

# Wellesley Cluster Bylaws Presentation

Wellesley Planning Board  
January 14, 2013

Horsley Witten Group, Inc.  
401-272-1717

Dodson & Flinker  
413-628-4496

# Basic Project Information

Planning Board sees a Zoning Bylaw problem

*Section XVIII B. Cluster Residential Developments*

Not being Used

Several large tracts of land remain

Town issued an RFP for a consultant to diagnose the problem and recommend a solution.

# What is “Cluster” Subdivision

- Started as an attempt to incorporate open space into subdivision design.
- Provided reduced lot sizes and other dimensional standards to incorporate a minimum percentage of open space.
- Maintained the same “property yield”

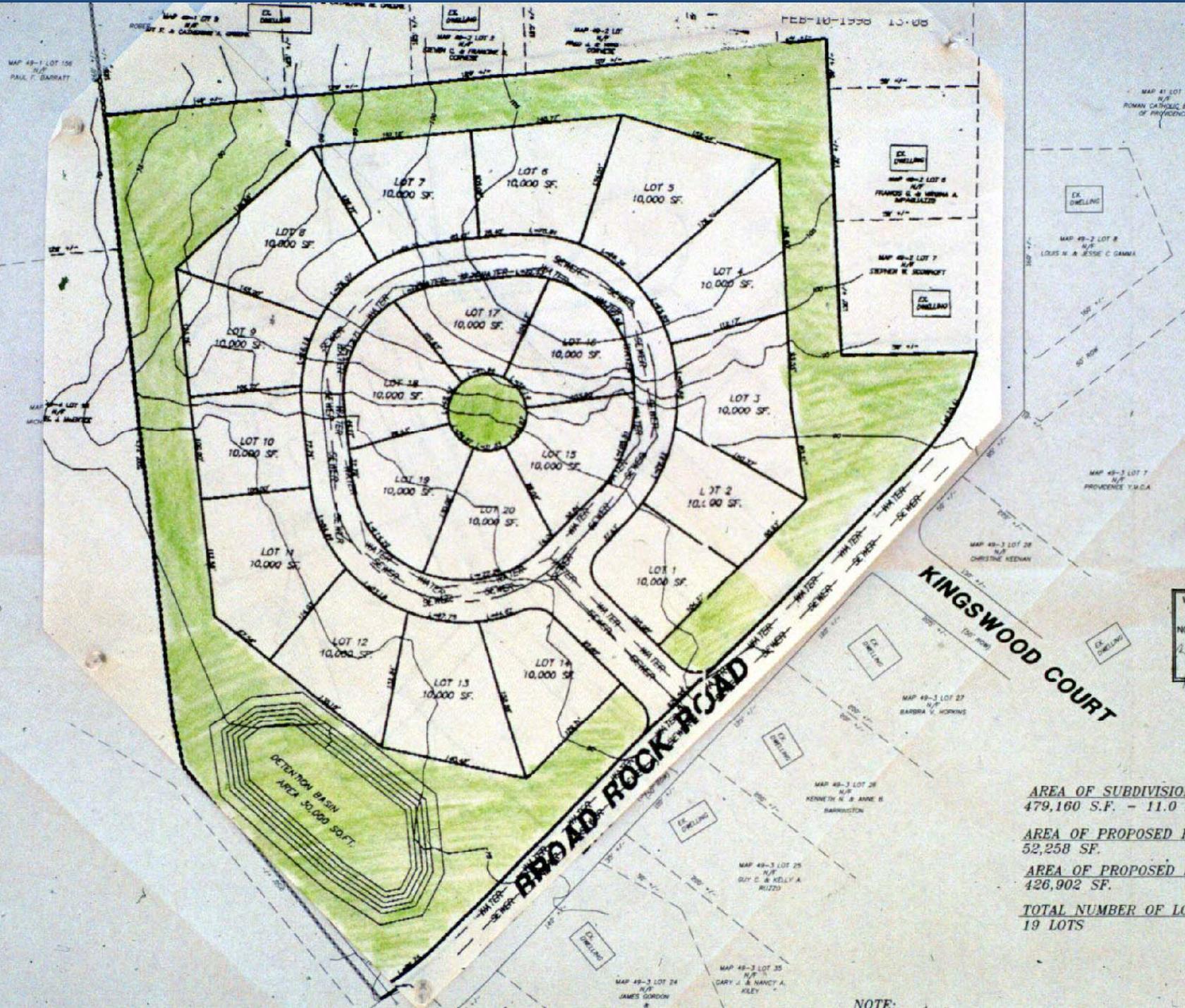
# How did Cluster Subdivision Work?

- “Property Yield” was calculated through either a site plan or a calculation.
- A minimum amount of “open space” was identified (e.g. 50%)
- Lot sizes were reduced and the new plan was developed.

# Problems with “Cluster” Subdivision

- Often required a Special Permit process.
- Little or no guidance on what should be called “open space”
- Little or no guidance on subdivision “design”
- Requirements for property buffers used all the “open space”. No meaningful open space left for residents.

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AREA OF SUBDIVISION  
479,160 S.F. - 11.0 A

AREA OF PROPOSED R  
52,258 SF.

AREA OF PROPOSED L  
426,902 SF.

TOTAL NUMBER OF LO  
19 LOTS

NOTE:

