

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE



FEBRUARY 12, 2013

CITIZENS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON CONSERVATION
(CACC)

CACC

- Comprehensive Plan
- Town Board
- Open Space Protection Programs - Funding and Tools Report
- Slingerlands Pedestrian Network Plan
- Recommendations on Open Space Needs and Opportunities

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Tier 1 Recommendation
- ...establish CACC as a non-regulatory advisory committee
 - Explore conservation projects and opportunities to work with willing landowners to assist them in maintaining the undeveloped status of their properties;
 - Assist with longer term activities at the Town Board's request such as exploring funding opportunities for open space protection programs, working to develop a Farmland and Open Space Protection Program

CACC ESTABLISHED

- August 2005 – Resolution “Defining the Limits of Power on Any CACC Established by Town Board”
- January 2006 11 members appointed
- March 2006 Town Board Initial Task:
 - Develop Open Space Protection Programs – Funding and Tools Report (completed October 2006)

FUNDING & TOOLS REPORT

- CACC developed a work program to draft a document to provide the Town Board with:
 - An overview of programs and sources of funding for open space protection;
 - An overview of techniques for the preservation and management of open space;
 - Recommendations of best approaches and next steps.

FUNDING & TOOLS REPORT

FUNDING & TECHNIQUES - BASICS

- Includes sources, methods and techniques that are applicable to the Town
- Includes landowner initiatives that may not directly involve the Town
- Lists advantages and disadvantages as viewed from the Town government perspective
- Recognizes the importance of the landowner perspective
- Public input is highly desirable
- More evaluation is necessary, other steps are prerequisites

FUNDING & TOOLS REPORT

● MUNICIPAL FUNDS –

- Appropriation of General Funds
- Issuance of General Obligation Bonds
- Real Estate Transfer Tax
- Sales and Hospitality Taxes
- Private Donations
- Park Land Set-Aside or Fees

FUNDING & TOOLS REPORT

- STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS –
 - NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)
 - Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)
 - US Dept. of Interior, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
 - Farm Security and Rural Investment Act (“Farm Bill”)

FUNDING & TOOLS REPORT

● CONSERVATION METHODS, FORMS & OWNERSHIP—

- Municipal Ownership
- Not-for Profit Land Trusts
- Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) or Conservation Easements
- Lease of Development Rights (LDR) or Conservation Easements
- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

FUNDING & TOOLS REPORT

● REGULATORY METHODS –

- Conservation and Average Density Subdivisions
- Natural Resource Zoning
- Official Maps
- Lands of Conservation Interests Map

● NEXT STEPS –

- Town Board consider the development of an Open Space Plan, incl. public education and outreach program to identify landowners willing or interested in conservation of their property
- Provided example Criteria for Establishing Land Preservation Priorities

