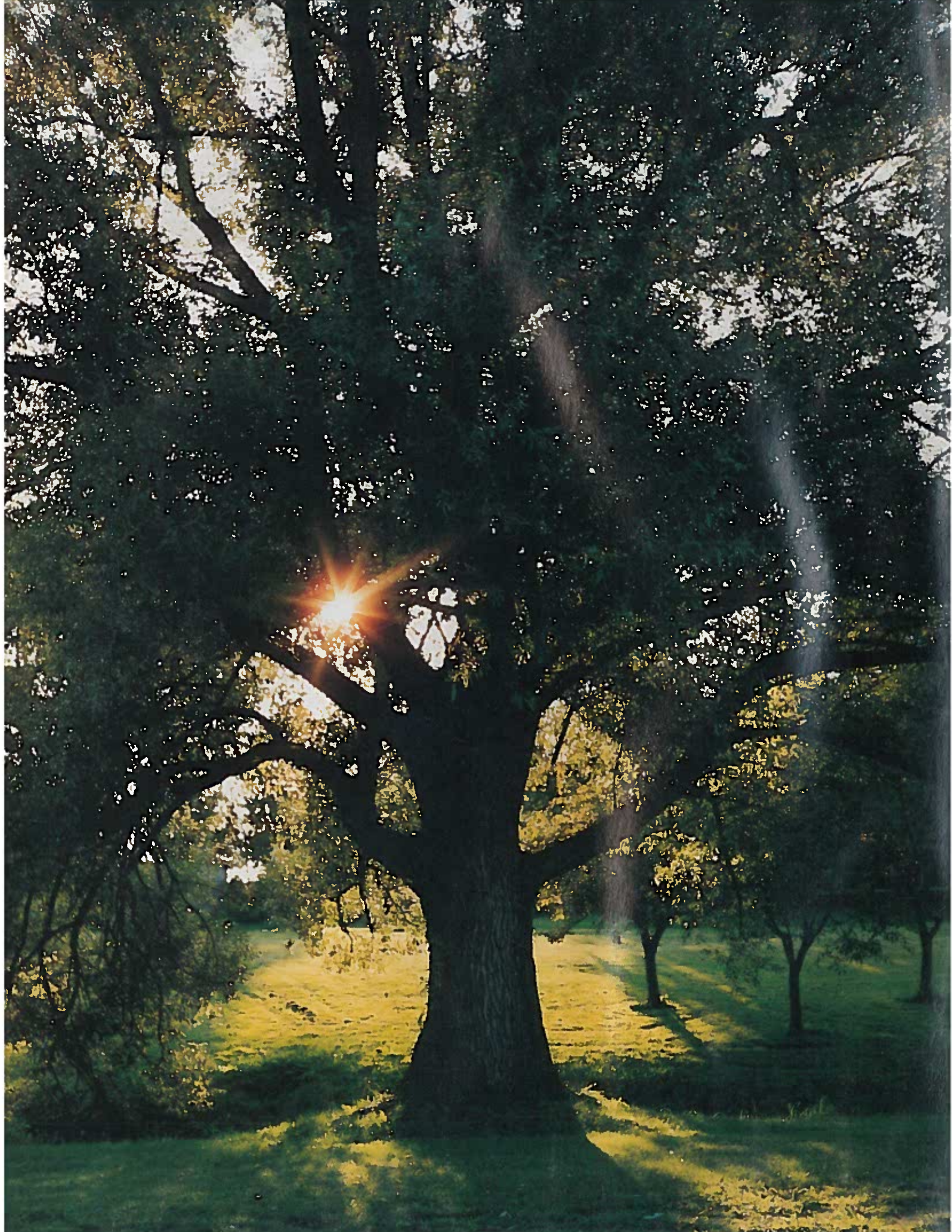




The City In The Country

*The Open Space Plan
for Saratoga Springs 1991*



I N T R O D U C T I O N

What makes Saratoga Springs a great place to live in and to visit? Reasons range from the historic architecture and mineral springs to a handsome racetrack; from Yaddo to the graceful sweep of Congress Park; from the bustle of downtown shops and restaurants to opera, symphony and ballet under the summer stars in a premier state park.

These features are complemented by the many open space resources in the city's vicinity and, combined, they contribute to Saratoga's unique and special sense of place. Without the expansive open spaces framing the urban core – the park land, rolling farmland, woods, lake, horse farms and stream corridors – much of what gives definition and allure to Saratoga Springs could be undermined or lost. Take away the tree-lined streets, community flower gardens, protected spring areas and Congress Park, and the city would quickly lose much of its charm and appeal.

The Open Space Plan for Saratoga Springs aims to protect the critical boundary between rural landscape and town with purposeful urban design. As the city continues to develop, care must be taken to maintain a vital urban center with a strong rural edge. With its emphasis on *infill*, its focus on *consolidation* as an antidote to sprawl and its stress on the *preservation* of land and fiscal resources, the 1994 Open Space Plan aims to safeguard the survival of Saratoga's economic health and visual appeal.

