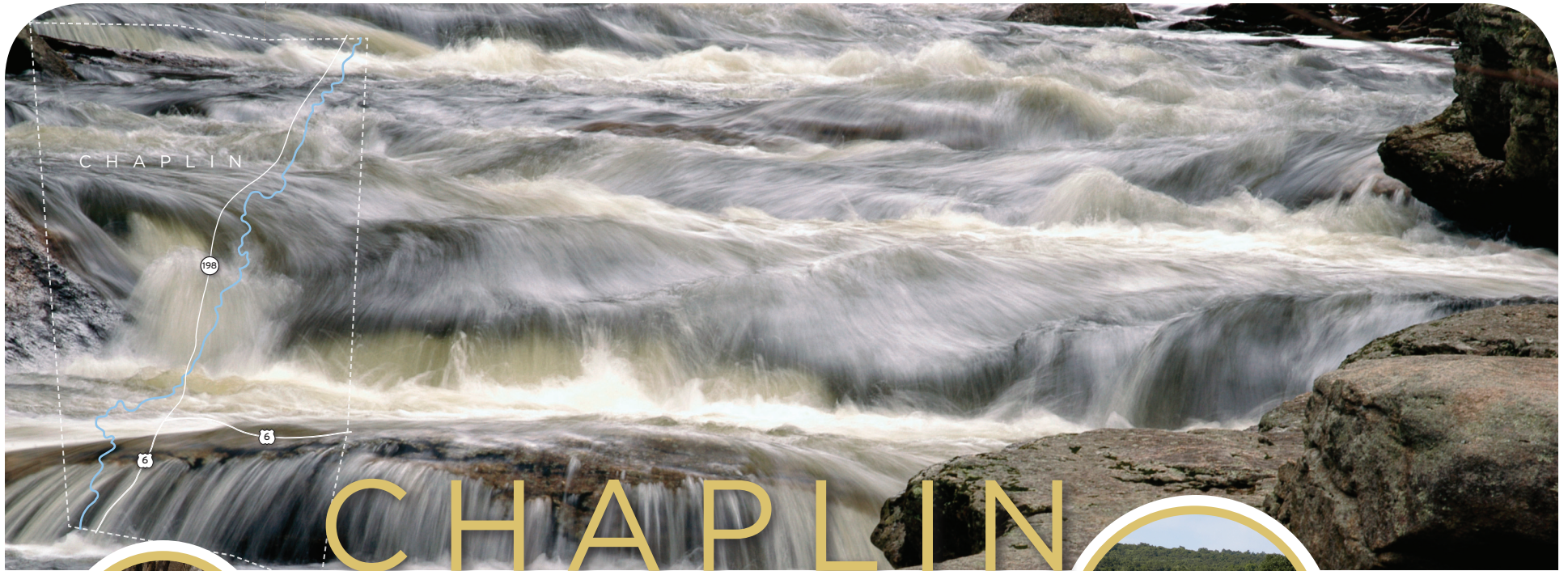
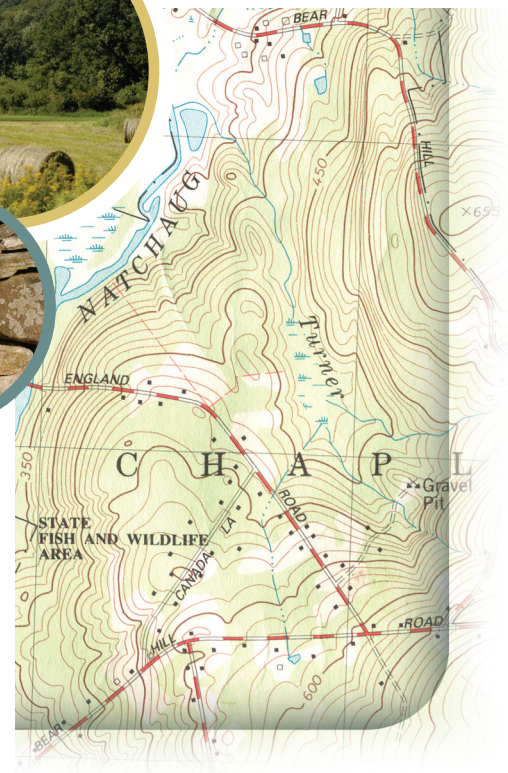




CHAPLIN

Plan of Conservation & Development



June 2010

2010 Plan of Conservation and Development

Acknowledgments

The preparation of this plan was financed with a grant from the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.
Effective July 1, 2010

Chaplin Planning & Zoning Commission

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Eric Beer	Secretary
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June Rose	
Virginia Walton	
Diane Cox	Alternate
Alan Burdick	Alternate
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Town of Chaplin

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Robert Dubos	First Selectman (previous)
John Smith	Selectman
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Scott Matthies	Inland Wetlands Chair
Juan Sanchez	Conservation Chair

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Cover Design by Renee L. Esordi.

TOWN of CHAPLIN

CONNECTICUT 06235

INCORPORATED, 1822



PLANNING and ZONING COMMISSION

To Chaplin Residents,

This endeavor has been an opportunity for Chaplin residents to take a fresh look at where we have been and where we are headed. To begin, the Planning and Zoning Commission formed a sub-committee co-chaired by John Meyer and myself. We hired a team of five planning professionals to assist us in the preparation of the plan. The synergy of the group yielded a strong plan representing a broad range of experience and technical expertise.

Four visioning workshops were facilitated in the spring of 2009 by Susan Westa and Paula Stahl of the Green Valley Institute. From these events we got a real sense of what our residents like about our community and what they would like to change. These events were well attended and provided a jumping off point for our series of ten focused workshops that were facilitated by John Pagini and Jana Butts. These ten workshops provided a real introspection into our community.

In April of 2010, we sponsored two public information sessions to present the plan to the citizens of Chaplin. We followed this with a public hearing in May where testimony was taken from all interested persons regarding the composition of the proposed plan. The plan was finalized, accepted and approved by the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission in June 2010.

I would like to thank John Meyer for his hard work on this project. His creativity and his ability to think outside the box were extremely valuable. Also, special thanks go to Diane Cox who has put in a tremendous effort behind the scenes, arranging meetings and calling folks to invite them to attend. I would like to thank the members of the Planning Team who have shared their skills and training with us over the last year and a half and patiently answered our questions and provided guidance when needed. In addition, I am grateful for the input provided by members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Selectmen, other boards and commissions as well as citizens of Chaplin. The efforts of so many have truly made this "Our Plan". We also recognize this is a living document, written as a guideline that should be interpreted as situations require.

Finally, much work lies ahead. This plan and the efforts that have gone into its creation will be worthless if we fail to implement the strategies and suggestions contained in its pages. New regulations and ordinances will need to be formulated and adopted. Grants will need to be applied for and the dialogue will need to continue.

Sincerely,

Barry Howard, Chairman
Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission

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CHAPLIN TODAY & TOMORROW

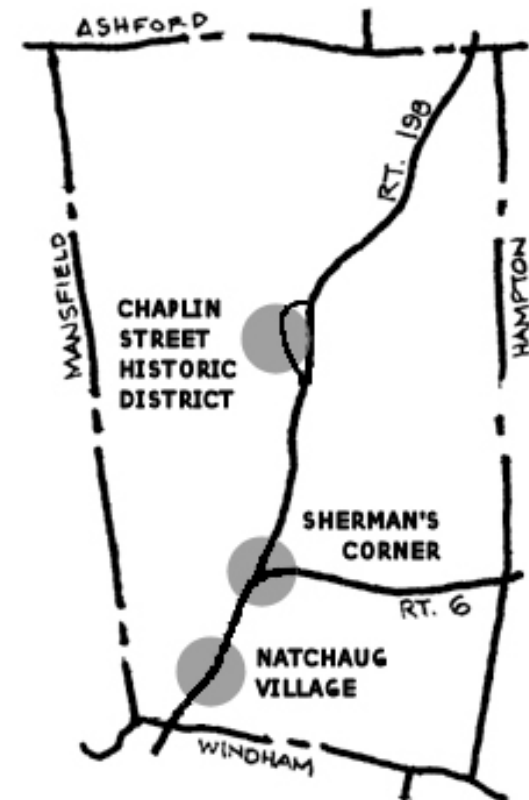
1

Chaplin is located in eastern Connecticut, about 30 miles east of Hartford in Windham County. Neighboring towns include Mansfield to the west, Ashford and Eastford to the north, Hampton to the east, and Windham and Scotland to the south. It is a short drive to the University of Connecticut's main campus at Storrs, as well as to Eastern Connecticut State University and Windham Hospital in Willimantic.

Chaplin is a rural community. Its rolling woodlands, river valleys, old farmsteads, and historic town center are characteristic of Connecticut's eastern highlands. More than 30% of the land in Chaplin is protected open space including portions of Natchaug State Forest, Goodwin State Forest and Mansfield Hollow State Park. Chaplin is known for pristine stretches of the Natchaug River including popular Diana's Pool. Almost all commercial development in Chaplin is located in the western Route 6 corridor with clusters of businesses at Sherman's Corner and Natchaug Village.

Chaplin had a 2008 population of 2,556¹. Chaplin's population growth has been slow but steady. The rate of growth has remained between 10-15% every ten years since 1970. The population has grown by approximately 300 since the Census 2000 count of 2,250 residents. Chaplin's total area is about 19.6 square miles (12,500 acres). Population density is about 132 persons per square mile or about 1 person per 5 acres.

Chaplin is located within the Willimantic – Danielson Labor Market Area, Regional School District 11, the Eastern Highlands Health District, and the Windham Planning Region. Chaplin is also located within the Last Green Valley; an area designated by Congress in 1994 because it is uniquely rural and has significant historic and natural assets.



¹ Source: CT Dept. of Health estimate.



Plan of Conservation and Development

Chaplin adopted its original Plan of Development in 1968. The plan was comprehensively updated and adopted in 1989. In 2000, the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission adopted the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan as an amendment to the Plan of Development. In the spring of 2009, the Town of Chaplin received a grant from the Office of Policy and Management to prepare another update, this time in the form of a Plan of Conservation and Development. Towns in Connecticut must update their Plans of Conservation and Development at least every ten years. If not, they become ineligible to receive discretionary state funding.

The Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission decided that an important first step was to gather input from the community and develop a vision for the future. Four visioning workshops were held in the spring of 2009.

Public Visioning Sessions

Visioning Session #1: This session was designed to gather input from the general public and began with a community brainstorming session. People were asked to identify issues and opportunities important to the future of Chaplin. Attendees were broken up into groups who looked at the issues in more detail by topic and then reported back to the larger group. The session also included a visual preference survey designed to gain input about how the community would like Chaplin to look and feel in the future. A full description of all the public visioning sessions can be found in the appendix.

*What is a
Plan of
Conservation
and
Development?*

*A statement of
policies,
goals, and
standards
for the physical
and economic
development of
a town.*

TOP LIKE



TOP DISLIKE



Visioning Session #2: This session focused on Chaplin's natural resources. Attendees were broken up into three groups: 1) the Natchaug River, 2) agriculture, and 3) other natural resources. Each group looked at the value of those resources, threats to those resources and potential solutions.

NATCHAUG RIVER

Values

Chaplin's trademark
Fisheries
Recreation
Water quality

Threats

Development
Pollution
Erosion/Sedimentation
Rising temperatures

Solutions

Regulations
Enforcement
Education
Monitoring

AGRICULTURE

Values

Open space
Beauty
Food
Jobs

Threats

Taxes
Land costs
Viability
Attitudes

Solutions

Agriculture-friendly regulations
Diversification
Tax reductions
Education

OTHER IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCES

Forests

Aquifer

Farm Fields

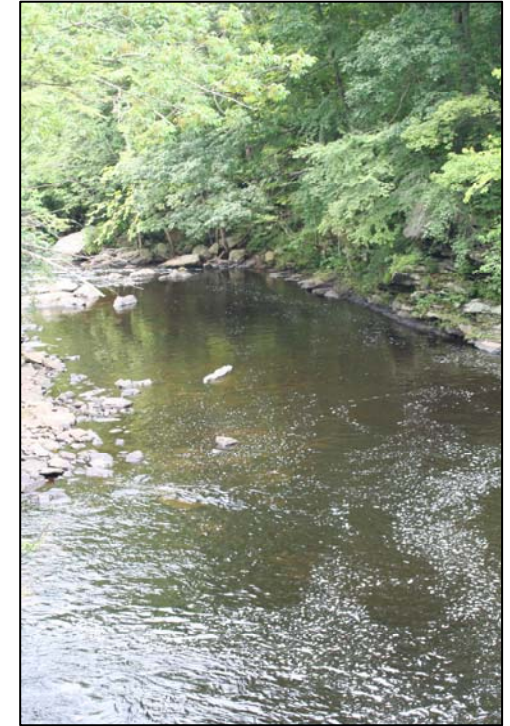
Dark Sky

Wildlife

Vernal Pools

Natchaug Tributaries

Natural Sounds



Natchaug River

Planning Priorities

*Economic
Development/
Transportation*

*Natural
Resources/
Agriculture*

*Community
Services/
Housing*

*Land Use/
Community
Character*

Visioning Session #3: This session was directed towards members of the Chaplin's boards and commissions including the Board of Selectmen, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, the Conservation Commission, and the Finance Board. The discussion centered on the following planning priorities: economic development and transportation, natural resources and agriculture, community services and housing, and land use and community character. While the first two visioning sessions helped identify the "pulse of the community", this session was more focused on strategies and specific recommendations to achieve the community's goals. A second visual preference survey revealed the following results.

TOP LIKES



TOP DISLIKES



Visioning Session #4: The last visioning session focused entirely on economic development in the Route 6 corridor. Many landowners along the Route 6 corridor were in attendance. A third visual preference survey was conducted. Chaplin citizens chose pictures that depict a quaint, pedestrian-friendly village setting. There was a strong preference for buildings with a traditional New England architectural style that is respectful of the rural setting and the needs of people and pedestrians.

TOP LIKES FOR ROUTE 6



Based on the input they gathered from the Chaplin community at the four public visioning sessions, the Plan of Conservation and Development sub-committee prepared the following vision statement for the future of Chaplin.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF CHAPLIN



Chaplin is situated in the rural northeast corner of Connecticut.

Hearing the quiet; hearing birds sing; and hearing the rushing waters of numerous brooks are, for many residents, high priorities—as are the sights and sounds of the pristine Natchaug River. We value wildlife, agriculture, and quiet village and farm settings. We value the dark night-time sky that allows us to see the stars.

But change is inevitable: Immediately to the south is Willimantic. And to the north, east and west of Chaplin lie Worcester, Providence, and Hartford—all not far away.

Our goal is to direct change, which may come quickly, in a manner that preserves our town's most valuable assets and provides long term benefits to our community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

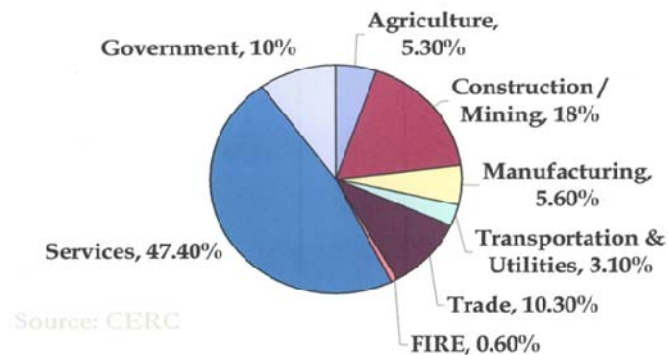
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Business and Employment

Chaplin has approximately 74 businesses employing the equivalent of 322 full-time workers. Chaplin's employers are mostly small, independent businesses employing fewer than ten employees. Chaplin's workforce is approximately 1,493 strong. Most Chaplin residents commute out of town for work.

Of the employment opportunities in Chaplin, services is the largest employment sector with approximately 47% of the total labor force. Construction and mining is another significant sector, employing approximately 18% of the labor force. Other sectors include trade and government, each with approximately 10% of the labor force. Agriculture only employs about 5% of the labor force, but that is considerably higher than the state average of 1%. Chaplin hosts many small farms and strives to maintain its agricultural businesses.

Chaplin Employment Profile (2005)



Top Employers

- Parish Hill High School
- Chaplin Elementary School
- Eden Camp & Retreat Center
- Orlando Excavations Inc.

Source: infoUSA 2010

Unemployment Rate July 2009

Chaplin	7.7%
Willimantic/Danielson	
Labor Market Area	8.9%
Connecticut	8%
United States	9.7%

Source: CT DOL 2010

Tax Base

Top Ten Tax Payers 2009

- Algonquin Gas Transmission
- CT Light & Power
- Zlotnicks Realty LLC
- Spring Valley LLC
- Kenneth & Jessica Ives
- Juliet C. Alexander Trust
- Walter A. Landon
- Susley LLC
- Robert Mott & Assoc.
- Marcia Donofrio

Source: Chaplin Assessor

Property taxes account for 61.5% of Chaplin's total revenues with approximately 38.5% of the budget coming from state and federal funding sources. Of the property tax revenues, 72.8% comes from residential properties and 6.2% from commercial, industrial and public utilities combined. All other property tax revenues (21%) are derived from motor vehicle taxes, personal property taxes and taxes on vacant and open space land. While there is no ideal ratio of residential and commercial properties in any town, the property tax distribution in Chaplin is normal for rural/residential towns. Chaplin appears to be slightly more diversified in its tax base than comparable towns in the area. A map of land use for tax purposes is located in the appendix.

Property Tax Revenue as % Total	
Eastford	66.1%
Hampton	63.4%
Scotland	61.5%
Chaplin	61.5%
Ashford	52.8%
Mansfield	47.0%
Windham	35.6%
STATE	71.2%
Municipal Fiscal Indicators, OPM	
Fiscal Year 2008 data	

Property Tax Composition % Residential	
Hampton	80.8%
Scotland	80.4%
Ashford	77.2%
Eastford	76.7%
Mansfield	76.0%
Chaplin	72.8%
Windham	55.4%
STATE	71.2%
Municipal Fiscal Indicators, OPM	
Fiscal Year 2008 data	

Per Capita Spending	
Scotland	\$1,880
Ashford	\$1,850
Eastford	\$1,798
Chaplin	\$1,777
Hampton	\$1,675
Windham	\$1,161
Mansfield	\$884
STATE	\$2,312
Municipal Fiscal Indicators, OPM	
Fiscal Year 2008 data	



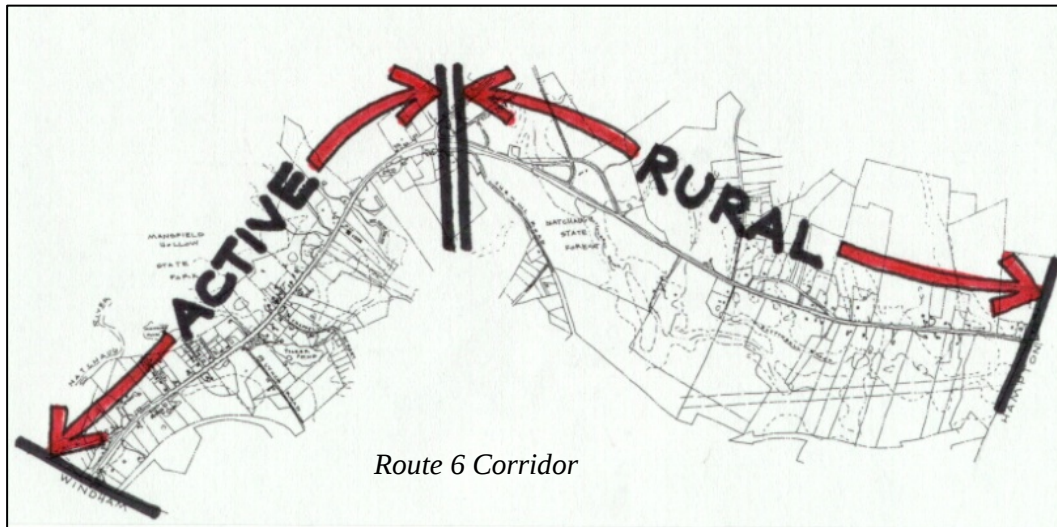
Western Route 6 Corridor

In 2000, the Town of Chaplin adopted the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan. It is included as part of this Plan of Conservation and Development update because the goals and strategies are still pertinent today.

