



Town of

North Stonington, CT

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

40 MAIN STREET, NORTH STONINGTON, CT 06359

2013 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Steering Committee has developed a **Community Survey** to gather your opinions about North Stonington and to determine the future needs of your community. This survey, as well as the neighborhood and other informal meetings and public workshops are all part of our ongoing effort to gather public input so that we may better protect what is good and improve upon our weaknesses.

Each household will receive a survey in the mail. You may copy the survey for additional adult members in the household who may wish to fill out their own. Copies will also be available at the Town Hall and Wheeler Library. The survey is also available on line. Please go to: www.northstoningtonct.gov/POCDSURVEY and follow the instructions. Be aware that a Map was included in the survey that was mailed to the residence. It is not visible when taking the survey on line. Please go to the Town Website under the Plan of Conservation and Development link to view the map (www.northstoningtonct.gov/POCDMap). Several questions refer to the information on this Map, so I urge you to look at it before you complete the survey on line. This is the fastest, most efficient way to fill out the survey as results will be automatically tabulated by the computer.

The information provided to us in individual questionnaires is anonymous and there is no way that anyone participating can be identified unless you opt to identify yourself on the back of the survey. The final results will be presented to the public at large during the **Visioning Session** to be held this April.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey and provide us with information that will help guide the community through the next 10 years. Attached also find a Zoning Map with information on the back that will help you as you fill out the survey. We ask that you return the survey no later than **March 15th**. The Town Planner can be reached at 860-535-2877 x27 or at jleeming@northstoningtonct.gov to answer any questions you may have about the survey and how to fill it out.

Please use the envelope included in the survey to return to town Hall. Surveys may also be dropped off at the **Town Hall** (Mon-Fri 8am-4pm) **or** at the **Wheeler Library** (M, W, F 10am-4pm; T, TH 10am-8pm & Sat 10am-1pm) in the boxes provided.

Thank you for your help with this important project!

Sincerely,

Juliet Leeming,
Senior Planning and Zoning Official

2013 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY IS TO GATHER AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE IN DIRECTING OUR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS IN DECISIONS REGARDING CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO INVOLVE AS MANY RESIDENTS AS POSSIBLE TO BEST REFLECT THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE.

Please return the survey in the enclosed envelope or deliver it directly to the Town Hall. Be sure to fill out both sides of each of the 3 pages. The survey is also available online at: www.Northstoningtonct.gov/POCDSURVEY. Please note that some questions reference the attached **SURVEY MAP** which is also available on-line on the Town Website under POCD. Please **DO NOT** duplicate by sending both physically and electronically. **ONLY ONE (1) RESPONSE PER ADULT PER HOUSEHOLD.** Please encourage all adults in the household to participate (18+). One survey was mailed to each household but may be copied for any additional adult members of your household or copies may be picked up at the Town Hall. You do not have to be a registered voter to respond.

Questions? Contact Juliet Leeming, Town Planner/ZEO @ 860-535-2877 x27 or

Email: jleeming@northstoningtonct.gov

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

YOUR AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
YRS IN TOWN	0-5	5-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50+

What are the most important issues currently facing North Stonington?

PART 1

PLEASE RANK THE FOLLOWING <u>IN ORDER</u> OF YOUR PRIORITY FOR OUR TOWN. (1 BEING MOST IMPORTANT, 10 LEAST IMPORTANT) In ranking these, please consider the costs associated with each. If some items are of equal importance- indicate as such or use comment space on last page to explain.	RANK # 1-10
Maintain an appropriate level of Town services (Transfer Station, Sanitarian, Senior Center, Public Works, Fire, Police, Zoning, Building Inspector, Assessor etc.)	
Maintain roads, bridges and utility infrastructure	
Promote new residential development	
Promote new development that would diversify the tax base without burdening town services	
Maintain or improve the quality of the School system	
Protect existing open space and natural resources	
Promote Affordable housing (primarily senior housing and starter homes)	
Protect existing farms and promote new Agricultural uses	
Town purchase of land for additional open space or recreational purposes.	
Protect Historic resources (buildings and sites)	

2013 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY

PART 2

IS NORTH STONINGTON PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF TOWN SERVICES?			
WHAT SERVICE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE →	INCREASED:	DECREASED:	TO STAY THE SAME:
Police (3 Resident Troopers- currently)			
Fire			
Ambulance			
Education			
Public Works			
Town Hall Services (Clerk, Building, Zoning, Assessor, GIS etc.) <i>(Any dept. in particular?)</i>			
Recreational Facilities			
Other(Specify):			

PART 3

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DON'T KNOW	DIS-AGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The Town should encourage more alternative energy development.					
The current Village Commercial, Commercial Development, and Office/Research Zones should be consolidated into one unified Commercial Development Zone that encompasses them all.					
It is necessary to invest in our infrastructure if we expect to have quality economic development (i.e. roads, schools, emergency services, utilities etc.)					
Any large-scale developments (i.e. Large senior housing complex or retail Big Box) can be located and visually screened in such a way that they would be acceptable to the residents of North Stonington.					
We should allow mixed-use (residential units above commercial) development in the Commercial Zones.					
The town should ease zoning restrictions on commercial properties.					
The inconvenience of having to drive long distances for jobs or services is an acceptable sacrifice for the privilege of such a high quality of life.					
It is OK to encourage development in the non-residential zones.					
It is OK to encourage development in the non-residential zones even if this means introducing sewers to this area.					
North Stonington should have a wider choice in housing.					

2013 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DON'T KNOW	DIS- AGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
We should allow 10+ unit residential development.					
We should allow 5-10 unit residential development.					
We should allow 3-5 unit residential development.					
North Stonington has enough starter homes for folks making under \$80,000 for a family of four.					
Certain Town-owned parcels should be utilized for Affordable residential development provided a generous portion is preserved as open space (i.e. Recently acquired 100+ acre off Wintechog Hill – See attached map)					
The town should ease restrictions on residential properties.					
Zoning should allow more than one house on a lot.					
I want more opportunities to buy local produce.					
I want to encourage farming to preserve our agricultural heritage.					
I want to encourage farming to achieve self-sufficiency/food security.					
The Town should <u>restore</u> the line item in the budget for the purpose of purchasing open space.					
Having protected Open Space is a net “tax positive” to the town.					
We have just enough protected open space, we don't need any more.					
North Stonington's rural character is important to preserve.					
Change is inevitable and we need to actively plan for this change rather than simply resist it.					
Attracting more tourists to town would destroy some of the rural characteristics residents most enjoy (i.e. privacy, less traffic, and unspoiled areas).					
I want North Stonington to be more “self-sufficient” by allowing wind turbines and solar farms, creating a water company and more farms.					
New residential subdivisions should be designed as cluster or conservation subdivisions to preserve as much open space as possible. <i>(See images on backside of attached map)</i>					
We should encourage more developments like Kingswood/Meadow Wood.					
Dark Skies and the quiet rural feel of NS are the reason I moved here (or have stayed here).					
The strong sense of community would be enhanced by more social and cultural opportunities.					
NS needs a community center or other central gathering place (like the Watermark used to provide).					

