

**FREE**

# SPECIAL EDITION

## A New Kind of Outreach

*Charrette .....backcover*

*Greenfield Planning Board*

[illegible]



## The Greenfield Spirit

The Greenfield Spirit is published bimonthly by the Greenfield NH Selectboard's Office at PO Box 256, Greenfield, NH 03047.  
Tel: 603-547-3442 Fax: 603-547-3004

Graphic Designer: Karen Day  
Tel: 547-2985 Fax: 547-3540

Editors: Rob Wimpory, Karen Day,  
Deb Davidson, Aaron Patt, and  
Catherine Shaw

### To submit articles to the Spirit:

E-mail text to: greenfieldnhbos@myfairpoint.net, or drop off typed articles to the Town Offices. Also, please send in photos, articles, announcements, news of the town, poems, drawings, historical info, letters to the editor, etc., with the name of the writer and/or photographer. Thanks!

### Sponsor the Spirit

If you'd like to sponsor an issue of the Greenfield Spirit, please call 547-3442. The cost is low, and it's a great way to get the word out about your business or group, as well as an easy way to support your community. Interest has been so great that we now have a sign-up form to keep everyone's turn organized. Please call the Town Office for rates and to get on the list.

Ad rates and sizes are available from the  
Town Office.

### DEADLINES

#### March 1st for the Apr/May Issue

May 1st for the Jun/Jul Issue

July 1st for the Aug/Sep Issue

September 1st for the Oct/Nov Issue

November 1st for the Dec/Jan Issue

January 1st for the Feb/Mar Issue

## SPIRIT DEADLINE

**March 1, 2014**  
**for the Apr/May Issue**  
**Will cover events between**  
**April 1 to May 31, 2014**

If you wish to get your news into the Spirit, make sure you send or deliver your information to the Town Office by March 1st. This is a firm deadline.

If you choose to send your information via e-mail, please send it to:

greenfieldnhbos@myfairpoint.net

If your article is a long one and you don't have e-mail, please supply a typed copy. If you have any questions, please call Aaron Patt at the Town Office at 547-3442 or Karen Day at 547-2985.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT ON THE 2014 BUDGET

In 2014 the plan is to deliver a flat town tax rate again this year. In 2013 the *Estimated Amount of Taxes to be Raised\** discussed at Town Meeting was \$1,127,798. When the rate was set at \$6.67 in October, it was based on a final effort of \$1,059,711. A combination of fund balance and revenues brought down the 2013 *Estimated Amount of Taxes to be Raised* from the amount discussed at Town Meeting. This compares to the 2012 tax effort of \$1,059,675, also at a tax rate of \$6.67, but based on an initial amount of taxes to be raised of \$1,141,806. 2014 is following the same outline. At Town Meeting residents will discuss a budget with an *Estimated Amount of Taxes to be Raised* line of \$1,130,547. The Selectboard and the Town Administrator have discussed the amount of revenues and fund balance needed to bring the actual taxes raised in October in line with the last two years. Based on estimates of revenues, savings from the previous year's operating budget and fund balance we are projecting an actual town tax effort in 2014 comparable to the years 2012 and 2013. This of course does not include the State Education, County, and School taxes,

which are outside of the Town's control.

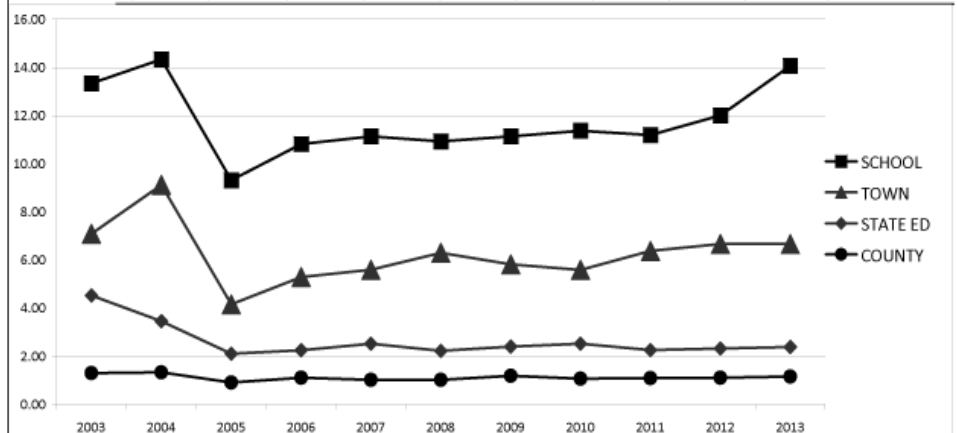
### Why the Tax Rate in 2014 will be different from 2012 and 2013:

In 2014 Greenfield will undergo its scheduled five-year revaluation. For the past several years the equalized valuation of property in Greenfield has been rising above 100% of market value (113.4% in 2013). Real estate market values, which increased rapidly in the 2007-2009 period, have fallen off dramatically since their peak. As a result this year's revaluation will almost certainly result in a lower overall valuation for the town. How much lower won't be known until after the process is complete.