The main goals of the Route 6 Corridor Management plan are to:

- Encourage commercial development in the western part of the Route 6 corridor,
- Guide the pattern of development on western Route 6 by stopping “strip” development and creating mixed use nodes at the intersections of Lynch Road and Route 198,
- Enhance community character by protecting scenic features such as barns, stone walls, buildings, trees, etc. that contribute to appearance,
- Reduce the number of driveways and other curb cuts on Route 6,
- Establish pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and
- Create zoning regulations to make the above goals a reality.

Chaplin is committed to focusing economic development on Route 6 from the Windham town line to the intersection with Route 198.



The Route 6 Corridor Management Plan is included as part of this Plan of Conservation and Development.

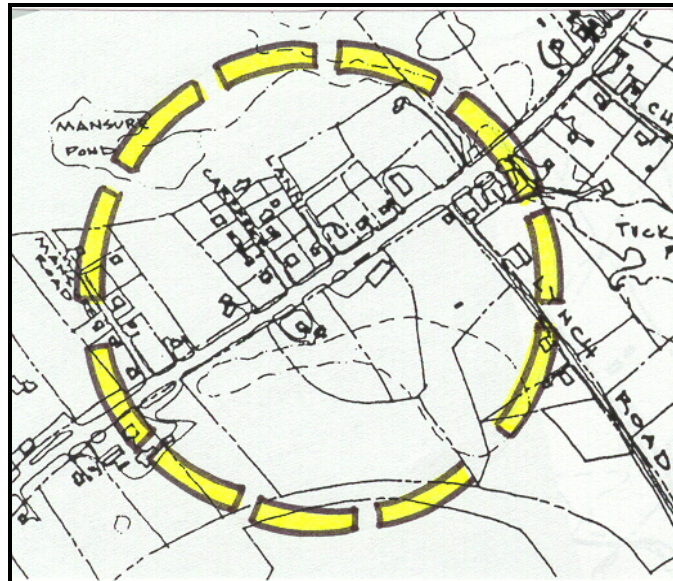
The Route 6 Corridor Management Plan encourages higher density, mixed commercial and residential uses at the Lynch Road intersection and the Route 198 intersection with Route 6. These two areas already contain relatively higher densities of mixed uses compared to other areas along western Route 6. These can be supplemented and enhanced to create the vision of village-scale development compatible with Chaplin's rural community character. The visioning workshops held in 2009 reinforce the village concept as Chaplin's preferred form of economic growth.

The POCD sub-committee named the nodes for greater clarity and to help create a sense of place. The Lynch Road intersection with Route 6 was named Natchaug Village. Sherman's Corner is a historic name for the Route 198 intersection with Route 6.

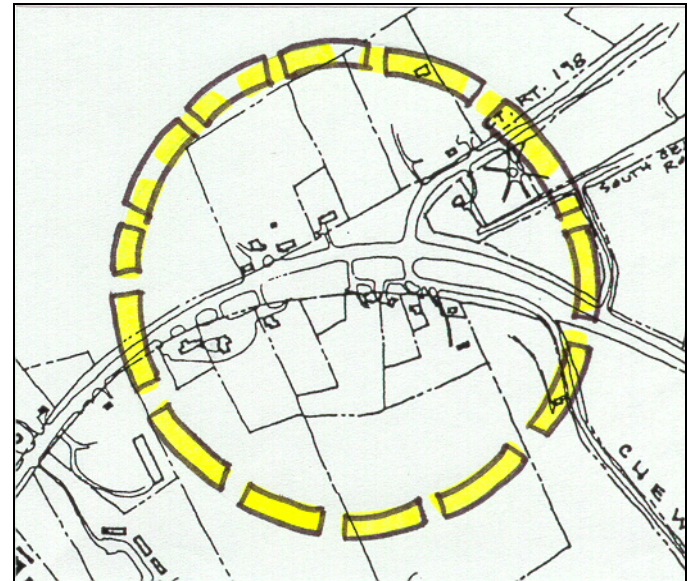
*The nodes were
named for clarity
and to give them
a greater sense
of place.*

*Sherman's
Corner is
the historic name
for the
Rte. 198/Rte. 6
intersection.*

Lynch Road Node → Natchaug Village



Route 198 Node → Sherman's Corner



Corridor Overlay District – A Good Start

The Route 6 Corridor Management Plan outlined a template for future growth in the western Route 6 Corridor through the creation of the Corridor Overlay District. The purpose of the Corridor Overlay District was to assure that the use of land, buildings and other structures and site development within its boundaries are conducted in a manner that promotes the establishment of village nodes, discourages the establishment of strip development, and promotes community character. The Corridor Overlay District was adopted in 2003.

Time and experience has revealed that the existing Corridor Overlay District has only been marginally successful in implementing the goals of the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan for several reasons.

- 1) The “overlay” district did not change the underlying zones of residential and commercial. About 35% of the existing Corridor Overlay District is zoned commercial and the remaining 65% is zoned residential. The overlapping zones are confusing for people seeking approval for development in the district. Additionally, the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan identified the existing residential zoning as an impediment to economic development because it limits the sites available for businesses and may hinder the establishment and operation of businesses in some areas. The plan encouraged the elimination of single family residential zoning in the western Route 6 corridor although it encourages apartments over stores (mixed-use) and multi-unit housing in the village nodes.
- 2) The Corridor Overlay District is large (427 acres and 1.7 miles long) and does not differentiate between the village nodes and other stretches of the western route 6 corridor which are less dense and more typically rural. Chaplin needs to target development in more defined areas through a modified zoning structure. By targeting development within the village nodes, the town is more likely to achieve the village vision outlined in the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan and the Plan of Conservation and Development visioning workshops.
- 3) The design guidelines included in the Corridor Overlay District have not been completely successful in guaranteeing that development is compatible with Chaplin’s rural character and supportive of the village vision. The Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission has been reluctant to require modifications to site plans when it is within their authority. The design guidelines could be improved by making them more visual, adding lots of pictures of preferred designs, and crafting specific design guidelines for the different districts within the corridor.
- 4) There are recommendations in the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan that cannot be implemented through zoning alone. These recommendations are more comprehensive than the limited sphere of zoning. Many of the recommendations for transportation safety and economic development are better implemented by pursuing more proactive strategies.

New Strategies for Implementing the Village Vision

The Planning Team prepared mock-ups of the proposed village areas to help people visualize what these areas could look like. These graphics were used during the economic development workshops to show what the Chaplin could look like in the future. It is important to recognize that, in order to achieve this vision, some wetlands filling and grading may be necessary in limited areas. Additionally, connector roads and public utilities such as community septic and water systems should be pursued to increase the area available for development in the village areas. Underground utilities should be installed in favor of above ground utilities for a more village-like atmosphere.

NATCHAUG VILLAGE TODAY



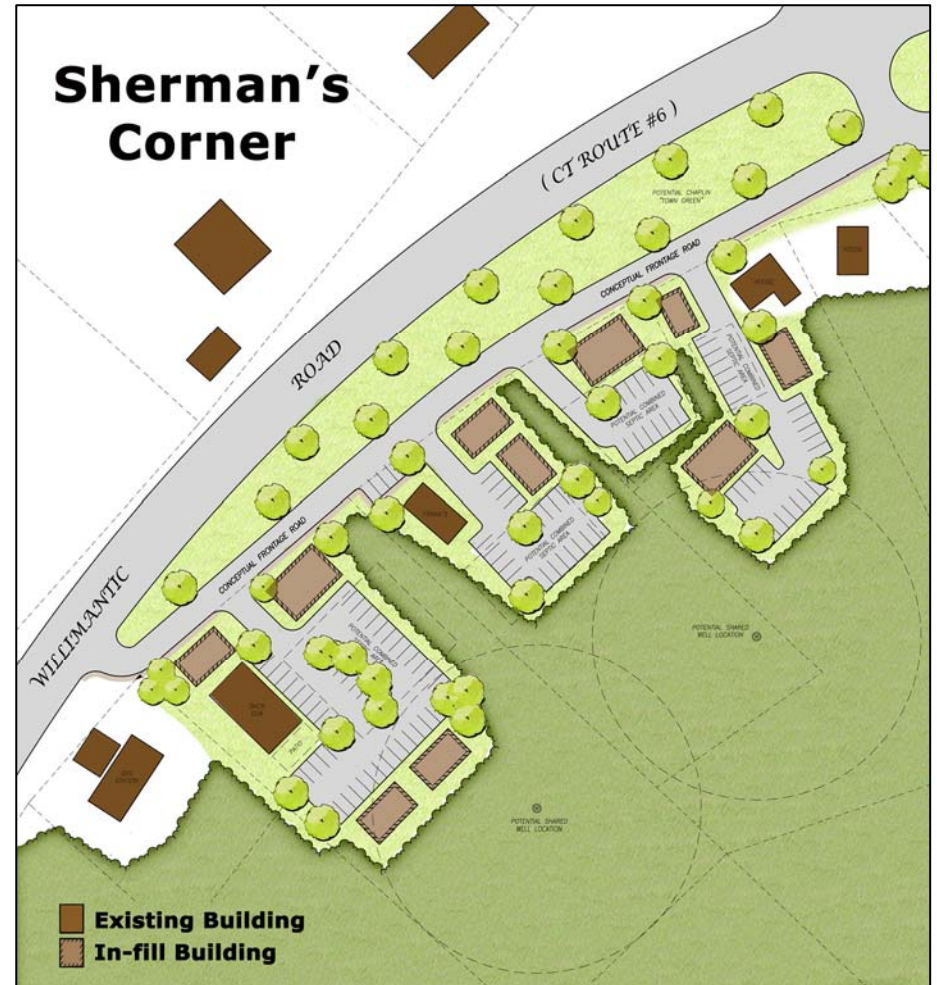
NATCHAUG VILLAGE TOMORROW



SHERMAN'S CORNER TODAY



SHERMAN'S CORNER TOMORROW

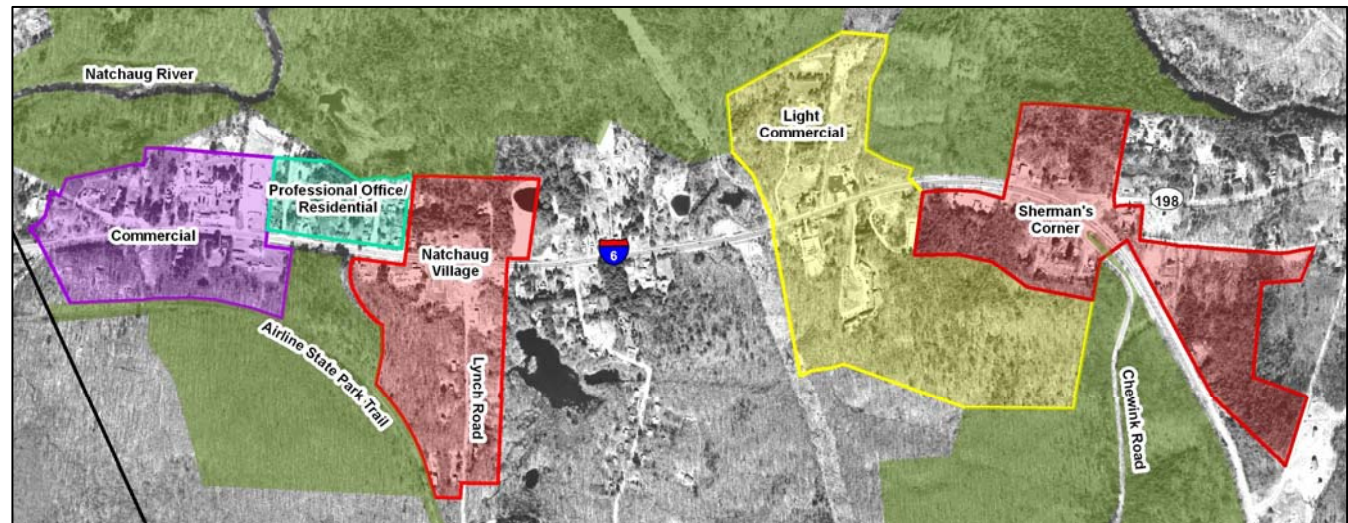


These are strategies to implement the “village vision” by guiding the pattern of development in the Route 6 corridor.

New zoning regulations will need to be developed and adopted to start implementing this vision.

Additionally, town officials must forge partnerships and pursue funding to make this vision a reality.

- Strategy:** Replace current zoning with new zones to implement the “village vision” in the western Route 6 corridor, potentially including:
Village Mixed Use - Unique retailers, restaurants, country inns, no single family residential;
Light Commercial – Commercial uses unreliant on “drive-by” traffic that can be hidden by effective buffering;
Professional Office/Residential – Offers opportunity for reuse of existing residences;
Commercial – Commercial uses that are a more reliant on “drive-by” traffic.
- Strategy:** Revise Route 6 Design Guidelines to be more user-friendly and to include images; topics should include site planning, access management, landscaping, signage, lighting, and utilities in addition to architecture. Create an advisory Design Review Committee including design professionals to assist the Planning and Zoning Commission in reviewing projects in the western Route 6 corridor.
- Strategy:** Create a “Recommended Future Transportation Network Map” in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-29 to proactively identify future transportation infrastructure. The map shall include proposed roads, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. and/or improvements to existing streets, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. Work with business and property owners in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner to consolidate curb cuts, mitigate traffic impacts, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Strategy:** Create an Economic Development Commission to assist businesses on Route 6 to improve their appearance including implementing the design standards and creating attractive lighting and signage. Create an awards program for attractive businesses that contribute to rural character. Consider the creation of Revolving Loan Fund to acquire, consolidate and sell properties for redevelopment. Possibly funding source: STEAP



Home-based Businesses

Many Chaplin residents work from their homes. Home-based businesses help Chaplin's tax base, provide in-town employment, and contribute to overall economic diversity. Some home-based businesses create minimal or no impact to the rural-residential neighborhoods in which they are located. Others can be nuisance, changing the character of the neighborhood and lowering property values.

Strategy: Continue to encourage home-based businesses to the extent that they are compatible with Chaplin's rural/residential character. Home-based businesses should not create negative impacts to neighborhoods or lower property values. Review and update zoning regulations for home-based businesses.

Agriculture

Chaplin strongly supports local agriculture as a form of economic development. Local agriculture and value-added agricultural products help preserve the rural landscape, increase quality of life and food sustainability, and add strength and diversity to the economy. Agriculture is also addressed in Chapter 7.

Strategy: Consider creating an agricultural business overlay zone for existing and potential future agricultural businesses.

Strategy: Modify zoning regulations to make them more "agriculture-friendly", particularly in regard to signage for farms and farm stands.

Strategy: Consider a "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance.

Existing Industrial Zone

The land in the existing Industrial Zone, south of the Airline State Park Trail/Greenway has limited building potential. It is steep with wet and shallow soils. Access to the property is difficult. The Chaplin Industrial Zone could support low density residential development and possibly very light industrial development. The zone is isolated and may be appropriate for some undesirable land uses such as a junk yards or adult entertainment businesses, provided neighboring properties can be buffered from negative impacts.



Strategy: Retain the Industrial Zone as an appropriate location for land uses that should be thoroughly buffered to prevent negative impacts to the rest of the community.

Strategy: Review and update the existing Industrial Zone regulations. Consider removing earth product processing as an allowable use in this zone.

Town-wide Economic Development Strategies

The following strategies for economic development apply town-wide. A map of development priorities is located in the appendix.

Strategy: Review all strategies from the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan and systematically incorporate viable strategies into the Chaplin Zoning Regulations.

Strategy: All changes to the zoning map and regulations should be sensitive to existing neighborhoods.

Strategy: Future zone boundaries should, to the extent practicable, follow existing property boundaries. Some large parcels may need to be split into different zones depending on the PZC's future land use goals for the property. No commercial zones should come within 200' of the Natchaug River.

Strategy: Create an annual signage budget. Install "Welcome to Chaplin" signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance. Seek professional design assistance for new signs. Additional signage should be pursued in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner as the "village vision" starts to take shape.

Strategy: Review and update sign regulations to ensure that new signage is attractive and functional and that it enhances the aesthetic and historical values of the community.

Strategy: Eliminate the existing Commercial Zone in the eastern Route 6 Corridor as recommended in the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan. This zone is no longer in keeping with Chaplin's goals for growth management.

Strategy: Consider tourism as an opportunity for economic development as suggested in the Windham Region Economic Development Plan.

Strategy: Investigate options to pursue successful noise enforcement, such as legislation and possibly a regional approach to noise enforcement.

TRANSPORTATION

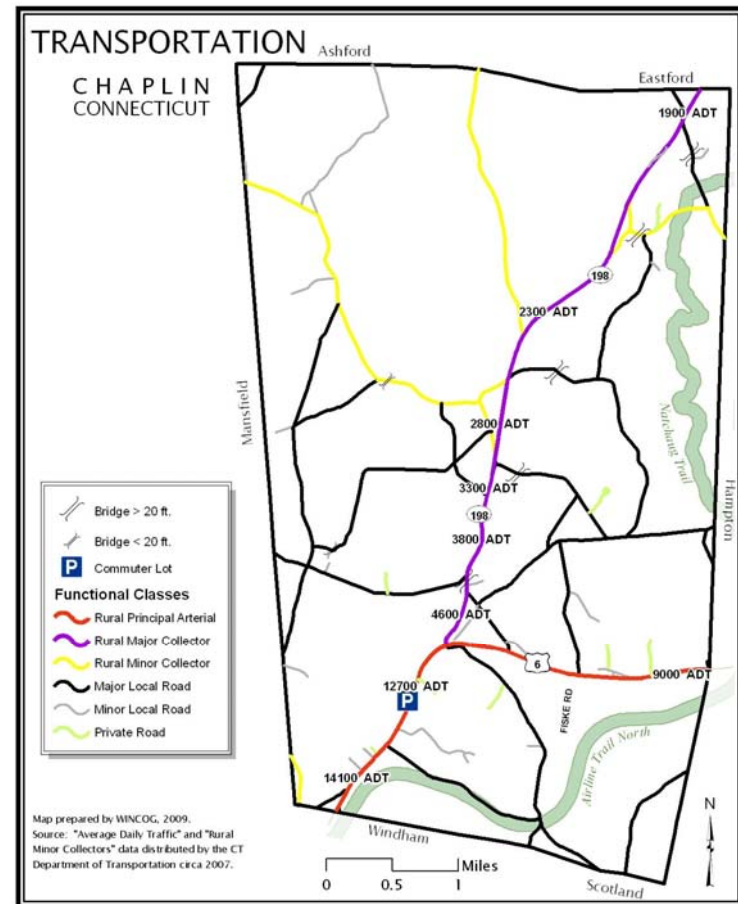
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Chaplin's road system consists mostly of rural roads supported by two major roads, US Route 6 and CT Route 198. Chaplin has about 37.6 miles of accepted town roads.

US Route 6, also known as the Grand Army of the Republic Highway, is an interstate road which extends from western Connecticut, through Hartford, and then to Providence, Rhode Island. The road enters from Chaplin's boundary with Windham, proceeds north for 1.5 miles, intersects with State Route 198, then proceeds west for 1 ½ miles to Chaplin's border with Hampton. This road links many eastern Connecticut towns to each other and is classified by the Connecticut Department of Transportation ("DOT") as a **Rural Principal Arterial**.

Route 6 has average daily traffic ("ADT"), measured by DOT, ranging from 14,100 vehicles per day at the Windham town line to 9,000 vehicles per day at the Hampton town line. The majority is pass-through traffic with peaks during morning and afternoon commutes. Route 6 also serves as Chaplin's commercial artery; commercial properties along this road are the basis of its commercial tax base. A major upgrade of Route 6 was completed by DOT in 1998.

CT Route 198, also known as Phoenixville Road, begins at the curve in Route 6 approximately 1.5 miles north of the Windham border, and continues for approximately 4 ¾ miles to Chaplin's border with Eastford. Route 198 has ADTs ranging from 4,600 vehicles per day at its source at Route 6 to 1,900 vehicles per day at the border with Eastford. Route 198 receives traffic from many of Chaplin's rural roads and is classified by DOT as a **Rural Major Collector**.



