Griffin's Dairy Reuse Master Plan

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- Abington Board of Selectmen
- Abington Town Manager
- Abington Conservation Commission
- Abington Highway Department
- Abington Parks & Recreation Department
- Abington Sewer Commission
- Abington School Department
- Save Abington with Green Energy (SAGE)

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Cover: The northern end of the Griffin's Dairy property as viewed from Pattison Street

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Executive Summary

This Master Plan provides the Town of Abington with a comprehensive analysis of the background and history of the Griffin's Dairy Farm land, previous planning and study efforts, public participation and input into the planning process, an analysis of the existing environmental conditions of the land, and recommendations on the best possible multi-purpose uses for the land.

The Plan concludes with specific recommendations to implement multi-purpose utilization of the land for the Town. Land use purposes recommended include active and organized recreation (playing fields), agricultural use, renewable energy use, passive recreation use, and nature education/wildlife habitat use.

Since Abington purchased the 64-acre former Griffin's Dairy off Plymouth Street for "public purposes including open space and recreation" in 1998 there has been extensive discussion of the most appropriate use of the site. The former farm is located between Central Street and Pattison Street. It includes a good portion of wooded wetlands in Rockland and abuts town-owned former sewer beds and woodland to the north.

In 2004, the Griffin's Dairy Study Committee recommended open space use under a proposed new group, the "Trustees of Griffin's Park". The following year the Middle School Site Selection Committee recommended using the property for a new Middle School though much of the site is in wooded wetlands, and has a high water table much of the year.

In 2005, a Senior Center Feasibility Study recommended the construction of a Senior Center on the property, a recommendation that was approved by both Town Meeting and a Town election. The Selectmen then committed to donate two acres of the farm's driest land fronting on Pattison Street for such a center. However, both the school and the Senior Center have been built elsewhere and the land recently has only been used for community gardens, a farmers market, and informal open space and recreation.

Much of the farm contains hydric soils with water at or near the surface seven to eight months of the year, but the northeastern corner and much of the area along Plymouth Street have slightly drier non-hydric soils. Still, the site's streams would require Conservation Commission review of most projects and a good portion of the southern and eastern portion of the site is in a mapped FEMA Flood zone also requiring close review.

The site's wetlands are defined by the town's vegetation-based Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD) but the potential projects also reflect the U.S Natural Resources Conservation Service's soils maps. The Conservation Commission's reviews will reflect the ORAD and detailed site analysis.

Recommended uses of some or all of the farm's land include:

- One to three multi-use fields for organized recreation e.g., soccer, lacrosse, and football.
- Agriculture ranging from grazing cattle or growing hay, to expansion of the present community gardens.
- Renewable Energy generated by wind turbines (given sufficient wind) or by photovoltaic arrays, with either generating electricity to use and sell.
- Open space/passive recreation including hiking trails across the site, nature study and protection of significant areas as natural habitat.
- Environmental Education using the farm's varied habitats for the field aspects of a program like Springfield's Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS) with shelter under a tent when needed.

One likely re-use is for multi-purpose playing fields since construction of a new high school and middle school will cause a temporary loss of up to five fields from January to August of 2016, and of three fields through the spring of 2020 with the permanent loss of one field. The replacement fields could be as small as 120 yards by 60 yards by town standards. The plan suggests that two fields could fit in the northernmost and westernmost open areas with the driest soils while a third might be possible on intermediate soils west of Charles Street depending on wetlands impacts and mitigation requirements.

While the plan is concerned with the appropriate use of the Farm rather than with supplying needed fields, it is worth noting that there are other potential sites for replacement fields such as the 16.83 acres of School Department land off of Brockton Avenue, and the abutting former sewer bed land north of the farm, as well as the reported new soccer field in Southfield on the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. The apparent site of the former sewer beds between a power line right of way and the French Stream, and south of the Hanover Branch Rail Trail appears to be wide enough for one field straddling the Abington-Rockland town line.

Beyond specific studies, public involvement featured a Selectmen's open public meeting on December 15, 2014 with comments reflecting a wide range of views. Participants expressed interest in recreation, particularly soccer fields, and in farming and community gardens, and some interest in renewable energy, along with concerns about wetlands and the impacts of potential uses on the surrounding neighborhoods.

There continues to be local interest in continued farming in some form. The community garden is a successful, expanding operation and one farmer from another town is interested in leasing land to grow needed hay and cow corn. This requires a close look at the soils, wetlands limitations, the type of grass growing naturally, and the effects of mowing on grassland-dependent species.

Recommendations

A. Overall Recommendations:

Use the land on the Farm for a mixed use project encompassing:

- One or two multi–purpose playing fields on the northern and western edges of the Farm using about four acres for the fields, parking and access roads.
- Use of most of the open upland for hay growing through a lease to farmer.
- Use of about five acres of open upland east and north-east of Bellow's Circle for Renewable Energy with photovoltaic collectors.
- Creating a stream-oriented trail system crossing the farm and connecting with adjacent destinations like surrounding major streets, the Hanover Branch Rail Trail, and the Rockland Golf Course.
- Preservation of the remaining wooded wetlands for open space, passive recreation use, wildlife habitat, and related educational programs.

B. Site Specific Recommendations

1. Conduct a detailed site analysis including updating of the 2012 Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD) in comparison to the DEP Wetlands map.

2. Identify the steps involved in developing playing fields or practice fields on wet soils and in developing them on sites with the least hydric soils, one south of Pattison Street and one just east of Plymouth Street.

3. Have the School and/or Park and Recreation Department hire a design firm to do preliminary plans for submission to the Conservation Commission, if needed.

4. Examine implementation alternatives, e. g. developing two less expensive practice fields and later converting one to a playing field to replace the lost field, or making a minimal investment in temporary fields and returning the land to open space or agricultural use after permanent fields are built if grading has not degraded the top soil.

5. Evaluate alternate sites for needed fields, e.g., School Department land off Brockton Avenue, the former sewer beds, or the use of a reported new play field in Southfield, for comparison with new fields at the farm.

6. Determine the agricultural value of the ditched wetland east of Bellow's Circle.

7. Lease available, suitable land to an interested farmer.

8. Work with Save Abington with Green Energy (SAGE) to expand the community gardens including a shelter for tools, supplies and gardeners during bad weather, and sanitary facilities.

9. Incorporate the woods and open land at the former sewer bed land along Charles Street in long-term plans for the farm, e.g., as a play field and as a trail to the adjacent bike path.

10. Refine the draft plan's proposed multi-purpose trails in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission.

11. Study the feasibility of photovoltaic electric generation; explore possible sites such as the 2.8 acres of open uplands immediately east of Bellow's Circle (shown on Image 6) and the southernmost 2.2 acres of hay fields; consider the trade-off between hay growing and electric generation, and reserve the needed land.

12. Explore the need for a base for environmental education programs and encourage SAGE to continue presenting such programs; doing so in a tent if needed during bad weather.

13. Consider putting recreation land and any remaining agricultural land under a conservation restriction (CR).

14. Add way-finding signage as needed to locate the farm.

These recommendation are largely compatible with one another except for the major question of how much land (if any) to commit to possible short-term fields versus long-term uses.

Introduction

In 1998 the Town of Abington acquired the former Griffin's Dairy property, under the Farmland Assessment Act, also known as Chapter 61A. The 64-acre property is located in the eastern part of Abington off of Plymouth Street and stretches into neighboring Rockland. Since the town purchased the property, there has been much discussion as it relates to possible reuses of the site, particularly the 33.31 acres that are located in Abington. There has been little consideration of the 30.69 acres in Rockland due to the prevalence of wetlands. An outline of the property is located in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Former Griffin's Dairy Property

In the years since the town purchased the land, there have been a number of proposals of how to effectively reuse it. These proposals have ranged from unimproved open space, agricultural uses, sports fields, and possible locations for a Middle School and a Senior Center. Since the Senior Center has been established at a former church and the new Middle School will be built next to the new High School, the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager have asked the Old Colony Planning Council to examine the farm's potential for other uses, primarily outdoor recreation, agriculture, and renewable energy.

This report provides the Town of Abington with a comprehensive analysis of the background and history of the Griffin's Dairy Property, previous planning and study efforts, currently expressed needs and preferences, public participation and input into the planning process, an extensive analysis of the existing environmental conditions of the land, and recommendations on the best possible multi-purpose uses for the land.

The Plan concludes with specific recommendations to implement multi-purpose utilization of the land for the Town. The recommendations include active and organized recreation (playing fields), agricultural use, renewable energy use, passive recreation use, and nature education/wildlife habitat use.

Old Colony Planning Council appreciates the support and cooperation of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager as well as the following town bodies: the Conservation Commission, Assessors' Office, Park and Recreation Commission, Planning Board, Park and Recreation Department, and School Department.

I. Background

A. The Plan's Purpose and Vision

The initial December 16, 2014 request from the Board of Selectmen to the Old Colony Planning Council under the State's District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program was to prepare a Master Plan for mixed uses "including all possibilities for agriculture, open space and active and passive recreation" and "possibly a renewable energy component."

At a meeting on December 15, 2014, the Board of Selectmen held a public meeting regarding use of the site that raised many issues about the following:

- The extent and effect of the site's wetlands.
- The needs for temporary or permanent soccer, football and/or lacrosse fields, the timing of such needs, and any required parking.
- The management of fields – primarily by the Park and Recreation Commission.
- The space needed to prevent injury from fast lacrosse balls.
- The interest in leasing the site for farming - either for grazing or for growing hay or cow corn.
- The temporary or long term need for football, soccer or lacrosse game or practice fields.
- The willingness of the teams to create the fields (Does this include drainage, etc.?).
- The interest in a solar field.
- The interest in a dog park.
- Potential expansion of the community garden.
- The strongest support was for permanent or temporary sports fields and for farming and/or community gardens.

At a later February 26, 2015 meeting of town officials, OCPC staff, and interested citizens James Dombrowski and Richard Donovan, the parties reviewed the results and findings of the past two studies and meetings:

- Two study committees had recommended passive recreation and agriculture, though two selectmen doubted the "viability of active recreation on the site." They did not specify if that was due to soils/wetland issues, institutional issues, land use issues, or a long-term town-wide need for more play fields and practice fields.
- A December 2014 public meeting had favored active and passive recreation and agriculture, possibly in combination, along with a system of hiking trails.
- There were reportedly other concerns particularly with the need for replacement soccer fields during the high school construction.
- The effort should rely on published data and on the results of fairly consistent past meetings centering on recreation and agriculture, rather than on further public outreach according to the Town Manager.

B. Goals and Objectives

Given the above concerns, this Plan's goals and objectives are as follows:

Goals

- To understand the needs of potential users of the site.
- To develop a balanced program reflecting and reconciling current interests in the site.

Objectives

- Determine the extent of wetlands and related constraints on proposed uses.
- Identify areas which are unsuitable for agriculture or recreation, but compatible with solar arrays and/or wind turbines.
- Identify the extent and approximate costs of drainage or other work required to accommodate active sports fields during active seasons.
- Determine space requirements to minimize hazardous conflicts between athletic activities (e.g. foul balls or misguided lacrosse balls endangering other games or spectators.)
- Creation of a site plan reflecting the above findings.

To meet the goals and objectives listed above, this plan proposes to review the reported needs and their space and terrain requirements, and to develop a program and site plan meeting the goals and objectives. The plan will consider issues regarding wetlands, traffic, ADA accessibility, parking, and relations to present uses, such as the Community Garden and the Farmers Market.

C. History and Background of the Site

The property was originally purchased by the Griffin family in 1925. The Griffin family ran a dairy farm on the property from that time until 1968-69. Since 1969, the farm reportedly was a vertical operation growing its own hay, grazing the cows on the site, (though buying its cow corn for feed), processing and bottling milk and delivering it to customers. The town bought it under Chapter 61A in 1998 for $750,000, but the Griffin family continued mowing it primarily for construction hay until 2002. After the sale of the property to the Town of Abington, it was used as a distribution center for HP Hood's commercial dairy and by local milkmen with trucks parked in the barn. This ended when HP Hood vacated its portion of the site in August 2010 around the same time as the other businesses on site moved on.

