



**NSPC Priority Mapping Project Next Steps Forum
February 25, 2014, 6:00 – 8:45 pm
Winchester Town Hall Auditorium**

Meeting goals:

- To provide an opportunity to learn about local and regional priorities for preservation, development, and infrastructure investment in the NSPC subregion and network with others
- To provide an opportunity to brainstorm and discuss possible projects, studies, policies, and other activities that may advance the identified priorities

Discussion Summary:

Attendees were asked to help identify short and long term activities (planning, advocacy, policies, studies) that can advance the development, preservation, and infrastructure priorities identified in the report. These activities could be subregional in nature or a local/municipal activity.

Attendees could choose to participate in up to two table discussions by topic within an hour. The table topics were: development, preservation, transportation, and other infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, stormwater.) Participants at each table were asked to consider the following general questions:

- Which of these priorities do you think are more implementable in the near term and why?
- Which of these priorities do you think may be harder to implement, and why?
- Which community groups active on this topic are not represented tonight? Which are particularly needed to advance some of these local priorities?
- Are there opportunities for coordinated activity between priorities in this category and others that have been identified? (Example: PPAs and STIs, PDAs and STIs)

Participants came together at the end of the small table discussions and facilitators provided a report-out of highlights. The following summarizes major topics raised during the table discussions and during the facilitator report-outs.

Table Discussion Highlights

Development Priorities

- **Town Center Redevelopment.** Facilitate the adoption of zoning that enables mixed use development in the downtown. Address parking requirements, which can be an impediment to redevelopment.
- **Promote redevelopment opportunities.** Lead with visuals to show what new construction can look like and to address fears of the unknown. Discuss the potential of design standards in setting expectations and to reduce fears about materials and designs.
- **Multifamily Housing.** Provide tools that can help sell the idea that the region needs more housing in light of fears like increased school costs.
- **Address parking requirements and concerns;** highlight the benefits of shared parking and transit-oriented development.



- Support development with a concern for transit; sometimes development is permitted without a concern for transit infrastructure; in some places there is the addition of many units of housing but with no access to public transit, which creates traffic.
- Support increased planning capacity. Several municipalities in the region do not have a planner. Having a planner will reduce work in silos.

Preservation Priorities

- Support tools and incentives for preservation; provide information on options such as Transfer of Development Rights and the Community Preservation Act
- There are different rules and regulations for historic preservation and open space preservation; there is an opportunity for more coordination
- Open space and recreation plan requirements could be updated to better emphasize examination of regional connections and sustainability
- Identify providers of technical assistance on cultural resource preservation efforts; MAPC can consider this
- Promote the possibility of parcel development and partial preservation on land that cannot be purchased in its entirety by the municipality for conservation
- Promote historic preservation considerations in development conversations
- Support the efforts of historic commissions and conservation commissions, which often have limited staffing

Transportation Priorities

- Support road diets - Reading, Stoneham; study Route 28 Corridor
- Support Wakefield/Lynnfield Rails to Trails project; preliminary designs ready; explore Rails to Trails and Tri-Community Bikeway connection
- Support walking audits as a way to examine walkability issues/opportunities between residential and commercial areas
- Support public transit alternatives, e.g. extension of Route 128 Business Council shuttle service
- Many identified STIs could be expanded to include segments in neighboring municipalities; take a more holistic approach when advocating for their improvement
- Examine pros and cons of the carbon tax as incentive to encourage use of public transit and reduce driving
- Examine pros and cons of active streets legislation and complete streets

Infrastructure Priorities

- Need for technical assistance to address flooding and stormwater issues in Stoneham and Wakefield and also in the Stoneham/Melrose area near the Lynn Fells Parkway
- Discussion about renewable energy – residential solar; interest voiced by some in attendance – tying into the Reading Municipal Light District



- Interest in the mapping of natural gas infrastructure – what does the network look like?
Constraints?
- Interest in the mapping of telecommunications infrastructure cell towers – so when new requests come to the boards and committees, they can have this understanding
- Wilmington has implemented NPDES stormwater requirement; not all municipalities have but should plan to meet it anyway; peak-rate-discharge discussed as an element of stormwater management