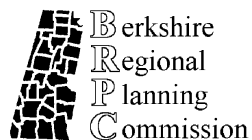


COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Town of Florida
2003**



Prepared By:



This document was prepared with funding provided by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, Department of Housing and Community Development, and Department of Economic Development.



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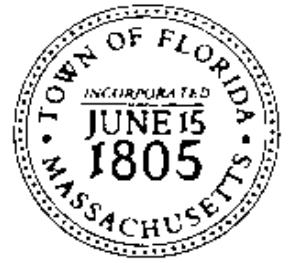
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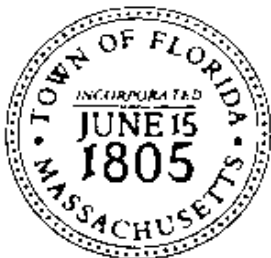
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Introduction

- Introduction to the Community Development Plan
- Executive Summary: Community Development Goals and Priorities
- Community Development Plan Action Map



Introduction to the Community Development Plan Program

On January 21, 2000, then Governor Paul Cellucci issued Executive Order 418, a measure designed to help communities plan for new opportunities while balancing economic development, transportation infrastructure improvements, and open space preservation.

Technical assistance and grants of up to \$30,000 were made available to assist communities in producing Community Development Plans. Community Development Plans are intended to provide guidance as cities and towns consider options and avenues for future development. The plans will focus on housing, economic and community development, transportation, and open space. The plan must also include strategies for how the community will develop housing that is affordable to families and individuals across a broad range of incomes.

Florida began the process of undertaking a Community Development Plan in 2001 after it conducted a town survey as a means of determining community need and interest. The results of the Town survey were tabulated and a forum was then held to discuss important issues relevant to the town and the community's vision for the future. After the forum, interested volunteers and Town Officials met 5 times in 2002 and 2003 to offer community input to guide the development of a Community Development Plan for the Town (see Appendix A.4).

Executive Order 418 required that the Community Development Plan cover the following four areas: affordable housing; open space and environmental resources protection; economic development and transportation. The Community Development Plan addresses how the community will accomplish its development objectives for each of the four areas.

Florida is a unique community facing its own set of challenges, and the Plan documents these challenges. The Plan also contains recommendations from members of the community as to how to address the challenges in a manner consistent with maintaining the desired character of the community. The Community Development Plan is based on the most accurate and detailed information available by Federal, State, local and private resources, and is based on a vision set forth through community consensus.

Executive Summary

The Community Development Plan outlines the Town of Florida's concerns for growth and development into the future. The process of developing the Plan began with a survey sent to town residents, which contained a number of questions related to the residents' views on the community, natural resource protection, protection of agricultural land, affordable housing, economic development, transportation, and town services. The survey was followed by a public forum, which was held to discuss the results of the survey and gain greater detail on the overall concerns that residents have for the future of the Town. Throughout each stage of the process, the town survey, the public forum, and several advisory committee meetings, the primary focus of discussion concerned open space protection and transportation. A focus of the Community Development Plan was therefore placed on creating the first municipal Open Space Plan, as well as an Official Road Map for the town of Florida. The following is a summary of the results of the four elements of the Community Development Plan:

Open Space and Recreation Element

Most Florida residents would like to preserve the town's rural character and slow pace of development. This plan is Florida's first municipal Open Space Plan and it strives to help maintain the rural character through planning and strengthening town resources. The goals established from the Open Space Plan are summarized as follows:

- Encouraging the preservation of the few farms in town through a low-cost, town-based initiative, as well as regional marketing efforts.
- Increasing or reestablishing opportunities for family-based recreation, especially for swimming, fishing and traditional recreation.
- Increasing opportunities for youth-oriented recreation.
- Improving maintenance, safety and patrolling of public trails and including user groups.
- Prioritizing new economic opportunities to existing closed or abandoned businesses.
- Exploring the development of wind power facilities on town-owned property to maintain open land and increase tax revenues.
- Revising local bylaws to help frame the type of development that the town would want.
- Promote a working landscape of privately owned lands, to include but not limit to agriculture, forestry, recreation and other natural resource based industries.

Housing Element

Residents of Florida wish to continue their efforts to develop and rehabilitate affordable housing to meet the needs of the community. The town has been producing an average of two new homes per year, and all of these, including the two new homes constructed in 2001, were considered affordable by EO 418 guidelines. In order to maintain the Town's goals for affordable housing, the following actions are available to the town:

- To encourage good quality, affordable housing opportunities with consideration of housing for seniors and persons of low, moderate, and middle-incomes.
- To maintain municipal bylaws that facilitate residential development that is consistent with the town's needs and desires for appropriate growth and development.

Economic Development Element

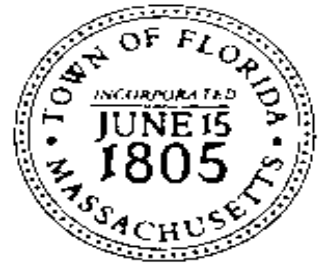
Residents of the town of Florida view natural and recreational attributes as vital to future economic development. The town wishes to see a moderate level of growth through support and encouragement of existing businesses. The following actions are recommended to promote economic development in the town of Florida:

- Build organizational capacity by creating an entity to oversee the process and direct implementation through partnerships with an area Chamber of Commerce or Community Development Corporation (CDC).
- Retention and expansion of local businesses through financial assistance, infrastructure improvements, and temporary tax deferments.
- Identifying potential sites for commercial revitalization
- Develop new enterprise in the fields of home-based businesses and renewable energy, specifically wind power.

Transportation Element

The purpose of this section is to document the development of an Official Map for the Town of Florida that identifies and classifies the status of roadways within the Town with respect to ownership, maintenance responsibilities, suitability for development, and eligibility for public road improvement funds. Inactive, "abandoned" and discontinued roads are also identified and evaluated. A large-scale Official Map, with a chart of all accepted roads and their distances, is included with this report. That Official Map, once adopted by Town Meeting majority vote, will serve as the legally authoritative document concerning the names, locations, distances and accepted statuses of all roads and parks in the Town of Florida. Copies of Florida's Official map, if adopted, are to be put on file with the Town Clerk of Florida, Florida's Town counsel, Ed Riley and other Town boards, as requested (i.e. planning, select boards).

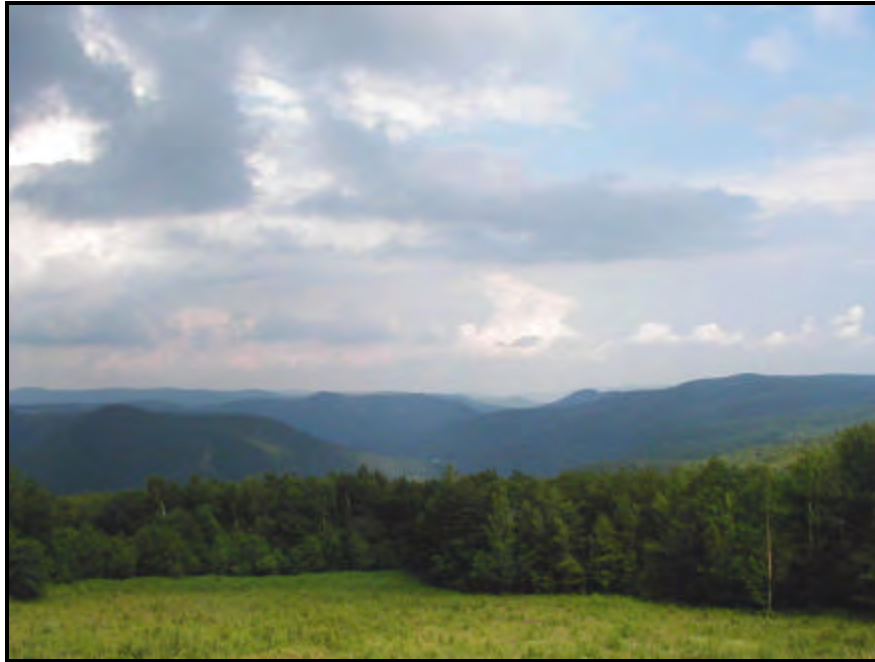
Community Development Plan
Town of Florida



Community Setting



Community Setting



The Town of Florida is a heavily forested hill town located high on the Hoosac Range in the northwest corner of Berkshire County. It is bordered by Stamford, Vermont, and Monroe on the north; Rowe and Charlemont on the east; Savoy on the south; and North Adams and Clarksburg on the west. Florida is a rural residential community with very little commercial development. The town does not have a well-defined village center. Most of the working residents commute to work in Pittsfield or have their own home businesses. Approximately 5,171 acres or 33% of the total area of the town is permanently protected open space. This consists primarily of state-owned land in Florida State Forest, Monroe State Forest and Mohawk Trail State Forest.

Florida has a population of 676, ranking it 27th out of 32 communities in Berkshire County. Population growth has been slow throughout the last 50 years, and has actually decreased from its peak in 1990. Recent BRPC population projections suggest that the population could grow by 20% over the next twenty years. Most of the residential developments in the town have been single family houses on large lots along existing roadways.

Community Vision Statement



Thoughtfully guide and manage growth to ensure Florida conserve its present natural resources, and preserve its traditional rural atmosphere and small town character that makes it a desirable place to live and work.

Maintain and improve its capital infrastructure by developing, cultivating, and investing in public utilities, transportation networks, schools and other public assets.

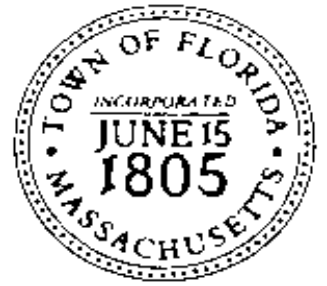
Maintain and improve its economic infrastructure by proactively identifying and cultivating appropriate commercial opportunities that are consistent with the character of the community.

Maintain and improve its social infrastructure by providing seniors, persons with disabilities and citizens of low, moderate and middle incomes with quality affordable housing opportunities and access to quality education for their children

Maintain and improve its civic infrastructure by providing its residents with quality municipal and emergency services.

Foster public participation in its local planning and decision-making processes.

**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Open Space



Introduction to the Open Space Element



The following section represents a summary of the first municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan for the Town of Florida. The community took advantage of the opportunity provided by the 2002-3 Community Preservation Initiative of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), to collect the information presented in this plan and to conduct a community visioning session to provide a basis for the goals and recommendations considered here.

A copy of the complete Open Space and Recreation Plan document can be available for reference at Florida Town Hall.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Summary

As a rural community with a slow pace of development, Florida may wish to use this plan to lay the foundation for the type of growth and development that it would like to encourage. Overall, most Florida residents would like to see the character and remote nature of their town stay the same. However, the town's tax base is not secure and appropriate development is seen as a way to improve that situation. At the same time, the state owns a significant percentage of the town as part of Florida Mountain State Forest, the Monroe State Forest, the Savoy State Forest and the Mohawk Trail State Forest. While these holdings protect the land from development, they are widely seen as impeding Florida residents' access to local natural resources and as preventing appropriate development in appropriate locations.

The purpose of this document is to address those issues and other concerns raised by residents through the cataloging of natural resources and development of an Action Plan that protects those resources while allowing increased tax-base security.

Most Florida residents would like to preserve the town's rural character and slow pace of development. This plan is Florida's first municipal Open Space Plan and it strives to address threats to the rural character and opportunities for preserving the character through planning, land protection and strengthening town resources.

As indicated in the Housing Element, only 28% of the land in town is buildable. Given that fact, the Town sees no need for additional "protection" of land in town by state or non-profit organizations. Instead, the Open Space Plan will be used to focus on ways the Town can benefit, economically, from its natural resources, while maintaining its rural character. Conservation easements, if utilized, should encourage conservation and the Town would like to hold them. Limited time easements would give the Town the flexibility to revisit easements to reassure that they are consistent with the Town's needs.

Despite a brief population and productivity boom during the construction of the Hoosac Tunnel and ongoing interest in the town as a recreational area, no industry and few commercial enterprises currently exist in town. While residents encourage new economic opportunities in town, the plan reflects a desire to direct new opportunities toward existing developed parcels to better utilize natural resources and give consideration to the privacy of Florida residents.

This 2003 Open Space and Recreation Plan presents recommendations and actions for Florida residents to maintain the character of the community by strengthening the tax base, identifying resources for conservation, improving management of existing protected lands and guiding appropriate future development. Accessibility of outdoor recreation is special to Florida and goals for improved trail access, enhanced opportunities and recreation safety are included.

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of Purpose

This plan represents the first municipal Open Space Plan for the Town of Florida. The community took advantage of the opportunity provided by the 2002-3 Community Preservation Initiative of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), to collect the information presented in this plan and to conduct a community visioning session to provide a basis for the goals and recommendations considered here. The information will also be included in a Community Development Plan (CDP) to be presented to the EOEA.

As a rural community with a slow pace of development, Florida may wish to use this plan to lay the foundation for the type of growth and development that it would like to encourage. Overall, most Florida residents would like to see the character and remote nature of their town stay the same. However, the town's tax base is not secure and appropriate development is seen as a way to improve that situation. At the same time, the state owns a significant percentage of the town as part of Florida Mountain State Forest, the Monroe State Forest, the Savoy State Forest and the Mohawk Trail State Forest. While these holdings protect the land from development, they are widely seen as impeding Florida residents' access to local natural resources and as preventing appropriate development in appropriate locations.

The purpose of this document is to address those issues and other concerns raised by residents through the cataloging of natural resources and development of an Action Plan that protects those resources while allowing increased tax-base security.

B. Planning Process and Public Participation

As part of the Community Development Plan process, the town administrator Jana Brule worked with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to organize a community visioning session in July 2001 (See Appendix A.4). Over 50 Florida residents attended the meeting and provided input on Open Space and Natural Resources, Economic Development, Housing and Transportation. Residents also provided written comments on a Town Visioning Survey.

Following that visioning session, several residents of the town, and members of municipal boards convened a working committee to provide guidance and input to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission as they prepared the official CDP. Members of this committee included: Paul Smith, Barb Newman, Tom Brule, Carrie Cummings, Tim Zelazo, Jill Jourdenais, Wanda & Dave McNary, and Steve Brown.

This committee held several public meetings over the course of 18 months, with one meeting devoted to the open space planning issues that were raised in the community visioning session. Maps of natural resources, cultural resources and the physical features of the town were reviewed and priorities for open space protection discussed. Several members of local off-road vehicle clubs and local business owners attended the meeting to address the importance of tourism and trail usage to the town.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission conducted the natural and cultural resource research and drafted the plan. The final draft was presented to the CDP Advisory Committee.

INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST

A. Description and Inventory of Protected and Unprotected Parcels

Introduction

The Town of Florida has a range of open space resources and recreational areas that add to the quality of life enjoyed by its residents. The gorges of the river valley are complimented nicely by the scenic vistas over the mountains. These areas are under both public and private ownership, which may limit the level of public enjoyment they offer in the future.

This section contains an inventory of the forests, open spaces, cemeteries, and other areas in town seen of particular interest to the residents of Florida in terms of recreation and conservation. This section will list the important parcels and give a description of their ownership and management, the level of accessibility to the public, and the level of limiting development they hold. The following lists appear in eight categories based on ownership, recreational possibilities, and level of protection (reference 2003 Florida OSRP for further details). The categories are defined as follows:

Public Conservation and Recreation Resources: This category is comprised of State Parklands. These areas are large-parcel forests open to public access and limited recreation.

Municipal Lands: These properties are owned and managed by the Town of Florida located throughout the town. Many of these parcels are small cemeteries or public facilities, but some of them are large parcels of undeveloped land. Though these lands are owned and managed by the Town.

Cemeteries: Cemeteries in Florida have both public and private ownership and management, and are a valued historic resource to the Town. Many offer public access for passive recreation and reflection.

Chapter 61A Lands - Protected Agriculture: Chapter 61A is a voluntary annual enrollment program for preferential tax assessment based on current use of the land. Chapter 61A requires a 5 acre minimum of agricultural land which must produce a minimum amount of agricultural products. Chapter 61A prohibits development unrelated to agricultural purposes. The landowner must re-apply for the program each year.

Chapter 61 Lands – Forestry: Chapter 61 is a program similar to Chapter 61A except that the tax abatement is for forest lands managed for timber production.

In order to qualify for Chapter 61, landowners must have 10 acres that are suitable for timber production. The program offers 95% tax savings, prohibits development unrelated to timber production and requires a 10-year management plan. Once enrolled, the Town places a lien on the property.

Chapter 61B – Recreation: Chapter 61B is a recreational land classification program designed to encourage the preservation of open space and promote recreational uses. In order to qualify for Chapter 61B the landowner's property must consist of at least 5 acres that are suitable for recreational purposes. The program offers a 75% tax savings.

Non-Profit Lands and Recreational Areas: This category contains lands owned by non-profit and charitable organizations that allow limited recreational use. Non-profit conservation lands are not open to Florida residents for many traditional uses.

Historic Properties and Resources: This category is a summary of the Town's historic properties or buildings according to the 2001 State Register of Historic Places. Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places may have permanent or temporary deeded restrictions according to M.G.L. Ch. 184 sec. 31-33. Properties listed on the National Register are eligible for potential historic preservation grants and are subject to historic reviews before their owners make alterations that may affect the historic qualities of these buildings. Also included is a summary of properties without official designation or protection that have been identified in the 1996 MA Historical Commission Inventory of Historic Places in Florida.

COMMUNITY VISION

A. Description of Process

On July 30, 2001, the town held a public visioning process (Appendix A.4) for a Community Plan Development program. Over 50 Florida residents attended the meeting and provided input on the four pillars of the Community Development Plan: Open Space and Natural Resources, Economic Development, Housing and Transportation. Residents also provided written comments on a Town Visioning Survey. Surveys were also available for residents at the town hall and library. Overall, 35 surveys were received.

On November 4, 2002, a Community Development Plan advisory committee met to discuss Open Space and Natural Resources. The committee expounded on the survey results and provided direction to the Open Space plan. The results of the survey are included in Appendix 3, and are summarized below with additional information provided by the CDP committee:

The town is almost evenly divided (51% to 45%) on whether there are enough recreation opportunities for residents. Many write-in responses call for improved maintenance and patrolling of existing trails, swimming and scenic areas. A few residents indicate a desire for more family-based recreation, noting that there is

not enough for children to do. The CDP advisory committee raised the issue of trail usage and maintenance. The committee invited several snowmobile, off-road vehicle and hiking groups to the November meeting to discuss the importance of trail uses to the local tourism economy and the responsibility that many clubs assume for maintaining trails. It was determined that many of the trail abuse problems are related to independent users. Formalizing user groups may help enforcement with extra “eyes” in the field.

Residents overwhelmingly support (81% to 15%) a town-effort to protect farms, forests and other scenic/natural resources, though write-in responses raise concerns over how that would be accomplished. Most participants were in agreement that it is preferable to maintain open space in private hands rather than as state forests. The CDP committee expressed a similar desire to maintain properties on tax roles but to find alternatives to protect property from development such as limited term Conservation Restrictions. The town does not have the funds available to protect land through municipal purchases. In one case however, town land is being considered for wind power development. Such an enterprise could contribute significantly to the town tax base, while limiting development and conserving wildlife habitat.

Most residents attending the visioning meeting and responding to the survey like Florida the way it is: rural and rustic with a small population, few commercial amenities and limited regulatory controls. Members of the CDP committee indicated that it may be difficult to maintain the town as is with the limited tax base, and zoning and development laws that do not encourage the town’s desires for large amounts of undeveloped land.

B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

Broadly, the community goals for open space and recreation include the following:

- Maintaining rural character though use of open space as a viable economic asset.
- Encouraging the conservation of the few farms in town through a low-cost, town-based initiative, and limited conservation easements.
- Increasing or reestablishing opportunities for family-based recreation, especially for swimming, fishing and traditional recreation.
- Increasing opportunities for youth-oriented recreation.
- Improving maintenance, safety and patrolling of public trails and including all user groups.
- Prioritizing new economic opportunities to existing closed or abandoned businesses.
- Exploring the development of wind power facilities on town-owned property to conserve land and increase tax revenues.
- Revising local bylaws to help frame the type of development that the town would want.

ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

The conservation of natural and agricultural resources is important. The few farms in town are mostly visible from the Mohawk Trail (Rt. 2) and would benefit by efforts toward long-term protection. Economic viability of these farms would ensure long term public benefits.

So much land is protected by the state that wildlife corridors are accommodated and wildlife that is already here can adapt easily to the slow pace of development in Florida. There is little local support for additional protection of land by the state, with a preference for protection of “human-use” corridors (see trail use concerns below).

Many resource areas are under state ownership, and poorly maintained. Lack of maintenance leads to unsafe conditions on trails, occasional, illegal use of park roads and illegal dumping on isolated, less traveled ways. In addition, forested habitats are not well managed, and management is needed for multiple-age classes.

Potential vernal pools should be investigated and certified if appropriate. There are few wetland resources of significance in town, however there may be resources that have not been detected simply because no one has looked for them. Education on effective natural resource management may be a cost-effective method for advancing resource protection needs.

B. Summary of Community’s Needs

There is a need to maintain local regulations that reflect on Town desires for growth and development. The community development plan advisory committee was particularly concerned with the degree to which local zoning and subdivision bylaws fail to encourage the types and forms of development desired by the community. More importantly, it was suggested that parts of the bylaws actually encourage undesired development. Additional review of the bylaws, along with research into potential changes to the bylaws is needed in order to ensure that they remain a reflection of the desires of the community.

There is a need for development practices (and conservation practices) that maintain property values that are affordable to operating farmers and forests as well as to young folks wishing to continue to live in town. Many property owners in town are conservation-minded and have protected their land from development for years. Landowners wish to make decisions concerning their own property. Encouragement of agriculture, forestry, and recreational industries may help keep open lands from being developed while remaining on the tax rolls. A variety of voluntary conservation options available to landowners may also help conserve the town’s open spaces in a manner tailored to a landowner’s and the Town’s needs.

Trail use is important to Florida in terms of local recreation as well as tourism. Corridors are needed for recreation; especially trail passage between public parcels. Public-use trails should be mapped and access should be defined with gates, parking areas, etc. There is great concern over the safety, security and appropriate use of trails, as well as concerns over traversing private lands when that is unacceptable to the owner. Including different user groups in trail development is important to maintaining quality trail system. OHRV, snowmobiles, cross country skiers and all those who use the trails should be involved in identifying the problems and finding the solution. Additional discussion on this issue is needed as it relates directly into eco-based tourism in town and the revitalization of its facilities.

Ridgelines may be appropriate and desirable for the development of wind power resources, especially where the town owns the land and can reap the tax benefit from the development. Promotion of renewable energy and renewable resource management in Florida may also include timber resources for wood products as well as biomass energy, hydropower of the Deerfield River and the consumptive use of the wildlife resource. Timber and wildlife may be a resource that is overlooked, but may have a very positive effect on land conservation and habitat management.

C. Management Needs, Potential Change of Use

Illegal dumping is a problem for town. This problem is related to the lack of maintenance and patrolling of infrequently used roads (see above). Enforcement should be improved though both local resources and state environmental police resources are limited.

Swapping conservation land for development may be an idea for the future. As so much of the town is protected by state forestland, there are assumed to be lands that are appropriate for development within the state holdings. Flexibility in land protection/development scenarios is desirable.

Management of public forests as well as recreational lands is a concern for the town. The state is in control of over 4,000 acres of forested habitats, which should be managed according to recommended habitat models and age class structures. Habitat models for New England give recommended forest compositions of seedling stage plantings, sapling and pole stage trees, mature sawtimber, very large sawtimber, and various forms of openness such as fields or meadows.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: Promote development which utilizes and conserves the Town's natural resources, while maintaining rural character and preserving traditional uses.

Objectives:

- Ensure subdivision and zoning bylaw consistency with the town visions developed under this plan.
- Encourage re-development and rehabilitation of commercial properties.
- Support residential development that respects rural character and natural resources.
- Promote a working landscape.

Goal: Promote economic viability of open space.

Objectives:

- Educate residents on the value of land conservation in a rural community. Identify and work with groups, such as the Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation or Berkshire Grown.
- Assist private landowners of historically significant sites and farms with land conservation strategies.
- Identify additional special landscapes or resources that are in need of protection.

Goal: Improve town access to and amenities for outdoor recreation.

Objectives:

- Investigate re-usage of former town-accessible recreation areas.
- Explore use of former gravel pits and town-owned vacant lots for creation of youth-oriented recreational facilities.
- Evaluate potential "Florida Resident's Only" recreational areas.
- Preserve traditional uses of resources for Town residents.

Goal: Improve trail maintenance and access for all trail uses.

Objectives:

- Delineate and classify all public use trails.
- Increase public safety on trails.
- Encourage the use of Chapter 61 programs or Memoranda of Agreements to protect/provide recreational corridors on private/public lands.
- Partner with private user groups to enhance recreational opportunities.

Goal: Improve and secure the tax base while protecting important resources and landscapes.

Objectives:

- Ensure future economic development opportunities coexist with natural resource utilization and conservation, and rural character.
- Prioritize re-development of existing commercial properties.

FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is a recommended series of tasks to be completed by town boards and committees over the next five years to help the residents of Florida achieve their goals for open space and recreation. The commitment of town

officials and volunteer time and resources is essential to the successful implementation of this plan.

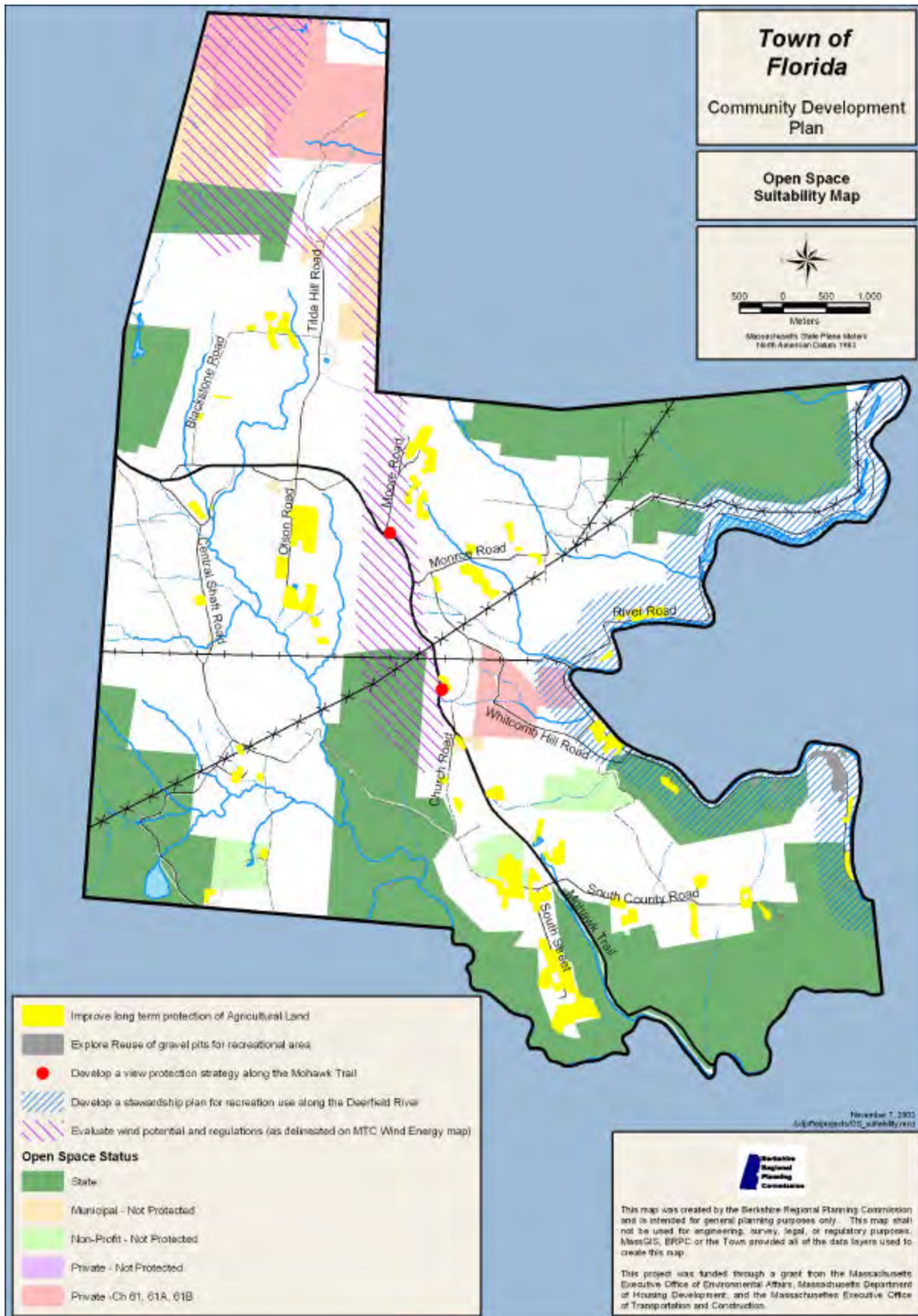
The recommended actions follow a three step process for the near term (2004-5), the mid-term (2006-7) and the long term (2008 and on). A summary of the three planning steps is: 1) Identify key lands for protection, recreational use or development use; 2) Develop strategies for land protection, recreational or economic development; and 3) Start implementation of strategies.

Actions		Lead Participants	Time Period
GOAL A	Promote a working landscape, using economic viability of open space.		
1.	<i>Encourage re-development and rehabilitation of commercial properties.</i>		
	a. Investigate betterment loan programs for capital improvements to existing commercial properties.	Select Board	2006
	b. Implement Economic Development Strategy developed under CDP.	Select Board	2004-8
2.	<i>Identify resources which can be used to promote economic viability of open space.</i>		
	a. Identify lands to be used as recreational trails.	CDC	2004-5
3.	<i>Support residential development that respects rural character and natural resources.</i>		
	a. Distribute copies of “Building Your Highlands Home” guide book from the Highlands Community Initiative to building permit applicants.	Building Inspector	2004-8
	b. Revise subdivision bylaws to improve conservation of natural resources by including permitted development.	Planning Board	2005-8
GOAL B	SECURE FUTURE PRIVATE LAND PROTECTION.		
1.	<i>Educate residents on the value of land conservation in a rural community.</i>		
	a. Organize a public meeting on land conservation options with speakers from local land trusts.	Conservation Commission	2006

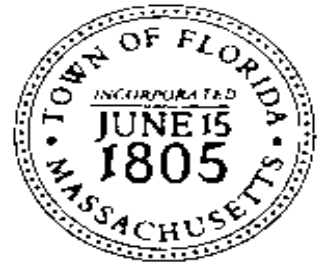
Actions	Lead Participants	Time Period
b. Distribute informative brochures on land protection/tax abatement programs to key parcel owners. c. Update Open Space Plan through a public process every five years.	Select Board Conservation Commission	2006 2008
2. <i>Identify and work with a land trust, such as the Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation or Berkshire Grown, to promote economic options for agriculture.</i>		
a. Invite representatives from Berkshire Grown to present programmatic information to municipal boards.	Select Board	2005
3. <i>Work with the State to broaden land protection/compensation options.</i>		
a. Continue to lobby for appropriate and adequate PILOT program.	Select Board	2004-8
b. Encourage the purchase of limited term conservation easements rather than fee-simple ownership by the state.	Select Board	2004-8
4. <i>Assist private landowners of historically significant sites and farms and other natural resources with conservation and economic viability strategies of open space.</i>		
a. Identify land owners of sites related to the building of the Hoosac Tunnel.	Historic Commission	2005
b. Identify land owners of agriculturally productive lands.	Planning Board	2005
c. Invite key parcel owners to attend meetings with land trust organizations.	Select Board Conservation Commission Select Board	2006
5. <i>Identify additional special landscapes or natural resources for conservation.</i>		
a. Conduct survey of town residents' favorite views and landscapes; link responses to parcel maps.	Select Board Planning Board	2004

Actions		Lead Participants	Time Period
	b. Create listing of parcels for potential conservation.	Select Board Planning Board Assessors	2005
GOAL C	IMPROVE TOWN ACCESS TO AND AMENITIES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.		
1.	<i>Investigate re-usage of former town-accessible recreation areas.</i>		
	a. Establish and recruit volunteers for a Recreation Committee.	Select Board	2004
	b. Apply for grant funds, such as the Self-Help program, to improve or acquire recreational facilities.	Recreation Committee/ Conservation Commission	2008
2.	<i>Evaluate potential "Florida Resident's Only" recreational areas.</i>		
	a. Identify key parking areas near fishing spots, trails and ponds.	Recreation Committee	2005
	b. Where logical, create recreational parking areas at town-owned vacant lots.	Select Board	2006-8
GOAL D	IMPROVE TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND ACCESS FOR ALL TRAIL USES.		
1.	<i>Delineate and classify all public use trails.</i>		
	a. Collect trail maps developed by user groups and link trails to parcel ownership.	CDC/ Recreation Committee	2005
	b. Create Master Map of all trails by use category in town.	Recreation Committee/ Select Board	2006
2.	<i>Increase public safety on trails.</i>		
	a. Establish protocol for reporting safety and maintenance problems to the state and/or property owners.	Recreation Committee	2004
	b. Work with the school to hold an annual meeting on trail use and safety; invite Environmental Police Officers to speak; invite both children and parents to attend.	Recreation Committee	2005-8

Actions		Lead Participants	Time Period
3.	<i>Encourage recreational corridors on private land.</i>		
	a. Distribute information on Ch. 61 B programs for recreational use of private land to key property owners along important recreational trails.	Conservation Commission	2007
	b. Develop a formal Memoranda of Agreement with private property owners for public access.	Select Board	2008
4.	<i>Partner with private user groups to enhance recreational opportunities.</i>		
	a. Invite representatives from user groups (off-road groups, sportsmen, rafters, scouts, etc.) to develop a plan for trail and parking/launch area maintenance and repair.	CDC/Recreation Committee/Select Board	2004
	b. Form a local volunteer trail stewardship group to conduct maintenance/clean-ups on recreational trails and parking areas.	Recreation Committee	2004
GOAL E	IMPROVE AND SECURE THE TAX BASE WHILE PROTECTING IMPORTANT RESOURCES AND LANDSCAPES.		
1.	<i>Ensure that future economic development opportunities coexist with natural resource conservation and rural character.</i>		
	a. Identify parcels with wind power potential.	Planning Board	2005
	b. Review private non-profit lands and research their local benefit, while ensuring local benefit for traditional uses.	Planning Board	2005
2.	<i>Prioritize re-development of existing commercial properties over new commercial development.</i>		
	a. See under Goal A		



**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Housing



Introduction to the Housing Element



This section examines the socio-economic trends in Florida and in the surrounding area of Berkshire County, which affect housing supply and demand. Planning to maintain an adequate supply of affordable housing while balancing concerns related to open space, natural resources, transportation, infrastructure, and community services is a challenging task. Planning for affordable housing begins with analysis of detailed information on the local demographics and housing stock (see Appendix 1, Florida 2003 Housing Profile) in order to identify specific needs and develop potential strategies. Several factors may indicate a potential need for affordable housing and contribute to a town's ability to maintain housing that is affordable to residents of a wide range of incomes. Some of these factors are:

- Low supply of existing housing relative to the population.
- High costs of housing that are beyond the affordability of local residents.
- Lack of housing production
- Relative scarcity of land available for residential development
- High cost of land –Scarcity due to significant amount of State and non-profit “open space” lands.
- Higher production costs associated with marginal development sites
- Lack of available infrastructure
- Restricting housing production, i.e. local zoning, subdivision controls, local permitting and regulatory barriers.

Housing Strategy

Current Housing Stock

The Town of Florida is a rural community of 676 year-round residents and 265 year-round households¹ located in northern Berkshire County. Florida is a rural residential community without much commercial development or a well-defined village center. The town has a history as a bucolic hill town and remains largely residential and agricultural. According to Town assessors, of the town's 326 total housing units, 269 (83%) are single-family homes and fifty-seven are mobile homes (17%). Most of the residential development in the town is single-family houses on large lots along existing roadways. A small section along Rte. 2 near the town center is more densely settled.

The entire Town of Florida consists of a single Residential/Agricultural zoning district. New housing production in Florida has been at approximately 2-3 houses per year since 1995. In the 1980's and 1990's, 156 new homes were built, which more than doubled the town's housing supply and was the largest increase in new homes for any twenty-year span. While housing units increased substantially during the 1980's and 1990's, population did not, increasing 10% from 672 residents in 1970 to a peak of 742 residents in 1990, and then subsiding to 676 residents in 2000. From 1990 to 2000, the population in Florida decreased 9% from 742 to 676, while the total number of housing units in Florida also decreased 9%, from 324 to 294 units.

As detailed in Table 1 below, more than five out of every six housing units in Florida are owner-occupied year round units (85%), while rental homes (5%), seasonal homes (5%), and vacant units (5%) have a more limited role in town. Data from 1990 to 2000 suggests an increased demand for year-round housing in Florida. While the housing stock decreased 9% in total, there was a 3% increase in year-round owner occupied dwellings. The number of seasonal homes decreased significantly, by 60%, which most likely is a combined result of conversion to year-round housing and demolition. The number of rental units in Florida decreased significantly as well, by 36%. Overall vacancy rates decreased in the last 10 years, possibly due to a lower number of abandoned buildings, as the vacancy rate of year round homeownership units was stable and the vacancy rate of rental units increased slightly.

Florida has issued an average of 2 permits for new home construction per year from 1997 to 2001, with the greatest number of houses added in 2000, when four new single-family homes were built. The average value of new homes has remained stable in the past five years, at a level slightly higher than the average value of the existing homes. Since 1997, none of the nine newly constructed homes in Florida have been assessed with property values of over \$100,000. In 2001, each of the two new homes constructed had property values below \$100,000. the affordable purchase price of \$220,994 listed for Florida in the DHCD's *Instructions for Completion of FY2003 Request for Housing Certification*. The median price for new homes built in 2001 was \$81,400.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Table 1: Housing Occupancy (US Census Bureau, 2000 Census)

	2000	1990	% Change 1990-
2000			
Seasonal	15 (5%)	38 (12%)	- 60%
Owner-Occupied	249 (85%)	241 (74%)	+3%
Rental	16 (5%)	25 (8%)	- 36%
Vacant Units ²	14 (5%)	20 (6%)	- 30%
Total Housing Stock	294	324	- 9%
% Vacant Owner Units	1.2%	1.2%	0%
% Vacant Rental Units	11.1%	10.7%	+ 4%

Table 2: Building Permits Issued for Construction of New Single Family Residences³

Year	Total # of Permits	AVG Value of New Home	AVG Value of Existing Homes
1995	3	\$100,000	\$59,062
1996	-	-	\$59,975
1997	1	\$165,000	\$60,586
1998	1	\$75,000	\$61,579
1999	2	\$85,600	\$62,101
2000	4	\$74,850	\$62,887
2001	2	\$81,400	\$74,412

Sources: 1997-1998 Data: MISER State Data Center, April 2003.

1999-2001 Data: Town of Florida Assessor's Office, April 2003

Constraints to Development

Housing development in Florida is constrained by a lack of infrastructure and a large amount of un-developable land in Town. Approximately 5,171 acres, or 33% of the total area of the town is permanently protected open space. This consists primarily of state-owned land in Florida State forest (in south of town), Monroe State Forest (in the northeast part of town), and Mohawk Trail State forest (in the southeast part of town). Approximately 4,338 acres, or 28% of the Town's land area is potentially buildable and zoned for residential uses. If this land were developed to the maximum allowed by zoning, it would result in 2,169 new housing units. At maximum buildout, the population of Florida would be 6,626, over eight times what it is today.

Florida has no municipal utilities such as water and sewer, making development more expensive than other less remote areas with public water and sewer. The zoning by-laws require lots that are a minimum of one acre, which is a common size for Berkshire County. One and two family housing and mobile homes are permitted throughout the town by-right. There is no regulation allowing for accessory, or "in-law" apartments, and multi family homes are prohibited in Town.

² Vacant Units Not Including Seasonal Units

³ Number does not include permits for mobile homes.

Population & Income

2000 US Census recorded Florida's year round population to be 676, which is a 9% decrease from 1990. However, the population of Florida increased steadily from 1960-1990, during which time the population increased by 30%, and the long-term trend for Florida is of a growing population that consists more and more of older residents. The population in Florida is aging. The decline in total population during the 1990's was generated by a large decline in population of children and young adults, and occurred in deference to a 30% increase in residents aged 65 and older. The population of residents aged 25-64 decreased by nine percent, and the number of children and young adults aged 0-24 years decreased approximately twenty percent in the last ten years. However, this decrease was mostly in young adults, as according to the Massachusetts Department of Education, the number of school-aged students in Florida increased 15% from 1990 to 2000 from 130 to 150 students.

Florida remains one of the least affluent municipalities in Berkshire County. In 1990, Florida was one of the lowest income towns in the Berkshires, ranked 28 out of 32 in terms of median income. In 2000 the Town was ranked 25th. The 2000 median household income in Florida was \$43,000, which was 10% higher than the average Berkshire County household income of \$39,047. Homeowners in Florida earn a median household income of \$44,766, which is more than double the median income for renters, who earned a median income of \$16,250, which was below what is considered the Town's low-income threshold of \$21,500⁴. Based on countywide figures, approximately 30% of the Town's households were considered low or moderate-income households, earning up to 80% of the median household income (\$31,273). Census Data indicates that 20 of the Town's 267 households, or 7.5% of all households were determined to be below the poverty level in 2000⁵. Seven of the sixteen renters, or almost half of all renters in Town were considered below the poverty level.

Unemployment in Town has consistently been higher than the state average. In April of 2002, the unemployment rate in Florida was 7.0%, which was higher than that of many Berkshire county towns and the State average of 4.4%. Businesses and government entities located in Florida employed a total of 81 workers in 2000. From 1990 to 2000, the number of jobs located in the Town of Florida increased from 47 to 81, which amounted to an increase of over 70%. Total annual payroll for all businesses during this time more than doubled, and average annual wage increased 49% to \$16,173, which was still approximately half of the average annual wages in Berkshire County, which were \$32,921. The increase in employment comes largely as an increase in service and government jobs.

Local Housing Needs

Florida's housing needs are tied to the needs of the surrounding region of Berkshire County. The depressed regional economy has reduced outside demand for new housing, but it is anticipated that the demand for affordable housing will

⁴ According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Low Income is defined as 50% of the median income for the area.

⁵ Poverty Status as determined by HUD thresholds based on size of family unit, household size, and age.

increase. While Florida has zero housing units that would qualify as affordable under Chapter 40B regulations, there are approximately 72 low-moderate income households currently living in town that may qualify for some type of public housing subsidy. While six families and forty individuals in the Town are considered impoverished no families in Florida receive Section 8 vouchers or are on the waiting list for a unit to rent with a Section 8 subsidy voucher.

Florida shares in a regional need for preserving the quality of the existing affordable year round housing stock. Residential housing in Florida is in constant need of repair, with several factors leading to high costs of homeownership. Harsh weather conditions on this rugged and mountainous landscape add to the wear on the buildings and increase the need for a sound structure. The Town's lack of public water and sewer and its exposure to extreme winter weather also add to homeownership costs. Many dwellings in Florida were not built by certified carpenters and do not meet building code regulations. The building inspector has been addressing major issues, around 15-20 per year, as these houses apply for building permits for repairs. However, many houses are not being repaired and remain in violation. It is estimated that 10% of the housing stock needs some type of major repair. The fact that so many homes in Town are in substandard condition suggests that repairs are particularly burdensome to local homeowners. It also demonstrates the need for assistance from state and non-profit housing agencies. The town sees this need as the basis for the State and other non-profits to help with the tax burden. The most common repairs needed in Florida are for new roofing and new windows. Rehabilitation has been a priority for affordable housing locally and throughout the region, and it has been a focus of the town to work with the Berkshire Housing Development Corporation to identify and improve properties that are in need of crucial repairs.

With a growing number of older residents, there is a need to maintain quality affordable housing for elderly and disabled residents in Florida. From 1990 to 2000, the median age of Florida residents increased by over five years from 34.4 to 39.8 – which is slightly below the countywide median age of 40.5. A growing number of older residents may also create a need to maintain housing for disabled and disabled elderly. Disabled residents comprise over 36% of the Town's residents over the age of sixty-five, and there may be a greater need for funding assistance in order to convert homes for more accessible use by disabled elderly residents of lower incomes. Regional trends show that many elderly households have been in need of financial assistance in order to make necessary repairs on their homes. The median household income for residents aged 65 and older in Florida was below \$30,000, which was considered low-moderate income.

There is a need to maintain local regulations that reflects on Town desires for growth and development. The community development plan advisory committee was particularly concerned with the degree to which local zoning and subdivision bylaws fail to encourage the types and forms of development desired by the community. More importantly, it was suggested that parts of the bylaws actually encourage undesired development. Additional review of the bylaws, along with research into potential changes to the by-laws is needed in order to ensure that they remain a reflection of the desires of the community, for example the allowance for accessory use (in-law) apartments.

Additional Findings

The Community Development Plan Home Affordability Analysis shows that homes being sold in Florida are generally affordable to residents of Town. There were no affordability gaps found for housing sales available to low, moderate, or middle-income households. Forty two percent (42%), 5 of the 12 sales from 1999-2001 were sold at a price that was below the maximum affordable purchase price for low-income households (households making \$21,500 in 2000). Since only nineteen percent of the town is considered low-income, and 42% of housing sales were affordable to low-income residents, there was no gap for low-income residents. Almost all sales, 11 of the 12 sales from 1999 to 2001 were considered affordable by median-income households in Florida.

