

The Vision of Greenfield

Methodology

As part of the creation of a Vision Section, the Town of Greenfield took on a multi-faceted approach to gather information from as many residents as possible. The kickoff of the process began with a “Photo Exercise” in which 17 residents took pictures of seven things they “like” about Greenfield, seven things they “don’t like” and one picture of something they think may be “at risk”. A public session was held to share the results of the exercise and to engage additional residents that did not participate in the Photo Exercise but still wanted to share their vision of the community.

The next approach was to hold a Roundtable event to engage yet another group of residents who chose to participate in this style of public forum. There were 28 participants in this activity. In addition to the Roundtable and the Photo Exercise, the Planning Board conducted a survey which was made available in several locations in town and on the Town website. There were 133 responses, which were analyzed by a subcommittee of the Planning Board.

All of the information gathered from these three sources was considered and the Vision Section was created. It is a true representation of what the residents of Greenfield, who participated in these events, would like to see as the development in town continues. Participants varied in age, income levels, and household size. The compilation of data will serve as a vision into the future and should be used as a *guide* by the Planning Board in future land use decisions.

In the following section, a list of priorities has been established as a result of the analysis of the data from the sources mentioned above. Carrying the vision into the appropriate chapters within this Master Plan will help to ensure that they will be considered as goals to work towards.

The Vision

The quality of life in Greenfield is defined by the rural character of the town. Maintaining slow growth will help to carry this vision for decades. The small town atmosphere and community involvement was echoed by many throughout the visioning sessions. Maintaining public facilities and town services helps to carry on the sense of pride residents feel for living in Greenfield. Community events such as the Roadside Round-up, an annual event to clean up litter accumulation along the roadways, shows the communities’ involvement and desire for continuing this vision. The residents of Greenfield have determined that the following information is important in order to achieve the desired outcomes of the future land use development:

- 1. Maintain Greenfield’s Heritage and Historical Significance** – Maintaining the rural and historical character of the town was repeated by many residents. The historical buildings, cemeteries, stone walls, and gathering places should be maintained to provide protection for these significant town treasures. Finding appropriate uses for these will help to continue the heritage of Greenfield for many generations.

Attention to the Village District and the historical and cultural entities within this area of town needs to be a priority to keep the Greenfield values that are important to many.

- 2. Preservation of Natural Resources, Open Space, and Farmland-** The lakes/ponds in Greenfield, as well as the numerous trails, and scenic vistas are enjoyed by many residents and visitors. Scenic views and enjoyment of wildlife must be protected from development before it is too late. Land use regulations must take into consideration the innovative ways in which development can occur while still preserving these areas. Maintaining a healthy ecosystem

requires good stewardship of conservation land and monitoring of the waterbodies to protect the water quality. Farms provide fresh locally grown food and undeveloped land with scenic views. It is important to support and encourage local farming.

- 3. Economic Development-** The concern by many residents about rising taxes was very high in the survey. In order to continue the current level of town services, it was acknowledged that some business growth is needed to help maintain the town budget. Attracting compatible businesses, at a growth rate that is consistent with the vision, will require some planning for the future.

Increased coverage and speed of broadband, cable, and cellular service will help to attract potential businesses looking to establish roots in Greenfield. Without these services, the Town is at an economic disadvantage. This will also make greater opportunities for residents to work from home, thereby reducing automobile trips and negative effects on the environment.

- 4. Housing Choices-** A mix of housing options, including senior housing, single family and some multi-family, is needed to serve all ages and income levels of Greenfield residents. Encouraging infill development in the Village District, including mixed-use, will add workforce housing units. Concentration in this area will help to minimize the impact of sprawl development into undeveloped areas.

- 5. Recreational Opportunities & Community Events-** The recreational opportunities available within the community add greatly to the enjoyment of living in Greenfield. Providing recreational options for all ages and all abilities is important and adds to the social equity of a community. Continuing efforts to maintain programs and recreational facilities should be a priority.

Community events are a great way to get to know other Greenfield residents. Local events in the village center should continue. Outreach efforts to encourage volunteers and sponsors will help achieve success of events and strengthen community relationships.

*Adopted by vote of the Planning Board following Public Hearing
August 13, 2012*