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Dover Natural Resource Mapping and Community Outreach Initiative, Bird

Dover Planning Department

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Dover Natural Resource Mapping and Community Outreach Initiative

A Final Report to

The New Hampshire Estuaries Project

Submitted by the

Dover Planning Department

for the

Dover Open Lands Committee

**288 Central Avenue
Dover, NH 03820**

December 31, 2004

This report was funded by a grant from the New Hampshire Estuaries Project, as authorized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 320 of the Clean Water Act.



Project Activities and Objectives

Task 1: Promote and conduct three outreach events including Fall Foliage Walk, staffing a booth at the Apple Harvest Day Festival, and “Preserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions” workshop.

The grant funding has allowed us to further address the continuing need for community awareness for open space and natural resource protection in the City of Dover. This funding has enabled the City of Dover Planning Department in partnership with the City of Dover Open Lands Committee to present several events throughout October and November 2004. The events offered participants information about natural resource and open space protection as well as an opportunity to enjoy nature. They increased public awareness about the Open Lands Committee and its function. Activities and workshops from October to November 2004 included Apple Harvest Day Festival Informational Booth, Fall Foliage Walk, and Preserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions. Copies of the various press releases, newspaper articles and attendance sheets for these three events are included in the Final Report.

Apple Harvest Day Festival Information Booth, October 2

Activities for this event included recruiting volunteers for booth staffing, preparing brochures and fliers for distribution, promoting the event through press releases and publicity, and outreach by OLC Outreach and Education volunteers at the festival in downtown Dover. OLC volunteers answered visitors' questions on topics from land protection to recreational trails.

Conservation maps were displayed inside the booth to show visitors the currently protected open land in Dover. Visitors completed surveys on topics of interest for future educational workshops. Volunteers collected contact information from visitors to the booth who wished to know more about the Open Lands Committee and its work.

Photographs of the event were published with a follow-up press release. The OLC's Apple Harvest Day Festival Information Booth was also an excellent venue to distribute fliers to publicize the upcoming outreach and education events.

Fall Foliage Walk, October 16

Karen Bennett of UNH Cooperative Extension Services led the outdoor education workshop on Garrison Hill in Dover. Garrison Hill was selected as the location for the workshop because of its many varieties of trees, its elevation and the scenic viewscape it offers.

Workshop leader Karen Bennett took participants on a tour of the diverse types of trees that line the park on top of Garrison Hill, and discussed ways to identify them by their leaves, branches and bark. Participants asked Bennett a number of questions that varied

from what they were seeing to how to discern trees in the forest to the trees in their own yards.

Activities for this workshop included arranging for the speaker and location, writing and distributing press releases and PR materials, recruiting volunteers, photographing the event and preparing follow-up press releases.

Preserving Rural Character Through Open Space Subdivisions, November 15

Bob Baldwin, President of Qroe Farm, a real estate development company specializing in open space subdivisions spoke at the workshop held at City Council Chambers at Dover City Hall. Baldwin discussed Qroe Farm's approach towards land use and conservation in its development projects, an approach the company calls Preservation Development. Baldwin described, among a number of particulars, how Preservation Development protects agriculture and farms. Baldwin took questions from the audience and conversed with participants on the topic of sustainable development.

The two-hour workshop was open to developers, planners, and interested citizens, providing them with the opportunity to learn about an option that incorporates residential development with preserving land and rural character.

Activities for this event included arranging for the speaker and location, writing and distributing press releases and PR materials to publicize the workshop presentation, photographing the event, and preparing follow-up press releases.

Task 2: Produce tax and resource maps for planning and outreach. Resource maps will show features such as protected lands, wildlife habitat co-occurrences, water resources, wellhead protection areas, important soils, and unfragmented areas.

Planning staff used the City of Dover's Geographic Information System (GIS) to produce maps for use in easement monitoring activities, landowner contact meetings, and for display at the Apple Harvest Day booth. Maps were produced in paper and mylar formats depending on the intended use. While the exact total number of maps produced is difficult to document, it is estimated that between different versions and drafts of the various maps that approximately 800 to 1,000 maps were produced.

