

## **George Davis speaking at the Saratoga Springs public hearing, January 8, 1973**

Thank you. I'm sure there's no one in this room that needs to be reminded of the existing beauty of the Adirondack Park. We certainly have a magnificent area here. I suspect everyone here realizes the need to protect this area for future Generations.

Nor do I believe that many of us in this room would need to be told that there are some land uses in the park that may perhaps detract from the beauty of the park as a whole. What is this creature called the Adirondack Park, however? I have a map here that shows the mixture of State lands, labeled here Adirondack Forest Preserve in the olive drab, and the private lands here in the white all outlined by the blue line that makes up the Adirondack Park. So immediately you see the concerns of both the state and the private people that own the land in the park in the intermixture of their lands and how obviously the uses on any one sector are going to affect the uses on the other sector. To mention ownership of land—well just who does own the Adirondack Park? You can see here the state land in the park that was shaded olive drab on the last slide is about 39% of the park is a whole.

The park resident—those people and those corporations that actually reside within the park or corporations that have their headquarters in the park—own about 24% of the part, slightly less than 1/4 of the entire park. Whereas corporations with their headquarters outside of the park, for instance some of the large paper companies, own another 24% of the park. Then non-residents of the park—non-resident individual owners—own approximately 13% of the park.

So you can see the concerns here are indeed much farther than just the park boundaries. So the Mandate of the agency was discussed briefly by Chairman Lawrence. I think we should make some mention of it. We were fortunate in the planning process in the Adirondack Park in that the area was not totally developed. Remember that most planning in the United States has taken part or taken place in urban and suburban areas. Well when this is the case one has to base the planning on existing land uses—land uses that are already going on in the area. We were fortunate because of the small amount of development in the Park that we were able to start from a resource-oriented base. What can the land withstand? Now recognizing this resource base, we were able to evaluate it so that future development can be geared to the capabilities of the resource itself. Of course, then, we looked at some of the other characteristics of the park.

Let's just briefly go through the planning process.

We started with base maps of the Park, the United States Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangle. These areas we shaded out in the light yellow overlay in the green on this map to state lands, because after all now we're talking of the private land use and development plan. Those areas that do not have the light shading of yellow on them are the private lands. Looking at these lands, we then evaluated the physical characteristics of the land. These would be things like soil factors, the effluent capacity of the soil, the erosiveness of the soil. Things also like slope—all the physical characteristics of the land. We shaded these to reflect the capability

for construction and for development, with the very black areas being areas where the soils and slopes and other physical considerations were such that development and construction here would very definitely harm the resource base, the physical resource base. The clear areas, those that we don't show screening on, are areas where prudent construction followed by prudent standards of construction. . . the physical resources were very amenable to development and the varying shades of gray in between are the zones in between these two extremes of very amenable to development to areas where development should be avoided.

We then did the same thing in an evaluation of the biological resources of the park. Here were talking of things like key wildlife habitat, the habitat of rare endangered species of wildlife, fragile ecosystem such as bogs or alpine meadows. Again, trying to rate: what would the impact of development on these various areas be? Using the same rating scale. So the clear areas we did not foresee any substantial adverse environmental impact and the black areas, if developed, would create substantial impact and again the shades of gray in between.

From this we then tried to evaluate the public considerations. After all, this is a state park and has been so designated for 81 years now. We looked at such things as vistas from the highways. We looked at areas of travel corridors—that is, areas adjacent to the highway—and presently undeveloped situations where development would certainly have an impact on the open space character of the park itself. We included things like the wild scenic and recreational river system, recently passed by the New York State Legislature. Historic sites would be another public consideration. Again, evaluating them with the same shading system. When one overlays all of these concern—all of the physical concerns with the biological concerns and then the public concerns—one get this sort of can of worms and it becomes a little bit difficult, perhaps, to try to grasp it all but again, we basically have the same situation: the clear areas are those areas where from a resource capabilities standpoint, we feel development should be directed and the black areas are where we should avoid development. And again, the shades of gray in between.

