Environmental Review Team Report

Platt Property

North Stonington, Connecticut

R C & D

EASTERN CONNECTICUT RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA, INC.

Environmental Review Team Report on Platt Property North Stonington, Connecticut

June 1982

eastern connecticut resource conservation & development area

environmental review team
139 boswell avenue
norwich, connecticut 06360

Location of Study Site

PLATT PROPERTY
NORTH STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT
ON
PLATT PROPERTY
NORTH STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT

This report is an outgrowth of a request from the North Stonington Conservation Commission to the New London County Soil and Water Conservation District (S&WCD). The S&WCD referred this request to the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Executive Committee for their consideration and approval as a project measure. The request was approved and the measure reviewed by the Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team (ERT).

The soils of the site were mapped by a soil scientist of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Soil Conservation Service (SCS). Reproductions of the soil survey map as well as a topographic map of the site were distributed to all ERT participants prior to their field review of the site.

The ERT that field checked the site consisted of the following personnel: Gary Domian, District Conservationist, Soil Conservation Service (SCS); Mike Zizka, Geologist, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Peter Merrill, Forester, (DEP); Gerhard Amt, Regional Planner, Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency; Tim Dodge, Resource Conservationist (SCS); Don Capellaro, Sanitarian, State Department of Health; and Jeanne Shelburn, ERT Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area.

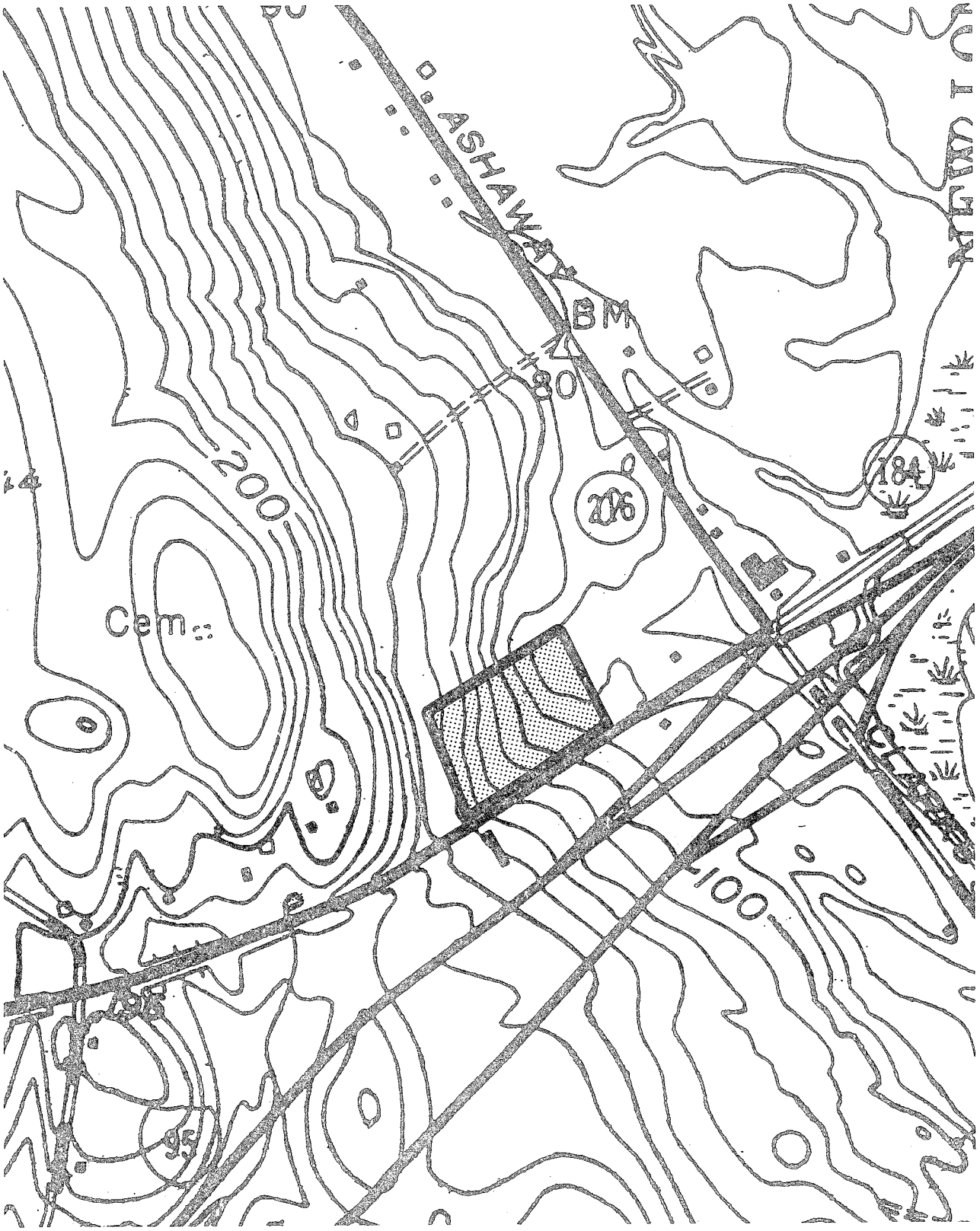
The Team met and field checked the site on Thursday, March 4, 1982. Reports from each Team member were sent to the ERT Coordinator for review and summarization for the final report.

