

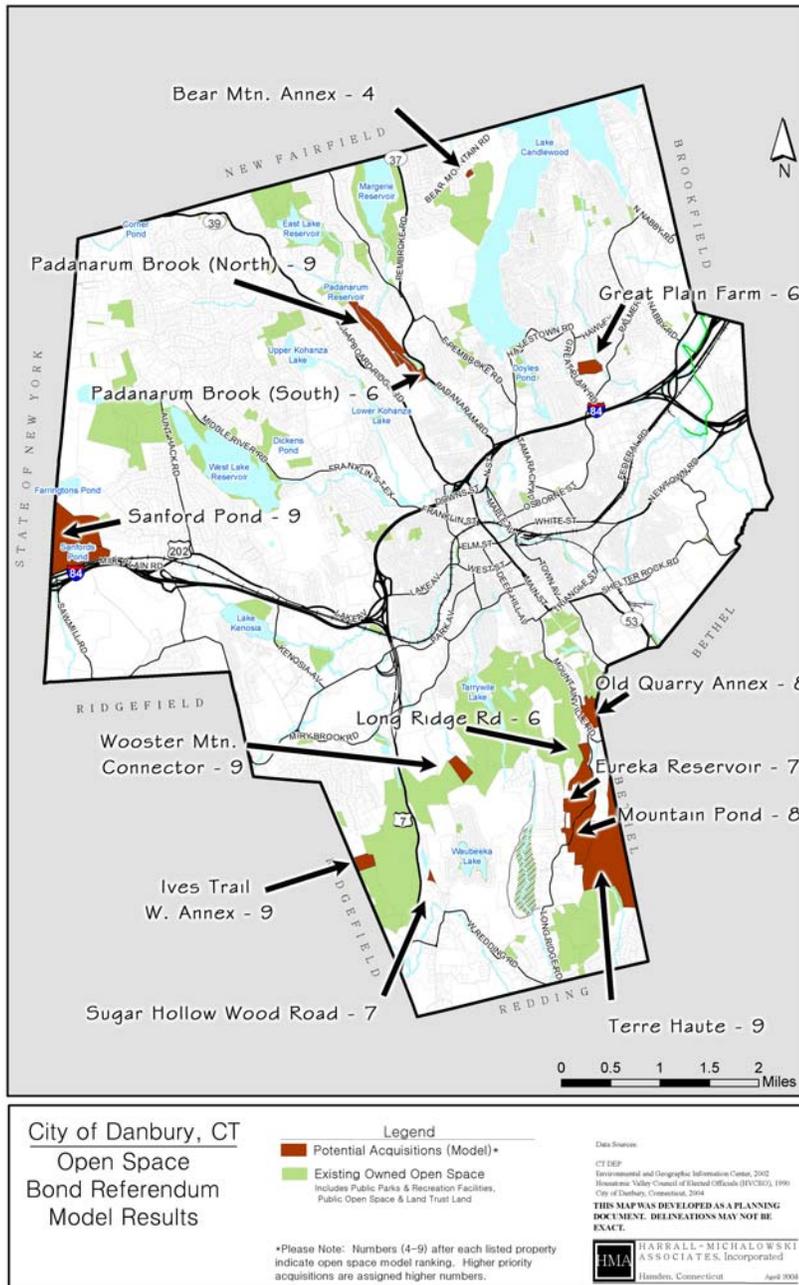
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# City of Danbury Open Space Bond Acquisition



## *Recommended Options for allocation of approved expenditures*

Prepared by Kozuchowski Environmental Consulting (KEC)

May 18, 2008

# Section I: Background and Objectives for “Options Package”

On February 5, 2008, the citizens of Danbury approved a bond referendum that authorizes the City to spend up to \$6.625 million in the acquisition of new open space areas in Danbury. The bond did not specifically identify the areas that would be purchased; it is non-specific in its authorization.

This report documents an objective and methodical process for selecting projects that should be subsidized by this bond. It presents “options packages” for the City of Danbury in the selection of open space acquisitions and conservation construction projects to create Greenways on the City’s open space areas. The “options packages” are defined here as alternative expenditure options that would allocate \$6.625 million in funding that is now authorized for acquisition of new open space areas in Danbury. These alternatives are based upon the following criteria:

- Size of the property;
- Ecological values of the sites;
- Economic value of the property.
- “Greenway” value with regard to starting / completing the Greenways that are in planning or design stage.

In addition to those factors identified above, the options packages also considers non-quantifiable variables such as the feasibility of the projects, the density of open space area that are present in the area of the city where a candidate property is located and the “oasis” factor (the need for preserving an open space in an area of the City that is subject to intense development).

This report is organized in five additional sections beyond this Introduction:

Section II presents a brief profile of each of the 13 candidate parcels for acquisition;  
Section III of this report documents the method that was used to prioritize the properties;  
Section IV describes 5 “conservation construction” projects to create Greenways in the City open space areas;  
Section V present three “options packages” based upon the selection methodology; and  
Section VI provides a categorization of priority considerations for acquisitions to guide the selection of sites.

This background concludes with an overall goal for the project and associated objectives.

**GOAL:** The project will present a logical framework of alternatives for the Mayor to select the best “value” for the \$6.625 million that was authorized by the bond aimed at the overall mission of acquiring 1200 acres of open space by 2012 and creating an open space legacy for the City with pragmatic targets achieved by the following objectives:

***Objective 1:*** Create a rational process for identifying the acquisitions that provide the City the maximum open space benefit for the funds available. This process should be objective by providing a “list” of properties ranked as the “best buys” and should continue to stand beyond the expenditures of this bond for future funding opportunities.

***Objective 2*** Identify the alternatives of properties from the list generated in Objective 1 and conservation construction projects on City open space areas that have achievable specifications for implementation and realistic chances for implementation.

***Objective 3:*** Integrate a selection process for the Mayor that includes a public review and participation process to allow the best selection of projects and acquisitions from the alternatives identified in Objective 2.

## Section II: Property Profiles

This section is presented up front in the report – even prior to the “methodology” presented in Section III below. We are presenting the readers of this report with an early “walk thorough” of the properties that are being considered for acquisitions or easements.

There are 13 properties that are candidates for open space acquisition, based on previously identified open space values and opportunities that have emerged for negotiating their purchase. This section presents a profile of each of these properties. The profiles are based on the previous open space modeling of Danbury parcels conducted in 2002-2004, field inspections of the sites, and/or examinations of aerial photographs of the properties. The profile of the properties presented here are illustrated on Figure 1. It starts with a site in north central Danbury (Great Plain Farm) and proceeds geographically in a clockwise direction around the City. Note that the illustrations (Figures 2- 11) can be found in the Appendix (pp. 18– 28) for each site profile.

- 1) **Great Plain Farm**, 53 Great Plain Road (see figure 2, page 18). This 18 acre property on Great Plain Road is the last active agriculture site in the City of Danbury. The farming operation includes a vegetable plot of approximately 6 acres, a 4 acre pad that hosts organic composting of leaves and manure and a wood storage / chipping site and a fallow land of approximately 8 acres. The City of Danbury has been in discussions with the owner of the Taylor Farms for acquisition of a conservation easement / development rights for several years. The “keystone property” of the 18.1 acre farm is the parcel that was modeled for its open space values. However, discussions with the City included the owner’s intention to convey other adjoining parcels, amounting to 10 additional acres across the road from the active farm.

The property is a flat parcel (slight gradient on the northeast side of the property). It has three separate areas:

- ◆ Vegetable production site (area A on figure 2). This is where vegetables are currently cultivated on the property. It is tilled land (using organic soil produced from the on site composting facility) and is the current economic base of the farm.
- ◆ Fallow land (approximately 8 acres: area B on figure 2). The fallow land of this site is immediately south and west of the active farm area. The fallow land is a manipulated wetland that has been previously drained, but still retains some wetland functions with pockets of wet meadow and scrub-shrub environment. On the southern end of this area is a small (less than 0.5 acres) farm pond that is shallow and bounded by scrub vegetation. A permanent watercourse runs along the north boundary of area B. This watercourse originates at the outlet of Candlewood Lake and discharges to Beaver Brook. On the east side of the property, a separate watercourse flows south-north of area B into the main brook to the south.
- ◆ Compost pad (approximately 4 acres, see area C on figure 2). This is an elevated area on the northeast corner of the property that is bermed with mulch and has piles of manure, leaves and hedgerows of composting mulch. One section of this pad hosts a storage area for wood and a chipping operation.

It should be noted that several members of the Conservation Commission during a presentation of this report at their meeting of March 31, 2008, indicated their perspective that the prospect of a community garden and old farm site should elevate the acquisition status of this property despite its relatively low model score.

- 2) **Bear Mountain Annex**, Bear Mountain Road (see figure 3, page 19). This 4 acre property adjoins Bear Mountain reserve, which is a large open space owned by the City of Danbury. The property is accessed off of Bear Mountain Road from a dirt road that extends approximately 400 feet. The property opens up into an

open meadow that is bounded by upland forest on the east, south and west. Bear Mountain Preserve adjoins the property to the south. Figure 3a provides a macro satellite view of the property

As indicated on the closer satellite view of figure 3b, the open meadow dominates the property. There are pockets of wetlands and an intermittent stream that flows from east to west. The intermittent stream originates at a small pool impoundment that may function as a vernal pool. The property provides a quiet pocket meadow that has the wildlife value of a meadow edged by open forest. There is a potential for a small pocket meadow bird sanctuary on this site.

- 3) **Old Quarry Nature Center Annex.** This property (figure 4, page 20) in southeastern Danbury on Mountainville Road is a 30-acre site that adjoins the Old Quarry Nature Center open space in Danbury. The property is primarily an upland forest with some pockets of wetland and a prominent knoll that provides an overlook vista. The Conservation Commission and the Friends of Old Quarry Nature Center commissioned the Bent of The River Audubon staff to conduct an “environmental points of interest” survey on the Old Quarry property in 1996. The survey identified this annex property with desirable characteristics. The site offers an opportunity to double the size of Old Quarry Nature Center and a new hiking trail through this lot.

The major obstacles for executing an acquisition of this property are as follows.

- ◆ The property is currently under foreclosure and is encumbered by liens. The Bank that currently owns the liens of the property has approached the City to open discussions on acquisition of threes liens. However, the translation of outright ownership of the property from the outright ownership of the liens is a separate process.
  - ◆ There is environmental contamination of the groundwater that has been documented in previous Phase 1 and Phase 2 contamination investigations. The City has insisted that the owners of the liens provide a more detailed remediation plan with cost estimates before proceeding further with discussions for acquisitions.
- 4) **Long Ridge Road residential property.** Figure 5 (page 21) illustrates the Long Ridge Road property that is 9.6 acres in area. The property that is available for purchase is the 10 acres of land, exclusive of the residential building. The parcel adjoins Tarrywile Park to the east and Eureka Reservoir to the south.

