

# Town of Canaan 2013 Plan of Conservation & Development





# Town of Canaan 2013 Plan of Conservation & Development

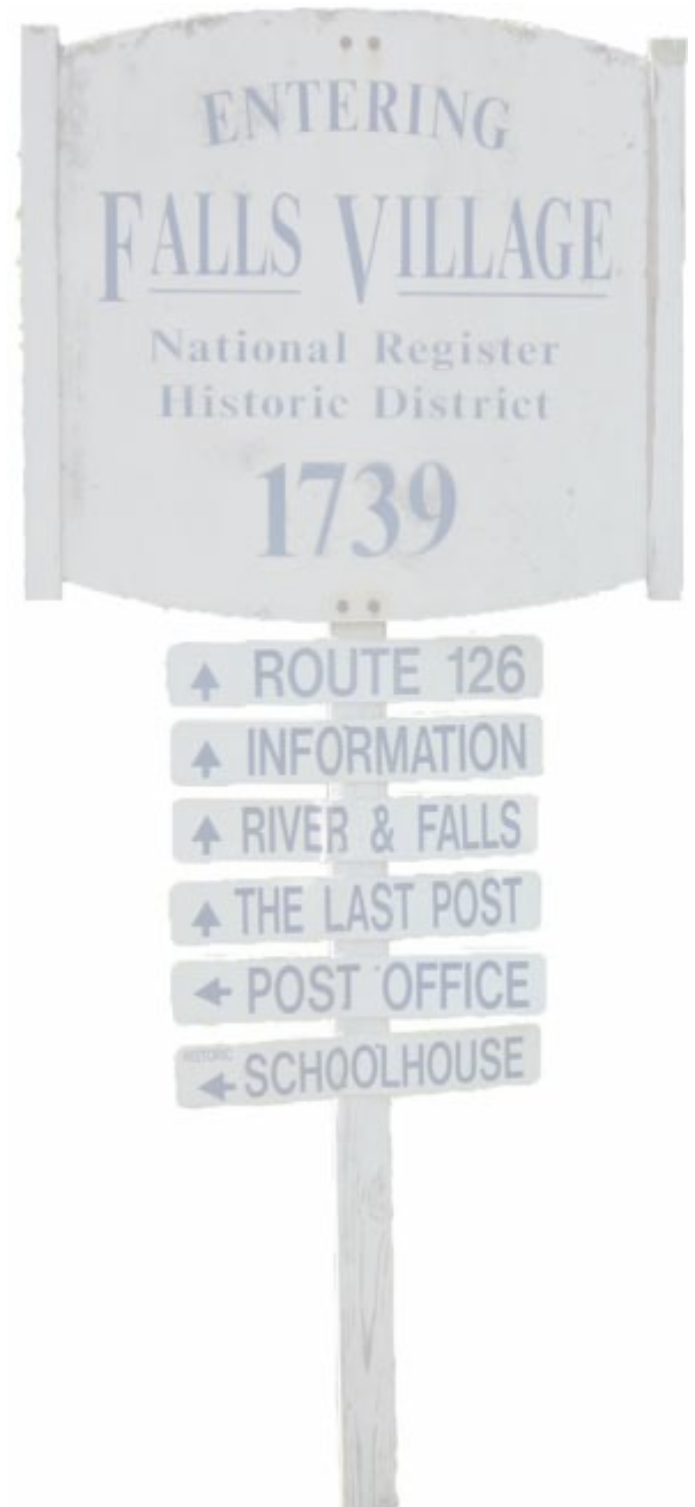


Photos (cover and this page): Colin Chambers, Falls Village Inn

# Contents

---

I. Introduction.....	3
A Vision for Falls Village .....	3
II. Current Conditions and Trends .....	4
III. Community Input .....	11
Community Survey .....	11
Planning Focus Group Sessions .....	13
Working Session with Town Boards and Commissions .....	14
Town Plan Community Forum .....	14
IV. Planning Visions for Falls Village .....	15
Planning Vision #1: Encourage Community Diversity .....	16
Planning Vision #2: Enhance the Village Center’s Vitality .....	18
Planning Vision #3: Support Farming, Forestry and Natural Resources .....	20
Planning Vision #4: Promote a Sustainable Community .....	24
Appendices	
A: Town Plan Strategy Implementation Meetings 2013–2023 (Schedule & Agenda) .....	26
B: State & Regional Plan Consistency .....	27
C: Future Land Use Map .....	30
D: Conservation Resources Map .....	31
Acknowledgements.....	32



# Town of Canaan · Town Plan Update 2013

---

January, 2013

Welcome to the 2013 Town of Canaan Plan of Conservation and Development.

The Town of Canaan / Falls Village is committed to preserving its rural character and lifestyle. The 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development provides a balanced and thoughtful approach to our Town's future needs and aspirations.

***We encourage diversity – of thought, age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual orientation. We strive to be inclusive and embrace and value education, community and the unique spirit of our Town's people and the appreciation of our natural surroundings and resources. The mountains, rivers, meadows, forests, and farmland are the essence of Falls Village along with a growing and thriving village.***

The process to develop this Plan was guided by the Planning & Zoning Commission with assistance from our professional planning consultants. Significant effort was devoted to soliciting input from all residents and community members on the visions, goals, and strategies presented in this Plan.

We want to thank everyone who participated in the creation of this plan by taking the community survey or attending one of the many meetings we held to solicit feedback on the plan. And we want to thank the children at Lee H. Kellogg School who drew beautiful, inspiring images of our Town which are included in this Plan. Town plans by their nature often focus on addressing future challenges rather than celebrating the present. ***There is much to celebrate about Falls Village and we hope this is captured in the images and photos we have included here.***

We are committed to the implementation of the strategies listed in the 2013 Town Plan. We will work with the other Town boards, commissions, and volunteer groups to revisit this Plan every two years and check in on the progress we have all made in achieving our goals. ***We look forward to working with all of you to enhance our traditions and respect our rich cultural and historic heritage while carefully carrying out a sustained and innovative approach to the many challenges that our community will face in the next decade.***

— Planning & Zoning Commission





# I. Introduction

This is an update to the Town's 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development. The Planning & Zoning Commission decided to undertake this update of the Town Plan due to the changing demographic and economic conditions in Falls Village and the State's requirement for revisions to municipal plans every 10 years.

To guide the Plan update, the Commission undertook a series of steps including a study of demographic, economic, and housing trends in Falls Village, a community opinion survey, focus group sessions, and a community forum. The results of this outreach, research, and analysis, summarized throughout this report, provided the basis for the updating of the Town's overall planning vision and the key goals and strategies the Town will follow to achieve that vision.

