

POSSIBLE CONSERVATION STRATEGIES FOR BRISTOL

Overview

A Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) lays out the long-term vision for the physical, economic, and social development of a community. As Bristol updates the 2000 POCD, the discussion of possible strategies for the City's future will be organized around three themes:

- **Conservation Strategies** - what the City might consider preserving, protecting, or enhancing in order to promote the public health, safety, and welfare.
- **Development Strategies** – how the City might want to guide growth and change in order to promote the public health, safety, and welfare.
- **Infrastructure Strategies** – the services and facilities the City might want to have to promote its overall conservation and development goals and promote the public health, safety, and welfare.

This booklet is intended to promote discussion of possible “conservation strategies” for Bristol. This booklet summarizes “conservation strategies” from the 2000 POCD and suggests some additional topics for discussion.

“Conservation is a state of harmony between [people] and land.”

Aldo Leopold
Environmentalist

Natural Resources



Open Space



Undeveloped Land



Cultural Resources



Historic Resources



Community Character



Possible Natural Resource Strategies

2000 POCD

Overview (from 2000 POCD)

... many communities seek to identify and protect those features of the natural environment that help define the character of the community or make it a unique place.

This chapter examines the array of ... conservation areas ... and prominent physical features that ... distinguish [Bristol's] natural environment. The chapter also seeks to address the "conservation" component of the Plan of Conservation and Development by encouraging ... the protection of its environmentally significant and sensitive areas.

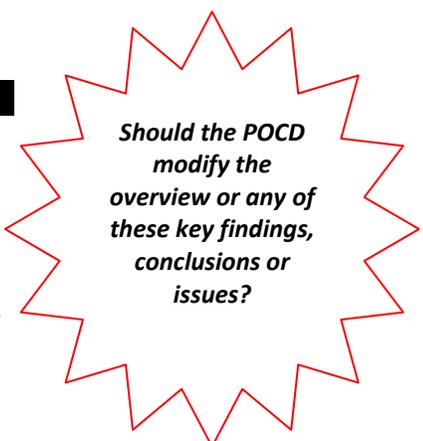
In Bristol's 2000 POCD, the topic of "Natural Resources" was included as part of Chapter 8 – Parks and Recreation, Open Space and Environment.

There were some "Natural Resource" recommendations included in Chapter 11 – Future Land Use Plan

Key Findings, Conclusions and Issues (from 2000 POCD)

The following unique natural features distinguish the city:

- **The** most prominent topographical features are Hurley Hill, which separates downtown Bristol from Forestville, Chippen Hill, located in the northwest corner of the city, and South Mountain, located in south-central Bristol.
- As it flows east through the entire city, the Pequabuck River – with few exceptions – is largely inaccessible to the public, making it one of Bristol's most under-utilized natural resources.
- Bristol is home to a unique geological formation known as "The Hoppers," which is located within a 200-acre open space parcel surrounding Birge Pond. "The Hoppers" is local terminology that refers to huge kettle holes formed during the Ice Age 12,000 years ago.



***Should the POCD
modify the
overview or any of
these key findings,
conclusions or
issues?***

These features have influenced Bristol's built environment, are important environmental resources for the city, and provide additional open space and recreational opportunities.

Local land conservation efforts, led in large part by the Bristol Regional Environmental Center, have been very significant in recent years, particularly in the area of South Mountain. Within recent years, the Center, the Jacklin Rod and Gun Club, and the Bristol Fish and Game Club have all acquired significant properties in this part of the city.

GOAL

Protect and maintain the quality of the city's watercourses, groundwater, air and environmentally sensitive lands.

Policies:

1. Protect the city's natural resources through land development controls, acquisition, and other preservation techniques.
2. Recognize the importance of the Pequabuck River as a significant natural asset to the community.
3. Carefully control development, especially in environmentally sensitive areas, which could result in damage to the land and environment.
4. Protect the quality of ~~potable public~~ surface water and groundwater ~~supplies by~~ controlling the use and development of land and regulating activities that pose a risk to ~~watersheds and aquifers~~ water quality. (from FLUP chapter)
5. Discourage development on steep slopes, ridgelines and in wetlands.
6. Encourage the preservation of South Mountain as an environmentally sensitive area.
7. Encourage energy-efficient patterns of development and land use, the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy, and energy conservation.
8. Recognize Bristol's sand and gravel deposits as a valuable and necessary resource, but carefully regulate their extraction. (from FLUP chapter)
9. Continue to carefully manage activities in flood-prone areas.
10. Seek to implement better storm water drainage approaches (such as "low impact development" practices) as appropriate, to help address water quality and flooding issues.
11. Protect the city's natural resources, unique geological and archeological sites and areas of unique natural beauty through acquisition, land development controls, and other preservation techniques

Recommendations:

12. Improve public awareness of the Pequabuck River as ~~an open space and recreational~~ a community asset.
13. Encourage the adoption of ridgeline protection regulations to minimize the visual and environmental impacts of new development on and along ridgetops.
14. Consider implementing "low impact development" (LID) approaches in Bristol as part of both public and private activities.
15. Consider removing impediments to LID and consider adopting regulations to encourage or require LID.

Is this goal appropriate?

Should it be modified?