The property is woodland with a small meadow. The primary open space value would be as an alternative route to the Mountain Pond and Terre Haute sites to avoid routing of the Ives Trail and Greenway through Eureka Reservoir.

- 5) **Eureka Reservoir.** The Eureka Reservoir (figure 6, page 22) is an impoundment that is owned and used by the Town of Bethel as part of its water supply. The property includes a pump house at the reservoir. The entire property is 56 acres, adjoining Tarrywile Park to the north and Mountain Pond to the west. In addition to the open water habitat, there is an upland forest encircling the Reservoir.

This would not be an acquisition. If an access corridor through Terre Haute and Mountain Pond is successfully negotiated between Danbury and Bethel for the Ives Trail, a walking pathway around Eureka Reservoir would be included as a permanent conservation easement with public access to the hiking trail. A permit from the Connecticut Department of Public Health would be needed to achieve a trail corridor here.

The layout of the Ives Trail and Greenway uses a route around the Reservoir to connect Tarrywile Park to Mountain Pond (and ultimately the Terre Haute property) to the west (crossing Long Ridge Road).

- 6) **Mountain Pond.** This 81 acre property (illustrated on figure 6, page 22) is owned by the Town of Bethel and part of the Class I public water supply watershed land that directly recharges Eureka Reservoir. Upland forests and isolated patches of wetlands and intermittent streams encircle the open water habitat of Mountain Pond.

The Ives Trail and Greenway conceptual design includes a walking trail through this property that connects to Terre Haute to the southwest and adjoins Eureka Reservoir across Long Ridge Road. It has been considered as an easement option to the Ives Trail Greenway design.

- 7) **Terre Haute.** This 208-acre property (figure 6, page 22) is owned by the Town of Bethel within the municipal boundary of Danbury. It adjoins a similar sized undeveloped tract to the east in the Town of Bethel. The property, which includes challenging topography for development along with areas that are amenable for some type of construction, has been the subject of development proposals and open space preservation efforts from residents and officials from the Town of Bethel and the City of Danbury.

From the perspective of size, Terre Haute is the prize of potential new open space areas for the City. At **208 acres**, it would be the second largest open space preserve in the City, after Tarrywile Park.

The property includes a ridgeline and a scenic view-shed from Bogus Mountain, a pond, upland forests, intermittent streams and pockets of wetlands. Although it is currently specified as the terminus corridor of the Phase 1 Ives Trail corridor, the negotiation challenges for acquisition of this parcel are formidable.

From the perspective of ecological integrity and open space preservation, locking the entire 208-acre parcel from future development would be the most desirable outcome. However, a more realistic approach may be to acquire a conservation easement for the property or to subdivide the lot along its northerly end (the section of the site with the most severe development restrictions) to create a zone that could be conveyed to the City as an acquisition or an easement. One final perspective regarding this property is that it cannot be viewed in a vacuum from the easements needed on Mountain Pond and Eureka Reservoir. Acquisition of property ownership or easement rights by the City of Danbury from the Town of Bethel needs to connect to the trail corridor that passes through Tarrywile Park. The negotiation of public access agreements through Terre Haute also needs to consider the terminus of the Trail in the Francis Clarke Industrial Park expansion annex (in Bethel) with parking areas designated for hikers of this trail corridor. This would also serve as the starting point for Phase 2 of the project that would extend the trail corridor through Redding to Weston.

- 8) **Wooster Mountain- Tarrywile Park connector.** Figures 7 a- 7b (page 23) illustrate the most complicated acquisition challenge for the City of Danbury. The complication is that the ownership of this property is in dispute. Figure 7a exhibits the current disposition of the property of parcel on the City Assessor's Map. The area of the City Assessor parcel that is of significance to the City for acquisition and public access is highlighted in red. An alternative perspective is shown on figure 7b that illustrates a boundary on a legal document of the Lake Waubeeka Association that was upheld in a court decision in 1929. Figure 7b also illustrates alternative layouts of the Ives Trail through this connector property. The open space model (Section III) was applied to a 20 acre section of this connector property (illustrated in orange on Figure 7b) which could be subdivided from the owner(s) and conveyed to the City of Danbury.

The connector property (illustrated in orange on Figure 7b) is desirable for an acquisition in that it would provide a connection of Wooster Mountain State Park to the west and Tarrywile Park to the east. It also traverses through a scenic canyon and passes over a watershed divide that separates the drainage to the Still River watershed to the north and the drainage of the Saugatuck River watershed to the south. The red

unbroken red line of figure 7b delineates the preferred corridor of the Ives Trail Greenway, as originally designed.

The habitat is dominated by upland mixed mesiphytic forest with intermittent streams, wetland seeps, springs and a canyon. Its isolation renders a high wildlife potential for this property.

Due to the difficult challenge of attempting a negotiation with the property owner(s) in conveying this 20-acre parcel, an alternative is identified in re-routing the Ives Trail and Greenway to the north off of undisputed land (red dashed line on Figure 7b). If the Lee Farm owners are amenable to granting this northerly route to the City, this could eliminate the need to acquire ownership over the canyon connector of Tarrywile Park to Wooster Mountain State Park. However, this would entail the construction (and long term maintenance) of a boardwalk over a marsh wetland.

- 9) **Jackson Pond connector.** Figure 8 (page 24) illustrates the property on the southeastern corner of Jackson's Pond. It identifies the eastern flank of assessors lot # G22003 which is bisected by property owned by the State of Connecticut (assessors lot # G22005). The eastern flank of this property is approximately 2 acres of the total 15 acres that comprise this parcel. The eastern flank is the only portion of lot # H23001 that is needed by the City of Danbury for public access.

The "need" for this 2-acre portion of the property is as a "connector". The Ives Trail and Greenway passes from the west over Wooster Mountain State Park (on the west side of Route 7), crossing Route 7 at the traffic light, then over 0.1 miles along the north shoulder of Starr's Plain Road. From Starr's Plain Road, the trail enters onto a historic wood road that passes along the east side of Jackson's Pond. The first 100 feet of this wood road passes through the 2 acre eastern flank of lot # # H23001.

The property includes an upland forest, a rock wall on the eastern edge, the eastern edge of the Pond and a wetland fringe to the pond. It adjoins state owned property further north on this wood road to the north.

The "connector" for this property can be achieved by an easement or an acquisition of this eastern flank. It should be noted, however, that there is an un-abandoned City wood road through this property. If a title search verifies that the City never discontinued this road, Danbury could retain the right of passage through this parcel. Nevertheless, the modeling of the properties identified in this report assumes an acquisition.

- 10) **Ives Trail West.** On the western border of Danbury with Ridgefield, lot # F22001 is a 17.7 acre lot (see figure 9. page 25) that immediately adjoins the section of Wooster Mountain State Park where the Ives Trail is designated for passage. The initial layout of the Ives Trail designed the Greenway around the private ownership of this property. If the City acquires the property, it could be annexed to the Ives Trail Greenway corridor, providing a greater buffer to the trail. It is possible that the trail would be re-routed through an easier terrain passage if the City acquires this property. The habitat is primarily a mixed mesiphytic upland forest.

- 11) **Sanfords Pond.** Figure 10 (page 26) exhibits lot #A14001, which is situated on the New York- Connecticut border. This is one of the three "priority 1 significant parcels" as identified by the criteria in Section VI, below. This property, in addition to its size, warrants consideration in the top three tier of this category due to the following considerations:

- ◆ The area of the property - **167 acres** – is substantial. This vast size offers an opportunity for multiplying the open space preserves of the City of Danbury. Its size also magnifies its functions of wildlife habitat and source protection for the headwaters of the Still River and Lake Kenosia.

- ◆ It has a variety of habitats and environmental characteristics including a ridgeline, a pond, an upland forest, and wetlands. The variety of habitats combined with the significant size renders a high potential for wildlife on the property.
- ◆ The property is situated on a watershed divide, situated almost precisely on the State border. The easterly side of the divide sheds water into Connecticut that is the source area for the Still River and Lake Kenosia, a stand-by public water supply reservoir. Hence, acquisition of this parcel will provide a degree of source protection for this water supply.
- ◆ The buildings on this property provide the potential for creating a Parks and Recreation outpost for a nature center or museum in the future.
- ◆ The shoreline of Sanfords Pond provides an opportunity for a scenic camping /picnic area for the public.
- ◆ The acquisition would provide geographic balance of open space areas in the City by allocating a significant preserve on the west side of Danbury.

In counterbalance to the great potential for this open space to the City's natural resource inventory, the value of the property would consume a significant portion of the open space bond funding. The relatively low appraised value for this site is due to severe development restrictions since the majority of the property is either wetlands or severely limiting steep slopes. An argument could also be made that if the City does not acquire the property, development may not occur on the site (though it always remains a possibility).

12) ***Padanaram south / Padanaram north***. These two properties are joined together since their primary value to the City is linked to preserving a riverine corridor along Padanaram Brook. Although the larger size of Padanaram Brook north dominates the challenge of creating this corridor, the preservation of the southerly property in and of itself will provide a "foothold" for future connections to the upland/floodplain/riverine corridor on Padanaram North whenever development / preservation arrangements on this property are finalized.

Furthermore, this complex of properties may also provide a link to the City owned Padanaram Reservoir as a terminus point of the Padanaram corridor Greenway. Adding the Reservoir property (14.8 acres) provides a total of **102.8 acres** for this corridor. Within this three parcel Greenway corridor, the individual properties are characterized separately.

12a) ***Padanaram South*** (see figure 11a /11b, page 27-28) This 9.2 acre site is situated on the west side of Padanaram Brook. It is accessed by passage over the Covered Bridge condominium bridge.

The property is a mosaic of riverine environment of Padanaram Brook, a floodplain fringe, four separate intermittent streams that flow from the west to the Brook and some scrub shrub wetland pockets. There is a terrace that allows access for hiking, though there would need to be small boardwalk sections installed for the crossing of the intermittent streams. There is access to the High School from East Gate Road that would allow outdoor environmental field trips to the Padanaram Brook corridor. Finally, there is a potential parking access along a City water line easement that is currently a gravel pad, where users of the Greenway could park and walk across the covered bridge for access to the Greenway trail (however this requires an easement from the Covered Bridge condominiums).

However, it should be noted that if the Padanaram North acquisition does not occur, the 9.2-acre site of

Padanaram South would be more of an outdoor environmental education field site as opposed to a Greenway. The site is in close proximity to the sight and noise of the traffic corridor and congested development on Padanaram Road. Nevertheless, securing the Padanaram south property, in and of itself, would provide an anchor for the future development of a longer Greenway through Padanaram north. This property has already been acquired with open space bond funding.