Photography

Front Cover: *Phil Haggerty*

Inside Front Cover: *Maureen Maclariello*

What is Open Space?

Open space need not refer exclusively to fields and woods free of buildings. Lakes, streams and urban parks qualify as open space. So do ballparks, playing fields, public gardens, cemeteries and farms. And with the varied types of open space come varied uses.

Open space gives a place distinctive character. It relaxes the eye and soothes the spirit. Open space introduces contrast and variety into an environment, invites recreational use and enjoyment, cuts dust and noise pollution, absorbs flood waters, provides wildlife with a natural habitat, filters polluted water and air, and moderates the climate with leafy windbreak and shade.

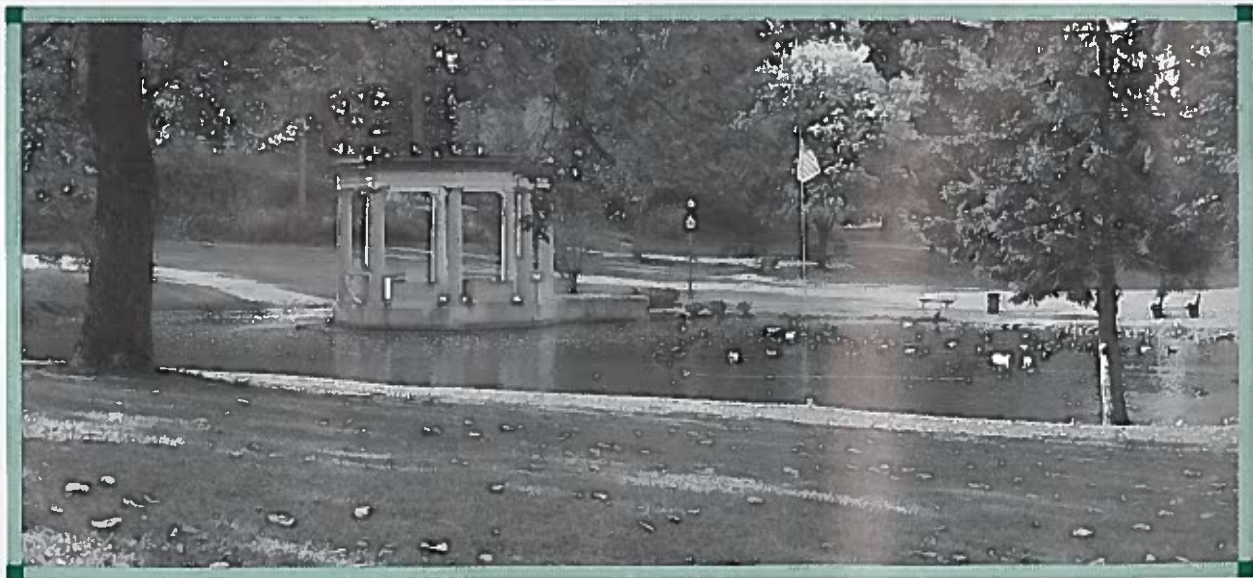
And hand in hand with the environmental benefits of open space are economic advantages. Horse farms and the racetracks – both prime examples of open space – generate significant tourist revenues for Saratoga Springs. Public and private open spaces alike improve the value of adjoining developed properties. Unlike developed areas, however, the cost of municipal services for open space is minimal. Well-planned and maintained open space pays for itself many times over in reduced costs for sewer, road and water services.

The Plan

The 1987 master plan for the City of Saratoga Springs recommended that a comprehensive open space plan be developed. This document provides the basis for achieving that goal.

From its inception in 1989, the Open Space Project has actively worked toward development of such a plan. Open Space Project Board members have sought the ideas, opinions and recommendations of the people of Saratoga Springs through numerous public meetings, workshop presentations to community groups and ongoing discussion with public officials.

Based on the information and ideas generated through these efforts, a draft Open Space Plan was published in 1991. The draft plan has received support from various groups and institutions including the Lions Club, the Downtown Business Association, the Rotary Club, the Soroptimists, the League of Women Voters, Skidmore College, The Saratogian, the City Recreation Commission, the Saratoga County Land Conservancy and The American Farmland Trust as well as many businesses and individuals.



Jeff Olson

Through public design workshops, lecture series, photo contests, the development of a video and an ongoing schedule of public presentations, the plan has been revised to its present form.

This plan inventories all of Saratoga's major open spaces and their uses. The accompanying map illustrates how these various individual spaces can be linked into a network or system, joined by greenways and trails, most of which are in the public domain. Furthermore, both the plan and the map have identified those open spaces which may be adapted and improved for recreational use and those which should be conserved in their natural condition.

Through a creative partnership among City government, the Open Space Project, and many supportive residents and community organizations, the vision set forth in this plan can and should be achieved.

Goals of the Open Space Plan

1. To provide a strategic Open Space Plan for the City of Saratoga Springs.
2. To inventory and highlight the importance of the various open space resources in Saratoga Springs.
3. To offer specific recommendations about how to maintain, protect and enhance these resources while developing additional open space assets.
4. To put forth a plan of action to accomplish these objectives.

