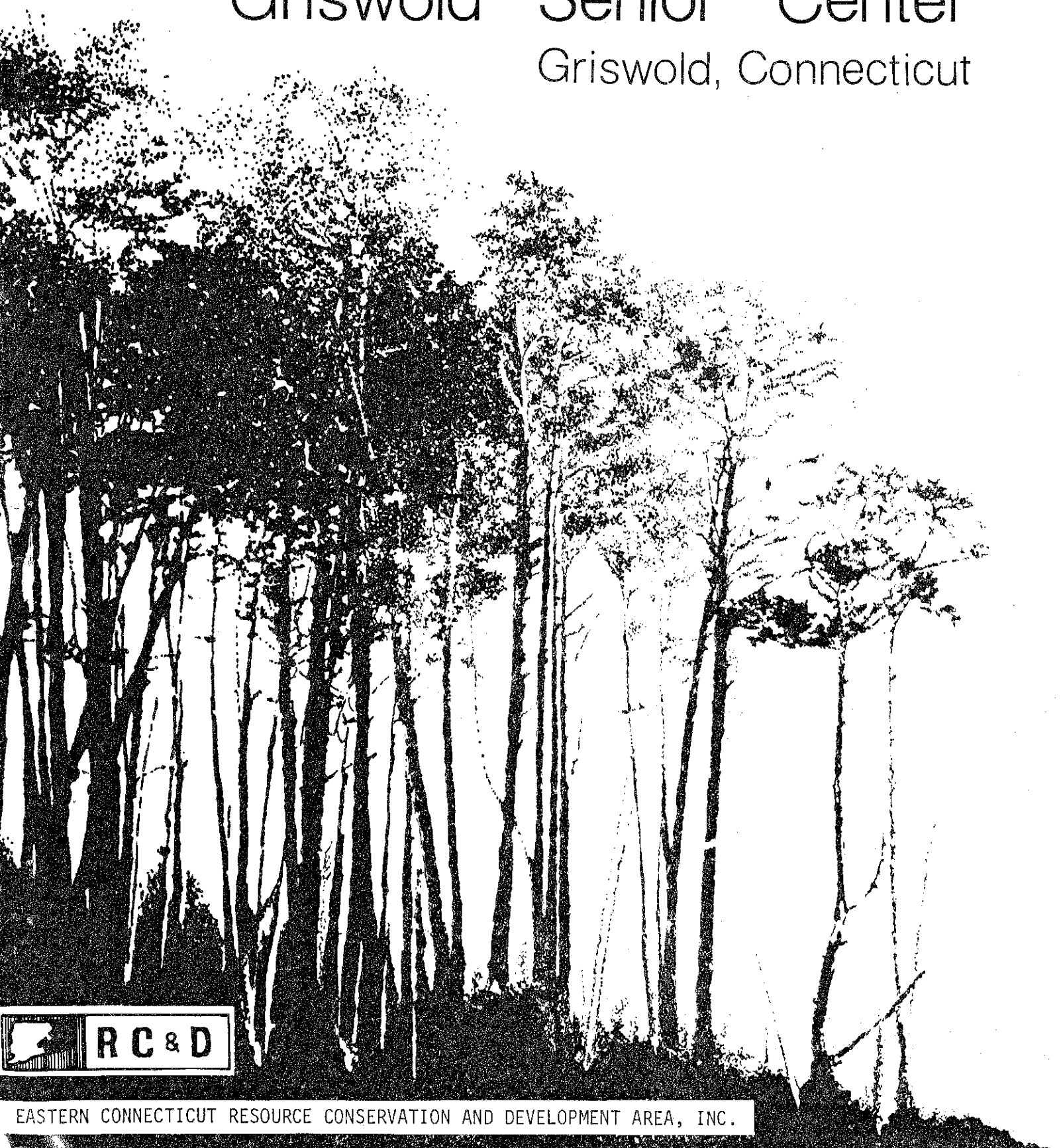


Environmental Review Team Report

Griswold Senior Center

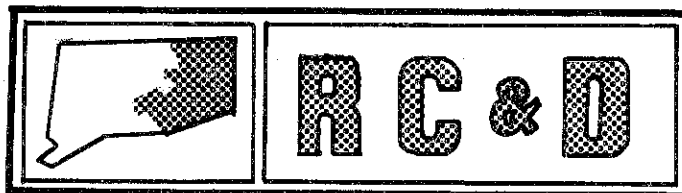
Griswold, Connecticut



EASTERN CONNECTICUT RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.

