

EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE

For the Town of Allenstown

Vision and Mission Statement of the Chapter

Allenstown is a unique community that prides itself on its community character, its rural areas and Suncook Village, and above all, its sense of community. Land use now and in the future should protect the identity of Allenstown through balanced growth that fits the community and meets its needs.

- *The Allenstown, NH Planning Board. December 2015*

Demographic changes, evolving housing needs, as well as emerging social and economic trends discussed throughout this Master Plan have a direct impact on the landscape of Allenstown. Because land is a finite resource, careful use of land is a critical issue for all communities. How Allenstown utilizes its land has a direct impact on aesthetics, community character, transportation infrastructure, housing affordability, as well as the tax base.

As the purpose of the Master Plan is to guide how Allenstown develops into the future, the Land Use Chapter becomes a primary mechanism for the overall development of the community. To that end, this Chapter explores land use trends in detail, while providing topical discussions of other issues discussed elsewhere in this Master Plan. The purpose of this Chapter is to identify and explore land use trends in Allenstown, discuss strategies for managing such trends, as well as offer recommendations as to what regulatory

steps should be taken in the future to meet the housing and economic needs of the community. Major areas of concern, then, include:

- Compliance with US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit requirements.
- Balanced development into the future. This means that all development should fit in with the character of Allenstown, and that housing development continues to remain balanced, both in terms of unit type, but also in terms of population to the number of units.
- Increase the workforce by attracting young families.
- Encouraging senior housing.

- Protect natural resources and community character.
- Continue to evolve the Planning Board approval process with any eye towards transparency, efficiency and modernization.

While data can provide some background as to what might be needed, it is the desires of the residents that drive community vision. Key themes identified from the Community Survey include: an emphasis on more commercial and light industrial development; perception that there is little or no growth; large majority of residents prefer to live in a mostly rural community like Allenstown; and strong interest in protecting agricultural land. The Community Visioning session’s main outcomes were concern for the lack of a strong base of volunteers to support community organizations, the impact of Bear Brook State Park on Town resources, taxes and economic development, and the need for access management along Routes 3 and 28.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In preparation of the master plan update, a community survey was available for residents to provide input. Like many communities in the Central NH Region, Allenstown has a long history of residents with strong ties and commitment to their community. Completed in 2013, the survey demonstrated a desire for commercial and industrial development along Routes 3 and 28, preferring additional retail, services and professional offices. Responders also expressed an interest in attracting more stores and shops to the Town.

Residents also expressed a desire to have development balanced with the existing rural character of Allenstown.

Question 1:

In your opinion, which statement best characterizes Allenstown’s rate of growth?

Question 1:	Total	Percent
Growing too fast	0	0.0%
Growing as fast as neighbors	0	0.0%
Growing fast enough	2	7.4%
Growth is not a major issue	2	7.4%
Growth is too slow	6	22.2%
No Growth is happening	12	44.4%
Not enough growth	3	11.1%
No opinion	2	7.4%
Grand Total	27	100.0%

Question 2:

Please indicate where you would prefer to see commercial development? Check all that apply.

Question 2:	Total	Percent
Route 3 / Large Scale	15	57.7%
Route 28 / Large Scale	22	84.6%
Suncook Village/Small Scale Mixed Use	6	23.1%
No Opinion	2	7.7%
Grand Total	26	

Question 3:

Which of the following should the Town be actively encouraging?

Check all that apply.

Question 3:	Total	Percent
Tourism	6	22.2%
Attracting more light industry	16	59.3%
Promoting local agriculture	11	40.7%
Attracting more stores and shops	22	81.5%
Expanding/promoting existing businesses	14	51.9%
Promoting recreational events	8	29.6%
Nothing	0	0.0%
Something else	2	7.4%
Grand Total	27	

Question 4:

Which of the following commercial enterprises would you like to see within Allentown?

Question 4:	Like	Dislike	No Opinion	Response Count
Professional Offices	88.0%	4.0%	8.0%	25
Industrial Parks	60.9%	17.4%	21.7%	23
Downtown buildings with first floor commercial and upper floor apartments	52.4%	23.8%	23.8%	21
Mix of commercial and residential on one lot	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	20
Retail	96.0%	4.0%	03.0%	25
Restaurants	92.3%	3.9%	3.9%	26
Services	95.7%	0.0%	4.4%	23
Home Businesses	47.6%	19.1%	33.3%	21
Recreational Businesses	68.2%	0.0%	31.8%	22
Motels/Hotels/Inns	40.0%	45.0%	15.0%	20
Grocery Store	87.5%	8.3%	4.2%	24
Tourism-related Businesses	57.9%	10.5%	31.6%	19
Agriculture-related Businesses	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	20
No more commercial development	18.8%	62.5%	18.8%	16

Question 5:

What factors should be considered in evaluating development in Town? Please indicate their importance.

Question 5:	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important	Average Rating	Total
Preserve historic neighborhoods	42.3% (11)	38.5% (10)	11.5% (3)	7.7% (2)	1.85	26
Provide additional land area for commercial and light industrial uses	53.9% (14)	26.9% (7)	3.9% (1)	15.4% (4)	1.81	26
Preserve scenic views	44.0% (11)	36.0% (9)	8.0% (2)	12.0% (3)	1.88	25
Protect agricultural land	52.2% (12)	34.8% (8)	13.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.61	23
Preserve open space	30.8% (8)	38.5% (10)	19.2% (5)	11.5% (3)	2.12	26
Preserve historical buildings	48.0% (12)	32.0% (8)	16.0% (4)	4.0% (1)	1.76	25
Ensure adequate housing choices	29.2% (7)	51.2% (13)	8.3% (2)	8.3% (2)	1.96	24
Control riverfront shoreline development	48.0% (12)	28.0% (7)	16.0% (4)	8.0% (2)	1.84	25
Encourage more senior housing	33.3% (8)	33.3% (8)	12.5% (3)	20.8% (5)	2.21	24

Question 6:

What types of development do you prefer in Allentown? Please give priority order (1,2,3,etc.)

Question 6	1	2	3	4	5	6	Rating Average	Response Count
Industrial/Commercial	50.0% (13)	42.3% (11)	3.9% (1)	0.0% (0)	3.9% (1)	0% (0)	26	5.35
Residential	30.8% (8)	34.6% (9)	19.2% (5)	11.5% (3)	3.9% (1)	0% (0)	26	4.77
Downtown buildings with first floor commercial and upper floor apartments	7.7% (2)	7.7% (2)	57.7% (15)	19.2% (5)	7.7% (2)	0% (0)	26	3.88
Mix of commercial and residential on one lot	7.7% (2)	11.5% (3)	11.5% (3)	57.7% (15)	7.7% (2)	3.9% (1)	26	3.42
No development	3.9% (1)	3.9% (1)	3.9% (1)	3.9% (1)	61.5% (16)	23.1% (6)	26	2.15
Other	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.9% (1)	7.7% (2)	15.4% (4)	73.1% (19)	26	1.42

Question 7:

What made you decide to live in Allentown? Please indicate their importance. Please leave question blank if you have no opinion.

Question 7	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important	Average Rating	Response Count
Rural community character	50.0% (12)	33.3% (8)	16.7% (4)	0.0% (0)	1.67	24
Job opportunities	20.0% (4)	20.0% (4)	20.0% (4)	40.0% (8)	2.8	20
Family or relatives in the area	43.5% (10)	13.0% (3)	13.0% (3)	30.4% (7)	2.3	23
Attending college	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	16.7% (3)	72.2% (13)	3.56	18
Cost of living in general	23.8% (5)	52.4% (11)	9.5% (2)	14.3% (3)	2.14	21
Proximity to cultural/recreation facilities	19.0% (4)	33.3% (7)	14.3% (3)	33.3% (7)	2.62	21
Quality of life	42.9% (9)	47.6% (10)	4.8% (1)	4.8% (1)	1.71	21
Proximity to job	33.3% (7)	47.6% (10)	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	1.95	21
Quality of schools	28.6% (6)	38.1% (8)	9.5% (2)	23.8% (5)	2.29	21
Cost of housing	50.0% (11)	45.5% (10)	0.0% (0)	4.6% (1)	1.59	22
Proximity to lakes, rivers and nature	25.0% (5)	45.0% (9)	20.0% (4)	10.0% (2)	2.15	20

Question 8:

What factors should be considered in evaluating development in Town? Please indicate their importance. Please leave question blank if you have no opinion.

