

# Today's Speakers

- Stephen Roy, P.G., NH DES Drinking Water & Groundwater Bureau  
(603) 271-0660, [stephen.roy@des.nh.gov](mailto:stephen.roy@des.nh.gov)
- Robert Tardif, P.E., NH DES Subsurface Systems Bureau  
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Spring Planning & Zoning Conference 2022

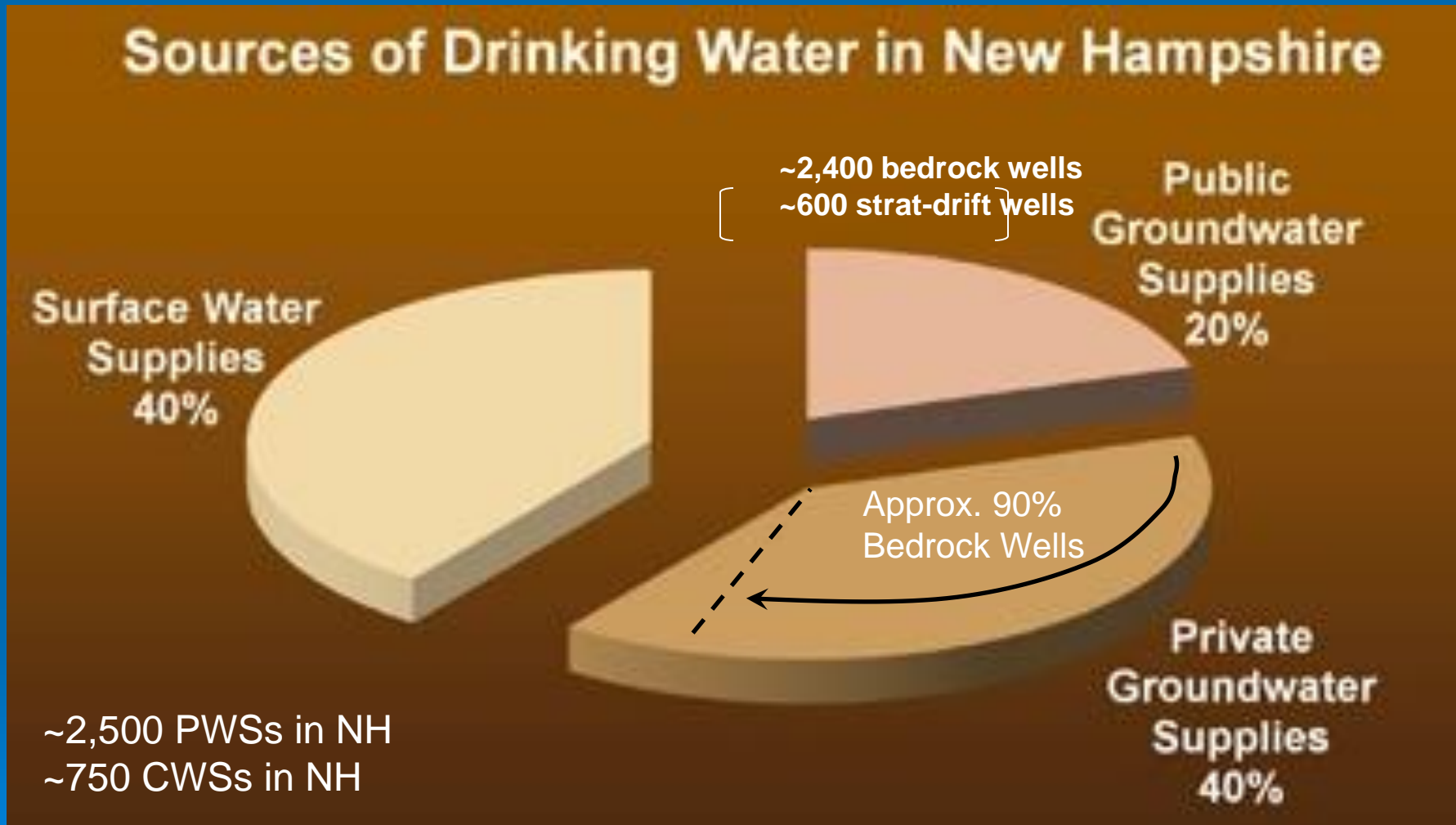
# Private and Public Well Siting Standards

**Stephen Roy, P.G.**

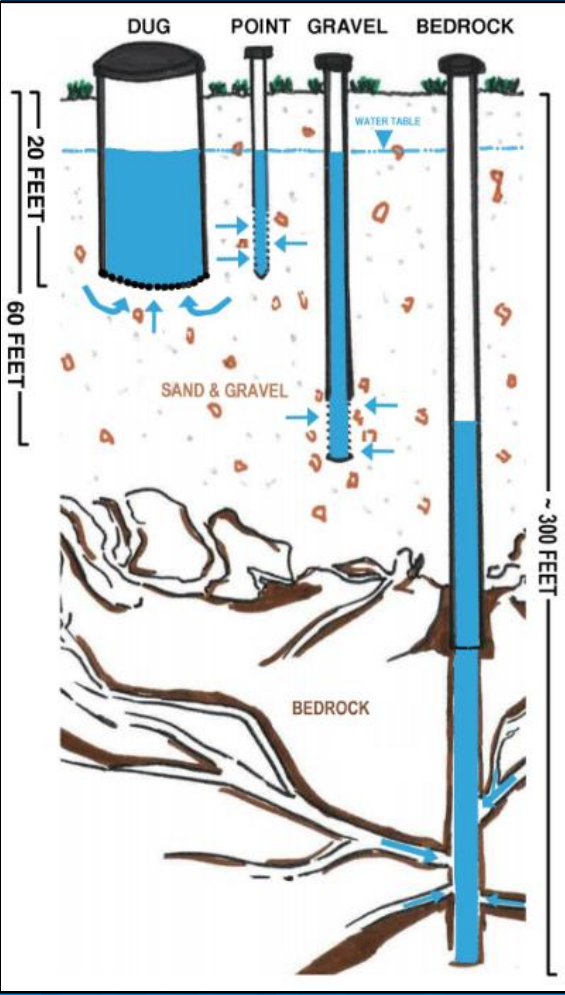
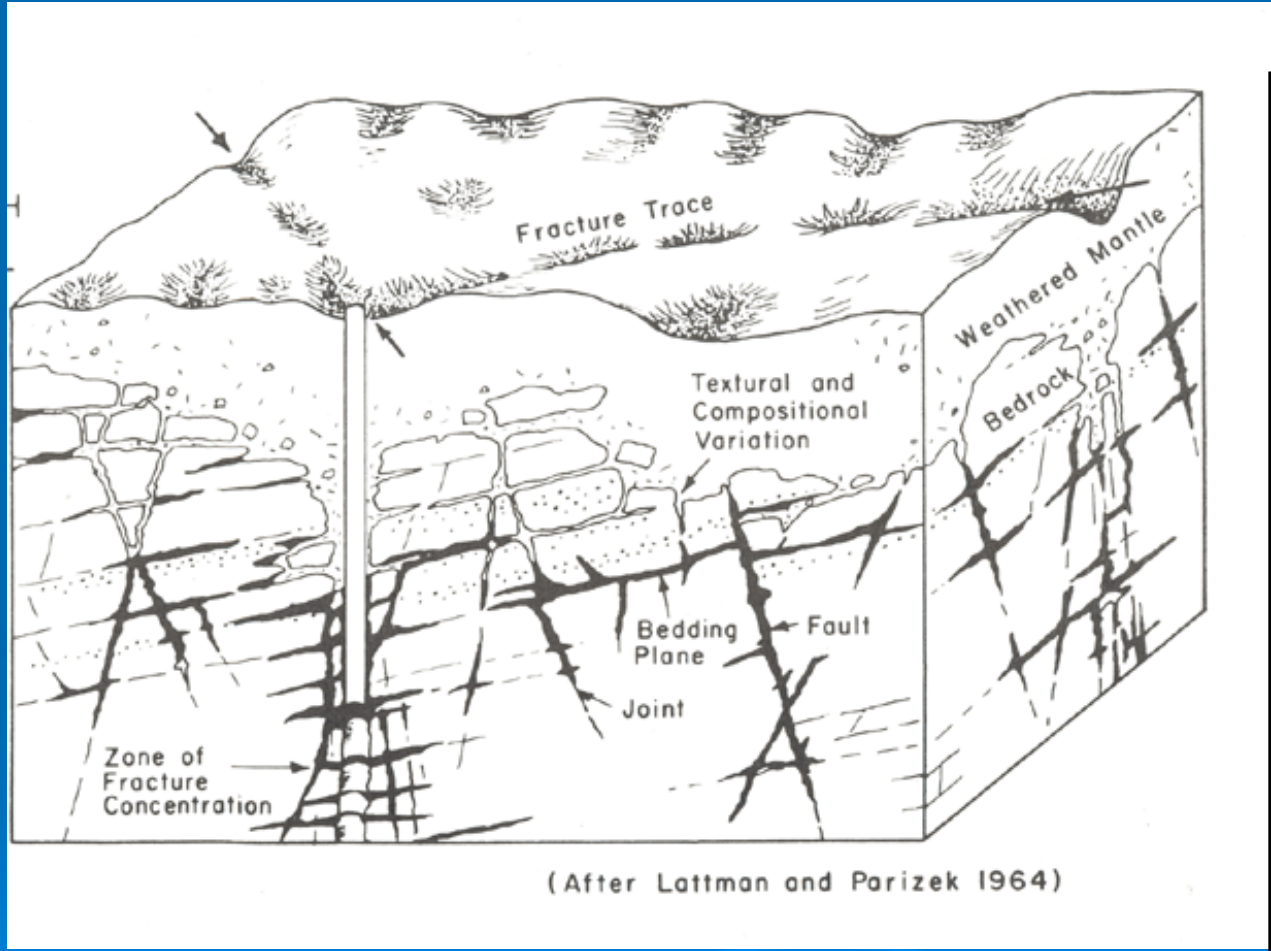
*NHDES, Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau*

[Stephen.Roy@des.nh.gov](mailto:Stephen.Roy@des.nh.gov)

# Where Does NH get its Drinking Water?

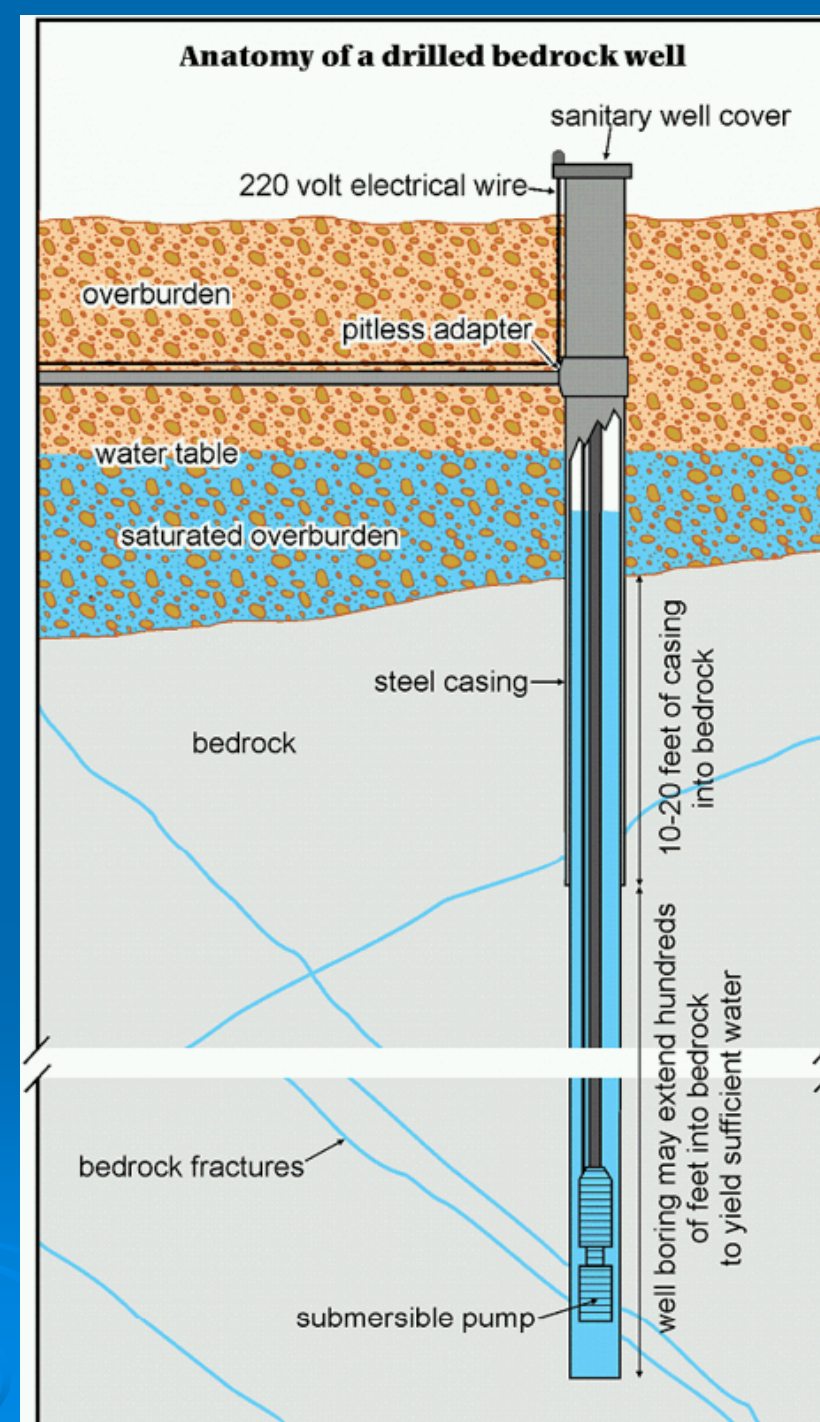


# Private Wells in NH



## Bedrock Water Supply Well Basics:

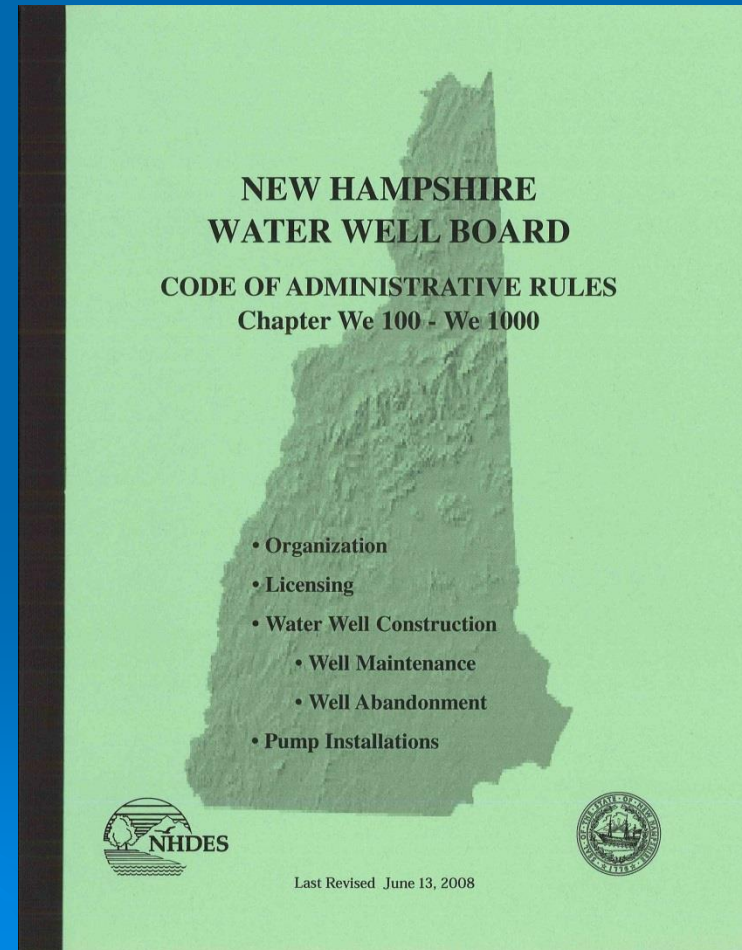
- Casing installed into competent rock
- Option to grout between casing and ground
- Water flow through fractures
- Submersible pumps



# NH Water Well Construction Standards

## NH State Water Well Board

- Driller and Pump Installer Licensing Authority
- Establishes well construction and pump installation and materials standards
- Establishes well siting standards
- Well Completion Reports
- Consumer Protection



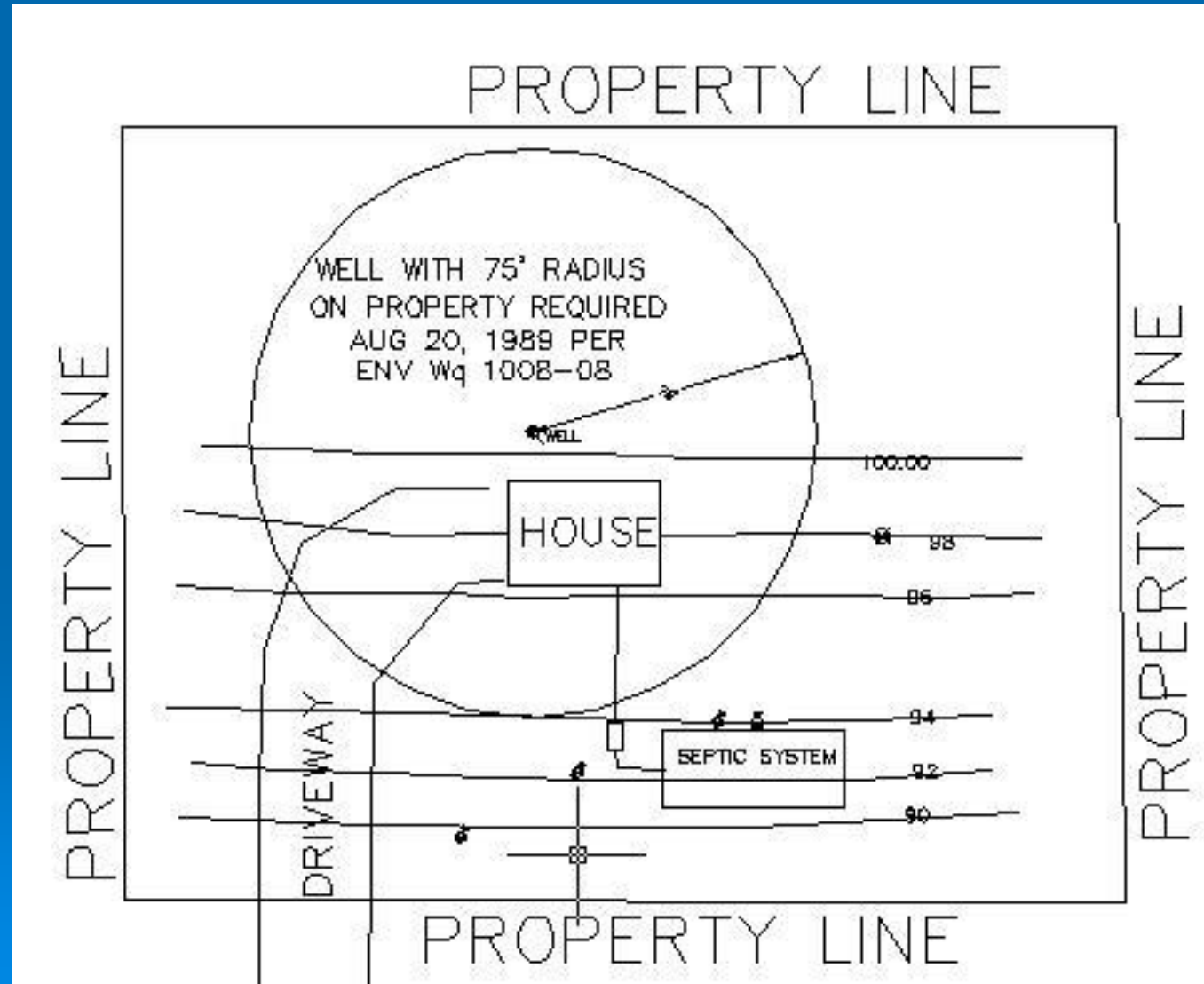
# Private Well Setbacks

- Well Siting needs to align with SSB approval
- Frequent site feature conflicts
- Small lots, steep slopes, surface water, etc.
- Reductions are conditionally allowed

