

Easthampton Master Plan

Community Planning Days

Notes from Saturday 4/28/07 meetings

Morning Brainstorm / Opening session:

What are the components of a “sustainable Easthampton?”

- Its people: what brings/keeps people here? Opportunity for all
Interconnected issues of transportation (including rail), education, housing (affordable), an economy that supports all its residents
- Discourage tear-downs (use demolition delay bylaw); provide incentives to save historic structures
- Connect with Holyoke (up and coming city) via rail – it will be the hub and the location of jobs in the future
- Education; after school center for kids; keep kids here
- More creativity in development: ensure lively, residential scale gateways (not large empty parking lots); more mixed use space so active evenings, weekend too.
- Wise selection of materials: incentives/credits to use local materials (stone, wood, native plants) – supports local businesses as well as reduce transportation costs
- Support the entrepreneurial spirit by supporting new local businesses, especially during the first five years
- Grow more food locally – our food supply is fragile
- Regional incineration – as energy source as well as reducing landfill
- Cooperative store (as Greenfield is discussing) – a place to buy everyday supplies, locally owned, rather than box store – keep money in town instead of driving elsewhere to buy socks
- Keep schools centrally located; concerned about moving them out of town center; these are critical resources
- Do energy audits on the old mills: replace/reglaze windows; look into micro=hydro plants; use geothermal (from Nashawannuck Pond) to heat/cool City Hall; increase the use of bio-fuels; look into bulk purchase
- Traffic: 80% of residents commute out of town for work – set up ride share programs, make downtown more walkable, improve bus service within town
- Balancing act between providing housing and protecting open space – wise use of large parcels (talk with land owners now)
- Artists/craftspeople produce useable materials – not just art, but locally made pots/dishes, furniture, etc – small scale manufacture
- Reduce trash (no plastic bags), improve recycling
-

Morning Focus Group Session:

Historic and Cultural Resources

(note: pages may not be in order of discussion)

- Farmer’s market/ artists’ market: one is starting to get started at Memorial Hall on Saturday’s during the summer

- Central information spot (now is Big E's): use newspapers, computer; quarterly town newsletter (insert in Summit); town official appointed to do work. Subscription cost? Keep small to save expense; get the Summit more involved
- Art in public places: city office parking lot – fair, ice sculpture, performance
- Proposal for art piece at historic places; hold art walks and historic walks on same weekend; would draw more people (economic value)
- Saratoga – horses: artist to create public art from historical references (buttons – benches – trash cans)
- Alternate routes for trucks: keep them off 141 and out of downtown! Reduce traffic. Restrict times for trucks.
- What's worth saving? Have kids do a photo project; identify historic things to save : landmarks, buildings, artifacts
- Put on National Historic Register – “historic district” – and become eligible for grants
- Define what is work keeping
- Downtown: keeping it real – tattoo, youth connection – moral – vibrancy (adds) – exciting creative use – blending different uses – historic Deerfield/ Williamsburg – lots of historic buildings
- Plenty to save in Easthampton: old town hall
- Providence RI using canals – fire/water – use our pond in the same way? (2008 dredging; boardwalk; bridge into 15 Cottage St; amphitheatre
- Better access to historical resources – maps
- Better design plans for intersections with views in mind: grants and education
- Our history is our future – mills, native culture – make folks more aware
- Cultural diversity – organic growth and use – don't sell our soul
- No place for youth to hang out
- How to foster success of cultural projects?
- Cable car to top of Mt. Tom – unique resource – discouraging car traffic
- Easthampton/Holyoke connection: better bus routes, train, biking
- Natural resources very local: utilize them for more traffic
- Walkable downtown – safe sidewalks, crosswalks
- Creating a “destination” – integration of activities; practical stores; creative stores
- Artwalk: art in business storefronts, monthly event
- Broader range of support and funding to make these projects more successful
- Historic/cultural is closely linked to all other topics – we are all linked
- The character of the town: everything else is interdependent (preventing sprawl, preventing box stores, enhancing economic growth)
- Sensitive to diverse population living here – buy local
- Keep connections to border towns – growing
- Coop store
- Tap into youth energy
- Interdependency
- What are you willing to sacrifice for a better community?
- Taxes – pay more to buy local and shop local
- Youth and art programs
- Business and art community collaboration – murals at Cottage St, creative use of business space