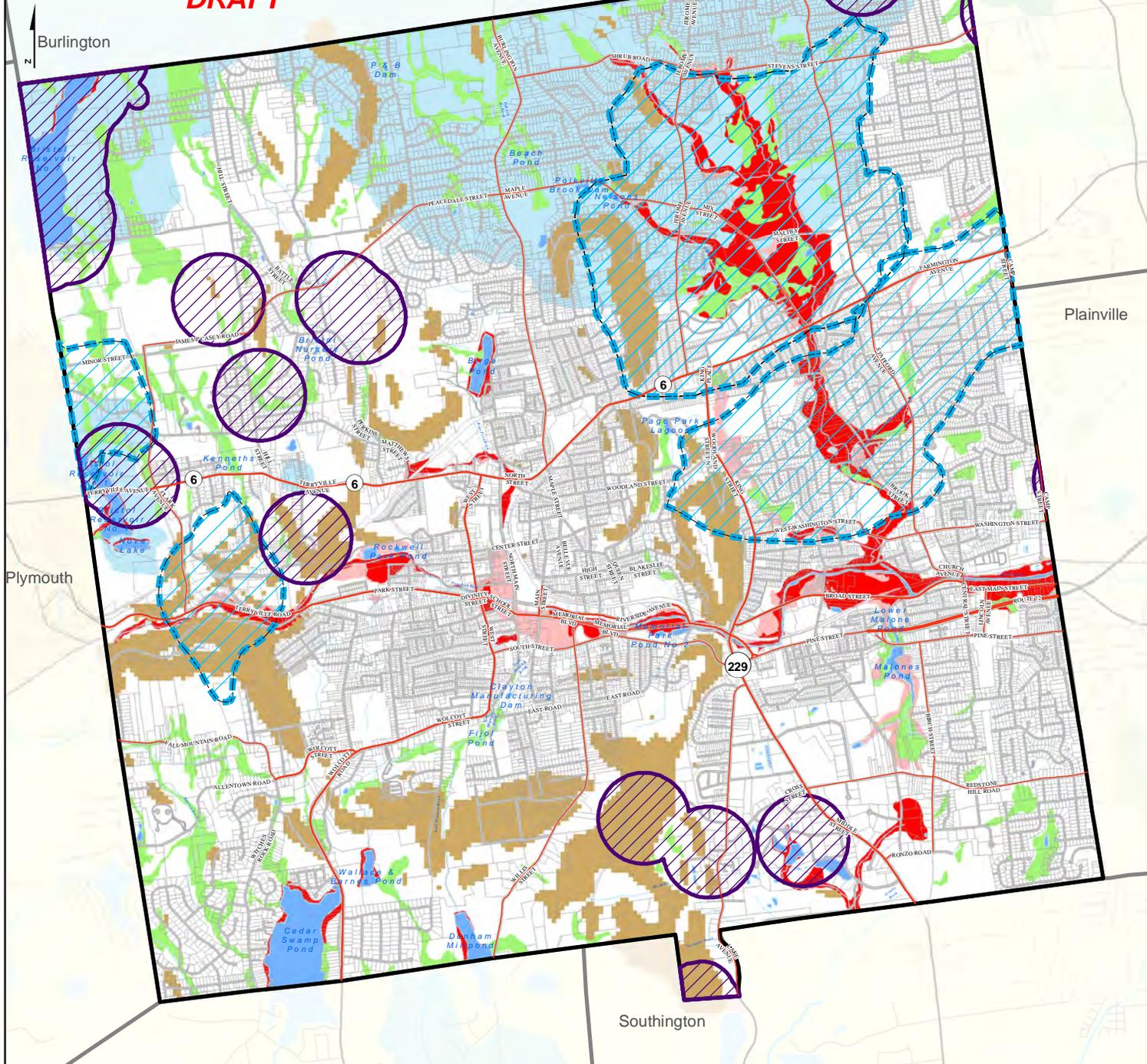
Are these policies and recommendations appropriate?

Should they be further modified?

Natural Features

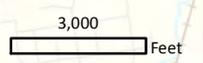
Bristol, CT

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Legend

- Natural Diversity Database Site
- Aquifer Protection Areas
- Slopes > 15%
- Water
- Inland Wetland Soils
- 100-year Floodplain
- 500-year Floodplain
- Public Water Supply Watershed Area



Possible Open Space Strategies

2000 POCD

In Bristol's 2000 POCD, the topic of "Open Space" was included as part of Chapter 8 – Parks and Recreation, Open Space and Environment.

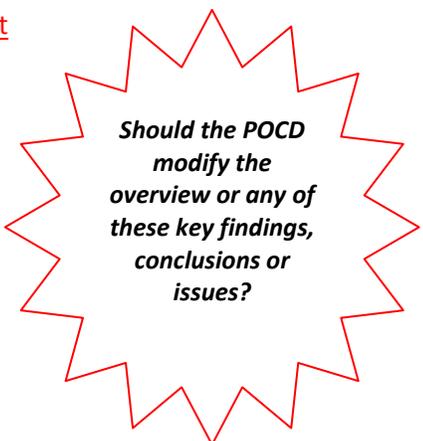
Overview (from 2000 POCD)

This chapter examines the array of ... open spaces

Key Findings, Conclusions and Issues (from 2000 POCD)

In the 2000 Plan of Conservation and Development, both public and private open space and recreational resources ~~thus account~~ accounted for ~~almost about~~ about 2,400 acres, or about 14.1 percent, of Bristol's land area:

	Acres	
Public Open Spaces		609
• City-owned parks, open spaces and recreation areas	560	
• State-owned open space area	49	
Semi-Public Open Space		438
• Bristol Regional Environmental Center	402	
• Scout Camp	36	
Water Supply Watershed Lands		738
• Bristol Water Department	430	
• New Britain Water Department	308	
Schools and Facilities		194
• City school sites and facilities	179	
• Private school sites and facilities	15	
Private Clubs		403
• Private golf courses	207	
• Fish and game clubs	196	
Other Private Open Space		24
• Subdivision Open Space	24	
		2,406



There are several walking and hiking trails located in the city, managed and maintained by the mostly volunteer Southern Tunxis Maintenance Crew.

The southwest, northeast and northwest sections of the city lack formal neighborhood parks.

Local land conservation efforts, led in large part by the Bristol Regional Environmental Center, have been very significant in recent years, particularly in the area of South Mountain. Within recent years, the Center, the Jacklin Rod and Gun Club, and the Bristol Fish and Game Club have all acquired significant properties in this part of the city.

GOAL

Provide ... adequate open space for all city residents.

Is this goal appropriate?

Should it be modified?