Most town facilities are located on or adjacent to Route 198. These include the Town Hall, Highway Department, Transfer Station, Senior Center, Library, Edward Garrison Park, and the Volunteer Fire Department. Route 198 runs parallel to the Chaplin Historic District as well as to the Natchaug River for much of its length.

Several other roads in Chaplin are classified by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (“DOT”) as **Rural Minor Collectors**. The Department of Transportation makes a small amount of funding available to towns to improve roads designated as Rural Minor Collectors. These include Bates Road, Chaplin Street, Tower Hill Road, Pumpkin Hill Road, Natchaug Street, Marcy Road, and a section of Morey Road from the intersection with Marcy Road to the Hampton town boundary. (See map on previous page.)

All roads not classified by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (“DOT”) are hereby classified as follows. **Major Local Roads** are through roads, whereas **Minor Local Roads** are dead-end roads and similar roads with very little traffic. **Private Roads** are privately owned and maintained. A full list of road classifications is located in the appendix.



New Road Standards and Acceptance Practices

The Town of Chaplin road standards need to be updated. New roads should be designed to be safe and compatible with the town's rural character, to seamlessly integrate with the existing road network, and be properly constructed.

Strategy: *Update road design standards and specifications governing new or improved local roads. Utilize appropriate engineering and landscape architecture professionals. The standards should be adopted by the Board of Selectmen as a Town Ordinance and included by the PZC as an amendment to the Subdivision Regulations.*

Strategy: *Consider requiring a 2 year maintenance bond in order to give sufficient time to identify structural and drainage issues on new and improved town roads.*

Strategy: *Adopt an ordinance to require developers to cover the cost of inspections in connection with the construction of new roads and other improvements.*

Safety Improvements

The main transportation safety concerns are vehicle speeds and the number of driveways and other curbs cuts onto Route 6, especially between the Windham town line and the intersection with Route 198. Many feel that the reconstructed parts of Route 6 are not as safe as before and now there are more accidents. The town should work with DOT to explore further improvements to enhance safety and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, and work with existing and future business owners to consolidate and reduce curb cuts.

Strategy: *Request a safety analysis study of the Route 6 improvements completed in 1998, especially at the intersection of Routes 6 and 198. Seek funding for such a study. Seek better design options to promote pedestrian and bicycle access and safety in the area of the Chewink Rd./Rte. 198/Rte. 6 intersection and the Lynch Road/Rte. 6 intersection.*

Strategy: *Create a "Recommended Future Transportation Network Map" in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-29 to proactively identify future transportation infrastructure. The map shall include proposed roads, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. and/or improvements to existing streets, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. Work with business and property owners in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner to consolidate curb cuts, mitigate traffic impacts, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access.*

Transportation Goal #1:

Provide and maintain a roadway system which is both safe and consistent with Chaplin's rural character.

Context sensitive design promotes historic, scenic and aesthetic considerations without compromising safety and capacity.

It also includes community outreach and encourages transportation improvements that are in harmony with community character and expectations.

Strategy: Promote traffic calming in the Route 6 Corridor, especially in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner. Continue to request from DOT a reduction of vehicle speeds to 35 mph in these areas. Request from DOT that context-sensitive design be used to promote the village vision.

The 2005 Regional Transportation Plan identified a number of safety improvements to intersections of local roads with Route 6 or 198. Many are sight line improvements. In addition to the intersections identified in that plan, the POCD sub-committee also identified the intersections of Route 198 and North Bear Hill Road, Chaplin Street, Natchaug Street, and Ridge Road as dangerous intersections which deserve further study.

Strategy: Include the above-listed site line improvements in the Chaplin capital improvement program.

Drainage Improvements, Maintenance and Environmental Sustainability

The Town of Chaplin has an interest in the efficient and coordinated maintenance of town roads and drainage facilities. The POCD sub-committee identified drainage problems on town roads caused both by new road improvements which did not carefully consider drainage implications of those improvements and by new driveways which funnel runoff from private property onto existing roads. Other drainage improvements need to be identified town-wide.

Additionally, there is an opportunity every time an improvement is made to incorporate solutions with a lower environmental impact. At the POCD sub-committee's workshop on Water Resources, problems such as siltation, runoff, and the disruption of the natural flow in streams were directly attributed to road and drainage systems.

Strategy: Inventory drainage issues which plague town roads, and incorporate drainage improvements into the Chaplin capital improvement program. When maintaining road and drainage systems, strive to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low-impact techniques.

Strategy: Consider increasing the performance bond for new driveway aprons to ensure that runoff from private property does not flow onto roads.

Strategy: Implement a town-wide road and drainage management system to define priority work, prudently budget for improvements, and ensure that roads and drainage structures are maintained on a continuing basis.

Strategy: Work with supporting groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Naubasetuck Watershed Council who can provide guidance on the environmental management of town road and drainage systems.

Bridges

The Town owns several aging bridges including the North Bear Hill Road Bridge and the England Road Bridge which are classified as “scour critical”. The DOT has slated the North Bear Hill Road Bridge for replacement within 5 years.

Strategy: Press DOT to follow through on programmed improvements to the North Bear Hill Road and England Road bridges.

The state-owned Rte. 198 Bridge next to Diana’s Pool is aging and functionally obsolete. The POCD sub-committee would like to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists using this bridge in the future as part of the Town’s future goals for recreation. It is a scenic area where crowds occasionally gather.

Strategy: For any future improvements to the Rte. 198 bridge, incorporate safe bicycle and pedestrian access. Consider a viewing platform cantilevered on the side of bridge next to Diana’s Pool or safe access to the north bank where crowds gather. Consider these former roads as part of the “Recommended Future Transportation Network Map”.

Discontinuance of Abandoned Roads

In remote parts of Chaplin, there exist some old cart paths that may have once been roads but are now largely impassable. These cart paths have not been maintained as roads for many decades but landowners along these roads may still claim them as lot frontage for development purposes. Current case law indicates that towns must assume the costs of improvements in connection with private development on these former access ways, which often cross town boundaries. Chaplin needs to study the feasibility of closing portions of those roads, while maintaining the right of way for access to greenway trails and the possibility of future road connections.

Strategy: Research the legal status of former roads and rights-of-way, especially in remote areas. Adopt an ordinance to clarify the status of these access ways in the future.

Strategy: Consider these former roads as part of the “Recommended Future Transportation Network Map” as outlined in CGS Sec. 8-29. Former roads and rights-of-way that are not part of Chaplin’s future transportation network map should be formally discontinued. If practical, a recreational trail easement should be placed on the land.

Scenic Roads

Previous plans recommend that the town protect scenic roads with an ordinance. The visioning sessions recommended that Route 198 be designated a scenic road.

Strategy: Adopt a Municipal Scenic Road Ordinance to offer some protection for scenic local roads.

Strategy: Apply to DOT to designate Route 198 as a State Scenic Road.

MULTI-MODAL CONSIDERATIONS

Transportation Goal #2:

*Create,
expand,
and promote
the use of
alternative
modes of
transportation.*

Chaplin must consider alternative modes of transportation in updating the Plan of Conservation and Development. The State Plan of Conservation and Development, as well as other state and regional plans, promotes an integrated multi-modal transportation system to encourage concentrated, mixed use development primarily in areas with existing development and infrastructure. These plans discourage auto-dependent development and, in specific areas, encourage development densities that are necessary to support public transit, walking, and biking. The goals of concentrated, mixed-use development and an integrated, multi-modal transportation system are deeply inter-related.

Approximately 90% of Chaplin residents commute to work in other towns. The majority commute to Windham (268) and Mansfield (164) followed by Hartford (61) and Manchester (43). The average commute time is 28 minutes. 87% of workers report that they drive to work alone.

Ridesharing

Ridesharing is one of the best ways to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled in rural towns like Chaplin. The CT Department of Transportation operates a commuter Park & Ride lot on Route 6. In the 2000 Census, 127 Chaplin residents reported that they carpooled to work. This is down from 180 carpoolers in 1990.

Strategy: Work with major employers outside Chaplin to encourage a ridesharing program for Chaplin residents as an alternative to single-occupant commuting.

Public Transit

In the 2000 Census, no Chaplin residents reported using public transit to get to work. Transit service in Chaplin is very limited; however, the Windham Region Transit District (WRTD) operates a twice-daily bus route from Willimantic to Danielson that stops at the Chaplin Post Office. No private bus service (Peter Pan, Greyhound, Bonanza) offers commuter runs that would benefit Chaplin residents. WRTD Dial-A-Ride and ADA Paratransit are door-to-door transit services that can be used for rides anywhere within the ten-town Windham Transit Region. While this service is open to the public, it is generally intended for seniors and those with disabilities.

Strategy: Consider housing densities capable of supporting transit service when drafting zoning regulations for Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner.

Strategy: Ensure that any Senior Housing is located in an area that can be easily serviced by transit providers.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

In the 2000 Census, four residents reported walking to work and no residents reported biking to work. There are no locally-maintained sidewalks in Chaplin. Two pedestrian crosswalks exist on Route 6 at the Lynch Road and Chewink Road intersections but they provide little refuge to pedestrians who are otherwise unprotected from the speeding traffic. Bicyclists can utilize the wide shoulders on Route 6 but have no designated bike lanes on state or local roads.

The Airline Trail is a notable walking and biking resource in Chaplin. The trail follows a former railroad route from Boston to New York and is part of an integrated statewide network of trails. It is designated as a Connecticut State Greenway and as a section of the East Coast Greenway. Activities are underway to improve the Airline Trail in Chaplin, but more work is needed, specifically at the Chewink Road trailhead. Pedestrian access to the Airline trail is also possible via Joshua's Trust's Two Sisters Preserve opposite Mansure Road on Route 6, but no off-street parking is available.

The Natchaug Trail is another notable walking resource in Chaplin. It is a CT State Greenway and is part of the CT Forest and Parks Association's "blue-blaze" trails network. The Natchaug Trail traverses portions of Goodwin State Forest and Natchaug State Forest. Access to this trail is possible at Morey Road and Marcy Road and via several old rights-of-way.

Chaplin needs to create needed bicycle and pedestrian improvements to link destinations as part of an integrated transportation network. Additionally, development within Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner should increase pedestrian safety and create connections between buildings and linkages to trails.

Strategy: Create a “Recommended Future Transportation Network Map” in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-29 to proactively identify future transportation infrastructure. The map shall include proposed roads, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. and/or improvements to existing streets, sidewalks, bikeways, etc.

Strategy: Integrate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the review of all commercial and residential development, and in the development of town facilities. These considerations may include, but are not limited to, provision of bike racks, bike and pedestrian improvements, including connections between properties.

Strategy: Work with DOT to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety along state routes by utilizing traffic calming techniques. Request “Share the Road” signage for all state routes.

Strategy: Seek funding to create a bicycle lane from Garrison Park on Route 198, over the Natchaug River bridge at Diana’s Pool, across Route 6 and along Chewink Road to the trailhead for the Airline Trail.

Strategy: Seek funding to create a bicycle lane along Route 6 from the Windham town line to Chewink Road.

Strategy: Create pedestrian linkages within the municipal core including Garrison Park, the town hall, the library and the senior center.

Strategy: Improve signage for existing trail heads and ensure good signage for proposed trails and bikeways. Signage should be welcoming and informative and should attract new people to use the trail. Signage should encourage and help use of trail by including information such as distances to nearest destinations and a map.

Strategy: Improve parking at the Chewink Road/Airline Trail head and at the Two Sisters Parcel on Route 6.

Strategy: Explore the opportunity to make new connections to the Natchaug Trail via old rights-of-way.

UTILITIES & ENERGY CONSERVATION

4

Water Supply

The vast majority of residences and businesses in Chaplin get potable water through individual on-site artesian wells that are regulated by the Eastern Highlands Health District. This method of water supply is appropriate for low-density, rural areas where there are few water users.

Public water systems are more appropriate for village density areas such as Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner. Many commercial uses such as restaurants as well as multi-family residential uses need more water than can be supplied by individual, on-site wells. The Connecticut Department of Health (CTDPH) regulates 3 types of public drinking water systems. "Community Water Systems" serve multiple buildings and at least 25 residents throughout the year; "Non-transient, Non-Community Systems" serve at least 25 of the same people over six months of the year at places like schools and office buildings; and "Transient Non-Community Systems" such as restaurants, parks, etc. Existing non-community water systems could be combined into community systems to serve multiple building sites, especially in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner. Community systems could supply water for multiple users while protecting the water source from pollution and interference from development.

Strategy: Encourage the establishment of public water systems in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner.

Strategy: Consider the formation of one or more municipally owned and operated public water systems in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner to support business development.

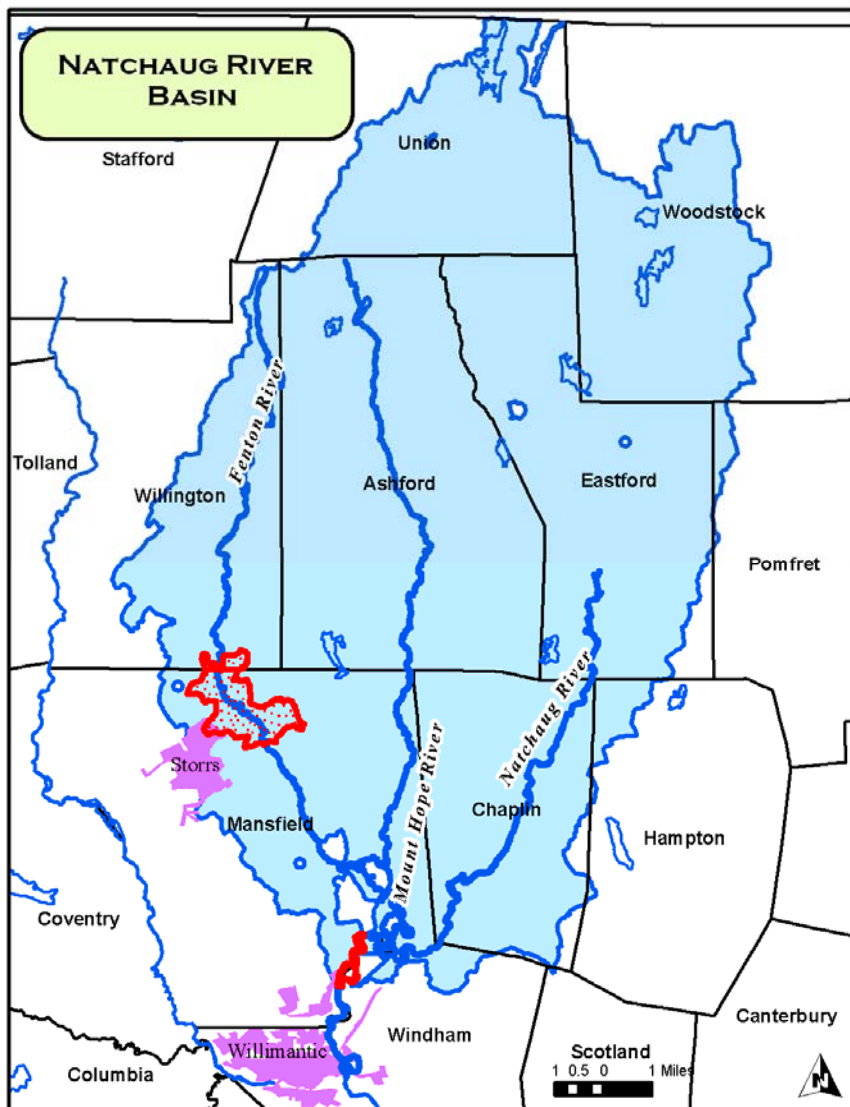
A stratified draft aquifer capable of providing large volumes of drinking water underlies much of the Natchaug River valley. This aquifer was partially protected through a municipal Aquifer Protection Zone in 1990. Protection of this resource is critical for future users. Potential sources of groundwater contamination include salt storage at the Highway Department and on Palmer Road, as well as former dumps on Old Hampton Road and a nearby state-owned property on Route 6.

Public Drinking Water Systems

Community Water Systems:
Chaplin Woods Condominiums

**Non-Transient
Non-Community
Water Systems:**
Carelot Children's Learning
Center
Chaplin Elementary School
Parish Hill High School

**Transient Non-Community
Water Systems:**
Ribbitts Restaurant
Bach Dor Café
Cha-Wi-Ma Co-Op
Chaplin Congregational Church
Chaplin Park
Chaplin Town Hall
Eden Institute (Camp Wawa)
Nickerson Park Campground
Pine Acres Family Restaurant &
Lodge
Zlotnick's Garage (Restaurants &
Convenience)



Strategy: *Review boundary and update requirements of the existing Aquifer Protection District.*

Almost the entire town of Chaplin is within the Natchaug Basin, a public water supply watershed covering 162-square miles. The basin supports the largest public surface drinking water supply watershed in Connecticut, supplying 22,000 consumers in Willimantic and Mansfield, the majority of the University of Connecticut water system (approximately 25,000 users) as well as 18,000 residents of the Natchaug Basin with private wells. The Natchaug Basin has good water quality overall because it is largely undeveloped and more than 75% forested; however, the river is not meeting its target for quality outlined by the CT Department of Environmental Protection. Threats to water quality in the Natchaug Basin are outlined in Chapter 7- Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Open Space.

Strategy: *Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.*

Strategy: *Increase protection of Natchaug River and tributaries through a River Protection Overlay Zone. The zone could include a tiered protection mechanism.*

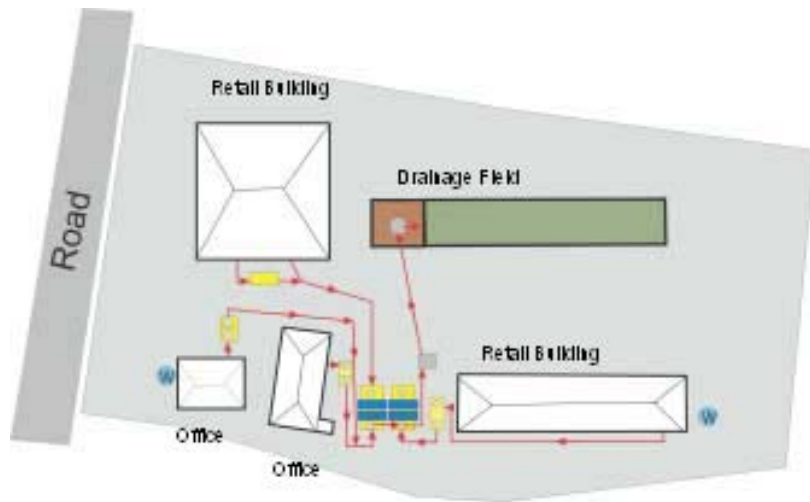
Strategy: *Explore increasing the minimum lot size to four acres in sensitive parts of town within the Natchaug Basin.*

Sanitary Sewer Systems

All residences and businesses in Chaplin dispose of sanitary sewer effluent through individual on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems (SSDS). Those SSDS's that have a daily flow of 2,000 gallons per day or less are regulated by the Eastern Highlands Health District, while those SSDS's that have a daily flow of 2,000-5,000 gallons per day are regulated by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Systems with a daily flow of 5,000 gallons per day or more are regulated by the Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP). All SSDS regulations and standards are promulgated through the Connecticut Department of Health (CTDPH), Environmental Engineering Program.

The CT Public Health Code's required separating distances from buildings, drinking water supply wells, stormwater management features, and other improvements can make siting of SSDS's on village-scale lots challenging. To this end, consideration of community SSDS's (those systems which collectively serve multiple buildings located on separate parcels of land) offer an economy of scale by combining daily design flows from multiple buildings and uses into one common effluent treatment system.

Based upon preliminary analysis of soil types in the proposed village areas and existing available soil data from previous development projects, it is evident that both of the proposed village nodes contain Hinckley series soils that are suitable for utilization of SSDS's. Likewise, the relative scale and form of planned commercial and multi-family residential uses in the village areas will be adequately served by individual or community septic systems.



