



TOWN OF NEW HAMPTON, NH

MASTER PLAN

ADOPTED – 1985

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Chapter II. Population - Updated

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Chapter III. Land Use - Updated

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Full Update

Chapter VII. Transportation – Added new

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Chapter VIII. Energy – Added new



This Master Plan is

DEDICATED TO THE TOWNSPEOPLE OF NEW HAMPTON

We hope this document encourages you to think about what is best for the future orderly growth and effective resource protection of our Town.

Thank you to all who gave input and who attended the public meetings and hearings as this plan was developed. We welcome your suggestions and feedback to provide the Planning Board with guidance for future revisions to this plan.

Town of New Hampton Planning Board

December 18, 2018

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter I. Vision.....	2
Chapter II. Population	3
Historical Population Trends	3
Chapter III. Land Use	4-5
3 – 3.3 Goals and Recommendations	4-5
Chapter IV. Historical Resources	6-8
Introduction.....	6
4.1 Historic Inventory	6
4.2 Techniques for Preservation	6-8
Chapter V. Economic Development Plan	9
Chapter VI. Land Resources	10
Chapter VII. Transportation.....	11-12
Chapter VIII. Energy	13-15

Introduction

The New Hampton Master Plan is a tool to be used by the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen to guide growth of the town at a rate that is consistent with the town's ability to absorb it, while preserving the existing rural and small-town character. The Master Plan furthers this goal through natural resource protection, historic and agricultural preservation, and promotes the town's desire to assure a pleasant, attractive, and desirable community in which to live and play. The Business and Industry Association of NH, in 1996, after extensive research, identified the *Quality of Life in New Hampshire* as the state's most important economic asset. The population of New Hampshire grew from 1.3 million in 2010 to 1.35 million in 2019. New Hampshire is losing 20,000 acres of farm and forestland each year to development. New Hampton is going to see its fair share of that growth and loss of farm and forest. It is not a question of if we are going to see it; it is more a question of how we are going to handle it.

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

As travel and tourism continue to be mainstays of the New Hampshire economy, New Hampton by virtue of its very location must be prepared to accommodate, not only the growth of its own population, but that of surrounding communities and, indeed, the state as a whole. No town exists in a void, and, particularly since September 11th, 2001 and more recently in 2020 with the Covid 19 mandates, many health and safety issues for New Hampton citizens must be considered in concert with other towns, the region and the state. As a result, an important tool is communication with other town governments, regionally and statewide. The number of state and regional organizations to which New Hampton has affiliated itself is long. New Hampton is a regular member of the Lakes Region Planning Commission and the New Hampshire Municipal Association to name two. The departments which serve its residents maintain memberships in like manner. Some examples include the NH Preservation Alliance, NH Association of Conservation Commissions, NH Ambulance Association, National Fire Protection Association, NH State Firemen's Association, the Belknap County Chiefs of Police, Northern New England Police Association, NH Association of Police Chiefs, the NH Finance Officers Association, NH Association of Assessing Officials, NH City and Town Clerks Association, the NH Tax Collectors' Association and others. Additionally, volunteer community members who serve the town's various boards often attend regional and state level conferences and meetings with those expenses paid by the town budget.

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

Chapter I. Vision

The response rate for the most recent community survey was the highest the Town has achieved to date. The results of the most recent New Hampton community survey responses mirrored the feelings our residents showed in the past surveys in that there is a clear desire to maintain the historical, rural, and natural aspects of New Hampton. The most recent survey showed a vast majority agreeing that a great thing about New Hampton is its rural character and sense of community as well as its scenic beauty. New development received favorable response only if it would help reduce the overall tax burden.

The general consensus is that New Hampton should continue to grow only at the rate that we can absorb, at a conservative and controlled rate, while preserving our natural and historic treasures. Moving forward the Town should look to effectively and thoughtfully promote business, growth, and change that the Town desires as reflected in the 2019 Community Survey results.

Chapter II. Population

The goal of the Population Section is to inform users of the Master Plan of the historic and current population as well as projected changes to the population and its demographics. As the Town looks at long range planning for services and resources it is important to understand the anticipated needs of the residents. Any significant change in population and its makeup will consequently effect land use patterns, the Town's economic base, local demand for housing, transportation, human services, and community facilities as well as Town services.

