

## **PATTERSON PRP DEVELOPMENT**

### ACTIONS PRIOR TO TOWN MEETING

- Acquire a pre-option agreement on the land. ✓
- Assess water/sewer availability; develop preliminary estimate(s) of cost of extending to and into property. ✓
- Prepare Town Meeting warrant articles.
- Create a memo for DHCD demonstrating the eligibility of the property as a Priority Development Site under MGL 43D: 1) the zoning allows the proposed use(s), and 2) the site could accept a building at least 50,000 sq. ft. in size.
- Assess the potential for use of PWED or CDAG grant funds for extending sewer and water to the site and improving its capacity in the vicinity.

### ANNUAL TOWN MEETING ACTIONS

- Appropriate \$120,000 (\$40,000/yr for 3 years) for pre-option agreement.
- Accept MGL 43D for the site.

### SUMMER 2010 ACTIONS

- Select Board applies for PDS designation.
- Town seeks grant funding support for pre-development technical assistance.
- Town prepares and publishes an RFP for site study and design consulting services.
- Following approval by state Interagency Permitting Board, Select Board approves designation and pursues amendments to local permitting requirements (for the PDS) to meet 43D conditions of creating a coordinated and expedited local permit path.
- Application for PWED or CDAG grants.

### FALL TOWN MEETING ACTIONS

- Fall 2010 Town Meeting considers/approves amendments to permit processes.

### SITE ANALYSIS & DESIGN

- Using 43D pre-development technical assistance grant funds, hire a team of design consultants to assess the site and work with an appointed committee to develop a conceptual plan, including site circulation, utility plans, building envelope, and design criteria.
- Perform necessary studies of site conditions, limitations and opportunities—wetlands, soils, 21E issues, slopes, historical/archeological issues, zoning, etc.
- Traffic - Conduct a traffic and circulation study of the surrounding roads. Project traffic anticipated from one or more build-out scenarios under the conceptual plan.
- Economic Feasibility - Based upon the conceptual design, and using assumptions about the range of possible uses, purchase price of the property, and other factors, develop an economic analysis of the development.

### PERMITTING

- MEPA application.
- Application for approval of site improvements using the expedited permit process.

### CONSTRUCTION

- Following local and MEPA approvals, construction of on-site improvements (roads, utilities, grading).

## PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH MASTER PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### KEY DIRECTIONS

- **Balance land preservation objectives with more intensive development in appropriate areas.**

Perhaps the most significant theme that surfaced throughout the *Planning Amherst Together* process is the need to protect the Town's significant open spaces, including wildlife habitats, farmland, recreational lands, scenic vistas, and environmentally sensitive areas. Conservation of large tracts of land will require trade-offs in other areas. For example, in order to deal with rising land prices that can result from reducing the supply of buildable land, higher density development must be allowed and incentives must be developed to direct more growth and increased economic activity to the appropriate areas. A mix of uses should likewise be promoted to encourage a more walkable community and bring residents closer to jobs, shops, and services. This Master Plan tries to address these trade-offs, striking a balance between land preservation and the need for intensified responsible development in Amherst.

- **Diversify and expand the economic base.**

**Amherst should pursue policies and regulations that encourage the diversification and expansion of its economic base in a manner consistent with the community's character and desires.** This will generate fiscal benefits for the community, provide revenue to pay for community services, create more private sector job opportunities for residents, and reduce dependence on the University and colleges as the economic engines of the community.

### LAND USE

**LU.1.B Evaluate built-up areas on the basis of their character, quality, and priority, and then identify areas to:**

- D. Allow more extensive development and redevelopment with a balance of incentives and controls (highway commercial corridors, research parks, etc.).**

**OBJECTIVE LU.5 – Identify key locations for business development and adopt land use regulations that can help broaden the Town's business tax base while avoiding inappropriate businesses, big boxes, heavy industry, etc.** The Amherst community has a clear sense of the types of businesses and industries that it would like to attract to the community. The Economic Development chapter of this plan highlights a number of strategies for encouraging the growth of target industries. This objective and accompanying strategies look at the role that land use regulations can play in enabling future economic growth.