## A Vision for Falls Village

The public outreach conducted as part of this Plan update resulted in the following vision statements.

In the future I would like to see Falls Village as:

- a community with age and cultural diversity.
- having a thriving, historic village center with shops and restaurants
- a community that supports farming, forestry, and natural resources
- a fiscally, environmentally, and socially sustainable community

*This Plan can be thought of as a road map to the desired future of Falls Village. It explains where we are (Conditions & Trends), where we would like to be (Vision Statements), and gives us directions on how we can get there (Goals & Strategies).*



## II. Current Conditions and Trends

This section reviews the demographic, economic, and housing changes that have occurred over the last 10 years and looks at the projected future changes in these areas. The conditions and trends shown here highlight the challenges that the Town of Canaan faces to realizing the community's vision for the future and informs the strategies laid out in this plan to address these challenges.

### Demographic Changes

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of Falls Village **increased by 153 people** between the years 2000 and 2010. This is relatively significant growth for Falls Village (between 1990 and 2000, the population only increased by 24 people). However, **this growth rate is not projected to continue**. Population projections from the Connecticut State Data Center show that over the next 15 years (between 2010 and 2025) the **total number of Canaan residents will stay the same or grow only slightly** (the least conservative projection shows an increase of 53 people).

The table shown here “Falls Village Demographic Trends” shows the population projections to the year 2025 by age group and the effect these age group changes may have on the demand for Town services and facilities such as schools, housing, and programs for seniors. The **number of school aged children** and people aged 30 to 64 (young professionals and families with school aged children) is **projected to continue to decline fairly significantly** over the next 10 to 15 years. The number of retirement aged residents (ages 65 and over) is projected to increase significantly over that same period. This will pose a challenge to the Town's desire to remain a community with residents of all ages — old, young, and in between.

Falls Village Demographic Trends			
Description	Age Range	Needs	Projection To 2025
Infants	0 to 4	Child care	Steady
School-Age	5 to 19	School facilities Recreation programs	Modest Decrease (by 16 people)
Young Adults	20 to 30	Rental housing Starter homes	Steady
Middle Age	30 to 64	Family programs Trade-up homes	Decrease (by 82 people)
Retirement Age	65 and over	Tax relief Housing options Elderly programs	Significant Increase (by 119 people)
Source: US Census Bureau and the Conn. State Data Center			

## Current Conditions and Trends *continued*

---

One of the most obvious effects of a decreasing school aged population would be ***declining school enrollments***. In the school year 2011–2012, Lee H. Kellogg School had an enrollment of 86 students. By the school year 2016–2017 enrollment is expected to decline. The school enrollment projections beyond 2017 are less reliable (as changes between now and then could affect the number of enrolled children) but currently show a continued decline to 64 students in school year 2021–2022. (*Source: New England School Development Council projections dated 2/16/2012.*)

The regional high school which is located in the Town of Canaan is also predicted to have a slightly declining school enrollment over the next ten years (from 1,724 in 2011 to 1,528 in 2021). This includes high school aged children who live in Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury, and Sharon as well as Canaan. The number of school aged children is generally declining in all these towns as well as in the state as a whole. (*Source: New England School Development Council projections dated 2/16/2012.*)

Also like many other Northwestern Connecticut towns, Falls Village has experienced an increase in seasonal or “weekend” residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the number of occasional use or seasonal homes in the Town increased from 21% of the housing units in 2000 to 25% of the housing units in 2010. However, we know that there are inaccuracies in the way the Census Bureau collects and interprets this type of information. The Town’s Tax Assessor believes the ***percentage of homes in Town which are now being occupied only seasonally*** or on weekends is more in the range of ***35% to 43%***. (This is based on the number of tax bills that are sent to addresses outside of Town.) This is a significant demographic and housing change in the Town which has impacts on school enrollment, home prices, demand for year-round town services and retail/commercial services.





## Current Conditions and Trends *continued*

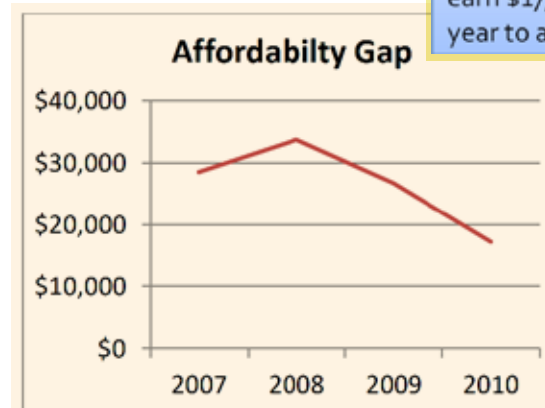
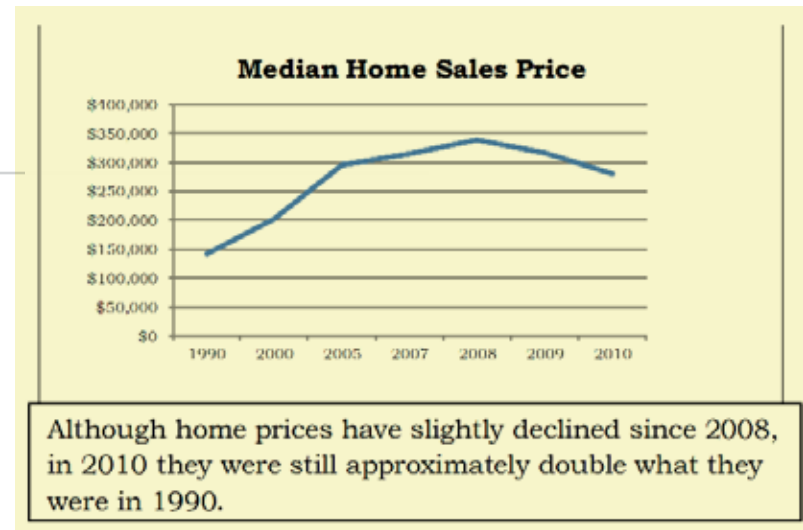
### Housing Changes

The Town of Canaan has approximately 636 units of housing (*Source: CERC Town profile 2012*). The 2000 Census showed about 610 housing units. Of these housing units a vast majority are owner occupied, single family homes. The 2010 Census found only 9 units for rent at that time.