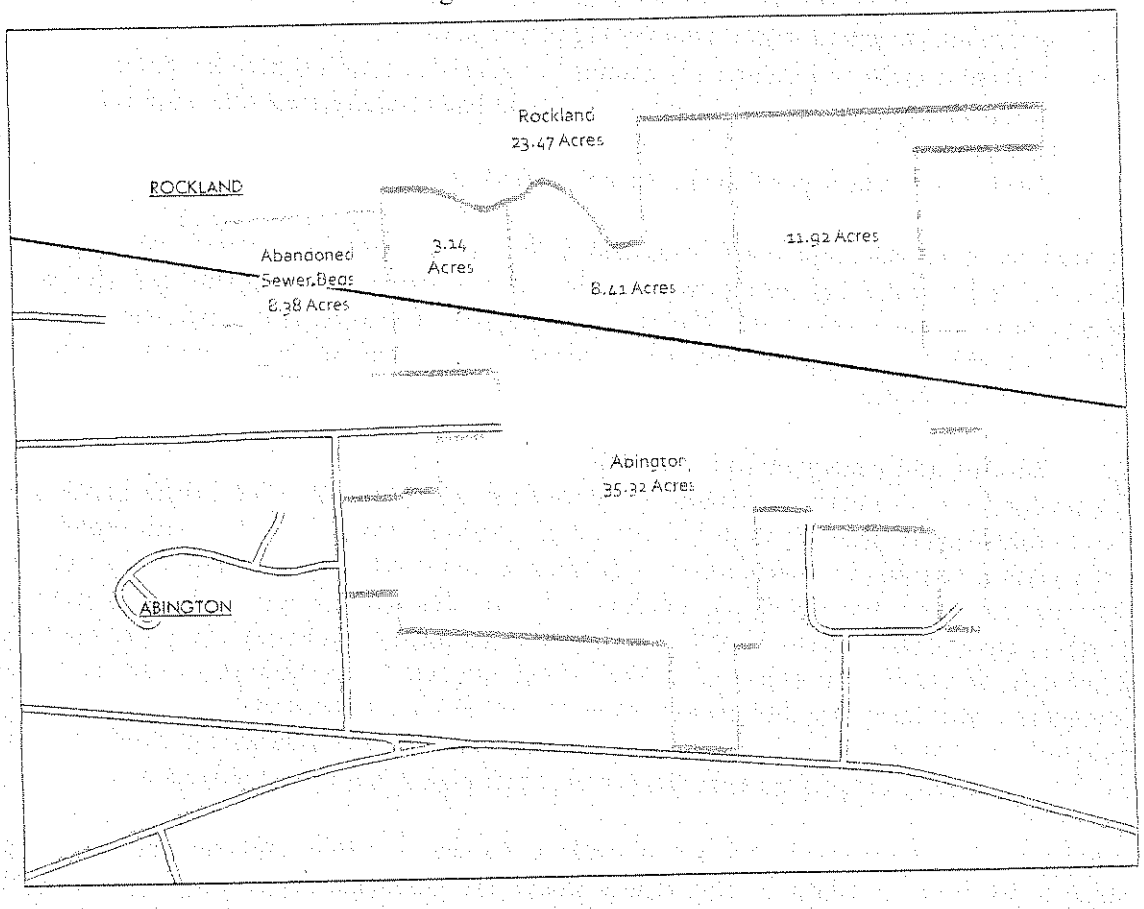
When the Town purchased the 64 acre property at its May 4, 1998 Town Meeting, the Town voted to exercise its rights of first refusal under the Farmland Assessment Act (Chapter 61A). The town meeting warrant article stated that the property was being bought for "public purposes including open space and recreation." The purchase of the property was reportedly in response to a proposed sale to the McSharry Brothers construction company for a condominium project. The open-ended language used in the warrant article was to keep the land available for various purposes such as the then-proposed new Middle School or Senior Center. Subsequent studies, described below, recommended the site for a new Middle School or Senior Center, as well as for recreational and agricultural uses.

Since that time, the town has converted a former church off of Summer Street into a Senior Center and a new Middle School is being built in combination with the new High School near the site of the present High School off Gliniewicz Way. The Woodsdale School and Beaver Brook Elementary School are the town's remaining elementary schools. According to communications that occurred with the Superintendent's Office on April 7, 2015, the town has no need for another school site.

D. Site Context

The 64-acre property includes 34.64 acres of uplands and wetlands in Abington and 29.36 acres of wooded wetlands adjoining housing and a golf course in Rockland as shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Site Context



The part of the property that was utilized as a farm is located in Abington and is bordered by housing along Plymouth Street to the west; by a multi-family condominium development on Pattison Street to the north; by housing along Charles Street and by a largely wooded parcel holding former sewer beds (which are partially in Rockland) to the north; and by wooded wetlands and the golf course in Rockland to the east. While not part of the farm site, the land holding the former sewer beds site is contiguous and contains Eldridge Fine Sandy Loam as is shown in Figure 4. This is the least constrained by hydric conditions of the land in the

study area. Thus, it would be appropriate for the former beds to be included in any overall plan for the farm. In addition, the Bellows Circle subdivision protrudes into the southwestern portion of the farm from Plymouth Street. This development is incomplete because of the presence of wetlands and its location in a flood zone.

Though it is on the eastern edge of Abington, the site is relatively central to the more developed portion of the town, east of Bedford Street. It is also a short distance from the major school/recreation complex along Washington Street about 2,400 feet to the east. This features the Frolio Middle School, the Beaver Brook Elementary School (formerly the Early Childhood Learning Center) and related ballfields. There are three softball fields and a playground at the Beaver Brook School and two softball fields, two baseball fields, one football/soccer field with track and field facilities, three tennis courts, and one basketball court at the Frolio School.

The development potential of the site is constrained due to a large portion of the property being within wetlands. The most buildable land is along the western and northern edges of the site, with major wooded wetlands along the eastern edge. The deteriorated farm house, barn and cooler building have been recently demolished and the silos were removed some time ago.

Town sewer and water service are available along Plymouth Street as is electric service by National Grid (or alternative supplier chosen by the customer) and gas service, also by National Grid. The site is zoned R-30 for low density housing on 30,000 square-foot lots, except for a fringe of the R-20 "high density" multi-family district with 20,000 square foot lots just south of Pattison Street.

E. Community Demographics

From the period of 2000 to 2010, Abington was one the fastest growing communities in the Old Colony region, as its population increased 9.45% (from 14,605 in 2000 to 15,985 in 2010) during this time. The Old Colony Planning Council projects that Abington will grow another 10.91% from 2010 to 2020, and see its population climb to approximately 17,730.

Age group patterns have been changing as well. Town-wide, the population aged 65+ has decreased from 12.2% in 2000 to 11.9% in 2010. While it is a slight decrease, it is opposite of the trend in both the County and the Commonwealth, whose populations aged 65+ increased from 2000 to 2010, with the County's 65+ population increasing from 11.8% to 13.9% and the Commonwealth's 65+ population increasing from 13.5% to 13.8%. In the long run, the older population is expected to grow with the aging of the Baby Boomers, but facilities for all ages will continue to be needed and many open spaces and recreation facilities such as community gardens serve diverse age groups.

Income data reveals a moderate-income community, but with rising income levels, possibly reflecting new residents who commute via restored commuter rail service to commonly higher-paying jobs in the Boston area. Median family incomes have exceeded state and county levels. In 2000, Abington's median family income was $57,100 versus $55,615 for Plymouth County and $50,502 for the state. According to the 2009-2013 American

Community Survey (ACS), the estimated median family income had risen dramatically to $78,395 in Abington; $75,092 in Plymouth County; and $66,866 in the State. In all, Abington is a strong middle-income community, but not an extremely affluent one. It has good-sized working families resulting in the lower per capita incomes.

The question is whether the moderate differences in ages and incomes imply differing interests or needs for open space and recreation land. These could suggest that any active sports facilities, particularly temporary ones like replacement soccer fields, be balanced with permanent open space and facilities for all ages, such as trails and community gardens.

II. Background Documentation

A. Past Planning Efforts

There have been a series of studies directly or indirectly involving the farm. These include:

- **"Long Range Master Plan for School Facilities" (2004) by Strekalovsky, Hoit and Raymond.**
  This plan reflected the May 2002 Town Meeting appropriation of funds to review and project present and future school building needs. One option included building a new middle school for grades 5-8, and the Selectmen established the Middle School Site Selection Committee which began meeting in 2005.

- **"Griffin's Dairy Study Committee Report" (2004) by Griffin's Dairy Committee.**
  The Selectmen established the Committee after the purchase to decide the best use of the property. It met with organizations interested in using the land including several non-profit organizations. In 2004, the Committee favored an open space reuse and recommended "that the property be run by a newly created group, the Trustees of Griffin's Park." That group has not been created, the land has remained under the control of the Selectmen, and it has not been designated as open space.

- **"Grade 5-8 Middle School Site Selection Committee Report" (2005) by Middle School Site Selection Committee.**
  The Committee held 15 public hearings, visited the sites and reviewed data on soils, wetlands and other considerations on 24 candidate publicly and privately-owned sites of at least 20 acres. It compared these through a matrix considering parcel size, ownership, availability, pending development, accessibility, utilities - sewerage, water, gas, electricity, and cable service - expected cost, and terrain, and found the farm to be the preferred site.

- **"Senior Center Feasibility Study" (2006) by the Senior Center Committee.**
  The 2001 Town Meeting appropriated $25,000 for a senior center feasibility study under the Senior Center Committee, and the 2003 Town Meeting voted to donate two acres of land for a senior center. The architect hired to find town-owned land for the center recommended a portion of the Farm fronting on Pattison Street to the north. The 2006 Town Meeting and Town Election accepted the recommendation and in 2006 the Selectmen committed to donate two acres for the center. However, the Center was ultimately created by conversion of a former church off of Summer Street to the south of the commuter rail station and the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District.

- **"Should the Selectmen Endorse the recommendation to Site a New Middle School on the Former Griffin's Dairy Property or Recommend other uses for the Site?" (2007) by Bruce G. Hughes (Prepared for the Masters in Public Administration program at Bridgewater State University, April, 24, 2007)**
  This reviewed past studies, developed and applied a set of criteria for re-using the site, and compared the options of: 1 - Building new middle school; 2 - Creating new playfields, or 3 - leaving the site as passive open space. The paper recommended

that "If the Town determines that new middle school is needed and funds can be obtained to build it, the Griffin's Dairy site is an acceptable location to build a new Middle School." Though highly qualified, this was a definite recommendation of a new middle school re-use of site.

Despite these past recommendations, the School Committee and School Department subsequently decided against a freestanding middle school and chose to build a new middle school abutting a new high school at the present High School site. This may create a short-term need for replacement playing fields as the new school will be located over the present fields and only two new (turf) fields with be built before the two schools are completed.

As discussed in the 2014 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, the town's open space and recreation inventory is substantial compared with the few available applicable standards formerly used by the Massachusetts' "Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan" (SCORP) planning program. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Abington Recreation Facility Needs by Past SCORP Standards

Facility Type	Supply	Standard	Calculated Need
Playfields	44 Acres	3 Acres per 1,000 Persons	4 Additional Acres
Playgrounds	7.5 Acres	1 Acre per 250 Persons Aged 5-11 Years	1.8 Surplus Acres
Tot Lots	3.5 Acres	.5 Acres per 1,000 Persons	4.5 Additional Acres
Tennis Courts	11 Courts	1 Court per 2,000 Persons	3 Surplus Courts

B. Citizen Involvement/Public Participation

Public involvement to date consists of participation in the previous planning processes, described above, involvement with the Griffin's Dairy Committee established by the 1998 Town Meeting, described below, later participation in the Selectmen's December 2014 Open Meeting described below, in subsequent volunteer efforts such as the "Save Griffin's Farm" group, and other activities of interested citizens.

The Board of Selectmen decided that with several years of studies coming to similar conclusions – i.e., use for recreation and/or agriculture and related concerns - there was no need for more basic input. The town's diverse concerns had been reflected in the lengthy December 15, 2014 Selectmen's public meeting reviewed below. Instead the process would include a session to discuss and review these findings/recommendations and the probable next steps.

"Save Griffin's Dairy Committee." Since the Middle School and Senior Center proposals are moot, organized citizen interest has taken the form of this volunteer committee. It is working to review and re-analyze the site's wetlands delineation as it affects the feasibility of various reuse proposals compared to agricultural use. The committee arranged for a review of previous wetlands delineations by the firm of Sabatia Inc. in February of 2007. This review found that the wetland resource areas "as depicted on a (2005) Plan of Record (POR) under-represent the extent of wetlands, particularly the bordering vegetated wetland (31 CMR 10.55)." It noted that the May 1 and 3, 2001 PORs showed more wetland in those

areas and an additional wetland off Bellows Circle. The report reviewed the limited observable wetlands and suggested a May observation by the Army Corps of Engineers and/or EPA. It noted that these would not be "bound by" the Order of Resource Delineation (ORAD) issued by the town pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act (MGL.C.131.s.40), though this is used by the Commission to determine jurisdiction and review projects.

Board of Selectmen's Public Meeting-December 15, 2014. The purpose of this meeting was "to hear input from members of the community regarding possible future use of" Griffin's Dairy. Many interested people spoke and their comments are found in Appendix 1. In summary, there was much interest in recreation, especially soccer fields; and in farming/community gardens; and some interest in renewable energy, along with a concern about wetlands and the impact of potential uses on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Correspondence and Public Input

The following individuals have written to Old Colony Planning Council with their views and concerns for the site. Mr. James Dombrowski points out the wetlands nature of much of the site, the small area of flood plain next to Bellow's Circle, the limited 6-7 acres suitable for corn growing compared to the more extensive previous hay growing and grazing, the need to field verify the total wetlands, the availability of recreation sites elsewhere in the town, the managed/harvested town forest potential of the 32+/- acres of forested wetlands in Rockland, the potential population of Eastern Box Turtles found in some of French's Stream, and the presence of various hawks, and of abundant deer, coyotes and turkeys. He continues to favor restored dairy farming over recreation.

