

**2015 REVISIONS
TO THE
LYME PLAN OF CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT**

Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission

TOWN OF LYME,
CONNECTICUT

Effective December 14, 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2015 Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development

Updating the Plan

Lyme has just completed the revision of its Town Plan of Conservation & Development as required by State Law. Lyme has continued to maintain a consistent vision for its future since the first Plan was prepared in 1964 and as updated in 1990 and in 2001. As was the case in 2001, a detailed questionnaire was mailed and made available online to all Lyme residents. The 2014 questionnaire was designed to repeat the questions asked in 2001 to determine what changes, if any, transpired through the last fourteen years. Where appropriate, new questions were included to survey how residents felt about newer issues that have arisen since the last survey.

Responses to the 2014 survey indicate that residents continue to remain strong in their desire to preserve Lyme's rural character and natural resources, and are willing to travel outside Lyme for employment and services in order to maintain the character of Lyme.

A Vision of Lyme

Lyme is a quiet rural community. Scattered homes lie among the wooded hills and along the clear streams flowing down to the coves and marshes of the Connecticut River estuary. Sailors return to Hamburg Cove after time on the water. Life in Lyme has continued to have a timeless, unhurried quality. There is an aged, well-worn character to its landscape, with houses and the few commercial and civic uses fitting comfortably on the land, even with the addition of the new town office building and new library. Lyme was once a busier place, with quarrying, lumbering, fishing and farming providing employment for Lyme families, but time has removed all but the traces of such activity. Through the ups and downs of the economy during the time since the 2001 Plan, Lyme has continued to remain quietly "off the beaten path". According to respondents to both surveys, they intend to keep it that way.

Lyme residents continue to have a strong appreciation for the natural resources that bless the area. The Connecticut River estuary and its tributaries are recognized nationally and internationally as a unique natural area. Preservation of these special resources, in many areas of the lower river valley, have been assured through a series of connected greenways that preserve the water quality, habitat and visual quality of the community. Within the balance of the Town's regulatory authority and the landowners' rights, existing views and vistas have been, and will continue to be preserved, and perhaps, new vistas will be opened to recall the agricultural heritage of the town. The people of Lyme will still be able to go out and look at the stars, unhindered by the glare of light pollution from nearby development. New homes will be compatible with and respect the scale and design of Lyme's rural New England character.

Lyme residents continue to appreciate their sense of community, but value the privacy that the rural landscape provides. Responses to the 2014 survey indicate that residents continue to be willing to forego quick and easy access to retail businesses and services and to travel longer distances to

employment so that they may enjoy the peace that Lyme provides. In-town services, as evidenced by the new town office building and library, will be modest in size and be located only in areas where such uses already exist. Hamburg Cove will still provide a refuge to boaters.

Lyme will not attempt to become frozen in time, but will continue to adjust to the demands and opportunities of modern life. As new technologies create the possibilities of new lifestyles, Lyme will adjust its regulations and requirements to allow people to work at home or to live in non-traditional family households. Changes will occur as a result of our changing society, but in a way that preserves the quality of life and the natural resources of Lyme.

In the Midst of Change

Through the 1990s and continuing into the past decade, southeastern Connecticut has experienced a shift in its economy, from its very heavy reliance on the defense industry to significant new economic activity in tourism and biotechnical research. Along with that shift has been a shift toward more in-home work made possible by expanding internet services, which is dramatically changing the way we do business. Improvements to Route 156, the central artery to Lyme, have provided a more reliable and convenient access throughout town. Although housing has generally been quiet in Lyme since the last Plan, the economic downturn starting in 2008 has further “quieted” development. Even with the recent rebound, development remains quiet. As was the case in 2001, the public’s awareness of the uniqueness of the Lower Connecticut River continues to grow, as does the interest in protecting one of the “Last Great Places”. During this period of time, the towns of Lyme, East Haddam and Salem were successful in obtaining Congressional approval of the Eight Mile River as a wild and scenic river and protection of the Eightmile Wild and Scenic Watershed bolstering the commitment to preservation and protection of resources and rural character.

Challenges

Going forward into the next ten years, the greatest challenge facing Lyme will be how to continue the protection and preservation of the town’s rural character and natural resources. Volunteer participation in community activities has been encouraged and residents continue to respond, all while continuing to respecting residents’ desires for privacy in a peaceful and serene setting. The town should continue to allow new development at a scale and design which is compatible with the rural landscape. Efforts should be continued to increase population diversity through a variety of present and additional housing opportunities for various income levels.

Recommendations

Lyme has been largely successful in directing its past growth in a manner that is compatible with the town’s vision. The 2015 Plan update recommends that current policies and practices be continued. Land use regulations should continue to be reviewed to insure that additional tools be included to better manage future development. Continued emphasis should be given to the proven successful working relationship with private land owners on open space preservation outside of the regulatory process.

Collection and maintenance of up-to-date information on Lyme's natural and human resources will continue to be essential to informed decision-making. Additional emphasis should continue to be placed on acquisition of permanent open space while allowing traditional community uses of land including farming, forestry and agriculture, limiting future non-residential development, encouraging appropriate design and scale for new residential structures and encouraging population diversity.

INTRODUCTION

Statutory Responsibility

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires all local Planning Commissions to periodically review and update the local Plan of Conservation and Development and to adopt such amendments as the Commission deems necessary to update the Plan. The contents and issues considered in the Plan are proscribed by Section 8-23 CGS. During the past several years, the Connecticut General Assembly has requested that the Office of Policy and Management to develop new planning strategies, which has in turn postponed the required local updates. This update of the Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development is beyond the proscribed ten year deadline, but is not considered “out of date” due to the OPM efforts, which will culminate in a new update deadline of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

The 1964 Plan

The first Plan of Development for Lyme was prepared by the Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission in 1964. The planning process included a questionnaire survey of Lyme residents by the League of Women Voters. That Plan estimated the town’s population at approximately 1,300 people, slightly more people than the population had been 100 years earlier, in 1860. Because Lyme was part of a rapidly growing region which had become more accessible by the completion of the Connecticut Turnpike in 1958, the 1964 Plan raised concerns that this growth would change the character of Lyme. Looking ahead to 1990, the town’s planning consultants anticipated a possible population increase to 5,000 people.

The first Plan noted that preservation of the town’s rural character would require a special type of zoning and subdivision control, going beyond simple large lot area requirements to set aside land for community uses and enjoyment. A major issue identified was the need to take steps “to keep large tracts of undeveloped and open land” intact. To accomplish this goal, the Plan recommended that farming activities be encouraged and that more land be brought under public ownership. Establishment of a local conservation commission was also recommended.

The Plan recommended that civic activities continue to be concentrated at one location on Route 156, as most efficient means of providing services. The Plan recognized existing commercial areas at Hamburg on Route 156 and at the crossroads in Hadlyme, but also recommended that the commercial areas be restricted to prevent “a spreading hit or miss along the principal town roads”. A waterfront business district was recommended for the head of Hamburg Cove, recognizing the sizable marina that had grown up to take advantage of the splendid harbor formed by the cove. Unlike too many other communities, Lyme paid attention to its Plan and proceeded to subsequently adopt its recommendations. The base laid by the 1964 Plan and its implementation has created the town of today – a true planning success story.

The 1990 Plan

In 1988 and 1989, the Planning and Zoning Commission undertook to review its Plan of Conservation and Development to assess its effectiveness and see if additional recommendations were in order. The 1990 Plan noted that the trends observed in 1964 had occurred at a slower pace than anticipated, in large part because intervening actions to maintain a rural landscape had been successful. The 1990 Plan noted that the 1980 Census reported a population of 1,822 people and cited projections from the State Office of Policy and Management estimating a 1990 population of 1,970 people. That the rate of population growth was much slower than earlier predications was attributed to Lyme's land use controls, its geographic distance from major employment centers and distance from the region's expressway systems, and national demographic trends such as lower birth rates and smaller household sizes. After the Plan was completed, the results of the 1990 Census showed an actual population of 1,949 residents.

The 1990 Plan included a detailed summary of a sample questionnaire distributed by the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission. The survey results indicated that respondents were very interested in preserving the rural character of their community and were largely willing to shop and work elsewhere to retain the country atmosphere. By a large percentage, residents opposed zoning additional areas for commercial development of any kind. Residents favored preservation of natural resources, especially along the Connecticut River and its coves and within the Eight Mile River watershed.

The long term goals and recommendations of the 1990 Plan focused largely on preservation of open space through as many methods as possible, including town purchase, cooperation with other land preservation organizations and individuals, and subdivision dedication. The economic boom of the late 1980s had resulted in high housing costs statewide, and the State Legislature responded by requiring consideration of affordable housing needs in every local plan. Accordingly, the Lyme Plan included the goal of creating "an atmosphere that allows a wide variety of socioeconomic groups to live in town", and a recommendation to explore and pursue options for provision of affordable housing to address this need. The Plan concluded that the area zoned for commercial uses was adequate for the foreseeable future, and that all commercial activities should be concentrated into existing locations. Other recommendations concerned community services, including schools, recreation, water supplies and sewage disposal.

The 2001 Plan

Since the production of Lyme's original Plan of Development in 1964, the town has maintained a constant and consistent vision of the type of community it wishes to be, according to the two first Plans. For the 2001 Plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission again mailed survey questionnaires to all Lyme residents and property owners. Of the approximately 1400 questionnaires distributed, 420 responses were received, resulting in a 30% return rate. Responses from that questionnaire reaffirmed that Lyme residents continued to remain strong in their desire to preserve and protect their rural character and area willing to travel outside of Lyme for shopping and employment to do so.

The revisions to the 1990 Plan of Development didn't alter the focus of the Plan. The land use pattern and priorities established in 1964 and refined in 1990 continued to accurately reflect what residents of Lyme wanted for the future of their town. The 2001 Plan was viewed as a continuation of the work done in the previous two Plans. That said, some new concepts and techniques were developed between 1990 and 2001, and new tools were made available to address town concerns and to assist in helping the town meet its goals.

The 2015 Plan Revisions

The 2015 Plan update continues the blueprint established by the previous Plans and includes similar provisions for retention of rural character and natural resources so important to residents. In order to track any changes in the feelings of residents with respect to the future of Lyme, the Planning and Zoning Commission again made a survey available to town residents and property owners. The survey repeated the questions and format of the survey which accompanied the 2001 Plan while including some new questions reflecting anticipated changes moving forward. Although the survey, made available through the mail *and* online on both the Town and Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments websites, was more widely distributed than past surveys, approximately 25% fewer responses were submitted (approximately 400 in 2000 vs. approximately 300 in 2014). Detailed results and analysis of the survey are included as an appendix to this 2015 Plan revision.

The latest revisions to the existing 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development do not alter the focus of the Plan. The land use pattern and priorities established back in 1964, refined in 1990 and again refined in 2002 still accurately reflect what Lyme people want for their town to be in the future. The 2015 Plan is viewed as continuing the work already begun. Some new concepts and techniques have been developed over the thirteen years since the Plan was last reviewed, and new tools are available to towns to address their concerns and achieve their goals. This Plan revision identifies these approaches where applicable.

CHANGES SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE 2002 PLAN

The Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission adopted its first Plan of Development in 1964. The Plan was first revised in 1990, followed by a second revision in 2002. Since the 2002 revision, there have been numerous changes in the region surrounding Lyme. While Lyme continues to generally appear like little has changed over the past thirteen years, outside forces continue to change Lyme in subtle ways.

Changes in Demographics

Census data (CT DECD, US Bureau of Census Summary File) indicates that the population in Lyme has increased to 2,406 from 2,016 between 2000 and 2010, a 19.3% increase. This compares to a 7.4% increase for the region as a whole and a statewide change during the same period of a modest 0.9%. If trends remain constant, population projections from the CT State Data Center (2020-2025) indicate that by 2020 and 2025, Lyme's population will increase to 2,682 and 2,780, an increase of 11.5% and 3.7% respectively.

One of the most significant changes illustrated by the 2014 questionnaire is that regarding the length of time respondents have lived in town. In 2002, 40% of those responding to the plan questionnaire indicated they had lived in Lyme less than 10 years, while 60% were long term residents of 10 years or more. Results of the 2014 questionnaire indicate that the number of respondents living in town 10 years or less has dropped significantly to approximately 25%. At the same time, the percentage of respondents living in town *over* 10 years has increased from 60% to 75%, suggesting the population is "aging in place".

A question regarding year-round residency, property ownership versus property rental and fulltime versus part-time use of property suggests that 90% of respondents are year-round property owners, a slight increase over the 88% reported from 2002. Similarly, the other categories of residence remained relatively unchanged.

A question regarding the number and age of residents in each household suggested a slight drop in the number of households with residents between the ages of 5 and 17 years, and 36 and 45 years. At the same time, responses indicate that the number of households with those 65 years and over significantly increased by approximately 17%, echoing the responses regarding years of residence.

Comparison of the most important reason of why respondents moved to Lyme in the first place reflected a continued shift toward a great appreciation of good schools (26% increasing to 36%), low density population (67% increasing to 71%) and rural atmosphere (75% increasing to 82%). Although all three of these categories showed modest increases in percent responses between 2002 and 2014, fewer respondents indicated that the level of taxation was "most important" (47% dropping to 38%). It is unknown if this latter response reflects a *dissatisfaction* with the level of taxation).

Interestingly, although schools showed the greatest increase in percentage of “most important” (10% increase), the same category also resulted in the most significant increase in those feeling it was “least important” (16%) at the same time. The difference was in the drop in percentage of those thinking that schools were just “important” (33% decreasing to 7%) reflecting perhaps a more polarized view of education in Lyme. That said, the percentages of children in Regional District #18 versus “all other schools” remained constant (55% vs. 45%, respectively).