The maps were particularly helpful in assisting the Open Lands Committee members during their initial site visits with landowners that are interested in preserving their property. Having a good property map that was at an accurate scale and that showed various natural features was very useful when walking around a piece of land. A sampling of maps produced is included with the Final Report to illustrate the types of maps produced.

The Open Lands Committee's efforts at easement monitoring were greatly assisted by being able to use the digital camera to document the existing conditions of the property

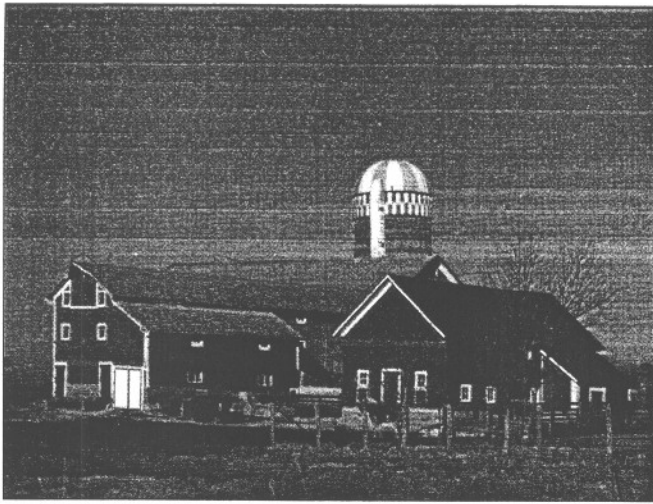
and to show the important natural features of a parcel, such as wetlands, ponds, streams, significant trees, fences, and property pins.

Task 3: Establish a land conservation resource center in the Dover Planning Department office that includes a resource library of land conservation publications; files, baseline information, and photo documentation of all conservation easements; and data on unprotected parcels that represent significant natural resources protection opportunities.

A land conservation library and bookshelf was created in the Dover Planning Department office, including 50 copies of the booklet published by the Society for the Protection of NH Forests entitled, Conserving Your Land, landowner files, baseline documentation files for existing easement properties, and Open Lands Committee brochures and handouts. The library is used as a resource for both members of the Open Lands Committee and citizens of Dover.

The digital camera that was purchased with this grant has been extensively used to take photographs of currently protected parcels of land that the City has monitoring responsibilities for and of prospective properties that the Open Lands Committee is considering for protection. The color laser printer has been used to print copies of these photographs. The grant helped pay for a new set of color ink cartridges for the color laser printer, which greatly improved the quality of the color photographs. A sampling of these photographs is included in the Final Report.

APPENDIX



Conserving Land Through Preservation Development

By Dona Masi Layton

How does a community with limited resources protect its most special natural areas and meet the financial needs of landowners at the same time? Many communities, like the City of Dover, wrestle with this ongoing question as they strive to balance the financial goals of long-time local landowners with the preservation of important community natural resources, such as wildlife habitat, working farms and forests, shorelines and drinking water supply lands.

One method is through voluntary land preservation via conservation easements. In Dover, for instance, the Open Lands Committee works with landowners who wish to permanently conserve their land by donating or selling a conservation easement on their properties. Like many New Hampshire communities, the City has a conservation fund, made up of the change-of-use fees paid by develop-

ers as well as special bonded appropriations, that can be used to purchase—and extinguish—the development rights of appropriate properties. The landowner can retain full ownership of his land, which is preserved via conservation easement to ensure that it remains in a natural state for future generations to enjoy.

Another tool used by communities to assist with natural resource preservation is zoning. In 2002 Dover amended its zoning regulations to create an open space subdivision (OSS) district ordinance that requires developers to retain between 20 to 50 percent buildable open space when creating new residential subdivisions. In this scenario, homes are grouped close by each other while a larger unfragmented parcel is set aside as permanent open space, providing substantial corridors for wildlife while protecting critical water supply lands

by reducing the amount of contaminants that enter municipal and private wells.

At a recent outreach and education workshop sponsored by the Dover Open Lands Committee, *Preserving Rural Character Through Open Space Subdivisions*, presenter Robert Baldwin of Qroe Farm talked about Preservation Development™, his company's own adaptation of the open space subdivision concept. He explained to participants how Preservation Development™ “conserves land, provides greater lifestyle satisfaction to residents, and adds value to development projects.”

