

# CHAPLIN

## 2021 Plan of Conservation and Development Update



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# Acknowledgments

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### Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission

Doug Dubitsky	Chairman
Peter Fiasconaro	Vice Chairman
Eric Beer	Member
Helen Weingart	Member
Randy Godaire	Member
David Garceau	Member
Kenneth Fortier	Member
William Ireland	Alternate
Peter Haines	Alternate
Dan Pearce	Alternate
Alan Burdick	Member (11/5/13-5/24/2021)

### Board of Selectmen

Juan Roman III	First Selectman
Joe Pinto	Selectman
Ken Fortier	Selectman
William Rose, IV	First Selectman (7/1/18-11/2/21)
Irene Schein	Community and Economic Development
Dave Stone	Recreation Commission
Paul Peifer	Historic District Commission
Scott Matthies	Inland Wetlands Commission

### Technical and Administrative Assistance

Jay Gigliotti	Zoning Officer
Jim Larkin	Northeast CT Council of Governments

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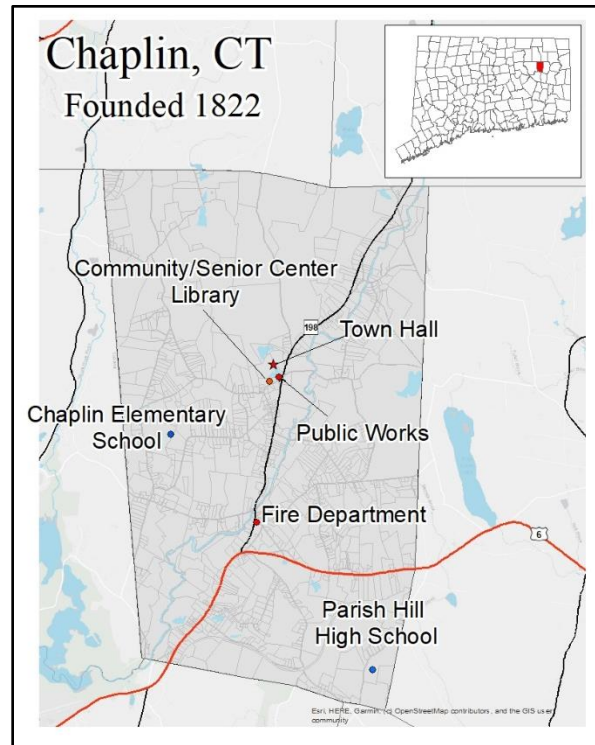
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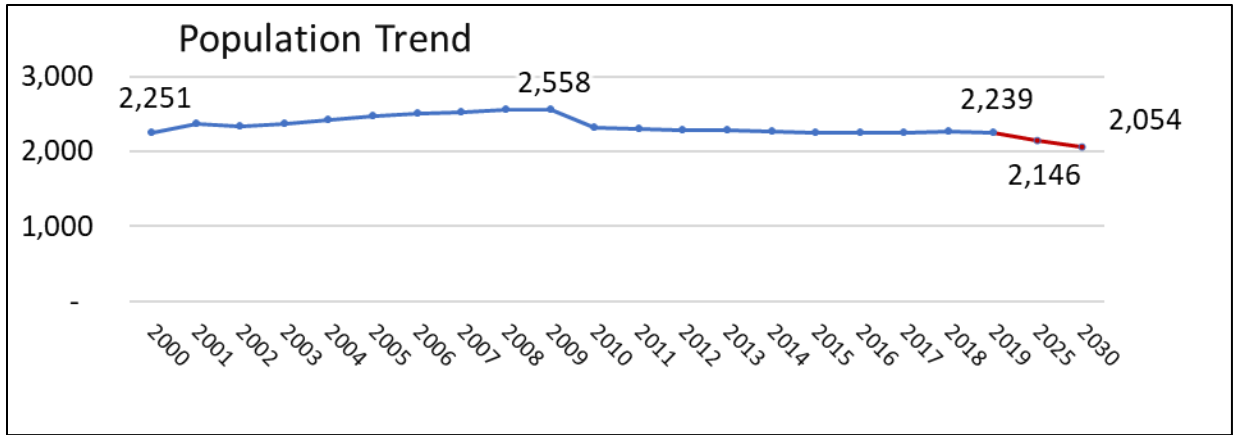
## CHAPLIN TODAY & TOMORROW

Chaplin is located in eastern Connecticut, about 30 miles east of Hartford in Windham County. Neighboring towns include Mansfield to the west, Ashford and Eastford to the north, Hampton to the east, and Windham and Scotland to the south. It is a short drive to the University of Connecticut's main campus at Storrs, as well as to Eastern Connecticut State University and Windham Hospital in Willimantic.

Chaplin is a rural community. Its rolling woodlands, river valleys, old farmsteads, and historic town center are characteristic of Connecticut's eastern highlands. More than 30% of the land in Chaplin is protected open space including portions of Natchaug State Forest, Goodwin State Forest, and Mansfield Hollow State Park. Chaplin is known for pristine stretches of the Natchaug River including popular Diana's Pool. Almost all commercial development in Chaplin is in the western Route 6 corridor with clusters of businesses from ROUTE 198 intersection to the Windham town line.

Chaplin's population in 2019 was 2,239. Population has decreased by 12% over the last decade having lost 319 residents since 2009. The rate of growth had been increasing 10-15% every ten years since 1970 but is now below the 2000 Census count of 2,251 residents. Population projections by the CT State Data Center using state and locally derived fertility rates show a continued decrease by 8% through 2030 (2,054). The makeup of the population by age cohort indicates that Chaplin is an aging community with a median age of 46.1, in 2019 ACS, an increase of six years from 40.8 in 2010, and higher than both the State of CT (41.0) and Windham County (41.2). The largest increase being in the 60-64-year-old population (8.2%) and the largest decrease being in 35-44 year-olds (7.6%).





Chaplin’s total area is about 19.6 square miles or 12,500 acres. As population has decreased, the population density is now about 114 persons per square mile or about 1 person per 5-6 acres.

Chaplin is located within the Willimantic – Danielson Labor Market Area, Regional School District 11, the Eastern Highlands Health District, and the Northeastern CT Council of Governments (NECCOG). Chaplin is also located within the Last Green Valley; an area designated by Congress in 1994 because it is uniquely rural and has significant historic and natural assets.

**Plan of Conservation and Development**

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut State Statutes requires that each municipality prepare a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and sets forth the requirements for such a plan. The plan is required to be updated every ten years but may be amended or updated at any time. If a plan is not amended as required, the First Selectmen is required to submit a letter to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Commissioners of Transportation, Energy and Environmental Protection and Economic and Community Development that explains why such plan was not amended and include a copy in each application for discretionary state funding submitted to any state agency.

Chaplin adopted its original Plan of Development in 1968. The plan was comprehensively updated and adopted in 1989. In 2000, the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission adopted the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan as an amendment to the Plan of Development. The 2010 POCD was updated with a grant from the Office of Policy and Management and included extensive outreach and public participation process. As much of the current 2010 plan and outreach is still relevant, the Planning and Zoning Commission decided to update sections of the current plan for 2020. The 2020 Update focuses on issues related to the Commercial Corridor along the western half of Route 6 and reviews suggested strategies as they relate to the overall development and needs of the town.

*What is a Plan of Conservation and Development?*

*A statement of policies, goals, and standards for the physical and economic development of a town.*



**Public Visioning Sessions**

**Visioning Session #1:** This session was designed to gather input from the public and began with a community brainstorming session. People were asked to identify issues and opportunities important to the future of Chaplin. Attendees were broken up into groups, they looked at the issues in more detail by topic and then reported back to the larger group. The session also included a visual preference survey designed to gain input about how the community would like Chaplin to look and feel in the future. A full description of all the public visioning sessions can be found in the appendix.

**TOP LIKE**



**TOP DISLIKE**



**Visioning Session #2:** This session focused on Chaplin’s natural resources. Attendees were broken up into three groups: 1) the Natchaug River, 2) agriculture, and 3) other natural resources. Each group looked at the value of those resources, threats to those resources, and potential solutions.

**NATCHAUG RIVER**

Values

Chaplins’s trademark  
 Fisheries  
 Recreation  
 Water Quality

Threats

Development  
 Pollution  
 Erosion/Sedimentation  
 Rising temperatures

Solutions

Regulations  
 Enforcement  
 Education  
 Monitoring

**AGRICULTURE**

Values

Open Space  
 Beauty  
 Food  
 Jobs

Threats

Taxes  
 Land Costs  
 Viability  
 Attitudes

Solutions

Agriculture-friendly regulations  
 Diversification  
 Tax Reductions  
 Education

**OTHER IMPORTANT  
NATURAL RESOURCES**

Forests  
Aquifer  
Farm Fields  
Dark Sky

Wildlife  
Vernal Pools  
Natchaug Tributaries  
Natural Sounds



**Visioning Session #3:** This session was directed towards members of Chaplin’s boards and commissions including the Board of Selectmen, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, the Conservation Commission, and the Board of Finance. The discussion centered on the following planning priorities: economic development and transportation, natural resources and agriculture, community services and housing, and land use and community character. While the first two visioning sessions helped identify the “pulse of the community”, this session was more focused on strategies and specific recommendations to achieve the community’s goals. A second visual preference survey revealed the following results.

**Planning Priorities**

***Economic Development/ Transportation***

***Community Services/ Housing***

***Natural Resources/ Agriculture***

***Land Use/ Community Character***

**TOP LIKES**



**TOP DISLIKES**



**Visioning Session #4:** The last visioning session focused entirely on economic development in the Route 6 corridor. Many landowners along the Route 6 corridor were in attendance. A third visual preference survey was conducted. Chaplin citizens chose pictures that depict a quaint, pedestrian-friendly village setting. There was a strong preference for buildings with a traditional New England architectural style that is respectful of the rural setting and the needs of people and pedestrians.

**TOP LIKES FOR ROUTE 6**

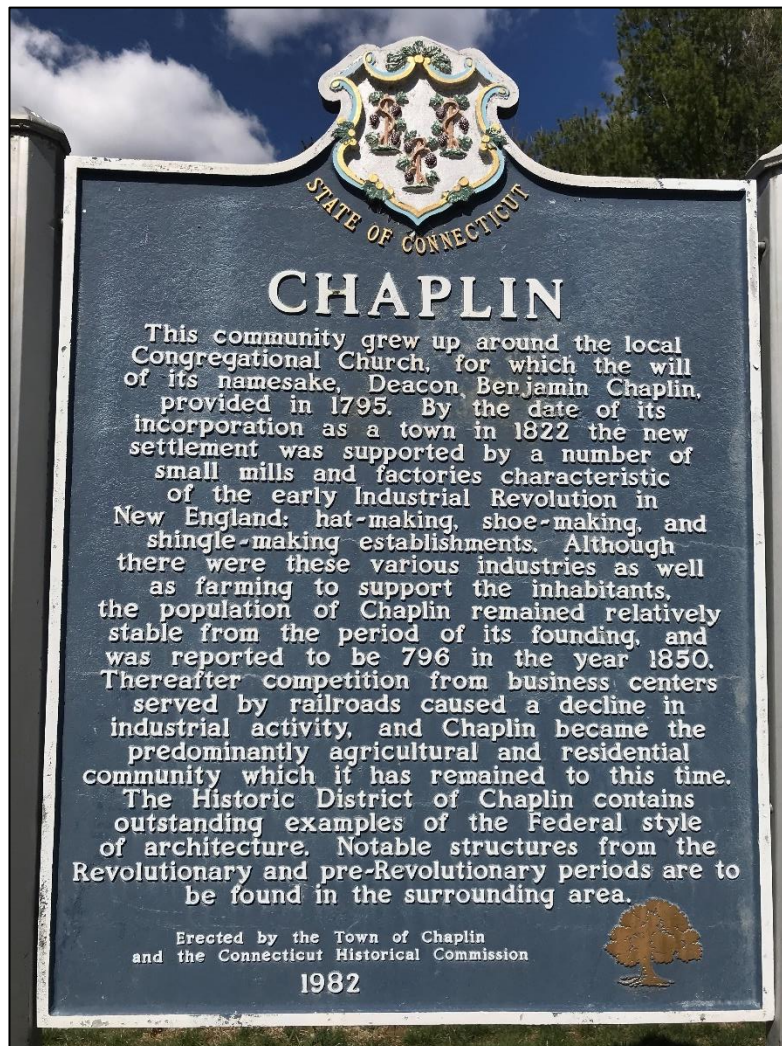


Based on the input they gathered from the Chaplin community at the four public visioning sessions, the Plan of Conservation and Development sub-committee prepared the following vision statement for the future of Chaplin.

**VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF CHAPLIN**

*Chaplin is situated in the rural northeast corner of Connecticut. Hearing the quiet; hearing birds sing; and hearing the rushing waters of numerous brooks are, for many residents, high priorities—as are the sights and sounds of the pristine Natchaug River. We value wildlife, agriculture, and quiet village and farm settings. We value the dark night-time sky that allows us to see the stars.*

***Our goal is to preserve our town's most valuable assets and provide long term benefits to our community.***



# 2

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## Business and Employment

2019 CT Department of Labor statistics show Chaplin had approximately 48 businesses employing the equivalent of 250 full-time workers. A majority (60.8%) of the jobs in Chaplin fall under the Government Sector and include employment at Parish Hill High School and Chaplin Elementary School. Construction, Accommodations/Food Services and Other Services make up approximately 22% of the town's employment. The remainder of Chaplin's employers are small, independent businesses employing fewer than ten employees. Chaplin's workforce is approximately 1,259, a decrease of 165 from 2010 due to falling population. Most Chaplin residents commute out of town for work.

Chaplin is also home to many small farms that contribute to the local economy by providing locally grown goods and services. The town strives to maintain and support its agricultural businesses.

### Top Employers

- Parish Hill High School
- Chaplin Elementary School
- Zlotnicks Irving
- Dunkin Donuts

*Source: CERC 2018*

### Unemployment Rate Sept 2020

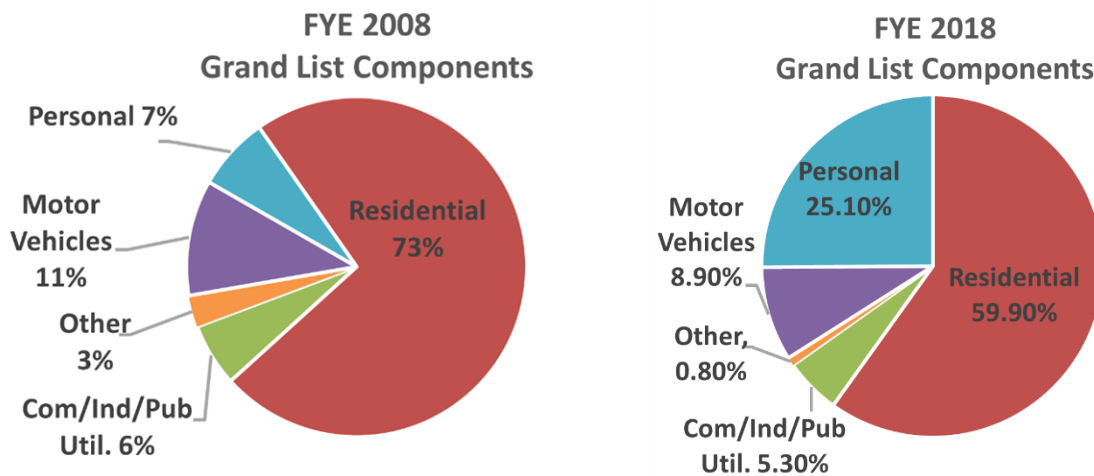
<b>Chaplin</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
Willimantic/Danielson	
Labor Market Area	6.8%
Connecticut	7.5%
United States	7.7%

*Source: CT DOL 2020*

<b>Business Profile 2019 Sector</b>	Units	Employment	% of Total
Total-All Industries	48	250	
Construction	10	16	6.4
Manufacturing	NA	NA	
Retail Trade	3	5	2.0
Accommodations and Food Services	4	19	7.6
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	8	19	7.6
Total Government (Includes Education)	10	152	60.8

**Tax Base**

Property taxes accounted for 70.8% of Chaplin’s total revenues in 2018, an increase of 9.1% from 2009. Approximately 28.2% of total revenues came from state and federal funding sources in 2018 a decrease of 10.3% from 2008. Property tax revenues in 2018 consisted of, 59.9% from residential properties, 5.3% from commercial, industrial, and public utilities, 8.9% motor vehicles, 25.1% personal, and 0.8% other. Algonquin Gas Transmission and Eversource contribute 32% of all property taxes collected. While there is no ideal ratio of residential and commercial properties in any town, the property tax distribution in Chaplin is normal for rural/residential towns. Chaplin appears to be slightly more diversified in its tax base than comparable towns in the area. A map of land use for tax purposes is in the appendix.



