



## Appendix H: Envision Concord Summary of Comments from Boards and Committees

The following summaries are lightly edited excerpts of comments received by the Committee from 21 Town Boards or Committees.

### **2229 Main Street Oversight Committee**

The 2229 Main Street Oversight Committee stressed the importance for clear, definitive plans for redeveloping the superfund site to be included in this Concord Comprehensive Long Range Plan. Cleanup, restoration, and reuse of the Site should be a very high priority for the Town in order to realize the potential value of sustainable development of this 46 acre parcel of ecologically and economically valuable land in the Town. One opportunity to accelerate and realize that value would be for the Town to engage EPA in the designation of the Site as one of its "Pilot Sites" under the Superfund Task's Force's recommendations.

Opportunities: The Comprehensive Long Range Planning Committee should consider these potential future uses of the site:

- Residential Uses
- Outdoor recreation & Recreation buildings
- Conservation & Education
- Transportation hub
- Truck/bus parking & maintenance
- Energy production
- Dog Park

The current CLRP SWOT considers many of these opportunities by listing the 2229 Main Street site as a potential site of a new village center, as a site for transit oriented development, as a mixed land-use site, and as a place with natural beauty. The committee would like to point out that ALL of these options could be realized at this site.

Threats: While the contamination at 2229 Main Street does not directly threaten Concord's town water supply, it does threaten the availability of drinking water in neighboring towns. Concord's main water supply is a reservoir in another town. The Town needs to consider that drinking water supplies are a limited resource, and support efforts to restrain and remove contaminants that are travelling off the site as we expect other towns to protect our water supply.

### **Agricultural Committee**

Despite the historical and present-day importance of agriculture in Concord, the future of farming in this community is uncertain. With 1004 acres in active agricultural production, with approximately 16 farm businesses and 11 farm stands, Concord stands out among the suburbs of Boston as a place that is friendly to agriculture.

- Protecting farmland from development and ensuring that farmland remains dedicated to agricultural use is essential to the survival of farming in Concord. The Ag Committee

supports collaborative efforts to buy farmland with existing housing and farming infrastructure, which can then be leased to new farmers. The Town's purchase of McGrath Farm is a great model for how this can work.

- The Ag Committee also recommends prioritizing seasonal farm worker housing in the Town's affordable housing plans.
- In the interests of sustaining a strong local economy in Concord, the Ag Committee would like to partner with the Town and its many local retailers to make the case to the community for regularly spending their dollars locally.
- The Ag Committee looks forward to working with the Town and local businesses to identify projects and find funding to keep Concord farms on the cutting edge of the local food movement, as well as competitive with the convenience and low prices of grocery stores, and offers several examples.

## **Board of Health**

### Board of Health--Core Values

- Health, well-being and safety of all residents
- Employ a broad definition of health that includes physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- Incorporate "health in all policies" into town planning efforts. Health should have parity with other planning goals.
- Healthy Community principles should guide town planning. A healthy community is one that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments. Such communities help people to support one another in aspects of daily life and to live to their fullest potential.
- Healthy Community principles should be as important as Sustainability principles in town planning efforts.

### Board of Health Current issues:

- Opioid crisis
- Need for resources for increased public outreach/education on current and emerging public health issues
- Youth mental health
- Continuing need for health education in schools
- Transportation—for all ages including seniors and youth; need for traffic reduction in town.
- Tensions between bicyclists and drivers.

### Anticipated Future Needs that should be addressed:

- Needs (social, mental health, housing, transportation) associated with increasing senior population.
- Programs and resources to assist seniors to maintain independent living.



- Cultivation of community relationships for mutual social support.
- Increasing need for mental health services, especially for youth and geriatric populations
- Anticipated increased need for preventative health services
- Capacity of town to respond to environmental threats and emergencies and plan for the needs of vulnerable residents in disasters.

#### Tensions/Conflicts/Roadblocks to Board of Health work

- Limited staff/resources in Health Division to deliver proactive public health programming and respond to emerging public health needs.
- Many Concord residents have a perception of “we have no problems” in Concord; it is difficult to change this perception.
- It is difficult to promote non-auto transport in the town without expanding alternatives such as bike lanes, sidewalks, adequate parking at train stations or providing alternate methods of transport (van service, etc.).

#### Recent Accomplishments

- Healthy Community Planning and Implementation program: Healthy Concord
- Recently awarded grant from CHNA15 for Community Substance Use Assessment project
- Tobacco Control efforts—prohibitions on: sale of tobacco and nicotine delivery products to persons under age 21; sale of flavored tobacco and nicotine delivery products; sale of tobacco products in pharmacies.
- Education programs on prevention of tick borne illnesses

### **Cemetery Committee**

#### Special Strengths

The Friends of Sleepy Hollow: a group of local citizens to preserve and protect the 3 Cemetery sites, provide funds and lend encouragement to the work of preserving this important part of Concord’s history. Concord’s cemeteries are recognized by many citizens as a precious heritage that should be cared for lovingly and consistently.

#### Recent major accomplishments

- Major roadway, stone wall and drainage improvement project.
- Master Plan Update

#### Pressing Issues

- Additional Burial Space for Cremations.
- Stone Wall Renovation.
- Restoration of the Melvin Memorial.
- Ongoing restoration and preservation of gravestones in all three cemeteries, along with monitoring headstone standards
- Considerations for providing additional mausoleums in Sleepy Hollow.

