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**THE MASTER PLAN
FOR THE
TOWN OF PIERMONT
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**DEVELOPED BY
THE PIERMONT PLANNING BOARD
PIERMONT NH 03779**

NOVEMBER 1991

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PIERMONT MASTER PLAN

I. GENERAL STATEMENT

The first Piermont Master Plan was adopted in 1968. New Hampshire regulations require that the master plan be updated or amended from "time to time" or as changing conditions dictate.

In order to help determine the present needs and problems, a new community attitude survey was conducted late in the summer of 1988. 379 questionnaires were distributed to both resident and non-resident property owners. 74% of these were returned for tabulation. From this encouraging return the Planning Board attempted to formulate new guidelines for the future development of Piermont.

Townpeople see Piermont as a good place to live because of the rural character, natural environment and sense of community. Residents are primarily single-family house dwellers and are generally not in favor of large-scale commercial or residential development. Many now are beginning to realize that very little, if any development pays for itself and that the demand for services soon, if not immediately, outpaces the revenue generated. Present Town services are perceived as adequate. High property taxes and loss of farm land to development are seen as major problems. More than 75% of the residents who responded felt woodlands, underground water supplies, agricultural land, open fields and meadows and the Connecticut River shoreline were very important resources. 28% of Piermont residents prefer no growth, 42% prefer slight growth and 27% prefer moderate growth.

Despite the desires of the residents the pressures of population growth indeed faces Piermont as rapid development of the Hanover/Lebanon area ripples out to the surrounding small towns.

Real estate values decrease as the distance from Hanover and Lebanon increases. Those families who need lower cost housing keep pushing out from the center in search of more affordable housing. Another attraction to families with school children in grades 9-12 is the ability to choose from a wide selection of area schools as Piermont has to tuition out those grades.

In 1988 the Planning Board approved 26 new building lots, in 1989, 25, and in 1990, 20. In 1980 the US census reported 507 people in Piermont. The 1990 census

reported 624. It is this growth trend that raises new questions about land use and community services in Piermont.

The Master Plan is intended to be the rational basis for all land use regulations and should be the yardstick by which planning and development proposals can be measured. It should provide guidance for an environmentally healthy and stable economic future by recognizing the capability of the land and resources to support various uses.

It is worth noting that N.H. State Government emphasizes home rule. It is understood that the residents of each town are in the best position to regulate growth in their communities and should not rely upon the State to protect natural resources or to control growth that may pose an undue burden upon the community.

II. LAND USE

A. Summary of community survey relative to land use in Piermont

Questionnaires distributed to Residents/Non-Resident property owners: 377

Questionnaires returned and tabulated: 279 (74% return)

Piermont property owners like: farms 90%, forest management 81%, home business 81%, retail shops 76%, light industry 76%, professional offices 67%.

Piermont property owners dislike: heavy industry 85%, shopping centers 66%, motels 52%.

B. Goals developed for land use in Piermont

- Promote the traditional pattern of rural land use.
- Protect Piermont's natural resources.
- Protect and preserve farm land.
- Guide growth to those locations which are best able to sustain it.
- Manage growth to minimize burden on Town services.
- Preserve the historic and aesthetic qualities of Piermont.
- Set aside land for future community needs.

C. Land use summary statement

Current Land Statistics

Total area of Town - 24,673 acres.

Steep slopes of 20% or greater - 6,254 acres (25.3%)

Developed land, residential/commercial -
1,040 acres (4.2%)

Wetlands/water areas - 743 acres (3.0%)

Flood plain - 615 acres (2.5%)

Remaining land - 16,021 (65%)

Land is a community's most basic and valuable resource. To a great extent the use of land determines the character and quality of life within the community. The rate, location and type of growth along with protection of unique features affect not only the town's physical appearance but also the need for public services and facilities. The wise use of land can be compared to using the interest rather than spending the principal. Use of land affects the quality of water, air and ultimately the health of all living creatures.

The future land use plan for Piermont has three components:

- 1) A natural resource and open space protection plan,
- 2) A residential plan,
- 3) A plan for accommodating business.

Recommendations for each of the above components are listed by implementation. In some cases, existing land use controls contain provisions necessary to achieve the recommendations set forth in this plan for the future. However, in many cases the existing controls must be amended to enable the Town to guide future growth and development consistent with the recommendations. In this plan, Piermont's land use goals are based on the premise that the natural resources and traditional styles should be preserved and that the future development of the Town should be directed and limited by the ability of the land to support development and the resources available to the Town.

Piermont consists of approximately 25,000 acres of land of which 16,000 acres are suitable for some type of development. Today only about 1000 acres are utilized for buildings, homes and the immediate yards around them. Even as Piermont continues to grow it will be some time before a large percent of the total land is developed. This may seem of little concern but some important land use questions have come to light, as follows:

- 1) Will valuable agricultural soils be converted to home and business sites while being forever lost for agriculture?
- 2) Will the location of development negatively impact the quality and quantity of ground water resources?
- 3) Will development take place where the Town can provide services efficiently?
- 4) Will critical wildlife habitat be destroyed?
- 5) Will land continue to be open in sufficient quantity for public sports and recreation ?
- 6) Will pleasing scenic views and the rural feeling which we have come to identify with Piermont be lost due to development ?

D. Significant Natural Resources

1. SOILS AND TYPOGRAPHY

The Town of Piermont has a wide variety of soils. The flood plain and terraces along the Connecticut River are predominately level and stone-free. The hills in the central part of Town are rolling to steep with stony soils. The mountains in the eastern part of Town are stony and steep with many areas of shallow soils and protruding ledge-rock. Also in the eastern part of Town are three large mountain lakes.

a. Flood Prone Areas

Flood prone areas are those areas adjacent to river, streams, ponds, lakes or wetlands which are likely to be flooded due to snow melt, heavy rainfall or prolonged periods of precipitation. The Federally defined flood hazard areas along the Connecticut River are shown on map M1.

b. Flood Plains

Flood plains along the river have broad areas of medium textured, very fine sand which is only moderately well-drained. The poorly and very poorly drained areas are usually confined to old channel depressions and seep areas along the base of the terraces and these areas are subject to flooding. The frequency of flooding depends on elevation. Development in these areas is not recommended.

c. Terrace Areas

The terrace areas along the river have areas of well to excessively well-drained fine and medium sands and silts. These areas are largely stone-free and along with the

flood plains comprise the best soils in Town. Based upon topography and soils, the terraced areas along the river can best support development. However, development in these areas does conflict with the goal of preserving agricultural land.

d. Rolling Hills

The rolling hills in the central part of Town have stony soils that were formed by material deposited by glacial action. Most of these soils are well-drained. Some broad areas, which are underlaid with hardpan clay are moderately well-drained. The depth of bedrock varies and areas of shallow soils and rock outcrop occur throughout the area. With careful consideration of soil conditions and good planning these areas can be appropriately developed.

e. The Lower Slopes

The lower slopes of the mountains to the east merge with the hill areas and like those areas are subject to appropriate development if careful consideration is given to planning, aesthetics, soil conditions and preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to wildlife habitat and water resources.

f. The Mountainous Areas

The mountainous areas of Piermont, Indian Pond, and Peaked Mountain are predominately steep to very steep, very rocky, and have broad areas of shallow soils with extensive rock outcrop. These steep slopes and rocky characteristic add to the scenic value, provide unique habitat and are useful for recreation and low production forests, but are not desirable for development.

g. The Mountain Lakes

Three mountain lakes and their surrounding area are located in the northeastern sector of Piermont. These lakes are a major natural resource, easily accessible and the land around these lakes is highly sought after for development. The lakes are:

- 1) Lake Tarleton, 315.4 acres, 3.7 miles of shoreline, 1305 ft. elevation. 160 acres and 2.3 miles of shoreline are in Piermont, the remainder lying in the town of Warren.
- 2) Lake Armington, 142.2 acres, 2.8 miles of shoreline, 1334 ft. elevation.
- 3) Lake Katherine, 37.1 acre, 1.1 miles of shoreline, 1339 ft. elevation.
- 4) Lake Constance, small (6AC.) but important.

