

Town of Pomfret

**An Update of the Goals and Objectives
of the
PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

2002

June 18, 2002

G:\Documents and Settings\CBradley\Local Settings\Temp\bat\92A8374B.wpd

POMFRET PLANNING COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

WALTER HINCHMAN, CHAIRMAN

MICHAEL WOLCHESKY

MAUREEN NICHOLSON

ROBERT BLACKMER

PHILLIP ALLEGRETTI

ALTERNATES:

RHONDA BROOKS

CHARLES A. BOSTER

This PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT was adopted _____ and effective, in accordance with section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes. This Plan updates the Plans adopted 1976 and 1990.

It is hereby resolved that:

WHEREAS, The Pomfret Planning Commission (“The Commission”) has undertaken to revise and update the existing Plan of Conservation and Development and has submitted a draft document for review by the municipal boards and commissions, and by the general public and,

WHEREAS, The Commission has held a public hearing to solicit comments from the residents of Pomfret about the Plan, pursuant to Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes and,

WHEREAS, The Commission, by a vote of its members has adopted said Plan now,

THEREFORE be it resolved by the Pomfret Planning Commission that the Plan of Conservation and Development, Pomfret, Connecticut, dated _____, and effective _____ is hereby adopted pursuant to Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

Dated this _____.

By _____
Planning Commission Chairman
Town of Pomfret



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE	Page
Introduction/Purpose of the Plan of Conservation and Development	1
Scope of the Plan of Conservation and Development	6
The Demographics of the Population of Pomfret	9
Population Needs Policy 1	14
Population Needs Policy 2	16
Population Needs Policy 3	16
Natural Resource Inventory and Analysis	18
Inventory and Analysis Policy 1	18
Inventory and Analysis Policy 2	21
Inventory and Analysis Policy 3	21
Inventory and Analysis Conclusions	22
Land Use Policies and Objectives	24
Land Use Policy 1	24
Land Use Policy 2	25
Land Use Policy 3	26
Land Use Policy 4	27
Land Use Policy 5	28
Land Use Policy 6	28
Town Property Development Review	29
Needs Assessment	29
Renovation and Capital Plan	30
The Pomfret Maps of Conservation and Development	31
Implementation	32



A. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, requires municipal planning commissions to prepare, adopt, and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality. A plan must:

- 1) Contain a statement of policies, goals, and standards for the physical and economic development of the community.
- 2) Take into account the state plan of conservation and development and note any inconsistencies it may have with that plan.
- 3) Be designed to promote, with efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of the people of the municipality.
- 4) Make provision for the development of housing opportunities (including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity) for all residents of the municipality.
- 5) Promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing that meets the housing needs identified in the State Housing Plan prepared under C. G. S. Section 8-37 and the State Plan of Conservation and Development.
- 6) Be reviewed and, if required, amended at least once every ten years.

A plan may include recommendations of the Commission for the location of streets and bridges, public recreational facilities, the extent of municipal water supply, waste water disposal systems, solid waste disposal areas and other public utilities, and the general location of other municipal buildings and facilities. The statute governing planning commissions mandates the “Plan of Conservation and Development be a statement of policies, goals, and standards” for the development of the community.

In addition, a plan may:

- 7) State the recommendation of the commission for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, and other public ways for airports, parks, playgrounds, and public grounds for general location, relocation, and improvement of public buildings for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether public or privately owned, for water, sewage, light power, transit, and other purposes, and for the extent and location of public housing projects.
- 8) Include such other recommendations as the commission deems beneficial to the municipality.
- 9) Include all necessary and related maps, explanatory material, photographs, charts, or other pertinent data and information relative to the past, present, and future demographic trends of the municipality.
- 10) Include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan, including a schedule and proposed budget for public capital projects, a program for the enactment and enforcement of land use regulation controls, building, housing codes and safety regulations, and plans for implementation of affordable housing, open space acquisition, and the projection and development of “greenways.”
- 11) Include plans for the redevelopment and improvement of districts and neighborhoods that, in the Commission’s judgment, contain special problems or show a trend toward reduced real property values.

Communities have found that the underlying philosophy regarding the development and implementation of municipal plans of conservation and development has changed and evolved since the adoption of the initial state statute. Today there is a recognition of certain inadequacies of past planning efforts. Although many of the same elements, e.g. land use inventory and analysis, population demographics including density, trends, and forecasts, etc. are still developed and analyzed. One major difference today is in the end product that is produced.

The Plan, more importantly, is a plan for future conservation and development of the community as a whole. The Plan provides broad goals coupled with specific objectives that provide guidance for the future development of the community. It is a document which reflects the interests, concerns, and objectives of the community at large as interpreted by the commission preparing the plan. The Plan should contain the necessary flexibility to allow for changes in the uses of land within the context of adopted policies. The Plan is developed to provide a consistent direction for the use of other municipal boards and commissions having jurisdiction over specific aspects of the plan. The Plan should also provide for the required statutory documentation to be developed to allow for the community's participation in the Connecticut State Farmland Preservation Program.

