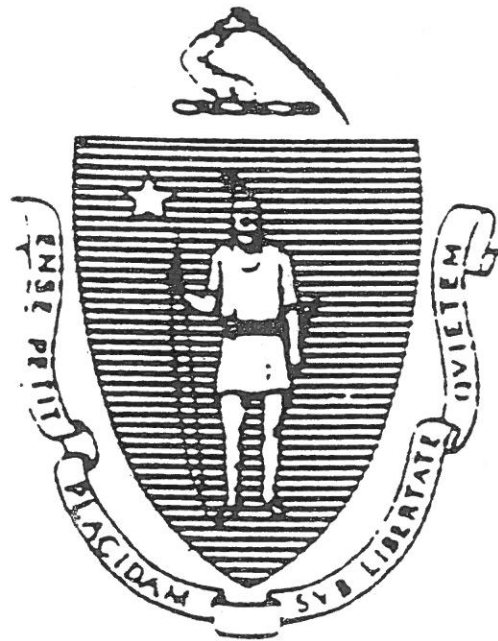


**RUTLAND HEIGHTS STATE HOSPITAL REUSE MASTER PLAN**

**April 1997**



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
William F. Weld, Governor**

**Executive Office for Administration and Finance  
Charles D. Baker, Secretary**

**Division of Capital Planning and Operations  
Lark Jurev Palermo, Commissioner**

**Rutland State Land Planning Committee  
Raymond Becker, Chairman**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Property Description	4
Rutland Map	4A
Regional Map	4B
SLPC Goals	5
DCPO Goals	6,7
Potential Uses	8,9,10,11
Proposed Uses	12
Physical Issues	13
Master Plan	14
Conclusion	15
Potential Reuse Zones	15A
Draft Land Use Master Plan	15B
Alternative A	15C
Alternative B	15D
Glossary	16
Appendix	17,18,19

## INTRODUCTION

As DCPO's consultants, Leff Consulting Group (LEFF) and David Dixon/Goody Clancy(DD/GC) worked with the Rutland State Land Planning Committee (SLPC) to develop a Master Plan for reuse of the Rutland Heights State Hospital (RSHS) site. This plan reflects the goals for reuse as stated by the SLPC and DCPO, and were analyzed by the consultants.

Preparation of the Master Plan was carried out in an iterative process. Following an initial meeting with the SLPC to review project goals, the consultants conducted a site visit to identify the characteristics of the site —e.g.: size, location, access, proximity to ancillary services and amenities, buildings' suitability for rehabilitation and retrofit, and other unique attributes. The consultants then identified a preliminary list of general land use categories for investigation based on the site's constraints and opportunities, the SLPC's goals and DCPO's goals for the site.

This preliminary list of potential uses were then further analyzed for the feasibility and fulfillment of the Committee's varied goals. Based on the results, the consultants prepared several alternative plans for site development and reviewed the analysis of potential uses and the alternatives for site development with the SLPC, working with them to identify a preferred alternative. The consultants then refined and elaborated the preferred alternative to produce a Master Plan.

The State Land Planning Committee, members and their affiliation are as follows:

Bernice Anderson, Member-at-large  
Thomas Catlin, EDIC\*  
Sandra Fife, Town Accountant  
Sally Hayden, Town Clerk  
George Mahowald, Assessor  
Bernard O'Grady, Brd of Health  
Thomas Ruchala, Fire Chief

Raymond Becker, BOS\* Chair.  
Mary Cornacchioli, COA\*  
Russell Gordon, Member-at-large  
Harry Johnson, Planning Board  
Richard Moisisio, Member-at-large  
James Purington, WRSD  
Martha Stranieri, Member-at-large

\*BOS - Board of Selectmen

\*EDIC- Economic Development and Industrial Commission

\*COA - Council on Aging

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Rutland is located at the geographical center of the Commonwealth. Rutland is located about 10 miles northwest of Worcester, about 8 miles from Routes 190/290, and about 10 minutes from the Worcester airport.

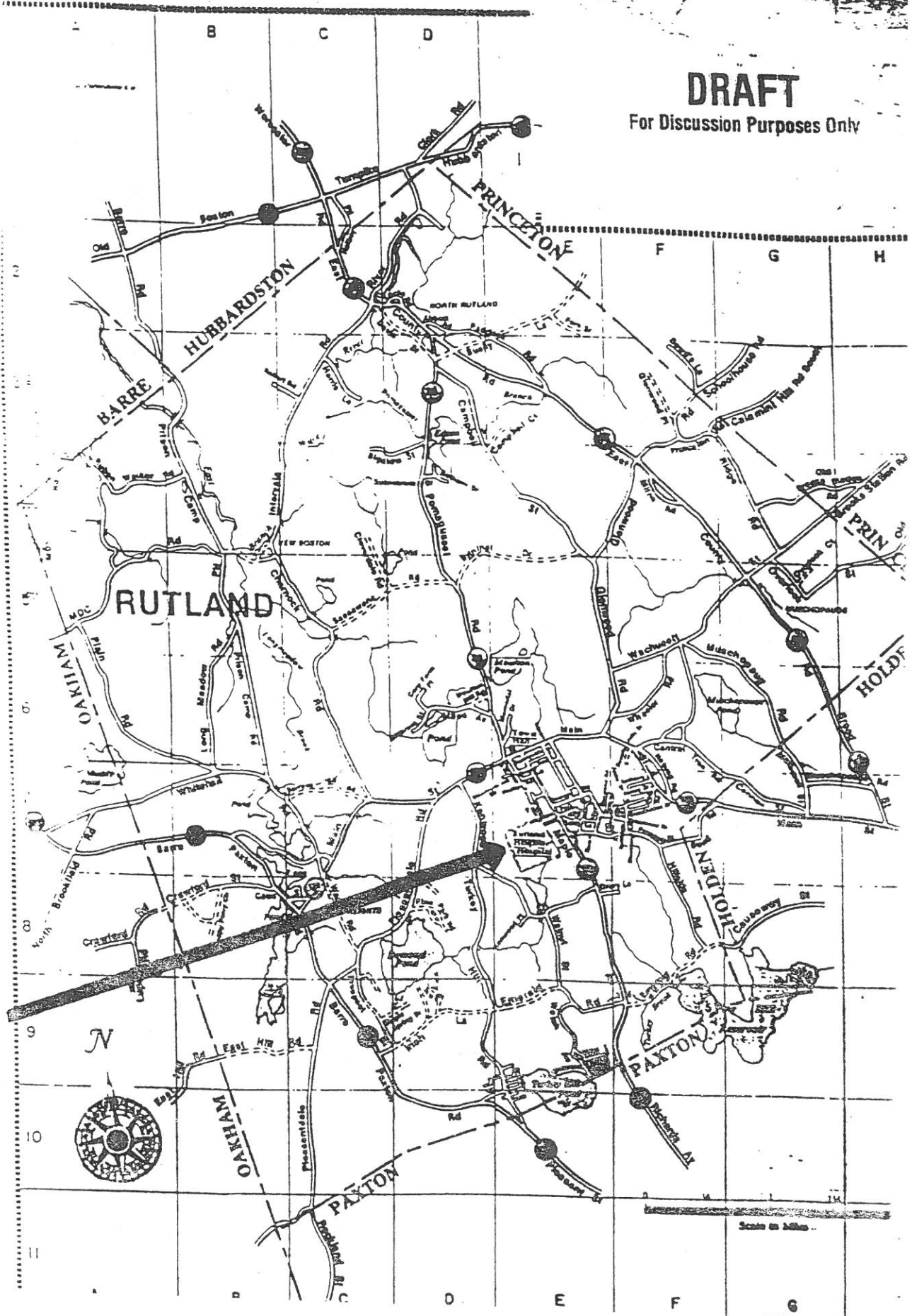
RHSH is located in central Rutland, approximately 60 miles west of Boston. The 87+/-acre property lies on Route 56, and it is about 20 miles northwest of Interstate 90 (The Massachusetts Turnpike).