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 the developer and the Town of North Stonington. 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 Reivew Team Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut RC&D Area, 139 Boswell Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360, 889-2324.

Topography	Site Boundary	0 660' scale	N



INTRODUCTION

The Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team was asked to prepare an environmental assessment for a proposed car dealership in the Town of North Stonington. The 8± acre site is in the private ownership of Annie Platt and is being developed by Alex Whewell.

The wooded parcel is located on the north side of Route 184, about 1,000 feet west of Clarks Falls Road (Route 216). Interstate Route 95, which runs parallel to Route 184, also has entrance and exit ramps at Clarks Falls Road. The terrain has a continuous downward slope towards the eastern side. A gravel driveway extends parallel to the west side boundary line and goes to a private dwelling situated to the rear of the study property. The parcel tends to be wet and is apparently composed of wetlands type soils. A limited area, towards the lower corner of the property near Route 184 has been filled over a period of time. Several drains for Route 184 discharge into the site. Drainage for this and other properties to the east has a surface and storm water drain outlet at a service station located at the junction of Routes 216 and 184, at which point the water continues to flow alongside Route 216.

Preliminary engineering and development plans prepared for Alex Whewell indicate the property would be divided into two sites, with the proposed car dealership located on four or more acres towards the western side of the site. The remaining lower portion of the property would be held for possible future commercial development. The area to be developed at this time would be filled (approximately one acre) for a parking area and a building which would have a showroom, garage and office. Sanitary facilities (water supply and sewage disposal) to serve the needs of the project would be developed on site.

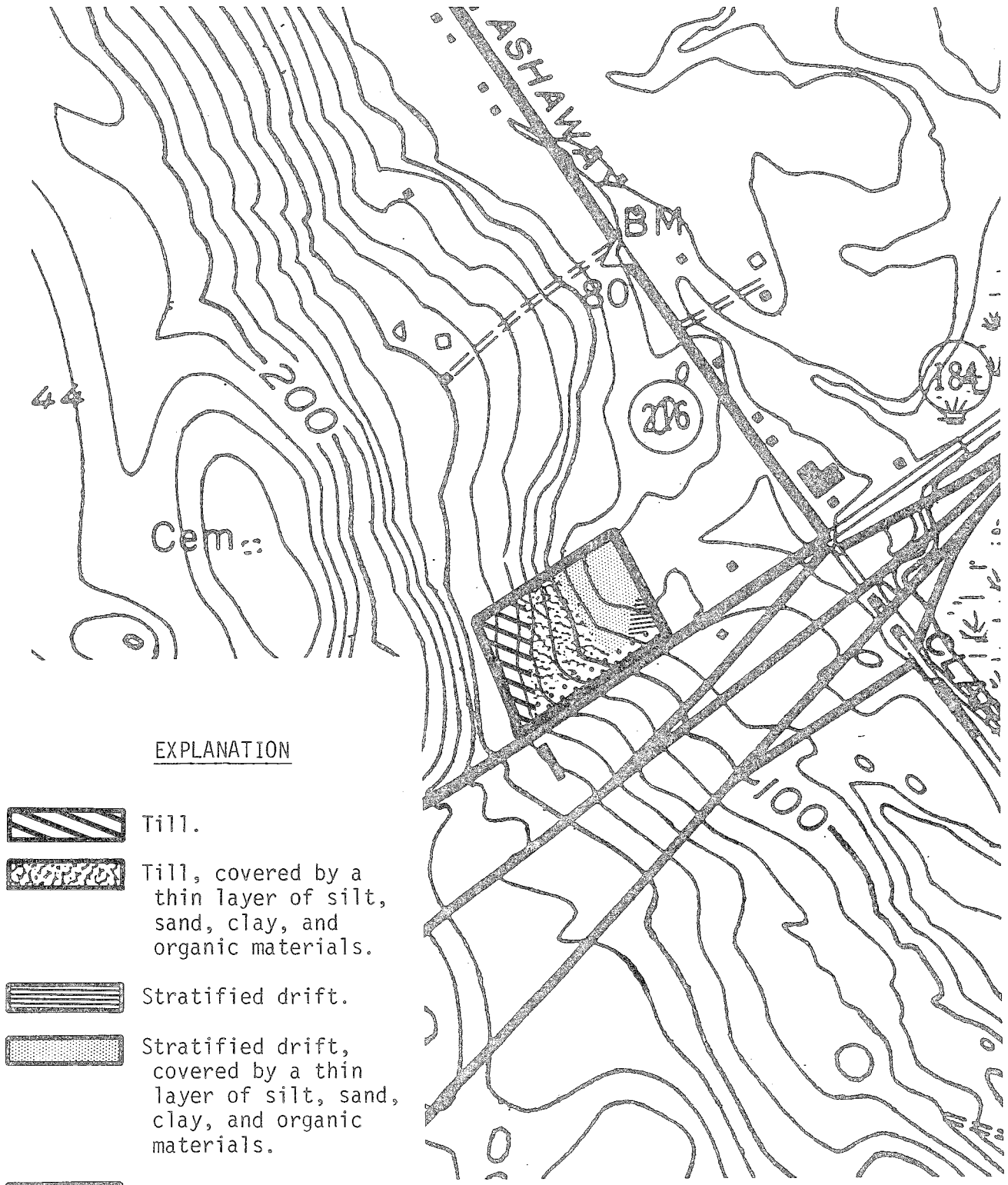
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

