

HOPE DAVEY & ICE CENTER AREA PARKS STUDY

VISION FRAMEWORK - DECEMBER, 2022

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Hope Davey Park is a 28.7-acre parcel in Waterbury Center. An 8+/- acre area in the western portion includes ballfields, a playground, basketball court, small skatepark, horseshoe pits, and a picnic shelter. The easterly 20+/- acre area was developed with a nature trail in the late 1990's, and an 18 hole disc golf course in the early 2000's.
- The Ice Center Area is a 40-acre parcel, which includes the Ice Center of Washington West, parking and access to the Perry Hill mountain bike trails, a bike pump track, a full-size soccer field used by Capitol Soccer, a dog park, and a materials storage area for the Town.
- The Town of Waterbury has initiated this project, supported by the Recreation Committee.
- The Hope Davey and Ice Center Area Parks Master Planning process will consist of field work and discussions with stakeholder groups and the community to provide us with a strategic roadmap for future improvements to these parks.

Expanded Recreation Opportunities

Assessing the current and future activities and opportunities of Hope Davey Park and the Ice Center Area Park to further enliven and promote opportunities for active and passive recreation for all users.

Ecological + Cultural Resources

Ensuring that both new and existing park features and improvements are sensitive to the existing ecology and protected natural and cultural resources, while considering short and long term sustainability.

Connectivity + Access

Exploring internal site relationships as well as connectivity to the park, and its relationship to neighboring parcels, trails and destinations.

SITE ANALYSIS - HOPE DAVEY

Natural resources

- Riparian area for Thatcher Brook
- Class II wetland complex and associated 50' buffer
- Vernal pool near Thatcher Brook on private property south of public lands

Cultural Resources

- Given the level terrain overlooking streams and wetlands, as well as elevated knolls in the 20-acre portion, any plans for development in this part should be archaeologically evaluated.

Site constraints and considerations

- Long-narrow parcel
- Property across Thatcher Brook is not accessible (no stream crossing)
- Nearby trail systems but no formal easement to access from Hope Davey.
- Most of site fully used for active recreation

SITE ANALYSIS - ICE CENTER

Natural resources

- 100' Riverbank Setback (per Act 250): Allow to remain natural, paths perpendicular to river to access permitted
- 100 year Flood Zone/FEMA Floodway: No permanent structures (temporary structures, fencing allowed), balance cut and fill
- Floodway Fringe/100 year Floodplain: Balance cut and fill, limited development
- Primary Ag Soils: do not reduce the agricultural or forestry potential, as possible
- Wetlands (presumed Class III)
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species: Freshwater pearl mussel. Preservation of 100' Riverbank setback will protect species
- River Corridor