- Vacancy – a problem for downtown currently
- Keeping businesses with a variety – sustainable; incentives for mixed businesses on main streets
- Affordable products
- Cultural center – used for? Parades, music/choir, murals, photography – ARTS AND YOUTH
- Bring back to basics: programs/workshops; cultural festival (week-long); local holiday
- Resources in the senior community: variety of history, wealth of talent, make connection, tutoring program – TAP IT!
- Affordable live/work space for artists

Summary report: Historic/Cultural Resources

1. Tap the energy of youth, the wisdom of age -- link youth with arts and cultural programs
2. link art & history through public art programs utilizing natural resources (amphitheatre at Nashawannuck Pond, public art)
3. bring community awareness to supporting the local economy (items produced by artisans)
4. Keep it real, affordable to local citizens and visitors alike
5. keep the conversation going:
historiceasthampton@yahoo.com
cultureasthampton@yahoo.com

Morning Focus Group session:

Transportation

- Park & Ride, bikeable Easthampton; bus service – shuttle to Northampton & Holyoke
- Traffic: Northampton street (252 accidents in 5 years)
- How does traffic/development effect wildlife? (corridor crossings)
- Lighting/signage
- Different traffic flow governed by use/design
- Dangerous intersections
- Take ownership of the road
- Public transportation
- Zoning for bike lane in new developments – new dev. For vans, in condominium documents (homeowner associations)
- PVRTA: new Easthampton Transportation Committee to attend
- What does transportation look like? Can we become more local? trolleys? Canal?
- Design: traffic flow, road itself
- Sacrifice: are we willing to pay? Be inconvenienced? Car pool?
- Enforcement – traffic regs (?)
- Train/bus/bike/walk – park and ride, zip car, public transportation –
- Transportation committee

Summary report: Transportation

1. improve safety on Northampton Street – better signage, signals
2. reduce traffic load through shared ride, zip car programs
3. establish a community transportation committee: to redesign Northampton Street, work with PVRTA to improve service, coordinate van service & ride pools
4. create a more bike-friendly zone in the center of town – bike share program

(these notes particularly hard to read... may not be in order of conversation)

- Municipal utility: we're for it; do a study; community control on power sources; finance and manage power sources
 - \$35 recs + 42 = 79K
 - 3 dams – hydro power - \$63,000
 - Manham dam 700,000 KW hours
Nash Pond 8000 watts (8 kwh) – RSI & city
(Ferry) Pond [Lower Mill Pond?] 7,000 watts (7 kwh)
Lower Mill/1 Ferry
 - \$250,000 permit – Federal Energy Dept
\$ capital to build
return on investment?
flooding – storms
fish ladder (EPA clearance)
small dam = small impact
maintenance \$ -- bonds? private co?
buy infrastructure from power companies – required
reduce to sell by law
 - Demand – less demand, more feasibility
- Geothermal on pond? Down to 35° water temp in winter; would have to dig below pond to lower level; wouldn't have to drain pond; geothermal under parking lots? Under open acreage?
- Natural gas: Rt 10 – primed with propane
Easthampton doesn't have enough pipe for gas for all customers
going LNG expensive (from Trinidad, Tobago)
get to 100% self-sustainability, not dependent on outside sources
- Wood: most CO₂ taken out by new trees; planting new trees takes out more CO₂; pellet more CO₂/energy efficient than cordwood
Hemp – better than tree; trees take 20 years to grow
Add bio-energy – crop times
90 days – fuel & CO₂ cycling
- Solar power: Kosmo finished study, submitted to mayor and City Council – break-even \$350K over 30 years; solar panels to run building
- Nuclear power? None in Easthampton.
Clean air; carbon footprint less than solar
- Geothermal – heat pump
pipes in Nash Pond to supply power to City Hall/City -- \$20K solar returns \$100/year; \$20K geothermal returns \$1300/year
- Mt Tom coal plant:
TransCanada/Ct River
WMECO sells power to Easthampton
ISO New England pools sources, sells to WMECO
"dirty plant" – 450K tons coal
146 mu, bought by First Light CT
turn it into "green" plant
has mercury disposal program
dispose fluorescent light bulbs