Property Tax Revenue		
As% of Total		
	FYE2008	FYE2018
Eastford	66.1%	67.1%
Hampton	63.4%	67.6%
Scotland	61.5%	73.6%
<b>Chaplin</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>70.8%</b>
Ashford	52.8%	68.1%
Mansfield	47.0%	58.4%
Windham	35.6%	46.7%
CT	71.2%	75.8%
Municipal Fiscal Indicators		

Property Tax Composition		
% Residential		
	FYE2008	FYE2018
Eastford	76.7%	69.6%
Hampton	80.8%	71.7%
Scotland	80.4%	81.4%
<b>Chaplin</b>	<b>79.8%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>
Ashford	77.2%	73.7%
Mansfield	76.0%	63.6%
Windham	55.4%	48.4%
CT	71.4%	67.2%
Municipal Fiscal Indicators		

Per Capita Spending		
	FYE2008	FYE2018
Eastford	\$1,880	\$2,116
Hampton	\$1,850	\$2,156
Scotland	\$1,798	\$2,594
<b>Chaplin</b>	<b>\$1,777</b>	<b>\$2,929</b>
Ashford	\$1,675	\$2,395
Mansfield	\$884	\$1,290
Windham	\$1,161	\$1,520
CT	\$2,312	\$2,934
Municipal Fiscal Indicators		

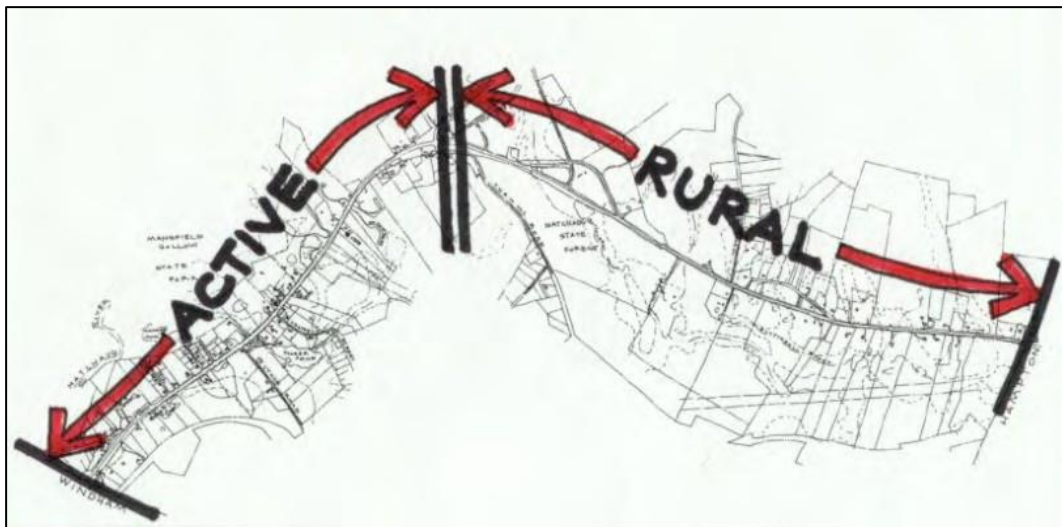
## Western Route 6 Corridor

In 2000, the Town of Chaplin adopted the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan. It was included as part of the 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development as well as the 2020 update because the goals and strategies are still pertinent today.

The main goals of the Route 6 Corridor Management plan are to:

- Encourage commercial development in the western part of the Route 6 corridor,
- Guide the pattern of development on western Route 6 by stopping “strip” development and allowing mixed use,
- Enhance community character by protecting scenic features such as barns, stone walls, buildings, trees, etc. that contribute to appearance,
- Reduce the number of driveways and other curb cuts on Route 6,
- Establish pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and
- Promote a diversity in business types and avoid the over development of a single use.

*Chaplin is committed to focusing economic development on Route 6 from the Windham town line to the intersection with Route 198.*





The Route 6 Corridor Management Plan encouraged higher density, mixed commercial and residential uses at the Lynch Road intersection and the Route 198 intersection with Route 6. These two areas already contain relatively higher densities of mixed uses compared to other areas along western Route 6. These can be supplemented and enhanced to create the vision of village-scale development compatible with Chaplin’s rural community character. The visioning workshops held in 2009 reinforced the village concept as Chaplin’s preferred form of development.



### **Corridor Overlay District**

The Corridor Overlay District was adopted in 2003 and intended to assure that site development within its boundaries would be conducted in a manner that promotes the establishment of village areas and discourage the establishment of strip development while enhancing community character.

Many of the same issues outlined in the 2010 POCD still exist.

- The “overlay” district does not change the underlying zones for residential and commercial uses. The district does not allow for any commercial uses beyond what is currently allowed in the underlying zones.
- The overlapping zones are confusing for people seeking approval for development in the district. Zoning boundaries should follow parcel boundaries when possible.
- The district is large (427 acres and 1.7 miles long) and does not differentiate between village commercial areas and other stretches of the western route 6 corridor which are less dense and more typically rural.
- The design guidelines should be improved by making them more visual, adding diagrams of preferred designs, and crafting specific design guidelines for commercial or mixed development.

### **Strategies for Implementation**

The 2010 POCD included mock-ups of the proposed nodes and village areas to help visualize what these areas could become. The original identified nodes were identified as Sherman’s Corner and Natchaug Village. The development of these nodes at the intersection of Route 6 and Route 198/Lynch Road did not materialize and have been determined to be no longer viable by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The concepts of shared parking, utilities, and access to Route 6, as well as septic designs, that may be necessary to increase the area available for development in the commercial zone, are still viable and supported by the town. Underground utilities should be installed in favor of above ground utilities where practical for a more village-like atmosphere.

As part of the 2021 POCD Update the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed three scenarios for development of a new business/commercial zone along the western half of Route 6 from the Windham town line to the area of the Route 198 intersection. The scenarios provide for differing levels of

coverage for the commercial/business zone based on the existing zoning configuration. Scenario 1 included all parcels that fell within the existing Commercial Overlay Zone while Scenario 2 was more in line with the current Business Zone allowing for intermittent gaps or RA zoned land between more densely developed business areas. The Scenario three was a hybrid and allowed for more land to be placed within the commercial zone while removing some larger parcels currently owned by the state or other conservation groups. All scenarios include the expansion of the zone to the rear lot lines where possible to eliminate the issue of properties falling within two or three zoning districts.

The allowable uses within the current Business zone should also be reviewed and amended to include the opportunity for mixed residential and commercial developments, providing a diversity of business types compatible to Chaplin and preventing the domination of one single use within the Corridor.



***Strategy: Replace current Business and Corridor zones with one zone that allows for a variety of mixed uses in the western Route 6 corridor that includes commercial and residential.***

***Strategy: Revise Corridor Guidelines to be more user-friendly and to include images; topics should include site planning, access management, landscaping, signage, lighting, and utilities in addition to architecture.***

***Strategy: Work with business, property owners and applicants to consolidate curb cuts, mitigate traffic impacts, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access in new developments.***

***Strategy: Encourage diversity in business types and prevent the overdevelopment of one type of use.***

### **Home-based Businesses**

Many Chaplin residents work from their homes. Home-based businesses help Chaplin's tax base, provide in-town employment, and contribute to overall economic diversity. Some home-based businesses create minimal or no impact to the rural-residential neighborhoods in which they are located. Others can be nuisance, changing the character of the neighborhood and lowering property values.

***Strategy: Continue to encourage home-based businesses to the extent that they are compatible with Chaplin's rural/residential character. Home-based businesses should not create negative impacts to neighborhoods or lower property values.***

### **Agriculture**

Chaplin strongly supports local agriculture as a form of economic development. Local agriculture and value-added agricultural products help preserve the rural landscape, increase quality of life and food sustainability, and add strength and diversity to the economy. The Planning and Zoning Commission has recently updated their regulations regarding Agricultural uses as well as signage. Once these regulations have been applied, they should be reviewed to ensure they encourage agricultural uses as intended. Agriculture is also addressed in Chapter 7.

***Strategy: Consider a "Right-to-Farm" Ordinance to inform new residents of Chaplin's support for farmers and historic farming activities, existing and future.***

### **Existing Industrial Zone**

The land in the existing Industrial Zone, south of the Airline State Park Trail/Greenway has challenges related to access of the property. The zone is isolated with limited access to ROUTE 6 but may be appropriate for specific uses, provided neighboring properties can be buffered from negative impacts. The Economic and Community Development Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission should review the regulations and potential uses for the district.

***Strategy: Retain the Industrial Zone as an appropriate location for land uses that should be thoroughly buffered to prevent negative impacts to the rest of the community.***

## **Town-wide Economic Development Strategies**

The Community and Economic Development Commission (CEDC) was established in 2017 as recommended by the 2010 Chaplin POCD. The CEDC research economic conditions and trends to make recommendations to improve the economic condition and development of the Town. The commission supports promoting tourism, agritourism and cottage industries through protection and enhancement of the towns natural resources and activities such as the Natchaug River, hiking trails and farms. The Commission is working with the boards of the Senior Center and Community Center to develop a Chaplin Arts and Cultural Center providing a destination for people to come and enjoy art, cultural events as well as many natural features like hiking trails, a pristine river to fish and kayak, opportunities for mountain bikers and skiers and all-season tourism, which from an economic development standpoint is our best asset.



The CEDC supports continued development of commercial uses within the western ROUTE 6 corridor with traffic calming measures that promote a village atmosphere.

The following strategies for economic development apply town wide. A map of development priorities is in the appendix.

***Strategy: Review all strategies from the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan and systematically incorporate viable strategies into the Chaplin Zoning Regulations.***

***Strategy: Future zone boundaries should, to the extent practicable, follow existing property boundaries.***

***Strategy: Install “Welcome to Chaplin” signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance.***

***Strategy: Review and update sign regulations to ensure that new signage is attractive and functional and that it enhances the aesthetic and historical values of the community.***

***Strategy: Consider tourism and agritourism as an opportunity for economic development.***

***Strategy: Ensure zoning regulations provide for protection of the Natchaug River from commercial development.***

***Strategy: Promote a diversity in business types and avoid the over development of a single use.***

# 3

## TRANSPORTATION

Chaplin's road system consists mostly of rural roads supported by two major roads, US Route 6 and CT Route 198. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT) 2019 Road List shows Chaplin has 36.11 miles of accepted town roads with 34.65 miles improved and 1.46 unimproved 2019.

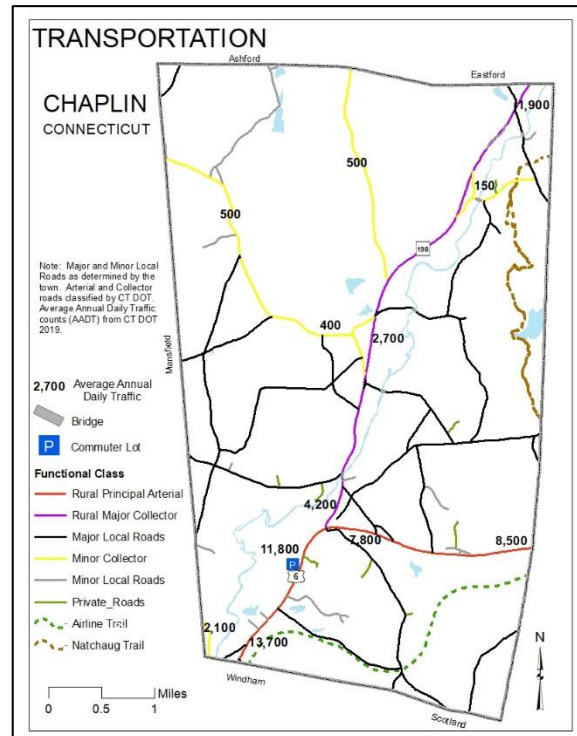
US Route 6 is an interstate road which extends from western Connecticut, through Hartford, and then to Providence, Rhode Island. The road enters from Chaplin's south western boundary with Windham, proceeds north for 1.5 miles, intersects with State Route 198, then proceeds east for 1 ½ miles to Chaplin's border with Hampton. This road links many eastern Connecticut towns and is classified by the CT DOT as a **Rural Principal Arterial**.

Route 6 has an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), measured by CT DOT, ranging from 13,700 vehicles per day at the Windham town line to 8,500 vehicles per day at the Hampton town line. The majority is pass-through traffic with peaks during morning and afternoon commutes. Route 6 also serves as Chaplin's commercial artery: commercial properties along this road are the basis of its commercial tax base. A major upgrade of Route 6 was completed by CT DOT in 1998.

CT Route 198, also known as Phoenixville Road, begins at the curve in Route 6 approximately 1.5 miles north of the Windham border, and continues for approximately 4.75 miles to Chaplin's border with Eastford. Route 198 has an AADT ranging from 3,900 vehicles per day at its source at Route 6 to 2,200 vehicles per day at the border with Eastford. Route 198 receives traffic from many of Chaplin's rural roads and is classified by CT DOT as a **Rural Major Collector**.

Most town facilities are located on or adjacent to Route 198. These include the Town Hall, Highway Department, Transfer Station, Senior Center, Library, Edward Garrison Park, and the Volunteer Fire Department. Route 198 runs parallel to the Chaplin Historic District as well as to the Natchaug River for much of its length.

Several other roads in Chaplin are classified by the CT DOT as **Rural Minor Collectors**. The Department of Transportation makes a small amount of funding available to towns to improve roads designated as Rural Minor Collectors. These include Bates Road, Chaplin Street, Tower Hill Road, Pumpkin Hill Road, Natchaug Street, Marcy Road, and a section of Morey Road from the intersection with Marcy Road to the Hampton town boundary. (See map in Appendix.)



All roads not classified by the CT DOT are hereby classified as follows. **Major Local Roads** are through roads, whereas **Minor Local Roads** are dead-end roads and similar roads with very little traffic. **Private Roads** are privately owned and maintained. A full list of road classifications is in the appendix.

*Provide and maintain a roadway system which is both safe and consistent with Chaplin's rural character.*

### **Road Standards and Acceptance Practices**

The Road Design Standards in Appendix A of the Chaplin Subdivision Regulations should be reviewed and updated if necessary. New roads should be designed to be safe and compatible with the town's rural character, to seamlessly integrate with the existing road network, and be properly constructed.

*Strategy: Periodically review road design standards and specifications governing new or improved local roads.*

*Strategy: Consider requiring a two-year maintenance bond to give sufficient time to identify structural and drainage issues on new and improved town roads.*

### **Safety Improvements**

The CT Crash Data Repository shows 267 reported accidents in the town of Chaplin between 2015- Dec 7, 2020. Accidents on local roads consisted of 26%, state roads (RT 198) 18% and U.S. Routes (RT 6) 55%. Tower Hill Road had the highest accident count with 21% of all accidents on local roads. The data indicates that 36% of all accidents resulted in possible, minor, or suspected injuries, with four suspected serious injuries and four fatalities all but one of which occurred on state and federal roadways.

The main transportation safety concerns are vehicle speeds and the number of driveways and other curbs cuts onto Route 6, especially between the Windham town line and the intersection with Route 198 which comprised 41% of all accidents between 2015-2020. The town should work with CT DOT to explore



further improvements to enhance safety and accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, and work with existing and future business owners to consolidate and reduce curb cuts.

Identify dangerous intersections such as Route 198 and North Bear Hill Road, Chaplin Street, Natchaug Street, and Ridge Road which deserve further study. Consultants for CT DOT are also reviewing the intersection of Route 6 and 198 as part of the Regional Transportation Safety Plan.

***Strategy: Participate in CT DOT and NECCOG transportation planning processes such as the Northeastern CT Regional Safety Plan and the Long-Range Transportation Plan.***

***Strategy: Promote traffic calming in the Route 6 Corridor.***

***Strategy: Include the above-listed sight line improvements in the Chaplin capital improvement program.***

### **Drainage Improvements, Maintenance and Environmental Sustainability**

The Town of Chaplin has an interest in the efficient and coordinated maintenance of town roads and drainage facilities. The 2010 POCD sub-committee identified drainage problems on town roads caused both by new road improvements which did not carefully consider drainage implications of those improvements and by new driveways which funnel runoff from private property onto existing roads. Other drainage improvements need to be identified town wide.

Additionally, there is an opportunity every time an improvement is made to incorporate solutions with a lower environmental impact. At the 2010 POCD sub-committee’s workshop on Water Resources, problems such as siltation, runoff, and the disruption of the natural flow in streams were directly attributed to road and drainage systems. Chaplin participates in the NECCOG Regional Engineering program and has utilized this service for the design of upgrades to North Bear Hill Road.

***Strategy: Inventory drainage issues which plague town roads, and incorporate drainage improvements into the Chaplin capital improvement program. When maintaining road and drainage systems, strive to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low- impact techniques.***

***Strategy: Consider increasing the performance bond for new driveway aprons to ensure they are installed properly.***

***Strategy: Implement a town-wide road and drainage management system to define priority work, prudently budget for improvements, and ensure that roads and drainage structures are maintained on a continuing basis.***

North Bear Hill Road Bridge 2021



### **Bridges**

The Town owns several bridges including the England Road Bridge which is classified as “scour critical” and is scheduled for replacement

in 2023-2024. The North Bear Hill Road bridge was replaced in 2018. Bridges on South Bear Hill Road, and Goodale Road were built pre-1960. The state-owned Route 198 Bridge next to Diana’s Pool was built in 1926. The most recent inspection was in 2019 and was considered in “Fair” condition.



Route 198 Bridge

**Strategy:** *For any future improvements to the Route 198 bridge, the town should request safe bicycle and pedestrian access. Consider a viewing platform cantilevered on the side of bridge next to Diana’s Pool or safe access to the north bank where crowds gather.*

### **Discontinuance of Abandoned Roads**

In remote parts of Chaplin, there exist some old cart paths that may have once been roads but are now largely impassable. These cart paths have not been maintained as roads for many decades but landowners along these roads may still claim them as lot frontage for development purposes. Case law indicates that towns must assume the costs of improvements in connection with private development on these former access ways, which often cross-town boundaries. Extensive research was conducted on behalf of the town regarding the status of Tutko, Ross, Diana’s Pool and Middle Roads to determine their status. Segments of these roads have been discontinued.

