

2012 Strategic Planning Retreat



Final Report of the June 20, 2012 Strategic Planning Retreat

Report Introduction



TOWN OF WESTFORD

Office of the Town Manager

Town Hall

55 Main Street

WESTFORD, MA 01886

(978) 692-5501 FAX (978) 399-2557

TO: Board of Selectmen
 cc: All Board, Committees, Commissions, Department Heads
 FROM: Jodi Ross, Town Manager *Jodi Ross*
 DATE: July 27, 2012
 RE: Summary report from June 20 Strategic Planning Retreat

Please find attached a summary report of our 2012 Strategic Planning Retreat. Our intent of this report is to summarize the event for public consideration, and sustain and build upon the cooperative spirit and positive rapport that was on display that evening.

Our retreat was held on June 20, 2012 at Kimball Farm in Westford. Although the temperature hovered around 95 degrees, 107 participants braved the heat and joined us for an evening of information sharing, questions, and constructive input from our residents. This event was well-received and we have included helpful comments we received after the event to help improve our retreat next year.

In this report you will find summaries of the discussions and key points highlighted from each session. All of the materials distributed to attendees and presented during the meeting are also included as appendices and are available on our website at: westfordma.gov/retreat

We began the event with a brief presentation and panel discussion of the fiscal condition of our town: preparing for FY14 and beyond. Topics that were covered included:

- What we have done to reduce/control expenses
- The cost of providing adequate services
- The cost of maintaining our existing assets
- Choices that may be required regarding reduction of service levels
- Revenue generating ideas
- Possible override request

This session was followed with break-out group discussions on key policy issues and topics including:

- Economic and Planned Development along Route 110,

- Education – Mandates, Budget, Full-Day Kindergarten, and other issues
- Examining Municipal Property, Capital Needs, Possible New Revenue from Facilities
- Underage Drug and Alcohol Usage Awareness

This report includes summaries of each topic compiled by the facilitators; along with both verbal and written input we received during and after the event.

I would like to highlight several key ideas that arose during our retreat and in the many follow-up discussions that have been held in the weeks since.

- The vast majority of residents was pleased with the event, and enjoyed the “opportunity to informally meet with town staff and committees”. Our Master Plan calls for regular all-board events, and we believe that such regular collaboration will support coordinated efforts toward shared public policy goals.
- Some attendees felt that the agenda was ambitious, which resulted in inadequate time to fully consider discussion items, while also limiting their ability to engage in each session. Others supported the range of topics as timely and informative.
- It was suggested that perhaps the town come with a list of questions to ask the audience, with perhaps electronic voting available.
- As a companion to larger events such as this, it was suggested that it may be useful to host smaller policy-specific meetings regarding issues that fall under multiple local jurisdictions or are of interest to multiple boards and the general public.
- We believe the event itself served as a beneficial catalyst, and that we were successful in sharing timely, significant information in a concise format. We also believe we were successful in facilitating public discussion in a relaxed environment (several commented they enjoyed holding the event outdoors). If events such as this are held on a regular basis, we believe this will improve communication regarding which action items are receiving the greatest attention, and also encourage participants in such efforts to regularly self-evaluate progress and make adjustments as needed.

The Board of Selectmen has directed us to hold this event annually, although we may consider trying it in the fall versus the summer to see if attendance improves. Thank you to the Board of Selectmen and the many other town officials, department heads, and staff members who contributed to the planning, information assembling, and conducting of our 2nd annual retreat.



Table of Contents

REPORT INTRODUCTION	1
TOWN FINANCE DISCUSSION	3
Financial Posters	6
CONCURRENT BREAK-OUT GROUP SESSIONS	8
Group 1 - Economic and Planned Development along Route 110:	8
Group 2- Education – Mandates, Budget, and other issues:	10
Group 3- Examining Municipal Property, Capital Needs, Possible New Revenue from Cell Facilities	12
Group 4 - Underage Drug and Alcohol Usage Awareness and Prevention	14
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN EXHIBIT	15
2012 STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT PARTICIPANTS	16
APPENDIX A – MEETING PACKET	17
APPENDIX B – MASTER PLAN POSTER EXHIBIT	17
APPENDIX C - PARTICIPANT SURVEY RESULTS	17



All Photographs in this report were taken by Bill Turner, Conservation Resource Planner and Chris Hayes, Planning Intern

Town Finance Discussion

Facilitators: Andrea Peraner-Sweet, Board of Selectmen Chair; Angela Harkness School Committee Chair; Mark Kost, Finance Committee Vice Chair; John Cunningham Public Works Initiative Committee Chair; Jodi Ross, Town manager; Bill Olsen, School Superintendent; Dan O'Donnell, Budget Director

Town Manager Jodi Ross made a brief presentation of the fiscal condition of our town and explained how we are preparing for FY14 and beyond. Examples were given illustrating how we have reduced and/or controlled expenses, the cost of providing services to the residents, the cost of maintaining our existing assets, and the choices that may be required regarding reduction of service levels. Detailed financial information was distributed in the meeting packet and is included with this report as Appendix A.

After the presentation there was a panel discussion with retreat attendees by the chairs of the following committees: Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee, Budget Solutions Task Force, Capital Planning Committee, and Public Works Initiative; and the town manager, school superintendent, and budget director. The following questions were posed by residents and discussed.

School Spending

A resident asked what are we going to do to slow spending on the school side. Town budgets have grown over the past ten years; however the school budget has grown at a rate over inflation every year. The resident commented that an override will not solve the problem if the school budget continues to grow at the current rate. The rate of growth of the school budget has to be solved. What does the long term plan over 20 years look like?

Superintendent Bill Olsen responded that the school budget took a big hit several years ago and “we are trying to claw our way back”. He said one in three citizens in our town is in a public school. Mr. Olsen feels the 2.9% increase is not a problem; but a symptom of underfunding that we are trying to deal with. He reported school budgets have increased due to mandates and increased enrollment. The new teacher evaluation model cost \$30K in this year and will cost \$40K next year. The school has one million square feet of buildings and associated staffing and technology costs. Per student, our costs are in the lower 30% of all MA schools. We are in the bottom 30% of school spending and the top 5% of performance. Proposition 2 -1/2 restrains our ability to generate additional revenue.



Jodi Ross, Town Manager

Highlights

- We are in the bottom 30% school spending and the top 5% of performance
- Selectmen established an Economic Development Committee to look at attracting businesses that are in line with Westford values
- Our public roads have more than doubled since 1978, without any additional staff in the highway department
- Only police officer has been added since 2000
- Regionalization has been successful in some departments and will continue to be considered

A resident said it would be helpful to know what percentage of “unclassified” (health insurance and retirement) are for school personnel so we understand the true costs of educating our children.

Regionalization

A resident asked if we believe that regionalization could provide some solutions. He thought it could be worth looking into.

Jodi Ross expressed that although we have examined and in some cases regionalized programs, in many instances regionalization does not always deliver the same level services that we currently provide, and there are not cost savings. We are looking at many opportunities, but they do not always make sense. Recently we examined regionalizing our dispatchers, but it would have cost us more money, for less service, and the proposal relied on state funding, which could be discontinued. This year the Board of Selectmen entered into mutual aid agreements with surrounding towns to share equipment and resources such as heavy equipment.

Ellen Rainville stated the library is taking advantage of regional opportunities such as the library network of 36 members used for automated interlibrary loans.

Bill Olsen mentioned that the schools are part of a purchasing collaborative. He researched regionalized Sped transportation. He said he did not feel this is the climate to give up local control.

Service Levels

Jodi Ross stated that the number of town roads has more than doubled since 1978. No new employees have been added to the Highway Department since that time and we have the best plowed roads of any of our surrounding towns. The Police Department has only added one position in the past twelve years.

A resident said we cannot have a budget that is rising at a rate that is higher than resident’s income. A 3 – 4 year solution is not going to be sustainable over time. He questioned why we were not projecting more “new growth revenue” for all the new construction along Route 110.

Revenue Ideas

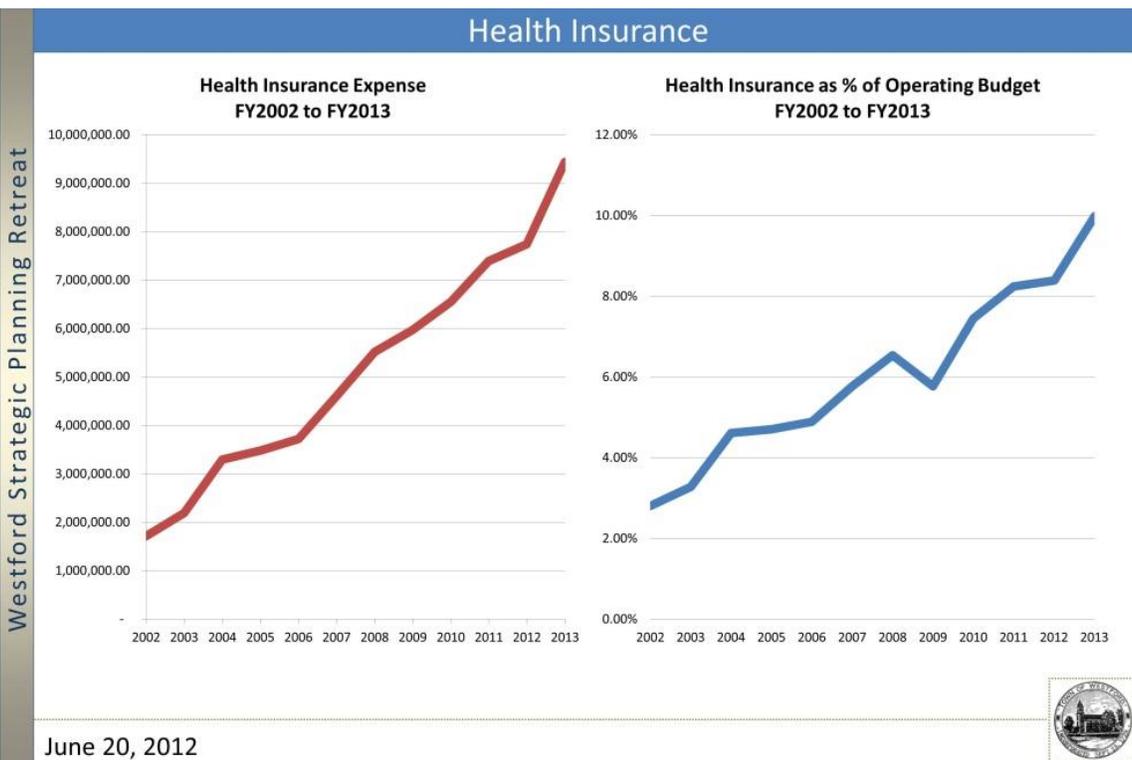
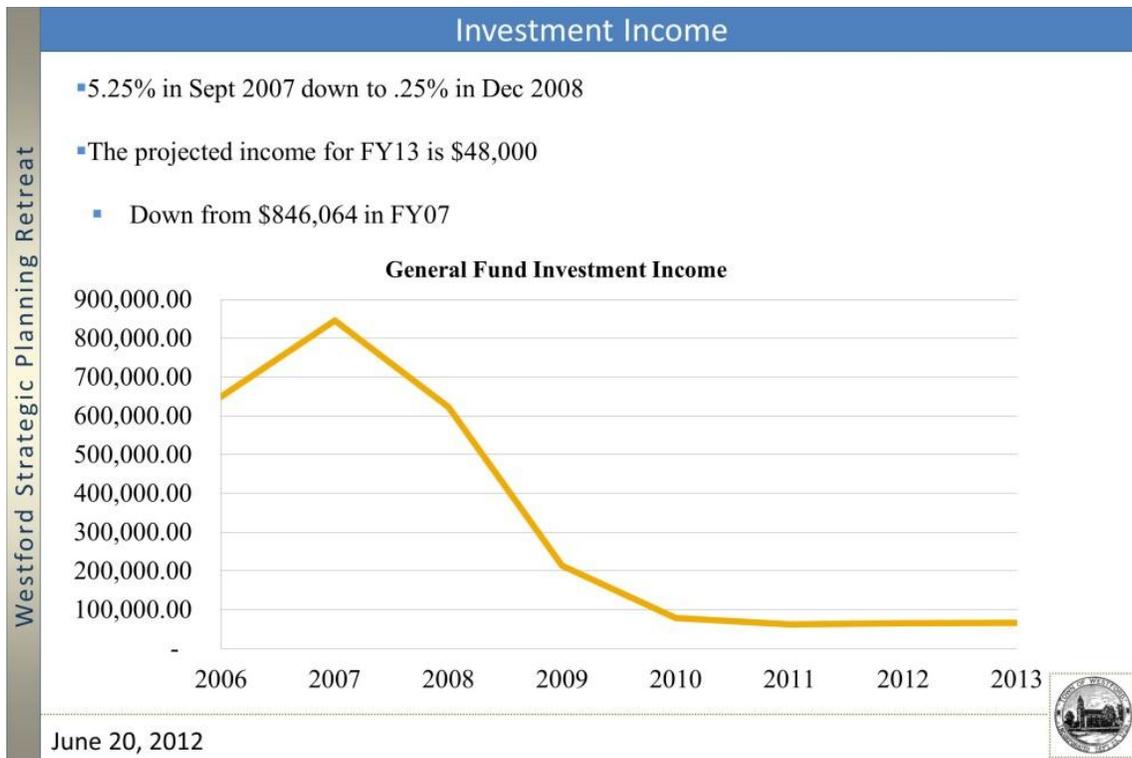
Selectman Chair, Andrea Peraner-Sweet stated the Board of Selectmen (BoS) is appointing an Economic Development Committee to examine development potential and pursue ways to promote Westford. Red Hat, Juniper, Cisco, and Goodrich either expanded or relocated recently into our town. The Route 110 corridor is attracting new development that is consistent with our Master Plan.



