

How Should Brookfield Use its Natural & Recreation Areas to Honor its Character and Ensure Sustainability as a Community?

Summary Report of Brookfield Public Dialogue Series

Released May, 2018

APPENDICES

The report and appendices will be available online:

- [MOPC website](#)
- Brookfield town website: Forms & Documents under Open Space / Master Plan

Appendices:

- A. Public Input Survey Responses
- B. Public Dialogue Discussion Guide
- C. Supplemental Information Sheet
- D. Brookfield Open Space Map
- E. Tallied Post-Dialogue Questionnaire Responses

Summary Report Completed by

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Appendix A. Public Input Survey Responses

Do you live in Brookfield?

99 responses

Yes: 76 responses (76%)

No: 23 responses (24.%) – includes Other as these are not Brookfield residents

Other - details:

- regional neighbor: 1 response
- Sturbridge, but use Brookfield public facilities: 1 response
- East Brookfield: 1 response
- Sturbridge near Brookfield: 1 response
- Summer resident on South Pond: 1 response
- I grew up in Brookfield and work there. I also have family and friends living there: 1 response
- West Brookfield: 1 response
- No details given: 1 response

What do you value most about Brookfield's natural spaces and outdoor recreation areas (forests, trails, rivers, lakes, farms, parks, athletic fields, etc.)?

98 responses (incl. repeats)

1. Athletic fields (4 responses)
2. Common area wonderful; Garden Club does great job of keeping up "corner lot". Proud of center of town; Lewis Field great and well kept. Rec Dept does great job and open to activities. Enjoyed "bouncy house", camp fire community event last fall and hope they do again; Quaboag River running through town is really an asset - peaceful and enjoyable.
3. Trails and rivers/lakes. Athletic fields are important for kids.
4. The rural character that farms maintain and the natural beauty of the waterways.
5. Close to home, accessible, natural
6. No regulations and still peaceful
7. The river is a treasure. I also appreciate Lewis Field, the open spaces that local farms provide, and the Audubon trails on East Main Street.
8. Safe places to walk.
9. it is a beautiful town overall, yet my primary interest is in river and watershed stewardship, connecting people to their local rivers/streams and promoting healthy, sustainable uses.
10. The Common
11. Lakes, trails, forests, rivers
12. That we have open space to preserve and use
13. farms
14. That we have it available to us is number one. The river in town looks inviting and uncluttered and the boat access areas are well set up. It's all too easy to get stressed driving through nearby built-up towns and that stress goes away when I enter this town and see the open areas.
15. athletic fields, playground, river for canoeing, hiking trails, bike trails, swimming areas, fishing, concerts etc. on common, sidewalks
16. Lakes
17. All the outdoor spaces are important: the trails and waterways as well as the field provide us all with different types of recreation and provide for a healthy environment.

18. athletic fields > trails etc. I value the health and wellness of the community I use them daily with my children, patients etc.
19. Lakes and rivers
20. Parks and athletic fields are great for many events
21. Rivers, lakes, common, farms
22. Lakes, rivers, trails, parks
23. History, Scenery, Trails
24. Convenience
25. lakes
26. Park, athletic field, lakes
27. I think Lewis Field, the River and North and South Pond are our best assets.
28. Farmland
29. The farms and scenic roads that take you back in time!
30. Just the fact that we have those things accessible to us.
31. Value that they are cleaned and kept up
32. forests, rivers, lakes, lewis field, the quiet
33. Lakes, trails
34. Lakes and farms
35. Forests, trails, rivers & lakes
36. Proximity
37. lakes
38. All of the aboveswimming, boating, fishing, hiking, concerts and events, sightseeing, and kids athletic
39. Quaboug river, north pond, south pond and the channel that connects the two great ponds The state land around the above mentioned waterbodies
40. Parks, athletic fields, lakes
41. All, particularly wetlands.
42. River lakes kayaking fishing hiking
43. Quality of life, livable environment, charm of community
44. lakes and farms
45. I frequent South Pond for its cleanliness and variety of activities
46. South Pond
47. Lakes and rivers are great for recreation and open space/farmland enhance the beauty and rural charm of the town.
48. All of the above!
49. Farms, rivers, views, athletic services, rural setting
50. lakes and forests
51. Rural atmosphere, natural resources, lakes, sparsely settled
52. The lakes.
53. lakes and athletic fields
54. That they can't be built on and will remain open
55. The lakes
56. I love the river and its beautiful sunsets over the bridge and ramp for launching canoes, North Pond and its boat ramp, South Pond and its swimming lessons, Lewis Field for its playground for moms to meet and fields for kids to play sports, the common for its beauty and town events held there. I don't know much about trails but would like to know more.
57. All of the above. It's why we live here.

58. Preservation of all current recreation area's and purchase new area's when available
59. North and South Pond
60. The houses are not all on top of each other.
61. the lakes and the overall rural nature of the area
62. we enjoy boating, kayaking, fishing and swimming at South Pond, Seven Mile and Quaboag Rivers; accessing open space and trails for walking; public and private land for hunting deer and turkey; I love the farms on Lake Road (Oakholm & Plant Mette: not sure if latter is correct]); support the effort of Chicopee watershed association, Blue trail river project
63. the lakes and rivers - for especially motorized activities
64. lakes and rivers; farm land and forest; wildlife
65. Lakes; open space; trails
66. all of the options listed - forests, trails, rivers, lakes, farms, parks, athletic fields, etc.
67. there is a quality of life that is the result of careful zoning and restrictions that allows for abundant natural space and outdoor recreation
68. the clean South Pond water and beach; the Common for gatherings; Lewis Park for recreation; fishing off the bridge
69. Since I am a farmer, my biggest interest is in the agricultural and forested land. The abundance of clean fresh water in this town is of huge importance. We have a beautiful lake and river system
70. the lakes and river
71. Keeping the lakes clean
72. The unspoiled natural beauty and availability of outdoor recreation.
73. Great for families, children, hikers, etc
74. Aesthetic, and knowing that natural spaces are available for use on the spur-of-the-moment.
75. I value that they are in our own backyard and are authentic.
76. Access to water recreation on Quaboag Pond...amazing wildlife...preserve the lake environment!
77. I live in East Brookfield and love so much of Brookfield. The farms I use all the time but the most precious and most used is your beach.
78. Peacefulness
79. For ceremonies
80. athletic fields, forests, river/lake, farm - basically all of the above
81. Brookfield's identity is anchored in its rural beauty and in the open spaces that have been preserved - conservation lands along the Quaboag River and on Long Hill Road, the Audubon Sanctuary lands on Elm Hill, the conservation area off Foster Hill Road and Devil's Elbow Road, public access to North and South Ponds, Twitchell's Grove behind the elementary school, Brookfield Common, our beautiful and historical cemetery, and Lewis Fields, among others. Nearly everywhere you look or drive in Brookfield (with some notable exceptions) there is a beautiful vista to enjoy. I most value the ability to walk through these beautiful places. They provide an escape from the troubles of the world and ground me in what is most important in life.
82. The natural Brookfield. The lakes and forest and the bility to enjoy them.
83. Clean water, trees
84. Country and ponds/lakes
85. All of it - lots of open space, forests, scenic views. Also the farms.
86. I feel they are well cared for.
87. Beautiful lakes for swimming. Recycling, porta-potty and handicap access at town beach
88. forest,trails,rivers,lakes,farms.....preserving the wide opened spaces and keeping small town characteristics
89. South Pond beach area. Needs to be revamped for handicap accessibility. Maybe design a level for picnic table
90. Lakes and beaches

91. farms, athletic field
92. lakes Quaboag
93. many, and varied options
94. forests rivers trails lakes farms
95. They are ALL good and important to preserve. Quaboag river is a treasure.

How do you use the natural and outdoor recreation spaces in Brookfield?

97 responses (incl. repeats)

96. I use Lewis Fields for playground and picnics and playing. Nothing formal. Quaboag River for canoe or kayak
97. Boating in Quaboag pond, canoeing quaboag river. Family softball games on the fields.
98. Mainly boating and fishing.
99. Fishing and kayaking
100. Hiking walking fishing hunting Back side of Lewis field should be set up for dog park
101. Kayaking and walking mostly.
102. Walk daily; would like to start kayaking on Quaboag, cross country skiing.
103. Primarily river access
104. Lewis Field is wonderful for practices and games. Also the play area is convenient
105. Kayaking, XC skiing, walking dog, sledding
106. Active farm, trail ride, supporting the Adena project
107. We operate a small farm
108. I am a hunter so I use the Wolf Swamp WMA every year. Outside of the hunting season we take walks out there and sometimes canoe in the pond. We used to use Lewis Field for shooting hoops or just walking around but it has been a few years since we did that. We also used the playground area when our son was younger. That is a nice area.
109. canoeing on Quaboag, taking kids to the playground, kids' soccer practices, swimming at North pond, walking on sidewalks along Rt. 9, going to concerts on the common as well as festivals, biking around town
110. Fishing hiking and sports
111. My family walk and boats; and my kids play sports
112. athletic fields I coach and play with community every season, with run \ walk \hike many of the trails we buy produce locally, we swim and kayak in the lakes and rivers frequently
113. Swimming and canoeing
114. Fairs/festivals, community events, kids' fun, sports
115. Lewis Field - soccer, common for cultural council events (and just a nice walk), kayaking on the river & lake
116. Kayaking, swimming, hiking, biking, family fun day
117. Sports
118. Hiking, youth sports/activities, social gatherings
119. Sport recreation
120. boating and swimming
121. Sports, fishing, family days
122. We do hike and use ATV and I also cycle and run.
123. Athletics hiking fishing kayaking
124. Dog walking... Photography...kayaking
125. Hiking, Walking, bicycling, swimming
126. Sports and family time to get out of the house
127. walking/hiking/xcountry skiing in woods, kayaking on river, softball at Lewis field

128. Kayaking, playground
129. Kayaking and walking
130. Wildlife management areas for walking, lakes/ivers for fishing or enjoying scenery
131. Hiking, Geocaching, Kayaking, Walking
132. boating, swimming
133. See above
134. Boating on various types such as kayak and motorboat
135. Parks, athletic fields
136. Hiking, fishing and preserving lakes/ivers.
137. I appreciate the peace and tranquility and opportunity for observing nature
138. Kayaking fishing boating hiking nature at it's best
139. Boating, bike riding, swimming, hiking
140. recreation
141. Swimming and fishing
142. Swimming
143. I use the lakes and rivers for boating, swimming and fishing.
144. Boating, swimming, hiking,
145. walking, nature study, birding, kayaking
146. swim, kayak, meditate, photography
147. Boating on and swimming in South Pond.
148. kayak and kids baseball games
149. Boating,
150. I live on a South Pond which is partially in Brookfield.
151. Canoeing on Quaboag River; sports and playground at Lewis Field; events on common (concerts, Pumpkin fest, Santa, Apple Country Fair, Boy Scout camping, etc.); swimming lessons at South Pond; hiking in woods on our property, driving down scenic roads (East Main Street, for example)
152. Lewis Field sports, Richardson Wildlife Preserve. Our backyard. Trails, hiking, etc. Community events on the common. South Pond--swimming lessons.
153. Kayaking, boating, fishing and swimming on South Pond
154. Kayak, swim, fish, walk the trails and socialize
155. Walking, birdwatching
156. swimming, boating, kayaking
157. boating, fishing, swimming, kayaking
158. boating and swimming
159. hunting, fishing, boating
160. kayak, fish, walk and hike
161. We use the walking sidewalks, the Brookfield Common, Lewis Park for family reunions and recreation, the new boat ramp for fishing and canoeing, the town beach for swimming/boating, and the cemetery for reflection/memories of friends and family
162. I use all of the above with my family (the clean South Pond water and beach; the Common for gatherings; Lewis Park for recreation; fishing off the bridge)
163. I've seen many beautiful natural wonders around Brookfield that only a farmer would know of or appreciate. God gave us a beautiful planet!
164. kayaking on the river and lakes. South pond beach
165. Have a home on South Pond. Ski, swim and fish there.
166. Photography, gardening, enjoying the view.

