

10. Revisions Made to the Draft Master Plan by the Town of Sheffield Planning Board During its Acceptance Process

1. Introduction

The Planning Board used the draft Master Plan dated June 25, 2004 during its review and adoption process. The revisions made by the Planning Board during this process are noted in this section. In presenting these adopted revisions, the text from the draft Master Plan dated June 25, 2004 will be presented first followed by the adopted text as it appears in the Master Plan.

Unless noted, all other text in the draft Master Plan, including that in all sections and all the text following the recommendations, as well as content of all the Appendices, were not reviewed by the Planning Board.

Following its review and adoption, The Master Plan document was reformatted by the Planning Board to:

- 1) provide uniform presentation and enhanced readability.
- 2) avoid spreading a table over two pages, where possible.
- 3) increase the font size used in the tables.
- 4) reference maps in the body of the text.

The text of Section 9, which had listed all the recommendations previously discussed in the sections, was replaced with the *Town Master Plan, Summary of Recommendations* document, previously published by the Planning Board. It is hoped that these changes make the Master Plan easier to read and therefore more usable.

2. Revisions

Section 1. A Vision For Sheffield

- Introductory paragraph: In the 1st sentence, “many months of work” was replaced with “two years of work”. In the 2nd sentence, “blueprint” was replaced with “guide”. In the 3rd sentence, the first word “while” was deleted and the 3rd sentence begun with the word “unplanned”; the word “that” was removed and the sentence ended with the word “live”. The 4th sentence was begun with “Coordinated” and “aspects” was changed to “qualities”.
- In 1. The Vision: In the 2nd paragraph, last sentence: the phrase “does not want to see itself turning into” was replaced with “does not want to become”. In the 4th paragraph, 7th bullet, the phrase “affordable to local members of the community” was changed to “affordable to all members of the local community”.

- In 2. How the plan was developed: 3rd paragraph, 1st sentence, the word “basis” was change to “guide”.

Section 2. Who We Are & How We Live: Demographic Trends & Housing Conditions. Housing Action Plan

1. Housing Goals

- Word “goals” revised to “OBJECTIVES”.
- Goal # 1: “To ensure that residential development benefits the entire community and maintains the open space, farmland and scenic vistas and other elements of small town and rural character to the maximum extent possible” was deleted as it was a reiteration of the Overall Goal for Housing.
- Goal # 2, which became the first objective: “To encourage the reuse of existing structures and infill development wherever possible to meet all general and affordable housing needs” listed as the first “Objective” and revised to “Encourage the reuse of existing structures and infill development wherever possible to meet all general, senior, workforce and affordable housing needs.”
- Goal # 3, which became the second objective: “To encourage the development of small-scale and scattered site, low and moderate-income housing as needed by the current residents” was revised to drop the word “to” and begin with “Encourage”.
- Goal # 4, which became the third objective: “To develop partnerships with local and regional housing organizations to assist in providing more affordable housing in town” was revised to drop the word “to” and begin with “Develop”.
- Goal # 5, which became the fourth objective: “To provide incentives through land use regulations to expand affordable housing opportunities for all ages and appropriate income levels in South County” was revised to “Provide incentives through land use regulations to expand affordable housing opportunities.”
- A fifth objective was added: “Develop a definitive plan to achieve the goal of 10% for low and moderate income housing as outlined in Chapter 40B.”

2. Housing Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: “Create appropriate organizations for the promotion, ownership or management of affordable housing opportunities in Sheffield” was revised to delete the words “appropriate” and “opportunities”.
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Evaluate, work with and/or incorporate housing ownership and management entities” was revised to “Establish housing ownership and management entities.”
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Seek Technical Assistance” was revised to “Create a database of regional, state and federal housing information.”