Pictured above: Dan O'Donnell, Budget Director; Paul Alphen; Ellen Rainville, Library Director; Leslie Thomas, Water Commissioner; Robert Creegan

Financial Posters

The Finance Team prepared posters which were presented to supplement the finance discussion. Additional posters are available on the Strategic Planning Retreat web page (www.westfordma.gov/retreat). For questions or more information about these posters contact the Budget Director or Tax Collector/Treasurer's office.



Understanding Middlesex Retirement Costs

• How is the Retirement System Funded?

- Employer Contributions
 - Assessment based on our own employee's, retirees, salary, disability, mortality rates, etc.
- Employee Contributions
 - Hire Date Prior to 1/1/1975 5%
 - After 1/1/1975 and prior to 1/1/1984 7%
 - After 1/1/1984 and prior to 7/1/1996 8%
 - After 1/1/1996 9%
 - After 1/1/1979 (earnings over 30k) +2%
- Return on Investments
 - Actuarial rate of return 8.125%
 - Losses and gains "smoothed" over 5 years

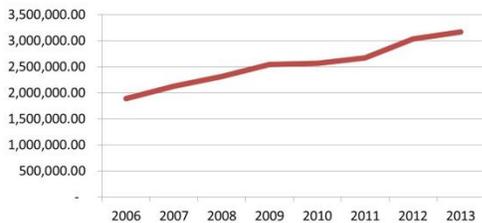
• What is the "Unfunded Pension Liability?"

- The single sum value of lifetime benefits to existing pensioners
- 63% of assessment towards unfunded liability
- Insufficient employee contributions in the 70's and 80's, reduced employer share contributions during years of market gains, reluctance to decrease actuarial investment assumptions, and some well publicized pension loop holes lead to the deficit

• Pension Law Reform Highlights

- Eliminated one day for one year service for elected officials
- Elected officials must serve ten years to become vested
- Eliminated "working out of grade" disability calculations
- Extend full funding of retirement systems to 2040 – Middlesex target is 2035
- Increase minimum retirement age and maximum benefit age
- Retirement calculation based on highest earning five years instead of three

Middlesex Retirement Assessment



Note: Teachers contribute to Mass. Teacher's Retirement which is funded by the State. There is no town appropriation.



June 20, 2012

Understanding Middlesex Retirement Costs

Illustration of Employee Contributions

Effect of 9% Contribution for Group 1 Members
 Assumed Salary Increase: 4% per year
 Investment Return: 8% per year

Approx. % Value of Benefits Paid by Employee

Age at Hire:	25	35
Retirement Age – 55	115%	100%
Retirement Age – 60	104%	90%
Retirement Age – 65	128%	89%

•Membership

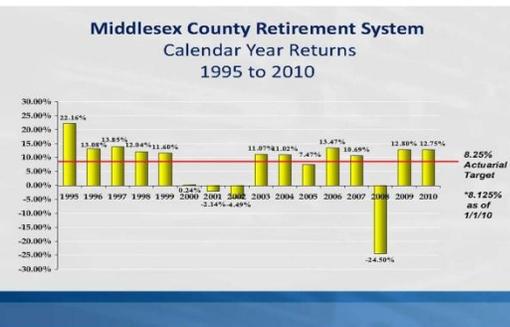
- 4,800 retired/ survivor/ beneficiary members
- Average benefit is \$19,400
 - State Average for local retirement systems is \$21,200
- Westford has 151 retired participants

•Oversight

- The Middlesex Retirement System is overseen by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC)

•Did you know....

- The municipal pension system in Massachusetts is governed by MGL Ch 32
- Town and School employees are not eligible to accrue social security benefits through their town employment
- In the private sector social security is deducted from employee pay and matched by the employer at the rate of 6.2% on all wages
- In fiscal year 2011, wages, salary, overtime, etc. totaled \$52,228,961
- If the town had to pay social security tax on those wages, the total would have been \$3,238,195
- The Middlesex Retirement Assessment in fiscal year 2011 was \$2,666,208



June 20, 2012

Concurrent Break-Out Group Sessions

Group 1 - Economic and Planned Development along Route 110:

Group 1 Facilitators: Chris Kluchman, Town Planner; Kevin Borselli, Planning Board member; Paul Starratt, Town Engineer (recorded by Chris Hayes, Planning intern)

The facilitators described the ongoing business activity along Route 110, including development projects, infrastructure projects (road and water), and they shared the anticipated revenues and funding sources. Additional information was distributed in the meeting packet and is included with this report as Appendix A. The following are questions and comments from participants:

You mentioned the anticipated revenues from new commercial development - what are the increased costs to the town for providing services to new development? We do not have cost of service information today. Generally, commercial services cost the town less than residential. The Princeton Properties 40B project for 200 units of rental housing conducted a fiscal impact analysis which showed that development is expected to be slightly revenue positive.

What is the town's attitude towards tax concessions? This would be an excellent question for the newly forming Economic Development Committee (EDC). Recently, Town Meeting approved Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for the expansion of the Red Hat office building at Tech Park West. The town currently has the same tax rate for commercial and residential uses, while industrial use is slightly higher.

If residential and commercial pay the same tax rate, why not raise the tax rate for businesses? Generally, businesses use many fewer services than residences do, and raising tax rates for businesses while also trying to encourage business development sends a mixed message. This is also a good policy topic for the EDC.

Does the town have fiscal projections for future development projects that are not yet under construction? The town is doing a better job of anticipating when new projects will be constructed, but long term projections are difficult for several reasons: 1) approved projects may or may not be built in a particular timeframe, 2) sometimes development changes over time, and 3) it is not possible to estimate the number, type and intensity of new development in the Commercial Highway (CH), and Industrial Highway (IH) zoning districts, because of the variety of uses allowed in these districts. For example, office and retail are both allowed in the CH district, so it is difficult to predict how a property will be developed.



Chris Kluchman, Town Planner and Kevin Borselli, Planning Board member

Highlights:

- Minot's Corner design should accommodate traffic for a 20 year period
- The town currently has the same tax rate for commercial and residential uses, while industrial use is slightly higher
- The Princeton Properties 40B project for 200 units of rental housing conducted a fiscal impact analysis which showed that development is expected to be slightly revenue positive

Is the Tiki Lau project approved for retail? What is going on at that site? The approval of the new 18,000 square foot retail development on the former Tiki Lau/mini golf site was appealed by the developer, so the timeframe for construction is up in the air until the litigation is settled.

Related to the detailed design of Minot’s Corner that was presented at this session, what is the extent of the seven lane configuration? Town Engineer Paul Starratt described the Minot’s Corner intersection design and noted that the intersection was last improved approximately 29 years ago. Mr. Starratt described the interface of the Minot’s Corner project, and the improvements to Route 110 and Boston Road being completed by the developer of the Cornerstone Square project. The Minot’s Corner intersection will have the widest number of lanes, which will increase the capacity and improve the existing delays. There will be pedestrian crossings installed as part of this project which do not exist now. The seven lanes at Minot’s Corner taper down to four lanes in each direction, which then decrease to two lanes. The Minot’s Corner project boundary is from the Cornerstone Square improvements on the west to Nixon Road on the east.

The design of MC seems to be far from the vision described by the Route 110 Master Plan because there is so much asphalt. The intersection is getting wider in order to improve the traffic flow. There is a landscaped median shown on the plans extending east from the intersection.

Who will maintain the landscaped median within Route 110? MassDOT has the responsibility to maintain landscaped areas within Route 110.

Can we have “nice looking” traffic signs for Minot’s Corner?

MassDOT has to follow the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, that the traffic signs will green with white lettering. One reason this - it is considered safer to have uniform signs so that motorists recognize the type of sign.



so
be
for

quickly

Does the design of Minot’s Corner include consideration for future development on the Route 110 Corridor?

Yes, the design should accommodate traffic within a 20 year planning period, and does include anticipated development along the Route 110 Corridor.

What is going on with Market Basket? The Cornerstone Square project will have a 60,000 square foot Market Basket store. The facilitators did not know what will happen to the existing Market Basket store.

Is commercial development clustered in certain areas of town? The town’s Zoning Map is the mechanism that directs new development and Route 110 is the primary commercial/office area, and Groton Road (Route 40) is the

other commercial/industrial area in town. The majority of Westford is zoned for single family residential (Residence A or B).

Group 2- Education – Mandates, Budget, and other issues:

Group 2 Facilitator: Bill Olsen, School Superintendent

This group discussed the impact of the ongoing challenging fiscal climate on the School Department and examined trends and projections related to education funding. Additional information was distributed in the meeting packet and is included with this report as Appendix A. The following are a few key points that were discussed.

Bill Olsen presented an overview, referring to charts and information from his FY13 budget documents and presentations.

- The school budget percentage increase has stayed fairly constant year-to-year since the new buildings opened in the early 2000's. The School Department had to cut services each year, and implement fees, in order to stay within the appropriation each year.
- 94.4% of the School Department budget is funded by the town appropriation, the remainder is funded by fees, and other outside sources such as school choice, grants, etc.
- Enrollment is stabilizing, but has not begun to drop. In-migration, rather than births, accounts for much of the new enrollment each year.

Questions from the group:

Why has the School Department hired 60 new student support services (special education) staff from 2008 through 2013 when the actual special needs population did not go up by a similar percentage? Mr.

Olsen responded, not all new hires were teachers – many were 1:1 aides, administrative staff such as psychologists and team chairpersons, and transportation staff. Positions were needed to address requirements of individual education plans (IEPs). Many times an aide will enable us to keep the student in our local schools rather than a more costly out-placement. 17 or more 1:1 aides were added in just the last few years. The average outside tuition used to be in the range of \$30,000. Now it is closer to \$60,000. Some placements can go as high as \$200,000. It is very important to ensure that the IEPs are appropriate for each student. Bill Olsen advised participants to contact Courtney Muller (Director of Pupil Services) to learn more about the special needs programs. Ms. Muller and Mr. Olsen are available to meet with members of the public who have concerns and questions.



Bill Olsen, School Superintendent

Highlights:

- Average per pupil cost is approx. \$11,000, but for special ed. it is closer to \$24,000
- The average outside tuition for special ed. was in the range of \$30,000. Now it is closer to \$60,000 and can go as high as \$200,000.
- We use a program called eSped to prepare and track IEPs and services
- Full-day kindergarten, if implemented, may require additional space at the Nabnasset School

We seem to be boxed in by mandates and unions, with no efficient way to get to savings. When do we expect to see enrollment drop so we can begin to see some savings? We have cut seven elementary staff due to lower enrollments over the last few years. This is reviewed every year as part of the budget process. We have hired general education interventionists (reading and math support personnel) to support the general ed population and retain students there, rather than moving to special ed where the cost to educate goes up. The average per pupil cost is approximately \$11,000, but for special ed it is closer to \$24,000.

How many classrooms would be needed if we go to full-day kindergarten? We have the capacity at Robinson and Miller but Nabnasset would be tight. We might need modulars at Nabnasset. We may be able to move one of the modular sections of the Millennium School over to Nabnasset. The School Committee has not yet made a recommendation about full-day kindergarten.

The Millennium Building has served the town well, but if we want to extend the life of the building we must maintain the roof and other systems. How will this be addressed? Mr. Olsen estimated there are 10 – 15 more years of useful life for the Millennium School.

All town departments including schools have scoured their budgets, and there are no more “low hanging fruit”. The town needs exceed the 2.5% allowed by Prop 2 1/2%. The resident suggested every town in the Commonwealth lobby the legislature for change, believing the rate should, at a minimum, be indexed.

How does the town get back to the situation in the 1990’s (no fees, more programs). We are not poorer, so why can’t we get back?



Pictured left to right: Terry Ryan, School Committee member; Selectmen Bob Jefferies and Valerie Wormell



Group 3- Examining Municipal Property, Capital Needs, Possible New Revenue from Cell Facilities

Group 3 Facilitators:
 John Mangiaratti,
 Assistant Town
 Manager; Tom
 Mahanna, Permanent
 Town Building
 Committee Chair; Mark
 Kost, Capital Committee
 Chair John Cunningham,
 Public Works Initiative
 Committee Chair
 (recorded by Ellen
 Rainville, Library Director)



This session examined ways to coordinate and fund capital improvements for long term sustainability of our resources and infrastructure. Recent recommendations from the Public Works Initiative Committee (PWIC) and the Permanent Town Building Committee (PTBC) were reviewed and discussed. There was also a brief discussion about what opportunities exist to utilize municipal property to generate new revenue from leases, cell facilities, and/or solar power generation facilities.

Additional information was distributed in the meeting packet and is included with this report as Appendix A. The following are a few key

Highlights:

- Facility summit needed to improve coordination on facility projects and planning
- Bundling and bonding long-term capital needs over the next five years may help to reduce the backlog of capital projects
- Expertise in the school facilities department could help with maintenance of other town buildings

points that were discussed.

Over \$35 million of capital needs have been identified by departments. Capital has been funded at an average of \$1.5 million in recent years, but one project could potentially take up the entire appropriation, for example, \$10-11 million for proposed new facilities is included in the \$35 million.

Can we solicit corporate help to fund these projects? Could programs such as adopt-a-building or adopt-a-site help fund building improvements?

What projects are to be considered a higher priority? For example, we have two ambulances with more than 100,000 miles.



**Mark Kost, Capital Committee Chair and
 Selectman Jim Sullivan**

The Public Works Initiative Committee (PWIC) updated the group on their recent activities, such as implementing recommendations from the Comprehensive Master Plan and Ad Hoc Public Works Committee, centralizing

procurement, examining care and custody of facilities, and investigating other opportunities to share resources without extra cost.

The group reviewed facility issues and discussed the Permanent Town Building Committee's recent recommendations. The use of former fire stations in Graniteville for storage and the substation in Forge Village for the IT department are not effective uses for these buildings. The town should consider using CPA funds to develop a Master Plan for the site containing the Town Farm Building, Rogers Fire Station, and School Barn. The Millennium building and Water Department garage are buildings that could provide temporary space while a Master Plan is developed.

The potential for cell tower revenue should be pursued, but it requires more study and analysis to find suitable locations.