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PART 4

MARK ALL THAT APPLY		“X”
I WANT MORE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT....	...because it will lower my taxes.	
	...because it will provide local job opportunities.	
	...to make access to basic goods and services more convenient.	
	...to make NS more interesting- more of a destination.	
	OR ... I don't want more Commercial Development.	
I WANT MORE PROTECTED OPEN SPACE...	...to preserve our rural character and maintain our high quality of life and sense of place.	
	...to increase the value of my home.	
	... to provide more recreational opportunities.	
	... to protect natural resources (like lakes, aquifers, great views, habitats).	
	OR ... I don't want any more protected open space.	
I WANT TO SEE AN INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT AND TYPE OF HOUSING...	...so my elderly parents/grandparents don't have to leave town when they retire.	
	...so my kids can live here when they get out of school.	
	... so we have more kids in our schools.	
	... to make NS a more vibrant community.	
	... so our teachers, firemen, and service employees (etc.) can live in town.	
OR ... We have enough Housing choice and quantity in town.		

PART 5

WHAT TYPE OF BUSINESS MIGHT YOU ENCOURAGE? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY “X”)			
Motel/Hotel	Small Grocery	Medical Offices	
Bank	Indoor Recreational Facility	Arts & Culture Establishments	
Gas Station	Restaurant	Large-scale Retail	
Drive-thru Restaurant	Research Facility	Manufacturing/Industrial	
Gift Shops	Small-scale Retail	Small-scale Brewery	
Professional offices	Auto Repair	Self Storage Facility	
Farm Store (year round)	Auto Sales	Commercial Greenhouses	
Pharmacy	Technical/IT Company	Assisted Living Facility	
Other (specify)	Other (specify)	Other (specify)	
Other (specify)	Other (specify)	Other (specify)	
Other (specify)	Other (specify)	Other (specify)	

2013 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY

PART 6 *PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED MAP TO ASSIST YOU WITH THIS SECTION.*****

1. If you want more residential housing mixed with stores, offices and small businesses, where would you best locate them?

Any of the Existing Non-Residential Zones (Commercial, Office Research and Industrial Zones) (AREA 1 on Map – See legend)	
Any of the existing Commercial Zones and in some Residential Zones by Special Permit (AREA 2 on Map See Legend)	
Only the Commercial and Industrial Zones by the Rotary (AREA 3 on map)	
The West End of Rte. 2 by the Casino (AREA 4 on map)	
Anywhere!	
I don't want this at all!	

2. In order to help attract new businesses to town, North Stonington should:

Offer tax relief to encourage new business to locate in NS.	
Consider providing necessary infrastructure such as municipal water and sewer.	
Other: (Please explain)	
Do not offer any incentives to the prospective businesses.	

PART 7

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO VOTE FOR AN INCREASE IN TAXES TO PROVIDE FOR EITHER THE CREATION OF, INCREASE IN, OR THE IMPROVEMENT OF ANY THE FOLLOWING?	YES	NO
Emergency Services (fire, ambulance, police)		
Education		
Infrastructure (roads, buildings, and bridges)		
Purchase and maintenance of Open Space		
Business Development		
Sewers to encourage business development		
Affordable Housing Fund		
A <i>package treatment</i> plant in the Commercial Development or Industrial Zone *		
Other:		

*Package Treatment Plant info: <http://www.pollutioncontrolsystem.com/Page.aspx/31/PackagePlants.html>

We encourage you to provide additional comments, suggestions or further clarification of any responses on the back of this page.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

(i.e. What do you like about NS? What do you want to preserve? What changes would you like to see? What is working and what is not? What do you want NS to look like and/or to be like in 10 years and how do we get there? How can we work together to achieve our goals?)

Optional

Name: _____

Address: _____

Are you a: Homeowner ___ Renter ___ Seasonal Resident ___ Land Owner ___ Business Owner ___
(Check all that apply)

Questions? Contact Juliet Leeming, Town Planner/ZEO @ 860-535-2877 x27 or

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Zoning Map

Town-owned
Wintechog Hill Parcel

Legend

Water Features

- Lakes and Ponds
- Streams

Zoning Key

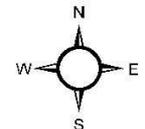
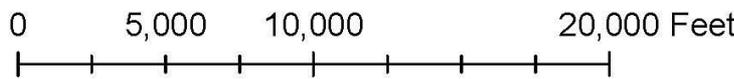
Zones

- Commercial Zone 1 (C1)
- Commercial Zone 2 (C2)
- Commercial Development (CD)
- Highway - Commercial (HC)
- Village Commercial (VC)
- Office/Research (OR)
- Industrial (I)
- High-Density Residential (R40)
- Medium-Density Residential (R60)
- Rural Preservation Zone (R80)

