



Scenic Resource Inventory

City of Beacon, NY

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The following Scenic Resource Inventory was developed during the fall of 2017 in the CRP 3072/5072 Land Use and Environmental Planning Field Workshop at Cornell University. It is funded in part by a grant from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund through the Hudson River Estuary Program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.



Table of Contents

Mission Statement	1
Community Profile	2
History of Beacon	3
Prior Planning Initiatives	4
Existing Land Use Regulatory Structure	7
Existing Land Use	10
Natural Resources	12
Existing Open Space and Historic Sites	16
Scenic Resource identification	18
Program Implementation	23
Priority Properties for Preservation	31
Endnotes	36
Case Study: Craig House Redevelopment Plan	37
Appendices	43



Mission Statement

Nestled between the Hudson River and the slopes of the Hudson Highlands, the City of Beacon is rich in natural and historic resources. From Denning's Point State Park to Madam Brett's Homestead, the city's landmarks tell the story of Beacon's early settlement, active role in the Revolutionary War, and industrious past. The recent opening of Dia: Beacon, a world-class contemporary art museum has spurred new interest in the City, and pressure to accommodate new residents and tourists should not come at the expense of historic and natural resources that have shaped the character of the city for decades.

Instead, rising popularity should be complemented by an active campaign to preserve and protect Beacon's scenic resources from incompatible development. Fortunately, the City has already developed a robust set of regulatory tools and agencies that will be more than capable of ensuring that Beacon's growth builds on the city's existing assets. Examples include, the city's hybrid zoning code, which combines form-based and use-based zoning, the Conservation Advisory Committee, and the Architectural and Community Appearance Board of Review.

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Community Profile

Named for the famous beacon fires that blazed atop Mount Beacon during the Revolutionary War, the City of Beacon has continued to shine throughout the ages and in recent years has transformed itself into one of the most desirable small cities along the Hudson for both residents and tourists. Home to a world-class contemporary art museum and a bustling artist community, Beacon's breathtaking views and historic Main Street are only the beginning of the cultural amenities the City has to offer. Located 70 miles north of New York City in the south-west corner of Dutchess County, Beacon has evolved from a single homestead to a small, bustling city. Fixed between the eastern shore of the Hudson River and the slopes of Mount Beacon, the city's natural wonders and historic buildings have attracted 15,541 residents to make Beacon their home.ⁱ

A reflection of broader economic changes within the city, the city's physical evolution over the past 60 years has been marked by a dramatic increase in residential development and a decline in industrial uses. Similar to most American cities, the 1960s were marked by urban renewal and widespread demolition, followed by a boom in residential construction. Between 1960 and 2017, the share of developed land increased from 68 percent to 87 percent.ⁱⁱ While residential land use nearly tripled from 13 percent to 34 percent, industrial land use declined by more than half.ⁱⁱⁱ

After facing two decades of population decline between the 1960s and 1980s, Beacon's population has now surpassed that of 1960 levels.^{iv} The City is even outperforming neighboring communities in terms of population growth, such as the City of Poughkeepsie and Newburgh.^v The City of Beacon is also more diverse than Dutchess County; 63.6% of residents identify as White, 23.3% as Black or African American, 0.4% as American Indian and Alaskan Native, 1.6% as Asian, 6.7% as some other race, and 4.5% as two or more races.^{vi} The median household income for Beacon is \$62,917, and the majority of workers are employed in "Professional and Related Occupations" (26.3 percent), "Management, Business, and Financial Operations Occupations" (14.0 percent), and "Office and Administrative Support Occupations" (14.0 percent).^{vii}

Similar to national trends, the share of residents age 65 and older has increased over the past decade, however the median age of Beacon residents remains relatively young at 39.8^{viii}. According to the demographic analysis conducted by BFJ Planning for the City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan, population growth is expected to be driven by young families, adults age 18-39, and empty nesters.^{ix}

Residents and tourists traveling to Beacon are sure to be pleased by the multitude of options available to them: from ferry to bridge to commuter rail, the city is well connected to the surrounding region. The Hudson Line of the Metro-North Railroad connects commuters to New York City, and for those traveling by car, Route 9D travels north and south out of Beacon. To connect to the western side of the Hudson, the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge and ferry are available.^x



History of Beacon

The City of Beacon's history can be traced back to the Wappinger tribe, a Native American community whose territories covered what is known today as Dutchess County and reached all the way down to Manhattan. The first European to settle in the area was Francis Rombout, who purchased the land during a northern expedition from New York City^{xi}. On his trip he was accompanied by Stephanus Van Cortlandt and Gulian Verplanck, for whom the nearby town and hamlet of Cortlandt and Verplanck are named.

The first homestead built in Beacon was constructed by Roger Brett and Catheryna Rombout Brett, the daughter of Francis Rombout, in 1709.^{xii} Madam Brett's decision to sell parcels of her own land after her husband drowned led to the creation of Fishkill Landing, a river port on the eastern half of present day Beacon, and the Village of Matteawan, a manufacturing center on the eastern side of present day Beacon. Similar to many other cities and villages located along the Hudson River, Matteawan and Fishkill Landing rose to prominence due to their suitability for manufacturing. Beacons first factory, The Matteawan Company, opened its doors in 1814 at One East Main Street as a cotton mill. As time went on, the Matteawan factory was repurposed to produce a multitude of goods ranging from wool to sugar to machinery, baby carriages, hats, and more.^{xiii}



Incline Railway

While Beacon was primarily an industrial city, it did develop opportunities for recreation and relaxation. In 1902, the Beacon Incline Railway opened, and over 3.5 million visitors made the journey to the top of Mount Beacon during the railway's 75 years of operation.^{xiv} While the initial construction of the incline was not enough to draw an influx of riders alone, the construction of a hotel and casino created an attraction that drew not only local residents but also residents of nearby municipalities and even New York City.

Unfortunately, the rail was consumed by flames in 1983; operations have not resumed since, but there is an active civic organization dedicated to reopening the railway.^{xv}

The City of Beacon was incorporated in 1913, when Fishkill Landing and the Village of Matteawan merged, but like most manufacturing cities, it fell on hard times beginning in the mid-twentieth century. Urban renewal in the 1960s severed Main Street's connection to the Hudson River, led to the demolition of numerous residential properties, and is responsible for the construction of Route 9D.^{xvi} Additionally, after 220 years of service, the Newburgh-Beacon ferry service ended in 1963, coinciding with the construction of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge.^{xvii} Fortunately, times have been looking up for Beacon in recent years. The opening of Dia: Beacon in 2003 is said to have kicked off the City's renaissance. Located in the former Nabisco box printing factory, Dia: Beacon provides fixed and rotational exhibits of artworks

produced in the 1960s and onward.^{xviii} Recent renovations along Main Street have also sparked renewed community spirit, and Second Tuesdays, a monthly event where Main Street shops stay open late for wine tastings and small events, draw scores of local residents out into the streets to socialize and shop at local businesses.



Dia: Beacon Exhibit

Prior Planning Initiatives

The City of Beacon is fortunate to have a robust planning history. In the past decade alone the City has adopted two comprehensive plans which have been complemented by additional transportation, recreation, and environmental plans. All planning initiatives appear to have sought resident input, demonstrating the City's commitment to civil discourse and community engagement. Additionally, the city has proven its commitment to collaboration through ongoing inter-municipal planning to provide residents with critical services, such as water and sewer.

Beacon's adopted plans represent a progressive planning agenda, and the city's collective and collaborative attitude towards change and service provision will be a critical asset in preserving the City's scenic resources. It is clear that residents already value the City's historic past and existing environmental resources as elements that enhance the quality of life for residents and can be a key asset in ongoing economic development. The following summaries of existing plans highlight existing preferences, priorities, and development plans related to environmental conservation and historic preservation.

Comprehensive Plan (2007)

The primary goal of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan was to devise a strategy that would, “preserve important environmental resources and improve the quality of life of the residents, workers, and visitors in the community.”^{xix} Through public meetings and a community wide survey the planning team identified fifteen priority projects that ranged from preserving open space to encouraging growth along Main Street.

The Comprehensive Plan identified environmental stewardship as a high priority among Beacon residents, with 97 percent of residents stating preserving Beacon's natural environment was important to some degree in a 2006 public survey. Of the environmentally significant resources in the village, the Hudson River, Fishkill Creek, and the slopes of Mount Beacon topped the list as areas worthy of protection and enhancement.

Beacon residents' main goal was to create open space corridors conducive to wildlife movement between the riverfront and Mount Beacon (A map of the open space corridors proposed in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan is located in Appendix A). Additional properties that would enhance open space corridors were large undeveloped properties east of Wolcott, Howland, De Puyster, and Washington Avenues.

Proposed methods for preserving natural resources and creating open space corridors included: obtaining easements for passive recreation, public land acquisition, acquisition by state or national nonprofit conservation groups, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and inter-municipal coordination with the Town of Fishkill to review and restrict development along hilltops, ridgelines, and steep slopes.

In addition to environmental conservation, Beacon residents were also invested in historic preservation, with 90 percent of residents rating protection of historic buildings as important to some degree in a 2006 public survey. At the time of the Comprehensive Plan, 12 city properties were designated in the State and National Register of Historic Places. Residents supported expanding the “the preservation of historically and culturally significant buildings, landscapes, and

neighborhoods.” Tools for accomplishing this goal include but were not limited to providing incentives to historic property owners, providing public funding to assist historic property owners with maintenance, and identifying and adding more properties to the national and state register.

Comprehensive Plan (2017)

Many communities opt to re-write their entire comprehensive plan when it is updated, however the 2017 Comprehensive Plan can truly be considered an extension of the original 2007 plan. Given this consideration, the following summary highlights enduring and newly emerging community concerns related to environmental planning and historic preservation.

The primary focus of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan was devising a new land use classification for the waterfront and train station area that would limit the density of future development and prevent incompatible uses of land that could block upland views of the Hudson River. The product of this effort is embodied in Beacon’s two newest zones: the Waterfront Park Zone and the Waterfront Development Zone. The Waterfront Park Zone runs along the Hudson River and includes the publicly owned properties of Denning’s Point, Riverfront Park, and also Long Dock Park and Madam Brett Park along Fishkill Creek, both developed and maintained by Scenic Hudson. The Waterfront Development Zone includes the publicly owned land surrounding the train station, which is to be developed in accordance with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan.

In addition to paving the way towards the creation of two new development zones, the 2017 Comprehensive Plan provided a multitude of relevant preservation and conservation recommendations in the chapters focused on Beacon’s environmental features and historic resources. Most recommendations focused on land use regulations, the creation of open space corridors, and methods for preserving privately owned historic properties. The Comprehensive Plan recommended the City review and revise development regulations in order to protect steep slopes, wetlands, and other significant natural features within the City. The plan also recommended that open space corridors of at least 500 feet be established and maintained along the Hudson River shoreline, Fishkill Creek, Dry Brook, and through the Hudson Highlands and the Fairview Cemetery. Proposed methods of creating this open space corridor include public acquisition of land or passive recreation easements, which could be obtained when a property goes through the site approval process.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) aims to ensure that development and revitalization activities along the waterfront use coastal resources in a responsible manner. The LWRP area includes the Hudson Riverfront – a three mile run between the Beacon-Newburgh Bridge and the southern tip of Denning’s Point – Fishkill Creek and Estuary, and the hills that overlook the river and the Creek (A map of the area is provided in Appendix B). Due to Beacon’s unique topography, the city’s Waterfront Revitalization Area provides views of both the Hudson River and the Hudson Highlands. The LWRP recommended a variety of scenic views for preservation, which can be found in the table and map in Appendix C.

Fishkill Creek Greenway & Heritage Trail Master Plan, City of Beacon (2013)

The Fishkill Creek Greenway & Heritage Trail Master Plan proposed the construction of a continuous creek trail that would connect the Town of Fishkill with the Metro-North Train Station in Beacon.

When the master plan was written, the trail was planned to cross a number of city parcels held by 21 unique owners, including municipalities, public utilities, non-profit organizations, and private owners. The 4.3-mile trail would provide Beacon's residents with a recreational trail that would be ideal for walking and would accommodate wheelchair use along the majority of the trail.