SLINGERLANDS PEDESTRIAN NETWORK PLAN

A Pedestrian Mobility Plan for
the Slingerlands Hamlet

December 2006



VISTA
Technology Park

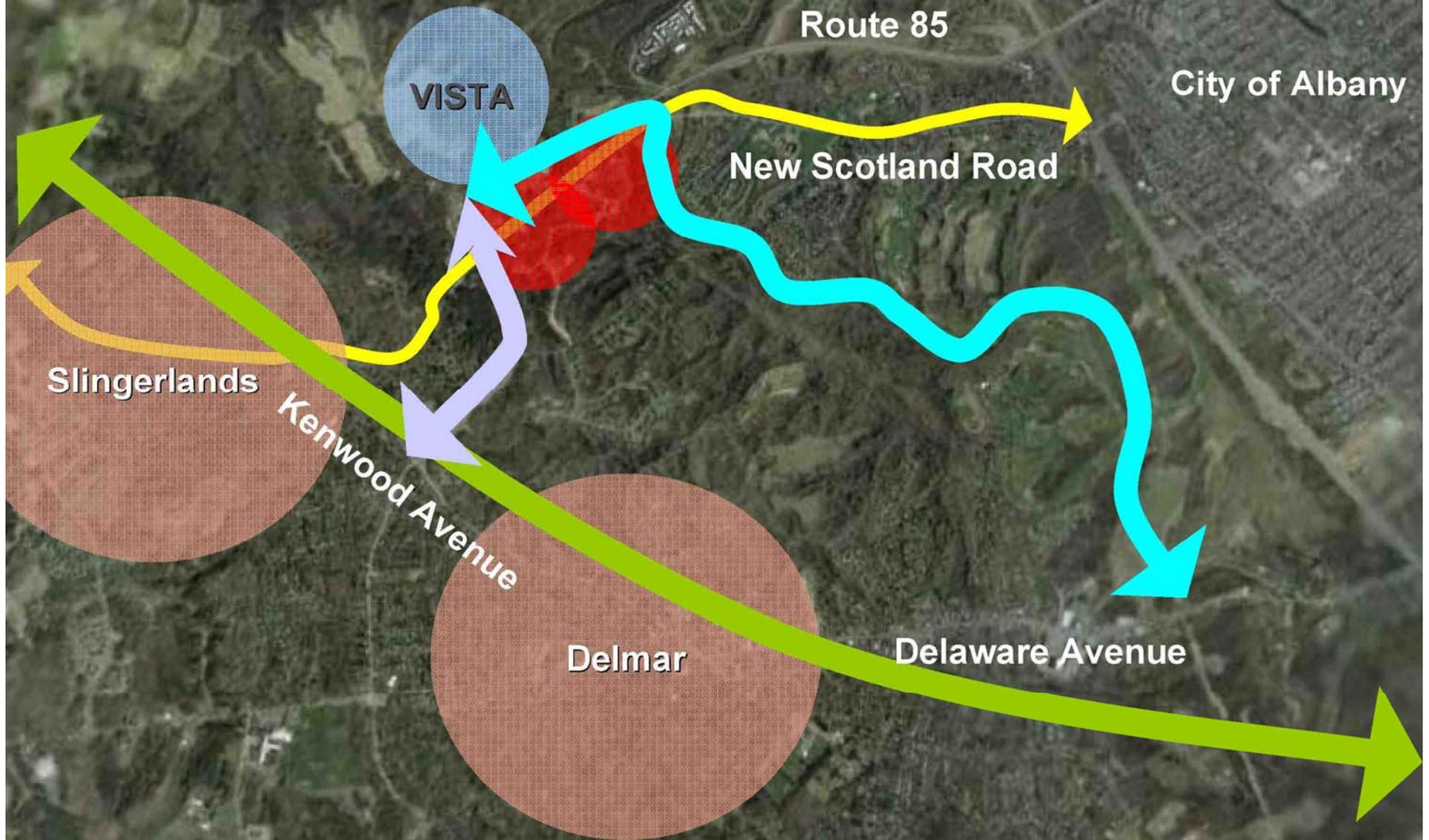
Maher Road

Route 85

New Scotland Road

Chestnut Avenue

Regional Network Recommendations



RECOMMENDATIONS ON OPEN SPACE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CACC
July 2009