Energy efficiency should always be considered in the reuse of buildings.

Is there a way to better utilize the expertise in the schools maintenance staff to help with town facilities needs?

The group agreed a facility summit would be a good way to align the current activities of the Capital Planning Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Public Works Initiative Committee and the Energy Committee.



Tom Mahanna, Permanent Town Building Committee Chair



John Mangiaratti, Assistant Town Manager



Group 4 - Underage Drug and Alcohol Usage Awareness and Prevention

Group 4 Facilitators: Andrea Peraner-Sweet, Board of Selectmen Chair; Sandy Collins, Health Director; Tom McEnaney, Police Chief; Jim Antonelli, Westford Academy Principal

The session began with the premise that underage drug and alcohol abuse does exist in Westford.

Residents were given statistical information on underage drug and alcohol use in Westford, which was obtained from the 2010 Westford Youth Risk Behavior Survey (WYRBS). This survey is administered in grades 6-12. Additional data may be obtained through the Westford Against Substance Abuse (WASA) web site at www.wasa.org and results were also provided to the school committee earlier this year.

Information was disseminated to all participants on the ongoing drug and alcohol prevention initiatives and activities, which are currently provided through W.A.S.A., the Health Department, the Schools and Police Department.

The group was asked to identify specific concerns they had related to topic and the following list was generated:

- **What drugs are circulating and being abused?**
 - Percocet, alcohol, hand sanitizers, prescription drugs
- **Where are drugs coming from?**
 - Lowell and surrounding towns. It has also been reported that our youth are obtaining and distributing to friends and other students.
 - Studies and community data have shown that since marijuana has been legalized, its use has increased.



Chief Tom McEnaney and Andrea Peraner-Sweet, Board of Selectmen Chair

Highlights:

- Increased parent education and awareness is critical
- School Resource Officers are needed
- K9 vehicle needed to support Police K9 program



- There is a real concern that parent perception is that underage drug and alcohol abuse does not exist in Westford despite evidence.
- **One resident commented that kids aren't being held responsible for their actions and they have no consequences.**
 - There is a need for more parental diligence checking for paraphernalia and searching their children's cars to detect use.

Ideas Generated From the Participants:

- There is a need for financial support for a cruiser van for the Police K-9.
- WASA and others should generate a list of signs and symptoms for parents to be aware of, which might indicate their child was using drugs.
- We should support and bring back a school resource officer to deal with the day-to-day concerns seen and provide more diligence.
- They requested that we find a way to ensure we are educating kids about being ethical.
- Be sure we increase parent education sessions on underage drug and alcohol use, including WASA programs at events such as: Parent Athlete Night and Parent Orientations. Principle Antonelli committed to making this occur.

Additional information was distributed in the meeting packet and is included with this report as Appendix A.

Comprehensive Master Plan Exhibit

A standing exhibit was available for review at this year's Strategic Planning Retreat regarding the 2009 Westford Comprehensive Master Plan, and the status of implementation of the action items included in the plan. Some action items are complete, others are well underway, and others are anticipated. This exhibit provided a great deal of information, including how to access status updates at public meetings and on the town of Westford website, and provided participants with the opportunity to offer input on how the town can best prioritize its efforts to continue progress toward Master Plan implementation. This information may be viewed on the Strategic Planning section of the town website. A reduced scale version of these posters are also attached as Appendix B.



Angus Jennings, Director of Land Use Management

2012 Strategic Planning Retreat Participants

(Names and affiliations as they were entered on sign-sheets)

Mary Alcorn, Resident	Angus Jennings, Land Use
Paul Alphen, Resident	Emily King,
James Antonelli, Schools	Chris Kluchman, Planning Intern
Kathy Auth, School	Hajo Koester, Library
Chip Barrett, Hwy Supt.	Erika Kohl, School Comm.
Tom Barry, Resident	Mark Kost, FinCom
Bob Boonstra, ConsCom	Lenore Kost, Crisafulli
Kevin Borselli, Planning Board	Penny Lacroix, WHS
Alan Bugos, Recycle Comm.	Matt Lewin, Planning Board
Betsy Bulger, COA	Gail Lorden, Citizen
Conni Burgoyne, Resident	Darren MacCaughey, BOH/Health
Kathleen Canavan, Energy	Edna MacNeil, Resident
Zac Cataldo, BOH/Health	Tom Mahanna, PTBC
Ron Caterino, Resident	Peter Mahler, ConsCom
Chauncey Chu,	Jack Mangan, Historical Comm.
Christine Collins, Treasurer/Collector	John Mangiaratti, Staff
Sandy Collins, Health/Resident	Patti Mason, WHS+Resident
Christopher Couto, GIS	Andrew McDonough, Town Hall
Joyce Crane, Press	Tom McEnaney, Police Dept.
Rob Creegan, Resident	Amy McGrath, Resident
Michael Croteau, Police Dept.	Margaret Murray, SC
Judy Culver, School Comm.	Bill Nussbum, Resident
John Cunningham, ConsCom	Daniel O'Donnell, Budget Director
Eli Demetri,	Rose O'Donnell, Resident
Richard Diaz, Citizen	Bill Olsen, School Supt.
Laura Dickey, Resident	Titus Palmer, Water
Buffie Dierks, Library Trustee	Ray Peachey, Health
Leslie Doherty, WASA	Andrea Peraner-Sweet, BoS
Patricia Dubey, Asst. TC	Bob Price, LWV
Thomas Dubey, Town Hall	Daniel Provost, Cemetery
David Earl, ZBA	Ellen Rainville, Library
Stephen Edwards, Resident, Westford CAT	Richard Rochon, Fire Chief
Kris Erickson, Recycle Comm.	Jodi Ross, Town Mgr.
Eric Fahle, ConsCom	Kelly Ross, BOS
Paul Fassbender, Resident	Terence Ryan, Sch.Comm.
Sarah Fauaf, Reporter-Lsun	Patricia Savage, Parks/Rec/Cemetery
Alice Ferro, Town Acctnt.	James Schuele, Citizen
Susan Fraser, Veterans Affairs	Joanne Sheehan, COA
Dennis Galvin, Planning Intern	Jim Silva, AHC
Gloria Gilbert, WFM	Terry Stader, Veterans Affairs
Matt Hakala, Town Hall	Charles Stark, Recycle Comm.
Angella Harkness, SC	Paul Starratt, Engineering
Christopher Hayes, Planning Intern	Andrew Stern,
Scott Hazelton, WHA	Jim Sullivan, Selectman
Pam Hicks, Employee	Andrew Sylvia, Westford Patch
Susan Higgins, WASA	Joe Targ, EM/Fire
Mike Higgins,	Leslie Thomas, Water Comm.
Aime J.,	Bill Turner, Conservation
Rob Janoch, Resident	Jonnie Walker-Rohs, BOH/Health
Ann Jefferies, Conservation Comm.	Mike Wells, Tech Dept.
Bob Jeffries, Selectman	Alden Wood,

Appendix A – Meeting Packet

Appendix B – Master Plan Poster Exhibit

Appendix C - Participant Survey Results





Town of Westford

Strategic Planning Retreat

at Kimball Farm June 20, 2012

The purpose for this retreat is to support and engage in an annual Strategic Planning Retreat devoted to town-wide policy identification, prioritization, discussion and development with standing boards, committees, management staff, and residents at large.

Event Schedule

5:30 Welcome and Opening Remarks

5:45 Town Finance Discussion - Fiscal Years 2013-2016

6:30 Break

7:00 Group Sessions

1- Economic and Planned Development along Route 110,

2- Education – Mandates, Budget, and other issues,

3- Examining Municipal Property, Capital Needs, Possible New Revenue from Cell Facilities,

4- Underage Drug and Alcohol Usage Awareness and Prevention

7:45 Break

8:00 Final Session

The event will be held in the tents near the golf driving range.



Stay Connected with the Town!

Visit www.westfordma.gov for news, updates, public meeting calendar, agendas, minutes and more.



Subscribe to
Notices



Follow the
Town on
Twitter



View the
Town RSS
Feed

2012 TOWN WIDE STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

PROGRAM DETAILS:

(5:30 – 5:45) Welcome and opening remarks: Andrea Peraner-Sweet, Board of Selectmen Chair
Retreat objectives and accomplishments from last year: Jodi Ross, Town Manager
Update on Comprehensive Master Plan: Angus Jennings

(5:45 – 6:30) Town Finance Discussion - Fiscal Years 2013-2016 : Brief presentation of fiscal condition of our town, preparing for FY14 and beyond, what we have done to reduce/control expenses, cost of providing adequate services, cost of maintaining our existing assets, choices that may be required regarding reduction of service levels, loss of contributions by volunteers, revenue generating ideas, and possible override request. Panel discussion/Q&A with retreat attendees by chairs of the following committees: Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Budget Solutions Task Force, Finance Committee, Capital Planning, and Public Works Initiative; also town manager, school superintendent, and budget director.

(6:30 – 7:00) Break

(7:00 – 7:45) Group Sessions (Concurrent)

Group 1- Economic and Planned Development along Route 110: This session will highlight current and planned developments along Route 110, anticipated revenues and basic information about related transportation improvements. Attend to get more information about the work you see underway and other changes not yet under construction. Town Staff will answer questions about the development approvals and past planning efforts for Route 110.

Group 1 Facilitators: Chris Kluchman, Kevin Borselli

Group 2- Education – Mandates, Budget, and other issues: As we continue to experience challenging fiscal conditions, we will value an exchange of ideas with community members on the following issues:

- Sufficiently funding annual operating budgets
- Offering competitive salaries to attract and retain highly qualified staff
- Continuously reviewing and improving our curriculum
- Applying the latest technologies to the instructional process
- Providing full-day kindergarten
- Providing accelerated learning opportunities for all students
- Accomplishing important capital improvements to our facilities
- Analyzing future residential developments and school enrollments

Group 2 Facilitator: Bill Olsen

Group 3 - Examining Municipal Property, Capital Needs, Possible New Revenue from Cell Facilities, etc: This session will examine and discuss:

- How we may coordinate and fund capital improvements for long term sustainability of our resources and infrastructure - specifically 1.1 million square feet of public buildings and 3,200+

acres of public lands. Our Capital Committee is currently evaluating our town's 5 year critical capital needs in order to bundle into one large bonding to take advantage of low interest rates.

- Ways to better utilize existing facilities, including the advantages and disadvantages of disposing of facilities as recently recommended by the Permanent Town Building Committee
- What opportunities exist to utilize municipal property to generate new revenue from leases, cell facilities, and/or solar power generation facilities?
- How the current activities of the Capital Planning Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, and the Public Works Initiative Committee align with the current policy priorities and needs identified in the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Group 3 Facilitators: John Mangiaratti, Tom Mahanna, Mark Kost, John Cunningham, Angus Jennings

Group 4 - Underage Drug and Alcohol Usage Awareness and Prevention: This session will address the issue of underage drinking and drugs in our community, highlighted in a Youth Risk Behavior Survey conducted in the schools and a discussion which occurred at a recently held Town Meeting on Drug Awareness. Participants will be able to become part of the solution by identifying preventive steps which could be implemented in Westford. A handout showing key statistics and current prevention efforts will also be shared.

Group 4 Facilitators: Andrea Peraner-Sweet, Sandy Collins, Tom McEnaney, Jim Antonelli

(7:45 – 8:00) Break

(8:00 – 8:45) Final Wrap-up

Each facilitator reports in 5 minute presentations: what was discussed, key concerns raised, and presents questions for the group to consider related to services, priorities, and civic engagement.

Other Exhibits:

A standing exhibit will be available for review throughout this year's Strategic Planning Retreat regarding the 2009 Westford Comprehensive Master Plan, and the status of implementation of the Action Items included in the plan. Some Action Items are complete, others are well underway, and others are anticipated. This exhibit will provide attendees a great deal of information, including how to access status updates at public meetings and on the Town of Westford website, and will provide participants with the opportunity to provide input on how the town can best prioritize its efforts to continue progress toward Master Plan implementation.

Please note: all retreat materials including follow-up reports are available at:
www.westfordma.gov/retreat.

