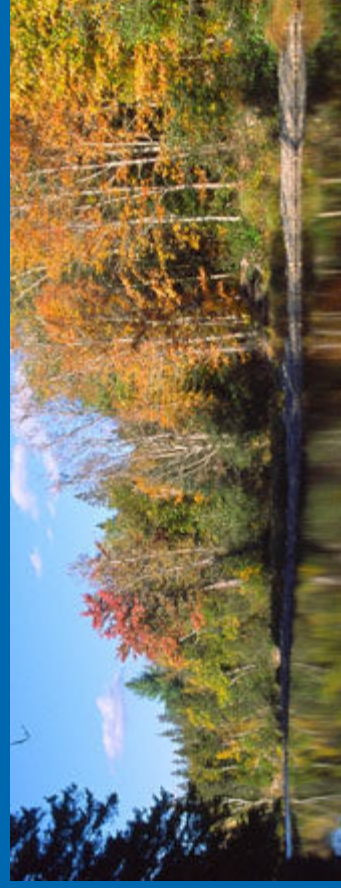


# “Yes We Plan”



## Northern New England Chapter American Planning Association Annual Meeting

September 23, 2009  
Belfast, Maine

# Conservation-Based Affordable Housing

Local Options to stimulate affordable  
housing development



# The Zoning Approaches

➤ Requirements

*Thou Shalt...*

➤ Inducements or

Incentives

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# Requirements



- Mt. Laurel decisions – court order
- Mandatory set asides
- Strict requirements for construction and preservation of affordable housing
- Inclusionary zoning
- Ayuh, but not in Northern New England

# Inducements/incentives, or how can we sweeten the pot?

➤ Seeds

➤ Stems



# Seeds – stimulate development of units naturally – passive approach

- Increase multi-family densities
- Conservation Subdivisions
- Reduced lot sizes
- Reduce infrastructure costs
- Hope the reduced costs



are reflected in reduced home prices, not just higher profits for the developer!

# Stems – support development of affordable units – active approach

- Bonus Units
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Development Transfer Program



# Bonus Units

- Give density bonus for desired outcomes
- Allow additional units for providing dedicated affordable units
- Topsham ordinance adopted in 2006
- Has not been used to-date
- Similar ordinance for elderly housing, has been used by Volunteers of America



# Topsham Affordable Housing Bonus Matrix

Bonus Units per Applicable Unit	Units that are affordable based on percentage of their median income			Dimensional standards based on percentage of affordable units per development
	80- 100% of Median Income	50 - 80% of Median Income	Less than 50% of Median Income	
	.50 unit bonus	.75 unit bonus	1.0 unit bonus	
				10% or Less Affordable Units
				11% -50% Affordable Units
				50% or More Affordable Units
Floor Area Ratio	10% Increase	20% Increase	30% Increase	
Max. Bldg. Height	5% Increase	10% Increase	15% Increase	
Setback Reductions	20% Reduction	35% Reduction	50% Reduction	

