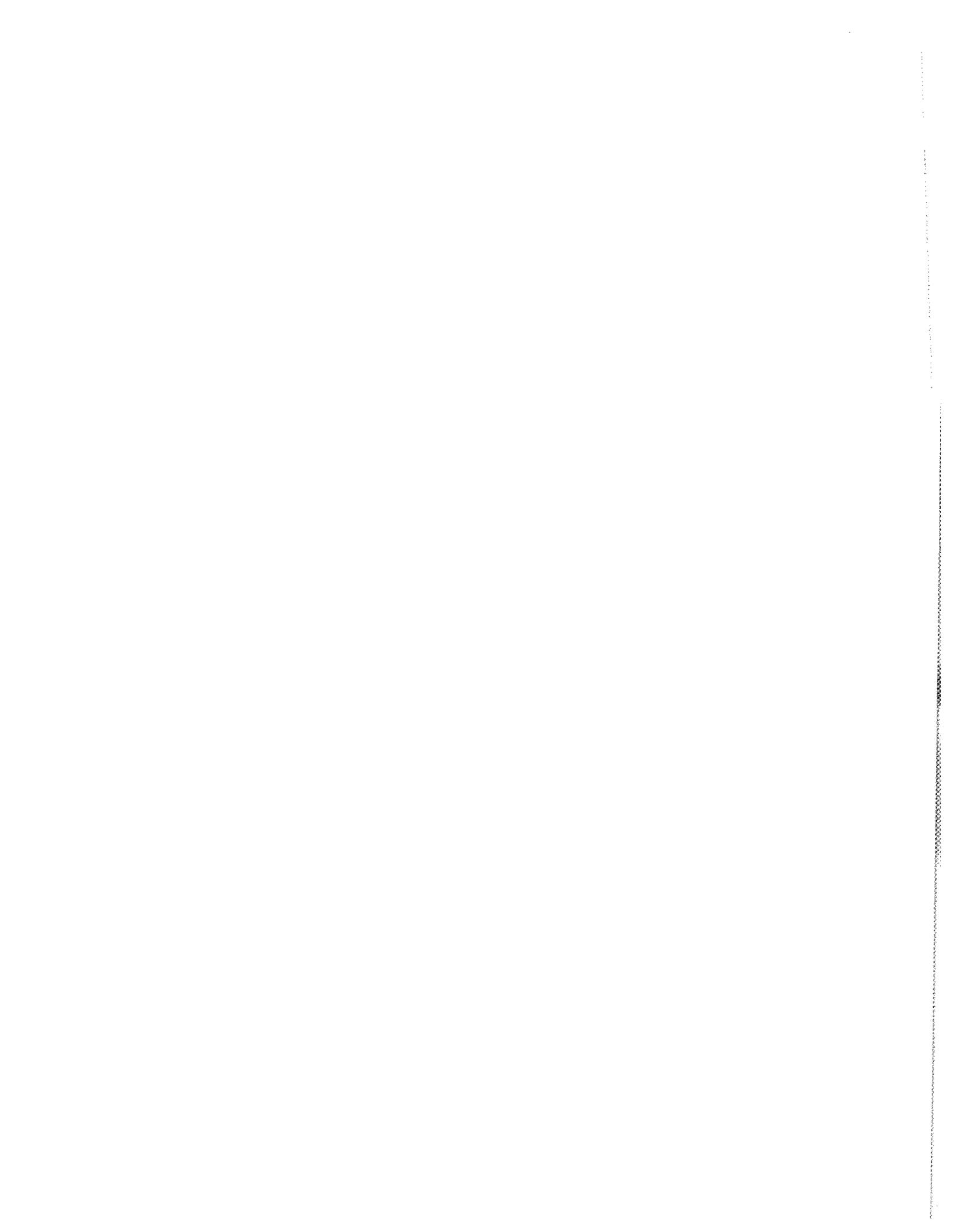


1997 Update
Comprehensive Master Plan
for
The Town of Sandwich, New Hampshire

Prepared by the
Sandwich Planning Board

December 3, 1997



ADOPTION STATEMENT

In accordance with and as authorized by RSA 674:1-4, the Sandwich Planning Board on December 3, 1997 adopted by vote this 1997 Update of the Sandwich Comprehensive Master Plan which was first adopted and published in 1981, and updated in 1990.

Sandwich Planning Board 1997-1998

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Charles Johnston
Daniel C. Peaslee
Willard G. Martin
Benjamin D. Shambaugh, Selectmen's Representative

This update is primarily the work of the current Planning Board. However, in certain areas other townspeople contributed data and ideas. Their assistance is appreciated.

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Introduction:

"Keep Sandwich the way it is -- a special and unique place."

While no one really feels that this is possible, it is a theme which has recurred again and again in the answers to the 1995 questionnaire, in the meetings and reports from Sandwich 2002, and in general discussions. It is rooted in a strong desire to maintain the rural nature and ambiance of the Town by preserving the forests, farmlands, wetlands, and scenic vistas.

