

MEMORANDUM

To: Pepperell Master Plan Advisory Committee
From: Jay J. Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
Subject: Pepperell Master Plan Visioning Results
Date: June 7, 2018

JJD

As part of the public input process for the Pepperell Master Plan, the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) worked with the Pepperell Master Plan Advisory Committee to schedule the Pepperell Master Plan Visioning Session at Lawrence Library. The purpose of the Visioning Session was to provide an overview of the Master Plan process, discuss the Visioning Process and then begin the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis exercise, in order to receive input from the participants as to the priorities for the community. The results of the SWOT Analysis exercise will be used in conjunction with the feedback from the community survey to determine the priority concerns to be addressed in the updated Master Plan. Additional input will be provided through the review of the Goals and Strategies, as well as the responses from the Pepperell Master Plan Advisory Committee on the individual Technical Papers and the final sections of the Master Plan.

The Pepperell Master Plan Visioning Session was held on April 19, 2018 and thirty-seven (37) Pepperell residents participated in the session. Roland Nutter, Co-Chairman of the Pepperell Master Plan Advisory Committee, welcomed the participants and introduced Beverly Woods, NMCOG Executive Director, to provide an overview of the Master Plan process. Jay Donovan then proceeded to discuss the Visioning Process and begin the SWOT Analysis. The SWOT Analysis exercise provided an opportunity for the attendees to voice their opinions on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with Pepperell. NMCOG staff recorded their thoughts, opinions and ideas on large sheets of paper, and after the discussion, participants were given an opportunity to indicate their priorities by placing colored dots next to each idea on the sheets of paper. For this exercise, red dots (4 points) indicated their first priority, green dots (3 dots), indicated their second priority, blue dots (2 points) indicated their third priority and yellow dots (1 point) indicated their fourth priority.

Based upon the tabulated point totals for each idea, the top five priorities for the Visioning Session for each category were as follows:

Strengths

- Library
- Senior Center
- Fire and Police Departments
- Open space/rural character
- Conservation land

Weaknesses

- Lack of senior housing, including low-income
- Lack of responsiveness & transparency from town government
- Town government needs better communication/website

- Odd shaped lots
- Lack of a sports center

Opportunities

- Redevelop Peter Fitzpatrick School building (could be public safety building, arts space, or other)
- Set a preservation target for open space at 25%
- Expand Pepperell Community Arts (classes, events, space, etc.)
- Mill site redevelopment/open space
- Community farming

Threats

- Overdevelopment/loss of resources
- Small town politics
- Local government ignoring the public
- Lack of communication
- Failure to attract youth

The complete results for the Visioning Session, as well as the flyer, agenda and sign in sheets, are provided as an attachment to this brief memorandum. The results are summarized by category and the ideas are listed by total dots and points based upon the values assigned to each dot. While these results do not represent a scientific sampling of local opinion, they do represent the views of the participants who attended the Visioning Session. We will provide a more complete discussion of the results at the Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting on June 14, 2018.

Pepperell Master Plan Update SWOT Session Results: 4-19-18

Strengths	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Library	1	9	4	0	14	39
Senior Center	7	2	1	1	11	37
Fire & Police Departments	5	4	2	0	11	36
Open space/rural character	5	3	0	2	10	31
Conservation land	6	2	0	0	8	30
Walking trail network	3	3	2	3	11	28
Water quality	3	4	1	0	8	26
Small businesses	3	3	1	2	9	25
Small town feel	5	0	1	2	8	24
Community events	3	2	2	2	9	24
Youth Programs	3	3	0	1	7	22
Agriculture	4	1	1	0	6	21
Covered bridge	2	3	2	0	7	21
Two land trusts (includes Nashoba Conservation Trust)	0	3	5	1	9	20
New High School	2	2	2	1	7	19
Food pantry	3	1	1	0	5	17
Relatively affordable housing	2	1	3	0	6	17
Access to medical care	1	2	3	0	6	16
Community & volunteer groups (Grange, VFW, Lions, etc.)	2	1	1	2	6	15
Conservation Commission	1	3	1	0	5	15
Bucolic character	3	0	1	0	4	14
Artistic & creative talents & resources	2	2	0	0	4	14
Rail Trail	1	1	3	1	6	14
Historic buildings	1	3	0	0	4	13
Waterways / Nashua River	1	2	1	1	5	13
National & industrial history	1	1	1	2	5	11
Well maintained roads	0	3	1	0	4	11
Large equine population	1	1	1	1	4	10
Hometown of William Prescott	2	0	0	1	3	9
Low crime rate	1	1	1	0	3	9
Small town politics	2	0	0	0	2	8
Strong business associations (Chamber of Commerce, etc.)	0	2	1	0	3	8
Signage providing guidance for handicap access to the library	1	1	0	0	2	7
Regional organizations & non-profits	0	1	2	0	3	7
Geographic location	0	2	0	0	2	6
Garden club	0	1	1	0	2	5
No traffic lights	0	1	0	2	3	5