**Strategy:** *Continue to research the legal status of former roads and rights-of-way, especially in remote areas. Former roads and rights-of-way that are no longer in use should be formally discontinued.*

### **Scenic Roads**

The town of Chaplin adopted a Scenic Road Ordinance in 1988. Bujak Road is the only local roadway designated as a scenic road. The ordinance provides a process for declaring a road based on “the lack of intensive commercial development and intensive vehicular traffic as well as one of the following criteria: it is unpaved, it is bordered by mature trees and stone walls, the travel portion is no more than 20 feet in width, it offers scenic views, it blends naturally into the surrounding terrain, or it parallels or crosses over brooks, streams, lakes or ponds.” The ordinance protects the road from being altered or improved, including the widening of the right of way





or travel portion as well as the protection of stone walls and mature trees. The ordinance is administered by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The Community and Economic Development Commission supports the designation of local and state scenic road designations as a tool to increase tourism within the community. The visioning sessions held in 2009 recommended that Route 198 be designated a state scenic road. This would require application and approval by CT DOT.

***Strategy: Apply to CT DOT to designate Route 198 as a State Scenic Road.***

### **Public Transit**

The 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates 1.3% of Chaplin residents use transit to get to work. Transit service in Chaplin is very limited; however, the Windham Region Transit District (WRTD) operates a twice-daily bus route from Willimantic to Danielson that stops at the Chaplin Post Office at 8:03am and 4:03pm. WRTD Dial-A-Ride and ADA Paratransit are door-to-door transit services that can be used for rides anywhere within the ten-town Windham Transit Region. While this service is open to the public, it is generally intended for seniors and those with disabilities. No private bus service (Peter Pan, Greyhound, Bonanza) offers commuter runs that would benefit Chaplin residents.

***Strategy: Ensure that any Senior Housing is in an area that can be easily serviced by transit providers.***

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

There are no locally- maintained sidewalks in Chaplin. Two pedestrian crossing push buttons exist on Route 6 at the Lynch Road and Chewink Road intersections, but no crosswalks or ramps exist to protect pedestrians. The Community and economic development Commission conducted a walkability audit in June of 2020 using the AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit. The two areas reviewed were the half mile section of Route 6 south of Lynch Road and the section of Chaplin Street. within the historic district. The group recommended a crosswalk and shoulder access along Chaplin Street for access between Garrison Park and the Senior/Community center.

Bicyclists can utilize the wide shoulders on Route 6 but have no designated bike lanes on state or local roads. The 2019 CT Active Transportation Plan does not identify any priority On-Road Bike networks in Chaplin. The plan designates Route 198 as a Tier III-3 and portions of Route 6 as Tier III-1 to Tier-III-2 meaning they generally meet recommended design criteria and are not a key Ct DOT priority.

The Airline Trail is a notable walking and biking resource in Chaplin. The trail follows a former railroad route from Boston to New York and is part of an integrated statewide network of trails. It is designated as a Connecticut State Greenway and as a section of the East Coast Greenway. Activities to improve grading and the trail surface have been



completed in Chaplin, but more work is needed, specifically at the Chewink Road trailhead. Pedestrian access to the Airline trail is also possible via Joshua's Trust's Two Sisters Preserve opposite Mansure Road on Route 6, but no off-street parking is available.

The Natchaug Trail is another notable walking resource in Chaplin. It is a CT State Greenway and is part of the CT Forest and Parks Association's "blue-blaze" trails network. The 19.5-mile Natchaug Trail traverses portions of Goodwin State Forest and Natchaug State Forest and runs through the towns of Chaplin, Eastford, and Ashford where it joins the Nipmuck Trail into Union. Access to this trail is possible at Morey Road and Marcy Road and via several old rights-of-way.

**Strategy:** *Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the review of all commercial and residential development, and in the development of town facilities where appropriate.*



**Strategy:** *Work with CT DOT to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety along state routes by utilizing traffic calming techniques.*

**Strategy:** *Seek funding to create a bicycle lane from Garrison Park on Route 198, across Route 6 and along Chewink Road to the trailhead for the Airline Trail.*

**Strategy:** *Investigate pedestrian linkages within the municipal core including Garrison Park, the town hall, the library, and the senior center.*

**Strategy:** *Improve signage for existing trail heads and ensure good signage for proposed trails and bikeways.*

**Strategy:** *Review the adequacy of parking at the Chewink Road/Airline Trail head and at the Two Sisters Parcel on Route 6.*

# 4

## UTILITIES and ENERGY CONSERVATION

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### Water Supply

Most residences and businesses in Chaplin get potable water through individual on-site artesian wells that are regulated by the Eastern Highlands Health District. This method of water supply is appropriate for low-density, rural areas where there are few water users.

Public water systems are more appropriate for higher density and commercial areas such as the western half of Route 6. The Connecticut Department of Health (CT DPH) regulates 3 types of public drinking water systems. “Community Water Systems” serve multiple buildings and at least 25 residents throughout the year; “Non- transient, Non-Community Systems” serve at least 25 of the same people over six months of the year at places like schools and office buildings; and “Transient Non-Community Systems” such as restaurants, parks, etc. Existing non-community water systems could be combined into community systems to serve multiple building sites. Community systems could supply water for multiple users while protecting the water source from pollution and interference from development.

A stratified drift aquifer capable of providing large volumes of drinking water underlies much of the Natchaug River valley. This aquifer was partially protected through a municipal Aquifer Protection Zone in 1990.

***Strategy: Review boundary and update requirements of the existing Aquifer Protection District.***

Almost the entire town of Chaplin is within the Natchaug Basin, a public water supply watershed covering 162-square miles. The basin supports the largest public surface drinking water supply watershed in Connecticut, supplying 22,000 consumers in Willimantic and Mansfield, the majority of the University of Connecticut water system (approximately 25,000 users) as well as 18,000 residents of the Natchaug Basin with private wells. The Natchaug Basin has good water quality overall because it is largely undeveloped and more than 75% forested. Threats to water quality in the Natchaug Basin are outlined in Chapter 7- Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Open Space.

### Public Drinking Water Systems

**Community Water Systems**  
Chaplin Woods Condominiums

### **Non-Transient Non-Community Water Systems**

Carelot Children’s Learning Center  
Chaplin Elementary School  
Parish Hill High School  
174 Willimantic Rd

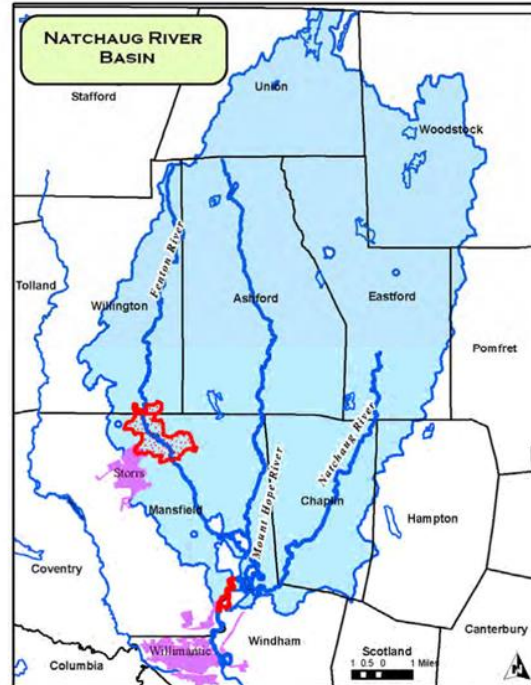
### **Transient Non-Community Water Systems**

Bach Door Café  
Cha-Wi Ma Co-OP  
Garrison Park  
Chaplin Town Hall  
Chaplin’Z Best Pizza  
Blondie’s Country Diner  
Chaplin Senior Center  
Zlotnicks Garage LLC.  
Chaplin Congregational Church

**Strategy: Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.**

### **Sanitary Sewer Systems**

All residences and businesses in Chaplin dispose of sanitary sewer effluent through individual on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems (SSDS). Those SSDS's that have a daily flow of 2,000 gallons per day or less are regulated by the Eastern Highlands Health District, while those SSDS's that have a daily flow of 2,000-5,000 gallons per day are regulated by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Systems with a daily flow of 5,000 gallons per day or more are regulated by the Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEEP). All SSDS regulations and standards are promulgated through the Connecticut Department of Health (CT DPH), Environmental Engineering Program.



The CT Public Health Codes require separating distances from buildings, drinking water supply wells, stormwater management features, and other improvements can make siting of SSDSs on small lots difficult. To this end, consideration of community SSDS's (those systems which collectively serve multiple buildings located on separate parcels of land) offer an economy of scale by combining daily design flows from multiple buildings and uses into one common effluent treatment system. The relative scale and form of planned commercial and multi-family residential that may occur in the Mixed Commercial areas could be adequately served by individual or community septic systems.

Alternative technologies are available for use which can significantly reduce the footprint of a SSDS leach field, and effluent can be transported over distances and topographic changes utilizing pump systems. As additional alternative technologies are supported by the CT Public Health Code, these technologies should be considered for implementation in areas of Chaplin where higher density development is desired.

**Strategy: Support the concept of decentralized sewage treatment as the preferred method of sewage treatment to maintain environmental health and conserve water resources.**

### **Natural Gas**

The natural gas transmission lines that run through Chaplin are part of the Algonquin Gas Transmission pipelines which are owned and maintained by Algonquin Gas Transmission Co., a subsidiary of Spectra Energy. The Algonquin pipelines transport 2.44 billion cubic feet of gas per day through 1,120 miles of pipeline reaching from the docking buoys off the coast of Massachusetts, through Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and connecting to another pipeline system in Northern New Jersey.

Although natural gas transmission lines are present in Chaplin, no natural gas service is currently available in town. One can assume that the rural development pattern in Chaplin has never necessitated construction of natural gas service lines within Chaplin’s municipal boundary.

### **Electricity**

The Town of Chaplin is serviced by standard electrical transmission lines through a distribution network constructed and maintained by Eversource. In addition to standard electrical service, residents and business owners in Chaplin can take advantage of alternative technologies for creation of electricity such as photovoltaic solar, hydro, geothermal and wind energy technologies.

Often utilized to reduce consumption of electricity or to supplement the creation of electricity, alternative technologies for thermal energy production are also important to consider. Reducing electricity and fossil fuel consumption can be achieved by utilizing non-polluting energy sources to provide heat. Geothermal heating systems extract heat from the ground and transfer it to residences or other buildings with the assistance of conventionally powered heat pumps, and solar thermal energy can be harnessed in the same manner.

***Strategy: Support implementation of non-polluting alternative electricity production technologies such as photovoltaic, wind, geothermal and water turbine systems.***



# 5

# HOUSING

Chaplin is a shrinking community composed mostly of single-family homes. Total population has decreased from 2,558 in 2009 to 2,239 in 2019. In 2010, there were 988 total housing units in Chaplin. The 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that there are now 1,058 housing units in Chaplin, 90.4% of them are occupied and 84.3% of are single family detached.

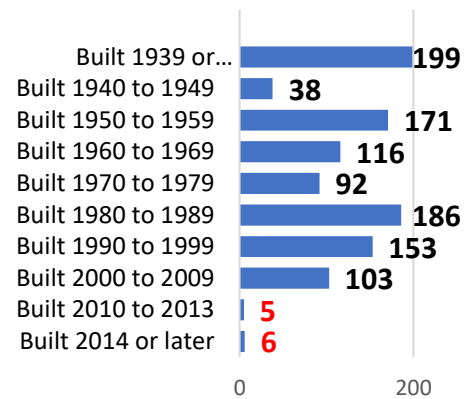
	2010	2019
<i>Total Housing Units</i>	1,015	1,058
<i>Occupied</i>	91.8%	90.4%
<i>Single Unit Detached</i>	80.6%	84.3%
<i>Built Pre 1950</i>	32%	24%
<i>Median Value</i>	\$232,600	\$207,600

Housing growth in the last ten years has been significantly lower than the previous ten. The average number of building permits per year for the 1999-2008 timeframe was 15.5. The number of new permits per year between 2009- 2017 averaged 1.3 a decrease of 92%.

Approximately 13.1% of the housing units are renter-occupied and approximately 86.9% are owner-occupied. Renter-occupied units can include single family homes as well as apartments and mobile homes. Chaplin’s rate of home ownership is higher than the state average of 66.1%.

Approximately 22.4% of the total housing stock in Chaplin was built before 1950, compared to the state average of 28.9%.

**Year Structure Built, Chaplin**



Source: 2019 ACS

Built 2010 or later based on Building Permit Data

## New Housing Permits by Town

Source: CT DATA.org

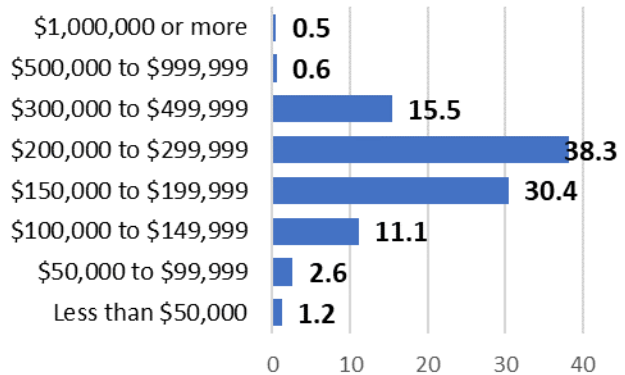
Location	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average
Ashford	9	4	4	3	3	5	2	7	8	5
<b>Chaplin</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Eastford	3	0	2	5	4	12	3	3	4	4
Hampton	6	6	6	3	3	0	0	0	0	2.7
Mansfield	22	16	7	14	11	14	8	4	7	11.4
Scotland	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	.5
Windham	14	71	7	6	6	10	9	3	5	14.5

**Affordable Housing**

In 2019, Chaplin’s median household income was \$70,500 or about 90% of the state average. The median value for homes in Chaplin was \$207,600 compared to \$275,400 statewide. Generally, housing in Chaplin is inexpensive compared to other towns in the state.

While affordability would not appear to be a significant issue in Chaplin, 27.8% of homeowners and 68% of renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs according to the 2019 ACS. A common definition of an affordable home is one where the resident spends no more than 30% of their income to pay the rent or mortgage. The median home value in Chaplin in 2019 was \$207,600 and the median household income was \$ 70,500. The monthly mortgage rate for a median priced home, using a 4% interest rate, 32.5 mill rate, no money down and not including insurance is \$1,475 per month. Households making the median income could spend \$1,762 per month before going over the 30% threshold.

**% Value of Owner Occupied Units, Chaplin**



The State of CT does not take into consideration the area market prices but rather uses a definition of assisted housing units along with a 10% quota to determine a communities housing affordability. The result often does not reflect the actual affordability of housing within a town but rather creates unrealistic goals and places small communities in potentially difficult land use situations, such as mandating undersized lots.

“Assisted housing” is defined in CT General Statutes as housing which is receiving, or will receive, financial assistance under any governmental program for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income housing, and any housing occupied by persons receiving rental assistance under chapter 319uu or Section 1437f of Title 42 of the United States Code.

All current assisted housing units in Chaplin are mortgaged by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, a state agency that aids first-time home buyers. The 2019 Affordable Housing Appeals Lists only 3.6% of Chaplin’s housing units as “affordable.”

**2019 Affordable Housing Appeals List**

2010 Housing Units	Government Assisted	Tenant Rental	CHFA/USDA Mortgage	Deed Restricted	Total Assisted Units	% affordable
988	0	0	36	0	36	3.64

**2010 Affordable Housing Appeals List**

897	1	0	25	0	26	2.9
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In 2017, the CT Legislature passed P.A. 17-070. Sec. 8-30j. requires every municipality to adopt and/or amend an Affordable Housing Plan at least once every five years. The plan shall specify how the municipality intends to increase affordable housing developments within the municipality. The town of Chaplin has received a grant from the CT Department of Housing for technical assistance for completion of the plan. The initial Affordable Housing Plan is to be completed by 2022 while grant requirements may have a sooner deadline.

### **Accessory Apartments and Mixed Use**

Accessory apartments increase housing diversity without changing the rural character of the community. The Zoning Regulations were updated in 2018 to expand the ability to develop accessory apartments. Accessory apartments may now be attached or detached with occupation of either unit by the owner or immediate family member and be between 500-1200 square feet in size. The updated regulations should provide more opportunities for housing while protecting the towns rural character and residential neighborhoods.



*Mixed Commercial with Residential in the rear.*

Route 6 is the best place to create mixed-use buildings that include residential. Several mixed-use buildings already exist in this area. The Route 6 Corridor Management Plan encouraged apartments over stores and other mixed-use buildings.

***Strategy: Incorporate mixed-use housing within the zoning district along the western half of Route 6. Strive to make this housing pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.***

***Strategy: Continue to allow accessory apartments as an important component of housing diversity.***

### **Senior Housing**

Chaplin has no dedicated senior housing or other age-restricted housing units. Older residents of Chaplin who wish to downsize but remain within the community have few options to do so. Senior housing and any other age-restricted housing should be located appropriately. Any senior or age restricted housing should be pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible. The Community and Economic Development Commission is working on identifying locations for affordable senior housing.

Senior housing and multi-family housing (3 or more units) are not explicitly allowed in the current zoning regulations. Two-family and accessory apartments are allowed within the Residential Agriculture zone and thus allowed within the Business Zone.

