

TOWN OF GEORGETOWN
MASSACHUSETTS

MASTER PLAN AND
EO 418
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

.....

VISION STATEMENT
AND
ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Prepared by

Community Design Partnership,
Boston, MA

January 2004



VISION AND ASSETS AND LIABILITIES



The Georgetown Master Plan Committee engaged the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) to assist in the preparation of a Master Plan and Executive Order 418 Community Development Plan. MVPC asked Community Design Partnership (CDP), a Boston consulting firm, to facilitate the first stage of public participation in the master plan process: creation of a vision for Georgetown's future.

Development of a Vision Statement is an essential early step in creating a Master Plan. The vision statement becomes a guiding image for a community as it faces challenges and makes decisions in the future. Vision statements focus attention on a community's values, sense of identity, and aspirations. In order to focus on a vision, community residents also need to understand current conditions on a community-wide level. They need to identify and understand the assets of their community – what is valued, what is working well – and the liabilities – the less attractive aspects of the community and the problems that need to be solved. The process of creating a vision statement is an occasion for residents to agree on a desired future and commit themselves to working towards that ideal.

The Process

MVPC and CDP met with the Georgetown Master Plan Committee and the Town Planner to discuss the purpose and organization of a public meeting to develop a vision statement and list of assets and liabilities. In that meeting, the Master Plan Committee members gave their views on the some of the opportunities and challenges facing the Town. In order to understand more about the town and create a brief presentation on current conditions, CDP reviewed existing data and studies about Georgetown and visited and photographed the Town. MVPC created a set of maps showing existing environmental and land use conditions.

The Visioning Public Meeting was held on November 13, 2003 at the High School Cafeteria. Roughly 35 people attended. (Please see the appendix for the meeting agenda.) Before the meeting began, the maps were on the wall for participants to view and discuss, and refreshments were available. Larissa Brown of CDP gave a brief presentation focusing on natural resources and open space, housing, economic development and transportation conditions in town. (See the Appendix for the presentation.) The participants then separated into five small groups, each provided with one or two facilitators, a big pad to record comments, and a base map for reference and to record ideas. At the end of the meeting, each of the groups reported back to the group as a whole. There was much overlap and convergence of views among the groups. (The results from each of the groups are available in the Appendix.)

This report contains a draft Vision Statement and list of Assets and Liabilities prepared by CDP. After review by the Master Plan Committee, the draft Vision Statement and list will be presented at the next master plan public meeting for revision or confirmation by community participants.

Town of Georgetown Vision Statement

In 2023...

Georgetown remains a predominantly residential and family-oriented community with a semi-rural, small town identity. Through careful planning, the Town has retained much of the visual character of its rural heritage of fields and woods balanced by a lively historic downtown and a small sector of clean industry. Georgetown has an involved, civic-minded population, strong town government and an excellent school system. The Town has been successful in shaping change to protect its livability and natural beauty while accommodating growth and reflecting the community's essential values:

- ***Protecting and Enhancing Georgetown's Natural and Cultural Heritage*** – Georgetown has protected its natural resources, especially its water resources, and its semi-rural character through permanent protection of critical open spaces, creative development, and public understanding of how to manage private landscapes to avoid pollution of rivers, streams and ponds. The Town's wellfields and aquifers are well-protected and water quality and quantity has improved significantly from only a few decades ago. Public parks are well-maintained and a pedestrian network of trails and sidewalks links neighborhoods with open space, town facilities, schools and the town center. The Town's most important historic resources have been identified and given landmark protection. CPA funds have been effectively deployed to protect historic as well as open space resources.
- ***Living in Georgetown*** – In addition to Georgetown's neighborhoods of single family homes, the Town now offers a greater variety of housing choices, including condominiums and rental apartments affordable to long time residents and seniors who wish to downsize their housing, young people starting out in life, and town employees. The town continues to achieve state goals for affordable housing through housing development that complements Georgetown's character, aided by CPA funding. Zoning standards and guidelines ensure that new construction is sensitive to the surrounding landscape and neighborhood.
- ***Supporting Economic Development*** – A mixture of small-scale shops, offices, housing, and town services brings more vitality to the town center. Apartment dwellers living over shops thrive and keep an eye on the downtown activities that include new family-style restaurants, a bakery and other businesses organized in a downtown business association. Antique shops have grown in number and have become a stable tourist attraction for the town. Patrons park in landscaped parking lots located behind buildings. The downtown is safe and appealing to pedestrians, with streetscape improvements and traffic controls to enhance walkability. A Town Economic Development committee has been successful in identifying and attracting new light industry to the industrially-zoned lands near I-95, enhancing Georgetown's tax base.
- ***Moving Around Georgetown*** – In addition to Georgetown's pedestrian network of sidewalks and trails in open space areas, bicycle and pedestrian routes have been created on abandoned railbeds and on utility line rights of way. Improvements in traffic management at key intersections and physical improvements combined with enhanced enforcement have made local roads safer and eased congestion. Enforcement actions have made truck traffic less noisy for residents along truck routes.
- ***Civic Georgetown*** -- The Town has built a state of the art school combined with a community center serving all ages of town residents. New or upgraded town buildings for the library and public safety departments have been completed. A comprehensive wastewater management program is being implemented.

Through wise stewardship and community commitment, Georgetown is shaping change by careful planning, protection of the Town's resources and natural environment, effective regulation, and incentives to enhance quality of life and opportunity for everyone who lives in Georgetown.