These four scenic mountain lakes are the most desirable in Piermont and among the most desirable undeveloped lands in the State. These areas are typical of

the type often destroyed by over-development.

Due to topography and shallow wet soils these areas are difficult to develop. However, if careful consideration is given to fire protection, police services, road maintenance and protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, and aesthetics, some development may be possible.

2. WATER RESOURCES

Piermont's water resources include the aquifers, surface waters and wetlands. Currently, several agencies are preparing a map that shows the routes by which water moves through the environment and the potential contamination sources. When this map is available, it will become part of the Master Plan.

With reports of water shortages and contamination across the State, New Hampshire towns are becoming increasingly concerned about their water supplies. Piermont has no central water supply, therefore the Town should take steps to ensure that residential ground water supplies are protected. The community attitude survey indicated 84% of the residents and 90% of the non-residents ranked underground water supplies as very important.

Even though we all rely on underground water supplies, very little is known about the aquifers which provide this indispensable resource. An aquifer is a water-bearing underground geologic formation. Water moves into the aquifer via recharge areas and out via springs and wells. If water is extracted from an aquifer more quickly than it can recharge, or if the aquifer is damaged by excavation, users may experience a slow or dry well.

Sand and gravel deposits usually contain a lot of water, but many good wells have been drilled into bedrock where water collects in voids and fractures. A map showing "Groundwater and Surface Water Potential Nonpoint Pollution Sources" is being compiled by the New Hampshire Water Supply and Pollution Control Commission. This map will describe potential sources of non-point pollution in relation to the known aquifers in Piermont. When this map is available, it will become part of the Master Plan.

Development controls should prevent activities which would present risks to water quality from locating in the aquifer recharge areas. Piermont's subdivision regulations should contain septic standards which would provide greater protection for sensitive areas than is currently afforded by the minimal State regulations.

Since the subdivision standards apply only to septic systems designed for lots created after 1971, a health by-law containing these standards should be adopted by the Selectmen so that the possibility of groundwater contamination is further reduced by ensuring that all new or significantly altered systems in town are built to the new standards.

Recently, underground fuel storage tanks have been identified as a major threat to water quality. Studies have shown that the average tank will develop leaks within 15 years. The State has proposed regulations to monitor and test tanks with a capacity of 1100 gallons or greater. Since most residential, small commercial and farm tanks are smaller than 1100 gallons, the Town may want to require installation of higher quality tanks.

An in-depth study of Piermont's aquifers and recharge areas is planned to be undertaken by an outside agency as funds are available. Consideration should be given to landbanking areas of high water yield near existing settlements for use as future well fields. Deforestation from development and/or abusive land use policies causes rainwater to flow off rather than percolate into the soil. Direct exposure to sunlight and wind increases evaporation and erosion. Experience from other more developed areas indicates as population density increases water tables inevitably decline.

Piermont's surface waters, ponds, brooks, streams, lakes and the Connecticut River are other types of water resources. Historically, surface water, being easily accessible was used for domestic purposes, watering of farm animals and waste disposal. Today surface waters are best appreciated for their recreation and scenic value as well as for fire fighting and wildlife. Maintaining ample clean surface water levels also insures that acceptable underground water is available.

Piermont's lakes cover approximately 352 acres or about 1.4% of the Town's land area. Lake Tarleton is the largest at 315 acres, approximately half of which lies in the town of Warren. Lake Armington And Tarleton both have some seasonal as well as year round residences along their shores. Each has a State boat launch site.

Further development in the lakes area must be carefully controlled to prevent nutrient enrichment from septic leaching and or destructive impacts on wetlands and wildlife. Lakes Armington, Katherine and Constance are very shallow and easily damaged. Every effort must be made to maintain the health of these natural resources. Natural vegetation buffers of sufficient width can help

reduce contamination and nutrient enrichment from storm run-off.

The waters from the lakes and accompanying drainage area flow into Eastman Brook and through the village where two small hydroelectric stations provide electricity as well as tax revenue. Piermont's water sheds are shown on map M2. Ultimately, almost all water in town flows into the Connecticut River.

The water quality of the Connecticut River has greatly improved during the last decade due to new modern sewage treatment plants and more careful use, the River has become a more valuable natural resource. Piermont has a relatively clean, virtually untapped recreational resource along it's entire western border. Road salts, erosion, siltation, agricultural run-off, industrial waste, and failed septic systems still pose pollution threats to the River. Efforts must continue to control these and other sources of contamination.

Access to the river for Town residents was the most frequently requested recreational facility on the attitude survey. Towns along the river have begun to develop a comprehensive strategy to manage the river front. Some school science classes monitor water quality and the Connecticut River Watershed Council conducts area wide programs on protecting this resource.

The Piermont Conservation Commission has identified important wetland areas on map M1. For a long time, wetlands were considered to be useless, but now are understood and appreciated for valuable flood control, wildlife habitat, ground water recharge and purification as well as recreation areas. Wetlands include high water table soils, marshes, bogs, and floodplain and cover 3 % (approximately 743 Acres) of Piermont.

Development should under no circumstances occur in or close to wetlands. Ground water contamination, disruption of wildlife and natural drainage systems, and flooding are all possible consequences of development in wetlands.

As protection against pollution and sedimentation, land within a proscribed distance of lakes, brooks, streams, ponds, and wetlands should not be developed. Efforts must be made to preserve these buffer areas and encourage natural vegetation to protect these fragile resources. Historically, roadways have often been laid out along waterways due to ease of construction. However this creates special pollution problems due to salting, maintenance and motor vehicle contaminants. The Town should be aware of

these dangers and take every opportunity to reduce or eliminate this damage to water resources.

3. SCENIC RESOURCES

Pleasing scenery has been indicated as an important part of the quality of life by many Piermont residents. Our everyday activities include countless scenic pleasures mostly taken for granted. While it is unreasonable to expect vistas to remain totally unchanged as Piermont grows, awareness of their importance to the quality of life of the community and a program to provide for special vistas will help protect this important community resource. The visual qualities of a town are important to residents as well as visitors; it encourages community pride; helps to attract higher quality development consistent with surroundings and provides for a higher tax base. These qualities can be especially important to a town like Piermont which has a narrow commercial base.

Scenic vistas may be lost when either buildings are constructed or pasture reverts to trees and views are blocked. Vistas may also be lost or damaged by clear cutting or development.

Piermont has important scenic resources. Entering Town from Vermont and the River, visitors pass through prime farmland while looking beyond the Village center to Peaked Mt., Indian Pond Mt. and Piermont Mt. in the background. Entering from the east one immediately passes through the scenic lakes area before descending down the slopes along Eastman Brook into Town. As visitors enter Town from either north or south on route 10 excellent views of the Connecticut River, many farms and the River valley are apparent. Outstanding views of the Green Mts. of Vermont are available from several locations in town.

