

# NEWTOWN RESIDENT SURVEY

## SURVEY RESULTS

AUGUST 2004

Conducted by



## **I. Executive Summary**

The Town of Newtown commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut (CSRA) to conduct a survey of residents to evaluate attitudes toward the Fairfield Hills property. A key issue also explored in the survey is the residents' opinions on the Fairfield Hills master plan developed by the town. A total of 400 town residents, ages 18 and older, were interviewed for this study.

The following are highlights of the survey findings:

### **Newtown Overall**

- The survey finds that Newtown residents have a strong positive view of their town with 94% of residents rating the quality of life in Newtown as either excellent (49%) or good (45%).
- Schools, people living in Newtown and the countryside feeling are the three best things about the Town.
- In general, residents of Connecticut municipalities consider education and taxes as the most important issue facing their town. In the case of Newtown, residents cite growth and development and the future of Fairfield Hills as their top concerns.

### **Fairfield Hills Issues**

- More than eight out of ten residents (85%) have read, seen or heard a lot or some about Fairfield Hills. On the other hand, only six out of ten (63%) say they are familiar with the master plan.
- The survey asked how residents would vote if a referendum on the Fairfield Hills plan were taken again today. If the vote were taken again today, there would be a three way tie between residents who oppose the plan (34%), those who support it (32%), and those who do not know enough about the issue to vote against or in favor (31%).
- Newtown residents were asked to rate a number of ideas as to what the town should do with the Fairfield site. Preserve open space and provide meetings space for community groups use receive the highest rating, while build a new high school and use land for new commercial development collect the lowest rating.
- The survey finds that Newtown residents clearly prefer renovating existing buildings for the town use instead of building new facilities. Nonetheless they are willing to consider having an architect perform a study to determine whether the buildings should be renovated or demolished.

- A majority of residents (59%) believe that the development of Fairfield Hills will result in an increase of the taxes they pay.
- Two-thirds of residents (64%) say they were aware of the fact that voters in 2001 authorized the money necessary to purchase the Fairfield Hills site. On the other hand, two-thirds of residents (66%) think that knowing that the town will not have to spend additional money to acquire the property does not make a difference on their position vis-à-vis the master plan.

### **Ratings of Town government**

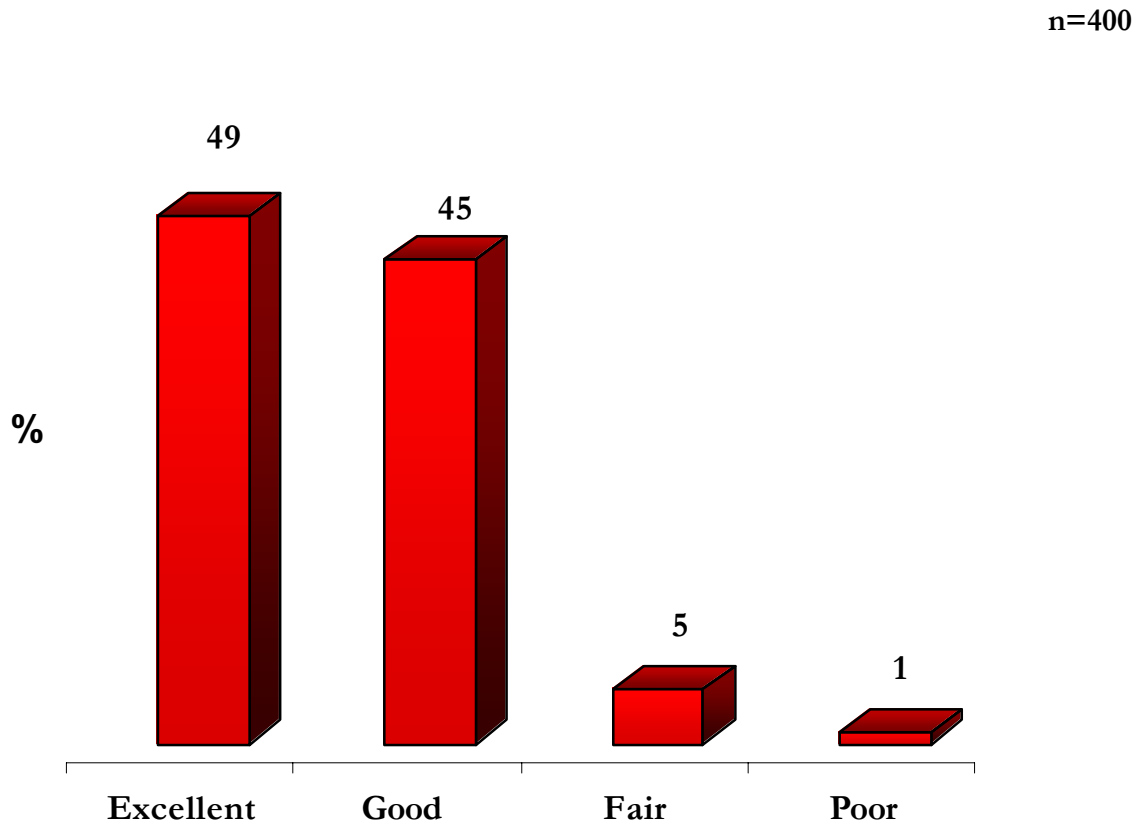
- The majority of Newtown residents (60%) have a positive view of the job the town government is doing overall. However, the town government does not enjoy this same positive rating with regard to the job it is doing in dealing with Fairfield Hills as less than half of residents (40%) gave a rating of either excellent or good.

## II. Newtown Overall

### Quality of life

The vast majority of residents (94%) rate the overall quality of life in Newtown positively, with 49% saying excellent and 45% saying good. The higher the household income, the higher the percentage giving Newtown's quality of life an excellent rating. Similarly residents who have school-age children enrolled in Newtown public schools are more likely to say excellent (59%) than residents who do not have school-age children (41%).

How would you rate the overall quality of life in Newtown, would you say it is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