- use bio-fuel feed? Tests being done ½ coal
required by 2012 – meet new standards or take it down
- Municipal power: hydro not enough – need other sources, develop income stream, sell electricity outside Easthampton
25 [xx] generator – back of wastewater
link between damming and mercury levels
but clay layer over aquifer
100,200 [xx]
mercury & contaminants can it penetrate
Barnes Aquifer – keep public owned
 - Solar capture: photosynthesis model – water based
 - Food – sustainability
community gardens
now leasing to farmers for hay for livestock – crops are sent out to other communities
encourage farmers to grow the food for local consumption
Farmers need to exist by earning profit; asking/limiting can hurt
CSA support to help w/ keeping open space and growing local
Pros: knowing what's in the farm, beauty, farmstand
what do we need for local food supply?

Summary report: Energy

1. make a sacrifice of cheap energy, shut down Mt Tom generating plant; / invest in alternatives – use green power – multi-source: solar, geothermal, hydro, methane, (wind?);
2. form a municipal power company – to finance/ administer new programs; sell excess to surrounding communities
3. reduce demand through conservation measures
4. encourage local food production – community garden, more CSAs & markets, for local consumption

- **Goals set forth in 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan:**
 - Farmland preservation and protection
 - Protect surface and ground water quality
 - Establish regional trail & greenway network
 - Establish Nashawannuck Pond as a central recreation destination
 - Fill in gaps of open space connecting Mt Tom and the Oxbow
 - Preserve scenic vistas
 - Improve neighborhood parks & playground amenities
- **Pressures against open space**
 - Economic value of land
 - Outsiders that don't see the value of OS
- **How to protect in a meaningful way?**
 - Zoning?
 - Open space plan
 - Master plan
 - Development review
 - Education
 - Reach out to community, get new people involved
 - Inform decision makers of OS goals
- **Need for clear definition: broadest definition: anything not built upon**
 - Should promote connectivity
 - Protect natural resources
 - Include recreation (connectivity important here too; makes people aware of open space importance; large pedestrian/bike path as backbone)
- **Is it reasonable to set a goal of a set number of acres to be preserved?**
 - Needs to be reasonable; can be % or set number of acres
- **What can we do now (before large zoning rewrite)**
 - What areas of zoning ordinance can be addressed first?
 - Petition to limit the size of commercial development
 - Forming committee to address what needs to be done first
 - Address zoning issues as it relates to open space
 - Conservation commission issues as well: no wetland regulation, revisit local wetlands regulations; conservation agent? Talk to Mayor.
 - Connecting trail systems to downtown – connecting park system and bikepath system to Nonotuck Park
- **Open space definition:** what it's not – small grassy areas?
what's valuable open space?
agriculture: valuable through local use
- Agriculture – recreation – wildlife
need large tracts of land – connectivity
- Positive things we've done:
passed the Community Preservation Act
Transfer of Development Rights bylaw

- What can we change to vision?
address implementation
what do we want to change about zoning?