Baldwin is the president of Qroe Farm, a real estate development company based in Derry, New Hampshire that was established in 1981. The idea for Preservation Development came to him through his work as a volunteer on the open space committee in Lincoln, New Hampshire. The concept marries three primary land uses: agriculture, open space, and residential or commercial development.

Preservation Development starts with looking at the land to identify the natural features to be protected, such as workable farmland, a community trail around a pond, or an outstanding view of an untouched landscape. Then houses are laid out based on the land

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(continued, next page)

conservation aspect. The houses are woven into the open space, blending into the land around them.

Unlike a cluster conservation development, in which the reserved open space is identified as a unique parcel separate from the homes around it, the Qroe Farm method manages the open space as part of individual homeowners' lots. The advantage to this, Baldwin explained, is that, "The system increases the discipline of land protection and maintenance of the open space system, since each homeowner is seen to have a stake."

Preservation Development is particularly effective in the way that it preserves farmland and promotes agriculture. When a farmer sells a parcel for a Qroe Farm development project, he agrees to continue to farm the remaining agricultural land, though he may no longer retain ownership of it. At the same time, the new homeowners agree to pay the taxes on the farmland. In this way they help to assure the farmer's economic viability while benefiting from the rural character of the land. The residents' contributions ensure that the land remains in a natural state.

The open space within a Preservation Development is maintained by restrictions in property owners' deeds rather than by permanent conservation easement. A homeowners'

association is responsible for maintaining the open space and enforcing the deed restrictions.

Baldwin believes that municipal zoning often causes more damage to the environment than necessary. Many zoning regulations, he said, "promote a growth pattern that fans out from the interior of a town and absorbs much of the open space and farmland for development." Both open lands and agricultural lands end up on the fringes of a community as a result. Whereas the Qroe Farm approach, Baldwin said, "creates a growth pattern that integrates open space and farmland and puts people in town close by open space and farms."

"It's an intriguing idea," said Dover Open Lands Committee Chair Joyce El Kouarti, who attended the workshop. "It depends upon what you want to accomplish. The Qroe Farm approach may not be the best way to ensure the permanent preservation of sensitive natural areas, but it's certainly an effective way to integrate man with the natural landscape. It looks like this approach has been particularly successful in conserving community farms that otherwise might have been developed."

Preservation Development is one of a number of tools for so-called "smart growth." This strategy is one of a number of methods, including open

space zoning and voluntary land conservation initiatives that communities are utilizing to maintain sustainable growth while conserving their natural resources.

Preserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions was the second of the Dover Open Land Committee's 2004 season of outreach and education workshops funded by a grant from the New Hampshire Estuaries Project.

The City of Dover Open Lands Committee is an advisory group established by the Dover City Council to promote open space protection. The committee works to protect undeveloped lands that possess significant conservation features, including critical wildlife habitat, drinking water supply resources, farm and forestlands, and historic and scenic areas.

Dona Masi Layton has been an Open Lands Committee member for more than two years. She has been the principal coordinator of many of the group's community outreach initiatives. She was recently elected to chair the Committee in 2005. For more information, contact the Open Lands Committee through the Dover Planning Department at 603.516.6013, or e-mail openlands@ci.dover.nh. ■

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Open Lands Committee
City of Dover
288 Central Avenue
Dover, NH 03820
603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joyce El Kouarti

Date: October 28, 2004

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**DOVER OPEN LANDS COMMITTEE PRESENTS WORKSHOP:
PRESERVING RURAL CHARACTER THROUGH OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISIONS**

DOVER, NH – Join members of the Dover Open Lands Committee, Conservation Commission and Planning Board at the upcoming workshop on *Conserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions*. The workshop will take place on Monday, November 15 from 7 to 9 p.m. in Council Chambers at Dover City Hall and will also be televised on Channel 22.