Mr. Sean Reynolds wrote to the Selectmen supporting the Griffin's Dairy Committee's recommendation to put the land in trust as open space which he feels was the original purpose of the acquisition of the dairy under Chapter 61A. He quotes a portion of Ch. 61A allowing assignment of the town's rights to a non-profit conservation organization for continuing agricultural or horticultural use "of a major portion of the property" as indicating that the act intended only those uses. He also stresses the emphasis on open space during the Town Meeting debate and the former owner's wish for continued agricultural use rather than a senior center.

It should be noted that the statute indicates that the restriction to agricultural and horticultural uses refers to the purpose of an assignment of the town' rights under Ch. 61A Section 14 to a conservation organization or to the Commonwealth, while an earlier Section 13 refers to the inapplicable rollback taxes "if the land is purchased for a public purposes by the city or town" indicating the broader allowable purposes. This is reflected in the warrant article's reference to "public purpose including open space and recreation."

Mr. Reynolds then warned against mixed educational/recreation use of the site because concerns with the school's security needs would limit the free recreational use of the rest of the land.

Mr. Robert Taylor is a residential abutter to the farm. Mr. Taylor has visited the OCPC office several times and expressed his strong preference for agricultural or open space use of the

property and his conviction that any needed playing fields could be located elsewhere such as at the School Department land off Brockton Avenue, or the former sewer beds abutting the farm to the north, or could be partially replaced by a recently opened soccer field in Southfield at the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station.

It should be noted that the discussion of possible public uses is now moot since both the proposed Senior Center and the Middle School are sited elsewhere or being built elsewhere, and the only tentatively proposed uses have been grazing or growing corn or hay for a dairy based in Hingham. Thus, the relevant questions are the appropriate size and location of any agricultural uses such as hay growing, grazing or expanded community gardens; of recreational uses such as trails, soccer fields, or multi-purpose fields; or of passive open space for relaxation, habitat preservation, and nature study. See the following Site Analysis.

III. Site Analysis - Existing Conditions and Potential Uses

A. Natural Environment/Natural Features

1. Topography

The site is essentially level, ranging from slightly below 110' Mean Sea Level (MSL) to slightly above it and sloping gently from the northwest to southeast. Thus spot elevations on a water pollution control study range from 113' MSL just south of Pattison Street to 104.6' MSL in the heavily drained areas just west of the Rockland line and east of Bellow's Circle, and 106.6 MSL just south of Bellow's Circle and north of the parcel boundary.

2. Hydrology

The ground has a varied, but generally high water table as indicated by the extensive man-made and natural streams draining the farm east towards French Stream. A natural stream runs south from just below Pattison Street and joins a very straight stream draining the site east towards French Stream. It has an apparent man-made extension running west and south towards the Community Garden and the location of the former barn and house. In the southern portion, just south of a large pocket of woods, are four straight heavily over-grown drainage ditches running past a power line right-of-way towards French Stream. They drain an area of Scarboro Mucky Peat and Squampscott Fine Sandy Loam. The farmer interested in leasing some of the land says that he would fill them, apparently in order to have a level surface, or clean them to restore drainage, as previous owners must have seen a need to drain the particular area. Overall he feels that the ditched land is best left natural or used for photovoltaics.

3. Watershed/Stream Corridors

The study area drains to the nearby French Stream which flows south through Rockland and Hanover to the Indian Head River and then to the North River, and on through Norwell and Scituate to Massachusetts Bay. Thus it is in the South Coastal Watershed.

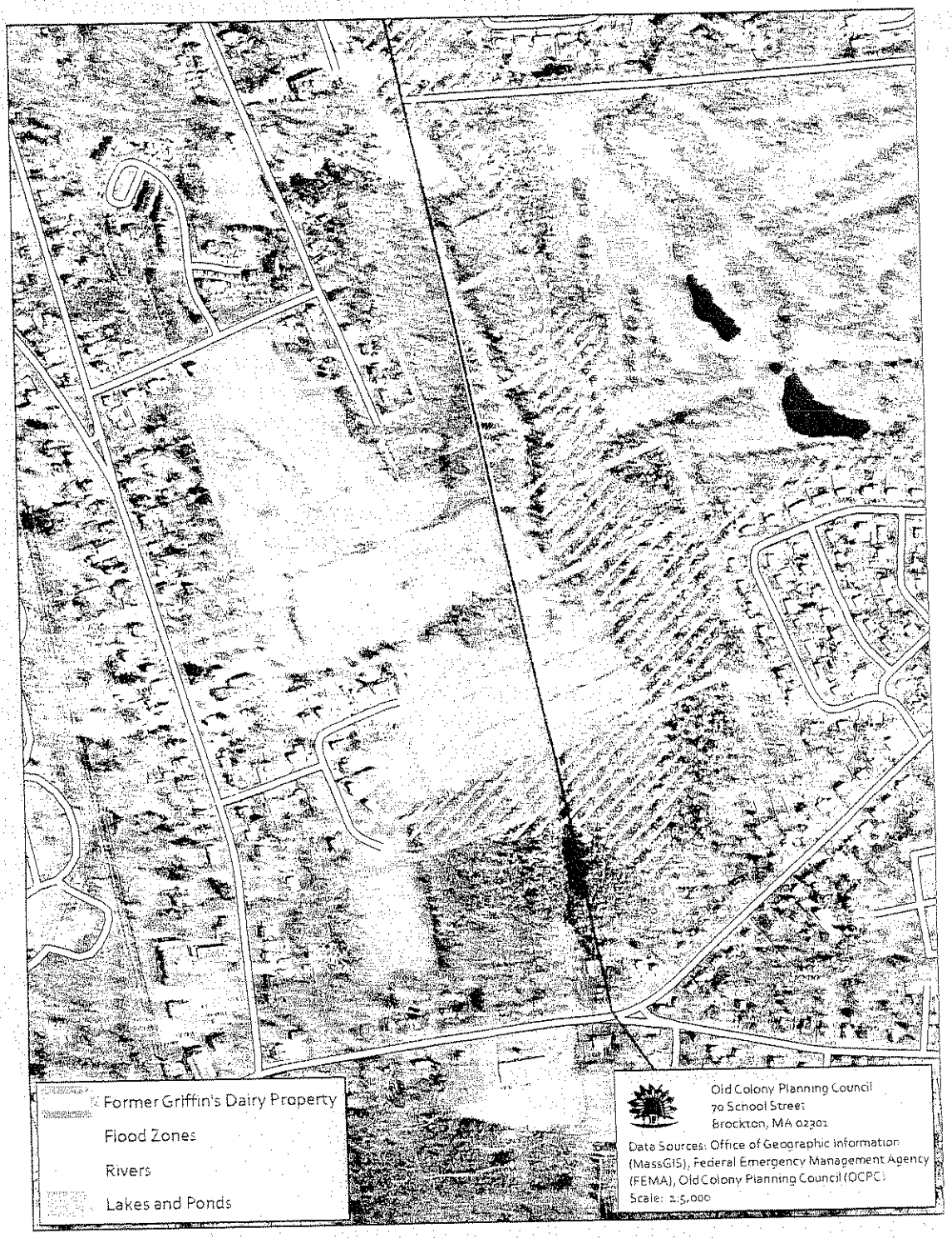
4. Floodplains

The FEMA flood zones shown on Figure 3 shows the 100 year floodplains along French Brook and across the southernmost portion of the site overlapping the drainage ditches and extending to the southeast corner of the Bellow's Circle subdivision. The northern portion of the site from the rear of the Bellow's Circle lots to Pattison Street is totally out of the mapped 100-year floodplain, though much of the area has a high water table.

This again suggests that the northern and eastern portion of the site just south of Pattison Street and west of Charles Street has the most potential for development, recreation fields or cultivated agriculture. Thus it was the area proposed and designated for a new Senior Center.

It is assumed the potential photovoltaic arrays can be designed to be compatible with the rare minimal flooding to be expected at the upper fringe of the mapped 100 year flood plain.

Figure 3: Floodplains Map



5. Soils

There are three types of soil on the Abington portion of the Griffins Dairy property as shown in Figure 4. A description of these three soils is below.

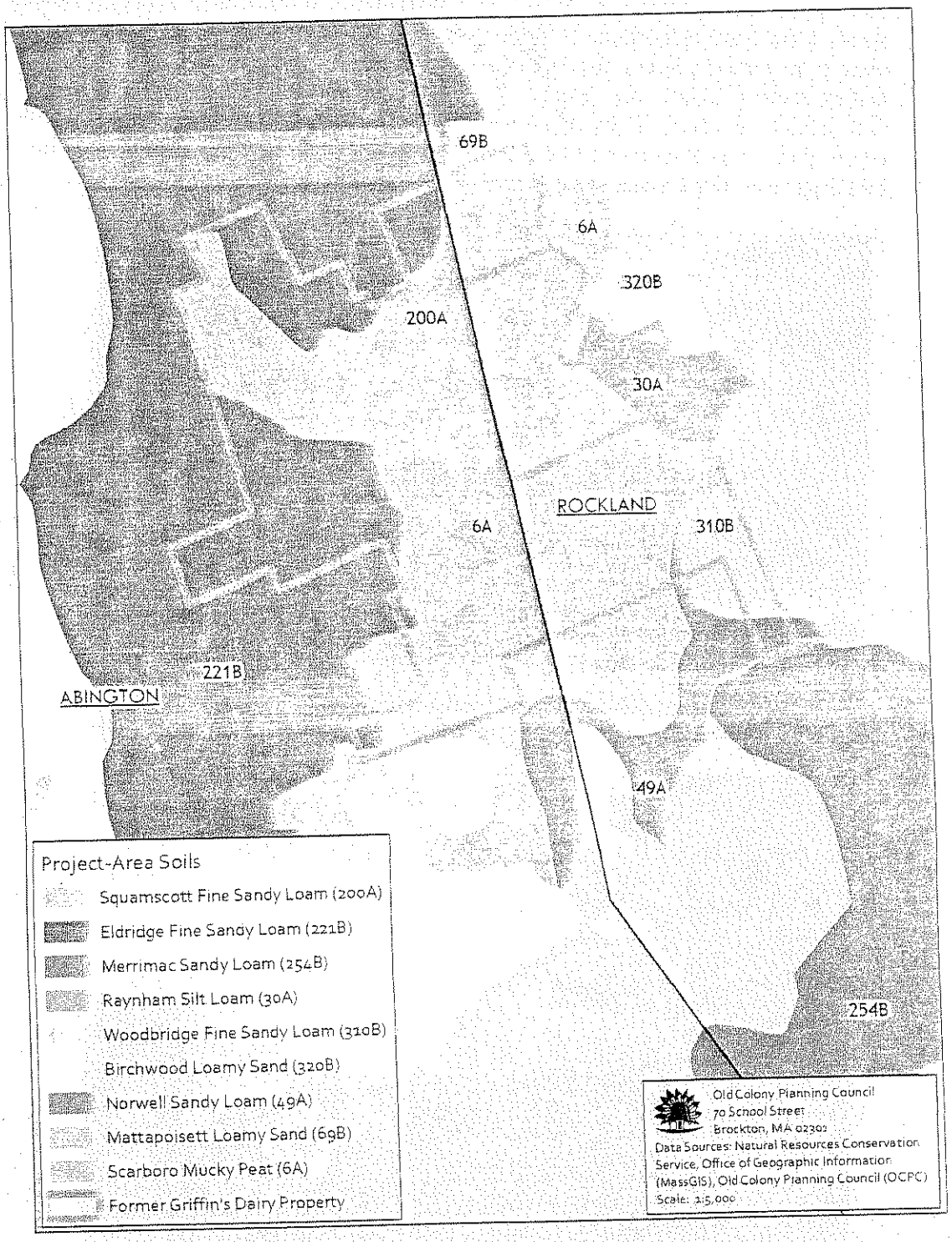
- Squampscott Fine Sandy Loam (200A): Drawing on the most recent (7/2010) Plymouth County Soils Survey, the greatest part of the site (59% or 18.4 acres) is Squamscott Fine Sandy Loam as shown on Figure 4. This is formed over old lakes. It has sandy glaciofluvial deposits (carried in by running water) over coarse-silty glaciolacustrine deposits (lake bottoms fed by siltation of fine material). It is considered to be "poorly drained" with water at the surface except for June through October, and is frequently ponded. It is classified as hydric, meaning that the soils show signs of frequent saturation.

- Scarboro Mucky Peat (6A): A smaller area occupying 3.4 acres or 11% of the site is Scarboro Mucky Peat. This is in southern central portion of the site including a distinct wooded area and two of the four drainage ditches noted earlier. It is found in depressions with organic matter over sandy and gravelly glaciofluvial deposits. Despite the sandy and gravelly underlying material, this land is considered to be "very poorly drained", hence slower than the Squamscott Fine Sandy Loam. It is also frequently ponded with the water table at the surface except for July through October and is classified as hydric.