This wish flies in the face of pressure from an increasing number of folks who seek out this rural ambiance and build vacation homes and retreats here -- in many cases later converting them to retirement homes for their permanent residence. A study conducted by Ad Hoc Associates of Salisbury, Vermont, arrived at the conclusion that the economic future of the Squam Lakes Watershed rests most firmly on a base of "eco-tourism" which will depend on preserving just those characteristics listed above. The tension between the way things are and the way they might be will be an area where the Planning Board will find plenty of action in the years just ahead.

Jobs -- construction, service, and forest products, among many others, depend on keeping the local economy vibrant and healthy, growing nonetheless, and our Zoning Ordinances need to allow for a slow rate of growth while keeping the nature of the community as it is. Gross development -- large condominiums, shopping malls, or heavy industrial plants -- are to be avoided as far as possible in the eyes of the Town. This report will return to this theme often as the many facets of the problem are explored.

This report should be considered as an analysis of the work yet to be done, and concerns to be covered, in the next several years. Although the wishes and desires of the citizens of the Town are well known, and, statistically at least, fairly accurately, a complete survey of the residents should be done when the Master Plan is thoroughly revisited and revised, if necessary, in 2000.

Water Quality:

Concern has been expressed from a number of fronts about the preservation or enhancement of the quality of water available in Town for domestic and recreational use. The Conservation Commission has done several studies which are identified in their report later in this document. In addition, several important aquifers have been identified. While these are untapped at present, they do

affect the quality of the waters in some streams and ponds. Question: should our Zoning Ordinances require recognition of the possible eventual need as a source of water for municipal needs by limiting the subdivision and construction activities which might take place on them?

It would appear that the Town has done about all it can to limit damaging run-off to water bodies, particularly by strong set-back requirements for septic systems, but the attraction of such bodies both to ourselves and to potential visitors will require that the Town continues to be vigilant in controlling as well as it can any activities which would impair the qualities of our water resources.

The preliminary work done by the Office of State Planning in the preparation of its "Plan for the Squam Lakes Watershed," which was reported in August of 1991, pointed to one problem to which further study by the Planning Board might be done. In time, pollutants which fall into lakes and ponds, or which are from run-offs, sink to the bottom of the lakes and ponds and are buried there by subsequent deposits of natural materials. If the lake is deep enough, these pollutants will remain there. If it is not, and if the use of the water body involves motor boats, they will be stirred up again and again resulting in increasing amounts of pollutants suspended in the water itself.

Since all so-called "great ponds" (ones with a surface area of 10 acres or more) are under the complete control of the State of New Hampshire, Sandwich's role in the matter can only have to do with the development of the shorelands and the lands around them. Perhaps some ordinance which allowed the Planning Board to limit the amount of development which could take place ought to be considered. An example of such an ordinance might be:

In the case of subdividing lots of greater than 10 acres bordering on, or containing, bodies of water or wetlands, the Planning Board may, in its sole judgement, require for the approval of the subdivision greater lot size, longer waterfront, or increased setbacks for structures or septic systems if it can be demonstrated that a more intensive subdivision would be detrimental to nesting sites or habitats of protected, threatened or endangered species or to the quality of water in the pond, lake, river, or wetland.

Many of our homes have older septic systems, and increased building will result in the creation of more of them. Since these are at least a potential source of diminution in the quality of the surrounding waters, care should be taken by the Town to be sure that the quality of its aquifers, surface waters, and water for household uses remain high.

We should not allow development in the community which threatens these water sources.

The recreational use of our bodies of water -- lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands -- for boating, swimming, fishing, canoeing, birding, and hunting -- and the maintenance of a healthy wildlife community -- all depend on the quality of the water in them. To the extent that the Town is able to avoid the contamination of these waters, they will continue to be a major factor in attracting seasonal residents and visitors to the area. As water quality is one of the keys to the sustainability of our economy, we need to keep our eyes squarely focused on threats, actual or potential, to that quality.

Shorelands and Wetlands:

Much has been written in this report about forest preservation, water quality, recreation, scenic vistas, employment, the eco-tourism industry, and other facets of life here in Sandwich but, long term, careful use and management of wetlands and shorelands should be high on the list. Overdevelopment of the shorelands, developmental encroachment on the wetlands, and misuse of the very limited amount of both in this Town would be a serious setback to the objectives of trying to keep "the Town as it is." Our zoning laws are perhaps as tightly written as we can write them but we should often review what has been written to see if more can be done. At this juncture, it would seem that we need to remain vigilant, and further study would not be particularly productive.

Wildlife Habitats:

One supposes that the interests in maintaining good wildlife habitats could be divided roughly into two groups -- the watchers and the hunters/fisherpersons/trappers. As long as the limits and seasons are well-managed, they can probably live together fairly happily. The principal variable is the quality of the habitat.

The watchers -- birders, hikers, all of us who experience the wonderful surprise of coming across an occasional moose, bear, deer, fisher, etc., while driving along the roads -- are, perhaps, the larger group and their needs require the presence of relatively well-managed forest lands and broad fields. The "watchers" also need good water quality for the presence of water birds, fishing birds, and shoreland birds, as well as swamps and marshes for moose and many other semi-aquatic animals. For this group, as for all of us, undeveloped lands, or very lightly developed lands, and well-cared-for water bodies are key.