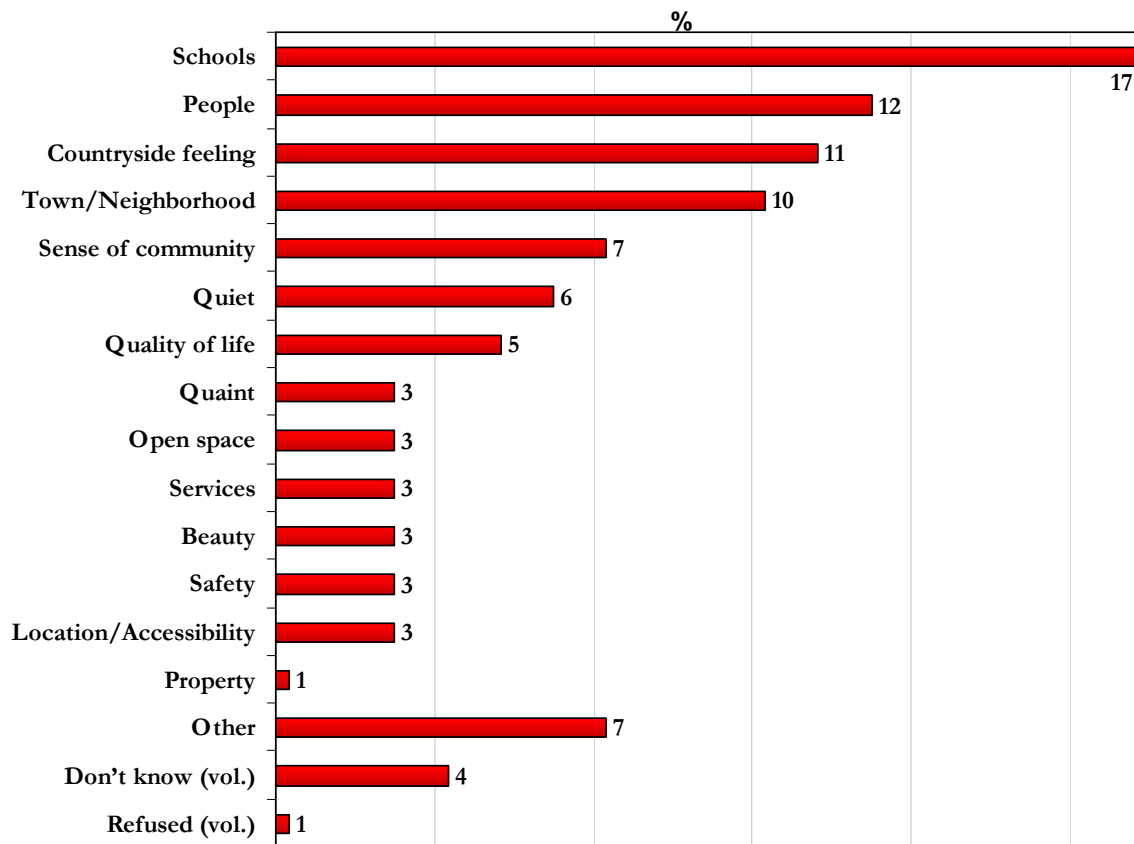


### What residents like best?

When asked to name the best thing about the town of Newtown, nearly one-fifth of residents (17%) name Newtown’s schools. Twelve percent (12%) of residents say people are the best thing about Newtown, closely followed by the countryside feeling and the size of the town or neighborhood respectively named by 11% and 10%. Other characteristics residents like best about Newtown include the sense of community (7%), the quiet (6%), quality of life (5%), location, accessibility, or convenience (3%), safety (3%), beauty (3%), quaint (3%), services (3%) and the open space (3%).

### What is the best thing about the Town of Newtown? (ASK OPEN ENDED)

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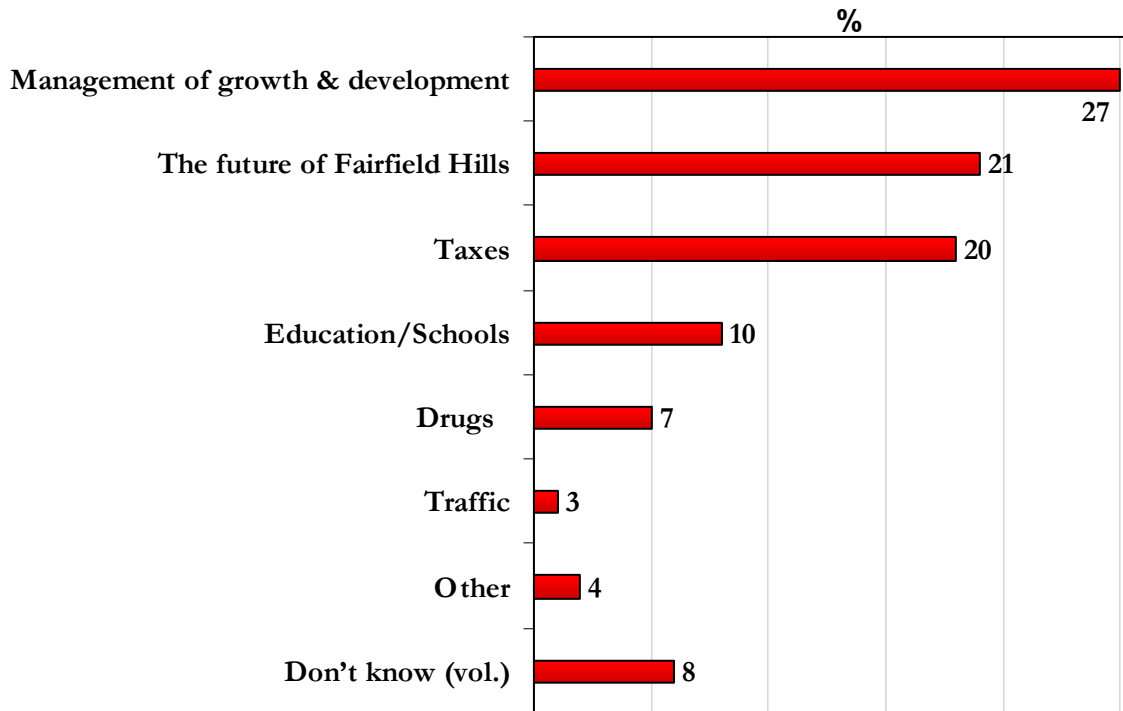
Residents who have school-age children are more likely to mention schools as the best thing about the Town of Newtown (27%), as compared to those who do not have school-age children (9%). Younger residents are much more likely to consider schools (25%) as the best thing in Newtown than residents age 56 and older (5%). Long-time Newtown’s residents (20 years or more) and women are much more likely to cite people (19% and 16% respectively) as the best thing about Newtown than newer residents (less than 5 years: 6%) and men (9%)

## Newtown Resident's Top Concerns

According to Newtown residents, the most important issues facing the Town are growth and development, the future of Fairfield Hills, and taxes. Over a quarter (27%) of residents cite growth and development as being the most important issue facing the city. Another 20% say that the future of the Fairfield Hills property is the most important issue facing the town. Nearly one-fifth (20%) of residents also name taxes as a top concern facing Newtown. Other issues include education and schools (10%), drugs (7%), and traffic and transportation (3%). Almost one in ten respondents (8%) did not offer an opinion on this question.

### What would you say is the MOST important issue now facing Newtown? (ASK OPEN ENDED)

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The higher the level of education, the higher the percentage mentioning growth and development as the most important issue facing Newtown. Thirty-five percent (35%) of residents with a post graduate degree say the most important issue facing the town is management of growth and development, compared with 27% of residents with a college education and 17% of those with a high school diploma or less.

Residents with children attending Newtown public schools are much more likely to be concerned about growth and development (32%) than residents who do not have children in the public school system (16%).

Long time residents and seniors are much more likely to be concerned about the future of Fairfield Hills than other issues. Among residents age 56 and older, over a third (34%) say the future of the Fairfield Hills property is the most important issue facing the town. Slightly less than a third (31%) of residents who have lived in Newtown for more than 20 years share the same viewpoint.

Newtown residents who live in a rental property or with relatives are much less likely to cite the future of Fairfield Hills as their top concern (9%) than people who own their homes (22%). These residents who live in rental properties or with relatives are also much less likely to cite taxes as their top concern (11%) than people who own their own homes (22%).

Residents with children enrolled in Newtown public schools are more likely to give education as their top concern (17%) than residents who do not have children in the public school system (5%) or residents who do not have school-age children (6%).

