

DATE: August 9, 2020

CLIENT: Julia Brock & Matt Lawlor

ADDRESS: 260 Roxbury St., Keene NH



EXISTING CONDITIONS



PROJECT SCOPE: Single family residence at the corner of Douglass & Roxbury Streets in Keene, NH. The existing landscape has not been updated for many years. Clients have three young children and anticipate a busy life of work and family. They would like to grow berries, fruit trees and vegetables (in raised bed gardens) but are not looking to be full-time gardeners for perennial or annual flower beds. They would like a stronger sense of enclosure and safety for their children to play outside. They have one dog and anticipate future dog/s as well. Both the yard and proposed raised bed gardens will need fencing. An initial walk-through was

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<https://healthyhomehabitats.com/> & fb.me/HealthyHomeHabitats

conducted on June 4, 2020 to talk through the new owners' substantive, creative ideas as follows.

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT: The property is within the Ashuelot River Watershed (see attached watershed map) in the [USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 5b](#)¹ Plants have been chosen, however, with winter temperatures closer to Zone 5 and Zone 4 due to increased incidences of deep freeze temperatures that have been prevalent the last several winters, potentially due to climate change.

Keene, in general, was a former proglacial lake². "The general vegetation types include transition hardwoods (maple-beech-birch,oak-hickory) and northern hardwoods (maple-beech-birch)."³ The lower elevations in Keene, however, were predominantly a floodplain forest with pockets of clay soils and sandy soils, haphazardly mixed throughout the City. This particular site, from cursory observation, looks to have, predominantly, very sandy, very sharply, drained, soil with minimal organic material and nutrients.

For your information, I have attached two additional resources that may be interesting. These resources highlight aspects of your property's relationship to our region's ecological systems and its health. They are:

- The Wikipedia listing for the Ashuelot River (of which Beaver Brook is a part) <http://academics.keene.edu/pegglest/documents/Atlasmap1.pdf> and,
- An Atlas of the Ashuelot River https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashuelot_River

Given these ecological aspects, in this design, I have specified predominantly native shrubs that are hardy to our USDA Zone 4/5. Native plants in general have the best survival rates and also a wide variety of ecosystem benefits such as chemical-free, blooming flowers for our regions' pollinators, a variety of berries for our region's birds and local wildlife as well as general habitat enhancements such as shrubby areas for small wildlife habitat and cover. Additionally, I have specified raised beds for the purposes of growing food. This allows a discrete area of good garden soil to be created, amended and fed over time for the benefit of growing healthy nutritious fruits and vegetables.

Bears and other wildlife are prevalent within this neighborhood, particularly in early spring. Bird feeders must be located with care close to the residence, bee hives must be protected with electric fences and in some cases an additional, wire mesh fence will be necessary around the vegetable raised beds to discourage rabbits, squirrels and moles.

¹ <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/>

² Refuge & Resource Description, US Fish & Wildlife Service. https://www.fws.gov/northeast/planning/johnhay/FinalCCP/03_Chapter%203%20-%20Refuge%20and%200Resource%20Descriptions.pdf

³ Ecoregions of New England. http://ecologicalregions.info/data/vt/new_eng_front.pdf
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INITIAL WALK-THROUGH

Front Entrance of House: Clients would like to have a well-defined entrance with fencing, potentially white picket, potentially a lovely arbor to frame the front entrance and a gate to prevent child-street accidents. Most likely to remove the existing overgrown plants to create a low maintenance, seasonally-interesting front landscape. This is where the children will exit and enter the home for their school bus stop but will not be the family main entrance due to the rear parking spaces. They'll consider a set-back second fence with a gate to prevent dog/s from running along the sidewalk at the arbor/gate. Suggested that the weeping Cherry tree may not be well placed for the three-story facade of the home, that a larger-scaled, shade tree would better, proportionally anchor the home to the site, providing efficient and helpful summer shade for the front entrance/porch and front rooms of the home.

East Side of House: Clients would like to consider growing berries. They would like a fence along this side to enclose the yard. Suggested hardy perennial border at the base of the fence to create easier mow line, e.g. daylilies.

Back of House: Existing 15-18' tall Privet hedge along back fence. Neighbor has requested that they remain. Shallow back area perfect for shade garden/quiet seating. Bulkhead doors to the east of the back door. Clients anticipate building a deck with a roof along the NW back corner for an eating table/seating area from the bulkhead west to the end of the house. The oil tank pipe is set in from the NW corner. Therefore, a path will be needed to the oil cap and from the parking spots at the garage to the back door. Daughter has visions of a secret, english garden in the shade corner :-).

Garage/Parking Spot: Existing garage to stay. Additional parking space is necessary and will be created on the south side of the driveway/garage which will have an added carport. A wire frame shed will be erected on the east side of the garage with clear panels on the south side to potentially start spring plants. Later discussion explored 2-3 fruit trees alongside the south side of the parking space/s for the improved exposure over the southeast yard border. West exposure is good but upon second look, the south exposure is obstructed by Maple street trees along Douglass St.

Back Yard: This will be an open play/grass area for the children. It may be enclosed by the same (picket?) fence with large, flowering shrubs at the back-most SW corner as an enclosing backdrop to the yard for the view from the large bay window. These shrubs will also create a bit of privacy and noise reduction. Potential shrub border along the Roxbury Street fenceline as well for the same reasons.

South of New Parking Space/Carport: This is a great, full-sun area where they would like to have four raised beds. They have 2, 2 x 10' raised beds and 2, 2 x 4' raised beds in mind.

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Need to connect parking spaces to a walkway leading to the back door. Poured concrete may be necessary for this level of regular use.

West of Home's Large, Bay Window: This is the other full-sun area, both west and southern exposures that may be appropriate for the desired fruit trees. An existing planting bed lined by medium-sized stones arcs around the bay window. A second, larger stone arc could be created to hold the fruit trees approx. 12' from the house. This area would have amended soil for the fruit trees. This lower area contains several spectacular Blue False Indigo that could be divided and utilized as low maintenance perennials in this area.