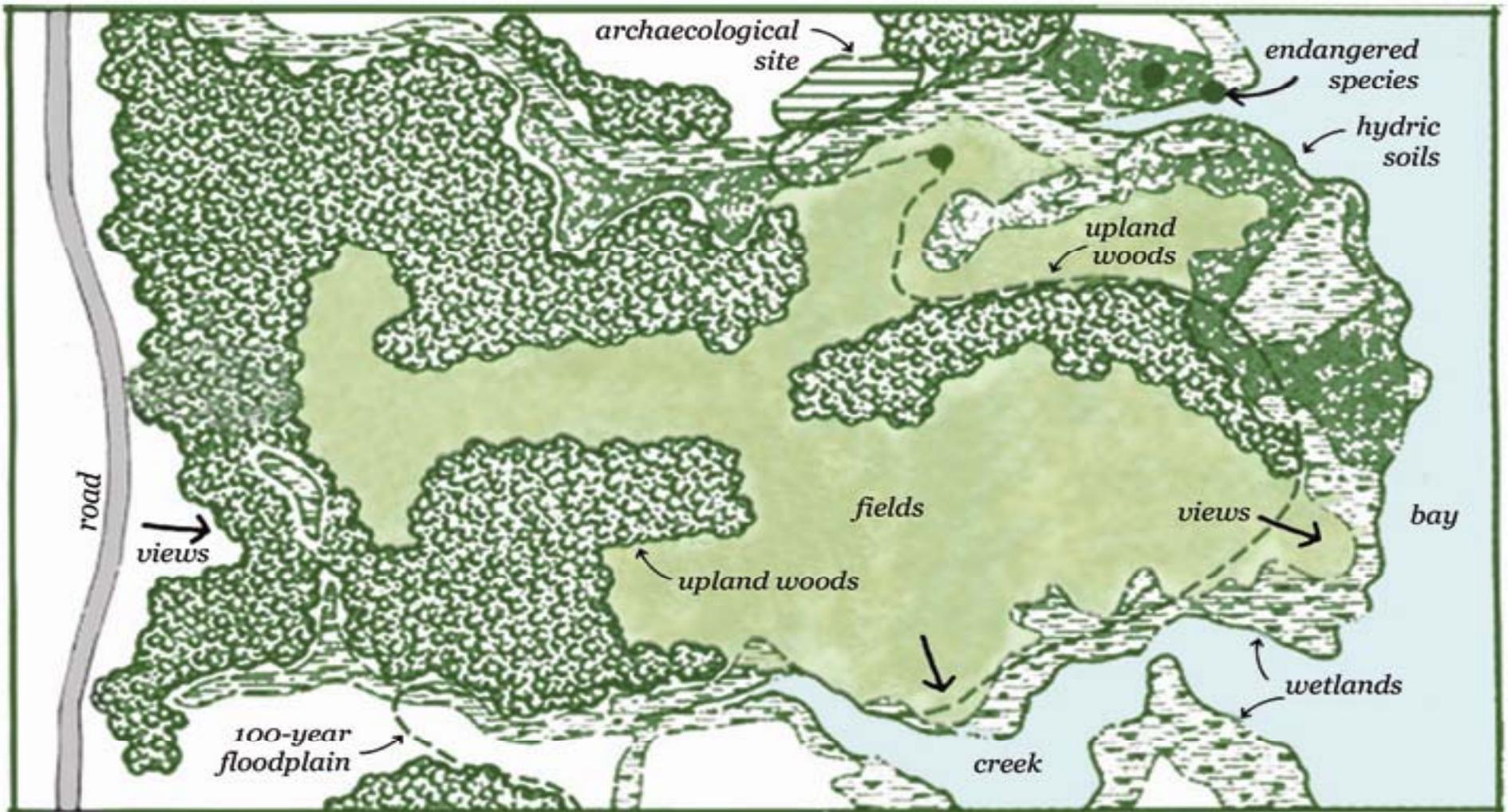


## “Cluster” evolves into “OSRD”

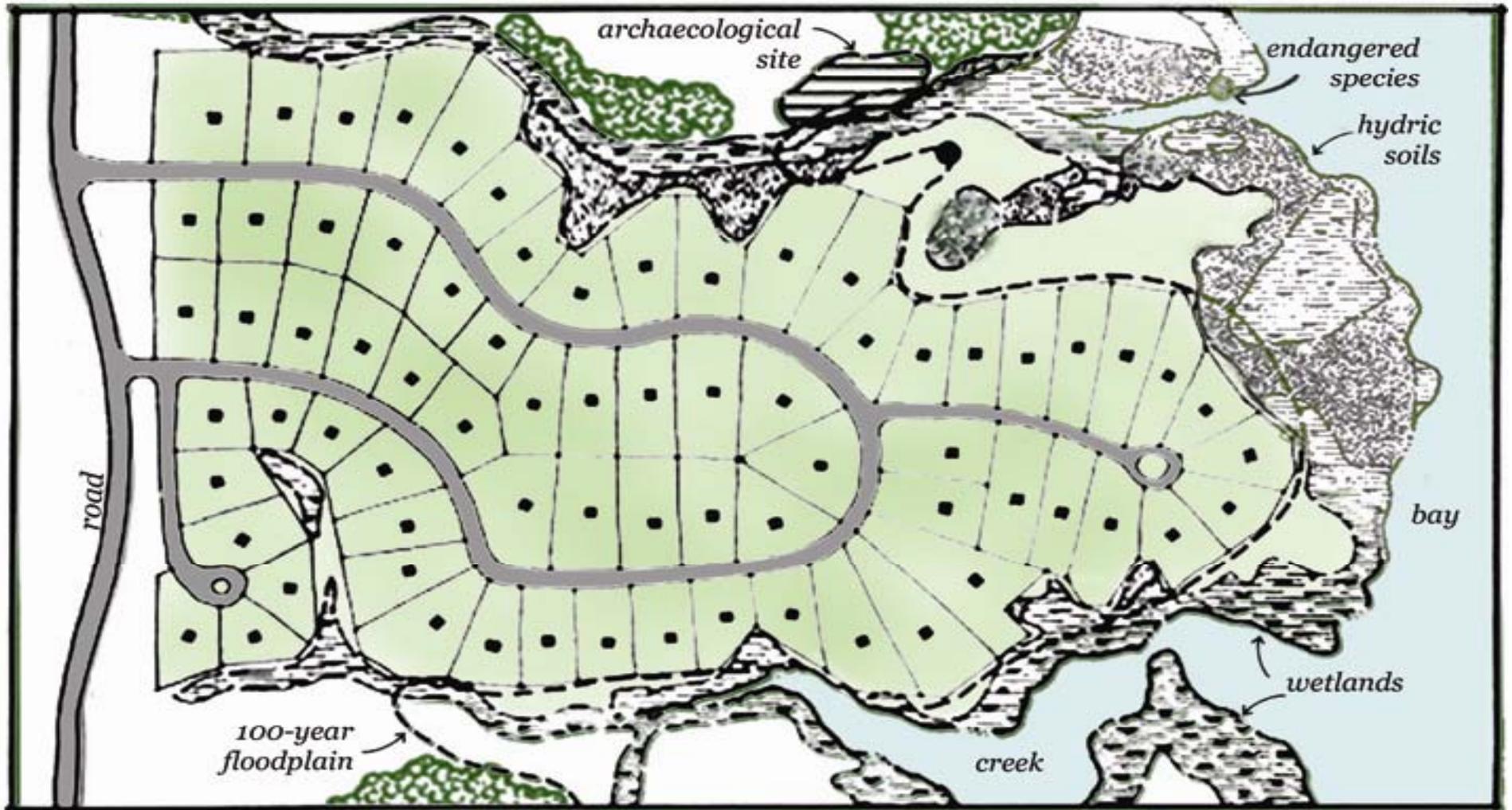
### Open Space Residential Design

- *Uses a site plan to calculate yield.*
- *Provides a much better “design-based” approach.*
- *The “four-step” design process.*
- *Still often required a Special Permit*