Town of Westford Finance Discussion – Fiscal Years 2013 - 2016

Fiscal Year 2014 Projected Financial Position

FY14 Projected Revenues:	\$96,878,597
FY14 Projected Expenses:	\$101,070,093
Reserves needed to balance budget:	\$4,191,496
Minimum Recommended Reserves (5% of operating budget)	\$4,648,025
Projected Minimum Recommended Reserves	\$1,819,948
Shortfall	(\$2,828,077)

Cost Control Measures

- 11 of our 12 unions and non-union personnel agreed to 0% COLAs in FY12 & FY13, and did not receive a step increase for one year (1 union is still in negotiations)
- Switched to Tufts Health Insurance on Nov. 1, 2011
 - Estimated \$524,000 town and \$299,000 employee cost avoidance
- Negotiated new Health Insurance Plan Design Changes effective November 1, 2012
 - Estimated \$237,000 cost avoidance for town and employees in FY13
- Received mitigation funding to construct a new “call” fire station in Parker Village
- Entered Mutual Aid Agreements with other municipalities to share Public Works and Public Safety resources
- Reduced expenses in Animal Control, Assessor’s, Finance, Facilities, GIS, Treasurer/Collector’s, and Technology budgets
- Bid virtually everything - gasoline, utilities, trash and recycling, town counsel, insurance, health insurance, town maintenance contracts, all highway contracts
- Reduced staffing through attrition and/or reorganization
- Restricted the use of town vehicles
- Streamlined procurement

Revenue Highlights

- Local Options Excise projected to exceed estimate by approximately \$200,000
 - \$760,000 total revenue in FY12
- Received additional \$375,000 and full indemnification from future perchlorate litigation in settlement with suppliers of blasting materials
- Sought and received MEMA and FEMA reimbursements for Hurricane Irene and October snowstorm
- Generated revenue by leasing town facilities
- Received over \$100k in insurance proceeds
- Sold Tax Possession Sale Committee properties
- Sold surplus vehicles and equipment
- Sold permitting software program to other communities
- Re-established fees for Sealer of Weights & Measures inspections

- Increased fees for bulk item disposal
- New growth - Red Hat expansion, Cornerstone Square, Princeton Properties, Abbot Mill, Graniteville Woods, Westford Solar Park, Boch Honda, Bridges at Westford, Loughton Farms, Aldrich Farms, Tadmuck Meadows

FY13 Uncertainties

- FY13 health insurance and premiums
- One union contract unsettled
- Ongoing litigation
- Perchlorate expenditures
- Waste water treatment plant operations
- Severe storms, town's response and recovery costs
- State aid
- Economy

Rising Costs and Declining Revenues

- Over the past five years:
 - Health insurance averaged a 15% annual increase
 - Middlesex Retirement Assessment averaged a 7.4% annual increase
 - Special Education FTE's increased from 117.6 to 177.9
 - Other school staff increased from 574.8 to 578
- Gasoline expenses were \$266,705 in FY09 - projected to be \$325,000 in FY12 (+22%)
- Investment earnings – reduction from \$846,064 in FY07 to \$48,000 in FY12
- Motor Vehicle Excise – cumulative reduction of \$1.5M in revenue since FY06

Future Challenges – Fiscal Years 2014 to 2016

- Significant deficits are projected for the next 3 years
- Capital Planning Committee evaluating long-term facility and infrastructure capital needs, to make a recommendation to “bundle” and bond to take advantage of low interest rates
- Collective bargaining agreements for FY14 - FY16 (Teachers' contracts are settled for FY14)
- Health insurance increases
- Increases in utility and fuel prices
- Projected revenues are not expected to increase at the same rate as expenditures
- Economic Development Committee to be formed
 - Advise the Board of Selectmen and other town boards on issues concerning bylaws, policies, regulations, and zoning that foster commercial growth, and are consistent with maintaining the character of our community
 - Encourage commercial investment along Routes 110 and 40, increasing

commercial property tax revenues, while minimizing impact on local services

- Budget Solutions Task Force looking at all fiscal opportunities

Conclusion

We are at a crossroads regarding sustaining the level of services that Westford has provided for its residents. Although we have undertaken numerous steps to control expenses, absorbing the increases in fixed costs and complying with state and federal mandates, has forced our town's operating expenses to increase at a greater rate than our revenues. Currently our town has a projected deficit of \$2.8M for FY14. At this time, it appears that without an increase in revenues, we may be forced to eliminate a considerable number of positions in FY14, which would significantly impact our delivery of services.

Group 1 - Development along Littleton Road (Route 110)

This session will highlight current and planned developments along Route 110 and provide basic information about related transportation improvements. Attend to get more information about the work you see underway and other changes not yet under construction. Town Staff will answer questions about the development approvals and past planning efforts for Route 110.

List of permitted projects = under construction



Cornerstone Square – 238,410 square feet retail and office, Route 110 and Boston Road



Red Hat Office Expansion – 100,000 square feet of new office, Westford Tech Park West



Tadmuck Meadows II, 37 townhouses, Tadmuck Road near Route 110



Bridges at Westford – 48 unit Memory Care facility, Route 110 and South Chelmsford Road



Princeton Westford Apartment Homes, 200 units rental apartments, 16 Littleton Rd

Infrastructure Improvements

1. Route 110/Concord Road -- complete
2. Route 110/Powers Road reconstruction – complete
3. Minot's Corner intersection redesign and construction – design complete, construction anticipated 2012 to 2014.
4. Water Line replacement – Route 110 from Boston Road to Nixon Road and Route 110 at Nixon Road to Tadmuck Road, (Route 110 to Princeton Westford Apartment Homes by private party)
5. Route 110/Tadmuck Road Intersection redesign and construction – design work is funded, RFP out summer 2012 for inclusion in the 2013 to 2016 TIP.

Helpful Resources

Minot's Corner www.westfordma.gov/engineering

Water Line www.westfordma.gov/water



**Group 2
Town of Westford
Strategic Planning Retreat**

Westford Public Schools

Budget

Like all other town departments, the school system has struggled to maintain programs and services during the last seven years. Only 94.4% of the FY 2013 school department budget is supported via the general fund. The remaining 5.6% of our budget is funded via alternative revenues (school choice; revolving funds; fees; special education reimbursement). Our annual budget is impacted by federal and state mandates such as:

- MCAS Testing
- Student Transportation
- "504" Accommodations
- Curriculum Frameworks
- English Language Learners
- New Education Evaluation System
- Special Education

Competitive Salaries and Benefits

The school system prides itself in providing an excellent education to our students. Educational research has determined that quality of the classroom teacher and the quality of the building administration account for over 60% of a student's growth in academic achievement. Our spring 2011 MCAS results are presented below:

Grade	ELA Statewide Ranking	Math Statewide Ranking
3	24th	23rd
4	35th	19th
5	22nd	12th
6	19th	3rd
7	9th	6th
8	4th	3rd
10	16th	8th

We must be able to provide competitive salaries and benefits in order to attract and retain highly qualified educators to ensure that our students continue to receive an outstanding education.

Curriculum Review and Revisions

We are working in the following areas of instruction:

- Common Core State Standards, particularly literacy across the curriculum. We will need to provide Professional Development for teachers regarding ways to integrate literacy skills into all subject areas. "All teachers need to become teachers of literacy."

- **Data:** The new Educator Evaluation Framework requires greater focus on the analysis of multiple measures of student learning. We will need to increase our capacity to use technology to store, organize, and track student learning data. Professional Development will be required for teachers. In addition, we should reinstate the position of Director of Technology so that we can ensure that we are utilizing our current technology effectively and that we remain current with the ever-expanding ways of using technology for student data and student learning.
- **RtI (Response to Intervention):** We have begun to offer Professional Development regarding RtI and specific types of assessments and interventions. We will need to expand this training to include all teachers. We will need to purchase assessments for universal screening and progress-monitoring.
- **Educator Evaluation:** The new framework requires that ALL educators (teachers and administrators) will be evaluated using a more comprehensive system. All educators need to write at least two goals: one student learning goal and one professional practice goal. We have engaged in Professional Development for administrators all year. We provided an introduction to the model for teachers this week, during the two Professional Development days. We will need to continue this Professional Development throughout the next two years.

Capital Improvement

The Westford Public Schools has approximately 1 million square feet of facility space. Many of our facilities are relatively new and have required only preventative and corrective maintenance. However these buildings, along with our older facilities (Abbot, Day, Robinson) will continue to need periodic major capital improvements. Our capital needs are analyzed on an annual basis and presented via a Five Year Capital Plan. This plan details the nature of the capital improvement, justification of the need, cost estimates, impact on future annual operating budgets. Major upcoming capital needs include window replacement (Day and Robinson), outside bleachers at Westford Academy and roof replacements at the Robinson and Millennium Schools.

Enrollment

Our systemwide enrollment has remained relatively stable over the last five years:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
2007-2008	5297
2008-2009	5325
2009-2010	5288
2010-2011	5306
2011-2012	5307

Our K-2 enrollment is beginning to trend downward as the numbers of births in town annually range from 150 to 170. This is a considerable decline from nearly 300 annual births earlier in the decade. The K-2 stable enrollment numbers indicate that families with school age children continue to move to Westford for a quality education.

Special Education

Although the number of special education students and programs costs are trending upward, both variables are significantly below state averages. In fiscal 2011 (latest data from the DESE) our special education expenditure, as a percentage of our total school department budget, was 14.1%. The state average was 19.8%. We are responsible for educating all children in our school system and we take this responsibility very seriously.

Technology

The staff and students have the benefit of using a significant amount of technology for teaching and learning. Of major concern is that the only funds appropriated annually for school technology must be used for replacement of aging equipment. We have no funds budgeted for the purchase of new technology. As we look to the future, we need to assess the role of new technology in teaching and learning. Do we replace textbooks with electronic devices? Do we educate more students via online courses? Can technology provide effective online staff development?

Full Day Kindergarten

An increasing number of school systems across the state and country are providing a full-day kindergarten experience. Currently Massachusetts only requires half-day kindergarten sessions, however as global academic competitiveness increases more school systems are implementing full-day programs. Full-day kindergarten sessions would provide the following benefits to students:

- Curriculum could be expanded horizontally (more depth)
- There would be more time to re-teach concepts
- More time would be available for enrichment activities
- Staff would better understand a child's strengths and needs
- Students would develop greater social competency
- English Language Learners would have more time to become proficient in English
- Staff would be able to develop and implement more interdisciplinary lessons
- Each school would have an integrated (Special Education/Regular Education) class

It has been my recommendation to the School Committee that full-day kindergarten is completely funded via the general fund.

Accelerated Learning Opportunities for All Students

A committee has been studying how to provide systemwide accelerated learning opportunities to all students. This would not be a pull-out type of program. Staff would be trained on differentiated instructional strategies.

Group 3 - Examining Municipal Property, Capital Needs, Possible New Revenue Ideas

The group will examine and discuss the following policy questions:

1. How may we coordinate and fund capital improvements for long term sustainability of our resources and infrastructure - specifically 1.1 million square feet of public buildings and 3,200+ acres of public lands.
2. Are there ways to better utilize existing facilities, including the advantages and disadvantages of disposing of facilities as recently recommended by the Permanent Town Building Committee?
3. What opportunities exist to utilize municipal property to generate new revenue from leases, rentals, cell facilities, and/or solar power generation facilities?
4. How do the current activities of the Capital Planning Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, and the Public Works Initiative Committee align with the current policy priorities and needs identified in the Comprehensive Master Plan?

Snapshot of Municipal Buildings

29 General Government Buildings

10 School Buildings

11 Storage Buildings

33 Cabins at East Boston Camps

21 Water Facilities (Wells, Pump stations, Tanks, Treatment)

4 Waste Water Treatment Plants

Capital Planning Committee (CPC)

Capital Committee is currently evaluating critical capital needs over the next 5+ years that might be available to be bundled into a possible debt exclusion. The focus is on items such as ambulances and fire trucks, major building items such as roofs and windows, bleachers at W.A. and the surrounding improvement ideas, roads, bridges, culverts and dams, and building consolidation opportunities currently being evaluated by the PTBC.

Public Works Initiative Committee (PWIC)

Proposing a summit meeting of all committees involved with facilities with a goal of developing an integrated process that would ensure timely coordination with well-defined roles for all affected committees. Reviewing current care and custody responsibilities with the goal of realigning as appropriate to allow departments to concentrate on their core missions. Evaluating the potential opportunities for consolidation of town and school maintenance operations as allowed by MGL Chapter 71 Section 37M and adopted by 2009 Annual Town Meeting.

Permanent Town Building Committee (PTBC) As part of the process of evaluating town wide facilities, the PTBC made the following initial recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in April of 2012:

	<p>Graniteville Fire Station 54 Broadway Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Dept. uses garage bays for storage of emergency response equipment and supplies • Second floor used for storage of misc. supplies (Board of Health). • Recommend Town sell property.
	<p>Forge Village Fire Station 1 East Prescott Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building is presently occupied by Information Technology Dept. • Servers are located on first floor garage bay, staff is located on second floor. • Recommend Town relocate IT staff and equipment and sell property.

	<p>Town Farm Building 35 Town Farm Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used as School Dept. Offices until 2003, currently occupied by Parks & Rec. • Recommend Master Plan of entire site including Rogers Fire Station • Investigate restoring building to historic structure
	<p>Old Highway Garage Beacon Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presently occupied by School Maintenance Dept. • Additional 2.5 acres± of land available on site • Master Plan should be developed to maximize use of parcel • Consider constructing new Central Storage Facility for all Town and school supplies
	<p>Millennium Building 23 Depot Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently occupied by School Dept. Administration Offices and school programs • Building is a modular facility that was purchased over 10 years ago • Recommend conducting professional study to determine life expectancy of structure before investing in major upgrades
	<p>Water Department Garage 60 Forge Village Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,000 s.f. metal building that Water Dept. stores vehicles, equipment, and inventory • 1,600 s.f. of finished office space that is currently used for storing files • Office space could be modified to accommodate small Town department that doesn't require interaction with public

Group 4

ONGOING COMMUNITY SUBSTANCE ABUSE ACTIVITIES/EFFORTS

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COORDINATOR

Ray Peachey- office at Town Hall
rpeachey@westfordma.gov
Contact: 978-399-2528

WESTFORD AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE: WASA was organized in 1986-1987 in response to concerns about substance abuse problems, both locally and globally. The ongoing goal of the organization is to educate all members of the Westford community about substance abuse. A long range goal is to assure that programs are in place which will aid in the prevention and treatment of all forms of substance abuse in the community of **Westford**. A Board of Directors, made up of a cross section of the Westford community, manages the affairs of the group.

WASA Board meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month at 2:30 pm at Westford Academy in the front office conference room. Anyone is welcome to attend a board meeting.

<http://www.westford.com/wasa/>

Current Board Members:

President –Susan Higgins- Resident/Parent 978 392-9034
V. President-Sandra Habe- Recreation
Secretary- Patty Mason- Resident
Treasure- Nancy Rigby- Resident/Parent
Ray Peachey-Health Department
Sean O’Leary- Westford Schools

Sandy Collins- Health Department
Mike Croteau- Police Department
MariElena Sanchez-Lowell Juvenile Court
Mitali Kumar-Resident
Melissa LeRay- Nashoba Tech
Jodi Geary- Resident/Parent

Representatives: Nayanika Kotagiri- SADD
Leslie Doherty- Last Night

WASA AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT PREVENTION SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

Westford Against Substance Abuse (WASA) co-published the **Red Flags and Resources Guide** with other area town coalitions in June 2005. **Red Flags and Resources** is a prevention guide for parents, teens and other adult care givers. A copy can be obtained by calling the Health Department at 978 692-5509.

LAST NIGHT- Last Night Is an all night graduation party, started by WASA 22 years ago, to help ensure that students safe on what is statistically the most dangerous night of the year for graduates. This year out of 404 graduates, 366 accepted the invitation to attend last night.