Environmental Review Team
Report
on

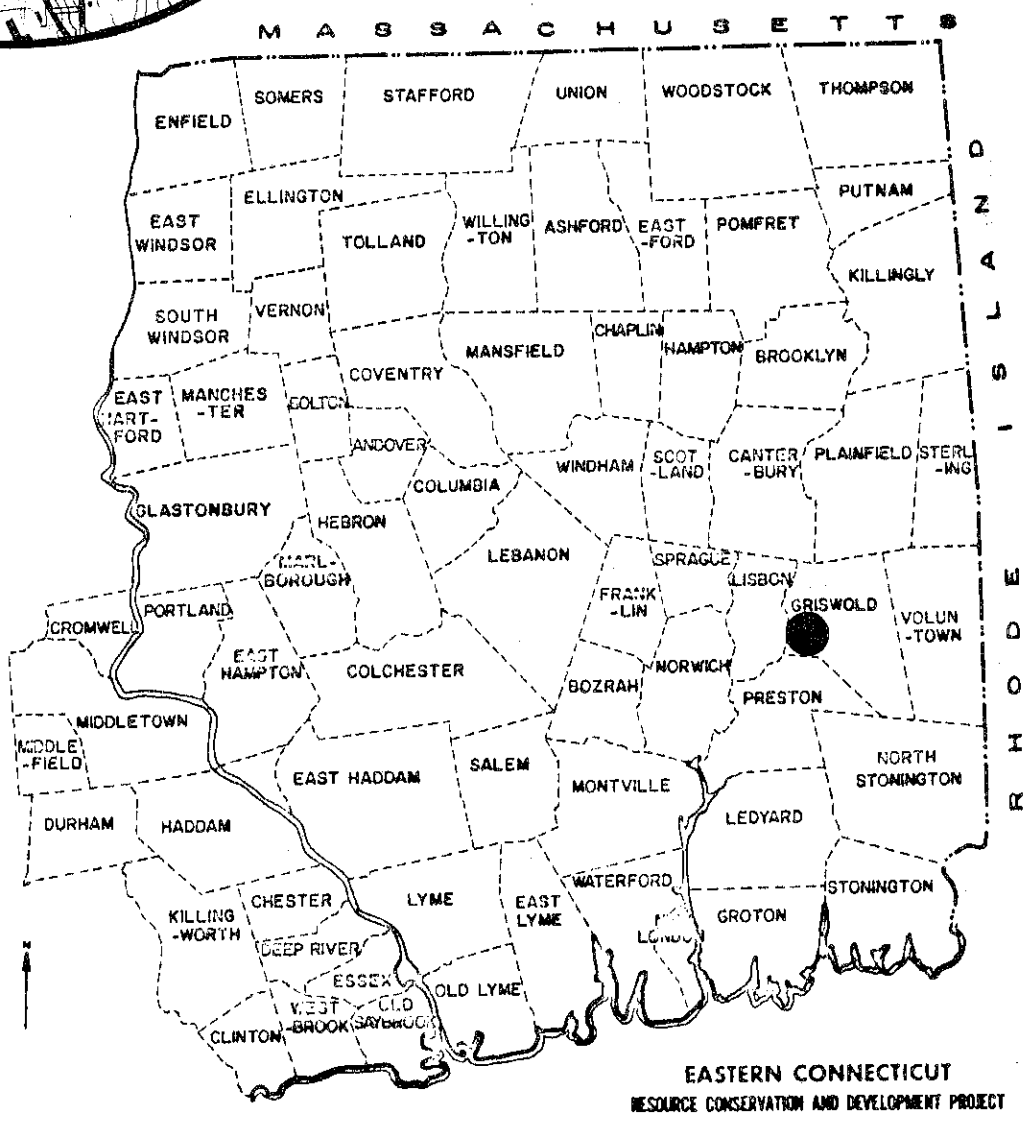
