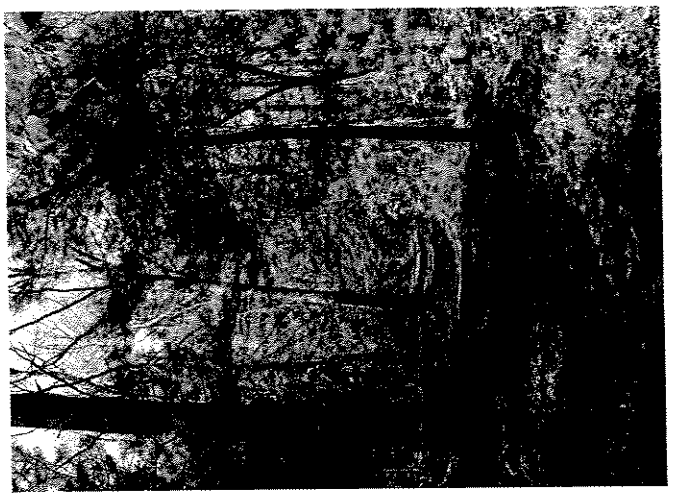
Shaping the Future of Your Community

A Citizen's Guide to Involvement in Community Planning, Land Protection, and Project Review in Massachusetts



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Where to Find Shaping the Future of Your Community

For online access to a full copy of *Shaping the Future of Your Community* visit:

http://www.massaudubon.org/advocacy/shapingthefuture

If you have questions or comments regarding *Shaping the Future of Your Community*, or would like to order a hard copy of the document, please contact:
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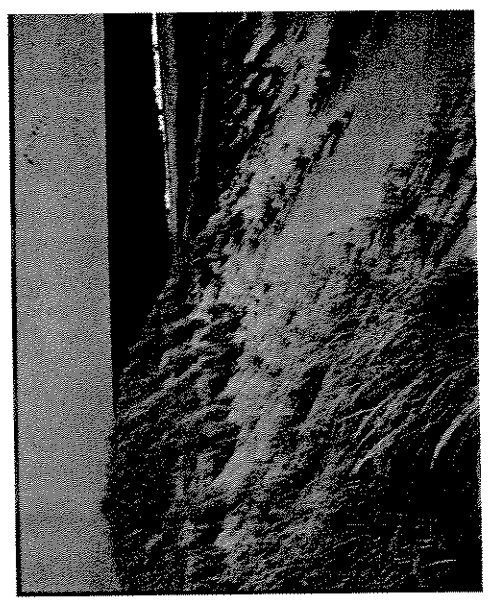

The Challenge: Losing Ground

More land has been developed in Massachusetts in the last 40 years than in the previous 340 years. We are losing more than 40 acres of habitat per day. While land prices escalate, open land disappears and the supply of reasonably priced housing falls well below the need.

The result is sprawling development that:

- Destroys and fragments wildlife habitats and ecosystems;
- Reduces biodiversity;
- Damages drinking-water recharge areas;
- Limits recreational, agricultural, and forestry opportunities;
- Alters local community character and our sense of place; and
- Increases transportation and energy costs.

Solutions are available.

The guidebook *Shaping the Future of Your Community* gives you the tools for active involvement. Using this guide, you can craft and implement effective strategies to:

- Update and implement community plans;
- Identify and protect the highest priority lands;
- Provide incentives for well-planned growth; and
- Establish and apply regulations to minimize the impacts of development.

Shaping the Future of Your Community

Chapter 1-Effective Advocacy

- Gain Credibility and Support to Achieve Your Goals

Chapter 2-Who's Who of Local, Regional, State, and Federal Management and Environmental Agencies

- Target Your Efforts and Get Results

Chapter 3-Local Land Use Planning and Conservation Strategies

- The Building Blocks of a Healthy and Sustainable Community

Chapter 4-Zoning Regulatory Land Use Controls and Incentives

- You Get What You Zone For-Update Your Land Use Rules With Innovative Tools

Chapter 5-Land Protection

- Funding Sources, Gifts, Tax Incentives, Land Trusts, and More

Chapter 6-Project Review

- How to Engage in Permitting to Get the Best Results from Development Projects

Federal, State, and Local Laws Chart

- Easy to Use Chart-Helps to Quickly Identify the Programs and Policies Relevant to Your Situation

You Can Make a Difference

"Never doubt that a handful of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." ~Margaret Mead

Activists value this guide!

"***Shaping the Future of Your Community***" is an awesome tool... As an environmental activist and advocate for preserving open space and controlling development, I know how confusing local, state' and federal laws can be to interpret. The guide book puts things in perspective... This guide helps as an effective tool in maintaining the well being of our community."

~Donna Brownell, President
Watchdogs for an Environmentally Safe Town

"***Shaping the Future of Your Community*** is... great for people suddenly confronted with development who hear about an alphabet soup of agencies and programs and don't know who can help with what. This useful book should promote more constructive solutions to development challenges.

~Sue Bass, President
Mystic River Watershed Association

"At last the gap is filled: plain language, practical information for citizen involvement in local planning and land protection."

~Jane Winn, Executive Director
Berkshire Environmental Action Team