Summary report: Open Space/Recreation

1. Goals remain the same as on '05 OSRP: protect farmland, water quality, trails/greenways, Nashawannuck Pond, Scenic Vistas, and provide connections between open space parcels
2. establish a committee to focus on city regulations that have impacts on open space; what changes could be made
3. hire a part-time conservation agent to monitor conservation lands; tighten up (create local) wetlands regulations
4. provide connections to downtown – bikeway access
5. limit commercial building size? (issues of private property rights)
6. initiate a tree planting program
7. issue: definition of open space – conservation land, farmland, aquifer protection, buffers, setbacks

- **Do we need new schools?**
 - Change the reputation of high school: more technology, quality education?
 - Reputation is improving – test scores improving – need technology, auditorium, science
 - High school at or near capacity
 - Smith Voc -- \$11,000/year – LPVEC (CTEC) 14 minutes by bus – remain EHS students at \$5,000/student
 - 59% likely to support override
 - Engineering study to determine need
- **What to do with old schools?**
 - Expensive to renovate – children are bussed (75%) – don't walk to neighborhood schools
 - Consider population/aging trends in master planning; older population has skills to teach and can also learn from younger people (like computer skills); Look at more than K-12; facilities could be used for 18-hour day; good schools draw people to the community
 - Have media centers & auditorium for community events
 - Intergenerational learning “diamond in the rough” – use the Senior Center, now teaching to MCAS – time on learning restricts us; built it & they don't come. We have facilities the community doesn't use
 - Schools are strapped for time
 - Community has to drive intergenerational learning
 - Springfield library set up for use by community with separate entrance
 - Need people to watch facilities
 - Open gyms, pools
 - Infrastructure not an issue – Pepin has lots of stairs
 - New Elementary will be three floors
 - Visioning for new schools started in 1998 – state to pay design phase instead of override – could pay 60%
 - How long will it take to build?
 - Schools becoming community centers – putting things together that weren't before – 18-hour day
 - Learn to run business in school
 - School day can't change, but 2-8 pm schools can be used for other things
 - Lots of research in community schools; read the research to help plan
 - Schools to be community centers; elders & kids teaching each other. Not pie in sky. How are we going to do this?
 - Cradle – support family from get go. Family resource centers in elementary schools during school day. Bring in workshops – funded by fee-based before and after school programs. Now in every school in Windsor CT; there's a way to fund it.
 - Grants can fund these programs.
 - Currently open communication with schools & senior center – how do you tap into senior talent/skills?
 - Inventory of people & what they do; invite people with skills; loss if we don't know what exists.

- Survey community members
- Building is opportunity for kids – design, building, carpentry, architecture; students invited to hear & critique ideas; \$40 million spent will kids be involved in experience? Contract should include time in classroom defending ideas.
- Wanted to include teachers and paras in process
- Kids are interested in their yearbook planning – Pepin students connected with seniors at Lathrop
- Senior skill sets – good way to extend school day; survey to find resources
- US has shortest school year world-wide
- Math & science can be made more engaging – good arts, theater should be included; farming, gardening (senior skill sets) Farm-to-school programs – CISA pairs farmers w/ schools to provide food locally; funding is tricky, but CISA working on it
- This is not in newspaper
- Talk about what is happening now: buildings are big complaint; Lots of Northampton transplants living here & sending kids to Northampton schools
- Amherst and Northampton huge budget cuts; no talk about that here
- Schools need to be experienced; you need a reason to go into the schools
- NEASC report: tired building but not tired school
- Need PR coordinator for schools – put the word out
- PTO not well attended
- Committee for Better Schools helped pass override
- **Trash**
 - CA people pay for cardboard – we’re behind in recycling
 - Q: why don’t you have transfer station, swap, “community center”? China’s buying cardboard. Simple to do. Don’t like to pay people for trash pickup.
 - Under discussion; burning: asphalt plant burns clean.
 - You can take anything away, but you pay for it.
 - Where to put transfer station?
 - Currently town pays employees to haul brush from transfer station to Olver dump site; is there a more efficient way?
- **Water/sewer**
 - Connecting residents to the town sewer – who pays? What happens to their septic?
 - Unaccounted for water: leaks; this can be updated to save water
 - Is there a system of maintenance?
 - How long will our water last? 8 million per day, but only use 1.7; usage is less, to the ‘50s level
 - Factories have closed
 - Water quality? It’s good
 - Compost bins: natural fertilizers – can this be taught/modeled/incentives for residents?
- **Public services – what do we want?**
 - Trash/recreation/water/police/fire
 - Increase communication between DPW/police/fire

