

Be a part of the vision!



2022
**NORTHWOOD
MASTER PLAN**

Community Visioning Workshop
Northwood School Gym
August 29, 2022
7pm-9pm

Stakeholder Input

Discussion Topic I:

Survey Respondents describe present day Northwood as:

Expensive Changing Charming Northwood Good average Quaint Convenient
beautiful town Rural Quiet Growing communities
Home busy Peaceful Boring Pleasant Disjointed Friendly

Do you agree or disagree? Why?

- Quiet in certain areas
- It is growing
- Still same areas, primarily rural
- Expensive – yes
- Agree, factual basis
- Convenient access to work and recreation
- Water supply – top of watershed
- We agree physically beautiful with all moved back after being away 25 years. Owns 17-acre lot, but have neighbors nearby.
- New residential communities some benefit, but not what we wanted. Not a negative.
- Melanie – moved from small town to be near her family. Had been Selectperson in Lyman, NH
- Loves having beaches, convenient to Dover
- Pass through town
- Had looked for town center, but opted for porch.
- Both like idea of a town common.
- Rec fields could serve as meeting community
- M likes minimum of chain businesses in Northwood. Prefers individual.
- W likes local hardware, etc. Businesses contribute back to community
- Expensive – yes, market up
- Quiet in areas, not Route 4
- Beautiful areas, yes
- Rural, yes. 30 minutes away from Portsmouth/Concord (convenient)
- Growing, yes, but need more small business
- Quaint, parts, antique alley
- Beautiful, but needs protected and governed (enforced)
 - lake water quality
 - oil contamination
- Agree, but area specific, i.e. junkyards, abandoned properties. Water quality is declining in our wake(?)well(?). Need watershed and aquifer ordinance.
- Agree, words are fact based.
- Convenient access to work and recreation

Discussion Topic 2:

The (one) word that survey respondents chose to describe how they want Northwood to be in the future is:

peaceful Updated home Better Inclusive Quaint Community prosperity
Safe town Welcoming Stable Rural Convenient
Affordable Cohesive brilliant Sustainable Progressive friendly
Quiet Thriving

What would need to be done or change to achieve this vision? Are we already there?

- Safe town – need to make Route 4 safer – traffic planning, etc.
- Affordable – at least in some areas
- Get away from a 2-acre minimum
- Town should foster events for community cohesiveness. Need center for events, socializing, etc.
- Senior activities.
- Safety: Traffic plan/study for Route 4. Too many accidents happening. As a resident who lives in Northwood Narrows and I drive west on Route 4, go route 107 south through Deerfield to Route 43 to Route 4 to go Route 4 east. It takes a lot longer, but I feel safer. (bothers me as when I moved to Northwood 20+ years ago, Route 4 was much safer.
- Rural: Northwood is growing too quickly. Many people moved here for country living, not industry/commercial.
- Already rural (except Route 4)
- Not affordable – housing market inflated
- No downtown
- 30 minutes away from Portsmouth & Concord
- Welcome center in town
- Better communication
- Safe for pedestrians and bicyclists
- No workforce housing, esp. for emergency personnel
- Importance of rural feeling
- Safe now – Concern over crime moving in from urban areas

Discussion Topic 3:

What can be done to enhance Northwood's sense of community?

- Beanhole bash location playground
- Town center
- Food festival
- Communication difficulties – newsletter
- Volunteers – young involvement problem
- Communities voting
- Community events, i.e. Home Day
- Media to inform residents of events (rec program)
- Communication Plan/Consistency of events (rec program)
- Pavilion and ballfields for concert series, food
- Trucks, chili fest, brew fest (local brews)
- Welcome to Northwood packets for new residents
- Communication
- Newspaper
- Web page
- Updated booklet on community businesses and town agencies/offices
- Determine what people want to see and build on those things.
- One facility large enough. Hobby equipment, arts, crafts, workshops, teaching.
- Community Power committee to gain better pricing for all residents.
- Involvement of multi-generations – kids, teens, seniors
- CBNA students, community hours, Town served mentors.
- More friendly
- Communication
- Community page on town website
- Newspaper/newsletter

Discussion Topic 4:

What would you change (if you could) about Northwood to make it a better community?