Discussed:

- Desire to not have shrubs that need to be pruned regularly, e.g. sheared.
- Prioritizing the removal of overgrown plant material with a rented backhoe.
- Potential relocation of a trimmed back rhododendron to the back SE corner of the lot.
- Discussed the need for a fence by September.
- They will be back at the beginning of August.
- I will email schematics to them before this for their comments.

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

1. Soil and USDA planting zone conditions - This property, as is common in Keene's bottomland area, has sandy, sharply-drained, thin soils. Soil conditions in Keene vary property to property as just one or two streets over are at a lower elevation with more organic material but higher probabilities of flooding. Additionally, we have a USDA Growing Zone 5A/B but we have had several winter events in the last five years of temperatures dipping below zero for extended periods.
 - a. **Vegetables & Fruit** - As discussed your yard has wonderful sun exposure for growing all kinds of food. The landscape design attached shows the variety of ways you have requested:
 - [Blueberry Bushes](#) are shown along the south fence along the sidewalk. They are native to our region, acclimated to our winters, and thrive in our acid soils. While Blueberries grow on top of many local mountains in this region, the bushes produce more and larger fruit with the addition of organic material rototilled into the planting area prior to planting the bushes. Additionally, you'll need to decide whether you want "to share" with the local birds and squirrels who also love Blueberries. If not, you can build a long, wooden frame around their mature size (4' wide by 6' tall) with a door access. Mesh can then be stapled to the frame.

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- [Raspberries](#) In contrast, Raspberries need additional shelter from our winter winds and much better soil. They are shown in 2' x 4' (growing area) raised beds on the narrow, east side of the property. This size or slightly longer beds are more easily accessed than a berry "patch" for berry picking and for cutting back canes. The raised beds allow for bringing in amended topsoil soil with compost and mulch.
 - [Fruit Trees](#) A deeper, wider, raised bed is shown on the west side of your home holding dwarf fruit trees (15 - 20' tall) around your bay window. This location provides full sun and the slope provides a unique opportunity as the raised has in the past and will prevent mowing a sloped turf area. This location will also allow for easy enjoyment of both the sight and the smell of fruit blossoms and fruit. That said, fruit trees are not native to our region so they require a decent amount of care. There are Apple varieties that can grow well here and Keene residents also grow Peach, Plum and Pear trees knowing that they may be damaged by deep freeze, winter temperatures. All of the fruit trees can do well with regular watering, rich soil and careful spraying for damaging pests. Neem Oil is an organic method for controlling many problems.
- b. **Turf** - Traditional bluegrass turf is very difficult to maintain in your yard area's type of soil without substantial inputs of organic material, regular watering and, in many cases, repeated and regular chemical fertilization. Many people here make due with a basically green mix of plants, some of which is grass that mows to look like a lawn. I am not the person to advise you on grass. I look to remove it whenever possible due to the intensive energy and often toxic resources it requires. I placate my own daughter with a patch of grass which benefits from annual Clover seeding every spring to provide more green vegetation and also fix nitrogen, as Clover is a legume, improving the soil over time. Alternatives to mix into existing, closely cut turf:
- [Micro Clover](#): Early reviews of the new [micro clovers](#) are coming in well also. [Micro clover](#) has a finer texture than traditional clover and looks a bit more lawn-like. I would recommend paying extra for the 'coated' version as this is an inoculant to assist in establishment.
 - Moss Phlox: An alternative for sunny areas where your children rarely play (potentially out front) can be seen in the Woodland Cemetery along Beaver and North Lincoln Streets. These also thin soil areas have terrific examples of a naturalized "lawn" composed of [Creeping or Moss Phlox](#), *Phlox stolonifera* (which blooms in spring).
 - [Creeping Thyme](#): Another option is Creeping Thyme, *Thymus serpyllum*. These plants can be planted either as mail-order deed-plugs (<https://www.northcreeknurseries.com/Landscape-Plugs>) or by seed in a

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wet spring if you are feeling very patient to wait several years. Thyme, as you might know, is fragrant when crushed. Of the two plants, [Thyme can tolerate more foot traffic](#). Regardless, the progression of coverage will take several seasons. As can be observed in the cemetery right now, these blooming ground covers are a valuable and important source of nectar and nutrients for our area's pollinators. Moss Phlox blooms in the spring. Thyme blooms mid-July to August. These pollinators would also pollinate the vegetables and fruits you would like to grow and harvest in your yard.

A consideration for any of these options, however, is the case where you find or know that your children have allergic reactions to bee stings.

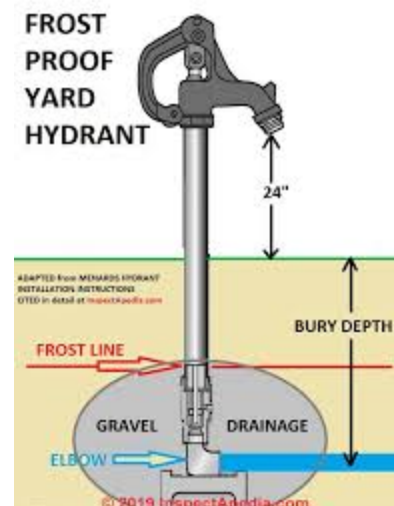
- c. **Shrubs & Flowering Perennials** - All of the shrubs and perennials within this landscape plan are tolerant of sharp drainage after an establishment period where their roots are well developed. They will, however, benefit from an annual, 1" layer of compost topped with a 2" layer of shredded bark mulch in an area that extends to the outer limits of their branches. This material can be formed into a shallow dish but the mulch must not be piled against the base of the plants or shrub bark. The compost will feed the plants nutrients not available in the sandy soil and the shredded bark mulch will conserve moisture for longer periods of time for the plant roots after a rain event. This layer will also make time spent weeding much more productive by allowing the weed roots to be removed more easily.
- d. **Ecological Garden Management & Maintenance** - I have evaluated four and included two aspects into your landscape plan that we did not discuss.
 - Chickens While we did not discuss chickens, they certainly could be incorporated into this design in the location of the new shed/greenhouse we did discuss. They are certainly not care-free but would be a terrific source of eggs, a great way to involve your children in the growing of your food and they would be a key component of complete nutrient cycling which creates terrific compost that would lead to even more nutritious fruits and vegetables throughout your site.
 - Rain Barrel: There are many people who harvest their rainwater for use in their gardens through direct capture from downspouts off of gutters. This is predominantly motivated by a low-lying condition where the cost of gutters is offset by the reduction in water/basement damage from rain events. For your home, there are no gutters currently in place and you

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are not in a low-lying circumstance so I have not looked at optimal rain barrel locations.