- Eldridge Fine Sandy Loam (221B): This is the least restricted of the farm's soils. It covers 9.5 acres or 30% of the site including the completed portion of the Bellow's Circle subdivision in the westernmost, central portion of the farm along with the Charles Street neighborhood and land to the east and west of it, and at least the southern portion of the former sewer beds. It consists of sandy eolian (wind-blown) or sandy glaciofluvial deposits over coarse-silty glaciolacustrine (lake bottom) deposits. The effect of these layers is that the soil is not ponded, the water table is only within 18 inches during the wettest seasons and the soil is considered to be "moderately well drained." It is revealing that the Bellows's Circle subdivision was completed within this mapped soil type and had to be left uncompleted over the adjacent Squamscott fine sandy loam.

    - The soils in the northeastern most corner of the site along Pattison Street, or in the central-western portion with access to Plymouth Street are probably the best suited for development, crop growing, or athletic fields. See Images 4 and 5 and the discussion comparing soils maps with the ORAD findings.

Figure 4: Soils Map



6. **Visual Characteristics/Viewshed**

Most of the site is screened by woods and surrounding development along Plymouth Street to the west, by portions of Bellow's Circle, and by woodland to the south. The view from Pattison Street, the entrance off Plymouth Street, and the northern dead end of Bellow's Circle are largely of a savanna landscape - grassland interspersed with islands or edges of woodlands. The iconic view of the barn, farmhouse and outbuildings from Plymouth Street is gone with the town's recent demolition of those buildings removing a visual reminder of Abington's Agricultural past.

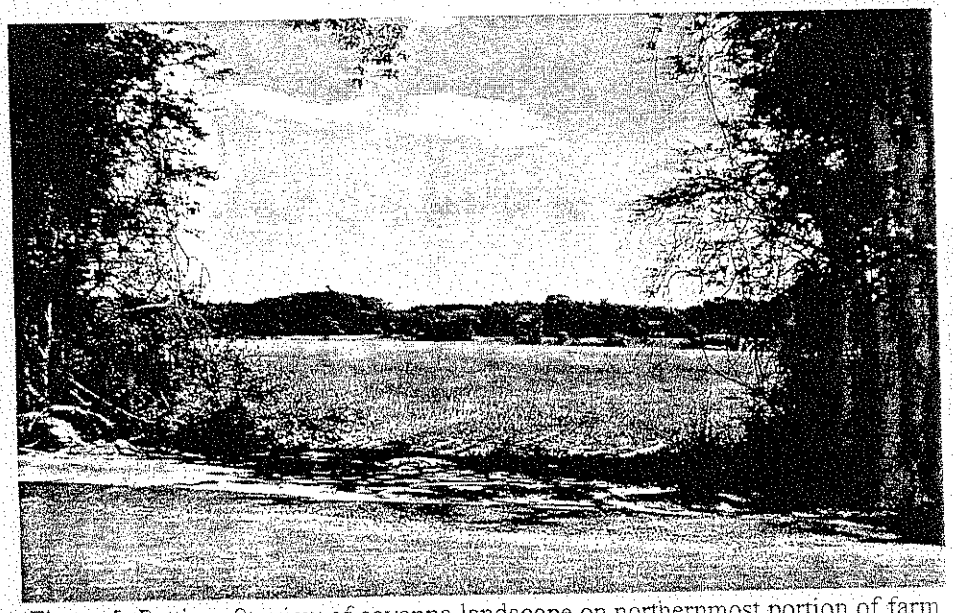


Figure 5: Pattison St. view of savanna landscape on northernmost portion of farm

Figure 6: Iconic Farmhouse and Barn as seen from Plymouth St. – Since Demolished

7. Wetlands

Consultants have disagreed slightly on the extent and configuration of the site's wetlands. The Abington Conservation Commission has commissioned its own Order of Resource Area Delineation, (ORAD) to replace that most recently done in 2012.

In February, 2007 the firm of Sabatia Inc. wrote to James Dombrowski of the Save Griffin's Farm Committee reporting that the wetlands shown on an November 11, 2005 Plan of Reference (POR) "under-represent the extent of wetlands, particularly the bordering vegetated wetlands", and noted that an earlier 2001 POR had shown more wetlands in three study areas. The consultant, Robert M. Gray, had observed many wetlands plants despite snow cover and recommended a second survey in the spring. As noted above, he also observed that the 1969 Plymouth County Soil Survey defined the central part of the farm as having Au Gres soil which is often times associated with wetlands conditions. In addition, he observed that any determination by the EPA or the Corps of Engineers for Section 404 permitting under the Clean Water Act would not be bound by the Commission's ORAD, though the ORAD would guide local enforcement under the Wetlands Protection Act. In all, most of the fields have the character of wet meadows despite the range in soil types.

Another consultant, Wetlands Strategies Inc., studied potential Middle School sites for the School Department including an extensive area between Plymouth Street and the town line. It found Griffin's Farm to be more suitable than the Pohorecky farm off Chestnut Street or the Hendrikson Dairy off Hancock Street. This was partly because the Griffin's land had suitable areas for any wetlands replication required by filling for the school or playing fields. The consultant, Lenore White, concluded that the wetlands in the Commission's Order were generally consistent with the DEP's wetlands website and with her site observations. She noted that an ORAD was good for three years from issuance. Thus the present one done in 2012 (as seen in Figure 7) may need updating.

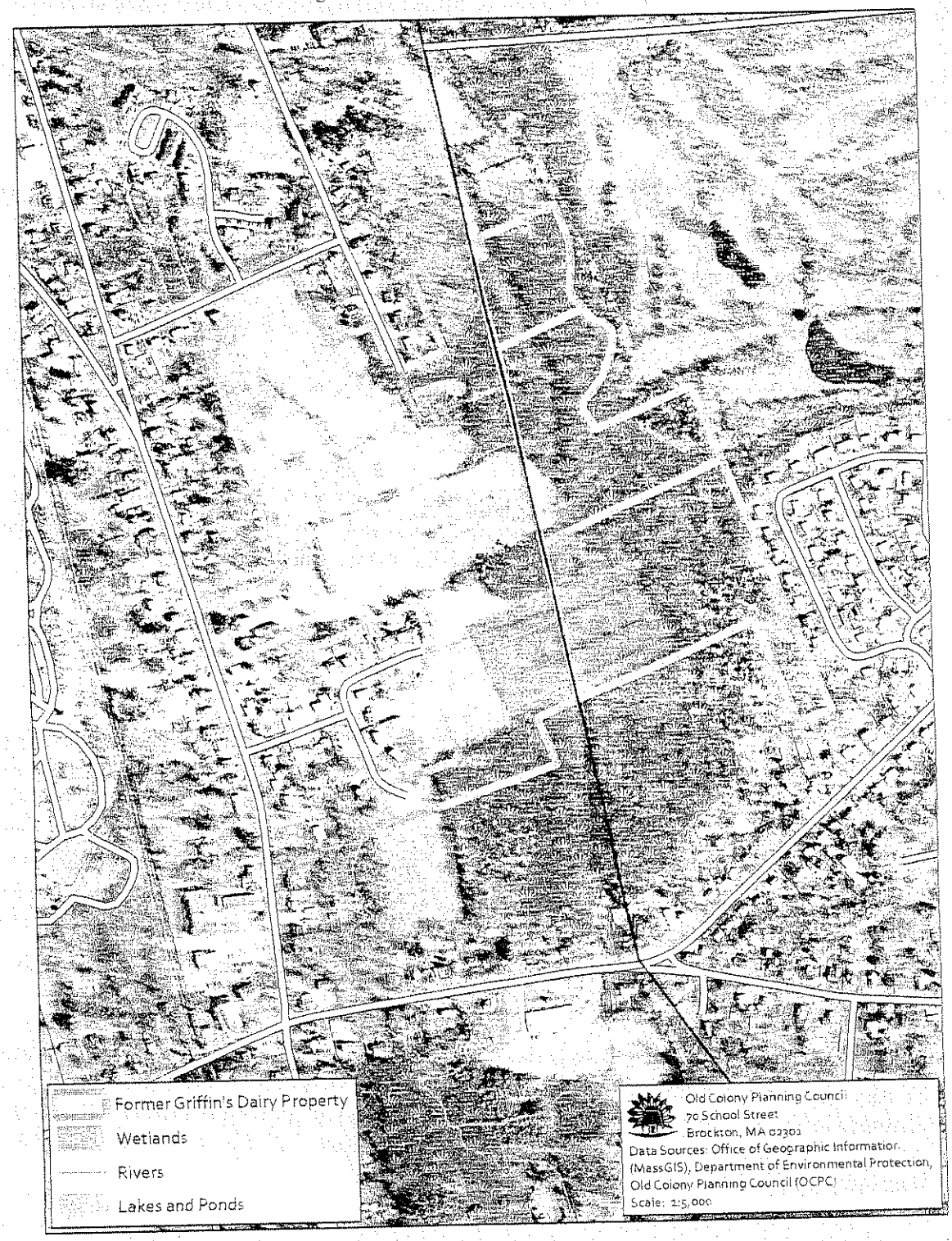
The present ORAD includes swaths along the natural and man-made streams north of Bellow's Circle and all the land east and south of Bellow's Circle and east of Charles Street extended. Thus it includes the heavily ditched open land east of Bellow's Circle. In addition, it includes a small area west of the southern end of Charles Street and at the town property line just south of Pattison Street. It excludes most of the Eldridge fine sandy loam (221B) noted as having some development potential and some of the adjacent open Squamscott land (200A), except for that along the above noted natural and man-made streams west of Charles Street.

The wetlands layer provided by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (as seen in Figure 8) shows slightly less extensive wetlands, e.g., omitting streams in the open northwest portion of the farm, but shows the relationship of the farm's wetlands to those on surrounding properties.

It should also be noted that there is one reported potential vernal pool that has not been evaluated, and ongoing town mowing may have removed any characteristic species. It is located to the rear of the former barn and house and on the town line just north of an island of woodland. Reduced mowing may allow continued function of the vernal pool.

Figure 7: 2012 Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD)

Figure 8: MassDEP Wetlands



Regulatory Issues

While most of the western portion of the site has high seasonal or year-round water tables, it is mapped by the USGS as fields, not as open marshland. It is also mapped as upland on Figure 8: MassDEP Wetlands and on Figure 7: 2012 Order of Resource Area Delineation. Nevertheless, work within 100' of the site's natural streams and man-made drainage ditches would require Notices of Intent to the Conservation Commission and conformance to the resulting Orders of Conditions. This is because any water body, natural or man-made, is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act. Similarly, any work affecting the very inclusive "Waters of the United States" requires a permit from the Corps of Engineers under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Beyond this, it is reported that any resumed agricultural activity in or affecting wetlands after a significant cessation of farming also requires a Notice of Intent and compliance with a subsequent Order of Conditions. Accordingly, the town may have to file a Notice for any restored farming as well as for any development of play fields and to follow any resulting Orders of Conditions. The proposed agricultural activities could be guided by a reported DEP publication '"Farming in Wetlands".

8. Vegetation

As the aerial photographs reveal, most of Abington's portion of the farm is in open grassland with many sedges (grass-like plants growing in dense tufts above the surrounding grasses in the marshy places) and with groups of trees along the edges of the grasslands.

9. Rare and Endangered Species

The town has five rare or endangered species according to the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program as noted in Table 2 below.