***Strategy: Study the need for senior housing as well as potential locations.***

***Strategy: Review the existing zoning regulations and consider senior housing in any future regulation updates.***



# 6

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The history of the Town of Chaplin begins in the mid-1700's, when Benjamin Chaplin settled a plot of land along the Natchaug River in an area of wilderness that later came to bear his name. Originally incorporated as an ecclesiastical society in 1809, Chaplin became a municipality in 1822. At that time, the population was approximately 900. Since then, industries have come and gone and residences have become more widespread, but the rural character that residents and visitors value and cherish has prevailed.

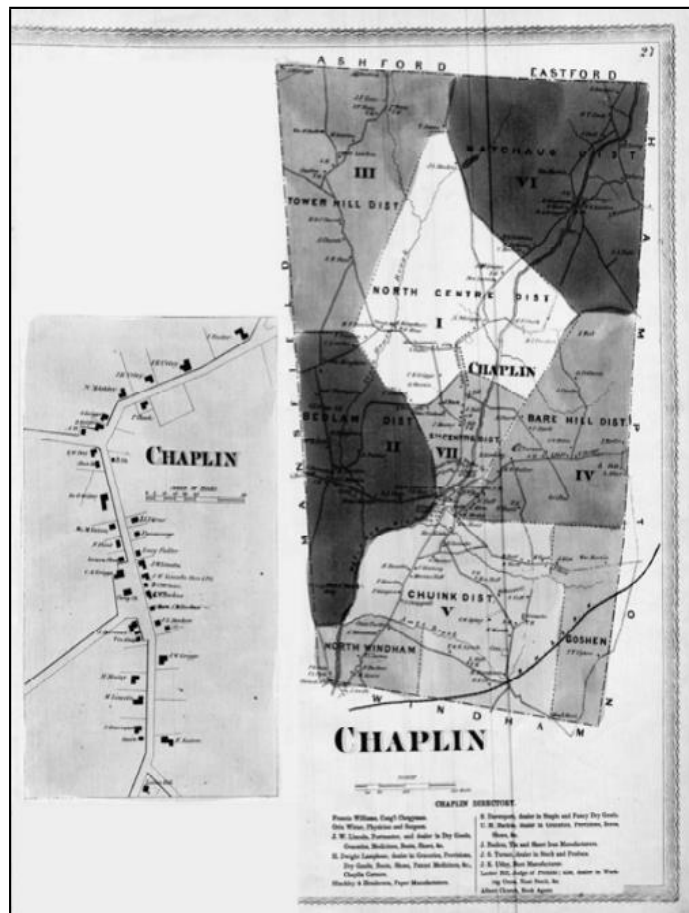
Chaplin's historic homesteads, former mills, schoolhouses, municipal buildings, agricultural buildings and barns, stone walls, and cemeteries have shaped the look and feel of the town through history. The goal of the Chaplin Plan of Conservation and Development for historic and cultural resources is to preserve and protect the structures, sites and landscapes that are uniquely representative of its cultural heritage.

### Chaplin's School Districts

The 1868 "Petersen Collection" Map of Chaplin offers an interesting snapshot of the town. The map identifies seven distinct districts of the Town: (I) North Centre District; (II) Bedlam District; (III) Tower Hill District; (IV) Bare Hill District, (V) Chuink District, (VI) Natchaug District; and (VII) South Centre District, and also delineates the areas of North Windham and Goshen, and identifies locations of schools, private residences with owner's names, businesses and mills.

Each of the seven established districts in Chaplin, at one time, had its own schoolhouse to educate district children. Though most of these schoolhouses have since been demolished, the Natchaug District Schoolhouse remains, and it has been identified as worthy of preservation by the residents during the formulation of this plan.

In addition to schoolhouses, over the years the Town of Chaplin has owned several other institutional buildings that are important components of Chaplin's history, the majority of which are in the Chaplin Historic District. These structures include



the former Chaplin Library, the Former General Store/Post Office, the former Chaplin Grange Hall, and the Chaplin Museum. These structures are addressed in more detail in Chapter 8 – Municipal Facilities.

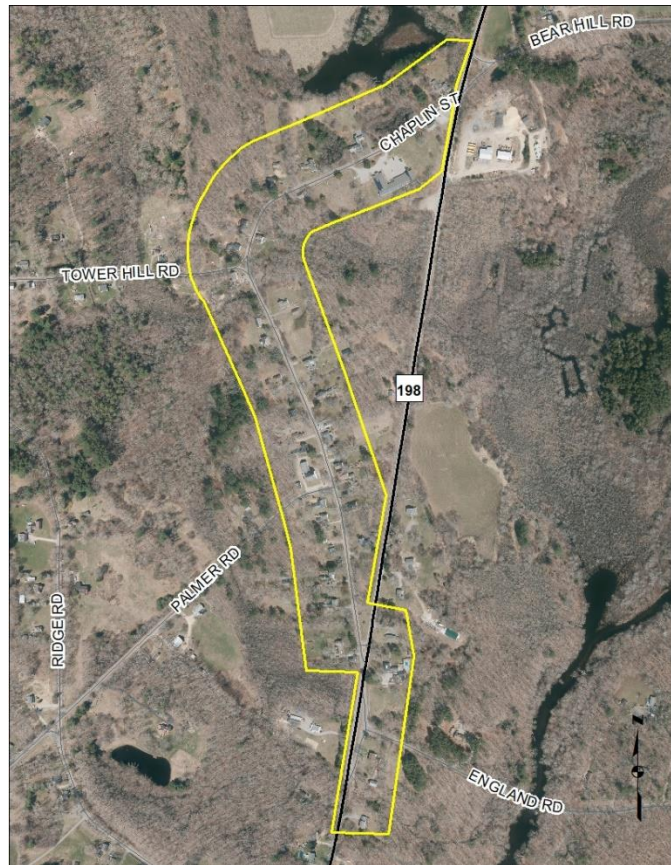
**Strategy:** *Identify and assess locations of former district schoolhouses throughout Town and provide for protection/preservation of these sites.*

**Strategy:** *Continue to support the Chaplin Museum and encourage the revitalization of the Chaplin Historical Society.*

### **Chaplin's Historic Town Center**

Chaplin's historic town center is located off Route 198 on what is now Chaplin Street, between England Road and North Bear Hill Road. The town center was a mix of residences, small commercial businesses, the post office, and the congregational church. With an exemplary concentration of well-preserved structures dating from the early nineteenth century, the entire village center is listed on both the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Perhaps the most notable structure in the Historic District is the Witter House, a Georgian mansion built in 1820 and listed as a National Register Historic Site.

The Chaplin Local Historic District was established in 1974 to protect the unique character and architecture of the village. Nearly half of the 42 identified structures are said to have been constructed by Major Edward Eaton, are regulated by municipal ordinance through the Chaplin Historic District Commission. The Commission oversees property uses and proposals for structural and material modifications to properties and structures within the District, to maintain the visual aesthetic quality of the individual structures and the district.



Chaplin's former village center is now primarily residential, the only exceptions being municipally owned buildings and the Congregational Church. Residents of the district prefer that the district remain primarily residential in use but may support the use of structures for cultural uses such as an art studio or museum.

**Strategy:** *Continue to support the work of the Chaplin Historic District Commission in preserving the Chaplin Local Historic District.*

**Strategy:** *Seek funding to install attractive signage at the gateways to the Chaplin Historic District. Seek professional design assistance in selecting the best location.*

**Strategy:** *Consider the gateway to the historic district if the intersection of Chaplin Street and Route 198 is re-aligned to improve sight lines.*

**Strategy:** *Foster adaptive reuse of municipally owned structures for uses of such manner and scale that are appropriate for the district.*



### **Living and Working in Chaplin**

Not surprisingly, historic documents and written histories of Chaplin identify agriculture as the primary business endeavor throughout town. However, there were several manufacturing mills in Chaplin: 3 on the Natchaug River between South Chaplin and the Stone House Brook confluence which produced products such as paper, pulp, lumber, and wheelbarrows, and 3 on the Stone House Brook, itself, producing pulp, iron and wood products, plow beams and shingles. Small retail businesses such as a shoe store, supply stores and a tin shop were located primarily in Chaplin Center, and few professional and personal services were offered to meet the needs of the rural population.

Outside of the village center, homesteads and farmsteads were scattered about the town, located where settlers found the land suitable for farming or raising livestock. Settlers built residences, barns, and outbuildings in the style of the times, and established cemeteries for those who had passed on. Many of these buildings and features have been maintained through the centuries and contribute to the unique look and feel of the town in a variety of ways.

**Strategy:** *Identify and assess locations of former mill sites on the Natchaug River and Stone House Brook and offer owners assistance for protection/preservation of these sites.*

**Strategy:** *Encourage owners of significant historic properties outside of the historic town center to apply for State of Connecticut and National Register of Historic Places designation.*

**Strategy:** *Continue to maintain and improve historic cemeteries throughout town.*

### **Lasting Marks on the Land**

Evidence of human occupation and historic uses of land are everywhere. Of the various man-made aspects of the environment that we encounter every day, few are more nostalgic than the classic New England stone wall. Originally built as a matter of necessity due to the large amounts of stone in the rough glacial till, and typically as a depository of fieldstones removed from plowing pastures, animal pens and crop lands, stone walls are among the most common types of Colonial-era property markers found in Eastern Connecticut for more than 200 years.



In this regard, Chaplin is no exception. Many town roads are flanked by dry stacked stone walls, as are many current and former pastures and agricultural fields. Locations of these stone walls are indicators of former land uses and are a lasting tribute to Chaplin's rich agricultural heritage. For these reasons, stone walls represent a unique cultural resource that should be preserved and protected. Some CT laws protect against the removal of stone walls that act as property lines or right of way boundaries, such as Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 823 Fences, Section 47.

**Strategy:** *Review and educate residents on property boundary laws that include stone walls.*



**Strategy:** *Install "Welcome to Chaplin" signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance.*

**Strategy:** *Consider enacting an ordinance that prohibits the removal of highway boundary stone walls.*



*108 Chaplin barns are listed on Connecticutbarns.org, a project of the CT Trust for Historic Preservation. Many are historic such as these on Tower Hill Road*



# 7

## NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE & OPEN SPACE

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Chaplin's extensive natural resources include the Natchaug River, Diana's Pool, large blocks of undeveloped mixed hardwood forest, and sizable tracts of protected land in the form of Natchaug State Forest, James L. Goodwin State Forest, and the Mansfield Hollow State Park. Agricultural areas can be found in the Natchaug River Valley, and the Chewink Road and Bedlam Road neighborhoods.

### **Natchaug River**

The Natchaug River is designated as a Connecticut State River Greenway. It is the largest branch of the Shetucket River, starting in Eastford at the confluence of Bigelow Brook and the Still River, flowing southeast towards the Mansfield Hollow Dam and onward towards the Willimantic Reservoir. The Natchaug River becomes the Shetucket River at the confluence with the Willimantic River.



The Natchaug River is classified by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection as "AA" which means it is an existing or proposed drinking water supply, fish, aquatic life and wildlife habitat, recreational use (may be restricted) agricultural and industrial supply. Threats to the river are increasing water temperature and siltation caused by human development activities in the watershed.

Increased water temperature is especially damaging to native trout populations, cold-water species that are indicative of environmental health. Rising stream temperatures are largely caused by the loss of forest shade cover, including along smaller streams that flow in the Natchaug River in Chaplin and in areas higher in the watershed. Chaplin has expressed a special interest in protecting the Natchaug River from these and other threats.

The Stonehouse Brook watershed is a significant sub-basin within the Natchaug Basin that covers much of the north-west quadrant of Chaplin. Stonehouse Brook starts in Ashford at Upper Colts Pond and flows under Tower Hill Road, Palmer Road, and Bedlam Road before joining the Natchaug River. In 2003, the Stonehouse Brook Preservation Circle, a collection of eight landowners in Chaplin and Ashford owning a total of 706 acres, received funding to permanently protect their forestland through the Forest Legacy Program. This system of ponds, wetlands, upland forest habitat is intact enough to support bobcat, black bear and moose.

While Mansfield Hollow State Park, Natchaug State Forest and Goodwin State Forest all include major tracts in Chaplin, neither park nor forests have an established formal entrance in town. Few people are aware that these significant recreational resources can be accessed from Chaplin and most trail heads are not marked with any kind of signage. At the community workshops, the 2010 POCD sub-committee showed great interest in improving access to and signage for these forests and parks, as well as improving access to and signage for the Natchaug River and the Airline Trail.

Almost the entire town of Chaplin is within the Natchaug Basin, a public water supply watershed covering 162-square miles. In 2008, the Nature Conservancy initiated a Conservation Action Planning (CAP) project in the Natchaug Basin which brought together many different stakeholders to identify key ecological attributes, conservation targets and threats, and strategies for protecting the natural resources. CAP has identified that the biggest threats to the Natchaug Basin are: 1) Residential and Commercial Development, 2) Road Construction and Maintenance, 3) Groundwater Withdrawal, and 4) Dams. In April of 2011, an intermunicipal agreement was signed by the CEOs of the eight communities within the watershed pledging to work cooperatively to balance conservation and growth.

In 2019 the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District was contracted by the CT DEEP to prepare a Natchaug River Healthy Watershed Implementation Plan. The plan will develop strategies for nutrient reduction from nonpoint source pollution. Included in the plan process was the development of a guidance document for low impact development best management practices.

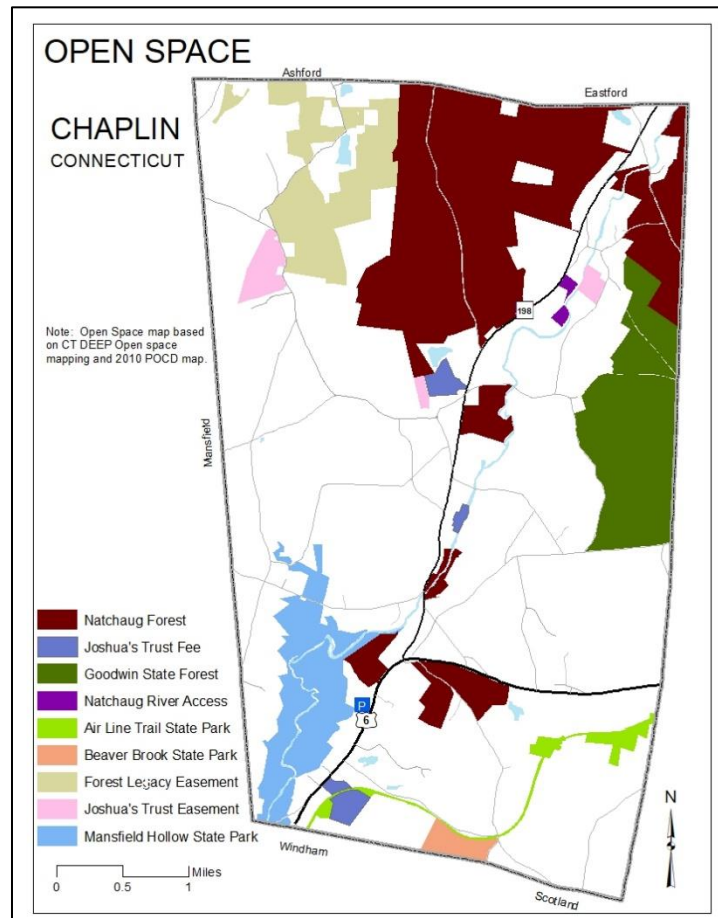
**Strategy:** *Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.*

**Strategy:** *Inventory existing state and municipal storm-water infrastructure including all municipal and state-owned culverts, catch-basins, outlets, and level spreaders. Work with CT DOT and Chaplin Public Works to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low-impact techniques.*

**Strategy:** *Avoid unnecessary impacts to watercourses and wetlands. Utilize low impact development guidelines and best management practices whenever necessary. Examples include rain gardens, minimal impervious surfaces, bio-retention, infiltrators, etc.*

## Open Space

Most of Chaplin’s open space is owned by the State of Connecticut and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The town experimented with conservation subdivision regulations as a method to preserve open space. In 2020 the Planning and Zoning Commission eliminated the Open Space Subdivision section from the zoning regulations finding the developments resulted in small areas of open space that were not compatible with the towns overall open space goals. The smaller roadside lots were not desirable and were often combined for



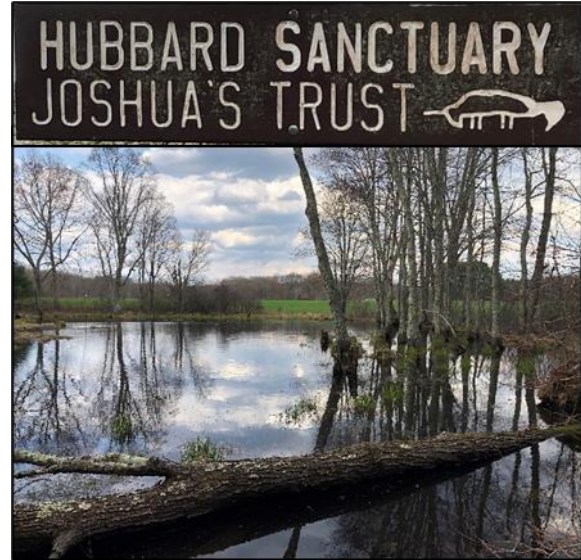
development of larger homes. The corresponding sections of the Subdivision Regulations should also be removed.