- Compost Bins: I have however, shown an optimal location for a series of three, 3' x3' compost bins. They are in a location that is immediately adjacent to the raised garden beds, out of the way of winter snow piling off of the expanded driveway, within direct exposure/sunlight and a good distance away from your deck & other gathering areas. There are three to optimize the ability to mix and mature batches with the greatest of ease. There are many materials that these can be constructed from. I'm sure you might have ideas! IF not we could explore options and potentially make them a bit more attractive than normal if necessary and helpful but coordinating their construction materials with the pavers and raised bed materials. In the interim, Keene is fortunate to have a residential compost service called Elm City Compost. For a nominal fee, they will collect your food waste weekly. More information on this can be found at <https://www.elmcitycompost.com/>

- Additional Water Spigot: While it may seem like a luxury, given the increasing frequency and lengths of our region's droughts, I have shown an additional water spigot which would be a much appreciated, immediately available source at the corner of the carport/patio area. This would prevent the long, cumbersome and constantly kinking hoses that would have to be run from the west side of the house out to the area of the garden raised beds. A simple layout of drip irrigation from one ½ of a "Y" attachment could be run off of such a spigot to more easily and consistently water the raised beds shown.



This could actually happen for all of the raised beds depending on your preference and available time. A plumber could explain the options of running a new line from the house meter. In Keene you can request a separate "yard/landscape" water service line that costs a reduced rate because the water used does not need to be purified through the sewer/ water treatment system.

2. Landscape Materials

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- a. Paving Choices - It is very likely that your main path of travel will be between the garage and carport area to the back deck of your home. As such, I have shown a paved path connection from the greenhouse/shed and the top of the carport at the garage door up the slope to the back deck you described. The initial pad on the east side of the carport pad/garage door could be expanded to hold a table with an umbrella. It could also expand to include a fire pit allowing for an outside seating area. The two most common and cost effective material choices in our area for such paving are bituminous asphalt and concrete. However, many poured concrete pavers are now much more reasonable than in past decades. [Key Landscape](#) is a local contractor who has paved his own property with one of these materials at 70 S.Lincoln Ave., just a few blocks away. Steve and his son Zac own the company and have a bevy of local work examples of paving jobs that are long lasting, look terrific and are easy to maintain. The catalog of materials they offers can be viewed at: [Techo-bloc](#). I would suggest that their "[rustic - traditional](#)" line could be an appropriate match for the age of your home.
- b. Raised Bed Material Choices - While untreated wood is the least expensive, it will need to be replaced in 3-5 years. Food grown in beds enclosed by treated timbers can be contaminated with the preservative chemicals. The Techo-bloc products have consistent materials that can complement their paving material offerings. Once again, their "[rustic - traditional](#)" line could be an appropriate match for the age of your home. Several other material choices for the variety of raised beds can be viewed in town at a local business called "Ground Up" south on Rt. 12. Allan Block products can also be found further south down Rt.12 https://www.allanblock.com/Dealers/Locations/Arthur_Whitcomb_-_N_Swanzey.aspx. If your budget allows, choosing a stone or poured concrete material that can be used for all of your raised beds throughout the site would create a cohesive and visually pleasing aesthetic effect.

PLANT PALETTE

As mentioned earlier, the site's recommended landscape plants have been chosen for the site's sandy soil and its associated sharp drainage as well as its proximity to Roxbury Street which means exposure to aerosolized winter salt spray. Discussed below are aspects of the proposed, primary 'structural' plants by location.

Full Sun Locations:

[Clematis vine](#) at the Front Arbor - Clematis is a flowering vine that needs shade at its roots, full sun everywhere else and climbs any vertical element with blooms galore. Three varieties that

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do well in our region/climate and that are fragrant are: 'Constance' (fuchsia), 'Bluebird' (lavender blue), 'Jacqueline du Pre' (pink-mauve), 'Pamela Jackman' (deep blue-purple). These are "Group 1" varieties, suited to your exposed location:

"Group 1 provides a good selection of clematis suited to temperatures down to Zone 3. A subdivision known as the Atragene group features small-flowered, early blooming varieties that are extremely hardy, undemanding, and among the easiest to grow. As an added bonus, you don't have to prune them, which makes for light cleanup at the end of winter!...Many develop handsome, swirling seed heads in shades of blond and silver that add cheerful, late season interest."

[Beautybush](#) - "An old-fashion back of the border shrub. Beauty bush lives up to its name in spring when it is covered with pink, bell-shaped flowers. Arching stems and dark green foliage turns a yellow-green in fall. During the rest of the season it offers little in the way of ornamental appeal." We have it planted at the end of the driveway for privacy and a spectacular, cheery, spring bloom.



[Nannyberry Viburnum](#), *Viburnum lentago* - This video link covers the identification, harvest, and preparation of nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*), a native fruit that ripens in the fall.



[New Jersey Tea, Ceoanthus americanus](#) - "is a small densely branched shrub anchored by a sturdy taproot. Leaves are oblong with an attractive rough surface and a border of tiny teeth. Summer flower panicles are borne on terminal growth. The attractive flowers are white and composed of many tiny fragrant florets."

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[Weigela](#) - “This old-fashioned beauty blooms profusely in spring and sporadically through the summer. Care of Weigela is low maintenance. A tough and hardy shrub, Weigela care involves planting the growing weigela in the right area and watering it in. This may lead you to wonder where to plant Weigela.” It is available in several bloom colors.