Recommendations

1. Preserve the city in the country

The future of Saratoga Springs as a special place depends on the existence of a diverse and lively urban core. In recent decades, "holes" in the form of vacant parcels of land have appeared throughout this core area, caused in part by demolition of old buildings. Some of the vacancies are a sign of the migration of businesses to the shopping malls in neighboring towns. This exodus has resulted in a change in character and has threatened the vitality in the downtown business district. Diverse

businesses oriented towards meeting community needs have steadily been replaced by boutiques, bars and restaurants.

On the south, east and west sides of the urban core, some suburban residential and commercial sprawl also has occurred, signifying a change in the city's historic pattern of development currently eroding its "city-in-the-country" character.

The vacant land in the urban core presents many opportunities for development of new businesses, residences and recreation areas. This plan recommends that the City Council amend the City's master plan and zoning ordinance to encourage infill development on appropriate parcels in the urban core.

The City Council should actively discourage the inappropriate development of additional commercial uses at the entranceways to the city, beyond the urban core. The recommendations in this Open Space Plan should be incorporated into the next revision of the master plan. In the interim, it is recommended that the Planning Board implement this plan through its ongoing decision-making process.

2. Preserve and maintain existing active recreation areas and facilities

Most recreation areas and related facilities within the city are operated by the City or the state. Community support should be sought and encouraged for optimum levels of maintenance and operation of these facilities.

- East Side Recreation Area (*Lake Avenue – owned by the school district, operated by the City, 20.0 acres*)
- West Side Recreation Area (*Division Street – owned by the school district, operated by the City, 8.0 acres*)
- Geysers Park (*Adams Road – City owned, 20.0 acres*)
- South Side Recreation Area (*Vanderbilt Avenue – City owned, 4.0 acres*)
- North Side Recreation Area (*Clement Avenue – City owned, 5.8 acres*)
- Saratoga Spa State Park (*Route 9 – State owned, 2,000 acres*)

3. Upgrade and improve existing active recreation areas and facilities

Some existing recreational facilities within the City should be expanded and improved.

- North Side Recreation Area
(currently underdeveloped and underutilized)
- Saratoga Spa State Park
(many opportunities exist for improving existing facilities in accordance with a master plan, which the state should develop)

Some areas of the City are underserved by recreational facilities now, and others are likely to be underserved if the population continues to grow. Facilities should be developed for these areas, including:

- Recreation fields in the northwest quadrant of the City
- Recreation fields east of the Northway

4. Preserve and maintain existing passive recreation areas

Passive recreation areas do not have facilities for organized sports activities. With minimal development and maintenance, they offer an opportunity to enjoy the natural environment



and the peacefulness accompanying it. Areas which should be considered include:

- Congress Park
(Broadway – City owned, 21.0 acres)
- High Rock Park
(High Rock Avenue – City owned, 2.0 acres)
- Proposed Excelsior Springs Park
- Saratoga Spa State Park

5. Develop new areas for passive recreation

As the City's population grows, new passive recreation areas should be developed in locations with interesting natural environments. Such areas may require minimal improvements (e.g., developing trails, maintaining open fields) with low maintenance. Some places with a potential for passive recreation include:

- Spring Run Area *(along the creek parallel to Excelsior Avenue from the old ice rink to the Northway – City and privately owned, approximately 40 acres)*
- King Arthur Court Park
(King Arthur Court – City owned, 13.7 acres)

6. Conserve quasi-public recreation areas and open spaces

Several privately owned passive recreation and open space areas in the City are open to the public. Such areas should continue to receive community support for good maintenance and operation to ensure continued physical and/or visual access for the public.

- Yaddo grounds
(both sides of Union Avenue, 300+ acres)
- Skidmore College grounds
(North Broadway, 280 acres)
- Racetracks *(Union Avenue, 350+ acres)*
- St. Clement's grounds *(Lake Avenue, 20 acres)*
- Gideon Putnam Cemetery
(Franklin Street, 1 acre)
- Greenridge Cemetery
(Lincoln Avenue, 49 acres)

7. Improve and develop additional center city gathering places

Interesting, well-designed plazas, sitting parks or other small open spaces draw people to downtown and help to create a dynamic urban center. Good urban design should intentionally create such spaces. The City's zoning regulations should offer density bonus provisions to developers who provide useful, public open spaces in the center of the City. Some of the existing small center city open spaces that should be well maintained and/or improved include:

- Broadway mini-mall
- Corner of Woodlawn Avenue and Church Street
- Urban Cultural Park Visitor Center/Drink Hall front lawn
- Franklin Square railroad right-of-way and Price Chopper parking lot

8. Encourage further development of small neighborhood parks

Small passive sitting parks are also important to outlying residential and commercial neighborhoods. Sites for these "pocket parks" should be sought by the City. They do not always have to be publicly owned or maintained. For example, publicly accessible, privately owned lots can achieve the same purpose if they are landscaped and equipped with benches, litter baskets and, if appropriate, lighting.

