

TOWN PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT



MILL POND AND DAM

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN OF WESTON, CONNECTICUT • ADOPTED JUNE 30, 2000

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The members of the Planning and Zoning Commission gratefully acknowledge the enormous contribution of Margaret Wirtenberg, Ph.D., who served in a voluntary capacity as a special advisor to the Commission in the preparation of this edition of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development. Dr. Wirtenberg, a former member of the Planning & Zoning Commission, has a distinguished record of public service. She has acted as planning consultant to municipalities in Connecticut and is currently the Board of Selectmen's representative to the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA). Dr. Wirtenberg earned a Master of Science degree in planning from Pratt Institute and a doctorate in public administration from New York University.

The Commission also thanks Commissioner Robert Osborn, who organized the written contributions of the other Commission members and worked to publish this document with editor Jane E. Zarem.

A special note of thanks is addressed to former First Selectman George Guidera, who contributed to the open-space section; Linda Roig, Tax Assessor; John Conte, Town Engineer; Joe Lametta, Director of Public Works; and Daniel K. Thomas of Cole-Layer-Trumble Company, Tolland, Conn. Appreciation goes to Elbert Burr former chairman of P & Z for his assistance in the production of this document. All of these individuals were of invaluable help in the development of this plan.

Members of the Planning & Zoning Commission are particularly grateful for the valuable input received during five initial public hearings on the Town Plan from Town officials, other Town boards and commissions, department heads, and many civic-minded residents who participated in these informative sessions.

The cover illustration is a pen-and-ink drawing of a scene in Weston by a former resident, Mary O'Reilly Sowinski and provided by the League of Women Voters of Weston.

The photographs in this publication are provided by Phyllis Gary.

Planning & Zoning Commission, Town of Weston, CT



TOWN HALL

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PROLOGUE

It was with a feeling of pride and a sense of great responsibility that members of the Planning and Zoning Commission prepared and adopted this 2000 Town Plan of Conservation and Development. We firmly believe that this new Town Plan embodies the needs and sentiment of the community at large as we enter the first decade of the new millennium, while putting into place a framework to preserve the unique character of the Town of Weston.

Before the ideas and text contained herein crystallized, the Commission conducted a series of public hearings to solicit input from Town officials and all interested Weston residents. During this process, the question of a "vision" for Weston was posed to commissioners; in fact, the word "vision" was used frequently. Our response, interestingly, required none of the exercises that the term itself evokes. Neither keen foresight nor imaginative contemplation were required to describe the Weston that we all envision for the future. Rather, we needed only to look around and view Weston as it is today.

The preservation of the unique character and qualities that drew each of us to Weston has been, and continues to be, the Commission's principal aim. The challenge is to achieve this goal and, simultaneously, satisfy the needs of a dynamic, growing community. Many qualities, both tangible and intangible, make Weston a wonderful place in which to live and raise a family. The most obvious one, however, is Weston's natural beauty. Gazing on laurel-clad ridges, coursing streams, and forested acreage, one conjures images of the first inhabitants, the Native Americans who lived off Weston's land and, with a deep respect for nature, co-existed in harmony with the environment.

While, historically, Weston residents have had an affinity for the natural environment, they have also exhibited a strong appetite for cosmopolitan services. In that sense, present-day Weston residents are quite similar to our Colonial predecessors, "the outlanders," who chose to live in the rather remote countryside in their search for a more meaningful existence, relying on neighboring communities for most needs. Today, we also continue to rely on neighboring Fairfield County communities for the bulk of our needs — goods, services, culture, and employment. New York City, with its array of business and cultural opportunities, is a mere 50 miles from the center of town.

Weston's dependence on its neighbors might be construed as a one-sided relationship. Closer examination, however, reveals a co-existence that is, undoubtedly, symbiotic and mutually beneficial. Weston contributes positively to the health of the region, a basic contribution that well exceeds the economic benefit that accrues to the providers of the goods and services that we consume. Our rivers and streams send clean water to Long Island Sound, and the Saugatuck Reservoir provides pure water for the residents of nearby towns. The abundant trees and lush vegetation found in tracts of Weston's open space — as well as in our own backyards — help purify the air for the entire region. Our scenic nature trails and preserves are visited and enjoyed by people from other areas of Fairfield County and beyond.

Among the important issues that Weston faces today are school expansion, adequate municipal septic facilities, and the need for active recreational areas. Traffic flow along our major roads, as well as new trends in development and redevelopment, have dramatically increased the disturbance of the land in certain areas of town. How we deal with these issues and other matters that will surely arise in the coming years will affect our quality of life and that of our children and grandchildren and future generations.

Planning is the first step — and a necessary step — to meeting these challenges. The key is to work together, as a community, to determine and execute the best solutions to protect and continue to improve our unique town. Given the spirit of cooperation and love of community that is displayed time and time again by residents, there is no doubt that Weston will continue to be a wonderful Town and a beautiful environment in which to live.



Marguerite Terzian, Chairman
Planning and Zoning Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	
Town of Weston Planning & Zoning Commission	1
Prologue	2
I. The Region	4
The Population	4
The Land & Its Use	5
Table 1. Land Use	6
Table 2. Business Development at Weston Center	6
Table 3. Public and Semi-Public Facilities	7
Table 4. Conservation and Recreation Areas	7
Map I. Land Use 2000	8-9
II. Plan of Conservation and Development	10
Basic Goals	10
Objectives	10
Natural Resources	10
Roads	10
Community Facilities	11
Residential Development	11
Business Development	11
Open Space and Recreation	11
III. Discussion of the Plan	12
Natural Resources	12
Roads	13
Community Facilities	15
Table 5. Weston School Buildings	19
Table 6. Pupil Enrollment Projections	19
Map II. Public & Semi-Public Facilities; Historic Districts	20-21
Table 7. Weston High School Profile	22
Table 8. Residential Development Trends	24
Table 9. Economic and Demographic Outlines	25
Residential Sales; Sales Price Distribution	
Table 10. Profile of Weston Housing	25
Residential Development	27
Business Development	28
Open Space and Recreation	29
Map III. Conservation & Recreation Use; Fire Ponds	32-33
IV. Implementation Programs	34
Natural Resources	34
Roads	34
Community Facilities	35
Residential Development	36
Business Development	37
Open Space and Recreation	37
V. Appendices	38
A: Zoning/Environmental Chronology	38
Town Officials	

I. THE REGION

Fairfield County, strategically located near New York City and in the middle of the Boston to Washington corridor, has long been a desirable place to live and, more recently, to work. Connecticut's Southwestern region — eight towns, stretching from Greenwich to Westport along Long Island Sound and extending up the railroad spurs to New Canaan and through Wilton — has always been a destination of choice. Weston, in the center of Fairfield County, has no railroad station, no bus service, no taxicab queues, no airports or helipads, virtually no roads wider than two lanes, and very few sidewalks. Thus, it is a comparatively remote, or "rural," place to reside.

Weston's primary goal must be to remain independent and retain its special identity within the region. Weston's unique rural character can only be maintained with careful stewardship of the Town's groundwater and septic systems that depend on natural systems, while supporting the demands of a growing population.

The official policy of the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA), the advisory planning body to which Weston and its neighboring communities belong, is to concentrate development and growth in those areas of the region best able to support it, while preserving the character of low-density, rural, and open-

space areas. In planners' language, this policy is called "centrality." It is particularly relevant to discussions of infrastructure — roads, streets, and, particularly, water and sewer systems. Centrality is achieved through actions taken by individual residents or through policies established by elected or appointed officials.

Centrality is encouraged when town and city centers are the only areas zoned for the highest density uses, keeping residential areas free from commercial development. SWRPA considers the MetroNorth commuter rail lines, for example, to be the areas along which to concentrate the highest density commercial and residential developments. Weston's rural character, its open-space areas reserved for public use, and the quiet ambience of the community provide a valuable balance to the commercial, more densely developed areas within the region.

Another focus for the South Western Region is to create incentives for redevelopment of older commercial centers, such as converting vacant or unused buildings (office or industrial space) to new uses (housing or retail). Although located just outside SWRPA's planning border, the former Gilbert and Bennett wire factory complex and pond in Georgetown is a likely prospect for this kind of development. The

old factory, actually in Redding to Weston's north, lies dormant; but it is only a matter of time before a developer comes forward once again with a redevelopment scheme for that property.

So Weston finds itself somewhat removed from the greater density and bustling activity of neighboring towns in the region. Yet, the through-traffic that is increasing every year must be discouraged from intruding into our residential neighborhoods. The need for "traffic-calming" remediation within Weston must be addressed, along with regional efforts to resolve the traffic congestion along U.S. Route 7 in Wilton. Concern for development to the north, in particular, is paramount. What happens in Georgetown — a the assisted-living facility under construction at Gilbert Hill or with the Gilbert and Bennett site — will have a considerable impact on Weston.

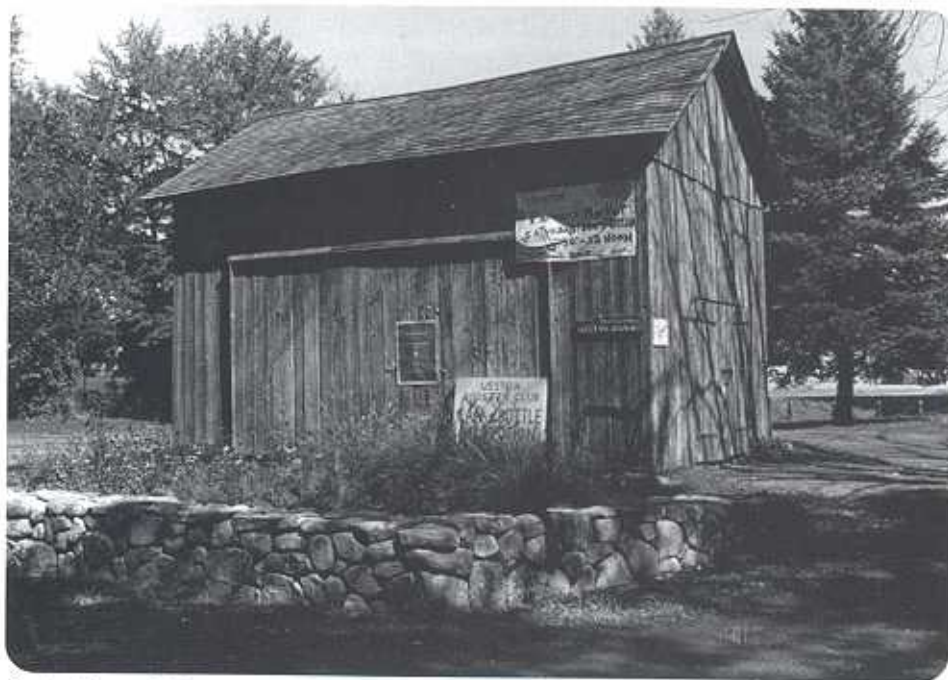
THE POPULATION

In the 20-year period between the 1970 Census and the 1990 Census, the recorded population increased from 7,417 to 8,648, or 16.6 percent; between the 1990 Census and 1998 estimates, it grew by only 2.3 percent. The Connecticut Department of Health estimated Weston's population as 8,846 on July 1, 1998.

Weston had 3,100 dwellings in 1987 and 3,537 dwellings on January 1, 2000 — an increase of approximately 36 new houses per year — but with slightly fewer people residing in each house. The average household in Weston has declined consistently from 3.6 people per household in 1970 to 2.8 per household in 1990 and 2.6 per household in 2000.

Weston's median age of 29.0 years in 1970 rose to 36.5 years in 1980 and 39.2 years in 1990. Local "Census of Children" projects, undertaken in 1995 and 1997, indicate that school-age population growth has stabilized and even begun to drop. The 1995 local census indicated 808 children were pre-school age (0-5 years); in 1997, that figure was 758. The 2000 U.S. Census should confirm this trend.

A major inhibitor to any significant population growth is Weston's dwindling supply of developable land. As of the 2000



Onion Barn c.1830 renovated by Weston Kiwanis Club

Grand List, Weston has 1,008 acres defined as "undeveloped," of which 206 acres are small parcels that, for various reasons, are unbuildable. Separately, there are large parcels of land that currently include a dwelling and may or may not be subdivided in the future. The data does not reflect those parcels.

Examining changes expected in Weston's population by age group, State of Connecticut projections indicate over the next ten years an increase in young people, fewer middle-aged, and a slight increase in elderly. In 2000, young people (0-24 years) represent 40 percent of Weston's population, up from 35.7 percent in 1995, and predicted to grow to 45 percent by 2010. Middle-age people (25-64 years) represent 51 percent of the population in 2000, predicted to shrink to 44 percent ten years forward. The elderly population will increase slightly from 9 percent to 10 percent in the ten-year period.

Pre-schoolers (0-5 years) are expected to decline in number, going from 6.7 percent in 2000 to 5.3 percent in 2010. The largest increase in the youth population will be the number of high-school children, whose ranks will swell from 7 percent to 13 percent by 2010. In the middle-age population, the largest numeric decline will be in the 45-49 years age group, with corresponding increases for those 50-64 years of age.

Weston's elderly population increased significantly over the prior two decades, increasing from 6.7 percent of the population in 1980 to 8.4 percent in 1990. Weston has responded to the needs of its elderly population by developing tax-abatement schemes, special transportation, and community outreach programs administered by the Town's director of social services.

The 1990 Census indicated that 4,428 Weston residents were employed, with 59.7 percent in executive or professional occupations. Females in the Weston workforce represented 44.3 percent of employed Weston residents, with 35.6 percent of Weston's employed females having children in the schools. In 1990, 3,467, or 78 percent, of Weston's workforce commuted to work outside of Weston.

Weston's per-capita income of \$75,934, as reported by the Connecticut Public Expenditures Council in 1998, ranks third in Fairfield County (after New

Canaan and Darien). In terms of educational attainment, 68 percent of those people 25 years or older had earned college or graduate degrees. Non-white racial groups account for 2.6 percent of Weston's population, which is the lowest in the region.

Weston residents freely volunteer their time to serve the community, resulting in Weston having the lowest municipal spending rate in the Southwest planning region — 17 percent of revenue for Weston in fiscal year 1994-95 vs. an average 23.6 percent for the region in the same period.

LAND AND ITS USE

Natural Features

The Weston Environmental Resources Manual ("Dominski-Oakrock"), issued in September 1976, provides a detailed description of Weston's land and its uses.