Workforce Demographics

Comparison of responses for questions regarding whether respondents were retired and, if not, where they worked, provided an interesting look into Lyme’s workforce. Although the percentage of responses for those that “work in Lyme” and those that “work at home” remained fairly constant, the percentage of those indicating that they are retired increased by 15% from 30% to 45%. At the same time, the percentage of those who “work outside of Lyme” decreased 18% from 53% to 35%. Some of this decrease may likely be attributed to the increased ability for residents to work from home given the capabilities of electronic interconnection through the internet. Indeed, numerous comments presented in the questionnaire pointed out the increased desirability of working from home in such a manner. The greatest number of those working outside of Lyme reported traveling to Hartford, New London, Old Lyme and Middletown for work. Some travel as far as New York City, New Jersey, Washington DC and Philadelphia as well as other parts of the country.

Housing and Residential Development

During the time since the adoption of the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development, the housing market in Connecticut went through a downturn, most notably during the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009. Many might say that as of 2015 we’ve yet to fully recover from that downturn.

The 2014 Plan questionnaire posed the same questions regarding housing that were posed in 2002. Topics included the amount and form of affordable housing, whether respondents would be willing to have the Town financially support affordable housing as well as questions regarding the size of single family dwellings and large lot zoning.

Affordable Housing

Although “affordable” is a relative term (it’s based upon income figures from those who live in the relatively affluent Middlesex County), the Town has been involved in forwarding affordable housing for years. During the time since the last PoCD, Lyme has added four new affordable housing units while having one remaining undeveloped lot dedicated to affordable housing. Residents were asked about their perspective on affordable housing.

A comparison of responses from 2000 and 2014 indicated that respondents were consistent in their view that the town should continue to provide affordable housing (33% in 2000 versus 34% in 2014) while those that felt the Town should stop providing such housing declined by 6% (53% in 2000 versus

47% in 2014). In summary, those who thought that the Town should *not* be providing affordable housing or had no opinion totaled slightly less than 70% of respondents. Only about 30% expressed a desire for the town to continue these efforts.

With that response level as a backdrop, respondents were asked to comment about which *forms* of affordable housing were most appropriate in Lyme. Of the choices, the greatest amount of support was for accessory or garage apartments, a view common to both the respondents in 2000 and in 2014. This kind of housing alternative was favored by 3 out of 5 respondents. The least favored alternative in both 2000 and in 2014 was the reduction of the minimum lot sizes for single family residential development which would presumably result in lower purchase prices for such properties. Only 1 of 8 respondents found this to be acceptable. Allowing greater density of development through “cluster” or “open space” developments was also seen to be less desirable with only 1 of 4 respondents supporting such an idea. Also discouraged was conventional multi-dwelling units such as condos, apartments, townhouses and elderly housing with only 1 in 5 respondents supporting this alternative. Permanent elderly housing had an equal amount of support and opposition.

Supporting housing alternatives is one question. Another is whether there’s support for the Town to use tax dollars to finance it. When asked if they would support the use of tax dollars for affordable housing, responses from 2000 and 2014 resulted in the consistent view that only 1 of 5 respondents with an opinion indicated they *did* support the use of tax dollars while 4 of 5 respondents with an opinion indicated that didn’t want their tax dollars used for this purpose. Approximately 10% of respondents had “no opinion”.

When asked about the need for affordable housing in Lyme, 2 of 5 respondents with opinions felt that there was such a need while 3 of 5 respondents with an opinion said they *didn’t* think there was such a need in Lyme. The percentage of those without an opinion increased from 4% in 2000 to 11% in 2014.

When asked about how important each of the various alternative forms of housing were, the two categories that were *least* important, and presumably least desirable, were apartment buildings (4 of 5 respondents) and condominiums (3 of 5 respondents). 3 out of 4 respondents found accessory apartments and elderly housing as either “most important” or “important”. Respondents seemed somewhat ambivalent about residential life care with only slightly more saying such developments were important versus least important.

Single Family Residential Development

A question that has often been raised over the past years is whether or not the size of single family dwellings has gotten to the point of creating negative impacts of any kind. Respondents were asked if they would support some limits in the allowable size of residential structures. Although responses from 2000 and 2014 were similar, there was a slight drop in the percentage of those who thought there *should* be some limiting of dwelling sizes while the percentage desiring *no* limits increased slightly.

Percentages of those supporting limits and those *not* supporting limits were close to 50-50 while a little more than 1 of 10 respondents had no opinion on the subject.

Another question that arises and was posed in the questionnaires is whether Lyme's large-lot zoning is reasonable and sufficient to meet the rural, low density development goals of the town. Although 7 of 10 respondents from 2000 felt that the limitations were reasonable and sufficient, that number increased to almost 9 of 10 respondents in 2014 questionnaire results. It seems clear that respondents consistently felt that downsizing minimum lot size requirements would be inconsistent with existing and desirable development patterns. Only 1 of every 10 respondents had no opinion on this subject.

When asked if minimum lot sizes should be larger, smaller or the same, 3 of 4 responding to the 2014 questionnaire felt that minimum lot sizes should be *larger* while only 1 of 4 felt they should be smaller. No respondents felt that lot size requirements should remain the same. In contrast, 2 of 5 respondents from 2000 felt that lot sizes should be larger while over half felt they should remain the same. Few thought lot sizes should be smaller.

Commercial and Industrial Development Issues

Lyme has continued to limit its commercial and industrial activities through zoning restrictions on those uses. In addition, Lyme's environment and community character have made it a desirable residential area for people who work elsewhere. Any proposals to expand the limited commercial area of Hamburg are usually opposed, sometimes even for long-time business owners. Residents have often expressed that they love their rural town character and have been willing to travel great distances for retail services in order to maintain the town as is.

Although limiting commercial development has long been a town policy and goal, the time since the adoption of the 2002 PoCD did see limited commercial expansion. Included in these changes were the modest expansion of the Reynolds car dealership, Lyme's largest business, and the issuance of a single permit for a bed & breakfast establishment. The resistance to commercial expansion or development of *any* kind was seen in two applications to expand the activities of a gravel pit located on Beaver Brook Road. For both environmental and traffic congestion and safety issues, two attempts to gain permission to greatly increase the gravel mining operations in that location were met with great public outcry which resulted in Special Permit denials from the Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission and the Lyme Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Appeals brought by the property owner were unsuccessful and, as a result, the gravel pit is now preserved in conservation.

Various Land Use Types

Respondents in 2000 and 2014 were asked to comment on numerous land type uses ranging from residential to commercial to municipal to agriculture. A consistent theme in responses from both questionnaires was the uses such as multi-family developments, mixed commercial-residential developments, developments designed to promote tourism and commercial/industrial developments

should be *discouraged*. Most others expressed that such uses should at least be *limited*. The use types that were to be *encouraged* included single family residential, conservation of land and open space (highest level of *encouragement, 94% of responses*), agricultural uses (second highest level of *encouragement, 89% of responses*), and to a lesser degree, marine uses (which more said should be *limited*). 90% of respondents said that recreational facilities were to be *encouraged or limited*. Over 9 of 10 respondents felt that municipal uses should be *limited or discouraged* perhaps because the Town had just gone through the process of constructing and paying for a new Town Hall and library.

Comparison of responses from 2000 and 2014 showed fairly consistent agreement of feelings of respondents toward the various use categories. Interesting variations occurred with a drop of 15% for those who would *discourage* tourism destinations in town, and a drop of over 10% for those *discouraging* commercial development. Through comments provided with the 2014 survey, the drop in *discouragement* of tourism – at least small scale tourism - may be related to the increase of relatively low-impact ecotourism and an understanding that with such tourism often comes a healthier economy. The modest drop in *discouragement* of commercial development may be attributed to the expressed desire of some for more grocery shopping and restaurant options in town. Most of all, comments highlighted the desire of respondents to keep the rural integrity of Lyme intact and to continue support for single family residential uses, conservation of open space, agricultural uses and for water access for residents.

Commercial Development Only

When looking at commercial development only and at what level such uses should be encouraged or discouraged, 9 of 10 respondents in both 2000 and 2014 indicated that they should either be *cautiously encouraged, discouraged or strongly discouraged*. In both 2000 and 2014, over 50% of respondents indicated that commercial development should be *discouraged or strongly discouraged* with only 30% suggesting that such development should be *cautiously encouraged*. Very few respondents had no opinion on this subject.

For those who would encourage such development, examples provided included agriculture and ecotourism, restaurants and small local-owned shops and businesses. Most expressed that any expansion, if appropriate, should occur in the existing commercial area of Hamburg and not spread throughout town. In addition, respondents indicated that existing businesses in Hadlyme and Hamburg – including Ashlawn Farm – should be supported prior to supporting *additional* commercial development. A small retail area in the area of Town Hall, the library and Lyme Consolidated School was also mentioned.

Industrial and Light Industrial Development

Respondent's perspective on industrial development shows a clear desire to discourage or strongly discourage industrial development in Lyme with 80% of respondents indicating as such. In the 2000 survey, respondents preferred to "strongly discourage" over "discourage" industrial development by a factor of 2 to 1. In 2014, that balance shifted slightly to only "discouraging" industrial development,

suggesting that those strong feelings diminished somewhat. That said, slightly less than 20% indicated that industrial or light industrial development should even be “cautiously encouraged”. For those that were willing to think about industrial or light industrial development, suggestions included the town should encourage film, software, engineering and home-based businesses. Other comments suggested that developments should have little or no pollution, include farms, marine facilities, renewable energy, should be located along Routes 156 and 82 or within existing “industrial” areas. Also considered should be wineries, farm-to-table eateries and artisan enterprises.

Support for Specific Commercial Use Types

Respondents were asked to render opinions on the *types* of commercial uses and whether or not there was a need for such uses. The uses listed included food stores, clothing stores, furniture stores, hardware stores, pharmacies, automotive uses, banks or other financial institutions, personal services and restaurants. Of the uses listed, there was no urgent need expressed for any of them. Those where some need was expressed (approximately 1/3 of responses) included food stores and restaurants. Only 1 of 6 respondents expressed a need for hardware stores, pharmacies and personal service establishments. Uses such as clothing stores, furniture stores and banks resulted in the expression of limited need. Comparison of results from 2000 and 2014 indicated that the shift in perceived “need” was greatest for food stores with the shift in least “need” being for pharmacies.

Expansion of Commercial Zoning Adjacent to Hadlyme and Hamburg

When asked whether existing residential areas should be rezoned adjacent to existing areas in Hamburg and Hadlyme for commercial purposes, only 1 of 7 respondents with opinions indicated that such rezoning should occur with 6 of 7 saying it should not. Comparison of results from 2000 and 2014 showed a slight shift toward the possible support for such rezoning (those saying “no” dropped to 76% from 84%). Only 1 in 10 respondents in 2014 had no opinion.

Development Character

Respondents were asked to comment on whether development in the period since the last PoCD has been in keeping with the character of the Town. Opinions in both 2000 and 2014 suggest that most are happy with development. Those who do *not* think development has been in character dropped in 2014 with a disapproval of 1 of 4 respondents in 2000 to only 1 in 7 respondents in 2014. A few comments provided in the most recent survey suggested a dissatisfaction with “McMansions” (large residential structures) and with commercial parking and car/marine sales yards in Hamburg.

New Development Needing More Attention from Town Officials

In an effort to gain an understanding regarding what types of development are bothering residents, a question was asked regarding what deserves more attention. Although the majority of respondents in 2014 indicated that either there was little need for more attention or there was no opinion, those that indicated there *was* such a need indicated issues such as better enforcement of zoning regulations, prevention of clear-cutting of trees, better maintenance of town infrastructure (roads, landscaping, new library and historical society properties). Some expressed concern over the size of large residential

dwelling and others expressed added need for bike and hiking paths. Comparison of responses from 2000 and 2014 indicated that those that felt that there *was* a need for more attention dropped by almost half to only 1 of 5 respondents.

Design Review

Respondents were asked whether they would support some sort of design review process as part of the Town's application procedure. Although most indicate that such an effort would be positive, the percentage supporting design review from 2000 to 2014 decreased by almost 10% with those *not* supporting design review *increasing* by the same amount.

Establishment of Additional Historic Districts

In addition to the Historic District located in the area of the Chester-Hadlyme Ferry, respondents were asked whether or not there were other areas that should be considered for such protection. Half of the respondents indicated that they had no opinion on the subject. Of those with an opinion, 3 of 5 respondents indicated that, yes, there were areas where historic districts should be considered. Comparison of results from 2000 and 2014 indicates that the level of support for new historic districts has dropped by 10%. This result seems consistent with the decreased desire of respondents to support design review. Both results seem to reflect respondents desire to be left alone with respect to their development desires, at least with respect to design.

Establishment of a Regulatory Village District

State statutes allow a municipality to designate a "village" and then establish regulations to regulate design of development within such areas. Nearby towns within the RiverCOG region which have adopted such programs include Deep River, East Haddam and Portland. Such programs require a town to establish a separate design review board or utilize a consulting architect in order to review applications submitted pursuant to these rules.

Residents were asked whether or not the Town should pursue such a regulatory design process within areas designated by the Town as "village", namely Hamburg and Hadlyme. Comparing responses from 2000 to 2014, there appears to be significantly *less* support for such a regulatory design process overall as compared to 2000. Although the 2014 support appears to have diminished, of those with opinions, a little less than half indicated such a process *should* be considered while a third said that regulatory design review *shouldn't* be considered while an equal percentage had no opinion at all. Where a greater amount of 2014 respondents had "no opinion" on establishment of additional historic districts, a larger percentage of the respondents had opinions about a regulatory design process.