- Recommendation 2: “Carry out a plan to convert existing housing units to affordable housing units” was revised to “Consider converting existing housing units to affordable housing units.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Identify Lower Value Properties for Affordable Housing Opportunities” was revised to “Identify properties for affordable housing opportunities.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Establish an Accessory Apartment Amnesty Program”; “Establish” was revised to “Evaluate”.
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Establish a Tax forgiveness Affordable Housing Plan” was deleted.
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Provide for Land Swaps as an incentive for affordable housing” was renumbered to c. and revised to “Explore land swaps as an option for affordable housing.”

- Recommendation 3: Identify appropriate areas of Sheffield for new housing.
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Encourage the community to exercise its ‘Right of First Refusal ’ was revised to “Encourage the town, with the community assistance, to exercise its ‘Right of First Refusal’ for properties that are good candidates for its Housing Plan unless it is more appropriate for the property to remain in its farm, forest, recreation or wildlife habitat condition.”

- Recommendation 4: “Provide for expansion and enhancement of well-established neighborhoods with development that incorporates the characteristics of traditional New England village design” was revised to “Expand and enhance established neighborhoods with development that incorporates the characteristics of traditional New England village design.”
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Use cost-effective site development and construction practices” was revised to “Use quality site development and construction practices.”

- Sub-recommendation f.: “Consider providing guidelines, patterning and incentive to follow them” was revised to “Consider providing guidelines and patterning with incentives to follow them.”
- Recommendation 5: “Prepare zoning, subdivision and building code revisions to improve overall residential quality and opportunities for all income groups and promote Smart Growth principles” was revised to “Prepare zoning, subdivision and building code revisions to improve residential quality for all income groups and to promote Smart Growth principles.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Provide for the careful conversion of larger homes to multifamily housing” was revised to “Consider the careful conversion of larger homes to multifamily housing.”
 - Sub-recommendation i. was added: “Consider alternative housing accommodations for the elderly.”
- Recommendation 6: “Utilize innovative public and private funding as well as technical assistance programs to maintain and produce additional affordable housing opportunities.” was revised to replace “as well as” with “and”.
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Private Funding Opportunity” was revised to “Private funding opportunities.”
- Recommendation 7: “Take steps (including the preparation of revisions and amendments to existing Zoning Bylaws, Subdivision Regulations and Building Codes) to ensure that all residential development takes place within a framework that protects the rural integrity and small town character of Sheffield in keeping with Smart Growth principles” was revised to delete “in keeping with Smart Growth principles”.
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Consider new bylaws and amending existing ones to allow for residential development in rural areas that is not visible from roads” was deleted.
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Promote and provide incentives for common driveways” was renumbered to d. and revised to “Encourage the use of common driveways where appropriate.”
 - Sub-recommendation f.: “Encourage maintenance of existing trees and planting of new ones in areas of new residential development.” was renumbered to e. and revised to “Encourage maintenance of existing trees and planting of new ones, especially in areas of new residential development.”

Section 3. Economic Development: Economic Development Action Plan

1. Overall Goal for Economic Development

- An overall goal was added: “To identify economic growth opportunities in keeping with community character and quality of life in Sheffield.”

2. Economic Development Objectives

- The three bullets listed under “Overall Economic Goal” were placed under “OBJECTIVES”.
- Goal # 1, which became the first objective: “Ensure that the Sheffield Community has a strong involvement and stake in the process and feels an ownership of the program” was revised to “Ensure that the community and town boards are involved in the economic development process.”
- Goal # 2, which became the second objective: “Guide economic development toward targeted locations throughout the community where it is most appropriate and desired” and revised to “Guide economic development toward targeted locations where it is most appropriate and desired.”
- Goal # 3, which became the third objective: “Create a cooperative partnership between the public sector and business communities” was revised to “Foster cooperation between the public sector and business communities.”