167. Walking & use for grand kids
168. Walking
169. Walking, nature photography
170. Very little right now. Mostly town common, Lewis Field and school yard for kids play.
171. Boating, swimming, and fishing
172. We kayak around South Pond and use the beach and porta-potties that have been well maintained. We are so grateful for the use of this space and having the amenities.
173. There is not much to use
174. Walking hiking biking relaxing
175. As my ancestors did. Protect what we held dear to our hearts
176. sports activities, kayaking, swimming, produce picking/Christmas tree, hiking
177. I walk 3-4 miles nearly every day in one or another of these places. My wife often takes photographs of the beautiful landscapes, birds and wildlife. This past spring, we saw a Scarlett Tanager in Twitchell's Grove and appreciated the work of the Boy Scouts in restoring and labeling the trails through the Grove. We enjoyed the warblers, Blue Birds, and an Indigo Bunting we saw on regular walks along East Main Street/Elm Hill Road.
178. I often visit Quabaug lake and stop at the river to enjoy the fresh air and scenery. I like to walk the roads and trails down Quabaug St area.
179. Log cabin on South Pond. Swimming, skating in winter
180. Have a house in south pond
181. Walking both in the woods and along the roadways.
182. Rec sports and other town events
183. Fishing, hiking, cross country skiing, walking the streets and picking up trash. I love the land and space in Brookfield.
184. canoeing, kayaking, town beach, hiking
185. hiking & fishing
186. Lewis field playground. Just to go sit and relax near pavilion
187. Boating (non-motorized), walking and hiking. Great to have porta-potties and recycling/trash pick-up at town beach! (we always bring trash bags and clean up when we are there:-))
188. walking, swimming
189. kayaking and canoeing
190. have a large tract of land that I and others use - viewing of lakes and rivers, Boston Post road, open landscapes, town common
191. some walking/kayaking
192. walking - use shelter at Lewis Field for a party. Scenic roads

How do others you know use these spaces?

79 responses (incl. repeats)

193. Same (9)
194. The same (2)
195. kayaking, hiking/exploration. Fishing.
196. In addition to boating and fishing there is hunting, walking, biking, swimming etc..
197. The same
198. I see lots of activity on the river and at Lewis Field.
199. Youth sports, bike riding.
200. paddling, fishing

201. Word of mouth
202. active youth programs scouts, athletics
203. Yes
204. There are plenty of local hunters that use the wildlife management areas in town and this year I have noticed more fishing activity in the Cranberry pond behind my house and in the old reservoir. I have even noticed people parking near the river to read the paper or to walk their dog.
205. similar, but with pets
206. They hike, walk and bike; as well as use the Rec areas
207. same as above
208. Swimming canoeing walking parks
209. Fairs/festivals, community events, kids' fun, sports, fishing, boating, walking
210. Same answer as above, although many more people use Lewis Field for other sports.
211. Same, plus playground, and sports
212. Sports
213. As above as well as kayaking, swimming, biking
214. Sport recreation
215. boating and swimming
216. Sports fishing family
217. I use my own land and or friends.
218. Walking and trails
219. About the same some fishing and hunting as well as!
220. same, but some use ATV's where they are not allowed & ruin the trails
221. Swimming at south lake
222. boating, fishing, sports teams
223. swimming sailing
224. Hiking and boating
225. Parks, athletic fields, lakes, trails
226. They use all recreational areas.
227. Walking, hiking, some water recreation
228. Same as above plus swimming
229. Boating, fishing, swimming, kayaking
230. don't know
231. Swimming, fishing
232. Swimming, boating, fishing.
233. bicycling, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting
234. swim, canoe, kayak, meditate
235. Hiking and lake recreation
236. boating and fishing hand gliding
237. Boating, sports,
238. My neighbors all live on the same lake.
239. Hiking, swimming, walking, playing sports, enjoying town events.
240. Same as above
241. The same way
242. hunting
243. Similarly
244. Hunting, fishing, kayaking and boating.

- 245. Family sports, personal enjoyment
- 246. Hunting
- 247. Fishing, running, jogging, birdwatching, water sports,
- 248. Similar to our with children including South Pond.
- 249. Boating, swimming, and fishing
- 250. Boating, swimming, the boat parade, the use of the boat ramp.
- 251. Most go elsewhere
- 252. For exploring the outdoors and being one with nature
- 253. same
- 254. I know several other people who take regular walks as my wife and I do. We appreciate the work that Kermit & Jeanne Eaton have done to repair the stone walls and to preserve open space on their property, which made it possible for the community to enjoy a Native American Heritage Event on their property and the Brookfield Garden Club does nice work to maintain the Gardens, the Historical Society has worked to help the community appreciate the Scenic Roads by putting up signs and they have maintained the Town Pound; the work of the Conservation Commission to protect the natural environment is invaluable, but often unnoticed; the APPLESEED organization has worked on beautification of town ways (the cherry trees) and sponsors the Apple Country Fair every year. The preservation of key open spaces and the linkage of these spaces with one another through conscious and careful planning of individuals and civic organizations, and municipal governments protects our wildlife and creates the environments that make it possible for community events to take place. These "meeting places" are what draws people together and build a strong community.
- 255. Probably not much, I don't think people know or appreciate what Brookfield has to offer.
- 256. Boating, fishing
- 257. Lots of walkers - We need more trails and sidewalks.
- 258. Town events, playground, walking
- 259. Pretty much the same as myself. Everybody I know respects the land.
- 260. in general country living
- 261. walking running kayaking

What concerns you about Brookfield's natural spaces and recreation areas?

99 responses (incl. repeats)

- 262. The biggest concern is the weed growth in Quaboag pond. The pond is getting ever shallower and will be gone in the near future.
- 263. That more emphasis will be put on recreational land less on agricultural which eventually becomes a "bedroom town" rather than a vibrant agricultural community.
- 264. Noise pollution from MX23, lack of marked trails for hiking or walking, lack of sidewalks
- 265. Regulations laws like signs on the common
- 266. That open spaces and farms will fall to poorly planned development schemes.
- 267. Traffic safety issues.
- 268. unmanaged and improper land uses. getting people involved in stewardship.
- 269. Right
- 270. Litter, lack of trash removal strategy, hunting during restricted days
- 271. funding to pursue preservation
- 272. Sale of farms for house lots, loss of open space, increased traffic & strain on the elementary school. Loss of the rural character of the town.

273. I see no reason to be concerned with the already allocated natural spaces and recreation areas in town. They appear to be managed properly and always have a welcoming look to them. I'm thinking of the South Pond beach area, the river on 148 and Lewis Field. As far as privately held natural spaces, I see them as being constantly under the threat of subdivision and development. The town should take great pride in the open spaces we currently have and do whatever is possible to work with the land owner to keep development as the very last resort.
274. upkeep, we could use more than one soccer field, a bike/hiking trail would be awesome
275. No good beach or fishing areas
276. Don't want to lose natural spaces and the Rec areas need updating
277. need for more fields many sports \ teams with similar needs competing for these areas
278. South pond is a disgrace! The ONLY place for many families to go. My husband has cleaned it up on his own, but it is awful now! There is barely any beach left. It's over taken with weeds. And what sand is left is so dirty! Rotten leaves, trash and cigarette butts! But the worst part is the smell of dog poop!! The minute you sit down it's ALL you can smell!
279. Not enough sports fields, not enough multi-purpose use areas, minimal electricity or water availability, minimal bathroom facilities
280. I wouldn't want to see any natural spaces taken away, and I would like to see them maintained and improved.
281. The beach access and parking are not as passable as they should be. Trash is often left by many in all places
282. Not taken care of and need more space
283. I'd like to see them protected. It would be great if the beach area could be improved. We could use better signage marking some of the historic and scenic points in our town, and maybe a map of these areas.
284. Lack of upkeep by the town
285. They do not manage their beach area well clean up especially
286. Events/sports available to Brookfield residents are not advertised enough to know what's going on
287. I would like to see Fisheries and Wildlife expand the use of their land. I think they are not being fair when they buy land, don't pay taxes and forbid people from using it in different capacities. I believe we could have the best of both worlds, where we can have areas designated for hiking trails, snow shoeing, ATV and snow mobiles.
288. Housing
289. Maintenance
290. Litter and graffiti in some areas trails
291. Some people not taking care of it when they visit
292. I'd like to see sidewalks from the common to the river & down to Long Hill road to promote more walking between areas. I'd love to see a walking path along the river. When my kids were small they got their feet cut up on debris in South Pond, otherwise we really loved going there. So further development there. I dislike the parking at Lewis Field. Given all of the pedestrian traffic at Lewis Field, I think the parking lot should be up by the basketball court next to the road.
293. South lake is over grown and unmanaged
294. Motorcross track is horrible and loud into late night. Sidewalks in tow end randomly and I am less willing to let my kids go to the field and center because of intermittent sidewalks.
295. I would like to maintain these natural spaces in order to continue keeping Brookfield a quiet country setting. Do not want to see development in these natural spaces as we will not be able to enjoy the wildlife that comes with these spaces
296. Lack of maintenance
297. where are they
298. Parking at lake is awful! No lifeguards, people fish from the beach area, leaving hooks and lines for swimmers to get caught on.