PLANNING PROCESS

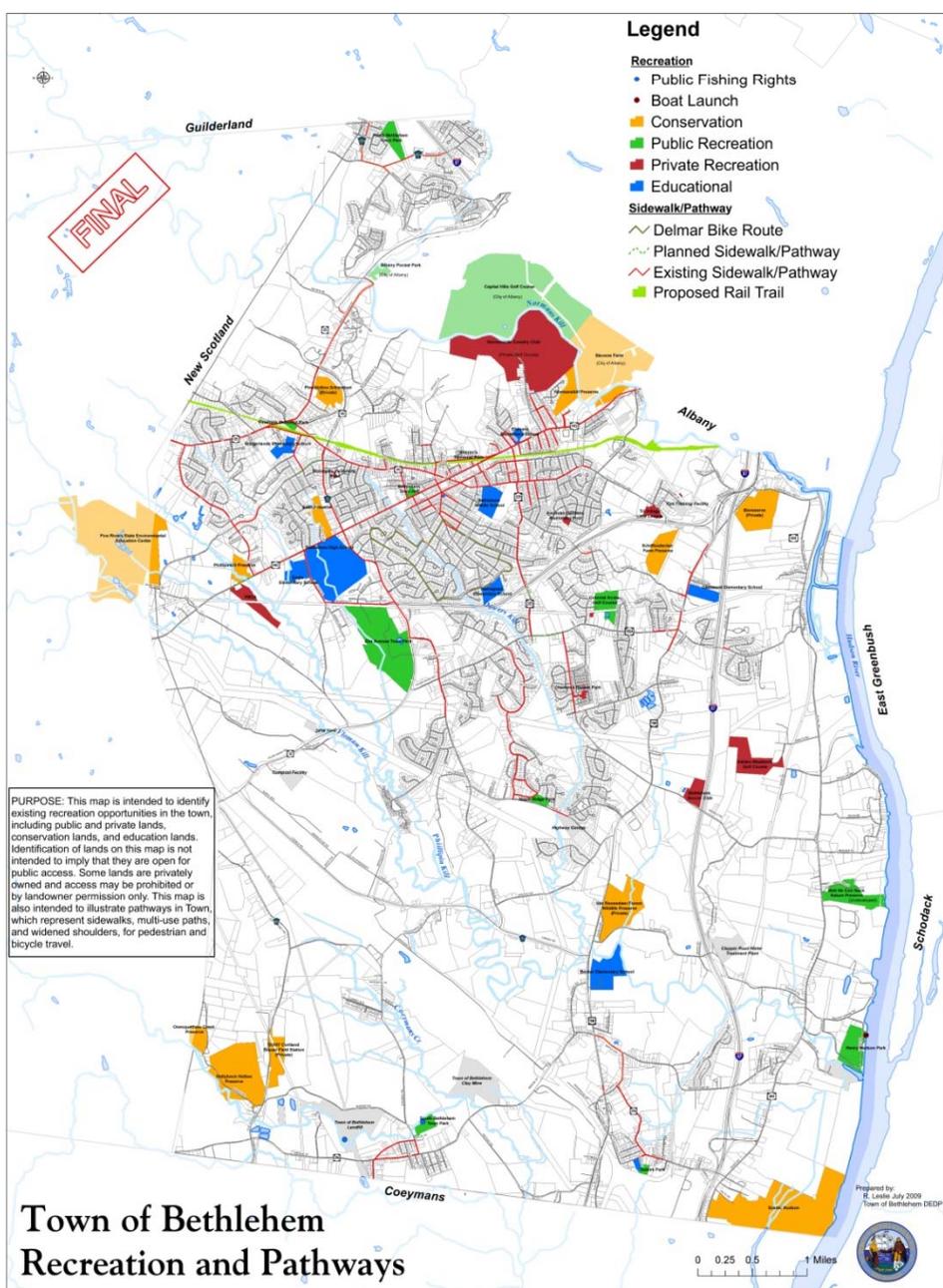
● Report Purpose

- First phase in Town open space planning effort
- Conduct assessment of issues, needs and opportunities
- Establish a framework for open space planning

● Participants

- Department of Economic Development and Planning
- Citizens Advisory Committee on Conservation
- Behan Planning and Design
- Town Residents

