



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Mark Wujtewicz, Planning Director

DATE: March 10, 2026

TITLE: Staff Report: Zone Map Amendment – Application PL-26-5
IP-1 to I-MF;
140 Waterford Parkway South

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An application has been made pursuant to Section 28.2 of the Zoning Regulations to amend the Zoning Map of the Town of Waterford for property located at 140 Waterford Parkway South. The application for map amendment (PL-26-5) proposes changing the present zone district classification of the parcel from IP-1 (General Industrial Park) to I-MF (Industrial-Multi Family).

The application was received by the Commission on February 10, 2026

The Public Hearing was advertised in The Day on February 24 and March 3, 2026

The date of Public Hearing was March 10, 2026

BACKGROUND

Pertinent Regulations

Connecticut General Statutes

CGS 8-3(a)

Waterford Zoning Regulations

Section 13 – General Industrial Park Zone

Section 16 – Multi-Family Residential Districts (R-MF) (C-MF) (CT-MF) **(I-MF)**

Section 18 – MultiFamily Development

Section 28 – Amendments

DISCUSSION

The applicant proposes to change the zone designation of the parcel designated as 140 Waterford Parkway South located within the IP-1 (General Industrial Park) Zone District to the I-MF (Industrial

Multi Family) Zone District. The parcel is the site of the former Waterford Airport and contains 188.8 acres. The airport ceased operations in 1987. Subsequent to the closing of the airport, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the site for a business park subdivision in 1990 known as Waterford Landing. Partial construction of the infrastructure took place but not completed. The property has remained undeveloped since the abandonment of the work sometime in 1995. A site plan and special permit application for the construction of a concrete products manufacturing facility was submitted in August of 2020 and later withdrawn by the applicant in December of 2020.

The uses that are permitted in the I-MF Zone District include Multi-Family Development in accordance with Section 18 of the Zoning Regulations in addition to all uses that are currently permitted or specially permitted within the IP-1 Zone District.

Pursuant to Section 8-3a of the Connecticut General Statutes, before the Commission acts upon an application to change the zoning map of the Town of Waterford, it must consider whether the amendment being proposed is consistent with the 2012 Waterford Plan of Preservation, Conservation and Development, herein after called the Plan.

The Community Structure Map of the 2012 Plan of Preservation, Conservation and Development identifies areas for Possible Future Mixed Use Nodes (Exhibit 7). The parcel included in the Zone Map Amendment is located within close proximity to two areas identified on the Map. "Mixed Use" for the purposes of the Plan, are residential uses that are combined with nonresidential uses such as commercial, industrial, office or institutional uses. The existing zone district in which these parcels are located is IP-1 (General Industrial Park) District. Residential uses are not permitted within the existing zoning for the parcel. The proposed change to an I-MF (Industrial Multi-Family) District for the area identified in the Proposed Zone Change Plan (Exhibit 8) will allow for the addition of Multi Family Development in an area that is supported by existing multi-family, commercial, business and medical uses.

The proposed addition of the multi-family use to the existing zone also provides for an opportunity to create mixed use and village style development. The inclusion of multifamily development will also increase the opportunities for supporting development that may occur within the areas identified as Future Mixed Use Nodes on the Community Structure Map within close proximity to two Future Mixed Use Node. This is consistent with a stated goal of the Plan by *"Increasing Opportunities for Mixed Use and Village Style Development"*. (page 52)

The area of the proposed zone change is within the existing sewer and water service areas as shown in the Plan. The Plan states that multifamily developments may be considered appropriate in areas where there is adequate infrastructure available. (page 56) Another stated goal in the Plan is to *"Encourage a variety of housing types and densities to meet the housing needs of current and future residents."* The proposed zone map amendment will provide for the opportunity to contribute to a more diverse housing portfolio by allowing Multifamily Development in an area where there is currently adequate infrastructure to support multi-family use. (page 52)