299. Improper posting information on usage
300. I don't have any concerns at the moment since I am fairly new to use these spaces.
301. Insufficient support for healthy watersheds and public beach (South Pond).
302. I worry that they may disappear
303. Losing them
304. Quality of water, preservation of open spaces
305. The lakes are over run by weeds. clogged
306. The beach area at South Pond can be clogged with jet skis, dogs and garbage at times
307. Clean lake water and beaches, along with a porta poti
308. The water quality suffers due to the Spencer Treatment plant and I'm concerned about development as more land is purchased by builders. The future of the Jeppson property is an unknown.
309. Development, both residential and commercial; the quality of lakes and rivers
310. loss of opportunities to get more, damage caused by illegal use by atvs, orvs, etc, continuing management
311. New developments
312. I'd like to see a reasonable amount of space reserved for nature and passive recreation to restrict any OVER development.
313. A clean public beach
314. weeds and pollution in quaboag pond
315. How the town will use newly acquired space
316. The preservation of our lake. Preventing any more invasive species (i.e. zebra mussels or aquatic plants) from being introduced.
317. Upkeep--trash always needs to be changed at Lewis Field; we often find trash along roadsides. South Pond beach is not pleasant (fish hooks, cigarettes, weeds). Dog poop on the common. Ticks and mosquitoes in forested areas--I would love to walk the trail from Devil's Elbow to Foster Hill but am scared of ticks. People don't know about trails and how to get to them (Wolf Swamp? Boy scout trail behind the elementary school--are people allowed to use this? Can people hike at Richardson Game Preserve or is it just for hunting?) Also, there are sidewalks in the center of town but a huge lack elsewhere. People are walking/running/biking in skinny roads next to speeding cars.
318. Ticks and mosquitoes. Lack of access and maintenance. Water quality and run off from upstream water treatment plants (Spencer).
319. Excessive development and especially the risk of pollution from the Spencer sewer treatment plant
320. Funding and peoples interest in our community
321. Overuse by motorized vehicles.
322. Spencer Waste Water treatment Plant dumping
323. the town makes no effort to clean, rake or care for the town beach or parking areas. There is a lot of mass fish farm wildlife land, Audobon and Opacum land, there doesn't seem to be any effort made to provide trails, maps, good parking nor to encourage the public use of these properties
324. care of waterways to minimize pollution
325. they [areas] will be sold and over developed
326. Sewer treatment plan in Spencer dumping into Seven Mile River. All of it ends up in North and South Ponds
327. keep them accessible
328. Future planning for protection and preservation of green space and woodlands
329. the quality of the water and beach at South Pond for swimmers
330. South Pond public area and North Pond public area beyond disgusting
331. South Pond public area and North Pond public area beyond disgusting. A complete embarrassment. So much more could be done. Brookfield taxes higher than East Brookfield, yet they manage to have the most delightful

beach area which I have to "stoop" to "trespassing" to enjoy. South Pond used to be half-way decent but with boat ramp, has become neglected dump. Not sure this qualifies as I don't know if part of Brookfield "jurisdiction" but lots could be done with area just beyond the lovely cemetery which was a former rest stop with picnic tables - trails, nature, picnicking, school field trips for vernal pool swamp, etc.

332. The decline in farming is troublesome. The pastoral landscape is quickly fading into the past. Supporting the local farms will keep Brookfield beautiful! It takes a bit of effort to do this.
333. the biggest concern I have is the health of Quaboag lake
334. Waste water from the Spencer plant back flowing into the river, then to the lakes.
335. The threat of sprawl, of blight from careless residents by littering/dumping or deliberate vandalism or carelessness, either of their own or publicly held properties. The misuse of public natural spaces by ATM and dirt bike drivers or snowmobile operators who trespass, cut trails through public properties, or trespass on private woodlands for their own selfish pursuit of pleasure.
336. To see them maintained & enjoyed
337. We need more commercial land; we have too much open space
338. Safety, especially in light of the opioid epidemic. People from in town and outside the area use some of our spaces to use drugs. 2.) Cleanliness. Trash and discarded waste are unacceptable. 3.) Lack of formality, signage and information about spaces, trails, etc.
339. The ponds are not as clean and attractive for swimming. Our town doesn't make much appealing to families with children outside the limited committee focused on the events around Halloween and Santa visit. There is little excitement drawn to what natural spaces and recreation spaces we have.
340. Water quality at Quaboag Pond especially related to Spencer Waste Treatment Plant issues and potential contamination of our ground water drinking supply from said plant
341. I worry about continued treatment of the water in South pond to be able to swim and boat.
342. The limited space we have
343. Brookfield practice dirt bike track is disruptive and loud. It affects wildlife
344. No road in the campground
345. they will not be maintained and will become unusable
346. Open Space planners have not done enough to show the linkage between the benefits or preserving open space to the economic development of the Town and Region. Too often preservation of key spaces are seen as impediments to the Town's economic development. This Open Space Plan needs to be developed hand-in-glove with the Town's Economic Development Plan so people see how they compliment one another. Municipalities have not done enough to ensure access to the open spaces we have by providing sidewalks, by creating school curricula that use the community as learning environments as a regular part of the course of study, and by developing activities that bring people to these sites. The effort by our Zoning Enforcement Officer, Nick Thomo, to get people to clean up their properties is to be commended because the Town has a number of areas of blight. The Selectmen's initiative (led by Clarence Snyder, Kermit Eaton, and others) to clean up the campground off Pine Lane, conduct archeological investigations and eventually to preserve this important Native American site is important, but planners need to be thinking also about the leadership and organizational development needed to create activities that will take place there to bring people to an appreciation of the site.
347. Under appreciated, I know that nature has taken back a lot of spaces formally developed.
348. Increased algae in water.
349. There is no boat wash for people putting boats in south pond potentially bringing harmful weeds into the lake
350. Don't want developers to take away the open space. Would like to preserve habitat for wild animals and plants. Worried about using Glyphosate and other pesticides in the rivers to rid unwanted plants. Agricultural runoff is a concern. Preserving historical sites is also a concern. Climate change will impact everything.
351. Outdated, limited options, eye sore for town

- 352. Owners logging out the forests, littering, destroying the natural resources for our wildlife.
- 353. concerns about too much development - please preserve the open spaces!
- 354. possible development, solar farms, land for sale in Elm Hill Historic district!
- 355. The Brookfields are a caring community. Cleanliness of areas - especially at town beach. Praise the fishermen that don't leave any hooks laying around. Or anyone leaving sharp objects
- 356. Want to support weed growth in south pond through education (re: no phosphates, no fertilizers, planting buffer zones) [something not readable] not chemicals.
- 357. who is paying attention to be sure these spaces don't disappear
- 358. vegetation management in ponds - need higher weir
- 359. Not promoted enough - lack of awareness. Some may not be maintained. State and federal spaces unknown.
We have ample space in Brookfield owned by state, town and private citizens that is available to general public for hiking, bird watching, hunting, ATVs, cross country skiing, etc. Need to catalogue these and promote them.
- 360. potential development and people that have hazardous materials within watershed areas
- 361. that they will be mis-used or wasted. That is, our town beach or Twitchell Grove, Mill Pond, Wolf swamp.

What concerns have you heard from other people-even those who think differently than you?

83 responses (incl. repeats)

- 362. None (2)
- 363. None. Just realization that people don't tend to recommend Brookfield lakes, etc
- 364. No one I talk to has any real concern other than the Spencer treatment plant runoff into the ponds.
- 365. People come here attracted by the rural character then want to turn it into "suburbia" where they original left to come here.
- 366. Signs are needed to deter inappropriate activities
- 367. That we need jobs here and they are willing to trade open land for that. I think we need a master plan that takes into account the need for jobs and the importance of keeping our town's rural character.
- 368. Nothing special.
- 369. umm, no specifics
- 370. I haven't heard any concerns but I am older and now using those open spaces for my grandchildren.
- 371. Trash
- 372. Money issues. Can't afford preservation.
- 373. Increased students in the schools, lack of services for elderly.
- 374. Not heard of any. There really isn't any discussion around town about our natural spaces and recreation areas.
- 375. They don't like people from other towns using our spaces (but I don't care!)
- 376. More hiking trails
- 377. places specified for dog walking
- 378. The lake needs to be fixed up!
- 379. Not enough community use space, not enough bathroom facilities, not enough sports fields, not enough walking trails, South Pond beach is gross and unusable, Soth Pond boat ramp is difficult to use
- 380. The beach needs to be cleaned up and a dock or play structure should be added in the water.
- 381. Needs to be cared for better and more often
- 382. Upkeep
- 383. Town does not manage their beach area well
- 384. That there is no place to ride or hike with marked trails where you don't feel you are imposing on someone's land.
- 385. Too much houses in what used to be woods

386. Town Beach at South Pond overgrown and lacking inviting atmosphere in general
387. Haven't talked to anybody else bout it
388. People want a defined swimming area at South Pond, like the town beach at Lashaway. Perhaps install a walking path around Lewis Field.
389. Same
390. motocross needs a curfew!
391. The sights and sounds that are not natural - i.e. motorcycle racetracks.
392. Lack of maintenance
393. poor lake quality of water due to spencer sewage plant and east brookfield dump
394. People that don't pick up after their dogs, and don't get fined for it. Makes responsible dog owners get blamed or harassed.
395. The height of the weir near the beach on south pond
396. I haven't heard any
397. Very similar concerns.
398. I'm sorry, I have not heard anything
399. Losing these natural spaces. Once they are lost they are usually gone forever. Would pay more taxes to maintain these areas
400. Lakes are in poor condition
401. Dangerous boating practices and rules not being followed
402. Some of the trees are so old that they should be cut down as they could be dangerous.
403. Similar to mine
404. not aware of anything
405. unknown
406. The same as me
407. There is weed control actively being pursued. There is always concern about our flood gate and the proper management of water flow into and out of South Pond.
408. Lack of sidewalks. Nothing to do in town.
409. Water issues--rivers and lakes mainly.
410. poor zoning that allows residences to accumulate trash, old inoperable automobiles and boats all over their yards. This detracts from the beauty of Brookfield and lowers resale values
411. Making sure that our lakes are healthy for generation's Continued education on the importance of the lake's Residents.
412. Not knowing what areas are usable vs private property.
413. Brookfield needs to develop commercial, business to broaden tax base. There are enough open space in to, however there is no effort to make people aware of these amenities
414. the contribution of the Spencer plant to pollution
415. nothing
416. similar to my own - Sewer treatment plan in Spencer dumping into Seven Mile River. All of it ends up in North and South Ponds
417. commercial development that would increase traffic, drugs and crime
418. the quality of water for swimming
419. Most would like to maintain our rural atmosphere, but are actually very much out of touch with it. Many are afraid of how to interact with nature.
420. Getting owners of unmaintained/unsightly properties
421. similar concerns

- 422. The same, especially noise pollution from the motocross area near the Quaboag or from ATM and dirt bike riders on other properties.
- 423. Open space takes land off tax rolls
- 424. Similar to ours for families with young children.
- 425. Same as above...concern as to why it has taken so long (years) to address the Spencer issue and what the town can do to help remedy the problem.
- 426. That the beach could be closed, that the maintenance could be better there.
- 427. Lack of athletic fields
- 428. Same as me. Although a lot of people from out of town enjoy the sport
- 429. Preserving the Adena Project Campground as a natural area and educational area for all to enjoy
- 430. n/a
- 431. Many people oppose open space planning because they fear more regulation, more limitations on their rights as property owners, more regulations that prevent them from enjoying being outside by riding motorcycles and 4-wheelers through the woods. To some, preserving open space is seen as preventing economic development. The Motocross track next to the Town Transfer Station is a good case in point - to some it is great recreation and a good use of open space and to others it is noise pollution and a regular irritant.
- 432. Haven't heard anything.
- 433. Loss of waterlilies/mustards due to intrusion of building too near 'sanctuary' cove.
- 434. Taking down too many trees in town. Need for safer walkways.
- 435. Space is limited for sports
- 436. Not too much.
- 437. Spencer sanitation plant going into lake
- 438. development that would change the characteristics.
- 439. Trash removal and the portable toilets - not cleaned or removed often enough
- 440. The road run-off to wetlands and other property
- 441. abandoned buildings
- 442. non taxable property
- 443. that we are not encouraging enough development and people should be free to do what they want with what they own

What are the most difficult challenges facing Brookfield related to natural spaces or recreation areas?

