

# **Public Workshop Report**

Open Space, Recreation, and Natural and Cultural Resources Workshop Dartmouth Master Plan Wednesday, January 29, 2020































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### Introduction

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 41, Section 81D states that a Master Plan "shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations, or other forms of communication, that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality." At its heart, a Master Plan is a living document that needs to be updated on a regular basis (every 10 years) to reflect the changes in a communities goals, values, and desires. Dartmouth is currently engaged in an update to its Master Plan, last adopted in 2007.

In the Summer of 2019, Dartmouth formally began the process of updating its Master Plan. The Town contracted with the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to complete this work. As with any successful planning document, public participation is a critical and important part in developing Dartmouth Master Plan, as it ensures that the document responds to the needs and desires of the community. The Dartmouth Planning Board and SRPEDD personnel are providing a number of in-person and online opportunities throughout the 24 month process for the public to provide their thoughts and ideas. To that end, the Town, in collaboration with SRPEDD, established a "project brand", a project website and Facebook page, numerous promotional materials, comment cards, large format paper maps, electronic presentations (PDFs and ArcGIS interactive maps) and other relevant materials to make every effort to engage with residents, business and property owners, town employees, and other interested stakeholders throughout the process.

### Discovery Workshop (Summer 2019)

The first step of the public process, the Dartmouth Master Plan Discovery Workshop took place at Dartmouth Town Hall, on Thursday June 13, 2019. The workshop sought to inform Dartmouth residents and business owners about Master Plans, their content, and the process by which they are created in. In addition, it kick-started a civic engagement campaign that will take place during the Master Plan process. Approximately 40 participants attended.

### Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Workshop (Fall 2019)

The second workshop addressed the Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Master Plan elements. It took place at the new North Dartmouth Public Library on Wednesday, October 30, 2019. Similar to the Discovery Workshop, the objectives were to inform attendees about the update process and to gather feedback on the three specific topics through an engagement activity that put the future development of the town in participants hands as citizen planners.

### Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Workshop (Winter 2020)

The third workshop, documented in this report, focused on the Open Space and Recreation and Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan elements. It took place at the Dartmouth Town Hall on Wednesday, January 29, 2020. Similar to the Discovery Workshop, the objectives were to inform attendees about the update process and to gather feedback on two specific topics through a mapper engagement activity.

In the time leading up to the workshop, SRPEDD personnel distributed the workshop advertisement and other materials at a number of local establishments and posted the flyer on the project webpage and





Facebook page. A press release was written for publication in Dartmouth Weekly and the Standard-Times. The workshop advertisement is available in Appendix A. Approximately 60 participants signed in, but with the volume of the crowd it is possible that another 20 individuals were also in attendance. These participants shared their thoughts about Dartmouth's current and future Open Space, Recreation, and Natural and Cultural Resource protection objectives and issues.

## The Day of the Workshop

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

The workshop began with an introductory presentation to set the context for the remainder of the meeting. The SRPEDD Project Manager presented slides describing existing demographic information, open space acreages, environmental justice areas, specialized natural communities in Dartmouth, and needs and goals summarized in the town's 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The presentation drew on figures from Mass GIS.

The presentation was purposefully short so that the bulk of the meeting could concentrate on obtaining feedback from workshop participants. The main purpose of the presentation was to establish existing conditions, and then to describe the mapper activity as it included multiple layers of data that participants could draw from given their particular interests.

The presentation is available in Appendix B.



### 2. Open Space, Recreation, and Natural and Cultural Resources Mapper Activity

Prior to the arrival of workshop participants, facilitators from SRPEDD set up the room into three groups, with each group situated around a table where workshop materials were set up. Workshop materials at each group included a large-format basemap showing existing open space and recreation areas included in the most recent MassGIS OSR dataset, Chapter 61 Lands, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, the Green Infrastructure Network, existing recreation trails, and hydrology. An additional map was printed on clear mylar that could be overlain onto the basemap. This map included an additional layer of information regarding natural communities in Dartmouth - specialized habitats per the state's BioMap2 layer, aquifer recharge zones, wellhead protection areas, vernal pools, and other more specialized datasets. The idea was that having all of this information on one map would be too cluttered, but that if a participant had a specific open space preservation goal in mind related to one

of these features, the overlay map could be referenced in the development of a specific action item. Finally, a stand-alone map of historic districts was provided, also for reference.

Following the introductory presentation, participants worked in one of these table groups to complete the mapper exercise. In general, the goal was to use a series of stickers on the map to identify key areas or locations in town that had natural & cultural and/or open space & recreation significance, to discuss current issues or thoughts, and to provide new ideas and input for recreation and open space facilities. Groups focused on identifying locations on a town map with a coded sticker representing:

- New Recreation / Open Space Facilities or Amenities;
- 2. Maintenance / Beautification Need;
- 3. Recreational Programming Need;
- 4. Pathway Need Bicycle;
- 5. Pathway Need Pedestrian;
- 6. ADA Access Need;
- 7. (7) Natural / Cultural / Historic Resource Need.

During this conversation, SRPEDD and Town Staff facilitators helped guide the discussion and answered questions, as well as transcribed the specific location and supporting documentation on a large note pad. The completed maps and note pads are recorded in Appendix C.

We note that participation at this Master Plan event was, in general, much greater than anticipated. The set-up was not conducive to the amount of people that attended - noise levels made discussions difficult. Were a similar situation to be faced in the future at such an event in the Dartmouth Town Hall, we recommend that facilitators pause the event briefly to relocate groups and group materials to different rooms within Town Hall.

### **Open Space and Recreation Mapper!**

Where would you like to see better public space maintenance? Where should the Town put a new park? A new sidewalk? A new bike trail?

The choice is in your hands! Use the stickers to indicate open space and recreation issues and opportunities on the base map.

