

Pepperell Select Board

Priorities 2021



At a special Select Board meeting held on August 29, 2020, the Select Board invited members of the Planning Board, the Finance Committee, and the Economic Development Advisory Committee to contribute their perspective on goals and priorities for the Town. Subsequently, the Select Board set eight priorities to pursue for the coming year, along with related goals. These priorities and goals will be shared with staff, boards, committees, and commissions throughout the Town to ensure all those working on Town agendas are working toward common interests.

In addition, Select Board members have aligned their personal plans with these priorities and goals. Board members will work collaboratively with members of other Town Boards, Committees, and Commissions, as well as staff, to pursue these important improvements for the Town.

The Select Board encourages town staff, boards, committees, and commissions to begin aligning their efforts with, and make progress towards, these priorities during calendar year 2021. Those pursuing these efforts should refer to the Town of Pepperell Master Plan (2020) and its Open Space and Recreation Plan (2016-2022) and the Massachusetts Municipal Association Best Practices Series (2016-present) documents as primary source materials to begin their work. References to the Master Plan recommendations are listed with the MP # . ## and Best Practice Series are listed as BP # - #. Complete documents are available on the Town website.

The Select Board suggests that the implementation of these goals follow a SMARTER format, meaning that goals are written as – **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction Oriented, **R**ealistic, **T**ime-bound, are **E**valuated, and **R**eviewed.

Priorities

1. Affordable Housing
2. Capital Planning and Infrastructure
3. Communications
4. Economic Development
5. Financial Planning
6. Open Space, Conservation Lands, and Recreation Areas
7. Staffing and Administration
8. Sustainability & Resiliency

Affordable Housing

- Create an Affordable Housing Trust document for the Town to be accepted at a Town Meeting and approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. **MP 5.10**
- Encourage developers to create ‘Affordable First’ projects. **MP 5.8, MP 5.10, MP 5.3**
- Create and distribute educational material related to affordable housing development for citizens and developers by the end of fiscal year 2021. **MP 5.8**
- Work with the Affordable Housing Committee and the Planning Board to create an Inclusionary Zoning By-law to be enacted by Fiscal Year 2023. **MP 5.15, BP 4-5**

Capital Planning and Infrastructure

- During Fiscal Year 2021 evaluate the physical infrastructure of town buildings to inform the Fiscal Year 2022 and beyond capital planning processes. **MP 8.17, MP 8.18, MP 8.5, MP 8.4, MP 7.6, MP 8.1**
- By the end of Fiscal Year 2022 evaluate all other town assets, not included above, including, roads, water systems, waste water systems, vehicles, equipment, fields and recreation spaces, protected open spaces, and vacant property, to inform the Fiscal Year 2023 and beyond capital planning processes. **MP 4.3, MP 4.18, MP 4.21, MP 8.19, MP 8.9, MP 8.20, MP 6.13, MP 2.11, MP 7.10**
- Working with the Building Committee, FINCOM, and Capital Planning establish a target for general fund spending on annual capital needs and the budget process to reach and sustain that target within three annual budget cycles. Current target is 7.5% of general fund. **MP 7.6, MP 4.21, MP 8.17, MP 8.19, MP 8.7, MP 8.18, MP 8.20, MP 6.13, MP 8.16, MP 8.2, MP 8.4, MP 8.1, BP1-1, BP1-2**
- Continue to foster the Building Committee’s efforts to determine the best way to ensure the physical infrastructure needs of all Town buildings are being met. **MP 7.6, MP 8.17, MP 8.20, MP 8.5, MP 8.2, MP 8.4, MP 7.6, MP 8.1**

Communication

- Establish a process to inform the community of Select Board activities.
- Ensure that Town-sponsored electronic media is up to date and robust in providing information.
- In Fiscal Year 2021 create a process to publicly acknowledge input from the community directly to the Select Board and Town Administrator.
- In FY2021 create a Select Board standing agenda topic for Board, Committee, and Commission reports. These reports can be oral presentations or written subPries. Presenters may provide updates as frequently as they choose, but at least annually.

