

MASTER PLAN UPDATE – NOVEMBER 2017

Introduction

The **New Hampton** Master Plan is a tool to be used by the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen to guide growth of the town at a rate that is consistent with the town's ability to absorb it, while preserving the existing rural and small town character. The Master Plan furthers this goal through natural resource protection, historic and agricultural preservation, and protection of the town's aesthetic values, which will assure a pleasant, attractive, and desirable community in which to live and play. The Business and Industry Association of NH, in 1996, after extensive research, identified the *Quality of Life in New Hampshire* as the state's most important economic asset. As a result New Hampshire is the fastest growing state in New England. It is estimated that the population of New Hampshire will grow from 1.3 million in 2010 to 1.5 million in 2020. That is an increase of 16% in just 10 years. New Hampshire is losing 20,000 acres of farm and forestland each year to development. New Hampton is going to see its fair share of that growth and loss of farm and forest. It is not a question of if we are going to see it; it is more a question of how we are going to handle it.

New Hampton is set in the geographic center of the state and lies roughly halfway between Newfound Lake and Lake Winnepesaukee, between the White Mountain National Forest and the state capitol in Concord. Interstate 93 and Routes 104 and 132 converge at the town's center. This crossroad of our State affords our residents access to convenient North, South and East, West travel. It also presents unique challenges during heavy tourism periods throughout the year and brings with it the accompanying high traffic volumes and calls for Town's emergency services. The section of Rt. 104 East of I-93 is particularly hard hit during holiday weekends and special events such as Bike Week and much concern over development and traffic flow in this area of town continues to weigh on planning and zoning decisions.

As travel and tourism continue to be mainstays of the New Hampshire economy, New Hampton by virtue of its very location must be prepared to accommodate, not only the growth of its own population, but that of surrounding communities and, indeed, the state as a whole. No town exists in a void, and, particularly since September 11th, 2001, many health and safety issues for New Hampton citizens must be considered in concert with other towns, the region and the state. Indicative of that reality, communication with other town governments, regionally and statewide, is an important tool, New Hampton regularly employs to the benefit of its citizens. The number of state and regional organizations to which New Hampton has affiliated itself is long. New Hampton is a regular member of the Lakes Region Planning

Commission and the New Hampshire Municipal Association to name two. The departments which serve its residents maintain memberships in like manner. Some examples include the **NH** Preservation Alliance, **NH** Association of Conservation Commissions, **NH** Ambulance Association, National Fire Protection Association, **NH** State Firemen's Association, the Belknap County Chiefs of Police, Northern New England Police Association, **NH** Association of Police Chiefs, the **NH** Finance Officers Association, **NH** Association of Assessing Officials, **NH** City and Town Clerks Association, the **NH** Tax Collectors' Association and others. Additionally, volunteer civil servants who serve the town's various boards often attend regional and state level conferences and meetings with those expenses paid by the town budget.

The 2017 revision of the New Hampton Master Plan attempts to set down as clearly and practically as possible the best and most appropriate future development of the town, and makes recommendations to aid the boards in designing ordinances that result in preserving and enhancing the unique quality of life and culture that reside in New Hampton. Additionally, it attempts to guide the Board of Selectman, the Planning Board, and other Town officials in the performance of their duties in a manner that advances the principals of smart growth, sound planning, and wise resource protection.

The revised Master Plan contains five major sections. Vision, Land Use, Historical Resources, and Economical Development Plan were addressed and updated in this version. The Population section is unchanged from the 2006 Master Plan and will be the focus of attention for the next updates as well as adding additional sections in the near future.

Vision:

The response rate for the recent survey was above average although not as high as the survey conducted for the 2002 update. Completed New Hampton Community Opinion Surveys were submitted by our community. The results of the most recent New Hampton community surveys have confirmed the feelings our residents showed in the past survey, that there is a clear desire to maintain the historical, rural, and natural aspects of New Hampton. The most recent survey showed a vast majority agreeing that a great thing about New Hampton is its rural character and sense of community as well as its scenic beauty. New development received favorable response only if it would help reduce the overall tax burden.

