CHECKLIST #9 – MASTER PLAN
LAND DEVELOPMENTS AND SUBDIVISIONS
CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENTS ONLY

Note: This Checklist is to be used only for Conservation Developments consisting of 6 lots / units or more.

The applicant shall submit to the Administrative Officer at least five (5) blue line or photocopies of all master plan maps and information required below. The scale of all plans shall be sufficient to clearly show all of the information required and shall be subject to the approval of the Administrative Officer. Plans shall include a certification that all plans and improvements conform to a minimum Class IV standard of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Board of Registration of Land Surveyors.

Narrative Report - The following information shall be presented in the form of a written narrative report, supplemented as necessary with drawings, sketches or plans to convey intent. The narrative report shall include reduced sets of all drawings and plans required below on sheets no larger than 11" x 17". Initially, the applicant shall submit to the Administrative Officer at least five (5) plans of master plan maps required below. The number of reduced copies of the plans and narrative report shall be determined by the Administrative Officer, based upon the required distribution to the TRC and Planning Commission, and other officials and agencies listed in Supporting Materials, below.

At a minimum, required information includes the following:

1. Site Base Map (see below)
2. Existing Resources and Site Analysis Map. See § IV.A.14
3. Site Context Map. See § IV.A.9
4. Sketch Plan Overlay Sheet. See § IV.A.8
5. Conventional Yield Plan. See § IV.A.10
6. Filing Fee: $300 + $50 per acre

A. BASE MAP

All Master Plan Drawing(s) required by this Checklist shall show the following information (if applicable):

1. _____ Title of subdivision.
2. _____ Name and address of property owner and applicant.
3. _____ Name, address and telephone number of engineer or land surveyor, or other preparer of plan(s).
4. _____ Date of plan preparation, with revision date(s) (if any).
5. _____ Graphic scale and true north arrow.
6. _____ Inset locus map at 1" = 2000'
7. _____ Names of abutting property owners and property owners immediately across any adjacent streets
8. _____ Plat and lot number(s) of the land being subdivided, abutting properties and properties immediately across any adjacent street.
9. _____ Zoning district(s) of the land being subdivided. (If more than one district, zoning boundary lines must be shown.)
10. _____ Perimeter boundary lines of the subdivision, drawn so as to distinguish them from other property lines.
11. _____ Area of the subdivision parcel(s) and proposed number of buildable lots.
12. _____ Location and dimensions of existing property lines within or forming the perimeter of the subdivision parcel(s).
13. _____ Easements and rights-of-way within or adjacent to the subdivision parcel(s).
14. _____ Location, width and names of existing roads within and immediately adjacent to the subdivision parcel.
15. _____ Names of abutting property owners and property owners immediately across any adjacent streets
16. _____ Sheet size 18" x 24"

B. THE 10-STEP DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS - Refer to § IV.A.7

Step 1: Analyze the Site

The information required in § IV.A.14 shall be shown on the Existing Resources and Site Analysis Map(s), and shall be subject to the approval of the Administrative Officer. This information may be based on the information provided at the pre-application stage of review (Checklist #8), with updates as required.

a. Topography and Slopes

After the pre-application meeting and concept review, the Planning Commission and the applicant should agree on the necessary accuracy and detail of topographic data for the Master Plan submission. 10' contours (elevation lines) based on USGS surveys can be traced manually or digitized for use as an overlay, and may be sufficient if proposed development zones fall in areas of moderate slopes. For planning roads and building sites within areas over 8% grade, or to discern gently-sloping areas near wetlands, vernal pools or intermittent streams, a field survey of topography to map the 2' or 5' contour interval may be necessary to ensure a buildable Master Plan. This can be the basis for a more accurate slope map depicting a general assessment of development suitability, or potential hazards, based on slope or hydrologic conditions.

1.____ Existing topography with minimum 10' contour lines or more detailed, if necessary.

2.____ Slope map, with slopes grouped according to three categories based on development suitability: <15%, 15-25%, and over 25%. Steeper slopes should be shown in progressively darker colors or shades of gray.

b. Natural Resource Inventory

Based on the preliminary designation of development zones, further site investigation and surveys may be necessary to establish the limits of natural resource areas such as wetlands, streams, vernal pools, and noteworthy vegetation. These overlays can be updated with the more accurate information, using the same graphic schemes as the Pre-Application submission. Subsurface aquifers and surface water supplies should be indicated in a gradation of colors, tone or hatching where the reservoir or aquifer is darkest and its watershed or recharge areas are progressively lighter. Farmland and forested land should be shown, with an indication of underlying soil types with hatching and/or labels. Natural Heritage areas can be shown with an outline around the designated area.