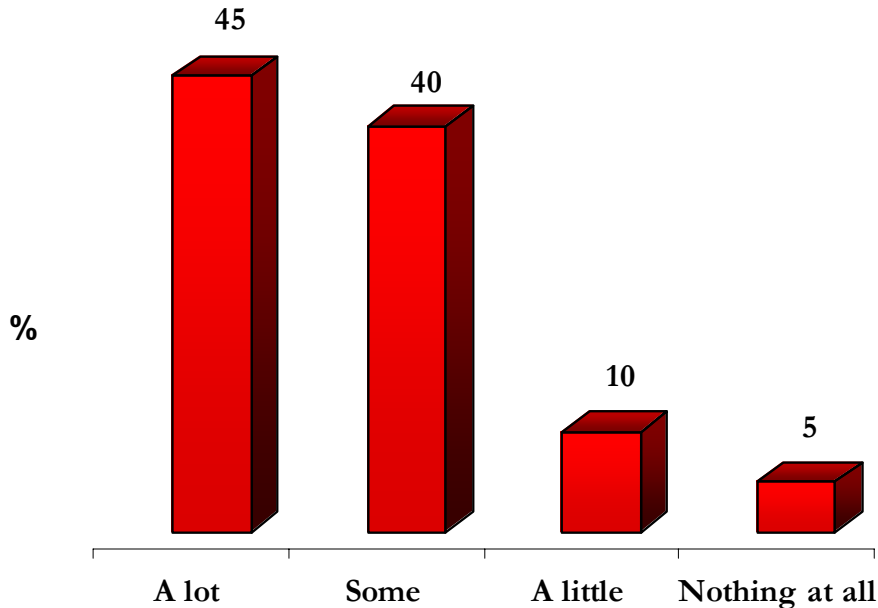
### III. FAIRFIELD HILLS ISSUES

#### Awareness of the Fairfield Hills property

The majority of Newton residents (85%) have read, seen or heard *a lot* or *some* about the Fairfield Hills property, with 45% saying they read, seen or heard *a lot* and 40% *some*. Fifteen (15%) of residents have only been exposed either *a little* (10%) or *not at all* (5%) to the Fairfield Hills issue.

**How much have you read, seen or heard about the Fairfield Hills property; a lot, some, a little, or nothing at all?**

n=400



The longer someone has been a resident of Newtown, the more likely the person has read, seen or heard *a lot* about the Fairfield Hills property. Among those residents who have lived in Newtown for more than 20 years, 52% say they have read, seen or heard *a lot* about the Fairfield Hills property as compared to 24% of residents who have lived in town for less than five years.

Residents who own their home are more likely to have read, seen or heard *a lot* about the property (48%) than residents who live in a rental property or live with relatives (26%).

Residents with a high school education or less are less likely to have read, seen or heard *a lot* about the Fairfield Hills issue (29%), than residents with a college education (43%) or a post graduate degree (52%).

Age and voters' registration also play an important part in residents' awareness of the Fairfield Hills issue. Newtown registered voters are more than twice as likely to have read, seen or heard *a lot* about Fairfield Hills (49%) than non-registered voters (20%). Older residents are much more likely to say they read, seen or heard *a lot* about the Fairfield Hills property than younger residents. Among residents age 56 and older, 53% have read, seen or heard *a lot* about the property, compared with 47% of residents between the ages of 40-55, and 36% of residents ages 18-39.

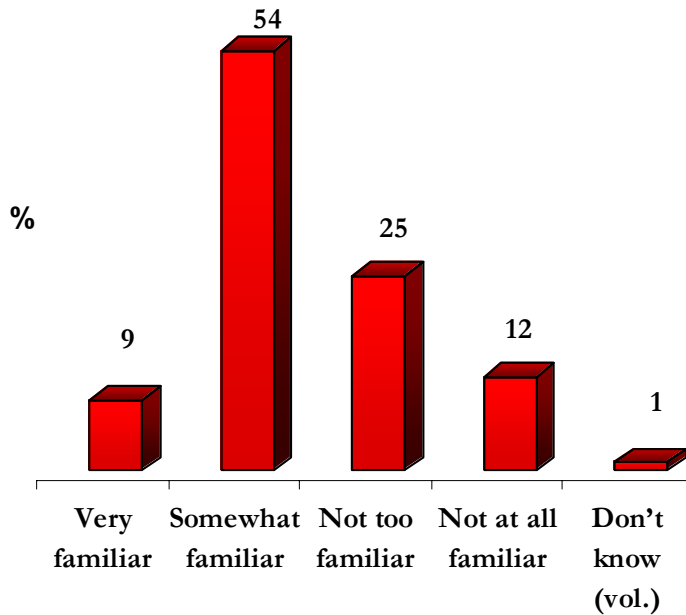


## Familiarity with the Fairfield Hills master plan

While a strong majority of Newtown residents have read, seen, or heard *a lot* or *some* about the Fairfield Hills property, fewer are familiar with the master plan developed by the town to decide how to use the property. Although nearly two-thirds of residents (63%) are very familiar or somewhat familiar with the Fairfield master plan, with 9% being very familiar and 54% somewhat familiar, over a third (37%) remain either not too familiar (25%) or not at all familiar (12%) with the master plan.

**How familiar are you with the Fairfield Hills master plan, would you say you're very familiar, somewhat familiar, not too familiar, or not at all familiar?**

n=400



The longer a resident has lived in Newtown, the more likely they are to be familiar with the Fairfield Hills master plan. Among residents who have lived in town for more than 20 years, 72% say they are very familiar (12%) or somewhat familiar (60%) with the Fairfield Hills master plan, compared to 66% of residents who have lived in town for 11 to 20 years, 68% of residents who have lived in town for 5 to 10 years, and 34% of those who have lived in town for less than 5 years.

Homeowners are more likely to be familiar with the property master plan (65%) than residents who live in a rental property or live with relatives (39%).

Residents with a post graduate education are much more likely to be familiar with the Fairfield Hills master plan (76% at least somewhat familiar) than residents with a college education (60%) or residents with a high school education or less (52%).

Newtown registered voters are more than twice as likely to be very or somewhat familiar with the Fairfield Hills master plan (67%) than residents who are not registered to vote (30%).

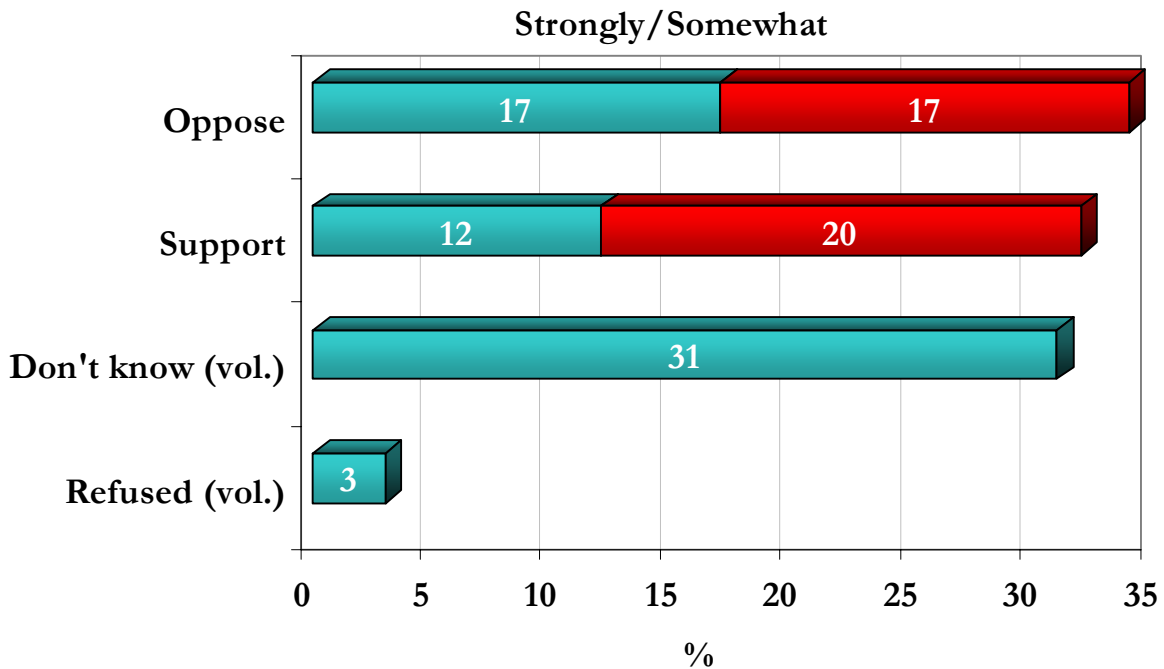
Younger Newtown residents (age 18-39) are less likely to be familiar with the master plan (53%) than either residents age 40-55 (68%) or residents over the age of 56 (67%).