Use the following key to place stickers within a specific category:



New Recreation / Open Space Facilities or Amenities



**Maintenance / Beautification Need** 



**Recreational Programming Need** 



**Pathway Need - Bicycle** 



**Pathway Need - Pedestrian** 



**ADA Access Need** 



Natural / Cultural / Historical Resource Need

Instructions and key for the mapper exercise





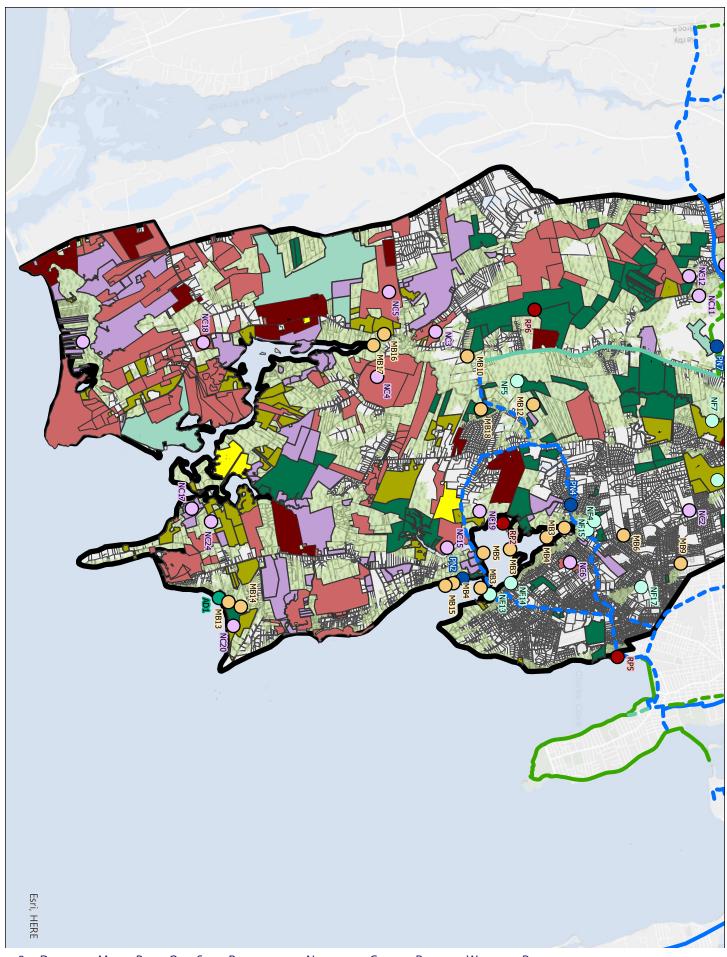
# **OSRP Mapper Activity Outcomes**

A total of **101** ideas for parks, recreation and open space improvements were identified during the table-top mapping exercise component of the workshop. Some of the comments concerned open space and recreation areas townwide while others contained more specific locational information for future action.

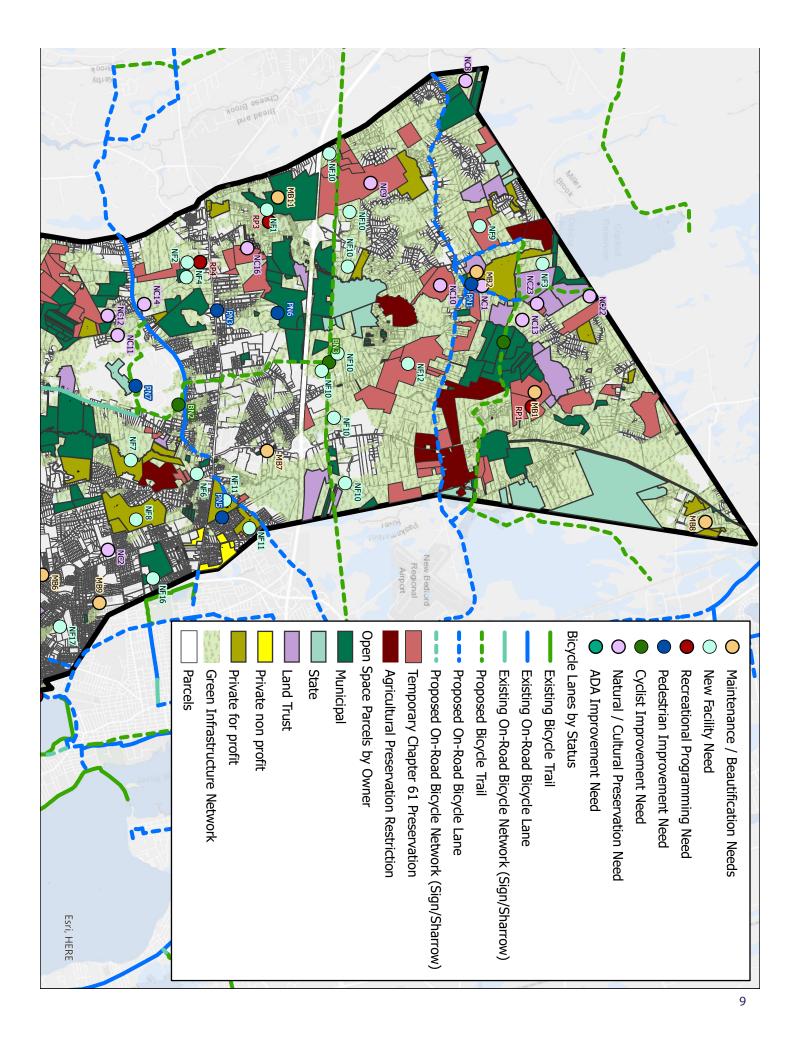
The maps on the following page, displays all of the locations identified by the workshop participants. The following sections of this report present the comments received in more detail.