Example of a Community SSDS

4,000 sf retail building = 400 gal/day
2,000 sf retail building = 200 gal/day
1,200 sf office building = 120 gal/day
2,000 sf office building = 200 gal/day
Total daily flow = 920 gal/day

The required leaching area would be 613 square feet. Depending on the suitability of soils, this SSDS could potentially be designed with a 1,000 gallon septic tank and 104' of 18" high concrete leaching galleries. For comparative purposes, a system such as this would be suited to serve one 3-bedroom single family residence. *Graphic source: Chepachet Village Decentralized Wastewater Demonstration Project, Joubert/Loomis, URI, 2005.*

Community SSDS's are effluent treatment systems that receive wastewater from multiple buildings.

Alternative SSDS's are systems that use newer technologies and much less area than traditional systems.

Both Community and Alternative SSDS's can be used in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner to achieve village-scale development density.

Effectiveness of the community design concept will be dependent on the scope and scale of proposed buildings and uses, testing of existing soils for suitability to absorb sewage effluent, as well as cost, permitting and construction considerations. Alternative technologies are available for use which can significantly reduce the footprint of a SSDS leachfield, and effluent can be transported over distances and topographic changes utilizing pump systems. As additional alternative technologies are supported by the CT Public Health Code, these technologies should be considered for implementation in areas of Chaplin where village density is desired.

Strategy: Support the concept of decentralized sewage treatment as the preferred method of sewage treatment to maintain environmental health and conserve water resources.

Strategy: Explore potential for community and alternative SSDS's in the Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner areas in order to support a village development density.

Strategy: Consider the formation of one or more municipally owned and operated community subsurface sewage disposal systems in the Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner areas to support business development.

Natural Gas

The natural gas transmission lines that run through Chaplin are part of the Algonquin Gas Transmission pipelines which are owned and maintained by Algonquin Gas Transmission Co., a subsidiary of Spectra Energy. The Algonquin pipelines transport 2.44 billion cubic feet of gas per day through 1,120 miles of pipeline reaching from the docking bouys off the coast of Massachusetts, through Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and connecting to another pipeline system in Northern New Jersey.

Although natural gas transmission lines are present in Chaplin, no natural gas service is currently available in town. One can assume that the rural development pattern in Chaplin has never necessitated construction of natural gas service lines within Chaplin's municipal boundary.

Strategy: Consider the feasibility of extending natural gas service into the Town of Chapin from existing service lines in neighboring towns.

Electricity

The Town of Chaplin is serviced by standard electrical transmission lines through a distribution network constructed and maintained by the Connecticut Light & Power Company, under the Northeast Utilities System. In addition to standard electrical service, residents and business owners in Chaplin can take advantage of alternative technologies for creation of electricity such as photovoltaic solar and wind energy technologies.

Often utilized to reduce consumption of electricity or to supplement the creation of electricity, alternative technologies for thermal energy production are also important to consider. Reducing electricity and fossil fuel consumption can be achieved by utilizing non-polluting energy sources to provide heat. Geothermal heating systems extract heat from the ground and transfer it to residences or other buildings with the assistance of conventionally powered heat pumps, and solar thermal energy can be harnessed in the same manner. These heat sources can be used in many ways to offset production of thermal energy that would otherwise be created through electricity or combustion of conventional fuels.

Due to recent concerns about the environmental and health effects of large-scale wood-burning appliances (i.e., outdoor wood furnaces/boilers), this plan will neither promote nor discount the use of these technologies for thermal energy production, but rather simply recognize that energy created by combustion of renewable fuels is preferable to combustion of non-renewable fossil fuels.

Strategy: Study and promote implementation of non-polluting alternative electricity production technologies such as photovoltaic, wind, and water turbine systems.

Strategy: Study and promote implementation of non-polluting alternative thermal energy production technologies which reduce heating costs such as geothermal and solar thermal technologies.

Strategy: Consider the health effects of renewable fuel combustion technologies and closely follow studies and legislation enacted by the State of Connecticut regarding wood furnaces/boilers. Consider adapting Chaplin's Zoning Regulations for wood furnaces/boilers based on findings of the authoritative State Agencies.

HOUSING

5



Chaplin is a slow-growing community composed mostly of single-family homes. In 2000, there were 897 total housing units in Chaplin. Of these, 718 were single family homes, 122 were multi-family units and 57 were mobile homes.

In 2008, the total housing stock grew to 1,021 housing units. Housing growth has been equal to about 15.5 new housing units a year for the past ten years.

New Housing Permits by Town

Source: Census, Department of Economic and Community Development

State/Towns	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	10 year Average
Connecticut	10,637	9,376	9,290	9,731	10,435	11,837	11,885	9,236	7,746	5,220	
Ashford	17	22	21	28	25	28	17	23	11	9	20.1
Chaplin	17	14	14	16	17	23	19	17	14	4	15.5
Eastford	9	6	3	15	19	16	15	7	6	2	9.8
Hampton	17	18	18	21	20	28	23	22	15	9	19.1
Mansfield	86	46	72	46	69	55	52	68	42	20	55.6
Scotland	9	7	6	16	8	13	11	7	8	5	9.0
Windham	36	5	26	29	26	25	66	20	19	13	26.5



Approximately 25% of the housing units are renter-occupied and approximately 75% are owner-occupied. Renter-occupied units can include single family homes as well as apartments and mobile homes. Chaplin's rate of home ownership is slightly higher than the state average of 63%.

About 25% of the total housing stock in Chaplin was built before 1950, compared to the state average of 31.5%.

Affordable Housing

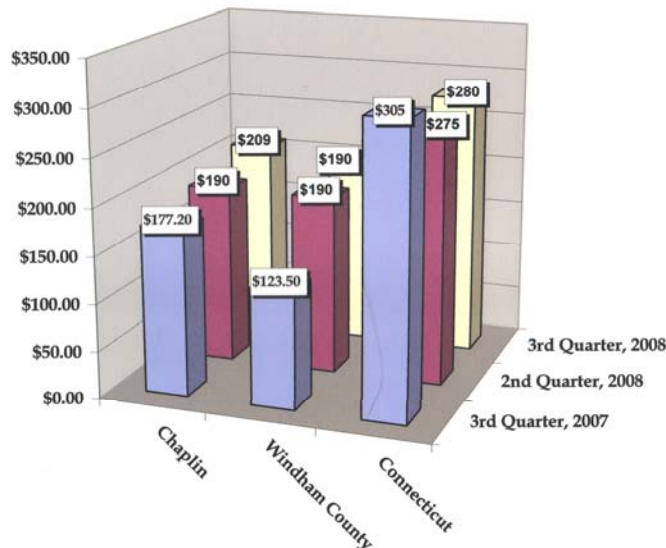
In 2008, Chaplin's median household income was \$63,996 or about 95% of the state average. The median sales price for homes in Chaplin was \$209,000 compared to \$280,000 statewide. Generally, housing in Chaplin is inexpensive compared to other towns in the state.

While affordability would not appear to be a significant issue in Chaplin, 22% of home owners pay more than 30% of their income on housing according to the last Census. "Affordable" housing is defined in the Connecticut General Statutes as housing for which a family earning 80% of the area median income pays no more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Some homeowners clearly choose to pay more than 30% of their income on housing, but it is not known how many of these homeowners' incomes are lower than the median.

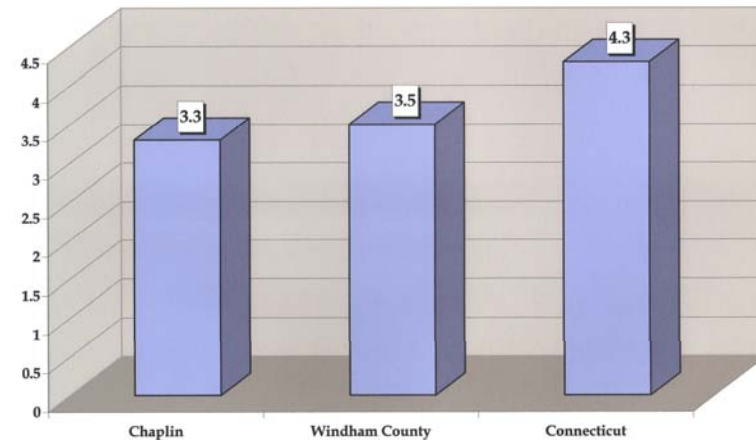
Municipalities with 10% or more assisted housing units are exempt from the statutes concerning affordable housing. Chaplin has 25 assisted housing units representing 2.79 % of the total housing units. Almost all of the assisted housing units are mortgaged by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, a state agency that provides assistance to first-time home buyers.

Chaplin strives to provide affordable housing options to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Homes Sales - Median Sales Prices (\$1,000's)



**Affordability Index
(Based on Median Household Income, 2007)**



“Mixed-use” buildings combine commercial and residential uses under one roof such as apartments over stores.



Store with apartment above

There are about 30 accessory apartments in Chaplin according to the last tax revaluation.

Apartments Over Stores

Sherman’s Corner and Natchaug Village are the best places to create mixed-use buildings such as those identified during the visual preference surveys. Several mixed-use buildings already exist in this area. The Route 6 Corridor Management Plan encouraged apartments over stores and other mixed-use buildings in the village nodes.

Strategy: Incorporate mixed-use housing within the village nodes at Sherman’s Corner and Natchaug Village. Strive to make this housing pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.

Strategy: Update zoning to eliminate new single family housing units in the commercial zones in the western Route 6 corridor.

Accessory Apartments

Accessory apartments increase housing diversity without changing the rural character of the community. The Zoning Regulations specify that accessory apartments must share a common interior wall to the primary dwelling, have no more than two bedrooms, be no bigger than 750 square feet, and one of the units must be owner-occupied.

Strategy: Continue to allow accessory apartments as an important component of housing diversity.

Strategy: Review existing accessory apartments for compliance to current zoning regulations. Review the need for changes to accessory apartment regulations and develop a strategy to handle non-compliant properties.

Senior Housing

Chaplin has no senior housing or other age-restricted housing units. The 1989 Plan of Development encouraged the location of housing for the elderly within walking distance of support services and other population in the Chaplin Historic District. Today, the recommendation is to locate any senior housing in the village nodes in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner.

Strategy: Study the need for senior housing. If needed, locate senior housing and any other age-restricted housing in Natchaug Village. Strive to make this housing pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.

Multi-Unit Housing

As with Senior Housing, any new multi-unit housing should be located in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner.

Strategy: Update existing multi-unit housing regulations and ensure that it be pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES

6

The history of the Town of Chaplin begins in the mid-1700's, when Benjamin Chaplin settled a plot of land along the Natchaug River in an area of wilderness that later came to bear his name. Originally incorporated as an ecclesiastical society in 1809, Chaplin became a municipality in 1822. At that time, the population was approximately 900. Since then, industries have come and gone and residences have become more widespread, but the rural character that residents and visitors value and cherish has prevailed.

Chaplin's historic homesteads, former mills, school houses, municipal buildings, agricultural buildings and barns, stone walls, and cemeteries have shaped the look and feel of the town through history. The goal of the Chaplin Plan of Conservation and Development for historic and cultural resources is to preserve and protect the structures, sites and landscapes that are uniquely representative of its cultural heritage.

Chaplin's Districts

The 1868 "Petersen Collection" Map of Chaplin offers an interesting snapshot of the town. The map identifies seven distinct districts of the Town: (I) North Centre District; (II) Bedlam District; (III) Tower Hill District; (IV) Bare Hill District, (V) Chuink District, (VI) Natchaug District; and (VII) South Centre District, and also delineates the areas of North Windham and Goshen, and identifies locations of schools, private residences with owner's names, businesses and mills.

Each of the seven established districts in Chaplin, at one time, had its own school house to educate district children. Though most of these schoolhouses have since been demolished, the Natchaug District Schoolhouse remains, and it has been identified as worthy of preservation by the residents during the formulation of this plan.

In addition to schoolhouses, over the years the Town of Chaplin has owned several other institutional buildings that are important components of Chaplin's history, the majority of which are located in the Chaplin Historic District. These

Historic Preservation Goal:

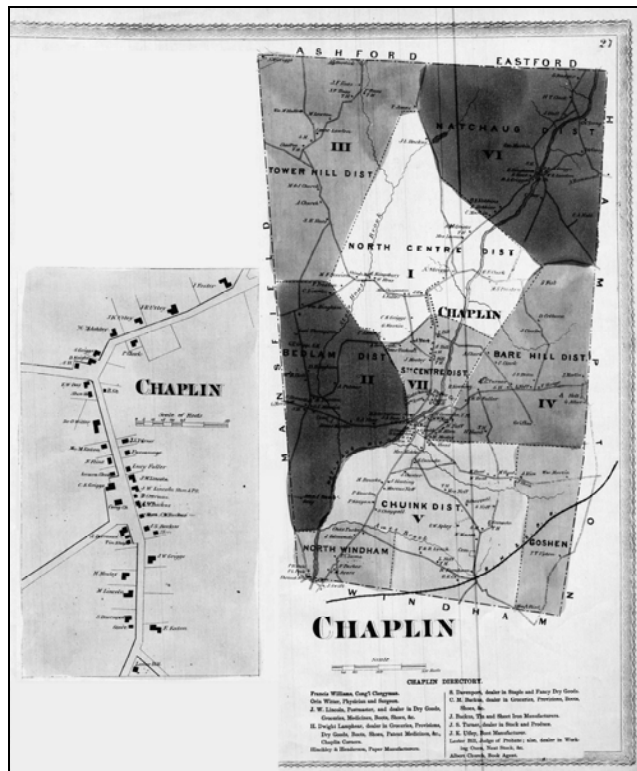
*Preserve and
protect the
structures, sites
and landscapes
that are uniquely
representative of
its cultural
heritage.*

structures include the former Chaplin Library, the Former General Store/Post Office, the former Chaplin Grange Hall, and the Chaplin Museum. These structures are addressed in more detail in Chapter 8 – Municipal Facilities.

Strategy: *Identify and assess locations of former district schoolhouses throughout Town and provide for protection/preservation of these sites.*

Strategy: *Continue to support the Chaplin Museum and encourage the revitalization of the Chaplin Historical Society.*

Strategy: *Prepare practical plans for the use of municipally owned institutional buildings.*



“Petersen Collection” map showing seven historic school districts, 1868.

Chaplin's Historic Town Center

Chaplin's historic town center is located off of Route 198 on what is now Chaplin Street, between England Road and North Bear Hill Road. The town center was a mix of residences, small commercial businesses, the post office and the congregational church. With an exemplary concentration of well-preserved structures dating from the early nineteenth century, the entire village center is listed on both the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Perhaps the most notable structure in the Historic District is the Witter House, a Georgian mansion built in 1820 and listed as a National Register Historic Site.

The 42 identified structures within the established Chaplin Historic District, nearly half of which are said to have been constructed by Major Edward Eaton, are regulated by municipal ordinance through the Chaplin Historic District Commission. The Commission oversees property uses and proposals for structural and material modifications to properties and structures within the District, in order to maintain the visual aesthetic quality of the individual structures and the district as a whole.

Chaplin's former village center is now primarily residential, the only exceptions being municipally-owned buildings and the Congregational Church. Residents of the district prefer that the district remain primarily residential in use, but may support the use of municipal structures for cultural uses such as an art studio.

Strategy: Continue to support the work of the Chaplin Historic District Commission in preserving this valuable cultural resource.

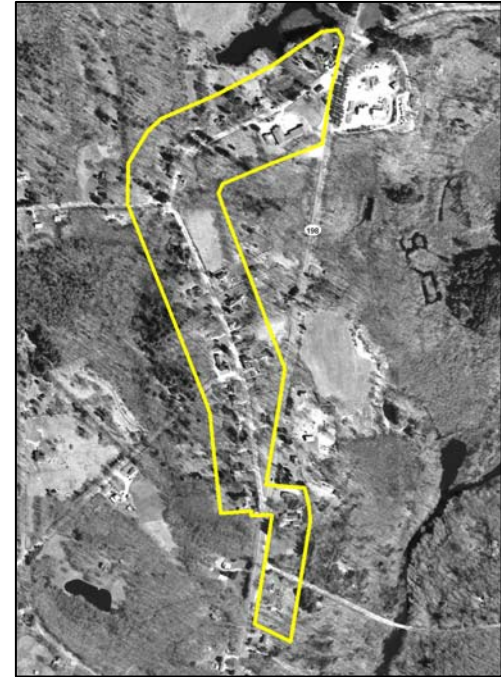
Strategy: Seek funding to install attractive signage at the gateways to the Chaplin Historic District. Seek professional design assistance in selecting the best location.

Strategy: Consider the gateway to the historic district if the intersection of Chaplin St. and Route 198 is re-aligned to improvement sitelines.

Strategy: Foster adaptive reuse of municipally owned structures for uses of such manner and scale that are appropriate for the district.



*Witter House
1820*



Chaplin Historic District

Living and Working in Chaplin

Not surprisingly, historic documents and written histories of Chaplin identify agriculture as the primary business endeavour throughout town. However, there were several manufacturing mills in Chaplin: 3 on the Natchaug River between South Chaplin and the Stone House Brook confluence which produced products such as paper, pulp, lumber, and wheelbarrows, and 3 on the Stone House Brook, itself, producing pulp, iron and wood products, plow beams and shingles. Small retail businesses such as a shoe store, supply stores and a tin shop were located primarily in Chaplin Center, and few professional and personal services were offered to meet the needs of the rural population.

Outside of the village center, homesteads and farmsteads were scattered about the town, located where settlers found the land suitable for farming or raising livestock. Settlers built residences, barns and outbuildings in the style of the times, and established cemeteries for those who had passed on. Many of these buildings and features have been maintained through the centuries and contribute to the unique look and feel of the town in a variety of ways.

Strategy: Identify and assess locations of former mill sites on the Natchaug River and Stone House Brook and provide for protection/preservation of these sites.

Strategy: Encourage owners of significant historic properties outside of the historic town center to apply for State of Connecticut and National Register of Historic Places designation.

Strategy: Continue to maintain and improve historic cemeteries throughout town.

Lasting Marks on the Land

Evidence of human occupation and historic uses of land are everywhere. Of the various man-made aspects of the environment that we encounter every day, few are more nostalgic than the classic New England stone wall. Originally built as a matter of necessity due to the large amounts of stone in the rough glacial till, and typically as a depository of fieldstones removed from plowing pastures, animal pens and crop lands, stone walls are among the most common types of Colonial-era property markers found in Eastern Connecticut for more than 200 years.

In this regard, Chaplin is no exception. Many town roads are flanked by dry stacked stone walls, as are many current and former pastures and agricultural fields. Locations of these stone walls are indicators of former land uses and are a lasting tribute to Chaplin's rich agricultural heritage. For these reasons, stone walls represent a unique cultural resource that should be preserved and protected.

Strategy: Consider adopting a town-wide resolution to protect scenic and culturally significant stone walls.

Strategy: Adopt a Municipal Scenic Road Ordinance to offer some protection for scenic local roads.

Strategy: Consider the realistic protection of culturally-significant properties such as the "Chaplin Chimney" in Natchaug Village. Develop a limited timeline for possible protection. If the properties cannot be protected within a reasonable time-frame, pursue other options.

Strategy: Create an annual signage budget. Install "Welcome to Chaplin" signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance. Seek professional design assistance for new signs. Additional signage should be pursued in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner as the "village vision" starts to take shape.

Strategy: Attempt to provide parking and accessibility at historic and culturally significant sites.



The Chaplin Chimney, also known as the "stack", is all that remains of the King Abbey House (1767), a former CT Historic Register Site.



Chaplin has many historic cemeteries, including the Chaplin Center Cemetery located in the Chaplin Historic District.



108 Chaplin barns are listed on Connecticutbarns.org, a project of the CT Trust for Historic Preservation. Many are historic such as these on Tower Hill Road.

NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE & OPEN SPACE

7

Chaplin's extensive natural resources include the Natchaug River, large blocks of undeveloped mixed hardwood forest, and sizable tracts of protected land in the form of Natchaug State Forest, James L. Goodwin State Forest, and the Mansfield Hollow State Park. Agricultural areas can be found in the Natchaug River Valley, and the Chewink Road and Bedlam Road neighborhoods.