3. Economic Development Recommendations

- The heading “General Recommendations” was revised to “Economic Development Recommendations”.
- As the majority of the recommendations were in long sentences, the Planning Board’s revisions presented recommendations to captured the essence of the draft text.
- Recommendation 1: “Provide Business Representation and Strengthen Sheffield’s Business Community” was revised “Establish an advocacy group for Sheffield’s business community.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Promote Sheffield’s businesses” was revised to “Promote Sheffield and Ashley Falls businesses. ”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Assist businesses in understanding and complying with town regulations” was revised to replace “in understanding and complying” with “to understand and comply.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Create a forum for the sharing of ideas, resources, and the development of cooperative programs, e.g. Sheffield agricultural forums, arts and crafts groups, and visitor programs” was revised to “Create a forum for businesses to share ideas and resources and develop cooperative programs.”
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Support interaction between local youth and the business community, especially for mentoring and training (i.e., The rival of the Building

Structures Program at Mt. Everett)” was revised to “Support interaction between local youths and the business community, especially for mentoring, training and employment.”

- Recommendation 2:
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Within 2 years gain funding and hire a consultant to work with residents, business owners, and property owners to review and enhance the existing plan for Sheffield Center, create an updated Ashley Falls Village Center Plan, and create a Neighborhood Enhancement Plan for the Clayton area. Consider and advocate use of TIP [regional transportation improvement program] funds for desired improvements” was revised to “With residents, business owners and property owners review and enhance the existing plan for Sheffield Center; evaluate an updated Ashley Falls village Center Plan and a Neighborhood Enhancement Plan for the Clayton Area.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Maintain a “Historical New England Town” aesthetic, by encouraging this look in the signage, landscaping, and architecture and create a beautification committee” was revised to “Encourage a ‘Historic New England Town’ aesthetic in architecture, landscaping and signage.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Improve traffic flow and parking and slow traffic speed through town (Lane designations and narrowing, signage, landscaping and other traffic calming measures along Main St.)” was revised to “Create a plan to improve traffic flow and parking on Main Street.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Create a better space for gatherings, recreation and walking through redesign of existing town green” was revised to “Redesign the town green to improve spaces for gatherings, recreations and walking.”
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Provide more opportunities for residents and visitors to “buy locally” by developing businesses such as a small pharmacy; a copy center; an arts and crafts center; additional restaurant/coffee shop facilities; “Made in Sheffield” shelves/sections in local stores; etc.” was revised to “Promote the sale and consumption of locally produced or grown products in local stores.”
 - Sub-recommendation f.: “Increase communications with a town bulletin board, brochure kiosk and website” was revised to “Create a town bulleting board, brochure and website.”
 - Sub-recommendation g.: “Explore sewer or package treatment system options that might reduce the cost of some establishments such as restaurants” was revised to “Explore alternative sewage treatment systems.”
 - A new sub-recommendation was added: “h. Create a beautification committee”.
- Recommendation 3: “Support Cottage Industries” was revised to “Support local industries.”

- Sub-recommendation a.: “Within 5 years resolve conflicts surrounding adjoining business and residential uses, through development of guidelines, for example relating to noise levels, traffic, smells, hours of operation, etc.) Who: Planning Board” and sub-recommendation c. “Provide incubator and mentoring services to assist home-based and cottage industries and other small businesses with technical and marketing expertise” were revised and combined into sub-recommendation b. “Support home based businesses, which are appropriate to their neighborhoods by providing incubator and mentoring services.”
- Sub-recommendation b.: “Also, continue with the traditions that have built Sheffield by encouraging and supporting home-based businesses (such as arts and crafts, agricultural products, eco-tourism, and more) that are in keeping with the character of the neighborhoods in which they operate” was renumbered sub-recommendation a and revised to: to “Redefine by-laws to govern business in residential neighborhoods.”
- Sub-recommendation d.: “Promote a “Sheffield” brand and establish a centralized, year-round agricultural and crafts market for such locally made products. This could start out as requesting shelf space in existing stores, and expand to establishing its own retail and wholesale business to market these products” was renumbered, revised and split into two sub-recommendations:
 - Sub-recommendation “c. Promote a ‘Sheffield’ brand.”
 - Sub-recommendation “d. Establish a centralized, year-round agricultural and crafts market for local products.”
- Sub-recommendation e.: “Support, without devaluing abutting properties, cottage industry, by creating suitable guidelines.” was revised to “Support, without devaluing abutting properties, cottage industries by creating suitable guidelines.”
- Recommendation 4: “Support Agriculture and Forestry Industries” was revised to “Support agriculture and forestry.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Support and nurture the agricultural and forestry businesses that Sheffield is known for and which in turn support related businesses and the tourism economy through maintaining the landscape.” was deleted.
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Encourage the development of businesses which process, market and distribute local agricultural products” was renumbered to sub-recommendation a. and revised to “Encourage the development of businesses which process, market and distribute local agricultural or forestry products.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “In marketing, promote the branding and purchase of Sheffield products” was renumbered to sub-recommendation b. and revised to “Promote the ‘branding’ and purchasing of such products.”