A group working on the mapper exercise



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### **Maintenance / Beautification Needs**

A total of **20** ideas related to needs for facility maintenance and beautification were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Dartmouth Regional Park and Rec area multi use facility improvements - currently under-utilized space	х	х		MB1
Cornell Pond maintenance	х			MB2
Dredging in Padanaram Harbor	х			MB3
Water quality in Padanaram Harbor	х	х		MB4
Increased public access to the landing and maintenance / beautification	х			MB5
Culvert Assessment – Buttonwood Brook	х			MB6
Culvert assessment – Faunce Corner Road	х			MB7
Future potential use of the landfill	х			MB8
Culvert assessment at Bliss Corner	х			MB9
Maintenance for the area around the transfer station	х			MB10
Improve the trails at the interchurch council land - maintenance needed	х		х	MB11
Water treatment plant – keep it well maintained and the land around it	х			MB12
Wayfinding signs throughout town	х	х		-
More parking / access to Round Hill Beach and restroom upgrades		х		MB13
Repave Round Hill Beach Rd		х		MB14
Sanitation facilities along harbor		х		MB15
Improve Paskamansett Park and Boat launch		х		MB16
Russels Mills Land Inc maintenance			Х	MB17
Dartmouth Playground maintenance			Х	MB18
Townwide safety and maintenance at school playgrounds – fall zones			Х	-





## **New Recreation and Open Space Facility or Amenity Needs**

A total of **25** ideas related to needs for new open space / recreation facilities and amenities were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Lake Nocquochoke – increase access	х			NF1
Multi-generational recreation facility to serve people of all ages and abilities	х			NF2
Acquire parcel between Collins land, Copicut Reservoir, and the Dutch Belt Farm/ Rod and Gun Club lands to create a continuous block of protected land (Auber Farm)	х	х	х	NF3
New indoor recreation facility (location unspecified)		х		-
Indoor tennis facility - opportunity as this facility transitions		х	х	NF4
Find new locations for soccer fields		х		-
Canoe Trail on Paskamansett River		х		NF5
Access at new police station to Paskamansett River		х		NF6
Access at Friends Academy to Paskamansett River		х		NF7
Potential future ball field at Allendale Country Club		х		NF8
Acquire / permanently protect Chapter 61 parcel along North Hixville Road - prime wildlife habitat – high priority for protection		x	х	NF9
Acquire / permanently protect land along the east-west rail line		х		NF10
Ensure Country Club of New Bedford Properties remain preserved in perpetuity		х		NF11
Protect chapter forest land from development between south of Old Fall River Road, Hixville Road, Faunce Corner Road, and the powerline right of way		х		NF12
Advertise boat ramps / waterfront access – wayfinding with consistent signage		х		NF13
Dog park in south Dartmouth		х		NF14
Look at imbalance between recreation and open space between north and south Dartmouth – more recreation and open space facilities are needed in the north		x		-
Ex pound recreation (Baseball field)			х	NF15
New rec facility behind town hall			х	NF16
Potential Dog park site			х	NF17
Need rec center (youth indoor)			х	-
Skate park – find a location			х	-
ATV park somewhere – maybe a converted brownfield or industrial property			х	_
Open access to certain wellhead protection areas			х	-
Expand access to small watercraft (ex Russells Mills Road) - example Paskamansett park			х	-

### **Recreational Programming Needs**

A total of 8 ideas related to needs for new recreational programming were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Make the temporary Dog Park at the Dartmouth Regional Park and Rec area permanent	Х			RP1
Designate areas for water skiing and tubing	х			RP2
Lake Nocquochoke pathway maintenance	х			RP3
Additional basketball facilities	х			RP4
Increase access at Rogers St Boat Ramp		х		RP5
More info about New Bedford Park (Woodcock Road Gun Range) / University Highlands Protected Areas - ensure they remain protected		х	х	RP6
Correct imbalance in funding for active/passive recreation – fund more active recreation		х		-
Strengthen relationship between rec leagues and the town Select Board / Departments		х		-

### Pathway Needs - Pedestrian

A total of **10** ideas related to needs for pedestrian pathways were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Cornell Pond pathway improvements	Х			PN1
Townwide pedestrian / biking shared use pathway	х			-
Additional sidewalks through the complete streets program	х			-
Improve pedestrian pathway connections in South Dartmouth	х			-
Continuation of pedestrian trails on Smith Neck Road		х		PN2
Pedestrian amenities and sidewalks along entire length of Route 6		х		PN3
Sidewalk on Russells Mills Road – kids run along road		х		PN4
Sidewalk on Slocum Rd		х		PN5
Town forest expansion – add trails			х	PN6
Complete pedestrian linkages near UMASS Campus			х	PN7





### Natural / Cultural / Historic Needs

A total of **31** ideas related to needs for improved ADA access and mobility were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Cornell Pond - preserve the cultural aspects - ensure permanent protection of the New Bedford Rod and Gun Club	х		х	NC1
Save the John George Farm	х	Х	Х	NC2
Preserve Alderbrook farm	х	Х	Х	NC3
Save the Vincent Farm	х	х	х	NC4
Tavares farm – preserve	х	х	х	NC5
Save the Flying Carrot farm	х			NC6
Continuous land, Collins land potential form combining parcels if purchased for protection	х			NC7
Preserve open land near bread and cheese brook	х			NC8
Preserve Double S farm	х		х	NC9
Preserve the McLaughlin Property	х			NC10
Cedar Dell Pond concerned about municipal wells overpumping and drying out	х		х	NC11
Deerfield Swamp concerned about municipal wells overpumping and drying out	х	х	х	NC12
Open space to house historic buildings and assets	х			-
Acquire / permanently protect parcel adjacent to the Acushnet Sawmill Wildlife Management Area, Washburn Reserve and Slocum River Reserve		х		NC13
Aquifer concerns with over pumping		х		NC14
Protect salt marsh		х		NC15
Protect Atlantic White Cedar Forest		х		NC16
Protect the saltmarsh at the cow yards		х		NC17
Protect Paskamansett River Corridor watershed and riverine habitat areas		х		-
Protect Shingle Island River Corridor		х		-
Farmland preservation APR at Wainer Farm			х	NC18
Weinshell farm preservation			х	NC19
Roundhill Beach Restoration project (salt marsh)			х	NC20
Acquire chapter land to add to Audubon land			х	NC21
Ecological connections to the bioreserve			х	NC22
GWOZDZ Farm – save APR			Х	NC23
Expand Little River road – conservation easement coverage			х	NC24
Prioritize list of ag preservation targets developed by Con Comm/Ag Preservation Commission/Select Board/DNRT			х	-