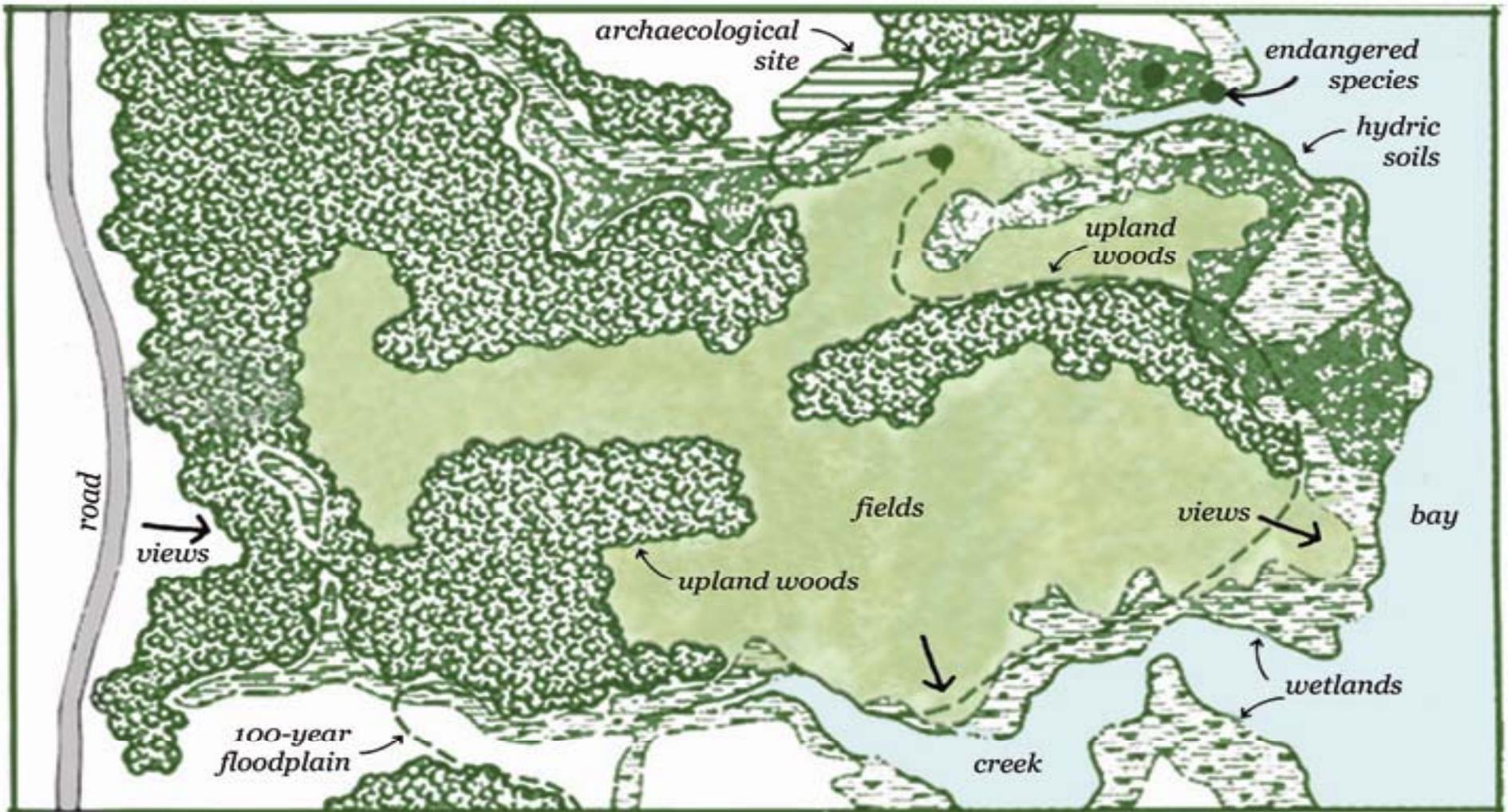
# An Illustrated Example of OSRD



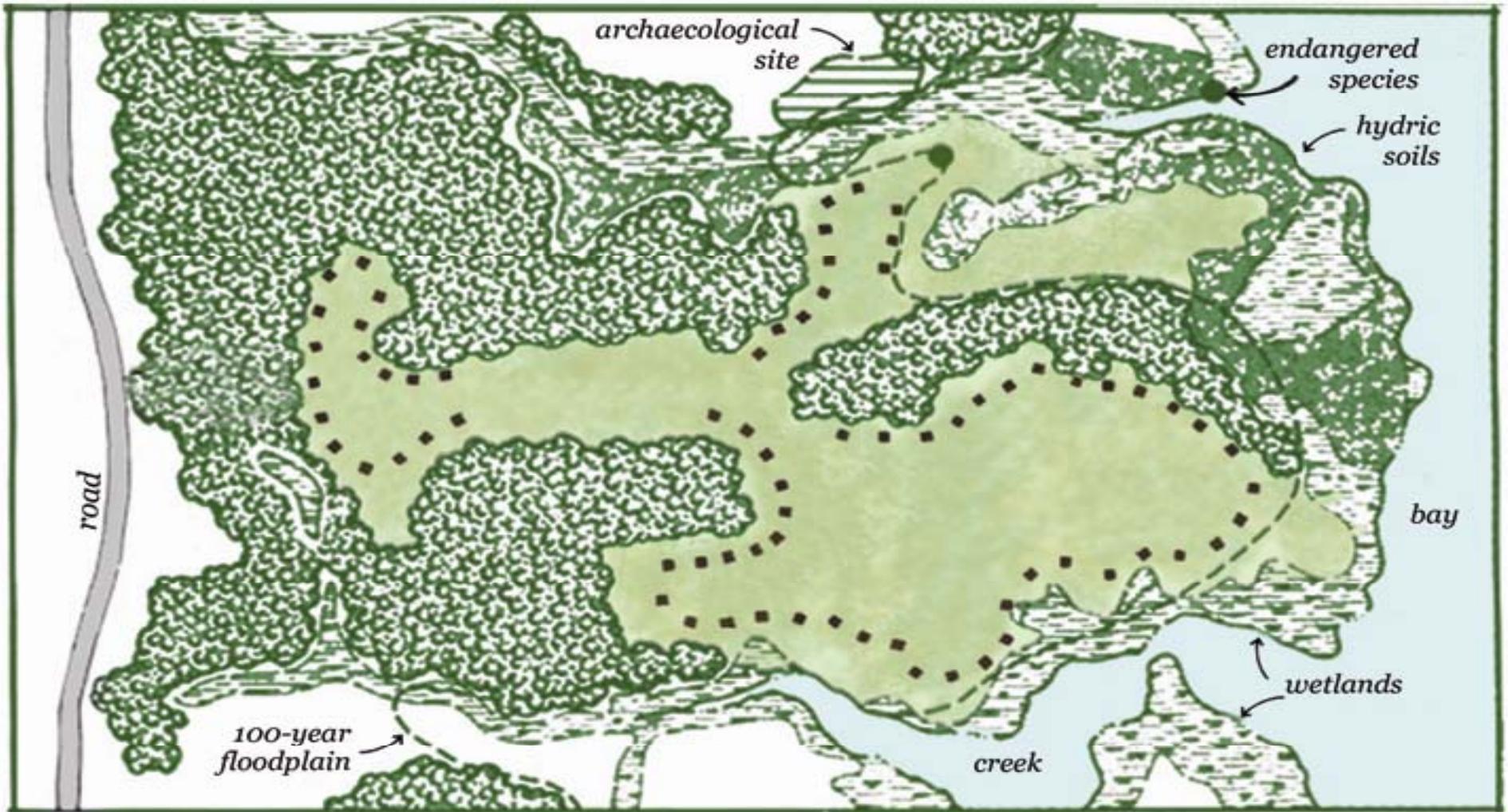
# OSRD BEGINS WITH A YIELD PLAN: How