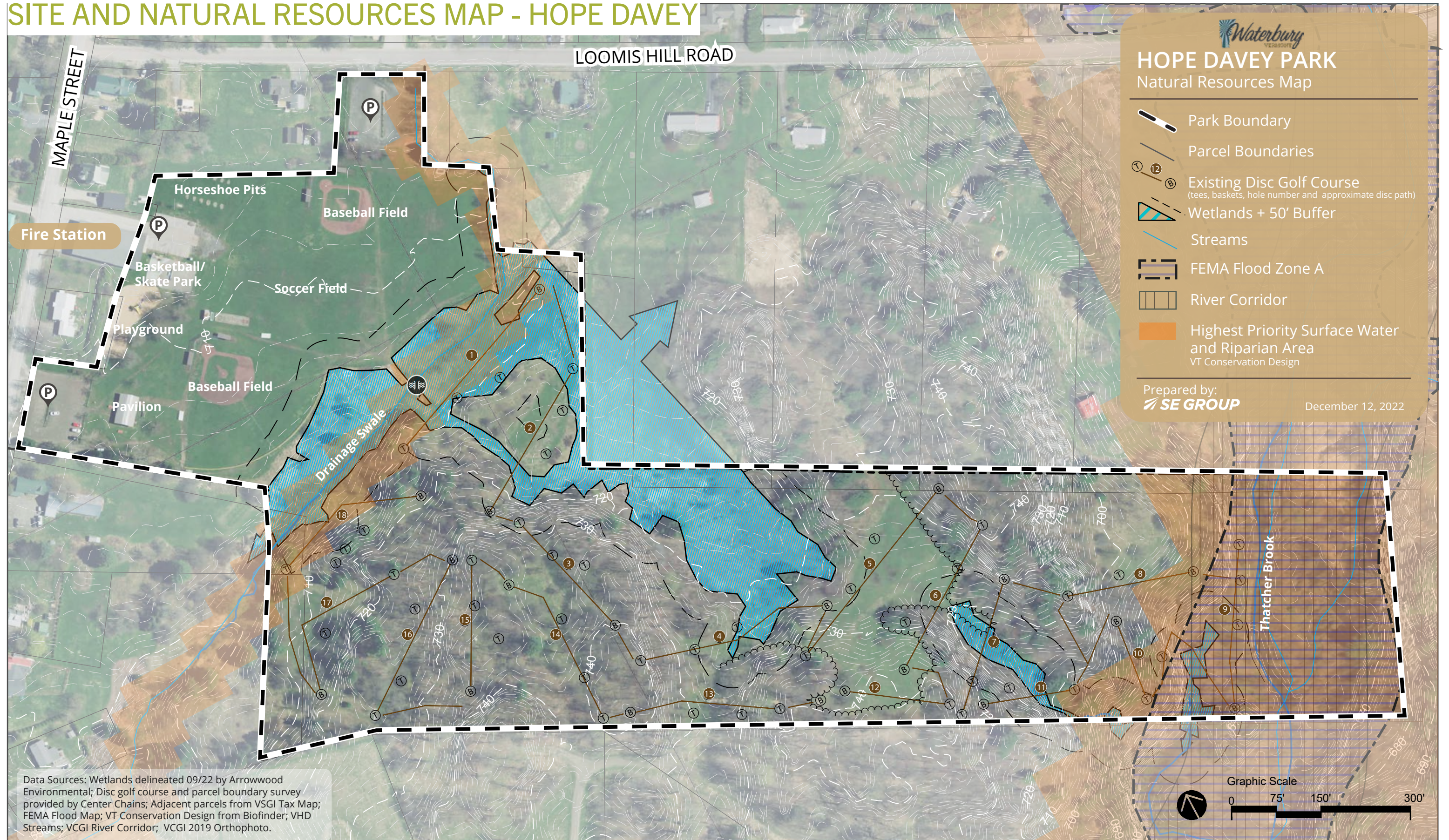
Cultural Resources

- Lamson-Bachelder Site - avoid disturbance if possible.
- Former Sargent House site - located at the northwestern corner - avoid disturbance if possible and consider plaque commemorating the family and the 1927 flood.