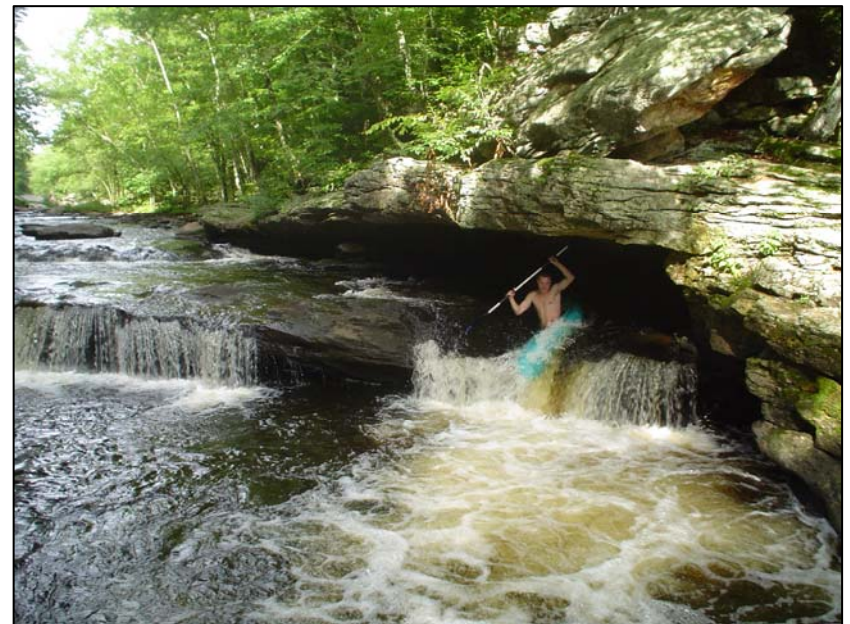
*Diana's Pool:
A popular spot on
the Natchaug
River.*

Natchaug River

The Natchaug River is designated as a Connecticut State River Greenway. It is the largest branch of the Shetucket River, starting in Union and flowing south-east towards the Mansfield Hollow Lakes Dam and onward towards the Willimantic Reservoir. The Natchaug River becomes the Shetucket River at the confluence with the Willimantic River.

The Natchaug River is classified by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection as "B/A, B/AA" which means it is a river with significant environmental quality that may be threatened. Immediate threats to the river are increasing water temperature and siltation caused by human development activities in the watershed. I

Increased water temperature is especially damaging to native trout populations, cold-water species that are indicative of environmental health. Rising stream temperatures are largely caused by the loss of forest shade cover, including along smaller streams that flow in the Natchaug River in Chaplin and also in areas higher in the watershed.



OPEN SPACE IN CHAPLIN

- **Natchaug State Forest, 2,002 acres.**
- **Goodwin State Forest, 707 acres.**
- **Mansfield Hollow State Park, 522 acres.**
- **Joshua's Trust Fee, 137 acres.**
- **Joshua's Trust Easement, 109 acres.**
- **Airline State Park Trail, 101 acres.**
- **Beaver Brook State Park Scenic Reserve, 66 acres.**
- **Natchaug River Access, 16 acres.**

Siltation is caused largely by road sand carried by storm water into the river as run-off. This impact is most notable in the early spring when winter road sand from local roads and Rte. 198 flows into the Natchaug River, burying the burgeoning macro-invertebrate populations that are a critical component of the aquatic food web. Chaplin has expressed a special interest in protecting the Natchaug River from these and other threats.

The Stonehouse Brook watershed is a significant sub-basin within the Natchaug Basin that covers much of the north-west quadrant of Chaplin. Stonehouse Brook starts in Ashford at Upper Colts Pond and flows under Tower Hill Road, Palmer Road, and Bedlam Road before joining the Natchaug River. In 2003, the Stonehouse Brook Preservation Circle, a collection of eight landowners in Chaplin and Ashford owning a total of 706 acres, received funding to permanently protect their forestland through the Forest Legacy Program. This system of ponds, wetlands, upland forest habitat is intact enough to support bobcat, black bear and moose.

While Mansfield Hollow State Park, Natchaug State Forest and Goodwin State Forest all include major tracts in Chaplin, neither park nor forests have an entrance in town. Few people are aware that these significant recreational resources can be accessed from Chaplin and most trail heads are not marked with any kind of signage. At the community workshops, the POCD sub-committee showed great interest in improving access to and signage for these forests and park, as well as improving access to and signage for the Natchaug River and the Airline Trail.

The Chaplin Conservation Commission completed a Natural Resource Inventory and Co-Occurring Resource Analysis with the help of the Green Valley Institute in 2002. This important project helped identify the most important areas in town that should be conserved. A map of conservation priorities is located in the appendix. Additionally, numerous stream walks have been held to collect information on the quality of Chaplin's streams and rivers. This data was compiled by the Thames River Basin Partnership and identifies benchmark information and areas in need of targeted mitigation.

Almost the entire town of Chaplin is within the Natchaug Basin, a public water supply watershed covering 162-square miles. In 2008, the Nature Conservancy initiated a Conservation Action Planning (CAP) project in the Natchaug Basin which brought together many different stakeholders to identify key ecological attributes, conservation targets and threats, and strategies for protecting the natural resources. The biggest threats to the Natchaug Basin are: 1) Residential and Commercial Development, 2) Road Construction and Maintenance, 3) Groundwater Withdrawal, and 4) Dams. The strategies for protecting the Natchaug Basin are included on the following strategies:

Strategy: Increase protection of Natchaug River and tributaries through a River Protection Overlay Zone. The zone could include a tiered protection mechanism.

Strategy: Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.

Strategy: Explore increasing the minimum lot size to four acres in sensitive parts of town within the Natchaug Basin.

Strategy: Inventory existing storm-water infrastructure including all culverts, catch-basins, outlets and level spreaders. Work with DOT and Chaplin Public Works to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low-impact techniques.

Strategy: Avoid unnecessary impacts to watercourses and wetlands. Utilize low impact development guidelines and best management practices whenever necessary. Examples include: rain gardens, minimal impervious surfaces, bio-retention, infiltrators, etc.

Strategy: Work with supporting groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Naubasetuck Watershed Council who can provide guidance on environmentally-friendly practices.

Municipal Open Space

Most of Chaplin's open space is owned by the State of Connecticut and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The town has only recently become active in the preservation of open space through the conservation subdivision regulations. There strong need to expedite the acceptance of open space transferred to the town through subdivision. By statute, subdivisions are held to strict time frames. It is very difficult to schedule a Town Meeting to authorize the acceptance of open space while additionally meeting the subdivision timeline. To address this issue and to make the municipal process for approving the acceptance of open space more compatible with the subdivision statutes, the following strategy is suggested.



Strategy: *Propose a referendum to authorize the Board of Selectman to take title of open space property and add it to the list of town-owned properties.*

Strategy: *Additionally, propose a referendum to authorize the Board of Selectman to take temporary title of open space property while a permanent conservator can be found for it. Continue to work with conservation organizations such as Joshua's Trust to provide for the long-term protection of critical open space.*

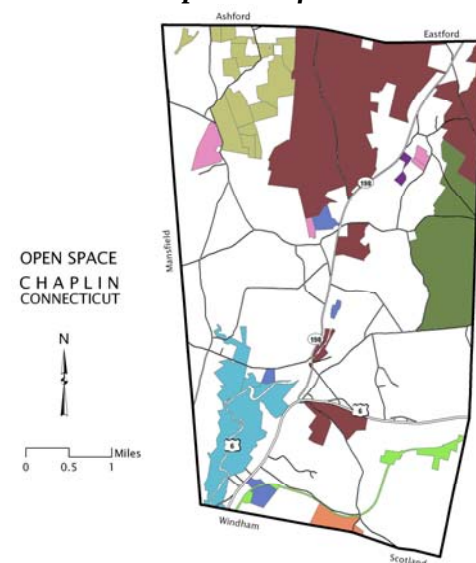
Strategy: *Review the subdivision regulations and process to ensure the resulting development reflects Chaplin's goals for open space. Consider eliminating 15 acres as the minimum conservation subdivision requirement. Consider including the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission as well as the Conservation Commission during the pre-application conference with the developer.*

Strategy: *Create a designated Open Space Fund for the collection of fees-in-lieu of open space as well as any additionally budgeted or bonded funds dedicated for open space acquisition.*

Strategy: *Encourage the Chaplin Conservation Commission to prepare and continuously update an open space and conservation easement inventory.*

Strategy: *Continue to use the Natural Resource Inventory and Co-occurring Natural Resource maps to direct where land should be preserved, either through conservation subdivisions (passive) or through targeted acquisitions (active).*

Strategy: *Consider a municipal open space category for conservation lands as provided for under Public Act 490, comparable to the farm and forest categories.*



Forestry

Chaplin's mixed hardwood forests, soils and rolling terrain are typical of Connecticut's eastern highlands. The town is graced with several large, un-fragmented forest "superblocks" that provide core wildlife habitat and help protect water resources. Forestry activities are common and large acreages of private and state land are managed for timber. Chaplin is one of the few communities in Connecticut with the authority to regulate logging activities through its zoning regulations.

Strategy: Encourage sustainable forest management and stewardship. Work with existing groups such as the Eastern CT Forest Landowners Association to provide education to forest property owners.

Strategy: Continue to consider large, forested super-blocks during subdivision review.

Agriculture

Agriculture helps preserve the rural landscape that many Chaplin residents hold dear. At the community visioning workshops, Chaplin citizens strongly supported agriculture in the community. Agricultural products produced in Chaplin include: fresh fruits and vegetables; nursery stock and cut flowers; silage corn and hay; honey and maple syrup; eggs, dairy, meat and fiber products. More strategies for agriculture are included in Chapter 2 - Economic Development.

Strategy: Modify zoning regulations to make them more "agriculture-friendly", particularly in regard to signage for farms and farm stands. Consider creating an agricultural business overlay zone for existing and potential future agricultural businesses.

Strategy: Consider creating an Agricultural Commission (possibly combined with another commission) to assist local farmers and promote agriculture. Projects could include a local farmers' market or "Buy Local" program.

Strategy: Work with groups such as the CT Farm Bureau and the ECRC&D "AGvocate" program to educate municipal officials, agricultural producers, and others to help make Chaplin a agriculture-friendly community.

Strategy: Consider a "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance to protect necessary farming activities.

Mining

Mining and gravel processing has been an issue in Chaplin. The noise, debris and trucks involved in rock-crushing and other gravel processing is not compatible with the existing residences and businesses in most areas of Chaplin; however, the very nature of development and reconfiguring topography requires some rock crushing and gravel processing. Small-scale gravel mining is a customary and incidental use to agriculture, but rock crushing and other gravel processing is not. Rock crushing may be considered in certain zones for very limited time periods.

Strategy: Review zoning regulations regarding gravel mining. Consider limited duration gravel processing.

Strategy: To facilitate development, provide the opportunity for a developer working in a commercial zone to crush rock on a specific site under development; the duration of the rock-crushing should be for a limited time period and specified as a condition of site plan approval.

Strategy: Consider removing earth product processing as an allowable use in the Industrial Zone.

PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

8

PUBLIC SAFETY

Chaplin Fire House and Volunteer Fire Department

The Chaplin Fire House was built in 2005 on the site of the previous fire house on Rte. 198. The building is considered sufficient for current needs and the property includes an outdoor training area and a cellular tower disguised as a flag pole. In addition to housing the Chaplin Volunteer Fire Department, the building has been identified as the potential future Emergency Operations Center and Voting Location. The building has also been the location of several community events.

Strategy: Consider the need for fire ponds and underground storage cisterns for large developments.

Resident State Trooper

A resident state trooper has been protecting the citizen's of Chaplin since 1988. Before then, Chaplin had constables and auxiliary police. The office of the resident state trooper is currently in the Chaplin Town Hall.

Strategy: Consider a new office space for the Chaplin Resident State Trooper.

CERT- Community Emergency Response Team

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) consists of a group of trained volunteers available to provide additional assistance in the event of an emergency that would otherwise overwhelm professional responders like police and fire. Examples of incidents that might cause an activation of the team are hurricanes, floods, chemical spills and terrorist attacks. If needed, the team would also setup and run a local Red Cross shelter.

Strategy: Encourage interested citizens to take the CERT training course and join the Chaplin/Hampton CERT Team to assist Chaplin first responders in the event of an emergency.

The Chaplin Volunteer Fire Department has approximately 35 members.

Members respond to both EMS and fire/hazard calls.

The emergency helicopter landing pad on Cross Road is in need of more regular maintenance.

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

The main goal for Chaplin's municipal properties and buildings is to prepare a coordinated master plan.

Chaplin has no coordinated plan for its municipal buildings and properties. Some of these buildings have languished from lack of maintenance and use. Other properties have been the source of conflict as town leaders struggle to find the highest and best use for these properties. The main goal is to prepare a coordinated, master plan for all town-owned buildings and properties. Additionally, a municipal building reuse zone could be adopted to help implement the master plan.

Strategy: Convene a Master Plan Committee to prepare a coordinated reuse plan for existing municipally-owned properties and buildings.

Strategy: Strive to incorporate “green” building practices in all new municipal facilities and upgrades.

Strategy: Develop a Municipal Building Reuse District to help implement the municipal master plan.

The municipal master plan should take the following town-owned properties into consideration.

Chaplin Library

Renovated and dedicated in 2000, the Chaplin Library occupies part of the former Chaplin Elementary School. Located at 130 Chaplin Street next to the Chaplin Senior Center, the library is spacious and well-equipped with public computers, wireless internet access and a small community meeting room. The Chaplin Library has one part-time librarian and several volunteers. The facility is used almost daily and hosts many successful community programs such as the Preschool Readiness Program, poetry readings, gardening and reading groups, and an annual model train show. The Chaplin Library shares available meeting space freely with community groups.

Chaplin Senior Center

The Chaplin Senior Center shares a driveway and parking area with the Chaplin Library. It also occupies part of the former Chaplin Elementary School. The Chaplin Senior Center has one part-time director. The Senior Center is open Monday through Thursday for residents of Chaplin and surrounding towns aged 50 years or older. It includes a lounge with a large screen television, pool table, an exercise room and large kitchen, as well as weekly classes in watercolors, yoga, Tai Chi, crafts, quilting and more. The Senior Center has also been open to sharing their medium sized meeting space for community meetings of approximately 50 people. Some larger town meetings have been held here; the Senior Center has a projector which has been used for presentations and there is the option of wireless internet access via the Chaplin Library Wi-Fi.

Chaplin Community Center

The Ferrara Community Center occupies the old gymnasium/auditorium of the former Chaplin Elementary School. The Ferrara Community Center shares an entrance and bathrooms with the Chaplin Senior Center. The approximately 4,000 square foot space is currently used for cold storage and the Senior Center's Annual Craft Fair. The room has a stage and large, east-facing windows. It is currently equipped with two industrial heaters that make it inappropriate as a meeting space because of the noise level. The Town has no current need for the space.

Chaplin Town Museum

This small building on the southern end of the Chaplin Historic District was once the Chaplin Town Hall. The building has been reborn as a local history museum operated by the Chaplin Historical Society, but gets little traffic due to the lack of parking and restrooms. The Town is investigating moving the structure to a new location next door to the Chaplin Library and the Chaplin Center Cemetery, in the location currently occupied by vacant, portable classrooms. It is hoped that, in this new location, the Chaplin Town Museum would be able to utilize the Library's parking and restrooms and would benefit from coincidental traffic.

Strategy: Seek funding opportunities to develop the site next door to the Chaplin Library as the future home of the Chaplin Town Museum.

William Ross Library

The late Romanesque Revival architecture of this building provides a clue that it is nearly one hundred years younger than its neighbors in the Chaplin Historic District. Built in 1911, this library operated for almost ninety years. The building has been vacant and used only for storage in recent years. The Chaplin Historical Society has been working with an architect to rehabilitate this building with grant funding and activities to renovate the building are underway. The Historic District Commission prefers a public use of the building.

Strategy: Continue to seek funding opportunities to encourage the further renovation of this historic structure.

Chaplin Grange

Located on Route 198 at the gateway to the Chaplin Historic District, the Grange is currently vacant and has been rarely used in recent years. The Grange disbanded but deed restrictions may prevent the town from selling the property in the near future. The Town has no existing need for the property or building and has considered renting it to a community organization or day care, but the structure is not up to current building and health code standards and cannot be utilized for any significant use until major upgrades are made. The building is one of three structures on the east side of Route 198 that are within the Chaplin Historic District.

Strategy: Determine the historical value of the grange building. Consider the Grange property as a potential future location of the Natchaug School House.

Old Chaplin Post Office

The Old Chaplin Post Office is located at the corner of Chaplin Street and Route 198 and is next door to the Chaplin Senior Center and Library. Historically, it was Chaplin General Store. The town purchased the property after the Post Office moved to a new building on Route 6. The property has been vacant and has only used for cold storage for several years. Considerable debate has surrounded the use of this building. The property is at the northern gateway to the Chaplin Historic District and many are concerned about uses that would be incompatible with the historic neighborhood. On the other hand, some hope to find a viable use for the property which is prominently located in the town center yet vacant and falling into disrepair.



Strategy: The Town of Chaplin should maintain ownership of the Old Post Office property. Its location in close proximity to the Town Hall, the Highway Department, the Senior Center, and the Library make it a strategic asset to the town and a critical piece of municipal property.

Strategy: Any renovation of the existing building, use, or redevelopment of the site should be compatible with the historic character of the Chaplin Historic District.

Chaplin Town Hall

The Chaplin Town Hall is fairly cramped with several employees doubled-up in offices. One registrar's office is in a closet. The building has an open central area where many town commissions hold their meetings although the layout for public meetings is not ideal. Commissioners must sit with their backs to the public; seating is cramped for groups of more than a few people. Parts of the central open area are sectioned off into a cubicle for the Administrative Assistant to the First Selectman, a cubical for storage, and a public computer station for viewing tax record information. There is a lack of permanent storage space for some town records including the Planning and Zoning Commissions maps and application information. Some of these records are disorganized from being moved several times.

Strategy: Prepare and implement a space management plan in the Town Hall. Likely changes include:

- 1) Moving the office of the Resident State Trooper and creating an office for the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Agent adjacent to the Building Office.***
- 2) Rearranging the central area for better meeting space.***
- 3) Creating an office with a customer service counter for the Building and Land Use Department.***
- 4) Provide for adequate record storage town-wide.***

Chaplin Highway Department

The Chaplin Highway Department is in need of some significant upgrades. Priority projects are a new roof and an additional work bay. The red pines along Route 198, originally planted as a buffer, are now too tall to offer any visual protection and sometimes grass blocks visibility of drivers entering and exiting. Cosmetic enhancements such as a new sign, better buffering and better landscaping along Route 198 could significantly improve the appearance of Chaplin's municipal core.

Strategy: Seek funding for deferred maintenance and functional enhancements such as the roof and an additional work bay.

Strategy: Seek funding for cosmetic improvements such as a new sign, possibly a fence, and better landscaping.



Chaplin Transfer Station

The Chaplin Transfer Station must expand its processing area in order to meet newer waste management standards for electronics and florescent lights. The town is working with the State of Connecticut in order to acquire land adjacent to the existing transfer station. There is a growing need to improve security and safety at the facility.

Strategy: Prepare an expansion plan for the transfer station and include necessary safety and security upgrades. Pursue funding strategies such as a STEAP grant and/or municipal bonds.

Strategy: Schedule local annual collection day of household hazardous waste for Chaplin residents so they do not have to travel to the Mid-NEROC facility in Willington.

Edward Garrison Park

Located next door to Town Hall, the Edward Garrison Park is a wonderful asset in Chaplin's social fabric; however, park usage has been declining in the past few years. The playing fields were recently renovated with assistance from the Senior Center. The park is currently limited to Chaplin residents. Recent vandalism has raised some security issues on the property.

Strategy: Replace the damaged split rail fence with materials that cannot be easily vandalized or moved.

Strategy: Create a permanent handicapped access to the Pavilion without the need to open the (normally locked) gate

Strategy: Seek recreational grant funding to repair the concessions building including the roof, doors, and trim.