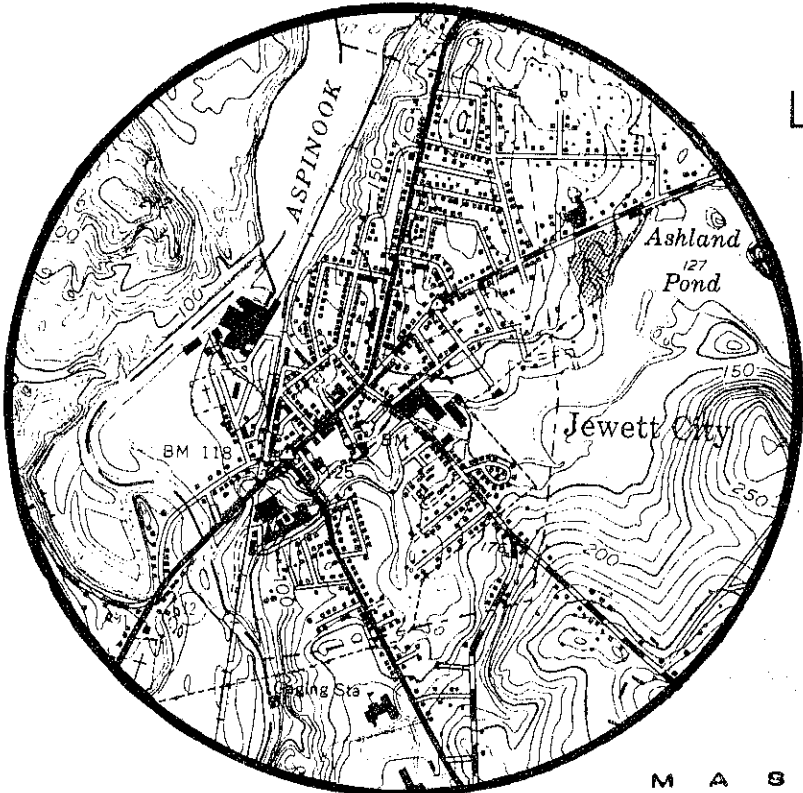
Griswold Senior Center
Griswold, Connecticut
November 1979



