ROYAL RIVER CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN
Yarmouth, Maine

DRAFT
October 2, 2008

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I. A Letter from the Co-Chairs

Fellow Residents of Yarmouth,

The Royal River Corridor Study Steering Committee was formed by the Yarmouth Town Council to provide community input during the development of guiding principles for the Royal River Corridor in Yarmouth. We have met many times since our first meeting in January 2008 in an effort to learn more of the history, geology, and ecology of the Royal River in Yarmouth and the land that abuts it.

We have been surprised at the volume and complexity of information that is relevant to this wonderful centerpiece of our town, in particular its history as a source of water power for multiple industrial uses at each of the four falls. The river corridor we know today is very different from what it was just decades ago.

As a committee, we see the corridor as a series of connected segments, each of which seems to give rise to its own possibilities for how it might be optimally used in the future: wildlife habitat or corridor, recreation area, viewshed, residential, commercial, etc.; all within a context of seeking to continually improve both the environmental impact Yarmouth has on the river and the resources available to both Yarmouth residents and businesses.

The draft report that follows describes the uses we believe will enhance the Royal River Corridor over the years to come. It is not a specific proposal, but rather a master plan whose final version will be cited and/or incorporated in the Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan, and will thereby influence all future corridor land use deliberations by the Town.

With the publication of this draft report, we formally begin a process of seeking broad public comment on this master plan. We encourage you to:

1) Read the sections of this draft report that interest you;

2) View our presentation to the Town Council on October 6th, 2008 on the local access channel, and attend our public meeting at the Yarmouth High School auditorium on October 20th, 2008 (both at 7 pm); and

3) Send us your thoughts and reactions to the recommendations for each segment of the Corridor via the internet survey located on the Town Web Site (next to the link for this report).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Whit Ford
Bill Taylor
Royal River Corridor Study Committee Co-Chairs
II. Executive Summary

The Royal River Corridor Master Plan creates a vision for one of the town’s most significant natural and cultural resources. It is the result of an extensive evaluation of the opportunities and limitations inherent in the corridor.

The primary study area is a corridor extending 500’ on both sides of the Royal River from the Yarmouth Water District building on East Elm Street to the end of Yarmouth Harbor at the sewage treatment plant. In a number of areas (e.g., East Elm Street and Main Street) the study area has been extended to take into account the river’s effect on abutting land uses.

The Master Plan for the Royal River Corridor is based upon a set of Guiding Principles (see box right) that was adopted by the Study Committee.

The master plan presents a series of recommendations, both corridor wide (in Chapter IV) and specific to individual segments (in Chapter V).

The underlying vision is to consider the Royal River a rich, green ‘necklace’ that links the harbor and the village. The green portion of the plan is the Royal River Park and other open spaces, the significant wildlife habitats, and the existing woodlands that give the river is present character and provide opportunities for people to interact with the natural world.

Arranged along this necklace will be a series of ‘pearls’... uniquely designed buildings for municipal, residential, and commercial uses that can capitalize on the riverfront location without detracting from it. Any new development would

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Create a Community Focus. The Royal River will become a dynamic focus of the community.

2. Encourage Appropriate Development. Appropriate mixed-use development, recognizing historic development patterns and environmental resources, will be encouraged in designated nodes within the river corridor. New riverfront development will add vibrancy and richness to the village.

3. Increase Density. Land use densities will be increased in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding patterns that define Yarmouth Village.

4. Create Interconnected Pathways. Pedestrian pathways and recreational uses will be expanded in appropriate areas to create an interconnected system of trails providing public access to the river. The river will no longer be seen as a barrier to cross-town pedestrian circulation.

5. Protect / Enhance Habitat. Significant riverfront habitat will be enhanced and preserved and become a central feature in the corridor.

6. Add to the Park. There will be incremental additions to the Royal River Park as land and opportunities become available.
have to meet rigorous standards for appropriate scale, environmental sustainability, and historic context. Done properly, a limited number of new buildings would allow more people to enjoy the riverfront, adding vibrancy and richness to the corridor.

**Pedestrian linkages** are a key component of the long-range vision. The master plan calls for a series of interconnected loops that offer people a variety of options for exploring the river corridor, travelling from one part of town to the other, and connecting places that have been cut off by the river or the interstate highway.

In recognition of its length, variety of land uses, and ecological conditions, the corridor was subdivided into 18 discrete segments for purposes of this study (see map below). While each segment has its own set of goals and specific recommendations, the entire corridor is treated as a unified area with a common vision.

The Study Committee recognizes the interwoven nature of the riverfront resources and the complexity of the regulations that currently apply here. As a blueprint for the future, the master plan is designed to be incorporated into the town’s Comprehensive Plan and guide land-use decision making for the foreseeable future.

**STUDY AREA SEGMENTS**

1. East Elm Street
2. Head of Royal River Park
3. Melissa To Forest Falls Drive/Gooch Is.
4. Factory Island
5. Forest Falls Drive
6. Route One To Bridge Street
7. Royal River Park: To Bridge Street Dam
8. Yarmouth Village: Route 1 To Bridge St.
9. Sparhawk Mill / Bridge Street
10. Yankee Drive
11. Grist Mill Park
12. Mill Point Apartments / Bridge St.
13. Town Land To I-295 Bridge
14. Town Landing
15. Dredge Spoil Site
16. Blueberry Cove To Marina
17. Main Street / Marina
18. Cemeteries / Treatment Plant
III. Background

INTRODUCTION

Yarmouth has a long history of intense industrial and commercial use along the Royal River, as evidenced by the Sparhawk Mill, the dams, and scattered remnants of historic paper mills, tanneries, fish processing plants, and brickyards.

Today much of the Royal River and adjacent lands are utilized for public and recreational purposes, including: Royal River Park, Rowe School, Grist Mill Park, a four-acre field above the lower falls and the town landing.

However, there is still a considerable amount of property in private ownership. Even though the land surrounding the river appears highly developed, there are many opportunities for appropriate improvements.

KEY LAND USE ISSUES

In authorizing the Royal River Corridor Study in 2007, the Yarmouth Town Council recognized a number of ongoing land use issues that demanded a more holistic approach to the river and the land surrounding it.

Policy Issues

• The Comprehensive Plan Update is focusing renewed attention on the Royal River as a defining attribute of the community.

Site-Specific Issues

• There are a variety of properties within the study area that could be (re)developed in a way that complements the village and advances the vision plan for the river corridor.

• The Sparhawk Mill on Bridge Street is a likely candidate for improvements. However, its current zoning (Commercial with Shoreland Overlay District) prohibits mixed use development at a density that makes economic sense.
• The Town owns a four-acre parcel of land downstream from the Mill Point apartments. There has been some discussion about possible uses for this property. However, it is constrained by current RP zoning.

• All the land between the river and Willow Street is presently on the market. This is a prime opportunity for the town to develop a pro-active vision for this highly visible land.

• Yarmouth Water District is interested in expanding their facility on East Elm Street. However, they are constrained by current RP zoning. The Town has been working with the Water District on alternative locations.

• There is continuing interest in adding a walkway on the south side of Route One, going under the highway bridge and tying the walkway into the Beth Condon footbridge.

• Expanding and interconnecting existing recreational and open space resources along the river corridor are topics of general interest.

• There is a recognized need for recreational boating access and parking within the harbor.

• The harbor is physically cut off from Yarmouth Village as a result of the construction of I-295.

• Dredging for harbor use and deep water access continues to be a costly expenditure for both small business owners and the Town.

WHAT IS A FLOODPLAIN?

Floodplains are typically low, periodically-flooded lands that are adjacent to rivers, lakes, and coastal areas. A river’s floodway – as distinguished from the floodplain – is where the water is likely to be deepest and fastest. It is the area of the floodplain that should be reserved (kept free of obstructions) to allow floodwaters to move downstream. Placing fill or buildings in a floodway may block the flow of water and increase flood heights.

For planning purposes, the regulatory floodplain is usually viewed as all land within reach of a “100-year flood”, which is defined as a flood event that has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) produces floodplain maps, defining what’s in and out of the 100-year (or “regulatory”) floodplain, in order to implement the National Flood Insurance Program.

Unfortunately, it is only during and after major flood events that the connections between a river, its floodway and its floodplain become readily apparent to many people. These areas form a complex physical and biological system that not only supports a variety of natural resources but also provides natural flood and erosion control. In addition, the floodplain represents a natural filtering system, with water percolating back into the ground and replenishing groundwater.
Gooch Island. The town was recently given Gooch Island in the upper end of the corridor.

(Re)Development Opportunities exist throughout the study area to add vitality to the river corridor.

Route One Land between the river and Willow St. is available – a prime opportunity to develop a proactive vision.

Bridge St. Zoning is being reviewed in response to local concerns about integrating commercial development into abutting residential neighborhoods.

Yarmouth Water District is interested in expanding their facility on East Elm Street, but are constrained by current (RP) zoning.

Pathway Connection. There is interest in connecting the east side of Route One, with the Beth Condon footbridge.

The Sparhawk Mill needs improvements, but zoning prohibits development at a density that makes economic sense.
Yarmouth Harbor is physically cut off from the Village as a result of the construction of I-295.

Town Land. The Town owns 4 acres on the river, constrained by current Resource Protection zoning.