ASSETS	LIABILITIES
<i>Overall Community Character and Issues</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-rural character ▪ Rural roads: narrow, winding, green, stone walls ▪ Good place to raise children ▪ Good community involvement with high Town Meeting attendance ▪ Strong volunteer base - most boards have members and many civic organizations ▪ Safe and crime free community ▪ Location provides easy commute to employment centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural character is diminishing and suburban character is increasing ▪ Too much mixture of residential and industrial uses throughout town ▪ Need to drive everywhere ▪ Need a more lively downtown ▪ Too much dependence on a residential tax base ▪ Not in My Backyard attitudes
<i>Natural and Cultural Resources</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generally proactive policies in natural resource protection ▪ Lufkin's Brook ▪ Parker River ▪ Wheeler Brook Farm ▪ Hampshire Woods ▪ Local ponds ▪ Historical buildings ▪ Theater groups and art galleries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern about development around water supplies/aquifer ▪ Residential septic failures and nonpoint pollution pollute ponds ▪ Pentucket Pond is overrun with geese ▪ Encroachment on wetlands: potential danger to water supply ▪ Wastewater management needed in town center ▪ Not enough recycling ▪ Drinking water quality for one well needs improvement (currently underway) ▪ With increasing population will need a new well(s) ▪ Currently have shallow wells ▪ Cost of treatment v. cost of drilling a new, deep well ▪ Limited water supply needs attention for future
<i>Open Space and Recreation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adoption of the Community Preservation Act ▪ Camp Denison ▪ Pond for swimming ▪ Golf and country club ▪ Tennis courts ▪ Summer concert series ▪ State Forest Land ▪ Town parks like American Legion Park and Harry Murch Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open space/parks not well managed, poor access, few trails, not well publicized ▪ Geese impacts on pond detract from swimming ▪ Lack of public access to open space ▪ Trying to find space for more athletic fields
<i>Housing and Residential Development</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality and variety of attractive housing styles and sizes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growth hasn't been "done right" ▪ Need tools to manage and shape growth

ASSETS	LIABILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Historic homes ▪ Town has reached 10% 40B goal with current rental project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tearing down small houses to put up big ones – trend towards “mansionization” ▪ Road frontage almost all developed ▪ Zoning & by-laws create higher housing costs - difficult permitting system ▪ No multi-family zoning ▪ No apartments downtown ▪ Even with the 40B project, housing for middle income households remains scarce
<i>Economic Development</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Civic buildings in the town center ▪ Good base of buildings and businesses in the town center ▪ Industrially-zoned land available for development close to I-95 ▪ Center antique shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of business tax base ▪ Not much employment in town ▪ No program to attract business to available industrial land ▪ No organization for small business Downtown ▪ Mixed uses not allowed downtown ▪ Need for more retail options, more restaurant option ▪ No apartments downtown ▪ Not aesthetically pleasing – need façade improvements ▪ Not walkable; Need to drive everywhere – no good pedestrian access to downtown ▪ Not enough and/or not fully utilized parking ▪ Wastewater disposal constraints
<i>Transportation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good access to I-95 and other major arterial roads ▪ Park and ride lot for commuter bus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location and easy road access means a lot of traffic traveling through Town to other destinations - growth in other towns will contribute to traffic in Georgetown ▪ Traffic congestion in center during commuter rush and at the end of the school day, 3-6pm ▪ Speeding and lack of enforcement ▪ Truck traffic along Route 133 ▪ Congestion on Route 97 East in the morning ▪ Parking scarce downtown ▪ Cul-de-sacs impede through circulation and create congestion on major roads
<i>Community Facilities</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good school system: locally controlled (not part of a regional school system), small classes, 100% MCAS pass rate for graduating seniors (2003) ▪ Volunteer Fire Department ▪ Local electric company with good rates/service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The library needs more space - it is in danger of losing certification ▪ No place for teenagers to hang out ▪ Cost of schools and need for space ▪ No youth or senior center ▪ Need for a comprehensive wastewater management program

APPENDIX

Georgetown EO 418 Community Development Plan/Master Plan
The Future of Georgetown: Town-Wide Visioning Workshop

Georgetown High School Cafeteria - November 13, 2003 – 6:30pm – 9pm

Agenda

6:30 - 7:00

- *Introductions:*
Georgetown Master Plan Committee and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
- *Brief Presentation:*
Envisioning Georgetown – Larissa Brown, *Community Design* Partnership

7:00 - 8:30 SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

What do we like about Georgetown? What are we worried about? – 30 minutes

- What are Georgetown's assets? What are the positive trends and opportunities for the future?
- What are Georgetown's liabilities? What are the negative trends and future threats facing the town in the next 10 to 20 years?

Brainstorm on the future of Georgetown – 30 minutes

- Identify attributes, values, qualities, places, and activities that you hope will describe and identify Georgetown in the future.
- How do we want Georgetown to be described 10 to 20 years from now?

Balancing development and preservation for quality of life – 30 minutes

Identify on the map areas where change is desirable (and what kind) and areas where no change is desired. For example:

- What are your favorite places in Georgetown and how do you experience them?
- Which natural resources and open space areas should be preserved?
- Where and what kind of residential development or redevelopment is desirable?
- Where and what kind of retail, office, or industrial development or redevelopment is desirable?
- What transportation improvements are needed?

8:30-9:00 RETURN TO THE GROUP AS A WHOLE

Presentations from the Groups

- A representative from each of the small groups will briefly present the most important points from the group discussion

Summary and Next Steps

Envisioning Georgetown...



Georgetown Master Plan Committee

Consultants:

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

Community Design Partnership

Community Design Partnership, Inc.

EO 418 Community Development Plan/Master Plan

Focus on Four Elements:

- Natural Resources and Open Space
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation

Why do a master plan?

- *Where* do we want to grow? Where do we want to preserve land for development?
- *How much* do we want to grow?
- *What kind* of growth do we want?

[illegible]

Georgetown was...

an Indian camping ground.

originally part of the settlement of Rowley and incorporated in 1838.

a town of orchards and cider producers until the temperance movement.

home of a bustling shoemaking industry for over a century and a small manufacturing center in the late 19th century.

Source: "A Brief History of Georgetown, Massachusetts"

Georgetown is...

- a town of 13.17 square miles
with a population of 7,377 people
in 2,572 households.
- a fast-growing town. Since 1990
the population has increased by 16%
and the number of households has
increased 18% .