GEOLOGY

The site consists of a till-covered area sloping eastward into an area of stratified drift. Till and stratified drift are glacial sediments that are distinguished by both their manner of formation and their general textural characteristics. The till was deposited directly from an ice sheet, whereas the stratified drift was deposited by meltwater flowing from wasting ice. The ice collected rock particles ranging in size from clay to huge boulders, and it abraded and crushed these particles as it moved. The till is consequently poorly sorted or not sorted at all; that is, particles throughout the size range may be found mixed together in the till. The stratified drift, in contrast, was sorted into layers and lenses that individually show only a small range of grain sizes. The grains in stratified drift also tend to be more rounded than those in till.

The textural line between till and stratified drift is not an obvious one. Deposits along the contact may show characteristics of both types of material. The sediments that appear to be most like stratified drift are confined to the

Surficial Geology



EXPLANATION

Till.

Till, covered by a thin layer of silt, sand, clay, and organic materials.

Stratified drift.

Stratified drift, covered by a thin layer of silt, sand, clay, and organic materials.

Artificial fill.

eastern third of the property. The remainder of the site is covered by deposits that are more till-like. The till on the site is relatively loose, stony, and sandy to silty. The stratified drift is predominantly sandy, but it may contain gravelly layers or lenses. Thin, organic-rich sediments overlie the glacial deposits throughout most of the site. The organic materials are the product of the proliferation and decay of vegetation in this wet parcel.

No bedrock outcrops were seen on the property, although many boulders were scattered about the surface. Bedrock is not likely to have an important impact on the proposed development, except with regard to its potential for water-supply purposes. This aspect is discussed in more detail in the water supply section of this report.

HYDROLOGY

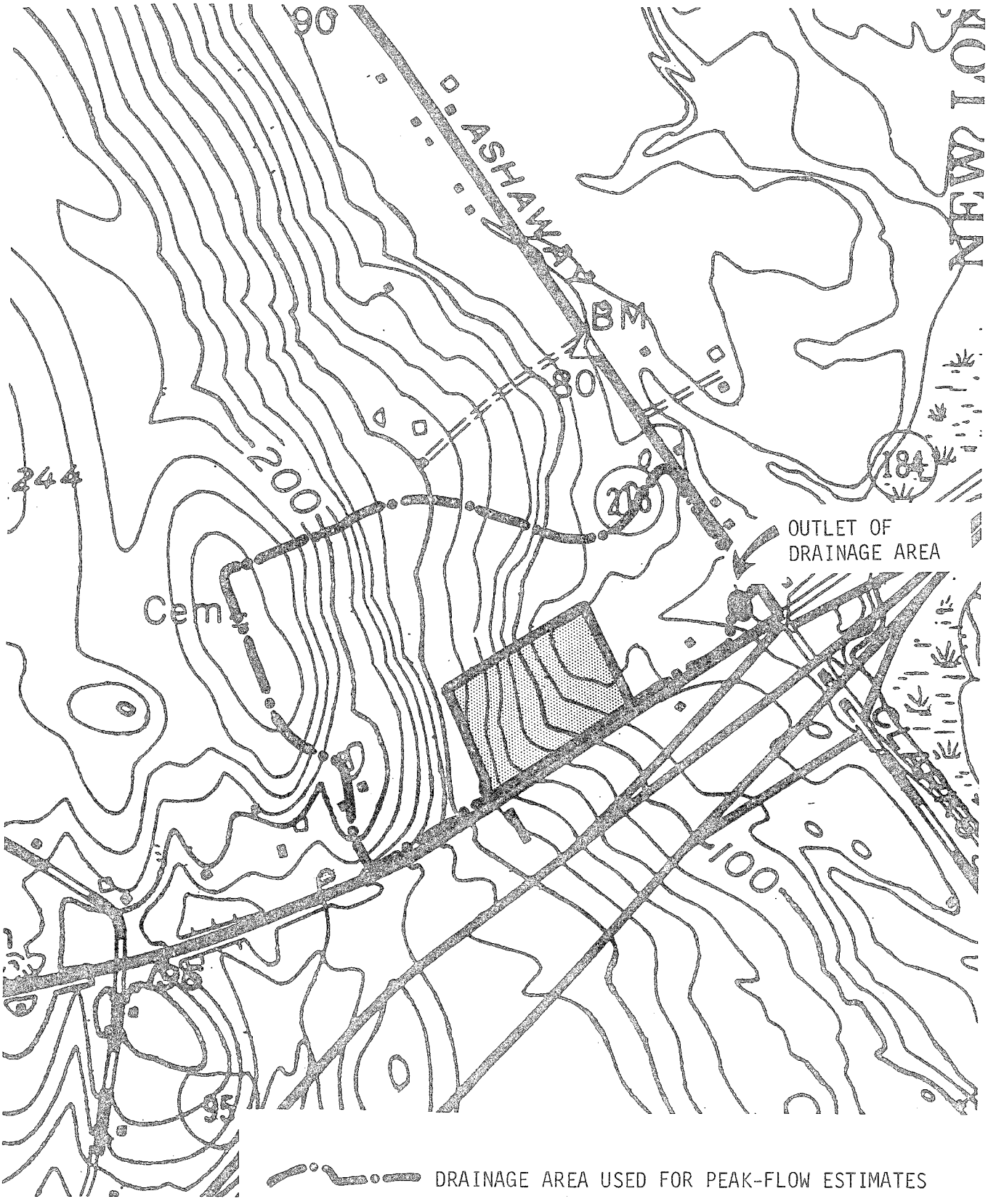
The Team's field inspection of the site suggested that groundwater may be at or near the surface in most of the parcel during most of the year. Evidence for this conclusion consisted of the hummocky microtopography; the presence of several shallow, criss-crossing drainage channels; and the existing wetness during the field review. The only portions of the site that appear to be dry for most of the year are a small area at the southeastern corner and a narrow, steeply sloped strip of land along the western boundary.