Policies:

1. Acquire land for open space ... as it becomes available, in locations recommended in the Plan.
 - a. Recognize the need to preserve the environmentally sensitive areas of the Hoppers; encourage the acquisition of additional areas for both preservation and passive/active recreational purposes at the Hoppers; encourage greater utilization of the Hoppers for both passive and active recreational purposes.
 - b. Encourage the preservation of South Mountain as an environmentally sensitive area.
 - c. Identify and support opportunities to enhance the use of the Pequabuck River corridor for both open space and recreational purposes. *(from NR Chapter)*
2. Encourage the establishment of bikeways and/or hiking trails within the city.
3. Give attention to the quality, size and location of open space parcels proposed through the subdivision process to assure that they become assets and not liabilities.
4. Where appropriate, consider utilization of the "fee-in-lieu-of-open space" provisions of the Subdivision Regulations.

Are these policies and recommendations appropriate?

Should they be further modified?

Recommendations:

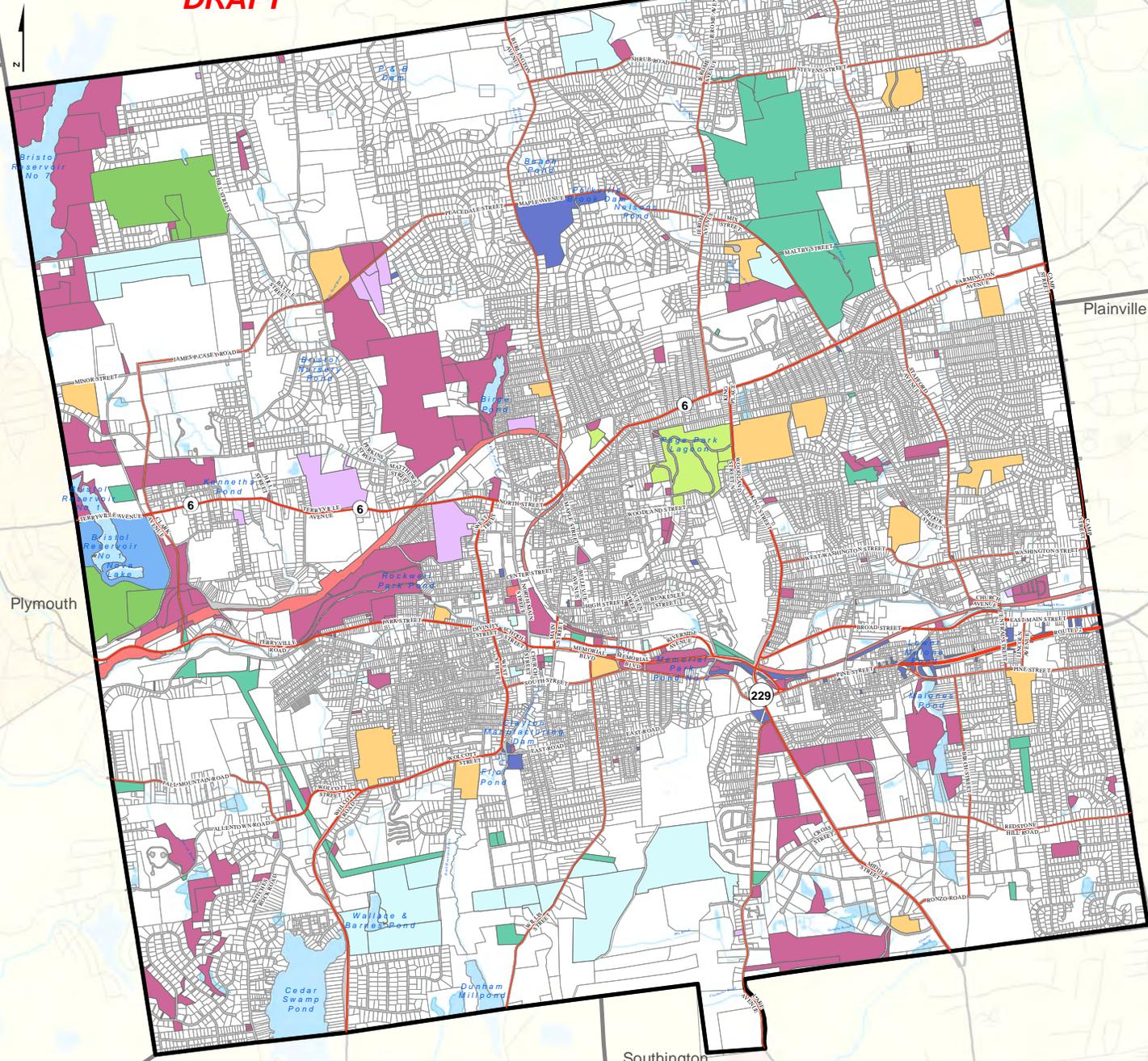
5. Establish priorities for the **maintenance** of ... open space, to enrich both the public's current enjoyment of them and their long-term cost effectiveness.
6. Establish a dedicated fund for the acquisition of land for ... open space, so that opportunities for acquisition can be acted upon expeditiously and/or used to match State or federal funding programs.
7. Rezone all significant open space and watershed lands in the city to the lowest density residential category.
8. Increase public access to the Pequabuck River.

Open Space

Bristol, CT

DRAFT

Burlington



Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Federal Land / Facilities |  Golf Facility |
|  State Land |  Municipal Land / Facilities |
|  Cemetery |  Recreation |
|  Charitable |  Public Utility |
|  Educational Land / Facilities |  Water Supply |

3,000 Feet

Possible Undeveloped Land Strategies

2000 POCD

The topic of “Undeveloped Land” was not included in Bristol’s 2000 POCD.

Overview

Section 12-107a of the Connecticut General Statutes provides that:

... it is in the public interest to prevent the forced conversion of farm land, forest land, open space land and maritime heritage land to more intensive uses as the result of economic pressures caused by the assessment thereof for purposes of property taxation at values incompatible with their preservation as such farm land, forest land, open space land and maritime heritage land

Key Findings, Conclusions and Issues

As provided by State statute, Bristol assesses some land within the community as:

- **Farm** - any tract or tracts of land, including woodland and wasteland, constituting a farm unit, and
- **Forest** - any tract or tracts of land aggregating ***twenty-five acres or more*** (emphasis added) in area bearing tree growth that conforms to the forest stocking, distribution and condition standards established by the State Forester

The designation of land as farm or forest is by the assessor subject to statutory criteria.