- How to reuse the 4 elementary schools – out of the box thinking... housing, coop store, business incubator (start-up space, wifi, consulting); happening @ 1 Cottage & Eastworks
- Where are we connected to the net? Provider pays the town
- Williston connects to main internet connection w/ Charter Communications
- Wiring administrative facilities of town
- Taking a walking tour of our downtown – provides a new lens for looking at our town – new opportunity for understanding/knowing our town
- Pond – more facilities, docks
- Comments/suggestions/ideas: please send them to michael.czerwiec@gmail.com

Summary report: Schools & Public Facilities

1. Community minded schools: cradle to grave opportunities – seniors teach youth teach seniors
2. Reuse of schools: cooperative store, business incubator, promote/support economic development
3. support of new buildings
4. big support of a transfer station
5. increase awareness of, support of schools

- Response to housing images:
 - Plus:
older homes = attractive – could be rehabbed & affordable
CSBG \$ rehab for homeowners
 - Minus:
afford. housing looks “bad” – why not look good
private developers don’t have requirements to build aff. housing
- **What do we not want?**
 - Concern: 40B projects could ignore local zoning issues
- **What do we want?**
 - Zoning for affordable housing – re. inclusionary zoning
 - Use CPA \$ to fund affordable housing built in closed schools
 - Incentives for private landlords & developers to create/convert their units as affordable
 - Make process for developer and landlords easier to access public \$ for affordable housing
 - Get people to help with grant writing to support affordable housing
 - When combining open space with housing: need open space that is useful, not wetlands, etc. Good landscaping & tree planting around development
 - Zoning requires two trees to be planted with new house
 - Mix income developments – not concentrate low income
 - Incentives for down payment assistance – avoid PMI
 - Make sure affordable housing is in both rehab and new construction
 - Make sure include affordable family housing with space for kids to play
 - Want to bring banks, city and developers together to create inclusionary zoning
 - Mechanism to address taxes and assessments for people who have owned home for long time residents
 - Abatement on taxes/ assessment – first \$100 m [*they must mean \$100k*] for lower income seniors (concern that people with savings are disqualified)
 - Figure out how to effectively use 40B for mixed income housing development
 - Housing to meet needs for everyone regardless of income – Section 8
 - Educate community about who receives Section 8
 - Co-housing that includes affordable housing
 - “green building” used with housing, maybe create zoning incentives to developer

Summary report: Housing

1. Use CPA funds to create (build/rehab) affordable housing in less than 7-10 years
2. work with City, developers, and banks to develop an inclusionary zoning bylaw that will pass
3. pursue/welcome “friendly” 40B projects
4. provide mixed housing to meet everyone’s needs; use all tools to ensure good mix of housing

5. housing developments that address mixed income and preserve green space
6. connect affordable housing with land preservation using CPA funds
7. provide abatement on tax assessment for seniors – look at total homeowner costs
8. provide incentives/\$ for landlords to modernize units (green, rehab) and keep them affordable
9. add a city employee to support and implement affordable housing projects (using CPA funds) – better city oversight to make sure developers/projects fulfill their obligations.