Large-Scale Wind Farms

A new question added to the 2014 survey asked whether or not respondents would support the construction of large-scale wind and solar farms as commercial or industrial ventures. The intent of this question was to separate larger facilities from those that are accessory to residential properties. Survey responses indicated that 3 of 10 respondents indicated that they could support such facilities while 6 of

10 would not support them. Only 1 in 10 respondents had “no opinion”. Comments included ranged from such facilities being not competitive, depends on location, total waste of money, any commercial or industrial organization should be *required* to use renewable energy, only if it can be done without disturbing the town’s natural beauty, solar should be considered but not wind, as long as they are visibly non-intrusive, and, on town property and not in residential areas. One comment requested that “the town” remove cell towers as technology advances beyond their need.

Natural Resources

The natural resource base in the lower river region and in the Town of Lyme in particular has long been considered one of its primary assets. This is reflected in the numerous accolades awarded the lower river estuary and the Connecticut River including The Nature Conservancy's one of 40 "Last Great Places" in the western hemisphere (1993), a Ramsar Convention designation as a "Wetlands Complex of International Importance" (1994), one of only fourteen "American Heritage Rivers" in the United States (1997), the Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Preserve (1997), the first "National Blueway" (2012), and finally, the designation of the Eight Mile River as a "U.S. National Wild and Scenic River" by the USF&WS.

As these valuable and finite resources continue to attract more and more development and people to the area, Lyme's natural resources and those of the entire river valley will require a greater degree of stewardship if those resources are to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Protection of Specific Resources

Comparison of survey responses between 2000 and 2014 shows that there is a slight decrease in opinions regarding whether there are any specific resources that need preservation by approximately 10%. Those with "no opinion" increased threefold from 6% of respondents to 19%.

Questioning which resources are most important, rivers and coves topped both the 2000 and 2014 surveys with 9 of 10 respondents indicating their importance. Wetlands (inland and tidal), the Eight Mile River Valley, farmland, stream belts and woodlands and fields followed in importance. The resource considered the least important in both 2000 and 2014 were "exposed ledges and ridges". Still, over 60% of respondents considered them "more important". All categories listed were considered "more important" in 2014 as compared to 2000 with the exception of "exposed ledges and ridges" which was considered slightly less important in comparing the two surveys.

Protection, Promotion and Retention of Farms and Farmland

More and more, people are recognizing the importance of farms and farmland as this important rural component of our land use portfolio slowly disappears. In the 2014 survey, 9 of 10 respondents indicated that farms and farmland were either "extremely important" or "important" with "extremely important" outnumbering "important" by a 2 to 1 margin. Comments included that "overgrown" farmland should be restricted, that the town would "miss" farms if they were to disappear and that the protection of farms and farmland is essential to the maintenance of Lyme's history and character. Respondents also noted that organic farming should be encouraged and that "small-scale" farming is one of the most exciting economic development opportunities. Produce growing seems to be favored by some over the promotion of the keeping of "large livestock".

When asked if respondents feel that specific properties should be targeted for conservation if available, almost half said they should while almost half had no opinion. Less than 10% said that specific properties *shouldn't* be targeted for conservation. The percentage of those who felt that properties

should be targeted dropped somewhat from 2000 to 2014 while those with “no opinion” increased somewhat.

The properties mentioned by those who specified properties for conservation included Tiffany Farm (21), farms in general (13), “large parcels” (8) and Connecticut River properties affording river access (7). Other properties named included “Route 156”, general resources (wetlands, fields, creeks, etc), open fields, Early Dawn Farm, Ashlawn Farm, Eight Mile River, Bill Hill, Starks, Mazur and Hamburg Cove.

Gateway Conservation Zone

As explained in the survey, the Gateway Conservation Zone is a protective overlay district paralleling the Connecticut River from Old Saybrook and Old Lyme north to Haddam and East Haddam with development standards overseen by the Connecticut River Gateway Commission. Their job, in partnership with each member town (including Lyme) is to balance development with the mission to protect the “natural and traditional river way scene”. The current Gateway standards require a 100 foot setback for structures built on the river and its tributaries and a 50 foot riparian buffer where no vegetation can be cut other than a five foot pathway to the river.

When asked if the setback and buffer should be increased, 1 of 2 respondents indicated that the two standards *should* be increased while 1 in 4 indicated that they should be left as is. Those who indicated that buffers should be increased dropped from a percentage of 75% in 2000 to 56% in 2014. It is noted that in 2000, the setback was 50 feet and there was no “riparian buffer”. In 2014, those standards were in place, perhaps explaining the drop in support for *additional* protective measures.

Ridgetop Development

Development on ridgetops in a way that allows structure to extend above ridge lines as seen from below has long been considered as a practice to be avoided. Comparison of responses to this issue in 2000 and 2014 indicate that, consistently, 3 out of every 4 respondents felt that the town should minimize this kind of development. An equal number of respondents – 13% - either have no issue with ridgetop development or have no opinion about it. It should be noted that existing Gateway Conservation Zone standards seek to minimize ridgetop development as well, with most of the hillsides leading up to the ridges fall within the protected Conservation Zone.

Open Space

The survey describes open space as land which is set aside, either in a natural state or for recreational and/or passive purposes and is protected from future development in perpetuity. Lyme, through its conservation organizations, have been great advocates of open space protection. Almost 50% of the area of Lyme is protected as open space.

When asked if the Town has sufficient open space under protection, respondents in 2000 indicated by a wide margin that more open space was needed (95% favor acquisition of more open space while 5% say the town has enough). Although the majority of 2014 respondents continue to favor more open space

acquisition, that support appears to be significantly less than was the case over ten years ago (64% favor acquisition of more open space while 36% say the town has enough).

When asked whether tax dollars should be used to buy and maintain open space, support continues to exist for such a program. The percentage of those supporting this, however, dropped slightly from 72% in 2000 to 63% in 2014. Conversely, those who do *not* support the use of tax dollars for open space acquisition rose somewhat from 21% in 2000 to 28% in 2014. Comments provided with the 2014 survey suggested that where respondents continued to feel open space was important, more caution should be exercised when spending public funds in this manner. The Town should be cast in a “supporting” role and should help *purchase* open space but not participate in its maintenance.

When specifically asked whether respondents would be willing to contribute higher taxes to an active open space program, 55% indicated that, yes they would be willing in 2014. The percentage of those indicating that willingness was 10% higher in 2000. Conversely, the percentage of those who would *not* be willing to contribute higher taxes increased from 29% in 2000 to 38% in 2014.

When asked how *much* of a tax increase might be supported, approximately 70% of respondents in both 2000 and 2014 indicated they’d support a tax increase between 1 to 5% with the largest percentage in 2014 indicating support for an increase between 1 to 3%.

When queried about the use of a *conveyance tax* for the purpose of funding open space acquisition, respondents in 2014 were fairly split with 56% indicated support with 33% indicating no support for the conveyance tax and 11% with no opinion. In 2000, there was slightly more support for the idea of a conveyance tax for funding open space acquisition with 63% indicating they would support state legislation to establish such a tax. Comments submitted with this question indicated that more information was needed in order to fully understand the possible ramifications of a conveyance tax. It is noted that such state legislation would likely be “enabling” which means that each Connecticut municipality could *choose* whether or not to establish such a tax in their community.

CRITICAL ISSUES

It is not surprising that the critical issues twelve years ago continue to be those issues which are critical today. That said, the results of the 2014 survey indicate a shift in the perception of how urgent some of those issues are today. Although respondents continue to support retention of rural and historic character, protection of natural resources and preservation of open space, there appears to be, for instance, somewhat more support for the establishment of some businesses in town such as a restaurant or bar, primarily serving the local population. Although respondents continue to support acquisition of open space, their support has diminished somewhat. What respondents are clear on, however, is that Lyme's rural character and natural resources are at the center of how they characterize their town.

Preserving Community Character

As has been previously recognized, the visual character of Lyme results from a combination of beautiful and abundant natural resources, interspersed with cultural features that are typically small in scale and sit gently on the rural landscape. Construction since the 2002 Plan has continued to consist primarily of new single family homes, some of which continue to be very large in size and scale. Most recently, the Town has added both a new Town Hall *and* a new Town Library. Although the pace of single family dwelling construction has slowed, the issue continues to be the maintenance of an aesthetically pleasing and functionally diverse natural landscape while making allowance for new development which complements rather than conflicts with or overwhelms the land. As the Town moves on through time, appropriate building design and location will continue to be an issue for Lyme. The 2014 questionnaire asked people what they like best about Lyme. As was the case with the 2000 survey, almost 60% of those responding (247 of 421 responses) used the words "rural character", natural beauty, quiet, peaceful and "conservation mentality" to express their favorite aspects.

Lyme appreciates **BOTH** the desire for privacy by many of its individual residents **AND** its small town sense of cooperation and community. Over 10 percent of the questionnaire responders said that what they liked best about Lyme was the privacy, peace and quiet. Approximately the same number said they liked their friends and neighbors from Lyme and the strong sense of community they experience here. With many of Lyme's people being weekend or part time residents, combined with electronic technology that allows other people to work at home, people have the ability to become increasingly detached from the greater community if they wish. Unlike other more suburban communities, Lyme has fewer places where casual social interaction can occur. It is especially important to maintain local cultural institutions and organizations that provide opportunity for community participation.

Critical Issues

Preserving Lyme's Farmland and Agricultural Heritage

Lyme is blessed with tracts of open land that enhance the rural character of the community, a character that respondents to the 2014 questionnaire overwhelmingly identified as one of the town's primary

assets. The respondents have made it clear that the town's rural landscape and farms warrant preservation and protection.

Working farms are important assets not only for the farmers and people who work the land, but also for the Town of Lyme itself. They can have tremendous benefits, not just for citizens engaged in agricultural activities, but also as part of a landscape mosaic that strengthens ecological connectivity and resiliency. These large fields and open vistas create the rural, rugged landscape that we identify as Lyme.

It is critical to keeping these tracts by helping to make it possible for individuals or families to continue to maintain these farms and agricultural uses without an undue financial burden that can lead to sale of properties and, ultimately, loss of the town's rural character.

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission will consider the option of developing a subcommittee which will propose and advocate ways to preserve agricultural lands, support farming, and encourage new agricultural pursuits compatible with the character of Lyme.

Preserving Open Space

There are many reasons for a town to encourage open space preservation within its boundaries. These include protecting natural resources to assure public health, such as maintaining drinking water quality, and assuring public safety, by avoiding downstream flooding. Another reason is to sustain biodiversity and wildlife habitat, especially where areas of unique habitat are of international significance. Open space is also preserved to provide linkages for wildlife migration and to establish recreational greenways. Undeveloped natural areas are essential in maintaining the visual character of the town. And finally, open space typically demands few town services, thus providing a minimal impact on local service costs.

In 1990, about 84% of the land area of Lyme was undeveloped. About one third of the undeveloped area was land committed to open space, including substantial acreage in Nehantic State Forest and Selden Neck State Park, and about 400 acres owned by The Nature Conservancy. Since then approximately 1% has been lost to development and our undeveloped land stands at about 83%.

Restricting Future Economic Development

Lyme has two small commercial areas, in Hamburg and Hadlyme, totaling about 15 acres. The marina at Hamburg Cove is included in this total. Other economic development activities throughout the town include farming and to a lesser extent, resource extraction (sand, gravel, wood). Responses to the 2014 survey echoes past sentiment that there is very little interest in additional commercial or industrial activity in Lyme, with the exception of agricultural uses. Approximately 60% of those responding felt that additional commercial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged. Although this represents a majority of respondents, the percentage is slightly lower than when the same question was asked in the 2000 survey. Respondents who indicated that commercial development should be "cautiously encouraged" increased to 33% from 28%. Suggestions for additional commercial activity included home businesses or cottage industries. As was the case going back to the 1999 survey, support still exists for "small eateries", variously described as a bakery, deli, café, or luncheonette. Further

comments indicated that many were concerned that additional commercial development would interfere with the quiet atmosphere in Lyme. Consistent with past surveys, 80% of the respondents to the 2014 survey indicated that any industrial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged. There was little support for any industrial activity. Where there *was* support, suggestions for businesses included film, software development, engineering and home-based businesses, those that produce little or no pollution and those that are related to marine uses, farms and renewable energy.

Maintaining Population Diversity

Not everyone wants to live in a rural setting, where shopping and service appointments require considerable traveling, and the daily commute to work may take up a significant amount of time each day. However, as suburban development spreads and rural areas within reasonable distance of employment and services become increasingly rare, the demand for such locations drive up prices beyond that which is affordable to many potential residents. Housing affordability thus becomes an issue for many. Increasing the supply of housing to meet market demand would also result in the conversion of the “rural” character to one that is more suburban. Lyme and other rural towns continue to struggle with the dilemma of high housing costs resulting from a demand for that which the town represents. Town officials and local citizens have struggled to find a way to create or retain affordable housing that is compatible with a rural, rather than urban setting. The Affordable Housing Committee has had success in creating four new affordable homes, and hopes to continue the effort in the future. One lot devoted to affordable housing remains as of the beginning of 2015.

As was the case in previous surveys, those responding to the 2014 survey were not supportive of affordable housing in Lyme in a general sense. There was a slight preference for accessory apartments or garage apartments. Opposition was strong, however, to most other forms of affordable housing. Accessory apartments and elderly housing were thought to be “most important” with approximately 35% of respondents indicating as such, while apartment buildings and condominiums were considered “least important”. These results echoed the results from the 2000 survey.

Keeping Up the Infrastructure

Routine maintenance and minor drainage and sight line improvements are necessary to keep Lyme’s roads in good condition. During the intervening time since the adoption of the 2002 Plan, major work was performed on Route 156 to improve sight lines at Bill Hill, Ely Ferry, Joshuatown and Mount Archer Roads. That said, care must be taken to maintain town roads, and eliminate potential safety hazards such as icing, without significantly changing the current visual character. Many still voice concerns regarding the amount of truck traffic and speeding vehicles on Route 156, a state highway.

