

2001
*Plan of Conservation
and Development
Lyme, Connecticut*

Hadlyme
Public
Hall

**Buildings
On Cover**

Lyme
Fire Company
Hadlyme

First
Congregational
Church
of Lyme

Grassy Hill
Congregational
Church

Lyme
Town
Hall

Lyme
Public
Hall

Hadlyme
North
School

Lyme
Public Library

**2001
Plan of Conservation
and Development
Lyme, Connecticut**

Lyme
Grange

Hadlyme
Congregational
Church

Lyme Volunteer
Fire Company

**2001 REVISIONS
TO THE
LYME PLAN OF CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT**

Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission

**TOWN OF LYME,
CONNECTICUT**

EFFECTIVE JUNE 29, 2001

Acknowledgements

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
2001 LYME PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Updating the Plan

Lyme has just completed revising its Town Plan of Conservation and Development, as required by State law. Lyme has maintained a consistent vision for its future since the first Plan was prepared in 1964 and updated in 1990. As part of the 2001 revision, a detailed questionnaire was mailed to all Lyme postal patrons. Responses indicated that the people of Lyme still remain strong in their desire to preserve Lyme's rural character and natural resources, and are willing to travel outside Lyme for employment and services in order to maintain that character at home.

A Vision of Lyme

Lyme is a quiet rural community. Scattered homes lie among the wooded hills and along the clear streams flowing down to coves and marshes of the Connecticut River Estuary. Sailors return to Hamburg Cove after time on the water. Life in Lyme has a timeless, unhurried quality. There is an aged, well-worn character to its landscape, with houses and the few commercial and civic uses fitting comfortably on the land. Lyme was once a busier place, with quarrying, lumbering, fishing and farming providing employment for Lyme families, but time has removed all but the traces of such activity. While growth pressure in southeastern and coastal Connecticut has resulted in suburban sprawl and a heightened pace of activity in many other nearby towns, Lyme remains quietly "off the beaten path".

Lyme residents have a strong appreciation for the natural resources that bless the area. The Connecticut River Estuary and its tributaries are recognized nationally and internationally as a unique natural area. In the future, preservation of these special resources will be assured through a series of connected greenways that preserve the water quality, habitat and visual quality of the community. Within the balance of the Town's regulatory authority and the landowners' rights, existing views and vistas will be preserved, and perhaps, new vistas will be opened to recall the agricultural heritage of the town. The people of Lyme will still be able to go out and look at the stars, unhindered by the glare of light pollution from nearby development. New homes will be compatible with and respect the scale and design of Lyme's rural New England character.

Lyme residents appreciate their sense of community, but value the privacy that the rural landscape provides. Residents are willing to forego quick and easy access to retail businesses and services and to travel longer distances to employment so that they may enjoy the peace that Lyme provides. In-town services will remain limited in size and only in areas where such uses already exist. Hamburg Cove will still provide a refuge to boaters.

Lyme will not attempt to become frozen in time, but will adjust to the demands and opportunities of modern life. As new technologies create the possibilities of new lifestyles, Lyme will adjust its regulations and requirements to allow people to work at home or to live in non-traditional family households. Changes will occur as a result of

our changing society, but in a way that preserves the quality of life and the natural resources of Lyme.

In the Midst of Change

Through the decade of the 1990s, southeastern Connecticut experienced a shift in its economy, from its very heavy reliance on the defense industry to significant new economic activity in tourism and biotechnical research. A new bridge over the Connecticut River between Old Lyme and Old Saybrook reduced the frequency of traffic jams on I-95 and commuter train service was established between Old Saybrook and New Haven. Advances in telecommunication and the Internet are beginning to change our lives in ways we can only imagine. After a slump in residential construction in the early 1990s, home building resumed in the area with construction of numerous large houses. With increased development came a concern about the loss of open space and new efforts to preserve undeveloped land. There was also a growing awareness of the uniqueness of the Lower Connecticut River and an interest in protecting one of the "Last Great Places".

Challenges

The greatest challenge facing Lyme is the multi-faceted effort necessary to maintain the town's rural character. Volunteer participation in community activities must be encouraged, while respecting residents' desires for privacy in a peaceful and serene setting. New development should be allowed at a scale and design which is compatible with the rural landscape. Efforts should be continued to increase population diversity through a variety of present and additional housing opportunities for various income levels.

Recommendations:

Lyme has been largely successful in directing its past growth in a manner that is compatible with the town's vision. The Plan update recommends that current policies and practices be continued, but that land use regulations be reviewed to determine if there are additional tools that could be used to better guide future development. Continued emphasis should be given to the proven successful working relationship with private land owners on open space preservation outside the regulatory process. Collecting and maintaining up-to-date information on Lyme's natural and human resources is essential to informed decision-making. Additional emphasis should be placed on acquisition of permanent open space while allowing traditional community uses of land including farming, forestry and agriculture, limiting future non-residential development, encouraging appropriate design and scale for new residential structures, and encouraging population diversity.

Copies of the 2001 Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development are available at the Lyme Town Hall on Route 156.

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INTRODUCTION

Statutory Responsibility

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires all local Planning Commissions to periodically review and update their local Plan of Conservation and Development and to adopt such amendments as the Commission deems necessary to update the Plan. The contents and issues considered in the Plan are proscribed by *Section 8-23*. In 1995, the Connecticut General Assembly renamed the plan, from the Plan of Development to the Plan of Conservation and Development, and authorized the plan to contain provisions for greenway protection.

The 1964 Plan

The first Plan of Development for Lyme was prepared by the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission in 1964. The planning process included a questionnaire survey of Lyme residents by the League of Women Voters. That Plan estimated the town's population at approximately 1,300 people, slightly more than the town's population had been 100 years earlier, in 1860. Because Lyme was part of a rapidly growing region which had become more accessible by the completion of the Connecticut Turnpike in 1958, the 1964 Plan raised concern that this growth would change the character of Lyme. Looking ahead to 1990, the town's planning consultants anticipated a possible population increase to 5,000 people.

The first Plan noted that preservation of the town's rural character would require a special type of zoning and subdivision control, going beyond simple large lot area requirements to set aside land for community uses and enjoyment. A major issue identified was the need to take steps "to keep large tracts of undeveloped and open land". To accomplish this goal, the Plan recommended that farming activities be encouraged and that more land be brought under public ownership. Establishment of a local conservation commission was also recommended.

The Plan recommended that civic activities continue to be concentrated at one location on Route 156, as the most efficient means of providing services. The Plan recognized existing commercial areas at Hamburg on Route 156 and at the crossroads in Hadlyme, but also recommended that the commercial areas be restricted to prevent "a spreading hit or miss along the principal town roads". A

waterfront business district was recommended for the head of Hamburg Cove, recognizing the sizable marina that had grown up to take advantage of the splendid harbor formed by Hamburg Cove. Unlike too many other communities, Lyme paid attention to its Plan and proceeded to subsequently adopt its recommendations. The base laid by the 1964 Plan and its implementation has created the town of today - a true planning success story.

The 1990 Plan

In 1988 and 1989, the Planning and Zoning Commission undertook to review its Plan of Conservation and Development to assess its effectiveness and see if additional recommendations were in order. The 1990 Plan noted that the trends observed in 1964 had occurred at a slower pace than anticipated, in large part because intervening actions to maintain a rural landscape had been successful. The 1990 Plan noted that the 1980 Census reported a population of 1,822 people and cited projections from the State Office of Policy and Management estimating a 1990 population of 1,970 people. That the rate of population growth was much slower than earlier predictions was attributed to Lyme's land use controls, its geographic distance from major employment centers and distance from the region's expressway system, and national demographic trends such as lower birth rates and smaller household sizes. After the Plan was completed, the results of the 1990 Census showed an actual population of 1,949 residents.

The 1990 Plan included a detailed summary of a sample questionnaire distributed by the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission. The survey results indicated that respondents were very interested in preserving the rural character of their community and were largely willing to shop and work elsewhere to retain the country atmosphere. By a large percentage, residents opposed zoning additional areas for commercial development of any kind. Residents favored preservation of natural resources, especially along the Connecticut River and its coves and within the EightMile River watershed.

The long term goals and recommendations of the 1990 Plan focused largely on preservation of open space through as many methods as possible, including town purchase, cooperation with other land preservation organizations and individuals, and subdivision dedication. The economic boom of the late 1980s had resulted in high housing costs statewide, and the State Legislature responded by requiring consideration of affordable housing needs in every local plan. Accordingly, the Lyme Plan included the goal of creating "an atmosphere that allows a wide variety of socioeconomic groups to live in town", and a recommendation to explore and pursue options for provision of affordable housing to address this need. The Plan concluded that the area zoned for commercial uses was adequate for the foreseeable future, and that all commercial activities should be concentrated into existing locations. Other

recommendations concerned community services, including schools, recreation, water supplies and sewage disposal.

The 2001 Plan Revisions

Over the past 35 years, Lyme has maintained a constant and consistent vision of the type of community it wishes to be, according to the 1964 and 1990 Plans. As part of the Year 2001 review, the Planning and Zoning Commission mailed survey questionnaires to all Lyme residents and property owners in March 2000. Of the approximately 1400 questionnaires distributed, 420 responses were returned for tabulation. This 30 percent response is excellent for such a survey. The questionnaire responses reaffirm that the people of Lyme remain strong in their desire to preserve and protect their rural character and are willing to travel outside Lyme for shopping and employment to do so. Detailed results and analysis of the survey are included as an appendix to this Plan revision. Comments on the results are included throughout this document.

These latest revisions to the existing 1990 Plan of Development do not alter the focus of the Plan. The land use pattern and priorities established back in 1964 and refined in 1990 still accurately reflect what Lyme people want for their town to be in the future. The 2001 Revisions should be viewed as continuing the work already begun. New concepts and techniques have been developed over the ten years since the Plan was last reviewed, and new tools are available to towns to address their concerns and achieve their goals. This Plan Revision moves forward to identify these approaches.

CHANGES SINCE ADOPTION OF THE NOVEMBER 1990 PLAN

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission adopted its first Plan of Development in 1964. The Plan was revised in November 1990, emphasizing many of the same goals as the 1964 Plan. Since the 1990 revision, there have been many significant changes in the region surrounding Lyme. While Lyme may appear to be little changed over the past decade, external factors are reshaping Lyme in subtle ways.

A New Regional Economy

Lyme is closely tied to the economy of southeastern Connecticut. In the early 1990s, a dramatic decline in federal defense procurement, including a major reduction in submarine construction at the General Dynamics shipyard in Groton and possible closure of the New London Submarine Base, was expected to have a severe negative impact on the economy of eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island. Instead, the construction of gambling casinos in nearby Ledyard and Montville, owned by federally recognized Indian tribes, led the way for substantial increase in tourism in eastern Connecticut. Near the end of the decade, Pfizer, one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, invested heavily in new central research facilities in Groton and New London, and greatly increased its research staff in this area. By 2000, the new economic base had resulted in significant growth pressure for new commercial and residential development throughout the area.

Lyme has limited its commercial and industrial activities through zoning restrictions on those uses, and most of Lyme's residents work outside the town. Lyme's environment and community character have made it a desirable residential area for people who work elsewhere. As job growth continues in the region as a whole, so too does the pressure for additional residential growth in Lyme.

About 40 percent of those responding to the Plan Questionnaire indicated they had lived in Lyme less than ten years, while 60 percent were long term residents of ten years or more. Question 3 asked people to list the last place they had lived prior to Lyme. The largest single location was Old Lyme (50), with Groton/Mystic (18) second. Other frequently cited locations including East Haddam (13), East Lyme (11), Essex (11) and Old Saybrook (10). Out of state locations included California (14) and New Jersey (10). Seven responders indicated that their last previous residence was out of the country (Bangkok, Tokyo, Switzerland, West Indies, London, Italy, Panama - See Appendix).

