

Preliminary thoughts for reviewing ALTERNATIVES in June 23 public meeting



**PUBLIC WORKSHOP
“Choose Your Acton”
Alternatives for Action**

Thursday, June 23, 2010
6:30 p.m.
Acton Town Hall, Room #204

Purpose:

The purpose of this meeting is to present three alternative courses of action that would meet the previously developed planning goals in a variety of ways and to differing degrees. The main objective is to seek input on these alternatives as we move forward in the process of selecting a preferred course of action. This workshop represents a continuation of 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 Tables
Provide Written Input -- ???
Presentation
- 7:30 – 9:30 Break into Groups
- 9:30 – 9:45 Resume as Large Group
Next Steps

6:30 – 7:30 PRESENTATION

Introduction – welcome, overview of process and purpose, description of day’s workshop events

Purpose: Developing alternatives is not a prediction, but rather a method to identify possible scenarios to help develop choices for action so that a community may develop policies which help guide growth and capture the forces of change in ways that are compatible with the community’s vision and goals.

Following an analysis and evaluation of the alternatives, elements may be selected from more than one to form a hybrid or composite alternative. Ultimately a series of strategies will be recommended to implement the preferred alternative.

Using Alternatives in discussing choices for action is useful because:

- Facilitates consensus building
- Enhances the group’s ability to understand and discuss choices by playing out the consequences of each choice
- Is a way to demonstrate potential consequences, opportunities and trade-offs

Overview of **Goals**

- Preserve Town character
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Improve connections
- Provide more opportunities for community gathering
- Support inclusion and diversity
- Preserve and enhance town assets
- Maintain and Improve financial well-being of the Town

Sample Strategies that would be part of all and any alternative

- Safe Routes to Schools
- Use of design guidelines
- Actively support agriculture
- Continue to promote water conservation & local wastewater disposal
- Continue to expand historic preservation efforts
- Continue to fund the MinuteVan shuttle
- Continue to increase the stock of affordable housing

Brief presentation of **Alternatives**

- Description of each
- Graphic (map)
- Photos representing potential outcomes

Key Issues that alternatives try to address (e.g. demographic trends, trends in Town's land use patterns, etc.)

Key Driving Forces (wildcards)

Define potential sources of change that may impact the future that are less predictable (e.g. national economic trends, price of gas, future availability of state funding opportunities, changes in technology, etc.)

Brief presentation of **evaluation of alternatives**

- Cost / benefit
- Observations and issues identified regarding potential trade offs

Discussion of **sustainability** as a lens-- ????

HOW TO EVALUATE THE ALTERNATIVES

Describe each alternative

Identify Implications: Cost / benefit analysis (listing)

Ask the public to add to list

How and to what degree they meet goals and objectives

Evaluate implications against guiding principles (think of other term)

Sustainability

Identify trade offs

What about “wild cards”

Focus / zoom in on specific locations and what happens there as a result of each alternative

e.g. Kelley’s Corner

Villages

Large parcels (only if they belong to the Town)

See Matrices

7:30 – 9:30 SMALL GROUPS

MATERIALS

- Goals and objectives (one set of laminated per table)
- Description of Each Alternative
 - Main Concept
 - Photos with captions highlighting features
 - Graphic representation with features identified on map
 - Key Features
 - Zoom in (on specific areas such as impact on villages, Kelley’s Corner, etc.)
 - Key Potential Actions
 - Positive Impacts
 - Negative Impacts
- Summary Evaluation Forms
- Comparison Evaluation Forms

1. Ask participants to use their individual evaluation forms on which to record their thoughts. Work alone or with a partner (?) How would you rate this alternative on a scale of 1- 5 for meeting each of the goals? [1 hour???

Fill out your Comparison Evaluation Forms using the Alternative descriptions
Fill out the Summary Sheet

Collect these at the end of the session

2. Make an effort to reach group consensus [1 hour???

FOR Alternative 1

Do you have anything to add to the list of Positive Impacts?
Do you have anything to add to the list of Negative Impacts?

FOR Alternative 2

Do you have anything to add to the list of Positive Impacts?
Do you have anything to add to the list of Negative Impacts?

FOR Alternative 3

Do you have anything to add to the list of Positive Impacts?
Do you have anything to add to the list of Negative Impacts?

Take a moment to review your thoughts regarding the alternatives.

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If you had to choose one alternative as the base or foundation to build on -- which one would you choose? (Show of Hands)

Identify the majority selection while carefully recording minority opinion

- What do you like about this alternative?
- What don't you like or what concerns you about it?
- What would you change to make this alternative better?

Additional Comments

**DRAFT SUMMARY EVALUATION SHEET:
ALTERNATIVE 1**

(one sheet per alternative for individuals to use for evaluating alternatives either alone or with partner??)

IMPLICATIONS

Positive

.....
.....
.....
.....

Other: _____

Negative

.....
.....
.....
.....

Other: _____

TRADE-OFFS

.....
.....
.....
.....

Other: _____

DISCUSSION

The best thing about this alternative is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What I like least about this alternative is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What I would like to keep from this alternative if another alternative is chosen or it is merged with elements from others is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My **OVERALL RANKING** of this alternative is (out of a total of 3, with 1 being the preferred option): _____