Question 8	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not Important	Average Rating	Response Count
Preserve historic neighborhoods	42.3% (11)	38.5% (10)	11.5% (3)	7.7% (2)	1.85	26
Provide additional land area for commercial and light industrial uses	53.6% (14)	26.9% (7)	3.6% (1)	15.4% (4)	1.81	26
Preserve scenic vistas	44.0% (11)	36.0% (9)	8.0% (2)	12.0% (3)	1.88	25
Protect agricultural land	52.2% (12)	34.8% (8)	13.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.61	23
Preserve open space	30.8% (8)	38.5% (10)	19.2% (5)	11.5% (3)	2.12	26
Preserve historical buildings	48.0% (12)	32.0% (8)	16.0% (4)	4.0% (1)	1.76	25
Ensure adequate housing choices	29.2% (7)	54.2% (13)	8.3% (2)	8.3% (2)	1.96	24
Control riverfront shoreline development	48.0% (12)	28.0% (7)	16.0% (4)	8.0% (2)	1.84	25
Encourage more senior housing	33.3% (8)	33.3% (8)	12.5% (3)	20.8% (5)	2.21	24

CURRENT LAND USE

ZONING DISTRICTS

Beginning in 2011, changes in Allenstown’s zoning ordinance were a response to the goal of encouraging economic development in Town. Several new overlay districts were added, including a downtown infill overlay an agricultural overlay, and a manufactured housing park overlay district in addition to several other changes. By making these changes, a wide range of permitted land uses with varying density is now permitted from the Suncook Village area and the intersection of Routes 3 and 28, in addition to provisions to protect groundwater, minimize stormwater runoff, and manage manufactured home parks. In addition to land use changes, access management was introduced to maximize access to sites while mitigating the impact of traffic congestion and environmental protection – namely drinking water protection and floodplain management. A more detailed description of each district is provided below. Zoning and overlay districts can be found on the Allenstown’s Zoning Map as well.

OPEN SPACE AND FARMING ZONE

The Open Space and Farming Zone is the largest zone in Allenstown, as it includes 11,592 acres of land, which includes Bear Brook State Park. Following the 2003 master plan, Bear Brook Sate Park was incorporated into this zone to ensure any parcels that may be sold by the State in the future would be zoned and not subject to unregulated development. Now that the Park is included, the zone comprises the majority of Allenstown, with the exception of the southwest corner and western border abutting Pembroke.

Within the zone, single-family dwellings, farms, forestry, agricultural operations, nurseries, municipal recreation, golf courses, and home child care is permitted. Single family residences require a minimum lot size of five acres, or ten acres for two-family dwellings, with a frontage

Table 1: Zoning Districts Land Area

Zone	Acreage	Percent
Open Space and Farming	11,592	88.0%
Residential 1	378	2.9%
Residential 2	205	1.6%
Business	173	1.3%
Industrial	525	4.0%
Commercial and Light Industrial	294	2.2%
Total	13,167	100.0%

Source: CNHRPC 2015 Zoning District Data

BEAR BROOK STATE PARK

Bear Brook State Park is the largest developed state park in New Hampshire. Comprising over fifty percent of Allentown’s total land area, smaller portions of the park also reside in the Towns of Deerfield and Hooksett.

The Park offers a wide variety of recreation options for residents, including hiking, biking, horseback riding, swimming, fishing, canoeing, archery, camping, picnicking, cross country skiing and snowmobiling just to name some of the options. The Park is open year round, but only staffed during the summer and fall seasons. For additional information, please refer to the Natural Features Chapter.

of 200 feet along the street.

Exceptions may be granted for motels, campgrounds, airports, cemeteries, governmental uses, excavation, warehouses, telecommunication towers, cluster housing on lots at least 15 acres in size, group child care homes, senior and assisted housing, and unobtrusive retail sales. All structures must be located at least 20 feet away from the roads and 30 feet from remaining lot lines, with the exception of swimming pools, garages, and utility shed/greenhouse which must follow a minimum of 15, 10, and 5 feet respectively from the rear lot line.

RESIDENTIAL ZONE

The Residential Zone is broken into two different zones, R1 Residential and R2 Residential. R1 Residential are areas where homes have town water and sewer and R2 Residential are areas where homes don't have access to town water and sewer. Within both zones, single family dwellings, recreational and community center buildings and grounds, family childcare homes, senior housing, and residential gardens are permitted. Exceptions may be granted for municipal uses, public utilities, funeral parlors, professional offices, two-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, carports, group child care centers, kindergartens, assisted living, home occupations, and restaurants less than 5,000 square feet. Livestock and motor vehicle repair services are strictly prohibited.

Any structure cannot be built beyond two stories or 30 feet high, and must be located at least 20 feet away from the streets and 30 feet from rear lot lines and 15 feet from side lot lines (with pool, garage, and shed exceptions). When Town water and sewer are available, lots shall have at least 100 feet frontage and an area of more than 10,000 square feet. If Town water and sewer are not available, lots shall have at least 200

feet frontage and an area of at least 40,000 square feet. No more than 40% of the lot may be covered by structures.

Both of these residential zones are located in Allenstown's southwestern corner, of which R1 Residential covers a much larger land area than R2 Residential. The R1 zone covers 378 acres, or 1.6% of the Town's land area. The majority of the zone is located in the downtown area between the Suncook River and the Hooksett Town line west of Route 3. There are also two additional areas of R1 zone east of Route 3. As one of the Town's smaller zones, R2 occupies 205 acres, and surrounds the eastern and western borders of the R1 zone and comprises a small portion of the Hooksett border.

BUSINESS ZONE

In addition to the permitted uses allowed in the Residential Zone, this Zone permits recreational and community center buildings and grounds, family child care homes, churches, hospitals, municipal uses, funeral parlors, filing stations and automobile repair garages, garden nurseries, museums, hotels, clubs, printing plants, offices, banks, places of assembly, restaurants, businesses or utilities which are not manufacturing, and the sale of goods. Exceptions may be granted for telecommunication towers, carports, manufacturing, veterinary services, multi-mode transportation hub, and automobile sales. Livestock and businesses which emit odor, fumes, dust, smoke, or noise are not permitted.

Any structure cannot be built beyond three stories or 45 feet high and must have at least 75 feet frontage. Structures need to be erected at least 15 feet from any side lot line and at least 40 feet from the rear lot line. No more than 70% of the lot may be covered by structures. There is no minimum lot size indicated in the Zoning Ordinance.

The zone is located between Daniel Webster Highway and Chester Turnpike, with a few parcels on the west side of Daniel Webster Highway. This area comprises 173 acres, covering 1.3% of Allentown's land area.

INDUSTRIAL ZONE

This zone permits offices, lab and research center, personal services, restaurants, filling stations, printing plants, warehouses, banks, guardhouses, schools, heavy manufacturing, and sawmills. Exceptions may be granted for those industries consistent with the character of the zone and may include retail sales and livestock. Industries which emit odor, fumes, dust, smoke, or noise are not permitted.

Any structure cannot be built beyond three stories or 45 feet high and must have at least 75 feet frontage. Structures shall be erected at least 15 feet from any side lot line and at least 40 feet from the rear lot line. No more than 70% of the lot may be covered by structures. There is no minimum lot size indicated in the Zoning Ordinance.

Comprising 4.0% of the Town's total land area, the Industrial Zone is located along the Commercial/Light Industrial Zone and borders Pembroke.

COMMERCIAL/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ZONE

This zone permits hospitals, municipal uses, schools, filling stations and automobile garages, garden nurseries, printing plants, offices, banks, restaurants, sales of goods, and lumber yards. Exceptions may be granted for telecommunication towers, sawmills, automobile sales, and livestock. Industries which emit odor, fumes, dust, smoke, or noise are not permitted in the Commercial/ Light Industrial Zone.

Any structure cannot be built beyond three stories or 45 feet high and must have at least 75 feet frontage. Structures shall be erected at least 15 feet from any side lot line and at least 40 feet from the rear lot line.

No more than 70% of the lot may be covered by structures. There is no minimum lot size indicated in the Zoning Ordinance.

The Commercial/Light Industrial Zone is located between the Chester Turnpike in the south and ends just past Pine Acres Road in the North. Totalling 2.2% of the Town, this zone borders the Suncook River along the Pembroke border in some areas to the west and borders River Road in to the east.

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

These districts are generally draped over or "overlay" the base zoning districts. They usually provide a higher level of regulation that protects certain features of the natural environment or address issues or encourage development in a certain area. Allentown's zoning ordinance contains an Infill Development District, a Mobile Home Park District, a Groundwater Protection District, and an Agricultural Conservation District.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Adopted in 2011, the Suncook Village Infill Development District supports the economic potential of the Suncook Village area by increasing density and establishing a broader list of permitted non-residential uses. As historically the Suncook Village has been under-utilized, the district provides a place for mixed use land areas that may contain a business and home on the same lot while ensuring that new development is consistent in character and scale with existing development.

Permitted uses in the district include, but are not limited to, home occupations, retail, restaurants, funeral homes, bed and breakfast, and art studios or galleries. Minimum lot size is based on building use, so that commercial activities, residential activities, first floor commercial and second and third floor residential, and first floor commercial and

second and third floor residential by owner require a minimum of 7,500, 5,000, 10,000, and 9,000 square feet, respectively. Front and rear setbacks must be at least ten feet, and at least 20 feet between buildings on abutting lots.

This district is located within the R1 Residential Zone, in the northern half bordering Pembroke and covering 118 acres. As this district covers a unique area, the exact location of the district is located in the zoning ordinance and on Allenstown's Zoning map.