RESIDENTIAL DRINKING WATER WELL LOCATION SETBACKS	
Entity	Setback (feet)
Effluent Disposal Area (leach field/bed)	75 <sup>1</sup>
Septic Tank	75 <sup>2</sup>
Property Boundary	75
Livestock Pen	75 (100 for dug wells)
Automobile Salvage Yard	75
Underground Storage Tanks (containing gasoline fuel)	250
Storage of Regulated Substance (except gasoline fuel)	75
Solid Waste Disposal Site	75
Bulk Storage of Material (ex. fertilizer, manure, salt)	75
Stump Dump	75 <sup>3</sup>
State Highway Right-of-Way	50 <sup>4</sup>
Sewer Component	50 <sup>5</sup>
Surface Water / Swamp	50 <sup>6</sup>
Public Road Surface	75 <sup>7</sup>
Other Sources of Contamination	75

# Protective Well Radius

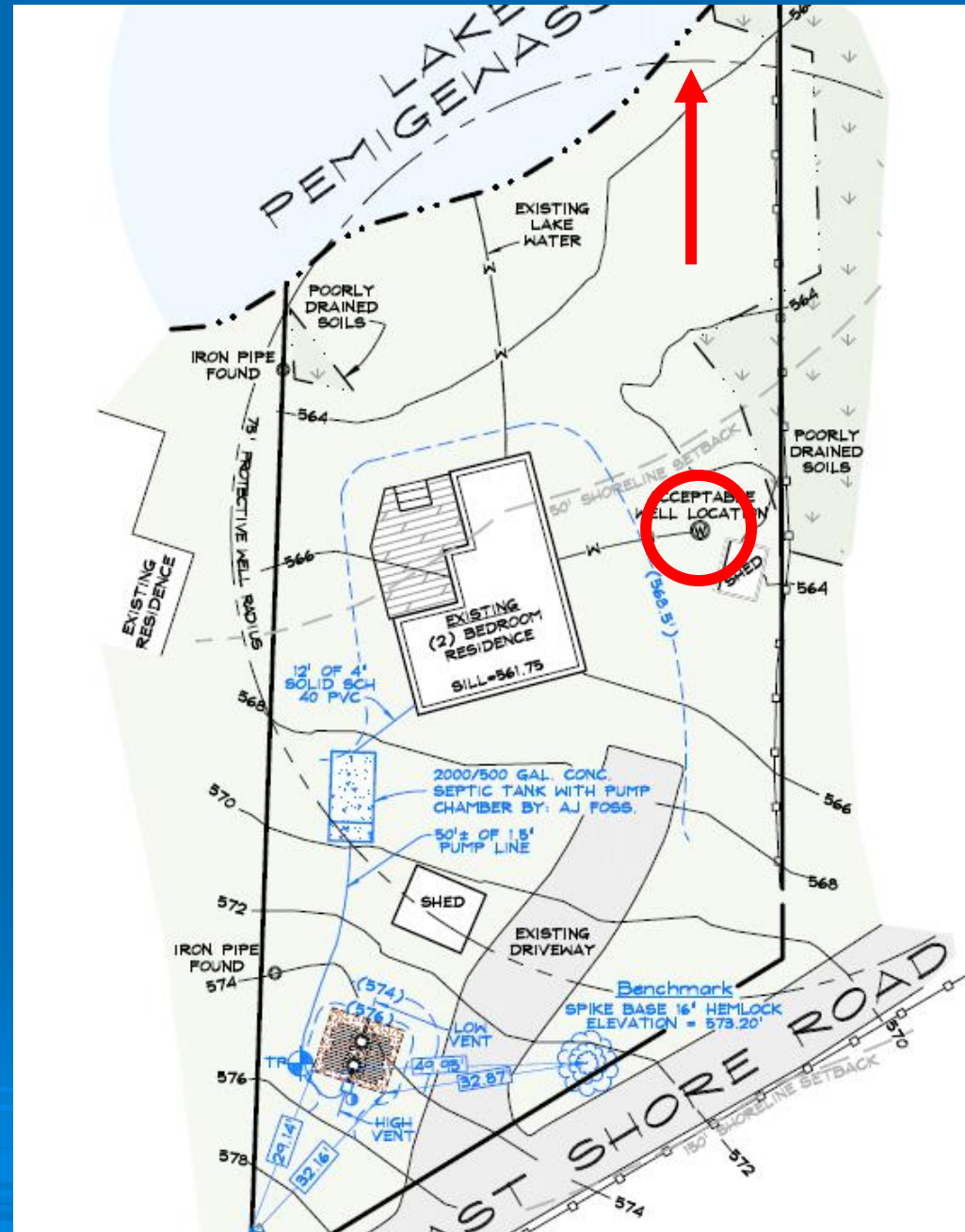
RSA 485-A:30-b



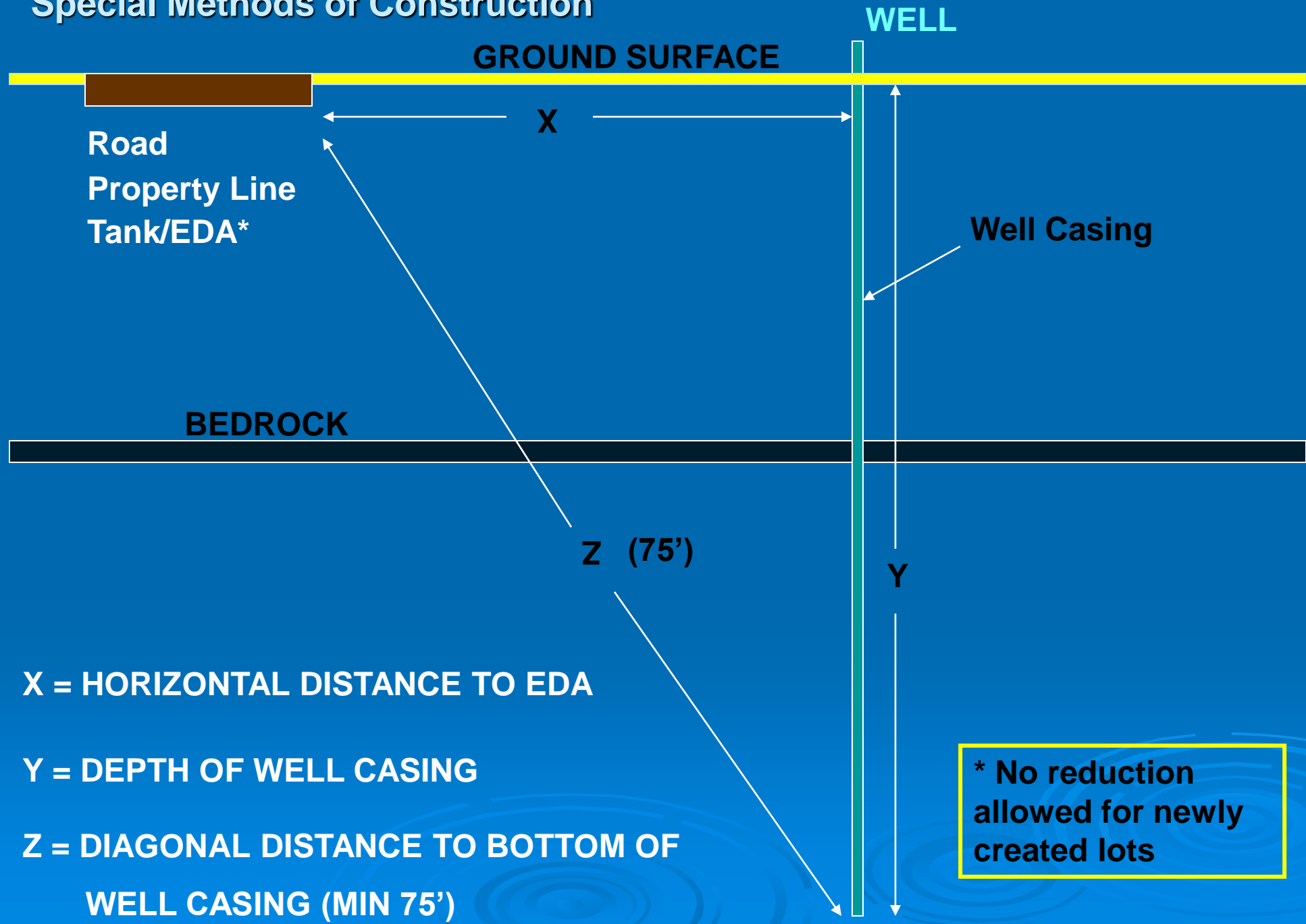


# Non-conforming locations

- Driller, SSB designer and owner consult when well cannot be located per site plan to choose alternate location
- Approved plan requires amendment
- Special methods of construction required
- Requires setback reduction form



# Special Methods of Construction



**X = HORIZONTAL DISTANCE TO EDA**

**Y = DEPTH OF WELL CASING**

**Z = DIAGONAL DISTANCE TO BOTTOM OF WELL CASING (MIN 75')**

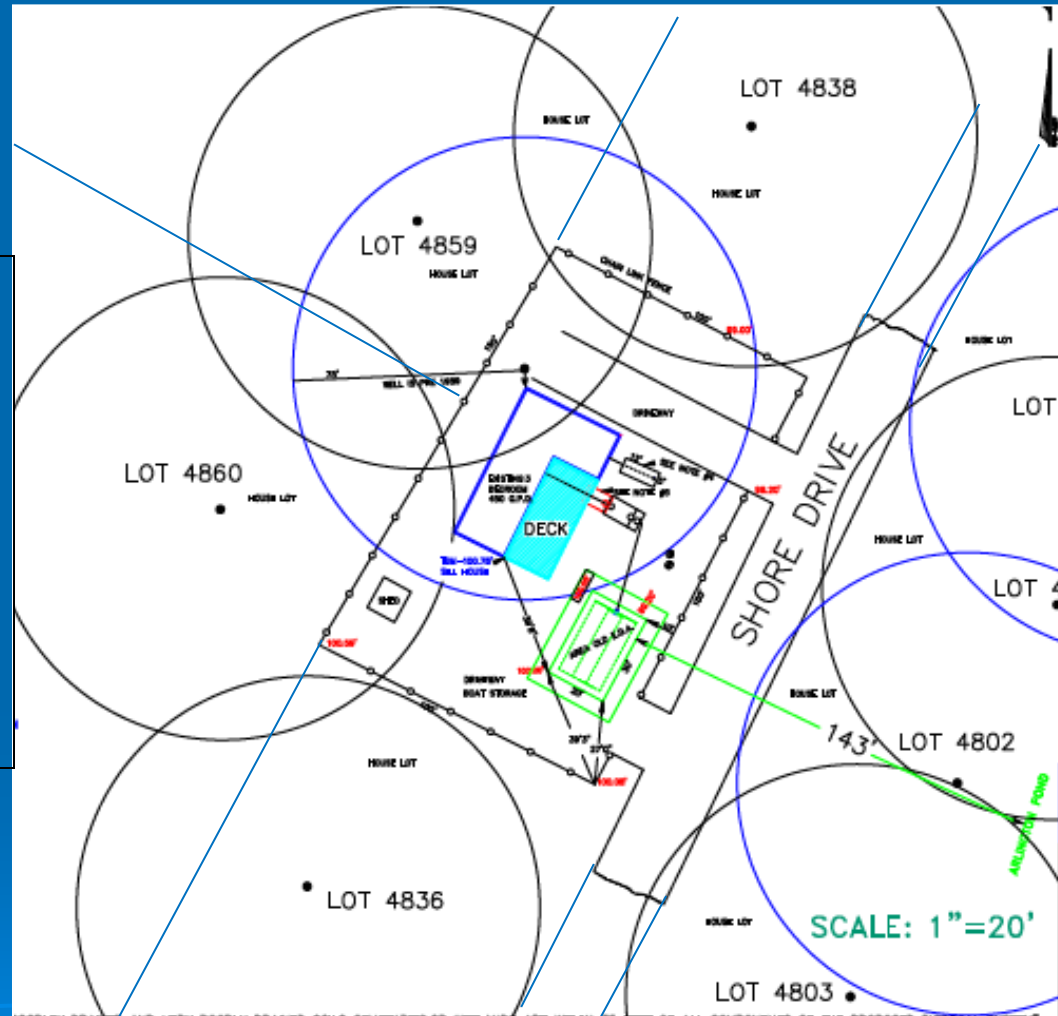
**\* No reduction allowed for newly created lots**

**Table 602-1**  
**Horizontal Setbacks and Minimum Casing Length**

<b><u>Horizontal Setback [Ft]</u></b>	<b><u>Required Minimum Casing Length [Ft]</u></b>
<b>75 or greater</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>70 to 74</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>65 to 69</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>60 to 64</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>55 to 59</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>50 to 54</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>45 to 49</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>40 to 44</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>35 to 39</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>30 to 34</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>25 to 29</b>	<b>71</b>

# Overlapping Well Radii

- Allowed but not encouraged
- Identified on SSB application
- Requires standard release form



# Private Well Testing

- No State Requirements
- Suggestion only
- State support for some (VOCs – PFAS)
- Treatment Guidance

## Contaminants and Testing Frequency

Testing Frequency	
<b>Standard Analysis</b> Arsenic Bacteria Chloride Copper Fluoride Hardness Iron Lead Manganese Nitrate/Nitrite pH Sodium Uranium	Every 3 to 5 years (except for bacteria and nitrate, which are recommended yearly)
<b>Radiological Analysis</b> Radon Uranium Analytical Gross Alpha	Every 3 to 5 years
<b>PFAS</b>	Every 3 to 5 years
<b>VOCs</b>	Every 3 to 5 years

# The NHDES Be *Well* Informed Guide

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH AND HOME

INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR  
TREATING YOUR WELL WATER



## ➤ Routine Water Analysis

	Units		Units
Arsenic (As)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	Lead (Pb)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼
Chloride (Cl)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	Lead, Stagnant (Pb)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼
Copper (Cu)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	Manganese (Mn)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼
Copper, Stagnant (Cu)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	Nitrate-N	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼
Fluoride (F)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	Nitrite-N	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼
Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	pH	<input type="text"/> units ▼
Iron (Fe)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼	Sodium (Na)	<input type="text"/> mg/L ▼

# Community Wells in NH

***Community Water System (CWS):*** A public water system that supplies water to the same population (25 or more people or 15 or more service connections) year-round.

- Requirements for Community Water Systems are established by both the state and federal Safe Drinking Water Act
- CWS Source and Design Requirements established by:
  - Env-Dw 302/305 : *Large/Small Production Wells for Small Community Water Systems*
  - Env-Dw 404/405 : *Design Standards for Large/Small Public Water Systems*

***Small Community Water System = population less than 1,000***  
***Large Community Water System = population greater than 1,000***

# Community Well location and protective radius criteria

## Well location and Sanitary Protective Area (SPA) radii must be:

- On land that's fully owned or controlled (via easement) by the CWS owner, no overlap onto abutting property unless cons. land
- Fully maintained in its natural state with no changes other than well
- Have no structures other than water supply related
- Receive no discharge from drainage features for stormwater or runoff
- Have no utilities other than those needed for well and water system

## Radius of SPA based on the required production volume per the size of CWS

### Example:

-15 X 3 BR homes: 45 BR

-150 gpd per BR = 6,750 gpd  
(design flow)

-6,750 gpd X 2 = **13,500 gpd**  
(production volume)

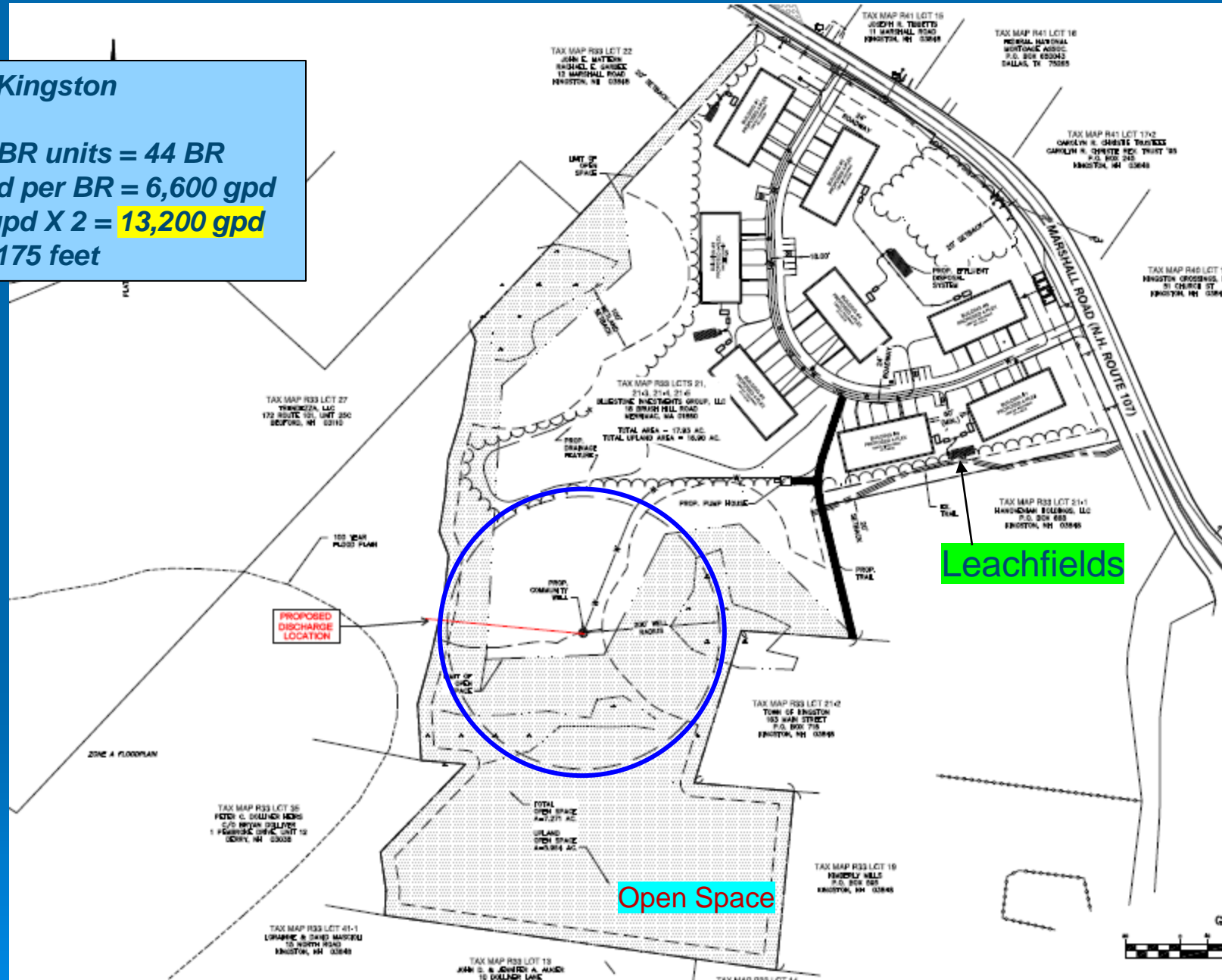
Table 302-1 Sanitary Protective Area Radii

Permitted Production Volume (gallons in a 24-hour period)	Radius (feet)
less than 14,400	150
14,401 to 28,800	175
28,801 to 57,599	200
57,600 to 86,400	250
86,401 to 115,200	300
115,201 to 144,000	350
greater than 144,000	400



**Example: Kingston**

- 22 X 2 BR units = 44 BR
- 150 gpd per BR = 6,600 gpd
- 6,600 gpd X 2 = **13,200 gpd**
- SPA = 175 feet