A range of housing options are needed in any town to meet the needs of families and individuals of different ages, household sizes, and incomes. Even as current residents grow older, their housing needs change. The Town of Canaan does not have a diverse range of housing options. This has an affect who can move to or stay in the Town of Canaan. Focus session participants noted, for example, that the high cost of housing has affected the Region 1 school district's ability to retain and recruit staff. Additionally, the lack of affordably priced homes and rental housing options is believed to have directly affected the Town's ability to attract and retain younger fire and ambulance volunteers.

The problem of housing affordability is not unique to the Town of Canaan. It is a problem in the state and the county as a whole as housing prices have risen more quickly than incomes leaving a large gap between what residents earn and what they would need to earn to qualify for a mortgage on the median priced home. Rental housing rates are also out of reach for many people, Connecticut residents typically need to earn at least \$23/hr. (or about \$45,000 annually) to afford the typical 2-bedroom apartment.

Typically housing is considered "affordable" if a household is paying less than 30% of their household income on housing costs (for example rent or mortgage). In the Town of Cannan, 93 renter occupied households and 28 owner occupied households reported spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs.



A Falls Village resident who earned \$68,150 and wanted to buy the median priced home in 2010 would need to earn \$17,143 more per year to afford it.



### Economic Changes

According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, in 2011 there were 694 town residents in the labor force. 111 residents were listed as self employed or working from home. It is common in a rural town for more residents to work from home than in other more urban parts of the State. The town's median household income is \$68,150 which is about the same as Litchfield County's median income and slightly higher than the State's median income of \$65,686.

The Town's *top four major employers* are:

- Hamilton Books
- Lee H. Kellogg School
- CT Light & Power
- Region 1 School District

The Town's *top four employment sectors* are:

- Services 31%
- Agriculture 25%
- Trade 15%
- Construction & Mining 11%

(Source: CERC Town Profile 2012)

Unemployment rates rose in Falls Village between 2007 and 2011 much as they did in the state and the nation as a whole. In 2011, 7.9% of Falls Village residents (55 working aged residents) were reported to be unemployed.

The Town's village center businesses struggled during the national recession (2007–2009) and some of the few available commercial buildings in Falls Village have gone through long periods of vacancy. However, even during this difficult economic time, the Falls Village Inn reopened its doors as did a new general store. These businesses have given a new, increased sense of life to the Town Center.



## Municipal Facilities

Municipal and municipally supported facilities and properties include roads, water and wastewater systems, stormwater management structures, libraries, schools, municipal offices, recreational facilities and parks, and public safety facilities. The current conditions of, and potential needs for improvements to, public facilities are described briefly on the following pages.

### **Demographic, Housing, & Economic Characteristics At a Glance**

**Number of residents (2010): 1,234**

**Population growth rate (2000- 2010): 14.2%**

**% of population below 18 years (2010): 17.4%**

**Median Household Income (2010): \$68,150**

**Housing Units (2009): 636**

**Median Home Sale Price (2010): \$280,000**

**Labor Force (2011): 694**

**Unemployment Rate (2011): 7.9%**

**Employment Growth Rate: -5.3%**

Sources: U.S. Census 2010, CERC Town Profile 2012, CT Dept of Labor 2011



## Current Conditions and Trends *continued*

---

### **Water and Wastewater Management**

There is no sanitary sewer collection system in Falls Village, which limits uses and future development potential in the village center. The village area is served by a municipal water supply system, owned and operated by the Town and sustained by user charges. The system has been upgraded over the past ten years, with new water storage tanks, updating and maintenance of well systems, and replacement and repairs to delivery lines.

This Plan Update recognizes the constraints on economic and municipal activities in the village center caused by sewage treatment limitations and recommends several planning steps to identify possible remedies. This Update also continues the strategies in the 2002 Plan to address parking, traffic, pedestrian access, and other physical improvements. Additionally, the Plan Update continues to recognize the need for direct action to promote business activities in the village center.

### **Streets and Parks**

As of the end of 2010, Falls Village maintained a total of 31 miles of town roads. No significant additions to the road system have been made since the 2002 Plan, which includes a map of Town and State roads in Falls Village. The existing road system and maintenance program adequately meet the Town's needs for the foreseeable future. A new Town Pool opened in 2010. Town has \$25,000 per year budgeted for additional improvements to the "Town Farm" recreation area.

### **Facilities and Services for Children and Seniors**

The library and local daycare center, which are privately managed but receive financial support from the Town, have both recently added space to accommodate growing needs. The senior center has also gone through a fairly recent renovation.



## Current Conditions and Trends *continued*

### Natural Resources and Land Cover

Farms, forests, wetlands, and rivers define the landscape of Falls Village. As shown on the map to the right, prime soils remain available for agricultural use. Extensive forests, especially Great Mountain Forest, are valuable sources of forest products. As detailed in the 2002 Plan, 55% of the Town's total land area is dedicated or managed open space (2002 Plan pg. 12). A wide diversity of plants and animals, including many that are rare or threatened in Connecticut, can be found in Falls Village, primarily within these protected open spaces.

According to the Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR), land cover has changed very little between 1985 and 2006 (the latest year measured). Total developed land in 2006 was calculated to be 4.7% of the total land area, compared to 4.4% in 1985. Land cover data from CLEAR is summarized below.

	1985		2002		2006		Change 1985-2006	
	acres	% of town	acres	% of town	acres	% of town	acres	% change
<u>Developed</u>	940	4.4%	993	4.7%	1003	4.7%	62.7	6.7%
<u>Turf &amp; Grass</u>	309	1.5%	337	1.6%	358	1.7%	49.6	16.1%
<u>Other Grasses</u>	358	1.7%	399	1.9%	416	2%	58.6	16.4%
<u>Agricultural Field</u>	1813	8.5%	1761	8.3%	1762	8.3%	-51.3	-2.8%
<u>Deciduous Forest</u>	10044	47.4%	10049	47.4%	10013	47.2%	-30.9	-0.3%
<u>Coniferous Forest</u>	5229	24.6%	5218	24.6%	5199	24.5%	-29.9	-0.6%
<u>Water</u>	395	1.9%	356	1.7%	355	1.7%	-10.3	-10.2%
<u>Non-forested Wetland</u>	214	1%	219	1%	219	1%	5.5	2.6%
<u>Forested Wetland</u>	1808	8.5%	1764	8.3%	1760	8.3%	-47.6	-2.6%
<u>Barren</u>	38	0.2%	53	0.2%	62	0.3%	23.9	63.4%
<u>Utility (Forest)</u>	65	0.3%	65	0.3%	65	0.3%	-0.2	-0.4%

*Native Red Spruce in Great Mountain Forest, red spruce is very uncommon elsewhere in CT.*





# III. Community Input

This section of the Town Plan describes how the Planning and Zoning Commission solicited community input on the Town Plan and summarizes the input that was received. This input assisted the Commission in revising and updating the Town's vision statements which now guide this 2013 Town Plan of Conservation and Development.