Under the statutes, there is another program available which is essentially a “local option” assessment program. At the present time, it does not appear that Bristol makes use of the “open space” assessment category. Open space land is defined as “... any area of land, ... the preservation or restriction of the use of which would:

- (A) maintain and enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources,
- (B) protect natural streams or water supply,
- (C) promote conservation of soils, wetlands, beaches or tidal marshes,
- (D) enhance the value to the public of abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations or sanctuaries or other open spaces,
- (E) enhance public recreation opportunities,
- (F) preserve historic sites, or
- (G) promote orderly urban or suburban development

Since establishment of an “open space” assessment program must be recommended in the POCD, the Planning Commission should discuss whether they wish to recommend such a program.

Should the POCD recommend the establishment of an “open space” assessment program?

POSSIBLE GOAL

Encourage the preservation of undeveloped lands within residentially zoned areas.

Possible Policies:

1. Encourage the establishment an open space assessment program within the city in order to encourage the preservation of residentially-zoned parcels of land less than 25 acres.

Possible Recommendations:

2. Establish an open space assessment program.

Is this goal appropriate?

Should it be modified?

Are these policies and recommendations appropriate?

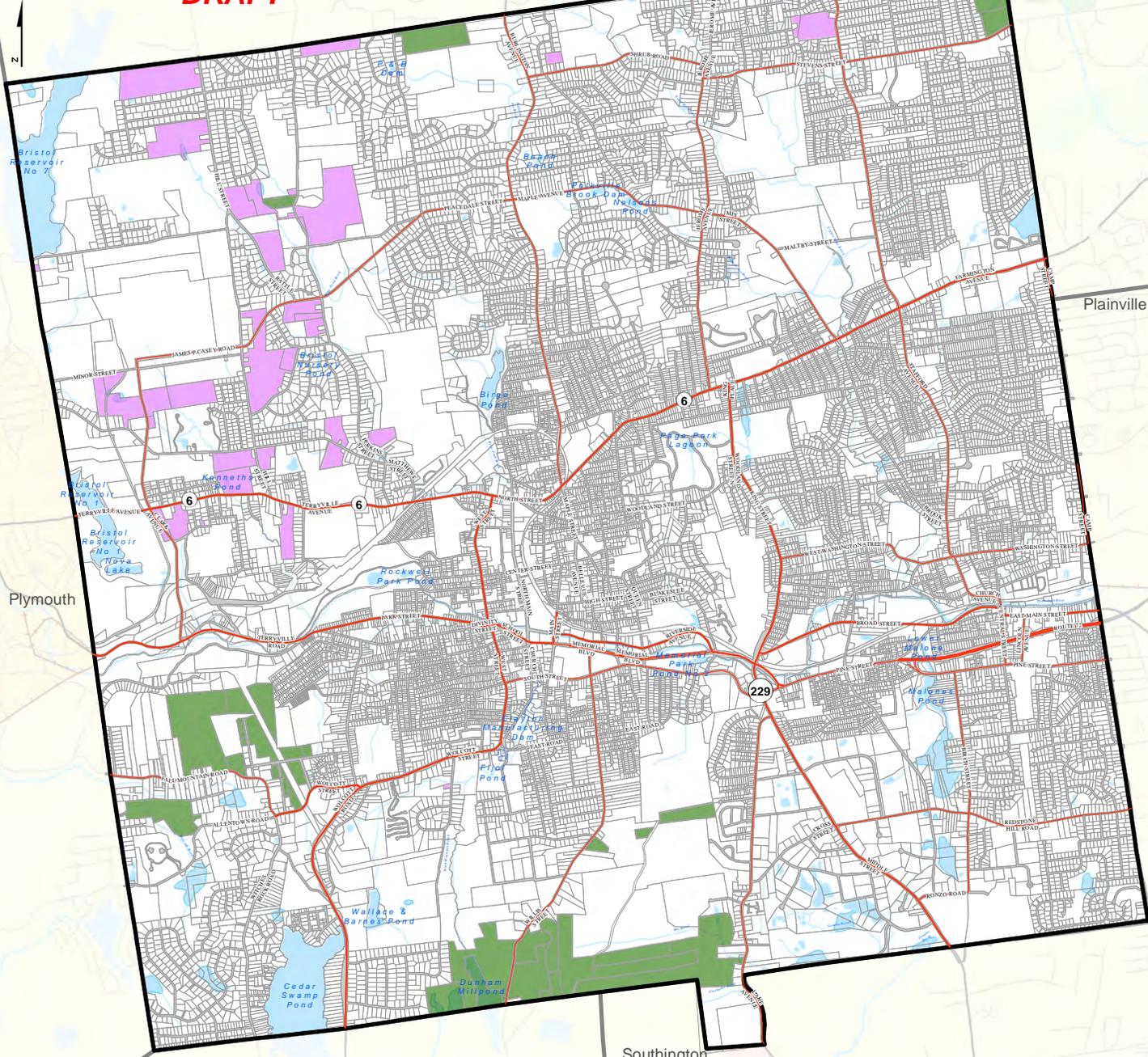
Should they be further modified?

PA 490

Bristol, CT

DRAFT

Burlington



Plymouth

Plainville

Wolcott

Southington

Legend

-  490 Farm
-  490 Forest

3,000

Feet

Possible Historic Resource Strategies

2000 POCD

Overview (from 2000 POCD)

The historic ... resources of a community ... contribute significantly to the community's quality of life. They often serve as a reminder of and provide a link to its social, economic and architectural past. They help to define the character of the community ... They are a manifestation of the richness of the community's heritage and the diversity of its residents, both past and present.

This chapter highlights Bristol's existing historic ... resources and recommends several means by which they might be preserved, enhanced and otherwise supported.

Key Findings, Conclusions and Issues (from 2000 POCD)

Due to its rich history, Bristol has a variety of historic resources which add to the overall character of the community.

Bristol has several listings on the National Register of Historic Places. While many people believe this to be the pinnacle of historic preservation initiatives, it is largely a ceremonial designation which simply identifies buildings and areas important in the history of the country or representative of a particular era.

