

CHAPTER I

GOALS, POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

A master plan not only describes existing conditions, assets and problems, but also provides guidance for the future development of the Town. This section of the Master Plan contains the "objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards upon which the constituent proposals for the physical and socio-economic development of the municipality are based" (RSA 674:2.1). The goals, policies and recommendations included in this chapter have been collected throughout the master planning process. Ideas have come from the community attitude survey, town boards and departments and directly from Lyme residents. The rationale behind these goals is based on the assets, problems and community attitudes described in the following chapters.

A goal is a stated objective, often unattainable and usually a long-range matter. Policies and recommendations are oriented to achieving goals.

This chapter should be reviewed and updated every year. It should be used as a checklist to monitor the implementation of this master plan. Also, as attitudes, needs and physical realities in Town change, this chapter should be revised accordingly.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Goals

To protect Lyme's heritage.

To conserve Lyme's important agricultural lands.

To ensure that future development will have no impact on fragile natural systems.

To protect the quality of Lyme's groundwater.

Recommendations

- Slopes greater than 25% should be left as open space because of high erosion potential and difficulty for development.
- A health by-law instituting septic system design standards consistent with the Lyme Subdivision Regulations should be adopted to protect Lyme's groundwater and surface water from septic system effluents.
- Regulations which require monitoring and testing of above and below ground storage tanks and which set standards for the installation of new storage tanks should be adopted to protect Lyme's groundwater from contamination resulting from leaky tanks.
- An in-depth study of Lyme's aquifers should be undertaken to identify recharge areas, aquifers and subsurface movement of water.
- Areas of high water yield near existing settlements should be landbanked for use should individual wells no longer be suitable sources of drinking water.
- A buffer of at least 100 feet should be maintained between any development and wetlands or surface waters.
- Building construction should not occur in flood prone areas.

- Lyme's important agricultural lands should be protected from development that would destroy their usefulness for growing crops in the future.
- Efforts should be made to prevent contamination of Lyme's water resources by road salt, erosion, agricultural runoff and failed septic systems.
- The Town should control activities related to road and utility maintenance and construction that jeopardize the quality of its water resources.
- The Conservation Commission and Planning Board should promote the recommendations of the Natural Heritage Program for managing the rare organisms on Holt's Ledge.
- Wildlife habitat is an important land use which should be considered in the review of proposals for development. Rare plants and animals should be insulated from disruptive land uses.
- Critical natural areas and areas of special natural significance should be identified and mapped. These areas should be protected by easements, acquisition or land use controls.
- More study is needed to identify and prioritize Lyme's critical visual resources.
- In high exposure areas or in important viewsheds, encourage the use of traditional building materials and the sensitive siting of new structures to minimize impacts.
- Visual impact should be considered in subdivision review; developers should work to minimize adverse impacts.
- Vegetation and topography should be used to create visual buffers between roadways and new development.
- A variety of development densities and lot sizes and a mix of land uses should be promoted to continue traditional visual patterns in Lyme.
- In addition to land acquisition and easements, the following land use controls should be considered or continued to protect Lyme's important scenery:
 - sign controls,
 - prohibit visual misfits from locating in scenic areas through zoning,
 - institute performance standards to protect views in overlay zones which encompass important scenic resources.

EXISTING LAND USE

Recommendations

- Land use controls, performance standards and density guidelines should be used to promote wise land use and reinforce existing land use patterns in Town.

POPULATION

Recomendations

- Following the adoption of a capital improvements program, review development proposals with attention to population impacts.

HOUSING

Goals

To preserve the rural and village character of Lyme.
To preserve the historic and aesthetic qualities of Lyme.
To encourage a climate in which available, affordable housing is possible.
To prevent development which jeopardizes the natural areas, health, safety, quality of neighborhood, or prosperity of the Town, or necessitates an excessive expenditure of public funds for supply of municipal services.

Recommendations

- Residential growth should be guided to areas of Town that can best sustain that growth.
- Residential growth should occur where there is no danger or injury to health, safety, quality of neighborhood or prosperity by reason of the lack of water supply, drainage, sewage disposal, transportation, schools or other public services; or necessitate excessive expenditure of public funds for the supply of such services.
- Development should be directed away from the most sensitive natural areas and integrated with less fragile natural areas. New residential development should be located in areas most economically served by existing Town services and utilities.
- Allow conversion of large houses to apartments.
- Promote a small town quality and character in housing development to preserve the village character of Lyme Plain and Lyme Center.
- The existing pattern of lot sizes and uses should guide the future land use development in an area recognizing that a mix of sizes and uses is desirable.
- Cluster development should be permitted.
- Large multi-unit structures should be located close to Town services.
- Roads should not be improved or created by the Town to open up inaccessible parts of Town to development.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Goals

To conserve the Town's resource base for farming and forestry.
To preserve and enhance Lyme's historical and architectural resources, especially around the Common.
To maintain the character of Lyme as a rural community with a limited commercial and industrial base.

Recommendations

- The Town should allow for the development of home occupations and cottage industry.
- Strip development should not be allowed along Route 10.
- The Town should adopt regulations to minimize or avoid the potential adverse impacts of commercial or industrial development.
- Discourage inappropriately scaled and designed residential and commercial enterprises, including, but not limited to manufacturing firms and shopping centers from locating in Lyme.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goals

To provide Lyme residents with a safe, healthy and educationally enriching environment.

