

Town of Southborough

2008

MASTER PLAN



SUBMITTED TO:
Town of Southborough
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

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Town of Southborough

2008

MASTER PLAN

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- ▶ Mary Hynes, AICP, Planning Board, Committee Chairperson
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Southborough Planning Board

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Consultant Team

The planning consulting team was charged with writing the report, preparing GIS maps, and facilitating the public forums.

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 - ▶ Mike Borsare, Planner/Graphic Design
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- ▶ Judi Barrett

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“Preserving our past; protecting our future.”



1. Vision and Goals Statements

Scenes from the two public forums held during the planning process.



“Preserving our past; protecting our future.”

Southborough’s Vision

Southborough is a community that takes great pride in its physical beauty, extraordinary views, distinct rural character, rich historic legacy, vast natural resources, and citizenry devoted to giving back. Southborough residents enjoy an unequalled quality of life – people appreciate the small town atmosphere with its sense of community and strong civic involvement. Residents value the excellent school system. Southborough also places significant importance in its village centers and neighborhoods.

The vision of this Master Plan is to preserve Southborough’s classic rural New England character and charm while enhancing the village centers and neighborhoods. While residents recognize that change is inevitable, it is important that Southborough safeguard its unique identity. This Master Plan is the Town’s chance to prepare for this change, to put forth the best plan for where change is most appropriate to occur, and suggest what it should look like so that it meets the needs of the community. The Town should build upon the past by reinforcing a sense of belonging to a community with such an exceptional heritage. Southborough needs to ensure that fragile open spaces and water resources are adequately protected. The Town appreciates its active citizenry and seeks to strengthen and increase the number of residents

who give their time to better the community. The Town also wants to create opportunities for future generations of Southborough residents to live, work and play here, as current residents have done.

Goals Statements

The following goals statements are meant to serve as a policy guide for the development of the Master Plan. They are the result of comments made at the January 29, 2007 Community Visioning Meeting, interviews conducted with key stakeholders early in the planning process, and input from members of the Master Plan Steering Committee. These goals statements represent overarching policy positions, while the specific recommendations or strategies are found at the end of each chapter and are summarized in Chapter 10 – the implementation program. Some may overlap because they could fall into more than one category and efforts were made to combine comments that are duplicative. The goals statements are sorted by plan elements and are not listed in any particular order.

Chestnut Hill Farm.

Photo courtesy of Southborough Planning Board.



Public input played a central role in formation of the Master Plan's Goals.

Land Use and Zoning

LU-1

Update and modernize the zoning bylaw and other land use regulations.

LU-2

Provide appropriate buffers or transitions between incompatible uses.

LU-3

Encourage more flexible development in appropriate places through such means as shared septic systems, cluster subdivisions, open space residential development, and by right zoning.

LU-4

Encourage architectural quality in non-residential development.

LU-5

Support a Town permitting process that is fair and efficient and follows the goals of the Master Plan.

LU-6

Promote growth that is environmentally sustainable and capable of withstanding economic downturns.

LU-7

Establish stewardship and preservation of the unique identity of Southborough's neighborhoods and villages and strengthen linkages between areas.

LU-8

Continue to engage neighboring towns about the development that occurs along the municipal borders.

Housing

H-1

Ensure that future generations of Southborough citizens and people who work in Southborough are able to remain as residents of the Town.

H-2

Encourage a more diverse population.

H-3

Expand the housing choice in Southborough for families.

H-4

Encourage small lot zoning in villages and other appropriate areas in Town.

H-5

Encourage multi-family housing in appropriate locations and at an appropriate scale.

H-6

Maintain Southborough's attractive and aesthetically diverse housing stock and continue to promote quality in future development.

Economic Development

ED-1

Expand commercial development where it is most appropriate, along Route 9 and in the villages, at an appropriate scale.

ED-2

Create opportunities for business to start and prosper in Southborough.

ED-2.1

Create a mix of jobs.

ED-2.2

Work with existing businesses to keep them in Southborough.

ED-2.3

Evaluate zoning to allow effective mix of uses.

ED-2.4

Encourage innovative and sustainable jobs, such as home-based businesses and telecommuting.

ED-3

Review/change the permitting process to try to eliminate unreasonable bottlenecks.

ED-4

Balance the financial benefit to the Town from development and open space.

Open Space and Recreation

OS-1

Continue to identify and preserve Southborough's open space and recreation resources.

OS-1.1

Be prepared to purchase open space when it becomes available.

OS-1.2

Better educate public about open space and natural resources conservation.

OS-1.3

Capitalize on small vacant and underutilized parcels in Town to create pocket parks and other open spaces.

*Southborough
citizens ponder the
future of their Town.*



OS-1.4

Encourage natural resource preservation in development projects.

OS-2

Expand access opportunities to Southborough's open spaces.

OS-2.1

Encourage public use of water resources and conserved open space.

OS-3

Increase walking and bicycle paths, boardwalks, and trails to create a trail network and connect open space and recreational resources.

OS-4

Maintain and enhance existing open space and passive recreational facilities.

Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources*NCR-1*

Enhance protection of valued open space and natural resources, particularly the Sudbury Reservoir and the SuAsCo watershed.

At each public forum tables of 6 - 8 were formed to obtain input.

*NCR-1.1*

Encourage more public access to water resources in Southborough

NCR-2

Successfully implement the Lower Impact Development Bylaw to promote "green" practices and ensure proper management of stormwater.

NCR-3

Increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of historic and archeological resources and resource preservation into the planning process.

NCR-4

Encourage architectural quality and the preservation of community character.

NCR-5

Establish guidelines for preserving and enhancing existing architectural and historic character and its context, as identified by the Cultural Resources Survey (2000).

NCR-6

Establish guidelines that encourage new development to conform to the architectural and historic character and context of Southborough's existing buildings.

NCR-7

Create and enhance cultural opportunities and activities in Southborough

Transportation, Transit, and Circulation*T-1*

Create a long-term conscientious vision for traffic mitigation while managing traffic and land uses to avoid congestion.

T-1.1

Expand relationships with adjacent Towns to manage traffic and environmental impacts on a regional and state scale.

T-1.2

Consider traffic calming measures, where applicable.

T-1.3

Work cooperatively with MA Highway Department on Route 9 improvements.

T-1.4

Minimize the impact of new development with creative transportation strategies.

T-2

Increase public transportation and other non-automobile transportation options on a local, regional and state-wide basis.

T-2.1

Create more sidewalks and bicycle-safe routes.

T-3

Consider improvements to roads in Town.

Municipal Facilities and Services

MF-1

Establish new or improved/upgraded facilities for public safety.

MF-2

Establish a new community center for use by residents of all ages.

MF-3

Increase sewage disposal options in Town and at municipal facilities.

MF-4

Enhance communication with residents and among Town boards, commissions and staff.

MF-5

Enhance facilities for Town staff and departments.

MF-6

Create a process for identifying and disposing of surplus Town-owned property.

MF-7

Provide recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

MF-8

Maintain and enhance existing open space and recreational facilities.

Southborough's Villages¹

V-1

Promote growth and development within the Downtown to encourage a mixed-use environment.

V-2

Reinvigorate Southborough's villages by creating small, resident-driven businesses.

V-2.1

Provide the types of goods and services that Southborough residents now have to obtain in adjacent communities.

¹ Note that specific goals and objectives for each village center will be addressed in Chapter 9 of the plan.