MANUFACTURED HOUSING PARK OVERLAY DISTRICT

Though the number of manufactured housing units in Allenstown has decreased by nearly 50% in the ten year period between 2000 and 2010, presite built and manufactured housing is regulated to ensure a balance of housing types in town. The Manufactured Housing Park Overlay District was adopted in March of 2015 as part of the adoption of a Presite Built Housing and Manufactured Housing article in the Zoning Ordinance. The purpose of this district was to provide standards and incentives for manufactured home parks while at the same time ensuring a balance of housing types throughout town. A total of 726 acres make up the overlay district accounting for 5.8% of Allenstown's land area. The overlay is situated entirely within the Open Space and Farming Zone (OSF). A Conditional Use Permit process, issued by the Planning Board, controls the development of manufactured housing parks. Incentives for manufactured home parks include greater density than the OSF normally provides (2 acres per unit as opposed to 5 acres) and clustering provisions. Standards include but are not limited to a 15 acre minimum park size with 200' of frontage, setbacks from property lines, wetlands, and other park units.

AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Agriculture Conservation District was adopted in 2011 to ensure that the potential for agricultural uses remain in the future while

preserving community character. This district overlays the highest quality soil used for agriculture in Town and establishes setback requirements from these soils for residential land uses. Additionally the district outlines permitted agricultural uses that may not be found in the underlying zone.

Permitted uses include agriculture, farm worker dwellings, farm roadside stand, accessory structures for agricultural use, agritourism, operation of agricultural and forestry vehicles and machinery, and all other uses outlined in the underlying zone. The district also requires all homes and structures to be at least 100 feet from agricultural land and separated by a 50 foot buffer.

The majority of this overlay is scattered over the Open Space and Farming Zone, covering 4,799 acres of the Town's total land area. The district is delineated on Allenstown's Zoning Map.

GROUNDWATER PROTECTION DISTRICT

Adopted in 2011, this district was established to preserve, maintain, and protect existing and potential groundwater supply areas and surface waters fed by groundwater from contamination of pollutants. This district is located throughout various areas of the Town, with the majority in the Open Space and Farming Zone area.

All uses permitted in the underlying district are permitted within the Groundwater Protection District with the exception of development or operation of a hazardous water disposal facility, solid waste landfill, junkyard, snow dump, petroleum bulk plant, gas stations, outdoor storage of road salt or deicing chemicals, biosolids processing, and floor drains without oil and water separation. Exemptions, conditional uses, and maintenance and inspection requirements are outlined in the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

Table 2: Summary of Zoning Districts and Overlays

Zone	Summary of Permitted Uses (General, not exhaustive list)	Frontage	Density (minimum lot size)
Base Districts			
Open Space/ Farming	Residential, Farming, Agriculture, Recreation	200'	5 acres per unit
Residential 1	Residential, Community Buildings, Senior Housing, Home occupations, Assisted Living, Small Restaurant	100'-200'	10,000-40,000 sf
Residential 2	Residential, Community Buildings, Senior Housing, Home Occupations, Assisted Living, Small Restaurant	100'-200'	10,000-40,000 sf
Business	All uses in Residential Zones, Medical Facilities, Retail, Professional, Commercial, Service Industry	75'	None
Industrial	General businesses, Restaurants, Service Industry, Manufacturing, R&D, Processing, Veterinary Services	75'	None
Commercial/Light Industrial	All uses in Residential Zones, Medical Facilities, Commercial, Professional, Retail, Schools	75'	None
Overlay Zones			
Suncook Village Infill Development District	Home Occupations, Mixed-use, Retail, Restaurants, Professional, Personal service, Recreation	None	7,500-10,000 sf
Agricultural Conservation District	Agriculture, Roadside Stand, Agritourism, Underling uses.	200'	15 acres
Manufactured Home Park Overlay District	Standards and incentives for the development of manufactured home parks within the Open Space Farming (OSF) Zone. Parks must be at least 15 acres in size.	200'	2 acres per unit; 15 acre minimum lot size
Groundwater Protection District	Underlying zoning district uses excluding: Landfills, Junkyards, Biosolids processing, Gas stations	None	None

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE ZONING DISTRICTS

A review of the Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and public discussions indicate that several additional zoning districts, in the form of Overlay Districts, should be explored. A Historic District in downtown Suncook or at the Route 28/Deerfield Road intersection should be examined by a

Historic District Commission approved through Town Meeting. Other overlay zoning districts for the protection of river corridors, wetlands, aquifer, steep slopes and other natural features could work in harmony with the existing districts but offer more stringent regulation for the protection of the environment. Finally, revising the Agricultural

Conservation District to encompass those areas currently delineated in the OSF would better fit the current development patterns of the rest of town.

Development is encroaching on the Commercial/Light Industrial and Industrial Zones, particularly along Granite Street and River Road. There are no provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for homes in these zones. One way to limit the number of commercial or industrial parcels which get converted to residential use would be to tighten the conditions for special exceptions granted for residences within the Commercial or Industrial zones. Another option would be to modify the Zoning Ordinance to allow for homes in these areas or to modify the Zoning Districts.

SUPPLEMENTAL REGULATIONS

Allenstown's zoning ordinance also contains numerous supplemental regulations, listed below.

- Accessory Uses
- Accessory and Home Occupation
- Proposed Streets
- Surface Waters
- Obstructions
- Casual Sales
- Junk
- Exception to Height Limitations
- Restriction Governing Motel Use
- Apartment Houses and One Family Attached
- Signs
- Parking Requirements
- Lot Access
- Obnoxious Uses Barred

- Waste Disposal Sites
- Regulations
- Hazardous Uses Barred
- Uses Not Permitted
- Town Building Code Regulations
- Outdoor Flea Markets
- Accessory Agricultural Uses

OTHER TOWN ORDINANCES

Allenstown voters have also enacted ordinances that regulate development within floodplain areas, guide the development of manufactured homes, dictate the responsibility for hazardous material cleanup, dictate procedures for disposal of solid waste, and guide the development of cell towers and antennas in the most appropriate manner.

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The floodplain development regulations allow only uses that limit any increase in base flood levels, flows, peaks, or velocity of local rivers and streams, including the Suncook and Merrimack River. These regulations also protect against the potential for flood damage, erosion, and sedimentation to the environment and/or threaten public safety. These regulations overlay designated areas subject to periodic flooding defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in its Flood Insurance Study for Merrimack County completed in 2010.

All proposed development in these areas require a building permit and must follow outlined development standards, which includes the requirement that all manufactured homes, basements, and utilities must be located at least two feet above the base flood elevation. Prohibited uses include storage of materials, substances, and grading that would impede the flow of flood waters, filling, dumping, wastewater or septage treatment facilities, unsecured tanks, junkyards,

landfills, and subdivisions that create non-developable land outside the Flood Hazard Area. Additional information can be found in the zoning ordinance. Allenstown’s regulations go beyond the minimum requirements for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and are a response to recent floods.

[PRESITE BUILT HOUSING AND MANUFACTURED HOUSING ORDINANCE](#)

In addition to the provisions pertaining to manufactured home parks, as described above, this Ordinance governs the construction standards for presite built housing (commonly referred to as modular) and the placement of them, along with manufactured homes on single lots. Slabs or foundations are required, not more than one home can be placed on a lot (unless part of a park), and that all relevant building standards apply. Also, as required by state law, the Ordinance establishes that a single manufactured home or single presite built home is permitted to be on a single lot of record everywhere in town that a “stick built” single family home is permitted.

[HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CLEANUP ORDINANCE](#)

The Fire Department is to be immediately notified of any release or potential release of any hazardous material within Allenstown. The responsible party is not only required to take all necessary and available measures to stop the release of the hazardous material, but is also financially responsible for all clean-up, including that by the Town. After a hazardous waste cleanup, the Fire Department has 60 days to bill the full costs of the cleanup to the responsible party, including a description of the costs incurred.

[SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE](#)

Allenstown’s solid waste is brought to the Concord Regional Solid Waste/Resource Recovery Cooperative facility and is collected curbside, at the transfer station, or through licensed transporter approved by the Board of Selectman. Curbside collection requires solid waste to be

placed in a trashcan no larger than 30 gallons in size or trash bags, weighing less than 40 pounds. Seasonal special pickups are scheduled throughout the year, including spring cleanup of appliances, fall cleanup of compostable leaves, and winter pickup of trees and wreaths. Residents wishing to recycle should bring their recyclables, already separated, to the recycling center at the transfer station. Solid waste collection for businesses, commercial and industrial enterprises is not provided.

[TELECOMMUNICATION TOWERS AND ANTENNAS](#)

This ordinance outlines the location, procedural requirements, performance standards, federal requirements, and removal of abandoned antennas and towers. Telecommunications towers and antennas are permitted by special exception in all zones except residential on any Town-owned land with the exception of conservation lands. Each applicant for an antenna or tower shall submit plans to the Planning Board, including written proof that the proposed facility complies with FCC, FAA, and any other federal government agency regulations and an inventory of all known towers within two miles of the Town border.

Performance requirements include a maximum height of 90 to 180 feet based on the number of users, a setback distance equal to 100% of the height of the tower, contain the appropriate security fencing and anti-climbing precautions, have a suitable landscaped buffer, and have a galvanized steel finisher or painted a neutral color. Finally, any antenna or tower that is not operated for a continuous period of 12 months, or is no longer needed shall be removed within 90 days of receipt of a declaration of abandonment. If not removed within 90 days, the Town may have the tower removed.