The RHSH is comprised of 345,000 square feet of buildings, clustered on about 35 of the 87 +/- acre site. The campus is accessed off Maple Avenue, which is also State Route 56.

The site has some predominantly flat areas near the entrance of the campus, then slopes off of the main campus to the rear of the site. There are some wetlands on the site, and portions of the property are protected by Chapter 92 Section 107A of the MGL (otherwise known as the Cohen Bill).

The site is located in an area of Rutland which is primarily residential. However, there are some small neighborhood businesses and commercial property located along Route 56, as well as in the Town center which is about .5 miles away.

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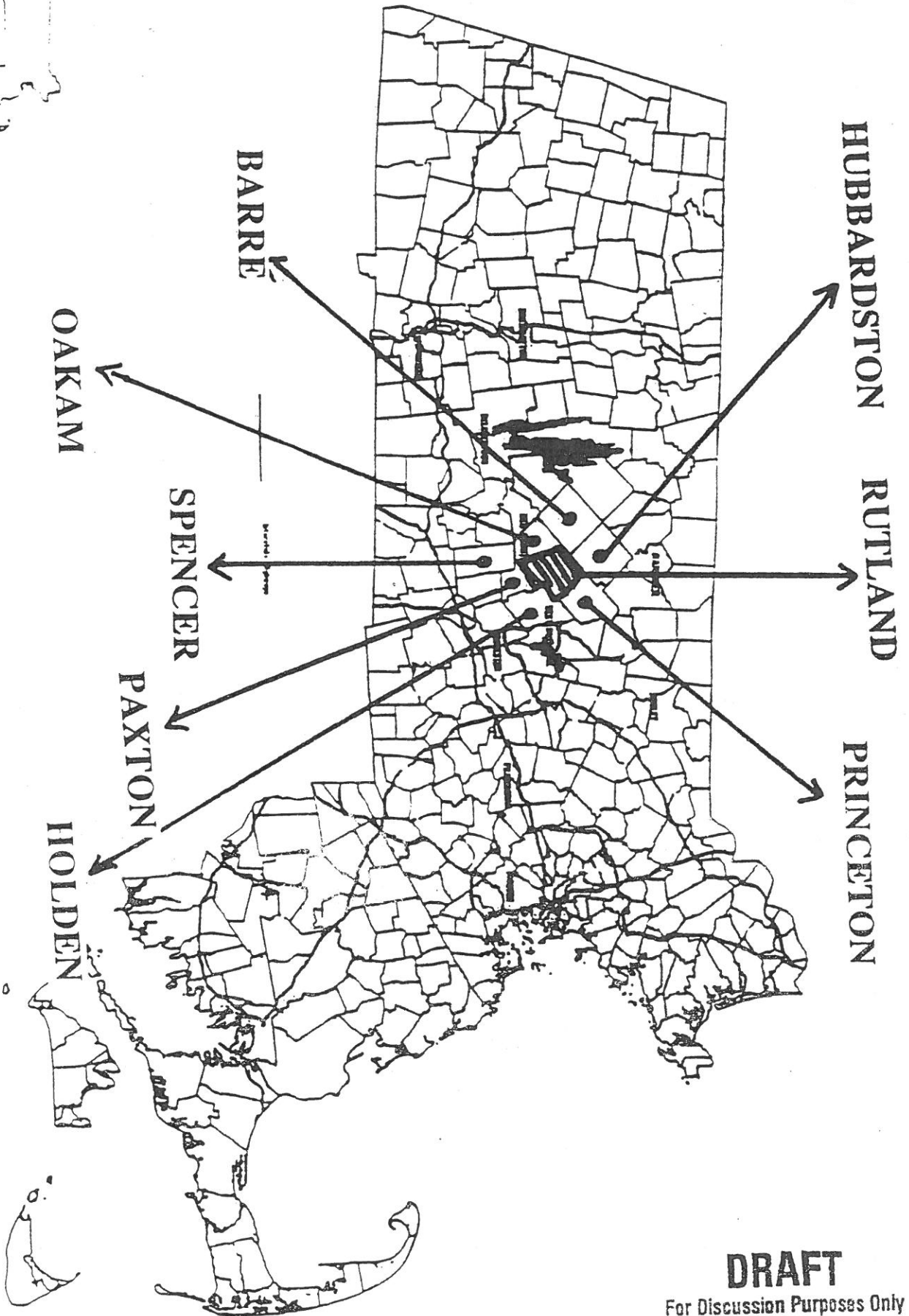


RHSB

4A



NOTE: Political Boundaries and Counties Are Aligned From 1800



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## SLPC GOALS/OBJECTIVES

**Mission Statement:** After investigating all avenues of possibility, develop a long range, comprehensive, redevelopment/development plan for the Rutland Heights Hospital's environmentally safe site/buildings, and to successfully market that plan to assure its.