- Sub-recommendation d.: “Encourage technical training and education supporting the use of conventional best management practices and organic farming methods” was renumbered sub-recommendation c. and revised to “Support best management practices, organic farming and environmentally sensitive forestry methods through technical training and education.”
- Sub-recommendation e.: “Encourage Chapter 61A and 61 and 61B designation for agriculture and conservation to secure the land base needed by these industries, and encourage the town to exercise its option on Chapter lands to ensure they remain in agricultural hands and current use” was revised, renumbered and divided into two sub-recommendations:
 - Sub-recommendation d. and revised to “Encourage the use of Chapter 61, 61A and 61B designations.”
 - Sub-recommendation e. and revised to “Encourage the town to exercise its options on Chapter land.”
- Sub-recommendation f.: “Encourage “right to farm” laws and provide flexibility in signage requirements, especially through the growing season” was revised to “Encourage ‘Right to Farm’ by-laws, including seasonal signage.”
- Sub-recommendation g.: “Explore getting the state to waive or reduce taxes on animals and farm equipment for active farmers” was revised to “Explore state tax relief on farm animals and equipment.”
- Recommendation 5:
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Within 2 years develop a campaign to welcome tourism and develop Visitors’ Center; through a collaboration between private and public entities, for example B&Bs, Chamber of Commerce, Conservation Organizations, Antiques Shops” was revised to “Develop a campaign to attract and welcome tourists.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Provide visitor services in the town center including bathroom and telephone facilities, maps and brochures of Sheffield businesses” was revised to end with the word “brochures”; the phrase “ of Sheffield businesses” was deleted.
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “As mentioned in previous sections, building a town identity, developing and offering “Sheffield” brand products, providing business support services etc., will all help with these efforts” was deleted.
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Enhance access to and promotion of recreational facilities with improved signage, and parking areas for hiking trails, and upgrading canoe launches to the Housatonic River; and ensure that the scenic rural landscape and

character of the town is maintained. Such improvements might be funded by grants under the proposed Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area, by Community Preservation Act funds or by the special aforementioned transfer tax)” was renumbered “c.” and revised to “Enhance access to and promotion of recreational facilities with improved signs, parking areas for hiking trails and upgraded canoe launches to the Housatonic River.”