12b) ***Padanaram North*** This 78.7 acres property (see figure 11a /11b, page 27-28)) is a continuation of the environmental mosaic of habitats of the southerly base site. However, there are four natural features that distinguish the northerly corridor from the southerly base:

- ◆ ***Size:*** The significant area provides more opportunity for hiking, environmental education and nature observations. The significant size of this corridor also magnifies its function as a wildlife habitat and a natural detention area for drainage.
- ◆ ***Potential for a Water Quality Basin (WQB).*** The long term problem of drainage from the ridgeline of East Gate Road would offer the potential to create a water quality basin, planted with a healthy stock of wetland vegetation to absorb pollutants. The Water Quality Basin (WQB) could be used as a demonstration project to educate school students on mitigative measures to counterbalance the urbanization effects of new development. In addition to one large water quality basin, there are opportunities to create “rain gardens (mini versions of the WQB) along swales leading from the intermittent streams along the site.
- ◆ ***Access to the ridgeline.*** The larger size and varying topography of Padanaram north allows a greenway trail to the top of the ridgeline from East Gate Road and points farther north beyond the end of East Gate Road). Along the northern end of Padanaram Brook North, near the Padanaram Reservoir, there is a natural terrace at the top of the ridge that offers very scenic views of the entire property below.
- ◆ ***Isolation.*** The farther north of Padanaram South that one travels, the hiker of this Greenway is soon away from Padanaram Road and the generally intense development that exists in this area. For a good stretch of the property can be characterized as “isolated”. It can also be characterized as a “Greenway Oasis” in this intensely developed area of the City. The isolation and size of this property accentuate its wildlife habitat.

The largest potential detraction from acquisition of this site is the cost. As discussed for the two other large acquisition properties, the sheer size of the site may cause the owners to dictate high transaction offers. The environmental value of the Padanaram North needs to be weighed against the degree to which it forecloses other acquisition opportunities in Danbury.

12c) ***Padanaram Reservoir.*** Although this is a City owned property that is not an acquisition candidate, it is mentioned here in that its 14.8 acres can be added to the total Padanaram Greenway if the City wishes to do so. It would require some expenditures (see Section V), public security measures to protect the integrity of the Reservoir and would need a permit from the Connecticut Department of Public Health for a use of Class I public water supply land. However, the benefits of this acquisition would be synergistic with the character of the corridor:

- ◆ The Reservoir itself provides a lake ecosystem dimension to the corridor;
- ◆ There is a waterfall at the spillway of the Reservoir; and
- ◆ It provides a northerly parking access point along Padanaram Road to the earthen bridge at the head of Padanaram Brook.

## **Section III: Methodology for Property Prioritization**

The acquisition of properties for the open space bond requires prioritizations. It is clear from the start that \$6.625 million is not sufficient to fund the acquisition of all 13 properties that are candidates for adding to the open space inventory of the City. The decisions will require an objective overview” of all of the cost and environmental factors along with a subjective weighing of intangible factors by the Mayor. This report addresses the former and is aimed at providing an objective framework for assisting the Mayor in the decision making process. This section describes KEC’s approach to creating this decision-making framework.

**Step 1:** Selection of candidate properties. There were 13 candidate properties that were identified in this selection model. The sites were selected as properties needed for the completion of existing Greenways, properties identified by the Mayor as opportunities for new opens space zones for the City or sites offered to the City that are adjoining existing open space areas, and areas deemed worthy of preservation from future development

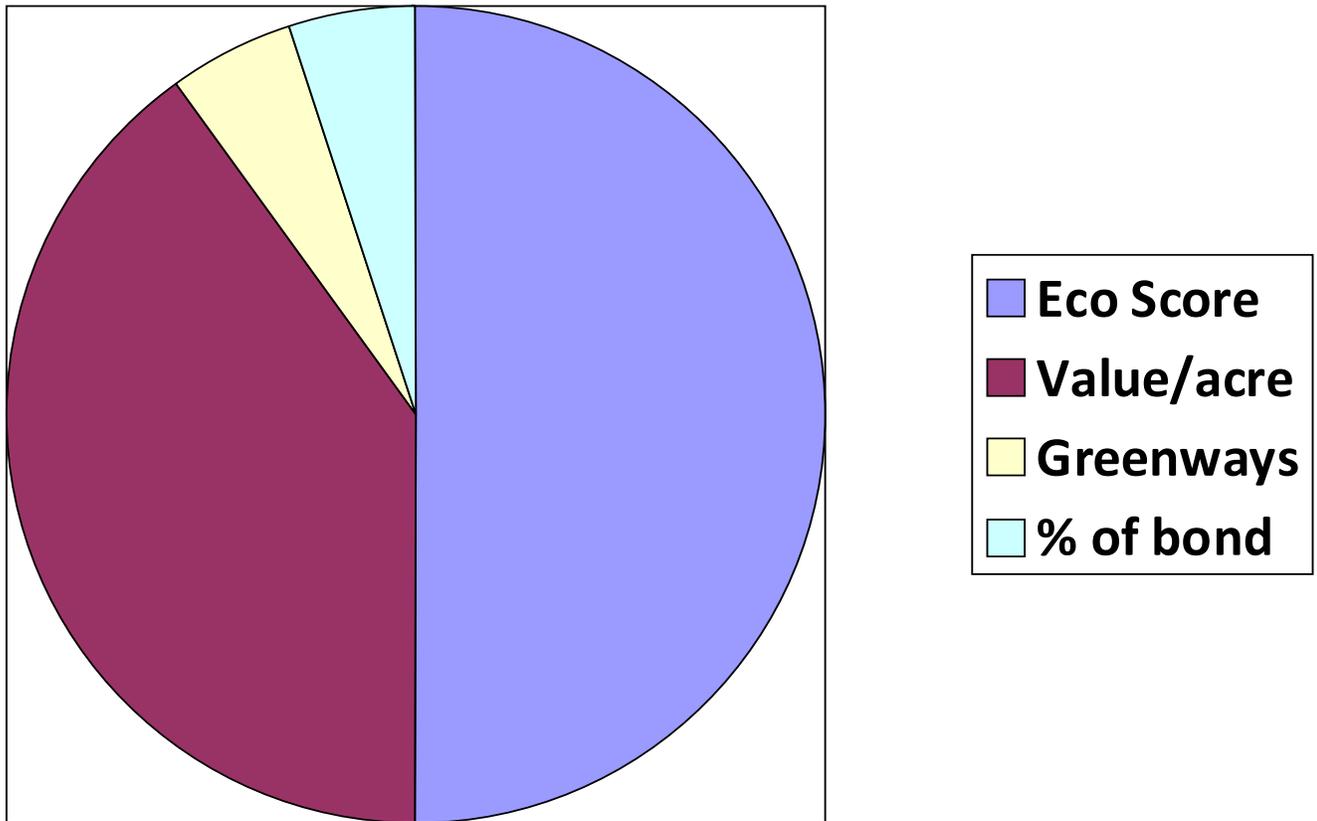
**Step 2:** Site characterizations. Each of the sites was visited by the Consultant<sup>1</sup> and was characterized for their environmental and open space property values. This characterization is narratively and graphically presented in Section II, above.

**Step 3:** Set the parameters of the Open Space model. In 2002-2004 the City of Danbury Conservation Commission subsidized the creation of an open space model that quantitatively scored each undeveloped property of the City to identify the “high priority properties” that warrant consideration for acquisition or easements. The Conservation Commission retained the services of HMA Consultants, who created a proprietary computer model to rank all undeveloped properties. KEC retained HMA as a subcontractor to focus this proprietary model to evaluate the thirteen candidate properties identified for acquisition in Step 2. KEC and HMA created a “weighting” of the parameters that would be used to re-run the model on the thirteen candidate parcels. The weighting factors used are illustrated on figure 14, below. Figure 14 also describes each of the weighting factors.

It should be noted that Kozuchowski Environmental Consulting (KEC) and HMA discussed and experimented with several combinations of weighting factors before deciding on the percentages that are presented in Figure 14. The decision was made to simplify the characterization. Importing the raw score from the existing model (as 50% of the total score) puts an emphasis on size and the environmental characteristics of the candidate sites. This slight “out weighing” of the “cost” factor provides portrays the process as using these purely open space variables as the leading factor in selection of the best sites for acquisition or easements. The value per acre provides the evaluation factor of the “best value for the dollar”, based upon the current appraised value that is listed on the Assessors card for the property. It should be noted that the actual negotiation of fair market value may differ from the City of Danbury’s Assessor’s Office, but the “negotiations factor” is considered in Step 6, below. The “Greenway potential” factor was presented to give a premium to properties needed to be acquired to complete Greenways or that have plans for a Greenway. However, given that any open space could be used to create a new Greenway, the weighting of this factor was discounted, though it warrants some consideration. Similarly, the cost as a percentage of the bond funding available was also discounted since the true meaning of this factor only becomes real when a negotiated agreement on the property is achieved. Nevertheless, this factor warrants some attention and the appraised value on the Assessor’s cards is the only value that can be used for a relative comparison.

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<sup>1</sup> Many of the sites were visited during Kozuchowski’s tenure as a full time employee with the City (and not charged for in this service)



**Figure 14: The weighting factors as a percentage of the computer Model**

**Eco Score (50% weighting):** This was the raw score imported from the 2004 model that was run for the Danbury Conservation Commission in its original ranking of undeveloped properties for the City. These factors were primarily environmental characteristics and included the total area of the parcel, unique and desirable habitats, and accessibility to the public for passive recreation, public water supply watershed lands and proximity to adjoining open space areas.

**Value/acre (40% weighting):** This parameter is a function of the appraised value of the property divided by the area of the parcel in acres. The lower the score for this cost per acre, the higher the ranking.

**Greenways (5% weighting):** This factor is a simple categorization of the potential for a Greenway as follows:

- 1 = No greenways on the property, no plans for a greenway, potential feasibility for Greenway.
- 2 = No Greenway on property but a design or a conceptual plan for a Greenway exists on the site.
- 3 = No Greenway on the property, acquisition is needed to complete an existing plan.

**% of Bond (5% weighting):** This is a ratio of the City of Danbury’s Assessor Office appraised value of the property divided by \$6.625 million available from the bond.

**Step 4:** Run the model. This task was subcontracted to HMA. The results are tabulated in Section V, below.  
Options Package for Open Space Acquisitions      11      Final Draft for public comment May 18, 2008

## Section V: Modeling Results and Analysis of Options

The modeling results are exhibited on Figure 1 (page 17). The values are listed next to each property on this figure. The higher the number, the greater is the environmental priority. Most of the properties fall in the range of 7-9. This is indicative that the 2004 modeling provided an effective screening of the 13 candidate sites, indicating that environmental factors are relatively equal for these sites.