### **Commission on Disability**

The Commission is a resource to the Town and its citizens to assist with access issues as well as sensitivity and disability rights concerns. The Commission’s hope is that people with disabilities will be seen as equal and necessary members of the community.



## Opportunities

Improve communication with Town management and regular participation from the ADA Coordinator

## Recent successes

- Changes to improve access at local venues such as Bank of America, Heywood Meadows, Beede Center Pools, and Gaining Ground.
- Plan review and suggestions concerning access at locations such as 51 Walden, CCHS fields, parking at visitor center at Walden Pond, First Parish renovations, working collaboratively with these entities.
- Working with the Trails Committee to improve access to trails and identify additional trails that could be made assessed or accessible, either in whole or in part.
- Affirmative Warrant Article at Town Meeting to change our status from a committee to a commission to allow the Commission to be able to apply for grants through the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities and other sources.

## **Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee**

CSEC's mission is to assist the Town in identifying, designing, and implementing programs for fostering energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy generation in the Town and in all segments of the community and strongly endorses embracing these goals as core guiding principles for the Long Range Planning efforts.

Concord should aspire to be a leader in regional and national efforts to aggressively address energy conservation and green development planning. It is especially important that the Town address the challenge of its built environment to ensure that residential, commercial and municipal buildings are as energy efficient with as low-carbon footprints as possible.

Concord's opportunities and responsibilities to pursue energy efficiency through control of its electric utility should be addressed in the Long Range Plan. The Town should promote utility-scale renewable energy supply and complementary utility-scale storage solutions. Creative tax policies, stronger building codes and innovative incentive-based utility pricing will contribute to promoting investment in sustainable energy solutions.

The Town of Concord needs to address transportation issues to reduce our dependence on automobiles and reduce carbon emissions from internal combustion engines. Incentives for more efficient vehicles, improved infrastructure for electric cars and bicycles and local public transportation opportunities should be considered.

Net zero goals as employed by other municipalities for building code standards should be analyzed for their utility in Concord.

A pressing issue for CSEC is to support Concord's priority to ensure every project or plan is as sustainable and energy efficient as possible. Requirements for construction of Junction Village may be cited as a case study to determine the cost-benefit calculations for the "social cost of carbon" over the life of the project.



Another tension is the balance of using undeveloped space for renewable energy production vs. other purposes. The Town's goals for reuse of 2229 Main Street present an excellent opportunity to assess the optimal choices for this property.

Tensions in the work of this committee include attention to adequate funding for energy efficient projects now that the Sawyer Funds have been expended.

### **Concord Housing Authority**

SWOT Analysis and Values:

- The use of “town character” in the SWOT Analysis for CHA suggests inclusivity of all Concord citizen sectors and town characteristics.
- As an effective property manager of a significant number of local affordable low-income housing units, CHA witnesses the anguishing decisions some of Concord’s long-term citizens have to make when they can no longer afford to live here and waiting lists or availability of affordable housing options are limited or non-existent. Taking action on issues of affordable housing opportunities sooner rather than later requires political will, commitment and cultivated citizen engagement.
- Local economic diversity of residents has already been seriously eroded and will continue to be with an ever-increasing price tag for housing. Financial implications of the final CLRPC plan recommendations are likely to exacerbate this reality without a balanced approach to “town character”.
- The population already in, or who would benefit from affordable housing is often under-represented in offering feedback. This provides an additional burden on the CLRPC to reflect citizen needs and priorities.
- More cross-town automotive transportation options are particularly important for some sectors of our community (individuals and families).
- Regionalization can also be viewed as a threat to providing a range of local affordable housing options to maintain diversity and “town character”.
- Political uncertainty is a potential real threat to future funding for public housing.
- Generational and citizen differences in defining priorities for their tax dollars are an equity issue and point of tension.

### **Pressing Issues for the Concord Housing Authority**

- To fund the preservation and modernization of existing CHA scattered site low-income rental housing units for seniors and families, with particular attention to sites close to town centers and transportation.
- To retrofit existing bathrooms to increase accessibility in older housing units designated for seniors.
- Complete a strategic portfolio analysis to identify opportunities for greater efficiencies and/or readiness for new opportunities.



- Develop a new strategic plan to meet existing and future affordable housing needs.
- Continue to work with town entities and departments in meeting the goals of the 2015 Housing Production Plan.

#### Recent Major Accomplishments for the Concord Housing Authority

- Major Peter Bulkeley Modernization Project with the last four units recently completed.
- Proven affordable housing town resource with a well-run portfolio that seamlessly blends into the community.

#### **Concord Housing Development Corporation**

Diversity of people is an asset to the community, especially different income levels. There is a social aspect to housing.

The CHDC is responsible to maintain and increase a diversity of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of the Town and its traditionally diverse population, and to recommend to the Select Board policies and by-laws that promote the creation and retention of housing diversity, including affordable housing, throughout the town. The CHDC is set up to be nimble, proactive and action-oriented, though it lacks a sufficient and consistent funding stream to achieve its objectives. Another challenge is the predominance of restricting available land that is suitable for housing to open space.

Additional innovative methods to create affordable and restricted housing should be explored.

1. Convert existing market rate homes to affordable homes.
2. Increase the required affordable component for private development.
3. Sponsor development on public land as in the 'Junction Village' model.
4. Other zoning ideas, including more infill development in a scattered site method.
5. More education is needed to build support.
6. Other possibilities are flexible housing, sustainable housing, restricted housing, workforce housing.