CELEBRATE WITH CARE: This campaign is centered around the holidays to encourage responsible party going and hosting.

PARENTING PROGRAMS:

GUIDING GOOD CHOICES

This course gives parents the skills they need to ensure the future well-being of their children by learning to communicate effectively.

This four session course will:

- Provide parents with current 2010 Westford Youth Risk Behavior Survey (WYRBS) data.(See below)
- Assist parents in developing family guidelines and expectations for behavior.
- Teach conflict management and strengthen family bonds.
- Help parents increase teen involvement in the family.
- Facilitate creating a parent support network.

TABLE TALKS:

Research shows that parents can be a powerful influence in keeping youth from drinking. The Table Talks model was created to provide parents with a comfortable opportunity to communicate openly with each other about underage drinking and how to prevent it. Parents host two meetings in their home and a professional is brought in to facilitate open discussion about drug and alcohol issues.

SAFEHOMES PROGRAM



Offers Westford parents an opportunity to join together to provide a safe environment for their children as well as fostering communication among parents and between parents and young people. Results from surveys of Westford Middle School and Westford Academy students, indicate significant tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use. The SafeHomes Program provides a way for parents to establish clear expectations of “no use” of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs by minors. Participation in the SafeHomes program is offered to all families in Westford with children of any school age.

COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS:

- Programs on drug awareness and parenting
- Collaboration with Westford Parent Connection
- Programs held at high school as part of the parent sport night (has not occurred in past few years)
- Attendance at parent orientations at the beginning of each year to highlight Prevention efforts
- WASA Newsletters
- Materials distributed at multiple locations across town
- WASA Website www.westford.com/WASA
- Frequent newspaper articles
- Hold Drug Take Back Days and Sharps Collections

POLICE DEPARTMENT EFFORTS

The Police Department's primary role is enforcement. Changing the marijuana law from a criminal violation to a civil violation has had a negative effect on young adults, as we have experienced an increase in incidents involving marijuana since the decriminalization. The law states any amount under ounce is a civil violation, (\$100.00 ticket) . One ounce is equivalent to 38 to 57 joints.

SCHOOL EFFORTS

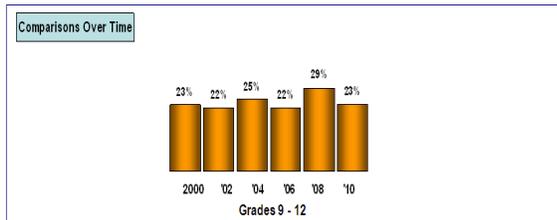
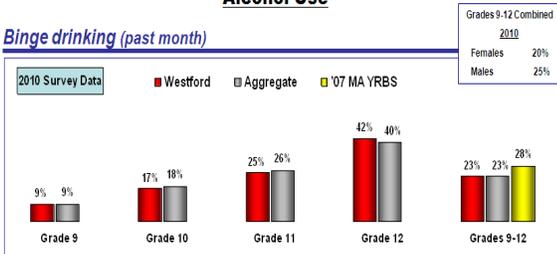
- Strong prevention curriculum
- School handbook with intolerance for drugs, alcohol and tobacco with penalty if caught
- Athletic handbook which outlines expectations/penalties for drug/alcohol use
- Educational sessions with students to begin each school year/regarding decision making, drugs/alcohol and performance enhancing drugs
- Guest speaker series to address drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use
- Strong guidance department to provide individual counseling to students
- School Social Worker to provide student support
- School Administration supports and works closely with the *Last Night Organization*
- Memorandum of Understanding between Westford Public Schools and the Westford Police Dept.

For additional information about any of the programs listed above, or interest in hosting a Table Talk program, please contact Ray Peachey – Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator at 978 399-2528 or to become more involved in WASA contact Sue Higgins- President at 978 392-9034.

Westford 2010 YRBS

Alcohol Use

Binge drinking (past month)

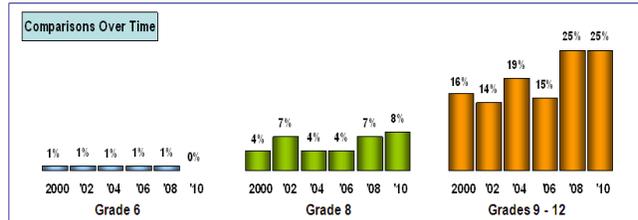
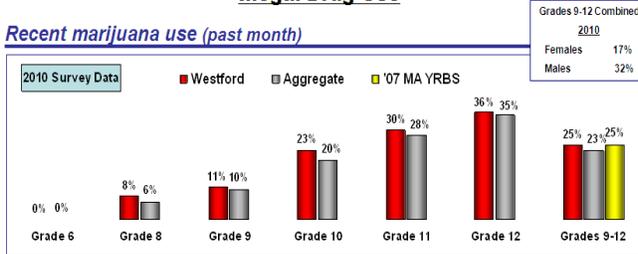


44

Westford 2010 YRBS

Illegal Drug Use

Recent marijuana use (past month)

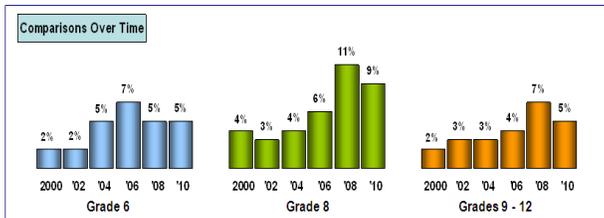
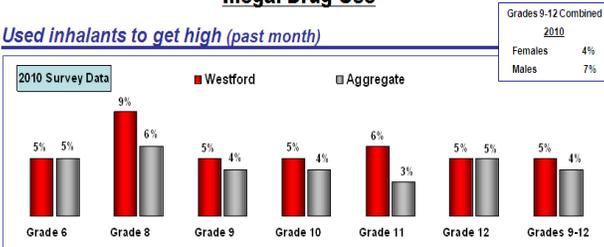


47

Westford 2010 YRBS

Illegal Drug Use

Used inhalants to get high (past month)

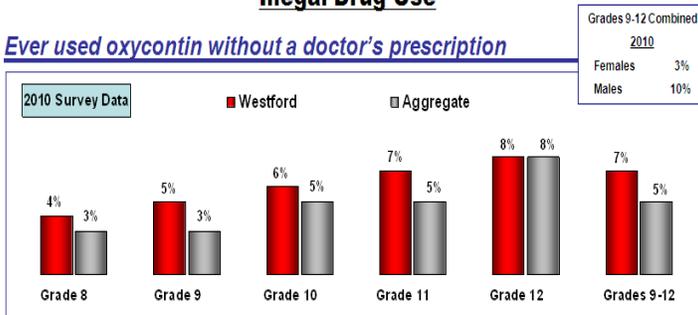


48

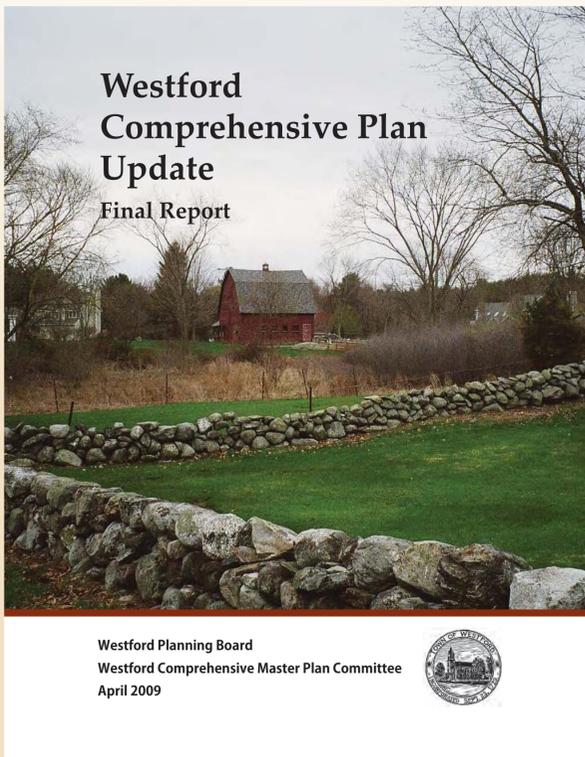
Westford 2010 YRBS

Illegal Drug Use

Ever used oxycontin without a doctor's prescription



COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



The **2009 Comprehensive Master Plan** is a statement of community policy objectives, and is also a management guide. It includes 126 Action Items organized into 8 categories. Some Action Items are complete, others are underway, and others are anticipated. Some Action Items are aspirational goals or part of ongoing operations, while others are one-time steps the Town can take.

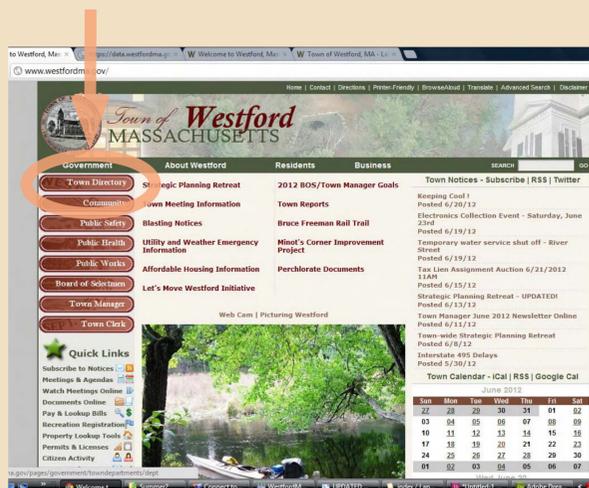
This exhibit is intended to give an update on the work everyone in the Town—Departments, Committees, Boards, and Volunteers—has done since 2009 to implement this Plan. **The exhibit isn't comprehensive**, as the number of initiatives the Town has taken and is taking would not be able to fit on six posters, but it does provide a wide variety of examples as a starting point for future action.

EIGHT CATEGORIES, SIX POSTERS

Those familiar with the Comprehensive Master Plan may wonder why there is no poster for **“Land Use and Zoning.”** This is because Land Use and Zoning affect every other category, so related Action Items are spread throughout the exhibit. Many actions the Town has taken could fit in more than one category; for example, trail improvement could fit in both **Natural Resources & Open Space** and **Transportation & Pedestrian Circulation**. Because **Governance** and **Community Facilities & Services** are also intertwined, they are displayed on a single poster.

To See Department or Committee Websites:

Go to www.westfordma.gov and click on “Town Directory.”



IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

Completed or ongoing Action Items are displayed in green: **13**

Action Items currently being completed are displayed in orange: **64**

Unstarted Action Items are displayed in red: **66**

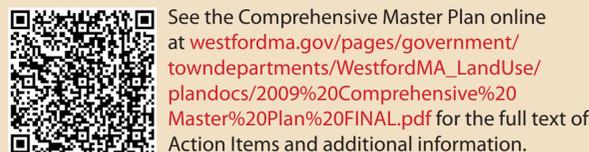
Condensed versions of Action Item text are in this font.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR IMPLEMENTATION

If the Comprehensive Master Plan is to be truly implemented, it must become part of the regular work program of the many entities whose actions may advance the plan. Town Boards, Committees, Commissions, staff and volunteers all have a role to play in the implementation of the Master Plan. **In effect, we are all, collectively, a “Master Plan Implementation Committee.”**

In order to keep the Master Plan in the forefront of staff actions, the Director of Land Use Management prepared an **implementation matrix** and, with the support of all of the Department Heads, identified which Departments do have - or wish to have - a role in implementing each of the Plan's 126 Action Items.

In a busy Town Hall environment, this Master Plan Implementation Matrix is a helpful way to share information and coordinate actions among town personnel. It is anticipated that the formal Master Plan Implementation Committee to be appointed by the Planning Board will serve a similar function in improving the sharing of information and coordinated action among the town's many volunteer Boards, Committees and Commissions.



See the Comprehensive Master Plan online at westfordma.gov/pages/government/towndepartments/WestfordMA_LandUse/plandocs/2009%20Comprehensive%20Master%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf for the full text of Action Items and additional information.

Implementation Matrix

Action Item	Department/Committee							
	Public Works	Police	Fire	Public Health	Planning	Finance	Information Technology	Community Development
1. Evaluate the needs, options, and feasibility of renovating and expanding Town Hall.								
2. Establish an Economic Development Committee.								
3. Identify and charge a responsible party for oversight of all plans developed for boards and committees for consistency with the vision and goals of this Comprehensive Master Plan.								
4. Establish design guidelines and a Design Review Committee to improve the appearance of commercial and industrial districts.								
5. Expand water quality monitoring program to include monitoring of Great Ponds and other water bodies.								
6. Improve capacity to track and report land use change, the status of protected and unprotected open space, land management, improvements to Westford's municipal property inventory, and the condition of municipal and school facilities.								
7. Establish a Department of Public Works that reports to the Town Manager. The Department of Public Works should include, but need not be limited to, engineering, highway, buildings and grounds maintenance, fleet maintenance, parkland and cemetery maintenance, solid waste and recycling, sewerage collection, and water.								
8. Establish a Capital Planning Committee.								
9. Establish a formal process for roadway and traffic-related design review that would require sign-off by the Town Engineer and the Highway, Police and Fire Departments. This should be integrated into the Planning Board's procedures for site plan review and special permits.								

Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University

TOWN OF WESTFORD 2012 STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT



NATURAL RESOURCES & OPEN SPACE

Strengthening Techniques to Protect Open Space



35 Provide Incentives to Preserve Open Space: Recent **Open Space Residential Design (OSRD)** developments such as Chestnut Hill (map to left), Lakeside Meadows, Aldrich Farms, and Laughton Farms, resulted in significant protection of open space.

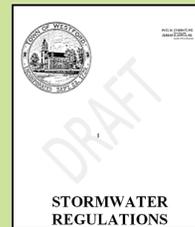


103 Continually Reassess Conservation Priorities: December 2011: The Town purchased 62.5 acres from the Schwab and Conneilly families adjacent to existing conservation land, advancing priorities to create a contiguous preserve of 210 acres of stone walls, hiking trails, and wildlife habitat.