many lots could we get under conventional zoning?



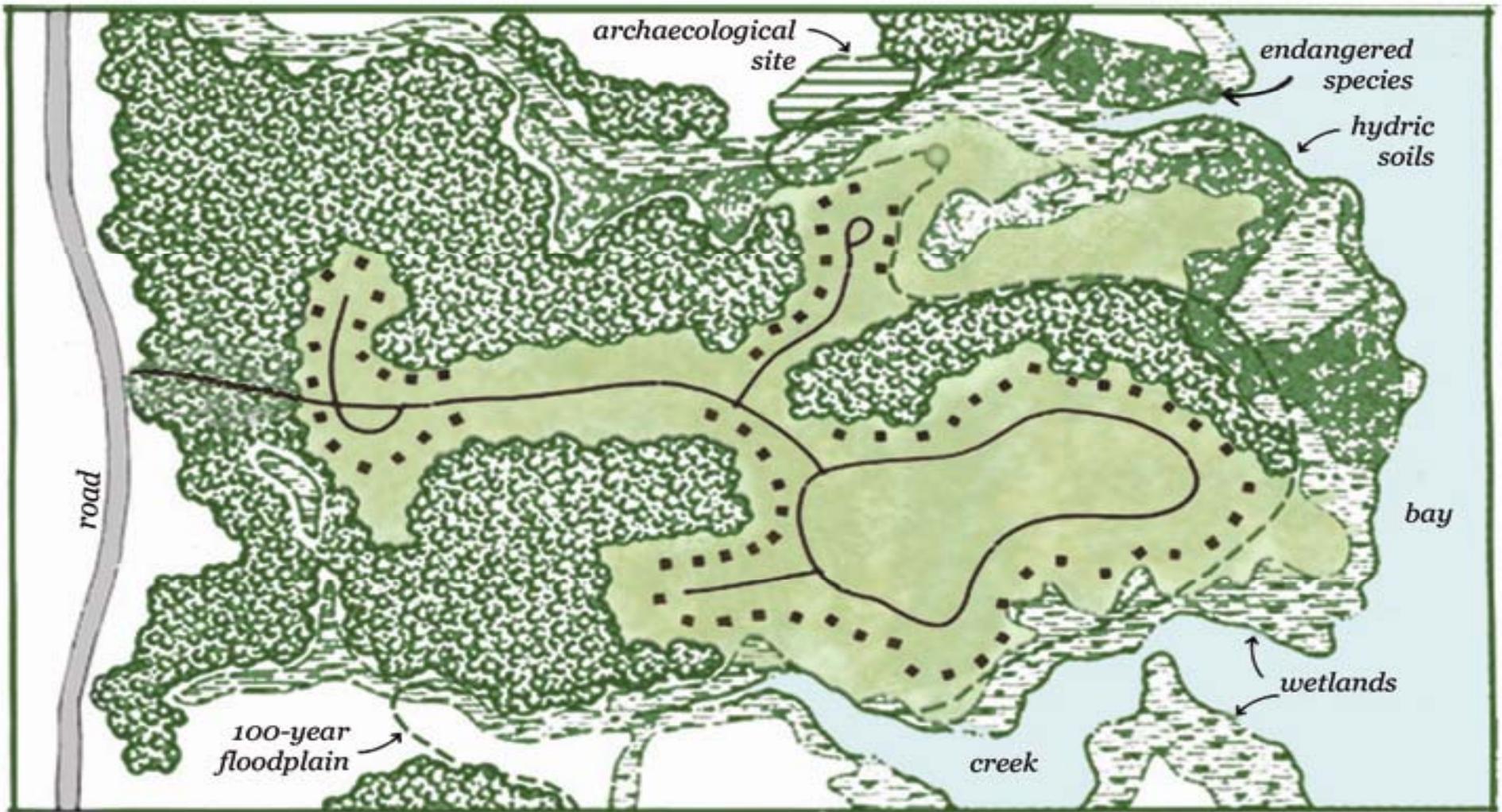
# 1. IDENTIFY VALUABLE RESOURCES and prioritize conservation