Weston is set in a temperate forest environment, with hilly topography and a high proportion of glacial deposits and shallow subsurface bedrock. The terrain is the most rugged in the southwestern region; more than 20 percent of Weston's land has a slope of 15 percent or more. Much of the undeveloped land in Weston contains special natural characteristics and must be treated with great care with regard to building location, septic systems, wells, driveways, and run-off controls.

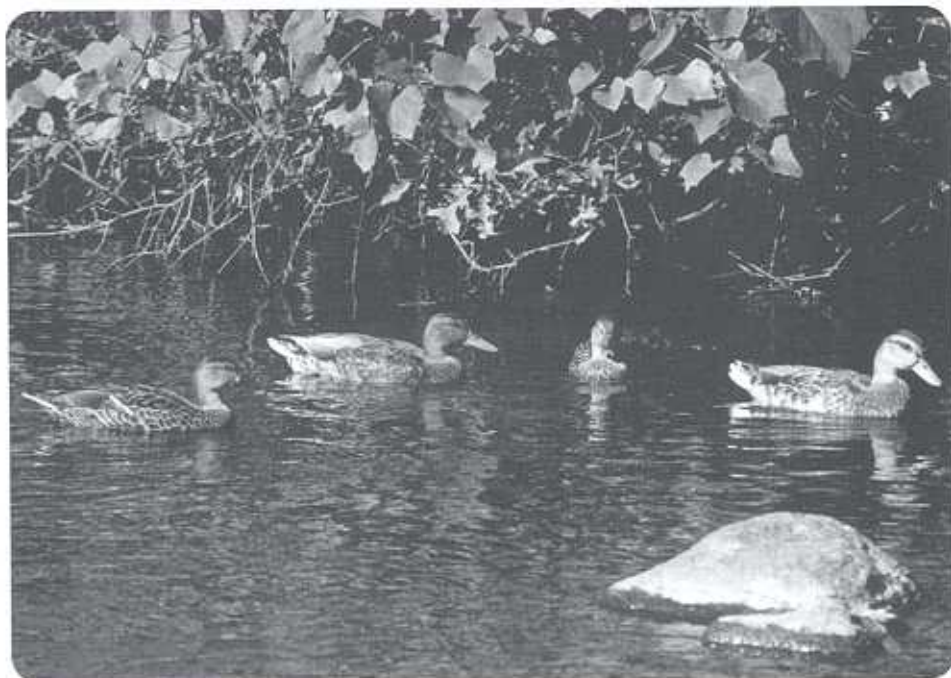
The Aspetuck River and two branches

of the Saugatuck River provide about 30 miles of river frontage in Weston. The Saugatuck Reservoir, a manmade lake more than one-half mile wide at its widest point and more than three miles long, dominates the northeast section of town and includes approximately three miles of Weston shoreline along its boundaries. These bodies of water, combined with the innumerable streams and small lakes and ponds located throughout the town, give Weston unique natural resources.

Soil drainage conditions in Weston vary greatly. The soils include:

1. Glacial sand and gravel deposits, which are the best-drained and usually occur over aquifers;
2. Glacial till soils with very low clay or impermeability;
3. Compressed glacial till soils with relatively impermeable substrata; and
4. Wetland linkage and wetland soils, where high-water tables and generally poor drainage conditions exist.

The best-drained soils exist on Weston's north-southeast axis, with heavier, less-well-drained soils concentrated in the northwest, central, and southwest areas. Poorly drained wetland soils exist in pockets throughout Weston, but they are the least-concentrated in the southeast quadrant.



Saugatuck River

Table 1. Land Use

	1969		1987		2000	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Residential	3,760	28	6,332	46	7,418	56
Commercial	20	—	15	—	20	—
Public	155	1	180	1	195	1
Semi-Public	24	—	28	—	79	1
Private Recreation	340	3	181	1	195	1
Conservation	1,500	11	1,658	12	1,815	14
Watershed	1,320	10	1,294	10	1,051	8
Roads ⁽¹⁾	550	4	686	5	579	4
Total Land in Use	7,670	56	10,653	78	11,352	85
Undeveloped ⁽²⁾	5,956	44	2,973	22	802	6
Undevelopable ⁽³⁾	0	—	0	—	1,130	9
TOTAL LAND⁽⁴⁾	13,626	100	13,626	100	13,284	100

Sources: 2000 re-evaluation data by Cole-Layer-Trumble Co. (CLT); Assessor's Office.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ 2000 data new calculation method: State @ 13 miles x 60'; Town @ 77.81 miles x 40'; private @ 29.52 x 30'

⁽²⁾ Available for future development, as defined by CLT in 2000 re-evaluation data

⁽³⁾ 2000 re-evaluation data by CLT; includes land with no frontage, poor topography, wetlands, under two acres, etc.

⁽⁴⁾ 2000 area, based on Fuss & O'Neill, Inc. maps

Table 2. Business Development at Weston Center

Use	1969	1986	2000
Market	2,000 sq.ft.	3,649 sq.ft.	4,218 sq.ft.
Dry Cleaner	1,200	1,128	1,282
Liquor	800	760	760
Hardware	3,600	3,539	3,315
Bank	800	1,960	1,752
Insurance	600	0	0
Insurance/Real Estate	0	656	1,248
Barber	600	0	0
Luncheonette	0	738	866
Dry Goods	1,600	0	0
Pharmacy/Stationery/Lunch	1,700	0	0
Pharmacy/Stationery	0	3,075	3,437
Gas Station	1,700	1,705	2,521
SUBTOTAL	14,600 sq.ft.	17,210 sq.ft.	19,399 sq.ft.
Post Office	1,800	1,579	1,800
TOTAL	16,400 sq.ft.	18,789 sq.ft.	21,199 sq.ft.

Source: Assessor's Office

Development

Current development patterns must be studied to provide the basis for planning the pattern of future development. Undeveloped land has been analyzed to determine any limitations to its development and to help provide a structure for its development within those limits. This information is embodied in "Dominski-Oakrock."

Weston has a total area of 13,284 acres,

about 20.7 square miles. Approximately 11,352 acres, or 85.5 percent of the town, may be classified as "in use." Included in this figure are 579 acres, or 4.4 percent of the total Town acreage, occupied by roads. Land reserved for watershed and conservation purposes totals 2,866 acres, or 21.6 percent of the total Town area.

In 1979, Weston entered into an agreement to participate in the area Sewer

Avoidance Program (as part of the federal Clean Water Act). Among the steps taken by the Town of Weston to comply with the requirements of the program were the adoption of a Heat Pump Ordinance, an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Regulation, and ongoing testing of water quality.

Only 802 acres, or 6 percent of the Town, are currently classified as undeveloped. This includes all privately owned vacant land not used for any purpose. In the case of oversized lots or large estates, the excess portion of the property not developed nor needed to comply with the minimum lot size required by zoning is considered developable and is included.

Residential Use

Weston's zoning regulations, initially adopted in 1950, were amended in 1953 to include the entire town area in a single "residential and farming" district, with a minimum two-acre lot size.

Approximately 7,418 acres, or 56 percent of the total developed area in town, are presently occupied by detached residences or have been approved for subdivision. Roads and public, semi-public, or recre-



Weston Center

Table 3. Public and Semi-Public Facilities

	1969	1986	1999
PUBLIC			
Elementary School	23 acres	26 acres	29 acres
Middle School	22	28	34
High School	45	53	53
Portables	0	6	5
School Administration Building	0	0	6
Town Hall, Fire, Police	4	4	4
Library	2	2	2
Lyons Plain Firehouse	0	1	1
Highway Department	6	6	7
Sanitary Landfill	54	0	0
Transfer Station/Dog Pound	0	54	57
Jarvis Military Academy	0	0	2
PUBLIC SUBTOTAL	156	180	195
SEMI-PUBLIC			
Norfield Church	3	3	9
Emmanuel Church	3	3	8
St. Francis of Assisi Church	13	13	13
Audubon Society	0	0	38
Coley Cemetery	3	3	3
Norfield Grange	0	1	1
Weston Historical Society	0	4	4
Miscellaneous	1	0	3
SEMI-PUBLIC SUBTOTAL	23	27	79
TOTAL AREA	179	207	274

Sources: Assessor's Office; Town Administrator

ational facilities occupy the remaining developed acreage.

Commercial Use

About 20 acres in Weston are presently used for business or commercial purposes. Of these, 10 acres are occupied by legal, nonconforming uses that existed prior to the establishment of zoning, including a shopping center, a restaurant, and a gas station/garage. A nursery — a use which, along with farming, is permitted anywhere in town — occupies other acreage.

Weston Center (6.2 acres) is the only

facility in town that caters to the day-to-day needs of the residents. The center includes a market, pharmacy, dry cleaner, hardware store, package store, bank, real estate/insurance office, luncheonette, gas station/garage, and post office.

Other business and professional services operate within residences as home occupations, some of which require a special permit, or as pre-existing, nonconforming uses. No acreage figures are recorded separately for these uses, since the properties on which they are located are classified as residential.

Table 4. Conservation and Recreation Areas

Land Use	1969	1986	1999
Town Parks and Open Space			
Bisceglie Park	0	54	54
Keene Park	0	9	9
Devil's Glen	0	20	20
Juliana Lachat Preserve	0	0	42
Trout Brook Property	0	0	43
Minerva Morehouse Heady Property	0	0	33
Other Town-owned Open Space	0	39	140
SUBTOTAL	0	122	341
Private Recreation			
Weston Field Club	27	27	27
Weston Gun Club	37	47	46
Weston Riding Club	25	0	0
Weston Tennis Association	12	12	12
Aspetuck Valley Country Club	150	107	110
SUBTOTAL	251	193	195
Private Camps			
Singing Oaks Day Camp	85	130	0
Camp Aspetuck (Girl Scouts)	16	16	16
SUBTOTAL	101	146	16
Conservation and Watershed			
Nature Conservancy	1,500	1,484	1,522
L. P. Ordway Preserve (Devil's Den)	[1,500]	[1,422]	[948]
K. Ordway Preserve	0	[62]	[62]
Bridgeport Hydraulic & Reservoir	1,320	1,294	1,051
Aspetuck Land Trust	0	174	256
Audubon Society	0	0	37
SUBTOTAL	2,820	2,952	2,866
TOTAL AREA	3,170	3,412	3,418

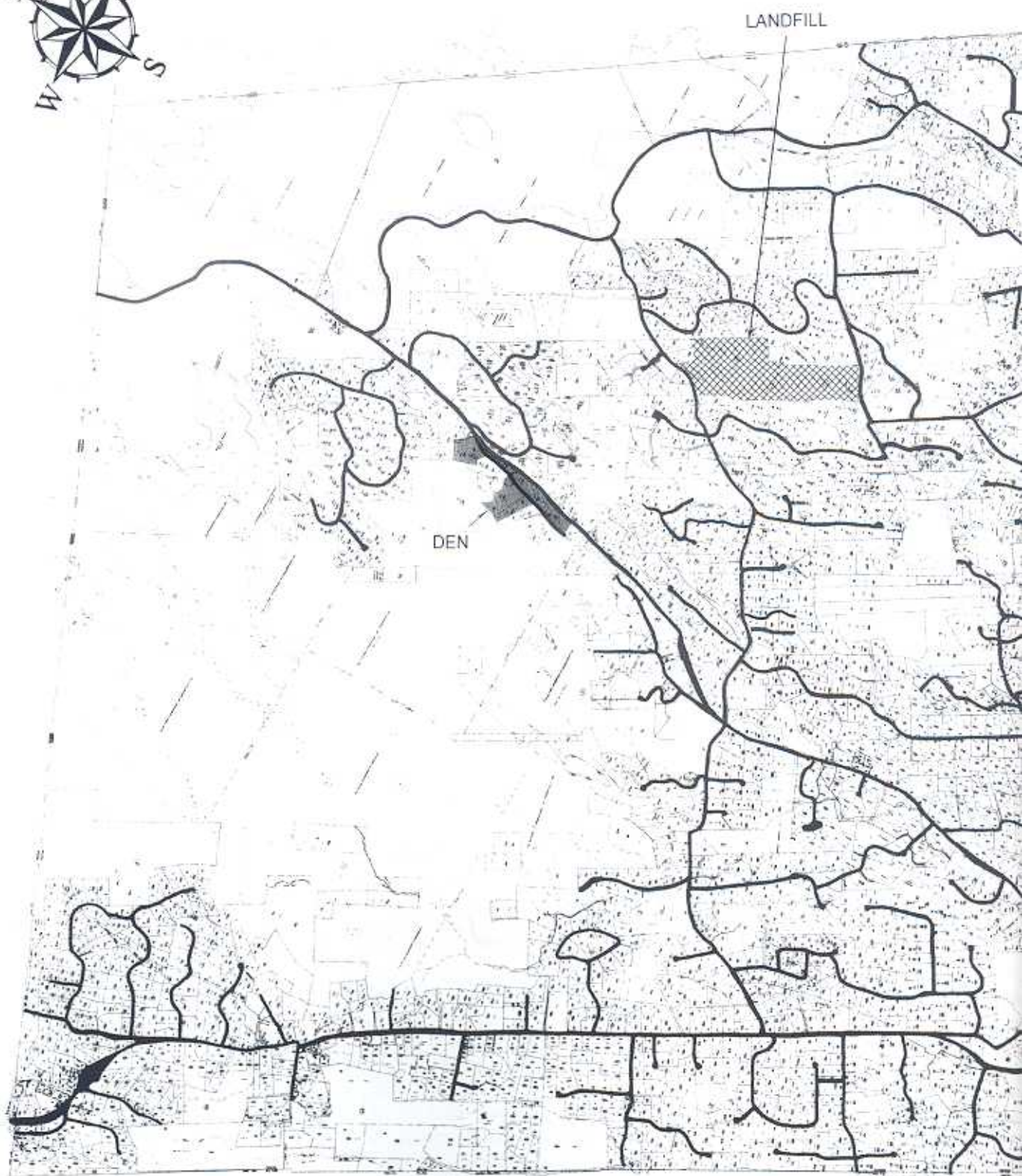
Sources: Grand List, Oct. 1, 1999; Assessor's Office; Town Administrator; Aspetuck Land Trust; Nature Conservancy

Public and Semi-Public Areas

Approximately 265 acres, or 1.9 percent of the total town area, are occupied by public and semi-public facilities.