- Sub-recommendation e.: “Explore additional public and private funding mechanisms” was renumbered “d.” and revised to “Explore public and private funding to achieve these objectives.”
- Recommendation 6: “Update Zoning and Bylaws” was revised to “Review all By-Laws.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Hire an outside specialist to work with the Select Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the community to review and update Sheffield’s zoning guidelines to ensure that the bylaws are consistent, supportive of the town’s goals, and not favoring any particular sub-groups” was revised to “Hire an outside specialist to review and update Sheffield’s zoning and town by-laws to ensure they are consistent and supportive of town goals.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Examine and update bylaws for all of the current districts for consistency with the findings, goals, and objectives of the Town Master Plan” was revised to “Examine and update by-laws for consistency with the findings, goals and objectives of the Master Plan.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Poll the town as to its desire to create a separate Residential District or consider areas within the Rural District with more parameters to limit conflicts between residential uses and business uses. Currently, the Rural District permits retail businesses, public utility facilities, country clubs, commercial kennels, commercial greenhouses, commercial radio and television towers, nursing and related facilities. (In some ways, it is easier to establish a business in the Rural District than in the Commercial and General Business District. The Rural District has had more business growth than any other area.)” was revised to “ Evaluate separate residential districts within the current rural district.”
- Recommendation 7: “Update Business Park Criteria” was revised to “Review Business Park criteria.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Update and revise the criteria used to consider and accept tenants for the Business Park, to bring in jobs and tax revenues while controlling strip development. Changes in the business and economic climate since the Business Park was created nearly 10 years ago have made the initial criteria out-dated. For example, the 4 acre minimum lot size limits small business use of the Business Park” was revised to “Review criteria to consider and accept tenants for the Business Park.”

- Sub-recommendation b.: “Consider developing the Business Park around agriculture-related activities to promote locally produced farm products and tie into regional initiatives” was revised to “Consider local and regional agriculturally related activities.”
- Sub-recommendation c.: “Consider broadening the scope of the type of businesses that would be allowed to purchase space” was revised to “Consider broadening the type of businesses that would be allowed to purchase space.”
- Sub-recommendation d.: “Consider allowing a developer to own, build and manage appropriate spaces and rent to smaller businesses and cottage industries” was revised to “Consider allowing a developer to own, build and manage appropriate spaces and rent to smaller businesses.”
- Sub-recommendation e.: “Explore alternative uses for the Business Park” was deleted, as it was redundant.
- Recommendation 8:
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Vigorously pursue high speed internet and cellular telephone access, perhaps by creating an ad hoc committee for this purpose” was revised to “Pursue high-speed Internet and cellular telephone access.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Conduct an energy audit for the Town of Sheffield, businesses, and individual households, to identify ways of reducing energy use and related costs. In some cases this type of audit can be funded through grants” was revised to “Investigate ways to reduce energy use throughout the town.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Investigate securing funding to bury power and telephone lines” was revised to “Investigate funding to bury power and telephone lines.”
 - A new sub-recommendation was added: “d. Investigate alternative energy sources for private or public use.”

Section 4. Natural Resources, Open Space, Recreation & Agricultural Resources (NORA)

1. Overall Goal for NORA

- The overall goal was revised from “Maintain Sheffield’s rural character, an essential part of Sheffield’s identity, and preserve, promote and enhance the Town’s recreational resources” to “Maintain Sheffield’s rural character and unspoiled natural and agricultural resources and preserve, promote and enhance the town’s recreational resources.”

2. The title “Keys to Maintaining Sheffield’s Rural Character” was revised to “Key Aspects of Sheffield’s Rural Character”; “#1. Open fields and farmed fields” revised to “Open fields”; “#2. Woodlands uninterrupted by structures” revised to “Farmed fields”; #3. Clear (undeveloped) wooded ridge lines and mountain sides” revised to “Uninterrupted woodlands”; “#6. Encourage careful site design to preserve rural character” revised to “Careful site design” and “Nature preserves” was added.

3. NORA Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: “Protect significant Open Spaces from adverse development” was revised to “Protect significant areas from adverse development.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Through the coordination of organizations such as Sheffield Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, The Trustees of the Reservation and town government, prioritize areas for preservation ” was added.
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Work with landowners to secure conservation restrictions on significant lands, particularly along river, wildlife and ridgeline corridors” was renumbered to sub-recommendation b. and revised to “Encourage land owners to secure conservation restrictions on significant lands, along rivers and wildlife or ridgeline corridors.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Encourage the placement of land under the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B current use programs and the use of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions” was renumbered to sub-recommendation c. and revised to “Encourage the use of Chapter 61, 61A and 61B programs and agriculture preservation restrictions.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Encourage smart growth (i.e. site sensitive development, clustering, etc.) in harmony with rural character through amendments to the zoning bylaws” was renumbered to sub-recommendation d. and revised to “Encourage ‘Smart Growth’ by considering amendments to the zoning by-laws.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Work with private conservation organizations to supplement efforts of local government in managing and acquiring open space” was renumbered to sub-recommendation d. and revised to “Partner with conservation organizations to supplement local efforts to protect, manage or acquire priority or other significant areas for preservation.”
- Recommendation 2: “Protect Significant Agricultural Lands” revised to “Protect agricultural and forest lands.”

