



# Open Space Land Acquisition Committee

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Open Space Land Acquisition Planning,  
Policies, Priorities, Accomplishments,  
Benefits and On-going Activities

March 2026

# Open Space Land Acquisition Ordinance

***Adopted on June 4, 1998 by  
Town Ordinance #98-1***



- Establishes a Hebron Land Acquisition Fund
- Provides for appropriations and other funding
- Establishes an Open Space Land Acquisition Committee and identifies responsibilities
- Sets forth a parcel recommendation and approval process

# Committee Membership

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## ■ Current Members:

- James Cordier – Citizen at Large
  - Christopher Frey – Conservation Commission
  - Jan Lawrence – Town Council
  - John Mullaney – Citizen at Large - Vice Chair
  - Adam Ockman – Board of Finance
  - Brian O’Connell – Citizen at Large - Chair
  - Adam Thiele – Parks and Recreation Commission
  - Frank Zitkus – Planning & Zoning Commission - Secretary
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# Open Space Land Acquisition Sub-Committees

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Agriculture  
Resource Protection  
Recreation

# Agriculture Sub-Committee

Preserve  
prime and  
important  
farmland  
soils



Footehills Farm

# Resource Protection Sub-Committee

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Protect natural resources including wetlands, watercourses, forests and areas of special concern