[PERMANENT \(POST-CONSTRUCTION\) STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE](#)

The stormwater management ordinance was added after the completion of the 2003 Master Plan, requiring all developments disturbing greater than 20,000 square feet to submit a permanent stormwater management plan. This plan, which needs to be stamped and signed by a New Hampshire professional engineer, should include a stormwater pollution prevention plan that outlines potential pollutant runoff locations.

Permanent stormwater management requirements included in the ordinance state that maximum effective impervious cover is not to exceed 20% of a site's land area. Best management practices should be utilized, including required discharge setbacks from water supply wells, conveyance to a minimum design storm event, and maintenance of existing surface waters and systems. Post-development peak flow rates, total runoff volumes, water quality standards, and total volume recharge standards should be followed and are outlined within the ordinance. The requirements of this Article also provide a foundation for compliance with MS4 requirements.

ADULT BUSINESS ORDINANCE

Adult businesses, defined as “sexually oriented businesses,” are regulated by this ordinance. All such businesses require an adult business license, including for employees, which is granted by the Board of Selectmen. Permitted only in the Industrial Zone, a 1,000 foot setback is required from other adult businesses, a Town boundary, a religious building, a public or private educational facility, a public park or recreational area, an family entertainment businesses, or any business serving or selling alcoholic beverages. A 750 foot setback is required from a zoning district boundary line. Additional regulations for each type of adult business is described within the ordinance.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE TOWN ZONING ORDINANCES

A review of the Zoning Ordinance identifies a number of improvements, additions, and clarifications which should be addressed at future town meetings. The Planning Board is responsible for most amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Recommended changes are:

- Refer to current RSAs in the text;
- Revise the Agricultural Conservation District to encompass only those areas currently delineated in the OSF to better fit the current development patterns of the rest of town.
- Include more accurate descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Building Inspector, and Planning Board;
- Include provisions for protection of natural features including, but not limited to, shoreland protection, buildable area, steep slopes, ledge, wetlands, buffers;
- Monitor fees for any needed revisions;
- Continue to support digital technology to increase efficiency and provide more user friendly services;
- Establish a technical review board of Department Heads;
- Update regulations as needed for MS4 compliance ;
- Provide clarification and additional details for allowing home occupations;
- Clarify non-conforming language, including expand language for nonconforming uses, nonconforming lot, nonconforming building;

- Include more details and guidelines for campgrounds and recreational facilities;
- Include language to protect the river corridors;
- Expand and improve language for junkyards;
- Include a dimensional use table including setbacks, frontage, height, impervious surface, buffers and etc;
- Include sign requirements and detailed language;
- Clarify accessory uses and accessory buildings;
- Include lighting, landscaping, fencing requirements;
- Establish provisions for the regulation of privately owned burial sites; and
- To support economic development efforts, consider allowing for minor accessory dwelling units on commercial enterprises (above or behind the principal business on site).

In addition, there are ordinances in the Zoning Ordinance that could be removed and placed in a separate publication entitled “Town Ordinances.” This would contain the Hazardous Material Clean Up and Solid Waste Management Ordinances currently found in Allenstown’s Zoning Ordinance. Other municipal ordinances, such as a noise ordinance, health and safety ordinance, Illicit Discharge Ordinance (an MS4 requirement dealing with, among other things, enforcement provisions associated with illicit discharges), etc, could also be contained in this Town Ordinance document.

LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Planning Board has also adopted Site Plan Review Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, and Excavation Regulations. These regulations support the Zoning Ordinance by further specifying conditions and procedures for new development. The Planning Board is responsible for developing, maintaining, and enforcing regulations, and they can be adopted after a duly-noticed Planning Board public hearing.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Within the regulations for subdivision of land, definitions are stated, the application procedure is outlined, and plan requirements are stated. Articles relating to conditions of scattered or premature development, improvements to existing infrastructure, and performance bonds are addressed. Additionally, the Planning Board’s application process is described here as well. The process also applies to Site Plan Applications, Conditional Use Permits, and Excavation Permits. The related subdivision checklist to be submitted by the applicant can be found on the Planning Board’s page of Allenstown’s website. The Subdivision Regulations and its associated checklist were last revised in October, 2015.

SITE PLAN REVIEW REGULATIONS

These regulations govern the review and approval of site plans for development, changes or expansion of use for non-residential uses or multi-family dwelling units. The plans are categorized as either a major site development, minor site development, or exempt site developments, based on building area and the number of dwelling units. The regulations outline the procedure for application as well as the submission and plan requirements. Design conditions to fit natural and human-made environments are described. Responsibilities, waivers, performance bonds, and recordation are also included. The related checklist to be submitted by the applicant can be found on the Planning

Board's page of the Allenstown's website. The Site Plan Regulations and its associated checklist were last revised in October, 2015.

EXCAVATION REGULATIONS

Earth removal regulations were adopted in 2008 to provide opportunity for excavation while still ensuring public health and safety, protection of natural resources and the environment, and preservation of the aesthetic features valued in Town. The regulation outlines exempt, abandoned, and prohibited excavations as well as operational standards, the application process, waivers, and the related application checklist. These regulations were last revised in October 2015 and can be found on the Planning Board's page of Allenstown's website.

PAST LAND USES

The 1965 Master Plan separated the areas in Allenstown into three areas: Urban Compact, Urban Fringe, and Rural. Although these areas were not mapped, it can be assumed that the downtown comprised the Compact Urban area, development along River Road and Route 28 comprised the Urban Fringe Area, and the remainder of the Town fell into the Rural Area.

The Rural area comprised the majority of Town, approximately 93.5%, and contained 123 homes and 16 acres of commercial and industrial categorized land. Urban Fringe comprised approximately 3.9% of the Town's land area, only containing 53 homes, of which 46 were single family. This area also contained five acres of commercial and industrial categorized land. The final area, Urban Compact, comprised the remaining 3.6% of land and contains the largest number of homes with 308 single family, seven manufactured, 36 two-family, and 25 multi-family homes. This area also comprises the largest amount of commercial and industrial land, with 20 acres.

The 1985 Master Plan separated Allenstown into general development trends instead of the acreages associated with different land use types. The largest consideration was Bear Brook State Park and the high density area that occurred between Route 3, the Merrimack River, the Suncook River, and to the edges of Town.

The 1985 Plan did include a Future Land Use Map which provided recommendations for future development. The map recommended industrial development along the majority of Route 28 and Granite Street/River Road. It also targeted the landlocked parcels between Bear Brook State Park and Route 28 as a future development area. Commercial development was recommended between Daniel Webster Highway and the Chester Turnpike while residential development was recommended near the downtown area.

Similar to the 1985 Plan, the 2003 Master Plan separated Allenstown into general development trends using digital tax maps and assessor's data from the Town. These development trends are summarized below. The mixed use was most commonly used when a business shared the same lot with a home.

2015 Land Use

The **Land Use Map** was created through an update of the 2005 CTAP Land Use coverage using 2010 aerial imagery. Using GIS technology and identification of uses on the tax maps, approximate acreage calculations were completed for Table 4. It is important to note that, depending on the data sources, there are varying sources of information on Allentown's land and water acreage.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Since the previous 2003 Master Plan, the population has declined and development has slowed and the trend is projected to continue into the near future. Over the past decade from 2000 to 2010, the total number

of housing units decreased just over four percent. Similarly, the population decreased nearly eleven percent over the same ten year period. Building trends point towards minimal additional construction. Allentown had sixteen residential construction permits and seven residential demolition permits issued between 2010 and 2013. Of these permits, the majority of construction permits were for single family and manufactured housing, while all but one demolition permit was for multi-family dwellings.

Depicted in the Land Use Table 4, residential land use was broken down into single family and duplex, multi-family, and mobile home parks. Single family households and duplexes, with the exception of undeveloped land, is the largest land use in Allentown covering 5.2% of land area. Multi-family and mobile home parks comprise a smaller portion of Town with 0.1% and 1.3%.

COMMERCIAL RETAIL

Commercial retail includes commercial establishments that sell goods rather than services. As seen on the map, these few locations are located in the vicinity of Allentown Road (Route 3). Retail covers an estimated 15 acres, which is 0.1% of the Town’s total land area.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial includes establishments that sell food in a restaurant settings, services, or contain mixed uses in the same building, such as a store on the main level and an apartment located above. These uses are primarily located along Allentown Road (Route 3) and at scattered locations along Route 28. There are also a few commercial locations along Granite Street. Overall, commercial land comprises an estimated 0.5% of the total town acreage with 66 acres.

