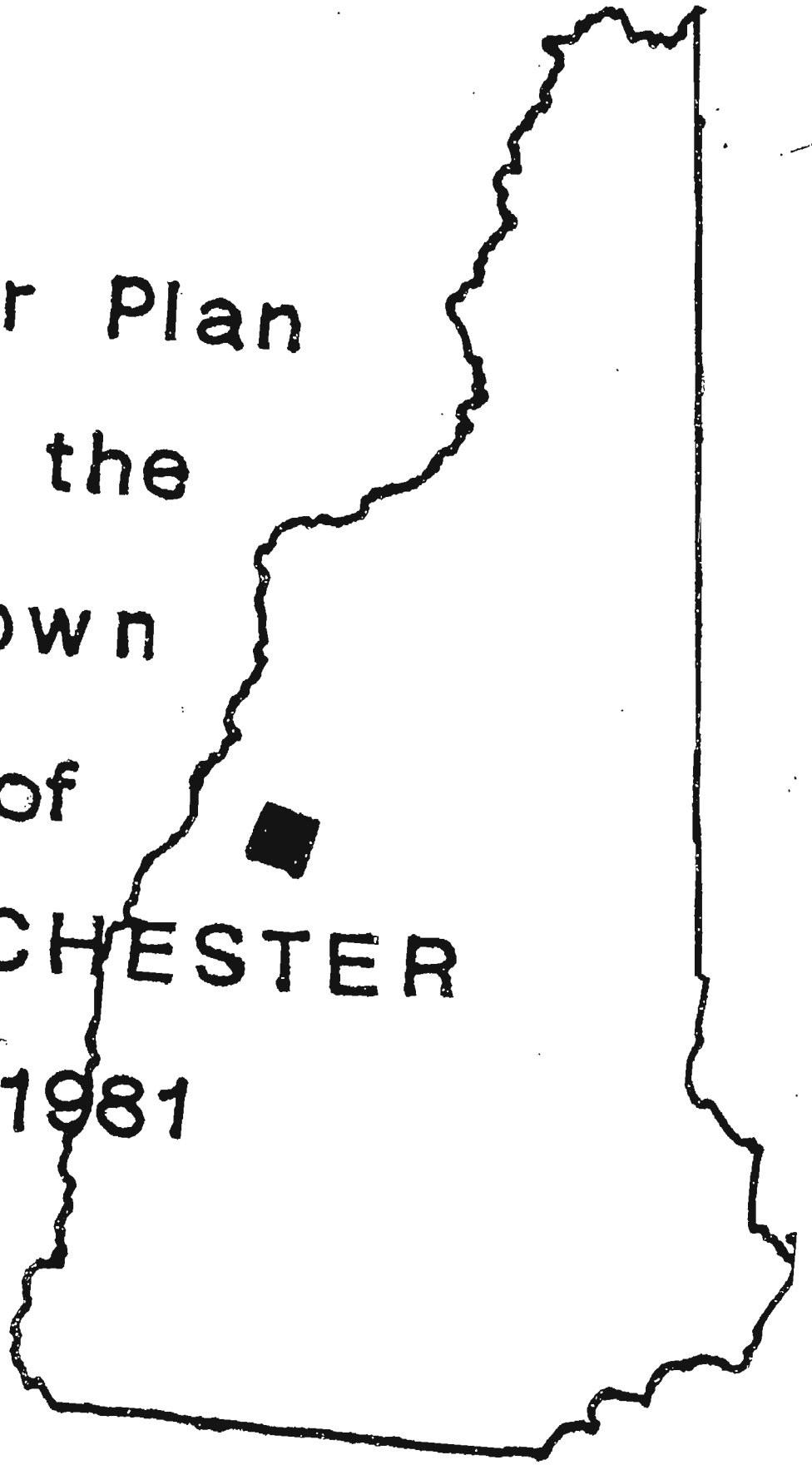
A Master Plan for the Town of DORCHESTER 1981



Amended
Nov. 1988
Pg's 27, 28, 29

The Planning Board of the Town of Dorchester, New Hampshire, in accordance with the provisions of RSA Sections 675:6-7, does hereby amend the Master Plan of the Town of Dorchester, including its findings, goals, policies and objectives; and urges all Town Boards ot use the Master Plan as the ploanning guideline to be consulted and folllowed by these Boards in the performance of their respective duties; and urges all Town Boards and the Town Meeting to implement to the best of their abilities the objectives contained within this plan for the c-ordinated and harmonious development of the Town of Dorchester, New Hampshire.

DORCHESTER PLANNING BOARD

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Jean R. Belair, Chairman

Edith L. Gray

Edith Gray

Blanche A. MacDonald

Blanche A. MacDonald

Henry Melanson

Henry Melanson

Valentine F. Parker

Valentine F. Parker,
Selectmens' Representative

Adopted by the Planning Board: November 29, 1988

INTRODUCTION

A master plan is a means whereby a community can assess what it has and make recommendations to guide future growth. This master plan represents the work of the Dorchester Planning Board, the many residents who provided valuable information, and technical assistance from the Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Council.

A master plan is not a legally binding document, but a collection of reports and maps which tell a community what it has, and serves as a framework for the community in setting its course over a period of years. A master plan is not rigid, and modifications and adjustments are always made. The steps in the development of a master plan can be summarized as follows:

1. Inventory of existing conditions - population, land use, natural environment, community facilities and services, transportation, housing, economic environment, etc.;

2. Identification of community goals;

3. Review of various alternatives for achieving goals and selection of the most appropriate method; and,

4. Carrying out of the recommendations in the master plan by appropriate action, including passage of various land use ordinances, capital improvements program, land acquisition, tax policies, study committees, etc.

Planning for growth allows a community to meet the basic needs of its citizens in the areas of schools, housing, transportation, public facilities, etc., and helps to insure that growth in a community does not result in fiscal chaos for that town.