In summary, a Plan of Conservation and Development is a broad "road map" providing direction and guidance for the future evolution of the community for which it is developed. The Plan is based upon the analysis of the best currently available data, coupled with the input of the community to the extent allowed under appropriate state statutes. The Plan will be a set of tools for better understanding, of and by the community, as to the basis from which policies and regulations, both present and future, are formulated. It is recognized, in consideration of the variable nature of the many factors influencing community growth, that any maps showing boundaries and limits of future land uses quickly become outdated. Therefore, a constant and continuing revision and updating process should be adopted and implemented. This plan is merely the latest update of the Pomfret Plan of Conservation and Development. For a comprehensive understanding of the direction in which Pomfret is headed, this document should be read in conjunction with the previously adopted and published plans and the recommendations in the Conservation Plan adopted June 2001 by the

Conservation Commission.

The maps that accompany this Plan of Conservation and Development are illustrations of current desirable land uses based on stated goals, objectives, policies, and growth trends currently being experienced in the community. Undoubtedly, things will change which may necessitate an update of this Plan.

In the final analysis, it is the policies presented in this Plan that will withstand the test of time.

It is accepted that, under state statutes, a Plan of Conservation and Development, as represented by this document, is not a legally binding document when adopted. It is advisory by state statute, a blueprint of recommended policies and regulations that become effective when implemented and adopted by those municipal boards and commissions that are empowered to do so by state statute. It must be clearly understood that a Plan of Conservation and Development does not convey additional regulatory powers that are traditionally reserved for the Town's land use boards and commissions. The Plan gives no additional power to a Planning Commission that it does not already possess under state statute.

A Plan of Conservation and Development is only as good in meeting its objectives as the underlying responsible commissions are in following through in their respective areas of responsibility and concerns. On a continuing basis the commission responsible for the preparation of the Plan should continually refine, and, if required, amend the plan as required to reflect the ever changing demographic pressures and ever changing needs and attitudes of the community.

Historically, a strong sentiment has always prevailed in Pomfret to maintain the rural character that is rooted in its agrarian history, to avoid costly policies and infrastructure that does not compliment a rural community environment. This sentiment continues to be the prevailing desire of the community. This conclusion is drawn from the series of "Study Circle" meetings sponsored by the Board of Selectmen which were organized by the Topsfield Foundation in 1995.

Today, as it moves into the new millennium, Pomfret is at a crossroads as to the way the town will be developed in the future. Since the 1970's the State of Connecticut has experienced a continuing decline in the traditional industrial employment base that has been the mainstay of the state's economy for the last 200 years. An example would be the departure of the textile based mills in the Quinebaug River Valley in the 50's and the defense industry in the 90's. Today the economy of the State of Connecticut is based upon a service economy where a large premium is placed on a highly educated work force. In many of the same ways as the state is changing, so is Pomfret changing. These same economic forces and trends bearing upon Pomfret will continue to make it harder for farming as a way of life to continue as it has in the past.

Consistent with the stated wishes of the community at large, as expressed through the Topsfield Study Circle meetings and the Conservation Commission survey, a strong central theme throughout this Plan is the development of policies and objectives formulated to assist in the preservation of farmland and the business of farming, as well as permanent protection of open space areas.

In addition to the preservation of farming activities, the Town of Pomfret must look forward and provide for the day when the current members of the local farming community retire and other uses are considered for the land they cultivate.

If properly planned for, Pomfret has the opportunity to benefit from other positive economic forces at work, such as the exponential growth in telecommunication employment opportunities. Over a very long historical period Pomfret has been inhabited by residents who have built and managed traditional home based businesses. Today's trends are only a continuation of this history, albeit with a high technology twist.

About forty years ago, Pomfret adopted its first Plan of Development. That plan, prepared by the planning commission with major assistance from the Northeast Regional Planning Agency staff, identified the town as an agricultural community and projected that it would retain its rural character in the future. A later Plan, recognized that Pomfret had remained a small, agricultural community, as previously forecast, but found that its small town character had indeed visibly changed. By 1980, the population of Pomfret had grown to more than 2,700 residents. After 1980, not unlike other towns in the Northeast Region, the community was growing at a steady rate. Between 1980 and 1990 Pomfret’s population grew by 11.78%. In this time period the number of new land subdivisions and subsequent building permits had been steadily increasing.

The 1990 Plan of Development projected the 2000 population based on the expected growth rate at that time. Pomfret’s current population is 3,798, based on the 2000 U.S. Census .