Question 8 asked people to indicate their place of employment. There were over 400 responses, including workplace locations for multiple workers within a household. About 30 percent of those responding were retired. Of those currently employed, about 17 percent worked at home and an additional seven percent worked elsewhere in Lyme. Seventy-six percent worked out of town, with almost a quarter of those working out of state. The most frequently cited work location out of town was New York City (28), with Groton/Mystic (27) second. Several people mentioned Pfizer in Groton specifically. Other frequent responses were Old Lyme (21) and the Hartford area (20).

Changes in Transportation

The most significant improvement to the regional transportation network during the past decade has been the construction of a new highway bridge carrying I-95 over the Connecticut River between Old Saybrook and Old Lyme. The new Baldwin Bridge, which opened in May 1993, was intended to alleviate frequent traffic congestion. Since the new bridge was opened, State Department of Transportation traffic studies indicate a significant increase in traffic on I-95, including truck traffic through the region as truck drivers choose the I-95/395 coastal route over the inland I-91/84 alternative.

Major improvements to the AMTRAK Northeast Corridor Route have been underway for several years in an effort to shorten the travel time by rail between New York and Boston. The faster train will make stops in both Old Saybrook and New London, making these urban centers more accessible to regional residents and making this region more accessible to urban workers. Despite several attempts in past years to cut funding for the State's Shoreline East commuter rail service between Old Saybrook and New Haven, connecting to New York, the service has survived. Area residents can take the train to jobs or other activities to the west.

Residential Development Continues

As subdivision development continues to transform Connecticut's rural landscapes into suburban areas, people seeking a more rustic living environment must look further into the countryside. Despite its distance from major employment, commercial activities, access highways, Lyme is an increasingly desirable residential area. The latest estimate (1997) from the state Department of Economic and Community Development indicated that there are 1,077 housing units in Lyme, of which about 97% are single family homes. Since 1990, there have been 37 subdivisions, creating 131 new building lots. Over the same period, building permits have been issued for 152 new homes. Typically, a new home in Lyme is large and pricey. About 44% of Lyme's housing stock was built prior to 1950, but many homes have undergone extensive renovations and may retain little of their original character. The average price of a home in Lyme is more than double the average for New London County, and almost twice that of the state as a whole. The 1990 Plan first raised concern about the affordability of housing in Lyme for the non-affluent. In response, the town established an Affordable Housing Committee that sought to address the problem of affordable housing for lower and moderate income persons. Their work has resulted in the completion of four new affordable houses which are leased to qualified tenants. Lyme's Affordable Housing Committee is completing an agreement with Habitat for Humanity to create additional affordable units in the future.

In the responses to the Plan questionnaire in 1999, the most frequently cited specific item that people liked least about Lyme was the increase in "huge ugly houses that don't enhance the landscape". Big houses were mentioned by 27 people, or 7% of all respondents. Some responders felt that these "trophy mansions" were out of scale and character for the town. One person stated that "the development around Hamburg Cove by starter castles and 'McMansions' is very discouraging. The Cove is looking more like a pond as these homes get bigger and bigger." Others were concerned about the hilltop location of large houses, which, while providing new views for the home's occupants, were also highly visible to everyone else. (See Appendix.)

Wider Recognition for a Unique Natural Resource

Lyme's character is defined by its steep rocky hills, interspersed by streams which generally flow down to the coves that line the Connecticut River. In the past decade, national and international recognition of the Connecticut River and its bordering shorelands has brought new awareness to the people of the Lower River Valley as to how special that character really is. The tidal marshes along the River have been designated as "Wetlands of International Significance" for waterfowl habitat under the international Ramsar Treaty. The Nature Conservancy has designated the River Estuary as "One of the Last Great Places". The area along the Connecticut River from the Canadian Border to Long Island Sound was designated as the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge under the US Department of the Interior. Most recently, in 1998, the Connecticut River was one of the 14 rivers in the United States designated as an "American Heritage River".

The University of Connecticut's Cooperative Extension Program worked with residents of Lyme and the other towns in the Eight Mile River Watershed to inventory the resources of the watershed and develop strategies for resource protection. In 1997, the First Selectmen of Lyme, Salem and East Haddam signed a joint compact to protect the Eight Mile River Watershed. This non-binding cooperative agreement sets forth the towns' commitment to work together to protect their natural and cultural heritage. The conservation commissions from the three towns are working to preserve as much of the watershed as possible and are seeking federal designation of the Eight Mile as a "Wild and Scenic River". In July of 1999, the State awarded the towns of Lyme and East Haddam \$640,000 toward the \$800,000 purchase price of the 312 acre Firestone estate on the Salem Road. This property includes almost a mile along the east branch of the Eight Mile River, with 54 acres in Lyme.

During the past decade, many of Lyme's beautiful cool green stands of hemlock trees have been severely damaged or destroyed by an infestation of the insect woolly adelgid. Like the beautiful chestnut forests of the past, the loss of these trees has changed the Lyme landscape. While there is some hope that

remaining hemlock trees may produce a disease-resistant strain, the hemlock loss is significant. Major changes in vegetation affect not only the natural beauty of the town, but result in changes in habitat for wildlife. The impact may be very subtle, such as a slight change in the temperature of a stream running through a former evergreen woods.

Changes in vegetation have been a concern since the first town plan was written. The 1964 Plan expressed concern about the loss of open fields. ***“One of the charms of Lyme has always been the aspect of open meadows and pasture land, combined with woods and water. Unfortunately, much of the area which used to be clear and open is now growing up to brush and woods. Extensive views are constantly being curtailed. Farming is more limited and is no longer such a large part of the landscape.”*** One of the most significant views in Lyme today is the view from Route 156 across the Tiffany farm at the intersection at Sterling City Road. Other fields in town are leased and farmed by the Tiffany family to provide feed for their dairy herd. Once fields are no longer in cultivated use, however, periodic mowing is necessary to avoid natural forest succession.

The Open Space Movement

In periods of vigorous economic growth, changes in land use generally occur faster and are more visible than during less active periods. As a result of the booming economy of the past several years, residents throughout New England and the United States have realized more than ever that natural areas are disappearing or being fragmented by growth. This has led to an awareness that the rural character of communities like Lyme will not remain unless steps are taken to permanently protect such open undeveloped lands. Preservation of open space is a national concern.

In Connecticut, the State Legislature established an Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program in 1998. The Program's stated goal is to protect 21 percent of the State's land as open space by 2023. Money from this fund was used to match local funds to acquire land in the Eight Mile River watershed.

.The Town of Lyme established its own Open Space Committee in 1996. The Open Space Committee and the Lyme Land Conservation Trust, working with other conservationists such as The Nature Conservancy and generous landowners, have played a critical conservation role.

Conservation easements are being used increasingly to protect open space in Lyme as elsewhere. Easements allow for continued ownership and use of the property by private interests while restricting activities that would have an adverse affect the property's natural character. Experience indicates that conservation easements require an ongoing monitoring and enforcement program over time, but are an effective tool for open space preservation.

The Plan's Questionnaire responses showed very strong support for open space preservation in Lyme. Out of the 420 questionnaires which were returned, 381 (or about 91%) indicated that conservation land and open space should be encouraged as a land use. Ninety percent felt that there were specific natural areas that should be preserved. About 72% favored using taxpayer money to buy and maintain open space in town, and about 64% would be willing to contribute higher taxes to support a town open space program.

The Cost of Development

Because of the high reliance on local property taxes in Connecticut to fund local services including schools, it has long been a common belief that towns must continually seek to increase their property tax base to provide revenue for those services. During the past decade, an understanding has arisen that property tax revenue on residential properties often fails to cover the cost of services to those properties. It is now widely believed that towns should encourage new commercial and industrial development to offset the gap between the revenue from and cost of residential development. However, there is a growing body of evidence that non-residential development has its own associated costs in terms of increased service requirements. As a rule, more developed towns have both a larger tax base and higher taxes to support services that are not required in lesser developed areas. Rural communities require fewer government services. Lyme, which is the least developed community in the Estuary Region by any measure, including population, tax base and percentage of non-residential development, also has the lowest adjusted tax rate. The town has avoided the spiral of new development which raises services costs and therefore leads to increased taxes, which then leads to an outcry for more development to increase the tax base.

Telecommunications Technology

In the later part of the 1990s, telecommunications technology evolved so rapidly that it was difficult to anticipate its impact on future land use activities. Wireless communications, computer technology and the development of the Internet have each changed and will continue to change the way we live. Where and how we work, what we do for recreation, how we shop and what we buy, and even the location and design of our homes is evolving rapidly as new technology

becomes available. This electronic technology may allow people to spend more time at home, and many will seek out places to live that retain their natural beauty and quiet. The result very well may be increased pressure for residential development in Lyme and land prices that continue to rise in the face of strong demand.

One highly visible sign of the new technology is the current push to provide complete coverage for cell and digital phone service. Within the decade, telecommunication towers have sprung up virtually everywhere, including Lyme. These towers may be only temporary features of the landscape until the next technology, probably utilizing a more extensive satellite network, is more fully developed. Installation of new towers is usually controversial, and generates considerable opposition based on their visual impact. Concern is frequently raised that towers may outlast their technological usefulness and remain a blot on the landscape for years to come.

Infrastructure Improvements

There has been regular attention to Lyme's capital needs over the past decade. With a low rate of population growth, there has not been a great need for new facilities. Most of the infrastructure improvements can be categorized as maintenance and minor upgrading, except where new facilities have been required to accommodate new technologies.

The Plan Questionnaire asked several questions concerning public facilities. Question 35 asked responders to indicate how important they felt certain capital improvements to be. Purchase of open space was rated as "very important" or "important" by about 85% of all responses. Other question responses indicated while there is great interest in protection of natural resources, there is much less interest in active recreational facilities. A smaller number felt it was "important" to improve municipal buildings, but only a very small percentage gave any importance to developing recreational facilities or a community/youth center. (See Appendix.)

Many of the "essay" comments in the questionnaire indicated satisfaction with the current level of services and with current town management, although there was substantial concern about the "school situation". After preparation of several plans and considerable debate on need and the cost of improvements as shared between the towns of Lyme and Old Lyme, approximately 33.9 million dollars in renovations to the Regional District 18 schools were approved by voters. Highest priority is being given to elementary and middle school improvements.

Other than the regional school improvements, the largest local projects have been repaving local roads and installation of storm drainage to correct existing problems. Road work has also included installation of guard rails in some areas. Roads which have been resurfaced include Ely's Ferry Road, Town Woods Road, Bill Hill, Grassy Hill and Honey Hill Roads, Honey Hill Lane, and the steepest portion of Mount Archer Road. Lyme's roads are an important part of the town's rural character and road maintenance and improvements are designed to have minimal visual impact consistent with basic safety improvements.

A different road issue is the perception of increased traffic and speeding on Route 156 through Lyme, as identified by several questionnaire responses. A comparison of the traffic counts between 1993 and 1997 shows mixed results. On the southern portion of Route 156 near the intersection of Sterling City Road, CONNDOT data shows an increase from 1800 to 3500 average daily trips (ADT). However, further up the road in the vicinity of Joshuatown Road, the data shows a slight decrease in ADT. The explanation for the difference is not apparent. Data on "rate of speed" is not available.

In the past year, construction of a golf course in East Haddam just north of the Lyme town line resulted in additional truck traffic on 156. Route 156 is narrow and winding through Lyme, with several sharp curves. Complaints about others driving too fast, failing to turn off high beams and "hogging" the road were mentioned in the questionnaires, but one individual noted that there was probably little that the town could do about the problem. Experience elsewhere has shown that road widening and straightening often results in increased speeds when people feel the road looks safer. CONNDOT is currently in the process of making sight line improvements at several major Route 156 intersections. Future development to the north of Lyme, including potential completion of Route 11, which now terminates at Salem Four Corners, and new development in East Haddam and Salem may result in increased use of Route 156 as a through road.