The property lies within the watershed of Ashaway River. Surface drainage flows eastward from the site via an artificial channel between a cornfield and a car dealership. The southern edge of the cornfield is low enough that it presumably is flooded on occasion by flows through the channel. The channel emerges into a small, shallow pond behind a gasoline service station. The pond drains through a 32-inch culvert into a piped course that carries the flows beneath the service station lot and Route 184. From there, the flows are carried through a trench between Routes 184 and Interstate 95, ultimately joining Ashaway River about 2,250 feet east of the site.

The combination of artificial drainage and local urbanization has caused degradation of the surface waters that originate on the site and flow into Ashaway River. Although the wetlands on the property presumably have some beneficial effect on the local surface water quality, this effect may be negated by the downstream conditions. Therefore, to the extent that the proposed filling on the site would reduce the natural cleansing function of the wetland, the effects would probably not be significant.

On the other hand, the development itself could be a source of additional pollution if care is not exercised. The placement of a septic system in the fill is of particular concern. During most times of the year, water is at or near the surface in much of the site. Wastewater discharged into fill may, therefore, be expected ultimately to leak out of the fill at the toe of the fill slope. Unless the wastewater has been adequately renovated in the fill, this leakage could cause surface-water contamination. It may be possible to engineer a septic system that would eliminate the risk, or at least reduce it to an acceptable level. However, it seems clear that the design of the system would have to be carefully evaluated, and that the installation process, including the use of fill with particular textural characteristics, would need to be strictly monitored.

Drainage Areas



The filling of the wetland areas as planned and the creation of impervious surfaces, such as roofs and parking areas, will increase the runoff flows from the site. Filling will reduce the storage capacity of the wetland, forcing excess water to flow downstream sooner than it otherwise would. It is possible to estimate the changes in peak flows that the development would cause. The Team used the SCS runoff curve-number method, as described in "Flood Flow Formulas for Connecticut," a manual prepared by the Department of Environmental Protection. The point of flow for which the peak rates were calculated is the culvert at the gasoline service station east of the site. The peak flows given below are those that would occur if there were no obstruction to the flow; the actual capacity of the culvert to transmit those flows through the piping system was not determined. If the flows exceed that capacity, water would back up behind the culvert. Peak flows were estimated for the 10-year, 25-year, 50-year and 100-year storms. The number refers to the long-term average frequency of the storms, but in any given year, the storms have a ten percent, four percent, two percent, and one percent probability of occurring.

Table 1: Estimated peak flows, in cubic feet per second, at the first culvert downstream from the site.

Storm Frequency	10-year	25-year	50-year	100-year
Present Flows	69	112	133	177
Future Flows	74	119	141	187
Percentage Increase	7%	6%	6%	5.5%

The "future flows" were estimated on the assumption that both the presently proposed car dealership and a further development of similar size would occur on the parcel. Although no specific proposal other than the car dealership has been made, the site plan reserves the eastern half of the site for future development.

It seems likely that the downstream piping system will limit through-flows to a rate that is less than the anticipated peaks at the inlet culvert for at least the 50-year and 100-year storms. Therefore, the effect of the flow increases for those storms would be confined to the area between the site and the gasoline service station. Presumably, the remaining wetlands on the site and the cornfield to the east would experience slightly higher flood water elevations. However, the estimated increases are so small that the additional flood water elevations would probably be insignificant. The Team concludes that the increases in runoff will cause some changes in local flood levels, but that these changes would be neither serious nor lasting in their effects.

In summary, the major hydrological impact from the proposed development is likely to be deterioration of local surface water quality. This risk will be contingent primarily on the viability of septic systems in the fill, but it will also be influenced by any debris that flows from the parking lots into the wetlands. The potential for surface water deterioration should be weighed against the probable deterioration that is already taking place downstream.

Of course, the town should also examine the possible loss of biological values that the wetland destruction will entail. The Team notes in this regard that approximately one-third to one-half of the existing wetland area would be preserved, so the loss would not be total.