9. Preserve important cultural resources

Parts of the City are rich in archeological artifacts. These sites should not be disturbed unless proper investigation first occurs. The sensitivity of these sites is such that most of them must remain unidentified in this plan to ensure that they will be undisturbed. Archaeologists should work closely with the local permitting agencies to ensure that these sites are properly protected or investigated prior to any development, and that appropriate interpretation is provided.

There is a close relationship between historic and open space preservation. The recommendations in this plan can be accomplished in part through historic preservation and interpretive

programs. These programs are administered by City agencies and private organizations. The City's open space network is an essential aspect of the Urban Cultural Parks Program because it links important historic and contemporary open spaces.

Historic cemeteries should be preserved and enhanced, including, but not limited to, Greenridge and Gideon Putnam.

10. Preserve and protect significant habitat

The City's environment should contribute to the maintenance of regional biodiversity. Many species of plants and wildlife can be found in Saratoga Springs. For example, several locations within the City are habitats for blue lupine and the endangered Karner Blue butterfly.

Habitat areas for endangered, threatened, rare or other important species of plants and animals should be identified and protected. Interpretive programs should be established for a wide range of plants, animals and ecosystems.

11. Protect drinking water aquifers and watersheds

City government should ensure that all residents have potable water of the highest quality. The City should develop and adopt watershed regulations to protect and conserve the water supply. It also should acquire additional land for watershed or aquifer protection, either by direct purchase or by conservation easement. Important drinking water resources include:

- Loughberry Lake (*Marion Avenue*)
- Geyser Crest wellfield (*Hathorn Blvd.*)
- Ballston Spa wellfield and reservoir (*Geyser Road*)

12. Preserve all existing wetlands

Among other benefits, wetlands provide valuable habitats for fish and wildlife, control for storm water runoff and floods, and water purification. The State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has identified more than 3,200 acres within the City as protected freshwater wetlands.

Many other wetlands in the city are protected under federal laws. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, regulate the discharge of dredged or fill materials into wetlands. The federal agencies and New York State apply a "no net loss" goal to the review of proposed wetland disturbances. Under this policy, if the need can be justified, wetlands are allowed to be altered only if a wetland of equal ecological value is created or restored.

The City should support this policy by cooperating fully with state and federal wetland agencies before issuing a local special use permit or approving a subdivision and site plan. Wetlands should be zoned by the City for conservation uses.

13. Protect stream corridors

The thirty miles of streams and waterways within the City serve many important recreational and ecological functions. If not properly controlled, land development and other soil disturbing activities can harm ecological systems through stream bank erosion and sedimentation. This can also create conditions conducive to flooding. Removal of vegetation within 75 feet of the banks

of streams, such as those listed below, should be prohibited by City regulation. Conservation easements should be obtained on these buffer areas. The width of the stream buffer area should be expanded if warranted by soil and slope conditions or if a recreation trail is part of the buffer area.

- Putnam Brook
- Village Brook
- Spring Run
- Bog Meadow
- Geysers Brook
- Kayaderosseras Creek
- Fish Creek

14. Maintain existing and develop additional springs

Mineral springs are an important part of the natural and cultural heritage of Saratoga Springs. While some mineral springs remain, there once were many more in the Saratoga Spa State Park and along the fault line that runs north and south through the City. Renovation of some of the known mineral springs, in a manner sensitive to perpetuating favorable hydrologic conditions, will benefit



Jeff Olson

tourism. Additional springs should be developed along Broadway and at the Urban Cultural Park Visitor Center to allow visitors to sample the mineral waters. Alternatively, waters could be piped to drinking fountains at these locations.

Redevelopment of some mineral springs with landscaping, signage, benches and other amenities will help meet the need for additional small passive recreation areas in the urban core. Such development will complement the proposed redevelopment of the mineral bath and health facilities in Saratoga State Park.

15. Preserve the petrified sea gardens

This geologically significant area on Petrified Sea Gardens Road contains unique outcroppings of stromatolite fossils. It is the only site of its kind in the United States and one of only a few in the world. It is listed by the U.S. Department of the Interior as a National Natural Landmark. The site is privately owned. Preservation of, and continued public access to, this important scientific and educational resource can be accomplished in several ways, in cooperation with the present owner. This should be done soon.

16. Identify and protect the scenic or visual qualities of the important entranceways to the city

The scenic or visual qualities of the highway entranceways to the city contribute much to Saratoga Springs' sense of place. Entranceways, in both developed and open areas, create an immediate impression of what to expect from the rest of the community. They separate the City from rural areas or from developed areas in adjoining communities.

Various techniques can be used to maintain the entranceways. Roadside open land could be protected by purchase or donation of fee title interests or conservation easements. Developed entranceways could be improved by planting trees or flowers; installing curbs, sidewalks and landscaped median strips; burying overhead electric, telephone and cable television lines; controlling commercial on-premise signs and repaving of

highways. The City should use architectural and site plan design review as tools to protect the entranceways. It can also establish special zoning districts and apply more stringent performance standards to development proposals.