Town Parks, Conservation, and Recreation Areas

Weston presently enjoys the use of 535 acres of its land for private and public recreation, which is 3.9 percent of the town's total acreage. Of that land, 341 acres are publicly owned. An additional 2,866 acres is set aside for conservation and watershed.



MAP I

HISTORIC DISTRICTS, PUBLIC
and SEMI-PUBLIC FACILITIES

LEGEND

-  Historic Districts
-  Public Facilities
-  Semi-Public Facilities

CHURCH

FIRE HOUSE

CENTRAL LYONS PLAINS

BRADLEY AXE TOOL

Town of
Weston, Connecticut
Date: April 2, 000

GRANGE

SCHOOLS

NORFIELD

CHURCH

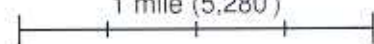
KETTLE
CREEK

COLEY CEMETERY

TOWN HALL
COMPLEXHISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Scale of miles

1 mile (5,280')



II. PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Weston is responsible for preparing and adopting a Town Plan of Conservation and Development that complies with the Connecticut State Plan of Conservation and Development. The plan is used as a basis to achieve certain objectives agreed upon by Weston residents, municipal agencies, and the planning function of the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission acts as an agent for residents for establishing the consensus through which Town Plan goals and objectives are fulfilled. Local consideration is also given to regional needs with regard to the protection of natural resources and development of facilities for transportation, jobs, alternative and affordable housing, shopping, recreation.

The Town Plan goals and objectives are flexible to permit modification as conditions and community attitudes change. Any modifications should be preceded by studies and public hearings, when appropriate, that clearly demonstrate that the proposed change is in the best interests of the community as a whole.

The following objectives are intended to guide future development of the town, and they form the basis for specific recommendations in later sections of this document.

BASIC GOALS

1. The present character of the town should be preserved and protected to the fullest extent possible. Town government of Weston actions should be consistent with this plan and should support and strengthen local zoning.
2. Within the overall development pattern of the region — and to protect air, water, and land resources — Weston should remain a low-density residential community.
3. Nonresidential development should be limited to uses that support residential use.
4. Sewer avoidance should continue as an overall goal of the plan.
5. Town-owned land should be reserved, without changing the basic character of the community, for the use, enjoyment, and benefit of the residents of Weston.
6. Town-owned land should be used for the benefit of all residents, and all facilities on public land should be owned and operated by the Town of Weston.

OBJECTIVES

Natural Resources

1. Maintaining the quality of Weston's natural resources is central to preserving and maintaining the overall quality of life for residents. Water resources, both surface water and groundwater, should be protected. Regular testing for purity should be continued.
2. A sufficient quantity of water supply for residential and municipal wells is a concern as development pressures increase. Protecting against overuse of groundwater, a precious commodity, is paramount. In order to assure an abundant groundwater supply and recharge capacity, the clearing of trees from residential lots and the nonessential use of well water should be discouraged.
3. Development should be permitted only where the septic carrying capacity of the land can be clearly demonstrated. Certain wetlands should be excluded from development.
4. Any negative impact of development on neighboring properties should be prevented by strict management of runoff, erosion, and visual degradation. The policy of zero incremental runoff for subdivisions should continue.
5. Natural and special features (e.g., rock ridges, outcrops, boulder fields, stone walls, trees, historic sites) should be protected and preserved.

Roads

1. Road improvements should take into consideration the character of the Town and should be designed to preserve its rural identity while improving safety. The Town's road system should be made safer to support increased use due to regional commuting patterns. The Town government should pursue the implementation of road improvements for which the State is responsible.
2. Minor roads should be maintained to provide adequate circulation of local traffic and improved coordination with the major and collector road system.



Norfield Grange

3. The Town should adequately fund a comprehensive road-maintenance program.
4. A system should be developed and instituted so that residential house numbers are clearly marked and visible from the road to assist emergency services. Street signs throughout town should be clearly lettered and uniform in design.

Community Facilities

1. Adequate provision for public facilities should continue; however, before deciding to add new facilities or expand existing ones, other options should be considered. Public facilities should be maintained in a manner consistent with Weston's character. Any expansion of public facilities should be consistent with the goals of the Town Plan.
2. All municipal and administrative buildings should be maintained in their present locations in the Town Hall Complex area, unless the infrastructure requirements make this untenable.
3. The impact on neighboring properties should be considered when exploring any municipal additions or modifications to ensure compatibility with the surrounding residential community.
4. School buildings and other school facilities should continue to be centralized, unless the infrastructure requirements make this untenable. When and where appropriate, school buildings and other school facilities should continue to be available for use by all residents of the community.
5. Emergency services (i.e., fire and ambulance services) should continue to be maintained at safe levels of performance under the policy or intent that they be maintained on a volunteer basis. Any new development should not create a burden that exceeds the capabilities of the Town's volunteer network.
6. Participation in regional solid-waste disposal plans should be continued and expanded, as necessary.
7. Town-wide public-works projects should be coordinated to meet public health, safety, and environmental standards.

8. The Town of Weston should be subject to the regulations of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Residential Development

1. Contingent on the size of the development and with an overall concern for the preservation of natural resources, residential development should be maintained at an overall density of one family on a minimum of two acres of residential land.
2. Single-family, detached houses should continue to be the only type of permitted residences. Consideration may be given, after further study of groundwater availability and the carrying capacity of the land, to alternative types of housing consistent with the objectives of protecting the environment and maintaining the low-density character of the town.
3. A small apartment within each residence should continue to be allowed, by special permit, to provide alternative housing opportunities. The Town of Weston should work with the State of Connecticut to have this in-home apartment policy qualify as affordable housing. The policy of allowing roomers and boarders in private homes should also continue.
4. All residential development should preserve and enhance the Town's open, low-density character and the natural features of the countryside in relation to existing development. With respect to coverage on building lots, the height and bulk of residential structures should respect the scale of the surrounding built environment and the natural topography.
5. The preservation and protection of the distinct characteristics of places of architectural, cultural, and historical significance to the town should continue.

Business Development

1. Commercial services should be restricted to those that fulfill immediate needs, with residents relying primarily on neighboring cities and towns for major shopping and services.

2. Commercial development should be limited to the current shopping center and other pre-existing, nonconforming business uses. If residents demonstrate the need and a desire for additional facilities, a neighborhood shopping center in another section of town should be considered — but only after a careful assessment of its expected impact on the environment, the character of the community, and traffic patterns and safety.
3. Professional and other limited home occupations should continue to be permitted throughout Weston, provided they are conducted by an owner-occupant at his/her domicile, or by a resident member of that owner-occupant's family, and are clearly subordinate to the residential use of the property. In view of the current trend of constructing large-scale dwellings, the Home Occupation Regulations should be reviewed and modified to limit the percentage of the dwelling permitted to be used for home occupation.

Open Space and Recreation

1. Preservation and acquisition of open space should continue. Consideration should be given to purchasing additional tracts of open land currently designated for conservation, recreation, or watershed uses.
2. Particular attention should be paid to the protection of lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, wetlands, and other areas of scenic and conservation value.
3. The condition of the quality and quantity of surface waters should be monitored. Regulations should be developed, adopted, and strictly enforced to protect the riverine environments and wetlands from erosion and sedimentation.
4. Planning for all new developments should encourage the preservation of open space.
5. Public recreation for all age groups should increase as the population grows.
6. Private recreational facilities, which contribute to the character of the town and provide additional resources for residents, should be encouraged to continue.

III. DISCUSSION OF THE PLAN

NATURAL RESOURCES

A concern for the protection of natural resources continues nationwide. In Weston, that concern has resulted in the development of specific planning tools aimed at protecting the environment and raising citizen awareness of local environmental issues. Monitoring natural resources and the systems designed to protect them must be constant and professionally consistent to prevent yesterday's solutions from becoming tomorrow's problems.

The 1976 Weston Environmental Resources Manual ("Dominski-Oakrock"), commissioned by the Planning and Zoning Commission, was a response to water-contamination problems and overall land-use concerns. The manual provided Weston with a professional description of the town's natural resources and an explanation of how those resources function. The manual also indicated specific strategies for protecting Weston's natural resources,

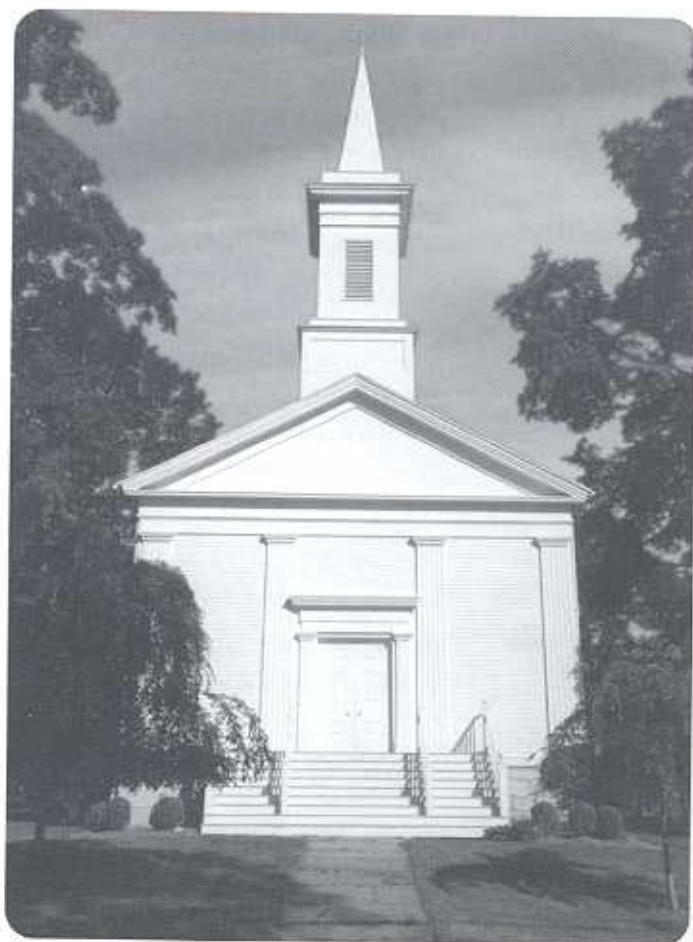
Certain principles of the report have become part of Weston's zoning and subdivision regulations; e.g., sections dealing with zero-incremental runoff, erosion and sedimentation guidelines, developmental limits on wetlands, and control of development of land with other special natural characteristics.

As additional monitoring of the environment has been accomplished and data describing the environment has become available, designing development to preserve natural resources for the future has become more possible. The Inland Wetlands & Water Resources Commission (Conservation Commission) became Weston's wetlands permitting authority in 1973. Flood-management regulations were adopted in 1978 and updated in 1998, reflecting a process begun in the early 1970s. Weston entered the Sewer Avoidance Program in 1979. Accurate topographical survey maps were prepared in the early 1980s, and better data on soil

types and locations became available to the State of Connecticut in 1982. Inland Wetland & Water Resources Commission regulations were adopted in 1983.

The "Weston Water Resource Guide" published in June 1993, was based on the work of the Weston Water Study Force. An intensive study was designed to test deep-well water and surface water for several chemical and bacteriological residues at a number of locations throughout Weston. The laboratory findings confirmed that Weston had a good and reliable supply of drinking water from wells. A few problem wells were mostly the result of land use not associated with two-residential uses (such as chemical contamination from a pre-existing business). The study concluded that Weston should continue and further refine its land-use regulations to assure good water quality into the future.

The Westport-Weston Health District implemented new Private Water Supply



Emmanuel Episcopal Church



St. Francis of Assisi Church

System Regulations in March 1997 to measure and report water quality. Seven inter-related environmental priorities are intended to ensure the town's natural resources will be preserved and protected to the greatest extent possible and that development on one piece of land will not adversely affect adjacent land:

1. Preserve and improve the quality and quantity of Weston's water supply, while specifically discouraging:
 - land-use activities that represent the most significant threats to water quality — failed septic systems, runoff from streets and storm-water systems, landscaping practices, and construction activities;
 - accelerated water usage on private property for applications or activities unrelated to occupancy and/or use of the dwelling (e.g., watering lawns and shrubbery); and
 - storm-water management practices and changes in surrounding upland areas that adversely impact wetland protection.
2. Maintain strict septic-system, waste-disposal standards to avoid the construction of sewers in town.
3. Develop a comprehensive septic-system waste-disposal plan for Weston's municipal and school facilities.
4. Protect types of land that support good water quality and quantity (e.g., wetlands) and that provide unique natural habitats for fish, amphibians, birds, animals, and plants.
5. Selectively acquire and protect open space and park land for active and passive recreation.
6. Ensure that the design of future development maintains the natural hydrologic functions of sites through the retention of natural land contours and existing vegetation to the maximum extent possible; minimize impervious surfaces on building sites and subdivisions.
7. Establish redevelopment guidelines for individual lots in environmentally sensitive areas to protect against any increased negative impact on wetlands, water quality, or water supply by the proposed changes in land use.

ROADS

Consistent local traffic-safety enforcement is necessary to ensure the safe use of the State highways, the Town road system, and private roads in Weston. A road study, completed in 1986 by a traffic consultant employed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, determined that our traffic would increase at least 2 percent annually until reaching capacity on most existing major roads around 2000. Although capacity has not been reached on Town roads, State routes are operating at capacity at signal-light intersections during peak hours. A long-range maintenance program for Town roads is in effect and implemented to avoid road deterioration. The program decreases the probability of repair costs, which could result from not having such a plan.

Functional Classification of Roads

Roads are generally classified in four categories, based on function:

Limited Access Highways are intended

for long-distance, through traffic. Access to individual properties along the right-of-way is prohibited and generally limited to selected major cross routes. Intersections are usually grade-separated. While there are no roads of this type in Weston, the Merritt Parkway, just south of the town border, is an example of this type of road.

Major Roads carry relatively heavy traffic movement to and from nearby centers of population and economic activity. Examples of major roads are State routes 53 and 57. The width of the pavement on major roads should be sufficient to permit the movement of traffic in both directions, free of interference from parked or standing vehicles. Access to private properties along major roads should be provided from collector or minor roads wherever possible.

Collector Roads are intended primarily to collect traffic from minor roads and feed it to major roads. In most cases, collector roads (such as Steep Hill Road, Good Hill Road, and Godfrey Road) interconnect sections of town and are the principal means of circulation in and around



Norfield Congregational Church

residential areas. Collector roads carry moderate traffic and provide access to abutting properties. Such roads should be sufficiently wide to permit movement in each direction, free of interference from parked or standing vehicles.