Other capital improvements during the decade have included a new emergency operations center in the Hamburg Firehouse, tennis courts, new heating and cooling systems in several town buildings, a new dog pound, removal of the town's underground storage tanks, and building a roof shelter over recycling bins at the recycling center. Lyme has a very high rate of participation in recycling programs and has been a regional leader in household hazardous waste collection. The town is currently participating in a regional effort to build a permanent household hazardous waste collection facility in Essex. During the decade, the town also restored the "swimming hole" at Moulson Park on MacIntosh Road, and expansion of the library is being planned.

The town continues to be supportive of private efforts to maintain important cultural institutions within Lyme. The private efforts of the Lyme Public Hall Association members have been successful in maintaining and improving the Lyme Public Hall. The Hamburg Fair continues under the auspices of the Lyme Grange and will celebrate its one hundredth anniversary in 2001.

The Land Use Review Process

Between 1970 and 1990, the Connecticut General Assembly created multiple new regulatory programs directed at protection of specific natural resources, including tidal and inland wetlands, controlling sedimentation and erosion problems, coastal resources, floodplain management, energy conservation, and water pollution control. Each resource protection program led to new requirements for local land use commissions. Other state legislative action required consideration of affordable housing. The result was a complex local regulatory system requiring a high level of knowledge on the part of volunteer commissioners and staff. Since 1990, the introduction of new regulatory programs has slowed considerably. However, new practices and techniques to deal with land use issues continue to evolve. Lyme is due for a review of its land use regulations to assure that all available tools are in place. While State enabling legislation for local land use regulations allows commissions to address infrastructure and environmental concerns, the Statutes are largely silent on design considerations. Regulations can assure that health and safety problems are avoided, but are generally ineffective in addressing "character" issues. Concerns about inappropriate residential building scale, location and design are difficult to address through the regulatory process.

CRITICAL ISSUES

Preserving Community Character

The visual character of Lyme results from a combination of beautiful and abundant natural resources, interspersed with cultural features that are typically small in scale and sit gently on the rural landscape. Over the years, much of the "natural" appearance of Lyme has changed significantly, from wooded hills to farm fields, and now, back to woods. The loss of significant stands of hemlock continues to change the appearance of parts of Lyme. Riverfront industry, including quarrying and shipping, has come and gone over the years. Recent construction has consisted primarily of new single family homes, some of which are very large in size and scale. With all the changes, the issue is to maintain an aesthetically pleasing and functionally diverse natural landscape while allowing

new development which complements rather than conflicts with or overwhelms the land. In the future, appropriate building design and location will continue to be an issue for Lyme. The 1999 questionnaire asked people what they like best about Lyme. Almost 60% of those responding (333 responses) used the words "rural character" to express their favorite aspect. Other words used frequently include "natural beauty", the "forests, streams and rivers", and "open space". "privacy", "quiet" and "peace".

Lyme appreciates **BOTH** the desire for privacy by many of its individual residents **AND** its small town sense of cooperation and community. Over 10 percent of the questionnaire responders said that what they liked best about Lyme was the privacy, peace and quiet. Almost twice that number said they liked their friends and neighbors from Lyme and the strong sense of community they experience here. With many of Lyme's people being weekend or part time residents, combined with electronic technology that allows other people to work at home, people have the ability to become increasingly detached from the greater community if they wish. Unlike other more suburban communities, Lyme has fewer places where casual social interaction can occur. It is especially important to maintain local cultural institutions and organizations that provide opportunity for community participation.

Preserving Open Space

There are many reasons for a town to encourage open space preservation within its boundaries. These include protecting natural resources to assure public health, such as maintaining drinking water quality, and assuring public safety, by avoiding downstream flooding. Another reason is to sustain biodiversity and wildlife habitat, especially where areas of unique habitat are of international significance. Open space is also preserved to provide linkages for wildlife migration and to establish recreational greenways. Undeveloped natural areas are essential in maintaining the visual character of the town. And finally, open space typically demands few town services, thus providing a minimal impact on local service costs.

In 1990, about 84% of the land area of Lyme was undeveloped. About one third of the undeveloped area was land committed to open space, including substantial acreage in Nehantic State Forest and Selden Neck State Park, and about 400 acres owned by The Nature Conservancy. Between 1990 and 1999, the Lyme Land Conservation Trust added 900 acres in easements and 190 acres in fee ownership to the town's protected conservation lands. Much has been accomplished in recent years, but there are still more than 65 parcels of 50 acres or more in Lyme. The potential for additional residential development is great.

Restricting future economic development

Lyme has two small commercial areas, in Hamburg and Hadlyme, totaling about 15 acres. The marina at Hamburg Cove is included in this total. Other economic development activities throughout the town include farming and resource extraction (sand, gravel, wood). Responses to the 1999 Plan questionnaire indicate that there is very little interest in additional commercial or industrial activity in Lyme, with the exception of agricultural uses. Responses to Question 15 indicated that a majority feel that mixed uses, tourism activities, commercial and industrial uses should be discouraged. In Question 16, two thirds of those responding felt that additional commercial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged, although about 28 percent felt that some commercial activity should be carefully encouraged. Suggestions for additional commercial activity included home businesses or cottage industries. There was some support specifically for a small eatery, variously described as a bakery, deli, café, or luncheonette. Further comments indicated that many were concerned that additional commercial development would interfere with the quiet atmosphere in Lyme. About 80 percent of the responses felt that any industrial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged. There was little support for any industrial activity.

Maintaining population diversity

Not everyone wants to live in a rural setting, where shopping and service appointments require considerable traveling, and the daily commute to work may take up a significant amount of time each day. However, as suburban development spreads and rural areas within reasonable distance of employment and services become increasingly rare, the demand for such locations drive up prices beyond that which is affordable to many potential residents. Housing affordability thus becomes an issue for many. Increasing the supply of housing to meet market demand would also result in the conversion of the "rural" character to one that is more suburban. Lyme and other rural towns continue to struggle with the dilemma of high housing costs resulting from a demand for that which the town represents. Town officials and local citizens have struggled to find a way to create or retain affordable housing that is compatible with a rural, rather than urban setting. The Affordable Housing Committee has had success in creating four new affordable homes, and hopes to continue the effort in the future.

In general, those responding to the Plan Questionnaire were not supportive of affordable housing in Lyme. There was a slight preference for accessory apartments or garage apartments as now permitted in the Zoning Regulations. Opposition was strong, however, to most other forms of affordable housing. Responses were least unfavorable to elderly housing. (See Appendix.)

Keeping up the infrastructure

Routine maintenance and minor drainage and sight line improvements are necessary to keep Lyme's roads in good condition. However, major efforts to widen, straighten or install extensive storm drainage would threaten the rural appearance of Lyme. Care must be taken to maintain town roads, and eliminate potential safety hazards such as icing, without significantly changing the current visual character. A frequently voiced concern about roads is the amount of truck traffic and speeding vehicles on Route 156, a state highway. Any proposed improvements to 156 by the State to accommodate additional traffic should be carefully monitored to assure that such activities do not significantly diminish the scenic character of the road. Efforts are underway to improve sight lines at the intersections of Route 156 and Bill Hill, Ely Ferry, Joshuatown and Mount Archer Roads.

The responses to the Plan Questionnaire indicate that many residents recognize the need to provide adequate but modest space for town services. Improvements to public facilities should be made to introduce more efficient technology and adequately house town functions, but in a manner that preserves the architectural character and scale of such facilities.

LYME'S VISION AND GOALS

Many of the people responding to the Plan Questionnaire took the time to include thoughtful written comments about the Lyme in which they would like to live. Almost all who wrote comments felt strongly about the importance of maintaining the beautiful, quiet rural character of their community. The following "vision statement" is largely derived from those questionnaire responses.

Lyme is a quiet rural community. Scattered homes lie among the wooded hills and along the clear streams flowing down to coves and marshes of the Connecticut River Estuary. Sailors return to Hamburg Cove after time on the water. Life in Lyme has a timeless, unhurried quality. There is an aged, well-worn character to its landscape, with houses and the few commercial and civic uses fitting comfortably on the land. Lyme was once a busier place, with quarrying, lumbering, fishing and farming providing employment for Lyme families, but time has removed all but the traces of such activity. While growth pressure in southeastern and coastal Connecticut has resulted in suburban sprawl and a heightened pace of activity in many other nearby towns, Lyme remains quietly "off the beaten path".

Lyme residents have a strong appreciation for the natural resources that bless the area. The Connecticut River Estuary and its tributaries are recognized nationally and internationally as a unique natural area. In the future, preservation of these special resources will be assured through a series of connected greenways that preserve the water quality, habitat and visual quality of the community. Existing views and vistas will be preserved, and perhaps, new vistas will be opened to recall the agricultural heritage of the town. The people of Lyme will still be able to go out and look at the stars, unhindered by the glare of light pollution from nearby development. New homes will be compatible with and respect the scale and design of Lyme's rural New England character.

Lyme residents appreciate their sense of community, but value the privacy that the rural landscape provides. Residents are willing to forego quick and easy access to retail businesses and services and to travel longer distances to employment so that they may enjoy the peace that Lyme provides. In-town services will remain limited in size and only in areas where such uses already exist. Hamburg Cove will still provide refuge to boaters, but only at the level that is now provided.

Lyme will not attempt to become frozen in time, but will adjust to the demands and opportunities of modern life. As new technologies create the possibilities of new lifestyles, Lyme will adjust its regulations and requirements to allow people to work at home or to live in non-traditional family households. Change will occur as a result of our changing society, but in a way that preserves the quality of life and the natural resources of Lyme.

Goals

The principal goal of Lyme's future conservation and development activities is to maintain the rural character of Lyme. This will be accomplished by the following activities.

- continuing to protect and preserve the town's natural resources and the rural landscape.
- encouraging volunteer participation in community activities, while respecting residents' desire for privacy in a peaceful and serene atmosphere.
- supporting limited government services and amenities at a rural scale,

- encouraging all new development to choose a scale and design which is compatible with the rural landscape.

CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As required by *Section 8-23* of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed this Plan Revision for consistency with the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 1998-2003, adopted by the State Legislature in 1998.

On the State Plan's Locational Guide Map, much of Lyme is included within "Areas of Critical Environmental Concern". More than half of the town is either designated as a Preservation Area or a Conservation Area. In Preservation Areas, the State Plan recommends that structural development be avoided, except as directly consistent with preservation values. In Conservation Areas, the recommended policy is to *"plan and manage, for the long-term public benefit, the lands contributing to the state's need for food, fiber, water and other resources, open space, recreation and environmental quality and ensure that changes in use are compatible with the identified conservation values"*.

The remainder of Lyme is designated as Rural Land. The principal policy for Rural Lands is to *"discourage structural development forms and intensities which exceed on-site carrying capacity for water supply and sewage disposal and therefore cannot function on a permanent basis and are inconsistent with adjacent open rural character or conservation areas or which are more appropriately located in Rural Community Centers"*. The State Plan shows one small Rural Community Center, located along Route 156 in the area of the Town Hall. Rural Community Centers are designated as suitable for future clustering of more intensive development, including public service needs of the municipality.

A comparison between the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the Lyme Plan shows complete consistency between the two plans. The State Plan is based on an overall philosophy of "anti-sprawl", directing growth to those areas of Connecticut where infrastructure such as roads, public water and public sewers already exist, or where infrastructure can easily be expanded. In contrast, the Plan also recommends that intensive growth be avoided in sensitive environmental areas and areas where little infrastructure exists. Lyme meets both criteria.

The Connecticut River Estuary Region's Plan of Development was updated in 1995. The Regional Plan also designates much of Lyme as a resource protection area or as "rural residential". The regional policy for rural residential areas is to *"allow development to proceed in a manner which maintains the present open appearance and character through well-designed low density primarily residential uses, but including home occupations and accessory apartments"*. Two village areas are shown on the regional plan, at Hamburg and Hadlyme. The Regional Plan based many of its recommendations on local plans, including Lyme's 1990 Plan.

