

APPENDIX A

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1989 PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

WHO ANSWERED THE SURVEY?

- Approximately 300 households responded, out of 1200 surveyed, for a response rate of approximately 25%.
- 87% of respondents are year round residents and 13% seasonal.
- 43% regularly attend Town Meeting and 57% do not regularly attend.
- 82% of respondents are registered to vote in New Gloucester.
- 19% own their own business. Of those businesses, 11% are located in New Gloucester.
- Most respondents have from 1.8 to 2.6 persons in their household.
- 77% live in single family homes; 14% in mobile or manufactured homes on individual lots; 4% in seasonal dwellings; 2% in mobile or manufactured homes in mobile home parks; 2% in two family homes; 1% in apartments.
- 98% of respondents own their homes; 2% rent.
- The employment status of the adults in households answering the questionnaire included: 228 employed full time, 72 employed part time, 57 home makers, 53 retired, 32 students, and 4 unemployed.
- The highest level of education completed by adults in households answering the questionnaire included: 131 who graduated from high school, 109 with some college, 99 with an undergraduate college degree, 88 with a graduate degree, and 45 with some vocational or technical training.
- The majority of respondents who answered the income question come from households earning between \$20,000 and \$35,999.
- The Town was broken up into quadrants on a map included with the survey. 11% come from Region 1 (West of Route 100, North of Route 231), 23% from Region 2 (East of Route 100, North of Route 231), 44% from Region 3 (West of Route 100, South of Route 231), and 22% from Region 4 (East of Route 100, South of Route 231).

TOWN CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES

Clean water, reasonable tax level, the natural environment, rural character and quality of the school system were the top five responses when residents were asked to consider what factors were important to them as residents of the Town of New Gloucester. Factors residents considered to be not important in their choice of New Gloucester as a place to live included: the availability of shopping, availability of childcare, being close to work, and the availability of elderly care.

Persons were asked to list their two most important reasons for living in New Gloucester. The top response was the town's "rural character". Other reasons included the natural environment, close proximity to family, close to workplace, attractiveness of town, tax level, and clean water.

IMPACTS OF GROWTH

When asked to consider whether several specific “indicators” had improved, declined, or stayed the same over the past five years, most respondents felt that the majority of the services had stayed the same. Some exceptions to this are the following responses:

- 66% felt that police protection had declined;
- 46% felt that recreation had improved while 47% felt it had stayed the same;
- 52% felt that the property tax burden had increased;
- 40% felt that the school facilities/services improved while 41% felt that they stayed the same;
- 67% felt that affordability of housing declined;
- 66% felt that the availability of open space had declined;
- and 50% felt that the quality of the natural environment had declined.

PRIORITY CONCERNS

Persons were asked to list the top three issues that they were most concerned about. Property taxes came up as the top number one and number two concerns, it ranked second in concern #3. The natural environment also was a top response in all three cases. Other concerns listed included the crime level, open space, and school facilities.

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

The best way to reach people is through the New Gloucester News and the mail.

LAND USE AND LAND USE REGULATION

Most who commented in regard to the location of future development offered the Upper Village, and Routes 100 and 26 as potential development areas. Most who commented in regard to the location of areas to be protected offered Sabbathday Lake, the aquifer area, the Lower Village, Royal River and the Shaker Village as areas where development should be limited.

75% of the respondents were in favor of the adoption of a building code that would establish uniform standards for the construction of buildings.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

74% of the respondents would like to see a system of connected woodland trails and open space designated throughout the Town.

Scenic areas that people particularly enjoy included the Opportunity Farm, the Intervale, Lower Village, Shaker Village, and Sabbathday Lake.

Specific buildings that respondents were interested in preserving included all buildings in the Lower Village, Shaker Village, and churches (Congregational and Universalist).

TOWN SERVICES

80% of the respondents currently separate their recyclables at the transfer station.

When asked to rate community services as being either very good, good or needing improvement, most persons felt that the majority of community services were good. Exceptions to this include the following: 58% felt that police protection needs improvement; while 46% felt that road paving was good another 45% felt that it needs improvement.

TRANSPORTATION

72% felt that there were sections of roads which need improvement or repair. Dangerous intersections cited included:

- Route 100 and 231
- Route 122 and Bald Hill Rd.
- Bald Hill Rd and Snow Hill Rd
- Cobb's Bridge Rd and 231
- White's Corner

Areas where road improvements were considered necessary included:

- Grading of dirt roads
- Woodman Rd
- North Pownal Rd
- Pond Rd

68% felt that there was no need for some public transportation connecting New Gloucester with urban areas.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL PLANNING

When respondents were asked "what other communities in your immediate area do you identify with in terms of sharing common opportunities, common problems or common resources," 74% named Gray, 9% Pownal, 7% 'none', 3% North Yarmouth, 3% Auburn, 2% Poland, and 1% Durham.

When asked what existing problems in New Gloucester and in surrounding communities would be best solved by a regional effort among two or more towns, 179 people listed solid waste, 107 water quality, 83 roadway or corridor improvement plans, 73 purchase of open space, 67 transportation, 66 creation of affordable housing.