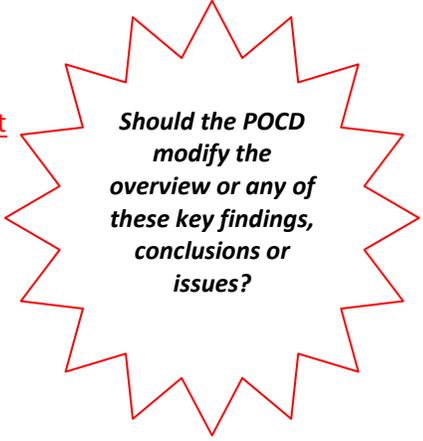
Individual Properties Listed On The National Register (to be updated)

- Beleden House – 50 Bellevue Avenue
- Bristol Girls Club – 47 Upton Street
- Ernest R. Burwell House – 161 Grove Street
- Copper Ledges – Founders Drive
- Chimney Crest – Founders Drive
- Forestville Passenger Station – Central Street
- William I. Jerome House – 367 Jerome Avenue
- Marlborough House – 226 Grove Street
- Rockwell Park
- Terry-Hayden House – 125 Middle Street
- Townsend G. Treadway House – 100 Oakland Street

Areas Recognized On The National Register (to be updated)

Federal Hill – Designated in 1986 with 290 structures, this original colonial town center was the civic and religious center of Bristol since the early 1700's. Today Federal Hill includes exceptional structures of Colonial and Greek Revival, Georgian, Italianate and Victorian styles. The mansions from Bristol's era as the clock-making center of the country and other large residences attributed to renowned architects such as Joel Case contribute to the rich character of the neighborhood.

In Bristol's 2000 POCD, the topic of "Historic Resources" was included as part of Chapter 9 – Historic and Cultural Resources.



Should the POCD modify the overview or any of these key findings, conclusions or issues?

Main Street – Designated in 1995 with 18 contributing structures, this district is located along the east side of Main Street between School and High Streets and along the west end of Prospect Street. The Art Deco-style Lorraine Building, the 1870 Mitchell Block, the 1900 railroad bridge, the Bristol National Bank and the Bristol Trust Company are among its significant structures.

Endee Manor – Designated in 1996, this residential neighborhood consists of 103 single-family and multi-family frame houses constructed in 1916 and 1917 by the New Departure Manufacturing Company as housing for its workers. Due in part to its protected location between the Boston & Maine railroad line, West Cemetery and Rockwell Park, Endee Manor retains much of its original character.

South End – To be updated.

Listings on the National Register are automatically listed on the State Register of Historic Places. (State Register to be evaluated for additional listings)

In addition, there is a local historic district in the “Overlook” section of the Federal Hill neighborhood where building construction or modifications in view from a public street or sidewalk are subject to review and approval by a Historic District Commission (established in 2007).

In addition, Bristol has a "Historic Resources Inventory", completed in 1979, which is a comprehensive survey of 620 properties in the city identified as having historical or architectural value and thus potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

The urban renewal activities of the 1960's severely altered the physical fabric of the center of Bristol. With the leveling and redevelopment of much of the city's downtown and the spread of strip commercial development along the eastern half of Route 6, Bristol lost some of its unique character and charm.

Public awareness and education regarding Bristol's history and its ... historical resources are crucial to their existence.

Three types of structures that represent an important part of the city's historical and physical fabric are most at risk of being lost to inappropriate renovation or to destruction:

- large, architecturally and/or historically significant single-family residences;
- older, multi-story brick industrial buildings; and
- multi-story, multi-family residential structures that characterize the city's older, more densely developed neighborhoods, especially the West End.

GOAL

Maintain and improve those aspects of the city's historic ... resources important to its quality of life.

Is this goal appropriate?

Should it be modified?

Policies:

1. Protect the city's historically and architecturally significant structures through acquisition, land development controls, and other preservation techniques.
2. Promote greater public awareness and education of Bristol's history and its ... historical resources.
3. Require that new infill development **in historic neighborhoods** be compatible with existing development (e.g., in terms of scale, architecture, density, mass and proportion).
4. Support nomination of additional historic districts to the National Register of Historic Places.
5. Support nomination of additional individual buildings and/or properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

Recommendations:

6. Increase the publicity about the city's ... historic resources using a variety of promotional techniques such as neighborhood walking guides; informational plaques to identify historic buildings or areas; schedules of community events of interest to both tourists and residents; special events days, festivals and parades highlighting Bristol's heritage; and educational programs.
7. Utilize a variety of techniques to preserve and enhance Bristol's historical resources, such as:
 - a. local historic districts and properties (Sec. 7-147b through Sec. 7-147v of the Connecticut General Statutes),
 - b. village districts (Sec. 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes) and
 - c. the Main Street Program (established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation).

Are these policies and recommendations appropriate?