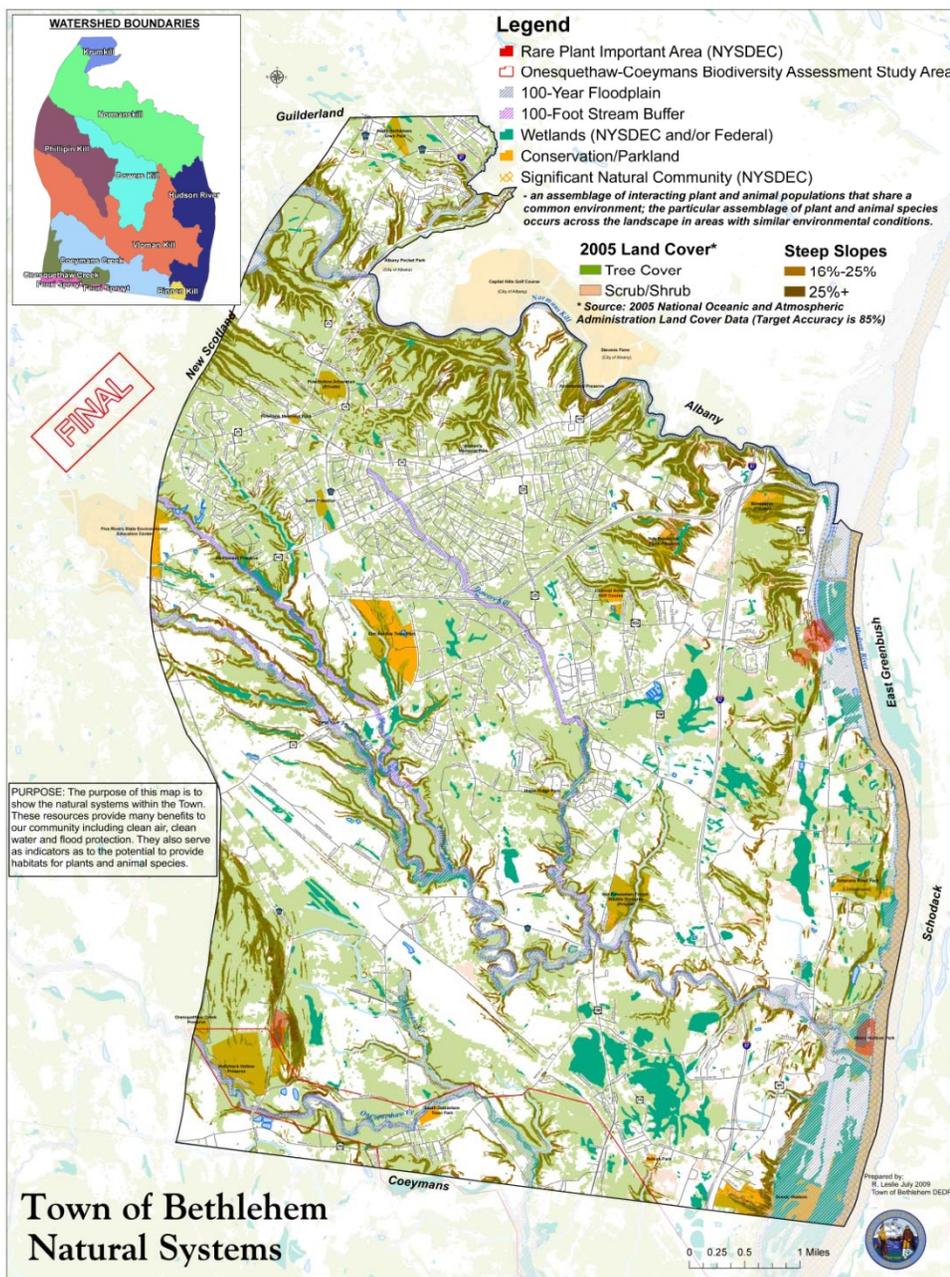
Bethlehem Open Space Resources



Recreation and Pathways

- Public and Private Recreation
- Conservation Lands
- Education Lands
- Pathways
 - Sidewalk
 - Shared-use path
 - Bicycle Lane
 - Striped/widened shoulder

