

## **“Hopkinton at the Crossroads”**

### Summary of Master Plan Forum – May 25, 2005

In September 2004, a Master Plan Revision Committee began to work on updating the 1999 Master Plan for Hopkinton. In addition to looking at what has and has not been accomplished from that Plan and gathering new, technical data, the Committee agreed that it was critical to involve as many citizens as possible in talking about their priorities for land use planning and management.

With that goal in mind, an informal survey was handed out at the November 2004 election asking participants to list what they loved about Hopkinton, what they'd like to see changed, and what their priorities were as the Town grows. 1700 people filled out the survey. Most of the respondents received the survey at the polls, but others responded to an online copy of the survey or picked one up from a location in town.

On May 25, 2005, 90 Hopkinton citizens gathered in facilitated, small groups of 8 to discuss the results of the Master Plan survey and to brainstorm the next steps for the Town's Master Plan Committee.

In order to give them some data to work from, they were provided with an overview of the survey results, which included the following:

- **Characteristics Valued Most\***
  - Feel of Town – particularly its “rural character”
  - Quality of Schools
  - People Factor – friendliness, volunteerism
  - Open Space – including parks and recreational space
  - Location/Convenience
  
- **Like to See Changed**
  - Downtown Revitalization – appearance, traffic, stores/restaurants
  - Slow/Stop Residential Growth – more people =more schools= more taxes
  - Lower Taxes
  - Increase/row Commercial – to improve tax base
  - Reduce Traffic Congestion
  - Maintain/Increase Open Space
  - Protect Natural Resources

\*Expanded version in Appendix A

In addition, participants learned about the changing demographics including: population growth since 1980; increase in school enrollment since 1992; change in median sales price of a single family home; the percentages of different categories of public and private land use; and the 2006 Budget Pie Chart. (See Appendix B)

## “Rural Character”

Everyone loves Hopkinton’s rural character and wants to preserve it. However, since the Master Plan Committee was not sure exactly what that meant to people, participants were asked to write down their responses to the question: “What does ‘rural character’ mean to you?”

What we found was that people had a **common picture** of *rural character*:

- **Physical:** farms, winding roads, stonewalls, lots of trees and open space; large lot sizes; no box stores/chains; historic houses; horse/bike/walking/skiing trails; clean air and water; animals; lack of traffic.
- **Community:** friendly people; “everyone knows your name”; Officials are accessible; respect and dignity; locally owned businesses

But there were **differences** in how much they think it still exists:

- Many people thought that Hopkinton has lost its “rural character” and is now a suburb, “exurb”, past being rural. “That was Hopkinton in the 1970’s.”
- But there were also a number of people who felt that Hopkinton hasn’t lost its “rural character” yet, that it provides a somewhat “slower, family-oriented community with restricted commercialization and more than average open space”. However, the fear is that what we do still have will soon be lost. (All responses in Appendix C.)

## Group Discussion #1

After looking over the survey data, the Forum Planning Committee (made up of the Voices for Vision Civic Engagement Committee and the Master Plan Civic Engagement Sub-committee) saw some potential conflicts between the different things that people wanted. They decided to frame these as “dilemmas” and asked participants to spend their first session discussing the dilemmas, seeing whether they agreed or disagreed with them, would reframe them, or would name a completely different set of dilemmas.

The dilemmas presented to the groups were:

- ***Restrict/Stop Residential Growth while Respecting Peoples’ Rights to Develop their Property***
- ***Improve Traffic Flow, especially through Town, at the same time as Making the Downtown Safe and Walkable***
- ***Invest in the Schools while Keeping Taxes Down***
- ***Respect Property Rights at the same time as Preserving Historical Features***
- ***Protect and Maintain Open Space as well as Increasing Commercial Growth***
- ***Expand Commercial Land Use without Impacting Residential Property***

The primary themes from the first round were:

- Everything is so **intertwined** that it is **hard to define any single dilemma**. “*If you move A, it leads to B and so on.*”
- **NIMBY**
- Residential growth drives everything. It leads to more school needs/more taxes.
- Invest in schools, BUT
  - Find other revenue sources than property tax
  - Find alternatives to certain school budget items

- Growth must be managed/“controlled” (because can’t “restrict” it). Need radical thinking about growth and zoning.
  - Large parcels vs. small parcels
  - Rezoning vs. existing zoning
  - Tax incentives for commercial
- We need to start thinking regionally about some issues, particularly traffic.
  - **“We have rural roads with suburban traffic.”**
- Look at tradeoffs/consequences of action/inaction
- “What does ‘rural character’ mean?” “What does ‘downtown revitalization’ mean?”

### **Group Discussion #2**

Having honed in on the dilemmas, participants then were asked to act “as if” they were the Master Plan Committee and come up with some ideas, guidelines, and/or next steps for ways to deal with these dilemmas.

Key themes that emerged from this discussion focused on:

- Huge need for **more education** on these issues, including current zoning, impact of different kinds of development on the tax rate; what kinds of processes are possible/realistic; what would encourage development; costs of buying and maintaining open space, etc.
- Several suggestions were made for **economic modeling** of alternatives as a way to help citizens see the impact of the different choices. Look at both **costs** and **revenues** associated with commercial/residential/open space
- Looking at what other towns have done to manage growth successfully
- Looking at whether we are **maximizing current use**
- **“Radical thinking”**, especially around zoning/ re-zoning
- A lot of talk about **“smart development”** and consideration of finding **balance** between natural/open space, mixed residential, light industrial, **“appropriate commercial that serves the Town, not the region”**
- The importance of everyone working together, leaders and citizens.
- Encouraging commercial growth through **financial incentives, streamlined processes, marketing** by the Chamber of Commerce AND slowing residential growth through **impact fees**
- Consider **public/private partnerships**
  - Commercial entities
  - Conservation organizations
- Looking at the sale of *Weston Nurseries*. Some saw it as an absolute necessity to put together resources to buy it and others urged caution against seeing it as the answer to all problems.

(Full set of discussion notes from each group for both questions can be found in Appendix D.)

Clearly, the big question on people's minds has to do with: "**How can we stop the tide from coming in?**" (Or: "*Is it too late?*") While participants had different viewpoints about this question, they were unanimous in their belief that it is worthwhile to keep talking together and grappling with the issues. Some of the comments in the evaluations were:

- *It felt terrific to connect with and hear ideas from the other concerned citizens.*
- *A great sense of purpose, good will and creativity*
- *Excellent to get more people involved; educating the citizens and getting them involved is crucial*
- *It brought to light the need for our townspeople to get involved and not be apathetic. It opened my eyes as to what they don't know about town government and the committees working under it.*
- *Building community will be the way to stay engaged with these issues.*
- *This type of broader community meeting should occur with some regularity.*

## APPENDIX A

### November 2004 Master Plan Survey Summary\*

#### WHAT YOU VALUE

- A deep sense of commitment to the small town, rural feel of Hopkinton.
- A town that captures people's hearts with open space, small businesses, strong community volunteerism, great schools, and high quality of life, including a sense of safety.

#### WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

##### Revitalize downtown

- Improve appearance of stores, add trees and put wires underground.
- Add more businesses - stores and restaurants.
- Improve traffic and pedestrian flow, increase parking.

##### Housing

- Growth rate and the effect it has on taxes to fund schools.
- Impact on overall rural character of the town.
- Need for affordable and moderately priced housing, so our children, senior citizens and public employees can live here.
- "Mansionization" of Hopkinton: larger houses require too much land clearing.

##### Financial management

- Increase commercial and business tax base to reduce the need to increase taxes.
- Set different tax rates for non-residential properties.
- Cap taxes for seniors.
- Increase user fees.
- Other suggestions: improve budgeting and priority setting, reduce waste and eliminate spending on extras, insure assessments are updated, improve management of school budget.

