

Acton 2020



Today. Tomorrow. Together.

**DRAFT AGENDA AND FACILITATOR'S
INSTRUCTIONS:
PUBLIC WORKSHOP**

Wednesday, October 20, 2010
6:30 p.m.

Acton Boxborough Regional High School

Purpose:

The purpose of this meeting is to bring together residents, business owners and other stakeholders to confirm the vision and goals developed in Phase I and to begin to take these to the next step by taking stock of preliminary findings of an inventory of existing resources. The main objective is to continue the community conversation that will result in formulating recommendations for a community master plan for the future of Acton.

AGENDA

- 6:30 - 7:30 Welcome and Introduction
Visit Information Table
Provide Written Input
Presentation (powerpoint)
- 7:30 – 9:30 Break into Groups (by goal)
- 9:30 – 9:45 Resume as Large Group
Next Steps

Emerging Vision (from Phase I¹)

Imagine an Acton... that has retained its uniqueness by **preserving its rural and historic characteristics** – with ample open fields and meadows, tree-lined roads with meandering sidewalks, ponds, farms, wooded areas, stone walls, and beautiful renovated historic buildings. Imagine an Acton where growth is managed and developed in keeping with the Town's character.

Imagine an Acton that proactively strives for a **sustainable future**. Imagine an Acton where new residents continue to be attracted to: the **excellent schools**; as well as to a variety of **recreational opportunities**; welcoming, safe and **lively neighborhoods**; and **attractive, safe, and walkable shopping areas**. In addition to **sidewalks and bike paths**, a **Town shuttle** connects people and places, providing alternatives to automobile travel. Residents are also connected by way of **open communication and accessible information**, and there are numerous **opportunities for the community to gather**.

Imagine an Acton with several **vibrant village centers** – each distinct in its character; and walkable to enjoyable and unique window shopping with locally-owned shops; stores to run to for daily errands and a variety of places to eat; and where you can run into people you know. Envision our ethnic communities enlivening our villages with cultural celebrations, music and food from their countries of origin. The villages are "quaint, but not cute;" they are authentically Acton.

Imagine that **Kelley's Corner has become a walkable town center**. It is vibrant with a wide range of shops and

¹ Vision and goals are based on input gathered from over two-thousand residents through surveys and meetings conducted over a six-month long period in 2008.

restaurants. Parking, sidewalks, benches, street lighting and signage are all oriented to the pedestrian. Redevelopment is guided by design guidelines and review so that all buildings are lovely and in keeping with Acton's character.

Imagine an Acton that **welcomes all its residents** – of all ages, socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds – by providing a variety of housing choices and support services, communicating in multiple languages, and inviting all to contribute to Acton's civic and social life by creating opportunities for intergenerational experiences and cultural celebrations to be shared and enjoyed by all.

Emerging Goals

- Preserve town character
- Increase awareness regarding the need to plan for sustainability
- Improve connections
- Provide more opportunities for community gathering
- Support inclusion and diversity
- Preserve and enhance town assets

Do you have any comments? Is anything is missing? ... needs more emphasis? ... a change in wording?

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON MORE DETAILED AGENDA

5:30 SET UP AND FACILITATOR TRAINING

6:30 -7:30 **Sign-In and Wait to Gather**

Visit Information Table

- summary sheet for each master plan element
- pages per goal from Phase I
- summary of Phase I (w/translations)-- ??

Provide Written Input

- Large comment sheets (on wall?) per goal with yellow stickies for comments (giving all participants an opportunity to comment on all of the goals)
- Back of the Agenda (comment on emerging vision & goals)
- Large comment pads per element?

Presentation (powerpoint)

- Welcome and Introduction
- Description definition of master plan and project purpose
- Presentation of
 - Overall process, Phase I, Phase II
 - Emerging vision and goals
- Overview of Preliminary Observations (based on inventory):
 - Identification of key issues (by element??)
 - Challenges and opportunities

Presentation of Themes (Phase I Goals) & Explanation of how these relate
Description of the evening's purpose and activities

7:30 – 9:30 Break into Groups (by theme/goal): *The purpose of the discussion will be to ask participants questions regarding the goals (some may be common across goals, others specific to the goal) so that the discussion becomes more directed. Participants will be encouraged to use the information provided in the handouts which will summarize preliminary inventory findings (by master plan element).*

30 minutes for assigning groups, group formation, introductions and review of hand-outs

5 minutes to "trade" group if so desired²

40 minutes for discussion of one theme

5 minutes to re-group

40 minutes for discussion of second theme

9:30 – 9:45 Resume as Large Group

Sample Report Back and Next Steps

² Each participant will be given a colored ticket (different color for each theme, perhaps with goal printed on it) and they will be given the chance to trade groups if they so desire, and if they can find another participant willing to trade.

7:30 – 9:30 Break into Groups (by theme/goal): (120 minutes)

The purpose of the discussion will be to ask participants questions regarding the goals (some may be common across goals, others specific to the goal) so that the discussion becomes more directed. Participants will be encouraged to use the information provided in the handouts which will summarize preliminary inventory findings (by master plan element).