The open space model was run with the parameters that were specified in Section III. The analysis of the results considered how the \$6.625 million could be allocated among the various acquisitions. The options packages are described here with a reference to the City of Danbury’s Assessor card listing of the “appraised value” for each property. It should be emphasized again that these appraised values do not necessarily reflect the real estate transaction value that the City could expect to pay for the property. Therefore, the values listed here are expressed in ranges of how hard the City wants to negotiate each site, based on the definitions provided in Section III. Note that the public release of this document will not include the specific factors applied to each of the “aggressive” “moderate” and “soft” categories of each parcel, in order to avoid the erosion of the City’s negotiating position. For example, a “soft push” may be higher than, lower than, or equivalent to the appraised value listed on the City Assessor’s card. In relative comparison, a moderate push” for the property will be an offer by the City that would be higher in cost than the soft push, and an “aggressive push” will be higher than moderate and soft pushes for the same property. The significant factors to review on these tables is which properties are included for each option package, what category of push (reflecting its priority) and how much of a contingency will remain.

**TABLE 1: Option Package 1**

Property	Assessor’s card listing of Appraised Value	Aggressive push	Moderate push	Soft Push	Other Costs / total costs	Notes
Terre Haute		XXXX				Depends on Bethel’s willingness to negotiate & approve at Town Meeting. Includes easement corridor via Eureka Reservoir & Mountain Pond
Parcel on Sugar Hollow Pond				XXX		Not needed if City Road is verified by tile search
Padanaram South					→	<b>ACQUIRED</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>					6,625,000	
Contingency					→	0%

NOTES: This package is **not** recommended. It is presented here as a “null alternative” that casts a standard for the decision between option package 2 and 3, above. It is included here since there has, over recent years, been a strong advocacy to purchase the Terre Haute property outright to preserve it from development and to incorporate the property into the Ives Trail Greenway. Rejecting Option 1 would express the need to balance the expenditures for open space acquisitions to a diversity of properties throughout the City. Eliminating this option would also reflect the “feasibility factor” as the Town of Bethel has strongly expressed its intention that the property is **not** on the market. However, note that this recommendation to limit the options to packages 2 and 3 does **not** eliminate the objectives of preserving the environmentally sensitive sections of the Terre Haute properties, as this option is preserved in both alternative packages 2 and 3 as either:

- Acquiring an easement on the property or a portion of the property allowing the Town of Bethel to retain ownership over the Terre Haute site; or,
- Subdividing the property into a zone that would allow the City to acquire the environmentally sensitive zone of the property or to create a permanent conservation easement over the subdivided area.

**TABLE 2: Option Package 2**

Property	Appraised Value	Aggressive push	Moderate push	Soft Push	Other Costs / total costs
Sanford's Pond	773,000	<b>XXXXX</b>			
Padanaram North	1,032,200		<b>XXXXX</b>		
<b>Padanaram south</b>					<b>ACQUIRED</b>
Terre Haute	3,120,000			<b>XXXXX</b>	
Wooster Mountain State Park-Tarrywile Park Connector	410,752		<b>XXXXX</b>		
Jackson Pond	36,000	<b>XXXXX</b>			
Ives Trail West	26,600			<b>XXXXX</b>	
Conservation Construction					500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>5,981,100</b>
Contingency					9.7%

Option Package 2 provides a dual emphasis of negotiating hard for acquisition of two large properties: Sanford's Pond and Padanaram South. Note that it does not eliminate negotiation for acquisition of Terre Haute, but limits the access to the possibility of negotiating an easement or the purchase of a portion of the Terre Haute property that has severe development restrictions, provided the Town of Bethel is interested in this transaction.

Since Option Package 2 does not aggressively push for the property with the highest appraised value on the list of candidate acquisition sites, it allows inclusion of three additional properties: Padanaram North, the Wooster Mountain State Park-Tarrywile Park connector and Ives Trail West. It also allows funds to be expended on conservation construction projects listed in Section IV and a 7.8% (\$643,900) contingency.

Go to page 14 for Option Package # 3.

**TABLE 3: Option Package 3**

Property	Appraised Value	Aggressive push	Moderate push	Soft Push	Other Costs / total costs
Sanfords Pond	773,000		XXXXX		
Padanaram North	1,032,200	XXXXX			
<b>Padanaram south</b>					<b>ACQUIRED</b>
Terre Haute	3,120,000			XXXX	
Wooster Mountain State Park- Tarrywile Park Connector	410,752		XXXXX		
Jackson Pond	36,000	XXXXX			
Ives Trail West	26,600			XXXX	
Conservation Construction					500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>6,110,700</b>
Contingency / Administrative Costs					7.8 %

Option Package 3 is very similar to options package 2, but shifts the aggressive push from Sanford’s Pond to Padanaram North. The only consequence of this shift in emphasis is a slightly lower contingency amount (7.8 % = \$514,300).

One final word about the four properties not listed in this analysis: Bear Mountain annex, Great Plain Farm, Long Ridge Road and Old Quarry annex<sup>1</sup>. Even though they are not included in any of the negotiating packages, this does not mean that they do not have value or will not be negotiated. It should be noted that all of the properties that were evaluated have environmental worthiness for open space acquisitions or easements, based upon the initial modeling of all City properties in 2002 and the on site visits to these properties. The Summary Section (VI) describes the general categories of prioritization for determining which properties should be pushed in the initial stage of acquisition. Some of the sites that are listed in Options Package 2 and 3 may fall out of the process, allowing funding to be expended on one of the remaining four sites. Alternatively, the negotiation for aggressive pushes may yield a property at its moderate or soft push values. Funding from the State of Connecticut or other programs that are not deemed as “grants in aid” may also free additional bond funding for acquisition of one or more of these sites.

<sup>1</sup> Note that although Eureka Reservoir and Mountain Pond are not listed in the table, they are presumed to be part of the negotiating package with the Town of Bethel, for Terre Haute, if that option plays out.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that although Eureka Reservoir and Mountain Pond are not listed in the table, they are presumed to be part of the negotiating package with the Town of Bethel, for Terre Haute, if that option plays out.

## Section VI: Summary of Prioritization of Open Space Projects

In the final analysis, the key element of the option package presented here is flexibility. The sites are not ranked 1-13 in value. Nor should this be viewed as providing the Mayor with a choice between options 2 and 3. The flexibility allows intermediate blends of the two primary options presented here.

Nevertheless, in terms of priorities for acquisitions or easements, there are three factors that define a priority-based categorization of the 13 properties evaluated in this analysis. They are presented below. Note that within Category I and II, only two of the three projects (earmarked as red bullet box) are considered as “ready for action”. The reasons for postponing action on the blue boxed Category I and II sites are explained in footnotes.

**Category I** : Large properties (greater than 100 acres in size of parcel or the Greenway corridor created by combining the parcels):

- Sanford’s Pond
- Padanaram south and north (combined with Padanaram Reservoir)  
(also see Discussion on **Terre Haute**<sup>4</sup> in Category III)

These properties should be considered for immediate focus to shape the profile of the City acquisitions. This analysis has provided options for securing two of these three large sites.

**Category II**: Properties needed to complete a Greenway or directly adjoining an existing Greenway, regardless of size:

- Sugar Hollow Pond Wood Road
- Ives Trail West

These smaller properties also warrant priority attention for acquisition. Options 2 and 3 could allow the acquisition of all of these additional sites.

**Category III**: Other open space areas or conservation easements on hold or in reserve

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Plain Farm | <input type="checkbox"/> Bear Mountain Annex  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long Ridge Road  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wooster Mountain State Park- Tarrywile park connector <sup>3</sup> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Old Quarry Annex | <input type="checkbox"/> Terre Haute <sup>4</sup>   |

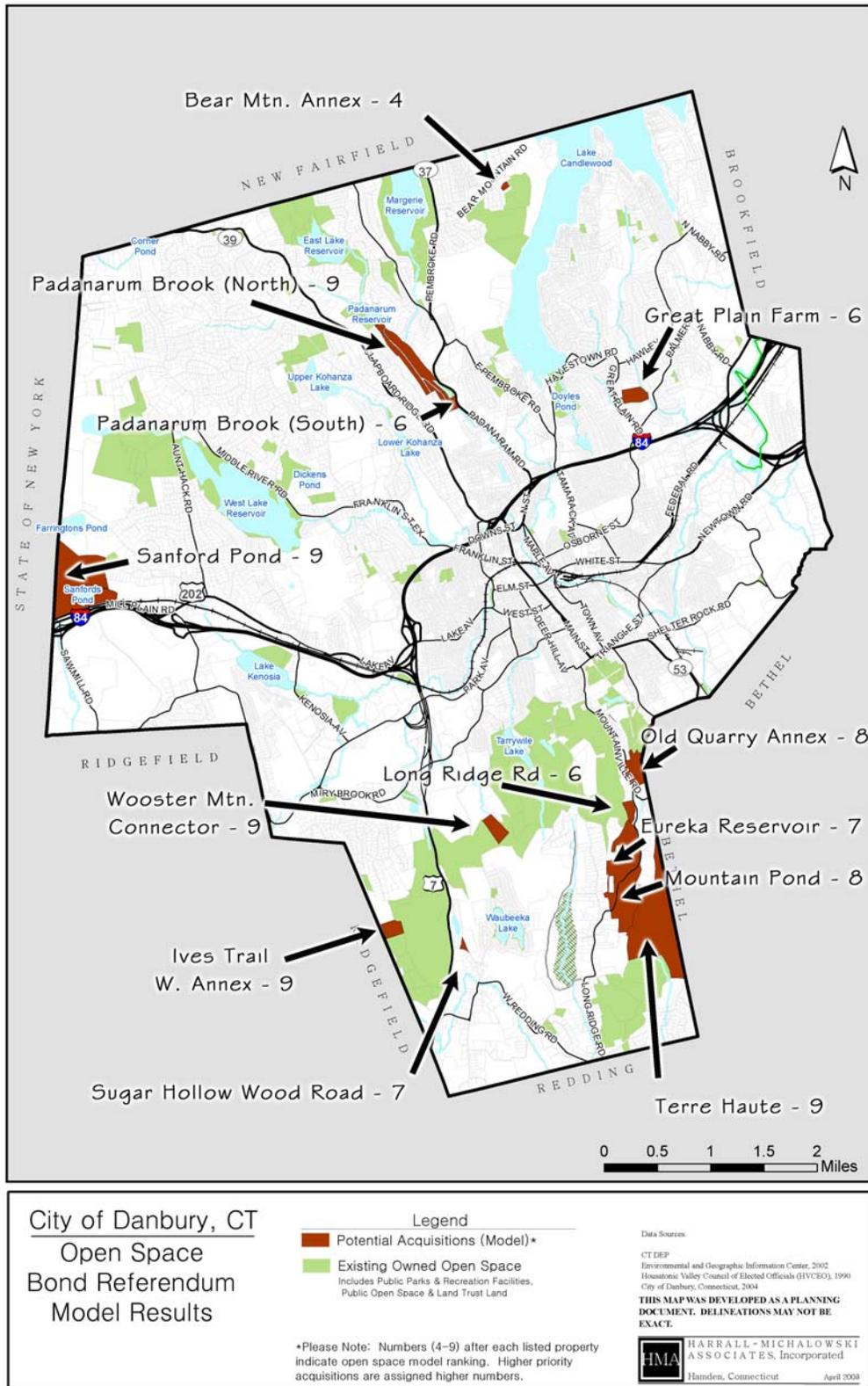
One or more of these sites could be secured with option package 2 and 3, depending upon the results of negotiations with the parcels that are specified. These should be considered for future negotiations

<sup>3</sup> Await the decision of the “Forest Legacy” grant application that would obligate public access through site.