- **How do we attract & retain business?**
 - Discourage big box which negatively impacts downtown business & increases traffic
 - A lot of businesses, not enough advertising
 - City needs to take control; don't leave it to out of town "big box" of local developers; community needs to be in the driver's seat' MP needs to develop mechanism to take control
 - Advantages/drawbacks to each group
 - EDIC needs tools/expertise
 - Valley CDC needs funding, consulting services for small business
 - Needs to be a balance between regulation & entrepreneurial efforts; need to attract investors; caution against over-regulation
 - Small businesses interested in location, accessibility (of customers) for relocation to Easthampton
 - Is there a survey of commercial space?
 - Space needs:
 - For customer attractions – high foot traffic
 - For artists/studio that don't need foot traffic
 - Mill buildings are great attraction – invest in improvements; the more mills are "cutting edge" the better for city; don't lose it as focus in commercial areas.
 - Grant tax incentives, advantages to property owners that improve buildings; TIFs instead of regulations;
 - Incentives to current businesses to give (\$\$, support) to community – non-profit, government
 - Lobbying by current businesses for new businesses
 - Affordability! Key for attraction/retention
 - Long-term issues will be similar to Northampton – taxes, rents will increase
 - Tax breaks, zoning
 - Mills as artist space
 - City can take major roll
 - Master plan to investigate
 - Economic cycle
 - Balance economic growth with affordability? Yes!
 - Space – do we have enough?
 - Commercial/office
 - Industrial space lacking
 - Permitting to be easier to attract new businesses
 - Retail space in excess 5 years ago
 - Bust & boom cycle could happen again
 - Clarification on industrial space
 - Needs focused on turnkey – we need more
 - Mills – 5 acres
 - Need more diversity of industrial space
 - We need new industrial space

- Brosco, Harvey windows – locally made – w. masseco dev.
- Small business needs? (what category, size) Focus on micro-business needs e.g., hairdresser
- Microbusiness help? Go to owners & survey for needs
- EDIC/ValleyCDC/Chamber addressing micro-business needs; most here – backbone of Easthampton are micro
- **How do we encourage economic development that:**
 - Maintains character (scale, physical definitions) of town
 - Scenic quality; natural environment
 - Icons of town – maintain character by duplicating icons; retain continuity of architectural structure
 - Important to look forward, build with modern architecture; don't anchor only in past – historic downtown great
 - Where would you put modern homes? Not sure, but where we grow.
 - Paradise One: cutting edge in historic structure; “aging in place”; mill building renovated to accommodate “cutting edge”; design with respect for historic – great example
 - Roundabout – area for modern buildings
-- You scare me! Glass pyramid? In rotary
 - Don't shut out the Gary's – layering the ages (-agreed!)
 - Bridge the gap with scale – critical
 - Single family homes can be at different scales ; add mature landscaping – a lot of what we appreciate was built without zoning
 - Streetscape should encourage people to get out of cars – you become more intimately tied
- **Affordable housing:**
 - Education drives economic development – Parsons School might reopen – good that it wasn't decommissioned
 - Goal was to get elementary & high school – we won't get both; community has to make decision on what model
 - Energy costs—moving students, people; we need to think locally; how do you move those people? Question assumptions. Move teachers not students.
 - As teacher/mom: successful schools are small schools; in big school lose identity, community, personal level
 - Has the school committee become too focused on this idea of two new schools?
 - Not a space problem; problem of flow
 - More students can be accommodated by adjusting hours; use facilities longer (not teachers & students)
 - Expand Parsons St lot to surrounding areas
 - You can do a lot with \$50 million besides two new buildings
 - Committee hard working – reevaluating, fair to look at it again
 - Plains area doesn't have neighborhood school; not suggesting we build one; who is the customer? The student.
 - Look at this school – no natural light
 - Would costly retrofit be the solution?
- **Infrastructure**
 - Critical to get fiber optics throughout; we need information highways
 - Be wired or be gone