The Jordan Brook watercourse and the FEMA designated floodway surrounding it are considered significant conservation priorities in Waterford. Multifamily development provides for flexibility in siting residential buildings and infrastructure in a way that preserves and protects sensitive natural resources and increases open space opportunities. A stated goal in the Natural Resources chapter of the Plan is to *"Preserve, protect, and enhance natural resources in order to maintain environmental health and support our overall quality of life."* (page 16 – 18)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Based on the information provided, staff recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission find that:

Findings:

1. Application PL-26-5 meets the requirements of Section 28 of the Waterford Zoning Regulations.
2. Application PL-26-5 meets the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 124 §8-3 governing changes of zoning regulations and districts.
3. The proposed Zone Map Amendment is consistent with 2012 Plan of Preservation Conservation and Development in that it is located in close proximity to areas identified in the Plan as Future Mixed Use Nodes that will support and be supported by existing commercial, business and medical uses in the area.
4. The proposed zone map amendment is consistent with a stated goal in the Plan by increasing opportunities for Mixed Use and Village Style Development in areas that contain adequate infrastructure to support the use.
5. Supports a stated goal in the Plan to preserve, protect, and enhance natural resources in order to maintain environmental health and support our overall quality of life by providing for the flexibility in locating residential buildings and infrastructure.
6. The proposed zone map amendment is consistent with the stated goal of the Plan to encourage a variety of housing types and densities to meet the housing needs of current and future residents.

Proposed Motion:

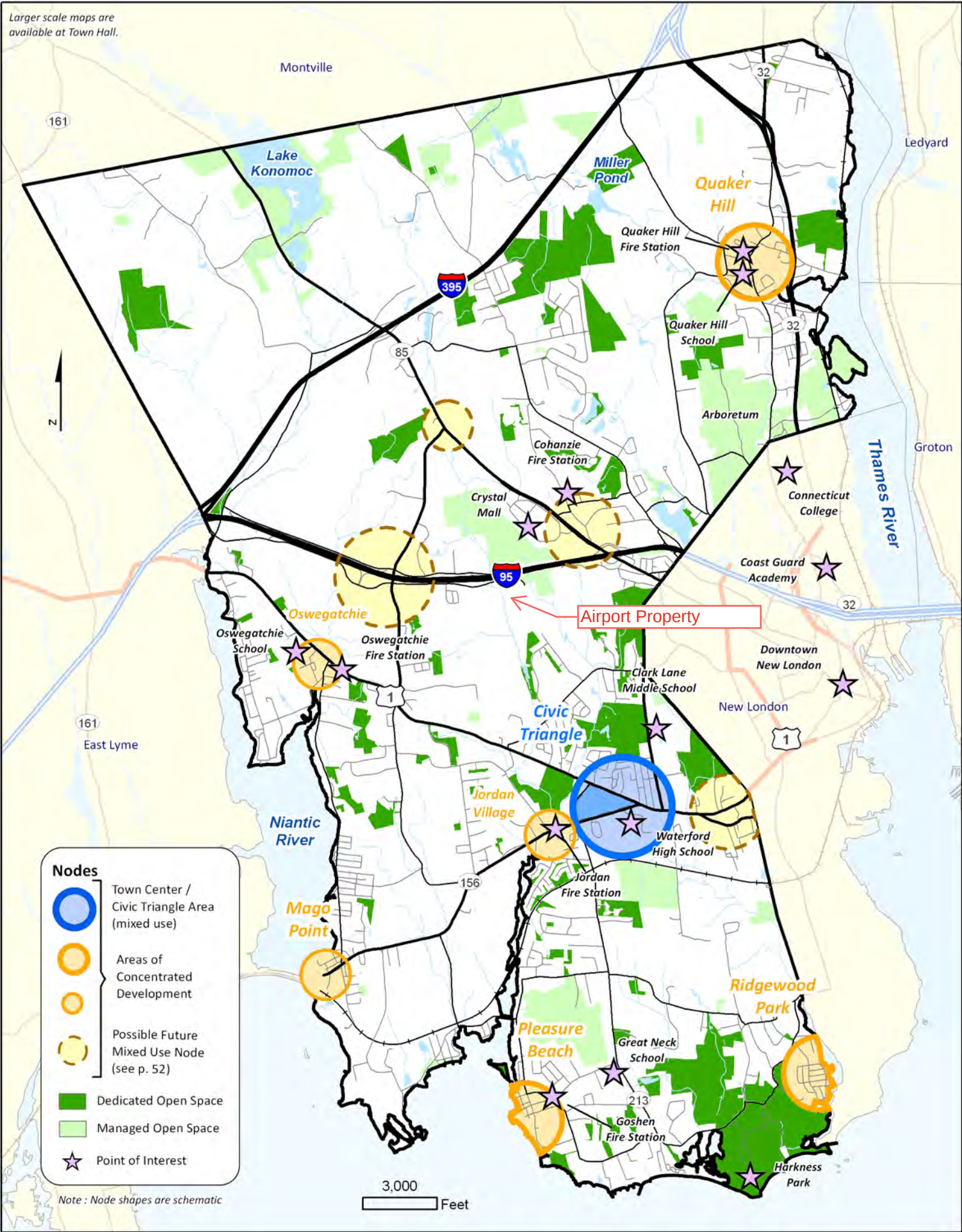
The Commission approve Application PL-26-5 to change the Zone Designation for property located at 140 Waterford Parkway South from IP-1(General Industrial Park) to I-MF (Industrial Multi-Family) and adopt the findings 1 thru 6 of the Staff Report dated March 10, 2026.