#### Natural / Cultural / Historic Needs Continued

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Replenish agricultural preservation trust fund			Х	-
Townwide aquifer protection			Х	-
Dart conservation commission – more staff and other proactive activities			х	

### Pathway Needs - Bicycle

A total of **5** ideas related to needs for bicycle pathways were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Townwide pedestrian / biking shared use pathway (sup)	Х			-
Improve bicycle pathway connections in South Dartmouth	х			-
East-west bike path from Fall River to New Bedford through the Acushnet Sawmill Wildlife Management Area		х		BN1
Bike connections to Umass-Dartmouth - complete bike-ped link		х	х	BN2
Bike path on railroad			Х	BN3

### **ADA Access Needs**

A total of 2 ideas related to needs for improved ADA access and mobility were recorded. The middle numbered columns represent the workshop(s) at which the idea was discussed. Ideas that came up in multiple workshops are highlighted in light blue. Those that apply townwide are indicated with a dash (-) in the Map Code column.

Comment	1	2	3	Map Code
Round Hill Beach ADA improvements		Х		AD1
Townwide ADA compliance at school playgrounds			Х	AD2





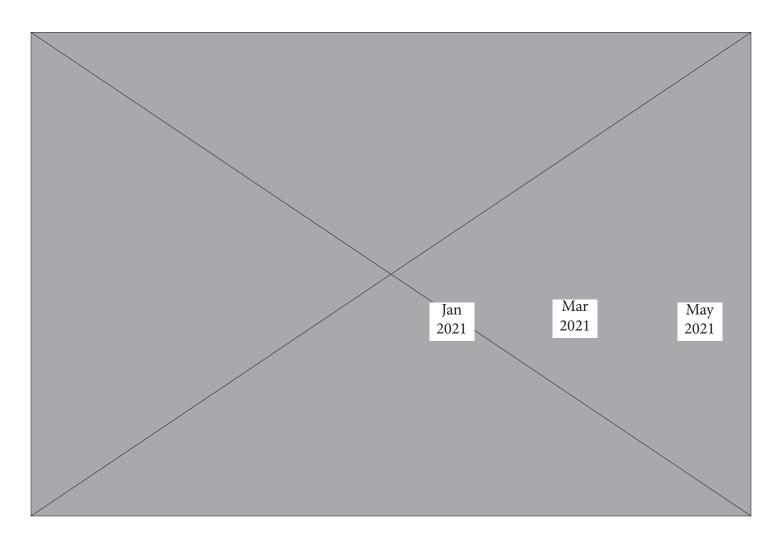
### **Main Themes**

The table of discussion comments above shows that certain topics received attention in all or multiple groups. These repeated comments emerge at the main themes of the mapper group exercise:

- 1. Dartmouth Regional Park and Rec area multi use facility improvements currently under-utilized space.
- 2. Water quality in Padanaram Harbor.
- 3. Improve the trails at the interchurch council land maintenance needed.
- 4. Additional wayfinding signs throughout town
- 5. Acquire parcel between Collins land, Copicut Reservoir, and the Dutch Belt Farm/Rod and Gun Club lands to create a continuous block of protected land (Auber Farm).
- 6. Indoor tennis facility opportunity as this facility transitions.
- 7. Need for a Dog Park, espeically in South Dartmouth.
- 8. Acquire / permanently protect Chapter 61 parcel along North Hixville Road prime wildlife habitat high priority for protection.
- 9. More info about New Bedford Park (Woodcock Road Gun Range) / University Highlands Protected Areas ensure they remain protected.
- 10. Farmland preservation of specific tracts John George Farm, Alderbrook Farm, Double S Farm, Vincent Farm, and Tavares Farm. Town entites including the Select Board, Agricultural Commission, Conservation Commission, and DNRT can work together to formulate a farmland preservation priority plan.
- 11. Cornell Pond preserve the cultural aspects ensure permanent protection of the New Bedford Rod and Gun Club.
- 12. Address concerns about over-pumping of municipal wells at Cedar Dell Pond and Deerfield Swamp.
- 13. Complete bike connections to Umass-Dartmouth complete bike-ped link.
- 14. Additional small craft (canoe and kayaking) opportunities, especially on the Paskamansett River.
- 15. Preservation of key environmental features, including salt marshes at the Cow yards and Round Hill Beach, and the town's river corridors.

### **Conclusion**

The Dartmouth Master Plan Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Workshop was the **third of six** workshops in a sustained and comprehensive civic engagement campaign. Similarly, this document is the next step in identifying issues that are important to the citizens and businesses of Dartmouth. The schedule of future workshops is as follows:



We will continue to draw main themes and specific priority action items from these topical workshops to include and the Dartmouth Master plan, which is scheduled for completion in Summer 2021. The Dartmouth Master Plan timeline has been extended due to complications from the pandemic. Future workshops will occur in on online format for the foreseeable future.





# **Appendix A** *Workshop Flyer*

# Master Plan Workshop #3: Open Space, Recreation & Natural and Cultural Resources



Wednesday
January 29, 2020,
6:30 - 8:30 PM
Dartmouth Town Hall
400 Slocum Road

The third of six Master Plan\* workshops, this meeting will focus on the specific topics of open space, recreation & natural and cultural resources.

Where would you like to expand recreational opportunities? What areas should be preserved to protect unique land and water resources?

### The choice is in your hands

in the open space and recreation mapper exercise that workshop participants will complete, identifying issues and opportunities for an improved recreation / open space network throughout town!

\*A Master Plan is a long-range policy document that guides community decision-making. It describes the experience of living in town today, and articulates the strategies, actions, and priorities that will propel Dartmouth toward the optimal vision of its future.