##### Open space/environment/water/natural resources

- Protect the natural beauty and resources in Town - especially water supply.
- (Overwhelming majority of comments) need to further protect and maintain existing natural resources and landscapes by focusing on minimizing intrusion on both neighborhoods and undeveloped resources.

### Transportation

- Downtown vehicular traffic.
- Condition of some roads.
- More sidewalks and bike trails.

### Recreation

- Little need for more playing fields.
- Different forms of recreation, such as a youth center, larger library, pool, more playgrounds, exercise facility and connecting trails for walking, hiking and bikes.

\*Survey taken Election Day, November 3, 2004 at polling centers.

## APPENDIX B

### Private Land Use

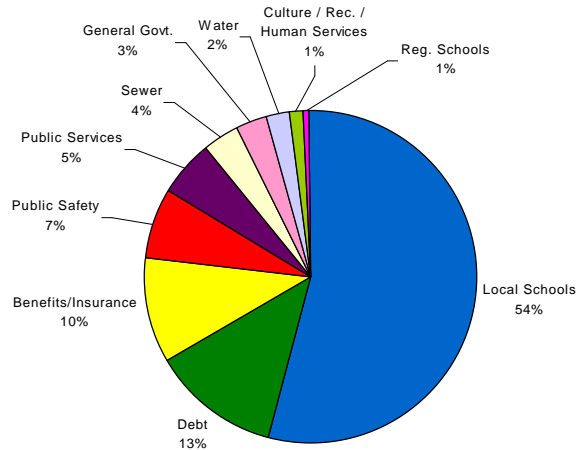
Land Use	1992	2004
Residential	4,567 (28%)	5,793 (36%)
Commercial	182 (1%)	178 (1%)
Industrial	936 (6%)	632 (4%)
Agricultural	1,541 (9%)	1,665 (10%)
Open land	5,462 (33%)	3,450 (22%)
Recreational	545(3%)	457 (3%)

### Public Land Use

State, Municipal and NonProfit	1992	2004
	3,321 acres (20%)	3,765 acres (24%)



## Recommended FY06 Budget % by Expense Category



## Interesting Facts

- 45% of Hopkinton's population has moved into town since 1995
- 17% have lived here for 22 years or more.
- 20% of the population is under the age of 10.

## Population Growth

1980	7114
1990	9191
2000	13,346
2004	14,504

## Median Sales Price / Single Family

1995	2004
\$282,000	\$544,500

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Hopkinton school enrollment has increased 110% from 1992-2002

## Appendix C

### “What Does Rural Character Mean to You?”

“Crossroads Forum”, May, 2005

- SCENIC CHARACTER. *We are now a suburb, not a farming community.*
- A balanced blend of natural areas and locally owned businesses. Natural areas should include parks, nature trails, and lakes/ponds. Businesses should be few in number to prevent traffic congestion, but carefully chosen to provide destinations of interest to the local population.
- Open space – trees- easy access to stores & shops – Parks/areas for playgrounds – large lots & no building between homes in the “old” town area
- *Rural character is not “zoning out of control”. It is not a Wal-Mart with nice landscaping in what was once a meadow. It also is not clearly defined. It ends up different everywhere. It is a balance between controlled development and maintaining the aesthetic of what existed in a place prior to any development.*
- Hopkinton in the 70’s. Farmland/open space
- “Mayberry-esque”. Everyone knows their neighbors. Farms. Horses being led up our street. Going out our back door and into the woods to cross-country ski or snowshoe. Being able to drive up to Hopkinton Center without any traffic congestion. Being able to walk our dog down Cross St. and in Hopkinton without cars speeding by. Lots of open space.
- *Rural Hopkinton: A fantasy vision of an earlier time when the town was small, quiet, and you could know all your neighbors. Having moved here from a rural community, I would say it was defined as: Significant farming – far from population centers/difficult to get to – Wal Mart – A general feeling of settling for what you got because there aren’t any other options. Clearly, this doesn’t describe Hopkinton!*
- “Country”. It doesn’t mean exurban, which is what we’re fast becoming, or, perhaps, have already become. We must try to keep as much land open as possible. We should encourage industrial development, not housing.
- Rural streetscapes – stonewalls – trees – low or no excess lighting – large setbacks for houses. Controlled: small traffic. Buildings in industrial areas, set way back and screened. Nice, walkable town center. Controlled growth.
- Hopkinton is already past being rural. Rural is farmland, mostly RR# for mail. Agrarian industry.
- Open land. Historic significance: avoid “generic” structures like Hopkinton Drug. Slower moving cars. Observe speed limits on back roads.

