

Town Center Plan Committee Draft Vision and Topics for Consideration

Draft Vision

To create an identifiable, vibrant downtown that includes mixed retail uses for residents and visitors, a safe and inviting pedestrian and bicycle environment, a common meeting place, visual vitality, and linkages to the town's open space and nearby residential neighborhoods.

Topics for Discussion

- **Economic Development Assessment.** Should an assessment of the economic development potential of the town center be conducted with the intent to adopt a proactive economic development strategy?

The assessment, or market analysis, could evaluate factors and focus on nuts and bolts recommendations to improve the economic viability of the town center. For example, actions to increase the number of retail and restaurant businesses in the town center could be identified.

- **Housing.** Should multi-family housing incorporated into mixed use/commercial buildings be added to the Town Center?

Do you agree that multi-family housing would help to add vitality and increase the viability of commercial ventures in the town center? Housing constructed on upper floors of mixed commercial/residential use buildings may provide a reliable revenue source to subsidize first floor commercial space and is consistent with the affordable housing goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Traffic.** Should the roads, sidewalks and pedestrian pathways in the Town Center continued to be evaluated for adequacy and safety for all users?

Traffic calming for pedestrians and cars could include techniques such as, but not limited to, bump outs, median with plantings, and on-street parking. Gaps remain in the Town Center sidewalk network. With the completion of the Shore Road Path, further extension of the sidewalk network may be requested and desirable, such as sidewalk connections to neighborhoods nearby the town center, e.g. Wells Rd, Fowler Rd, etc.

- **Visual Identity.** Should the town create a visual identity for the town center, beginning with establishment of a town green?

Should the Town encourage and partner with private businesses to elevate the image of the town center? Efforts could include installing banners, developing a branding and marketing strategy for the Town Center Shopping District, or upgrading and expanding commercial properties.

- **Zoning.** Should the Town Center Zoning District regulations be reviewed and left as is, or revised?

The review should begin with a discussion of the town's values. A vision statement for the town center should then be developed. Once the town center vision is updated, appropriate zoning changes should be made to implement the vision. One example of a possible format change would be to convert the town center zone to a form-based code. Several neighboring communities are considering or have already implemented a Form-based Code in an effort to advance economic development goals. A Form-based Code is a form of zoning regulation that emphasizes the character and design of a building rather than only its intended use.