Source: U.S. Census

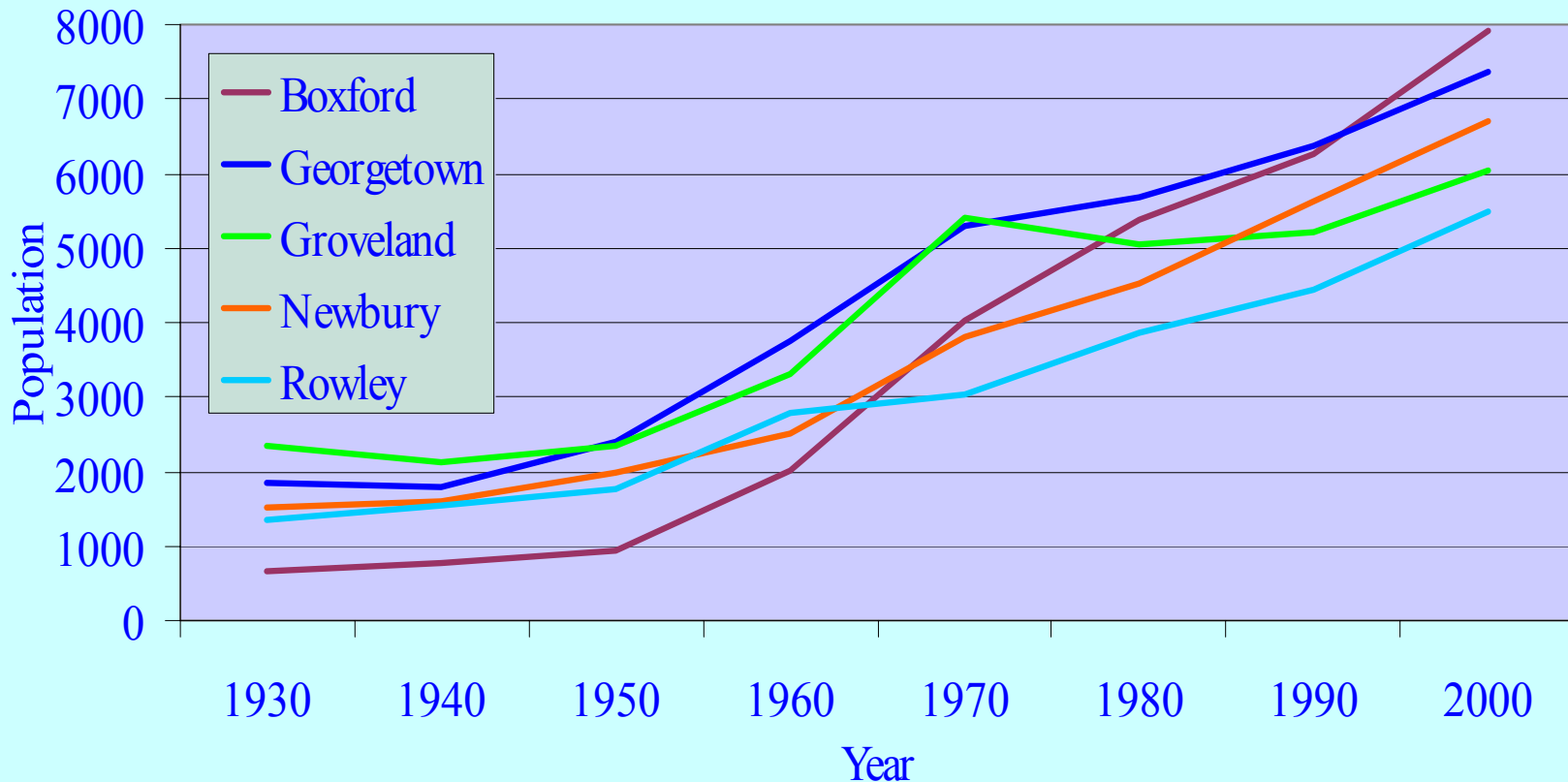
Population Characteristics

In 2000...

- Children under 18: 28.6%
- Adults 65 and over: 9.3%
- Median Age: 37.8
- Households with children under 18: 43.4%
- Households with persons 65 and over: 20.3%
- Single person households: 17%
- Average household size: 2.86
- Average family size: 3.27