- Be wireless is good too – Mt Tom antennae , one solution
- Retrofitting older building with wireless great solution
- T1 line transmits more data – wireless range limits; fiber optics to area; wireless within building
- Wireless defines space – how do you gather & define areas within city?
- We need to clarify what capacity is within city
- City needs to have responsibility to maintain existing infrastructure; in 15-20 years, master plan will be looked at for direction on maintenance of infrastructure
- Long-term trend towards urban centers, not sprawl; businesses will be attracted to downtown if infrastructure is maintained
- Historic urban core had trolleys; businesses should think about trolley bus to eliminate congestion; people don't know where to park
- Dams for generating power
- **Environmental protection**
 - Assets are natural resources; how do you defend spaces & use them for economic gain? Small farms are making a resurgence – food supply, community gathering spots. Big E, Apollo Grill: how can local use natural resources more?
 - So many farms are disappearing – what are we going to eat? What happens to the land? Older people – transitioning
 - Community share farming – CSA – what can farms do to extend growing season? Where can we put community gardens?
 - CSA: pay for share upfront, no farm work, pick up share every week – May to October
 - What about a business that takes excess food from local farms & processes it?
 - Economic viability of small farms is value-added activities; sustain ag by adding value
 - OR – encourage microbusinesses to support small farms
- **Open space preservation**
 - Farm discussion interesting, but small role in economic development. We need to set standards about what we want here
 - Stop & Shop are not buying locally; they are trucking in
 - Regulations need to encourage enviro protection
 - Easthampton is small, fragile; big box stores – scale issues, stormwater, traffic vs. downtown that can be walked to, reduced traffic; multi-story buildings, less pavement, longer use hours.
 - Dimensions can regulate big box stores – limit to 10,000 sf; don't limit retail opportunities
 - City doing great job; encourage more use of economic development tools
- **Balance needs & find solutions**
 - Multistory buildings, traffic flow – challenge to put options in regulations
 - Over-regulation can limit economic development – really?
questioned: developer didn't build in compliance, not forced to comply
clarification: yes regulations are needed
but we don't have manpower to enforce compliance
(counter) there are structures to ensure compliance; bond assurance on streets
Main Street compliance: did he have a performance bond? Was there recourse?
Private property vs. public infrastructure.
 - Should there be more performance regulations?

- Issues of property rights & what city can regulate (issue for more discussion)
- Does the city have regulations for green infrastructure? Beyond NEPA
- Tax incentives for solar?
- **Closing thoughts**
 - Strategy: use existing tools like EDIC to take ownership of buildings, land; needs different status to do – involve more partnering, communities partner
 - Not necessarily eminent domain, but partnering
 - Engage public in EDIC by publicizing meetings
 - Engage community in process, make it more productive, informative so that they have more input
 - New business models should be examined – e.g., Greenfield cooperative model
 - No place to buy socks – collective buying power for stores
 - What about affordable housing? Does Paradise One include affordable housing/retail?
 - Valley CDC – take old properties & renovate; expertise
- **Index card comments:**
 - Regulation for “big box” type stores to maximum of 10,000 sq.ft.
 - Encourage businesses & studios to pitch in and introduce a “trolley” type bus that would loop around downtown for shoppers to get “on & off” and be more informative as to where to park the car – especially during “open studios” & busiest days ie, Saturdays
 - Notify people about municipal parking as in behind One Cottage St; need signs indicating where to park for shopping
 - Our factory buildings are deteriorating somewhat; how do we get help for replacement of windows & energy saving measures?

Summary report: Economic Development

1. ensure that regulations are not overly restrictive
2. provide technical support for small businesses
3. maintain mill buildings – replace exterior windows, improve aesthetics, keep affordable for tenants (mixed use), retain as focus of city center
4. infrastructure for commercial/ industrial – particularly wireless
5. what are appropriate uses for available land, where is it?
6. attend to scale of architecture – site standards
7. education is essential to economic development; what alternatives do we have to new buildings?
8. farmland: essential to retain it while improving economic development
9. underlying question: How do we do more with what we have as a city?

Afternoon Session: “Town Meeting”

Priorities: What are the essential components of Easthampton’s Master Plan?