CONSISTENCY WITH COASTAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND GOALS

Lyme is a coastal municipality as a result of its frontage on the Connecticut River Estuary. Under the Connecticut General Statutes, such municipalities must assure that their Plans of Conservation and Development follow the goals and policies of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. While Lyme has not prepared a specific plan for the town's coastal area, the 1990 Plan and its 2001 Revisions are consistent with Coastal Management Act. The comprehensive goal of the Act is *"to insure that the development, preservation or use of the land and water resources of the coastal area proceeds in a manner consistent with the capability of the land and water resources to support development, preservation or use without significantly disrupting either the natural environment or sound economic growth"* (CGS Section 22a-92 (a) (1)). The Plan also is prepared with reasonable consideration for the restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, as required under *Section 8-23(a)* of the Connecticut General Statutes. As also required by statute, Lyme's land use commissions review proposed development projects in the coastal area for their impact on coastal resources, to assure that adverse impacts have been minimized before approval is granted. When appropriate, coastal site plan review is used as a tool for coastal resource protection and for giving priority to water-dependent uses.

The Lyme shore area consists of wooded upland hills which drop steeply down to significant and extensive areas of tidal and freshwater wetlands which are recognized nationally and internationally for their wildlife value. In some areas, including Joshua Rock, the riverbank rises dramatically in cliff-like fashion. Whalebone Cove and Hamburg Cove are relatively pristine estuarine

embayments, although the advancing rate of *Phragmites australis*, a non-native invasive plant species, is cause for concern. Other significant features include Selden Creek, tucked behind Selden Neck, and Eustasia Island off of the Deep River shore. Mapped coastal resources for Lyme include tidal wetlands, freshwater wetlands, estuarine embayments and flood hazard areas along the Connecticut River. The flood hazard areas are limited to the marshes and the bottom of the steep hillsides.

Lyme's goal for most of its coastal area is to preserve and protect the unique natural resources along the River. At the head of Hamburg Cove, zoning has designated a limited area as a Waterfront Business District specifically for water dependent marinas and boatyards only. Where an opportunity appears, the Town has made efforts and continues to seek passive public access to the riverfront at locations including Ely's Ferry Road and Brockway Ferry Road. Access at both locations is presently limited by the lack of adequate space for parking, but town efforts continue to seek additional land for open space in these areas and others on the Connecticut River and coves as it becomes available.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Protecting the Rural Landscape

People responding to the Plan Questionnaire overwhelmingly identified preservation of the town's rural character as the most important issue facing the town in 2000. When given the opportunity to comment on the town's future, many residents wrote eloquently about the town's natural beauty and secluded setting. To date, Lyme has retained its rural ambiance not only because it is geographically distant from urban areas, but also through a consistent planning approach that values rural qualities. This effort has been well-established, but additional measures should be considered.

1. Review local land use regulations and ordinances to assure that all available and appropriate land use tools are in place. Because regulations have been amended piecemeal in the past, organize and clarify regulation texts for efficiency of use.
2. Encourage maintenance of open fields and meadows to prevent loss of open views and vistas and to maintain habitat diversity. Include mowing requirements in stewardship plans for preserved open space land.

3. Encourage continuation of farming and preservation of farmland through preferential taxation and zoning regulations which accommodate farming needs. Support state enabling legislation for tax alternatives for open space.
4. Maintain an inventory of historic buildings and historic sites as a reference while reviewing development proposals, to assure that new development is sensitive to cultural resources. Develop an educational program which increases public awareness of historic locations.
5. When reviewing development plans, emphasize preservation of cultural features including stone walls, site trees, pastures, open fields, scenic views and vistas, and resources of archaeological interest.

Open Space

Lyme's important natural resources are recognized internationally, nationally, and on a state and regional basis. Most important, however, is the virtually unanimous support from Lyme's people for permanent protection of natural resources and community character through creation of permanent open space. While Lyme has been active in pursuit of permanent open space, a continued effort is necessary to assure that important land is protected in the future.

1. Preserve large, connected tracts of undeveloped and open land to maintain the town's rural character, protect public health and safety, and retain wildlife habitat. Develop a town-wide greenway plan and seek preservation over time of parcels which are located within the proposed greenways.
2. Preserve a variety of habitat types which will support a healthy biodiversity of plant and animal life. Manage preserved land to support and maintain a broad diversity of natural resource areas.
3. Continue town funding for a reserve account for town purchase of open space land. Such "opportunity" funds can allow for optioning land, paying for surveys and appraisals, and can enable the town to act quickly when a desirable property becomes available.
4. Continue to support an active town open space committee which works aggressively with the Lyme Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Connecticut River Gateway Commission, the State Department of Environmental Protection and other land preservation organizations to secure ownership or development rights for parcels identified for protection.
5. Utilize all available tools for preservation including open space tax abatement programs, grants, and conservation easements

6. Assure access to open space areas consistent with the purpose of the open space. Seek linkages with other nearby open space. Where possible, establish and maintain hiking trails.
7. Review criteria and standards for open space in subdivisions, including minimum acreage and percentage of the subdivision, quality and diversity of land, and access. Subdivision open space should serve as building blocks for the town's greenway system.
8. Through zoning, consider establishing a specific no-development, no-cut buffer along the Eight Mile and Connecticut Rivers.
9. Continue to work with the Connecticut River Gateway Commission to assure that standards in the Gateway Conservation Area preserve the natural and traditional character of the river scene and are adopted and enforced for all Gateway member towns. Views across the River of the western shore are an important part of Lyme's visual character.
10. Continue efforts to create viable public access to the water at Ely's Ferry and Brockway Ferry Road by obtaining additional land for parking.

Residential Development

"*Starter castles*", "*McMansions*", and "*trophy houses*" were some of the terms used by responders to the Plan Questionnaire to describe their concerns about large new homes which intrude upon the natural and historic character of Lyme. The large house phenomenon was the most frequent answer to what people liked least about their Town. There are other communities within and beyond Connecticut that have experienced a similar increase in large homes that clash with the town's character. Lyme can borrow from their experiences.

1. Consider requiring a minimum area of buildable land as part of each new subdivision lot, which assures that there is a suitable site for future development without threatening public health and safety.
2. Review zoning criteria for accessory residential uses including accessory apartments, home occupations and family criteria to assure that such criteria does not unnecessarily restrict how people live and work at home with newly available technology. Allow a broad range of home occupations consistent with the rural character of the community.
3. Continue town efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing including rental considerations for less affluent residents. Continue to

provide financial and regulatory support for the work of the Affordable Housing Committee.

4. Restrict location of new residential development to minimize visual impact. Develop standards for hilltop development to assure that new homes are located so as to preserve natural views and vistas. Such standards should also include lighting considerations so that hilltop development does not result in significant light pollution.
5. Consider creating a design handbook to guide architects and other designers toward designs which are compatible with the town's character. The handbook could also include examples of what should be avoided.
6. In order to maintain a rural scale for new structures, consider establishing a maximum square footage for any single structure, including residential development.

Economic Development

Conventional economic development programs have several public objectives, including tax base enhancement, job creation, and provision of services. Those who responded to the Plan Questionnaire placed a very low priority on additional commercial and industrial development in Lyme. The purpose of such development in Lyme is to provide a very limited selection of services to residents. Several responders indicated in additional comments that they were willing to sacrifice convenient access to services in order to live in a rural environment.

1. Areas presently zoned for commercial use are adequate to accommodate the community's requirements for the foreseeable future
2. Concentrate all commercial activities in locations currently zoned for commercial use. Discourage residential development in commercially zoned areas to assure that commercial zoning remains available for future commercial development.
3. Review zoning standards and site plan requirements for commercial development to assure that any new development or reuse of existing development sites will be well-designed, both functionally and aesthetically.
4. The area zoned for waterfront business is adequate to accommodate the community's requirements for the foreseeable future. The Waterfront Business District should be reserved for marinas, boatyards and other water dependent uses.

Infrastructure

The people of Lyme are generally satisfied with the level of services they receive from their local government. The major exception is a dissatisfaction with the discord surrounding questions of service levels and funding arrangements within Regional School District 18. When asked by the Plan Questionnaire what people liked least about Lyme, school issues were tied with large out-of-scale houses as the number one concern. The questionnaire responses also indicated that many people are concerned with speeding on Lyme roads, but there was also a feeling that speeding is an enforcement issue rather than an indication of needed road improvements. Approximately 90 percent of all responders said they were satisfied with Lyme's road network and 78 percent felt that the roads are sufficient to accommodate existing and future traffic. Responders were almost evenly divided on whether there was a need for pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways along roads in Lyme. Those who opposed such pathways were concerned about safety, cost and aesthetic impact. When asked (Question 40) whether people would support scenic road designation for any Lyme roads, about three fourths indicated positively. Eighty-seven people suggested that Joshuatown Road be designated as a local scenic road.

1. Continue to protect public health and safety by permitting development only in those areas shown to be capable of supporting on-site sewer and water supply systems. Implement an aggressive sewer avoidance program which includes regular inspections and maintenance of septic systems and required pumping.
2. Provide strict enforcement of codes and regulations and provide adequate staffing for review and enforcement of development.
3. Consider the need for adequate water sources for fire protection in reviewing all development proposals. Identify a suitable source of water from firefighting purposes for each new subdivision.
4. Limit future road construction and improvements to reduce the impact on the natural and visual environment. Continue a limited road maintenance and improvement program to assure safe and adequate access for all residents, school buses and emergency vehicles, but avoid major road widening and realignment which will change the character of local roads.
5. Consider adoption of a local scenic road ordinance under *Section 7-148* of the Connecticut General Statutes for roads such as Joshuatown and Grassy Hill Roads. Consider seeking scenic road status for Route 156 under the State's Scenic Road Program.

6. Study, designate and provide signage for bicycle routes where feasible.
7. Review and revise town road and drainage standards to include techniques for traffic calming and incorporate best management practices for drainage design. Incorporate provisions for reduction of non-point source water pollution for storm water runoff.
8. Consider access by emergency vehicles in the review and approval of new subdivisions.

Other recommendations:

1. When complete 2000 Census information is available, review information to determine if projections are correct and if there are any surprising results that should be addressed through an amendment to the plan.
2. Consider preparing a supplemental amendment to the Plan of Conservation and Development which more closely examines coastal resources and determine if further protection measures are possible.
3. Take measures to enlist and maintain community service volunteers to minimize the tax burden for community services.

MAPS

The 2001 Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development includes three maps.

- **Base Map** showing property lines, inland wetlands and tidal wetlands
Lyme is blessed with a complex network of inland and tidal wetlands, providing natural drainage ways for storm water runoff, valuable habitat for wildlife and aesthetic diversity to our landscape. The map shows the general location and extent of both inland and tidal wetlands for illustrative purposes only. The specific location of wetlands for regulatory purposes must be delineated in the field.
- **Zoning Map** showing zoning districts and floodplains
The Zoning Map is an update of the initial 1964 Plan, revised to July 26, 1974, and reaffirmed in the 1990 Town Plan.. Zoning districts are now shown on a property base map. The categories and densities established for the original zoning districts continue to be an appropriate guide for the

town's future development. At present, zoning information and assessor's property information is being integrated into a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS) for easier retrieval and understanding, which will support implementation of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

This map also includes the location of areas subject to flooding from major storms, as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The floodplain area on this map is for illustrative purposes only. For a more specific delineation, the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) should be consulted.

- **Greenbelt Plan** indicating the location of existing and proposed open space. *The Greenbelt Plan shows both existing protected open space and desirable future open space links. Existing open space includes both land owned outright by preservation interests and conservation easements which limit future development of land. Proposed linkages would create a network of protected open space providing significant areas of contiguous habitat, protection for streams and rivers, and preservation of the rural character of Lyme.*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Lyme, Connecticut Plan of Development. 1964. Technical Planning Associates. Consultants

Lyme, Connecticut, Plan of Development, November 1990. TPA Design Group, Consultants.