Historical Population Trends

The Town of New Hampton was granted in 1775 and settled about the same time. New Hampton was incorporated in 1777. The Town was reduced in size when in 1797 the area of town which now Center Harbor separated from New Hampton.

The population grew rapidly to 652 in 1790 and to 1,095 in 1800. This decade was the fastest rate of growth that the town has experienced. Population growth continued at a steady pace for the next 30 years, when it peaked in 1830 at 1,905. This trend was reversed for the 100 years as the town began a steady decline down to 692 in 1930. Population began to increase steadily again from that point back up to 946 in 1970. At that point a dramatic growth spurt set in with a 32% increase to 1,249 in 1980 and another 28.8% to 1,606 in 1990. The population in 2010 was 2,165 showing an 11% change from 2000. The population in 2019 rested at 2,221 showing a modest increase in those 9 years while the more recent increase in building activity in 2020 and the beginning of 2021 have not been captured for population increase.

There are many online sites with links to the most up-to-date information on population and trends. A quick internet search brings up many government sites with statistics on New Hampton, Belknap County, and the State of New Hampshire.

Chapter III. Land Use

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

3.1 GOAL

Preserve the rural working landscape and protect prime agricultural lands.

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

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

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

3.2 GOAL

Ensure that the town retains its unique and historic rural character.

This is mainly a visual goal that demands a complicated process of determination of unique character and a process to provide protective scenarios. The 2002 Master Plan committee had recommended the creation of a Mixed-Use District and Architectural standards section. These were both accomplished since that time. The architectural standards are now part of the site plan review and applied as appropriate by the Planning Board. The recommendation from the committee for the mixed-use zone read as follows:

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

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

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

It is important to be reminded of the actions taken by previous members of our community and what the anticipated results were at that time. While the health of the economy dictates the pace at which changes occur in Town, we must be patient and at the same time focused on attaining our long-term goals. The Planning Board is tasked with the mission of continuing to move the Town in the direction that its residents desire.

3.3 GOAL

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

3.3.1 Recommendation: In order for valuable wildlife habitats to be protected, the Conservation Commission should consider working with the Department of Fish and Game to locate valuable habitats and add them to existing maps. This would enable the Planning Board to consider these habitats in future land use planning.

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

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

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

Chapter IV. Historical Resources

Introduction

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

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

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

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

4.1 The Historic Inventory

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

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

4.2 Techniques for Preservation

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

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

4.2.1 Historic Building Restoration – Tax Incentives

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

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

4.2.2 National Register

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

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

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

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

4.2.3 Commissions

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

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

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

A heritage commission is a newer and different concept that was enabled by the Legislature in 1992 under RSA 673:4-A. It had broader responsibilities in recognizing, using and protecting the historical and cultural resources of a community, wherever they are in that community. The function is analogous to the Conservation Commission, which is established to advise, review and perform tasks for the protection of the natural environment. By contrast, the heritage commission's focus is on the cultural and man-made resources. Heritage commissions have two and possibly three general powers: to serve as an advisory and review authority; to oversee and administer property; and, if authorized at a town meeting, assume the composition and duties of a heritage commission.

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

Chapter V. Economic Development Plan

Purpose and Mission:

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

Assessment:

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

Existing Business Base:

Of the 47 establishments identified by the 2011 census a majority of 29 showed an employee base of one to four. Only 2 establishments, both in educational services showed an employee base of greater than 100.

Goals and Strategies:

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

Some of the strategies needed to facilitate growth include:

- Marketing and communications to advertise the community as a desirable business location.
- Advocating for the improvement of state road infrastructure in mixed use and business districts.
- Exploring the viability of expansion of water and sewer systems as technology advances.
- Drawing on regional resources that provide coaching, training, start-up, capital, and incubation services for entrepreneurship and small business development.
- Fostering business networks to allow peer-to-peer exchanges for best practices.
- Advocating for the expansion of broadband services in remote areas of town.
- Attracting knowledge-based businesses that are "location neutral" and where the owners value the quality of life in the Town.
- Continue to improve the general business climate while keeping in harmony with the Town's historical and rural nature.

