

1999

Town of Blue Hill Maine Comprehensive Plan 1999

Blue Hill Maine Comprehensive Plan Committee

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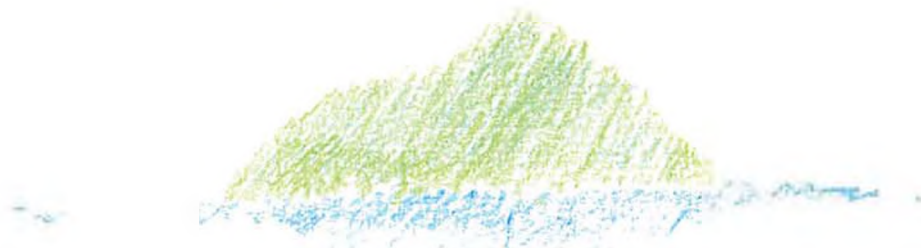
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TOWN OF
BLUE HILL



1999 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

BLUE HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Blue Hill is changing. Population has increased by nearly 20% every decade since 1960. Most of that growth has occurred in the rural, outlying areas of the Community. Blue Hill is viewed by many as a desirable place to live and visit. Its resources are many - a highly scenic rural landscape, prized coastal villages, reflective of the small town values that most wish to preserve, and a seashore rich in resources with diverse recreational opportunities and there are many other resources of high value to its citizens.

The Broad Goals of the 1999 Comprehensive Planning Effort have been to:

1. preserve the traditional character and values of the Community, i.e.,
 - its small town atmosphere,
 - its scenic qualities,
 - its valuable natural resources,
 - its rural character,
2. arrange for the Town to absorb additional growth and development, and in the process both conserve and enhance the existing quality of the Community,
3. provide policy guidelines and direction for the administration of the Town's land use regulations and ordinances,
4. keep future municipal services costs down, to the maximum extent possible.

*addition as well
for examples*

The Town of Blue Hill has prepared a Comprehensive Plan assessing the resources of the Community, proposing further studies and problem areas for the management of Blue Hill's growth over the next ten years. In 1988 the Town approved a Comprehensive Plan for the Community. The 1999 Comprehensive Plan for Blue Hill builds on the early planning effort undertaken by the Town. The 1999 Plan for Blue Hill contains detailed inventory and analysis of the Community's natural resources (soils, geology, coastal and fresh water resources, wildlife, scenic areas) population, economy, housing, transportation system and its public facilities. Maps showing the distribution of these features have also been prepared and are included as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Using information about the Town and the wishes of its citizens as a guide for future development and growth has shown that most of the seashore, and the areas in and around the villages of East Blue Hill, Blue Hill Falls, and South Blue Hill are limited for much further development. The soil conditions in the northern and rural areas of the Community are suitable but remote for efficiently providing public services. This area of Town is also where farms and good agricultural soils are found.

There is a wide band of good soils around Blue Hill village and it is where the existing municipal infrastructure can easily be expanded to efficiently provide services. Therefore, the Town intends to gradually and over time encourage growth near and around the village area and in and around existing neighborhood areas, where soil conditions are suitable, and as identified in the 'Environmental Opportunities and Constraints Map.

II. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Historical and Archaeological Resources

1. There is at present very little protection for Blue Hill's unique and valuable historic resources, as represented in particular by the Town's designated historic district.
2. Blue Hill has a rich history and the present character of the Town is influenced to a large extent by sites and buildings of historic and architectural significance. A comprehensive survey of Blue Hill's historic resources needs to be conducted in order to identify those additional properties which may be eligible for nomination to the National Registry of Historic Places.
3. There are a number of archaeological resources that are of statewide and local importance located in Blue Hill. Additional data collection is needed to identify, more specifically, other potential archaeological resource areas for the Town.
4. The Comprehensive Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Board consider means by which Blue Hill's historic district might be managed.

B. Natural Resources

1. The Salt Pond is a unique piece of coastline that has considerable natural resource value and is also important as an aquaculture site. The Tidal Falls at the outlet of the Salt Pond is a natural area of state and regional importance. The threat to the marine resources from overboard discharge needs to be carefully monitored to maintain water quality. The threats to the recreational resources of the Falls is from overuse, lack of parking and over crowding, which will also need attention in the near future.
2. The amount of productive shellfish habitat in the Blue Hill Harbor area are extensive. Overboard discharges also create a problem but the major pollutant in the area is from the outfall of the sewage treatment plant.
3. There are several other smaller but no less important shellfish areas that are considered redeemable and Town-State cooperative efforts to clean up these areas may be needed.
4. "The Ponds" area of Blue Hill is another unique natural area of considerable importance. This area supports valuable fisheries, high quality potable water and significant wildlife habitat. The Ponds themselves are susceptible to additional phosphorous loading from land use development. More detailed watershed planning and associated protection for this area should be undertaken and supported as a high priority.
5. There are few areas that have the scenic qualities in such abundance as does the Town of Blue Hill. Scenic points and vistas and the elements that compose them are key aspects of the character of the Community. The character of the Town of Blue Hill is gradually being altered by incremental growth and development. The Town needs to investigate / establish workable guidelines for negotiating with land owners for the protection of scenic areas.

6. There is much in Blue Hill that the public has historically enjoyed either on foot, from the water, or out of the car window. However "Informal" rights of public access are evaporating. A committee needs to be appointed by the Town to pursue good relations between landowners and land users through education and communication, to discourage landowners from posting their land in response to a careless minority. The committee should also investigate how to expand public access to the shore, waters and resources of Blue Hill Bay, and to the Ponds and coastal islands as well.

7. Potentially polluting point and non-point sources of water pollution such as salt-sand piles, underground storage tanks, and high intensity use activities need to be monitored carefully to prevent any degradation of water quality.

8. The Town may wish to reactivate the Conservation Commission. That body could inventory the natural resources of the Town and might develop an inventory and acquisition plan for public access to natural areas, waterways and other land of special public interest. A network of multi-purpose trails for recreational activities might also be considered.

C. Socio-economic Characteristics

1. Age distribution - In the past 20 years the fastest growing segments of the year-round population are the 18 to 44 and the 45 to 64 age brackets. Together they comprise 57% of the year-round population. This has significant effects on services such as health care and education and employment opportunities.

2. The economy of Blue Hill is varied and surprisingly diverse for such a small community. While depending largely on summer visitors for a retail base, the town is also a year-round hub for the peninsula. The year-round economy comes from a mix of natural resource harvesting and processing, independent professionals, craftspeople, and links to the major employers in the region.

3. Household income - Household income is distributed in a pattern similar to the county. These income patterns have implications for the Town's tax base, education levels, and housing types and distribution, especially housing affordability. Housing affordability is a more serious concern in Blue Hill than for the county as a whole because median house costs are higher in Blue Hill. (see Housing, Table #3)

4. The Town could appoint a development committee to promote the formation of a Chamber of Commerce and to study, formulate and implement a plan to create jobs. This proposal is supported by the decrease in taxable sales when inflation was factored in. The increase of medical facilities and their usage by other Peninsula towns has had a positive impact on Blue Hill's economic growth. It may be beneficial for this committee to investigate the creation of a business park.

5. A Chamber of Commerce could be formed to promote existing local businesses and to help attract new businesses. The Chamber of Commerce would distribute information to tourists and provide printing and distribution of a local map. It should also create an official internet presence for the Town.

6. School age populations are on the decrease and elderly populations are rising. This could cause a higher demand for health care facilities.

D. Land Use

1. The most fertile soils in Town are found in a band around Blue Hill Village and in the more remote northern rural areas of the Community.
2. Recent growth in Blue Hill has occurred mostly in the outlying rural areas of the Community.
3. Commercial growth has been most evident in the Village area of Town, and particularly along the roads leading in and out of the Village.
4. Individual land owners rights shall be carefully considered when planning and forming new ordinances.

E. Transportation

1. Traffic congestion in the Village is a problem. There is also a problem at the 4-way intersection at the top of Tenney Hill.
2. There is a lack of organized parking in the Village area. The downtown parking issue may be partially solved if the Town conducted a parking study.
3. The Village area sidewalks are in need of repair, better winter maintenance, and in some cases, reconstruction.

F. Community Facilities and Fiscal Capacity

1. The Town does not have a long range Capital Improvement Plan for its public facilities, and it needs one.
2. The Town may need to make capital expenditures for improvements to Town facilities in the near future for sidewalks, roads, Harbor improvements, sewage treatment plant extensions, water supply, public access and fire protection.
3. Blue Hill tax rate is comparatively higher and its citizens have seen a smaller increase in taxes over the last five years than those from other surrounding communities.
4. Although in 1990, Town voters authorized a committee to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Town Manager or administrative assistant form of government, that committee has not been formed as of yet. This committee should be formed.

III. Inventory and Analysis

A. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Historical and archaeological resources are a part of a community's heritage. They contribute significantly to a community's character and make each town distinctive and unique. An inventory of historical and archaeological buildings, sites and areas is necessary to understand the total community environment and to preserve the best of the past.

1. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Archaeological resources include locations where there are structures, artifacts, terrain features, graphics or remains of plants or animals associated with prior human habitation. The focus in Maine is on prehistoric (Indian) archaeology. With the exception of the sites of Maine's earliest known inhabitants (Paleoindians - at the end of the last Ice Age), most archaeological sites are found along waterbodies.

Long before the discovery and settlement of the Maine coast by Europeans, various Indian groups inhabited the area. Archaeological excavations in this region suggest that a non-agricultural tribe, referred to as the Red Paint or the Moorehead People, frequented the region as long as 5,000 years ago. These Indians followed seasonal fluctuations in food supply, hunting seal and porpoise for food and oil, and catching fish and shellfish along the coast. It is possible that an even earlier prehistoric Indian group inhabited the region shortly after the end of the last Ice Age, some 10,000 years ago.

Since 2000 BC Algonquin Indians moved in from the south and west, forming the Abnaki group (Indian for "living at the sunrise"). The Abnaki pursued a semi-agricultural, semi-hunting and gathering livelihood, wintering on the coast and summering inland. Abnaki progeny of historic times, known today as Penobscots and Passamaquoddies, probably reversed this pattern, wintering inland and summering along the coast. This change may have occurred partly as a result of European exploration and the subsequent demand for furs, which necessitated that Indians hunt inland in the winter-time to supply the fur traders. These tribes spent summers on the coast as recently as the late 1800's.

Archaeologically sensitive zones have been identified and are mapped on the Blue Hill Marine/Natural Resources Map (See Map). A total of twelve (12) prehistoric archaeological sites are located along Blue Hill's coast. These are "shell middens" which are Indian campsites. Most of these sites are located in the Blue Hill village and Salt Pond areas of the Community. Although insufficient data is available at this time to assess significance, care should be taken that these sites are protected.

A mechanism for archaeological review of all construction activity or other ground disturbing activity within the identified "archaeologically sensitive zones" should be established, such that no activity is allowed to proceed without a field check by a qualified archaeologist.

2. EARLY EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

Although their visits have not been documented, Northern European fishermen probably visited the coast prior to the 1500's. Temporary settlements may have been built by these fishermen.

Explorers of the 15th and 16th centuries, notably Cabot for England, Verrazano and Thevet for France and others for Portugal and Spain, sailed along Maine's coast, making claims for their respective countries.

In the early 17th century, French geographer Samuel de Champlain visited and mapped the region which had been claimed by earlier French explorers. Champlain was a member of the 1604 expedition of Pierre du Guast, the Sieur de Monts, to whom King Henry IV of France had granted a large block of land known as Acadia or La Cadie (French for The Place).

Blue Hill was one of the David Marsh townships granted in 1762 to the veterans of the last war against the French. The Massachusetts General Court gave an area of each township to the first settled minister and set aside a second for his use. The Court designated a third lot for the support of schools and gave a fourth to Harvard College. The grantees, known as proprietors, had the power to dispose of the un-allotted land. The first to arrive in the area, Joseph Wood and John Roundy, settled here before the grant was made. Most of the early settlers were veterans of the wars with the French. All were Congregationalists and Scotch or English in their ancestry.

Originally settled by settlers from Andover, Massachusetts, Blue Hill emerged in the 19th century as a thriving diversified community with important maritime ties. With the arrival of its first settled minister, the remarkable Jonathan Fisher, in 1796, and the chartering of Blue Hill Academy, the Community early became a remarkably cosmopolitan center in a then remote area.

The first settlement was at the tidal falls. In this neighborhood were the first mill and the first schoolhouse. Here were held the first meetings of the proprietors and the church members. Soon settlements grew up in other localities. The one in South Blue Hill was called the Neck. The one between the head of the tide and the foot of the mountain was called the Head-of-the-Bay. The third settlement, located where McHeard's Stream flows into the bay, became East Blue Hill. The settlement back of the mountain became North Blue Hill. In time each had a school and a store and a chapel or church. By the close of the nineteenth century each had a post office. Settlers from neighboring towns came to each. The Wescotts from Castine and the Conary family of island-dwellers sent their sons here.

The settlement, the "Head-of-the-Bay" outgrew the others. By the mid-nineteenth century it could boast of mills, forges, stores, inns and two churches. Its library dated to the last decade of the eighteenth century; its academy, to 1804. Some village families prospered, the Holts, Chases, Peters, Stevens, Hinckleys, Osgoods, Dodges, Darlings, Parkers. Cloughs and Faulkners built handsome village homes.

3. EARLY COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

It was shipbuilding and trading by the sea that gave Blue Hill its first prosperity. The first vessel was built in 1792 at the tidal falls. Between 1792 and 1862, one hundred and thirty-three vessels were built in Blue Hill. Some were brigs and ships. Most of them were schooners. Usually a shipyard grew up beside a saw mill. There was one near the tidal falls, near the mill, called the Endeavor. There was one at the shore of the R.G.W. Dodge place in the village. This was most active between 1846 and 1858. There was one on either side of the Mill Brook in the village. One was owned by the Town; the other, by George Stevens. John Peters had his own yard near his mill. Joel Long had his yard at the cove where McHeard's Stream flows into the Bay. This yard was later operated by Joel Long, Jr. There was a yard at Webber's Cove. In the last decade of the nineteenth century Frank Cousins built vessels in a malt water field in East Blue Hill. Now and then farmers built a small vessel in a meadow beside the bay. At least one vessel was built behind the mountain and hauled to the Head-of-the-Bay by oxen.

Blue Hill-built craft took lumber and masts and shingles to Atlantic coastal cities. Sometimes they took farm products such as cheeses and vegetables and Ben Davis apples that were fine keepers. Fish and clams and porgy oil and kiln wood were also carried on local vessels. Parson Fisher, the town's first minister who still casts his shadow on the town, sent cranberries to Boston. Often the trade was a three cornered one. Vessels took local products to Portland where they were unloaded and then reloaded with a cargo of lumber and staves for Cuba. On the trip home the cargo was sugar and molasses for Portland's sugar houses.

In the years of shipping prosperity, those who stayed in Blue Hill became ship's carpenters, smiths and sailmakers. Adventurous ones started as ship's cook and worked up to be mate or captain. They came to know Charleston, South Carolina as well as they knew Ellsworth; Havana, as well as Rockland. Local sailors went to English and French ports. In the 1840's and 1850's they sailed to California and Hawaii. They went to China but not in locally built vessels. Women often went to sea with their husbands. Seafaring people took on views and ways unknown to Blue Hill farmers.