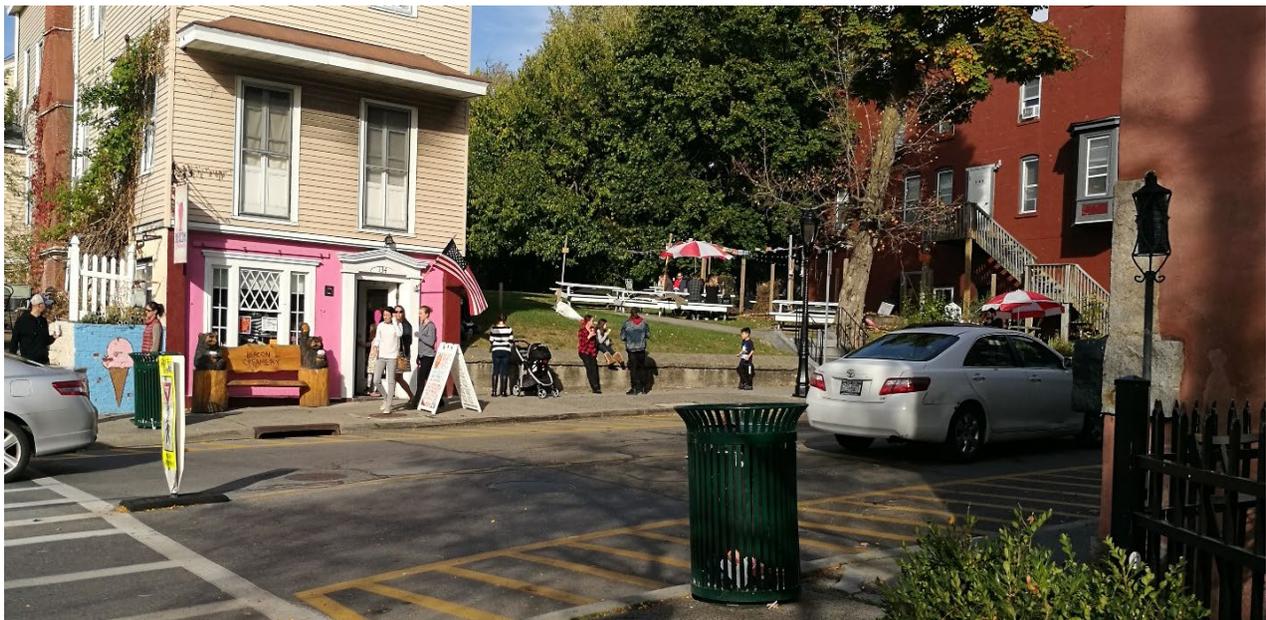
Additional plans relevant to scenic resource planning include the 2012 Harbor Management Plan, the 2009 Waterfront Redevelopment Traffic Management Study, the 2009 University Settlement Camp Mater Plan, and the 2008 Beacon Transportation Linkages Program.

Natural Resources Inventory (2020)

In June 2020 Beacon adopted a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) prepared by the City of Beacon Conservation Advisory Committee and Natural Resources Inventory Committee. The NRI is an inventory and assessment of the variety of natural resources within the city's boundaries, including water, vegetation, wildlife, habitat, endangered species, but also scenic, cultural and recreational resources. The document is designed to be used by Beacon's municipal officials, City Council and City boards and committees, as well as community groups, non-profit organizations and residents. It can be a tool to help assess the environmental impacts of proposed actions and policies being considered by Beacon, and in the review of proposed development. The information provided by the NRI will also be useful in future City planning initiatives, and to identify natural area within Beacon worthy of enhanced protection and stewardship.

Greenway Connections

In 2000, the City of Beacon adopted Greenway Connections: Greenway Compact Program and Guides for Dutchess County Communities, a statement of land use policies, principles, and guides created uniquely for the County. The Greenway Guides are intended to assist City agencies in reviewing development plans and proposals.



Existing Land Use Regulatory Structure

The City of Beacon has a hybrid zoning ordinance that combines traditional use-based zones with form-based zones. The zoning ordinance is organized into five overarching zones: industrial, waterfront, form based, commercial, and residential. Each district has subdivisions within it. The Industrial Zone is subdivided into light industrial and heavy industrial zones. The Waterfront Zone is divided into the Waterfront Park Zone, Waterfront Development Zone, and the Fishkill Creek Development Zone. Form-based districts include areas along Central Main Street and the Linkage district, which is the area between Main Street and the Metro North Train Station. Commercial Districts include areas designated for Business Off-Street Parking, Office Business, Local Business, Central Business, and General Business. Residential Districts are subdivided into 15 unique residential districts ranging from single homes with minimum lot requirements of 120,000 sq. ft. to multi-family sites requiring only 800 sq. ft. per unit.

Regulatory agencies that uphold and enforce development standards, guidelines, and laws include the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals and the Architectural and Community Appearance Board of Review. Additionally, the Conservation Advisory Committee is tasked with recommending legislative changes and commenting on or reviewing plans that pertain to the preservation and quality of the natural and man-made environment in Beacon.

Planning Board

Per New York state law, the City of Beacon Planning Board may review and make recommendations on proposed city comprehensive or other land use related plans as well as other issues as requested by the City Council. In general practice, city planning board often oversee the preparations of land use related plans and reports, on behalf of the city councils, which have the ultimate authority to approve such documents.

A key task of planning boards is reviewing and approving site plans, that show the arrangement, layout and use of developments such as commercial, multi-family residential and institutional uses. The purpose of site plan approval is to ensure compliance with local zoning regulations and design standards, ensure the safety of the general public using the premises, and review the potential environmental impacts, and mitigation measures, for the development. Planning boards also may have the authority to review proposed subdivisions of land, including for new residential developments for compliance with local planning and zoning, and potential environmental impacts that may require mitigation.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals is charged with interpreting the City of Beacon Zoning Code when questions arise in its enforcement, and also to hear appeals from City property owners for relief from specific requirements or restrictions of the zoning regulations, generally known as variances. The Zoning Board of Appeals is a quasi-judicial body, meaning that its decisions must be backed by specific facts and findings laid out in state law.

Architectural and Community Appearance Board of Review

The Planning Board also holds a dual role as the Architectural and Community Appearance Board of Review. Action by the Architectural and Community Appearance Board of Review is triggered when an applicant applies for a building permit for either construction, reconstruction, or alteration of any

structure over 1,000 square feet. Any and all site plans, subdivisions, or new developments are subject to review.

Conservation Advisory Commission

The primary role of the Conservation Advisory Commission is to ensure the, "...preservation and the improvement of the quality of the natural and man-made environment within the City of Beacon, in the face of population growth, urbanization and technological change..." by advising the City Council on all matters pertaining to development and its impact on the City. This role can be fulfilled in a multitude of ways, including: educating residents about environmental issues affecting the community, maintaining an inventory of the City's natural resources and open space, and coordinating between multiple stakeholders – such as private groups, institutions, public and private agencies, and residents – to uphold the integrity of the natural environment. The Conservation Advisory Commission also is responsible for recommending changes in local laws and ordinances and working with the Planning Board to recommend plans or programs that may be suitable for inclusion each time the City updates its comprehensive plan.

Environmental Quality Review

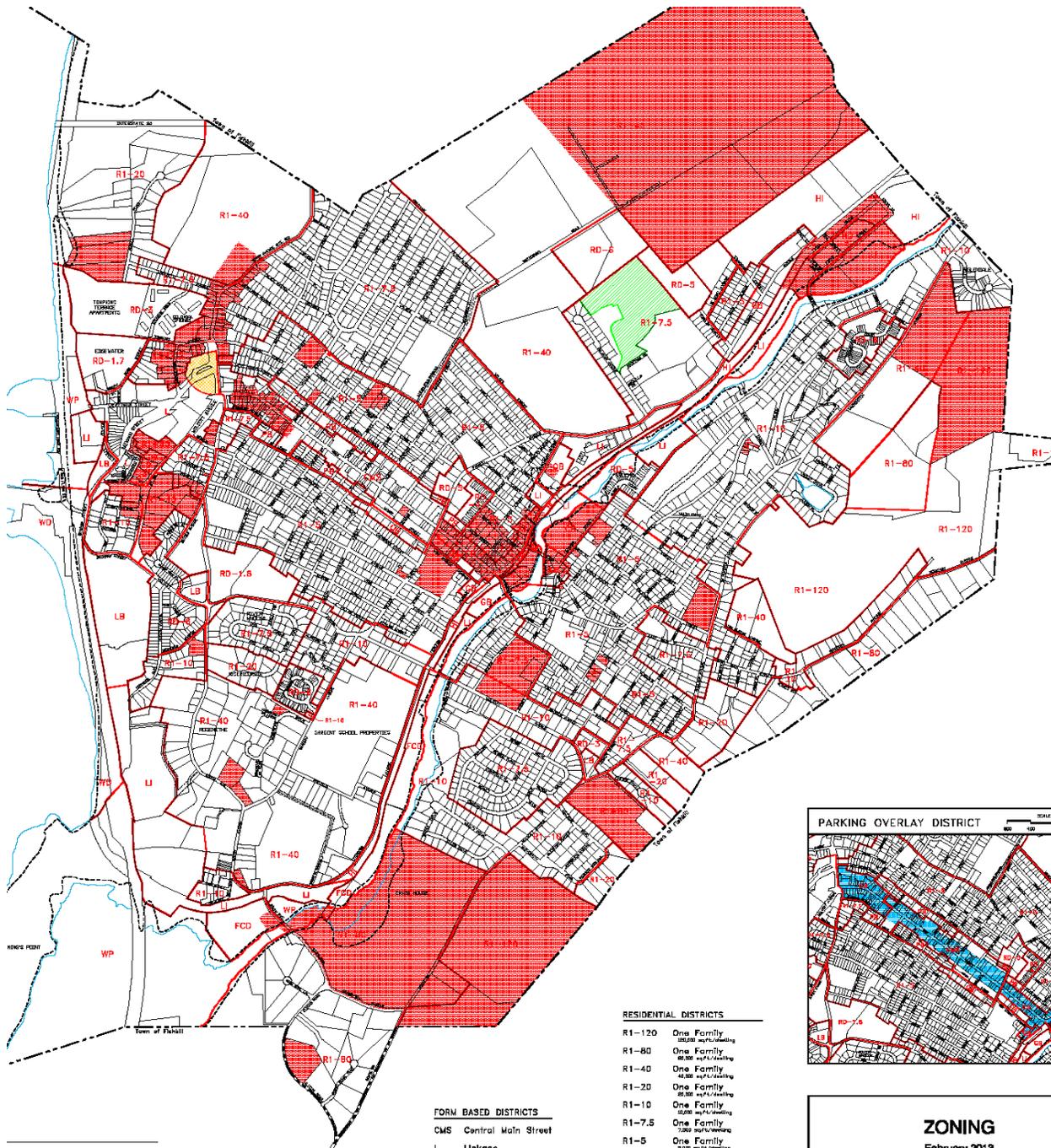
The New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) requires that any and all discretionary decision by city governmental bodies and city agencies must be preceded by a thorough review of any and all potential adverse environmental impacts of the proposed action. The decisionmaking body begins by completing a preliminary Environmental Assessment questionnaire that assists in identifying any potential impacts, and assessing their environmental significance. If one or more significant adverse impacts are identified, then a more detailed environmental impact statement must be prepared that detail the potential impacts, and develops mitigation measures that will substantially reduce or eliminate the impacts. The SEQRA process is also designed to ensure an open and public process and substantive citizen participation.

Historic Preservation

All landmark properties and all properties within a historic overlay district are required to obtain a certificate of appropriateness from the Planning Board or a certificate of economic hardship from the Zoning Board before beginning exterior alterations.

Waterfront Consistency Review

The Waterfront Consistency Review Law provides City agencies with an extensive checklist that can be used to determine if applications for action within the waterfront comply with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.



Historic District and
Landmark Overlay Zone

Parking Overlay District

Senior Affordable Housing
Overlay District

Within 400 Feet of the Rt. 9D/
Beakman Street Intersection

Zoning District Boundary

Flood Prone Area Boundary

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

LI Light Industrial

HI Heavy Industrial

WATERFRONT DISTRICTS

WP Waterfront Park

WD Waterfront Development

FCD Flatkill Creek Development

FORM BASED DISTRICTS

CMS Central Main Street

L Linkage

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

PB Business
Off-Street Parking

OB Office Business

LB Local Business

CB Central Business

GB General Business

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

R1-120 One Family
20,000 sq ft/lot/acre

R1-80 One Family
80,000 sq ft/lot/acre

R1-40 One Family
40,000 sq ft/lot/acre

R1-20 One Family
20,000 sq ft/lot/acre

R1-10 One Family
10,000 sq ft/lot/acre

R1-7.5 One Family
7,500 sq ft/lot/acre

R1-5 One Family
5,000 sq ft/lot/acre

RD-8 Designated Residence
8,000 sq ft/lot/acre

RD-6 Designated Residence
6,000 sq ft/lot/acre

RD-4 Designated Residence
4,000 sq ft/lot/acre

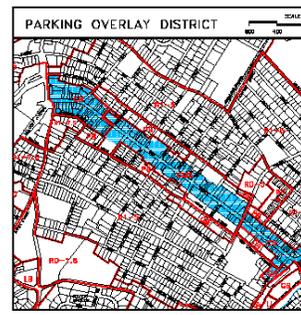
RD-3 Designated Residence
3,000 sq ft/lot/acre

RD-1.8 Designated Residence
1,800 sq ft/lot/acre

RD-1.7 Designated Residence
1,700 sq ft/lot/acre

RMF-1.3 Multi-Family
1,300 sq ft/lot/acre

RMF-.8 Multi-Family
800 sq ft/lot/acre



ZONING
February 2013

CITY OF BEACON, NY

FREDERICK P. CLARK ASSOCIATES, INC.
Planning/Development/Environment/Transportation
350 Theodore Fremd Avenue, Rye, New York 10590