Since the adoption of the 2002 Plan, the Town has undertaken one of its largest infrastructure improvements by expanding the existing Town Hall and constructing a brand new town library. Moving

into the future, improvements to public facilities should be made to introduce more efficient technology and adequately house town functions, but in a manner that preserves the architectural character and scale of such facilities.

Being a rural community, Lyme relies totally on subsurface on-site septic systems for sewerage disposal. With the exception of lots around Rogers Lake, the Town is comprised principally of large lots. Zoning throughout the Town is for one (1), two (2) and three (3) acre lots providing adequate space for continued use of subsurface disposal. The Town has no current plans for a sewerage system and there are no known areas where sewers should be avoided should they become necessary in the future.

Asked if residents are satisfied with Lyme's network of town and state roads, 96% of respondents indicated that yes, they were. This was up from the 90% response from 2002. Only 12 respondents indicated that no, they were not satisfied with the roads or had no opinion. Comments offered sought wider road shoulders and generally more support for bike lanes and biking.

Asked if the roads are sufficient to accommodate existing and future traffic, 90% of respondents indicated yes they were, up from the 78% who responded yes in 2002. Of the few comments received, focus was said to be needed on Route 156 with several highlighting the importance of adequate tree removal in the rights-of-way.

When the question of whether or not there is a need for pedestrian or bicycle pathways along roads in Lyme, approximately half said, yes, there was such a need. This was up 10% from the response in the 2002 survey. A total of approximately 35% indicated that there was not such a need. A few comments indicated that the respondents thought bicyclists were a hazard to themselves and others.

When asked if they would support designation of roads in Lyme as "scenic roads", which would protect their rural nature, 70% of respondents in 2014 indicated that they would provide such support. This was down from 75% support expressed in the 2002 survey. In both 2002 and 2014, more respondents had "no opinion" than said "no" to this question. Asked to cite which roads would be most appropriate as "scenic roads", the following was provided: Joshuatown (46), Grassy Hill (28), Route 156 (22), Beaver Brook (18), Sterling City (14), Eli Ferry (14), Mount Archer (12), Ferry Road (12) and Bill Hill (12). This list and the number of responses for each was almost identical to that provided in 2002.

LYME'S VISION AND GOALS

Many of the people responding to the 2014 survey took the time to include thoughtful written comments about the Lyme in which they would like to live. Almost all who wrote comments felt strongly about the importance of maintaining the beautiful, quiet rural character of their community. The following "vision statement" remains unchanged from that included in the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development because it continues to reflect the feelings of the residents of Lyme:

Lyme is a quiet rural community. Scattered homes lie among the wooded hills and along the clear streams flowing down to coves and marshes of the Connecticut River estuary. Sailors return to Hamburg Cove after time on the water. Life in Lyme has a timeless, unhurried quality. There is an aged, well-worn character to its landscape, with houses and the few commercial and civic uses fitting comfortably on the land. Lyme was once a busier place, with quarrying, lumbering, fishing and farming providing employment for Lyme families, but time has removed all but the traces of such activity. While growth pressure in southeastern and coastal Connecticut has resulted in suburban sprawl and a heightened pace of activity in many other nearby towns, Lyme remains quietly "off the beaten path".

Lyme residents have a strong appreciation for the natural resources that bless the area. The Connecticut River Estuary and its tributaries are recognized nationally and internationally as a unique natural area. In the future, preservation of these special resources will be assured through a series of connected greenways that preserve the water quality, habitat and visual quality of the community. Existing views and vistas will be preserved, and perhaps, new vistas will be opened to recall the agricultural heritage of the town. The people of Lyme will still be able to go out and look at the stars, unhindered by the glare of light pollution from nearby development. New homes will be compatible with and respect the scale and design of Lyme's rural New England character.

Lyme residents appreciate their sense of community, but value the privacy that the rural landscape provides. Residents are willing to forego quick and easy access to retail businesses and services and to travel longer distances to employment so that they may enjoy the peace that Lyme provides. In-town services will remain limited in size and only in areas where such uses already exist. Hamburg Cove will still provide refuge to boaters, but only at the level that is now provided.

Lyme will not attempt to become frozen in time, but will adjust to the demands and opportunities of modern life. As new technologies create the possibilities of new lifestyles, Lyme will adjust its regulations and requirements to allow people to work at home or to live in non-traditional family households. Change will occur as a result of our changing society, but in a way that preserves the quality of life and the natural resources of Lyme.

Goals

The principal goal of Lyme’s future conservation and development activities is to maintain the rural character of Lyme. This will be accomplished by the following activities:

- Continuing to protect and preserve the town’s natural resources and the rural landscape.
- Encouraging volunteer participation in community activities, while respecting residents’ desire for privacy in a peaceful and serene atmosphere.
- Supporting limited government services and amenities at a rural scale.
- Encouraging all new development to choose a scale and design which is compatible with the rural landscape.

CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As required by *Section 8-23* of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed this Plan Revision for consistency with the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2013 - 2018, adopted by the State Legislature in 2013. In that Plan, the State identifies six Growth Management Principles.

- GMP #1 - Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure.
- GMP#2 - Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs.
- GMP#3 - Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options.
- GMP#4 - Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands.
- GMP#5 - Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety.
- GMP#6 - Promote Integrated Planning across All Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis.

A comparison between the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the Lyme Plan shows complete consistency between the two plans. The State Plan is based on an overall philosophy of “anti-sprawl”, directing growth to those areas of Connecticut where infrastructure such as roads, public water

and public sewers already exist, or where infrastructure can easily be expanded. In contrast, the Plan also recommends that intensive growth be avoided in sensitive environmental areas and areas where little infrastructure exists. Lyme meets both criteria.

GMP#1- The Town of Lyme does not include a “regional center” and, even in the small commercial nodes that do exist, little in the way of expansion has occurred. The Town *has*, however, expanded the existing Town Hall and has also constructed a new Town Library, this redeveloping and revitalizing this area that already has the physical infrastructure to accommodate such uses.

GMP#2 – Lyme is primarily a town of single family residential development. That said, the town has supported the establishment of a limited number of affordable housing units and has adopted zoning regulations that allow the use of “accessory apartments” in order to address the need for additional housing types and choices.

GMP#3 – Major transportation nodes exist south in Old Lyme at the two locations of I-95 interchanges at Exit 70 and 71. Development concentration has occurred in the area of the Lyme Town Hall, the Lyme Town Library and the Lyme Consolidated School. These facilities are located on State Route 156, Lyme’s only “major” transportation corridor.

GMP#4 – For a small rural town, this Grown Management Principle best describes Lyme’s philosophy and goals. The consistency of responses from the town wide surveys from 2002 and 2014 clearly demonstrate the importance of open space, forests, wetlands, flora and fauna and cultural and historic resources to the residents. Elected officials and others have long been consistent in their running of the local government in order to accomplish these goals.

GMP#5 – Through protection of the community’s natural environment through preservation of open space, retention of forest and farmland and along for only limited development, the Town has ensured for the integrity of environmental assets – such as ground water and air quality – which are critical to the health and safety of its residents.

GMP#6 – Although Lyme is often thought of as a somewhat insulated rural community separated from the hustle and bustle of today’s world, town officials and residents participate in many local, regional and state activities and efforts. Lyme is an active member of the newly formed Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments with First Selectman Ralph Eno contributing significantly to the process that merged the former Connecticut River Estuary and Midstate regional planning organizations. The Town has also supported regional and state efforts in transit planning and recycling.

For most of the thirteen years since the adoption of the last PoCD, Lyme has been a member of the nine town Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency. That agency’s most recent regional PoCD was adopted in 1995 and was being revised when the final decision was made to merge CRERPA with the Midstate Regional Planning Agency. As such, the newly formed Lower Connecticut River Valley Council

of Governments, or “RiverCOG”, is in the process of establishing its first seventeen town regional PoCD. It can be said that the draft 2015 Lyme PoCD will no doubt be consistent with the new region’s PoCD because Lyme’s policy of preservation and conservation embodies the policies of many of the RiverCOG towns, and thus, RiverCOG itself.

CONSISTENCY WITH COASTAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND GOALS

Lyme is a coastal municipality as a result of its frontage on the Connecticut River Estuary. Under the Connecticut General Statutes, such municipalities must assure that their Plans of Conservation and Development follow the goals and policies of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. While Lyme has not prepared a specific plan for the town's coastal area, the 2002 Plan and its 2015 revisions are consistent with Coastal Management Act. The comprehensive goal of the Act is *"to insure that the development, preservation or use of the land and water resources of the coastal area proceeds in a manner consistent with the capability of the land and water resources to support development, preservation or use without significantly disrupting either the natural environment or sound economic growth"* (CGS Section 22a-92 (a) (1)). The Plan also is prepared with reasonable consideration for the restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, as required under *Section 8-23(a)* of the Connecticut General Statutes. As also required by statute, Lyme's land use commissions review proposed development projects in the coastal area for their impact on coastal resources, to assure that adverse impacts have been minimized before approval is granted. When appropriate, coastal site plan review is used as a tool for coastal resource protection and for giving priority to water-dependent uses.

The Lyme shore area consists of wooded upland hills which drop steeply down to significant and extensive areas of tidal and freshwater wetlands which are recognized nationally and internationally for their wildlife value. In some areas, including Joshua Rock, the riverbank rises dramatically in cliff-like fashion. Whalebone Cove and Hamburg Cove are relatively pristine estuarine embayments, although the advancing rate of *Phragmites australis*, a non-native invasive plant species, is cause for concern. Other significant features include Selden Creek, tucked behind Selden Neck, and Eustasia Island off of the Deep River shore. Mapped coastal resources for Lyme include tidal wetlands, freshwater wetlands, estuarine embayments and flood hazard areas along the Connecticut River. The flood hazard areas are limited to the marshes and the bottom of the steep hillsides.

Lyme's goal for most of its coastal area is to preserve and protect the unique natural resources along the River. At the head of Hamburg Cove, zoning has designated a limited area as a Waterfront Business District specifically for water dependent marinas and boatyards only. Where an opportunity appears, the Town has made efforts and continues to seek passive public access to the riverfront at locations including Ely's Ferry Road and Brockway Ferry Road. Access at both locations is presently limited by the lack of adequate space for parking, but town efforts continue to seek additional land for open space in these areas and others on the Connecticut River and coves as it becomes available.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Protecting the Rural Landscape

People responding to the 2014 survey overwhelmingly identified preservation of the town's rural character as the most important issue facing the town in 2015. When given the opportunity to comment on the town's future, many residents wrote eloquently about the town's natural beauty and secluded setting. To date, Lyme has retained its rural ambiance not only because it is geographically distant from urban areas, but also through a consistent planning approach that values rural qualities. This effort has been well-established, but additional measures should be considered.

1. Continue to review local land use regulations and ordinances to assure that all available and appropriate land use tools are in place.
2. Continue to encourage preservation and protection of open fields and meadows to prevent loss of open views and vistas and to maintain habitat diversity. Include mowing requirements in stewardship plans for preserved open space land.
3. Maintain an inventory of historic buildings and historic sites as a reference while reviewing development proposals, to assure that new development is sensitive to cultural resources. Develop an educational program which increases public awareness of historic locations.
4. When reviewing development plans, emphasize preservation of cultural features including stone walls, site trees, pastures, open fields, scenic views and vistas, and sites with archaeological interest.

Protecting Farms and Farmland

Protection of rural landscape and protection of farms and farmland were closely tied together in responses to the 2014 questionnaire. As stated earlier, respondents overwhelmingly identified preservation of the town's rural character as the most important issue facing the town in 2015. Most identified farms and farmland as a part of that rural character that is so significant to Lyme's identity.

Open Space

Lyme's important natural resources are recognized internationally, nationally, and on a state and regional basis. Most important, however, is the virtually unanimous support from Lyme's people for permanent protection of natural resources and community character through creation of permanent open space. While Lyme has been active in pursuit of permanent open space, a continued effort is necessary to assure that important land is protected in the future.

1. Preserve large, connected tracts of undeveloped and open land to maintain the town's rural character, protect public health and safety, and retain wildlife habitat. Continue to support the development of a town-wide greenway plan and seek preservation over time of parcels which are located within the proposed greenways.

2. Preserve a variety of habitat types which will support a healthy biodiversity of plant and animal life. Manage preserved land to support and maintain a broad diversity of natural resource areas.
3. Continue town funding for a reserve account for town purchase of open space land. Such “opportunity” funds can allow for optioning land, paying for surveys and appraisals, and can enable the town to act quickly when a desirable property becomes available.
4. Continue to support an active town open space committee which works aggressively with the Lyme Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Connecticut River Gateway Commission, the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and other land preservation organizations to secure ownership or development rights for parcels identified for protection.
5. Utilize all available tools for preservation including open space tax abatement programs, grants, and conservation easements
6. Assure access to open space areas consistent with the purpose of the open space. Seek linkages with other nearby open space. Where possible, establish and maintain hiking trails.
7. Review criteria and standards for open space in subdivisions, including minimum acreage and percentage of the subdivision, quality and diversity of land, and access. Subdivision open space, where significant enough in size and value, should serve as building blocks for the town’s greenway system.
8. Continue to work with the Connecticut River Gateway Commission to assure that standards in the Gateway Conservation Zone preserve the natural and traditional character of the river scene and are adopted and enforced for all Gateway member towns. Views across the River of the western shore are an important part of Lyme’s visual character.
9. Continue efforts to create viable public access to the water at Ely’s Ferry and Brockway Ferry Road by obtaining additional land for parking. Continue to seek opportunities for additional public access where appropriate.