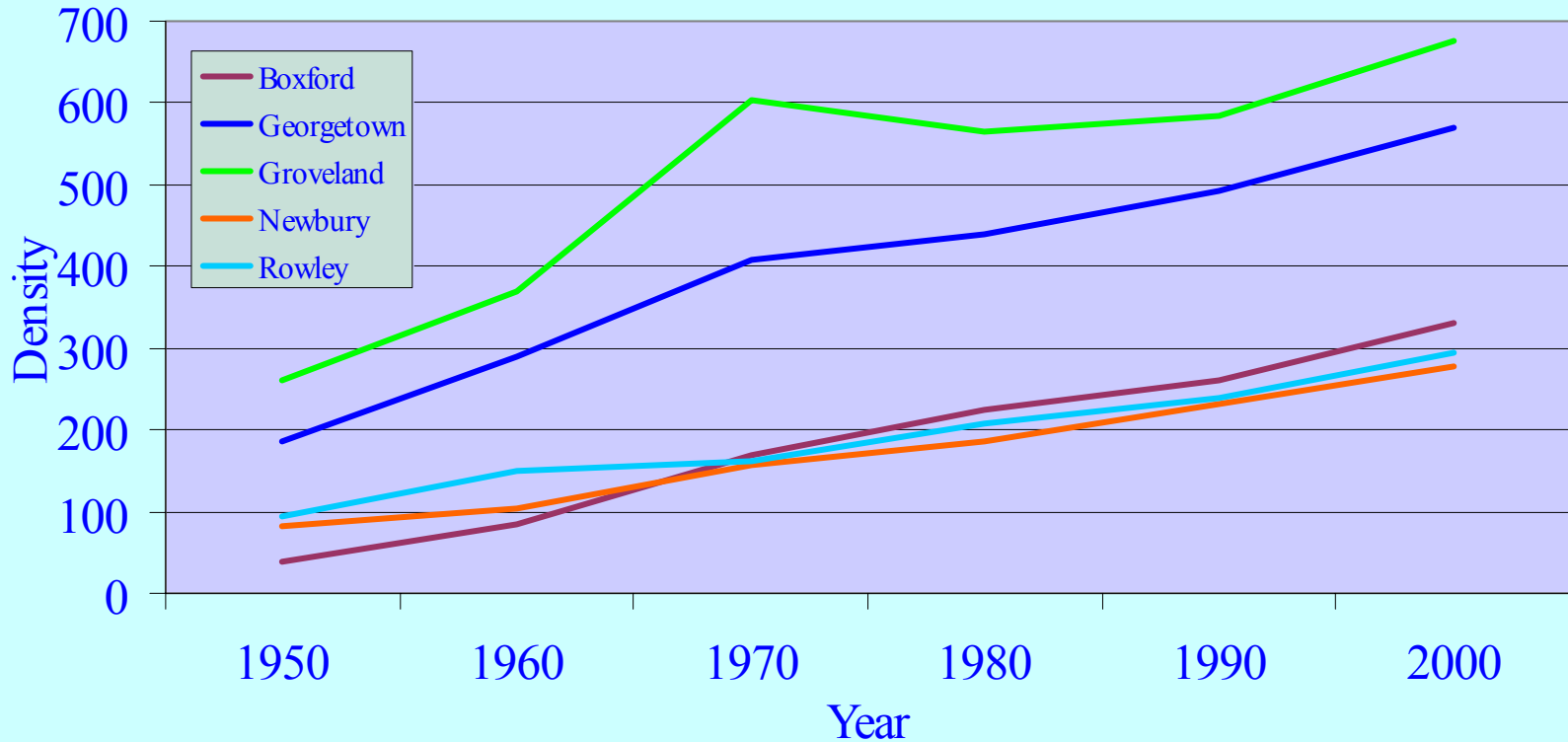
Source: U.S. Census

Population Growth 1930 to 2000



Source: MISER/Mass. State Data Center

Population Density 1950 to 2000



DHCD website at <http://www.state.ma.us/dhcd/iprofile/default.htm>

Georgetown Could Be...

Population Projections					
Municipality	2000 Census	2010	2020	2025	Maximum Buildout
Boxford	7,921	9,923	11,924	12,925	13,795
Georgetown	7,377	8,265	9,154	9,598	11,140
Groveland	6,038	6,145	6,251	6,304	9,489
Newbury	6,717	8,398	10,079	10,920	13,486
Rowley	5,500	6,858	8,217	8,896	11,552
West Newbury	4,149	5,256	6,364	6,918	12,284

If every parcel were built to what current zoning and other regulations permit, Georgetown would have..

- 3,763 more residents**
- 2.178 million more commercial square feet of development**
- 642 more students**
- 445,548 additional gallons per day of water demand**
- 1284 more housing units**
- 25 miles of additional roadway**

Source: U.S. Census and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

Median Household Income

Year	1999	\$76,260
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Year	1989	\$44,861
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Percent Change	70%
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Greatest change compared to neighboring towns

Source: U.S. Census and Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

Environmental and Recreation Assets...

- Gentle topography with drumlin hills
- Diverse native plants and animals
- Parker River
- Pentucket Pond, Rock Pond
- Lufkin Brook, Penn Brook
- Baldpate Hill
- Over 1700 acres of protected land
- Passage of the Community Preservation Act
- Trails around Lufkin's Brook and Crane Pond
- Fishing including angling and ice fishing
- Birding – Swimming -- Boating



Environmental and Recreation Challenges

- Small brownfields sites - clean-up
- Aquifer protection – sole source of drinking water
- Parker River water flow
- Ground and surface water pollution
 - Septic system maintenance
 - Stormwater run-off and other nonpoint pollution
- Route 97/Parker River crossing flooding
- Development encroaches on open space and wildlife corridors
- Potential need for a community center



Cultural and Historic Places

Captain Brocklebank House

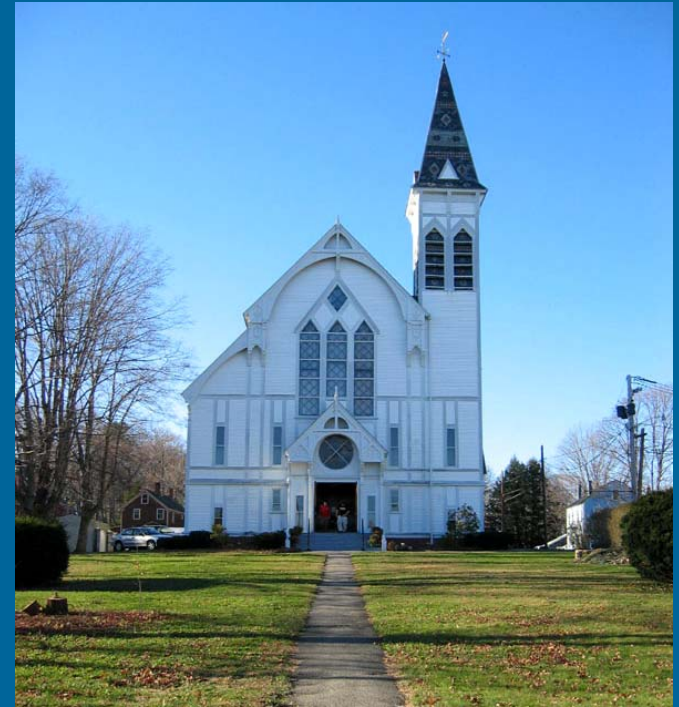
- oldest house 1660

Schoolhouse #3

Historic cemeteries

Native American artifacts

Cluster of historic homes on Elm and Chestnut Streets



Source: Georgetown Open Space Plan 2001

Georgetown is primarily residential....

- Most of town is zoned for one- or two-acre lots
- Diversity of housing ages and sizes
- Most street frontage is already developed
- Newer houses are nearly twice as big, on average, than older homes



Georgetown is primarily residential....



- Total housing units in 2000: 2616
- Total housing units in 1990: 2219
- 18% increase in the number of housing units over the 1990s
- 25% of housing units built before 1940
- 31% of housing units built since 1980
- 94% single family homes
- 86% owner-occupied

Source: U.S. Census

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New Housing development types...

- Independent Senior Housing for the over 55 population – potential for 117 units in process
- Cluster-style developments
- Chapter 40B multifamily rental project



Source: Mass. Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

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Town approach to new housing development...