A corollary to a decline in overall valuation, however, is an increase in the tax rate. This is because the formula that is used to raise a dollar in tax revenue has the town valuation as its benchmark. For the last several years we have used approximately \$158,000 to calculate a dollar on the tax rate (this is from the overall valuation of \$158,000,000 divided by a thousand, or "per thousand"). When the overall value of the town adjusts to a lower fig-

Tax Rate Comparison Chart

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
SCHOOL	13.34	14.34	9.32	10.82	11.14	10.93	11.14	11.37	11.19	12.01	14.07
TOWN	7.09	9.12	4.16	5.29	5.60	6.30	5.82	5.59	6.38	6.67	6.67
STATE ED	4.53	3.46	2.11	2.25	2.52	2.23	2.40	2.52	2.26	2.32	2.39
COUNTY	1.30	1.33	0.91	1.11	1.02	1.02	1.19	1.07	1.09	1.11	1.16
TOTAL:	\$26.26	\$28.25	\$16.50	\$19.47	\$20.28	\$20.48	\$20.55	\$20.55	\$20.92	\$22.11	\$24.29



**TA's Report continued from page 2**

ure it will mean that it takes fewer dollars to equal a dollar in taxes. So for instance, if the value of the town is hypothetically reduced by 10% to \$142,000,000 it will take \$142,000 to equal a dollar. Because the taxes to be raised (outlined above at \$1,059,675 in 2012) should be approximately the same as last year, the tax rate will increase (it takes more dollars in increments of \$142,000 to equal \$1,059,675 than it does in increments of \$158,000). Again,

no one can say what the valuation will be until the process is completed. The tax rate equation will use the 2014 benchmark until the next five year revaluation is completed.

*\*The Estimated Amount of Taxes to be Raised is on the last line of the Town Budget Report (MS-6), which is found in the Town Report every year.*

## SAND OPERATION ON FOREST ROAD

In March of 2013, the town approved the excavation of sand from property next to Greenvale Cemetery. In 2013, we removed approximately 3000 yards of material from the Forest Road location. We found that the majority of product at the opening of the site is a very good grade of sand. So far, we are seeing a mix of 83% sand and 17% gravel. With some screening and separating, DPW created an excellent product for winter road sand. The cost of screened sand delivered to us was \$10.00 a yard in 2013. Our yield was therefore approximately \$25,000 dollars worth of sand and another \$4500 in Bank Run Gravel. There are costs to remove the sand and gravel products but over time our costs are not as great as paying for the retail cost of purchasing these products and having vendors truck the product to us from out of town. In all, according to engineering studies completed in 2013, there is over a million dollars worth of sand and gravel available from this project over roughly a 25 year period.

In January of this year a Special Town Meeting was held in order to vote on a petition warrant article to stop this project. Ultimately the article failed as was reported in the Ledger Transcript. As we look forward to the 2014 Town Meeting, residents who attend will discuss three warrant articles on this subject; one from the Cemetery Trustees to provide a larger buffer along the side of Greenvale Cemetery, and two petition warrant articles that could prevent the excavation of sand. In order to keep Town Meeting moving smoothly the articles are outlined below along with some background information for those who did not attend the previous meetings. They may also be found in the Town Report, which will be available at the beginning of March.

**Article 16:** Are you in favor of the following? To form a 7 person committee to include members from the BoS, Cemetery Trustees and at least two abutters of Lot R7-28 to establish a set of guidelines to be followed when removing or processing sand and gravel on Lot R7-28. Rules to include at a minimum the following topics: buffer zones from Greenvale Cemetery, limitations on sand and gravel operations during burial ceremonies, amount of material that can be removed in any one year, the procedure to be used for replanting and land reclamation after sand and gravel is removed, procedures to ensure Zephyr Lake remains free from contamination related to excavation of sand and gravel. Further, if this article

is passed at Town Meeting, the BoS will be compelled to accept these rules and ensure that any agent of the BOS engaged in sand and gravel removal from Lot R7-28 will follow the established rules and no further removal of sand and gravel from Lot R7-28 be done until said committee has completed its work. (By Petition)

To the extent that there is a delay or deadlock within such a committee, sufficient funds would have to be set aside for the purchase of sand and gravel.

**Article 17:** To see if the town will vote to establish and maintain a 100-foot buffer zone at the Greenvale Cemetery, between the row of granite pillars on the northwest side of the cemetery running from Forest Road to Zephyr Lake and any work to be performed on the adjacent town-owned land. Work activity not allowed in the buffer zone would include soil or gravel excavation, tree-cutting or construction. (Requested by the Cemetery Trustees)

This article deals with the buffer zone between the cemetery and the project site. The town was faced with balancing the buffer and the use of the resources. The Board established a buffer at 50 feet because in fact it will actually be a gradual slope; from 50 feet to 75 feet per the engineering design drawn to State regulations. The plan is to repopulate this slope with trees.

**Article 18:** Are you in favor of the adoption of the following? To suspend the excavation and processing of sand and gravel on Lot R7-28 on Forest Road until the actual financial benefit to the town from the 2013 excavation can be formally presented to town residents in a public forum such as a specially noticed Selectboard meeting. (By Petition)

The third article is a call for financial information. The Select board discussed this at their November 07 meeting (please see website) and reported the figures in the Dec/Jan 2014 Greenfield Spirit (also on the website).

As always residents should vote their conscience and, again, we hope this provides some background to the events to date.

*Greenfield Selectboard*



## HOW DOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD HERITAGE DISTRICT CONTRIBUTE TO GOALS OF GREENFIELD'S MASTER PLAN

Greenfield citizens appreciate their small town. They'd like to see it grow and prosper, attract new investment, and maintain its distinctive identity as a rural town characterized by open vistas, older buildings, and a slower pace of life. They want to see their tax base grow.

The proposed new Neighborhood Heritage District in Greenfield was developed with these goals in mind. The village center, with its mix of civic, residential, and commercial uses, is essential to the town's history and function. By managing major changes to the character of this place, the entire community benefits.

Studies have shown that a vibrant village center encourages a more livable community in many ways. There is more civic interaction and pride among citizens. Rehabilitating historic structures keeps more money circulating locally than new construction. Locally owned, independent businesses are encouraged, while chains, which rely on formula architecture and often want to demolish existing structures, find it more difficult to establish themselves. Homes, trees, and fences that define village streetscapes are added to or removed in ways that don't undermine the very qualities that are most cherished about them.