For the hunters -- fisherpersons, game hunters, and trappers -- all of the above apply. An added component for the game hunters, is the fact that forested and undeveloped corridors are needed between the clumps of forests in order to facilitate the passage of large animals in their seasonal meanderings.

For both groups, access to privately-owned land for recreational use is essential. We hope that those landowners whose lands are presently open for trails and considerate use by visitors will be willing to keep them open. We hope that those whose lands are not open, will reconsider the possibility of opening them. All landowners whose lands are in "current use assessment" are entitled to an additional 20% reduction in assessment if they allow recreational use. Provision for light-use recreational access is particularly important for those who have placed conservation easements on their lands because these easements are "forever" -- and the time to make arrangements for public access is now.

All terrestrial, marine and avian life depends on keeping the quality of water as high as possible, preserving as much undeveloped land as possible, and for proper care of those lands. As each of these goals is defined, the relationships between them and the need for good stewardship of the lands and water bodies that were left to us for our brief use is clear. Leaving them in better shape than we found them would be a wonderful heritage to leave future generations.

Employment:

Many of the citizens of the Town are employed in construction and the forest products industries. Any consideration of trying to keep the growth of the Town restrained has to include a concern for the carpenters, plumbers, electricians, roofers, loggers, sawmill and gravel pit operators, excavators and truckers that form such an important portion of our citizenry. They depend heavily on the continuing construction of new housing and the repair of the old. They, and our future citizens, depend on the use of sound harvesting techniques in our forests, aimed at the preservation of the forests for sustainable yields and harvesting, as well as for most of the objectives enumerated above. The Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, and the Land Trust Committee, therefore, will need to encourage farm and forest landowners to avoid heavy development which would impair the qualities of the community as we want it to continue to be.

A report entitled Building a Healthy Squam Lakes Economy of a study done by Ad Hoc Associates of Salisbury, Vermont, states that the future of the Squam Lakes Watershed should depend most heavily on "Eco-tourism." The authors of that

study lead one to the conclusion that it is on that base that the economic future of the area should be built. To keep people coming to the area, however, means keeping the characteristics of the area as close to the way they are now as possible -- to avoid over-building, destroying the gentle ambiance of the place, maximizing yields from the forests, losing the battle to keep water qualities high -- and all the other facets of life here as expressed above. Some have described this as "conservation-based development."

In the Ad Hoc study, as in those done by several other qualified analysts in the state, the following points are made:

The property tax bill on the median-value year-round house is generally higher in towns with larger tax bases (more taxable property value).

The property tax bill on the median-value year-round house is generally higher in towns with more year-round residents than in towns with fewer year-round residents.

The property tax bill on the median-value year-round house is generally higher in towns with more commercial/industrial taxable property value.

The property tax bill on the median-value year-round house is generally lower in towns with more vacation homes. The smaller (less populated) towns in which vacation homes represent a high percentage of total housing units tend to have lower tax bills than larger towns that may have a higher number of vacation homes but that also have more residential and commercial development to service.

The property tax bill on the median-value house is generally lower in towns in which there is more undeveloped land per year-round resident. It is also generally lower in towns with more state and federal forest land.

To restate the obvious, keeping our Town as it is is more likely to mean lower property taxes in the future than would gross development. But, moderate growth in housing, especially in seasonal housing, will continue to provide some of the employment opportunities which are so important.

The construction and forest products industries are not the only areas in which our citizens are employed. Many wish to, or have to, commute to job sites in other communities. And many have professional or other careers which are carried on in their homes or in separate, in-town offices. A recent draft of The Sandwich Yellow Pages, lists some 73

different occupation categories, from "Antiques" to "Wood Chipping," with some 129 individual listings. The Planning process needs to look at how the Town could encourage such businesses and to answer the question of whether the Ordinances could be changed to make it easier for such operations to expand outside the home but still in either the rural/residential districts or the Historic District. This question is explored further in the section entitled "Housing."

In addition, the people of Sandwich need to do their part in encouraging businesses in Town. Where possible and convenient, it would be very helpful if they did as much shopping as possible in places like A.G. Burrows store, the North Sandwich Store, The Designery, and Sandwich Home Industries, and any other retail operations.

One of the outcomes from Sandwich 2002 was the formation of a group called Sandwich Economic Resources Group (SERG). Now under the leadership of Robert Erb and Michael Chestnut, the purpose of SERG is to help any business person who wishes to start a business, or expand one, by providing or arranging for expertise in a number of areas such as the formulation of a business plan, access to loans or equity funds, marketing skills, etc.. SERG has already held one breakfast meeting at which Janice Kitchen of the Small Business Development Center at Plymouth State College spoke and other gatherings are expected. Anyone interested in participating, or obtaining more information should contact either Mr. Erb or Mr. Chestnut.

From this and other efforts, it is hoped that small businesses may be formed and grow in the Town, providing satisfying employment for young people. The Town demonstrates no enthusiasm for encouraging large retail or industrial operations to move to Town.