- I. Identify Community Needs:
  - A. Municipal Uses
  - B. Open Space & Recreational Uses
  - C. Create Housing opportunities
  - D. Maintain Community Character
  
- II. Promote Re-Use Options Which Enhance Economic Growth:
  - A. Increase the tax base when possible
  - B. Create employment opportunities
  - C. Promote land uses which are environmentally sensitive and compatible with existing land/structures.
  
- III. Ensure That Adequate Infrastructure is Available to Support Proposed Uses:
  - A. School
  - B. Adequate street capacity
  - C. Sewage disposal
  
- IV. Ensure That Community Services Can Be Upgraded to Support Proposed Uses:
  - A. School
  - B. Fire Department
  - C. Police Department
  
- V. Adopt A Feasible Implementation Plan:
  - A. Economically Feasible as possible to the state & community
  - B. Impacts with surrounding area
  - C. Compiled with participation and endorsement of community & state
  - D. Actively promotes the land use through:
    1. Legislators
    2. Town Boards
    3. Town Hearing
    4. State Administration
    5. Town Meeting if necessary

## DCPO GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The DCPO's goals and objectives for the redevelopment of the RSHH Campus are as follows:

### **Process Goals:**

1. Achieve Consensus with SLPC: The State's desire is to reach consensus, taking into account its development goals and the needs of the community.
2. Enact Legislation: Legislation is required to undertake redevelopment. All parties must work cooperatively to enact legislation authorizing disposition that is consistent with consensus plan.
3. Obtain Required Approvals: In addition to legislation, the Commonwealth and the SLPC must work together to obtain any required revisions to local zoning, or other regulatory approvals (MEPA, etc.) to allow uses and density identified in the consensus plan.

### **Redevelopment Goals:**

1. Financially Feasible: Reuse plan must be financially feasible, i.e. it is self-funding, if feasible. Private uses recommended must have demonstrated market interest and feasible financial structure.
2. Generate Revenue: Generating revenue from any disposition is an important State goal. This revenue should help to minimize the cost to the state to cover the costs of site preparation necessary to allow redevelopment to occur (e.g., environmental remediation demolition and/or building stabilization, road and utility work). Additionally, any net proceeds that may be realized in the future by sale of pieces of the RSHH to private entities should be divided between the Commonwealth and the Town of Rutland, with a significant majority of this amount reverting to the Commonwealth's General fund. The actual formula for this division may be developed in the enabling legislation.
3. Environmental Lands: Preservation of sensitive environmental lands should be incorporated in the development plans.
4. Economic Development: Support uses which encourage long-term economic health of region (jobs, economic activity, housing).
5. Multiple Uses: Planning should give due consideration to a wide range of uses that are compatible with State and local goals with the realization that a site of this size can accommodate a mix of uses.



6. Timing: Enact a redevelopment plan which can happen in a timely fashion given the current market conditions.
7. Local Revenue: Increase local tax base, local tax revenue.

## INVESTIGATION OF POTENTIAL USES

This proposed Master Plan, presented below, includes a mix of uses for the RSHH site: an industrial/business park, elderly housing, limited commercial development and recreational/ municipal uses.

The following pages provide an overview of the analyses conducted in the course of preparing the Master Plan, including a discussion of the market and feasibility of various potential uses and of the physical issues surrounding reuse of the property. This is followed by presentation of the proposed Master Plan.

To determine the range of uses to be incorporated in the Master Plan for the RSHH site, several categories of use were analyzed to assess their relative market and economic potential for development, as well as their ability to achieve the goals for reuse as defined by the SLPC and DCPO. Building on the suggestions of the Committee, this investigation included residential, public school, industrial park, office/R&D, retail, institutional, Town Center Concept, hotel/inn and recreational/open space uses. The analyses included review of available data on demographic and other economic characteristics of the Town of Rutland, Worcester County and the State of Massachusetts, along with interviews with local and regional business, civic and governmental leaders. Following is a summary of findings and recommendations.

### Residential

In this rural community, development consists primarily of single-family homes. Most of the developable land within Rutland is zoned residential, and throughout the past decade virtually all new development in the Town has been in the form of single-family housing. In fact, single-family residential property accounts for 80% of the total assessed property value in the Town. According to the latest U.S. Census data (1990), 70% of the Town's housing units were owner-occupied and 20% were tenant-occupied.

Recent market trends suggest that single-family housing represents a market for development in both the short and long term. However, single-family and multi-family housing represents a burden on the tax base as the costs of providing municipal services for these uses are greater than the tax revenues they generate. Still, other types of residential development could also be considered, although the time frame for such development may be somewhat longer. Though single family housing has potential on this site, one of the goals of the land planning committee was not to increase the single family housing stock in Rutland by employing this site.

Based on preliminary research, senior, or elderly, housing appears to have some potential for the site and warrant further exploration. Recent demographic trends in the region reflect an aging population, both in terms of higher median age and greater numbers of people in the upper age brackets. Current aging residents of Rutland and neighboring towns who may be interested in downsizing their home or who can no longer maintain

single family residences have limited alternative housing options within their own communities. Reuse of the State Hospital site presents an opportunity to serve this market with the development of an adult residential community which features residences with no more than two bedrooms and which provides a variety of recreational or service amenities. For the more elderly market, congregate and assisted living housing are other residential development alternatives to be considered. In any case, senior housing does not represent the same burden on net municipal revenues as do other types of housing, as there is no additional use of the schools and limited use of other municipal services.