# Please visit our website or facebook page for more information

Project Webpage





Project Facebook

www.srpedd.org/Dartmouth-Master-Plan

www.facebook.com/dartmouthmasterplan





















We are here





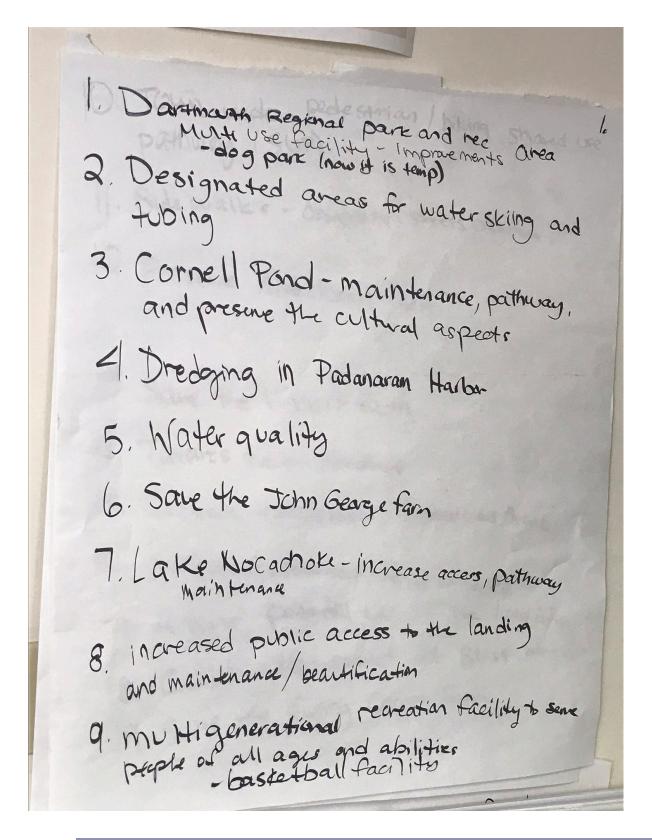
# **Appendix B**Workshop Presentation







# **Group 1 Discussion Comments**



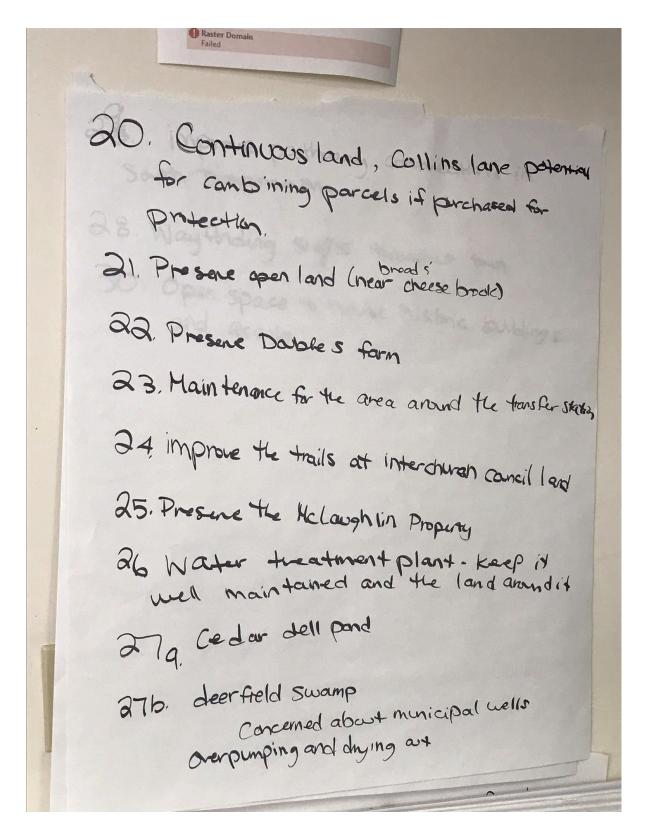
# **Group 1 Discussion Comments Cont.**

D. Town wide pedestrian / biking shared use
1. Side walks - complete streets program
2. Presure Alderbrook farm
13. Sawe the Vincent farm
4. Tavares farm-preserve
15. CUlver Assessment - Buttonwood Brook
16. CUHER Assessment faunce Corner Rd. 17. Future potental use of the landfill 17. Future Potental use of the landfill 17. Future Potental use of the landfill
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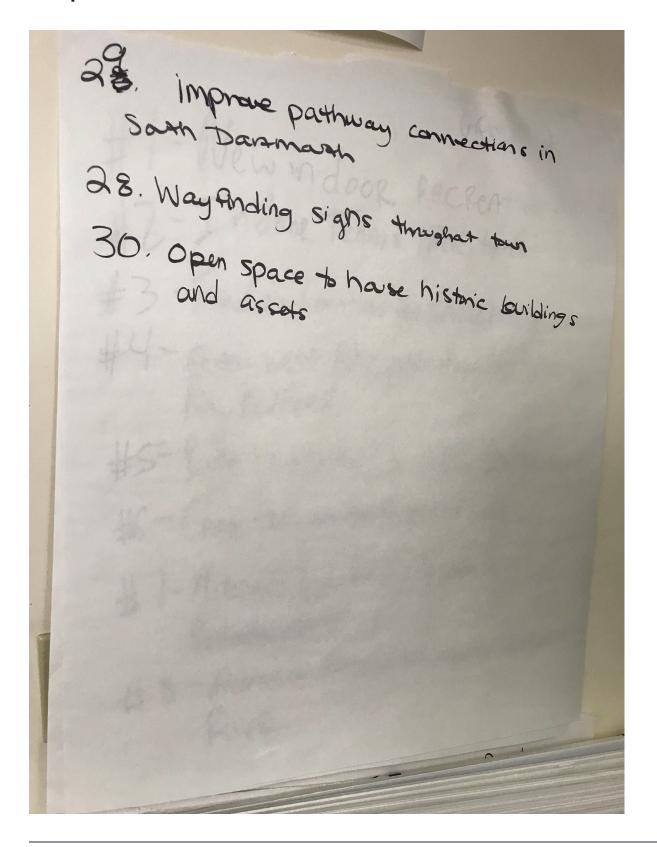