**Strategy:** *Continue to work with conservation organizations such as Joshua's Trust to provide for the long-term protection of critical open space.*

**Strategy:** *Encourage the Chaplin Conservation Commission to prepare and continuously update an open space and conservation easement inventory.*

**Strategy:** *Review the Natural Resource Inventory and Co-occurring Natural Resource maps and update as needed.*

**Strategy:** *Combine the Conservation Commission with the Inland Wetlands Commission.*



### **Forestry**

Chaplin's mixed hardwood forests, soils and rolling terrain are typical of Connecticut's eastern highlands. The town is graced with several large, unfragmented forest "superblocks" that provide core wildlife habitat and help protect water resources. Forestry activities are common and large acreages of private and state land are managed for timber.

**Strategy:** *Encourage sustainable forest management and stewardship. Work with existing groups such as the Eastern CT Forest Landowners Association to provide education to forest property owners.*

**Strategy:** *Continue to consider large, forested super-blocks during subdivision review.*

### **Agriculture**

Agriculture helps preserve the rural landscape that many Chaplin residents hold dear. Chaplin citizens strongly support agriculture in the community. Agricultural products produced in Chaplin include fresh fruits and vegetables; nursery stock and cut flowers; silage corn and hay; honey and maple syrup; eggs, dairy, meat, and fiber products. More strategies for agriculture are included in Chapter 2 - Economic Development. The Planning and Zoning Commission recently approved changes to the regulations including the definitions of Agriculture, Limited Farms and Farm Stands with the intention of being more farm friendly. These changes should be reviewed in the future to ensure that they work as intended and do not needlessly inhibit agricultural activities.



*Strategy: Work with groups such as the CT Farm Bureau and the CT Resource Conservation District “AGvocate” program to educate municipal officials, agricultural producers, and others to help make Chaplin an agriculture-friendly community.*

*Strategy: Consider a “Right-to-Farm” Ordinance to inform new residents of Chaplin’s support for farmers and historic farming activities, existing and future.*



## **Mining**

Mining and gravel processing have been an issue in Chaplin. The noise, debris and trucks involved in rock-crushing and other gravel processing is not compatible with the existing residences and businesses in many areas of Chaplin; however, the very nature of development, agriculture and reconfiguring topography requires some rock crushing and gravel processing. Recent changes to the earth excavation regulations may clarify the permitting process as well as provide enforcement avenues. Future applications for earth excavations should be monitored to ensure compliance and effectiveness of the new regulations.



# 8

## PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

### PUBLIC SAFETY

#### **Chaplin Fire House and Volunteer Fire Department**

The Chaplin Volunteer Fire Department provides fire and medical services to the town. In fiscal year 2016-2017, the department responded to 101 fire calls and 153 medical calls. The Chaplin Fire House was built in 2005 on the site of the previous fire house on Route 198. The building is considered sufficient for current needs and the property includes an outdoor training area and a decommissioned cellular tower disguised as a flagpole. The building is also utilized as the Emergency Operations Center and the town voting location.

In 2018 there were 411 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) requests. EMS is now provided by the Willimantic Fire Department as the Hampton/Chaplin Ambulance Service ceased operations in 2020 due to rising costs of training personnel and recruitment. Advanced life support is provided by Windham Hospital.

*Strategy: Consider the need for fire ponds and underground storage cisterns for large developments.*



#### **Resident State Trooper**

A resident state trooper has been protecting the citizens of Chaplin since 1998. Before then, Chaplin had constables and auxiliary police. The office of the resident state trooper has been relocated to the Old Post Office at the intersection of Route 198 and Chaplin Street.

#### **CERT- Community Emergency Response Team**

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) consists of a group of volunteers that have received training in basic support roles such as shelter operations, communications, and traffic control. Team members are available to provide additional assistance in the event of an emergency allowing first responders to focus their efforts. If needed, the team would also setup and run a local Red Cross shelter. The CERT is a combined group with the town of Hampton but does not meet on a regular basis. Team members are not allowed to self-deploy and can only be activated by the Emergency Management Director.

*Strategy: Encourage interested citizens to take the CERT training course and join the Chaplin/Hampton CERT Team to assist Chaplin first responders in the event of an emergency.*

Chaplin has been working on a coordinated plan for its municipal buildings and properties. Some buildings have been sold privately while others have been rehabilitated and are ready for reuse. Decisions on

properties have been the source of conflict as town leaders try to find the best use for these properties. The main goal is to utilize the structures efficiently and as cost affectively as possible.

**Strategy:** *Continue to incorporate “green” building practices in all new municipal facilities and upgrades as cost effectively as possible.*

## MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

### **Chaplin Library**

Renovated and dedicated in 2000, the Chaplin Library occupies part of the former Chaplin elementary School. Located at 130 Chaplin Street next to the Chaplin Senior Center, the library is spacious and well equipped with public computers, wifi and a small community meeting room. The Chaplin Library has a full-time Director and three part-time Assistants. The facility is open 24 hours a week with the community room available for use when the library is not open.

The library has greatly expanded its services by establishing a web page which gives access to the catalog, events, and Chaplin history, provides downloadable ebooks and audiobooks through Overdrive and has expanded wifi into the parking lot for use by the community when the library is not open.

The library has increased community programs for children such as Preschool Story Time, an Annual Summer Reading Program, and school vacation programs. It is also open to student volunteers who are completing school projects. Two very popular programs for adults are the monthly Book Chat and the Cookbook Club. The Chaplin Library shares meeting space freely with community groups such as the Chaplin Ukulele Band and Mahjong Group.

**Strategy:** *Promote collaboration between the Library and Senior Center.*

### **Chaplin Senior Center**

The Chaplin Senior Center shares the renovated elementary school building in the Historic District on Chaplin Street with the Library and Ferrara Community Center (sharing an entryway with the Center). Chaplin residents, and those of surrounding towns, can become members after fifty years of age and participate in activities. Proximity of these facilities provides an opportunity to have joint arts and cultural events and become a destination for visitors to our Town.

The Center maintains an office for the Municipal Agent for the Elderly who assists senior in navigating services provided to meet their needs.

The Center has a large multifunction room with tables for dining events and meetings. It also has a large television for movies and games. Our



commercial kitchen is a valuable asset; our seniors are provided with low-cost nutritious meals made on site, which has become popular with our members. For a more intimate gathering there is a lounge with a coffee table and smaller television. There is also a good size craft room with many tables and shelving.

The mission of the Center is to enrich the lives of our senior community through friendship, educational, cultural, physical, and social activities. The Center has a Board of Directors, Director, Assistant Director, small kitchen staff and many volunteers who plan and carry out a multitude of activities, events and classes; and provide and a place for folks gathering to enjoy the planned and spontaneous get togethers.

With over eight hundred seniors in Town, and fifty percent of the population over the age of forty-five, it is clear there is a large population to serve. The Center reaches out on an ongoing basis to attract and engage this community.

A survey conducted by the Center to assess the interest, preferences and needs of our aging community guides the planning of events, and the Center will work to continue to evolve with the interests of this population. One goal is to expand hours of activities to reach more working seniors.

***Strategy: Continue to reach out to surrounding communities for recruitment of members and increase participation in programs.***

### **Chaplin Community Center**

Named after previous Selectmen Joseph Ferrara, the Community Center is the auditorium/ gymnasium of the former elementary school and shares an entryway and bathroom facilities with the Senior Center. The approximately 4,000 square foot space, after removal of the stage, and recent upgrade of lighting and heating and cooling system, provides a venue for athletic activities and cultural events.

***Strategy: Increase utilization of the facility for community functions and recreational activities.***

### **Chaplin Town Museum**

This small building on the southern end of the Chaplin Historic District was once the Chaplin Town Hall. The building had been reborn as a local history museum operated by the Chaplin Historical Society but gets little traffic due to the lack of parking and restrooms. The Town has investigated and allocated funds for moving the structure to a new location next door to the Chaplin Library and the Chaplin Center. The town has recently held discussions at a town meeting to resolve the future use of the building, but a final decision has not yet been made. Relocating the structure would alleviate issues of parking and facilities while centralizing municipal properties in one location.



***Strategy: Continue to seek funding opportunities to develop the site next door to the Chaplin Library as the future home of the Chaplin Town Museum.***

***Strategy: Resolve future of Building and remaining site.***

### **William Ross Library**



The late Romanesque Revival architecture of this building provides a clue that it is nearly one hundred years younger than its neighbors in the Chaplin Historic District. Built in 1911, this library operated for almost ninety years. The building is 1,175 sq. feet and sits on a narrow .45-acre lot that does not include a driveway or parking. The building has been vacant and used only for storage in recent years. The Historic District Commission prefers a public use of the building but that would require installation of a well and septic system. A review of the building by the Eastern Highland Health District concluded that the site could support a well but that percolation tests would be required for any septic approvals. An A-2 survey has been conducted to determine if an easement would be necessary for access.

### **Old Chaplin Post Office**

The Old Chaplin Post Office is located at the corner of Chaplin Street and Route 198 and is next door to the Chaplin Senior Center and Library. The town purchased the property after the Post Office moved to a new building on Route 6. The property is at the northern entrance to the Chaplin Historic District. The property has recently been renovated and now is home to the resident state trooper. The property is also located within the Municipal Adaptive Reuse Overlay District (MAROD). The district allows for limited commercial uses as defined by the zoning regulations by special permit.



### **Chaplin Town Hall**

The Chaplin Town Hall is located at 495 Phoenixville Road, just north of the historic district. Recent changes regarding office assignments have alleviated some space issues. The building has an open central area and conference table where town commissions hold their meetings although the layout for public hearings is not ideal. Parts of the central open area are sectioned off into counter space for the town clerk and a public computer station for viewing tax and land record information. Tax collection is now processed through the Windham Tax office or on certain days at the Senior Center. Tax bills may also be paid online.

***Strategy: Seek to enhance the towns online presence and accessibility of meetings and services.***

### **Chaplin Highway Department**

The Chaplin Highway Department buildings have had minor improvements over the past ten years. Additional storage was created within the building that use to be the dog pound. The red pines along Route 198 have been removed providing space for maintenance of existing specimen trees. Cosmetic enhancements such as a new sign and landscaping along Route 198 could significantly improve the view from the street.

*Strategy: Seek funding for cosmetic improvements such as a new sign, possibly a fence, and better landscaping.*

### **Chaplin Transfer Station**

The Chaplin Transfer Station is located behind the town highway garage. The current location does not allow for expansion. The site is surrounded by state owned land but has environmental limitations due to its proximity to the Natchaug River and various other uses associated with the garage.

*Strategy: Review the adequacy of the transfer station for future use including safety and security upgrades.*

### **Edward Garrison Park**

Located next door to Town Hall, the Edward Garrison Park is a wonderful asset in Chaplin's social fabric. The park includes a pavilion, bathrooms, and snack bar. The park is a popular site for dog walkers and those wanting to have a pleasant walk. The park now includes a disc golf course that attracts visitors from out of town and other states. Garrison Park will become home to the Chaplin Bicentennial Memorial Arboretum. It is a three-year project to plant 60 native trees and shrubs 20 of which were planted in the Fall of 2020. The Arboretum has primarily been funded by donations from current and former town residents. Improvements to the buildings and grounds to reduce vandalism while still providing access have been implemented. Use of the soccer and baseball fields is low and requires a higher level of maintenance. Overall park usage has increased in the past few years. The park is open to the public on a first come, first serve basis although buildings can be reserved by Town entities such as Chaplin Recreation Commission, Senior Center, Library, and school. Trails around the pond should be



maintained and possibly expanded to provide access to other municipal facilities such as the Senior and Community Centers.

*Strategy: Improve access through the installation of a staircase from the lower parking lot up the hill at the main entrance*

*Strategy: Maintain trail connections between Garrison Park and adjacent Joshua's Trust property and Natchaug State Forest.*

*Strategy: Maintain the stone dust trail around the park.*

*Strategy: Create opportunities within the arboretum for educational programs for schools and families*



## MUNICIPAL SERVICES

[www.chaplinct.org](http://www.chaplinct.org)

The Chaplin website is one of the primary methods for Chaplin residents to get information about town services. Information and links to other organizations provided on municipal websites often become out of date quickly. Pages should be reviewed periodically and either brought up to date or removed. As

 <p><b>TOWN OF CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT</b></p> <p>495 Phoenixville Road, Chaplin, CT 06235</p>	<p>Windham County Connecticut</p> <p>☎ Phone: (860) 455-0073</p> <p>☎ Fax: (860) 455-0027</p> <p>✉ Email: <a href="mailto:assistant@chaplinct.org">assistant@chaplinct.org</a></p>	<p>It is Friday, April 23rd, 2021 and the local time is 12:54:35pm</p>
<p><a href="#">Home</a> <a href="#">About Chaplin</a> <a href="#">Town Hall</a> <a href="#">Boards</a> <a href="#">Commissions</a> <a href="#">Committees</a> <a href="#">Community</a> <a href="#">Resources</a> <a href="#">Contact Us</a> <a href="#">Careers</a></p>		

technology and online commerce advances the town should update software and hardware to continue providing as many virtual and remote services as possible. Many municipalities have reported an increase in participation in public meetings when remote or online options are available.

***Strategy: Provide for timely posting of municipal committee meeting dates, agendas, and minutes.***

***Strategy: Update and Maintain software and hardware to provide as many virtual and remote services as possible.***

Chaplin added a part time Recreation Director position to assist and organize the commissions activities and volunteers. A director was hired for a couple of years but when he resigned the position was not filled. The need and compensation for a part time director should be reevaluated to determine if the hours and workload are in line with the demand. Staffing for the commission and other recreational programs can be negatively affected by the rise and fall of participation by volunteers.

***Strategy: Evaluate the need for a part-time, paid Recreation Director. Consider sharing the position with a neighboring town.***

***Strategy: Ensure that all town staff, boards, and commissions have adequate training and resources to perform their duties.***

The town of Chaplin currently participates in both regional and collaborative efforts for town services to both reduce cost and improve efficiency. Chaplin is a member of the Northeastern CT Council of Governments (NECCOG) and participates in the Animal Services Program as well as the Regional Revaluation Contract. Tax collection has been outsourced and is now conducted by the town of Windham's tax office and household hazardous waste collection is available through MidNEROC in Willington. Chaplin continues to seek opportunities for partnerships with surrounding towns and through NECCOG to provide services to its citizens while keeping costs low.

***Strategy: Continue to seek opportunities for collaborative and/or regional services that create efficient and cost-effective solutions to municipal issues.***



# 9

## EDUCATION

There are two schools in Chaplin. Chaplin Elementary School built in 1993 has pre-kindergarten classes through Grade 6 with 156 students. Parish Hill Middle School/High School Region 11 built in 1967 provides classes for Grade 7 through Grade 12 for 232 students.

Spending per student for Chaplin Elementary School for the 2018-2019 school year was \$22,673 of which 65% was locally funded compared to \$24,953 in Region 11 with 71% locally funded. The state average is \$17,506 per student.

Chaplin's total expenditure in FYE 2018 was \$8,279,141 or \$3,669 per capita. Education expenditures made up 78% of total expenditures. The per pupil costs increased from \$16,250 in 2008, to \$22,731 in 2018 an increase of \$6,541 per pupil over ten years. This can be attributed to decreasing school enrollment from 342 students in 2008 to 259 in 2018. Since 2008, expenditures for education have increased (15.8%) almost twice the amount of operating expenditures (8.3%).

The main issues facing Chaplin's school districts are the decreasing student population and rising costs. It is not the intent of this plan to prescribe the best course of action for the school districts.

### **Chaplin Elementary School**

Chaplin Elementary School is located on 26 acres on Palmer Road. Enrollment is decreasing and the facility, built in 1993, is considered sufficient for current and anticipated enrollment. The gym is well used by many groups and school space is shared freely with community organizations such as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts.

If grades 7-8 are ever brought into the elementary school, the facility on Palmer Road will need to expand. In addition to new classroom space, upgrades to the gym, auditorium, and sports fields would be necessary. It has not been determined if there is enough room on the existing property for expansion on-site.

***Strategy: Upgrade air conditioning to accommodate summer school programs. Consider cooperating with Hampton Elementary School in the provision of summer school programs.***

***Strategy: Evaluate future building potential and identify appropriate expansion opportunities if necessary.***

Education Expenditures Per Pupil		
	FYE 2008	FYE2018
<b>Chaplin</b>	<b>\$16,250</b>	<b>\$22,731</b>
Hampton	\$16,025	\$25,021
Mansfield	\$14,864	\$20,335
Scotland	\$14,627	\$22,244
Ashford	\$14,023	\$19,700
Eastford	\$13,442	\$20,391
Windham	\$13,199	\$18,868
Municipal Fiscal Indicators, OPM		





### **Parish Hill Middle School/High School**

Parish Hill Middle School/ High School is located on approximately 60 acres on Parish Hill Road. Parish Hill is the middle/high school for Regional School District 11 that includes the towns of Chaplin, Hampton and Scotland. Total enrollment in 2019 was 232 students compared to 309 in 2008. In 2019 Chaplin students made up approximately 40% percent of the total student body with Hampton students being 24% and Scotland 36%. The auditorium and gym are well-used by the regional community. The facility is aging and requires some maintenance upgrades.

***Strategy: Replace boiler with an energy-efficient model such as a solar-assisted unit. Replace roof which is over 20 years old. Consider the concurrent installation of solar panels. Build a soccer field with the correct orientation (north south) and adequate drainage.***

***Strategy: Investigate possible deed restrictions on the existing 60-acre property. Evaluate existing building potential and identify appropriate expansion opportunities if necessary.***

***Strategy: Consider the needs of Chaplin Elementary School, Parish Hill High School/Middle School, and the Town of Chaplin in preparing for changes in the school structure.***



# 10

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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While the Chaplin Planning and Zoning Commission is primarily responsible for the implementation of this plan's recommended strategies, the Chaplin Board of Selectmen and other boards and agencies also have certain powers and authorities necessary to further the goals of the plan. The following pages outline the strategies and tasks as prioritized by the Planning and Zoning Commission, to serve as a guide in the implementation of this Plan of Conservation and Development

### **Major Implementation Priorities**

The following strategies are major implementation priorities. They reflect the major goals of the plan and are essential to its implementation.