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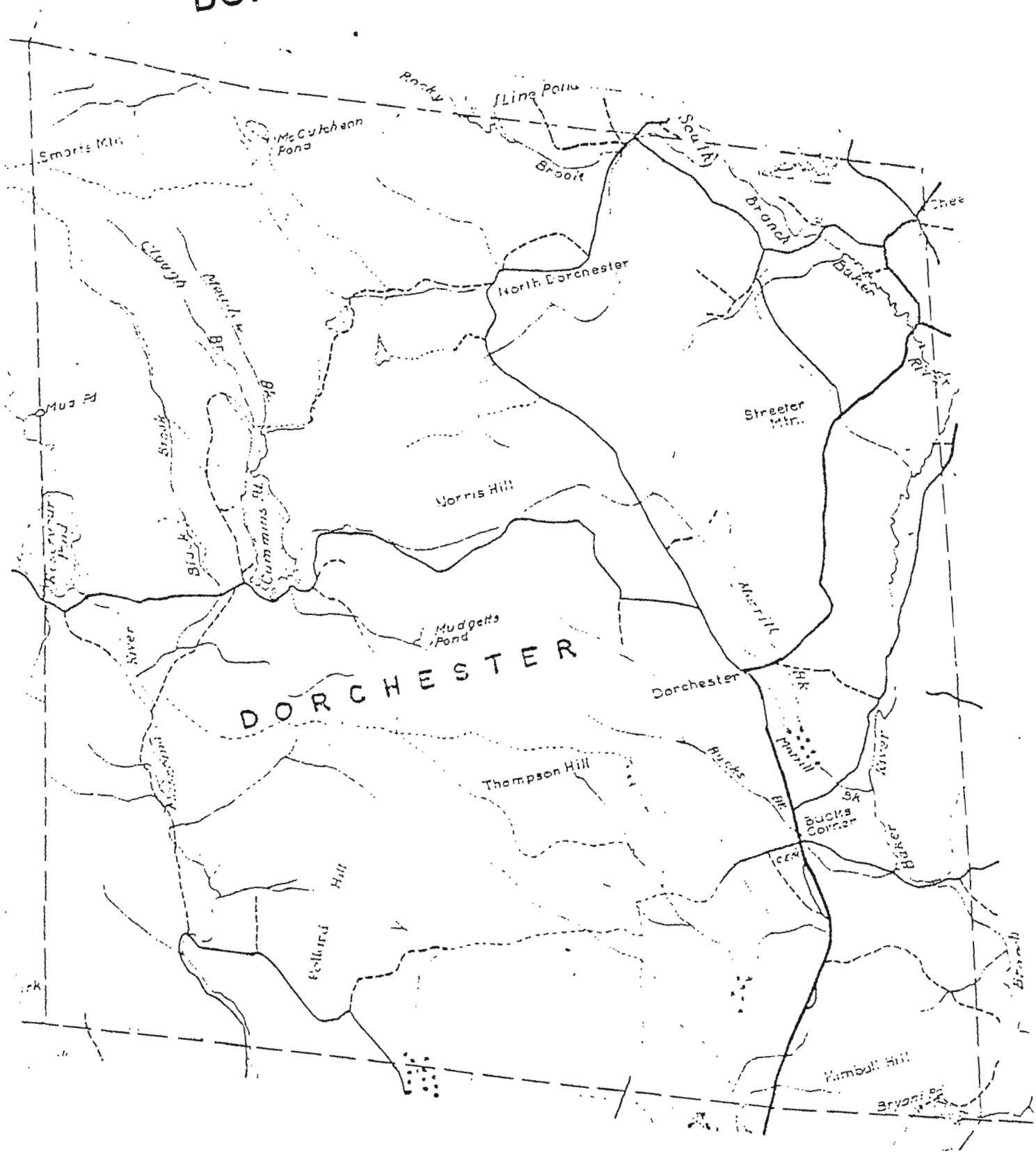
FIGURE 1

DORCHESTER



HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF DORCHESTER

The Town of Dorchester is located in the upland region between the Connecticut and Merrimack River Valleys. More isolated than its neighbors, and lacking unusual or valuable resources, Dorchester never experienced the interaction and growth associated with locations on important highways, railroads, lakes or rivers.

negative start

The Town was initially founded in 1761, but it took three charters before Dorchester was finally organized. John House received the last one on May 3, 1772. It was not until 1780 that the first meeting was held to choose officers and organize the Town. By 1801, four school districts had been formed within the community. Dorchester reached its peak in 1840, when there were 840 people, 200 miles of roads, a sawmill, starch mill, woolen mill, tannery, and the famous Wrights Tavern.

? not accurate

The Civil War started the Town on its decline. Many young men went off to war, and the cost of that war put Dorchester in debt for over twenty years. The development of the railroad along the Baker River in the late 198th century added to this decline, as communities along the railroad grew at the expense of the hill towns. By the end of World war I, the population had fallen to 228 people.

Through the 1920's the Town continued its decline in both population and industry. Lumbering and farming had been the main sources of revenue. As the forests were stripped of marketable timber, the number of sawmills declined. In 1932, there was one portable sawmill operating in Dorchester, where there had been eleven six years earlier. While many small farms were still producing milk, which was taken daily to the creamery in West Rumney, these farms were not productive enough to support the families who maintained them. Farmers were forced to spend the winter months cutting and hauling logs and pulpwood to the railroad cars in West Rumney. In the spring, maple syrup production brought some income to the farmers.

The Great Depression reduced the demand for lumber and pulpwood. However, the farmers did not suffer as much as those who lived in cities because they were able to grow their own food and to cut wood for fuel. The men depended on the work they could do on the roads of the Town for the money to pay their taxes and furnish bare necessities.

The great hurricane of 1938 destroyed hundreds of acres of prime timber and young trees as well as many of the productive maple sugar groves. Although some employment was gained by salvaging the fallen trees, this could not compensate for the loss that would be felt for years to come.

World War II called the few eligible men into the service, and many more deserted their farms to seek the benefits of regular wages in defense plants in Connecticut and Rhode Island. These farms were never to recover from this neglect. By 1950, there were only a half dozen farms in Dorchester where milk was produced, and small vegetable gardens had replaced the fields of corn and oats of previous years.

A renewed demand for lumber and employment in nearby towns brought a gradual improvement to Dorchester's economy. In the early 1950's, surfacing of Route 118 was completed from the Dorchester Town House to the Canaan town line, and roads were kept passable through the winter and spring months, thus enabling people to drive to shops in Lebanon, Plymouth, and Beebe River where regular employment brought a more comfortable living and modern improvements to homes where electricity had been available scarcely more than a dozen years.

The development of the Interstate system linking the Lebanon area on one side and the seacoast and White Mountains area on the other made Dorchester a more desirable place in which to live or to enjoy a pleeasant retirement. A further asset was the airports in Lebanon and Concord, both within an hour's drive.

From a low of 91 in 1960, the population of Dorchester had grown to 238 in 1980. Many professional people have found the Town well within reach of their jobs and can thus enjoy a comfortable rural life. They have the benefits of police protection by Dorchester's own police chief and ttwo deputies; fir protection of the nearby fire departments of Rumney and Canaan; a fine library; a museum; two churches, one of which was recently declared an Historic Site; and regular busing of student to schools in the Mascoma Area School District of which Dorchester became a member in 1962.

POPULATION

Historically, the population of Dorchester had varied greatly. Earliest figures, from 1773, showed the Town with a population of 121 people. A high of 769 was reached in 1840, after which the Town showed a steady decline. A low of 91 was reached in 1960. By 1970, the population had climbed back up to 141, an increase of 55% over that of 1960. 1980 US Census figures gave the community a population of 238, a 68.8% increase from 1970 and a 161% increase from 1960. This increase is almost four times the rate of increase of the remainder of the Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Council region, and is due greatly to the small size of the town. Figure 2 gives the population history of Dorchester.

Population projections are important because they are indicators of when demand will increase for schools, housing, etc. In a community with such a small population, accurate projections are almost impossible. For example, projections made in 1971 by Envico projected a 1980 population of only 128, and a population of only 150 by the year 2000. Projections made by the New Hampshire Office of State Planning in 1975 listed a population of only 230 in the year 2000, eight less than the 1980 US Census figures. Therefore, projeections should be used with great care. However, it is important to at least estimate the number of people that will require services in the next 20 years. If major deveopment occurs in the Hanover-Lebanon or Plymouth job markets, population in Dorchester is expected to continue to rise rapidly. But, if the job market stays the same, and the price of gasoline continues to rise, the population increase will likely be smaller.

Figure 3 shows four sets of population projections for the Town of Dorchester. Two were made by the New Hampshire Office of State Planning, one in 1975 and one in 1980; one was made by Envico in 1971; and one is a UpperValley-Lake Sunapee Council projection based on a continued increase of 62% - the average increase from 1960-1980. A continued increase of 62% is considered highly unlikely.