Shade/Part-Shade Location:

[Witchhazel ‘Arnold’s Promise’](#) - Is planted at the outside corner of the back deck to provide seasonal interest and fragrance without bother. This “is a large deciduous shrub with sweetly fragrant, bright yellow flowers in late winter to early spring. ... Clustered along the leafless branches, the flowers unfurl their spidery petals on mild days.”

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I hope that this Landscape Master plan allows you to envision a spatial arrangement for the various aspects you desired and explained at our first meeting. In particular:

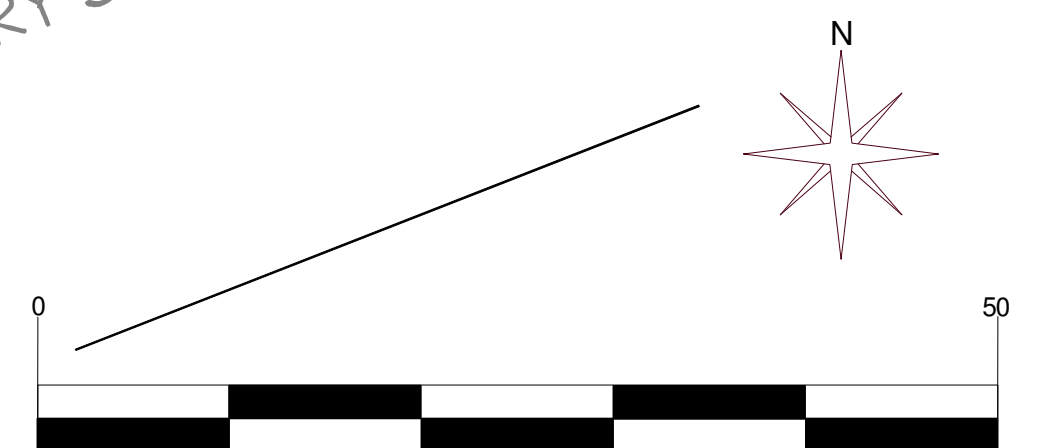
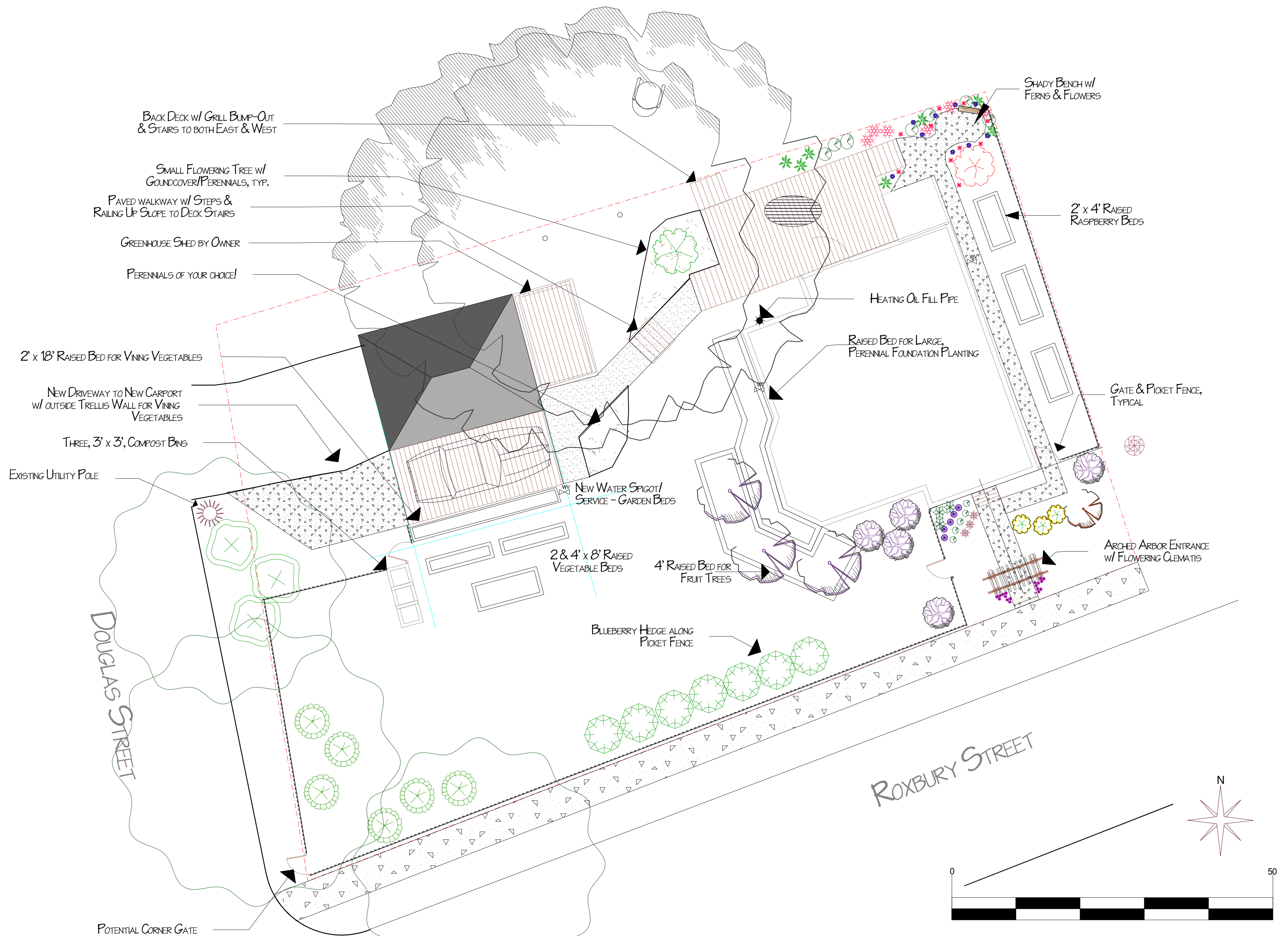
- I have endeavored to specify locations that address the various associated related issues such as a fence that encloses the entire yard for less doggie and child escapes :-).
- I have also endeavored to address the front entrance in a more formal manner.
- Perennial plant groupings are minimized to reduce the time needed to weed and water.
- Plants have been chosen for the generally very dry conditions.
- Food growing areas are in raised beds to allow for appropriate soil to be brought in for positive results and good yields.
- Per our initial discussion, I have not gone into greater detail to show the exact extent of planting beds. I have also not created illustrated elevations. This allows me to bill you simply the remaining \$250 of the \$500 maximum we agreed upon in addition to the initial \$60 consult.