Additional recreational boating access and parking is needed within Yarmouth harbor.

Existing Open Space Network. Expanding/interconnecting the Town’s open space resources along the river corridor is of general interest.

Harbor Dredging. Dredging for harbor use and deep water access continues to be a costly expenditure for both small business owners and the Town.
**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Constraints and Opportunities**

The Royal River corridor includes a broad spectrum of natural communities and habitats, ranging from a rich estuarine and salt marsh ecosystem to small freshwater perennial streams, from salt marshes to vernal pools. Many of these habitats are protected under a variety of state and federal regulations, as well as several Town ordinances. For the purposes of this report, mention of natural resources and applicable regulations has been limited to an overview of the most important resources and/or those that would pose constraints to potential development or modifications to ordinances. More extensive information about these resources and regulations are provided in Stantec’s supplemental report *Royal River Corridor Study, Yarmouth Maine, Natural Resource Reconnaissance Surveys, July 2008.*

**Yarmouth Harbor and Royal River Estuary.** In the lower section of the river where it meets the Cousins River and Casco Bay, the Royal River corridor is characterized at low tide by a narrow brackish water river channel, extensive mudflats, fringing spartina salt marsh, and steep, forested slopes. With a 9-foot tidal range, this section of the river receives a significant influx of nutrients with each tide cycle, making it an attractive and productive environment for a wide range of species including wading birds, waterfowl, fish, shellfish, marine mammals, and humans. Extensive areas of the estuary and adjoining marshes have been designated as Significant Wildlife Habitat by the state.

**Above head-of-tide,** the river contains a variety of freshwater aquatic habitats between several sets of falls. These habitats support a number of fish species, including several anadromous (live in the sea, breed in fresh water) and catadromous (live in fresh water, breed in the sea) species.

**Dams and Waterfalls.** Four natural and man-made barriers within the river exist in the study area, including two dams and two natural falls. In terms of fish passage, the Lower Falls do not present a barrier to most fish species. Although the Upper Falls may themselves be a barrier, there is a side channel to the east of those falls that allows fish passage around the falls. In contrast, the two dams present a complete barrier to all fish passage. A concrete Denil fish passage exists at each dam, but these structures are flawed and do not appear to be providing adequate function. The structure and geometry of the bedrock underlying and adjacent to the two dams suggest that fish passage through those falls would be possible if the dams were removed.

![The Bridge Street dam above the Sparhawk Mill during a period of low river flow.](image)
Wetlands and Streams. Within the study area there are 20 separate freshwater and coastal wetlands, as well as a number of small perennial and intermittent streams and two potential vernal pools. Wetlands below the head of tide consist of coastal wetlands including salt marsh, intertidal mudflats, and several small streams. Freshwater wetlands above East Main Street are predominantly floodplain wetlands and small perennial streams, although a large forested wetland exists south of the Mill Stream apartments off Bridge Street. The two potential vernal pools have not yet been confirmed as significant vernal pools which would require significant buffer zones. (See Stantec’s Natural Resources Reconnaissance Surveys for definition of terms and additional information on resource values.)

Riparian Zones. Many of the riparian zones adjacent to the river are relatively undeveloped, and are comprised of upland woods, shrub thickets, parkland, field, and wetlands. The steeply wooded slopes are dominated by red oak, red maple, white pine, sugar maple, white birch, and eastern hemlock, with little to no understory or herbaceous layer. There are a few narrow drainages along the slopes. Additional small wooded areas are located throughout the study area and contain similar vegetation. Upland wooded floodplain areas and shrub thickets adjacent to the river contain significant amounts of invasive species such as black locust, common buckthorn, Morrow’s honeysuckle, multiflora rose, Japanese knotweed, and oriental bittersweet.

Soils and slopes along the river are dominated by clay-rich, poorly-drained hydric soils that form steep slopes and gullies and are subject to moderate erosion and slumping. Several landslides have occurred historically on both sides of the river downstream from the marina areas, and there are unstable slopes all along the estuary. Upstream from East Main Street, the shore consists mostly of Presumpscot formation marine clays, with some areas of river alluvium and gravel overlain by thin soils particularly on the south side of the river.

Wildlife. A wide variety of wildlife species utilize the river corridor and its habitats. Wading birds and waterfowl are common along the estuarine sections of the river, and the state has formally designated most of the harbor and estuary as wading bird and waterfowl habitat. Osprey and several species of gulls are frequently seen feeding and resting along the river corridor, particularly during periods of fish migration and spawning. In addition, sections of the river and adjoining salt marsh downstream from the Royal River boatyard have been designated as Shorebird Roosting Areas by MDIFW.

The Bridge Street dam during a summer freshet in 2008.
WHAT IS A WETLAND?

Wetlands are areas that are either covered by water or have waterlogged soils for long periods during the growing season. Plants that thrive in wetlands are capable of living in saturated soils for at least a portion of the growing season. Some wetlands, such as salt marshes, swamps, and streams, are fairly obvious, but other wetlands are not easily identified because they may be dry during part of the year.

The presence (or absence) of water is not necessarily a good method for identifying wetlands because the amount of water fluctuates, depending on rainfall, snow melt, droughts, and tide levels. Thus, the proper identification of wetlands considers three parameters: soil characteristics, vegetation, and hydrology.

Wetlands are valuable to us not only for their scenic character and recreational uses, but also for the important functions they perform including water storage, flood conveyance, groundwater recharge and discharge, erosion control, and water quality improvement. Perhaps most importantly, wetlands also provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including many rare species. For these reasons, wetlands are protected under several state and federal regulations, as well as under Town ordinances.

No rare, threatened, or endangered species have been identified in the study area through desktop research or inquiries with natural resource agencies.

NATURAL RESOURCE REGULATIONS

There are a number of federal, state, and municipal regulations and ordinances that protect specific natural resources within the corridor. The following sections provide an overview of the existing regulatory environment and discuss the potential development constraints resulting from Town ordinances that are in effect as of 2008.

Shoreland Overlay District. The Town of Yarmouth Zoning Ordinances protect several categories of natural resources in the study area under ordinances specific to the Shoreland Overlay District (SOD) and the Resource Protection (RP) district. The pertinent natural resource categories that are specifically addressed in these ordinances include the river, wetlands, streams, floodplains, vegetation, and steep slopes. Parcels in the study area that are subject to these ordinances are generally those that are within 250 feet of the river and thus fall within the defined SOD. The Town does not regulate wetlands or other natural resources outside the SOD, but defers to the state and federal agencies for permitting requirements.

Resource Protection District. More stringent constraints are imposed on activities that fall within the RP district. The Town’s definition of its RP district includes areas within the 100-year flood plain of the Royal River as shown on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps, or all lands within 100 horizontal feet of the normal high water mark of the Royal River, whichever is more inclusive.

The Town’s RP definition also includes 100-year flood plains adjacent to all other coastal waters, as shown on FEMA maps, and MDIFW-identified Significant Wildlife Habitat such as high-value wading bird habitat, and shorebird roosting and feeding areas. It should be noted that the state’s
Model Shoreland Ordinance does not include the “within 100 horizontal feet of the normal high water mark” language, but does reference Significant Wildlife Habitat which exists in several sections of the study area.

**Maritimes Activities in RP.** It is also important to note that certain areas which are currently developed, as well as areas which meet the criteria for the Limited Commercial, General Development I, or Commercial Fisheries/Maritime Activities Districts (such as the WOC1 district in Yarmouth), need not be included within a RP district. The state’s guidelines for defining a Maritime Activities district include “areas which are suitable for functionally water-dependent uses”. The term “functionally water-dependent use” includes a diverse group of uses ranging from industrial facilities that receive shipments by water or use water for cooling, to traditional commercial fishing enterprises, and public shorefront parks.

In Yarmouth, this kind of district definition may be particularly applicable not only to the existing marinas within the harbor, but also to other upstream areas that have recreational park components or existing mixed-use development.

**State and Federal Regulations.** A variety of federal and state regulations also apply to the natural resources identified within the study area. Federal regulations include the Federal Clean Water Act, Section 404, Section 10 of the River & Harbors Act, and the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Act (Essential Fish Habitat).

State regulations include Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Shoreland Zoning, Natural Resource Protection Act (NRPA) and Site Location of Development laws, and Maine DEP waste discharge and stormwater laws.

Impacts to the river or adjacent protected natural resources may require permits under several of these regulations, or they may not be allowed depending on the resource and level of impact. It should be noted that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does not regulate activities in buffer zones, only within wetlands.

**THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**

**Existing Zoning.** Several sections of the study area face regulatory constraints on new development or expansions of current use under the current Town Zoning Ordinances (see Zoning Map following page). In particular, the existing definition of the RP district to include a 100-foot setback from the Royal River effectively eliminates any new development or expansion of existing structures, parking areas, or significant vegetation removal within that zone.
Future Zoning Mechanisms. Rezoning specific parcels or sections of the riverfront as a water-oriented district with design and use limitations, or creation of a new type of mixed-use district, or the creation of a riverfront overlay district, may allow appropriate development and establishment of scenic views while retaining protection of natural resources.

