

**Comprehensive Master Plan  
Review Team  
May 28, 2015 Meeting**

Team Members present were: Frayla Schoerfeld, Marge Govoni, Tony Searles, Ken Grondin, Dave Nadeau, Dave Tobin, David Lavigne, Sparky Hurgin, and Mike Duffy.

Planning Director, Ben Smith, and Planner, Amanda Lessard, were also present.

Guest, Clayton Haskell was present.

Review of the Parks and Recreation Draft Chapter:

- Not all open space should be programmed.
- Focus on playing fields, not just trails and forested land.
- Include the RSU 14 properties in the inventory with a note regarding the limited public use.
- Lincoln Circle Subdivision has a public access field.
- Include town owned potential future fields?

Agriculture:

- The draft Agriculture chapter had been discussed at a mini-forum; sent to the Land Trust and the Community Garden.
- It should be determined how many people in town were currently involved in agriculture.
- The town hadn't preserved land and offers no financial support for those that do.
  - The public expects to use land for recreation, yet if they damage it the property owner must repair it.
- A large tract of land was currently for sale. Some of it had been purchased for farming.
- A map was needed to accurately depict the location of working farms and tree growth areas.
- The town has never followed through with the goals and strategies that were established in the 80s.
- Viewsheds were also important to retain rural character.
- Many owners of large tracts of land are counting on them for retirement. Limitation on usage through deed restrictions was not something they wanted.
- It was noted at the mini-forum that the tax burden was too high and land use/zoning regulations were too strenuous.
- If the town leased a portion of the agricultural land for recreation it would provide some income to property owners.
- The tax rate should be based on the current use, not the potential use.
- There were ways to reduce the property tax burden that were available. Most farmers were so busy farming that they didn't know about those options. A finance professional or the example of other towns and outreach could be helpful.
  - This could be a strategy, or researched as part of the planning process.
- A map of soils map showing prime agricultural land should be created.

The next Review Team meeting was scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup>.