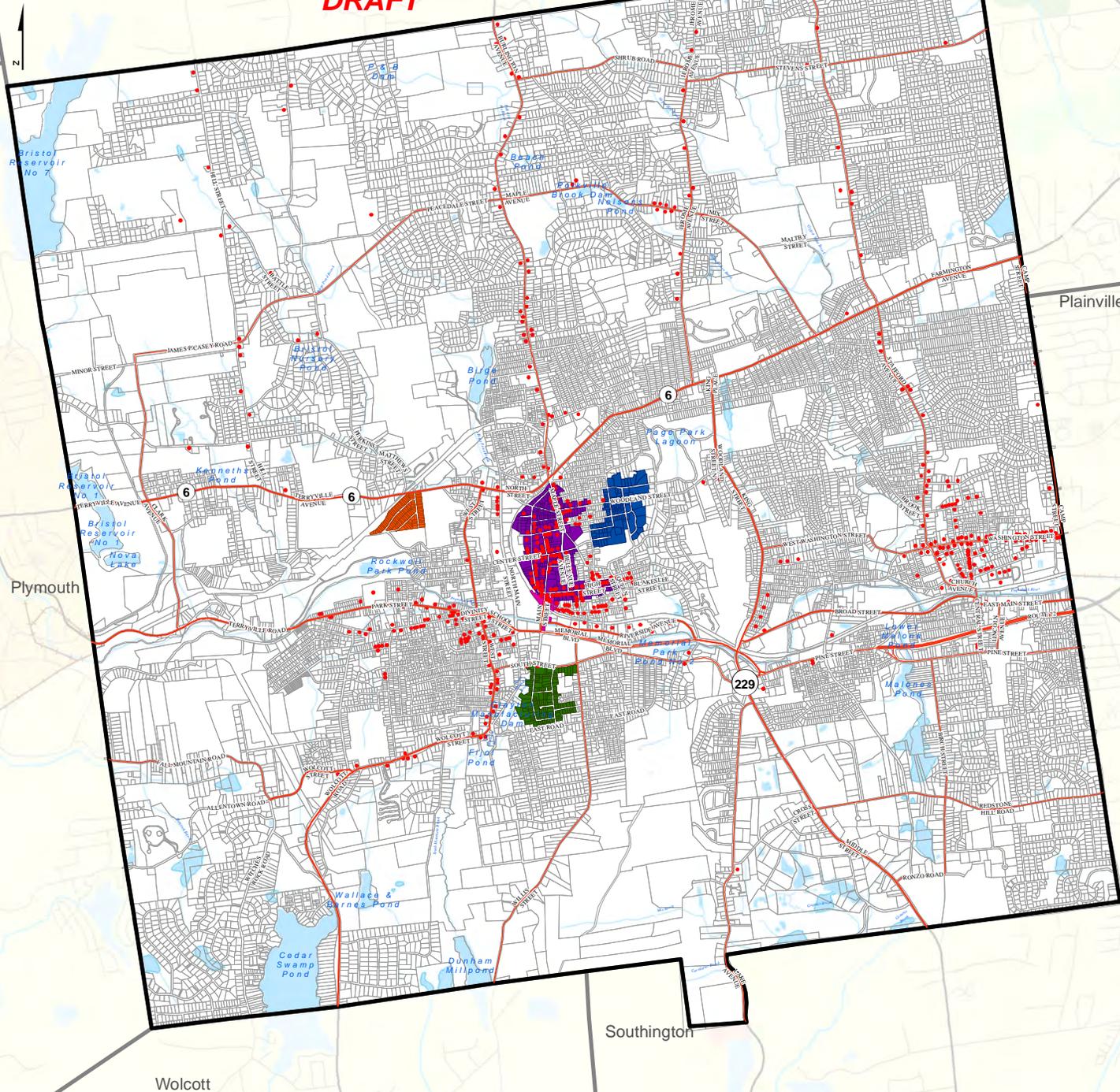
Should they be further modified?

Historic Resources

Bristol, CT

DRAFT

Burlington



Legend

- Historic Resources Inventory Property
- Historic Districts on National Register**
 - Endee Manor Historic District
 - Federal Hill Historic District
 - Main Street Historic District
 - South End Historic District
- Local Historic District**
 - Overlook Historic District

3,000 Feet

Possible Cultural Resource Strategies

2000 POCD

Overview (from 2000 POCD)

The ... cultural resources of a community – e.g., its museums and monuments, its arts facilities and programs, its array of community organizations – contribute significantly to the community’s quality of life. They also contribute to Bristol’s vitality, civic pride and uniqueness.

This chapter highlights Bristol’s ... cultural resources and recommends several means by which they might be preserved, enhanced and otherwise supported.

Key Findings, Conclusions and Issues (from 2000 POCD)

Bristol is home to a variety of community, cultural and recreational facilities:

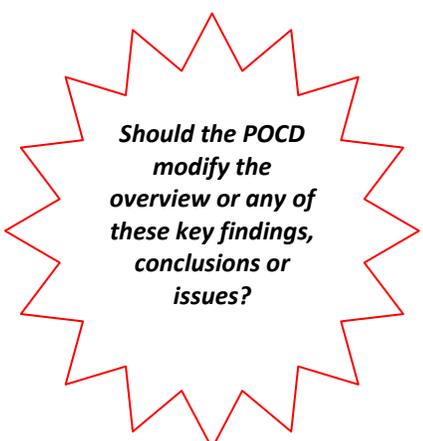
1. **Lake Compounce**– the oldest continuously operating amusement park in the United States
2. **ESPN World Headquarters** - a global cable and satellite television channel that focuses on sports-related programming
3. **A. Bartlett Giamatti Eastern Regional Little League Center** – the regional headquarters for Little League and other events
4. **American Clock and Watch Museum** –over 3,000 clocks and watches, as well as a large library dedicated to the preservation of historic clocks
5. **New England Carousel Museum** – houses one of the nation’s largest collections of antique carousel art
6. **Bristol Historical Society / Museum** – contains a variety of exhibits related to Bristol history including local companies, sports memorabilia, military memorabilia, and period furniture, clothing, , toys and tools
7. **Witch’s Dungeon Horror Movie Museum** – houses legendary horror films and their original props and costumes
8. **Barnes Nature Center** – provider of environmental educational programs
9. **Imagine Nation** - a hands-on, interactive children's museum

There are other community and cultural activities within the city that currently do not have a permanently designated space or facility. These include the Bristol Symphony Orchestra, the Bristol Art League, and the Bristol Community Theatre.

Public awareness and education regarding Bristol’s ... cultural ... resources are crucial to their existence. Increasing the publicity of the city's attractions may generate more usage, promote preservation of ... community resources, and encourage new cultural or community facilities.

The contribution of Bristol's cultural and community organizations to the quality of life of the city is significant, and attention should be given to their need for appropriate space for meetings, performances, displays and administration.

In Bristol’s 2000 POCD, the topic of “Cultural Resources” was included as part of Chapter 9 – Historic and Cultural Resources.



Should the POCD modify the overview or any of these key findings, conclusions or issues?

GOAL

Maintain and improve those aspects of the city's ... cultural resources important to its quality of life.

Policies:

1. Encourage as necessary the establishment, maintenance and/or growth of programs and facilities that address the cultural needs and desires of the community.
2. Promote greater public awareness and education of Bristol's ... cultural ... resources.