Strategy: Improve trail connections between Garrison Park and adjacent Joshua's Trust property and Natchaug State Forest. Check property ownership and formalize trail access rights. Continue the stonedust trail around the pond.

Strategy: Consider allowing non-residents to rent the park for events.

Strategy: Include other recreational areas as part of the coordinated municipal master plan.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

www.chaplinct.org

The Chaplin website is one of the primary methods for Chaplin residents to get information about town services. During the workshop, several suggestions were made for improving the website:

Strategy: *Ensure that an adequate description of every town service and board/commission is on the website. There are still a few “coming soon” pages that need to be filled out.*

Strategy: *Provide for timely posting of municipal committee meeting dates, agendas and minutes.*

Strategy: *Make the website more relevant to town residents by including more instructional material such as how to recycle and how to use the Transfer Station.*

The main goal for Chaplin’s municipal services is to maintain an appropriate level of service for all town residents and business people.

Municipal Human Resources and Professional Development

Chaplin Recreation is run by volunteers. The energy and productivity of that group can wax and wane: active volunteers can get “burned out” and a need arises for an influx of energy and interest. For example, Chaplin used to have a Summer Youth Program that included sports, trips, and games, but the program ended when there were no longer volunteers available to run it.

Strategy: *Evaluate the need for a part-time, paid Recreation Director. Consider sharing the position with a neighboring town.*

Due to the many requirements regarding municipal record keeping, Chaplin has struggled to provide training and guidance to new board clerks regarding standardized meeting minutes and other documents.

Strategy: *Ensure that all town staff have adequate training, time, facilities and resources to perform their jobs.*

Strategy: *Increase time and budget for Town Planner/ZEO.*

EDUCATION

9

There are two schools in Chaplin. Chaplin Elementary School has pre-kindergarten classes through Grade 6. Parish Hill Middle School/High School which has classes for Grade 7 through Grade 12.

Chaplin spends about \$1,777 per capita spending on municipal services and education, less than the state average but comparable to neighboring towns. The current net expenditure per pupil increased from \$14,470 in 2005 to \$16,250 in 2007, although per capita costs normally vary from year to year.

In all categories of educational attainment, Chaplin is slightly lower than average for Windham County. Compared to state-wide data, Chaplin has a higher than average percentage of high school graduates, but lower than average college graduates.

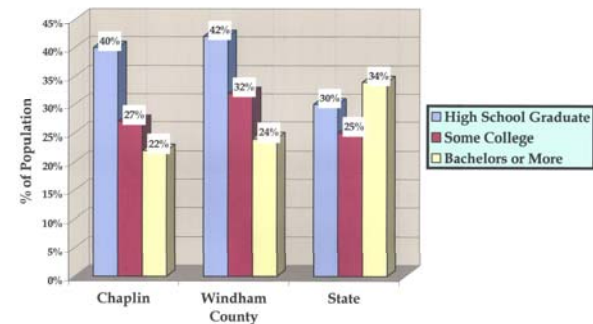
Education Expenditures per Pupil

Chaplin	\$16,250
Hampton	\$16,025
Mansfield	\$14,864
Scotland	\$14,627
Ashford	\$14,023
Eastford	\$13,442
Windham	\$13,199

Municipal Fiscal Indicators, OPM

Fiscal Year 2008 data

Educational Attainment (2008)



The main issues facing Chaplin’s school districts are the uncertain future of District 11 and the potential future environmental magnet high school. It is not the intent of this plan to prescribe the best course of action for the school districts. This plan suggests strategies for school buildings and properties considering several future scenarios including the potential dissolution of District 11 and the potential establishment of an environmental magnet high school.

Chaplin Elementary School

Chaplin Elementary School is located on 26 acres on Palmer Road. Enrollment is not rapidly growing and the facility, built in 1993, is considered sufficient for current and anticipated enrollment. The gym is well used by many groups and school space is shared freely with community groups such as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts.

If the elementary school is ever combined with the middle school (Grades 7-8), the facility on Palmer Road will need to expand. In addition to new classroom space, upgrades to the gym, auditorium, and sports fields would be necessary. It has not been determined if there is enough room on the existing property for expansion on-site.

Strategy: Upgrade air conditioning to accommodate summer school programs. Consider cooperating with Hampton Elementary School in the provision of summer school programs.

Strategy: Evaluate future building potential and identify appropriate expansion properties if necessary.

	Chaplin Elementary School	Total Chaplin Town
Year	Enrollment	Population
1997	198	2,212
2002	240	2,331
2007	210	2,528

Municipal Fiscal Indicators, OPM

Fiscal Year 2008 data

Parish Hill Middle School/High School

Parish Hill Middle School/ High School is located on approximately 60 acres on Parish Hill Road. It is part of Regional School District 11 that also includes the towns of Hampton and Scotland. The auditorium and gym are well-used by the regional community. The facility is aging and requires some maintenance upgrades. It is likely that there is space to expand school facilities on-site of necessary but the property may be restricted in some way by deed. For example, it is feared that the property would revert to previous owners in the event of district dissolution.

Strategy: Replace boiler with an energy-efficient model such as a solar-assisted unit. Replace roof which is over 20 years old. Consider the concurrent installation of solar panels. Build a soccer field with the correct orientation (north-south) and adequate drainage.

Strategy: Investigate possible deed restrictions on the 60 acre property. Evaluate existing building potential and identify appropriate expansion areas if necessary.

Potential Environmental Magnet School

The concept of environmental magnet school high school has been endorsed by the Regional 11 Board and an operations plan is nearly complete. It may be endorsed by the Connecticut Department of Education as soon as 2011. The magnet school would focus on sustainable and renewable energy as well as conservation and resource management. The magnet school compliments Chaplin's goals for agricultural preservation and natural resource conservation.

If the project goes forward, the ideal site for the magnet school is on the main Parish Hill campus, possibly in an addition to the existing high school. The magnet school would probably need about 5,000 – 7,000 square feet and have an enrollment of about 40 students. If the magnet school is located on the Parish Hill campus, the middle school will need to be moved.

The reimbursement rate for construction of a magnet school is 95%. Chaplin has low debt and a favorable bond rating. As of the fiscal year ending in 2008, Chaplin's debt per capita was only \$394 compared to the state average of \$1,547. The Moody's bond rating for Chaplin is A3, the highest rating for a town of Chaplin's size.

Strategy: Consider the needs of Chaplin Elementary School, Parish Hill High School/Middle School, and the Town of Chaplin in preparing for changes in the school structure.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

10

While the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission is primarily responsible for the implementation of this plan's recommended strategies, the Chaplin Board of Selectmen and other boards and agencies also have the powers and authorities necessary to fulfill the goals of the plan. The following pages outline the strategies and tasks as prioritized by the Planning and Zoning Commission, to serve as a guide in the implementation of this Plan of Conservation and Development.

Major Implementation Priorities

The following four strategies are major implementation priorities. They reflect the major goals of the plan and are essential to its implementation.

- ❖ **River Protection Overlay Zone:** *Increase protection of Natchaug River and tributaries through a River Protection Overlay Zone.*
- ❖ **Agriculture-Friendly Regulations:** *Modify zoning regulations to make them more "agriculture-friendly", particularly in regard to signage for farms and farm stands.*
- ❖ **Economic Development in West Route 6 Corridor:** *Economic development strategies for the west Route 6 corridor including: village zoning, water and sewer services, and transportation.*
- ❖ **Municipal Reuse District:** *Develop a Municipal Building Reuse District to help implement the municipal master plan.*

Short-Term Strategies

The following short-term strategies are considered to be attainable within the next two years.

- *Eliminate the existing Commercial Zone in the eastern Route 6 Corridor as recommended in the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan. This zone is no longer in keeping with Chaplin's goals for growth management.*
- *Create an annual signage budget. Install "Welcome to Chaplin" signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance. Seek professional design assistance for new signs.*
- *Authorize the Board of Selectman to take temporary title of open space property while a permanent conservator can be found for it.*
- *To facilitate development, provide the opportunity for a developer working in a commercial zone to crush rock on a specific site under development; the duration of the rock-crushing should be for a limited time period and specified as a condition of site plan approval.*
- *Consider removing earth product processing as an allowable use in the Industrial Zone.*
- *Investigate options to pursue successful noise enforcement, such as legislation and possibly a regional approach to noise enforcement.*
- *Research the legal status of former roads and rights-of-way, especially in remote areas. Adopt an ordinance to clarify the status of these access ways in the future.*
- *Consider the need for fire ponds and underground storage cisterns for large developments.*
- *Integrate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the review of all commercial and residential development, and in the development of town facilities. These considerations may include, but are not limited to, provision of bike racks, bike and pedestrian improvements, including connections between properties.*
- *Update existing multi-unit housing regulations and ensure that it be pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.*
- *Review the subdivision regulations and process to ensure the resulting development reflects Chaplin's goals for open space. Consider eliminating 15 acres as the minimum conservation subdivision requirement.*

Conformance to Other Plans

This Plan of Conservation and Development appears to be consistent with the plans of neighboring towns as well as the State of Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan. The plan is largely consistent with the Regional Land Use Plan 2010 with minor inconsistencies noted in the Regional Planning Commission's review letter located in the appendix.

Table of All Strategies

The following table includes all strategies found in this Plan of Conservation and Development.

Abbreviations: PZC = Planning and Zoning Commission, BOS = Board of Selectmen, EDC = Economic Development Commission, CC = Conservation Commission, HDC = Historic District Commission, HS = Historical Society, SC = Senior Center Board of Directors, RC = Recreation Commission, BOE = Board of Education, PW = Public Works (aka Chaplin Highway Dept.), AC = Agricultural Commission.

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Replace current zoning with new zones to implement the “village vision” in the western Route 6 corridor, potentially including: <u>Village Mixed Use</u> - Unique retailers, restaurants, country inns, no single family residential; <u>Light Commercial</u> – Commercial uses unreliant on “drive-by” traffic that can be hidden by effective buffering; <u>Professional Office/Residential</u> – Offers opportunity for reuse of existing residences; <u>Commercial</u> – Commercial uses that are a more reliant on “drive-by” traffic.</i>	PZC	14
<i>Revise Route 6 Design Guidelines to be more user-friendly and to include images; topics should include site planning, access management, landscaping, signage, lighting, and utilities in addition to architecture. Create an advisory Design Review Committee including design professionals to assist the Planning and Zoning Commission in reviewing projects in the western Route 6 corridor.</i>	PZC	14
<i>Review all strategies from the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan and systematically incorporate viable strategies into the Chaplin Zoning Regulations.</i>	PZC, BOS	16

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Create an Economic Development Commission to assist businesses on Route 6 to improve their appearance including implementing the design standards and creating attractive lighting and signage. Create an awards program for attractive businesses that contribute to rural character. Consider the creation of Revolving Loan Fund to acquire, consolidate and sell properties for redevelopment. Possibly funding source: STEAP</i>	BOS, EDC	14
<i>Create a “Recommended Future Transportation Network Map” in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-29 to proactively identify future transportation infrastructure. The map shall include proposed roads, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. and/or improvements to existing streets, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. Work with business and property owners in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner to consolidate curb cuts, mitigate traffic impacts, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access.</i>	PZC	14, 19, 24
<i>Continue to encourage home-based businesses to the extent that they are compatible with Chaplin’s rural/residential character. Home-based businesses should not create negative impacts to neighborhoods or lower property values. Review and update zoning regulations for home-based businesses.</i>	PZC	15
<i>Consider creating an agricultural business overlay zone for existing and potential future agricultural businesses.</i>	PZC	15
<i>Modify zoning regulations to make them more “agriculture-friendly”, particularly in regard to signage for farms and farm stands.</i>	PZC	15, 43
<i>Consider a “Right-to-Farm” Ordinance</i>	BOS	15, 43
<i>Retain the Industrial Zone as an appropriate location for land uses that should be thoroughly buffered to prevent negative impacts to the rest of the community.</i>	PZC	16
<i>Review and update the existing Industrial Zone regulations. Consider removing earth product processing as an allowable use in this zone.</i>	PZC	16
<i>Review all strategies from the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan and systematically incorporate viable strategies into the Chaplin Zoning Regulations.</i>	PZC	16
<i>All changes to the zoning map and regulations should be sensitive to existing neighborhoods.</i>	PZC	16

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Future zone boundaries should, to the extent practicable, follow existing property boundaries. Some large parcels may need to be split into different zones depending on the PZC's future land use goals for the property. No commercial zones should come within 200' of the Natchaug River.</i>	PZC	16
<i>Create an annual signage budget. Install "Welcome to Chaplin" signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance. Seek professional design assistance for new signs. Additional signage should be pursued in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner as the "village vision" starts to take shape.</i>	EDC	16, 37
<i>Review and update sign regulations to ensure that new signage is attractive and functional and that it enhances the aesthetic and historical values of the community.</i>	EDC	16
<i>Eliminate the existing Commercial Zone in the eastern Route 6 Corridor as recommended in the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan. This zone is no longer in keeping with Chaplin's goals for growth management.</i>	PZC	16
<i>Consider tourism as an opportunity for economic development as suggested in the Windham Region Economic Development Plan.</i>	EDC	16
<i>Investigate options to pursue successful noise enforcement, such as legislation and possibly a regional approach to noise enforcement.</i>	BOS	16
STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
TRANSPORTATION	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Update road design standards and specifications governing new or improved local roads. Utilize appropriate engineering and landscape architecture professionals. The standards should be adopted by the Board of Selectmen as a Town Ordinance and included by the PZC as an amendment to the Subdivision Regulations.</i>	PZC, BOS	19
<i>Consider requiring a 2 year maintenance bond in order to give sufficient time to identify structural and drainage issues on new and improved town roads.</i>	PZC, BOS	19
<i>Adopt an ordinance to require developers to cover the cost of inspections in connection with the construction of new roads and other improvements.</i>	BOS	19

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
TRANSPORTATION (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Request a safety analysis study of the Route 6 improvements completed in 1998, especially at the intersection of Routes 6 and 198. Seek funding for such a study. Seek better design options to promote pedestrian and bicycle access and safety in the area of the Chewink Rd./Rte. 198/Rte. 6 intersection and the Lynch Road/Rte. 6 intersection.</i>	BOS, PZC	19
<i>Create a “Recommended Future Transportation Network Map” in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-29 to proactively identify future transportation infrastructure. The map shall include proposed roads, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. and/or improvements to existing streets, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. Work with business and property owners in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner to consolidate curb cuts, mitigate traffic impacts, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access.</i>	PZC	14, 19, 24
<i>Promote traffic calming in the Route 6 Corridor, especially in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner. Continue to request from DOT a reduction of vehicle speeds to 35 mph in these areas. Request from DOT that “context-sensitive” design be used to promote the village vision.</i>	BOS, PZC	20
<i>Include the above-listed site line improvements in the Chaplin capital improvement program</i>	BOS	20
<i>Inventory drainage issues which plague town roads, and incorporate drainage improvements into the Chaplin capital improvement program. When maintaining road and drainage systems, strive to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low-impact techniques.</i>	BOS, PW	20
<i>Consider increasing the performance bond for new driveway aprons to ensure that runoff from private property does not flow onto roads.</i>	BOS	20
<i>Implement a town-wide road and drainage management system to define priority work, prudently budget for improvements, and ensure that roads and drainage structures are maintained on a continuing basis.</i>	BOS, PW	20
<i>Work with supporting groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Naubetuck Watershed Council who can provide guidance on the environmental management of town road and drainage systems.</i>	CC, PW	20

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
TRANSPORTATION (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Press DOT to follow through on programmed improvements to the North Bear Hill Road and England Road bridges.</i>	BOS	21
<i>For any future improvements to the Rte. 198 bridge, incorporate safe bicycle and pedestrian access. Consider a viewing platform cantilevered on the side of bridge next to Diana's Pool or safe access to the north bank where crowds gather. Consider these former roads as part of the "Recommended Future Transportation Network Map".</i>	BOS	21
<i>Research the legal status of former roads and rights-of-way, especially in remote areas. Adopt an ordinance to clarify the status of these access ways in the future.</i>	BOS	21
<i>Consider these former roads as part of the "Recommended Future Transportation Network Map" as outlined in CGS Sec. 8-29. Former roads and rights-of-way that not part of Chaplin's future transportation network map should be formally discontinued. If practical, a recreational trail easement should be placed on the land</i>	PZC, BOS	21
<i>Adopt a Municipal Scenic Road Ordinance to offer some protection for scenic local roads.</i>	BOS	22
<i>Apply to DOT to designate Route 198 as a State Scenic Road.</i>	BOS	22
<i>Work with major employers outside Chaplin to encourage a ridesharing program for Chaplin residents as an alternative to single-occupant commuting.</i>	BOS	22
<i>Consider housing densities capable of supporting transit service when drafting zoning regulations for Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner.</i>	PZC	23
<i>Ensure that any Senior Housing is located in an area that can be easily serviced by transit providers.</i>	BOS, PZC	23
<i>Create a "Recommended Future Transportation Network Map" in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-29 to proactively identify future transportation infrastructure. The map shall include proposed roads, sidewalks, bikeways, etc. and/or improvements to existing streets, sidewalks, bikeways, etc.</i>	PZC	14, 19, 24

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
TRANSPORTATION (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Integrate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the review of all commercial and residential development, and in the development of town facilities. These considerations may include, but are not limited to, provision of bike racks, bike and pedestrian improvements, including connections between properties.</i>	PZC, BOS	24
<i>Work with DOT to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety along state routes by utilizing traffic calming techniques. Request “Share the Road” signage for all state routes.</i>	BOS	24
<i>Seek funding to create a bicycle lane from Garrison Park on Route 198, over the Natchaug River bridge at Diana’s Pool, across Route 6 and along Chewink Road to the trailhead for the Airline Trail.</i>	BOS	24
<i>Seek funding to create a bicycle lane along Route 6 from the Windham town line to Chewink Road.</i>	BOS	24
<i>Create pedestrian linkages within the municipal core including Garrison Park, the town hall, the library and the senior center.</i>	BOS, PZC	24
<i>Improve signage for existing trail heads and ensure good signage for proposed trails and bikeways. Signage should be welcoming and informative and should attract new people to use the trail. Signage should encourage and help use of trail by including information such as distances to nearest destinations and a map.</i>	BOS, RC	24
<i>Improve parking at the Chewink Road/Airline Trail head and at the Two Sisters Parcel on Route 6.</i>	BOS, RC	24
<i>Explore the opportunity to make new connections to the Natchaug Trail via old rights-of-way</i>	BOS, RC, PZC	24

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
UTILITIES AND ENERGY CONSERVATION	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Encourage the establishment of public water systems in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner.</i>	PZC	25
<i>Consider the formation of one or more municipally owned and operated public water systems in Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner to support business development.</i>	PZC, BOS	25
<i>Review boundary and update requirements of the existing Aquifer Protection District.</i>	PZC	26
<i>Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.</i>	CC	26
<i>Increase protection of Natchaug River and tributaries through a River Protection Overlay Zone. The zone could include a tiered protection mechanism.</i>	PZC	26
<i>Explore increasing the minimum lot size to four acres in sensitive parts of town within the Natchaug Basin.</i>	PZC	26
<i>Support the concept of decentralized sewage treatment as the preferred method of sewage treatment to maintain environmental health and conserve water resources.</i>	PZC	28
<i>Explore potential for community and alternative SSDS's in the Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner areas in order to support a village development density.</i>	PZC	28
<i>Consider the formation of one or more municipally owned and operated community subsurface sewage disposal systems in the Natchaug Village and Sherman's Corner areas to support business development.</i>	PZC, BOS	28
<i>Consider the feasibility of extending natural gas service into the Town of Chapin from existing service lines in neighboring towns.</i>	BOS	28
<i>Study and promote implementation of non-polluting alternative electricity production technologies such as photovoltaic, wind, and water turbine systems.</i>	BOS	29
<i>Study and promote implementation of non-polluting alternative thermal energy production technologies which reduce heating costs such as geothermal and solar thermal technologies.</i>	BOS	29