Area 1

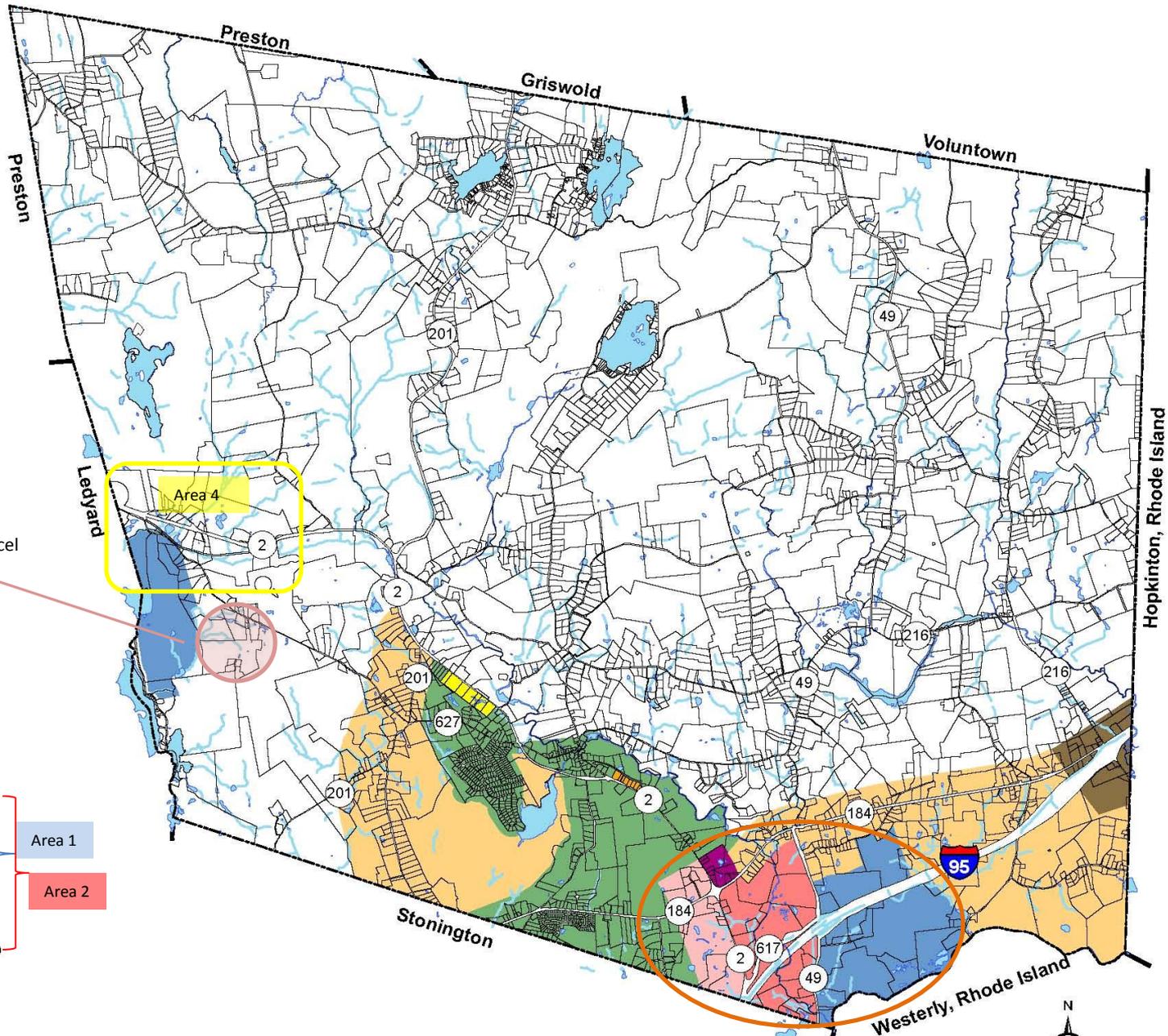
Area 2

Area 3



Notes

THIS MAP IS PREPARED FOR THE INVENTORY OF REAL PROPERTY FOUND WITHIN THESE JURISDICTIONS AND IS COMPILED FROM PERSONAL SURVEYS, PLATS, AND OTHER PUBLIC RECORDS AND DATA. USERS OF THE MAP ARE HEREBY ADVISED THAT THE INFORMATION ON THIS MAP IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. THE TOWN AND THE MAPMAKING COMPANIES ASSUME NO LIABILITY FOR THE INFORMATION CONTAINED ON THIS MAP. HORIZONTAL DATUM BASED ON THE CONNECTICUT STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM, NAD83.



Hopkinton, Rhode Island

Westerly, Rhode Island

Preston

Preston

Griswold

Voluntown

Stonington

Traditional Subdivision



Figure 7A-2. Site A: Yield Plan

Conservation Subdivision



Figure 7A-9. Site A: Drawing in the Lot Lines

TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	EXAMPLES	CURRENT ACREAGE (Approx.)
PROTECTED OPEN SPACE	State Owned Development Rights (or TDR)	427
	Conservation Easements/other deed restrictions and required 15% Set aside Open Space per Subdivision Regs.	1614
	Land owned by Avalonia, and Land Alliance	574
	State Land	2754
	Unbuildable land (FEMA Flood land and Wet soils)	7022
	*Land Owned by Nature Conservancy	135.13
	*Town Owned parcels (Excluding Hewitt Farm property)	281.75
PURPOSEFUL/PERCEIVED OPEN SPACE	*Farmland (PA490 and 10 Mil)	5473
	*Forest (PA 490)	6235
	Mixed Farm and Forest	2270
ACTIVE AND PASSIVE PUBLIC RECREATIONAL AREAS	State Parks/Forests	1368
	*Municipal Recreational Areas (i.e. Hewitt Farm, recreational Facility, school fields)	161
	Private recreational facilities and Areas (Little League, Summer Camps)	1315

*Less protected in the long run- but currently counted as open space
 Given the State Goal of preserving more Open Space, I am assuming for the sake of this Plan that Patchaug State Forest will remain protected.

Total Acreage for North Stonington: 35,000 acres

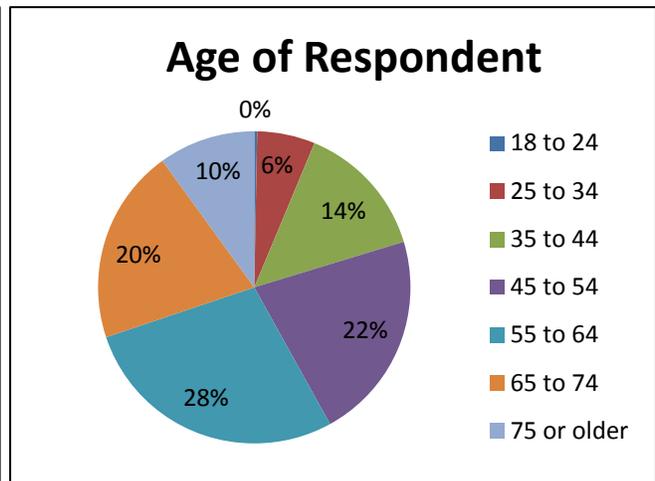
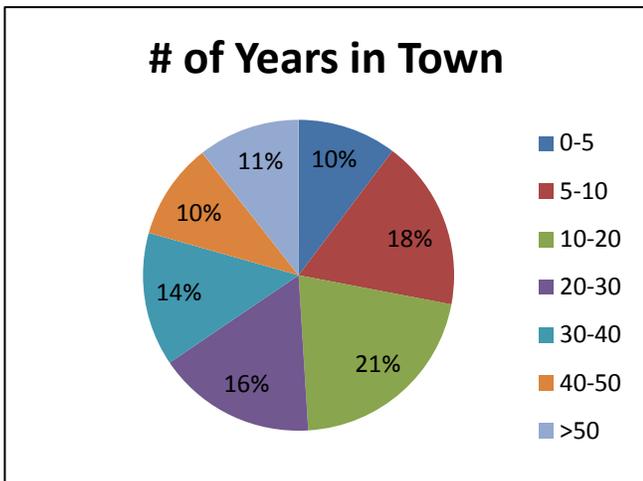
Any Questions? Contact Juliet Leeming, Town Planner at jleeming@northstoningtonct.gov or at 860-535-2877 x27

General

Age of Respondents		
18 to 24	0.30%	1
25 to 34	6.00%	21
35 to 44	14.00%	49
45 to 54	21.70%	76
55 to 64	27.90%	98
65 to 74	20.20%	71
75 or older	10.00%	35

Abbreviations Used	
SA	Strongly Agree
A	Agree
DK	Don't Know
D	Disagree
SD	Strongly Disagree

Years lived in Town		
0-5	10.30%	32
5-10	17.70%	55
10-20	21.00%	65
20-30	16.50%	51
30-40	13.90%	43
40-50	10.00%	31
>50	10.60%	33