Recommendations:

3. Increase the publicity about the city's cultural ... resources using a variety of promotional techniques such as schedules of community events of interest to both tourists and residents; special events days, festivals and parades highlighting Bristol's heritage; and educational programs.
4. Establish a centrally located, multi-purpose facility to provide performance, display, meeting and administrative space for the city's cultural and community organizations.

Is this goal appropriate?

Should it be modified?

Are these policies and recommendations appropriate?

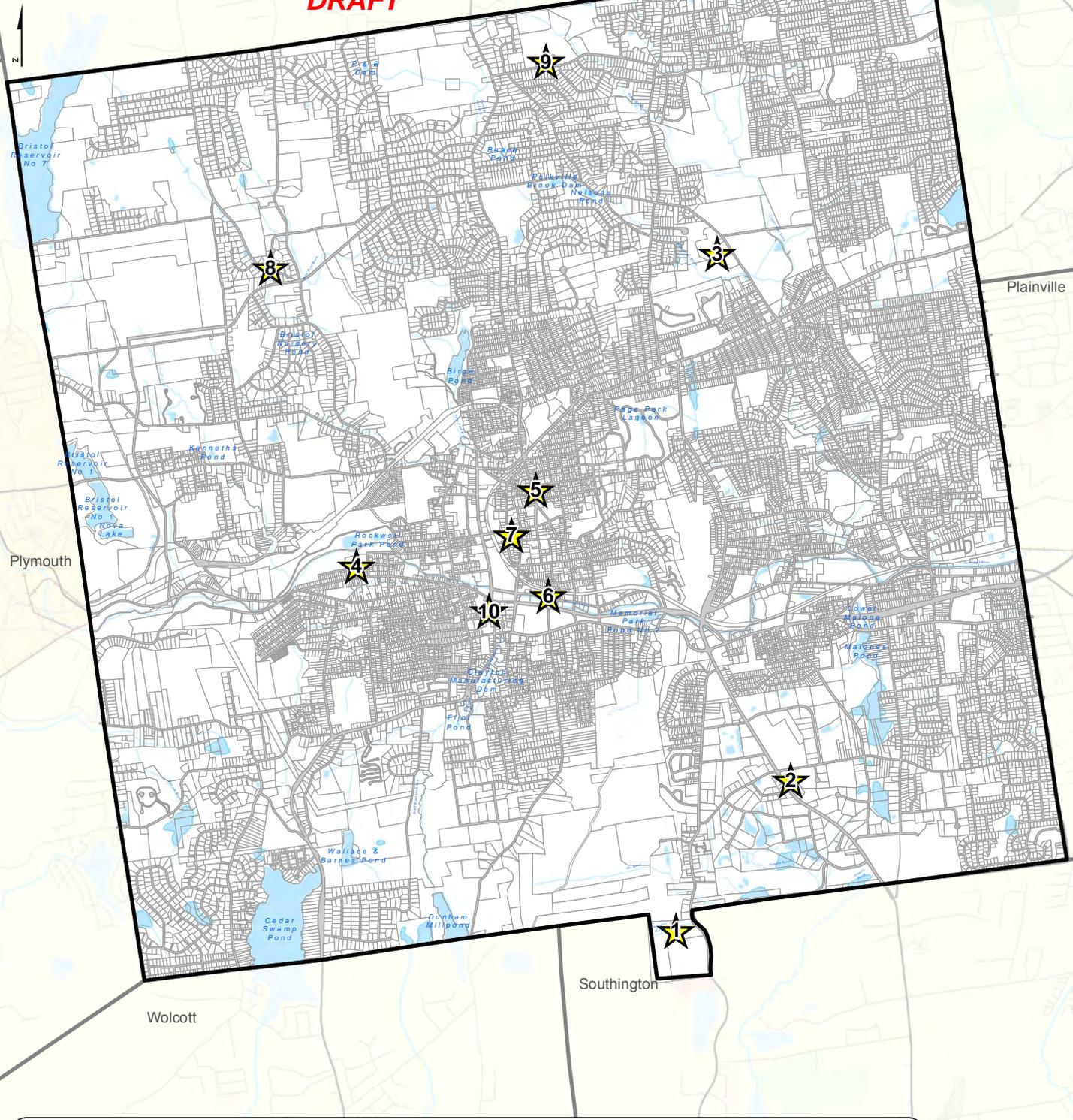
Should they be further modified?

Cultural Resources

Bristol, CT

DRAFT

Burlington



Legend



Cultural Resources

1 - Lake Compounce Amusement Park

2 - ESPN World Headquarters

3 - Eastern Regional Little League Center

4 - Muzzy Field

5 - American Clock and Watch Museum

6 - New England Carousel Museum

7 - Bristol Historical Society Museum

8 - Witch's Dungeon Horror Movie Museum

9 - Barnes Nature Center

10 - Imagine Nation

3,000

Feet

Possible Community Character Strategies

2000 POCD

the topic of “Community Character” was not included as a separate chapter in Bristol’s 2000 POCD.

Overview

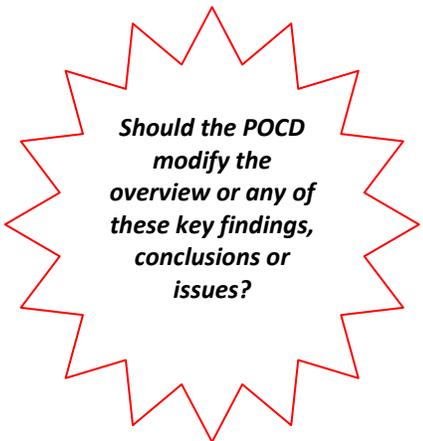
Community character is an important concept to many people yet the term really has no accepted definition.

In the broadest sense, community character includes those features that support people’s perception of their community, enhances its overall appearance, and/or contributes to the overall quality of life for residents. Community character essentially consists of physical resources that make Bristol special to its residents.