The general consensus is that New Hampton should continue to grow only at the rate that we can absorb, at a conservative and controlled rate, while preserving our natural and historic treasures. Moving forward the Town should look to effectively and thoughtfully promote business, growth, and change that the Town desires as reflected in the 2012 Community Survey.

Chapter II. Population (Updated 2006)

THIS SECTION SHALL REMAIN UNCHANGED.

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Chapter III. Land Use

The goal of the Land Use Section is to provide a ready resource of existing and potential land use as tailored by the Community Survey results.

GOAL 3.1 Preserve the rural working landscape and protect prime agricultural lands.

This goal addresses those industries that historically have used the land. The intent is to find strategies that ensure sustainability and good management practices.

3.1 Recommendation: Selectmen appoint an Agricultural Lands and Industry Promotion and Protection Committee (ALIPPC) to research funding sources and zoning/planning techniques that will further protect New Hampton's agricultural and sylvan assets. The committee remains a "standing committee" for banking prime agricultural lands and for promoting strategies to assist farmers. The committee will meet with professional foresters to determine if there are planning and zoning initiatives that will ensure best management harvesting practices and long term protection of the timber resource. The committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and to the Planning Board. The application of Transferable Development Rights and other conservation techniques to this area is strongly recommended.

As part of their duties ALIPPC should consider creating an overlay district that would define prime agricultural and forested area and work to ensure its protection. Considering increased minimum lot size or allowing residential dwellings by special exception only but never on prime agricultural land, were ideas that were brought forward by the past committee. The map prepared by the last Master Plan committee would be a good start in looking at the entire Town's assets. A wildlife habitat preservation goal would also be of benefit to the town.

Goal 3.2 Ensure that the town retains the unique and historic rural character.

This is mainly a visual goal that demands a complicated process of determination of unique character and a process to provide protective scenarios. The last Master Plan committee had recommended the creation of a Mixed-use District and Architectural standards section. These were both accomplished since that time. The architectural standards are now part of the site plan review and applied as appropriate by the Planning Board. The recommendation from the committee for the mixed-use zone read as follows:

"The Planning Board should prepare a change to the Zoning Ordinance to create a Mixed-use Town Center Zoning District as shown on the Future Land Use Map (See Appendix). This district should be pedestrian friendly, mixed use, i.e. a mixture of small commercial establishments and residential units including multi-family, sustainable in water and wastewater, and with a limited access to major arterials.

This will promote new mixed income residences in town without significantly impacting any of the other goals. The result will be housing priced at what people working in New Hampton can afford. It would also ensure that the children born in town would not have to move from town once they become adults. This mixed-use area will encourage the development of small businesses, and it is important to place small business where they can prosper without negatively impacting similar or other uses. It is important that businesses be located near future and existing population areas and not impact traffic on the major highways. An example of negative impact would be creating a "miracle mile" atmosphere, which would not preserve the quality characteristics of New Hampton.

In order for this district to be realized, a different method of handling wastewater must be found. As previously recommended, the Town should investigate some of the state-of-the-art innovative systems that have become available during the past 5 to 10 years."

It is important to be reminded of the actions taken by previous members of our community and what the anticipated results were at that time. While slow economic times in recent past have delayed the changes the Town envisioned we must be patient and at the same time focused on attaining our long term goals.

Goal 3.3 Preserve important wildlife Habitat, scenic view areas, ridgelines, wetlands and water resources.

3.3.1 Recommendation: In order for valuable wildlife habitats to be protected, the Conservation Commission should consider working with the Department of Fish and Game to locate valuable habitats and add

them to existing maps. This would enable the Planning Board to consider these habitats in future land use planning.

The best method for the protection of wildlife habitat, scenic view areas and ridgelines is to remove them from possible development. In order to do this equitably, the current owner of such lands needs to be reimbursed in some manner. Transferable Developments Rights and LCHIP are two methods that can be used for the reimbursement of the owner. It is recommended the Planning Board working jointly with the Conservation Commission to research funding sources and implement a conservation land-purchasing program.

