

## **CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION**

### **PURPOSE OF MASTER PLAN**

The development of an updated town Master Plan is an opportunity to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of our community's needs and desires as they pertain to the anticipated growth of our Town. The overall purpose of the Master Plan is to provide guidelines for the future growth and development of our community. It is a consensus-building, planning process which attempts to identify the guidelines for growth of our town as preferred by the people in the town and not just a few individuals. The goal of this master-planning process is to proactively chart a course identifying the desired future of our community. Without this comprehensive planning process, in a relatively short time Newbury can find it has lost many of the facets the people in our community cherish.

### **OVERALL VISION FOR NEWBURY'S FUTURE**

The Planning Board gathered public input on this Master Plan update in order to prepare a plan which reflects our community's collective vision for the future of our Town. The overall guideline for the future development of our community expressed by the people of Newbury through this Master Planning process is:

“Over the next ten years, to remain primarily a rural residential community with a small town atmosphere, uncrowded and quiet living conditions, and a scenic and unpolluted natural environment.”

Chapter II “A Vision for the Future” provides greater detail on this overall vision statement.

### **PROCESS TO UPDATE THE MASTER PLAN**

The process for updating the 1997 Newbury Master Plan began in earnest in the summer of 2005. At that time, the Planning Board conducted three public work shops to develop a Vision Statement for the future of our community. Following that the Planning Board crafted a Community Survey to get feedback on important issues to address in the Master Plan update. The Community Survey was distributed in December 2005 and the results were tabulated in the spring of 2006.

Following the Community Survey, the Planning Board conducted several work sessions and reviewed the recommendations from the 1997 Master Plan to identify those recommendations that had been accomplished, those recommendations that they still wanted to include in the update and new recommendations that were to be added. Following that effort, the planning Board held a public forum to receive public input on this effort.

Next a draft of each chapter of the Master Plan update was prepared by Kenneth B. McWilliams & Associates for the Planning Board to review and critique. Following this review, the revisions were incorporated into the draft chapter. Following preparation of the draft Land Use Chapter in late 2007, the Planning Board conducted a second public forum to receive feedback on that chapter. After all the revised draft chapters were completed, they were assembled into an integrated document for the Planning Board's final review. The Planning Board conducted a public hearing on the draft Master Plan update on . After making final revisions to the document as a result of the input received at the public hearing, the Planning Board adopted the updated Master Plan on .

## **SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY SURVEY**

As noted above, an integral part of the process of updating the Town's Master Plan was to find out what Newbury residents and property owners thought about important growth issues facing our community. The Planning Board prepared and mailed out 1,767 Community Survey forms to all Newbury property owners. A total of 462 surveys were completed and returned, for an overall response rate of 26%. This is a typical response rate for a community survey and comparable on the return to the last community survey in Newbury. Response rates on individual questions vary since everyone completing and returning a survey did not answer all the questions. It is evident in looking at the demographic section at the end of the survey instrument that there is some bias in the survey. In particular, the percentage of persons over 55 years of age responding to the survey was greater than the percentage they represent of the total town population. Conversely, the percentage of people responding to the survey who have children at home was lower than the percentage they represent of the total population. Nevertheless, the results of the Community Survey have provided the Planning Board with invaluable insight and feedback on key growth issues facing our community and have been incorporated as applicable throughout the document.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE ADOPTION OF THE 1997 MASTER PLAN**

Before we look to the future and sort through the development issues facing our community, it is beneficial to look back and take stock of the accomplishments the town has achieved since adoption of the 1997 Master Plan. This is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of those accomplishments, but rather a summary of the highlights. Included are:

- Development of a Capital Improvement Plan in 2002 and annual updates each year since then.
- Major revisions of the Site plan Review Regulations in 2005 with adoption on April 19, 2005.
- Major revisions of the Land Subdivision Control Regulations in 2005 with adoption on April 11, 2005.
- Development of several important Zoning Ordinance amendments by the Planning Board and adoption by ballot vote at town Meeting, including:
  1. Blodgett Landing Cottage District;
  2. Skyline/Hillside Conservation Overlay District;
  3. Amending the density provisions for residential development;

4. Revising the boundaries of the Business District;
  5. Aquifer Protection Overlay District;
  6. Mt. Sunapee Recreation District;
  7. Personal Wireless Service Facilities; and
  8. Impact Fees.
- Library Expansion.
  - New Highway Garage.
  - Improvements in the Bell Cove area include the refurbishment of the Train Station, addition of the renovated caboose for museum use, a scenic byway sign, and landscaping.
  - Sidewalk and related improvements in Newbury Center have been funded and are under design.
  - Acquisition of the Bald Sunapee and Camacho properties in Newbury Center.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2007 MASTER PLAN**

The Planning Board's efforts in developing this long range Master Plan has resulted in numerous recommendations on a variety of topical areas. In an effort to make the Master Plan more effective, a new section on Implementation has been added to the Master Plan to identify who does what by when.

## **INTERLINKING CHAPTERS OF THE MASTER PLAN**

The extent to which one element of the Master Plan is interwoven with other elements of the Plan becomes evident during its development. For example, housing is a land use which can affect the transportation system, community facilities and services, and the natural and cultural resources. Separating these components into chapters of the Master Plan simply provides an organizational structure to address the various topical areas. The more one works with these various topical areas, the more one recognizes the links between them.