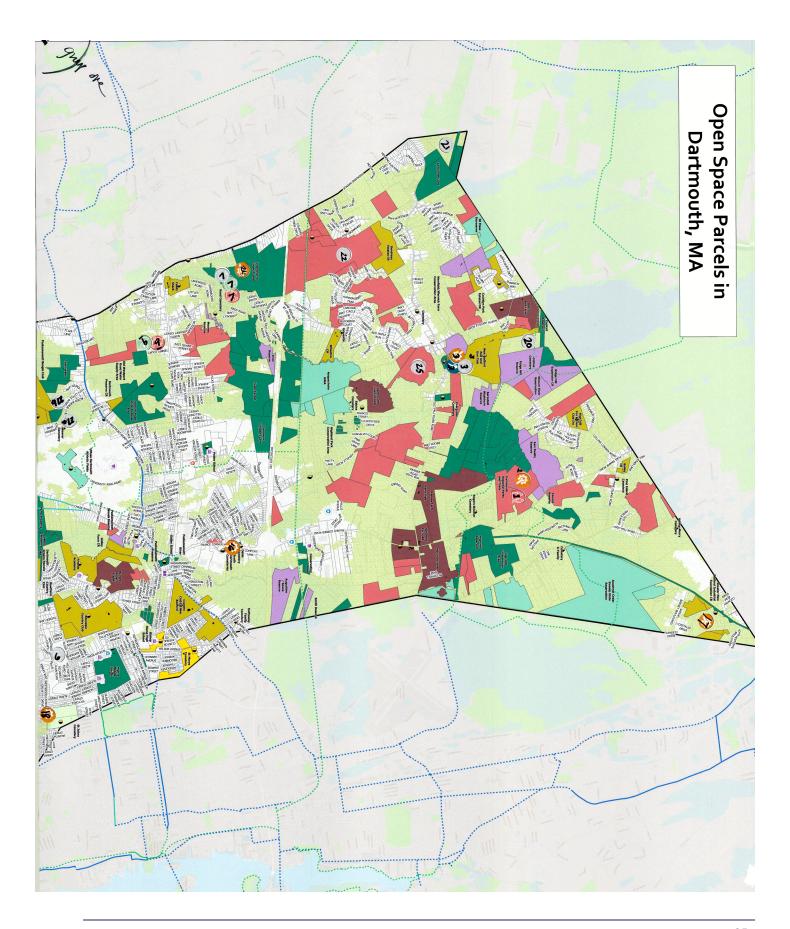
# **Group 1 Discussion Comments Cont.**



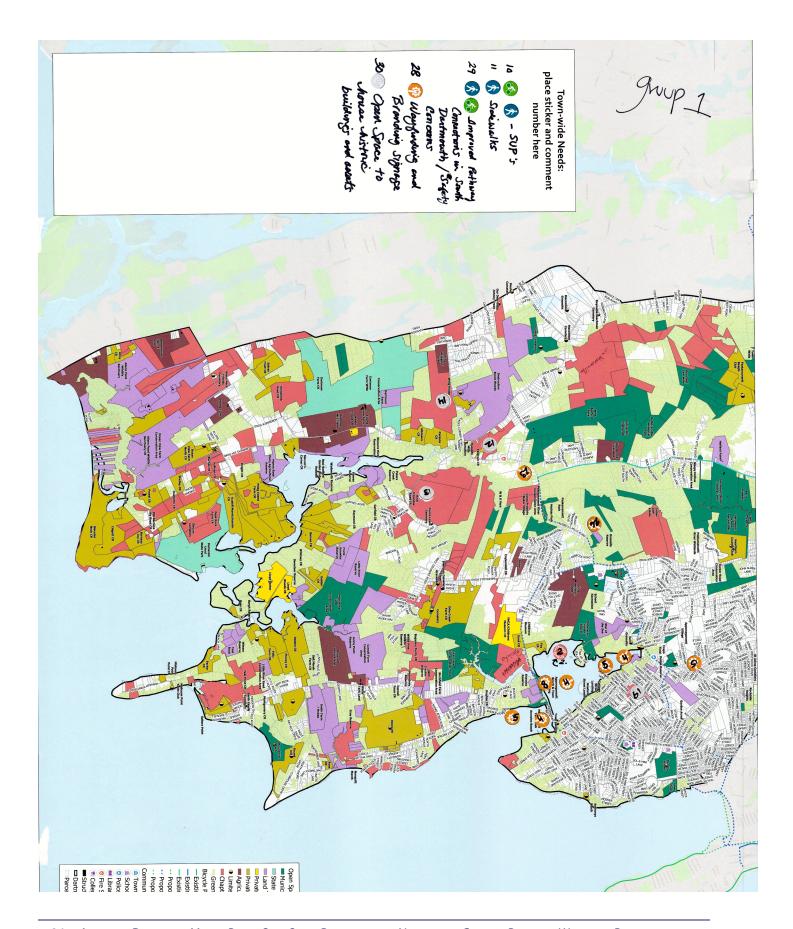
## **Group 1 Discussion Comments Cont.**