Thank you for this opportunity to create a family landscape plan that will not only enhance the aesthetics of your new home but also enhance the ecological diversity and functioning of our area's various ecosystems. Healthy Home Habitats' purpose is to inspire creative choices at home for abundant gardens, greater energy efficiency, more plant diversity, increased health and the collective healing of our planet.

I'm excited that with this design, you'll be able to grow healthy food and fruit for your family in a way that maximizes the effort you spend. I'll look forward to speaking with you again whenever you come up for air!

Sincerely,
Michele Chalice

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Revision #:
 Date: 7/27/2020

Scale:
 1" = 10'

Landscape Plan:
 Brock - Lawlor Residence

Landscape Design by: Michele Chalice
 Healthy Home Habitats

LEGEND

	COMMON NAME	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	HEIGHT	WIDTH
FLOWER, FERN					
	FERN, OSTRICH	7	MATTEUCCIA STRUTHIOPTERI	36" (90 CM)	18"
FLOWER, PERENNIAL					
	BLEEDING HEART, FRINGED	6	DICENTRA EXIMIA	18" (45 CM)	18" (46 CM)
	BUTTERFLY WEED	5	ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA	36" (90 CM)	2'
	CANDYTUFT, EVERGREEN	3	IBERIS SEMPERVIRENS	12" (30 CM)	1' (30 CM)
	CONEFLOWER, PURPLE	5	ECHINACEA PURPUREA	36" (90 CM)	3'
	HELIOPSIS 'LORAINÉ SUNSHINE'	3	HELIOPSIS 'LORAINÉ SUNSHINE'	36" (90 CM)	2' (60 CM)
	HOSTA 'SAGAE'	5		24" (60 CM)	15"
	INDIGO, FALSE	3	BAPTISIA 'SOLAR FLARE' PRAIRIEBLUES	48" (1.2 M)	3' (90 CM)
	LUNGWORT, BETHLEHEM SAGE	7	PULMONARIA	12" (30 CM)	1'
	PURPLE CONEFLOWER	6	ECHINACEA PURPUREA 'MAGNUS'	48" (1.2 M)	1' (30 CM)
SHRUB, DECIDUOUS					
	BEAUTYBUSH	3	KOLKWITZIA AMABILIS	8' (2.5 M)	8' (2.5 M)
	BLUEBERRY	7	VACCINIUM CORYMBOSUM SPP.	5' (1.5 M)	3
	NANNYBERRY VIBURNUM	6	VIBURNUM LENTAGO	15' (4.5 M)	6-12 SUCKERS
	NEW JERSEY TEA	3	CEOANTHUS AMERICANUS	48" (1.2 M)	3-5
	ROSE WEIGELA	1	CAPRIFOLIACEAE	36" (90 CM)	3' (90 CM)
	WEIGELA, SONIC BLOOM PINK	5	WEIGELA FLORIDA 'BOKRASOPIN'	8' (2.5 M)	12' (3.7 M)
	WITCHHAZEL, ARNOLD'S PROMISE	1		15' (4.5 M)	12
TREE, DECIDUOUS					
	APPLE TREE	3	MALUS DOMESTICA	20' (6 M)	10' (3 M)
	CHERRY, WEeping FUJI	1	PRUNUS INCISA 'PENDULA'	15' (4.5 M)	12' (3.7 M)

Revision #:

Scale:

Landscape Plan:

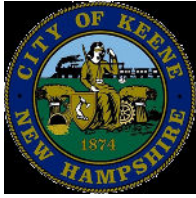
Landscape Design by: Michele Chalice

Date: 7/27/2020

1" = 5'