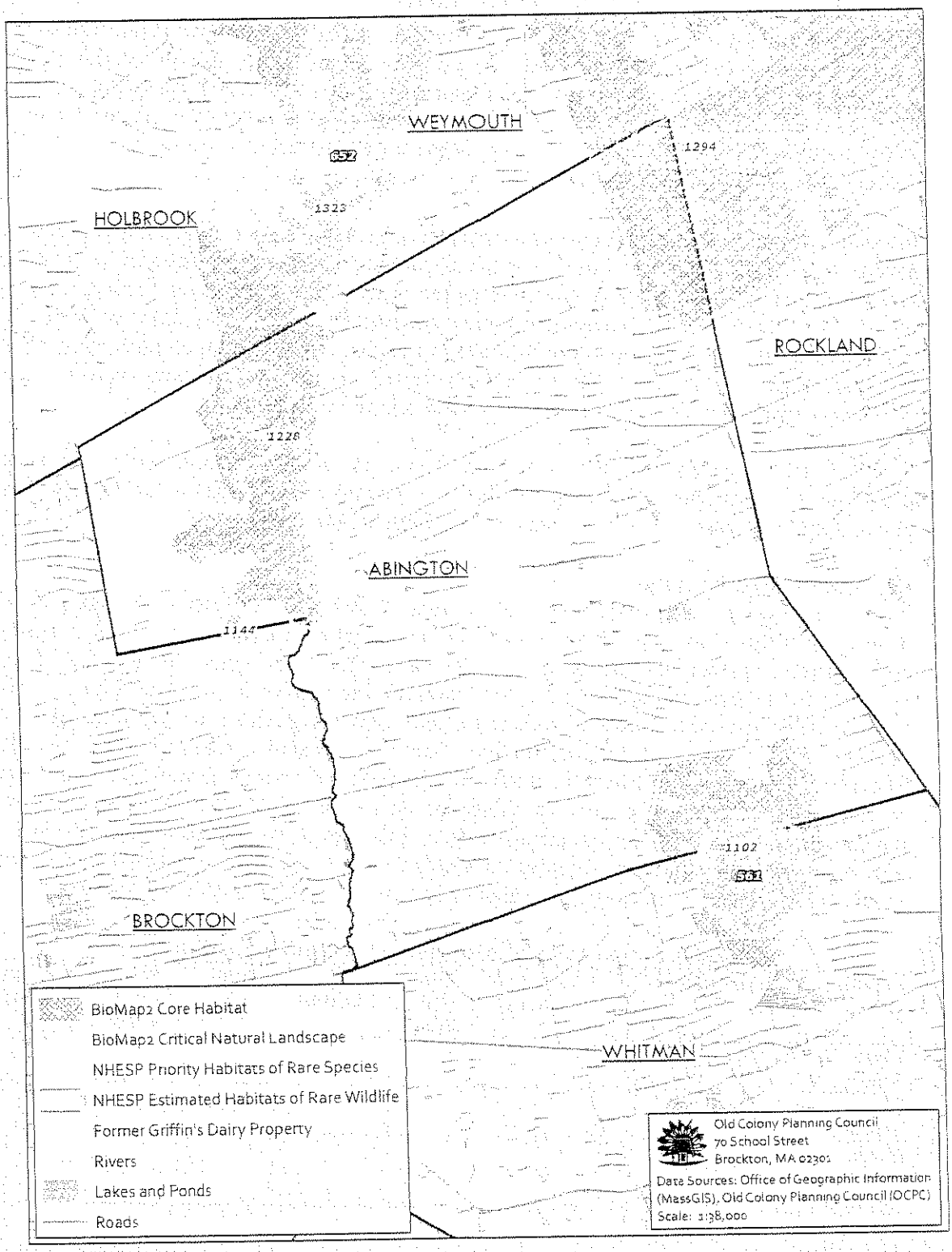
Table 2: Rare or Endangered Species in Abington

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conservation Status
American Bittern	Botaurus lentiginosus	Endangered Bird
The Least Bittern	Ixobrychus exilis	Endangered Bird
Hessel's Hairstreak	Callophrys hesseli	Butterfly of Special Concern
Grasshopper Sparrow	Ammodamus savannarum	Threatened Bird
New England Blue	Enallagma laterle	Dragonfly Damsel of Special Concern

In addition, an abundant amount of hawks, geese, coyotes, turkeys and deer and other wildlife have been observed on the site, but none are endangered.

Figure 9 shows Core Habitat, Critical Natural Landscape and Priority and Estimated Habitats of Rare Species and Wildlife located in Abington. It is important to note that all Priority, Estimated and Core Habitats and Critical Natural Landscapes are remote from the study area, being in northeast, northwest and southeastern portions of the town, all located a considerable distance from the site.

Figure 9: Habitat & Rare Wildlife Map



B. The Built Environment - Man-Made Features

1. Circulation, Transportation and Site Access

The site and the town as a whole have good regional accessibility. North-south Routes 58 and 18 and east–west routes 123 and 139 connect Abington to adjacent communities including the city of Brockton, and to the region's limited access highways, Routes 3, 24, and 128 which are all one-community distant. The town also has commuter rail service with a station off of Route 123, making it an increasingly desirable community for people working in the Boston/Cambridge area.

Immediate site access is via frontage on Plymouth Street and Pattison Street and dead-ended portions of Charles Street and the Bellow's Circle subdivision. The adjacent abandoned sewer bed property along Charles Street abuts the site to the north and has frontage at two points along Charles Street. Access to the most developable parts of the farm would be via Pattison Street serving the north-eastern corner of the site, or the present entrance way off of Plymouth Street serving the adjacent central-western portion of the site including the community gardens and the site of the former barn and farmhouse.

The farm itself is located on Plymouth Street (Route 58), between Routes 139 to the north and Route 123 to the south. As noted earlier, it is roughly in the center of the town's most developed north-south corridor along and east of Bedford Street (Route 18).

2. Recreation Facilities

Table 1 on Page 13 summarizes the town's present recreation facilities as included in the Town's 2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan. In particular, there now are five essentially multi-purpose (football, soccer, lacrosse) fields behind the High School, though there is no provision for softball or baseball. All of the fields are big enough for the sizes of soccer and lacrosse fields used in the town as well as football, with the goals set up and lines added as needed. As is noted in Table 1: Abington Recreation Facility Needs by Past SCORP Standards, Abington has a four acre surplus of playfields, a 1.8 acre surplus of playgrounds, but is lacking an acre for tot lots. (It should be noted that the SCORP no longer includes quantitative standards relating requiring acres of facilities to population groups. Instead, it now focuses on the expressed demand for various types of facilities by various population groups in the context of the usage of available facilities to suggest needed investments.

Table 3: Inventory of Abington's Recreation Facilities

Location	Playgrounds	Tot Lots	Basketball Courts	Misc. Ball Fields	Track Facilities	Tennis Courts	Multi-Purpose Fields	Swimming Facilities
Center School	1	1		1+				
High School							5	
Beaver Brook Elementary	1	1		3				
Frolio Junior High	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	
Woodsdale School	1		2+	1			1	

Location	Playgrounds	Tot Lots	Basketball Courts	Misc. Ball Fields	Track Facilities	Tennis Courts	Multi-Purpose Fields	Swimming Facilities
S. Valley Golf								
Police Station			2					
Reilly Field					1		1	
Green Street	1	1	2	1				
Arnold Park/Wales Street	1	1	1	1				
Island Grove Park	1	1						1
Laidler Field	1	1					1	
Plymouth Street Recreation Area							2+	
Total	8	7	8+	9+	2	3	11+	1

3. Cultural Resources - Structures

As noted above under Visual Characteristics-Viewshed, the iconic view of the barn, farmhouse and outbuildings from Plymouth Street is gone with the town's recent demolition of those buildings. The house and barn were part of the agricultural landscape as were the earlier silos.

More broadly, the fading presence of agriculture in the town with the residential development of the western "country" part of Abington, the inactivity at the former Pohorecky Farm and Hendrikson's Dairy, and the small scale of the Sun Rae Lea farm have diminished the town's farming culture and economy. The expanded community gardens and farmers' market (now being relocated to the Senior Center) will give more people the chance to experience growing food and the opportunity to sell surplus and to buy from other producers.

4. Zoning

As noted earlier, the site is zoned R-30 for low density housing with 30,000 square-foot lots, except for a fringe of the R- 20 "high density" multi-family district with 20,000 square foot lots just south of Pattison Street. The R-30 zoning allows single-family detached houses on 30,000 square foot lots and excludes two-family or attached dwellings along with apartments and multi-unit condominium. It can allow various health, social service, and recreation facilities by special permit, assuming suitable site conditions.

The R-20 District allows single family-detached houses on 20,000 square foot lots as-of-right and by special permit it can allow two-family houses, single-family attached houses (townhouses) in groups of four units, apartments, and multi-unit condominium, but only on 40,000 square foot lots. Though called "high density," the District's highest allowable

density, slightly over 10 units/acre, is about the same as many single-family neighborhoods in older closely-built suburbs.

In addition, the town has a Flood Plain and Wetlands Protection zoning district, S.175.35. This is to protect and preserve water bodies and adjoining wetlands, to protect the town from the flooding hazards, and to preserve the capacity of wetlands and flood plains to absorb, transmit and store runoff and to safely convey flood flows. It is primarily concerned with protection from flood damage and therefore should not constrain use of the site's land which is away from the mapped floodplain.

The wetland protection functions parallel those in the Wetlands Protection Act which is included by reference and enforced by the Conservation Commission. The Commission would continue to regulate alteration of the site's water bodies and wetlands including natural and man-made streams.

The proposed uses are all allowable under the present zoning. Chapter 40A, the state zoning act, allows agriculture in any district so long as a site has a minimum of five acres (even if divided by a road) or of two acres if it produce crops valued at $1,000 an acre. Smaller activities like the community garden would presumably be allowed in a residential disrict as accessory uses. And, as noted, above insitutional and recreation uses are allowable by special permit in the applicable R-30 District.

5. Utilities

The site has water supplies from the Abington-Rockland Joint Water Board; electricity and gas from National Grid; and sewage treatment through the City of Brockton via inter-municipal agreements, though the adjacent former sewer bed site would have flowed to the Rockland treatment plant. Most significantly, Abington's allowed daily flows to the Brockton system was recently increased from one million gallons/day (MGD) to 1.5 MGD. Thus neither accessibility nor the availability of utilities will limit the site's development potential in comparison with soil characteristics and patterns of wetlands.

C. Site Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The site characteristics affecting possible uses can be examined via a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis.

Strengths-The site's strengths are undeveloped land, available utilities, good accessibility, and an attractive setting.

Weaknesses-The applicable main weaknesses are the site's soil conditions and wetlands. Any development would have to conform to the Wetlands Protection Act and the Clean Water Act and reflect a Conservation Commission Order of Conditions protecting the site's streams and wetlands as well as a Corps of Engineers permit protecting any Waters of the United States.

Opportunities-Apart from agriculture (including haying), the opportunities include limited institutional development like the previously planned Senior Center and proposed Middle

School, limited low and moderate density residential development like that north of Pattison Street, or preservation as Open Space for passive recreation or wildlife habitat.

Threats-The threats to such opportunities are largely constraints imposed by wetlands and other site conditions.

D. Potential Reuse Opportunities

Possible reuse opportunities for the site are discussed below. They include Active Organized Recreation, Agriculture, Renewable Energy, Open Space/Passive Recreation/Wildlife Habitat, and Education.

1. Active Organized Recreation

The forthcoming temporary loss of four to five playing fields due to the construction of the new High School and Middle School and the present reported shortage of playing fields and practice fields has led to interest in developing several playing fields or practice fields on suitable parts of the farm. The following explores these needs and possible responses.

Recreation Uses and Needs

There was a golf education program reportedly operated at the farm for some time, but is now gone leaving other possibilities. Recreation activities in coordination with the golf course on the adjacent land in Rockland have been suggested, but the extensive intervening wooded wetlands apparently preclude joint development efforts. However, by some standards, there are calculable gaps in local recreation facilities as discussed below and four to five multi-use fields will be needed to at least temporarily replace those that will be lost during construction of the new high school and middle school.

This suggests that given the lack of a market interest in farming over the whole site (beyond the prospective Hornstra lease of most of the open land for hay production) a partial re-use should be one to three multi-purpose playing fields or practice fields.

Present needs for recreation facilities within Abington

As stated previously, the 2014 Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan analyzed the town's overall recreation facility needs by past Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) standards which led to the following four major goals:

- Increasing the availability of all types of trails for recreation.
- Increasing the availability of water based recreation.
- Investing in recreation and conservation areas that are close to home for short visits.
- Investing in racially, economically and age diverse neighborhoods given the projected increase in participation in outdoor recreation.

Facilities created at the Farm could advance all of these goals, though water based recreation would be limited to activities along the site's natural and man-made streams and the bordering French Stream.

Present Facilities
In all, there are reportedly 11 fields occupying 44 acres. The SCORP analysis based on acreage suggests that the town now needs one more multi-purpose field. The actual need depends on expressed and inferred demand, the use of present resources, and scheduling practices/problems. The Park and Recreation staff reports sufficient demand to support several more fields, but notes the budgetary constraints, even on present operations.

Impacts of the School Construction Project
In any case, the construction of the new high school and middle school will temporarily remove five fields from the mix and permanently remove one field by replacing the five high school fields with four; two artificial turf fields and two natural fields.

According to the present project schedule, all of the high school fields will be closed by project activities by December 2015. Two will be replaced by artificial turf fields in the northeast corner of the present site in less than a year by August of 2016. After opening the new schools and demolishing the present school in January, 2018, and completing site work, construction of two natural turf fields will begin in August 2018, with the fields being available for use by the spring of 2020. Thus the project will remove five fields from use for less than a year from December of 2015 to August of 2016, and keep the other three fields for use for three and a half years until the two natural fields open in 2020, leaving the permanent loss of one field. The project will not affect the Park and Recreation Commission's heavily used Reilly Field and track just west of the school.

The project schedule suggests the temporary need for up to five fields from January to August of 2016, for three fields through the spring of 2020, and the possible need for one additional field to maintain the present supply.

However, the schools' athletic director believes that the greatest need is for practice fields and that these could be created at the farm with very little preparation by mowing the present grass and lining it as needed. Such fields do not even need to be of standard dimensions as one practice field was only 70 yards long.