The depression of 1857 and the American Civil War dealt hard blows to shipbuilding and trading by sea. English steamboats made of iron drove wooden sailboats from the seas. Decline in shipping and shipbuilding led to a decline in the Town's population. In 1880 the Town had 2213 people. In 1900 it had 1808.

Other factors accounted for the Town's loss of people. Some people went west in the 1840's. Numerous soldiers died in the Civil War and after the war some of the survivors chose not to return to town. The call of the west's fertile fields and the pull of developing cities and extending railroads pulled others from the town. The Holts and the Woods went to California. The Holts went to Kansas; a Hinckley and two Osgood sisters moved to Chicago. Numerous women went to the city. Some went to Concord, New Hampshire and made coats. Others went to Waltham and trimmed hats.

On the other hand the opening of mines and quarries brought people to town, some of whom were not Protestant or Anglo-Saxon. There was some prejudice against the newcomers, some of whom changed their names. The Italians, skilled workmen, left town when the granite industry declined.

By 1907, there were six quarries opened in Blue Hill. The first was in operation as early as 1853. But the golden years for the granite industry were those from 1875 and 1905. The Collins Company, the Blue Hill Granite Company and the Chase Company (later owned by the Slavons) made Blue Hill granite famous. W. Merrill Howard cut memorial monuments. Local granite was used for curbing city streets and for the underpinning of bridges and buildings. The Brooklyn Bridge, the Pittsburgh Post Office and the New York Stock Exchange are but a few of the structures having Blue Hill granite. Usually granite was shipped on large sailing ships that were not built or owned locally. Local men became quarrymen and cutters, teamsters and engine tenders, stoneboxers and "water boys. The industry brought prosperity for a few decades. Its decline was due to the "Great Lock-Out" of 1893 and the use of cement and sandstone in place of granite.

In 1917 and 1918 the American Smelting and Refining Company began mining in town as the war led to a rise in the value of copper. This operation was not accompanied by the boom and bust cycle of the earliest years. Few out-of-towners came to work in the mines though the managing group was non-local. The semi-processed ore was hauled to the steamboat wharf in heavy carts drawn by horses. Men and boys wheeled the ore aboard sailing vessels from non-Maine ports.

In the 1960's the Black Hawk Mining Company of Canada reopened and developed a mine. In the 1970's the Kerr-American Company, another Canadian firm, operated the mines and employed 120 men from Blue Hill and nearby towns. The ore was taken by power trucks to Bucksport where it was sent by railroad to smelters on the Gaspee.

In August of 1882, Emma Dole of Bangor was Blue Hill's first rusticator. Other summer boarders followed. In a few years some of them bought land and built clapboard cottages. A few purchased old houses and "improved" them beyond recognition. The era of the summer people had begun.

The coming of the automobile brought another revolution to Blue Hill as it did to every other town. It also diminished the importance of the closely-knit rural neighborhoods. Neighborhood names and friendliness may remain. But gone are the neighborhood stores and schools. Often neighborhood chapels and Grange halls are deserted or torn down.

The 1960's saw the start of a process that is once more changing the character of the Town. In that decade Blue Hill was again discovered. Some of the summer people winterized their cottages and became winter people. Many native-born people who had spent their working years in distant schools and industries returned to their native town. And many others came to visit and escape the bustle and the battle of the city to immerse themselves in the tradition and charm of small town Blue Hill.

4. OTHER HISTORIC RESOURCES

The village of Blue Hill is a remarkably well preserved 19th century Maine coastal community containing excellent examples of prevailing architectural styles of the period. A Historic District was delineated by the State Historic Preservation Commission in 1980 (see accompanying map). There are, however, no state or local regulatory measures in existence to protect the historic resources located in the District. The District is comprised of over seventy historically significant residential, commercial and public building located at the head of Blue Hill Harbor. Most of the buildings have undergone little change so that the streetscapes maintain in homogeneity and cohesiveness the flavor of the area as it was a century ago.

Many houses in the village were built by the numerous sea captains who operated from this active port. Since the 1870's, Blue Hill has lured large numbers of summer visitors and residents who have built homes largely along the shore. The intellectual flavor of Blue Hill has been carried on by individuals such as composer Ethelbert Nevin, who built a summer house in the area, and noted Maine author Mary Ellen Chase who was born in the Chase House in Blue Hill.

As an intact 19th century Maine mid-coastal community, Blue Hill conveys a remarkable sense of time and place and retains the same scale and balance in proportion between building types as it did a century ago. Architecturally most major 19th and 20th century styles are represented, such as: Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Mansard Style, and Colonial Revival. The District boundaries in general encompass the major portion of Blue Hill Village as it was during the late 19th century.

In addition to the general historic values identified as part of the Blue Hill Historic District there are several buildings in Blue Hill which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These are-

The Ward Hinckley House, Route 172 and 175
"Barn Castle" South Street
John Peters House, Peters Point
Jonathan Fisher Memorial, Route 15
East Blue Hill Public Library

The Jonathan Fisher Memorial Inc. provides upkeep to the Fisher House and operates the home as a museum. The Fisher House was the home of Blue Hill's first minister. The Blue Hill Historical Society maintains the Holt house, another historic home representing old Blue Hill.

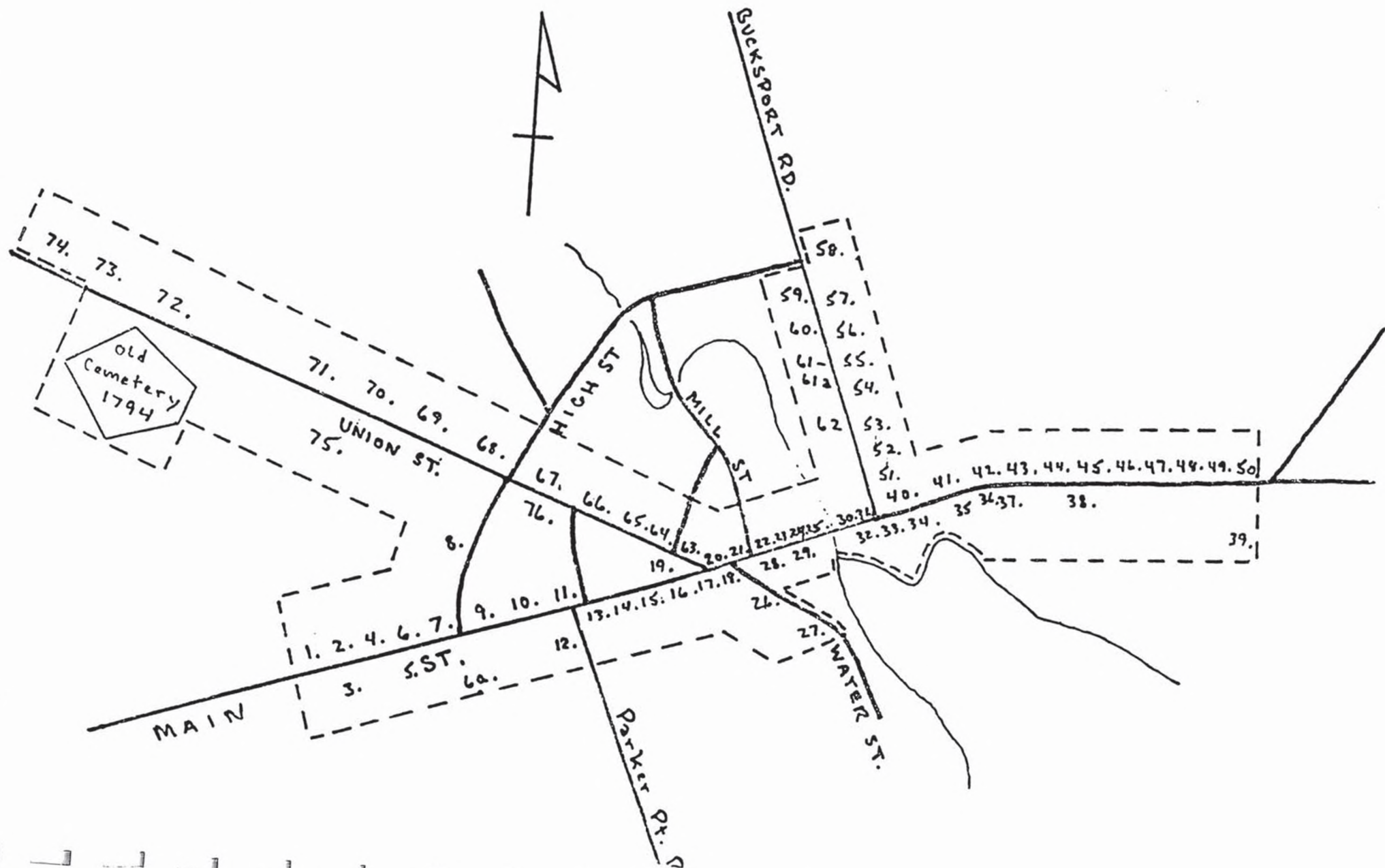
Buildings contributing to the historic character of the district

#	Name	Date	#	Name	Date
1	Hosea Kittredge House	1832	37	Clark Osgood House	1851
2	Moses P Cough House	1832	38	Senaca Parker House	1833
3	Samuel Baker House	1822	39	Faulkner House	1873
4	George Pillsbury House	1889	40	Osburn Bowden House	1900
5	Congregational Church	1843	43	Ellsworth Builder's Supply	1933
6	Nathaniel Hartford House	1803	44	Herrick Corporation	1960
6a	Daniel Spofford House	1800	45	Tucker House	1840-60
7	American Legion Hall	1833	46	Jarius Osgood House	1835
8	Judah Chase House	1840	47	Benjamin Clay House	1835
9	John Arnold House	1829	48	Sargent House	1819
10	Union Trust Company	197-	49	William Hopkins House	1850
11	Parsonage of Congrgational Church	1800	50	Joseph Wiscott House	1860
12	Blue Hill Public Library	1959	51	Octavius Stover House	1878
13	Florist Shop	1928	52	Percy Moore House	1930
14	Candage Hardware	1969	53	"Village School"	1848
15	Robert W. Gray Insurance	1970	54	Rodney Osgood House	1881
16	"The Weekly Packet"	1850	55	Baptist Chapel	1880
17	Bar Harbor Banking & Trust Co.	1960	56	Baptist Church	1817
18	"The Old Red Store"	1830	57	Nathan Osgood House	1840
19	The Town Hall	1895	58	Clough House	1929
20	"The Dunn Block"	1856	59	Marshall Harding House	1866
21	Andrew Witham	1796	60	Joseph Mann House	1830
22	Blue Hill Department Store	1876	61	Merrill & Hinckley Store	1880
23	"Sea Gull Restaurant"	1859	62	"George Stevens House"	1814
24	Edwin Schneider Law Offices	1859	63	George Stevens Academy Buil	1998
25	Merle B. Grindle Agency	1847	64	Thomas Lord House	1847
26	The Holt House	1815	65	Joseph P. Thomas House	1839
27	The Pendleton House	1826	66	The Chase House	1842
28	Partridge Drug Store	1895	67	Rev. Albert Cole House	1839
29	Madelaine's Fashions	1855	68	Dr. Lyman Hall House	1836
30	"The Blacksmith Shop"	1884	69	Gillis House	1950
32	I.O.O>F. Hall	1896	70	Freeman Hardin House	1820
33	Babson & Duffy Building	1890	71	Rowantrees Pottery	1830
34	Jerry Faulkner House	1824	72	Blue Hill Inn	1830
35	Barber Shop	1950			
36	Edmund Herrick House	1881			

BLUE HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

District Boundary - - - -

(Not to scale)



III. B. *NATURAL RESOURCES*

The Town of Blue Hill is at the center of a peninsula which is bound on the west by Penobscot Bay, and on the east by Blue Hill Bay. In land area, Blue Hill with its 35,623 acres, is the second largest in Hancock County. Only Ellsworth, with 54,491 acres, is larger. Within its boundaries the Town contains a highly diverse range of natural resource features, with many lakes, ponds, streams, mountains, hills and seashore.

This section of the Blue Hill Comprehensive Plan is broken down into the following major categories: physiography, climate and hydrology, wetlands, and wildlife resources, ponds and watersheds, marine features and characteristics, and other land based resources.

1. Physiography

Topography has had a significant influence in Blue Hill. The mountain and the many hills and ridges have been traditional barriers to movement and settlement, while the valleys and lowlands have been corridors for development. There are several fairly distinct natural resource regions in Blue Hill and characteristic patterns of development have evolved in association with them (see accompanying map). Early water-oriented power and transportation systems directed the location of Blue Hill village, Blue Hill Falls and East Blue Hill. At the confluence of fresh and salt water, where Mill Stream and Peters Brook enter into Blue Hill Harbor, is where Blue Hill village, or Head-of-the-Bay as it once was called, developed. The first settlement in the town of Blue Hill however was at the tidal falls, where Salt Pond connects with Blue Hill Bay and separates Blue Hill Neck from the mainland.

To the east of Town McHeard Brook drains an extensive and relatively flat land mass, and then exits through the village of East Blue Hill into McHeards Cove. The northern section of Town which is largely undeveloped, contains large tracts of heavily forested, difficult to access land, much of which drains into Toddy Pond. To the west, the agricultural settlement of North Blue Hill developed in the area where Route 15 and the Ridge Road meet.

In the southern, inland section of Town lies a particularly unique section of Blue Hill known historically as 'The Ponds' which contain First, Second, Third and Fourth Ponds, associated streams and brooks as well as several surrounding hills and ridges. This is also the area where considerable mining activity was located. These hills and ridges run on into North Blue Hill, include Chandler Parker Mountain, and then continue into the adjoining town of Penobscot.

Finally and almost at the geographic center of the Community lies Blue Hill Mountain. The south flank of Blue Hill Mountain just to the north of Blue Hill Village rises abruptly to 940 feet and descends more gradually to the northwest connecting with a series of undulating and much smaller hills which extend into the town of Penobscot.

2. Climate and Hydrography

The Blue Hill area has a mean annual temperature of 44F. The monthly mean temperature is at the freezing point or below about three months out of a typical year. Generally, summer monthly mean temperatures are 60F to 75F and winter monthly mean temperatures are 20F to 33F.

Mean annual precipitation is around 44 inches. Precipitation is not evenly distributed over the year on a monthly basis. November is normally the wettest month with nearly six inches average. August is driest at 2.5 inches. Winter and spring normally have three or four inches per month. Much of the precipitation that falls in winter comes as snow and may not enter the growing area as runoff until the warm weather of late winter or early spring. This situation presents the same potential for pollution from runoff as major rainfalls. There are no significant rivers contributing fresh water in the area.

The normal tidal fluctuation is ten feet and there are two cycles every twenty-four hours. This produces good mixing, dilution and flushing in most of this area. One exception to this pattern is Salt Pond where tidal flow is somewhat restricted by the narrow channel through which it passes. Consequently the tides in Salt Pond are staggered an hour or two with respect to the normal tides. The Salt Pond may receive less flushing action from the tidal movements than areas more open to the ocean and, although the channel through the center of the pond does receive considerable water flow, the coves and secluded sections of the pond receive minimal flushing.