#### **Concord Municipal Light Board**

CMLP's Strategic Plan, Version 1 is a living, working plan that will continue to evolve over time and will create benchmarks that can be tracked. Annual adjustments will be required to our programs to stay on track and respond to market conditions. The next step is to do detailed planning for each initiative.

While we have a credible plan that will achieve CMLP's goals, the forward capacity, transmission and REC markets, along with policy changes that affect those markets could vary greatly from our assumptions and must be watched carefully.



This plan finishes the job of reducing GHG emissions from electricity use by 2021, and begins the transition from fossil fuels to non-emitting power for space and water heating and transportation. The community's main focus needs to be on completing that transition to ensure that the Town's 2050 GHG reduction goal can be met.

A secondary focus will need to be on reducing the remaining fossil fuel use in Town. Weatherization of buildings that are still partially or fully heated with fossil fuels will be important. Working on ways to reduce vehicle miles driven will help reduce GHG emissions while the vehicle stock transitions from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles.

Involvement by the new Director of Sustainability, other Town departments, and active citizens and volunteers will be essential. CMLP looks forward to working with many partners to achieve this mission in the years ahead.

### **Council on Aging**

#### Pressing Issues

Senior Transportation. More in town vans will be needed as well as transportation outside Concord especially for medical visits. Cross Town Connect is not likely to work for ill and frail seniors due to long waits. Neighborhood school bus shuttles were employed in the past during hours when not in use by students. Consider revisiting this idea.

#### More Flexible and Affordable Housing:

More small houses are needed for seniors scaling down and young families starting out

#### Multi family and Mixed Use Zoning.

- Build senior housing close to grocery and drug stores e.g. near/above Crosby's Market
- More access to affordable home management services e.g. snow shoveling.

More Social Service/Public Health Outreach and Intervention Services e.g. hoarding and mental health issues.

#### -More Emergency Financial Aide

There will be more seniors with inadequate savings.

#### Conflicts

Presently only a small percentage of the town's budget goes towards senior services but the population of seniors is expected to rapidly reach 40% which will require reallocation of resources and ensuing conflicts. Can facilities and budget keep up with growing demand?



## Recent Accomplishments

- Creation of Concord After 60
- Increase in nursing outreach hours

## Finance Committee

Achieving Town goals will have a financial cost and must be analyzed in detail, carefully planned for and managed proactively. Long range capital planning efforts identified in the 2005 Comprehensive Long Range Plan are still needed.

Certain APA Principles will affect Town Finances:

- Objectives related to infrastructure improvements
- Subsidizing affordable housing
- Protection of land
- Assistance to those at risk
- Use of renewable energy
- A balanced mix of land use

The Finance Committee considers Financial Sustainability to include maintaining Concord's economic soundness, financial strength and flexibility through maintaining excess levy limit capacity to avoid overrides, a free cash balance, and continuing investments in capital needs.

Broadening this conversation beyond the Finance Committee will create a more integrated approach. For the past 6 years the FinCom has issued a five-year projection of the expected range of taxes and maintains cooperation with the Concord Public Schools and Concord Carlisle Regional High School Committees to benchmark costs and outcomes.

## Historical Commission

The Concord Historical Commission is charged with attending to the broad historical interests of the Town, including identification and preservation of the historic built environment and the heritage landscape.

### Protection of built environment

Two years ago, town meeting passed the first update to Concord's demolition delay which has succeeded in providing oversight and temporary protection for more than a thousand Concord buildings outside the Historic Districts. Following a year of applying the new bylaw and developing procedural regulations, the CHC is concerned that the present demolition review bylaw still falls short of the protective and constructive functions that are required for strong protection of historic assets. Ideas for improvement include:

- Require that owner/contractor provide professional other-party proof of structural failure if that is the stated cause for wishing to demolish; add regulations concerning owner/contractor participation in seeking alternatives during delay period; consider including a longer delay period, and adjusting "historic" cut-off date to later year (1950?) or period of time (50 years or older).
- Work on identifying options to prevent demolition. Expand options for the individual homeowner or developer. Beyond this, investigate possibilities such as Town purchase of property to renovate for elderly, affordable, or single parent housing. The reuse of these houses can link to Envision Concord goals beyond historic preservation such as affordable housing,

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diversity, sustainability, in an effort to lower the number of demolition applications and the number of demolitions following the imposed one year delay.

More broadly, the Commission is concerned about the important and problematic concepts of "unique character" and "historical integrity" as applied to our town. Comments:

- Does the town have specific growth and economic development goals? What are they? Such goals should be tested carefully against the overriding goal of "maintaining the unique character of the town."
- Growing threats to the character now include: mass and scale of development, building out-of-scale residences in neighborhoods--often leading eventually to the destruction of small scale neighborhoods; pressure to build on open land (for example, seeing open land as a place to build affordable housing rather than integrating such housing into existing neighborhoods or using existing housing).
- Has the "unique character of the town" been defined in ways that allow us to test changes against this? The Town used to say the goal was maintaining the character of the town as a New England village or town. It is important to remember that this character is a result of landscape, topography, open land, agriculture, architecture, small business--many factors interacting with and impacting each other.
- How can the character and history of West Concord be protected without using it as a tax base and place to develop in order to keep other parts of town free from this development.
- How can the interests of preserving Concord's historic integrity be balanced with maintaining strong financial health. Concord's historic integrity is defined as open space, farmland, historic vistas, preservation of historic structures and scale. The impact of any major alteration or construction on historic integrity must be considered.