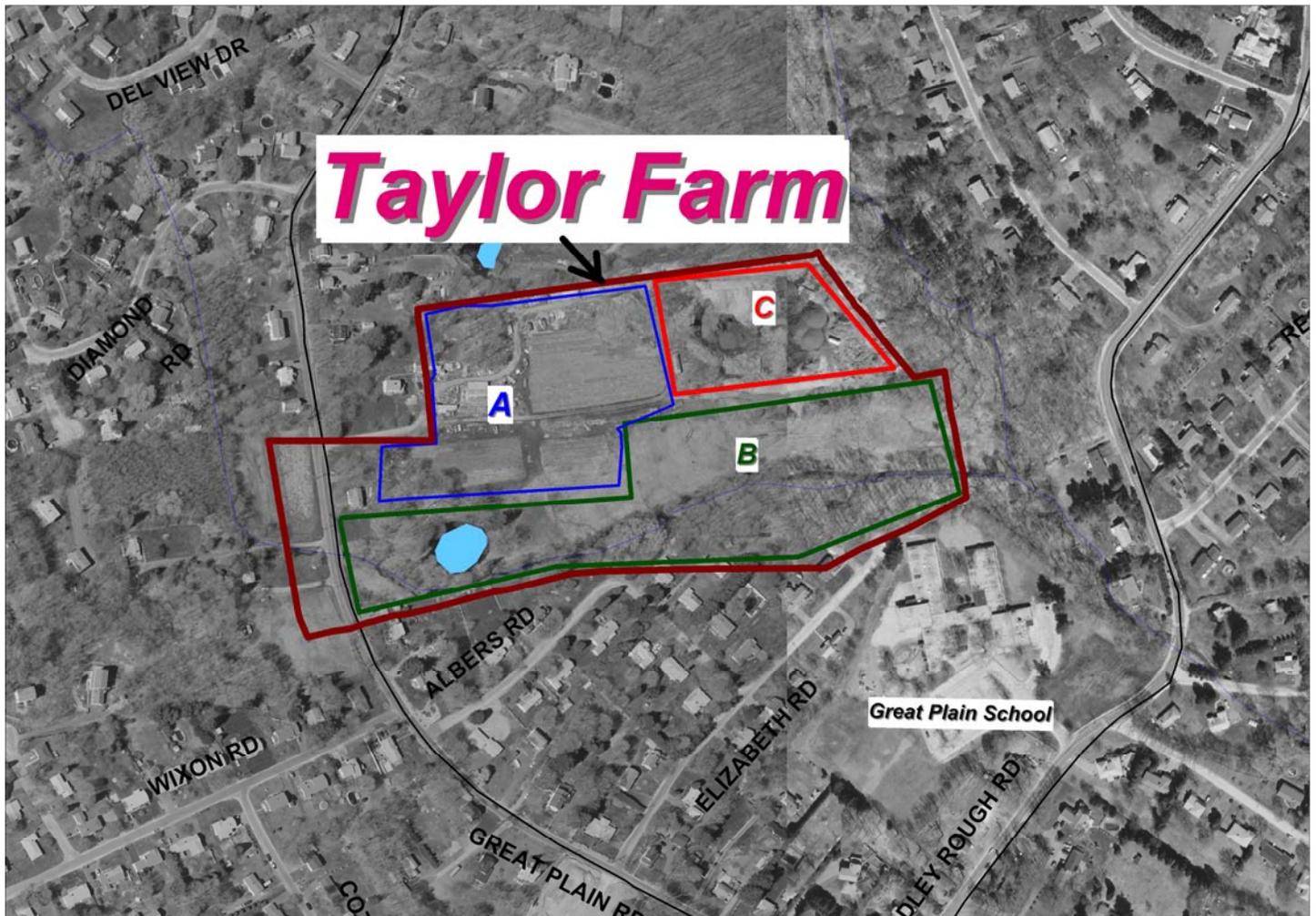
Hence this site is considered as a “Category II in Reserve” and listed also in Category III

<sup>4</sup> Requires willingness of the Town of Bethel to negotiate acquisition. If negotiation begins, reconsider for Category I  
Options Package for Open Space Acquisitions 17 Final Draft for public comment May 18, 2008

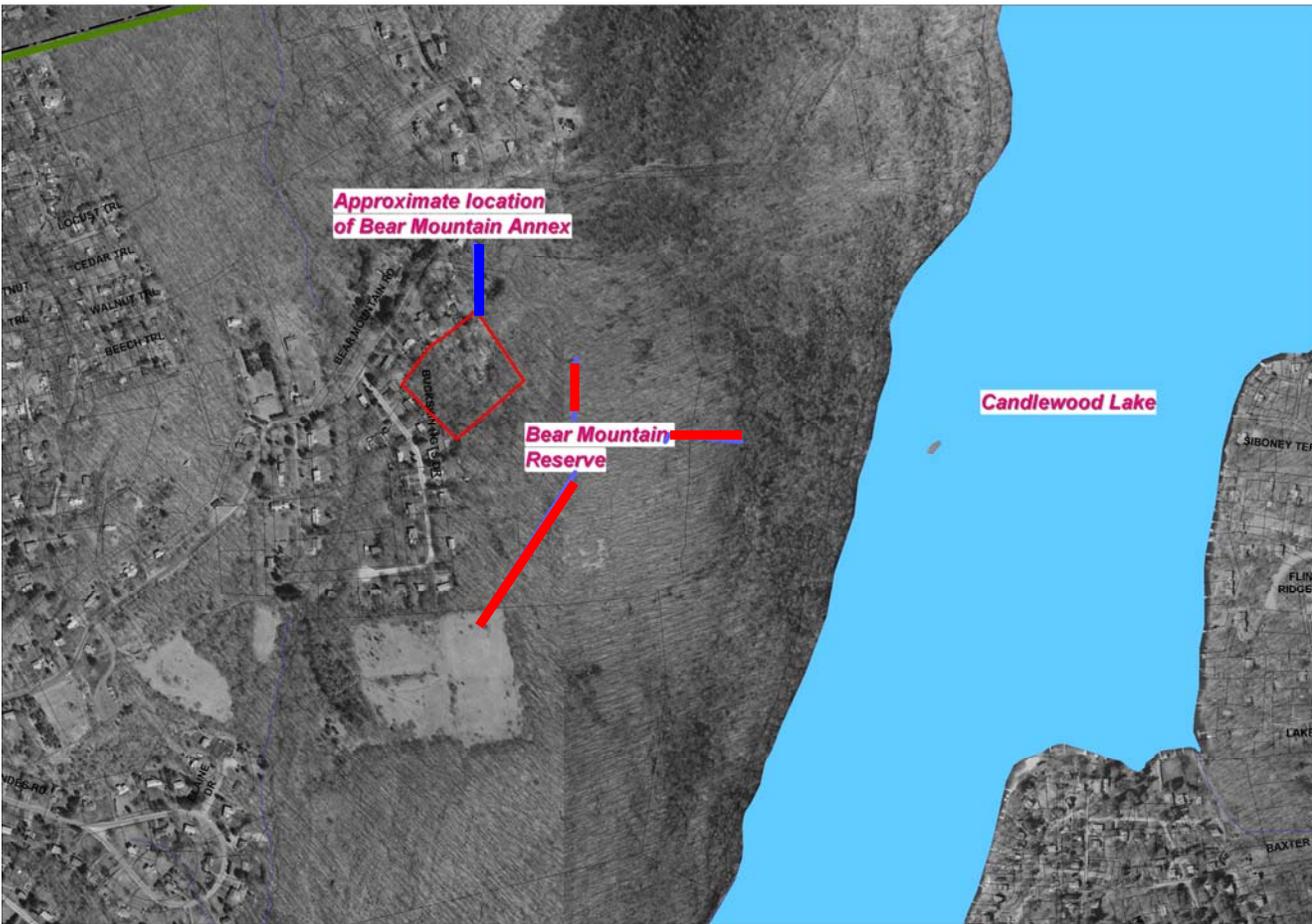
## **Appendix : Site Maps and aerial photos**



**Figure 1:** Candidate acquisition sites open space model scores illustrate on scale of 1 (lowest priority) to 9 (highest priority)



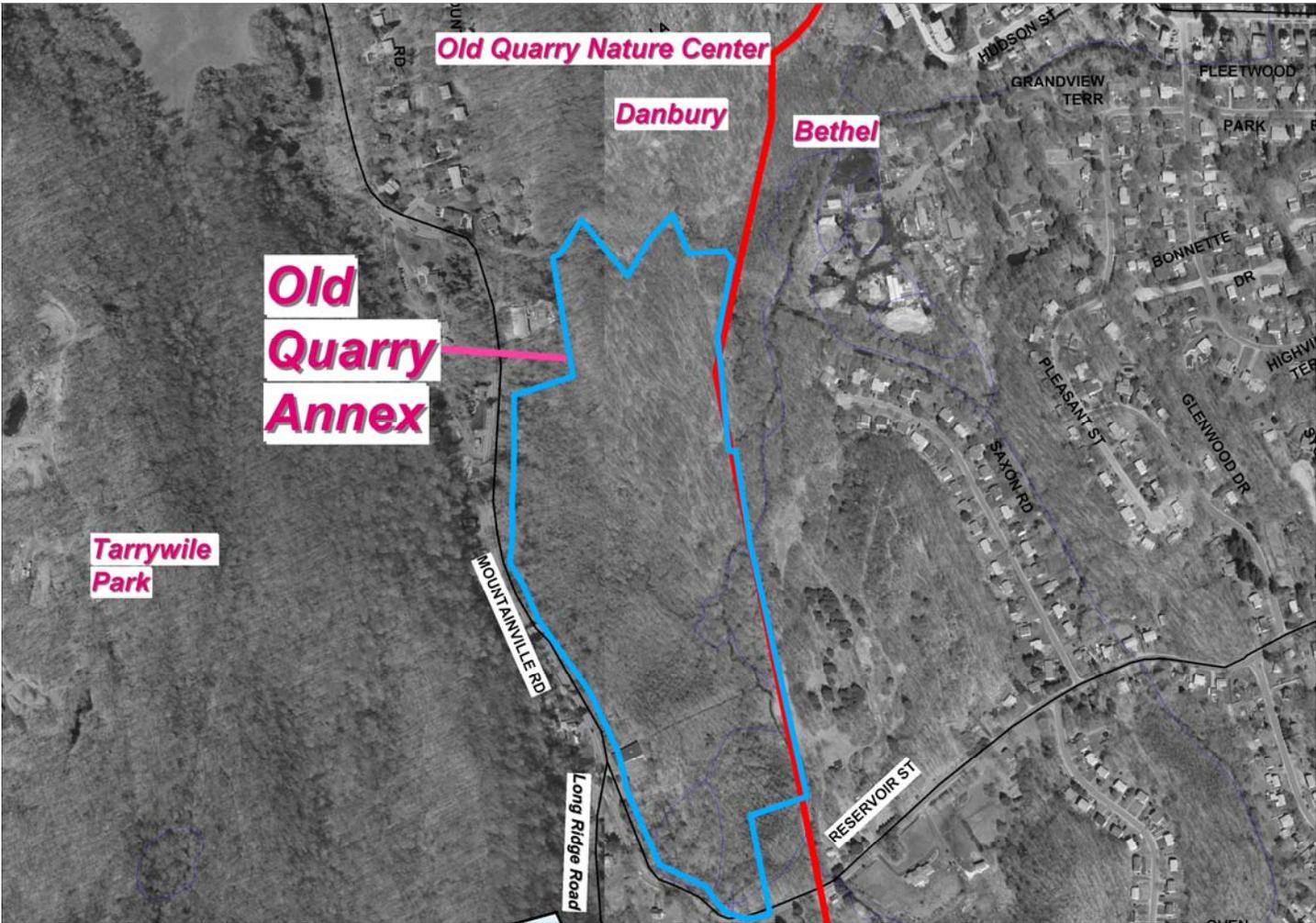
**Figure 2:** Taylor Farm, Blue area (A), green area (B) and red area (C) correspond to approximate use zones on property as discussed on page 2 of report