The Community Development Plan Rental Housing Affordability Analysis shows that rental units in Florida are less expensive than in neighboring Towns of Berkshire County. The number of rental units in Florida has decreased from 1990 to 2000 by 36%, from 25 to 16. This loss has contributed to a 25% raise in the median contract rent in Florida from \$275 to \$346 per month. Of the 16 rental units in Florida, the median monthly rent in 2000 was \$346. This is well below the county median of \$499, and would be considered affordable to a low income household in Florida-comprising less than 20% of monthly income for a household earning 50% of the Florida median household income. However, a large percentage of renters in Florida are still rent-burdened, which means they are paying over 35% of their monthly income toward rent. Nine of the 16 renters, 56% of all renters in Florida, were reported to be rent-burdened.

Recent and Ongoing Town Efforts to Address Housing Needs

The Town has actively participated in regional housing discussions and has adopted the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's *Regional Plan for the Berkshires* (May 2000), which contains a section on housing and housing needs, and supports the development and preservation of affordable housing throughout Berkshire County. The Town continues to maintain a presence in regional discussions on housing policy and the development of a regional housing needs strategy.

EO 418 Planning and Certification

The Town of Florida is participating in the Executive Order 418 Community Development Plan Program, which includes a housing element. The Town also received Executive Order 418 Housing Certification for FY2002 and is in the process of re-certifying for FY2003. This Certification allows the Town to be competitive when applying for grant funds from a number of State agencies including the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. This certification has assisted the Town in receiving CDF funding for its Senior Center Project and for the Housing Rehabilitation Project that is discussed below.

Housing Rehabilitation Program

Berkshire Housing Development Corporation (BHDC) has been very successful in securing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to provide housing

rehabilitation loans of up to \$20,000 per unit to income eligible residents in Florida. The terms of these loans are very lenient and usually do not require repayment as long as the home is not sold or the title is not transferred during the life of the loan which is typically 15 years. During the 1998 funding round 14 households received home rehabilitation loans totaling about \$200,000. During the 2000 funding round an additional 7 households received loans totaling \$100,000. This amounts to a total of 21 housing units repaired at an average cost per unit of \$14,286. BHDC is currently preparing a regional CDBG housing rehabilitation grant application for 9 towns in Berkshire County for the 2003 funding cycle. Florida is one of the applicant towns and it is anticipated that this will fund the repairs for an additional 6 units in Florida.

The home rehabilitation loans can be used for a wide range of rehabilitation projects including electrical upgrades, installation or upgrades to heating systems, roof replacements, replacement and weatherproofing of foundations (frost walls), insulation, plumbing repairs, septic repairs and numerous others. BHDC indicated that most of the projects being done in Florida are for exterior repairs related to weather wear such as painting, siding, roofs, windows etc... Some of the projects have included interior repairs to remedy code violations and other substandard features. BHDC also indicate that the majority of the loan applicants were working families with a smaller portion of the applicants being elderly households with fixed incomes. BHDC has indicated that the demand for housing rehab loan funds is very high in Florida and that there is a waiting list of several applicants for the upcoming funding round, and it is anticipated that the demand for future funding beyond FY2003 will be very strong.

MassHousing Homeowner Assistance Programs

Town residents are active participants in MassHousing's homebuyer assistance programs. In the last 5 fiscal years (from 1997-2001), one Florida resident has received a MassHousing MassAdvantage Homebuyer loan totaling \$62,080, one resident has obtained a septic repair loan for \$18,000, and seven residents have received lead paint removal loans totaling \$94,769.

Goals, Objectives and Future Housing Strategy

The Town of Florida will continue its efforts to support the creation and maintenance of additional housing units affordable to the elderly and to households on low, moderate, and middle incomes. Town officials intend to facilitate the process of affordable housing development by working with sub-regional housing and community development corporations in order to tailoring the town's affordable housing solutions to address specific local needs. The town has been producing an average of two new homes per year, and all of these, including the two new homes constructed in 2001, were considered affordable by EO 418 guidelines. Based on construction trends and new home values over the last five years, the town expects to produce 2 affordable units per year in order to meet the needs of the community.

As a result of its efforts for the Community Development Plan housing element, the Town has developed the following goals and objectives of a strategy designed

to meet the specific needs of the community while supporting regional efforts for affordable housing.

Affordable Housing Goals

Goal #1: To encourage good quality, affordable housing opportunities with consideration of housing for seniors and persons of low, moderate, and middle-incomes.

Goal #2: To maintain municipal bylaws that facilitate residential development that is consistent with the town's needs and desires for appropriate growth and development.

Primary Action Plan (see attached Strategy document for detail)

- Work to reduce local barriers to affordable housing construction with reviews of local zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, and the local permitting process.
- Continue to participate in rehabilitation programs offered by regional housing development corporations.
- Continue involvement in developing affordable homeownership options and publicizing current programs available from MassHousing and local lenders.
- Identify potential areas for future housing rehabilitation and development.
- Participation in the Community Development Plan Program development of a housing element.
- Ensure that the state maintains housing that is on property it purchases locally

Additional Actions

- Develop capacity to address housing needs through a housing partnership or some other local or sub-regional entity.
- Pursue development of new affordable ownership and rental housing by partnering with regional and sub-regional community development corporations and other affordable housing development groups.
- Continue work with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to develop a comprehensive housing assessment and regional housing strategy.
- Implement the new by-laws that the town created with the assistance of the Berkshire Regional Planning commission (See Appendix 5). Making these changes helps insure good practices and strengthens the desires of the community.

Summary

Florida intends to continue its efforts to develop and rehabilitate affordable housing to meet the needs of the community, and is taking steps to implement its affordable housing strategy. The Community Development Plan strategy is consistent with the approaches and policies outlined in the *Regional Plan for the Berkshires* to enhance the quality and quantity of affordable housing in the Berkshire region.

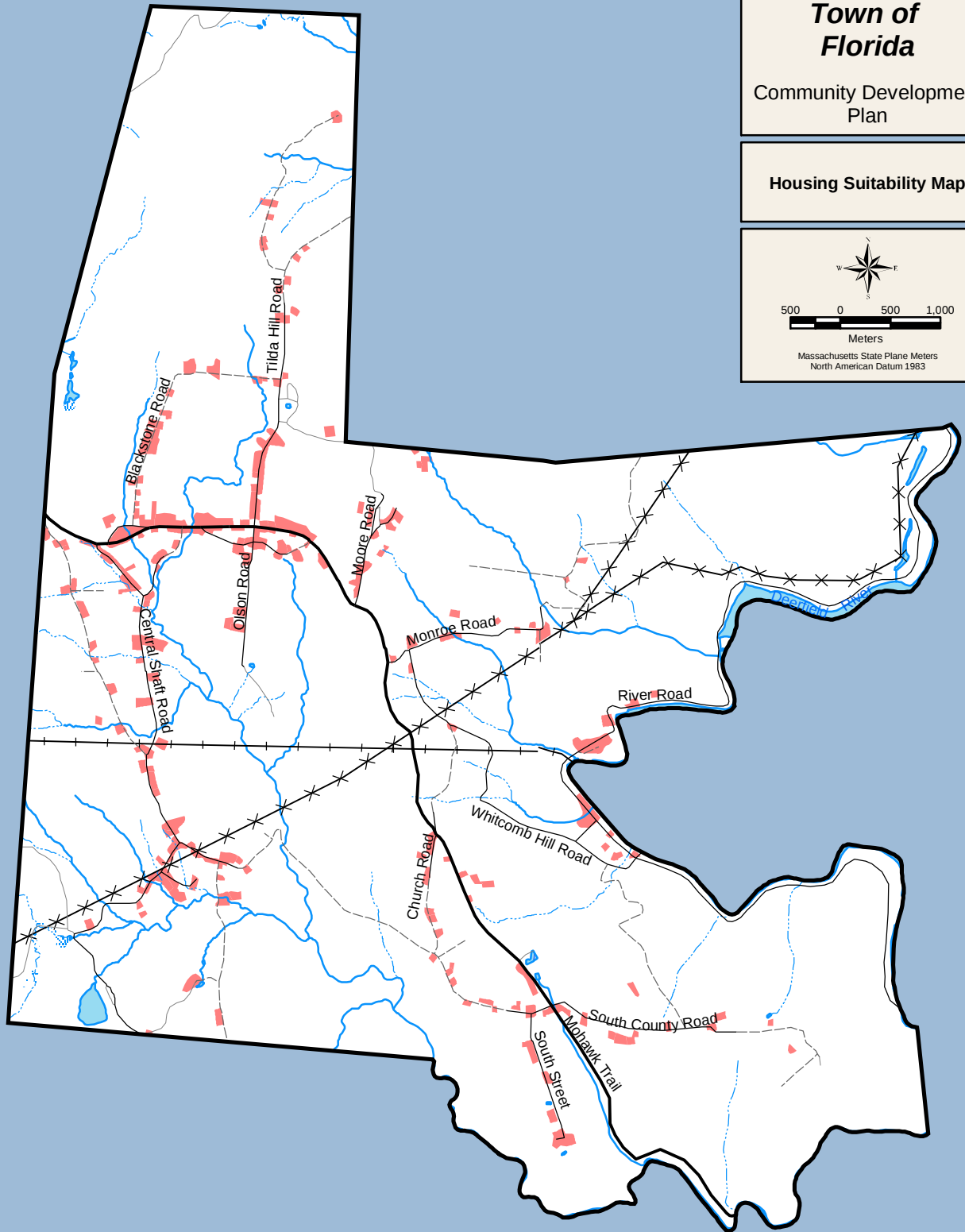
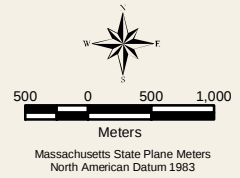
References:

U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census
Buildout Analysis, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 2000
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Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, 2003

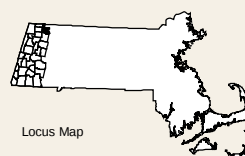
Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Housing Suitability Map



1/4 to 1/2 acre lots; Larger then 1/2 acre lots



Locus Map

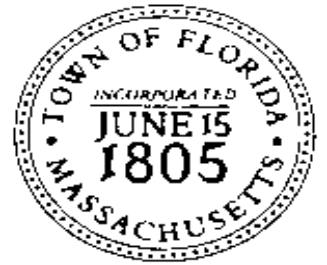
November 10, 2003
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This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, BRPC or the Town provided all of the data layers used to create this map.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Economic Development



Introduction to the Economic Element



This section examines an economic strategy that incorporates the socio-economic trends in Florida and in the surrounding area of Berkshire County that affect economic development. Planning to maintain an adequate supply of businesses while balancing concerns related to open space, natural resources, housing, transportation, infrastructure, and community services is a challenging task. Planning for economic development begins with analysis of detailed information on the local economy in order to identify specific concerns and potential areas in which the town may encourage business and employment. Several factors may indicate the community's economic stability, strengths and potential areas in which to guide business development that emulates the character of the community. Some of these factors are:

- Supply and diversity of local employment opportunities
- Size, education, and skill level of the Local Labor Force
- Supply of affordable housing and transportation available for local workers.
- Condition of existing businesses, buildings, infrastructure
- Developable land for new businesses/industries.
- Local commercial tax rates, regulations and permitting processes that are conducive to business.
- Economic trends and characteristics of the regional economy
- Financial, educational, and developmental resources available.

**Community Development Plan
2003 Economic Development Profile
Florida, Massachusetts**

Introduction

The Florida Economic Development Element was developed as a result of a community-based effort to identify the Town's Economic Development needs and engage in planning to address those needs. Through the Massachusetts Executive Order 418 Community Development Plan process, BRPC researched and compiled an updated economic data profile for the Town of Florida. The profile includes extensive data covering number of local employers, employees, wages, annual payroll, household income levels, population characteristics, local tax information and a fiscal impact analysis based on various land uses (see Appendix 2, 2003 Florida Economic Development Profile). The information in the data profile was presented by BRPC to the Town of Florida's Community Development Plan Advisory Committee. Following the presentation of the profile data the Committee discussed the findings and proposed potential options for initiating local economic development activities. The Town's economic development will be closely associated with a balance of utilization and conservation of its natural resources.

Background

In a number of ways Florida's economic profile is typical of other small, rural hill-towns in Northern Berkshire County. Like other towns in the area, unemployment rates are considerably higher than the County and Statewide averages, the wages of employees working in the Town are considerably lower than the county average, the number of local employers is extremely low and typically the largest employer is the local government and specifically the school system. As with a number of other small towns in the region, the rate of Low and Moderate Income (LMI) households hovers around 30%. Another common characteristic of small towns in this sub-region is that the small amount of commercial activity that is occurring is closely tied to scenic, recreational and cultural venues that sustain a small retail and service industry that is primarily based on tourism. Like its neighboring towns to the east and west, Florida is part of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway.

In spite of the similarities to other neighboring towns in the sub-region, Florida has a couple of economic factors that set it distinctly apart from many of its neighbors. While most of the towns in the sub-region generate local revenue nearly exclusively from residential property taxes, 60% of Florida's local tax revenues come from a single industrial property-owner, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) National Energy Group, which owns the Bear Swamp Hydro-Electric Plant in Florida. This facility essentially subsidizes the local tax base, relieving the tax burden from private, non-profit, and DCR conservation lands. Conversely, the facility only provides about three (3) local jobs and the Town's local revenue base is extremely dependent on this single enterprise. Another emerging economic factor is related to the Town's fortuitous topography and meteorology. Florida has an abundance of peak ridgeline that happens to have generous wind currents. These combined factors provide highly suitable conditions for wind-generated

power turbines and this is another potential economic asset that could be developed by the Town.

Economic Challenges

Many of the general economic challenges are noted in the previous section, i.e. high unemployment rates, scarcity of local employers, low local wages, and nearly one-third of the local households are considered low to moderate income. A more specific economic challenge is the Town's heavy dependence on local tax revenue from a single property owner. In the economic profile it is noted that if for some reason the hydro-electric plant was to cease operations, or move to another locale, residential taxpayers could be facing an average annual tax increase of up to \$3,000. In light of this stark fact, it appears that diversifying the town's commercial tax base is an obvious concern.

Another specific concern is local business closures. In discussions with the CDP Committee it was noted that a number of retail and service-oriented enterprises, particularly along Route 2, have closed down and never re-opened. These enterprises include restaurants, lodging establishments, a post office and a gas station. In addition to business closures, there are a number of other businesses that appear to be faltering. Some of the faltering businesses appear to be related to a need for capital investments such as repairs to buildings and facilities. Other declining businesses appear to be simply a function of aging proprietors who are unable to pass the business on to family members or sell to other investors. Failing and faltering local businesses create a number of direct and ancillary economic challenges for the Town including; loss or reduction in local tax revenues, loss of local jobs, and blighted conditions when commercial buildings are left unused and not well maintained. These conditions can begin to create a downward economic spiral. For example, when potential business investors research local economic indicators and visit the Town and actually see that commercial buildings are vacated and unkempt this may greatly reduce their confidence in the Town's economic opportunities. This same logic would apply to existing local businesses that may be considering expansion.

Some other areas of concern affecting local commercial development are that the Town does not have a well-defined, centralized commercial district or supporting infrastructure, i.e. water and sewer services. The business establishments that are in Florida are largely scattered along, or just off, Route 2 and when driving along the Mohawk Trail there is no distinctive "main street" or downtown area that is clearly identified. There is no central gathering place where local residents, tourists, or casual passers-by would be attracted to stop for shopping, dining and other commercial activities. The fact that public water and sewer services are unavailable is often a deterrent to commercial investors looking for a place to relocate, or start a new business. Lack of proximity to an interstate highway or rail access is also often a deterrent.

Opportunities

In spite of the numerous local economic challenges, there are also myriad of potential opportunities for economic growth. In fact, recent data indicates that some fairly significant local economic growth has been occurring over the last

decade. The key indicator of this growth is fact that the Town's total annual payroll in the last 11 years increased by 204%, from \$512,000 in 1990 to \$1,556,000 in 2001². The number of employees working in Florida also increased by 74% going from 47 local employees in 1990 to 82 employees in 2001³. The number of local business establishments also increased slightly going from nine (9) in 1990 to 13 in 2001⁴. The data indicates that the greatest number jobs were created in the service industry going from 0 in 1990 to 26 in 2001⁵. Anecdotal evidence provided by the CD Plan Committee, which seems to be supported by regional trends, indicates that a number of the new enterprises are home-based businesses and that a number of these may be related to construction and landscaping operations.

There are several local factors that provide a favorable climate for business development in Florida. The price of land is less expensive in Florida, relative to other more populous areas in the County and State. The same applies to commercial tax rates. Even though Florida's commercial tax rate is slightly higher than its residential tax rate, it is still much lower than many other more populous areas county and statewide. For example, the commercial tax rate of \$28.31 in North Adams is about 125% higher than the rate of \$12.65 in Florida⁶. Another factor that most business investors would find highly favorable is a minimal degree of local regulation, particularly with regard to local land use. Florida has a single zoning district, but it allows for a wide variety of commercial uses by right⁷. The by-laws also expressly allows for home-based businesses.

Florida's greatest economic resources are linked to its scenic, recreational and cultural attributes. As mentioned, Route 2 which runs right through Florida is part of the designated Mohawk Trail Scenic By-Way. The Town offers spectacular mountain top vistas, access to the scenic Deerfield River, includes Florida State Forest and parts of Mohawk Trail State Forest, the Historic Hoosac Tunnel is located in Florida and there a number of other historically significant structures in the Town. The vistas, forest lands and waterways offer year-round recreation to residents, travelers, and tourists. These recreational opportunities have traditionally supported local commercial activities, particularly those service industries focused on tourism and outdoor recreation. The CDP Committee indicated that certain recreational activities such as snowmobiling and OHRV use are becoming increasingly popular. The Committee also indicated a notable increase in visitors from outside the area coming to, or through, Florida to engage in these recreational activities. There appears to be a strong emerging market for food services, fuel services, lodging services and recreational supplies, which cater to this clientele.

The Town has a history of hosting grand projects that foster local and regional economic growth. The Hoosac Tunnel and the Bear Swamp Hydro-Electric Plant provide two compelling examples. By virtue of its topography and meteorology the Town is once again presented with another significant economic opportunity in the

² Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training, February 2003

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Massachusetts Municipal Directory 2002-2003

⁷ Florida Zoning By-laws researched at www.ordinance.com

form of renewable energy production facilities. The Town has been approached by investors considering the installation of wind-power generation turbines on peak ridgelines that would likely be located on municipal property. If approved, this could result in significant direct revenue for the Town and serve to further diversify the local tax base.

Public Input and Goal Development

One of the primary sources of public input used to develop this Element was the Florida Community Opinion Poll conducted in July of 2001. The survey asked a number of questions regarding development in general and economic development in particular. The Mohawk Trail Scenic By-way Corridor Plan (2002) also provided valuable information in developing this Element and three residents from Florida served on the Plan's Advisory Committee. Another key source of public input was the Community Development Planning process and specifically a meeting held on February 3, 2003 to review the Town's economic profile and discuss potential economic development strategies for Florida. The meeting was attended by the CDP Committee and several other interested members of the community. The key issues and goals that were developed from the public input are:

- A moderate level of local growth (this applies generally to residential and commercial growth) is desirable.
- The amount of commercial development in the Town is about what it should be, and there is not a consensus for attracting a lot of new commercial development.
- Any commercial development that does occur should be localized and small-scale.
- The type of economic development activities that would be most suitable for Florida are:
 - Support, encourage and assist in the development of home-based businesses
 - Revitalization of defunct or faltering businesses
 - Expansion of successful existing businesses
- The Town's natural and recreational attributes are viewed as vital to attracting tourism and therefore vital to many of the Town's existing, and potential commercial enterprises.
- There is a need to support better sub-regional marketing of the areas scenic, natural and cultural assets along the Mohawk Trail Scenic By-way.
- There is a need to diversify the local tax base to reduce dependence on revenues from Bear Swamp Plant and residential taxpayers.
- There is a need to continue advocacy for the State to provide greater financial resources to the Town to support the maintenance and access to the State Forest lands.
- There is a need to further explore the local economic potential for emerging renewable energy technologies such as wind power production facilities.

The public input sessions and informational resources also led to the identification of several local sites that could be suitable for commercial revitalization. These sites include:

- Whitcomb Summit Motel and Restaurant (need of repairs)
- Giovanni's Restaurant (closed)
- Florida Lounge (closed)
- Chilson's Campground (closed)
- Smythe's Dairy Bar (closed)
- Brown's Garage (recently closed)
- Historic Post Office on Brown Property (Closed)

Recommend Actions

Based on the profile data, the opportunity analysis and the input from the public and other reliable information resources the following actions are recommended to promote economic development in the Town of Florida.

- **Build Organizational Capacity** – to carry out any of the recommendations discussed there will need to be an entity to advocate for local economic development initiatives that can direct the process and make sure that projects are identified and activities are implemented and seen through to completion. This entity can take many forms and can be structured very informally or it can be highly structured. A variety of organizational examples are provided in Appendix 2. The fact that Florida is a relatively small town it probably doesn't need to establish a separate formalized organization dedicated to economic development. However, because there are a number of complex economic development activities and issues that the Town is currently facing, it is prudent for the Town to at least partner with a capable organization such as an area Chamber of Commerce, a regional community development corporation (CDC) or some other regional agency that has experience in community/economic development. If such a partnership is formed, the Town should also appoint a lead person, or persons, from the Town to make key decisions and to direct the activities of the partner agency.
- **Business Retention and Expansion** – The most consistent theme throughout this process was that existing local businesses should be supported and assisted where necessary to maintain their viability. As noted above, a number of businesses in Town have either failed, or have closed down. These defunct enterprises have reduced local tax revenues, local jobs and have left the town with unattractive, empty storefronts. To prevent additional businesses from suffering the same fate, the Town should take an active role in identifying faltering enterprises and exploring ways of assisting these businesses such as technical and financial assistance, infrastructure improvements, temporary tax deferments. One local business, the Whitcomb Summit Motel and Restaurant, has already been identified as needing assistance in terms of funding to make capital repairs to their establishment. This establishment may also be a candidate for expansion.

Once interested participants have been identified, the Town should begin working cooperatively with its chosen Economic Development entity and local business owners to begin prioritizing projects and plotting a course of action to develop a business retention and assistance program and then to secure necessary funding.

- **Commercial Revitalization** - There are at least six local establishments in Town that are closed and have been identified as potential candidates for revitalization. Mere identification is an important first step in the revitalization process. Another initial step in this process would include determining ownership of the identified sites and contacting the owners to determine if there is a genuine interest in reopening the establishment or marketing the site to other potential investors. A more comprehensive inventory of sites should also be conducted to make sure that other interested business owners in need of assistance are not overlooked.

Once interested participants have been identified, the Town should begin working cooperatively with its chosen Economic Development entity and the business owners to begin prioritizing projects and plotting a course of action to develop a local revitalization program and then to secure necessary funding. A number of potential funding sources are provided on page 12 of the Economic Development Profile.

- **New Enterprise Development** - There are two areas of business development that the Town is interested in pursuing. The first area is the development of additional home-based businesses. These types of businesses provide the Town with additional local jobs and tax revenue while usually placing minimal demands on the aesthetic quality of the community and on the local infrastructure. The approach to this type of business development usually involves identifying and providing education, technical assistance and in some cases assistance with start-up costs to local would-be entrepreneurs. Examples would be providing assistance to draft a Business Plan, computer training and perhaps financial assistance to purchase office equipment. Key sources of funding for this type of Program are available through the State's Community Development Fund (CDF I and II) Micro-Enterprise assistance and other grants and loans available through the Federal Small Business Administration. Once again this type of program would be jointly developed and ultimately managed by the Town and its chosen ED entity.

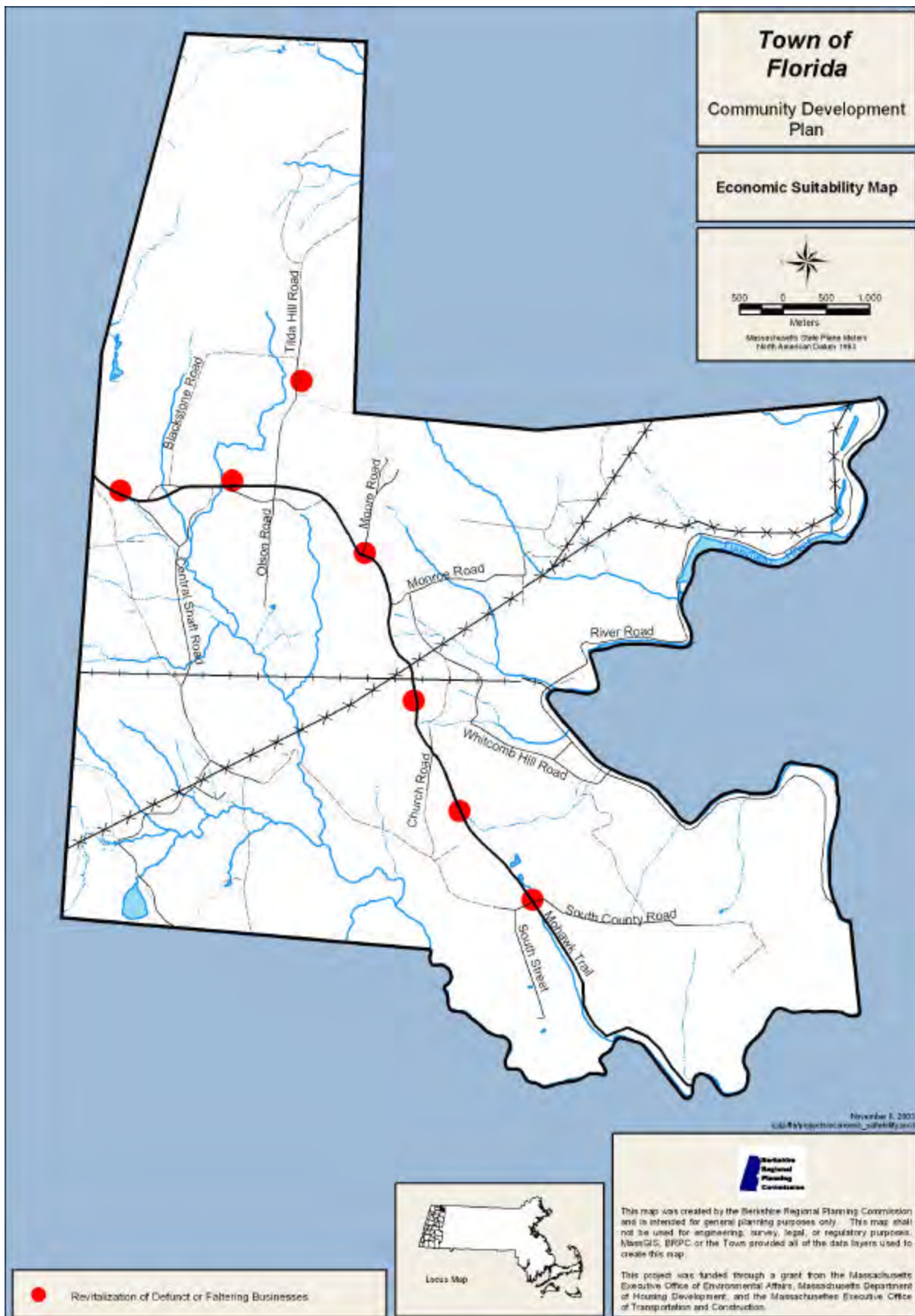
The other area of business development that is of primary interest to the Town is related to renewable energy technology and production, specifically in the form of wind power and biomass production. This recommendation is opportunity-driven, because the Town has the resources for both technologies.

The first logic step in this process is to perform an analysis to determine how, and to what extent the Town can benefit economically from this type of industry. The analysis should also access identify the mechanism with which the Town will receive just compensation for allowing this type of industry. These analyses can be conducted at no cost to the Town, through grant funds from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) and through consultant review fees paid by the developer. The Renewable Energy Resource Laboratory at UMASS- Amherst has received funding form MTC to provide technical assistance on windmill design and the wind farm developer EnXco, has agreed to fund an independent consultant to advise the town on other technical matters.

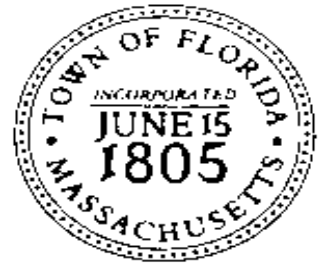
The analyses should also assess what type of regulatory measures the Town needs to put in place to ensure that the industry operates in a responsible manner that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the community. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has recently received a grant from (MTC) to provide assistance to town officials in Florida, and other towns in the sub-region, as they weigh the costs and benefits of a wind farm within their communities. This assistance includes opportunities to engage local citizens and establish by-laws that would allow wind farm development in a manner consistent with community goals. In addition, the Berkshire Renewable Energy Collaborative, a local renewable energy advisory group in place that is acting as a catalyst to build local support for this enterprise is available to provide assistance. This group should continue to work cooperatively with the Town and other stakeholders, i.e. investors, property owners, local and regional business associations etc. to further explore the potential of this industry.

Organizational Resources: Below are a listing of regional organizations that can provide the Town with assistance in the development and implementation of economic and community development projects.

- o Berkshire Chamber of Commerce
- o Berkshire Housing Development Corporation
- o North County Community Development Corporation
- o Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation



**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Transportation



Introduction to the Transportation Element



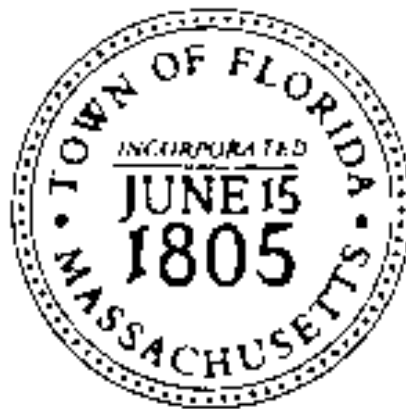
Transportation in Florida is tied to issues of economic development, housing, land use, and community development. As in many small towns, Florida depends largely upon a small number of local roads for local and regional access. An Official Map was created in order to address ownership, maintenance responsibilities, suitability for development, and eligibility for public road improvement funds. Several factors are considered when recommending such improvements and include the following:

- Roadway characteristics such as ownership, pavement and shoulder width, speed limit and sidewalks
- Land Use
- Traffic volumes and vehicle classification
- Speed limits, travel speed, and crash history
- Parking conditions
- Measurement of bicycle compatibility
- Comprehensive study of existing roads

Official Map Report

Town of Florida

2003



Prepared By

Berkshire Regional
Planning Commission

*This document was prepared with funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs,
Executive Office of Transportation and Construction/MHD, Department of Housing and Community Development,
and Department of Economic Development.*

Objective

The purpose of this report is to document the development of an Official Map for the Town of Florida that identifies and classifies the status of roadways within the Town with respect to ownership, maintenance responsibilities, suitability for development, and eligibility for public road improvement funds. Inactive, “abandoned” and discontinued roads are also identified and evaluated. A large-scale Official Map, with a chart of all accepted roads and their distances, is included with this report. That Official Map, once adopted by Town Meeting majority vote, will serve as the legally authoritative document concerning the names, locations, distances and accepted statuses of all roads and parks in the Town of Florida. Copies of Florida’s Official map, if adopted, are to be put on file with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), the Town Clerk of Florida, and with Florida’s Town counsel.

Preliminary Survey of Roads

The BRPC presented Town of Florida officials, namely Planning Board chair Tim Zelazo and other CDP committee members, with a Town orthomap, a high-quality aerial photograph of the Town of Florida depicting a GIS overlay of roads listed in the 2002 MassHighway Road Inventory File (RIF). The roads were color-coded according to jurisdiction (e.g. MassHighway, State Forest, Town, Unaccepted or Unknown). The BRPC then compared the roads shown on the orthomap (see Map 1) with roads shown on the 1988 County Engineer’s map (the last revision; see Map 2) and those shown in the 1998 *Official Arrow Street Atlas of Western Massachusetts* (see Map 3). All inconsistencies in location, distance, naming and status were cataloged, and BRPC verified any roads shown on the County Engineer’s map as “discontinued by vote” or “abandoned for use” by checking the book and page citations listed on the map from the County Commissioner’s records at the Registry of Deeds in Pittsfield, MA. BRPC also checked all road status changes against Florida Town records. (See Appendix B for County Commissioner’s records. Town records were received from Florida Town Administrator Jana Brule. They are available at the Town Hall)

Inventory of Ways

As the second step in building an Official Map, the BRPC prepared the comparative inventory of all documented roads and ways within the Town of Florida shown in Table 1 (below). The table gives a comprehensive overview of the status of all Florida roads known or identified on any of the maps noted above. It is easy to identify roads in question by reading across each row of the table: any road missing information or with parenthetical information requires clarification or action. Mileages shown are derived from MassHighway RIF data or from Town of Florida records. Some characteristics (e.g. accepted names, specific locations) were indeterminable from information available to BRPC. Roads in such cases require clarification, whether by simply refining the data available for a given road (e.g. spelling of name) or by fixing particular questions of legal status (e.g. administration, mileage, maintenance responsibilities) by action of the select board or Town Meeting vote.

Table 1. Summary of Road Status Prior to Official Map

Street Name	Admin System	Miles	Mass Highway RIF	Official Arrow Road Atlas	County Engineer’s Map
MOHAWK TRAIL (ROUTE 2)	Mass Highway	7.09	✓	✓	✓
ADAMS ROAD	???	???	DISCONTINUED for Maintenance under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82 Section 32A (show road on Official Map)		
BLACKSTONE ROAD	Town Accepted	1.64	✓	✓	✓
BLISS ROAD	Town Accepted	1.28	✓	✓	✓ (Shown as “abandoned for use” at northern end)
BRAWLEY ROAD	???	???	Show on Official Map (provide distance if possible)		

Table 1. Summary of Road Status Prior to Official Map

Street Name	Admin System	Miles	Mass Highway RIF	Official Arrow Road Atlas	County Engineer's Map
	<i>(Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)</i>				
BURDICK ROAD	Town Accepted	0.06	✓	✓	✓ (Shown but unnamed)
BURNETTS ROAD*	Town Accepted <i>(Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)</i>	0.40	✓		
			DO NOT Show on Prototype Official Map		
BUSBY ROAD	???	???			✓ (Shown as “discontinued for use”)
			DO NOT show on Official Map		
CENTRAL SHAFT ROAD	Town Accepted	3.83	✓	✓	✓
CHURCH ROAD	Town Accepted	1.49	✓	✓	✓
DICKENSON ROAD*	Town Accepted <i>(Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)</i>	0.30	✓		✓ (shown as “abandoned for use” portion of what was once the eastern end of “Moore Road” loop)
			Show on Official Map at distance shown		
GANGEMI ROAD	Town Accepted	0.16	✓	✓	✓ (Shown as “abandoned for use” but unnamed)
GREER ROAD	Town Accepted	0.20	✓	✓ (GREER LANE)	✓ (Shown as unnamed, small branch off of Monroe Road)
KRUTIAK WOODLOT ROAD	PRIVATE	???			
			Actively used, show on Official Map as PRIVATE		
MONROE ROAD	Town Accepted	2.67	✓	✓	✓
MOORES ROAD	Town Accepted	0.98	✓	✓ (MOORE ROAD)	✓ (MOORE ROAD)
MOORES ROAD EXTENSION	Town Accepted	???		✓ (Shown as extension of Moores Road into Town of Monroe)	
			Actively used, show on Official Map		
MOUNT ANTHONY ROAD	PRIVATE	???		✓ (Shown as unnamed branch off Moores Road)	✓ (Shown as unnamed branch off Moores Road)
			Show on Official Map		

Table 1. Summary of Road Status Prior to Official Map

Street Name	Admin System	Miles	Mass Highway RIF	Official Arrow Road Atlas	County Engineer's Map
			Show on Official Map		
NAPOLEON ROAD*	Town Accepted (Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)	0.21	✓		✓ (Shown as unnamed)
			Show on Official Map		
NORTH COUNTY ROAD	Town Accepted	1.18	✓	✓	✓ (Branch from Oleson Road to Mohawk Trail shown as "discontinued by vote")
OLSON ROAD	Town Accepted	0.89	✓ (Shown as Oleson Road)	✓ (OLSON ROAD)	✓ (OLSON ROAD)
PEANUT ROAD	Town Accepted	???	✓ (Shown but unnamed)		
			Show on Official Map		
PHELPS ROAD	Town Accepted	0.54	✓	✓	
POIROT ROAD	Town Accepted	0.26	✓	✓	
RAYCROFT ROAD	???	???		✓ (Shown as northern end of Monroe Road)	
			DO NOT Show on Official Map		
RIVER ROAD	Town Accepted	7.81	✓	✓	✓
RIVER ROAD BRANCH	Town Accepted	0.14	✓		
			DO NOT Show on Official Map		
ROWE ROAD	???	???		✓ (Shown as unnamed extension of Whitcomb Hill Road crossing Deerfield River)	✓ (Shown as unnamed extension of Torrey Mountain Road crossing Deerfield River and leading into Town of Rowe)
			DO NOT show on Official Map		
SAVOY ROAD	Town Accepted	1.15	✓	✓	✓
SHAFT ROAD BRANCH (also MARTIN ROAD)*	Town Accepted (Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)	???			✓ (Shown as Shaft Road)
			DO NOT Show on Official Map (candidate for discontinuance)		
SOUTH COUNTY ROAD	Town Accepted	4.80	✓	✓	✓
SOUTH STREET	Town Accepted	0.87	✓	✓	✓
STONE ROAD*	Town Accepted (Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)	0.10	✓		✓ (Shown but unnamed)
STRYKERS ROAD	Town Accepted	1.65	✓	✓	✓

Table 1. Summary of Road Status Prior to Official Map

Street Name	Admin System	Miles	Mass Highway RIF	Official Arrow Road Atlas	County Engineer's Map
TALC MINE ROAD (or WOODS ROAD)	???	???	DO NOT Show on prototype		
TILDA HILL ROAD	Town Accepted	1.25	✓	✓	✓
TORREY MOUNTAIN ROAD*	Town Accepted (Not Plowed or Maintained by Town)	1.46	✓	✓	✓
TOWER ROAD	???	150ft	Show on prototype as PRIVATE		
			✓ (Shown at southern end of South County Road as Wheeler Road)		
			Show on prototype as PRIVATE (end of South County Rd.)		
WHEELER ROAD	Town Accepted	0.35	✓ (Shown at very southern end of South County Road)		✓
WHITCOMB HILL ROAD	Town Accepted	2.50	✓	✓	✓ (Portion between Monroe Road and Moore Road shown as “discontinued for use”)
WHITCOMB HILL ROAD EXTENSION	Town Accepted	0.18	✓ (Shown as unnamed, non-connecting road between River Road and Whitcomb Hill Road)	✓ (Shown as unnamed, connecting road between River Road and Whitcomb Hill Road)	✓ (Shown as unnamed, connecting road between River Road and Whitcomb Hill Road)
ZYK’S ROAD	???	???			✓ (Shown as “discontinued by vote”)
			Show on Official Map		
UNNAMED ROAD (Between River Road and Deerfield River)	???	???	DO NOT Show on Official Map (candidate for discontinuance)		

Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Table 2 (next page) details the clarifications or actions needed for all roads in question. The right-hand column lists, where possible, conclusions drawn by Florida's CDP committee and BRPC. Where simple conclusions were not possible, BRPC recommendations are listed.

This road-by-road analysis should answer most of the questions about how roads ended up on or off the Official Map and why. It also provides the action plan for resolving the questions of road status in the Town of Florida and for adopting the Official Map. Recommendations that call for Select Board or Town Meeting action provide much of the language Town officials can use when drawing up Select Board motions or Town Meeting warrant articles. (See Appendix ??? for additional examples.)

NOTE: In Massachusetts, the terms “discontinue,” “close,” and “abandon” do not mean the same thing legally. Discontinuance ends the public right of access along a road; the road ceases to exist legally and all land uses requiring public access along that discontinued portion of the road, such as Approval Not Required (ANR) subdivision development, disappear. In cases where the term “close” is used, it is assumed that the term was intended to mean more or less the same thing as “discontinue”—that is, the cessation of legal public right of access. But it must be stipulated that “close” is not defined by Massachusetts General Laws as “discontinue” is and therefore may be subject to legal challenge. “Abandonment” likewise has no official definition in Massachusetts General Laws. Though the Town of Florida may have voted at Town Meeting to “abandon” roads, the Town has, according to current Massachusetts statutes, taken an indefinite, potentially challengeable legal position on the status of the roads. In most cases, the intent of the abandonment was most likely to either cease the Town’s responsibility for maintenance along a road or part of it or discontinue the right of way altogether. For ceasing maintenance, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82, Section 32A requires that the Town vote to “discontinue maintenance” for roads that the board of selectmen has deemed “abandoned and unused for ordinary travel...” Where the Town intended to cease both maintenance and the public right of passage, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82, Section 21 requires that the Town vote to “discontinue” a Town way.

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
ADAMS ROAD	1) Discontinued, Discontinued for Maintenance, Private Statutory Way? 2) Town or State Administered? This former county road in Savoy Mountain State Forest, shown as “discontinued by vote” on the County Engineer’s map, may or may not be actively used. The CDP committee felt that the public right of access should be maintained. County Commissioners’ records from January 2, 1973 (Book 24, Page 4) state that Adams Road was “discontinued under the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82, Section 32A...from Central Shaft Road to the town line....” According to the Fall 2003 draft of <i>Discontinuing Town and County Roads</i>, the effect of discontinuing county ways under Chapter 82, Section 32A was to “turn the county road into a private statutory way, open to the public without requirement of town maintenance.”	Conclusion: Show Adams Road (0.63 miles in distance) on Official Map as a State Forest right-of-way (i.e. administered by the Department of Environmental Management). The road maintains public right of access, but the Town of Florida has no legal liability or responsibility for maintenance. Recommendation: As of Fall 2003, Savoy Mountain State Forest Trail Maps, distributed by the Department of Environmental Management at trailheads throughout the Forest, showed what was Adams Road as an “unpaved road” in “poor condition,” leading from Adams, where the road is called Old Florida Road, across the town line into Florida. BRPC recommends that the Select Board notify the Department of Environmental Management so that it will apply the name Adams Road on its State Forest maps from now on.
BLISS ROAD	1) Northern portion “abandoned by vote,” as shown on the County Engineer’s map. No book and page number are given for County Commissioners’ records and no Town records mention this “abandonment.”	Conclusion: Show Bliss Road as a Town Accepted way leading 1.28 miles north from Tilda Hill Road. (This is the portion that is currently passable and actively used.) Recommendation: Vote at Town Meeting to “discontinue the portion of Bliss Road beyond 1.28 miles.” The act of discontinuing a road that may or may not have been discontinued already does

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
		not imply that the way being discontinued ever was a road. It will simply document the legal status of that way from that day forward.
BRAWLEY ROAD	1) Not shown on any map but noted as a way by members of the CDP committee and other town residents. 2) May be a common driveway, serving no more than three residences.	Conclusion: Do not show Brawley Road on Official Map. The CDP committee did not find cause to include Brawley Road on the Official Map. If anything, the 0.04 mile way serves as a driveway to fewer than three residences, which means that it can be construed as a way without any public right of access. The Town will not be legally liable or responsible for maintenance for this way from the date of Official Map adoption forward. Recommendation: Since this road was never recorded on any map, no action to discontinue should be required, though the Town may wish to vote to discontinue the way anyway at Town Meeting, if for no other reason than to formally confirm its absence from the Official Map and the Town's release from liability.
BURNETTS ROAD	1) Town Accepted public way or driveway serving fewer than two or three residences?	Conclusion: Do not show Burnetts Road on the Official Map. The CDP Committee found that Burnetts Road, despite its inclusion in the 2002 MassHighway RIF, should not be considered a Town accepted way or a way with any public right of access. Recommendation: The Town should vote to discontinue Burnetts Road (shown as 0.2 miles in distance in the MassHighway RIF) at Town Meeting.
BUSBY ROAD	1) Discontinued, Discontinued for Maintenance, Private Statutory Way? 2) Town or State Administered? This former Town road in Savoy Mountain State Forest, shown as "discontinued by vote" on the County Engineer's map, is used currently as a multi-use trail. The CDP committee felt that the public right of access should be maintained. County Commissioners' records from January 2, 1973 (Book 24, Page 4) state that Busby Road was "discontinued under the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82, Section 32A." According to the Fall 2003 draft of <i>Discontinuing Town and County Roads</i>, the effect of discontinuing county ways under Chapter 82, Section 32A was to "turn the county road into a private statutory way, open to the public	Conclusion: Show Busby Road on Official Map as a State Forest right-of-way (i.e. administered by the Department of Environmental Management). The road maintains public right of access, but the Town of Florida has no legal liability or responsibility for maintenance. Recommendation: As of Fall 2003, Savoy Mountain State Forest Trail Maps, distributed by the Department of Environmental Management at trailheads throughout the Forest, showed what was Busby Road as an "ORV Trail" in the summer and as a "skiing, Snowshoeing trail" in the winter. The way leads north from Central Shaft Road. BRPC recommends that, after the adoption of the Official Map, the Select Board notify the Department of Environmental Management so that it will apply on its State Forest maps the name "Busby Road" to the portion shown on the Official Map.