Image source: Schwab-Conneilly Lands

Protecting and Managing Water Resources



61 38 Mitigate Water Quality Problems, Implement National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System: Mar 2012: Health & Engineering Depts supervised smoke testing to locate extraneous flow. Town adopted **Illicit Discharge Bylaw** and draft **Stormwater Regulations** are underway. See drafts at Engineering webpage. If you suspect illicit discharge, please contact stormwater@westfordma.gov or 978-692-5520.



28 63 Adopt Landscaping Techniques, Monitor Effectiveness of Low Impact Development (LID) Bylaw: The Town has monitored the performance of LID features, such as stream restoration at Laughton Farm and preservation of horse riding trails and a barn at Aldrich Farm, LID guidelines are included in the draft **Stormwater Regulations**.



105 Integrate Roadway and Stormwater Review for ANRs: The 2008 Stormwater bylaw & the draft **Stormwater Regulations** apply to all disturbances over 1 acre.



Image source: Westford Schools Dept.

38 Implement NPDES/DEP Stormwater Policy: Westford is working toward compliance with this policy after approval of **Stormwater Regulations**, currently in public hearing. Compliance includes public outreach such as a 2011 informational mailing to Westford businesses and participation in the week-long Living Lab program for all fifth graders in Westford.



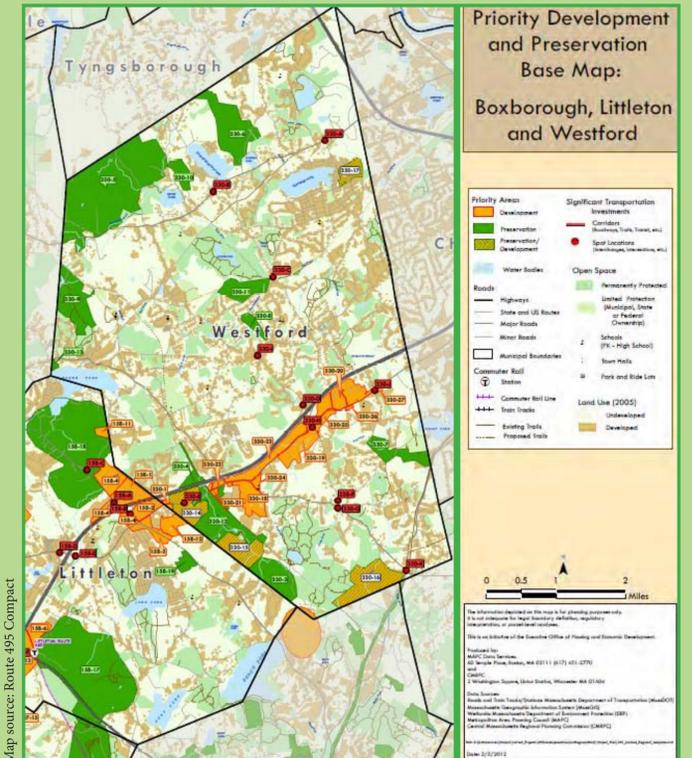
Image source: Westford Stream Team

5 Expand Water Quality Monitoring Program: 2012: Planning Board authorized \$7,500 of gift funds to Conservation Dept. to purchase monitoring equipment for public and Westford Stream Team use. Team is looking for volunteers! Contact Kate Hollister on the Planning Board, khollister@westfordma.gov

Increasing Capacity to Manage Natural Resources

47 ID and Establish Standards for Environmentally-Sensitive Areas: The Departments of Land Use and Conservation, through the 495 Compact, worked with the Rt. 495 Partnership, MassAudubon and several state agencies to create identify regionally-recognized priority preservation areas. See: www.495partnership.org

Find a toolkit of strategies to advance this plan online: www.massaudubon.org/495Toolkit/



6 Improve Tracking/Reporting Capacity: GIS Department and Department of Land Use are working together to create up-to-date maps of land use change and development. Contact GIS Coordinator Chris Coutu at ccoutu@westford-ma.gov for map creation.

Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University



CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Expanding the Historical Commission's Role in Planning

10 Expanding Historical Commission's Role:
2010: The Town Planner's job description was expanded to provide policy support to the Historical Commission on an "as needed" basis.

88 Hire a Part-Time Preservation Planner:
The Town has dedicated \$39,600 of CPC funds to hire a preservation consultant who will serve as a resource to the Commission, including advancing one or more of Master Plan goals such as:

- 14** Complete a comprehensive cultural resource inventory.
- 74** Inventory historic homes and other buildings that may not lie within current National Register districts.
- 86** Work with neighborhood groups to encourage pride in ownership of historical property.
- 87** Consider collaborating with one or more neighboring towns to establish regional preservation capacity.
- 89** Create incentives for maintenance and/or improvements to historical structures.
- 93** Consider Neighborhood Conservation Districts in Westford's villages.
- 112** Seek grants as well as CPC funds.

The Historical Commission is working with the Director of Land Use Management to finalize the work scope and advertise this consulting contract.



Protecting Critical Properties and Scenic Roads

56 Inventory Scenic Roads:
2011: Land Use, Building, and IT Depts created auto-response e-mail to all applicants for permits on Designated Scenic Roads, informing applicants that a separate permit is needed for altering stone walls or trees within the right-of-way and alerting appropriate staff. In 2012, more than 100 such e-mails have been sent to date, ensuring that applicants comply with this important bylaw.



2011: To improve familiarity with and enforcement of the Scenic Roads Bylaw, the Historical Commission created an improved webpage with photos and information. Find it on their webpage.

Protect Critical Properties, Preserve Historic Structures:

Jun 2012: The Town is auctioning the tax lien on the former **Westford Anodizing** in Graniteville. The circa-1850 structure suffered roof collapse in 2011. If the tax lien is sold, a private party would take ownership of the property, bringing potential for productive reuse of this property. This follows Town work to apply for an unawarded EPA Brownfields grant in 2010 to evaluate environmental conditions on site. Although the grant was not funded, it helped to bring attention to this important property.

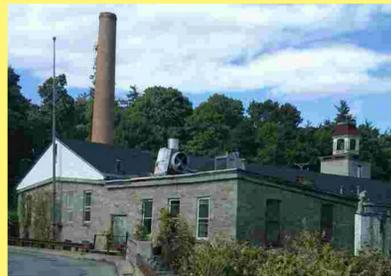
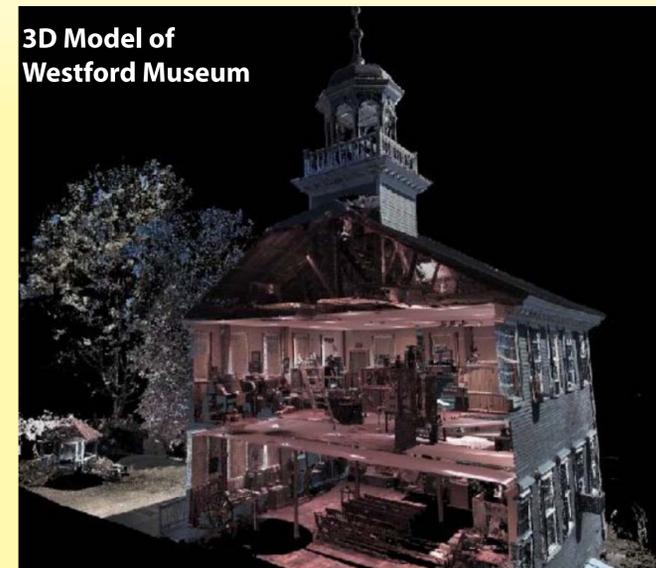


Image source: Historical Commission

Highlighting Westford's Diverse Heritage



2012: Digital scanning of the Westford Museum, formerly Westford Academy, is underway, using Light Detection and Ranging technology. The 3D model will be used for school education programs and analysis for future preservation. In addition, it will engage the community by allowing anyone to virtually "visit" the museum.



Image source: Historical Commission

Supporting Public Archives and J.V. Fletcher Library

12 Evaluate Library Expansion:
Mar 2012: Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$20,000 from capital monies to support the Library's application for competitive state funds to perform a Feasibility Study evaluating the site and facility needs and options.

17 Support the J.V. Fletcher Library Plan:
Nov 2011: Library Department began work on its next five-year Strategic Plan, due to the state Board of Library Commissioners on October 1, 2012. To provide input, visit the library or e-mail Ellen Rainville, Library Director at erainville@westfordma.gov



Town Record Vault

15 Train Staff in Historic Record Handling:
2010-2011: Consultants working with Town Clerk's office met with every department and assisted in developing recommendations for improved record retention practices.

16 Identify Location for Archives Center:
The new Town Hall includes improved facilities for long-term storage & access to public records. First Parish Church United is also available as an Archives Center.

J.V. Fletcher Library image source: Westford Museum



Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University



HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

Providing Ways to Develop Market-Rate and Affordable Units

95 Provide Ways for Developers to Create a Variety of Housing



The Bridges at Westford, a 48-bed memory care facility which received local permits in 2011, is under construction. Residents will live in family-like settings in this alternative housing type which serves an important need identified in the town's Housing Plan.



Graniteville Woods, developed by Emanouil Bros., is a 164-unit, townhouse and single-family development with 25% affordable units. The developer preserved 68 acres under a conservation restriction, and deeded an additional 72 acres to the Conservation Commission as permanent open space.

25 Allow Mixed-Use in CH District:

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee has designated funds to support limited residential development near the intersection of Route 110 and Tadmuck Road, adjacent to existing retail. Cornerstone Square will include a mix of retail and office, including medical office.



35 Update Affordable Housing Plan:

Dec 2011: The 2011-2015 Affordable Housing Plan was completed in collaboration with NMCOG. Jun 2012: Certification of plan creates a 2-year 40B "safe harbor."

98 Directly Sponsor Affordable Housing



2010-2012: Town Meeting voted in 2009 to authorize the disposition of public land for affordable housing. Wescon LLC responded to an RFP process to create 20 affordable single family homes while turning over 12 acres of the 17-acre site to conservation. The initial concept was prepared in a meeting with stakeholders. After development was stalled due to negotiations with National Grid, the first occupancy permits have now been issued.



CHOICE Veterans' Housing



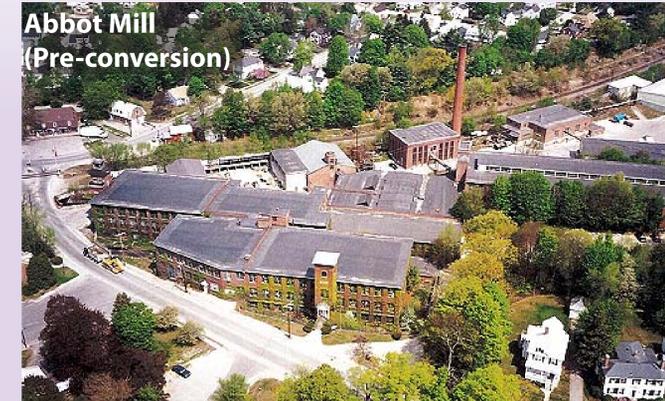
This will complement the \$400,000 in CPC funds approved by Town Meeting in 2010 for this five unit development.

Stony Brook



The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee and the Community Preservation Committee, supported by a March 2012 vote of Town Meeting, have provided funding to support a second phase of the existing affordable housing development on Farmer's Way, near the Stony Brook School. Permitting is complete, project financing is underway, and this 36-unit expansion is expected to break ground in 2013.

Preserving Historic Villages, Neighborhoods, and Structures



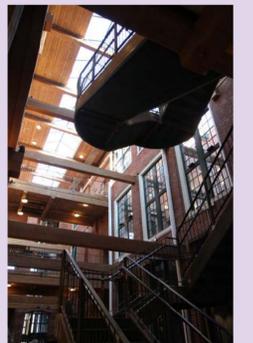
59 Preserve Historic Homes that Create Affordable Units:

May 2012: Abbot Mill opened its 1st units for rental. Because Forge Village is on the National Register of Historic Places, the developer was eligible for federal tax credits by following preservation standards.

The Mill Conversion Overlay District zoning bylaw, enacted by Town Meeting in 2000, ensures 10% of units will be affordable by state guidelines. In addition, the developer is working with neighborhood residents to develop an exhibit about the history of the Mill.

24 Make Demolition Delay Bylaw more Effective:

The Historical Commission has developed a draft workflow chart to review building demolitions. All building permits contain language about the Bylaw to ensure its consistent enforcement.



Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Developing a Public/Private Partnership

2 Establish an Economic Development Committee: On June 26, 2012 the Board of Selectmen will decide upon the draft charge for a new **Economic Development Committee**. This committee will include resident members. If you're interested submit CAC to Town Manager's Office.

Draft Charge for Economic Development Committee

- Advise the BoS and other boards on issues concerning bylaws, policies, regulations, and zoning that foster commercial growth, strengthen the local economy, and are consistent with maintaining the character of our community
- Encourage business investment along Routes 110 and 40, increasing the commercial tax base, while minimizing the impact on local services
- Identify changing economic trends and develop recommendations to maximize interest in our community & attract potential new businesses
- Assist with generating local employment opportunities
- Advocate for state and federal grants, incentives, or improvement in regulations that help advance our economic priorities
- Promote Westford's identity in the Greater Boston/MetroWest/495/Merrimack Valley area
- Establish relationships & improve communication with local businesses; act as liaison for Town in the business community
- Represent our town in the local chambers and other local business associations
- Make recommendations to streamline permitting, licensing, and other regulatory functions; help new business owners navigate our permitting process

19 Designate Business Point of Contact:

The job description for the Director of Land Use Mgmt., hired in 2010, includes serving as the town's primary contact with businesses locating or expanding in Westford.