Special consideration should be given to the following:

- Route 9 (*South Broadway*)
- Route 50 (*Ballston Avenue*)
- Route 29 (*Washington Street*)
- Route 9N (*Church Street*)
- Route 29 (*Lake Avenue*)
- Route 9P (*Union Avenue*)
- Route 50 (*north to Exit 15*)

17. Protect scenic byways, vistas and areas

There are important scenic roads, vista points and scenic viewsheds throughout the city. The scenic quality of these areas and sites may be ensured by purchase of conservation easements (development rights). The City also may enact regulations to require development of low-rise buildings in scenically sensitive areas, with adequate setbacks, screening and landscaping. The Department of Public Works (DPW) can take special management actions within the right-of-way to preserve, protect and enhance scenic resources. The City government should take advantage of the State's new (1992) Scenic Byways program, which can make federal funds for enhancement available on a priority basis under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA).

Some locally important scenic places are:

- Exit 14, Union Avenue area
- Saratoga Lake vista from Route 9P
- Adams Road
- Locust Grove Road area
- Geysers Road area near Route 50
- Route 9, State Park, State Tree Nursery
- Route 50, State Tree Nursery
- Avenue of the Pines

- Bloomfield/Denton Road area
- Northway corridor
- Lake Avenue, Bear Swamp area
- Route 9, north of Kayaderosseras Creek

18. Develop bikeways

Several opportunities exist for developing or designating bicycle routes. Some could be separate, hard-surfaced cross-country paths, while others could follow city streets and highways or be located on a hard-surface path along the shoulder. Some roads could be repaved with wide shoulders for bicycling, as was done with Route 9, south to Malta. Certain routes would be suitable for commuting or going to and from school and church or synagogue. Bikeways should connect with existing paths, such as those in Saratoga Spa State Park.

The City should create a continuous trail network throughout Saratoga Springs, as proposed in the July 1992 report published by the Open Space Project with a grant from the NYS Council on the Arts. The Mayor, City Council and Planning Board have approved the proposed trail system in concept.



Jeff Olson

19. Develop walking, skiing, and equestrian trail systems

As with bicycle trails, many opportunities exist to develop trails to be used exclusively or jointly by walkers, fishermen, hikers, horseback riders and cross country skiers. Some possibilities include:

- Trails along the banks of Putnam Creek, Géyser Brook and Kayaderosseras Creek
- Trails around Loughberry Lake
- Saratoga Spa State Park to Mechanicville via the Saratoga County Heritage Trail
- Trails around Lake Lonely
- Trails along Fish Creek
- Nature trail on city-owned railroad right-of-way in Bog Meadow, off Route 29

20. Maintain and expand a sidewalk system throughout the more developed areas of the city

Walking for pleasure is the most popular outdoor recreation activity, according to national surveys. It is an ideal and healthy way to enjoy the history and beauty of Saratoga Springs. To realize these benefits, it is important for the City government to maintain and more fully create a network of sidewalks throughout the more developed portions of the city, as recommended in the City's 1987 master plan. The Planning Board should envision a detailed plan for the sidewalk system. Sidewalks protect walkers from vehicular traffic, facilitate social interaction and help to create a greater sense of community. People enjoy walking in their neighborhood or the downtown area.

Sidewalks do not have to be installed everywhere, but they should be required in areas of medium and high residential densities, near schools, in commercial areas, and along busy highways connecting residential areas to shopping centers. Sidewalks should be located and designed as a system – a network to connect and link places. For example, Lake Avenue (from the Northway to the East Side Recreation Field) and Weibel Avenue (from Route 29 to Route 50) are areas obviously in need of sidewalks.

The use of slate, brick and other attractive sidewalk materials should be encouraged in the historic districts of Saratoga Springs by City agencies and preservation organizations.

21. Develop canoe routes

In high water, it is feasible to canoe from Ballston Spa to Saratoga Lake via Kayaderosseras Creek. Within the city limits, access for canoeing is feasible where Route 9 crosses the creek, off Kayaderosseras Avenue near the Northway, near the Lake Lonely outlet and at the end of Arrowhead Road. However, lack of off-road parking and consideration of private property rights are major concerns at these locations. They need resolution.

Canoeing on Fish Creek offers a pleasurable experience, particularly below Staffords Bridge where there are few motor boats. Formal public access is available at the State boat launch. There is informal access at Staffords Bridge and Bryant Bridge Road (Town of Saratoga).

Public canoe access also could be developed on Lake Lonely and on Loughberry Lake (if future watershed regulations permit such recreational uses).

Additional parking places should be acquired for canoeing enthusiasts. Canoeable waters should be kept free of log jams and debris by the City, with the assistance of volunteers.