In many larger cities, such as Cambridge, Ma, Philadelphia, Nashville, Boise, and Phoenix, it is the neighborhood residents themselves who have initiated these mechanisms, often referred to as Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Unlike a traditional Historic District, this proposed zoning mechanism is designed to afford a higher degree of flexibility and avoid the conflicts so often associated with detailed design review.

Those who own property in the town center are assured that their neighbors will share the same constraints, with the result that no one property loses value as a result of what their neighbor does or does not do. Such stabilization -and consistency in managing a district--means that those who buy in or choose to invest in property improvements will have some assurance that their investment will be safeguarded. In many communities, fluctuations in assessed value are minimized, and overall values are more stable, and often slightly higher, in such districts.

The ordinance encourages the on-going use, or re-use, of older or existing buildings, and allows for new construction that reflects the overall character of the district. Exceptions are available in cases of hardship. Far from regulating the precise details of architectural design and features (as in a Historic District), this ordinance is focused on preserving overall character and minimizing major changes that would have a negative community-wide impact. In other words, keeping Greenfield as it is, but allowing for changes that citizens have said they want.

Ordinances like this are a new opportunity for New Hampshire, and Greenfield could set a new standard of managing change to its village with the creation of a Neighborhood Heritage District. Such action would go a long way toward making the Town a more attractive and desirable place in which to live and work-- just what the Master Plan is all about.

*Maggie Stier, Field Service Representative  
NH Preservation Alliance*

Note from the PB: Maggie Stier is our lead consultant in Greenfield's Community Planning Grant #2.

## Word Cloud

*This word cloud was generated from the language in our 2012 Master Plan Vision statement.*

*Remember that word clouds emphasize the words that are mentioned most often, with more frequently mentioned words appearing larger and less mentioned words appearing smaller on the infographic.*



## HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE INITIATIVE

### Why a Neighborhood Heritage District?

At a recent Planning Board hearing, many residents asked why we are considering a Neighborhood Heritage District? The Planning Board's work revising the 2003 Master Plan in March of 2012 led us to involve the community in a series of meetings and exercises that would point the Planning Board in the right direction as we look to the future. One of the first steps was to conduct a town-wide Photo Shoot of most liked/disliked aspects of town by community volunteers in March of 2012. Following up on this activity, we conducted a community wide written and electronic survey; 133 community members offered many opinions about the direction our new Master Plan should take us. As a result of that work and following a public hearing, a new Vision statement was adopted in August 2012. The result of these activities gave the Planning Board important feedback from community members.

A few excerpts from the Master Plan Vision Statement illustrate some of the motivators that have guided the Planning Board's search for a process by which we could preserve the village while promoting economic development:

"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...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...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 - 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...The historical buildings, cemeteries, stone walls, and gathering places should be maintained to provide protection for these significant town treasures...
  2. Preservation of Natural Resources, Open Space, and Farmland...
  3. Economic Development...concern about rising taxes was very high in the survey...business growth is needed to help maintain the town budget. Attracting compatible businesses...will require some planning for the future.
  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. 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...
- (See the Master Plan on the Town Website for full text of the Vision)

Based on this Vision, the Planning Board began to search out options to protect the characteristics of the village valued by the community. We also began to seek out grants to help finance the work of planning outside the budget process.

In June 2012 we applied for and received a Community Planning grant of \$7125 to review our major ordinances and regulations for consistency and clarity. That work was completed in June of 2013 with Zoning Ordinance amendments made at Town Meeting in 2013 and Subdivision and Site Plan Review changes made in June of 2013.

A Community Conversation was held on December 1, 2012 at which residents gave input into the process of Town-wide economic development. The Planning Board took this information, along with the Master Plan Vision work, and began to explore alternatives to protect the village while promoting economic development. The Planning Board felt strongly that an ordinance like a Historic District was not what the public was looking for. Public input agreed. It was felt that the best approach was to create something that was advisory in nature, included input from the residents and community as a whole, and rested with the Planning Board being ultimately responsible for the decision making. The creation of a Neighborhood Heritage District seemed to capture the community's message to the Planning Board on what people wanted to protect and preserve in the Town of Greenfield.

In February of 2013, we applied for and received a grant of \$23,300 for research and development of a Neighborhood Heritage District. Beginning in April, 2013, we sought volunteers for a Neighborhood Advisory Committee who agreed to work on preparing an ordinance for preservation of the Village. They first met in May, 2013. With the guidance of the NH Preservation Alliance and Southwest Region Planning, a survey was conducted in late June/early July of 2013

*continued on next page*

and a village reconnaissance was conducted by Elizabeth Hengen, a preservation consultant. She reported out a draft in July that was revised by the NHD Advisory Committee and the Planning Board in August. Her final report, August 26, 2013 was then submitted to a Community Conversation of residents for feedback on September 14, 2013. Based on this feedback, Southwest Region Planning developed a first draft of our proposed Ordinance on October 7, 2013. The Planning Board and NHD Advisory committee reviewed and revised that draft which was completed by Southwest Region Planning last November. On December 14, 2013, a fourth Community Conversation was held. Feedback from that meeting resulted in revisions that were finally brought to a public hearing on January 13, 2013.

This has been a long, deliberate process involving extensive outreach in new ways for Greenfield. Such outreach has included:

- Two meetings in 2012 and 2013 conducted at the Conservation Commission's annual Round-Up dinner informing the public of our work and soliciting input.
- Two meetings each with the Volunteer Fire Department, Historical Society, Conservation Commission, Library Trustees, the Givers and several meetings with the Selectboard to seek input and keep them informed of the project and its progress.
- Several meetings with volunteers who served on the Neighborhood Advisory Committee from May through October.
- Brochures and pamphlets provided in the Town Offices and during Community Conversations.
- Four different Community Conversations, beginning with Vision work in April 2012 and concluding in December 2014 seeking widespread public input.
- Three different mailings, two postal cards and one Every Door Direct Mailing to invite public input and report our progress.
- This Town wide mailing of a "Spirit" like publication designed to help inform the public about upcoming Town Meeting issues.