### **Public School**

The Town of Rutland is part of the Wachusett Regional School District (WRSD). Schools in the district are already overcrowded, and with continued population growth expected within District communities, school officials are now studying their facility needs. This study will be completed in the Fall. Meanwhile, the Superintendent of Schools has identified the RSHS property as a potential school site, particularly for the development of a regional middle school to accommodate an eventual maximum student population of 2,000. Reuse of existing buildings at the Hospital site is not considered viable for the school, although the theater facility could conceivably be of some value.

Although this represents an opportunity for immediate reuse of the RSHS site, development of a public school facility has not been supported by the SLPC as this type of development would not contribute to the Town's tax base. Nor would a middle school further the community's desire for reusing the site in a way that would promote economic development in the community. Though it would generate some employment, other sites in the immediate area are under consideration and are supported by the Committee. The viability of these other sites and the program and site criteria for the middle school will not be available until the study is complete in the Fall. Recently the Town has purchased a parcel of land that abuts the hospital site. The Town is currently deliberating about using this newly acquired property for a school site.

### **Industrial/Business Park**

The State Hospital property is a large parcel with extensive utility service available for development and, therefore, its considered one of the best locations for realizing economic development that would diversify Rutland's tax base. For this reason, an industrial/business park, which would accomplish these objectives, is viewed as highly desirable.

A survey of industrial parks in the region (encompassing the City of Worcester and 33 area towns) is carried out by the Worcester Area Chamber of Commerce every two to three years. This survey provides pertinent information on each park including its location, total acreage and available acreage, park ownership and number of tenants/companies, as well as a listing of company names and the nature of each company's business. The most recent survey, completed in 1993, identified 33

industrial parks in the region, with 202 companies employing a total of 13,540 people. At that time, approximately 630 acres were still available. Most of these industrial parks are located within close proximity of a major interstate, e.g. I-90 (Mass Turnpike), I-190/290 and I-495, or with good access to these highways. One significant exception is the Holden Industrial Park, located on Route 122A. This 50-acre industrial park was developed by the Worcester Business Development Corporation (WBDC), the primary developer of industrial parks in Worcester County. With nine companies employing a total of 741 people and no acreage available for further development, the Holden Industrial Park is considered one of the WBDC's most successful projects. [The WBDC is currently focusing on two major developments: a new 126-acre industrial park in Grafton, targeting emerging technologies, and expansion of the successful Mass BioTech Research Park].

For such a development to succeed on the State Hospital site, an effective, focused development and marketing plan will be necessary to compensate for the inherent disadvantages of the State Hospital location. A long-term build-out also is anticipated. The Holden Industrial Park attained full build-out in approximately fifteen years, through the 1970s to 1985, the pace having been slowed somewhat by a moratorium on sewer hook-ups. Nonetheless, the Holden Industrial Park serves as a good model for a similar type of industrial development in Rutland.

### **Office/Research and Development**

In the short term this options faces many challenges, though as the Holden Industrial Park has proven, such a park could be developed in Rutland given the proper plan and marketing horizon.

### **Retail**

Retail in Rutland is currently very limited, and residents must travel to neighboring towns for nearly all types of shopping. The Town's largest commercial center, Rutland Plaza located near the Holden town line, has a mix of office and retail uses. Among Rutland Plaza's tenants are professional services (dentist, insurance and realtor); convenience stores; and a hardware and lumber store. A few retail establishments are located in Rutland Center, including a pharmacy, pizza shop, gas/service station and a thrift shop. A small strip center has been proposed by a local business owner in the Town Center, although specifics of the planned development are not yet available.

The lack of significant retail development in Rutland can be attributed to location and market size. With a rural setting and relatively low population density, Rutland is located on the outskirts of the major population centers in the region and is without direct access to the region's highway network. The Town's estimated 1995 population of approximately 5,000 people places it among the smaller towns in the region. Furthermore, with the exception of Holden, the towns neighboring Rutland are similarly small in scale.

It is unlikely that significant retail on the State Hospital site can be supported in the near- to mid-term. Some retail might be considered in the longer term as the population base increases or in conjunction with a specific supporting use. For example a regional school on or near this site will result in increased demand for local business activity, such as small commercial businesses.

### **Recreation**

The State Hospital site is currently used for recreational purposes, with a Little League Baseball field adjacent to the main entrance on Maple Avenue. The primary commercial recreational use considered for the site was a golf course. However, an eighteen-hole golf course requires several hundred acres, depending upon the site, although executive-style or nine-hole courses require less—perhaps as little as 100 acres. The State Hospital site does not offer adequate acreage. Furthermore, many new golf course developments include a significant residential component, considered essential to the economics of the entire development. In other words, a golf course typically is the open space and recreational amenity to a residential development, and the total acreage required exceeds that of the RHSH.

A limited amount of additional recreational uses such as the ballfield could be accommodated on the site. While such uses do not contribute to the Town's tax base, they do provide a favorable amenity for the Town.

### **Hotel/Inn**

In spite of its pastoral setting, the State Hospital site is not a viable location for a hotel/inn. Rutland is not an established visitor destination, and the Town is not an employment center; therefore, it lacks an overnight lodging market.

### **Municipal Uses**

Those buildings on the Hospital site that are in good condition are either inappropriate in scale or poorly located for municipal use, or both. That part of the site which is more accessible does not provide buildings that could be economically rehabbed, nor do they offer any advantage over current locations for municipal uses.

## PROPOSED USES

Based on the analysis of various potential uses for the RSHS site, the consultants have identified a number of uses that are suited to the site, can achieve the Committee's and DCPO's goals for reuse and are viable over the long term. These uses, which the Committee are proposing as part of the Master Plan, include: an industrial/business park, elderly housing, limited commercial development and limited recreational/municipal uses. In addition, the use of a portion of the site for a middle school may also be a good match with the site and a viable option, however that use does not fully meet the Committee's goals.