## Vote on the Fairfield Hills master plan

Although a referendum on the Fairfield Hills plan held in August of 2003 was NOT approved, residents were asked if this vote were taken again today, whether they would vote to support or oppose this plan for the Fairfield Hills property. If they were to vote again today on the Fairfield Hills property master plan, Newtown residents would be almost evenly split between supporting, opposing or not knowing whether to vote in favor or against the plan. Slightly over one-third of residents (34%) would oppose the plan for the Fairfield Hills property compared to almost one third (32%) that would support it. An even proportion of residents (31%) would not know whether to vote to support or to vote to oppose the plan.

**A referendum on the Fairfield Hills plan held in August of 2003 was NOT approved by Newtown residents. If this vote were taken again today, would you support or oppose this plan for the Fairfield Hills property? (PROBE: SUPPORT/OPPOSE STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT)**

n=400



The older the resident, the more likely the person is to vote against the master plan. Residents age 56 and older and those between the ages of 40-55 are more likely to oppose the master plan (respectively 38% and 39%) than younger residents age 18-39 (24%). Younger residents age 18-39, however, are most likely to volunteer to not know enough about the issue to vote on it (38%).

Residents who have lived in Newtown for less than 5 years are more likely to volunteer that they do not know enough about the master plan to vote on it (52%) as compared to 28% of residents who have lived in town for 5 to 10 years, 25% of those who have lived in town for 11 to 20 years, and 28% of the people who have been Newtown residents for more than 20 years. Longer-term residents of Newtown who have lived in town for more than 20 years are most likely to oppose the master plan (43%).

Residents with less education (high school or less) are more supportive of the master plan (44%) than residents with a college education (28%), or post graduate degree (32%).

Residents who do not have children in Newtown public schools and those who do have school-age children (no children under the age of 18) are more likely to oppose the master plan on the Fairfield Hills property (respectively 43% and 38%) than residents with children attending Newtown public schools (26%).

Residents who have read, seen or heard a little or nothing at all about the Fairfield Hills property are less likely to support the master plan (13%) than those who have read, seen or heard some (33%) or those who have done so a lot (36%).

The higher the familiarity with the master plan, the higher the opposition to the master plan. Residents who are familiar (somewhat familiar/very familiar) to the Fairfield Hills master plan are more likely to oppose the master plan (41%) than those who are not familiar (not too familiar/not at all familiar) with it (22%). While most residents who are familiar with the master plan would vote to oppose it (41%), residents who are not familiar with it are most likely to disclose that they do not know enough about the plan to cast a vote (56%).

- **Why vote to support the Fairfield Hills master plan?**

Newtown residents were asked to give the main reason why they would vote to support or oppose the plan. Nearly a quarter (24%) of residents say that the main reason for supporting the master plan is that the town is better off using the property rather than letting it sit there. Others cite the town and its future (13%) and the good quality of the plan (11%). Another 10% cite the variety of uses proposed in the plan for Fairfield Hills. Other reasons residents cite for support of the master plan include preserving the land (8%), widening the tax base (6%), opportunity for community use (6%), beautiful usable property (5%), and housing and business development (4%).

- **Why vote to oppose the Fairfield Hills master plan**

When asked to name the main reason why they would vote to not support the Fairfield Hills master plan, over a quarter of residents (28%) cite concerns surrounding finances such as high costs, risky, and possible increase in taxes. Thirteen percent (13%) name the lack of open space and too much development as the main reason for not supporting the master plan. Another 11% say the main reason why they would vote not to support the Fairfield Hills plan is because it is a poor plan and is not comprehensive enough. Other residents (10%) name the lack of development and the plan failure to put the property to better economic use. Ten percent (10%) say they would not support the Fairfield Hills master plan because they do not know enough about it. Other reasons residents name for not supporting the plan include the perceived inability of the town to manage the development of the property (7%), the plan failure to reflect residents' wants and needs (6%), and the possible destructions of existing buildings on the property (4%).

## Suggestions for Fairfield Hills

Newtown residents were asked to rate a number of ideas as to what the town should do with the Fairfield Hills site on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 meaning “not a good idea at all” and 10 meaning “a very good idea.”

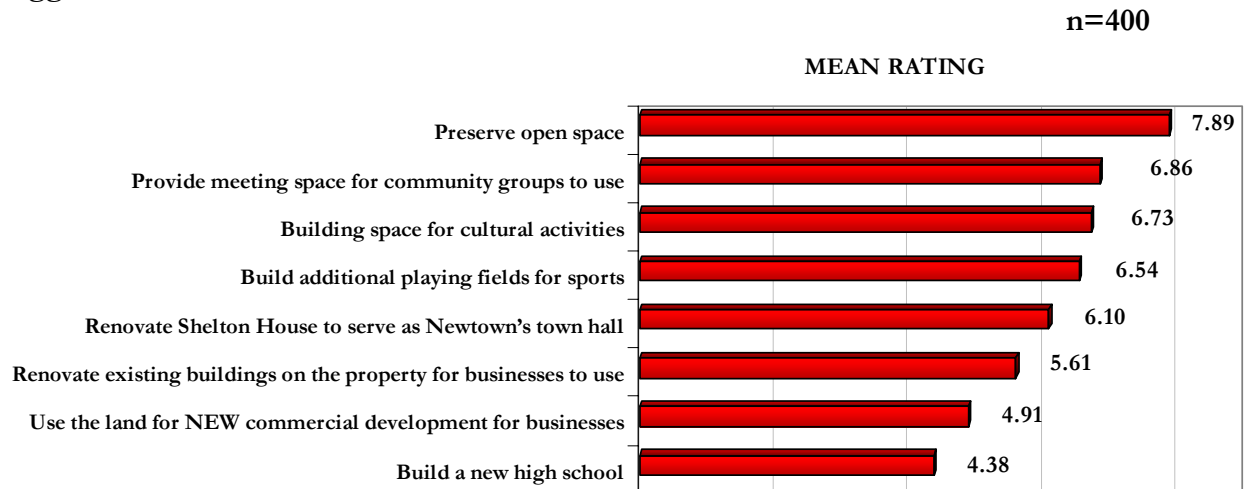
Over half of residents (52%) rate the idea of preserving open space to be used for activities like jogging and walking as either a 9 or 10 with an overall mean score of 7.89. Provide meeting space for community groups to use receives overall the second highest mean score of 6.86, with one-third of residents (32%) rating the idea as either a 9 or 10.

Building space for cultural activities and build additional playing fields for sports receive near equal ratings. About three in ten residents (27%) rate the idea of building space for cultural activities as either a 9 or 10 with an overall mean score of 6.73. Similarly, 30% rate build additional playing fields for sports as either a 9 or 10 with an overall mean score of 6.54.

