

SECTION 9: RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

RECREATION PROGRAMS

The Ogunquit Recreation Department in 2002 had a full-time director and 6 seasonal employees during the summer. The summer employees included an overseer at the Town's Agamenticus Ballpark on Agamenticus Road (in York) and camp counselors at the Ogunquit Youth Summer Camp.

The Recreation Director is responsible for the development and coordination of numerous recreational activities sponsored by the Town. In 2002, over 64 programs offered a range of activities for a range of ages and interests including travel-oriented, dance, arts & crafts, exercise, athletic, educational, cultural and leisure-time activities. Many of these take place in the Dunaway Community Center, for which the Recreation Director maintains a schedule. The Director also works with the Town Parks Committee and the Public Works Department in maintaining 14 town parks and the Marginal Way. The Director administers the Marginal Way Beautification and Memorial Bench Trust Funds, contributed to by the townspeople and visitors.

The Recreation Department attempts to respond to the community's changing recreational and leisure time interests by conceiving and scheduling new programs. This is only possible, however, if a suitable teacher or leader and the necessary equipment (if needed), can be found. In the future, more programs aimed at seniors are likely to continue as the number of retirees in Town continues to increase.

DEVELOPED RECREATION FACILITIES

Agamenticus Ballfield - Across the line in York the Town maintains the Agamenticus Ballfield for sports activities. Besides the ballfield, there are tennis courts and basketball courts. From May to November the facilities are used for Little League and informal baseball, lacrosse and softball leagues, pick-up basketball playing and fall soccer programs.

Marginal Way - The Town maintains the Marginal Way footpath, a one and one-half mile, highly scenic pedestrian walkway along the ocean. Given to the Town as a gift in 1925, the walkway extends from Oarweed Cove northward to Beach Street and receives heavy tourist use during the summer months and resident use year-round. It is estimated that the overall annual use is approximately a quarter million visitors. As a result of a Federal Recreational Trails Fund grant received in 2001, the Town completed a major rehabilitation program of pruning vegetation and replanting native species along the footpath for aesthetics and view maintenance and installed erosion control and safety facilities. The Town also maintains an ongoing Marginal Way Beautification Fund, established in 1988, for annual maintenance.

Dorothea Grant Common - In 2000, the Grant Common Committee commissioned a plan and embarked upon a long-term landscaping program for the Dorothea Grant Common to make it into the central park of Ogunquit. The park is located between Route One and the Dunaway Center and is being developed to provide both passive and active recreational uses including

strolling, sitting, picnicking as well as an outdoor performing arts space for music, live theatre and public events, such as graduation ceremonies for the adjacent Village Elementary School.

Winn House - The historic Winn House was moved to its current location in the Dorothea Grant Common Park and is being historically restored as a Town museum featuring, among other displays, artifacts and information about the Town's traditional arts and fishing communities.

**TABLE 9-1
DEVELOPED PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES - 2003**

Facility	Location	Number	Uses
Tennis Courts	Agamenticus Road Park	3	Sports
Basketball Courts	Agamenticus Road Park	2	Sports
Ball field	Agamenticus Road Park	1	Sports
Boat Launch	Footbridge Parking Lot (high tide only)		Recreational boating
Ogunquit Beach	1 ½ miles of beach	1	Recreation
Playground	Ogunquit Village School*	1	Youth recreation
Marginal Way Footpath	Ocean cliffs	1	Passive recreation
Dorothea Grant Common	Center of Village	1	Passive recreation
Winn House	Grant common	1	Town museum
Indoor performing arts space	Dunaway Community Center	1	Arts, crafts, culture