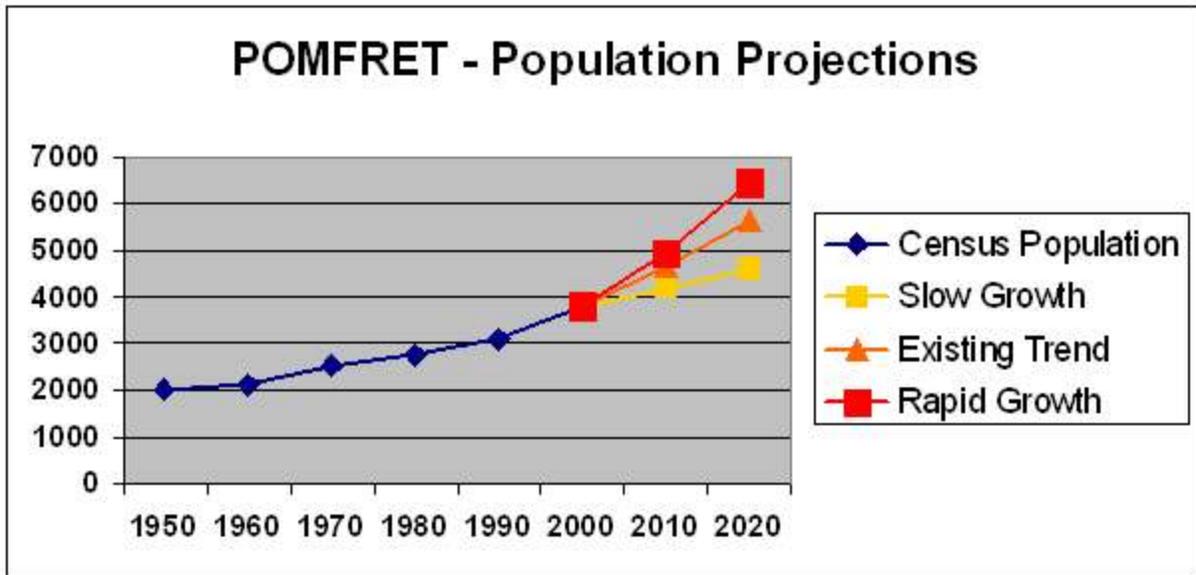
Table 2-1

POPULATION PROJECTIONS OF POMFRET’S GROWTH 2010 and 2020 (Base Year 2000 Population - 3,798)			
Year	Slow growth (10%)	Existing trend (22%)	Rapid growth (30%)
2010	4,177	4,632	4,936
2020	4,594	5,651	6,417

Recognizing the continuing pressures of growth, particularly of a residential nature, and acknowledging the statutory mandate to have a current community plan, the Pomfret Planning Commission has undertaken the preparation of a revision of its existing Plan of Conservation and Development. At the outset, the Commission established a goal to continue to maintain the existing natural, historical, and traditional character of Pomfret, consistent with the inevitable continuation of new residential growth and the promotion of orderly commercial growth.

It should be clearly noted that this plan is a basic land use reference guide. Refinement of the data contained herein and continual additions to the plan based on more correct data are essential to keep the planning policies and land use regulations of the town up to date.

For their study and analysis,



the Commission has concentrated on the following elements:

- 1) A population analysis utilizing data derived from the 2000 US Census and other institutions to determine the amount of growth that has occurred and can be expected to occur in the years to come so that decisions regarding municipal land use and expenditures can be made. Most comparisons are made between Pomfret and the planning region it belongs to, The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments, Ten Town Planning Region.
- 2) An inventory and analysis of natural resources prepared by the Pomfret Conservation Commission and developed to identify appropriate valuable natural resources for conservation and preservation.
- 3) An inventory and analysis of existing land use prepared by the Conservation

Commission, to be used as a base upon which to determine suitable locations for future building commensurate with the ability of the land to support its development in order to provide:

- a) the variety of housing choices required by state statute, and,
 - b) the orderly development of the type of service, commercial, professional, and occupational opportunity needed by the community and that would traditionally be used by the residents of the town, and,
 - c) the orderly development of the land required to support the municipal and educational services that are required to safely manage and operate the community.
- 4) Subsequent sections of the Plan summarize the data and are analyzed to provide the basis for the objectives, policies, and recommendations that were derived and are contained herein.

**THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE POPULATION OF POMFRET
ITS PAST, PRESENT - A BASE FOR FUTURE TRENDS**

An analysis of population trends is of vital importance to town officials and residents in making decisions about the future of their community. This summary describes past and current population trends of Pomfret, their changes, and how the trends compare to surrounding towns in northeastern Connecticut. It also forecasts estimates of the current and future population based on these trends.

Population projections are guidelines based on historical trends and assumptions about the future. The town must periodically review these trends and their assumptions and make revisions, as needed, to take into account the changes that actually are being experienced. The town’s small population base makes accurate projections extremely difficult, as a large new development can substantially alter the estimates.

Table 3-1

TOTAL POPULATION OF POMFRET				
Pomfret’s Population Growth History				
Year	Population	Change 1980-1990	Change 1990-2000	Change 1980-2000
1980	2775	11.78%	-	-
1990	3102	-	22.44%	-
2000	3798	-	-	36.86%

Source US Census

Table 3-2

POPULATION DENSITY					
Town	2000 Population	Square Miles	Person Per Square Mile	Acres Per Town	Person Per Acre
Brooklyn	7,173	29.10	246	18,624	0.39
Canterbury	4,692	40.20	117	25,728	0.18
Eastford	1,618	29.20	55	18,688	0.09
Killingly	16,472	50.00	329	32,000	0.51
Plainfield	14,619	43.00	340	27,520	0.53
POMFRET	3,798	40.60	94	25,984	0.15
Putnam	9,002	20.40	441	13,056	0.69
Sterling	3,099	27.30	114	17,472	0.18
Thompson	8,878	48.70	182	31,168	0.28
Woodstock	7,221	61.80	117	39,552	0.18
Regional Totals	76,572	390.30	196	249,792	0.31

Source US Census

Table 3-3

NEIGHBORING TOWN GROWTH						
Town	2000 Population	1990 Population	1980 Population	Change 1990-2000	Change 1980-1990	Change 1980-2000
Brooklyn	7173	6,681	5,691	7.36%	17.40%	26.04%
Canterbury	4692	4,467	3426	5.04%	30.39%	36.95%
Eastford	1618	1,314	1028	23.14%	27.82%	57.39%
Killingly	16472	15,889	14519	3.67%	9.44%	13.45%
Plainfield	14619	14,363	12774	1.78%	12.44%	14.44%
Pomfret	3798	3,102	2775	22.44%	11.78%	36.86%
Putnam	9002	9,031	8580	-0.32%	5.26%	4.92%
Sterling	3099	2,357	1791	31.48%	31.60%	73.03%
Thompson	8878	8,668	8141	2.42%	6.47%	9.05%
Woodstock	7,221	6,008	5117	20.19%	17.41%	41.12%
Regional Totals	76572	71,880	63,842	6.53%	12.59%	19.94%

Source US Census

1990 -2000 % growth = 22.4 % the third highest rate for any town in our region (exceeded only by Eastford and Sterling).