3.3.2 Recommendation: The Planning Board or Board of Selectman should commission an inventory of all scenic views and vistas located in the Town of New Hampton. This inventory should be added to the Master Plan, and ordinances introduced that would protect these views and vistas from development that would have a negative impact, such as "cell towers, water towers, or high rise buildings".

3.3.3 Recommendation: The Planning Board, working with the Conservation Commission, should develop zoning and planning amendments for aquifer protection and stream systems. All wetlands and stream systems should be labeled as Sensitive Areas and should receive special attention when their land use is being considered.

Chapter IV. Historical Resources

4. Introduction

History is a process. It is being made even as it is being written. History is more than the simple recalling of events. It summons new and varied interpretations as people seek to make sense of their current environment.

Historical interpretation can be used as a mirror to the future. The natural setting and human spirit that have been unique to New Hampton should be used as a guide for its future. The Town Plan is one method of helping to recognize and carry on the best and proudest traditions of the town. A plan for the future, however, without a look at the past, is incomplete.

The visual evidence of New Hampton's early character and appearance contributes greatly to the town's current appeal and character, adding personality and a real sense of place. An ongoing, active preservation effort demonstrates that the town has a sense of caring and pride. New residents perceive these values, assimilate them, and bond with their new community.

In New Hampton, the identification and conservation of the built environment can be used as an important community development instrument, especially in terms of evaluating future community planning and development proposals. The preservation of noteworthy architectural styles and historically significant buildings from New Hampton's proud past helps keep the town's rich heritage in clear view, as today's public officials and decision-makers confront a variety of planning and development challenges and opportunities.

4.1 The Historic Inventory

The New Hampton Historic Resources Inventory was limited primarily to properties of significance because of age or architectural style. This survey is a beginning. It sets the stage for a more complete inventory of New Hampton's numerous buildings of significant historic or architectural character, quality and importance.

Twenty-two (22) noteworthy structures were recorded on survey forms, identifying each by common and historic name, location, owner, use and basic description of the structure. Each building was numbered and photographed and descriptive information was provided such as structure type, style, age, condition and other architectural and historical features of significance or interest.

Where interesting information of historical or architectural importance was known or available from existing records or "windshield" survey observation, this was incorporated to the extent feasible on the survey forms.

4.2 Techniques for Preservation

Preservation of old buildings and neighborhoods enriches inhabitants and visitors alike by affording them pleasant surroundings and, more importantly, by keeping them in touch with a part of their heritage. Along New Hampton roads there are many structures in varying stages of use and repair. These buildings can be repaired and restored and will continue their productive life for a long time to come.

The goal is to preserve a bit of the past economically and to live in pleasant surroundings comfortably and safely.

There have been many successful projects involving historic preservation within New England and on the national level. Some examples include Portsmouth downtown and Strawberry Banke; Salem, Massachusetts, and Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston; Mount Vernon; the Paul Revere House; Portland, Maine Waterfront; and Charleston, South Carolina. The current trend applies the historic house concept to entire neighborhoods. Rather than preserve one old house, historic preservation is sometimes involved on a larger scale. For information about historic preservation generally, see RSA 227-C.

4.2.1 Historic Building Restoration - Tax Incentives

Some income-producing buildings may be eligible for a 20 percent investment tax credit for substantial rehabilitation, in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. [See NPS.GOV for the most current information.](#)

For additional information about the National Register of Historic Places and tax incentives for rehabilitating historic buildings, contact the Division of Historical Resources, Department of Cultural Resources, 19 Pillsbury Street, PO Box 2043, Concord, NH 03302. Telephone (603) 271-6437.

4.2.2 National Register

The National Register of Historic Places is a list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture on the local, state, or national level. National Register listing recognizes resources worthy of preservation but does not impose any restriction.

These two types of historic districts, local and National Register, have the same general purposes to recognize and protect significant community resources, although they function in different ways. In many cases it may be most effective for a locally designated historic district also to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

An historic district is characterized by a more or less homogeneous grouping of structures and/or sites dating from the 18th, 19th, or 20th centuries, an area in which the character of the past is rather strongly asserted both in number of structures and in overall visual quality. These may include groups of related buildings and spaces that represent the standards and tastes of the community or neighborhood during one period of history, unrelated structures that represent a progression of various styles and functions, or cohesiveness that possesses an identity of place.