### **Economic Development in West Route 6 Corridor:**

- *Replace current Business and Corridor zones with one zone that allows for a variety of mixed uses in the western Route 6 corridor that includes commercial and residential.*
- *Promote diversity in business types and prevent the overdevelopment of one type of use.*
- *Future zone boundaries should, to the extent practicable, follow existing property boundaries.*

### **Protection of Natural Resources:**

- *Ensure zoning regulations provide for protection of the Natchaug River for commercial development.*



## **Short-Term Strategies**

The following short-term strategies are considered to be attainable within the next two years.

- *Install “Welcome to Chaplin” signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance.*
- *Consider increasing the performance bond for new driveway aprons to ensure they are installed properly.*
- *Investigate pedestrian linkages within the municipal core including Garrison Park, the town hall, the library, and the senior center.*
- *Continue to research the legal status of former roads and rights-of-way, especially in remote areas. Former roads and rights-of-way that are no longer in use should be formally discontinued.*
- *Consider the need for fire ponds and underground storage cisterns for large developments.*
- *Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the review of all commercial and residential development, and in the development of town facilities where appropriate.*



The following table includes all strategies found in this Plan of Conservation and Development.

Abbreviations: **PZC** = Planning and Zoning Commission,  
**BOS** = Board of Selectmen,  
**EDC** = Economic Development Commission,  
**IWCC** = Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commission,  
**HDC** = Historic District Commission,  
**HS** = Historical Society,  
**SC** = Senior Center Board of Directors,  
**RC** = Recreation Commission,  
**BOE** = Board of Education,  
**PW** = Public Works (aka Chaplin Highway Dept.),

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>PRIMARY</b>	<b>PG. #</b>
<b>Chapter 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	
<i>Replace current Business and Corridor zones with one zone that allows for a variety of mixed uses in the western Route 6 corridor that includes commercial and residential.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	13
<i>Revise Corridor Guidelines to be more user-friendly and to include images; topics should include site planning, access management, landscaping, signage, lighting, and utilities in addition to architecture.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	13
<i>Work with business, property owners and applicants to consolidate curb cuts, mitigate traffic impacts, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle access in new developments.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	13
<i>Encourage diversity in business types and prevent the overdevelopment of one type of use.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	13
<i>Continue to encourage home-based businesses to the extent that they are compatible with Chaplin’s rural/residential character. Home-based businesses should not create negative impacts to neighborhoods or lower property values</i>	<b>PZC, EDC</b>	13
<i>Consider a “Right-to-Farm” Ordinance to inform new residents of Chaplin’s support for farmers and historic farming activities, existing and future.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	13
<i>Retain the Industrial Zone as an appropriate location for land uses that should be thoroughly buffered to prevent negative impacts to the rest of the community.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	13
<i>Review all strategies from the Route 6 Corridor Management Plan and systematically incorporate viable strategies into the Chaplin Zoning Regulations.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	14
<i>Future zone boundaries should, to the extent practicable, follow existing property boundaries.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	14
<i>Install “Welcome to Chaplin” signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance.</i>	<b>BOS, EDC</b>	14

<i>Review and update sign regulations to ensure that new signage is attractive and functional and that it enhances the aesthetic and historical values of the community.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	14
<i>Consider tourism and agritourism as an opportunity for economic development.</i>	<b>EDC</b>	14
<i>Ensure zoning regulations provide for protection of the Natchaug River for commercial development.</i>	<b>PZC, IWCC</b>	14
<i>Promote a diversity of Business types within the commercial zone and avoid the over development of a single use.</i>	<b>PZC, EDC</b>	14
<b>Chapter 3: Transportation</b>		
<i>Periodically review road design standards and specifications governing new or improved local roads.</i>	<b>PZC, BOS</b>	16
<i>Consider requiring a two-year maintenance bond to give sufficient time to identify structural and drainage issues on new and improved town roads.</i>	<b>PZC, BOS</b>	16
<i>Participate in CT DOT and NECCOG transportation planning processes such as the Northeastern CT Regional Safety Plan and the Long-Range Transportation Plan.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	17
<i>Promote traffic calming in the Route 6 Corridor.</i>	<b>BOS, PZC</b>	17
<i>Include the intersections identified on page 17 for sight line improvements in the Chaplin capital improvement program.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	17
<i>Inventory drainage issues which plague town roads, and incorporate drainage improvements into the Chaplin capital improvement program. When maintaining road and drainage systems, strive to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low- impact techniques.</i>	<b>BOS, PW</b>	17
<i>Consider increasing the performance bond for new driveway aprons to ensure they are installed properly.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	17
<i>Implement a town-wide road and drainage management system to define priority work, prudently budget for improvements, and ensure that roads and drainage structures are maintained on a continuing basis.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	17
<i>For any future improvements to the Route 198 bridge, the town should request safe bicycle and pedestrian access. Consider a viewing platform cantilevered on the side of bridge next to Diana’s Pool or safe access to the north bank where crowds gather.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	18
<i>Continue to research the legal status of former roads and rights-of-way, especially in remote areas. Former roads and rights-of-way that are no longer in use should be formally discontinued.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	18
<i>Apply to CT DOT to designate Route 198 as a State Scenic Road</i>	<b>BOS, EDC</b>	19
<i>Ensure that any Senior Housing is in an area that can be easily serviced by transit providers.</i>	<b>BOS, PZC</b>	19
<i>Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in the review of all commercial and residential development, and in the development of town facilities where appropriate.</i>	<b>PZC, BOS</b>	20
<i>Work with CT DOT to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety along state routes by utilizing traffic calming techniques.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	20
<i>Seek funding to create a bicycle lane from Garrison Park on Route 198, across Route 6 and along Chewink Road to the trailhead for the Airline Trail.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	20

<i>Investigate pedestrian linkages within the municipal core including Garrison Park, the town hall, the library, and the senior center.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	20
<i>Improve signage for existing trail heads and ensure good signage for proposed trails and bikeways.</i>	<b>BOS, RC</b>	20
<i>Review the adequacy of parking at the Chewink Road/Airline Trail head and at the Two Sisters Parcel on Route 6</i>	<b>BOS, RC</b>	20
<b>Chapter 4: Utilities and Energy Conservation</b>		
<i>Review boundary and update requirements of the existing Aquifer Protection District.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	21
<i>Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.</i>	<b>BOS, IWCC</b>	22
<i>Support the concept of decentralized sewage treatment as the preferred method of sewage treatment to maintain environmental health and conserve water resources.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	22
<i>Support implementation of non-polluting alternative electricity production technologies such as photovoltaic, wind, geothermal and water turbine systems.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	23
<b>Chapter 5: Housing</b>		
<i>Incorporate mixed-use housing within the zoning district along the western half of Route 6. Strive to make this housing pedestrian-friendly and transit-accessible.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	26
<i>Continue to allow accessory apartments as an important component of housing diversity.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	26
<i>Study the need for senior housing as well as potential locations.</i>	<b>BOS, EDC</b>	26
<i>Review the existing zoning regulations and consider senior housing in any future regulation updates.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	26
<b>Chapter 6: Historic Preservation &amp; Cultural Resources</b>		
<i>Identify and assess locations of former district schoolhouses throughout Town and provide for protection/preservation of these sites.</i>	<b>HS</b>	28
<i>Continue to support the Chaplin Museum and encourage the revitalization of the Chaplin Historical Society.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	28
<i>Continue to support the work of the Chaplin Historic District Commission in preserving the Chaplin Local Historic District.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	28
<i>Seek funding to install attractive signage at the gateways to the Chaplin Historic District. Seek professional design assistance in selecting the best location.</i>	<b>BOS, HDC</b>	28
<i>Consider the gateway to the historic district if the intersection of Chaplin Street and Route 198 is re-aligned to improve sight lines.</i>	<b>BOS, HDC</b>	29

<i>Foster adaptive reuse of municipally owned structures for uses of such manner and scale that are appropriate for the district.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	29
<i>Identify and assess locations of former mill sites on the Natchaug River and Stone House Brook and offer owners assistance for protection/preservation of these sites.</i>	<b>HS</b>	29
<i>Encourage owners of significant historic properties outside of the historic town center to apply for State of Connecticut and National Register of Historic Places designation.</i>	<b>HS</b>	29
<i>Continue to maintain and improve historic cemeteries throughout town.</i>	<b>BOS, HS</b>	29
<i>Review and educate residents on property boundary laws that include stone walls.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	30
<i>Install “Welcome to Chaplin” signs and other signs at areas of historic or natural significance.</i>	<b>EDC</b>	30
<i>Strategy: Consider enacting an ordinance that prohibits the removal of highway boundary stone walls.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	30
<b>Chapter 7: Natural Resources, Agriculture &amp; Open Space</b>		
<i>Promote protection of surface and groundwater resources through education for property owners, residents and business owners living and working in the Natchaug Basin.</i>	<b>IWCC</b>	32
<i>Inventory existing state and municipal storm-water infrastructure including all municipal and state owned culverts, catch-basins, outlets and level spreaders. Work with CT DOT and Chaplin Public Works to incorporate environmental options such as culverts that do not disrupt natural stream flow, bio-retention, and other low-impact techniques.</i>	<b>BOS, PW</b>	32
<i>Avoid unnecessary impacts to watercourses and wetlands. Utilize low impact development guidelines and best management practices whenever necessary. Examples include rain gardens, minimal impervious surfaces, bio-retention, infiltrators, etc.</i>	<b>PZC, PW</b>	32
<i>Continue to work with conservation organizations such as Joshua’s Trust to provide for the long-term protection of critical open space.</i>	<b>IWCC</b>	33
<i>Encourage the Chaplin Conservation Commission to prepare and continuously update an open space and conservation easement inventory.</i>	<b>BS, IWCC</b>	33
<i>Review the Natural Resource Inventory and Co-occurring Natural Resource maps and update as needed.</i>	<b>IWCC</b>	33
<i>Combine the Conservation Commission with the Inland Wetlands Commission.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	33
<i>Encourage sustainable forest management and stewardship. Work with existing groups such as the Eastern CT Forest Landowners Association to provide education to forest property owners.</i>	<b>IWCC</b>	33
<i>Continue to consider large, forested super-blocks during subdivision review.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	33
<i>Work with groups such as the CT Farm Bureau and the CT Resource Conservation District “AGvocate” program to educate municipal officials, agricultural producers, and others to help make Chaplin an agriculture-friendly community.</i>	<b>EDC</b>	34

<i>Consider a “Right-to-Farm” Ordinance to inform new residents of Chaplin’s support for farmers and historic farming activities, existing and future.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	34
<b>Chapter 8: Public Safety, Municipal Facilities &amp; Services</b>		
<i>Consider the need for fire ponds and underground storage cisterns for large developments.</i>	<b>PZC</b>	35
<i>Encourage interested citizens to take the CERT training course and join the Chaplin/Hampton CERT Team to assist Chaplin first responders in the event of an emergency.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	35
<i>Continue to incorporate “green” building practices in all new municipal facilities and upgrades as cost effectively as possible.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	36
<i>Promote collaboration between the Library and Senior Center.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	36
<i>Reach out to surrounding communities for recruitment of members and increase participation in programs.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	37
<i>Increase utilization of the facility for community functions and recreational activities.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	37
<i>Continue to seek funding opportunities to develop the site next door to the Chaplin Library as the future home of the Chaplin Town Museum.</i>	<b>BOS, HDC</b>	37
<i>Resolve the future use of the museum building and remaining site.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	37
<i>Seek to enhance the towns online presence and accessibility of meetings and services.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	38
<i>Seek funding for cosmetic improvements such as a new sign, possibly a fence, and better landscaping.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	39
<i>Review the adequacy of the transfer station for future use including safety and security upgrades.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	39
<i>Improve access through the installation of a staircase from the lower parking lot up the hill at the main entrance of Garrison Park.</i>	<b>RC, BOS</b>	40
<i>Maintain trail connections between Garrison Park and adjacent Joshua’s Trust property and Natchaug State Forest.</i>	<b>RC</b>	40
<i>Maintain the stone dust trail around the Garrison Park.</i>	<b>RC</b>	40
<i>Create opportunities within the arboretum for educational programs for schools and families.</i>	<b>EDC</b>	40
<i>Provide for timely posting of municipal committee meeting dates, agendas, and minutes.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	40
<i>Update and Maintain software and hardware to provide as many virtual and remote services as possible.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	41
<i>Evaluate the need for a part-time, paid Recreation Director. Consider sharing the position with a neighboring town.</i>	<b>RC</b>	41
<i>Ensure that all town staff, boards, and commissions have adequate training and resources to perform their duties.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	41
<i>Continue to seek opportunities for collaborative and/or regional services that create efficient and cost-effective solutions to municipal issues.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	41



## Chapter 9: Education

<i>Upgrade air conditioning at Chaplin Elementary School to accommodate summer school programs. Consider cooperating with Hampton Elementary School in the provision of summer school programs.</i>	<b>BOE</b>	42
<i>Evaluate future building potential and identify appropriate expansion opportunities if necessary, at Chaplin Elementary School.</i>	<b>BOS</b>	42
<i>Replace boiler with an energy-efficient model such as a solar-assisted unit. Replace roof which is over 20 years old. Consider the concurrent installation of solar panels. Build a soccer field with the correct orientation (north south) and adequate drainage at Parish Hill High School.</i>	<b>BOE</b>	43
<i>Investigate possible deed restrictions on the existing 60-acre property. Evaluate existing building potential and identify appropriate expansion opportunities if necessary, at Parish Hill High School.</i>	<b>BOE</b>	43
<i>Consider the needs of Chaplin Elementary School, Parish Hill High School/Middle School, and the Town of Chaplin in preparing for changes in the school structure</i>	<b>BOE</b>	43

# Appendix A

## **Consistency with the Six Growth Management Principles of the State of CT Plan of Conservation and Development**

The State of CT Plan of Conservation and Development 2018-2023 is in the process of approval with the Continuing Legislative Committee on State Planning and Development. The plan's foundation is based on the following Six Growth Management Principles. The Chaplin 2020 POCD update is consistent with the State Plan of Conservation and Development as described below.

### **1. Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure**

*Chaplin POCD: encourages growth along the western half of Route 6 along an existing commercial corridor and within a defined Village Priority Funding Area identified in the State POCD.*

### **2. Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs**

*Chaplin POCD: provides strategies related to housing diversity including senior housing, mixed use developments and accessory apartments.*

### **3. Concentrate Development around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options**

*Chaplin POCD: encourages development along portions of Route 6 along transit routes and existing infrastructure.*

### **4. Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands.**

*Chaplin POCD: recommends the protection of the Natchaug River, Chaplin Historic District, and agricultural working lands.*

### **5. Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety**

*Chaplin POCD: continues to protect environmental assets such as the Natchaug River and Watershed through local regulations and participation with regional planning efforts such as the Natchaug Healthy River Watershed Plan.*

### **6. Promote Integrated Planning Across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis.**

*Chaplin POCD: promotes coordination with all levels of government in addressing economic decision making through collaboration with regional and state partners.*

# 2013-2018 CT POCD

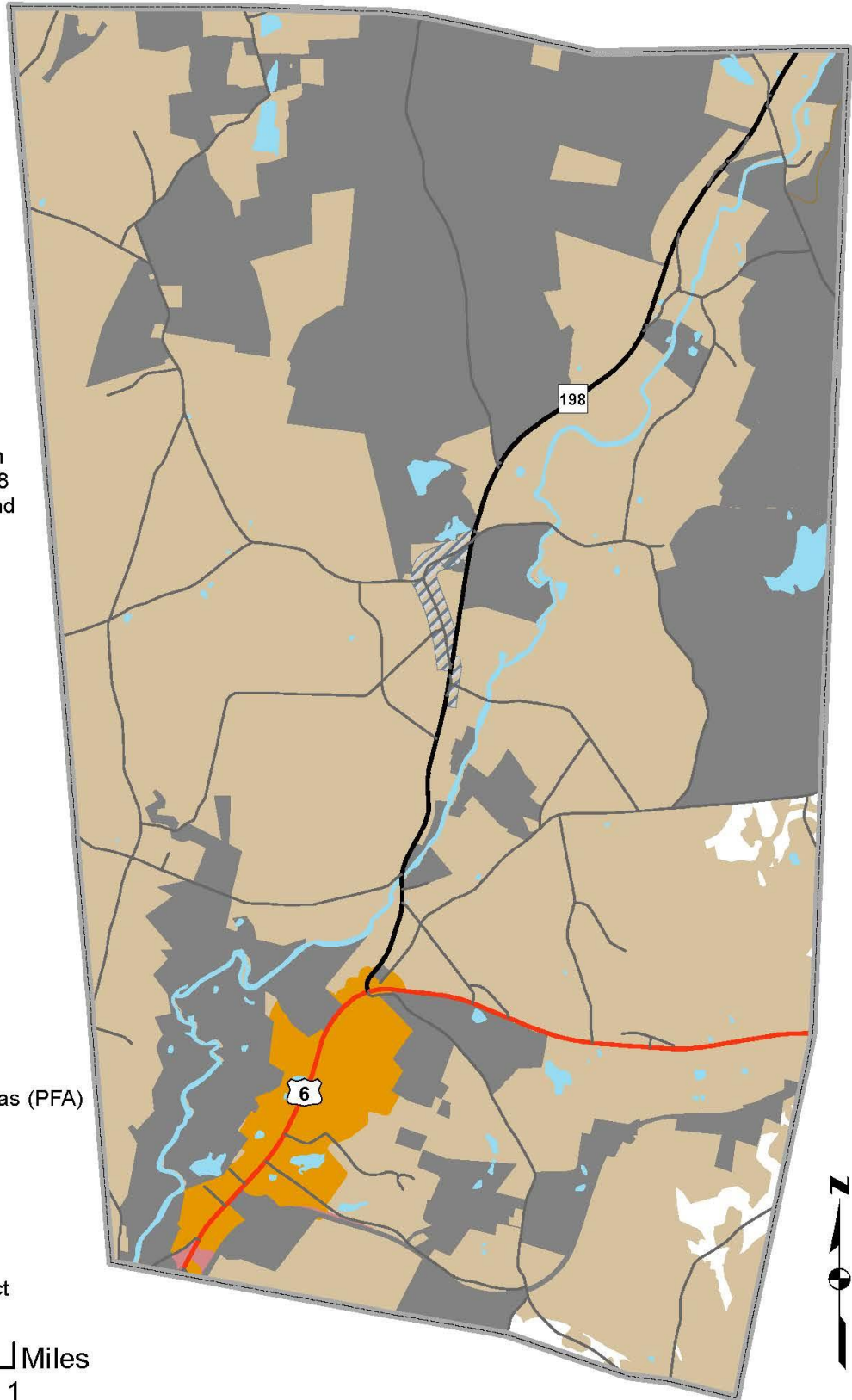
## CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

Note: GIS Data Layers from  
CT OPM and the 2013-2018  
CT Plan of Conservation and  
Development (POCD)  
Locational Guide Map.