Economic Development

- Meet regularly with our legislative delegation to promote issues important to Pepperell and our regional partners. Leverage regional partnerships and legislative assistance. **MP 4.19, MP 5.14, MP 3.16, BP 1-10**
- Encourage collaboration between the local Chamber, local businesses, and the Pepperell Business Association. **MP 3.1, BP 1-10**
- Provide information to developers to facilitate development and understanding of local, state, and federal obligations. **MP 3.5**
- Foster communication between the Select Board, Economic Development Advisory Committee and the Planning Board on specific enhancements / changes to local zoning to encourage economic development desired by the community. **MP 2.15, MP 3.4, MP 3.11, MP 2.6, MP 2.7, MP 2.1, MP 2.3, BP 1-10, BP 5-6**
- Promote the economic benefits of the community's natural assets. **MP 7.8, MP 3.15, MP 3.8, MP 3.7, MP 4.6, MP 6.10, MP 7.17, MP 6.9**

Financial Planning

- Work with the FINCOM to create policies for stronger financial management including:
 - Aligning budget growth to actual growth
 - Increasing stabilization budgets
 - Building special fund balances
 - Developing a long-term plan for financial stability **MP 5.7, MP 3.2, MP 4.18, MP 4.5, MP 8.14, MP 6.12, BP 1-1, BP 2-1, BP 2-2, BP 2-3**
- Require proposed initiatives for new funding provide a sustainable financial benefit or a justification for new spending **BP 4-1**

Open Space, Conservation Land, and Recreation

- Acquire properties or create conservation restrictions to permanently protect open space conservation land to provide a balance between development vs. open space protection, which is essential to the quality of life within Pepperell as identified in the Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan. **MP 6.0**
- Implement the 7-Year Action Plan outlined in the 2016 Pepperell Open Space and Recreation Plan **MP 6.1, MP 6.4, 7.16, MP 7.17, MP 6.6**
- Improve the quality of playing fields and court spaces for recreation throughout the town. **MP 6.13**
- Enhance trails, reduce mis-use, and highlight all the town lands as community assets. **MP 6.1, MP 7.12, MP 6.10, MP 7.16, MP 6.6, MP 6.7, MP 6.8, MP 6.9**
- Identify funding to purchase a fee interest in property for the permanent protection of well fields, wildlife corridors, and passive recreation. **MP 7.16, MP 7.5**

Staffing and Administration

- In time for FY2022 budget consideration, create and publish an ‘as is’ organizational chart to include staff, boards, committees and commissions. Explore changes to staffing model and provide advice on a ‘to be’ version. **MP 8.13, BP 5-4**
- Develop succession planning for town departments **BP 4-7, BP 4-8, BP 4-9**
 - Internal documentation of processes
 - Cross-training of staff
 - Professional development of staff
 - Reduce downtime / service challenges related to employee turnover
- Establish a long-term professional human resources function to hire, train, and retain a high-quality workforce. **BP 4-7**

Sustainability and Resiliency

- Require sustainable planning and development for all aspects of local government. New initiatives, budget requests, capital planning, grant applications, etc. should address sustainability from the beginning of each process. For the purposes of this goal, sustainability is financial, including human resources available, and also in relation to the impact the initiative may have on the local environment. **BP 4-1**
- Prioritize sustainable and resilient projects for the future of Pepperell. **MP 2.13, MP 2.17, MP 2.18, MP 5.14, MP 6.4, MP 6.5, MP 3.15, MP 4.21, MP 4.12, MP 2.8, MP 8.15, MP 8.17, MP 8.19, MP 8.6, MP 8.9, MP 7.12, MP 8.18, MP 3.9, MP 3.14, MP 4.6, MP 8.12, MP 8.16, MP 2.11, MP 2.19, MP 7.13, MP 7.15, MP 7.18, MP 7.19, MP 7.20, MP 7.21, MP 7.22, MP 8.4, MP 6.12, MP 7.5, MP 7.11, MP 6.10, MP 7.10, MP 7.16, MP 7.17, MP 8.1, MP 6.6, MP 6.7, MP 6.8, MP 6.0, BP 3-3**
- Establish processes in concert with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to ensure that Pepperell becomes a zero emissions community by 2050. **BP 3-3**