90 responses (incl. repeats)

- 444. Not sure (3)
- 445. Awareness and commitment. Rec department does well - I'm not on the committee but they probably lack volunteers and support (2)
- 446. Funds. The town can't rebuild a bridge, how can it maintain recreation? Every bill on recreation includes a tag for affordable housing and that won't pass in a highly republican town.
- 447. The overwhelming urge to do "something" with them through laws rather than foster and encourage that which is true to our history and rural character.
- 448. Lack of and maintaining not enough hunting
- 449. I don't think enough people care/realize that once land is gone, it is GONE. I think we as a town should be willing to pay to keep open space open as an investment in the future.
- 450. An abundance of opportunity vs resources to develop?
- 451. unsure. civic engagement?

452. Maintenance
453. Lack of funding, vocal minority opposed to change.
454. The tax base needs more industry but we don't want to lose our open space.
455. I don't fully understand this question. My first thought is that the town officials are the only ones that can answer it. It would most likely come down to how much money the town has or needs for maintaining the areas. For public natural spaces and recreation areas, a little advertising in the Brookfield Citizen would help draw in more interest or maybe hosting an event at each location around town would create more interest.
456. parking, no shade at the little park by the rail road tracks
457. Wasting our town money on stupid crap and not caring what the town as a whole wants
458. Need a balance when deciding how to develop and keep natural. The Rec areas need planning and funds to move forward- the ballfields area in dire need of updating
459. ongoing maintenance, needing more space, more community involvement, the same people tend to do the major share of the work.
460. People to keep them clean. People to enforce the rules such as no dogs in the swimmers area!
461. Residents don't want to spend money on anything
462. Money, maintenance
463. Mis-use, littering, graffiti at the playground
464. Money
465. Money and manpower to maintain them.
466. The upkeep
467. maintenance of the vast area of responsibility
468. laws preventing such access.
469. Volunteers to make it happen
470. Community support
471. Development happening
472. We are lucky to have a large number of natural spaces.
473. Volunteers to help clean up
474. Different generations. Youth wanting more to do and elders wanting to maintain history.
475. keeping them this way
476. Funds
477. dirty lake water
478. Up keep and trash barrels.
479. The cleanup of the Spencer waste water treatment plant ASAP Also understanding why the Quaboag river chokes out with weeds
480. Unsure
481. Setting priorities.
482. Keeping them safe, protected and clean
483. Cost to maintain and expand areas
484. The sewage treatment plant and the impact on the lakes
485. maintenance
486. The use from non residents and their inability to follow rules.
487. Clean Lake water!
488. Maintaining open space owned by the town such as the Tobin property
489. if not, Community Preservation Act should be passed
490. I think there's always the threat of expansion, building or "developing land", which can harm the environs
491. Limited financial resources

492. keeping all waterways free of pollution
493. The thought of selling space for tax revenue
494. Keeping people educated on good stewardship of our lakes and rivers.
495. Money, upkeep of spaces, creating trails and access to trails.
496. Due to nature of volunteer management South Pond can lack in upkeep.
497. I would suspect lack of adequate funds
498. Keeping the community educated about our responsibility to keep our natural spaces safe, clean and available for everyone.
499. Keeping them open
500. the permitting process and complexity around dealing with Spencer's waste water treatment - bureaucracy at its worst!
501. Protecting water quality in rivers and ponds; finding good location for more playing fields for youth/adults
502. Funds - how to have enough to support worthwhile and desired projects, and how to decide what projects to support with the funds you have
503. maintaining clear water for recreation
504. cleaning up the environment, land and water resources
505. forward progress (commercial imposing development) vs. preservation of quality of life issues
506. maintaining a quality of life for all ages
507. Personally, I believe most people including children have great apathy for the outside world. Their technology has driven them into a make-believe world.
508. Balancing the rights of private landholders with the need to preserve open space. Balancing the influx of new residents and the demand for housing they bring with the preservation of open space and unspoiled terrain.
509. Imagine it is difficult to police all the areas, but we need to feel safe.
510. I am not sure but maybe limited funds.
511. State inaction to environmental issues especially with the Spencer Issue
512. Keeping the spaces and maintaining them rather than development or to stop maintaining them.
513. Available space
514. No road in the campground
515. maintenance - the beach looks terrible, trails are not maintained
516. How to connect open space planning with community development strategies more broadly, especially economic development. 2. How to connect individual pieces of open space in the town and with contiguous towns to meet differing needs for preserving the natural environment, providing recreational opportunities for a variety of audiences, and allowing economic development in the right places for both the businesses and the environment. 3. Strengthening leadership in both individual town governments and in regional economic, environmental, and social development of the region. A good open space plan that simply sits on the shelf is a waste of time and money unless it is accompanied by an organizational strategy and budget to implement it. The plan needs to propose specific organizational and financial steps. Can the plan be implemented successfully without having a town administrator to provide continuity - I think the evidence suggests that a town administrator/grant writer, active participation in the Central Mass Regional Planning efforts, and an active Brookfield Master Plan Committee will be essential elements.
517. I don't think there is much awareness RE the history of Brookfield or the recreational resources there are.
518. Waste from industrial sites
519. Preserving green corridors for animals. Encouraging people to get outside and take advantage of our natural world. We need create more ways to encourage people get out into nature.
520. Town commitment to spend money to improve.lack of selectmen support for open spaces.

- 521. Getting folks to agree, and probably funds.
- 522. Raising south pond flow barrier 18" without losing ability to boat under bridge between south/north ponds
- 523. money
- 524. bike and skateboard park
- 525. weeds in lakes, ticks in woods. Disagree on how to reduce weeds.
- 526. honest selectmen and support staff
- 527. low level of lake Quaboag. Fix bridge on Quaboag street
- 528. awareness; underutilized; maintained. Rec field facilities well maintained and utilized.
- 529. having a coherent plan. establishing fields for the youth for recreation leagues without losing too much forest, etc.
- 530. Co-ordinate with state or Audobon etc. uses

What do people disagree about when discussing these topics?

71 responses (incl. repeats)

- 531. Nothing (2)
- 532. Funding (2)
- 533. What to do with the old campground. Some people want a historic trail others want it converted to a recreation field for baseball or soccer.
- 534. Economics vs. quality of life.
- 535. N/a
- 536. They always complain about taxes even if it is a small increase that would help save land and farms. I am angry about that when I know people pay large amounts for other things like lottery tickets, cigarettes, cable, and the like.
- 537. No idea - sorry.
- 538. suspect it is a land rights issue?
- 539. I think maintenance of those spaces might be an issue.
- 540. we can afford it...
- 541. The need to keep Brookfield as a small rural community.
- 542. I haven't heard of any discussions on the topic in this part of town.
- 543. ?
- 544. Some are for the agenda in this town some aren't.
- 545. The people I talk have kids playing on the fields as well as themselves and agree that they need help
- 546. not sure
- 547. Unknown
- 548. I haven't had that discussion
- 549. I haven't heard any disagreements
- 550. Who should take responsibility for it
- 551. The use of motorized vehicles, hunting, and the level of investment we should put into these spaces. I heard (and oppose) a suggestion to build a municipal building on Lewis Field or other open space.
- 552. not much disagreement
- 553. I think ATV and Snow mobile riders get a bad rap in this state. In New Hampshire and Maine, they bring in much needed revenue. I think most riders are environmentally conscientious. Most hikers pick up trash and will maintain trails if given the opportunity. Cough State Park in New Hampshire is a great example of a little bit of everything.
- 554. Financial viability

555. Haven't heard
556. What is good for the few is not good for majority
557. Everyone has their opinion
558. Who is responsible for a certain area
559. do not know
560. No idea.
561. The height of the weir (adding 18" additional inches to block all overflow conditions and doing a risk assessment on impact to waterfront homes in Brookfield Sturbridge & East Brookfield as part of Flood Zone etc
562. Unsure
563. Budgetary priorities.
564. I don't know -
565. Finances
566. Although most people agree that the town is a better place due to the open space there are some who feel more development will add to the tax base.
567. Money to keep water quality and minimum weed growth
568. CPA is a tax, development will help make Brookfield more financially secure
569. not aware of anything
570. unknown
571. how money is spent
572. Uses
573. As a QQLA member, we are very unified in the proper management of this natural resource.
574. I'm not sure.
575. People disagree about spending money.
576. What are the priorities to focus on
577. They may not understand the importance of the barrier at the beach between North and South Pond.
578. Motorized access
579. See above
580. Funds - how to have enough to support worthwhile and desired projects, and how to decide what projects to support with the funds you have
581. not aware
582. Not aware
583. The level to which the Spencer plant back flow affects our invasive weed situation
584. "Property rights" versus "Common good." There seems to be a sentiment that one makes the other impossible. This is far from the truth.
585. Unsure
586. In Brookfield, it's always a fight for "How do we pay for XYZ?"
587. Don't know
588. Most are in agreement !
589. Not sure.
590. What's important
591. They want to put a road through the campground that is a cemetery.
592. n/a
593. Disagreements happen most frequently because of a lack (1) the lack of a comprehensive Master Plan combining all the elements of open space planning, economic development, capital planning, etc. and (2) knowledge and broad consensus about the plan if it exists. Usually, people are debating about a specific proposal - something concrete - and they do not understand how it fits within a larger strategy. As a result, they let their

larger fears (too much government, too much taxation, tree-huggers vs. evil developers. too little or too much economic development, etc. etc.) form the basis of debate. The current "no-tax" climate frames the debate at the outset rather than "what is best for our community and region?"

- 594. Nothing I can think of.
- 595. Economic need vs nature preservation.
- 596. Have not heard much disagreement, only concern to preserve it.
- 597. The value of attracting new families, value of open space to the community
- 598. Where the funds should be spent.
- 599. priority of woods/nature vs. economic development

What new directions or improvements would you like to see in Brookfield related to natural spaces and recreation areas?

99 responses (incl. repeats)

- 600. Open up more natural space - Lewis Field trails, area after cemetery before West Brookfield; make picnic area at railroad tracks desirable (hard one); make beach areas presentable & usable for beaching and swimming!
- 601. n/a (2 responses)
- 602. Dredge the quaboag pond. Bring back the halloween bon fire. The town really does a good job otherwise.
- 603. Agri-tourism is one way of staying true to our history and maintaining our rural character.
- 604. Better kayak access to Quaboag River, marked and maintained hiking trails
- 605. Maintaining hiking trails along Quaboug river full length and board walks
- 606. I would like it if there were more activities relating to the river (bird walks, kayak and canoe trips, e.g.) and to other guided walks. Also presentations about the history of towns' farms and open space areas so that more people are aware of them as resources. I'd like to see a group dedicated to searching out more open areas as possible purchases and also to be a resource to people in town who might be willing to donate land to the town.
- 607. Where to go cross country skiing. Maybe a skating rink on the common. Community gardens/fruit and veg plantings free to harvest.
- 608. need to study this better
- 609. Would love to see a safe bike path but not sure if that is feasible.
- 610. More care for our natural resources
- 611. Grow youth fields, preserve Adena site (historic space/cultural center)
- 612. Sale of the Cooley Hill Reservoir
- 613. I would encourage keeping housing development to a handful of houses or possibly none each year until a set number of years has passed. Also, keep large solar projects out of town. Brookfield should attempt to stand out as one that has the most open space, and that space, if advertised, could generate a lot of tourism that would help businesses and farms in this town as well as give the town a great reputation.
- 614. I would love a biking/hiking trail, another soccer field would be great
- 615. Disc golf course
- 616. The waterways need attention as they are getting choked with weeds. The Rec areas need an improvement plan as well as a proper maintenance plan to move forward
- 617. more trails, more athletic fields, there are a lot of grants out there but just need to be approached
- 618. I would love to see pond revamped!
- 619. More walking trails - both easy (think rail trail) and difficult levels
- 620. Walking/bike trail would be nice