#### Importance of historic landscape and archaeological resources

The landscape of Concord is deeply valued as an environmental resource, an aesthetic pleasure, and a medium of continuity with the past. It helps to form and perpetuate the community. It furnishes numerous opportunities for recreation. It adds to the economic value of real estate. And it serves as a backdrop of our lives. In preservation and planning, it is important to find ways to make the landscape not just a backdrop but an integral part of our lives in the present. Can it be a living heritage, and are there ways that the preservation process can promote such relevance? While Concord provides landscape protection to those areas covered by wetlands regulations, there is no comparable protection for the majority of the town's acreage where wetlands legislation does not apply. Conservation Commission, Concord Land Conservation Trust and the Historical Commission would do well to work in close cooperation to protect publicly owned parcels and raise the consciousness of citizens concerning the heritage value of all land within the town. This is particularly true as pertains to archaeological resources, both pre-Columbian and from the historic area. These resources, like the land itself, are not replaceable. The CHC is working on developing a predictive archeological sensitivity map for the whole town. This project, being done in partnership with Brandeis University, is expected to be completed within the next 3-5 years, and be available for consultation by all public & private entities whose work will involve ground disturbance,

#### Collaborative/coordinated interpretation and engagement

The CHC feels strongly that the best ally in historic preservation is an informed and engaged public who understand the depth and fragility of even the most humble aspects of the historic past. Primary partners in this effort are/should be:

- Concord Recreation Department – Concord Visitor Center

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- Concord media including the Journal and Town website
- Concord schools including CCHS and private schools
- The Concord Historical Collaborative and its members

Examples of historic sites that might be enriched for outreach include the current Brandeis “dig” at Barrett Farm, and the Wheeler-Harrington House and Park, which the CHC and NRC jointly manage. Target audiences include residents all along the age spectrum, including young adults in the post-college/pre-kids range and seniors. It is a goal of the CHC that these connections, and specific outreach programs connecting Concord’s past to Concord’s future will be initiated within the year, and “up and running” within 3-5 years.

## **Hugh Cargill Trust Committee (HCTC)**

### Recent Financial Concerns

Since CY2013 the HCTC annual distributions to needy clients have consistently exceeded \$24,000 per year increasing to an all time high of \$29,856 in 2016. In contrast, the \$24,000 distribution was only exceeded twice between CY2007 and CY2012. Meanwhile, the Trustees of Town Funds have indicated that they will limit distributions from the Hugh Cargill Trust Fund to only the interest generated. This interest is typically \$4,600 per year compared to the average \$17,000 per year that has been distributed in 2015 and 2016. The Trustees have also indicated that the Silent Fund, for which HCTC now has responsibility, will receive \$7,000 per year rather than the \$20,000 received and distributed in 2015 and 2016.

The additional funds brought in through the donations to the Tax Relief Fund and/or the Hugh Cargill Trust Fund will allow continuation of our mission through the balance of CY2017. However, the primary focus and energy of the HCTC should be working directly with clients and not fund raising. It is important that clients are receiving both the financial and non-financial support they need to become more independent. In many cases this may require referrals to and discussions with the Town social workers and other support groups. For this reason it is important that a good long term solution to the growing future needs of our needy Concord citizens be identified.

### Town of Concord 2015 Housing Production Plan Data Supports The HCTC Concerns

The Town of Concord 2015 Housing Production Plan is based upon 2010 census data and includes the following important points:

- About 1 of every 5 Concord households has low incomes and roughly 76% of these low-income households are ‘cost burdened’ because they are paying more than 30% of their income toward housing costs.
- More than half of all Concord’s elderly residents who are not living with family are also ‘cost burdened’, and about 43% of all renter households are ‘cost burdened.’
- Concord has more than quadrupled its affordable housing in the last decade from 177 units to 718
- As of 2015 there were 210 households on the Concord Housing Authority waitlist, of which 156 were waiting for Section 8 vouchers
- 1,213 households are expected to be added between 2010 and 2030
- Maintaining 10% of these new households as “affordable” means that an additional 121 households will most likely be “cost burdened” requiring some level of financial assistance.

- In addition to these new ‘cost burdened’ households, by 2030 the over-65 population is estimated to reach 6,181 residents, an increase of 74% from 3,546 in 2010. This older population is among the most financially needy. They are citizens who have lived for decades in Concord and are now struggling to stretch their limited resources.

## Natural Resource Commission

The NRC advocates for protection of open space and natural resources as a high priority in the Long Range Plan for the following benefits:

- Maintain the Town’s character
- Protect water resources and biodiversity
- Improve recreational access and connectivity
- Protect agricultural land, including fields, meadows, and orchards
- Open space and natural resources are irreplaceable.