Brock - Lawlor Residence

Healthy Home Habitats



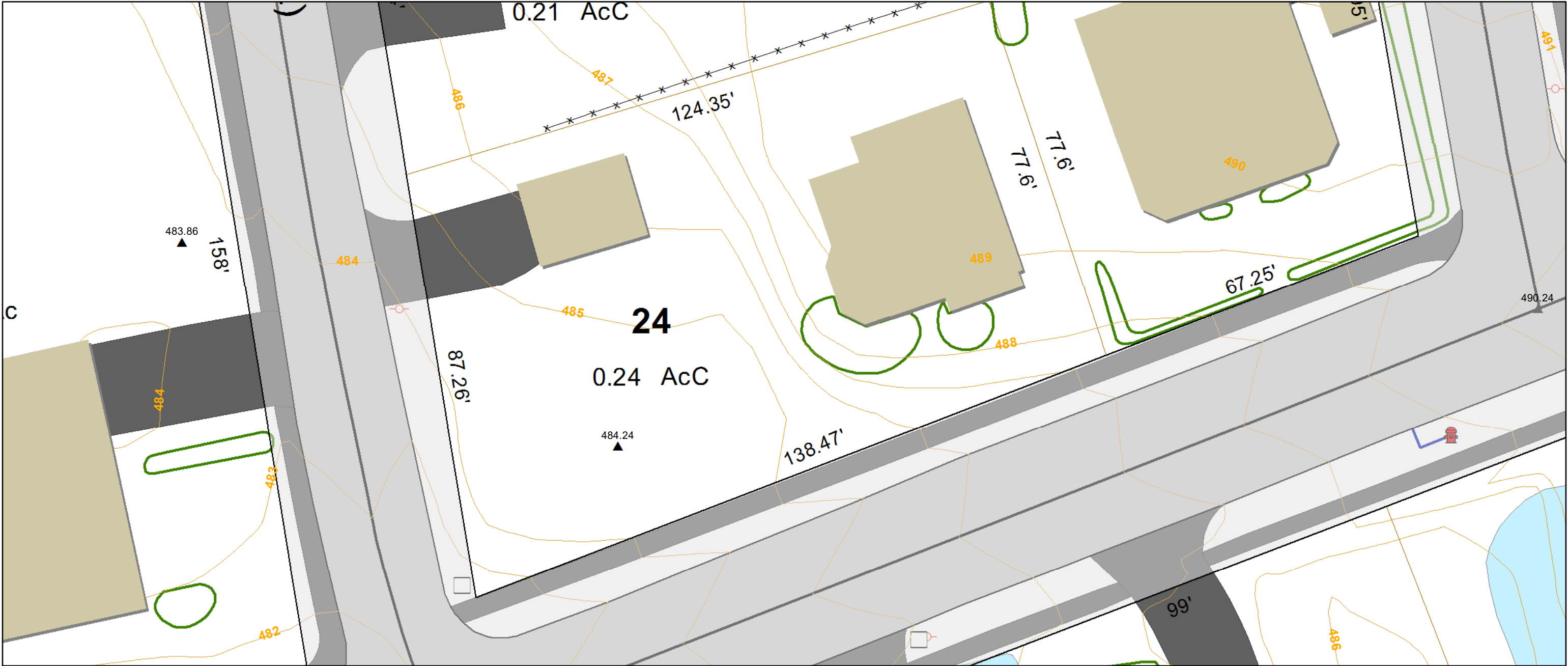
Brock Residence Master Plan

260 Roxbury, Keene, NH

1 inch = 20 Feet

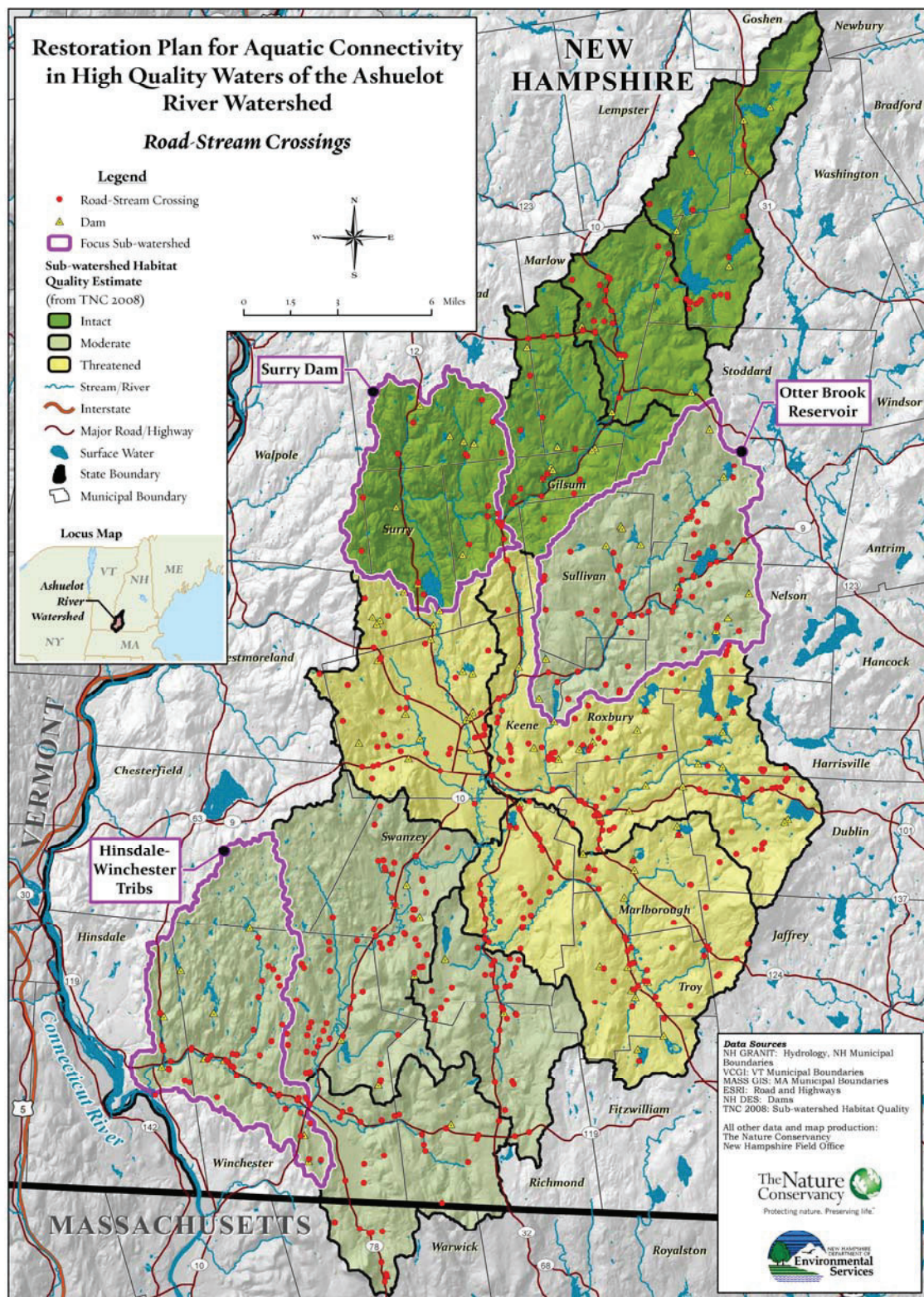


June 4, 2020



Property Line	Spot Elevation	Street Centerline	Hydrant
Public Road	Street Sign	Deck_Patio	Water Main
Buildings	Utility Pole	Driveway	Sewer Main
Shadow	Edge Of Street	Mixed	
Right of Ways	Fence Wall	Roadway	
Contour	Hedge	Sidewalk	

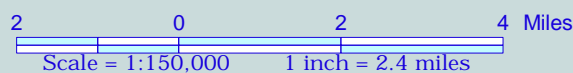
Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.