SOILS

A detailed soils map of this site and detailed soils descriptions are included in the Appendix to this report, accompanied by a chart which indicates soil limitations for various urban uses. As the soil map is an enlargement from the original 1,320 feet/inch scale to 660 feet/inch, the soil boundary lines should not be viewed as absolute boundaries, but as guidelines to the distribution of soil types on the site. The soil limitation chart indicates the probable limitations of each of the soils for on-site sewage disposal, buildings with basements, streets and parking, and landscaping. However, limitations, even though severe, do not preclude the use of the land for development. If economics permit large expenditures for land development and the intended objective is consistent with the objectives of local and regional development, many soils and sites with difficult problems can be used. The soils map, with the publication, New London County Interim Soil Survey Report, can aid in the identification and interpretation of soils and their uses on this site. "Know Your Land: Natural Soil Groups for Connecticut" can also give insight to the development potentials of the soils and their relationship to the surficial geology of the site.

Areas that have been disturbed to an extent that the natural layers are no longer distinguishable are occupied by Udorthents, smoothed. Udorthents, smoothed are designated by the soil mapping ML2. Udorthents occur when soil materials have been removed, or filling has occurred and the soil profile is buried and no longer is a major factor in interpreting an area for land use.

The gently sloping drumlins and rounded or elongated hills on the uplands are occupied by Woodbridge fine sandy loam. The mapping unit symbol is 31B, the letter "B" denotes a 3 to 8 percent slope. The Woodbridge soils formed in compact glacial till. The soils are moderately well drained. They have moderate permeability in the surface layer and subsoil, slow to very slow permeability in the substratum (fragipan). The soils have a seasonal high water table at eighteen to twenty-four inches. Woodbridge soils have slow to rapid surface runoff. This soil qualifies as Prime Farmland soil in Connecticut.

The low lying, nearly level areas along drainageways in the uplands are occupied by Ridgebury, Leicester and Whitman extremely stony fine sandy loams. The soils are designated by the mapping unit symbol 43M. The letter "M" denotes extremely stony. The Ridgebury and Whitman soils formed in compact glacial till; the Leicester soils formed in friable glacial till. The Ridgebury and Leicester soils have moderate to moderately rapid permeability in the surface layer and subsoil and slow or very slow permeability in the substratum (fragipan). The Leicester soils have moderately rapid permeability throughout. The seasonal highwater table for Ridgebury and Leicester soils is at or near the surface 7 to 9 months of the year. The Whitman soils have high runoff potential. Runoff is slow to medium in Ridgebury soils and slow in Leicester soils. This soil is designated as a wetland soil and is regulated under Public Act 155.

The gently sloping well drained areas on drumlins or elongated hills of uplands are occupied by Paxton and Montauk very stony fine sandy loam. This soil is designated by soil mapping unit symbol 35XB. The letter "X" denotes a very stony surface condition. The letter "B" denotes slopes as 3 to 8 percent. Paxton and Montauk soils formed in compact glacial till. Permeability is moderate in the surface layer and subsoil and slow in the substratum (fragipan). Surface runoff is medium to rapid.

PLANT COMMUNITIES

The 8 acre Platt parcel is located on the north side of Route 184 near the Clarks Falls Road (Route 216) exit of Interstate 95. The site gently slopes from the southwest, down towards the northeast, and is predominantly moist to wetland. There are three plant communities found here. The southwest section of the parcel shows signs of logging approximately five years ago, and is now very dense with sapling growth. Traveling northeast, one encounters a mature community of red maples, with little understory growth. The last community encompasses a field adjacent to Route 184, and also the roadside vegetation.

Sapling Community

The sapling community is dominated by red maple (Acer rubrum), black cherry (Prunus serotina), red cedar (Juniperus virginiana), American elm (Ulmus americana), and white ash (Fraxinus americana).

Many shrub and vine species form a semi-understory as some individuals reach into the canopy. Spice bush (Lindera benzoin), sweet pepperbush (Clethra alnifolia), elderberry (Sambucus canadensis), and highbush blueberry (Vaccinium sp.) are some shrub examples. Vines are represented by common green brier (Smilax rotundifolia), sawbrier (Smilax glauca), and poison ivy (Toxicodendron radicans).

Herbaceous plants found were: Cinquefoil (Potentilla sp.), sedge (Carex pennsylvanica), violet (Viola sp.), skunk cabbage (Symplocarpus foetidus), running pine (Lycopodium complanatum), cinnamon fern (Osmunda cinnamomea), and Christmas fern (Polystichum acrostichoides).