Weaknesses	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Lack of senior housing, including low-income	20	7	3	4	34	111
Lack of responsiveness & transparency from town government	10	7	1	1	19	64
Town government needs better communication/website	9	1	0	3	13	42
Odd shaped lots	2	2	7	3	14	31
Lack of a sports center	3	6	0	0	9	30
Lack of housing for people over 55 years	3	3	2	2	10	27
Empty storefronts	5	1	0	1	7	24
Lack of water quality protection/declining water quality	4	2	1	0	7	24
Not doing enough to protect resources (rural, historical, cultural)	3	3	1	1	8	24
Lack of funding and certification for the library	2	4	0	0	6	20
Safety issues on Routes 113 and 119	1	5	0	1	7	20
Outdated Town Charter	3	1	1	1	6	18
No discussion of or preparation for climate change	1	3	1	2	7	17
Need a local newspaper	0	3	3	2	8	17
Losing wetlands & wildlife - weak protections for these resources	2	1	2	1	6	16
Losing business to New Hampshire	2	1	0	3	6	14
Don't have a plan for affordability	1	2	2	0	5	14
Recycling program	1	2	1	2	6	14
Lack of employment opportunities	0	3	1	2	6	13
Public safety facilities	1	1	2	1	5	12
Underdeveloped/aging electric infrastructure	2	1	0	0	3	11
Not enough affordable housing	1	2	0	0	3	10
Over-use of plastics	1	1	1	1	4	10
Need sidewalks along Route 111	1	1	1	1	4	10
Transportation for seniors is lacking	0	2	2	0	4	10
No Community Preservation Act	2	0	0	1	3	9
Hard/expensive to maintain large houses	0	3	0	0	3	9
Not enough recreational opportunities	2	0	0	0	2	8
Lack of destination locations	1	1	0	1	3	8
Mill site & other undeveloped sites	0	2	1	0	3	8
Lack of space for public meetings	0	0	2	2	4	6
Limited cultural resource protection	1	0	0	1	2	5
Limited sewer infrastructure	0	1	1	0	2	5
Lack of funding for municipal services	0	1	0	2	3	5

Weaknesses (cont.)	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Need outdoor recreation space for disabled residents	1	0	0	0	1	4
Difficult for empty-nesters to find housing	0	1	0	1	2	4
Difficult to hear at public meetings	0	0	1	2	3	4
Traffic flow from outside of Pepperell	0	1	0	0	1	3
Lack of wayfinding signage on Main Street for historic assets	0	1	0	0	1	3
Pedestrian safety / lack of crosswalks at Railroad Square	0	1	0	0	1	3
Cell phone coverage	0	0	1	1	2	3
Outdated building code/zoning bylaw/ need better cluster zoning	0	0	1	0	1	2
Common drives create numbering issues	0	0	0	2	2	2
Rotary signage	0	0	0	2	2	2
Lack of young farmers	0	0	0	1	1	1
Traffic congestion around East and Main Streets	0	0	0	1	1	1
Lack of green energy opportunities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of cable access choices	0	0	0	0	0	0

Opportunities	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Redevelop Peter Fitzpatrick School building (could be public safety building, arts space, or other)	27	2	0	1	30	115
Set a preservation target for open space at 25%	9	1	1	1	12	42
Expand Pepperell Community Arts (classes, events, space, etc.)	5	3	0	4	12	33
Mill site redevelopment/open space	4	4	2	1	11	33
Community farming	6	2	0	0	8	30
Solar / local generation of electricity (possibly with neighboring towns or through municipal aggregation)	3	4	0	0	7	24
Preserve dark skies	2	5	0	0	7	23
Remain a small town	2	2	0	2	6	16
Lift solar caps at the state level	3	1	0	0	4	15
Clean hydro-electric / modernize & improve efficiency of Main Street dam	3	0	0	3	6	15
Railroad Square - add historical façades using grant money or This Old House	1	2	2	1	6	15
Farm to table program	0	3	0	2	5	11
Improve public transit	1	2	0	0	3	10
Green or hybrid burial grounds	1	1	0	2	4	9
Branding/marketing campaign	0	2	1	0	3	8
Art galleries on Main Street	0	2	0	1	3	7
Pop-up shops on Main Street	0	2	0	1	3	7
Market historical assets and outdoor recreation	0	1	2	0	3	7
Review Town Charter	0	2	0	0	2	6
Market bird watching	0	1	1	0	2	5
LEED certification for buildings	1	0	0	0	1	4
Sustainable government investments (electric police vehicles, building efficiency, etc.)	1	0	0	0	1	4
Charging stations for electric cars	0	0	1	2	3	4
Capitalize on through-traffic	0	0	0	2	2	2
Expand/modernize agriculture	0	0	0	0	0	0