Update and Clarify Sign Bylaw: Westford is currently in Phase II of clarifying and updating the language of the signs bylaw. Working group meeting Jun 28. Get updates on the website: www.westfordma.gov/signbylaw

2011 Business Mailer



21 Streamline Permitting:

The Land Use & Permitting offices are working with volunteers from the Village at Stone Ridge to create and implement a **Small Business Permitting Guide**.



Attracting High-Tech and Green Industry



90 93 Attract Green Industry, Reuse Rt. 40 Quarries: Apr 2012: Westford Solar Park, the largest privately-owned ground-mounted solar plant in New England, opened on the site of a former quarry. At full build, the Solar Park will provide 4.5 megawatts per year of renewable energy with no negative infrastructure, traffic, or noise impacts.

The Energy Committee is working with the Director of Land Use Management to consider a new bylaw to encourage additional solar development.



55 Secure Incentives for High-Tech Industry: RedHat, a growing Fortune 500 software company, is expanding, and is expected to create more than 180 new jobs in Westford over the next 5 years. In 2011, Town Meeting approved **Tax Increment Financing**. This helped make Westford more attractive than a competing site in Silicon Valley, California, helping improve Westford's position as a home for high-tech business.

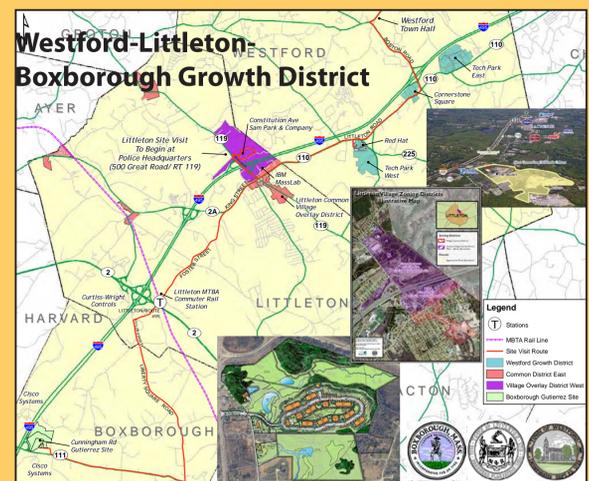


20 Encourage Commercial Investment along Rts. 110 & 40: The Town has been coordinating with regional agencies to prioritize regionally-significant areas and projects in Westford. The identified community priorities will guide State infrastructure and open space preservation policy and funding.

Encouraging Development in Commercial Centers



20 The town has taken a lead role in coordinating improvements to the Minot's Corner intersection, LRTA bus service, ramps to I-495, and sidewalk projects in order to maximize public and private investments' effects to move Rt. 110 toward the goal of being a multimodal, mixed-use center.



20 The Town has applied for a **Growth District Initiative (GDI)** designation, which facilitates State infrastructure investment and national marketing. The District includes high-tech business sites in Westford, Littleton, and Boxborough. Work done to secure this status, including studying streamlined permitting, coordinated zoning with neighboring towns, and build-out potential, could have additional positive economic development effects.

Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University



TRANSPORTATION & PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Encouraging Alternate Forms of Transportation

43 **Extend Transit Service:** Jun 2009: Board of Selectmen worked with Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) to extend bus Route 15 along Rt. 110, linking it with Chelmsford, Lowell, and commuter rail stations. LRTA considers the route a success.

May 2012: LRTA replaced a 20-passenger Roadrunner van. LRTA provides funding and the Council on Aging manages senior transportation. For senior transit info, call (978) 692-5523.



108 **Establish Traffic Management Associations:** The Director of Land Use Management is currently discussing potential for a transportation management initiative with Rt. 110 employers in Westford and Littleton. The Town and Employers could partner to:

66 Encourage Employers to Provide Ridership Subsidies.

75 Encourage Employers to Offer Flexible Work Hours.

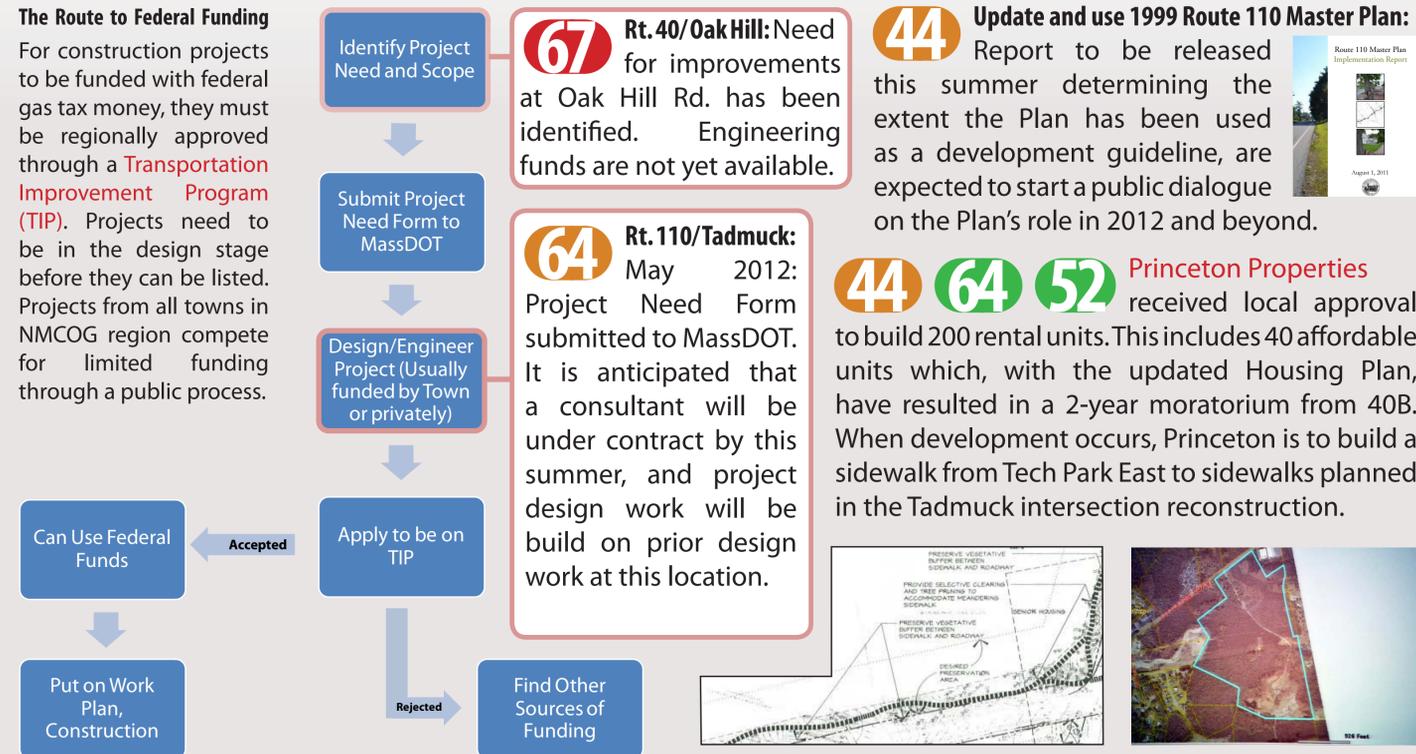
106 Use of Private Shuttles: RedHat and Juniper currently offer daily shuttles to Alewife T-Station, and this service could be expanded.



Image source: LRTA

Addressing Critical Traffic Locations

The Route to Federal Funding
For construction projects to be funded with federal gas tax money, they must be regionally approved through a **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**. Projects need to be in the design stage before they can be listed. Projects from all towns in NMCOG region compete for limited funding through a public process.

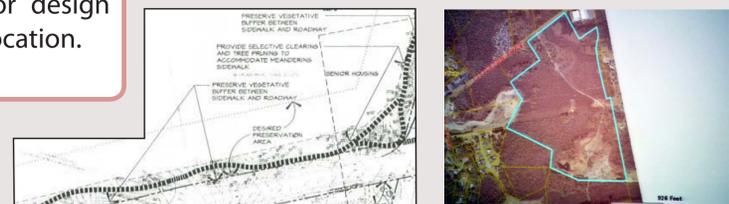


67 **Rt. 40/Oak Hill:** Need for improvements at Oak Hill Rd. has been identified. Engineering funds are not yet available.

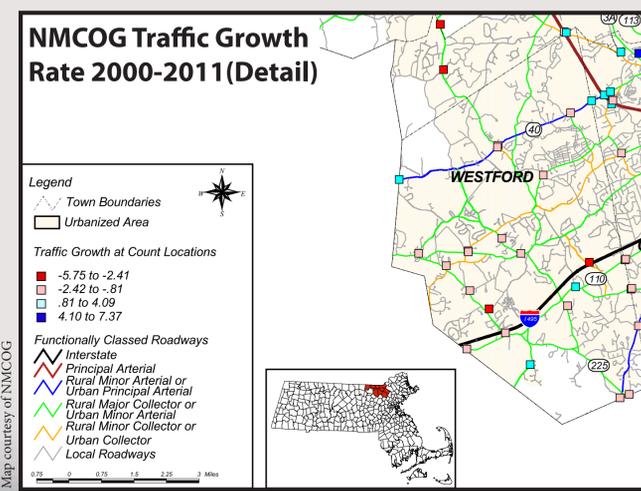
64 **Rt. 110/Tadmuck:** May 2012: Project Need Form submitted to MassDOT. It is anticipated that a consultant will be under contract by this summer, and project design work will be build on prior design work at this location.

44 **Update and use 1999 Route 110 Master Plan:** Report to be released this summer determining the extent the Plan has been used as a development guideline, are expected to start a public dialogue on the Plan's role in 2012 and beyond.

44 **64** **52** **Princeton Properties** received local approval to build 200 rental units. This includes 40 affordable units which, with the updated Housing Plan, have resulted in a 2-year moratorium from 40B. When development occurs, Princeton is to build a sidewalk from Tech Park East to sidewalks planned in the Tadmuck intersection reconstruction.



Excerpt From Rt. 110 Master Plan Development Location



11 **Monitor Traffic of Developments:** Local land use and public safety departments work with NMCOG annually to set traffic monitoring stations. See 2011 report of traffic monitoring results at www.nmcog.org

42 **Emergency Vehicle Detection:** Ongoing: Town purchased OptiCom Sensors and Transmitters for all traffic signals and emergency vehicles. See www.tcmfd.com/stuff/opticom.html for more information.

42 **Improve Town Center Circulation:** 2011: New signage and crosswalks installed. Worksop approved to inventory and evaluate parking, traffic, and pedestrian conditions and create an improvement plan with public input. Work expected to begin in late fall 2012 with NMCOG support.

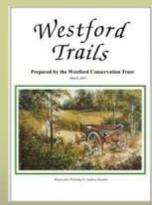
Implementing a Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan

Jun 2011 **47** **Form Permanent Committee:** The BoS appointed 9 people to Pedestrian Safety Committee (PSC) & charged them with identifying and evaluating options for improving pedestrian safety. Peter Ewing, Committee chair, can be reached at: pewing@westfordma.gov

2011-2012 **51** **65** **Develop Prioritized Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan:** PSC met with Schools, Planning Board and, GIS to create a pedestrian access map including bus stops and pedestrian accident locations in order to update the 2000 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan.

Jun 2012 **23** **115** **Sidewalk Improvements within Villages and New Subdivisions:** May 2012: Sidewalk Gift Account funding is available for use for planning, design, and/or construction of sidewalks. The developers of Graniteville Woods and the Princeton Properties projects will build new sidewalks as part of their developments.

- Next Steps to consider:
- 39** Examine accommodating bikes by increasing shoulder width when reconstructing major thoroughfares.
 - 40** Work with schools to adopt Massachusetts Safe Routes to Schools Program.
 - 50** Continue to implement Rt. 110 Master Plan Recommendations.



107 **Publicize Trail Network:** GIS Department is mapping all publicly-accessible trails, building on work by the Land and Trail Stewards volunteers.

Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University



COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES/GOVERNANCE

Operating Efficiently and Raising Revenue

Committees and Departments Working Together

Several action steps recommended forming committees, while others are actions committees are currently taking. This chart shows a simplified version of how they work together. See their minutes & reports on Town's website & Annual Town Reports.

13 Monitor Energy/Water Use:

Assistant Town Engineer now staffs the EC, which encourages energy efficiency/conservation. Feb 2012: EC made recommendations to prevent future weather event blackouts.

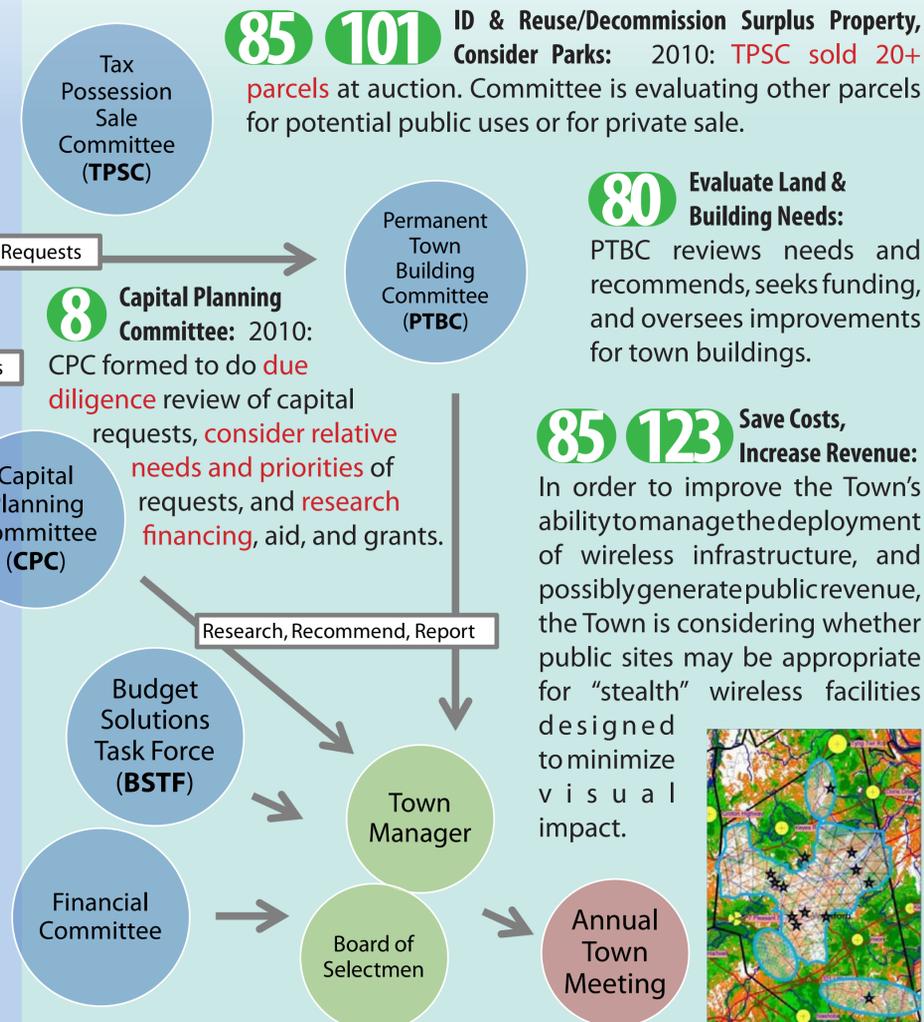


EC played key role in installing school rooftop Solar panels. See real-time updates on Stony Brook Panels: www.solrenview.com/cgi-bin/CGIhandler.cgi?&sort=pvi_IDs&cond=site_ID=691

7 79 Establish Dept of Public Works / Consolidate Maintenance: 2010: Ad Hoc Public Works Committee made efficiency recommendations, but advised against a DPW. A new Public Works Initiative Committee including representatives from town and school depts is meeting monthly. See updates on their website.

