

2. Creating a Vision

From the statements that emerged in a formal *Visioning Session*, it is clear that the central philosophy of the 2013 Plan does not differ dramatically from previous years' plans with the exception perhaps, of a new commitment to more proactive planning and decision making in order to progress and to grow the local economy. The challenge North Stonington and other communities face, is how to meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. Growth is slowly being recognized as an opportunity to implement the community vision, rather than a threat to the town's character. It presents an opportunity for residents to get involved in planning for the future of their town.

NORTH STONINGTON'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- ***EMBRACE AND BUILD ON WHO WE ARE – A SMALL, QUIET, FARMING COMMUNITY WITH VALUABLE NATURAL ASSETS.***
- ***BE PROACTIVE ABOUT BUSINESS GROWTH WHILE CAREFULLY MANAGING TYPE, LOCATION, AND APPEARANCE.***
- ***INVOLVE AND INFORM RESIDENTS IN MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS.***
- ***STRENGTHEN OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY.***

When North Stonington residents were asked to choose phrases that resonated with them with respect to the future of North Stonington, they selected the terms Livability, Sustainability, Progress and Community.



2013 Community Visioning Session

Livability: The vision for North Stonington is a safe, quiet, rural setting with a sense of community that is financially affordable. It will provide for open space initiatives, combined with development that is in scale and suitable to North Stonington's character. These developments should be self-funded or profitable enterprises so they will not become burdens to the taxpayers.

Sustainability: We envision becoming a confident, collaborative community by improving our infrastructure and increasing our tax base. We envision accomplishing this proactively by attracting business while maintaining our rural and historic character.

Progress: North Stonington will move forward and retain its character by creating a balance between community, environment, and business.

Community: North Stonington will be a place where our leadership is supportive of new ideas and innovations and our public is supportive of our leadership in moving forward with these ideas for the common good.

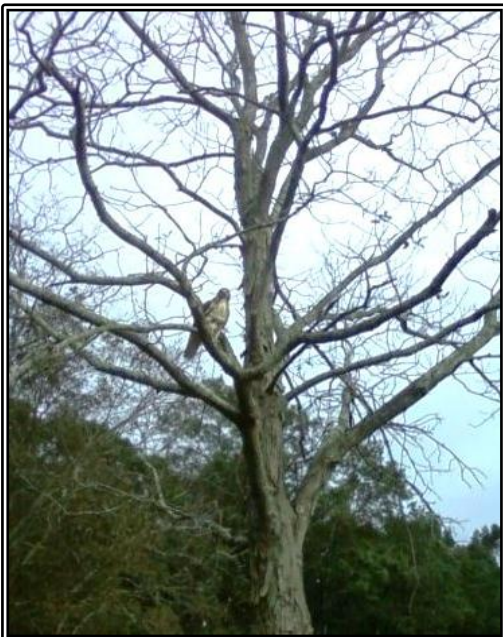
Mission Statement:

The Town of North Stonington will maintain its small-town character; continue to promote an exceptional quality of life in a safe, quiet, rural setting; and preserve property values and the quality of its neighborhoods by encouraging attractive landscaping and design, maintaining historic resources, preserving our pristine natural environment, and planning, maintaining and investing in infrastructure.

North Stonington will continue to provide effective and efficient services designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents; and actively encourage innovation, transparency, and responsiveness by all town employees, volunteers, and officials in the performance of their duties.

Much of North Stonington's charm is derived from its scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, strong rural character, abundant natural resources, farms, and forests. The town will preserve and enhance this environment by identifying and utilizing existing local resources and opportunities, building on community strengths, and addressing problems and new opportunities as they arise. This strategy will improve the economic and social conditions while preserving the overall environment and quality of life.

Finally, North Stonington is a community that strives to be sustainable while creating a new framework for progress. North Stonington's boards, commissions, and schools will make a commitment to engage in coordinated master planning so that coherent town goals can be achieved.



Red-tailed Hawk on Renehan Property in Clarks Falls



Solar Panels at Town Garage



Attractive stonewall and landscaping along Main Street