- *The term rural no longer applies to Hopkinton. The town is far more suburban than rural, with all the issues generally associated with rapidly-growing suburban communities: rising taxes, population growth, traffic, newcomers outnumber “townies”*
- *A small town has a walkable downtown with shops and services that are providing and supporting the needs of the people who live in town. These shops need to have what the locals want so they both feel connected to the town and their neighbors. People know your name you and want to support local and small businesses over larger businesses.*
- *Open space – wildlife habitats, evidence of animals/birds – clean air/water – peace/quiet – evidence of agriculture/farms – trees/shrubs – water, ponds/lakes/brooks – quaint: preserved homes/buildings*
- *Green-lined thoroughfares. Clustered neighborhoods to enable community spirit. No traffic jams. Ability to bike to shopping w/o fear of death.*
- *Smallish industrial/commercial area not noticeable, blending in with the feel of the area. Small, single family houses with large yards. Small downtown area (not huge stores) just like it is now. No larger, no smaller. Large areas of undeveloped land. The most noise heard at night is nature, not traffic. Small total population.*
- *Preserving the geographic and “regional” cultural history of the town as it incorporates new people and their personal commitments into the whole.*
- *Winding roads – stone walls – historic preservation – maintain small town feel*
- *Hopkinton before 1980’s*
- *Quiet, spacious, friendly living. Low traffic flow. Controlled, thoughtful town growth. Large areas of unbuilt land.*
- *Wooded streets with stone walls. No large developments. Open space throughout the town. Fields used for agriculture, horticultural, and farm animals. No strip malls. Any retail space should be aesthetically similar to historic buildings.*
- *People know/care about neighbors/community. Pretty: lots of trees, nature, etc. “Quaint” downtown (e.g. not lots of chains, fun & interesting shops and restaurants, locally owned.)*
- *Sufficient open space in town for passive recreational activity such as hiking, kayaking, mountain biking. Well-planned downtown and avoidance of “honky-tonk” feel.*
- *Less population density than major SMSA’s. Priority on quality of life: willing to “pay” for quality. A place where “officials” are accessible, and take the time to get to know you.*

- *In addition to being surrounded by busier, more commercial communities, Hopkinton's rural character provides a somewhat slower, domestic, or family oriented community with restricted commercialization and more than average open space including recreational opportunities.*
- *Open space.*
- Open space. Non-"suburban" atmosphere, with minimal homogeneous housing developments. Winding roads. No shopping centers. Diverse population and income levels.
- Beautiful country roads, Traditional N.E. downtown. Rich heritage in lands. Bodies of water.
- *A great place to live with large and small tracts of trees, parks, and stone walls along with all the history to enrich our lives. The friendliness of town people makes Hopkinton great!*
- *When the economic base of the town is centered around agricultural, local business and extractive industries. A nostalgic sop to suburban towns that deny they are suburban.*
- *Maintain some open space and keep development style less urban, but do not sacrifice the opportunity for additional commercial growth – it is needed to build revenues. Rural character is provided by scenic roads, lakes, etc and development that does occur within certain guidelines should be done to try to maintain this "feel".*
- Landscape, country roads, lack of commercial development
- Not Hopkinton. Probably a town somewhere in Montana. "Rural" town would be a remote farming town with lots of farms and large tracts of undeveloped land.
- Cows, farms, barns, stone walls, shade trees hanging over roads (Fruit St.), Joe Pratt.
- Land largely undisturbed by commercial or residential development. Abundant in undeveloped land/open space. Town dominated by Weston Nurseries.
- *Downtown – I love the character of the town common with the true New England flavor (trees, less traffic). Large growth of developments is bothersome, however, due to the attorney general, zoning changes are stopped. Also, stopping a lot of the developments comes with a price. I would like more industrial/commercial development so our infrastructure will not be affected as much. The geographic location is wonderful. We are now a suburban active community...changing!!*
- *Lack of expansive industrial areas. One area location. Scenic streets – no cutting of trees near the roads. Centrally located commercial area downtown.*