Eight Mile River Watershed Project maps and materials - For more information, contact the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Service at (860) 345-4511, or on the Web at <http://www.canr.uconn.edu/ces/nemo.eightmile.html>

APPENDIX

RESULTS OF THE LYME PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION QUESTIONNAIRE

In March 2000, the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission mailed survey questionnaires to all Lyme residents and property owners. Approximately 1400 questionnaires were distributed, and 420 were returned for tabulation by the April deadline. The 30 percent response is considered an excellent return for a mailed survey and shows the high level of interest in Lyme's future among its people.

Not every question was answered on every returned survey, so the tabulation totals in most instances do not add up to 420. Occasionally, people provided more than one answer to a question, and in such cases, both answers were included in the totals. Several questions appear to have been confusing to respondents. In those instances, the apparent confusion is noted below.

The results of this survey are not a measurement of public opinion, since the responses depend on the willingness of individuals to participate in the questionnaire. However, these results are a strong indication of public attitudes and help identify those issues that concern Lyme's people.

The survey was divided into several parts. The first part was intended to find out the characteristics of those who responded. The second part asked about residential development and affordable housing. Next, the questionnaire asked about commercial and industrial development issues. Fourth, a section on natural resources was included. Open space and public facilities were addressed next. Finally, the survey form provided space for people to write longer comments on a series of subjects. The responses are tallied below, in the questionnaire format. Where a percentage is shown, it is based on the number of responses to that specific question.

ABOUT YOURSELF

Please tell us something about yourself. This survey is designed to protect your privacy, but it would be helpful to know the concerns of different age groups and neighborhoods. Feel free to circle answers or place X's in spaces provided.

1. *What part of town do you live in (where is your property located closest to)?*

<u>92</u> Hadlyme	<u>77</u> Hamburg
<u>52</u> Roger's Lake	<u>53</u> Grassy Hill
<u>81</u> Other (specify): Joshuatown (10), Pleasant Valley (2), Lord Hill, Sterling Hill(2), Mitchell Hill, Beaverbrook, and Uncas Lake	

2. How many years have you lived in Lyme?

<u>65</u>	Less than 3 years (15%)	<u>124</u>	10 – 25 years (30%)
<u>103</u>	3 – 9 years (25%)	<u>126</u>	25 or more years (30%)

3. Where was the last place you lived before you came to Lyme?

In Connecticut:

Chester (4), Bloomfield (2), Bristol, Canton, Clinton (6), Colchester (2), Cromwell, Darien, Deep River, East Haddam (13), East Lyme (11), Essex (11), Fairfield (5), Farmington (4), Glastonbury (6), Groton/Mystic (18), Greenwich (2), Guilford (2), Hamden (3), Hartford (2), Ledyard (5), Litchfield, Madison (6), Meriden, Milford (2), Middletown (3), Montville, North Stonington (3), New London (2), New Cannan, New Haven (2), Norwalk (3), North Haven (2), Norwich (6), Old Saybrook (10), Old Lyme (50), Ridgefield, Riverside, South Windsor, Trumbull (2), Vernon (2), West Haven (2), Wallingford (12), Waterbury, Waterford (6), Westport, West Hartford (2), Westbrook, Wethersfield, Windham, and Woodstock. (1)

Out of State: AZ, CA (14), FLA, NH, IL, KE, MA (8), ME (2), MI (2), MO, NJ (10), NY (3), PA (6), RI, TX, VA, Washington, DC (1).

Out of Country: Bangkok, Tokyo, Switzerland, West Indies, London, Italy, Panama

4. You are:

(88% of answers)	<u>342</u>	A year round Lyme resident and property owner
	<u>8</u>	A year round resident renting property in Lyme.
	<u>31</u>	An occasional use resident and property owner
	<u>0</u>	An occasional use resident renting property
	<u>5</u>	A non-resident and property owner in Lyme.
	<u>2</u>	Other: building a house in Lyme

5. How many persons in each of these age groups live in your residence? Please circle the age group that represents the age of the respondent filling out this questionnaire as well as indicating number in household

<u>29</u> households	0 – 4 years	<u>38</u> households	23 – 35 years
<u>65</u> households	5 – 17 years	<u>78</u> households	36 – 45 years
<u>31</u> households	18 – 22 years	<u>207</u> households	46 – 64 years
		<u>120</u> households	65 years and over

- Note: This was one of the questions that seemed to confuse many respondents. Very few circled the age of the one filling out the questionnaire. As a result, the totals provided below are the number of households who reported having a member within a specific age group. Thus, some families are reported more than once since

- they may include both children and adults of various ages. It was not possible to obtain a clear picture of household size, since many people neglected to indicate the number of residents in each age group.

6. *How important were each of the following to your choice of Lyme for your home?*

	<u>Most</u> <u>Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Important</u>
<i>Schools</i>	93	18	148
<i>Low density population</i>	284	108	8
<i>Rural atmosphere</i>	334	69	4
<i>Natural resources</i>	230	126	36
<i>Potential for Economic Development</i>	12	35	318
<i>Location relative to employment</i>	37	114	213
<i>Taxes</i>	144	178	58
<i>Level of Services</i>	24	119	212

Other: open space (6), water(2), family (11), community/people (5), zoning (3), remote, rural, conservative ethics, spent summers here as a child (1)

7. *How many in your household currently attend school in:*

Regional District 18 schools? 38 families Other Schools? 30 families (includes college, daycare, private schools)

8. *Your place of employment:*

121 Retired **47** Work at home
20 Work in Lyme **214** Work outside Lyme

If outside of Lyme, where?

In Connecticut (towns): Berlin, Bloomfield (2), Branford (2), Bridgeport, Cheshire, Chester (3), Clinton (5), Deep River (2), Durham, East Haddam (2), East Lyme (11), Essex (7), Fairfield, Gales Ferry, Guilford (3), Hamden, Hartford (20), Madison (3), Meriden (3), Middletown (13), Montville (2), Mystic/Groton (**27**), New Haven (8), New London (18), Norwalk, Norwich (5), Old Lyme (21), Old Saybrook (12), Rocky Hill, Shelton (1), Simsbury, Storrs, Trumbull, Wallingford (3), Waterford (10), Westbrook, Wethersfield, Windsor; other Connecticut (3)

Outside Connecticut: Atlanta, Boston (2), California, Denver, Long Island Sound (3), London, Massachusetts (3), New England (3), New York State, New York City (**28**), Philadelphia (2), Rhode Island, Tokyo, and Washington. (1)

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

There has been an increase in residential development in Lyme over the past decade with large houses becoming more popular. Please answer the following questions with respect to residential development in Lyme:

9. *Should changes in the Plan of Conservation & Development further affordable housing in Lyme?*

130 Yes **210** No **59** No Opinion

10. *Please comment on the following affordable housing initiatives with respect to your support:*

* *Expansion of non-conventional means, i.e., conversion of a single family residence as currently permitted in Section 3.17, accessory dwellings or garage apartments?*

175 Favor **171** Oppose **70** No Opinion

* *Permit conventional multi-unit dwellings, i.e., condominiums, apartments, townhouses, elderly housing?*

58 Favor **334** Oppose **25** No Opinion

* *Permit elderly housing only?*

158 Favor **172** Oppose **83** No Opinion

* *Permit greater density development through cluster/open space subdivisions (single family houses on smaller lots with common open space so that overall density remains the same as in conventional subdivision)?*

105 Favor **272** Oppose **35** No Opinion

• *A decrease in single family acreage requirements (smaller lot sizes)?*

32 Favor **375** Oppose **15** No Opinion

* *No town action?*

128 Favor **132** Oppose **100** No Opinion

11. *Would you support the expenditure of town funds in support of affordable housing initiatives?*

126 Yes 253 No 34 No Opinion

12. *Do you feel there is a need for housing alternatives other than single-family residential in Lyme?*

87 Yes 305 No 17 No Opinion

If so, please rate the following alternative housing types in terms of level of importance within Lyme for future planning consideration.

	<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not Important</u>
<i>Accessory Apartments</i>	39	46	62
<i>Apartment Buildings</i>	8	8	120
<i>Elderly Housing</i>	40	66	40
<i>Condominium Development</i>	5	24	106
<i>Residential Life Care</i>	24	42	71

Other: subsidize rents (3), elderly only, non profit life care, duplexes

13. *Would you support some limiting of the size of residential structures that can be built in Lyme?*

216 Yes 147 No 42 No Opinion

Comments: Over fifty people wrote additional comments in response to this question. There is considerable public concern about the increasing number of large houses being built in Lyme. One responder expressed concern in the following way: "So-called trophy homes destroy features of nature that attract homebuilders in the first place". Another stated that "people come here for the beauty and then ruin it". Large houses were described variously as "ostentatious", as "McMansions" and as "pretentious megahomes". One person stated that "mansions are not rural". Several people specifically mentioned new homes on Cove Road as being out of character with Lyme. Maximum house size limits were suggested by many people, with caps ranging from 3,000 to 10,000 square feet. Other people suggested that house size should be proportional to lot size, or that larger houses should be required to have larger setbacks or buffers. One person felt that if there is enough land and appropriate screening, limitations on size are unnecessary. A few people felt that larger houses paid higher taxes and thus were a benefit to the community.

14. Current zoning regulations in Lyme allow for minimum lot sizes of one (1), two (2) and three (3) acres. Do you feel that these minimum lot size requirements are reasonable and sufficient?

296 Yes 107 No 8 No Opinion

Minimum lot size requirements should be:

112 Larger 23 Smaller 149 Same

If not, please explain why. Comments in response to this question focused on water quality concerns for the most part. Several responses indicated that larger lot sizes were more appropriate for the rural character of Lyme. One person defined "rural" as "low density". There was some limited support for smaller lot sizes or clustered single family homes to meet affordable housing needs.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Lyme is unique in the Estuary Region in that it has remained substantially rural and secluded throughout its history. Residents have been willing to travel miles to neighboring towns to access services and goods, and have supported efforts to limit the level of economic development that the Town is willing to accept. As a result of this mindset and the beauty of the Town, Lyme faces slightly different land use pressures that include an increased desire for high-end residential development and the increase in population that such development will create. For comparison, several of the following questions repeat a previous survey from about ten years ago. Please answer the questions so that the Town can determine how to best address these development pressures.

15. Please indicate whether the following land use types should be encouraged (E), limited (L) or discouraged (D):

	ENCOURAGE	LIMIT	DISCOURAGE
___ Single family residential	249	126	26
___ Multi-family residential	24	81	297
___ Mixed use (comm and resid.)	38	94	250
___ Conservation Land/Open Space	381	30	6
___ Recreational Facilities	163	165	64
___ Tourism Destinations	33	112	258
___ Industrial/Light Industrial	16	82	309
___ Commercial	23	105	277
___ Marine	105	211	75
___ Municipal Facilities	62	222	108
___ Agricultural Uses	362	42	4

Other. Encourage the following - coffee shop, small restaurant, commercial services for residents only, gas docks at marina, farmland restoration, open space, hunting and fishing

16. To what extent should Lyme encourage additional commercial development, even on a limited scale?

<u>4</u>	Strongly Encourage	<u>93</u>	Discourage
<u>13</u>	Encourage	<u>178</u>	Strongly Discourage
<u>110</u>	Cautiously Encourage	<u>10</u>	No Opinion

If so, where and what type? While two thirds of those responding felt that additional commercial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged, there were several dozen suggestions for further development. The most common suggestion was to encourage more home businesses or cottage industries, including crafts, information and finance, bed and breakfasts, agriculture and native products. Some people also felt the town would benefit from a small eatery, bakery, deli, luncheonette, or diner. Others suggested a convenience store and a gas station.

17. To what extent should Lyme encourage industrial or light industrial development, even on a limited scale?

<u>6</u>	Strongly Encourage	<u>106</u>	Discourage
<u>10</u>	Encourage	<u>222</u>	Strongly Discourage
<u>59</u>	Cautiously Encourage	<u>10</u>	No opinion

If so, where and what type? Almost 80 percent of the responses to this question

felt that industrial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged. However, there were some suggestions for limited additional development, including residence-based cottage industries, research and development, marine and small boat building, and expansion in existing locations. Three people suggested that "e-business" was appropriate for Lyme.