In contrast, the Park and Recreation Director/Highway Superintendent, John Caine, sees needs for both playing fields and practice fields. He feels that practice fields should be built to comparable standards to playing fields, particularly with uniform level surfaces to prevent injuries. He notes that one major field is not needed since the school plays its home football games at the Frolio School Field.

Summary of Impacts of the High School/Middle School Project
In all: Town loses five fields from 12/2015 to 8/2016 when two turf fields at right rear of site are finished. Town continues to lose three fields to 2020; 1/2018 New HS/MS is done; old school is demolished through end of 2018; 1/2019 two new grass fields in front of new school are seeded for use in 2020; 2020 new artificial turf fields are useable. Net loss is one multi-purpose field.

Size Requirements

If variable field sizes are acceptable for soccer and lacrosse, the following standards indicate that official football fields are large enough to encompass soccer and lacrosse fields when needed. According to the Athletic Director Peter Serino, the sizes used in Abington are as follows:

Table 4: Abington Public Schools Dimensional Requirements for Sports Fields

Sport	Length	Width	Comments
Football	120 Yards (Includes 10 yards at each end)	160 Feet (55.3 Yards) plus 10-15 feet of runoff space at each side=180-190 feet or 60-63 yards.	Leave 10 Feet between fields.
Soccer	100-120 Yards (For H.S.)	55-80 Yards (Slightly exceeds football width, but they prefer 60-65 yards for H.S.)	They prefer smaller sizes for H.S. with 10 feet between fields.
Boys Lacrosse	110 Yards	50-80 Yards	They prefer a 60-65 yard width for H.S., so it can fit within a football field.
Girls Lacrosse	110 Yards	50-80 Yards	

In all, the multi-use fields are recommended to be 120 yards long by 60 yards wide. These could fit on either side of the stream draining the northernmost part of the farm by using a combination of the hydric Squamscott soils and the non-hydric Eldridge soils. Making maximum use of the Eldridge soils along Pattison Street might require altering or moving the stream. Among potential future sports, field hockey could require bigger fields but there are no present plans for such a program.

Parking

The Assistant Superintendent of Schools notes that some off-street parking will be needed even for practice fields to avoid conflicts with neighbors. The number required by section 175-52 of the Abington Zoning By-Law is one space for each three seats in stadiums and other places of public assembly. However, the Schools' Athletic Director, Mr. Peter Serino, reports that none of the fields to be lost to the new school construction have bleachers and no fields built at Griffin's Diary would need any. (This is in contrast to the Memorial Field at the Frolio School and the Reilly Field which have bleachers.) Parents would mostly drop off and pick kids at the edge the field for practice, but rarely stay to watch. Hence, we propose minimal parking.

If required, parking could be north of the western field with access via a special project crossing the adjacent stream, or south of that field where the house and barn were.

If the major games continue to be played at the Frolio School field, games at the other fields might draw one hundred or so spectators. Assuming that there are no formal bleachers with seats that can be counted, a possible 100 spectators would require 34 spaces. At 200 square feet (10' by 20') this would take 6,800 square feet plus a comparable amount for aisles, or

13,600 square feet, slightly over a quarter of an acre. To minimize impacts and drainage requirements the space should use Low Impact Design e.g., with permeable grass pavers, crushed stone or porous paving, with occasional overflow parking on the grass or at curbside. The parking requirements need further study.

Field Development

According to the Park and Recreation Department, basic field development involves:

- Stripping and stockpiling loam or top soil with a rented bulldozer.
- Adding sand to make a good well drained sub-base.
- Replacing top soil.
- Grading it to be level but with a slight crown for draining with a rented road grader.
- Providing drainage around the edges of the Playing fields.
- If needed also providing irrigation facilities.
- Possibly adding parking space even for practice fields to avoid curb parking, though the biggest games are played at the Frolio School Field.

This could cost $100,000 per field for either a practice field or a play field according to the Parks and Recreation/Highway Department.

Overall Needs and Alternative Sites

There are two questions:

First, whether one or two replacement fields could be created at the farm (or at the 16.83-acre unused potential school site at Brockton Avenue and High Street) by December 2015. Unless they were quite primitive, such a schedule might require expensive artificial turf fields.

Second, whether three other fields could be created for use through the spring of 2020 when the natural fields become available. At a minimum, this would require detailed site analysis to see if driest land south of Pattison Street could be used without significant filling, grading or drainage. If only practice fields are needed, given the early completion of the artificial turf fields, this land may be useable as is.

Other possible sites for investigation by those seeking fields include the above mentioned 16.83- acre unused school land at Brockton Avenue and High Street, the town-owned former sewer bed property west of Charles Street and north of the Farm, and the reported available fields at Southfield, the new community at the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station.

The 3+ acre sewer bed property is mostly woodlands backing on to houses and a business along Charles Street to the west. It is just south of the Hanover Branch rail trail, just west of French Stream in Rockland, and north of the Farm. It is divided by a power line and the Abington/Rockland town lines with about a third of the land being in Rockland. The only significant open area is about .9 acres of sandy fill with scattered vegetation over the apparent former sewer beds in the north-east corner of the site. This area is mostly in Rockland consistent with USGS maps showing a past sewage disposal site along the Rockland side of the town line just south of the Rail Trail.

Use of the woodlands behind the Charles Street houses for a field would be impractical as it would clear woods and destroy that neighborhood's setting.

The open, sandy northern portion containing the apparent covered sewer beds could accommodate a 60 yard by 120 yard field bracketing the town line with the greater part in Rockland. A closer look by a landscape architect or civil engineer is needed to determine the feasibility of any of these sites.

Since this report is concerned with identifying and recommending possible uses of the Farm, not with meeting play field needs as such, detailed exploration of alternative field sites is the responsibility of the respective athletic organizations.

Conclusion: The Farm offers opportunities to meet a combination of athletic, agricultural, open space/recreation, renewable energy and habitat protection needs in one mixed-use development.

Site Design

The Site Design/Proposed Land Uses to be shown to the public will consist of fitting one or two fields of the maximum 120 yard by 60 yard dimensions to accommodate the intended sports, particularly in the least constrained areas south of Pattison Street and just east of Plymouth Street along with any needed parking. The plan shows the location of the field, but not the future parcel lines separating the playing fields from the adjacent hay fields. These would be established during the design phase.

The layout would also accommodate an expanded community garden contiguous to the present one, along with open space/habitat use of the remaining wetlands with connecting walking/riding trails and a possible photovoltaic array on upland east and north east of Bellow's Circle, and the potential lease of any remaining open upland for growing hay.

2. Agriculture

There is expressed citizen interest in continued farming and continuation of the present partially open, partially wooded savanna landscape, particularly by neighbors. However, no one apparently sought to buy and continue the farm when it was sold. At the most, HP Hood and independent local milkmen temporarily rented space in the barn and cooler for milk distribution. The town reportedly mows the fields annually in hope of improving the quality of the hay by cutting back various intrusive plants, but with little effect.

One potential opportunity is use of much of the upland for growing hay by a local dairy farmer such as John Hornstra of Hingham's Hornstra Farms. While Mr. Hornstra needs both hay and cow corn, he and other informed observers note that most of the farm is only good for growing hay with cow corn possible only on a small area near the community gardens. Mr. Hornstra would be willing to negotiate with the town for renting some land by the acre as he is now doing with the Hingham Conservation Commission.

One suggestion has been to develop temporary playing fields until the new high school/middle school project is done and the new fields are finished. However, informed

sources say that any significant grading even of practice fields would degrade the top soil precluding further cultivation. Hence, all but the most un-altered temporary fields might as well continue in playing field use. In any case, management for feed hay rather than construction hay would require considerable fertilizing and liming to lower acidity. In the meantime, the one active agricultural use is the very successful .46 acre community garden which is planned for continuing expansion.

3. Renewable Energy

The Selectmen's December 16, 2014 request was to examine "all possibilities for agriculture, open space and active and passive recreation." Also, "possibly a renewable energy component." Accordingly, the plan accommodates recreation uses in the form of two multi-purpose athletic fields (subject to detailed site analysis) and trails connecting the various components to their surroundings, along with agriculture with the expansion of the present community garden and possible use of available open land for growing hay. It also preserves the main open and forested wetlands as wildlife habitat and open space, and retains some land which might be used for renewable energy generation.

Any renewable energy components such as wind turbines and solar collectors would need to be compatible with any agricultural, recreation, and open space uses and to be productive. Wind turbines could be compatible with solar collectors or agriculture since they cause very little shade and need to be surrounded by extensive undeveloped clear areas. For example, a 110' windmill with 20' radius blades would require a 260'diameter clear area.

The need for the clear areas suggests growing crops or placing photovoltaic collectors in them, particularly on open land which is too wet for growing more than hay. However, the low-lying, relatively flat farm lacks the height or relief most suited to capturing the wind. A study of the site's year-round wind patterns would probably find less opportunity for wind power than for photovoltaic generation. The region now has at least 17 functioning or planned solar arrays generating from 2.64 Kilowatts at the Brockton High School to 5.7 Megawatts by Borego Solar Systems in Plympton. (1000 kilowatts = one megawatt, i.e. one million watts). These systems are exemplified by a 1.87 megawatt system built on 8.6 acres off of Route 28 in West Bridgewater.

The area just east of Bellow's Circle contains about 2.8 acres of open upland while the firm operating the West Bridgewater site seeks at least five acres for a productive array. Thus, a facility could require using 2.2 acres of some adjacent potential hay field or open wetlands/ grasslands habitat as discussed below.

The nearby power line crossing the site may allow a low-cost connection for selling surplus power to the grid, but some power companies prefer feeding power to the grid via the local pole-mounted distribution system.

4. Open Space/Passive Recreation/Wildlife Habitat

At a minimum, Open Space/Passive Recreation uses would include the extensive wetlands in the eastern portion of the farm, along with land for trails across the site. These would include land alongside the natural and man-made streams in the northwest corner of the site and

possibly the power line right of way, and give access to surrounding features - Pattison Street, the Rockland Golf Course, Plymouth Street, the Community Gardens, and possibly Central Street to the south.

A more ambitious approach would be to preserve the entire farm as open space and habitat except for portions needed for specific public purposes like the previously proposed Senior Center and Middle School. This would preserve wooded wetlands as well as a large area of increasingly rare grasslands habitat which is very important for some bird species and other small creatures.

Such a use is not required by the Town Meeting article providing for the acquisition, but it is possible. In such a case, the town would do well to put the affected property under a Conservation Restriction (CR) or to turn the property or portions of it over to the Conservation Commission or possibly to the Park and Recreation Commission to manage any developed facilities such as camp sites and the trails.

5. Education - An Environmental Center for Our Schools (ECOS)

Another past proposal was an environmental education center like the Environmental Center for Our School (ECOS) program at the Springfield schools. This would take advantage of the range of vegetation and wildlife communities in fields, woods and ponds on or near the site. While there is no pond on the farm, there are others nearby such as that north of Hamlin Lane on Mount Vernon Cemetery land between the Frolio School and the Cemetery.

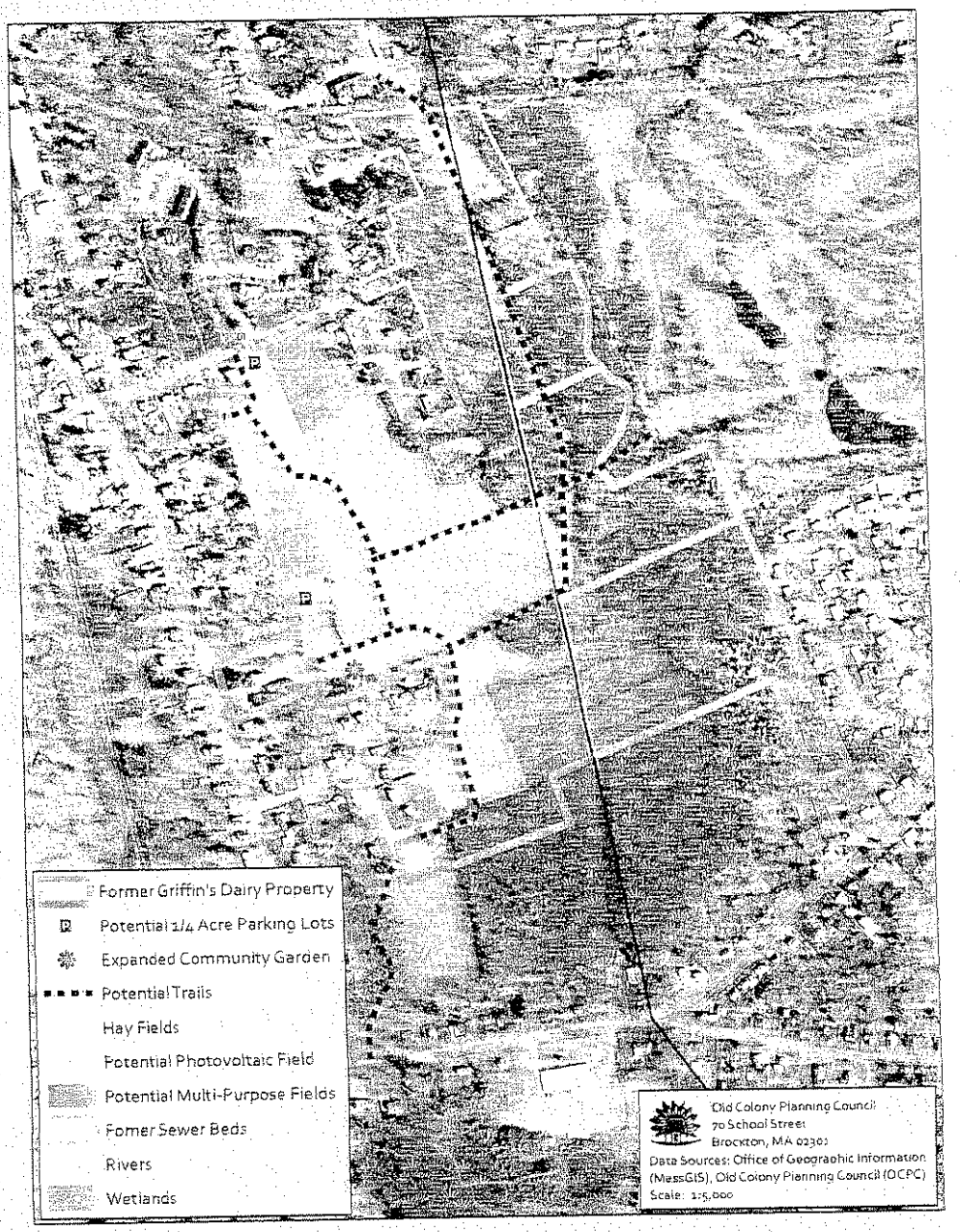
This program would have been housed in either the barn or the house. Because these structures have been removed, it would require new space or housing at a nearby school such as the Beaver Brook Elementary School. It could require preserving the site's diversity thereby possibly constraining uses or possible use of the fields or ditched area for photovoltaic arrays. However, the program could also use comparable ecological communities elsewhere in town or at Ames Nowell State Park.