# **Group 1 Map North Dartmouth**



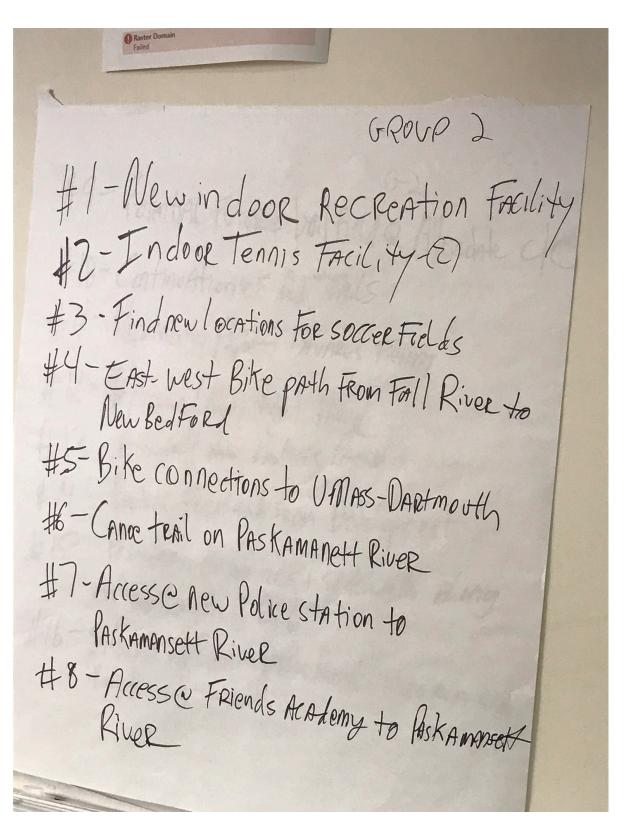
# **Group 1 Map South Dartmouth**



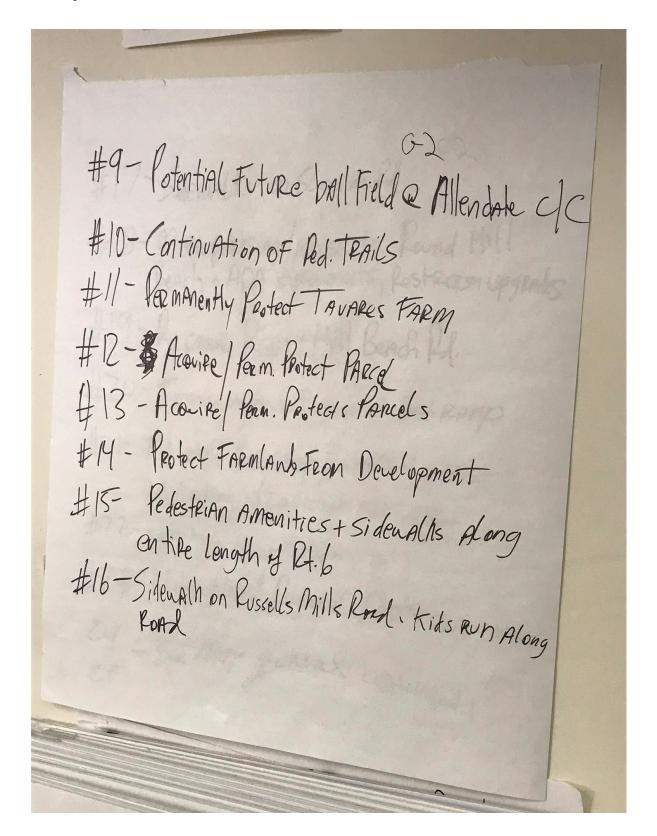




# **Group 2 Discussion Comments**



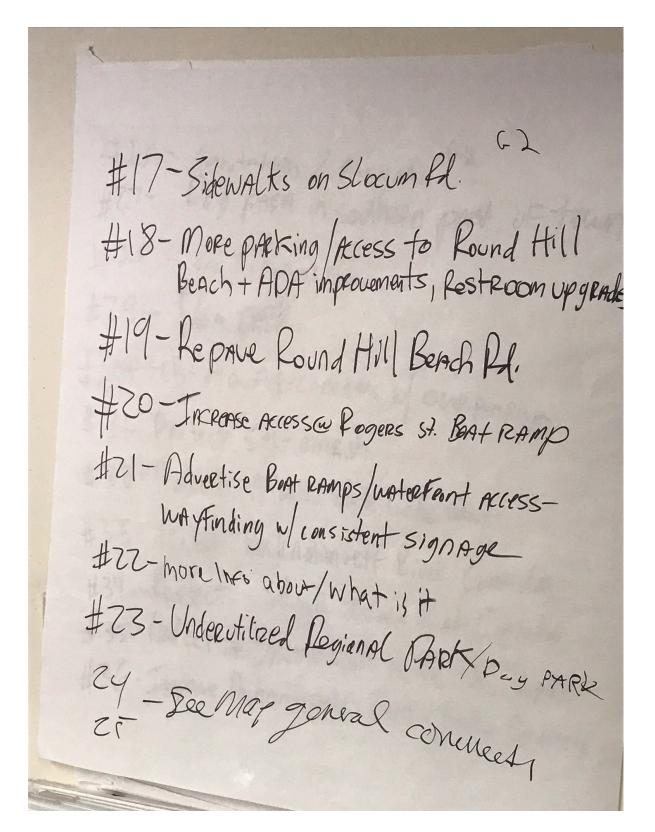
# **Group 2 Discussion Comments Cont.**







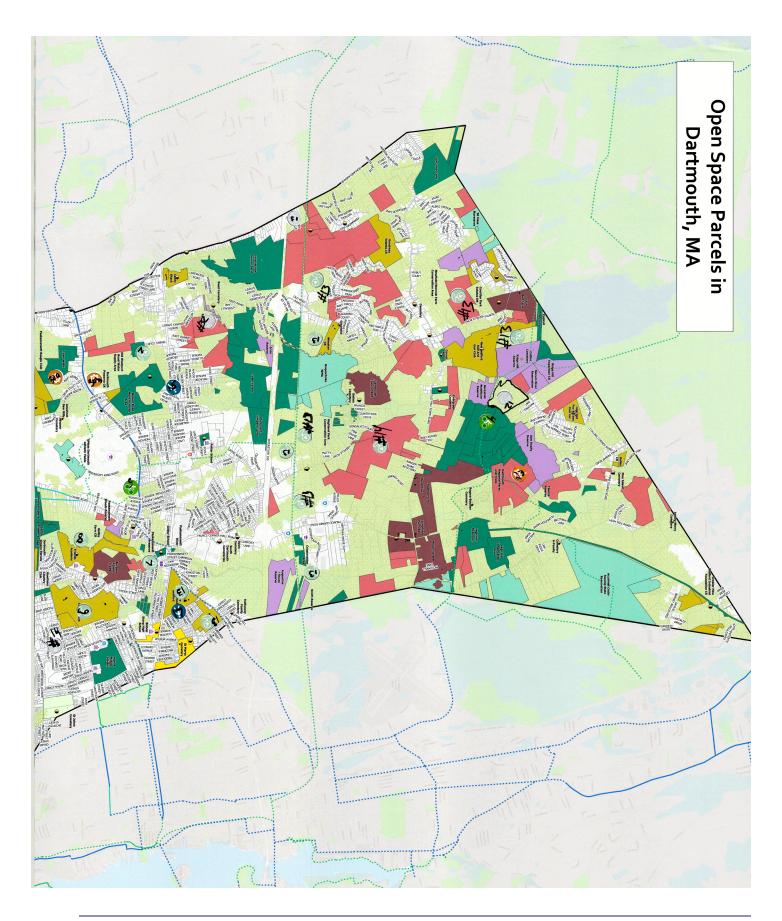
# **Group 2 Discussion Comments Cont.**



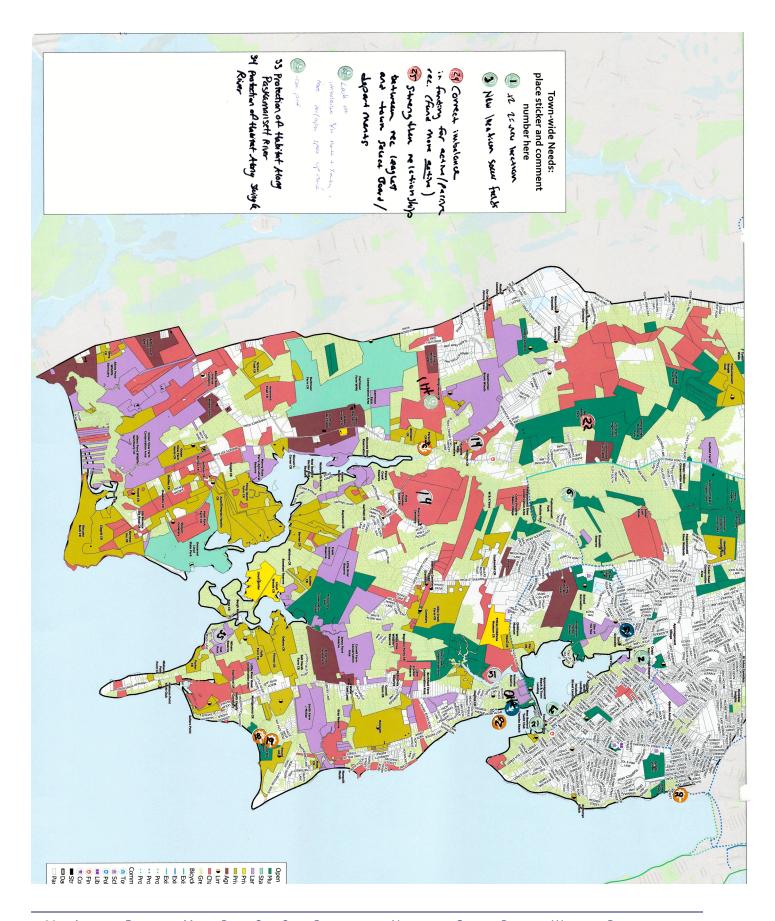
# **Group 2 Discussion Comments Cont.**

#27- Dog parch in Southern part of town #27- Dog parch in Southern part of town #29- Dog park #30A+30B- A oviFer-concerns