- Rate of Development Bylaw since 1995 – current limitation to 20 new building permits for new housing per year
 - with exceptions for over 55 housing, low and moderate income housing, rehabilitation and nonresidential development
- Independent Senior Housing Bylaw
- Housing Balance bylaw mandates affordable units in special permit projects
- Passage of the Community Preservation Act

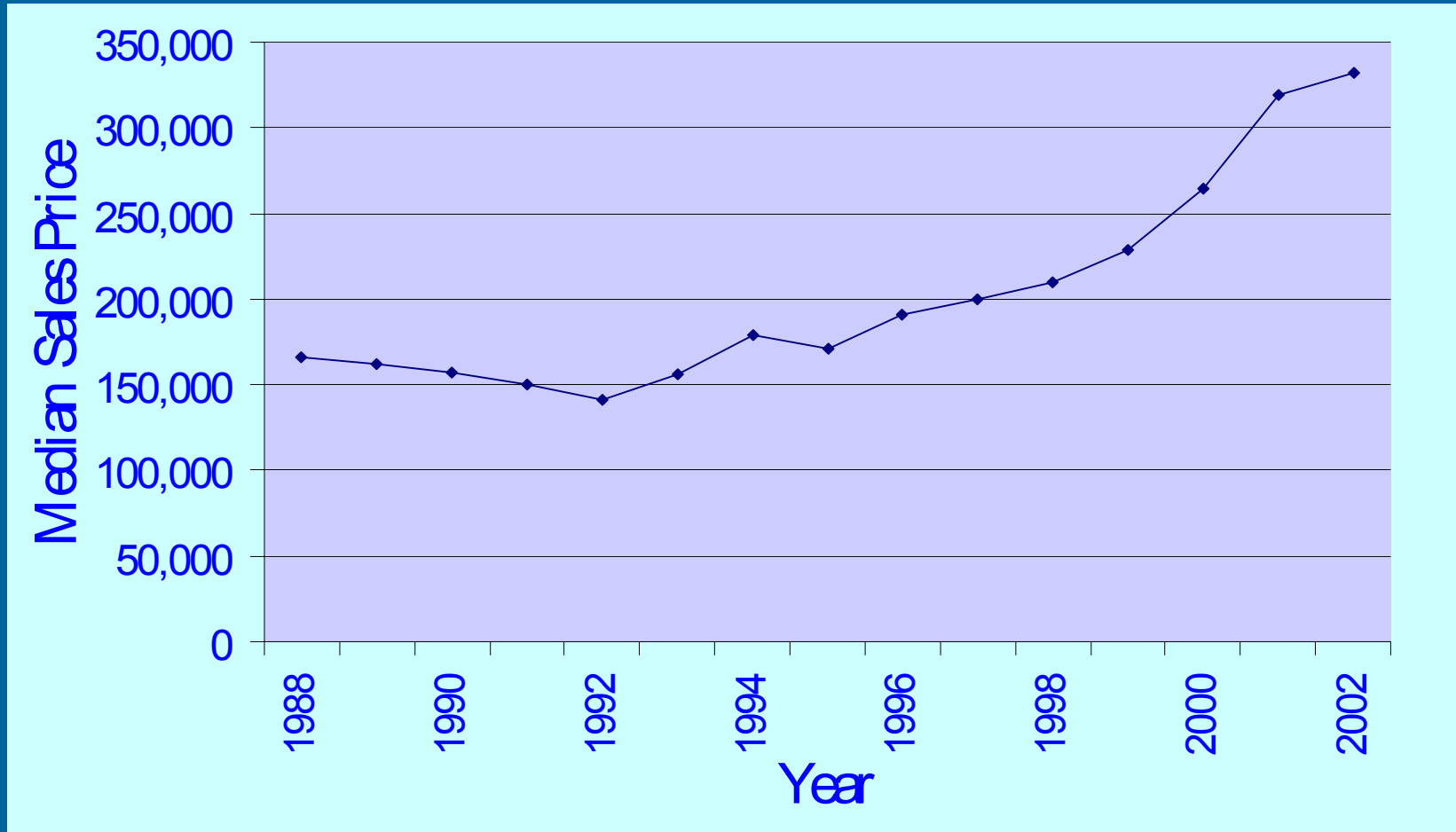
The Cost of Housing...



- Median price of a single family house in 1990: \$187,400
- Median price of a single family in 2002: \$332,250
- Percent change: 77%
- 35% of current Georgetown residents could not buy a house today in Georgetown

Source: The Warren Group; US Census

Median Home Sales Price



Source: The Warren Group

Affordable Housing

- Appointment of the Affordable Housing Task Force in 2001
- Approval of the Mirra/Norino Chapter 40B project
 - **Georgetown will be well over the 10% Chapter 40B goal.**
- Need for family housing to accommodate town employees and local young families
- The Affordable Housing Plan proposes creation of 2-4 affordable units, on average, every few years starting in 2006.

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Business: Georgetown Center



- Antiques stores
- Some handsome buildings with parking in the rear
- Some undistinguished commercial buildings with large front parking lots



Business: Industry



- Located mostly parallel to Route 95
- Industrially-zoned land available
- Some industrial uses near residential areas

