Town of Chester
Plan of Conservation and Development Project
Workshop #2 – Summary – February 10, 2007

We know where it is!
EXERCISE 1 - “Shopping Trip”
You are being given $40.00 of “Chester Cash” to spend on the Town. There are 20 items. You may spend a maximum of $3 and a minimum of $1 on each item. Please budget your shopping trip on the worksheet below. Then spend your “Chester Cash” in the shopping bags at the front of the room.

RESULTS

- Education - $213
- Natural resources – $194
- Preservation of town character – $194
- Village Center – $160
- Pedestrian/ Bike Routes – $160
- Open Space – $160
- CT River Preservation – $158
- Historic Preservation – $157
- Rural Landscape – $153
- Town Infrastructure – $152
- Parks and Recreation – $146
- Waterfront Access – $140
- Affordable Housing – $127
- Public Transportation – $119
- Commercial retail development – $114
- Tourism – $113
- Town Buildings – $110
- Professional Office Space - $109
- Manufacturing – $95
- Residential Development – $75
If you could spend more on any of the above or anything else, what would it be? About half of the participants commented on this section. Preserving town character (7), open space (7) natural resources (6), and waterfront access (5) were the most often cited. Other multiple responses included public safety/police and fire (4), education (4), town infrastructure (4), tourism (4), capital reserve and savings (3), rural landscape (2), and pedestrian/bike routes (3). Other answers included social services, sustainability, new agriculture and farming structure, farmers market, community garden, disaster planning, parks and recreation, facilities to support a research park, a youth/community center, community green power options, fiber optic cable, speed bumps, fund pension liabilities, and future planning. One person wanted money returned to the tax payers. Three people objected to the methodology, feeling that it did not provide an opportunity to express a negative opinion on certain items.
**EXERCISE 2 - “Beauty Contest”**
We will now show a collection of slides displaying a wide variety of images. Please respond to each slide on the ballot below by noting whether you like it/find it appropriate or dislike it/find it inappropriate for the character of Chester. Use several words in the Comments column to describe any extreme reaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide</th>
<th># of pics</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>boats in fog, undeveloped river bank</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>urban streets, sidewalks</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>urban-pedestrian river bank</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>new suburban subdivision houses</td>
<td>158</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>urban-market, fountain, square</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>shopping center - strip malls</td>
<td>86</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>riverwalk at night, riverwalk</td>
<td>326</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chester village, shops</td>
<td>420</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>modern glass office bldgs</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>dense Euro village</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>village shopping, stone buildings</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>produce, market, fields</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>various office building styles</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chester marina aerials</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>suburban subdivision aerials</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>sports field, playground, pools</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>fall foliage, hills, barn</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>traffic scenes</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>urban street life</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>rustic parks, benches along water</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>new urbanism village (Florida)</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chester village street</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>Chester - Main Street rear</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Red** – Highest “Likes” Score  
**Green** – Most Commented On  
**Blue** – Lowest “Likes” Score
Beauty Contest Comments:
* Some slides, including 1, 5, 6, 12, and 32 received no comments on the lower half of the scale, meaning that all responders approved in varying degrees. Slide 32 received the highest number of tens, at 29, followed by slide 12, with 28 high scores.
* Some slides received no comments higher than 5, including 6, 11, 15, and 16, meaning that no responders approved or thought the slide appropriate for Chester. Slides 11 and 16 received the lowest possible score from 35 people, with slide 15 receiving 30 lowest scores. Slide 6 received 24 lowest scores.
* Slide 18, a view of Main Street in Chester, received thirteen comments, all relating to power lines, e.g. “too many power lines”, “hide power lines”, “remove the lines”, “lose the poles”.
SLIDE #5
Received the highest score
“Most Liked”
Numerous volunteer groups have formed to work on issues related to our built and natural environment. They include:

- Renewable energy
- Land conservation
- Pedestrian friendly streets
- Water and sewer
- Downtown economic development
- Affordable and diverse housing
- Community gardens
- Scenic paths and roads
- Local transportation
- Waterfront access

SLIDE #22

Received the 2\textsuperscript{nd} highest score

“Most Liked”
Received the lowest score
or
"Least Liked"
Received the 2nd lowest score or “Least Liked”
SLIDE #18

Received the most comments

“Negative about wires and lines”
EXERCISE 3 – “Planning the Future – What’s at Risk?”
As planners we must speculate as to what the future needs of Chester will be. Help us speculate what you and future generations will need to enjoy Chester as we do today, but better. Below are some questions to spark your imagination.

THE QUESTIONS

• What would you change and what would you want to remain the same?
• What do you see happening that will affect us?
• How’s the future going to change Chester?
• How does the development of Deep River, Tylerville, Westbrook and Killingworth affect us?
• How will changes in transportation affect us?
• How will the advancement of telecommunications technologies affect us?
• Add any other question or answer you deem appropriate.