To provide community services and operate community facilities in a cost-efficient and effective way.

Recommendations

- The Town should continue to participate in and take advantage of regional services when they can be provided cost-efficiently and at a service level meeting the needs of Lyme residents.
- The Town should continue to provide local officials with the resources to administer the Town effectively and efficiently. The following projects should be funded and/or undertaken:
 - 1) Reassessment of property
 - 2) Solid waste plan including a stump dump
 - 3) Parking areas in both villages
 - 4) Septage disposal by land application or in lagoons
 - 5) Road management plan with capital improvements plan
 - 6) Bridge repair as needed and identified by the State
 - 7) New equipment for Town departments
- The Town should participate in the development of a regional indoor recreation facility.
- A Connecticut River beach area suitable for swimming, boat launching and picnicing should be set aside.
- An assessment of recreational needs should be undertaken in the next few years.
- Cemetery expansion should be planned and funds appropriated for the expansion.
- The activities of the Home Health Agency should be consolidated in one building capable of adequately accommodating each program/service.

- Lyme should continue to participate in the Upper Valley Solid Waste District.
- The Town should support the regional household toxic waste pick-up program.
- Recycling should be promoted and practiced as a way to reduce the volume of the waste stream and to use resources more efficiently.
- A program of regular road maintenance should be continued. Reconstruction, if needed, should be initiated in order to keep roads serviceable and as a precaution against expensive unanticipated projects.
- Discourage development in areas with poor road access.
- The Town should accept only roads built to Town standards.
- Adopt driveway regulations, to ensure that curb cuts occur at safe locations with good sight distance and to protect existing Town roads.
- Consider the effect which proposed subdivisions may have on off-site roads. When appropriate, limit the scope of subdivisions or require the developer/subdivider to improve off-site roads as a condition for subdivision approval.
- If development occurs on private roads, insist that these roads be built to Town road specifications and maintenance responsibilities are clearly assigned.
- Future rights-of-way for the improvement of existing Town roads should be established now and laid out on the Official Map. Problem sections of roads should be identified and new road layouts considered, if necessary, to replace these sections.
- New development along Route 10 should not impede traffic flow.
- An environmental review board including abutters should be established to evaluate the impacts of major road projects before they are undertaken.
- The Town should identify sources of sand and gravel to supply the Town. If necessary, land with deposits should be purchased and landbanked until needed.
- With most commuters employed in Hanover, Lebanon or Hartford, ride-sharing and use of Advance Transit are logical and cost-effective solutions to traffic congestion and parking shortages in the employment centers.
- There should be continued support for Advance Transit.

TOWN FINANCES

Recommendations

- Develop a capital improvements program and update it annually.
- Continue to use reserve funds for capital expenditures.
- Establish reserve funds for road improvements and school expansions.
- A revaluation should be undertaken every ten years.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Goals

To preserve Lyme's architectural heritage.

To promote an appreciation for and understanding of Lyme's historic resources.

Recommendations

- Consider the establishment of local historic districts surrounding Lyme Common and around Lyme Center.
- Preserve open space along Route 10 and the East Thetford Road to complement the Common architecture which is inseparably linked with the landscape.
- Survey historic resources in Lyme.
- Provide the public with information about local historic districts so the advantages and disadvantages are clearly understood.
- Historic structures and areas should be considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places including but not limited to the following:

- Congregational Church and Horsesheds
- Edgell Bridge
- The Lockup and Tomb
- Cyrus Hamilton House
- Lyme Center Baptist Church and Vestry
- Various districts described in the local historic district section
- Other private residences

- A public information program should be undertaken to disseminate information more widely for the greater recognition and enjoyment of historic resources by the townspeople including publications, leaflets, exhibits, slide shows and lectures.
- The School system and Town Library should be encouraged to integrate local history and architectural history to a larger degree.
- Encourage the publication of comprehensive historic resources survey for Lyme.
- The town should encourage the donation of or, where necessary, purchase conservation and agricultural easements to preserve the community's agricultural heritage. Development of a land trust uniting preservation and conservation interests is recommended.
- The Town should continue to encourage the designation of scenic roads.
- Encourage the publication of a comprehensive history of Lyme incorporating an oral history component.
- Immediate restoration/rehabilitation of the Academy Building is imperative before this important local landmark is lost forever. Fundraising, foundation funding and grants should all be explored.
- Lyme's cemeteries should be inventoried.

FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- To protect Lyme's natural heritage.
- To promote the existing pattern of rural land uses.
- To guide growth to the right place at the right time.
- To control growth so that development poses no burden to the Town.
- To encourage a climate in which available, affordable housing is possible.
- To set aside land for recognized future community facility needs.
- To preserve historic and aesthetic qualities of Lyme.
- To manage growth so that fiscal and environmental impacts are minimized.

Recommendations

- Monitor growth and development in the Town, especially noting the cumulative effects on the Town's character, natural resources and finances.
- Regularly review and update the master plan and, in particular, the future land use plan.
- Adopt land use controls to implement the future land use plan.
- Revise subdivision regulations and other land use controls as needed.
- Undertake a community attitude survey every five years.