Renovate Shelton House to serve as Newtown’s town hall and renovate existing buildings on the property for businesses to use receive overall mean ratings of 6.10 and 5.61 respectively. Twenty-three percent (23%) of residents give the idea of renovating Shelton House to serve as Newtown’s town hall a rating of 9 or 10 and another 20% rate renovate existing buildings on the property for businesses to use a 9 or 10.

Newtown residents do not see using the land for NEW commercial development for businesses or a new high school as good ideas for what the town should do with the Fairfield Hills site since less than 2-in-10 rated these ideas a 9 or 10, with overall mean score below 5.

**There have been a number of ideas as to what the town should do with the Fairfield Hills site. I’m going to read you a list of items that some people have suggested be done with Fairfield Hills. Using a scale from 1 to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate each suggestion for Fairfield Hills.**



## Single best use of the Fairfield Hills

When asked what the single best use of the Fairfield Hills property would be, Newtown residents offer a variety of options with three responses competing for the single best use. Residents think that the single best use of the property would be use land for commercial development for businesses (15%), preserve open space (14%), or recreational use (13%). Other responses for single best use of the Fairfield Hills property include community groups use (8%), combination of commercial development and open space (8%), a new high school (7%), a university or college (7%), town offices (5%), build space for cultural activities (3%) and build something that generates revenues for the town (3%). Some residents also mention that the town should not be involved with the property (3%) while others prefer to see the property use as a municipal golf course (2%) or a new town center (1%).

- Residents who are relatively new to Newtown (lived in town for less than five years) are more supportive of using Fairfield Hills for commercial development for businesses (22%) than residents who have lived in town for more than 20 years (11%).
- In general, residents with school-age children attending Newtown public schools are more supportive of putting Fairfield Hills for recreational use and playing fields (18%) than those who do not have school-age children (10%).
- The largest supporters of preserving open space are residents with post graduate degree (19%), those who have lived in town for more than 20 years (19%) and those who have lived in town for 5 to 10 years (19%).

## Plans for the Fairfield Hills property

Newtown residents were asked to consider a number of plans to deal with the Fairfield Hills property.

- **Build a new town hall or renovate Shelton House?**

Over half of Newtown residents (53%) prefer renovating Shelton House to serve as town hall over building a new town hall. Twenty percent (20%) favor building a new town hall. Although not offered as an option, 12% volunteer an answer of *neither* to which option they would choose for a town hall. Fourteen percent (14%) of residents did not offer an opinion on this question.

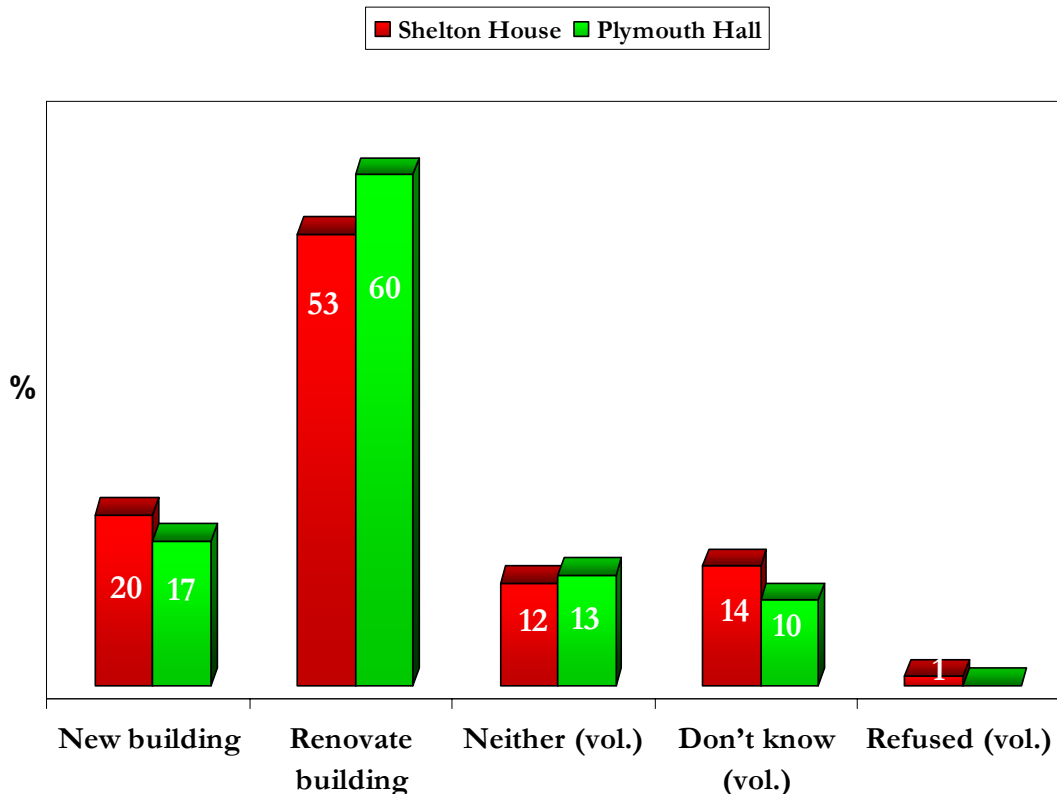
Men are more supportive of renovating Shelton House to serve as town hall (60%) than women (48%).

Two-thirds of Newtown residents either strongly support (36%) or somewhat support (33%) having an architect perform a study to determine whether Shelton House should be renovated or demolished with a new town hall built on the same site in the same architectural style

- **Build a new cultural arts center or renovate Plymouth Hall?**

Six-in-ten residents (60%) prefer renovating Plymouth Hall to serve as cultural arts center more than building a new cultural arts center. Fewer residents (17%) favor building a new cultural arts center. Thirteen percent (13%) would not prefer either of the two suggested options. Ten percent (10%) did not offer an opinion on this question

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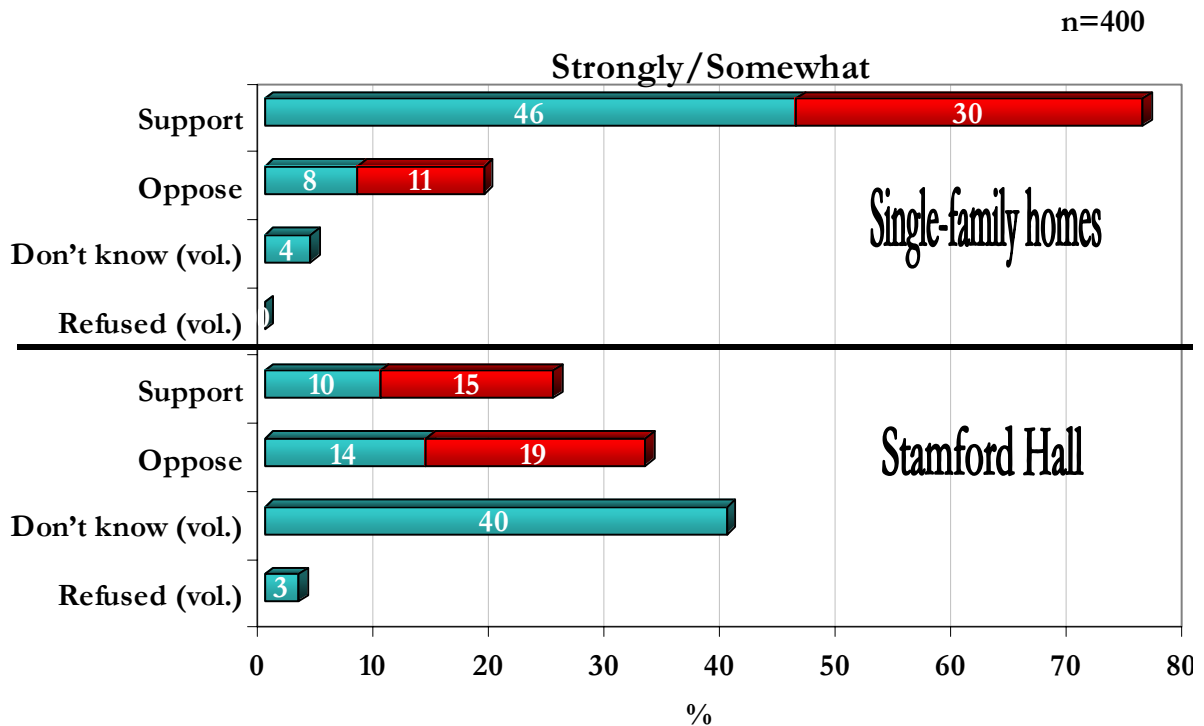