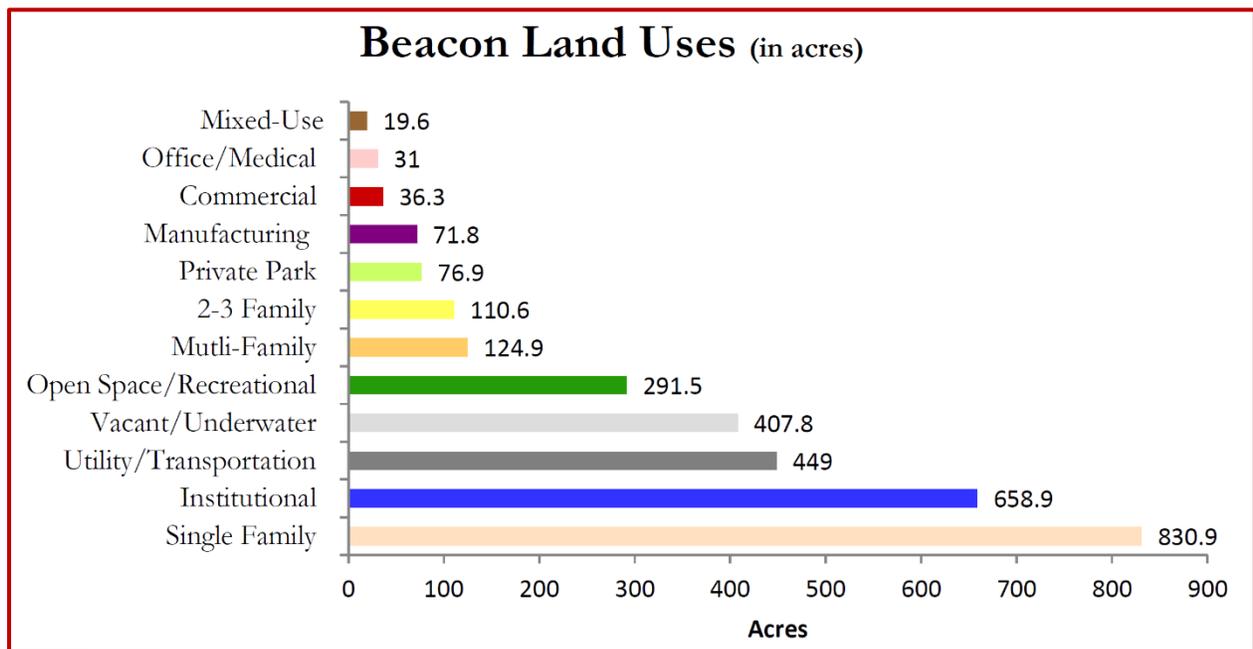
REV
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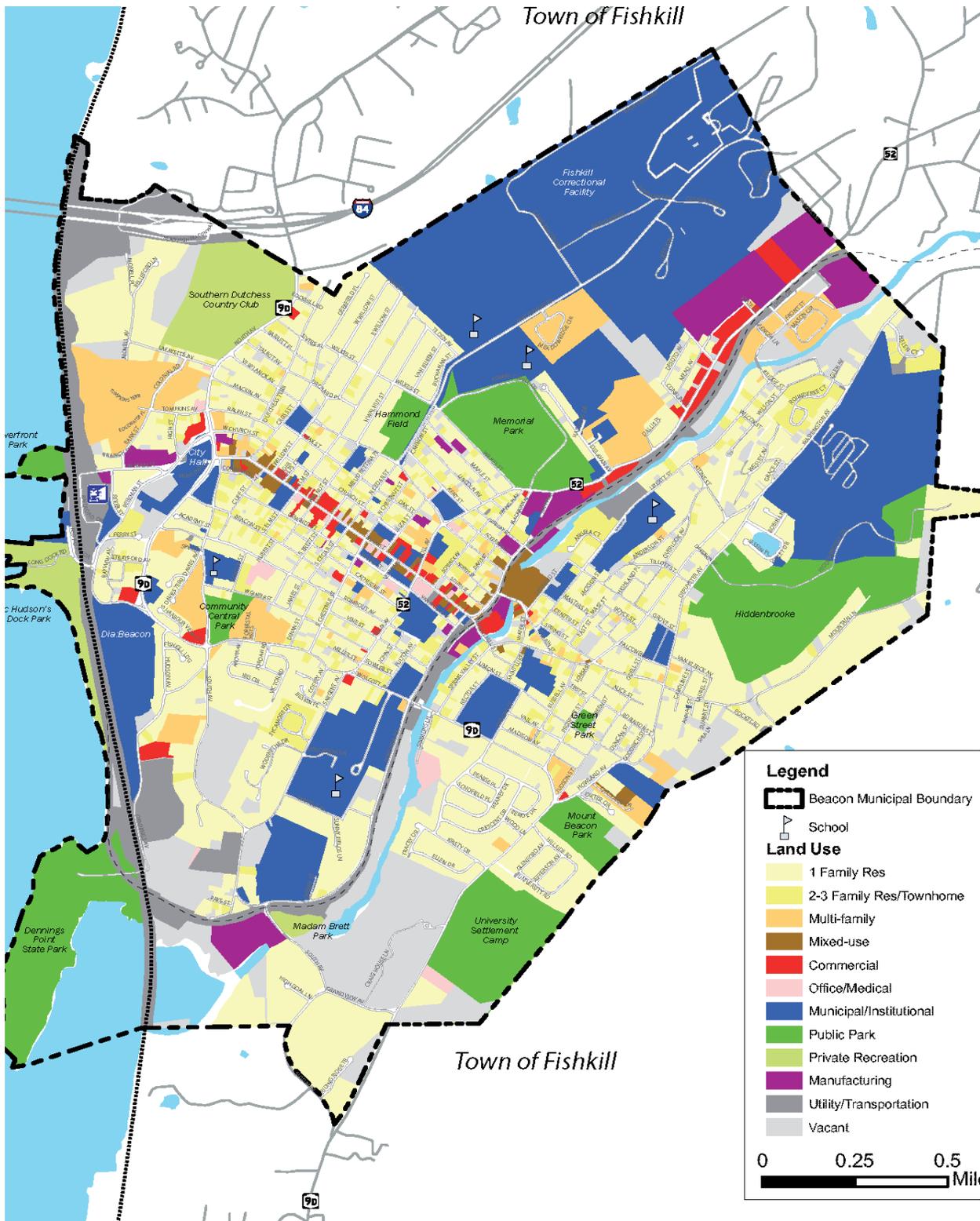
JRE 2-2: ZONING MAP

Existing Land Use

In 2016, as part of the comprehensive planning process, BFJ Planning created an existing land use map based on field surveys, aerial photographs, and data from the Dutchess County Office of Real Property Tax. In descending order, the top 5 land uses by acre in Beacon are as follows: single family (830.9 acres), institutional (658.9 acres), utility/transportation (449.0 acres), vacant/underwater (407.8 acres), and open space/recreational (291.5 acres).^{xx} A map of existing land uses are on the following page.

City of Beacon Existing Land Use (in acres)	
Single Family	830.9
2-3 Family	110.6
Multi-Family	124.9
Mixed-Use	19.6
Commercial	36.3
Office/Medical	31.0
Institutional	658.9
Open Space/Recreational	291.5
Private Park	76.9
Industrial	71.8
Utility/Transportation	449.0
Vacant/Underwater	407.8
Total Acres	3,109.1





RE 2-1: LAND USE

OF BEACON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



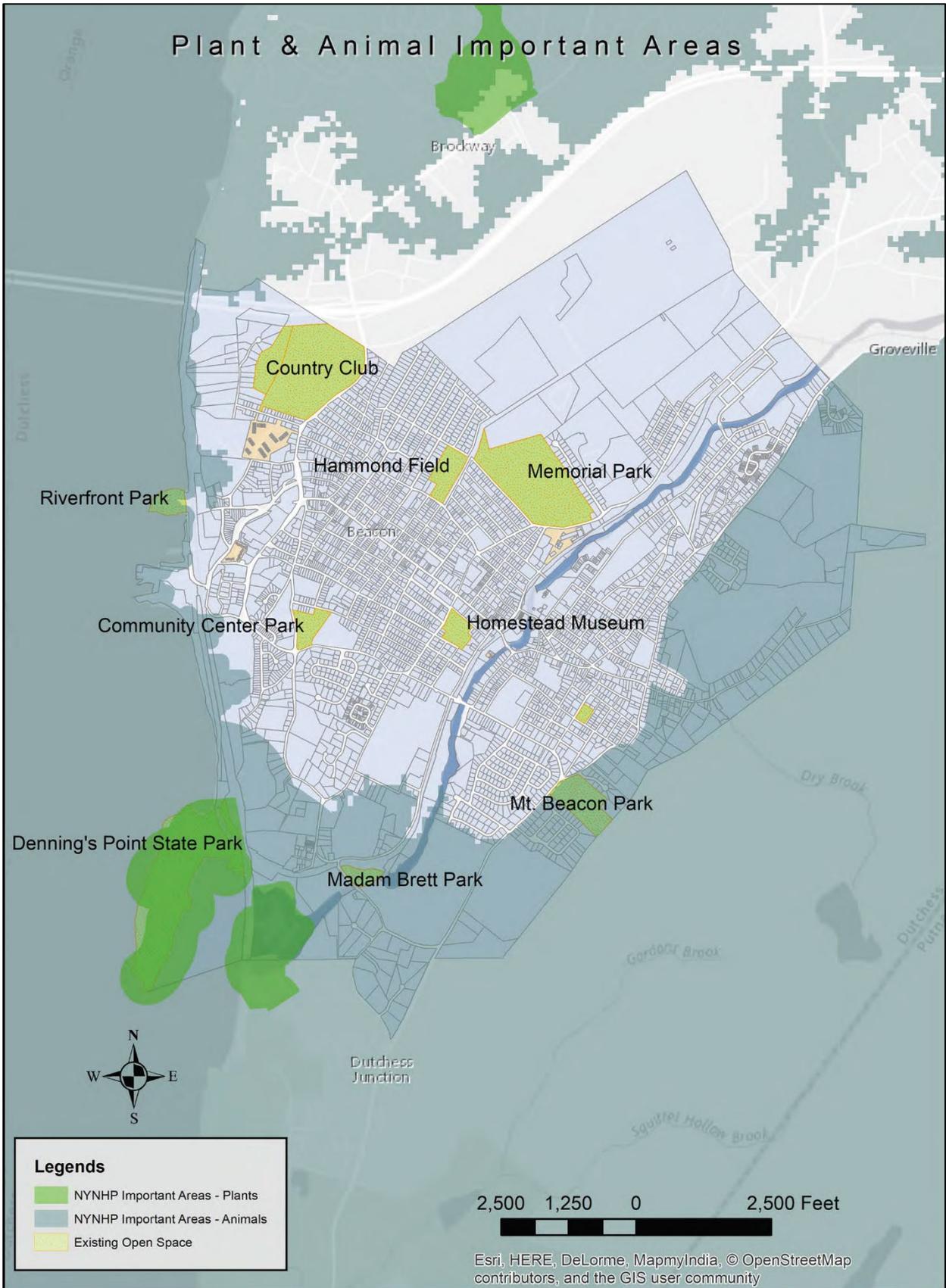
Natural Resources

Open space conservation plays a crucial role in habitat conservation, as the latter would generally not exist without the former. Habitat conservation is essential for protecting rare and high quality animals, plant and communities inhabiting lands or water in Beacon. The New York Natural Heritage Program identifies Important Areas for Rare Plants and Rare Animals. These critical areas include tidal creeks, emergent marshes, swamps, and forests, where species have been observed, but also areas where fauna and flora populations may breed, nest, feed, roost, or over-winter.

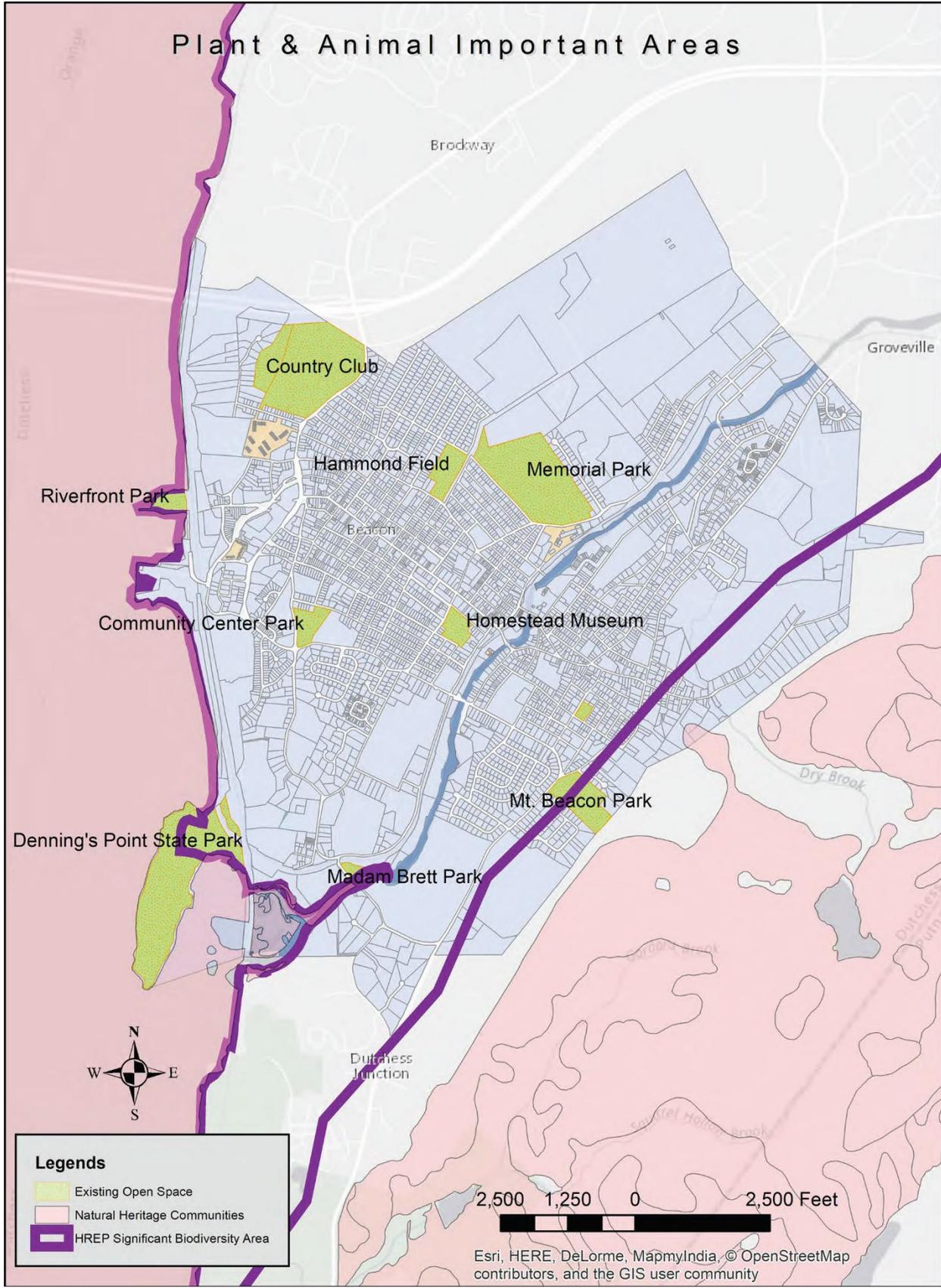
Oak-Tulip Tree forest, a mesic forest community of about 2768 acres, is one of the main ecological resources surrounding the city of Beacon. With a characteristic location on the low slopes of the Breakneck Scofield Fishkill Ridge, the forest eventually extends to higher elevations where it encounters and transitions into the Appalachian Oak-hickory forest and later into Chestnut Oak Forest patches. The densely populated tree canopy found in Oak-Tulip is comprised of *Quercus rubra*, a dominant species, followed by *Acer saccharum*, *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Carya glabra* and *Quercus montana*. Less popular species are *Betula lenta* and *Acer rubrum*. Understory trees also characterize this landscape with species like *Acer saccharum*, *Betula lenta*, *Ostrya virginiana* and *Cornus florida*. Shrubs in this area are sparse but nonetheless existent. Both the ridge and the forest maintain their intact maturity, lowlands that are in proximity to larger developments show signs of logging, and other general disturbances from human activity.