Robert Baldwin from Qroe Farm will lead the workshop. Headquartered in Derry, NH, Qroe Farm specializes in creating new residential spaces while saving 80% or more of agricultural farm, tree farm, and other environmentally important spaces. “The preservation of active farming and nature should be an integral and vital part of the package,” said Baldwin. “The marriage of these components with sensitive residential usage adds value to the [project as a] whole.”

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information or to register, call 603-516-6008.

The workshop is sponsored by the Dover Open Lands Committee and funded by NH Estuaries Project. NH Estuaries Project is a government program established under the Clean Water Act to promote and protect nationally significant estuarine resources. For more information about NH Estuaries Project, call 603-599-0022.

The Dover Open Lands Committee is an advisory group established by the Dover City Council to promote local open space conservation. The committee works to conserve important community water resources, farm and forestlands, critical wildlife habitat, and historic and scenic areas through voluntary land preservation partnerships. For more information about the Open Lands Committee, contact the Dover Planning Department at 603-516-6008, or email openlands@ci.dover.nh.us.

Open Lands Committee

**City of Dover
288 Central Avenue
Dover, NH 03820
603-516-6008**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dona Layton, 603-742-2352

Date: December 7, 2004

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CONSERVING LAND THROUGH PRESERVATION DEVELOPMENT

- By Dona Masi Layton

DOVER, NH – How does a community with limited resources protect its most special natural areas and meet the financial needs of landowners at the same time? Many communities, like the City of Dover, wrestle with this ongoing question as they strive to balance the financial goals of long-time local landowners with the preservation of important community natural resources, such as wildlife habitat, working farms and forests, shorelines and drinking water supply lands.

One method is through voluntary land preservation via conservation easements. In Dover, for instance, the Open Lands Committee works with landowners who wish to permanently conserve their land by donating or selling a conservation easement on their properties. Like many New Hampshire communities, the City has a conservation fund, made up of the change-of-use fees paid by developers as well as special bonded appropriations, that can be used to purchase – and extinguish – the development rights of appropriate properties. The landowner can retain full ownership of his land, which is preserved via conservation easement to ensure that it remains in a natural state for future generations to enjoy.

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percent buildable open space when creating new residential subdivisions. In this scenario, homes are grouped close by each other while a larger unfragmented parcel is set aside as permanent open space, providing substantial corridors for wildlife while protecting critical water supply lands by reducing the amount of contaminants that enter municipal and private wells.

At a recent outreach and education workshop sponsored by the Dover Open Lands Committee, *Preserving Rural Character Through Open Space Subdivisions*, presenter Robert Baldwin of Qroe Farm talked about Preservation Development^{11VI}, his company's own adaptation of the open space subdivision concept. He explained to participants how Preservation Development^{11VI} "conserves land, provides greater lifestyle satisfaction to residents, and adds value to development projects."

Baldwin is the president of Qroe Farm, a real estate development company based in Derry, NH that was established in 1981. The idea for Preservation Development^{11VI} came to him through his work as a volunteer on the open space committee in Lincoln, NH. The concept marries three primary land uses: agriculture, open space, and residential or commercial development.

Preservation Development^{11VI} starts with looking at the land to identify the natural features to be protected, such as workable farmland, a community trail around a pond, or an outstanding view of an untouched landscape. Then houses are laid out based on the land conservation aspect. The houses are woven into the open space, blending into the land around them.

Unlike a cluster conservation development, in which the reserved open space is identified as a unique parcel separate from the homes around it, the Qroe Farm method manages the open space as part of individual homeowners' lots. The advantage to this,

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Preservation Development^{1(M)} is particularly effective in the way that it preserves farmland and promotes agriculture. When a farmer sells a parcel for a Qroe Farm development project, he agrees to continue to farm the remaining agricultural land, though he may no longer retain ownership of it. At the same time, the new homeowners agree to pay the taxes on the farmland. In this way they help to assure the farmer's economic viability while benefiting from the rural character of the land. The residents' contributions ensure that the land remains in a natural state.

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natural landscape. It looks like this approach has been particularly successful in conserving community farms that otherwise might have been developed."

Preservation Development is one of a number of tools for so-called "smart growth." This strategy is one of a number of methods, including open space zoning and voluntary land conservation initiatives that communities are utilizing to maintain sustainable growth while conserving their natural resources.

Preserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions was the second of the Dover Open Land Committee's 2004 season of outreach and education workshops funded by a grant from the NH Estuaries Project. In April, the Open Lands Committee will present *Discovering Vernal Pools*, an outdoor, hands-on workshop to be led by environmental and science educator Gale Christensen. All outreach and education workshops are free and open to the public.

The City of Dover Open Lands Committee is an advisory group established by the Dover City Council to promote open space protection. The committee works to protect undeveloped lands that possess significant conservation features, including critical wildlife habitat, drinking water supply resources, farm and forestlands, and historic and scenic areas. For more information, contact the Open Lands Committee through the Dover Planning Department at 603-516-6013, or email openlands@ci.dover.nh.

Open Lands Committee
City of Dover
288 Central Avenue
Dover, NH 03820
603-516-6008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: July 30, 2004

Contact: Dona Masi Layton, 603-742-2352 (H)
Page 1 of 2

**DOVER OPEN LANDS COMMITTEE RECEIVES GRANT
TO HELP WITH CONSERVATION EFFORTS**

DOVER, NH - The Dover Open Lands Committee will receive an \$1,884 grant from the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC), with funding from the NH Estuaries Project. In collaboration with the Dover Planning Department and Conservation Commission, the Open Lands Committee will use the funds to develop and promote educational workshops and programs, and to produce maps to assist with the Committee's planning and outreach efforts. "This grant from the NROC will help to promote the Open Lands Committee's mission and support the Committee's land conservation efforts," said City Planner Steve Bird.

In prior years, NROC has given financial and expert support to the Dover Open Lands Committee to assist with various projects. In 2001 and 2002, NROC facilitators assisted local volunteers with the development of a workshop series to address rapid development growth in Dover. After the workshops, the Dover City Council voted to bond \$1 million for land conservation.

This year's NROC grant funds will help support the presentation of the following Open Lands Committee outreach and education events: the OLC Apple Harvest Day Festival Information Booth at *Dover's Apple Harvest Day* on October 2; a *Fall Foliage Nature Walk* on October 16; and a workshop on *Preserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions* on November 15. Grant monies will also fund the development of updated maps detailing local natural resource features such as currently conserved lands, unfragmented areas of open space, wildlife habitat co-occurrences, water resources, wellhead protection areas, and significant soils.

The Natural Resources Outreach Coalition (NROC) is collaboration among 10 state, private non-profit, local, and regional organizations. NROC assists coastal watershed communities use a natural resource-based planning approach to managing growth pressures. For more information please contact: Contact: Amanda Stone (amanda.stone@unh.edu), NROC Coordinator, UNH Cooperative Extension, (603) 364-5324. NROC partners include: NH

Estuaries Project, NH Coastal Program, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Regional Planning Commissions, Center for Land Conservation Assistance, NH Dept of Environmental Services, UNH SeaGrant, NH Office of Energy and Planning, and the National NEMO Network.

The City of Dover Open Lands Committee is an advisory group that was established by the Dover City Council to promote open space protection as outlined in the city's 2000 Master Plan. The committee works to protect undeveloped lands that possess significant conservation features, including drinking water supply resources, farm and forestlands, critical wildlife habitat, and historic and scenic areas. For more information about the Open Lands Committee, contact the Dover Planning Department at 603-516-6008, or email openlands@ci.dover.nh.us.

*Open Lands Committee
Planning Department
City of Dover
288 Central Avenue
Dover, NH 03820*

Join us at a free workshop:

Preserving Rural Character through Open Space Subdivisions

Presented by Robert Baldwin, Qroe Farm

Date: Monday, November 15

Time: 7 to 9 p.m.