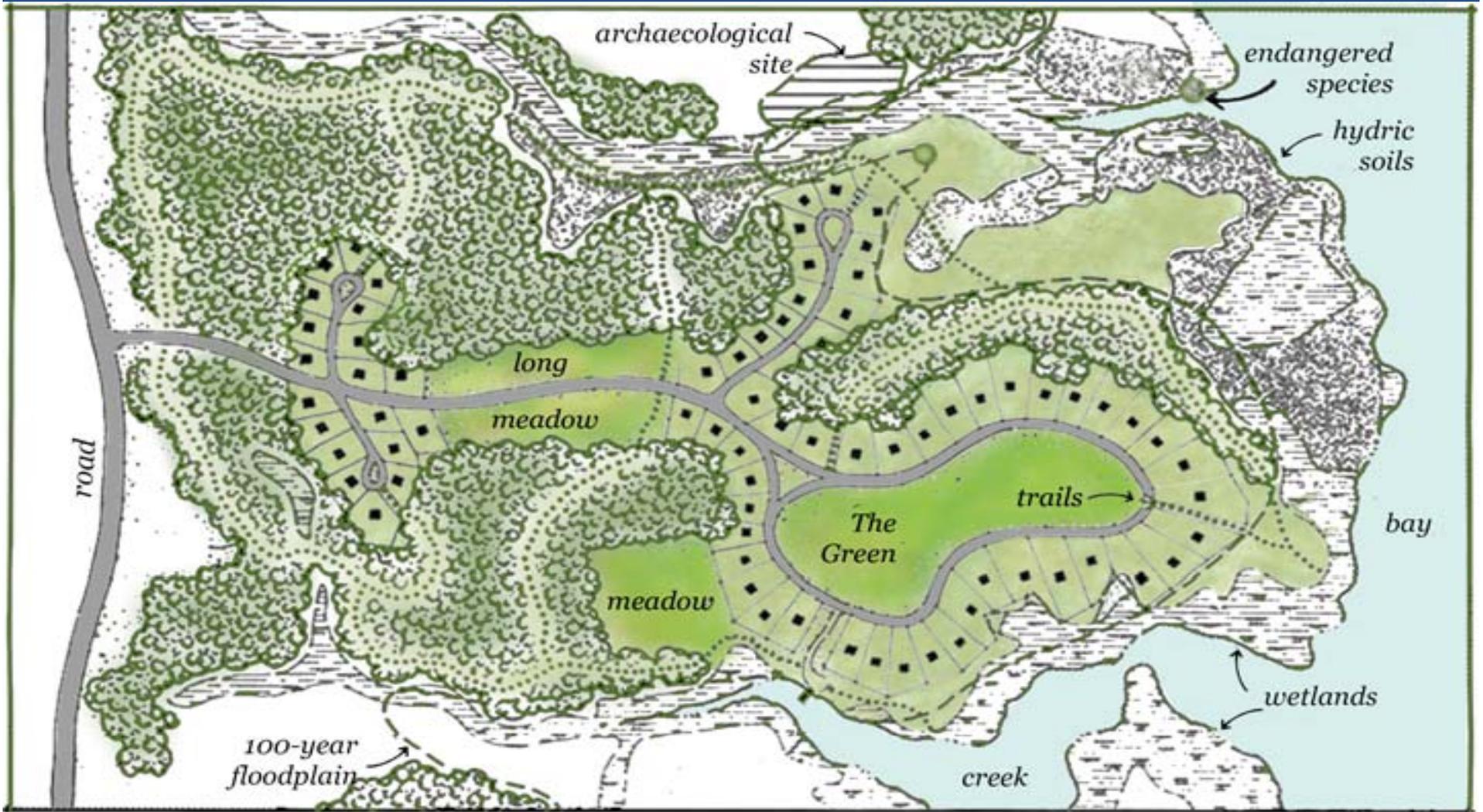
2. PLACE HOUSES in the remaining area in a way that would maximize access and marketability.



**3. ALIGN ROADS AND TRAILS on the site to provide pedestrian and vehicle access.**



4. DRAW LOT LINES around the homes.



# OSRD gets positive results





## “OSRD” evolves into “NRPZ”

### Natural Resource Protection Zoning

- *Calculates yield with a formula. Protected areas are not part of the yield.*
- *Keeps the OSRD four-step design.*
- *Uses a mandatory, “by-right” permit mechanism.*