621. Better access to the lake and flattening of the parking areas across the street.
622. More time and money put into the atletci fields, ex. lewis field (baseball and softball fields need to be redone, possibly plumbed restrooms
623. Improved town beach area, interpretive and wayfinding signage to historically significant sites, such as the native burial grounds. A historic map. Lewis Field is a gorgeous property and under-utilized. A splash pad at Lewis Field would be awesome!
624. More space is needed for pour growing community
625. Port a pottie maintenence and trash collection at the beach
626. Score boards at the fields
627. More hiking and riding trails. Most people live in this area because we love the outdoors yet there are very little sidewalks or places to actually walk safely. I think Atvs on the road with lights on Town roads, should be considered.
628. Larger land plots . Value and budget the funding for athletics and outdoor fun perhaps trails
629. More involvement from the younger generations
630. Beach area more inviting.
631. Would like to see activities added to Lewis field
632. I answered this on the previous page. Additionally, Get rid of the "practice" ATV race or whatever motor racing by the transfer station that people are complaining about. People move to this area for quiet!
633. Adding Areas for family's to gather
634. walking trails would be nice
635. Marked trails, tours to area with discussions on the history of the area. Like how the area in which I live had ice houses that they stored ice from the lake and took it via horse and buggy to the train. Some of the area still has foundation coming out of the ground from these storage facilities.
636. More accessibility and an Internet listing of what's available where.
637. checking boats entering public landing
638. Trash barrels, lifeguards, and better parking.
639. Brookfield should have at least one joint meeting with Sturbridge and East Brookfield per year to discuss common goals to protect South Pond
640. Being an out of town resident, with a child in Brookfield Elementary, I am pretty happy with the park and athletic fields so far. This is compared to the park and fields in the town I am from. Brookfield is several steps ahead.
641. Very clear priority to protect watersheds.
642. Possibly more information available regarding how and why these spaces need to be preserved
643. Public exposure
644. Upgrades to the sewage treatment plant
645. Clean them up
646. Improved trash collection and a way to make the visitors to South Pond follow rules better
647. Clean Lake Water! Boats from North Pond should be cleaned before coming into South Pond
648. More walking trails similar to the town forest in North Brookfield. More activities at the South Pond beach.
649. Emphasis on water quality
650. More action in preserving open space and agricultural lands, identification of ecologically important habitats
651. Identify areas that at are abandoned and buy them for preservation
652. Preservation of open space/recreation as much as possible with the \$\$\$ available.
653. Keeping the lakes clean.
654. clean up and repair existing structures
655. Keep them open

656. To continue monitoring and managing these areas is a must. Improvements are great when all parties are pulling in the same direction.
657. I would love to see sidewalks so people can walk/run/stroll babies, and I would love to see more trails developed and used and advertised. There was talk once of fixing up the old military highway that connects Devils Elbow and Foster Hill--this would be fantastic both recreationally and historically. Also, many people have expressed interest in cleaning up South Pond, as it's the only place to swim in Brookfield.
658. I'd like people to be better able to move through town on foot (trails and sidewalks) and bike (trails and bike lanes). Also better South Pond beach maintenance.
659. be sure to prioritize keeping the lakes, rivers and ponds free from pollution
660. A way to have unity and work together for both Brookfield and Sturbridge
661. Signage
662. how to deal with Spencer's waste water treatment plant issues - this has been an unresolved topic for the 11 years I have owned property in East Brookfield
663. make use and take care of the natural woods, ponds, rivers that we have. Make them more usable - trails, maps, signage, parking
664. Continue supporting all activities to improve and maintain water quality in waters and surrounding watershed lands.
665. Laws to keep and protect the open spaces so they are not sold to development. I would love to see a walkway along the Quaboag river for nature observation
666. more off street parking at South Pond boat ramp
667. keep open spaces accessible
668. careful comprehensive planning that will maintain Brookfield property and its countryside as a desirable place to live for its residents
669. keeping green space green
670. Perhaps just better awareness of what is actually out there in the natural world would help. Tours for our own school children might help. Educate them about the world right outside their doors.
671. More/Better trails to access the wildlife areas and Audobon property
672. Holding the Spencer plant to a higher standard regarding their back flow
673. First, more funding to facilitate the safe and appropriate enjoyment of these areas by visitors. Staffed lifeguards on the beach, appropriate signage and information for hunting/fishing areas, both on site and at Town Hall. Better supervision to prevent inappropriate or destructive behavior.
674. Kept same
675. We could use adult athletic fields for baseball and soccer ; Lewis field is for 12 and under. We need fields for high school kids and adults
676. A web page and/or annual town notice that lists all the available outdoor recreation opportunities, along with maps, info about access, availability/times, etc. State MassParks recreational activity search on the web lists NOTHING within 10 miles of 01506.
677. For ponds they should be clean and inviting. It would be nice to see trash cans at the town common on a regular basis so people don't throw trash on the grass. A dog park a nice add. More events for families with children. Town yard sale.
678. Pressure Spencer for cost of remediation of the environmental damage from their sewage treatment plant including protection of ground water for drinking.
679. Maintaining and improving the weir to keep South Pond wonderful
680. More athletic fields
681. Get rid of race track or at least enforce time limits(no holidays/sundays)
682. More education about Native People

683. I would like to see spaces maintained better
684. The challenge now is not to add more open space, but rather to "connect the dots" of our many existing elements of open space into a carefully articulated vision of how open space will spur economic, environmental, social and community development in the Town of Brookfield. The plan needs to provide case studies of successes in other communities, including insight into the organizational elements necessary to mobilize the communities. Building on these case studies, the plan - and the process of developing the plan - should include some public forums about these successes in other communities that suggest how Brookfield can better utilize its existing open spaces. For example, the campground project has great potential, but what is needed to attract visitors to it (if that is a goal), what social, educational and recreational activities might be organized, what facilities and access are needed, who administers the site, and how does this site connect programmatically to other sites? This same kind of thinking needs to be applied to perhaps 4-5 other key open space sites in Brookfield (Audubon and the Conservation areas, Lakes and River (Lake Association), Twitchell's Grove and School Committee (environmental education), Common and Historical sites, etc. Simultaneously, the Town needs to develop a vision for Brookfield's primary economic corridor - the Village Center, Route 9, and Mill and Quaboag Streets - that incorporates open space projects (Lake clean up and programming, Native American site, Audubon, Twitchells Grove and Foster Hill conservation areas, clean-up of the Finney gas station and replacement of blight). Could Audubon be persuaded to collaborate with various environmental groups and Town Officials to create a new Visitor Center on Route 9 on the eastern border of Brookfield (Audubon's property connects there) that could also serve as a gateway to other Brookfield recreational sites (Lakes, Native American site, etc.) ? Could Brookfield carve out an identity as a center of natural foods (create a coop natural foods store on route 9 to build on Tip Top) to go with the Native American site, perhaps combined with alternative energy approaches (new solar farm scheduled to be built across from the Clambox) that might be proposed if Brookfield were to compete for Clean Energy Community status?
685. I have proposed a project and gotten positive feedback as well as encouragement from Anne Gobi to continue exploring ideas. What I have proposed: With the archeological dig taking place down at the old camp ground, all of the natural spaces between there and Fiskdale Rd. and the rich but unknown history of the area in mind. 1. Start with a small housed display of findings from the dig and other historical facts of the Quabaug lake area to be located at the old campground site. 2. At the intersection of Quabaug river and Fiskdale Rd add another small housed display of Quaboag River history, town history and local history from other parts of the original town of Brookfield and the Quaboag Plantation. 3. At this intersection a large crossroads sign can give people directions to different areas of interest, reflecting information shown in the displays. Including area towns and possibly other small housed displays throughout the area. All of the Brookfields have rich history as well as recreational potential. 4. Build a raised boardwalk from oak street area, the old campground, to the same intersection of Quabaug & Fiskdale Rd. Similar to the one along the river behind West St School in Southbridge.
686. Follow and protect guidelines of waste management.
687. Control of the spread of hamfull weeds from one body of water to another
688. More pathways, trails with signage. It would be great to be able to walk or bike to surrounding towns and Tantasqua without risking your life. Making a boardwalk along Quaboag Street so people can walk along North Pond.
689. Support from selectmen verbally and through budgetary requests
690. I'd like to see the beach area at South pond cleaned up and maybe a play area for little kids. Last time I went there, it was dirty, dead fish ON the beach,. It was pretty unpleasant. It's a nice part of Brookfield that should be taken care of better.
691. weed control in Quaboag river
692. hiking trails
693. watch the road run-off to wetlands and other property

- 694. toddler play lot
- 695. promotion
- 696. try to determine best locations to allow development protect others formally
- 697. hiking trails, historic areas, public beach/picnic area, wildlife areas... WIDE, well marked trails to avoid ticks

Who should take what actions for these new directions or improvements to occur?

84 responses (incl. repeats)

- 698. Volunteers, town funded though.
- 699. The Town as a whole could support those who are involved in farming now. Knowing that as long as a town remains agriculturally viable we all benefit from a higher quality of life, as well it encourages others to participate.
- 700. Town and volunteer
- 701. Do we have an open space committee? A master plan committee? These need to be coordinated so that goals are clear and opportunities don't slip away because no one took it on themselves to act.
- 702. Investigate any liabilities to the town and do fundraising to offset insurance costs?
- 703. broad based stake holders team
- 704. DPW road trash pickup,
- 705. Large constituency
- 706. Selectmen
- 707. I don't know enough about town government to say who should do what.
- 708. not sure, that is always the problem
- 709. Our highway dept could help if they spent less time watching someone else cut trees
- 710. The town leaders
- 711. more assistance from everyone
- 712. Volunteers. But I think the town should hire someone to dig up the beach. Clean it & dump some fresh sand!
- 713. multiple boards/committees should be involved - Rec, Conservation, Cultural, Selectmen, BoH, seniors, etc
- 714. Not sure
- 715. Whoever is in charge of this area
- 716. Town / town committees
- 717. The selectmen should work with the recreation committee and historic commission and capital planning committee to explore the feasibility and establish project committees to pursue designs and funding. The town will have to decide how to invest in its natural resources and allocate funding for improvements and especially maintenance. We shouldn't have to haggle for the money to keep our fields mowed! Not too many parents with young children attend the town meetings. A public awareness campaign with an issue like this on the warrant may draw people out.
- 718. The town.
- 719. park and recreation committee
- 720. Selectman would have to give direction and permission.
- 721. Selectmen and people of the community
- 722. The town people
- 723. Recreation Committee, Highway Department
- 724. Have a 2 day volunteer event, ask for specific things such as people who do gardening or tree trimming, specific items to enhance a certain part/location of Brookfield. volunteers for food vending to help attract people
- 725. recreation committee and town financial allocation