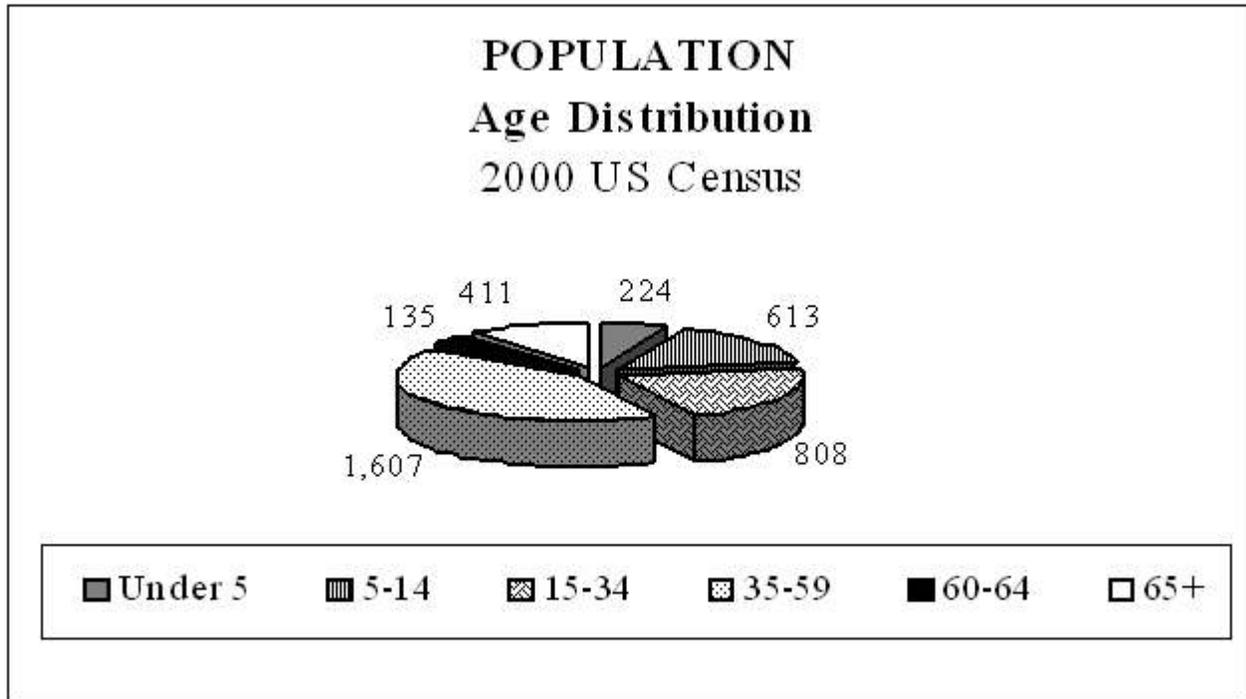
The conclusions that can be reached from the above statistics are:

- 1) Pomfret's growth rate between 1980 and 2000 is greater than all towns in the region except for Canterbury, Eastford, Sterling and Woodstock.
- 2) Pomfret's growth rate between 1980 and 2000 is close to double that of the region.
- 3) Five of the region's smallest towns experienced over 30% growth over the past 20 years.

NUMBER OF PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Pomfret	2.81	2.66	2.64
<u>Region</u>	<u>2.85</u>	<u>2.70</u>	<u>na</u>
State	2.76	2.70	2.53

The number of persons per household has declined slightly. The same trend can be observed in the region and in the state as a whole. The number of persons per household is only slightly lower in Pomfret than throughout the region. The age distribution of Pomfret closely follows that for all of the region.



HOUSING UNITS

1990 1258
 1994 1352
 2000 1503

The above data indicate that the number of housing units in Pomfret grew by 245 units or approximately 19.5% between 1990 and 2000. This figure is in keeping with the rate of population growth and is a greater rate than the increase in housing units for the region. The following table details the number of new housing units on an annual basis between 1991 and 2000.

Table 3-4

New Housing Units (Annually)									
1991-2000									
1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
24	15	24	26	24	31	29	30	34	22
Source: Town of Pomfret Building Department									

Table 3-5

Employment Locations (1990)		
Location	Number Employed	Percentage of Total Employment
Pomfret	452	29.00%
Region	674	43.00%
Hartford Area	156	10.00%
Massachusetts	97	6.00%
Rhode Island	36	2.00%
Other	155	10.00%
Total	1,570	100.00%
Source: 1990 US Census		

The above data indicate that although the majority of Pomfret’s employed work within the town or within the northeastern Connecticut region, a significant number (444) commute to work in other areas.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	1980	1990	2000
Pomfret	\$16,080	\$40,653	57,937
Region	\$16,712	unavailable	unavailable
State	\$20,077	\$41,721	53,935

It is apparent from the above figures that the median household income for Pomfret was below that for the region and state in 1980, and, although closer, still below that for the state in 1990. In the year 2000, the median household income for Pomfret exceeds the region and state.