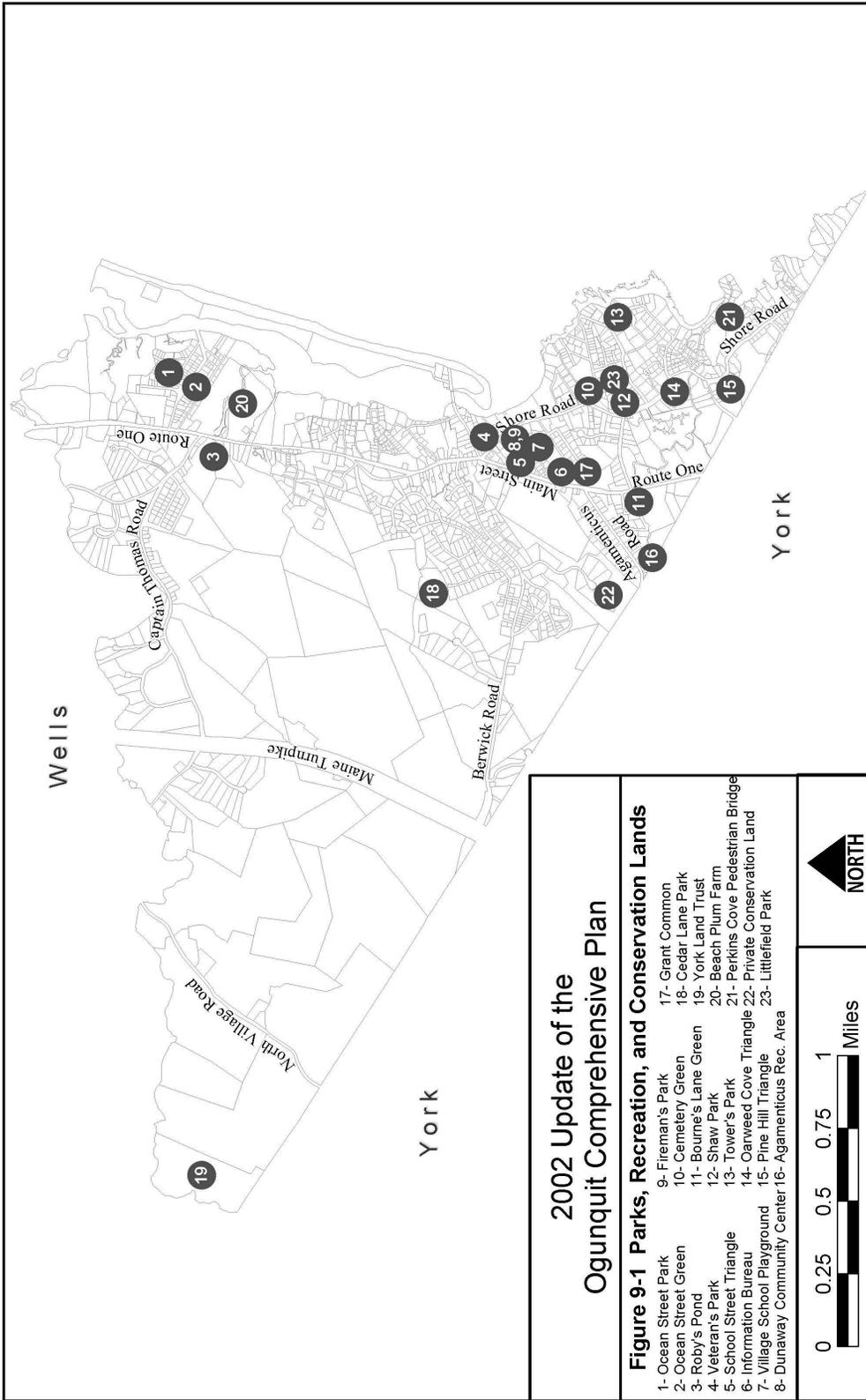
*(Owned by Wells-Ogunquit Community School District; re-designed and upgraded, 2002)

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The Town has 14 parks covering several acres. In addition, there is 146 acres of open space in privately-owned conservation land on three parcels: Beach Plum Farm, between Route One and the Ogunquit River estuary owned by the Great Works Land Trust; the York Land Trust land at the extreme western side of Town, part of the Mt. Agamenticus conservation area; and private conservation land east of the Turnpike between Agamenticus Road and Berwick Road along the York Town line. The following Map, on page 123, shows the location of parks, recreation and conservation parcels in Town.