- Need ↑ communication
- Sense of community
- Venue for events
- No town center
- Route 4 long and divides us
- We had small local districts. Find way for central location
- Recreation fields potential for gathering site.
- Encourage our arts community
- FT (full time) rec director
- Revaluation of town staff for better communication
- Intergenerational activities
- More communication
- Use library more
- Use of sign – change messages frequently
- Improvement to communications
- Venue for music events and lecture series, etc.
- A “downtown” or central congregation area
- Make an investment in quality as opposed to price - pays off richly in the future
- Intergenerational activities
- More community functions. Other towns have summer music series.
- Safe active transportation. Upgrade Class VI.
- Get communities connected.
- Keep the business directly updated.
- Better organization and communication of committees and parties organizing stuff, events. More involvement from town residents.

Discussion Topics 1-4 Report Out

- Communication from Town Hall could be improved. Rec, business, help from committees
- Northwood is a beautiful place. Maintenance is critical.
- Community-based events, and someplace to hold them, both indoor and outdoor. Getting the word out.
- Safety – especially Route 4. Need a traffic plan.
- Back roads are dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Concerns & Ideas Sticky Notes

Concerns

- Large number of small lots being developed; and/or seasonal to year round on lakes.
- Staying rural while making housing more affordable.
- Loss of agricultural land to development.
- Joe Gunfen started a master plan. Is it being reviewed.
- Maintaining quality of lakes and ponds
- Providing for future water supplies as the population expands.
- Education and public safety are important for community. We need to improve the acceptance to pay for them.
- Lack of oversight on development. Need watershed and aquifer protection ordinance.
- Length and number of homes on cul-de-sac (dead end roads), i.e. Gulf Road
- Better enforcement of environmental impacts on lakes. Waste and oil, gas, etc. has seeped into the lakes.
- Northwood is atop 3 watersheds, so our use and waste affects many downstream users. Most residents are on wells. We need to consider long term water supply.
- A lot of programs that benefit the few and funded by all. Ex. Some recreation events, special interest groups.
- Lack of communication. Talk!! Listen
- A lot of talk, not always a lot of action. Almost 30 years living in Northwood, and every few years I hear someone with a “great new” idea that has been brought up over the years and never gets done.
- Some more of these meetings
- Healthy lakes (all of them)
- Need for a senior center.
- Unfair business practices in town. When reported, Town officials play dumb or keep kicking the can down the road.
- Same folks are on town boards/committees – how to get town folk more interested? Activities geared to only certain ___ taxpayers.
- Lack of transparency in town hall/town government.

Concerns & Ideas Sticky Notes

Ideas

- Have annual community pride day
- Community center, heating/cooling for weather disasters. Learning center for games, crafts, instruments, dance, etc.
- Hire a grant writer to chase funding for a community center, safety complex
- Lobby NH DOT for a corridor study for Route 4, Epsom Circle to Lee Circle.
- Build on arts community
- The master plan statute (RSA 674:2) now allows an energy section to be included. Can that be added as a section?
- Seems it is the same people doing all the work. Try to solicit more involvement by other residents.
- Trail connectivity. Need on lot to complete connection from School to west side.
- Town Administrator must live in Northwood, along with police force.
- More centralized places to gather. Sidewalk on Route 4 – State issue as it is a State road.
- Develop a community center that could hold large town gatherings, concerts, meetings.
- A common meeting area or venue in Town. Example, bandstand for music events. Stage for performances.
- Xmas party in Jan for all volunteers
- Left hand turn lanes on Route 4 to improve safety.. or at least more rigorous enforcement of traffic laws, rate of speed, etc.
- Senior center
- Business development in village setting off Rt. 4
- Better communication with town signage (many times messages are days or weeks old.. not timely)
- Partner with neighboring communities for trail connections for safe bicycle, pedestrian access
- Foster better relationships in town. Feels like there are groups that are self-serving “What’s in it for me?” Paid for all to serve a few.