- Sub-recommendation a.: “Encourage, educate and promote participation in Chapter 61A current use tax program and town’s exercising or assigning of its right of first refusal under these programs ” was revised, renumbered and divided into two sub-recommendations:
 - Sub-recommendation a. “Encourage, educate and promote participation in Chapter 61, 61A and 61B programs.”
 - Sub-recommendation e. “Encourage the town to exercise or assign its right of first refusal under these programs.”
- Sub-recommendation b. was unchanged but renumbered to be sub-recommendation c.
- Sub-recommendation c.: “Encourage, educate and promote the use of Agricultural Restrictions” was renumbered to sub-recommendation d. and revised to “ Promote the use of agricultural restrictions.”
- Sub-recommendation d.: “Encourage, educate and promote the principles of ‘Smart Growth’ ” was renumbered to sub-recommendation e. and revised to “Promote the principles of ‘Smart Growth’.”
- Sub-recommendation e.: “Encourage, educate and promote agriculture and inform town boards and property owners.” was combined with Sub-recommendation f.: “Encourage, educate and promote open and informed dialogue on the economic facts regarding open space” and renumber sub-recommendation f. and revised to “ Promote through the education of Town Boards and property owners the value of agriculture and open space to the town.”
- Recommendation 3: “Improve management, conservation and use of existing public open spaces, recreational facilities and natural resources and promote and expand recreational opportunities and facilities, especially on Town lands” was revised to “Promote and expand recreational opportunities, management and facilities, especially on town lands and other public ‘open spaces’.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Inter-Board Policy” was revised to “Establish inter-board policies.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Expand Volunteer Assistance” was revised to “Encourage volunteer assistance.”
 - Sub-recommendation g.: “Sheffield Recreation Handbook” was revised to “Consider producing a Sheffield Recreation Handbook.”
 - Sub-recommendation h.: “Develop a Public Swimming Area(s)” was revised to “Evaluate a public swimming area(s).”
 - Sub-recommendation i.: “Develop Canoe Launch Sites” was revised to “Evaluate canoe launch sites to include parking and coordinate regional river access points.”

- Recommendation 4: “Enhance and promote the use of alternative transportation modes in the community that complement natural and cultural resource protection.” was deleted as covered in 5. Transportation and Circulation and address in other recommendations in NORA. Recommendation 5: “Maintain, enhance and preserve local, state and federal scenic roads, both paved and unpaved” was renumbered Recommendation 4. and revised to “Maintain, enhance and preserve scenic roads, both paved and unpaved.”
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Consider design standards for reconstruction of public ways that complement the surrounding rural character (see Transportation Section and Action Plan for details)” was revised to end after the word “character.”
 - A new sub-recommendation was added by the Planning Board: “sub-recommendation b.: Minimize detrimental impacts of public works projects.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Consider designating as scenic roads, streets or portions thereof identified in section 2.3 and elsewhere, as well as seeking recommendations from the community” was renumbered sub-recommendation c. and revised to “Consider designating scenic roads.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Minimize street signage that distracts from the aesthetics that a scenic road designation is intended to secure” was renumbered sub-recommendation d. and revised to “Minimize street signs that detract from scenic roads.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “The Town could inventory and maintain its heritage trees, replace those lost with appropriate native species, and support new trees along public ways, particularly in the village centers. Partnering with groups like the Sheffield Tree Project can help increase the resources available to the town” was revised, renumbered and divided into two sub-recommendations:
 - Sub-recommendation e. “Work with local tree groups to inventory, maintain and replace Sheffield’s heritage trees.”
 - Sub-recommendation f. “Work with Berkshire Bike Path council on routes and designations” was added based on sub-recommendation a in recommendation 4 of the master plan draft.