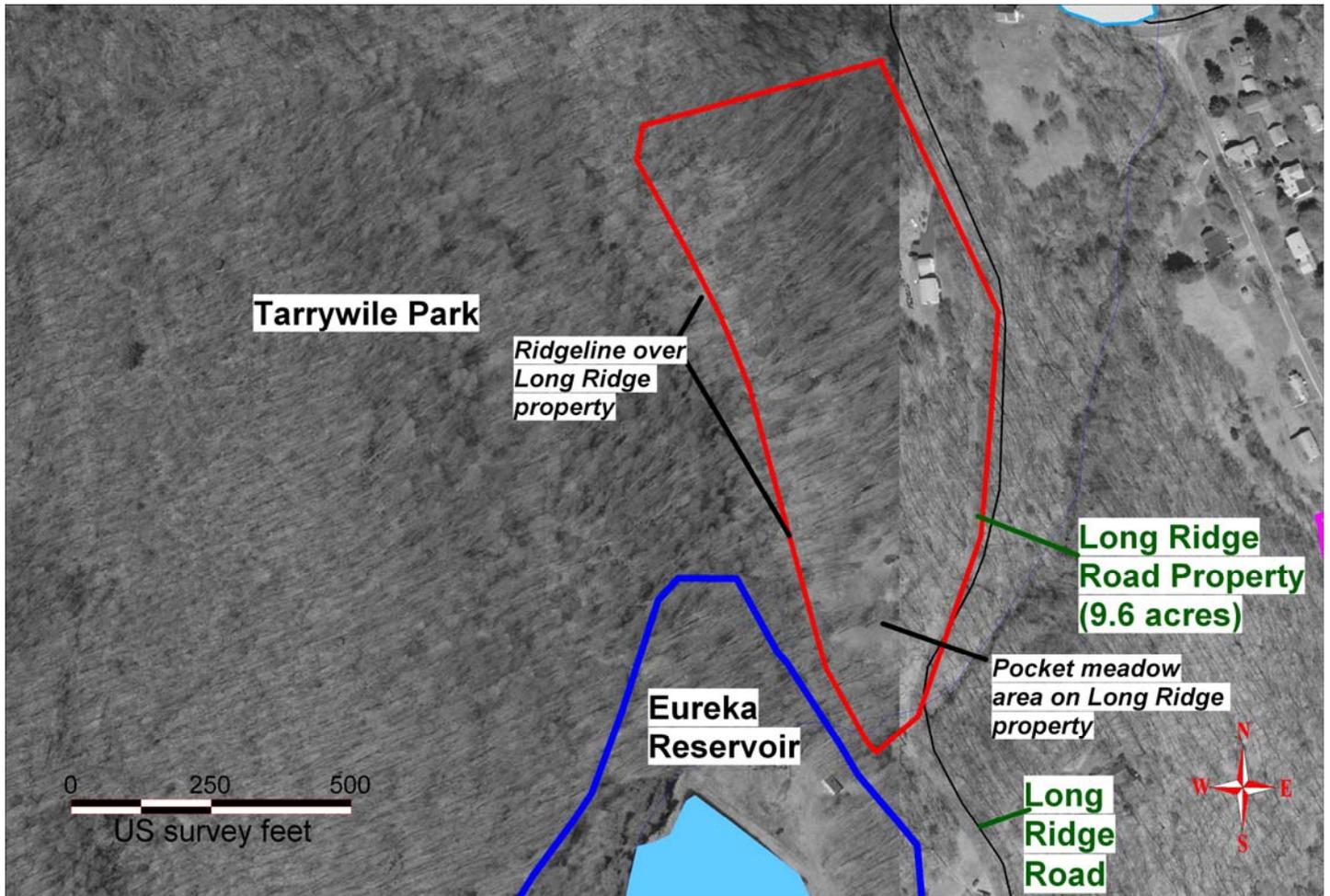
**Figure 3a:** Macro view of approximate location of Bear Mountain Annex



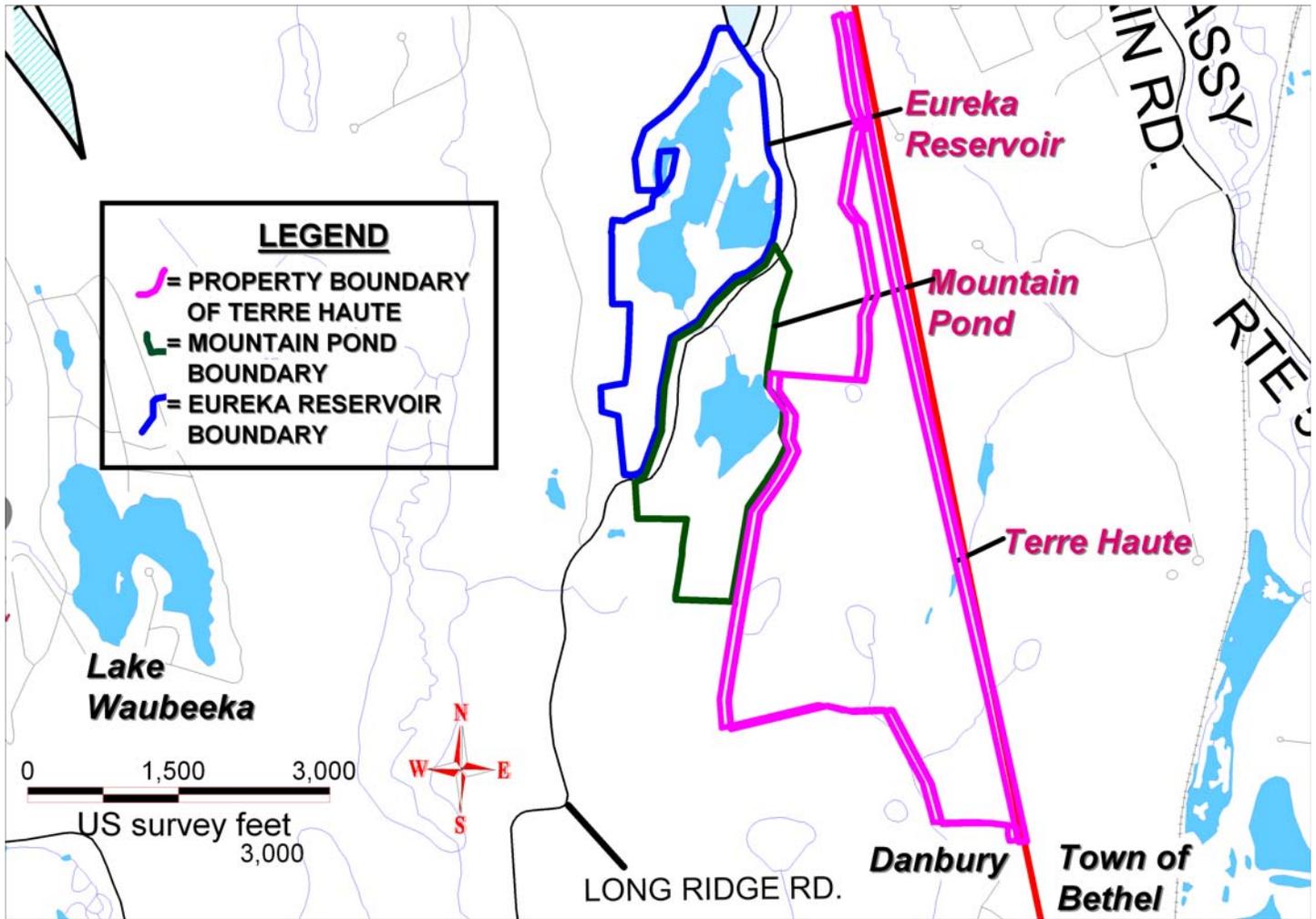
**Figure 3b** Close-up satellite view of meadow area of Bear Mountain Annex