An historic district is a tool for local land use planning. The primary purpose for establishing historic districts is to protect areas of architectural or historic value from encroachment by inappropriate building forms or development patterns, which could adversely affect the area's character, and to establish regulations for its preservation and protection. Like all municipal activities, the authority to establish districts by cities, towns, and villages was granted by the State Legislature under RSA 674:45 and 674:46. An historic district may be an overlay zone; it may exist within any land use zone designated by a zoning ordinance (e.g., commercial, industrial, residential, agricultural, etc.), in which case it may impose more restrictions than the underlying zone regulations. Like the zoning that has now existed in New Hampton for many years, the establishment of an historic district and its regulations or restrictions is authorized at town meeting. Unlike conventional zoning, the administration of

historic district regulations is by an historic district commission as authorized under RSA 674:46-A.

4.2.4 Commissions

The New Hampshire State Legislature has enabled the establishment of town commissions to preserve and protect areas of natural and historic significance.

The town may create an historic district commission and appoint the commission membership. The procedures provided for the appointment of an historic district commission are found in RSA 673:4.

An historic district commission administers a particular **place** defined by the local legislation to be preserved for its cultural, social, economic, political, community and architectural history. The historic district commission may study areas for future historic districting consideration, and prepare an appropriate ordinance and regulations. However the foremost task of an historic district commission is to see that modifications to structures within its jurisdiction are compatible with the characteristics and design histories of each property and that design standards are consistently and equitably applied.

A heritage commission is a newer and different concept that was enabled by the Legislature in 1992 under RSA 673:4-A. It has broader responsibilities in recognizing, using and protecting the historical and cultural resources of a community, wherever they are in that community. The function is analogous to the Conservation

Commission, which is established to advise, review and perform tasks for the protection of the natural environment. By contrast, the heritage commission's focus is on the cultural and man-made resources. Heritage commissions have two and possibly three general powers: to serve as an advisory and review authority; to oversee and administer property; and, if authorized at a town meeting, to assume the composition and duties of an historic district commission. Likewise, if an historic district commission exists, it may, if authorized by a town meeting, assume the composition and duties of a heritage commission.

While the Town shows a desire to preserve natural and historic sites, results of the 2012 survey showed private funding was the most desirable method followed by government grants. Local taxation was the least desirable approach.

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Economic Development Plan

Purpose and Mission:

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New Hampton's economic development goals are based on the dual goals of retaining the existing business base and helping the business base grow within the context of the vision in the master plan.

Assessment:

Many of New Hampton's businesses are attracted here due to the Town's geographical location in the center of the state with excellent east to west and north to south highway access. It is a place where many people pass through on their way to more remote areas. This brings a need for businesses that would support service enterprises for both the local population and visitors. Our Town's central location coupled with its character makes it a good place for cottage industries of which New Hampton has many.

Existing Business Base:

Of the 47 establishments identified by the 2011 census a majority of 29 showed an employee base of 1-4. Only 2 establishments, both in educational services showed an employee base of greater than 100. A full breakdown of businesses is available in the appendix.

Goals and Strategies:

Realistically New Hampton's economic development should take place within the context of the regional and state level, as we do not have the financial resources to implement strategies that would facilitate growth on its own. New Hampton is within easy commuting distance to larger business centers and so the kinds of businesses that will flourish in New Hampton need to fit within the context of the region.

Some of the strategies needed to facilitate growth include:

- Marketing and communications to advertise the community as a desirable business location.
- Advocating for the improvement of state road infrastructure in mixed use and business districts.
- Exploring the viability of expansion of water and sewer systems as technology advances.
- Drawing on regional resources that provide coaching, training, start-up, capital, and incubation services for entrepreneurship and small business development.
- Fostering business networks to allow peer-to-peer exchanges for best practices.
- Advocating for the expansion of broadband services in remote areas of town.

- Attracting knowledge based businesses that are "location neutral" and where the owners value the quality of life in the Town.
- Continue to improve the general business climate while keeping in harmony with the Town's historical and rural nature.

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