- Recommendation 6 “Protect Ecological Resources” was renumbered to Recommendation 5.
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Ensure adequate protection of aquifers is provided in local bylaws” was revised to “Ensure by-laws protect town aquifers.”

- Sub-recommendation c.: “Critical Habitat Areas” was revised to “Protect critical habitat areas in land use change decisions.”
- Recommendation 7 was renumbered to recommendation 6.
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “A Scenic Mountain Act Committee could be formed to help the Conservation Commission review language and parameters from other communities toward Sheffield’s defining and enacting its own” was revised to “Update the Scenic Mountain Act process begun in 1975.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Landowners might be encouraged to enroll in Chapter 61 Forestry and 61B Wildlife and Recreation current use assessment programs to help minimize the need and likelihood of conversion of this land” was revised to “Encourage landowners to enroll in the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B programs to help minimize the need and likelihood of conversion of this land.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “The Commission and Committee could work with local conservation organizations to compile a list of priority sites for which conservation restrictions might be procured from landowners” was revised to “Work with local conservation organizations to identify priority sites for conservation.”
- Recommendation 8: “Adopt the Community Preservation Act or create a similar mechanism to provide an ongoing source of funds to help implement community preservation and many of the recommendations in this section” was renumbered recommendation 7. and revised to “Adopt the Community Preservation Act or create a similar mechanism to provide an ongoing source of funds to help implement recommendations in NORA.”

Section 4. Cultural & Historic Resources

1. Overall Goal for Cultural & Historic Resources

- The overall goal was revised from “To enhance and preserve the historic resources and landscape essential to Sheffield’s character and economy and develop Sheffield as a cultural center and to raise visitor’s and the community’s awareness of these resources” to “Enhance and preserve the historic resources and landscape essential to Sheffield’s character and economy. Develop Sheffield as a cultural center, raising visitors’ and community awareness of these resources.”

2. There were no objectives listed for Cultural & Historic Resources. The draft Master Plan moved form Overall Goal to Recommendations.

3. Cultural & Historic Resources Recommendations

- Recommendation 1:
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Obtain technical assistance to inventory and catalog Sheffield’s Heritage Landscapes and establish priorities for preservation of historical homes, landscapes and sites” was revised to “Inventory and catalog Sheffield’s Heritage Landscapes and establish priorities for preservation of historical homes, landscapes and sites.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Establish an historic / architectural signage program, wherever appropriate, to identify historic resources and create an historic/ architectural "trail" that enhances connections between historic/architectural places and settings through out the township.” was revised to “Establish a historic / architectural sign program to identify historic resources and create a historic/ architectural "trail" that enhances connections between historic/architectural places and settings throughout the township.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Establish an historic / architectural ‘walking tour’ in the town center” was revised to “Establish a historic / architectural ‘walking tour’ in the town centers.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Enhance the covered bridge experience by connecting it to the town, beautifying the picnic area and improving the river access” was revised to “Enhance the covered bridge experience by connecting it to the town, beautifying the picnic area and improving river access.”
 - Sub-recommendation g.: “Secure wherever possible public access to scenic areas and historic sites. Landowners could be encouraged to place conservation or historic restrictions or easements on portions of their land or buildings and access to historic sites or places of interest could be sought. The town could explore a program to secure funding to purchase such rights and access” was revised to “Secure wherever possible, public access to scenic areas and historic sites.”
 - Sub-recommendation h.: “Work with local schools to increase awareness of these resources” was revised to “Work with local schools to increase awareness of scenic areas and historic resources.”
 - Sub-recommendation i.: “Consider creating a brochure of historic and cultural attractions for use locally and for visitors, perhaps include additional amenities such as restaurants, B&Bs, stores and other service establishments as well as natural and recreational attractions” was revised to “Consider creating a brochure of historic and cultural attractions for use locally and for visitors.”
 - Sub-recommendation j.: “Work with Sheffield’s cultural groups to promote Sheffield as a cultural destination, perhaps linking with B&Bs and other service establishments” was revised to “Work with Sheffield’s cultural groups to promote Sheffield as a cultural destination.”