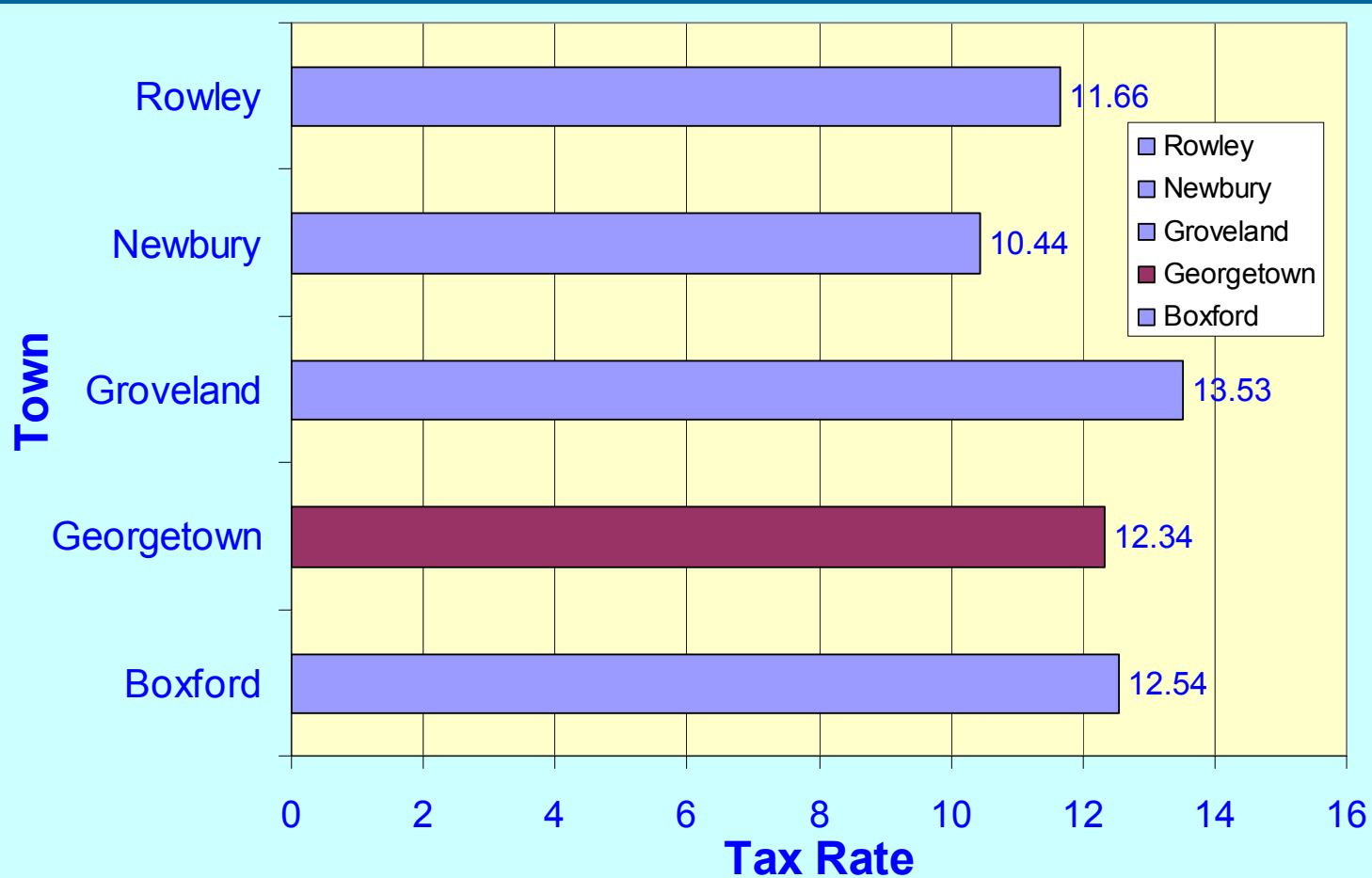


Getting Around: Transportation and Traffic

- Good highway access: I-95, I-495
- Other major roads: Routes 97 and 133
- Rail access via Rowley or other stations
 - 87% of commuters drove to work alone according to the 2000 census
 - 4.3% of workers worked at home
- Traffic congestion in town center
- Through traffic from I-495 to I-94