Effective Date: April 7, 2026

Community Structure Map

Waterford, CT

Larger scale maps are available at Town Hall.



C. Increase Opportunities For Mixed Use And Village-Style Development

There is growing interest in Connecticut and elsewhere in creating opportunities for “smarter growth.” In general, this philosophy embraces the following principles:

Conservation Concepts	• Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
Development Concepts	• Strengthen and direct development towards existing developed areas • Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place • Mix land uses • Create a range of housing opportunities and choices • Take advantage of compact building design
Infrastructure Concepts	• Provide a variety of transportation choices • Create walkable neighborhoods
Process Concepts	• Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions • Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective

Since these principles can help support community structure and community character, opportunities to implement them should be considered, where appropriate. As has been a basic growth principle in Waterford for some time, such developments should only be located where consistent with the recommendations of this Plan and where infrastructure with adequate capacity exists to support it.

Promoting “smarter growth” could include creating new mixed-use “village-type areas” in locations supported by transit and utility infrastructure where there will be a strong focus on integrating the development within the overall structure of the community and the neighborhood, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment and a strong sense of place.

The term “mixed-use” refers to development devoted to more than one use or purpose on the same property or in the same area. Much development over the past several decades has been single-use on one property and use areas were required to be separated. For the purposes of the Plan, the term “mixed-use” generally means residential uses in combination with commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other land uses.

D. Consider Allowing Small-Scale Neighborhood Businesses Where Appropriate

One way to begin supporting mixed use “village-type” areas might be to allow *small-scale* business uses (such as a small neighborhood “general store”) in areas of concentrated development provided that:

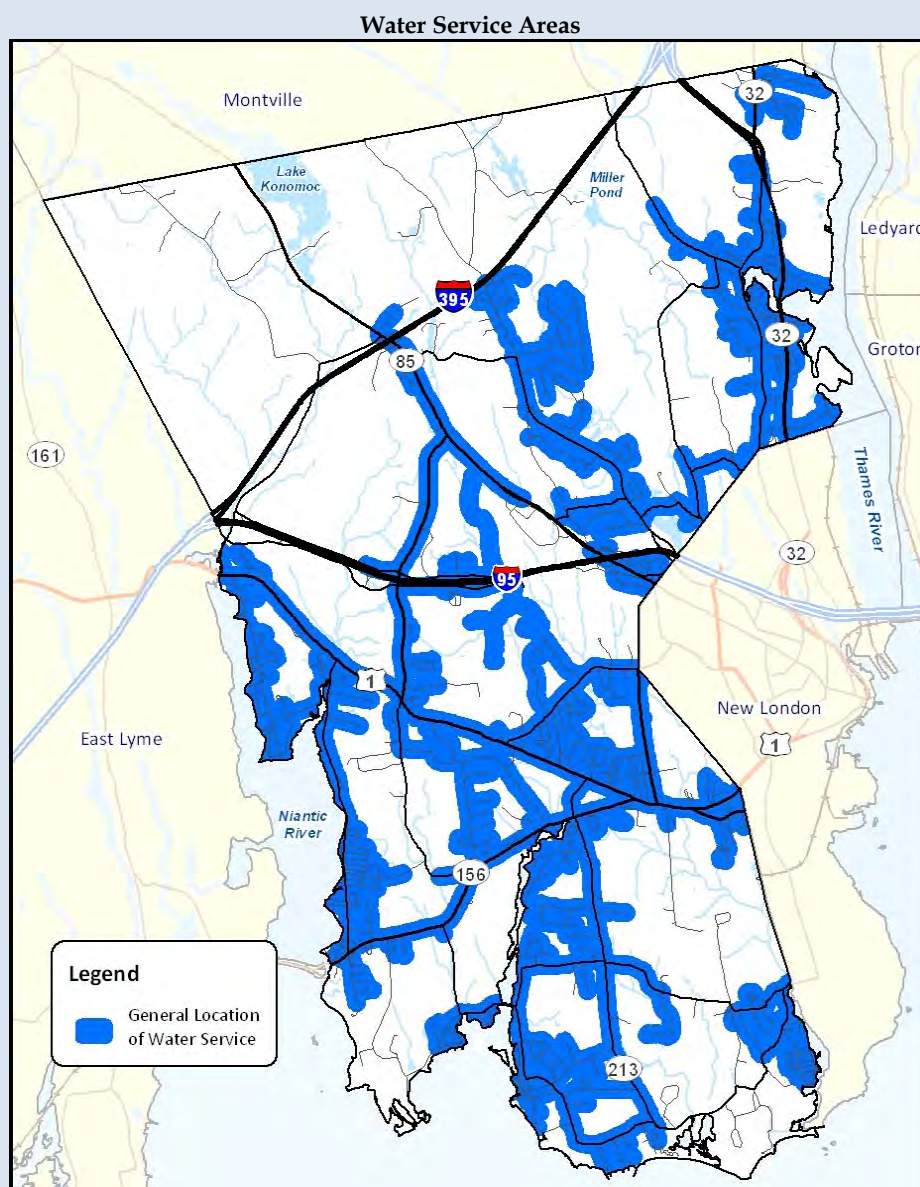
- the use is only allowed as a special permit to ensure that it is controlled and is compatible with the village character,
- the site is appropriately located (such as on a major street), and
- strict floor area limitations and design guidelines are utilized in order to ensure that the proposed use is integrated into the existing neighborhood.

See the “Implementation Element” of the Waterford Plan of Preservation, Conservation and Development for information on tasks and actions currently programmed for implementation of these Overall Structure strategies.

B. Maintain Adequate Water Supply And Infrastructure

Since the 1998 Plan, the water system in southeastern Connecticut has been enhanced by the Thames River Basin Regional Water Interconnection Project, which involved interconnecting the water systems of six communities and one Tribal Nation via a pipe under the Thames River.

While this has provided an added measure of redundancy and resiliency to the overall water supply in the region, there may still be a need to augment water supply sources (such as increasing the capacity of Lake Konomoc or other reservoirs, adding surface or groundwater sources, etc.) to support future growth in Waterford and the region. For example, East Lyme is taking steps to connect to the regional system in order to provide additional water in the winter months and draw adequate water during the summer months. Strategies related to water conservation were discussed in the Sustainability / Resiliency section of the Plan.