Table 3-6

Educational Attainment of Persons Over the Age of 25								
YEAR	Less Than Grade 9	Grade 9-12	H. S. Grad	Some College	Assoc. Degree	B.S. or B.A.	Grad. Degree	Total
1990	145	185	482	313	150	391	298	1964
% of Total	7%	9%	25%	16%	8%	20%	15%	100%
2000	79	158	830	405	163	476	425	2536
% of Total	3%	6%	33%	16%	6%	19%	17%	100%

Source: US Census

These figures show that Pomfret residents have a higher level of educational attainment, based on percentages, than any town in the region.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES TO PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF THE PROJECTED POPULATION OF POMFRET

As demonstrated above, the population of Pomfret will continue to grow. Concurrently, the demographic make-up of the population is expected to continue to evolve and change.

The history of land use in Pomfret has been based upon agricultural and farm-based enterprises. The local population could and did make use of the land for farming purposes. Today, however, it is hard to imagine the next generation of individuals coming into stewardship of these farms, continuing as their ancestors did. Dairy farming will undoubtedly continue to some degree. It seems likely that we will see

increased recreational farming on smaller plots of land producing higher yielding, non-traditional crops. As an example of the type of changes that can be expected, bison farming is now present in Pomfret.

As rural life styles continue to attract more people away from urban and suburban areas there is a need for new housing while finding ways to preserve the land for its scenic vistas and rural character. The physical Character of a town is expressed in the way its land is used. The challenge to Pomfret's citizens and government is to anticipate and seek to reconcile these and other conflicts in order to create the best possible land use pattern for the town.

Based on a Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis, over 80% of the town remains undeveloped with an estimated 17% of the land developed as residential. Twenty-two percent of the land in Pomfret is wetlands. There is a need to inventory and analyze the land resources, on an ongoing basis, with an objective to identify those landscapes having natural features most likely to be adversely affected by development.

For Pomfret to protect its heritage, culture, and way of life, it must be aware of the changes that are sure to occur and pro-actively prepare for them. There is no doubt that at some point, in the near future, those lands that are today used as very large farm operations will be faced with a change of use.

The challenge to Pomfret is to prepare and plan for that time. The policies incorporated into this Plan must reflect the changes that are sure to occur. To provide for the needs of the future population, the Planning Commission endorses the following objectives and policies:

POPULATION NEEDS POLICY 1

To the maximum extent possible maintain the rural character of Pomfret, its scenic vistas and open space for the health, safety, and welfare of the current and future residents.

Objective 1a: To encourage the retention of farmland, agricultural, and related businesses through the use of land use policies and allocation of resources that may support the agricultural effort.

The best way of retaining land for agricultural use is to acquire the development rights from the existing owners. To succeed will require a concerted effort by Pomfret and its residents in partnership with the State of Connecticut and today's landowners who may want to leave a legacy for the future.

As much as everyone would like this to be adopted universally, the reality is that it will only play a part in the preservation of agricultural and open space lands in Pomfret. Existing landowners may elect not to participate because of the economic value they may be asked to forego. The lands that are not included in a permanent protection program should have alternatives to a traditional "subdivision."

In lieu of permanent protection, optional alternative subdivision regulations should be developed that allow for the development of large individual parcels that, by themselves, can sustain the next wave of recreational farming. By providing for the development of "mini farms," Pomfret will protect its future.

The use of clustering and/or density zoning are approaches that should also be considered. A basic problem, the solution to which has not been found, is that for the concept to be implemented requires a dilution of Pomfret's septic requirements. This could have the unintended result of allowing for more intense development in the form of apartments and condominiums.

Objective 1b: To adopt open space policies that encourage the creation and maintenance of land permanently dedicated to open space utilizing the advice of the Conservation Commission.

POPULATION NEEDS POLICY 2

Provide population and demographic information for the purpose of assisting Town Boards and Commissions and to provide funding to meet anticipated changes in the population such as increased student populations and/or elderly residents.

Objective 2a: To provide forecasts, regularly updated as additional data becomes available, to the Pomfret Board of Finance and other appropriate town officials as additional input for their planning of funding and required expenditures.

Objective 2b: To continue to provide for a means through which the town may enhance its ability to obtain private and government funding for available town projects. These projects include municipal government improvements on town properties, housing for residents and relatives of residents, including, but not limited to the elderly, and other projects that town residents may deem important for the community.

POPULATION NEEDS POLICY 3

Provide for the transportation and town road infrastructure needs of a growing and changing population.

Objective 3a: To develop a “circulation policy” that will keep thru traffic to the major roads.

Objective 3b: To establish a long-range road improvement plan that addresses the current condition and specific maintenance and improvement needed to bring all roads up to acceptable safety standards in a manner that will have little environmental and visual impact on nearby properties. The final plan should provide for the roads to be all brought to minimum standards within five years, and that a ten year program be established to upgrade all roads. Each ten years a road should be scheduled for resurfacing and sealing. Such a plan would maintain

quality and minimize long-range costs. Prior to inception of this plan a priority list should be established to meet the goals of this objective.

Objective 3c: To establish flexibility in the road design standards to allow for modification when necessary to protect natural and visual resources, such as stone walls, mature trees, etc., while maintaining strict standards for the control of sedimentation and erosion control during and after the construction of new roads, public and private, and of driveways where they intersect public roads.