Changes to RP. There will be specific areas where the RP designation cannot be modified without violating state regulations. This would be true in undeveloped areas that are confirmed 100-year flood plains, mapped as significant wildlife habitat, sections of unstable slopes and landslide areas, or within the river channel itself.

State and Federal Regulations. Of course, state and federal regulations may further constrain specific development plans, but the permitting processes offer multiple avenues for moving forward with a project if avoidance and minimization of impacts is demonstrated and mitigation of impacts is successfully negotiated.

Invasive Species. Many sections of the corridor are thick with invasive species such as bittersweet, buckthorn, and honeysuckle. Removing these invasives and replacing them with natives as a habitat enhancement measure would be allowed under SOD and RP guidelines. Selective pruning and trimming in sections of the corridor to enhance views or provide clearing for pathways would also need to be done in compliance with SOD requirements. It might also be feasible to consider replanting in an existing cleared area as a form of no-net-loss mitigation for clearing done in another, more desirable area. It is important, however, to remember the reasons behind restricting vegetative cutting along a river, which include soil retention, runoff control, water quality, canopy shading to reduce water temperature, and providing food, shelter, and visual buffers for wildlife using the corridor.

Pathways Within the Corridor. With regard to pedestrian pathway development, it is important to note that Shoreland Zoning does not clearly regulate pathways, only roads and driveways. The Table of Uses in the state’s Model Shoreland Ordinance allows public recreational areas with minimal structural development to occur in a Resource Protection district. The Maine DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers regulate impacts to wetlands identified within a project area. However, if no filling of wetlands is anticipated during trail or pathway construction, permitting would only be required for work that occurs within 75’ of Significant Wildlife Habitat, which has not been identified anywhere upstream from East Main Street. A Permit By Rule may be required from the MaineDEP (see regulations).
SPECIFIC LAND USE AND REGULATORY CONSTRAINTS

There are a number of resource-based regulatory constraints at the local and state level that may limit the ability to make improvements along the river corridor. The following is a description of specific land use and regulatory constraints that will occur in various sections of the study area.

Since these apply throughout the study area, they are presented here and referenced in individual segments under the **Regulatory Constraints** portion of each segment description. Additional segment-specific regulatory constraints are presented in most locations in the report.

**NOTE:** these constraints are presented for basic understanding of current regulatory issues. This section is not intend to replace or supplement a thorough review of the existing zoning and subdivision ordinances or state and federal regulations.

**Uses in the Resource Protection District.** No new structures, parking areas, or roads are allowed in the RP, which extends 100 feet from the river and associated floodplain wetlands.

**Uses in the 100 Year Floodplain.** Land located within the 100-year FEMA floodplain is considered Land Not Suitable for Development, and cannot be included in the calculations of minimum lot area or net residential acreage in an Open Space Residential Development.

**Development beyond the Floodplain.** Development is allowed outside the floodplain, 100 feet away from the river, 25 feet from wetlands, and 75 feet from streams.

**Structures: Setback from River.** Under current Town ordinances, new structures need to be set back at least 100 feet from the normal high-water line of the river, and screened from the river by existing vegetation. This provision does not apply to structures related to hydropower facilities or to structures located within the Water-Oriented Commercial (WOC) I District.

**Parking Areas: Setback from River.** Parking areas must be set back 100 feet from normal high-water line.

**Road and Driveways: Setback from River.** Roads and driveways must be set back 75 feet from the normal high-water line of the river, or the upland edge of a wetland.

**Vegetation within the SOD.** Existing vegetation within 250 feet of the river must be maintained in conformance with the SOD requirements. Selective cutting of vegetation is allowed within a 75-foot buffer, but it must retain a well-distributed stand of trees. Pruning on the bottom 1/3 of trees is allowed. Existing vegetation <3’ in height within the 75-foot buffer under cannot be cut or removed, except to provide a permitted footpath. Invasive species, however, could be removed and replaced with native species.

**Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts.** Total developed area of all structures, parking lots and other unnatural non-vegetated surfaces may not exceed 20% of the lot area or the portion located within the SOD, including land area previously developed. Outside the SOD lot coverage may not exceed 50%.

**Allowable Lot Coverage: SOD/Industrial and Commercial Districts.** Total developed area of all structures, parking lots and other unnatural non-vegetated surfaces cannot exceed 60% adjacent to tidal waters and rivers.

**Allowable Lot Coverage: WOC I District.** Total developed area of all structures, parking lots and other unnatural non-vegetated surfaces is not to exceed 75%. Building footprints can cover no more than 20% of a lot.

**Uses in the WOC I District.** No parking areas can be within 10 feet of normal high water line. There can be no paving except for pedestrian walkways and launching ramps within 10 feet of normal high water. If any structures or paving are within 50 feet of normal high water, appropriate steps are required to prevent any erosion of the banking. No buildings can be within 25 feet of normal high water line. Buildings within 75 feet of mean high water must be at least 50 feet from other buildings.

**Building Footprints in the WOC I District.** Buildings cannot have a footprint over 4,000 square feet, except for buildings used entirely for boat building and repair and boat sales which may have a footprint up to 12,000 square feet.
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 1993 Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan contains a number of goals, objectives, and implementation strategies that pertain directly to the Royal River Corridor and its role as an economic resource for the community.

• Provide Additional land area for business development with appropriate performance standards. (I.3)
• Encourage a wider variety of housing opportunities. (II.2)
• Increase pedestrian and bicycle access linkages throughout town to commercial, coastal, and riverine areas. (III.1)
• Provide general public access to the water. (V.1)
• Provide a continuous pedestrian trail system throughout town. (V.2)
• Preserve and protect the high recreation and natural resource values of the Royal River. (V.7)
• Identify and protect significant wildlife habitat. (VI.5)
• Provide greater protection for Yarmouth’s undeveloped shoreline. (VI.7)
• Direct the development of new residential neighborhoods in ways that promote the efficient use of land. (X.2)
• Promote a viable mix of commercial and residential uses in the village. (X.3)
• Increase the pedestrian and bicycle linkages between the Village and Route One, the Harbor, and the Royal River Park. (X.3.c)

• Promote new construction that complements existing village character. (X.5)
• Encourage historical village development patterns. (X.7)
• Promote small to medium scale retail (to 15,000 SF) and service businesses along the center segment of Route One. (X.9)

Yarmouth is currently in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan, partially in response to the changes that have occurred over the past decade. This planning effort should be coordinated with the ongoing work of the Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee as they make their recommendations.
IV. Corridor-wide Recommendations

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Develop a Green Necklace Concept. Create a green necklace along the river corridor that strikes the proper balance between habitat preservation and recreational and targeted development opportunities.

Identify and Promote Appropriate Development. Identify appropriate clusters for new residential, commercial, and mixed-use development. It may be possible to increase density in certain locations, provided that there are defined public benefits (e.g., improved public access, habitat restoration, preservation of architecturally-significant structures, improvements to water quality, etc.).

Establish a Corridor Overlay District. Create a corridor-wide overlay zone to address future land use. Offer density and other incentives in exchange for public access. Require adherence to design standards. Explore the greater use of Contract Zoning or Form-Based Zoning as a way to achieve public benefits within the corridor.

Establish Design Standards within the Corridor for new mixed use, residential, and commercial construction within the river corridor.

Require Low Impact Development (LID) measures for stormwater management for any projects within or adjacent to the corridor to improve water quality in the river and nearby streams. See Maine DEP LID Manual for Maine Communities. Promote the corridor as an educational model of innovative stormwater management tools (buffers, rain gardens, vegetated swales, pervious pavement, green roofs, etc.).

Study the Future of Existing Dams. Perform a comprehensive study of the advantages and disadvantages of removing existing dams within the corridor. These may include fish habitat enhancement, fish passage, bank stabilization, invasive species removal, recreational opportunities, aesthetics, loss of power generation, and a host of other related issues.

Improve Fish Passages. Make improvement to fish passage throughout the corridor, recognizing the potential for significant alewife populations to use the river.

Coordinate Town-Wide Studies. Coordinate recommendations of the Route One Study, Design Guidelines, Comprehensive Plan, the Bridge Street Zoning Study, and the Royal River Corridor Study.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Maintain wooded buffers along the river, with particular attention to native understory vegetation.
Initiate a vegetation management program throughout the corridor to remove invasive species, restore native plant communities, open view corridors, and add visual interest to the corridor. MaineDEP supports the removal of invasive species along Maine waterways, providing the stability of the underlying bank is not compromised.

Evaluate the condition of specimen trees within the corridor. Develop a long-range plan to address disease, pruning, and proactive plantings of eventual replacement.

**INTERCONNECTEDNESS**

Create interconnected paths to tie nearby residential neighborhoods and common areas into the park. Path systems should also provide multiple loops within the park.

**Improve Access from Main Street** (both physical and visual access) by upgrading existing pathways, better lighting, signage, view corridors, interpretive signage, and other appropriate means.

**Design common improvements** (e.g., benches, lights, railings, footbridges, signs, etc.) that will add continuity to the river corridor. Evaluate the effectiveness and aesthetic qualities of all current details.

**Provide accessible routes** for people with limited mobility throughout the river corridor wherever possible, following recommendations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Develop a coordinated lighting plan** for corridor to emphasize continuity and stress safety. Lighting in designated areas only.

**CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS**

**Recognize and improve gateways** into the river corridor with proper attention to view corridors, landscape detailing, signage, and lighting.

**Open view corridors** along the river in appropriate locations in keeping with current Shoreland Zone standards, while minimizing wildlife impacts and erosion.

**Control Invasive Species.** Establish a program to replace invasive species within the river corridor, especially within the Royal River Park, with native species with significant wildlife value.

**Encourage More Park Usage.** Take advantage of underutilized portions of the park by establishing looped trails and overlooks.

**Establish a coordinated signage system** throughout the river corridor. These should include:
• Signs guiding people to the river.
• Corridor/village-wide interpretive signage with a particular focus on the Town’s industrial (shipbuilding and manufacturing) heritage.
• Entrance signs.

**Install tree markers** for identification of specimen trees throughout the corridor.

**Add sitting areas** (benches, flat rocks, cut granite foundation stones) periodically (every 300-500 feet) along the pathways to encourage greater recreational use. Site sitting areas for shade, views, and security.

Interpretive signage is recommended throughout the corridor to give people a greater understanding of Yarmouth’s natural and cultural heritage.
V. Segment Recommendations

1. EAST ELM STREET

Current Land Use. East Elm Street is a village-scaled residential neighborhood, with relatively narrow lots and historic homes close to the street. Several parcels of land, including one large piece abutting the river, offer potential for future development.

Zoning. The majority of the area is zoned MDR. The area within 250’ of the river is in SOD. The floodplain of the Royal River is classified as RP.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- A vernal pool may exist within the forested wetland near the railroad tracks.
- Railroad tracks border several potential development parcels. There is the potential for increased rail traffic in the future.

Regulatory Constraints

The following are some of the major regulatory constraints that apply to Segment 1 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Development beyond the Floodplain
Structures: Setback from River
Parking Areas: Setback from River
Road and Driveways: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD
Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts.

Goals

- Extend village residential character to open land at rear of homes on East Elm Street.
- Maintain buffer zone along riverfront.
- Establish pedestrian access in conjunction with future development.
- Protect character of existing homes on East Elm Street.

Overview of development / infill opportunities at Elm Street.
Recommendations

A. Work with private landowners to develop conceptual plans for potential development, with a focus on riverfront, public access, and village patterns.

B. Increase density in conjunction with the overlay zoning district to be at least equivalent to current Village density.

C. Incorporate provisions for water access along the river for any new development on the north side of East Elm Street.

D. Continue the Royal River pathway along the west side of the river to the town’s property on Sligo Road (the former pole yard site).

E. Establish housing patterns in any new development that are in keeping with those found in Yarmouth village (see Livability Guide to the Great American Neighborhood).

1. EAST ELM STREET
2. HEAD OF ROYAL RIVER PARK

Current Land Use. This segment includes the entrance to the Royal River Park off East Elm Street, the Yarmouth Water District’s facilities and storage yard, and the land between the river and the entrance to RiverBend Condominiums. The Water District’s drive provides an easy access to the river for canoers and kayakers.

Zoning. The Water District property is totally within both the Resource Protection District and the SOD. The land beyond the floodplain is in Medium Density Residential.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- Flood plain is mapped as cutting through the Yarmouth Water District building and portions of the parking lot.
- 100-foot Resource Protection (RP) zone from the Royal River includes the Water District building and parking lot.
- East Elm Street dam is leaking.

Regulatory Constraints

Water District Building. The Water District building is completely within the RP, so it cannot be expanded by more than 25% in volume or footprint, and not toward the river.

Structures and Flood Elevations. The lowest floor elevation needs to be elevated at least one foot above the elevation of the 100-year flood.

Future with SOD. If the RP was eliminated, the Shoreland Overland District (SOD) would apply. Under SOD, the Water District building is an existing non-conforming structure, and can be expanded by up to 30% of footprint or volume, but not toward the river.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 2 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Structures: Setback from River
Parking Areas: Setback from River
Road and Driveways: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD
Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts
Goals

• Create an appropriate gateway into the Royal River Park.

• Preserve visibility into the park.

• Improve the image and usability of the park and surrounding land.

• Preserve character of Water District Building.

• Work with the Water District to relocate to another appropriate site.

• Create opportunities for appropriate water-dependent and water-enhanced uses.

• Create opportunities for mixed-use development and higher densities to take advantage of the park setting and create more ‘eyes’ on the park.

• Follow historic development models from Yarmouth Historic Society for the design of any new structures.

(Above) Looking downstream from above the East Elm Street falls, c. 1895, the first Hodsdon Shoe Company building (which burned in 1896) at left was near the current Royal River Park parking lot, and the smaller buildings at center were near what is now the Yarmouth Water District building. The chimneys in the background are part of the Forest Paper Company at the third or Mill Street falls. (Below) The same scene today.
Remnants of old dam on sluiceway below Elm Street.

Open field near Riverbend may present development potential.

One option for limited development near the park entrance.

Existing entrance to Royal River Park.
Recommendations

A. Investigate acquisition of properties abutting and across the river from the park for future recreation and related uses.

B. Develop a mixed-use building near the entrance to the park that may include Historical Society, Community Services facility, the relocated Water District.

C. Expand parking area off East Elm Street to accommodate expanded visitor use.

D. Increase allowable density on the north side of the river to the entrance to RiverBend Condominiums.

E. Redevelop existing Water District building to water-dependent use.

F. Improve small boat put-in and parking area on Water District property. Redesign the site plan to include wider vegetated buffer along river.

G. Improve sidewalks and pathways leading to park entrance.

H. Inspect and make structural improvements to the East Elm Street dam as necessary.

I. Make improvements to the East Elm Street bridge over the Royal River to better accommodate pedestrians.

2. HEAD OF ROYAL RIVER PARK
3. MELISSA TO FOREST FALLS DRIVE INCLUDING GOOCH ISLAND

Current Land Use. This segment of the corridor is the interface between the river and residential neighborhoods on the east side of town. Several well used footpaths provide connections throughout this area. Gooch Island is generally inaccessible, except at low water conditions.

Zoning. The underlying zone for the majority of Segment 2 is Medium Density Residential. Gooch Island and the floodplain are classified as Resource Protection. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- Two streams and associated wetlands lie between Melissa Drive and Ellen Circle.
- The flood plain as mapped covers most of Gooch Island.
- The 100-foot RP zone from the river includes all of Gooch Island.
- Invasive species are present on the island.
- Removal of the Elm Street dam could increase river flow in the channel on the back side of Gooch Island.

Regulatory Constraints

Gooch Island Footbridge. A footbridge over the river side channel to Gooch Island would need to avoid flood plain and wetland impacts, or else state and federal permitting would be required.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to improvements in Segment 3 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Structures: Setback from River Vegetation within the SOD
Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts.

Goals

- Establish a looped pathway system.
- Re-establish old riverfront trail.
- Preserve natural character of the island
- Provide at least one point of access. Consider Gooch Island a waypoint in a larger looped trail system.
Recommendations

A. Improve existing path to the end of Forest Falls Drive.

B. Extend the path from the end of Forest Falls Drive to Factory Island.

C. Construct a footbridge over the river above the falls next to Gooch Island.

D. Work with landowners to obtain access easements to the waterfront, along the river, and to footbridge locations. Provide fencing, screening, signage as necessary to maintain privacy.

E. Obtain easements from abutting streets to connect neighborhoods to the path system.

F. Connect Gooch Island with the pedestrian path between the Park Street sewer pump station and Forest Falls Drive.

G. Install a footbridge(s) over the Royal River to gain access to the island.

H. Determine if Gooch Island can be used to offset existing parkland that may be used for other purposes.

I. Develop a vegetation management plan to control invasives and increase habitat value on the island.
4. FACTORY ISLAND

Current Land Use. Factory Island is primarily an historic industrial ruin, with access limited by the remnants of an old granite bridge over the back channel.

Zoning. Factory Island is entirely within the Resource Protection District.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

• 100-foot RP zone from river includes Factory Island and shorefront.
• Flood plain includes Factory Island and area below Forest Falls Drive slope.
• Invasive species are present on the island.
• Granite blocks in the river currently inhibit water flow in the channel behind Factory Island. Removal of these blocks would enhance fish passage at Upper Falls.

Regulatory Constraints

Factory Island footbridge. A footbridge over the river side channel to Factory Island would need to avoid flood plain and wetland impacts, or else state and federal permitting would be required.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 4 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Structures: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD

Goals

• Preserve the island as an historic ruin and focal point for the river corridor.
• Limit public access due to inherent hazards on the site.
• Increase habitat value.
The Forest Paper Company complex spanned the third falls of the Royal River at the end of Mill Street about 1916.

Factory Island today, to the right of the falls. Very little physical evidence remains of the former Forest Paper Co. operations.
Recommendations

A. Remove invasive and noxious species and replace with native shrubs with high wildlife value.

B. Evaluate whether to remove or restore the remnants of the granite footbridge over the back channel.

C. Provide interpretive signage on the mainland above the island.

D. Develop a vegetation management plan to control invasives and increase habitat value on the island.

4. FACTORY ISLAND
5. **FOREST FALLS DRIVE**

**Current Land Use.** Forest Falls Drive is a relatively new commercial district, with access off Route One and significant, though underutilized frontage on the Royal River. Much of the land area had been the chemical and ash dump for the Forest Paper Company (see photograph on right bottom).

