



Mixed Use District Input Session and Survey/Evaluation Results

from

October 20, 2012

Report prepared October 23, and November 27, 2012, by Nicola Strong, Planning Coordinator

On Saturday, October, 20, 2012, a group of about 35 people met in the Russell Community Room at the Whipple Free Library to discuss the idea of a Mixed Use District for New Boston.

This report is in two parts. The first part includes the input gathered from the three breakout groups transcribed directly from the groups' flip chart papers.

The second part is the tabulated results of the evaluations/surveys received at the end of the day. Six surveys were received. One additional online response was received.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Planning Department at 487-2500, ext. 142 or s.silver@newbostonnh.gov.

Breakout Group Reports

Group 1

Purpose

- Small rural community.
- Mix use.
- Flexibility.
- Taxes: increases.
- Groundwater withdrawal.
- Parking.
- Traffic.

Goals

- Flexibility.
- Off street parking.
- Traffic impact.
- Property outside district.
- Is mix use necessary?

Proposed Usages

- Small scale commercial.
- Mix use with residential.
- Recreation, i.e. trails.
- Too many commercial usages in one area.
- Concerns parking and traffic.
- Lack of walkable infrastructure.
- Senior housing.

Name of District

- No downtown.
- Village.

Group 2

Purpose

- Provides process for property owner to change use.
- Town Center no longer limited to just commercial.
- More flexibility for possible uses.
- More options for property owners.
- Keep town's current "feel" (quaintness, mixed use, aesthetics, Victorian heritage).
- Establish character of area.
- Establish uses.
- Create activity in town center.
- Bring people to town center area.

Goals

- Increase services in town center.
- Bring or allow small businesses that complement each other.
- Promote/encourage residential uses.
- Residential/commercial that complement each other.
- Define architectural standards in keeping with town feel.

Uses

- Photog studio.
- Prof office space.
- Art gallery.
- Beauty shop.
- Antique shop.
- Not allowed - base uses on performance standards.

Name

- Village Overlay.
- Village District.
- Maybe not ready for naming yet.
- Keep it the way it is.

- Businesses that don't create more traffic.
- No drastic changes.

Group 3

Concerns

- Residential pedestrian access vs. commercial island creation.
- Parking adequacy.
- Adequate Planning Board controls.
- Tax increase
 - infrastructure improvements
 - property value/assessments
- District boundaries.
- Historic characteristics.
- Noise levels.
- Safety.
- Welfare/Section 8.
- Size.
- Traffic.
- Pedestrian safety.

Criteria

- Abutters' approval (radius of noise/sight lines).
- Health issues.
- Quality of life.
- Abutters' approval ?
- Personal animosity with abutters.
- Architectural detail.
- Size.

Name

- Village.
- Village Mixed Use
 - District.
 - Area.
 - Center.

Uses

Allowed	Not Allowed
Internet café	Drive through
	Tattoo parlors
	Chain fast food
	Hazardous materials
	Welfare/Section 8
	Chain stores

- Hierarchical system of uses.

Survey/ Evaluation Results

Number of responses - 6 from the event, 1 online

1. How long have you owned property/lived/worked in the village area?

☐ 0-5 years -1

☐ 6-10 years -1

☐ 11-15 years -4

☐ 16-20 years -1

☐ 21-25 years

☐ 25+ years

☐ I don't own property in the village area. Please let us know where you live in the space below.

☐ I work in the village area. Please let us know where you work in the space below.

- XX River Road.
- Work from home, self employed.

2. What were your reasons for purchasing property/living/working in the village area?

- Living in the village.
- Wanted to live in the village.
- Location, small town lifestyle.
- Loved the house and being close to community activities.
- Small town, friendly neighbors, walkable community, safe area, quiet, peaceful surroundings.
- Close to school, library, historic home on quiet street, river.
- Walkable, at the time I purchased my house was very affordable.

3. What do you most like, or dislike, about owning property/living/working in the village area?

- Speed and noise.
- Walking to Dodges, walking Depot Road, seeing people.
- Dislike lack of walkability.
- Not fond of traffic.
- The beauty of the area, the many walking trails, friendly neighbors, walkable community.
- Great neighbors and above [indicates the previous answer "Close to school, library, historic home on quiet street, river."]
- Walkable, alive with friendly faces, wonderful neighbors.