3.____ Location of land unsuitable for development as defined in the Zoning Ordinance, including wetlands, ponds, streams, ditches, drains, special aquatic sites, vernal pools. All wetland locations shall be verified by RIDEM.

4.____ Vegetative cover on the property, indicating any unfragmented forest tracts.

5.____ Soils types, indicating any prime farmland soils, and any land in active agricultural use. See Supporting Materials, No. 4

6.____ Geologic formations

7.____ Ridge lines of existing hills

8.____ Wellhead protection areas for public or community drinking water wells

9.____ Flood hazard areas (Town)

10.____ State, regional, or community greenways and greenspace priorities.

11.____ State-designated Natural Heritage Sites (RIDEM)

c. Cultural Resource Inventory

Cultural features identified on the site, such as stone walls, agricultural elements, historic houses and outbuildings, and other landscape features may need to be more carefully surveyed in the field, along with other special features, views, etc. identified during the site visit and pre-application review. This is especially important if these features fall within proposed development areas, and could be incorporated into the proposed development.

12.____ Approximate location of man-made features such as roads, structures, outbuildings, roads or trails, and other such features on the parcel.

13.____ Historically significant sites or structures

14.____ State or locally-designated historic sites, districts, cemeteries or landscapes.

15.____ Location of any stone walls within or forming the perimeter of the site

16.____ Archaeologically significant sites.

17.____ Scenic road corridors and state-designated scenic areas.

18.____ Viewshed analysis.

d. Recreational Resource Inventory
Trails identified in pre-application may need to be more carefully surveyed in the field, especially where they cross proposed development areas. Trails should be graphically separated into existing (solid line) and potential (dashed line), and colored differently for hiking, biking, boating, etc.

19.____Existing hiking, biking, and bridle trails within and adjacent to site.

20.____Boat launches, lake and stream access points, beaches and water trails.

21.____Existing playfields and playgrounds on or adjacent to the site.

e. Utilities and Infrastructure
Utilities should be shown to the level of detail necessary for planning the most efficient connections to the development, but need not be surveyed in the field. Documentation of capacities of various services should be provided, if applicable.

22.____Size and approximate location of water lines, if common wells are proposed.

23.____Electrical service.

24.____Telephone, cable, and other communication services.

25.____Width and surfacing material of existing road(s) at access points.

26.____Existing drainage and drainage structures, such as ditches, culverts and pipes, etc.

Step 2: Site Context Map

The Contextual Analysis process is described in detail in §IV.A.5 and in the design process §IV.A.7, Step 2 of these Regulations. This information may be based on the information provided at the Pre-application stage of review (Checklist #8), with updates as required.

Using 1997 RIGIS orthophotos, or more recent aerial photography if available, show the area within one-half mile of the development parcel at a scale of l"=400' or as necessary. Outline the parcel boundary. Surrounding parcels, 10' contours, surface waters and wetlands from RIGIS may be overlaid with the photograph if available. After Pre-Application Review, the Planning Commission may request that other resources be overlaid with the context map in order to better understand how the development will affect its surroundings. This may be particularly important in showing how the site fits

into surrounding ecological or cultural systems. These may include regionally-important surface or subsurface water supplies, large stream/wetland systems, continuous blocks of forested land, or extended areas in agricultural use.

1.____ Site Context Map

2.____ Soils Map of surrounding area. See Supporting Materials, No. 4.

Step 3: Potential Conservation Areas

The pre-application review, especially Step 3, initiated the designation of potential conservation areas. The Master Plan review will serve to focus on the more detailed mapping of potential conservation areas. More detailed assessment of soils and slope constraints should be based on the specific character of the site and the type of development proposed. Conclusions about "non-buildable" and "partially-constrained" areas of the site will thus be calibrated to fit the specific situation. At the same time, the Planning Commission can identify locations where field testing of soils and water table will be necessary, and the extent of such investigation required for the Master Plan submission.

Non-Buildable Areas

1.____Wetlands and surface waters including local and state regulated setbacks.

2.____Surface waters

3.____Hydric soils

4.____Ledge/outcrops

5.____Slopes greater than 25%

6.____Existing land restrictions such as utility easements, power line right-of-ways, etc.

7.____Any other land unsuitable for development, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance

Partially Constrained Areas
(Physical Constraints to Development)

8.____ Slopes between 15-25%

9.____ 100-year flood plains

10.____Soils with seasonal high water table less than 3.5 feet or slowly-permeable "hardpan" soils

Important Natural, Cultural and Recreational Resource Areas

Identify the resources in each category which are the most important to protect; these can be indicated with transparent tones and/or written annotations on the map.

11.___ Natural resource areas. The natural, cultural, and recreational inventories from Step 1 should be used here, and supplemented as necessary with field surveys.