Chapter VI. Land Resources Chapter

As a community in the heart of New Hampshire, the Town of New Hampton affords a convenient location to travel to, and enjoy, many natural and manmade attractions. The Town's central location and the intersection of Interstate 93 and Route 104 also makes for easy access for our residents to other towns and cities, for work and pleasure. Rural character and natural beauty are attributes of the Town that have been identified in past community surveys as important to our residents. With many tracts of land still managed for farm and forestry use and others existing as quiet undisturbed land there is still a sense of country living in much of the Town. Some owners of these lands realize the tax advantages of a Current Use Assessment. As land owners change or current owners' plans change there is a potential for these lands to change use and possibly offer a different environment for all residents that abut or travel past these areas.

Within the Town there are areas of land with specific zoning designations. These zones were defined to guide the development in Town and allow specific uses in certain areas. The Planning Board is tasked with developing and reviewing the criteria for different zones to ensure an orderly development of land that meets the desires of the Town. A regular review of these ordinances is important to ensure that the intent and results continue to remain pertinent and effective. It is in the Town's best interest that the Planning Board continues this duty while looking for further methods to ensure the important attributes of the Town are maintained while providing a structure for growth and development in appropriate areas of the Town.

There are avenues for land owners to pursue if they choose to keep their property in its current state. Private land trusts will at times work with land owners to purchase and preserve land of significant importance and keeping the current status of the property in perpetuity through specific deeding of the land. The Town has some, albeit limited, ability to acquire and preserve lands for conservation easements through the Conservation Commission's authority in conjunction with the Town Office. A few examples of these lands in Town include, Kelley-Drake Farm Conservation Area/Town Forest, Snake River Conservation Area, Alfred Jenness Spring, Island on Lake Pemigewasset, etc.... with some purchased, tax deeded, or donated by generous land owners. Land owners seeking to protect their property from development are encouraged to explore options that may be at their disposal.

The Conservation Committee has authored an **Open Space Plan** for The Town of New Hampton. It outlines their mission and plans going forward to help protect open spaces for all to enjoy. A link to their plan is available on the Town of New Hampton Website.

Chapter VII. Transportation

Introduction

The intent of this chapter of the Master Plan is to provide information to assist the Town of New Hampton in addressing the current and future transportation needs. The Town's primary goal is to develop and maintain an effective transportation system that meets the needs of residents and facilitates economic development while maintaining and complementing the rural, small-town character of New Hampton.

One of the primary responsibilities of government at all levels is to provide a safe, convenient and reliable transportation system to facilitate the movement of people and goods as efficiently as possible. The transportation system has a major impact on local and regional economic health, quality of life and overall well-being of the community. It also has a significant impact on the ways in which land is developed.

This chapter addresses transportation within the town limits of New Hampton and the impact of through traffic on NH Route 104 and NH Route 132 as a result of development in abutting towns and the impact of destination trips within the town limits and to surrounding communities.

Since most New Hampton residents need to access employment, shopping, medical services, entertainment and other needs within and outside of the town, it is also essential that the community engage in the process of giving input regarding improvement of the state, federal and regional transportation systems. These systems include state and federal highways, as well as regional bus and ride services.

For economic development purposes, the availability of an efficient transportation system is an important locational consideration for new businesses and a primary decision factor for new residents looking to relocate to or within the region or longtime residents who want to remain in New Hampton but are forced to leave because transportation systems are not available. Enhancing its transportation system is a strategy a town can utilize to retain and attract suitable commercial and industrial facilities and maintain residential property values to strengthen the tax base. Transportation system choices that result in congestion, high accident rates or unreasonable speeds, however, can have negative impacts on community character, safety and livability as well as public finances. Managing the future development of the transportation system can promote safety and protect the rural, small-town character of residential areas by avoiding implementation of street designs that encourage high speeds and routing the heaviest traffic around neighborhoods onto collector and arterial roads without sacrificing street connectivity. A properly designed transportation system should also include accommodations for all users including bicycles and pedestrians wherever possible, and incorporate necessary traffic signals, signage and other controls as warranted.

Traffic is one of the more visible impacts of land development and economic activity. Traffic generated by residential, commercial, institutional and industrial land development not only affects the town's local road network, but also impacts the regional highway system and inter-regional travel. Therefore, New Hampton needs to determine how its own growth patterns affect travel demand and to what extent the existing local and regional system can accommodate those demands. There needs to be a balance between maintaining rural community character and roadway efficiency and safety. When indicators of deficiencies such as higher than average accident rates are found to exist at a particular location, roadway improvements may be necessary to ensure safety, even if some sacrifice to travel times results.