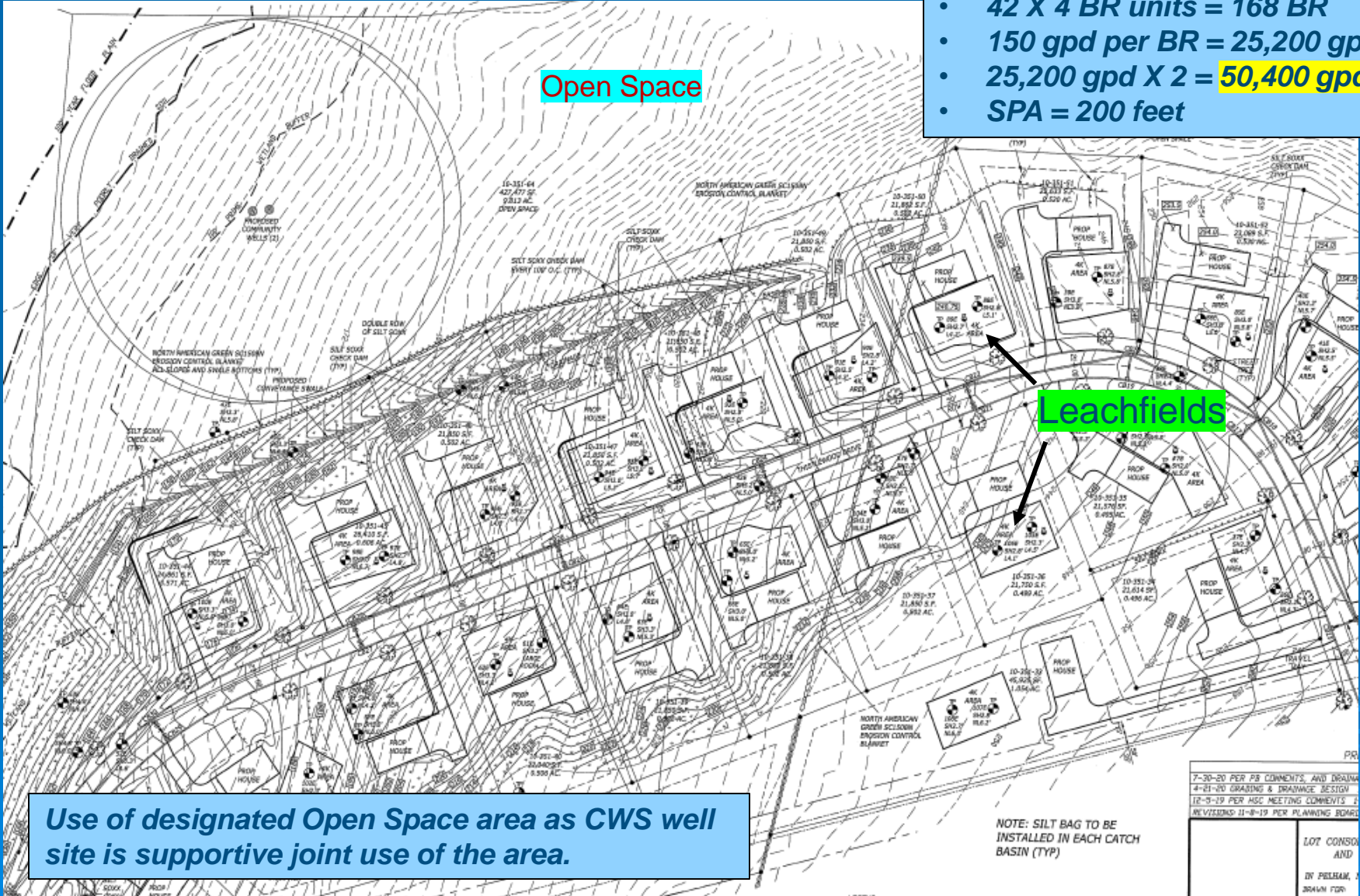
### Example: Pelham

- 42 X 4 BR units = 168 BR
- 150 gpd per BR = 25,200 gpd
- 25,200 gpd X 2 = **50,400 gpd**
- SPA = 200 feet



**Example: Pelham**

- 42 X 4 BR units = 168 BR
- 150 gpd per BR = 25,200 gpd
- 25,200 gpd X 2 = **50,400 gpd**
- SPA = 200 feet



# Community Well Water Quality

## EXTENSIVE Water quality sampling during new well permitting

- Identifies constituents that exceed drinking water standards
- Defines water system treatment requirements

## Scheduled and routine water quality sampling after first year of CWS activation

- Monitors treatment performance
- Assures public health standards are met
- Schedule varies per parameter
  - Weekly
  - Monthly
  - Annually
  - Per 3-years
  - Per 6-years
  - Per 9-years

- Inorganics (Fe, As, Mn)
- Radiological (U, Radon)
- Microbiological (E.coli)
- VOCs (gasoline, solvents)
- SVOCs (pest/herbicides)
- PCBs - Dioxins
- Microparticulates
- PFAS (per/poly-fluorinated)

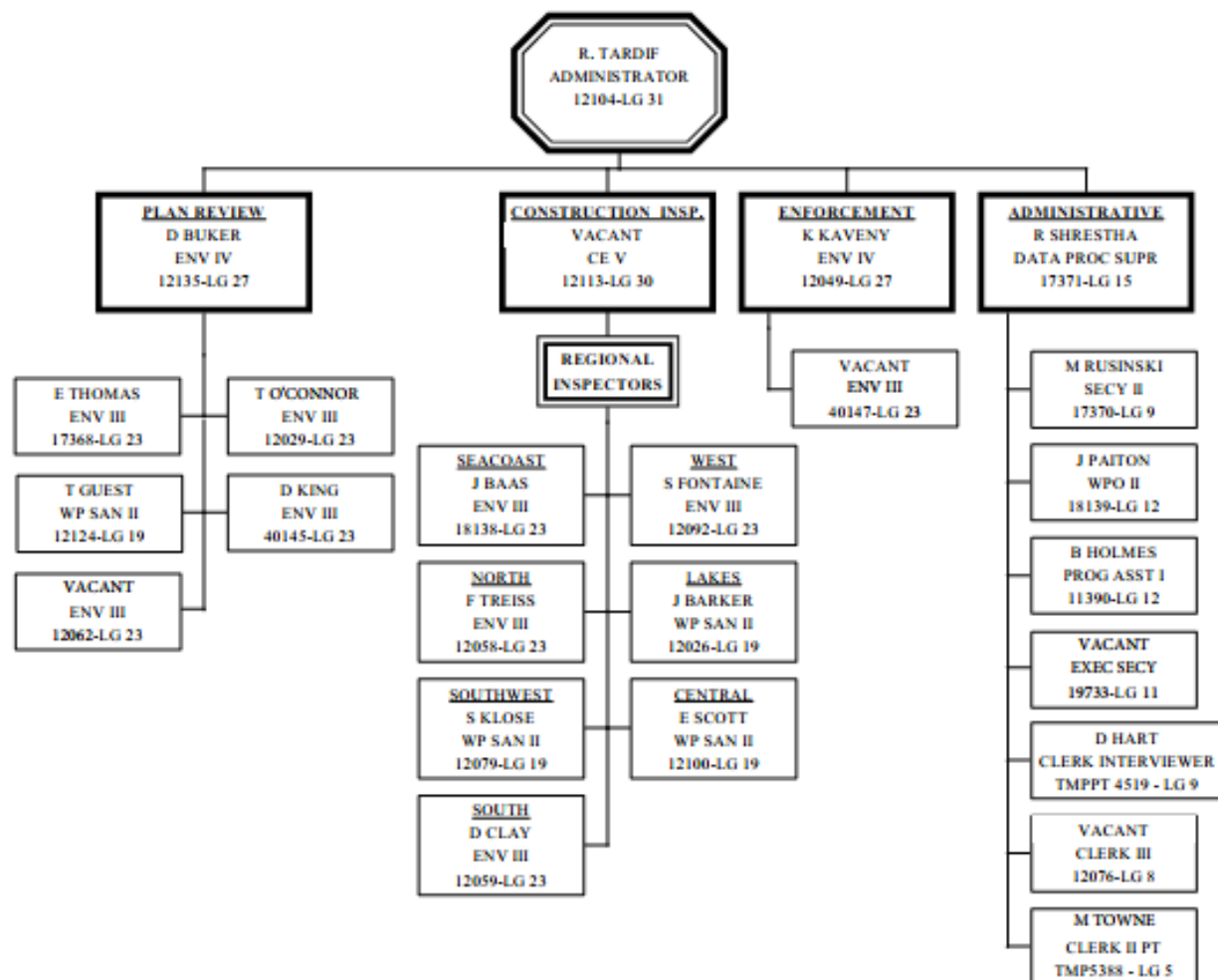


# Subsurface Systems Bureau Lot Sizing Requirements

Robert A. Tardif, P.E., Administrator  
Subsurface Systems Bureau  
New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

[robert.a.tardif@des.nh.gov](mailto:robert.a.tardif@des.nh.gov)

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
WATER DIVISION  
LAND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  
SUBSURFACE SYSTEMS BUREAU**



- The Subsurface Systems Bureau is responsible for the review and issuance or denial of permits that govern approximately two thirds of all development that occurs within the state of New Hampshire. In particular, the bureau is responsible for the following activities:
- Reviews applications for the subdivision of land and the design of septic systems (Approximately 7500 Approvals Per Year)

- Performs on-site inspections of all septic systems installed in order to ensure strict compliance with the approved plans. Also performed site check for every lot prior to subdivision approval.
- Implements and administers the program for permitting (licensing) both designers and installers of septic systems. Subdivision applications must include test pit data stamped by a permitted designer.



- Investigates written complaints received by the Department of Environmental Services relative to situations which are or may be causing degradation to water supplies, pollution to surface and groundwaters, or creating nuisances and potential health hazards.
- Coordinates other necessary permits involved in a particular project or development.

# AUTHORITY/HISTORY

- 1965 RSA 149-C “Island Rule” Required that any person proposing to construct a sewage disposal system on any island submit plans and specification for approval.
- 1967 RSA 149-E Required that any person proposing to construct a sewage disposal system within 1000’ of a surface water submit plans and specification for approval

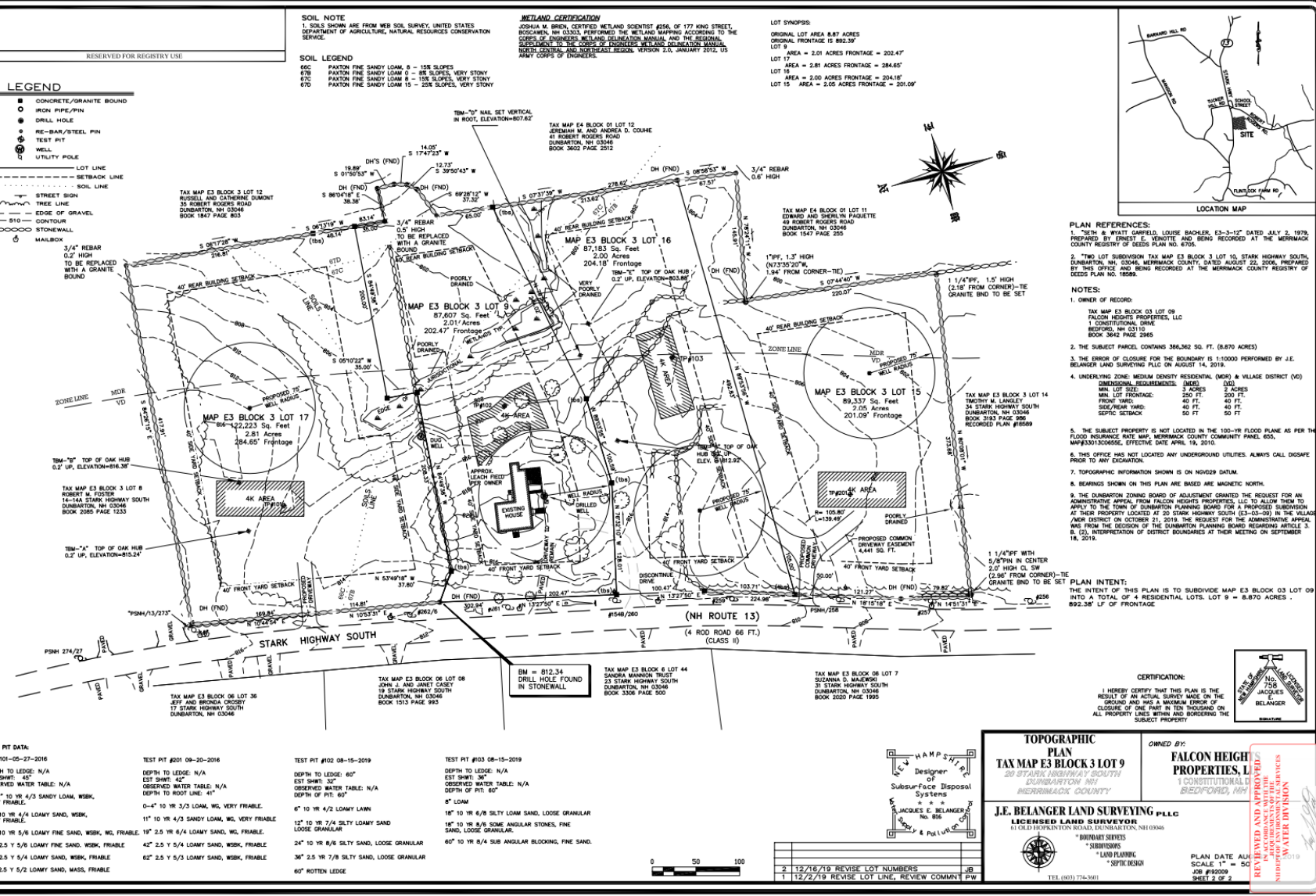
- 1971 RSA 149-E Amended to remove the term “Near Shorelines” thereby requiring that any person proposing to construct a sewage disposal system regardless of its location submit plans and specification for approval
- 1989 RSA 485-A codified.

# RSA 485-A:2 Definitions

- XIII. “Subdivision” means the division of a tract or parcel of land into 2 or more lots, tracts, or parcels for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of sale, rent, lease, building development, or any other reason....
- Allows for Lot Line Adjustments under certain conditions;
- Includes condominium conveyance, or other conveyance thereof;
- A re-subdivision in which previously approved lots are grouped together to form larger lots shall not be deemed a subdivision.

# LOT SIZING/LOADING

- ❑ RSA 485-A:29 - Any Lot Less Than 5 Acres, That Is Not Served By Public Sewer, Requires Subdivision Approval
- ❑ Lot Sizes Are Determined Individual Lot Characteristics (Soils, Wetlands, Slopes, Ledge, Water Supply...) And Are Based On The Lots Ability To Support/Manage The Sewage Load



**RESERVED FOR REGISTRY USE**

**LEGEND**

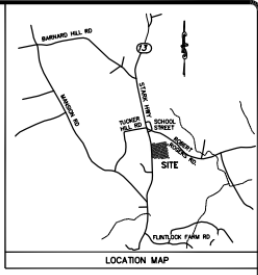
- CONCRETE/GRANITE BOUND
- IRON PIPE/PIN
- DRILL HOLE
- RE-BAR/STEEL PIN
- TEST PIT
- WELL
- UTILITY POLE
- LOT LINE
- - - - - SETBACK LINE
- SOIL LINE
- STREET SIGN
- TREE LINE
- EDGE OF GRAVEL
- S10
- CONTOUR
- STONEWALL
- MAILBOX

**SOIL NOTE**  
 1. 20% SHOWN ARE FROM WEB SOIL SURVEY, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE.

**SOIL LEGEND**  
 66C PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM, 8 - 15% SLOPES  
 67B PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM 0 - 8% SLOPES, VERY STONY  
 67C PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM 8 - 15% SLOPES, VERY STONY  
 67D PAXTON FINE SANDY LOAM 15 - 20% SLOPES, VERY STONY

**WETLAND CERTIFICATION**  
 JOHANNA M. BRINK, CERTIFIED WETLAND SCIENTIST #256, OF 177 KING STREET, BOSSCAMEN, NH 03311, PERFORMED THE WETLAND MAPPING ACCORDING TO THE CODES OF ENGINEERS WETLAND FIELD MANUAL AND THE REGIONAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE CODES OF PRACTICES IN WETLAND Delineation MANUAL, NORTHEAST CENTRAL REGION, VERSION 5.0, JANUARY 2012, US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS.

**LOT SYNOPSIS:**  
 ORIGINAL LOT AREA 8.87 ACRES  
 ORIGINAL FRONTAGE IS 892.39' LOT 9  
 LOT 9 AREA = 2.01 ACRES FRONTAGE = 202.47'  
 LOT 10 AREA = 2.81 ACRES FRONTAGE = 284.65'  
 LOT 11 AREA = 2.00 ACRES FRONTAGE = 204.18'  
 LOT 15 AREA = 2.05 ACRES FRONTAGE = 201.09'



**PLAN REFERENCES:**  
 1. "5TH & WYATT GARFIELD, LOUISE BAGLER, E3-3-12" DATED JULY 2, 1979, PREPARED BY ERNEST E. VENETTE AND BEING RECORDED AT THE MERRIMACK COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS PLAN NO. 6705.  
 2. "TWO LOT SUBDIVISION TAX MAP E3 BLOCK 3 LOT 10, STARK HIGHWAY SOUTH, DUNBARTON, NH 03046, MERRIMACK COUNTY, DATED AUGUST 23, 2006, PREPARED BY THIS OFFICE AND BEING RECORDED AT THE MERRIMACK COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS PLAN NO. 10588.

**NOTES:**  
 1. OWNER OF RECORD:  
 TAX MAP E3 BLOCK 03 LOT 09  
 FALCON HEIGHTS PROPERTIES, LLC  
 1 CONSTITUTIONAL DRIVE  
 BEDFORD, NH 03110  
 BOOK 3642 PAGE 2985  
 2. THE SUBJECT PARCEL CONTAINS 386,362 SQ. FT. (8.870 ACRES)  
 3. THE ERROR OF CLOSURE FOR THE BOUNDARY IS 1:10000 PERFORMED BY J.E. BELANGER LAND SURVEYING PLLC ON AUGUST 14, 2019.  
 4. UNDERLYING ZONE: MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR) & VILLAGE DISTRICT (VD)  
 DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS (MIN) (MAX)  
 MIN. LOT SIZE: 3 ACRES 500  
 MIN. LOT FRONTAGE: 250 FT. 200 FT.  
 FRONT YARD: 40 FT. 40 FT.  
 SIDE/REAR YARD: 40 FT. 40 FT.  
 SEPTIC SETBACK: 50 FT. 50 FT.  
 5. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS NOT LOCATED IN THE 100-YR FLOOD PLANE AS PER THE FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP, MERRIMACK COUNTY COMMAUNT PANEL 605, MAP#3301300656, EFFECTIVE DATE APRIL 19, 2010.  
 6. THIS OFFICE HAS NOT LOCATED ANY UNDERGROUND UTILITIES. ALWAYS CALL DIGSAFE PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATION.  
 7. TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHOWN IS ON NAVD83 DATUM.  
 8. BEARINGS SHOWN ON THIS PLAN ARE BASED ARE MAGNETIC NORTH.  
 9. THE DUNBARTON ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT GRANTED THE REQUEST FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL FROM FALCON HEIGHTS PROPERTIES, TO ALLOW THEM TO APPLY TO THE TOWN OF DUNBARTON PLANNING BOARD FOR A PROPOSED SUBDIVISION AT THEIR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 20 STARK HIGHWAY SOUTH (E3-03-09) IN THE VILLAGE /MDR DISTRICT ON OCTOBER 21, 2018. THE REQUEST FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL WAS FROM THE DECISION OF THE DUNBARTON PLANNING BOARD REGIONS ARTICLE 3, B. (2). INTERPRETATION OF DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AT THEIR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2019.

**PLAN INTENT:**  
 THE INTENT OF THIS PLAN IS TO SUBDIVIDE MAP E3 BLOCK 03 LOT 09 INTO A TOTAL OF 6 RESIDENTIAL LOTS. LOT 9 = 8.870 ACRES - 892.38' LF OF FRONTAGE

**CERTIFICATION:**  
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN IS THE RESULT OF AN ACTUAL SURVEY MADE ON THE GROUND AND HAS A MAXIMUM ERROR OF CLOSURE OF ONE PART IN TEN THOUSAND ON ALL PROPERTY LINES WITHIN AND BORDERING THE SUBJECT PROPERTY.