The Hudson River, both a tidal river and a wetland totaling an area of 74248.64 acres, forms part of an extensive 312-mile stream system, and constitutes the entire waterfront of the City of Beacon. The river's brackish water is a habitat for multiple aquatic, amphibian and waterfowl species of which vary dramatically as the salinity of the river increases or decreases. The health of the river's ecosystem is endangered by varying water quality, which ranges from dissolved oxygen levels to high levels of toxic chemicals. The main stem of the river is around 150 miles, with varying widths and an average depth is 10 meters. Bordered by a variety of landforms, the Hudson River flows on a long and predominantly rocky channel comprised of saline and freshwater wetlands, salt marshes, and steep rolling hills.

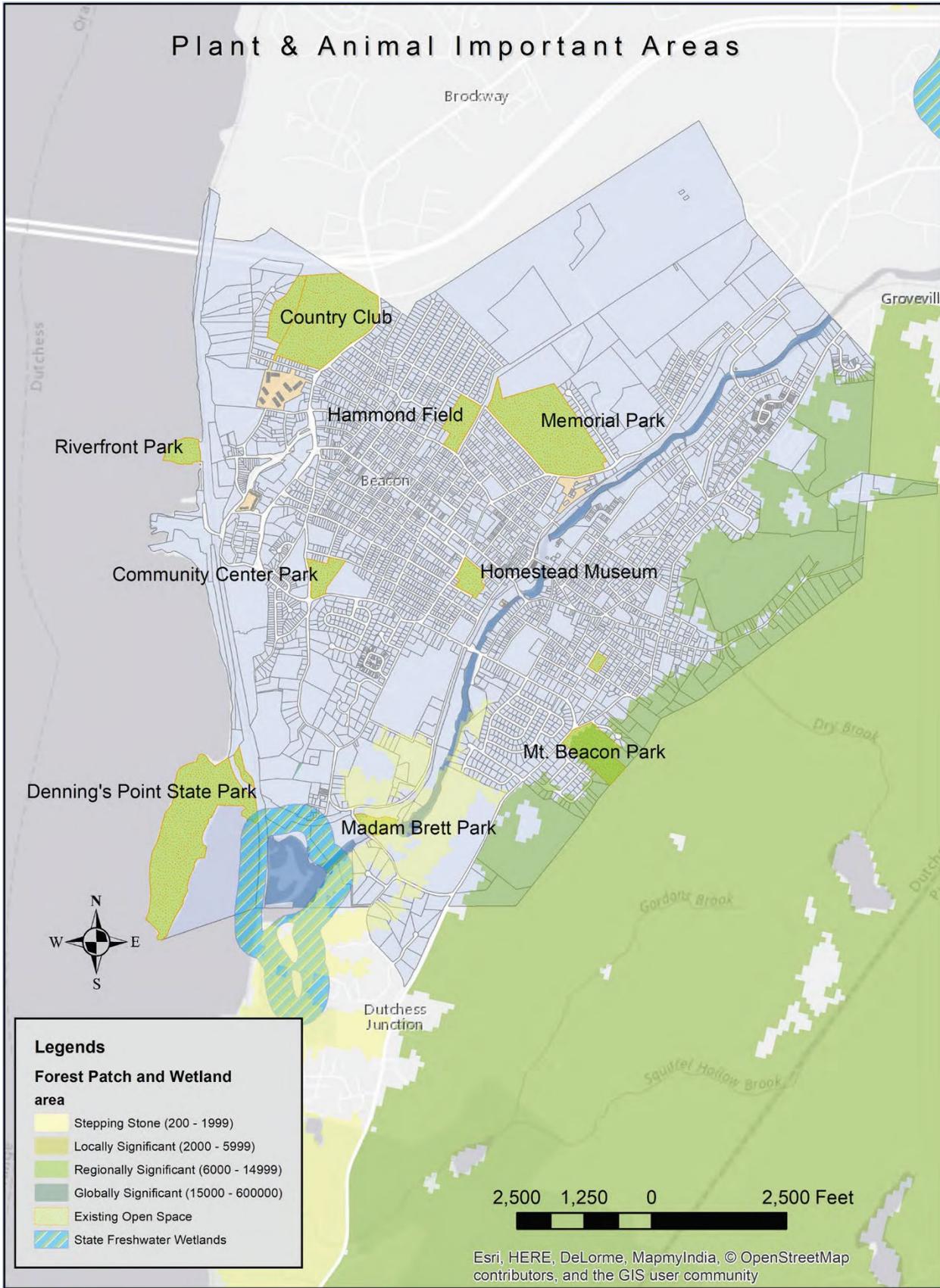
Plant & Animal Important Areas



Plant & Animal Important Areas



Plant & Animal Important Areas



Existing Open Space & Historic Sites

Existing Open Space: Preserved and Unpreserved

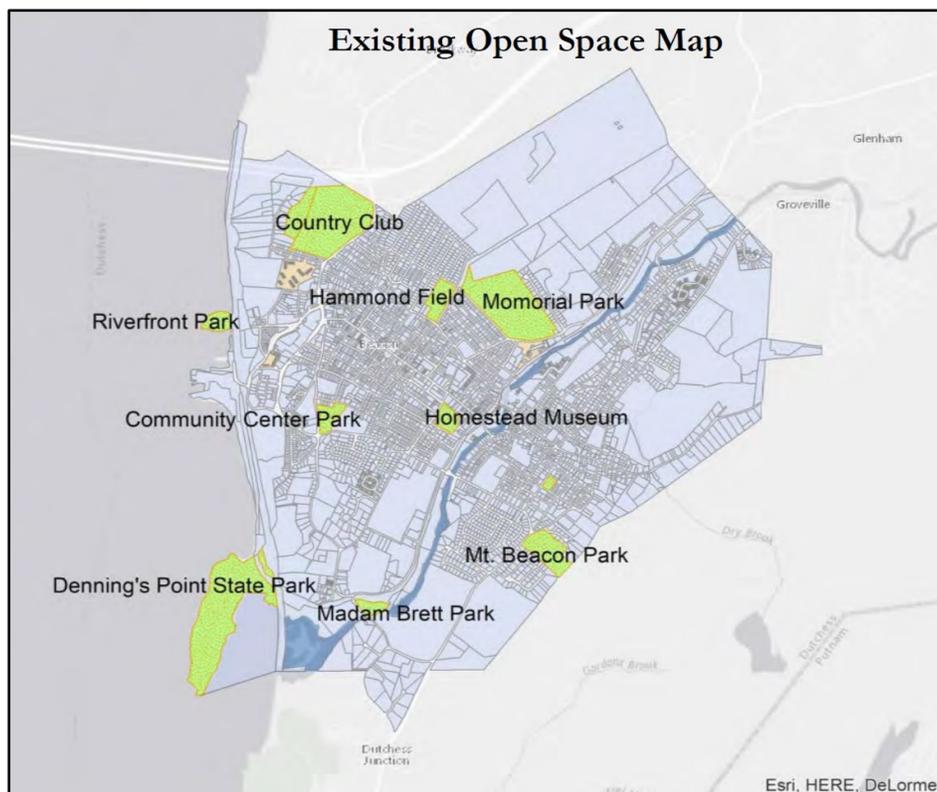
State parks, public and private local parks, community recreation areas, and golf courses comprise the totality of Beacon's open space. Within the City, 291 acres are preserved open space, and another 77 acres are private open space. The largest protected open space areas are sections of Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve along Wolcott Avenue and at Denning's Point, and the City-owned Memorial Park and Riverfront Park. Smaller community parks are located on South Avenue and Green Street. Scenic Hudson has developed for public use the Long Dock Park on the Hudson River, and Madam Brett Park on Fishkill Creek, as well as the Mt. Beacon Park trailhead and parking off Wolcott Avenue and Howland Avenue. The largest private open space in Beacon is the Southern Dutchess Country Club on North Avenue.



Long Dock Park



Madam Brett Park



Historic Sites

There are over 50 properties in Beacon that are listed in the National and State Register of Historic Places, the majority of which are owned by private individuals and organizations. The National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Historic Places are the official lists of the America’s or New York State’s buildings, structures, and places that are worthy of preservation. In New York,

“...sites, districts, structures, buildings, areas or objects above or below the surface of the earth whether on land or in the waters of the State, together with any designated improvements thereon, significant in the history, architecture, archeology or culture of the State, its communities or the nation.”

are eligible for listing.

The objective of these national and state programs is to raise awareness of historic resources, to generate a sense of pride in citizens in the unique history and culture of their community. Placing properties on the national or State Register attests to their historic importance, and attract heritage-based tourism and community revitalization.

Owners of properties listed on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places can take advantage of federal historic rehabilitation tax credits to defray the costs of maintaining or rehabilitating their properties. In addition, New York offers grants and technical assistance to local governments and historic preservation organizations.

Notable properties include the Howland Circulating Library, Beacon Fire and Hose, and Eustatia.



Howland Circulating Library



Beacon Fire and Hose



Eustatia

A full table of all listed properties can be found in appendix D.

Scenic Resource Identification

While the City of Beacon currently possesses nearly 300 acres of preserved open space, there are still a number of unprotected parcels that bear local, ecological, and historical significance. The following pages provide an instructive guide and methodology for identifying, prioritizing, and protecting scenic resources. The methodology used to identify and preserve scenic resources is based on accepted practices embraced by non-profit conservation groups and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The methods used to prioritize parcels has been uniquely designed to build on Beacon's prior planning initiatives, regulatory structure, and zoning, as well as community input garnered from a site visit and community survey.



Students host community survey and mapping exercise.

Identifying Scenic Resources

The Maine Scenic Assessment Handbook defines scenic resources as, "...public areas, features, and sites that are recognized, visited, and enjoyed by the general public for their inherent visual qualities." Scenic resources often fall into one of the four following categories:



Cultural Landscape

A cultural landscape is a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.



Natural Landscape: Macro or Micro

A landscape has a distinctive character that is rich in visual variety, and is appealing for its aesthetic qualities.

Macro Landscape: panoramic, extends into the distance, can be viewed from any number of vantage points



Micro Landscape: visibility of the feature(s) is restricted to a matter of yards from any given vantage point



Landmark

A place or object that is very distinct in the local landscape and attracts the attention of a resident or tourist. It can be but is not always aesthetically pleasing

Scenic Resource Prioritization

The following scoring criteria were used to rank each parcel identified as an unprotected scenic resource.