The challenge for Greenfield is for voters to decide what we'll do. The Planning Board urges voters to weigh the costs and benefits of this proposal and its potential for our community. Please turn out and vote accordingly on March 11th.



*One of the Neighborhood Heritage District meetings at the Stephenson Memorial Library.*



# PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD HERITAGE DISTRICT ORDINANCE

## BRIEF SUMMARY

### Quick Guide to the proposed NHD Ordinance.

For the full wording, see the Planning Board section of the Town Website-Additional links.

#### Purpose of the Ordinance:

The purpose of the Neighborhood Heritage District (hereinafter referred to as NHD) is to protect the unique characteristics of the village area, maintain the rural beauty of the town, and guide new investment to stabilize and strengthen our tax base. The preservation of the cultural and historical attributes will help maintain the features of Greenfield that have contributed to the quality of life for present and future enjoyment.

#### Boundaries:

See map.

#### Actions subject to Review by Neighborhood Heritage District Committee and Planning Board:

1. New Construction 200 square feet or more visible from a public way.
2. Demolition or relocation of all or part of a building/structure visible from a public way.
3. Any new/expansion of existing parking areas, 1000 square feet or more, in areas visible from a public way.
4. Removal of fencing supported by granite posts or installation of any new fencing greater than 4 feet in height constructed of materials other than wood
5. Removal or significant alteration of any mature street or front yard tree 15 inches in diameter unless necessary for public safety reasons.

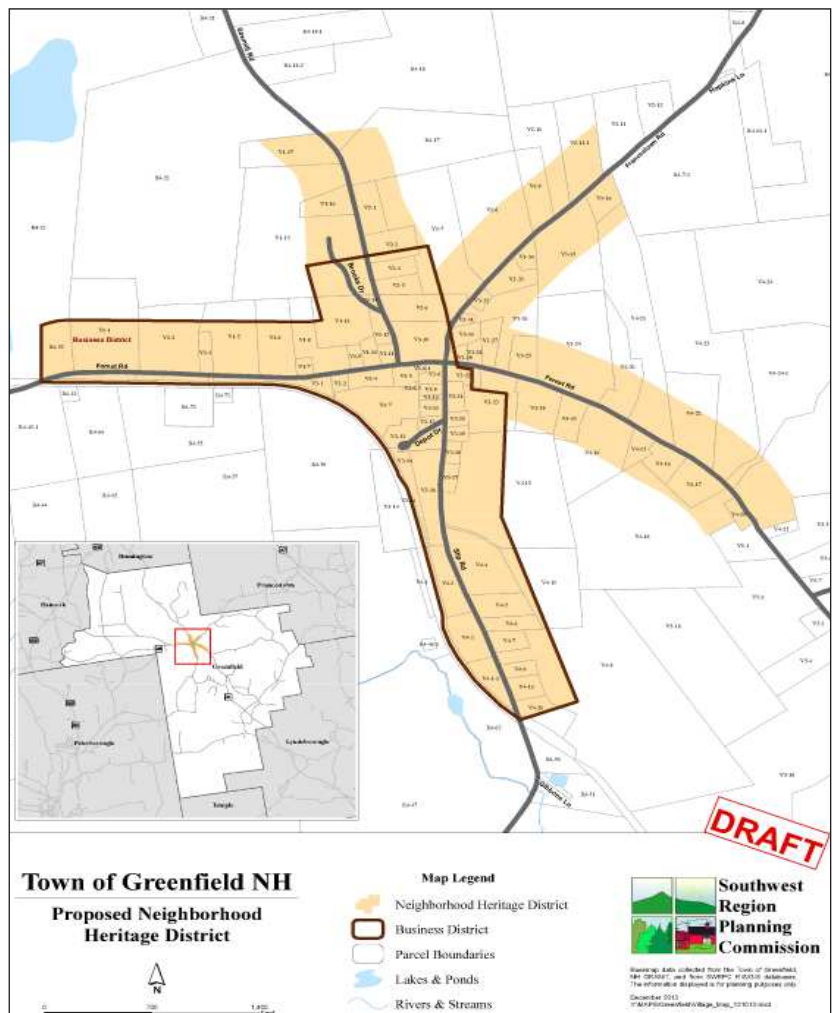
#### Standards for Review:

This section spells out in greater detail what standards are suggested for the five actions identified above. (see detailed language in the proposed ordinance).

#### Procedure:

This section describes how the process works. Briefly:

1. Any activity that warrants review under Actions to Review requires an application to the Planning Board by the property owner. Costs of public/abutter notice and administration of the application are borne by the Town.
2. Planning Board refers the application to a Neighborhood Advisory Committee, which reviews and makes a recommendation to the Planning Board within 30 days.
3. Planning Board has 35 days to make a decision. If the Planning Board decision is contrary to the recommendation of the NHD Advisory committee, they must state reasons in writing.





*Aerial views of our town from in front of and behind the Meeting House. Photography by Ray Cilley*

## Two of the Major Changes in Our Town Within the Last Decade.



*Once Carbee's Corner, this building, circa 1907, was renovated and became the Greenfield Meeting Place which now houses small businesses and the Riverhouse Restaurant.*



*The Stephenson Memorial Library, circa 1912, as it was and now after the major renovation.*





The "New Hampshire Way" is a term often used to describe how things are done in this state, both good and bad. Clearly, citizen participation is central to the success of small communities such as ours whose resources are limited and needs great. With the exception of several administrative offices like our Town Administrator, Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Bookkeeper, few of our town's needs are met by paid staff. Elected volunteers include the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Budget Committee, Library Trustees, Cemetery Trustees, Budget Advisory Committee and Trustees of the Trust Funds, Supervisors of the Checklist. Central to our public safety are the long hours contributed by our Volunteer Fire Department members, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Fire Wardens. Appointed volunteers can be found on the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Roads Commission, Emergency Management Director, Hazardous Mitigation Committee.