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
	without requirement of town maintenance."	
DICKENSON ROAD	1) Town Accepted or "Abandoned for Use"? 2) If Town Accepted, what distance? 3) Dickenson or Dickinson Road? Dickenson Road appears in the 2002 MassHighway RIF as 0.60 miles of Town Accepted right-of-way along a road that the County Engineer's map shows as the eastern end of the former "Moore Road" loop. The County Engineer's map also shows Dickenson Road as "abandoned for use," though it does not document a book and page number for County Commissioners' records.	Conclusion: Show portion of "Dickenson" Road leading 0.3 miles from Monroe Road on Official Map as a private statutory way under M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 21. Recommendation: Before Town Meeting, the Select Board should lay out 0.3 miles of Dickenson road as a private statutory way. Then, at Town Meeting, residents can vote to discontinue all of Dickenson Road and, under a separate article, vote to lay out the first 0.3 miles as a private statutory way. This will establish that the road has public right of access, but that the Town is relieved of all legal liability and maintenance responsibilities and that no frontage is available for new ANR development along Dickenson Road. The laying out of Dickenson Road as a private statutory way will essentially reinforce and update the language of a January 19, 1973 order by the County Commissioners to make "Dickinson" Road "private," as requested then by the Select Board.
KRUTIAK WOODLOT ROAD	1) Private Statutory Way or Town Accepted? The CDP committee noted that this way provides the only access to parcels of land located north of Moores Road just over the Monroe Town line. They wished to end maintenance and legal liability for Krutiak Woodlot Road, but could not say that Krutiak Woodlot Road is "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel," as required in M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 32A for discontinuance of maintenance.	Conclusion: Show Krutiak Woodlot Road on Official Map as a private statutory way from the end of Moores Road to the Monroe Town line. Recommendation: The Select Board should lay out Krutiak Woodlot Road as a private statutory way under M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 21. Then, at Town meeting, residents should first vote to discontinue this portion of road, then vote separately to lay it out as a private statutory way named Krutiak Woodlot Road. The public right of access will remain while the Town is relieved of liability, new frontage or maintenance obligations along Krutiak Woodlot road. Maintenance and legal liabilities revert to abutters.
MOORES ROAD	1) Moores Road or Moore Road?	Conclusion: Show on Official Map as "Moores Road," as decided by the CDP committee.
MOORES ROAD EXTENSION	1) Located at end of Moores Road in Monroe? Or branch off of east side of Moores Road in Florida?	Conclusion: Show Moores Road Extension on Official Map as branch off of Moores Road, leading 0.28 miles to the east-northeast, as agreed by the CDP committee.

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
MOUNT ANTHONY ROAD	1) Private Statutory Way or Town Accepted? 2) Distance? The 2002 MassHighway RIF, Atlas, and County Engineer's map all show this way as a "Town Accepted" road branching off of Moores Road to the north-northwest, though none of them give it a name. The CDP Committee told BRPC that the way was known as Mount Anthony Road and that the Town wished to end maintenance, legal and frontage liabilities along the road, but that Mount Anthony Road is not "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel," as required in M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 32A for discontinuance of maintenance.	Conclusion: Show Mount Anthony Road on the Official Map as a private statutory way, branching 0.28 miles north-northwest off of Moores Road. Recommendation: The Select Board should lay out Mount Anthony Road as a private statutory way under M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 21. Then, at Town meeting, residents should vote first to discontinue this portion of road, then vote separately to lay it out as a private statutory way named Mount Anthony Road. The public right of access will remain while the Town is relieved of liability, new frontage or maintenance obligations along Mount Anthony Road. Maintenance and legal liabilities revert to abutters.
NAPOLEON ROAD	1) Town Accepted or Private Statutory Way? The 2002 MassHighway RIF and County Engineer's map show Napoleon Road as "Town Accepted." The CDP committee felt that the Town should be relieved of legal and maintenance liabilities, but that Napoleon Road is not "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel," as required in M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 32A for discontinuance of maintenance.	Conclusion: Show Napoleon Road on Official Map as a private statutory way. Recommendation: The Select Board should lay out Napoleon Road as a private statutory way under M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 21. Then, at Town meeting, residents should vote first to discontinue the road, then vote separately to lay it out as a private statutory way. The public right of access will remain while the Town is relieved of liability, new frontage or maintenance obligations. Maintenance and legal liabilities revert to abutters.
OLESON ROAD	1) Oleson or Olson Road? Some maps showed the road as Olson while others showed it as Oleson. The CDP committee decided that Oleson was more widely used.	Conclusion: Show the road as Oleson Road on the Official Map. The use of the spelling on the Official Map should legally establish Oleson as the spelling of the road name, so no laying out or any other action is necessarily required.
PEANUT ROAD	1) Town Accepted or Private Statutory Way? The 2002 MassHighway RIF showed the road as unnamed but "Town Accepted." The committee agreed that there is a road where MassHighway shows one, and that its name is Peanut Road.	Conclusion: Show Peanut Road on Official Map as a Town Accepted road.
RAYCROFT ROAD	1) Raycroft Road or northern end of Monroe Road? The Atlas showed Raycroft Road where MassHighway and the County Engineer's map showed just the northern end of Monroe Road. The	Conclusion: Do not show Raycroft Road on the Official Map. The portion of road named Raycroft Road on the Atlas map will appear on the Official Map as the continuation of Monroe Road.

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
	CDP committee decided that no portion of Monroe Road should be officially named Raycroft Road.	
RIVER ROAD BRANCH	1) Unknown status in MassHighway RIF The 2002 MassHighway RIF shows a road between the eastern end of Whitcomb Hill Road and the northern end of Torrey Mountain Road, which runs south parallel to River Road and then intersects with River Road. The road is unnamed and listed as "unknown" in status. BRPC and the CDP committee assumed this unnamed road to be River Road Branch, though in the MassHighway RIF the road by that name is listed as "Town Accepted." No other road could be found in any Town records or on any map by the name of River Road Branch.	Conclusion: Do not show River Road Branch on the Official Map. The CDP committee and BRPC agreed that it was not clear whether or where any River Road Branch actually exists or ever existed. Since there is no way to discontinue such an unspecified road at Town Meeting, the CDP committee decided to let the absence of River Road Branch from the Official Map suffice as the Town's official designation of its legal status. It is, in effect, equivalent to discontinuing the road.
ROWE ROAD	1) Town Accepted? The Atlas shows an unnamed extension of Whitcomb Hill Road crossing the Deerfield River, and the County Engineer's map shows an unnamed extension of Torrey Mountain Road crossing the Deerfield River and leading into Town of the Town of Rowe. The CDP committee suggested that these roads are in fact a Deerfield River bridge crossing. Committee members suggested that this way may have been called Rowe Road, though such a name did not appear in any maps that BRPC found.	Conclusion: Do not show Rowe Road on the Official Map. Recommendation: The Town should vote at Town Meeting to discontinue Rowe Road, or "the road crossing the Deerfield River in to the Town of Rowe, possibly known as Rowe Road, near the eastern end of Whitcomb Hill Road and the northern end of Torrey Mountain Road."
SHAFT ROAD BRANCH (also MARTIN ROAD)	1) Town Accepted, Private Statutory Way, or Discontinue? Members of the CDP committee noted that there was once a road branching to the west off of Central Shaft Road, between that road's intersections with Strykers Road and South County Road. The county Engineer's map shows a road named Shaft Road at this location, but such a road does not appear in Town records or on other maps. Others believed the road may have been called Martin Road or perhaps Shaft Road Branch.	Conclusion: Do not show Shaft Road Branch (or Martin Road or Shaft Road) on the Official Map. The CDP committee decided that it was not clear whether any passable way still exists at the location in question. Recommendation: The Town should vote at Town Meeting to discontinue Shaft Road Branch, or Shaft Road or Martin Road or any way located x miles south of the Strykers Road and Central Shaft Road intersection.
STONE ROAD	1) Town Accepted or Statutory Private Way? The 2002 MassHighway RIF and the	Conclusion: Show Stone Road on Official Map as a statutory private way.

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
	County Engineer's map both show a short, unnamed way leading west off of Strykers Road. The CDP committee told BRPC that this way is called Stone Road, which the MassHighway RIF lists as a 0.10 mile, "Town Accepted" way. The CDP committee felt that the Town should be relieved of legal and maintenance liabilities, but that Stone Road is not "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel," as required in M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 32A for discontinuance of maintenance.	Recommendation: The Select Board should lay out Stone Road as a private statutory way under M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 21. Then, at Town meeting, residents should vote first to discontinue the road, then vote separately to lay it out as a private statutory way. The public right of access will remain while the Town is relieved of liability, new frontage and maintenance obligations. Maintenance and legal liabilities revert to abutters.
TOWER ROAD	1) Town Accepted or Statutory Private Way? The 2002 MassHighway RIF shows a small way leading south near the eastern end of South county Road named Wheeler Road. CDP committee members claimed that that road is actually named Tower Road and that Wheeler Road is another road leading south from South County Road, somewhat to the west of Tower Road. The MassHighway RIF lists the road it labeled as Wheeler Road as a 0.30 mile, "Town Accepted" way. The CDP committee felt that Tower Road should not be a liability to the Town, but members could not say that it is "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel," as required in M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 32A for discontinuance of maintenance.	Conclusion: Show Tower Road on the Official Map as a statutory private way. Recommendation: The Select Board should lay out Tower Road as a private statutory way under M.G.L. Chapter 82, Section 21. Then, at Town meeting, residents should also vote to lay it out as a private statutory way. The public right of access will remain while the Town is relieved of liability, new frontage and maintenance obligations. Maintenance and legal liabilities revert to abutters. Since Tower Road did not appear as a Town accepted way in other records, the Town may forgo a Town Meeting vote to discontinue it before laying it out as a statutory way. The Official Map will serve as the legal documentation of the location, and of Wheeler Road's location. (See Wheeler Road.)
WHEELER ROAD	1) Correct Location? The 2002 MassHighway RIF shows Wheeler Road where the CDP committee agreed Tower Road is located. The CDP committee instead agreed with the County Engineer's map, which shows Wheeler Road leading about 0.35 miles south from South County Road, somewhat west of Tower Road.	Conclusion: Show Wheeler Road on the Official Map leading south from South County Road, west of Tower Road, in accordance with the depiction on the County Engineer's map. Because it is not clear whether the location of Wheeler Road was ever in question (or whether MassHighway simply mislabeled it in their RIF), the CDP committee decided to let the depiction of Wheeler Road on the Official Map serve as official documentation of its location.
ZYK'S ROAD	1) Discontinued, Discontinued for Maintenance, Private Statutory Way? 2) Town or State Administered? This former Town road in Savoy Mountain State Forest, shown as "discontinued by vote" on the County Engineer's map, is used currently as a trail, according to members of the CDP	Conclusion: Show Zyk's Road on Official Map as a State Forest right-of-way (i.e. administered by the Department of Environmental Management). The road maintains public right of access, but the Town of Florida has no legal liability or responsibility for maintenance. Recommendation:

Table 2. Roads Requiring Clarification/Action

Road	Clarification	Recommendation/Conclusion
	committee. The committee felt that the public right of access should be maintained. County Commissioners' records from January 2, 1973 (Book 24, Page 4) state that Zyk's Road was "discontinued under the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 82, Section 32A." According to the Fall 2003 draft of <i>Discontinuing Town and County Roads</i>, the effect of discontinuing county ways under Chapter 82, Section 32A was to "turn the county road into a private statutory way, open to the public without requirement of town maintenance."	Unlike Busby Road and Adams Road, which were discontinued under the same petition as Zyk's Road, Zyk's Road does not appear in Savoy Mountain State Forest Trail Maps, BRPC recommends that, after the Official Map is adopted showing Zyk's Road, the Select Board notify the Department of Environmental Management so that it should apply on its State Forest maps the name "Zyk's Road" to the portion shown on the Official Map.
UNNAMED ROAD (Between River Road and Deerfield River)	1) Town Accepted or Discontinued? The 2002 MassHighway RIF shows an unnamed road of "unknown status" running between River Road and the Deerfield River in the northeastern corner of Florida. The CDP committee did not have a definitive opinion about this way, or whether a passable way even exists there now.	Conclusion: Do not show Unnamed Road on the Official Map. Recommendation: Since there are questionable records of this way, at best, and debate over whether it is or ever was an accepted way, BRPC recommends discontinuing "the unnamed road running x miles between River Road and the Deerfield River in the northeaster corner of Town." This will reinforce the legal weight of leaving the road off of the Official Map.

Appendices

Appendix A may be the most helpful of all the appendices: it provides detailed legal and procedural discussion about discontinuance, discontinuance for maintenance, and laying out statutory private ways. Appendix B contains all of the documentation about discontinuances, abandonments, and ownership reassignments for roads in Florida gathered from County Commissioners' and Town records. Appendix C provides sample language Town officials can use to draft Town Meeting warrant articles for both road discontinuance and Official Map adoption. Included are several example articles from other Town Meeting warrants where Official Maps or road discontinuances were adopted.

Of Note...

Concerning "abandoned" roads: a July 2003 Massachusetts Appeals Court decision regarding the rebuilding of an abandoned public road in the Town of Leverett for the purpose of developing abutting land. According to the "Around the Commonwealth" column in the September 2003 *Beacon*, the court ruled that a public road must be passable by emergency vehicles at the time of the development application. The court decision makes accessibility by emergency vehicles at the time of application the determining factor in denying an "approval not required" (ANR) endorsement, as outlined in the Subdivision Control Law (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 81, Sections K-GG). Development of the land in Leverett would have required the Town to rebuild a road no longer in use, a cost the Town did not want to bear.

It should be noted also that *The Boston Globe* has reported cases in other Massachusetts towns, notably Marshfield, where developers are actively seeking roadways that may be unused, or “abandoned,” but that were never legally discontinued. Developers have claimed that such roads provide legitimate access for “approval not required” subdivisions, which a planning board must endorse so long as certain criteria are met, as laid out in the Subdivision Control Law. “Abandoned” roads in Florida may therefore have presented land use quandaries if their status had not been clarified legally before a developer approaches the planning board with an ANR subdivision plan.

Reference

Discontinuing Town and County Roads [Draft]. Lynn Rubinstein and Alexandra Dawson, Esq. Massachusetts Department of Public Works and the Highland Communities Initiative. 2003.

Map of Florida, MA

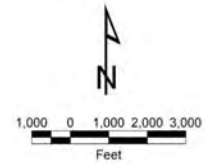
Orthomap: Aerial Photo with 2002 MassHighway Road Inventory Overlay

DRAFT

Town of Florida Road Network Administration

Street Name	Miles	Administration
MOHAWK TRAIL	7.09	Mass Highway
BLACKSTONE ROAD	1.64	Town
BLISS ROAD	1.28	Town
BURROCK ROAD	0.06	Town
BURNETTS ROAD	0.20	Town
CENTRAL SHAFT ROAD	3.85	Town
CHURCH ROAD	1.49	Town
DICKENSON ROAD	0.60	Town
GANGEMI ROAD	0.16	Town
GREER ROAD	0.20	Town
MONROE ROAD	2.67	Town
MOORES ROAD	0.98	Town
NAPOLION ROAD	0.21	Town
NORTH COUNTY ROAD	1.18	Town
OLSON ROAD	0.89	Town
PHELPS ROAD	0.54	Town
POBROT ROAD	0.26	Town
RIVER ROAD	7.81	Town
RIVER ROAD BRANCH	0.14	Town
SAVOY ROAD	1.15	Town
SOUTH COUNTY ROAD	4.80	Town
SOUTH STREET	0.87	Town
STONE ROAD	0.10	Town
STRYKERS ROAD	1.65	Town
TILDA HILL ROAD	1.25	Town
TORREY MOUNTAIN ROAD	1.46	Town
WHEELER ROAD	0.30	Town
WHITCOMB HILL ROAD	2.50	Town
WHITCOMB HILL ROAD EXTENSION	0.18	Town

Mass Highway Department
Town Accepted
Unknown Status



Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983

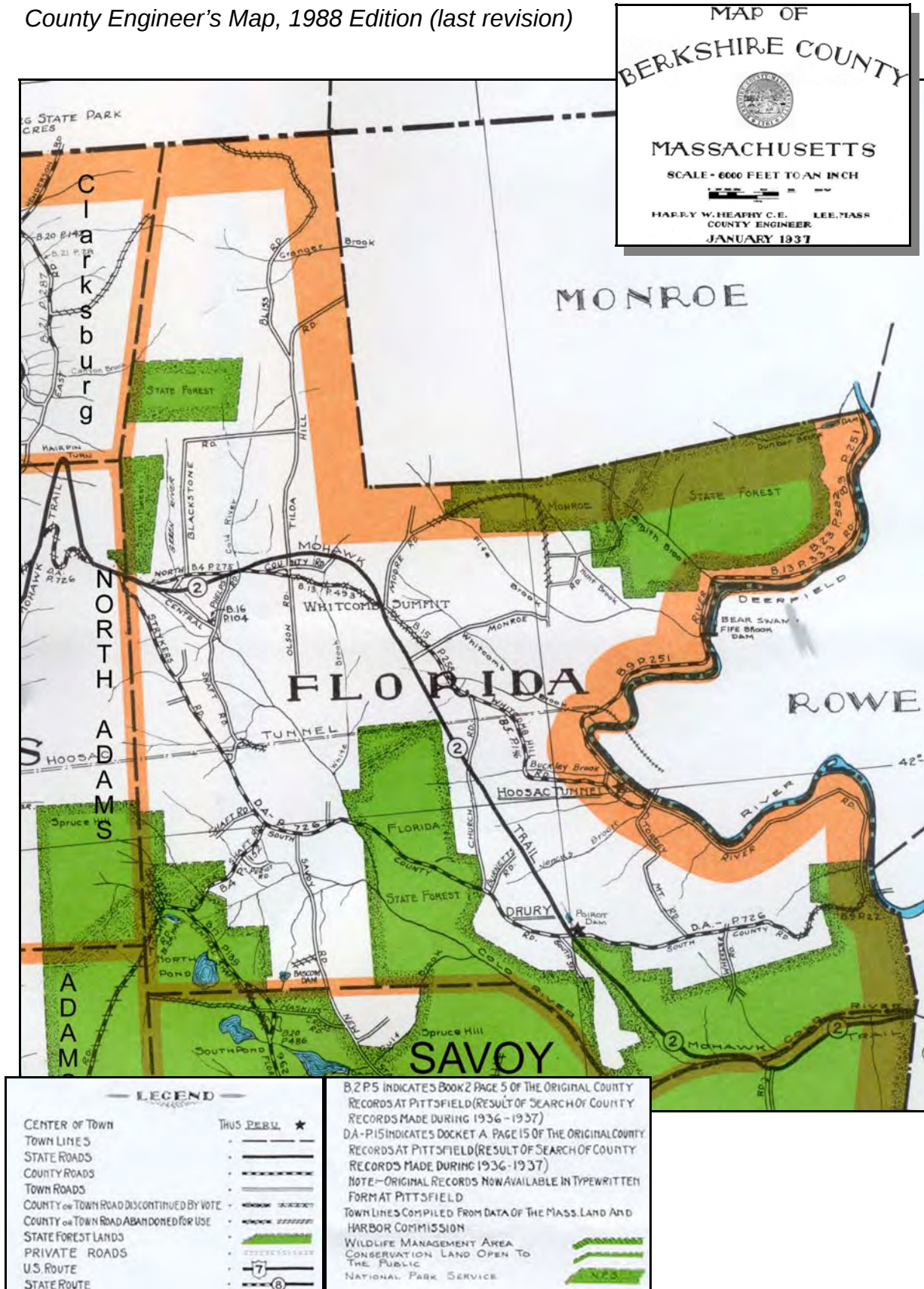


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Schwartz A. 2002
MassDOT, all rights reserved

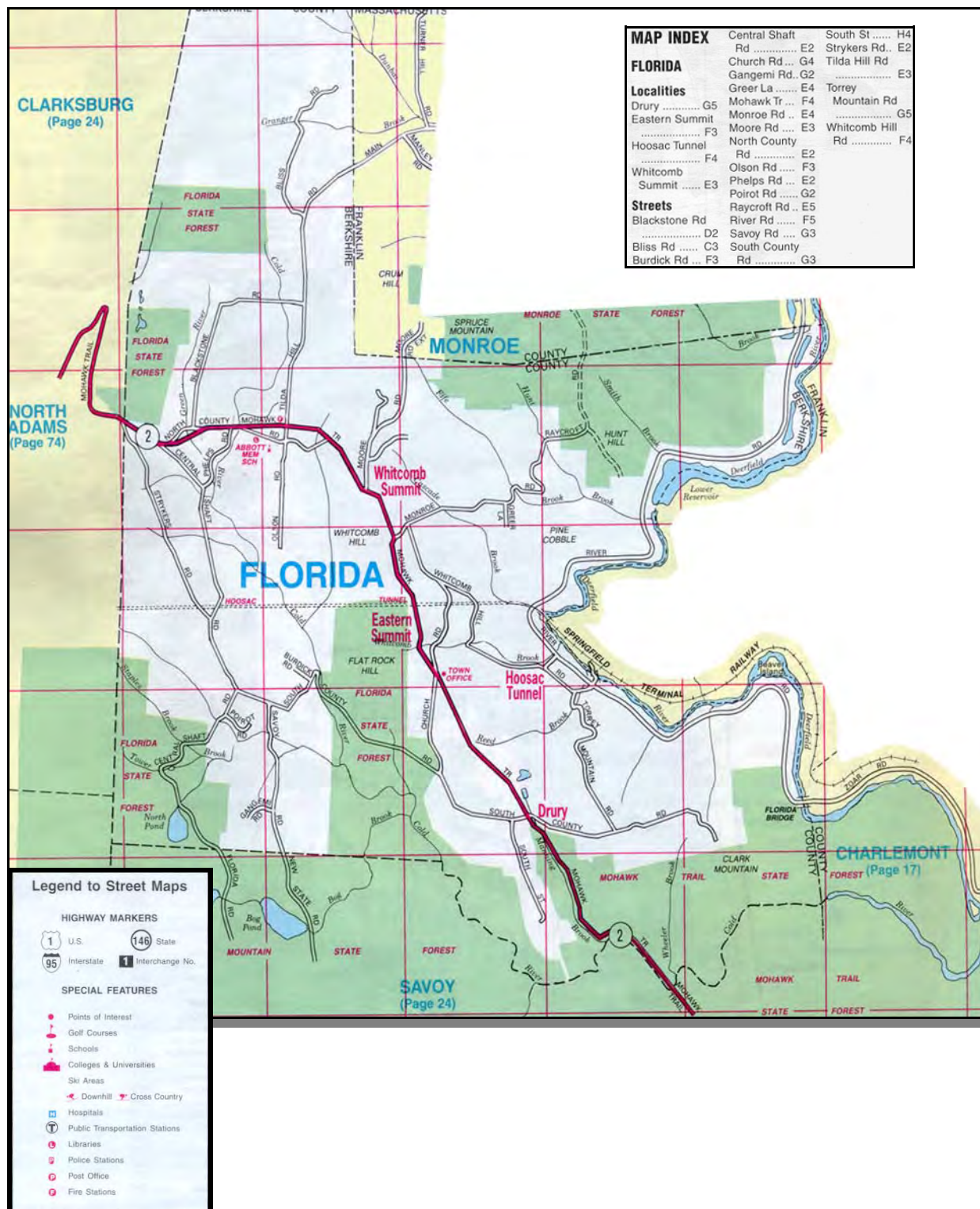
Map of Florida, MA

County Engineer's Map, 1988 Edition (last revision)

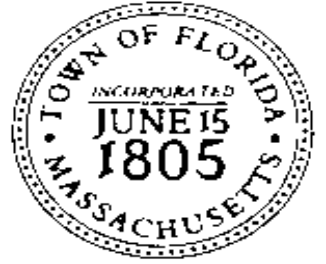


Map of Florida, MA

Official Arrow Street Atlas of Western Massachusetts, 1998 Second Edition.



**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



GIS Mapping

Introduction to GIS Mapping

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are quickly becoming a staple of our times. Defined broadly, GIS is a computer-based system “for capture, retrieval, analysis, and display of spatial (locationally defined) data.” The essential elements in this definition for local governments are “spatial” and “analysis”: where are things, why do we want to know about them, and how can our community use this information to make better decisions?

GIS is a system of computer software, hardware, data, and personnel to help manipulate, analyze and present information that is tied to a specific location on the earth. Aspects of GIS include:

spatial location – usually a geographic location

information – visualization of analysis of data

system – linking software, hardware, data

personnel –the key to the power of GIS

GIS applies modern computer graphics and database technology to the efficient, cost-effective management and planning of the local government's assets. It provides enhanced capabilities for data storage, retrieval, and analysis. GIS does this by linking (1) maps and (2) databases. This marriage lets us easily explore the relationship between (1) location and (2) information.

The real key for small city governments is that GIS quickly integrates *information with location*. Through its use of computer technology, GIS provides a better, faster, easier way for local officials to find answers to questions and carry out analyses based on spatial relationships.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission uses GIS in projects covering almost all aspects of planning. This includes environmental, land use, community development, transportation, economic and housing projects. BRPC uses our GIS for map creation, data development and spatial analysis.

Throughout the Community Development Plan, GIS has been used to create a series of base maps illustrating what is in each community and has allowed community officials to determine where the most suitable locations are for various types of development / preservation. Some communities also used suitability maps to assist them in determine where the best locations for development / preservation were. These suitability maps were created by evaluating the importance of various environmental, housing, economic, and transportation items and plotting the best and worst locations based on the combination of all these factors. The final maps presented throughout the report show the decisions that were arrived at by the community. In this section, the base maps are presented as reference to show what is currently in the town. The descriptions of the mapped items that you will find within these base maps are listed below.

Introduction to Development Suitability Maps

Description of Map Attributes:

Environmental Resources

Drinking Water

Aquifers – shows medium and high yield aquifers as delineated by USGS Water Resource Division. The original data is from the USGS 1:48,000 hydrologic atlas series on groundwater favorability.

Interim Wellhead Protection areas – shows the primary, protected area for PWS groundwater sources in the absence of an approved Zone II. The radius around the well is determined by the pumping rate in GPM of the well. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) wells.

Lakes/Ponds Resource Area – shows a 100 ft. buffer around the lakes and ponds that are on the USGS topographical maps. This buffer shows the area that has an immediate impact of the lakes and ponds.

Outstanding Resource Water – shows waters which constitute an outstanding resource as determined by their outstanding socioeconomic, recreational, ecological, and / or aesthetic values and which shall be protected and maintained as determined under Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards of 1995

Wellhead Protection Zone I – shows a 400 ft. buffer around public water supply points.

Wellhead Protection Area Zone II – shows the primary, protected area for PWS groundwater sources based upon the area of an aquifer which contributes to a well under the most severe pumping and recharge conditions that can realistically be anticipated. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) wells.

Water Bodies and Protection Areas

FEMA 100yr. Floodplain – shows areas of possible risk associated with flooding. This layer was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM)

Lakes / Ponds Resource Areas – 100 ft - shows a 100-foot buffer around lakes and ponds that defines the resource area that contributes to the lake/pond. The lakes and ponds are derived from USGS topo maps.

River Protection Area – 200 ft. – Shows a 200-foot buffer delineating the resource area of perennial streams. These areas were created as an addition to the long-standing Wetlands Protection Act. The law establishes protected riverfront areas that extend 200 feet from the mean annual high-water line.

Surface Water Protection Area Zone A – shows land between the surface water source and the upper boundary of the bank, the land within a 400 foot lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of a Class A surface water source and the land within a 200 foot lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of a tributary or associated surface water body. These areas are included in the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations as Surface Water Supply Protection Zones.

Surface Water Protection Area Zone B – shows the land within one-half mile of the upper boundary of the bank of a Class A surface water source or the edge of the watershed, whichever is less. Zone B always included the land area within a 400 ft lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of the Class A surface water source. These areas are included in the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations as Surface Water Supply Protection Zones.

Wetland Resource Areas – shows a 100-foot buffer around wetlands that defines the resource area that contributes to the wetland. The wetlands are derived from USGS topographical maps.

Wetlands – shows wetlands derived from USGS topographical maps.

Soils / Geology

Excessively Drained Soils– shows soils that have too much or too rapid loss of water, either by percolation or by surface flow. The occurrence of internal free water is very rare or very deep. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Highly Erodible Soils – shows soils that are highly susceptible to erosion from wind and/or water. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Hydric Soils – Soils that are wet long enough to periodically produce anaerobic conditions, thereby influencing the growth of plants. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Poorly Drained soils– shows soils that do not lose water very rapidly. The occurrence of free water is common. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Scenic Landscapes – shows areas identified as having distinctive or noteworthy scenic landscapes as part of the Massachusetts Landscape Inventory Project, Department of Environmental Management, 1981.

Slopes Greater than 15% - shows slopes that are greater than 15% based on slope information derived from either 3 or 10-meter contours generated by MassGIS

Biological

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern – shows the location of areas that have been designated ACECs by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs. This designation requires greater environmental review of certain kinds of proposed development under state agency jurisdiction with the boundary.

Contiguous Natural Lands – shows large, contiguous tracts of natural land. “Contiguous” lands are defined to be at least 250 contiguous acres and “Natural” lands are defined based on the land use codes for water, forest, shrubland, pasture and wetland. The data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

Natural Land Riparian Corridors – shows contiguous natural lands within a 100-meter corridor encompassing perennial streams and river features. These areas within the riparian corridor remain in a “natural state”, potentially functioning as a corridor for select species movement, as well as additional ecological purposes. These data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

NHESP BioMap Core Habitat - Depicts the most viable habitat for rare species and natural communities. The polygons may consist of many individual species or natural communities.

NHESP BioMap Supporting Natural Landscapes – buffers and connects the Core Habitat polygons and identifies large, naturally vegetated blocks that are relatively free from the impact of roads and other development. The quality of undeveloped land considered in the landscape analysis was evaluated based on four major components: natural vegetation patch characteristics, size of relatively road less areas, sub watershed integrity, and contribution to buffering Bore Habitat for plants and exemplary communities.

NHESP Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife – shows estimations of the habitats of state-protected rare wildlife populations that occur in Resource areas. These habitats are based on rare species records maintained in the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program's (NHESP) database.

NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species – shows areas that represent estimations of important state-listed rare species habitats in Massachusetts. These habitats are based in rare species population records maintained in the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program's (NHESP) database.

Riparian Corridors – shows a 100-meter corridor, which encompasses perennial streams and river features. The 100 meter buffer distance is a subjective value derived from existing conservation plans, as well as current literature. The data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

Vernal Pools – shows a 100-foot buffer around NHESP Certified Vernal Pools. Certified Vernal Pools are protected if they fall under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act Regulations. They also are afforded protection under the state Water Quality Certification regulations, the state Title 5 regulations, and the Forest Cutting Practices Act regulations.

Community

Developed

Commercial Land – shows land that is classified as commercial in the most recent land use update.

Gravel Pits / Mining - shows land that is classified as Gravel / Mining in the most recent land use update.

Industrial Land – shows land that is classified as industrial in the most recent land use update. Industrial land is defined as Industrial, Mining, and Waste Disposal.

Multi-Family Residential - shows land that is classified as Multi-Family residential in the most recent land use update.

Residential Land – shows land that is classified as residential in the most recent land use update. Residential land is defined as lots smaller than ¼ acre lots, ¼ to ½ acre lots, lots larger than ½ acre, and multi-family lots.

State Registered Historic Resources – shows land that is listed with the State Register of Historic Places as being of historical interest.

Village / Commercial Centers – an area defined by the community as representing the village or community center.

Non-Developed Land

Agriculture Land – shows land classified as agriculture in the most recent land use update. Land that is defined as agriculture is composed of cropland, pasture, and woody perennial.

Agricultural Preservation Restriction Land – shows land that is permanently protected as agricultural land due to an APR designation

Buildable Land – shows land that was determined to be buildable based upon existing development, protection, and restricted land during the 1999/2000 Buildout Analysis

Forested Land – shows land that is classified as forest in the most recent land use update.

Non-Protected Open Space – shows land that is classified as open space, but is not permanently protected.

Partial Constraints – shows land that is buildable but is limited based on land characteristics, such as slope, wetlands, and proximity to water.

Protected Open Space – shows land that is classified as open space and is permanently protected.

Recreational Resources – shows land that is classified as recreational in the most recent land use update. Recreational land is defined as Participation Recreation, Spectator Recreation and Water based Recreation.

Housing and Population Densities

Owner Housing Density – The percentage of housing that is owned by the resident on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Population Density - The population of the census block on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Rental Housing Density - The percentage of housing that is rented by the resident on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Seasonal Housing Density - The percentage of housing that is seasonal on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Infrastructure

Roads

Dirt / Unpaved Roads – roads that are considered dirt or unpaved based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Local Roads – roads that are considered local roads based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Minor Roads – roads that are considered collectors based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Major Roads / Highway Access – roads that are considered arterials or interstate on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Other Transportation

Para Transit – This data layer is only useful for regional analysis. A town that is a member of BRTA receives para transit

Transit access – Roads that have existing BRTA bus service.

Rail Access – Existing rail lines that are currently used.

Air Access – The area surrounding the airports that are considered part of the airport complex.

Bike Trails – The Ashuwillticook bike trail from Lanesborough/Pittsfield line to downtown Adams.

Utilities

Public Water – a line approximating the location of the public water lines. DPW staff verified this data during summer of 2001.

Sewer – a line approximating the location of the sewer lines. The DPW staff verified this data during summer of 2001.

Solid Waste Facilities – Compiled by DEP to track the locations of landfills, transfer stations, and combustion facilities.

Bureau of Waste Prevention - Major Facilities – *facilities that are regulated by the DEP. These are considered to have the greatest environmental significance. Facilities included are:*

Large Quantity Generators of Hazardous Waste

Large Quantity Toxic Users

Hazardous Waste Recyclers

Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage and / or Disposal Facilities

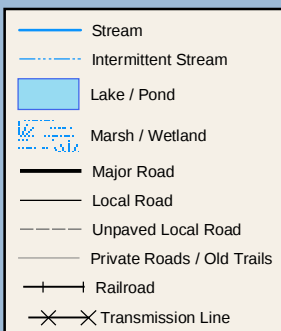
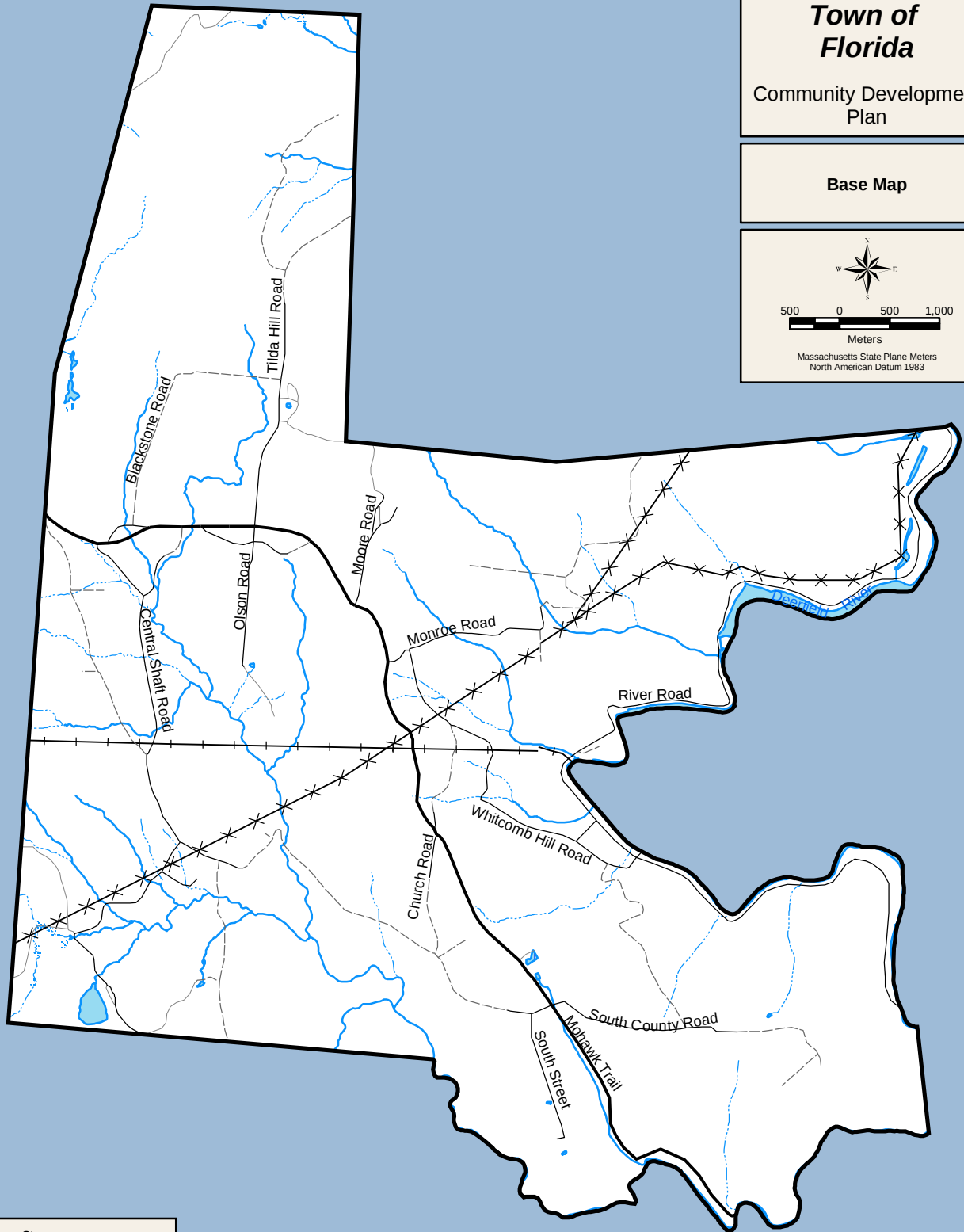
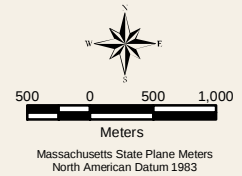
Facilities with Air Operating Permits

Facilities with Groundwater Discharge Permits

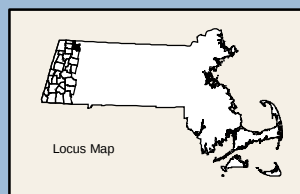
Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Base Map



August 19, 2002
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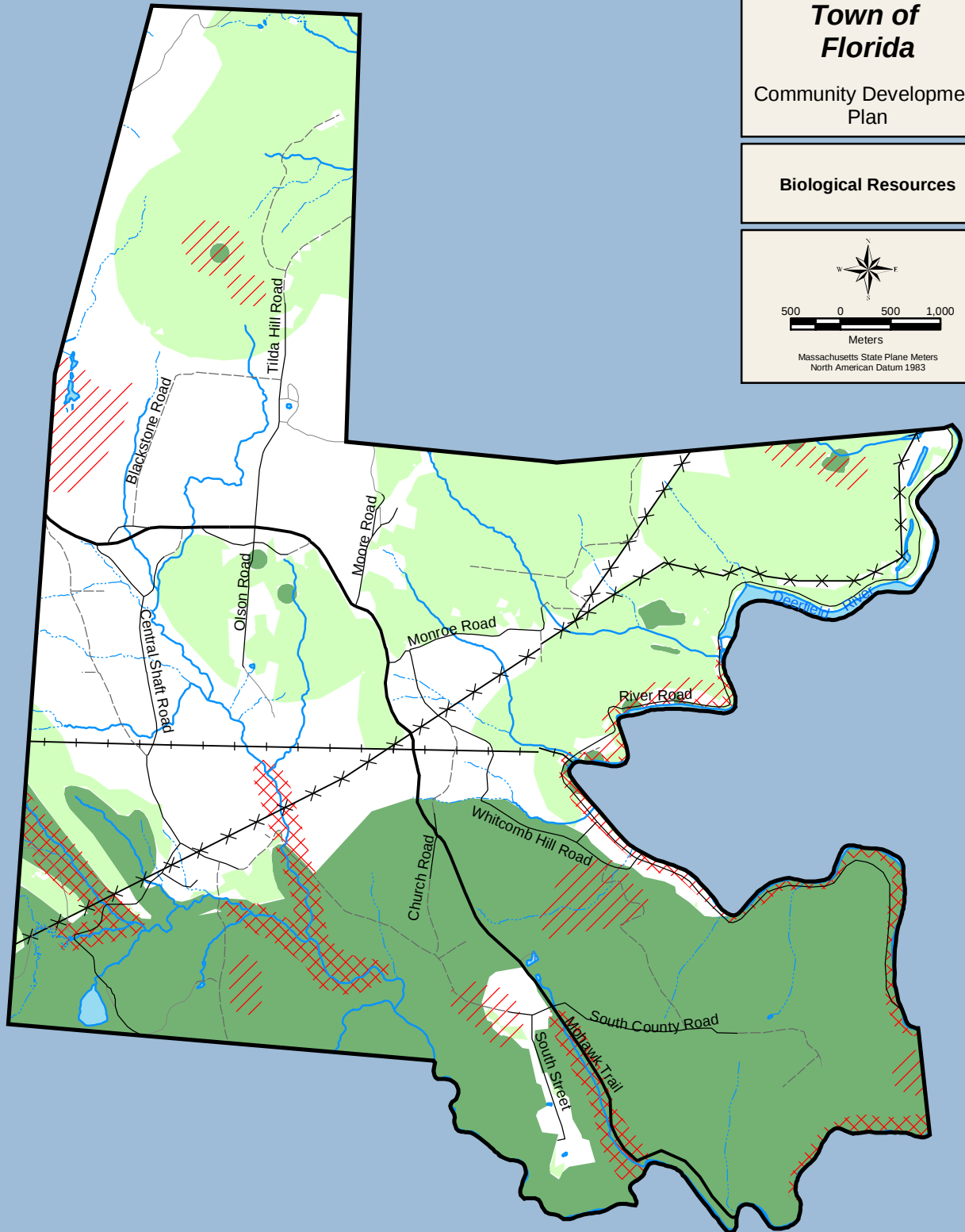
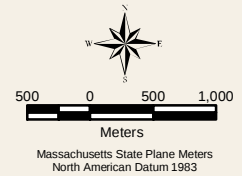
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This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

Town of Florida

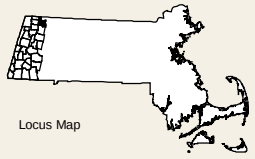
Community Development Plan

Biological Resources



- Estimated Habitats for Rare Wildlife *
- Priority Habitats for State-Protected Rare Species **
- NHESP BioMap Core Habitat
- NHESP BioMap Supporting Natural Landscape

* NHESP 1999-2001 Estimated Habitats for Rare Wildlife: For Use with the MA Wetlands Protection Regulations (310 CMR 10).
 ** NHESP 1999-2001 Priority Habitats for State-Protected Rare Species: NOT equivalent to 'Significant Habitat' as designated under Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.