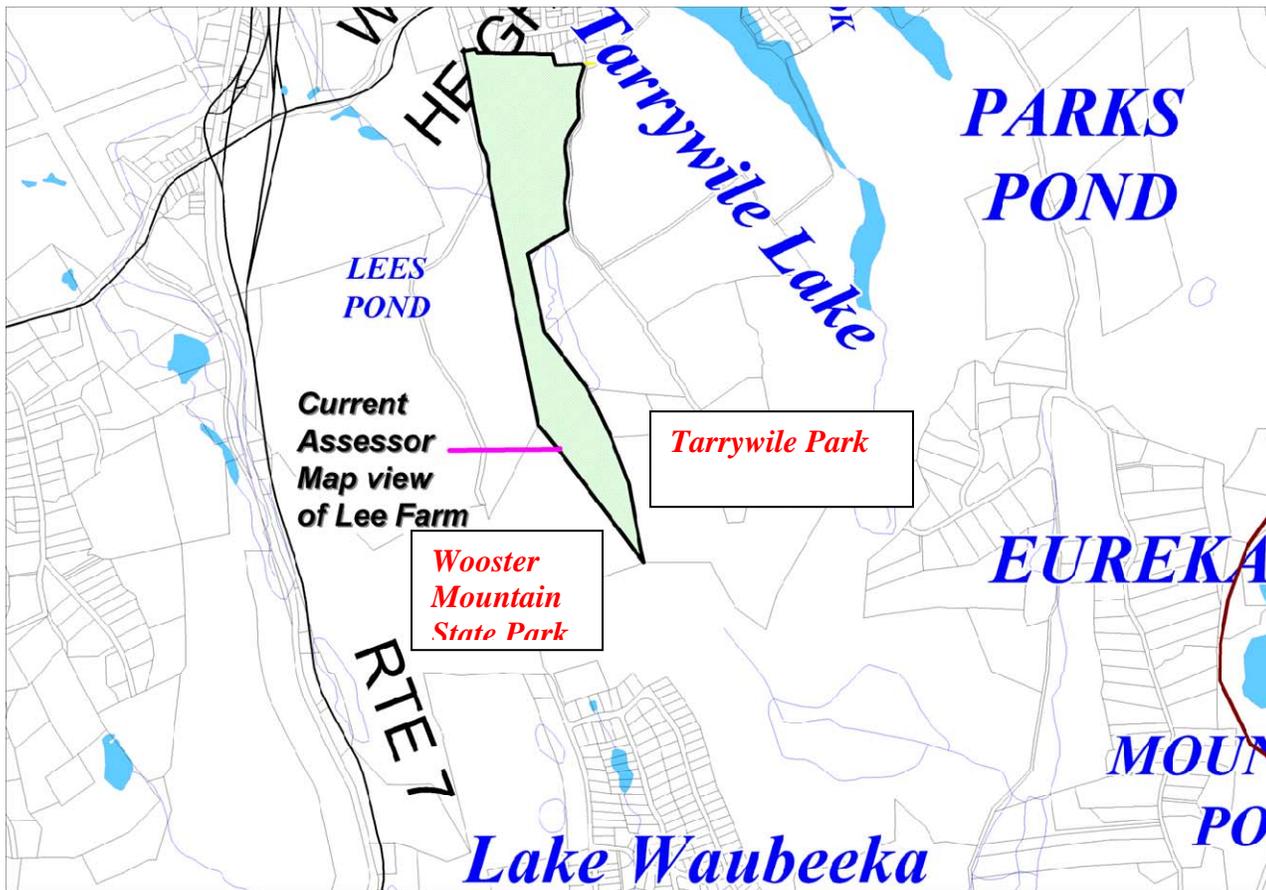
**Figure 4:** Satellite view of Old Quarry Annex property



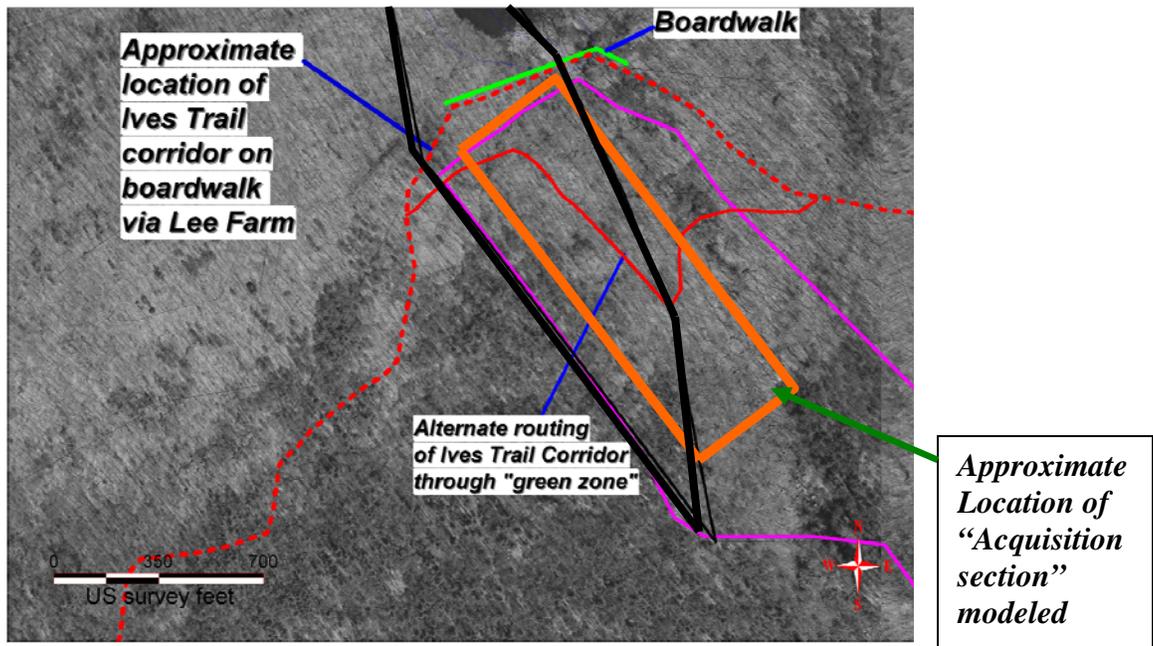
**Figure 5:** Satellite view of Long Ridge Property adjoining Tarrywile Park and Eureka Reservoir



**Figure 6:** Trio of Bethel Properties (Eureka Lake, Mountain Pond and Terre Haute) that could provide southeasterly link for Ives Trail



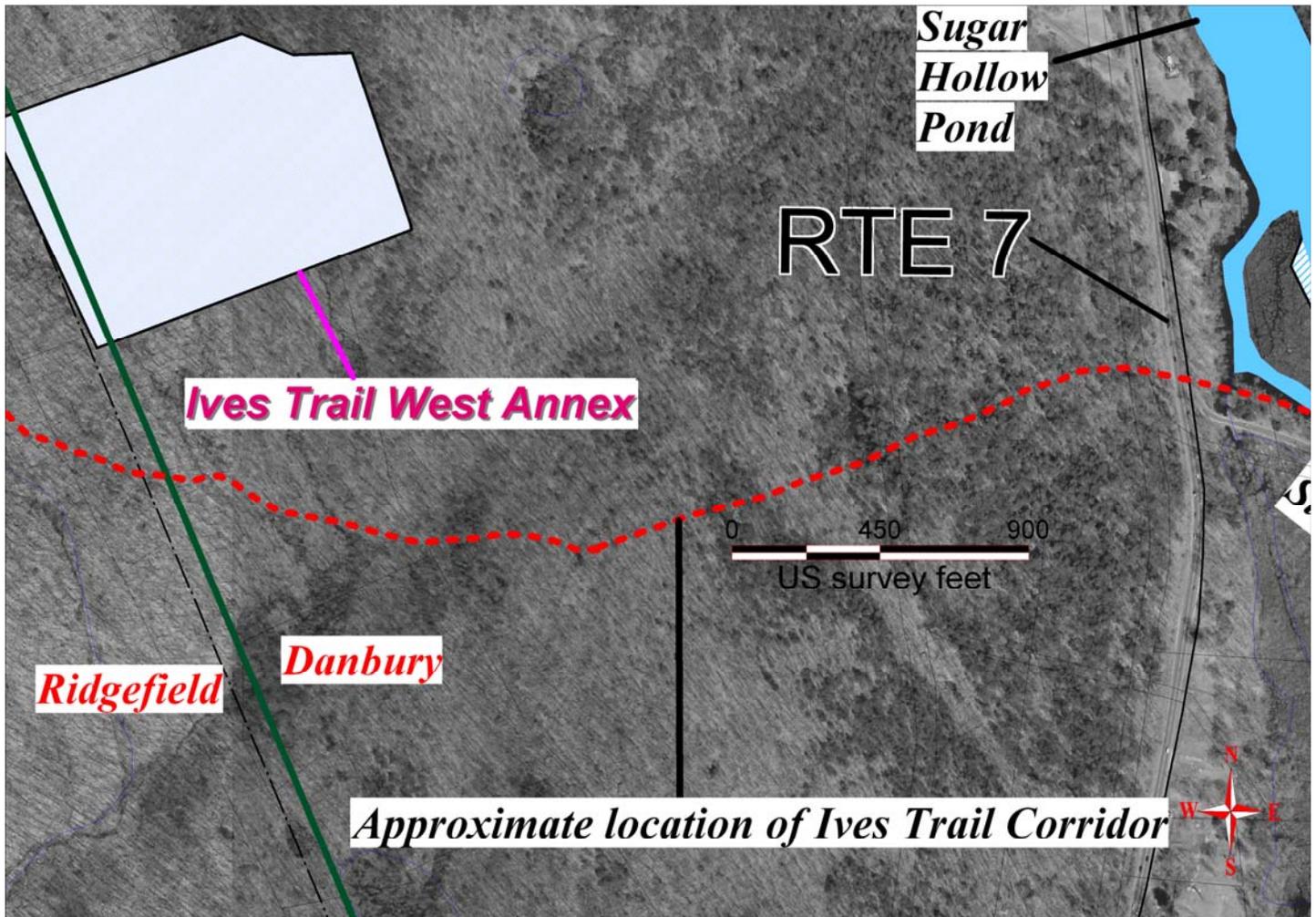
**Figure 7a:** Location of property (green shaded area) that separates Tarrywile Park from Wooster Mountain State Park (as shown on current City Assessor’s Map. Note the triangular southern “connector” that is magnified in Figure 7b, below.