Although Dorchester's population has increased at a much higher rate in the past 20 years than many area communities, that trend is expected to level off. Table 1 on the following page lists Dorchester's past and projected population increase in comparison with other area sommunities. Table 2 shows the same information by percent of change.

TABLE 1

AREA POPULATION INCREASE

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000*
Dorchester	91	141	238	297	370
Canaan	1507	1923	2464	2815	3238
Orange	83	103	197	246	307
Grafton	348	370	725	905	1129
Lyme	1026	1112	1290	1410	1542
Lebanon	9299	9725	11052	12181	13436

TABLE 2

AREA POPULATION PERCENT CHANGE

	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990*	1990-2000*
Dorchester	54.9	68.8	24.8	24.6
Canaan	27.6	28.1	14.2	15.0
Orange	24.1	91.3	24.9	24.8
Grafton	6.3	95.9	24.8	24.8
Lyme	8.4	16.0	9.3	9.4
Lebanon	4.6	13.6	10.2	10.3

* New Hampshire Office of State Planning projections.

At the end of 1988, the population is estimated by housing survey to be 340, indicating a 1980-1988 increase of 42.9 percent or a compounded growth rate of slightly under 5 percent. Projecting this growth rate, it is estimated that 1990 population will be 360, and population in the year 2000 will be 5000.

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POPULATION HISTORY - DORCHESTER
1790-1980

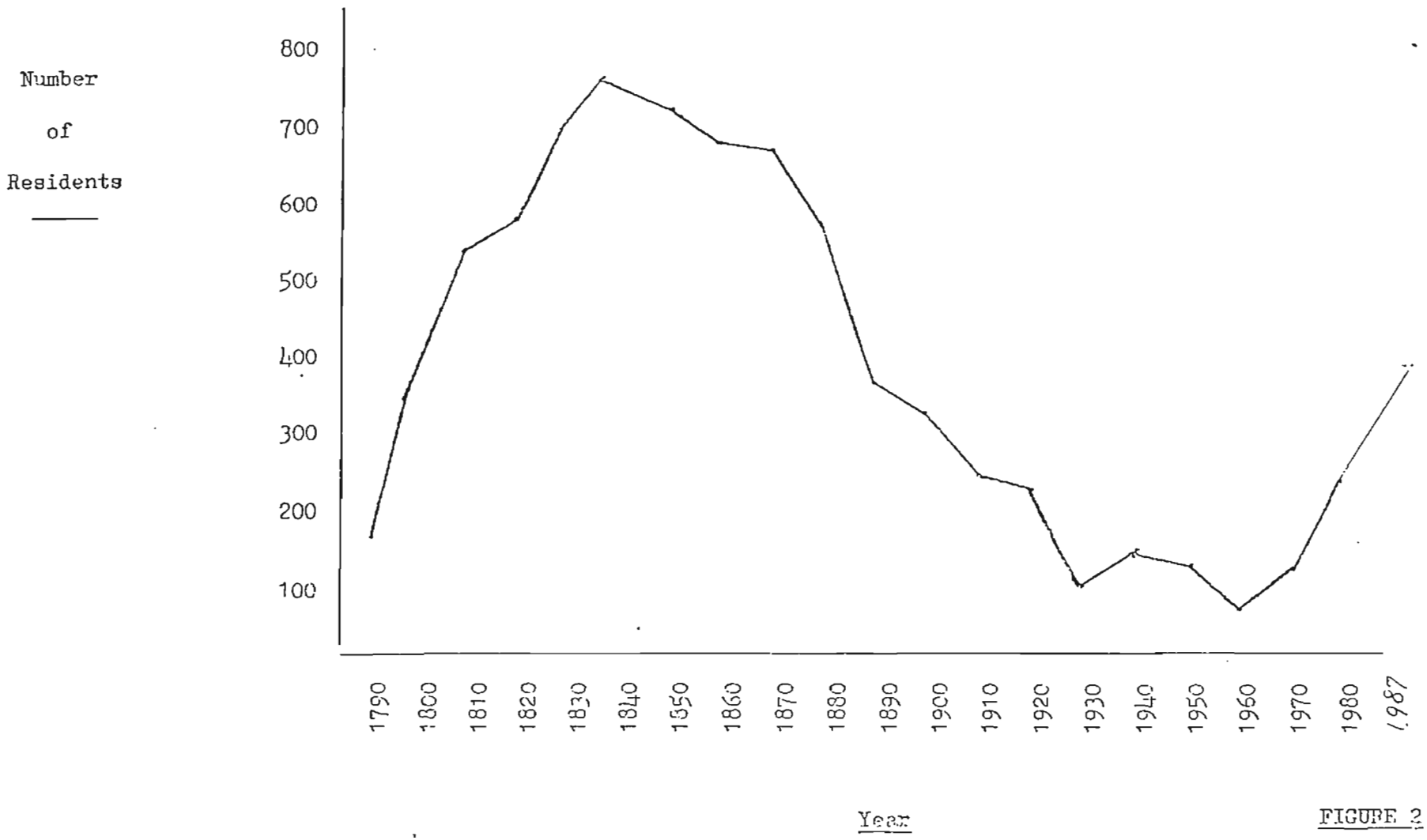


FIGURE 2

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The Town of Dorchester can be characterized as a rural, wooded and hilly residential community. It has little farming or commerce. The majority of its residents work in the Plymouth or Hanover-Lebanon job markets.

Dorchester is located in southern Grafton County and is surrounded by the Towns of Groton, Wentworth, Lyme, Canaan, and Rumney. Major access to the community is supplied by Route 118, a north-south highway. Because this road is the major, and almost only, means of access to THE COMMUNITY, Dorchester shares services with Canaan and its southern neighbors and Rumney and its northern neighbors, rather than with Lyme and Groton, its eastern and western neighbors.

Dorchester has many natural features which must be considered when planning for the future. The highest peaks in Town are Smarts Mountain with a height of 3220 feet; Thompson Hill, 2380 feet; and Pollard Hill, 3000 feet. These elevations are compared with a low of 992 feet found along Baker Brook. The two largest bodies of water cover more than 247 acres compared with a total land area of 28,254 acres. Cummins Pond, the largest, is 2.7 miles long, covers 136 acres and has an average depth of 10 feet. Reservoir Pond, on the Lyme-Dorchester border, covers 111 acres, is 2.3 miles long and has an average depth of 42 feet. Other ponds in Town include Bryant Pond, Trout Pond, McCutcheon Pond, Townline Pond and Taylor-Read Pond. Seasonal communities are found only on Bryant Pond and Reservoir Pond. The South Branch of the Baker River is the major stream. Brooks include the Black, Clough, Meadow, Rocky, and Merril.

An important part of any plan is determining the best location for future development. Natural features play an important role in this determination. Interpretative soils maps which divide each community into areas suitable for development based on steepness of slopes, soil type for septic systems and building construction, wetland areas and water bodies, and drainage patterns are often used. However, there is no recent soils survey for the Town of Dorchester. The last complete survey of Grafton County was done in 1935. Although some communities in the County have been redone as part of a new study, only a few parcels in Dorchester have been completed.