Residential Development

“Starter castles”, “McMansions”, and “trophy houses” were some of the terms used by responders to the 2014 survey to describe their concerns about large new homes which intrude upon the natural and historic character of Lyme. Although somewhat less important to respondents of the 2014 survey as compared to those responding to the 2002 survey, the large house phenomenon was still a frequent

answer to what people liked least about their Town. There are other communities within and beyond Connecticut that have experienced a similar increase in large homes that clash with the town's character. Lyme can borrow from their experiences.

1. Review zoning criteria for accessory residential uses including accessory apartments, home occupations and family criteria to assure that such criteria does not unnecessarily restrict how people live and work at home with newly available technology. Allow a broad range of home occupations consistent with the rural character of the community.
2. Continue town efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing including rental considerations for less affluent residents. Continue to provide financial and regulatory support for the work of the Affordable Housing Committee.
3. Continue to support and enforce the standards of the Connecticut River Gateway Commission with respect to the location of new residential development to minimize visual impact. Review development proposals to prevent hilltop development to assure that new homes are located so as to preserve natural views and vistas. Such standards should also include lighting considerations so that hilltop development does not result in significant light pollution.
4. Continue to support efforts to limit removal of mature tree growth and vegetation solely for the purpose of gaining views of the river valley. Educate developers and the public with respect to the value of maintaining the tree cover while selectively trimming to allow for views.
5. Consider creating a design handbook to guide architects and other designers toward designs which are compatible with the town's character. The handbook could also include examples of what should be avoided.

Economic Development

Conventional economic development programs have several public objectives, including tax base enhancement, job creation, and provision of services. Those who responded to the 2014 survey (and previous surveys) placed a very low priority on additional commercial and industrial development in Lyme. The purpose of such development in Lyme is to provide a very limited selection of services to residents. Although a significant number of survey responders indicated in additional comments that they were willing to sacrifice convenient access to services in order to live in a rural environment, a larger number of respondents indicated concern over the distance they have to travel for services.

1. Areas presently zoned for commercial use are adequate to accommodate the community's requirements for the foreseeable future.

2. Concentrate all commercial activities in locations currently zoned for commercial use. Discourage residential development in commercially zoned areas to assure that commercial zoning remains available for future commercial development, if desired.
3. Review zoning standards and site plan requirements for commercial development to assure that any new development or reuse of existing development sites will be well-designed, both functionally and aesthetically.
4. The area zoned for waterfront business is adequate to accommodate the community's requirements for the foreseeable future. The Waterfront Business District should be reserved for marinas, boatyards and other water dependent uses.

Infrastructure

The people of Lyme are generally satisfied with the level of services they receive from their local government. When asked by the 2014 survey what people *liked least* about Lyme, the distance from services had the highest number of responses (11), followed by concerns over development (8), concerns over traffic on Route 156 (7) and speeding (7). Close to 100% of respondents said they were satisfied with Lyme's road network with about 90% saying that they felt that the roads are sufficient to accommodate existing and future traffic. A greater percentage of responders indicated support for pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways along Lyme's roads with over half indicating such support. Those who opposed such pathways were concerned about safety, cost and aesthetic impact. When asked (Question 40) whether people would support scenic road designation for any Lyme roads, slightly less than three fourths indicated positively, down slightly from responses from the 2002 survey. Joshuatown Road continued to head the list of those roads that should be considered for "scenic road" designation. When questioned about the level of police services in Lyme, over half of the respondents indicated that they felt that the current level of services are adequate with a quarter indicating the need for more services. These results are consistent with those seen in the 2002 survey.

1. Continue to protect public health and safety by permitting development only in those areas shown to be capable of supporting on-site sewer and water supply systems. Continue an aggressive sewer avoidance program which includes regular inspections and maintenance of septic systems and required pumping.
2. Continue to provide strict enforcement of codes and regulations and provide adequate staffing for review and enforcement of development.
3. Consider the need for adequate water sources for fire protection in reviewing all development proposals. Identify a suitable source of water from firefighting purposes for each new subdivision.

4. Limit future road construction and improvements to reduce the impact on the natural and visual environment. Continue a limited road maintenance and improvement program to assure safe and adequate access for all residents, school buses and emergency vehicles, but avoid major road widening and realignment which will change the character of local roads.
5. Consider adoption of a local scenic road ordinance under *Section 7-148* of the Connecticut General Statutes for roads such as Joshuatown and Grassy Hill Roads.
6. Study, designate and provide signage for bicycle routes where feasible.
7. Review and revise town road and drainage standards to include techniques for traffic calming and incorporate best management practices for drainage design. Incorporate provisions for reduction of non-point source water pollution for storm water runoff.
8. Consider access by emergency vehicles in the review and approval of new subdivisions.

MAPS

The 2015 Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development includes three maps.

- **Base Map** showing property lines, inland wetlands and tidal wetlands.

Lyme is blessed with a complex network of inland and tidal wetlands, providing natural drainage ways for storm water runoff, valuable habitat for wildlife and aesthetic diversity to our landscape. The map shows the general location and extent of both inland and tidal wetlands for illustrative purposes only. The specific location of wetlands for regulatory purposes must be delineated in the field.

- **Zoning Map** showing zoning districts and floodplains

The Zoning Map is an update of the initial 1964 Plan, revised to July 26, 1974, and reaffirmed in the 1990 Town Plan. Zoning districts are now shown on a property base map. The categories and densities established for the original zoning districts continue to be an appropriate guide for the town's future development. At present, zoning information and assessor's property information is being integrated into a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS) for easier retrieval and understanding, which will support implementation of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

This map also includes the location of areas subject to flooding from major storms, as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The floodplain area on this map is for illustrative purposes only. For a more specific delineation, the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) should be consulted.

- **Greenbelt Plan** indicating the location of existing and proposed open space.

The Greenbelt Plan shows both existing protected open space and desirable future open space links. Existing open space includes both land owned outright by preservation interests and conservation easements which limit future development of land. Proposed linkages would create a network of protected open space providing significant areas of contiguous habitat, protection for streams and rivers, and preservation of the rural character of Lyme.

Addendum A

RESULTS OF THE LYME PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION 2014 QUESTIONNAIRE

In June of 2014, the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission mailed survey questionnaires to all Lyme residents and property owners. In addition, they used the online survey service known as "Survey Monkey" to provide those who are comfortable with computers the ability to answer the survey electronically. Approximately 1400 questionnaires were distributed with just under 300 being returned for tabulation by the August deadline. A 10 percent response is considered a good return for surveying and shows the significant level of interest in Lyme's future among its people, although approximately 25% fewer responses were received than in 2000.

The 2014 survey was designed to compare responses to the questions presented in the 2000 survey in order to determine if there were any shifts in trends over the past fourteen years. Where appropriate, new questions were added and tabulated. The results of this survey are not considered an absolute measure of public opinion, since the responses depend on the willingness of individuals to participate in the questionnaire. However, these results provide a strong indication of public attitudes and help identify those issues that are on the minds of Lyme citizens.

As was the case for the 2000 survey, the 2014 survey was divided into several parts. The first part was intended to find out the characteristics of those who responded. The second part asked about residential development and affordable housing. Next, the questionnaire asked about commercial and industrial development issues. Fourth, a section on natural resources was included. Open space and public facilities were addressed next. Finally, the survey form provided space for people to write longer comments on a series of subjects. The responses are tallied below in the questionnaire format. Where a percentage is shown, it is based on the number of responses to that specific question. Where appropriate, the reviewers have offered thoughts on the results.

Finally, the results of the 2014 survey are presented adjacent to the results of the 2000 survey. Since there was a significant difference in the number of surveys received and tabulated (approximately 400 in 2000 vs. approximately 300 in 2014), percentages are used for comparison. In most cases, the raw number of responses is presented next to the percentage. As a note, not all respondents answered every question, as evidenced in the first question regarding in what part of town they lived.

ABOUT YOURSELF

Please tell us something about yourself. This survey is designed to protect your privacy, but it would be helpful to know the concerns of different age groups and neighborhoods. Feel free to circle answers or place X's in spaces provided.

1. *What part of town do you live in (where is your property located closest to)?*

81 Hadlyme (34%) **97** Hamburg (41%)
32 Roger's Lake (13%) **29** Grassy Hill (12%)

2. *How many years have you lived in Lyme?*

		2000	2014
20	Less than 3 years	15%	7%
47	3 – 9 years	25%	17%
96	10 – 25 years	30%	34%
119	25 or more years	30%	42%

A greater percentage of respondents to the 2014 survey have lived in Lyme for ten years or more than was reported in the 2000 survey. A significantly greater percentage reported living in town 25 or more years.

3. *Where was the last place you lived before you came to Lyme?*

166 Within Connecticut (68%)
70 Outside Connecticut (29%)
3 Outside of the USA (3%)

4. *You are:*

		2000	2014
251	A year round Lyme resident and property owner	88%	90%
8	A year round resident renting property in Lyme	2%	3%
14	An occasional use resident and property owner	8%	5%
0	An occasional use resident renting property	0%	0%
5	A non-resident and property owner in Lyme	1%	1.5%)
1	Other: building a house in Lyme	1%	(<1%)

5. *How many persons in each of these age groups live in your residence? Please circle the age group that represents the age of the respondent filling out this questionnaire as well as indicating numbers*

		2000	2014
10	Households 0 – 4 years	5%	3%
30	Households 5 – 17 years	11%	8%
19	Households 18 – 22 years	5%	5%
24	Households 23 – 35 years	7%	6%
18	Households 36 – 45 years	14%	5%
137	Households 46 – 64 years	36%	35%
148	Households 65 years and over	21%	38%

The percentage of households with residents under 45 years of age decreased while the percentage of households with those 65 and over increased. This shift in the age of respondents is reflected in numerous responses to survey questions.

6. *How important were each of the following to your choice of Lyme for your home?*

2014	Most Important	Important	Not Important
Schools	26% (67)	33% (84)	41% (103)
Low density population	67% (175)	29% (77)	4% (11)
Rural Atmosphere	75% (202)	23% (63)	2% (5)
Natural resources	59% (153)	34% (89)	7% (17)
Potential for economic development	2% (4)	8% (20)	90% (228)
Location relative to employment	6% (14)	34% (86)	60% (151)
Taxes	47% (123)	45% (120)	8% (21)
Level of services	4% (11)	38% (95)	58% (146)

2000	Most Important	Important	Not Important
Schools	36% (93)	7% (18)	57% (148)
Low density population	71% (284)	27% (108)	2% (8)
Rural Atmosphere	82% (334)	17% (69)	1% (4)
Natural resources	59% (230)	32% (126)	9% (36)
Potential for economic development	3% (12)	10% (35)	87% (318)
Location relative to employment	10% (37)	31% (114)	59% (213)
Taxes	38% (144)	47% (178)	15% (58)
Level of services	7% (24)	34% (119)	60% (212)

Comparison of 2014 results with 2000 results by categories shows:

- (1) Significant **increase** in importance of schools – interesting considering the increased age of respondents, presumably those with fewer school-aged children
- (2) **Similar** importance of low density population
- (3) **Similar** importance of rural atmosphere
- (4) **Similar** importance of natural resources
- (5) **Similar** importance of economic development potential
- (6) **Similar** importance of location relative to employment
- (7) Level of taxes **slightly more** important
- (8) **Similar** importance of level of services.

Comments also indicated importance for the library, sports, volunteerism, beauty of the town, arts development, ecology, beauty of the environment, unspoiled natural beauty, low taxes, no services and the importance of being a lifetime resident.

7. *Number of families having children currently attending school in:*

	2000	2014
Regional School District #18	56% (38)	55% (30)
Other Schools (college, daycare, private schools)	44% (30)	45% (25)

Comments stated that most “other” schools were described as being colleges and similar institutions of higher education.

8. *Your place of employment:*

		2000	2014
126	Retired	30% (121)	45% (126)
15	Work in Lyme	5% (20)	5% (15)
41	Work at home	12% (47)	15% (41)
96	Work outside of Lyme	53% (214)	35% (96)

If outside of Lyme, where?

In Connecticut (towns): Hartford (9), Essex (4), CT (3), Centerbrook (2), Haddam (2), New London (10), Chester (3), Old Lyme (8), Rocky Hill (3), Pawtucket, Westerly RI, Old Saybrook (6), Deep River (3), NYC (6), Madison, Waterford (3), Middletown (6), Branford (4), Overseas, Meriden, New Haven (3), Glastonbury, Uncasville, Windsor (2), Shoreline, Fairfield, Mamaroneck NY (2), Norwich (3), Groton (6), Guilford, Marlborough, East Lyme, Newington, Woodcliff NJ, Wallingford, East Hartford, Coventry, Hamden, Gales Ferry, Storrs, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Stamford, Trumbull, Miami FL, West Hartford, Bristol, Enfield, Willimantic, Milford, Colchester.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

9. *There has been an increase in residential development in Lyme over the past decade with large houses becoming more popular. Please answer the following questions with respect to residential development in Lyme:*

	2000	2014
Further affordable housing	33% (130)	34% (93)
NOT further affordable housing	53% (210)	47% (129)
No opinion	15% (59)	19% (50)

The percentage of respondents looking for the town to support affordable housing remained constant while the percentage of those who would *not* have the town support affordable housing decreased.