# The Wellesley Cluster Study

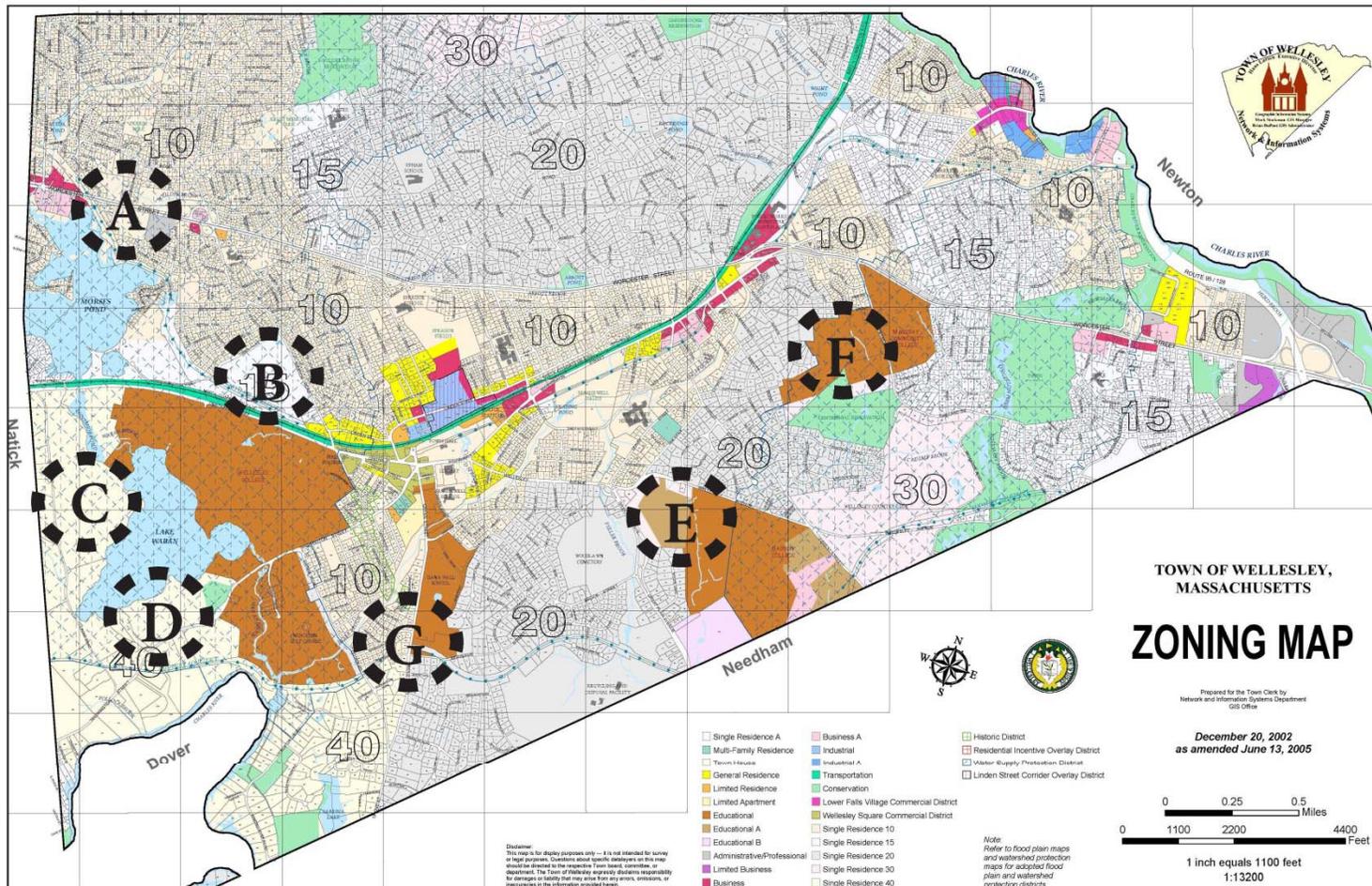
- **Examine several existing sites in town.**  
*What does this teach us?*
- **Audit the Existing Zoning Bylaw**  
*How would this work in Wellesley's framework?*
- **Develop new language**

# WELLESLEY CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT BYLAW STUDY

Prepared for: Planning Board, Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts

Prepared by: Dodson Associates, Ltd., Landscape Architects & Planners in association with  
Horsley Witten Group, Inc., Environmental Science and Engineering

Date: September 30, 2011



### Scenario Site Locations

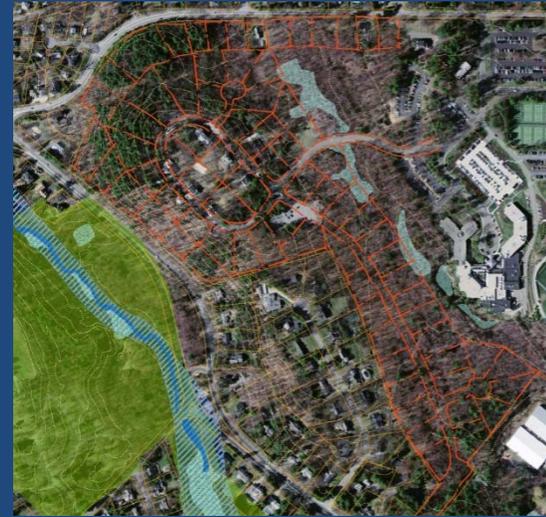
- A. St. James Parcel
- B. Wellesley College North
- C. Wellesley College West
- D. Hunnewell Estate
- E. Babson College
- F. Mass Bay Community College
- G. Grove St. Parcel

### Notes:

1. Plans reproduced in this set include all of the sites studied as part of the project. Several of these were selected for further analysis and include additional plans, including Wellesley College North, Babson College, and the Grove Street Parcel.
2. Plans included in this set have been reduced to fit this format and are not-to-scale. Original maps and drawings were prepared at scales of 1"=200', 1"=100' and 1"= 40'. Base data was obtained from the Wellesley GIS system and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts MassGIS database.