**Zoning.** The area is split between Medium Density Residential on the northern half of the land and Commercial on the Route One side. The steep slopes along the river are classified Resource Protection, and land within 250’ of the river is in SOD.

**Resource Opportunities/Constraints**

- Two drainages (potential streams) and associated wetlands are found below the Post Office and office buildings on Forest Falls Drive.
- Steep slopes along the river may be subject to erosion or slumping if vegetation is removed or soil disturbed too close to the edge.
- Invasive species exist along the forested slope.

**Regulatory Constraints**

The following regulatory constraints apply to possible improvements within the Segment 5 corridor (see pp. 8/9):

*Uses in the Resource Protection District*
*Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain*
*Development beyond the Floodplain*
*Vegetation within the SOD*
*Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts*
*Allowable Lot Coverage: SOD/Industrial and Commercial Districts*

*The black ash dump before the construction of Forest Falls Drive. Photo taken near Post Office site.*

*The river side of the Forest Falls development.*
Goals

• Establish a public walking path along the top of the bank to re-orient Forest Falls Drive toward the river.

• Encourage walking within the Forest Falls Drive community.

• Maintain/improve the aesthetic quality of the riverfront.

• Maintain/improve water quality.

• Open/establish/maintain views from Forest Falls Drive and the existing businesses to the river and the opposite shore (Yarmouth village and Royal River Park).

• Allow taller buildings (four-story maximum) and higher densities within Forest Falls Drive. Encourage more mixed use with greater emphasis on riverfront amenities and activities at the top of the embankment.

• Integrate Forest Falls Drive into the fabric of Yarmouth Village.

• Maintain privacy and sense of security for existing businesses that now front on the river.

The trolley crossed the Royal River between 1906 and 1933 over the same abutments used today for the Beth Condon Pathway bridge. (Photo above c. 1910.)
**Recommendations**

**A.** Work with property owners to improve existing footpaths and establish a continuous walking route at the top of the embankment. Install fencing, plantings, lighting, and other features to ensure privacy and security.

**B.** Connect top-of-bank path with existing Beth Condon Pathway.

**C.** Allow greater densities where appropriate to encourage mixed use development that can take advantage of the riverfront location. Discourage uses with high demands for parking/loading (e.g., post office).

**D.** Develop a master plan for Forest Falls Drive to incorporate more pedestrian features (e.g., street trees, pathways, seating areas) into the public landscape. Investigate access management as a way to minimize curb cuts and provide additional parking.

**E.** Establish footpaths from abutting residential neighborhoods/communities to the waterfront trail system.

**F.** Develop a vegetation management plan to maintain bank stability, increase habitat value, replace invasive species, and open views to the river.

**G.** Evaluate options to reduce the amount of land required for parking in order to make more land available for village-density development and green space.

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**5. FOREST FALLS DRIVE**
6. ROUTE ONE TO BRIDGE STREET

Current Land Use. The land between the Royal River and Willow Street (including Downeast Village and the former Yarmouth Auto property) represents a significant development opportunity that could change the complexion of Route One and have long-term implications on the character of the river corridor. The Downeast Village property should provide ample room for development in conformance with the current SOD requirements without variances.

Zoning. The majority of the land is zoned Commercial. Portions of the floodplain and associated wetlands are Resource Protection. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- Flood plain and associated wetlands occupy a significant area below the parking lot and Downeast Village.
- Steep slopes along the river may be subject to erosion or slumping if vegetation is removed or soil disturbed too close to the edge.
- Significant volume of invasive species are found in the floodplain and on the slope.

Regulatory Constraints

The following regulatory constraints apply to future improvements within the Segment 6 section of the Royal River Corridor (see pp. 8/9):

Goals

- Establish a pedestrian connection between Route One and Bridge Street that takes advantage of the riverfront location.
- Promote (re)development that complements Yarmouth Village in terms of density, massing, and architectural character, without overpowering the existing views of Sparhawk Mill.
- Provide adequate transition between Route One commercial uses and nearby residential uses.

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Development beyond the Floodplain
Structures: Setback from River
Parking Areas: Setback from River
Road and Driveways: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD
Allowable Lot Coverage: SOD/Industrial and Commercial Districts

The Downeast village property from the Royal River.
LiveMaps view of Downeast property.

Existing path leading to the river from Downeast Village.

Existing Downeast Village buildings are mostly screened by riparian vegetation.

View corridor to Bridge Street dam from Downeast Village.
**Recommendations**

**A.** Work with landowners/developers to establish a location for pedestrian connections between Route One and Bridge Street, preferably following existing clearings / top of the bank and existing driveways / pathways.

**B.** Provide a pathway connection on the south side of Route One and under the highway bridge to tie into the Beth Condon Pathway bridge.

**C.** Maintain an adequate setback from the top of the bank to preserve water quality and wildlife habitat.

**D.** Minimize visual impacts on the Royal River Park through careful attention to design detailing, lighting, and signage.

**E.** Minimize impacts on the floodplain through careful attention to grading and filling resulting from possible redevelopment of the Downeast Village property.

**F.** Develop a bank stabilization plan to prevent soil erosion and water quality degradation.

**G.** Coordinate the recommendations of this Master Plan with the Route One Study and the efforts of the Gateway Committee.
7. ROYAL RIVER PARK: EAST ELM STREET TO BRIDGE STREET DAM

Current Land Use. The Royal River Park was created on land that had been the Forest Paper Company. The park today is one of Yarmouth’s most accessible and popular open spaces, and forms the core of the Royal River corridor.

Zoning. The majority of the Park is in Medium Density Residential, with some Resource Protection within the floodplain. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

• A vernal pool may exist within the forested wetland at the railroad tracks near Mill Street.
• Three streams with associated wetlands and two drainages are found in this section of the corridor.
• Flood plain is mapped as cutting through portions of the Royal River Park parking lot and a large section of the existing pathway just upstream from the Bridge Street dam.
• The large forested area between Route 1 and Bridge Street provides habitat for a variety of terrestrial species and serves as a visual focal point for people within the park as well as those on Route One and surrounding areas.

Regulatory Constraints

Factory Island footbridge. A bridge over the river main channel to Factory Island would need to avoid flood plain and wetland impacts to the extent practicable. State permitting would likely be required.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 7 (see pp. 8/9):

Development beyond the Floodplain
- Structures: Setback from River
- Parking Areas: Setback from River
- Road and Driveways: Setback from River
- Vegetation within the SOD
- Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain

Existing overlook at the falls in Royal River Park
(Above) Looking upriver from the 3rd falls of the Royal River (at Mill Street) toward the Hodsdon’s Shoe Company building (built 1896) and Weston’s Machine Shop (1877-1898) at the East Elm Street falls, c. 1912.  (Below).

Ruins of the Forest Paper Company and other industrial uses in what is now Royal River Park, 1984.
Goals

- Maintain the high quality experience that attracts people to the park.

- Continue to use the park for concerts, programs, and other organized gatherings.

- Use select portions of the edge of the park to site a gateway building that takes advantage of its village location and accessibility.

- Preserve / enhance visibility into and through the park.

- Increase trail opportunities without diminishing its habitat value.

- Provide opportunities for interpretation of the Forest City Paper Company and other former uses.

- Provide connection(s) to the Village and Forest Falls Drive.

- Encourage high quality landscape and architectural treatments throughout the park.

- Maintain the dense stand of mature pines between the tennis courts and the river.

(Top Left) Construction of the Royal River Park in early ‘90’s involved removal of paper making ruins and covering with paper making sludge.
(Top Right) Potential limited development site at entrance from Mill Street. (Left) Filtered views to park from proposed upper trail paralleling tracks. (Bottom Left) Ruins of paper making operation have been incorporated into the park design. (Bottom Right) Pump station off Bridge Street.
Recommendations

A. Consider adding Gooch Island and Factory Island to the Royal River Park, with appropriate limitations on their use. These parcels may be able to be used as compensation for land which may be lost through limited development for public benefit within the park.

B. Install a more formal overlook at the falls to accentuate its position as a focal point in the park. Design elements should consider a paved surface at the overlook; stone walls to define the edge of the space; interpretive signage to tell the story of the paper company; and low-maintenance landscaping.

C. Add low-maintenance perennials throughout the park to add seasonal color.

D. Re-compact and regrade the slope above the falls to minimize sinkholes. Consult with geotechnical engineer to determine proper method and degree of compaction.

E. Consider the development of a mixed-use building near the Mill Street entrance that may include space for the Historical Society, Community Services, the relocated Water District, and similar uses. The grade in this area may allow for a lower level oriented to the wooded portion of the park on the north. Any building should avoid disruption of the view corridor from Mill Street into the park, wetlands, and specimen trees within the park. Study alternate location at East Elm Street entrance (see 1: Water District / East Elm Street).

F. Create a parking area on the east side of the railroad tracks off Mill Street to keep vehicles out of the park as much as possible.

G. Establish a new footpath system paralleling the railroad tracks between Mill Street and East Elm Street. Open views from this upper level down to the river and the adjacent open fields. Avoid steep slopes and forested wetlands. Maintain an adequate separation between the path and the tracks.