22. Develop public access for boating and fishing

Public access for fishing should be secured along selected streams through acquisition of land in fee title or by conservation easement. Small parking areas may be associated with these locations and some trail development may be needed to complete them. Access should be acquired for the following bodies of water:

- Kayaderosseras Creek (*A fishing rights easement should be acquired for its entire length, on both sides of the stream. Cooperation with the Town of Malta should be sought for the south side.*)
- Lake Lonely
- Loughberry Lake
- Fish Creek
- Saratoga Lake

23. Preserve farmland and support existing agricultural activity

Saratoga Springs has only a few remaining active farms. These are mostly, but not exclusively, horse farms. In addition to their economic value, they are important open spaces for the community. The farms provide scenic and amenity values, add diversity to the landscape and serve as important buffers between developed areas. They also contribute to the race-track image of the city and reinforce the rural edge that creates the "city in the country."

Efforts should be made to encourage use of local and state programs which benefit agricultural activities. In some cases, it may be feasible to obtain donations of conservation easements to ensure the long-term preservation of farmland. The City should zone for agricultural use such key farmland areas as:

- Lower West Avenue area
- Lower Nelson Avenue area
- Outer Union Avenue – Meadowbrook Road area
- Outer Grand Avenue area
- Cady Hill
- Ash Grove/Sunrise Farms

Agriculture also can be encouraged by supporting markets for agricultural products. The existing open-air farmers' market on Spring Street is an important agricultural and open space resource. The market adds character and interest to the community. The City should secure an appropriate location for the market for the long term and ensure that it is effectively promoted. Parking areas should be established for the farmers and the customers.

The City should consider establishing a transfer-of-development rights (TDR) program. This would help maintain the vitality of the urban core by encouraging development there, while perpetuating open space in the fringe and outlying areas. The key to a successful program is to ensure that sufficient market incentives exist to use the available rights. This can be accomplished through appropriate zoning of the TDR sending and receiving areas. In addition, the City should consider establishing a purchase-of-development-rights program to

complement the TDR program, possibly using fees from developers as allowed by state law, such as those in the park fund. The Saratoga County Land Conservancy can assist in planning and implementing these programs.

24. Formalize the community shade tree program

Street trees are an important environmental and aesthetic resource. The shade they provide also offers energy savings. The shade tree program initiated by DPW should be strengthened and institutionalized. The program should ensure that shade trees of appropriate types and diversity continue to grace the streets and parks of Saratoga Springs. Continued proper maintenance, replacement and planting of trees are integral to the program.

A shade tree commission should be established to prepare a shade tree master plan in cooperation with the DPW and to provide advisory assistance to the agency. The City should support and expand the tree nursery established by the DPW. This plan also recommends that the city take advantage of the Urban Tree Program administered by the State DEC.

25. Promote improved land use design and development standards

Strengthened land use planning and regulation can improve the quality and number of the city's vital open spaces. For example, the City's subdivision regulations could be amended to include provisions such as mandatory clustering, setbacks and buffers for protection of stream corridors and scenic values, and greater compactness in project design and layout. This would result in more usable open space and public amenities. Regulations could require public access to open space areas associated with certain types of development in certain locations.

Certain sections of the city should be identified as special planning districts and targeted for intensive design work. The Henry Street – Putnam Street "valley" is one such example. With the new library being built in the area, and Congress Park and High Rock Park anchoring the southern and northern ends of the valley, respectively, an opportunity exists to create a spectacular urban design that could infill and reinforce the urban core. The design could be based on a linear greenway which would include commercial uses, landscaped parking areas, mineral springs, mini-parks, and improved linkages to Broadway.



Jeff Olson

Next Steps

1. Adopt the plan

The most important next step is to have this Open Space Plan formally adopted as a public policy guide. It is appropriate for the Saratoga Springs City Council to formally endorse the plan as a general statement of policy. This endorsement would indicate to the rest of the community that there is a broad consensus within City government about the direction for open space action during the next decade.

2. Establish roles for implementation and coordination

This Open Space Plan recommends establishment of a public/private partnership to carry out strategies and actions for preserving, protecting, enhancing and using open spaces in Saratoga Springs. It is proposed that the private, non-profit Open Space Project join its resources with those of the City government to implement this plan. In these times of scarce public resources, it is necessary and desirable to use private resources and individual volunteer activity to help carry out the community-improvement activities described in the plan.

The private and public sector roles in coordinating and implementing all of the strategies and actions recommended in this plan need to be clearly defined. Active interest by private citizens and civic organizations are the key to bringing the plan to life. These include the fishermen, joggers, bicyclists, canoeists, hunters, naturalists, farmers, business owners and interested citizens who will be involved in implementing one or more of the plan's 25 strategies.

The Open Space Project, as appropriate, is willing to continue its role in coordinating the efforts of these private interests and to assist in other ways.