**TEST PIT DATA:**  
 TP #101-05-27-2016  
 DEPTH TO LEDGE: N/A  
 EST SHWT: 42"  
 OBSERVED WATER TABLE: N/A  
 DEPTH OF PIT: 60"  
 0-12" 10 YR 4/3 SANDY LOAM, WSK, VERY FRABLE  
 12" 10 YR 4/4 LOAMY SAND, WSK, VERY FRABLE  
 32" 10 YR 5/8 LOAMY FINE SAND, WSK, W/CL FRABLE  
 37" 2.5 Y 5/4 LOAMY FINE SAND, WSK, FRABLE  
 45" 2.5 Y 5/4 LOAMY SAND, WSK, FRABLE  
 61" 2.5 Y 5/2 LOAMY SAND, MASS, FRABLE

**TEST PIT #201-08-20-2016**  
 DEPTH TO LEDGE: N/A  
 EST SHWT: 42"  
 OBSERVED WATER TABLE: N/A  
 DEPTH OF PIT: 41"  
 0-4" 10 YR 3/3 LOAM, W/CL, VERY FRABLE  
 11" 10 YR 3/3 SANDY LOAM, W/CL, VERY FRABLE  
 19" 2.5 Y 6/4 LOAMY SAND, W/CL, FRABLE  
 42" 2.5 Y 4/4 LOAMY SAND, WSK, FRABLE  
 62" 2.5 Y 5/3 LOAMY SAND, WSK, FRABLE

**TEST PIT #102-08-15-2019**  
 DEPTH TO LEDGE: 60"  
 EST SHWT: 36"  
 OBSERVED WATER TABLE: N/A  
 DEPTH OF PIT: 60"  
 6" 10 YR 4/2 LOAMY LAWN  
 12" 10 YR 7/4 SILTY LOAMY SAND  
 LOOSE GRANULAR  
 24" 10 YR 8/6 SILTY SAND, LOOSE GRANULAR  
 36" 2.5 Y 7/8 SILTY SAND, LOOSE GRANULAR  
 60" ROTTEN LEDGE

**TEST PIT #103-08-15-2019**  
 DEPTH TO LEDGE: N/A  
 EST SHWT: 36"  
 OBSERVED WATER TABLE: N/A  
 DEPTH OF PIT: 60"  
 8" 10 YR 8/6 SILTY LOAM SAND, LOOSE GRANULAR  
 18" 10 YR 8/6 SOME ANGULAR STONES, FINE SAND, LOOSE GRANULAR.  
 60" 10 YR 8/4 SUB ANGULAR BLOCKING, FINE SAND.



2	12/16/19	REVISE LOT NUMBERS	JB
1	12/27/19	REVISE LOT LINE, REVIEW COMMENT PW	

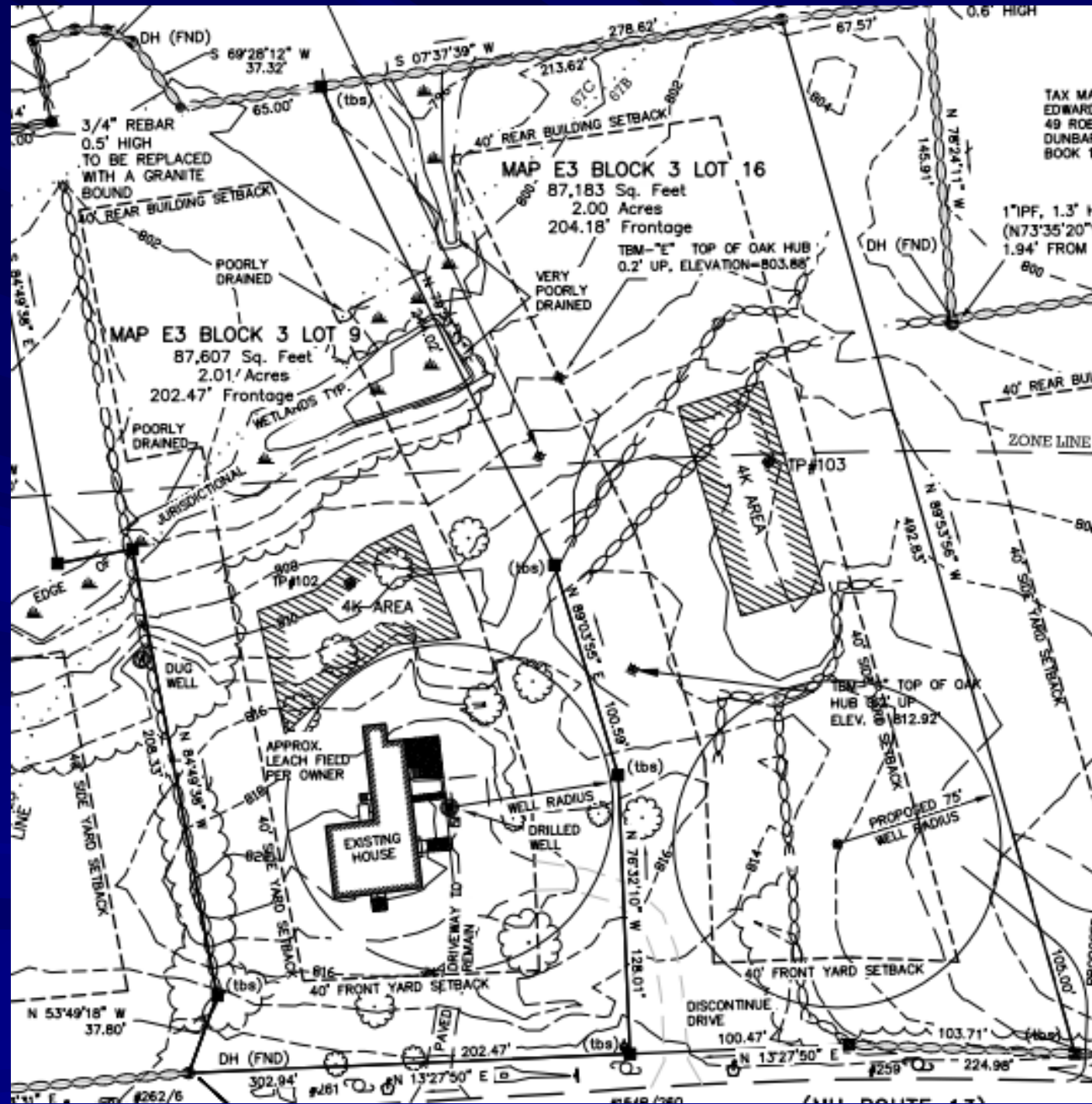
**TOPOGRAPHIC PLAN**  
**TAX MAP E3 BLOCK 3 LOT 9**  
 20 STARK HIGHWAY SOUTH  
 DUNBARTON, NH  
 MERRIMACK COUNTY

**OWNED BY:**  
**FALCON HEIGHTS PROPERTIES, LLC**  
 1 CONSTITUTIONAL DRIVE  
 BEDFORD, NH

**J.E. BELANGER LAND SURVEYING, PLLC**  
 61 OLD HOPKINTON RD., LITTLETON, NH 03046  
 \* INDEPENDENT SURVEYS  
 \* SURVEYS  
 \* LAND PLANNING  
 \* SEPTIC DESIGN

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED:**  
 JACQUES E. BELANGER  
 LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR  
 NO. 816  
 STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
 WATER DIVISION  
 12/16/2019  
 SHEET 2 OF 2

TEL: (603) 734-5941



TAX MAP  
 EDWARD  
 49 ROB  
 DUNBAR  
 BOOK 1

171PF, 1.3' H  
 (N73°35'20" W)  
 1.94' FROM  
 600

40' REAR BUILDING SETBACK  
 ZONE LINE

TBM-"E" TOP OF OAK HUB  
 0.2' UP, ELEV. 812.92'

PROPOSED 75' WELL RADIUS

DISCONTINUE DRIVE

258' 224.98'

262/6 261 260 (ALL DIMENSIONS IN FEET)

- ❑ Lots Must Support A Minimum Of 600 Gallons Per Day. A One Acre Lot With The Best Soils Can Support 2000 Gallons Per Day
- ❑ Determined By Using The Formula
  - ❑ Lot Size = (Q (gpd)/2,000 (gpd/acre)) x sewage loading factor

Table 1005-1: Minimum Lot Size - Residential, 1 to 4 Bedrooms; Sewage Loading Factors

Soil Group→ Slope ↓	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>0-8% or A/B</b>	30,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.0	39,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.3	48,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.6	43,500 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.45	90,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 3.0	See (c)
<b>8-15% or C</b>	33,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.1	43,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.43	53,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.76	48,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.6	Not Applicable	See (c)
<b>15-25% or D</b>	36,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.2	46,800 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.56	62,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 2.08	52,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.73	Not Applicable	See (c)
<b>25-35% or E</b>	39,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.3	50,700 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.69	72,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 2.4	57,000 ft <sup>2</sup> 1.90	Not Applicable	See (c)

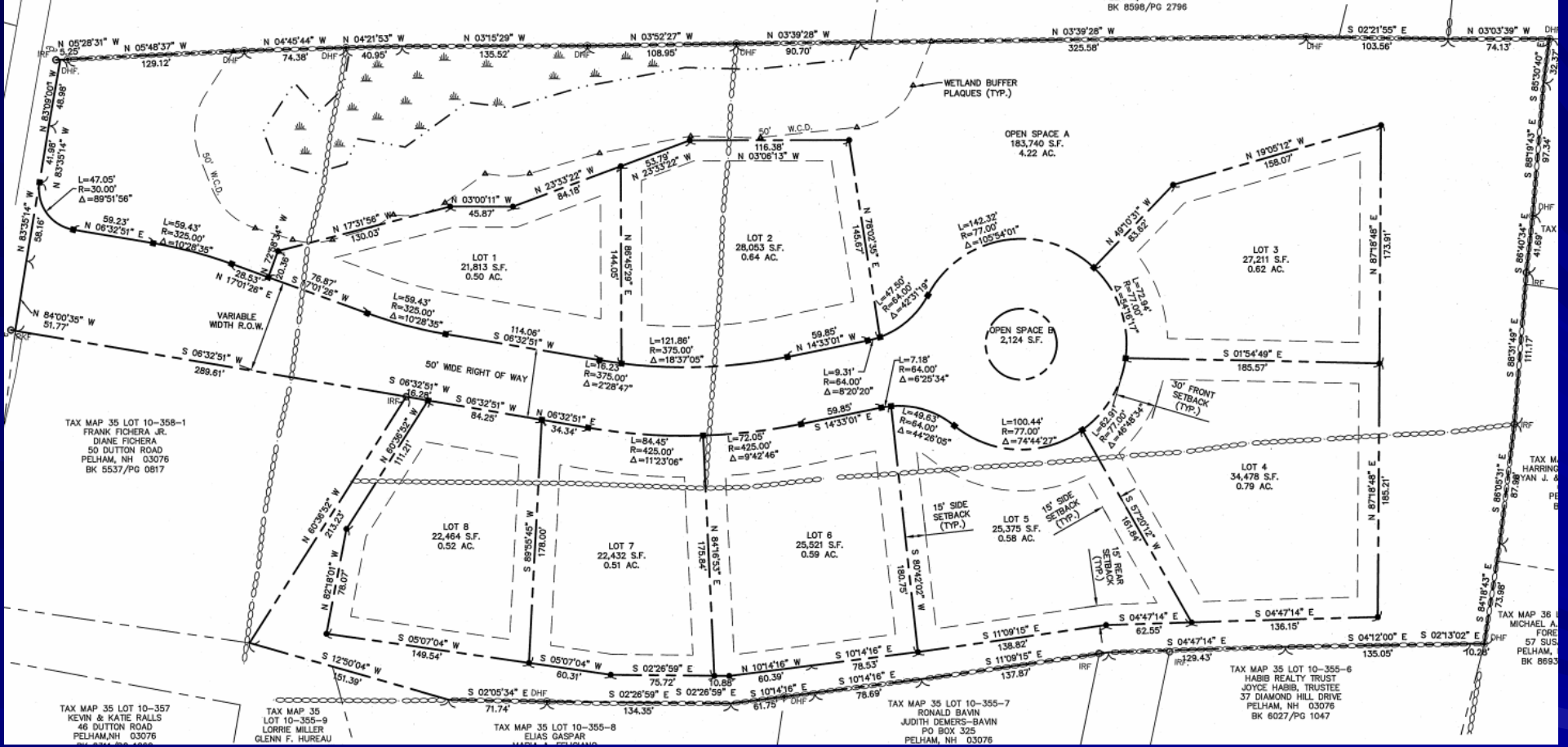


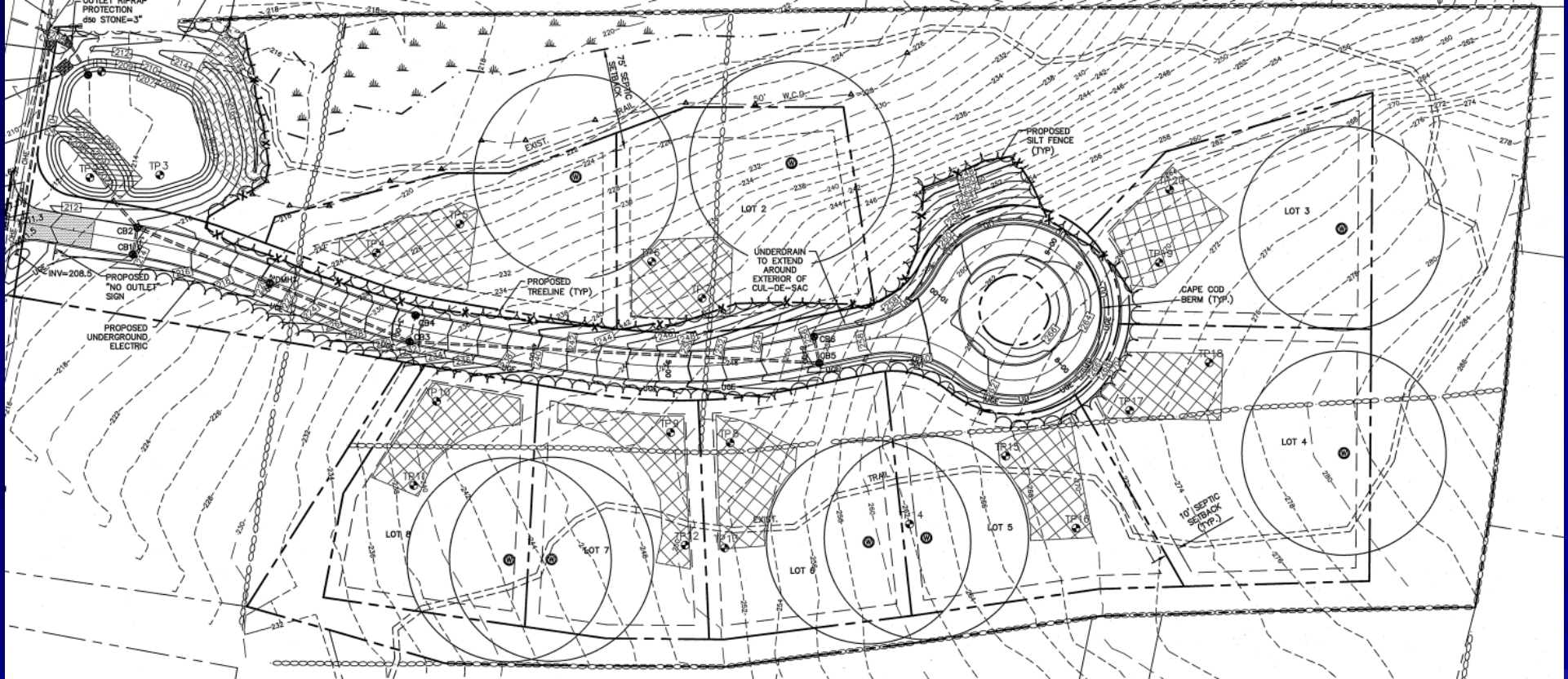
- ❑ The Minimum Lot Size For Lots With On-Site Waste Water and On-Site Well is 30,000 Sq. Ft. (0.67 Acres)
- ❑ The Minimum Lot Size For Lots With On-Site Waste Water and Off-Site Well is 20,000 Sq. Ft. (0.46 Acres)
- ❑ The Minimum Lot Size For Lots With Off-Site Waste Water and Off-Site Well is Determined By The Municipality.

# CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS

- Conservation (a.k.a., Open Space, Cluster) Subdivisions Allow For Smaller Individual Lot Sizes.
- Conservation Subdivisions Must Include Conservation Land To Account For The Sewage Load Not Supported By The Smaller Lots

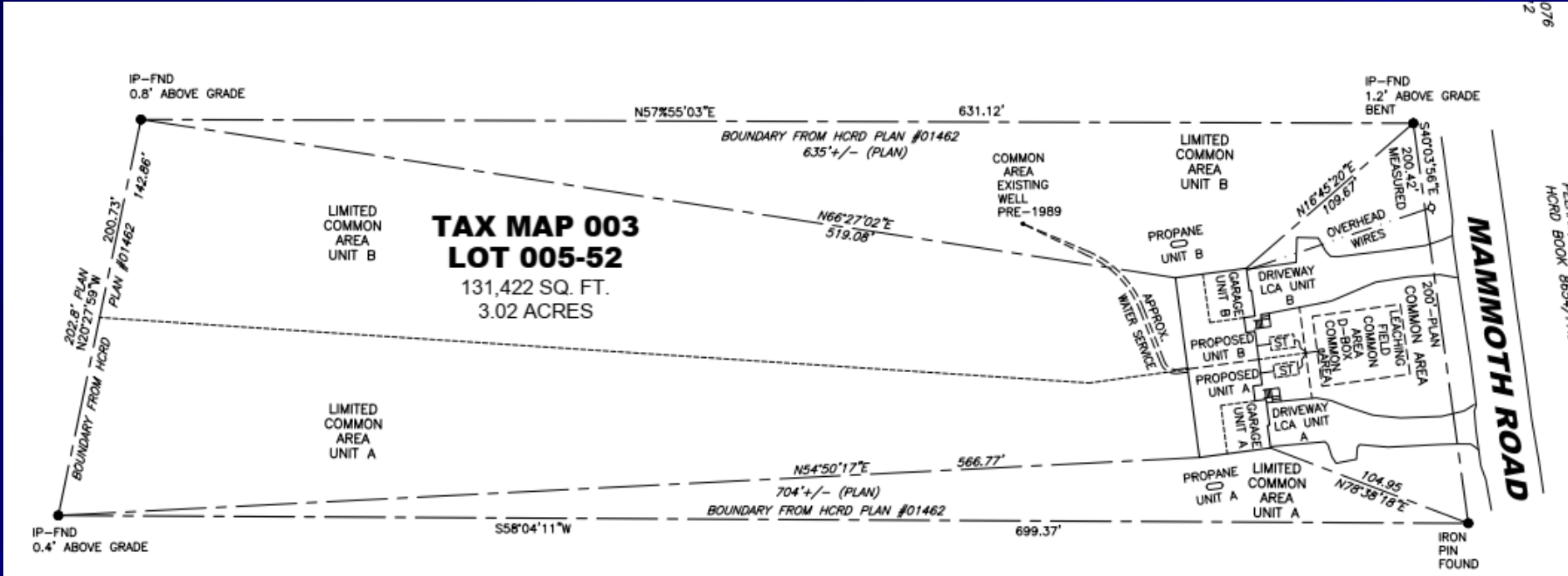
- The Total Combined Land Area, i.e., Individual Lots Plus Conservation Area Must Meet The Sewage Loading For Proposed Use.
- Well Radii Do Not Have To Be Wholly Maintained On-Lot.
- Conservation Area Easement Must Be Held By A Third Party, Many Times The Local Conservation Commission.





# CONDOMINIUMS

- Any Lot On Which Condominiums Exist Must Be Able To Support The Sewage Load For The Proposed Development.



076  
2

PLANNING  
 HORD BOOK 86547

# MANUFACTURED HOUSING PARKS

- Manufactured House Park Sites Shall Be At Least 10,000 FT<sup>2</sup>
- Any Lot On Which Manufactured Homes Exist Must Be Able To Support The Sewage Load For The Proposed Development.



# Quick Note on Innovative Technologies

- Innovative Treatment Technologies Allow For Smaller Septic Systems (EDA), But Do Not Allow For Smaller Lots (Lot Loading).