### Legend

- Priority Funding Areas (PFA)
- Balanced PFA
- Village PFA
- Protected Lands
- Conservation Areas
- Local Historic District

0 0.5 1 Miles



**Rural Principal Arterials**Hampton Rd/Willimantic Rd  
(Route 6)**Rural Major Collectors**Phoenixville Rd  
(Route 198)**Minor Collectors**Bates Rd  
Chaplin St  
Marcy Rd  
Morey Rd (portion)  
Natchaug St  
Pumpkin Hill Rd  
Tower Hill Rd**Major Local Roads**S Bear Hill Rd  
N Bear Hill Rd  
Bedlam Rd  
S Bedlam Rd  
N Bedlam Rd  
Canada Ln  
Cedar Swamp Rd  
Chewink Rd  
Cross Rd  
Davis Rd  
Depot Rd  
England Rd  
Federal Rd  
Goshen Rd  
Halls Pond Rd  
Lynch Rd  
Miller Rd  
Morey Rd (portion)  
Nollett Rd  
Old State Rd  
Old Willimantic Rd  
Palmer Rd  
Parish Hill Rd  
Ridge Rd  
Scotland Rd  
Singleton Rd  
N Windham Rd**Minor Local Roads**Bolduk Ln  
Bujak Rd  
Bujak Rd Connector  
Carefree Ln  
S Cemetery Rd  
Chappell St  
Chappell St Ext  
Dianas Pool Rd  
Goodel Rd  
Harakaly Rd  
Mansure Rd  
Middle Rd  
Mt. Laurel Ln  
Nutmeg Ln  
Nyberg Rd  
Old Hampton Rd  
Shuba Ln  
Tower Hill Cutoff  
York Rd  
#1 McQuade Rd  
#2 McQuade Rd**Private Roads**Cavanaugh Rd  
Chaplin Woods Rd  
Hall Rd  
Lannie Ln  
Linkkila Ln  
Nyberg Hill Rd  
Park Dr  
Piaseczny Dr  
Ross Rd

# TRANSPORTATION

## CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

Note: Major and Minor Local Roads as determined by the town. Arterial and Collector roads classified by CT DOT. Average Annual Daily Traffic counts (AADT) from CT DOT 2019.

2,700 Average Annual Daily Traffic



Bridge

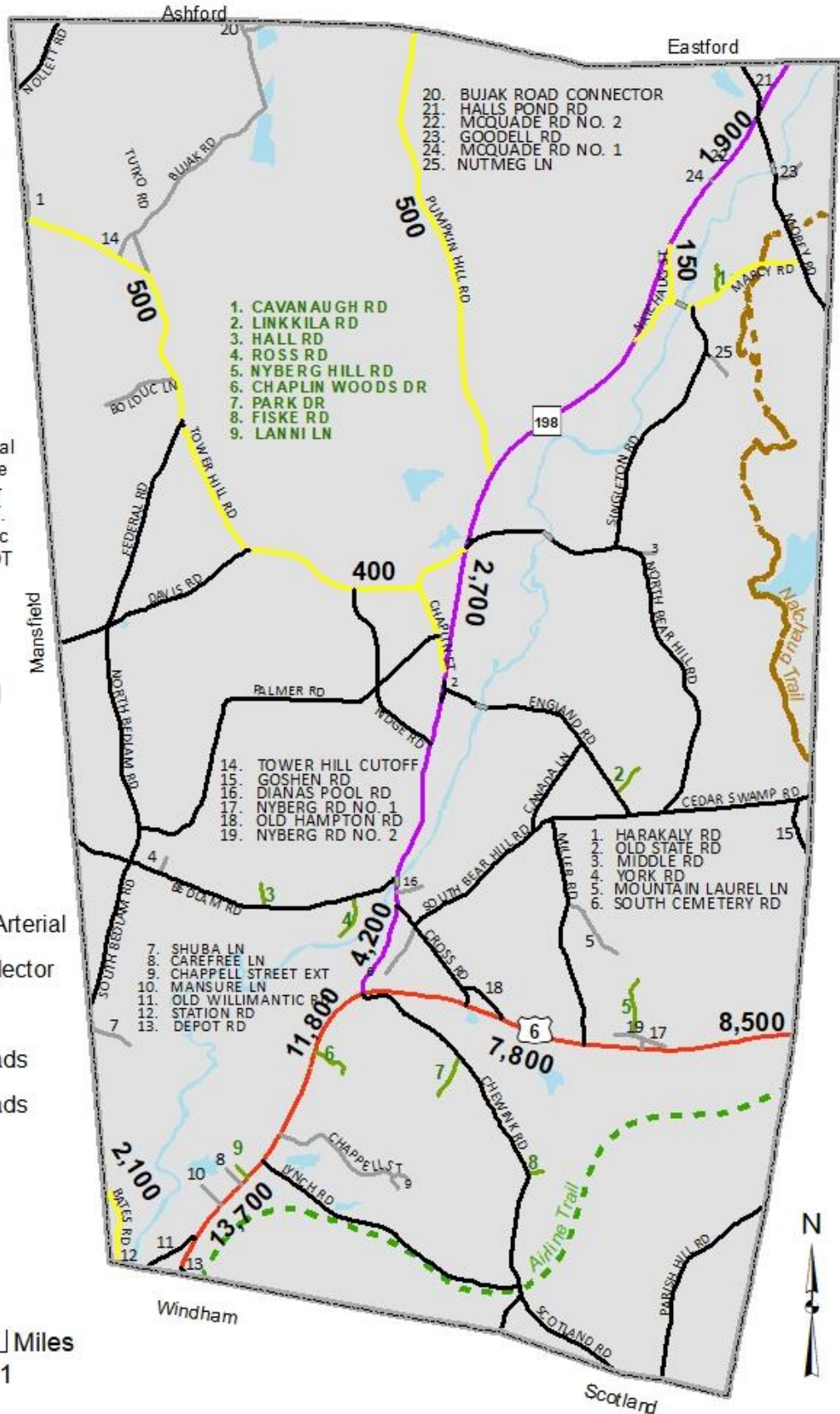


Commuter Lot

### Functional Class

- Rural Principal Arterial
- Rural Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Major Local Roads
- Minor Local Roads
- Private\_Roads
- - - Airline Trail
- - - Natchaug Trail

0 0.5 1 Miles



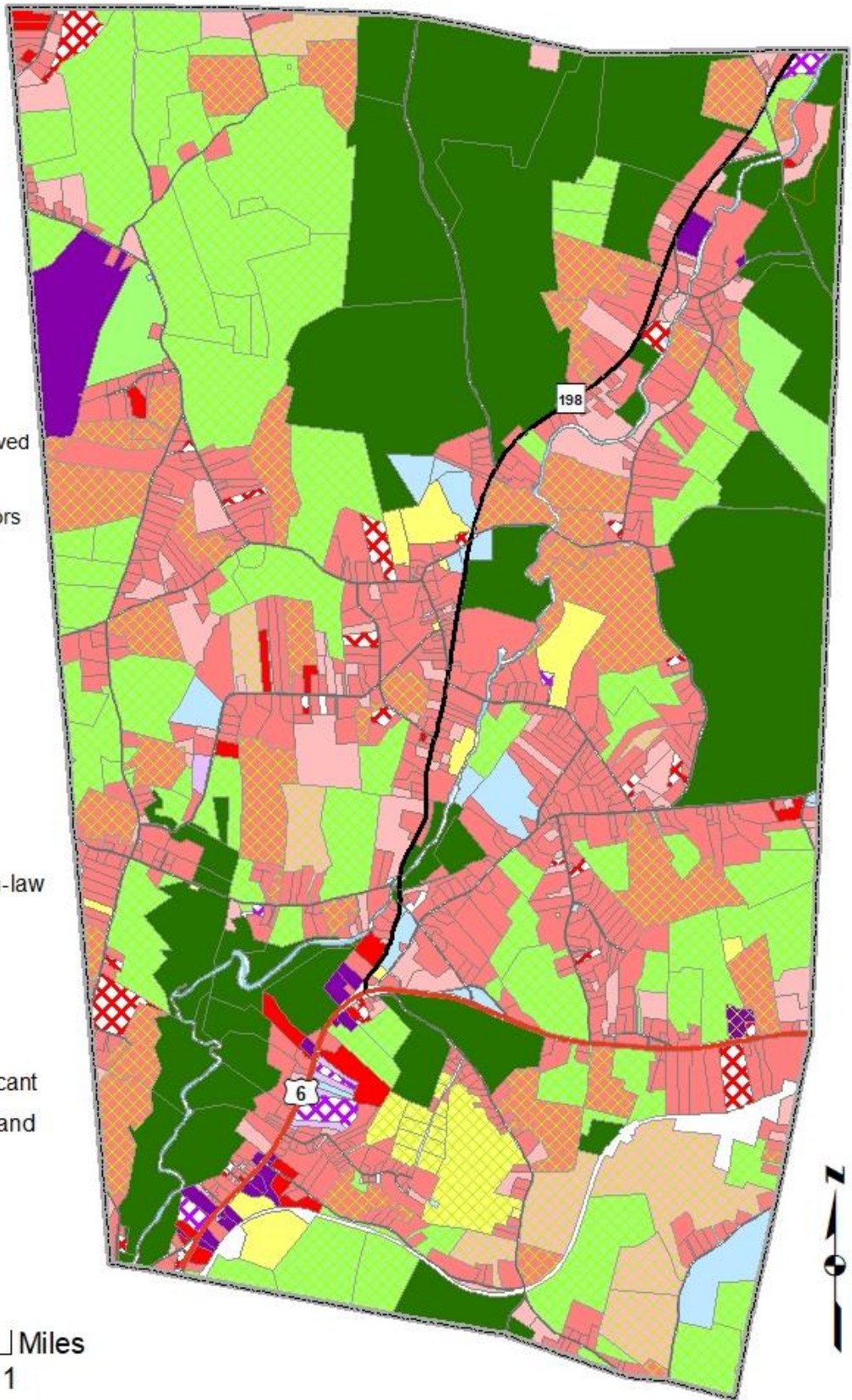
# Existing Land Use

## CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

Note: GIS Data Layers derived from Chaplin 2020 Parcels coded by primary land use as classified by the assessors 2020 CAMA.

### Legend

-  PA 490
-  Multi-Family
-  Single Fam w in-law
-  Single Family
-  Res. Vacant
-  Res / Comm
-  Commercial
-  Commercial Vacant
-  State/Federal Land
-  Farm or Forest
-  Non Profit
-  Municipal



# Future Land Use

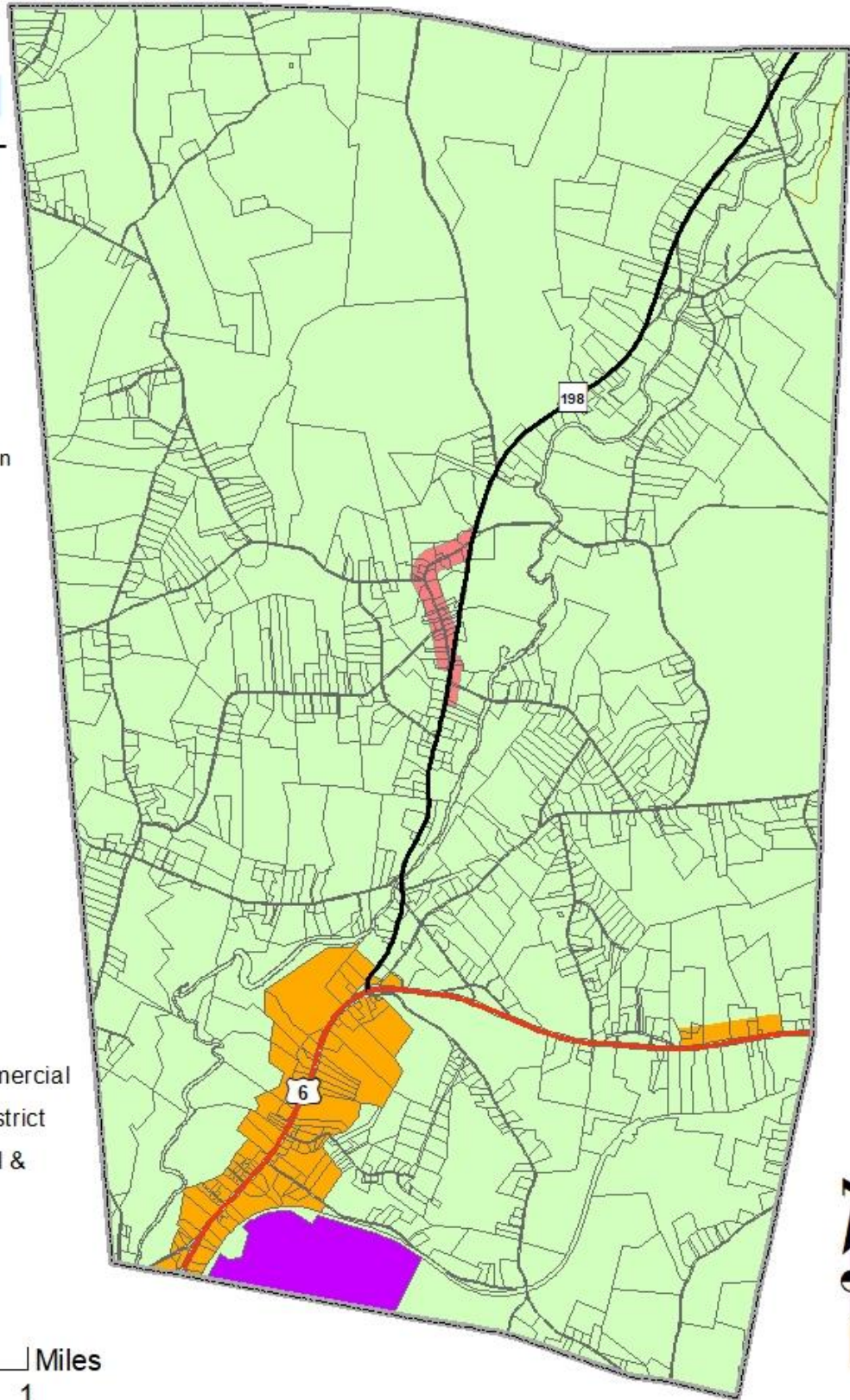
## CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

Note: Parcels from Chaplin 2020 Parcel Dataset.

