

HAMPSTEAD VISION

Vision Statement

Our vision for Hampstead is to maintain our quaint village atmosphere and the traditional rural New Hampshire countryside so that all residents are able to share in the varied quality of life experiences available to them.

In order to achieve this goal we have developed zoning, subdivision and site plan regulations to guide the development in an orderly and reasonable manner.

The Town should continue to have a reliable infrastructure with facilities for the local government to function to ensure the welfare of the public and to provide for their protection. Our road system shall be thoughtfully developed and well maintained. We will continue to preserve our fragile natural resources. The community deserves access to open space which is convenient. The Town will endeavor to have a quality educational system. There needs to be continued recreational, library and social activities for every age group.

We will strive to keep Hampstead an exciting community to live, work and play in.

This chapter offers a set of Community Vision Statements for the future of Hampstead. The basis of this chapter was derived from four primary sources: the first source being the previous Hampstead master plan; the second from the Town community profile exercise overseen by UNH Cooperative Extension Service during the year 2005; the third was derived from a citizen's survey distributed and tabulated by the Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) in 2006. The final input came from planning principles of the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions, provided to the town by the Rockingham Planning Commission. The compilation of these inputs as discussed and approved by the Hampstead Planning Board resulted in the Vision Statements below.

The 1992 Master Plan for the Town of Hampstead:

The prior plan was compiled by collaboration between the Hampstead Planning Board and the Rockingham Planning Commission. The plan was an update to a 1983 Master Plan and was based on input from local officials, residents of Hampstead, NH Statutes and Supreme Court cases.

“Speak-up Hampstead” Community Profile Sessions:

On April 1st - 2nd, 2005 over 200 Hampstead residents met to develop a Community Profile with the assistance of the UNH Co-operative Extension Service. The first day of the exercise identified community strengths and weakness at the time of the session as well as addressing how Hampstead should look in the future. During the second day an affinity analysis grouped the issues identified previously into six key issues. The participants broke into subgroups to further discuss and flush out goals/projects for the community to address those key issues.

The six key issues covered the following areas:

- 1) Business
- 2) Community Involvement
- 3) Human & Educational Services
- 4) Recreation
- 5) Planning/Zoning
- 6) Communication

The specific priority projects and issues discussed during this two day visioning session have been captured in the Hampstead Community Profile Report. The report can be found as Appendix A to this Vision Statement.

Town of Hampstead – Community Priorities Survey:

The Hampstead Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) conducted a community priorities survey of the town’s residents in the spring of 2006. The survey asked residents to indicate levels of satisfaction, needs and opinions regarding the following focus areas:

- Quality of existing services or facilities
- Need for new facilities, housing and services
- Position regarding Zoning & Housing Issues
- Position regarding Water & Natural Resources
- Position regarding Transportation
- Position regarding Historic Preservation

549 surveys were returned and tabulated resulting in a return rate of 16%. The information gathered represented a good sample of the town’s population and serves as the most recent solicitation of general public opinion. The results of this survey are summarized and included in Appendix B.

New Hampshire Planning Commission Planning Framework Principles

Principles have been developed by the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions to articulate a framework to achieve good planning in New Hampshire. Central to these principles is the concept that decisions are made at the local level, in the spirit of regional cooperation, with public participation. The Hampstead Planning Board finds some of these principles to be helpful in forming a vision for Hampstead’s future.

The principles have been organized within four general categories: **prosperity, sustainability, mobility and livability**. The principles are strongly interrelated and often relevant to more than one category, and therefore they are best considered as a comprehensive framework rather than individual principles. These principles can be found in Appendix C.

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENTS

Relevant Vision Statements (previously named goals) of the prior Hampstead Master Plan (1992) have been updated and incorporated as appropriate in the Vision Statements below based on the primary sources noted above as well as input from other town officials and constituencies.

Hampstead seeks to:

Provide for orderly land use and development to preserve Hampstead’s character for the benefit of present and future residents of the Town.

The town should promote sound planning practices that will discourage detrimental effects on historic and natural resources as well as Hampstead’s rural character. Effectively guiding the pattern of growth will help to avoid problems such as inefficient road design, conflicting uses, and deterioration of the Town’s character. As growth continues, operative zoning ordinances and growth management techniques will assist in preserving the aesthetic qualities of the Town.