Housing:

The Town has done a reasonably good job of providing subsidized housing for the elderly but it needs to be creative in finding ways to make it possible for the younger people whom we very much want and need in our Town to find or build housing which they can afford. Part of the solution to that problem has been met by the provisions in the ordinances for "cluster housing," and for housing in mobile homes/trailers. However, study should be done on whether to make possible the building in the two principal villages in Town of structures which are a combination of stores or shops on the ground floor and housing on the second floor, neither necessarily occupied by the owner. It would be a shame if the villages became completely commercial but some way to approach the problem on a limited basis might be helpful.

Another way to increase relatively inexpensive housing in the villages might be to reduce the set-back requirements as they now are and to allow the construction of combination structures with no set-back, or an average set-back, from sidewalks. Similarly, study should be done on whether reducing the size of an acceptable lot in the villages makes sense.

By "average set-back," we mean that which is typical of the homes in the Center. A quick drive up Skinner Street, for example, reveals the fact that almost all of the homes on the right side have the same set-back from the highway -- and that this set-back would appear to be less than that required by our present ordinances.

Affordable housing requires, to some extent, affordable land and another approach to the problem might be to allow a landowner to subdivide his land to create a lot which by today's standards would be unbuildable -- that is, less than 100,000 square feet. This "right" might be limited to a one-time-only opportunity, or a once-every-ten-year one. A phenomenon which is certainly not limited to Sandwich is that it is becoming increasingly expensive to buy land and homes, but if we're going to enable the younger and less affluent people to live in this Town, perhaps we need to be creative in working out how this might be made possible.

Scenic Vistas:

One of the most highly-prized views in Sandwich is that of the Sandwich Range from the top of Wentworth Hill. A number of years ago, Denley Emerson, the owner of the hilltop, entered into an agreement under the State's Land Conservation Investment Program whereby he sold to the Town a conservation easement on nearly a square mile of his land, including the hilltop, at a bargain price. Under the terms of the easement, the Town has the right anytime in the future to mow the fields on the hilltop to preserve the vista for all to share.

Scenic vistas are probably the most widely enjoyed of the many attributes of our Town. Some are sudden surprises as we travel along the highways and byways, or one of the many hiking trails, and some are hidden to all but a few visitors who hike to see them, sometimes over rough terrain. While the preservation of these vistas is high on the wish list of the Town's residents and visitors, there is probably little that the Planning Board can do to insure that they remain available and unspoiled. To fulfill these wishes, other Town Boards such as the Conservation Commission and the Land Trust Committee should have this objective on their agendas. Some scenic vistas require little more than an annual or biannual mowing. Others, such as the view of the

Sandwich Range from Route 25, are gradually disappearing and will be gone completely unless something is done to assure that they will continue to be available to all.

Forest Preservation:

The section on employment deals with some of the aspects of this concern -- the forest products industry, and its jobs, depends in the long run on careful "best practices" harvesting of the trees in our forests. "High grading," taking all the best trees and leaving only junk trees which will cause the forests to take hundreds of years to become mature again, or extensive clear-cutting, will mean ultimately that we will have no forest-products industry in Town.

There are no laws on our books which would enable the Town to control how well the forests are managed, nor is it likely that the Town would want such laws. The tools which are available to the Planning Board or to other Town Offices are very limited. Increasing public awareness through efforts by foresters and others who are a part of the logging industry, educating landowners who are proposing to cut their timberlands on the need for best practices management and sustainability issues, would make a substantial difference to our Town.

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) has recently published a guide called Good Forestry in the Granite State; Recommended Voluntary Forest Management Practices. Perhaps some trust, or group, could acquire sufficient copies of the book to give to the major landowners in Town.

The SPNHF has been asked to research the question of whether it might be possible for a town to reduce the yield tax, now 10%, if a landowner follows best practices management in a timber cut on his or her lands. If not, that organization may propose legislation which would enable a town to establish such a procedure if it voted to do so.

The SPNHF has recently created a program for the marketing of something they call "Green Certified Wood." Under this program, "green certified wood is guaranteed to have been harvested in an ecologically sustainable way, and some mills will pay a higher price for it." (See Autumn 1997 issue of "Forest Notes.") The assumption, of course, is that the final buyer of the lumber would also be willing to pay a somewhat higher price.

Further, the AMC is also working on the problem and expresses its focus on these three fronts, which perhaps expresses our goals as well:

"Conserving Wildlands in the Northern Forest to protect the forest's ecological integrity and support its recreational opportunities and the sustainability of its timber production.

Encouraging well-managed forests that support forest health and the forest-based economy, including high-value timber products, recreation tourism, and jobs these industries support.

Building strong, diverse, locally-based economies that support vibrant communities throughout the Northern Forest." ("AMC Outdoors" September 1997)

Also coming out of Sandwich 2002 was the establishment of a Natural Resources Committee to encourage good forest management practices in the Town. This group, chaired by Fred Lavigne and Peter Pohl, has held several educational meetings, bringing in outside speakers to discuss sustainable forestry. More are planned for the future. Any interested persons should contact Mr. Lavigne or Mr. Pohl.

For the "feeling" of the Town, for all sorts of recreational activities, for wildlife habitats and water quality, the preservation of our forest is essential.

Recreation:

Sandwich is blessed by having a very active and well-run recreation program for those who are sports oriented, young and old. Jere Burrows has been in charge of this program for over fifteen years and there is little that one could wish were changed.