There are several other resources, however, that may be used for Dorchester in place of a current soils survey. Figure 4 is a slopes map, prepared from a U. S. Geological Survey topographic map, showing areas where slopes exceed 8-15% gand 15-25%. Areas with these steep slopes are not usuallyt suitable for development. Another resource which could be used in Dorchester is a Land Capabilities Map. These maps were prepared for the entire State of New Hampshire in the mid-1970s based on information from soil surveys, aerial photographs and U. S. Geological Survey maps. From these sources, base maps were prepared which divided the land area of the State into four development suitability categories:

1. Intense Development Capability
2. Moderate Development Capability
3. Limited Development Capability
4. Critical Resource Area

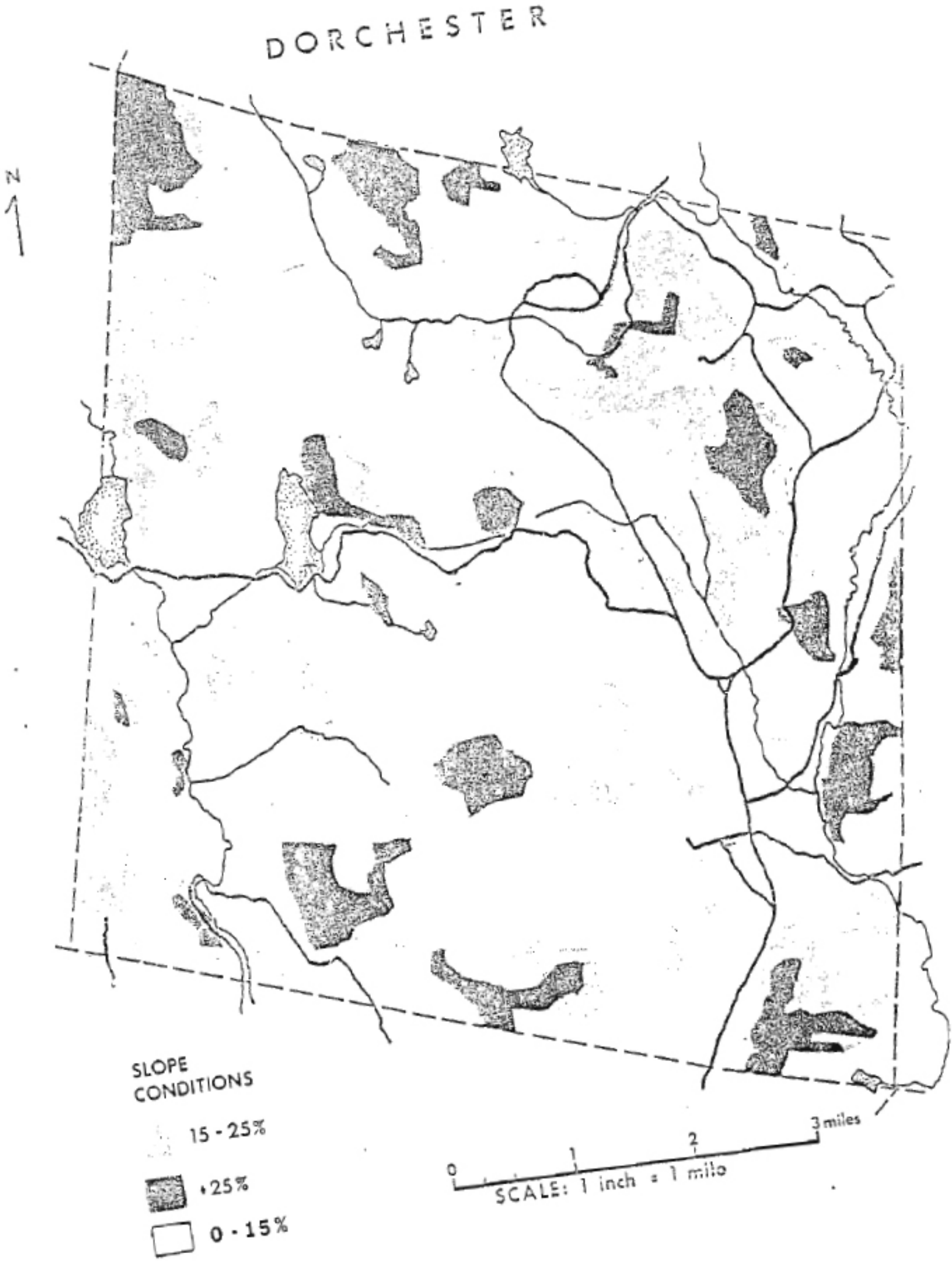
Table 3 below shows the information used to arrive at the four groupings.