Protect areas of environmental and recreational importance, including wetlands.

Protection of areas of environmental significance will benefit the citizens of the Town and the region. The location, in Hampstead, of three ponds (Wash, Angle, Island) and brooks (e.g. Hog Hill and Darby) – with substantial environmental wildlife habitat, and recreational attributes – makes protection of these water resources vitally important.

Likewise, construction affecting Hampstead’s wetlands could have an adverse impact on the Town’s water resources – as well as destroying the wetlands themselves. The placement of development without consideration of the suitability of the underlying soils can result in environmental harm, damage to structures placed on wetland soils, pollution of groundwater, and ultimately, the necessity for large private and/or public expenditures to mitigate damage.

Respond to growth by keeping municipal services at a reasonable level.

The Town seeks to provide necessary services to satisfy the needs of the community and to avoid excessive strains on these services while controlling the tax rate.

Maintain and expand recreational facilities for present and future residents of Hampstead.

Provision for recreational facilities will reflect the Town’s continuing support for community based activities for the multiple demographics that reside in Hampstead. Areas with significant environmental qualities, such as the three ponds, should be protected so that they may continue to provide recreational opportunities. Greater utilization of the school’s facilities should be encouraged.

Encourage the establishment of necessary commercial services while maintaining the Town's rural character.

A long established goal in Hampstead is to encourage the location and/or expansion of commerce (e.g. professional offices and small retail stores) within existing, appropriately zoned areas. This will allow residents to be able to take care of more of their needs locally. This will enhance commerce for local employment, as well as provide other economic benefits that result from moderate increases in community businesses.

Encourage the provision of an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of all of Hampstead's residents – including all income levels and age groups.

The Town seeks to continue to implement strategies, local regulations and State Statutes which encourage the provision for a variety of housing opportunities. These strategies include making provisions for the development of mobile home parks, multi family structures and age restricted housing developments.

Ensure the quantity and quality of both surface water and groundwater.

The Town's land use policies should continue to protect both the quality and quantity of the ground and surface water resources. In addition the Town should continue to partner with the State, surrounding communities and the local lake associations in managing and protecting water resources (e.g. septic system installation and replacement with the State).

Develop land use controls, and solicit state support, toward resolving problems of traffic density and speed on Hampstead's roads.

Increased traffic and speed on roads that were designed for less traffic at lower speeds have continued to generate safety issues and concerns. Additional traffic, due to increasing residential and commercial development in the region has the potential to exacerbate these problems in Hampstead. Addressing these issues is vital to maintaining safety and the quality of life in Hampstead.

Protect Hampstead's historic and cultural resources; including historic structures and significant scenic qualities.

Hampstead seeks to preserve its valuable historic and cultural resources in order to preserve its heritage and character for the benefit of present and future generations. Hampstead's historic, cultural, and scenic resources contribute to the Town's physical character. Future planning efforts should encourage preservation of identified historic structures, landscape, and scenic areas.

Provide for an effective solid waste disposal solution that will address both the short and long term needs of the community.

Hampstead must continue, individually or in cooperation with its neighboring communities, to advance efforts in determining long and short-term solutions for environmentally safe and proper final disposal of solid waste and septage.

Provide within the town an adequate level of essential public services. These services should be augmented in their delivery by relying on individual initiatives, volunteerism, and the private sector.

Hampstead has an established legacy of volunteerism and community involvement to provide both essential and non-essential services. The high level and quality of volunteerism in Hampstead is a practically and financially effective system, which demonstrates residents' strong commitment to Hampstead and is a credit to the Town's residents. The town should be supportive of these volunteer efforts and continue to promote a climate to enhance this activity.

Continue to monitor and update the Hampstead Master Plan by establishing a process of reviewing one or two chapters annually to reflect the changing needs of the town.

With growth and change occurring at a rapid rate, and with increasing legislative and court concern for ensuring that land use regulations are kept rational, it is more important than ever that the Master Plan be kept up-to-date. An out-dated plan can result in unsupported land use controls, which can be, and often are, looked upon unfavorably by the courts.