**LU.5.E Identify and inventory existing and potential areas appropriate or already zoned for the development of business parks, then extend or improve the infrastructure necessary to make these parks viable.**

**Provide existing and potential new business parks with necessary infrastructure in appropriate areas for clean businesses, research companies, professional offices, information- or technology-based firms and other appropriate business uses.**

**LU.5.G Consider outright Town purchase of the most critical properties to spur appropriate development and redevelopment. Then use public ownership as a development incentive, as well as a control.**

Once an inventory has been completed, the community should consider whether any of the lands targeted for economic growth are in need of special attention in order to attract private investment and appropriate development. **In some cases the Town may need to purchase the properties outright, or obtain development rights or easements for critical areas.** Amherst has a long history of obtaining property rights—particularly APRs and conservation easements—in order to protect critical resources and slow or control growth in specific

areas of Town. **Public ownership of land can also be used as an active incentive where development is desired—it allows the community to reduce land costs for development, offering transfer of a property to a developer at a very low cost in exchange for the developer providing public amenities. Ownership allows the community full control over the nature and design of the resulting development.**

**LU.5.H Organize and coordinate administrative procedures to ensure that the permit process itself does not represent an unreasonable impediment to desired development.**

Having identified the kinds of business development it desires, the Town should encourage their development. **The permitting process should be expedited for these businesses by implementing coordinated review procedures for development plans, while continuing to ensure that such companies protect the health and welfare of local populations and ecologies, and respect historic character.**

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**OBJECTIVE E.1 - Support sustainable growth of existing businesses and attract new ones while protecting environmental values.**

Smart growth principles (see [www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)) should be used to support sustainable business growth while preserving Amherst's character and protecting the environment. The following strategies address issues of zoning, infrastructure, and economic policy that can attract targeted industries to Amherst.

**E.1.F Provide incentives for high priority, targeted development.**

**The Town should identify its development priorities, design a package of incentives, and undertake pre-development activities to facilitate development in these areas. These priorities should include evaluating and developing professional research park areas,** identifying and redeveloping brown-fields sites, as well as pursuing mixed-use infill and redevelopment projects in downtown and village centers, and carefully expanding those centers. **To accomplish this, Amherst could seek out state grant programs, provide density bonuses, provide infrastructure improvements, and/or explore tax incentives.**

**OBJECTIVE E.5 - Improve the regulatory environment to encourage business development.**

The following strategies suggest how the Town should review and update its regulatory processes in order to attract new businesses to Amherst.

**E.5.B Allow pre-permitting in targeted development zones.**

**In appropriate target areas, establish basic requirements for appropriate uses, site planning, and design, so that projects which meet those Town requirements can obtain approvals through a streamlined permit process.**

**OBJECTIVE E.7 - Encourage physical and technological infrastructure that support business and industrial growth.**

**The Town should invest in infrastructure and technological advancements that enable business attraction and retention.**

## **SERVICES & FACILITIES**

**OBJECTIVE S.4 Maintain and enhance Town infrastructure and facilities consistent with best practices.**

To function effectively, the Town needs and expects well maintained facilities. Infrastructure should be kept in good, environmentally-sound repair to assure the safety and well-being of the community. The Town should plan, budget, and act to maintain the quality and soundness of its buildings, facilities and infrastructure.

**S.4.D Study and plan for future utility extensions.**

Amherst's town-owned utilities include public water, sewer, and storm drain systems, as well as street lighting. In some places (downtown Amherst) it includes wireless computer installations. **The Town should coordinate its utility planning to ensure that future extensions are aligned with the community's land use, growth management, economic development, and environmental protection principles. Future sewer extensions**

**should direct development to appropriate areas that have been designated for growth.** Where possible, the Town should seek utility extension reimbursement costs from private developers.