eastern connecticut resource conservation & development area
environmental review team
139 boswell avenue
norwich, connecticut 06360

Location of Study Site

GRISWOLD SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER
GRISWOLD, CONNECTICUT



ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT
ON
GRISWOLD SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTER
GRISWOLD, CONNECTICUT

This report is the outgrowth of a request from the First Selectman of Griswold, to the New London County Soil and Water Conservation District (S&WCD). The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Project Executive Council also approved the request as a project measure which was subsequently reviewed by the Environmental Review Team (ERT).

The soils of the site were mapped by a soil scientist from the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service (SCS). Reproductions of the soil survey map, a table of soils limitations for certain land uses, and a topographic map showing the property boundaries were forwarded to all members of the Team prior to their review of the site.

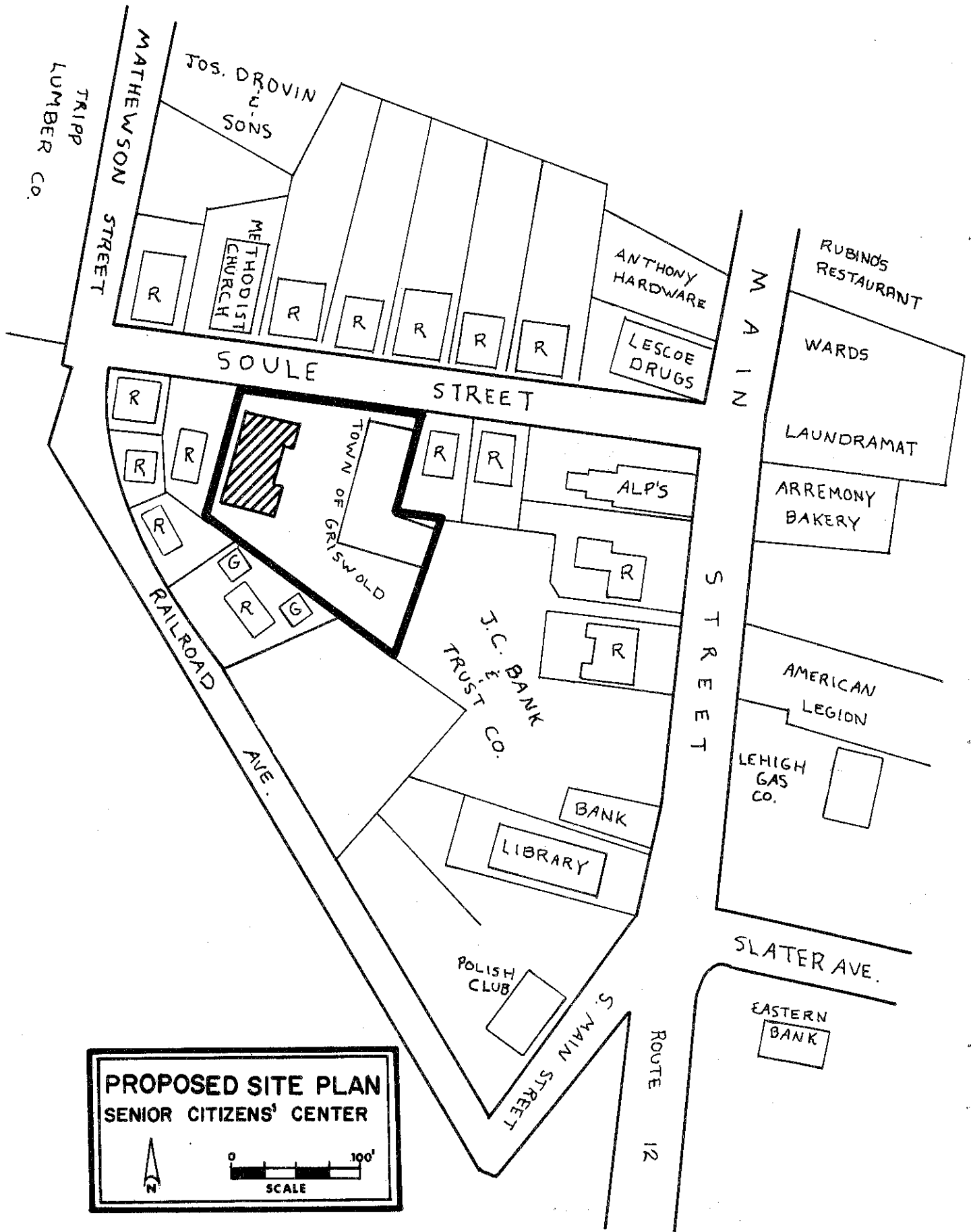
The Environmental Review Team that field-checked the property consisted of the following personnel: Gary Domian, District Conservationist, SCS; Michael Zizka, Geologist, DEP; David Miller, Climatologist, Connecticut Agricultural Extension Service; Gerhard Amt, Regional Planner, Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency; and Jeanne Shelburn, ERT Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area.

The Team met and reviewed the site on Thursday, September 27, 1979. Reports from each Team member were sent to the ERT Coordinator for review and summarization for this final report.

This report is not meant to compete with private consultants by supplying site designs or detailed solutions to development problems. This report identifies the existing resource base and evaluates its significance to the proposed development and also suggests considerations that should be of concern to any developers and the Town of Griswold. The results of this Team action are oriented toward the development of a better environmental quality and the long-term economics of the land use.

The Eastern Connecticut RC&D Project Committee hopes you will find this report of value and assistance in making your decisions on this particular site.

If you require any additional information, please contact: Ms. Jeanne Shelburn, Environmental Review Team Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Project, 139 Boswell Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360, 889-2324.