August 19, 2002
 /cdp/fla/projects/biological.mxd



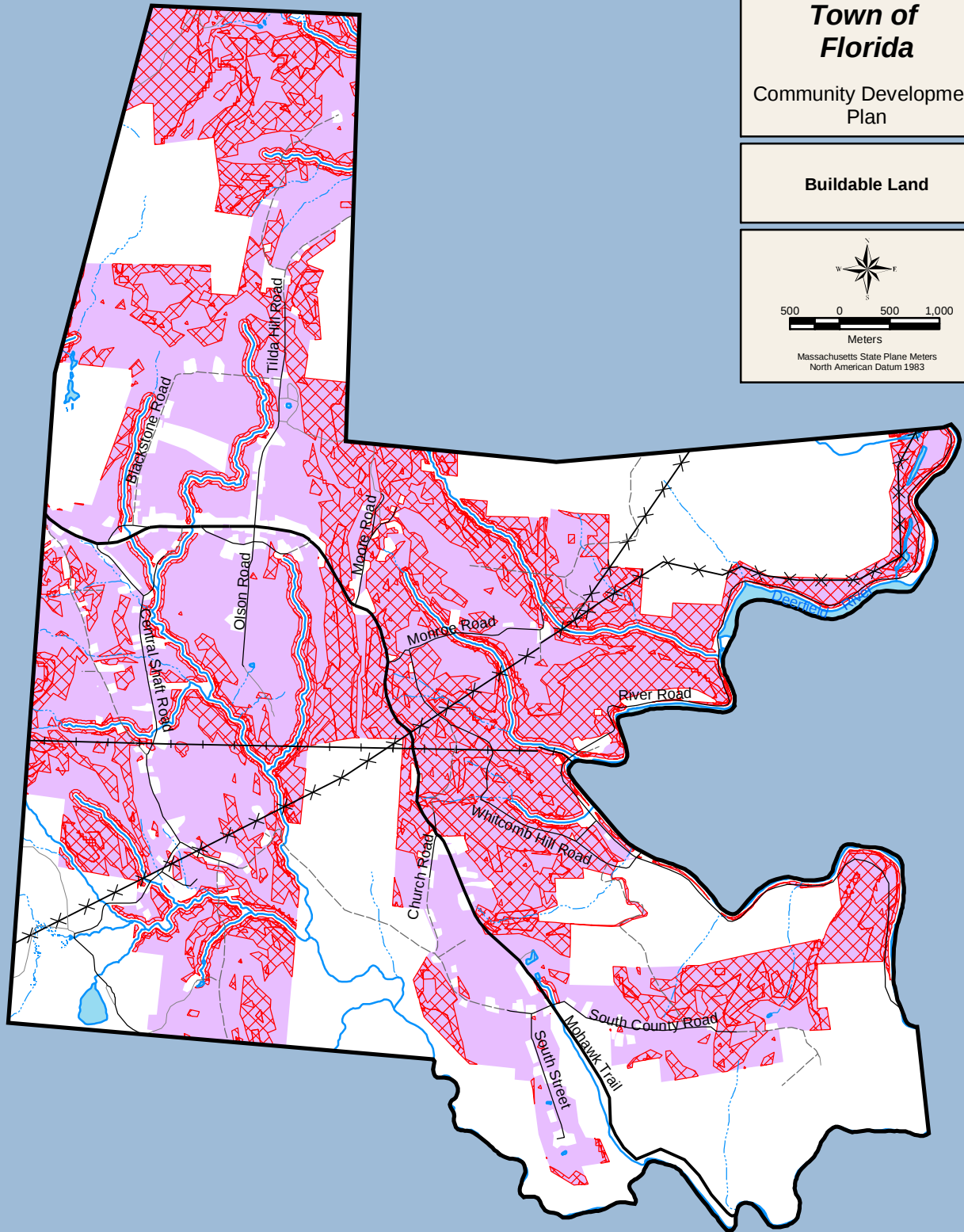
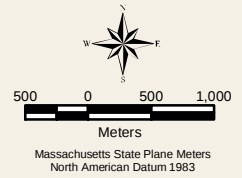
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Town of Florida

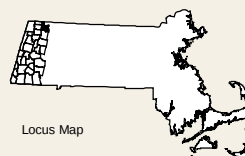
Community Development Plan

Buildable Land



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-  Partial Constraints
-  Buildable Land



Locus Map



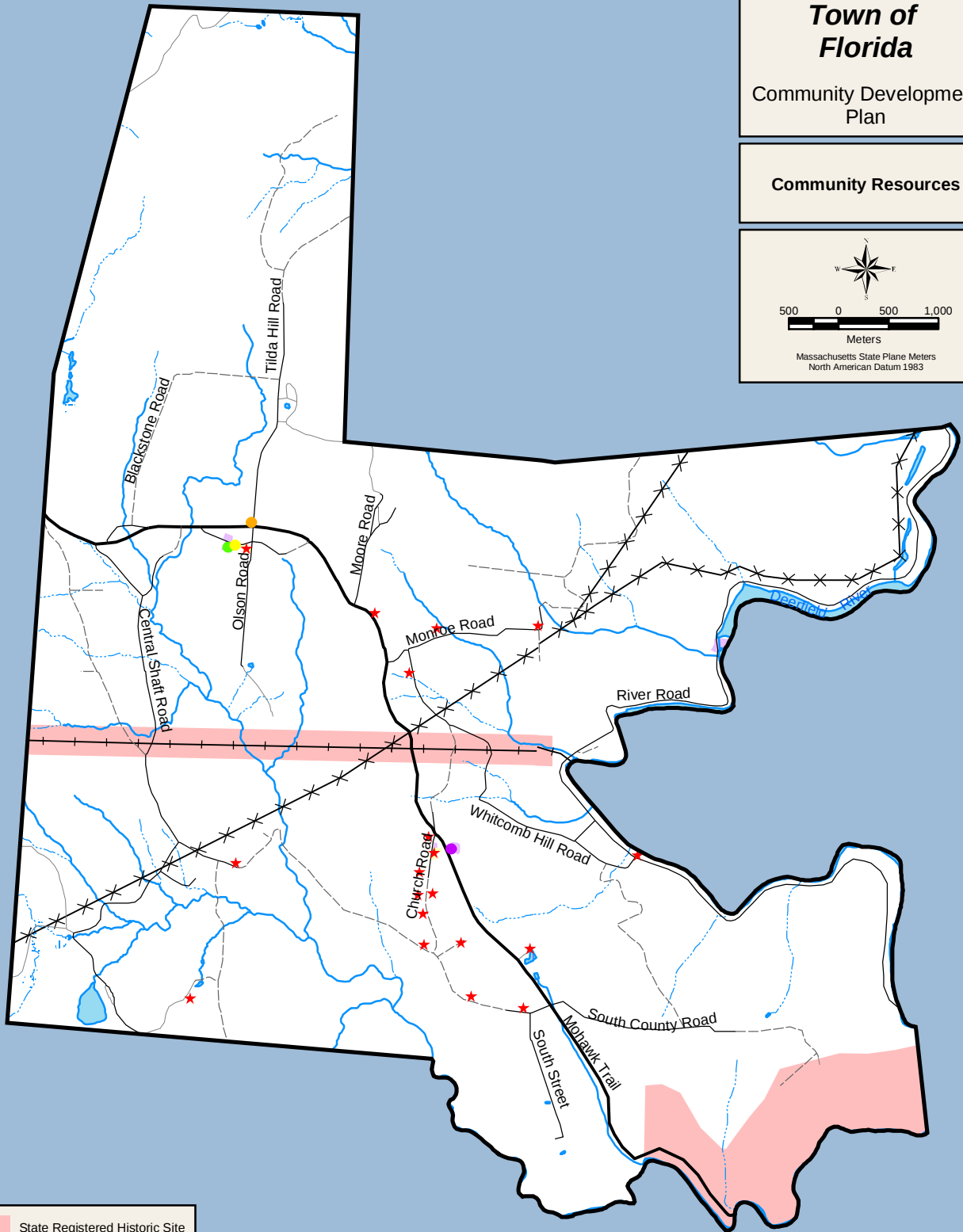
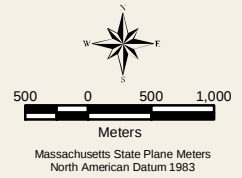
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Community Resources



- State Registered Historic Site
- ★ Historic Sites
- Public Facilities
- Cemeteries
- Fire House
- Library
- School
- Town Hall



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/community.mxd



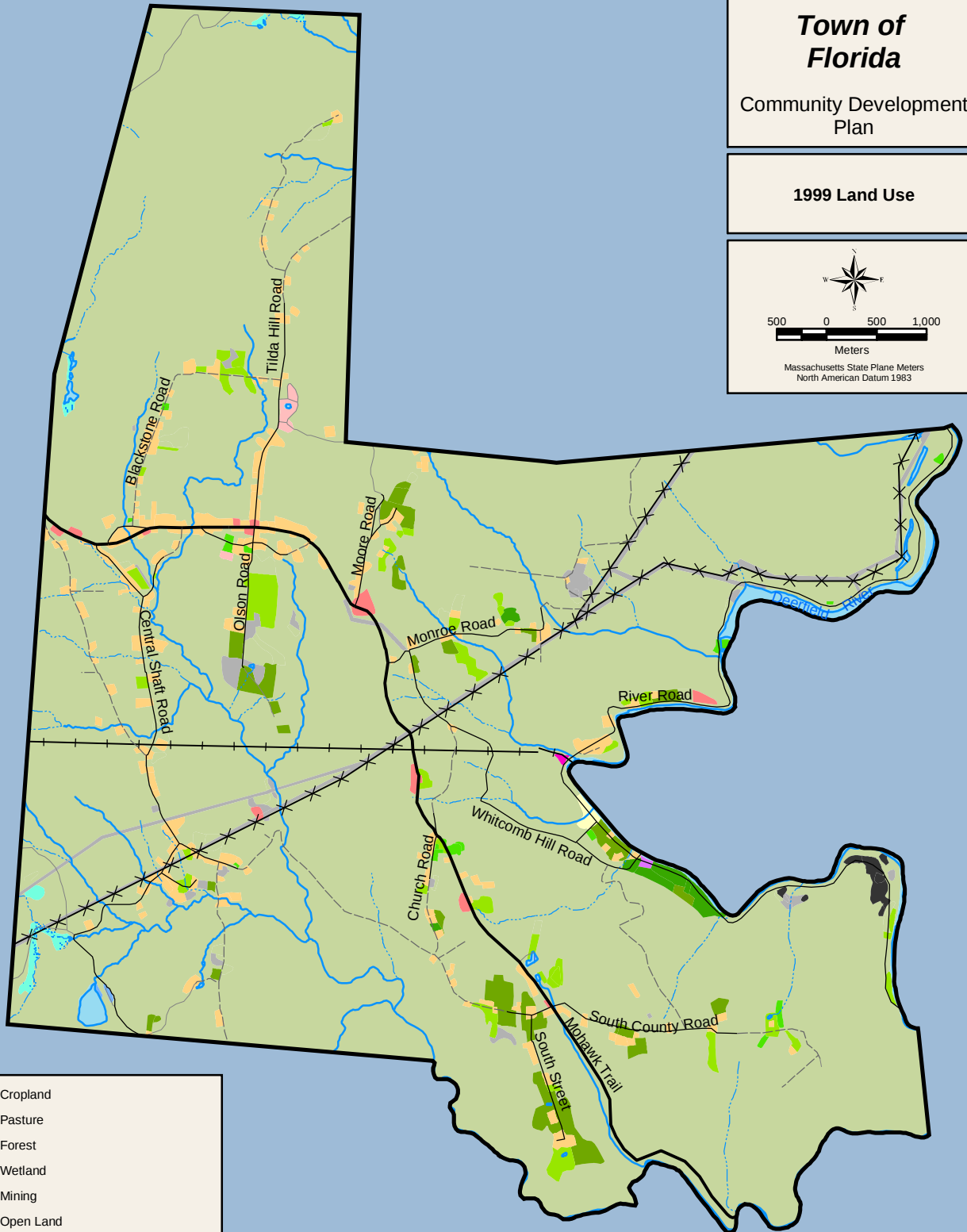
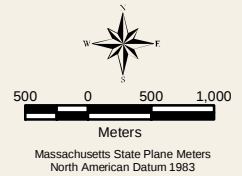
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

1999 Land Use



- Cropland
- Pasture
- Forest
- Wetland
- Mining
- Open Land
- Participation Recreation
- Water Based Recreation
- Residential - 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
- Residential - Larger then 1/2 acre lots
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Urban Open
- Transportation
- Water
- Woody Perennial

August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/currentlanduse.mxd



Locus Map



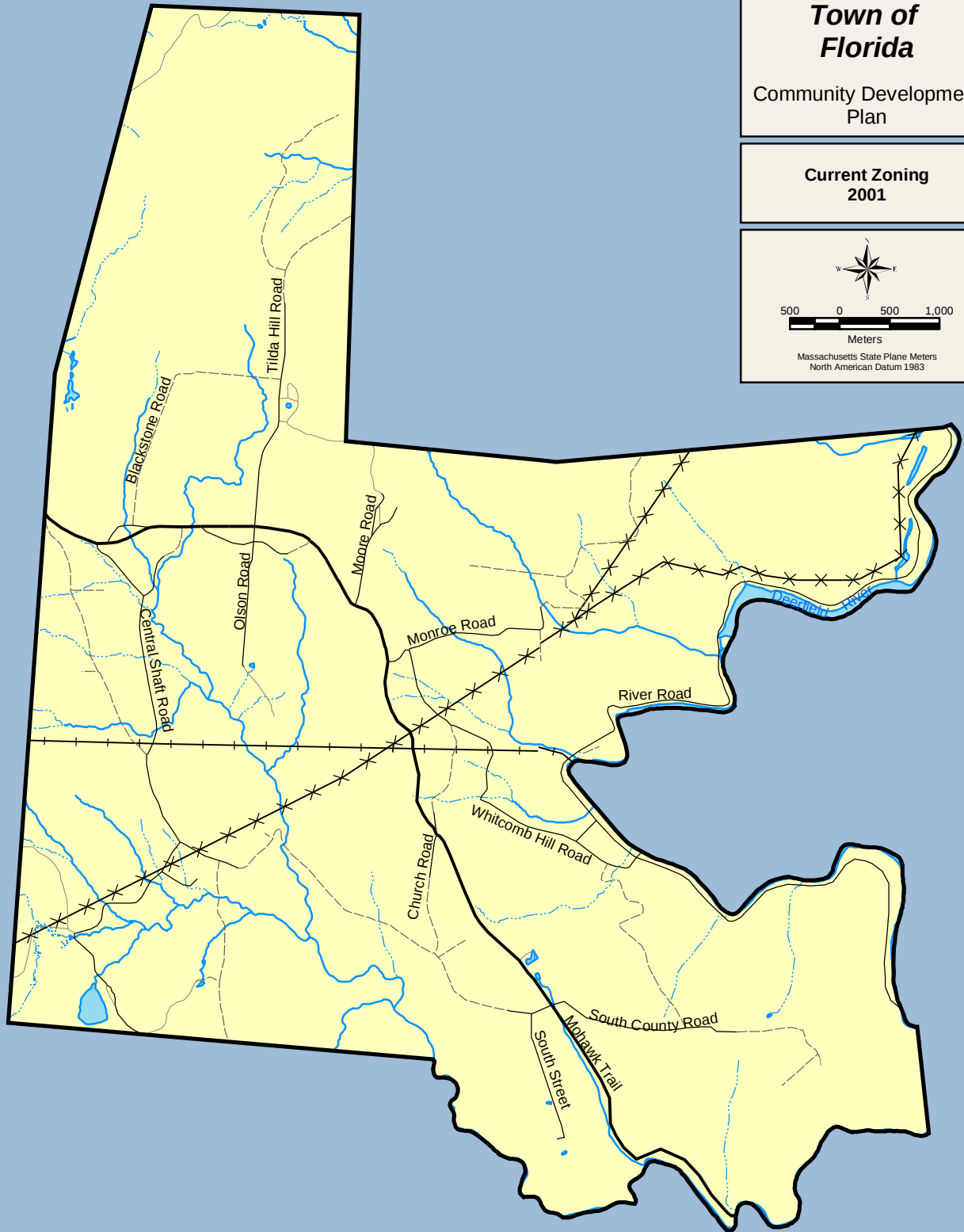
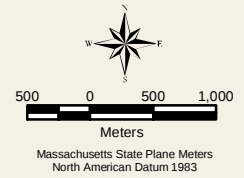
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

**Current Zoning
2001**



August 19, 2002
/cdp/ila/projects/currentzoning.mxd

Agricultural / Residential



Locus Map



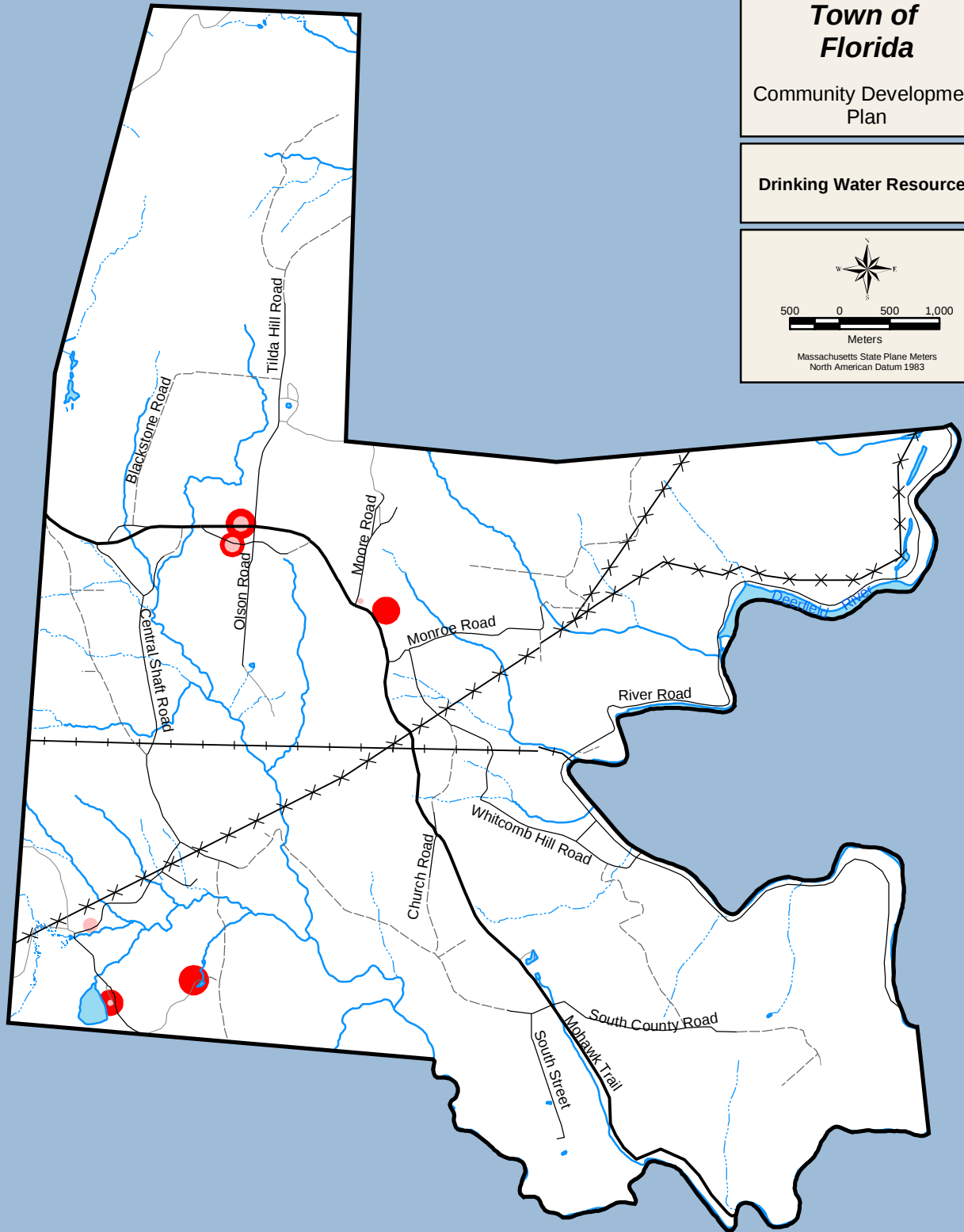
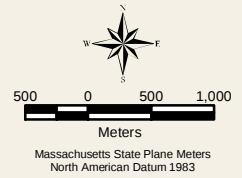
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Drinking Water Resources



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/drinkingwater.mxd

- Public Water Supply Zone 1
- Interim Wellhead Protection Area



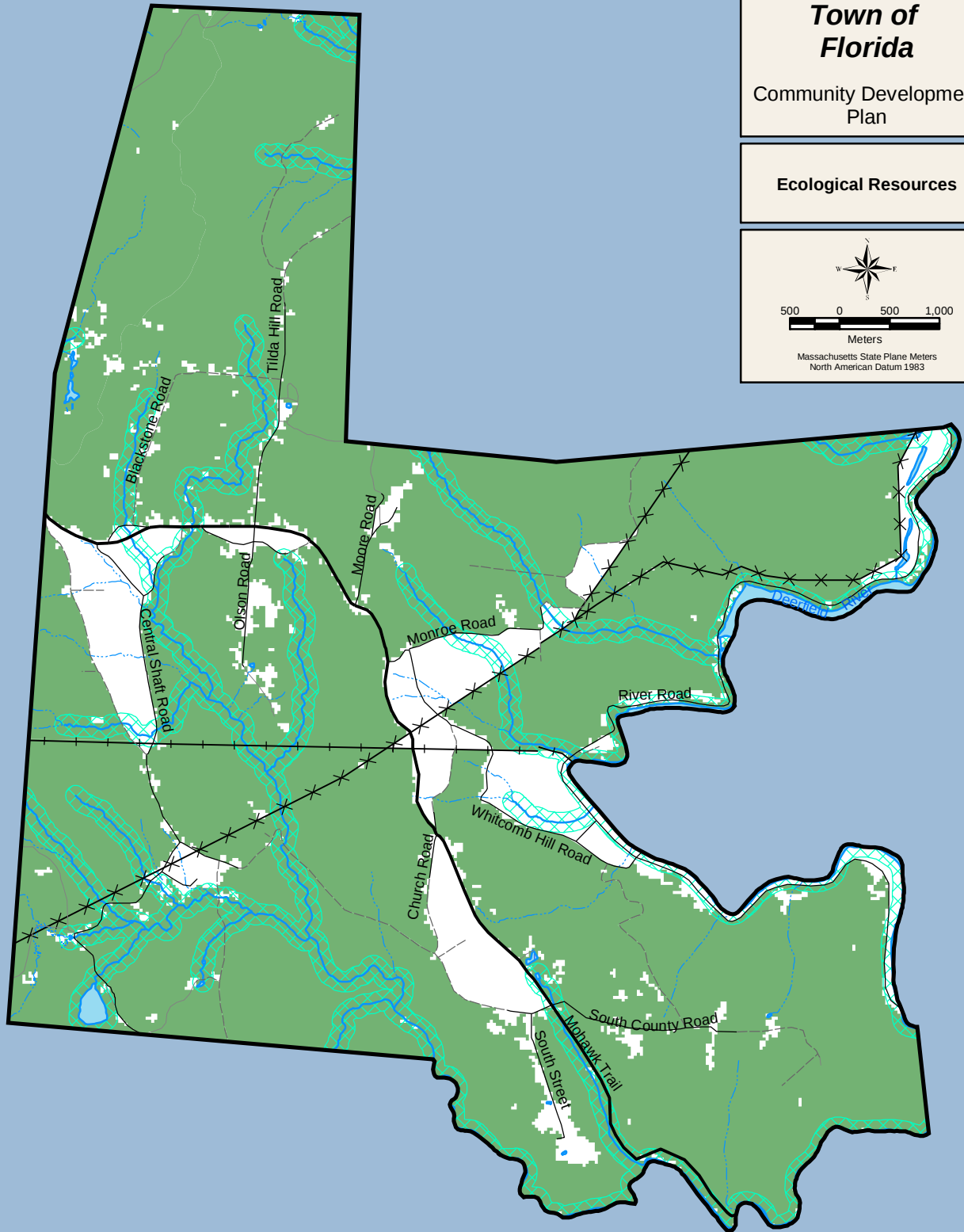
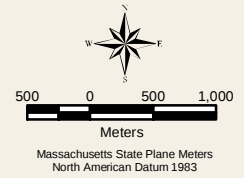
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Ecological Resources



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/ecological.mxd

-  MRIP Riparian Corridor
-  MRIP Contiguous Natural Land

MRIP - Massachusetts Resource Identification Program



Locus Map



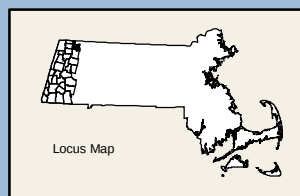
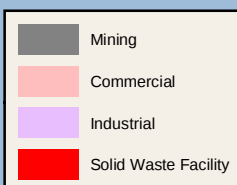
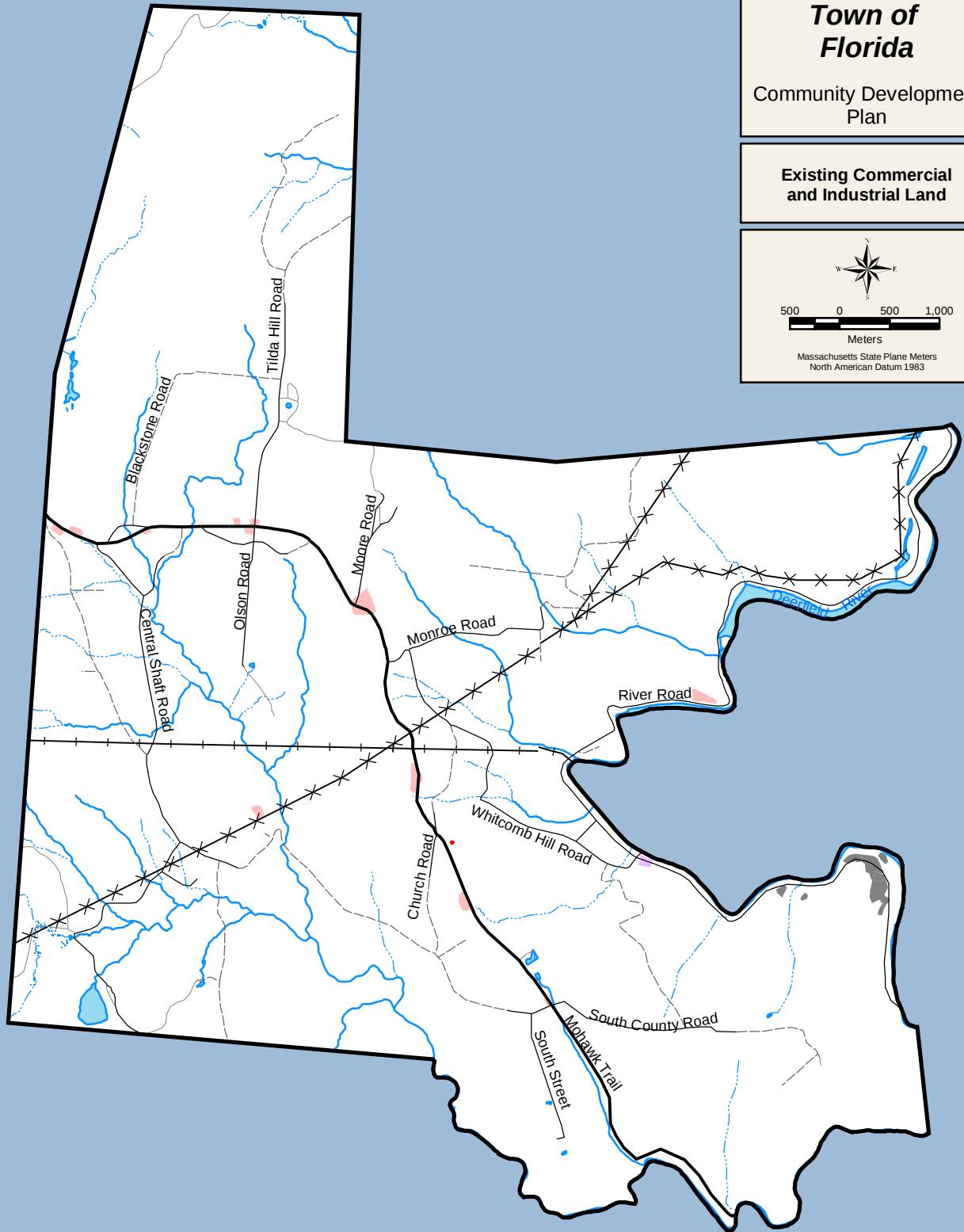
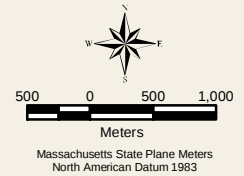
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Existing Commercial and Industrial Land



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fila/projects/existingcommind.mxd



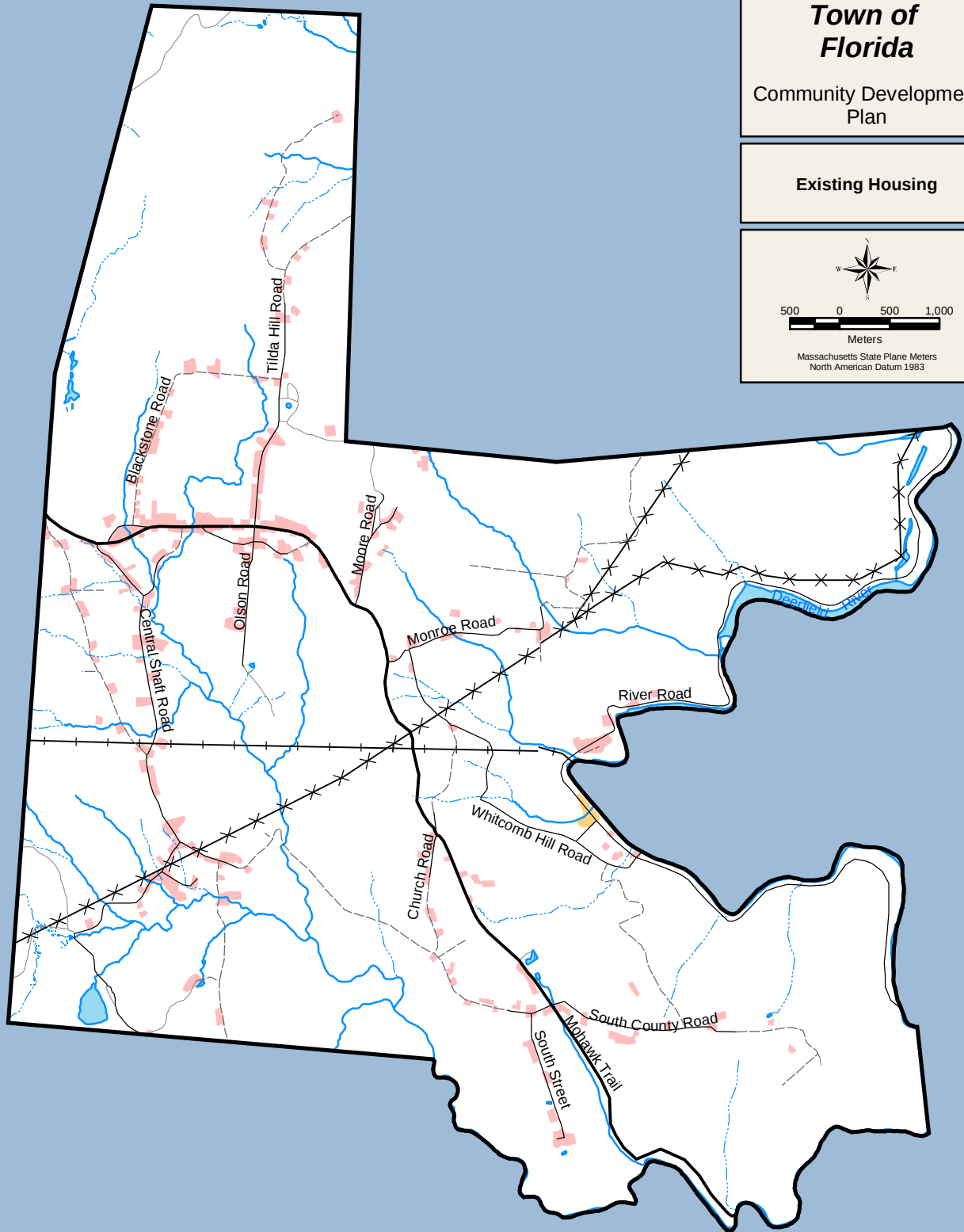
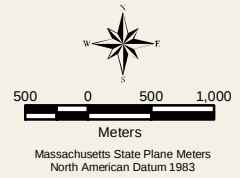
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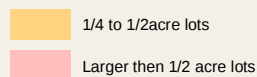
Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Existing Housing



Residential Lot Size



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/existinghousing.mxd



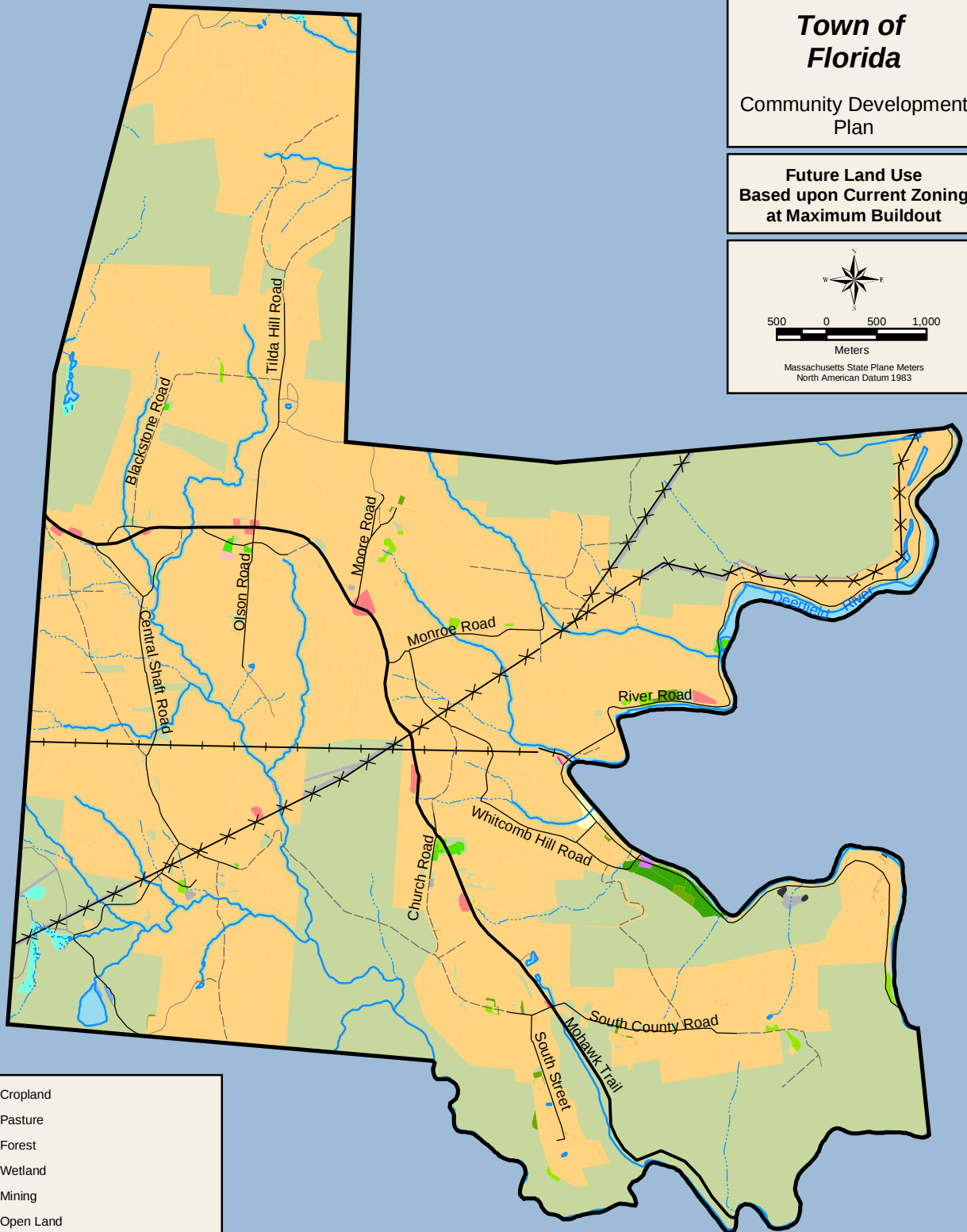
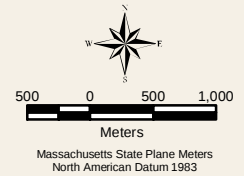
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Future Land Use Based upon Current Zoning at Maximum Buildout



- Cropland
- Pasture
- Forest
- Wetland
- Mining
- Open Land
- Participation Recreation
- Water Based Recreation
- Residential - 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
- Residential - Larger then 1/2 acre lots
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Urban Open
- Transportation
- Water
- Woody Perennial

August 19, 2002
/cdp/fila/projects/futurelanduse.mxd



Locus Map



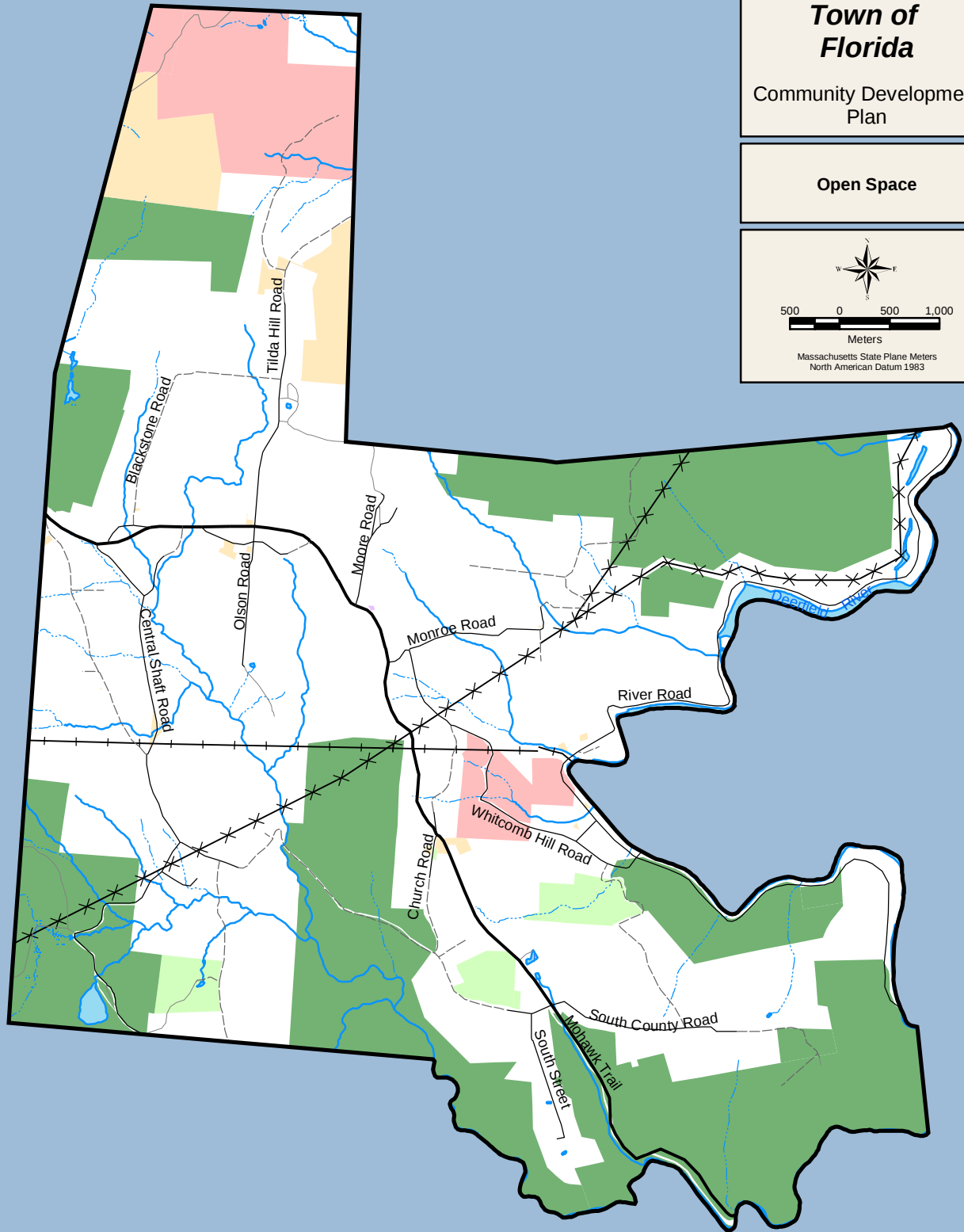
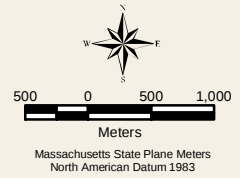
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Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Open Space



Open Space Status

- State
- Municipal - Not Protected
- Non-Profit - Not Protected
- Private - Not Protected
- Private - Ch 61, 61A, 61B



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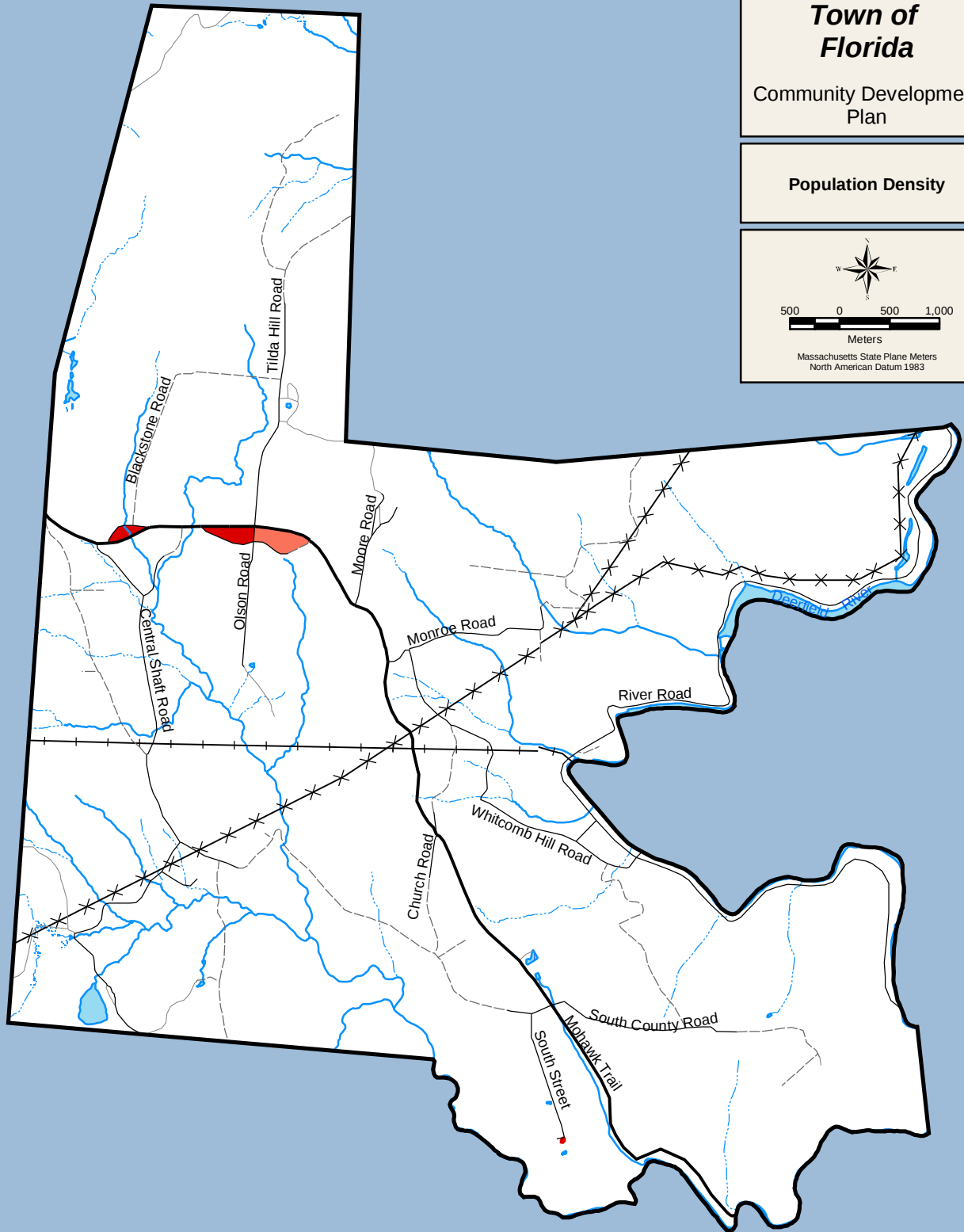
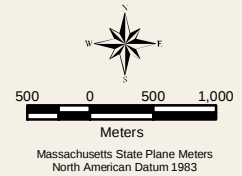
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June 13, 2003
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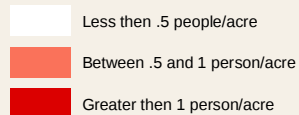
Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Population Density



Population Density



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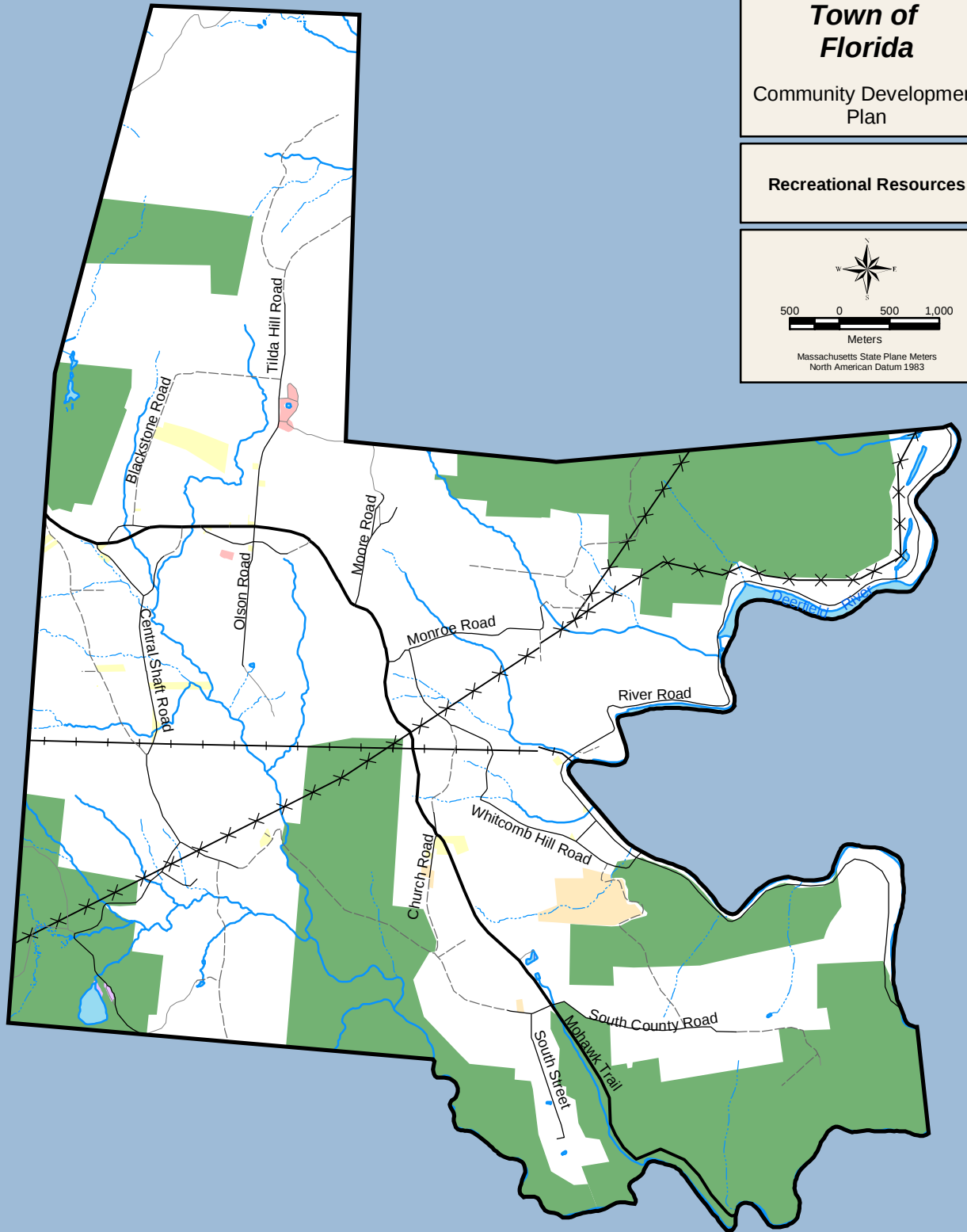
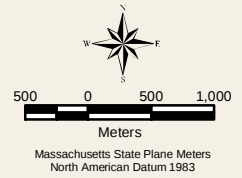
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August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/populationdensity.mxd