Objective 3d: To evaluate the possibility of cost effective, flexible rural transportation to all persons not capable of driving.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS POLICY 1

An ongoing effort will be made to continue to inventory and analyze the land resources of the town of Pomfret with the assistance of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission and the Conservation Commission.

Objective 1a: To continue to identify those landscape features having natural processes that are most likely to be adversely affected by development and are, therefore, a limitation to development. The following such landscape features should be analyzed in order to determine development potential.

- a) Soil suitability for on site septic disposal. Soil suitability must be analyzed to determine development potential for on site septic disposal systems as a controlling feature regarding land development. A site specific analysis is to be made of the suitability of the mechanical ability of the soil to accept and efficiently process sewage. The location, texture, and hydraulic properties of this very important landscape feature will determine the extent to which a particular soil can perform one of its natural functions for processing effluent. Building development in poorer soils may result in the mechanical failure of a septic system, possibly polluting the groundwater supply and adversely affecting human health. The importance of soil renovation for septic processing becomes extremely important in areas where no public sewers exist or are planned.

- b) Depth to seasonal high water table. Another significant landscape feature to be analyzed is the depth of soils to its seasonal high water table. This depth determines the mechanical ability of soils to store water in times of peak flow and gradually disperse it to surface and

groundwater supplies as peak flow subsides. The height to which water rises is an indicator of the importance of one soil type over another in the natural flood control process. This landscape feature is important for many reasons, including the following:

- i) Building development in areas of high water table may place greater pressures on areas of low water table and could eventually cause downstream flooding and surface erosion.
 - ii) Land development has the potential for polluting surface and groundwater supplies from siltation and surface runoff, particularly in high water table areas.
 - iii) Development in high water table areas may eliminate potential sources of surface and subsurface water supplies.
 - iv) Maintenance of building sites may increase because of alternate freezing and thawing in the water table above the frost line.
- c) Depth to Bedrock. The depth to bedrock at each site is a landscape feature that is not easily destroyed by development, but it does directly influence project location and development costs. Construction in shallow bedrock areas necessitates costly blasting which may result in increased costs to repair any damage. In addition, blasting may disturb the hydrologic process that recharges groundwater and bedrock water supplies. The general landscape feature of bedrock depth does not have as great an impact on a site as either soil suitability for on-site septic disposal or depth to high water table, but it still is a factor to be considered.
- d) Topography. Topography can be divided into two elements, slope and elevation. The latter element is significant when determining scenic quality, but has little effect on determining the development potential. Slope, however, is much more important, particularly when there are

location circulation systems that accompany building construction and may have a significant impact on development.

- e) Groundwater Resources. A site-specific analysis of groundwater resources is of particular importance to a town such as Pomfret because of its geographical location and its geomorphology. Located within the Quinebaug River watershed, the surface and groundwater resources should be adequately protected as development increases, but the same resources should be utilized in order to support such development. The landscape features most adversely affected by development are the identified aquifers and their recharge areas. Any of these deposits, having an estimated saturated thickness of 40 feet, (US Geologic Survey data) should not be developed to any great extent. Substantial increases of impervious surface reduce the recharge to the aquifer, and consequently the development potential of this resource is low.

Objective 1b: By using the factors identified above, you may determine the development potential of Pomfret’s land areas. With the use of USGS data and the GIS mapping capabilities, the individual landscape resources can be categorized and mapped to demonstrate the degree of limitations for development. Areas of severe and very severe limitations should be avoided, as should important groundwater resources. Areas of the town that are critical to groundwater protection are identified in the Conservation Plan. These areas should be scrutinized more closely than others during development plan review.

The Town of Pomfret consists of 25,996 acres, of which 5,719 (22%) is classified as wetlands. (Department of Environmental Protection Data, 2000).

Other soil types in Pomfret that are restrictive soils for septic tank absorption fields are:

<u>Soil Name</u>	<u>Limitations</u>	<u>Acres in Pomfret *</u>
------------------	--------------------	---------------------------

Charlton Hollis	slope	3,553
Hinckley	poor filter	1,062
Paxton	percs slowly	1,888
Sutton	wetness	127
Woodbridge	percs slowly, wetness	<u>10,134</u>
		16,764 (64.5%)

*Soils data from the DEP wetlands soils map for Pomfret (using the GIS system).

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS POLICY 2

To assess the development potential of Pomfret’s land area based upon those physical and demographic factors that may impact the future of the community at large.

To the citizens who have lived in Pomfret for any length of time who have come to appreciate its 40 square miles of scenic vistas and rural character there is a strong desire to protect our open spaces and provide for managed land development that may have an impact on the future of the community at large. The conclusion that there is little suitable land for intensive concentrated development is obvious. In general, large blocks of land reasonably suited for building and construction are limited to certain areas of Pomfret. In these areas steep hillsides may restrict development potential. All development in the Quinebaug River and Mashamoquet Brook watersheds should be done with caution.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS POLICY 3

To assess the current state of soil erosion in Pomfret and discover and identify those sites where erosion already exists including those sites located on both public and private land that require remedial action.