- Plenty of trees. Preserving of landmarks. Keeping up with rivers and lakes in terms of pollution. Keeping our back roads as they are unless they're unsafe.
- Winding country roads. Friendly neighbors. Rich natural resources.
- Home spacing. Congestion control. Open space access. Trees. Community connection.
- Tree lined roads. Low housing density. Relaxed pace.
- *Winding roads. Open space. Historic homes. Preservation of mature landscaping.*
- *Open space. Low density. No strip malls. Few traffic lights. Neighborhood safety.*
- *A small, tight, "downtown section", with quick travel to small farm areas, or houses separated by lots of land. In town, there is a densely build old section, with close, similar houses. Outside of the center, there are narrow roads with stonewalls, small farm animals, chickens, roosters, lambs, goats, some horses and laundry on the line!*
- Continued existence of winding, country roads; housing and commercial/industrial hidden from view when driving through town; limited traffic; trees.
- *I moved to town in 1978...a lot has changed since then! "Rural" means:*
  - *More green and blue than black (top)*
  - *Few traffic signals*
  - *Manageable traffic*
  - *Scenic roads, outlooks or panoramas (Saddle Hill!), hiking trails, fishing*
  - *Public access to open spaces*
  - *Few national chain stores*
  - *No big box stores!*
  - *No parking meters*
  - *Walkable, attractive downtown*

*"Rural" means a slower pace of life, community, and an abundant measure of woods, water, and views.*
- In place: Where one feels spacious; where there is some woodland to explore on or off trail; where one can have horses and a chicken coop; where water sports don't feel crowded. In people: Where we greet one another outdoors in respect and dignity. "A friendly place to live."
- Trees, open space, country roads, larger house lots, stone walls.
- *Farmland, open space/woodlands, fresh air, clean bodies of water, limited population, some commercial/business – small shops, no large factories, friendliness, knowing your neighbors.*
- *Hopkinton is no longer a "rural" community. It is a suburban, residential community – suburban to the Boston suburbs of the 128 area,*

*Framingham/Natick, etc. The term “exurb” may apply more accurately to Hopkinton. It will continue to grow under these influences with constraints due to limited services (water, sewer) and public transportation. We should try to direct growth with mixed residential (multi & single family) with light industrial development and “appropriate” commercial development – meaning commercial development to serve the Town, not the region. Residential growth should accommodate a mix of age and economic groups.*

- Maintaining the general characteristic, the face of the town. Little industrial/commercial development, but enough to give the town a tax revenue and growth...I love all the lakes and landscapes; trees and all.
- My idea of “rural character” is stone walls; tree lined road, and a neighbor to say “hi” to. Also, our historic homes and structures to remain intact to remember where we came from.
- *Varied home styles with “traditional architecture”; rural roads (i.e. 2 lane only), winding, tree lined; encouragement of agricultural/farm use; no chain stores or fast food; protection of open water (lakes, streams); open space (either public or private); open views; protection of remaining farmland.*
- *Open space, undeveloped, natural.*
- It means historical houses, small narrow roads, trees, 61 A land – lakes free of pollution, no condos.
- Lots of undeveloped open space and no little strip mall type of commercial development. It also means narrow, winding roads.
- No traffic, limited shopping, and horse and buggies at the grocery store.
- *Green space; appropriate commercial/industrial development; appropriate signage*
- *Woodlands and open space, either privately held or held in common (public)*
- Farms, stone walls, winding roads; small-town character; town green; town meeting form of government; fields and lakes; invisible industry. What Hopkinton was in 1977.
- Open space; quaint “downtown”; Familiar faces at the grocery store – “Everybody knows your name.”; good schools, good teachers who know the students and parents.
- The “green tunnel”; back roads; wildlife in its element.
- *Living more than 30 minutes from Boston and having some streets in the town that have many trees.*
- *Open space, parks/nature/trees, safety, lack of strip malls or store chains, low population density, narrow country roads.*