In addition, though they receive small stipends, volunteers go above and beyond the call on the Selectboard, School Board Rep, Welfare Director, Moderator, Treasurer and deputy Treasurer and Fire Chief

Volunteerism is central to the quality of life we enjoy in small communities. Traditional volunteers providing a wide range of services include Greenfield Covenant Church members, the Woman's Club, the PTO, the Greenfield Historical Society, Friends of the Library, the Greenfield Little League organization, Scouting for both boys and girls, the Greenfield Trails Committee, the Oak Park Committee, the GIVers and the Greenfield Drawbar Club. Many other volunteers have contributed service in committees that no longer function at the active level. The hundreds and hundreds of hours donated by dedicated members of these groups create community events, promote development of local resources, beautify the Town and create the rich cultural and social environment we value.



*Roadside Round-Up Volunteers*

Outside of those longstanding groups, others move in and out of our consciousness with short term goals and initiatives. Though naming every volunteer would be difficult, some warrant noting here because of their valuable, unsung contributions made in the past year or two.

Our thanks go out to:

- Participants in the Master Plan Photo Shoot in 2012, an exercise which helped by visualizing what makes Greenfield unique and special, included SMS students Abigail Johnson and Chloe Costello, Lisa Carey, Janet Renaud, Marilyn Fletcher, Adele Hale, John Halper, Mike Kavanaugh, Chris Weeks, Sheldon Pennoyer, Laura Sullivan, Laura Morrocco, Carol Irvin, Candice Fowler and Ken Paulsen.
- The Neighborhood Heritage Advisory Committee, composed of Mary Ann Grant, Rev. Dan Osgood, Sheldon Pennoyer, Mary Ann Beard, Louise Gryval, Lee LeBlanc and Beth Nee.
- Girl Scouts, who have provided child care at many of our Community Conversations, including Ruth Bergman, Marilyn Fletcher, Stacy Hill, Asta Hill, Sienna Ferry, Ruthanna Ellis and Lily Hill.
- Large group facilitators who have helped guide citizen input at our Community Conversation sessions, including John Gryval, Gil Morris, Candice Fowler, Jim Fletcher and Lori Dumaine-Weeks.
- Residents who have volunteered their input in general at many of our Community Conversations.

Active citizen participation is essential to the quality of life, growth and development of our community. Consider participating in an activity of interest to you. Volunteers are always needed...we have much to do. Please consider contributing your talents to the cause in an area of interest to you. No prior experience necessary and you'll meet some great people in the process.



*Wide Angle Aerial View of Our Community. Photography by Ray Cilley*

## Word Cloud

*This word cloud was generated from the language in our April 2012 Round Table discussion about values held for Greenfield's future.*

*Remember that word clouds emphasize the words that are mentioned most often, with more frequently mentioned words appearing larger and less mentioned words appearing smaller on the infographic.*





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROGRESS

A new volunteer committee was born in town in 2013. In Master Plan Vision work beginning in 2012, the public urged the Planning Board to begin to promote economic development to help broaden the tax base in town and bring services to the community. Following a meeting with the Selectboard in January 2013, an appointed Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), composed of residents Norm Nickerson, Paul Renaud, Jim Fletcher, Jack Moran and Ray Cilley, with alternates Andre Wood, Craig Morrocco and John Hopkins, took up a charge from the Planning Board to:

- Recommend action for 2014 Town Meeting for an expansion of industrial zones in town.
- Examine broadband options for the community.

As a result of their work, two important developments have emerged.

1. One question on the ballot for voters will be an expansion of the current industrial zone on Sawmill Road. This proposal includes two large lots abutting the industrial zone. Care was taken in their proposal to create a buffer along Crotched Mountain Road to preserve the aesthetics of the Sawmill Road/Crotched Mountain Road intersection, protect the unique qualities of that land, assure access from Sawmill Road only and protect the sensitive lands abutting Sunset Lake. These lots have extensive frontage on Sawmill Road while also extending the existing industrial overlay district. This recommendation is supported by the Planning Board.

2. Greenfield is one of 3 towns in the state selected by the New Hampshire Broadband Mapping and Planning Program to receive assistance in the coming year with community assessment, planning and decision making regarding broadband. This was made possible by collaboration between Southwest Region Planning Commission and the Greenfield EDAC. The NH Broadband and Capacity Building Team will work with the community to develop a specialized plan regarding broadband and economic development, all at no cost to the town. This program will begin in late winter and continue into autumn, with a break during the summer. Volunteers will be needed to comprise a steering committee for this effort. Interested persons should visit the EDAC section on the town website to contact the committee chairman or call the Town Office.

You will find a third development from their work at Town meeting. They have proposed that the Town adopt RSA 79 E, legislation that enables Towns to use tax incentives to "...encourage the rehabilitation and active use of under-utilized buildings and, in so doing, promote strong local economies, promote smart, sustainable growth, as an alternative to sprawl, in accordance with the purpose and objectives of RSA Ch 9-B (State Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Policy)".

Many thanks to the members of this committee for their work. This is another example of differences being made in Town thanks to the efforts of committed volunteers. On the following pages, you'll see more on the expansion of the industrial zone and the tax relief incentive.