In order to prevent important visual elements of the Town from being destroyed or compromised, these elements should be inventoried and the critical scenic resources identified and understood. Certain portions of some roads should be designated as scenic and be subject to restrictions to preserve trees, stone walls and the historic character. In addition to preserving the existing features the Town must strive to preserve traditional New England architectural qualities by encouraging restoration of existing old homes and farms and by encouraging traditionally styled and sited new construction.

Regulations governing signs, billboards, unregistered motor vehicles and incompatible uses should be modified and or adopted.

a. Implementation

The Planning Board will make it understood to all who propose development that protection of scenic vistas is important to the Town. Sub-dividers may be asked to voluntarily provide for specific site location of development combined with conservation easements to minimize the impact on important scenery. They may also be asked to concentrate their development in order to preserve scenery and open space.

b. Roadway Appearance

Frequently, the least expensive subdivision is the creation of lots along existing roadways. This is known as strip development. Strip development has the potential to quickly destroy the rural feeling of Piermont just as it has in many developing towns across New England. The most traveled road frontage is usually among the first to be subdivided. Homes and businesses then are built on these lots, often close to the road. When enough of this style development occurs the "feeling" of open space disappears and the "feeling" of congestion takes over.

There are two techniques which could help maintain roadway appearance 1.) interior roads and 2.) setbacks from major roads.

The Planning Board feels that it is preferable for subdivision to take place on interior roads with lots radiating outward rather than simply subdividing major road frontage as in strip development. This type of lot arrangement allows for trees to screen the development from the highway thereby maintaining the rural character.

4. WILDLIFE HABITAT

The relatively small impact of human population, the diversity of Piermont's terrain, fields which have been kept open by agriculture, large areas of uninterrupted forest cover, deer yards, wetlands, ponds, bogs, streams, river, floodplain, elevations ranging from 400 ft. to 2712 ft., and other historic environmental features in combination have provided Piermont with important populations of diverse plant and animal species

This unique natural landscape and it's ability to sustain diverse species is viewed by the Planning Board as a valuable resource which must be protected as Piermont grows.

E. Land Use

1. INTRODUCTION

The principal determinants of land use in Piermont are physical features such as topography, soil types, roads and water resources. As an example, dairy farming is located almost exclusively along the river because the soils are best for the necessary support crops. Planning and regulation have also played a part in existing land use such as zoning regulations prohibiting mobile homes from certain areas and requiring 1 acre minimum lot size (enacted 1971).

2. HISTORIC LAND USE

In 1830, the town of Piermont had 60% more population than at the time of the last census in 1990. In 1830 there were about 27 people per square mile, in 1990 there were 16 people per square mile. In 1830 the most prosperous farms were growing wheat. Many fine homes with views of the mountains to the west were located on the now abandoned north/south road running from Clay Hollow to the Rodimon place on route 25C.

The use of hydropower along Eastman Brook supported many small businesses, the first being a grist-mill established in the village just prior to 1800.

The following are census numbers for the population of Piermont, along with people per square mile.

<i>year</i>	<i>population</i>	<i>people/sq. mile</i>
1830	1042	26.7
1860	989	25.4
1890	707	18.2
1920	577	14.8
1930	475	12.2
1940	535	13.7
1950	511	13.1
1960	477	12.2
1970	462	11.8
1980	507	13.0
1990	624	16.0

As can be seen from the above table there have been wide variations in population during the last 160 years.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Piermont peaked in population when sheep farming prospered. During those times many of the hillsides that are now forested were pasture and homes were scattered

throughout town. Old cellar holes found today along abandoned roads such as the North/South road and elsewhere mark these old home sites. Corn was the principal crop of the valley farms and cattle were kept only in limited quantities. In those times of limited transportation there were small village centers scattered around town where schools, churches, cemeteries and in some cases taverns were located.

During the second half of the Nineteenth Century the population of Piermont declined to somewhere around 700 people as the promise of new more fertile lands in the west and regular paychecks of the Mills to the south lured away many from the harsher uncertainties of life in the north. The days of sheep and wheat were finished. In 1887 a creamery was incorporated and from that time to the present day farmers have concentrated on dairy as the principal source of revenue.

During the Twentieth Century the population remained relatively constant ranging from a high of 637 in 1900 to a low of 462 in 1970. During this period, the forests took over most of the hillside pastures. The number of small family farms began to dwindle with the economic pressures of the 1930's Great Depression and the advent of mechanized farming.

In the era of World War II, demands on the economy for greater production led to entirely mechanized farming practices and a wide variety of other jobs became available in and around Piermont. A recreation industry developed with the Lake Tarleton Club (1934-1969) and with summer camps for children established on lakes Tarleton and Armington.

3. EXISTING LAND USE

The use of land in Piermont today is described by area of Town: Along the Connecticut River on the flood and the terraced areas are located some of the outstanding dairy farms in New Hampshire. Unfortunately, from 1980 to 1990 there have been a number of excellent farms that have sold their herds and are no longer in the dairy business. This means that about 1,000 acres of farm land in Piermont is no longer involved in dairy farming and could become available for development.

In the foreseeable future Piermont can reasonably expect more of the same. The present economics of small scale farming in New England is not good and the Town may see others discontinue operation.

Although it is clear the Town faces the potential of a significant loss of farm lands to development it should be noted that some have begun other businesses in order to maintain their land. Development rights to some farm land have been sold to the N.H. Land Trust, whereby land owners can obtain substantial inheritance and property tax benefits while retaining title by combinations of donating and or selling the development rights in exchange for "conservation easements" which can be held by the Town or other non-profit agency. This keeps the land from being lost to development while always remaining available for agriculture, forestry or other sustainable uses.

These kinds of actions as well as other land use policies should be encouraged and promoted by Piermont to preserve the rural character of the Town, conserve valuable agricultural land and promote traditional values. In addition Piermont should enact additional land use regulations in the form of "open space" zoning. This requires development to maintain certain percentages of open land as part of the project.

4. USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Piermont is fortunate to have agricultural soils that are of national or statewide importance. If these soils are used for development they will forever be lost for agriculture.

Exhibit E1 lists outstanding agricultural soils by soil name and exhibit M3 is a map showing the location of these soils in Piermont. Unfortunately, today, small scale agriculture is economically marginal. The decline in small farms which began in the 1830's has been a continuing trend, and Piermont has only a few farms where farming is the principal source of income for those families. Many experts today foresee increasing problems from changing weather patterns, shifting growing zones, unavailable irrigation water, and lost or chemically laden top soils. Transportation of foods from distant areas may become increasingly expensive as energy prices continue to rise. The day may soon come when the people of Piermont will become more dependent on the local agriculture. Every effort must be made to preserve our best soils.

At least two factors add to the complexity of conserving important agricultural soils for the future. First, many of these soils are located along the most traveled roads, are flat, well drained and suitable for septic systems. These characteristics make agricultural soils prime locations for easy development. The real estate market values these properties for their development potential.

Second, it is conceivable that some farm families that own outstanding soils have been counting on the development value of these lands as their retirement income.

In 1989 one Piermont family finalized the sale of development rights on 120(?) acres to the Land Conservation Investment Program. This generous action on their part protects large blocks of productive farm land plus 5500 ft.(?) of Connecticut River shoreline. In 1990 another family chose to protect their land by conservation easment. The Planning Board applauds this type of private citizen action which demonstrates a caring for the future of Piermont.