- *Farms/barns – manure piles; cultivated fields; forests and woodlands; natural growth of trees and grasses (as opposed to landscaped)*
- Quiet, slow growth; no big stores or chains; community involvement (i.e. church bake sales). It also has come to mean a real conflict in Hopkinton. You can't have rural character and all bells and whistles that all want.
- Low density; significant agricultural/and/or undesignated open space; limited development.
- Something that Hopkinton that used to have but no longer, for better or worse, has.
- *Country feel – you know you're outside the "big" city; movement is a bit slower; old-fashioned feel; locally owned businesses; breathing clean air. ("Country feel" preferable term to "rural")*
- *Undeveloped commercially; restricted low density residential; wooded; clean water; passive recreation areas*
- Woods; narrow roads; lack of light pollution (it's dark at night); wild animals; horses; stonewalls; farming
- Country estates; farm land (with a horse or two or maybe a cow); fields; open space; large acre homes (1.5 & 3); stonewalls
- *Quaint, charming, old colonial homes. Not too much commercial presence. No ugly signage. No chain-store restaurants. Not a lot of trucks driving through.*
- *Limited new housing developments. Save current open space and add more. Limit amount and type of new commercial growth. At same time, would like to see some user-friendly businesses downtown.*
- Farms, tree-lined streets (Pond St.), open space, small country stores
- Smaller town feel; independently owned retail downtown; friendly atmosphere; community activity; preserved open space
- *Lots of open space, farmland, fields, meadows, spaced out housing – a few developments, winding roads, small downtown with enough stores to support necessary services; friendly residents with a feel of community; family events; lots of dogs, horses, sheep, etc.; a sense of being away from city life; historic buildings; mostly small businesses owned and run by residents.*
- *Minimal traffic; scenic roadways; woods, ponds, meadows, wildlife; small businesses with easy access in town; Town center should participate in the rural character, not become the "zone" for the undesirable characteristics of suburban life, i.e. don't cluster densest housing, greatest traffic, etc.*
- Watersheds; forest and fields' country lanes; small downtown; wildlife

- Woodlands; scenic areas preserved; open space for passive recreation; hiking/biking trails; no big boxes; room for farms/horses; larger lots, lower density
- Open farmland, natural trails, farms and a village feeling. No franchise stores. A peaceful and involved community.



## **Table B**

### **Dilemmas Discussion**

- Control growth – large parcels vs. small parcels
  - Rezoning v. existing zoning
- Invest in schools – find other revenue sources (instead of property tax)
  - How to pay for good education?
- Commercial growth leading to undesirable characteristics of town
  - “Smart” commercial growth
  - Improve balance
- Need more information on cost of open space v. development
- Traffic flow
  - Need better/more sidewalks
  - Not too bad
  - Would require drastic change and would ultimately increase traffic

### **Next Steps**

- Information is needed:
  - Cost for residential v. commercial v. open space
  - Revenue from: residential/commercial v. open space
- Investigate partnerships
  - Commercial entities
  - Conservation organizations to acquire open space
- Balance short term v. long term goals
- Look for information from other towns who have faced and solved these problems/issues
- Preserve historic sites/homes