While an industrial/business park may take a long time to develop (perhaps as many as 12-15 years or more), such use will meet the Town's objectives for generating economic development and expanding the tax base. The development of approximately 50-80 units of elderly housing appears to have development potential over the mid- to long-term and avoids the financial burden on municipal services that single-family and multi-family housing represents. The housing could be located in an appropriate setting near limited commercial facilities and the recreational and/or municipal facilities desired on the site by the Town.

Finally, while locating a school on the site may be feasible, the SLPC does not favor this alternative as it will not provide the potential for long-term tax benefits. Many members of the Committee believe that alternative sites in Town are equally appropriate for school expansion. As noted above, the WRSD is currently studying its facility needs and results of that study will be available in the Fall. Also, as mentioned in another section of this report, the Town recently acquired property that abuts the hospital property, and they are considering using that land to meet any school needs.

## PHYSICAL ISSUES

The hospital site property includes slightly over 87 acres of land. The property is accessed from Maple Avenue (Route 56). Some portions of the campus are undevelopable, and they include the pond and brook areas as well as very steeply sloped land areas. Some parts of the campus may fall under Chapter 92 Sec. 107A of the MGL.

The property also contains the former hospital buildings which are clustered towards the rear of the property although several ancillary buildings are clustered near the main entrance from Maple Avenue.

The developable portions of the site include the areas with existing buildings, other relatively flat areas of land near the entrance to the property, and other moderately sloped areas of land (some of which is wooded). The wooded portions may not be best suited for development, but could contribute to the site's long term potential, with possible access from the western portion of the site.

In general, the developable portion of the site can be divided into three zones:

Zone A: area which includes most of the former hospital buildings, is about seventeen buildable acres.

Zone B: area to the left of the existing driveway which includes the little league ball field, is about ten buildable acres.

Zone C: area to the right of the existing driveway, is about five buildable acres.

Even though there are 345,000 s.f. of buildings on the property, just about all of this space is not suited for the redevelopment goals of this plan. The rehabilitation costs that are associated with restoring this campus to something remotely resembling its former functions are considered astronomical. Thus it is the belief of the committee that the legislation authorizing the disposition of this campus, should allow for the complete removal of all of the structures, if a suitable and financially feasible reuse can not be achieved prior to the enabling legislation being enacted.

## THE MASTER PLAN

A series of alternative approaches to site development were discussed with the Town of Rutland's State Land Use Planning Committee. It is the goal of DCPO to have legislation passed that will allow the transfer of a clean RHSH campus (both of structures and environmental hazards) to the town of Rutland with the Rutland Economic Development and Industrial Commission (EDIC), acting as the lead developer for the campus. Of all the alternatives discussed, the key elements of the approach preferred by the Committee is as follows:

Zone A: **Reuse and redevelopment as a business/industrial park.** This approach, favored by the Committee, would necessitate demolition of existing buildings to make way for development.

Zone B: **Recreation and municipal uses.** This would continue to provide space for the little league and other related recreational uses, and other compatible Town functions.