14 Page Answer Sheets from Exercise 3
Are Located in an Attached Microsoft Word Document
EXERCISE 4 – “Greatest Hopes and Fears”
Describe your hopes and fears for the town of Chester

The following is a compilation of some responses from the Workbooks
Answer Sheets from Exercise 4 are located in an attached Microsoft Word Document

Hopes
• “Development of small businesses should be promoted, specifically shops. Certain businesses cannot survive due to Franchises, large stores selling things cheaper.”
• “Original residents will/can stay in Chester. The town will maintain a diverse population.”
• “The Chester Industrial Park to be returned to forest land.”
• “That the Arts will thrive and inspire.”
• “That people realize that young people do not have an inherent right to own property at the beginning of their adult lives. They will need to mature in their careers and earning potential and will actually benefit from coming-into-their own with the baby-steps of renting and learning to manage having a limited budget that will need to go to basics such as food, utilities and, student loans.”
• “That people bond together to buy up available vacant land!”
• “That residents realize (based on real estate prices, taxes, etc), Chester is a pretty exclusive place to live and that is what keeps town from changing too quickly, affordable housing won’t be an asset.”
Chester
Greatest Hopes

expand commercial space
join to buy-up available vacant land
pass a scenic road ordinance
summer boat rentals at Cedar Lake for kids
townboards keep up on educating themselves
vision is long term - 30+ years
maintain standard of education/ or improve it
Max development/ zone changes
residents realize purchase of town hall was excessive
have river launch accessible- small boats/ interface with waterfront
look at lrg tracts/ conservation
support agriculture and farming
solve issues with technology smart/cutting edge /cost effective
support small business/ mixed use/ cottage industry
limit impact of cars/transportation alternatives/
alter zoning/planning to enhance smart growth objectives
senior/young adult starter affordable housing
reduce and limit tax burden
more diverse socio/economical development
concentrated development/ preserve rural/ mixed use
expand the arts
open space/cluster housing encouraged
sustainable vision/social/environmental/ economic
develop river front space/park, bike paths
comm center for youth/ library in town
greening of town
preserve, maintain and enhance unique sense of place/historical
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOPES</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preserve, maintain and enhance unique sense of place/historical</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduce and limit tax burden</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>limit impact of cars/transportation alternatives/</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>alter zoning/planning to enhance smart growth objectives</td>
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<td>concentrated development/ preserve rural/mixed use</td>
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<td>sustainable vision/social/environmental/economic</td>
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<td>maintain standard of education/ or improve it</td>
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<td>senior/young adult starter affordable housing</td>
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<td>greening of town</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Max development/ zone changes</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>vision is long term - 30+ years</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- support agriculture and farming                                     | 4     |
- have river launch accessible- small boats/ interface with waterfront| 3     |
- open space/cluster housing encouraged                               | 13    |
- look at large tracts/ conservation                                  | 3     |
- pass a scenic road ordinance                                        | 1     |
- develop river front space/park, bike paths                          | 14    |
- community center for youth/ library in town                          | 15    |
- residents realize purchase of town hall was excessive                | 2     |
- join to buy-up available vacant land                                 | 1     |
- summer boat rentals at Cedar Lake for kids                           | 1     |
- expand commercial space                                              | 1     |
- expand the arts                                                      | 13    |
- town boards keep up on educating themselves                          | 1     |
- solve issues with technology smart/cutting edge /cost effective      | 5     |
EXERCISE 4 – “Greatest Hopes and Fears”
Describe your hopes and fears for the town of Chester

Fears
• “The new town office Building/TownHall is a prime example of that we should avoid. 154 is becoming a real eyesore – a mish mash of varying unattractive uses completely at “varience” with a bucolic rural New England Town.”
• “Won’t be able to flush the toilet.”
• “I grew-up here and feared development of any kind would change our quality of life and the nature of the town more than the threats of any nuclear war.”
• “That the only jobs to entice our youth to stay in Chester will be towel boy at the spa, waitressing, or gallery clerk. The ‘people’ who want to put this into Chester are not raising their kids to take these jobs.”
• “Developers will gain entry and some of our greatest assets will be overlooked and given-up for the ‘Almighty Dollar’(greased palms, ability to slide things through.)”
• “That we do not retain the talent and spirit that defies Chester.”
• “The sewer project is quite scary. We need to avoid/vote down..”
Chester
Greatest Fears

young won't come back / old will have to move away
too many people to tax water system / divide town
taxed out of town / residential development
town of WOOFers
will have retail chains in town
lack of public involvement
Cul-de-sacs / plastic houses / McMansions
Coordinate towns so don't compete for same resources
changes in zoning = pressure for larger and larger development
154 will become really developed
residential over development
over development based on current regs
No vision / not keeping up
any kind of change
town government has hidden agendas
tourist needs are priority over residents
narcissitic environment of big cities
move away from town / disgusted with town
any kind of affordable housing
FEARS

town of WOOFers 4
154 will become really developed 3
Coordinate towns so don’t compete for same resources 3
Cul-de-sacs/plastic houses/McMansions 3
young won' come back/ old will have to move away 13
too many people to tax water system/ divide town 10
changes in zoning = pressure for larger and larger development 3
taxed out of town/residential development 5
narcissistic environment of big cities 1
will have retail chains in town 3
residential over development 2
move away from town/ disgusted with town 1
any kind of change 2
town government has hidden agendas 1
tourist needs are priority over residents 1
any kind of affordable housing 1
lack of public involvement 3
over development based on current regulations 2
No vision/ not keeping up 2