Town of Florida

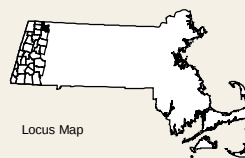
Community Development Plan

Recreational Resources



August 19, 2002
/cdp/ffa/projects/recreational.mxd

- Participation Recreation
- Water Based Recreation
- Publicly Accessible Open Space**
- State
- Municipal
- Non Profit



Locus Map



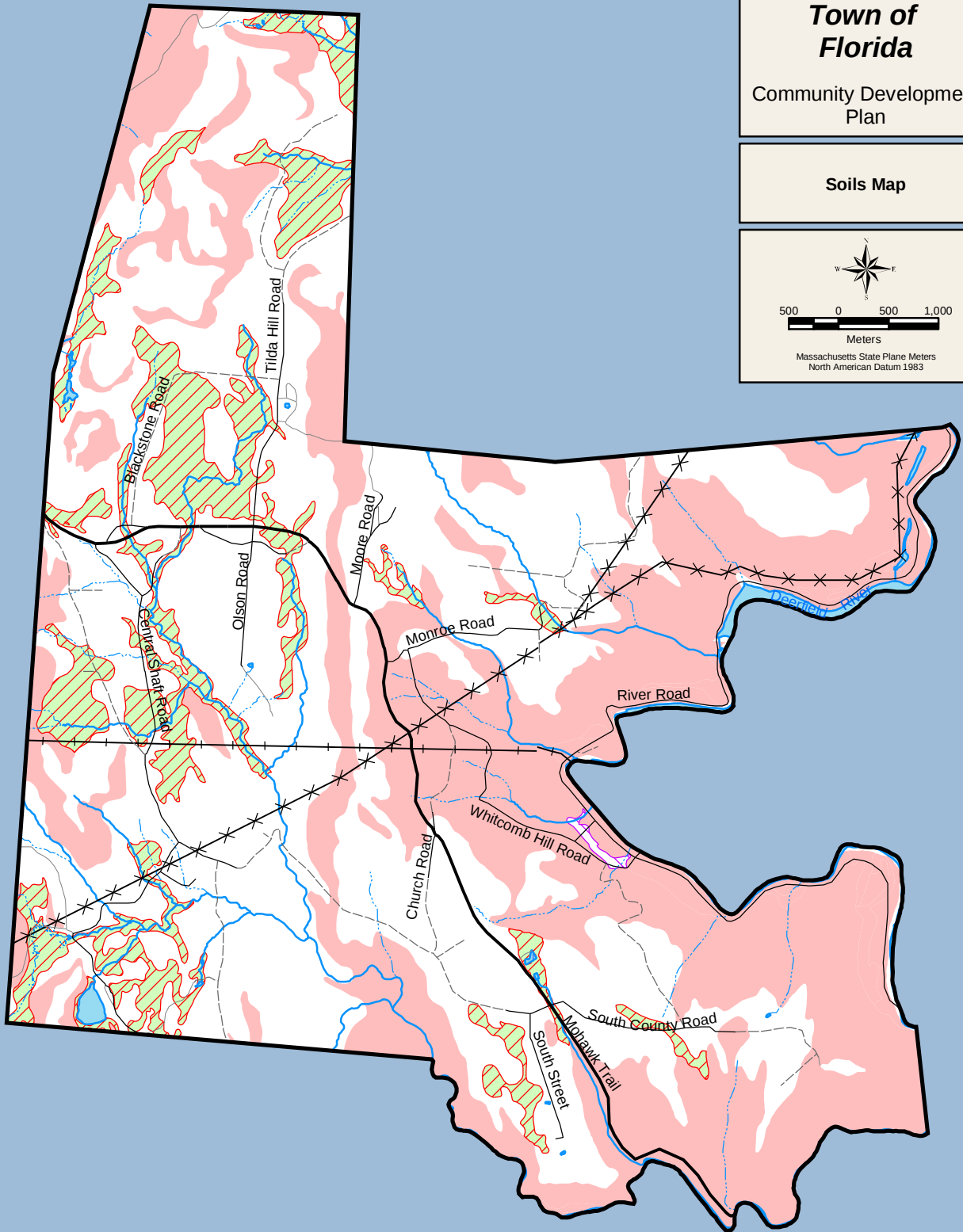
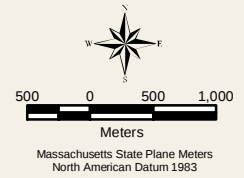
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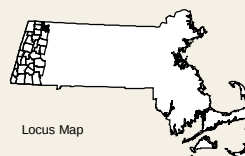
Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Soils Map



-  Highly Erodible Soils
-  Hydric Soils
-  Poorly Drained Soils
-  Excessively Drained Soils



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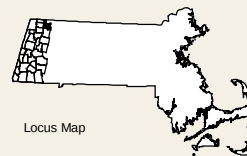
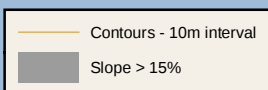
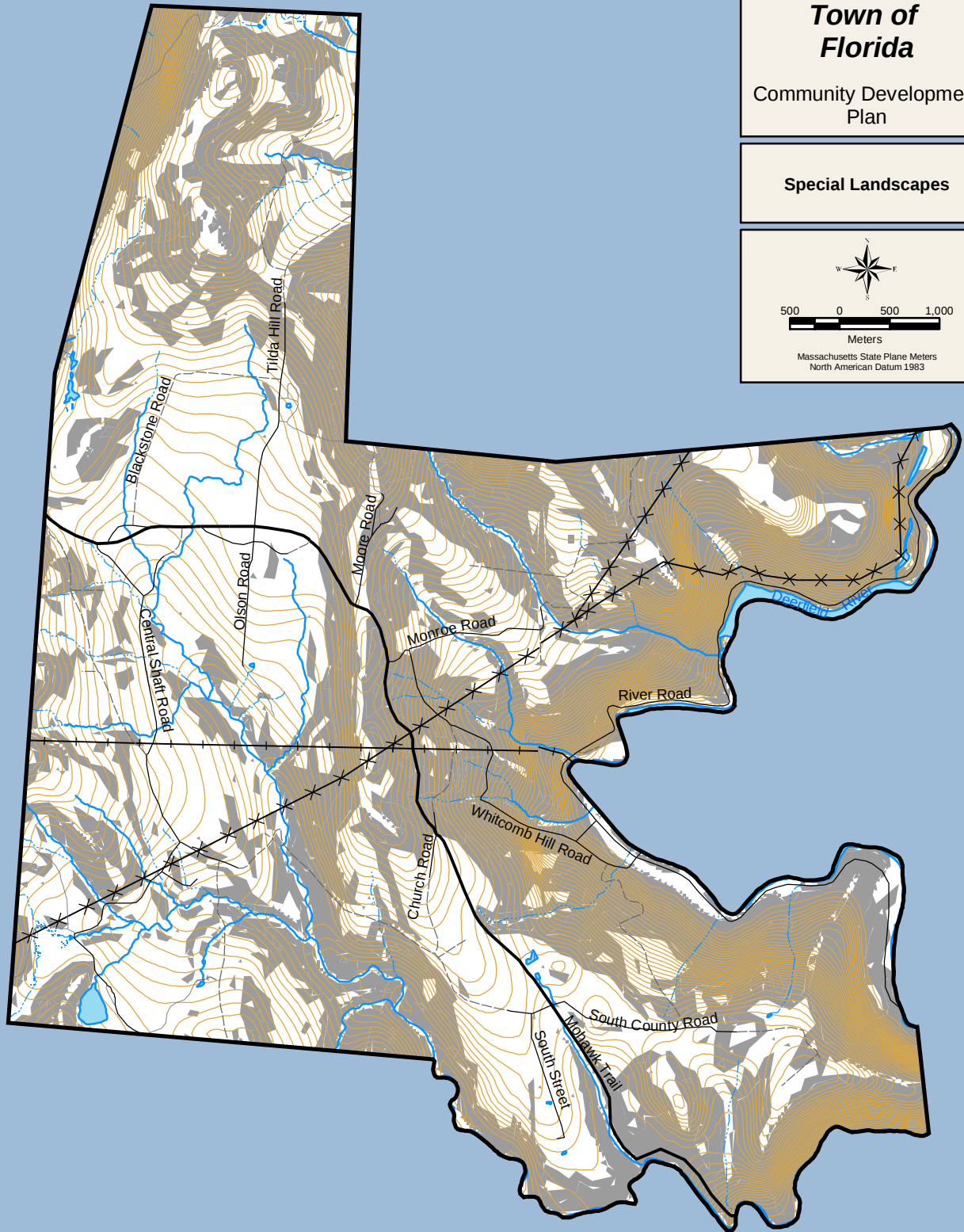
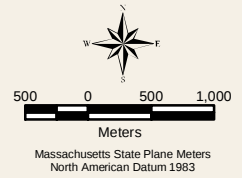
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August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/soils.mxd

Town of Florida

Community Development Plan

Special Landscapes



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/speciallandscapes.mxd



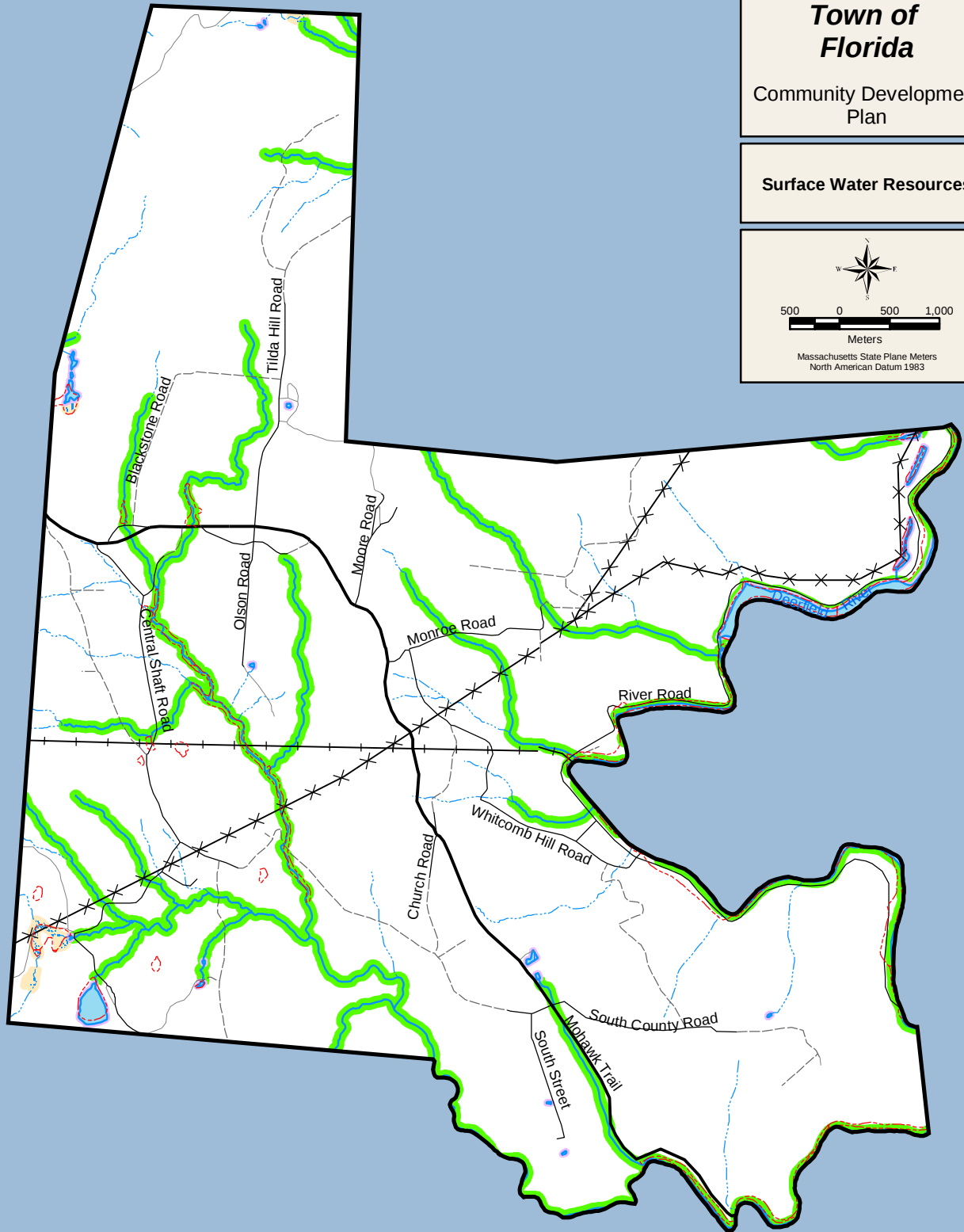
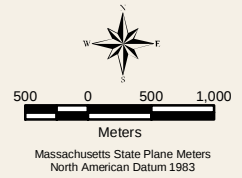
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Town of Florida

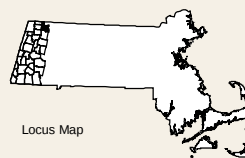
Community Development Plan

Surface Water Resources



August 19, 2002
/cdp/fla/projects/surfacewater.mxd

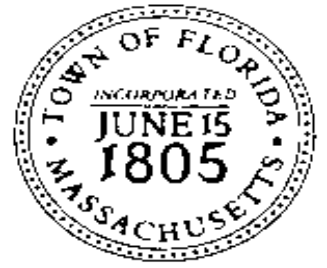
-  FEMA 100yr Flood Zone
-  Lake / Pond Resource Area - 100ft
-  River Protection Area - 200ft
-  Wetland Resource Area - 100ft



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**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Appendix



Appendix A

Legal and Procedural Details

Appendix A: Legal Status of Roads and Official Maps

What is an Official Map?

A map showing the accepted names, locations, distances, maintenance and liability responsibilities, and legal status or ownership of all roads and parks in a Town. This is a formal document, accepted by Town Meeting vote, with legal authority under Massachusetts General Laws Chap 41, Sec. 81E-I.

The Town of Florida chose to develop an Official Map, rather than a less formal Legal Status of Roads Map, as part of its Community Development Plan. This appendix discusses both types of documents in order to give readers an appreciation for the distinctions and powers of an Official Map. This appendix also addresses in relative detail the terminology used in the body of the report—discontinuance, statutory private way, abandonment—and lays out an explanation of the legal and procedural logistics required to fulfill many of the recommended actions, particularly those in Table 2.

The procedures for creating a Legal Status of Roads Map and an Official Map are very similar, except that Official Maps require legislative action, namely adoption of the map by Town Meeting vote. The research process for either kind of map can be involved, requiring investigation of Town and County records as well as extensive public input and feedback. In the end, one thing will distinguish the two kinds of maps: a Legal Status of Roads map is, despite its name, not a legal document under Massachusetts General Laws, whereas an adopted Official Map is.

Why Pursue Status of Roads or Official Maps?

Legal Status of Roads Maps can help a municipality identify and understand the potential problems or inconsistencies in legal, geographical or historical records regarding its roads. The map will display all roads and attempt to specify the legal status or possible statuses of roads in question. It will, however, do nothing to officially establish legal road status or resolve inconsistent records. A Legal Status of Roads Map is thus not as powerful a document as an Official Map. Official Maps *do* establish legal road statuses and resolve inconsistent records. While Official Maps have yet to be extensively tested in the Massachusetts courts, they can provide a critical tool in a municipality's land use control and legal planning arsenal. In the one case where an Official Map was challenged in a Massachusetts court over an issue of land development (*Warwick v. Rivers*, 1994), the court ruled in favor of the municipality based on its Official Map.

The municipalities in Massachusetts with Official Maps on file with the Department of Housing and Community Development are: Burlington, Georgetown, Northboro, Sudbury, Warwick, Weston, Wilmington and Worcester. The BRPC has obtained copies of a number of these Official Maps for use as models. As of May 2003, the Town of Richmond became the first Berkshire municipality to adopt an Official Map, pending Town Meeting vote later this month. The Towns of Alford, Florida, Peru and Tyringham have Official Maps as transportation items in their CDP scopes of work, with Hinsdale also expressing an interest in pursuing an Official Map. The Towns of Dalton, Hancock and New Ashford have requested Status of Roads maps as part of their CDP transportation elements. The BRPC is in the process of producing these documents.

Pros and Cons

The following is a chart of advantages and disadvantages for municipalities considering a Legal Status of Roads Map.

Legal Status of Roads Map

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Provides a single visual display of legal status or questions of legal status (ownership, maintenance and liability responsibilities) of roads.	A significant amount of effort and research are required to develop an accurate and meaningful Legal Status of Roads Map.
Does not require legislative action, public hearings, or Town Meeting adoption	Not a formal legal document with authority in cases of land use control or legal liability
Deals only with roads	Does not deal with parks
Shows road distances, road layouts or locations, functional classes, other road characteristics	Records may not agree on road characteristics; map will not settle disputes

The following is a chart of advantages and disadvantages for municipalities considering an Official Map.

Official Map

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Provides a tool for local land use control, particularly as related to ANR, subdivision and strip development.	A significant amount of effort and research are required to develop an accurate and meaningful Official Map.
Provides a formal graphic depiction of locally recognized ways and parks.	The map must be amended & updated each time a new way is added, discontinued or modified.
Identifies ownership of all ways within a municipality.	To be most effective, an Official Map needs to be followed up with corollary actions such as the discontinuance of roads and local zoning by-laws.
Establishes official road distances and functional classes, road and park layouts or locations, other characteristics	Requires updating if road and park characteristics change

BRPC Process for CDP Legal Status of Roads/Official Map Projects

1. Ask Town for its own official list of roads and ways and any relevant documentation.
2. Print out an orthomap (a large-scale aerial photo) of the Town, with a GIS overlay of roads and ways cataloged by administrative status (e.g. MassHighway, Town, Private, Unknown) in MassHighway's 2001 Road Inventory File (RIF). Provide a draft of this orthomap to the Town planning or select board for feedback on status of roads and parks shown and not shown.
3. Digitally scan the 1988 County Engineering Map (the last available revision) to make a blown-up version of the Town, and then identify and research the map's Book and Page citations from the County Commissioners' records (available at the Registry of Deeds in Pittsfield, MA) for roads marked as "abandoned for use," "discontinued by vote," or otherwise altered in any way.
4. Draft a status of roads or Official Map report, documenting Town, MassHighway RIF, County Engineering, County Commissioner and road atlas (1998 *Official Arrow Street Atlas for Western Massachusetts*) records of roads and ways, identifying any inconsistencies in road names, distances, locations and legal status.
5. Meet with Town's Community Development Advisory Committee to discuss the BRPC Official Map draft report, orthomap questions and County Commissioners' records (if any)
6. Decide with the Town whether any roads or ways require discontinuance by Town Meeting vote (under M.G.L. Chap 82, Sec. 21), *discontinuance of maintenance* by Select Board (M.G.L. Chap 82, Sec. 32A), a change of status from public way to "private statutory way" by Select Board and Town Meeting vote (M.G.L. Chap 82, Sec. 21), or alteration or addition by Select Board. Note that each of these actions is a separate local action, independent of the adoption of an Official Map (Chap 41, Sec. 81 E-I).

Pursuing these actions is by BRPC recommendation only. In theory, Official Map adoption will establish the legal status of ways as shown, without separate actions on roads in question. These following actions will make certain that the status of roads in question is clarified and on record before Official Map adoption.

Discontinuance by Town Meeting vote under M.G.L. Chap. 82, Sec. 21 completely ends the public right of passage along a road or way: the Town ends all legal responsibility for the road's maintenance and its liability for use. In most cases, the discontinued road can no longer serve as frontage or access for development of land abutting the discontinued road, including strip or frontage development and Approval Not Required (ANR) development under the Subdivision Control Law (Chap 41, Sec 81 K-81GG). Depending on the Town's zoning by-laws and subdivision regulations, new development can only occur along land abutting a discontinued road via the full subdivision approval process, which can often be lengthy and expensive. Discontinuance is thus an important tool in 1) legal responsibility and liability and 2) growth management.

Discontinuance of maintenance under M.G.L. Chap 82, Sec. 32A is a relatively new law (approved May 27, 1983) and has yet to be extensively interpreted by the courts. BRPC's present understanding is that this action results in the cessation of the Town's responsibility for maintenance and liability for use of the road (so long as the road is adequately posted as not maintained), but the *road remains a public way with a public right of passage, and with the potential for strip and ANR development*. Discontinuance of maintenance in Section 32A is a Select Board action intended for roads that have become "abandoned and unused for ordinary travel and that the common convenience and necessity no longer requires said town way ...to be maintained in a condition reasonably safe and convenient for travel...."

Statutory private ways are actually public roads, with public right of passage, but no responsibility by the Town for maintenance. Maintenance is provided by the abutters. This is a good option for the Board of Selectmen if it is unclear that the road in question meets the "unused for ordinary travel" requirements of Sec. 32A but the Town wants to end maintenance and legal liability obligations for the road. Towns can re-institute maintenance along a statutory private way, or along part of one, by town ballot vote or by town meeting by-law. In practice, the Select Board can recommend discontinuing the road in question by Town Meeting vote, and then lay it out as a statutory private way and vote to accept it as such at the same Town Meeting. According to a Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling (*Casagrande v. Town of Harvard*, 1979), statutory private ways are not considered sufficient for public access under the Subdivision Control Act, and therefore cannot be used as frontage for ANR lots or strip development. It is up to local interpretation of Town zoning and subdivision regulations whether statutory private ways meet the public access requirements for the full subdivision approval process. In some cases, statutory private ways may have to be laid out again and accepted at Town Meeting as full-fledged Town roads, with public right of passage *and* maintenance.

NOTE: Towns can re-establish maintenance of a statutory private way or a portion of one by town ballot vote (M.G.L. Chap 40, Sec. 6D) or by a Town-wide by-law (M.G.L. Chap 40, Sec. 6N).

Laying out or altering ways is prescribed by M.G.L. Chap 82, Sec. 21. A Select Board can add or alter roads, either public with maintenance or private without, that may not appear on any map or that may have been discontinued or discontinued for maintenance but that the Town now requires for "ordinary travel."

7. Draw up a draft Official Map showing all accepted public and private ways and parks, with a key and table of roads as well as a chart of official road distances on the back of the map.
8. Draft official map article language for Town Meeting warrant and schedule, announce and hold all necessary public hearings or comment periods for alterations to road status (where applicable).
9. Vote at Town Meeting to alter any roads in question and then, in a separate action, vote on the Official Map, showing all accepted parks and road locations, distances and names. Official Map adoption and amendments pass by simple majority vote.

10. Submit the final Official Map to the Registry of Deeds and to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), as stipulated in M.G.L. Chap. 41, Sec. 81E-I. The state requests that, for the sake of accuracy and ease of updating, official maps be provided in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format.
11. SUBSEQUENT CHANGES to the Official Map (M.G.L. Chap 41, Sec. 81F), *except plans approved under the Subdivision Control Law*, must be adopted by Town Meeting with two additional requirements:
 - ❑ The select board must hold a public hearing, after at least 10 days official advertisement and notice to abutters, prior to any vote on the action. The planning board may modify or remove any way, “which is not a public way,” without a Town Meeting vote, so long as the amendment is uncontested at the public hearing. In the event the amendment is contested, special procedures are required as outlined in M.G.L. Chap 41, Sec. 81F.
 - ❑ A majority vote at Town Meeting is required for amendment of public ways or parks shown on the map or for addition of ways or parks to the map. Variances to plans approved by the Planning Board require a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting.

An approved subdivision plan is to be added to an Official Map as soon as the plan's certificate of approval is recorded. No Town Meeting vote is required to add the roads or ways in the plan to the Official Map. (M.G.L. Chap 41, Sec. 81E)

Appendix B

Sample Article Language for Town Meeting Warrants

Reference Town Warrant for Official Map Adoption & Road Discontinuance Warrant for annual Town Meeting

Town of Richmond, MA

May 28, 2003

Article 18: Road Discontinuance

Article 19: Official Map Adoption

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Noting there was a quorum, the Moderator, Douglas Chapman, opened the meeting at 7:31 PM and the Town Clerk, Edna Crewdson, read the warrant. The head table was introduced as was the Town Counsel, Sally Bell. Instructions as to the procedure for the meeting was given and the Moderator asked all non registered voters to identify themselves.

Total voters present: 167
Total voters – active 1070
inactive 82

WARRANT FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Berkshire, ss

To any of the Constables of the Town of Richmond in said County, Greetings:

In the name of said Commonwealth, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Richmond qualified to vote in Town affairs to meet in the Consolidated School of said Richmond on May 28, 2003, at 7:30 PM, and then and there to act upon the following:

Article 1- To hear and act upon the reports of the Town Officers and Committees and give authority and instruction in relation thereto. *The voters approved this article at 7:37 PM.*

Article 2- To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to determine the manner of repairing the highways and caring for the cemeteries for the year. (Approved by the Finance Committee) *Approved by voters at 7:38 PM.*

Article 3- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate such sums of money as shall be deemed necessary for the upkeep and repair of the buildings, equipment, highways and cemeteries and for all other charges and expenses of the Town for the year and to set the salaries and compensation of all elected officers of the Town as provided by Section 108 of Chapter 41 of the General Laws. (Approved by the Finance Committee)

Article 18- To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the following roads:

ROAD #	ROAD NAME/DESCRIPTION
1	Foster Drive, so called, located at the old landfill.
2	Unnamed road extending 0.617 miles between the northwest end of Osceola Rd. Extension and the southeast end of Anthony Rd.
3	Unnamed road extending 0.280 miles between the northwest end of Anthony Rd. and the northeast quarter of Orchard Circle.
4	Unnamed road extending 0.312 miles between the northern end of Orchard Circle and the northern end of Dublin Rd.

Approved by voters at 9:03 PM.

Article 19- To see if the Town will vote to adopt an Official Map in accordance with the provisions of Section 81E of Chapter 41 of the General Laws. The map, dated May 28, 2003, approved by the Planning Board, entitled "Official Map, Town of Richmond, Massachusetts" by Mark Maloy and Melissa Jette of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, reflects the action taken under Article 18 (above) and is on file with the Town Clerk. *The voters approved this article at 9:16 PM.*

Reference Town Warrant for Official Map Adoption Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting Town of Sudbury, MA 1970

Article 36: Official Map Adoption

CONTROL COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN TO CO-ORDINATE, INITIATE AND STIMULATE ACTION ON PROGRAMS TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED THAT SUCH COMMITTEE KEEP INFORMED ON THE PROGRAMS OF ALL DRUG ACTION COMMITTEES, DEPARTMENTS AND GROUPS WITHIN THE TOWN AND REPORT ON PROGRESS AT REGULAR INTERVALS THROUGH THE TOWN FATHERS AND NEWSPAPERS DISTRIBUTED IN THE TOWN.

Article 34: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 8, and all amendments thereto, which provides, in essence, that no proposed ordinance or by-law making a change in any existing zoning ordinance or by-law which has been unfavorably acted upon by a Town Meeting shall be considered on its merits by the Town Meeting within two years after the date of such unfavorable action unless the adoption of such proposed ordinance or by-law is recommended in the final report of the Planning Board required by Chapter 40A, Section 6, or act on anything relative thereto.

Submitted by the Planning Board and Committee on Town Administration.

Mr. Richard Davison moved for the Planning Board that the Town accept the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 8 and all amendments thereto.

Planning Board Report: (Mr. Richard Davison) Following the public hearings held on February 25, 1970, the Planning Board agreed to continue recommending passage of this article. Mr. Davison added that the report of the Committee on Town Administration as printed in the warrant concisely covers the reason for this article.

Committee on Town Administration Report: By accepting General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 8, the Town would protect itself from having to consider previously defeated zoning by-law amendments within two years after their defeat unless the Planning Board submits a report recommending their adoption. As the matters that must be considered by the Town at its Annual Meeting increase in quantity and complexity, the Committee on Town Administration feels that it is advantageous to provide for some limitation on reconsidering zoning by-law amendments which the Planning Board—which is the elective body most concerned with the zoning by-law—does not support.

After discussion, the Planning Board's motion was defeated.

No further action was taken under this article.

Article 35: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 20, and all amendments thereto, so that no appeal or petition for a variance and no application for a special exemption which has been unfavorably acted upon by the Board of Appeals shall be reconsidered on its merits within two years after the date of such unfavorable action except with the consent of all but one of the members of the Planning Board, or act on anything relative thereto.

Submitted by the Planning Board.

Mr. Richard Brooks moved for the Planning Board that the Town accept the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 20 and all amendments thereto.

Planning Board Report: (Mr. Richard Brooks) The Planning Board recommends adoption of this article. At the public hearing no opposition was voted. The purpose of this article is to take advantage of the state enabling legislation which limits the inefficient repetitive appeals to zoning board of appeals for two years separation.

After discussion, the Planning Board's motion was defeated.

No further action was taken under this article.

Article 36: To see if the Town will vote to adopt an official map in accordance with the provisions of Section 81E of Chapter 41 of the General Laws, a copy of which, dated: January 1970, approved the Planning Board, entitled: "Official Map of the Town of Sudbury", by George D. White, Town Engineer, is on file in the Town Clerk's office, or act on anything relative thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board.

Board of Selectmen Report: (Mr. Martin Doyle) The town map under Section 81E entitles any city or town to record a map showing the public ways, parks and any other private ways which they are entitled to. A town map may seem to be a rather inconsequential thing. However, it means that when we register a road or a way within the Town, we also have to have a detail registered with the Town Clerk which shows where the layout of drains, sewers, gas mains and electric mains are within that public way. It entails a certain amount of work on the part of the Town Engineer. As you are aware, the Town Engineer reports to the Board of Selectmen.

This year we have appropriated the sum of \$5,000 towards the Town Engineer's account for starting this work. Over the next five to ten years it will cost the Town that amount also. However, several years ago when Willis Road became an article for action by the Town Meeting as to whether it should be adopted by the Town, it cost the Town a certain amount of money to determine whether Willis Road was a town way or not.

The intent of this article is to insure that town ways are properly delineated, that we do not enter into arguments with builders and developers in the future as to whether or not a road is a town way, and that we have a proper record of what is laid within the town way to prevent confusion.

There are at present 299 streets in Sudbury. 209 of these appear on the Official Town Map. The 299 streets include those in proposed subdivisions. However, even in a matter of accounting for 209 streets there is room for confusion and we should have a proper record of these. We recommend that you vote for this article.

Planning Board Report: (Mr. Richard Brooks) The Planning Board favors adoption of this article which will settle for all time which are or are not to be considered public ways in the Town of Sudbury.

Finance Committee Report: The Finance Committee agrees with the sponsors of this article, that an official map of Sudbury, with well delimited street boundaries, is necessary. The Town Engineer's budget has \$5,000 included for subcontract survey services, the major portion of which is for this project.

Highway Commission Report: (Mr. Richard Duggan) The Highway Commission is also in favor of this article, but possibly for a slightly different reason. The work that will be done on the Official Town Map will help the Highway Department get ahead in the engineering it needs to lay out the roads that have to be rebuilt. We will not run into the problem yearly of having just one road to work on. We should always have two or three ahead of us.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: THAT THE TOWN ADOPT AS THE OFFICIAL MAP OF THE TOWN OF SUDBURY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 81E OF CHAPTER 41 OF THE GENERAL LAWS THE MAP DATED JANUARY 1970 APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD, ENTITLED "OFFICIAL MAP OF THE TOWN OF SUDBURY," BY GEORGE D. WHITE, TOWN ENGINEER, A COPY OF WHICH IS ON FILE IN THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE WITH SAID MAP INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

Article 37: To see if the Town will vote to amend its zoning by-law to change from residential zone B2 to a Limited Business District, the following described property:

Beginning at a point on the south side of the Boston Post Road at the junction of the westerly side of Raymond Road.

**Reference Town Warrant for Road Discontinuance
Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting
Town of Warwick, MA
May 9, 1988**

Article 17: Road Discontinuance

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ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Franklin County Technical School District to accept an Equal Educational Opportunity Grant (EEOG) from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the amount of \$13,929.00, in additional educational aid for fiscal year 1989.

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, appropriate from free cash, transfer, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$10,000.00 for the purpose of widening, excavating, installing drainage and gravel, and constructing a cul-de-sac turnaround on Hastings Pond Road, a distance of .35 miles, to fund improvements to the road accepted by the Town under Article #3 of the November 9, 1987 Special Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40;46, which raises the limit of expenditures not requiring public bidding from \$2,000.00 to \$4,000.00.

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote to rescind Article #9 of the May 11, 1987 Annual Town Meeting, thereby retaining \$20,000.00 in the Capital Stabilization Fund.

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, appropriate from free cash, transfer, borrow or otherwise provide the sum of \$6,475.00 (\$3,145.00 tuition, \$3,330.00 transportation) for the Fiscal Year 1988 Warwick School Budget to cover the unanticipated costs of a special needs student.

ARTICLE ¹⁷~~14~~: To see if the Town will vote to discontinue all public roads in Warwick except those on the attached list of Public Ways

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Selectmen will petition the Franklin County Commissioners regarding the following County roads;

1. to accept a section of Route 78 between Hotel Road and Athol Road.
2. for discontinuance of 1829 layout of Highway #11 (5th Massachusetts Turnpike) westerly from the White Road to end (thought to be the southwest corner of the Spooner house; a distance of about 3,000 feet, more or less).
3. for discontinuance of Highway #1, laid out in 1761, Record Book 0, Page 44, from the Northfield Town Line, perhaps along a portion of the White Road, past Balancing Rock and the Old Fort to its end, and retaining as a town road ANY portions of the White Road, or other town roads with the same layout.
4. for discontinuance of a portion of Highway #2, laid out in 1774, Book 0, Page 106 (part of which may be known as Round the Mountain Trail or as Old Northfield Road) from its intersection with the present Northfield Road at Wendell Road to the Northfield Town Line, retaining any portion of Flower Hill Road which has the same layout, as a town road.
5. for discontinuance of Highway #6, laid out in 1822, Book I, Page 194, from the last discontinuance of Spooner Road, easterly to the White Road, a distance of about 2,000 feet, more or less; also, the portion from Northfield Road westerly and northerly across Leland Hill Road to the 1774 layout of the Northfield Road.
6. for discontinuance of a portion of Highway #2, laid out in 1774, Book 0, Page 106, westerly from Gale Road to the present Athol Road, also known as Pedeman Hill.
7. for discontinuance of Brush Valley Road (known on County records as Dubovik Road) from Orange Road to its end.
8. for a map of County roads in Warwick, color coded, with County number and layout date, overlayed on USGS Topographical sheets, and a second map showing discontinued County roads in the same form as the first map, but adding the date of discontinuance.

Reference Town Warrant for Road Discontinuance

Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting

Town of Warwick, MA

May 9, 1988

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will take action regarding the following Town roads, with each road a separate action:

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Road #	Name	Action Requested
1	Hastings Heights	change mileage from 1.55 to 1.84 miles
3	Royalston	discontinue from Tully Brook Road to Reil's driveway.
7	Wendell	change description from "to Orange Road" to "to intersection of Revere Hill Road". Add a new road named "Revere Hill": "from Orange Road to intersection of Wendell Road and Northfield Road, 0.25 mile" and change mileage of Wendell Road from 5.6 to 5.35 miles.
9	Store	change name to Northfield Road and add 0.55 mile.
10	Soderman	discontinue
13	Shaw Place	change mileage from 0.15 to 0.12 mile.
14	Wilson	discontinue the center portion from 1,000 feet southeasterly of the intersection of Flagg and Chestnut Hill at pole #10-733/5 about 50 feet past River's driveway, to the southeast side of Wilson Brook (which is about 1,100 feet northwesterly of intersection with Wendell Road), and change the name of East Wilson Road and West Wilson Road.
15	Flagg	discontinue
17	Shepardson	discontinue portion north of White Road (which is also known as Spooner Road), change mileage from 2.45 to 1.69 miles and change description from "to Northfield Road" to "to White Road".
18	Shepardson Place	change description from "to" to "toward".
19	White	change mileage from 2.35 to 2.8 miles
22	Mt. Grace Avenue	change description from "from Store Road" to "from Orange Road across Northfield Road" (Store Road) and change mileage to 0.15 mile.
23	Leland Hill	change mileage from 0.15 to 0.19 miles
26	Hastings	change name from "Hastings" to "Hastings Pond"
28	Tully Brook	discontinue
32	Smith Road	change mileage from 0.19 to 0.16 miles
33	Whipple Place	discontinue
34	Robbins	change mileage from 0.80 to 0.55 miles
35	Rum Brook	discontinue the center portion, starting 1,000 feet westerly from Richmond Road at the top of a knoll just westerly of Black Brook to a point 1,400 feet easterly from Old Winchester Road, meaning to be the west bank of Rum Brook, and changing the name to East Rum Brook Road and West Rum Brook Road, respectively.
36	Sevens Place	change description from "to" to "toward".
40	Beech Hill	change description from "Thompson's" to "Doubleday's".

Article 19: Road Discontinuance/Alteration

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Road #	Name	Action Requested
43	South Holden Road	discontinue portion from 10 feet east of Sammy Lane to end and change description from "to Holden place" to "to Sammy Lane", a distance of 0.22 mile.
43	North Holden Road	change mileage from 0.15 to 0.12 mile.
44	Wheeler	discontinue 0.06 mile and change from "westerly loop off Orange Road" to "northerly off Orange Road to Dead End".
45	Paul	change description from "to" to "toward"
46	Pine	change description from "from Shepardson Road to Wilson Road" to "from Wendell Road to dead end".

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to establish a revolving fund for self-supporting services of the Town Forestry Committee, as authorized by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44:53D, and further, to raise and appropriate, appropriate from free cash, transfer or otherwise provide the sum of \$500.00 to establish this fund.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44:57, allowing the Treasurer, on behalf of the Town to contract with an employee to defer a portion of that employee's compensation.

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will vote to reappropriate \$21,000.00 of unused Revenue Sharing Funds to design and construct a fire escape for the Town Hall.

And you are directed to serve this Warrant, by posting up attested copies thereof at the Town Hall and the Community Store in said Town, 7 days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

HEREOF FAIL NOT, and make due return of this Warrant, with your doings thereon, to the Town Clerk, at the time and place of meeting, as aforesaid.

Given under our hands this 2nd day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight.

Jon M. Cooke)
J. David Young)
Mickey Williamson) Selectmen of Warwick

A true copy Attest: Rodney F. Whipple, Constable

Franklin, ss.

PURSUANT TO THE WITHIN WARRANT, I have notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Warwick May 2, 1988 by posting up attested copies of the same at the Town Hall and the Community Store 7 days before the date of the meeting, as within directed.

Rodney F. Whipple, Constable of Warwick

Reference Town Warrant for Road Discontinuance

Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting

Town of Warwick, MA

May 9, 1988

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PUBLIC ROADS--(as referenced in Article #17, Annual Town Meeting May 9, 1988

1. Hastings Heights Road: from Athol Road to Orange Town Line 1.55 miles
2. Athol Road: from Orange Road to Orange Town Line 3.55 miles
3. Royalston Road: from Athol Road to 1200 feet east of Chase Road 0.55 mile. Also, easterly from Tully Brook Road to Reil's driveway 0.40 mile.
4. Winchester Road (Route 78): from the end of Orange Road at Warwick Center to State Line (NH) 3.15 miles
5. Orange Road (Route 78): from end of Winchester Road at Warwick Center to Orange Town Line 5.00 miles
6. Hockanum Road: from Orange Road to Wendell Road 0.80 mile
7. Wendell Road: from Orange Town Line to Orange Road 5.60 miles
8. Northfield Road: from Northfield Town Line to junction of Wendell Road 4.00 miles
9. Store Road: from Wendell Road to junction of Orange and Winchester Roads at Warwick Center 0.45 mile
10. Soderman Road: from White Road to Soderman place 0.25 mile
11. Quarry Road: from Wendell Road to Northfield Town Line 1.55 miles
12. Omitted
13. Shaw Place Road: from Wendell Road westerly to Shaw place 0.15 mile
14. Wilson Road: from Wendell Road to junction of Flagg and Chestnut Hill Roads 0.85 mile
15. Flagg Road: from junction of Chestnut Hill and Wilson Roads westerly and southerly to end at woods 0.35 mile
16. Chestnut Hill Road: from junction of Flagg and Wilson Roads to Wendell Road 1.05 miles
17. Shepardson Road: from Wendell Road to Northfield Road 2.45 miles
18. Shepardson Place Road: from Shepardson Road westerly to old house 0.25 mile
19. White Road: from Northfield Road by southerly loop back to Northfield Road 2.35 miles
20. Kirk Road: from Orange Road easterly to Kirk place 0.05 mile
21. Omitted
22. Mount Grace Avenue: from Store Road to old Cook house 0.05 mile
23. Leland Hill Road: from Northfield Road to Flower Hill Road 0.15 mile
24. Flower Hill Road: from Northfield Road to Winchester Road 2.35 miles
25. Buzzell Place Road: from Flower Hill Road westerly to Buzzell house 0.05 mile
26. Hastings Road: from Orange Road to Cadwell's driveway 1.10 mile
27. Hotel Road: from junction of Orange and Winchester Roads to Athol Road 0.05 mile
28. Tully Brook Road: from Athol Road to Royalston Road 1.00 mile
29. Omitted
30. Chase Road: from Royalston Road to Athol Road 0.55 mile

List of Roads Referred to in Article 17

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31. Richmond Road: from Athol Road to State Line (NH) 2.80 miles
32. Smith Road: (re-opened 3/31/75) 1,000 feet from Richmond Road 0.19 mile
33. Whipple Place Road: from Richmond Road westerly to Whipple place 0.05 mile
34. Robbins Road: from Old Winchester Road to Winchester Road 0.80 mile
35. Old Winchester Road: from Athol Road to State Line (NH) 2.85 miles
36. Stevens Place Road: from Old Winchester Road easterly to Stevens Place 0.15 mile
37. Rum Brook Road: from Richmond Road to Old Winchester Road 0.75 mile
38. Gale Road: from Athol Road to Orange Town Line 2.55 miles
39. Omitted
40. Beech Hill Road: from Gale Road southerly to Thompson place 1.10 mile
41. Brush Valley Road: from Beech Hill Road to Orange Road 1.25 miles
42. Bliss Hill Road: from Orange Town Line to Royalston Town Line 0.20 mile
43. South Holden Road: from Wendell Road easterly to Holden place 0.35 mile - North Holden Road: from Orange Road westerly to house 0.15 mile
44. Wheeler Road: westerly loop off Orange Road 0.20 mile
45. Paul Road: from Orange Road easterly to house and buildings 0.10 mile
46. Pine Street: from Shepardson Road to Wilson Road 0.18 mile
47. Garage Road: from Winchester Road to Town Garage 0.40 mile
48. Rockwood Road: from Hastings Road to Orange Road 0.10 mile

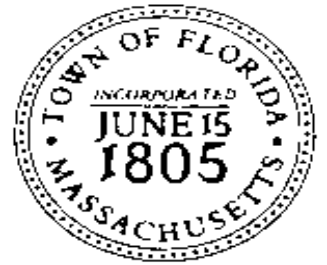
REPORT OF THE ACTION TAKEN ON THE ARTICLES IN THE WARRANT FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING May 9, 1988

Prior to the commencement of the Annual Town Meeting, a brief ceremony was conducted by the Moderator, Helen E. Whipple, commemorating the first town meeting held in Warwick on this same date 225 years ago, May 9, 1763. The Annual Town Meeting for May 9, 1988 was called to order by the Moderator. The following action was taken on the Articles in the warrant by the 97 voters present:

ARTICLE 1: VOTED: To accept the reports of Town Officers and Committees.

ARTICLE 2: VOTED: to authorize the Town Treasurer with the approval of the Selectmen, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1988, in accordance with the General Laws Chapter 44;4, and to issue a note or notes therefore, payable within one year, and to renew any note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year, in accordance with the General Laws Chapter 44;17.