**PROPOSED SITE PLAN
SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTER**

0 100'
SCALE

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposed project involves the construction by the Town of Griswold of a senior citizens' center on a half-acre lot on Soule Street in the Borough of Jewett City. The property is owned by the Town and is vacant, except for a garage on the eastern border which houses the local ambulance. This property was the location of the former town hall until the structure was demolished several years ago. It is now used for parking for neighboring residences, and a driveway along the eastern edge of the property provides access to the ambulance garage.

The proposed senior citizens center involves a 4,000 square foot structure, containing a large social room, handicraft room, kitchen, pool room, office and health room, and toilet facilities for the handicapped. In addition, the site will accommodate parking for 45 vehicles. The building will be located at the western end of the site, facing east.

Griswold senior citizens presently use a rented room in a commercial building on Main Street in Jewett City for social activities. The facilities are inadequate, and the financial arrangement is unsatisfactory. The senior citizens desire a larger, better equipped facility in the same general area.

This project has had widespread local support and has received a favorable review under A-95 review procedures. It is consistent with local, state, and federal policies which support facilities and programs for the elderly.

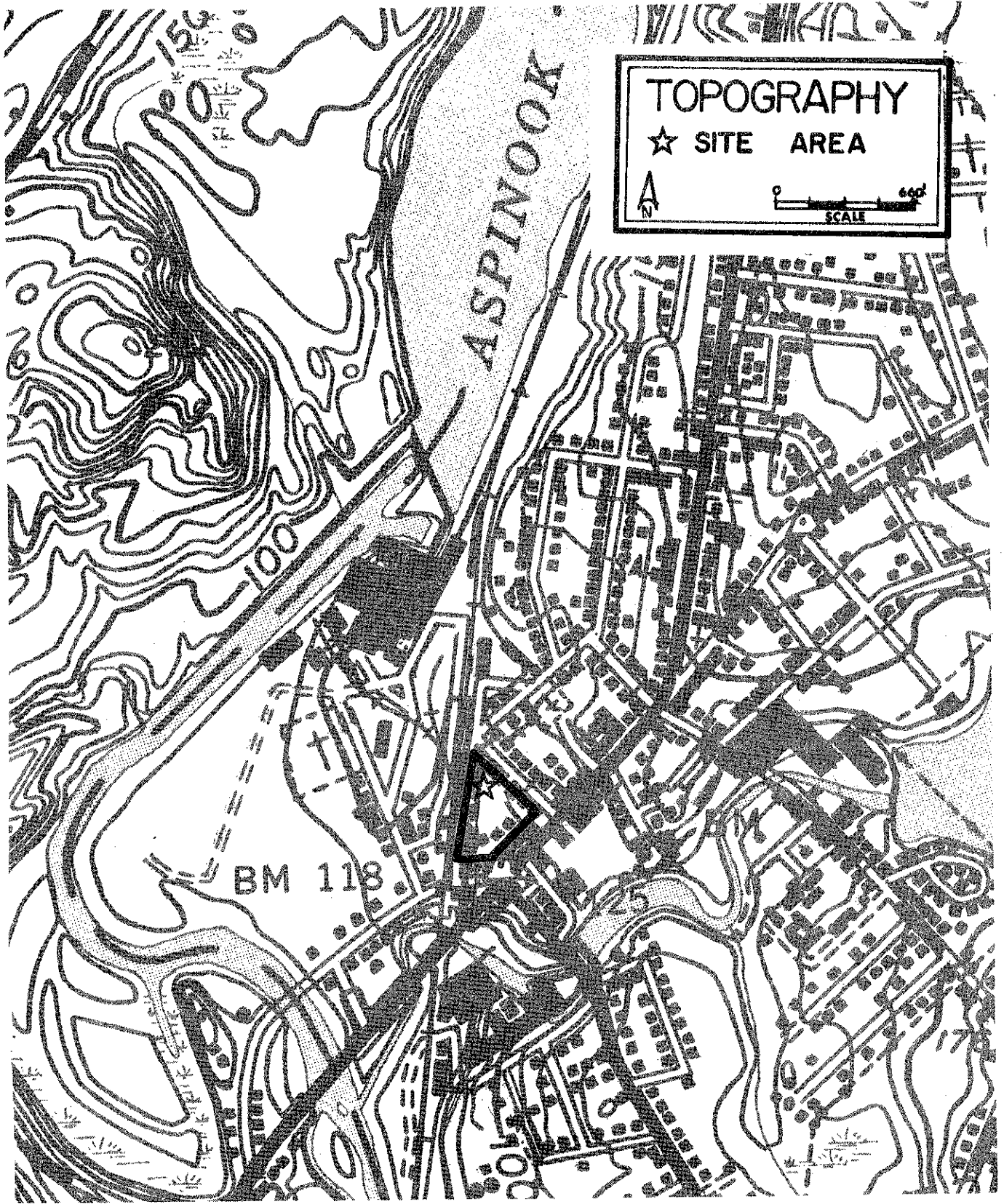
DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