	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
Change is inevitable and we need to actively plan for this change rather than simply resist it.	35.10%	42.70%	5.70%	9.70%	6.80%	370
	130	158	21	36	25	
	77.80%		5.70%	16.50%		
	288		21	61		
The strong sense of community would be enhanced by more social and cultural opportunities.	20.50%	45.90%	18.90%	11.20%	3.60%	366
	75	168	69	41	13	
	66.40%		18.90%	14.80%		
	243		69	54		
NS needs a community center or other central gathering place (like the Watermark used to provide).	18.90%	43.30%	17.80%	15.10%	4.90%	365
	69	158	65	55	18	
	62.20%		17.80%	20.00%		
	227		65	73		

Town Services

Level of Town Service	Increased	Decreased	Stay the same	Count
Police (3 Resident Troopers- currently)	23.60%	7.30%	69.00%	368
	87	27	254	
Fire	19.20%	1.90%	78.90%	365
	70	7	288	
Ambulance	14.30%	1.70%	84.00%	363
	52	6	305	
Education	37.70%	13.30%	49.00%	361
	136	48	177	
Public Works	15.40%	11.50%	73.20%	358
	55	41	262	
Town Hall Services (Clerk, Building, Zoning, Assessor, GIS etc.) (Any dept. in particular?)	5.70%	14.50%	79.80%	366
	21	53	292	
Recreational Facilities	23.40%	7.20%	69.40%	359
	84	26	249	

Police (3 Resident Troopers- currently)

Increase police if all shifts are not covered (2)

Troopers need to not just check for seat belts at the rotary

There needs to be something done about the speeders & all the drug houses in Town!

Police seem ineffective-somehow increase supervision to increase effectiveness

I think contracting with the State Police is fine, as long as they are spending their time and resources on North Stonington, not as a secondary aspect of their position. Also, as long as we have access to the resources of the State Police in emergencies. I think from what I heard and their lack of interest or apparent apathy during the string of burglaries wasn't flattering./ Or maybe the troopers should try to leave Mystic Pizza now & then

Decrease resident troopers to 2

Use troopers to control speed in village if necessary.

Fire

If fire & ambulance think they are overworked & need more equipment-increase, if not support them.

Improvement needed in Fire/ Firehouse-need something done, but not a palace

Merge ambulance with fire department (2)

I think the town would be better off with full time fire services, especially due to the rural nature of the town; it would decrease response time and increase chances for survival in a life threatening emergency.

Ambulance

It's time for the fire department, ambulance and police to have an updated common building.

Ambulance-needs attention, much of the time it has no coverage

We had a serious accident & N. Stonington ambulance took forever to come. Westerly was quicker.

Town Services

Town Hall Services

reduce town hall hours/ automate services to on-line (4)
reduce assessor office staff/ replace assessor (2)
Town Officials - decreased/ cross-train
Decrease the hiring of consultants.
decrease PZ lawyer funding
Decrease Town Hall departments to reduce taxes. Get trained personnel or train the people on these boards to make better decisions for the Town.
The economy tanked and the zoning official was kept full time with no applications.
Senior Citizens service & wetlands & zoning enforcement increased.
Promote Planning & Zoning and add a staff person.
hire town manager
Hire Finance Manager
Full-time building inspector
Regionalize Animal Control
Have Town Hall open 9 to 5 or Saturday morning.

Public Works

Public Works should be able to do their job with fewer people.
Increase Public Works only for infrastructure
Increase storm service clean up/Do something to avoid so many unnecessary power outages!
Increase - Trash/Transfer Station / Hours (5)
Keep budget the same, trash pickup should be included as part of taxes paid. (4)
DO NOT ELIMINATE PUBLIC USE OF TRANSFER STATION - WILL ULTIMATELY COST BOTH THE TOWN & RESIDENTS MORE \$ - HAVE SEEN THIS HAPPEN IN OTHER TOWNS! (2)

Education

Eliminate high school/Consolidate w/ region (5)
Schools buildings need attention, so the increase in education is for this alone
Better schools attract & need ball fields for recreation
Need to review options for education/ Explore a specialized High School

Recreational Facilities

Several recent projects have helped with recreational facilities such as new tennis courts, basketball courts, ice/volleyball court
Let individuals build, bring funding for recreation facilities. Let individuals do the work and provide funding for items without over controlling them, but guide as the public majority would want.
We don't need a town pizza party at the end of every sport season. I would rather decrease the payment to play the sport. Re; parks and rec
Make better use of the existing recreational facilities.
Need recreational facilities on other areas in town not 12 miles away.

Town Services

Other
Increase - Commercial Development (4)
Increase - Farmers market
We have an existing Open Space parcel in the form of the former YMCA Camp up in the North West corner of Town. It has trails, diverse wildlife and landscape and is an ideal recreational facility for our community (walking dogs, hiking, boy scouts, etc.) Why are we letting that get taken away from us? Because we are afraid of the cost of standing up for what belongs to this Town? We must stand for that principle. It will cost us far less than trying to go out an 'buy' similar Open Space! And that frees up funds for other services as needed.
Recreational assets that the Town has (e.g., the former YMCA Camp property) are attractive to Town citizens and to those considering N. Stonington for their home
Increase for Hiking/Walking Open Space
Create a 1.5 mile track
Increase for Family Services
Senior Center - Decreased (unless it starts to do something for more than a few "members") Pawcatuck Neighbor Center - Increased Wheeler Library - Increased
Increase for Historic Preservation
Public swimming access (2)
We don't get many services now. The school system is about it. The ones we do have are volunteer and we can barely pay for ones we do have.
Increase tourism
Need Street Lights
Save ex red horse nursery school for appropriate use.
Great job!!!!
Increased public space for meetings, etc for town organizations such as the Boy Scouts
Need cross country grooming machine for Hewitt property

Taxes

Would you be willing to vote for an increase in taxes to provide for either the creation of, increase in, or the improvement of any of the following?

	YES		NO		Count	Answered Question	359
						Skipped Question	31
Emergency Services (fire, ambulance, police)	52.40%	175	47.60%	159	334		
Education	54.30%	184	45.70%	155	339		
Infrastructure (roads, buildings, and bridges)	51.50%	167	48.50%	157	324		
Purchase and maintenance of Open Space	27.30%	87	72.70%	232	319		
Business Development	42.50%	133	57.50%	180	313		
Sewers to encourage business development	42.30%	134	57.70%	183	317		
Affordable Housing Fund	17.60%	56	82.40%	262	318		
A package treatment plant in the Commercial Development or Industrial Zone *	23.90%	68	76.10%	216	284		
Other (please specify)					42		

General - Taxes

I don't feel that raising residential taxes is the answer, and I am not familiar with all the possibilities for creative financing that the town can take advantage of such as long term bonds, etc. Raising taxes will drive people out of town to Stonington or Voluntown, where the tax burden is much lower comparatively. It's unfortunate that the current administration never took advantage of the Foxwoods offerings for town improvements when that casino was doing well. Instead, there short-sightedness and swamp Yankee mentality has resulted in the situation that we are in now....rising costs and no way to pay for them, but to increase residential taxes. Why am I to assume anything will change if the same people are in power?