## Community Survey

Every household in the Town of Canaan was sent a postcard and asked to participate in a survey to help with the Town Plan update. Following is a summary of the results.








### Respondents:

- 144 total responses
- 36% of respondents were 2 person households,
- 44% were 3 or 4 person households
- 84% of respondents were full-time residents,
- 48% have lived in FV for more than 15 years
- 25% of respondents worked from home
- 62% of respondents had no school-aged children living in their household.

In the future I would like to see Falls Village as:  
(note: you may check more than one box below)

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
a mainly rural residential community			67	40.2 %
a community with many creative home based businesses			84	60.4 %
having a thriving village center with shops and restaurants			103	74.1 %
a community that supports farming			93	66.9 %
a community that supports the arts			82	50.9 %
a community with residents of all ages- old, young, and in between			112	80.5 %
a community with a diversity of incomes			83	59.7 %
Other			7	5.0 %
Totals			139	100%

What natural resource is in critical need of protection?  
(note: you may check more than one box below)

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
water			97	68.7 %
flora & fauna			69	48.9 %
scenic ridgelines			85	60.2 %
soils			57	40.4 %
open space			56	39.7 %
none of the above			13	9.2 %
don't know			17	12.0 %
Totals			141	100%

## Community Input *continued*

### Survey results on Community Facilities and Services:

- 39% of respondents said that the town should consider installing a public sewer system to serve the village center area. (28% said no, 31% said they don't know)
- 67% of respondents said the town should consider other options for Kellogg School considering declining enrollment.

### Survey results on Housing related questions:

- 80% of respondents agreed the town should do more to encourage and support housing opportunities for families earning between \$50K and \$90K. (only 59% agreed for families earning less than \$50K)
- 80% of respondents would like to see Falls Village be a community with residents of all ages — old, young and in between.
- 74% of respondents agreed that the town should pursue housing and job creation strategies that would bring/keep more young families with school aged children in town.
- 64% of respondents agree there is a need for housing that young emergency volunteers and school teachers can afford (22% don't know)

### Survey results on Economic Development related questions:

- 78% of respondents said there was a need for more job opportunities in Falls Village
- 88% of respondents agree that the town should encourage economic development to increase tax revenue.
- 99% of respondents agree that keeping our existing village center businesses is important.
- 96% of respondents agree that the town should pursue strategies to attract additional businesses to the village center.
- 74% of respondents would like to see Falls Village having a thriving village center with shops and restaurants.
- 66% of respondents would like to see Falls Village as a community that supports farming.

What types of economic development would you like to see?  
(note: you may check more than one box below)

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
farming/agriculture			91	65.9 %
home based businesses			105	76.0 %
natural resource related businesses			84	60.8 %
retail stores			87	63.0 %
wholesale			33	23.9 %
manufacturing			32	23.1 %
tourism			91	65.9 %
none			3	2.1 %
Other			15	10.8 %
Totals			138	100%



### Planning Focus Group Sessions

Two focus group sessions were also held as part of the Town Plan update process in order to get further feedback from residents, volunteers, and town leaders on critical issues identified through the community survey. Specific town stakeholders were personally invited to attend. Any interested resident was also welcomed to attend.

#### **Focus Group #1 – Encouraging Age and Housing Diversity Supported Strategies in order of most votes of support:**

**OVERVIEW:** Attended by 24 people. **GUEST SPEAKERS** Lea Davies of the Sharon Housing Authority, Bill Bachrach of Kent Affordable Housing, and Jocelyn Ayer of the Accessory Apartment Program.

#### **Focus Group # 2 – Creating Jobs and Supporting Local Businesses**

**OVERVIEW:** Attended by 15 people.

**GUEST SPEAKERS:**

1) Kurt Mailman of Fuss & O'Neill, Inc. (Engineering Consulting Firm)

**TOPIC:** Wastewater treatment options for supporting economic development

2) Dan Bolognani of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area and Western CT Convention & Visitors Bureau

**TOPIC:** How the Town can support local businesses and encourage tourism

3) Chris Wood of Northwestern CT Regional Planning Collaborative

**TOPIC:** NWCT Village Center Vitality Initiatives — current STEAP proposal to support local businesses and economic development.



### **Working Session with Town Boards and Commissions**

On December 7th, 2011 the Planning & Zoning Commission held a working session with representatives from the Town's boards and commissions to get solicit their feedback. The strategies listed in this plan could not be carried out without these dedicated mainly volunteer board and commission members. The Commission would also like to revisit these strategies with the other Town Boards and Commissions at a similar meeting every other year. At these meetings each commission can give updates on the progress it has made on these strategies and update them as conditions change.

**The following boards and commissions sent representatives to the meeting and provided written comments on the draft Town Plan strategies:**

Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Board of Education, Historical Society, Inland Wetlands / Conservation Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission. The feedback received by these commissions has been incorporated into the final strategies presented in this Plan.

### **Town Plan Community Forum**

The Town Plan Community Forum was held on Saturday, June 9th 2012. Every household in Falls Village was sent two postcards inviting them to this forum to learn about and provide input on the proposed Town Plan update goals and action steps. The feedback received during the forum and through the comment forms received after the forum has been incorporated into the final visions, goals and strategies presented in this Plan.

## **We need YOUR input...** **A Plan for Our Future!**



*What I Like About Falls Village, Calpurnia Carter (slideshow online)*

**Come to the Town Plan Community Forum**  
**Saturday, June 9, 2012**  
**10am – noon**



## IV. Planning Visions for Falls Village

---

Based on feedback from the community survey, focus group sessions, and community forum described above, as well as an analysis of current conditions and population projections, this Plan update is organized around four Planning Visions:

- 1. Encourage Community Diversity;*
- 2. Enhance the Historic Village Center's Vitality;*
- 3. Support Farming, Forestry, and Natural Resources; and*
- 4. Promote a Sustainable Community.*

Many of the goals and strategies for these visions overlap. All reflect the community's strong support for the rural, historic, and natural character that defines Falls Village. Students from the Lee Kellogg School captured this community character in a series of drawings shown here that illustrate the planning visions for this Plan update.

The next sections of this plan will describe these visions for the town's future and detail specific goals and strategies that the Town can take over the next 10 years to make these visions a reality.