For too long a period Pomfret has neglected the effect of existing soil erosion. Some problem sites currently exist and require remediation. Without remediation the problems they represent will continue to increase. The policy of the town of Pomfret, through its Conservation Commission, is to discover and inventory sites that are eroded,

prioritize their remediation and implement corrective action within the shortest possible time frame.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS CONCLUSIONS

THE STATUS OF POMFRET'S DEVELOPMENT AS IT CURRENTLY EXISTS

Existing land use inventories and the analysis of existing uses for this study were done in a more traditional manner than the natural resource inventory and analysis methodology proposed for the future. Using the maps and records of the Pomfret Assessor's Office, the specific use of each property in town was identified. In addition information concerning the properties having preferential farm assessment under Public Act 490 was collected. By identifying farm class properties, some general observations regarding the immediate future use of the agricultural land can be made.

The inventory and analysis of the current uses of the land were divided into the following categories:

Residential use: single and multi-family homes.

Commercial use: home business, office, and general commercial.

Industrial use: manufacturing, storage, and earth materials operations.

Agricultural use: properties qualifying under Public Act 490.

Public use: including structures, open space, and recreational areas of public use.

Quasi-public/

Institutional use: Churches, cemeteries, land trusts, private schools, and other similar ownerships and uses.

As has been the experience for many years, there are currently three predominant land uses in Pomfret - residential, agricultural, and forest. The only other uses of considerable size would fall into the public or quasi-public/institutional category, including facilities, parks, and schools.

With one of the largest percentages of open undeveloped land in Windham County, it is not hard to believe that nearly 40% of land in Pomfret continues as open land devoted to farm land or forested. However, only 21.8% of the acreage in Pomfret is permanently protected and 72% of the open land is privately owned and in Title 19. Given the increase in residents and homes since the last plan was adopted, approximately 300 acres of open space land have been converted to residential land. A few acres have been converted to commercial use. Amaral Farm is the largest farm in town and the remaining farms are separated by intrusions of residential development.

In general, dwellings are concentrated along the principal roads in Pomfret. The notable exception to this is Longmeadow Drive which is home to the most extensively developed parcel in town.

There has been a slow, but continual, increase in the number of homes in the last decade. This trend is most likely to continue. Most newly created lots have been sold to new owners intending to build homes for themselves. The favorable interest rates and the forecast of future relatively low rates also enhances the likelihood of this trend continuing into the foreseeable future.

Aside from scattered older homes and a few minor subdivisions, the northwestern section of Pomfret is the least developed area of town. In other areas of town steep slopes, shallow bedrock, and poorly drained soils have discouraged developers from proposing large developments. These constraints will probably continue to forestall extensive development except along existing roads.

LAND USE POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

5

LAND USE POLICY 1

To develop conservation policies and other land use policies that will encourage the continued preservation of the natural features of Pomfret.

In determining the location of future development in Pomfret and in evaluating specific building projects, the Planning Commission endorses the following objectives and policies:

1. Preserve environmentally sensitive natural resources by regulating encroachment by development on these resources permitted by statute.
2. Continue to eliminate lands having no potential for subsurface disposal systems, including wetlands, excessive slopes, and shallow depth to bedrock, as defined in the Connecticut State Health Code. Provision should be made to allow for use of these lands for recreation, open space, and environmental protection by using these areas as buffers, habitat corridors, wetland enhancement and/or mitigation, and other similar uses that are in the interest of the community.
3. Permanently set aside lands having no development potential either through acquisition by the Town or a land trust, or through the use of conservation restrictions within the meaning of Section 47-42A of the Connecticut General Statutes.
4. Avoid any development on ridge lines unless such development would reduce impact on wetlands and water quality or balance the effect of development by mitigation.
5. Preserve the quality of surface water supplies in both Pomfret and surrounding communities by limiting development in the critical water supply watersheds.
6. Support the development of an awareness program for existing and potential sources of pollution in water supply watersheds and take corrective action where necessary.

7. Provide educational and other assistance to homeowners regarding installation and care of septic systems, wells, underground petroleum storage tanks, and other conservation issues.
8. Establish and enforce runoff and sediment and erosion control measures and standards for all new construction. Construction includes any excavation such as driveways, ponds, etc., where, because of the local slope and site topography, such measures are warranted and should not be limited to the construction of structures only. The commission, agency, and/or department with jurisdiction for permitting and enforcing should be granted power to enforce sedimentation and erosion control procedures and should be held responsible for enforcing the control measures that are under their jurisdiction.

LAND USE POLICY 2

To encourage the preservation of farmland and other open space. The town's Conservation Plan is an important resource that should be consulted to help to identify prime farmland and important open space tracts.

Objective 2a: To encourage regulation of agricultural lands, a business facilitator group should be formed for the purpose of forming associations with State and Federal farm agencies to seek funding for farm operations; to become better educated about new farm technologies and farm product development; providing guidance on financial and estate planning to assure long-term continuation of farming operations; lobbying for the protection of farming rights; and gathering information on new developments important to the farming operations in Pomfret.

Objective 2b: Add to the subdivision regulations an alternative design provision that encourages preservation of a greater portion of open space within subdivisions. Open space dedicated to productive or potentially productive farmland should be provided for and encouraged.

Objective 2c: Encourage landowners with property that is not within a subdivision to retain open space by designating, under section 12-107e of the CGS as “open space” all undeveloped land that:

- i) Is at least four acres, exclusive of the acreage assessed as the building lot, and,
- ii) Is not part of property used for commercial and/or industrial use, and,
- iii) Is not designated as “farm land” under Section 12-107c of the CGS, and,
- iv) Is not designated as “forest land” under Section 12-107d and 12-76 of the CGS.

Implementation of the above policies will require an ordinance be drafted and approved at a Town Meeting.