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
UTILITIES AND ENERGY CONSERVATION (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Consider the health effects of renewable fuel combustion technologies and closely follow studies and legislation enacted by the State of Connecticut regarding wood furnaces/boilers. Consider adapting Chaplin's Zoning Regulations for wood furnaces/boilers based on findings of the authoritative State Agencies.</i>	PZC	29
STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
HOUSING	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Incorporate mixed-use housing within the village nodes at Sherman's Corner and Natchaug Village. Strive to make this housing pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.</i>	PZC	32
<i>Update zoning to eliminate new single family housing units in the commercial zones in the western Route 6 corridor.</i>	PZC	32
<i>Continue to allow accessory apartments as an important component of housing diversity.</i>	PZC	32
<i>Review existing accessory apartments for compliance to current zoning regulations. Review the need for changes to accessory apartment regulations and develop a strategy to handle non-compliant properties.</i>	PZC	32
<i>Study the need for senior housing. If needed, locate senior housing and any other age-restricted housing in Natchaug Village. Strive to make this housing pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.</i>	PZC, BOS, SC	32
<i>Update existing multi-unit housing regulations and ensure that it be pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.</i>	PZC	32

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Identify and assess locations of former district schoolhouses throughout Town and provide for protection/preservation of these sites.</i>	HS	34
<i>Continue to support the Chaplin Museum and encourage the revitalization of the Chaplin Historical Society.</i>	BOS	34
<i>Prepare practical plans for the use of municipally owned institutional buildings</i>	PZC, BOS	34
<i>Continue to support the work of the Chaplin Historic District Commission in preserving this valuable cultural resource.</i>	HDC	35
<i>Seek funding to install attractive signage at the gateways to the Chaplin Historic District. Seek professional design assistance in selecting the best location.</i>	HDC	35
<i>Consider the gateway to the historic district if the intersection of Chaplin St. and Route 198 is re-aligned to improvement sitelines.</i>	HDC, BOS	35
<i>Foster adaptive reuse of municipally owned structures for uses of such manner and scale that are appropriate for the district.</i>	BOS, PZC	35
<i>Identify and assess locations of former mill sites on the Natchaug River and Stone House Brook and provide for protection/preservation of these sites.</i>	HS	37
<i>Encourage owners of significant historic properties outside of the historic town center to apply for State of Connecticut and National Register of Historic Places designation.</i>	HS	37
<i>Continue to maintain and improve historic cemeteries throughout town.</i>	HS	37
<i>Consider adopting a town-wide resolution to protect scenic and culturally significant stone walls.</i>	BOS	37
<i>Attempt to provide parking and accessibility at historic and culturally significant sites.</i>	BOS, etc.	37
<i>Adopt a Municipal Scenic Road Ordinance to offer some protection for scenic local roads.</i>	BOS	37

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Consider the realistic protection of culturally-significant properties such as the “Chaplin Chimney” in Natchaug Village. Develop a limited timeline for possible protection. If the properties cannot be protected within a reasonable time-frame, pursue other options</i>	HS	37
<i>Create an annual signage budget. Install “Welcome to Chaplin” signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance. Seek professional design assistance for new signs. Additional signage should be pursued in Natchaug Village and Sherman’s Corner as the “village vision” starts to take shape.</i>	BOS	16, 37
STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
NATURAL RESOURCE, AGRICULTURE, AND OPEN SPACE	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Increase protection of Natchaug River and tributaries through a River Protection Overlay Zone. The zone could include a tiered protection mechanism.</i>	PZC	40
<i>Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.</i>	PZC, etc.	41
<i>Explore increasing the minimum lot size to four acres in sensitive parts of town within the Natchaug Basin.</i>	PZC	41
<i>Inventory existing storm-water infrastructure including all culverts, catch-basins, outlets and level spreaders. Work with DOT and Chaplin Public Works to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low-impact techniques.</i>	BOS, PW	41
<i>Avoid unnecessary impacts to watercourses and wetlands. Utilize low impact development guidelines and best management practices whenever necessary. Examples include: rain gardens, minimal impervious surfaces, bio-retention, infiltrators, etc.</i>	PZC, PW	41
<i>Work with supporting groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Naubasetuck Watershed Council who can provide guidance on environmentally-friendly practices.</i>	All	41
<i>Propose a referendum to authorize the Board of Selectman to take title of open space property and add it to the list of town-owned properties.</i>	PZC, CC	42

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
NATURAL RESOURCE, AGRICULTURE, AND OPEN SPACE (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Additionally, propose a referendum to authorize the Board of Selectman to take temporary title of open space property while a permanent conservator can be found for it. Continue to work with conservation organizations such as Joshua's Trust to provide for the long-term protection of critical open space.</i>	PZC, CC	42
<i>Review the subdivision regulations and process to ensure the resulting development reflects Chaplin's goals for open space. Consider eliminating 15 acres as the minimum conservation subdivision requirement. Consider including the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission as well as the Conservation Commission during the pre-application conference with the developer.</i>	PZC	42
<i>Create a designated Open Space Fund for the collection of fees-in-lieu of open space as well as any additionally budgeted or bonded funds dedicated for open space acquisition.</i>	PZC	42
<i>Encourage the Chaplin Conservation Commission to prepare and continuously update an open space and conservation easement inventory.</i>	CC	42
<i>Continue to use the Natural Resource Inventory and Co-occurring Natural Resource maps to direct where land should be preserved, either through conservation subdivisions (passive) or through targeted acquisitions (active).</i>	PZC	42
<i>Consider a municipal open space category for conservation lands as provided for under Public Act 490, comparable to the farm and forest categories.</i>	BOS	42
<i>Encourage sustainable forest management and stewardship. Work with existing groups such as the Eastern CT Forest Landowners Association to provide education to forest property owners.</i>	CC	43
<i>Continue to consider large, forested super-blocks during subdivision review.</i>	PZC	43
<i>Modify zoning regulations to make them more "agriculture-friendly", particularly in regard to signage for farms and farm stands. Consider creating an agricultural business overlay zone for existing and potential future agricultural businesses.</i>	PZC	15, 43

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
NATURAL RESOURCE, AGRICULTURE, AND OPEN SPACE (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Consider creating an Agricultural Commission (possibly combined with another commission) to assist local farmers and promote agriculture. Projects could include a local farmers' market or "Buy Local" program.</i>	BOS	15, 43
<i>Work with groups such as the CT Farm Bureau and the ECRC&D "AGvocate" program to educate municipal officials, agricultural producers, and others to help make Chaplin a agriculture-friendly community.</i>	AC	43
<i>Consider a "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance to protect necessary farming activities.</i>	BOS	15, 43
<i>Review zoning regulations regarding gravel mining. Consider limited duration gravel processing.</i>	PZC	44
<i>To facilitate development, provide the opportunity for a developer working in a commercial zone to crush rock on a specific site under development; the duration of the rock-crushing should be for a limited time period and specified as a condition of site plan approval.</i>	PZC	44
<i>Consider removing earth product processing as an allowable use in the Industrial Zone.</i>	PZC	16,44
STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Consider the need for fire ponds and underground storage cisterns for large developments.</i>	PZC	45
<i>Consider a new office space for the Chaplin Resident State Trooper.</i>	BOS	45
<i>Encourage interested citizens to take the CERT training course and join the Chaplin/Hampton CERT Team to assist Chaplin first responders in the event of an emergency.</i>	BOS	45
<i>Convene a Master Plan Committee to prepare a coordinated reuse plan for existing municipally-owned properties and buildings.</i>	PZC, BOS	46

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Strive to incorporate “green” building practices in all new municipal facilities and upgrades.</i>	BOS, PW	46
<i>Develop a Municipal Building Reuse District to help implement the municipal master plan.</i>	BOS, PZC	46
<i>Seek funding opportunities to develop the site next door to the Chaplin Library as the future home of the Chaplin Town Museum.</i>	BOS, HDC	46
<i>Continue to seek funding opportunities to encourage the further renovation of this historic structure.</i>	HDC	47
<i>Determine the historical value of the grange building. Consider the Grange property as a potential future location of the Natchaug School House.</i>	HDC	47
<i>The Town of Chaplin should maintain ownership of the Old Post Office property. Its location in close proximity to the Town Hall, the Highway Department, the Senior Center, and the Library make it a strategic asset to the town and a critical piece of municipal property.</i>	BOS	48
<i>Any renovation of the existing building, use, or redevelopment of the site should be compatible with the historic character of the Chaplin Historic District.</i>	All	48
<i>Prepare and implement a space management plan in the Town Hall. Likely changes include:</i> <i>1) Moving the office of the Resident State Trooper and creating an office for the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Agent adjacent to the Building Office.</i> <i>2) Rearranging the central area for better meeting space.</i> <i>3) Creating an office with a customer service counter for the Building and Land Use Department.</i> <i>4) Provide for adequate record storage town-wide.</i>	BOS	49
<i>Seek funding for deferred maintenance and functional enhancements such as the roof and an additional work bay.</i>	BOS, PW	49

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Seek funding for cosmetic improvements such as a new sign, possibly a fence, and better landscaping.</i>	PW	49
<i>Prepare an expansion plan for the transfer station and include necessary safety and security upgrades. Pursue funding strategies such as a STEAP grant and/or municipal bonds.</i>	BOS	50
<i>Schedule local annual collection day of household hazardous waste for Chaplin residents so they do not have to travel to the Mid-NEROC facility in Willington.</i>	BOS, PW	50
<i>Replace the damaged split rail fence with materials that cannot be easily vandalized or moved.</i>	RC, PW	50
<i>Create a permanent handicapped access to the Pavilion without the need to open the (normally locked) gate.</i>	RC, PW	50
<i>Seek recreational grant funding to repair the concessions building including the roof, doors, and trim.</i>	RC, BOS	50
<i>Improve trail connections between Garrison Park and adjacent Joshua's Trust property and Natchaug State Forest. Check property ownership and formalize trail access rights. Continue the stonedust trail around the pond.</i>	RC, PW	50
<i>Consider allowing non-residents to rent the park for events.</i>	BOS	50
<i>Include other recreational areas as part of the coordinated municipal master plan.</i>	BOS, PZC	50
<i>Ensure that an adequate description of every town service and board/commission is on the website. There are still a few "coming soon" pages that need to be filled out.</i>	BOS	51
<i>Provide for timely posting of municipal committee meeting dates, agendas and minutes.</i>	BOS	51
<i>Make the website more relevant to town residents by including more instructional material such as how to recycle and how to use the Transfer Station.</i>	BOS	51

STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES (CONT.)	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Evaluate the need for a part-time, paid Recreation Director. Consider sharing the position with a neighboring town.</i>	RC	51
<i>Ensure that all town staff have adequate training, time, facilities and resources to perform their jobs.</i>	BOS	51
<i>Increase time and budget for Town Planner/ZEO.</i>	BOS	51
STRATEGIES	PRIMARY	PG. #
EDUCATION	RESPONSIBILITY	
<i>Upgrade air conditioning to accommodate summer school programs. Consider cooperating with Hampton Elementary School in the provision of summer school programs.</i>	BOE	53
<i>Evaluate future building potential and identify appropriate expansion properties if necessary.</i>	BOE, PZC	53
<i>Replace boiler with an energy-efficient model such as a solar-assisted unit. Replace roof which is over 20 years old. Consider the concurrent installation of solar panels. Build a soccer field with the correct orientation (north-south) and adequate drainage.</i>	BOE	53
<i>Investigate possible deed restrictions on the 60 acre property. Evaluate existing building potential and identify appropriate expansion areas if necessary.</i>	BOE, PZC	53
<i>Consider the needs of Chaplin Elementary School, Parish Hill High School/Middle School, and the Town of Chaplin in preparing for changes in the school structure.</i>	BOE	54

Appendix

Municipal Road Classifications

Rural Principal Arterials

WILLIMANTIC RD
HAMPTON RD

Rural Major Collectors

PHOENIXVILLE RD

Rural Minor Collectors

BATES RD
CHAPLIN ST
TOWER HILL RD
PUMPKIN HILL RD
NATCHAUG ST
MARCY RD
MOREY RD (portion)

Major Local Roads

S BEAR HILL RD
N BEAR HILL RD
BEDLAM RD
S BEDLAM RD
N BEDLAM RD
CANADA LN
CEDAR SWAMP RD
CHEWINK RD
CROSS RD
DAVIS RD
DEPOT RD
ENGLAND RD
FEDERAL RD
GOSHEN RD
HALLS POND RD
LYNCH RD
MILLER RD
MOREY RD (portion)
NOLLETT RD
OLD STATE RD
OLD WILMANTIC RD
PALMER RD
PARISH HILL RD
RIDGE RD
SCOTLAND RD
SINGLETON RD
N WINDHAM RD

Minor Local Roads

BOLDUK LN
BUJAK RD
CAREFREE LN
S CEMETERY RD
CHAPPELL ST
CHAPPELL ST EXT
DIANAS POOL RD
GOODELL RD
HARAKALY RD
MANSURE RD
MT. LAUREL LN
NYBERG RD
SHUBA LN
TOWER HILL CUTOFF
YORK RD
#1 MCQUADE RD
#2 MCQUADE RD

Private Roads

CAVANAUGH RD
CHAPLIN WOODS RD
HALL RD
LANNI LN
LINKKILA LN
NYBERG HILL RD
PARK DR
PIASECZNY DR

TOWN OF CHAPLIN 2009 VISIONING SESSIONS

SUMMARY REPORT

May 21, 2009

OVERVIEW

This spring the Town of Chaplin's Planning and Zoning Commission began to prepare to update the town's Plan of Conservation and Development. The PZC decided that an important first step was to gather input from the community to begin to develop a vision for the town's future. The PZC requested the assistance of the Green Valley Institute to gather this information from the community. Susan Westa and Paula Stahl from GVI facilitated a series of four visioning workshops in March through May 2009.

The first visioning session was designed to gather input from the general public. The program began with a community brainstorming session. Folks were asked to identify issues and opportunities important to the future of Chaplin. Attendees were broken up into four smaller groups who looked at the issues in more detail by topic and then reported back to the larger group. The session also included a visual preference survey designed to gain input about how the community would like Chaplin to look and feel in the future. A summary of the information gathered follows.

The second visioning session focused on the town's natural resources including the Natchaug River and agriculture. Attendees were broken up into three groups, the Natchaug River, agriculture and other natural resources. Each group looked at the value of those resources, threats to those resources and potential solutions.

The third session followed the same general program as the first session but was designed specifically for members of the Town's Boards and Commissions. Since this was a smaller group, a roundtable format was used.

The fourth visioning session focused on economic development issues in the Route 6 Corridor. A roundtable format was used again and a visual preference survey was conducted. Many landowners along the Route 6 Corridor were in attendance. A summary of information from each session is attached.

The following information is intended for use by Chaplin as it updates its Plan of Conservation and Development. This information will be available to the public by posting it on the town website and having it available at the town hall.

**PUBLIC VISIONING SESSION
MARCH 23, 2009 - PRIORITIES, PREFERENCES & NEXT STEPS SUMMARY**

➤ **PRIORITIES**

1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

- Design Overlay
- Encourage development of nodes/villages – not strip development
- Restrict signage & noise & light pollution
- Don't rezone more commercial land
- Design of buildings
- Transportation to businesses
- Discourage trucks through town
- Home-based businesses
 - High tech/computers

2) NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE

- Maintain agricultural feel of town = top priority
- Opposed to common driveways
 - Concerned about opening up too much land to development
- PA 490 – use value vs. potential value
- Right to farm issues
 - Promote best management practices
- Protect Natchaug River and tributaries
 - Overlay Zone
- Concern over CL&P line expansion & gas line
- Population limits = 800-2500
- Farmer's Market

3) COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING

- Identified Current Services
 - Schools
 - Highway Department
 - Resident Trooper
 - Library
 - Senior Center
 - Town Park
 - Town-wide trash pickup
 - Volunteer Fire Department & Ambulance
- Identified Potential Future Services
 - Schools (new or addition)
 - Senior Housing – community wells & septic and affordable housing
 - Municipal Overlay Zone – over all municipal buildings
 - New Town Hall or addition
 - Biking/hiking paths & horse trails

4) LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Chaplin's Strengths
 - State Forest, Joshua's Trust land, Town Open Space

- o Farmland
- Need coherent plan for open space w/maps, inventories, etc.
- Protect stone walls
- Maintain agricultural character of town
- Maintain character of town hall, Garrison fields & historic district
- Characteristics to protect:
 - o Road widths
 - o Forests
 - o Historic District
 - o Farmland
 - o Road edges (snow plowing issue)
 - o Access to river
- Address multi-family housing discrepancy in regulations
- Eliminate business zone on Route 6 from Nyberg Rd. To Hampton line.

➤ **VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY**

1) TOP LIKES

Receiving 13 votes

- a) Stone wall & wooded road edge

Receiving 10 votes

- a) Quinebaug River Trail, Putnam
- b) Farm view & pasture

Receiving 9 votes

- a) Barn w/pumpkins and hayrides

Receiving 8 votes

- a) Farm stand
- b) Barn along road
- c) Edge of town green, Thompson

Receiving 7 votes

- a) Family on trail

Receiving 5 votes

- a) Tree-lined, rural road
- b) View of farm field
- c) Historic home w/stone wall

2) TOP DISLIKES

Receiving 11 votes

- a) Strip Signs – N. Windham

Receiving 6 votes

- a) Large lot subdivision w/no trees

Receiving 5 votes

- a) Dunkin' Donuts building w/parking in front

Receiving 4 votes

- a) Industrial, metal building
- b) Strip Plaza, Storrs

3) MIXED RESULTS

Receiving 7 Likes & 3 Dislikes

a) Hampton General Store

Receiving 2 Likes & 1 Dislike

- a) Sidewalk w/cafes & trees in Northeast
- b) Sidewalk cafes in new downtown area, San Luis Obispo, CA

➤ NEXT STEPS FOR TOWN

- Develop regulations that encourage agriculture & open space, and limit residential development
- Ensure development maintains rural character
- Increase protection of Natchaug River & tributaries
- Designate Route 198 a Scenic Road
- Commercial development – location is critical & regulate signage, parking, curb cuts, etc.
- Lynch Rd./Rt. 6 intersection – could be focus of compact, mixed use development, possibly including senior housing – close to rail trail & aquifer
- Make Route 198 more accessible for walking & bikes
- Consider loosening regulations to promote certain uses, i.e. farming
- Consider expanding commercial area to increase tax base
- Consider other Route 6 uses
- Conduct Buildout Analysis for town
- Consider aesthetics of new development – see different scenarios

NATURAL RESOURCES/NATCHAUG RIVER & AGRICULTURE VISIONING SESSION

APRIL 27, 2009 - VALUE, THREATS, SOLUTIONS & NEXT STEPS SUMMARY

➤ NATCHAUG RIVER

1) VALUE

- *Trademark image of Chaplin*
- Fisheries
- Kayaking
- Other recreation
- Water supply watershed
- Possible hydropower
- Economic value
- Wildlife sustenance
- Plant life
- Tranquility/health
- Fire protection
- Irrigation

2) **THREATS**

- Pollution from surrounding towns
- Erosion
- Storm drains
- Invasive/alien plants
- Rising temperature
- Development on river bed
- Garden/lawn pesticides
- Septic systems
- Large trees falling in river/damming river
- Loss of canopy
- Loss of recreational value

3) **SOLUTIONS**

- Natural/protective measures of erosion – plantings, rocks, etc.
- Regulations on development & enforcement procedures
- Encourage farmland pride – education/awareness
- Riverwalks – to monitor and/or for enjoyment
- Educate river abutting owners of dangers of fertilizers; development
- River walk/River festival – about value and fragility of river
- Enforcing regulations/creating new regulations on development
- Make Diana's Pool more accessible – balance use; keep litter & crowds down; keep safe; work with state

➤ **AGRICULTURE**

1) **VALUE**

- Open space
- Creates jobs
- Lowers taxes
- Local resource – food, fiber
- Beauty
- Low impact on infrastructure – low density
- Symbiotic with other businesses
- Can be protective of watershed
- Morals of children – connection to land, work & play
- Forestry is an agricultural activity

2) **THREATS**

- High property taxes
- Land costs
- Viability of farm businesses
- Town regulations
- Neighbors' attitudes
- Lack of next generation of farmers
- Scale of operation
- Transfer to the next generation

3) SOLUTIONS

- Natural/protective measures of erosion – plantings, rocks, etc.
- Farm friendly town regulations – definition agriculture/income
- Signs – seasonal, temporary & permanent
- Agriculturally related businesses – farmer’s market, pick your-own, corn maze
- Right to farm law
- Education/Agricultural Committee
- 490 Enforcement
- Development to offset property taxes

➤ OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES

1) FOREST - threats

- Development
- Clear-cutting – unmanaged
- Insects
- Fire
- Invasive plants

2) WILDLIFE

- Create wildlife corridors connecting large parcels of property
- Increase size of contiguous corridors
- Loss of habitat diversity

3) GRASSLANDS

- “Viewshed” – Palmer Ave. field

4) AQUIFER – threats

- Paving/development

5) VERNAL POOLS

- Wetlands commission has jurisdiction
- Value: storm water storage & habitat – frogs & salamanders

6) SURFACE WATER - threats

- Road salt
- Phosphates
- Herbicides/pesticides
- Erosion (deforestation)

➤ WHAT ELSE IS IMPORTANT?