Approaches to protect open space and natural resources include:

- Work with other Town Committees and Departments to expand implementation of Transferrable Development Rights (TDR) and Conservation Restrictions (CR)
- Increase financial resources available to protect open space and natural resources
- Actively pursue the use of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions to protect agriculturally productive land through permanent restriction
- Identify lands of conservation interest using the criteria laid out in the OSRP Seven-year Action Map
- Continue to connect trails and open space both within Town and with adjoining communities
- Climate Change Resiliency

## Benefits of Best Practices Protection of Open Space and Natural Resources

### Liveable Built Environment

- BP 1.1 – connecting trails and open space
- BP 1.2 – Use of Transfer of Development Rights
- BP 1.4 – Trails can supplement and connect to complete streets
- BP 1.5 – Use of trails to encourage walking and TDR’s to free up land for new mixed-use developments
- BP 1.6 – Use of TDR’s
- BP 1.7 – Include Conservation Restrictions as part of design standards for individual houses, planned residential developments and industrial / business development to help maintain Concord’s rural town character
- BP 1.8 – Use of mobility devices on conservation land trails
- BP 1.9 – Include open spaces and natural resources as part of Town’s historic resources (such as Emerson – Thoreau Amble)

### Harmony with Nature

- BP 2.6 – Role of protecting open space and natural resources in adapting to climate change



## Resilient Economy

- BP 3.1 – Use of TDR's

## NRC Key Accomplishments 2016-2017

- Timely hearings and issuance of decisions under the WPA and Bylaw
- Protection of over 50 acres of land throughout Town for conservation purposes in fee interest with an additional 69 acres protected through conservation Restrictions
- Expanded trail network on the Baptist Brook conservation land and between Second Division Brook and Harrington Park, at Black Birch and October Farm
- Returning the Rogers land to agricultural production

## Planning Board

The Planning Board can contribute to Concord's Comprehensive Long Range Plan by passing zoning bylaws, updating rules and regulations and participating in Town task forces and committees that support the APA "Sustaining Places" principles. For example, over the past year, the Board proposed and passed a Tree Preservation Bylaw at Town Meeting that aligns with Principle #2, Harmony with Nature. Similarly, for FY2018, the Planning Board's goals include adding sustainability criteria to all site plan reviews. Looking ahead, the Planning Board has prioritized the following long range planning initiatives that we would either lead or support:

- Higher density, more walkable and economically diverse neighborhoods (Principles 1.6, 1.7, 3.1 and 4.9). Investigate zoning changes to encourage mixed-use development within the village centers, consider whether to allow 2-family housing by right in village residential districts, and evaluate how to integrate form-based code concepts into Concord's zoning bylaw. Encourage affordable housing production through the site plan review process and future zoning bylaw amendments.
- Enhanced environmental sustainability (Principles 1.10, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.10). Consider raising the energy-saving requirements of the Building Code, with the long term goal of achieving Net-Zero development, promote low-impact development (LID) by proposing a residential lot stormwater bylaw, review how future precipitation projections due to climate change may affect our floodplain designations.
- A multi-modal and efficient transportation infrastructure (Principles 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.3, 6.1 and 6.6). Recognizing that most transportation initiatives relate to public infrastructure (outside of the Planning Board's charter), the Board can still work to reduce minimum parking requirements, update design standards to be compatible with Complete Streets and contribute to alternative transportation projects such as the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

The Board is also committed to the principles of Authentic Participation (Principle 7) and Accountable Implementation (Principle 8). We will look for opportunities to engage the public via workshops, surveys, broader access to planning documents and communications outreach. We will also continue to publish an annual set of goals and formally evaluate our progress against them.

## Public Works Commission

### 1. Roads, Sidewalks and Multi-Modal Accommodations -

The Public Works Commission adopted a "Public Works Commission Road Policy" in December 1999 focusing on context sensitive design which states "In the reconstruction and construction

of roads, the Town of Concord seeks to maintain those aspects of the existing environment which enhance the historic, scenic, and agricultural properties of the roadway consistent with public safety and in addition to consider alternative transportation accommodations on the Town's roads consistent with this policy and public safety". This policy includes a focus on pedestrians and cyclists. The Commission and staff will continue to evaluate the "complete streets" program and leverage program funding and participation when benefits are clearly identified as well as multi-modal transportation when feasible. It must however be recognized that at times, infrastructure improvements may not be compatible with community desires and historic layout.

2. Walden Street Landfill – A Public Works and Town Priority – The Commission voted "No Action" be taken on Article 12 - Landfill Conservation Restriction at the 2013 Annual Town Meeting. The Town's landfill on Walden Street is an invaluable asset to the Community providing a location for many activities. Among them are winter snow storage, management of bulky materials and storm debris, recycling of various materials, composting and brush management, storage of equipment and a fire training site. It is used by many stakeholders including Concord Citizens, Public Works, CMLP, Natural Resources, the School Department and Fire Department. Due to its location, topography and configuration it can serve as a 24/7 operational site while having minimal impact to abutters. It's critical that the landfill site must always remain unencumbered by any restrictions which would impede Concord Public Works or other entities from carrying out their responsibilities. The Commission requests that this statement, as supported by Town Meeting, be codified in the Comprehensive Long Range Plan

3. Infrastructure - Provide and maintain infrastructure capacity in line with growth or decline in system demands. Ensure cost of expanded infrastructure is recognized and captured through rates or fees. Explore and leverage other funding sources for infrastructure maintenance and expansion including grants, private contributions, and developer fair share contributions for facility expansion and impacts. Continue with a proactive approach with replacement/upgrades. Ensure adequate water supply, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, transportation infrastructure (multi-modal) emergency preparedness (winter maintenance), integrated solid waste management and recreational facilities, etc. are properly planned, maintained and rehabilitated.