*The Harvester Market which was once Delay's Country Store*

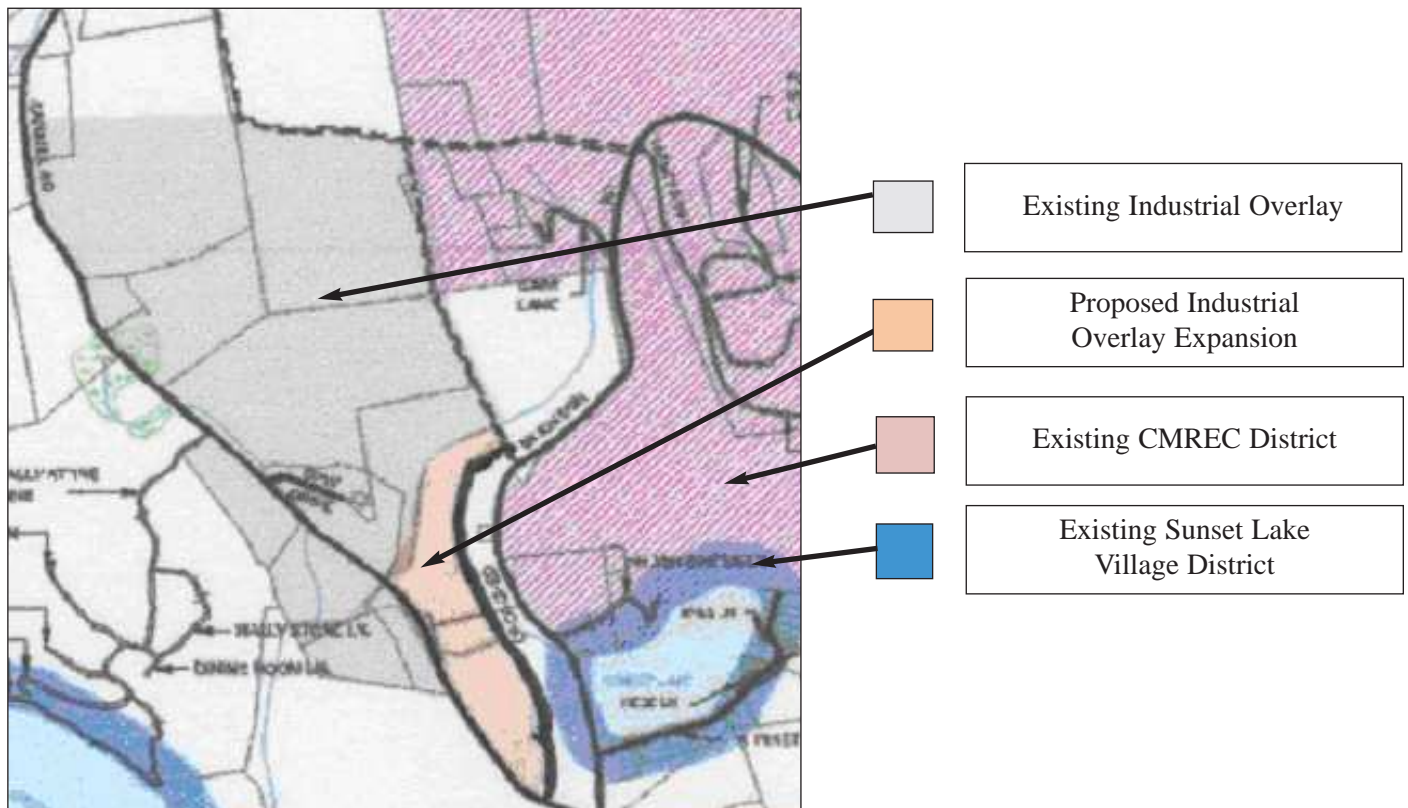
## EXPANSION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ZONE ON SAWMILL ROAD

Part of the work of the new Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) this past year has been to review the extent of our industrial zones and the needs for expansion. As a result of their work, the EDAC proposed to the Planning Board two possible expansions to existing Industrial Zone Overlays in both the Southeastern and Northern sections of town. After studying their recommendations for both areas, the Planning Board presented a proposed expansion of the existing district on Sawmill Road. The Board was concerned about the impact of the proposed expansion on the Sunset Lake environs, including private properties, the Town Beach area, and the Crotched Mountain Road intersection. To preserve those resources, the Planning Board was careful to create a 300 foot buffer between Crotched Mountain Road and the Crotched Mountain Road intersection with Sawmill Road. All access to the proposed expansion must be made from Sawmill Road.

Many thanks go out to the EDAC for their careful analysis and recommendations. At our public hearing on January 13, 2014, support was expressed for the proposed expansion. Please review the map and the specific language of the proposal below. The Planning Board urges your support of the proposal.

Amend Section III, I Special Purpose Districts, (1) Industrial Districts, (b) Sawmill Road area of the Greenfield Zoning Ordinance by adding, as the last sentence:

"On the East side of Route 31, the Industrial Zone encompasses the properties identified as lots #15-3 and #15-4 on Tax Map sheet R2 to a line 300' West of Crotched Mountain Road. All access to these lots shall be from NH Route 31, Sawmill Road."





## TOWN TO VOTE ON TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE

At this year's Town Meeting, Greenfield voters will decide whether the Town will adopt the provisions of RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive. Passage of this warrant article is recommended by the Greenfield Economic Development Advisory Committee and the Selectboard. Adoption of the warrant article could allow owners intending to substantially rehabilitate a building in the center village district, business district, or the industrial overlay district, to be granted a temporary period of property tax relief. The proposed rehabilitation would also have to result in a public benefit. The tax relief may also include the proposed demolition and replacement of an under-utilized structure if it is determined that rehabilitation won't achieve benefits to the same degree as replacement of the structure.

A property owner seeking to rehab a building would apply to the Selectboard prior to commencing any work. A duly noticed Public Hearing would be held within 60 days of the receipt of the application. At this hearing, the Selectboard would determine (1) if the proposed rehab is for a building in a designated district, (2) if the proposed rehabilitation is substantial and (3) if there is a public benefit to the proposal. In addition, any proposed rehabilitation or replacement of buildings would have to meet town ordinances and regulations, and be consistent with Master Plan goals. If the proposal meets these requirements, then the Selectboard may grant up to 5 years of tax relief beginning at the time of completion of rehab or replacement. The owner would be assessed at the pre-rehab value of the property for the duration of the tax relief period. In return, the property owner would agree to a covenant with the town that the structure would be maintained and used in a manner that protects or furthers the public benefit for which the tax relief was granted.