726. Maybe a sub-committee in cooperation with Conservation Commission. Even though volunteerism is hard to come by, nowadays.
727. do not know
728. Town
729. Selectmen
730. Conservation Commission.
731. If they are beyond the scope of those currently responsible then maybe we need to appoint a separate commission?
732. Everyone from tax paying citizens to local state and federal agencies
733. Allocate the money for the upgrade
734. The town of Brookfield
735. Town of Brookfield or State of MA as needed
736. Some can be accomplished by volunteer groups but large areas will need the support of the town.
737. Individuals, local organizations, and the town of Brookfield
738. local people through their town and the state.
739. Apply for grants?
740. Brookfield DPW for the beach.
741. People directly effected should be asked how they feel regarding use
742. We all share responsibility for protecting and preserving our natural spaces.
743. I assume it would have to be volunteers. Maybe we should have a Trail Committee and a Beach Committee. And a Sidewalk Committee. The Rec Committee has too much to do already managing the sports teams.
744. Those who are motivated can make it happen. Plan to push sidewalks when I have more time.
745. continue the good work on pressuring Spencer to update their sewer treatment plant
746. I'm not sure. The towns, the lakes the community?
747. It's cheap - someone has to organize & identify what areas have what access.
748. The Conservation Commission, Board of Health, and Select Board
749. MA WMA - state; Audobon; Opacum; town- take care of the beach, look to future need for new playing fields Rec department
750. Public should be encouraged to become involved
751. Not sure, maybe Selectmen or a special appointed community members
752. not sure
753. Anyone interested
754. implementing and enforcing rules of conduct at Lewis Park, Common, and the Brookfield Public Beach
755. don't know politics - Rec dept? Selectmen? Volunteers? Common/Cemetery Committee expanded role? Mass engineering?
756. don't know politics - Rec dept? Selectmen? Volunteers? Common/Cemetery Committee expanded role? Mass engineering?
757. All of us citizen
758. Maybe the boy scout troop could maintain trails as a service project
759. The legislation needs to drive this action as the public can only do so much
760. Local government should determine the priorities and then enlist the help of regional (CMRPC) and state resources and expertise, as well as studying examples of successful programs in other parts of the country. Then seeking funding via grant programs and maybe corporate donations, plus the wise use of taxpayer funds where practical. In all cases, a developing a consensus first, rather than a "top-down" approach," is vital to getting Brookfield citizens to buy in to any action taken. Also, zoning should reflect these same priorities by way of putting teeth in any necessary restrictions to prevent sprawl and the swallowing up of these spaces as the town's

population increases. Finally, measures need to be taken to increase awareness of what makes this town so beautiful, including enlisting town boards and committees where appropriate to spread the word at the very least and to actively assist in these efforts where they overlap with their charges.

- 761. Selectmen & town officials
- 762. Try to add or develop fields around Lewis
- 763. State Rep. Gobi, State Sen. Berthiaume, Brookfield selectmen, and OSRP committee
- 764. The town counsel and volunteer committees. What do other towns do well? Let's learn from them and replicate where feasible.
- 765. Selectmen and related town departments
- 766. The town to work with government to improve the weir.
- 767. The town
- 768. Town council
- 769. maybe a committee of volunteers to do maintenance?
- 770. The creation of a Town Administrator/grant writer/Master Planner position in Brookfield is an essential first step in bringing coordination to the heretofore sporadic, project-by-project efforts of the past. There is a pool of willing volunteers to serve on committees and to work on implementation, but they need direction and coordination and staff support. Underneath the Town Administrator, it would be necessary to create a standing Community Development/Master Planning Committee to coordinate the overall work of master planning and grant writing and the specific projects identified as first priorities. This group would need staff support from the Greater Worcester Regional Planners.
- 771. There are many parts to this project and a few road blocks. Including much doubt about the ability to build a boardwalk in that area. However, I have seen them built in other parts of the state and the benefits of a boardwalk vs a developed sidewalk is that a boardwalk will leave much of the area undisturbed. I think there are many resources available to help out including the Army corp of engineers, the State Parks and other government funded entities as well as many local businesses and grant opportunities. The town has a Historical society, recreation dept, as well as other players that should and would be involved.
- 772. Clarify limits, hold industry to guidelines. Local authorities, EPA. .
- 773. Selectmen should form a town committee with the charge to get citizen input and then look for grants, town meeting votes to do the projects.
- 774. Selectmen should advocate for improvement and all involved should volunteer to help improve.
- 775. Utilize Social Media, as well as the newsletter/paper. I know not everybody has the internet, but a good majority do and it would be a great place to start. There are a lot of good folks in Brookfield that would volunteer to help. That's my thought. We have a Brookfield page on Facebook.
- 776. See what the state and federal government can assist with to preserve what we have.
- 777. Dept of recreation/ Little League/Soccer people
- 778. The highway department - good luck with that!!
- 779. state, town and neighborhood associations
- 780. starts with Selectmen. Town has an active volunteer core. Solicit support from volunteers.
- 781. joint public/private effort

Please share any other thoughts about this issue you would like to offer.

48 responses (incl. repeats)

- 782. Brookfield is a wonderful rural town. Just needs a little TLC
- 783. I have no thoughts.

784. If the town officials feel compelled to do something, how about a public campaign to by local, get to know what's being offered by our neighbors. Maybe an public bulletin board with the info. or on the town web site.
785. I love the rural character of Brookfield and was thrilled when land was donated to the Audubon Society so that the Elm Hill Farm area would be protected. We need more of that.
786. How can we make Brookfield a better destination, not just a town people drive through en route to somewhere else?
787. Organize to purse a plan based on priorities
788. The natural spaces and recreation areas would benefit from a bit of advertising. People are crazy about fitness and exploring the outdoors and we have plenty of natural areas to explore. It is really nice to see all of the boats and canoes on the river and seeing that has me thinking of getting a canoe so I can join in. I can't think of any natural spaces set up for fitness biking so if there are any they need to be advertised. The town's website could use a facelift. It is all right for use by the town's people but I can see it as being tremendously boring to anyone not living here. The recreation committee page has one little picture of the playground area at Lewis field. A link to Facebook isn't an answer because I don't have an account with them so I have a difficult time viewing any information on that site.
789. more community involvement get more volunteers,
790. Maintaining what we already have is very important.
791. I'm excited to see what other folks have proposed. I hope you will share the results of this survey!
792. it's a shame the town expects the recreation department that is responsible for rec sports to maintain and upkeep these spaces.
793. The town clearly has the responsibility and yet neglects it's resource.
794. I would love to improve access to the hundreds of acres owned by Fish and Game!
795. The town has a lot of potential, it just needs some creative thinking to utilize the amenities
796. When I think of brookfield I think of agriculture, history and safety. Less is more
797. I appreciate that a survey was available to answer. Most often things happen in town that you are not informed about. So thank you
798. none
799. N/a
800. Involve QQLA all plans and events as observers
801. MS4 NPDES participation.
802. Please keep and expand brookfield natural open spaces
803. clean up the lakes!!!!
804. Possibly limit the access to the Pond to residents and/or sell visitors passes
805. Brookfield is a great town and the open space contributes greatly to its desirability. Maintaining and improving the quality of these areas, especially the lakes and rivers is critical.
806. Thank you for asking!
807. Make sure people are advised of all meeting regarding uses. Possibly placing signs in effected area informing residents in the areas of meetings
808. Thanks for requesting this input, it shows that Brookfield on the right tract.
809. SIDEWALKS!!! Our road is skinny with hills and curves and no room on the grass to walk because it's full of poison ivy. I feel like I'm taking my life in my hands just walking on my road, and I live a mile from the center of town and would love to be able to walk there. Busy roads where I see people walking and that could especially use sidewalks are: Main Street (ends halfway), North Brookfield Road, Lake Street, Rice Corner Road, improve the South Maple Street one past State Police (it's overgrown). Should a permanent bathroom at Lewis Field be considered, instead of port-a-potties? Also, a bubbler (water fountain) like the one on the common? Trails would be so wonderful. Because of ticks and electronics, kids don't get outside often enough

and people of all ages need more exercise and time in nature. Maybe an organization like the Last Green Valley would want to get involved. I'm not sure if the campground counts as natural space, but after the archaeologists release their report I would love to see a museum/ nature/history center here. And a sidewalk leading to it :)

810. I like open space and recreation but we need to take care of it. Littering also comes to mind as a challenge.
811. again, that without clean and usable lakes, ponds and rivers, the property values and hence tax base will erode, which is a very ominous situation for the town of Brookfield, and East Brookfield and Sturbridge as well
812. The porta potty, recycle and trash bins at the beach at the lakes has been WONDERFUL. A committee of volunteers to sweep the beach once a week of debris would enhance our lake. I would definitely volunteer.
813. Protect farms like Jeppson's Oakholm farm, this is a gem for Brookfield. Reach out to try to find individual buyer, association, educational group that would preserve this property. Protect the Indian heritage on [shot ??] site and make it a teaching farm
814. The recreational areas (Lewis Park and town beach) need to be carefully patrolled by our police and city authorities from vandalism, drugs, abusive behavior, and out of town crowds/parties taking over at times
815. Farming is all about work and play. Unfortunately for most youth, work is a dirty word. The youth that do help me on the farm, for the most part, have seen the light. Most of them are home-schooled. Perhaps the education system needs a re-do!
816. I don't hunt. I don't fish. I don't do boating. I don't hike. I'm pretty much a couch potato. But I appreciate what makes this town special and think we need to be proactive on the grassroots level to make sure that development and the influx of new residents doesn't ruin what we have in the name of increasing the tax base.
817. I am pleased with our town facilities & fields
818. We have very little active economic development happening in Brookfield. Citizens and town officials need prioritize the OSRP and its follow-through as a vitally important effort to improve quality of life and attract visitors and new residents.
819. I would love to have North pond have a few less weeds too.
820. In an open forum
821. Many thanks to those who are working on this critical area of community development.
822. I have never understood why the local history has really never been explored and presented for the general public. There are many pieces of history that might surprise a lot of people and the natural places to enjoy are numerous.
823. Thank you for this opportunity to share my views. I hope you got a good response as it is very important. However, it is difficult to get people to do these surveys so don't get discouraged if there few returns.
824. Open space in Brookfield is in desperate need of improvement. If it goes unaddressed for too long it will be a major challenge to overcome
825. I would be willing to volunteer to help with a clean up of the town beach. Maybe add a dock for the kids to play off of. Give the kids something to do that is fun and it will bring them back outside! ;-) I miss seeing the kids playing outside like when I was a kid in Brookfield.
826. Love Brookfield! Thank you!
827. I would LOVE to see a Indian Cultural Center be put in at the Adena Site.
828. Would like to resurrect prior plan for hiking/kayaking regional trail.
829. Town maps with all public areas listed. Mill street park is a nice touch!

Appendix B. Public Dialogue Discussion Guide

How should Brookfield use its natural and recreation areas to honor its character and ensure sustainability as a community?

"Brookfield is a wonderful rural town. It just needs a little TLC."

-resident

"We all share responsibility for protecting and preserving our natural spaces."

-resident

Next Spring, the Town of Brookfield will revise its *Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)*. This plan charts the course for how we as a town will invest in our community landscape, including how to manage, enhance, and support the quality natural habitat, our rich agricultural heritage, and the many outdoor recreation opportunities. The OSRP also opens doors to state funding for plan implementation.

Brookfield is a small, rural community where rivers, ponds, wetlands, and protected forests represent over half the area. Agriculture and homes make up a good part of the rest of the community. Most of our residents highly value the abundant open space, easy access to nature, and opportunities to fish, hunt, hike, swim, boat, and bike. People also value the small-town charm and importance of farming and tribal lands as part of our cultural heritage.