4. Water Supply and Wastewater permit capacity – As regulations become more rigid and supply becomes more limited it will be vital for the Town's future that Concord officials and stakeholders aggressively defend any challenges to its water supply rights and permitted/registered water capacity. This includes NPDES Wastewater permitting and Nagog Pond Water rights established in 1884. In line with this is the inclusion of appropriate language (easements) in future property acquisitions and conservation restrictions to ensure flexibility for crossing and use of these protected properties for water, wastewater, drainage and other utility infrastructure in the best interest of the Town to maintain local control.

5. Water and Wastewater Facility Security – Increased Investments in robust security measures, both physical barriers and electronic surveillance around drinking water and wastewater facilities are a priority for the Commission. In addition the growing threat of cyber-attacks to critical water and wastewater infrastructure must be addressed with the continued investment in system vulnerability assessments and implementation of best practices and recommendations.



6. Water and Wastewater Conservation – To manage a finite supply from both a permitting and operational sense, the Commission recommends inclusion of conservation efforts specifically addressing outdoor irrigation, smart metering and steps individuals, businesses and institutions can take to minimize wastewater demands.

7. Public Works Facility Space Constraints – CPW continues to be challenged with making use of the limited existing space at 133 Keyes Road while the CPW program and responsibilities grow. Under cover storage for equipment and materials (salt, mix) is critical when evaluating response times and equipment longevity. Although the 133 Keyes Road campus site footprint is sufficient for operations and the location provides for an optimal response to all areas of Concord, the existing layout is not optimized resulting in inadequate administrative, fleet and operations space, outdoor storage of equipment resulting in premature degradation and insufficient supply of deicing materials.

8. Public Right of Way - The Public Right of Way (ROW) is an important aspect in delivering utility services to residents, businesses and institutions in Concord. Inefficient use or insufficient planning of this ROW will result in costs being transferred from investor owned utilities (i.e National Grid, Comcast, Verizon) to Concord taxpayers and ratepayers. The PWC supports a consistent application of ROW use to ensure delivery of uniform and efficient utilities services to the public in accordance with the MGL Chapter 164.

9. Integrated Solid Waste Management –Substantial analysis has taken place around the benefits and detriments of single stream recycling in comparison to CPW’s existing dual stream program. After systematically reviewing this option the conclusion is that dual stream recycling is the most cost effective collection solution and provides the largest diversion benefit providing clean, high quality paper in high demand from paper mills and recycled material processors. Concord consistently leads the Commonwealth in its curbside recycling program with a rate exceeding 40% of waste diversion.

10. Regulatory Permitting – The Commission recommends an assessment of proposed regulations be established before it is enacted to indicate the true “environmental yield” or net benefit resulting from the regulation is identified to ensure it is in alignment with Town goals and objectives. Regulations or permit conditions which do not meet this “environmental yield” test should be challenged to protect the Town from being burdened with unnecessary and costly regulations.

11. Leadership and Professional Staffing – Continue to strengthen Concord’s town government by attracting and retaining the highest quality professional and volunteer staff for all Departments, Commissions and Boards.

## **Recreation Department**

Healthy Community BP 5.4 Plan for physical activity and healthy lifestyles

### Strengths

- Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan inclusive of long-term goals through 2018+ (incorporated by reference)
- Large ratio of open space : population
- Access to a track that is not on a public school’s grounds which creates more self-direct and public use opportunities

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#### Weaknesses

- Need for more inclusive and accessible recreation spaces that are accessible beyond basic ADA design
- Lack of braille signage, large print text, and other languages at parks and in Recreation facilities/brochures
- No master plan for park spaces •Lack of group exercise space at Beede Center
- Current lack of communication and collaboration amongst public and private entities in Concord in scheduling the use of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities
- Lack of indoor and outdoor special event space(s) ie., amp theater, large presentation spaces, etc.
- Current overlap of out of school hour programming by multiple entities (Concord Libraries, Umbrella Arts, Schools, Recreation Department, Community Ed, Private Sector, etc.)

#### Opportunity

- Self-guided walking tours at visitor center with audio and maps
- Bike share program at visitor center •Create self-directed fitness circuits at parks and throughout town
- Healthy Concord initiative makes recommendations for more stress reduction programs for youth and adults
- Combining the Parks Department with the Recreation Department for more fluid programming and facility management
- Transition the Beede Center to a Revolving Account instead of an Enterprise Account to provide better administrative support

#### Threats

- Limited General Fund support for Recreation Department programs as compared to the national average. 5.9% of the General Fund budget comes from taxes, as compared to the typical Department receiving 70- 75% of expenses from taxes.
- There is 1 picnic pavilion throughout the town system. The recommended standard is one pavilion per 5,000 population (Concord would therefore need 4)
- Comparative data shows a need for 2.9 additional playgrounds for the current population

#### Responsible Regionalism BP 6.5 Promote regional cooperation and sharing of resources

##### Strengths Weaknesses Opportunity

- Create a Concord/Lexington Tourism Council inclusive of the Concord Visitor Center, Minuteman National Park, Lexington Visitor Center, DCR, local museums for better service to tourists and guests
  - Creating a community event signage space that is organized and coordinated by a Town entity to better communicate events in Concord Threats
  - Over signage of events run by municipal, federal, state, private and state run programs
- Responsible Regionalism BP 6.6 Enhance connections between local activity centers and regional destinations Strengths

#### Weaknesses

- Lack of signage or maps directly off of the local transportation centers in Concord and West Concord



#### Opportunity

- Bike share program at visitor center (in works with Concord Visitor Center and Lexington Visitor Center)

#### Threats

- Limitations involved with partnering and planning for improvements that deal with state run features such as a flyover bike path at route 2 or doing anything with the MBTA.

