

BUILDING ON PAST PLANNING PROCESSES

Listening to what's already been done...the top takeaways from Whately's previous plans:

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS (MVP) RESILIENCY PLAN 2021

- Address stormwater management & drainage issues.
- Identify additional locations where a municipal well could be installed.
- Identify flooding and fluvial erosion threats to municipal wells along the Mill River Watershed.
- Assess drinking water needs for farm workers and gather information about vulnerable populations.
- Identify locations in need of vegetated buffers along the Mill River and identify riparian areas in need of restoration.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN 2021

- Ensure that Whately protects farmland, forestland, scenic views, and other open space vital to sustaining the town's historic rural character and maintaining the quality of air, water, and wildlife habitats.
- Ensure that Whately maintains and improves the variety, quality, and accessibility of recreational facilities important for health and well-being of all residents, and promote the use of these facilities and any organized programming thereof.
- Coordinate effectively among Town boards, committees, community organizations, and volunteers, and with neighboring Towns, to achieve local and regional open space goals and keep the public well informed of goals, progress, and opportunities.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN 2020

- Provide adequate shelter, water, food and basic first aid to displaced residents in the event of a natural disaster.
- Provide adequate notification and information regarding evacuation procedures, etc., to residents in the event of a natural disaster.
- Minimize the loss of life, damage to property, and the disruption of governmental services and general business activities due to natural hazards.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2004

- Preserve Whately's valued agricultural landscapes and working farms
- Protect the beauty and unique rural character of our community and its natural resources
- Support sustainable economic development that strengthens the tax base, provides services, and a diverse mix of housing opportunities for residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION 2018

- Support local farm and food businesses, and help the industry sector to be resilient and expand.
- Recognize the outdoor recreation assets of the community, and encourage related responsible small scale business creation, like outdoor recreation tourism.
- Preserve Whately's historic character and natural environment, as it provides business development opportunities as well as a strong community identity to attract visitors and bring together residents.
- Promote the use of the Town's existing historic architectural styles in the development of new economic development initiatives.
- Encourage the Town to recognize and promote its historical character as an existing economic asset to coordinate with regional tourism activities.
- Support and maintain economic development that strengthens the municipal tax base.

MASTER PLAN 2011-2012

- Preserve important environmental and cultural resources in Town while engaging in the economic development needed to support the Town's tax base and to keep Whately a vibrant and sustainable town.
- Preserve agricultural lands and strengthen our farm businesses, helping to provide more living wage jobs and fresh, local food for Whately and its neighbors.
- Focus on efforts to preserve those areas that sustain the health of our waters, forests, and wildlife as well as those areas that are the town's most valued open spaces to safeguard Whately's historic and cultural resources
- Support sustainable economic growth by carefully planning commercial and industrial development to provide goods, services and additional jobs in town.
- Support a mix of housing opportunities in Whately which harmonize with the historic character of the town and which, along with accommodating future generations, could potentially satisfy our aging residents who may want to live in more accessible homes.
- Encourage all residential and commercial growth to use energy efficiency and affordability as guiding principles.

COMMON THEMES PRESENT ACROSS PLANS

1. Environmental Conservation and Protection

- Emphasis on preserving important environmental resources, including farmlands, recreational areas, forests, wildlife habitats, and watersheds.
- Recognition of the need to address stormwater management, drainage issues, and potential flooding threats to municipal wells.

2. Economic Development

- Encourage orderly economic, industrial, and commercial growth while discouraging uncoordinated and incompatible development that may overburden public investment or damage natural resources and rural character.
- There is a common emphasis on supporting local businesses, agriculture, and recognizing that Whatley's historic character and natural environment are economic assets in coordination with regional tourism activities.

3. Cultural and Historic Preservation: Preservation of the town's cultural and historic resources, including agricultural lands, historic buildings, and landscapes.

4. Housing and Community Development:

- Recognition of the importance of diverse housing options and the need to balance residential development with the preservation of natural, historic, and scenic assets to accommodate future generations.
- Consideration of energy efficiency and affordability as guiding principles for residential and commercial growth.

5. Collaboration and Regional Connectivity: Consideration of regional or shared resources and collaboration with neighboring towns, regional entities, and non-profit groups are recurring themes across all plans.

6. Community Resilience and Hazard Mitigation: Plans consistently focus on building resilience to natural hazards, including floods, and mitigating risks to public safety and property, particularly those intensified by climate change.

Whatley's landscape—its historic buildings, working farms, extensive forests, steep hillsides and broad, flat floodplain corridors—gives the town its unique character and charm that residents deeply appreciate. Whatley's previous plans collectively strive to create a resilient, sustainable, and vibrant community while preserving this distinctive character.