Gradually, more and more hiking trails and snowmobile trails are being created and/or improved for summer and winter use by bird watchers, cross country skiers, hikers, and snowmobilers. The activities on Quimby Field, the fair grounds, and the tennis courts are almost continuous and Remick Park in North Sandwich is available for more occasional athletic and social use.

Most of the "non-athletic" needs of the Town appear to be met by individual groups of people getting together for their own amusement. Bridge tournaments occur twice a year, trips are scheduled to Portland and Boston to attend shows of one sort or another, "International Nights" take place every other Friday at the Benz Center in February and March, and the Over the Hill Hikers are busy, weather

permitting, roughly forty weeks of the year walking, hiking, skating, or skiing -- doing their thing. There are numerous other active groups similarly engaged in such activities as quilting and hooking.

The only things which appear to be on some wish lists are an indoor swimming pool and an enclosed hockey rink. Both would probably cost more than the Town is able to fund from taxes, but there is a marvelous opportunity for a great memorial for someone who wants to make a substantial gift to the Town. Both facilities would be well used.

Other recreational activities such as hunting and fishing are mostly sports done by individuals or pairs. Forests and open lands available for thoughtful use by hunters, and water bodies with good water quality and public access, are the two most important ingredients. (See sections on forests and water quality for further discussion) Here again, such Town Boards as the Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission and the Land Trust Committee could accomplish much by securing permission and easements on private lands for recreational use.

Bike paths are becoming more popular today, in part perhaps because of the Federal money which is currently available for building them. A group of volunteers was formed out of the discussions at Sandwich 2002 with the specific assignment of creating a bike path from the Center to the Town Beach. It is currently meeting and Ben Bullard is serving as its Chair. Since the neighboring towns of Holderness, Moultonborough and Tamworth, are in the process of developing bike paths, perhaps the Sandwich group could talk with their counterparts in those communities to see if further action here might be warranted to connect these various efforts.

Squam Lakes:

One of the greatest assets for the eco-tourism industry in our area are the Squam Lakes -- "Golden Pond." The Town has little or no impact on the most important aspects of the lakes -- water quality, recreational use and misuse, etc. -- because it is a "Great Pond," located in five towns and three counties. Our zoning ordinances are the most restrictive of the five towns and they have been strictly enforced. We need to cooperate with the residents of the other towns in the event that undue use threatens the overall value of the lakes to its watershed area.

The Sandwich coves in the lake -- Squaw, Rattlesnake and Bear -- are in fairly good shape, although Upper (or Inner) Squaw has the worst water quality on the big lake and is the most likely to become eutropic (so loaded with nutrients that it perils aquatic life). Major development on its large and unprotected shorelands could hasten its decline.

A number of years ago, the Selectmen of the Town went before the State Legislature to try to get a law passed which would limit boat speed in the Town coves to five miles per hour. It was felt that these coves are the only places on the lakes which are reasonably well protected from heavy winds and are ideally suited to small boat use. The wind, wave and wake problems on the main lake make canoeing, for example, unsafe and it would enhance the overall use of the lake had such legislation passed. The head of the Marine Patrol at the time declared that such a law was unnecessary and it failed. Should we try again?

Great Ponds:

An almost hidden asset in our Town is the presence of nine "Great Ponds" -- those bodies of water ten or more acres in size. Kusumpe, Intervale, Dinsmore, Barville, and Miles Ponds all have no public access. Little Pond, thanks to Denley Emerson's willingness to include this in the easement he sold the Town, is open to everyone and rare is the time in the summer when one can drive by the pond without seeing someone fishing in it or on it. Bear Camp Pond has both a Town Beach, available to Sandwich and Tamworth residents, and a launch site for canoes, kayaks, and other small boats. Red Hill Pond has access for viewing, but no clear, well-maintained access for small boats, canoes or kayaks. There are also several ponds in the White Mountain National Forest which have limited public access including Flat Mountain Pond, Kiah Pond, and the Hall Ponds.

Under State law, the State can take a right of way to any great pond to provide public access. Since that would open a pond to unrestricted use by the general public, it would be much more desirable for the Town to try to negotiate private access for townspeople only and limited to light recreational uses such as bird watching and fishing, canoeing, kayaking, small boating, and ice skating.

Conservation Commission

The Commission's primary activities consist of monitoring wetlands applications, sponsoring the Five Days of Sandwich summer conservation camp, developing a natural resources inventory and special consultations or tasks as requested by other branches of Town government. Perhaps the biggest change in the Commission since the last Master Plan has been the evolution of the Land Trust Committee into permanent status. All land trust activities and easement monitoring are handled by the Land Trust Committee; town trails (Bearcamp River and Red Hill Pond) are also handled by that committee. See the Land Trust section of the Master Plan for a full report.