**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Appendix - A.1



Florida 2003 Housing Profile

INTRODUCTION

This section examines the socio-economic trends in Florida and in the surrounding area of Berkshire County, which affect housing supply and demand.

Housing Profile - Supply

Current Housing Stock Statistics

Single Family Homes	269
Mobile Homes	57
Multi-Family Units	0
Condominiums	0

Total Housing Stock: 296

Source: Town of Florida Assessor's Office, 9/02
Housing Tenure

Table H-2: Housing Occupancy in Florida, 1990, 2000					
	Number 1990	% Total 1990	Number 2000	% Total 2000	% Change, 1990-2000
Seasonal	38	12%	15	5%	-60%
Owner-Occupied	241	74%	249	85%	+3%
Rental	25	8%	16	5%	-36%
Total Housing Stock:	324		294		-9%
Vacancy rate	20	6%	14	5%	-30%

Source: US Census 2000 Total Count

Summary:

- Reduction in total stock
- Significant reduction in seasonal units – possibly conversion to year round, demolition, abandonment
- Significant reduction in rental units

Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory

Source: Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

According to the Massachusetts DHCD Inventory of CH40B Subsidized Housing Inventory through April 27, 2002, none of Florida's 279 year-round Housing Units qualify as Chapter 40B Units. "Chapter 40B Units" are units considered affordable by low- and moderate-income households with long-term restrictions that ensure that it will continue to be affordable. Chapter 40B authorizes a housing agency or developer to obtain a single comprehensive permit for the construction of subsidized low- or moderate-income housing. If a community in which less than 10% of its total year-round housing stock is subsidized low- or moderate-income housing, denies a comprehensive permit, or

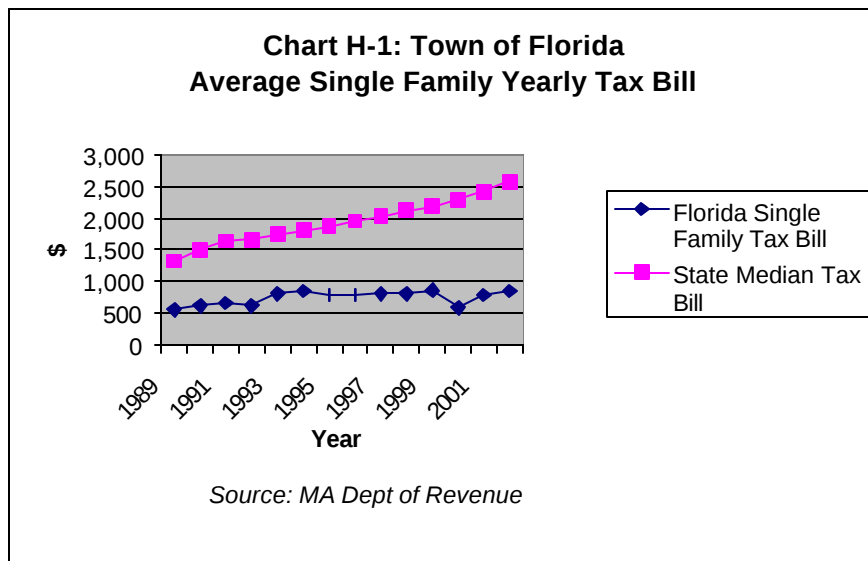
imposes conditions that make the project un-economic, the developer may appeal to the state Housing Appeals Committee for review of the local action.

Summary:

- No qualified 40B units in Florida – exposes Town to Comprehensive Permit applications

Property Values

There are 269 taxable single-family parcels in Florida in 2002. The average assessed value of single-family homes was \$75,527. The tax rate for all residential property in Florida in 2002 was \$11.25 per thousand, which was slightly lower than the average rate of \$12.67 for Berkshire County Towns. The average single-family tax bill in 2002 was \$850, ranking the town very low, 335 of 339 Massachusetts Towns reporting tax rates to date. Florida was ranked 28th in the State for the year 2000 equalized valuation per capita, with an average per capita valuation of \$180, 195.



Summary:

- Average single family tax bill among lowest in the State.
- Per capita valuation among the highest in the State.

Assessed Value vs. Market Value

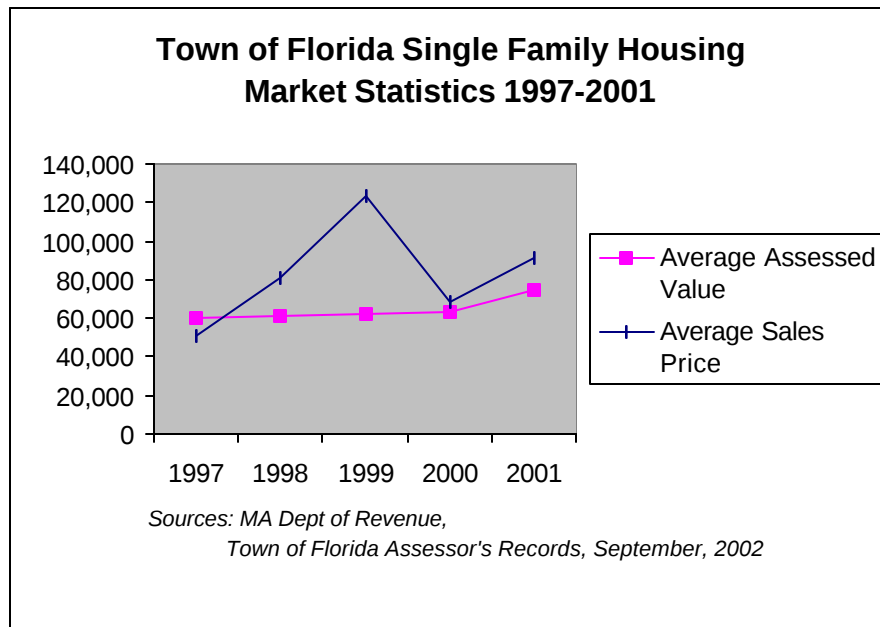
Sales Data: <http://rers.thewarrengroup.com/townstats/search.asp>

Assessed Property Values Data: [MA DOR 1988-2001 AVG Single Family Tax Bill](#)

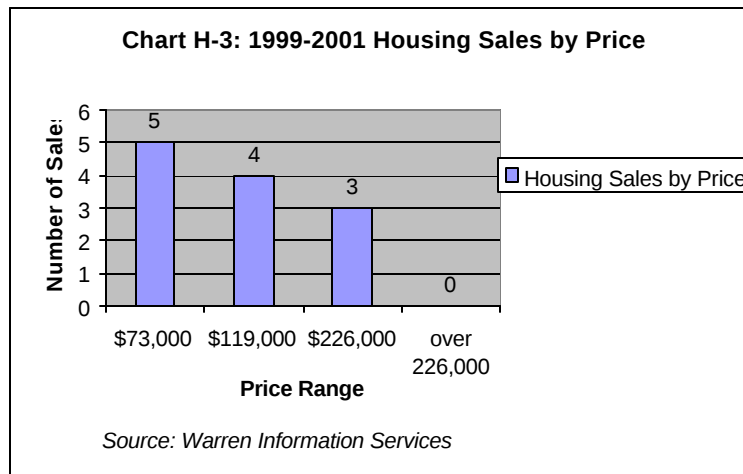
Table H-3: Annual Single Family Home Statistics 1997-2001

Year	Average Assessed Value	Average Sales Price	Median Sales Price	Total Number of Sales
1997	\$60,586	\$50,991	\$55,000	15
1998	\$61,579	\$81,250	\$93,500	8
1999	\$62,101	\$123,000	\$123,000	1
2000	\$62,887	\$68,736	\$62,000	7
2001	\$74,412	\$91,549	\$93,598	4

Chart H-2: Single Family Home Statistics 1997-2001



Recent Single Family Home Sales by Price



Summary:

- Significant variations in average and median sales prices from year to year since 1997.

Local Educational Expenditures

Each year, the Department of Education (DOE) reports community educational expenditures. The Net Average Membership Pupils is the number of students residing in Florida, averaged over the entire year. The number includes pupils from Florida enrolled in local and regional schools, and those being tuitioned to out-of-town schools. The number does not include non-residents. Cost per pupil is based on the DOE integrated operating costs. The DOE integrated operating cost is one of the most widely accepted measures for comparing educational spending among communities. It reflects the community's share of regional school spending as well as that of its own local schools. The figure does not include capital outlay and construction costs. The following chart shows the total number of membership pupils, and calculated operational costs per pupil for Florida from 1995-2000. It also includes school expenditures as a percentage of all town expenditures from the general fund on government operational costs excluding capital outlay and construction costs.

Table H-4: Educational Expenditures 1995-2000			
Year	Net Avg. Membership Pupils	Education spending as % of all Town expenditures	Cost Per Pupil
1995	156	52.44%	\$5,276
1996	134	56.51%	\$7,136
1997	149.3	60.79%	\$6,786
1998	158	58.24%	\$7,484
1999	155.2	55.24%	\$7,535
2000	150.6	53.61%	\$8,759
Source: Massachusetts Dept of Revenue			

In 2000, the cost per pupil was \$8,759, which was greater than the Berkshire County average of \$7,831. In 2000, 53.61% of town expenditures were for educational purposes, which was similar to the countywide average of 54% educational spending. The DOR lists the Town's 2000 per-capita spending on education to be \$1,568.

Summary:

- Significant increase in cost per pupil, but number of students and percent of Town expenditures is stable.

Current Development Practices and Available Land

Sources: [State Data Center Annual New Construction Reports](#)
Town Building Inspector Data to fill in recent data

Construction Trends & New Construction 1995-2001

Table H-5: New Construction Values 95-01			
Year	Total Single-Family Units Built⁽¹⁾	Avg New Home Value⁽¹⁾	Avg Existing Home Value⁽²⁾
1995	3	\$100,000	\$59,062
1996	N/A	N/A	\$59,975
1997	1	\$165,000	\$60,586
1998	1	\$75,000	\$61,579
1999	2	\$85,600	\$62,101
2000*	4*	\$74,850	\$62,887
2001*	2*	\$81,400	\$74,412

Sources: ⁽¹⁾ Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research

⁽²⁾ Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Note: Home Value is based on pre-market assessment by Assessor

*Data from Town Building Inspector

Renovations

Source: *Town Building Inspector List of Permits for 1999 - March 2002*
(Included in appendix)

Development Patterns

The Town of Florida is a heavily forested hill town located high on the Hoosac Range in the northwest corner of Berkshire County. Florida is a rural residential community with very little commercial development and without a well-defined village center.

Approximately 5,171 acres, or 33% of the total area of the town is permanently protected open space. This consists primarily of state-owned land in Florida State forest (in south of town), Monroe State Forest (in the northeast part of town), and Mohawk Trail State forest (in the southeast part of town).

Most of the residential development in the town has been single-family houses on large lots along existing roadways. Housing development has steadily increased in the last

20 years, and the number of housing units in the town has increased by approximately 53% since 1980.

Source: BRPC 2000 Buildout Analysis

Utilities

Florida has no municipal water and sewer systems, as all housing units must provide on-site disposal. Western Massachusetts Electric Company provides electricity service for the Town. The town is also without gas service. Trash disposal is done at the Town Transfer station.

Source: BRPC Data Book 2001

Local Zoning Provisions

The entire Town of Florida consists of a single zoning district, the Residential/Agricultural District. Single family and two-family dwellings are permitted by-right, although there has been no two-family development in the last ten years. Mobile Homes are allowed by right. About 13.5% of the units in Florida are mobile homes. However, mobile home parks are not permitted. The minimum lot size is one acre. Retail stores and consumer service establishments are allowed by-right. Other types of commercial development require a special permit from the Select Board.

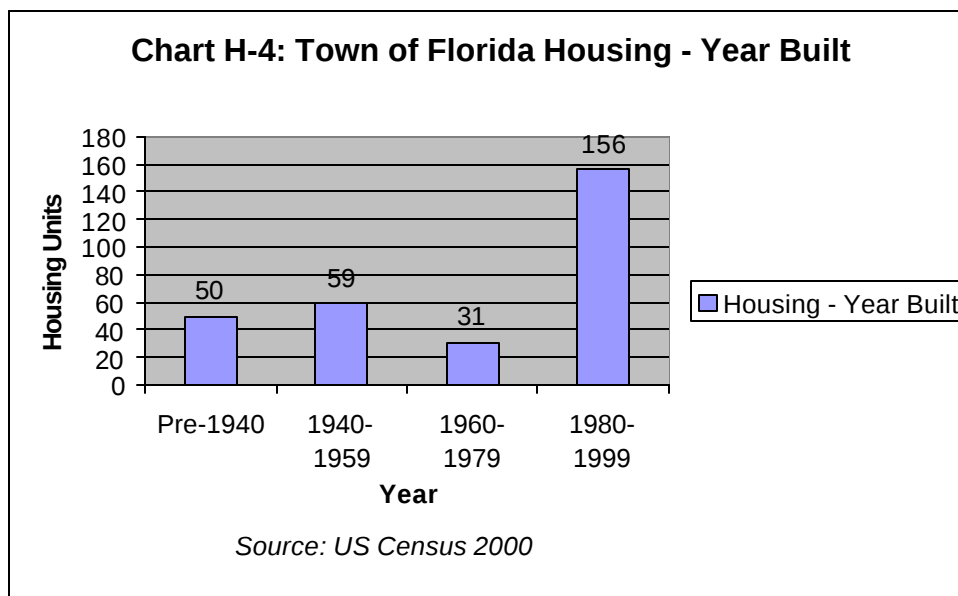
Florida does not have its own regulations for Wetlands, Stream and pond Protection, Floodplain, Water Supply Protection or site plan review.

Source: BRPC 2000 Buildout Analysis

Current Housing Conditions

Age of Housing Stock

Fifty Two percent (52%), or 156 of Florida's 296 housing units were built since 1980. In 1980, Florida had 237 households and 309 total housing units. In 2000, Florida had 266 households and 296 housing units.



Assessment of the Housing Stock

Response to previous findings

Structural Conditions

Source: Town Building Inspector, Sept 4, 2002

Residential housing in Florida is in constant need of repair. Harsh weather conditions on this rugged and mountainous landscape add to the wear on the buildings and increase the need for a sound structure. Also, many dwellings in Florida were not built by certified carpenters and do not meet building code regulations. The building inspector has been addressing major issues, around 15-20 per year, as these houses apply for building permits for repairs. However, many houses are not being repaired and remain in violation. It is estimated that 10% of the housing stock needs some type of major repair. The most common repairs needed in Florida are for new roofing and new windows. Many roofs are old and leaky, and many windows have rotted out. These are crucial needs in order to keep out the elements. Berkshire Housing Development Corporation is currently working with residents on rehabilitating homes most in need of repair see Section V for details.

Housing Profile – Demand

Population Statistics

Source: BRPC 2001 Data Book Census Figures

Table H-6: Historical Population Counts

	Florida	Berkshire County
1970	672	149,402
1980	730	145,110
1990	742	139,352
2000	676	134,953
2010	696*	135,700*

*projected. Source: BRPC Population Projections-Preliminary, Nov. 2002

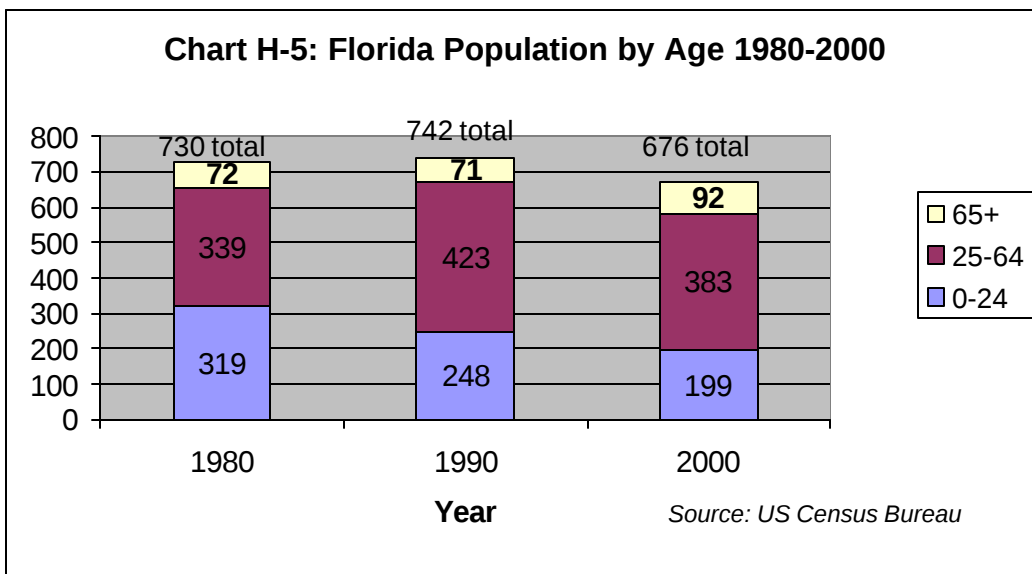
Population By Age

Source: BRPC 2001 Data Book Census Figures

Population By Age 1980-2000				
Age	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-2000
0-24	319	248	199	-38%
25-64	339	423	383	13%
65+	72	71	92	28%
TOTAL	730	742	674	-8%

Summary: Aging population, significant reduction in 25 and under, significant increase in 65+

Chart H-5: Florida Population by Age 1980-2000

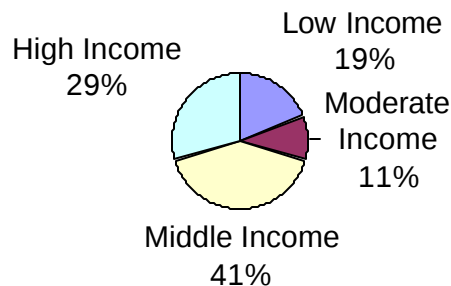


Economic Statistics:

Local Household Income Levels

The Median Household income for Florida was \$43,000. This was higher than the Berkshire County Median of \$39,047, but lower than the Massachusetts median household income of \$50,502. Chart H-6 shows the approximate distribution of Household Income levels in Florida according to countywide low, moderate, middle, and high household income levels. The chart shows that 30% of Florida households are considered low or moderate income households, earning up to 80% of the median household income for Berkshire County, which was \$31,273. These 80% and below groups are the ones that are eligible for public housing subsidies or assistance. 41% of Town households were middle income in 2000, earning up to \$58,000 a year. Twenty nine percent of Florida households earned over \$58,000 a year, considered high-income for Berkshire County.

**Chart H-6: Approximate Household Income Levels
According to Berkshire County Median, 2000**



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Low Income = Up to 50% of
Berkshire County Median

Moderate Income = 50-80%
of Berkshire County Median

Middle Income = 80-150%
of Berkshire County Median

High Income = Over 150%
of Berkshire County Median

Local Employment

The average annual wage for persons employed in jobs located in Florida was \$16,173. With this income, it would take three people from a single household to reach the median household income for Florida. (\$43,000) This suggests that it may be difficult for those working in Florida to live in Town. The greatest number of jobs in Florida are primarily in government (the town school) and services.

Chart H-7: Employment and Wages in Florida

Year	Total Annual Payroll	Avg Annual Wage	Establishments	Total	Agriculture Forestry Fishing	Government	Construction	Manufacturing	Trade	Services
1985	\$429,400	\$6,926	10	62	conf	46	0	0	0	conf
1990	\$511,579	\$10,885	9	47	conf	43	0	0	conf	0
1995	\$736,926	\$12,490	9	59	0	50	conf	conf	0	conf
2000	\$1,310,014	\$16,173	12	81	0	57	0	Conf	Conf	21

Source: Massachusetts Dept of Employment and Training, 2000

Market Trends for Housing

In recent interviews with the Berkshire Eagle, (*Housing Demand Up, Supply Down* June 11, 2002), real estate agents have seen an increase in demand and a reduction of supply throughout Berkshire County. The Berkshire County Board of Realtors, in their most recent Berkshire County Market Trend Assessment, reports that from 2000 to 2001 the Berkshire's experienced a (4 %) decrease in units sold, but an 11% jump in average selling price. In the short term, there appear a combination of factors increasing real estate investment, such as a low interest rate and a lack of confidence in investing in the stock market. Longer-term factors influencing the Florida real estate market is an apparent northward encroachment of high demand and higher real estate prices for higher-end homes, most notably high-end second homes, currently being experienced in South County. Realtors in the Central and Northern Berkshires commented on a "greater awareness of the [real estate] opportunities somewhat north of South County". The cost of land in Florida is also relatively inexpensive compared to other areas of the County and the State. As of January 23, 2003, no homes are on the market in Florida.

Affordability Gap Analysis

Housing Affordability Methodology

The housing affordability study was conducted to determine whether or not the “typical” family in Florida could actually afford to buy a home in Florida at current market values. According to HUD guidelines housing is considered to be affordable when monthly mortgage payments comprise no more than twenty-eight percent (28%) of a household’s total monthly income.

This analysis factors in consideration determining the availability of affordable housing for all town residents. The typical family was defined as a household with an income equal to the median estimated income of the Florida (\$43,000). A typical low income family was defined as a household with an income equal to 50% of the Town’s median estimated income (\$21,500), and a moderate income family earned 80% of the median income (\$34,400). Higher income households earned over 150% of the Town’s median income (over \$64,500).

Florida’s median housing price was taken from sales data provided by Warren Information Services, while Florida’s median income for 2000 was given by the 2000 US Census.

Maximum price affordability levels for each type of household were determined by mortgage loan qualification calculations provided by local mortgage lenders. The analysis was based on a 10% down payment with no points. Calculations incorporate a mortgage interest rate of 7.0%, compiled as an average of current rates offered by local lending institutions at the time of the report. A current localized basic homeowner’s insurance quote for Florida was provided by local insurance brokers. The results estimate a maximum housing price with monthly payments that are no more than 28% of the household income with an assumed maximum of 8% in other debts or obligations forming a combined personal debt payments of no more than 36% of monthly income.

Chart H-8: 2001 Affordability Matrix

Income Level	2000 Household Income Limits	Calculated Maximum Affordable Home Price	Number of Sales below Maximum Price, 1999 - 2001	Number of Florida Households below this Bracket in 2000	Percent of Florida Households below this bracket in 2000	% Sales (1999-2001) affordable by these households	Affordability Gap
low income – up to 50% of Median	\$21,500	\$73,000	5	45	19%	42%	NONE (-23%)
Moderate – income up to 80% of Median	\$34,400	\$119,000	9	72	30%	75%	NONE (-45%)
Middle Income-up to 150% of Median	\$64,500	\$226,000	12	171	71%	100%	NONE (-29%)
High Income-over 150% of median	\$64,500	over \$226,000	12	242	100%	100%	NONE (0%)
Median Household Income 2000	\$43,000	\$150,000	11	121	50%	92%	NONE (-42%)

Affordability Findings

The Gap Analysis shows that homes being sold in Florida are largely affordable by residents of the town. There were no affordability gaps found for low, moderate, or middle-income households. Forty two percent (42%), 5 of the 12 sales from 1999-2001 were sold at a price that was below the maximum affordable purchase price for low-income households (households making \$21,500 in 2000). Since only nineteen percent of the town is considered low-income, and 42% of housing sales were affordable to low-income residents, there was no gap for low-income residents. Almost all sales, 11 of the 12 sales from 1999 to 2001 were considered affordable by median-income households in Florida.

It should be noted that this is a price-based analysis only, and does not document that low-income households own, or are buying the lower priced houses. The analysis also does not say anything about the quality of the homes or the amount of renovations needed to get them up to health and building code regulations. Comments on the

conditions of housing are given above in the Assessment of Housing Stock. This analysis also does not account for homes owned by absentee owners and landlords.

Rental Housing Affordability

The number of rental units in Florida has decreased from 1990 to 2000 by 36%, from 25 to 16. This loss has contributed to a 25% raise in the median contract rent in Florida from \$275 to \$346 per month. Of the 16 rental units in Florida, the median monthly rent in 2000 was \$346. This is well below the county median of \$499, and would be considered affordable to a low income household in Florida-comprising less than 20% of monthly income for a household earning 50% of the Florida median household income. However, a large percentage of renters in Florida are still rent-burdened, which means they are paying over 35% of their monthly income toward rent. Nine of the 16 renters, 56% of all renters in Florida, were reported to be rent-burdened.

Current Housing Activities

E.O. 418 Certification

The Town of Florida received Executive Order 418 Housing Certification for FY2002 under Category A which requires that the Town show that new affordable units have been produced in the Town and that the Town has a community housing strategy. This Certification allows the Town to be much more competitive when applying for grant funds from a number of State agencies including the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. There are currently \$401 million dollars worth of grants and loans that are subject to EO 418 certification. This certification has assisted the Town in receiving CDF funding for its Senior Center Project and for the Housing Rehabilitation Project that is discussed below. The Town is in the process of re-certifying for FY2003.

Housing Rehabilitation Program

Berkshire Housing Development Corporation (BHDC) has been very successful in securing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to provide housing rehabilitation loans of up to \$20,000 per unit to income eligible residents in Florida. The terms of these loans are very lenient and usually do not require repayment as long as the home is not sold or the title is not transferred during the life of the loan which is typically 15 years. During the 1998 funding round 14 households received home rehabilitation loans totaling about \$200,000. During the 2000 funding round an additional 7 households received loans totaling \$100,000. This amounts to a total of 21 housing units repaired at an average cost per unit of \$14,286. BHDC is currently preparing a regional CDBG housing rehabilitation grant application for 9 towns in Berkshire County for the 2003 funding cycle. Florida is one of the applicant towns and it is anticipated that this will fund the repairs for an additional 6 units in Florida.

The home rehabilitation loans can be used for a wide range of rehabilitation projects including electrical upgrades, installation or upgrades to heating systems, roof replacements, replacement and weatherproofing of foundations (frost walls), insulation, plumbing repairs, septic repairs and numerous others. BHDC indicated that most of the projects being done in Florida are for exterior repairs related to weather wear such as

painting, siding, roofs, windows etc... Some of the projects have included interior repairs to remedy code violations and other substandard features. BHDC also indicate that the majority of the loan applicants were working families with a smaller portion of the applicants being elderly households with fixed incomes. BHDC has indicated that the demand for housing rehab loan funds is very high in Florida and that there is a waiting list of several applicants for the upcoming funding round, and it is anticipated that the demand for future funding beyond FY2003 will be very strong.

Appendix A: Affordable Homeownership and Rehabilitation Assistance Programs

Good Samaritan Homeownership Program

Berkshire County Towns participate with Berkshire Housing Development Corporation, Berkshire Fund, Inc., and nine local lenders with the Good Samaritan Homeownership program described below. The participating lenders include Berkshire Bank, Legacy Banks, Pittsfield Cooperative Bank, Lee Bank, Lenox Savings Bank, Adams Cooperative Bank, So. Adams Savings Bank, Hoosic Bank and Greylock Federal Credit Union.

The Good Samaritan Homeownership program, which received a Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program Grant for \$96,000 in 1999 to assist low-income households with down payment and closing cost assistance. This program is available to income eligible residents throughout the County and more than 175 families have bought homes through the program in the past 10 years. Participating lenders provide a first mortgage equal to 80% of the purchase price, Berkshire Fund provides a second mortgage equal to 15% of the purchase price, and the buyers provide a 5% down payment. The banks also purchased more than \$1.6 million of low interest bonds to fund the down payment pool.

USDA Rural Housing Service Loan Guaranty Program

This program is a federally funded program from the Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Rural Housing Service. This program is available to all borrowers seeking mortgages throughout Berkshire County, with the exception of the City of Pittsfield. Through the Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program, moderate-income earners can qualify for existing single-family mortgages without a down payment. This program is currently available at Lee Bank.

MassHousing General Lending Program – 1st Time Homebuyers

MassHousing partners with Lee Bank, Berkshire Bank, and Legacy Banks to assist credit-worthy, low and moderate income, first time home buyers whose income and home purchase price fall within federally-set guidelines with financing and educational assistance. Florida residents have participated in this program in the past 5 years,

Source: [MassHousing Stats](#)

As of March 6, 2002, eligibility requirements for MassHousing programs in Florida are:

Chart H-9: Income Limits For MassHousing Programs In Florida			
Income Limits		Acquisition Cost Limits	
1 - 2 Persons \$ 66,000 3 or More \$ 75,900		New Construction	Existing Housing
		Single Family \$ 277,100	Single Family \$198,000
		2 Family n/a	2 Family \$223,350 3 Family \$270,450 4 Family \$314,400

MassHousing Septic Repair Loan Program

The Septic Repair Loan Program is a state-wide program established under Chapter 708 of the acts of 1966 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that is funded by MassHousing and available locally at Lee Bank. The MassHousing program offers reduced interest rate loans of \$1,000 - \$25,000 to cover costs associated with the upgrade of a failed sewage disposal system within the meaning of Title 5. Homeowners may qualify for 0%, 3% or 5% interest rates based on household income (see chart H-10). Repairs are for owner-occupied primary-residences only, not for second homes. The program is popular and several such loans are given out every year throughout the county. Few local applicants have failed to qualify. The Average Loan amount for a Septic Repair Loan has been relatively high, as the program's closing cost requirements have discouraged smaller value loans. The program began with a \$13 million State grant; it is considered successful; and is expected to continue with self-sufficient funds from loan payments. In the last five fiscal years, no homeowners from Florida have participated in this assistance program. (Source: [MassHousing Use Figures for FY96-01](#))

Chart H-10: Income Limits for Septic Repair Loans in Berkshire County

Loan Rate	1-2 person family	3 or more persons
0%	\$23,000	\$26,000
3%	\$46,000	\$52,000
5%	\$92,000	\$104,000

MassHousing Home Improvement Loan Program

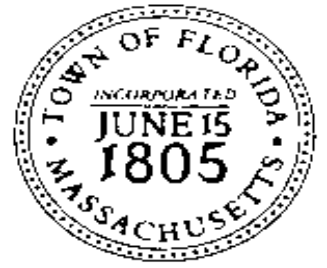
Local residents are also eligible for participation in the Home Improvement Loan Program at MassHousing. This program is available through Lee Bank, and residents of other towns in Berkshire County have participated. The program offers financing for income-eligible homeowners to repair their homes. Eligible properties are one-to-four family properties and residential condominiums, and the residence must be the borrower's principal residence for minimum of one year. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000 - \$25,000 for loan terms of 5 to 15 years.

In the last five fiscal years no residents from Florida have participated in this program.

Source: [MassHousing Use Figures for FY96-01](#)

For more information on this program, contact MassHousing or Lee Bank.

**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Appendix - A.2



Florida Economic Development Profile

As a small and remote town, Florida's economic base is limited, and comprised of a few small, locally owned businesses. Many of the town's businesses are located along Route 2, also called the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway. The Byway is a major part of the Town's economy, bringing tourists through and connecting the town to North Adams, the town's neighbor to the west which is also the economic center of Northern Berkshire County. Florida's tax base is dominated by the PG&E Hydroelectric Plant, which comprises over 60% of the town's tax base, though it does not have local employees. The following sections profile in detail the local and regional economy of Florida.

Local Business Inventory, 2001

Although the majority of Florida's labor force is employed outside of Town, the town does have an expanding number of businesses that provide increasing employment, services, and goods to its residents. From 1990 to 2001, the number of employers in town increased from 9 to 13. (see table E-1) while the total number of jobs in Town has increased by over thirty percent, from 62 to 82. The largest growth area for employment has been in the service industry, which increased from 0 jobs in 1990 to 21 in year 2000. Approximately 32% of Town jobs in 2001 were in service industries. The largest local employer is the Town of Florida itself, with 51 employees in 2001 at the Town Hall, the Town Garage and Abbott Memorial School.

Table E-1: Employment by Industry – Recent Trends

Year	1990	1995	2000	2001	% Change 1990-2001
Agriculture	Conf	0	0	0	Not Available
Government	43	50	57	51	+ 19%
Manufacturing	Conf	Conf	Conf	Conf	Not Available
Construction	0	Conf	0	0	0%
Trade	Conf	0	Conf	Conf	Not Available
TCPU	Conf	0	0	0	Not Available
Services	0	Conf	21	26	+ 100%
Total Establishments	9	9	12	13	+ 44%
Total Employment	47	59	81	82	+ 74%

Source: MA Dept of Employment and Training

Table E-2: Major Employers in Florida, 2001

Name	Description	Employees
Town of Florida	Government	51
Ralph O Dodge Trucking	Trucking	5-9
Brown's Garage	Automotive	1-4
John S. Field Sales & Service	Service	1-4
Source: Amerca's Labor Market Information Service (ALMIS), 2001		

Local Labor Force

According to the Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training, Florida's total labor force as of April 2002 was 358. The labor force measures the number of residents living in Florida who are employed or are actively looking for employment. Florida's labor force number does not measure the jobs actually located within the town lines. The labor force has declined since the 1980's and 1990's, where the town reached a peak of 389 workers in 1990. The labor force has also rebounded from a 15 year low of 348 workers recorded in 2000.

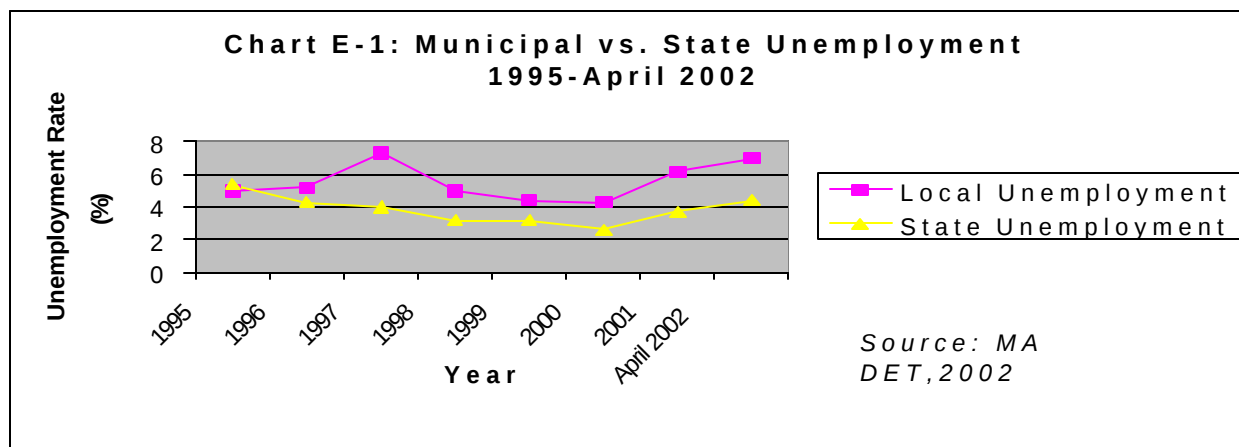
Table E-4: Employment and Unemployment in Florida

Year	Labor force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate	Statewide Rate
1985	377	346	30	8.0%	3.9%
1990	389	349	40	10.3%	6.0%
1995	359	341	18	5.0%	5.4%
1997	381	353	28	7.3%	4.0%
1998	372	354	18	4.8%	3.3%
1999	360	344	16	4.4%	3.2%
2000	348	333	15	4.3%	2.6%
2001	354	332	22	6.2%	3.7%
April, 2002	358	333	25	7.0%	4.4%

Source: MA Dept of Employment And Training

Local Unemployment

Florida residents have consistently had higher unemployment rates higher then the State average. (see Chart E-1) The rate has been rising steadily since 2000. In April 2002, while the statewide unemployment rate was 4.4%, and the Berkshire County Unemployment Rate was 4.2%, Florida experienced a 7.0 % unemployment rate, which was the Town's highest recorded unemployment rate since 1997.



Employment and Wages

The Employment and Wages figures for Florida are for jobs located within the town. Average weekly wage of jobs located in Town have been increasing dramatically since 1990. From 1990 to 2001, average annual wages have increased by 74%, or about 7% a year. The 2001 average wage translates to a monthly wage of approximately \$1,581. In spite of recent increases, this number is still low in comparison to the County average annual wage of \$32,921. Total annual payroll for local businesses have increased 204%, or 19% a year for the last 11 years.

Table E-3: Employment and Wages – Recent Trends

Year	1990	1995	2000	2001	% Change 1990-2001
Total Annual Payroll	\$511,579	\$736,926	\$1,310,014	\$1,556,040	+ 204%
Avg Annual Wage	\$10,885	\$12,490	\$16,173	\$18,976	+ 74%
Total Employment	47	59	81	82	+ 74%

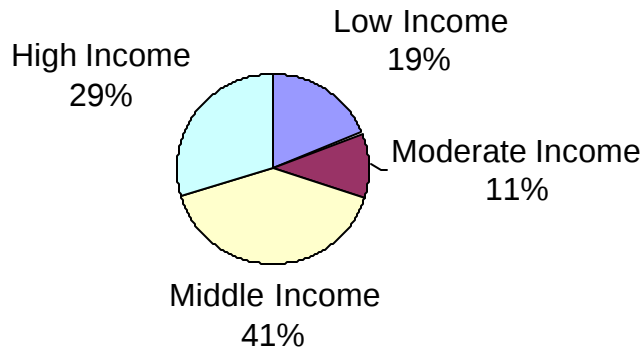
Source: MA Dept of Employment and Training

Local Household Income Levels

In the US Census of 2000, the Town had a median household income of \$43,000,¹ which was higher than Berkshire County's median household income of \$39,047. Thirty percent of the Town's households were considered low or moderate income (earning from zero to 80% of the County's median income), forty one percent were middle income (earning between 80% and 150% of the County's median income), and twenty nine percent were high income (earning more than 150% of the County's median household income).

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

**Chart E-2: Approximate Household Income Levels
According to Berkshire County Median, 2000**



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Low Income = Up to 50% of Berkshire County Median (Under \$19,500)

Moderate Income = 50-80% of Berkshire County Median (\$19,500-\$29,700)

Middle Income = 80-150% of Berkshire County Median (\$34,400-\$58,600)

High Income = Over 150% of Berkshire County Median (Over \$58,600)

Population Characteristics, Past, Present and Future

Historical Population Counts

The population of Florida has increased slightly since 1970, but has decreased 10% since reaching a peak of 742 residents in 1990. The population of the surrounding area of Berkshire County has been decreasing steadily since 1970 by an average of approximately 3% every 10 years.

Table E-4 Historical Population Counts and Future Projections

	Florida, MA	10 Year % Change	Berkshire County
1970	672	-	149,402
1980	730	+9%	145,110
1990	742	+2%	139,352
2000	676	-9%	134,953
2010	696*	+3%	139,352*
2020	763*	+10%	145,875*
2030	864*	+13%	162,650*

Source: U.S Census 2000; *BRPC Population figures: Preliminary, 2002

Population and Population By Age

The last ten years have seen a 9.4% increase in the town population aged 55 or older. This demographic now represents 24% of the total population of the town, increasing the median age to 39.8 – which is younger than the county-wide median age of 40.5. The working-age population aged 25-54 years decreased by 9% from 346 to 315, and the number of residents aged 24 and under decreased by 20%. School aged children and young adults (5-19) years of age had actually increased by 2, from 154 to 156.

Future Population Projections

Based on regional population projections provided to the BRPC by Regional Economic Models, Inc (REMI), of Amherst Massachusetts. The population decline in Berkshire County is expected to end sometime between year 2000 and year 2010. The BRPC expects the population of Florida is expected to follow this trend, with slight population increases in the next decades. REMI population projections have been a reliable model for regional population trends in the past 20 years, but they are susceptible to unforeseen changes, and have been less reliable forecasting future trends for individual municipalities such as Florida. The projections do not take into account age, and therefore do not project whether or not future population increases will add working-age residents to the community.

Educational Attainment

According to the 2000 census, 80.4% of the Town's residents aged 25 years or older had a high school degree, while 15% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Throughout Berkshire County, 85% of the population has at least a high school degree and 26% has at least a bachelor's degree.

Challenges, Needs, and Opportunities

Municipal Taxes & Property Values

Encouraging additional economic development has been viewed as one way to broaden the town's base of tax revenues without adding to the largest source of town expenses, i.e. educational costs.

As summarized in the following chart E-5 and E-6, the town's expenses are dominated by educational expenditures, while the town's local tax levy is dominated by industrial taxes. The revenue figures demonstrate Florida's high degree of fiscal dependence on just ten industrial parcels. **These ten parcels account for over 60% of the town's total tax revenues.** Therefore, the town is in an unstable situation where it is heavily dependent on a single revenue stream. Adding to the potential instability is that the ten parcels are owned by the same business enterprise, which has changed hands several times in recent years. If just one of these ten parcels were to fail, then the town would be forced to raise an additional \$80,000 from another source. Placing the burden of the loss of just one industrial parcel on residents could amount to an additional \$300 annually from each of the town's 269 single-family homes, which would be a 35% increase in taxes on from 11.25 to 15.22. If all ten were to fail, then it would mean additional \$3,000 a year from residents to make up for the lost revenues.

Table E-5: Major Town Expenses (2001)

Source	Percent of Total Town Expenses 2001	Amount of Expense (2001)
Educational Expenditures	52%	\$1,044,720
Public Works/ Highway & Other Public Works	25%	\$512,202
General Government	10%	\$194,284
Other misc. sources	13%	\$272,635
Total Expenditures	100%	\$2,023,841

Table E-6: Major Town Local Tax Revenue Sources (2002)

Type	Percent of Total Local Tax Levy	Local Tax Levy	Number of Parcels, 2002
Industrial	63%	\$ 807,116	10
Single Family Homes	18%	\$ 228,564	269
Personal Property	12%	\$ 157,145	15
Misc. Other	7%	\$ 89,876	375
Total, non exempt		\$ 1,282,701	669

Costs of Community Services: The Fiscal Analysis

The fiscal analysis included in the appendix and summarized in Chart E-7 conducts a more detailed analysis of the costs associated with different types of development in town such as residential, commercial and industrial, and compares them with the tax revenues they generate. The analysis is intended to get a picture of the fiscal impact that certain types of development have on the town. The result shows the net effect of different developments on the town as well as a picture of the stability of the local tax base.

The Fiscal Analysis for Florida shows that the Town's residential developments clearly do not generate enough revenues to cover the expenses for education and other town services. On the other hand, industrial parcels are generating a surplus of \$78,000 per parcel. Vacant Land, Open Space, and Tax-Exempt state owned land are the only other types of parcels whose revenues exceed costs for Town services needed to use them.

Table E-7: Summary of Fiscal Analysis

	Parcels	Total Costs	Total Revenues	Net Revenues (Costs - Revenues)	Total Revenues By Parcel
Single Family	269	\$1,605,547	\$946,653	-\$658,894	-\$2,449
Apartment Buildings	1	\$5,969	\$4,270	-\$1,698	-\$1,698
Misc. Residential (Mobile Homes)	57	\$340,209	\$185,063	-\$155,146	-\$2,722
Vacant Land	297	\$0	\$43,341	\$43,341	\$146
Open Space	4	\$0	\$570	\$570	\$143
Commercial	8	\$22,190	\$13,775	-\$8,414	-\$1,052
Industrial	10	\$27,737	\$816,507	\$788,770	\$78,877
Chapter 61	3	\$8,321	\$3,590	-\$4,731	-\$1,577
Other Usage	5	\$13,869	\$10,482	-\$3,386	-\$677
Tax Exempt	-	\$0	\$34,755	\$34,755	N/A

Housing Availability for a Future Work Force

Housing information provided by town officials and the 2000 US Census shows evidence that both the size and makeup of the housing stock is a concern. Although the year-round population decreased 12% from 1990 to 2000, there are fewer vacant houses available. The vacancy rate for housing units in Town decreased slightly from 6% to 5% from 1990 to 2000. There are few apartments in town, and median contract rents from 1990 to 2000, climbed from \$275 to \$346, a 25.8% increase.

Local Zoning & Compatibility with Existing Land Use & Regional Plans

The Town currently consists entirely of a single zone that allows for a number of diverse uses. Though the town has diverse topography and historical development pattern, the uniform zoning of the town encourages uniform development that may not reflect development desired by the town.

The town has permissive bylaws permitting home occupancies, making home businesses and small-scale enterprise a viable option for current and future residents and possibly an important part of the town's future economy.

The following commercial uses are allowed:

- Commercial Greenhouse, sawmill, commercial dog kennel, or veterinary hospital, golf course, ski tow, riding stable, or other recreational facility of similar character.
- Retail business or consumer service establishment including but not limited to grocery store, barber shop or beauty shop, antique shop, eating establishment, bank or other office use.

Source: Florida Town Ordinance, via www.ordinance.com, 2003

Infrastructure, Service Demands & Available Utilities

Florida does not have a municipal water or sewer system. Massachusetts Electric Company provides electricity service for the Town, but no gas service is provided. Trash disposal is done at the Town Transfer station.

Employment Outlook and Regional Economic Trends

Concerns have been raised both by the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board and the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training's publication on regional workforce trends that much of the job growth taking place in the Berkshires is in low wage segments of the service and retail sectors. At the same time, businesses throughout the region have experienced difficulty in recruiting qualified employees with job skills and technical abilities matching employer needs.

The number of higher paying small, or "micro" businesses has been growing in the area. The role of small or "micro" businesses is of interest in Town and in the surrounding region for its importance in economic development – especially because of changes in where and how people work. Advances in telecommunications technology and the growth of personal computers in the home have meant many more people can – and do – work at home as self-employed contractors and consultants. Results of the Donahue Institute study on Technology Enterprise found that Berkshire County was home to 1,500 Technology Enterprise sole proprietorships, as well as 154 employer firms with an average of eight employees. This contrasts with the 39 per firm average in manufacturing businesses, and the 15 per firm in the average services industry business in Berkshire County.