Minor Roads are all roads not previously classified, whether public or private. The primary purpose of minor roads is to provide direct access to private properties, although they may serve minor traffic movement in some cases. Sufficient width is required to permit vehicles traveling in opposite directions to pass safely.

Traffic Volume

Weston is not a destination so much as a place that traffic passes through. When the previous Town Plan was published in 1987, it was expected that U.S. Route 7 ("Super 7") would be completed, eventually, to Danbury, putting much of the increase in commuting traffic onto a road built for that type of travel — no curb cuts, no traffic lights, and designed for higher speeds. Now, thirteen years later, policy suggestions from local public-safety officials should be re-examined and, perhaps, changed.

Weston is seeing the infiltration of more and more regional through-trips over roads not designed for heavy traffic volumes. One example of what is happening

because development of "old 7" has not continued since 1987 is the use of Cannondale Road as a link for commutation and truck traffic between Route 57 (Georgetown Road) and U.S. Route 7 in Wilton. Greater increases are probable as development in Georgetown proceeds. Monitoring of plans by the State of Connecticut to improve Route 57 is needed to ensure that any changes to the roadway do not encourage the growth of through-traffic.

The traffic consultant employed by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 1985-86 surveyed traffic volume. Results indicated a dramatic increase in through traffic on Weston's main roads and the expectation that this trend would continue. The greatly increased automobile commuter traffic is due to the commercial buildup in communities to our north, south and west and a corresponding increase in population in towns all around Weston. The main roads impacted are State routes 57 and 53, as well as Lyons Plain Road; some Town roads have also become convenient detours. Although most Town roads appear capable of handling local traffic, an increase in through-traffic will cause excessive road wear and require increased maintenance. The impact of traffic on our roads resulting from regional trends must be addressed by a strong program of traffic control and enforcement.

Road System

Weston's road system consists of 13 maintained by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, 78 miles maintained by the Town Highway Department, and 30 miles of private roads maintained by abutting property owners.

Virtually all of Weston's road is improved and paved. A small segment (1.04 miles), although graded to a certain extent, has a surface of either dirt or gravel. A map, which shows the general location of current improvements for each road in Weston, is on file with the Public Works Department.

Town roads currently consist of 78 miles of bituminous concrete surface. The condition of Town roads is presently as follows:

Good	57.49 miles
Fair	18.28 miles
Poor	2.04 miles

The State highways that pass through Weston are considered well-maintained, but certain deficiencies have been reviewed that seriously affect safety. The State of Connecticut completed studies of the intersection of routes 57 and 53 at Cobbs Mill Bridge and concluded that the present condition of the intersection (with a flashing signal) is acceptable. The opinion of Town officials, however, is that the intersection should be fully signalized. The Connecticut Department of Transportation is planning to realign a dangerous curve at the intersection of White Oak Lane and Route 57 (Georgetown Road), approximately one-half mile north of the Cobbs Mill Bridge intersection.

Automatic traffic control consists of full signals at the intersections of: Bridge Street and Route 57 (Weston Road); Route 57 (Weston Road) and Route 53 (North Road); Route 57 (Weston Road) and School Road; and Route 53 (New Turnpike) and Godfrey Road, flashing at Cobbs Mill.

Road Widths and Alignments. Straightening and widening projects should be carried out to increase safety but should not, at the same time, encourage increased speed. Appropriate minimum-width and alignment standards for well-designed major roads generally require a right-of-way width of 50 feet, with a pavement width between 30 and 24 feet. Horizontal curves should be



Weston Town Hall

a radius of at least 150 feet, and grades should be a maximum of 10 percent.

Most of Weston's major and collector roads were constructed prior to the 1940s, when width and alignment standards were far less stringent than they are today. With a few exceptions, these early roads have not been substantially improved. The result is that a portion of Weston's most important mileage is poorly suited to the demands of modern traffic movement. Narrow road widths significantly reduce traffic-carrying capacity and present a safety hazard by reducing the margin for driver error. Lateral obstructions (retaining walls, bridge abutments, parked cars, etc.) effectively narrow the roadway. And the absence of adequate shoulders presents a hazard to normal traffic movement, since there is no refuge for disabled vehicles. Poor alignment has an adverse effect on capacity and safety, as well. Sharp and frequent curves require reductions in speed, resulting in reduced capacity, or risk of serious accidents.

Intersections. Wherever possible, minor roads should terminate where they intersect major or collector roads. A three-corner (or "T") intersection has only one primary through street. Four-corner intersections, while more desirable than an inadequate offset, present a potential hazard from conflicting cross movements.

Based on a field survey done by Weston's traffic consultant in 1986, a substantial number of major intersections in Weston's road system were classified as poorly designed and hazardous. Town officials were presented with a detailed list of these intersections and their deficiencies, which was to be used to guide their improvement. To date, the only intersection from that list to be addressed is Georgetown Road, from Hillside Road to Weston Road, which will be reconstructed by the State of Connecticut.

Dead-End Roads. The dead-end road, or cul-de-sac, is an attractive way to provide access to residential properties, because it eliminates through traffic while creating an added sense of privacy, safety, and value. A major drawback to dead-end roads is that access to interior lots can be impeded by a blockage at the open end, particularly where the dead-end road is excessively

long and provides access to a large number of homes. Should a blockage occur, the ability to provide police, fire, and emergency medical service protection may be severely impaired. Providing an additional road connection into a dead-end road allows an alternate means of access, and traffic volume should be distributed more evenly along its length. The road layout and placement of intersections can be such that they discourage through traffic.

Standards are employed in Weston's subdivision regulations to reduce the drawbacks of dead-end roads: A maximum length (1,500 feet) and a maximum number of lots (12) are allowed on a dead-end road or a dead-end road system. A number of dead-end roads in Weston, however, have lengths in excess of 1,500 feet. A road-by-road evaluation verified whether traffic flow could be improved by joining certain of these roads. The advantage of the resulting town-wide convenience must be weighed against neighborhood interests.

Major Road Deficiencies. Steep Hill Road and Godfrey Road (both East and West) have the highest accident rates in town due, in part, to road alignment. Route 57, between Hillside Road and Weston Road, has the most safety problems. Cost of improvements would be borne by the State

of Connecticut.

Town Bridges. All bridges within Weston's boundaries have been inspected by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and recommendations for improvements have been noted.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Town Hall Complex

The Town Hall Complex is located on approximately four acres of Town-owned land on the north side of Norfield Road, just east of its intersection with Route 57 (Weston Road). The Town Hall shares the building and property with Weston's main firehouse, police headquarters, emergency services, and communications center. Constructed in 1952 and enlarged in 1986-87 by the addition of two wings, the Town Hall is a single-story masonry structure with a basement. The main floor (approximately 16,600 square feet) contains offices, meeting rooms, a conference room, and a vault for records storage. The basement (5,200 square feet under the Town Hall) connects with fire, police, and emergency services area.

If additional office space is required in the future, plans exist for another small wing on the original Town Hall building.



Town Hall "Walk of Fame" with names of hundreds of current and former residents

Jarvis Military Academy Complex

Late in 1997, the Town of Weston purchased the 1.94-acre lot at the southeast corner of Norfield Road and Route 57 (Weston Road) to preserve what remains of the original property of the Weston Boarding School, later called the Jarvis Military Academy. Comments gathered from a "use questionnaire" distributed during a public walk-through of the property and at a Town Meeting, called to discuss the use of the property, overwhelmingly agreed that the property and buildings should be developed for historic and cultural purposes and that community gardens should be re-established.

The gardens are being restored to their original grandeur, and a new fence was erected in 1999 to conform to an etching of the property in the Beer's Atlas of 1867. The dwelling is being used temporarily for town offices. Its future use is to be determined.

Library

The Weston Public Library is on Norfield Road, immediately across Walker Way from the Town Hall. Constructed in 1963, it is a single-story, gable-roofed, masonry and glass structure. The library's collection of approximately 48,000 volumes meets minimum library standards, based on Weston's present population.

The library building was expanded

twice, first in 1985-86 and again in 1992-93, to its present total floor area of 13,826 square feet. A meeting room, added in the 1992-93 expansion, is heavily used by Weston residents for meetings, performances, and other events.

Fire Department

Fire protection and rescue services are provided by the Weston Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD). Established in 1931, its current 87 active members meet minimum state ratings of Firefighter I and/or EMT-B or above. The WVFD operates from two firehouses: The main station is on Norfield Road, in the Town Hall Complex; the second is on Lyons Plain Road, in the southeastern part of town. Both buildings are of masonry construction. The WVFD has a reciprocal agreement with the Georgetown Fire Department to share equipment on an "as needed" basis, which provides an additional element of protection for both communities.

Weston has seven fire-fighting vehicles, two ambulances (see Emergency Medical Service, below), and one boat utilized by the WVFD SCUBA Dive/Rescue Team. In addition, the department has access to specially equipped hazardous-materials apparatus. The fire-fighting fleet has been kept up to date; all seven commissioned vehicles were purchased, one with private donations, since 1974. The

capacity of the pumpers and tankers, owned by the Town of Weston is considered adequate for the foreseeable future. To maintain its readiness, however, the WVFD plans, in 2000, to replace Engine 2 with a pumper/tanker better suited to Weston's rural nature.

Because of Weston's low density, with houses widely spaced, most fires are minor, involving a single structure or brush. In the event of a major fire or major casualty, equipment is available from adjoining communities through mutual aid agreements.

A town-wide network of fire ponds and underground cisterns serves as a supply reservoir system. Dry hydrants continue to be implemented at fire ponds on new subdivisions.

Note: Fire protection services are provided under contract by the Georgetown Fire District to approximately 200 households along Route 57 from Samuel Road north.

Emergency Medical Service

The Weston Emergency Medical Service (EMS) was established in 1967 as an arm of the WVFD. Today, it is an operational division of the WVFD and functions independently. Weston EMS is licensed by the State of Connecticut. Its 40 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Medical Response Technicians (MRTs) are state-certified and trained in advanced life-support systems. Several years ago, Weston EMS, along with the Town of Weston, established with the Town of Wilton a joint Paramedic Program, which provides Weston residents with round-the-clock paramedic acute-care services.

Weston EMS is an all-volunteer service that provides emergency care to the community at no charge. It is part of the Weston's Public Safety Team and integrates all its activities with its emergency response partners. Weston EMS operates two ambulances and a state-of-the-art paramedic "fly-car" 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The system is built around a mobile "first responder," who goes directly to the emergency scene. All EMTs and MRTs carry advanced communication equipment and medical kits to provide appropriate emergency intervention.

The success of the Weston's emergency response system is based on the u



Library

lization of the "911" system to report an emergency, along with clearly identified roads and house numbers. At the close of 1999, emergency responses were averaging approximately one call per day. The increase in new residents and the advancing age of the elderly population, along with the dramatic growth in home offices, requires a continuing commitment to EMS by the community.

Police Department

The Weston Police Department was established in 1975. The Board of Police Commissioners oversees the department, which currently consists of the police chief and three sergeants, one detective, nine patrol officers, and one civilian employee. The police department currently responds to about 700 calls for service per month, compared to 850 calls per month in 1986-87. Medical emergency and rescue calls receive the highest priority from the department.

The Weston Police Department is located on the lower level of the Town Hall Complex on Norfield Road. The department's overall purpose is to safeguard the lives, rights, and property of all people within its jurisdiction and to deter crime. Trends and patterns of crime are studied to prevent recurring crimes. Intensive investigation techniques are utilized along with stakeout and surveillance activities to apprehend violators. The collection of evidence, the interviewing of witnesses, and the interrogation of suspects are done in a prompt and effective manner while observing due process and respecting individual rights.

The department seeks to prevent crime through public enlightenment, neighborhood-watch programs, and other crime-prevention and educational programs. Emphasis is placed on programs for young people in the community. Alcohol and drug awareness programs receive high priority. Collaborative efforts with school and recreational officials are used whenever possible.

The department also seeks to prevent crime by using visible patrols to create a feeling of "police presence" and reduce perceived opportunity. To reduce preventable motor-vehicle accidents, the police issue warnings and summonses to achieve citizen compliance with motor-

vehicle laws. Emphasis is placed on the apprehension of drunk drivers and other violators who pose serious risks to safety. All accidents are investigated to determine cause. Roadway design and traffic-control measures are reviewed to improve safety.

To maintain the highest professional standards, the department is committed to continuing education and training. Each officer receives training that exceeds the minimum mandatory requirements. Department management practices encourage and reward high levels of achievement and commitment. Keeping the department modern and motivated facilitates the delivery of quality service to Weston residents.

Public Works

The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintenance of town roads, drainage and operation of the Transfer Station.

Refuse Disposal. The Transfer Station, located on the 54-acre former landfill site on Godfrey Road West, is used for the compaction of waste and the collection of recyclables: glass and plastic bottles, cans, newspaper, tires, batteries, metals, demolition materials, and white paper goods. In 1985, Weston signed a 20-year agreement with the Connecticut Resource

Recovery Authority (CRRA) for the delivery to and disposal of compacted waste at a resource-recovery system (waste-to-energy plant) in Bridgeport. In 1999, the agreement was extended for five years in exchange for a lower "tip" fee. The ash residue is deposited in the Putnam Landfill.

Safe disposal of household hazardous wastes (e.g., oil-based paints and paint products, house and garden chemicals) is critical to the maintenance of Weston's natural environment, particularly the water supply. A household-hazardous waste collection day, sponsored by the Town, takes place each year, in the fall, for residents.

Consideration has been given to future use of the open space created by the landfill. Because of the difficult terrain at the site, coupled with the acquisition of other open space in town (e.g., the Heady property), no plans to develop the property for any purpose — except for a second communications tower — are being considered for the immediate future.

Dog Pound. The Town Dog Pound is located on the Transfer Station site.

Town Garage. Located on Old Hyde Road, about one mile east of the Town Center, the Town Garage had been an amalgam of structures without adequate storage for salt



Weston Volunteer Fire Department and wireless communications tower

and sand. As recommended in the 1987 Town Plan, a new facility was rebuilt in 1998 on the same site.

Water Supply. Privately owned deep wells supply water for nearly all the homes in Weston. Bridgeport Hydraulic Company supplies water to a small number of users along the Weston-Westport border. Limited municipally maintained water supplies, also derived from deep wells, provide water to the school buildings, the Town Hall Complex, the Library, and the Town Garage. A similar municipally maintained system serves 29 users in the Ravenwood Road area, including the Weston Gun Club and the Transfer Station. Water supply to the Ravenwood system has proven to be inadequate during drought periods. When that occurs, Bridgeport Hydraulic Company supplements the supply by trucking in water to a holding tank on the Transfer Station property.

