



VISIONING WORKSHOPS DAY 2

9:00 a.m. – Breakfast, Introduction & What We’ve Learned So Far

9:20 a.m. – Major Topics Roundtable: Small Group Discussions & Report Back on Related Topics

Land Use, Transportation & Housing

Brief presentation, small group discussion, report back to the larger group, and break

Open Space, Agriculture, Cultural & Historic Resources

Brief presentation, small group discussion, report back to the larger group, and break

Public Services, Infrastructure & Economic Development

Brief presentation, small group discussion, and report back to the larger group

12:00 p.m. – Wrap-Up

GROUND RULES FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Guiding Principle: Mutual Respect of All Participants

1. Listen carefully to others. Do not interrupt or dominate the discussion. Everyone’s opinions and feelings are important.
2. Respect other points of view, even if you don’t agree.
3. Speak openly and honestly from personal experience.
4. Do not criticize other people or rehash past conflicts.
5. Don’t argue over facts. Agree to disagree until an answer is found.
6. When disagreement occurs, acknowledge that conflicts exist and try to understand the other point of view.
7. Focus on areas of agreement and try to expand them.
8. Keep an open mind.



VISIONING WORKSHOPS DAY 2: LAND USE, HOUSING & TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems, including vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian networks, as well as public transportation services, connect different land uses to each other. Housing (residential use) is a land use of particular concern in comprehensive master plans.

Key Issues

- Southamptton has lost significant acreage that was once occupied by agricultural and forest lands. Meanwhile, the town has seen large increases in land occupied by large lot residential housing, as well as some commercial growth.
- Southamptton’s rate of housing growth is higher than in other parts of the region. Nearly all of this growth has been single family residential, and it is notably difficult to find other housing options in town.
- Southamptton is quickly becoming an unaffordable community to new prospective homeowners or existing homeowners looking to downsize or upsize.
- A 2004 study found that the town’s residential growth and other land uses that generate a high volume of vehicle trips could dramatically impact future traffic volumes and strain existing infrastructure.
- There are no bike lanes or paths in town. Despite significant support, a proposal to create a bike path along the railroad was defeated at Town Meeting in the early 1990s.
- The town has sidewalks in the village center, but lacks a continuous sidewalk network that connects different parts of town.

DISCUSSION OF LIKES, CHALLENGES & FUTURE VISIONS

Example Questions

- What land use characteristics do you want to preserve? What housing and transportation characteristics are working?
- Do you see any land use, housing or transportation challenges in Southamptton?
- Are you concerned about new development in town?
- What areas could be improved? How?
- Should we promote more large lot residential development? What are the benefits and negative impacts of this kind of development?
- How can the town meet the needs of residents (e.g. recent college graduates, retiring seniors) who need smaller housing units?
- Should the town to build bicycle paths, sidewalks or other alternative transportation networks? If so, where?



VISIONING DAY 2: OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURE, CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Open space, agriculture, cultural resources, and historic features comprise many of the town's most treasured assets and help give the town a sense of unique identity. Recreational open spaces and facilities are also covered in this discussion.

Key Issues

- Southamptton's open space attributes make the town desirable for new development that is slowly altering the rural character.
- The town lost over 1,200 acres of agricultural, forest and wetlands between 1971 to 1999.
- A significant portion of Southamptton's natural lands are not permanently protected.
- Surveys have found that residents support forest, water, farmland and other natural resources protection.
- Southamptton has relatively few recreational resources for a town of its size.
- An early 1990's proposal to develop a bike path along the railroad did not pass at Town Meeting.
- Residents have expressed the need to improve access to the town's recreational and open space resources.
- Many residents are not aware of cultural and historic resources like the Old Canal.

DISCUSSION OF LIKES, CHALLENGES & FUTURE VISIONS

Example Questions

- What important resources should the town preserve?
- Are the town's resources well-used?
- Do people know about the town's resources and can they get to them?
- Are the town's resources well-maintained?
- Are there enough resources near the village center?
- Are there easy ways to reach open space and recreation resources by foot or bicycle?
- Are there opportunities for creating new parks and open spaces, or for connecting different open space and recreation areas to each other?
- Is there a need for new recreational facilities, or to maintain or improve existing facilities?



VISIONING: PUBLIC SERVICES, INFRASTRUCTURE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Public services and infrastructure include town facilities, library, fire, police, water, sewer, roads, energy and school services and infrastructure. Economic development includes activities that seek to improve the economic-well being and quality of life for a community. Economic development is an important function of local government, and additional infrastructure and services may be required to promote desired growth.

Key Issues

- Southamptton’s rapid population growth and low tax rate is straining the town’s ability to provide the services needed to support this growth.
- Many residents have suggested the need for a paid fire department.
- Southamptton’s lack of sewer services restricts growth in the village center (including growth of municipal services), as well as commercial and industrial growth elsewhere in town.
- Southamptton has experienced less growth in new employers than the larger region. The Economic Development chapter of the town’s 2004 Community Development Plan is concerned with balanced development that diversifies the tax base.
- Key economic development constraints include lack of usable land zoned for business and lack of public sewer services.
- Key economic development strengths include low taxes and proximity to Routes 90, 91, Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke.
- Many of the town’s existing businesses do not have room for expansion, and many are located in areas zoned for residential use and do not conform to the laws of their zoning district.
- A number of businesses located in the town’s Water Supply Protection District are prohibited uses in that district.

DISCUSSION OF LIKES, CHALLENGES & FUTURE VISIONS

Example Questions

- What town services are working well? Which could be improved? What infrastructure improvements are needed?
- Should the town encourage new retail and non-retail commercial (light industrial) development? Where?
- Should the town promote infill and mixed-use (residential and commercial in same building) development in the village center?
- Should there be design standards for the village center? For new commercial developments in town?
- Should the town develop sewer infrastructure for the village center, or to promote commercial and light industrial development in other areas of town?

COMING UP ON DAY 3: WHAT WE’VE LEARNED SO FAR, ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS & FUTURE LAND USE ACTIVITY & DESIGN ACTIVITY FOR VILLAGE CENTER & ROUTE 10