



PLANNING BOARD

~ 2013 REPORT ~

The Planning Board is the local land use planning and regulatory board charged with facilitating our community's long-term planning process. The foundation of that planning lies in the Town's Master Plan and the Board is responsible for overseeing the crafting and updating of that document as community needs and conditions change. While many plans are called "master plans", a Town's Master Plan, as defined by NH RSA 674:2, is intended to define the community's vision for itself, guide policy decisions and drive implementation strategies to fulfill that vision. Additionally, the Board is charged with overseeing completion of the annual Capital Improvements Plan; recommending revisions to ordinances and local regulations, and applying those rules as they relate to commercial and residential development.

As with all of the Board's work, public and professional input is sought through a variety of avenues: special subcommittees or working groups that include interested stakeholders, an interdepartmental review process, engaging external consultants as needed, public comment periods, and public hearings. Our work sessions are always open to the public. With the continual improvements of the Town's website, we hope to be able to have even more Planning Board related information readily available online.

Throughout the year, the Board works closely with many committees and departments including the Conservation Commission, the Economic Development Advisory Council, the Zoning Board, the Board of Selectmen, and the Department of Public Works on various initiatives and proposed revisions to our ordinances and regulations. Impetus for this work comes from citizen input, suggestions from other boards and commissions, changes in State and Federal regulations, new best practices and changing community needs. Based on what the Board has heard from the community and our colleagues, the general focus areas for 2014 will continue to be economic development, transportation and housing.

The 2013 Planning Board projects included: revisions to the Town's Gravel and Earth Removal regulations prompted by changes in State law; completion of the annual Capital Improvements Plan; initial evaluation of certain land use ordinances that impact the cost and ease of doing business in our Town; and continued progress on planning for Milford's future housing needs. With assistance from the Nashua Regional Planning Commission and a NHHFA Community Planning Grant, the Board continued reviewing the Town's Zoning Ordinance and related regulations relative to opportunities for housing development. After much research and deliberation, initial strategies were drafted to promote neighborhood development that enhances quality of life in Milford. This work will continue in 2014. An adequate housing supply, of various price-points and designs, is one factor in promoting economic development.

Overall, the number of applications before the Board this year was higher than in 2012 and a number of entities came in to “discuss” potential development projects. Many of the applications in 2013 involved the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and investments to improve existing commercial locations. For example, residential buildings on Elm and Union Streets were renovated for commercial and multi-family use. The MacDonald’s restaurant on Nashua Street is undergoing a major renovation and modernization, and Crown Castle International replaced a communications tower off McGettigan Road with a new 180 foot telecommunications tower. On the residential front, the Board conditionally approved a 6-lot single family home development on Melendy Road and a 24-unit senior housing complex on Route 13-N. The Board continues to work with St. Joseph Hospital on plans for a major redevelopment and investment at their Nashua Street location.

Milford has a vibrant business community which significantly contributes to the quality of life in our town. As a way to recognize outstanding members of our local business community, the Planning Board implemented a Distinguished Site Award program. In 2013, a fourth business was awarded this annual recognition – **The J.P. Pest Training Facility** located at 34 Hammond Road. Visible from the Route 101-Bypass, the J.P. Pest Training Facility demonstrates careful attention to detail and complements Milford’s architectural history. This site exemplifies the kind of thoughtful design, site layout and pride the Distinguished Site Award is intended to recognize.



The Milford Planning Board is made up of 6 full members, 1 ex-officio member and currently 1 alternate member. All members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Potential members are asked to attend a few meetings and meet with current members to become better acquainted with the work of the Board. Prospective members are recommended by the Planning Board as candidates for membership to the Board of Selectmen. The Board is always looking for new volunteers to serve as alternate members! If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity to help guide Milford’s future, please contact the Planning Board at 249-0620.

Milford is fortunate to have a very dedicated group of employees working in the Office of Community Development. Led by Director Bill Parker and assisted by Town Planner Jodie Levandowski and Administrative Assistant Shirley Wilson, the office supports and facilitates the work of the Planning Board, and keeps us abreast of new land use trends and best practices. The Board extends many thanks to the entire Community Development team for their assistance and guidance!

The Planning Board also extends its hearty thanks to the citizen volunteers who contribute their expertise and energy to the many committees, commissions and councils that work with the Planning Board for Milford's betterment. Community input is vital to successful community planning, and the Board thanks the residents and business owners who have shared their thoughts, questions and suggestions throughout the year. We welcome your input and look forward to hearing more from you in 2014. By working together and sharing ideas we can assure that the Granite Town remains a wonderful place to live, work and play!

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Langdell, Chairperson



Thank You