With a less formal approach, Save Abington's Green Environment (SAGE) would presumably continue their present series of agricultural and environmental programs at the Community Garden with a large tent for weather protection.

IV. Master Plan - Process and Recommendations

Reviews of past studies and public input indicates support for a combination of organized recreation (playing fields), agriculture, and open space uses, and possibly some renewable energy uses. The following plan as shown in Figure 10 seeks to accommodate all of these. Each playing field would be placed on the most suitable soils for ballfields and any required parking. The remaining open upland would be kept for agriculture, except for areas proposed for photovoltaic arrays, and the extensive wooded wetlands would be kept as open space/wildlife habitat.

Figure 10: Map of Master Plan Recommendations



A. Potential Uses

Active Organized Recreation

It is assumed that the desired improvements are one to two multi-purpose practice or playing fields in addition to those at the new high school. Only one to two fields are proposed unless the alternative sites (off Brockton Avenue, the former sewer beds, or others) prove to be unworkable or there is a major delay in providing the planned two artificial turf fields by 2016. The new playing fields would be located where the soils are most suitable (the least hydric) and where no nearby wetlands can be affected. They would have to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for access to the site, seats, and any sanitary facilities. The recommended sites are just south of Pattison Street and on the western most edge of the farm next to woods and houses fronting on Plymouth Street. A potential third site just west of Charles Street is not recommended because of probable impacts on the abutting neighborhood. At 60 yards by 120 yards the playfields take about 1.49 acres plus buffer space around the edges for an estimated 2 acres/field.

Agriculture

Agriculture would use approximately 14 acres of the remaining uplands for hay growing under a lease with a farmer after resolving conflicts between the ORAD and DEP Wetlands maps. This is without the reportedly less suitable ditched open wetlands mapped east of Bellow's Circle.

Beyond this, the highest priority would be expansion of the present 19,968 square-foot (.46 acre) community garden by the present sponsor, S.A.G.E. Expanding the 192' side by 50' would add 9,600 square feet while expanding the 104' side by 50' would add another 5,200 square feet for a possible total addition of 14,800 square feet. Larger scale agriculture will require closer examination of the soils, but reports that the Griffin family grew hay, but not corn, suggests that much of the remaining open land could remain as managed hay fields.

The present site plan leaving the 2.8 acres of open upland just east of Bellow's Circle for potential solar photovoltaics when five acres are needed for the array and then developing playing fields on sites one and two, requires 2.2 more acres. These could come from either of adjacent open wetlands to the east or from potential hay fields to the north. If the wetlands are not usable, taking the 2.2 acres from the potential hay fields would leave approximately 11.8 acres for hay growing. This assumes that the ditched open wetlands east of Bellow's Circle are not potentially productive hay fields.

In this regard the objectives of the current Abington Open Space and Recreation Plan include completing "reuse planning for the Griffin's Dairy land in conjunction with the 6.3-acre former sewer beds (to) the north, transferring any portion planned for permanent open space, recreation or agricultural use to the Conservation and/or Recreation Commission" and "leasing portions of new and existing farmland holdings like Griffin's Dairy to new or prospective farmers." The Open Space plan does not contemplate providing five acres for photovoltaics so meeting those needs without using wetlands will reduce the area of potential hay fields as discussed above.

Open Space/Passive Recreation

The open space /passive recreation uses would include the extensive wooded wetlands to the east along with land for trails across the site. These would run along the natural and man-made streams in the northwest corner of the site and possibly along the power line right of way, and give access to surrounding features - Pattison Street, the Rockland Golf Course, Plymouth Street, the Hanover Branch Rail Trail, the Community Gardens and possibly Centre Avenue to the south. The wooded wetlands to the east would protect wildlife habitat while allowing a nature trail.

Renewable Energy

The Selectmen's December 16, 2014 request was to examine "all possibilities for agriculture, open space, and active and passive recreation" (and) "possibly a renewable energy component." Accordingly, the draft plan recommends using some of the open upland east and northeast of Bellow's Circle for renewable energy generation through photo-voltaic panels. Wind turbines are not proposed because the low, level farm probably has relatively light winds, and avoiding wetlands would put the turbines very close to the Bellow's Circle housing. The minimal wind is unfortunate as turbines would probably be compatible with collectors or agriculture since they cause very little shade and require undeveloped surrounding clear areas.

The proposed collectors could be modeled on the 1.87 megawatt system built on the 8.6 acres Asack site off Route 28 in West Bridgewater. The proposed strip of open upland east and northeast of Bellow's Circle contains only about 2.8 acres while the operator of the West Bridgewater field prefers a minimum of five acres. (Note that the ORAD (Figure 7) shows wetlands up to Bellow's Circle while the DEP Wetlands map (Figure 8) shows this 2.8 acres as upland.) Rather than attempt to site the collectors on the adjacent mapped open wetlands and flood plain to the east, it is more appropriate to make up the rest of the minimum five acres from adjacent land using 2.2 acres of adjacent the southern-most potential hay fields.

Thus, a five acre facility may be feasible here at the cost of foregoing some hay fields or areas of rare grasslands habitat. Financially the photovoltaics could generate far more income than hay fields, though the hay fields would be more in the spirit of the site's agricultural past.

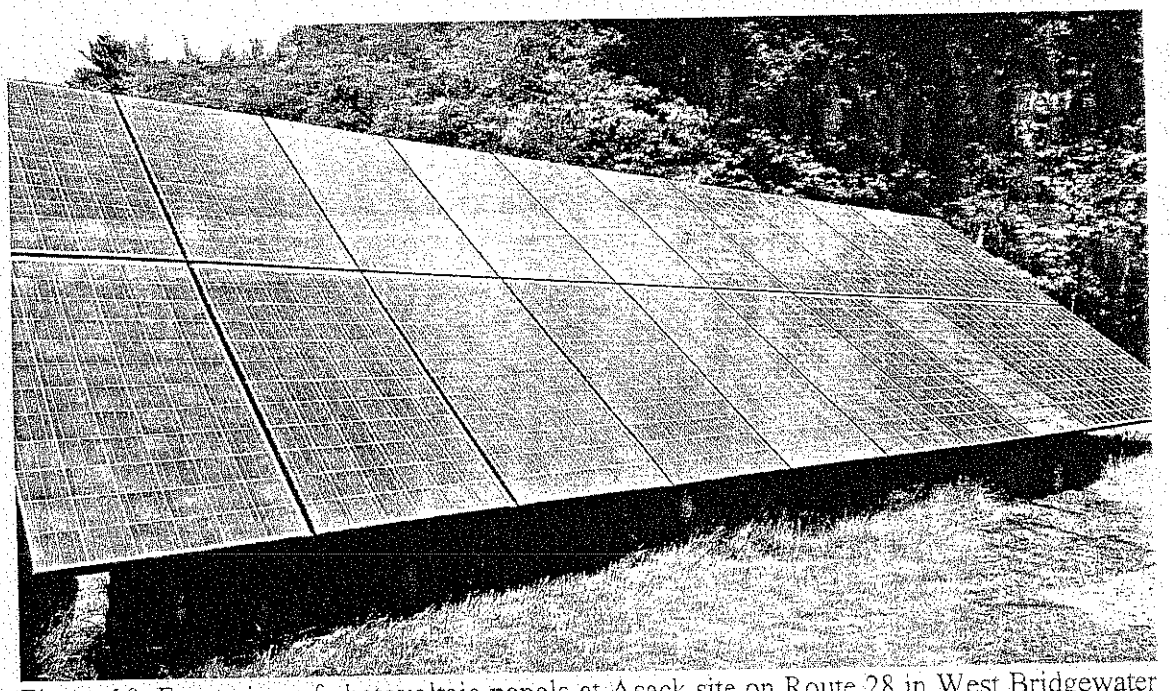


Figure 10: Front view of photovoltaic panels at Asack site on Route 28 in West Bridgewater (Note the minimal impact/disturbance to the ground)

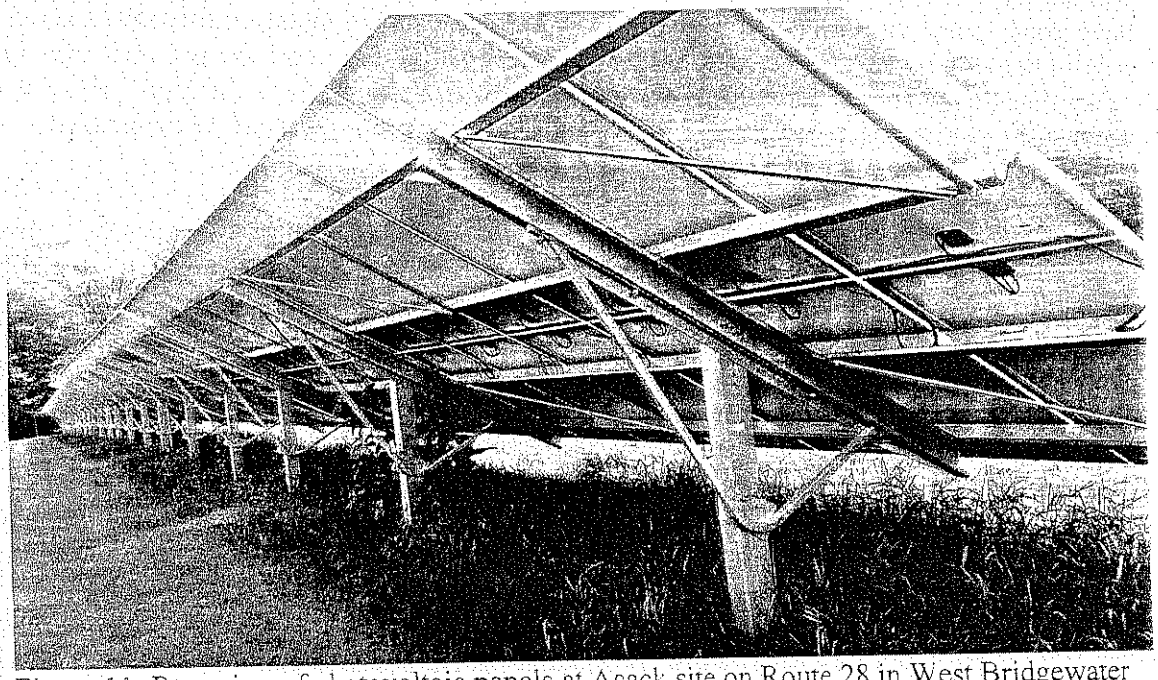


Figure 11: Rear view of photovoltaic panels at Asack site on Route 28 in West Bridgewater (Note once again the minimal disturbance to the ground surface)

Proposed Site Plans

The major planned uses remain the multi-purpose ballfields. There are two recommended possible locations.

Site One would have one field just south of Pattison Street. This would put most of it in the driest non-hydric Eldridge Fine Sandy Loam soils, while the southwest corner of the field is on Squamscott Fine Sandy Loam soils (with water at the surface seven months of the year) and very close (about 40 feet) from the stream running south from Pattison Street. A notice of intent and order of conditions from the Conservation Commission would be required for any work within 100' of the broadly defined streams and bordering wetlands shown on the ORAD map (Figure 7).