Wetlands Monitoring

The monitoring of Wetlands applications is the Commission's primary statutory task. The number of applications has generally been reduced over the last five years due to a lessening of development activity. It should also be noted that the Wetlands Bureau has taken successful steps to streamline the permit process. Two new applications have resulted in relatively quick approval for small, low-impact projects. A "Forestry Notification" that applies to logging activities crossing wetland areas has made it easier for applicants and the Commission in this area. These can be reviewed procedurally by the Commission but onsite inspection is limited. A second change is the "Expedited Permit" review. The Expedited Review is only available to towns with a Conservation Commission. Low impact projects that meet specific criteria, for example simple docks or driveway fills, may now be approved within four to six weeks. The Town Commission is required to sign the application certifying that the project does meet the expedited criteria for size and impact. We have had good success with this new process. The result of these developments is that there are fewer extended site visits required by the Commission. The current average number of applications is two per month of each type, with most activity in the fall and spring. The Commission has not had any applications affecting prime wetlands since the last Master Plan update.

Five Days of Sandwich

The Five Days of Sandwich summer camp continues to be supported by the Commission. Due to the increase in the number of children aged 10-12 in Town, we now have two one-week sessions of 7 to 10 children each. The camp is free to children of residents and Town taxpayers. Because of this increase, the Commission budget has been increased to \$1200 per year. Additional support of approximately \$600 to \$700 is received each year from donations by the White Sylvania Trust, Bearcamp Valley Garden Club and individuals. The camp consists of exploring the natural resources of the Town, generally through hiking and canoeing. Each session also takes a one-day trip to the seashore. The camp is an important learning experience for children as it stresses the natural environment specifically in our Town.

Natural Resources Inventory

The Well Study originally conducted in 1983 was repeated in 1996. The Commission obtained a favorable price of \$49 per test from a testing company, individual well owners paid this fee with a copy of all the reports going to the

Commission. We were able to obtain about 50 participants. Half of the wells had also been tested in 1983. A comparison of the results from 1983 and 1996 showed no degradation of water quality. Also of note was the lack of bacterial contamination of wells in the Center where the new sewer system has now been operating for 8 years. These tests will provide a continued baseline for the monitoring of our water quality through future testing.

Conservation Commissions are required by statute to develop a Natural Resources Inventory. The Commission has begun the task of collecting information for this. The Town has some information available of wetlands, soils, slopes, and the well study. Commission members are searching for other items available at no cost from Lakes Region Planning, Fish and Game, and others. It is desired to develop a set of maps on one scale including this data. In one approach, the well study has been placed on GIS maps at the Community School. To complete the work in this type of format would require funding from the Town or other sources. Paper and mylar map overlays may be a less expensive alternative. The Commission will continue to collect the basic information for the Inventory and explore various display alternatives.

Occasionally, the Commission is requested to perform special projects. Generally, these involve reviewing proposed building permit or subdivision applications to determine if Wetlands Permits are required. Recently, the Selectmen requested that the Commission administer a tree-planting program. The Commission discovered that, due to the large number of trees throughout the Town, there are relatively few roadside locations available for new trees. Newly-planted trees must be kept safe from damage by snowplows. Some open areas, such as the fair grounds, are subject to vehicle parking which can also damage new trees. As one of the Land Use recommendations in the 1990 Master Plan references views, planting of trees must be done carefully to avoid view disruption.

Hazardous Waste Day continues to be sponsored by the Town through the Commission. All management of this activity is handled by Lakes Region Planning Commission. The current drop-off area in Moultonborough has proven satisfactory.

Future Plans

In the future, the Commission will continue its statutory tasks of monitoring wetlands applications and developing a natural resources inventory. The well study will be repeated within another ten years. Our support of the Five Days of Sandwich summer camp will continue as well as our response and involvement in any special projects requested by the Selectmen and Planning Board.

Sandwich Land Trust:

In 1992, the Sandwich Land Trust Committee was established as a separate Town entity. Two members of the Conservation Commission and one Selectman sit with seven other members. The Committee was established as a separate body to continue work in establishing and monitoring conservation easements in the Town.

The Committee has taken seriously the 1990 Master Plan recommendations regarding preservation of

- a. Scenic views
- b. Productive farmland
- c. Maps of protected areas
- d. Protection of Squam Lake

The Committee has not obtained any new easements since the Land Conservation Investment Program ended. However, the Committee has worked successfully with private groups, encouraging landowners to donate or sell easements, educating them as to how easements work, and opening the door with interested private conservation groups. This quiet assistance has helped, in small part, in bringing more lands into protection on Squam Lake and on Red Hill. The committee is currently working with private groups to help obtain easements on the Ossipees, on Town aquifers, and on farmland areas. These groups include the Lakes Region Conservation Trust, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, Squam Lakes Conservation Society, and Squam Lakes Association. Recently several statewide organizations have produced useful images of all protected lands in the Town.

In addition, the Committee has focused on its ongoing work in monitoring easements. Members of the Committee and other Town citizens hike the properties annually to find boundaries and to see that requirements of the easements are being upheld by both landowners and the public. The Committee has also flown over the easements for aerial checks. We have learned in these years that public education is a paramount task for the Committee so that Townspeople understand the purpose of easements, their benefits to Townspeople, and Town responsibilities.

The Committee recently began working with the above groups to identify collectively what properties or types of land still need protection. We have been particularly interested in large timber tracts. Statewide groups are interested in privately-owned mountains and aquifer areas. Over the next five years, we expect to continue work on the same goals as mentioned above: the protection of scenic views and steep

slopes, farmlands, productive timberlands, and shorelines and aquifers.