#### General Comments

- Lack of commitment to tourism from the community as a whole. For a very historic town, there is little for visitors (transportation services and otherwise)
- Traffic congestion deters participation in programs based on location. Re-designate certain roads as one way only, restrict specific roads to drive-through during certain hours only. Set goal to reduce the amount of traffic lights in Concord by 30%
- Need for dog parks so there is less use of sport fields by animals and pet owners (health and safety reasons)
- Overall lack of an established "community center" that would allow for more impromptu recreation
- Lack of a coordinated Capital Improvements Plan
- Need to establish long term plans for school buildings that may be retired from the school system
- Lack of cell phone service throughout the Town
- Lack of free wifi throughout the Town
- Lack of parking around parks, specifically Emerson Park area
- Lack of remaining home inventory for down sizing empty nesters.
- Over development of large multi-unit "affordable condos/apts."

#### Recreation/Open Space

- Continue Concord's "right to first refusal" purchase of any farm land that comes on the market.
- Expand Beede footprint to provide full service fitness needs under one roof; swim, cardio, weight training & group fitness programs.
- Approve a limited number of Open Space/Conservation Lands in Concord as dog accessible.

#### Public Schools

- Consider Consolidation of 1 new Middle School

#### Culture/Historic

- Maintain character and historic importance of Concord.

Pressing issues for the Recreation commission include:

- a) Receiving more concise and accurate accounting data from Town Finance department. Work in process.
- b) Understanding why the Town of Concord does not provide a higher % of tax Dollars to Concord Recreation (noted above)

- c) Beede not paid “User Fees” by CCHS Swim Team (eg; CCHS Hockey pays \$35k in User Fees annually to The Edge in Bedford for ice time).
- d) Lack of membership support from Concord community and why.
- e) The Beede Center's operations and budget are pressing issues. The lack of response to advertising is alarming; presumably the age of the average member is rising, so how best to reach the next generation of members? Traditional advertising is unlikely to be the best route. Also, how to get Beede paid by the schools for the services it provides is critical.
- f) Maintaining/increasing participation in the recreation programs. It seems like summer camp is stable, but how best to increase participation and visibility of programs beyond young kids? Also, how to best deal with the encroachment of club sports (e.g., girls basketball).
- g) How to balance the need for stable/increased revenues with the need for providing affordable services to the town (I think summer camp is a good example of how this can be well done) but rates for other programs such as after-school care seem high. There was a mandate to cut prices for summer camp; how or why was this mandate not extended to all programs?

Tensions/conflicts in the Commissions’ work:

- a) Lack of specific updated monthly information from Beede ie; (work in process)
  1. Number of new memberships sold – 10 days pass, 3 month, 1 year
  2. Total monthly revenue sold
  3. Membership monthly sales YOY 4.
  4. Monthly revenue YOY
  5. 3-6 Month Marketing Plan

Accomplishments in the past year:

- a) Rideout Park
- b) Ripley Playground
- c) Beede's revised pricing and billing structure was a solid accomplishment. Offering members other ways to join (10 visit passes) and pay (monthly vs. annual renewals) will serve to bring in more revenue after an adjustment period from members. It also more aligns the Beede with current health club offerings at other facilities.

### **School Committee**

Pressing issues facing the School Committee

- Strategic Planning – process to begin January, 2018
- Supporting new Superintendent and implementing effective Superintendent review process
- Communicating widely and effectively with broad community (including parents, students, staff, and all town citizens)
- Communicating with Finance Committee regarding Budget
- Finding a common language to discuss Budget, “per pupil spending”, and success metrics
- Identifying sources and solutions relative to student stress levels; encouraging mindfulness throughout all schools
- Ensuring Cultural Proficiency throughout the schools and Districts to keep pace with a changing population and world, especially with increased varied housing in town (multi-family, affordable, cluster building, etc)
- Educating ALL students in an ever-changing environment and population while balancing the cost challenges



- At CCHS – Utilizing, maintaining, and continually improving the campus, including the building, renovated fields provided by CC@Play, and all school land
- At CPS – Upgrading/ replacing middle school facilities

#### Tensions or conflicts in School Committee work

- Lack of a common language around budget creation and approval processes
- Lack of trust around budget process
- Balancing increasing costs with a priority on what is best for students (the high quality services that Concord expects often cost more)
- Educating over 3,000 students, at 2/3 of the Town's Budget, with only ~30% of families/citizens in Concord having school aged kids in the public system
- Increasing diversity and resultant demands on staff and resources (i.e. increase in English Language Learners necessitates increase in ELL teachers )
- Challenges at Concord Middle School of attempting to conduct 21<sup>st</sup> century learning in aging, inadequate facilities which are overcrowded and inefficiently spread over two campuses

#### Recent School Committee Accomplishments

- Hiring a new Superintendent who is already building bridges, looking at things in new ways, and becoming attuned to the needs of the Districts and the town
- Improving communications and relations between the School Committees and the community
- Implementation of a later Start Time at CCHS
- Introduction of Spanish at the Elementary Schools and Latin at CMS
- Completion of a new Transportation facility
- Transition to the new CCHS building
- Initial Facilities Study of Concord Middle School and submission to MSBA for inclusion in construction funding application process

#### Considerations for Envision Concord Plan

- The provision of a “range of housing types” for the community - as discussed in the SWOT analysis - should be considered as both an “opportunity” as well as a “threat” in terms of the effect on schools.
- An improved Middle School facility should be considered as an opportunity to advance the Town's public infrastructure as well as green building design and energy conservation.