The terraced areas along the River, in addition to containing prime farm land also contain the commercial development, all the public buildings and many homes. The Bank and a Supermarket/Smokehouse are located at the intersection of Route 25C and River Road. Further down River Road is a Nursery, several Farms, an Antique Shop and a Camper Sales. Proceeding east from the junction of River Road and route 25 there are two more farms, and several homes before entering the Village. In the Village there is the Service Station, Church, Fire Station, School, Garage, Riding Stables, a Real Estate Office, an Inn, the Post Office, the Library/Town Offices, and the Town Hall.

The terraced areas occupied by the Village, with it's mixed uses will require a different treatment in land regulations.

5. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Piermont today has only modest commercial development and no major employer. Only a small number of people are employed full or part time in the Town. Therefore, it is not surprising that a number of respondents to the survey indicated a preference for certain clean, low impact businesses to be encouraged.

At the same time other businesses such as: Amusement Parks (86.5%), heavy industry (78.5%), shopping centers (70.5%), warehouse (57%), and motels (55.7%) were rated as undesirable.

The Village area should be redefined to include only those areas presently used for high density housing and commercial business and suitable for that type of development. Within this area a higher density is appropriate and consistent with the traditional and existing uses.

6. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The rolling hills in the central part of Town and the lower slopes of Piermont, Indian Pond and Peaked Mountains are mostly forest with few farms and some open fields. Homes in this area are mostly permanent single family with a few mobile homes scattered about. These areas can support carefully controlled development. Open space zoning for these areas can be particularly useful in helping to maintain the scenic resources appreciated by many.

The mountainous areas of Piermont are mainly forests that, along with the lakes provide the major wildlife habitat in Town. These lands tend to be in larger tracts with some hunting camps and a few homes. Some logging takes place while many private trails permit access to the mountain tops and are frequently used by Piermont residents and their visitors.

As one would expect because of the steep slopes prevalent in this area there has been little pressure for large scale development. The use of open space zoning and densities consistent with the lower slopes will adequately protect this area and allow appropriate development when and if such development becomes economically feasible and or desirable.

The mountain lakes and their surrounding areas are, except for the north shore of Lake Armington, largely undeveloped. These areas along with the terraced areas along the river, are most subject to large scale development. Approximately 49 seasonal, several year round homes and two youth camps are located on or near the lakes. Most all the seasonal homes are owned by non-residents. From 1939 - 1969 the Jacobs Family operated a first class summer resort called the Lake Tarleton Club serving as many as 600 guests and offering well known entertainment, a golf course, and many other amenities.

From 1969 to 1976 the property was owned by Boise Cascade, a large national conglomerate that planned a major resort development that did not materialize. Following that the property was owned by foreign investors who sold to the present owner in 1982. This land owner has the largest holding in Piermont, approx 4200 acres, has plans for developing a resort hotel with 80 - 90 rooms, private lots, golf course, and ski trails mostly located outside Piermont in the Town of Warren.

The mountain lakes and the beauty of the surrounding natural environment and the development potential present a challenge and unique opportunity. The challenge

to preserve the natural beauty and environment while permitting appropriate development. Seasonal homes and resort facilities are some of the few ways that could provide Piermont with an improved tax base. Appropriate land use regulations to protect the natural beauty and environment while permitting seasonal residential (along with appropriate restrictions to insure compliance) and resort development (including fire sprinklers for larger buildings) are among the actions called for.

7. RECCOMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE LAND USE X

The following are goals for land use developed by the Planning Board using the results of the community survey, outside experts, and Board members.

These goals are then followed by a set of recommendations of policy for future land use to achieve the Town's goals.

a. Goals for Land Use

- Promote the traditional pattern of rural and village land use.
- Protect natural resources.
- Promote the existing pattern of agricultural and forest land use.
- Guide growth to those locations best suited to support that specific use.
- Control growth so development poses a minimal burden on Town services.
- Preserve the historic and aesthetic qualities of Piermont.
- Set aside land for future community needs.

The following recommendations of policy for future land use in Piermont have been developed by the Planning Board. The policies are broken down into General Policies and Density Policies. The density policies refer specifically to the number of buildings in a specific area of Town or on a particular parcel of land.

b. Lot Size / Density

During the past twenty years Piermont's land use regulations have required a one acre minimum lot size. Some respondents to the survey indicated a preference for different minimum lots sizes for different areas.

We have the good fortune of being able to look at many other communities in the state that have experienced the pressures of growth and who have tried varying approaches to this complex issue. Most towns have not been successful in maintaining the quality of their community because the original approach to lot size simply did not

work when development arrived.

Because of this trial and error which has taken place in other towns across the state, several new approaches have evolved. The Planning Board recognizes that the lot size issue is of highest importance and suggests two "state of the art" concepts.

- 1.) Lot size by soil type; and
- 2.) Open Space concept.

1. Lot size by soil type: Not all land is well suited for development, some land is very steep, excessively wet, rock ledge, etc. Some soils percolate wastewater so quickly that impurities such as bacteria, viruses, phosphorus, and nitrogen contaminated ground water are not filtered. Proper lot size must take into consideration the soil - slope complex in which the lot is located, the hydraulic capabilities, purification capabilities, and physical constraints.

Approximately 175 different classifications of soils and slopes exist in Grafton County. Piermont soils include most of these types. The minimum lot size for each class of soil - slope has been recommended by soil scientists and adopted by the Grafton County Conservation Commission. Exhibit E2 is the Grafton County recommended minimum lot size by soil-slope.

Increasing numbers of communities are accepting these recommendations as excellent guides and are utilizing them to set minimum lot size. Under these guidelines minimum lot size ranges from one to three acres depending on the ability of a given soil to handle septic and water supply on the same lot. Access to community sewer and or water allows for some reduction in size. Soils which are too wet, shallow, steep or are in floodplain are ruled out for development. This approach to lot size could go a long way towards satisfying the concerns expressed in the survey regarding development in environmentally sensitive areas. Respondents would discourage development in wetlands (75%), floodplain (69%) and steep slopes/mountain tops (63.7%).

2. Open Space concept: The recommended minimum lot size by soil type may allow in certain instances for an intensity of development which would undermine the rural character of Piermont. To help protect against this possibility, a second concept of "openspace/cluster" should be considered in combination with lot size by soil type.

Development with mandatory open space is a concept which has been generated by the Center For Rural Massachusetts associated with the School of Planning and Architecture at the University of Massachusetts. This idea recognizes that in historic New England

towns and village centers developed with homes and services grouped together surrounded by farms, fields, and forests.

Under development with a mandatory open space requirement, when a parcel of land is developed, approximately one half of the land is set aside as open space and the buildings are grouped on the remaining land. This approach creates village centers which are surrounded by open space in a manner similar to our historic and traditional form of development. Rural character is retained.

F. Recommendations for Land Use Policy

1. TO PROMOTE THE TRADITIONAL PATTERN OF RURAL LAND USE:

a. General Policies:

- Maintain undeveloped space (woodlands, agricultural land, open fields and meadows) to the maximum extent possible when development is proposed.
- Intensive land use which creates a demand for community services and or causes negative environmental impacts is not consistent with the existing pattern of land use and is not recommended.
- No heavy industry is recommended.
- No shopping centers are recommended.
- Residential or commercial strip development along highways is not recommended.
- Preserve valuable agricultural soils.
- Maintain the character of Piermont as a rural community with a limited commercial base except for farms.
- Commercial and or intensive residential development should only occur near existing similarly intense development.
- Development should be permitted only if consistent with the capability of the land and compatible with existing neighborhood character; and after a careful review of impact on community services and the environment.

b. Density Policies

A mix of lot sizes, house types and land uses is desirable and should be consistent with the existing pattern of uses.