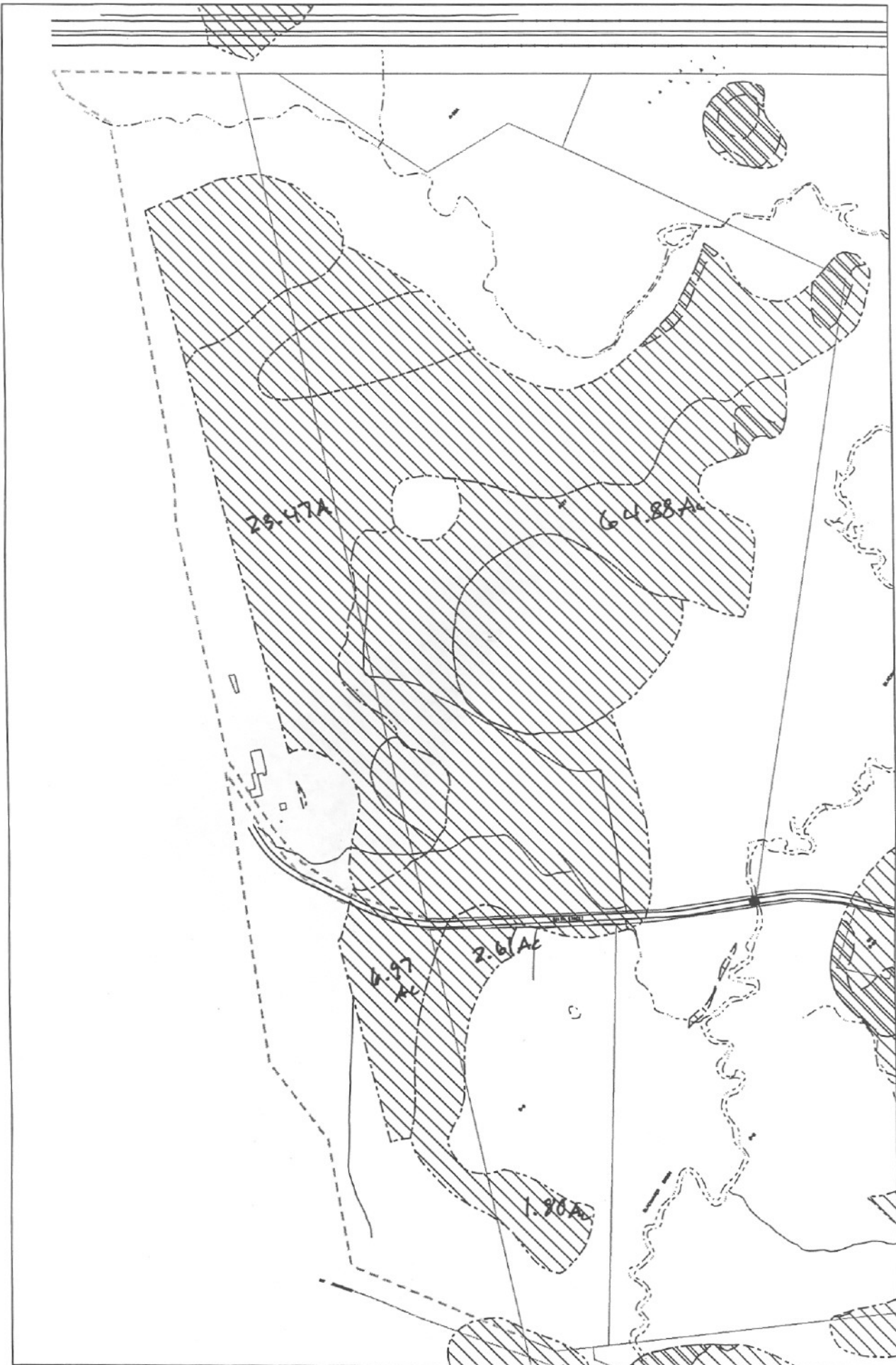
Where: Council Chambers, City Hall
288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH

*Learn to balance human and natural resource needs
through the creation of residential areas that
conserve more than 80 percent of
environmentally important open space.*

The workshop is free and open to the public. However, pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information or to register, call 603-516-6008 or email openlands@ci.dover.nh.us.

This workshop is presented by the Dover Planning Department and Open Lands Committee and funded by a grant from New Hampshire Estuaries Project. The Dover Open Lands Committee works to conserve Dover's most special natural areas through voluntary land preservation agreements. New Hampshire Estuaries Project is a government program established under the Clean Water Act to promote and protect nationally significant estuarine resources.





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