10. *Please comment on the following affordable housing initiatives with respect to your support:*

	2000	2014
	Favor – Oppose - No Opinion	Favor / Oppose/ No Opinion
Expansion of non-conventional means, accessory apt/garage apt	42% - 41% - 17% 175 - 171 - 70	45% - 35% - 20% 124 - 95 - 55
Conventional multi-dwelling units, (condos, apartments, townhouses, elderly housing)	14% - 80% - 6% 58 - 334 - 25	16% - 74% - 10% 45 - 204 - 28
Permanent elderly housing only	38% - 42% - 20% 158 - 172 - 83	36% - 39% - 25% 97 - 106 - 66
Greater density (cluster, open space subdivisions)	29% - 48% - 23% 105 - 172 - 83	26% - 62% - 12% 73 - 170 - 33
Decrease in single family acreage requirements (smaller lot sizes)	8% - 89% - 3% 32 - 375 - 15	9% - 78% - 13% 25 - 212 - 35
No town action	36.5% - 36.5% - 28% 128 - 132 - 100	Not queried

Apartments – slightly less opposition

Multi-dwelling units – slightly less opposition

Permanent elderly housing - similar results

Cluster, open space subdivisions – more opposition, less “no opinion”

Smaller lot sizes – slightly less opposition, more “no opinion”

11. *Would you support the expenditure of town funds in support of affordable housing initiatives?*

	2000	2014
Yes	31% (126)	29% (80)
No	61% (253)	60.5% (167)
No opinion	8% (34)	10.5% (29)

Essentially identical results

12. *Do you feel there is a need for housing alternatives other than single-family residential in Lyme?*

	2000	2014
Yes	21% (87)	24% (65)
No	75% (305)	65% (180)
No opinion	4% (17)	11% (30)

Those responding “yes”, more alternatives are needed remained similar. Those responding “no” decreased. Those with “no opinion” increased.

*If so, please rate the following alternative housing types in terms of level of **importance** within Lyme for future planning consideration.*

	2000	2014
	Most – Important - Least	Most – Important - Least
Accessory apartments	27% - 31% - 42% 39 - 46 - 62	38% - 38% - 24% 23 - 23 - 14
Apartment buildings	6% - 6% - 88% 8 - 8 - 120	5% - 14% - 81% 3 - 8 - 47
Elderly housing	27% - 45% - 27% 40 - 66 - 40	34% - 43% - 23% 21 - 27 - 14
Condominiums	3.5% - 18% - 78.5% 5 - 24 - 106	10% - 27% - 63% 6 - 16 - 37
Residential life care	17.5% - 30.5% - 52% 24 - 42 - 71	20% - 39% - 41% 11 - 22 - 23

Responses from both surveys identify accessory apartments, elderly housing and residential life care in a fairly positive light. Respondents appear to consider apartment buildings and condominiums as less important.

13. Would you support some limiting of the size of residential structures that can be built in Lyme?

	2000	2014
Yes	53% (216)	47% (42)
No	36% (147)	40% (36)
No opinion	11% (42)	13% (12)

Percentages of those supporting and not supporting the limiting of residential structures remained essentially the same, although there is a slight reduction in those interested in limiting and a slight increase in those saying not to limit sizes.

Comments included “dislike” of mega-mansions, limit depending upon “what and where”, the need to like “mansion” applications to open space conservation, no limits – personal liberty, “McMansions” don’t fit – look what they did to New Canaan, acreage limitation is enough, screening and setbacks more important than limiting sizes, shouldn’t be too small except for senior car, limit height especially, anything ostentatious should be hidden from public view, no limit if land supports the large size, and “be respectful of our natural resources.”

14. Current zoning regulations in Lyme allow for minimum lot sizes of one (1), two (2) and three (3) acres. Do you feel that these minimum lot size requirements are reasonable and sufficient?

	2000	2014
Yes	72% (296)	86% (78)
No	26% (107)	9% (8)
No opinion	2% (8)	5% (5)

Although the number of responses is lower for the 2014 survey, it appears that most

feel that current lot size minimums are fine and should be left as is. Although on eight responses were received for the question regarding what size the minimums *should* be, it appears that there's a feeling that minimum lot sizes *don't* need to be smaller.

Minimum lot size requirements should be:

	2000	2014
Larger	40% (112)	75% (6)
Smaller	8% (23)	25% (2)
Same	52% (149)	0% (0)

Comments included that subdivision lot sizes should be minimum 5 acres with coverage and setback requirements except in areas like Roger's Lake, Cove Road, etc., higher minimums are supported, keep population density to minimum, easier to afford land (with smaller minimum lot sizes), and a recommendation to make minimum lot size one half acre.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Lyme is unique in the Estuary region in that it has remained substantially rural and secluded throughout its history. Residents have been willing to travel miles to neighboring towns to access services and goods and have supported efforts to limit the level of economic development that the Town is willing to accept. As a result of this mindset and the beauty of the Town, Lyme faces slightly different land use pressures that include an increased desire for high-end residential development and the increase in population that such development will create. For comparison, several of the following questions repeat a previous survey from about ten years ago. Please answer the questions so that the Town can determine how to best address these development pressures.

15. Please indicate whether the following land use types should be Encouraged, Limited or Discouraged:

	2000			2014		
	Encourage	Limit	Discourage	Encourage	Limit	Discourage
Single Family Residential	62% (249)	31.5% (126)	6.5% (26)	69% (188)	28% (78)	3% (7)
Multi-Family Residential	6% (24)	20% (81)	74% (297)	4% (12)	37% (101)	59% (160)
Mixed Use (commercial/residential)	10% (38)	25% (94)	65% (250)	8% (23)	42% (115)	50% (138)
Conservation Land Open Space	91% (381)	7% (30)	2% (6)	94% (260)	5% (15)	1% (3)
Recreational Facilities	42% (163)	42% (165)	16% (64)	37% (102)	51% (139)	12% (34)
Tourism Destinations	8% (33)	28% (112)	64% (258)	12% (33)	41% (112)	47% (128)
Industrial Light Industrial	4% (16)	20% (82)	76% (309)	3% (7)	24% (66)	73% (203)
Commercial	6% (23)	26% (105)	68% (277)	3% (9)	40% (110)	57% (157)
Marine	27% (105)	54% (211)	19% (75)	20% (55)	65% (180)	15% (42)
Municipal Facilities	16% (62)	57% (222)	27% (108)	9% (24)	70% (193)	21% (58)
Agricultural Uses	89% (362)	10% (42)	1% (4)	83% (228)	16% (45)	1% (4)

Comments: Keep rural integrity; Should be rural, agricultural, single family and beautiful conservation land and water accessible to residents; internet and business from home should be encouraged; multifamily should be limited to two-story/two residences per structure, “residential” means home-based businesses; conservation and agriculture are incompatible with other uses listed. New residents should be steered toward existing housing stock (as opposed to constructing new) by making subdivision costs prohibitive.

16. To what extent should Lyme encourage additional **commercial** development, even on a limited scale?

	2000	2014
Strongly Encourage	1% (4)	1% (2)
Encourage	3% (13)	3% (9)
Cautiously Encourage	27% (110)	33% (91)
Discourage	23% (93)	27% (76)
Strongly Discourage	44% (178)	34% (96)
No Opinion	2% (10)	2% (5)

Comparison of the results suggest that the percentage of respondents are slightly less concerned with whether or not commercial development should be discouraged or limited in scale. **During both 2000 and 2014, more than 6 of 10 respondents feels that commercial development should be “discouraged” or “strongly discouraged”.**

If so, where and what type? Comments included agriculture/ecotourism, restaurant; retail, small businesses; Hamburg/convenience store; commercial in mixed zones not being used; in current commercial center; shops, professional offices; food store; self-employment requiring small offices and conference rooms; deli; recreational commercial; Route 156; Route 82, 156, Hamburg and Hadlyme; sustainable industries; information-based technologies; should stay “neutral” rather than encourage, but allow small local owned shops; by the highway in the industrial park areas; light tourism such as restaurant or café along the river; encourage existing businesses in Hadlyme, Ashlawn Farm, and Hamburg. Hamburg/Hadlyme could use a package store. Gift or antique store; small gas station in Hamburg; grocery store/ restaurant in Hamburg Center; small retail in general area of Town Hall and library; any light home or farm industry; businesses that are either non-impactful on the land and/or provide increased quality of life for residents (restaurants, bars, coffee shops, high-quality boutiques).

17. To what extent should Lyme encourage **industrial** or **light industrial** development, even on a limited scale?

	2000	2014
Strongly Encourage	1.5% (6)	1% (2)
Encourage	2.5% (10)	1% (2)
Cautiously Encourage	14% (59)	17% (46)
Discourage	26% (106)	36% (98)
Strongly Discourage	54% (222)	44% (119)
No Opinion	2% (10)	1% (2)

Like responses to commercial development, respondents didn't appear to feel quite as strong about discouraging industrial or light industrial, as seen in the percentage of respondents who felt that such development should be "strongly discouraged". The percentage of those wanting to "discourage" such development increased by 10% between 2000 and 2014. The most significant indication may be that 8 out of every 10 respondents in both 2000 and 2014 felt that industrial and light industrial development should either be "discouraged" or "strongly discouraged".

If so, where and what type? Comments included that industrial and light industrial uses should include film, software, engineering and home-based businesses; small with little or no pollution; farms, marine, renewable energy; small-scale home businesses; along Route 156 and 82; current industrial areas; wineries, farm-to-table eateries, artisan enterprises.

18. Please indicate your opinion with regard to the need for the following uses in Lyme’s commercial district with an “X”:

	2000	2014
	Yes – No - Neutral	Yes – No - Neutral
Food Stores	28% - 58% - 14%	35% - 48% - 17%
Clothing Stores	2% - 90% - 8%	4% - 87% - 9%
Furniture Stores	2% - 90% - 8%	1% - 90% - 9%
Hardware Stores	15% - 72% - 13%	13% - 71% - 16%
Pharmacy	14% - 62% - 24%	15% - 72% - 13%
Automotive	8% - 79% - 13%	10% - 76% - 14%
Banking/Financial	12% - 76% - 12%	7% - 79% - 14%
Personal Services	9% - 70% - 21%	14% - 66% - 20%
Restaurants	32% - 50% - 18%	36% - 45% - 19%

In comparing the uses, food stores and pharmacies seem to have the largest percentage shift between whether or not those uses are “needed”. Where the food store category need increases by approximately 10%, the pharmacy category need decreases by approximately 10%. Otherwise, the listed uses have remain consistent within 4% to 5% in whether or not they are “needed”.

Other uses “needed”, as indicated in comments, include “enough already”; population wouldn’t support many business; package store, small food stores, furniture stores limited in size; “Jane’s Store perfectly suits the purpose; mixed uses similar to Chester Center; access to CT River; small, locally-run businesses; another cell tower would be helpful but not essential.

19. Should the Town rezone existing residential areas so as to increase commercial areas, which are presently located in Hamburg and Hadlyme?

	2000	2014
Yes	10% (43)	13% (35)
No	84% (353)	76% (210)
No opinion	6% (24)	11% (30)

The responses suggest a slight “softening” on opinions regarding the establishment of new commercial areas in the two existing commercial areas of town. This is reflected in all three response categories with a slight increase in “yes” responses, a decrease in “no” responses and an increase in “no opinion”.

Comments: Comments included open space/farmlands; small offices; Roger’s Lake; will look like industrial park otherwise; limited; recognize why Lyme is unique and beautiful – don’t turn this town into a copy of so many currently “inferior” others; not opposed to commercial use in referenced residential areas, but should be reviewed case-by-case and only considered for local businesses; two (existing commercial areas) are enough – water and septic to consider; with restrictions on design and types of commercial; small expansion of existing commercial to allow for “mixed use”; wouldn’t want to discourage “in-home” businesses; if anything, *reduce* amount of commercial in those two areas; limited to residential properties that are for sale.

20. *Do you feel that recent development in Lyme has been in keeping with the character of the town?*

	2000	2014
Yes	59.5% (245)	68% (186)
No	27.5% (113)	13% (35)
No opinion	13% (54)	19% (52)

The responses to this question appear to suggest that, in general, respondents are more pleased with the development in Lyme that was the case in the previous survey.

Comments: A number of comments indicate dissatisfaction with “McMansions” and large houses, A few comments of dissatisfaction refer to the commercial parking areas and car/marine sales yards in Hamburg.

21. *Are there any aspects of new development which you feel should receive more attention from town officials?*

	2000	2014
Yes	34.5% (132)	19% (51)
No	30% (117)	38% (102)
No opinion	35.5% (137)	43% (115)

The responses in the 2014 survey appear to suggest slightly more satisfaction with development in Lyme than that occurring at the time the 2000 survey was taken.

If so, please indicate what areas or issues should receive more attention:

Comments ranged widely: zoning rules need to be enforced (2); clear cutting for views is a concern (3); maintain town services, roads, landscape, new library and historical society properties; Route 148; affordable and senior housing (2); large size of homes (4); elderly housing; screening (of development) from water/road; affordable housing development (2); more bike paths; light pollution a concern; restricting home “styles”; maintenance of rural character/open space; increase minimum lot sizes; keep roads maintained, provide recycling, and “leave us alone”.

22. *Several Lower River area towns have adopted ordinances which establish non-regulatory (advisory only) Architectural or Design Review Boards. Would you support some level of design review to guide design efforts in our commercial and waterfront districts?*

	2000	2014
Yes	73% (304)	65% (179)
No	19.5% (81)	27% (75)
No opinion	7.5% (31)	8% (23)

Despite the general suggestion of concern for larger residential structures and “styles” in the responses to the 2014 survey, responses to this question suggest that there is less interest in the creation of a board that would oversee architectural or design issues with respect to non-residential development.

Comments: Responses in the 2014 survey range from the town not needing another board to “only for commercial” to review for “character” and not personal taste; if it helps keeping development to a minimum; low priority, but may be occasionally useful; design for potential sea level rise; no commercial development.

23. *In Lyme, the Hadlyme-Chester Ferry area on Ferry Road is currently designated as an “Historic District”. Are there other areas in Lyme that may be suitable for such consideration?*

	2000	2014
Yes	38% (157)	28% (77)
No	13% (56)	18% (50)
No opinion	49% (203)	54% (149)

Responses to the 2014 survey suggest that respondents are generally satisfied with the current historical designations with the majority having “no opinion” on the issue. “No opinion” could mean that respondents didn’t have enough information on the ramifications of such designations.