### Proposed Future Land Use

- Light Industrial
- Mixed Use Commercial
- Local Historic District
- Rural Agricultural & Residential

0 0.5 1 Miles



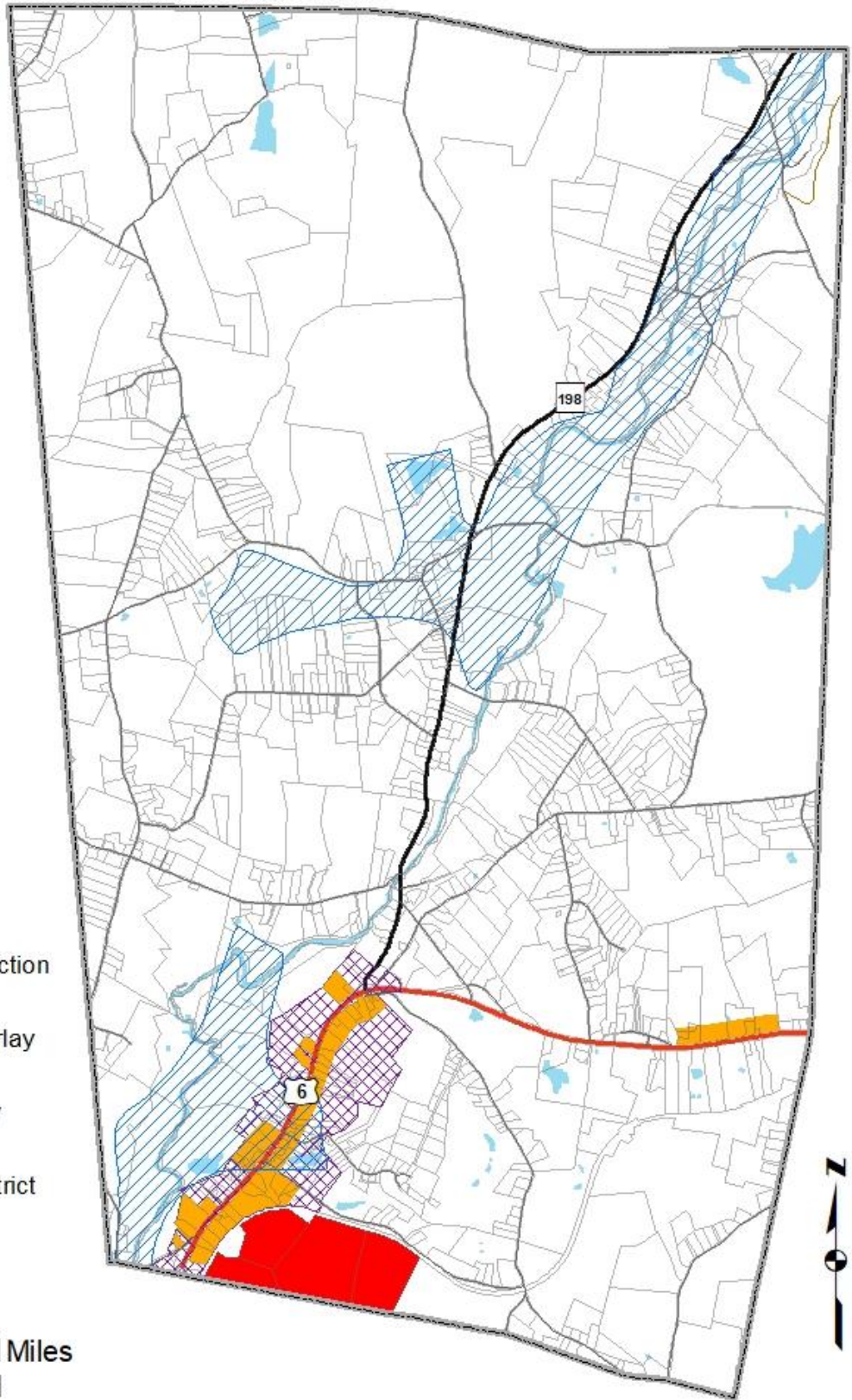
# 2020 Zoning

## CHAPLIN CONNECTICUT

Note: Parcels from Chaplin  
2020 Parcel Dataset.

-  Aquifer Protection District
-  Corridor Overlay District
-  Light Industry District
-  Business District

0 0.5 1 Miles





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## ***TOWN OF CHAPLIN 2009 VISIONING SESSIONS***

### ***SUMMARY REPORT***

**May 21, 2009**

#### **OVERVIEW**

This spring the Town of Chaplin's Planning and Zoning Commission began to prepare to update the town's Plan of Conservation and Development. The PZC decided that an important first step was to gather input from the community to begin to develop a vision for the town's future. The PZC requested the assistance of the Green Valley Institute to gather this information from the community. Susan Westa and Paula Stahl from GVI facilitated a series of four visioning workshops in March through May 2009.

The first visioning session was designed to gather input from the general public. The program began with a community brainstorming session. Folks were asked to identify issues and opportunities important to the future of Chaplin. Attendees were broken up into four smaller groups who looked at the issues in more detail by topic and then reported back to the larger group. The session also included a visual preference survey designed to gain input about how the community would like Chaplin to look and feel in the future. A summary of the information gathered follows.

The second visioning session focused on the town's natural resources including the Natchaug River and agriculture. Attendees were broken up into three groups, the Natchaug River, agriculture and other natural resources. Each group looked at the value of those resources, threats to those resources and potential solutions.

The third session followed the same general program as the first session but was designed specifically for members of the Town's Boards and Commissions. Since this was a smaller group, a roundtable format was used.

The fourth visioning session focused on economic development issues in the Route 6 Corridor. A roundtable format was used again and a visual preference survey was conducted. Many landowners along the Route 6 Corridor were in attendance. A summary of information from each session is attached.

The following information is intended for use by Chaplin as it updates its Plan of Conservation and Development. This information will be available to the public by posting it on the town website and having it available at the town hall.

**PUBLIC VISIONING SESSION  
MARCH 23, 2009 - PRIORITIES, PREFERENCES & NEXT STEPS SUMMARY**

**PRIORITIES**

**1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION**

- Design Overlay
- Encourage development of nodes/villages – not strip development
- Restrict signage & noise & light pollution
- Don't rezone more commercial land
- Design of buildings
- Transportation to businesses
- Discourage trucks through town
- Home-based businesses
- High tech/computers

**2) NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE**

- Maintain agricultural feel of town = top priority
- Opposed to common driveways
  - Concerned about opening up too much land to development
- PA 490 – use value vs. potential value
- Right to farm issues
  - Promote best management practices
- Protect Natchaug River and tributaries
  - Overlay Zone
- Concern over CL&P line expansion & gas line
- Population limits = 800-2500
- Farmer's Market

**3) COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING**

- Identified Current Services
  - Schools
  - Highway Department
  - Resident Trooper
  - Library
  - Senior Center
  - Town Park
  - Town-wide trash pickup
  - Volunteer Fire Department & Ambulance
- Identified Potential Future Services
  - Schools (new or addition)
  - Senior Housing – community wells & septic and affordable housing
  - Municipal Overlay Zone – over all municipal buildings
  - New Town Hall or addition
  - Biking/hiking paths & horse trails

#### 4) LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Chaplin's Strengths
  - State Forest, Joshua's Trust land, Town Open Space
  - Farmland
- Need coherent plan for open space w/maps, inventories, etc.
- Protect stone walls
- Maintain agricultural character of town
- Maintain character of town hall, Garrison fields & historic district
- Characteristics to protect:
  - Road widths
    - Forests
  - Historic District
  - Farmland
  - Road edges (snow plowing issue)
  - Access to river
- Address multi-family housing discrepancy in regulations
- Eliminate business zone on Route 6 from Nyberg Road. To Hampton line.

#### VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

##### 1) TOP LIKES

*Receiving 13 votes*

- a) Stone wall & wooded road edge

*Receiving 10 votes*

- a) Quinebaug River Trail, Putnam b)
- Farm view & pasture

*Receiving 9 votes*

- a) Barn w/pumpkins and hayrides

*Receiving 8 votes*

- a) Farm stand
- b) Barn along road
- c) Edge of town green, Thompson

*Receiving 7 votes a)*

Family on trail *Receiving*

*5 votes*

- a) Tree-lined, rural road
- b) View of farm field
- c) Historic home w/stone wall

##### 2) TOP DISLIKES

*Receiving 11 votes*

- a) Strip Signs – N. Windham

*Receiving 6 votes*

- a) Large lot subdivision w/no trees

*Receiving 5 votes*

- a) Dunkin' Donuts building w/parking in front

*Receiving 4 votes*

- a) Industrial, metal building
- b) Strip Plaza, Storrs

### **3) MIXED RESULTS**

*Receiving 7 Likes & 3 Dislikes a)*

Hampton General Store *Receiving 2*

*Likes & 1 Dislike*

- a) Sidewalk w/cafes & trees in Northeast
- b) Sidewalk cafes in new downtown area, San Luis Obispo, CA

### **NEXT STEPS FOR TOWN**

- Develop regulations that encourage agriculture & open space, and limit residential development
- Ensure development maintains rural character
- Increase protection of Natchaug River & tributaries
- Designate Route 198 a Scenic Road
- Commercial development – location is critical & regulate signage, parking, curb cuts, etc.
- Lynch Road./Route. 6 intersection – could be focus of compact, mixed use development, possibly including senior housing – close to rail trail & aquifer
- Make Route 198 more accessible for walking & bikes
- Consider loosening regulations to promote certain uses, i.e. farming
- Consider expanding commercial area to increase tax base
- Consider other Route 6 uses
- Conduct Buildout Analysis for town
- Consider aesthetics of new development – see different scenarios

## **NATURAL RESOURCES/NATCHAUG RIVER & AGRICULTURE VISIONING SESSION APRIL 27, 2009 - VALUE, THREATS, SOLUTIONS & NEXT STEPS SUMMARY**

### **NATCHAUG RIVER**

#### **1) VALUE**

- *Trademark image of Chaplin*
- Fisheries
- Kayaking
- Other recreation
- Water supply watershed
- Possible hydropower
- Economic value
- Wildlife sustenance

- Plant life
- Tranquility/health
- Fire protection
- Irrigation

## 2) THREATS

- Pollution from surrounding towns
- Erosion
- Storm drains
- Invasive/alien plants
- Rising temperature
- Development on river bed
- Garden/lawn pesticides
- Septic systems
- Large trees falling in river/daming river
- Loss of canopy
- Loss of recreational value

## 3) SOLUTIONS

- Natural/protective measures of erosion – plantings, rocks, etc.
- Regulations on development & enforcement procedures
- Encourage farmland pride – education/awareness
- Riverwalks – to monitor and/or for enjoyment
- Educate river abutting owners of dangers of fertilizers; development
- River walk/River festival – about value and fragility of river
- Enforcing regulations/creating new regulations on development
- Make Diana’s Pool more accessible – balance use; keep litter & crowds down; keep safe; work with state

## AGRICULTURE

### 1) VALUE

- Open space
- Creates jobs
- Lowers taxes
- Local resource – food, fiber
- Beauty
- Low impact on infrastructure – low density
- Symbiotic with other businesses
- Can be protective of watershed
- Morals of children – connection to land, work & play
- Forestry is an agricultural activity

### 2) THREATS

- High property taxes

- Land costs
- Viability of farm businesses
- Town regulations
- Neighbors' attitudes
- Lack of next generation of farmers
- Scale of operation
- Transfer to the next generation

### 3) **SOLUTIONS**

- Natural/protective measures of erosion – plantings, rocks, etc.
- Farm friendly town regulations – definition agriculture/income
- Signs – seasonal, temporary & permanent
- Agriculturally related businesses – farmer's market, pick your-own, corn maze
- Right to farm law
- Education/Agricultural Committee
- 490 Enforcement
- Development to offset property taxes

## **OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES**

### 1) **FOREST – threats**

- Development
- Clear-cutting – unmanaged
- Insects
- Fire
- Invasive plants

### 2) **WILDLIFE**

- Create wildlife corridors connecting large parcels of property
- Increase size of contiguous corridors
- Loss of habitat diversity

### 3) **GRASSLANDS**

- “Viewshed” – Palmer Ave. field

### 4) **AQUIFER – threats**

- Paving/development

### 5) **VERNAL POOLS**

- Wetlands commission has jurisdiction
- Value: storm water storage & habitat – frogs & salamanders

### 6) **SURFACE WATER – threats**

- Road salt
- Phosphates
- Herbicides/pesticides
- Erosion (deforestation)
- 

#### **WHAT ELSE IS IMPORTANT?**

- Other streams and Natchaug River tributaries
- State Forests – future protection?
- Four-wheeler issue
- Need up to date open space data
- Night sky – dark
- Solitude/natural sounds – threats=human noise
- Through education & communication establish priority for rural/quiet community
- Use regulations to induce/promote appropriate commercial development
- Trail maps

### **TOWN BOARDS & COMMISSIONS VISIONING SESSION May 4, 2009 - ISSUES/CONCERNS & PREFERENCES SUMMARY**

#### **ISSUES/CONCERNS FOR CHAPLIN'S FUTURE**

##### **1) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION**

- Lynch Road./R.t 6 should be a Walkable, Mixed Use Center
  - Commercial & residential
  - Infrastructure limitation – alternative infrastructure issue
  - Corridor has wetlands & aquifer issues
  - The Chimney has significant historic & archeological value
    - Liability concerns
    - Potential to incorporate greenspace into economic development
    - Busy intersection makes it loud but visible
- Need a Route 6 Management Plan
  - Current plan looks includes 500' on either side of road – need to reconsider to promote workable nodes
- Could the Airline Trail be Turned Back to Rail?
- Walking/Biking Trails Needed Throughout Town
- Truck/Traffic Concerns
  - Need a transportation plan
- Regional Economic Development Plan
- Need Plan for Municipally-owned Buildings
  - All located in historic district
- Industrial Park Property @ Windham Line/Route. 6
  - Considering extending sewer w/limited tie in opportunities

##### **2) NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE**

- Natchaug River Overlay District – to protect river



- Define distance from river & consider including tributaries
- Use other techniques to protect river, such as conservation easements
- The river is constantly changing, include floodplains & wetlands
- Connect Wildlife Corridors
  - Uplands need protection
  - Minimize conflicts between uses
  - Need multiple approaches
  - Connect regionally
- Review Town Animal Control Policy
- Tax Impact on Agriculture is a Concern
  - Tax impact on entire community is a concern
  - Investigate alternatives to promote agriculture
- Need Farm Friendly Regulations & Definition of Farming
- How to Keep Large Farms Intact

## 2) COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HOUSING

- Need for Elderly Housing
  - In-law apartment controversy
  - Consider small apartment complex with services for seniors
  - Consider creative solutions – intergenerational
  - Conduct a Senior Center Needs Assessment
  - Lynch Road./Route. 6 – location for senior housing?
- Need General Store to Provide Services
- How Can Chaplin Address Poverty?
  - Not politically

## 3) LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Chaplin's Character is the Natchaug River and Agriculture
- Importance of Protecting & Maintaining Stone Walls
  - Incorporate stone walls into new development
- Views of Sugar Maples
- Vision of 2009/2010 POCD Update = SUSTAINABILITY?

## VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

### 4) TOP LIKES

*Receiving 6 votes*

b) Hampton General Store

*Receiving 5 votes*

c) Farm view & pasture d)

Pasture & barn *Receiving 4*

*votes*

b) Edge of town green, Thompson

*Receiving 3 votes*

d) Small-scale high density commercial development – Cape Cod

- e) Small historic commercial building f)  
Barn along road
- g) Barn w/pumpkins & hydrides
- h) Historic home w/stone wall
- i) Stone wall along wooded road j)  
Quinebaug River Trail, Putnam

#### 5) TOP DISLIKES

*Receiving 6 votes*

- a) Big box store w/huge parking

*Receiving 5 votes*

- b) Strip signs – N. Windham

*Receiving 4 votes*

- b) Large lot subdivision w/no trees
- c) Small industrial building – N. Windham

#### 6) MIXED RESULTS

*Receiving 2 Likes & 1 Dislike*

- c) Sidewalk w/cafes & trees in Santa Barbara, CA

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ROUTE 6 VISIONING SESSION May 18, 2009 - ISSUES/CONCERNS & PREFERENCES SUMMARY**

#### **ISSUES/CONCERNS FOR THE ROUTE 6 CORRIDOR**

- Existing Corridor Plan
  - Concern that it's designed for a "big" town
  - Design guidelines helpful
  - Only some recommendations of plan have been implemented
  - 25' setback and parking in back are an issue
- Character of Route 6
  - Feels like a hodgepodge or characterless, which is somewhat OK
  - Consider "welcome" signs
  - Consider theme for corridor
  - Some don't like strip malls – others do
  - Determine appropriate size of signs for the traveling speed of cars
  - Widening the road has split the town in two
  - Need noise and lighting regulations
    - Noise – band & motorcycle issue
- Economic Development
  - Route 6 should be focus of town businesses
  - Take care of existing businesses
  - Promote diversity of businesses
  - Support businesses through regulations
  - More density would support more business development
  - Industrial Zone, 194 acres – should investigate what could happen there
  - Lack of sewer can protect community from certain uses but limits others
  - Eliminate rock crushing

- Mix of Uses
  - Like commercial and residential uses together but there are conflicts
  - Suggestion to phase residential out of corridor to make it just commercial
- Traffic
  - Is 50mph the right speed?
  - Traffic calming could help businesses, especially if develop center
  - Suggestion to slow the speed down from the day care center to Route 198
- Vision for “Center”/Lynch Road. Node
  - Some interest in a walkable center but think it would be hard to do and have a hard time imagining
  - Issue for center development is width of commercial corridor – 500’
  - Could cluster commercial development better – to get from one to another
  - Need ideas about what has worked in other places
  - Build on “green” ideas
  - Voluntown has nice sidewalks and lighting in a small center
- Types of Commercial Uses to Promote
  - Hair salon
  - Bookstore
  - Art gallery
  - Small grocery store
  - Some types of uses are limited by lack of sewer, including hair salons
- Bike Path along Route 6 and Connecting to the Airline Trail

## **VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY**

- For Route 6 corridor
  - Russell’s Corner - small coffee/ice cream shop (highest)
  - Putnam Bank multi-tenant property at Rte 101/169
  - Patio with place to sit outside
  - Small commercial street with outside tables
  - Bedford NH Walgreens
  - Stowe VT gas station with steep pitch metal roof
  - Newbury Village Store
  - New commercial building with eaves, porch and parking to the side
  - New commercial building with steep roof, porch, close parking
  - Two commercial buildings in Kennebunkport
  - Hamden commercial complex with village feel
  - Olde Mystic Village
  - Moose Tracks Restaurant & Pub
- For anywhere in town
  - B&B with hanging sign
  - Antique store with outdoor display and sign
  - Barnard General Store
  - Farm stand
  - B&B with oval sign