LAND USE POLICY 3

To attempt to insure that any new building that occurs shall be located on land suitable for supporting development.

Objective 3a: To develop a systems to ensure compliance with the subdivision regulations whereby the minimum setback distances for health and safety reasons on parcels that are not part of subdivisions should be altered only when engineering studies deem a waiver from the subdivision regulation is appropriate. Current engineering and technical data should be reviewed from time to time to ascertain if minimum standards are adequate.

Objective 3b: Provide for alternatives to the design of conventional subdivisions by adopting an alternate design standard as part of the subdivision

regulations that allows for imaginative use of land to provide for a variety of housing needs while still respecting the limited development capacity of the land.

LAND USE POLICY 4

To encourage new development in locations where existing roads and other facilities are capable of supporting increased use without major improvements by the town.

Objective 4a: To allow for the continuing development of existing residential use in areas adjacent to arterial or primary collector roads capable of supporting increased traffic.

Objective 4b: Allow for alternative road design and standards. Permit unpaved private roads provided: 1) they are constructed to adequate standards; 2) provision is made for continued maintenance by the property owner; 3) repair of any damage to existing town roads or drainage problems which arise from the unpaved road are the responsibility of the property owner.

Objective 4c: Retain the rural character of roads and encourage compliance with speed restrictions by using road design techniques and surfaces which promote this objective.

Objective 4d: Preserve character of Pomfret roadsides by encouraging the preservation of existing stone walls and mature roadside trees where safety allows.

LAND USE POLICY 5

To comply with updated State and Regional plans which discourage heavy industrial and major commercial development except in urban areas where major infrastructure already exists. Pomfret is not urban and does not have infrastructure to support any heavy uses nor any regional commercial uses.

Objective 5a: Encourage non-residential development that is environmentally sensitive such as professional and educational offices and institutions. Heavy industrial development should only occur in urban areas as recommended by the State Plan of Conservation and Development.

Objective 5b: Encourage light manufacturing and industrial development only when such development is done in an environmentally sensitive manner where existing and/or planned infrastructure is available. Such developments shall be of a size and scale and shall not detract from the strong rural character of the town. Such development shall be held to the highest architectural standards present on many homes in the town by enhancing the community.

LAND USE POLICY 6

To continue to support and expand the use of “Historic District” designation to preserve significant structures and areas within the town of Pomfret.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The facilities of the town including the Town Hall, Pomfret Community School, Library, Town Garage, Town Cemeteries, The Murdock Property and the newly acquired Recreational Area should be reviewed for their adequacy to meet the growing needs of the community.

The recreational and educational needs and the facilities to meet them should receive special attention.

RENOVATION AND CAPITAL PLAN

7

A continuing plan for renovation and expansion should be maintained by the Board of Selectmen and a summary provided to the town during the annual budget process.

A long term capital plan should be developed that reflects the renovation and expansion of town owned facilities.

**THE POMFRET MAPS OF
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**



PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT MAPS.

<u>Map</u>	<u>Title</u>
#1	Property Line Base Map
#2	Topographic Map
#3	State and Town Holdings Map
#4	Inventory of Wetlands Map
#5	Watershed Map
#6	Prime Farmland Map
#7	Institutional Holdings Map
#8	Soils Map
#9	Future Land Use Map

This Plan of Conservation and Development is designed to be a blueprint for the future of Pomfret. It is only the beginning of a rational approach to understanding the limitations and assets of the Town. More focused analysis is needed in the areas of open space, recreation, road improvements, the location of municipal facilities, and capital improvement planning. These analyses should be done by those officials and boards or committees responsible for implementation of the various functions. This Commission, along with other municipal boards and commissions, must, through their activities and actions, continue the comprehensive planning process and add to this basic land use plan.

This document will be of little value if the objectives and policies are not implemented. Some recommendations can be easily put into effect within the existing regulatory structure. Other policies and objectives need the cooperation of the other municipal boards and commissions. For example, the Board of Selectmen is the appropriate agency to adopt modification of road standards and to recommend funding for an ongoing improvement program. The Conservation Commission is an advisory commission well suited to establishing a comprehensive open space policy. The Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) enforces the state health code. The Planning Commission enforces the subdivision regulations. The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission enforces the town's wetlands regulations. The town should adopt ordinances that the residents find appropriate, and the Town Counsel deems legal, to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the town which includes the maintenance of its rural character and preservation of its natural resources.

Through a variety of means, the recommendations of this Plan should be adopted and implemented for Pomfret to grow in harmony with its natural and cultural heritage.

RESOURCES

Connecticut General Statutes.
Connecticut State Farmland Preservation Program.
Connecticut State Health Code.
Connecticut State Plan of Conservation and Development.
Department of Environmental Protection Data 2000.
Wetlands Soils map for Pomfret (using the GIS system).
Geographic Information System (GIS) Data of 2000.
Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission Regulations April 28, 2001
Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) Regulations of 2000.
Planning Commission Subdivision Regulations of April 11, 2001.
Pomfret Assessors Database Records 2000.
Pomfret Conservation Commission Plan of Conservation, July 23, 2001.
“Study Circle” meetings sponsored by the Board of Selectmen and
organized by the Topsfield Foundation in 1995.
US Census Data of 2000.
US Geologic Survey data

Technical Assistance, James Rabbitt, Town Planner
Cover designed by Betty Morin, Clerk
Photographs, Ford Fay