Taxes are already high for a Town with nothing in it./ Can't afford a tax increase.

At this time the Town has not shown any proposal is worthy of a tax increase.

Let's allow commercial growth to happen to pay for these. I strongly feel that the town will not get another dime more from me until there is guaranteed revenue from other sources.

Not sure on Infrastructure or Open Space & package treatment plant depends on the amount of the increase. I would like to see taxes at least kept at the same level & our teachers, firemen, etc. should be living in Town if our tax dollars are paying their salaries.

I will pay extra to keep the town character, but our money seems to disappear.

Increase in taxes for underground utilities

Shift tax dollars for business development

Develop a water company to sell to towns in need

Noise enforcement

Make cuts to all budget items!

Taxes

Education	
Pro	Increase in education for buildings only.
	A good school is on the top of the list for any upscale or middle class community. It's a core need that attracts small business owners and private development. If the school closes, this town will slowly
??	Why does it cost less to send a child to a private school than the cost for the same student in our public school?
Affordable Housing	
Pro	In regards to Affordable housing. WE need to solicit for grant funding and look at other towns that have done this successfully.
	Affordable housing only because it is required by the state.
??	SA
Con	Why would I want to increase my taxes to pay for someone else's house. If you want affordable
	Why would affordable housing fund need to exist. Developers should include them as part of their development. Developers can also be responsible for adding facilities such as gyms and community centers/club houses.
Recreation	
Pro	Increase - Youth & Family Services (like Ledyard & Stonington)
	Increase for Rec. Department Scholarships
	Increase-Community Center
Sewers	
Pro	Sewers in the Route 2/ Route 184 area only.
	Sewers to encourage business development should be highest priority
	Package treatment plant is a great idea and there are a lot of grants for higher gov't levels to accomplish this so local residents don't have to fully fund the project. Same goes for sewers and water. Gas line is already on rt.2.
	Sewers to encourage business development-should have accepted Mashantucket's offer instead of using tax money to fight the inevitable. Change in attitude doesn't cost anything but accomplishes much
??	Sewers are a huge expense, not totally opposed but first the plan and then do we have any takers?
	Maybe on Business Development, sewers to encourage business development & a package treatment plan
	If the package treatment plant is part of encouraging business development, then perhaps I would vote for it.
	Would need a cost benefit analysis on sewers for encouraging business development.
	Maybe for business development & sewers
Con	A package treatment plant-then we would be in the sewer business-not a good idea.
	We need to invest in our own infrastructure before we can invest in sewers and other projects we need a long term plan and keep the taxes low as possible very good management skills.

Taxes

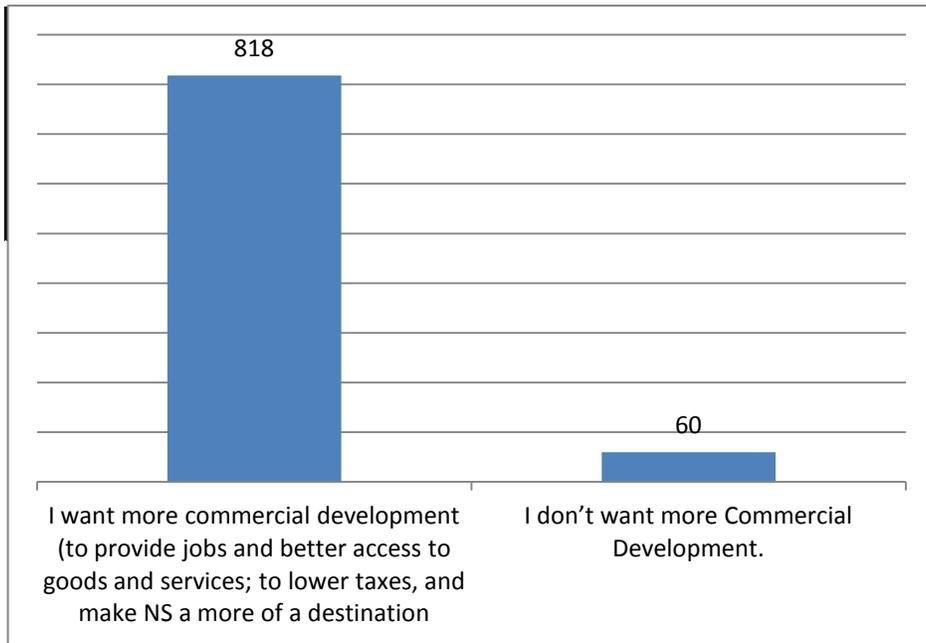
Sewers Cont.	
Con	Why do we need to provide sewers? there are green methods that are just as viable and better for the environment i.e. composting systems
	Development should be self supporting not subsidized
	Let business bring sewer up
Emergency Services	
Pro	The necessity of a fire "substation" should be the priority of our residents. The location & land is available & this is always shot down. A central location for quick response to save lives & our homes. Our high taxes create more infrastructure in Town that is a waste. The needs our residents is never a priority.
??	Maybe an increase for Emergency Services
	Do we need a one of a kind Firehouse?
Con	Consolidate Emergency Services
Open Space	
Pro	We need to fund Town's ability to protect open space gifts to Town & enforce open space zoning restrictions.
	Protection & restoration of historic publicly owned assets, houses, dams, trails.
??	Maybe Open space
	Maybe would pay more for the purchase & maintenance of Open Space

Economic Development

Development Related Questions	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
The current Village Commercial, Commercial Development, and Office/Research Zones should be consolidated into one unified Commercial Development Zone that encompasses them all.	11.70%	31.70%	37.40%	13.60%	5.70%	369
	43	117	138	50	21	
	43.40%		37.40%	19.30%		
	160		138	71		
It is necessary to invest in our infrastructure if we expect to have quality economic development (i.e. roads, schools, emergency services, utilities etc.)	24.40%	51.80%	10.00%	10.60%	3.30%	369
	90	191	37	39	12	
	76.20%		10.00%	13.90%		
	281		37	51		
Allowing large-scale developments (i.e. Large senior housing complex or retail Big Box) is OK provided they can be located and visually screened in such a way that is acceptable to the residents of North Stonington.	29.20%	32.20%	11.20%	15.30%	12.00%	366
	107	118	41	56	44	
	61.40%		11.20%	27.30%		
	225		41	100		
We should allow mixed-use (residential units above commercial) development in the Commercial Zones.	19.80%	45.10%	13.30%	15.80%	6.00%	368
	73	166	49	58	22	
	64.90%		13.30%	21.80%		
	239		49	80		
The town should ease zoning restrictions on commercial properties.	18.40%	27.90%	22.70%	20.50%	10.40%	365
	67	102	83	75	38	
	46.30%		22.70%	30.90%		
	169		83	113		
It is OK to encourage development in the non-residential zones.	23.20%	50.50%	9.00%	10.70%	6.60%	366
	85	185	33	39	24	
	73.70%		9.00%	17.30%		
	270		33	63		
It is OK to encourage development in the non-residential zones even if this means introducing sewers to this area.	18.40%	33.20%	18.10%	17.30%	13.20%	365
	67	121	66	63	48	
	51.60%		18.10%	30.50%		
	188		66	111		