# Conservation Subdivision Design:

## *A Flexible Design Approach for Siting Septic Systems and Wells in Rural Subdivisions*

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[rgarendt@comcast.net](mailto:rgarendt@comcast.net)



Second Edition

# RURAL BY DESIGN

PLANNING FOR TOWN AND COUNTRY



RANDALL ARENDT

# Conservation Design for Subdivisions

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CREATING OPEN SPACE NETWORKS



Randall G. Arendt

*Natural Lands Trust, American Planning Association, and American Society of Landscape Architects*

# GROWING GREENER

Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Ordinances



Randall Arendt

*Natural Lands Trust • American Planning Association • American Society of Landscape Architects*

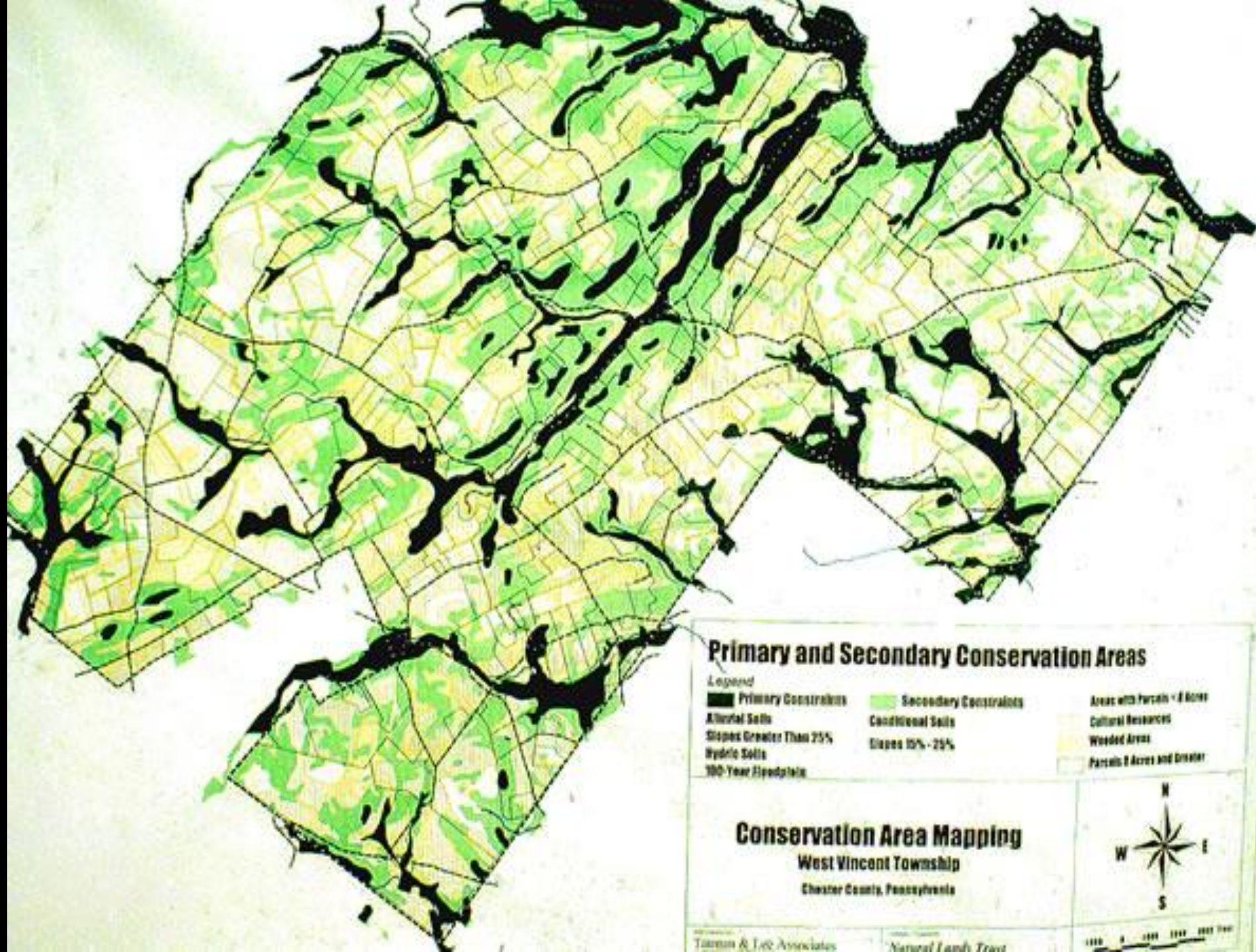
This is a *Density-Neutral*  
Design Approach

Lot count is determined either by a realistic “Yield Plan” or by a formula based on net buildable land.

Mapping:












Build-out Scenarios  
and

Potential Greenspace Networks

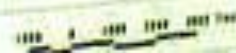


### Primary and Secondary Conservation Areas

**Legend**

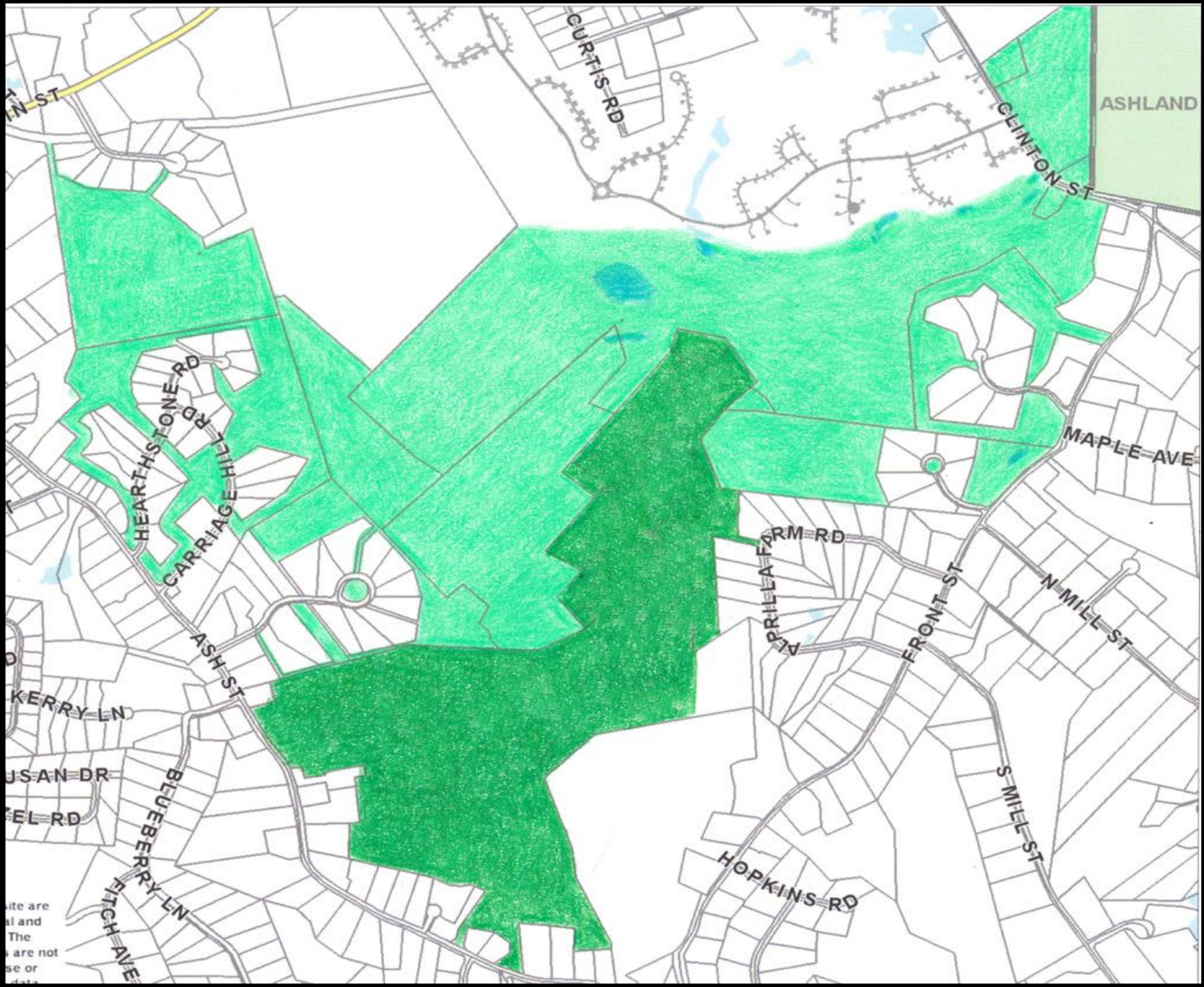
- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|  Primary Constraints     |  Secondary Constraints |  Areas with Potential for Cultural Resources |
|  Alluvial Soils          |  Conditional Soils     |  Wooded Areas                                |
|  Slopes Greater Than 25% |  Slopes 10% - 25%      |  Parcels 2 Acres and Greater                 |
|  Hydric Soils            |   |   |
|  100-Year Floodplain     |   |   |

### Conservation Area Mapping West Vincent Township Chester County, Pennsylvania









site are  
al and  
The  
s are not  
se or  
data

Choosing which Site Features to  
protect, and which to build on

# DESIGN STUDY – LAND PRESERVATION DISTRICT

- Save Woodland



# DESIGN STUDY – LAND PRESERVATION DISTRICT

- Save Farmland



Site Visits:

An Essential First Step

with Applicants (and abutters)

To Discover and Evaluate  
Special Site Features







# Four-Step Design Process

Identify Potential Conservation Areas

Locate House Sites

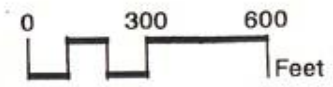
Connect Homes with Streets

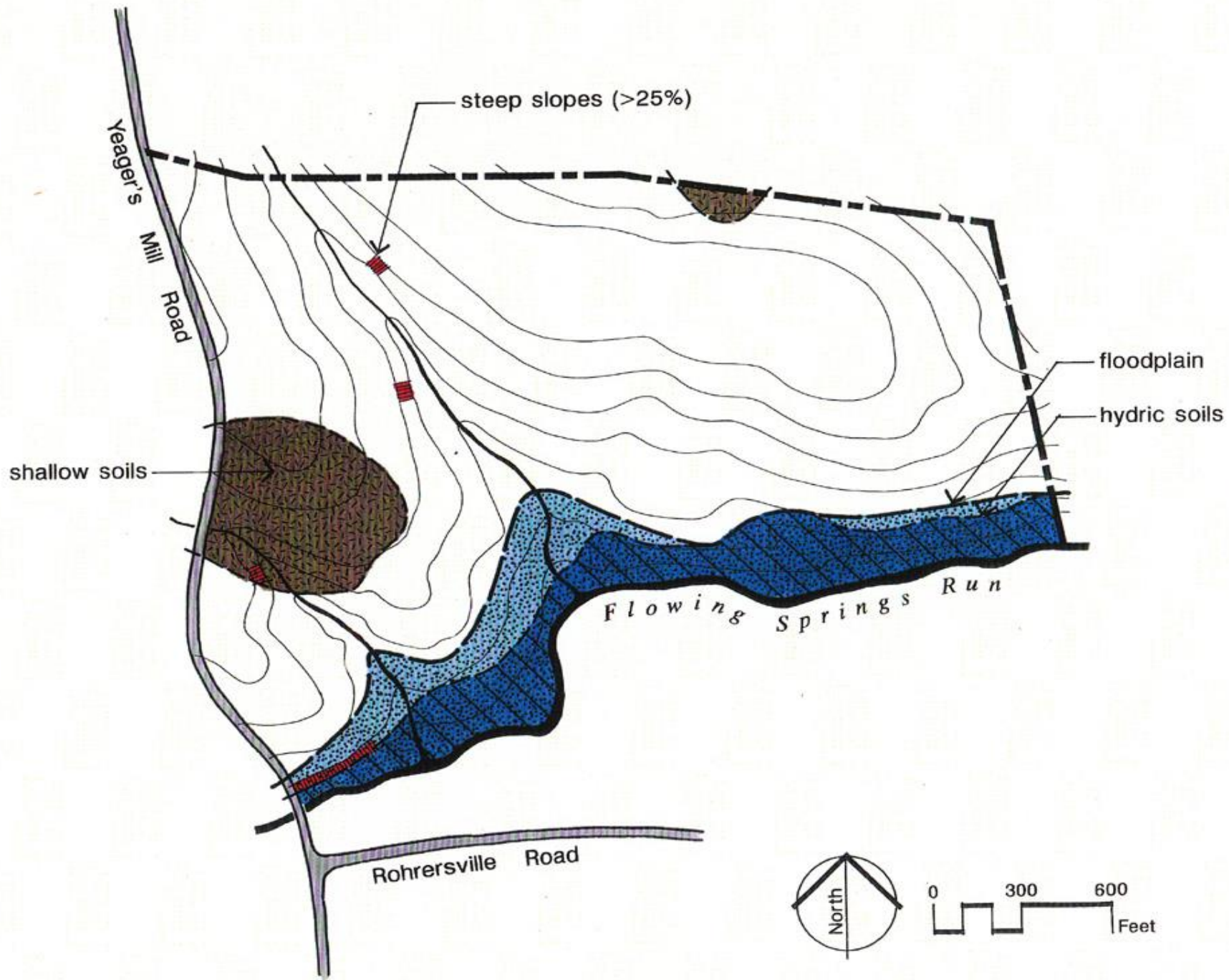
Draw in the Lot -Lines



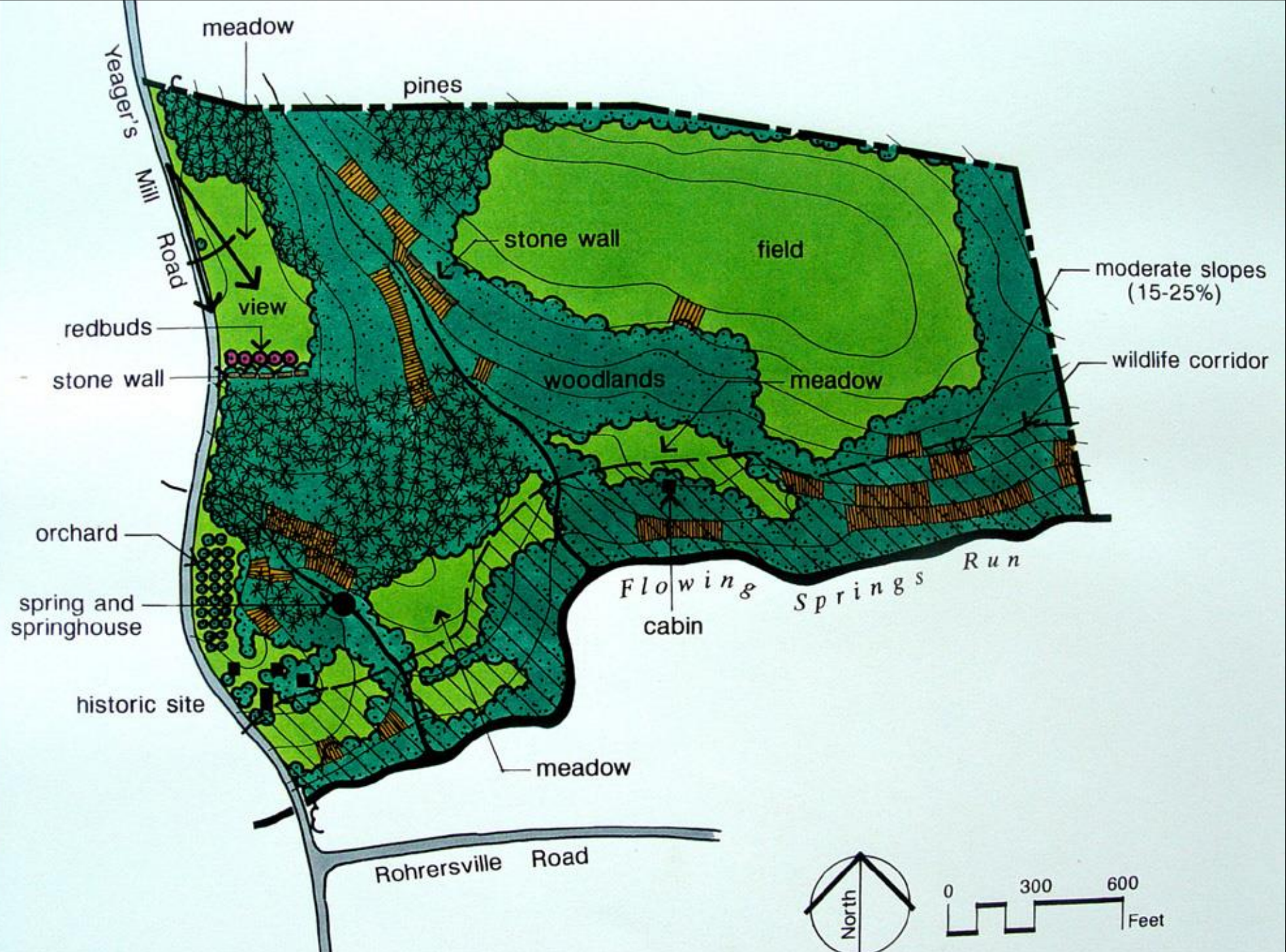


- floodplain
- hydric soils
- shallow soils
- moderate to steep slopes (>15%)