12.___ Cultural resource areas.

13.___ Recreational resource areas.

Summary Map

A Summary Map should be prepared, combining non-buildable, partially-constrained and important resource areas into a single overlay. The Summary Map represents a synthesis of the principal conclusions drawn from the previous maps. It therefore serves as a record of what the applicant and the Planning Commission agree are the areas which should be preserved as open space, and likewise clearly identifies the areas most suited for development. It also allows for an agreement on what areas of the site may need to be investigated in further detail, either to better locate the edges of a sensitive resource, or to perform a more detailed survey of features which might be incorporated in the proposed development.

The Summary Map simplifies the previous overlays into three colors:

14.___Non-Buildable Areas

15.___Partially-Constrained Areas

16.___Important Natural, Cultural and Recreational Resource Areas

Step 4: Determine Maximum Number of Units

The applicant and the Planning Commission shall agree on the Basic Maximum Number of Dwelling Units, if changed from the pre-application stage of review. Refer to the

discussion of Step 4 in §IV.A.7 and to §IV.A.10, entitled Basic Maximum Number of Dwelling Units.

1.___ Yield Plan drawing(s), with indication of number of units. : _____

Step 5: Locate Development Areas and Explore Conceptual Alternatives.

Based on the results of Steps 1-3, the applicant prepares a Sketch Plan Overlay Sheet to overlay the Existing Resources and Site Analysis Maps showing the potential development areas, and at least three conceptual alternatives, where applicable, for the general layout of the proposed development. Refer to Section IV.A.8 entitled Sketch Plan Overlay Sheet. The focus of this Sketch Plan is to demonstrate how the development areas will avoid or minimize impacts to the potential conservation areas as shown on the Summary Map in Step 3. The plan should also demonstrate how the proposals would fit into the context as described in Step 2. The Sketch Plan Overlay Sheet shall be prepared for review by the Planning Commission during the site visit.

1.___Potential development areas - show as a tone or boundary line.

2.___Conceptual alternatives - specify number and variables, if possible.

3.___Describe house types and/or architectural themes.

Step 6: Locate House Sites

Once a preferred concept is in place, attention turns to selecting house sites that provide high value to potential buyers, with opportunities for creative design, privacy, attractive views and yard space. Potential house sites are also evaluated for potential access, drainage, availability of utilities, and suitability for wells and septic systems. The process of locating house sites should be documented by describing the potential of proposed locations to avoid or minimize impacts to the resources identified in Steps 2 and 3, as well as the visual effect from within and outside the development, and livability for future residents.

A site visit is recommended at this point and prior to establishing final locations to verify that locations avoid or minimize impacts to the conservation areas identified in Steps 2 and 3.

1.___ Development Suitability - annotate plans to indicate site scale differences in microclimate (such as north-facing areas sheltered from the summer sun but affected by winter winds, or southern exposures good for solar heating), soils, hydrology, or special features affecting construction, such as unique trees or stone walls to be preserved.

2.___ For all proposed wells and OWTS, a general description of their location shall be provided. Location of water table test holes and soil percolation tests, with test hole data, if available.

3.___ Show initial locations for house sites, yards and access driveways

4.___ Indicate how the house sites will be connected to or benefit from the dedicated open space.

Step 7: Lay Out Roads, Trails and other Infrastructure

The layout of roads and trails is based on providing efficient access to the preferred house sites, organized by the overall design concept or theme. Several alternatives may need to be explored to find the best balance of community design with physical goals of minimizing pavement and limiting disturbance of the site.

1.___ Alternatives for location and alignment of proposed roads and pedestrian system.

2.___ Typical cross-section of proposed roads, including buildings, street trees, plantings, fences, curbs, sidewalks and trails, etc. on both sides of the road, along with the width of pavement and shoulders, if any.

3.___ Alternatives for stormwater treatment and management with an emphasis on maintaining the natural hydrology, and encouraging the infiltration of precipitation as close to the point of origin as possible. Refer to Step 7 in §IV.A.5, and to Article XIII, Section D for further information regarding stormwater treatment methods. The most recent edition of the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual should also be consulted. Use of Low Impact Development (LID) site planning and design strategies is encouraged.

4.___ Concept for placement of utilities including electrical, communications, etc.

Step 8: Design Open Space

Proposed uses and design guidelines for open space areas to be preserved by the project should be carefully planned to take advantage of existing natural, cultural and historical

features and the potential for active agriculture and forestry, and active or passive recreation. The design of open space should flow directly from its proposed use -- farming, stormwater management, habitat protection, recreation, etc. - and respond to the needs of the Town.