If so, where? A tally of specific suggestions is listed below. A little less than half of the 50 comments (21) suggested the Hamburg/Hamburg Cove area. Other suggestions included Tiffany Farm/Ashlawn Farm, the Grassy Hill area, Bill Hill, , Sterling City, Joshuatown Road around “the bridge” and Ely’s Ferry. Hamburg and Hamburg Cove were clearly the subject of most suggestions.

24. *State legislation enables Connecticut municipalities to establish “village districts” thereby allowing for the adoption of additional standards and criteria directed toward their preservation. Do you feel the Town should pursue opportunities to establish “village district” designation for areas such as Hamburg and Hadlyme?*

	2000	2014
Yes	64% (270)	43% (116)
No	14% (59)	30% (83)
No opinion	22% (94)	27% (73)

Responses to the 2014 survey suggest that there is significantly less interest in establishing regulatory “architectural and design” review in the Hamburg and Hadlyme villages than existed at the time of the 2000 survey. Unlike the previous question regarding “historic district” designation where half had “no opinion”, three quarters of respondents to this question regarding regulatory “village districts” responded. Although respondents continue to be interested in such review, the 2014 survey suggests less of a “mandate” than existing in 2000.

Are there any other such areas in Lyme where such a district may be appropriate? If so, where? Although this question addressed design review for Hamburg and Hadlyme, numerous comments highlighted the need in those two areas. Other areas mentioned included Joshuatown Road, Brockway Ferry, Grassy Hill and the Town Hall/Library area. Numerous comments mentioned that they did not have enough information to form an opinion.

25. *Would you support the construction of large-scale wind and solar farms in town as commercial or industrial facilities?*

	2014
Yes	29% (78)
No	59% (162)
No opinion	12% (33)

A new question added to the survey, half of the respondents who have an opinion on this issue appear to be reluctant to support large-scale wind and solar farms as a “primary use” on properties in Lyme. These facilities do not include facilities that individual homeowners can have on their properties.

Comments include: Not competitive (4); depends on location; total waste of money; commercial or industrial organization should be required to use renewable energy; only if it can be done without disturbing the town’s natural beauty; not sufficient wind or winter sun to justify; solar, not wind (5); as long as they are visibly non-intrusive (4); please remove cell towers as technology advances beyond their need; on town property, not in residential areas.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resource base of the Lower River region and the Town of Lyme in particular is one of its prime assets. As these valuable and finite resources lure more and more development to the area, natural resources will require a greater degree of stewardship if we are to protect them for generations to come.

26. *Do you feel that there are any specific natural resource areas in town that should be preserved?*

	2000	2014
Yes	91% (378)	77% (207)
No	3% (14)	4% (11)
No opinion	6% (24)	19% (50)

Responses to this question in the 2014 survey suggest that there may be less interest, or perhaps less knowledge about, natural resources in Lyme and the need for their preservation.

If so, please indicate how important you feel each of the following natural resources are to you:

	2000	2014
	More Important - Less Important	More Important - Less Important
Rivers and Coves	87% - 13%	89% - 11%
Wetlands (Inlands and Tidal)	73% - 27%	80% - 20%
Farmland	66% - 34%	75% - 25%
Stream Belts	66% - 34%	76% - 24%
Woodlands and Fields	69% - 31%	76% - 24%
Eight Mile River Valley	75% - 25%	81% - 19%
Exposed Ledges and Ridges	65% - 35%	62% - 38%

It appears that respondents to the 2014 survey generally feel that the listed natural resources are more important than respondents did in 2000. As a note, the 2014 survey did not include a category entitled “No Opinion”. As such, those who might have offered no opinion instead may have indicated that the listed resources *are* important as opposed to “not important” or “less important”. This alone could count for the general increase in the sense of “importance” of the listed natural resources.

Other resources indicated as being important included lakes, vegetation around Hamburg Cove, resources within Whalebone and Selden Coves and all waterfront property.

27. *How would you rate the importance for the protection and promoting the development or retention of farms and farmland?*

	2014
Extremely Important	63% (177)
Important	28% (78)
Somewhat Important	8% (21)
Not Important	1% (3)
No Opinion	0% (0)

Nine of ten respondents of the 2014 survey indicated that farms and farmlands are important or extremely important and should be further developed or retained in Lyme. Conversely, only one in ten indicated that farms and farmland are *less than* important to worry about.

Comments included that there should be a restriction on “overgrown” farmland; that the town would “miss” the farms; protection of farms is essential to maintaining Lyme’s history and character; residents should support local and sustainable food sources; organic farming should be encouraged; small scale farming is one of the most exciting economic development opportunities currently, and fits perfectly into Lyme’s overall “ethos”; not in favor of promoting large livestock , but love the idea of produce-growing farms in Lyme.

28. *Do you feel that there are any specific properties or parcels which should be targeted for conservation in the event that they become available?*

	2000	2014
Yes	51% (204)	44% (120)
No	6% (24)	7% (20)
No opinion	43% (173)	49% (132)

Responses from the 2014 survey suggest that there was a slight shift away from those that had opinions about properties that should be conserved versus those that had no opinion on the topic. That said, there were numerous comments about what properties should be conserved:

Tiffany Farm	21	Davidson Property	1
Farms (general)	13	Lord's Hill	1
Large Parcels	8	Speirs Property	1
CT River Properties (access)	7	Grassy Hill	1
Route 156	5	Whalebone Cove	1
General Resources (wetlands, fields, creeks, etc.)	4	Beaver Brook	1
Open Fields	4	Lieutenant River	1
Early Dawn Farm	3	Beachfront	1
Ashlawn Farm	2	Waterfront	1
Eight Mile River	2	Brodkin Property	1
Bill Hill	2	Route 82	1
Starks	2	Lee Farm	1
Mazur	2	Joshuatown Road	1
Hamburg Cove	2	Total Responses	91

Respondents to the 2014 survey indicated that conservation of farms, specifically Tiffany Farm, were at the top of the list of those properties that should be protected. Farms, together, totaled approximately one third of all responses.

29. *The Gateway Conservation Zone is a protective overlay district paralleling the Connecticut River from Old Lyme and Old Saybrook north to East Haddam and Haddam. Standards overseen by the Gateway Commission include protection of the scenic quality of the Connecticut River view shed. In Lyme, the current construction setback from the Connecticut River in the Gateway Conservation Zone is 100 feet and riparian buffer protection (upland vegetation along the banks of the river) is 50 feet. Do you feel that Lyme should consider increasing this buffer area in order to further protect the river from the aesthetic and environmental impacts of riverfront development?*

	2000	2014
Yes	75% (310)	56% (154)
No	16% (64)	28% (76)
No opinion	9% (38)	16% (45)

Responses to this question in the 2014 survey suggest that residents don't feel that there is a need to further "buffer" the Connecticut River beyond that which exists now. It is interesting to note that when the 2000 survey was issued, the Gateway Commission standards included a 50 foot construction setback and no riparian buffer. The 2014 survey was issued ten years after the construction setback was increased from 50 to 100 feet and the 50 foot riparian buffer setback was added. Perhaps less apparent interest in increasing buffers reflects that such an increase already occurred.

All of the fourteen (14) comments supported the idea that the setbacks should either be maintained at the current level or increased in order to increase protection of the river.

30. Do you feel that the Town should consider minimizing development along its ridges and hilltops?

	2000	2014
Yes	76% (316)	74% (204)
No	14% (56)	13% (37)
No opinion	10% (42)	13% (35)

The percentage of responses to the 2014 survey was essentially identical to the responses provided in the 2000 survey. Of those with an opinion, more than 4 of 5 respondents indicated that development on ridges and hilltops should be minimized.

OPEN SPACE

“Open Space” is land which is set aside, either in a natural state or for recreational and/or passive purposes and is protected from future development in perpetuity. Open space may include nature preserves (i.e. wildlife habitat, natural resource areas), wetlands (tidal and inland), farms, cemeteries, forests, parks, beaches and other recreational facilities. It may be privately owned (by a land trust or neighborhood association, for example) or publicly owned (by the town or the state). Some open space land is available for public use, while access to other land is restricted. Open space planning can link land parcels to form wildlife corridors or protect important wetland systems, or provide trails for passive recreation. If land is to be set aside for open space, its characteristics, method of acquisition and long term use must be planned in advance of proposed development activities.

31. *In your opinion, the Town of Lyme:*

	2000	2014
Has enough Open Space	5% (81)	36% (94)
Needs More Open Space	95% (380)	64% (170)

Comparison of results to this question regarding whether or not the Town has enough open space set aside strongly suggests that town support of acquiring open space moving forward may be waning. This could reflect the fact that the Town has just made significant expenditures for public improvements including the Town Hall and library. Given the positive nature of respondents answer regarding retention of the rural nature of Lyme and the protection of natural resources, one might imagine that if this question were asked prior to the recent public improvements, a more supportive response may have occurred. That said, over 6 in 10 of respondents answered that Lyme needs more open space.

32. *Do you think the Town of Lyme should use taxpayer money to buy and maintain open space in the town?*

	2000	2014
Yes	72% (301)	63% (173)
No	21% (87)	28% (78)
No opinion	7% (31)	9% (25)

Comparison of the results to this question again suggests a waning of support for the acquisition of open space by the Town of Lyme. That said, 7 of 10 respondents who had opinions on this subject answered in the affirmative.

Comments offered on these questions suggest that there continues to be interest in the securing of open space into the future, but caution about using town resources should be exercised. Suggestions and comments include if the budget allows; use a developer’s tax; use contributions and gifts of land as a primary source; the town’s position should be one of being in a “supporting role”; care should be taken in any efforts that may raise Old Lyme’s taxes; buy – yes, maintain – no.

33. *Would you be willing to contribute higher taxes to support an active open space acquisition/maintenance program?*

	2000	2014
Yes	64% (267)	55% (151)
No	29% (122)	38% (106)
No opinion	7% (28)	7% (19)

As with the two previous questions, responses appear to suggest that there is still support for town acquisition of open space through the contribution of higher taxes, but the support is less than existed in the 2000 responses. These responses track those from the previous question. Again, one can view the decline if support through a lens of fiscal fatigue.

If yes, how much of a tax increase would you be willing to support for the purpose of open space acquisition/maintenance?

	2000	2014
0 – 1%	20% (59)	17% (25)
1 – 3%	32% (96)	42% (61)
3 – 5%	24% (70)	23% (33)
5 – 10%	15% (44)	13% (18)
> 10%	9% (27)	5% (7)

Overall, the comparison of responses suggests similarities for how much of a tax increase for the purchase of open space might be supported.

34. *An open space conveyance tax is a local tax charged at the time of sale of property and is used for establishing a fund for the purpose of open space acquisition. Would you support State legislation for such an open space initiative?*

	2000	2014
Yes	63% (257)	56% (154)
No	25% (99)	33% (91)
No opinion	12% (49)	11% (29)

Responses to this question suggest waning interest in the use of a conveyance tax charged at the time of sale of property for open space funding. These responses seem consistent with the greater reluctance expressed for various funding options for open space acquisition.

Comments to this question included depends upon quantity; need more understanding; tax on *seller*, not buyer; preferable to higher taxes; one more closing cost! ABSOLUTELY NOT! Use donations from high income residents to acquire and maintain open spaces; conveyance taxes are best solution; why discourage home sales when already depressed; OK if voluntary; depends on the %; one-time tax preferred to annual tax; only if reasonable and not too high.

35. Please indicate how **IMPORTANT** each of the following open space categories is to you.

	2000	2014
	Most – Important - Not	Most – Important - Not
Active Recreation (ball fields, biking, tennis, pools)	11% - 35% - 54%	11% - 37% - 52%
Passive Recreation (walking trails, nature preserves)	54% - 39% - 7%	55% - 40% - 5%
Protection of Wildlife Habitat	71% - 26% - 3%	65% - 32% - 3%
Protection of Stream Belts	71% - 27% - 2%	63% - 36% - 1%
Protection of Wetlands (inland and tidal)	69% - 29% - 2%	65% - 33% - 2%
Protection of Eight Mile River Valley	70% - 28% - 2%	67% - 31% - 2%
Protection of Aquifer Areas	71% - 27% - 2%	64% - 34% - 2%
Protection of Town Aesthetics and Character	74% - 23% - 3%	55% - 39% - 6%
Protection of Large Unfragmented Tracts of Land	62% - 33% - 5%	61% - 35% - 4%
Provide Greater River and Cove Access	34% - 31% - 35%	33% - 36% - 31%
Provide Greater Boating and Fishing Access	31% - 49% - 20%	23% - 34% - 43%
Protection of Ridges and Hilltops	57% - 36% - 7%	47% - 45% - 8%

Comparison of the answers for the 2000 to 2014 surveys shows a fairly strong similarity in responses for each category, with some exceptions. A first observation, perhaps due to the more mature age of the respondents, is that there appears to be more support for open space that is connected to conservation than there is for open space connected to active pursuits (active recreation, greater river/cove access, greater boating/fishing access). This was generally the case in the 2000 survey as well. Perhaps the largest shift was how much more *unimportant* boating and fishing access seemed to be to the respondents of the 2014 survey. When combining responses for “Most Important” and “Important” and comparing those results to those for “Not Important” only boating and fishing access shifted to any significant degree. Interestingly, the boating and fishing access question was also answered by approximately 30% fewer respondents than all other questions.

Another observation is that there appears to be a shift for respondents to the 2014 survey to lesser importance with respect to “town aesthetics and character”. Where three quarters of 2000 respondents found such aesthetics *most* important, only half of the 2014 respondents had the same strong feeling.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Public facilities include schools, roads, parks and municipal buildings and other structures. These facilities and the services they provide are paid for, in large part, through the property taxes that citizens pay. The following questions are designed to allow the town to determine what level of facilities improvements would be supported.