The Committee is also very interested in recruiting new, young Townspeople to the Committee. It will take time to educate these new members in the details of easements. It is time to bring new members into this area.

Sandwich Children's Center:

In May 1997, the Sandwich Child Care Center officially changed its name to Sandwich Children's Center.

The Sandwich Children's Center is a licensed nonprofit child care facility, located on Maple Street in Center Sandwich. The Center provides child care services to children starting at age six weeks. The programs include year-round child care as well as nursery school for pre-schoolers from September through June taught by teachers with Early Childhood Education degrees.

The Center also offers a school-age program for before and after school, as well as during school vacations, for children in kindergarten through age 12.

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. U.S.D.A. approved meals including lunch and two snacks are available daily.

Financial assistance is available.

The Sandwich Children's Center is the main provider to families in need of daytime child care. The Sandwich Children's Center is a contract agency with Title XX services (financial assistance for working low-income families). The Center is state licensed to accommodate up to 40 children ranging in age from six weeks to 12 years.

The outcome from a long-range planning board retreat in October 1993 was the 1997 Capital Campaign. The goal of this campaign is to raise \$300,000 for building reconstruction which will ensure the continuance of safe and quality child care. The renovation, to be completed in 1998, will also enable the Center to offer all of SCC's programs under one roof.

Coffee House/Pub:

A popular idea expressed at Sandwich 2002, but which was lost in the effort to limit the list of concerns to five, was the need for a coffee house and pub as a gathering place in the Center. Part of this desire was for a place where teenagers could gather after school, in the early evenings,

and on weekends for general socializing. There isn't anywhere in Town where such gathering can occur, at present, and it is a felt need by many of our citizens.

It was also thought that such a place could be an informal spot for assorted people in Town, perhaps especially older men and women, to gather mid-day for friendly (or sometimes perhaps not so friendly) conversation and discussion, and for breakfast or lunch. There wouldn't appear to be any reason why both groups couldn't use the same facility, though some separation within it would likely be necessary.

The word "pub" kept intruding into the discussions as a reflection of the desire of some that light lunches might also be served as well as beer and wine. Obviously, the serving of any form of liquor would make the separation of adult vs. teenager facilities absolutely necessary. Nonetheless, there is a strong feeling in Town that such could and should exist.

For such a thing to become a reality, the Planning Board would have to propose adjusting Zoning Ordinances to make it possible and, were it in the Center, the Historic District Commission would have some oversight as to its design and location.

Capital Improvement Program:

In a New Hampshire municipality where the Planning Board has adopted a Master Plan, a Town Meeting may authorize the Planning Board to prepare and amend a recommended program of municipal capital improvement projects. In 1992, the Town of Sandwich voted to do this.

The Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIP Committee) is made up of Planning Board members, interested citizens, the Town Treasurer, and a representative from the Board of Selectmen. It meets several times prior to the yearly budgeting process and its main purpose is to aid the Selectmen and the budget advisory committee in their consideration of that budget.

In addition to being an advisory document, the Program is also used by Town department heads to review long-term requirements. It may also be used to assess impact fees, which would represent a fair share of necessary infrastructure improvements caused by a developer's proposal. In addition, it is hoped that the Program will stabilize tax rates by spreading out major expenditures.

Our CIP Program outlines four methods of financing capital improvements. They are capital reserve funds, bonding, current expenses, and grants.

In Sandwich, the Program covers a span of six years and it is periodically updated. The capital expenditure has to be in excess of \$2500 and it cannot be an operating expense or a maintenance cost. It should also be noted that CIP projects are not meant to be a "wish-list," but rather a fairly accurate projection of the Town's future capital needs.

Federated Church of Sandwich:

During 1997, the Federated Church of Sandwich took the final steps in a process which began nearly 80 years ago. At that time, the Methodist Episcopal Church of Sandwich and the Free Baptist Church of Sandwich, "being beset with serious and increasing difficulties because of reduced membership and financial support," decided that their activities could continue effectively only through federation with each other. Thus was the Federated Church of Sandwich formed.

It was not until December 22, 1959, however, that this federation of three church entities was formalized by a written agreement. Nevertheless, the agreement provided for separate boards of trustees for each of the constituent churches and these boards retained control of their respective property consisting of two meetinghouses and a parsonage as well as their individual capital investments. The agreement further stipulated that responsibility for the operation and maintenance of all church real estate be delegated to the Federated Church trustees and that anyone was welcome to join any one of the three congregations. There would continue to be only one church service and one minister, either a Baptist or a Methodist by ordination.

The Federated Church operated successfully under this agreement for over 20 years until it was felt a more legally binding set of church bylaws was needed. After much study and prayerful deliberation, the first set of bylaws was adopted on June 14, 1981, followed by amendments in 1983, 1985, and 1986. These bylaws did not materially change the philosophy of the 1959 Agreement but merely defined the church organization structure and the responsibilities of officers, church council, committee members and the congregation. The three boards of trustees, three sets of capital investments and three congregations remained in existence, as did affiliations with the Methodist and Baptist regional organizations.