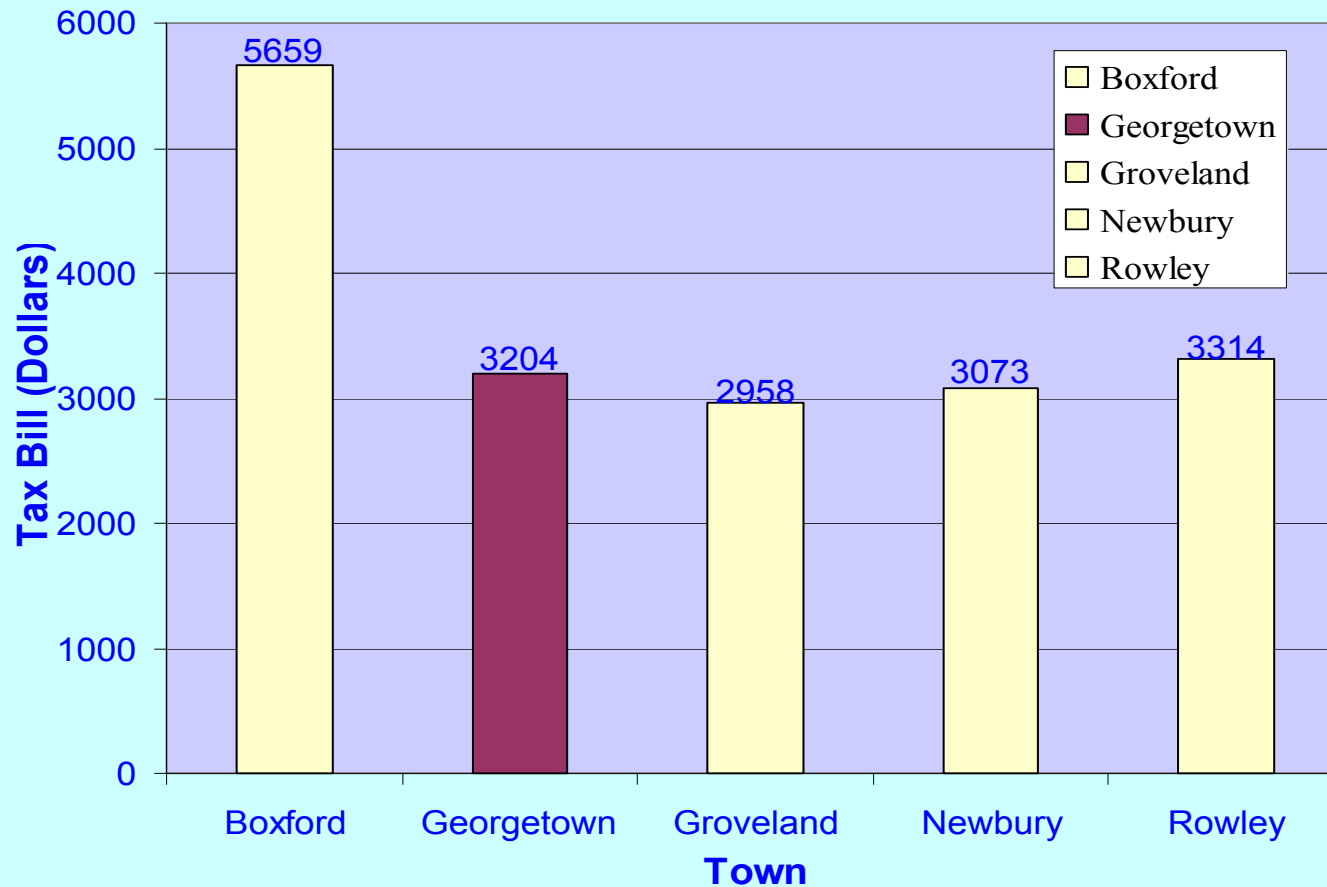


Comparative Tax Rates



Source: Mass. DOR Website

Comparative Average Single Family Tax Bill



Source: Mass. DOR Website

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Visioning...

- What kind of town do you want Georgetown to be ten or 20 years from now?
- What's good about Georgetown? What's not so good?



Comments from Small Groups at Visioning Session

GROUP ONE

Assets – What’s good about Georgetown?

- Safe/crime free community
- Good place to raise children
- Community
 - Good community involvement/interaction
 - Good attendance at town meeting
 - Strong volunteerism
- Excellent schools
 - All in town (not part of a regional school system)
 - Small classes
 - Good educational quality – 100% pass MCAS, despite low per pupil expenditures
- Size of the town – small town feel
- Access
 - To highways and public transportation
 - To the coast
 - To other states
- Electric company
 - In town
 - Good rates/service
- Police and fire departments
 - Volunteer fire department
 - 2 fire stations, only 1 town funded
- Volunteer parks and recreation department
 - Trying to find space for more fields
- Summer concert series
- Can swim in the pond (most of the time)
 - Pond is getting/has gotten cleaner – used to be unswimmable

Liabilities: What’s not so good or needs improvement?

- Downtown
 - Not aesthetically pleasing
 - Not walkable
 - Not enough/not fully utilized parking
 - Need to drive everywhere – no pedestrian access to downtown
- Need more sidewalks/pedestrian access throughout town
 - Sidewalks end away from the downtown
 - Bicycling thru town is as hard as walking
- Not enough thru streets
 - Town eliminated several thru streets
 - Increases congestion on main roads
- No community center
- Library needs to be expanded
- Would like youth center like North Andover
- Water quality
 - With increasing population will need a new well
 - Currently have shallow wells
 - Water quality used to be better
 - Water currently “undrinkable” because of iron and mineral contamination
 - Cost of treatment v. cost of drilling a new, deep well

- Condition of school facilities
- School is reaching capacity – another will be needed as the town continues to grow
- Not much employment in town
 - Good access to highway and transportation allows people to get to where they work easily
 - Would like more jobs (light manufacturing) in town

Vision Elements: What should Georgetown's future be like?

- More housing will be built to accommodate the increasing population
 - Smaller house lots
 - Cluster development
 - Housing developments that allow preservation of open space and farm land
 - The amount of housing currently being built is slowed
- Places in town are accessible and usable by everyone
 - Library
 - Senior center
 - Youth center
 - Sports and other types of (active) recreation
 - Arts
 - Facility that would pay for itself (require membership?)
 - A (new) town square that is more than just a highway crossroads
- A walkable town
 - Sidewalks to (not just in) downtown
 - Natural paths/trails between places and subdivisions
 - Bike trails
 - A place where people don't have to drive everywhere they want to go
- It is easier to get around and through town using any means – driving, walking, etc.
- More friendly to light industry
- Downtown
 - Preserve historic structures
 - Allow mixed use/greater density
 - Good place for senior housing
- New, large space for community events
 - Multi-use facility
- Keep own school system – don't join a regional system
- Deeper wells have been drilled
- Sewer system – town only or join with other towns
- New businesses – hotel, more types of restaurants
- All efforts should be taken to preserve the small town, community feel

GROUP TWO

Assets – What's good about Georgetown?

- Small town feel, family town
- Antique shops
- American Legion Park
- Hampshire Woods
- Harry Mirch Park
- Wheeler Brook Farm
- Honor system farm stand
- Dunkin' Donuts
- Camp Dennison
- Pond when you can swim there
- Tennis courts
- Library and surrounding area

Liabilities: What's not so good or needs improvement?

- Growth and housing
 - Tearing down small houses to put up big ones
 - Want to keep it low-density, affluent, single family
 - Almost no Class A residential lots left
 - No sewerage downtown
 - Dual usage not allowed downtown
 - By-laws are prohibitive
 - Zoning & by-laws create higher housing costs
 - If generations can't afford to live in GT, there is a lack of "community"
 - Private property rights
 - Developers are developing the land and making the infrastructure
 - Growth hasn't been "done right"
 - No apartments downtown
 - No multi-family zoning
 - No multi-family zoning
 - Even with new project, there is still a lack of housing for a mid-income "condo" range
- Traffic
 - 3-6pm and on 97 East in the morning
 - Parking scare downtown
 - Growth in other towns will contribute to traffic in Georgetown
- Children
 - A large percent of the population is children
 - Vandalism is a problem
 - How will schools keep up with demand?
- Natural Resources
 - Aquifer protection
 - Pond is overrun with geese (can they be moved?)
 - Water quality has declined
 - CPA funds have been used to buy land that isn't directly useable by residents
- Cultural Resources
 - The library needs expansion - in danger of losing certification
 - No youth or senior center
 - A lot of old favorite places are gone

Vision Elements: What should Georgetown's future be like?

- A lively downtown with living space, tavern,
- Good design, restaurants; walkable
- Building where there's existing infrastructure
- Wheeler Brook Farm purchased w/ CPA funds
- Additional parking downtown
- Traffic subsided
- No multi-family housing
- Controlled density multifamily housing
- Accessory apartments available for rent
- Relocation of Scotty's Mobil
 - Move Scotty's to the Boxford line
- Upkeep of parks and public buildings
- Recreational area made of a previously ignored corner of town
- Georgetown has maintained or strengthened its town character

- Refurbished bowling alley has potential
- Old bus/railroad yard good place for senior housing
- Andover's parking is behind buildings
- Andover has one hour parking meters
- Site review for commercial projects to maintain "village" character
- Cluster zoning

GROUP THREE

Assets – What's good about Georgetown?

