

DRAFT, UNAPPROVED ACES COMMENTS

Action Item: concentrate growth. Growth concentration in town centers must not be implemented at the expense of air or ground and surface water quality. Therefore, tools and infrastructure must be made available and used, such as traffic mitigation, low impact development methods and advanced stormwater and wastewater treatment systems, in highly concentrated areas.

Action item: review zoning in light of plan goals and buildout potential. Zoning needs to take water quality impacts into consideration; e.g., ensuring riparian protection areas, and limiting density and types of use near water resources.

Action item: new development by-laws. Impact on air and water quality should be taken into consideration when determining impact fees.

Action item: Extend design guidelines. Also add incentives for preserving/ remediating surface and groundwater and air quality, such as alternative energy, vegetated roofs, bioretention areas, etc.

Action item: Village Centers Plan. Water and air quality, particularly stormwater management, motor vehicle traffic, and commercial or industrial uses that could introduce environmental and human health risks should be high priorities when considering “elements and qualities that contribute to the success of traditional villages”.

Action item: Encourage developer contributions to town centers. Include use of bioretention areas and rain gardens in the design of “pocket parks”.

Action item: Redevelop Kelley’s Corner. Include stormwater management and mitigation in the list of criteria to apply as incentives during special permit review.

Action item: Concentrate town investments in Kelley’s corner. Landscaping should also serve to mitigate runoff.

Action item: West Acton: plan some growth. Include water and air quality considerations when delineating areas to be redeveloped/subject to infill, and include low impact development and advanced stormwater management in design guidelines.

Action item: Document and prioritize rural characteristics. Prioritize preservation of waterbodies as rural characteristics.

Action item: Preserve historic buildings and landscapes. Include preservation of waterbodies as part of historic landscapes.

Action item: Monitor groundwater quality and quantity. Also monitor groundwater withdrawal rates and water quality of private wells, and develop a plan to limit the impact of private wells for residential lawn irrigation on groundwater quality and quantity.

Action item: Advanced package wastewater treatment. Even the most advanced wastewater treatment systems do not treat for all contaminants; however, given that treatment plants already discharge into Zone IIs, please amend to state that package treatment plant effluent discharged in a Zone II water

protection area, as defined by the Acton Water District's map, should undergo highest possible level of treatment, and that no discharge is allowed into a Zone I, also as delineated by the Acton Water District maps.

Action item: Enhance quality of water discharges. Add Engineering as an owner, and add contaminants other than phosphorous and nitrogen compounds to include other contaminants typically found in stormwater runoff, such as pesticides and herbicides used on lawns, and contaminants from automobiles found in parking lot runoff.

Action item: Match Water District and Town protection zones. Thank you for including this very important zoning piece. The current system leads to confusion and is not as protective of our water resources as it should be.

Action item: Use a proactive approach to mitigating existing stormwater issues and avoiding new problems throughout Acton. Add Engineering and Highway as Other Owners.

Action item: In reviewing development, consider incentives and infrastructure to create better managed runoff recharge by limiting impervious surfaces. Limiting impervious surfaces might lead to adverse impact of groundwater in Zone II's; this should be a tiered system depending on the sensitivity of a site's location. Add Engineering as Other Owner.

Action Item: Water Education. Note that the Discovery Museums water education program was initiated by a grant initiated by ACES. Also, ACES has been a presence at Octoberfests, PIP STEM events, Earth Days, and other public gatherings. Please add ACES as Other Owner.

Action item: Monitoring private wells. Please add WRAC and ACES as other owners. Private wells for irrigation that are in Zone II's should be required to meter their water use during periods when the Water Districts limits or prohibits watering, and this usage should be reported to the Water District and Health Dept. At some point water use monitoring for private wells may be required by our DEP water withdrawal permit, and count against the town's withdrawal limit.

Action item: Update private well standards. There should be provisions to decommission private wells, whether they are non-compliant or not. Some private well owners choose to hook into the public water supply when the main comes by their property, even if their well is compliant, in order to have a water supply during power outages. Decommissioning of wells should be performed in accordance with State guidelines, and Acton regulations need to be changed to include those guidelines.

Action item: Encourage rainwater harvesting for irrigation. The Board of Health needs to amend its ban on cisterns to forbid only cisterns that serve as potable water supplies.

Action item: Acton Stream Teams. Specify citizen groups and insert Conservation Commission as Owner, since the Rivers Act and Wetlands Protection Act are in their sphere of influence.

Action item: Education on disposal of unwanted items. Add Health Department, which by Mass. Statute is responsible for solid waste, and Highway Department, which runs the transfer station, as owners.

Action item: Create a zero waste committee. Please see above.

Action item: Provide recycling bins in central locations around the Town. Bins should be located where their contents, if spilled accidentally or by vandalism, do not adversely impact the MS4 or surface waterbodies.

Action item: Reduce throw-away use. Leverage Scout troops and schools to influence children. Again, Health should be added as owner due to solid waste responsibilities.

Action item: Transfer station waste reduction. Add Finance Committee as other owner if fees and capital improvements are to be made to the Transfer Station.

Action item: Enact a bylaw to control where landscape contractors dispose of debris. Add Conservation Commission and Board of Health as owners.

Action item: Composting. The DEP is in the process of amending regulations. See <http://www.mass.gov/dep/service/regulations/newregs.htm#organics>

Action item: Local hazardous waste days. Consider the feasibility of accepting pharmaceuticals. Pharmaceuticals have been accepted at some local hazardous waste days already, so there is no need to consider feasibility. There is a need to continue accepting pharmaceuticals, as they are a source of water contamination.

Action item: Educate the public and enforce/encourage compliance with anti-idling laws, especially at schools and the train station. Add both school districts as owners, and note resources available at <http://www.thegreenteam.org/GTguide.pdf>

Action item: Air-drying of clothing. Lobby the Massachusetts legislature to pass a ban on homeowner association bans of clotheslines – this has been done in five states, including Florida.

Strategy: Biodiversity. All the action items seem to be plant-related. There are non-plant species in Acton that contribute to biodiversity, and they require clean surface water bodies to survive. No action items are given that help to protect birds, mammals, fish, beneficial insects, etc.

Strategy: Conserve farm land and support agriculture in Acton. Agriculture needs to be sustainable and needs to avoid creating environmental and human health risks due to pesticide and herbicide use.