18. Please indicate your opinion with regard to the need for the following uses in Lyme's commercial district with an "X":

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
Food Stores	111	234	56
Clothing Stores	9	370	33
Furniture Store	7	372	33
Hardware Store	63	297	54
Pharmacy	65	283	111
Automotive	33	321	52
Banking/Financial	49	312	52
Personal Services	39	284	87
Restaurant	136	212	79

Other: coffee shop, mom and pop sandwiches, bakery, eatery, ATM machine, post office, antiques, B&Bs, dry cleaner, café (not Burger King), Essex-type boutiques

19. *Should the Town rezone existing residential areas so as to increase commercial areas, which are presently located in Hamburg and Hadlyme?*

43 Yes 353 No 24 No opinion

Comments: Comments included "Absolutely Not!" (9), "no more" (6), and "enough already". Several people stated that they were willing to go out of town, typically to Old Lyme, for commercial services. Only one individual stated that more commercial development was desirable to increase the tax base.

20. *Do you feel that recent development in Lyme has been in keeping with the character of the town?*

245 Yes 113 No 54 No Opinion

Comments: Twenty four people mentioned large houses as out of character with the town, with specific references to "grotesque large mansions" and "architectural misfits". One person said that such houses were "tasteless baroque", too large and too fancy for the rustic character of the town. Nine people specifically mentioned

new houses on Cove Road as not fitting in. Twelve people felt that the town should discourage creation of new roads. Three people expressed concern that the new golf course development in East Haddam would cause additional traffic on Route 156.

21. *Are there any aspects of new development which you feel should receive more attention from town officials?*

132 Yes 117 No 137 No Opinion

If so, please indicate what areas or issues should receive more attention: Many responders listed specific areas about which they are concerned. These include the following subjects:

Limit house size (31 responses), create architectural guidelines (7), control development on ridges (6), limit clear cutting of trees (6), control speeding (5), and limit the total number of new houses (2). Several people also felt that there should be strong or greater enforcement of environmental regulations. One person suggested greater use of conservation easements.

22. *Several Estuary Region towns have adopted ordinances which establish non-regulatory (advisory only) Architectural or Design Review Boards. Would you support some level of design review to guide design efforts in our commercial and waterfront districts?*

304 Yes 81 No 31 No Opinion

Comments: While there was broad support for a design review board, many people added a note of caution to their support. One person wrote, "yes, but don't get carried away", and another marked "yes", but added "be cautious". Several people noted that composition of the Board would be important. Several also suggested that if size of new structures were limited and new structures were screened, there should not be a need for such a board. Several people emphasized that the Board should be advisory only. Others felt that the Board should encourage traditional design and avoid extremes. A few stated that it is not possible to legislate taste. Several others stated they felt it was "too late".

23. In Lyme, the Hadlyme-Chester Ferry area on Ferry Road is currently designated as an "Historic District". Are there other areas in Lyme that may be suitable for such consideration?

157 Yes 56 No 203 No Opinion

If so, where? A tally of specific suggestions is listed below.

Hamburg (34)	Hamburg Cove (18)	Sterling City (20)
Grassy Hill (12)	Bill Hill (6)	Hadlyme 4 Corners (5)
Ely Ferry (5)	Birch Mill (2)	Sawmill (1)
Tiffany Farm (3)	Reeds Landing (2)	Brockway Ferry (3)
cemeteries (4)	Fairgrounds (3)	Hamburg Bridge (2)
Harding Farm (3)	8 Mile River (3)	

Note: A large percentage (almost half) checked "no opinion". There were numerous comments indicating that people did not know enough about this program to form an opinion. Many said they would need more information before making a choice.

24. Recent state legislation enables Connecticut municipalities to establish "village districts" thereby allowing for the adoption of additional standards and criteria directed toward their preservation. Do you feel the Town should pursue opportunities to establish "village district" designation for areas such as Hamburg and Hadlyme?

270 Yes 59 No 94 No Opinion

Are there any other such areas in Lyme where such a district may be appropriate? If so, where? Sterling City (12), Reeds Landing, Grassy Hill, Rogers Lake, Hamburg (3), Hamburg Cove (3), Pleasant Valley (2), Hadlyme (3), Joshuatown, and Bill Hill.

Note: As with the previous question, many people said they did not have enough information to form an opinion.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resource base of the Estuary Region and the Town of Lyme in particular is one of its prime assets. As these valuable and finite resources lure more and more development to the area, natural resources will require a greater degree of stewardship if we are to protect them for generations to come

25. Do you feel that there are any specific natural resource areas in town that should be preserved?

378 Yes 14 No 24 No Opinion

If so, please indicate how important you feel each of the following natural resources are to you:

	<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not Important</u>
Rivers and coves	356	54	6
Wetlands (inland and tidal)	286	108	12
Farmland	262	136	14
Streambelts	249	127	7
Woodlands and fields	273	124	8
Eight Mile valley	293	99	11
Exposed ledges, ridges and hilltops	238	26	30

Other (specify): Lakes (3)

26. Do you feel that there are any specific properties or parcels which should be targeted for conservation in the event they become available?

204 Yes 24 No 173 No Opinion

If so, which properties should be preserved? Many people answered "yes" without making specific suggestions. Suggestions are tallied below:

waterfront (14)	Beaverbrook Area (3)	Joshuatown area (8)
Ely Ferry area (5)	Tidelands (3)	Grassy Hill (5)
Czikowsky (8)	Mt. Archer (6)	Cooper property (2)
Along the EightMile (10)	Whalebone Cove (5)	Rogers Lake (2)
Hamburg Cove (13)	Tiffany Farm (8)	wetlands (6)
farmland (9)	Candlewood Ledge (7)	Davidson
Mellons at Joshua Rock	large wooded tracts (8)	ridgetops (4)
any/all we can (19)	Harding Farm (2)	Jewett (7)

... And one person stated that "we are getting obsessed with open space!"

27. *The Gateway Conservation Zone is a protective overlay district paralleling the Connecticut River from Old Lyme and Old Saybrook north to East Haddam and Haddam. Standards overseen by the Gateway Commission include protection of the scenic quality of the Connecticut River viewshed. In Lyme, the current construction setback from the Connecticut River in the Gateway Conservation Zone is 50 feet. Do you feel that Lyme should consider increasing this buffer area in order to further protect the river from the aesthetic and environmental impacts of riverfront development?*

310 Yes **64** No **38** No Opinion

Comments: Six people expressed surprise that the current setback was “only” fifty feet. Thirty eight people expressed a preference for a specific buffer width, ranging from 75’ to 200’. The setback favored by 22 people was 100 feet. One person stated that the buffer should be flexible depending on topography, rather than a fixed distance. Several others felt that the existing setback should be better enforced, or should remain as a vegetative buffer. Six people expressed concern about clear cutting on the riverbank. Several people thought it was “too late” to protect the scenic quality of the river.

28. *Do you feel that the Town should consider minimizing development along its ridges and hilltops?*

316 Yes **56** No **42** No Opinion

Comments: Several people felt that ridgetop protection was “very important”. As one individual put it, “a view from the hills is stunning for one and intrusive for the rest of us”. Others felt that houses should be located below the ridgetop, on the side of the hill, in a less conspicuous location. One person said that the hills are the town’s best feature. Two people felt there was a need to control exterior lighting of hilltop houses.

OPEN SPACE

“Open Space” is land which is set aside, either in a natural state or for recreational and/or passive purposes and is protected from future development in perpetuity. Open space may include nature preserves (i.e. wildlife habitat, natural resource areas), wetlands (tidal and inland), farms, cemeteries, forests, parks, beaches and other recreational facilities. It may be privately owned (by a land trust or neighborhood association, for example) or publicly owned (by the town or the state). Some open space land is available for public use, while access to other land is restricted. Open space planning can link land parcels to form wildlife corridors or protect important wetland systems, or provide trails for passive recreation. If land is to be set aside for open space, its characteristics, method of acquisition and long term use must be

planned in advance of proposed development activities.

29. In your opinion, the Town of Lyme:

81 Has enough open space 320 Needs more open space.

30. Do you think the Town of Lyme should use taxpayer money to buy and maintain open space in the town?

301 Yes 87 No 31 No Opinion

31. Would you be willing to contribute higher taxes to support an active open space acquisition/maintenance program?

267 Yes* 122 No 28 No Opinion

*Many people added the comment that depended on how much higher the taxes would be.

If yes, how much of a tax increase would you be willing to support for the purpose of open space acquisition/maintenance?

59 0-1% 96 1-3% 70 3-5% 44 5-10% 27 >10%

32. An open space conveyance tax is a local tax charged at the time of sale of property and is used for establishing a fund for the purpose of open space acquisition. Would you support State legislation for such an open space initiative?

257 Yes 99 No 49 No Opinion*

* Many who answered "no opinion" also noted that they needed more information on this program before they could make a decision.

33. Please indicate how important each of the following open space categories is to you.

	<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not Important</u>
Active recreation (fields, tennis, pools)	42	137	210
Passive recreation (trails, nature preserves)	219	159	29
Protection of wildlife habitat	292	107	11

Protection of stream belts	282	107	8
Protection of tidal and inland wetlands	294	125	9
Protection of Eight Mile River valley	286	114	11
Protection of aquifer areas	285	106	9
Protection of ridges and hilltops	232	143	29
Protection of town character	302	95	12
Provide greater river and cove access	137	122	142
Provide greater boating/fishing access	85	133	54
Protection of large unfragmented tracts	247	131	21

Other (Specify): Preserve farmland (5), more waterfront access (3), dredge Hamburg Cove, hunting (2), Rogers Lake (2)

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Public facilities include schools, roads, parks and municipal buildings and other structures. These facilities and the services they provide are paid for, in large part, through the property taxes that citizens pay. The following questions are designed to allow the town to determine what level of facilities improvements would be supported.

34. Please indicate how important each of the following recreation categories is to you.

	<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not Important</u>
Swimming areas/pools	96	127	184
Hiking/walking/nature trails	166	192	41
Recreation/community center	171	114	213
*Develop Hartman Park	125	140	213
Softball/baseball fields	13	111	270
Tennis courts	11	118	266
Parks/playgrounds	36	194	170
Skating/hockeyrinks	4	84	294
Cross-country skiing	35	145	212
Access for boating	56	164	176
Access for fishing	40	164	188

Other suggestions: soccer fields (2), horse trails, hunting (2), passive only, no pool

* The question concerning Hartman Park created considerable confusion. Quite a few people placed a question mark after this portion of the question, indicating they did not know what was being asked. Other said it depended on what type of development was intended. Still others stated that they like Hartman Park "just the way it is." Several people also stated that they did not know what Hartman Park is.

35. Please indicate how important each of the following capital improvement categories are to you.

	<u>Most Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not Important</u>
Improve municipal buildings	31	192	167
Develop recreational facilities	17	146	222
Develop/build a community/youth center	24	110	257
Purchase open space	213	126	64

Other: The only additional suggestion was to screen the recycling area behind town hall.

36. Currently, Lyme's police services are provided through Troop "F" State Police barracks in Westbrook. With increased development and traffic in the area, do you feel there is or may be a need for additional police services in the Town of Lyme?

138 Yes 220 No 60 No Opinion

Comments: Needed for speed/traffic control (11), may be needed in future (4), after sunset hours, stop vandalism, out on Hamburg Cove

37. Are you satisfied with Lyme's network of town and state roads?

376 Yes 35 No 8 No Opinion

If no, which road(s) should be upgraded and in what manner? Suggestions include filling potholes (2), eliminating dangerous curves, completing Route 11, repaving and drainage improvement.

38. Do you feel that the Town's system of roads is sufficient to accommodate existing and future traffic?

328 Yes 51 No 39 No Opinion

If no, please explain: There were many comments expressing the wish that roads not be over improved to the extent that they would lose their rural character

Others felt that development should be limited to fit existing road capacity rather than improving roads to accommodate new development. Those that indicated a need for some road improvements most frequently cited Route 156 as a problem road due to narrowness and sharp curves. Some felt that if 156 were straightened or widened it would only encourage higher vehicle speed.