3. Wetlands and Wildlife Resources

Wetlands serve to protect water quality, control flooding and erosion, provide a natural habitat for waterfowl, wildlife and unique plant life, encourage nutrient recycling and serve as fish sanctuaries and nursery grounds. Freshwater wetlands are also an integral part of the water cycle, so these areas are vital in preserving the water quality and quantity of surface and ground water.

Blue Hill has an abundance of freshwater wetlands. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (I.F.W.) has identified and mapped 54 wetlands in Town. The mapped wetlands are generally un-forested and greater than 10 acres in size. 43 out of 54 wetlands have not yet been rated by I.F.W.. Out of those that have been rated, 6 were considered of moderate and high value, and 5 were rated as low +/-n terms of their value to waterfowl and other wildlife. The high value wetlands are found in association with ponds in the southwestern portion of Blue Hill, in particular First and Fourth Ponds. In the northeastern area of town, Noyes Pond and McHeard Pond are also high in value as wildlife and waterfowl areas. Important wetland areas are also found in and around Wight Heath and Camp Brook. The table and map that follow provide an indication of the regional distribution of wetlands in Blue Hill. Other important wildlife and waterfowl areas in Blue Hill are the shore bird nesting, staging and feeding areas found near the Salt Pond Tidal Falls and at the north end of Morgan Bay in the East Blue Hill area. There has also been a bald eagle nest site identified and mapped near Allen's Point, which is also in the Salt Pond area. Finally, Conary Nub is considered by I.F.W. to be a significant habitat as a colonial-nesting seabird island.

TABLE 1
Acres of Wetlands in Blue Hills by Area

<u>Location</u>	<u>Ratings</u>				<u>Total</u>
	<u>High</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Undetermined</u>	
Blue Hill, Village and Mountain area	28.9		-	28.6	57.5
Southwestern Blue Hill-"The Ponds" area	120.6		-	206.5	335.1
Eastern Blue Hill area	77.0		115.0	117.5	309.5
Northern Blue Hill area	122.2		207.3	438.5	768.0
TOTAL	356.7		322.3	791.1	1470.1

Several laws, including federal, state and municipal laws, have been enacted to protect wetlands. In general, these laws attempt to prevent soil erosion, harm to wildlife, degradation of water quality, interference with the natural flow of water, and interference with existing recreation or navigational uses.

The Federal Clean Water Act requires a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers before any wetlands is filled or dredged. The Maine Natural Resources Protection Act (38 M.R.S.A. Section 480A-8) enacted by the State Legislature requires a permit for dredging, draining, filling or construction in all freshwater wetlands that are of ten or more contiguous acres and characterized predominantly by wetland vegetation.

The Natural Resources Protection Act also extends protection to significant wildlife habitats which are those wetlands the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife rates as "high" or "moderate". Other "significant" habitat identified in Blue Hill includes a deer wintering area 167 acres in size, which is located near Western Brook and Toddy Pond, and Conary Nub. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife enforces the Maine Endangered Species Act under which protection to essential habitat is provided. The bald eagle nest site in Blue Hill on Carlton Island is an example of habitat covered under this law (see natural resource map).

The Shoreland Zoning Ordinance for the Town of Blue Hill contains provisions to protect wetlands within 250 feet of the normal high-water mark of all ponds, seashore and streams designated on the Official Shoreland Zoning Map. Wetlands are designated as part of the Resource Protection District if they are located within the normal high water mark of inland waters, rated as moderate to high value waterfowl habitat and/or contain wetland soils. The State has enacted legislation requiring adjacent shoreland areas of wetlands greater than ten acres in size are to be protected through Shoreland Zoning (38 M.R.S.A. Sections 435-445). The State is responsible for mapping these areas.

The Floodplain Management Ordinance governs wetlands when they are within the 100 year floodplain. A permit is required for nearly all activities within the floodplain.

4. Ponds and Watersheds

There are 8 ponds located in Blue Hill that are 10 acres in size or larger. They have a combined area of 7021 acres.

five of these ponds are shared with other neighboring communities. The acreage of each pond within each community as well as the watershed it drains can be found in Table 2.

In addition Table 2 provides the rating for each pond that was compiled by the Lakes Division of the Department of Environmental Protection (D.E.P.) The meaning of the Lake Status Category column in Table 2 is based on water quality, existing and potential. These categories are explained below:

LAKE WATER QUALITY CATEGORIES	
<u>Lake Status Category</u>	<u>Description of Current Water Quality</u>
Outstanding	Exceptional water quality
Good	Greater than average water quality
Moderate/Stable	Average water quality, not declining under present phosphorous loading
Moderate/Sensitive	Average water quality, but high potential for phosphorous recycling from lake bottom sediments
Poor/Restorable	Lake supports algal bloom - restorable
Poor/Low Priority	Lake supports algal bloom, but restoration appears infeasible

Almost all of the ponds located in the southwestern section of Town, plus Noyes Pond, are classed as "moderately sensitive", meaning that they have average water quality but have a high potential for phosphorous recycling from lake bottom sediments. First and Fourth Ponds are also considered to be significant waterfowl habitat by I.F.W. Second Pond supports an extensive loon population. Third Pond has been identified as a potential water supply for the Town. First Pond is also an important fishery habitat because of its depth and water temperature. The Pond is known to be capable of supporting both a warm water and cold water fishery. Noyes Pond is a recognized Trout Pond and because of its size and small, associated drainage area is particularly susceptible to deterioration of water quality.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection also classifies all lakes and ponds with over ten acres of surface area as Great Ponds and classifies most of them as GPA. They are considered to be a high quality fisheries habitat and excellent water quality suitable for wildlife, fishing, swimming, and other water contact recreation. The water is potable but the D.E.P. does recommend minor treatment before drinking. All ponds located in Blue Hill are classed as G.P.A. Similarly, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection classifies rivers and streams in five different categories: class AA, A, B1, B2, and C. All streams in Blue Hill, with the

exception of Carlton Stream, are classed 'B1'; "Waters of this class shall be considered the higher quality of the class B group and shall be acceptable for recreational purposes, including water contact recreation for use as potable water supply after adequate treatment and for a fish and wildlife habitat." Carlton Stream has a classification of 'C', a legacy of mining activities in the area.

TABLE 2

Characteristics of Blue Hill Ponds and Lakes

<u>Pond/Lakes</u>	<u>Size of Pond</u>		<u>Watershed Area</u>		<u>Lake Status Category</u>
	Surface Area	Max. Depth	within Blue Hill (acres)	Other Towns (acres)	
First Pond	93 acres	37'	1576	675 (Sedgwick)	Mod/Sensitive
Fourth Pond	50 acres	9'	818	-	Mod/Sensitive
Noyes Pond	23 acres	18'	435	-	Mod/Sensitive
Second Pond	62 acres	23'	909	32 (Sedgwick)	Mod/Sensitive
Third Pond	206 acres	35'	1063	-	Mod/Sensitive
Turtle Pond	located in Penobscot		51	95 (Penobscot)	Mod/Sensitive
Wight Pond	located in Penobscot		554	1294 (Penobscot)	Mod/Stable
Toddy Pond	1987 acres total	122'	1615	3001 (Orland, Surry, and Penobscot)	Mod/Stable and Good

A large portion of the South Basin of Toddy Pond lies in Blue Hill. This is also the least developed section of the lake. However, the South Basin of Toddy Pond has a lower transparency and higher color than the North Basin. The principal fishery in Toddy Pond is salmon, lake trout and white perch. The overall condition of Toddy Pond is good as it remains oxygenated all the way to the bottom.

5. Marine Features and Characteristics

a. Salt Pond

The Salt Pond is an arm of Blue Hill Bay having narrow, constricted outlets on both aides of "the Nub and Mill Island", and is located at the northern most end of Blue Hill Neck. The eastern shore of the Pond is found to be significantly less developed than its western shore, in part because of the steeper slopes and its relative inaccessibility. Salt Pond can be divided into four areas: Conary Cove, the Upper Pond, Middle Pond and Lower Pond. Most of the Lower Pond area is located in Sedgwick. This area of Salt Pond is the farthest from the outlets, has very shallow water depth and development is more concentrated than in other areas of Salt Pond. This area of Salt Pond is closed to shell fishing because of excessive concentrations of pollution.

The Middle Pond area is bounded on the south by Carlton land, Allen Point and to the north by a narrowing of the pond's shore where Mother Bush Brook empties into Salt Pond. The Upper Pond section of Salt Pond receives the highest amount of tidal flushing and is also the deepest water in Salt Pond. These two areas were recently reopened to shell fishing by the Department of Marine Resources. The constriction formed by Allen Point, Carlton Island, and Blue Hill Neck serves to mix and dilute the water of the Lower Pond on the ebb tide.

Conary Cove is the area located north of Mill Island and the Falls. There are several known sources of pollution identified in this area (see Table) and this area remains closed to shell fishing. The open area in Salt Pond were worked extensively by commercial clam diggers. Quahogs were found in abundance at the Pond's south end and along its eastern and western shores. It is suspected that this quahog population once provided most of the natural quahog seed for flats in Blue Hill Bay and Western Bay where quahogs are occasionally found.

A mussel farm raises blue mussels in the Salt Pond east of Carlton Island. There has also been reports of an oyster population in the Salt Pond.

b. Upper Blue Hill Bay

Most of the coves between Parker Point and Blue Hill Falls once produced a relative abundance of clams. The highest concentrations of blue mussels and soft shell clams are located below the two Salt Pond outfalls in the flats surrounding 'the Nub' and in the area between Mill Island and Stills Point. The shore in this area of Blue Hill is mostly ledge (Ellsworth Schist). Only in the area of High Head is the shoreline steep, while elsewhere the shore is more gently sloping.

The Department of Marine Resources has six primary water sampling stations in the area and these, along with the three located in Salt Pond, are listed in the Table 3 that follows, along with the result of the sampling taken.

TABLE 3

The Department of Marine Resources
Results of Water Sampling 1987-1998
(See map next page for locations of Stations)

<u>Water Sampling Station</u>	<u>Results of Tests</u> (1990 - 1998)
#8	Meets Standards
#9	Meets Standards
#10	Meets Standards
#11	Meets Standards
#12	Meets Standards
#13	Failed to meet standards
#14	Failed to meet standards
#15	Failed to meet standards
#16	Failed to meet standards
#17	Failed to meet standards
#18	Meets Standards
#19	Meets Standards
#22	Failed to meet standards
#23	Meets Standards
#24	Meets Standards

Note: Standards are based on permissible levels of fecal coliform bacteria counts.

Source: Department of Marine Resource

The inner harbor has historically contained some of the most productive shellfish growing areas in Blue Hill, particularly the Peter's Point area, the area around the Municipal Landing, and the area around Parker's Point. Pollutants from the Village and now from the licensed municipal discharge from the Blue Hill sewage treatment plant has resulted in these areas being closed for many years. Depuration digging might be considered in the future, provided the discharge from the municipal treatment plan can be stabilized. The treatment plant discharge is below mean low tide and empties 60,000 to 80,000 gallons per day of treated effluent into the harbor area. An upgrade of the treatment facility is presently underway.

Blue Hill has seen low harvest of shellfish in recent years as recorded by the Department of Marine Resources averaging around 550 bushels per year in 1990. In 1998 we believe the harvest to be minimal.

c. Morgan Bay and East Blue Hill

The shoreline in this area of Blue Hill is highly variable. In the Webber Cove area many pockets of mud and gravel, and soft shell clams are found between large boulders. As the shore curves southeast towards Closson Island, it becomes bolder with stretches of steep granite to Conary Point. There is a small gravel / sand beach at the head of Curtis Cove and then fractured granite with occasional pockets of sand to the point just north of McHeard Cove and Mink Island. McHeard's Cove itself is bordered by fractured granite, moderately sloped on the north shore and steeper on the south. The shorelines between McHeard's Cove on to Sculpin Point is similarly diverse with moderate to steep sloping granite and an occasional gravel/mud or gravel/sand beach.

In 1987 the State enacted the Overboard Discharge Law which prohibits any new non-municipal sanitary wastewater discharge into Maine waters and requires that existing overboard discharges not be re-licensed if alternatives are available. The law also established a process by which overboard discharges affecting official redeemable 'shellfish' areas are phased out on a priority basis. Redeemable 'shellfish' areas have not been officially designated yet in Blue Hill but several areas are prime candidates for such designation, and these are shown in Table 4. These areas have few licensed overboard discharges and have important shellfish habitats.

TABLE 4

PROBABLE 'REDEEMABLE' SHELLFISH AREAS IN BLUE HILL

Salt Pond Area

Middle basin of the Pond (maintenance of water quality needed particularly along western and southern shores of the Pond and in areas where stream enter the Pond)
Conary Cove area

Upper Blue Hill Bay Area

Sand Point area, north of High Head (pockets of mud/gravel in the bouldered intertidal zone)

Bragdon Brook Cove Area (extensive soft mud-flats)

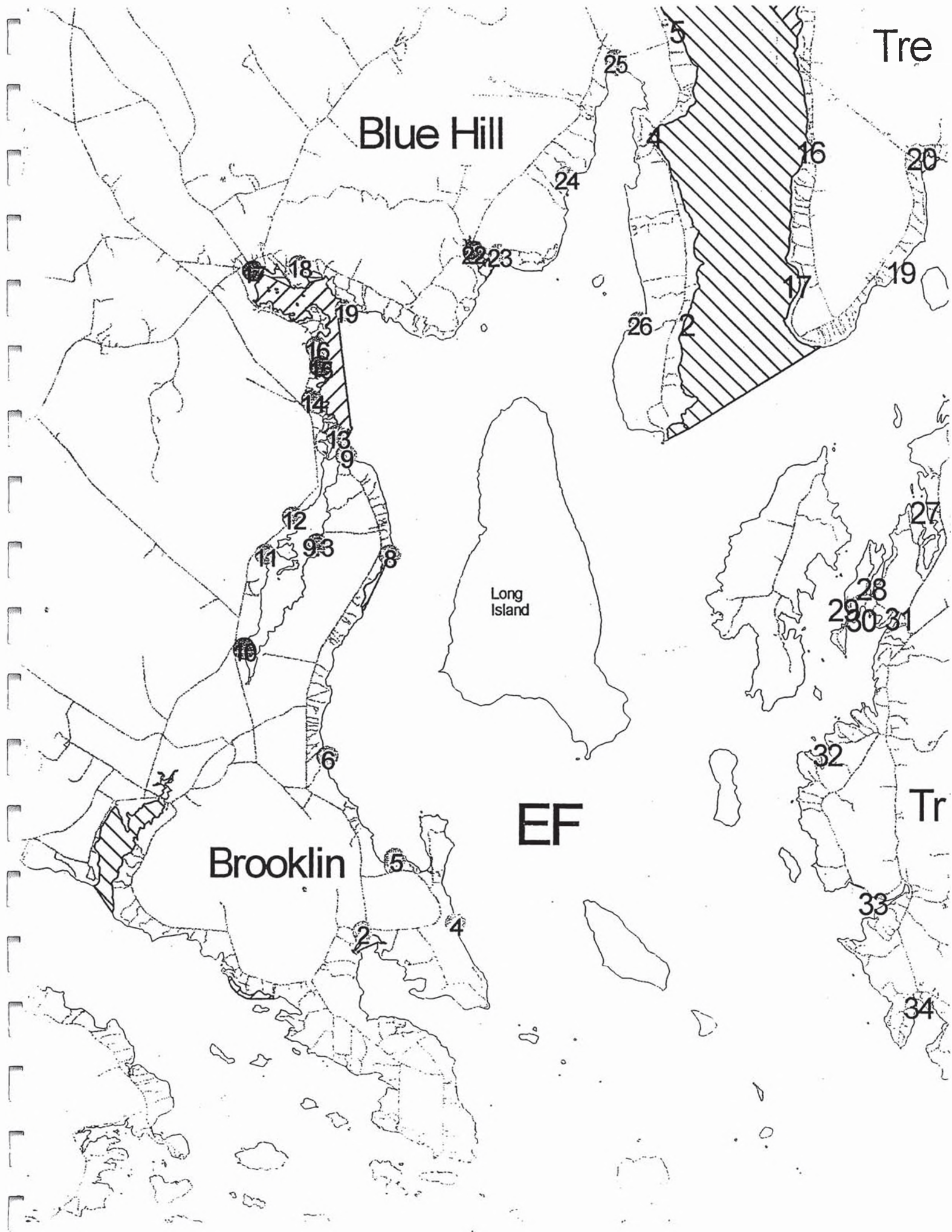
Holder Point unnamed cove to the North

Robertson Cove (mud-flats on the east side of Kniesel Point)

Morgan Bay and East Blue Hill

Curtis Cove area

Webber Cove area



6. Other Important Natural Resources

a. Forest and Agriculture

Most of the forest land in Blue Hill is located in the northern and western section of the town. Due to the proximity of the Champion paper mill in Bucksport, there is a strong demand for softwood for pulp. It is important that the Town consider policies which will encourage proper forestry techniques, encourage the maintenance of forest for recreation, scenic, and environmental reasons and recognize the economic importance of the forests.