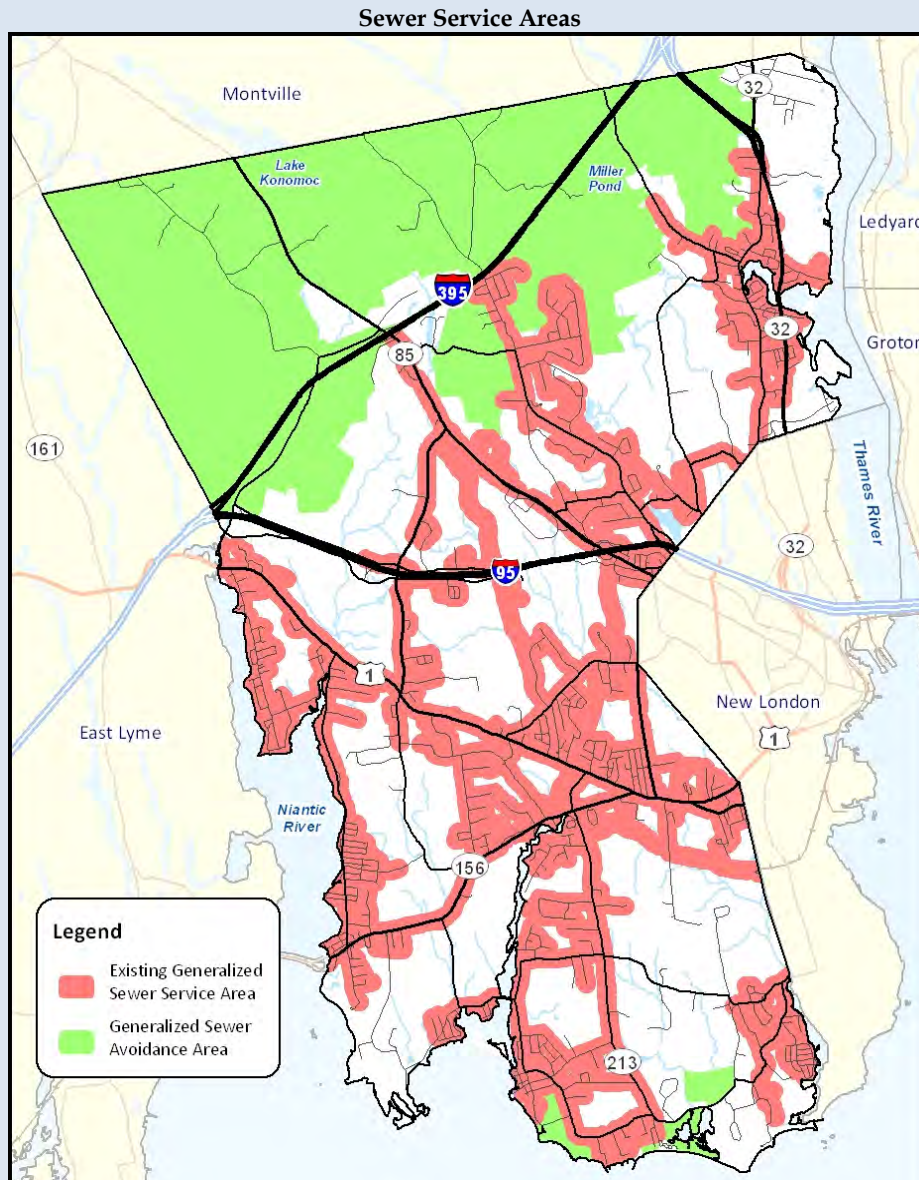


C. Maintain Adequate Sewer Capacity And Infrastructure

Since 1976, Waterford has established an extensive public sewer network to meet local needs. Waterford maintains pipes, pump stations, and other facilities and utilizes sewage treatment capacity at the New London treatment facility. The most recent sewer master plan recognizes that the role of the sewer system has transitioned from focusing on public health issues (septic failures) to a larger role which also considers the economic and physical development of the community.

Future sewer extensions should:

- Address documented septic problems in accordance with the overall sewer policy,
- be in accordance with the sewerage master plan, and/or
- support the recommendations of this Plan of Preservation, Conservation and Development.



PRESERVE

Natural Resources

GOAL

Preserve, protect, and enhance natural resources in order to maintain environmental health and support our overall quality of life.