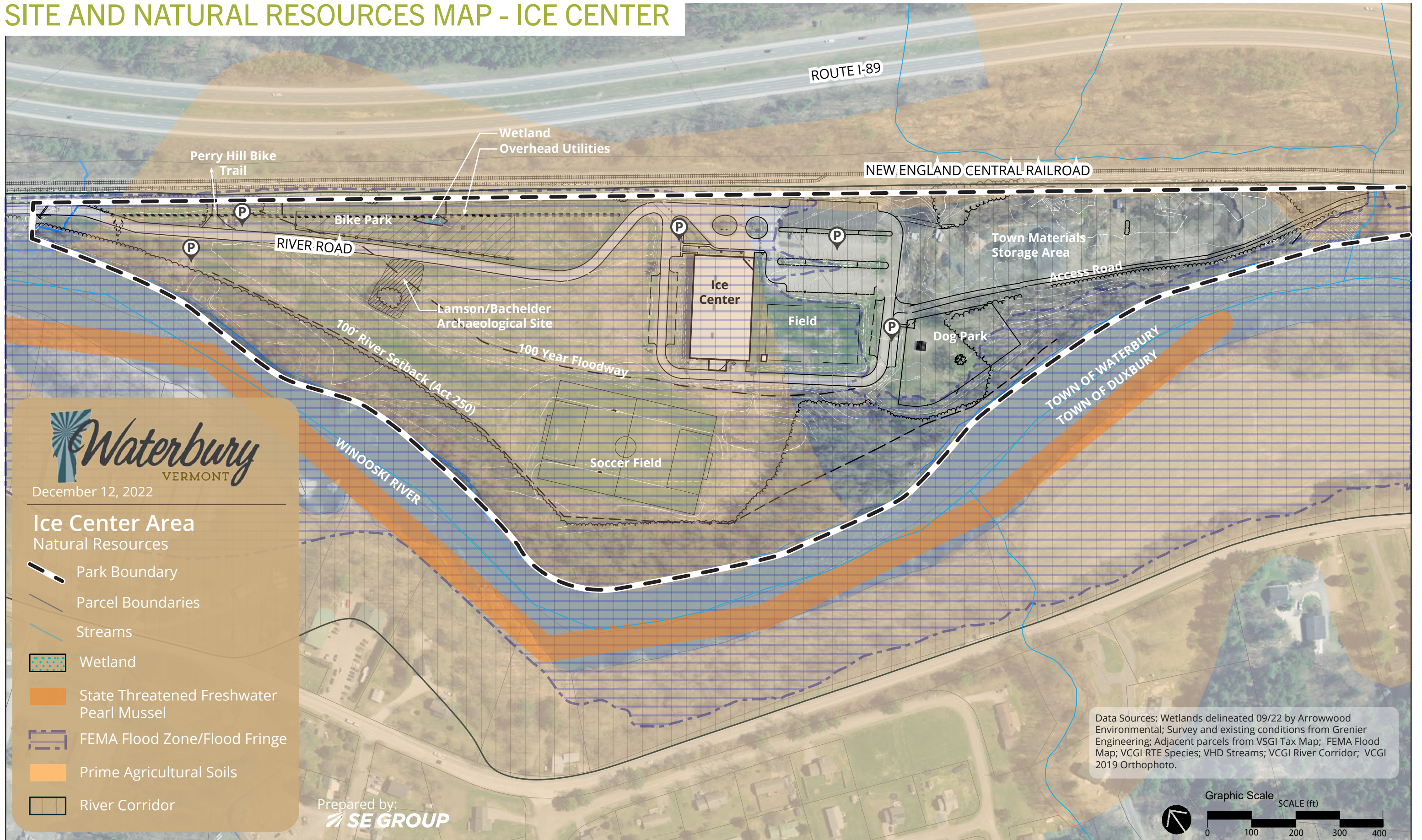
Site constraints and considerations

- Overhead utility corridor parallel to railroad
- Railroad right-of-way
- Town materials storage area - relocate truck access
- Existing Perry Hill trails parking in 100' buffer to the top of the riverbank - relocate outside of buffer

SITE AND NATURAL RESOURCES MAP - HOPE DAVEY



SITE AND NATURAL RESOURCES MAP - ICE CENTER



HOPE DAVEY PARK

PURPOSE AND NEED:

PURPOSE

The purpose of Hope Davey Park project is to plan and design a concept for improving the layout and management of this centrally located public park using principles of ecological and accessible design. The project is intended to provide safe access to the park's key recreational amenities while enhancing and protecting the natural setting. The goal is to serve the needs of local residents and neighbors, out-of-town visitors, and people of all ages and abilities who seek the benefits of active recreation, community gathering spaces, and multi-use passive and active recreation in a diverse environment, while maintaining the area's wetland and habitat functions.

NEED

Improve the active recreational experiences offered.

Although the ball fields and playground are well maintained, disc golf users have expressed a need for improvements to the course, and the skatepark is currently in disrepair.

Make the park accessible to all.

Access to the site, including community and family gathering spaces such as the pavilion, playground, and sports fields sidelines are not currently ADA accessible. There is an identified need to provide ADA access from both parking lots to these resources.

Enhance opportunities to enjoy the natural areas of the park and support their educational potential.