Correspondingly, it is recommended that the City Council establish an effective and accountable process to ensure consistent public policy and make an adequate commitment of municipal resources. It should also ensure that responsibility for this plan and for related open space interests is lodged with an appropriate City agency. In this regard, various options are available to the City Council. The Council could assign these coordinating activities

to an existing body, such as the Planning Board or the Recreation Commission. The City Council should consider whether the existing agency's mission and the proposed open space assignment are compatible, as well as whether the agency can accommodate the substantial additional workload. Or, the City Council could consider establishing a new advisory body specifically for these purposes. For example, some communities have accomplished their open space planning and development activities through a conservation advisory council, as authorized by Section 239-X of the State's General Municipal Law. Creation of this body will make the City eligible for available state funding, consistent with state appropriations, for part of the operating expenses for these agencies. More than three hundred of these councils have been created by local governing bodies throughout New York. In Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire and New Jersey nearly every community has one. Open space planning and conservation is their primary mission, complementing the work of planning boards and local land trusts, such as the Saratoga County Land Conservancy. These agencies also work to obtain federal, state and private funding for open space planning and development.

Alternatives, such as the ones described above, should be carefully evaluated by the City Council before a final decision is made about how best to institutionalize a public commitment to coordinating these public interests and overseeing the wide-ranging open space action agenda proposed for the City.

3. Implement specific projects

Planning and implementation of some of the recommendations in this plan have already begun. However, many other recommendations are still in the conceptual phase. To some extent, establishing priorities is a matter of selecting projects as targets of opportunity. Other projects involve continuous, ongoing work. Each of the recommended projects requires preparation of its own detailed action plan. Cost estimates, timetables, funding sources and gathering of volunteers will all have to be identified and coordinated as each project is implemented.

4. Revisit and update the plan

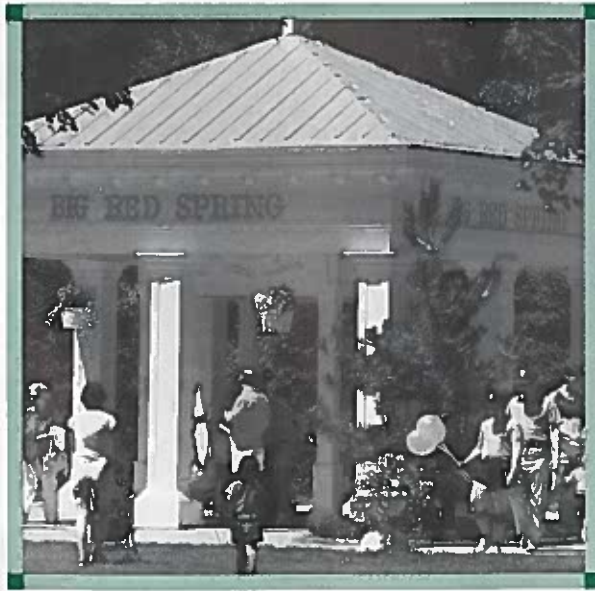
This plan is not an end in itself. It is a document to live by which, to be useful, must be revised periodically to meet changing conditions and circumstances. It is a document that should be consulted frequently by public agencies and private groups. Using this plan on a day-to-day basis will encourage consistent decision making about the City's valuable open space resources. However, new issues will emerge and new light will be cast on old issues. The City Council should authorize the appropriate City agency (e.g., conservation advisory council, Planning Board or Recreation Commission) to review and update this plan every five years, in cooperation with the Open Space Project. In this manner, the City will be in a position to respond to changing conditions.

5. Continue Public Input

Every resident of the City of Saratoga Springs has a stake in its future and should consider these recommendations carefully.

You can indicate your support by:

- Writing to the Mayor and other members of the City Council (*please send a copy to the Open Space Project*)
- Informing the Planning Board and other city agencies of your support (*please send a copy to the Open Space Project*)
- Getting the organization to which you belong to contact the Mayor and City Council
- Writing to the Open Space Project in support of the plan or to give comments on it (*see page 13*)
- Becoming a member of The Open Space Project
- Becoming involved as a volunteer in specific plan implementation projects
- Telling your friends and neighbors about the plan and asking them to support it as described above or help in other ways



Jeff Olson

The Open Space Project

The Open Space Project operates under the auspices of the not-for-profit Saratoga Institute. The participating members of the project are concerned with the protection and enhancement of the city's open space resources. The plan has been prepared by the Board of Directors of the Project as a civic contribution, entirely as a volunteer effort.

Board of Directors

Barbara Glaser, Co-Chair
Jeff Olson, Co-Chair
Ken Bollerud
Constance Carroll
Tom Cobb
John DeMarco
Lynne Gelber
Brian J. McMahon
Ben Mirling
Jenny Mirling
Charles C. Morrison
Kate O'Connell
Libby Smith
Cathy Stimmel
Ann Wait
Doug Ward

Cynthia Behan, *Staff*

Comments?