of over pumping #31- Protect SACT MARSh #32-Protect Atlantic White Cedar Forest #33- Protect Pash a man sett Pivel Corridor #34- Protect Shingle Island River Corridor	
#33- Protect Pash Aman sett River Corridor #34 - Protect Shingle Island River Corridor #35 - Protect the Saltmansh At the Con Yards #36 - Improve Poshamansett Paph + BOA+ Counch	

# **Group 2 Map North Dartmouth**



# **Group 2 Map South Dartmouth**



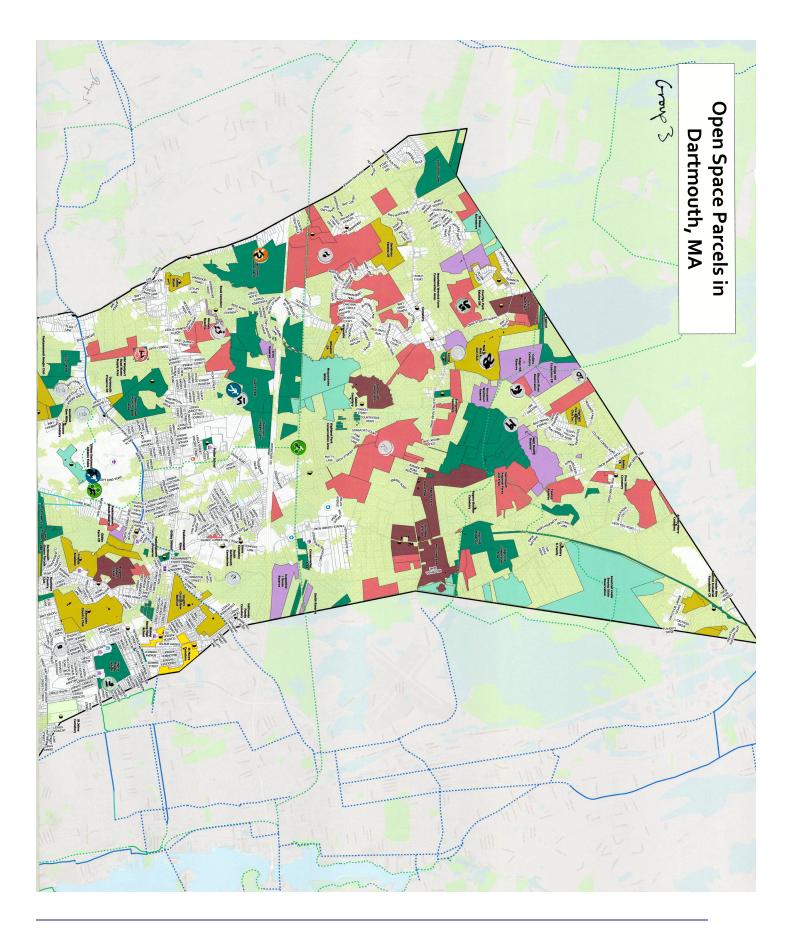




# **Group 3 Discussion Comments**



# **Group 3 Map North Dartmouth**



# **Group 3 Map South Dartmouth**