16	Be energy sustainable through a municipal power company, using multiple alternative sources
18	Affordable housing – using all the tools available (inclusionary zoning, friendly 40B, etc) “we can” – incorporate along with commercial development
9	Increase transportation options – PVRTA, bikes, walks, local trolley, etc
6	Schools as community centers – used 3-9 pm by community; 18-hour day Find sources to retain central locations; increase walkable neighborhoods
9	Identify, emphasize and protect historic assets – find ways to rehab, reuse
21	Identify key open space parcels to protect, work with existing landowners now
4	Educate, outreach re. vibrant, creative downtown – through local businesses, artists community, cultural assets; use of arts/culture as inspiration and economic development
5	Prioritize land under APR for local food production
1	Market the arts as an economic draw – writers/producers to bolster and promote local arts Initiate bus trip for NYC gallery representatives to see our artists’ work, market our own
13	Increase emphasis on infrastructure/facilities improvement, beyond the capital plan – green and cost effective
3	Emphasize local economy: make it here, buy it here, keep it here
4	Capture the history of the mills, use that iconography to visualize and market Easthampton
4	Upgrade/add resources to/ invest in existing economic development tools: EDIC, Valley CDC
0	History of farmland important to record/recall – tour of history of use
0	Educate re natural history too – Nashawannuck Pond
	Easthampton’s people are its primary resource! (overriding idea!)
6	Provide education on energy conservation, recycling, conservation contract – implement measurable steps
5	Get youth involved in this process! And protect existing residents from gentrification
4	Use regional resources for planning, transportation – keep regional connections in mind
4	Public space: parks, gathering space, spread across the city – not just buildings as community spaces
5	Low cost, high speed internet
0	Improved barrier-free access – highlight where additional improvements are needed

Afternoon Session: “Town Meeting”

Potential Conflicts/Concerns

- Open space vs. affordable housing: interdependent, need to work together – those promoting open space need to consider affordable housing as much as housing advocates argue for open space
- Cost of creating a municipal power company: how feasible is this? Investment in new power vs. making existing facilities more economic, environmentally sound
- What administrative capabilities are needed to deal with the bureaucracies required to implement some of these strategies?
- Need for a thoughtful planner to review these ideas; we want the master plan to be taken seriously
- What issues are beyond our control? E.g., the housing market
- Need to identify, make use of existing resources – and regulatory measures
There are economically feasible alternative energy options
- The cost of rehabbing/reusing old buildings while also making them energy efficient and green – less costly to build new
- How do we measure the amount of open space protected or needed – per capital or overall acreage?
- Commitment – what is Easthampton prepared to commit itself to? (vs “sacrifice”)
- Limited city funding: have to move beyond taxes as the only source of revenue
 - Must have a sustainable economy
 - Need joint venture with private sector (e.g., munic generation plant)
 - Community-owned wealth
 - Must establish priorities to generate the funds
- The city must purchase land dedicated to affordable housing

Questions that need to be addressed

- What is affordable housing? Make sure people understand the definition(s)
- What is open space? Similarly, needs clarification
- What can the city do to control development, given private property rights?
- What obstacles block good projects? (e.g., Paradise One)
- What keeps cities from establishing their own power system? What is the fair market price for (WMECO’s) transmission lines and distribution system?
- How risky is it? What is the risk?
- What are the criteria for open space acquisition? Open space purchase for what purpose?
- Can we afford not to secure more open space? Or not to find alternative means to generate our own power?
- Does the city have the personnel to manage these programs
- What are the opportunities for private citizens to get involved?

Final comments

- Do we appreciate the big businesses that remain in Easthampton? Do we “love” them enough?
- Easthampton has a great story to tell – its history, mills, farms – some communities have gathered individual stories annually which are edited into a play produced by and for the community; involve the creative folks in town to put on a play about Easthampton – past, present, future.

- Attend to affordable commercial space as well as housing – to bring in new and sustain fledgling businesses – they bring new revenue, jobs, etc.
- Avoid the consequences of an economic boom – that pushes some people out; you lose the essential character of the town
- Tighten zoning where we don't want change, allow creative zoning where we do.
- Identify the gaps in commercial/retail and invite those businesses to town
- Increase financial, regulatory, technical support for businesses
- Locate a recycling center/energy generating center centrally
- Ensure that those who move into town respect/support existing businesses/industry (like a right to farm bylaw? A right to light industry area)
- Look to other models – other countries with limited land have initiated some remarkable efforts.