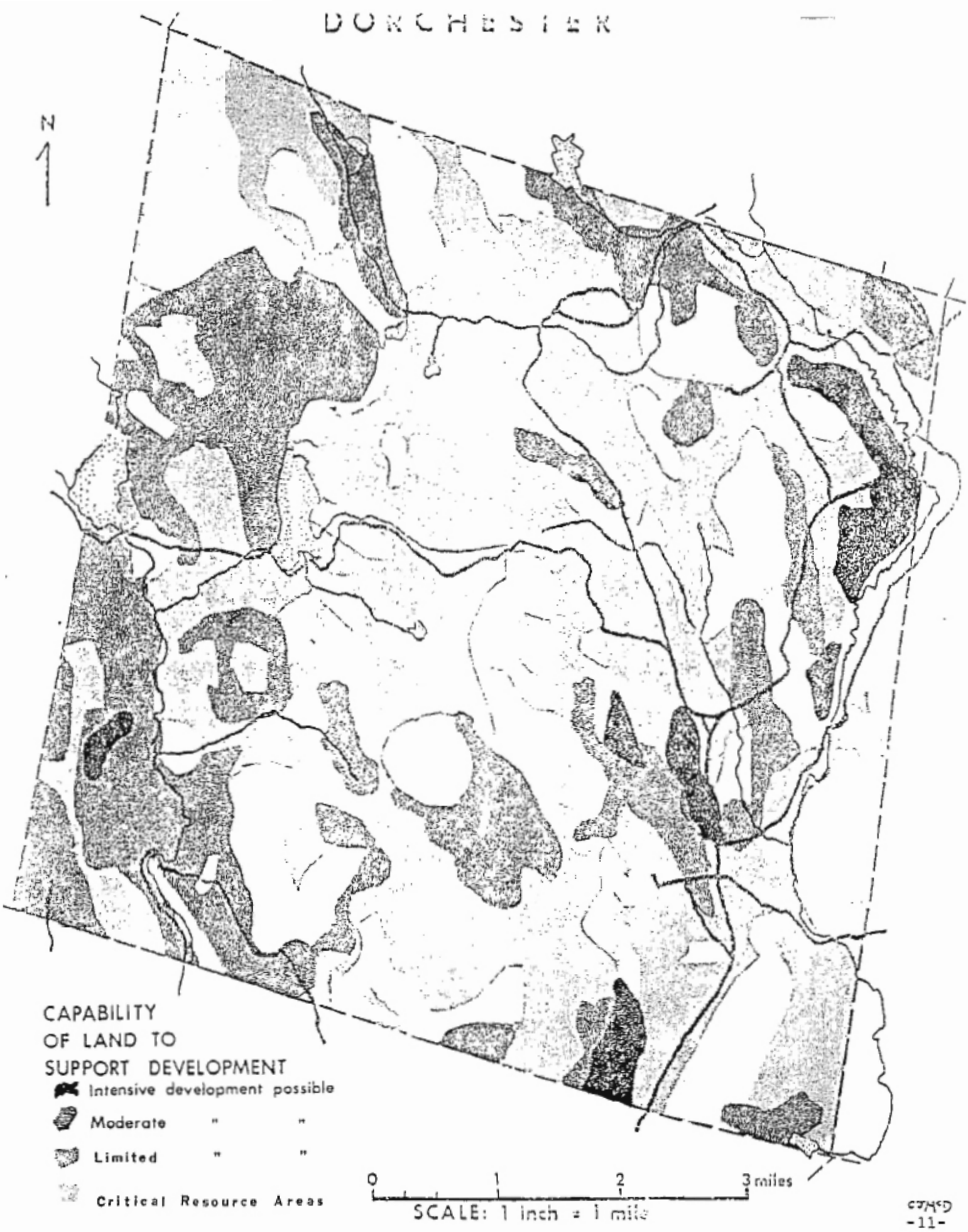
TABLE 3

CAPABILITY OF LAND TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT

Group I Intense Development	0-8%	Sand and Gravel Non-hardpan Glacial Till
Group II Moderate Development	0-8%	Hardpan Glacial Till
Group III	0-8%	Shallow to Bedrock Soils Seasonally Wet Soils
Limited Developmen	8-15&15-25%	All Soils mentioned above
Group IV Critical Resource Areas		Steep Slopes Floodplains Wetlands Aquifer-Recharge Areas Agricultural Soils Public Water Supply Watersheds

Figure 5 is a Land Capabilities Map for Dorchester. Caution should be used in working with this map because the boundaries of various suitability classes are often generalized. It does help to illustrate, however, the constraints to intense development that are found in the Town of Dorchester. Once an up-to-date soil survey for the community is available, a more accurate Land Capabilities Map should be prepared fand a new future land use map, utilizing this information, developed for the Town.


DORCHESTER
N
SLOPE CONDITIONS
15 - 25%
+25%
0 - 15%
0
1
2
3 miles
SCALE: 1 inch = 1 mile


DORCHESTER
N
CAPABILITY
OF LAND TO
SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT
Intensive development possible
Moderate " "
Limited " "
Critical Resource Areas
0
1
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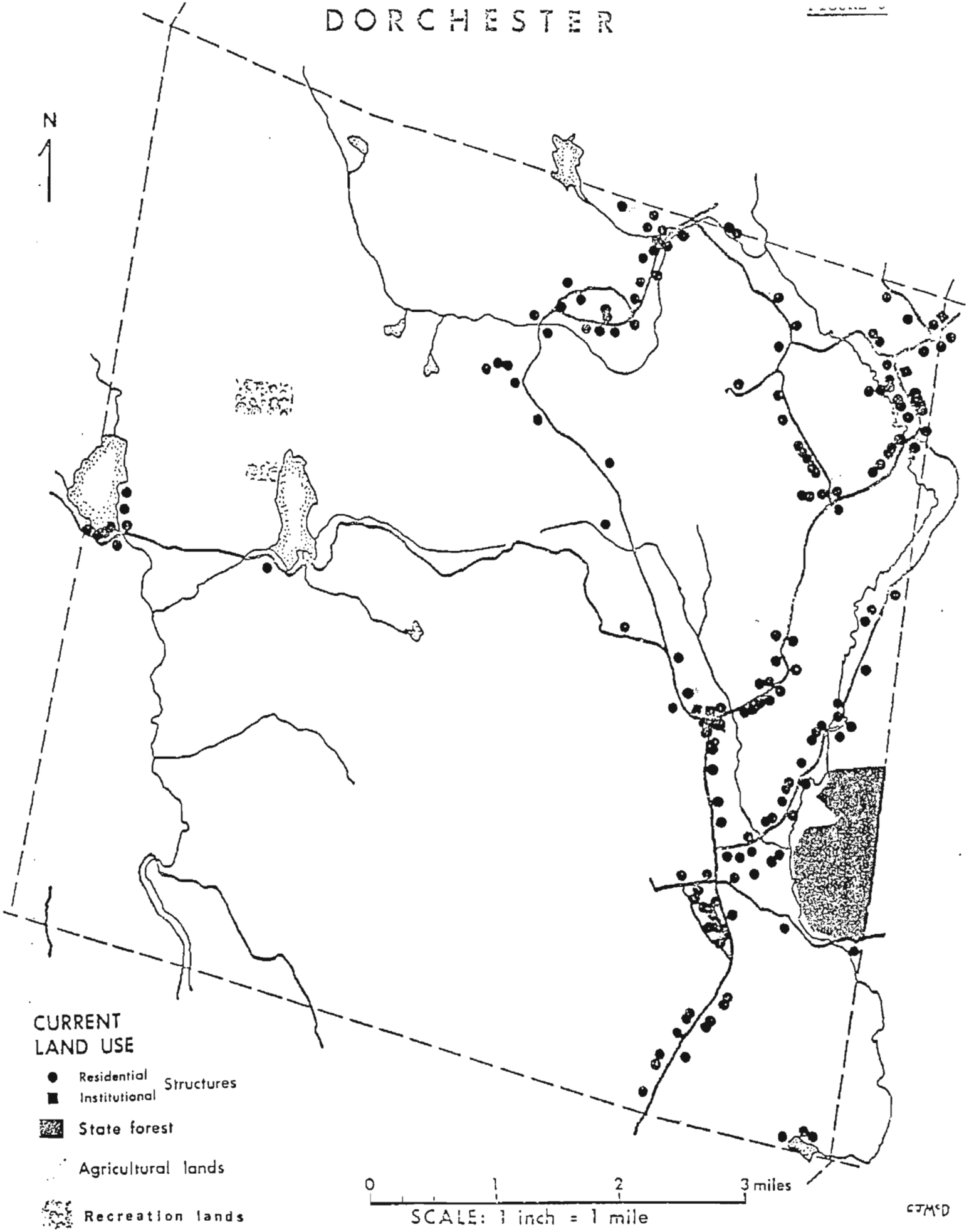
3 miles
SCALE: 1 inch = 1 mile

EXISTING LAND USE

Dorchester has a total of 28,254 acres, or 45.7 square miles. Total agricultural, developed and idle land amounts to less than 5% of the total land area in the community; the remainder of the Town is forested. Figure 6 shows the current land use patterns in the community.

Historically, the major village area of Dorchester was located on Thompson Hill. This area was abandoned as a village center in the early 1900s. Today, population is scattered throughout the eastern portion of the community with centers occurring in Dorchester Center, North Dorchester and Cheever Corner. The western portion of the community is almost entirely forested and logging is the major activity. Because of difficulties with access, it is expected that growth will continue in the eastern portion of Dorchester and that lumbering will remain the major pursuit in the western portion.

DORCHESTER



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HOUSING

A detailed study of Dorchester housing stock is difficult. 1970 census figures are outdated, while detailed 1980 information will not be available until after this report is completed. Some information is, however, both available and useful.

Preliminary 1980 census figures give the number of housing units in Dorchester as 154, an increase of 41 from the 1970 figures. In 1970, there were 107 year-round units and 6 seasonal units. The proportion of seasonal to year-round is expected to have increased considerably because of the number of seasonal mobile homes which have been placed in Dorchester in the past few years. A windshield survey done by the Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Council in late 1980 showed 32 seasonal dwellings out of a total 139 units in the Town.