# Affordable Housing Transfer of Development Rights



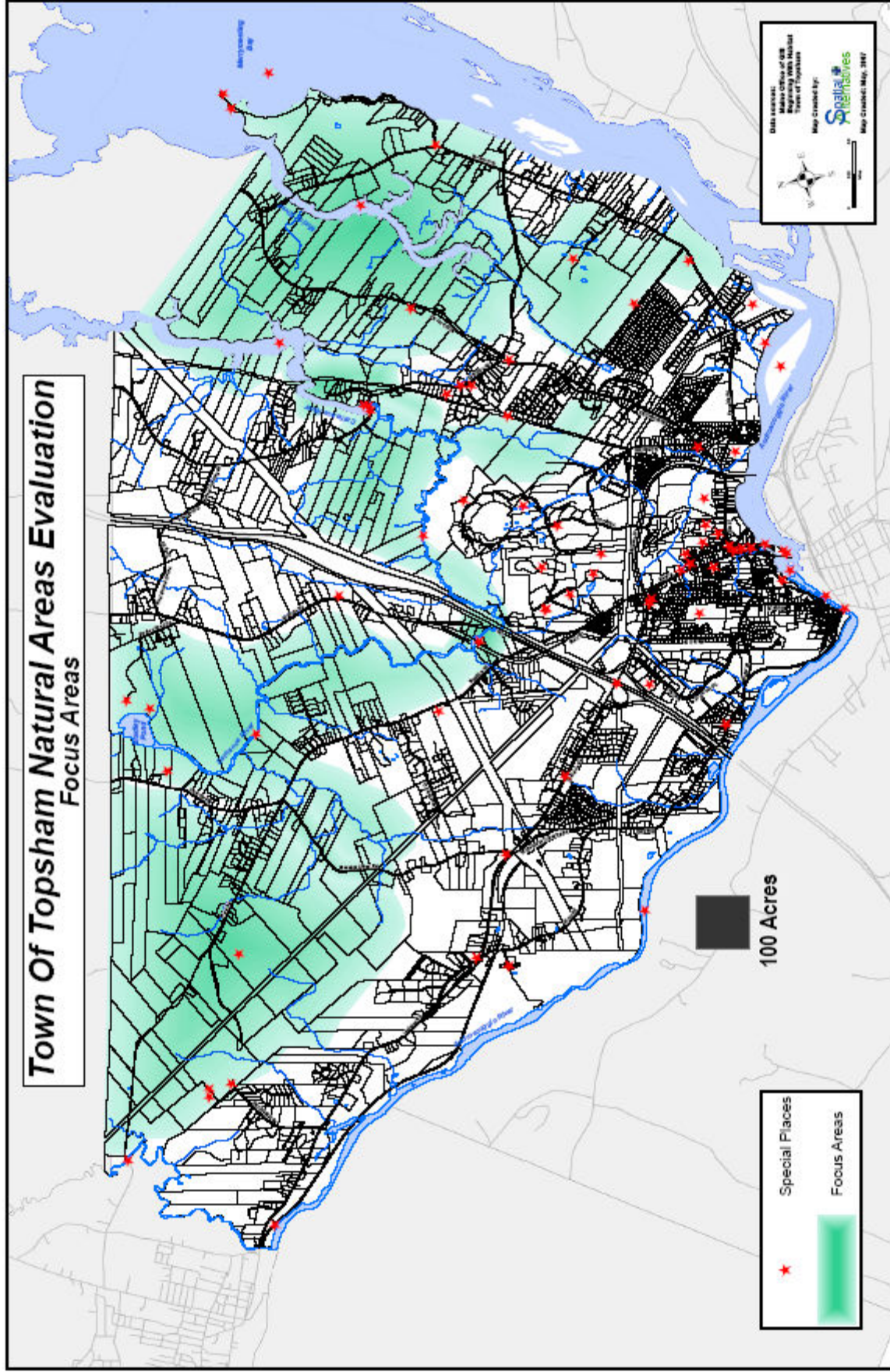
- Create Market for development rights
- Developers purchase rights from willing landowners to build units, with no new land requirements
- Local code can allow additional units be built, as long as they are affordable

# Development Transfer Program

## Topsham's Draft Ordinance

- Tool to direct growth into Growth Area and out of Limited Growth Area
- Similar to TDR, but puts municipality in the mix
- Developer pays town for right to build additional units
- Town uses money to acquire buildable land in targeted conservation/preservation areas – ties in with Natural Areas Plan

# Town Of Topsham Natural Areas Evaluation Focus Areas



# Development Transfer – Options

- Same mechanism could be adapted to promote affordable housing, with funds going into a housing fund
- Bonus units can be required to be affordable – Topsham hasn't done this, but instead hopes that increased density will result in lower costs (See Seeds)
- Town can use funds to acquire land, subsidize construction cost, etc.

# Development Transfer – Affordability Options

- Funds paid to Town could capitalize Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Town could subsidize construction costs for affordable housing
- Town could acquire land for affordable housing construction
- Town could subsidize cost of infrastructure in new development
- Require bonus units to be affordable



# Summary of land use options

- Communities can take a hard position by requiring affordability
- Communities can try to lead or encourage the market by lowering the cost of development, and hope that affordable housing results
- Communities can take an active role in the marketplace, by providing incentives to achieve affordable goals

# FMI

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