As the years went by under these bylaws, it became more and more apparent that the Federated Church could operate more efficiently as one legal entity while maintaining its Baptist and Methodist affiliations. Many members asked that the matter be studied and the Church Council appointed a "Unification Committee" in 1996 consisting of Pastor

Henderson and four church officers and board chairmen to do this. The committee was asked to develop a new set of church bylaws which would unify all church activities, acknowledge all legal requirements, simplify the church organization structure and maintain the Baptist and Methodist affiliations.

All church officers, boards and committees were consulted as the new bylaws were developed and the fifth revision was accepted by the Council. A hearing for all church members on March 17, 1997, gave everyone a chance to ask questions or make suggestions. The last step before denominational voting was to seek legal advice to ascertain that all legal requirements were being met. This was accomplished with the generous and expert assistance of Attorney Willard G. Martin, Jr., of Sandwich. He advised that the best procedure was to treat the reorganization of the three churches as a merger as permitted under New Hampshire Statute RSA 292:7 with the Federated Church of Sandwich being the surviving corporation.

On June 1, 1997, the Baptist members and trustees unanimously approved the proposed merger. On June 2, 1997, the Methodist members and trustees did the same. On June 7, 1997, the regional Methodist officials voted their approval. On June 8, 1997, the Federated members and Church Council unanimously approved the merger, thus completing the many necessary steps of accomplishment. All that remains is to record the certificate of merger and file it with the New Hampshire Secretary of State, the Town Clerk of the Town of Sandwich and the Carroll County Registry of Deeds. This is being done as this report is written.

Spokesfield Common:

At the corner of Grove Street and Heard Road there is a sign identifying an area which most of us call Spokesfield Common but which, in fact, contains three separate entities.

The first, on the right as one goes in, is a 10-unit apartment complex owned by the Sandwich Senior Housing Committee Inc. It offers subsidized housing to those individuals who are 62 years old or older and whose annual income is \$15,100 or less for an individual, or \$17,250 or less for a couple.

This complex opened in December 1987 and is managed by Stewart Property Management of Bedford, New Hampshire. The owning committee is made up predominately of Sandwich residents.

The second, on the left, is the Doris L. Benz Community Center. It is owned by another volunteer organization

called Sandwich Senior Resources, Inc. It offers a facility for a large number of community groups and events including the Girl Scouts, School Sports Teams, Private Parties, Visiting Nurse Association, Sandwich Children's Center, Sandwich Historical Society, Artist Groups, Sandwich Care Givers, Over the Hill Hikers, etc., etc. If a group or individual wishes to use the Center, for-profit organizations are charged \$1.00 per person and \$15.00 for the use of the kitchen if they use it. Typically, non-profit groups are not expected to pay anything. If a group outside of Sandwich wants to use the Center, a Sandwich resident has to sign them in. Linda Jacobs is the Program Coordinator, (284-6313).

The Center was built in 1992-1993 on land which is owned by Taylor Homes of Laconia which granted Sandwich Senior Resources, Inc. a permanent easement to build the Center and its related parking space, etc..

The third is Spokesfield Common itself -- a retirement community for senior citizens. Owned in its entirety by Taylor Homes of Laconia, the 14 units offer "Independent Living." The first unit was built in 1991 and there is no space on which to build any more. Visiting nurse services for residents are provided by Taylor Homes, as well as bus transportation once a week for shopping at Heath's, etc.

The units are available to anyone who is 62 years old, or older. A tenant pays a single "up-front" charge, in an amount which is determined partly by the tenant's age, and a monthly management fee. If the tenant should die within ten years from the "purchase," a pro rata refund is paid to his or her estate. Subsidation is available. Assisted living, or full nursing care, can be provided at the Congregate Living Center at Taylor Homes. Residents may stay at Spokesfield until their death.

Sandwich Caregivers

A new arrival on the scene of Sandwich volunteer, non-profit organizations, since the 1990 Master Plan Update, is Sandwich Caregivers. It began in September of 1992 and has found an important place in our lives. The purpose of Sandwich Caregivers is "to provide services to all residents of Sandwich to assist them in maintaining independence and dignity within their home and community. The volunteer services include, but are not limited to, transportation, friendly home visits, respite care, light household chores, errands, and telephone assurance."

The Caregivers have helped people in various situations: after operations and accidents, they have assisted with

meals, laundry, vacuuming, and transportation. They have provided transportation when a car is in the garage for servicing or a spouse is out of town. They have offered respite from caring for a loved one, enabling the primary caretaker to take some time for him/her self. And they have even helped stack firewood and rake leaves.

Begun in 1991 by the Sandwich Home Nursing and Health Association, Sandwich Caregivers operated out of the home of Linda Jacobs, its Program Coordinator from its inception, for its first three years, or so. It was subsequently located at the Doris L. Benz Community Center for several years before recently moving its office to the basement of the Baptist Church. Ms. Jacobs continues to be the Program Coordinator and the phone number at the office is 284-6313.

Growing steadily in the demands placed upon it for assistance, it now helps an average of approximately 20 people per month making 67 trips, thanks to the work of some 31 volunteers. More volunteers are always welcome