Group Assignment and Formation (30 minutes)

Introductions

Review of Handouts

[5 minutes to “trade” group if so desired³]

Theme #1: 40 minutes

5 minutes to re-group

Theme #2: 40 minutes

CAPACITY

6 themes x 12 - 15 people/group = 72 – 90 people

150 people / 6 themes = 25 tickets/theme x 2 themes/person = 50 tickets per theme

Have extra “tickets” per theme and just add them to existing groups (as long as the total number in a group does not exceed 15 people)

IF MORE PEOPLE COME then form additional groups --- ask additional group for show of hands for themes (each person raises hand for two) – the two top choices are the ones that get discussed

³ Each participant will be given a colored ticket (different color for each theme, perhaps with goal printed on it) and they will be given the chance to trade groups if they so desire, and if they can find another participant willing to trade.

Preserve town character (40 minutes)

Introduction: *Participants in all the public forums in Phase I, agreed that preservation of Acton's character was a priority. Please look at the Town Character Goal and Objectives pages. There are three pages in total with two very different objectives.*

Objective #1: Preserve Rural and Historic Characteristics

As you can see this way considered a top priority by the participants in Phase I. Key ways in which Actonians felt the Town's character could be preserved are listed at the bottom of the first page, the first column and further described on the second page.

Objective #2: Preserve and Enhance Village Centers

Discussions in Phase I included :

- Appreciating existence of number of village centers, would like these to be enhanced
- Wishing there was a "town center"; some thought Kelley's Corner has potential to become this

Please review the Goal and Objectives pages for this theme and keep in mind the Summary Sheets on the Town's existing resources as well.

ALL QUESTIONS WILL BE BRAINSTORM STYLE, EXCEPT FOR #6 (approx. 6 minutes per question plus 5 minutes for introduction to questions)

1. *Please tell me whether you feel something is missing or should be given more of a priority in the comprehensive plan.*
2. *Do you see these objectives as being potentially in conflict with other goals and objectives?*
3. *Is there any information in the inventory of existing resources (see Summary Sheets) which you would like to highlight and/or relate to this goal and objectives?*
4. *What are the biggest threats to meeting these objectives?*
5. *What would you say most important to include in future discussions?*
6. *What are the most critical steps that Acton should take to meet this goal and related objectives? GO AROUND THE TABLE AND ASK EACH PARTICIPANT. THEN ASK FOR HAND RAISE "VOTING" on ALL.*

IF MORE TIME: Is there anything else would you like to say about the issue?

REPORT BACK WILL BE ON TOP CRITICAL STEPS FROM #6

**Increase awareness regarding the need to plan for sustainability
(40 minutes)**

***Introduction:** This came up as a major concern for Acton residents in Phase I (79% of mail survey respondents and 78% of phone survey respondents felt that the Town should take action to reduce greenhouse gases).*

Please review the Goal and Objectives pages for this theme and keep in mind the Summary Sheets on the Town's existing resources as well.

ALL QUESTIONS WILL BE BRAINSTORM STYLE, EXCEPT FOR #6 (approx. 6 minutes per question plus 5 minutes for introduction to questions)

1. *Please tell me whether you feel something is missing or should be given more of a priority in the comprehensive plan.*
2. *Do you see these objectives as being potentially in conflict with other goals and objectives?*
3. *Is there any information in the inventory of existing resources (see Summary Sheets) which you would like to highlight and/or relate to this goal and objectives?*
4. *What are the biggest threats to meeting these objectives?*
5. *What would you say most important to include in future discussions?*
6. *What are the most critical steps that Acton should take to meet this goal and related objectives? GO AROUND THE TABLE AND ASK EACH PARTICIPANT. THEN ASK FOR HAND RAISE "VOTING" on ALL.*

IF MORE TIME: Is there anything else would you like to say about the issue?

Preserve and enhance town assets (40 minutes)

Please review the Goal and Objectives pages for this theme and keep in mind the Summary Sheets on the Town's existing resources as well.

ALL QUESTIONS WILL BE BRAINSTORM STYLE, EXCEPT FOR #6 (approx. 6 minutes per question plus 5 minutes for introduction to questions)

1. *Please tell me whether you feel something is missing or should be given more of a priority in the comprehensive plan.*
2. *Do you see these objectives as being potentially in conflict with other goals and objectives?*
3. *Is there any information in the inventory of existing resources (see Summary Sheets) which you would like to highlight and/or relate to this goal and objectives?*
4. *What are the biggest threats to meeting these objectives?*
5. *What would you say most important to include in future discussions?*
6. *What are the most critical steps that Acton should take to meet this goal and related objectives? GO AROUND THE TABLE AND ASK EACH PARTICIPANT. THEN ASK FOR HAND RAISE "VOTING" on ALL.*

IF MORE TIME: Is there anything else would you like to say about the issue?
