

SECTION 6

COMMUNITY GOALS

A. DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

Note: Examples of materials created and used for publicity and information gathering; results and data gathered during the process; agenda/minutes of planning meetings are contained in the Appendices of this OSRP.

In the Spring of 2012, Shelburne received a generous grant-in-aid from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to support the town in its updating of the expired 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The town's Selectboard charged the Open Space Committee (OSC) to lead the effort to do so.

An OSRP up-date sub-committee of the OSC (USC) formed as a working group to steer the project, plan public forums, design a community survey, assess the results, meet with town committees and boards to gather their input, draft sections of the Plan, present them to the whole OSC for review and approval, and to coordinate the whole process with FRCOG staff.

Wishing to involve town residents from the very outset of the project, the USC decided to begin the process with a **Public Visioning Forum**, which was planned September/October 2012 by the , with the assistance of FRCOG staff and a local organizational planner who volunteered his time and expertise. Advertising for the event included extensive leafleting of the Town, postings on the Town web-site, articles in local newspapers (Greenfield Recorder and Shelburne Falls Independent), outreach by individual members of the WG, and a robo-call which reached over 1100 Shelburne residents. In addition, 14 community members with experience in group leadership were recruited to facilitate the planned small group discussion.

The Forum was held on 24Oct12 and attracted more than 60 Shelburne residents who, in separate interest groups, explored 5 different areas of concern for Shelburne's future , generating significant and valuable lists of ideas, concerns, solutions, and hopes/visions. The meeting was reported on in a follow-up article in the Shelburne Falls Independent.

This information was then compiled, and used to create (Nov/Dec 2012) a **Community Survey**, with input from Town boards and committees, and assistance from FRCOG staff. In mid-December, the Survey was mailed to ~900 Shelburne households, posted online via SurveyMonkey, and made available in Town libraries and Town Hall. Extensive publicity to foster and maximize public participation in this information gathering process included meetings with Town committees and boards, web-site postings, extensive leafleting, phone calls by USC members, articles in local newspapers,

and robocalls. By the end of January 2013, 339 surveys had been returned (~70 of which were done on-line)—a heart-gladdening participation rate of 37%!

As described in Section 2 of this Plan, the USB, starting in the Spring of 2013, began the process of utilizing the data obtained through the Public Visioning Forum and the Survey results (including over 100 pages of respondents' comments) of **developing updated Goals, Objectives, and the new 7 Year Action Plan**. Frequent visits by USC members to Town boards' and committees' meetings, ongoing coordination via committee liaisons on the USB, and reviewing and editing draft versions of Sections 8 and 9 with these entities helped insure wide participation and continued input in this process.

On 21Nov13, a **town-wide Public Meeting** provided members of the public with the opportunity for additional review and comment on the Draft of the updated Plan. It was attended by 30+ Shelburne residents, Town officials, and members of the local press. This meeting, as with all of the information-gathering efforts undertaken in support of this project, was heavily publicized with flyers, leafleting, a press release, an article in local newspapers, email outreach to over 150 residents, and a community-wide robo-call. After a brief presentation of the why's, how's and who's involved in creating the update, residents joined one of three small group sessions, each addressing the Action Steps of one the of the three overarching Goals of Action Plan (Section 9): although Goal I (maintaining the Town's rural, small-town character) was the most heavily attended, Goals II and III had ample participation, and each of the groups provided thoughtful and valuable feedback and specific suggestions that were then assessed by the USC, resulting in additions and editing of the Section 9 draft.

In addition, a **two-week comment period (22nov13-6dec13)**, was made available to insure the opportunity for residents to add their input (via letters and email) to the Plan. During this time, the Draft was available for review in Town Hall, Shelburne's two libraries and on-line at the Town's website.

B. Vision Statement

Shelburne residents who responded to the Open Space and Recreation Survey and participated in the two Public Forums and the process of developing this Open Space and Recreation Plan, share a vision for the future of Shelburne's natural, historical, and recreational resources.

This vision for the Town of Shelburne includes preservation of our valued agricultural landscapes and working farms; protection of the beauty and unique rural character of our community as well as our water resources and drinking water supplies; support of sustainable economic development that protects our natural, historic, and cultural resources, strengthens the tax base, and provides services to our Town's citizens. We envision a proactive planning process that encourages land uses that sustain the health of our waters, forests, wildlife and working farms, preserves historic resources, and

helps the Town to permanently protect its most valued open spaces, working with and supporting willing landowners to do so.

We envision a process in which the Town actively assists landowners and potential developers in designing projects that sustain and enhance our community's shared assets and character, while remaining respectful of the rights, needs and visions of Shelburne landowners. This Open Space and Recreation Plan will be seen as a vital component of a proactive, sustainable land planning and development process which, in cooperation with Shelburne's landowners, will strive to effectively and equitably manage the growth pressures facing Shelburne while preserving natural resources and wildlife habitat, historic features, scenic roads and vistas, and recreational opportunities for current and future residents of our town.

We envision a diverse local economy in the future Shelburne, anchored by existing businesses and agricultural-based operations, and strengthened by development appropriate to the rural and historic nature of our Town, and which respects the preservation of our natural scenic and environmental resources. Residents will be active in the successful efforts to maintain and restore historic buildings throughout Town. The Town will continue to be supportive of local farmers and the value they offer to the town. By supporting local agricultural and forestry businesses, town residents (and others) will have access to fresh vegetables, dairy products, fruit and meat produced close to home, as well as the opportunity to buy forest products raised by neighbors, and farmers and other agricultural-based businesses will have improved income streams.

Our vision also supports the maintenance, expansion and promotion of the recreational opportunities and resources available to Shelburne residents, and the successful use of state, federal and private grants for the development of recreational programs for all residents—seniors, youth and adults.

In short, our vision is one where future residential and economic growth will be undertaken in a manner that maintains and protects Shelburne's scenic, historic and natural resources.