Economic Development

I want more commercial development..... (Mark ALL that apply)					
		Percent	Count	Answered Question	346
...because it will lower my taxes.		71.40%	247	Skipped Question	44
...because it will provide local job opportunities.		68.80%	238		
...to make access to basic goods and services more convenient.		60.70%	210		
...to make NS more interesting- more of a destination		35.50%	123		
OR...I don't want more Commercial Development.		17.30%	60		



Economic Development

What type of business might you encourage? (Mark ALL that apply)					
		Percent	Count	Answered Question	365
Motel/Hotel		20.00%	73	Skipped Question	25
Small Grocery		65.80%	240		
Medical Offices		62.20%	227		
Bank		38.40%	140		
Indoor Recreational Facility		42.50%	155		
Arts & Culture Establishments		54.50%	199		
Gas Station		14.50%	53		
Restaurant		61.60%	225		
Large-scale Retail		27.10%	99		
Drive-thru Restaurant		22.70%	83		
Research Facility		54.20%	198		
Manufacturing/Industrial		44.90%	164		
Gift Shops		37.50%	137		
Small-scale Retail		55.60%	203		
Small-scale Brewery		56.40%	206		
Professional offices		66.30%	242		
Auto Repair		37.30%	136		
Self Storage Facility		20.80%	76		
Farm Store (year round)		74.20%	271		
Auto Sales		12.30%	45		
Commercial Greenhouses		60.50%	221		
Pharmacy		63.30%	231		
Technical/IT Company		56.40%	206		
Assisted Living Facility		49.90%	182		
Coffee shop or other type of "central" community service where everyone can gather...					
Green technology companies, work with the schools to encourage curriculum for agriculture as well as alternative energy options as this will be the future for jobs for our children and their children. We need to get back to basics, get rid of all the unnecessary mandates and testing so our children can learn! Math and Science very important.					
Agricultural food processing facility Small scale farm and natural resources tourism					
We need more Arts & Culture Establishments, there is a cultural vacuum in Town with the Watermark gone.					
I suggest the town become more a mix of historical tourism, and independent restaurant/pub that can capitalize on visitor interest in the open space attractions the town offers. People who hike, bike and are interested in history enjoy stopping for a meal. Growth can be steady and controlled. Launching into big box and large scale residential development is attractive from a tax revenue standpoint but could destroy the charm of the town.					

Economic Development

If you want more residential housing mixed with stores, offices and small businesses; where would you best locate them?		
	Percent	Count
Any of the Existing Non-Residential Zones (Commercial, Office Research and Industrial Zones) (AREA 1 on Map – See legend)	33.20%	116
Any of the existing Commercial Zones and in some Residential Zones by Special Permit (AREA 2 on Map See Legend)	23.50%	82
Only the Commercial and Industrial Zones by the Rotary (AREA 3 on map)	30.10%	105
The West End of Rte. 2 by the Casino (AREA 4 on map)	33.20%	116
Anywhere!	14.90%	52
I don't want this at all!	18.90%	66
	answered question	349
	skipped question	41

In order to help attract new businesses to town, North Stonington should:		
	Percent	Count
Offer tax relief to encourage new business to locate in NS.	50.30%	164
Consider providing necessary infrastructure such as municipal water and sewer.	52.50%	171
Do not offer any incentives to the prospective businesses.	24.20%	79
Other ideas? (please specify)		61
	answered question	326
	skipped question	64

Would you be willing to vote for an increase in taxes to provide for either the creation of, increase in, or the improvement of any of the following?			
	YES	NO	Count
Business Development	42.5% (133)	57.5% (180)	313
Sewers to encourage business development	42.3% (134)	57.7% (183)	317
A package treatment plant in the Commercial Development or Industrial Zone *	23.9% (68)	76.1% (216)	284

Economic Development

Additional Comments
Incentives
I do not subscribe to using taxes to control behavior. If we as a Town can attract a business without incentives then we are doing things correctly. Good infrastructure and visibility (near I-95 exit 92 and 93) should be attractive enough. Actively recruit businesses deemed appropriate
No! By offering incentives you are going to raise my taxes!
Incentives on a case by case basis and for a limited time only. Offer tax relief selectively.
Tax relief for a period of time only - provide statistics on traffic throughput (e.g. use casino as source of increased throughput to encourage businesses); show rt 2 as commuter route, not just driven by locals. for business success - location, location, location so must show businesses why NS location is a positive for them.
I don't see the Town offering tax relief for existing business so why for new businesses?
Offer tax incentive to offset the lack of city water and sewer
Offering tax relief has not proven to encourage "long-term" businesses. When relief ends, businesses leave and we're stuck with empty buildings and business blight.
CT state must also partner for incentive & relief
The State of Connecticut is the problem, needs to be fixed. Get our representatives to make it easier to start a business here. We have not had a MAJOR company move here since the income tax was implemented.
Vision/Planning
We need a vision and to look at other communities and see how they have enticed new businesses (look at Stonington). Do our homework first and then implement the necessary changes. We need to evaluate what is in demand for the area & provide services to meet that demand. Any business should fit into the rural nature of town.
1. First we should decide on what types of businesses we would want to have in town . 2. Then we should decide, where we want them. 3. Then if we put out a notice of availability and encourage certain businesses here, we can get the types of businesses we would like to have here.
I think we should have a clear plan for what we want, including a architectural/landscaping handbook of designs that we like and stick to it, so that a developer knows what will get approved and the town will know that what gets approved will be a good fit. I do not think we should have tax incentives or pay for a sewer or anything like that because it doesn't pay off in the long run.
If you keep all the development near the Casino and keep the traffic out of the residential areas, then I'm OK with the mixed use/commercial/affordable housing. I don't want any large scale place that attracts traffic and crime in the rural residential areas. That's why we paid so much for the house we bought and chose NS over Mystic, Niantic, Westerly, and Pawcatuck. We wanted space, privacy, and nature. Small restaurants like the
No more residential housing
Need to have town leadership continue to work towards these goals
Promote Agribusiness

Economic Development

Taxes

We simply need to simplify the tax code. The town (required by the state) literally taxes every last item owned by the business. Simply tax the building and land - not all the equipment or inventory needed to run the business. Lower the mill rate in order to make it profitable for business. If the rate keeps climbing to pay for the little services we have in the town i.e. schools, gov't, we won't be able to keep the people in town or get business here either.

Should a business get a tax break but not the residents? We need tax positive businesses if you plan to provide water and sewer.

Need qualified tax relief/support, tied to sustainable growth businesses & specific job addition threshold.