The density of development or number of buildings permitted per acre should be dependent upon the land to support the use, the availability of community services, and

upon traditional existing community character. These factors will vary for different areas of the Town. The areas that encompass similar density factors should be similarly identified.

2. TO PROTECT PIERMONT'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND PROMOTE THE EXISTING PATTERN OF AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND USE:

a. General Policies:

Maintain undeveloped space (woodlands, agricultural land, open fields, meadows) for conservation, preservation, and aesthetic purposes to the maximum extent possible when development is proposed.

Development is discouraged:

- 1) on steep slopes.
- 2) on or within the specified setback of wetlands or surface waters.
- 3) on floodplain.

b. Density Policies:

Implement land use regulations with density minimums consistent with existing patterns in the various areas of Town.

Encourage the establishment of undeveloped open space through regulations that permit more dense development on a portion of the parcel in order to keep the remainder open.

3. TO GUIDE GROWTH TO THE PREFERRED LOCATIONS AT TIMES APPROPRIATE FOR THE TOWN:

a. General Policies:

Scattered or premature growth that necessitates excessive expenditures of public funds for community facilities or services shall not be permitted unless properly mitigated.

Phased development should be encouraged as one means of mitigating impacts.

Streets should be constructed to Town standards; however, standards should be reviewed and modified to be consistent with the rural character of the Town. The revised

standards should be different for traffic loads and take into consideration the density and character of the area.

4. TO PRESERVE THE AESTHETIC QUALITIES OF PIERMONT:

a. General Policies:

- Restrict development that would adversely impact important scenic resources.
Visually incompatible uses are not recommended.
- Mobile homes should be allowed in specific areas in order to eliminate potentially unfavorable visual impacts.
- Create natural visual buffers between roadways and new development.
- Regulate signs.
- Regulate unregistered motor vehicles, junk yards and accumulations of trash.
- Preserve forested ridge lines.
- Setback standards should be established for all new construction specific to each area of Town in order to maintain the existing character.
- Scenic areas should be identified and preserved throughout Town.

5. TO SET ASIDE LAND FOR FUTURE COMMUNITY NEEDS:

a. General Policies:

When and as opportunities arise, the Town should acquire:

- 1) beach/boat ramp on the Connecticut River. (survey results)
- 2) beachfronts on one or more lakes in the Tarleton area (survey results)
- 3) land for improved Town facilities
- 4) land for additional sewage disposal sites
- 5) land for parks and recreation

G. Techniques for Guiding Growth in Piermont

1. DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS ACQUISITIONS

In order to prevent development of important natural or scenic areas, the Town should pass a bylaw which would permit the Town to negotiate for the purchase of development rights from owners of special property.

This would also necessitate appropriating funds to acquire these rights. Owners would retain title and rights for permitted uses.

2. CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

New Hampshire has had, for several years, a program whereby a landowner can accrue substantial tax relief while retaining title to his land by donating a "conservation easement" to the Town. This legally binding agreement, executed at the discretion of the land owner, can effectively prevent development of that land forever. In return, the land owner receives Federal income tax reductions, estate tax reductions and local property tax relief. The owner retains title to the land and can continue to use it with the (self imposed) limitations of the agreement. The land may be sold but the restriction remains forever attached to the deed. Like donations of land, this technique should be encouraged and used along with other protection methods.

3. LOCAL BYLAW

Towns may adopt bylaws for specific purposes relating to the protection of public health. Pursuant to RSA 147:1, health officers may establish regulations for the prevention and removal of a nuisance relating to public health. These regulations can be as simple or complex as the Town may wish, but must have a direct relation to the protection of public health. These often include a septic system bylaw which would require new or altered systems to be built to standards comparable to those contained in Piermont's Subdivision Regulations. Wetland and floodplain bylaws are common protection techniques in New Hampshire.

III. HOUSING

This section of the Master Plan provides goals and policy recommendations for the future of housing in Piermont. These are based on the Community Attitude Survey, census data, historic and current housing characteristics, housing problems, and the current Piermont Zoning Ordinance.

A. Summary of Community Survey relative to housing in Piermont

The 1988 Community Attitude Survey (74% return) provided the following information from Piermont property owners relative to housing:

71.8% would like to see the population decrease, stay the same, or grow only slightly; 27.4% wanted moderate growth; 0.8% wanted rapid growth.

Evaluation of the supply of rental housing was 16.5% excellent; 47.5% good; 36% poor.

Property owners cited the following as serious problems (number listed is out of 279 responding):

- Lack of multi-family housing, 17
- Lack of housing development, 20
- Excessive housing development, 70
- Low-income housing for elderly (listed under "other problems").

Attitude toward new housing in Piermont:

- Single-family homes: 247 favor, 9 against
- Multi-family homes: 54 favor, 182 against
- Condominiums: 46 favor, 190 against
- Mobile homes: 68 favor, 156 against
- Cluster housing: 54 favor, 172 against
- Elderly housing: 195 favor, 42 against
- Rent-subsidized housing: 43 favor, 181 against

Location in town for the following types of housing:

- Single-family homes: 169 anywhere, 16 in village, 53 in designated areas, 2 nowhere
- Multi-family homes: 40 anywhere, 23 in village, 103 in designated areas, 18 nowhere
- Mobile homes: 37 anywhere, 4 in village, 143 in

designated areas, 19 nowhere

The following homes were singled out in responses to be preserved for historic or scenic value: Clark home, village old Victorian homes, and Evans house.

Relative to further development in the Lake Tarleton area, 54 property owners cited primary residential development, 84 cited seasonal residential development.

B. Housing history summary

Piermont was chartered under the British Colonial Governor Benning Wentworth in 1764, and the first settlers arrived in 1768. These pioneers built crude houses fit for bare survival, beginning at first on the partially cleared meadows along the Connecticut River. The meadows, subject to floods that kept them clear of dense forest growth, were thought to have been used by the Indians for corn crops. Homes built on the meadows were prone to destruction from floods, and as more settlers arrived, the forests began to be cleared for homesites. Travel was difficult; roads that would permit even ox-cart travel were not opened until after the Revolutionary War.

Homes away from the river began to be built along the traveled paths, usually following usable waterways such as Eastman Brook and Bean Brook. These waterways provided a source of power, and saw mills were early businesses. The mills provided sawn lumber to construct more substantial and more comfortable homes.

The hill country of Piermont was found to be better farmland for wheat and other grains and for the sheep industry that flourished in the early-to-mid-1800's. It has been said that the Clay Hollow area had the most prosperous farms in those times, and probably the best homes. The opening of the Midwest spelled doom for the sheep and wool marketed from Piermont farms. The population of the town decreased as the hill farms could no longer

provide a living for the farmers. Today, a majority of the hill homes are gone. For example, those homes along the once well-traveled North-South Road are barely discernible cellar holes, with the road itself returned to wilderness.

Other businesses spurred the development of residential areas over time. As the river farms turned to the dairy business, creameries, butter-box factories, and other supporting businesses opened. These helped shape the character of the village area and made it a prime location for homes.