According to 1970 census figures, 35% of Dorchester's housing units are over 40 years old. Data on the age of Dorchester housing, from the 1970 census is shown in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4

YEAR BUILT

Prior to 1939	1940-1949	1950-1959	1960-1964	1965-1968	1969-1970
54	5	11	19	21	5

According to the 1980 US Census, there have been 41 housing units added to Dorchester since 1970 when there was a total of 113 units. This would seem to indicate that the age of Dorchester's housing stock has decreased. This is not the case. Many of these 41 are not new single family units but seasonal homes and trailers. Many of the trailers had been used before they were brought to Dorchester.

Note: 1988 tax survey indicates approximately 205 housing units

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HOUSING CONDITIONS

As part of the windshield survey done to identify land uses in Dorchester, an assessment of housing conditions was undertaken by the Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Council staff. Using the following criteria, an attempt was made to judge the external condition of all accessible housing units

Condition 0 - No defects; new construction.

Condition 1 - Restored older home; only slight defects in newer home (peeling paint).

Condition 3 - In need of major work (cracked foundation, sagging roof).

Condition 5 - Unsafe and in need of substantial work before it is livable.

Based on this criteria, Dorchester's housing stock was classified as shown on Table 5 below.

TABLE 5

CLASSIFICATION OF HOUSING STOCK

	Condition				Total
	0	1	3	5	
Year-round Homes	13	63	8	0	84
Seasonal Homes	1	16	7	0	24
Mobile Homes	0	10	4	0	14
Seasonal Mobile Homes	0	5	3	0	8
Commercial/Residential	0	2	1	0	3
Vacant	0	3	2	1	6
	14	99	25	1	139
Percent of each	10	71	18	1	100

As can be seen from the above figures, over 80% of Dorchester's housing stock is in good to excellent condition while 20% is in fair to poor condition.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities in Dorchester include the Town Hall, Dorchester Library and Dorchester Historical Museum. The Town Hall, Historical Museum and Dorchester Community Church were all built in the early 1800s on Thompson Hill and were moved to their present location in Dorchester Center in the early 1900s.

The Town Hall is a one-story, 1200 square foot building with post and beam construction. It is used not only for the annual Town Meeting but also for the Grange, 4-H Club, weddings and other town functions. Its major deficiencies are that it is not winterized and has no bathroom facilities.

The Dorchester Library, which also serves as the Selectmen's Office, is located on the opposite side of town from the Town Hall. It has a total of 800 square feet, 300 square feet of which is used as office space. The remaindeer houses approximately 1000 books. Like the Town Hall, it has no bathrooms and is not winterized. The parking area, adequate to house six vehicles off the road, is not paved. The property on which the building is located is not owned by the Town.

The Dorchester Historical Museum, located in an old Dorchester one-room schoolhouse, is approximately 500 square feet. It also is not winterized.

The Dorchester Historical Society has begun a campaign to establish a historic district around the area of the Dorchester Town Green, including the Town Hall, Dorchester Historical Museum and Dorchester Community Church.

Dorchester does not have a highway garage nor any town recreation facilities.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Because of the size of the community, most services available to Dorchester residents are not provided directly by the Town, but are provided for a fee by neighboring communities. The following is a brief description of the various services provided for Dorchester residents:

The Dorchester Police Force has three members, a chief and two deputies. Total expenditures for the department in 1979 were $1250., of which $609., went for wages.

Fire protection is provided by the Town of Rumney and the Town of Canaan. Fifteen hundred dollars was appropriated in 1979 for this service.

Emergency ambulance services are provided by the Canaan F.A.S.T. Squad and the Plymouth Fire Department.

Dorchester is a member of the Mascoma Area Health Council, the Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee Region Association and the Upper Valley-Lake Sunapee Council.

There is no public water supply or waste treatment facilities in Dorchester. Residents are served by home wells and septic systems.

Dorchester disposes of solid waste on an individual resident basis at the Rumney Transfer Station. Use of these facilities cost $1500. in 1979, $6200. in 1987, and $7200. in 1988. At the end of 1988, the waste, less recyclables, is being hauled to a landfill in Post Mills, Vermont. Both Dorchester and Rumney are members of the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District Planning Committee and expect to move forward together in the development of ecologically sound disposal facilities for the 16 or more towns of the proposed Districe. Since it is probable that the per ton cost of disposal will increase, the town will use its best efforts to promote recycling and to reduce solid waste material production.

Post Office facilities are available in either Canaan or Rumney.

Although not provided by the Town, churches are an important part of any community. Dorchester has two active churches, the Dorchester Community Church and Cheever Chapel.

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Dorchester is a member of the Mascoma Valley Regional School District, established in 1962 by the Towns of Enfield, Canaan, Grafton, Orange and Dorchester. The District has two elementary schools, one in Enfield and one in Canaan. All Dorchester students in K-6 attend Canaan Elementary School. Because of overcrowding in the schools there are presently plans to either build a new school or add on to the existing ones. Table 6 below shows Dorchester school population for the past five years. (Plus 1986 and 1987).

TABLE 6

SCHOOL POPULATION		Total Population	Housing Stock
1975-1976	32		
1976-1977	34		
1977-1978	36		
1978-1979	30		
1979-1980	40	233	154
1986-1987	57		
1987-1988	61		205

Electricity in Dorchester is supplied by the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative. There is no street lighting in Dorchester.

Includes Seasonal Houses

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ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

Easy accessibility to maintained roads is an important factor in the growth of a community. In 1980, Dorchester had 41 miles of maintained roads - 30 miles of Class V roads, maintained by the Town; and six miles of Class I, three miles of Class II and two miles of Class III roads maintained by the State. An estimated three miles of road considered Class VI are not maintained. The only thoroughfare through Dorchester is Route 118. Almost all traffic entering or leaving must use this road. Figure 7 is a map showing major roads and their class.

Table 7 shows highway expenditures for Dorchester for four different years during the last two decades. Although highway expenditures have increased, so has the amount received in subsidies from the State. The amount of Class V highway mileage which must be maintained by the Town has also increased, from 22.27 miles in 1970 to 30 miles in 1979.

TABLE 7

HIGHWAY EXPENDITURES

	1970	1975	1979	1987
Summer Maintenance	$3,000	$13,078	$17,340	$45,934
Winter Maintenance	2,500	- included above -		
TRA	582	493	538	-
Class V Road Money	4,177	6,466	10,822	-
Total	$10,259	$20,037	$28,700	$45,934

HIGHWAY INCOME

	1970	1975	1979	1987
Class V Road Money	$4,177	$6,962	$10,498	
Highway Subsidy	-	5,705	5,475	
TRA	-	-	5,783	
Hwy. Block Grant	-	-	-	$20,282
Total	$4,177	$12,667	$21,756	$20,282

The increase in expenditures from 1970-1987 has been 77%, while the increase in income has been 79%. Income has increased at a faster rate than expenditures.

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In the ten years prior to 1981, road improvments were made to Cheever Corner, Cummins Pond Road, Groton Woods Road, Streeter Road and North Dorchester Road. Thereafter planned improvements to Cummins Pond Road were abandoned, but new bridges have been built on Province Road, North Dorchester Road and Cummins Pond Road at Reservoir Pond. All town roads have been maintained as possible in view of budget restraints. A developer has improved a portion of Town Line Pond Road and has offered Pheasant Run for acceptance as a town road.