Septic Systems. All residences, businesses, and public buildings are served by individual septic systems. Care must be taken to avoid contamination of wells through effluent leak-off.

A study of the septic systems that serve the Weston schools and Town Hall Complex is presently underway. The study will determine an adequate system that meets Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection regulations. Water conservation planning should be considered

as an integral part of any adequate system design.

Drainage. Town subdivision regulations mandate "zero-incremental runoff" as the control to regulate overall water discharges or flooding; drainage plans are presented with subdivision and lot development requests. A study was completed, using existing maps, by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and flood elevations in the Saugatuck River were revised from the Saugatuck Reservoir Dam to the intersection of Davis Hill and Kellogg Hill roads. Flood elevations were also revised in the West Branch of the Saugatuck River from Godfrey Road West to Lakeside Drive.

Social Services

In 1979, the Department of Social Services was established with a part-time director. Currently situated in Town Hall, the director counsels and helps many Weston families in their times of need. The department offers guidance, counseling, and financial help to senior citizens, single-parent families, shut-ins, and others. Programs include Meals-on-Wheels, Warm-up Fund, Senior Center, Dial-a-Ride, Weston Tax Abatement Program, shopping assistance, a food pantry, and other lifeline services.

The Commission for Children and Youth, which includes a youth member, responds to the need for children's services. In 1997, a full-time youth services

director was hired to serve the special needs of children under 18 years of age.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Commission for the Elderly acts as advocate for elderly residents. Its social service outreach is manifested in Weston through the director of social services and the director of the Senior Center.

Day Care

The three churches in Weston each operate day-care centers. Emmanuel Nursery School, Norfield Children's Center, and St. Francis of Assisi Pre-school accommodate approximately 125 children in total. In addition, four private day-care facilities that serve a total of about two dozen children, are licensed by the State of Connecticut in Weston.

Telecommunications

Telephone and Data. The installation in 1999 of a telecommunications and data fiber-optic backbone for the Town's municipal and school buildings is expected to serve the town well into the future. Expansion capability has been built in to insure any school additions can be accommodated. An enhanced 911 system is currently being developed and will be installed in the near future.

Cable TV. Two carriers, Cablevision of Connecticut and SNET Americast, currently provide cable television access to Weston residents. Weston has the exclusive use of two channels on the system: one for community/government use; the other for the school system. Use of these public channels to disseminate information and programming of interest to Weston residents should be encouraged. Town funds, private donations, grants, and volunteer efforts can facilitate the operation of and programming on these channels.

Wireless Communications. The Town has adopted a proactive attitude toward building communication towers. In an effort to serve public safety needs, municipal locations were made available to six licensed wireless carriers to share access, along with the Police Department, the WVF, and EMS, to the Town's 195-ft. communications tower, which was installed in February 2000 adjacent to Town Hall. In the future, a second shared communications tower may be placed at the Transfer Station to cover the northeast section of Weston.



Weston War Memorial Honor Roll

Table 5. Weston School Buildings

	Date Opened	Additions
Hurlbutt Elementary School (K-3)		
East House	1950	
South House	1953	
North House	1963	1992
Jean I. McNeill Center	1997	
<i>North House was rebuilt after a fire in 1960 destroyed the original building; four classrooms were added in 1992. The Jean I. McNeill Center was built in 1997 as a "core" facility.</i>		
Weston Middle School (4-8)	1960	1972, 1996, 1999
<i>Additions and remodeling projects were completed in 1972; additional remodeling of the clusters was completed in 1996. In 1999, 5 portable classrooms were added to the facility.</i>		
Weston High School (9-12)	1968	1970
<i>The original facility, built in 1968, accommodated grades 8-10; by 1970, the facility was enlarged to accommodate grades 9-12.</i>		
Administration Building	1997-98	

Sharing the tower(s) reduces the chance of multiple towers being placed throughout the town on or near residential property. This practice should be continued if or when a future need arises for towers in additional locations.

School System

Since 1970, Weston has had its own K-12 school system, consisting of three separate schools: Horace C. Hurlbutt Jr. Elementary School, Weston Middle School, and Weston High School. In 1968, the high school was comprised of grades 8, 9 and 10; grades 11 and 12 were added in 1970.

The Weston public schools have long been committed, in partnership with families and the community as a whole, to the development of each child's individual best performance. Weston High School provides a college-preparatory curriculum, and 99 percent of Weston High School graduates in 1999 continued their education at four-year colleges. Extensive fine arts, athletic, and other co-curricular offerings provide opportunities for young people to develop beyond the core curriculum. Students who desire vocational courses or need other forms of preparation participate in regional programs.

Weston has had a long history of extraordinary support for its schools. In the school year 1998-99, Weston spent 68.8 percent of the Town Budget on education. In the same year, Weston's per-capita

expenditure for its schools was \$2,568 vs. \$1,265 for Connecticut as a whole.

Through 2010, facilities projects are expected to require additional capital expenditures, which will have to be funded, in part, by local taxes. The State of Connecticut currently provides up to 20 percent reimbursement for school construction, but this level of support is not guaranteed. Other forms of traditional federal and state support, such as special education and Title I funding, have been

reduced or eliminated in recent years.

Weston schools are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. In 1982, the U.S. Department of Education initiated a program intended to identify and recognize as "National Blue Ribbon Schools" the top one percent of the 160,000 schools in the country. Weston Middle School received this honor in the 1987-88 school year; Weston High School was recognized in 1994-95.

(Continued on page 23)

Table 6. Pupil Enrollment Projections

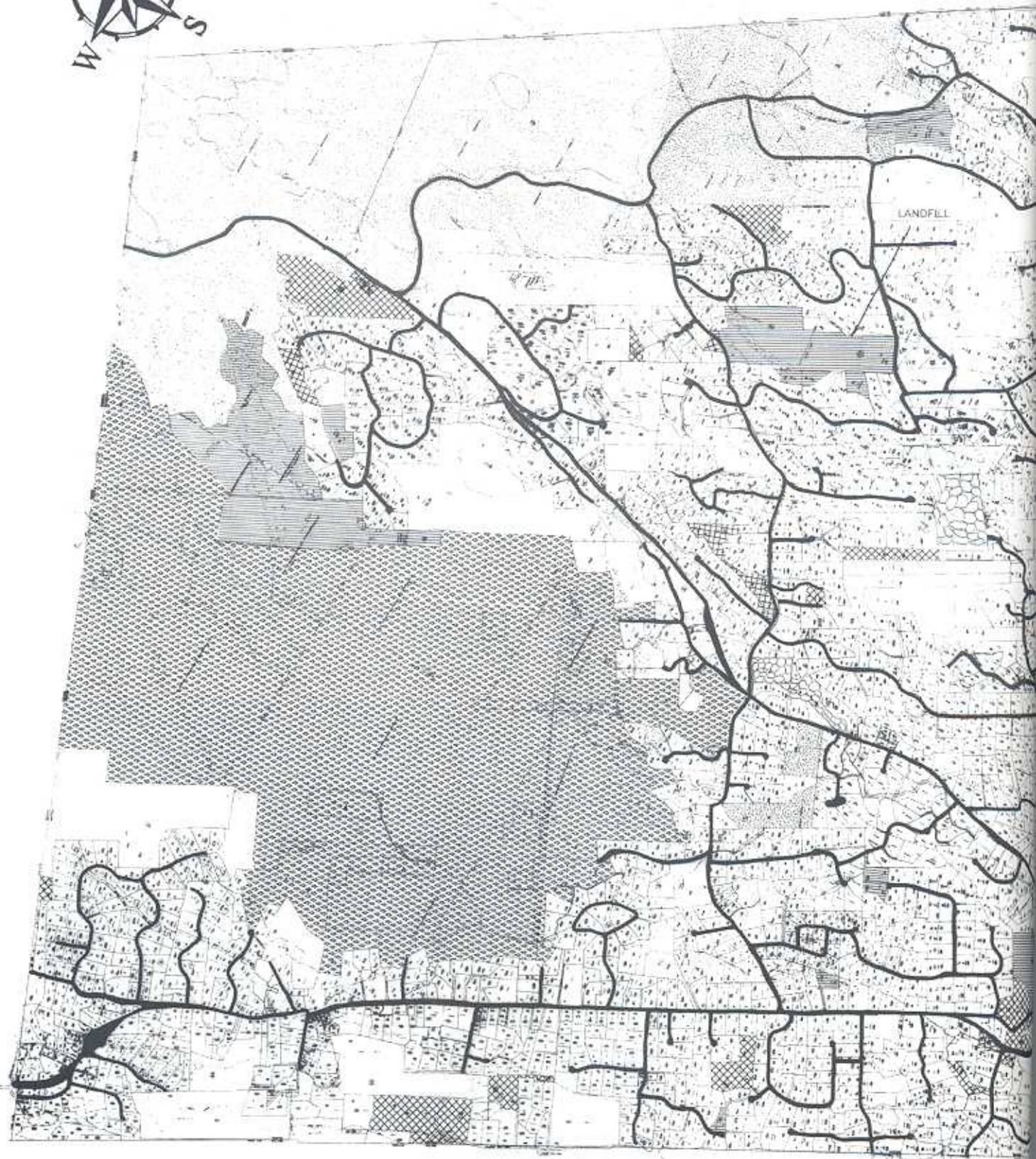
School Year	Pre-K*	K-3	4-8	9-12	Total	Actual
1995-96	16	707	614	361	1,701	1,682
1996-97	16	732	693	382	1,823	1,807
1997-98	16	778	748	401	1,943	1,960
1998-99	16	821	808	418	2,063	2,104
1999-00	16	836	897	453	2,202	2,285
2000-01	16	890	965	479	2,350	
2001-02	16	898	1,011	535	2,460	
2002-03	16	908	1,067	579	2,570	
2003-04	16	901	1,122	627	2,666	
2004-05	16	870	1,165	704	2,755	
2005-06	16	868	1,190	731	2,805	

* estimated.

Source: State of Connecticut, Department of Education, Weston Board of Education



Hurlbutt Elementary School Core Building



Aspetuck Valley Country Club

MAP II

TOWN OF WESTON, CONNECTICUT

LAND USE 2000

LAND USE 2000
LEGEND

RESIDENTIAL USES

Lots & Building

BUSINESS USES

OPEN SPACE

Town of Weston

Nature Conservancy

Aspetuck Land Trust

Bridgeport Hydraulic

Audubon Society

Scale of miles

1 mile (5,280')

KEENE PARK

TOWN HALL

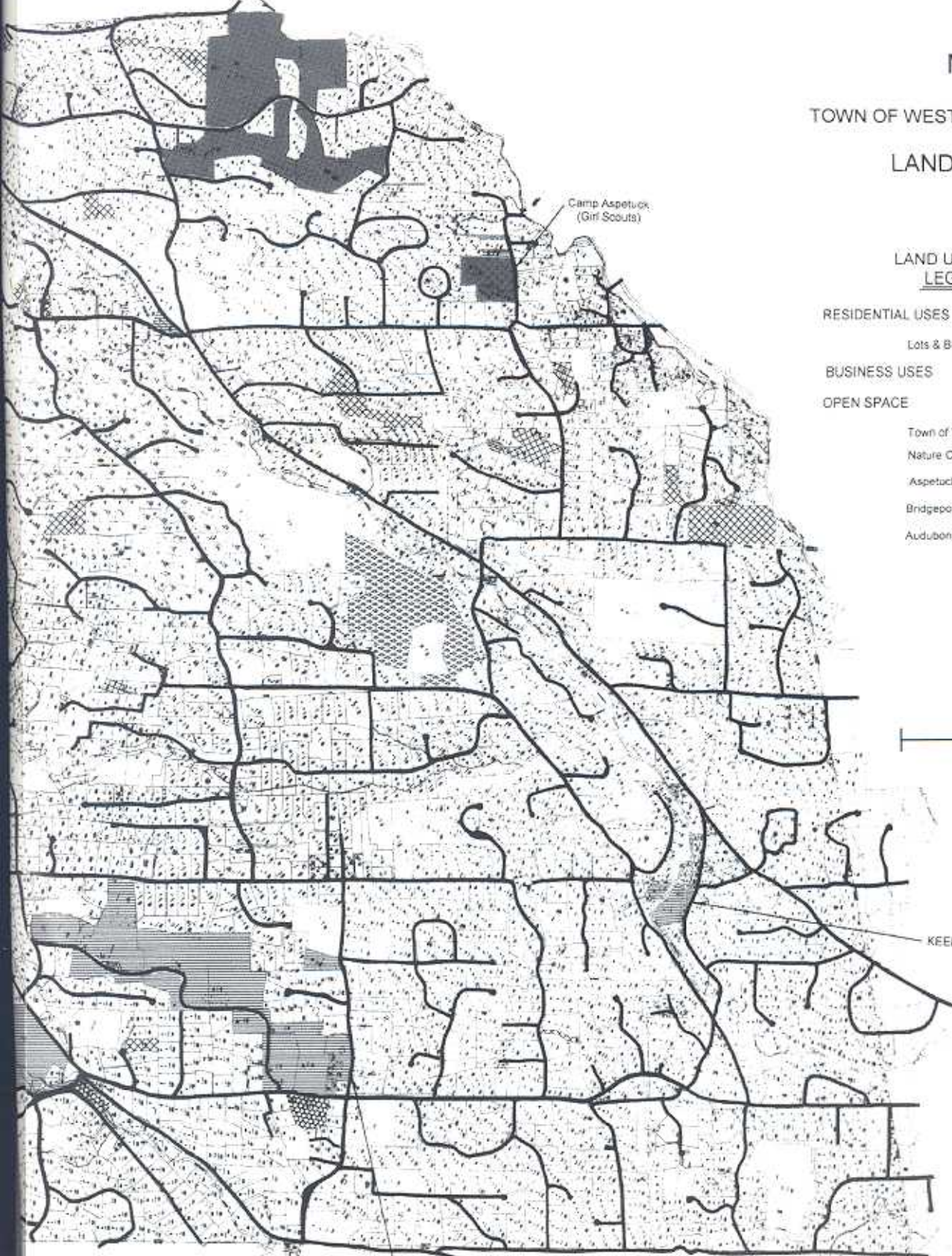


Table 7. Weston High School Profile 1994-99

	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
# of Graduates	93	93	85	84	98	83
Graduates who entered college	95%	95%	94%	96%	96%	90%
Entered 4-year college	94%	94%	89%	94%	91%	86%
Entered 2-year college	1%	1%	5%	1%	5%	4%
Weston SAT Verbal Mean	560	576	585	553	575	595
Connecticut SAT Verbal Mean	510	510	509	507	511	506
National Verbal Mean	505	505	505	505	508	503
Weston SAT Math Mean	558	589	576	557	560	567
Connecticut SAT Math Mean	509	509	507	504	507	502
National SAT Math Mean	511	512	511	508	512	509
Weston SAT Combined Mean	1,118	1,165	1,161	1,110	1,135	1,162
Connecticut SAT Combined Mean	1,019	1,019	1,016	1,011	1,018	1,008
National SAT Combined Mean	1,016	1,017	1,016	1,013	1,020	1,012
NMSQT Semi-Finalists	4	2	3	1	2	3
NMSQT Commended	10	10	6	9	11	11



Weston Historical Society is Coley homestead on Weston Road (Route 57)

Weston ranked first in the Connecticut Junior Engineering and Technology (JETS) competition in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, and 1997. The competition, sponsored by the University of New Haven and United Technologies Corp., is based on engineering, mathematics and science skills and engineering aptitude.