H. Upgrade Mill Street to make it a more attractive pedestrian route into the park. Add signage, landscaping, and possibly a sidewalk, starting at Main Street.

I. Inspect the stone retaining walls along the river and plan for stabilization measures as necessary.

J. Remove vegetation from the face and top of these walls to give them greater visibility to park users.

K. Improve the aesthetics of the pump station structure next to the river on the north side of Bridge Street, using the Sparhawk Mill and other nearby historic structures for guidance.

L. Upgrade the existing path as necessary: bring grade up to meet path surface; remove overhanging branches; provide benches every 500± feet.

M. Upgrade existing Town storage facility to complement the aesthetics of the park.

N. Develop a bank stabilization and vegetation management plan for the park.
7. ROYAL RIVER PARK
Around 1915 pulp wood for the Forest Paper Company covered much of the 10-acre mill site spreading out toward the East Elm Street building built by the Hodsdon Shoe Company in 1896.
8. YARMOUTH VILLAGE: ROUTE ONE TO BRIDGE STREET

Current Land Use. This segment is located in the core of Yarmouth Village, characterized by historic homes, North Yarmouth Academy, senior housing, and some available land areas. Despite its proximity to the river, very few of the structures or land uses take advantage of this resource.

Zoning. The first tier of structures along Main Street is in the Village District, while the lower portion near the river is in MDR. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- The large forested area between Route 1 and Bridge Street provides habitat for a variety of terrestrial species and serves as a buffer between Yarmouth Village and the river.
- A stream with associated wetlands exists in a gully behind North Yarmouth Academy extending to the river.

Regulatory Constraints

The following regulatory constraints apply to possible improvements within Segment 8 (see pp. 8/9):

- Uses in the Resource Protection District
- Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
- Development beyond the Floodplain
- Structures: Setback from River
- Parking Areas: Setback from River
- Road and Driveways: Setback from River
- Vegetation within the SOD
- Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts

Goals

- Establish opportunities for additional (senior) housing within Yarmouth Village.
- Maintain the dense stand of tree cover next to the river on the south side of the Route One bridge.
- Increase public access opportunities to the river from the village.
- Provide infill housing on Bridge Street as part of the expansion of the NYA senior housing.

Entrance to senior housing off Main Street.
Existing buffer between potential housing site and Royal River.

Pathway from Royal River Park to Main Street at Apartments at Yarmouth Falls.

Potential infill housing site at Bridge Street above entrance to Royal River Park.
Recommendations

A. Increase allowable density to take advantage of buildable sites within and adjacent to the existing NYA senior housing (the Apartments at Yarmouth Falls) and the residential community on Bridge Street. The amount of housing could be increased significantly by acquiring land from abutting landowners.

B. Housing should be designed following Yarmouth village examples: i.e., 2-3 story Federal style frame buildings.

C. Cluster parking within a central courtyard to minimize views of parked cars from the riverfront.

D. Housing developed adjacent to the existing senior housing behind NYA will require careful attention to grading, tree protection, and stormwater management. Maintain a minimum of 200’ of undisturbed vegetation between the river and any development to avoid visual impacts, erosion, and noise impacts.

E. Provide better/more signage along the existing paved footpath that leads to the waterfront through the senior housing. Additional foot traffic may require screening, fencing, or other means of preserving privacy for residents.

F. Work with the management of the Apartments at Yarmouth Falls to provide better access to the river from Main Street.
9. SPARHAWK MILL / BRIDGE STREET (EAST OF RIVER)

Current Land Use. Sparhawk Mill is one of Yarmouth’s largest, and most iconic structures. This historic assemblage is currently being used for a variety of professional office and light manufacturing uses. The east side of Bridge Street is a largely residential neighborhood with a variety of housing types.

Zoning. The Sparhawk Mill building is situated in the Resource Protection district (within 100’ of the river). Some of the adjacent land is in the Medium Density Residential District. Bridge Street is currently split between Commercial on the north and MDR on the south side of the street. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- The flood plain for the Royal River is mapped as cutting through the eastern portion of the Sparhawk Mill, covering a significant portion of its parking lot.
- The 100-foot RP zone from river includes the entire mill building and most of the existing parking lot.
- The river between the Bridge Street dam and East Main Street provides habitat for a wide variety of fish species.
- The Bridge Street dam is leaking.
- The existing Denil fish passage on the dam has serious flaws.
- A significant amount of invasive shrub species are in the floodplain and wetland east of the parking lot.

Regulatory Constraints

Sparhawk Mill Expansion. The Sparhawk Mill is completely within the resource protection (RP) district, so it cannot be expanded by more than 25% in volume or footprint, and not toward the river. A lowest floor elevation needs to be elevated at least one foot above the elevation of the 100 year flood. The eastern portion of the Sparhawk Mill is already within the floodplain.

Future with SOD. If the RP was eliminated, SOD would apply. Under SOD, the Sparhawk Mill is an existing non-conforming structure, and can be expanded by up to 30% of footprint or volume, but not toward the river.

Parking at Sparhawk Mill. Parking areas must be set back 100 feet from the normal high-water line of the river. Stormwater runoff must be engineered to avoid impacts to the river. The Sparhawk parking lot is a nonconforming use.
**Royal River Footbridge.** A footbridge over the river would need to avoid flood plain and wetland impacts, or else state and federal permitting would be required.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 9 (see pp. 8/9):

- Uses in the Resource Protection District
- Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
- Development beyond the Floodplain
- Structures: Setback from River
- Parking Areas: Setback from River
- Road and Driveways: Setback from River
- Vegetation within the SOD
- Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts

**Goals**

- Provide density incentives to restore the mill into a thriving mixed-use development while respecting its riverfront location.

- Make physical connections between the Sparhawk Mill and Route One, the west side of the river, and Bridge Street.
**Recommendations**

A. Allow additional buildings for mixed use development on the Sparhawk Mill property. Utilize the site of the barn that recently burned as well as the high ground in the southeast corner of the property.

B. Establish detailed design standards for new structures; set maximum heights, building materials, detailing, and style to complement the historic structure.

C. Incorporate covered or under-building parking wherever possible to take advantage of limited area and minimize views of cars from the river and Bridge Street.

D. Establish a vegetative buffer between the river and the development at the mill to help treat runoff leaving the site. Any major re-development should include LID stormwater treatment, following MaineDEP standards.

E. Install a footbridge across the river downstream from the Sparhawk Mill to provide a connection to the Grist Mill Lane Field. Final location of the bridge will have to respond to floodplains, wetlands, and ownership patterns.

F. Investigate a footpath connection from the rear of the Sparhawk Mill to the corner of Willow and Bridge Street, following an existing drainage easement.

G. More parking may be created on the north side of Bridge Street by relocating the existing barn approximately 60-75 feet to the north. This could eliminate the current situation that forces cars to back into Bridge Street.

H. Initiate a bank Stabilization plan

9. **SPARHAWK MILL / EAST BRIDGE STREET**
10. YANKEE DRIVE

Current Land Use. This segment is comprised of a single-family residential neighborhood that extends down to the riverfront. The majority of the land is too steep for any type of active use. Cross slopes below the homes approach 100%.

Zoning. Yankee Drive is zoned Medium Residential Density. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD. The steep banks are designated Resource Protection.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- Two drainages (potential streams) and associated wetlands are located below Yankee Drive.
- Steep slopes along the river may be subject to erosion or slumping if vegetation is removed or soil is disturbed. The slopes are generally too steep to be used for trails or other forms of recreation.
- Invasive species exist along the forested slope above the river.

Regulatory Constraints

The following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 10 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Development beyond the Floodplain
Vegetation within the SOD

Goals

- Maintain the aesthetic and buffer qualities of the riparian zone below Yankee Drive.
- Stabilize severe slopes and minimize further degradation of riparian habitat.

Steep grades below Yankee Drive limit access.
**Recommendations**

A. Maintain existing riverfront in its current condition. Do not extend the pathway along the river between Sparhawk Mill and Grist Mill Park.

B. Improve sidewalks on Main Street, Yankee Drive and Bridge Street to provide a continuous pathway around this section of the river as part of the looped trail network.

C. Explore the involvement of conservation easements with third party involvement to protect the shoreline and steep bank below Yankee Drive.

D. Work with property owners on Yankee Drive to develop vegetation management and restoration plans for the riverfront slopes.

E. Examine stormwater outflows from Yankee Drive as a possible contributor to ongoing erosion problems on the riverfront slopes.
11. GRIST MILL PARK

Current Land Use. Grist Mill Park is a small Town-owned green space overlooking the lower falls, providing water access, parking, and picnic tables.

Zoning. The park is designated as Resource Protection and SOD due to its proximity to the river.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

• A 100-foot RP zone from river includes the entire park and the parking lot.

Regulatory Constraints

The following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 11 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Development beyond the Floodplain
Parking Areas: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD

Goals

• Continue to maintain the park as a place for water access, picnicking, and open space enjoyment.

The East Main Street dam on the Royal River, 1873-4, with the back of Main Street buildings on the hilltop behind.
ROYAL RIVER CORRIDOR

Views from Grist Mill Park
Recommendations

A. Perform a structural assessment of the retaining walls at the base of the park adjacent to the river and on the opposite side of Main Street. Evaluate the condition of the railings and other site features within the park. Develop a long-range plan for improvements to stabilize the wall and correct other deficiencies.