If you would like to know more about the Saratoga Springs Open Space Project and how you can assist in preserving and enhancing Saratoga Springs' open space heritage, please call or write:

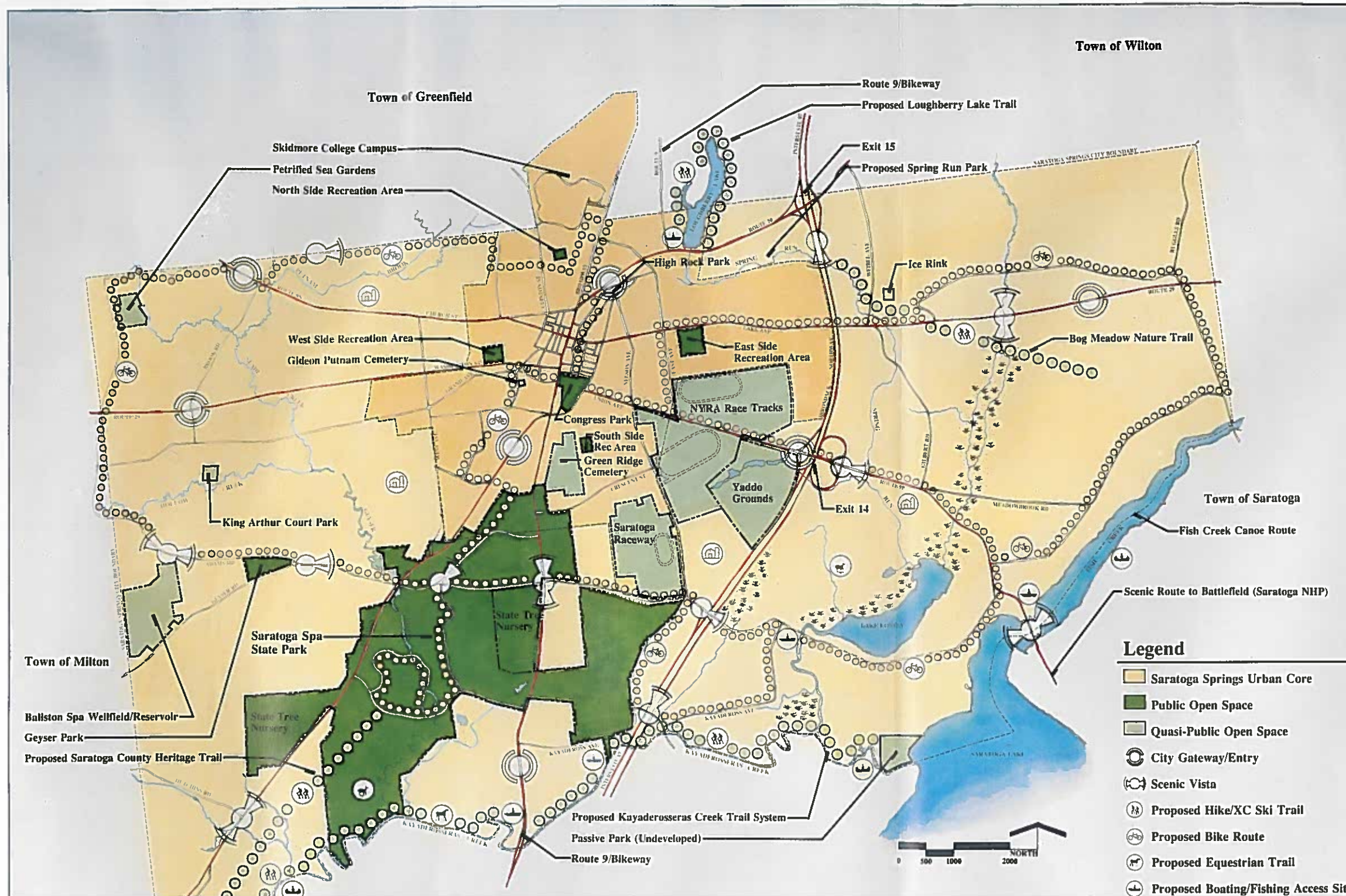
Saratoga Springs Open Space Project
110 Spring Street
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
(518) 587-5554

Your comments on this plan will be appreciated. They will be used to refine and expand the plan, as well as to establish priorities for implementation of particular projects. **Please send your written comments to the above address.**

The Saratoga Springs Open Space Plan is funded (in part) by the Rural New York's Rural New York Environmental Action Fund administered by the Open Space Institute with the support of the J.M. Kaplan Fund.



Gary Randorf



Summary of Recommendations

1. Preserve the city in the country
2. Preserve and maintain existing active recreation areas and facilities
3. Upgrade and improve existing active recreation areas and facilities
4. Preserve and maintain existing passive recreation areas
5. Develop new areas for passive recreation
6. Conserve quasi-public recreation areas and open spaces
7. Improve and develop additional center city gathering places
8. Encourage further development of small neighborhood parks
9. Preserve important cultural resources
10. Preserve and protect significant habitat
11. Protect drinking water aquifers and watersheds
12. Preserve all existing wetlands
13. Protect stream corridors
14. Maintain existing and develop additional springs
15. Preserve the petrified sea gardens
16. Identify and protect the scenic or visual qualities of the important entranceways in the city
17. Protect scenic byways, vistas and areas
18. Develop bikeways
19. Develop walking, skiing, and equestrian trail systems
20. Maintain and expand a sidewalk system throughout the more developed areas of the city
21. Develop canoe routes
22. Develop public access for boating and fishing
23. Preserve farmland and support existing agricultural activity
24. Formalize the community shade tree program
25. Promote improved land use design and development standards



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