Scoring Criteria	Rationale	Point Assignment
Land Value	The monetary value of a property deserves critical consideration since higher land values often lead to increased pressure to develop, followed by opposition to preservation. Low cost properties will receive more points than high cost properties. Community-based values will be factored in to the total value.	Each parcel's value will be calculated in terms of price per acre. Ex. The price of a 10-acre parcel will be divided by 10, whilst the price of a 0.1-acre parcel will be multiplied by 10. Each parcel will be assigned between 1-10 points, higher value-lower value, respectively.
Road Frontage	Properties that are clearly visible from roadways contribute to the aesthetic pleasure of large groups of community members and visitors that pass by. Properties with more road frontage will be given higher scores than properties with shorter road frontages.	Parcels will be given one point per 100 feet of road frontage. Properties with less than 100 feet of road frontage will receive 0 points. Properties with over 1,000 feet of road frontage will receive a maximum of 10 points.
Proximity to Town Center	Properties that are close to Main Street, Beacon's center, have a high exposure to residents and visitors. Properties located near the City's center will be given a higher scores than those further from the City center.	Distances will be measured in a straight line from the intersection of Main Street and Cedar Street to the nearest, viewer-accessible border of the property. Properties that are more than 1.25 miles away from the intersection will be given 0 points. Properties between 1 and 1.24 miles will receive 1 point; afterwards anything 0.1 miles less will be given an additional point; 0.9=2 points, 0.8=3, etc.
Zoning	Zoning is an important factor to consider when reviewing a property's development potential. If a property is zoned for residential or commercial uses, it is more likely to be developed. Higher priority will be given to properties that are zoned for industrial uses.	Properties zoned for residential, commercial, or high density uses will be given 0 points. Anything else will be given between 5-10 points, depending on the value of the property itself (higher value = less points, lower value = more points).
Land Size (area)	The size of a property can be critical to preserving expansive viewsheds. Larger properties will be given higher scores.	The largest parcel recommended for preservation will receive 10 points. A 10% reductions in size will lead to the loss of one point. For example, a parcel with 10% less land than the largest parcel recommended for preservation would receive 9

Scoring Criteria	Rationale	Point Assignment
Ecological Value: Woodland	Woodlands possess both ecological and aesthetic value within the City of Beacon. Parcels with more woodlands will receive higher scores.	Parcels with 75 to 100% woodland coverage will receive 10 points. Parcels with 50 to 74% woodland coverage will receive 5 points. Parcels with 25 to 49% will receive 3 points. Properties with than 25% woodland coverage will receive 0 points.
Road Frontage Ratio	This accounts for parcels that were too small to list as significant with the road frontage category. Small parcels with a significant amount of road frontage can still contribute to an area's overall scenic quality.	Parcel with over 50% of road frontage ratio will get 20 points, more than 40% will get 15, 30% will get 10, 20% will get 5, while, less than 20% will get 0.
Historic Significance	Historic sites are both visually appealing and contribute to Beacon's local culture and sense of place. They are an essential part of the city's scenic character and influence future development around them.	Sites listed in the National or State Register of Historic Places that are not yet protected will receive 10 points.
Ecological Value: Wetlands	Similar to woodlands, wetlands are of both ecological and aesthetic value. Parcels containing wetlands will be given higher scores, since they can be used for outdoor recreation and facilitating an appreciation of the wilderness among residents and tourists.	Data from the National Wetland Inventory was used to measure the extent of wetland coverage on individual parcels. 10% reductions in wetland area lead to the loss of one point. For example, a parcel with 80% wetland coverage would receive 8 points.
Ecological Value: Notable Natural Features	Striking features such as streams, creeks, waterfalls, and exposed rock faces provide special significance to existing natural areas by inspiring awe and increasing visual appeal. Properties that have views of these areas or contain these views within their boundaries will be given higher scores.	Beginning with 0 points, each property receives an additional 5 points for each body of water, exposed rock face, or cliff contained within or exactly adjacent to the parcel.
Street/ Highway Traffic Volume	A scenic resource that is not visited is not enjoyed. Parcels that border highly trafficked areas, such as highways, are more likely to be enjoyed. Properties that experience high volumes of passing traffic will receive higher scores.	Traffic volume on adjacent streets. Properties bordering the street/ highway with the highest average traffic volume receive 10 points. Each 10% reduction in road traffic leads to a reduction of one additional point. Properties along roads with very infrequent use receive 0 points.

Scoring Criteria	Rationale	Point Assignment
Presence of Scenic Vistas	Vistas are aesthetically pleasing views of macro- landscapes. Parcels that offer wide views of Beacon and the greater Hudson Valley will receive high scores.	Parcels were rewarded 10 points for each scenic vista they contain.
Community Value	The intent of this inventory is to identify properties that not only have ecological significance, but also provide views that enhance the quality of life of Beacon's residents. Properties identified during a community outreach survey receive the highest scores.	During a community outreach event, Beacon residents identified areas that they considered to be scenic resources. Properties that were most frequently recommended but were not yet preserved received points. The property recommended most frequently received 10 points. Each 10% reduction in recommendations led to the loss of one additional point.
Connectivity to other Preserved Parcels	Connecting existing preserved parcels enhances the quality of the scenic resource being preserved by creating opportunities to protect fragile habitats, preserve large scenic vistas, or create space for active recreation, like walking and jogging trails. Parcels that are adjacent to existing preserved parcels will receive higher scores than those that are not	Properties that were adjacent to properties with conservation easements, owned by the city or state, or owned by Scenic Hudson receive 5 points.
Connectivity to other Preservable Parcels	Similar to the criteria described above, parcels that contribute to connectivity among scenic resources will receive higher scores than those that do not.	Parcels that are adjacent to properties that are candidates for preservation receive 5 points.

Program Implementation

A program to preserve Beacon's scenic resources could take a variety of forms. The already established Conservation Advisory Committee could be responsible for implementation, or the City could fund a full- or part-time position dedicated to scenic resource preservation.

The total cost to acquire each property identified in this study at market value is \$40,981,600. Fortunately, as can be seen in the table of recommendations, each property has not been recommended for purchase which will drive down the cost of overall implementation. The following table explains five options for scenic resource preservation and additional resources for learning about each method.

Transfer of Development Rights

When development rights are transferred, the development potential of a site becomes its own good that can be bought and sold by another landowner who wishes to build on another property at a higher density that the zoning allows.

There are a number of properties in Beacon where a transfer of development rights (TDR) could be coupled with a cluster subdivision/land development ordinance. This would allow for property owners to earn back some of the value of their land that they will forego by not developing it, and will accommodate residential or commercial growth without sprawling into properties with historic or ecological significance.

Advantages of TDR include:

- Properties remain on the tax rolls;
- The program does not create a financial shortfall for the landowner, who receives market value for the development rights;
- No direct expenditure of municipal funds to purchase property.

A disadvantages of TDR may be that such programs necessitate ongoing administration and careful oversight.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are used to protect wildlife, ecosystems, natural habitats, wetlands, and other valuable ecological resources while maintaining a property's private ownership. As a result, the properties do not have to be purchased outright by any public or private organization in order to preserve the parcel.

The property that is being considered for conservation but is currently owned by a private landowner must be assessed by the governmental or Non-governmental organization that is involved in acquiring the easement. The proposed easement would be permanent, legally binding, and would prevent or strictly regulate future development that would occur on the property. This assessment would thus be the compensation to the landowner who would have a monetary loss by conserving his/her land. If the two parties (land owner and easement grantee) agree upon a price for the easement, the grantee entity could then purchase these rights which would subsequently enforce the agreements made in the easement.

Key advantages of conservation easements is that the property remains on tax rolls, while the property owner retains ownership and control of access to their lands. In addition, property owners are often willing to donate conservation easements, or take less than market value for an easement, in exchange for income tax advantages accrued through a charitable donation.

Public Acquisition

Preservation through public or private land trust acquisition, either through donation or outright purchase. Rather than just buying the development rights of the land, the city or other entity buys the property outright for guaranteed preservation of the land. In this case, the city government is the owner of the property. In doing so the City of Beacon, other governmental entity, takes responsibility for establishing use policies, and monitoring and maintenance responsibilities for the preserved lands.

In this way public acquisition is straight forward and is a simple way to preserve properties within the city and provide additional recreational opportunities for residents. Future modifications that enhance quality or public use do not require the consent of a private owner. Disadvantages of acquisition, in addition to purchase costs, include remove property from the tax base, and the long-term costs of maintaining the property.

Private Acquisition by Non-Profit Conservation Groups

Non-profit conservation groups, such as land trusts, can be a vital resource for preserving scenic, historic, and ecological resources. In New York State, 90 land trusts are at work preserving land throughout the state, in both rural and urban areas. Private acquisition by non-profit groups can be a more financially feasible method for preserving scenic resources. Mission based organizations often have extensive experience writing grants, and if their sole mission is acquisition and maintenance, they may be able to expedite the acquisition process through sharp negotiation skills and legal expertise. It will be important for the City to be vigilant in vetting the mission of each organization to ensure that the scenic resource will be treated in a way that enhances its quality.

Advantages of private acquisition:

- No direct acquisition expense for the City;
- No direct maintenance expense for the City.

Disadvantages:

- Not-for profit land trusts are exempt from payment of property taxes and the property may be removed from tax rolls;
- Public use of the property may be restricted.

Zoning

The City of Beacon already possesses a progressive and comprehensive zoning ordinance and regulatory structure that allow for stringent review of proposals to modify historic properties or properties along the waterfront.

Some modifications should be considered, however. First, the Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone should be expanded to include Main Street, which constitutes a significant Cultural Landscape. Second, the City should consider adopting cluster zoning. Cluster developments allow property owners the ability to develop small portions of their property at a higher density, preventing sprawl from spreading into historically and environmentally significant areas.

Advantages:

Property owners maintain the value of their property Properties maintain their historic and ecological significance

Disadvantages:

Some developers may forego development due to stringent review requirements.



Ranking Outcomes

The following table was produced by scoring each parcel according to the methodology explained in the above rubric. Parcels with high scores should receive priority over parcels with lower scores. The table shows how each parcel scored for every category and its total score. The properties that received the 10 highest scores are discussed at length in the pages following the table of rankings.

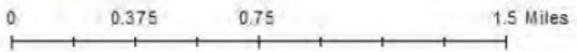
Parcel Number	Type of Scenic Resource	Land Value	Ownership: Public or Private	Land Value	Road Frontage	Proximity to Town Center	Zoning	Land Size (Acres)	Woodlands	Road Frontage Ratio	Historic Significance	Wetlands	Notable Natural Features	Road Traffic	Presence of Scenic Vistas	Community Value	Connectivity	Total	Recommendation
751258	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$500,000	Public	2	5	1	10	2	7	3	0	6	10	1	20	5	10	82	Transfer of Development Rights
001258	Cultural Landscape	\$3,000,000	None Listed	5	10	1	3	10	7	10	0	5	10	1	10	5	5	82	Transfer of Development Rights
649885	Cultural Landscape	\$80,000	Private	8	2	7	0	1	3	33	10	0	2	10	0	5	81	Transfer of Development Rights	
096715	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$10,200,000	Private	10	7	3	10	3	10	10	2	0	2	10	5	5	77	Conservation Easement	
894286	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$24,000	Private	10	2	1	10	1	5	3	0	4	10	1	10	0	5	62	Conservation Easement
213807	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$7,000,000	Private	9	5	5	0	1	7	7	10	2	0	1	10	0	5	62	Acquisition: Public or non-profit
121715	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$550,000	Public	10	1	7	0	1	7	3	10	2	5	1	10	0	5	62	Acquisition: Public or non-profit
323928	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$24,000	Private	10	6	4	10	1	10	9	0	1	5	0	0	0	5	61	Conservation Easement
535128	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$116,000	Private	7	7	0	10	1	5	8	0	2	5	1	10	0	5	61	Acquisition: Public or non-profit
251352	Landmark	\$3,225,000	Public	0	10	2	2	10	3	7	0	0	5	1	10	5	5	60	Zoning
630770	Cultural Landscape	\$79,000	Private	8	5	7	0	1	5	6	10	0	0	2	10	0	5	59	Conservation Easement
145691	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$52,000	Private	0	2	7	7	1	3	9	10	2	0	1	10	0	5	57	Conservation Easement
259571	Landmark	\$97,000	Public	8	8	3	7	1	3	10	10	0	0	1	0	5	0	56	Transfer of Development Rights
830270	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$126,500	Public	7	4	1	2	1	3	5	0	6	5	1	10	5	5	55	Transfer of Development Rights
993482	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$400,000	Private	3	0	5	10	2	10	0	0	4	5	0	10	0	5	54	Transfer of Development Rights
502133	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$839,700	Private	1	7	1	10	1	10	10	0	0	0	4	0	5	5	54	Acquisition: Public or non-profit
012574	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$201,000	Private	7	1	6	7	1	7	2	0	3	5	0	10	0	5	54	Conservation Easement
713005	Landmark	\$970,000	Private	1	10	0	4	8	5	4	0	0	0	1	10	5	5	53	Transfer of Development Rights
590165	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$4,300,000	Private	0	8	0	10	2	5	6	10	0	5	1	0	0	5	52	Conservation Easement
448993	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$88,000	Private	8	5	1	3	1	10	8	0	5	5	1	0	0	5	52	Conservation Easement
586430	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$600,000	Utilities	2	0	1	10	1	7	0	0	5	5	0	10	5	5	51	Transfer of Development Rights
066670	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$515,000	Private	0	2	6	10	1	3	2	0	0	5	1	10	5	5	50	Conservation Easement
637879	Cultural Landscape	\$82,000	Private	8	0	7	0	1	0	1	10	0	0	2	10	5	5	49	Conservation Easement
125690	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$37,500	Public	0	1	7	7	1	0	7	10	5	5	1	0	0	5	49	Conservation Easement
688931	Cultural Landscape	\$111,000	Public	7	7	8	0	1	3	8	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	46	Transfer of Development Rights
113702	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$9,000	Private	2	0	7	7	1	3	5	10	0	5	1	0	0	5	46	Conservation Easement
742549	Cultural Landscape	\$165,000	Private	6	6	5	0	1	10	5	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	45	Transfer of Development Rights
168772	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$3,250,000	Private	0	10	5	3	1	5	8	0	2	5	1	0	0	5	45	Conservation Easement
045593	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$51,000	Public	8	1	6	4	1	3	9	0	1	5	1	0	0	5	44	Conservation Easement
660924	Cultural Landscape	\$1,000,000	Private	0	4	6	3	1	10	7	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	43	Transfer of Development Rights
556840	Cultural Landscape	\$71,500	Private	9	4	7	0	1	0	10	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	43	Transfer of Development Rights
720084	Cultural Landscape	\$60,000	Private	9	1	7	4	1	5	4	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	41	Zoning
717075	Cultural Landscape	\$60,000	Private	9	1	7	4	1	5	3	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	40	Zoning
032452	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$112,500	Public	4	0	3	6	1	10	0	0	5	5	1	0	0	5	40	Transfer of Development Rights
323902	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$1,013,900	Private	0	7	3	3	1	5	6	0	3	5	1	0	0	5	39	Transfer of Development Rights
951357	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$548,500	Private	2	0	2	10	1	10	0	0	3	5	0	0	0	5	38	Conservation Easement
730492	Cultural Landscape	\$165,000	Private	6	9	3	0	1	10	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	38	Transfer of Development Rights
910293	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$14,500	Public	10	0	1	4	1	10	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	5	37	Conservation Easement
656145	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$99,000	Public	8	2	0	3	1	5	3	0	4	5	1	0	0	5	37	Transfer of Development Rights
739465	Cultural Landscape	\$81,500	Private	8	1	5	3	1	0	2	10	0	0	1	0	0	5	36	Transfer of Development Rights
774559	Cultural Landscape	\$180,000	Private	6	0	5	2	1	3	0	10	0	0	1	0	0	5	33	Transfer of Development Rights
662193	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$50,000	Public	9	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	2	5	0	0	0	5	33	Conservation Easement
459057	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$29,500	Private	10	0	2	0	1	10	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	33	Conservation Easement
521325	Landmark	\$479,000	Public	3	0	0	2	4	3	0	10	0	0	0	5	5	5	32	Transfer of Development Rights
236870	Micro/Macro Landscape	\$69,000	Private	0	4	6	0	1	3	9	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	29	Conservation Easement
053701	Cultural Landscape	\$78,000	Private	2	0	6	0	1	10	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	26	Conservation Easement