- ***Stamford Hall and the eight single-family homes***

When asked whether they would support or oppose demolishing Stamford Hall, most residents (40%) did not know enough about it to offer an answer. One-third of residents (33%) either strongly oppose (19%) or somewhat oppose (14%) demolishing Stamford Hall. About a quarter (25%) of residents strongly support (10%) or somewhat support (15%) the demolition of the building.

Residents with a high school (38%) or college education (35%) are more likely to oppose demolishing Stamford Hall than residents with a post graduate degree (24%); those with a post graduate education, however, are most likely to disclose that they do not know enough about the building to vote in favor or against its demolition (49%). The least a resident knows about Fairfield Hills, the more likely this person is to oppose the demolition of Stamford Hall.

Over three-quarters of residents (76%) support either strongly (46%) or somewhat (30%) keeping in place the eight single-family homes currently on the site until an architectural review is completed. Fewer than one-fifth of residents (19%) oppose the proposal.

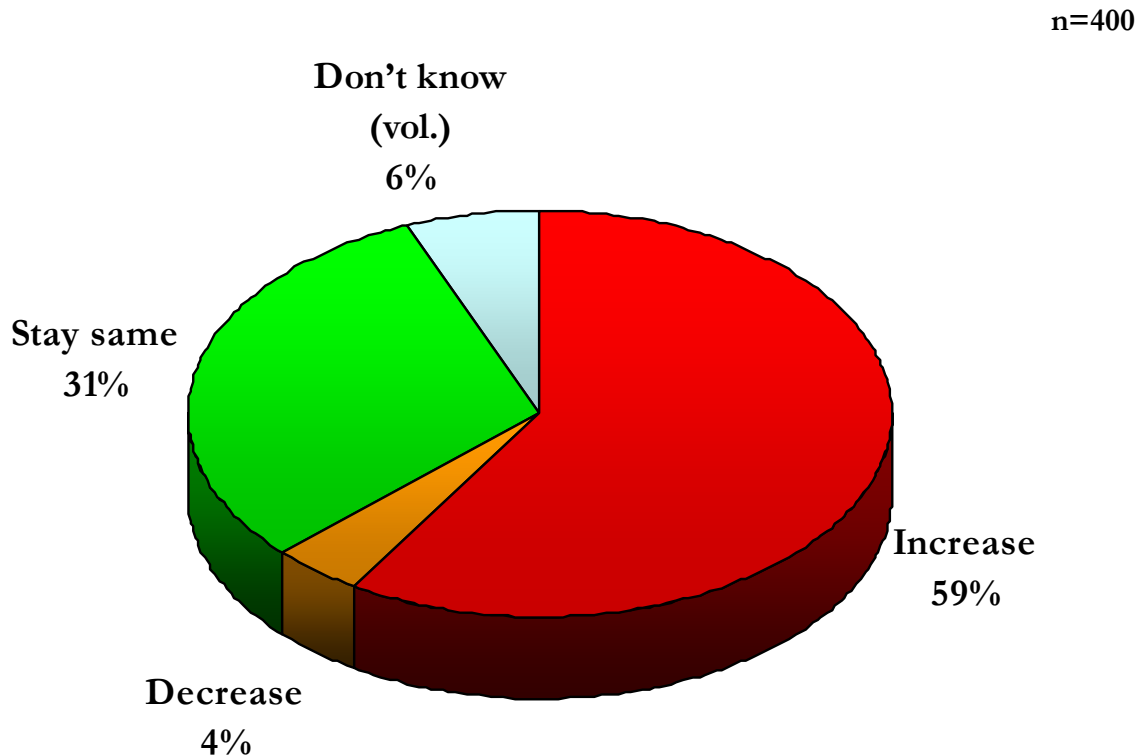




## Taxes and the development of Fairfield Hills

Newtown residents were asked what kind of impact they thought the development of Fairfield Hills would have on their taxes. The majority of residents (59%) think that the development of Fairfield Hills will result in an increase in the taxes they pay. Slightly less than one-third of residents (31%) think that the development of Fairfield Hills would have no effect on the taxes they pay. Only four percent (4%) of Newtown residents think their taxes would decrease with the development of Fairfield Hills. Six percent of respondents (6%) did not offer an opinion on this question.

**Do you think that the development of Fairfield Hills will result in an increase in the taxes you pay, a decrease in the taxes you pay, or do you think they will stay about the same?**



Residents without school-age kids are more likely to think that the development of Fairfield Hills will result in an increase in the taxes they pay (63%) than residents who have children attending Newtown public schools (52%).

## **Awareness of 2001 vote and support of the master plan**

When asked if they were aware of the fact that voters in 2001 authorized the money necessary to purchase the Fairfield Hills site and that the town will not need to spend any additional funds to acquire the property, the majority of Newtown residents (64%) say they were aware of that fact. However, one-third (34%) say they were not aware of it.

The higher the level of education, the more likely residents are to be aware of the 2001 vote to authorize money necessary to purchase the Fairfield Hills site. Residents with higher education (post graduate) are more likely to be aware of the 2001 vote authorizing money necessary to purchase Fairfield Hills (82%) than residents with a college (62%) or high school (40%) education.

Residents who are relatively new to Newtown (less than 5 years) are less likely to be aware of the 2001 vote to authorize the money necessary for the purchase of the Fairfield Hills site (35%) than longer-term residents who have lived in Newtown for 5 to 10 years (73%), 11 to 20 years (67%), or 20 years or more (71%).

Newtown residents who live in their own home are three times more likely to be aware of the 2001 vote (71%) than those who live in a rental property or live with relatives (22%).

Residents who have read, seen or heard a lot about Fairfield Hills are much more likely to be aware of the 2001 vote than residents who have read, seen or heard some (58%), or those who have read, seen or heard a little or nothing at all (36%).

While three-quarters of residents (75%) that are familiar with the master plan are aware of the 2001 vote, less than half of the residents (45%) who state that they are not familiar with the master plan are in fact aware of the 2001 vote to authorize the money necessary for the purchase of Fairfield Hills.

Residents were then asked if knowing that the town will not have to spend any additional money to acquire the Fairfield Hills Property makes a difference in their support of the Fairfield Hills plan. Two-thirds of residents (66%) say that knowing that the town will not have to spend additional money to acquire the property does not make a difference in their level of support or opposition to the master plan. Slightly more than a quarter of residents (26%) say knowing about it makes them more likely to support the Fairfield Hills master plan. Only 2% percent of residents say that knowing about the 2001 vote makes them less likely to support the master plan. Five percent (5%) of respondents did not offer an answer on this question

Residents who were not aware of the 2001 vote to authorize the money necessary to purchase the Fairfield Hills site are more likely to support the master plan knowing that no additional money will be needed to acquire the property (40%) than those who were already aware of that fact (19%).