Support Existing Business

STOP preventing businesses to do well here! Perception of being business unfriendly needs to change. Make Economic Development a priority; ensure our zoning and wetlands regulations support a clear vision and are more business friendly.

Promote existing local businesses and offer local services to help small businesses understand & navigate all red tape issues. Reduce the size restrictions on signage and develop new regulations that are flexible. Ensure that the application process is more predictable and reliable and then always follow the "rule of law".

Infrastructure

Small temporary tax relief and assistance in building individual sewers if town is not going to assess business district municipal water and sewer

Consider placing infrastructure (sewers, water, gas) along Route 2 corridor. Consider tax relief for infrastructure development

Housing

Housing Related Questions	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
Allowing large-scale developments (i.e. Large senior housing complex or retail Big Box) is OK provided they can be located and visually screened in such a way that is acceptable to the residents of North Stonington.	29.20%	32.20%	11.20%	15.30%	12.00%	366
	107	118	41	56	44	
	61.40%		11.20%	27.30%		
	225		41	100		
We should allow mixed-use (residential units above commercial) development in the Commercial Zones.	19.80%	45.10%	13.30%	15.80%	6.00%	368
	73	166	49	58	22	
	64.90%		13.30%	21.80%		
	239		49	80		
North Stonington should have a wider choice in housing.	11.80%	31.50%	15.30%	30.60%	10.80%	372
	44	117	57	114	40	
	43.30%		15.30%	41.40%		
	161		57	154		
We should allow 10+ unit residential development.	8.40%	13.20%	15.70%	34.80%	27.80%	356
	30	47	56	124	99	
	21.60%		15.70%	62.60%		
	77		56	223		
We should allow 5-10 unit residential development.	8.20%	24.40%	16.70%	28.30%	22.40%	353
	29	86	59	100	79	
	32.60%		16.70%	50.70%		
	115		59	179		
We should allow 3-5 unit residential development.	12.80%	41.60%	14.50%	14.00%	17.10%	351
	45	146	51	49	60	
	54.40%		14.50%	31.10%		
	191		51	109		
North Stonington has enough starter homes for folks making under \$80,000 for a family of four.	7.70%	23.40%	34.30%	21.40%	13.20%	364
	28	85	125	78	48	
	31.10%		34.30%	34.60%		
	113		125	126		

Housing

Housing Related Questions	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
Certain Town-owned parcels should be utilized for Affordable residential development provided a generous portion is preserved as open space (i.e. Recently acquired 100+ acre off Wintechog Hill – See attached map)	11.30%	36.50%	11.80%	20.60%	19.80%	364
	41	133	43	75	72	
	47.80%		11.80%	40.40%		
	174		43	147		
The town should ease restrictions on residential properties.	12.90%	26.90%	19.00%	28.00%	13.20%	364
	47	98	69	102	48	
	39.80%		19.00%	41.20%		
	145		69	150		
Zoning should allow more than one house on a lot.	5.50%	14.50%	15.60%	40.30%	24.10%	365
	20	53	57	147	88	
	20.00%		15.60%	64.40%		
	73		57	235		
New residential subdivisions should be designed as cluster or conservation subdivisions to preserve as much open space as possible. (See images on backside of attached map)	23.30%	41.90%	14.50%	12.30%	7.90%	365
	85	153	53	45	29	
	65.20%		14.50%	20.20%		
	238		53	74		
We should encourage more developments like Kingswood/Meadow Wood.	6.10%	20.10%	22.00%	29.20%	22.60%	363
	22	73	80	106	82	
	26.20%		22.00%	51.80%		
	95		80	188		

Housing

I want to see an increase in the amount and type of housing.... (Mark ALL that apply)				
	Percent	Count	Answered Question	333
...so my elderly parents/grandparents don't have to leave town when they retire.	35.10%	117	Skipped Question	57
...so my kids can live here when they get out of school.	29.40%	98		
... so we have more kids in our schools.	19.80%	66		
... to make NS a more vibrant community.	36.60%	122		
... so our teachers, firemen, and service employees (etc.) can live in town.	41.40%	138		
OR...We have enough Housing choice and quantity in town.	39.30%	131		

If you want more residential housing mixed with stores, offices and small businesses; where would you best locate them?				
	Percent	Count	Answered Question	349
Any of the Existing Non-Residential Zones (Commercial, Office Research and Industrial Zones) (AREA 1 on Map – See legend)	33.20%	116	Skipped Question	41
Any of the existing Commercial Zones and in some Residential Zones by Special Permit (AREA 2 on Map See Legend)	23.50%	82		
Only the Commercial and Industrial Zones by the Rotary (AREA 3 on map)	30.10%	105		
The West End of Rte. 2 by the Casino (AREA 4 on map)	33.20%	116		
Anywhere!	14.90%	52		
I don't want this at all!	18.90%	66		

Would you be willing to vote for an increase in taxes to provide for either the creation of, increase in, or the improvement of an Affordable Housing Fund?	YES	NO	Count
	17.60%	82.40%	318
	56	262	318

Open Space

Open Space Related Questions	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
The Town should restore the line item in the budget for the purpose of purchasing open space.	13.10%	21.90%	27.00%	23.20%	14.80%	366
	48	80	99	85	54	
	35%		27%	38%		
	128		99	139		
Having protected Open Space is a net "tax positive" to the town.	13.20%	24.80%	33.60%	16.50%	11.80%	363
	48	90	122	60	43	
	38%		33.65%	28.30%		
	138		122	103		
We have just enough protected open space, we don't need any more.	16.80%	28.10%	21.10%	21.40%	12.70%	370
	62	104	78	79	47	
	44.90%		21.10%	34.10%		
	166		78	126		
New residential subdivisions should be designed as cluster or conservation subdivisions to preserve as much open space as possible. (See images on backside of attached map)	23.30%	41.90%	14.50%	12.30%	7.90%	365
	85	153	53	45	29	
	65.20%		14.50%	20.20%		
	238		53	74		

I want more protected open space.... (Mark ALL that apply)				
	Percent	Count	Answered Question	325
... to preserve our rural character and maintain our high quality of life and sense of place.	53.20%	173	Skipped Question	65
... to increase the value of my home.	25.50%	83		
... to provide more recreational opportunities.	32.30%	105		
... to protect natural resources (like lakes, aquifers, great views, habitats).	64.90%	211		
OR... I don't want any more protected open space.	27.40%	89		

Would you be willing to vote for an increase in taxes to provide for either the creation of, increase in, or the improvement of any of the following?					
	YES	NO	Rating	Answered Question	359
			Count	Skipped Question	31
Purchase and maintenance of Open Space	27.30%	72.70%	319		
	87	232			