There are no public transportation facilities in or around Dorchester. Residents must own their own vehicle or depend on friends for transportation. Dorchester has fairly easy access to both Interstate 91 and Interstate 89, so that access to other parts of New Hampshire and New England is not difficult. Lebanon Airport is the nearest full-service airport. It has two runways - one, 5500 feet and one, 4200 feet; night lighting; a control tower; a terminal with restaurant; and scheduled and charter air service. Bus transportation is available to north and south from Plymouth, or for more frequesnt scheduling, from Concord. From White River Junction, Vermont, Vermont Trailways connects with all major carriers in Burlington, Boston, Hartford, Springfield and Albany. A subsidized local commuter bus line, Advance Transit, connects Canaan to Lebanon and Hanover. The Boston and Maine Railroad has a freight terminal in White River Junction, and AMTRAK has passenger service connecting all points north and south. Several taxi companies serve the Tri-Town Area.

Figure 7

D O R C H E S T E R

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- State, Class 2
- Town Class 5
- State, Summer Maintained Only
- Town Class 6
- Private Road
- Town Class 5, Summer Maintained

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ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Dorchester has very little commercial or business enterprise. There is a variety store/luncheonette, a welding shop, a wholesaler of home gardening supplies and a manufacturer of jigsaw puzzles. All are located along Route 118. The number of local people employed at these establishments is less than 10. Besides a few small farms, the only other means of employment in Town are a few logging operations, mainly on Smarts Mountain. Yield taxes from these logging operations in 1979 resulted in income to Dorchester of $3532. With the growing use of wood for fuel, the logging business in Dorchester is expected to grow.

Expenditures for most budget items have increased dramatically in the past 10 years, due both to inflation and to the increase in population. With the population increase of 68% has come the need to improve roads, to provide better police and fire protection, and to pay increased county taxes. There also has been an increase in expenditures due to stricter environmental and health regulations, mainly seen in the cost of having to truck trash to an approved landfill in Rumney for disposal. The rising cost of education also have added to the increase in expenditures.

The total increase in community expenditures from 1970-1979 was 213%.
Table 8 shows selected community expenditures for 1970, 1975, 1979, and 1987.
Table 9 shows a summary of expenditures for the same years.

TABLE 8

SELECTED EXPENDITURES

	1970	1975	1979	1987	% In
Town Officers Salaries	$ 1,628	$ 2,372	$ 5,700	$ 7,364	352
Town Officers Expenses	483	1,195	2,031	5,555	1050
Town Hall & Other Bldgs.	91	139	427	339	-
Police Dept.	10	415	1,250	2,621	2611
Fire Department	180	1,275	1,264	-	-
Health	-	405	250	1,900	-
Town Dump & Solid Waste	50	600	1,500	6,500	12900
Highways & Bridges	10,259	20,037	28,702	76,000	640
Libraries	-	200	150	250	-
Welfare	797	-	262	262	-
Cemeteries	50	200	300	500	900
Principal & Interest	1,139	2,487	258	3,440	202

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TABLE 9

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

	1970	1975	1979	1985	1987	1979-80 %Inc.
Total Town	$16,967	$33,646	$51,875	$163,069	$336,773	537
Total County	1,771	3,134	7,085	13,049	14,655	106
Total School	14,436	28,000	44,824	124,268	170,478	280
Grand Total	$33,174	$64,780	$103,784	$300,3864	$521,906	402%

However, income from Federal, State and local sources other than property taxes to help offset these increases has risen 394.7% from 1970-1979 and 11 from 1979-1987. Table 10 gives major sources.

TABLE 10

MAJOR SOURCES OF INCOME

	1970	1975	1979	1985	1987	%Inc.
Federal						
Revenue Sharing	-	-	$2,219	-	-	-
State						
Meal/Room Tax	$632	$1,184	1,132	-	-	-
Int. & Div. Tax	1,914	2,863	2,339	-	-	-
Sav. Bank Tax	-	183	235	-	-	-
Bus. Profit Tx.	-	161	1,813	-	-	-
Rev. Sharing	-	-	-	$22,863	$22,863	-
Hwy. Subsidy	-	5,705	5.475	-	-	-
Add. Hwy. Sub.	-	-	3,382	-	-	-
Class V	4,178	6,962	16,281	-	-	-
Hwy. Block Grant	-	-	-	26,371	20,282	-
State/Fed. Forest Land				545	637	-
Flood Reimb.	-	-	-	-	14,562	-
Local						
Residents Taxes	$26	1,020	1,200	-	-	-
Yield Taxes	384	1,149	3,532	9,154	9,920	180
Motor Veh. Fees	1,633	2,370	4,552	11,641	11,470	262
Dog Licenses	49	80	178	258	193	8
Sale of Town Property		-	-	1,675	2,750	-
Int. on Deposits	-	-	106	3,344	4,618	4256
Other	20	12	497	970	7,461	1401
Total	$9,070	$21,964	$44,870	$75,146	$94,756	111%
Local Prop. Tax Committed to Collector	$25,275	$47,237	$63,204	$130,797	$227,455	260%

Amended November 1988

New residential development has provided the only increases to the tax base in the past 10 years. Small seasonal communities are found on Bryant Pond and Reservoir Pond; and seasonal homes and trailers are found in most areas of the Town. Although the small Bryant Pond community is not expected to grow, the development on Reservoir Pond is growing. At present, these seasonal houses add to the Dorchester tax base while requiring few, if any, services. However, conversion of any of these homes to year-round dwellings could prove disastrous to the Town. Students either would have to be tuition students in Lyme or Hanover, or would have to be bused more than 20 miles through Lyme and Hanover to attend Mascoma Valley schools. Dorchester would also have to pay Lyme for police and fire protection to these homes.

Until the reassessment done in 1980, there was no property in Town under current use assessment. However, the reassessment increased property valuation enough to make current use advantageous to large land owners. Total gross assessed valuation in Dorchester increased from $1,335,524. in 1979 and $6,994,079. after the 1980 reassessment. Table 11 shows tax rates and valuation for selected years in the past decade. Actual rate is the town rate and does not reflect school and county taxes.

TABLE 11

TAX RATES AND VALUATION

Year	Actual Rate	Ratio	Locally Assessed	Estimated Full Value	Estimated Full Value Rate
1970	5.60	42%	$ 470,988	$1,208,642	2.35
1973	4.90	34	698,346	1,832,097	1.67
1974	4.30	40	912,691	2,382,371	1.66
1975	4.60	40	1,049,781	2,382,371	1.84
1977	5.16	46	1,085,604	2,443,629	2.37
1979	4.83	23	1,335,524	6,087,627	1.11
1980	1.78	95	6,994,079	7,362,190	1.69
1985	1.78	84	6,426,498	7,650,590	1.49
1987	6.63	67	6,788,385	10,131,920	4.44

Dorchester has three Capital Reserve Funds. Accounts at the end of 1979 showed:

1.	Highway Equipment	$6,255.
2.	Cemetery	1,525.
3.	Building Repair	1,717.
		$9,497.

The Revenue Sharing Fund had a balance of $2,865. at the close of 1979.

A note of $10,500. is outstanding on a truck loan, of which $4,270. was paid in 1979.