**Wellesley College North**



**Babson College**



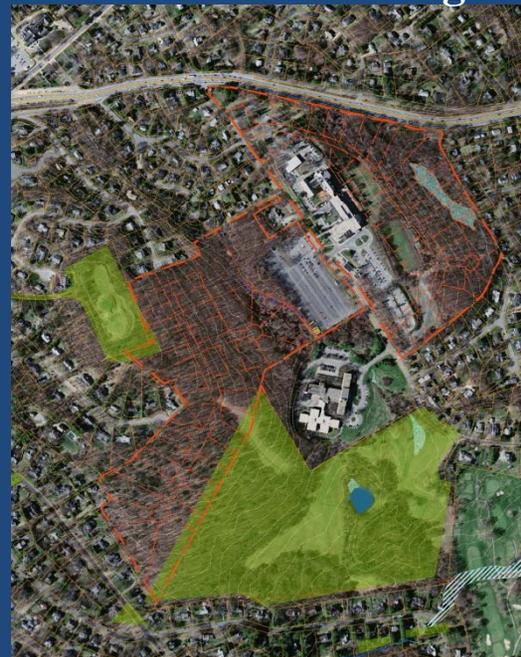
**Wellesley College West**



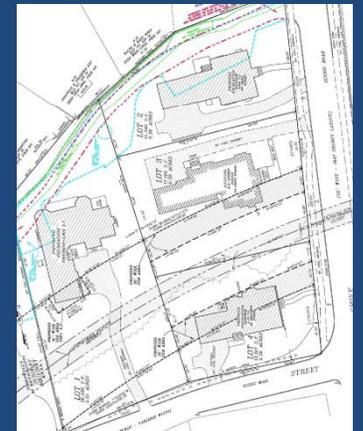
**St. James Parcel**



**Hunnewell Estate**

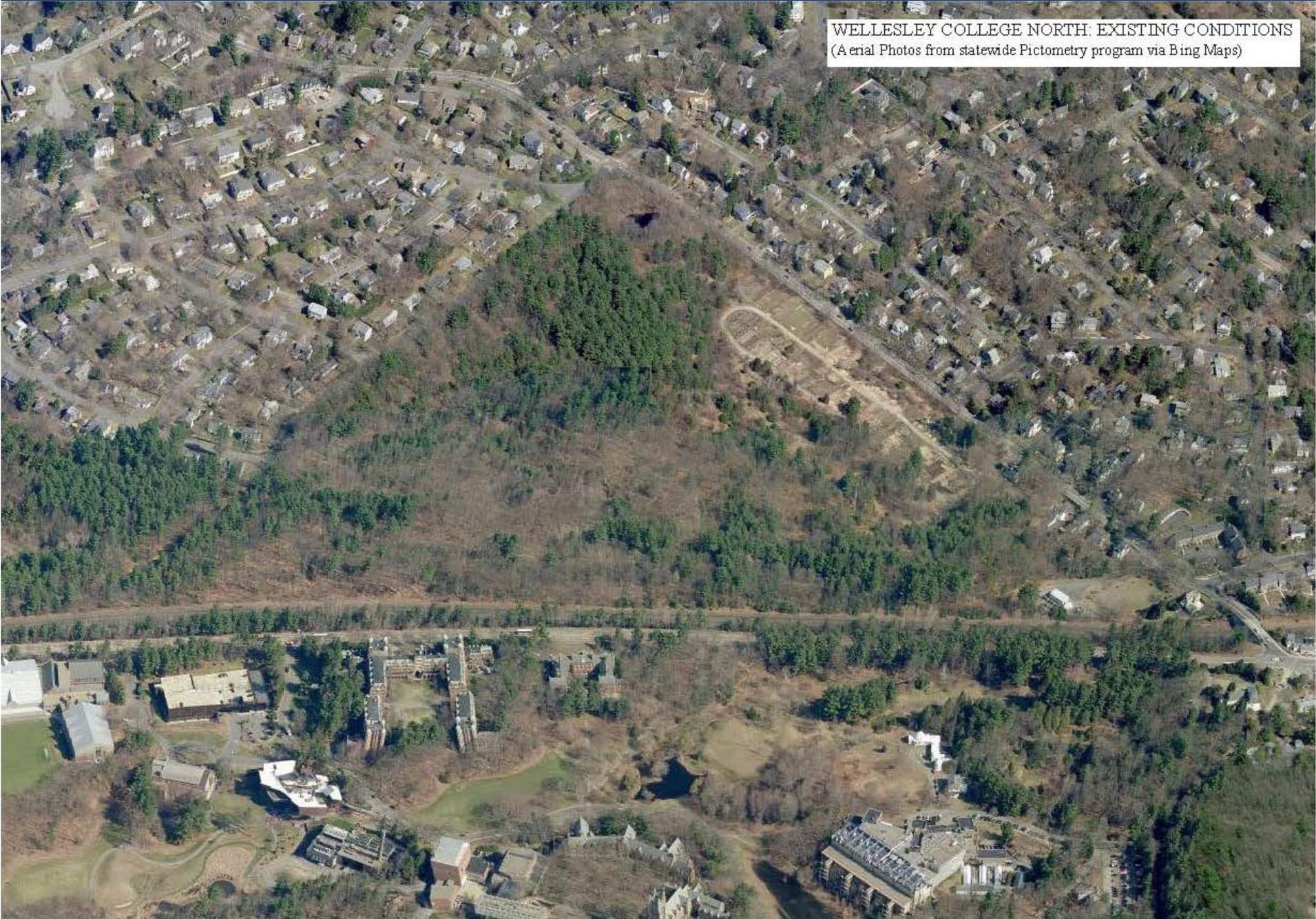


**Mass Bay Community College**



**Grove St. Parcel**

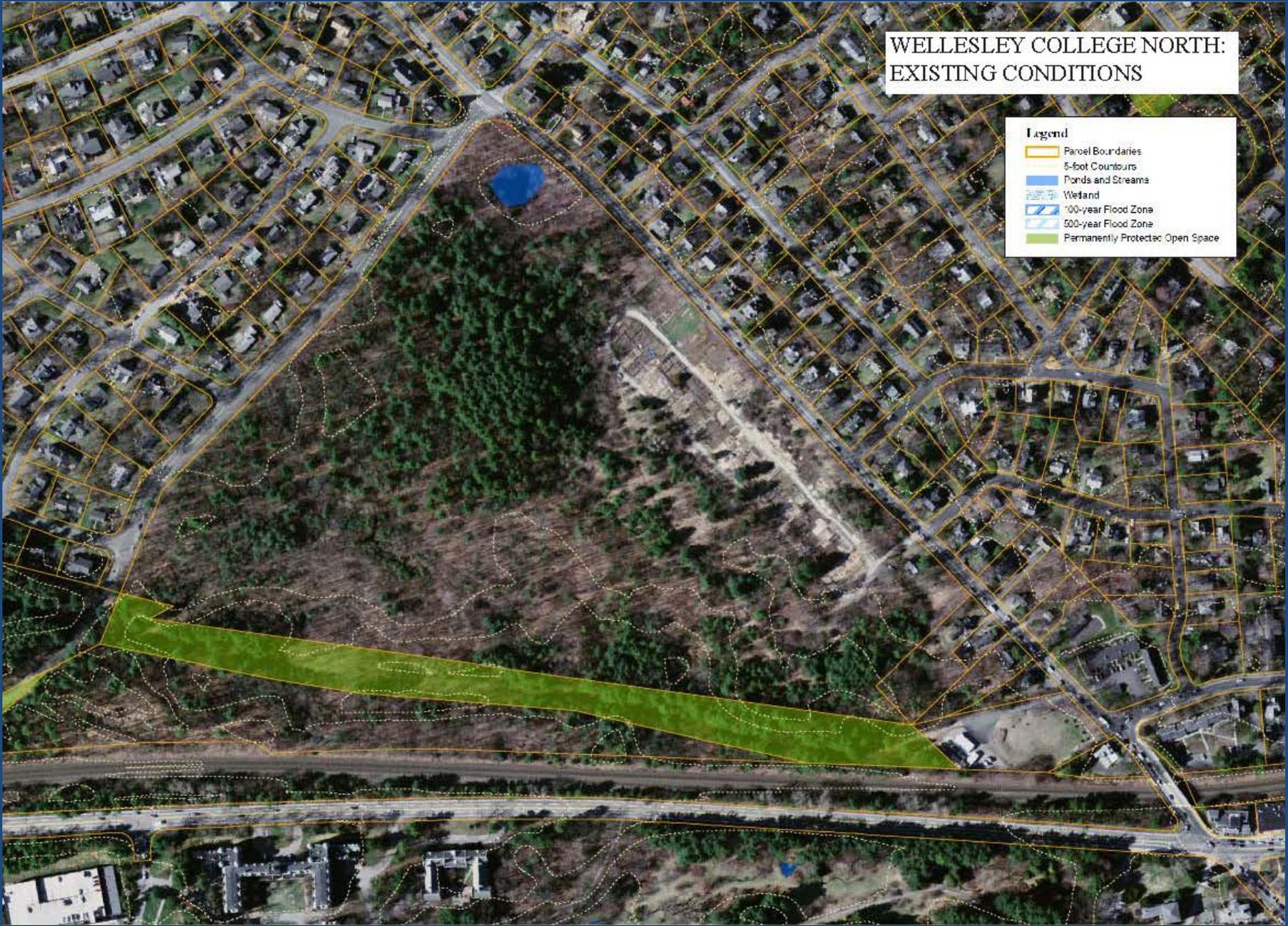
WELLESLEY COLLEGE NORTH: EXISTING CONDITIONS  
(Aerial Photos from statewide Pictometry program via Bing Maps)



# WELLESLEY COLLEGE NORTH: EXISTING CONDITIONS

**Legend**

- Parcel Boundaries
- 5-foot Contours
- Ponds and Streams
- Wetland
- 100-year Flood Zone
- 500-year Flood Zone
- Permanently Protected Open Space



# WELLESLEY COLLEGE NORTH: BUILDOUT UNDER CURRENT ZONING

**Legend**

- Parcel Boundaries
- 5-foot Contours
- Ponds and Streams
- Wetland
- 100-year Flood Zone
- 500-year Flood Zone
- Permanently Protected Open Space

The buildout takes into account limitations posed by wetlands and steep slopes. In general the site is very buildable, with good access from existing roads. Zoning for this district requires a minimum lot size of 15,000 s.f. and 100 foot minimum frontage, resulting in a buildout of 80 house lots.

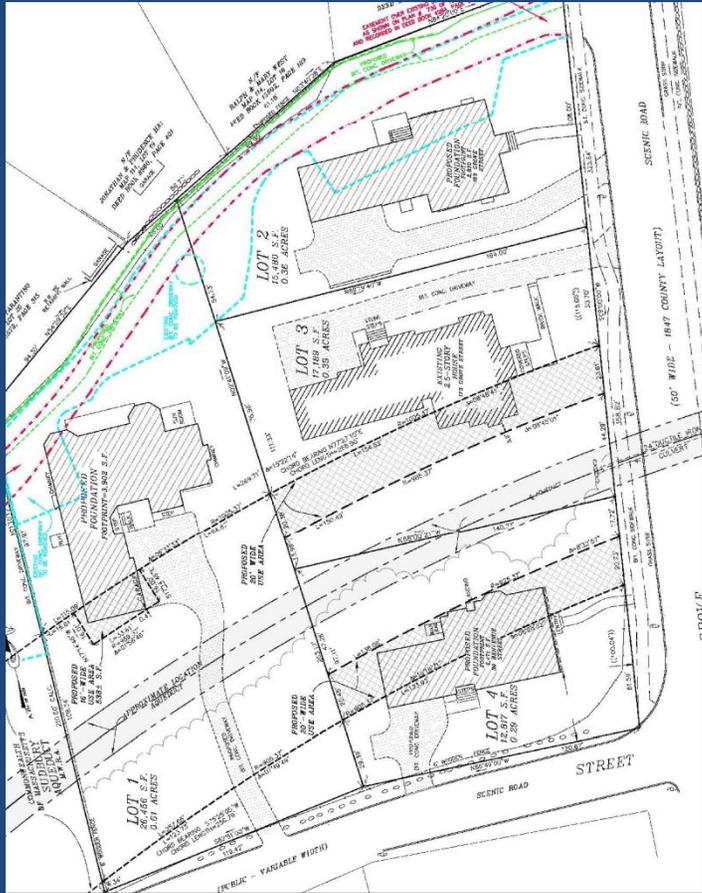


## WELLESLEY COLLEGE NORTH SCHEMATIC CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This plan shows how the recommended development areas could be divided up into 80 houselots, each of which would be 50 feet wide and 100 feet deep. At 5000 square feet, they are a third of the size required by existing zoning, allowing almost two thirds of the site to be preserved as permanent open space. This would include the existing community gardens and land along the aquaduct and root 9. Several new parks have been laid out within the development to provide an attractive setting for the new homes.









# The Wellesley Approach

## Two Zoning Bylaw Amendments

- *NRPZ Cluster*
- *Infill Cluster*

Associated Amendments to Subdivision Regulations

# The Wellesley NRPZ

- Mandatory, by-right provisions for subdivisions with five or more lots
- Determines Yield with the formula approach
- 50% Open Space required w/ conservation easement
- Allowable reductions in lot size, lot width, frontage, and setbacks
- Strict requirements for shared driveways

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# The Wellesley Infill Cluster

- Optional, by-right provisions for subdivisions with two-four lots
- Determines Yield with the site plan approach
- Amount of open space determined as part of the Planning Board review process
- Allowable reductions in lot size, lot width, frontage, and setbacks
- Strict requirements for shared driveways



Questions