Table 3: Land Use, 2001

Land Use	Total Acres	Percent
Residential	1,883.8	14.5%
Commercial	146.7	1.1%
Mixed Use	14.9	0.1%
Industrial	30.5	0.2%
Public/Institutional	543.7	4.2%
Excavation Sites	279.2	2.1%
Bear Brook State Park	6,683.3	51.4%
Undeveloped	3,416.4	26.3%
Total	12,998.5	100.0%

Source: 2001 Master Plan

Table 4: Land Use, 2010

Land Use	Total Acres	Percent
Single Family/Duplex	686	5.2%
Multi-Family	19	0.1%
Mobile Home Parks	169	1.3%
Commercial Retail	15	0.1%
Commercial	66	0.5%
Institutional/Government	139	1.1%
Industrial	19	0.1%
Agricultural	138	1.0%
Undeveloped	11,486	87.2%
Water	205	1.6%
Other (road surfaces, accessory transportation, etc.)	225	1.7%
Total	13,167	100.0%

Source: 2005 CTAP Land Use Coverage and 2010 Aerial Imagery

INSTITUTIONAL/GOVERNMENT

This designation includes all land owned by the municipality or the state, including schools, municipal buildings, and churches. It also includes lands that are tax exempt. These sites are located along and around River Road, Route 28, and in the downtown area covering 1.1% of the Town.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial sites in Allenstown are scattered along the southwestern portion of the town. These areas include a portion along Canal Street in the mills along the Suncook River, along the Chester Turnpike, along Bartlett Street, along and near Granite Street, and near Allenstown Road (Route 3) along the Town boundary with Hooksett. A spot of industrial land is located on Route 28 adjacent to the Suncook River. Overall, industrial land comprises 19 acres at 0.1% of the Town's total acreage.

AGRICULTURAL

Agricultural land includes farmhouses and agricultural buildings, and agricultural fields as seen on the 2010 aerials. Agricultural areas include the southwestern portion near the Merrimack River, along Route 28, along Wing Road, and on Deerfield Road. These locations encompass 138 acres of land, which is 1.0% of the Town's total acreage.

UNDEVELOPED LAND

The remainder of Allenstown's land is undeveloped. As the largest land use category in Town, undeveloped land covers 11,486 acres and is located throughout the entire town, including the majority of Bear Brook State Park. Undeveloped land also includes forests, non-agricultural fields and conservation land. Some undeveloped land is related to its natural condition, such as topography and soil conditions, that would create higher development costs in areas such as environmental permitting and needed infrastructure costs. Other

undeveloped land is restricted by conservation, which covers a large portion of the community, as shown on the **Land Use Map**.

LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

Many factors come into play when examining how land is being used in a community. The decisions made today will impact how the land will be used in the future.

COMPARISON OF ZONING DISTRICTS WITH LAND USE

In Table 5, the Zoning District acreages were roughly compared with the Land Use acreages. The Business and Commercial/Light Industrial Zones used figures from the Commercial Land Use and Mixed Use categories. The Industrial Zone used acreages from the Industrial and Excavation Land Use categories. The Open Space and Farming included information from the Undeveloped and Public/Institutional categories. Although not exact, for residential and commercial land uses a rough comparison can be made between the Zoning Districts and existing land use:

Table 5: 2001 Zoning District Land Availability

Zone	Acres	Acres Developed (Land Use)	Acres Available
Business	129.7	161.6	221.8
Commercial/Light Industrial	253.7		
Industrial	454.7	309.7	145.0
Residential	472.1	1,883.80	-1,411.7
Open Space and Farming	4,959.5	3,960.1	999.4
Bear Brook State Park	6,683.3	6,683.3	0.0
No Data	45.4	----	----
Total	12,998.4	12,998.5	

Source: Digital Tax Maps 2001 (total acres differ slightly due to rounding); comparisons to land use database

The largest disparity is between the Residential Zoning District acreage and the Residential Land Use. The Town should consider rezoning the Residential District to be consistent with the land use patterns. Residential development has encroached on the commercial and industrial zones along River Road and Chester Turnpike through the granting of variances. Since developable land is limited, an effort should be made to curtail further residential growth in this area.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

A limited number of undeveloped properties are available for commercial or industrial development. Allenstown should encourage commercial development to the best of its ability to help strengthen the tax base and provide services, goods, and employment to Allenstown residents. Since commercial and industrial land is limited, a concerted effort should be undertaken to determine the suitability of these and other appropriate parcels and develop an active marketing campaign to target those businesses and industries best suited to locate to these parcels. A reinstated Economic Development Committee could be of great assistance to this endeavor.

BEAR BROOK STATE PARK

The Park covers over half the land area of the town, making Allenstown one of the few towns in the state with such a high percentage of public lands. The Park's 40 miles of trails provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the town as well as for the thousands of visitors from the nearby cities of Manchester, Concord, and Portsmouth, as well as many out of state visitors. Much of the wellhead protection area around the Allenstown/Pembroke public water supply is located within the park. Communication to the Town about Park activities could be enhanced by the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development, and any land use decisions in Allenstown should consider how the Park may impact those decisions.

CURRENT USE

In 1973, the New Hampshire State Legislature enacted RSA 79-A:1 and created the Current Use program, a tool landowners can use to reduce the amount of property tax they pay on open space within their property limits as well as an incentive to keep the land in its traditional use. Before the RSA, financial burdens were being placed on individuals with large open space land holdings, since property taxation was based on the highest and best use of the land. Now under the program, current use value is the assessed valuation per acre of open space land based upon the income-producing capability of the land in its current use - not its real estate market value.

Property owners can file for reduced property taxes through the current use taxation program at municipal offices where the valuation shall be determined by the municipality's assessor in accordance with the range of current use values established by the state's Current Use Board (CUB). Eligible land types include farm land, forest land, open space land, unproductive land and wetlands.

By allowing open space land to be classified as current use, it acts as an incentive for landowners not to develop property. When land is removed from Current Use, ten percent of the full and true value of the land, not the Current Use assessed value, must be paid as a Current Use Land Change tax. It is important to understand that the Current Use classification can be placed on, or removed from, land at the landowner's discretion which is why these lands vary from conservation lands. For more information on Current Use, please refer to the Master Plan's Natural Features chapter and the NH Department of Revenue Administration: www.revenue.nh.gov/current-use/index.htm.

The Table below illustrates the trend of land within current use between 2008 and 2013. Over twenty-four percent of Allenstown's land was in Current Use in 2013, which has varied little over the six year period. The

smallest amount of Current Use acreage was in 2008, with 3,004.74 acres.

Further information on the physical characteristics of the land in Allenstown can be found in the Natural Features Chapter.

CURRENT LAND USE TRENDS

Population trends have a direct link to land use trends, particularly in the single-family home (residential) type of land use. Between 2000 and 2010, Allenstown’s population decreased by eleven percent, with a loss of over six hundred residents. Table 8 below shows that Allenstown is the only Town to have a decrease in population when compared to surrounding communities. Deerfield had almost a sixteen percent increase in population over the ten year period.

As the population decreases, average household size of persons per household has also been decreasing. Smaller household size seems to suggest smaller housing units in the future. The number of housing units

Table 6: Current Use by Type, 2008-2013

CU Acreage by Land Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Farm Land	188.43	188.93	201.43	201.43	201.43	201.43
Forest Land	2,742.69	2,948.56	3,007.56	3,007.56	2,997.37	2,861.64
Unproductive Land	27.00	37.00	41.00	42.00	51.00	42.53
Exempt Wetland	46.62	56.62	46.62	46.62	46.62	50.56
Total CU Acres	3,004.74	3,231.11	3,296.61	3,297.61	3,296.42	3,156.16

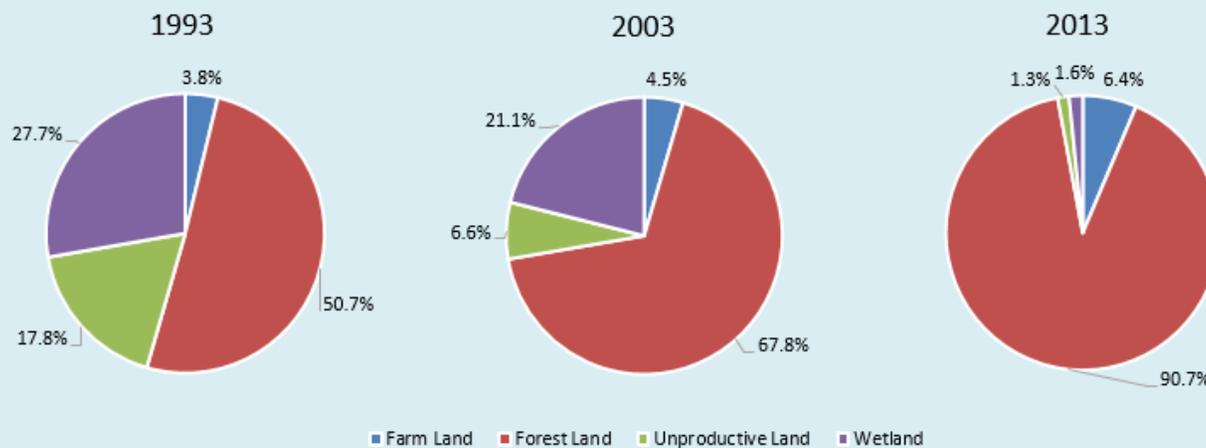
Source: NH Hampshire Department of Revenue Current Use Reports

Table 7: Land Use Tax Collected, 2008-2013

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Land Use Change Tax Collected	\$24,460	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14,200	\$0

Source: New Hampshire Department of Revenue Current Use Reports

Figure 1: Current Use Type by Percent: 1993, 2003, 2013



Source: New Hampshire Department of Revenue Current Use Reports

for Allenstown is highlighted below, which overall saw a ten percent decrease in units between 2000 and 2010. The largest change in housing units is the number of manufactured units, which has decreased by nearly fifty percent, losing almost half the number of manufactured homes present in 2000 over the ten year period. Much of this was the result of the post-flood buyout that took place approximately in 2009. Additionally, the number of multifamily units increased over twenty percent, while the number of single family units only increased five percent. Compared to abutting towns, Allenstown has a high percentage of manufactured housing units and the lowest percent of single family units. In terms of housing units to population, the number - 2.4 - is consistent with what was reported in the 2010 US Census. Couple this with a 1% vacancy rate, it seems that not only are the types of units in balance, but so too are the number of units for the population. More on housing balance can be found in the Housing Chapter of this Plan

Building permits for residential housing between 2010 and 2013 in Allenstown are displayed in Table 11. The values represent net change, which accounts for residential construction and demolition. Thus, a negative value implies that more units were demolished compared to those built. Overall, the last four years have seen nine permits issued. On a regional level, Central New Hampshire has seen a decreasing trend in building permits, similar to Allenstown. The number of building permits issued in 2010 was only 22% of the number of permits issued in 2000.