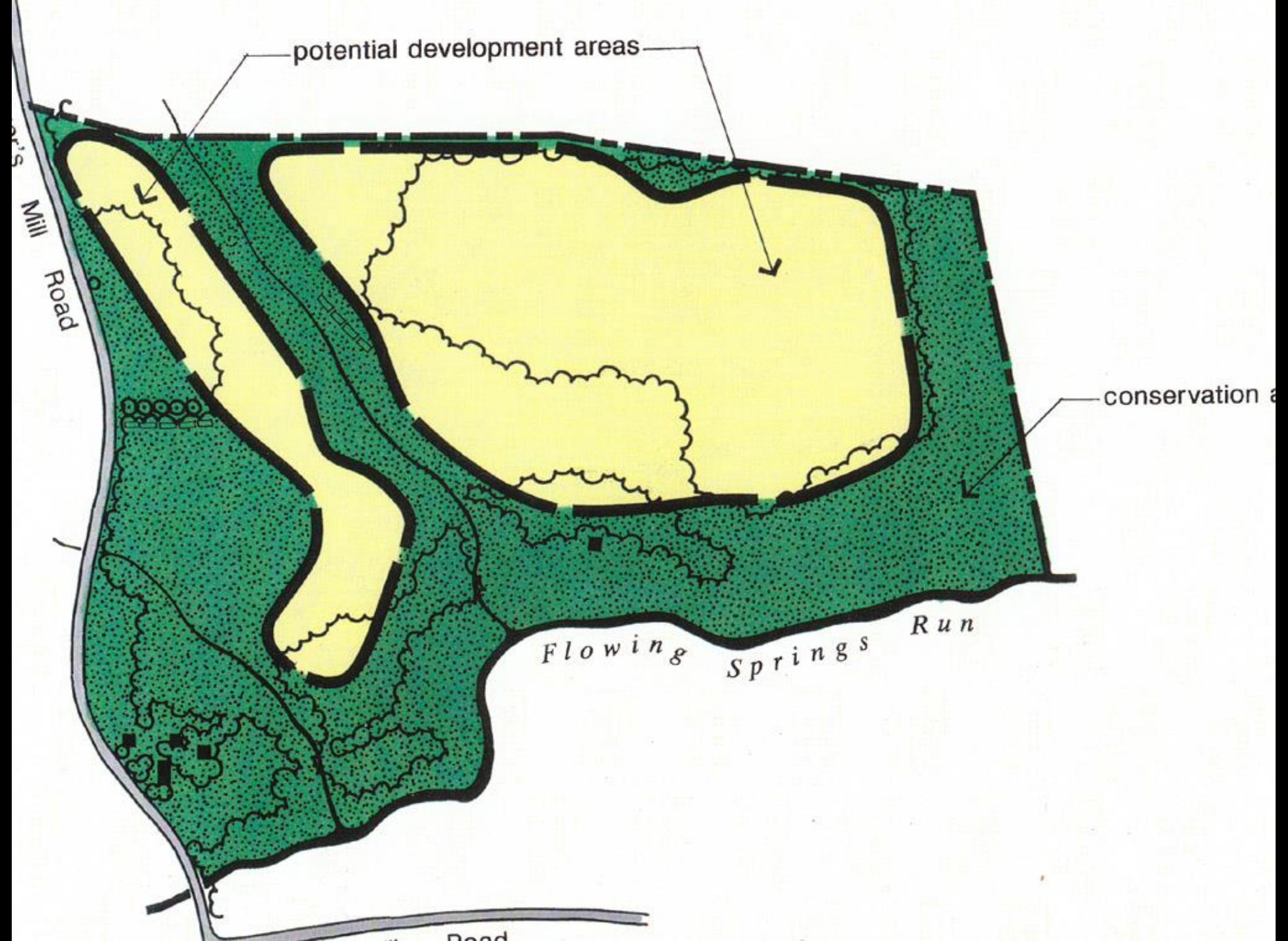




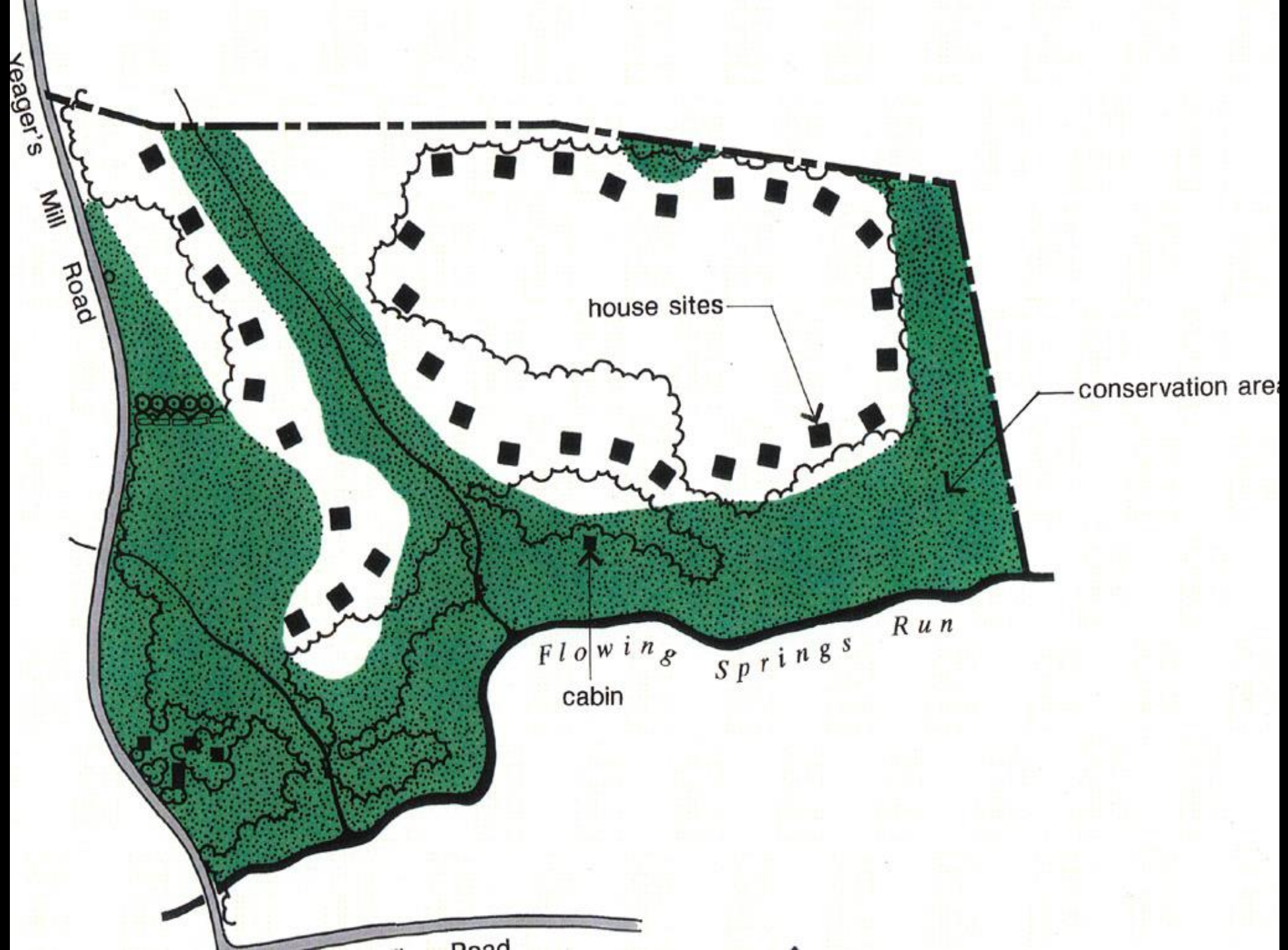


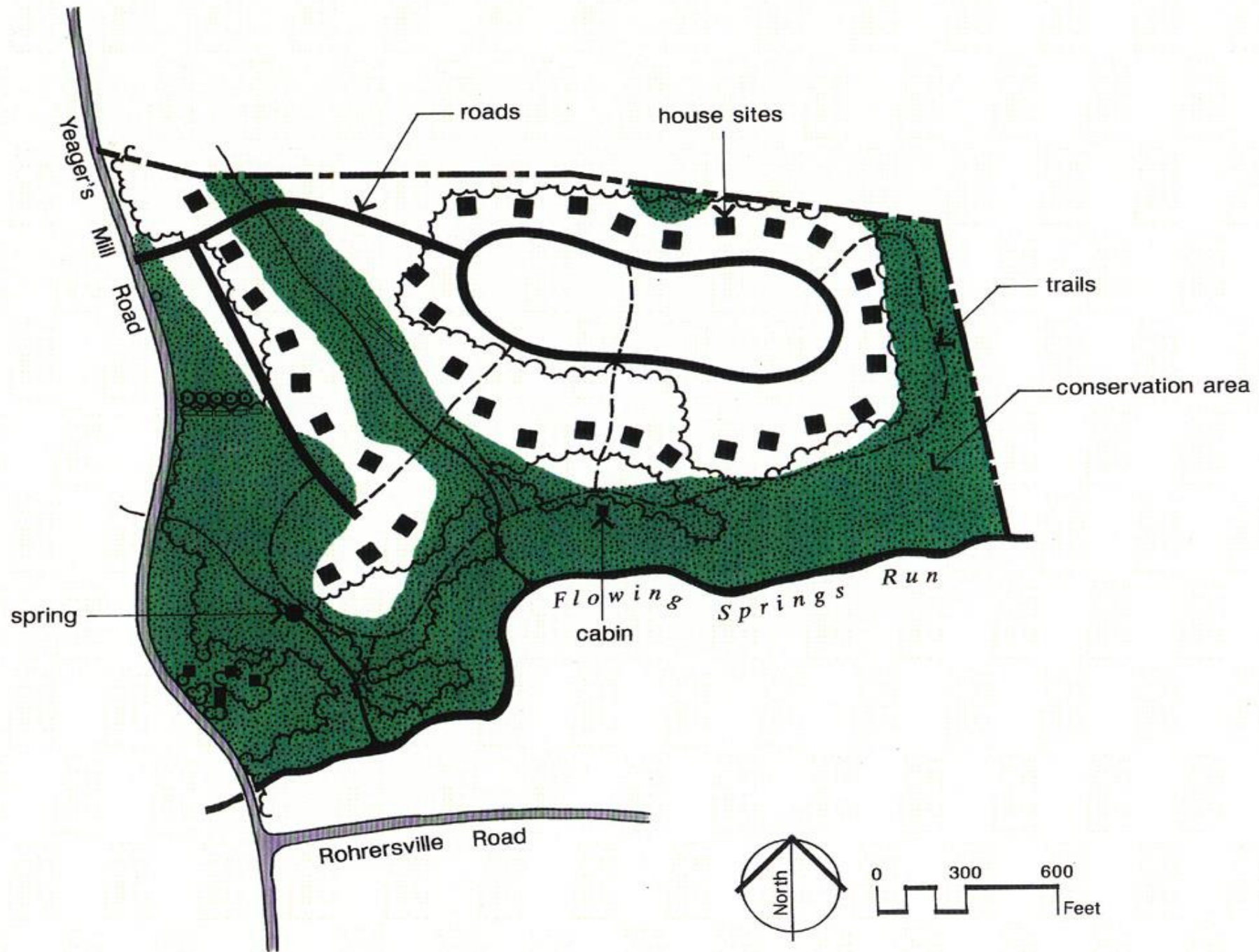


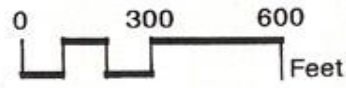






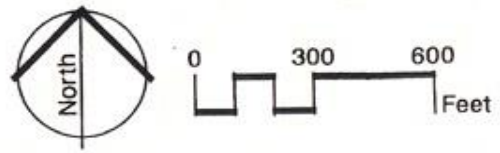


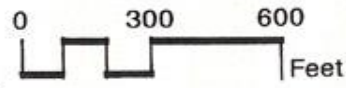






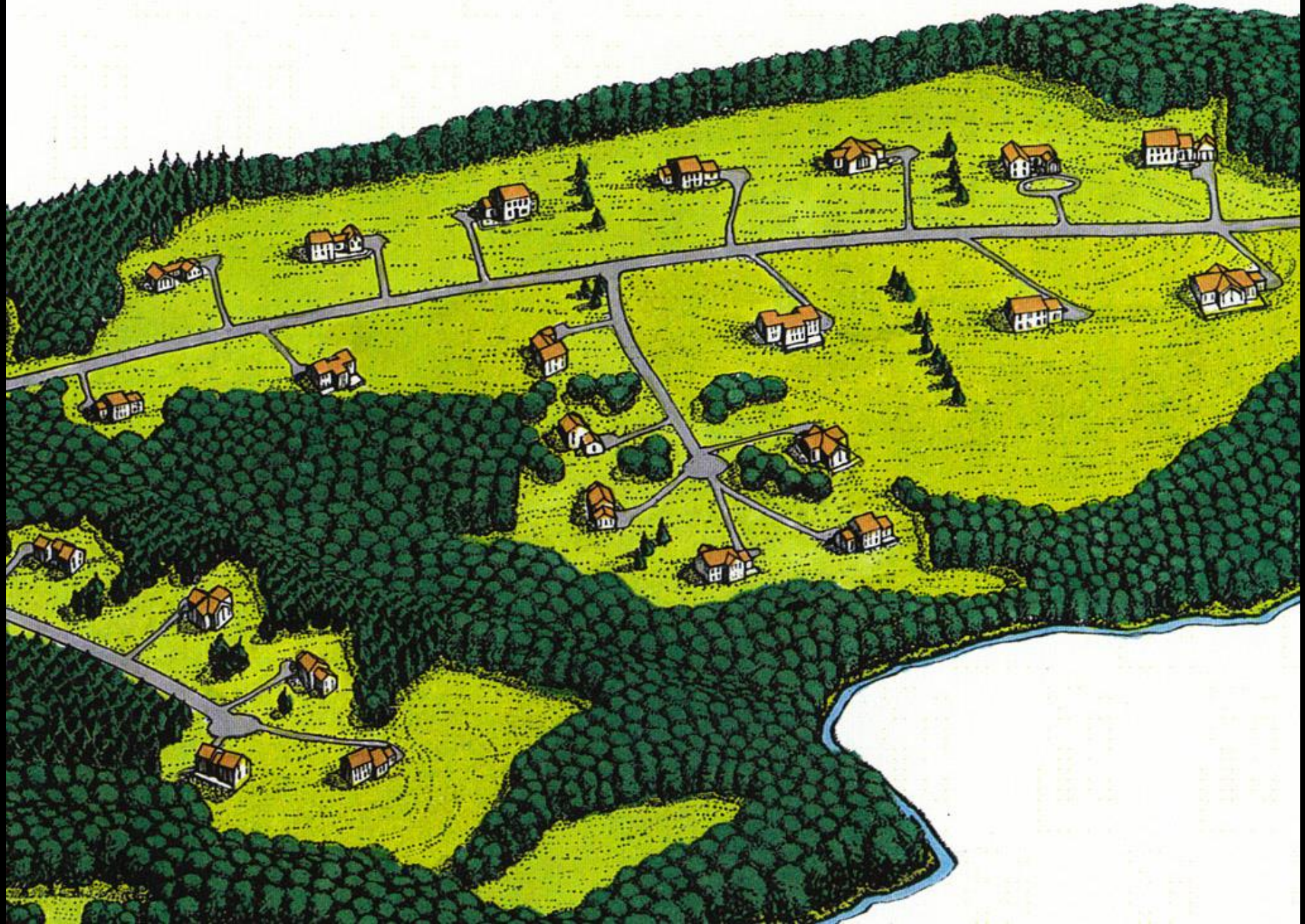
- floodplain
- hydric soils
- shallow soils
- moderate to steep slopes (>15%)