4. What zoning district is your property in?

☐ Residential - Agricultural - 4

☐ Commercial - 3

☐ I don't know

- *On my side of the street, residential. Across the street commercial/residential... they have a sidewalk. I don't.*

5. Has the current zoning district ever created problems for something you wanted to do with your property?

☐ Yes. Please explain in the space below. - 2 - see below

☐ No. Please explain in the space below. - 4 with no explanations

Other - please specify - 1

- *Want the flexibility for mixed use. Residential-Agricultural respondent.*
- *I cannot have a home business and still maintain it as my residence. Commercial respondent.*
- *Other - 2009 addition was not denied... Commercial respondent.*

6. What is your opinion of the proposed Mixed Use Overlay District?

- *I am in favor of it.*
- *Good thing.*
- *We are in favor of the mixed use overlay.*
- *I'm hopeful w/reservations.*
- *Need more information - do not want the current character of the community to change. That is why we moved here in the first place from the city.*
- *Still not sure - concerned about unintended consequences.*
- *I need more info.*

7. Do you think you might make use of the proposed Mixed Use Overlay District if it passes?

☐ Yes. If yes, what would you propose to do? Please explain in the space below. - 3

☐ No. If no, why not? Please explain in the space below. - 2

No answer to the yes/no question, but explanation in the box - 2

- *Yes - if we wanted sell house for light commercial use.*
- *No answer - Not sure.*
- *Yes - Expand our home business adding retail space.*
- *Yes - If it allows me to run a business and maintain my residence.*
- *No - I am not currently planning to start a business.*
- *No answer - I don't know - need more info.*

- No - Not at this stage in my life but years ago I had thought of a consulting firm for residential space planning.

8. How do you think a Mixed Use Overlay District could affect your property value?

- Not sure.
- Increase the value.
- Yes.
- Hopefully positively.
- Afraid it would be decreased.
- See above [referencing previous answer "I don't know - need more info."]
- Not sure.

9. What are the issues the Planning Board should consider in the development and/or implementation of a mixed use overlay district?

- Should have mixed use area and the village.
- Infrastructure - parking, pedestrian.
- Keeping the current feel of the "village".
- Keep us informed w/progress.
- Current businesses at existing locations - café, small corner store (Dodge's) - would not like to see additional business. New businesses could move into current commercial properties.
- All the unintended consequences - look at case studies of small communities who have adopted.
- Communication technology is constantly changing the way we deal with businesses. I would hate for any town planning articles be made bylaws. Make a set of guidelines to be used for a period of let's say 7 years... then re-evaluate... don't make it so black and white... make friends, listen, then decide for the good of the town and the citizen...

The following questions, 10 through 15 were not on the online survey and, therefore, had only 6 respondents from the October 20, 2012, meeting.

10. What did you like most about what you heard today?

- Just the discussions.
- Open discussion taking place.
- That the Planning Board wants our input.
- Need more information.
- Can't say.

11. Is there anything that you heard today that you did not like? If so, why?

- No.
- Confusion current ZBA process - what the new process might be.
- Do not want to see more businesses in town.
- Concerned it may make it easier for more commercial.

12. What did you not get to say today that you would like to express?

- ? asked what is the current percentage of commercial versus residential in the town center? Seems like the mixture is ideal now.
- Please tell us why and where this idea is coming from - why now?

Tell us how you feel about these statements. You can check "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree" or anywhere in between.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
13. This project is taking the public's views into account.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>4</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>1</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>1</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I am optimistic about the direction this project is taking.	<input type="radio"/> <u>2</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>1</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>3</u> <u>One</u> <u>response</u> <u>said</u> <u>"Need</u> <u>more</u> <u>info"</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Today's meeting was helpful.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>3</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>2</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <u>1</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following question was on the online survey but not on the survey/evaluation distributed at the October 20, 2012, meeting because there was opportunity to discuss proposed uses at the meeting in person.

What kind of uses do you think would be a good fit, or a bad fit, in a mixed use overlay district?

- The Young's tried to relocate the hardware store to Valley View Street. That was voted down due to traffic patterns and flood light and a bu. right in the middle of a quiet residential neighborhood. It depends on the business and what its exposure would be to its immediate surroundings. Then there was a bad decision made by the board denying a B&B because the board would not allow the owner to live there. Now do you know of any B&B whose owner does not live there????? A B&B in the center of town would have been a wonderful draw for New Boston... for New Boston is the Currier and Ives of NH.