Zone C: **Elderly housing and modest commercial development.**



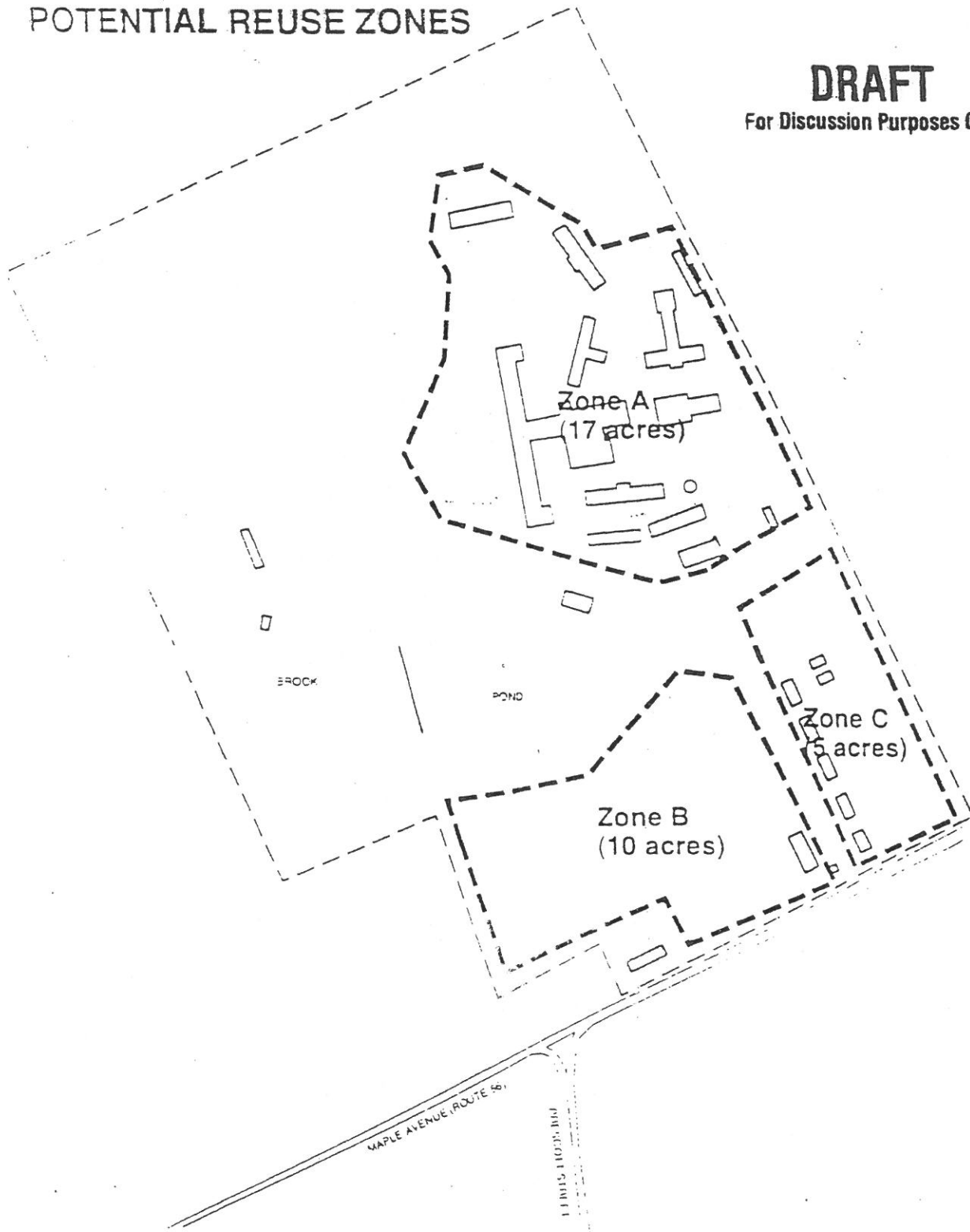
## CONCLUSION

The Master Plan recommends that Zone A be used for an industrial/business park; Zone B be used for recreation and possible compatible municipal uses; and Zone C be used for elderly housing with the possibility of some limited commercial/retail space (possibly a small strip center) that will serve as an amenity for the housing and may also serve the need for a larger building than can be provided in the center of Town. **There is the potential for interaction between these uses, or there may be a conscious separation.** The industrial/business park has been located on the hill both because of the availability of a large amount of usable space and the possibility of further expansion in the back to isolate its impacts from housing and recreational uses. The housing and recreation have been located next to each other as the housing might benefit from proximity to recreational (and possibly municipal and retail) uses.

The Master Plan must be viewed as a plan for the long term. It is unlikely that the Plan can be fully achieved in the early years following its adoption. It is therefore essential that for the Rutland Economic Development and Industrial Commission to achieve success on this project, it must maintain a flexible approach to development so that reuse of the site can continue to be focused on meeting the Town's needs and can reflect and be modified to respond to changing goals and market demands.

# POTENTIAL REUSE ZONES

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## RUTLAND HEIGHTS STATE HOSPITAL

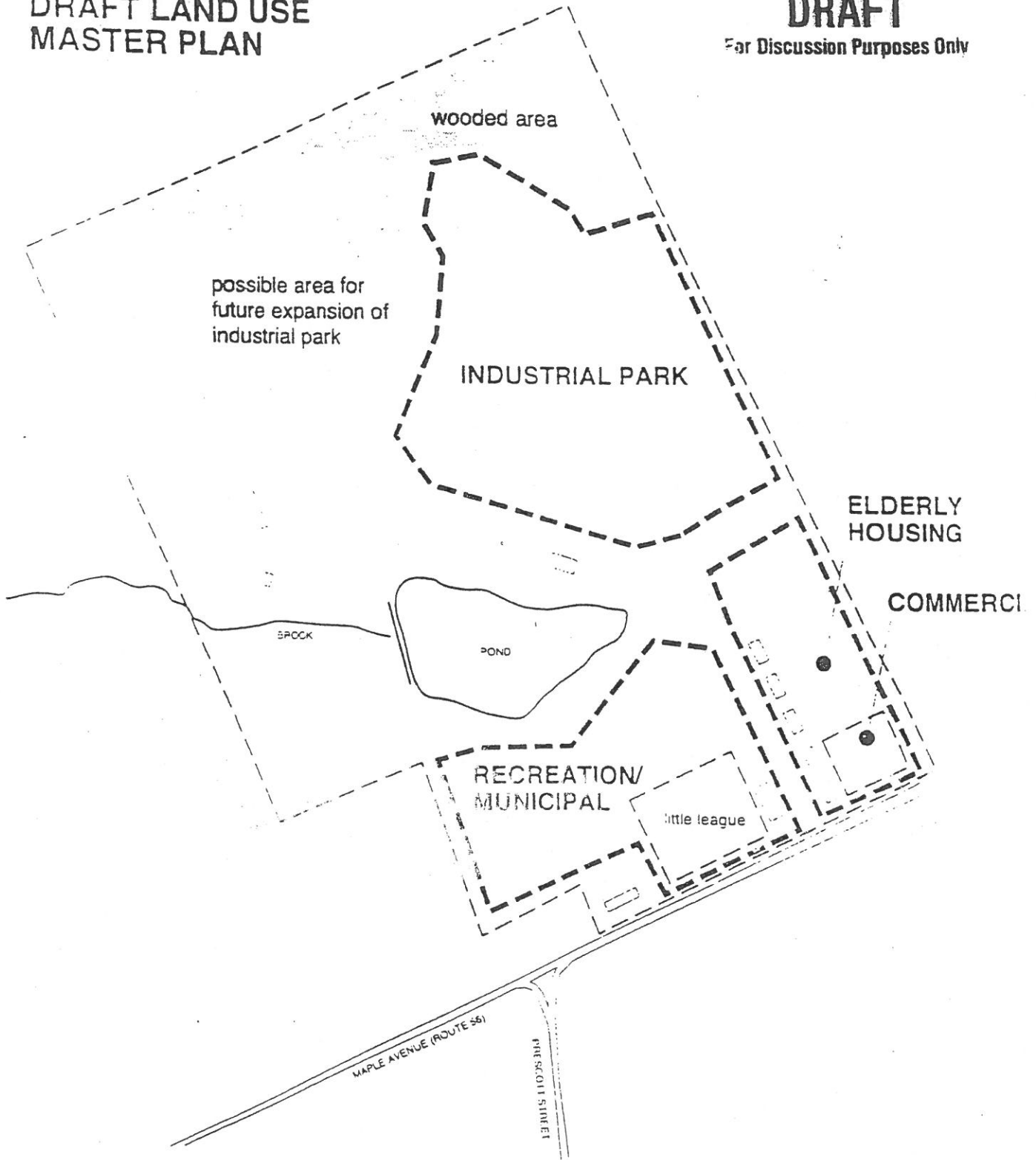
TOWN OF RUTLAND  
State Land Planning Committee

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
Division of Capital Planning and Operations

Consultants:  
Left Consulting Group  
David Dixon/Goody Clancy • Planning & Urban Design  
a division of Goody, Clancy & Associates