Raymond Brook at Hibbert Preserve

# Recreation Sub-Committee

Provide for active and passive recreational opportunities



Trail at Hibbert Preserve

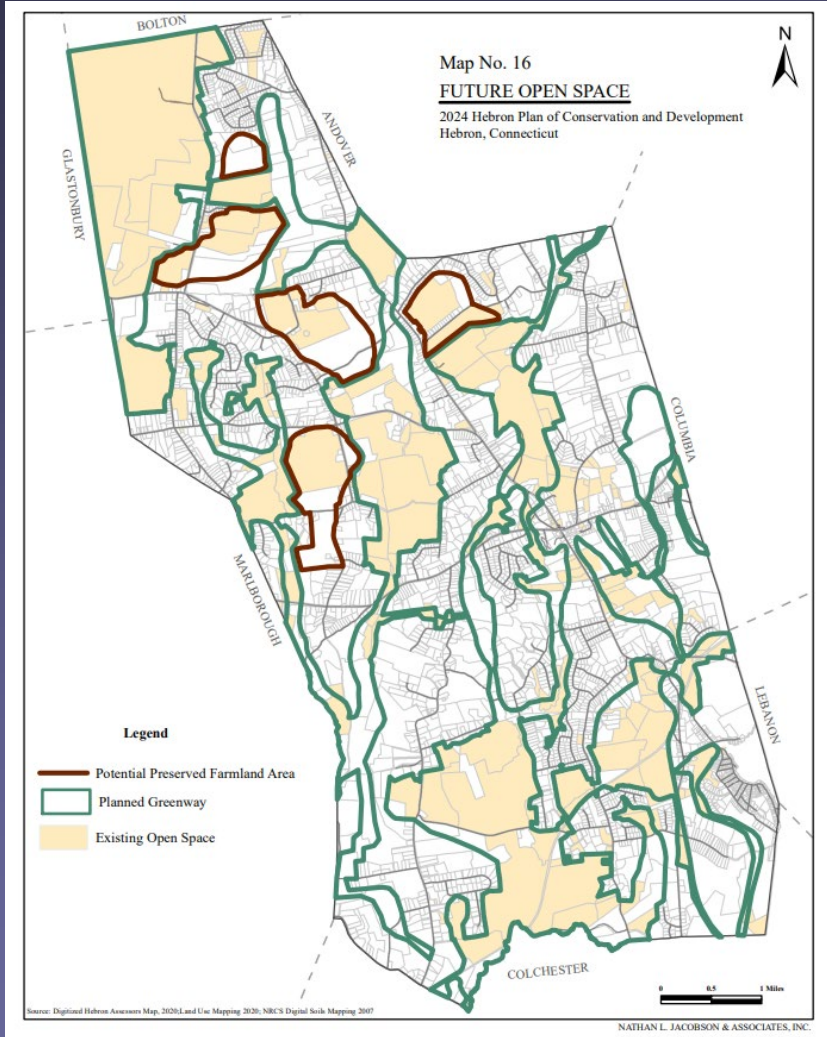
# Policies Overview

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- 1. Guided by Hebron's Plan of Conservation and Development, the Inland Wetland Agency's riparian corridor protection areas, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the State Plan of Conservation and Development**
  - 2. Land Acquisitions should, where possible, link parcels to create/enhance Greenway corridors**
  - 3. Consider "multiple-use" of open space parcels**
  - 4. Maintain a partnership with the State of Connecticut**
  - 5. Assist State acquisition of certain parcels where appropriate**
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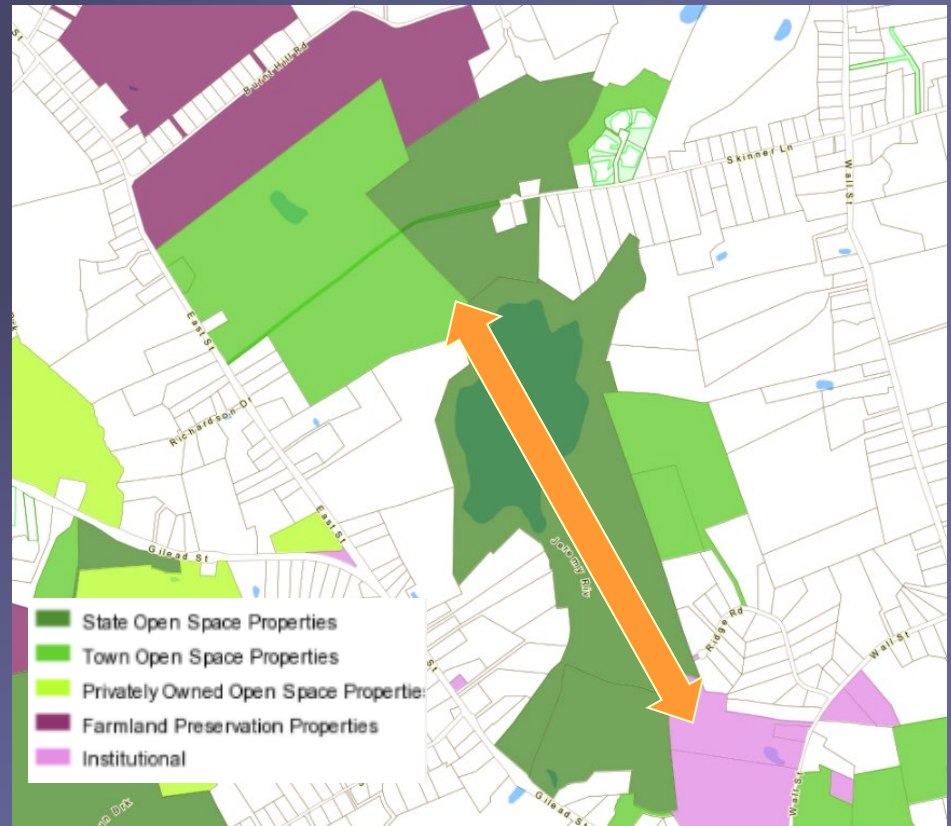
# Policy One:

- Be consistent with Hebron's 2024 Plan of Conservation and Development and Future Open Space Plan
- Guided by the Inland Wetland Regulations corridor protection areas
- Guided by the Town's Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Consistent with the State Plan of Conservation and Development



# Policy Two:

- Acquire parcels to create large blocks of preserved land
- Connect the blocks into Greenway corridors



# Policy Three:



Consider multiple uses where possible (see example below)

Historical Laneway at Raymond Brook Preserve

Photo by F. Zirkus

Raymond Brook Preserve protects forest and farmlands that contain watercourses, existing trails and historic features



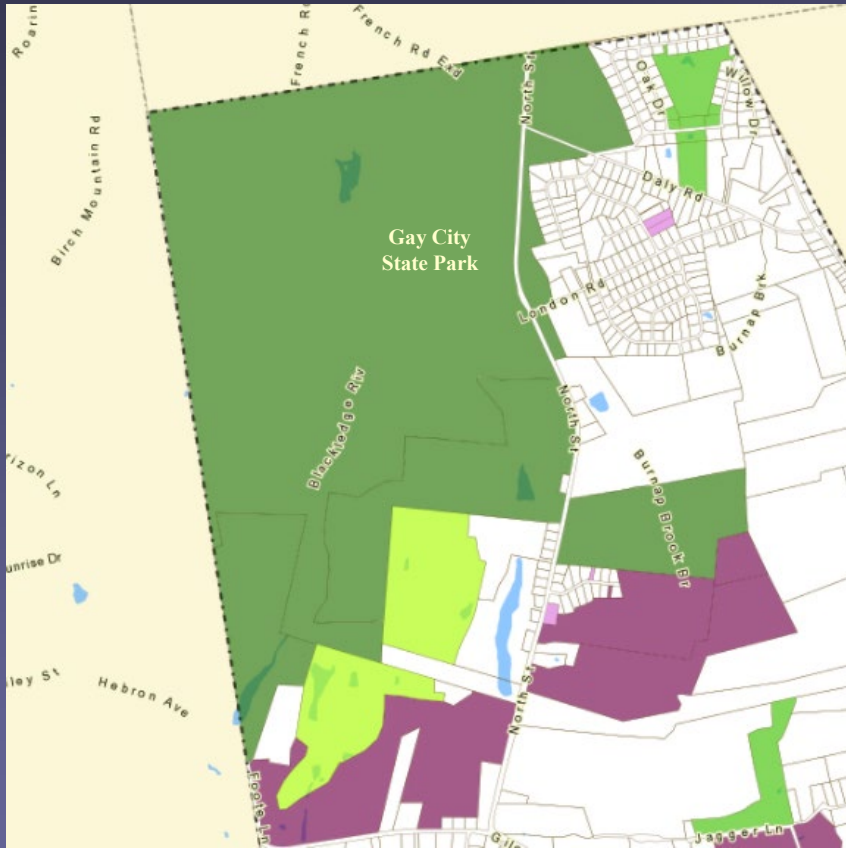
# Policy Four:

## Partnership with the State of Connecticut

- Provide surveys
- Fund appraisals
- Partial purchase
- Offer technical services



# Policy Five:



**Encourage State purchase where appropriate**

- where land abuts existing State open space
- where it supports State goals

# Top Preservation Priorities

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## 1. Watercourse / Water Body Protection:

- Protect Fawn Brook and the West Branch Fawn Brook stream corridors, tributaries and headwaters
- Protect all other stream corridors, tributaries and headwaters (Raymond, Jeremy, Hope Valley and Judd Brooks)
- Preserve areas abutting significant water bodies

## 2. Farmland Preservation:

- Seek permanent preservation for unprotected working farmland
  - Protect other significant areas of prime farmland
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# Top Preservation Priorities (contd.)

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## **3. Extension of Existing Open Space Properties:**

- Seek to extend existing town-owned open space and parks with additional open space acquisitions
- Assist the State with acquisition of properties abutting state forest / parks

## **4. Air Line Trail Corridor / Connections:**

- Preserve vacant parcels along the Air Line Trail establishing a permanent buffer
  - Establish a trail connection from the Air Line Trail to the Neighborhood Convenience District and Raymond Brook Preserve and then north to Hebron Town Center
  - Consider other trail extension opportunities
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# Top Preservation Priorities (contd.)

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5. Protection of Gateway / Scenic Parcels and sites with Special Concern Species and unique Historic Features:
- Consider open space acquisition / protection of parcels that provide a scenic gateway into the Town
  - Protect other vacant land that provide scenic views of rural landscapes
  - Preserve parcels with species of special concern and unique historic features (i.e. mill sites / foundations / laneways)
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# Accomplishments

- Burnt Hill Park – active recreational complex
- Raymond Brook Preserve – passive recreation with trails, brook, pond, meadows
- Air Line Trail - scenic corridor protection
- Raymond Brook Marsh – water quality protection, ecologic features of rare occurrence, carbon sink
- Forests - with trails, species of special concern, aquifers, unique landscapes, historic features, biodiversity and ecosystem services

# Accomplishments

Since the establishment of the Ordinance, the following parcels have been acquired by the Town of Hebron:

## Open Space Acquisitions by the Town of Hebron 1998 – Present

<b>Way</b> , Jagger Lane – 31.6 acres	<b>RBrook Preserve</b> , Leary - 19.4 acres
<b>RBrook Preserve</b> , Church St – 65.3 acres	<b>Alexander</b> , Daly Rd – 9.4 acres
<b>Burnt Hill Park</b> , Hidden Acres – 111.9 acres	<b>Serra</b> , Grayville Rd – 10.0 acres
<b>Burnt Hill Park</b> , Emmanuelson – 61.2 acres	<b>Fish</b> , Gilead St – 47.5 acres
<b>RBrook Preserve</b> , Horton – 32.1 acres	<b>Alpert</b> , Air Line Trail Spur – 20.2 acres
<b>Mussman</b> , Church St – 94.4 acres	<b>Hibbert</b> , Old Colchester Rd – 81.9 acres
<b>Harasimowitz</b> , Old Colchester Rd – 20 acres	<b>Horton</b> , Kinney Rd – 35.0 acres
<b>Reed</b> , Church St – 14.1 acres	<b>St. Peter's Field</b> , Church St – 8.0 acres
<b>Cardillo</b> , Church St – 48.7 acres	<b>Bernstein</b> , Old Colchester Rd – 214.2 acres
<b>Michaud</b> , Church St – 3.4 acres	<b>Raymond</b> , Millstream Rd – 8.5 acres
<b>Reid</b> , Burnt Hill Rd – 2.2 acres	<b>Morin</b> , Air Line Trail Spur– 4.4 acres
<b>O'Connor</b> , Chittenden Rd – 115.5 acres	<b>St. Peter's Church</b> , Jeremy River – 5.0 acres
<b>Total Acquisitions – 1,063.9 acres</b>	



## Hebron OSLAC 2023 Conservationist of the Year Award!

At its Annual Meeting In April 2023 Joshua's Trust awarded the Hebron OSLAC its Group Conservationist of the Year Award stating "We are impressed with the good work that this Committee has done for the benefit of Hebron citizens over the past 25 years".