36. Please indicate how important each of the following recreation categories is to you.

	2000	2014
	Most – Important - Not	Most – Important - Not
Swimming Areas/Pools	24% - 31% - 45%	10% - 28% - 62%
Hiking/Walking/Nature Trails	42% - 48% - 10%	49% - 44% - 7%
Recreation/Community Center	34% - 23% - 43%	6% - 33% - 61%
Develop Hartman Park	26% - 28% - 46%	4% - 36% - 60%
Softball/Baseball Fields	3% - 28% - 69%	5% - 29% - 66%
Tennis Courts	3% - 30% - 67%	5% - 25% - 70%
Parks/Playgrounds	9% - 49% - 42%	8% - 37% - 55%
Access for Fishing	10% - 42% - 48%	6% - 22% - 72%
Skating/Hockey Rinks	1% - 22% - 77%	6% - 28% - 66%
Access for Boating	14% - 41% - 45%	14% - 44% - 42%
Cross Country Skiing	9% - 37% - 54%	11% - 45% - 45%

Comparison of the responses to the 2000 and 2014 surveys suggests that respondents varied in their assignment of importance the surveyed categories, with some exceptions. Those categories that were thought to be of generally less importance included swimming areas/pools, recreation and community centers, development of Hartman Park, parks and playgrounds and access for fishing. Again, the mature age of the respondents (a higher percentage of 65 and over in age) may be part of the reason that active recreation categories were thought to be of less importance. Those categories that were thought to be more important included skating and hockey rinks and facilities for cross-country skiing. The most

significant changes occurred in the decreased level of importance for swimming areas/pools, access for fishing and parks and playgrounds. The few categories where any increase in importance was assigned saw only modest increase as compared to the more significant level of decrease in support where support declined.

A significant number of comments pointed out the need for more bicycling facilities both for on-street and off-road bicycling. As for many of the active recreational facilities mentioned, numerous comments suggested that the schools cover those needs. Equine trails were mentioned in a few instances. Where the question of Hartman Park received numerous questions in 2000, only one comment – that of confusion regarding just what Hartman Park is – was received.

37. Please indicate how important each of the following capital improvement categories are to you.

	2000	2014
	Most – Important - Not	Most – Important - Not
Improve Municipal Buildings	8% - 49% - 43%	7% - 50% - 43%
Develop Recreational Facilities	4% - 38% - 58%	6% - 26% - 68%
Develop/Build a Community / Youth Center	6% - 28% - 66%	6% - 20% - 74%
Purchase Open Space	53% - 31% - 16%	40% - 36% - 24%

Of the choices offered for capital improvement categories, only the purchase of open space garner respondent support, approximately 7 to 8 respondents out of ten indicated that open space purchase was “Important” or “Most Important”. That said, the level of importance of open space as a capital improvement declined from 2000 to 2014 from a level of importance by almost 10% (“Most Important” and “Important” combined). The level of importance assigned to the development of recreational facilities and community/youth centers also decreased by approximately 8% to 10%. Only improvement of municipal buildings remained the same in terms of level of importance.

38. Currently, Lyme’s police services are provided through Troop “F” State Police barracks in Westbrook. With increased development and traffic in the area, do you feel there is or may be a need for additional police services in the Town of Lyme?

	2000	2014
Yes	33% (138)	28% (78)
No	53% (220)	57% (158)
No opinion	14% (60)	15% (40)

Comments offered vary from speeding cars continue to be an issue; maybe; response time too slow; no, but additional funding to Troop “F” may be warranted; need more information; yes, but no tax increases; raised concern over crime and robberies; had one before and it didn’t work; a municipal police force should not be considered; consider *part* time police force.

The results to this question are consistent with the responses from the 2000 survey. Although there is general concern over safety, few indicate a willingness to pay for the increased level of services.

39. Are you satisfied with Lyme’s network of town and state roads?

	2000	2014
Yes	90% (376)	96% (265)
No	8% (35)	2% (6)
No opinion	2% (8)	2% (6)

Respondents who are satisfied with Lyme’s networks of town and state roads appeared to increase modestly from 90% to 96% with those dissatisfied decreasing modestly. Of the five comments received, four commented on the need for wider shoulders and generally more support for bike lanes and biking activities. The fifth comment was from a respondent who does not support the extension of Route 11.

40. Do you feel that the Town's system of roads is sufficient to accommodate existing and future traffic?

	2000	2014
Yes	78% (328)	90% (248)
No	13% (51)	4% (11)
No opinion	9% (39)	6% (17)

Responses to this question suggest an increased level of satisfaction with the ability of Lyme's roads to accommodate existing and future traffic. Five of seven comments submitted indicated the need for improvement on Route 156. Several comments also suggest that tree cutting is an important consideration in whether or not Lyme's roads can accommodate traffic. One respondent provided a comment on the dangerous nature of Route 156 with blind curves and high rates of speed.

41. Do you feel there is a need for pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways along roadways in Lyme?

	2000	2014
Yes	43% (181)	53% (146)
No	49% (204)	36% (98)
No opinion	8% (35)	11% (29)

Respondents to the 2014 survey showed an increase of approximately 10% in the desire for pedestrian and bicycle pathways along Lyme's roads. This expression of increased need is supported in other questions in the survey.

Like responses from fourteen years ago, most of the twenty five comments centered on the need to better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists on Route 156. A few respondents commented that bicyclists are a hazard to themselves and others.

42. *Would you support an initiative to designate any Lyme roadways as “scenic roads”, thereby protecting their rural nature?*

	2000	2014
Yes	75% (309)	70% (192)
No	11% (43)	13% (36)
No opinion	14% (58)	17% (47)

Although the percentage of responses to this question was slightly lower in 2014, approximately 7 of 10 respondents indicated that they support initiatives for the designation of Lyme roadways as “scenic roads”. As was the case in 2000, respondents had many suggestions:

Joshuatown Road(46), Grassy Hill Road(28), Route 156 (22), Beaver Brook Road (18), Sterling City Road(14), Ely Ferry Road (14), Mt Archer Road(12), Ferry Road (12), Bill Hill Road (12), Blood Street (7), Cove Road (5), Salem Road (5), Gungy Road (4), Selden Road (4), Brush Hill Road(3), Mitchell Hill Road(3), Old Hamburg Road (3), Route 82 (3), River Road (2), Brockway Ferry (2), Tantumorantum Road(2), Town Woods Road(1), Birch Hill Road (1), Keeney Road (1), Route 148 (1).

The list of roads in the 2014 survey is almost identical to that seen in the 2000 survey. The number of responses for each road was also similar when the number of surveys received is factored in. As was the case in 2000, numerous responses indicated that “all roads in Lyme” are scenic.

COMMENTS

Answers to the following type questions have proven to be invaluable in understanding respondent's feelings regarding their Town. Your thoughts are welcomed and are very important.

43. *What do you like **BEST** about Lyme?* Out of approximately 300 total responses, 229 respondents took the time to add additional comments. Many of the answers used similar words or phrases, as follows:

129	Rural character
50	Natural beauty (beautiful, scenic beauty, beautiful scenery,
41	Quiet, peaceful
27	Open spaces, conservation mentality
24	Low Taxes
21	Sense of community (people, friends, neighbors, residents)
19	Lack of commercial/industrial development
15	Schools
15	Farms, agricultural land
12	Low population
10	Nature
10	CT River, Hamburg Cove
8	Small
8	Well run government
7	Controlled growth
7	Wildlife
7	Forests
6	Historic
6	Doesn't change
4	Library
4	Small town feel
3	Simplicity
3	Good, well-maintained roads
3	Ferry
3	Safe

44. What do you like **LEAST** about Lyme? Of the approximately 300 surveys received, 160 of the respondents provide comments to this question. Most are listed as follows:

- 11 Distance from services
- 8 Development
- 7 Traffic on Route 156
- 7 Speeding
- 7 Traffic (in general)
- 6 Noise from boats and motorcycles
- 6 Increase in taxes
- 6 Outsiders
- 5 Growing commercial pressures
- 5 High property prices
- 4 Blight
- 4 Lack of water access
- 4 No restaurants
- 4 Ticks, Lyme disease
- 3 Bicyclists on Route 156
- 3 Library expansion
- 3 Large homes
- 3 No grocery store
- 3 Lack of diversity
- 3 No police
- 3 No post office
- 3 Hilltop/ridgeline development
- 2 Too few pedestrian/bicycling trails
- 2 Large trucks
- 2 Lack of swimming facilities
- 2 Lack of affordable housing
- 1 People
- 1 Dwelling densities at Roger's Lake
- 1 Change
- 1 Lack of "infrastructure"
- 1 Dangerous roads
- 1 Too "woody", too much forest
- 1 Lack of elderly housing
- 1 No public transportation
- 1 Little to offer young families
- 1 Low-end development
- 1 Poor schools
- 1 Poor cell service
- 1 Slow police response
- 1 Over regulation
- 1 Liberals

45. What **PROBLEMS** would you most like to see local government address? There were 144 responses to this question. Most are listed as follows:

- 11 Traffic increase, dangerous bicyclists and pedestrians
- 10 Speeding, particularly on Route 156
- 9 Increased development pressures
- 8 Lack of tree and brush trimming along roadways
- 7 Noise, particularly motorcycles
- 6 Lack of affordable housing
- 6 Loss of open space, loss of preservation ethic
- 5 Maintenance of Lyme character
- 5 Rising taxes
- 4 Lack of river and cove access
- 4 Concern over controlling commercial and industrial growth
- 4 Concern for the environment (septic systems, underground storage tanks)
- 4 Lack of police
- 4 Concern over protection of Roger's Lake (weed control)
- 3 Blight
- 3 Lack of biking and pedestrian facilities
- 3 Concern over crime
- 3 Concern over growth of local government
- 2 Large homes
- 2 Trucks on Route 156
- 2 Invasive plants
- 2 Poor cell phone service
- 2 Proliferation of deer
- 2 Need for more services (local bars for meeting friends, grocery stores)
- 1 Need for boat restrictions at Roger's Lake
- 1 Commuter traffic
- 1 Concern over the school plan/redistricting
- 1 Lack of younger citizens
- 1 Viability of volunteer services
- 1 Lack of diversity
- 1 Lack of regulation enforcement
- 1 Concern regarding *over* regulation
- 1 Concerns over water quality

46. In a couple of sentences, **DESCRIBE** the Lyme in which you'd like to live. There were 104 responses to this question. Like responses to the 2000 survey, the most responses to the 2014 request described the Lyme they like as the one it is now. If there's one clear message that has come out of this survey, it is that. Keep things the way they are.

Those responding want to live in a Lyme that is described as follows:

As is, we love it, I already live there (75)
A town that embraces its rural heritage (6)
No, or restricted development (6)
A town with no commercial development (5)
More farms (4)
Continued support of open space acquisition (4)
A town with more elderly housing (3)
More affordable housing (2)
More restaurants, preferably small (2)
Maintains and protects "small town charm" (2)
A town that maintains a low population density (2)
A town that is a quiet retreat
One with more affordability for younger generations
One that retains its natural beauty
A town with fewer houses
More local employment
More open fields
Reduction in traffic
More housing
A town with more services
Less speeding and motorcycles
Lyme of the past
More renewable energy
Maintains historic element
A town that uses zoning to restrict all by single family residential and farming
A town that has more young people
A town with more beach access
A town with safer roads
A town that is more friendly for bicycling
An "upscale" town
A town with low taxes
One that has great schools
Clean air
More trees, woods and water

Some significant comments include:

“Some of the questions you ask in this survey leads me to think that there are plans afoot to increase infrastructure. We don’t need police in town. We don’t need sidewalks. We don’t need a sewer system. This sounds like some people came to Lyme to leave where they were behind and come to Lyme because of the beauty and the peace and quiet, and now want to start changing it because it needs some amenities. Just like the place they came from. We don’t need to keep up with Chester or Essex or Old Saybrook. What’s great about here is that it’s the way it is.”

“Lived here for 58 years, going to need elderly housing soon.”

“Lyme is a unique community and I would like to continue to live in this area with neighbors who have respect for one and other. I want the town to maintain the integrity of Lyme and the freedom we have to live here in such a beautiful rural area. Please do something about the properties that should be considered additions to the town dump rather than residential living areas.”

“A town that protects, embraces and maintains its beauty and small town charm. A town that recognizes that it is special and works hard to protect why. A town that avoids the slippery slope of development and providing additional services. A town that uses zoning to block development beyond single family and agricultural. A town that protects more land and water every year. The most unspoiled, naturally beautiful town in Connecticut, filled with residents who appreciate these gifts and are willing to fight to keep them, and who will fight to keep out those who want to change or develop Lyme.”

“A place dedicated to preserving the open space and restricting development in keeping with the wonderful historic significance of the town that the residents wish to preserve.”

“I like to live in a town with low population. When the roads are improved they invite more use, more development, and higher speeds. It’s the lack of development and inconveniences that accompany the ruralness that discourages development and holds the beauty of Lyme.”

“Overall, I like the Lyme I live in. The library is important to me, so I’m glad that it will see improvements. Agricultural uses of the land are very important to me, so I would like to see more new farms. I think the Lyme Land Conservation Trust and the Town of Lyme do a great job of preserving open space. I am willing to drive for my groceries/gas/banking in order to preserve Lyme’s rural character.”

“It will be hard to do, but try not to change! We can go elsewhere for stores and services, but there are fewer and fewer places that we can find the beauty of Lyme.”

“A small, rural community that values open spaces, conserving nature and keeping our impact on our surroundings minimized. Support of small, local farms and produce - and preservation of scenic, single-residence living on multiple acres without any commercial development. Ideally this would also be a 'best kept secret' and non-Lyme residents would not frequently visit or vacation.”