## **Table C**

### **Dilemmas Discussion**

- Traffic flow in center of town
  - Left turn arrows at light??
- Maximize commercial land (add to tax base)
  - Utilize South St. area?
  - Move some commercial out of downtown?
- Examine long term growth patterns
- Encourage commercial/industrial growth while limiting residential growth
- Promote commercial areas
  - Chamber of Commerce
- Balance between school spending and other town needs (to keep taxes from rising)
  - Find alternatives to certain school budget items
- Restrictions on developers

- “Impact fees” (per unit or sub-division)
  - School subsidy
- Address changing water issues
- Maximize use of commercially and industrially zoned space
  - Address traffic impact simultaneously
  - Address re-zoning issues
  - Reduce residential growth

### **Creative Solutions**

- Implement commercial plans which have less impact on town’s “rural character”
- Encourage more commercial/industrial and/or agricultural development (which may limit residential growth)
- Impose impact fees on developers
- Encourage town to purchase open space
- Develop possible plan for Weston property before pitching sale to town. Look at: traffic, taxes, open space
- Consider split tax rate (residential v. commercial)
- Examine town boards’ processes and guidelines to streamline planning and development. (“coordinate”) i.e. – communicate through process (with Conservation Commission, etc.)

### **Table D**

#### **Moving Forward**

- Control/manage residential growth and unwillingness to examine/embrace all zoning options
- More residential alternatives – spread out or centralized down town?
- Study current industrial/commercial zoned areas to see what can be done to maximize tax impact
- 20% of the population is less than 10 years old. What happens when they all start driving?
- Identify key outposts for smaller commercial shops/gathering spots
- At current rate, tax increase is inevitable if we want to keep services level – schools
- Economic modeling of key alternatives is key to educating the populace!

## Table E

### **Dilemmas Discussion**

- Restrict/stop Residential Growth
  - Need to strike a balance
  - Resident apathy
  - Change zoning to reach goal
- Downtown
  - Gathering places
  - Shops and restaurants

### **Moving Forward**

- Revitalize Downtown
  - Gathering area
  - Spend locally
  - Need definitions
  - Financial incentives
  - Zoning incentives
  - Public and civic facilities
  - Do a survey – electronically
  - Public hearings and forums
  - Mailing survey with census
  - Seek input from similar towns
  - Seek grants

## Table F

- Land use
- Commercial use – where is it planned.
- How valuation works – higher val/lower taxes.
- ? Footbridge across 495.
- ? New 495 exit to route traffic to comm. Areas (?use new/existing).
- Linkage fees for comm. - 85 and Hopkinton – Weston Nurseries and use.
- Retail opportunities ( at Weston Nurseries)
  - Book store
  - restaurants
- How balance desire for open space with revenue generation?
- ? Priv/ pub partnerships for Dev. Of Weston Nurseries.
- Traffic dilemmas
  - Define pressure points
  - W. Main St/85 corner - ? by pass roads.
  - Alternative transportation (bike and foot paths).
  - Downtown parking to assist in revitalizing the area.
- Critical mass – look at what works in other towns of similar size - ? traffic bypass.
- Overlay districts
- Share the change
  - Spread equally around town.
- “Village” concept.
  - Create zoning overlay districts to allow this.

## **Table G**

### **Question 1: Dilemmas**

- Development inevitable, manage it, cannot be stopped.
- Traffic flow and downtown safety Not a dilemma.
- “Frame” the issues.
- Tradeoffs/ consequences of action/inaction.

### **Master Plan Committee Suggestions**

- Making town attractive to comm. development.
- ? zoning change?
- Market concept of dev. To townspeople -> education to inform public.
- Define town’s priorities via population consensus.
- Forward reaching.
- Downtown livable and viable.
- Critical mass insufficient.
- Communication.