Threats	Participant Priorities				Totals	
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Dots	Points
Overdevelopment/loss of resources	7	3	2	0	12	41
Small town politics	7	1	0	3	11	34
Local government ignoring the public	6	3	0	0	9	33
Lack of communication	6	2	1	0	9	32
Failure to attract youth	2	4	2	0	8	24
Expansion of recreational facilities in neighboring towns results in disinvestment in local facilities	2	5	0	0	7	23
Lack of local aid from the State	3	3	0	0	6	21
Climate change	2	3	1	0	6	19
School security	3	2	0	0	5	18
Deteriorating public buildings/need better maintenance plan	3	1	1	1	6	18
Lack of historic preservation strategies	2	2	2	0	6	18
Not changing with the times	1	4	0	0	5	16
Gentrification	2	2	0	1	5	15
Lack of trust in local government	2	1	2	0	5	15
Aging population	1	2	1	2	6	14
Lack of mental health services	1	1	1	3	6	12
Shortage of farm land	1	2	0	0	3	10
Environmentally unfriendly businesses opening	1	2	0	0	3	10
Businesses leaving/retail vacancies	0	2	2	0	4	10
Lack of funding for services	0	2	1	2	5	10
Lack of central parking & walkability on Main Street	1	1	0	0	2	7
Rising property taxes	1	1	0	0	2	7
Lack of creative planning to attract businesses	0	2	0	0	2	6
Participation in a regional school district reduces Town's impact	0	2	0	0	2	6
Sustainability and water capacity (town wells)	1	0	0	0	1	4
New Hampshire	0	0	0	4	4	4
Angle parking at Rail Trail is unsafe	0	0	0	1	1	1
Development destroying bio-diversity	0	0	0	0	0	0

Pepperell Master Plan Visioning Session



Please attend this important event and help determine Pepperell's future. The Master Plan will address land use, infrastructure, environmental resource protection, housing and economic development policies. Strong community participation is the most important aspect in creating a document that best meets the needs of the town. Make sure your voice is heard.

When: Thursday, April 19, 2018
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Where: Lawrence Library
15 Main Street
Pepperell, MA

Light refreshments will be served.

PEPPERELL MASTER PLAN VISIONING SESSION

APRIL 19, 2018

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Lawrence Library

Program

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Overview of the Master Plan Process - Beverly Woods, Executive Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
- III. The Visioning Process and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis - Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
- IV. Input Prioritization Exercise (using color coding dots)

PEPPERELL MASTER PLAN VISIONING SESSION

Thursday April 19, 2018 - 6:30 PM

Attendance

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
1	Vincent Russo	self	House@Vinnierusso.com
2	Bill GREATHHEAD	SELF	Bgreathhead@yahoo.com
3	Dave Lavender	self	dlavender184@live.com
4	Craig Hansen	Self	pjhansen@mudslide.net
5	Carol Murdock	"	~
6	Nancy Lebedzinski		nlebed@charter.net
7	Tony Beattie	self	Robinwood farm Farm@gtel
8	Chet Babineau	Self	CHETRX@VERIZON.NET
9	Linda Whelan	Self	~
10	Sherill Rosoff	self	SLROSOFF1@gmail.com
11	Jeremy Nutt	self	Jeremy.nutt@yaho.com
12	Jan Stiles	self	jenstiles@gmail.com
13	David Bean		cloverluckfarm@gmail.com
14	Bridget Morris	Self	BridgetMorris-1@Hotkey.com
15	Scott Healy	"	~
16	Diane Cron	Self	diane@cbcountrystore.com
17	Allyn	Self	pepperell-family-pharmacy
18	Steve Lamb	Self	slamb@symprovs.com @gmail.com
19	SUSAN J SMITH	Pepperell Sec.	sjsmith16@charter.net
20	Gnan Bergeron	SELF	fjb3msnlp@gmail.com
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PEPPERELL MASTER PLAN VISIONING SESSION
Thursday April 19, 2018 - 6:30 PM

Attendance

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
1	Gabe Visniewski		
2	Jack Visniewski	MPC committee	jack@cornerstoneand.net
3	MARK FOUNTAIN		
4	Deb Fountain	self	deborahfountain@gmail.com
5	STEVEN BOURDON	SELF	stbourdon@comcast.net
6	Joyce Marano	MPC	pepperknoll@me.com
7	Rob Rind	MPC	rind343@gmail.com
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PEPPERELL MASTER PLAN VISIONING SESSION

Thursday April 19, 2018 - 6:30 PM

Attendance

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
1	Roland Niteley	Bas	
2	Stephen Lemelin		
3	Frances Lumb		
4	Barbara Bourdon	Self	bbourdon@comcast.net
5	Shark P Walsh	8 Countyville	
6	Ken Hartlage	Nashoba Conservation Trust	khartlage@mac.com
7	April B. Healey	Self	a2bhealey@gmail.com
8	Pat Harrington	Self	JParrington@hotmail.com
9	Russ D'Argento	Self	rdargento01463@yahoo.com
10	Tim Linder	concom	timlinder@charter.com
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