Agriculture is a traditional and still important activity in Blue Hill. Blueberries, Christmas trees, and wreaths are very important to the economy of Blue Hill. Also vegetable farms, ornamental nurseries and professional landscaping firms are important to the economy of Blue Hill. Agriculture contributes to the rural character of the town by maintaining open fields along roadway and between surrounding residential areas. Agricultural production should also be monitored to prevent erosion and sedimentation and the destruction of significant fish and wildlife habitat.

Existing farmlands and blueberry fields have been located on the Natural Resource map. These lands constitute a sizable chunk of Blue Hill and represent a welcome contribution to its economy.

b. Mineral Resources

A 1958 Maine Geological Survey Report entitled "Maine Granite Quarries and Prospects" listed nine separate, major granite quarries and prospects in Blue Hill:

- Blue Hill Granite Company Quarry
- Chase Quarries
- Collins Quarries
- Doorstone Quarry
- Grindle Quarry
- Howard Quarry
- Manning Quarry
- Pittsburg Quarry
- White Quarry

Most of these quarries were located on the eastern side of town and near the northern shore of upper Blue Hill Bay.

Copper, silver and gold were extensively mined in the western part of town, particularly in the Second Pond area - 32 separate operations were identified in the Second Pond area, in 'Maine Mines and Minerals' by Philip Morrill and Wm. P. Hinckly, a 1959 Maine Geological Survey report. There are no remaining mining operations left in town nor are there plans for renewing these operations. The last mine operated by Kerr-American closed in the mid-seventies and the mineral rights have since expired.

c. Ground Water Resources

Ground water is defined as subsurface water found in the matured soils and water bearing bedrock of the earth's surface. Its upper level, which rises and falls seasonally, is called the water table. An aquifer is a soils deposit or porous rock formation which contains recoverable volumes of ground water. Precipitation and surface water infiltrate into the soil and depending on underground conditions, recoverable ground water supplies may be plentiful or scarce in any given location. Ground water moves through this saturated zone by

gravitational forces. It is recharged by precipitation and discharges as springs or into wetlands, lakes and ponds and eventually drains into the ocean in combination with surface water as the flowing waters of rivers and streams.

There are three, presently known aquifer areas in Blue Hill as determined from existing state inventories and these are shown on the accompanying Natural Resources Map. These areas are:

1. A sand and gravel aquifer, with some boulders located in the eastern section of town, near the Surry town line.
2. A sand and gravel aquifer to the east of Blue Hill Mountain (present fairgrounds site) and Route 172.
3. A sand and gravel aquifer near Wight Heath in the north section of town and south of Route 177.

In addition there are some sections of town where there are many high yield bedrock wells. Several high yield bedrock wells (greater than 10 gallons per minute) have been identified and mapped in East Blue Hill and around the Blue Hill Village area (Parker's Point and the area west of Town). The State Bureau of Geology has also mapped potential bedrock fracture zones and many of those are found in the north and east Blue Hill area and again around the Village. Finally the Bureau of Geology has identified three areas considered to be important bedrock recharge zones. These are shown on the Natural Resource Map.

Potential non-point source discharges include sites such as land fills, sand and gravel storage areas, underground fuel storage tanks, and farms raising livestock or employing fertilizers near a water body or aquifer. Identification and regulation of these sites is important in safeguarding both surface waters and ground water aquifers. Pollutants from these sources have the potential to leach into ground water aquifers and contaminate important water resources.

The primary non-point sources of pollution in Blue Hill are runoff from roads and streets, runoff from camps, and runoff from agriculture. Also, some shorefront buildings still have malfunctioning septic systems. A road salt pile is located near one of the three known aquifers in Town, and the impact of those facilities on groundwater is not known. Agricultural spraying near ponds and streams is also a potential source of pollution.

d. Scenic Areas and Views

Scenic areas and views are important to a community both for their aesthetic qualities and their recreational and economic value. Blue Hill is an exceptionally attractive community. There are six scenic areas of statewide importance in Blue Hill, more than in any other community, in the area recently surveyed by the State Planning Office in its "Scenic Inventory of Penobscot Bay" report (May 1990). There are many more scenic areas that are of local and regional significance.

The community architectural and historic character blends exceptionally well with its natural features, creating the outstanding and classic coastal villages of Blue Hill, Blue Hill Falls, and East Blue Hill. Each of these coastal villages is located in the shadow of Blue Hill Mountain. The mountain is an essentially unspoiled natural symbol of the Town, although there has been some development on its lower flanks in recent years.

Another important area is Parker Point, a highly diverse landscape featuring views across the Blue Hill Country Club to an island studded harbor. The Allen Point area in South Blue Hill is where boulder strewn, blueberry fields on small knolls, frame majestic, highly diverse views of water and land.

These scenic areas of statewide significance are shown on the accompanying Natural Resource map and they should be carefully protected. The best means for protecting these scenic resources is through a voluntary program to be established between the Town and landowner.

e. Public Access and Recreation

There are several areas in Blue Hill where an informal understanding has existed between landowners and townspeople allowing use of such areas. Now these informal understandings are strained and in some cases are being revoked. The degree of 'public' access that has existed in the past for Blue Hill natives is threatened from overuse. There are a few areas owned by the Town where public access is more clearly established, and these are:

Blue Hill Park, a one acre site located in the village of Blue Hill, is owned and maintained by the Town. It provides a tidal beach area, bathrooms, playground equipment and picnic tables. There are approximately 24 parking spaces available and 100 feet of shore frontage. The Park is well maintained and well situated within walking distance of major services and the facilities in Town.

East Blue Hill Park is a private facility, to be used and maintained for East Blue Hill residents by the East Blue Hill Improvement Society. The East Blue Hill Improvement Society is very active, and maintains the facilities, playground equipment, boat landing and picnic area.

In South Blue Hill the rapids at the Falls are very popular. Canoeists and kayakers from all over the state enjoy the reversing falls white water. Safe parking however is practically nonexistent.

There are no clearly established town-owned rights-of-ways to any of the fresh water ponds in Blue Hill.

A public ball field and skating rink on 20 acres off of upper Union Street is available for public and school use and for field sports, such as baseball, soccer and softball. The Fairground also has an area used for field sports, although it is private property.

A scenic turn-off area which is maintained by the Town and a trail to the top of the mountain was made available to the public as a result of the efforts of the Blue Hill Heritage Trust which acquired an easement to property upon which the trail travels.

There are two publicly accessible boat access points in Blue Hill:

One is located in Blue Hill Village near the fire station and the sewage treatment plant. It is however only accessible at high tide. Extending the town pier to provide an all tides capability at this site would be much too costly. Over one half mile of mud-flats exist at this point in the Harbor, at low tide.

Another point of access for boats is available in South Blue Hill near Sand Point, at the site of the old steamboat wharf landing. There, the Town owns a right-of-way and an excellent ramp for boat launching. The Town has a one and one half acre parcel of property adjacent to the site for parking and plans are underway to make improvements to the South Blue Hill facility.

f. Blue Hill's Coastal Islands

Long Island located in the town of Blue Hill is Hancock County's third largest un-bridged Island. It has 4,390 acres and a few seasonal residences. The Island provides excellent protection for Blue Hill Harbor. It is less than one mile from the nearest mainland point which is Sand Point in South Blue Hill. Although Long Island is inhabited only seasonally, it was once well populated. There was at one time a granite quarry on the south end of the Island as well as a few farms. Deep Cove on the west side of the island was at one time an important area for catching cod, haddock and hake.

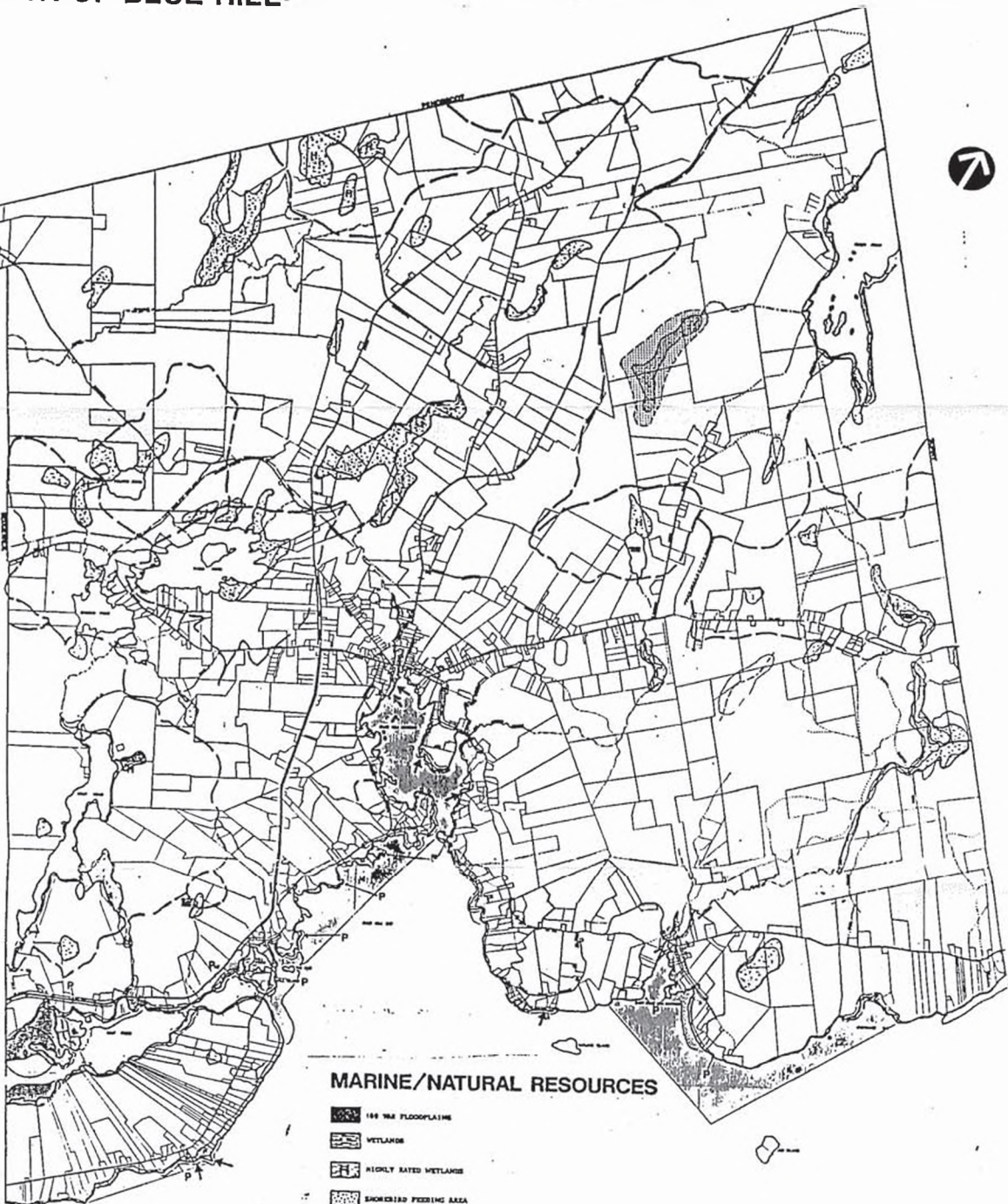
There are two coastal islands, privately owned, that are located in Blue Hill and that are approximately 10-15 acres in size. They are Jed Island just off the coast from Conary Point and Darling Island which is offshore from the Wood's Point area. Jed Island is locally known as a seal haul out site.

In addition, there are three coastal islands located in Blue Hill that are over one acre in size and that are owned by the State. These are:

A small island approximately two acres in size, with grass and shrub vegetation, is located in McHeard's Cove and was listed by the State as a picnic site and potential aquaculture site.

Another small island near Jed island, approximately 1 acre in size located in the Morgan Bay area, is a locally important sea habitat site.

Another small island unnamed less than one acre in size identified as a potential picnic site. It is located near the Salt Pond outlet and has established soil and forest vegetation.



MARINE/NATURAL RESOURCES

- 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN
- WETLANDS
- HIGHLY RATED WETLANDS
- SHOREBIRD FEEDING AREA
- MOTTSHALL CLAW RESOURCES
- AREAS CLOSED TO SHELLFISHING
- ROCK TIDES
- EXISTING WATER RIGHT/RIGHT OF USE
- PRIME SITES FOR WATER RIGHT/RIGHT OF USE
- KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREA
- WATERSHED BOUNDARY
- SCENIC AREA OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE
- EAGLE NEST SITE
- P CONFINED POLLUTION SOURCE

SCALE
1" = 1000'
TOWN OF BLUE HILL PLANNING COMMISSION
2004

III. C. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Population

a. Introduction

Almost all aspects of a community, in some manner, relate back to a community's demographic pattern - the number of people living, working, and interacting in the economy, environment and government of the municipality.

The purpose of this section for the Comprehensive Plan is to:

1. identify important changes and characteristics of the population of Blue Hill;
2. compare these characteristics of Blue Hill with those of Hancock County.

b. Year-Round Population

Like many Downeast towns, Blue Hill's population increased in the mid-nineteenth century due to prosperous shipbuilding and sea trading industries. In 1860 the town had 1993 people and in 1880 it had grown to 2213, or roughly equal to the current population. Setbacks in the shipbuilding industry and a Depression in 1883 resulted in a population of just 1808 in 1900.

Population continued to decline until 1960 even though the opening of mines and increased popularity as a vacation area attracted people to the area. This was offset by deaths during wartime and emigration to the west. But starting in 1960 immigration increased with people escaping urban environments and native-born people returning to their home town. Thus Blue Hill has seen approximately 20% growth rates in each decade since 1960. And Blue Hill's population has increased 15% in just 5 years between 1990 and 1995 in spite of State wide population growth being stagnant.