In the Town of New Hampton, easements between parcels in Mixed Use and Business/Commercial Districts are required for the future interconnection of sites that allow employees and customers to move from site to site without repeatedly entering and exiting arterial roads.

Communities often face the problem of having to upgrade the local road network as new development occurs. It is important that the transportation plan reflects the future development of the town as proposed in the Town Zoning Ordinance as well as the financial impact to the Town of any expansion of the existing transportation network as a result of proposed new subdivisions or upgrading existing roads from Class VI to Class V. To the extent that new development projects create a need for improvements and upgrades to public roads, drainage, sewer and water systems, exaction and impact fees should be charged to pay a reasonable proportion of the cost to implement these improvements.

The Town of New Hampton owns and maintains approximately 31.5 miles of paved roads and about 22 miles of unpaved roads. The Lakes Region Planning Commission conducted a Road Inventory, Condition Assessment, and Forecasting for the Town of New Hampton, NH. Inventory and Assessments were entered into the Road Surface Management System (RSMS) software for analysis, prioritization, and generation of repair strategies. Repair strategies and a 10-year budget plan have been prepared in partnership with the town and presented within this report. Since 2019, the Town of New Hampton has used this report as the basis for a detailed management plan for its town roads.

Recommendations and conclusions:

- Encourage the development of transportation that promotes safety and the effective flow of traffic.
- Manage road capacity requirements by coordinating transportation and land use, with the goal of minimizing unnecessary traffic without compromising the ability of people to move within and through the community.
- Encourage the continued development of a hierarchy of streets and roads to service local residential use, non-residential development and through traffic.
- Encourage land use patterns that make transportation alternatives viable.
- Minimize the negative effects that sometimes accompany the development of roads and driveways, while still enabling future transportation system development.
 - Promote the development of transportation systems consistent with the preservation of viewsheds and the scenic character of the community.
 - Non-residential driveway entrances should be designed to prevent vehicles on the arterial from queuing while waiting to access the site. By providing adequate depth or driveway length at the curb cut access, vehicles are allowed enough maneuvering space on site to move away from the entrance and allow other vehicles to efficiently and safely enter or exit the site.
 - Investigate ways of calming traffic to improve safety for residents, business owners, and customers.
 - The Select Board should investigate the feasibility and appropriateness of exaction and impact fees.

Chapter VIII. Energy

“Though frugality and shrewdness in business dealings are traits characteristic of New Englanders as a whole, I think New Hampshireites are the most frugal of all,” Judson D. Hale writes in his book “Inside New England.”

Introduction

The intent of this chapter of the Master Plan is to provide information to assist the Town of New Hampton in addressing its current and future energy needs. Reliable, affordable sources of energy are critically important to our overall quality of life and the stability of the economy.

This chapter serves as an important first step to help the Town begin examining its energy consumption and developing implementation strategies to:

- Reduce municipal energy consumption and costs;
- Pursue energy savings for all municipal facilities, equipment, and vehicles through weatherization and building renovations, operational guidance; and
- Develop purchasing policies in favor of energy-efficient equipment.

As global energy costs rise and clean energy technology options become more feasible and economical, both the private and public sectors will find energy-saving options more plentiful. A wide range of financial and informational resources exist to help municipalities, business owners, and residents make changes in their energy consumption. Available incentives and financing options can be the determining factor in whether to invest in a renewable energy system or a conventional one.

Energy conservation is the wise use or management of energy and the avoidance of waste. Energy efficiency refers to achieving the same desired goal, such as powering a building, while reducing the energy inputs or “doing more with less.” Energy savings are often achieved by substituting technologically more advanced equipment to produce the same level of end-use services.

Renewable energy describes energy sources and systems that produce power from sources that are unlimited or can be cyclically renewed, such as solar, wind, geothermal, or biomass. Non-renewable energy sources are those with a finite supply, such as oil, natural gas, nuclear or coal.

Vision

A more energy efficient Town of New Hampton within the next decade.

