

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This update of Newtown's Plan of Conservation and Development is the result of the dedicated efforts of many Newtown residents and town staff who have worked to craft a document that can be used to guide future municipal actions and policies. Newtown's updated Plan of Conservation and Development proposes a vision of Newtown in 10 years and a series of goals and action recommendations to manage change toward the achievement of this vision.

The Plan evolved from the development of 10 technical planning memoranda that focused on a variety of topics including Newtown's expanding population, past land development patterns, the importance of preserving Newtown's community character, natural resources and open space, parks and recreational facilities, community facility needs, the need to grow Newtown's non-residential tax base and transportation issues. Each planning memoranda identifies key community concerns which became the focus of specific goals and implementation recommendations.

The Plan of Conservation and Development contains a Generalized Future Land Use Plan, to be used as an advisory and policy-guidance tool to direct the Town's future efforts to manage change. Key to the successful implementation of this Plan is the use of Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, design guidelines and/or implementation techniques that explicitly enable the achievement of the overall Vision through the implementation of the Plan's many recommendations.

The following is a sampling of Plan goals. Each goal is backed-up with an Action Agenda that specifies recommended actions and assigns responsibility for implementation.

Community Character:

- Maintain the scenic characteristics of Newtown's "Pastoral and Rural Areas,"
- Preserve the mixed-use functions and enhance the visual appearance of Newtown's commercial corridors and Villages.
- Preserve Newtown's historic sites and archeological resources.

Conservation and Natural Resources.

- Continue to preserve and protect Inland Wetlands and Watercourses from potential sources of contamination or development.
- Achieve and protect high water quality classifications throughout Newtown.
- Regulate development and storm water management activities within flood hazard areas to protect life and property and to preserve the natural storm retention functions of the watershed.
- Protect prime agricultural land resources and promote agricultural uses.
- Conserve and protect natural systems and their functions in order to maintain indigenous wildlife and plant life.

Open Space

- Achieve the preservation and protection of Newtown's key natural resource features.
- Newtown will achieve or exceed the State's goal for 21% open space.
- Enhance opportunities for passive recreation.

Housing

- Strive for a more balanced supply of housing types that will accommodate the housing needs of Newtown residents and those working in Newtown.
- Manage residential development to enhance Newtown's present community character.

Economic Development

- Grow Newtown's commercial property tax base at a rate at least equal to the Town's growth in its residential tax base.
- Increase the inventory of viable economic development sites.
- Prioritize the clean-up and re-use of Newtown's brownfield sites.
- Facilitate the maintenance and development of agricultural businesses in scale with Newtown.

Community Facilities

- Strive for a more organized and efficient approach for municipal office buildings.
- Define long range school facility requirements.
- Maintain and support recreational facilities for townspeople of all ages.
- Provide sufficient space for the operations of the Newtown Senior Center.
- Maintain the capacity of Newtown's public sewer system.
- Continue to provide for a high level of police, fire and emergency services.

Transportation

- Achieve the appropriate functional classification of State roads in Newtown.
- Alleviate areas of congestion and address safety issues.
- Improve opportunities for pedestrian circulation.
- Initiate "fixed route" bus service in Newtown on a trial basis.
- Maximize rail mobility opportunities.

This Plan is not a static document. The Action Agenda section of the Plan was created to enable the annual evaluation of progress made in accomplishing specific plan recommendations. This will enable an annual report to the community on the status of the Plan.