Key Findings, Conclusions and Issues

Community character could include the following topics:

1. Scenic views / areas / roads
2. Scenic hillsides / ridgelines
3. Farms
4. Architectural review / landscaping
5. Community design
6. Community facilities and services
7. Community events (parades, festivals, concerts, etc.)
8. Overall community spirit / pride
9. Community perception / brand
10. Street lighting
11. Underground utilities



***Should the POCD
modify the
overview or any of
these key findings,
conclusions or
issues?***

GOAL

Maintain and improve community character in Bristol.

Policies:

1. Protect the city's ... areas of unique natural beauty through acquisition, land development controls, and other preservation techniques.
2. Promote the "greening" of the city by encouraging the installation of landscaping such as trees and shrubs along city streets, along other public rights-of-way and in public open spaces, and by requiring landscaping in new private developments.

Recommendations:

5. Increase the publicity about the city's cultural ... resources using a variety of promotional techniques such as schedules of community events of interest to both tourists and residents; special events days, festivals and parades highlighting Bristol's heritage; and educational programs.
6. Establish a centrally located, multi-purpose facility to provide performance, display, meeting and administrative space for the city's cultural and community organizations.

Is this goal appropriate?

Should it be modified?

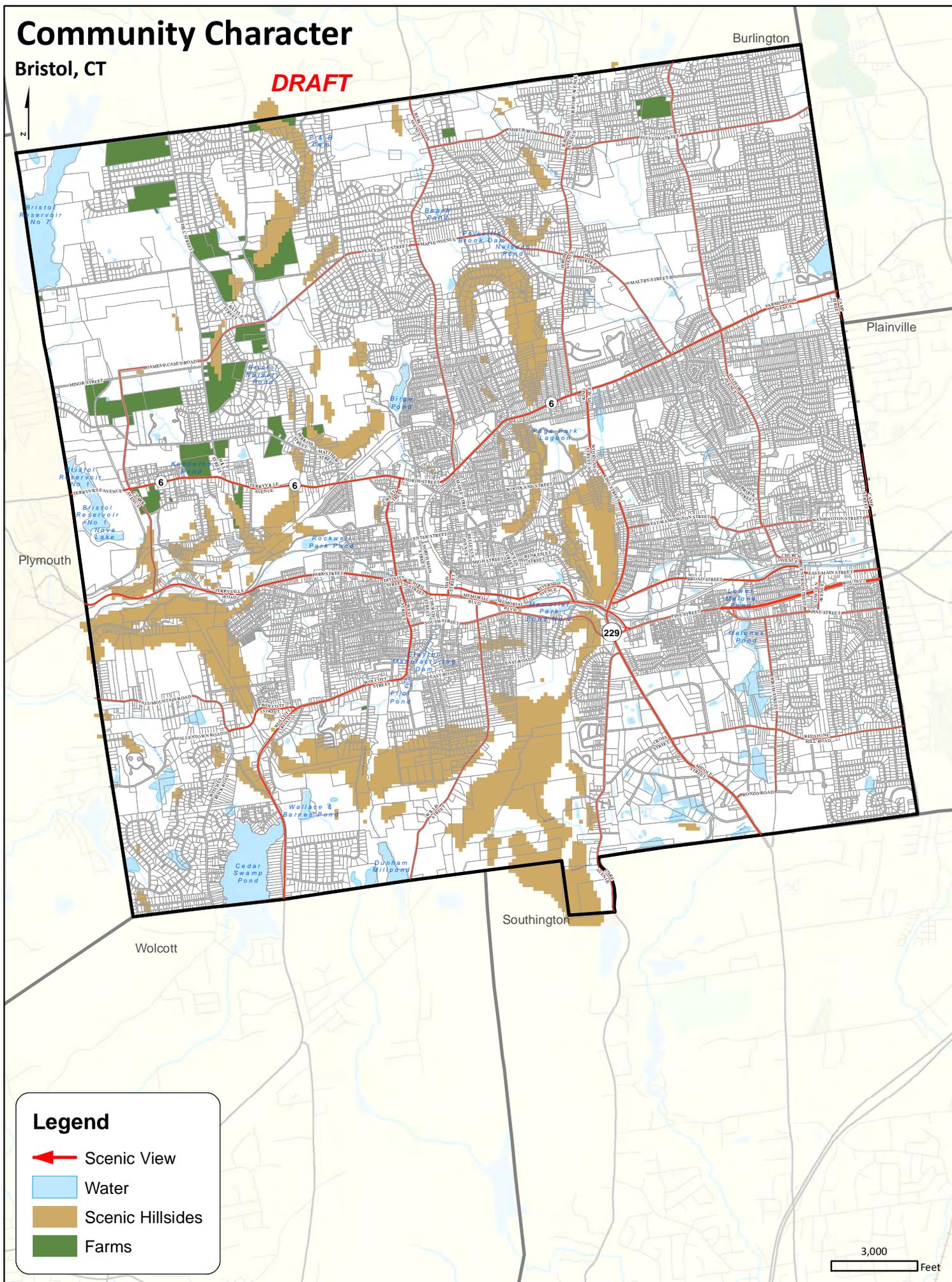
Are these policies and recommendations appropriate?

Should they be further modified?

Community Character

Bristol, CT

DRAFT



Legend

-  Scenic View
-  Water
-  Scenic Hillsides
-  Farms

3,000 Feet

Possible Other Conservation Strategies

For the purposes of a POCD:

- “sustainability” could refer to a philosophy of encouraging activities that allow present generations to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- “resiliency” could refer to the community’s ability to readily recover from sudden changes or adversity.

Possible Sustainability Concepts

1. Promote energy conservation / sustainability
2. Promote water conservation
3. Promote waste reduction / recycling
4. Educate residents about sustainability concepts

Possible Resiliency Concepts

1. Continue to review and improve hazard mitigation plans for recurring events, such as flooding
2. Continue to review and improve emergency preparedness plans (single events) in order to be able to respond to unknown events in the future
3. Maintain emergency response capability
4. Strive to place electrical lines underground as opportunities present themselves
5. Consider establishing “smart grids” and emergency power supplies for some key facilities (shelters, restaurants, gas stations, etc.)

Sustainability



Resiliency