Physical Facilities. The school buildings are on a 116-acre campus, separated by playing fields, wetlands and wooded areas. In the past, the aim was to keep the existing campus concept should new structures become necessary, since it enhances communication between schools and fosters a close relationship between staff and students as the students move through the system. In 1995 — to address an expanding school population, parking and transportation issues, as well as educational needs — the Board of Selectmen retained Friar Associates, a planning and architectural

firm, to provide a ten-year plan for the school campus. This resulted in the 1997-98 construction of a new elementary school building, which links the three existing elementary school buildings, provides four additional classrooms, reduces student transit time between classes, and expands core facilities. At the same time, the existing physical facilities and systems at the elementary school were upgraded.

Critical issues came into focus in 1998-99 in connection with existing and projected enrollment increases, lack of potential building sites for possible new school construction located within the campus configuration, septic problems at the high school, and serious traffic problems at the school campus. The Town determined that more time was required for evaluation and planning, as well as to formulate a new vision to address the critical issues properly. The Friar Associates plan was set aside in 1999, and portable class-

rooms were installed at the Middle School to meet pressing space needs.

Architectural firm Owens, Renz and Lee (ORL) was then selected by the Board of Selectmen to analyze the needs of the school system and provide a series of options — including new school construction, the expansion of existing schools, or both — to form a basis for the major and costly decisions that voters may have to make. The ORL recommendations are currently being reviewed by various Town boards and commissions.

Population. While the implementation plans in the 1987 Town Plan were intended to cover approximately a decade, "Population Enrollment Projections" provided by the Board of Education projected student population through 1991-92. These projections accurately showed a bottoming out of total enrollment early in that cycle. What was not projected — or even envisioned —



A new house

Table 8. Residential Development Trends

Fiscal Year	Number of Subdivisions	New Lots Created	New-House Avg. Lots Subdivision	Building Permits
1969	15	98	6.5	109
1970	9	33	3.7	47
1971	9	36	4.0	60
1972	9	33	3.7	58
1973	15	56	3.7	69
1974	8	n/a	n/a	59
1975	7	n/a	n/a	27
1976	8	40	5.0	55
1977	12	54	4.5	72
1978	14	111	7.9	68
1979	14	64	4.6	49
1980	9	98	10.9	27
1981	8	37	4.6	53
1982	9	27	3.0	35
1983	7	42	6.0	52
1984	5	18	3.6	66
1985	14	113	8.1	83
1986	13	46	3.5	90
1987	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1989	7	52	7.4	18
1990	9	79	8.8	16
1991	3	62	20.7	9
1992	5	17	3.4	15
1993	4	16	4.0	30
1994	4	41	10.3	34
1995	3	10	3.3	40
1996	3	9	3.0	66
1997	1	3	3.0	45
1998	5	29	5.8	40

n/a: not available

Sources: Town of Weston Annual Reports; Building Office

was the "mini" baby boom of the 1990s and the "out-migration" from cities and suburbs to ex-urban communities.

Enrollment in Weston schools has grown by almost 60 percent in the last decade, increasing from 1,449 students in school year 1990-91 to 2,285 students in 1999-2000. Peak enrollment occurred in school year 1972-73, when 2,446 pupils attended Weston schools. The Connecticut Department of Education projections

indicate Weston will have a school population of 2,805 students in 2005-06. Architectural firm ORL uses an expected enrollment figure that peaks at 3,000 students in 2010, then declines. SWRPA projections indicate 2,742 students in Weston in 2020.

Program. Weston's curriculum at the elementary level stresses the development of reading, writing, and mathematics skills.

As children progress to the intermediate grades, content-based learning is introduced. This progresses to a discipline-based, college-preparatory program at the high school. College-level Advanced Placement courses are offered in all major departments, with college credit awarded to students who satisfactorily complete the courses. College entrance requirements are monitored continually to ensure that Weston's curriculum links well with colleges and universities.

Weston provides up-to-date computers, telecommunications access, and other technology for students and teachers to use when these tools support the curriculum. In 1994, the schools began a major — and continuing — technology initiative to replace old machines, invest in Internet connections for student research, and develop communications networks. Teachers are regularly provided in-service courses in new technological advances.

Regional/Cooperative Programs. Weston teachers founded, administer, and teach in the Four Town Summer School, in Norwalk. This regional program features a well-developed summer curriculum that addresses cultural diversity.

Weston students may enroll in the Japanese Magnet School at Brien McMahon High School, also in Norwalk. Along with traditional courses, this innovative program adds the study of the Japanese language and a trip to Japan.

In 1997, the Connecticut Legislature reviewed recommendations for change in the public schools statewide as a result of a Connecticut Supreme Court order in the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case. The court ruled that the State of Connecticut's system for managing public schools on a town-by-town basis resulted in racial isolation and differences in educational quality among schools. In the 1995 eighth-grade Connecticut Mastery Test, for example, 83 percent of Weston students (the highest percentage in the state) reached the state goal for mathematics; in Hartford, only 9 percent of students met the goal. The court charged the Legislature to find remedies. While the governor-appointed panel recommended changes, the Legislature's Appropriations Committee refused to fund the proposals. The discrepancies in educational results between Connecticut's

**Table 9. Economic and Demographic Outlines, Southwestern Connecticut
Residential Sales; Sales Price Distribution**

	Total Sales	Less than \$100,000	\$100,001 to \$200,000	\$200,001 to \$300,000	\$300,001 to \$400,000	\$400,001 or more
Darien	428	5	21	54	85	263
Greenwich	1,247	33	93	168	186	767
New Canaan	504	18	26	33	67	360
Norwalk	1,495	227	613	394	150	111
Stamford	2,190	431	611	546	253	349
WESTON	264	5	8	12	48	191
Westport	664	6	42	4	152	380
Wilton	497	9	45	69	145	229
South Western Region	7,289	734	1,459	1,360	1,086	2,650
Connecticut	56,333	22,254	20,713	6,600	2,730	4,036
Fairfield County	17,795	4,504	4,830	3,211	1,901	3,349
Stamford Labor Market Area	7,289	734	1,459	1,360	1,086	2,650
South Western Economic Development Region	7,289	734	1,459	1,360	1,086	2,650

Source: Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc., July 1999.

Table 10. Profile of Weston Housing: 3,537 houses on 7,418 acres

Houses by Size (square feet of living area)	No.	% of Total	Average Value	Average # baths	Average Lot Size	Average Age
0-2,000	975	27.5	\$ 471,971	1.8	2.14	1940 (59 yrs.)
2,001-4,000	2,002	56.5	\$ 585,895	2.5	2.14	1957 (42)
4,001-6,000	447	12.6	\$ 994,967	3.7	2.56	1970 (29)
6,000 and up	113	3.4	\$ 1,730,340	5.1	2.72	1983 (16)
Houses by Value	No.	% of Total	Average SFLA*	Average # baths	Average Lot Size	Average Age
\$0 to \$350,000	239	6.7	1,350	1.5	1.38	1941 (58 yrs.)
\$358,000 to \$500,000	1,070	30.2	2,021	2.2	1.93	1948 (51)
\$501,000 to \$700,000	1,307	36.9	2,790	2.5	2.24	1958 (41)
\$700,000 and up	921	26.0	4,277	3.5	2.74	1961 (38)
Houses by Age (year built)	No.	% of Total	Average SFLA*	Average # baths	Average Lot Size	Value
1640 to 1900	243	6.8	2,591	2.4	2.58	\$ 625,640
1901 to 1940	337	9.5	2,232	2.2	2.57	\$ 608,702
1941 to 1970	1,649	46.6	2,356	2.4	2.04	\$ 522,664
1971 to 1980	510	14.4	2,930	2.6	2.22	\$ 604,604
1981 to 1990	482	13.6	3,702	3.0	2.25	\$ 794,706
1991 to 1999	313	8.6	4,858	3.8	2.43	\$ 1,153,703

* SFLA: [sq. ft. of living area]

Source: 2000 Revaluation, Cole-Layer-Trumble, Inc.

major cities, where poverty is widespread, and Connecticut's suburbs, which are significantly more affluent, remain vast.

During the 1999-2000 school year, as a consequence of the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case, three students from the City of Bridgeport are enrolled in Weston's elementary school, and five attend the high school. They are bussed to Weston at State of Connecticut expense. Weston also receives a reimbursement of \$2,000 per pupil from the State of Connecticut. Depending on the availability of classroom space, it is expected that this program will grow.

Special Education. Weston provides programs for exceptional children, as required by federal laws and state statutes. This obligation remains very dynamic, with medical research, new uses of technology, legal decisions, and other sources of change influencing programming for special students. The recent reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education

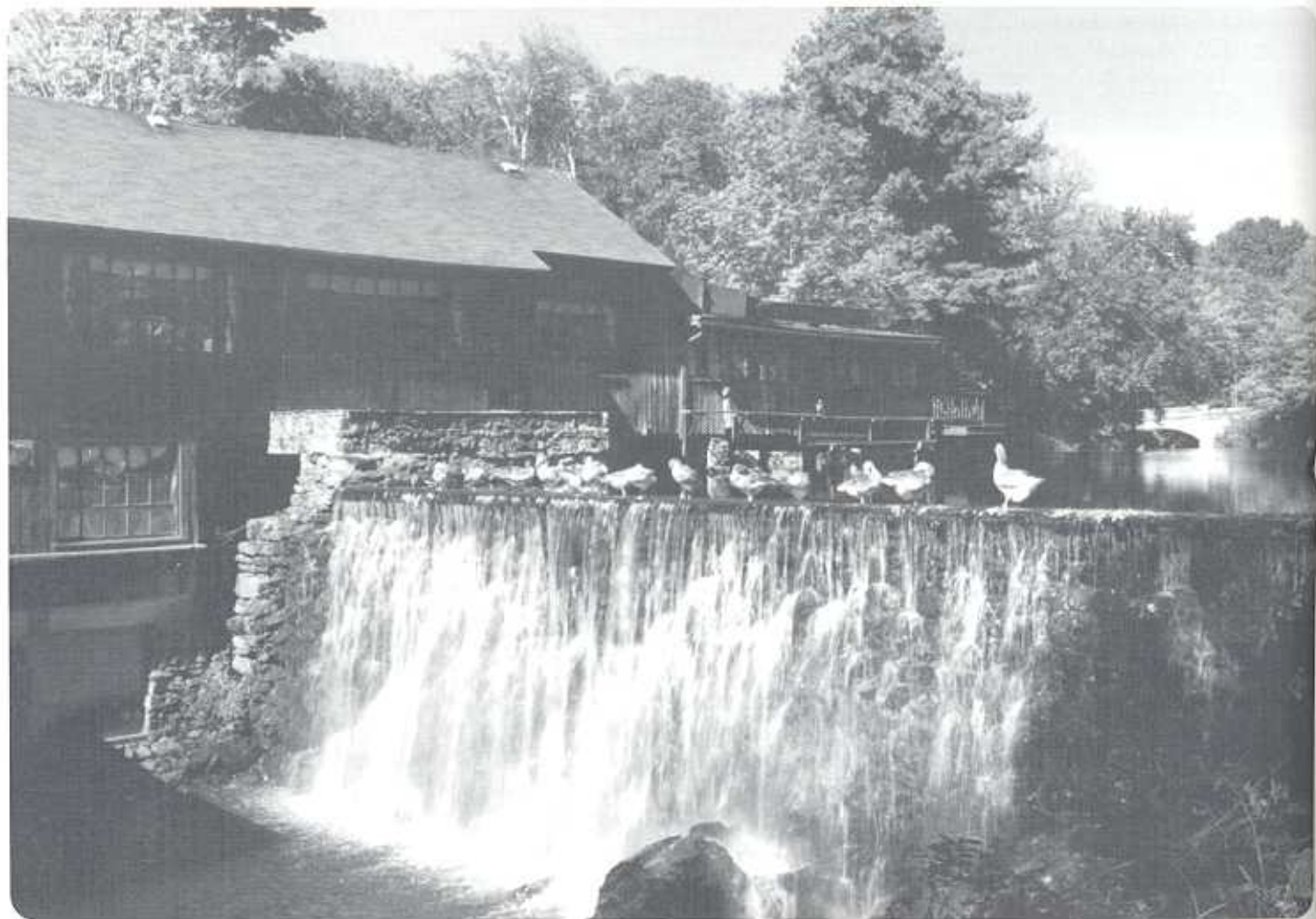
Act (IDEA) brings additional changes and increased local costs. Some examples:

- Each child must be assessed in terms of the general curriculum; tying the expectations and academic program of children with disabilities to the general curriculum must be borne at local cost.
- At least one of the child's regular classroom teachers must participate in the development of the child's IEP (Individual Education Program) and any modification thereto. The related cost of substitute teachers and lost class time can be significant.
- Parents have access to all records.
- Teachers are entitled to more support services.
- The child's need for technology devices and services must be considered.
- Higher qualification levels among professionals and paraprofessionals are promoted.