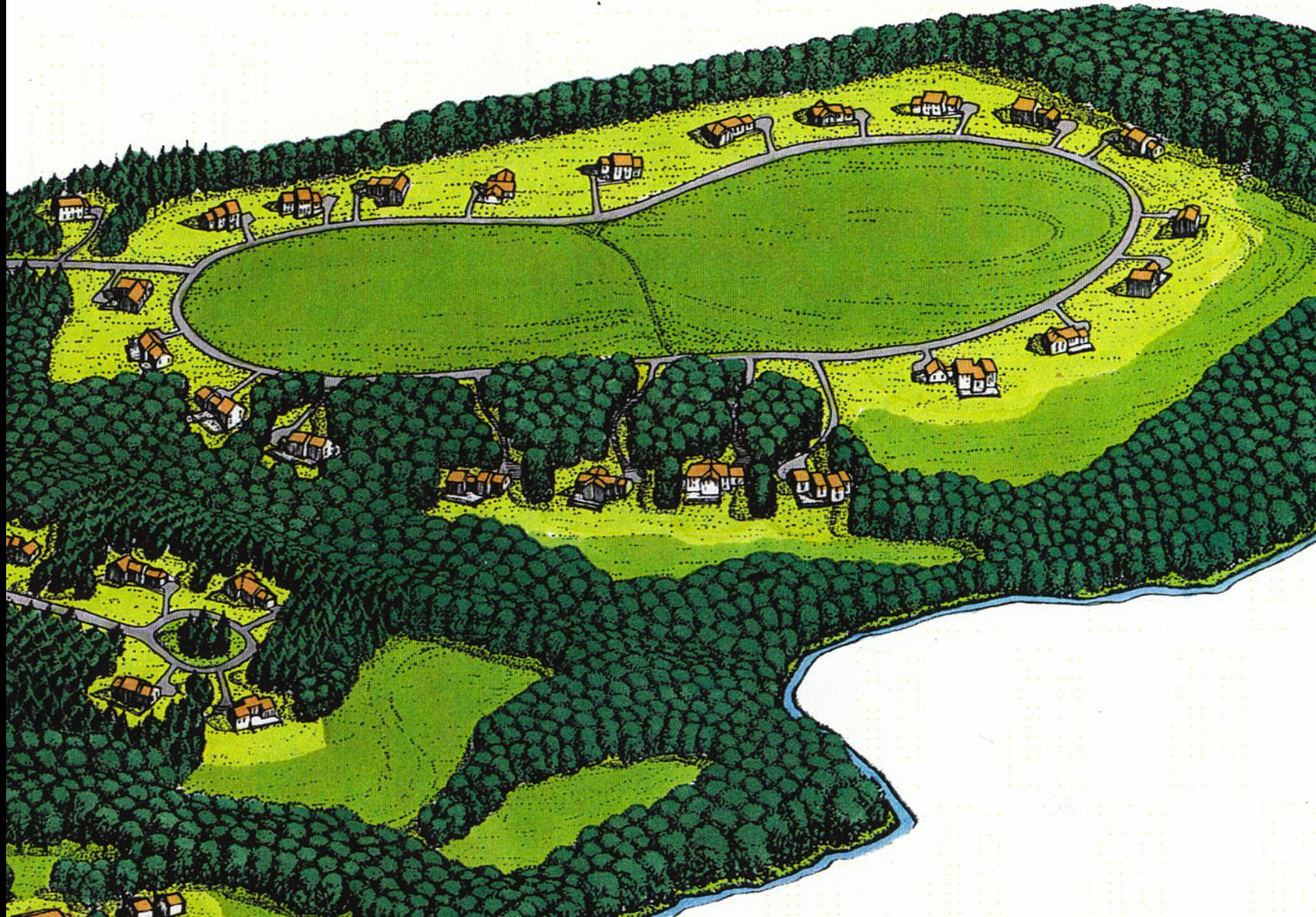














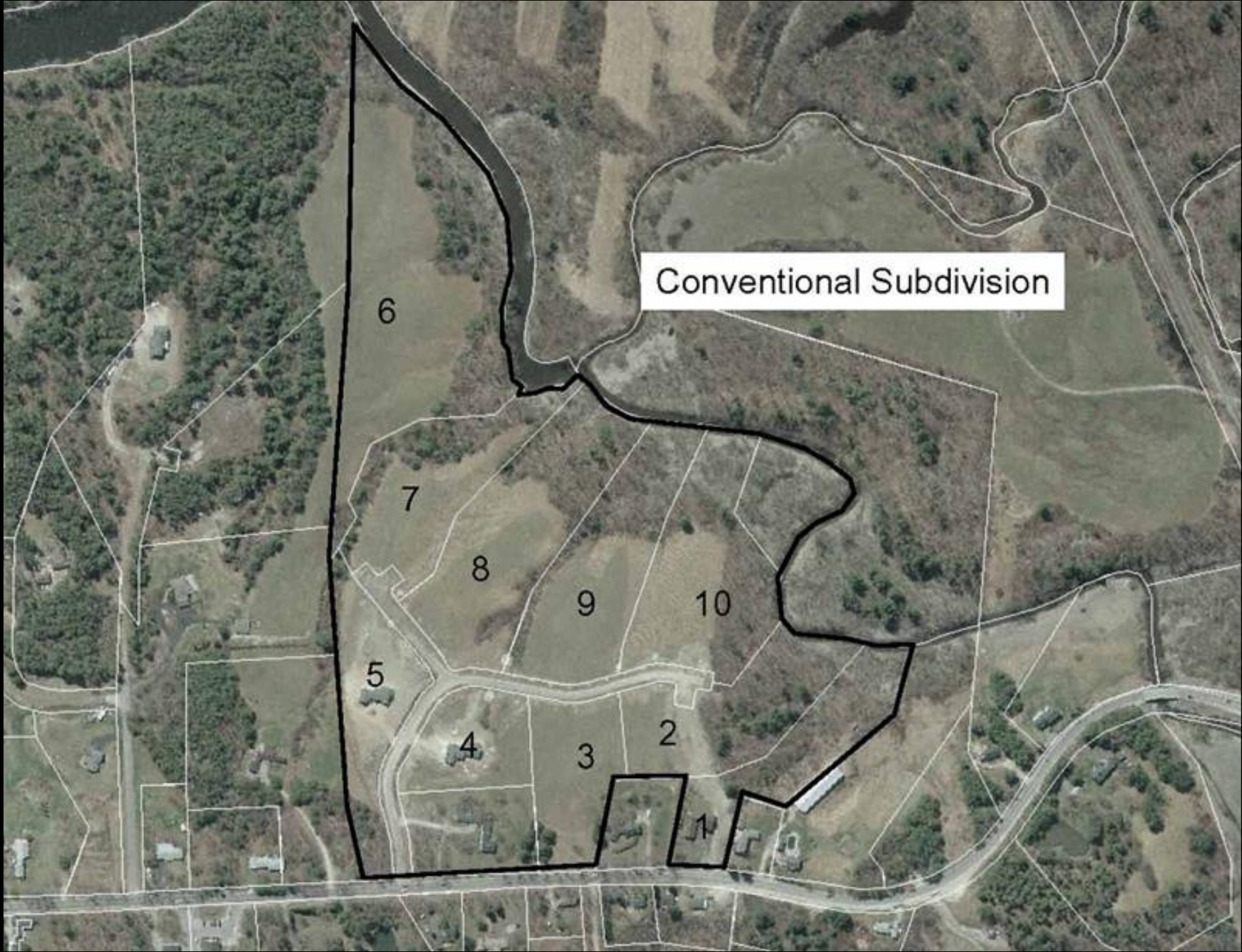




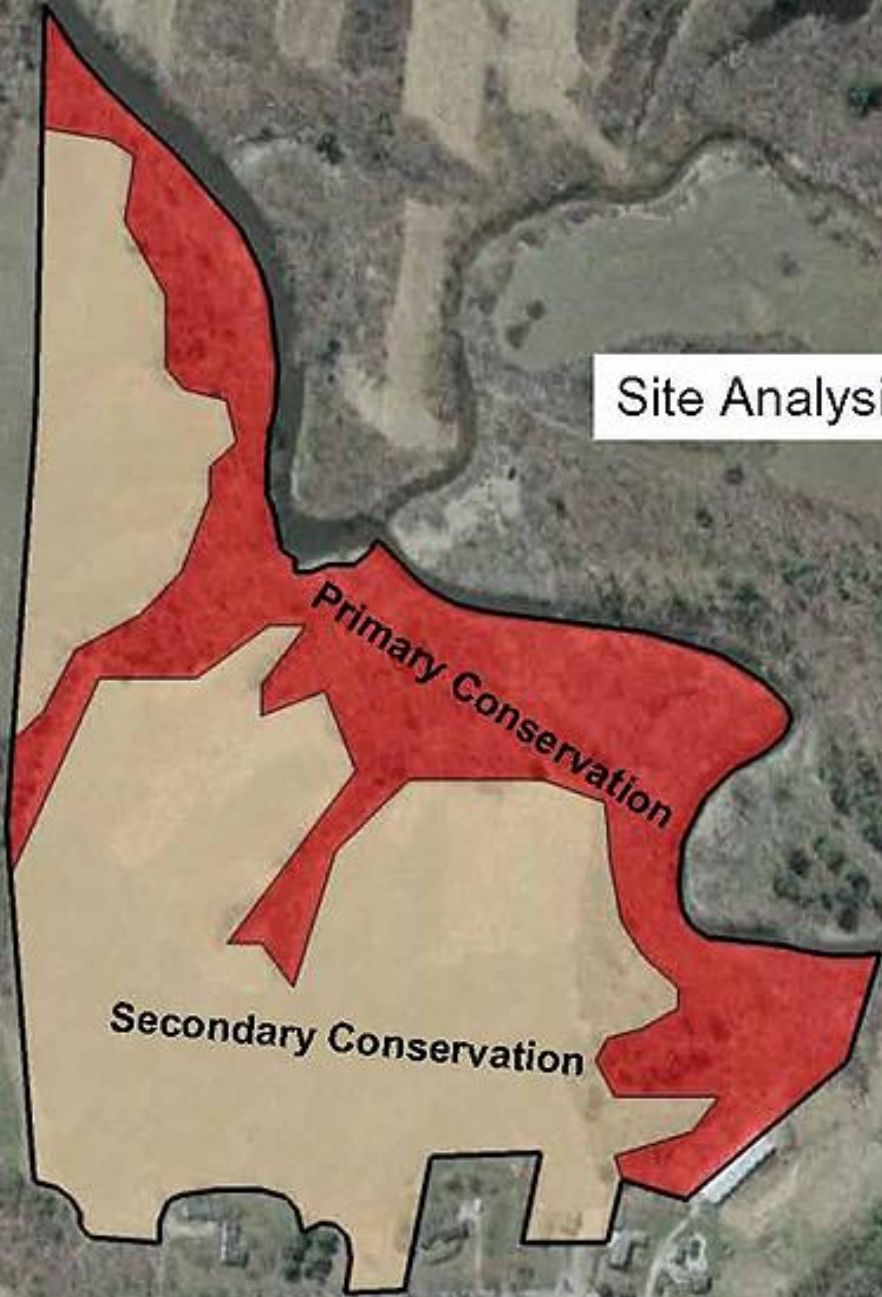


**The Merrill Farm**

Conventional Subdivision

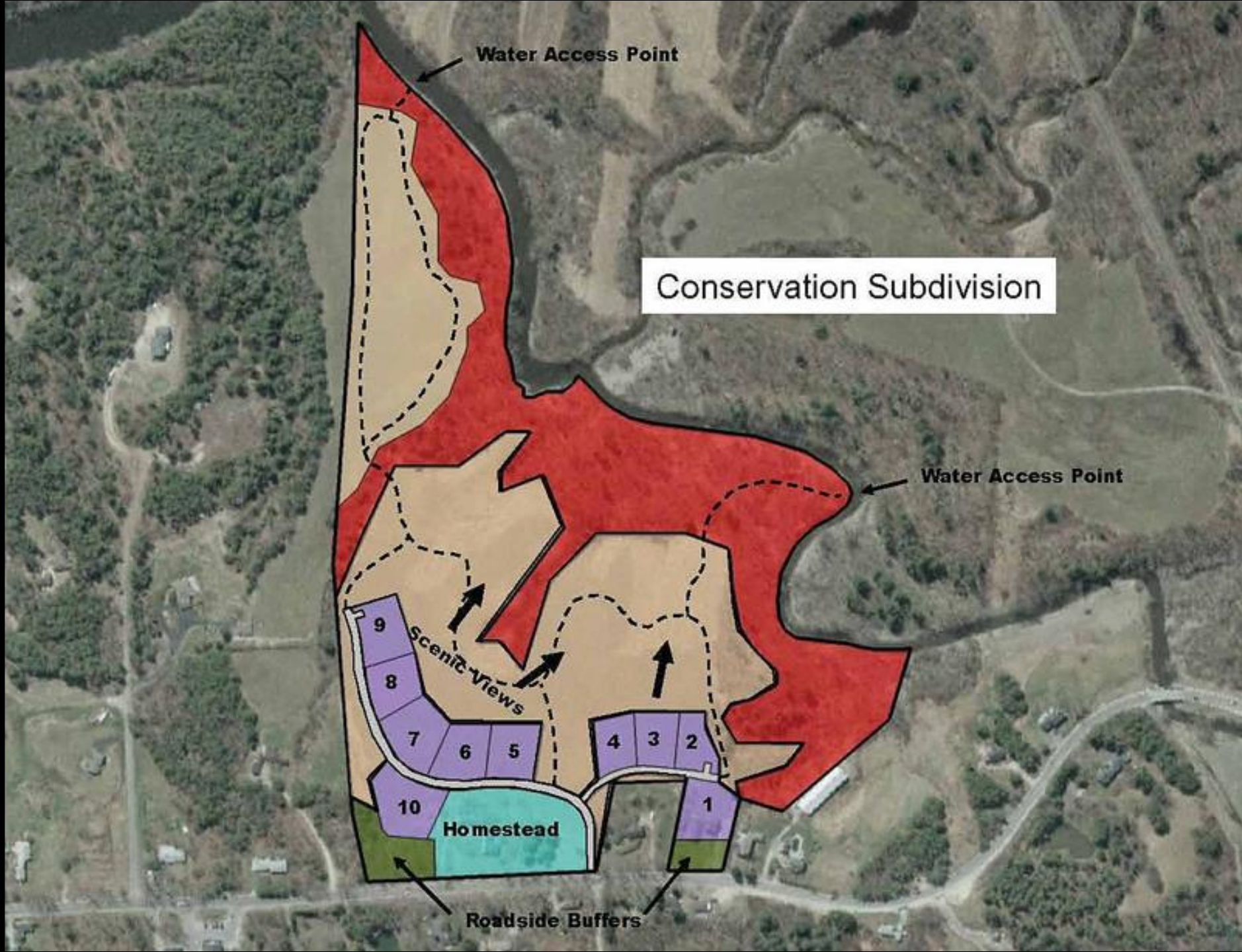


Site Analysis



Primary Conservation

Secondary Conservation



Water Access Point

Conservation Subdivision

Water Access Point

Scenic Views

Homestead

Roadside Buffers



# Compare Two Sketch Plans

(prepared by a LA or Planner)

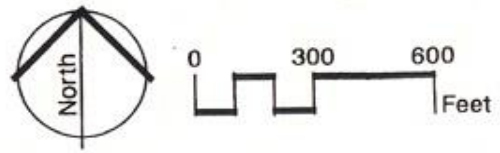
**BEFORE**

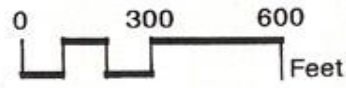
“Preliminary” Plan is Submitted

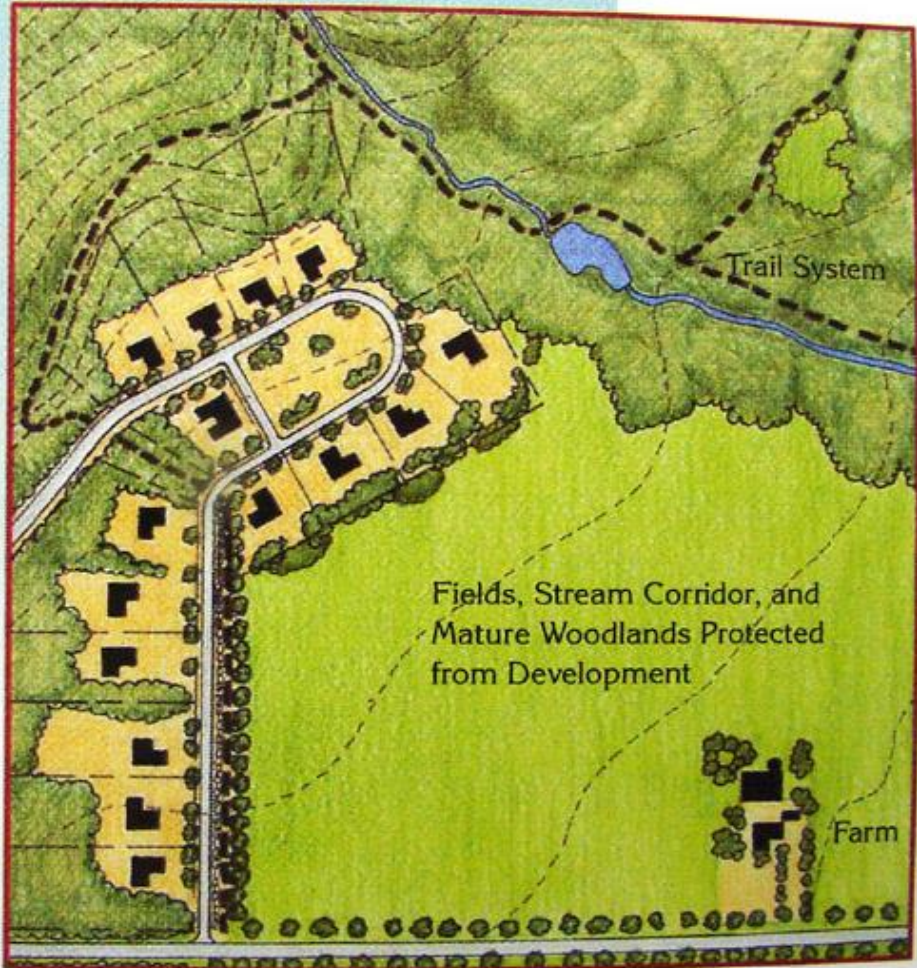
*PB decides which one better complies  
with Bylaws and Comp Plan policies*



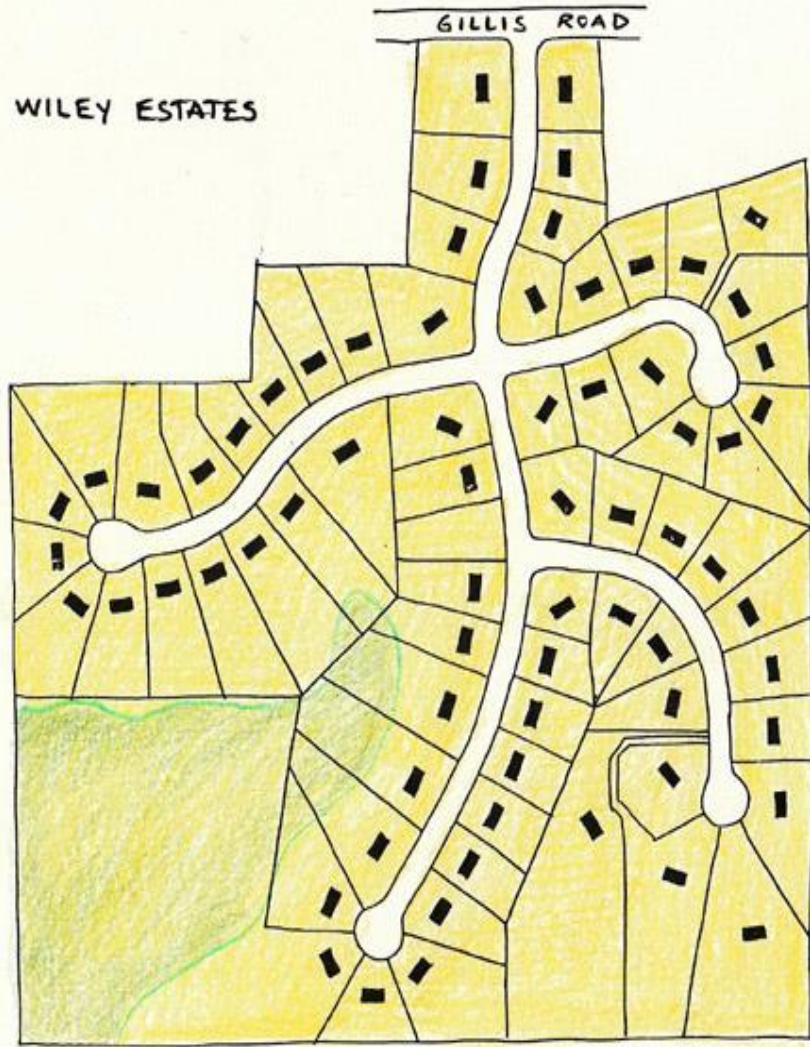
- floodplain
- hydric soils
- shallow soils
- moderate to steep slopes (>15%)



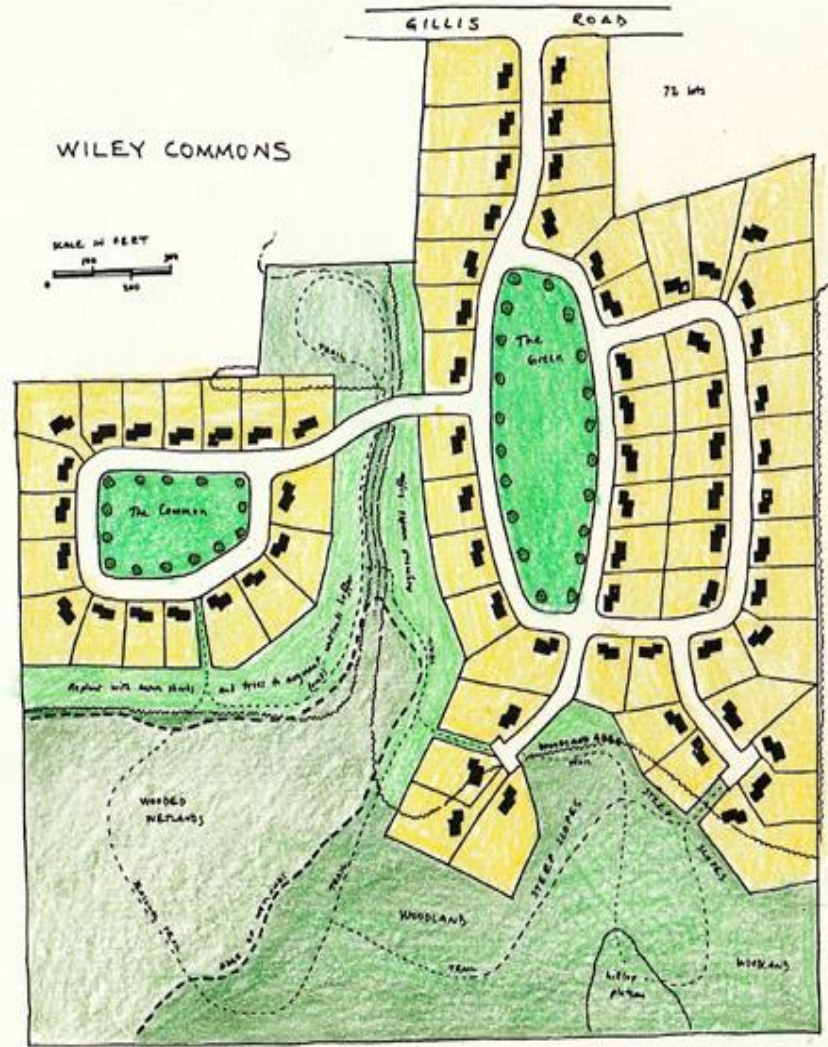




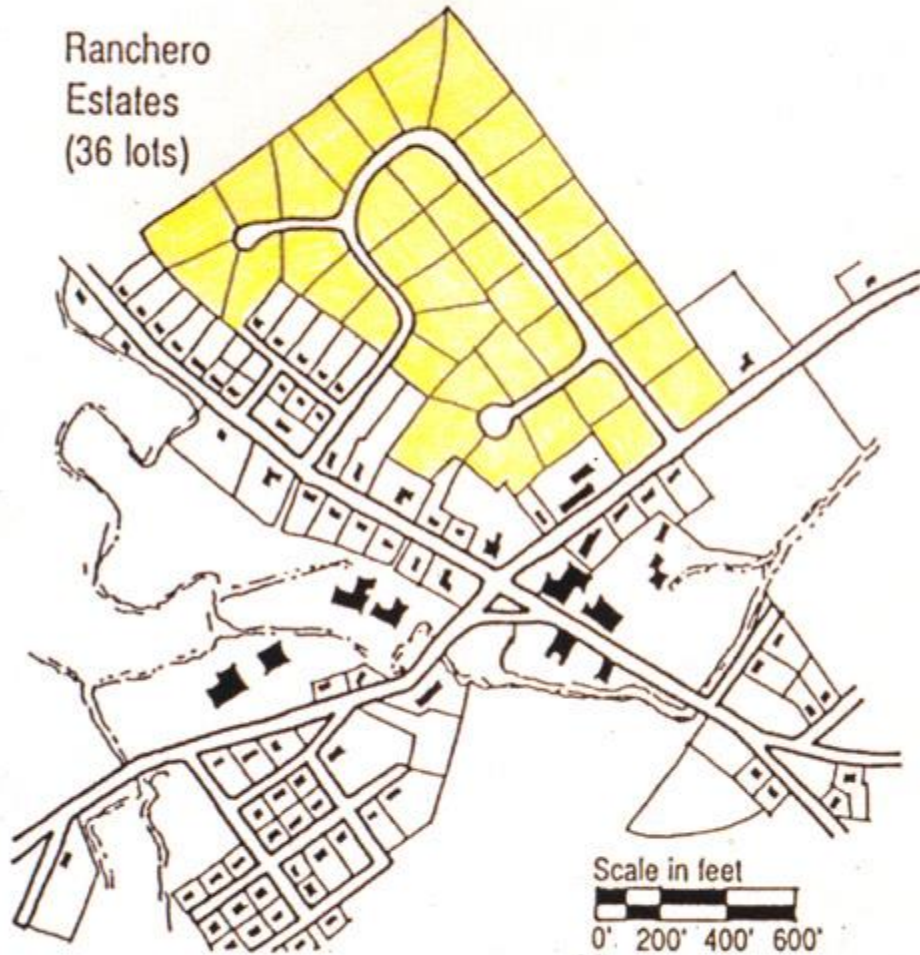
# WILEY ESTATES



# WILEY COMMONS



Ranchero  
Estates  
(36 lots)



Blackstone  
Commons  
(37 lots)



# Ways that Conservation Lands Have Been Used



























# *Acres Saved with Conservation Subdivision Design*

(as of 2014)

## **Municipalities**

Westborough, MA 448 acres

Westford, MA 650 acres

Hamburg Twp, MI 750 acres

Hopkinton, MA 875 acres

## **Counties**

Cherokee County, GA 1,374 acres

Waukesha County, WI 1,670 acres

Hanover County, VA 5,550 acres

Calvert County, MD 7,765 acres

San Luis Obispo County, CA 9,000 acres

**Nationwide Estimate: 100,000 to 180,000 acres**

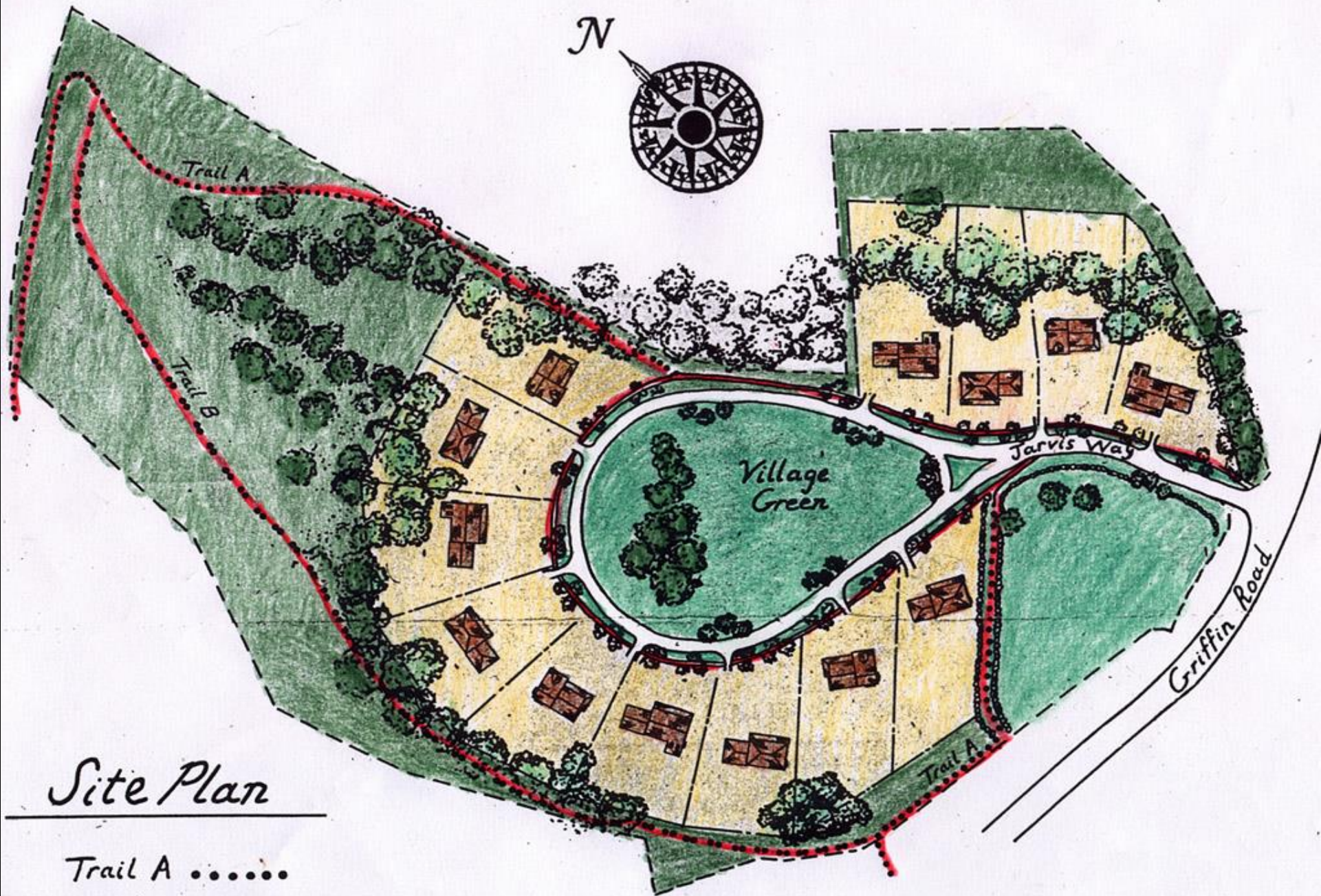
On-Lot

Well and Septic

# Jarvis Farm

Westford, MA

*(Lots range from 0.5 to 0.6 acres  
= 22,500 to 26,000 SF)*



# Site Plan

Trail A .....