Rural Character

Rural Character Related Questions	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
North Stonington's rural character is important to preserve.	44.10%	42.70%	5.70%	5.10%	2.40%	370
	163	158	21	19	9	
	86.80%		5.70%	7.50%		
	321		21	28		
Attracting more tourists to town would destroy some of the rural characteristics residents most enjoy (i.e. privacy, less traffic, and unspoiled areas).	18.50%	26.40%	13.40%	30.80%	10.90%	367
	68	97	49	113	40	
	44.90%		13.40%	41.70%		
	165		49	153		
The inconvenience of having to drive long distances for jobs or services is an acceptable sacrifice for the privilege of such a high quality of life.	29.00%	31.50%	8.50%	22.70%	8.20%	365
	106	115	31	83	30	
	60.50%		8.50%	30.90%		
	221		31	113		
Dark Skies and the quiet rural feel of NS are the reason I moved here (or have stayed here).	38.40%	39.20%	4.60%	12.80%	4.90%	367
	141	144	17	47	18	
	77.60%		4.60%	17.70%		
	285		17	17.70%		

Farming and Self Sufficiency

Farming and Self Sufficiency Questions	SA	A	DK	D	SD	Count
The Town should encourage more alternative energy development.	28.50%	38.60%	12.80%	13.30%	6.80%	368
	105	142	47	49	25	
	67.10%		12.80%	20.10%		
	247		47	74		
I want more opportunities to buy local produce.	31.00%	48.80%	9.60%	9.30%	1.40%	365
	113	178	35	34	5	
	79.80%		9.60%	10.70%		
	291		35	39		
I want to encourage farming to preserve our agricultural heritage.	42.30%	45.30%	5.10%	5.40%	1.90%	371
	157	158	19	20	7	
	87.60%		5.10%	7.30%		
	315		19	27		
I want to encourage farming to achieve self-sufficiency/food security.	36.00%	39.80%	12.70%	8.70%	2.70%	369
	133	147	47	32	10	
	75.80%		12.70%	11.40%		
	280		47	42		
I want North Stonington to be more “self-sufficient” by allowing wind turbines and solar farms, creating a water company and more farms.	29.30%	33.60%	19.80%	10.60%	6.80%	369
	108	124	73	39	25	
	62.90%		19.80%	17.40%		
	232		73	64		

Farm Store (year round)	74.20%	271
Commercial Greenhouses	60.50%	221

Summary of written comments from final “Open Comment Question” on 2013 Community Survey

There is a clear recognition that NS is a special place and residents expressed a deep desire to preserve what is good and special about NS. There was also a clear recognition that some change is needed in order to sustain NS as a livable community especially given the harsh the economic climate. Many feel that NS can both retain its rural character and allow for a moderate increase in suitable commercial development. There are, however, many factors that complicate attainment of this desired balance.

NS was described as a “rural oasis” worthy of respect and preservation. Residents identified the following positive attributes as things to preserve: quiet and safe environment, agricultural heritage, natural beauty, strong community, strong values, rural small town character, access to nature, and of course the dark skies. The negatives most commonly spoke about were the high taxes despite the lack of town services. Residents identified the need for housing and opportunities (jobs, services, recreation) for young people in order to be a sustainable vibrant community. The lack of housing choice for young people and seniors, the lack of commercial development to diversify the tax base while also providing jobs and convenient access to goods and services, and the high cost of education, and the lack of effective leadership were also identified as negatives that needed to be addressed.

Before the four themes were identified at the Visioning Session, other recurring themes emerged from the 170 written comments received. These themes were: Responsibility, Balance, Commitment, Fear, and Communication. When reclassified under the Visioning themes of Livability, Sustainability, Progress and Community, the same overall message emerges.

Responsibility:

Residents spoke of a need for thoughtful action and fiscal sustainability/responsibility. There was a cry for greater efficiency within town departments and to live within our means (less spending). Despite great insistence on reducing spending, most acknowledged the need for capital investment (infrastructure and schools) but that the *process* by which decisions were made needed to be far more transparent and responsive to the needs of all residents (not a perceived elite, vocal few). The need for greater communication was expressed often. Residents felt that the Town had a responsibility to the residents to provide more (creative) opportunities to participate; to be thoughtful, proactive and responsive when planning for the future; and to address the problems of today with a fresh attitude rather than applying old logic/tactics.

Balance:

Residents agreed that change is inevitable, but expressed a robust belief that change must occur organically, in a thoughtful manner in order to preserve the essence of NS’s character. An increase in *suitable* development in the designated commercial and industrial zones could be encouraged and managed in such a way as to retain the rural character. To accomplish this balance, the Town must be deliberate in its actions; the regulations flexible but clear coupled with a predictable permitting process; have a welcoming attitude and embrace creative ideas; and the leadership and commitment strong, or the town will remain stagnant with an ever increasing tax burden and dwindling services. The lack of

large scale commercial development is not seen as the primary problem or only reason for high taxes; many feel the problem lies in NS's reputation of being business unfriendly; being its own worst enemy; perceptions of unresponsive and ineffective leadership; inefficient spending; and lack of thoughtful planning and clear regulations.

Communication and Commitment:

These two concepts relate to each other in that once communication is established and people are involved in the process, the level of commitment to the shared goals increases dramatically. Many related a need to create a vision or to decide what the Town wants and to then commit to it. This could be deciding we are a rural agricultural town and simply build on that or NS could decide to commit to attracting clean energy industries or simply add more residential units. There were many suggestions about what we need in town or how the town could progress. NS could also decide to remain exactly as is. Whatever the decision, the message was clear that more effective communication was needed to move forward as well as renewed commitment, and proactive stance on the part of the town officials and commission members while increasing opportunities for citizen participation in decision making.

Fear:

Many fears were entwined within the comments. There is a clear fear of large-scale development that many feel would ruin the rural character and turn NS into "Anywhere USA." There is also a fear of not being able to remain in NS because of rising taxes and other livability factors such as limited housing choice, few local jobs, and limited access to goods and services. There is a fear of losing the school due to changing demographics and high cost of maintaining a facility for so few students. Many fear nothing will change which primarily stems from a distrust of the ability of local government to change and/or a disappointment in current leadership practices. Perhaps a plausible summary of the greatest concern expressed is the fear of permanently losing the extraordinary character and unique attributes that make NS so desirable due to the unintended consequences of hurried, reactionary development decisions made without the benefit of a deliberate, thoughtful planning process facilitated by professional staff and a fully informed, committed public.

What do we risk by not addressing the issues facing NS?

Without change, will continue to "tax motivate" people and businesses to leave. The residents and existing small businesses will not only continue to feel the brunt of the high taxes, but they will also have to make do with fewer services. Ns will continue to lose its younger generation which equates to a loss of diversity and vitality and some may argue an ultimate loss of community. If school enrollments continue to decline and state mandates continue to increase, NS residents will face the possible loss of the High School. Finally, without clear deliberate planning, effective regulations, strong responsive leadership (committed to creating a livable, sustainable, progressive, community), and a process by which the public can participate in a meaningful way, the town essentially loses its ability to prevent unwanted development or effectively manage change which may ultimately jeopardize the very things residents are passionate about preserving.