PRESENT/PAST LAND USES

The proposed senior citizens center is a permitted use under the Jewett City Zoning Regulations. The site is located in a commercial zoning district which is presently a mixture of residential and commercial uses. A small church exists on Soule Street opposite the site. The buildings in the area are reasonably well-kept late 19th and early 20th century wood-frame structures, none of which has been identified as being architecturally or historically significant. The site is the former location of the Jewett City Town Hall.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The proportion of elderly in Griswold's population is somewhat higher than the average for Southeastern Connecticut. The Town had a 1970 population of 7,763, of which, persons aged 65 and over numbered 748, or almost 10%. The Borough of Jewett City, which is the part of Griswold where most of the population is concentrated, had a total of 5,277 persons, of which 583, or 11%, were aged 65 and over. These figures compare with a regional elderly population of 18,900, which was 8.5% of the total regional population of 220,096.



TOPOGRAPHY

☆ SITE AREA



SCALE

ASPINOOK

BM 118

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

There will probably be a significant increase in traffic on Soule Street generated by the proposed center. However, this should be limited to the eastern end of the one-block street, which connects directly to Main Street, which would be the route of travel for the majority of users of the facility. Also, because the site is located in the area of the Town with the heaviest population concentration, it is likely that many users will walk to the center. Soule Street has sidewalks on both sides.

SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE GEOLOGIC CHARACTERISTICS

The site is located on stratified drift deposits in the Quinebaug River valley. These deposits consist of approximately 25 feet of sand and gravel, which was left in the valley by meltwater streams associated with the last glacial ice sheet in Connecticut. An unknown depth of artificial fill may overlie the stratified drift. Bedrock underlying the stratified drift is principally composed of quartz-biotite-plagioclase-hornblende schists and gneisses.

SOILS

As shown on the Soils Map in the Appendix to this report, soils on the site are designated DF, an urban land category. These soils have been covered by roads, parking lots, and buildings. In the case of this particular site, the overburden seems to be composed of crushed brick and stone or some type of rubble from the demolition of the former Town Hall.

CLIMATE

Jewett City is in the transition area between the Northeast hills and coastal sections of Connecticut, and therefore its climate is primarily influenced by the proximity of Long Island Sound, but it also shows some of the more extreme characteristics of the inland hills. When low pressure weather systems bring southerly airflow from the sound the area experiences humid maritime conditions. When high pressure systems prevail, the area experiences relatively cool dry weather which is the prevalent fall season condition.

The site is located in the Quinnebaug River Valley and therefore experiences the valley circulations of southerly breezes during the day and northerly (down valley) at night with high incidences of thermal inversions. This, coupled with the proximity of the Connecticut turnpike and heavy urban traffic, result in higher concentration of air pollutants than is normal in the surrounding country side.

Annual Mean temperature	49°F
Annual Heating degree days	6000
Precipitation (mean annual)	
relatively evenly distributed	
by month	48 inches
Average annual snowfall	40 inches
Average length of frost free	
season	170 days

Solar Radiation at the site is sufficient for space and hot water heating (in adequately designed buildings) most of the year. Generally there will only be one or two periods, of about a week, during the winter when supplemental heat would be required. The average amounts of radiation available for collection (by a south facing "flat plate" collector at a 35% slope angle) vary from 503 calories per square centimeter a day in mid July to 234 calories per square centimeter a day in mid December. The above information was taken from "Estimation of Direct Solar Radiation on Slopes in Connecticut" by D.R. Miller and F.W. Hammond; Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 452 and "The Climate of Connecticut" by J.J. Brumback; Connecticut Geological & Natural History Survey Bulletin 99.