Red Maple Community

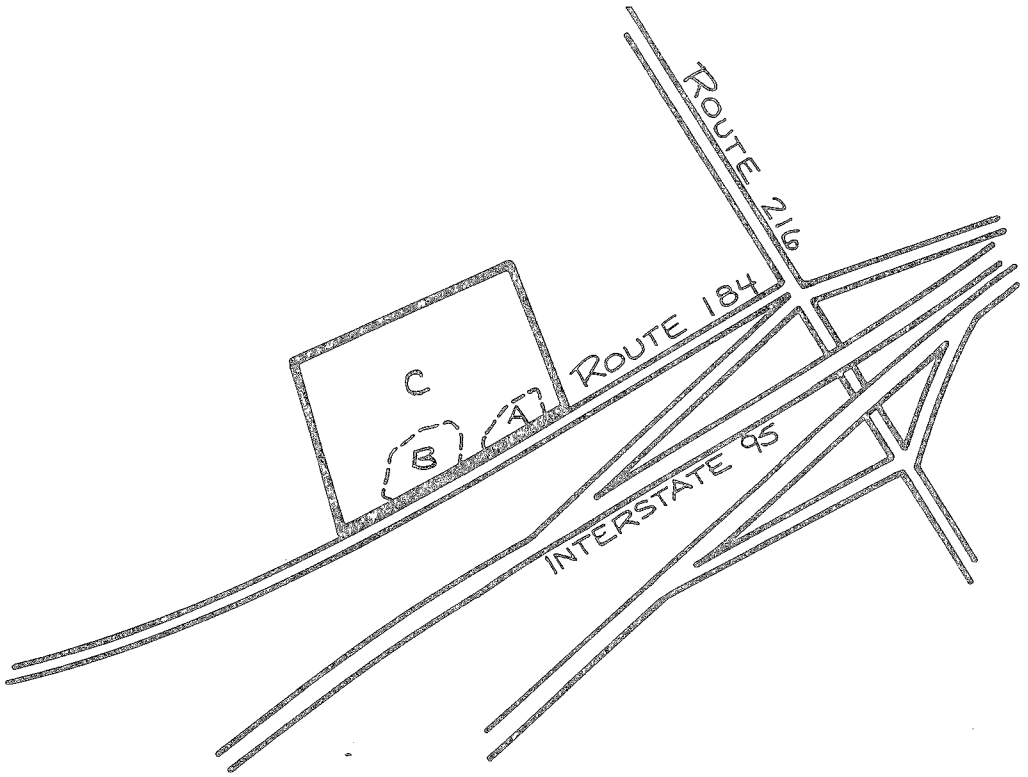
A swamp dominated by mature red maple (Acer rubrum), and associated with white ash (Fraxinus americana), covers a large part of the parcel, especially in the northeast section. The dense canopy excludes healthy sapling growth, and the understory is composed of shade tolerant species, excepting a few remnant individuals of red cedar (Juniperus virginiana). Spice bush is here the most common understory plant.

The herbaceous layer is well represented by ferns, such as: crested wood fern (Dryopteris cristata), lady fern (Athyrium felix-femina), Christmas fern (Polystichum acrostichoides), and cinnamon fern (Osmunda cinnamomea). Many kinds of mosses cover the wet, rocky ground, and clumps of sphagnum moss (Sphagnum sp.) are frequently encountered. Skunk cabbage (Symplocarpus foetidus), and violets (Viola sp.) are also found here.

Vegetation

0 660'
Scale

N



LEGEND

- Road
- Property Boundary
- Vegetation Type Boundary

VEGETATION TYPE DESCRIPTIONS*

TYPE A. Old field, 1/2± acre.

TYPE B. Sprout growth, 1/2± acre.

TYPE C. Mixed hardwoods, 5 1/2± acres, slightly overstocked, pole to small sawtimber-size.

* Seedling-size = Trees less than 1 inch in diameter at 4 1/2 feet above the ground (d.b.h.)
Sapling-size = Trees 1 to 5 inches in d.b.h.
Pole-size = Trees 5 to 11 inches in d.b.h.
Sawtimber-size = Trees 11 inches and greater in d.b.h.

Field Community

The field community is dominated by grasses, weeds, shrubs and vines. Twenty foot specimens of shining sumac (Rhus copallina), Japanese barberry (Berberis thunbergii), European barberry (Berberis vulgaris) grape (Vitis sp.), clematis (Clematis virginiana), and meadowsweet (Spiraea tomentosa), were some of the woody species present.

The herbaceous layer is composed of goldenrod (Solidago spp.), steeple bush (Spiraea tomentosa), yarrow (Achillea millifolium), and hay-scented fern (Dennstaedtia punctilobula).

FOREST RESOURCES

Of this eight acre site, approximately one acre will be cleared for the building and parking lot. Clearing, filling and drainage ditching will remove approximately another one-half acre, leaving approximately six and one-half acres. This can be further broken down into Section A, which is one-half acre old field type and Section B, which is one-half acre of sprout growth. The rest of the five and one-half acres are mixed hardwoods in the six to twelve inch diameter size class.

Section A - Old Field Type: This is reverting open field with the usual mixture of smooth sumac, gray birch and encroaching red maple. Lesser vegetation includes grasses and sedges, blackberry, sweet fern, spirea and wild grapes.

No management practices are needed. This area presently provides the desirable edge effect that wildlife like.

Section B - Sprout Growth: This area was clear cut for firewood eight to ten years ago. Most of the area is occupied by red maple, black cherry, and white ash stump sprouts. The understory is comprised of black alder, spice bush, sweet pepperbush, elderberry, arrowwood and grape vines.

Much of the present sprout area will be developed with the proposed parking lot, but the remainder of the area will grow poorly because of the high stumps the new stand is sprouting from. The trees will have weak stems caused by butt rot that will start in these high stumps as they start to decay. The best solution would be to recut the stumps to a maximum of six inches in height; this would help to minimize the amount of butt rot in the next stand.

Section C - This five and one-half section is comprised of trees six to twelve inches in diameter. Species include red maple, black cherry and white ash with an occasional American elm, large toothed aspen and red cedar. The understory includes seedlings and saplings of red maple, black cherry, sugar maple and black birch. Lesser vegetation includes elderberry, grapes, spice bush, sweet pepperbush, blueberry, azalea, black alder, mountain laurel and green brier.