Residents with a high school education (39%), people in Newtown who would vote to support the master plan (36%), and older residents age 56 and above (33%) are most likely to support the master plan after being told that the town will not have to spend any additional money to acquire the Fairfield Hills property.

Residents with a high school degree or less (39%) are much more likely to support the master plan knowing no additional fund will be needed to purchase the property compared to residents with a college education (28%) and those who have a post graduate degree (15%).

Thirty-six (36%) of residents who would vote to support the master plan are more likely to vote for the plan knowing there is no need to raise additional fund to purchase the property, compared with 28% of residents who were not sure whether they would vote against or in favor of the plan, and 14% who would oppose the master plan.

Older residents are much more likely to support the master plan knowing the town will not need to spend additional money to purchase the property (33%), compared with residents between the ages of 40 and 55 (21%), and younger residents ages 18-44 (27%).

#### IV. Ratings of Town Government

Newtown residents overall have a positive view about their town government. When asked how they would rate the job their town government is doing, the majority of residents (60%) rate the town government job as excellent (10%) or good (50%). Nearly one-third of residents (32%) rate the job Newtown town government is doing as fair and another 7% as poor.

- Residents who have lived in town for less than 5 years are much more likely to give a good job rating to the town government (58%) than residents who have lived in Newtown for 5 to 10 years (42%). Women (57%) are more likely than men (43%) to give a good job rating to the town government. Residents who have only read, seen or heard a little or nothing at all about Fairfield Hills are more likely to rate the job the town government is doing as good (59%) than those who have read, seen or heard a lot (39%).

Newtown town government does not enjoy the same positive job rating when it comes to dealing with the Fairfield Hills issue. A large number of residents (38%) rate the job the town government is doing in dealing with the Fairfield Hills property issue as fair. Over a third of residents (36%) rate the town's government job as good while only 4% give a rating of excellent. Nearly 2-in-10 residents (17%), however, say the town is doing a poor job in dealing with the Fairfield Hills issue.

- Nearly half of Newtown residents (45%) who have read, seen or heard a little or nothing at all about Fairfield Hills rate the town government job as fair, compared with 40% of residents who have read, seen or heard a little and 35% who did so a lot. Residents who own their own home are more likely to rate the job Newtown government is doing on the Fairfield Hills issue as poor (19%) compared to residents who rent or live with relatives (5%). Nearly a quarter of residents with a post graduate education give a poor job rating to Newtown town government (24%) compared with 15% of residents with a college degree or less, and 13% of those with a high school education.

## **V. Methodology**

The Town of Newtown commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut (CSRA) to conduct a survey of town residents on the Fairfield Hills issue. The survey was conducted via telephone from July 26, 2004 to July 29, 2004 by the CSRA interviewers. The survey was conducted with a total of 400 randomly selected respondents from Newtown. Interviews were conducted at the CSRA's interviewing facility in Storrs, Connecticut, using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system.

The sample telephone numbers for the population were generated through a random-digit-dial telephone methodology to ensure that each possible residential telephone number had an equal probability of selection. The sample error associated with a survey of this size is approximately  $\pm 5$  percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. This means that there is less than one chance in twenty that the results of a survey of this size would differ by more than 5 percentage points in either direction from the results which would be obtained if all residents of Newtown had been selected. CSRA attempted to minimize all possible sources of error in this survey.

## VI. Annotated Questionnaire

Q1. To begin, do you live in Newtown?

100%	Yes
0	No
0	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Newtown, would you say it is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

49%	Excellent
45	Good
5	Fair
1	Poor
0	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q3. What is the best thing about the Town of Newtown? (ASK OPEN ENDED)

17%	Schools
12	People
11	Countryside feeling/Rural & Suburban
10	Town/Neighborhood/Size
7	Sense of community
6	Quiet
5	Quality of life
3	Location/Accessibility/Convenience
3	Safety
3	Beauty
3	Services
3	Open space
3	Quaint
1	Property
7	Other
4	Don't know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q4. What would you say is the MOST important issue now facing Newtown? (ASK OPEN ENDED)

27%	Growth and development
21	The future of Fairfield Hills
20	Taxes
10	Education/Schools
7	Drugs
3	Traffic
4	Other
8	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

IQ5. The next set of questions concerns the Fairfield Hills property in Newtown.

Q5. How much have you read, seen or heard about the Fairfield Hills property; a lot, some, a little, or nothing at all?

45%	A lot
40	Some
10	A little
5	Nothing at all
0	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

IQ6. Fairfield Hills is a 189-acre parcel of land that voters authorized the town to purchase in June 2001. Fairfield Hills is made up of land from the Fairfield Hills Hospital campus and land on Wasserman Way containing the campus fire station. The Fairfield Hills Master plan was developed by the town to decide how to use the Fairfield Hills property.

Q6. How familiar are you with the Fairfield Hills master plan, would you say you're very familiar, somewhat familiar, not too familiar, or not at all familiar?

9%	Very familiar
54	Somewhat familiar
25	Not too familiar
12	Not at all familiar
1	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q7. A referendum on the Fairfield Hills plan held in August of 2003 was NOT approved by Newtown residents. If this vote were taken again today, would you support or oppose this plan for the Fairfield Hills property? (PROBE: SUPPORT/OPPOSE STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT)

12%	Strongly support
20	Somewhat support
17	Somewhat oppose
17	Strongly oppose
31	Don't know (vol.)
3	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q8a. What would you say is the main reason why you would support the Fairfield Hills master plan? (OPEN-ENDED)

24%	Town better off using property rather than letting it sit there
13	Good for the town and its future
11	Good master plan
10	Variety of uses proposed in the master plan
8	Preserving the land
6	Generate revenues
6	Opportunity for public & community use
5	Big/beautiful usable property
4	Housing/business development
5	Other
8	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=126

Q8b. What would you say is the main reason why you would NOT support the Fairfield Hills master plan? (ASK OPEN-ENDED)

28%	Financial reasons: costly/risky/increase in taxes
13	Too much development: need more open spaces
11	Poor plan
10	Better economic use of property: more development
10	Lack of information/Do not know enough about the plan
7	Town cannot manage development of the Fairfield Hills property
6	Plan not reflective of residents' needs & wants
4	Disagree with possible destructions of current buildings
9	Other
0	Don't know (vol.)

n=136



IQ9. There have been a number of ideas as to what the town should do with the Fairfield Hills site. I'm going to read you a list of items that some people have suggested be done with Fairfield Hills. Using a scale from 1 to 10 where one means "not a good idea at all" and 10 means "a very good idea," please tell me how you would rate each suggestion for Fairfield Hills.