Wildlife Habitats

The publication, **Beginning With Habitat – An Approach to Conserving Open Space**, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, 2001, provides information and maps on water, wetland and upland habitats and conservation land in Ogunquit and is adopted as part of this 2002 Update of the Comprehensive Plan. This publication is on file in the Land Use Office in Town Hall.



The publication identifies three large undeveloped habitat blocks in Town in which wildlife may be found: (1) a 319 acre block east of the Turnpike, west of Route 1, south of Captain Thomas Road and north of Berwick Road; (2) a block of 332 acres west of the Turnpike and east of North Village Road; (3) the entire part of Town west of North Village Road, which is a part of a 1,280 acre block that spills over into Wells and South Berwick. Land in the three blocks is privately owned, therefore could be developed. See Map, Town of Ogunquit - Undeveloped Habitat Blocks, 5/11/2001 in the Habitat-Open Space publication.

The publication also identifies 5 habitat locales in Town where endangered species have been found. See Map, Town of Ogunquit – High Value Plant and Animal Habitats, 12/31/00 in the Habitat-Open Space publication.

- (1) Spartina Saltmarsh
- (2) Harlequin Duck
- (3) Sassafras
- (4) Northern Black Racer (snake)
- (5) Spotted Turtle and Blanding’s Turtle

**TABLE 9-2
PARKS, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION LAND
OGUNQUIT 2002 (SEE MAP)**

(1) Ocean Street Park – (M)	(12) Shaw Park – (M)
(2) Ocean Street Green – (M)	(13) Tower’s Park – (M)
(3) Roby’s Pond – (M)	(14) Oarweed Cove Triangle – (M)
(4) Veteran’s Park – (M)	(15) Pine Hill Triangle – (M)
(5) School Street Triangle – (M)	(16) Agamenticus Rec. Area
(6) Info. Bureau (former) – (M)	(17) Grant Common – (M)
(7) Village School Playground*	(18) Cedar Lane Park – (M)
(8) Dunaway Community Ctr – (M)	(19) York Land Trust
(9) Firemen’s Park – (M)	(20) Beach Plum Farm – Great Works L T
(10) Cemetery Green – (M)	(21) Perkins Cove Boardwalk/Footbridge – (M)
(11) Bourne’s Lane Green - (M)	(22) Private conservation land
	(23) Littlefield Park (former Ledge Park) –

(M)

* Owned by Wells-Ogunquit Community School District

(M) = Municipally owned by the Town of Ogunquit

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS FROM PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Three broad recreation trends are affecting parks, open space and the land use pattern in Ogunquit in the first decade of the 21st Century. The continuing construction of hotels and motels is increasing the number of outdoor and indoor swimming pools in Town, as well as weight rooms, spas and other exercise facilities. While many of these serve exclusively the summer tourist, some of these facilities also remain open year-round and also serve year-round residents.

The design of the Dorothea Grant Common includes walkways, benches and a flat lawn for audience sitting for the enjoyment of arts performances. It also includes a children's post & beam playhouse.

The year-round interest in more pedestrian connections between Town parks and the Beach is paralleled by the more youthful residents (and tourists) interest in more inter-connected bicycle pathways. The manifest desire among retirees for greater, and safer, pedestrian facilities: sidewalks, crosswalks across busy streets and more pathways like the Marginal Way prompt the development of an interconnected Town open space pattern. Preservation of in-town open space for park use by locating new parking lots on the fringes of the Village is another expressed desire of many residents.

The Marginal Way provides a marvelous example of how to get around on foot. Sidewalks and paths that tie together the various parks in the Village with Dorothea Grant Common, the central park in Town, with the Marginal Way and the passenger trolley system would enable easier pedestrian movement around the Village.

Also identification of crucial open space for habitat protection, recreational objectives and environmental quality maintenance in an open space pattern seems desirable. Such a mapped pattern would enable the Planning Board to allow subdividers and major site plan developers to contribute cash toward land purchases within a Town Open Space Plan in lieu of providing open space within their own subdivisions or site plans.

Properly balancing recreational interests with the hospitality industry's recreational services with provision for youth facilities and programs both within the Village and at athletic fields is likely to be one of the biggest land use challenges of the 21st Century.