDOT--Connecticut Department of Transportation

CTDEP—Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

EPC—Darien Environmental Protection Commission

FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Agency

GIS—Geographic Information System

IWW—Inland Wetlands and Watercourses

NAPS—Natural and Architectural Preservation Survey

NFIP—National Flood Insurance Program

NPDES—National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

PTL—Protected Town Landmark

SLOSSS--ConnDOT's Suggested List of Surveillance Study Sites

STP--Federal Surface Transportation Program

SWRMPO—Southwestern Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

SWRPA—Southwestern Regional Planning Agency

VOC—Volatile Organic Compounds

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