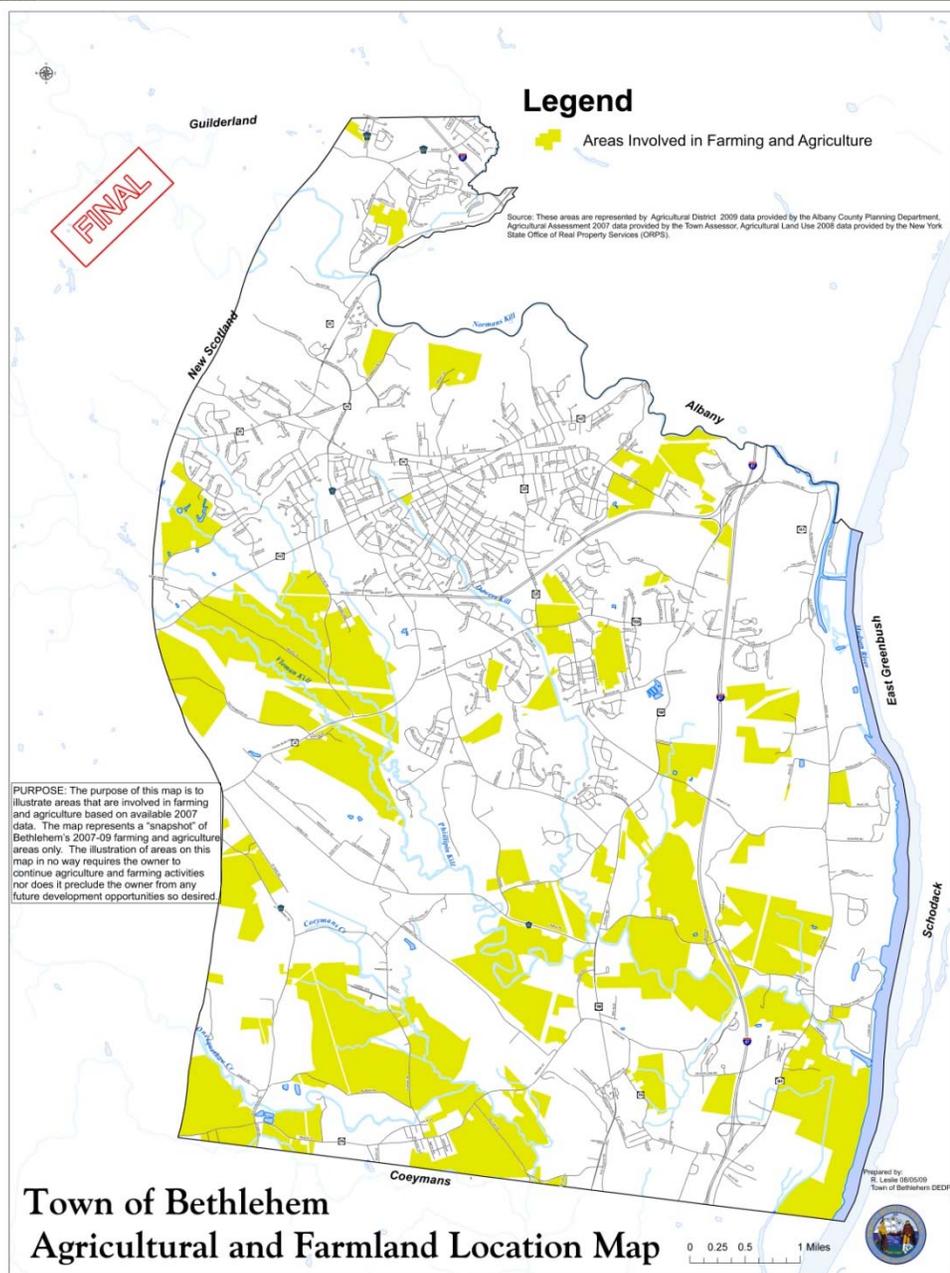
Bethlehem Open Space Resources



○ Natural Systems

- Forest Cover
- Wetlands
- Surface water
- Floodplains
- Topography

Bethlehem Open Space Resources



- Agriculture and Farmland
 - Agricultural Districts
 - Agricultural Assessment
 - NYS ORPS Parcel Data

PLANNING PROCESS

Open Space Definition:

Land that is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use. It serves many purposes, whether it is publicly or privately owned. It includes agricultural and forest land, community gardens, undeveloped shorelines, undeveloped lands that provide scenic value, public/private parks and recreation fields, walking and bicycling pathways or corridors, and nature/wildlife areas. It also includes water bodies such as rivers and streams. Its occurrence enhances the community character and quality of life for the Town of Bethlehem.

PLANNING PROCESS

● Key Points

- Voluntary participation
- Willing landowners

● Key Definition

Willing Landowner – a property owner who voluntarily decides to participate in a program related to open space protection or preservation as suggested in this report, and/or one who gives approval for his/her property to be included in the implementation of such a program or to have action taken thereon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Four Major Actions

- Open Space in Development
- Connections to Nature and Other Places
- Land Conservation
- Open Space Financing

Open Space in Development

- Develop Amenity Zoning for Open Space
- Update Town Code and Conservation Subdivision Regulations

Connections to Nature & Other Places

- Establish a Pathways Committee
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Established

Land Conservation

- Sponsor/Support a Landowner Forum
- Explore the Development of an Open Space Education series
- Strengthen Town Code
 - Consult Town Police Department
 - Explore ways to provide assistance with property encroachment
 - Prepare informational brochures and articles regarding trespassing and encroachment
- Research and Explore the Development of a Term Conservation Easement Program

Land Conservation

- ◉ Explore the Development of a Purchase of Development Rights Program
- ◉ Enhanced Tree Planting Along Public Rights-of-Way
- ◉ Prioritize Study Areas and Document Ecological Resources
- ◉ Develop Land Feature Criteria to Rate Preservation Opportunities

Finance Open Space

- Survey Residents
- Consider Green with Grey
 - Leverage Town Investment

Questions/Comments/Discussion