The development of the site will not have a detectable effect on the overall climate and climate will not be limiting to the development of the site. But, the proposed parking lot and building complex could cause a severe microclimatic "heat island" in the summer and wind swept area in the winter. A number of landscaping and architectural measures could be utilized to offset this problem and ameliorate the microclimate of the site to increase the outdoor comfort of the elderly. Windbreaks, shade trees and building orientation are all important to maximizing physical comfort of the site.

WATER RESOURCES

Water supply to the proposed senior citizen's center will be through existing public water mains.

VEGETATION

Vegetation on the site consisted of grasses and forbs. Notable among them were clover, poison ivy, St. John's wort, and milkweed.

WILDLIFE

The site is undoubtedly frequented by urban wildlife forms such as skunks, raccoons, squirrels, mice, cats, dogs, pigeons and seasonal songbirds.

PROBABLE FUTURE ENVIRONMENT

If construction of this project does not take place, the site will probably be used for construction of some other municipal facility, as the Town currently owns the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

EFFECT ON LAND USE

Construction of this project will cause no appreciable change in land usage.

The block in which the site is located has several vacant parcels due to demolitions in recent years. A lot across Soule Street from the site is also vacant for the same reason. These have a blighting impact on the neighborhood and construction of new buildings would improve appearances. Therefore, the proposed center should be beneficial to the character and appearance of the area.

EFFECT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Construction of this project will cause no appreciable change in socio-economic conditions.

EFFECT ON TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

Construction of this project will cause no appreciable change in use of transportation routes; however, on-site parking may prove inadequate for major social events at the center. Overflow parking can be accommodated to some extent at curbside, but arrangements should be explored with the adjacent bank to use their extensive parking areas during non-banking hours.

SOLID WASTE GENERATION

Solid wastes will be disposed through the city sewer and garbage collection services.

EFFECT ON WATER RESOURCES

Runoff increases from the site would be insignificant since the affected area is very small and presently unvegetated. Although the stratified drift deposits underlying the property could have future potential for water supply, the urban location probably would preclude the use of the site for a public well. Moreover, since city water and sewer services are available, adverse effects on the groundwater would probably be negligible.

EFFECT ON VEGETATION

This project will cause no detrimental effect to the vegetation presently existing on the site.

EFFECT ON WILDLIFE

This project will have no appreciable effect on wildlife frequenting the area.