Table #1 shows the population of Blue Hill and Hancock County from 1970 to 1990.

c. Age Distribution

The age distribution of Blue Hill and Hancock County has been changing since 1960 and is expected to continue changing. In Table #1 the impact of the "Baby Boom" can be seen in the growth of the 18 to 44 age group and later in the 45 to 64 age group. Children to age 4 are the slowest growing group and 45 to 64 is the fastest growing group. While in the last decade the school age population grew strongly, its growth seems to have stopped recently while the elderly population continues to grow. This will greatly affect schools, housing, and health care facilities.

d. Number and Size of Households

The number of households in Blue Hill increased dramatically in the 1970's, increasing by 40%. Household size also decreased substantially, down to 2.48 in 1980. Household size decreased only slightly in the 1980's, to 2.43. This has a significant effect on housing, both the quantity and type.

e. Household Income

Table #2 shows the income for households in Blue Hill and in Hancock County. It also shows the income breakdown and Poverty status for both as of 1989.

Until the 1980's Blue Hill's median household income lagged behind the county. It is now slightly higher than the county with each having median income more or less double in each decade. Blue Hill and Hancock County have roughly the same percentage of their population below the poverty level, at 10%.

f. Seasonal Population

In Table #3 you can see that the number of seasonal dwellings has been doubling each decade since 1970. The 1990 U.S. Census shows 421 seasonal dwelling in Blue Hill. Seasonal dwellings are estimated to have more people per dwelling than year-round dwellings. The size of households for seasonal residents is estimated to be 50% higher than that of year-round dwellings, or about 3.75 people per dwelling. That means around 1580 seasonal residents. There were, as of 1990, five lodging facilities along with restaurants located in Blue Hill which would account for an additional 1270 people during peak periods. (US Travel Data Center in a study of Maine Tourism in 1985 estimated the party size for those staying in rental lodging at 2.5 persons per unit) The seasonal population could therefore be considered to be around 2850, more than doubling the winter-time population.

2. Economy

a. Introduction

The economy of Blue Hill is a service-oriented economy based on seasonal visitors and the area's natural resources. The Town's goal for its economy as expressed in its 1988 Comprehensive Plan, is: "to promote commercial uses which fit Blue Hill's small-town character, contribute to the Town's employment and tax base, and provide a convenience and diversity of services which add to the general quality of life. The State of Maine has adopted a growth management goal to promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well being. It is the purpose of this section to assess the economic climate of Blue Hill, in view of the State Goal as well as local and regional goals. specifically, this section will:

1. profile the labor force and economic activity of Blue Hill and Hancock County;
2. identify changes in the economy of the town and county:
3. identify the economic links between the town and the region; and

The data presented in this section comes from a variety of existing state, local, and federal sources. Basic information on the location of commercial and industrial areas is shown on the Land Use Map. The text below refers to figures and tables which are presented at the end of each section of the narrative.

b. Labor Force and Unemployment

The labor force increases as the population increases and as a larger percentage of the population decides to work or look for work. The labor force fluctuates and varies with the economic trends of the area. Unemployment has been very low but Blue Hill remains slightly lower than that of Hancock County. However, there are large seasonal fluctuations in employment in the area, with significantly larger unemployment in the winter months.

Table #4 shows education levels for the population age 25 and older. Higher paying jobs require higher education levels. Compared to Hancock County Blue Hill has a higher percentage of its population pursuing studies or training beyond high school. (55% compared to 45%)

c. Occupation of Labor Force

Table 4 shows a breakdown of Blue Hill's labor force by occupation. The distributions are relatively similar, yet, as might be expected, there is a larger number and growing percentage of professionals, craftspeople and seasonal service providers caused by increased tourism in Blue Hill. This is in part due to the Hospital in Blue Hill, and also due to the large number of independent professionals, consultants, artists, and craftspeople and seasonal service providers.

d. Major Employers, Location of Employment

The majority of the Blue Hill labor force works in Blue Hill. Approximately 30% of the work force commutes to neighboring towns, mostly in Hancock County.

The major employers in Blue Hill are the Hospital, Parker Ridge, the schools, and one Christmas tree/wreath facility. There are also restaurants, inns, stores, crafts shops, antique shops, potteries, real estate offices and other businesses. Fishing, blueberries, and forestry and the processing of agricultural, fish, and forest products also provide several jobs. Many other workers are self-employed professional or crafts people.

e. Taxable Sales

The State of Maine monitors local and regional economic activity through records of sales taxes. Because Blue Hill's sales are so low, the State uses the "Blue Hill Economic Summary Area" (ESA) for detailed sales information. The Blue Hill ESA includes the Towns of: Blue Hill, Brooklin, Brooksville, Castine, Deer Isle, Isle au Haut, Penobscot, Sedgwick, and Stonington.

Available data shows that the rate of sales growth in Blue Hill has been higher than that of the County, while the Blue Hill ESA rates of growth have been lower than that of the Town or County. If Blue Hill were excluded from the ESA growth figures, the ESA would likely show much lower growth.

Distribution of sales by sector and quarter is only available for the ESA, not for the Town. It should be remembered that the Town's growth is much more healthy than the ESA.

Compared to the County, Blue Hill is heavily reliant on food, building supplies, and restaurants and lodging as a retail base. Blue Hill's retail sector has continued to decline from the 1980's.

3. Housing

a. Introduction

The State of Maine has adopted a goal to encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens". Blue Hill's 1988 Comprehensive Plan has two housing related goals and these are:

"To promote the residential and rural nature of Blue Hill, especially single family housing, ensuring that residential growth takes place in a controlled, orderly and environmentally sound manner."

"To assure that adequate and affordable housing is available to all residents".

It is the purpose of this section to assess the housing of the Town of Blue Hill, in view of State and local goals. Specifically, this section will

1. profile the size and characteristics of the housing stock of Blue Hill and Hancock County;
2. describe the affordability of the housing of Blue Hill for moderate and low income households;
3. identify important changes in housing characteristics and demand as needed to meet future needs.

The data presented in this section comes from all known available federal, state, and municipal sources. As with other data in other sections of this plan many of the data sources are limited and, in many cases, are only approximations of actual figures. Such information is meant to serve as a general basis for planning.

The location of housing is shown on the accompanying Land Use Map. The text below refers to the housing tables which are presented herein.

b. Number of Year-Round Units

Table #3 shows the number of year-round units for 1970, 1980 and 1990. The growth in year-round units in Blue Hill is about the same as that of the County. But the growth in Hancock County is more rapid than other areas of the State. Blue Hill has seen a very large growth in the number of seasonal dwellings however. The size of seasonal population continues to have a large effect on many aspects of the Town.

c. Vacancy of Year-Round Units

There are few good measures of the number of vacant dwellings in a community and what is available is not recent. The 1980 Census records that 10.5% of the year-round units in Blue Hill were vacant in 1980, and 9.5% of the units in Hancock County were recorded as vacant. After the 1980's housing and population boom in the area, however, vacancy figures are likely to have significantly dropped.

Vacancy is an important indicator to consider when planning because of its effects on housing stock and prices. Low vacancy rates push up housing and rent prices. High vacancy may lead to dilapidation due to low rents or low usage. Low vacancy, furthermore, can be seen as a measure of demand for housing, and if sustained can lead to conversion of seasonal units, division of existing units, and pressure for more dense housing patterns in general.

d. Structure Type of Year-Round Units

The past and present types of housing structures, whether single family, multi-unit, or mobile home, is shown in Table 3 for Blue Hill and Hancock County. As shown in Table 3 there is a sharp increase of seasonal homes.

Blue Hill's housing stock is becoming more diversified, with rates of growth of manufactured housing, mobile homes and multi-unit housing being much higher than the rate of growth of single family housing. This diversification is expected to continue as manufactured housing and mobile homes continue to provide affordable housing, and as Blue Hill continues to attract multi-unit developments for the elderly.

The diversity of structure type is important to consider when planning because of its overlap with affordability, community character, density of housing, and availability of housing of appropriate size and tenure.

e. Tenure of Year-Round Units

The tenure of housing units refer to the number of units which are rented or lived in by owners. Table 3 shows past and present tenure of occupied units in Blue Hill.

Tenure, when combined with structure type and vacancy rates, is an important indicator of availability of affordable and appropriate housing. High levels of rental units may often reflect the real estate market, indicating that many people cannot afford to purchase homes.

f. Condition of Year-Round Units

The 1980 Census provides an assessment of the condition of year-round housing in both Blue Hill and Hancock County. This Census information in both limited and dated. According to the 1990 Census, 6.8% of the homes in Blue Hill lack complete kitchen facilities, while 7.5% lack complete bathrooms. These figures are higher than those of Hancock County, where only 5.8% have incomplete kitchens, and 4.0% have incomplete baths.

The growth during the eighties in both the Town and County, has led to significant rehabilitation of housing. Also the increase of seasonal dwellings have contributed to the improved conditions.

g. Affordability of Year-Round Units

The State of Maine, for comprehensive planning purposes, defines affordable housing as "decent, safe, and sanitary living accommodations that are affordable to lower and moderate income households". "Lower" and "moderate" are defined in comparison to the County median household income, and affordable housing is defined as that which costs less than 30% of income for renters, and less than 33% of income for owners. The State encourages all towns to achieve the goal of assuring that ten percent of all new housing is affordable to lower and moderate income groups.

The most accurate available estimates of actual housing prices in Blue Hill and Hancock County come from Real Estate Transfer Tax information from the Maine State Housing Authority. The average home in 1997 was priced far above the maximum affordable value even for moderate income households. The Real Estate Transfer Tax information is not an ideal measure of housing costs because it is an average of all houses sold with no measure of distribution, yet it is still useful as a general indicator and comparative tool.

Blue Hill's income levels are similar to that of the County's and due to the fact that housing costs are significantly higher, affordable housing is more likely to be an issue in Blue Hill than the county as a whole. This is a serious issue to the Town to the extent that long time residents may no longer be able to afford to live in the Town, or start-up families may not be able to rent or buy property in the Town.

In Hancock County, the median household in 1989 earned only 69% of what would be necessary to afford a median home, thus indicating that residents must spend much more than the average 33% of their income on housing. In Blue Hill, the situation is likely to be worse than the County.

h. Subsidized Housing

There are two clusters of subsidized housing in Blue Hill, both sponsored by FMHA and managed privately. Blue Hill Terrace has a total of 24 low income family units while the Harborview Apartments have 24 elderly low income units. All of these units are subsidized through low mortgage rates which enable the owner to charge lower rents. Nine of the family units and 22 of the elderly units are further subsidized through rental assistance, through which the government compensates the landlord for rent which the tenant is unable to pay after the tenant contributes 30% of his or her income.

i. Seasonal Housing

Blue Hill has a large number of seasonal houses. The 1990 Census measured 421 seasonal units. The number continues to increase at a higher rate than that of year-round homes. Blue Hill's seasonal homes play a large role in the municipality. They contribute to the tax base, and also push up property values. Seasonal residents lead to increased demand for services, especially parking, police protection, and increased highway maintenance. The seasonal population contributes strongly to the local economy, yet new construction presents one more strain on tax equity, land use patterns, preservation of natural resources, and maintenance of scenic sites and village character.

j. Regional Housing Links

The housing inventory and issues discussed above are not issues that Blue Hill can plan without considering the housing and demographic situations in neighboring towns. Throughout this section, county information was used as a method of comparison by which to analyze Blue Hill's housing details. In addition, Blue Hill must consider the housing needs and opportunities of neighboring towns, especially in terms of subsidized and affordable housing, and be willing and ready to assume a "fair share" of needed housing. This, Blue Hill has done.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

BLUE HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

POPULATION

Table #1

YEAR		1970	1980 rate of growth		1990 rate of growth		1995 rate of growth (estimated)	
Blue Hill Pop		1367	1644	20%	1941	18%	2235	15%
Hancock Co. Pop		34590	41780	21%	46948	12%	49500	5%
Age Dist.	0 to 4	100	105	5%	115	10%		
	5 to 17	340	316	-7%	371	17%		
	18 to 44	374	595	59%	709	19%		
	45 to 64	320	312	-3%	403	29%		
	65 and older	233	316	36%	343	9%		
		1367	1644		1941			
Households								
year-round	Blue Hill	470	663	41%	798	20%		
	Persons/house	2.91	2.48		2.43			
	Hancock Co.	11334	15442	36%	18374	19%		
	Persons/house	3.05	2.71		2.56			
Size Distribution								
	1 person	91	156	71%	195	25%		
	2 or more	379	507	34%	603	19%		

Socio-Economic Characteristics

BLUE HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INCOME

Table #2

YEAR	1970	1980	Increase	1990	Increase
Household Income					
Blue Hill	\$5,836.00	\$11,908.00	104%	\$26,134.00	119%
Hancock County	\$6,404.00	\$12,163.00	90%	\$25,247.00	108%
Household Income Breakdown					
	Hancock Co		% of Total	Blue Hill	
less than \$15,000	5076		28%	217	
\$15,000 to \$25,000	4012		22%	165	
\$25,000 to \$35,000	3244		18%	145	
\$35,000 to \$50,000	3231		18%	147	
\$50,000 to \$75,000	1945		11%	78	
\$75,000 to \$100,000	517		3%	31	
\$100,000 to \$150,000	228		1%	15	
more than \$150,000	121		1%	5	
Total	18374		100%	803	
Poverty status					
for 1989 # below poverty level	Hancock Co		% of pop	Blue Hill	
under 18 years old	1168		11%	53	
18 to 65	2415		7%	94	
over 65 years old	891		13%	30	
Total	4474		10%	177	

Socio-Economic Characteristics

BLUE HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

HOUSING

Table #3

YEAR	1970	1980 rate of growth	1990 rate of growth
Housing units			
seasonal	120	232	93%
year-round	642	741	15%
unoccupied			113
total	762	973	28%
			1332
			37%
Structure type			
single family	593	615	4%
2 or more units	34	69	103%
Mobile and other	11	57	418%
total	638	741	16%
			1332
			80%
Occupancy by type			
Owner occupied	382	521	36%
Renter Occupied	88	142	61%
Total	470	663	41%
			798
			20%

AGE

Year built

1980 to 1990
1970 to 1980
1960 to 1970
1940 to 1960
Before 1940
total

1990 Census

Hancock Co

% of stock

Blue Hill

% of stock

7544

25%

329

25%

6359

21%

186

14%

2317

8%

92

7%

2935

10%

104

8%

11241

37%

621

47%

30396 100%

1332 100%

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

1990 Census

Hancock Co

Blue Hill

Median value

\$85,200

\$101,000

Median rent

\$325

\$317

Median Household Income

\$25,247

\$26,134

Source

Hancock Co. Planning Comm

U.S. Dept of Commerce

BLUE HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

EDUCATION Table #4

Education level	Age 25 & over	Hancock Co.	%	Blue Hill	%
	Less than 9th grade	1830	6%	47	3%
	9th to 12th, no diploma	3431	11%	112	8%
	High School Grad	11893	38%	460	34%
	Attend College, no Degree	5345	17%	225	17%
	Associate's Degree	2254	7%	92	7%
	Bachelor's Degree	4349	14%	243	18%
	Graduate or Professional Degree	2373	8%	167	12%
	Total	31475	100%	1346	100%