39. Do you feel there is a need for pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways along roadways in Lyme?

181 Yes 204 No 35 No Opinion

Comments: Of those who felt that pedestrian and bikeways were desirable, fourteen specifically identified Route 156 as a preferred location. About an equal number felt that 156 was not a safe road for walking and biking. One person noted that the state bicycle map routes indicated in Lyme, including Route 156, Route 82 and Beaverbrook Road were unsafe. Several people felt that too many trees would need to be cut for bike lanes. The potential cost of bike lanes was a concern for many who felt they were unnecessary.

40. Would you support an initiative to designate any Lyme roadways as "scenic roads", thereby protecting their rural nature?

309 Yes 43 No 58 No Opinion

If so, which road(s): Eighty-seven people suggested Joshuatown Road. Grassy Hill was suggested by 34 people. Route 156 (24), Bill Hill (24), and Beaverbrook Road (22) were also popular. Other towns mentioned more than ten times included Ferry Road (14), Ely Ferry Road (16), Sterling City Road (14), Blood Street (11), Mt. Archer Road (18), and Cove Road (12). Twenty people said they felt that all roads were scenic.

COMMENTS

Answers to the following type questions have proven to be invaluable in understanding respondent's feelings regarding their Town. Your thoughts are welcomed and are very important.

41. What do you like **BEST** about Lyme? Out of 420 total responses, 333 people took the time to add additional comments. Many of the answers used similar words or phrases, as follows:

- 193 rural character
- 73 sense of community (people, friends, neighbors, residents)
- 64 natural beauty (beautiful, scenic beauty, beautiful scenery, beautiful place, beautiful landscape)
- 36 open spaces
- 34 forests, streams, river, wetlands, preservation of natural resources
- 32 little bureaucracy, well-run government
- 32 quiet, peaceful
- 31 low taxes, low tax rate
- 29 limited commercial and industrial development, not overly developed, controlled development

- 22 historic/colonial, traditional homes, New England character
- 22 low population, not too crowded
- 16 farms, farmland
- 15 schools, school system
- 13 absence of municipal services, limited government
- 12 privacy, seclusion, remoteness
- 11 hiking, outdoor recreation, nature activities

A sampling of quotes:

- * I like the postcard environment that surrounds me here. The rural character and unique charm need to be protected -
- * the feeling of living far out in the country even though there are plenty of amenities and bustle nearby -
- * the utter quiet except for the natural sounds that take over after the workday ends -
- * this area is untouched and most beautiful, yet totally livable -
- * mutual respect, gratitude admiration of our blessings of nature, friends and neighbors - these are our treasures.
- * the rivers, ridges, open fields and tasteful homes, sense of age and intimacy, and town meetings, rural, private, and low taxes
- * we feel that beautiful places like this bring interesting and pleasant people
- * I like everything about Lyme. I have been here all my life and never felt the urge to leave.
- * Community pride in the heritage and tranquility of our community.
- * Millions of acres are being paved over every day in this country. We are lucky to live here. We need places of beauty to visit to remind us of great gifts that come from peaceful rural settings. Not a day goes by when we aren't enriched by this town - it is worth fighting to preserve.
- * Sense of slower time and place
- * we consider ourselves lucky stewards. Lyme has the feel of an oasis - keeping that solitude is important.
- * I love the open fields, the stone walls, the old houses, the turkeys, the river and the great people
- * rural character, historic feeling, old houses, winding roads, cows, water, no shopping malls, funky old Hamburg Fair, watching eagles, hawks nesting in back yard, foxes, pubic halls, fish ladder, Selden Cove, cutting our own firewood, privacy, being able to have livestock, walking beautiful roads, visiting or waving to neighbors.

42. What do you like **LEAST** about Lyme? There were 260 responses to this question out of the total 420 questionnaires returned. The following issues or attributes were cited:

- 27 big houses, trophy houses, "mansionizing", ridgeline construction
- 27 schools (school board, educational system, building conditions, budget problems)
- 24 new development, suburban encroachment

- 22 speeding on Lyme roads
- 22 increase in traffic volume, increase in truck traffic.
- 18 ticks, deer
- 17 drive too far for services, lack of a grocery store
- 11 weekend residents/New Yorkers
- 9 lack of community involvement
- 8 lack of affordable housing alternatives
- 6 lack of police service
- 5 negative boating experience on Rogers Lake
- 5 no central, defined village
- 4 lack of diversity
- 4 population increase
- 3 lack of recreational facilities/youth facilities
- 3 poor river access
- 2 suburban encroachment
- 1 loss of farming

A sampling of quotes:

- * presently, there isn't anything I dislike, but there could be problems as our secret becomes more public
- * the only thing I want is better newspaper delivery - we need more than TV news to form opinions
- * starter castles
- * expanded use of roads for heavy commercial trucks - loggers , gravel, too fast, no canvas covers, not enough room for oncoming cars on narrow roads
- * houses on the brow of Mt. Archer
- * the huge ugly houses being built do not enhance the landscape
- * that our kids cannot afford to live here, that farming is being squeezed out
- * I think the development around Hamburg Cove by starter castles and McMansions is very discouraging. The Cove is looking more like a pond as these homes get bigger and bigger.
- * I don't like all the rocks in my garden, and ticks.
- * the trend toward becoming a weekend habitat with a certain disdain for civic matters - part time residents who have no sense of community
- * what to do about schools - it seems there are always issues - I would expect better of Lyme and Old Lyme
- * environmental rules are too complicated for some landowners - must be simplified
- * people who move here to conquer their surroundings with big houses - the "look at me" attitude
- * traffic on 156
- * traffic on 156 - Grassy Hill and 156 are like a race track
- * high speed traffic on 156
- * increased traffic on 156
- * too many big houses popping up on hills
- * by and large, I am pretty much a happy camper and consider myself lucky to live here in Lyme
- * the strong economy in recent years has created a sense that the town is constantly

- under siege from development pressures. These threats are real. Generations of effort in creating this enchanted place can be lost forever in the span of 20 years
- * recent trend of huge houses being built in visually important areas - if someone wants to build a house in the middle of their 15 acres, fine, as long as I do not have to look at it. Those who want to build monster houses should do so in some other town
 - * sound pollution - redundant siren on Blood Street
 - * there is nothing to dislike - best place I have ever lived - Lyme is sublime
 - * big new ugly ostentatious houses - "mine is bigger than yours" kind of contest
 - * cultural and ethnic diversity is missing
 - * people buying land and building strange looking million dollar houses - high end big money spenders, out building each other and driving their \$65,000 cars too fast and talking on their cell phones
 - * ticks, but it goes with the territory

•
43. What **PROBLEMS** would you most like to see local government address?

There were 205 responses to this question. The area of greatest concern was the issue of schools.

- 46 school related
 - 23 general
 - 20 building improvement, facilities
 - 2 administration
 - 1 budget
- 30 controlled growth, over-development
- 26 open space and natural resources preservation/protection
- 23 speeding on Lyme roads
 - 9 affordable housing
- 8 large homes
- 7 road maintenance, drainage
- 2 deer/ticks
- 2 power boats and jet skis
- 2 more access to water

Some quotes:

- * Speeding on local roads seems to be a serious problem. It is also a problem that the town probably can't solve or even control effectively.
- * Replacement of rotten and fallen road posts and cables
- * affordable housing for all socio-economic groups
- * provide greater incentives for people to join the volunteer fire department
- * restore some fields and meadows - keep brush from growing into forests
- * as farming becomes uneconomic in the area, we need to figure out how to preserve the pastures and farmland
- * to fight with every means that is constructive, creative and positive to prevent further development, improvement, modernization or whatever of this wonderful harbor of freedom and beauty we call Lyme
- * can the town help elderly with disposal of leaves?

- * provide for some eateries without detracting from character
- * how to preserve and maintain a rural farm area in the 21st Century
- * get schools fixed now!
- * portions of the town's woodlands are badly overgrown with invasive plants, especially Japanese Barberry ... a concerted effort will be required to turn back this tide
- * I would like to see the government limit dwelling size and visibility
- * We need to stop bickering with Old Lyme and get on with what is best for our community.
- * The library needs updating, leash laws need enforcing, and would like to see a Lyme web site with ordinances posted where residents can learn who to contact with problems
- * stupid looking mansions in a farm town
- * be on guard against "cutsey"
- * fix the school

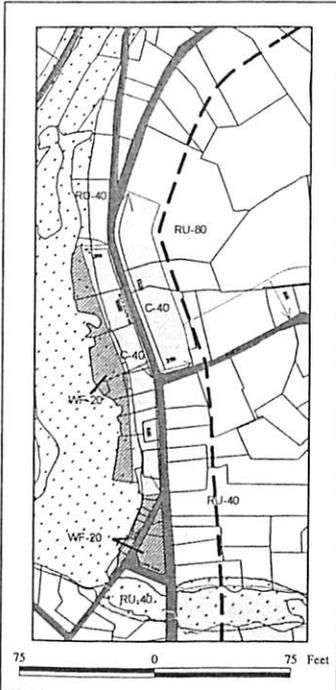
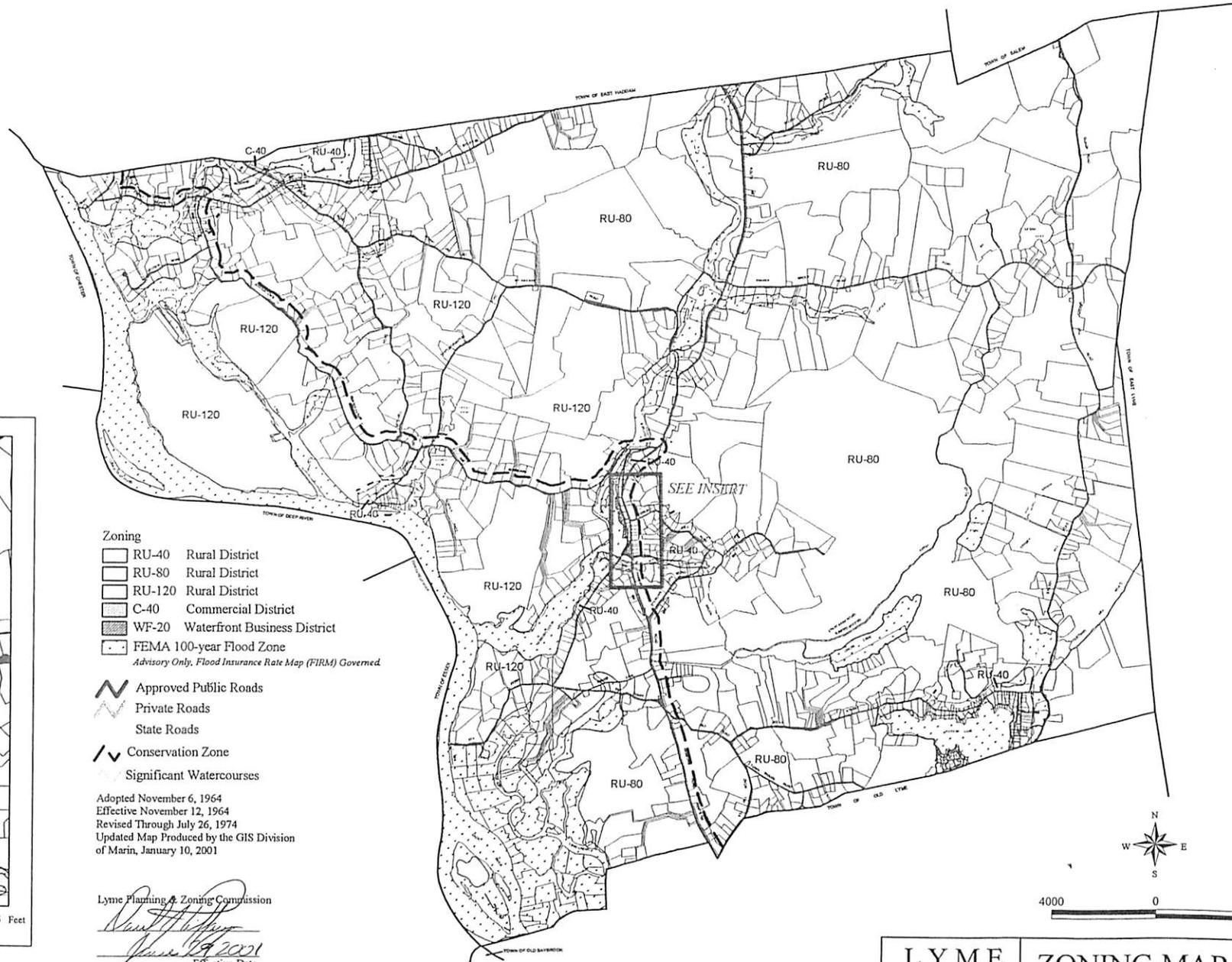
44. *In a couple of sentences, **DESCRIBE** the Lyme in which you'd like to live.*

Many of those who responded to Question 44 stated that they like Lyme "the way it is". One person stated: "as it is today - the same community, noted for its commitment to nature". Another said, "It's here, it's now!"