Site Two would put a second field to the southwest next to woods backing onto houses along Plymouth Street. Most of this would be over the Eldridge Fine Sandy Loam soils with the northwest corner being over Squamscott Fine Sandy Loam soils. It would cover a portion of the adjacent man-made stream which would need to be relocated consistent with a Conservation Commission Order of Conditions. The approximately 160 feet of woodland to the west should help to buffer the houses along Plymouth Street against loud games. A potential third site would be just west of Charles Street and south of the present houses on Charles Street. This would be partially on the most favorable Eldridge Fine Sandy Loam soil and partially on Squamscott soils. It would be remote from the nearest stream, and would have good access via Charles Street. However, it would have a greater noise impact on the nearby houses than the other sites. Further, as mentioned above, there are potential sites for other fields elsewhere in Abington, and the two artificial turf fields at the High School are planned for completion by August, 2016. Therefore, only sites 1 and 2 are recommended.

B. Potential Funding Sources

- The State's Parkland Acquisition and renovations for Communities (PARC) grant program which can support acquisition and development of land for park and outdoor recreation purposes. This is the state-supported former Self Help Program and the Urban, Small Town, regional and statewide variants. These were earlier proposed in the 1989 East Bridgewater Bay Circuit Open Space and Recreation Plan for the development of the East Bridgewater landfill as a regional recreation facility serving at least East Bridgewater, West Bridgewater and Brockton. PARC projects in Abington can be reimbursed by 64%.
- The state supported Land Acquisition for Natural Diversity (LAND) program for acquiring open space for natural diversity and passive recreation. It allows reimbursements of 50% to 70% of project costs with 64% applying to Abington.
- The Federally supported Massachusetts Land and Water Conservation Fund allowing reimbursement of funds spent for acquisition and development or renovation or park, recreation, or conservation areas.
- Local Community Preservation Act funds – if the program, accepted by Town Meeting, is approved at a forth coming election.
- Town Appropriations.
- School Department Budget for improvements and impact mitigation related to the new schools.

- Any revenue from renting fields to other users.

C. **Potential Operating Costs**

- Minimal practice field maintenance. The mowed and lined natural practice fields should require no special maintenance beyond mowing, removal of any stones which work their way to the surface from frost action, perhaps filing in any major divots or other damage to the surface plus fertilizing and irrigation.
- Playing field maintenance could require more expensive, complex turf management with mowing, reseeding, watering, weeding and related tasks. As a rough guide, the Park and Recreation Department suggests allowing $6,000 per year per field. It is not clear if this is for both practice fields and playing fields.

D. **Potential Revenues**

- Rentals to other schools and private teams.
- The Park and recreation Commission now charges $25/participant/year fee for rental or fields, hence $550 for two 11-person football teams. Rates are higher for the relatively few out-of-town teams.
- According to the Abington Schools' Athletic Director, Mr. Peter Serino, this could add up to $15,000/year, with more possible if more fields were available. Still, the Town's Park and Recreation Director does not see rentals as a major revenue source.
- Other potential revenues from the farm would be from solar arrays. As an example, 8.6 acres in West Bridgewater are rented to a solar power company for $30,000 a year. Revenue for directly producing and selling power and possibly tax credits would presumably be considerably higher.

E. **Design Guidelines**

- The dimensional standards are those used by the Abington Public Schools and summarized on Table 4. This study proposes a standard of 120 yards by 60 yards for multi-use fields which can accommodate the three major sports: soccer, lacrosse and football.
- ADA requirements relevant to an open field are simpler than for stadiums or other complex facilities, but the concerns with equal unobstructed access and provisions for wheelchairs and companion seating remain. Key needs from the 2014 requirements are:

  -Accessible seating for both spectators and players and accessible route requirement to court sports.

  -Six wheelchair spaces plus one per .75% of the seats in excess of 5,000.

  -Wheelchair space and companion seating on all levels of a facility on an accessible route (an unlikely need here). Each wheelchair space must have at least one adjacent companion seat.

  -At least one wheelchair space for each team or player seating area – if provided – Accessible routes will be allowed to slope up to 1:48 (2.1%).

  -An accessible route to the boundary of each area of sports activity.

Access
Access to the site would be by foot, bike or car along Pattison Street or from the end of Charles Street to reach site number one, and by the roadway in from Plymouth Street to reach site number two. In addition pedestrian or bicycle access to both sites could be by the proposed trails in from Plymouth Street, Pattison Street, or by a longer walk from Central Street if that off-site trail is built.

Parking
As noted, games at the new fields might draw one hundred or so spectators if the major games continue to be played at the Frolio Field. Assuming that the new fields have no formal bleachers, a possible 100 spectators would require 34 spaces at the one space per three seats zoning standard and occupy about a quarter of an acre. To minimize impacts and drainage requirements the space should use Low Impact Design techniques as described above. The Planning Board may require fewer spaces by Special Permits if the required land is reserved for future use if needed.

F. Plan Evaluation
The plan may be able to provide at least two practice fields or playing fields on present open upland before the two new artificial turf fields come into use in August of 2016. Most of the remaining open upland would be reserved for farming assuming that a farmer still wants to lease it for hay growing. The plan could allow the expanded community gardens by this season since the land is already clear and the successful experienced organizational structure is already in place.

The energy facilities will be on about ten acres of open upland land just east of Bellow's Circle to avoiding wetlands impacts. This is shown as upland on the DEP wetlands map (Figure 8), but as wetlands on the ORAD (Figure 7). The remaining wooded land and open wetlands would be left as open space and wildlife habitat. The streams could be the basis for a trail system allowing hiking or riding through the farm from east to west and north to south with connections to nearby attractions like the Hanover Branch rail trail via the former sewer bed land to the north, the Rockland Golf Course, and surrounding streets.

V. Recommendations:

A. Overall

Use the land on the Farm for a mixed use project encompassing:

1. One or two multi–purpose playfields on the northern and western edges of the Farm using about four acres for the fields, parking and access roads.

2. Use of most of the open upland for hay growing through a lease to farmer.

3. Use of about five acres of open upland east and north west of Bellow's Circle for Renewable Energy with photovoltaic collectors.

4. Creating a stream-oriented trail system crossing the farm and connecting with adjacent destinations like surrounding major streets, the Hanover Branch Rail Trail, and the Rockland Golf Course.

5. Preservation of the remaining wooded wetlands for open space, passive recreation use, and wildlife habitat and related educational programs.

B. Specific Recommendations

1. Do a detailed site analysis including updating of the 2012 ORAD (Order of Resource Area Delineation) in comparison to the DEP Wetlands map and the Soils map.

2. Identify the steps involved in developing playing fields or practice fields on wet soils and in developing them on sites with the least hydric soils, one south of Pattison Street and one just east of Plymouth Street.

3. Have the School and/or Park and Recreation Department hire a design firm to examine the sites and do preliminary plans for submission to the Conservation Commission with a Notice of Intent if needed.

4. Examine implementation alternatives, e.g., developing two less expensive practice fields and later converting one to a play field to replace the lost field, or making a minimal investment in temporary fields and returning the land to open space/ agricultural use after permanent fields are built if grading has not degraded the top soil.

5. Evaluate alternate sites for needed fields, e.g., School Land off Brockton Avenue, town land at Diane Circle, the Former Sewer Beds, or the use of new playfield in Southfield, for comparison with new fields at the farm.

6. Determine the agricultural value of the ditched wetland east of Bellow's Circle.

7. Determine if proposed resumed haying is an alteration of wetlands and prepare any needed Notice of Intent.

8. Lease available, suitable land to an interested farmer. Work with SAGE to expand the community gardens including a shelter for tools, supplies and gardeners during bad weather, and sanitary facilities.

9. Incorporate the woods and open land at the former sewer bed land along Charles Street in

10. Long-term plans for the farm, e.g., as a playing field and as a trail to the adjacent bike path.

11. Refine draft plan's proposed multi-purpose trails in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission.

12. Study the feasibility of photovoltaic electric generation; explore possible sites such as the 2.8 acres of open uplands immediately east of Bellow's Circle, or the southernmost 2.2 acres of hay fields; consider the trade-off between hay growing and electric generation, and reserve the needed land.

13. Explore the need for a base for environmental education programs and encourage SAGE to continue presenting such programs; doing so in a tent if needed during bad weather.

14. Consider putting recreation land and any remaining agricultural land under a conservation restriction (CR).

15. Install way-finding signage as needed to locate the farm.

16. Determine the compatibility of the prospective photovoltaic collectors' support systems with the 100-year flood plain east of Bellow's Circle.

Appendix 1: Results of the December 15, 2014 Selectmen's Public Meeting

Comments and Observations included:

- Though the recommendations of the first Griffin's Dairy Committee were not acted on, progress has been made, particularly with the "very successful community garden and farmers' market."
- National Grid is reportedly interested in a solar project.
- OCPC will be doing a Master Plan on best uses and town needs.
- The Griffin Dairy Advisory Committee has recommended a farm and community garden, possibly two practice fields and consideration of a solar field.
- One selectman questioned interest in farming.
- Some farmers have talked to the Committee.
- Why was a dog park ruled out? Cattle would not be compatible with dogs.
- Would a 3+ year lease agreement require a town meeting vote –yes.
- Youth Soccer would need fields when the existing ones are ripped up in Sept. 2015. Splitting up fields would have an impact.
- Temporary fields at the farm would be towards Pattison Street, would have no structures, and be used two days a week.
- Work on them (undefined) would be done by sports teams, not with town funds.
- There are four fields behind the high school. (Schools report five fields.)
- Two synthetic fields will be in use by August /2016 with two more on the side and front of the new building.
- Soccer people are looking at any open space. They must be aware of wetlands near Pattison Street, acknowledge parking needs, and work with Conservation Commission.
- It's a high price for temporary fields.
- Soccer people hope for volunteer help and have some money.
- What is the Soccer group's Plan B?
- Fast Lacrosse balls could endanger other nearby kids. They need their own space and play from March to June.
- The land is very wet and it will be expensive to control it.
- The donor's wishes are being ignored. [There was no donor; it was purchased under a Ch.61A first option as it was proposed for a condo development.]
- Accept and respect water (wetlands) limitations.
- Who will control the fields? A: Park and Recreation.
- Unexpected dangerous parking problems will arise and traffic will be dangerous.
- You can't take grass out for hay until next year.
- Save Griffin's Farm contested the ORAD (wetlands delineation) in 2005 and reviewed NRCS studies.
- James Dombrowski: Streams on site are a protected resource and the plan does not show all wetlands.
- Proponents will have to do a Notice of Intent (NOI).

- James Dombrowski: All streams and bordering vegetated wetlands have land subject to flooding.
- James Dombrowski: John Hornstra was interested in bringing young cows but will not due to the labor costs of watching them and the lack of weather shelter with the barn's demolition.
- Town Manager Rick LaFond: Leasing it to John Hornstra would reqiure a procurement process.
- Selectman Michael Franey: Board of Selectmen wants to know of any Hornstra interest. He supports agricultural use while sports fields would take much investment for drainage, bathrooms, parking.
- Ed Gorman:Youth Soccer rep. questions leasing to a farmer when local soccer kids could benefit.
- Sports teams are willing to take on wetlands work (How much work on drainage?).
- Wetlands alterations for sports might require replication, some farming might not.
- Robert Taylor: There are under-utilized fields elsewhere and one in Southfield. He prefers farming at the farm.
- James Dombrowski: There is also school land at Brockton Ave. and High Street with school and recreation potential.
- Robert Taylor- There is traffic and flooding at Pattison Street. The sewer beds could hold a field despite traffic and parking.
- S. Djusberg: Soccer people want six fields.
- L. Reyerson: SAGE, COA, Griffin Dairy Committee - For Expanding organic community gardening, opposes commercially fertilized recreation fields, but not against recreation fields as such.
- C. Walsh: Prefers Pattison Street for its distance from Community gardens.
- Ann Reilly: Wants OCPC to plan fields, rec. and community gardens.
- Sue Brennan: What discussions with Rockland?
- Town Manager Rick LaFond: No discussions with Rockland.
- James Dombrowski: It's all wooded wetlands.
- S. Weaver: Do a loop trail with a bridge over main stream.
- Soccer Supporers: Can BOS overturn a previous BOS vote and block recreation?
- A. Burbine: Any use requires a TM vote, but other public uses are also possible.
- A. Burbine: The land was bought for entire town's use not just for agriculture.
- Bob Manning: Boy Scouts would help and would use land for sleepovers.
- Kate Casey AAD: Students would benefit from added practice fields.
- Jean Griffin: Wants expanding wetlands reversed to 1998 levels.
- Joe Murry: Prefers mixed uses, town should have kept the barn.
- K. Coyle: Purchase was not restricted to agriculture.
- Selectman Michael Franey: Present all findings to OCPC; for mixed uses, agriculture, active and passive recreation, and a plausible renewable energy component.