COMPARATIVE TAX RATES

Table #4A

	1995 State Valuation	1995 State Valuation per Capita	1995 Tax Assessment	1995 Tax Assessment per Capita
Blue Hill	\$268,450,000	\$133,358	\$2,694,437	\$1,339
Penobscot	\$62,250,000	\$55,333	\$845,595	\$752
Orland	\$91,650,000	\$48,009	\$1,124,435	\$589
Hancock County	\$4,569,750,000	\$93,571	\$53,552,500	\$1,097

Socio-Economic Characteristics

BLUE HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

EMPLOYMENT

Table #5

Blue Hill Labor force		1980	%	1990	%
Industry	Agriculture,Fishing ,Forestry, Mining	35	5%	49	6%
	Construction	95	14%	94	11%
	Manufacturing	90	13%	119	14%
	Transportation	18	3%	15	2%
	Utilities, Communications	3	0%	9	1%
	Wholesale Trade	9	1%	13	1%
	Retail Trade	93	13%	144	16%
	Business, Repair Services	42	6%	27	3%
	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	23	3%	43	5%
	Personal Services, Entertainment, Recrea	59	9%	48	5%
	Health Services	75	11%	123	14%
	Education	102	15%	114	13%
	Other Professional Services	27	4%	57	6%
	Public Administration	19	3%	23	3%
	Total	690	100%	878	100%
Occupation	Executive, Administrative, Managerial	57	8%	84	10%
	Professional Specialty	137	20%	170	19%
	Technicians and Support	17	2%	27	3%
	Sales Occupations	51	7%	98	11%
	Administrative Support, Clerical	62	9%	68	8%
	Service	96	14%	147	17%
	Farming, Forestry, Fishing	47	7%	51	6%
	Precision Production, Crafts, Repair	151	22%	145	17%
	Machine Operator, Assembler, Inspector	22	3%	35	4%
	Transportation, Material Moving	21	3%	20	2%
	Handlers, Equipment cleaners,Helpers, L	29	4%	33	4%
	Total	690	100%	878	100%
Classification		Hancock Co.	%	Blue Hill	%
	Private, Wage and Salary	14604	70%	599	68%
	Local Gov't	1659	8%	74	8%
	State Gov't	773	4%	33	4%
	Federal Gov't	566	3%	14	2%
	Self Employed	3325	16%	152	17%
	Unpaid Family workers	73	0%	6	1%
	Total	21000	100%	878	100%

III. D.

LAND USE

1. General Trends

Many of Blue Hill's unique assets are a result of the fact that the Community took shape prior to the age of the automobile. The sprawl of housing along stretches of rural town roads is a recent phenomenon. The villages of Blue Hill still retain an essentially compact pedestrian orientation and this should continue to take precedence in planning for future land use.

There are 36,301 acres in Blue Hill, 1470 acres of which consist of wetlands 10 acres in size or greater, and 678 acres is classed as Inland waters. The Town has a total of 42.1 miles of coastline, 15.85 of which is island shoreline. There are a total of approximately 1840 acres of residential land use and roughly 396 acres of commercial land use in Blue Hill. Of the remaining 33,000 acres or so, most is devoted to forest and agricultural land use.

Further information on agricultural and forest resources is provided in the Natural Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan.

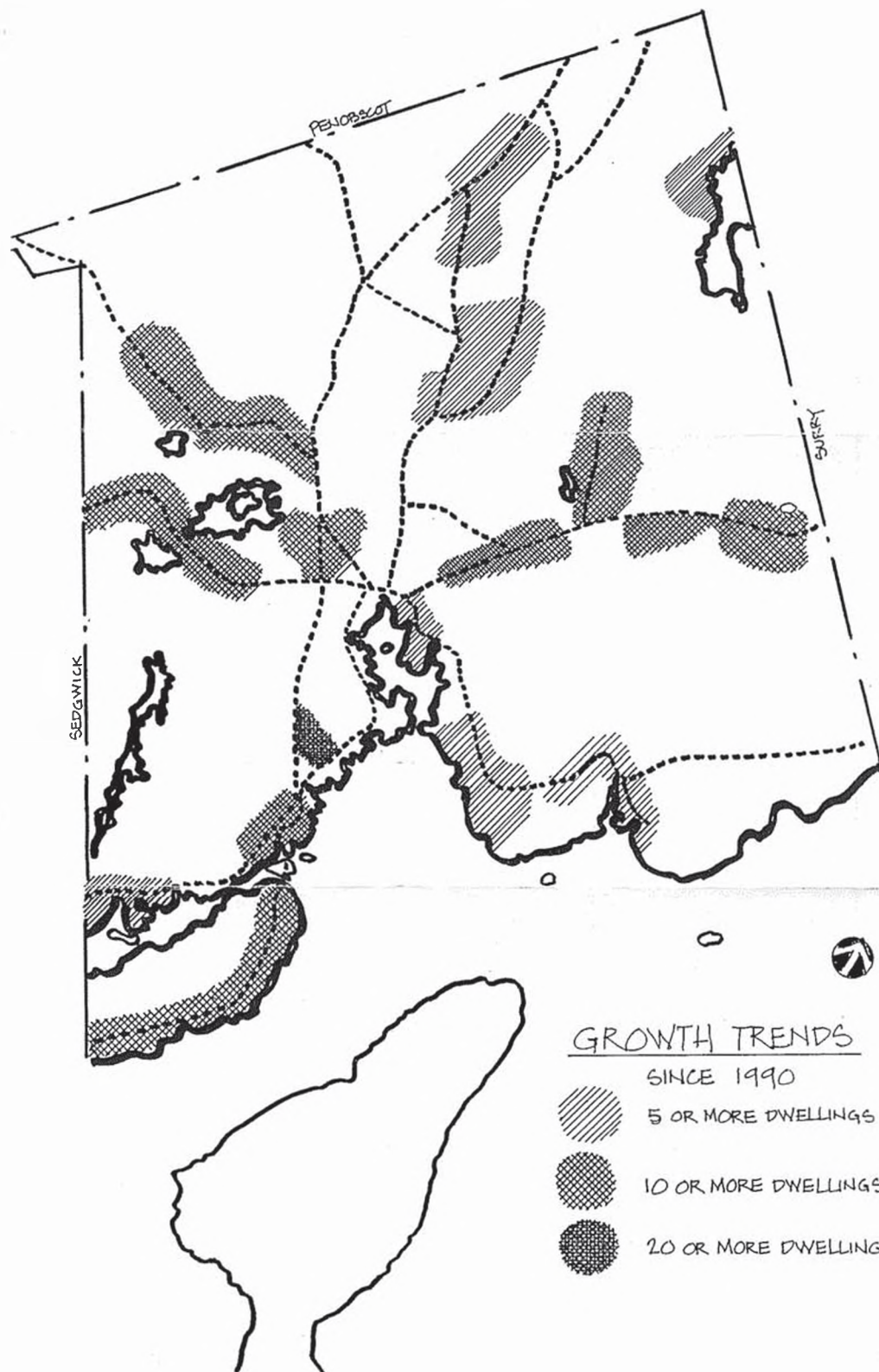
2. Soils

The northern reaches of the Town are where predominant agricultural uses developed around the turn of the last century, and generally this area has deep, well drained soils. The agricultural settlement of North Blue Hill evolved in this area.

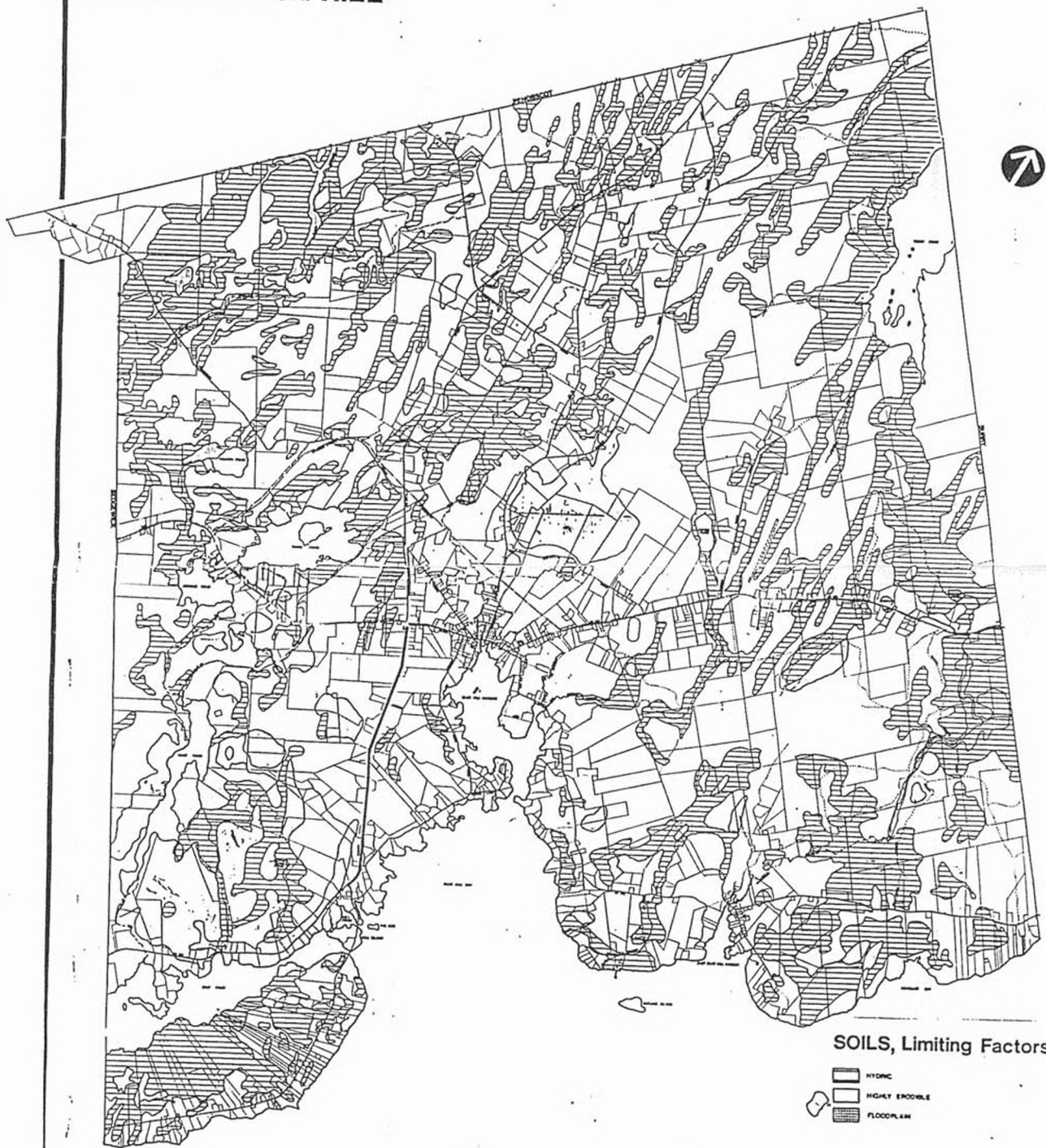
Two Soils Maps were prepared for Blue Hill: SOILS: *Limiting Factors*, which shows which areas in Town are on Hydric or poorly drained soils, erodible soils, or on floodplain soils, and a second map which is entitled SOILS POTENTIAL FOR LOW DENSITY DEVELOPMENT. This second map shows which soils are rated as having very high to very low potential for development of single family homes with subsurface waste disposal. The ratings are based on the degree of site modification and associated costs needed to make the soil satisfactory for subsurface waste disposal, house building and roads.

3. Land Use Trends by Type and Neighborhood

The map that follows shows Growth Trends by Neighborhood: since 1990, it provides an indication of the growth in the numbers of residential units. The maps that accompany this section - the LAND USE map and the GROWTH TREND map - show the geographic distribution of new construction during the time period between 1990 and 1999, as well as the current location of various structures in Town. Like most rural communities in Maine recent development has tended to develop out from the village areas along town roads and into the rural areas. And like most Maine communities the distinction between village centers and rural areas is rapidly disappearing.