The fact sheet and procedural flowchart on the next pages describe in more detail the steps and requirements of the tax relief incentive process. More details will be forthcoming and any questions regarding this program will be answered at Town Meeting on Saturday, March 15, 2014, prior to the vote on adoption.



*We've come a long way since the days of the rail depot that sat next to the tracks somewhere in the vicinity of the Ministry Center.*



### **RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive: Fact Sheet**

RSA 79-E encourages investment in downtowns and village centers with a new tax incentive. Its goals are to *encourage the rehabilitation and active use of uner-utilized buildings* and, in so doing, to

- **promote strong local economies** and,
- **promote smart, sustainable growth, as an alternative to sprawl, in accordance with the purpose and objectives of RSA Ch. 9-B** (State Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Policy).

#### **How it works:**

- In a town that has adopted the tool created by this legislation, a property owner who wants to substantially rehabilitate a building located downtown, or in a village center, may apply to the local governing body for a period of temporary tax relief.
- The temporary tax relief, if granted, would consist of a finite period of time during which the property tax on the structure would not increase as a result of its substantial rehabilitation. In exchange for the relief, the property owner grants a covenant ensuring there is a public benefit to the rehabilitation.
- Following expiration of the finite tax relief period, the structure would be taxed at its full market value taking into account the rehabilitation.

#### **The legislation offers strong community process and discretion:**

- Any city or town may adopt this program with the majority vote of its legislative body.
- Applications by property owners are made to the governing body and are accompanied by a public notice and public hearing.
- The governing body may grant tax relief if the application meets the guidelines and public benefit test.
- The governing body may deny the application in its discretion: "...such denial shall be deemed discretionary and shall not be set aside by the board or tax and land appeals or the superior court except for bad faith or discrimination." (79-E:4V)

#### **Qualifying properties:**

A property owner can apply for the tax relief only if:

- The building is located in the community's downtown district (or equivalent), and
- The rehabilitation costs at least 15% of the building's pre-rehab assessed value, or \$75,000, whichever is less, and
- The rehabilitation is consistent with the municipality's master plan or development regulations.

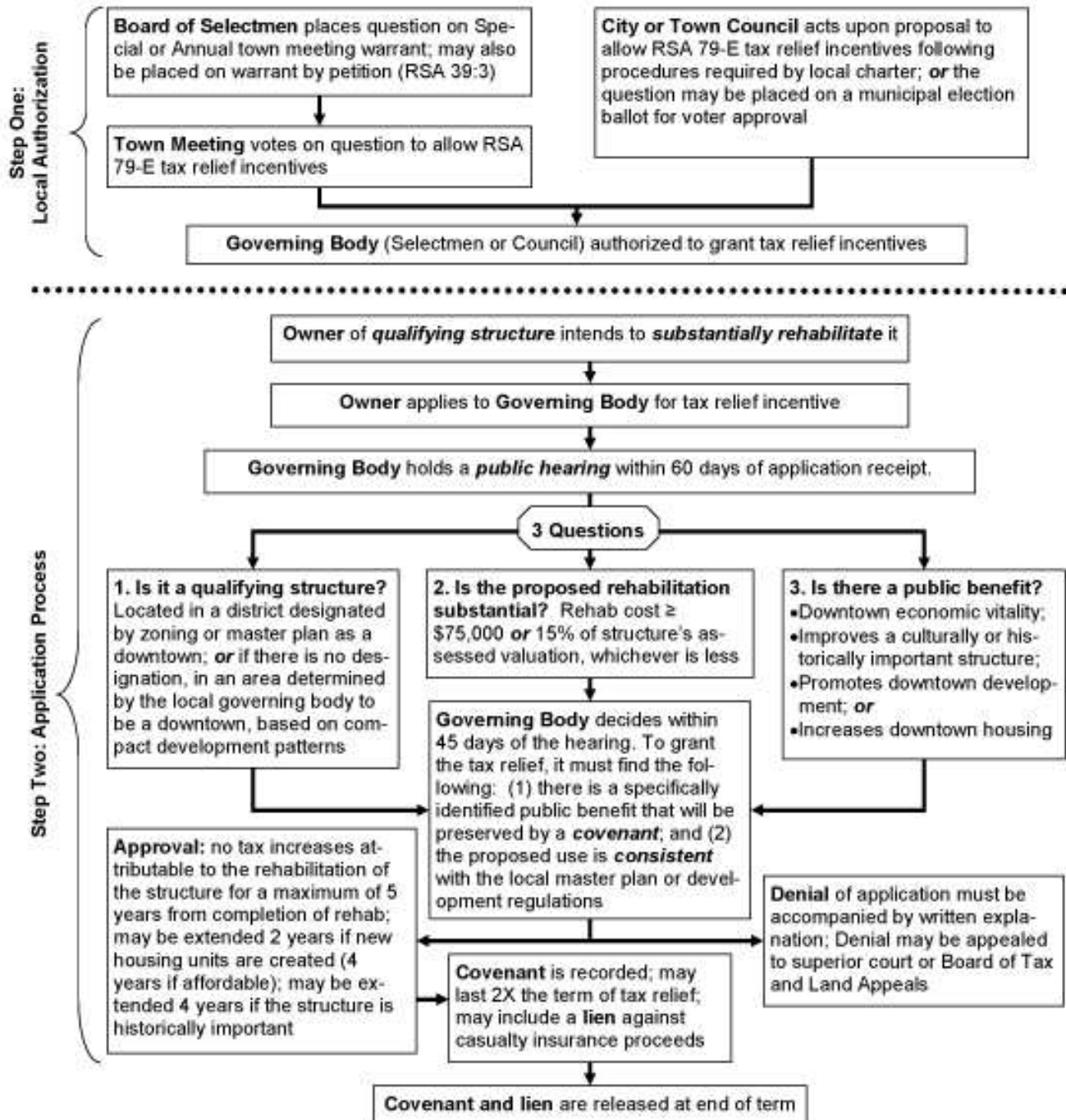
For more information or to share experiences from your municipality, contact:

603.224.2281 or [jg@nhpreservation.org](mailto:jg@nhpreservation.org)

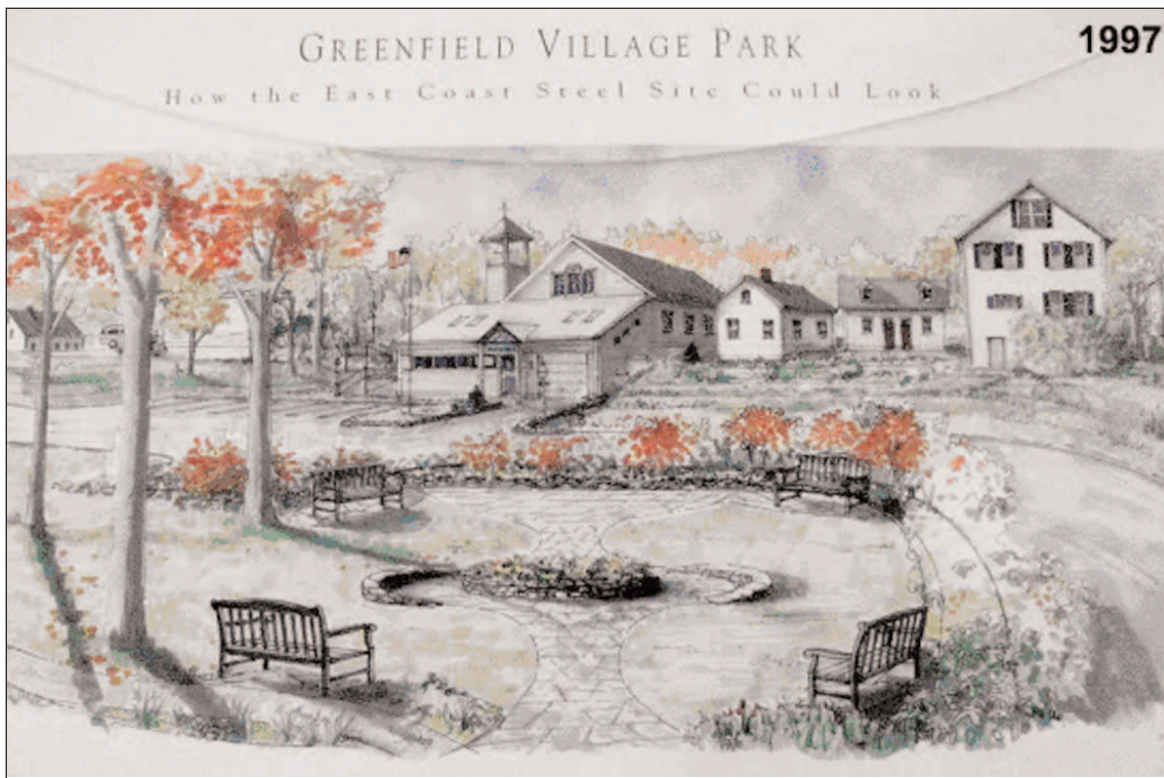




## RSA 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive



**Termination:** the tax relief provided by a municipality may be terminated if the property owner fails to maintain or utilize the property according to the terms of the covenant, or fails to restore, rebuild, or demolish the structure following damage or destruction. The Governing Body holds a public hearing to determine the extent of the diminution of the public benefit; the tax relief may be reduced or terminated; if it is terminated, the property owner is liable for back taxes.



## Planning Charrette Coming in September 2014

The Planning Board has been busy this past year seeking the best way to preserve the village. This mission came about as a result of the Planning Board's community interaction held in 2012, and is a direct result of the public's input at several community conversations. The public's second directive was to promote economic development in Town in order to broaden the tax base. By promoting economic development, it was felt that we could create a more vibrant, walkable village center. To that end the Planning Board applied to Plan NH last fall for a planning Charrette designed to help us complete village development work begun in 2003, to suggest further investments for the village/community and find new ways to promote economic development. We were very pleased to receive notice in January that we had been selected for a Charrette to take place in late September 2014.

Many residents may remember our last experience with a Charrette in 1997. That Charrette resulted in much of the ground work for a major community investment in the village; including sidewalks, more public parking, street lighting, construction of a community septic system, additions to the Fire Department and Library, and other improvements. Though the artist rendering, pictured above, may not have materialized as suggested, the exercise was important in helping us focus on options we had and choices we needed to make. The result is the downtown we enjoy today.

One of the Articles you will face at town meeting this year asks for an appropriation of \$5000 to finance this second Charrette. The intent of the Planning Board is to try to raise as much of this money through private contributions as possible. Any funds we are able to secure will reduce the amount raised by tax payers through this appropriation. For planning purposes and to assure that Plan NH will participate, we need to have the funding in place.

On the first day, Charrette professionals will seek public input about what citizens want for their community. They will then analyze the village, including the unfinished work from our last project, along with buildings and infrastructure around the common, and then propose possible projects/alternatives for the community to pursue. At the end of the second day, they will make a public presentation of their findings and recommendations for future community economic development. Your support of this article will enable us to participate in this valuable exercise so that we can achieve the goal of a vibrant walkable village that will provide residents with an enhanced downtown experience that builds from our original Charrette nearly twenty years ago.

Town of Greenfield  
Box 256  
Greenfield, NH 03047

**Postal Patron**

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Greenfield NH 03047  
Permit No. 3