Q9. Renovate Shelton House to serve as Newtown's town hall (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means "not a good idea at all" and 10 means "a very good idea," please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

11%	1.00
5	2.00
4	3.00
6	4.00
17	5.00
5	6.00
12	7.00
14	8.00
8	9.00
15	10.00
4	Don't know (vol.)

n=400

6.10 Mean Rating

Q10. Build additional playing fields for sports (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means "not a good idea at all" and 10 means "a very good idea," please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

6%	1.00
3	2.00
7	3.00
10	4.00
14	5.00
7	6.00
9	7.00
14	8.00
6	9.00
24	10.00
0	Don't know (vol.)

n=400

6.54 Mean Rating

Q11. Preserve open space that can be used for activities like jogging and walking (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

2%	1.00
2	2.00
4	3.00
3	4.00
9	5.00
4	6.00
8	7.00
15	8.00
10	9.00
42	10.00
1	Don't know (vol.)

n=400

7.89 Mean Rating

Q12. Provide meeting space for community groups to use (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

5%	1.00
4	2.00
4	3.00
5	4.00
15	5.00
6	6.00
11	7.00
17	8.00
10	9.00
22	10.00
0	Don't know (vol.)

n=400

6.86 Mean Rating

Q13. Use the land for NEW commercial development for businesses (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

24%	1.00
8	2.00
6	3.00
7	4.00
15	5.00
5	6.00
10	7.00
6	8.00
5	9.00
14	10.00
1	Don't know (vol.)

n=400

4.91 Mean Rating

Q14. Renovate EXISTING buildings on the property for businesses to use (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

15%	1.00
6	2.00
8	3.00
6	4.00
14	5.00
5	6.00
12	7.00
11	8.00
7	9.00
13	10.00
3	Don't know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400

5.61 Mean Rating

Q15. Build a new high school (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

26%	1.00
13	2.00
7	3.00
8	4.00
12	5.00
6	6.00
8	7.00
7	8.00
3	9.00
9	10.00
1	Don't know (vol.)

n=400

4.38 Mean Rating

Q16. Building space for cultural activities (PROBE: On a scale from one to 10 where one means “not a good idea at all” and 10 means “a very good idea,” please tell me how you would rate this suggestion for Fairfield Hills.)

4%	1.00
4	2.00
5	3.00
4	4.00
14	5.00
12	6.00
13	7.00
16	8.00
7	9.00
20	10.00
1	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

6.73 Mean Rating

Q17. What do you think would be the single BEST use of the Fairfield Hills property?  
(ASK OPEN-ENDED)

- 15% Use land for commercial development for businesses
- 14 Preserve open space
- 13 Recreational use/playing fields
- 8 For community groups use/community activities
- 8 Combination of commercial development, open space, and space for cultural activities
- 7 New high school
- 7 University/College
- 5 Town offices
- 3 Something that generates income/revenues
- 3 Build space for cultural activities
- 3 Town should not be involved/Leave the property as is
- 2 Municipal or public golf course
- 1 New town center
- 4 Other
- 6 Don't know (vol.)
- 1 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q18. Some people have suggested building a new town hall on the Fairfield Hills campus, and others have suggested renovating Shelton House to serve as town hall. Which option would you prefer?

- 20% Build new town hall
- 53 Renovate Shelton House
- 12 Neither (vol.)
- 14 Don't know (vol.)
- 1 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q18a. Would you support or oppose having an architect perform a study to determine whether Shelton House should be renovated or demolished with a new town hall built on the same site in the same architectural style? (PROBE: Support/oppose Strongly/somewhat)

- 36% Strongly support
- 33 Somewhat support
- 8 Somewhat oppose
- 17 Strongly oppose
- 5 Don't know (vol.)
- 0 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q19. Some people have suggested building a cultural arts center on the Fairfield Hills campus, and other have suggested that Plymouth Hall be renovated to serve as a cultural arts center. Which option would you prefer?

- 17% Build new cultural arts center
- 60 Renovate Plymouth Hall to serve as cultural arts center
- 13 Neither (vol.)
- 10 Don't know (vol.)
- 0 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q20. Would you support or oppose demolishing Stamford Hall? (PROBE: Support/oppose Strongly/somewhat)

- 10% Strongly support
- 15 Somewhat support
- 14 Somewhat oppose
- 19 Strongly oppose
- 40 Don't know (vol.)
- 3 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q21. Would you support or oppose keeping in place the eight single-family homes currently on the site to be used as affordable housing until an architectural review is completed? (PROBE: Support/oppose Strongly/somewhat)

- 46% Strongly support
- 30 Somewhat support
- 8 Somewhat oppose
- 11 Strongly oppose
- 4 Don't know (vol.)
- 0 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q22. Do you think that the development of Fairfield Hills will result in an increase in the taxes you pay, a decrease in the taxes you pay, or do you think they will stay about the same?

- 59% Increase
- 4 Decrease
- 31 Stay same
- 6 Don't know (vol.)
- 0 Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q23. In 2001, voters authorized the money necessary to purchase the Fairfield Hills site. The town will not need to spend any additional funds to acquire the property. Would you say you were aware of this fact before I mentioned it or not?

64%	Yes, was aware
34	No, was not aware
2	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q24. Does knowing that the town will not have to spend any additional money to acquire the Fairfield Hills Property make you more likely to support the Fairfield Hills master plan, less likely, or does it not make a difference?

26%	More likely
2	Less likely
66	Does not make a difference
5	Don't know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q25. How would you rate the job that the town government is doing in Newtown, would you say excellent, good, fair, or poor?

10%	Excellent
50	Good
32	Fair
7	Poor
1	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

Q26. How would you rate the job that the Newtown town government is doing in dealing with the Fairfield Hills issue, would you say excellent, good, fair, or poor?

4%	Excellent
36	Good
38	Fair
17	Poor
5	Don't know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=400

IQD1. I now have a few questions for classification purposes:

QD1. Are you currently registered to vote at your current address in Newtown?

86%	Yes
12	No
1	Don't know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD2. How many years have you lived in Newtown? (ENTER NUMBER 0-97. ROUND TO NEAREST NUMBER, for example: enter 0 if less than 6 months, enter 1 if 6 to 12 months.)

18%	Less than 5 years
29	5 to 10 years
24	11 to 20 years
29	21 or more years
0	Don't Know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD3. Do you currently own your own home, rent, or live with relatives?

86%	Own
4	Rent
9	Live with relatives
0	Don't Know (vol.)
2	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD4. How many adults at least 18 years of age or older live in your household?

7%	1
59	2
22	3
10	4
1	5
0	6
0	7 or more
0	Don't Know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400



QD5. How many people living in your household are under the age of 18?

44%	0
21	1
22	2
9	3
3	4
0	5
0	6
0	Don't Know (vol.)
2	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD6. How many people living in your household under the age of 18 currently attend Newtown public schools?

28%	0
34	1
30	2
6	3
2	4
0	5
0	6
0	7 or more
1	Don't Know (vol.)
0	Refused (vol.)

n=209

QD7. What was the last grade of school that you have completed? (ASK AS OPEN ENDED: DO NOT READ CHOICES)

1%	Some high school (9-11)
15	High School graduate (12)
17	Some College (1-3 years)
36	College Graduate (4 years)
29	Post Graduate (4+ years)
0	Don't Know (vol.)
1	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD8. What is your race? Are you White, Black, Asian, Native American, or some other race?

87%	White
1	Asian
1	Native American
1	Hispanic
0	Black
2	Other (SPECIFY)
1	Biracial (vol.)
1	Don't Know (vol.)
7	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD9. For classification purposes only, what is the total yearly income of all members of your family now living at home? (READ CHOICES 1-7)

1%	Less than \$20,000
4	\$20,000 to less than \$40,000
9	\$40,000 to less than \$60,000
10	\$60,000 to less than \$80,000
12	\$80,000 to less than \$100,000
20	\$100,000 to less than \$150,000
19	Over \$150,000
5	Don't Know (vol.)
20	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD10. In what year were you born? Age

8%	18-24
8	25-34
41	35-49
23	50-64
12	65 +
1	Don't Know (vol.)
8	Refused (vol.)

n=400

QD11. (DO NOT ASK. RECORD GENDER)

50%	Male
50	Female

n=400