Protect and maintain New Hampton’s rural, small-town character while looking for opportunities to pursue energy efficiency that will generate reduction in municipal expenditures and promote efficient development that supports the concept of energy conservation, efficiency and renewable energy generation.

The Town of New Hampton encourages energy efficiency, use of renewable energies and proactive policy-making that will enable future generations to inherit a more sustainable community.

Goals

Overall, municipal operations and energy consumption is a small fraction of the total energy consumption for a typical New Hampshire town. Regardless, it is important for the Town to reduce its energy demands

through building weatherization and upgrades and energy efficient operations and procurement guidance for Town staff and officials. The Town would responsibly utilize tax dollars and lead by example in an effort to reduce the cost of maintaining and operating its facilities.

To that end, the Town shall incorporate energy efficient measures in town buildings, activities and ordinances.

Energy savings can be achieved through employing energy efficiency measures; reusing, reducing, and recycling resources; and substituting technologically more advanced equipment to produce the same level of end-use service. Energy conservation goes hand in hand with savings. Weatherization such as insulation and the replacement of windows can be a cost-effective method to reduce energy use.

Links between Energy and Planning Energy and land use planning are interconnected in multiple ways. Residents, businesses, and municipalities use energy for lighting, heating, and cooling buildings; for transportation, manufacturing, and food production and for utilities, communication, and entertainment. Energy in its various forms powers all aspects of community life. Geography and land development patterns, therefore, play an integral role in shaping how and where energy is used. Land use planning decisions in turn shape development patterns and the use of resources. Consequently, municipal policies and regulations affect both private and public energy use, and can significantly impact long-term energy trends in a community.

Capital Improvement Planning and Long-Term Energy Projects Many municipalities in New Hampshire, including New Hampton, regularly update a capital improvements plan (CIP). The CIP is an advisory document, prepared by the Planning Board, which inventories and prioritizes expected future capital spending over a period of years. The purpose is to advise voters and the budget committee about anticipated needs and to avoid unexpected large appropriations in any given year that would overburden taxpayers. One way to achieve facility energy improvements or other long-term energy projects is to incorporate them into the CIP. This may mean simply ensuring that building improvements which were needed anyway include energy efficiency and conservation measures; or it could involve utilizing new technology and design when replacing or adding to town facilities so that they are energy efficient. In this way, energy-conscious municipal facilities can be gradually phased in. In some cases, initial construction costs could be higher than if conventional construction practices were used; however, lower operational energy costs throughout the life of the facility should outweigh the upfront costs. The Town should identify expenditures that benefit long term energy savings.

Energy security

The Town of New Hampton relies on a variety of energy sources to heat and power its public buildings, fuel its vehicles and to provide services and information to the community. Circumstances such as price spikes, demand surges, severe weather, fuel shortages and supply disruptions may prevent the Town from providing services on a consistent basis. Failure of the energy infrastructure can also lead to shortages of water, food and heat to the Town's inhabitants.

There are no assurances that a steady source of energy will be available to us, nor that the expense will be predictable. The Town should regularly monitor its ability to operate during energy supply disruptions and evaluate the reliability of its energy sources.

Recommendations and conclusions:

The Town should lead by example through its commitment to sustainability and energy savings in the operation of its public buildings, exterior lighting and vehicle fleet management. When town buildings undergo regular maintenance or significant renovations, efforts should be made to complete those projects with energy-conserving products and techniques, including the installation or use of renewable energy sources.

Encourage department heads to consider energy efficiency projects and possibilities for cost savings as well as coordination on projects between departments which will increase energy efficiency for town facilities.

Increase energy efficiency in public buildings to realize energy savings in all areas of town government and town operations. Use the tool of energy audits in designing upgrades, and continue to seek and use grants to help finance cost-cutting measures

Implement a “Best Practices Policy” to adopt energy-saving operational behaviors within all municipal organizations, such policy requiring energy use baselines (benchmarks) for all municipal buildings and maintenance of an on-going database of energy usage.

Consider zoning and land use regulations that allow for alternative energy sources and systems and that promote energy conscious development principles such as mixed use, centralized development, and alternative transportation to help reduce energy use.

Consider the voluntary implementation of solar easements on deeds when a developer is subdividing a larger property. Adopt policies that will promote the transition from polluting, non-renewable sources of energy to cleaner renewable sources as they become available and economically feasible.