114 125 Consolidation, Economies of Scale, and Technology: These action items are implemented through the annual budgeting process. BSTF recommends FY '14 taking advantage of low interest rates by bundling capital expenses.

Taking a Comprehensive Approach to Asset Management



85 101 ID & Reuse/Decommission Surplus Property, Consider Parks: 2010: TPSC sold 20+ parcels at auction. Committee is evaluating other parcels for potential public uses or for private sale.

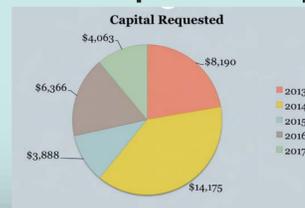
80 Evaluate Land & Building Needs: PTBC reviews needs and recommends, seeks funding, and oversees improvements for town buildings.

85 123 Save Costs, Increase Revenue: In order to improve the Town's ability to manage the deployment of wireless infrastructure, and possibly generate public revenue, the Town is considering whether public sites may be appropriate for "stealth" wireless facilities designed to minimize visual impact.



Existing Wireless Facilities

5-Year Department Requests (in 000's)



CPC reports to Town Manager and keeps the public informed. Chart from Nov '11 presentation, see Town website for complete reports from all committees.

Providing Training and Communication



58 82 Annual/Biannual All-boards Meetings:

The 1st annual Strategic Planning Retreat was a big success. Surveys indicated that participants prefer meeting annually and would value topic-specific multi-board meetings as needed. The first of such was on Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, August 2011, leading to coordinated action in pursuit of the "Acton option" for BFRT parking.



119 120 122

Emergency, Pre-Disaster, and Incident Training: 2011: Town updated Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan and Continuity of Operations plan. Staff received training on ensuring continuing public services in the event of natural disasters or other unplanned events.

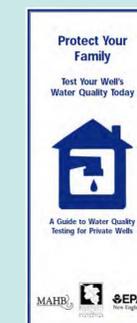
70 Provide Manuals and Training for Boards, Commissions, and Committees:

Jul 2010: New Open Meeting Law took effect, and the Town Clerk's office made training and assistance available to all boards, commissions, and committees.

Facilitating Excellence in Governance

54 Evaluate Public/Private Liability Risk: 2011: Town adopted an indemnification form and guidelines for volunteer work on public land.

91 Review Status of Committees: This action is a 2012 goal of Board of Selectmen and Town Manager and a staff working group has been formed.



113 Expand Public Health Programs:

The Public Health Department organizes outreach programs such as the recent program on Septic System and Drinking Water Well Basics. For more information, see their website.

9 27 Improve Design Review Coordination:

2011: The new Town Planner reinstated joint design development review meetings among municipal department heads to ensure attention to all departments' regulations within the permitting process.



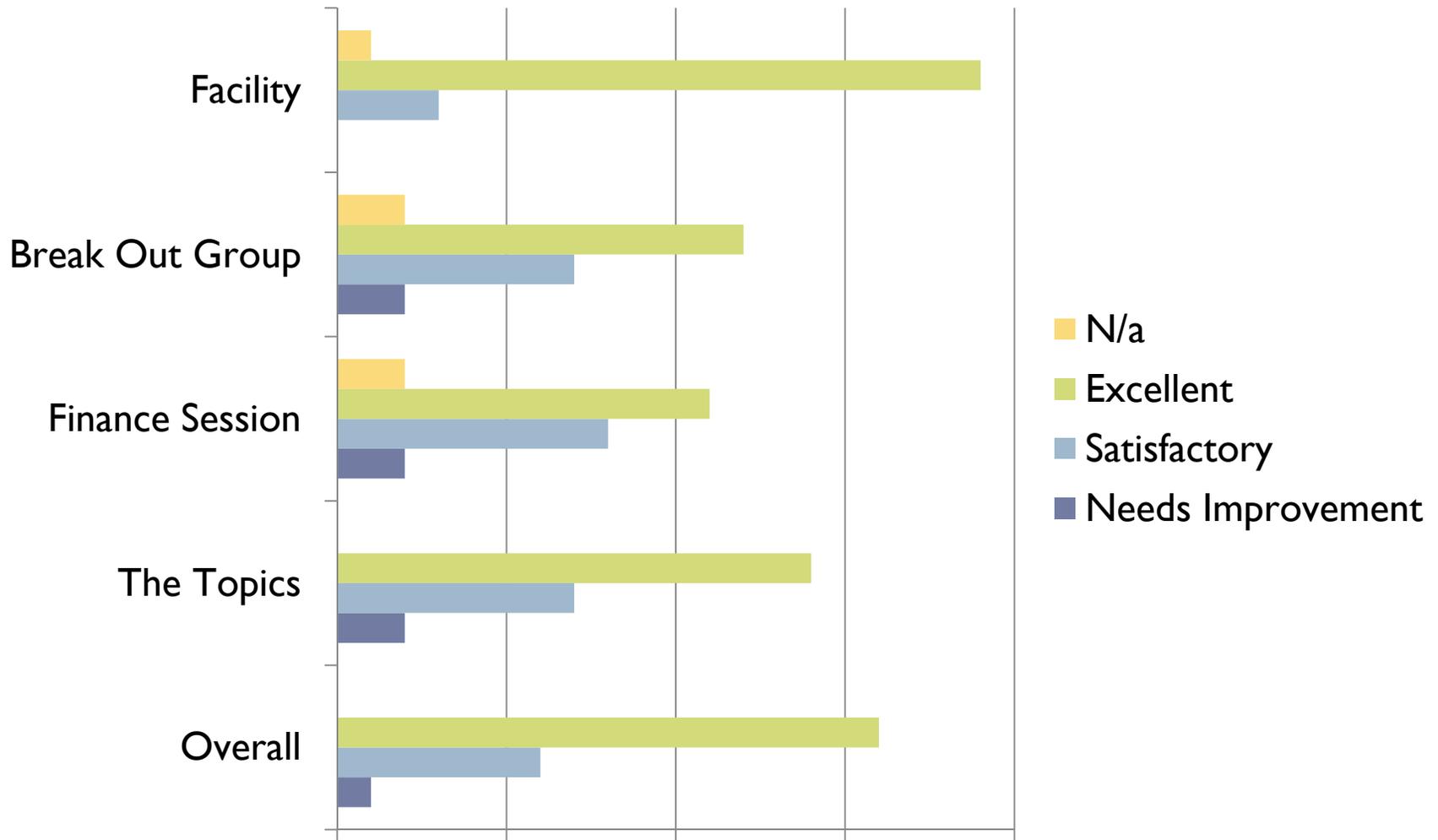
Posters prepared by Westford Director of Land Use Management Angus Jennings with Christopher Glenn Hayes, MRP Candidate Cornell University



SPR 2012 – Survey Results

24 Surveys Completed

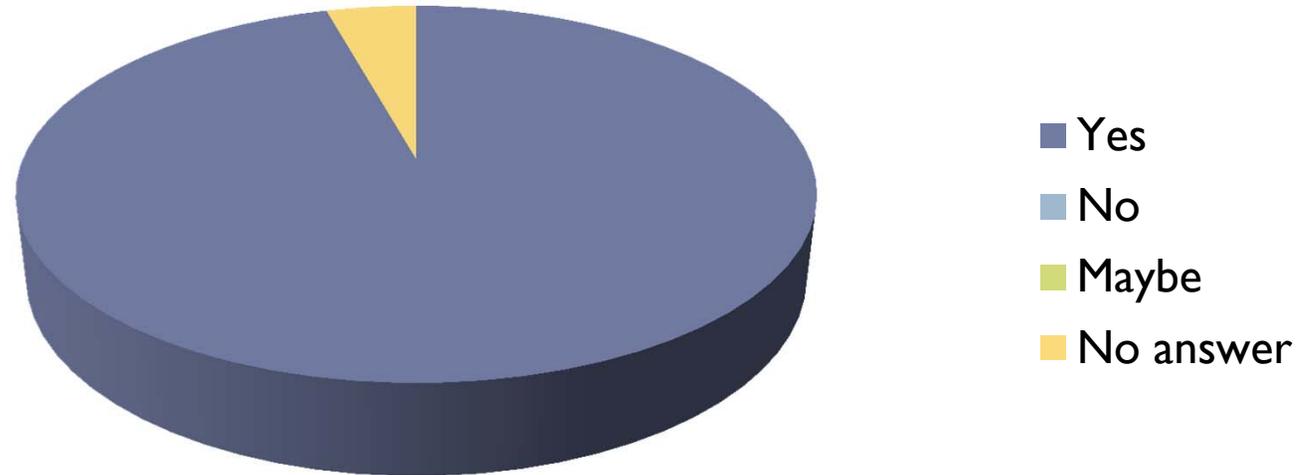
Feedback on 2012 Event



Comments on 2012 Event

- ▶ Good social event to help promote teamwork.
- ▶ Wish I could have attended another breakout session. Realize there was not enough time - not even for the one session attended. Don't know what the solution is. Session involved just about right number of participants.
- ▶ Need a bit more time for the breakout sessions and a bit more variety. Also, the breakout sessions were very short so were only capable of being just question and answer sessions unlike last year which was more comprehensive and about strategizing. Overall, a good event and fun. But could use some improvement. Last year was better.
- ▶ I expected more exchange of ideas between presenters and participants. What it turned out to be was an information session - presentations and Q&A. This is not a bad thing, just different from what I expected.
- ▶ There was a lack of specificity in the responses given in the school session.
- ▶ **Overall:**
 - ▶ I would still like to see more input/suggestions generated and less presenting by town staff.
 - ▶ Did not have a large strategy component. Good for info-sharing, Q&A interaction. Maybe goals should be changed
- ▶ **Finance:**
 - ▶ Much to do about woes and little on approaches and solutions.
 - ▶ Could have used a moderator to keep a couple of people from dominating the Q & A session
 - ▶ What are the strategy alternatives being considered? Can we discuss some or suggest others?
 - ▶ Need more time
 - ▶ Difficult to have it dominated by primarily one - would have appreciated it to include more questions (brief) and answers
- ▶ **Break Out Group:**
 - ▶ Good discussion on Special Ed and its requirements. Difficult to hear-is there any way for the breakout group leader to wear a mini-microphone?
 - ▶ Good info-sharing, needs more on alternatives
 - ▶ Good relevant topics
- ▶ **Topics/Suggestions:**
 - ▶ Volunteerism in town. Can we recruit volunteers to take up some of the slack?
 - ▶ Too much emphasis on budget. Not enough on where we are going.
 - ▶ Choices for sessions are among the most important
- ▶ **Facility:**
 - ▶ Enjoyed the outdoor setting.
 - ▶ Dinner delivery could have been more efficient

“Would you like to see another Strategic Planning Retreat?”



- **Comments:**
 - On financial issues.
 - It is a great event, so please keep doing it.
 - Only if it connects the outcomes/feedback from the session yesterday to the future direction.

General Comments

- ▶ It was hard to hear speakers, so perhaps a small portable microphone and speaker for each session would be great!
- ▶ I will plan to attend if offered again, and I will encourage other townspeople to attend.
- ▶ Great opportunity to informally meet with town staff and committees.
- ▶ Maybe you could have a meet and greet at 5 PM and start the program at 5:30.
- ▶ The Development breakout session I attended brought a lot of questions out from the audience.
- ▶ Good to see the interest.
- ▶ I thought the Strategic Planning Event was well attended. I hope the Town holds it again next year.
- ▶ I think the town did a great job in pulling this together, especially given the circumstances of the very hot weather. Unfortunately, it was almost impossible to hear the speakers in the breakout sessions with the competition from the fan. We should consider giving them microphones in the future.
- ▶ Nice job everyone. We really appreciate your efforts.
- ▶ In opening comments: top 5 issues in town (brief prioritized list).
- ▶ Need a little more time in the 4 sessions.
- ▶ Good job all around. Did not really see any focus on the finance discussion. Breakouts were excellent. Congrats to all who made it happen.
- ▶ How about the town comes with a list of questions to stimulate discussion like: would you prefer A or B and why?
- ▶ Like to see this shared discussion opportunity -- its shows an excellent working together of variety of boards and people.
- ▶ Good choice of 4 hot button issues.
- ▶ Did the Town staff learn anything? Great opportunity for casual conversation that doesn't seem to happen at Town Hall or during Board meetings.