On the other hand, some residents have noted that open space provides few opportunities for jobs and tax revenue and that resources are in short supply for land maintenance and upkeep. Some feel that their access to using the town's open spaces as they would like is limited by regulation, poor infrastructure (lack of trails, signage, maps, parking), and poor understanding of ownership and allowable uses,

while others are concerned that overuse would impact wildlife, water quality, and the unspoiled character of the landscape.

Before revising the OSRP, those writing the plan want to better understand people's concerns and interests, hear where people stand on the tensions and trade-offs related to open space and recreation in our community, and allow people to hear from each other. Today's dialogue is part of a series intended to help us as a community to explore these issues, hear from each other, and move toward action collectively.

This guide offers three approaches to help start the conversation about how our natural and recreation areas can honor Brookfield's character, while strengthening the livability and sustainability of our community. While not mutually exclusive, each approach reflects different perspectives and priorities that provide a different lens on the nature of the problem and the kinds of actions we might take. Additional approaches may surface during the dialogue. No approach is without drawbacks, which we must examine and decide if we are willing to live with in order to decide how we want to proceed.

This discussion guide was developed by the MA Office of Public Collaboration through its Center for Public Life, in collaboration with a team from Brookfield, the Central MA Regional Planning Commission, and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The Issue Guide is based on town resident conversations and survey data.

Dialogue Guidelines

We will spend equal time on each approach. Consider each approach fairly: Examine the benefits and drawbacks of each.

Step out of your comfort zone: If you tend to talk a lot, we invite you to listen more, and if you tend to hold back, push yourself to speak more.

The dialogue is a form of discussion aimed at finding the best course of action, guided by what we most value. You don't need to be an expert, and there will be no voting at the end.

It is okay to disagree. Assume best intentions. Words may come out wrong, but everyone here cares about Brookfield. Assuming this makes it easier to disagree without being disrespectful.

Share your ideas: don't be limited by what is suggested here, but don't go completely off topic either.

Please remember to hand in your completed questionnaire before leaving. Thank you!

Approach One:

Protect Brookfield's Unspoiled Character

This approach places high value on the unspoiled character and rural feel of the community, intact natural habitats, and Brookfield's cultural heritage. The emphasis is on preserving natural spaces and the rural character of the town, protecting and restoring the environmental health of the ecosystems, limiting noise pollution and environmental impact from overuse and development, and increasing a sense of connection to wilderness.

This approach would require engagement from many segments of the community, including potentially town government, volunteer groups and individual residents, lake associations, schools, land trusts, state & federal agencies, tribal leaders, and local non-profits.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS TO CONSIDER:

Protect our natural areas through improved regulation and enforcement.

Examples:

- *Instate time restrictions for motor cross racing*
- *Increase fines and enforcement for littering*
- *Pass stronger zoning protections of natural areas*
- *Enhance supervision and enforcement of land use restrictions*
- *Use volunteer monitors to check boats for invasive weeds*
- *Partner with others to protect ecologically and agriculturally important areas*

Manage our natural and recreation areas for long-term sustainability.

Examples:

- *Coordinate with surrounding communities on protection of shared resources, like South Pond*
- *Promote Brookfield's regional reputation for high quality open space*
- *Develop comprehensive strategies to control aquatic weeds and water pollution*

Educate the community on how and why we protect our natural areas.

Examples:

- *Put up more signs that explain what activities are allowed in natural areas*
- *Develop a cultural center that conveys the significance of the Adena site*
- *Teach about watershed protection in schools and at community events*

LIKELY TRADE-OFFS OR CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER:

- Lack of tax revenue from protected land
- Increased limits on economic development
- Restrictions of certain land uses could impinge on personal freedom
- Increased police presence (local and/or environmental police) may feel uncomfortable
- Sense of government overreach from stricter property regulation

Approach Two:

Promote & Enhance Accessibility & Public Safety of Brookfield's Natural and Recreation Areas

This approach places high value on the ability to access and use Brookfield's natural and recreation areas conveniently and safely. The emphasis is on improving access, usability, knowledge, and safety of Brookfield's natural areas; adding and/or expanding amenities and ways to connect outdoor recreation opportunities; and increasing people's awareness and curiosity about natural and recreational resources and their allowable uses.

This approach would require engagement from many segments of the community, including potentially resident volunteers, town government, regional planning agency, state agencies, tribal leaders, local associations, non-profits, local news outlets, and the library.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS TO CONSIDER:

Enhance physical access to, and safety of, natural, cultural, & recreation areas

Examples:

- *Provide upgrades to athletic fields and beach sites (e.g. lighting, parking, paths, trash removal, bathrooms, lifeguards, water fountains)*
- *Increase number of trails and proper maintenance of trails in natural areas and along river (consider resurrecting regional hiking/kayaking trail plan)*
- *Build sidewalks/trails/bike paths along major routes and connecting key recreation and cultural areas (in accordance with the newly adopted "Complete Streets" policy)*
- *Increase boating and swimming access points to river and ponds*

Develop an awareness campaign around opportunities and allowable usage of natural, cultural & recreation areas

Examples:

- *Create trail maps, visitor kiosks, and outreach materials highlighting recreation opportunities and cultural sites*
- *Increase trail markers, interpretive signs, and signs explaining allowable uses for trails, natural areas, and historic sites*
- *Host promotional events at recreation and natural areas to create interest*
- *Expand allowable recreation uses of wildlife management areas (DFG property)*
- *New Audubon/Brookfield Visitor Center on Route 9 as "gateway" to community recreation and Native American sites*
- *Develop historic and nature tours for school children and adults*
- *Use internet/website/social media/public bulletin board/Brookfield Citizen as vehicles for information on events, usage rules/hours, access*
- *Clarify, enhance, and promote opportunities for public access to Chapter lands*

Create new recreation areas

Examples:

- *Designate area for motorized recreation*
- *Create Native American education center*
- *Create additional athletic field space*
- *Other possible new recreational amenities: toddler playground, dog park, town beach play area, community garden, picnic area, splash pad at Lewis Field playground, a disc golf course*

LIKELY TRADE-OFFS OR CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER:

- Missed opportunity to develop land for revenue (commercial development)
- Threats to natural habitat and environment from potential overuse
- Increased amenities require more maintenance which diverts resources from other needs
- More developed facilities could lead to increased vandalism and require greater police resources
- Increased usage would detract from sense of unspoiled nature

Approach Three:

Sustain Brookfield's Long-Term Viability as a Place to Work & Thrive

This approach places high value on the economic viability of the community, especially jobs, tax revenue, and sustainability of farming as a way of life. The emphasis is on activities that generate revenue streams for land management and upkeep, actions that provide jobs for residents, enhancing the tax base for the town as a whole, and leveraging the town's open space to enhance economic activity through increased tourism opportunities.

This approach would require engagement from many segments of the community, including potentially volunteer groups and residents, local businesses and associations, town government, local farmers, state agencies, local news outlets, regional tourism organizations, and the chamber of commerce.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS TO CONSIDER:

Plan comprehensively to keep Brookfield economically sustainable and desirable

Examples:

- *Articulate a community vision to spur economic development, environmental health, and social wellbeing*
- *Define an economic corridor within Brookfield*
- *Use master planning to identify locations for development and areas for protection*

Expand community events and recreation opportunities that generate revenue

Examples:

- *Create a skating rink on the Town Common*
- *Promote Brookfield through marketing and social media as a regional eco-tourism and agri-tourism destination*
- *Develop tours and presentations of history of farms and open spaces*
- *Promote state fishing derbies*
- *Create a museum and education center at Adena site*
- *Ice boat sailing*
- *Upgrade town beach as regional destination*
- *Expand Apple Country Fair*

Enhance the viability of farms and farming

Examples:

- *Help sustain local farms through Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (such as Jeppson's Oakham farm)*
- *Promote area farmers' markets/co-ops*
- *Create opportunity for educational farms*

Diversify town revenue sources

Examples:

- *Sell Cooley Hill Reservoir*
- *Create additional solar farms*
- *Pass the Community Preservation Act (to leverage state funds)*
- *Compete for Clean Energy Community status as source of grant funding*

LIKELY TRADE-OFFS OR CONSEQUENCES TO CONSIDER:

- *Change to the community's small-town character*
- *Loss of peacefulness/quiet*
- *Threats to the natural habitat and environment (air/soil/water pollution and wildlife)*
- *Traffic increase/congestion (insufficient parking, narrow streets for access)*
- *Increased littering and a need for more trash removal resources*

Appendix C. Supplemental Information Sheet

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION RELATED TO OPEN SPACE & RECREATION IN BROOKFIELD

The State's role in Local Open Space and Recreation Planning

- The MA Division of Conservation Services (DCS) municipal grant programs can fund the acquisition of conservation or parkland, the development of a new park, the renovation of an existing park, or the development of trails on municipally-owned conservation or recreation land. Grant awards of up to \$400,000 are available.
- DCS requires that a municipal applicant to their grant programs have an up-to-date *Open Space and Recreation Plan* (OSRP), which is considered current for seven years. In its OSRP guidance, DCS states that "Planning provides the opportunity to assess where you are, where you would like to go, and how you might get there. Planning now to protect important open space and recreational facilities can greatly enhance the attractiveness of your community and encourage compatible growth in the future."
- Brookfield's last OSRP was published in March 2010 and expired last spring. To set the course for future management of its natural and recreation areas, and qualify the town for funding for implementation, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) will work together with town officials to revise Brookfield's OSRP this spring.

Next Steps in Revising Brookfield's OSRP, Including Other Opportunities to Help Shape It

- As part of the OSRP revision process, CMRPC will send out a community-wide survey, the details of which will be shaped in part by the outcome of this winter's community dialogues. The survey will be more extended than the one some of you filled out to shape the community dialogues, and will give residents an opportunity to provide more detail to their ideas and concerns.
- Additionally, one or two public forums will be held later in the spring at which town residents will be able to hear about and respond to draft goals, objectives, and actions for the OSRP.
- Data from the winter dialogue series, the extended community-wide survey, and the public forums in the spring will all be discussed with Brookfield's Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee and other relevant town staff and reflected in the OSRP's final recommendations. The finished plan will be shared with the Board of Selectmen.

Brookfield Land* Classified as Open Space by MassGIS, current as of 12/2017

Owner	Owner Type	GIS Acres**	% of town open space	% of total town area	Description
MA Audubon Society	Land Trust	500	14.30%	4.71%	Elm Hill Farm APR
Town of Brookfield	Municipal	145	4.14%	1.36%	Cemetery, Elem. School, Lewis Field, Tantasqua Reg. High School
Private	Private	180	5.15%	1.70%	Rod & Gun, Spencer Farm, other
Department of Fish and Game	State (Dept. of Fish & Game)	2,674	76.42%	25.20%	WMAs (Quamcumquasit, Wolf Swamp, Quaboag, Richardson)
Total		3,499	100%		
Total Land Area in Brookfield (GIS Acres)**	10,612				

*Table does not include Chapter 61, 61A, 61B Lands.

** GIS Acres means the area was calculated using GIS (Geographic Information Systems) software directly from the mapped features, rather than from formal sources such as land deeds.

Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) - (approx. 536 Acres in Brookfield)

- The Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program is a voluntary program that preserves agricultural land from being built on for non-agricultural purposes or used for activities detrimental to agriculture.
- The program pays farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland, in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which prevents uses of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability, thereby giving farmers a non-development alternative when faced with a decision regarding future use and sale of their farms.

Conservation Restriction (CR) - (approx. 135 Acres in Brookfield)

- A Conservation Restriction is a means of permanently restricting development on a property while allowing the property to remain in private ownership. It limits future development by transferring – through donation or sale - some rights in property, such as the right to construct new buildings, from the landowner to a nonprofit organization or a government entity, for conservation purposes. This is a popular option for owners who care deeply for their land and do not want to sell it and move away but may be pleased to donate or sell the development rights to ensure that their property is protected in the future. Continued private ownership generally means that some portion of the property value remains on the local tax rolls.

DFG land in Brookfield – (approx. 2,600 Acres in Brookfield)

- MassWildlife, a division of MA Dept. of Fish and Game, holds 4 wildlife management areas (WMA) entirely or partially in Brookfield: Quaboag WMA; Richardson WMA; Quacumquasit WMA; and Wolf Swamp WMA.
- These total around 3,200 acres, of which around 2,600 acres are in Brookfield (approx. 24% of Brookfield's total area).
- By statute, the purpose of these areas is the biological protection and management of fish, wildlife, and rare species, and the provision of wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities for the public, including hunting, fishing, and trapping. This management requires a careful balance between the protection of wildlife resources and public access.
- MassWildlife policy holds that marked recreational trails do not advance - and in most cases directly conflict with – the above statutory mandates. For example, recreational trails can fragment and degrade habitat, disrupt wildlife, and compromise biodiversity. (The agency does recognize 6 major trails in Massachusetts that cross state WMAs and supports the ongoing use of these trails. However, the agency is not aware of any regional trails that cross their properties in Brookfield.)
- MassWildlife does, however, encourage use of its lands in Brookfield, through dispersed public access (not concentrated by trails) for: hunting, fishing, tracking, birding, photography, and general nature appreciation.

Chapter 61, 61A, 61B Programs - (approx. 1,590 Acres in Brookfield)

- Chapter 61 programs give Massachusetts landowners an opportunity to reduce property taxes in exchange for providing public benefits like clean water, wildlife habitat, rural character, wood products, food, outdoor recreation, and a commitment to keeping some or all of their land undeveloped for a specified period of time. There are three different Chapter 61 programs: 61–Forestry (approx. 415 acres in Brookfield); 61A–Agriculture (approx. 625 acres in Brookfield); 61B–Open Space and Recreation (approx. 550 acres in Brookfield).
- Chapter 61 requires min. 10 acres in active forest management and an approved management plan. Chapter 61A requires min. 5 acres in agricultural use and at least \$500 in annual product sales. In both of these programs, landowners receive a property tax reduction based on market value of the forest/agricultural products the land is capable of producing.
- Chapter 61B requires min. 5 acres of contiguous land, does not require active land management, and has two categories: Open Space is land maintained in a substantially natural, wild, or open condition; a landscaped or pasture condition; or managed forest. Public access is not required. Recreation is land available for recreational purposes that do not significantly impair the environmental benefits of the land. Land under the Recreation category must be open either to the public or to members of a nonprofit organization, though the landowner may charge a fee for this service. The assessed value of the property for tax purposes is reduced at least 75% under this program.

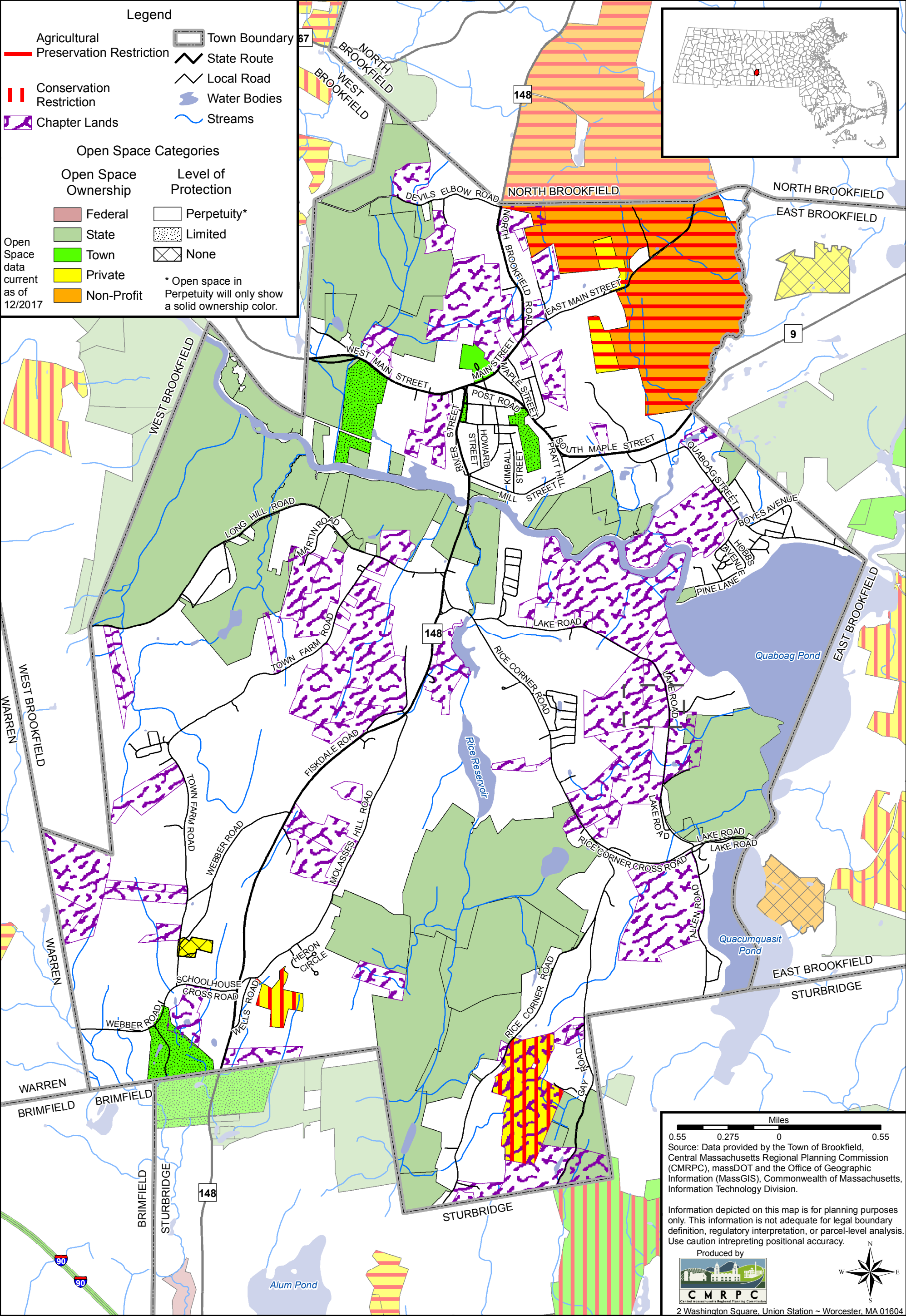
Community Preservation Act (CPA)

- The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a smart growth tool that helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. The CPA allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund through a property surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation.
- The CPA statute also creates a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund, which provides distributions of state money each year to communities that have adopted CPA.
- Municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum. Each CPA community creates a local committee that recommends CPA projects to the community's legislative body.

Appendix D. Brookfield Open Space Map

OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

Open Space and Recreation Plan



Appendix E. Tallied Post-Dialogue Questionnaire Responses

All 37 Completed Questionnaires

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. Brookfield should preserve and protect its natural spaces as a defining characteristic of the town.	19 53%	10 28%	3 8%	3 8%	1 3%
2. Brookfield should focus on safety and usability of the natural areas to improve access and enjoyment of these resources for recreation.	20 56%	12 33%	0 0%	2 6%	2 6%
3. Brookfield should focus on opportunities to increase revenue and create jobs through expanding eco/agri-tourism and prioritizing economic development.	15 58%	5 19%	2 8%	1 4%	3 12%
Do you favor or oppose each of these actions? Brookfield should...	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not Sure
4. Increase regulation to protect natural areas.	7 20%	15 43%	5 14%	4 11%	4 11%
5. Strictly enforce existing land-use restrictions within natural areas.	10 29%	14 40%	5 14%	3 9%	3 9%
6. Emphasize water quality and long-term sustainability in planning for Brookfield's natural resources.	27 73%	8 22%	1 3%	0 0%	1 3%
7. Educate community about culturally important sites, habitat protection, and restricted land use activities.	25 69%	9 25%	0 0%	1 3%	1 3%
8. Improve safety and maintenance of existing recreation areas.	23 66%	9 26%	2 6%	0 0%	1 3%
9. Raise awareness and access to natural and recreation areas through increase signage, trail markers, maps, and information kiosks.	23 62%	12 32%	0 0%	0 0%	2 5%
10. Promote usage of recreation areas through social media/web presence and events.	20 56%	13 36%	0 0%	0 0%	3 8%
11. Build a Visitor Center on Route 9 as "gateway" to community recreation and Native American sites.	10 27%	17 46%	4 11%	2 5%	4 11%
12. Create new recreation areas and amenities such as athletic field space, community garden, playgrounds, picnic areas, and designated area for motorized use.	13 36%	10 28%	8 22%	0 0%	5 14%
13. Create a vision & comprehensive plan for economic development.	17	13	2	0	2

	50%	38%	6%	0%	6%
14. Expand community events and recreation opportunities that generate revenue.	19	12	2	0	2
	54%	34%	6%	0%	6%
15. Enhance farm viability through Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs) and promotion of local farm products.	26	8	1	0	1
	72%	22%	3%	0%	3%
16. Leverage natural areas to generate matching state funds through the Community Preservation Act.	20	8	2	2	4
	56%	22%	6%	6%	11%
Do you agree or disagree each of these actions?	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not Sure
17. We should preserve our natural and recreation areas EVEN IF it means limiting the town's ability to generate tax revenue and create jobs.	7	10	7	7	4
	20%	29%	20%	20%	11%
18. We should protect our natural areas EVEN IF it means further limits to our personal freedom through increased regulations and enforcement.	3	13	8	8	4
	8%	36%	22%	22%	11%
19. We should increase access to natural areas and recreation EVEN IF that means less land available for commercial development.	10	13	6	2	5
	28%	36%	17%	6%	14%
20. We should promote and enhance accessibility to natural and recreation areas EVEN IF increased activity may pose harm to the environment and impact the town's natural character.	3	12	13	5	2
	9%	34%	37%	14%	6%
21. We should increase maintenance & safety EVEN IF it means diverting resources from other town needs.	4	15	8	2	5
	12%	44%	24%	6%	15%
22. We should create economic opportunities to increase revenue EVEN IF it means losing some of Brookfield's peaceful, small-town charm.	2	13	14	6	2
	5%	35%	38%	16%	5%
23. We should promote development EVEN IF it means potential threats to the natural habitat and environment.	0	6	15	12	2
	0%	17%	43%	34%	6%
	17 or younger	18-30	31-45	46-64	65 or older
24. What is your age?	0	0	5	13	16
	0%	0%	15%	38%	47%