Recommended Parcels for Preservation

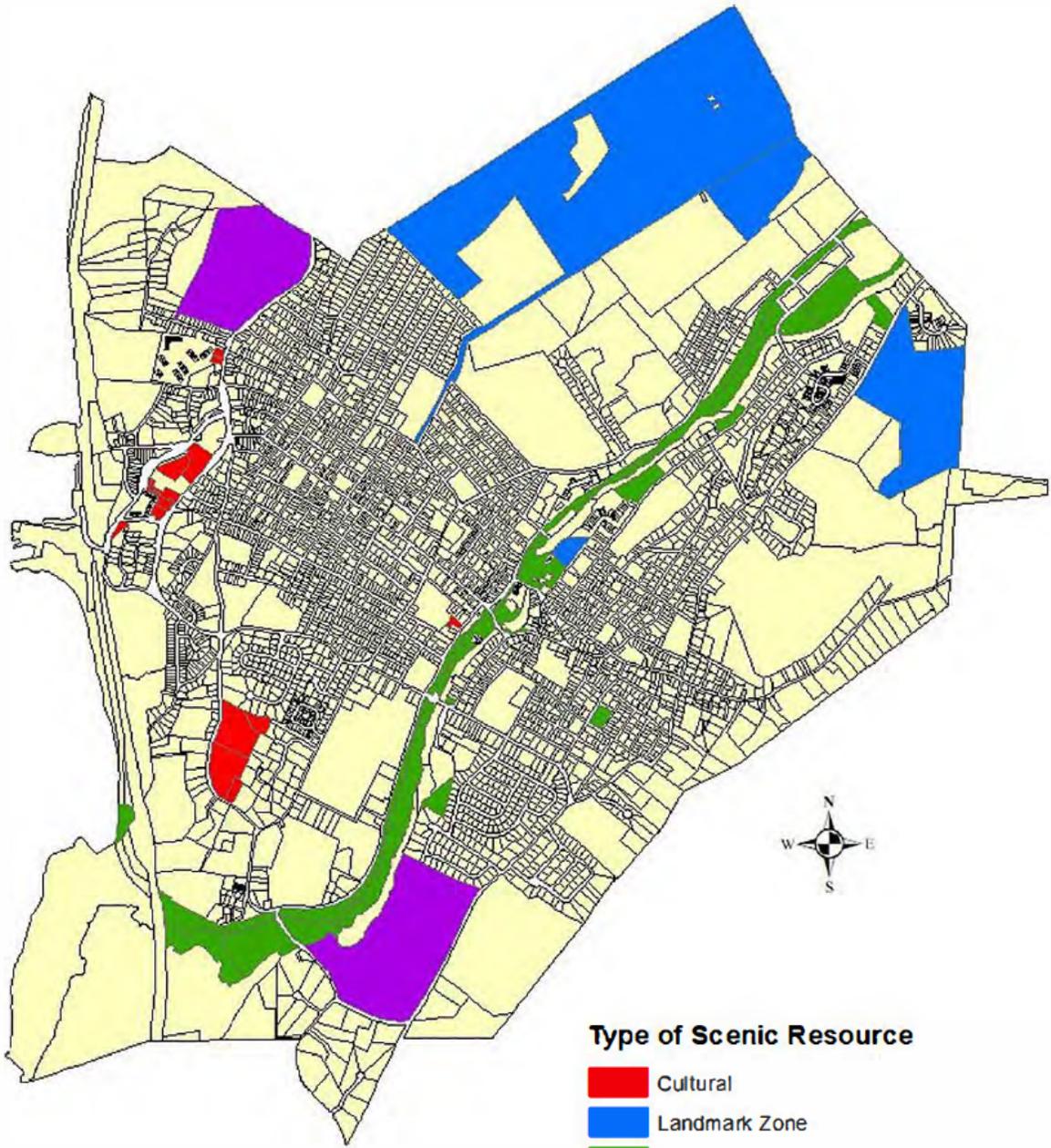
Parcel ID	Map #
001258	1
012574	2
032452	3
045593	4
053701	5
066670	6
096715	7
113702	8
121715	9
125690	10
145691	11
168772	12
213807	13
236870	14
251352	15
259571	16
323902	17
323928	18
448993	19
459057	20
502133	21
521325	22
535128	23
556840	24
586430	25
590165	26
630770	27
649885	28
656145	29
660924	30
662193	31
688931	32
713005	33
717075	34
720084	35
730492	36
739465	37
742549	38
751258	39
770210	40
774559	41
830270	42
894286	43
910293	44
951357	45
993482	46



Recommended Parcels for Preservation
 Non-Recommended Parcels

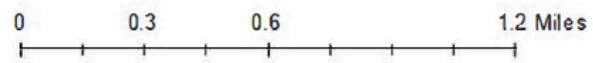


Scenic Resource Parcels Selected for Protection By Type

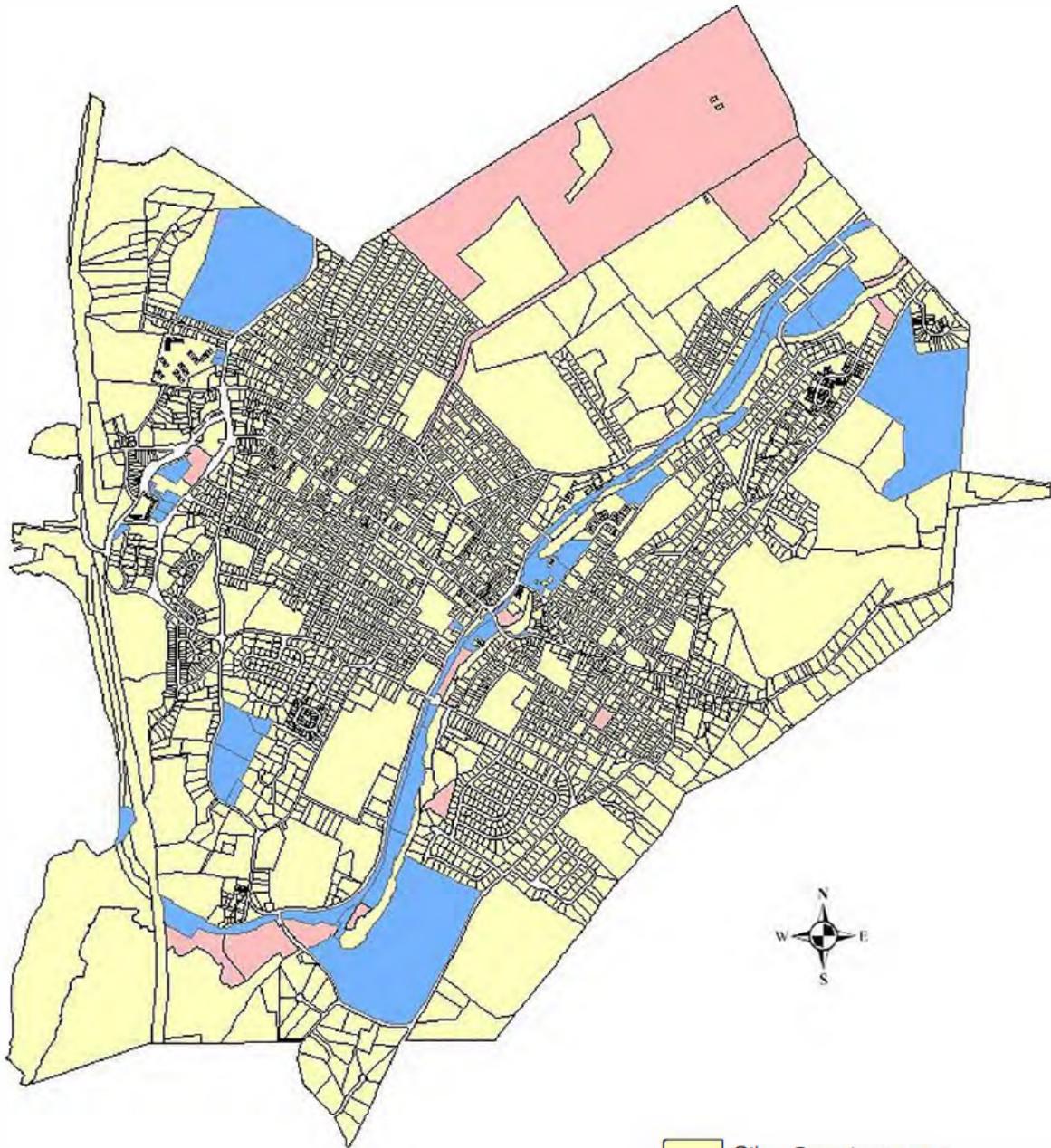


Type of Scenic Resource

- Cultural
- Landmark Zone
- Micro/Macro Landscape
- Micro/Macro Landscape/Cultural Landscape



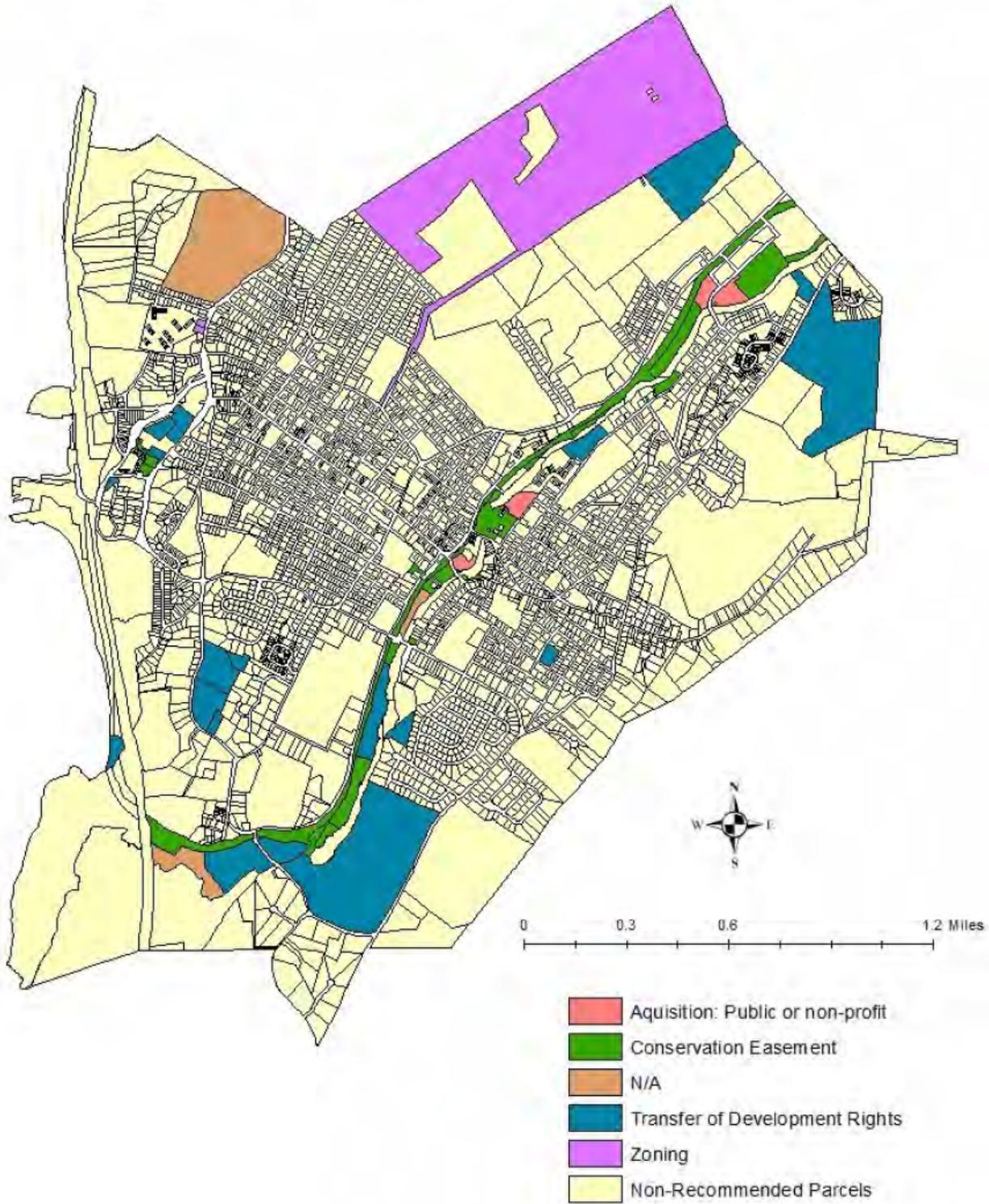
Ownership of Parcels Selected for Preservation