Lafayette Morrison



Nick Dodge



Jessy Hazzard



Natalie Wadsworth

## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

### Planning Vision #1: Encourage Community Diversity

The first vision to guide Falls Village over the next ten years and beyond is that Falls Village will be a culturally and age diverse community. This vision promotes social, cultural, and demographic diversity that ensures a healthy and vibrant community.

In order to achieve this vision, a series of goals and strategies are detailed below that address housing and community facility needs to support a diversity of residents and that promote the community spirit which holds this diverse group of residents together.

#### PV#1, Goal 1: Encourage a range of housing options. Address the diverse housing needs of all residents.

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Form a local housing group with volunteers to proactively seek ways of meeting the housing needs of residents: rental and homeownership.					
Revise zoning regulations to allow for the conversion of larger homes into two- or three-family homes.					
Consider adopting an Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) to allow zoning flexibility to create well designed affordable and market rate housing.					
Continue to allow for two-family housing to provide for housing choice.					
Consider zoning regulation revisions that allow multi-family housing in the village center.					
Promote accessory apartments by holding an outreach session at least once a year in Falls Village on how to create them. Continue to modify regulations as needed to encourage accessory apartments.					



**LEGEND:** PZC / Planning & Zoning Commission; IWCC / Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission; BOS / Board of Selectmen; BOE / Board of Education; GMF / Great Mountain Forest; HS / Historical Society; PRC / Parks & Recreation Commission; NWCT / Northwestern CT Regional; RPC / Planning Collaborative; NWCD / Northwest Conservation District; VFD / Volunteer Fire Department

## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

### PV#1, Goal 2: Address community facility needs for residents of all ages.

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Promote the use of Citizen's Hall for activities for all ages — including seniors, teens and children.					
Uphold the advantages and unique character of our small local school while augmenting increasing costs with resources from public and private sources.				BOE	
Develop ways for the school building to be even more of an asset to the community. <b>Note:</b> Many groups already use the school building, including CYB teams, the Falls Village Scholarship Committee's Bingo night, large town political gatherings, The FVCT, after-school programs, etc.				BOE	
Establish a new public safety facility.				VFD	In process
Encourage the installation of fire ponds or underground cisterns in new development.				VFD	Review specific proposals with IWCC

### PV#1, Goal 3: Promote community spirit.

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Seek ways to maintain and promote community spirit and pride.					
Continue to encourage local recognition, volunteer contributions and local events.					
Maintain and promote the on-line community calendar to coordinate events in town.					
Maintain strong communication between the Town Hall and the community. Actively encourage public participation in all stages of planning and decision making and welcome public participation in government agency proceedings and meetings.					
Consider a <i>quarterly Town newsletter or email</i> which would update residents about the activities of the Town's boards, commissions, and other volunteer groups and include upcoming events.					
Increase volunteer participation and visibility at Lee Kellogg School.				BOE	



## Planning Vision #2: Enhance the Village Center's Vitality

The village center is the heart of Falls Village. Town Hall, Citizen's Hall, the Children's Theater, Library, Lee H. Kellogg School and the Historical Society Museum are all housed here providing critical community services to residents of all ages. The Falls Village Inn, Toymakers Café, Jacob's Garage, Liquor Store and P.D. Walsh country store draw both residents and visitors to the village center to eat, shop, stay, and play.

The Town Plan community survey, community forum and focus group session on economic development all underscored residents' second planning vision: **Falls Village will be a community that has a thriving historic village center with shops and restaurants.**

Goals and strategies to promote this vision include infrastructure improvements (such as sidewalks, streetscaping), historic preservation, supporting the Falls Village business group and encouraging visitors to support existing village center businesses.



## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

### PV#2,

#### Goal 1: Enhance the vitality of the village center. Reinforce the village center as the business and cultural center of the Town.

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Address the wastewater infrastructure limitations in the Village Center which inhibit existing businesses and potential new village businesses.					Opportunities for public input on this will be provided.
Apply to CT DEEP for a wastewater planning grant to determine possible wastewater management solutions and costs. Allocate the necessary town funding to match the DEEP grant.					
Monitor and comment on State planning efforts to designate “priority funding areas” as required by State statutes; work with area towns, local legislators, and State officials to ensure consideration of Falls Village’s needs.					
Establish a village business zone and encourage first floor commercial space with residential space above.					
Create and support a Falls Village Business group to coordinate activities that will help all businesses and keep the village center vital.				Business group	Support from NWCT RPC
Improve signage and wayfinding to get visitors to businesses, recreation opportunities, and historic sites in the village center.				NWCT RPC	
Create walking trail map of the village center including historical sites, where to eat, shop, stay.				Business group	Support from NWCT RPC
Work on ways to increase visitors to the Town, especially in the winter months.				Business group	Support from NWCT RPC
Improve the village streetscape- including sidewalks, parking, and landscaping. Continue to pursue grants to make improvements in Village center, including street hardware and lighting and handicap accessibility.				Business group	
Over the long term, seek to put wired utilities underground in the Village Center.					
Ensure that strip development patterns do not emerge along Route 7.					
Support and encourage upgrading the rail line tracks to handle existing freight traffic and, at some point, passenger service				Business group	
Actively seek to fill vacant stores and commercial spaces in the Village Center.				Business group	Support from NWCT RPC
Actively seek to fill vacant stores and commercial spaces in the Village Center. Help create and support a weekly farmers’ market.					See also Agricultural goals.

## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

### **PV#2, Goal 2: Protect the historic resources of Falls Village.**

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Continue to conduct Historical Society and other educational programs				HS Schools	
Educate property owners on how to nominate eligible resources to the National or State Register of Historic Places.				HS	
Continue to pursue funding for the preservation of local historic resources.				HS	
Consider local designation of scenic roads.					
Reinstallation of sidewalks and attractive street lighting in the village center to enable visitors to tour historic district better. Better signage directing people to historic sites is also needed.					

### **Planning Vision #3: Support Farming, Forestry and Natural Resources**

Falls Village residents recognize the importance of agricultural activities to sustaining the rural character of Falls Village. They also recognize the importance of protecting the forests and other natural resources that the Town possesses. Planning vision #3 is to remain a community that supports farming and forestry and preserves natural resources. The goals and strategies listed below will assist the community in achieving this vision.

The Town's 2002 Plan of Conservation & Development mapped priority environmental resources and these priorities remain applicable today to land use and conservation planning (see appendix C for maps). As the 2002 Plan points out, over half of the Falls Village land area is already preserved as open space. While this contributes significantly to the Town's character, it also has fiscal implications. Future open space planning must recognize this and consider a balance between conservation and development as described in the strategies on the next page.



## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

Great Mountain Forest and the forestry activities and conservation leadership demonstrated by its owners represent a significant asset to the Town, both environmentally and economically. Falls Village continues to support and work closely with Great Mountain Forest and other major land owners to promote appropriate land uses and conservation activities.

### **PV#3, Goal 1: Continue to protect important clean water resources.**

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Update Wetland regulations to reflect the most recent DEP model regulations.					In process
Review flood plain ordinance to confirm that it meets National Flood Insurance Program requirements.					
Review and update stormwater and erosion control regulations, including application of low impact development techniques.					
Determine how many underperforming septic systems there are in the village center.					
Enhance regulations regarding earth excavation.					



## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

### **PV#3, Goal 2: Continue to preserve the existing open space, recreation areas and scenic views that make Falls Village unique.**

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Seek ways to establish walking/hiking trails throughout open spaces in Falls Village (link to AT & Mohawk Trails).				PRC	See Current & future Trails map
Discourage development that would break up connected open spaces.					See Open Space map
Establish bikeways throughout the town. Participate in the regional development of the HouBike trail.				PRC	
Prepare materials on the availability of trails & bicycle routes in Falls Village.				PRC	
Continue to consider developing zoning regulations to control the development of private alternative energy generating facilities and to provide guidance for State or Federal regulators with authority for commercial generating facilities.					Review proposals with IWCC
Carefully evaluate proposed locations and siting of telecommunications towers or other major facilities to prevent or mitigate environmental and scenic impacts.					Review proposals with IWCC
Continue to maintain and upgrade the school playground and fields for school and non-school events, as well as revive the teaching garden between the Kellogg School & the Library.				BOE	
Pursue the enhancement of the Town Farm property into a Recreation Facility and Aquatic Center to provide additional recreation opportunities and a revenue source for the Town (through programming fees, seasonal passes, facility use fees).				PRC	

## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

### PV#3, Goal 3: Continue to encourage agricultural and forestry operations.

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Review land use regulations to ensure “farm friendly” standards including “right to farm” provisions, permitting for farm markets, adaptive reuse of farm structures for farm related activities, and use of active agricultural properties for related commercial activities.					
Create a map and inventory of prime agricultural soils use this information to protect these areas. <b>Note:</b> Funding for farmland protection available through CT Department of Agriculture Agriculture Viability Grants.”					
Offer workshops and connections that encourage landowners to preserve farmland.				GMF	
Use Town Farm property for Community Garden project in conjunction with Kellogg School.				PRC	
Support educational programming that will support agriculture. For example- educational programming at Great Mountain Forest and VoAG program at HVRHS.					



**LEGEND:** PZC / Planning & Zoning Commission; IWCC / Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission; BOS / Board of Selectmen; BOE / Board of Education; GMF / Great Mountain Forest; HS / Historical Society; PRC / Parks & Recreation Commission; NWCT / Northwestern CT Regional; RPC / Planning Collaborative; NWCD / Northwest Conservation District; VFD / Volunteer Fire Department



### Planning Vision #4: Promote a Sustainable Community

At the Town Plan Community Forum many residents expressed interest in working towards a more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable community. Sustainability is difficult to define or measure. It generally involves the responsible and thoughtful use of resources to ensure that future generations of Falls Village residents will have a clean and functioning environment, models of how to work productively together to address community issues, and not left burdened with financial debt from previous generations.

The goals and strategies listed below provide a few ideas on how residents may work towards this idea of sustainability. They include promoting environmental awareness and responsible use of energy and supporting economic activities that help to increase revenues at the same time that town funding is spent to reduce debt left to future generations.

The economic initiatives discussed under Vision #2 that support business development and activity, as well as those discussed under Vision #1 which enhance community spirit could be thought of as helping to achieve this planning vision as well.

#### PV#4, Goal 1: Promote environmental awareness and energy efficiency in Falls Village.

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Participate in regional energy efficiency programs.				NWCD	
Promote recycling through Town publications and coordination with waste haulers.					
Seek funding or low cost/no cost programs for energy efficiency audits in Town facilities and operations.					
Support educational programming that will support energy efficiency and environmental awareness.				BOE	
Explore “Transition Initiatives” as part of the “Transition Town Movement” to increase local self reliance and resilience in the face of national & global challenges such as peak oil, climate change, and the economic crisis.					transitionus.org

## Planning Visions for Falls Village *continued*

The Town of Canaan, Falls Village is the second smallest town in Connecticut by size of population. Therefore it makes good sense that the Town partners with other surrounding towns to provide some services in a more cost-effective manner. The goals and strategies listed below encourage the town to continue this.

### **PV#4, Goal 2: Support and participate in cost-saving regional services and planning efforts.**

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Maintain membership in the Regional Health District.					
Maintain membership in the Northwestern CT Regional Planning Collaborative.					
Continue to support NWCT Conservation District.					
Monitor and support the existing Regional High School, Regional Special Education Services, Regional Administration services and Regional Band, while being open to other cost-saving regional educational initiatives.					
Identify and implement necessary emergency preparedness improvements, including regional planning and implementation.				VFD	

### **PV#4, Goal 3: Support economic and fiscal stability (see also Vision #2).**

Strategies	PZC	IWCC	BOS	Other	Comments
Continue efforts to increase the amount of State aid to Falls Village.					
Continue to identify and pursue grants from various public and private sources.					
Continue to support NWCT Conservation District.				PRC	

# Appendix A

## Town Plan Strategy Implementation Meetings 2013–2023

---

**Goal of Implementation Meetings:** to revisit the Plan’s strategies with the Town Boards and Commissions who have been identified as the lead in implementing them in the strategies tables in Section IV of this Plan. A meeting would be held every other year during the ten year life of this Plan. At these meetings each board and commission can give updates on the progress it has made on these strategies and update or change them as conditions change.

### **Meeting Schedule:**

Meetings should be held at a time when at least one representative from each Town Board and Commission can be in attendance. The Planning & Zoning Commission will host these meetings and provide two months notice of them to the other Town boards/commissions. Each board/commission will be asked to bring with them an update on the strategies that they have been asked to take the lead on (*see tables*) and comments on what should be updated, changed, or added to these strategies.

The meetings will be held in:

- February 2015
- February 2017
- February 2019
- February 2021
- February 2023

In addition to the Town Plan Strategy Implementation meetings the Planning & Zoning Commission will hold with the other Town boards and commissions every two years, the Planning & Zoning Commission will review and update the Town Plan strategies every year at it’s October meeting.

