

## Tamworth Planning Board

84 Main Street  
Tamworth NH 03886

July 22, 2009

Dear Tamworth Citizen,

You are receiving this letter because the Planning Board needs your input. We are responsible for implementing the Land Use Section of the 2008 Master Plan. But this implementation plan needs to be based on the views and ideas of all members of the community. We hope to develop a plan which everyone can live with, that's a compromise among the many strongly held views on land use. This summer we are soliciting your thoughts and contributions on how we, as Tamworth citizens, want to collectively use our land resources. If the community favors land use regulation, the next step would be drafting an ordinance based on these discussions. And then, any proposed ordinance would be voted on by the town, before taking effect.

We are planning three forums to solicit your opinions on our land use options, at the Town House at 7-9 PM August 5<sup>th</sup>, 7-9 PM August 17<sup>th</sup>, and 10-noon August 29<sup>th</sup>. We are also planning to organize several neighborhood potlucks to discuss land use issues. We would encourage people to discuss these topics with their friends and neighbors, and bring your conclusions to one of the forums.

The following information describes the topics we are looking for your views on:

The purpose of zoning is to promote the orderly development of the town, by limiting conflicting and incompatible land uses, protecting property values and the character of existing neighborhoods, and minimizing municipal spending on public infrastructure and facilities. Zoning regulations allow property owners the reasonable use of their land, as long as the use is not detrimental to abutting properties values, or the neighborhood. A zoning ordinance defines a set of districts, with distinct regulations for future development within each. The Planning Board is seeking community input on two important topics: the **type of zoning** that might be implemented, and **district definitions**.

**Types of Zoning Regulations** There are several styles or types of land use ordinances to choose from, each with a different approach for regulating development:

- Use Based Codes  
The traditional and most common approach to zoning is use based. It regulates development through land use classifications, characterized by segregating land uses into specified geographic districts. With a use based code, the descriptions of zones are generally accompanied by tables with lists of the allowed, conditional, and prohibited uses in each district.
- Form based  
Form based regulations contain specific form and character specifications for building height, setback, density, streetscape, lot size, and architectural standards. With form based zoning, the land use, or activity occurring within a building, is not regulated.
- Incentive  
Incentive zoning, as its name implies, offers a reward (usually in the form of increased density) to a developer who does something "extra" that is in the community's interest (such as more open space) or promotes a public goal (such as affordable housing).

- Performance  
Performance zoning regulates the *effects* or impact of land uses through performance standards. It specifies the intensity of land use, measured by density, traffic flow, noise, and measurable pollution impacts. Performance zoning utilizes flexible standards that are targeted to objectives, as compared to prescriptive zoning, which focuses on strict limitations of uses.
- Innovative Land Use  
Innovative Land Use techniques describe a variety of zoning, subdivision, and site plan review regulation options, provided under NH law to promote Smart Growth principles. Among the tools include are: Environmental Characteristics Zoning, Conservation Subdivisions, Cluster Development, Feature Based Density, Impact Zoning, and Agricultural Incentives.
- None of the Above  
Some residents will favor "none of the above."

**District Definitions** Typical zoning districts include:

- Residential Districts There are several existing residential neighborhoods and subdivisions in town with well defined boundaries. Many have established regulations on development, implemented through covenants, deed restrictions, or neighborhood association rules. Where property owners in these areas already have development regulations, there would be no need to impose different or additional standards.
- Village Districts concentrate single and multi-family residential uses, with retail uses, civic buildings, and open spaces. High density and mixed use developments are desirable features of villages. This concentration allows people living in a village area to walk to stores, businesses and other public buildings.
- Commercial Districts provide land for general commercial, office, and light industrial uses. The goal is to reserve suitable land as locations for new commercial development, in areas where business development already exists, and where the current or historical use is of a business nature. A Commercial District is important for improving employment opportunities and strengthening the economic base of the town.
- The Rural District conserves open space, and the natural and scenic values of the town's outlying areas, by requiring a level of development that does not destroy those values. The Rural District contains the town's rural resources: agricultural lands, timber growing and harvesting areas, recreation sites, open spaces, and scenic views of the natural resource base. It maintains a rural land use pattern, with minimal development of homes and compatible non-intensive home businesses, interspersed among large open spaces.
- Overlay Districts If a comprehensive land use ordinance is adopted, overlay districts can be established to protect natural or cultural resources and protect health, such as: an agricultural, aquifer protection, drinking water protection and/or historic district.

We look forward to hearing your opinions, so the town's future growth reflects your wishes.

Sincerely,

Dom Bergen	Scott Aspinall	Willie Farnum, BOS Rep.	Becca Boyden, Alternate
Nicole Maher-Whiteside	Dave Sargent	Steve Gray, Alternate	Pat Farley, Alternate
Tom Cleveland	David Little	Tom Peters, Alternate	Dave Cluff, Alternate