



Medfield's Natural, Open Space - 4 & Recreation Resources

DISTINCTIVE NATURAL AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

- While much of the **topography** is gently sloping and low-lying, Medfield contains several high points located in the northeast (in and around the Rocky Hill Reservation) and southwest (in and around the Noon Hill Reservation) parts of town.
- Just under 40% of the town contains well-drained, sandy and gravelly **soils** that present few constraints to development.
- Medfield lies within the Charles River and Neponset River **watersheds**, and contains two major water courses, the Charles and Stop Rivers. Extensive wetlands area is associated with each river, as are Core Habitats and Critical Natural Landscapes as defined by the State's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.
- Smaller **streams, brooks and small ponds** are scattered throughout the Town, and these provide habitat for wildlife and aquatic species.
- Medfield's **scenic resources** include rural roads, hill summits, river corridors and ponds.



Kingsbury Pond is one of Medfield's many natural resources of high scenic value that also provides habitat for wildlife and a spot for canoeing, kayaking and fishing.

SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE PROTECTION EFFORTS

- Medfield residents **place high value on the town's open space resources**, as evidenced by the results of recent surveys and public forums. Some of the most treasured open spaces are Noon Hill, Rocky Woods, the Charles River meadows, and Vine Lake.
- Medfield is the 258th in land area of the 365 municipalities in the Commonwealth but **ranks 65th in the amount of permanently protected land**. Of the Town's 9,337.60 acres, approximately 33% has been protected in perpetuity from development.
- The **largest owners and/or managers of conservation lands** in Medfield are The Trustees of Reservations and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A large portion of protected open space lies within the Charles River Natural Valley Storage Project area, managed by the ACOE for flood control.
- Recent purchase of **134 acres of the former Medfield State Hospital** endorses the Town's long-standing commitment to preserving and protecting open space.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

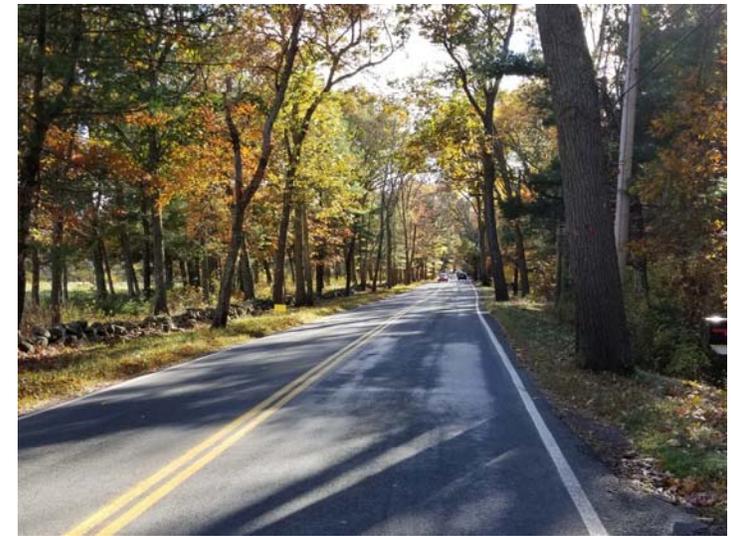
- Just under 40% of Medfield contains **soils that present few constraints to development** and these soils dominate most of the central area of town.
- The presence of **large wetland areas** associated with rivers, streams and ponds **limits development** of approximately 25% of the town.
- The US Army Corps of Engineers has assumed control of the natural basins along the Charles River **to control and minimize flooding throughout the watershed**.
- While Medfield has had success in protecting open space, many **parcels lack connections to one another**.
- As climate change continues, **the potential of many streams, brooks, and ponds to flood will continue to increase**.

RECREATION RESOURCES IN MANY FORMS

- Medfield's **over 3,000 acres of open space** offer infinite opportunities to explore the outdoors through recreation of many forms, including hiking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, bird watching, and swimming. Ownership and maintenance of this land is shared between the federal, state and local government, as well as a private land trust (The Trustees of Reservations).
- The Town's **downtown passive recreation sites**, including Memorial (Gazebo) Park, Straw Hat Park, Meeting House (Baker's) Park, and Baxter Park also serve as venues for community gathering, including Medfield Day, held each September.
- **Management of town-owned outdoor public recreation facilities** is handled by the Park and Recreation Department and School Department. The Conservation Commission is responsible for managing Town-owned open space. McCarthy Park, located on the former site of the Medfield State Hospital farm, has yet to be fully developed into a recreation facility.
- **Medfield's trails** link to two regional systems, the Bay Circuit Trail and the Charles River Link Trail.



The Stop River flows westward through the Town and joins the Charles at the Medfield-Millis line.



Hartford Road, located at the eastern end of Medfield, has been designated a Scenic Road. It leads through woodlands and past farmland and divides the Rocky Woods Reservation from Fork Factory Brook.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- While Medfield owns and maintains **over 260 acres of athletic fields, most are overused**, with school fields booked seven days per week.
- The existing Park and Recreation Department building, the **Hannah Adams Pfaff Center**, is in a **state of decline**. A new facility is needed in order for the department to improve and broaden its services to Medfield residents of all ages.
- Currently, **Medfield does not have a designated "dog park"** and canine owners have routinely used the former Medfield State Hospital grounds and conservation land behind the Wheelock School for this purpose. **Lack of dog waste removal** at these sites is a public health concern.
- Medfield has **attempted to pass the Community Preservation Act** three times, without success. Funding through the CPA can support expansion of recreation facilities and lands, as well as open space acquisitions.



The Town maintains over 260 acres of athletic fields, located adjacent to schools, and at Metacomet and McCarthy Parks.