### **Sample agenda:**

1. Review progress to date on each strategy listed in the strategy tables (board/commission listed as lead for each strategy will be asked to comment)
2. Discuss other strategies which should be added to these tables to help the Town meet its goals and visions as described in this Plan. For any new strategies a lead board/ commission should be identified.
3. Discuss the volunteer or financial resources that are needed to help each board/commission carry out the strategies over the next 2 years until the next implementation meeting.

*Handouts:* Strategies tables from Plan (Section IV)

*Meeting deliverable:* Updated tables sent to all boards/ commissions after each strategy implementation meeting



# Appendix B — 2013 Plan Update

## State and Regional Plan Consistency per CGS 8-23

---

### **Growth Management Principles (CGS §8-23)**

The State of Connecticut has adopted a series of Growth Management Principles, intended to provide a consistent framework for municipal, regional, and State Plans. The strategies laid out in the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development, as supplemented by this 2013 Plan Update, are consistent with those principles, as well as the policies in the current State Plan, including the land use categories provided on the State Locational Guide Map.

#### ***Redevelopment and Revitalization of Commercial Centers and Areas of Mixed Uses***

- The 2013 Plan Update provides a series of strategies aimed at revitalizing the village center, addressing business growth opportunities, infrastructure needs and maintaining the natural and historic character of the village center.

#### ***Expansion of Housing Opportunities and Design Choices***

- The 2013 Plan Update include strategies to increase the availability and diversity of housing opportunities in Falls Village, through regulatory, administrative and private efforts.

#### ***Concentration of Development Around Transportation Nodes and Corridors***

- Falls Village does not have what are generally considered “transportation nodes or corridors,” although the Plan Update recognizes the relative importance of Route 7 and the future potential of the existing Housatonic rail line.

#### ***Conservation and Restoration of the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources and Existing Farmlands***

- Falls Village has long recognized the importance of its natural, cultural and agricultural resources, and one of the planning visions in the Plan Update is to “support farming, forestry, and natural resources” with specific strategies.

***Protection of Critical Environmental Assets***

- As noted above, the Falls Village Plan recognizes and strongly supports efforts to protect environmental assets in the Town.

***Integration of Planning Across All Levels of Government***

- This Plan Update recognizes the increasing need for regional cooperation and collaboration, and provides strategies to continue and strengthen the Town's participation in such regional efforts, including its leadership role with the Northwestern Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative and its participation on regional economic development strategies, regional planning agency work, the regional school system and other intra-town cooperation.

**State Conservation and Development Policies Plan Locational Guide Map**

The 2013 Plan Update establishes goals and strategies that are fully consistent with the policies for each of the land use categories identified in the State Location Guide Map. In Falls Village, five such categories are identified: Rural Community Center, Existing Preserved Open Space, Preservation Area, Conservation Area and Rural Lands.

The planning visions in the 2013 Plan Update emphasize the need to support the Town's farming, forestry, and natural resources, all components of the State Plan conservation policies that apply to most of the area of Falls Village. The planning visions also address the importance of the village center (coincident with the Rural Community Center designation) with strategies to enhance the village center vitality, encourage community diversity and promote a sustainable community.

**Regional Plan of Conservation and Development Consistency**

This Plan Update has also considered, and is consistent with, the 2009 Plan of Conservation and Development by the NW Connecticut Council of Governments (“NWCCOG Plan”). The planning visions in the 2013 Plan Update are consistent with the applicable NWC-COG Plan Recommendations and will further that Plan’s recommendations for the Regional Planning Agency.

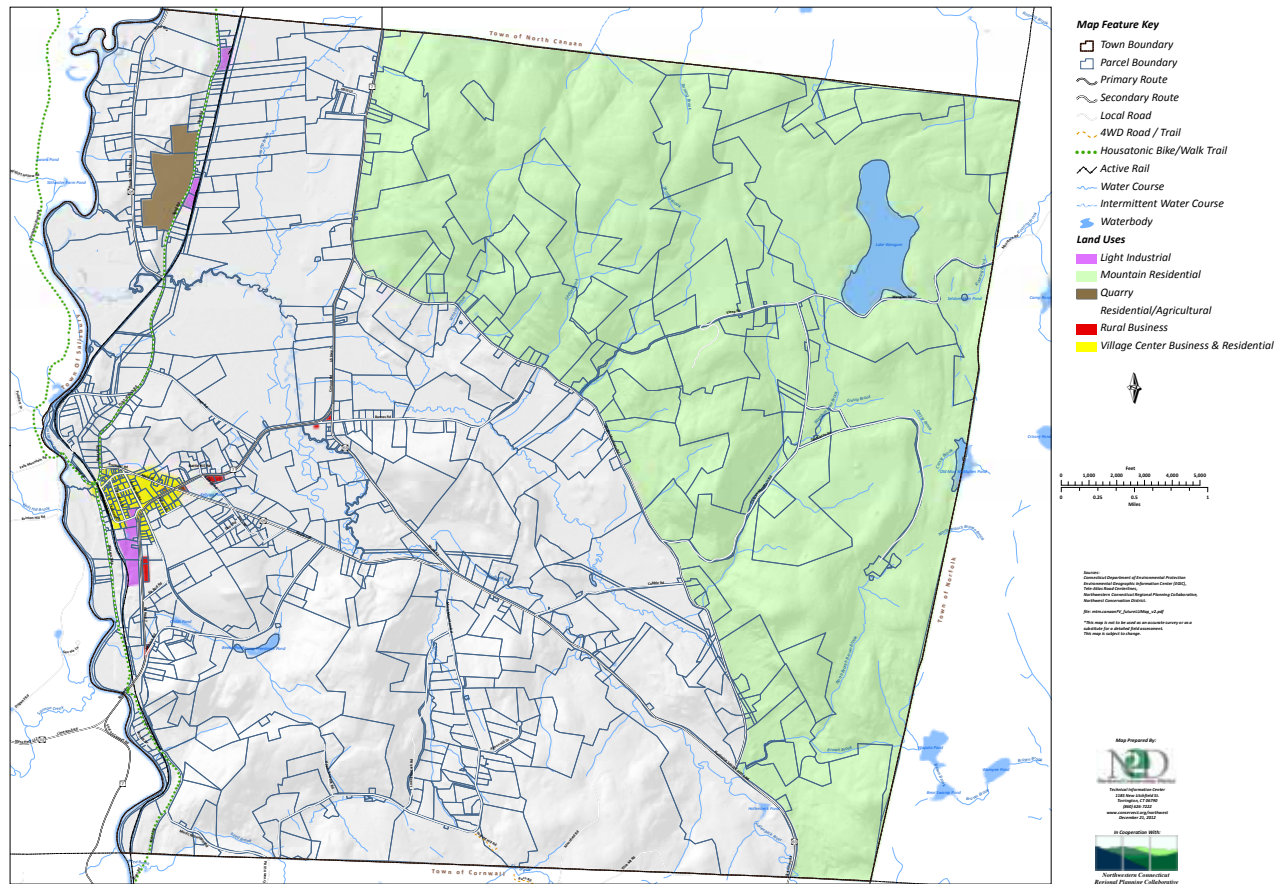
Specifically, the 2013 Plan Update supports the Regional Plan goals to preserve open space and agricultural land, and implement appropriate land use regulations. The Plan Update goals pertaining to housing diversity and affordability support the Regional Plan’s housing recommendations with goals to encourage community diversity.