1.___Map the proposed open space and indicate the proposed uses and design criteria.

2.___Show proposed recreational trails and any potential links to other trails, natural features or amenities on the site or in the context area, and pedestrian connections to other neighborhoods, schools, etc.

3.___Plan for active agriculture, silviculture or forestry.

4.___Conceptual management criteria, including protection of the natural and cultural resources identified in Step 3.

Step 9: Draw in the Lot Lines

As one of the last steps in the design process, the location of lot lines should flow logically from the location of resources, proposed house sites, and existing features of the site. Lot lines should reflect logical boundary locations in the field, such as drainage patterns, stone walls, and tree lines. Easements for utilities and trails are also set down to preserve access to important corridors. If the best locations for lot lines are still unclear at the Master Plan stage, criteria or guidelines for their placement should be described.

Depending on the size of individual lots, building envelopes may be necessary to ensure that houses are built in the desired area of each lot. This can take the form of a "build-to line" showing where the front wall of each house should be placed, a "limit of disturbance line" showing the area that should not be altered, or a building envelope zone, within which the builder can vary the final location and orientation of the house and appurtenances.

1.___Alternatives for location of lot lines.

2.___Location of rights-of-way, utility or trail easements.

Step 10: Establish Ownership and Maintenance of Open Space

In the final step of the process, the applicant should suggest the alternatives for ownership and maintenance of designated open space areas. This may only be

conceptual during Master Plan stage, with the goal of revealing opportunities for ownership that may take advantage of unique site features, or which makes a particularly good fit with one of the design alternatives under consideration.

1.___Conceptual open space use and management plan. See IV.A.11 (1-2).

C. CONVENTIONAL YIELD PLAN

An updated Conventional Yield Plan, as discussed at the Pre-application stage of review shall be presented for further review by the Planning Commission, if required.

1.____ Conventional Yield Plan, if modified from Pre-application review

D. SUPPORTING MATERIALS

*The applicant shall submit to the Administrative Officer a **narrative report** providing a general description of the existing physical environment and existing use(s) of the property along with a general description of the uses and type of development proposed by the applicant. The narrative report shall include reduced copies of all plans required above plus items 3-6, below:*

1. _____ Application Form
2. _____ Administrative (Filing) Fee. See § XI.D
3. _____ An aerial photograph or a blue line copy of an existing aerial photograph of the proposed subdivision parcel and surrounding area.
4. _____ A copy of the soils map of the subdivision parcel and surrounding area, and general analysis of soil types and suitability for the development proposed. If any prime agricultural soils are within the subdivision parcel(s), the soils map shall be marked to show the location of said prime agricultural soils.
5. _____ A list of names and addresses of all property owners within 200 feet of the parcel perimeter
6. _____ Proposed phasing, if any.
7. _____ Initial written comments on the Master Plan from the following local agencies *(to be provided by the Administrative Officer):*

Local Agencies

A. _____Planning Department Date:_____

B. _____Town Administrator Date:_____

C. _____Public Works Date:_____

E. _____Building Official Date:_____

F. _____Solicitor Date:_____

G. _____Conservation Comm. Date:_____

H. _____Police Dept. Date:_____

I. _____Fire Dept. Date:_____

J. Other (specify)_____ Date:_____

_____

State agencies

A.____Environmental Management Date:_____

B.____Transportation Date:_____

C.____Coastal Resources Date:_____

D.____Other (specify)_____ Date:_____

_____

Federal agencies

A._____ U.S. Army Corps Engineers Date:_____

B._____ FEMA Date:_____

F. CONCLUSIONS/OUTCOMES FROM MASTER PLAN REVIEW

Following certification of a complete Master Plan submission, the town has 120 days to approve the Master Plan as submitted, deny the plan, or approve with conditions. As this formal approval proceeds, it is critical to the ongoing design process that the applicant and the town reach a clear and mutual understanding about the character of the site and the best way to develop it. Whether incorporated into the written approvals or not, these agreements record the conclusions of the Master Plan review and establish review criteria for the Preliminary Plan:

____ Agreement on areas for further investigation, soil tests, borings, necessary detail of field surveys, etc. to be done for the Preliminary Plan submission.

____ Agreement on location and function of natural, cultural and recreational resources.

____ Agreement on function and value of resource systems within the site's larger context.

____ Agreement on location of potential conservation and development areas.

____ Agreement on basic maximum number of units

____Agreement on design and uses of open space areas, trail connections, and other shared amenities.

____ Agreement on location and design of streets, home sites and other elements.

____ Agreement on criteria for establishing lot lines, pending further site surveys and analysis.

____ Agreement on ownership, maintenance and management responsibility of open space areas.

____ Agreement on relevant town goals for the area.