**DRAFT LAND USE  
MASTER PLAN**

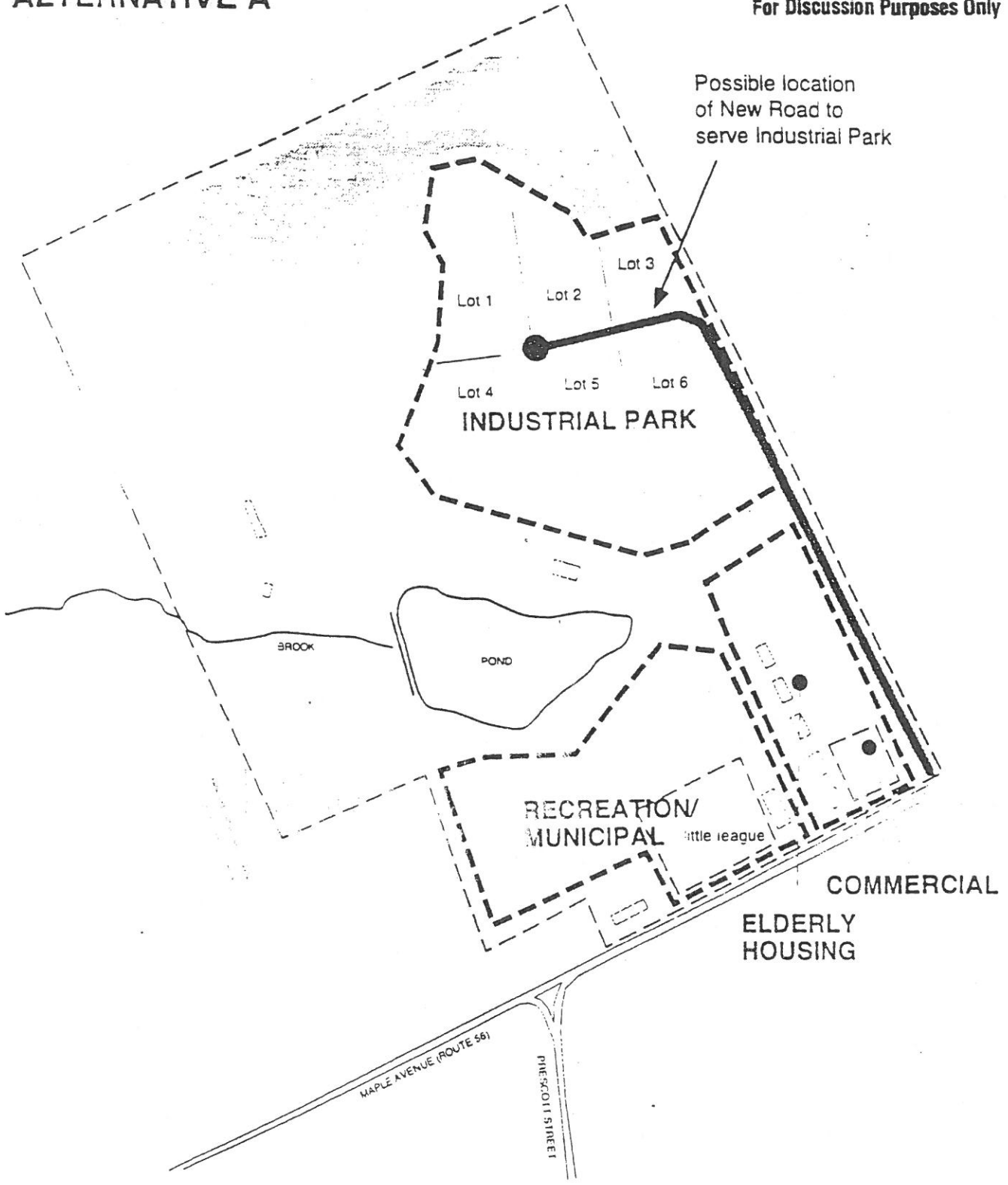
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# POTENTIAL ROAD ACCESS TO INDUSTRIAL PARK DRAFT