Economic development concerns, both local and regional, are reflected in the 2013 Plan Update strategies designed to enhance the Village Center’s vitality and to continue working with the NW Connecticut Regional Planning Collaborative. The 2013 Plan Update emphasizes the importance of protecting agricultural and natural resources, consistent with the Regional Plan’s natural resources recommendations. Infrastructure and transportation issues, while of less significance from a regional perspective, are also addressed in the Plan Update goals to establish new public safety facilities, address wastewater limitations in the village center, improve the village streetscape and support the potential re-use of the Housatonic Railroad.



# Appendix C

## Future Land Use Map



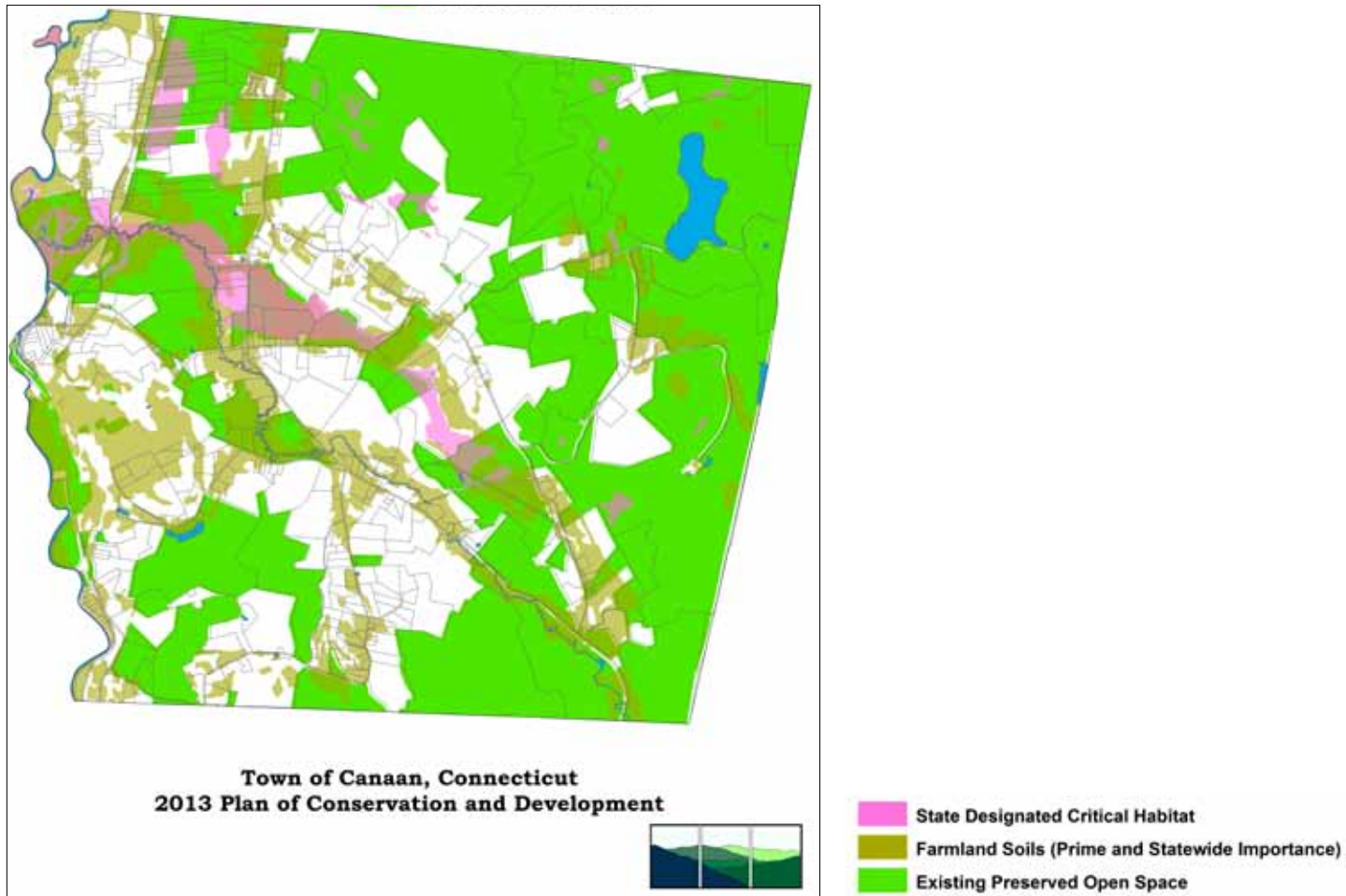
**Canaan / Falls Village, CT**

**Future Land Use Map**

# Appendix D

## Conservation Resources Map

---



# Acknowledgements

---

The Town of Canaan 2013 Plan of Conservation & Development is an update from the previous plan submitted in 2002.

The present plan was prepared by the following members of the Planning & Zoning Commission:

Fred Laser, *Chairman*

Greg Bidou

Jody Bronson

Vincent Inconiglios

Stephen Koshland

Alice Macchi

Greg Marlowe

Tom Scott

Ruth Skovron

Adam Sher

The Commission would like to acknowledge contributions from the following organizations and individuals:

Board of Selectmen

Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission

Board of Education

Michael O'Neil, *Zoning Enforcement Officer*

Historical Society

Parks & Recreation Commission

The residents of Canaan/Falls Village

*Mapping assistance provided by:*

Northwest Conservation District

*Design assistance by:*

Jim Carroll, *BlueBelleLou*

Donna Raftery, *Apptex International*

*Professional planning assistance, guidance,  
and logistical support was provided by:*



*The NWCT Regional Planning Collaborative:*

Jocelyn Ayer

Chris Wood