TOWN OF BLUE HILL

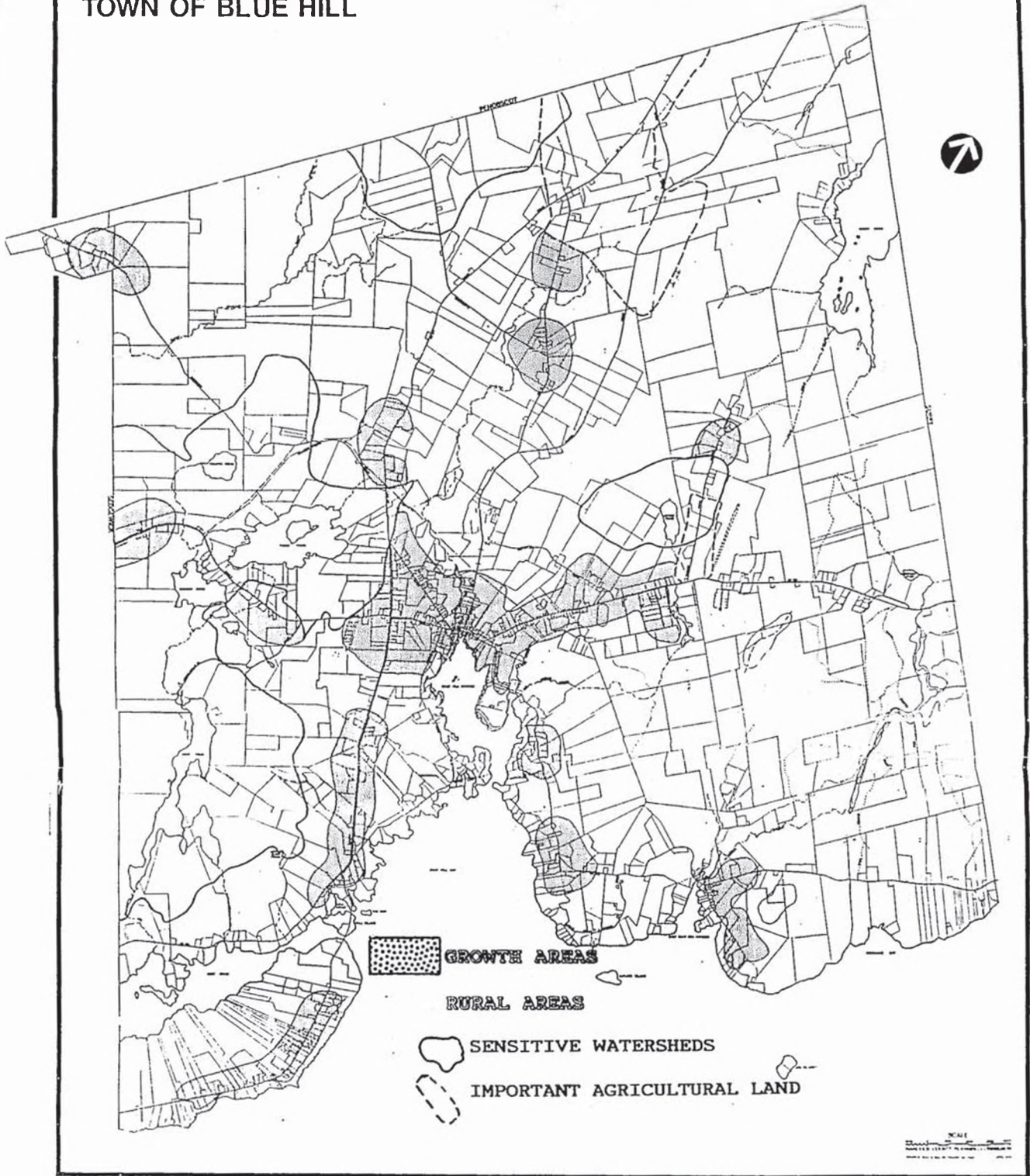


SOILS, Limiting Factors

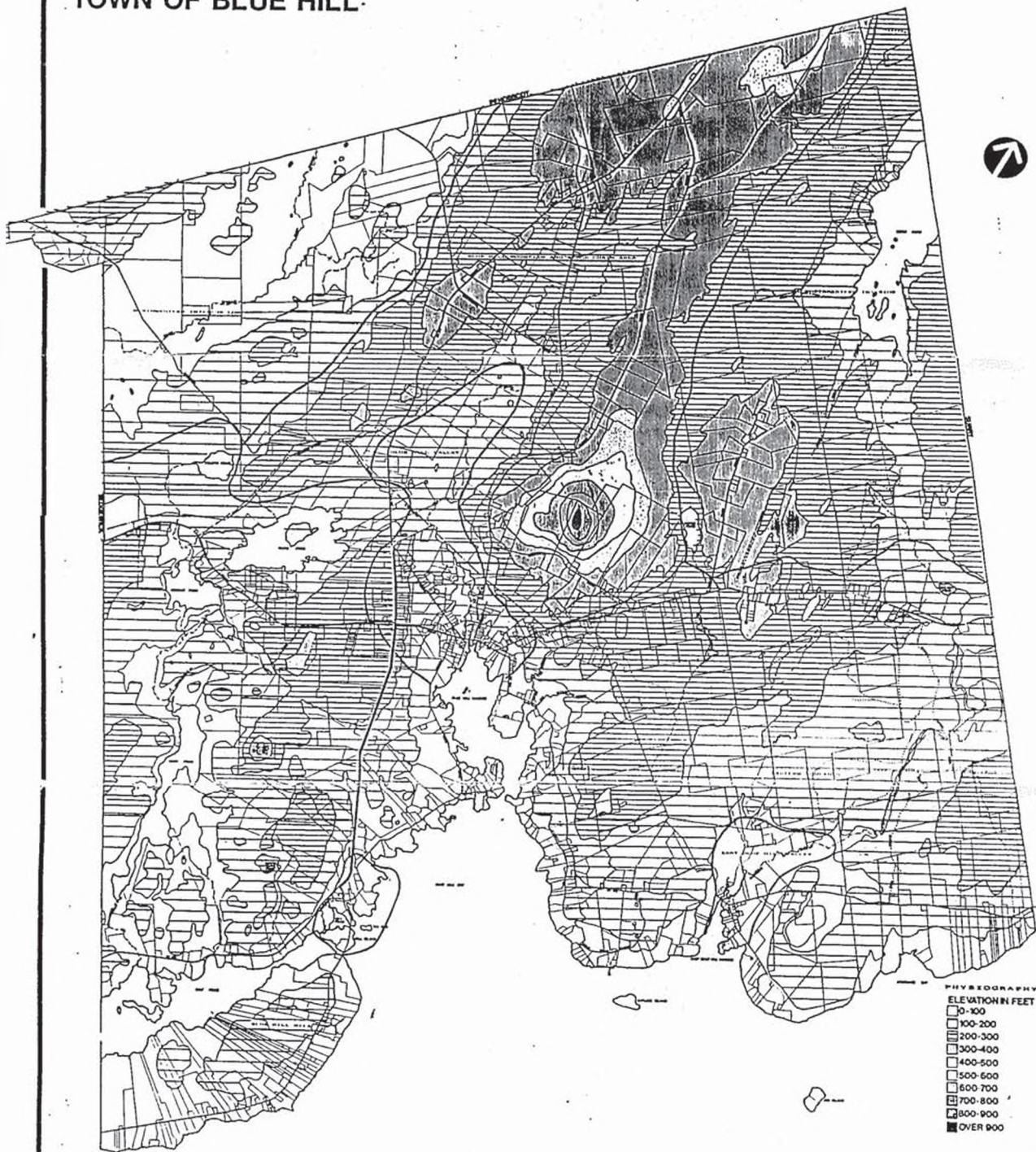
- HYDNC
- HIGHLY ERODIBLE
- FLOODPLAIN

SCALE
1 inch = 1 mile
BENEDICT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Benedict, West of New York, New York

TOWN OF BLUE HILL



TOWN OF BLUE HILL.



PHYSIOGRAPHY
ELEVATION IN FEET

0-100
100-200
200-300
300-400
400-500
500-600
600-700
700-800
800-900
OVER 900

SCALE
1" = 1 MILE
HUNTER COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
Revised: May 1990

III. E. TRANSPORTATION

1. Introduction

Blue Hill serves the area around it as a hub serves a wheel. Most traffic going to or coming from Sedgwick, Brooklin, Brooksville, Deer Isle and Stonington goes through Blue Hill. Parking is also an issue in the village center of Blue Hill. It is the purpose of this section to assess transportation-related issues. Specifically, this section will:

- a. identify and profile Blue Hill's roadway and transportation systems in terms of extent, capacity, and use;
- b. assess the adequacy of those systems in handling current use demands;
- c. predict whether transportation improvements will be needed to adequately accommodate the demands generated by projected increases in population and development within Blue Hill and Hancock County;
- d. describe Blue Hill's public parking facilities and assess whether improvements will be needed to adequately accommodate the needs of the projected population and economy; and
- e. estimate the general costs of providing the needed transportation system and parking facility improvements.

2. Goals

The State of Maine has adopted no specific transportation goal for comprehensive planning purposes. Regional goals and policies for Hancock County include promotion of curb cut access controls and setbacks from highways, enhanced visual quality of transportation corridors, limited strip development, and expansion of public transportation systems. The Town of Blue Hill in its 1986 Comprehensive Plan adopted as a goal the establishment of a roadway system which will meet the optimum standards of quality, efficiency, and safety, while minimizing the cost to the Town for maintaining this network. Currently, the Town seeks a solution to the parking shortages in town and hopes to avoid any further parking problems created by new businesses.

3. Classification and Mileage of Roads

There are approximately 62 miles of roads in Blue Hill which are publicly maintained. In addition, there are dozens of year-round and seasonal private roads. Tables 1 and 2 list the names of all state and town roads with their lengths and pavement types.

TABLE 1
BLUE HILL TOWN ROADS 1998
Mileage, Pavement Type and Condition

	Tar	Gravel	Total
Jay Carter Read	.40 P	.42 P	.82
Turkey Farm Road	1.37 G		1.37
Mountain Road	1.26 G		1.26
Range Road	2.84 G	1.0 F	3.84
Stover Road		1.50 F-P (.75 P -.75 G)	1.50
Tamworth Farm Road	1.08 P		1.08
Ackley Farm Road		.57 F	.57
Kingdom Road		4.46 F-P (2-2 F - 2.2 G)	4.46
Beech Hill Road	1.20 G		1.20
Parker Point Road	3.19 G (2.2 G 1.0 F-P)		3.19
E. P. Lane	.13 F		.13
Curtis Cove Road	1.25 F		1.25
Grindleville Road		5.00 P	5.00
Water St., Mill St., and High at. .70	.70 G		
Mill Pond Road	.13 G	.12 F	.25
York Road		.75 F	.75
Wood Point Road	.25 P		.25
<u>Hinkley Ridge Road</u>	<u>1.30 G</u>		<u>1.30</u>
Totals	12.16	15.51	27.67

Condition
P - Poor
F - Fair
G - Good

Source: Blue Hill Town Office, Road Commissioner Mike Astbury

TABLE 2
BLUE HILL STATE ROADS
Mileage, Pavement and Ride Quality Condition

Route #	Local Names	Mileage	PCRI	PSI2
15	Mines Road	2.93	3.32	2.3
	Pleasant Street	6.12	3.17	2.2
172	Ellsworth Rd, Greens Hill	5.30	3.35	3.1
	E Main St., Tenney Hill Rd, and Main St.			
	South Street (outer)	0.63	3.65	n/a
	South Street (middle)	1.12	4.44	4.9
	South Street (inner)	0.78	3.01	N/A
175	S Blue Hill Rd	6.12	4.44	4.9
176	E Blue Hill Rd	6.68	2.78	2.5
177	Union St., North St.	3.49	4.44	4.9
	Western County Rd (inner)	0.99	3.03	3.4
	Western County Rd (outer)	0.72	3.70	4.3
Total		35.75		

*** Notes**

1: PCR is DOT's Pavement Condition Rating

0:	out of service
1:	extreme cracking, rutting, patching
2:	advanced cracking, rutting, patching
3:	moderate cracking, rutting, patching
4:	initial cracking, rutting, to near new
5:	perfect

2: PSI is DOT's Ride Quality Index

0.0:	out of service
1.0:	comfortable at 25 mph
2.5:	comfortable at 45 mph
3.5:	comfortable at 55 mph
5.0:	perfect

Source: Maine Department of Transportation

a. State Highways

Five state highways go through the Town, totaling 35 miles. Route 15 connects Blue Hill to Penobscot and Stonington. Route 172 runs from Ellsworth to Sedgwick via Blue Hill. Route 177 connects South Penobscot to Blue Hill. Route 17S runs along the South Blue Hill shoreline connecting Blue Hill with Sedgwick. Route 176 runs from Blue Hill along the East Blue Hill shoreline to Surry. All of the state roads are paved and classified by DOT as "collector" roads. Collector roads are moderate speed roads which distribute traffic from local roads to highways or primary destinations. The State is responsible for both summer and winter maintenance, although it may compensate the Town for plowing of the village center and other roads.

b. Town Roads

Blue Hill has 27.67 miles of town roads that it must maintain. Approximately 12 miles of this total are paved while the remainder are dirt and gravel. All of the town roads are classified by DOT as "local" roads. Local roads carry low volumes of traffic at low speeds.

c. Private Roads

There are many private roads in Blue Hill, mainly short gravel roads leading to the shore of ponds or the ocean. More and more private ways are being built in subdivisions shared and maintained by a common homeowners association. As more acreage is subdivided, it is important to assure that these roads are built to standards which can accommodate fire trucks, school busses, and other forms of public travel.

Functional classifications of roads (i.e., local vs. collector) help to conceptualize potential problems due to conflicts in use of a road. For example, as the village area fills up, extensive residential and commercial development along outlying collector roads leads to such roads serving a double function as both 'local' and collector. This produces traffic problems based on conflicts of access (cars turning in and out of driveways) and speed (cars hoping to go 55 mph toward Bucksport or Ellsworth) and parking and pedestrian hazards. Similarly, heavy traffic on back roads or residential streets designed for a low rate of traffic (such as the Josie Leech Road or Parker Point) increases the chance of accidents.

4. Condition and Service of Roads

An elected road commissioner has total authority over repair and upkeep of town roads. The town selectmen release funds approved at town meeting to the road commissioner, who in turn contracts out all road work. Maintenance is generally scheduled in response to requests or complaints from residents. Table 1 describes the general condition of all local roads.

The Department of Transportation keeps records of the condition of all State-maintained roads in Blue Hill and this is shown in Table 2. PSI measures ride quality and comfort at various speeds. PCR measures pavement condition.

5. Usage and Capacity of Roads

a. Traffic Levels

The Maine Department of Transportation (DOT) collects limited traffic data for Blue Hill roads. The accompanying Transportation Map compares 1979 and 1988 traffic counts for key locations in the Town, showing steady growth in traffic. Serving as a hub for surrounding areas presents traffic congestion problems. In summer months especially, through traffic causes excessive congestion problems at several areas of town.

b. Accidents and Safety

The Department of Transportation maintains accident records using a "Critical Rate Factor" which considers the construction of the road comparable sites, and a variety of other factors. For the three year period from 1986 to 1988 three intersections and segments were identified by DOT as areas of concern (CRF>1.00; f>8). Those three are Green's Hill Road (Rt. 172) from Mountain Road to the East Blue Hill Road (176); North Street (Rt. 177) from Kingdom Road to Tamworth Farm Road; and Tenney Hill Road (Rt. 15) between Parker Point and Union Street. The intersection of Main and Pleasant by the Town Hall is still an accident problem, even though moving the Post Office has reduced some congestion there.

All of the areas identified as accident-prone fall under the jurisdiction of DOT. All changes in design, control, and direction must be approved by DOT. The Town does have a significant role as an interested party however, and can be very active by requesting changes or participating in hearings.

c. Traffic Controls

Curb access, setbacks and highway land use controls are some traffic control methods available to the Town. The Department of Transportation currently has some control on the design and number of curb cuts allowed on state roads.

d. Alternative Routes

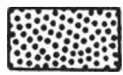
Improvements made by the Town on the Ridge Road several years ago increased use of Route 177 and North Street (Beach Hill Road) as a Village bypass for traffic from Bucksport, along Route 15. Despite significant increases in traffic volume in the general area, annual average daily traffic counts on Route 15 in the Village decreased by 24% between 1979 and 1988. Traffic counts on Route 172 between 1979 and 1988 increased by 63%, from 1090 vehicles in 1979 to 3260 vehicles in 1988.

6. Parking

The village of Blue Hill is considered to have a serious parking problem. There are not enough town-owned parking lots to handle all the cars looking for a place to park. Many businesses have been established over the years which have not provided any off-street parking for their customers. The result has been too many village business patrons looking for too few parking spaces. 'Ball park' estimates of the number of parking spaces for a small retail center such as Blue Hill suggests that between 450 - 750 spaces would be necessary. These spaces however should be no more than 600, from the retail area. A rough count of both public and private parking spaces currently available in Blue Hill Village indicates that a total of roughly 600 spaces is now available in Blue Hill. Many of the parking spaces available are however as much as 1000' away from the primary shopping area. The Town needs to control the growth of any more businesses that do not have adequate off-street parking. A by-product of the lack of parking in the village is the growth of businesses springing up on the side of the major town and state roads leading into the village area,

What few public lots exist (see attached map) are not well laid out or identified. A coordinated public-private effort to identify and improve existing parking areas would help. Off-street parking standards for new businesses in the village need to be stated specifically in the Commercial Site Plan Review Ordinance and enforced.