As in many towns, the great depression of the 1930's affected the town's economy and its growth. At about the same time, the change from horses to automobiles and other industrial advances impacted the economy. These led to other potential businesses, including for Piermont, more mechanized farming, tourist inns, and a major resort hotel. The Lake Tarleton Club, from 1911 to 1969, had a large impact on the town and its residents. But as the economy and tourist needs changed, the resort became less profitable and closed. It is hard now to even imagine that complex of buildings and facilities that have returned to open fields.

The automobile fostered the development of the lakes area for seasonal homes. Such homes, along the lake shores and in the hilly areas, form a significant part of Piermont housing. Many have been built or converted for year-round living capability.

Another significant part of Piermont housing is the mobile home. It provides a low-cost means for young families or low-income families to own their own home. These evolved from the tourist trailers of the 1940's and 1950's into more substantial, yet readily relocated, units. Many have been renovated or added to, making them more permanent structures. The need for mobile-home units gave rise to the manufactured home, which is factory made and trucked to the site of a permanent foundation assembled, and finished off. Such homes are more permanent and more aesthetically pleasing than basic mobile homes.

In the last few decades, rapid, convenient travel has allowed residents to find employment in growing areas such as Lebanon and Hanover, while living in the rural environment of Piermont. This has furthered renovation of old homes as well as the construction of new ones. This increase and rehabilitation of homes has occurred also with retired people living, or planning to live, in Piermont.

The shifts in livelihoods over the years has affected homes. For example, a large home, once on the main road between Hanover and Haverhill, passed through a succession of owners. With the decline in tourists, the inn reverted to a private home. Similarly, the recent decline in dairy farming has affected the use of land, which in turn has impacted housing. Areas once prime farmland are being subdivided and developed for housing.

This type of development inspired the town, by a large majority vote (80 to 9), to establish a Planning Board in 1967. The Board produced a "Comprehensive Plan" in 1968, which was to "report to the Town appropriate recommendations for the promotion and maintenance of the Town's best development." The report states: "In carrying out its mission, the Planning Board will try to keep abreast of current trends and anticipate future changes while working concurrently to retain the town's character essentially as formed during the past two hundred years."

Along these lines, the Planning Board prepared, and the town enacted, Subdivision Regulations in May 1970, and the town enacted a Zoning Ordinance in 1971.

C. Piermont Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance, with amendments through March 8, 1994, defines three districts in the town: lake, village, and rural. Relative to housing, the Ordinance provides:

Alteration or enlargement of any residential building is permitted.

Mobile home provisions (Article VIII, Subsection 2.6):

- "The establishment of a mobile home for dwelling purposes shall only be permitted in the Rural District."

- "A mobile home so established shall be placed on a foundation and be skirted by material of a permanent nature."

Residence provisions (Article VIII, Subsection 2.9):

- "The construction of single family residences is permitted in any District."

- "Condominiums, or apartment buildings, not exceeding 3 stories or 42' in height, as measured from the average finished building front grade may be permitted in any District under the Special Exception use provisions of Article V, Section 4."

- "The construction of cottages for seasonal use is only permitted in the lake and rural District."

Restrictions on other uses of a residence (e.g., for home occupations) are defined in Article VIII, Subsection 2.10.

D. Housing characteristics & trends

1. CENSUS DATA

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission prepared a Regional profile in 1993, using the federal 1970, 1980, and 1990 census data. Relative to housing in Piermont, the profile shows the following changes in housing from 1970 to 1990:

The UVLSRPC profile presents the types of housing for 1990 (1980 data on housing types was sampled data, not actual counts, and can be misleading):

- Total housing units: 404

- Single-family units: 338, 8.7% of total

- Multi-family units: 32, 7.9% of total

- Mobile homes: 33, 8.2% of total

- Other; 1 (living quarters in structures intended for non-residential use)

The profile further provides the age of housing, stating that a large proportion of older homes may serve as an indicator of the need for renovation and rehabilitation. Of Piermont's 404 dwellings, 182 or 45% were built before 1940. This compares to the region's 32.2%, New Hampshire's statewide 27.1%, and Vermont's statewide 36.5%.

The number of persons per household in Piermont was 2.56 in 1980 and 2.55 in 1990.

The 1990 census data, separate from the UVLSRPC profile presents information on the occupancy of homes in Piermont. Of the total 404 dwelling units:

- 245 are permanently occupied

- 197 of the 245 are owner occupied

- 48 of the 245 are renter occupied

- 130 are seasonally occupied

- 29 were vacant

The permanently occupied housing units use the following heat sources:

- Bottled, tank, or LP gas; 24.6%

- Electricity; 4%

- Fuel oil or kerosene; 35.3%

- Wood; 36.1%

Of the occupied homes, 10 completely lack plumbing facilities, as do 16 of the vacant (probably seasonal) homes.

Population data over time shows that Piermont's population peaked in 1840, with 1,057 people, compared to 624 in the 1990 census. However, these figures should be put in the context of the number of households for a true comparison relative to housing those people. In the 1700's and 1800's, family units tended to be larger, especially on the family farm because children from an early age up through their teens and even longer were vital to labor-intensive farms. In 1840, households averaged between 5 and 6 persons (5.55 in the 1850 census, national average). This indicates that the number of households in Piermont would have been about 190. Piermont in 1990 had 245 households (2.55 persons per household).

2. HOUSING TYPES

a. Permanent Dwellings

These dwellings are single-family homes and multi-family homes. Multi-family homes include attached town houses and condominiums and duplexes. The majority of Piermont homes are single-family units, many of which date back to the 1800's. The number of multi-family units increased approximately 78% between 1980 and 1990 (exact data not available). The total number of permanent dwellings increased 37.9% from 1980 to 1990.

In 1983, the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Council (as then named) prepared a partial draft of a Master Plan for Piermont. In it was described a survey in which Council staff members "...and the Piermont Planning Board Chairman drove every road in Town in order to survey and locate all primary structures in Town." The survey "...counted only 13 (or 5.5 percent) of all year-round housing to be deteriorating and none to be dilapidated. The overall condition of housing in Piermont, therefore, is very good." Though this survey was done about twelve years ago, it is likely that repeating the survey in 1995 would result in the same general conclusion.

b. Seasonal Dwellings

Seasonal homes have traditionally been units without the amenities of permanent homes, including running water, central heating, and the like. However, UVLSRPC has found that the majority of seasonal homes today are fully equipped for year-round use. The distinction has become one of length of residency, not quality of the unit. About 32% of the homes in Piermont are seasonal dwellings. In Piermont, the majority may not be suitable for year-round living, but no data is available to make a conclusion.

c. Mobile Homes

The number of mobile homes in Piermont has increased significantly from 1980 to 1990.

Although exact data is not available, sampled 1980 census data compared to 1990 shows a four-fold increase. Since enactment of the Zoning Ordinance in 1971, mobile homes now may only be situated in the Rural District within the town. This is consistent with the community survey that by large majority wanted restrictions on mobile home placement.

3. HOUSING PROBLEMS

Housing problems in Piermont are not unique. To a large degree they reflect the housing problems of the Nation and State of New Hampshire. Typical of these problems are high cost of housing, high property taxes, and low income levels.

