

**Draft
FOSP
Open Space Criteria for identification
of Key Parcels**

The Future Open Space Preservation Committee (FOSP) has been charged by the Cape Elizabeth Town Council with identifying property in Cape Elizabeth that is a high priority for preservation as open space.

6. FOSP shall identify specific key parcels of land in town that are of the highest priority. A comprehensive review of vacant lands in Cape Elizabeth should be undertaken to determine which areas exhibit the most important habitat features, recreational opportunities and whose preservation would help to ensure the town retains its rural character, including large undeveloped areas, agricultural uses of the land and scenic vistas.

FOSP reviewed open space criteria used in other communities and created a matrix of common elements. Open space elements significant in Cape Elizabeth were also added to the list. Committee members then voted on the highest priority criteria.

In the review of open space criteria used elsewhere, it was noted that some communities established criteria that essentially made it possible for any land in the community to be eligible for open space preservation. Other communities attempted a more rigorous prioritization that would focus preservation efforts on the most important areas. The committee discussed the two approaches and decided to create a list that emphasized priorities rather than all-inclusiveness. With this approach, the committee agreed on the following criteria to select land for preservation.

1. **Agriculture**

Undeveloped lands used for agriculture.

2. **Greenbelt trails and recreation areas**

Land identified in the 2001 Greenbelt Plan.

3. **Wildlife Habitat**

Undeveloped lands that provide a habitat for wildlife as identified by State of Maine data such as the Beginning with Habitat information and field verified.

4. Other

Significantly scenic, cultural and/or unique properties identified by the Town Council using a public process.