



THE AURORA

2010



Open Space Plan

PROTECTING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE

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The Open Space Plan

SUMMARY

Forests, wetlands, stream corridors, and farms are all forms of open space. Preserving these open spaces provides communities with scenic views, natural resources, and potential economic benefits from tourism and strong property values. The combination of the picturesque, historic Village of East Aurora and the surrounding Town of Aurora, which still retains substantial open space, creates an increasingly rare, desirable place to live. To preserve this quality of life for future generations, the time to act is now – before increased development threatens our open spaces.

The Aurora Town Board created the Aurora Open Space Committee in January 2007 to address open space protection. The mission of the Committee is to define, inventory, and evaluate the Town of Aurora's priority open space resources and work with the community to develop and promote a plan for the protection of these resources.

In a summer of 2007 community survey, respondents overwhelmingly favored preserving open space. Taking community preferences into account, a procedure was developed and applied to rank the 166 parcels in the Town consisting of 25 acres or more. The result is a preliminary list of priority properties totaling about 4,000 acres that are deemed to have the greatest conservation value. The goal is to protect about 1,500 acres from development, doubling the amount of protected open space that currently exists in the town. As shown in Figure 3 of this document, the majority of the priority properties can be placed in nine groups that are well distributed throughout the town.

The Open Space Committee works with the Town Board, the Planning Board and town residents to protect open spaces in Aurora. Land protection tools will include:

- Promoting the voluntary donation of development rights through conservation easements.
- Securing funds for the purchase of land or development rights for projects that have high natural resource values and community support.
- Assisting with updating of the 1981 Aurora Master Plan.
- Outreach to the public about open space protection.

For up-to-date news about the open space plan, please attend one of our monthly Open Space Committee meetings or go to http://www.townofaurora.com/open_space_committee.php.

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