Self-employment has been increasing at a faster rate than wage and salary employment both regionally and on a national level. Data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis for 1998 for the Berkshire region indicate that proprietorships (both farm and non-farm) represent about 18% of total regional employment, and have increased in number about 2.8% from 1994.

Regional Business Overview

According to an analysis of employment in the Berkshires by the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board (“Blueprint”) 9 industry segments (**Table E-5**) are defined as “critical” to the region since these 9 provide the preponderance of employment opportunities, or about 78% of the jobs – in the region.

TABLE E-5 – Critical Industries in Berkshire County

Industry	(% Workforce)
Health & Human Services	16.1%
Travel & Tourism	14.0%
Retail	13.6%
Education	11.2%
Paper/Plastics	8.7%
Construction	5.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	4.1%
Business Services	2.8%
Applied Technology	2.5%
Total:	78.3%

Source: Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, 2001

Current Regional Growth Trends & Emerging Industries

The 2001 Regional Employment Board Workforce Development Blueprint has identified business services atop 5 other industry sectors with growth rates in employment in excess of 10%, represent the region’s “emerging” industries (Table E-7).

TABLE E-7: Emerging Industries in Berkshire County

Industry:	Growth Rate(%):	% of Workforce Employed:
Business Services	25	2.8%
Misc. Retailing	18	4.5%
Spec. Trades Contractors	18	2.6%
Gen'l. Building Contractors	18	1.0%
Amusement & Recreation	15	2.3%
Personal Services	12	1.2%

Source: Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, 2001

Another recently recognized growth area in Berkshire County is in the Technology Enterprise sector, which is comprised of four major types of activity: Software and Systems Design; Design and Art; Content and Publishing; and Information Technology (IT) Business Consulting. The University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute recently completed the first major study of the growth of technology enterprise sector in Berkshire County. The study, *Technology Enterprise in Berkshire County: Economic Analysis, Feb 2002*, reports that since 1993, the Technology Enterprise sector has grown at a higher rate than every major division of the Berkshire economy in terms of firm growth, employment growth, and real annual payroll growth. The study shows that payroll for Technology Enterprise firms increased by 190% from 1993-2002, while total payroll in the region increased by only 13.5%.

Future Growth Areas Regionally

Berkshire County's future base is very much tied to its strong past manufacturing base industries – though with substantially fewer employees, but unprecedented output value as measured by Gross Regional Product

Economic forecasts provided by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission using the REMI model indicate that while the service sector will continue its upward trajectory in numbers of employees, high technology and high productivity manufacturing will continue to be the structural and economic base of the region's economy.

Job growth within the major sectors of the regional economy is slated to continue and remain roughly the same proportionally out to 2025. Services are expected to continue to climb in employment to almost 50% of total employment by 2025, with healthcare services being the leading employer regionally within this sector. Increasing numbers of service jobs can be expected to affect overall wages and income in this region.

Technology Enterprise is also expected to continue to increase its substantial impact on Berkshire County's economy. According to an anonymous survey by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, companies associated with this sector reported a positive business outlook, with 75% expecting increased revenues over the next three years and 96% reporting they are likely to remain in Berkshire County for the next 5 years.

Educational and Financial Resources and Opportunities

Local Educational Opportunities

Residents in Town have access to higher education (Associate's Level) and technical training programs at Berkshire Community College in Pittsfield. The Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams also offers undergraduate and graduate level programs accessible to both day and evening students. Two other residential private colleges serve the region: Williams College and Simon's Rock. Simon's Rock offers high school age students the opportunity to enroll in college programs. The University of Massachusetts also offers a MBA program in Pittsfield. Additional opportunities for technical training or skill-building are viewed as critical to workforce development in the region.

Workforce Development Programs

Companies in emerging sectors of the economy, especially Technology Enterprises, are highly dependent on the attraction and retention of a well-educated and professional workforce. A variety of creative and intellectual skills are in demand along with specific technical expertise.

Residents in Town have access to a number of workforce development programs and economic development organizations offering workforce development activities, access to training grants, youth employment and training opportunities, strategic planning

resources, and much more. Appendix A lists these economic development programs and organizations with a description of the activities and resources in which they are involved.

Financial Resources in the Berkshires

At this point there is no central “clearinghouse” for information on community development or economic development funds sought or granted for projects or initiatives undertaken in this region. Funding for these purposes in the past has been sought by multiple agencies and organizations, and separate communities with minimal coordination of efforts or region-wide prioritization. As a result, a priority regional goal was established with the intent of improving communication and collaboration on economic development planning and activities for a better, targeted use of resources and a clearer vision of the desired future economy of the region. Establishing a central source for information about funding opportunities available, and tracking both applications for funding and resulting awards will enable the Berkshire region to develop needed expertise in seeking funding.

APPENDIX A: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Listed below are key organizations – both public and private – and a brief summary of recent activities in support of regional economic development and/or recent assessments or studies, which have fostered understanding of regional economic issues:

Berkshire Council for Growth

Leading the coalition-building effort has been the Council for Growth, established in 1998 as a regional outgrowth of the Cellucci Administration’s Berkshire Jobs Task Force. The Council and its committees, in partnership with volunteers from many private businesses and support from the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, have coordinated/spearheaded a number of important regional initiatives including a regional jobs website, www.berkshirejobs.com.

Berkshire Applied Technology Council

Formed in 1997/1998 as a partnership of businesses and government, local schools, Berkshire Community College, and regional 4 year colleges, the Council’s mission is to establish the Berkshire region as a technology center of excellence. The Council’s goal is to address the workforce needs of manufacturing companies and industries in the region through a long-range strategy of technology-focused educational initiatives. Providing state of the art educational programs, financial assistance, training, and professional support targeting students and incumbent workers, the Berkshire Applied Technology Council addresses a key factor in attracting and retaining technology-based industries and firms – the need for technically trained employees. Berkshire Applied Technology Council has sponsored the following:

TECHPATH

This workforce/educational program was developed in 1997 as a **2+2+2** sequence to link high school to associate to baccalaureate degrees with a high technology curriculum specifically integrating local industry applications. The TECHPATH program is designed to be accessible to incumbent workers, as well as a seamless link in motivating and developing future high tech workers. Over 50 students are currently enrolled in the program.

WOMEN ON TECH PATH PROGRAM

A collaboration with Berkshire Community College, this project will offer after-school training to 22 young women (from the 11 regional public schools) in engineering, graphics/animation, and information technology. A follow-up summer program – the Internet Academy – will also provide job shadowing and electronic networking components.

Berkshire Connect

A regional initiative cited by the Federal Communications Commission in 2000 as a national model for efforts to improve telecommunications access in rural or under-served areas with a cost-effective solution to help drive regional economic activity. The partnership agreement with Global Crossing/Equal Access Networks has resulted in building sufficient telecommunications infrastructure and services to support the needs of businesses and industry in this region at a competitive and affordable price.

Berkshire County Regional Employment Board (BCREB)

The BCREB is the local organization responsible for assisting employers with workforce development activities, access to training grants, youth opportunities, and strategic planning & oversight. It helps access the following programs: Career Center, Workforce Training Fund, Department of Employment and Training, Berkshire Training and Employment Program, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Advantage Employee Network and Full Employment Program. It also promotes the School-to-Work Initiative, Summer of Work and Learning and Welfare-to-Work Initiative. Two key documents published by the BCREB are its Workforce Development Blueprint (1998, 2000 & 2001 draft) and Workforce Needs Assessment (May, 2000).

Economic Development Organizations

There are a number of regional and local economic development organizations, each with defined geographic service areas and unique missions. These include:

- Berkshire Enterprises: *Berkshire Enterprises runs ten-week training programs addressing a wide range of issues that serve as the foundation for new entrepreneurs. The focus is on business plan development, financing, marketing and management.*
- Berkshire Housing Development Corporation
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
- Berkshire Training and Employment Program
- Berkshire Visitors Bureau
- Community Development Corporation of Southern Berkshire
- Division of Employment and Training
- Lee Community Development Corporation
- Massachusetts Office of Business Development
- Northern Berkshire Community Development Corporation
- Northern Berkshire Industrial Park and Development Corporation
- Pittsfield Economic Development Authority
- Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation

State Funded Economic Development Grants for Communities

There are also seven program co-ordinates of the Mass. CDBG Program. These seven components serve different purposes or types of clienteles, each with different requirements, awards, cycle periods of grant awarding, and functions.

Community Development Fund (CDF) I

Communities are eligible for this grant depending on a scale that determines the level of needs based upon an assessment formula. These applicable communities would be considered of high needs.

Community Development Fund (CDF) II

Communities are eligible for this grant depending on a scale that determines the level of needs based upon an assessment formula. These would be considered communities of moderate needs.

Housing Development Support Program

This grant is limited to communities building smaller housing developments. It provides partial support to such projects.

Ready resource Fund

Communities that are creating small to medium size economic development projects are eligible for this grant.

Massachusetts Community Capital Fund

Depending on eligibility, this can provide grants to communities for assisting businesses. Industrial, commercial and real estate, including mixed -use development projects may be eligible.

Mini Entitlement Program

This is a program designed for the communities with the highest needs as designated by the DHCD.

Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program

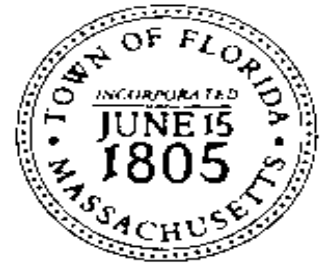
A loan guarantee of HUD loan for communities to use to assist businesses. Industrial, commercial and real estate, including mixed use developments may be eligible.

For additional information, see the website : www.state.ma.us/dhcd

References

1. Technology Enterprise in Berkshire County: Economic Analysis, University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, February 2002.
2. Workforce Development Blueprint, Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Inc., July 2002.
3. America's Labor Market Information System Employer Database, 2nd edition. InfoUSAGov., 2001.
4. Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training. <http://www.detma.org>
5. Data Book, 2001, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

Community Development Plan Town of Florida



Appendix - A.3



Florida Community Opinion Poll

Tabulation of Responses from 7/30/01 meeting
8/17/01

Returned Surveys: 35/50

70%

Community Questions

Question #1

What is the most important aspect of living in Florida? (Consider such things as the towns' rural nature, job opportunities, school system etc.)

Response Rate: 20/35

57%

Responses:

- Natural State, Rural Nature (8 responses), Open Space (2 responses).
- Private (3 responses), Peaceful, Quiet (3 responses), Solitude, Tranquil (2).
- School System (4 responses), pre-school.
- Small & friendly, ability to live near friends and family
- Low taxes (2), low population.
- Freedom to live without restrictions (4 responses), little government intervention in personal affairs.
- Change minimum lot size from 1 acre to 3.
- Too many controls always proposed
- Topography & weather keep out flatlanders

Question #2

How would you like to see the town grow? (check one)

___ no growth at all ___ moderate growth ___ rapid growth ___ unlimited growth

How would you encourage this type of growth?

Response Rate: 35/35

100%

Responses:

No Growth	8/35	23%
Moderate Growth	26/35	74%
Rapid Growth	0/35	0%
Unlimited Growth	1/35	3%

Question #2 continued...

Comments on encouraging growth:

- Don't want supermarkets, K-mart's or Wal-Mart, want small family owned establishments, fix existing business.
- Slow growth, family based.
- Family based.
- Expand/promote tourism
- Improve dirt roads
- Need more stores and a place to gather
- Keep land open
- Keep open space, use zoning & incentives to encourage growth in designated areas.

Question #3

Would you like to see the town develop a town center?

___ Yes

___ No

___ No Response

Response Rate: 33/35

94%

Responses:

Yes:	12/33	36%
No:	16/33	48%
No Response	5/33	16%

Comments:

- Senior Center, Yes; Other uses, No
- Yes- for Florida residents only
- Senior Center
- Multi-use, not just a town center
- Do not see how this is possible in town because it is so spread out.

Open Space and Natural Resources

Question #4

Are there enough family based recreational opportunities? (Consider a town park/playground, trails, bike path, river access, hunting, etc.)

___ Yes ___ No ___ No Response

Response Rate: 33/35

94%

Responses:

Yes:	17/33	51%
No:	15/33	45%
No Response:	1/33	3%

Comments:

- Not enough for children to do
- Clean up junk along byway
- Need rafting/camping/canoeing facilities
- Chilson's pond was a great family place; state should allow access again.
- Need better maintenance

Question #5

Would you support a town effort to protect farms, forests and other natural/scenic resources?

___ Yes ___ No ___ No Response

Response Rate: 33/35

94%

Responses:

Yes:	27/33	81%
No:	5/33	15%
No Response:	1/33	3%

Comments:

- Yes, depends on cost
- Yes, within reason; by keeping them in private hands of individuals who can maintain & keep like the past
- How would this be accomplished? – As one of the few farmers in town I do not want people who do not work on my farm telling me how to run it.

Question #6

What are your Open Space and Natural Resource priorities?

Response Rate: 19/35

54%

- None
- Availability of open space to the people of the area
- Forests, streams and lakes
- State lands should be cleaned up; more scenic trails are needed
- End state management of lands
- No condo's or big subdivisions on old farm land
- Get DEM & others to work with private land owners through conservation restrictions opposed to owning land in fee
- Wind power
- Keep natural; improve on fire trails
- Leave alone/like town the way it is
- Open Space should be a priority weighed against development of housing, business, etc.
- Keep both commercial and residential development limited
- Stock lakes and rivers; clean up existing state parks, try to get revenue from rafters using the Deerfield
- Leave people alone to keep their open space private and not state owned or controlled
- Keep as rustic as possible
- Keep open space, I don't want to see my neighbors
- Keep open space and natural resources
- Keep it open to all people and all uses

Economy

Question #7

Is there enough commercial development in town?

____ Yes ____ No

if no, what else would you like to see? (restaurant, retail shopping, etc.)

Response Rate: 29/35

83%

Responses:

Yes:	17/29	59%
No:	12/29	41%

Comments:

- Small family owned business, home occupation, restaurants, artisans
- Antiquing, cottage industries
- Use business that are already here- Giovanni's, Whitcomb Summit, Florida Lounge
- Restaurants, clubs, specialty stores, camping sites, hiking
- Wind Farms development (pay off back taxes)
- Limited growth; work with existing hotel base. Open up old restaurants
- More commercial dev.= need for police force = higher taxes

Question #8

Do you think tourism is important to Florida?

____ Yes ____ No ____ No Response

Response Rate: 34/35

97%

Responses:

Yes:	24/34	71%
No:	7/34	20%
No Response:	3/34	9%

Question #9

How closely is Florida's economy tied to the rebound of North Adams?

(Consider job opportunities, commercial development, etc.)

Response Rate: 20/35

57%

Question #9 continued...

Responses:

- Somewhat (3 responses)
- Very close (4 responses)
- Closely (3 responses)
- Florida is the bedroom
 - More business in North Adams enables people to live in rural areas and travel short distances to work
 - Just develop existing business in Florida
 - Tourism dependent on North Adams, minor. Tourism depends on Mother Nature and advertising
 - Hopefully we will not get the seasonal home spin-off
 - Tourist traffic from Boston
 - Might be more service jobs once North Adams gets going, most surely for summer homes if North Adams really gets going
 - Not at all (2 responses)
 - We need not depend on N.A.

Question #10

What are your economic priorities for the town?

Response Rate: 18/35

51%

Responses:

- None
- More home based business
- Lower taxes (2 responses), Florida is a hill town not a hill city.
- Affordable utilities
- Family type restaurant; more cell towers, use of natural resources (wind/hydro)
- More home based business, wind and water power development
- More income from taxes on commercial development
- More state support for maintaining forest land
- Keep economic development small and private
- Small scale tourism based on open space- wind, hydro and forest resource development
- Solid tax base from business development
- Tourism
- Favor slow paced economic growth. Take advantage of tourism and associated tax dollars. Tourists are using the towns' roads and facilities and should be charged for such use.
- More money for state land
- Low taxes, good schools, more wind power; encourage personal economic growth, including accessory apartments

- More cell towers and windmills
- Look into windmills for the benefit of all townspeople

Question #11

Is good quality affordable housing available in Florida?

___Yes ___No ___ No Response

Response Rate: 27/35 77%

Responses:

Yes:	14/27	52%
No:	8/27	29%
No Response:	5/27	18%

Question #12

Would you support a town initiative to explore the feasibility of a small community sewer system?

___Yes ___ No ___ No Response

Response Rate: 31/35 89%

Responses:

Yes:	9/31	29%
No:	20/31	65%
No Response:	2/31	6%

Comments:

- Whole town paying to benefit a few
- Yes, if system serves the entire town at reasonable cost for construction, maintenance and operating costs
- Absolutely not
- Yes, if user fee

Question # 13

What other housing priorities do you have?

Response Rate: 19/35 54%

Responses:

- One of the reasons for living in Florida is that there is no sewer and water bills
- Taxes must stay low for the elderly and affordable for our children. No more bylaws, especially for mother-in-law apartments, we do not need more laws.
- Make landownership easier

- Keep taxes low enough to allow seniors and young people to stay in town
- Housing for seniors who cannot live alone due to age
- More bylaws; stricter property control
- If elderly housing does happen, it should be for Florida residents only (2)
- Not to have a leaky roof

Question #13 continued...

- Senior housing, help for first time home buyers
- None (2 responses)
- Need higher housing standards, i.e. do not allow 2-3 trailers on one lot
- Senior housing, ability for children to be able to afford to stay in Florida if they wish to
- Leave people alone, limit bylaws
- Allow people to get market value for their home while also helping existing homeowners stay in town
- Less building

Transportation

Question #14

Should the town improve existing roads to enable single family home development?

___ Yes ___ No ___ No Response

Response Rate: 30/35

86%

Responses:

Yes:	14/30	47%
No:	13/30	43%
No Response:	3/30	10%

Comments:

- Improve them as we can afford to
- Yes, but for town use
- Yes, need full time road crew boss; keep gravel, no asphalt

Question #15

Do you have any concerns about safety, aesthetics and access on Route 2?

Response Rate: 27/35

77%

Responses:

- Rumble strips and white lines would help in foggy conditions
- State only plows, sands and salts when there are severe problems. Such decisions should be made locally, not from Boston. The road used to be better maintained
- Not safe for truck use
- No concerns (8 responses)
- Trucks are too large and lax inspections probably mean they are overweight as well. Speed is too high for a scenic byway (2)
- The view on parts of Route 2 are embarrassing
- Scenic vistas need to be cut out along the trail. Tree's need to be cut back so the trucks do not hit them
- Speed limits, people do not obey the law. Tree clearance before they fall into the road.
- Too much commercial traffic- large trucks
- Need more turnoff sections at Whitcomb Hill. Need access to cell tower sites, more cell towers to help beeper and cell phone use to attract professionals.
- Speeding; better upkeep by the state
- Tractor traffic, Mass highway does not maintain the road as it used to
- Yes
- Rte. 2 lined with dead tree's waiting to fall in the road
- Aesthetics

- Safety- dead tree's

Question #15 continued...

- Enforce existing laws and speed limits- some posted speeds are ridiculous, others not enforced
- Better fire equipment

Question #16

What are your transportation priorities for the town?

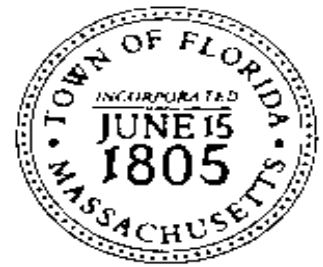
Response Rate: 22/35

63%

Responses:

- Ability to get where I want to go
- We all use personal transportation
- Help for seniors who can no longer get about
- Bus would be nice, but I don't see it happening
- Make Rte. 2 safe
- Enact what we discussed tonight
- Plow the roads better in the winter
- Find out what roads belong to the town
- None (2 responses)
- Secondary roads need improvement
- Keep good work on town roads going
- Safety
- Don't pave roads, people go fast enough
- Elderly and people without vehicles
- Need a ride, buy your own
- Development of Rte. 2
- Van or other small bus, possibly running on a fixed schedule
- Just fine
- Some type of public transportation
- Need accurate inventory of town roads to allow or restrict development
- Elderly transportation to North Adams for Dr.'s appointments and supermarkets may be helpful

**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Appendix - A.4



Florida Visioning Session

Summary of flip pad notes

7/30/01

I. Housing:

Senior Housing-

- Small scale senior assisted living development- "residents only"
- Seniors want to stay in Florida

Affordable Housing-

- Want housing affordable for young families and seniors on a fixed budget
- Housing that does not affect the town budget and taxes
- Control municipal spending

Housing Market-

- Declining in general; increasing for well maintained properties
- Houses selling for higher than assessed value- Why?

Starter Homes-

- Explore available options with municipal spending and tax rate in mind

By-Laws-

- Explore accessory apartment By-Law

Second Home Market-

- Rising housing costs- (out- of -towners)

Community Sewer System-

- Not fiscally responsible
- More feasible in town center
- Prefer user fee's

II. Open Space and Natural Resources

State Land-

- Need better access and maintenance from the state
- Pilot Fee's- not getting enough money to compensate for lost taxes
- Need better cooperation and communication between the town and state

Florida Visioning Session

Summary of flip pad notes

7/30/01

Open Space and Natural Resources

Trails

- Safety issues
 - Cost of patrolling trails
 - Poor maintenance on state land
- Recreation
 - Conflict with snowmobile's
 - Permit fee's not covering trail maintenance
 - Explore user maintenance- put clubs to work
- Family based recreation
 - Better fishing access at North and South Pond
 - Over use of existing facilities
 - Explore possible user fee at North Pond
 - Interest in town based recreation center
 - Florida residents only- resident pass

III. Economy

- Food Shopping- leaving town not an issue
- Reuse existing business (Whitcomb summit, Giovanni's and Florida Lounge)
 - Better management is needed to make them successful
- Access Problems at both sides of town (Hairpin turn and Deadman's curve)
- Encourage small home based business (not industry)
- Fall foliage season- problems due to tourist traffic
- Internet Access/ Communication Isolation
 - Lack of access hinders business growth
- Road access for business
 - Tandem trailers a problem
- Mineral Resources
- Wind Power
 - Needs feasibility study
 - Gauge public opinion
 - Could town lease land and collect tax revenue

Florida Visioning Session

Summary of flip pad notes

7/30/01

Economy

- Jobs- improvement of towns employment opportunities

IV. Transportation

- Public transportation for elderly and others having difficulties getting around
- Explore climbing and passing lanes
- Turnouts, turnoffs and parking needed for recreational access (river, trails)
- Need maintenance of scenic vistas and viewsheds
- By-pass for trucks on Rte.2
- Acknowledged need for compromise between environmental and business needs
- Dead tree's along Rte.2 pose safety and aesthetic issues
- Need better access to State Police
 - Enforce speed limit equally, do not issue tickets only at speed traps
- Posted speed limits not always equal to driving conditions
- State road crews do not maintain Rte. 2 as well as they could
- Need better access to post office boxes
- Identify town roads
 - Need inventory
 - ANR roads as applied to budget
 - For growth control

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Town of Florida

Community Development Plan Advisory Committee Meeting



6:00 pm
July 30, 2001
Fellowship Hall

Agenda

- I. Introduction – Jana H. Brule' 6:00-6:15
 - Discussion on Community Development Process- Tom Matuszko
- II. Build Out Summary- Chris Leo 6:15-6:30
Discussion on Build Out analysis
- III. Discussion of Town Priorities 6:30-7:30

Guidelines for a Productive Public Forum- Amy Pfeufer

Open Space and Natural Resources- Amy Pfeufer

Economic Development-Chris Leo

Housing- Tom Matuszko

Transportation- Amy Pfeufer

- IV. Conclusion 7:30-7:45
Form core group of volunteers and
discuss next course of action

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Town of Florida

Community Development Plan Advisory Committee



Minutes from CDP Committee Meeting

September 9, 2002

7:00 PM at Florida Town Hall

Present:

Tim Zelazo	Tom Brule	Barb Newman	Dave McNary
Paul Smith	Jill Jourdenais	Amy Pfeufer, BRPC	Bryan Boeskin, BRPC

Following introductions, general discussion of the Community Development Plan process , roles and responsibilities of Committee members and a re-cap of the last meeting (November 2001), the committee reviewed the approved Scope of Work for the CDP.

Housing was the main topic of the meeting. The Committee reviewed the data provided in the draft Housing Profile and offered many comments on its accuracy. Tom Brule checked with the assessors and verified the current housing stock as 269 single Family Homes and 57 mobile homes for a total of 326 housing units. Per capita property valuations were also questioned as being too high (\$180,195). The Committee felt they might be skewed by the valuation of hydroelectric properties along the Deerfield River. The Committee will get input on this information from the Assessors to improve the accuracy of the Housing Profile.

The Committee discussed housing needs and reiterated a strong interest in Senior housing and continued interest in providing home improvement financing through BHDC . When it comes to affordable housing, Florida seems to have enough, but there is concern that some of the housing is substandard.

The Housing task of most interest to the town is the review of zoning and subdivision bylaws that will be completed by Joellyn Warren of BRPC. Tim Zelazo will be the main contact and liaison to the Planning Board regarding this topic.

Bryan Boeskin presented the Draft Official Road map to the Committee. They will post the map in a prominent place in Town Hall and ask knowledgeable residents and municipal officials to review the map for accuracy and to pencil in corrections and additions where needed.

Finally, the Committee reviewed the draft base maps and gradient maps. Members of the Committee will review the maps for accuracy and will present changes to BRPC in subsequent Advisory Committee meetings.

The next CDP Advisor Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday November 4, 7:00 PM at the Florida Town Hall. Open Space and Natural Resources is the topic. Additionally, BRPC will contact DEM regarding a community "Trail Safety and Usage" meeting to be scheduled in mid-November.

The Committee also indicated that would be holding additional working meetings between the regularly scheduled meetings with BRPC staff in order to thoroughly review the information provided and to adequately prepare for each topic area. It was also determined that the Town Administrator, Jana Brule would remain as the Committee Liaison with BRPC and that key information would be forwarded to her for distribution to the remaining Committee members.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Town of Florida
Community Development Plan
Advisory Committee Meeting



November 4, 2002
7:00 pm @ Town Hall

- I. Introductions for any new Committee members present (5 minutes)
- II. Review of Scope of Work and Re-cap Last Meeting (15 minutes)
- III. Discussion of Open Space Data (30 minutes)
 - a. Draft Open Space plan sections
 - b. Open Space Goals and Priorities
 - c. Opportunities to privately protect land
- IV. Review of CDP Mapping (15 minutes)
 - a. Brief discussion of Gradient Maps
 - b. Transportation Map
- V. Schedule Next Meeting (5 minutes)
 - a. Topic: Transportation
 - b. Date, Time, Location

Handouts: Open Space Plan draft, APR program, Chapter 61 programs, Open Space Planning Tool

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Town of Florida

Community Development Plan Advisory Committee



TOWN OF FLORIDA
CDP MEETING
February 3, 2003 @ 7:00 PM
Florida Town Hall

Dear Florida Advisory Committee Member,

This letter is to inform you of the third meeting of the Florida Community Development Plan Advisory Committee. Listed below is a tentative agenda for the meeting.

Agenda

- I. Follow-up Items from Last Meeting
 - Status of Open Space Plan
 - Status of Meeting with DEM
 - Potential for additional funding for Open Space Planning
- II. Presentation of Florida Economic Data Profile
 - Review and Discussion of Economic Data
 - Review and Discussion of Fiscal Impact Analysis
 - Discussion of Challenges and Opportunities
- III. Economic Development Planning
 - Overview of Economic Development and ED Planning Process
 - Building Capacity
 - Discuss Economic Development Strategies and Tools
- IV. Other Business and Next Meeting.

Please review the attached materials in preparation for the meeting. If you have any questions regarding this meeting or if you will not be able to attend please contact either Bryan Boeskin or Amy Pfeufer at BRPC. The phone number is (413) 442-1521, or you can e-mail us at bboeskin@berkshireplanning.org or apfeufer@berkshireplanning.org.

Attachments:

- Economic Development Profile and Fiscal Impact Analysis
- Pages 1-12 of *"Organizing for Economic Development- Municipal and Regional Options"*
- Copy of Brochure on "Massachusetts Farm Viability Enhancement Program"

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

**Town of Florida
Town Hall
Community Development Plan
Advisory Committee Meeting**



Monday, May 12, 2003 @ 7:00 pm

Dear Florida Advisory Committee Member,

This letter is to inform you of the fourth meeting of the Florida Community Development Plan Advisory Committee to discuss the Transportation Element and finalizing the Community Development Plan. Listed below is a tentative agenda for the meeting.

Agenda

- v. Discussion of Purpose and Development of Official Map/Status of Roads Map
- Review of Florida Ortho Map with Road Overlays and Discussion of Report
 - Review of Official maps from other Towns and Discussion of Map Formatting
 - Timetable for Next Steps

Presented by: Peter Falcier, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and
Tim Zelazo, Florida Planning Board

- vi. Status of Florida CDP
- Review and Discussion of Housing Element Draft
 - Review and Discussion of Economic Development Element Draft
 - Update on Status of Open Space Plan and Subdivision By-law Review

Presented by: Bryan E. Boeskin, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

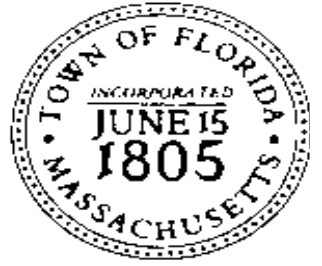
- vii. Finalizing CD Plan and Scheduling Final Plan Presentation

If you have any questions regarding this meeting or if you will not be able to attend please contact Bryan E. Boeskin at BRPC. The phone number is (413) 442-1521, or you can email me at bboeskin@berkshireplanning.org.

Attachments

Official Map Tool Box
Draft Status of Roads & Official Map Report
Draft Housing Element
Draft Economic Development Element

**Community Development Plan
Town of Florida**



Appendix - A.5



MEMORANDUM



1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA 01201-6229

Phone: 413/ 442-1521

Fax: 413/ 442-1523

www.berkshireplanning.org BRPC@berkshireplanning.org

Date: December 3, 2003

To: Florida Planning Board

From: Joellyn Warren, Senior Planner

Subject: **Suggested changes to Subdivision Rules and Regulations**

In response to the Planning Board meeting in October, I have revised and prepared the following outline regarding the town's subdivision controls. When referring to the regulations the items in **bold** and **highlight** are new and items in **highlight** are amended. Please review and let me know if you have any other questions or comments on the recommendations. Good Luck!

Section 2.0 Authority.

- Label by sub-section.
- Include a sentence in sub-section A that refers to amendment dates once approved by majority of the Planning Board.
- Include language from 3.30 to sub-section B (delete 3.30).

Section 3.10 Definitions

- Add a definition for Easement
- Remove definition for Preliminary Plan since ANR and Definitive are not defined here. Move to Section 4.102.
- The type of Street if further defined by Minor, Collector and Major to be consistent with Section 5.102.

Section 3.20 Plan Believed Not to Require Approval

- Added language as to contents of ANR submittal.

- Amended language related to notice to Town Clerk.
- Amended language to reflect time line for approval as per Mass General Law.

Section 4.0 Procedure for the Submission and Approval of Plans

- Added language to allow Board to hire, at the expense of the applicant, a professional consultant.

Section 4.102 Preliminary Plan Contents

- Amended language to include mylar as opposed to tracing paper.
- Moved language from original definition to here.

Section 4.103 Preliminary Plan Approval

- Added “within 45 days” as allowed by Mass General Law.

Section 4.201 Definitive Plan General

- Highlighted fee structure to bring attention to need for the Board to come to consensus on fee structure.

Section 4.202 Definitive Plan Contents

- Amended sub-sections k-v to added more detailed language on submittal requirements.

Section 4.203 Impact Statement

- Amended impact statement to include only those projects that are greater than 10 or more lots.

Section 5.103 Grade

- Highlighted to remind Board to consult with Highway Superintendent as to town’s desired grade requirements.

Sections 6.10 Streets and Right-of-way and 6.104 Paving

- These Sections are both highlighted to remind Board to consult with Highway Superintendent as to town’s desired construction and paving requirements.

Section 6.11 Surface Draining (Comments from Amy Pfuefer)

- 6.111 Piped drainage is not always necessary. In fact, open, vegetated drainage often works better, and is cheaper.

- 6.112 Any spring or surface water that exists prior to development should be treated as a wetland and left alone, if possible. Any water that is a result of development is probably stormwater and should be treated before discharge or infiltrated, when possible.

Forms - Changed the date on all the forms.

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SUBDIVISION OF LAND

1.0 PURPOSE

The subdivision control law has been enacted for the purpose of protecting the safety, convenience and welfare of the inhabitants of the cities and towns in which it is, or may hereafter be, put in effect by regulating the laying out and construction of ways in subdivisions providing access to the several lots therein, but which have not become public ways, and ensuring sanitary conditions in subdivisions and in proper cases parks and open areas. The powers of a planning board and of a board of appeal under the subdivision control law shall be exercised with due regard for the provision of adequate access to all of the lots in a subdivision by ways that will be safe and convenient for travel; for lessening congestion in such ways and in the adjacent public ways; for reducing danger to life and limb in the operation of motor vehicles; for securing safety in the case of fire, flood, panic and other emergencies; for insuring compliance with the applicable zoning ordinances or bylaws; for securing adequate provision for water, sewerage, drainage and other requirements where necessary in a subdivision; and for coordinating the ways in a subdivision with each other and with the public ways in the city or town in which it is located and with the ways in neighboring subdivisions.

2.0 AUTHORITY

- A. Under the authority vested in the Planning Board of the Town of Florida by Section 81-Q of Chapter 41 of the General Laws, said Board hereby adopts these rules and regulations governing the subdivision of land in the Town of Florida. **These amended regulations supersede all previous Subdivision Control Regulations and are effective (date of adoption by Planning Board). A public hearing regarding these amendments was held on (date of Planning Board hearing).**
- B. No person shall make a subdivision within the meaning of the Subdivision Control Law of any land within the Town, or proceed with the improvement or sale of lots in a subdivision, or the construction of ways, or the installation of municipal services therein, unless and until a Definitive Plan of such subdivision has been approved and endorsed by the Planning Board as hereinafter provided. **(Moved from previous Section 3.30)**

3.0 GENERAL

3.10 Definitions

EASEMENT A right acquired by public authority or other person to use or control property for a utility or other designated public or private purpose.

LOT An area of land in one ownership, with definite boundaries, used, or available for use, as the site of one or more buildings.

PRELIMINARY PLAN (move to Section 4.102)

ROAD See "Street".

SKETCH PLAN May be a simple free-hand sketch, preferably on topographic survey, showing proposed layout of streets, lots, and other features in relation to existing conditions.

STREET A public way, or a private way either shown on a plan approved by the Planning Board in accordance with the Subdivision Control Law, or otherwise qualifying a lot for frontage under the Subdivision Control Law. The specific type and design of streets shall be in the following manner:

Minor Street – A street, which is likely to be used only by vehicles traveling to or from lots on that state. It is designed to carry a very low volume of traffic and is limited in the volume of through traffic.

Collector Street – A street which serves a larger neighborhood type of subdivision. A collector street may also function to serve other smaller streets or cul-de-sacs.

Major Street – A street which, in the opinion of the Board, is likely to carry substantial volumes of traffic and may also serve as access to house lots along its frontage. It must be a through street which may also function to serve other smaller streets or cul-de-sacs.

SUBDIVISION The division of a tract of land into two or more lots and shall include re-subdivision, and, when appropriate to the context, shall relate to the process of subdivision or the land or territory subdivided; provided, however, that the division on a tract of land into two or more lots all not be deemed to constitute a subdivision within the meaning of the subdivision control law, if at the time when it is made, every lot within the tract so divided has frontage on

(a) a public way or a way which the clerk of the city or town certifies is maintained and used as a public way, or

(b) a way shown on a plan theretofore approved and endorsed in accordance with the subdivision control law, or

(c) a way in existence when the subdivision control law became effective in the city or town in which the land lies, having, in the opinion of the planning board, sufficient width, suitable grades and adequate construction to provide for the needs of vehicular traffic in relation to the proposed use of the land abutting thereon or served thereby, and for the installation of municipal services to serve such land and the buildings erected or to be erected thereon. Such frontage shall be of at least such distance as is then required by zoning or other ordinance or bylaw, if any, of said city or town for erection of a building on such lot, and if no distance is so required, such frontage shall be of at least twenty feet. Conveyances or other instruments adding to, taking away from, or changing the size and shape of, lots in such a manner as not to leave any lot so affected without the frontage above set forth, or the division of a tract of land on which two or more buildings were standing when the subdivision control law went into effect in the city or town in which the land lies into separate lots on each of which one of such buildings remains standing shall not constitute a subdivision.

3.20 Plan Believed Not to Require Approval

Any person who wishes to cause to be recorded in the Registry of Deeds or to be filed with the Land Court a plan of land and who believes that his plan does not require approval under the Subdivision Control Law may submit his plan and application Form A (see Appendix) to the Planning Board

accompanied by the necessary evidence to show that the plan does not require approval. Said person shall file, by delivery or certified mail, a notice with the Town Clerk stating the date of submission for such determination and accompanied by a copy of said application. If the notice is given by delivery, the Town Clerk shall, if requested, give a written receipt therefor.

In addition to requirements of the Registry of Deeds, the plan must clearly delineate the following information to enable action by the Planning Board:

a. Boundary lines, areas and dimensions of each proposed parcel shown.

b. Intended disposition of each parcel shown; for example: "Parcels A, B, & C are to be conveyed as building lots." Parcel D is to be added to property now owned by , an abutter, and is never to be conveyed as a separate building lot."

c. Area and street frontage of land remaining after parcel (s) shown on plan is/are cut out of said land.

d. Total new area and road frontage of land to which any parcel is to be joined. If the Planning Board determines that the plan does not require approval, it shall without a public hearing and without unnecessary delay endorse on the plan the words "Approval under the Subdivision Control Law not required." The Planning Board may add to such endorsement a statement of the reason why approval is not required.

If the Planning Board determines that the plan does not require approval, it shall without a public hearing endorse on the plan the words "Approval under the Subdivision Control Law not required."

The Plan will be returned to the applicant, and the Planning Board shall notify the Town Clerk and Building Inspector of its action.

DELETE The Planning Board may add to such endorsement a statement of the reason why approval is not required.

If the Planning Board determines that the plan does require approval under the Subdivision Control Law, it will so inform the applicant and return the plan. The Planning Board will also notify the Town Clerk of its action.

If the Planning Board fails to act upon a plan submitted under this section within **twenty-one days** ~~fourteen days~~ after its submission, it shall be deemed to have determined that approval under the [Subdivision](#) Control Law is not required.

3.30 Move to Section 2.0.B.

4.0 PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF PLANS

Before preparation of an official subdivision plan it is strongly recommended that the subdivider submit a sketch plan of the proposed subdivision to the Planning Board and consult with the Board informally regarding procedures, design standards and required improvements in order to save time and avoid costly mistakes.

A subdivision plan shall be considered as submitted to the Planning Board when delivered at a meeting of the board or when sent by certified or registered mail to the Planning Board, care of the Town Clerk, together with properly filled out application form, fee and supporting documents.

If the Planning Board believes it necessary to hire professional consultants to review the plan or to review construction cost estimates or to review and report on construction or to determine the amount of bond or surety required, the cost of such consultation shall be paid as directed by the Planning Board by the developer, into a special account administered by the Town Treasurer, from which the Planning Board's consultant shall be paid. The developer may appeal from the selection of the outside consultant to the Board of Selectmen. The grounds for such an appeal shall be limited to claims that the consultant selected has a conflict of interest or does not possess the minimum required qualifications. The minimum qualifications shall consist either of an educational degree in or related to the field at issue or three or more years of practice in the field of issue or a related field. The required time limits for action of the appeal to the Board of Selectmen is 30 days. In the event that no decision is made by the Board of Selectmen within one month following the appeal, the selection of consultants made by the Planning Board shall stand. Such appeal to the Board of Selectmen shall not preclude further judicial review, if otherwise permitted by law, on the grounds permitted by the section.

Any such account established by the Town Treasurer shall be kept separate and apart from other moneys. This special account, including accrued interest, if any, shall be expended at the direction of the Planning Board without further appropriation; provided, however, that such funds are to be expended by the Planning Board only in connection with carrying out the Planning Board's responsibilities under the law. Any excess amount in the account attributable to a specific project, including any accrued interest, at the completion of said project shall be repaid to the developer or to the developer's successor in interest and a final report of said account shall be made available to the developer or the developer's successor in interest. The Town Accountant shall submit annually a report of said special account to the Board of Selectmen for their review. Said report shall be published in the annual Town Report. The Town Accountant shall submit a copy of said report to the Director of the Bureau of Accounts.

4.10 Preliminary Plan

4.101 General

A Preliminary Plan of a subdivision may be submitted by the subdivider to the Planning Board, the Board of Health and the Conservation Commission for discussion and approval, modification or disapproval by each board. The submission of such a Preliminary Plan will enable the subdivider, the Planning Board, the Board of Health, the Conservation Commission, other municipal agencies and owners of property abutting the subdivision to discuss and clarify the problems of subdivision before a Definitive Plan is prepared. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that Preliminary Plan be filed in each case. A properly executed application Form B (see Appendix) shall be filed with the Preliminary Plan submitted to the Planning Board.

The applicant shall file by delivery or registered mail a notice with the Town Clerk stating the date of submission for such approval of a Preliminary Plan and accompanied by a copy of the completed application, (Form B).

4.102 Contents

The Preliminary Plan shall be drawn on **mylar** ~~tracing paper with pencil~~ at a suitable scale and two prints shall be filed at the office of the Planning Board and one print at the office of the Board of Health. Said plan shall be identified as a Preliminary Plan and shall show the following:

(a) the subdivision name, boundaries, north point, date, scale, legend and title "Preliminary Plan";

(b) the names of the record owner and the applicant and the name of the designer, engineer or surveyor;

(c) the names of all abutters, as determined from the most recent local tax list;

(d) the existing and proposed lines of streets, ways, easements and any public areas within the subdivision in a general manner;

(e) the proposed system of drainage, including adjacent existing natural waterways, in a general manner;

(f) the approximate boundary lines of proposed lots, with approximate areas and dimensions;

(g) the names, approximate location and widths of adjacent streets;

(h) and the topography of the land in a general manner.

~~proposed names of roads or ways as well as all information described under the definition of the Preliminary Plan so as to form a clear basis for discussion of its problems and for preparation of the Definitive Plan.~~ During discussion of the Preliminary Plan the complete information required for the Definitive Plan (Section 4.202 Contents) and the financial arrangements (Section 4.206 Performance Guarantee) will be developed.

4.103 Approval

The Planning Board may give such Preliminary Plan its approval, with or without modification, **within 45 days of submission**. Such approval does not constitute approval of a subdivision.

4.20 Definitive Plan

4.201 General

Any person who submits a Definitive Plan of a subdivision to the Planning Board for approval shall file with the Board the following:

a. An original drawing of the Definitive Plan and three contact prints thereof, dark line on white background. The original drawing will be returned after approval or disapproval.

b. A properly executed application Form C (see Appendix).

c. Application fee of \$25.00 plus \$10.00 per lot, payable to the Town of Florida, to cover the cost of advertising and notices, and inspections by the Planning Board. (To be determined by Board)

The applicant shall file by delivery or certified mail a notice with the Town Clerk stating the date of submission for such approval and accompanied by a copy of the completed application (Form C).

4.202 Contents

The Definitive Plan shall be prepared by a professional civil engineer and land surveyor registered in Massachusetts and shall be clearly and legibly drawn. ~~with India ink on linen or tracing cloth.~~ If multiple sheets are used, they shall be accompanied by an index sheet showing the entire subdivision. The Definitive Plan shall contain the following information:

- a. Subdivision name, boundaries, north point, date and scale.
- b. Name and address of record owner, subdivider and engineer or surveyor
- c. Names of all abutters as they appear on the most recent tax list.
- d. Lines and widths of existing and proposed roads, ways, easements and public or common areas within the subdivision, and the approved names of proposed streets.
- e. Boundary lines, areas and dimensions of all proposed lots, designated numerically and in sequence.
- f. Sufficient data to determine the location, direction and length of every road and way line, lot line and boundary line, and to establish these lines on the ground.
- g. Location of all permanent monuments properly identified as to whether existing or proposed.
- h. Locations, names and present widths of roads bounding, approach or within reasonable proximity of the subdivision.
- i. Indication of the purpose of easements, and/or restrictions.
- j. Suitable space to record the action of the Planning Board, Board of Health and Town Clerk
- k. ~~Existing and proposed topography at a suitable contour interval.~~

k. Existing and proposed topography at a suitable contour interval, generally five (5) feet, or two (2) feet in areas where construction is proposed or where grades exceed 15 percent.

l. General description of soil types.

~~l. Location of flood plains and wetland areas, if any.~~

m. Location of flood hazard areas, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and areas within 200 feet of a river as defined by the Rivers Protection Act (M. G. L.c. 13 1, 40, as amended by St.

1996, c. 258 , 17-20). Any plan of a proposed subdivision in a Flood Plain District, as delineated in the Town's zoning bylaw, greater than 50 lots or 5 acres, whichever is lesser, shall provide base flood elevation data.