Weston's Early Learning Center, started in August 1988, provides special education and related services to children, ages 3-to-5, who are identified as having special needs, and their families. The Hand-in-Hand program was established in the 1992-93 school year to provide opportunities for special-needs children to interact and learn with children without disabilities. Children without special needs who participate in the Hand-in-Hand program, which meets twice a week, are charged a fee of \$300 per year. Currently, there are 14 children in the Early Learning Center program, plus seven children in the Hand-in-Hand program.

The schools also provide programs for gifted children, as well as user-funded, after-school enrichment programs.

Staffing. Weston's faculty in school year 1998-99 included 154.5 full-time equivalent teachers and 12 Central Office and building administrators (including department chairs). Other full-time equivalent



Cobb's Mill Inn

professionals, including librarians and guidance staff, totaled 15.4. The non-certified full-time equivalent support staff count was 55.6. Weston teachers boast an average 14 years of experience and nearly 80 percent hold master's degrees or higher.

Student Achievement. On the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the 1998 combined math and verbal average score of 1,165 was a Weston High School record. This compares to a State combined score of 1,019 and a national combined score of 1,017. Weston's 1999 combined math and verbal average score of 1,118 compares to a statewide combined score of 1,019 and a national combined score of 1,016.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Weston is one of the lowest density residential communities in the Greater New York Metropolitan Region, primarily due to the following factors:

1. the absence of public water-supply and sewage-disposal systems makes private wells and septic systems necessary;
2. zoning regulations that require a minimum two-acre lot for each residence;
3. the absence of commercial and industrial development; and
4. more than 3,400 acres of land set aside for parks, open space, conservation, or watershed preservation.

The underlying concepts that should govern the planning of any future residential development in Weston are the preservation of the Town's present low-density residential character and protection of the environment. Under current zoning, all areas of Weston are zoned for use as single-family, detached residences, at a density of not more than one house per two acres. Other uses, such as private clubs or churches, are permitted under the special permit procedure included in the zoning regulations. More than 55 percent of the developed land in Weston is in residential use. Most of the remaining 45 percent is used for public facilities, conservation, or private recreational clubs. Every dwelling has the potential for an in-house, accessory apartment and/or home occupation, provided the requirements in the

zoning regulations are met.

To a large extent, the existing pattern of residential development conforms to the one-dwelling-per-two-acres density established throughout Weston by the 1953 Amended Zoning Regulations.

Approximately four percent of Weston's existing residences are on lots of four or more acres. About 600, or 20 percent, of existing residences are located on lots of less than two acres. The majority of these smaller lots are larger than one acre, and do not substantially detract from Weston's overall low-density character.

Trends

Weston, now 85 percent developed, is within commuting distance of Stamford and other centers of economic activity in Fairfield and Westchester counties, as well as New York City. Yet, the town is able to maintain its pattern of low-density development through strict application and enforcement of its current zoning regulations.

Weston's residential development has experienced peaks and valleys over the past 40 years. In the past six years, new-house building permits (the best indicator of building activity) have been fairly consistent, peaking in fiscal year 1995-1996, when 66 permits were issued. A greater fluctuation, however, appears in the number of new lots created by subdivision — from a low of three in 1997 to a high of 113 in 1985.

During the past ten years, the number of lots created roughly equaled the number of new house permits issued. From 1989 through 1994, the aggregate number of lots created by subdivision or re-subdivision was greater than the number of new house permits by a margin of 267 to 122. From 1995 through 1998, however, the number of new house permits issued has exceeded the number of new lots created by subdivision by a count of 191 permits issued to 51 lots created. Thus, the growth in the number of new dwellings in Weston over the past five years has been primarily from building on lots created by subdivision and re-subdivision activity earlier in the decade.

The issuance of new house permits, however, is not always the result of a lot created by subdivision or re-subdivision. New houses may be constructed on building lots created as a result of "free cuts" (i.e., where subdivision approval is not

required) or, as in the case of the recent redevelopment phenomenon, through demolition of existing homes. Based on the number of demolition permits issued over the past ten years, it is estimated that almost 15 percent of new houses in Weston are being built on lots where the pre-existing house was torn down.

Another trend Weston is experiencing is the construction of very large homes. These mansions have raised ever-increasing concerns over lot coverage, drainage issues, and well-water supplies. In neighboring towns, similar concerns have resulted in the implementation of floor-area ratio and/or lot-coverage limitations in an effort to maintain the character of neighborhoods and protect critical natural resources.

Development Potential

Future development in Weston should enhance and protect the region's natural resources and preserve the town's low-density residential character. Much of the remaining developable land is sensitive or marginal in nature and will require individual attention through applicable zoning and subdivision regulations. New subdivisions should be developed in harmony with the neighborhoods around them. Areas that contain buildings and sites of historic and natural significance should continue to be designated and protected.

When the 1969 Town Plan was published, 57 percent of Weston was developed, and the measure of the community's future needs was uncertain. By the publication of the 1987 Town Plan, 83 percent of Weston's land had been committed to specific uses. Now, in 2000, approximately 85 percent of Weston's land is developed. Recent acquisitions of land by the Town for open space and recreation will also affect the amount of land available for future residential development.

The maps "Land Use 2000" (see Map II, pages 20-21) and "Conservation & Recreation Areas and Fire Ponds" (see Map III, pages 32-33) show all areas presently in use or reserved for conservation or watershed preservation, as well as all land available for future development. Using these maps, and based on the following conditions and assumptions, an effort has been made to determine the maximum number and general distribution of potential sites for new residences.

1. New lots will conform to current zoning and subdivision regulation requirements.
2. Residential development will be as intense as permitted by these regulations — two acres per lot, with an allowance for road access and open space.
3. Development of areas with very rugged terrain will be possible only with sufficient consideration of special natural characteristics.
4. No development will take place in wetlands or swamps without exhausting all reasonable and prudent alternatives and considering the need for conservation and for maintenance of a healthy groundwater cycle.
5. Nonconforming uses will remain.
6. No allowance has been made for land to be devoted for new public or semi-public uses.

The 1987 Town Plan reflected the potential for 984 new homes. Currently, it is estimated that approximately 300 new residences could be constructed in Weston if all remaining developable land were devoted to residential development. This takes into account all land not yet subdivided or otherwise in use, less the road areas necessary and the required open space.

Of course, the need for open space, additional private or public recreational facilities, additional public facilities, or the effects of development beyond Weston's borders may reduce the amount of acreage available for future residential development. Conversely, if land now used for private recreation, conservation or watershed becomes available for development, more building lots than currently estimated could potentially become available.

At the present average family size of 2.6 persons, approximately 300 single-family housing units could accommodate almost 800 people under present zoning regulations. When added to the 1998 estimated population of 8,846, Weston's total population at full development would approach 10,000 people.

Weston's zoning regulations have always provided for roomers or boarders. Also, Weston was a pioneer in the southwestern region in permitting accessory

apartments. There were an estimated 247 legally permitted accessory apartments in town — in nearly seven percent of the dwellings — as of April, 2000.

Much of the remaining land available for development in the Town of Weston is very rugged terrain and will present difficulties for development. Policies for planning future residential development must consider the carrying capacity of the land. The Weston Water Study, a groundwater analysis completed in 1993, determined Weston's groundwater was very high-quality overall. Although the volume of the water supply was found to be ample for most residences, a further study should be done to determine the effect of multiple wells on individual and neighboring properties. Since new homes being constructed can have more than one well, the impact of future development on groundwater quantity must, for planning purposes, rank in importance with groundwater quality.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Weston has little retail business development. It has one shopping center, and home occupations are scattered throughout what are otherwise exclusively residential areas. In Weston, however, businesses are (with the exception of the one shopping center) generally not the types that attract customers locally and create traffic, parking, and appearance problems. Weston is fortunate not to have to cope with the consequences of uncontrolled business growth in the past and is relatively free to make firm policy decisions with respect to business development in the future, especially with the proliferation of Internet-based e-commerce.

The entire Town of Weston is zoned as a two-acre residential and farming district. Home occupations are permitted if they are conducted by an owner-occupant at his/her domicile or by a resident member of that owner-occupant's family; but the activity must be clearly subordinate to the residential use of that property. Businesses currently in operation that do not qualify as home occupations are non-conforming uses that existed prior to the establishment of zoning.

Weston Center, the primary area of

retail business development in Weston, is a pre-existing, non-conforming business use located on approximately six acres of property on the west side of Route 57 (Weston Road), just north of Norfield Road, in the southwestern quadrant of town. Weston Center comprises a market, hardware store, package store, insurance agency, real estate agency, dry cleaner, pharmacy, luncheonette, bank, auto service station, and post office (see Table 2, page 6).

Weston's current zoning regulations also define requirements for Neighborhood Shopping Districts. Since there is no undeveloped Neighborhood Shopping District property designated on the Weston zoning map at this writing, a change in the map would be required before such a district could be approved.

Approximately 300 business, professional, and service uses are registered currently with the Town of Weston, of which 283 are home occupations. These uses either preceded the establishment of zoning (legal, nonconforming uses) or are permitted under existing home-occupation regulations. Some involve service to customers or clients at the business location; at others, transactions are handled primarily by telephone, Internet or other electronic communication system, or at the customer's place of business.

Further Development Through the years, the Planning and Zoning Commission has carefully studied the need for further business development and concluded:

1. To protect the rural-residential character of the community, business development should be limited to that which serves the immediate needs of the residents as they so determine.
2. Weston residents should continue to rely primarily on facilities available in neighboring cities and towns for major shopping needs and services.

The shops currently located at Weston Center are considered adequate to meet the needs of Weston residents. Medical services, both locally available as home occupations and amply provided in neighboring communities, are sufficient for the community's needs. Other occupations and services allowable under the present home-

occupation regulations are deemed sufficient for the foreseeable future.

The Planning and Zoning Commission's conclusions are based on these factors:

- The logic supporting the 1987 Town Plan was reviewed, and it was determined that the amount of commercial development available is still sufficient to support the needs of Weston residents.
- At public hearings held in 1999 on the subject of commercial development proposals, residents overwhelmingly voiced their approval of retaining the policy of no further commercial development in Weston; avoiding over-commercialization, such as that in neighboring communities; and retaining Weston as a residential "green" area, as recommended in SWRPA studies.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission, as part of its Town Plan 2000 workshops, solicited input from citizens and Town of Weston officials regarding the desire and/or need to increase commercial

development of Weston. No increase in commercial development was desired.

If, in the future, Weston residents clearly indicate that expanded commercial facilities are needed, any such development should contribute to, rather than hinder, efforts to preserve Weston's rural-residential character. Strict standards should be set for site planning and building arrangement, with such development located only on environmentally suitable land. All locations considered for future business areas should also be evaluated carefully to determine whether any adverse effects will impact the efficient movement and safety of automobile traffic and/or pedestrians.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Weston residents have consistently indicated that the Town's "rural character" is its most desirable physical feature. On numerous occasions during the past 12 years, the residents have voted overwhelmingly for the acquisition or preservation of signifi-

cant tracts of land in their natural and undeveloped state. In that same period, voters approved total expenditures of \$4.7 million to assure the perpetual preservation of over 1,600 acres, or 2.5 square miles, of land. Residents have shown both a strong desire to protect and preserve the natural landscape and a willingness to pay higher taxes to assure it. Sound ecological reasons support the instincts of the voters, including: protection of aquifers, streams, rivers, and ponds; the preservation of natural landscape forms; and the protection of native plant and animal communities.

Weston's geographical location in the heart of the megalopolis, along with the attractiveness of its outstanding school system, pose severe challenges to the acquisition and setting aside of remaining tracts of land. High land prices are not new to Weston, and public officials have, in the immediate past, found creative and effective ways to reduce the cost of acquisition or preservation.

The Town of Weston has learned that it



Godfrey Pond, Devil's Den Preserve

is not likely that private landholders will donate large tracts of land to the Town and, therefore, has had to find other, more aggressive and sophisticated ways to preserve open lands.

The Town also has learned that the outright purchase of undeveloped land in fee simple for cash is not the only method of preserving open space. Effective partnerships with various landholding organizations have demonstrated that the Town is not the only party capable of, and interested in, preserving open space in Weston.

The Town of Weston should consider adopting the following policies:

1. Town officials should continue to acquire open space and recreation lands. Because open space lands will be preserved in perpetuity, long-term financing, either through bonded indebtedness or long-term mortgages to landowners, is an appropriate vehicle of financing.
2. The Town should continue to find partners with financial resources and the

common goal of land and natural habitat preservation. Any plan of action that results in the dual guarantees of (a) perpetual preservation, and (b) availability for passive or active recreation and for spiritual refreshment, is to be encouraged.

3. To induce private owners to sell land to the Town for open-space purposes, the Town should take advantage of the acceptance of Conservation Restrictions, the granting of life estates, and the use of the Town's special tax status.
4. The Town should appeal to the "sense of place" of long-term residents who do not favor development but require some security for their later years.
5. Acquiring lands of any size that link, connect, bridge between, or tack onto parcels already preserved, in order to create continuous forest tracts, are important targets of acquisition.
6. The public should understand that the purchase of open-space land affects

development and ultimately reduce pressure on the Town's annual budget.

7. Town officials must continue to educate the public as to the importance of protecting wetlands. Regarded as valueless by some, wetlands are, in fact, among the most "valuable" lands to preserve and protect. Their acquisition by the expenditure of Town funds is, therefore, to be encouraged without apology.

Recreation Areas

Weston presently enjoys the use of 53 acres of its land for private and public recreation, which is 3.9 percent of the Town's total acreage. Of that land, 34 acres are publicly owned. The National Recreation Association has established a widely used minimum standard of ten acres of recreation land per 1,000 population. This standard, however, is based solely on active recreational needs and does not take into account the broader functions of open space or the varying needs and desires of



Bisceglie-Scribner Park

different types of communities. Nevertheless, at Weston's current population level of about 8,800, that standard suggests a minimum of 88 acres and makes Weston's commitment to recreation quite substantial.

Recent land acquisitions for essentially passive recreation are the Trout Brook and Lachat properties. At least sixteen acres of the 33-acre Heady property purchase will be devoted to active recreation, particularly ball fields.

In carrying out its open-space program, consideration has been given to the acquisition of sites that could be developed for active recreational purposes (e.g., Bisceglie Park, Keene Park, a small parcel near Devil's Glen, and the aforementioned Heady property). Use of these properties by various age groups is being planned in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Commission. Any recreational development on Town-owned land, whether that development is an indoor or outdoor facility, should be owned and operated by the Town of Weston.