Table 8: Population Increases, 2000-2010

Town	% Increase, 2000-2010
Allenstown	-11%
Bow	5.0%
Deerfield	15.6%
Epsom	13.6%
Hooksett	14.3%
Pembroke	4.8%

Source: 2000 US Census & 2010 US Census

Table 9: Dwelling Unit Change, 2000-2010

Dwelling Units	2000	2010	% Increase
Total Number of Single Family Units	763	806	5.6%
Total Number of Manufactured Units	779	396	-49.2%
Total Number of Multifamily Units	551	679	23.2%
Total Number of Dwelling Units	2,093	1,881	-10.1%

Source: US Census 2000 and 2010

Table 10: Type of Structure as Total Percent of Development, 2010

	Allenstown	Bow	Epsom	Pembroke
Single Family Units as % of Total Development	42.8%	93.7%	73.0%	62.2%
Multifamily Units as % of Total Development	36.1%	6.3%	4.7%	36.3%
Manufactured Units as % of Total Development	21.1%	0.0%	22.3%	1.5%

Source: 2010 Census

Table 11: New Residential Building Permits Issued, 2010-2013

Housing Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	4-Year Total
Single Family Homes	3	-1	1	3	6
Manufactured Homes	3	3	1	0	7
Multi Family Homes	0	2	0	-6	-4
Yearly Totals	6	4	2	-3	9

Source: New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning

FUTURE LAND USE

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Certain natural features of the land must be taken into account when planning developments, such as aquifers, surface water and wetlands, locations of floodplains, and the presence of steep slopes and hydric soils.

Hydric soils are soils that are poorly or very poorly drained and are not suitable for development. Although not available in digital form for depiction on maps, the locations of very poorly drained soils strongly correlate with the locations of wetlands as determined by the National Wetlands Inventory. There is also a very strong correlation between the location of hydric soils and watercourses. In many cases, the hydric soils and wetlands drain into water bodies, streams, and intermittent streams.

Steep slopes are found throughout Allenstown. Although many are located in Bear Brook State Park, many are also located along Daniel Webster Highway at the Hooksett border, south of Deerfield Road and west of Route 28, and in the northeastern corner of Town. These features will impede development in these areas. Additionally, wetlands are concentrated in the Park but are also found in the northeastern corner, along River Road, along Boat Meadow Brook south of Dodge Road, and along the Suncook River.

Allenstown has neither steep slope (greater than 15%) nor wetlands regulations. These planning tools require developers to work around these environmental constraints, protecting both humans and the environment. The Town could consider adopting these regulations. Considering the large amount of shoreland along the Merrimack and Suncook Rivers, the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act regulations should be specifically listed within Allenstown's regulations.

Development constraints are also discussed in the **NATURAL FEATURES CHAPTER**.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

This section identifies all known sources of sand and gravel deposits, their location, and the estimated extent of permitted excavations. The *Existing Land Use Map* illustrates the permitted excavation operations throughout Allenstown. This helps determine the impact to the natural resources on those sites and how the depleted sites should be reclaimed.

EARTH EXCAVATION

Chapter 155:E of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated was enacted August 24, 1979. Although it has been revised considerably since then, the substance of the law remains the same: the municipality, usually the Planning Board, is responsible for the regulation of excavation of earth materials to be used as construction aggregate. In Allenstown, the Planning Board, therefore, is the Regulator of excavation operations.

The law states that permits are required for any excavation operation unless the operation was active in the 2-year period before the law was enacted August 24, 1979, if it is used for highway construction, or if it is attached to a stationary manufacturing plant. Grandfathered operations (operations which produced material of sufficient weight or volume that was commercially useful in the 2-year period before August 24, 1979) are subject to the operational and reclamation standards laid out in the law, and they also must apply for a permit if they wish to expand their operation. In order for a grandfathered operation to retain its status, it must have filed an Excavation Report with the Planning Board no later than August 4, 1991. Failure to do so results in loss of grandfathered status, and a permit must be requested in order to continue work. The permit requires more stringent standards than

the ones that must be complied with in order to run an excavation operation without a permit.

Excavation operations being used exclusively for state or local highway construction do not need a permit; however, the Planning Board must have on file an agreement between the pit owner and the state or local government. This type of excavation must not operate in violation of local zoning, unless an exemption has been granted.

A permit is not required for an excavation operation that on August 4, 1989 was contiguous to or on land contiguous to a stationary manufacturing plant that was in operation as of August 24, 1979 and used earth from the excavation site. No additional permits are required for excavation sites connected to stationary manufacturing plants for which permits had been issued by state or local government since August 24, 1979. These operations are subject to the standards set forth in the permits issued to them for their operation.

Allenstown has had excavation regulations, entitled Town of Allenstown Earth Removal Regulations, in place since July 16, 2008. These regulations are in line with RSA 155:E and have been revised three times (2009, 2014, and 2015). Key highlights beyond those provisions that mirror RSA 155:E include: permits are good for three years; erosion and sedimentation controls are adopted from the Site Plan Regulations by reference; and, excavations requiring a permit must adhere to additional stormwater standards (driven by MS4 compliance) as described in the Site Plan Regulations.

TIMBER HARVESTING

The largest forest resource in Allenstown is Bear Brook State Park which covers approximately 6,700 acres of the Town. Bear Brook State Park, which covers 10,000 acres between Allenstown, Hooksett, Candia, and Deerfield, is a managed forest with the exception of 3,000 acres set

aside as a wildlife preserve. The NH Department of Resources and Economic Development selects areas of the park to be logged based on the Bear Brook State Park Management Plan. Foresters from DRED mark and tally the trees to be cut. A contractor is awarded the right to harvest the trees through a competitive bid process. The revenue from the sale of the lumber to the contractor is mostly deposited in the State's General Fund, with a small portion going to DRED's Forest Management and Protection Fund. The stumpage tax for the sale goes to the Town, just as if the timber sale had occurred on private property. On average there is one timber sale in Bear Brook State Park each year.

KEY FOCUS AREAS

Bear Brook State Park: The large acreage of Bear Brook State Park (over 51%) has a profound impact on development patterns, yet Allenstown has little control over the future use of this land. Additionally, Bear Brook can play a role in attracting people to town - both future residents and businesses. Greater lines of communication should be opened with the Department of Resources and Economic Development to identify strategies to maximize the Town's goals and potential.

MS4 compliance: At the writing of this Chapter, the EPA Permit governing what Allenstown will need to do for compliance is not yet finalized (earliest will be April of 2016). Stormwater runoff, as well as connections to the storm sewer will have to meet the guidelines spelled out in the Permit. Given this, MS4 compliance efforts will impact every aspect of what the Town does. From land use permitting requiring various stormwater management controls, to the prevention and enforcement of illicit discharges and illegal connections, to the stormwater management practices of Town facilities and properties, compliance efforts will be complex and far reaching. A plan, in addition to a Notice of Intent (NOI) will need to be completed once the Permit is effect. Additionally, annual reporting efforts will be required capturing

changes in impervious coverage (i.e. buildings, pavement and other man-made surfaces) as well as tracking enforcement and other aspects of the plan. To this end, the Town has devised a strategy to work with CNHRPC and the Town's Engineer. These efforts will be sustainable over the long run to maximize resources and ensure compliance.

Transportation and land use: As land is developed, roads need to expand to meet increased demand. Once road systems have been expanded, greater land development will occur leading to the need to upgrade roads once again. This transportation/land use cycle needs to be considered for development into the future. Being cognizant of impacts, and requiring, as needed, transportation studies and necessary off-site improvements for roadways (including sidewalks) should continue to be utilized by the Planning Board. Also, further expanding the access management program to include Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation will be vital efforts to minimize the impact of the transportation/land use cycle along Routes 3 and 28. Lastly, the recommendations outlined in the Transportation Chapter of this Plan should be implemented.