Now as we follow out the planning process, we turn to the individual counties involved and use the county base map. Here have taken the last slide you saw and simplified it make it easier to work with in terms of the resource capabilities of the land and applied it to Saratoga County. The red areas being the state lands. Then the blue areas are those areas that were clear on the last slide that are most amenable to development, and the yellow areas—some of the gray areas—that offer definite development potential but where perhaps special standards would have to be adhered to. The clear areas representing the bodies of water—the arm of Great Sacandaga Lake here—and also the areas where one would have adverse environmental impacts with development from a resource standpoint.

Then and here we have another County slide because we didn't have one available on Saratoga. We inventory the existing land uses on these lands. Something that is generally the paramount creature in the planning process in areas that are heavily developed. But here again you see red lands being State lands and various colors representing industrial areas, residential areas, commercial areas, this sort of thing, with the clear area on here being lands that are presently

basically open space forested or agricultural lands. Then again, we inventoried public facilities such as the water system in the village of Corinth; sewage system; sanitary landfill site. We tried to locate these because of course development is going to have an impact on facilities and facilities are going to obviously have an impact on where development is best suited to go.

Another characteristic we took into account was the wishes of local government as expressed in adopted local zoning ordinances. Here we again are going to another county where we can examine these. Again, the colored red areas that was colored with a colored crayon are the State lands. But then the other shades of color on there indicate where there are local ordinances and we evaluated them. They picked out high-density residential areas and low-density residential areas and also some areas they felt should be left alone and some areas where they thought there were possibilities for industrial uses. So we tried to consider this in the process. Now putting all of these factors together, we came up with seven zones or seven land classification areas shown here in this legend. This Legend fits the map that's over on the wall. It is available for you to look at.

We came up, basically, with a hamlet area, and here we're talking of urban and rural hamlets. Basically, the difference here is that in an urban hamlet, we have a great variety of commercial services already available. One might have a department store and a tire store and a food chain market, as opposed to some of the rural hamlets, which are more residential in nature, and maybe have a general store or one or two commercial stores in the area. So this is really an extent between the difference of these two. The plan now says it in these hamlet areas, this is the area of maximum, as we see it, local concern for here are where most of the people, the residents of the park, live. So these areas have been given by this preliminary plan you have before you pretty wide uses as to what is allowable within them before it becomes of statewide concern or Agency concern.

Going down the list, we came up with a moderate intensity use area. This is our maximum density, primarily residential-type area outside of the hamlets. This is reflected in the map on areas that already have existing high residential use and also in areas adjacent to some of these hamlets where logical residential expansion would take place. We go down to a low-intensity use area, where we are talking of about 150 principal buildings—essentially read that to say houses, if you will, although it includes much more than that—per square mile. As we go down the intensity scale, we start getting into resources that are more fragile. Then we go to a rural use area—this would be areas, perhaps, of abandoned farms, or this would be areas where essentially the resource is fragile—but yet some residential use can be made of it. These are termed rural use areas.

Then we go to the resource management category, where we have areas that are essential to, for instance, the timber industry in the Adirondack Park—the real backbone, in many respects, of the Adirondack economy. Areas where the natural resources are necessary for the continuance of this industry. And also, these areas, of course, include the most fragile of the lands in the Adirondack Park—those areas that would have been black back on the shading of the resource capabilities. Very fragile resources.

Finally, we identified some industrial sites—by and large existing industrial sites. Again, we feel that local government is going to be best equipped to tell us where in their towns or villages they want industry to concentrate in the future. We're not talking of existing use, because industry is allowable existing use wherever it is already taking place, practically. But in the future, where do they want industry to concentrate? So we're hoping they feed this information to us through the planning process described in the plan.

Okay, applying these 7 zones to the entire park, we come up with a map which you received in your preliminary private land use and development plan, using the same color system that you saw on the legend. More specifically, applying it to the county where we're at tonight in Saratoga County, this is what we came up with. This is the application of those particular factors.

Now this preliminary plan is really the Agency's effort to channel land use and development in those areas best suited for it, number one. Number two, to provide for orderly growth and development in the park. And number three, to protect the intrinsic beauties of the park that we have now for the future generations. Now we do have available with us tonight on slides individual slides of each town in Saratoga County if we come to the point where you want to take a look at those. They will be the same as the county slide you saw, but a blow-up of each individual town within the Park. I think rather than get into those specifics, we could better spend our time hearing your reactions to the preliminary private land use and development plan and your ideas as to how it should be modified. Thank you.