- Nelson Street, rural streets
- schools (top 10% of MCAS)
- supporting tax base w/ residential
- 74% new to town: increasing tax base
- viable center

Liabilities: What's not so good or needs improvement?

- traffic
- infrastructure
- permit process
- form of government
- Nimby –
 - lack of cared-for open space
 - Too many apartments/condos•balance in housing
 - amount of retail
 - zoning districts
 - water quality in pond
 - personal agenda & politics
- Need a strong town government
- Need to streamline permitting process
- Need standard operation procedures
- Need home-based occupations/cottage industries

Vision Elements: What should Georgetown's future be like?

- Still in the country
- Style of houses
- Easy commute/location
- Small town feel
- No franchises such as fast food restaurants, malls
- uniformity of zoning & laws to keep within direction it's going
- need to protect ruralness, "planned growth" brings people in
- need to preserve the character of a "small town"
- locally grown small business and industrial but no large franchises
- look at municipal buildings and schools to ensure proper size with growth
- larger library
- vibrant downtown w/ mixed use apartments over businesses
- creation of thru-streets not just cul-de-sacs

GROUP FOUR

Assets – What's good about Georgetown?

- There is an existing town center
- The school is in the town center
- Viable: library, bank, post office, town hall, gas station, grocery, pizza (x3), doctors, CVS

- Small town: little league, junior olympics, bandstand music, lots of volunteers, PTA carnival, Fire Dept. Santa Claus
- Independent: schools
- Volunteer Fire Department
- Theater Groups
- Art Galleries
- Most boards have members/volunteers
- Resolved the 40B problem
- Scenic Areas: ponds, farmland/greenery, horse farms, Lufkin's Brook Area, golf course, Parker river
- Historical buildings
- Good access to Boston, Rte. 128, 495, NH, ocean, mountains, crossroads of Essex County, of NE Mass.
- Rural roads: narrow, windy, green, stone walls
- Good electric department
- Good school system
- Lots of potential for small businesses downtown

Liabilities: What's not so good or needs improvement?

- Trucks in residential neighborhoods (mostly Rte. 133)
- Traffic in center: commuter congestion, end of school day
- Speeding is a problem: enforcement
- Lack of business tax base
- No place for teenagers to hang out
- Encroachment on wetlands: potential danger to water supply, enforcement
- Fear of lawsuits
- Strain on water supply
- Cost of schools: need for space
- Open space/parks: not well managed, poor access-few trails, not well publicized
- Lack of growth control mechanisms available
- Concern about development around water supplies/aquifer
- Wastewater management in town center
- Not enough recycling

Vision Elements: What should Georgetown's future be like?

- Lots of protected open space
- New middle school & new community center: accessible to everyone-anytime
- New library
- End of traffic congestion
- Pedestrian-friendly town center
- More and better maintained, safe pedestrian ways: sidewalks and paths
- Bike trail/Rail trail
- Facelift for center buildings: façade improvements
- More proactive town government: take advantage of opportunities, especially in center, ex. tax Title
- Tennis courts & new playing fields
- Improve water quality of ponds
- Environmental education on best management practices for landscaping residential property esp. (fertilizers, pesticides, etc.)
- Delicious water and plenty of it
- Maintain historical integrity
- Family restaurant in center
- Town center: more choices, more vitality, no smoke
- Bigger parking spaces: a variety of parking spaces

GROUP FIVE

Assets – What’s good about Georgetown?

- Location (convenient to highway, beach, other states)
- Small schools
- Business district
- American Legion Park (concert space, park, tennis courts; all need updating)
- Volunteerism is very high
- Pedestrian friendly
- Nice homes
- Historic homes
- Community Feel
- (Some feel) voice matters (e.g. town meeting)
- Have parks (but they need work)
- Quaint town
- Camp Dennison

Liabilities: What’s not so good or needs improvement?

- Location (everyone travels through Georgetown to get somewhere else)
- Traffic!!!
- Industry and residential is mixed throughout town
- 133 traffic is excessive
- Water quality has gone down
- Issue of Town Hall vs. School feeling
- Not enough dissemination/communication (e.g. town is aware of grant opportunities but community groups are not)
- Town working as fiefdom
- (Some feel) town meeting format is disenfranchising – people are disengaged and not participating in gov’t/town issues
- Open space located in backlots – concerned that this is regarded as developable land
- Insufficient sidewalks
- Zoning!!! Insufficient
- Lack of parking (area near Old Town Tavern)
- Inconsistencies of old and new homes (e.g. new home on Elm Street next to historical home)

Vision for the Future

- Community Center
- More sidewalks, and extending them beyond the town center – needed in the periphery
- More restaurants (sit down) downtown
- No connection downtown – Town Hall doesn’t function in concert with shopping center – doesn’t function as one unit
- Businesses are moving out
- Need bakery
- Do we need a Georgetown Chamber of Commerce (concern that business base needs to be more active first)
- Economic Development – need someone to oversee and manage it
- Bike trail
- Assisted living/senior center
- Need balance between building and residential
- Consideration of type of housing preferred (e.g. rental unit vs. condo), and tax structure for rental units
- Better definition of roles and responsibilities of community groups and government (e.g. town vs. school, local groups working on same issue but not knowing it)
- Concern that 40B housing –the rent control can drop off – someone needs to be watching this
- Set milestones for plan

- Need greater participation in government; need to illicit more participation
- Need improved Community Outreach
- Need improved community/cooperation
- How to structure housing so people can walk to business district
- Use and maintenance of open space/green space which is on the periphery of town
- Community Center
- A town center that promotes community needs
- Sidewalks
- Signage (e.g. so people know where library is, soccer fields are, etc.)
- Zoning to promote quaintness of town and to protect wellfields (big threat!)
- Library improvement
- Creation/identification of historic district
- Route 95 access road