Accounts in the three Capital Reserve Funds at the end of 1987 showed:

1.	Highway Equipment	$1,223.
2.	Cemetery	1,479.
3.	Building Repair	2,283.
		$4,985.

Amended November 1988

CONTROLLED GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT: GOALS, POLICIES and DEVELOPMENT

The formulation of community goals for Dorchester, and a plan for controlled growth and development is a basic part of the planning process. They make the master plan responsive to the needs and desires of the people of Dorchester, help to define priorities by which projects should be undertaken, and provoke consideration of the problems at hand.

The process to define original goals and now to amend them was initiated by conducting community attitude surveys. The responses were used by the Planning Board in the development and amendment of the following goals, policies and objectives.

Physical Environment

Goals:

Protect, improve, enhance, and maintain scenic, historic, and natural areas.

Maintain rural character while meeting the needs of Dorchester's residents.

Policies:

Protect and maintain watershed, wetland, and wilderness areas; maintain water quality of the Town's water bodies.

Encourage development away from wildlife habitats, critical environmental areas, scenic areas.

Preserve Dorchester's historic buildings.

Objectives:

Continue support of the historic district.

Develop maintenance program for historic cemeteries and surrounding stonewalls.

Preserve water quality by strictly enforcing State statutes on septic tank installations.

Develop a program to encourage and improve forestry practices in the community.

Create a conservation commission to act as spokes-person for critical environmental areas.

Amended November 1988

GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The formulation of community goals for Dorchester was a basic part of the planning process. It provided direction to make the Master Plan responsive to the desires of the people in Dorchester, helped to define priorities by which projects should be undertaken, and provoked consideration of the problems at hand.

The effort to define goals was initiated by conducting a community attitude survey. The responses were then used by the Planning Board in the development of the following goals, policies and objectives.

Physical Environment

Goals:

Protect, improve, enhance, and maintain scenic, historic, and natural areas.

Maintain rural character while meeting the needs of Dorchester's residents.

Policies:

Protect and maintain watershed, wetland, and wilderness areas; and maintain water quality of the Town's water bodies.

Encourage development away from wildlife habitats, critical environmental areas, scenic areas.

Preserve Dorchester's historic buildings.

Objectives:

Continue support of the historic district.

Develop maintenance program for historic cemeteries and surrounding stonewalls.

Preserve water quality by strictly enforcing State statutes on septic tank installations.

Develop a program to encourage and improve forestry practices in the community.

Create a conservation commission to act as spokesperson for critical environmental areas.

Community Facilities and Services

Goals:

Provide an adequate and efficient town government to serve the community.

Provide town-owned property.

Policies:

Ensure adequate school facilities and educational programs.

Establish improved communication among town officials, agencies, and citizens.

Upgrade certain town services, i. e. police, fire, roads.

Establish town offices for selectmen and town clerk.

Provide a community recreation area.

Work with neighboring communities to develop a safe and effective method of solid waste disposal.

Objectives:

Develop a quarterly newsletter to keep citizens informed of community activities.

Renovate the current town hall.

Identify property appropriate for future town needs at tax sales and purchase it for the community.

Establish a capital reserve fund for the purchase of town property.

Continue the policy of requiring the dedication of a portion of the land in major subdivisions for open space.

Raise and expend town money for recreation.

Housing

Goals:

Assure the availability of safe, decent and affordable housing for all residents of the Town.

Housing (cont)

Policies:

Attract housing which brings adequate taxable income.

Objectives:

Establish a building code to recognize the character and type of development anticipated for the Town of Dorchester.

Roads and Transportation

Goals:

Encourage a cost effective transportation system which will meet the needs of Dorchester's residents.

Policies:

Develop a five year plan to upgrade town roads.

Objectives:

Develop a program to identify potential problems from Class VI roads and have the town meeting vote to discontinue those roads.

Adopt an ordinance which prohibits building on Class VI roads without a permit from the Selectmen.

Identify potential scenic roads and have them classified as such.

Resurface existing roads under TRA and Duncan Fund.

Economic Environment

Goals:

Maintain a stable local economy in order to provide jobs, economic activity and a broader tax base.

Policies:

Encourage commercial or light industrial activity to provide employment for the existing labor force in Dorchester and the surrounding communities, and to provide a broader tax base.

Encourage cottage industry.

Encourage dwellings which do not erode the tax base.

Objectives:

Establish a capital reserve fund for major town purchases so the cost will be spread over several years.

Economic Environment - Objectives (cont)

Develop a land use plan with provision for commercial and industrial areas.

Maintain a high level of participation on budget requirements.

Community Facilities and Services

Goals:

Provide an adequate and efficient town government to serve the community.

Provide town-owned property.

Policies:

Ensure adequate school facilities and educational programs.

Establish improved communication among town officials, agencies, and citizens.

Upgrade certain town services, i.e. police, fire, roads.

Establish town offices for selectmen and town clerk.

Provide a community recreation area.

Work with neighboring communities to develop a safe and effective method of solid waste disposal.

Objectives:

Develop a quarterly newsletter to keep citizens informed of community activities.

Renovate the current town hall.

Identify property appropriate for future town needs at tax sales and purchase it for the community.

Establish a capital reserve fund for the purchase of town property.

Continue the policy of requiring the dedication of a portion of the land in major subdivisions for open space.

Raise and expend town money for recreation.

Housing

Goals

Assure the availability of safe, decent and affordable housing for all residents of the Town.

Housing (cont.)

Policies:
Attract housing which brings adequate taxable income.

Objectives:
Establish a building code to recognize the character and type of development anticipated for the Town of Dorchester.

Roads and Transportation

Goals:
Encourage a cost effective transportation system which will meet the needs of Dorchester residents.

Policies:
Develop a five year plan to upgrade town roads.

Objectives:
Develop a program to identify potential problems from Class VI roads and have the town meeting vote to discontinue those roads.

Adopt an ordinance which prohibits building on Class VI roads without a permit from Selectmen.

Identify potential scenic roads and have them classified as such.

Resurface existing roads under TRA and Duncan Fund.

Economic Environment: Guidance and Control of Development

Goals:
Maintain a stable local economy in order to provide jobs, economic activity and a broader tax base.

Provide an environment for orderly controlled growth consistent with the preservation of the rural character of the town.

Policies:
Encourage dwellings so constructed and situated that they do not erode the tax base.

Encourage cottage industry.

Permit commercial and light industrial activity and facilities to provide employment for the existing labor force in Dorchester and the surrounding communities and to provide a broader tax base.

Control town expenditures and encourage control of school and county expenditures in order to keep tax rate under control.

Provide procedures to spread added costs of development over a period of time to prevent a catastrophic effect on the tax rate.

Objectives:

Adopt a system of flexible land use ordinances which will encourage or direct development which will:

-first develop areas along existing roads;

-place any commercial or industrial enterprises along major arteries;

-ensure sufficient setbacks to protect future necessary expansion of public rights of way and to preserve the beauty of our roads;

-restrict development to those sites suited by soil type, topography, location of water courses and water bodies, water table and other physical attributes to such development;

-tend to protect and preserve open space;

-provide, protect or promote areas and facilities for public recreation.

Promote a capital reserve fund for major town purchases so the cost will be spread over several years.

Establish a Capital Improvement Program to provide for and spread the cost of necessary improvement of public facilities.

Establish powers of site plan review of nonresidential development.

Maintain a high level of citizen participation in budget planning.

Amended November 1988