Trail B .....











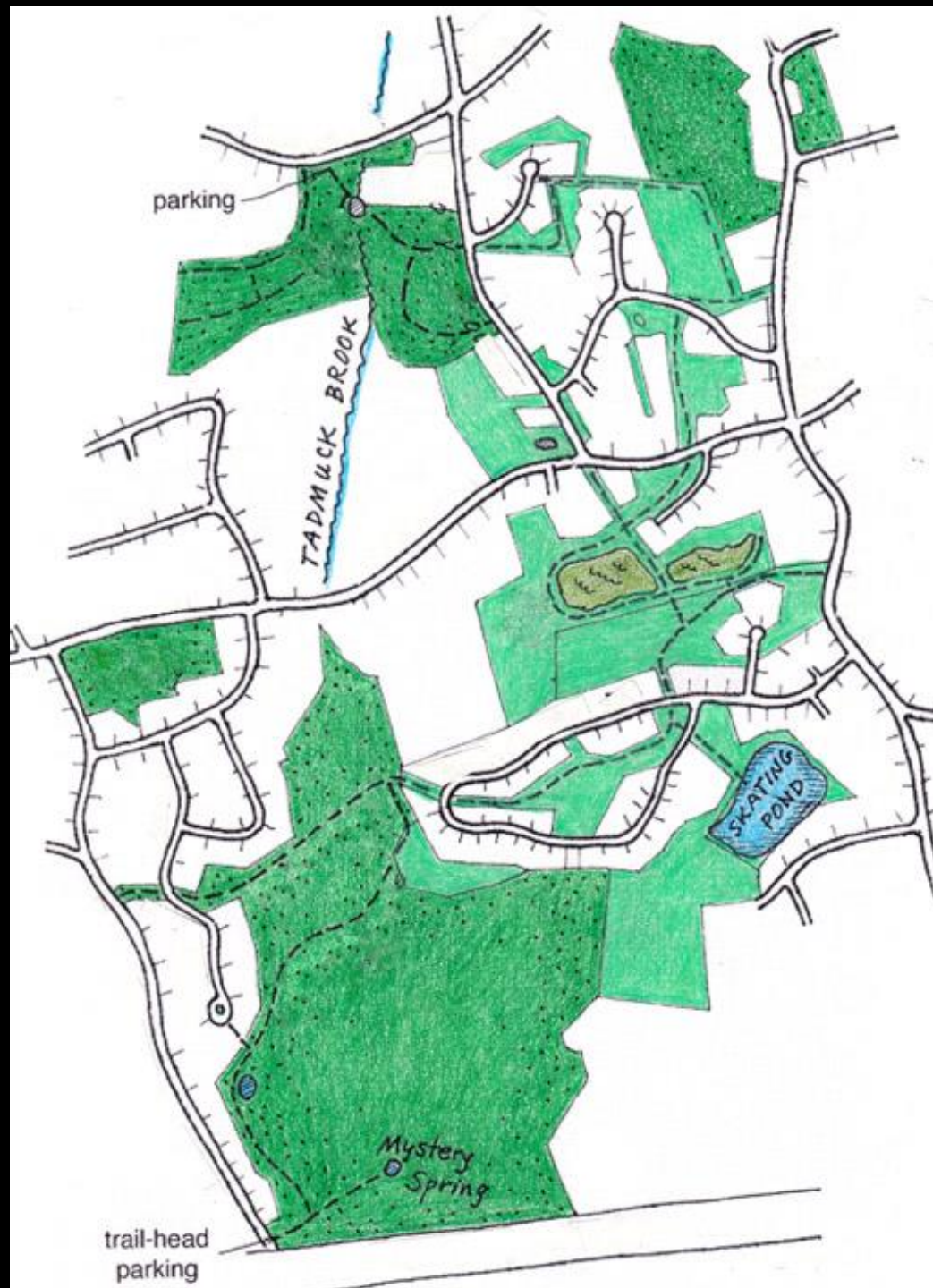


Trails in Westford, Massachusetts  
Showing Connecting Links  
Through New "Open Space" Subdivision



Scale in feet  
0' 200' 400' 600'





# Off-Lot Septic

Can be either Individual or  
Shared Systems

*(on utility easements in the open space)*

This flexible design approach allows septic systems to be located on the deepest and best drained soils on the property.

*This is not the case in conventional subdivisions, where lots are spread out across the entire property, causing some lots to have much more marginal soils than others (they all pass, but some just barely).*



# Strathmore Farm

Madison, CT

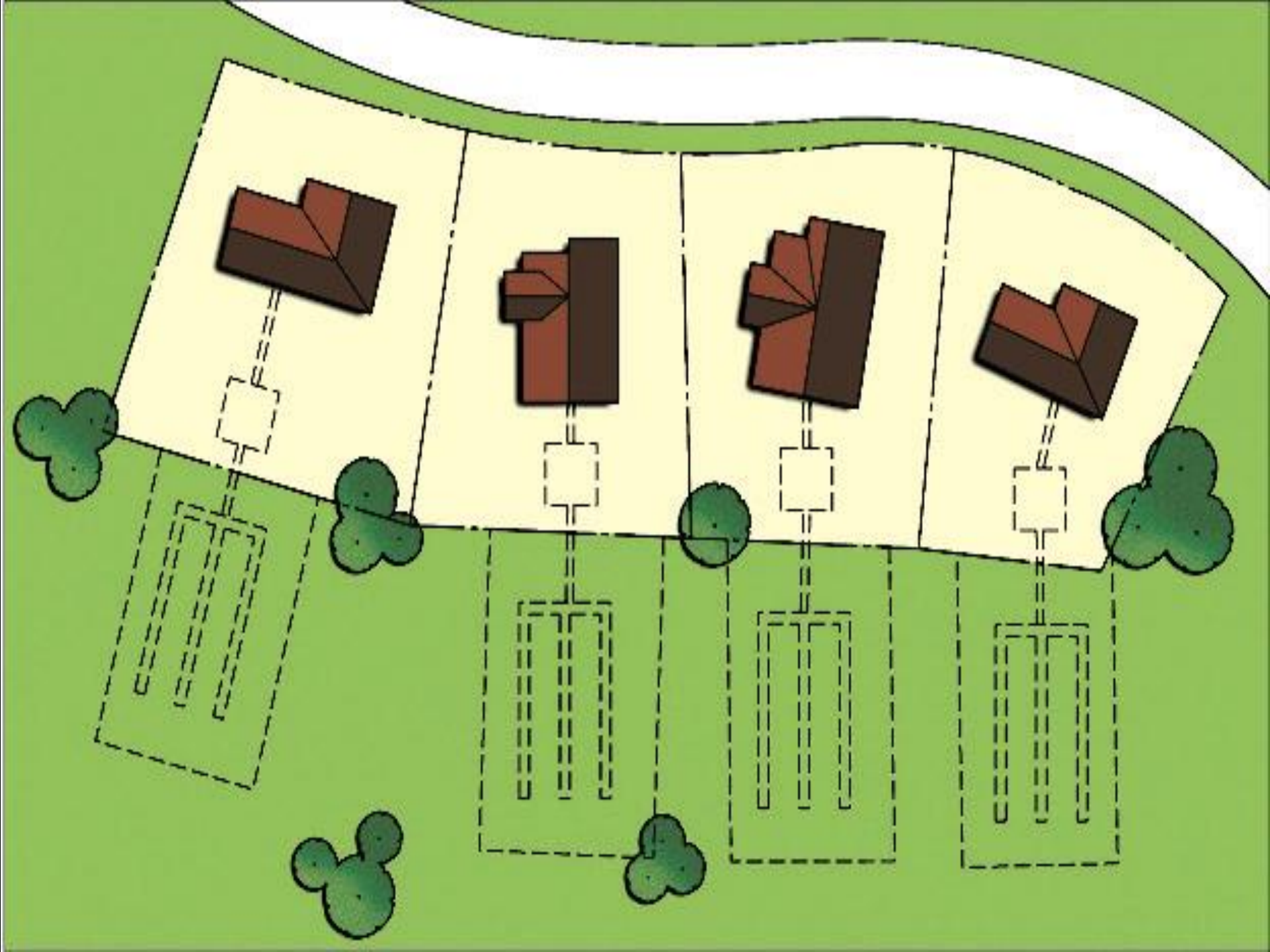
Condominiums on EUAs of 10,000 to 12,000 SF











Off-Lot

Community Septic

*(on utility easements in the open space)*

# Partridgeberry Place

Ipswich, MA













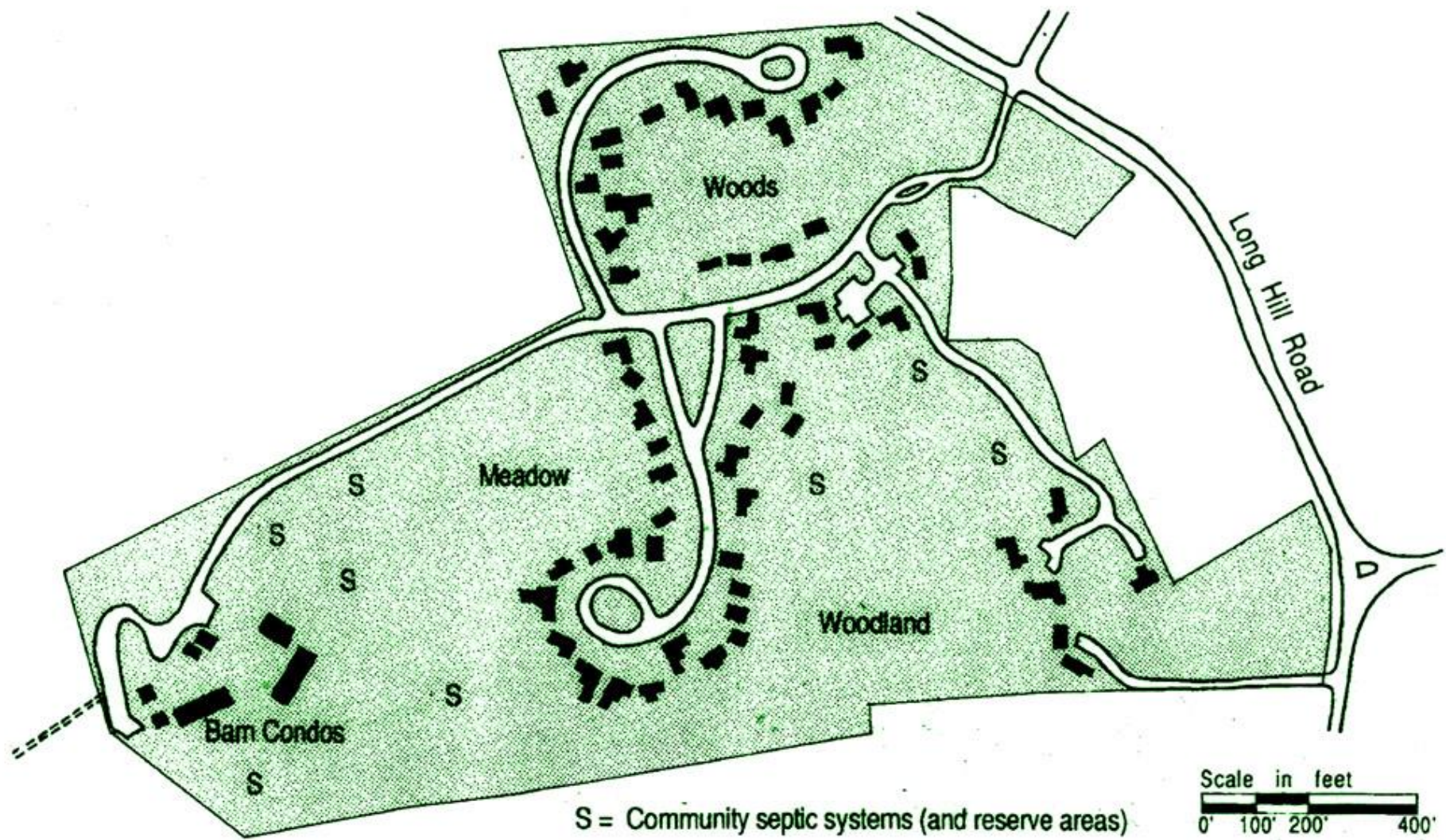
# Multiple Shared Septic Systems and Shared Wells

*(on utility easements in the open space)*

# Long Hill Farm

Guilford, CT

Condominiums on 5,000 SF EUAs











# Ringfield

Chadds Ford Township,  
Chester County, PA

*Most homes on small individual lots*

(with mostly shared septics, but with some  
individual off-lot septics)



s = septic field  
w = well house



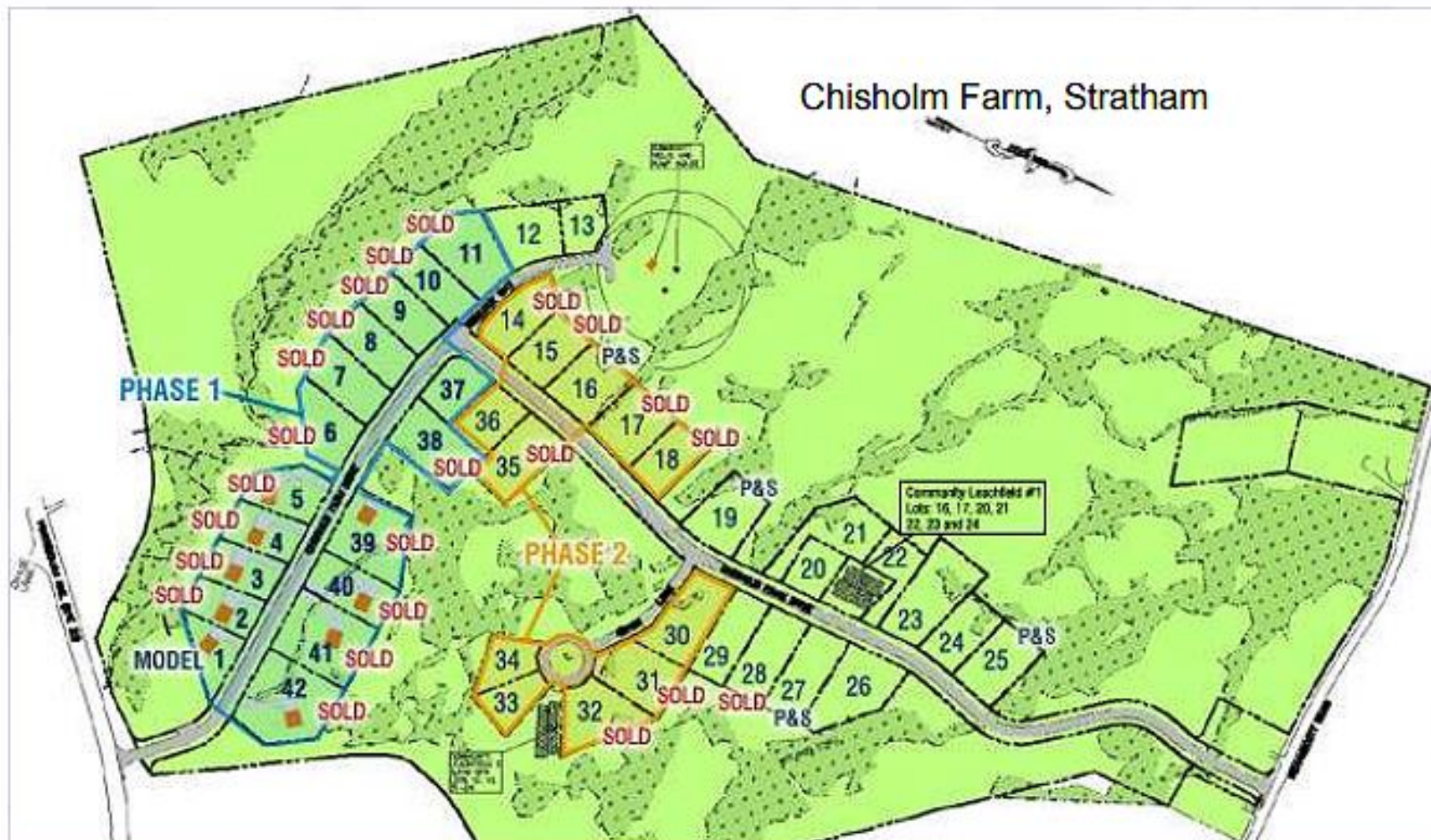


# Central Septic System and Central Well

*(on utility easements in the open space)*



## Chisholm Farm, Stratham



- 115 acres, 85 acres as open space (74%)
- 42 house lots (1/3+ to just under 1 acre)
- Community Leachfield and Community Well



Deerfield Knoll  
(*“Detached Townhouses”*)

Willistown Township,  
Chester County, PA

Condominiums on EUAs of about 5,500 SF



Sign in







# Resources

- *Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques – A Handbook for Sustainable Development* - NH DES; NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions; NH OSI; NH Municipal Association, October 2008
  - ▶ *Conservation Subdivision Chapter*
- *Conservation Subdivision Design. Minimizing the Impact of Subdivisions* - Carolyn B. Russell, AICP, NH DES
- *Rural by Design, Second Edition* – Randall Arendt, F.R.T.P.I., ASLA (Hon). To purchase a copy e-mail [rgarendt@comcast.net](mailto:rgarendt@comcast.net) or go to <http://www.greenerprospects.com/index.html>



# Questions and Answer Section

- If you would like to ask a question, please either raise your hand and we will give you the ability unmute yourself or type your question in the Chat box. If on the phone, lines have been unmuted



# Thank you!

- All Conference Session slides and recordings will be available next week on the Conference webpage

**Feedback Encouraged!**

- Please fill out the Anonymous Evaluation Form that can be found at the link below

[Click Here for Feedback Survey](#)