Playgrounds and Play Fields

Playgrounds and play fields should continue to be developed at school sites and within our parks — such as the recent installation at Keene Park of a play area for small children. Playgrounds should contain areas and apparatus for separate sports activities. Facilities should include traditional ball fields and courts, running/walking tracks, tennis courts, etc., and, where practical, adequate on-site parking.

As school facilities expand, plans should include their use for after-school indoor and outdoor recreation.

Parks

Weston's parks and recreation areas provide a variety of active and passive outdoor recreation. Outdoor swimming and a fitness course are available to residents at Bisceglie Park. All the public parks provide trails and quiet areas to observe the beautiful natural surroundings and wildlife. The Town's recent purchases of the Lachat and Trout Brook properties will provide addi-

tional walking trails and, perhaps, cross-country skiing areas and ice-skating on natural ponds. The acquisition of small "neighborhood parks" may be desirable in the future.

Pathways

We should plan to enhance the use of our parks and dedicated open space by linking them with adjoining Aspetuck Land Trust property. A network of trails linking public recreation and open-space areas could be made available for walking and, where allowed, horseback riding. The amount of land required for such a network would be relatively small and should be identified in advance so acquisition could be planned.

Private Recreation

Weston Field Club, Weston Tennis Association, Weston Gun Club, and Aspetuck Country Club provide private recreational opportunities for many Weston residents who are members.



Keene Park



WESTON TENNIS
ASSOCIATION

GUN CLUB

FIELD
CLUB

BISCEGLIE PARK

ASPETUCK VALLEY
COUNTRY CLUB

MAP III

Conservation, Fire Ponds and Recreation Uses

LEGEND

- Fire Ponds
- ▨ Conservation Lands
- ▩ Recreation Uses

CAMP ASPETUCK
(GIRL SCOUTS)

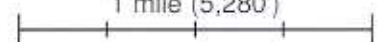
OTHER PRIVATE
(STONYBROOK)

Town of
Weston, Connecticut
Date: April 2, 2000

KEENE PARK

Scale of miles

1 mile (5,280')



IV. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

NATURAL RESOURCES

Action/Recommendation	Implementing Agent
1. Consider water and aquifer pollution and conservation protection action.	P&Z Selectmen (local ordinance)
Continue to improve Inland Wetland regulations to assure non-migration of aquifer contamination.	Conservation Commission Selectmen
Continue program of regular testing of wells and surface water for water purity.	P&Z Conservation Commission Westport-Weston Health District
2. Consider changing existing subdivision regulations to minimize impervious surface area and to maintain the natural hydrologic function of the site(s).	P&Z
3. Minimize impact of development on neighboring property.	P&Z Conservation Commission
4. Continue open-space requirement for subdivisions.	P&Z
5. Implement a town-wide policy encouraging retention of existing forests, rocky outcrops, ridges, boulder fields, trees, stone walls, and historic and archeological features.	P&Z Conservation Commission Selectmen Historic District Commission
6. Establish guidelines on redevelopment of individual lots to assure no greater negative impact on the water supply, water quality, or wells.	P&Z Conservation Commission
7. Provide support for run-off control policy.	P&Z Conservation Commission

ROADS

Action/Recommendation	Implementing Agent
1. Strengthen traffic safety enforcement.	Police Dept.
2. Continue an adequately funded road maintenance program.	P&Z Public Works Dept. Town Engineer Selectmen Board of Finance
3. Study "traffic calming" within Weston.	P&Z Town Engineer Public Works Dept. Police Dept.
4. Study the impact of regional traffic patterns on Weston traffic, including any possible impact of the Super 7 project.	P&Z Selectmen SWRPA Metropolitan Planning Organization Police Commission Police Dept.
5. Require appropriate uniform street signs to facilitate emergency service response.	Selectmen (local ordinance) Public Works Dept. Town Engineer

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Action/Recommendation	Implementing Agent
1. Develop a long-range plan for Town administrative facilities that maximizes use of existing facilities and structures through the efficient use of space; modern office design, and technology.	P&Z Selectmen Board of Finance
2. Continue capital funding of appropriate school expenditures with design for multi-purpose community use.	Board of Education Board of Finance Selectmen Town Meeting
3. All town facilities should be used to maximum extent possible by all community groups before committing to additional community facilities.	P&Z Selectmen Board of Finance Town Meeting
4. <i>Emergency Services:</i>	
a. Provide appropriate funding of necessary emergency services.	Selectmen Board of Finance Town Meeting
b. Create a long-range plan for fire protection, including development of additional fire ponds and underground cisterns, and requiring sprinkler systems where appropriate.	P&Z Selectmen (local ordinance) WVFD Fire Marshal
c. Develop a plan for fire-pond and underground cistern maintenance.	P&Z WVFD Fire Marshal Public Works Dept.
d. Require appropriate house numbering and uniform street signs to facilitate emergency service response.	Selectmen (local ordinance) Police Commission Police Dept. Communication Center WVFD Fire Marshal
e. Educate property owners about providing proper access for emergency vehicles.	P&Z Selectmen Police Dept. WVFD Fire Marshal

(Continued on next page)

5. *Public Works:*

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Continue a program of sewer avoidance. | P&Z |
| b. Protect aquifers, groundwater, surface water. | P&Z (changes to regulations, and enforcement)
Conservation Commission |
| c. Consider future use of Transfer Station site. | Public Works Dept.
Selectmen (with P&Z) |
| d. Make safe, organized household hazardous-waste disposal a priority. | Selectmen |
| e. Coordinate household hazardous-waste disposal with the State and with neighboring towns to maximize results, minimize expense, and add reciprocal disposal opportunities. | Selectmen |
| f. Develop and maintain appropriate municipally owned wells. | Town Engineer
Public Works Dept. |
| g. Continue to limit to municipal property the construction of communication towers. | P&Z
Selectmen |
| 6. Explore ways to re-establish the Town government's compliance with zoning regulations. | P&Z
Selectmen |

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Action/Recommendation

Implementing Agent

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Implement the recommendations of the Ground Water Study and continue to monitor the ground water supply. | P&Z
Conservation Commission
Westport-Weston Health District |
| 2. Review septic suitability in relation to water supply. | P&Z
Westport-Weston Health District |
| 3. Develop a policy for future residential development and redevelopment, considering alternative types of housing consistent with the environment and the town's character. | P&Z
Referendum (for major changes) |
| 4. Require confirmation of water supply and septic suitability when property is transferred. | P&Z
Conservation Commission
Westport-Weston Health District |
| 5. Continue official record of apartments. | P&Z
Assessor's Office |
| 6. Study the proposals of the State Blue Ribbon Commission on Affordable Housing, dated February 2000, to measure diversity of housing. | P&Z |
| 7. If a public water supply is introduced, maintain sewer avoidance. | P&Z |
| 8. Consider implementation of floor-area ratio limitations. | P&Z |
| 9. Review and implement zoning standards for lot coverage, building height, floor area ratio, and set-backs to protect neighborhood character and to preserve natural characteristics. | P&Z
Westport-Weston Health District |
| 10. Study and implement regulations regarding the effect of multiple well installations on neighboring properties and aquifers prior to the installation of additional wells. | P&Z
Conservation Commission
Westport-Weston Health District |

Action/Recommendation	Implementing Agent
11. Continue updating map of historic districts and consider establishing new districts.	P&Z Town Engineer Historic District Commission
12. Update community register of homes that are 100 or more years old Historic District Commission.	P&Z Assessor's Office

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Action/Recommendation	Implementing Agent
1. Study current zoning regulations regarding business use.	P&Z
2. Prior to making any change in business development policy, determine the possible impact on traffic, safety, environment, and rural-residential community character.	P&Z
3. Review and amend the zoning regulations that allow certain professional and other limited home occupations. Due to the increased size of the average residence being constructed, reassess the current regulations as to the percentage and maximum square footage of the residential property that is allowed to be dedicated to a home occupation.	P&Z

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Action/Recommendation	Implementing Agent
1. Acquire appropriate open space as it becomes available.	Selectmen Land Acquisition Comm.
2. Develop appropriate funding mechanisms for land acquisition.	Selectmen Land Acquisition Comm.
3. Attempt private agreements with property owners to preserve open space.	Selectmen (Land Acquisition Comm.)
4. Continue present policies of protecting certain natural sites and bodies of water.	P&Z
5. Establish "Dominski-Oakrock"-identified protection zones as a guideline for identifying the location of "micro-environments".	P&Z Conservation Commission
6. Consider requiring that new development be designed to maintain the open, low-density appearance of town.	P&Z
7. Continue to evaluate the need for town-owned and operated recreational facilities.	Selectmen P&Z Parks & Recreation
8. Connect open-space areas, where possible.	P&Z Aspetuck Land Trust Nature Conservancy
9. Continue current subdivision practice of requiring open space on all new projects and redevelopment.	P&Z
10. Outline professional planning, legal, emergency, and use studies before the Heady, Lachat and any properties acquired in the future are dedicated to permanent use.	P&Z Selectmen

V. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: A ZONING/ENVIRONMENTAL CHRONOLOGY

- 1950 First zoning regulations adopted
East House (Hurlbutt Elementary School) opened
- 1953 Zoning regulations amended; 2-acre zoning
- 1956 Subdivision regulations adopted
- 1960 South House (Hurlbutt Elementary School) opened
North House destroyed by fire
Middle School opened (as Junior High School)
- 1963 North House (Hurlbutt Elementary School) rebuilt
- 1966 Aspetuck Valley Health District formed
- 1967 Weston adopts "Home-Rule" Charter
Zoning regulations revised: no commercial development
Sanitary Landfill opened
P&Z changed to 7 elected members (from 5 appointed)
Emergency Medical Service formed
- 1968 Conservation Commission appointed
High School opened
- 1969 Town Plan of Development published
Historic District Commission formed
- 1970 Zoning Regulations revised and expanded
Neighborhood Shopping Districts
Weston Watershed Association formed
Subdivision Regulations revised
League of Women Voters/P&Z Housing Survey conducted
- 1971 Communications Center opened
- 1972 Lazard property purchased (Keene Park)
Middle School addition, including pool, completed
Inland Wetlands Ordinance adopted
Town Tennis Courts opened
- 1973 Scribner property purchased (Bisceglie Park)
Devil's Glen received from Bridgeport Hydraulic
Zoning Inspector's job redefined and expanded
Water problems develop at Middle School
- 1975 Ravenwood public water-supply system installed
Police Department formed
- 1976 "Dominski-Oakrock" Environmental Manual published
- 1977 Gravel ordinance adopted
Tree-spraying ordinance adopted
Town Charter revised and adopted
Town notified that Sanitary Landfill must close
- 1978 Town-wide reassessment
- 1979 Model Sedimentation and Erosion Control Plan
developed by Conservation Commission
Flood Plain Management Regulations adopted
- 1980 \$1,000,000 appropriation for Town road improvements
- 1981 Davis Hill Bridge rebuilding completed
Water-supply system for Town Hall Complex and schools completed
Lamazzo Gravel Pit development plans approved by P&Z
after court-stipulated judgment
Aerial mapping of Town of Weston completed
- 1982 Sanitary Landfill closed; Transfer Station opened
Heat Pump ordinance adopted
- 1984 Subdivision Regulations revised to incorporate
"Dominski-Oakrock" recommendations
- 1986 Apartment Regulations revised
Library expansion completed
- 1987 Bicentennial Year
Town Plan of Development updated and published
- 1988 Court-ordered road constructed to an in-holding in the
Nature Conservancy
Weston's ownership of development rights to 1,400 acres of the
the Nature Conservancy's properties approved by Town Meeting
Flood Plain Management Regulations rewritten
Subdivision Regulations rewritten
- 1989 Special Permit for antennas adopted
- 1990 Water testing at 50 randomly selected wells and two surface
sites completed
Bisceglie Park swimming facilities approved by Westport-Weston
Health District
- 1991 \$849,000 bond approved for expansion of the Weston Library
Inland Wetland Regulations updated
Town-wide Residential Recycling Program instituted
- 1992 Zoning Regulations revised regarding building height and
definition of flag lots and corner lots
Second Library expansion, including a meeting room, completed
- 1993 Special Permit created and issued for all Aspetuck Land Trust parcels
Weston Water Study completed and published
- 1994 Zoning Regulations modified regarding Town road standards
\$7,000,000 bonded for Code Compliance work at the schools
- 1995 Bridgeport Hydraulic takes over Ravenwood Water System
Preliminary planning for a possible sewage treatment plant
for the schools
- 1996 Hurlbutt Elementary School expanded; septic fields redesigned
Middle School "clusters" renovated
Construction of new Public Works Garage
Town-wide 911 emergency number instituted
Jarvis Military School (Vetromile) property purchased for
undetermined use
- 1998 Board of Education Administration Offices constructed
Flood Plain Regulations were strengthened
Communications Tower & Antenna Advisory Committee formed
by Board of Selectmen
- 1999 195-ft. monopole communications tower approved and installed
at the Town Hall Complex
Town-wide reassessment
Lachat, Trout Brook, and Heady properties acquired by the Town
Inland Wetlands Regulations updated
- 2000 Town Plan of Conservation and Development published
Select Committee on the Impact of Sewage Treatment on the
Character of Weston formed by the Board of Selectmen



Pent Trail, Devil's Den Preserve



Valley Forge School 1911–1912. Teacher: Miss Florence Banks. Children: Beers, Hallock, Rowland, Harcor, Gould.

TOWN of WESTON, CONNECTICUT



TOWN OFFICIALS

Elected

First Selectman	Board of Tax Review (3)
Selectmen (2)	Zoning Board of Appeals (5)
Town Clerk	(plus two alternates)
Tax Collector	Planning and Zoning Commission (7)
Registrars of Voters (2)	Board of Police Commissioners (7)
Board of Finance (7)	Justices of the Peace (15)
Board of Education (7)	

Appointed

Library Board (9)	Parks and Recreation Commission (7)
Conservation Commission (7)	Building Committee (7)
Town Treasurer	Commission for the Elderly (7)
Asst. Town Treasurer	Community Services Advisory
Asst. Town Clerk	Council (7)
Code Enforcement Officer	SWRPA representatives (2)
Town Administrator	Canine Control Officer
Town Counsel	Jury Committee (3)
Director of Social Services	Board of Ethics
Fire Marshal	Commission for Children and Youth
Deputy Fire Marshal	Town Historian
Panel of Moderators (4)	Conservation Planner
Historic District Commission (5)	Building Inspector
(plus two alternates)	Town Engineer
	Youth Services Director