B. Upgrade site detailing in the park to improve its aesthetics and functionality. Install additional ornamental plantings to add seasonal interest.

C. Install interpretive signs related to the history of mills, bridges, shipbuilding, and freshets that influenced this area.

D. Connect the park with improved sidewalks leading to the boatyards and the village.

11. GRIST MILL PARK

[Diagram of Grist Mill Park with labeled features and key]
12. MILL POINT APARTMENTS / BRIDGE STREET (WEST OF RIVER)

Current Land Use. Mill Point Apartments are two 2.5-story brick buildings near the shoreline of the river. A large piece of undeveloped land west of the apartments is quite steep and wet and may not allow significant expansion. The remainder of Bridge Street is an older neighborhood comprised of one and two-family residences that are part of Yarmouth village.

Zoning. Mill Point Apartments are partially in Resource Protection, partially in Medium Density Residential. The lower portion of Bridge Street west of the river is in MDR; the upper portion near Main Street is zoned Village. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints
- Flood plain is mapped as cutting through the eastern portion of the Mill Point property.
- A stream and associated wetland exist south and east of the two apartment buildings.
- An extensive forested wetland extends from the existing parking lot far up the slope to the south toward Main Street.
- 100-foot RP zone from river includes a portion of the existing apartment buildings and driveway.

Regulatory Constraints

Expansion of Mill Point Apartments. The existing apartment buildings are partially within RP, so they cannot be expanded by more than 25% in volume or footprint, and not toward the river.

Future with SOD. If the RP was eliminated, SOD would apply. Under SOD, the apartment buildings are existing non-conforming structures and could be expanded by up to 30% of their existing footprint or volume, but not toward the river.

New Construction. The lowest floor elevation of any new structure needs to be elevated at least one foot above the elevation of the 100 year flood.

Royal River Footbridge. A footbridge over the river would need to avoid flood plain and wetland impacts, or else state and federal permitting would be required.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 12 (see pp. 8/9):

Uses in the Resource Protection District
Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
Development beyond the Floodplain
Structures: Setback from River
Parking Areas: Setback from River
Road and Driveways: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD
Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts

Any expansion at Mill Point should preserve Bridge Street buffer.

Steep slopes and drainage courses above river limit development.
Goals

• Provide density incentives to allow additional living units in exchange for waterfront access and other improvements, while respecting its riverfront location.

• Extend the informal path into a designated pedestrian connection between Mill Point Apartments and the Grist Mill Lane Field.

• Preserve existing vegetation along the riverfront.

*Mill Point Apartments’ riverfront could accommodate an extension of the Royal River pathway.*
Recommendations

A. Allow additional residential development to complement the existing apartments at Mill Point. New units could be attached to the south end of the existing structures and/or incorporated into a new building built into the hillside on the west side of the parking lot.

B. New construction should not be built closer to Bridge Street to minimize tree removal.

C. Install a footbridge across the Royal River downstream from the Sparhawk Mill to provide a connection to the pathway on the west side of the river and access to Grist Mill Lane Field. Final location of the bridge will have to respond to floodplains, wetlands, and ownership patterns.

D. Extend the Royal River pathway across the property to connect to the town’s Grist Mill Lane Field.

E. Construct a footbridge (following the design guidelines for the river corridor) to replace the existing bridge over a small drainageway on the south side of the Mill Point property.
13. TOWN LAND TO I-295 BRIDGE

Current Land Use. The land between Mill Point Apartments and I-295 is a mixture of open space, single family homes, a historic mill, and mixed-use commercial. The Town owns a 4-acre piece of open land (formerly a truck garden) on the river that is within the floodplain.

Zoning. Most of the land is designated as Resource Protection, due to its location within the floodplain. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- Flood plain is currently shown on FEMA maps as covering the entire Grist Mill Lane field (town-owned), three of the four houses on Grist Mill Lane, and most of the parking lot next to the Beck property (mill building).

- The RP zone, which extends 100 feet from the river plus the mapped flood plain, includes the entire Grist Mill Lane area.

- A potential vernal pool exists just south of Grist Mill Lane.

- On the east side of Main Street, the 100-foot RP zone from river includes the entire area from Main Street to the I-295 bridge.

- The coastal wetland along the shore east of Main Street is considered a Wetland of Special Significance.

- The State has identified the entire area between I-295 bridge and town landing as Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat, considered Significant Wildlife Habitat.

Regulatory Constraints

Coastal Wetlands. Activities within 75-feet of coastal wetlands will require a NRPA permit.

Expansion of Existing Buildings. Many of the existing buildings in this section are completely within RP, so they cannot be expanded by more than 25% in volume or footprint, and not toward the river.

New Construction. The lowest floor elevations need to be elevated at least one foot above the elevation of the 100 year flood level.

Future with SOD. If the RP was eliminated, SOD would apply. Under SOD, most of the buildings are existing non-conforming structures,
and can be expanded by up to 30% of footprint or volume, but not toward the river.

**Possible Vernal Pool.** If the vernal pool south of Grist Mill lane is classified as significant, it would require setbacks of at least 250 feet under state NRPA regulations and 500 feet for Army Corps permitting.

**Maintenance of Town Field.** Mowing of the town-owned field is allowed under SOD and RP ordinances, but it is unclear whether large scale removal of vegetation and tilling to establish a community garden would be acceptable to the state unless an adequate vegetated buffer was preserved along the river edge.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 13 (see pp. 8/9):

- Uses in the Resource Protection District
- Uses in the 100-Year Floodplain
- Development beyond the Floodplain
- Structures: Setback from River
- Parking Areas: Setback from River
- Road and Driveways: Setback from River
- Vegetation within the SOD
- Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts

**Goals**

- Maintain the Grist Mill Land Field as community open space.
- Evaluate the current designation as RP.
- Provide incentives for increased investment in lower Main Street.
- Strengthen the pedestrian connections between Main Street and the harbor.
- Increase density in this area if allowable.
- Maintain the aesthetics of the view from Main Street over the Royal River.
- Create a pedestrian connection between Grist Mill Park/Main Street and the Town Landing at the end of Bayview Street.
- Heighten the town’s knowledge of the historic resources in this location.

**About 1874, the East Main Street bridge was flanked by a grist mill, saw mill, store, and a carpenter’s shop that produced wood products for the ships built in the harbor.**

West Main Street next to Walter Gendell memorial.
(Top) I-295 bridge separates the Village from Yarmouth Harbor. (Bottom Left) Grist Mill Lane. (Bottom Right) Steep embankment opposite Grist Mill Park.)
**Recommendations**

**A.** Allow/encourage additional density and/or mixed use development along Main Street.

**B.** Develop a master plan for streetscape and sidewalk improvements between the river and Lower Falls Landing.

**C.** Continue to maintain the Grist Mill Lane field by periodic mowing of paths to connect to Grist Mill Lane. Consider using this land for additional community garden.

**D.** Perform an engineering evaluation of floodplain conditions to determine the accuracy of the current FEMA designation.

**E.** Study the potential for constructing a pedestrian path between Main Street and Town Landing. This would require detailed analysis of permitting, ownership patterns, flood levels, MDOT ROW issues, bank stability, and related issues. Benefits would be a continuous pathway from the village to the east side of the harbor and the Bayview Street peninsula.

**F.** Consider the view to the river when improvements are made to the Main Street Bridge. Replicate the existing concrete railing using Texas rail or similar design.

**G.** Improve parking on the south side of Main Street at the Walter Gendell memorial.

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**13. TOWN LAND TO I-295 BRIDGE**

[Diagram of 13. TOWN LAND TO I-295 BRIDGE]
14. TOWN LANDING

Current Land Use. Town Landing is the community’s main access into Yarmouth Harbor for commercial fishing and recreational boating.

Zoning. The landing is zoned Water Oriented Commercial, with the land area within 250’ of the river designated SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- The coastal wetland along the shore is considered a Wetland of Special Significance.
- A large freshwater wetland extends north from the east side of the town landing.
- State has identified the areas on both sides of the boat launch ramp as Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat, which is considered Significant Wildlife Habitat.

Regulatory Constraints

Coastal Wetlands. Activities within 75-feet of coastal wetlands will require a NRPA permit.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 14 (see pp. 8/9):

Allowable Lot Coverage: WOC I District.
Uses in the WOC I District
Building Footprints in the WOC I District
Goals

• Improve the efficiency of the Town Landing for people servicing fishing boats, launching recreational boats, and picnicking.

• Improve the aesthetics of the area as a major gateway into the river corridor.

• Explore economic development opportunities that take advantage of the waterfront location.

Boulder dump at Town Landing.

View from Town Landing to marinas on opposite side of harbor.

Boat launch at Town Landing.
**Recommendations**

**A.** Expand existing parking to include the boulder dump at the east end of the site.

**B.** Consider the potential for a town marina at the town landing, with a private marina operator responsible for design, permitting, construction, dredging, operation, management, and maintenance.

**C.** Explore the potential for grants for harbor improvements (e.g., the Boating Infrastructure Grant to attract boats >27’ in length).