- Other Parcels
- Private Owned Parcels
- Public Owned Parcels

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 Miles

Recommendation Type for Parcels Selected for Preservation



Priority Properties for Preservation

Parcel # 751258: Property Adjacent to Madam Brett Park

Address: 555 South Avenue

Score: 82

Classification: Fishkill Creek Development and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone Scenic

Resource Type: Cultural Landscape and Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Transfer of Development Rights

This parcel can be accessed from the parking lot of Madam Brett Park. This parcel is currently covered in old industrial buildings, however it adds character to the park and is a reminder of Beacon's industrial history.



Parcel #751258 is worthy of preservation because it is directly adjacent to Madam Brett Park, follows the creek bank of Fishkill Creek, and is located in the midst of an ecologically sensitive area. The abandoned buildings are an enhancement to the scenic quality of the area, as they are a stark contrast to the flourishing natural landscape and serene creek that surrounds the industrial grounds.

Parcel # 001258: Craig House

Address: 7 Craig House Ln

Score: 82

Classification: R-180 and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone

Scenic Resource Type: Cultural Landscape

Recommendation: Transfer of Development Rights, Cluster Development Zone

Craig House is a property of local significance, and many residents are concerned about its future use. Given the property's location along Fishkill Creek, abundant woodland coverage, and the architectural detail embodied in the physical structure of the Craig House, it is a top candidate for preservation.



Parcel #649885: Parcel Adjacent to Reformed Church

Address: Wolcott Ave

Score: 81

Classification: Linkage and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone

Scenic Resource Type: Cultural Landmark and Macro Landscape

Recommendation: Transfer of Development Rights

The parcel located to the left of the Reformed Church provides views of the Hudson River and contributes to the thick woodland that surrounds the Church.



Parcel#096715: Parcel along Fishkill Creek

Address: Main St

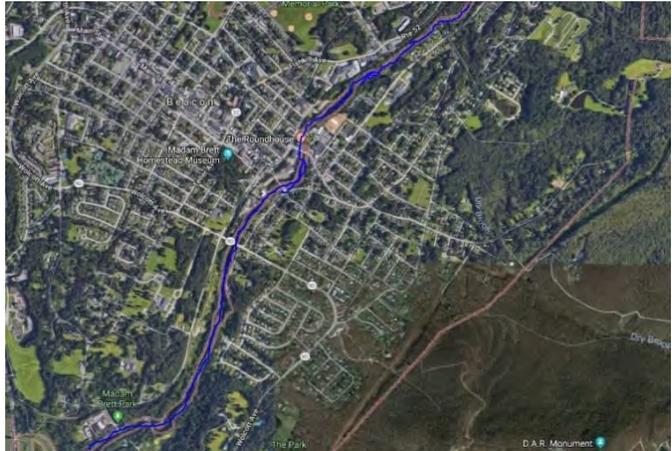
Score: 77

Classification:

Scenic Resource Type: Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Conservation Easement that permits recreational uses

The parcel marked in blue runs along the entire length of the western bank of Fishkill Creek. The parcel is owned by the Metro North Railroad Company and has not seen active use in many years. A number of modifications could be made to the parcel so that it is more hospitable to passive recreation uses, such as walking or jogging. Beacon's 2013 Fishkill Creek Greenway and Heritage Trail Master Plan provide considerable guidance with regard to trail design and route. Preserving this parcel would enhance an existing wildlife corridor



Parcel #894286: Parcel along Tioronda Ave

Address: Tioronda Ave Rear

Score: 62

Classification: Fishkill Creek Development and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone Scenic

Resource Type: Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Conservation Easement

This parcel has been ranked high priority due to its ecological and scenic significance within the parcel. While the property is not surrounded by roads and is relatively small, the parcel contains a miniature water fall which can be seen along the Creekside walking path. In addition, this is a creek side property which influence the surrounding ecological and scenic environment, and therefore is a valuable parcel to preserve.



Parcel #213807: Parcel along Fishkill Creek

Address: 50-54 Leonard Street

Score: 62

Classification: Micro Landscape

Scenic Resource Type: Micro Landscape Recommendation:

Acquisition: public or non-profit

This parcel is a parcel along Fishkill Creek that could significantly help and improve wildlife habitat around the creek and within the city. With increasing development within the city, this parcel can act as a buffer property that would help preserve the wild scenery around the creek.



Parcel #121715 Fishkill Creek

Address: E Main St

Score: 62

Classification: Light Industrial and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone Scenic

Resource Type: Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Acquisition: public or non-profit

This parcel was recommended for acquisition by a non-profit conservation group because it may require environmental remediation due to past industrial use. The property is currently used as a parking lot, however it could be reforested and serve as an important natural buffer zone between wild life and the city.



Parcel # 323928: Parcel Along Fishkill Creek

Address: Fishkill Ave

Score: 61

Classification: Light Industrial

Scenic Resource Type: Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Conservation Easement

This is another “wildlife connection property” that would preserve the greenspace within Beacon and along Fishkill Creek. While there is no way to access the property via road, due to the shape and the creek side location, any drastic modification such as development would significantly alter the natural look of the creek. Any development within this parcel would also obstruct the only wildlife corridor that runs through the city.



Parcel #535128 Fishkill Creek

Address: Front St

Score: 61

Classification: Light Industrial and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone Scenic

Resource Type: Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Acquisition: public or non-profit

This parcel might require environmental remediation, but once preserved could act as a significant natural area that would help increase wildlife habitat and thus the preservation of the scene along Fishkill Creek. The property runs along the creek and can be viewed from the bridge from the south boarder, thus being an important property to preserve along the creek.



Parcel #251352: Grounds Surrounding Fishkill Correctional Facility

Address: 83-85 Coughlin Drive

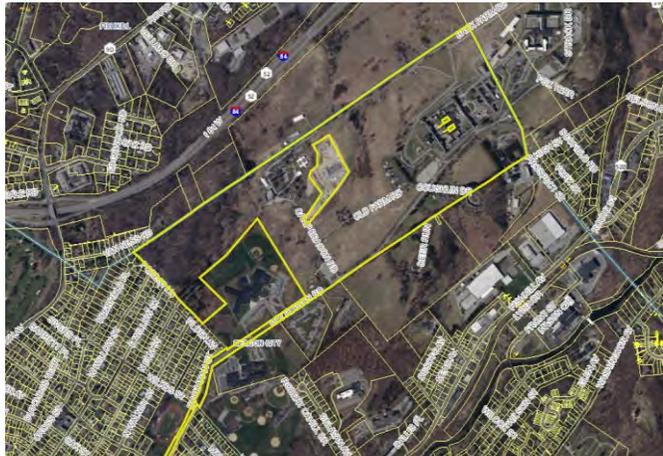
Score: 60

Classification: R1-40 and Historic District and Landmark Overlay Zone

Scenic Resource Type: Micro Landscape

Recommendation: Zoning

This parcel takes up a great deal of land within the city of Beacon. Because this land has a great deal of open space, any development will significantly change the wildlife habitat and green space within the city. While this has been categorized as existing open space within the recent Beacon Master Plan, the current use significantly discourages public use.



Endnotes

- i U.S. Census 2010
- ii 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 31
- iii 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 31
- iv U.S. Census 2010
- v 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 42
- vi U.S. Census 2010
- vii American Community Survey 2016 5-Year Estimates
- viii 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 43 & U.S. Census 2010
- ix 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 43
- x 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 15
- xi Beacon Historical Society. (n.d.). Beacon History. Retrieved from <http://beaconhistorical.org/bhs---beacon-history.html>
- xii 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 114
- xiii Murphy, R. J., & VanBuren, D. D. (1998). *Historic Beacon*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia. xiv Mount Beacon Incline Railway Restoration Society. (n.d.). Heyday. Retrieved from <http://www.inclinerailway.org/history-heyday/>
- xv Mount Beacon Incline Railway Restoration Society. (n.d.). Decline. Retrieved from <http://www.inclinerailway.org/history-decline/>
- xvi 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 31
- xvii Beacon Historical Society. (n.d.). Beacon History. Retrieved from <http://beaconhistorical.org/bhs---beacon-history.html>
- xviii Dia Art Foundation. (2016). Dia:Beacon. Retrieved from <https://www.diaart.org/visit/visit/diabeacon-beacon-united-states>
- xix 2007 Comprehensive Plan, 1
- xx 2017 Comprehensive Plan, 26

Craig House Site Redevelopment Plan

The Project

The plan for Craig house site has been developed in a manner that provides for 33 new residential units, while preserving the original portions of the Craig House as well as the four other historic structures on the site through adaptive reuse. The Craig House, is oriented on the hill (elev. = 175 ft.) which gives it a panoramic view from the house looking west and north across the Hudson River. Both of these historic viewshed are protected with this design proposal. Preserving existing woodland, steep slope areas, wetlands and the Fishkill Creek riparian corridor as a natural area was also a high priority. This plan protects the scenic character, and the historic resources of the Craig house site. More importantly, this redevelopment plans allows for the conservation of 80% of the natural areas within the site boundary.

The modern addition on the south side of the Craig house will be demolished and redeveloped into a 3-story structure allowing for 12 multi-family condominium units with parking below on the ground floor. These units will have a minimum of 2 bedrooms and 1,500 sq. feet of floor area per unit. By building in the exact same footprint of the dormitory building extension, the Craig House can be engaged and landscape preservation maximized. This structure would not visually intrude the historic character of Wolcott Avenue because there are existing mature trees that will be preserved and block the view from people driving down.

In addition, the modern addition on the west side of Craig House proper would also be demolished, restoring the structure to its original footprint.



Satellite image showing viewshed down Fishkill Creek toward Hudson River from Craig House.

The Craig house, Gatehouse # 1 on Grandview Avenue, Gatehouse #2 on Wolcott Avenue/NYS Rte. 9D, Tioronda School on South Avenue near Fishkill Creek, and a small brick shed building identified as Outbuilding #4 are currently unoccupied and will be reused to serve single and multi-family homes. The structure of the Craig house and Tioronda School will both provide four housing units. Gatehouse #2 appears to be utilized as a single-family home and will remain in place.

The new single-family homes are of substantial size (3,500 sq. feet) and can be marketed to a high end market. In order to conserve the sites naturalistic character and have minimum impact, variances from the area requirements of the zoning code were necessary. 11 single-family lots each have a minimum size of 40,000 sq. feet as required by the Average Density Subdivision provisions.

History

The Craig House site in Beacon New York is a 65-acre former estate and historic private psychiatric clinic located on the south side of the city, bordering Fishkill Creek, as well as NYSRte. 9D/Wolcott Avenue. The site is currently about 40% covered by estate-style lawns with a naturalistic landscape along Rte. 9D, and a combination of wooded slopes, meadows and wetlands along Fishkill Creek. The land drops about 150 feet from Wolcott Ave. down to Fishkill Creekfeet.

Craig House itself is located in the northeastern quadrant of the site, and includes the original historic house/clinic and two modern additions, one a long narrow dormitory building parallel to Wolcott Ave. There are three other significant structures on the site.

The site is both a scenic resource and historic and cultural resource. The property contains 4 structures that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places: Craig Houseitself, the nearby Gatehouse #2 off Wolcott Ave., Gatehouse #1 on Grandview Ave. and the Tioronda School building on South Ave. near Fishkill Creek.

The challenge facing the city of Beacon is that it is also prime real estate development property, recently sold for a reported \$6 million. Given the City's eroded property tax base, a major source of its operating revenue, it cannot afford to lock up the land as undeveloped open space.

Considerations

Zoning Information

The site is zoned R1-80 One-Family Residence District, with a Historic District and Landmark Overlay zoning district. The underlying R1-80 zoning district permits one-family residences to be built, but requires a minimum of 80,000 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. Under this density limit, the Craig House site is permitted up to 33 dwelling units.