## **Table H**

### **Dilemmas**

- Smart development.
- By-law in place to control residential growth.
- Plan for the future.
- Mix use affordable housing.
- Downtown revitalization – Tax incentives to improve look of downtown.
- Keeping open space.
- Traffic impact.
  - Don’t widen downtown road.
- Access to town via walking, biking trails.
- Control development – smart.
- Mixed use with land that will be developed.
- Other uses other than residential “conference center.”
- Incentives that are given to new business done thoughtfully.
- Town purchase any large parcels of land to control the outcome.
- Zoning to be changed to promote new small business.
- Connecting open space – “Green necklace”
- Downtown more walkable and inviting.
- More restaurants and other attractions, bakery, retail.
- Parking downtown.
- Tax incentives to improve current businesses and new businesses.
- More sidewalks to connect downtown.
- Improving communications with residents to tighten community – promote more involvement.
- Workforce housing.
- Long term planning.

## Table I

### Question 1 - Dilemmas

- NIMBY
- What is the right kind of business.
- Zoning and access for new business – Keeping rural roads.
- Could better “traffic flow” and walkable and safe” go hand in hand?
- A lot of vacancies in existing building – B/C not looking for office space rather light manufacturing etc.
- Need to keep biz. Close to 495 or else increase traffic congestion in DT.
- Police enforcement on traffic flow/J-walking etc.
- “Of course it’s not Hopkinton people it’s out of towners.” ☺
- 14,000 people is not rural.
- We have rural rds. With suburban traffic.
- Why do people say we want to maintain a rural feel if it’s already gone?
- People who work here can’t afford to live here.
- Zoning questions - # of homes on X size lots with this much open space.
- People who purchased land years ago can no longer afford the taxes – “But I’d just like to live there if forced to sell. Open space turns into buildable lots – more kinds in schools – more houses ...
- Water and sewage
- |
- V
- Drinking

### Points

- Zoning
- Traffic/parking/sidewalks
- Are we still really rural “14,000”.
- Rural rds. With suburban traffic.

### Zoning

- Need solution to water and sewage issue.
- Requirements plan for developer
  - Drill a well
  - Good roads
  - Low income or affordable housing
- Zoning task force.
- Town-wide master plan for land-use.
- Get best town planner we can afford.
- Vision
- Funds: knowing where \$ comes from.
- Get a grant writer.
- Develop means for town to buy land
- Economic planner
- Investment
- Develop win/win to protect people with large amounts of land (tax increases etc.)
- Town to buy for open space?

## **Education**

1. How can you control growth with zoning?
2. Water: Clean/drinking and sewage.
  - o Where is it coming from /going to.
3. What can we require of developers?
4. What we can get from/ how to max. grants?
5. Options/ ways to control growth?
6. How can we stop the tide?

## **Table J**

### **Dilemmas**

- Not traffic flow/definition? By pass? Rush hour.
- Expanding commercial may not be M.E. to preserving open space.

### **Focus**

- Limiting residential growth, open space and comm. growth – light industry – office.
- Education re zoning.
  - o Zoning restrictions.
  - o Conservation restrictions.
- Consensus land owners and town committees – regarding available land (private or [61A? GIA? Me].
- 10-15 subjects?
- \*Ombudsman – overseer of “Big Picture”
- \*Proactive assessment of available priv. Land/use
- \*Rezoning.

## **Table K**

1. Cap bldg permits/yr.
  - a. Provide alternatives to owner to improve re not equal to residential.
  - b. Residential growth drives most dilemmas.
  - c. Reeducate population on benefits of alternatives.
  - d. Limitations in understanding options for planning  
Residential Industrial Commercial
  - e. Competing agendas; inefficient communication/PR.
2. Revenue positive plan for Weston Nurseries.
  - a. Revive back lots bylaws
  - b. Town buys and controls W.N. with trust fund and buy future open land.
3. Lack of civic engagement due to town leaders.  
Drive radical pub/ private partnerships.
4. Identify master endgame/target max. population – Inventory all available unimproved land.
5. General population = educate / participate
6. Grass roots org. by neighborhood: To sell master plan.