High cost of housing - The cost to purchase a new or resale home remains high, though the recession in the early 1990's tended to level off the increase from the 1980's. However, one attraction for living in Piermont is that housing costs are lower than some of the surrounding areas, notably Hanover and Lebanon, where many Piermonters are employed. The demand for seasonal housing has dropped. The development planned for the Lake Tarleton area has been delayed due to the drop in demand. Other developments have also been affected.

High property taxes - This has been a problem related to Piermont homes for many years. It was discussed in the 1968 Piermont Comprehensive Plan. The problem impacts not only the purchase of a home, but the expansion or renovation of a home, and even its resale. Changes that might increase the valuation of the home for tax purposes may not be undertaken. High taxes may be a reason for an outside buyer to reject moving to Piermont.

Low income levels - This problem is usually faced by the younger and older segments of the town population. People on starting salaries or those depending on Social Security may not be able to afford a conventional permanent home. For the younger people, the lower-cost alternatives may be buying a used mobile home, a badly deteriorated permanent home, or a make-do, non-winterized seasonal home, or renting in a single or multi-family

unit. For older people, it can mean losing a family home of many generations.

Impact on town services - Where young families live in the low-cost alternatives cited above, their property taxes or rent will likely not cover the actual cost of town services, especially the cost of schooling, which is about 75% of tax revenues.

Aesthetic values - The proliferation of mobile homes, the foregoing of renovations, and lowering of property valuations to offset costs and taxes have a detrimental affect on the aesthetic values of the town. These, in turn, may dissuade a potential buyer from moving into Piermont. This aesthetic value is then turned into monetary value to the town.

e. Goals developed for housing in Piermont

- Maintain Piermont as a town of predominantly single-family permanent homes, while allowing mobile homes in selected areas
- Encourage decent and affordable housing, emphasizing housing for the elderly
- Promote safe, sanitary, and well-constructed housing, particularly relating to rental units
- Encourage innovative planning in design and construction to minimize the cost, energy consumption, and environmental impact of housing
- Encourage maintenance of residences to enhance the aesthetic quality of the town
- Encourage the preservation of historic structures in Piermont
- Promote housing development that will not burden town services or detract from the natural resources and open space

f. Recommendations for Housing Policy

1. Develop a housing code for rental

properties to assure minimum safety and health standards for the tenants. This may not be able to be applied to existing rental properties; however, the future conversion of large old houses to multi-family occupancy should be carefully controlled. Issues to be considered are fire safety, electrical safety, sanitary facilities, water supply, sewage disposal, and adequate and safe parking.

2. Protect homes of historic or architectural merit. Homeowners should be encouraged to maintain their homes, not penalized by raising the valuation for maintenance actions, such as painting, replacing deteriorated structure, and cosmetic improvements.
3. Require a fiscal impact study for subdivision applications, defining the short and long-term impact on town services, especially school requirements.
4. Encourage senior housing development and explore sources of funding for the project.

Piermont Master Plan, Section III - Transportation

III. TRANSPORTATION

A. Goals

1. To encourage, promote, develop and support a system of transportation resources that is at once orderly, safe, efficient and affordable for the residents of Piermont as well as for those who may be visiting or passing through.

B. Current Inventory of Transportation Resources

1. Air Transportation

- a. *Private* - Dean Memorial Airport, North Haverhill, NH
11 miles; grass runway, not lighted, no navigational aids
- b. *Commercial* - Lebanon Airport, West Lebanon, NH
32 miles, provides connections to major commercial airports such as Boston and New York.
Others include Manchester, NH and Burlington, VT.

2. Water Transportation

- a. Piermont is blessed with extensive water resources, but other than for use as recreation, they provide no benefit to the current transportation system.

3. Ground Transportation

- a. *Railroads* - Although the former Boston & Maine Railroad parallels the Connecticut River through Bradford, VT, the line is currently shut down and not open to traffic. The former stop on that line called PIERMONT STATION is but 1/2 mile from the Piermont crossing to Bradford.

Amtrak service either north to Montreal or south to New York is available from White River Junction, VT, a distance of about 32 miles via I 91.

Piermont Master Plan, Section III - Transportation

a. *Highways and Roads - approx. 41 miles total*

1. **Federal Highways** - Piermont has no US Routes or Interstate Highways within it's borders. Access to major routes is as follows:

I 91, 3 miles in Bradford, VT

I 93, 27 miles in Plymouth, NH

I 89, 32 miles either in White River Junction or Barre

US 302, 12 miles in Woodsville, NH

US 5, 2 miles in Bradford, VT

2. **New Hampshire State Routes** - Piermont has four State Routes within is borders comprising approx. 20 miles:

NH Route 10 runs parallel to the Connecticut River through Piermont between the Haverhill and the Orford Town Lines - 5.4 miles.

NH Route 25 runs concurrently with NH Route 10 from the Haverhill Town Line to Piermont Four Corners - Junctions of 10, 25 and 25C - then west where it crosses the Connecticut River to Bradford, VT - approx. 4.5 miles.

NH Route 25C runs east from the Piermont Four Corners - Junctions of 10, 25 and 25C - paralleling Eastman Brook, then between Lakes Tarlton and Armington to the Warren Town Line - approx. 10 miles.

River Road runs south paralleling the Connecticut River from NH Route 10 near the Haverhill Town Line to NH Route 25 just east of the Piermont crossing to Bradford, VT - approx. 4 miles.

3. **Piermont Town Roads** - Piermont has 32 Town roads comprising approx. 21.8 miles - 18.4 miles of Class V and 3.4 miles of Class VI.

Piermont Master Plan, Section III - Transportation

A list of these roads with all pertinent data is provided in Appendix A of The Piermont Master Plan.

c. *Public Transportation*

1. Interstate bus service is available via Vermont Transit in Bradford, VT.
2. Access to Wells River, Newbury, Fairlee, Thetford, Norwich and White River Junction, VT is available via Stagecoach Transportation Services Mon. through Sat.
3. There are private firms out of Hanover, Lebanon and White River Junction that provide limousine and van service to airports and for special occasions.

d. *Private Transportation*

1. Privately owned automobiles are the principal means of transportation for Piermonters.
2. Ride-share is available for those who work at Dartmouth College in Hanover or Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon.

C. Current Programs for System Maintenance and Improvements

1. The Town currently appropriates about \$69,000 to be raised by taxes and another \$25,000 from NH State Highway Subsidy money each year for maintaining highways and bridges.
2. The Town Bridges Expendable Trust Fund is a "savings account" that was set up to fund repairs to and rebuilding of Town bridges. The Town typically appropriates \$5000 each year to this account.
3. The Vehicular Equipment Capital Reserve Fund is a "savings account" that was set up to fund major purchases such as road graders, etc. The Town typically appropriates \$5000 each year to this account.
4. The Town's *Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance* both contain provisions relative to the transportation system. They are as follows:

Piermont Master Plan, Section III - Transportation

- a. Minimum standards for design and construction of new roads
- b. Minimum standards for improvements to existing roads
- c. Driveway Permits
- d. Minimum building set-backs from roads

D. Recommended Programs for System Improvements

- 1. Maintain all of the current programs as listed in Section III, C, 1 thru 4 above.
- 2. Improve and "fine-tune" current programs wherever possible.
- 3. Consider "Scenic Road" designation for some of Piermont's most beautiful roads.
- 4. Investigate and document each Town road as to legal status and ownership of right-of-way.
- 5. Encourage the development of existing roads as opposed to the construction of new in cases of subdivision.
- 6. Encourage the development of public transportation - rail, bus, etc.
- 7. Encourage State funding for the widening of existing roads to accommodate bicycle lanes.