The City of Beacon also permits developers tremendous latitude in designing a subdivision in a manner that preserves scenic resources and ecologically sensitive areas. Using the Average Density Subdivision mechanism, the City of Beacon Planning Board may modify the zoning regulations with respect to lot area and dimensions, with certain conditions:

- a. The average size of all lots shown on the subdivision plat shall be equal to or greater than the permitted minimum lot area in such district (80,000 sq. feet) and that there shall not be a greater average density of population or cover of the land with buildings than is permitted in such district;
- b. No lot shall have less than the minimum lot area and dimensions required for lots in the next less restrictive residential zoning district (R1-40 or 40,000 sq. feet).

Design Guidelines

- a. Proposed public streets shall be located within 50-ft wide rights-of-way;
- b. Proposed streets shall have a minimum width of 24 feet or 12 feet per lane and have curbing; streets with on-street parallel parking shall be an additional 8 feet wide;
- c. Sidewalks shall be built on both sides of any public street, with at least 5 feet of landscape area between the sidewalk and street curb; sidewalks shall be a minimum of 4 feet wide;
- d. Proposed streets shall have a minimum curve radius of 100 feet as measured from the street centerline;
- e. Proposed streets shall intersect at right angles to each other;
- f. Proposed cul-de-sac turnarounds shall have a minimum diameter of 75 feet.

Building Sites

- a. Any homes or other building fronting on Wolcott Avenue shall be set back from the street at least 120 feet;
- b. No new homes or other structures shall be built within 200 feet of the front or rear facades of the Craig House. The entry drive circle in front shall be maintained, but in a manner that redirects traffic not associated with the House from the circle;
- c. No one-family home footprint shall cover more than 35% of the area of its lot;
- d. No one-family home shall be closer than 20 feet from the front (street) boundary, 50 feet from the rear boundary of its lot, or 10 feet from any side boundary of its lot;
- e. No garage shall project beyond the front façade of any home.

Viewshed and Natural Areas Protection

- a. To the extent practicable existing roadways and drives on the site shall be repurposed as streets for the new development and only where necessary widened or realigned;
- b. Where new homes are proposed within the wooded areas of the site, tree removal shall be

limited to that necessary to accommodate the footprint of the home, plus 10 feet beyond the footprint of the home;

- c. Driveways within wooded areas shall be designed in a manner that minimizes removal of mature trees, shall be no more than 10 feet wide, and require no more than 5 feet of disturbance beyond the edge of said driveway;
- d. No new development shall be permitted within 100 feet of any stream on or bordering the site.

Precedents

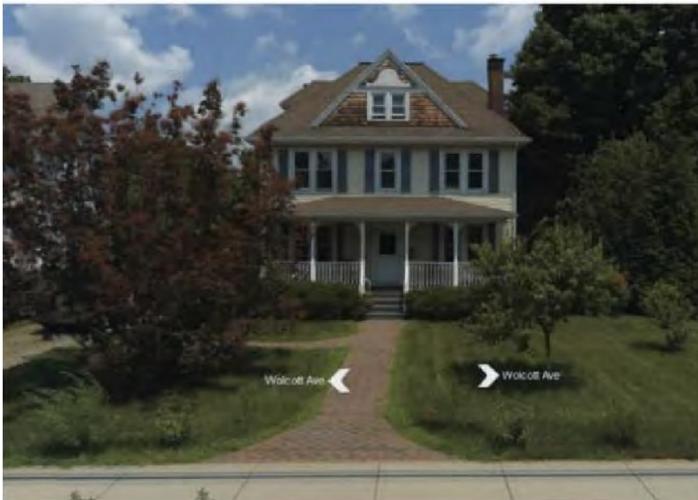
The following photos show design precedents that were considered in the design of the project. They are existing homes in Beacon that are sited on smaller residential lots typical of urban area, and include homes from the mid- to late 1800s through the early 2000s. Besides reflecting the typical residential design for the community, these design precedents also represent homes that are valued at between \$300,000 and 600,000 in Beacon, which was the target market for the site.



Circa 1890 Victorian home – 12,600 sq. ft. lot; 75 ft. wide lot; 1,350 sq. ft./2,700 sq. ft. home.



Circa 1890 Queen Anne - 10,150 sq. ft. lot; 50 ft. wide lot (at street); 950 sq. ft. building footprint; 1,500 sq. ft. floor area.



Circa 1910 Colonial Revival - 15,000 sq. ft. lot; 75 ft. wide lot (at street); 1,350 sq. ft. building footprint; 2,350 sq. ft. floor area.



Circa 2010 Contemporary - 105,850 sq. ft. lot; 120 ft. wide lot (at street); 2,690 sq. ft. building footprint; 3,900 sq. ft. floor area.

The above conceptual plan for the redevelopment of the Craig House site proposes up to 16 condominium dwellings in the Craig House and an adjoining new structure on the footprint of a 1960s era building parallel to Wolcott Avenue. The former Tioronda School would be converted to up to 4 dwelling units, and the two existing single-family homes (gatehouses) will remain single family homes. In addition, 11 new single family homes could be built on two short cul-de-sac streets off Wolcott Avenue and Grandview Avenue.

The proposed redevelopment concept would preserve the historic viewshed from the Craig House, and up to 42 acres of open space on the site. This includes some 35 acres of mature woodlands, steep slopes and wetlands along Fishkill Creek that could be dedicated as public park or preserve.



Craig House Site Redevelopment Plan
Beacon, NY
January 2018

Appendices

Appendix A: Wildlife Corridors Identified in 2007 Comprehensive Plan

Appendix B: Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Area

Appendix C: Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Scenic Views – Map and List

Appendix D: Properties listed in the National and State Register of Historic Places

Appendix E: Image Credits



Appendix A: Wildlife Corridors Identified in 2007 Comprehensive Plan



Appendix B: Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Area



Appendix C: Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Scenic Views – Map and List

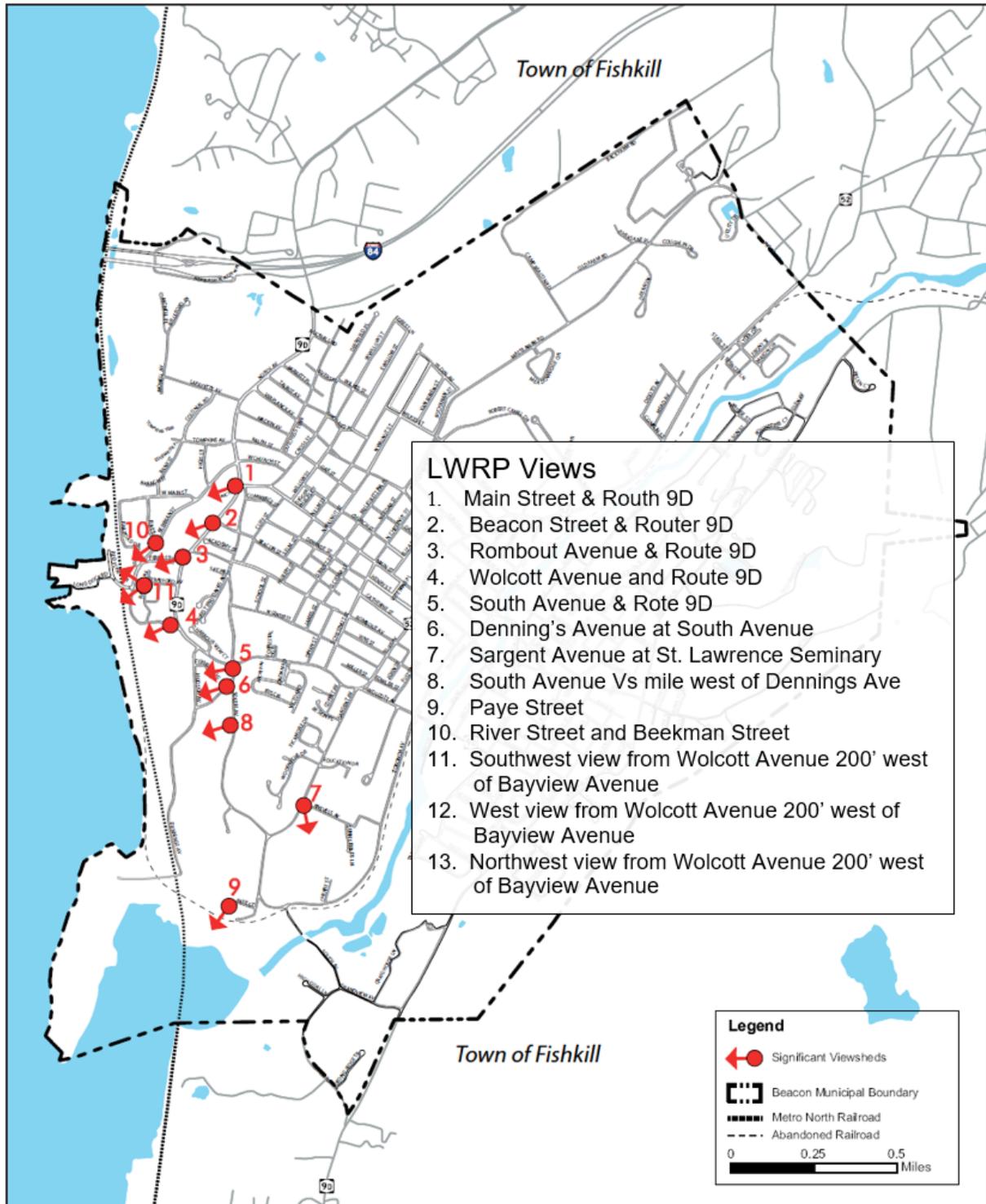


FIGURE 7-4: SIGNIFICANT VIEWS

Appendix D: Properties Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places

139 Main St., Beacon	Norbeth Hall Assc Inc - 217 Main St
143 Main St., Beacon	Norbeth Hall Assoc Inc - 219 Main St
162 Main St., Beacon	Norbeth Hall Assoc Inc. - 215 Main St
164 Main St., Beacon	Nuccitell Comm - 169-173 Main St
167 Main St., Beacon	Nuccitelli Commercial - 153-155 Main St
181-183 Main St., Beacon	Overby Apts - 142 Main St
219-221 Main St., Beacon	Peter C. Dubois House - 36 Slocum Rd
Acosta Commercial - 163-65 Main St	Planners Commercial - 184 Main St
Alvarez Comm - 157-161 Main St	Reformed Dutch Church of Fishkill Landing - 1113 Wolcott Ave
Beacon Fire And Hose - 57 East Main St	Romano Commercial - 177-79 Main St
Brett, Madam Catharyna, Homestead - 50 Van Nydeck Ave	Shebanie Commercial - 143-145 Main St
Cahn Commercial - 172 Main St	Smith Commercial - 149 Main St
Charkaus Commercial - 197-199 Main St	Sonnak Commercial - 186-188 Main St
Christopher - 182 Main St	Sonnak Commercial - 190 Main St
Dewindt/Bogargus House - 16 Tompkins Ave	St Lukes Church - Wolcott Ave
Dondero Block - 174-178 Main St	Star Of Bethlehem Church - 139-141 Main St
Eustatia residence	Tioronda Bridge
Faison Commercial - 192 Main St	Tomasi Commercial - 164-66 Main St
Galaburda Commercial - 158-60 Main St	Trifilo Commercial - 193 Main St
Howland Circulating Library - 477 Main St	Trifilo Commercial - 195 Main St
Jajaque Commercial - 201-11 Main St	Trinity Methodist Church (Former) - 8 Mattie Cooper Square
Knapp Commercial - 180 Main St	United States Post Office Of Beacon - 369 Main St
Kranz Commercial - 150 Main St	Vacant - 151 Main St
Luciani Commercial - 213 Main St	Vacant - 152 1/2 Main St
Mt Beacon Incline Railroad - Howland Ave	Vacant - 152 Main St
Nabisco Carton Making And Printing Plant - 125 Beekman St	Vacant - 175 Main St
Nicholson Apts - 131 Main St	Valentine Commercial - 144-146 Main St
Nicholson Apts - 133-37 Main St	

Appendix E: Image Credits*

Cover Photo

Image Source for Cultural Landscape, Macro Landscape, and Micro Landscape:
<http://www.streetadvisor.com/beacon-dutchess-county-new-york>

Image Source for Landmark: <http://www.alittlebeaconblog.com/blog//2015/04/tbt-howland-cultural-center-as-howland.html>

Community Profile

Image Source: <http://www.hvillustrated.com/tag/sunset-spot/>

History of Beacon

Image Source for Incline Railway:
<http://www.funimag.com/photoblog/index.php/articles/us-the-great-era-of-lost-american-funiculars/>

Image Source for Dia: Beacon Exhibit: <http://www.thefrisky.com/2015-06-19/local-travel-19-places-to-visit-in-the-northeast-this-summer/diabeacon/>

Existing Open Space & Historic Sites

Image Source for Long Dock Park: <http://www.hvillustrated.com/long-dock-park-beacon/>

Image Source for Madam Brett Park: <http://www.hvillustrated.com/madam-brett-park-beacon/>

Image Source for Howland Cultural Center:
<http://www.alittlebeaconblog.com/blog//2015/04/tbt-howland-cultural-center-as-howland.html>

Image Source for Beacon Fire and Hose: Victoria Neenan

Image Source for Eustasia: Victoria Neenan

Identifying Scenic Resources

Image Source for Cultural Landscape, Macro Landscape, and Micro Landscape:
<http://www.streetadvisor.com/beacon-dutchess-county-new-york>

Image Source for Landmark: <http://www.alittlebeaconblog.com/blog//2015/04/tbt-howland-cultural-center-as-howland.html>

*Images are identified by section