Balanced housing development: In terms of overall development, this Chapter, as well as the Housing Chapter, have outlined a need for a balance of housing - type and the number of units - as Allenstown grows in the future. Additionally, the Economic Chapter has articulated a need to attract young families to grow the future workforce, and, both visioning sessions as well as the survey results have indicated a desire for growth, but "balanced" growth that fits with Allenstown's character. All of this speaks to developing strategies to allow for, and encourage growth that is consistent with the community's needs and makeup. Strategies would include maximizing traditional village-type mixed use development in Suncook; possibly utilizing architectural guidelines or a historic district along Main Street to protect the historic homes;

ensuring that zoning along Routes 3 and 28, as well as Suncook reflects the character of these segments of the community; and, ensuring that housing in all parts of town is balanced and fits with its surroundings.

Development process: A final factor to consider is the continued streamlining of Allenstown's development process, notably the Planning Board approval process. A strong web presence with easily accessible information not only creates efficiency through predictability, but it also increases transparency. This results in better serving applicants, abutters, and the general public. Additionally, it also serves as an economic development tool as it allows potential developers to understand the process and regulatory requirements quickly and clearly. Allenstown should continue to transition to an online permitting application process and to make sure all necessary information is easily accessible on the Town's website. Lastly, feedback should be taken periodically from all stakeholders to assess the effectiveness, predictability, and ease of use of the website and its content.

HISTORIC/COMMERCIAL MAIN STREET AND SUNCOOK VILLAGE

Though initially a traditional, mixed-use downtown, Suncook Village has become primarily residential over the years. Main Street is bordered by homes and schools, but commercial enterprises have greatly decreased. In order for Allenstown to regain the historic, mixed-use Main Street downtown atmosphere it desires, a streetscaping program could be considered in addition to expanding the Suncook Infill District. Architecturally consistent and pleasing lighting, benches, trees, historic markers, and signs can help to bring the community together by encouraging a sense of community identity and ownership. In addition, beautifying Main Street in this way will encourage visitors, passers-by, and businesses to better appreciate what Allenstown has to offer.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES

The most noticeable commercial areas in Allentown are the strip malls along Daniel Webster Highway from the Route 28 intersection to the Hooksett border. Gas, grocery, retail, and fast food stores offer goods and services to residents and motorists alike. Close by, other uses include an excavation site and industrial businesses such as repair shops. The Suncook Business Park along Route 28 offers a convenient location for professional offices and wholesalers. Another gas station and convenience store are located near the junction with Deerfield Road. Home-based businesses are scattered throughout Town.

Allentown will need to carefully consider the type and location of businesses it wants to solicit since land is not readily available for development. In addition to supporting existing businesses and the ability to expand, prioritizing those industries identified in the Economics Chapter as “target industries” will help to maximize economic growth. Additionally, several parcels may be available which could serve many commercial and industrial purposes. Ideally, a community would have a balance of both commercial and industrial development to serve both employment and economic needs.

Allentown should focus its future commercial development in the areas which can support commercial or industrial land uses. These areas typically, but not always, include those parcels with municipal water and sewer. Siting next to existing businesses creates a destination for consumers. Pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, benches, and walk signals should be installed to cater to the many people who live nearby, including linkages with Suncook Village. The Community Survey results have identified pedestrian amenities as a strong need.

Desired commercial and industrial land uses, notably, the Target Industries, should be compared with the zoning ordinance to verify

compatibility with where they are permitted, and, if necessary, revise the ordinance to maximize balanced economic growth.

RESIDENTIAL USES AND LOT SIZES

Allentown residents live in the downtown area, along Deerfield Road, or in one of several manufactured housing parks located throughout Town. Easily developable residential land is diminishing, and much of what remains is land with wetlands or steep slopes, or is landlocked. Also, as mentioned in the Housing Chapter of this Plan, a balance must be maintained. Balance must include: the number of units to the population, the type of housing (including young families and seniors), the costs of housing, and how well community character is maintained.

To accomplish the residential use and lot size goals, the Zoning Ordinance needs to be assessed for compatibility. Additionally: cluster provisions need to be revised for things such as a better ease of use and a density incentive; zone for senior housing; determine the need for architectural design standards; ensure townhouses are permitted in and around Suncook; ensure adequate infrastructure; consider a demolition delay bylaw in Suncook Village; continue to manage growth of manufacture home parks; and, track changes in building permit data, vacancy rates, and the ratio of housing to population compared with average household size.

TECHNIQUES TO SHAPE FUTURE LAND USE

WETLANDS SETBACKS AND BUFFERS

Wetlands are natural resources that that are characterized by considerable development constraints. Wetlands pose development restrictions due to poor drainage, high water tables, slow percolation rates for septic systems, unstable conditions for foundations, and susceptibility to flooding. Wetlands are typically defined by three parameters: drainage, soil type, and vegetation. The National Wetlands

inventory defines wetlands by hydrology, hydric soils, and vegetation, including trees and plants that dominate wetland areas and require wet conditions to grow.

Wetlands have been viewed in the past as areas with little economic value and have been subjected to filling, draining, and dumping with little regard for the consequences. In recent times, however, science has shown that wetlands provide a number of benefits to the community. Wetlands serve a myriad of purposes: flood control, water storage and ground water recharge, erosion and sedimentation control, pollution filtration, wildlife habitat, education and recreation, and environmental health and biodiversity. Allenstown has a significant number of wetlands, particularly in Bear Brook State Park, in the northeastern corner of Town where heavy development is occurring, and around Suncook and Merrimack Rivers. Wetlands regulations should be considered to ensure that these features continue to function properly. In addition, MS4 provisions will require certain protection measures for wetlands given their functionality.

When updating the Town's current ordinances with respect to wetland buffers, the criteria established in *Buffers for Wetlands and Surface Waters: A Guidebook for New Hampshire Municipalities* can be used as a guide.

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL

During site preparation of a residential or commercial development, pollution loads and stormwater runoff can increase, sometimes dramatically, as sites are excavated and developed. Soil is exposed during development as vegetation is removed and excavation takes place. Bare soil particles are dislodged by rainfall and can be carried downslope as sediment to streams, lakes, and wetlands. Runoff can increase and have a greater ability to transport pollutants and constructed impervious surfaces (roofs and pavements) reduced

infiltration and can modify flow patterns. Higher runoff rates can result in flooding and erosion of previously stable streams and act as a vector for delivering much larger quantities of pollutants. Runoff is a concern locally, but also for the United States Environmental Protection Agency via its MS4 program.

Erosion control and prevention plans should be submitted for subdivisions and site plans for verification that specific conditions will be met prior to the issuance of a building permit. The review and verification process for submitted plans will also determine whether or not a Site Specific Permit is required from DES. RSA 485-A:17, known as the Alteration of Terrain Program or "Site Specific Program," requires a permit from DES for any earth disturbance greater than 100,000 square feet, or 50,000 square feet within the protected shoreline area. The permit involves both temporary erosion control measures during construction and permanent controls on the impacts of stormwater effects following construction. MS4 standards will require standards to be in place for developments that disturb 20,000 square feet and up.

The Town should ensure that required siltation and sedimentation controls are in place prior to the start of any construction activity and that they remain functional during the entire construction process. This is also required by MS4 regulations. Updates to the Site Plan, Subdivision, and Excavation Regulations in October of 2015 captured much of this. Permanent erosion and sedimentation control measures, also required in accordance with MS4 were put in place with the adoption of the Permanent (Post Construction) Stormwater Management Ordinance in March of 2010. Additional standards were put in place in March of 2015 and 2016.

At a minimum, developers and contractors need to demonstrate that they will provide pollutant control by professional planning, design, construction, and implementation of these BMPs. Designs and site

plans should demonstrate measures to retain natural vegetation where possible, especially at waterbodies, wetlands and steep slopes. Developers and contractors should not only have a commitment to integrating BMPs into overall development plans but also for monitoring practices and adjusting, maintaining, and repairing periodically and after every storm.

Provisions included in the Site Plan, Subdivision, and Excavation Regulations, as well as the Stormwater Management Ordinance implement these provisions and assist Allenstown in not only complying with MS4 requirements, but, more importantly, protecting its surface water, groundwater, and drinking water.

PROTECTION / BUFFERS / SETBACKS FROM THE SUNCOOK & MERRIMACK RIVERS

Buffers adjacent to shoreland and wetlands reduce the adverse effects of human activities on these resources by protecting water quality, protecting and providing wildlife habitat, reducing direct human disturbance, and maintaining aesthetic qualities and potential recreational value. The loss of buffers through variances/waivers and through illegal activities should be minimized. A well-educated constituency advocating the appropriate development of shorelands will more likely support and adhere to the regulations made by Town decision makers. The Town should incorporate the Comprehensive Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act provisions into the Zoning Ordinance to protect the River from impacts of future development.

AESTHETIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS TO AVOID CONFLICTS WITH NEIGHBORING USES

Because the appearance of Allenstown's traditional landscape, including views of simple things like farmland, forests, historic buildings and water resources, is so important to its residents, there must be a priority placed on preserving them. Planning regulations addressing lot

size, placement of buildings, signage and landscaping are typically used to address aesthetic elements of the community.

Commercial, industrial, and residential land uses often abut one another in Allenstown. Commercial and industrial development can have negative impacts on the community, ranging from increased traffic to reducing the aesthetic appeal of the community.