The site is home to a range of ecological environments including wetlands, a stream and riparian area, mixed forest, and former farmland. A nature trail used to provide passive recreation access to this part of the park, but it has become non-existent since the disc golf course became more dominant. The disc golf course paths and an old farm road are used periodically by people walking, horseback riding, and taking their dogs for walks. There is a need to re-establish a nature trail through the park that requires minimal crossings of the disc golf course. Informal nature education opportunities should be supported with interpretive signs.

Improve the ecological health of the park.

The presence of Class II wetlands, sloped wooded areas, and the Thatcher Brook riparian corridor inspire an ecologically responsive use of the site that provides a balance of the recreational needs with the environmental values of the community. While the established disc golf course baskets, tees, paths, and mowed areas meet regulatory requirements, a sensitivity to maintaining and improving the wetlands and associated buffers, riparian and wooded areas, should be considered for all proposed improvements.

PRIMARY PROGRAM GOALS

- Improve ADA access to active spaces
- Create passive recreation trail loop with separation from disc golf course
- Remove or replace/repair skatepark, which is in poor condition
- Define parcel boundaries and provide separation between land uses where needed
- Establish ecological protection priorities
- Manage/upgrade disc golf amenities to improve user experience, decrease conflicts with other uses, and be sensitive to neighborhood and ecological context
- Establish wayfinding for nature trail and disc golf

SECONDARY PROGRAM GOALS

- Expand playground
- Update pavilion
- Consider future opportunities to connect to other trail networks
- Provide trail interpretation
- Protect and interpret pollinator fields, wetlands, old-growth sugar maples
- Add volleyball facilities
- Expand parking
- Improve restroom facilities

ICE CENTER AREA PARK

PURPOSE AND NEED:

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Ice Center Area Park project is to plan and design upgrades and additions to the park to accommodate additional uses and activities. This park encompasses the entire municipal parcel that includes the Ice Center and adjacent areas. The project is intended to enhance the riverfront setting and meet an increased diversity of recreational needs. The goal is to serve the needs of local residents and visitors of all ages, while balancing town resource needs and meeting regulatory requirements along the Winooski River.

NEED

Provide passive recreation opportunities, including gathering/resting places, and access to the river.

Adding passive recreational opportunities that increase the frequency and duration of use for local residents, including older and differently abled members of the community, is a goal of the project. The park boundary follows the Winooski River, and access to the river's edge from the park should be improved to connect the community to this natural and cultural resource. Places to gather and sit should be identified and explored, as well as a path around the park.

Expand active recreation to accommodate new and expanded opportunities.

Stakeholder groups within the community are advocating for the addition of a soccer field or two and a concrete skatepark to serve local needs and potentially attract visitors. Community interest in additional active recreation opportunities such as a volleyball and expanded mountain bike opportunities are also being considered, along with their management and maintenance.

Improve safe access to and within the park.

Vehicles travel relatively fast on River Road, and the road is not wide enough to safely accommodate bike and pedestrian circulation. In addition to road width, traffic calming, crossings, and alternative bike/pedestrian paths should be considered in the design process. New recreational uses should consider proximity to site lighting and other park features to promote visibility of different park users.

Manage the park to protect ecological, floodplain, and cultural resource integrity.

The park's proximity to the Winooski River requires consideration of development

impacts to floodplain, habitat, and water quality. An old building foundation of archaeological significance is present in the park, as well as prime agricultural soils. Park improvements and development need to be responsive to the cultural and ecological constraints, which are dictated by regulatory requirements.

PRIMARY PROGRAM GOALS

- Construct skatepark
- Develop multi-use, multi-season trail
- Enhance river access
- Provide public restrooms
- Protect or reconstruct pump track
- Create gathering spots
- Manage speed of vehicular traffic for bike and pedestrian safety on River Road
- Expand Capital Soccer fields
- Improve Perry Hill Parking to meet demand and Act 250 requirements; maintain or expand parking for Ice Center and Soccer events; maintain or expand parking for additional uses (skate park)
- Ensure all recreational development meets ADA standards to provide accessibility

SECONDARY PROGRAM GOALS

- Repair volleyball nets
- Integrate bike skills elements with trail or create expanded bike skills park/pump track
- Improve mountain bike kiosk/tune-up station
- Facilitate space for concerts and event
- Create playground