#### Select Board

The Select Board underscores that a sustainable community must balance the economic, environmental and social components of society. Our community thrives on its tourist economy and the vibrant downtown areas where visitors shop, eat, and learn about our history. Identifying current incentives that drive our small businesses to succeed is important as well as those that create impediments to success. Rising rents may be outpacing business returns and small businesses may need assistance from the town and commercial property owners to



remain profitable and attractive. Other issues raised as concerns include zoning, fees, congestion and in-town transportation limitations.

The Select Board is mindful of the balance required for a future where young and old can share in the economy, town services and rich environmental history.

The Select Board is interested in engagement in a dialogue, not static one-way communication, with all residents in the community. Additionally, the Board seeks to improve civic literacy and training for volunteers on boards and committees in the principles of good governance.

Town Character is consistently touted as the highest valued attributes of our community, yet there is not a definition of Town Character nor unanimity on how to preserve it. The heart of the challenge may be to balance the elements that may reinforce Town Character: our place in history during the American Revolution, during the Age of Authors, our farming heritage, the recreational and open space opportunities, the economic vitality of our town centers, Concord as a Welcoming Community in keeping with our transcendental history.

### **Tax Fairness Committee**

The Tax Fairness Committee suggests the Comprehensive Long Range Plan include the effect of the property tax on the character of the Town, including ways to preserve economic diversity in Town, and ways to ease the tax burden on homeowners of modest means. The 2005 Comprehensive Long Range Plan stated as an objective “Adopt tax policies that align the tax burden more closely with income than with property values”. The Tax Fairness Committee is concerned that the property tax in its current form does not take into account Concord homeowners’ ability to pay. The Tax Fairness Committee has proposed a means tested senior property tax exemption which was approved by the state legislature, and passed by the 2017 Town Meeting as well as by voters at the 2017 Town election. The Board of Assessors is currently preparing for the implementation of this new exemption in 2018.

### **West Concord Advisory Committee**

Livable Built Environment:

- We would like to see a unified and committed effort to install a bridge across the Assabet River, connecting the Baker Street businesses and the Village. The benefits to the people who work on Baker Avenue, and the local residents who frequent those businesses, is incalculable. This would also allow untold numbers of commuters to get out of their cars and take the train to the Village to access their jobs at local commercial and retail businesses. We also see this as a cross-over to the Resilient Economy category.
- We recommend establishing a formal town-wide Bike Committee that will not only encourage bike use for recreation and commuting, but will also look at infrastructure issues on topics that need attention such as a safe, non-motorized passage across Rte. 2, a bridge across the Assabet River in West Concord for both bike and pedestrian use, and general “safe routes” considerations to various points of interest including the schools and business corridors. This group, which would ideally report to a person or group with authority such as the town manager or Select Board, could also work on systemizing the town’s offering for safe bike storage (racks, sheds) and even bike rentals in the future.



- We recommend creating a body that will look at smart growth and density as it affects long range planning. We are seeing a number of high-density building projects in West Concord and believe there needs to be alert stewards who will look specifically at how to balance a desire for density around the train station with a strain on services in town such as schools.

#### Harmony with Nature:

- We would like to see a unified effort to bring people back to the river in West Concord. This is an important potential economic engine and also a recreational bonus that many people don't know how to access or take advantage of. Our committee has begun work on this issue in planning for a West Concord River Festival, but there is more to do. Part of this could and should be planning to take better care of the debris on Concord's rivers, so boaters could use them. Also, we would like to see better signage alerting people to access points and parking at or near the river. We also see this as a cross-over with the Resilient Economy category, because of the destination potential of West Concord for boaters.

#### Resilient Economy:

- We would like to see the addition of food trucks and other affordable food options in town to handle the coming influx of people on the rail trail, as well as from employees at the Baker Avenue businesses who will eventually have easier access to the Village through the pedestrian bridge we hope to see installed.
- We would like to see an effort to incorporate the arts and arts-related interests as part of our resilient economy. That could be in the form of support for more arts spaces, such as development of "maker spaces" or artists' studios, as well as a concerted effort to install more public art, which we see as a draw for more visitors and therefore a boon to our businesses.

#### Interwoven Equity:

- We would like to encourage more formal interaction with the Committee on Disabilities to ensure that accessibility to all of our amenities is always considered for people with disabilities.

#### Healthy Community:

- We would like to see fruition of the much-discussed new culvert reconstruction on Rte. 2 to help reduce truck traffic through the Village and thus reduce noise and pollution.
- We would like the town to consider installing outdoor exercise equipment in the form of a workout circuit along the back of Rideout Park.

#### Responsible Regionalism:

- We believe that no long-range plan can exist without accounting for changes with the MCI prison property. We have become aware that the state could close that facility within the next 20 years. That event would be a game changer for the Rte. 2 corridor and West Concord. We see it as an opportunity for an exploration of dynamic mixed uses, such as housing (including affordable units), retail and light industrial interests. This high-profile piece of property could satisfy many categories on this list, including Resilient Economy and Livable Built Environment, and we would be remiss not to take it under consideration sooner rather than later.