Map 1. Ashuelot River Basin with Sub-watersheds highlighted.

Atlas of the Ashuelot River and the Ashuelot River Watershed

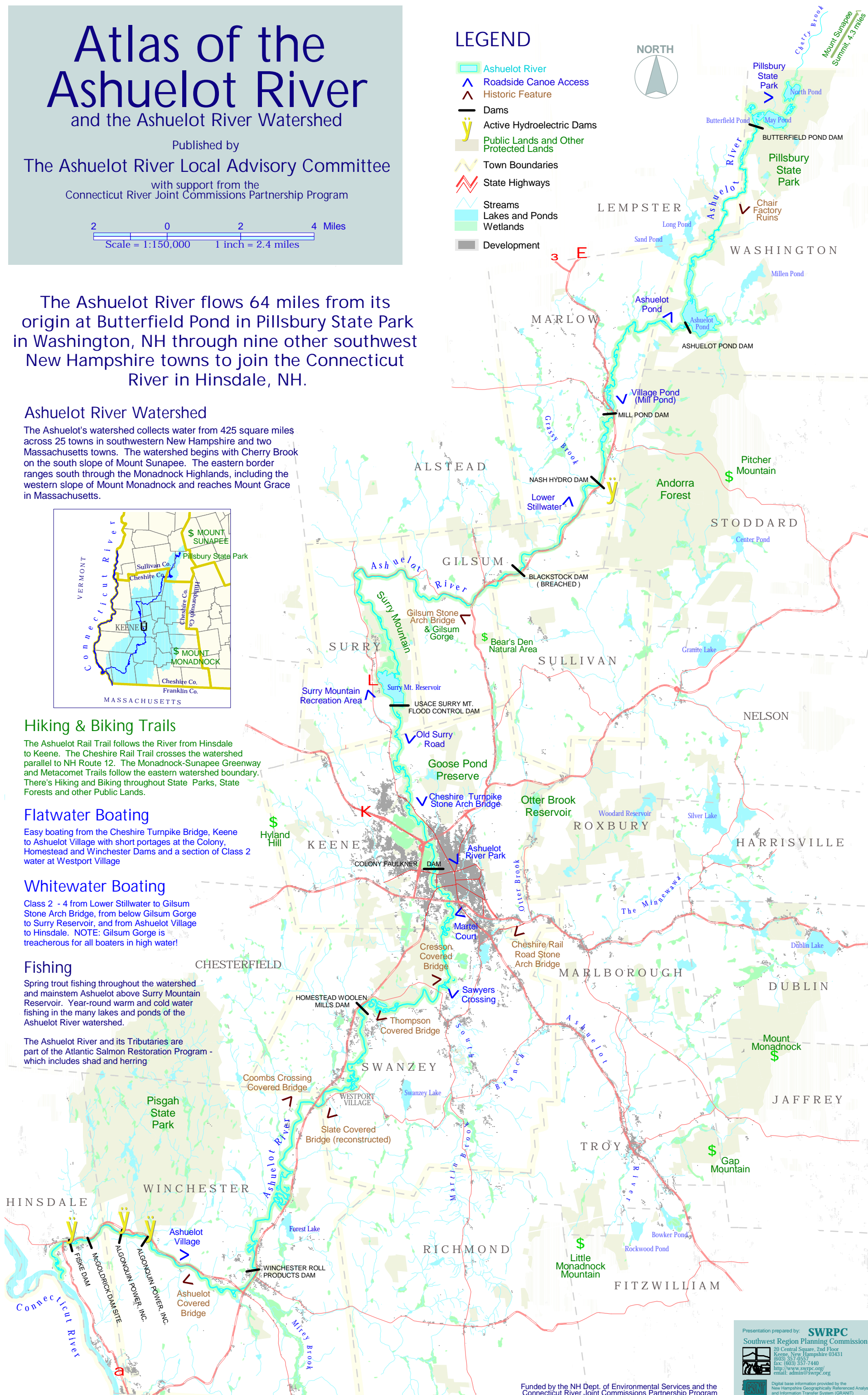
Published by
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LEGEND

- Ashuelot River
- Roadside Canoe Access
- Historic Feature
- Dams
- Active Hydroelectric Dams
- Public Lands and Other Protected Lands
- Town Boundaries
- State Highways
- Streams
- Lakes and Ponds
- Wetlands
- Development

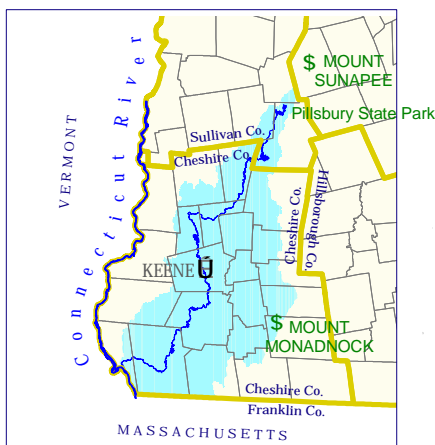
NORTH



The Ashuelot River flows 64 miles from its origin at Butterfield Pond in Pillsbury State Park in Washington, NH through nine other southwest New Hampshire towns to join the Connecticut River in Hinsdale, NH.

Ashuelot River Watershed

The Ashuelot's watershed collects water from 425 square miles across 25 towns in southwestern New Hampshire and two Massachusetts towns. The watershed begins with Cherry Brook on the south slope of Mount Sunapee. The eastern border ranges south through the Monadnock Highlands, including the western slope of Mount Monadnock and reaches Mount Grace in Massachusetts.



Hiking & Biking Trails

The Ashuelot Rail Trail follows the River from Hinsdale to Keene. The Cheshire Rail Trail crosses the watershed parallel to NH Route 12. The Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway and Metacomet Trails follow the eastern watershed boundary. There's Hiking and Biking throughout State Parks, State Forests and other Public Lands.