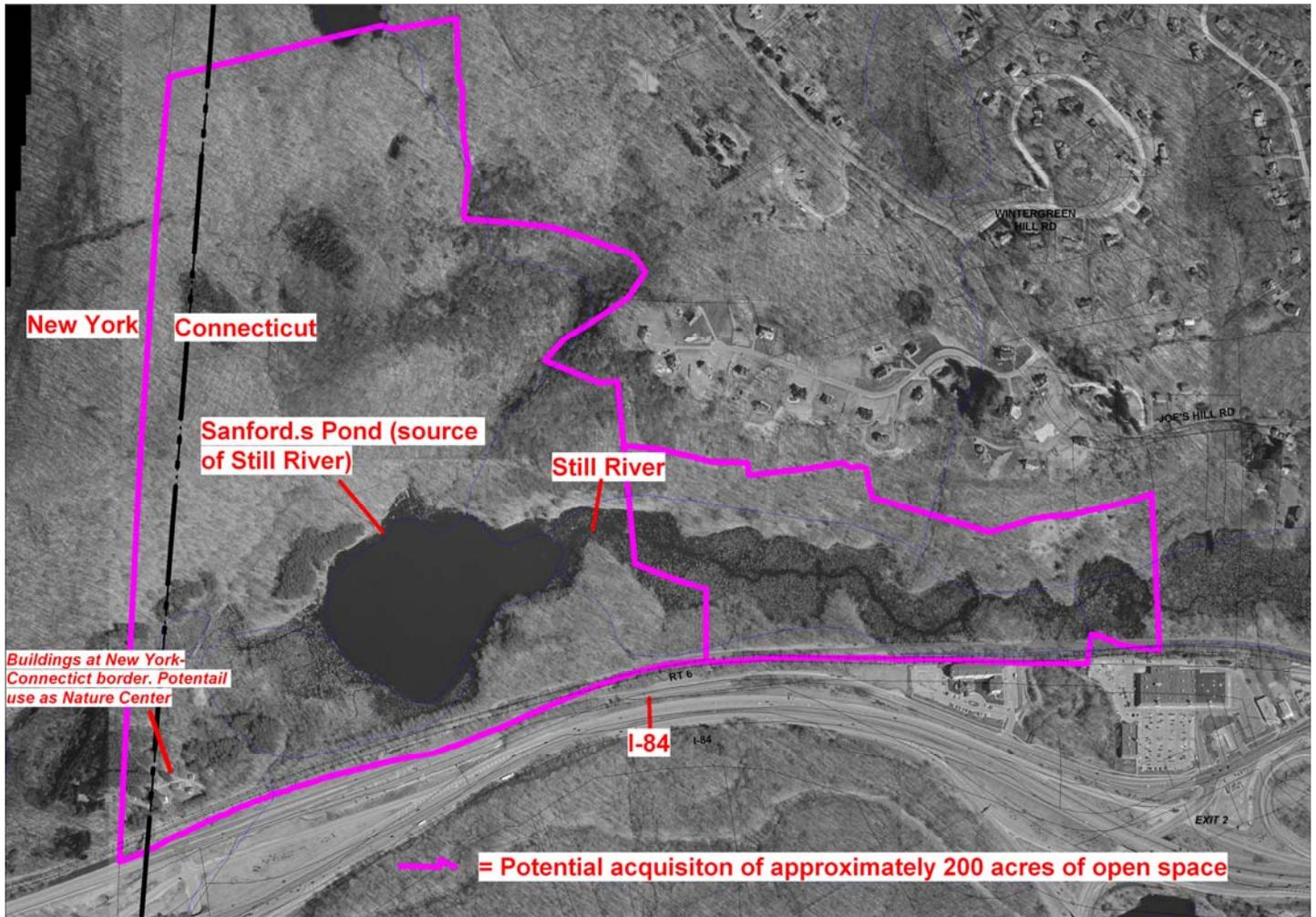
**Figure 7b:** Satellite view of triangular southern “connector” parcel that would link Tarrywile Park with Wooster Mountain State Park. Note alternative Ives Trail layouts (red lines). Also note City Assessor boundary (heavy black Lee Farm triangle”) Lake Waubeeka’s claim of property (purple boundary over Lee Farm triangle) and City acquisition interest (orange)



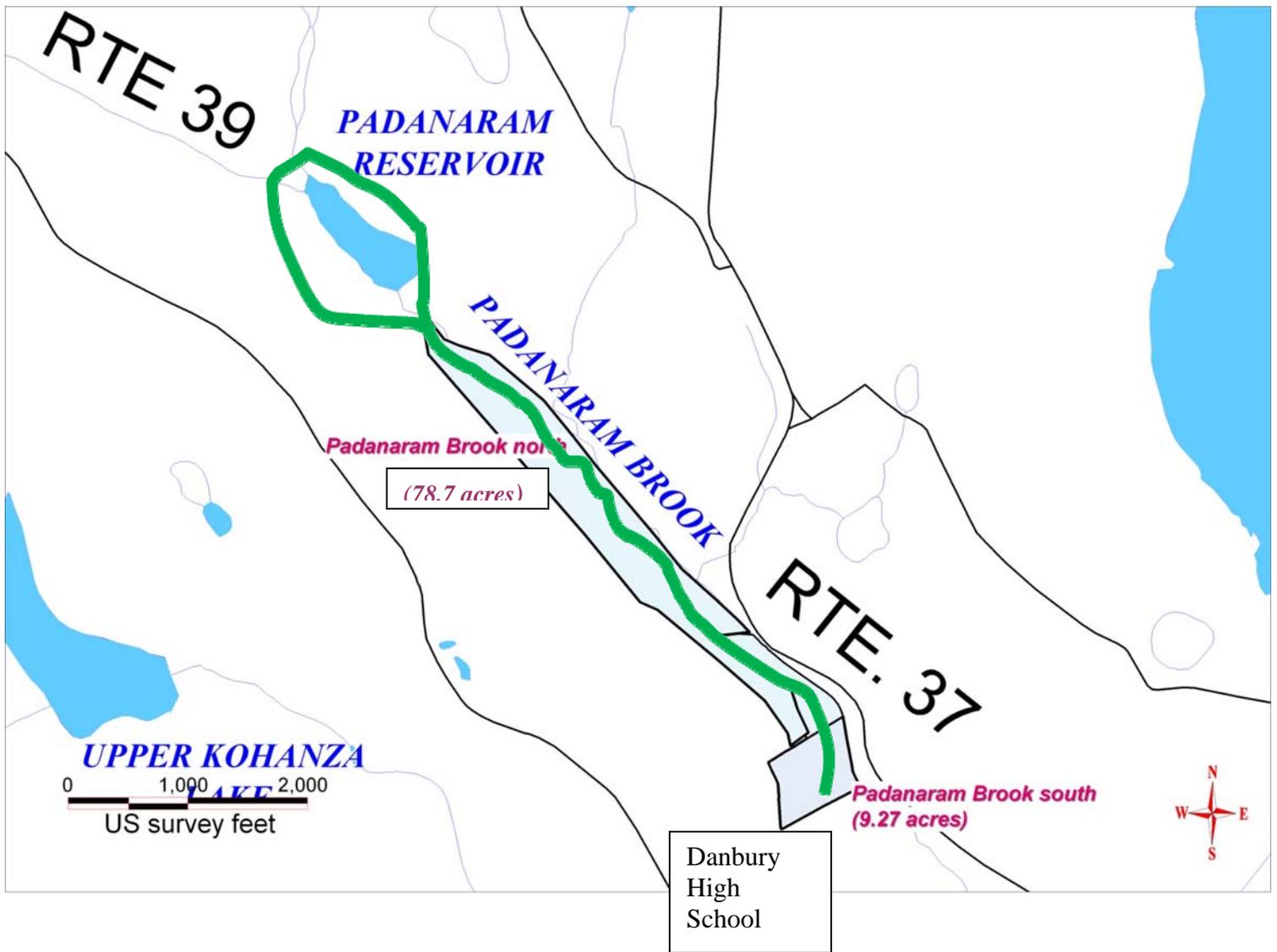
**Figure 8** : Approximate location (shown in blue stripes) of portion of Jackson property needed for wood road connector to Ives Trail



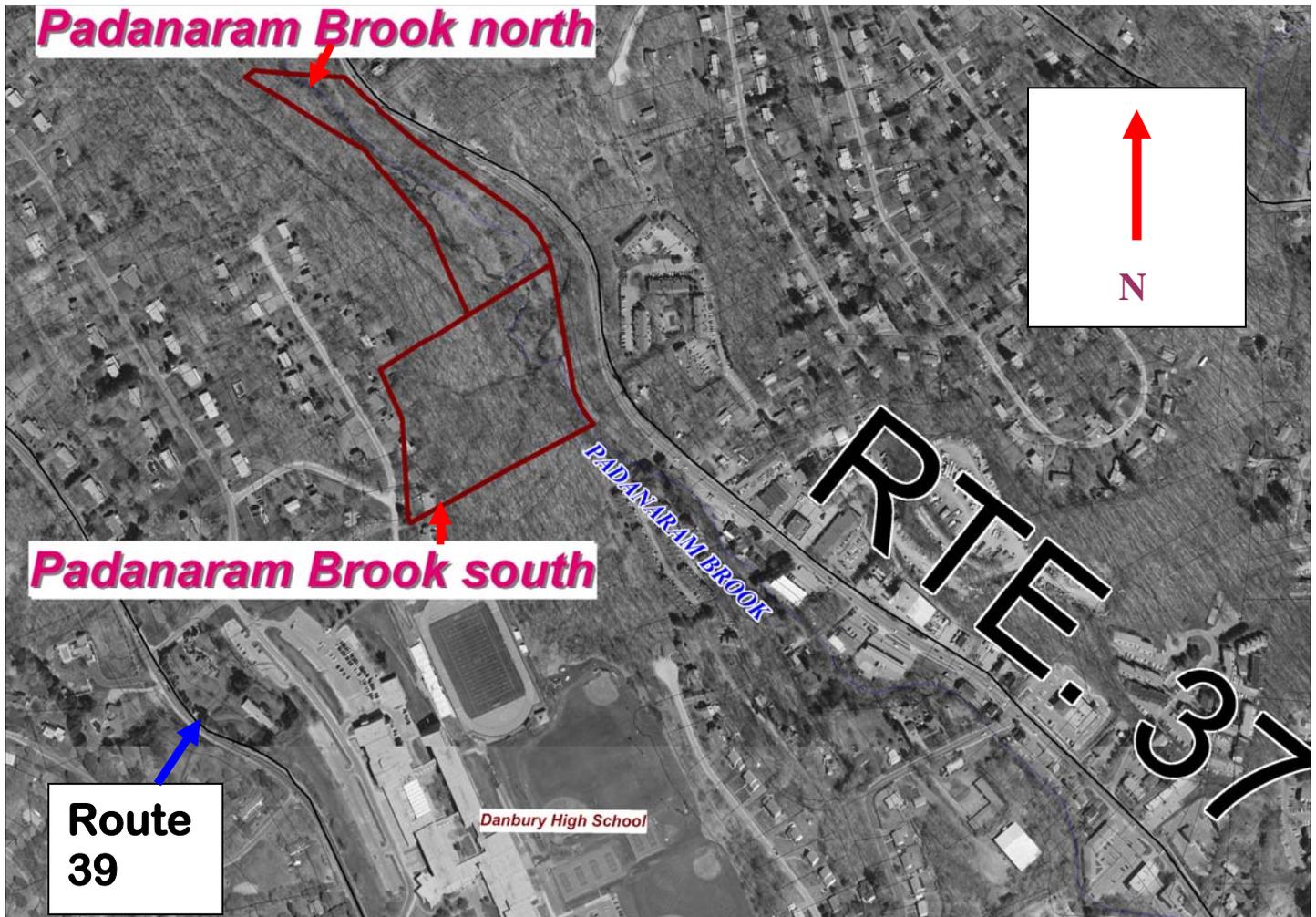
**Figure 9**: Satellite view of Ives Trail West



**Figure 10:** Satellite view of Assessor's lot # A14001, Sanford's Pond



**Figure 11a:** map view of Padanaram north and Padanaram South corridor with potential layout of Greenway trail corridor (green line)



**Figure 11b:** Satellite view of Padanaram South and southern tip of Padanarm North and proximal location of Danbury High School