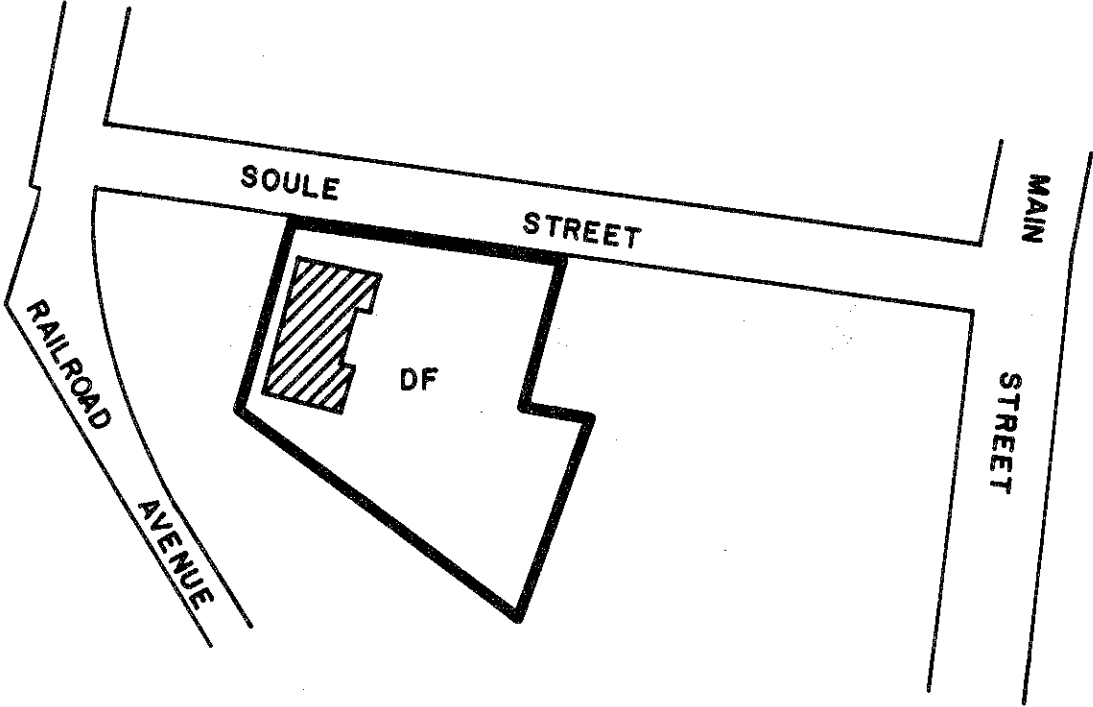
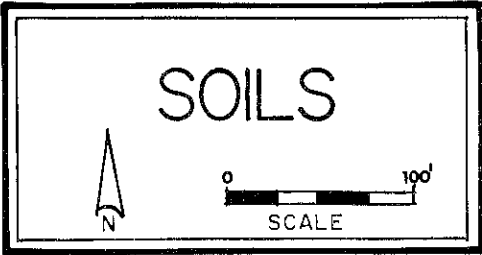
IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Although the sand and gravel deposits underlying the site would be permanently committed by the project, the volume lost would be insignificant for construction purposes. In addition, it is improbable, given the urban location, that the deposits would be excavated anyway.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

The alternatives to the proposed center are: 1) continue to rent the facilities presently used, 2) seek other rental space or unused public space, or 3) build in a different location. Concerning alternatives 1 and 2, there are no suitably equipped facilities available at an affordable price in the vicinity. Concerning alternative 3, this site is publicly owned and available at no cost and other publicly owned sites are not as accessible as this to the major concentration of the Town's elderly population.

Appendix



SOIL LEGEND

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Soil Series</u>	<u>Limitations</u>
DF	Urban Land	Must be determined on site.

About the Team

The Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team (ERT) is a group of professionals in environmental fields drawn together from a variety of federal, state, and regional agencies. Specialists on the Team include geologists, biologists, foresters, climatologists, soil scientists, landscape architects, archeologists, recreation specialists, engineers and planners. The ERT operates with state funding under the supervision of the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area.

The Team is available as a public service at no cost to Connecticut towns.

PURPOSE OF THE TEAM

The Environmental Review Team is available to help towns and developers in the review of sites proposed for major land use activities. To date, the ERT has been involved in reviewing a wide range of projects including subdivisions, sanitary landfills, commercial and industrial developments, sand and gravel operations, elderly housing, recreation/open space projects, watershed studies and resource inventories.

Reviews are conducted in the interest of providing information and analysis that will assist towns and developers in environmentally sound decision-making. This is done through identifying the natural resource base of the project site and highlighting opportunities and limitations for the proposed land use.

REQUESTING A REVIEW

Environmental reviews may be requested by the chief elected officials of a municipality or the chairman of town commissions such as planning and zoning, conservation, inland wetlands, parks and recreation or economic development. Requests should be directed to the Chairman of your local Soil and Water Conservation District. This request letter should include a summary of the proposed project, a location map of the project site, written permission from the landowner allowing the Team to enter the property for purposes of review, and a statement identifying the specific areas of concern the Team should address. When this request is approved by the local Soil and Water Conservation District and the Eastern Connecticut RC&D Executive Council, the Team will undertake the review on a priority basis.

For additional information regarding the Environmental Review Team, please contact Jeanne Shelburn (889-2324), Environmental Review Team Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area, 139 Boswell Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360.