Flatwater Boating

Easy boating from the Cheshire Turnpike Bridge, Keene to Ashuelot Village with short portages at the Colony, Homestead and Winchester Dams and a section of Class 2 water at Westport Village

Whitewater Boating

Class 2 - 4 from Lower Stillwater to Gilsun Stone Arch Bridge, from below Gilsun Gorge to Surry Reservoir, and from Ashuelot Village to Hinsdale. NOTE: Gilsun Gorge is treacherous for all boaters in high water!

Fishing

Spring trout fishing throughout the watershed and mainstem Ashuelot above Surry Mountain Reservoir. Year-round warm and cold water fishing in the many lakes and ponds of the Ashuelot River watershed.

The Ashuelot River and its Tributaries are part of the Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program - which includes shad and herring

Presentation prepared by: **SWRPC**
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Digital base information provided by the
New Hampshire Geographically Referenced Analysis
and Information Transfer System (GRANT)

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Summer 2001

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ATLAS OF THE ASHUELOT RIVER

WITH FUNDING FROM THE CONNECTICUT RIVER JOINT COMMISSIONS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM
AND THE SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

THERE IS ONLY ONE ASHUELOT RIVER. Ten towns in southwestern New Hampshire share it. The power of the Ashuelot’s moving water is the reason five town centers are where they are. It provided shad and salmon to hunter-gatherer societies prior to European colonization; offers nationally renowned white water boating; supports essential waste water treatment; it is a 64-mile ribbon of water flowing downhill through boulders and swamps, between fern-covered banks, under hemlock thickets, and through pastures and backyards like countless other rivers around the world - but like no other river in the world.

HISTORY

To travel the River is to travel through time. The Ashuelot River provided power for wood and textile manufacturing for 200 years. Before that the River corridor was home to Native Americans for millennia. Villages, factories, farmsteads, dams, stone walls, bridges, and archeological sites (dating back 9,000 years) are each a link in the Ashuelot Corridor’s long history with people: Native American, European, and modern American. The natural forces of geology and ecology are little changed, but, the qualities of the landscape are irrevocably shaped by human activity, and in such lays before us a living story. Settlers colonized rounded hilltops in 18th-Century farm communities. Those farm centers stopped growing, or were abandoned, and new villages sprung up on rivers and brooks where homes and businesses co-located with new hydro-powered industry. Clearing forests for timber and agriculture, damming the flowing River for power, and industrial-era pollution profoundly affected the River. Local libraries house “town histories” for most southwestern New Hampshire towns – fascinating chronicles of the comings-and-goings of the individuals, families, and communities that continue today.



PLANT & ANIMAL HABITAT

The Ashuelot River and its riparian land are very special habitats. One of the high values of any river corridor is the unique community of plants and animals that thrives there. Several major habitat types are easily recognized by the casual passer-by: **the Stream Channel itself, River Bank, Floodplain Forest, Wetlands, Upland Forest, and Farmland.** The stream hosts several habitat types as well: steep rocky channels, wide flat gravel-bottomed reaches, and deep slow moving “flat water” areas. These habitat types combine in a seamless mosaic that supports an essential diversity of plants and animals from moose to hummingbirds to trout to lady slippers. Some plants and animals live only in the stream or on its banks. Many others rely on the stream and its banks as part of a larger habitat – in some cases using the river for part of their life cycle, or as one more place to find food or shelter.

Warning! Invasive plant and animal species, species not native to our area, pose a serious threat to the River’s ecology. Purple Loosestrife is the most conspicuous invasive plant, and there are many others.

WATER RESOURCES

The Ashuelot River is the central feature of a watershed that covers more than 425 square miles in southwestern New Hampshire. Water moves endlessly through the air we breathe, over the land we live on and through the rock and soil beneath us. The natural environment of which each person, home and business is part, depends on clean water. Growing demand for clean water by the very development that disrupts the natural movement of water raises concerns about ensuring enough clean water for all uses.



Photo courtesy of US Army Corps of Engineers

Ground Water: Stratified drift aquifers (sand and gravel buried by glaciers) are filled with water. This is a particularly rich resource in the towns of Keene, Swanzey, and Winchester. Almost ALL watershed residents rely on groundwater – it doesn’t come from somewhere else – it’s the same water that falls on our forests, roads and lawns. **Surface Water:** About 160 billion gallons of water drain from the watershed each year by way of the Ashuelot to ultimately join the Connecticut River in Hinsdale.

WARNING ! NON-POINT SOURCE (NPS) POLLUTION - SOIL EROSION, RUN-OFF FROM PAVEMENT, FERTILIZER, GASOLINE & OIL, HEAVY METALS, PESTICIDES , SEWAGE - is a serious threat in the Ashuelot River watershed and may also be one of the most preventable threats to the Ashuelot River. Modest changes in our daily routines at home and work can prevent most NPS pollution.

RECREATION

Residents and visitors alike treasure the Ashuelot River and forested riverbanks for year-round outdoor recreation. Every popular outdoor sport has a place in the Corridor: hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, snow-mobiling, canoeing and kayaking, or just sight-seeing from the car. There are opportunities for all challenge levels from a family roadside picnic to all-day mountain biking or world class white-water boating.

Remember: Most public access to the River enjoyed today is allowed by the graciousness of private land owners. Continued access depends on responsible and respectful behavior by those playing in and around the River – it’s as easy as **Carry In / Carry Out.**

The Ashuelot LAC Invites You to be a Steward of the Ashuelot River.

AWARENESS APPRECIATION RESPONSIBILITY

ASHUELOT RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE C/O SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION □ 357-0557
NH DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES RIVERS COORDINATOR □ 271-3503
YOUR LOCAL CONSERVATION COMMISSION

WASHINGTON LEMPSTER MARLOW GILSUM SULLIVAN SURRY KEENE SWANZEY WINCHESTER HINSDALE