- Other streams and Natchaug River tributaries
- State Forests – future protection?
- Four-wheeler issue
- Need up to date open space data
- Night sky – dark
- Solitude/natural sounds – threats=human noise
- Through education & communication establish priority for rural/quiet community
- Use regulations to induce/promote appropriate commercial development

- Trail maps

TOWN BOARDS & COMMISSIONS VISIONING SESSION

May 4, 2009 - ISSUES/CONCERNS & PREFERENCES SUMMARY

➤ ISSUES/CONCERNS FOR CHAPLIN'S FUTURE

1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

- Lynch Rd./Rt 6 should be a Walkable, Mixed Use Center
 - Commercial & residential
 - Infrastructure limitation – alternative infrastructure issue
 - Corridor has wetlands & aquifer issues
 - The Chimney has significant historic & archeological value
 - Liability concerns
 - Potential to incorporate greenspace into economic development
 - Busy intersection makes it loud but visible
- Need a Route 6 Management Plan
 - Current plan looks includes 500' on either side of road – need to reconsider to promote workable nodes
- Could the Airline Trail be Turned Back to Rail?
- Walking/Biking Trails Needed Throughout Town
- Truck/Traffic Concerns
 - Need a transportation plan
- Regional Economic Development Plan
- Need Plan for Municipally-owned Buildings
 - All located in historic district
- Industrial Park Property @ Windham Line/Rt. 6
 - Considering extending sewer w/limited tie in opportunities

2) NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE

- Natchaug River Overlay District – to protect river
 - Define distance from river & consider including tributaries
 - Use other techniques to protect river, such as conservation easements
 - The river is constantly changing, include floodplains & wetlands
- Connect Wildlife Corridors
 - Uplands need protection
 - Minimize conflicts between uses
 - Need multiple approaches
 - Connect regionally
- Review Town Animal Control Policy
- Tax Impact on Agriculture is a Concern
 - Tax impact on entire community is a concern
 - Investigate alternatives to promote agriculture
- Need Farm Friendly Regulations & Definition of Farming
- How to Keep Large Farms Intact

3) COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING

- Need for Elderly Housing

- o In-law apartment controversy
- o Consider small apartment complex with services for seniors
- o Consider creative solutions – intergenerational
- o Conduct a Senior Center Needs Assessment
- o Lynch Rd./Rt. 6 – location for senior housing?
- Need General Store to Provide Services
- How Can Chaplin Address Poverty?
 - o Not politically

4) LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Chaplin's Character is the Natchaug River and Agriculture
- Importance of Protecting & Maintaining Stone Walls
 - o Incorporate stone walls into new development
- Views of Sugar Maples
- Vision of 2009/2010 POCD Update = SUSTAINABILITY?

VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

4) TOP LIKES

Receiving 6 votes

- b) Hampton General Store

Receiving 5 votes

- c) Farm view & pasture
- d) Pasture & barn

Receiving 4 votes

- b) Edge of town green, Thompson

Receiving 3 votes

- d) Small-scale high density commercial development – Cape Cod
- e) Small historic commercial building
- f) Barn along road
- g) Barn w/pumpkins & hydrides
- h) Historic home w/stone wall
- i) Stone wall along wooded road
- j) Quinebaug River Trail, Putnam

5) TOP DISLIKES

Receiving 6 votes

- a) Big box store w/huge parking

Receiving 5 votes

- b) Strip signs – N. Windham

Receiving 4 votes

- b) Large lot subdivision w/no trees
- c) Small industrial building – N. Windham

6) MIXED RESULTS

Receiving 2 Likes & 1 Dislike

- c) Sidewalk w/cafes & trees in Santa Barbara, CA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ROUTE 6 VISIONING SESSION
May 18, 2009 - ISSUES/CONCERNS & PREFERENCES SUMMARY

➤ **ISSUES/CONCERNS FOR THE ROUTE 6 CORRIDOR**

- Existing Corridor Plan
 - Concern that it's designed for a "big" town
 - Design guidelines helpful
 - Only some recommendations of plan have been implemented
 - 25' setback and parking in back are an issue
- Character of Route 6
 - Feels like a hodgepodge or characterless, which is somewhat OK
 - Consider "welcome" signs
 - Consider theme for corridor
 - Some don't like strip malls – others do
 - Determine appropriate size of signs for the traveling speed of cars
 - Widening the road has split the town in two
 - Need noise and lighting regulations
 - Noise – band & motorcycle issue
- Economic Development
 - Route 6 should be focus of town businesses
 - Take care of existing businesses
 - Promote diversity of businesses
 - Support businesses through regulations
 - More density would support more business development
 - Industrial Zone, 194 acres – should investigate what could happen there
 - Lack of sewer can protect community from certain uses but limits others
 - Eliminate rock crushing
- Mix of Uses
 - Like commercial and residential uses together but there are conflicts
 - Suggestion to phase residential out of corridor to make it just commercial
- Traffic
 - Is 50mph the right speed?
 - Traffic calming could help businesses, especially if develop center
 - Suggestion to slow the speed down from the day care center to Route 198
- Vision for "Center"/Lynch Rd. Node
 - Some interest in a walkable center but think it would be hard to do and have a hard time imagining
 - Issue for center development is width of commercial corridor – 500'
 - Could cluster commercial development better – to get from one to another
 - Need ideas about what has worked in other places
 - Build on "green" ideas
 - Voluntown has nice sidewalks and lighting in a small center
- Types of Commercial Uses to Promote
 - Hair salon

- Bookstore
- Art gallery
- Small grocery store
- Some types of uses are limited by lack of sewer, including hair salons
- Bike Path along Route 6 and Connecting to the Airline Trail

➤ **VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY**

- For Route 6 corridor
 - Russell's Comer - small coffee/ice cream shop (highest)
 - Putnam Bank multi-tenant property at Rte 101/169
 - Patio with place to sit outside
 - Small commercial street with outside tables
 - Bedford NH Walgreens
 - Stowe VT gas station with steep pitch metal roof
 - Newbury Village Store
 - New commercial building with eaves, porch and parking to the side
 - New commercial building with steep roof, porch, close parking
 - Two commercial buildings in Kennebunkport
 - Hamden commercial complex with village feel
 - Olde Mystic Village
 - Moose Tracks Restaurant & Pub
- For anywhere in town
 - B&B with hanging sign
 - Antique store with outdoor display and sign
 - Barnard General Store
 - Farm stand
 - B&B with oval sign

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

CHAPLIN

Date: May 5, 2010
Referral #: 10-03-22-CN-POCD
Report on: **Draft Plan of Conservation & Development**

To: Town of Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission
C/o: Demian Sorrentino, Planner and Zoning Agent

Commissioners;

This referral involves: A proposal to adopt a revised municipal Plan of Conservation and Development.

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the above referral. Notice of this proposal was transmitted to the Windham Region Council of Governments under the provisions of Section 8-23(f) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

Comments for Inclusion in the Public Record: At their May 5, 2010 meeting, the Regional Planning Commission of the Windham Region Council of Governments (WINCOG) reviewed Chaplin's proposed Plan of Conservation and Development. The Regional Planning Commission reviews municipal plans of conservation and development for consistency with the Windham Region Land Use Plan, the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, and the plans of conservation and development of other towns in the region. In order to promote planning that is integrated on all levels, the Regional Planning Commission may offer recommendations on how a municipal plan may be more consistent the goals and vision of other plans. The recommendations of the Regional Planning Commission are purely advisory.

- The Regional Planning Commission applauds the efforts of the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission in striving to carefully plan for Chaplin's future. The plan committee is commended for bringing the planning process to fruition after many months of effort.
- The proposed Chaplin Plan of Conservation and Development is largely consistent with the goals and policies outlined in the Windham Region Land Use Plan, particularly the emphasis on mixed –use villages, watershed lands preservation, agriculture and historic resource protection.
- The Windham Region Land Use Plan identifies Natchaug Village as an economic growth area, but it does not identify any other areas on Route 6 as economic growth areas. While these areas may be development priorities on a municipal level, they do not rise to the level of being significant on a regional scale. This is a normal and expected deviation between the two plans, however the Regional Planning Commission must note these inconsistencies as part of their review of the Chaplin Plan of Conservation and Development as required by state statutes.
- The Chaplin Plan of Conservation and Development appears to be consistent with the plans of conservation and development of neighboring towns.
- The Regional Planning Commission looks forward to assisting the Town of Chaplin in implementing mutual goals in the future.

Questions concerning this referral should be directed to Jana Butts at the Windham Region Council of Governments.

Sincerely,

Katherine Holt, Chair
WINCOG RPC

EXISTING LAND USE

CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

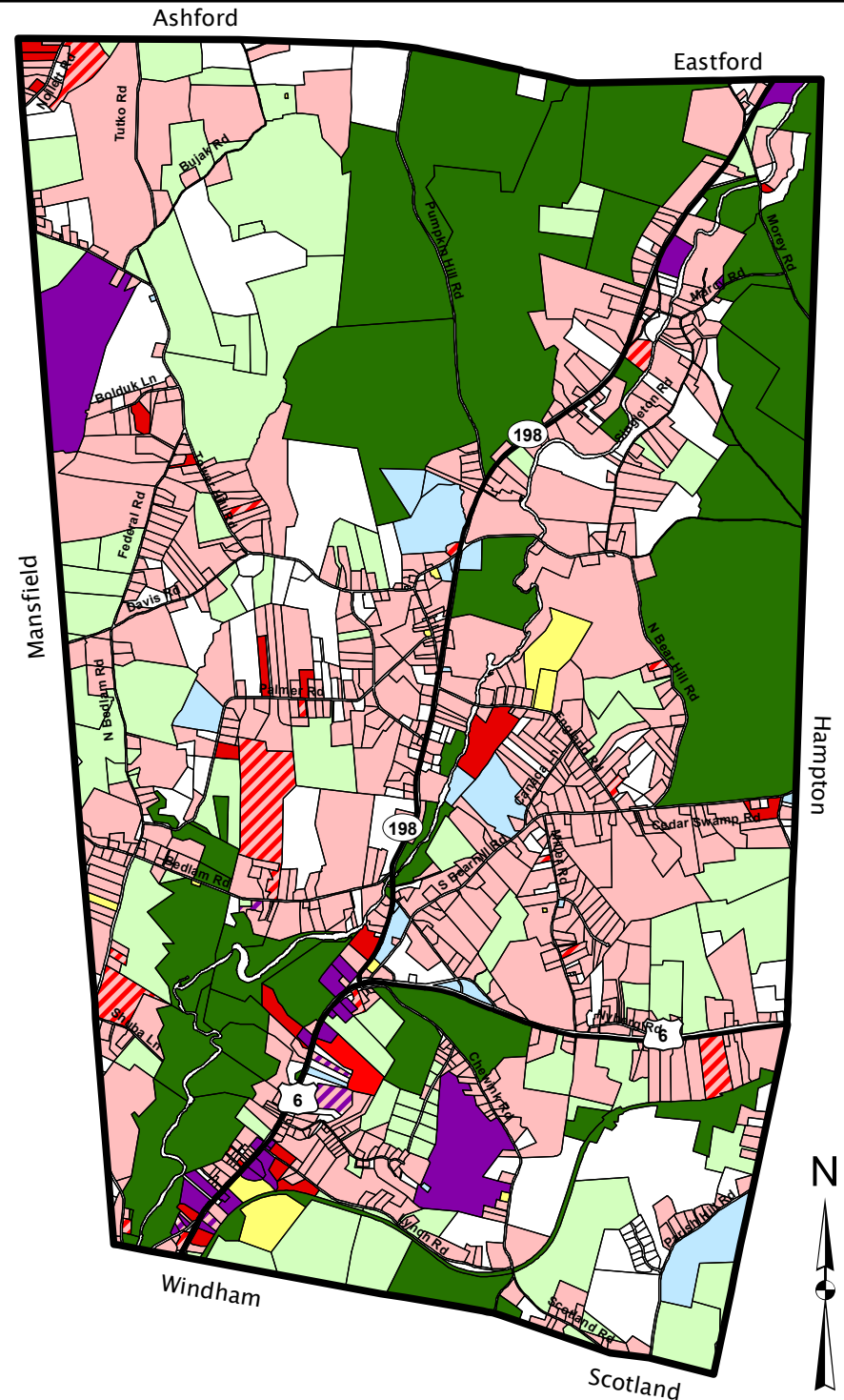
The following land use categories are based on municipal tax assessments. They are generalized and do not depict every land use.

-  Multifamily
-  Single Family with apartment
-  Single Family
-  Mixed Residential/Commercial
-  Commercial
-  State/Federal Land
-  Farm or Forest (PA 490)
-  Non-Profit
-  Municipal/Community Facilities
-  Vacant



Map prepared by WINCOG, 2010.
Source: Town of Chaplin Tax Assessor.

0 0.5 1 Miles



CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

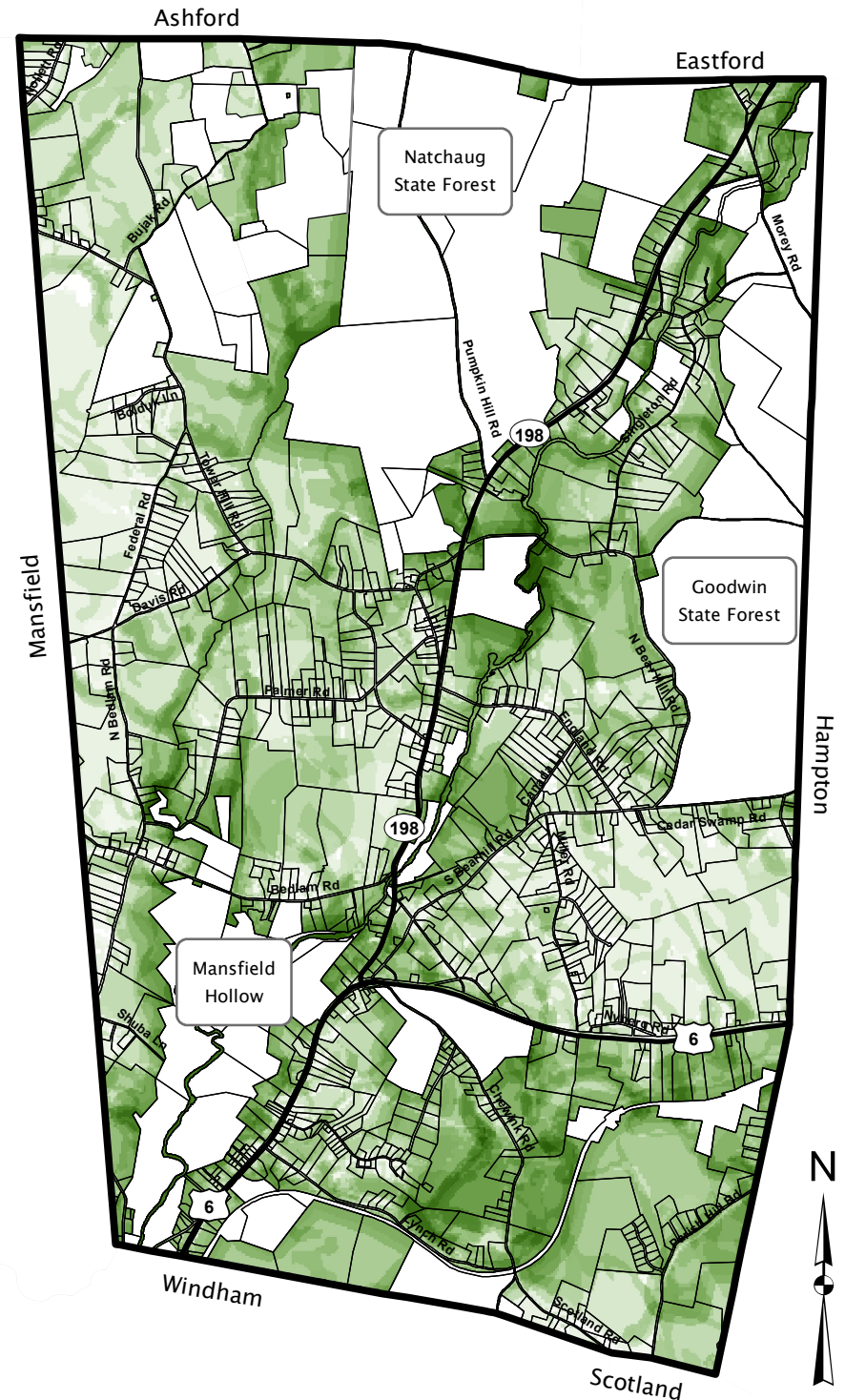
Conservation priorities are based on a map created in 2002 by the Chaplin Conservation Commission and the Green Valley Institute as part of a natural resource inventory. Titled a "co-occurring resource analysis", this summary map takes into account natural resources such as undeveloped areas, wetland soils, farmland soils, natural riparian areas, wild trout streams, stratified drift aquifers, existing open space and other local natural resource priorities. These natural resources were analyzed together to identify those areas that are especially important for conservation.

Darker green areas are thought to have especially high natural resource value; however, many areas with high natural resource value may not be accurately depicted on this map. White areas are permanently protected open space. This data may be used in reviewing subdivision proposals, prioritizing open space for protection, and analyzing natural resources for conservation.



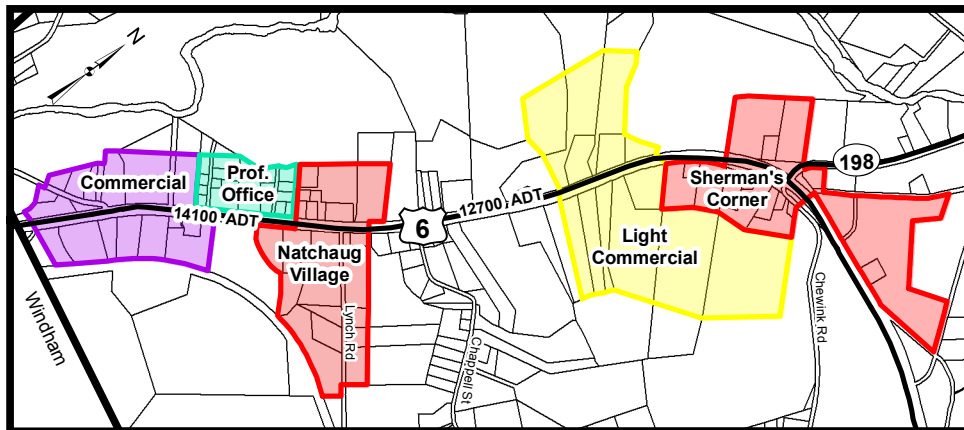
Map prepared by WINCOG, 2010.
Other Sources: Green Valley Institute,
Co-occurring Resource Analysis, 2002.
Town of Chaplin Tax Assessor, 2010.

0 0.5 1 Miles



DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT



Potential New Use Districts

- Village/Mixed Use
- Light Commercial
- Commercial
- Professional Office



Map prepared by WINCOG, 2010.
Other Sources: Average Daily
Traffic (ADT) ConnDOT, 2007.
Town of Chaplin Tax Assessor, 2010.

0 0.5 1 Miles