Natural resources (land, water, air, plants and animals) help support the overall character of Waterford and the quality of life in the community. It is considered important to preserve and enhance these resources in order to maintain the richness of natural communities, promote diversity in biological/natural habitats and species, and preserve the relationship of environmental health to human health and well-being. These resources are highly valued by residents and, as responsible stewards, we will strive to protect these resources for present and future generations.

Waterford has demonstrated a strong commitment to environmentally sensitive land use planning and, by most accounts, is doing a good job protecting natural resources. As a result, the main strategy will be to maintain and enhance efforts to protect these resources in the future.

In the telephone survey, participants were asked about Town efforts in some areas of natural resource protection. In general, participants felt the Town was devoting the right amount of effort to protection of these resources.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Too Little Effort</i>	<i>Effort Just Right</i>	<i>Too Much Effort</i>	<i>Not Sure / Don't Know</i>
Protecting environmental quality.	15%	65%	3%	17%
Protecting wetlands and bodies of water.	13%	60%	9%	18%

Vernal Pool Wetland



Spotted Salamander



A. Protect Water Quality

In terms of future strategies, protecting water quality (surface water and ground water) is an important priority for Waterford since the overall health of residents and the environment relies on having clean water. Almost all forms of life require water and we will do our part to preserve the integrity of water resources in Waterford.

In recognition of this, Waterford:

- has undertaken and participated in numerous studies of sensitive watersheds such as the Niantic River, Jordan Cove, Stony Brook, and Jordan Brook,
- participates in a number of water quality related programs such as the Jordan Cove Urban Watershed Project (www.jordancove.uconn.edu/) and the Niantic River Watershed group (www.nianticriverwatershed.org/), and
- performs water quality testing of a selection of streams (for monitoring environmental health) twice a year.

While water quality protection is important in all areas of the community, it is especially important in watersheds that contribute to:

- public water supply reservoirs and supply sources, and
- coves and embayments such as Niantic Bay and Jordan Cove.

Waterford has been a leader within Connecticut in implementing water quality treatment systems for storm drainage and promoting water recharge as opposed to water discharge (now referred to as “low impact development” (LID) techniques). In fact, Waterford was doing this long before it became popular.

Much of this has been accomplished through Town Staff working with engineers and developers rather than through specific regulatory requirements. In the future, Waterford should continue to be a leader in this area and should adopt specific provisions in its regulations to implement LID techniques.

Water Quality Basin



The Town should continue to develop and implement strategies to ensure healthy watersheds such as those presented in the Jordan Brook Watershed Management Plan, the Niantic River Watershed Management Plan, and similar plans as they are prepared in the future.

B. Protect Plants And Animals And Their Habitats

Plants and animals are key indicators of environmental health and an important part of a healthy and functioning ecosystem. The overall strategies in Waterford are to:

- protect habitats for rare and endangered species and other sites as listed on the Natural Diversity Database maintained by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection,
- seek to create and protect unobstructed natural corridors to connect important habitats and sustain species diversity,
- strive to maintain the health of fisheries and shellfish beds, and
- control invasive species to the extent possible.

C. Protect Important Natural Resources

The following table (and the map on the facing page) outlines natural resource conservation priorities for Waterford. Waterford should continue efforts to identify important resource areas and conserve and protect these areas.

Priority	Resource
Significant	• Water quality, inland and coastal • Watercourses • Poorly drained soils (wetlands) • Floodplain (100-year, 1.0% annual probability) • Soils with slopes in excess of 25% • Active public water supply watersheds (Lake Konomoc) • Potential public water supply watersheds (Miller Pond)
Important	• Special species, habitat, or scenic areas • High groundwater availability (aquifers) • Back-up public water supply watersheds (Lake Brandege) • Floodplain (500-year, 0.2% annual probability) • Forested areas • Inland, estuarine and marine environments

D. Expand Conservation Planning

Continuing to develop and implement sound strategies for natural resource conservation is an important recommendation of the Plan. Waterford should strive to enhance the capacity of Town boards/agencies to think strategically about such issues.

Lake Konomoc



Piping Plover



See the "Implementation Element" of the Waterford Plan of Preservation, Conservation and Development for information on tasks and actions currently programmed for implementation of these Natural Resource strategies.