~~m.~~ n. Overall plan for drainage of surface water, including plans and specifications for the control of erosion and sedimentation both of temporary and permanent nature including compliance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Stormwater Management Policy. Drainage shall be analyzed utilizing either the TR-20 or TR-55 method, or a method as determined by the board.

~~o.~~ n. Directly above or below the layout plan of each road, a profile showing existing and proposed grades along the centerline and sidelines of that road, together with figures of elevation at the top and bottom of all even grades and at 25-foot intervals along all vertical curves. Intersecting roads shall be clearly indicated on the profile. ~~The horizontal scale of the profiles shall be 40 feet to one inch, and the vertical scale shall be four feet to one inch. Only one road plan and profile shall be drawn on a sheet except by permission of the Planning Board.~~ The horizontal scale of the profiles shall be 40 feet to one (1) inch and the vertical scale should be four (4) feet to one (1) inch. Only one (1) street plan profile shall be drawn on a sheet except by permission of the Planning Board.

p. The location of private wells and public water supplies and surface water supplies within four hundred (400) feet of property boundaries.

q. Soil and percolation tests demonstrating the suitability of a specific location(s) on each lot for sub-surface sewage disposal in compliance with the State Sanitary Code.

r. Test well results or other data suitable to demonstrate the presence of an adequate water supply.

s. ~~o.~~ Location and species of trees intended for preservation within the road rights of way.

t. Any other information pertaining to the natural characteristics of the site that may be needed in the opinion of the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, or the Board of Health for determination of the suitability of the land for proposed purposes shall be furnished at the developer's expense.

u. Evidence of the ability of Town government to provide necessary services, including, but not limited to, fire and police protection. Such evidence may be in the form of review letters from appropriate Town department heads.

p. Any other information pertaining to the natural characteristics of the site that may be needed in the opinion of the Planning Board or the Board of Health for determination of the suitability of the land for proposed purposes shall be furnished at the developer's expense.

4.203 Impact Statement

Any land subdivision plan consisting of ten (10) or more lots must be accompanied by an impact statement which details the probable effects of the proposed subdivision on the following aspects of concern to the Town.

- a. Increases in vehicular traffic on adjacent public ways.
- b. Changes in surface drainage in surrounding area.
- c. Land erosion or loss of tree cover.
- d. Disturbance to other aspects of the natural ecology.
- e. Demands on public services and utilities.

4.204 Plan Approval by Board of Health

- a. At the time of filing of the Definitive Plan, the subdivider shall also file with the Board of Health two contact prints of the Definitive Plan. The Board of Health shall report to the Planning Board in writing approval or disapproval of said plan, and in the event of disapproval shall make specific findings as to which, if any, of the lots shown on such plan cannot be used for building sites without injury to the public health, and include such specific findings and the reasons therefor in such report, and where possible, shall make recommendations for the adjustment thereof. If a municipal sewerage system will serve the proposed subdivision, then failure of the Board of Health to make such a report within forty-five days after the plan is filed with their office shall be deemed approval by such board. A copy of the report, if any, shall be sent by such board to the applicant.
- b. Every lot not serviced by a municipal water supply and sewage disposal systems shall be provided with water supply and sewage disposal installations in compliance with the provisions of the State Sanitary Code subject to the approval of the Board of Health.
- c. The Board of Health may approve the plan on condition that prior to the issuance of a building permit for a dwelling on any lot, soil and percolation tests be made in accordance with their specifications by a qualified technician as to suitability of a specific location for subsurface sewage disposal installation in compliance with the State Sanitary Code.
- d. Based on the recommendation of the State Department of Public Health or the Town's Board of Health, where due to restrictive water, soil, topographic, geologic, or other natural conditions, the proposed development is of a density which exceeds the sustaining capacity of the proposed lots in terms individual sewage disposal systems and wells on each lot, the Planning Board may require that the developer revise his plan to either provide for:
 - (1) A consolidated water supply system, or
 - (2) A consolidated sewage disposal system, or
 - (3) An increase in lot size so that individual wells and sewage disposal systems may have adequate areas in which to properly function on the same lot.
- e. The Board of Health may require as a condition of the subdivision approval that a performance bond or deposit of money or negotiable securities be furnished by the subdivider to guarantee the construction of surface drainage improvements recommended by the Board and that all required

improvements shall be made without causing any condition of public nuisance through dust, or surface drainage, or any act of negligence by the subdivider or his agent during the period of construction. Such performance guarantee may be released only after completion of the work to the satisfaction of the Board of Health. In viewing possible drainage problems the Board is not limited to lots as shown on the subdivision plan, but may in appropriate cases consider areas outside the subdivision.

f. Land subject to flooding or land deemed by the Board of Health to be uninhabitable shall not be approved by the Planning Board for residential occupancy, nor for such other uses as may increase danger to health, life or property, or aggravate the flood hazard. Such land within the subdivision shall be set aside for such uses as shall not be endangered by periodic or occasional inundation of improved in a manner satisfactory to the Planning Board and the Board of Health to remedy said hazardous condition.

4.205 Public Hearing

a. Before approval of the Definitive Plan is given, a public hearing shall be held by the Planning Board. Notice of such hearing shall be given by the Planning Board at least 14 days prior thereto by advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation in the town once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication being not less than 14 days before the day of such hearing, or if there is no such newspaper in the town, then by posting such notice in a conspicuous place in the Town Hall for a period of not less than 14 days before the day of such hearing and by mailing a copy of such advertisement to the applicant and to all owners of land abutting upon the land included in such plan appearing on the most recent tax list.

b. The applicant and his engineer and surveyor shall be present at the public hearing.

c. A hearing by the Conservation Commission may be required under the provision of the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Section 40 of the General Laws.

4.206 Performance Guarantee

Before endorsement of the Planning Board's approval of a Definitive Plan of a subdivision, the subdivider shall agree to complete the required improvements specified in Section 6 for any lots in a subdivision.

Approval of the plan by the Planning Board may be made subject to condition that such approval shall automatically rescind after a period of time set by the Planning Board unless all required improvements as specified in these regulations and in the recommendations of the Board of Health have been completed within that period of time.

The construction and installation of required improvements shall be secured by one, or in part by one and in part by the other, of the following methods, which may from time to time be varied by the applicant:

a. Approval with bonds or surety

The subdivider shall either file a performance bond or a deposit of money or negotiable securities in an amount determined by the Board to be sufficient to cover the cost of all or any part of the improvements specified in Section 6 not covered by a covenant under "b" hereof.

Such bond or security, if filed and deposited, shall be approved as to form and manner of execution by the Town Counsel, and shall be contingent on the completion of such improvements within the period of time specified by the Planning Board. If the required improvements are not completed within the set period of time the Planning Board may require an estimate of the cost of the remaining work, increase the amount of performance bond, and establish a new date for the completion of said Improvements. Failure of the developer to complete the improvements within the set period of time or any extension thereof, shall not relieve the developer from his obligation to pay for increased costs for completing the improvements in excess of his performance bond.

b. Approval with covenant

The subdivider shall file a covenant, executed and duly recorded by the owner of record, running with the land, whereby such ways, services and improvements as specified in Section not covered by bond or deposit under "a" hereof shall be provided to serve any lot before such lot may be built upon or conveyed, other than by mortgage deed.

4.207 Reduction of Bond or Surety

The penal sum of any such bond, or the amount of any deposit held under clause "a" above, may, from time to time, be reduced by the Planning Board and the obligations of the parties thereto released by the Board in whole or in part. If release is by reason of covenant, a new plan of the portion to be subject to the covenant may be required.

4.208 Release of Performance Guarantee

a. Upon the completion of improvements required under Section 6, security for the performance of which was given by bond, deposit or covenant, or upon the performance of any covenant with respect to any lot, the subdivider may orally request and agree upon terms of release with the Planning Board, or he shall send by certified mail to the Town Clerk a written statement in duplicate that the said construction or installation in connection with which such bond, deposit or covenant has been given has been completed in accordance to the requirements contained under Section 6, such statement to contain the address of the applicant, and the Town Clerk shall forthwith furnish a copy of said statement to the Planning Board. If the Planning Board determines that said construction or installation has not been completed, it shall specify in a notice sent by certified mail to the applicant and to the Town Clerk, the details wherein said construction and installation fails to comply with the requirements under Section 6. Upon failure of the Planning Board to act within 45 days after receipt by the Town Clerk of the applicant's said statement, all obligations under the bond shall cease and terminate by operation of law, any deposit shall be returned and any such covenant shall become void. In the event that said 45-day period expires without such specification, or without the release and return of the bond or return of the deposit or release of the covenant as aforesaid, the Town Clerk shall issue a certificate to such effect, duly acknowledged, which may be recorded.

b. Before the final release by the Planning Board of the town's interest in a performance bond, deposit or covenant, the applicant shall file with the Board a certificate (Form F) by a registered Massachusetts

professional civil engineer and land surveyor declaring that streets, storm drains and all other required construction and improvements on the ground have been properly completed in accordance with the approved plan and subdivision regulations of the Planning Board, and with the recommendations by the Board of Health.

4.209 Certificate of Approval

a. The action of the Planning Board in respect to such plan shall be by vote, copies of which shall be certified and filed with the Town Clerk and sent by delivery or mail to the applicant. If the Planning Board modifies or disapproves such plan, it shall state in its vote the reasons for its action. Final approval, if granted, shall be endorsed on the original drawing of the Definitive plan by the signatures of a majority of the Planning Board but not until the statutory 20-day appeal period has elapsed following the filing of the certificate of the action of the Planning Board with the Town Clerk, provided that the Town Clerk has not received notice of appeal to the Superior Court, and provided further that other conditions of approval, if a part of the Board's action, are transmitted or corrected to the satisfaction of the Board.

b. Approval of the Definitive Plan does not constitute the laying out or acceptance by the Town of streets within a subdivision, nor does it indicate in any way compliance with the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act, Chapter 131, Section 40 of the General Laws.

4.210 Submission of Documents

Easements, and bond and/or covenant, shall be submitted within 20 days from the date of approval of the Definitive Plan to the Planning Board, which then shall submit the documents to the Town Counsel for approval as to form and legality.

4.211 Filing of Plans in Registry of Deeds or Land Court

Approval of all subdivisions is subject to the condition that, unless an appeal has been taken from such approval as provided by statute, the subdivider will record the subdivision plan in the Berkshire Registry of Deeds, or the Land Court, within six months from the date of its approval, and furnish a copy of the recorded plan to the Planning Board. If the applicant delays recording of such plan past the required six-month period, such plan shall not be accepted for recording by the Registry of Deeds or Land Court unless and until it has endorsed thereon, or recorded therewith and referred to thereon, a certificate of the Planning Board, or the Town Clerk, dated within 30 days of such recording, that the approval has not been modified, amended, or rescinded, nor the plan changed. Such certificate shall, upon application, be made by the Board or the Town Clerk unless the records of the Board or the Town Clerk receiving the application show that there has been such modification, amendment, rescission or change.

5.0 DESIGN STANDARDS

5.101 Location and Alignment

a. All trees in the subdivision shall be designed so that, in the opinion of the Planning Board, they will provide safe vehicular travel. Due consideration shall also be given by the subdivider to the

attractiveness of the street layout in order to obtain the maximum livability and amenity of the subdivision. Curvilinear street design will be encouraged.

- b. The proposed street shall conform, so far as practicable, to the Master or study plan as adopted in whole or in part by the Planning Board.
- c. Provision satisfactory to the Planning Board shall be made for the proper projection of streets or for access to adjoining property which is not yet subdivided, if deemed necessary by the Board.
- d. Reserve strips prohibiting access to street or adjoining property shall not be permitted, except where, in the opinion of the Planning Board, strips shall be in the public interest.
- e. Street jogs with centerline offsets of less than 125 feet should be avoided.
- f. The minimum centerline radii of curved street shall be 100 feet. Greater radii may be required for principal streets.
- g. Streets shall be laid out so as to intersect as nearly as possible at right angles. No road shall intersect any other road at less than 60 degrees.
- h. Property lines at street intersections shall be rounded or cut back to provide for a curb radius of not less than 20 feet.
- i. Cross (four-cornered) street intersections shall be avoided where possible, with the exception of arterial street crossings.
- j. All ways shown on a preliminary plan shall be named in pencil and shall have names rather than numbers or letters (such as First Street or Avenue A). Names shall be substantially different from names of existing ways in Town or nearby communities.

5.102 Width

The minimum width of a street right-of-way shall be as follows: Minor street: 40 feet; Collector street: 50 feet; Major street: 60 feet. Greater width may be required by the Planning Board when deemed necessary due to anticipated vehicular traffic or other considerations.

5.103 Grade

Grades of street shall not be less than 0.5%. Grades shall not be more than 5.0% for major streets nor more than 10.0% for minor or collector streets. The grade of a street within 50 feet of a street intersection shall not exceed 1.0% to provide a level area for traffic safety. (To be determined by Board)

5.104 Dead-end Streets

- a. Dead-end streets shall not be longer than 500 feet, unless, in the opinion of the Planning Board, a greater length is necessitated by topography or other local conditions.

b. Dead-end streets shall be provided at the closed end with a turn-around having an outside roadway diameter of at least 100 feet, and a property line diameter of at least 115 feet.

c. At the end of a dead-end street the Board may require the reservation of an easement twenty (20) feet wide to provide for the continuation of pedestrian traffic and/or utilities.

5.20 Easements

5.201 Easements for utilities across lots or centered on rear or side lot lines shall be provided where necessary and shall be at least 12 feet wide.

5.202 Where a subdivision is traversed by a water course, drainage way, channel or stream, the Planning Board may require that there be provided a storm-water easement or drainage right-of-way of adequate width to conform substantially to the lines of such water course, drainage way, channel or stream, and to provide for construction or other necessary purposes.

5.30 Open Spaces

Before approval of a plan the Planning Board may also in proper cases require the plan to show a park or parks suitably located for playground or recreation purposes or for providing light and air. The park or parks shall not be unreasonable in area in relation to the land being subdivided and to the prospective uses of such land. The Planning Board may by appropriate endorsement on the plan require that no building be erected upon such park or parks without its approval for a period of three years.

5.40 Protection of Natural Features

Due regard shall be shown for all natural features, such as large trees, stone walls or fences, water courses, scenic points, historic spots and similar community assets which, if preserved, will add attractiveness and value to the subdivision. The developer shall make every attempt to adapt his subdivision to the site with a minimum of cutting and filling operations.

6.0 REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS FOR ALL APPROVED SUBDIVISION

6.10 Streets and Rights-of-Way

6.101 The entire area of each street right-of-way shall be cleared of all stumps, brush, roots, boulders, like material, and all trees not intended for preservation. No trees may be preserved within eight feet of the edge of the traveled way.

6.102 The full length and width of the traveled way shall be excavated or filled, as necessary, to a depth of at least 12 inches below the finished surface as shown on the profile. However, if the soil is soft and spongy, or contains undesirable material such as clay, sandpockets, peat or any other material detrimental to the subgrade, such material shall be removed and replaced with suitable well-compacted material.

6.103 All parts of the traveled way shall be brought to a finished grade as shown on the profile of the Definitive Plan with at least the top 12 inches consisting of well-compacted gravel to a width of at least 24 feet, to be located central within the street right-of-way. At each side there shall be a shoulder three feet wide, also consisting of well-compacted binding gravel at least 12 inches deep. The gravel shall be spread and rolled in two layers of about 6 inches each. All stones larger than 4 inches shall be removed before layers are rolled. Rolling shall be done with a self-propelled roller weighing not less than 8 tons and shall continue until a firm, even surface, true to line and grade, is obtained. **(To be determined by Board and Public Works Super).**

6.104 Paving

a. Where, in the opinion of the Planning Board, the anticipated volume of traffic or grades of the finished traveled way or other conditions require it, streets shall be paved.

b. For paved streets a bituminous-penetration-type surface shall be applied as follows: Over compacted gravel base not less than 12 inches deep, spread a layer of three-eighths inch crushed stone at the rate of 20 pounds per square yard. Roll with a 5- to 8-ton roller. Over this surface apply MC3 emulsified asphalt at the rate of 0.33 gallons per square yard. Apply emulsified asphalt again at the rate of 0.33 gallons per square yard. Cover this with three-eighths inch stone and roll again. Apply emulsified asphalt again at the rate of 0.33 gallons per square yard. Dress off top at completion of construction work with three-eighths inch stone chips applied at the rate of 15 pounds per square yard. Compact surface with a 5- to 8-ton roller, leaving finished pavement free from holes, rolls or other unsightly imperfections. Grades must be run true and even with ail instrument **(To be determined by Board and Public Works Super– cannot be more stringent than town road standards).**

c. The subdivider shall repair any settlement or imperfections in this work during, a period of one year from the date of final installation of pavement.

6.11 Surface Drainage

6.111 Adequate disposal of surface water shall be provided. Catch basins and culverts shall be built in conformity with specifications of the Selectmen on both sides of the roadway on continuous grades at intervals of not more than 400 feet, at low points and sags in the roadway, and near the corners of the roadway at intersecting streets.

6.112 The subdivider may be required by the Planning Board to carry away by pipe or open ditch any spring or surface water that may exist either previous to, or as a result of the subdivision. Such drainage facilities shall be located in the street right-of-way where feasible, or in perpetual unobstructed easements of appropriate width.

6.113 A culvert or other drainage facility shall, in each case be large enough to accommodate potential runoff from its entire upstream drainage area, whether inside or outside the subdivision. The Selectmen or the Highway Superintendent shall approve the design and size of facility based on anticipated runoff from a "ten year" storm under conditions of total potential development permitted by the Zoning Bylaw in the watershed.

6.114 The subdivider's engineer shall also study the effect of each subdivision on the existing downstream drainage facilities outside the area of the subdivision; this study shall be reviewed by the Selectmen or the Highway Superintendent. Where it is anticipated that the additional runoff incident to the development of the subdivision will overload any existing downstream drainage facility, the Planning Board shall not approve the subdivision until provision has been made for the improvement of said condition.

6.12 Utility Wires

6.121 All utility wiring as well as transformers and other distribution and control devices shall be placed underground unless, in the opinion of the Planning Board, estimates made by utility companies indicate that an unreasonable cost would be imposed on the subdivider.

6.122 Poles and any associated structures used for police and fire boxes, and for street lighting, and other similar municipal equipment, shall be installed where deemed necessary by the Planning Board, and shall be of a design approved by the Planning Board.

6.123 Utility wires or cables, other than those going across streets and those leading directly to individual consumer installations, shall be buried within the street right-of-way in a strip 4 1/2 feet wide running parallel to the edge of the right-of-way unless soil or terrain require a different location. No wires or cables may be installed under the traveled portion of the right-of-way except where crossing a street and there ducts must be used.

6.124 Copies of all plans showing the location of all buried wires or cables are to be filed by the subdivider before any paving of streets started, one copy with the Planning Board, one with the Town Clerk, and one with the Selectmen.

6.125 If underground installation is found by the Planning Board to be unreasonably costly to the developer, all overhead utility wires and related equipment shall be centered as much as possible on rear or side lot lines, unless this provision is waived by the Board. Easements shall be provided as outlined in Section 5.20.

6.13 Monuments

6.131 Permanent monuments shall be installed at all street intersections, at all points of change in the direction or curvature of streets and at other points where, in the opinion of the Planning Board, permanent monuments may be necessary.

6.132 The permanent monuments shall be of 3,000 p.s.i. reinforced concrete or granite, posts measuring 5' x 6" x 6" and shall have a suitable reference marker on the top.

6.133 No permanent monuments shall be installed until all construction that would destroy or disturb them is completed. The tops of monuments shall be set to the established grades, and backfill material shall be carefully placed around each monument and thoroughly tamped.

6.14 Street-Name Signs

Posts with signs carrying the names of street or other ways shall be installed at the beginning of all new ways and at the intersection of all ways whether existing or proposed within a subdivision. There shall be at least one such sign and sign post at each intersection. Said signs and sign posts shall follow the specifications of the Selectmen.

6.15 Sidewalks and Curbing

The Planning Board may require construction of curbing and sidewalks on one or both sides of the streets to be built if deemed necessary in accordance with the Selectmen's specifications.

6.16 Work Standards

Unless otherwise specified, all the work and the materials used in the work to be done under these regulations shall conform to the requirements of "The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Works, Standard Specifications for Highways, Bridges and Waterways" as most recently amended.

6.17 Inspection

The Planning Board shall be notified by the subdivider prior to commencement of each of the major phases of construction, and as each phase is completed, it shall be approved by the Planning Board prior to starting work in the succeeding phase. The Planning Board may designate the Town Highway Superintendent as the inspector for the construction of streets and the installation of municipal services and utilities in subdivisions.

6.18 Shade Trees

Unless at least two shade trees per lot, of species recommended by the Conservation Commission and having a diameter of at least one inch at a point one foot above the finished grade, exist and can be preserved either within the road right-of-way or within 20 feet of the edge of the right-of-way, the subdivider shall procure and plant at least two nursery-grown shade trees per lot within 20 feet of the edge of the right-of-way, said trees to be species recommended by the Conservation Commission and measuring at least one inch in diameter at a point approximately four feet above the root collar.

6.19 Topsoil

Topsoil shall be placed to a depth of 4" and thoroughly compacted on side slopes within the road right-of-way and over land exposed during grading operations. Grading shall be done carefully to avoid unnecessary damage to existing vegetation. Except when necessary to conform to road, driveway and drainage standards or to eliminate blind intersection or poor sight lines at curves, major earth movements shall be avoided. Drainage ditches wherever possible shall be graded to resemble natural streams.

Topsoil shall not be removed from the site except where so authorized by the Planning Board.

6.20 Seeding

To prevent erosion, shoulders and graded slopes shall be seeded on completion or planted with shrubs or similar approved landscape treatment recommended by the Conservation Commission. Seed and planting specifications shall be in accordance with Section H-3 of the Standard Specifications for Highways and Bridges of the Commonwealth. All new planting within the street right-of-way shall be with good nursery stock and will be subject to inspection after one year. Trees, shrubs or grass found by the Board to be dead or in an unsatisfactory condition within one year from the time of planting may be required to be replaced by the developer.

6.21 Side Slopes

The slope of the area from right-of-way line to the finished grade of abutting lots shall not be greater than at the rate of two feet horizontal to one foot vertical.

Whenever the approved street grade differs substantially from the grade of adjacent land or where otherwise necessary for public safety, the applicant shall be required to erect retaining walls or guard rails, of the type and size approved by the Planning Board.

6.22 Clean-Up

The entire area of the subdivision must be cleaned up so as to leave a neat and orderly appearance, free from debris and other objectionable materials. The subdivider shall be responsible for providing thoroughly clean and unsilted storm-drain lines within the subdivision.

7.0 ADMINISTRATION

7.10 Variation:

Strict compliance with the requirements of these Rules and Regulations may be waived when, in the judgement of the Planning Board, such action is in the public interest and not inconsistent with the Subdivision Control Law.

7.20 Reference:

For Matters not covered by these Rules and Regulations, reference is made to Sections 81-K to 81-GG, inclusive, Chapter 41 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, and to the By-Laws of the Town.

7.30 One Dwelling Per Lot

Not more than one building designed or available for use for dwelling purposes shall be erected or placed or converted to use as such on any lot in a subdivision or elsewhere in the Town, without the consent of the Board, and that such consent may be conditional upon the providing of adequate ways furnishing access to each site for such building, in the same manner as otherwise required for lots within a subdivision.

FORM A

**APPLICATION FOR A DETERMINATION OF PLANNING BOARD JURISDICTION
AND FOR ENDORSEMENT THAT PLANNING BOARD APPROVAL UNDER
SUBDIVISION CONTROL LAW IS NOT REQUIRED.**

File one completed form with the Planning Board and one copy with the Town Clerk.

TO THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FLORIDA

The undersigned, believing that the accompanying plan of his property does not constitute a subdivision within the meaning of the Subdivision Control Law, herewith submits said plan for a determination and endorsement that Planning Board approval under the Subdivision Control Law is not required.

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

Plan Prepared by _____
(Registered Engineer or Land Surveyor)

Entitled _____

Dated _____

Deed of Property Recorded in _____

Book _____ Page _____

Location and Description of Property _____

Applicant believes that Planning Board's approval is not required for the following reasons:

1. The division of land shown on the accompanying plan is not a Subdivision because every lot shown thereon has the frontage, area and depth required by the Zoning Bylaw of the Town and is on a public way, namely, _____ or a private way, namely, _____ which was approved under the subdivision control law as a subdivision entitled _____ or,

2. The land shown on the accompanying plan is not a [subdivision](#) for the following reason (s):

Signature of Applicant

Name

Date

Address

Accepted this _____ day of _____, 20____, as duly submitted under the Rules and Regulations of the Planning Board.

PLANNING BOARD by _____

Plan endorsed by _____ for the Planning Board under date of _____.

FORM B

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF PRELIMINARY PLAN

File one completed form with the Planning Board and one copy with the Town Clerk

(Where alternative paragraphs are provided, applicant is to select and complete the paragraph pertinent to his case.)

TO THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FLORIDA

1. The undersigned applicant, being the owner of all land included within a proposed subdivision shown on the accompanying plan, entitled _____, and drawn by _____ and dated _____, 20____, submits such plan as a Preliminary Plan of the proposed subdivision and made application to the Board for approval thereof.
2. The land within the proposed subdivision is subject to the following easements and restrictions:
3. The owner's title to the land is derived under deed from _____, dated _____, 20 _____, and recorded in Berkshire District Registry of Deeds, Book _ -- _____, Page _____; or Land Court Certificate of Title No. registered in Berkshire Land Registry District Book _____, Page _____;

Applicant's Signature: _____

Applicant's Address: _____

Accepted this _____ day of _____, 20 _____, as duly submitted under the Rules and Regulations of the Planning Board.

FLORIDA PLANNING BOARD

By _____

FORM C

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF DEFINITIVE PLAN

File one completed form with the Planning Board and one copy with the Town Clerk.

(Where alternative paragraphs are provided, applicant is to select and complete the paragraph pertinent to his case.)

TO THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FLORIDA

1. The undersigned applicant, being the owner of all land included within a proposed subdivision shown on the accompanying plan, entitled _____ and dated _____, 20____, and prepared by _____ Massachusetts Registered (Engineer) (Surveyor), Registration No. _____ SUBMITS SUCH PLAN AS A Definitive Plan of the proposed subdivision and makes application to the Board for approval thereof.
2. The land within the proposed subdivision is subject to the following easements and restrictions:

3. There are appurtenant to the land within the proposed subdivision the following easements and restrictions over the land of others:

4. A preliminary Plan of the proposed subdivision was discussed by the Board on _____, 20____. The modifications recommended at this meeting have been incorporated in the accompanying plan.
5. The applicant agrees, if the definitive plan is approved, to construct and install all improvements within the proposed subdivision required by the Rules and Regulations of the Planning Board as in force on the date of this application, and as modified and supplemented by the work specifications and other requirements of the Public Works Department and recommendations of the Board of Health.
6. The applicant further agrees to complete all said required improvements within two years from the date of approval of the definitive plan by the Board, unless a different period of time is set as a condition for approval of the plan.
7. The applicant further agrees, if this application is approved, to file with the Board within twenty (20) days of such approval, a bond in form satisfactory to the Board and conditioned on the completion of all required improvements in the time an, manner prescribed, in a penal sum sufficient, in the opinion of the Board, to cover the cost of such work, and executed by

the applicant as principal and a surety company authorized to do business in the Commonwealth and satisfactory to the Board surety, or secured by the deposit with the Town Treasurer of money or negotiable securities, satisfactory to the Board, in an amount equal to the penal sum of the bond.

OR

(As an alternative to the above agreement) The applicant requests the Board to approve the definitive plan on condition that no lot in the subdivision shall be sold and no building shall be erected or placed on any lot until the required improvements specified are constructed and installed so as to serve the lots adequately.

8. The applicant further agrees, if this application is approved, to cause the definitive plan of the subdivision to be recorded in the Berkshire Registry of Deeds or in the Berkshire Land Registry District within six (6) months of such approval.
9. The owner's title to the land is derived under deed from _____, dated 19 ____, and recorded in Berkshire District Registry of Deeds, Book _____, Page _____, or under Land Court Certificate of Title No. _____, Registered in Berkshire Land Registry District, Book _____ Page _____.

Applicant Address

Accepted this _____ day of _____, 20____, as duly submitted under the rules and regulations of the Planning Board.

FLORIDA PLANNING BOARD

By _____

Fee collected in the amount of \$ _____

Received _____, 20____

By _____

FORM D
COVENANTOR

The undersigned _____ of _____ county, Massachusetts, hereinafter called the "Covenantor", having submitted to the Florida Planning Board, a definitive plan of a subdivision, entitled _____ dated _____ made by _____ does hereby covenant and agree with said Planning Board and the successors in office of said Board, pursuant to the General Laws, Chapter 41, Sec. 81U, as amended that:

1. The covenantor is the owner of record of the premises shown on said plan;
2. This covenant shall run with the land and be binding upon the executors, administrators, heirs, assigns of the covenantor, and their successors in title to the premises shown on said plan;
3. The construction of ways and the installation of municipal services shall be provided to serve any lot in accordance with the applicable Rules and Regulations of said Board before such lot may be built upon or conveyed, other than by mortgage deed; provided that a mortgagee who acquires title to the mortgaged premises by foreclosure or otherwise and any succeeding owner of the mortgaged premises or part thereof may sell any such lot, subject only to that portion of this Covenant which provides that no lot so sold shall be built upon until such ways and services have been provided to serve such lot;
4. Nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit a conveyance subject to this covenant by a single deed of the entire parcel of land shown on the subdivision plan or of all lots not previously released by the Planning Board without first providing such ways and services;
5. This covenant shall take effect upon the approval of said plan;
6. Reference to this covenant shall be entered upon said plan and this covenant shall be recorded when said plan is recorded.

The undersigned _____ of the covenantor hereby agree that such interest as I, we, may have in said premises shall be subject to the provisions of this covenant and insofar as is necessary release all rights of tenancy by the courtesy, dower, homestead and other interest therein.

EXECUTED as a sealed instrument this _____ day of _____ 20_____.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

_____ SS _____ 20_____

Then personally appeared _____ and acknowledged the
foregoing instrument to be _____ free act and deed, before me

Notary Public

My commission expires _____

FORM E

COVENANT RELEASE

Florida, Massachusetts _____ 20____

The undersigned, being a majority of the Planning Board of the Town of Florida _____, Massachusetts, hereby certify that the requirements for work on the ground called for by the Covenant dated _____, 20____, and recorded in _____ District Deeds, Book _____, Page _____, (or registered in _____ Land Registry District as Document No. _____, and noted on Certificate of Title NO. _____ in Registration Book _____, Page _____) have been completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Board as to the following enumerated lots shown on Plan entitled _____ recorded with said Deeds, Plan Book _____, Plan _____, (pr registered in said Land Registry District, Plan Book _____, Plan _____) and said lots are hereby released from the restrictions as to SRI and building specified thereon:

Lots designated on said Plan as follows:

Majority of the Planning Board of the Town of Florida

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

_____ SS. _____ 20____

Then personally appeared _____, one of the above named members of the Planning Board of the Town of Florida, Massachusetts and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be the free act and deed of said Planning Board, before me.

Notary Public

My commission expires _____

FORM F

CERTIFICATE OF PERFORMANCE

_____ 20_____

To the Planning Board of the Town of FLORIDA

I Hereby certify that the required improvements for the following described [subdivision](#) have been constructed and conform in all respects to the Rules and Regulations of the Planning Board and the recommendations of the Board of Health and the specifications of the Board of Selectmen.

[Subdivision](#) Names (or Plan Title) _____

Dated _____

Name of Subdivider _____

[Street](#) Name(s) _____

Stations _____ to _____

Civil Engineer Land Surveyor

Address Address

Registration Number & Seal Registration Number & Seal

Florida, Massachusetts



Open Space

Areas of Concern:

- Amount of Farmland in the town
- Recreational Facilities available to families

Vision for Future Open Space and Resource Protection:

Thoughtfully guide and manage growth to ensure Florida preserves its present combination of exceptional natural assets, traditional rural atmosphere, and small town character that makes it a desirable place to live and work.

Recommended Actions:

- Encouraging the preservation of the few farms in town through a low-cost, town-based initiative, as well as regional marketing efforts.
- Increasing or reestablishing opportunities for family-based recreation, especially for swimming fishing and traditional recreation.
- Increasing opportunities for youth-oriented recreation.
- Improving maintenance, safety and patrolling of public trails and including user groups.
- Prioritizing new economic opportunities to existing closed or abandoned businesses rather than new development.
- Exploring the development of wind power facilities on town-owned property to protect land and increase tax revenues.
- Revising local bylaws to help frame the type of development that the town would want.
- Promote a working landscape of Privately owned lands, to include but not limit to agriculture, forestry, recreation and other natural resource based industries.

Transportation

Areas of Concern:

- Need to develop an Official Map

Vision for Future Transportation:

Maintain and improve the safety and utility of Florida's transportation networks capital infrastructure by reasonable development and investment.

Recommended Actions:

- Complete specific recommended actions listed in the Official Map Report.
- Adopt Official Map to clarify ownership, location, and maintenance responsibilities of local public and private ways.



Economic Development

Areas of Concern:

- Commercial Revitalization
- Growth of existing businesses

Vision for Future Economic Development:

Maintain and improve Florida's economic infrastructure by supporting existing business and proactively identifying and cultivating appropriate commercial opportunities that are consistent with the character of the community.

Recommended Actions:

- Create an entity to oversee the process of Economic Development
- Offer financial assistance, infrastructure improvements, and temporary tax deferments to encourage expansion of local businesses.
- Identify potential sites for commercial revitalization
- Develop new enterprise in the fields of home-based business and wind power

Housing

Areas of Concern:

- Availability of affordable housing
- Out of date bylaws for the subdivision of lands

Vision for Future Housing:

Maintain and improve Florida's social and economic infrastructure by providing quality affordable housing opportunities

Recommended Actions:

- To encourage quality, affordable housing opportunities with consideration of housing for seniors and persons of low, moderate, and middle-incomes.
- To maintain municipal bylaws and implement new changes that facilitate residential development that is consistent with the town's needs and desires for appropriate growth and development.

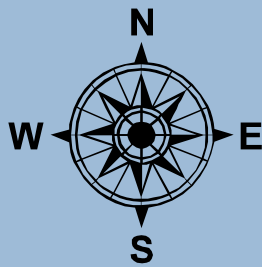
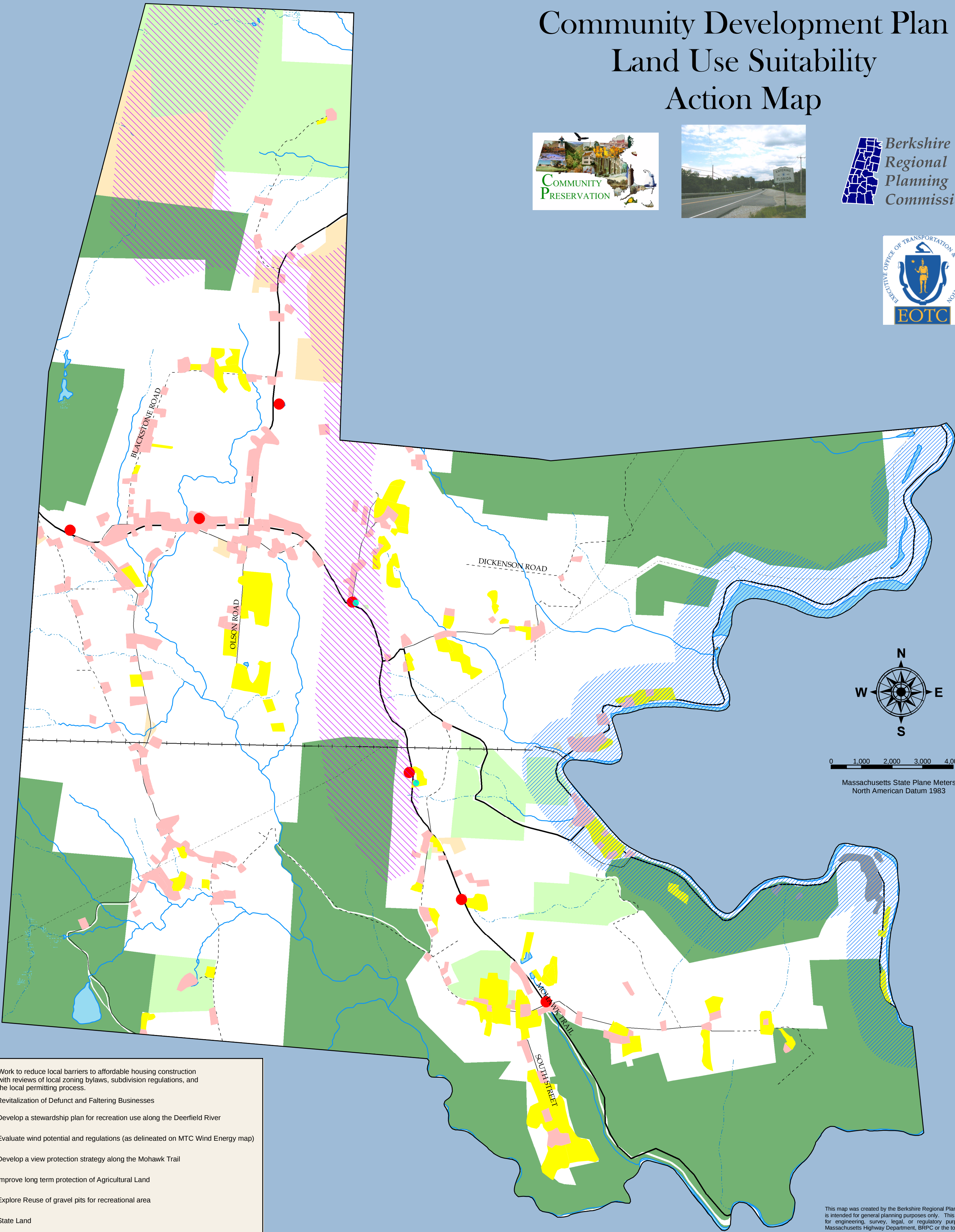


Town of Florida, Massachusetts

Community Development Plan

Land Use Suitability

Action Map



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983

- Work to reduce local barriers to affordable housing construction with reviews of local zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, and the local permitting process.
- Revitalization of Defunct and Faltering Businesses
- Develop a stewardship plan for recreation use along the Deerfield River
- Evaluate wind potential and regulations (as delineated on MTC Wind Energy map)
- Develop a view protection strategy along the Mohawk Trail
- Improve long term protection of Agricultural Land
- Explore Reuse of gravel pits for recreational area
- State Land
- Municipal Land
- Other Open Space

This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, Massachusetts Highway Department, BRPC or the town may have supplied portions of this data.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

Official Map

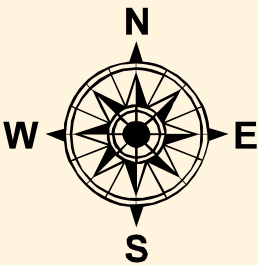
Town of Florida, Massachusetts

Administration	Street Name	Length (Miles)	Grid
State Accepted	Mohawk Trail	7.09	B6
State Forest	Adams Road	0.63	A6
State Forest	Busby Road	0.81	A6
State Forest	Zyk's Road	0.33	A6
Town Accepted	Blackstone Road	1.66	A3
Town Accepted	Bliss Road	1.28	B2
Town Accepted	Burdick Road	0.06	B6
Town Accepted	Central Shaft Road	3.85	A5
Town Accepted	Church Road	1.56	B6
Town Accepted	Dickenson Road	0.30	C4
Town Accepted	Gangemi Road	0.16	B7
Town Accepted	Greer Road	0.25	C5
Town Accepted	Monroe Road	2.73	B4
Town Accepted	Moore's Road	1.00	B4
Town Accepted	Moore's Road Extension	0.28	B4
Town Accepted	Napoleon Road	0.21	A4
Town Accepted	North County Road	1.16	B4
Town Accepted	Oleson Road	0.87	B4
Town Accepted	Peanut Road	0.12	C5
Town Accepted	Phelps Road	0.54	A4
Town Accepted	Poirot Road	0.26	A6
Town Accepted	River Road	7.87	C5
Town Accepted	Rowe Road	0.02	C6
Town Accepted	Savoy Road	1.21	B6
Town Accepted	South County Road	4.81	B6
Town Accepted	South Street	0.87	C7
Town Accepted	Stone Road	0.10	A5
Town Accepted	Strykers Road	1.71	A4
Town Accepted	Tilda Hill Road	2.20	B4
Town Accepted	Wheeler Road	0.35	C7
Town Accepted	Whitcomb Hill Road	2.71	B5
Town Accepted	Whitcomb Hill Road Extension	0.18	C6
Private	Krutiak Woodlot Road	0.19	B3
Private	Mount Anthony Road	0.26	B4
Private	Torrey Mountain Road	1.45	C7
Private	Tower Road	0.08	C7

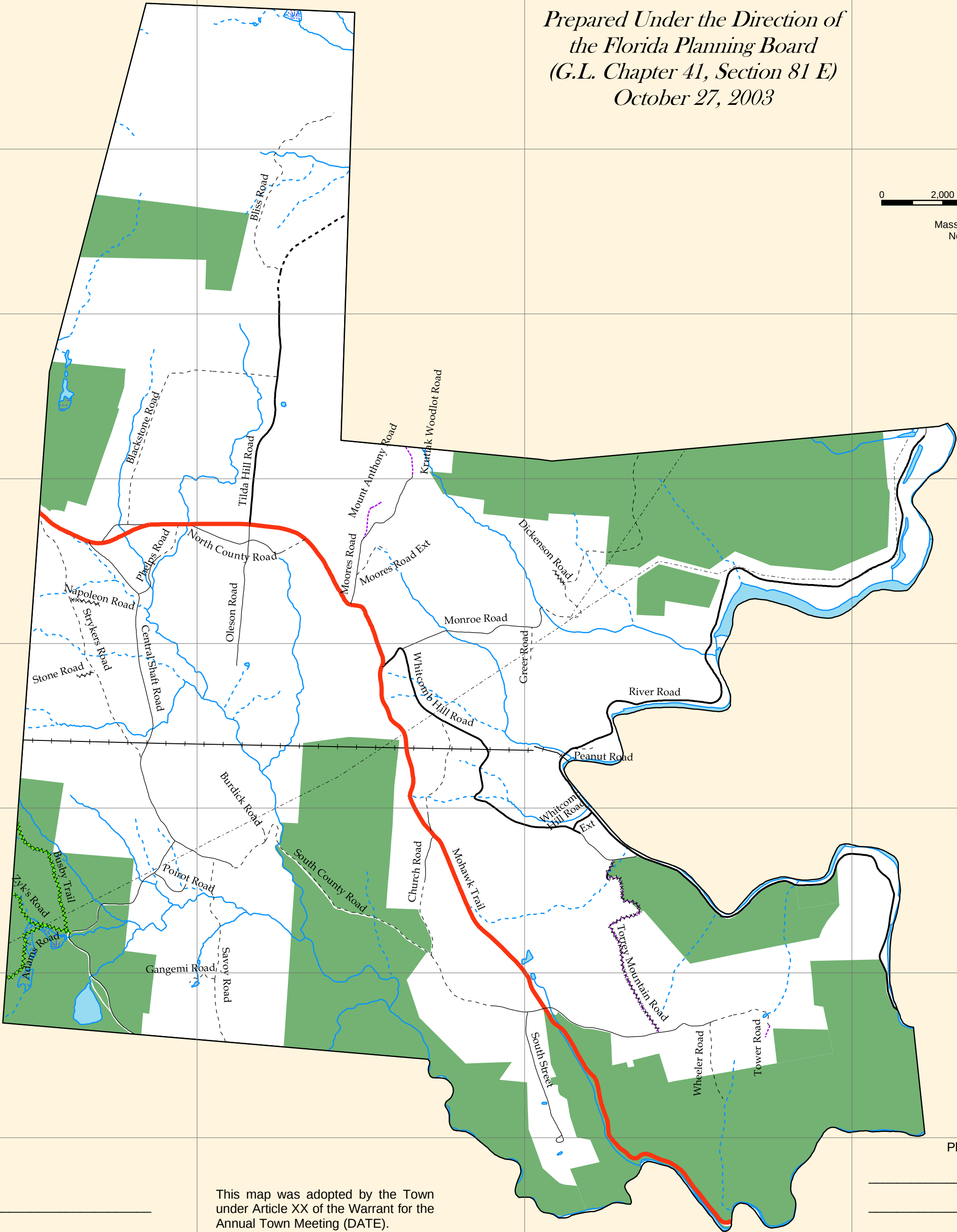
- State accepted, principal arterial, paved
- State Forest accepted, local road, unpaved
- Town accepted, minor collector, paved
- Town accepted, minor collector, unpaved
- Town accepted, local road, paved
- Town accepted, local road, unpaved
- Private road, unpaved
- Road not maintained
- Railroad
- Power Line
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Lake / Pond
- Wetland / Marsh
- State Forest



Prepared Under the Direction of
the Florida Planning Board
(G.L. Chapter 41, Section 81 E)
October 27, 2003



1:36,000
0 2,000 4,000 6,000 8,000 Feet
Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983



Public Hearing _____
Adopted _____
Approved _____

This map was adopted by the Town
under Article XX of the Warrant for the
Annual Town Meeting (DATE).
Town Clerk: _____
Date: _____

Planning Board

Chair