PARKING AREAS



PUBLIC ON-STREET PARKING

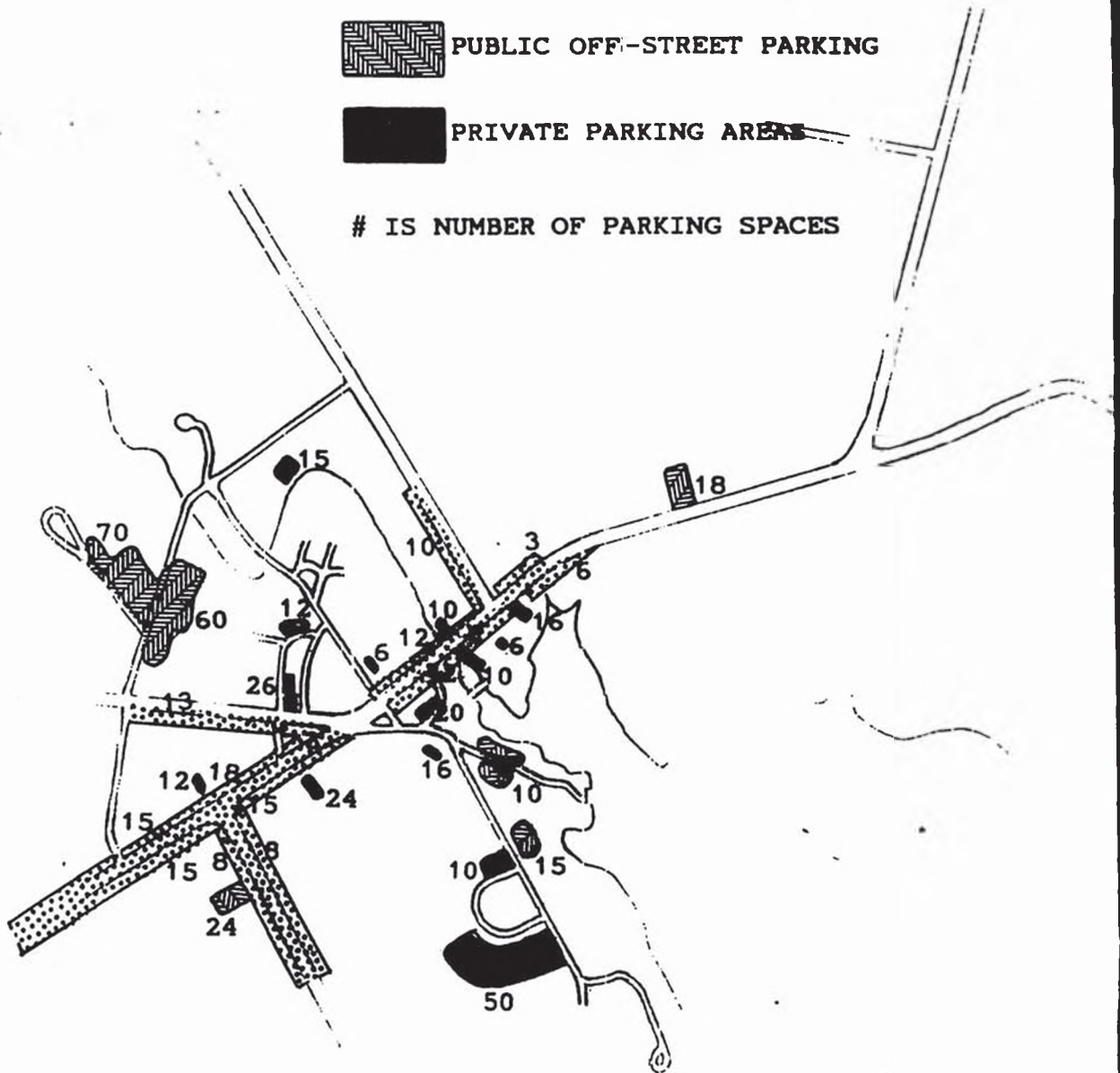


PUBLIC OFF-STREET PARKING



PRIVATE PARKING AREAS

IS NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES



BLUE HILL VILLAGE AREA

HANCOCK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
1991

7. Sidewalks

All sidewalks in Blue Hill are in the village area, with one short stretch in East Blue Hill. There are approximately 7000 lineal feet of sidewalks in Blue Hill. Their condition is generally fair to poor, and many are in need of upgrading and repair.

8. Railways

Rail freight service is available in Bucksport and Bangor/Hermon. The closest passenger rail is in Boston.

9. Airports

The Hancock County Airport at Trenton, located 20 miles from Blue Hill, provides regularly scheduled commercial service. The primary runway is 5796 by 150 feet; the secondary is 3363 by 75 feet. Navigation is aided by a CAT I ILS system (landing for visibility of one half mile). 40,000 take-offs and landings in 1989 reflect heavy use by charter, private, and scenic flights.

The Stonington Municipal Airport, located approximately 15 miles from Blue Hill, has no commercial service and one 2100' by 60' foot runway.

Bangor International Airport, located 40 miles from Blue Hill is a major commercial and cargo airport. An 11,000 foot runway serves three commercial airlines and refuels flights from Europe.

There is a small plane, private air field located on the north side of Blue Hill Mountain, off the Turkey Farm Road that is available for occasional local public use.

10. Public Transportation

The closest bus terminal is in Bangor, forty miles from Blue Hill, with regular service to Portland and Boston and connecting routes. Greyhound runs busses seasonally to Mount Desert Island with a stop in Ellsworth.

Downeast Transportation, based in Ellsworth, provides bus service twice a week from Blue Hill to Ellsworth.

The Washington -Hancock Community Agency provides demand-response transportation for eligible Blue Hill residents referred to them by the Maine Department of Human Services, including scheduled and demand trips to Ellsworth and Bangor for shopping or medical reasons.

No taxi services are available in Blue Hill.

Public and private transportation services reflect the number of social services and opportunities for mobility available to citizens. While Blue Hill residents rely primarily on personal autos for transportation, public transportation is an important issue when considering aging populations, increasing traffic congestion, and the long distances traveled by Hancock County residents for jobs and shopping.

III. F COMMUNITY FACILITIES and FISCAL CAPACITY

The Town of Blue Hill is charged with providing its citizens adequate services without undue taxation. The Town's relatively small population increasingly spread over an extensive land area of over 35 square miles makes this a challenge.

1. Assessment of Existing Public Facilities

a. Fire Department

The Blue Hill Fire Department is a volunteer effort with Thirty active members. There are four fire department vehicles and these are:

- 1 - Tanker, 1981 in "fair" condition
- 2 - Pumpers, one 1970 in "fair" condition and one 1989 in excellent condition
- 1 - Rescue / Utility, 1995 in "Excellent" condition

The Fire Station was originally built in 1967 and has been added to twice. The original building is 55' x 70' in size, the ambulance storage addition is 30' x 40' and the now training room, completed this year, is 24' x 32' in size.

Over the next five years the following Capital Improvements will be needed for the Fire Department:

- 1. 1970 pumper will be replaced with a new pumper from donated monies (No Tax Burden) Cost: \$150,000
- 2. Building generator at a cost of \$15,000

b. Police Department

The Town has no police. It does have a part-time constable who provides traffic control, security and handles the occasional domestic squabble and other complaints.

Other police protection services are provided by the County Sheriff's Department and the State Police. Varying numbers of State Police Troopers live in Town and thus provides an added measure of service.

c. Schools

The Town has an elementary school which was renovated and enlarged in 1992 to handle 400 students. There are currently 230 students enrolled in Kindergarten through eighth grade. The Town has no public secondary education facility. Tuition is paid to private and other public schools on a tuition basis. Approximately 95% of 140 to 150 secondary students attend George Stevens Academy in Blue Hill. Other schools providing secondary education are the Liberty School in Blue Hill, Ellsworth High School, Deer Isle - Stonington High School, Mount Desert Island High School and Bucksport High School all located in their respective towns. School bus transportation is contracted out to a private service.

d. Town Administration

Blue Hill has a selectmen form of government. The Selectmen are paid per hour. The Town has a full-time treasurer / administrative assistant and a full time tax collector / secretary. There is also a town clerk. The Town government operates out of Town Hall, a building erected in 1896 and considered to be in good condition. More office space for assessors and administrative services are needed. The Town Hall was renovated in 1993.

In 1990, Town voters authorized a committee to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Town Manager or administrative assistant form of government. That committee has not been formed as of yet. This Committee should be formed.

e. Roads

The Town has an elected Road Commissioner. He hires personnel and equipment on an as needed basis, and in keeping with the Town Meeting approved budget for roads.

The Town owns very little equipment for road maintenance. All road improvement services are contracted out.

The major roads in Blue Hill are all state-aid roads. These roads are 100% maintained by the State of Maine Department of Transportation during the summer season. During the winter months the Town has the responsibility for plowing and sanding these routes. The Town receives some reimbursement for plowing and sanding through the "Road Block Grant" fund. There are a total of 35-75 miles of roads in Blue Hill that are in this category. All town roads are 100% maintained by the Town, summer and winter.

The condition and mileage of the various town roads is provided in a Table in the Transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan. A town road improvement plan and a program for improvement of town roads over the next ten years needs to be formalized. A suggested plan for these improvements could be included with the Capital Improvement Program.

f. Other Town Services and Facilities

The Town of Blue Hill has a Sewage Treatment Plant on Water Street constructed in 1975 and designed for 70,000 gallons per day. It currently operates at 20% +/- less than capacity (55,000 G.P.D. average). The Town has \$1.3 million +/- to expand sewer lines and perform a complete rehabilitation of the plant and is currently in the process of putting out bids for the work. Work should begin in the spring of 1999. The plant is capable of treating 60% +/- more sewerage by changing its operational mode. This would however create more sludge for disposal. Sludge is currently being disposed of on local farm land.

Ambulance services for Blue Hill is provided by Peninsula Ambulance Corporation, a non-profit organization that serves nine area communities. The two ambulances and equipment are housed at the Blue Hill Fire Station. The Ambulance Corp. had a face lift in February of 1996. This new facility allows the ambulance personnel to stay in the building with two attendants on duty 24 hours a day. Peninsula Ambulance Corporation has 31 people, 5 are full time, 25 part time and 1 mechanic. There is one volunteer. As of December 30, 1998 there had been 1,031 runs for the year.

Blue Hill is a PERC Contract community. A transfer station facility was built jointly with the Town of Surry in 1987. Surry and Blue Hill are the owners and operators of the facility. Three other communities - Brooklin, Sedgwick and Brooksville - have contracted with Surry/Blue Hill to handle their solid waste and are charged on a per capita basis for operating and capital costs. An interlocal committee of the Boards of Selectmen of Blue Hill and Surry manage the transfer station facility. Additional land for the transfer station facility has recently been purchased.

Cemeteries in Blue Hill are town-owned and a local cemetery association does perpetual care. A new cemetery exists in North Blue Hill which has adequate capacity for the future.

The Town of Blue Hill's Library is privately endowed. Until 1990 the building was owned by the Town. The Town contributes \$22,000 per year. The library has 30,000 volumes and employs four part time and four full time persons. There is also a public library in East Blue Hill which is maintained by private contributions and fundraising projects.

2. Fiscal Capacity

A fiscal analysis is important to understanding Blue Hill's ability to pay for the major capital expenditures it faces over the next five to ten years. This section will first review historical expenditure and revenue trends in Blue Hill. These trends will help explain the Town's current fiscal situation. Projections of future expenses and revenues can then be made. Once this background information has been presented, it will be possible to estimate the tax impacts of proposed capital expenditures.

Overall revenue and expenditure trends in Blue Hill are shown in Table 1. Part way down the table is shown the change in valuation or the estimated value of all taxable property in the town. The ability of a town to raise property taxes is dependent on its valuation. Local property taxes are the primary source of local government revenue. Due to the elimination of federal revenue sharing and the reduction of state funds, Blue Hill's reliance on the property tax continues to increase.

The major outlay is school expenditures. Capital expenditures account for a relatively minor proportion of total appropriations. In fact, there have been years when very little was spent for capital expenditures. This trend is consistent with many small towns where major capital needs occur on an infrequent basis. It must be emphasized, however, that town records have not been kept on a consistent basis so it is possible that some capital expenditures have been overlooked. In some cases, the distinction between capital and operating expenditures is also blurred. For example, road improvements have not always been traditionally considered capital expenditures in Blue Hill while they are included in the list of proposed capital expenditures for the future. To facilitate future record keeping, the Town should consider clearly indicating all capital items in its annual budget.

It is also useful to compare Blue Hill's tax situation with surrounding communities. Table 4A in Part III, section C provides some comparisons. From this information it can be seen that Blue Hill has a relatively high comparative tax rate.

Town of Blue Hill

Fiscal Capacity	1997	1996	1995	1994
Operating Costs				
Town & Other	529,007	514,810	513,444	523,562
School	2,494,688	2,309,180	2,056,719	1,915,936
Total	3,023,696	2,823,990	2,570,163	2,439,498
Population			2,235	
Exp/Capita			1,150	
Capital Expense				
Debt Service	94,512	94,107	107,484	109,212
Valuation	277,529,770	273,005,270	272,165,350	268,435,585
Property Tax	3,136,086	2,947,051	2,694,437	2,550,138
Overlay	39,915	53,927	5,613	53,888
State Revenue Sharing	65,285	63,942	62,942	65,035
Education Subsidy	238,139	255,005	221,272	248,355
Excise Tax	224,047	256,818	221,307	225,243
Transfer from surplus	-	17,000	-	-

1993	1992	1991	1990	1989
510,524	481,846	505,654	479,604	433,255
1,784,518	1,617,950	1,463,327	1,227,685	1,134,508
2,295,042	2,099,796	1,968,981	1,707,289	1,567,763
			1,941	2,005
			880	782
105,822	78,506	51,454	79,240	76,404
264,542,449	258,029,288	255,524,745	256,283,457	77,627,416
2,407,337	2,218,747	2,095,303	1,793,984	1,591,362
61,495	43,840	75,731	69,530	45,838
63,309	36,649	63,830	77,616	70,471
380,780	540,911	457,512	455,249	344,204
202,295	190,979	184,790	180,021	174,890
22,000	-	10,000	5,000	25,800

Town of Blue Hill

Capital Expenditures

1989

Voting machine	7,600
Revaluation	39,900
Fire Truck	152,134
Treatment plant retrofit contract	59,559
Beech Hill & Leach roads	30,000
Town Clock	5,237
Tax mapping	10,713

1990

Revaluation	33,090
Recycling Facility	18,289
Forestry Station	35,000
Treatment Plant retrofit	184,339
Kingdom road	5,179
Tax Mapping	20,737

1991

Town Hall restoration	13,374
Revaluation	4,537
Comprehensive Plan	10,440
Transfer station Engineering, expansion &	30,868
Transfer station Equipment reserve	10,000
Salt Pond	15,901
Septic sludge site	12,000
Kingdom road	5,000
"Paving"	28,924
Grindleville road	2,000
Cemetery mower	3,208
Paving Wharf area & Fire Station	7,241
Tax mapping	3,863

1992

Comprehensive Plan	13,485
Town Hall restoration	74,235
Transfer station Equipment reserve	10,000
Transfer station Engineering, expansion &	35,103
Septic sludge site	12,000
Grindleville road	2,000
Kingdom road	5,000
"paving"	30,000
Tax mapping	3,716

1993

Town Hall restoration	290,991
Kingdom road	5,000
Grindleville Road	2,000
Turkey Farm road	5,000
Jimmy Leach Road	5,000
Mountain Road	23,225
AA field building	12,694

1994

Kingdom Road	5,000
Grindleville road	5,000
"Paving"	34,557
Turkey Farm Road	5,000

1995

Firedam repairs	40,189
Fire truck loan	30,000
Ambulance building	33,161
"Roads"	218,537

1996

Fire Department Radio	14,237
Ambulance Building	16,674
Paving Beech Hill, High St., Range Rd.	63,750
Playground appropriation	15,000
AA Field appropriation	6,000

1997

So. Blue Hill Wharf/Ramp	10,207
Blue Hill Wharf/Ramp	11,511
Paving Range, Josie Leach, Tamworth	89,050
Grader	18,891
Skating Rink	1,500