

Plymouth Public Lands Committee
September 27, 2007

The Plymouth Public Lands Committee is charged by the Town with:

- Developing a criteria for evaluating best or preferred uses for Tax Title, surplus and un-dedicated town land.
- Establishing a list of possible uses (such as affordable housing, municipal facilities, schools, infrastructure, economic development, conservation, recreation, renewable energy etc.).
- Creating a preliminary ranking of specific Tax Title, surplus and un-dedicated town land based on the criteria, including portions of a larger parcel if appropriate.
- Establish recommended future/potential uses for land or designate land as surplus to be sold.
- After the initial review process, the committee will be reactivated from time to time to:
 - Ø review additional lands identified or lands acquired by the Town as Tax Title, surplus or un-dedicated land; and
 - Ø provide initial recommendations to various boards and committees, Town departments and Town Meeting with respect to any party's request to change the use of any Town Land in the future.

To prepare this report and to establish guidelines for town decision makers the Committee adopted the following goals:

1. Create consensus among the various interest groups regarding current tax title land.
2. Through utilization of Master Plan, ENSR & RKG Reports create a process for reviewing public lands with an eye towards long-term needs.
3. Provide Report to the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting with recommendations for current properties and future process.

For the purpose of this report, municipal uses include:

- Schools
- Public facilities
- Water protection (surface & aquifer)
- Affordable & workforce housing
- Economic development
- Infrastructure (drainage)
- Open space
- Recreation

BRAINSTORMING SESSION

On June 21, 2007, the committee began the planning process with a brainstorming session. This session helped establish a framework that the committee used to develop goals and actions. This brainstorming was used to draft the overall guiding principles and review guidelines. In addition, throughout the planning process, the committee will use this information to make sure they are on the right track.

Overall Guiding Principles

Town land should be designated for uses or protection that enhance the quality of life of the residents of Plymouth.

Provide an approach to meeting the Town's municipal facilities, open space, recreation, housing and economic development needs in a balanced manner which controls sprawl and traffic congestion.

When reviewing Town land (especially large tracts), the Town should strive to accommodate multiple goals.

The Town should consider and attempt to anticipate future long term municipal needs (both known and unknown) for Town owned land.

Plymouth's natural (land and water) resources are its greatest assets.

Long term positive tax revenue generation is important.

Encourage agencies to use the capital outlay process to address our long-term land needs.

Guidelines

Not in any particular order

- "Land bank" land for future known and unknown municipal uses.
- Buffer neighbors from larger municipal uses (i.e. economic development, schools, municipal facilities, traffic).
- Protect Plymouth's aquifer its sole source of drinking water.
- Create affordable and workforce housing consistent with the Town's Affordable Housing Plan and Master Plan.
- Focus development within our village centers.
- Maximize the use of existing facilities and land with existing facilities and buildings.
- Many locations in Plymouth have a rural feel and appearance, future municipal uses in these areas should enhance that rural character.
- Open space within our village centers is important.
- Maintain and enhance public access to Plymouth's waterfront, lakes, ponds, and streams.
- Focus municipal uses where adequate infrastructure exists.
- Protect and link natural habitats.
- Declare land not identified for current or potential municipal uses as surplus. Surplus land shall not be made available for the development of market rate housing.