Some other quotes:

- * Life in Lyme is like having therapy for the soul and peace for the mind at your fingertips all the time.
- * I don't need a couple of sentences. Lyme as it is probably cannot be improved on substantially.
- * We don't need development to keep up with other towns. Our strength is in our natural beauty and focus on a quiet life.
- * We already have that ideal place and we're well aware of how fortunate we are to live here. This is a very special place and should be preserved for all to enjoy.
- * Sleepy, undeveloped, unpretentious
- * Lyme that continues to be vigilant about maintaining its rural character and natural resources, in spite of increasing demands to overbuild and destroy what makes it so special in the first place.
- * just as it is, but with a coffee shop
- * just like it is. Unrealistic, I know.....
- * this is it, quiet and peaceful -a place where you can enjoy the outdoors, you can think, and be away from the fast-paced world we live in
- * Is it possible to retain our rural quality without being elitist in the process? In other words, can all income groups live here who appreciate a rural setting?
- * where change happens slowly enough so you might recognize it 20 years later
- * very similar to now, with maybe a little more sense of community. The resurgence of the Hadlyme Public Hall is working toward that. You can do it! Let's save Lyme from the mundane sameness afflicting most of the other towns.
- * Lyme as it is today suits our requirements perfectly. Congratulations on a job well done.
- * I like the Lyme I live in. My wish list - 1. fewer big trucks racing down the road;

2. Less litter; 3. Fewer roaming barking dogs; 4. Increased community pride; 5. Chips available at the dump (not reserved for others); 6. Fast speed internet access and reliable electric service; 7. Some kind of nearby service to airports and delivery of the New York Times (surely not the responsibility of the town); 8. No deer eating my plants



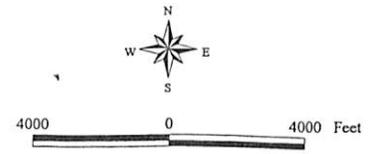
- Zoning**
- RU-40 Rural District
 - RU-80 Rural District
 - RU-120 Rural District
 - C-40 Commercial District
 - WF-20 Waterfront Business District
 - FEMA 100-year Flood Zone
Advisory Only, Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Governed.

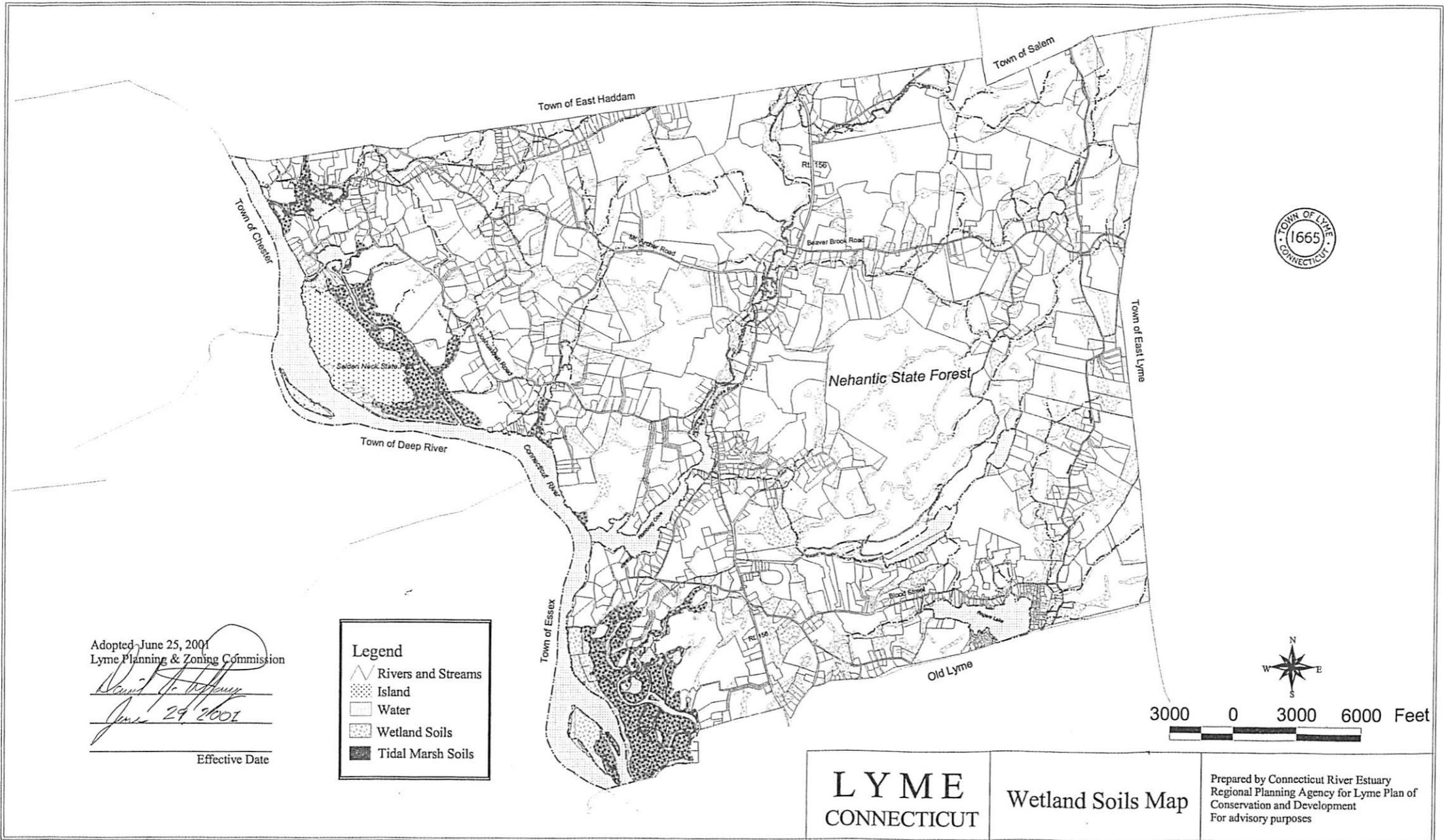
- Approved Public Roads
- Private Roads
- State Roads
- Conservation Zone
- Significant Watercourses

Adopted November 6, 1964
 Effective November 12, 1964
 Revised Through July 26, 1974
 Updated Map Produced by the GIS Division
 of Marin, January 10, 2001

Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission

 June 29, 2001
 Effective Date





Adopted June 25, 2001
 Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission

David J. Hoffmeyer
 June 29, 2001

Effective Date

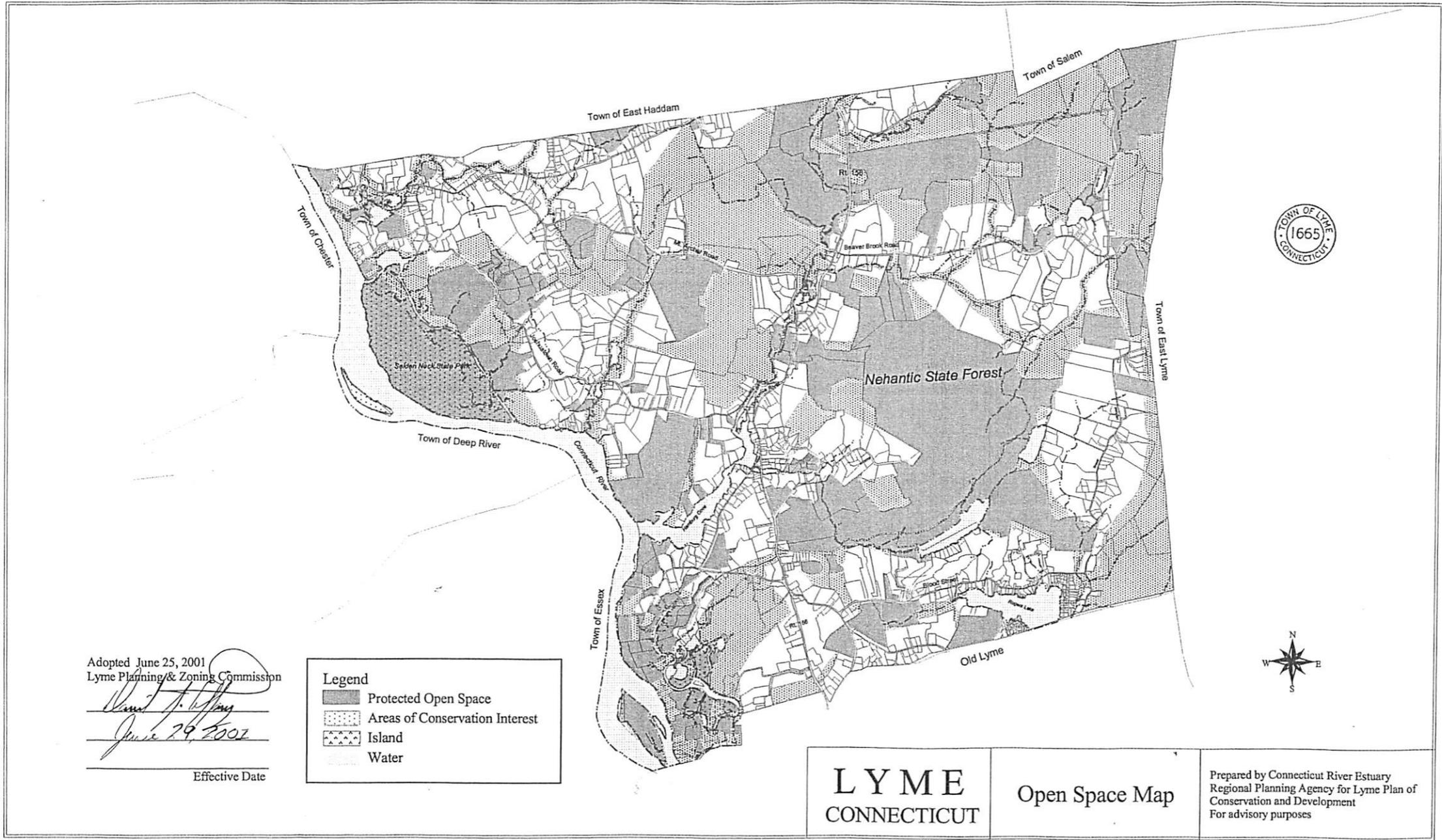
Legend

- Rivers and Streams
- Island
- Water
- Wetland Soils
- Tidal Marsh Soils

LYME
 CONNECTICUT

Wetland Soils Map

Prepared by Connecticut River Estuary
 Regional Planning Agency for Lyme Plan of
 Conservation and Development
 For advisory purposes



Adopted June 25, 2001
 Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission

[Signature]
 June 29, 2001

Effective Date

Legend

- Protected Open Space
- Areas of Conservation Interest
- Island
- Water

LYME
 CONNECTICUT

Open Space Map

Prepared by Connecticut River Estuary
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