Piermont Master Plan, Section IV - Recreation

IV. RECREATION

A. Goals

1. To encourage, promote and provide a balanced mix of indoor and outdoor programs and facilities and open space areas to meet the current and future recreation needs of all Piermont residents.

B. Current Inventory of Recreation Resources

1. Town or School Owned

- a. *Swimming hole* - Bean Brook Road, Tax Map R-1, Lot 3. Includes fresh water pond, changing rooms and portable toilet. Seasonal. 5.7 acres.
- b. *Ball Field* - Bedford Road, Tax Map U-1, Lot 1. Includes soccer field, baseball diamond, portable toilet, running water. Seasonal.
- c. *Town Forest* - Bedford Road, Tax Map U-1, Lot 1. Includes trails for hiking, nature studies, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and horseback riding. 67 acres. Toilet at ball field (seasonal).
- d. *Village School Ball Field* - Rt. 10, Tax Map U-1, Lot 8C. Large level playing field behind and to north of school building also provides an ice skating rink in winter months. Facilities only when school building is open.
- e. *Sarah Moore Lot* - River Road, Tax Map R-11, Lot 2. Sixteen acre open and wooded Connecticut River access for carry-in boats, fishing and picnics. Parking. No camping. Open portion rented to private party for pasture. No facilities. Seasonal.
- f. *Bonnett Lot* - Bean Brook Road, Tax Map R-2, Lot 10. Two

Piermont Master Plan, Section IV - Recreation

acre brook-side park with picnic table. No facilities.
Seasonal.

- g. *Glebe Lot* - Northeast of Black Hill on Haverhill Town line, Tax Map R-19, Lot 6. 113 acre forested parcel with no road access. Also provides timber revenue. No facilities.
- h. *School Lot* - Off River Road on the Connecticut River, Tax Map R-20, Lot 25. 20 acre open meadow in flood plain rented to private party for agricultural use. No facilities.
- i. *Day Farm Preserve* - Confluence of the Connecticut River and Eastman Brook. Tax Map R-1, Lot ?? . Wetland preserve. No facilities. Access by Connecticut River only.

2. State Owned

- a. *Lake Tarleton State Park* - Rt 25 C, Tax Map R-16, Lot ax. Mostly open land - 48 acres - includes barn, house (future visitors center) and beach. No facilities.
- b. *Lake Tarleton Public Boat Access* - Rt 25C, Tax Map U-2, Lot 1. A 1.7 acre public access to Lake Tarleton. No facilities. Scheduled to be upgraded in the summer of 2000.
- c. *Lake Armington Public Boat Access* - Rt 25C, Tax Map U-2, Lot 35. A 1.25 acre public boat access to Lake Armington. No facilities.
- d. *Lake Armington Outflow* - Off Rt 25C, Tax Map R-15, Lot . A landlocked parcel at north end of lake - 2 acres, dam and open area. No facilities.
- e. *Sentinel Mountain State Forest* - Cape Moonshine Road, Tax Map R-5, Lots 3, 6, and 8. 236 acre forest on both sides of road. No facilities.
- f. *Connecticut River* - Over 8.5 miles of navigable water with feeder streams and estuaries.

Piermont Master Plan, Section IV - Recreation

- d. *Brock Farm* - Wakefield Drive, north of Brock Farm Road, Tax Map R-11, Lots 10-4 and 10-1. 5.05 acres agricultural land.

Conserved by: William Daley and Elizabeth Bayne, 1998.
Currently owned by: Same.
Rights held by: Upper Valley Land Trust
- e. *Putnam Farm* - Rt 25, north and south sides, Tax Map R-1, Lots 19 and 20, and Map R-10, Lot 1. Total 127.14 acres agricultural land with long frontage on Connecticut River; and Rt 25C south side, Tax Map R-9, Lot 55. 15.9 acres agricultural land along Eastman Brook.

Conserved by: Putnam Farm, 1997.
Currently owner by: Same.
Rights held by: State of New Hampshire
- f. *Underhill Farm* - Rt 25 north and south sides. Tax Map R-1, Lot 14 consists of approx. 104 acres agricultural land with long frontage on the Connecticut River and Rt 25; and Tax Map R-10, Lot 31 consisting of approx. 104 acres agricultural and forest land.

Conserved by: Lawrence and Nancy Underhill, 1995.
Currently owned by: Hal Covert and Lisa Knapton.
Rights held by: State of New Hampshire
- g. *River Road* - River Road, east and west sides. Tax Map R-11, Lots 1 and 58. Consists of approx. 100 acres of agricultural and forest land with Connecticut River Frontage.

Conserved by: Verne Batchelder and Jeanne Hahn, 1986.
Currently owner by: Same
Rights held by: State of New Hampshire
- h. *Southeast Piermont Heights* - Between Piermont Heights Road and Cape Moonshine Road on Orford town line, Tax

Piermont Master Plan, Section IV - Recreation

Map R-5, Lot 4. Approx. 34 acres of forest land just off Appalachian Trail.

Conserved by: Alan Thorndike, 1998.

Currently owner by: Same

Rights held by: Society for the Protection of New
Hampshire Forests

- i. *Peaked Mountain - north slope* - Barton Road, Tax Map R-9, Lot 31. 107 acres of forest land on the northeast side of Peaked Mountain.

Conserved by: Myron and Helga Mueller, 1994.

Currently owner by: Same

Rights held by: Town of Piermont

5. Recreation Opportunities in nearby Towns

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|--------------|
| a. | Dartmouth Skiway | skiing | Lyme |
| b. | Hanover Country Club | golf, skiing | Hanover |
| c. | Northeast Slopes | skiing | Corinth, VT |
| d. | Lake Morey Country Club | golf ,skiing | Fairlee, VT |
| e. | Bradford Golf Club | golf | Bradford, VT |
| f. | Mr. Putz | mini-golf | Bradford, VT |
| g. | Blackmount Country Club | golf | N. Haverhill |
| h. | Bugbee Landing Conn. River boat launch | | Bradford, VT |
| i. | Newbury Crossing Conn. River boat launch | | Newbury, VT |

Piermont Master Plan, Section IV - Recreation

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|------------------|
| j. | Orford Conn. River boat launch | Orford |
| k. | Bedell Bridge State Park picnic | Haverhill |
| l. | Haverhill Common Tennis courts | Haverhill Corner |
| m. | Elizabeth's Park children's park | Bradford, VT |
| n. | Indian Pond swimming/boating | Orford |

6. Current Recreation Programs

- a. Piermont Village School sponsored activities - while school is in session.
- b. Other area school's programs.
- c. Area spring softball leagues.
- d. Little League baseball

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Explore the potential for developing a Town summer recreation program for adults and children using a combination of fees and volunteers.
2. Explore the establishment of capital reserve funds and use of grants for funding desirable recreational facilities such as basketball courts, running track and cross-country ski trails at Piermont Village School.
3. Establish tennis courts, horseshoe pits and picnic area on Town land near Town ball field and transfer station on Bedford Road.
4. Continue to make use of private and public programs to procure title or recreation easements on lands with important open space or recreational value.

Piermont Master Plan, Section IV - Recreation

5. Discourage discontinuance of any Town road that may, one day, be used to provide access to recreation lands.
6. Cooperate with state and regional efforts to develop a system of bicycle/pedestrian paths along existing roads.