This area is slightly overstocked and could be thinned lightly for firewood. However, the wet ground conditions will severely limit the operability of the area. Unthinned, the area will continue and will mature at a slower rate than if thinned properly. If the area is thinned, then the introduction of a conifer such as hemlock at about 50 to 100 trees per acre would enhance the appearance of

the area, and it would make a better noise barrier for the winter months when the decidious trees are without leaves.

WILDLIFE CONCERNS

This wetland site is primarily wooded. A fifty foot wide strip which parallels Route 184 has had the trees cut, presumably for cordwood. Stump sprouts, shrubs and vines, perennial weeds and some native grasses characterize this area.

A small drainageway with a poorly defined channel bisects the site generally flowing southwest to northeast.

Wildlife habitat provided by this wetland is available to small game and non-game wildlife species. The area closest to Route 16, where trees have been removed, provides the best habitat quality due to the diversity of plants which have developed. This area contains good quality songbird habitat, cottontail rabbit and woodcock habitat. This section is small in total area, probably an acre or so in size. The more wooded sections of the site offer habitat of a lesser quality. Leaf litter nests are common, indicating use by squirrels is high. Songbird and rabbit habitat is fair. Other species such as raccoon, opossum, fox, and skunk may be transient to the wetland, using it and surrounding areas to meet their habitat needs. No areas were seen to be outstanding in quality, unique or providing habitat for rare or endangered plants or animals. If developed, the area will lose virtually all habitat qualities, due to increased disturbance by human activities, loss of vegetation and wetland filling.

Undeveloped areas will retain some habitat for songbirds and other small animals tolerant to man's activities.

WATER SUPPLY

The most viable on-site source of water would be bedrock. Wells drilled into bedrock usually can supply small but reliable amounts of groundwater. Because the water is transmitted through the rock by means of interconnected fractures, and because the fractures are unevenly distributed, a well drilled in any particular location may intersect no fractures and be dry, or may intersect numerous fractures and be a high supplier. There is no way to predict the yield before drilling. Approximately 90 percent of the bedrock wells evaluated in Connecticut Water Resources Bulletin No. 15 (Lower Thames and Southeastern Coastal River Basins) were capable of supplying at least three gallons per minute. Wells yielding 100 gpm are rare, as are completely dry wells.

The natural quality of the groundwater should be generally good. The well needs to be protected from the risk of contamination by septic system effluent, salt, and fuel or other hydrocarbons. In particular, the Team recommends that the well be placed as far as possible from the septic system.

WASTE DISPOSAL

As the Town of North Stonington does not have a public sewerage system, means for sewage disposal as well as handling other waste water drainage would be through on-site facilities.

Although development plans, including sewage disposal, have been prepared, it is noted from soil mapping data and from visual observations at the time of review, the area in general is wet, having poorly drained soils. Vertical movement of water is apparently restricted by tight underlying compact till causing severe perched water conditions. Apparently no on-site soil testing was done due to the wetness of the ground.

It is essential that careful consideration and analysis be given to possible land development and subsurface sewage disposal in order to minimize the impact on surface and groundwater. It was obvious that the site is not suitable for sewage or waste water disposal as it exists. Plans indicate the site is to be extensively filled and ground and surface water control systems would be installed. Because of the questionable nature of the site to support a satisfactory system(s), it would seem that improvements should be undertaken and appropriate testing, monitoring and further site evaluation be done before a determination of site suitability is made.

The plans should also include the basis of design flow elevations. In addition to sewage generated by employees or customers, plans should include provisions for floor drainage, which might include car wash water, as well as gasoline, grease, oil, etc., from vehicles being serviced. The Department of Environmental Protection would be responsible for the review of plans for the storage and/or disposal methods of such chemical wastes.

PLANNING CONCERNS

The proposal concerns the construction of an automobile dealership and related parking lot on a site of about eight acres on the north side of Route 184 in North Stonington, about 1,000 feet west of the Route 216 intersection. The proposed use is consistent with the recently adopted Plan of Development and the Zoning Regulations of North Stonington, both of which recommend this area for traffic-oriented commercial establishments. Although there are residences to the north and west of the site, these are outside of the highway-commercial zoning district and located several hundred feet from the proposed commercial building. Existing nearby commercial uses include a motel across the highway and another automobile dealership on property to the east of the site. Vacant land remains within this commercial zone fronting on Route 184 for perhaps three or four additional commercial uses.

Route 184 is a relatively lightly used state highway, with average daily traffic (ADT) in 1980 of only 1,750 vehicles per day.* The site's exposure to the public is enhanced by its clear visibility from Interstate Route 95, which has an ADT of 18,100 through this area.

Traffic generated by the proposed use is expected to be about 180 vehicles per day, based on 44.31 vehicles per day per 1,000 square feet of building floor area.** Route 184 is reasonably well-built and without curves in the vicinity of the proposed use and should easily accommmodate the increased traffic. However, traffic safety could be improved by limiting access to the site to a single location instead of two. Consideration should be given to eliminating or reducing the size of the proposed driveway at the western end of the site.