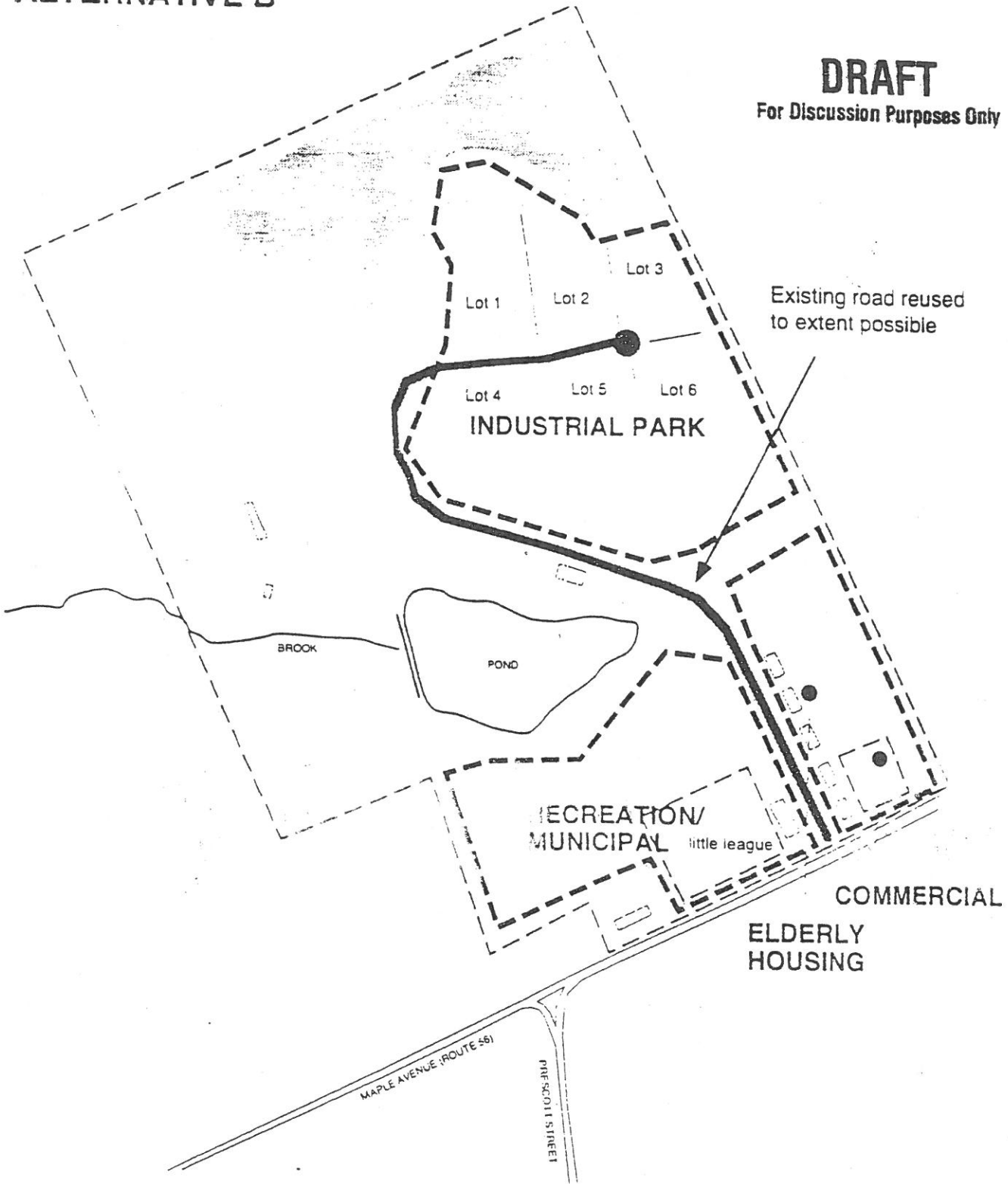
## ALTERNATIVE A

For Discussion Purposes Only



# POTENTIAL ROAD ACCESS TO INDUSTRIAL PARK ALTERNATIVE B

**DRAFT**  
For Discussion Purposes Only



## **GLOSSARY**

<b>DCPO</b>	Division of Capital Planning and Operations
<b>EDIC</b>	Economic Development and Industrial Commission
<b>R &amp; D</b>	Research and Development
<b>RHSH</b>	Rutland Heights State Hospital
<b>SLPC</b>	State Land Planning Committee
<b>WBDC</b>	Worcester Business Development Corporation
<b>WRSD</b>	Wachusett Regional School District

## APPENDIX

### HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

#### HOUSING FACT FINDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Elizabeth Brennan Jeff Melin  
Martha Stranieri Sally Hayden  
Sandra Fife Robert Taylor

#### HOUSING

The community expressed a need for elderly housing. To better define the community's needs a Housing Fact Finding Committee was assigned the task of identifying elderly housing possibilities.

Many housing types were reviewed. Rutland is struggling to accommodate a surge in school enrollment, particularly in the elementary grades. Rutland has problems providing the fiscal resources and classroom space to meet that increased enrollment. It prefers that housing with a significant number of school age children has a low impact of traffic volume as desired by the State Land Planning Committee's original goals. Family housing, likely to generate significant numbers of school aged children, was not pursued.

The existing campus provides an excellent opportunity for a community of senior citizens large and diverse enough to require an array of support services. The need for these services would facilitate growth of local business. The committee recognizes that the type of housing units needed for a community of senior citizens is not compatible with existing buildings on the campus, due to the extensive physical renovations needed to meet ADA requirements.

#### GENERAL HOUSING ISSUES:

The Committee feels that the primary objective of the site developer should be, to meet the needs of the community through affordable housing and services, such as:

- medical care
- adult/child care
- art/hobby center
- fitness center
- adult day health services
- transportation
- community gardens
- convenience store

These should be incorporate into the development proposal.

To assure the attractiveness of the site it is recommended that the developers provide affordable transportation services either directly or in collaboration with other transportation providers in the community. Transportation services should provide adequate access to shopping, employment, medical services and other community services for residents with a wide variety of needs.

The Committee recommends implementation of a mixed senior living program that includes all of the following types of units. These types are recommended because they can serve the seniors of the community and allow them to age in peace, while economically benefiting the Town.

- independent living (see Glossary) units for senior citizens. (comprehensive use for all seniors needs, if private would generate tax dollars, increase local business, security of care, physical security of campus and area employment)
- assisted living (see Glossary) units for senior citizens (serving seniors aging in place, adds services as needed without moving, lower entrances fees or no entrance fees, attractive campus, again if private would generate tax dollars, good fit with local population, security of care and campus, area employment)
- mixed living which includes affordable housing (see Glossary) units for senior citizens (combination independent and assisted living, more care added as needed, support services, keep residents in town, security, area employment.

This reuse plan does not express a guideline for the maximum number of housing units that can be accommodated on the site. The Committee is aware of the diminishing availability of financing for housing. The Committee is recommending the residential model with rental option of modified rental/entry fee.

The committee met with representatives of other types of elderly housing and for reasons stated, is not recommending the following:

- senior mobile park - need large amount of acreage
- nursing home - moratorium in state license until at least the year 2000
- rest home - funding no longer available, being phased out
- CCRC - high entrance fees, not financially feasible for most local community

Facility characteristics and financing will be based on final site design, types of units and compliance with the objectives, criteria and guidelines set forth in the request for proposals.



## **HOUSING REPORT GLOSSARY:**

**Assisted living** refers to a real estate product which is similar to congregate living but which may provide non-medical services. These services often include meals, cleaning and other living support services.

The design of assisted living centers is very similar to the design of congregate living facilities and closely resembles conventional apartment structures with additional common areas.

**Independent Living** is characterized by living unit that is completely self sufficient with no personal or health care services provided to the residents. Independent living may, however, contain substantial common areas, amenities, and organized activities. The design of an independent living facility is similar to the design of conventional (non elderly) housing and differs only in the sense that residents are elderly and the "extras" (common areas, amenities and activities) are targeted toward elderly needs.

**Affordable Senior Housing Units:** includes both subsidized housing, which usually results from state or federal grant programs, and other housing. To be eligible for subsidized housing under HUD occupancy applicants must be 62 years of age, handicapped, or disabled and fall within the income eligibility guidelines.