The existing Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review Regulations do not contain any performance standards related to the aesthetic, environmental, or traffic impact of commercial and industrial developments. In the future, it is recommended that such performance standards be included in the Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review Regulations. Performance standards or requirements that could be specifically included are:

- Minimum Landscaping and Screening Performance Standards - These standards preserve and enhance the aesthetic qualities of the community by establishing landscaping and design standards, which are proportionate to the intensity of proposed land use(s).
- Exterior Building Facade Performance Standards - These are used to protect the aesthetic character of the community and to improve the quality of development constructed, the Town should consider instituting architectural design standards in the Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan review regulations.
- Screening Performance Requirements - An important aspect of commercial and industrial development design, screening can help preserve property values of abutting parcels and reduce the overall aesthetic impact of such developments.
- Parking Performance Requirements - The Town should also consider revising parking requirements in the Site Plan Review Regulations to

include provisions for the different aspects (pedestrians, parking, landscaping, stormwater, etc) of parking lot design.

- Signage Requirements - Signage can have a significant impact on the character of a community. In the future, the Planning Board should review the current sign ordinance and consider instituting changes regarding to dimension, height, materials, lighting, etc. while also complying with the latest US Supreme Court Rulings.
- Lighting Standards - Lighting is also a critical component of commercial and industrial site design. Often, site designs employ excessive amounts of lighting, thus having negative impacts on abutting properties. Also, excessive lighting acts as a form of signage, and should not be permitted. It is recommended that the Town consider enacting specific performance standards regarding lighting for commercial and industrial sites.
- Environmental Performance Standards - Environmental performance standards should be developed in order to protect the long term environmental quality and overall vitality of commercial and industrial districts. The variety of permitted uses, taken together with often intensive land use patterns and an inventory of environmental resources, necessitates environmental performance standards. Specific environmental performance standards that the Town should consider adopting should include standards related to odors, noise, wetlands, steep slopes, and ground water supplies.

SUMMARY

Moving forward, Allenstown has several items to consider, challenges to address, opportunities to take advantage of, and assets to protect. To begin with, MS4 requirements will need to be addressed through a town-wide approach. Things like wetlands, surface water, groundwater,

and drinking water will need to be protected. Not only for MS4 compliance but quality of life as well. Various tools, in both the Zoning Ordinance and the Planning Board's regulations (Site Plan, Subdivision, and Excavation Regulations) will play a role. Wetland setbacks, erosion control measures, and modern stormwater management practices will need to be in place. The Town will need to continue to build upon what has been done, most notably, through the creation of an Illicit Discharge Ordinance.

Streamlined, transparent, and modern approval processes, notably that of the Planning Board, need to continue to be a priority. A vibrant, informative, and easy to use website is crucial. Continuing to transfer the application process online; maintaining all meeting materials, agendas, and ordinances/regulations; and ensuring that the web site is easy to use, will ensure transparency and ease of use for applicants, abutters, and the public as a whole. Additionally, the new Technical Review Committee, whereby applicants meet with all department heads to review their application early, along with the checklist review process by the Town's Planner and Building Inspector, will continue to ensure levels of predictability for all parties. This will ensure compliance with the Town's regulatory framework while at the same time streamlining the process.

Though challenges exist, there are also opportunities to capitalize upon. As discussed in the Housing and Economic Chapters of this Plan, Allenstown has a fairly balanced housing stock which lends itself to tailoring its housing market to attract the workforce of the not-so-distant-future. With aging populations and larger homes not selling, much of the state will be wrestling with the challenge of having an excessive supply that doesn't meet the demand. Allenstown on the other hand, can tailor housing to fit its needs (for seniors) while at the same time trying to take advantage of an opportunity that few other towns can: attracting young families, and therefore, a workforce. Minor

changes in the Zoning Ordinance, such as updating clustering and ensuring that various types of housing will be allowed in Town, will move this to fruition quickly. Other strategies can be found in the Housing Chapter of this Plan.

Natural resources and community character go hand-in-hand in Allenstown. The presence of Bear Brook State Park, coupled with an urban Suncook Village, and suburban homes in the northeast corner of Town give Allenstown a very unique character that cannot be found in many other communities. Protecting this character is key to Allenstown's future. Efforts to promote rural and natural features, such as the OSF Zone and the Agricultural Overlay, work in concert with the Suncook Infill District to provide a foundation for protecting this character. Adding provisions such as historic preservation, expanding the Suncook Infill Development Zone, and wetland setbacks can help to solidify these strong foundations now and for years to come.

Balance is the key to the whole process moving forward. This was not only evident in the survey and visioning sessions but also in data dealing with topics such as future land use and housing. Housing for instance, will require balance in the type, cost, and where it is located in Town, while at the same time, the housing stock must be in balance with population size and growth. With regard to economics, balance would take the form of scaling the type of business within a given industry to Allenstown's character (for instance, within the healthcare cluster, a hospital or clinic may not fit but a doctor's office might). Development should also look different along Routes 3 and 28, the OSF Zone, and in Suncook. Understanding how each location facilitates and support development is key to development. In short, balance will ensure that Allenstown's future fits the needs of both its current and future residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBJECTIVES

Moving forward, a number of objectives and recommendations have been made to implement the vision articulated in this Chapter. Some of the recommendations and objectives from the 2003 Master Plan that are still relevant and are incorporated in this Plan. Recommendations and Objectives include:

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBJECTIVES FROM THE 2003 MASTER PLAN

The 2003 Master Plan update contained several objectives and recommendations that are to be included in this Master Plan. Those include:

2003 Objective 1:

To revise, or rewrite where necessary, the Zoning Ordinance, Site Plan Regulations, and Subdivision Regulations to promote consistency within all three documents and with regulations that will further protect natural resources in Allenstown.

- Develop steep slope (greater than 15%) development regulations to protect land and buildings.
- Develop wetlands setback regulations and reference the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services' (DES) Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act within the regulations.

2003 Objective 2:

To continue to encourage the modernization and streamlining of Planning and Zoning Board processes.

- Continue to employ a part-time Planning Board/Zoning Board coordinator position to be responsible for collecting of applications, noticing, mailings, and other clerical work.

- Research, record, and monitor grandfathered gravel operations.
- Continue the use of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission for circuit rider planning services in support of the Planning Board.

2016 Recommendations and Objectives

In addition to the goals and objectives described above as part of the 2003 Master Plan, the following are to be added as part of this update:

2016 Objective 1:

Work to comply with US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit requirements.

- Adopt an Illicit Discharge Ordinance, and other ordinance/regulation changes to comply with the permit.
- Work with CNHRPC and the Town's Engineer to develop the Stormwater Management Plan and ensure that the Notice of Intent (NOI) is properly filed.
- Ensure that all Town departments comply, as applicable.
- Continue to ensure compliance with all Permit requirements.

2016 Objective 2:

In support of economic development priorities, work to attract young families to Allenstown.

- Revise and enhance cluster ordinance provisions to make them easier for developers to use and provide greater density incentives than the current five acres. This, coupled with ensuring that there are no barriers to renovate homes across Town will also keep costs down.

- Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance allows for townhouse-style development in and around Suncook Village and the Residential Zones.
- Work to ensure there is adequate infrastructure, including sewer, water, roads, and broadband internet access.
- Continue to support outdoor recreation efforts in Allenstown.
- Work with the Allenstown School District to ensure that the school system provides innovative curriculum to serve as an attraction.
- Work with realtors to develop additional strategies, including marketing.

2016 Objective 3:

Ensure that Allenstown’s land use regulations support development of a wide range of housing options to meet the needs of residents at all ages of the life cycle, including single residents, families and seniors.

- Audit housing regulations to be sure that housing options are available for residents of all ages, income and abilities.
- New development should model sustainable design and sensitively integrate into its natural setting.

2016 Objective 4:

Maintain balance between the housing stock and population while pursuing other opportunities such as strategies for aging in place and for workforce attraction.

- Maximize downtown development potential in terms of higher density, a mix of compatible uses, and infrastructure.
- Continue to manage the growth of the mobile home parks.

- Pursue demographic-specific housing strategies (seniors, workforce, etc).
- Institute phasing provisions in accordance with RSA 674:21.IV.c, for all major subdivisions and multi-family site plans.
- Consider historic preservation provisions for Suncook Village such as demolition delay bylaws and/or historic district designation.
- Track changes in building permit data, vacancy rates, household size, and the ratio of population to housing to determine if balance is maintained each year.
- Work with realtors to develop additional strategies, including marketing.

2016 Objective 5:

Ensure economic development is consistent with community character.

- Maximize downtown development potential in terms of higher density, a mix of compatible uses, and infrastructure.
- Where appropriate, consider architectural design standards downtown.
- Recruit “target industries” as described in the Economics Chapter.
- Review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that target industries are permitted, where appropriate, and are of a scale that fits with Allenstown’s community character.

2016 Objective 6:

Continue the process to modernize and streamline the permitting process.

- Continue to shift to an online application process. Periodically assess the process for effectiveness.
- Support and rely upon the new Technical Review Process to ensure department heads screen applications for issues well in advance of public hearing on applications.
- Continue to utilize the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission Circuit Rider Service for application review and Planning Board support.
- Continue to rely upon the Circuit Rider and Building Inspector checklist review process for all Planning Board applications.