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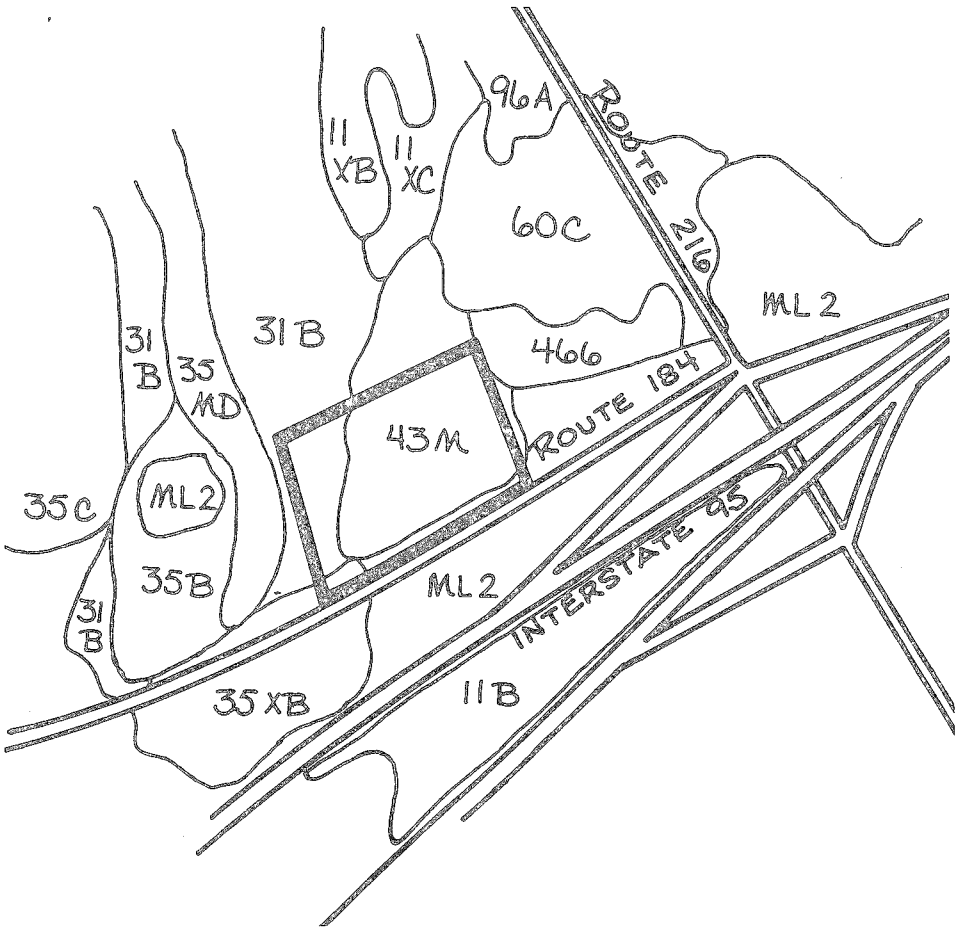
* Source: 1980 Traffic Log by CONNDOT.

** "Trip Generation by Land Use," Maricopa Association of Governments, 1974.

Appendix

Soils	Site Boundary	0 660' scale	N



PLATT PROPERTY
NORTH STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT

PROPORTIONAL EXTENT OF SOILS AND THEIR LIMITATIONS FOR CERTAIN LAND USES

Soil Series	Soil Symbol	Approx. Acres	Percent of Acres	Principal Limiting Factor	Urban Use Limitations*			
					On-Site Sewage	Buildings with Basements	Streets & Parking	Land-Scaping
Paxton	35XB	1.0	10%	Large stones, Frost Action, Percs slowly	3	2	2	2
Ridgebury, Leicester and Whitman	43M	5.5	55%	Large stones, Wetness	3	3	3	3
Woodbridge	31B	2.0	20%	Wetness, frost action	3	3	3	1
Udorthents	ML2	1.5	15%	LIMITATIONS DETERMINED ON-SITE				
		10	100%					

LIMITATIONS: 1=Slight; 2= Moderate; 3=Severe

SOIL INTERPRETATIONS FOR URBAN USES

The ratings of the soils for elements of community and recreational development uses consist of three degrees of "limitations:" slight or no limitations; moderate limitations; and severe limitations. In the interpretive scheme various physical properties are weighed before judging their relative severity of limitations.

The user is cautioned that the suitability ratings, degree of limitations and other interpretations are based on the typical soil in each mapping unit. At any given point the actual conditions may differ from the information presented here because of the inclusion of other soils which were impractical to map separately at the scale of mapping used. On-site investigations are suggested where the proposed soil use involves heavy loads, deep excavations, or high cost. Limitations, even though severe, do not always preclude the use of land for development. If economics permit greater expenditures for land development and the intended land use is consistent with the objectives of local or regional development, many soils and sites with difficult problems can be used.

Slight Limitations

Areas rated as slight have relatively few limitations in terms of soil suitability for a particular use. The degree of suitability is such that a minimum of time or cost would be needed to overcome relatively minor soil limitations.

Moderate Limitations

In areas rated moderate, it is relatively more difficult and more costly to correct the natural limitations of the soil for certain uses than for soils rated as having slight limitations.

Severe Limitations

Areas designated as having severe limitations would require more extensive and more costly measures than soils rated with moderate limitations in order to overcome natural soil limitations. The soil may have more than one limiting characteristic causing it to be rated severe.

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.