The Award is given to a Group that exemplifies values of preserving land in the interest of Conservation.

# State of Connecticut – Land Acquisitions

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- Since 1998, the following parcels have been acquired by the State of Connecticut:
  - Jones' Properties, Air Line Trail – 55.6 Acres \*
  - Campbell Property, Salmon River State Forest – 92.3 Acres
  - Corapinski Property, Holbrook Pond – 46.1 Acres
  - Fracchia Property, Bishop Swamp WMA (east) – 104.9 Acres
  - Fracchia Property, Bishop Swamp (west) – 178.9 acres
- Total – 477.8 Acres

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\* With Town of Hebron assistance

# State of Connecticut - Farmland Preservation

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- Since 1998, the State of Connecticut has purchased development rights for the preservation of farmland on the following properties:
  - Way / Schoonover Property – 72 Acres\*
  - Way Property – 105 Acres
  - Maple Leaf Farm / Ellis Property – 234 Acres
  - Porter Farm – 193 Acres
- Total – 604 Acres

\* With Town of Hebron assistance

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# Total Open Space Preserved

Since 1998 (through land/easement acquisition activities)

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■ Town of Hebron:	1,064 acres
■ State of Connecticut:	478 acres
■ Purchase of Development Rights:	604 acres
■ Mohegan Land Trust Transfer*	<u>220 acres</u>
■ Total Acres Acquired:	2,366 acres

\* 220 acres of Open Space was accepted by the Town from the Mohegan Land Trust

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# Open Space Inventory

Ownership	Acreage	% Of Town
■ Town of Hebron	2,106	8.8%
■ State of CT	<u>3,284</u>	<u>13.8%</u>
■ Total Public Ownership	5,390	22.6%
■ Preserved Agricultural Land	<u>1,118</u>	<u>4.7%</u>
<b>Permanently Preserved =</b>	<b>6,508</b>	<b>27.3%</b>
■ Private Open Space (not permanently preserved)	1,463	6.1%

# Fiscal Impact:

- The American Farmland Trust has completed 151 *Cost of Community Services (COCS)* studies in 25 states between 1989 and 2009.
- Hebron conducted the very first COCS!
- The COCS studies report that for each tax dollar communities receive from privately held open and working lands, only \$.35 is expended in services on such lands.
- For every tax dollar received from residential development, the median amount expended for residential services is \$1.16.
- *Open Space Preservation Pays!*

# Fiscal Impact:

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- The 5-year average Open Space Appropriation from FYE 2022-FYE 2026 was \$85,000 (or approximately 1/4th of 1%) of the total approved Municipal Budget.
  - FYE 2026 appropriation was \$50,000.
  - The Return on Investment of these appropriations have the following Open Space Benefits:
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# Open Space Benefits

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- enhances home values
  - mitigates property tax increases
  - provides for recreational areas, both passive and active
  - provides a desirable setting for harmonious economic growth
  - promotes eco and agrotourism, a benefit for local businesses
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# Open Space Benefits

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- preserves forests and productive farmland soils
  - provides for scenic vistas
  - preserves areas of cultural heritage
  - protects natural resources, including clean air and drinking water
  - provides wetland buffers which absorb pollution (pesticides, fertilizers, runoff)
  - provides habitat for wildlife
  - mitigates effects of climate change
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# Open Space Fund Balance Status

From July 1, 1998 (Fund Inception) to December 31, 2025

<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Town Contributions	\$3,991,695.00
State Grants (8 awarded to date, includes one pending award receipt )	\$1,122,435.00
Fees in Lieu of Open Space	\$223,396.57
Donations	\$6,603.53
Investment Earnings	\$212,952.61
Other	\$293.70
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$5,557,376.41</b>

<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Land Acquisition	\$4,940,634.01
Site Assessment	\$28,266.91
Appraisals	\$70,240.00
Surveys (includes 1 pending A-2 survey)	\$120,361.57
Other	\$10,825.29
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$5,170,327.78</b>

Fund Balance (12/31/2025, uncommitted):  
**\$387,048.63**

# Ongoing Activities...

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- Pursue connection of Air Line Trail to Hebron business districts
  - Pursue other trail connections and participate in regional trail initiatives (i.e. 12-Town Air Line Trail Master Plan)
  - Continue to extend Greenway connections
  - Re-evaluate Priority Parcels
  - Site Walks on Key Parcels
  - Discussions With Landowners
  - Seek Adequate Local Funding
  - Seek State Grants
  - Continue Contact with State DEEP regarding acquisitions
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# Hebron's Open Space Land Acquisition Fund

*Thank you for supporting Open Space planning and preservation in our Town !*