**D.** Study the potential for constructing a pedestrian path between Main Street and Town Landing. This would require detailed analysis of permitting, ownership patterns, flood levels, MDOT ROW issues, bank stability, and related issues. Benefits would be a continuous pathway from the village to the east side of the harbor and the Bayview Street peninsula.

**E.** Consider limited commercial/mixed used development at the waterfront that would capitalize on its riverfront location and easy highway access. Any additional use would have to avoid impacts on existing parking supply and the functional aspects of the waterfront.
15. DREDGE SPOIL SITE

Current Land Use. For the past several decades this land has been used as a land-based disposal site for material dredged from Yarmouth Harbor. A narrow footpath on the earthen embankment at the edge of the site affords a panoramic view of the harbor and waterfowl activity.

Zoning. The entire site is within the Water Oriented Commercial district and the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- The entire dredge spoil area appears to meet the criteria of a jurisdictional wetland for both the Maine DEP and US Army Corps of Engineers.
- A freshwater pool exists in the center of the dredge spoil area. It is unclear if this would be considered a vernal pool, but amphibian species vocalize at this location in the spring.
- Invasive phragmites is present throughout the wetland.
- The wetland is a nesting area for redwinged blackbirds.
- The coastal wetland along the shore is considered a Wetland of Special Significance.
- A large freshwater wetland extends north from the west side of the dredge spoils area.
- State has identified the entire intertidal area here as Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat, which is considered Significant Wildlife Habitat.

Regulatory Constraints

Coastal Wetlands. Activities within 75-feet of coastal wetlands will require a NRPA permit.

Dredge Spoils. Discussions with Maine DEP and the Corps of Engineers are needed to determine the status of the dredge spoils area as a jurisdictional wetland and the potential to use it for dredge spoil disposal or other uses in the future.

Goals

- Retain the existing dredge spoil site as a potential area for future dredge spoil disposal.
- View Yarmouth Harbor as a single management entity and the dredge spoil site as a community resource to be used by both the Town and the active marinas in Yarmouth Harbor.
- Improve public access along the shoreline.
- Maintain and improve the riparian zone between the dredge spoil area and the river.
Recommendations

A. Continue to work with the Army Corps of Engineers, MaineDEP, and other regulatory bodies to plan, fund, and implement periodic dredging of the harbor.

B. Develop a long-range cooperative dredge management plan for the harbor with the marinas and the Town to ease the financial, testing, and permitting burdens on individual parties.

C. If permittable, develop a strategy with MaineDEP to allow the continued use of the dredge spoil site in the future. This would require the excavation, drying, and disposal of previously deposited material in conformance with MaineDEP policies. Material may have some beneficial re-use, such as landfill cover as has been the practice in recent years at the Yarmouth Transfer and Recycling Station. Excavation of existing material would help rid the area of Phragmites, a freshwater invasive species.

D. Maintain and improve the informal footpath at the top of the dredge spoil containment area that runs between the south end of the Town Landing to private property off Bayview Street.
16. BLUEBERRY COVE TO MARINA

Current Land Use. The majority of this segment is comprised of a large condominium complex (Blueberry Cove) and a family-owned boatyard.

Zoning. The majority of the land area is zoned Water Oriented Commercial. Land within 250' of the river is in the SOD. The waterfront to the immediate south is partially in RP, due to its significant wildlife habitat. Most of this segment abuts the Low Density Residential district.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints
- The coastal wetland along the shore is considered a Wetland of Special Significance.
- State has identified the entire intertidal area here as Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat.
- The State has identified the area east of the Royal River Boat Yard as a Shorebird Roosting Area including a 250 foot buffer zone. The entire buffer zone is considered Significant Wildlife Habitat.
- Steep slopes occur along the shore below the condominiums and downstream from the marina. The State has identified this coastal bluff as a known coastal landslide site.

Regulatory Constraints

Coastal Wetlands. Activities within 75-feet of coastal wetlands will require a NRPA permit.

Steep Slopes. Any development or disturbance of soils at the base of or along the steep slopes would require state NRPA permits. Minimum setbacks of structures from the top of slope would also apply.

Significant Wildlife Habitat. The shorebird roosting area is Significant Wildlife Habitat. Any activity on or adjacent to a shorebird Roosting Area will require a state NRPA permit.

Blueberry Cove condominiums are largely screened from the river.
In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to future development within Segment 16 (see pp. 8/9):

Structures: Setback from River
Vegetation within the SOD
Allowable Lot Coverage: Residential Districts
Allowable Lot Coverage: WOC I District.
Uses in the WOC I District
Building Footprints in the WOC I District

Goals

• Develop reasonable land use policies that allow for continued operation of the marina while protecting nearby residential uses.

• Extend the footpath from the dredge spoil area to Bayview Street.

Recommendations

A. Review current zoning ordinances and make adjustments for buffer requirements between WOC and LDR districts.

B. Work with private landowners, including Blueberry Cove Homeowners Association, to continue the pathway from the river to Bayview Street.
17. MARINAS

Current Land Use. This segment represents the major core of Yarmouth’s waterfront commercial district, with marinas, a restaurant, office space in a converted cannery, boat storage, and other water-related uses.

Zoning. The underlying zone for this segment is Water-Oriented Commercial I. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- The coastal wetland along the shore is considered a Wetland of Special Significance.
- Two streams and associated wetlands flow under Route 88 and enter the river in this area.
- The entire Lower Falls Landing facility is within the mapped flood plain.

Regulatory Constraints

Coastal Wetlands. Activities within 75-feet of coastal wetlands will require a NRPA permit.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 17 (see pp. 8/9):

- Allowable Lot Coverage: WOC I District.
- Uses in the WOC I District
- Building Footprints in the WOC I District
Goals

- Develop reasonable land use policies that allow for continued operation of the marinas while protecting nearby residential uses.

- Provide a more defined physical connection between the village (lower Main Street) and the waterfront.

Recommendations

A. Develop a sidewalk / site improvement plan to upgrade the physical condition of Main Street and Route 88 between Grist Mill Park and the marinas.

B. Study potential locations for local sailing school and rowing club.

The former cannery has been converted to mixed use development at Lower Falls Landing.
17. MARINAS
18. CEMETERIES / TREATMENT PLANT

Current Land Use. This segment is comprised of Riverside Cemetery (municipal) and Holy Cross Cemetery (Sacred Heart Church) on Smith Street, and the Yarmouth Sewage Treatment Plant. Both cemeteries are significant open space resources for the Town, with expansive views to the harbor and Royal River. The segment abuts the Town’s property on Gilman Road, though it is separated by a series of deep wooded gullies.

Zoning. The majority of the land areas that make up the cemeteries and the Treatment Plant are in the MDR District. The steep slopes leading to the river are classified as RP. The area within 250’ of the river is in the SOD.

Resource Opportunities/Constraints

- The coastal wetland along the shore is considered a Wetland of Special Significance.
- The State has identified the entire intertidal area here as Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat, which is considered Significant Wildlife Habitat.
- Steep slopes occur along the shore below the cemetery and treatment plant. The State has identified this section of the Royal River shoreline as a landslide risk area.

Regulatory Constraints

Coastal Wetlands. Activities within 75-feet of coastal wetlands will require a NRPA permit.

Steep Slopes. Any development or disturbance of soils at the base of or along the steep slopes would require state NRPA permits. Minimum setbacks of structures from the top of slope would also apply.

Existing Structures. The existing structures are partially within the RP, so they cannot be expanded by more than 25% in volume or footprint, and not toward the river.

Future with SOD. If the RP was eliminated, SOD would apply. Under SOD, the structures are existing non-conforming structures, and can be expanded by up to 30% of footprint or volume, but not toward the river.

Future with WOC I. If the area in the vicinity of the treatment plant was rezoned as WOC I, building and parking lot setbacks would be reduced and building expansions would be allowed.

In addition, the following regulatory constraints apply to Segment 18 (see pp. 8/9):

- Uses in the Resource Protection District
- Structures: Setback from River
- Vegetation within the SOD.

Goals

- Stabilize embankments to preserve existing uses (i.e., cemeteries and boatyards).
- Provide public access opportunities between the cemeteries and the town-owned property on Gilman Road (Fels-Groves Farm Preserve).
- Amend zoning policies to allow the municipal sewage treatment plant to continue to operate and possibly expand.

Recommendations

A. Work with a geotechnical engineer to examine and plan for the long-term stability of the steep embankments on the north and east sides of the cemeteries. Establish strict recommendations for drainage, vegetation management, and land-use for the embankment and surrounding lands.

B. Work with the Riverside and Holy Cross Cemeteries to develop a pedestrian trail plan that takes advantage of the undeveloped
woodland and ravines between Gilman Road and the river. Tie the trails into the northern parcel of the Fels-Groves preserve. Avoid major slopes and drainage patterns. Footbridges may be necessary to span ravines and avoid wetlands.

C. Review the Resource Protection designation of the sewage treatment plant access road and related areas. Consider designating this area as Water Oriented Commercial I, which allows municipal uses and essential services. The definition of ‘essential services’ may have to be adjusted to include sewage treatment facilities (municipal sewage lines are an allowable use in the WOC I).

D. Develop a vegetation management plan for this section of the river.

18. CEMETERIES / TREATMENT PLANT