- The Planning Board added Sub-recommendation l: “Consider establishing a Historic District for the Sheffield Village Center and Sheffield Plain areas.”
- Recommendation 2.
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Continue to seek historical preservation grants such as those offered by the Self-Help Program and the Community Development Block Grants” was revised to “Continue to seek historical preservation grants.”
 - Sub-recommendation f.: “Consider adopting the Community Preservation Act and/or a transfer tax program that can generate funds to protect historic and open space resources” was revised to “Consider adopting the Community Preservation Act and/or a transfer tax program to generate funds to protect historic and open space resources.”

Section 6. Transportation & Circulation Action Plan

1. Overall Goal for Transportation & Circulation

- No revision was made.

2. Transportation & Circulation Objectives

- The title “Prioritized Objectives” was changed to “OBJECTIVES”.
- Objective 1.: “To ensure the safety of our community members and visitors” was revised to “Provide safe roads, pathways and surroundings for all users.”
- Objective 2.: “To create clear communication to community members & visitors about our transportation and circulation network and its supporting facilities and services” was revised to “Inform community members & visitors about our roads, recreational routes and walkways and their supporting facilities and services.”
- Objective 3.: “To create opportunities for social interaction within the community; a sense of place and community (ergo less feeling of community, because everyone drives somewhere else for work and play)” was revised to “Create opportunities for social interaction within the community.”
- Objective 4.: “To promote, enhance or create alternate routes and/or modes of transportation” was revised to “Promote, enhance or create alternate routes and modes of transportation.”
- Objective 5.: “To create a community connection/partnership, both physically and socially, with other towns and organizations to assist in establishing a safe, well-defined circulation

network” was revised to “Establish partnership with other towns and organizations to achieve a safe, integrated circulation network.”

3. Transportation & Circulation Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: “Develop transportation patterns and a plan for traffic, using safety and design standards as the primary criteria that support village, neighborhood and rural character, particularly regarding Sheffield and Ashley Falls centers and the Route 7 corridor” was revised to “Develop transportation plans to support village, neighborhood and rural character.”
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Promote narrow roadways and traffic calming measures” was revised to “Evaluate traffic calming measures. ”
 - Sub-recommendation f.: “Develop and Implement a Routing Plan” was revised to “Evaluate a ‘Routing Plan’.”
 - Sub-recommendation h.: “Review and redesign street & parking area lighting” was revised to “Review street & parking area lighting.”
 - Sub-recommendation i.: “Incorporate “Village” visual cues” was incorporated into draft Master Plan sub-recommendation q. with is sub-recommendation m. in the Master Plan.
 - Sub-recommendation “j.: Publicize enforcement of speed limits and drunk driving regulations ” was renumbered sub-recommendation i. and revised to “Continue to enforce speed limits and drunk driving regulations; publicize enforcement results.”
 - Sub-recommendation “k.: Consider a tax deferral incentive for business owners who improve the facades of their stores to ‘fit’ the character of the town” was deleted.
 - Sub-recommendation “l.: Review bylaws for consistency and clarity of intent” was deleted as covered elsewhere.
 - Sub-recommendation “m.: Encourage ‘village-scale’, pedestrian-based development rather than strip development” was renumbered sub-recommendation j.
 - Sub-recommendation “n.: Encourage foot traffic and public gathering spaces so Sheffield Center and Ashley Falls are attractive, welcoming, pedestrian friendly community gathering places.” was renumbered sub-recommendation k. and revised to “Encourage foot traffic, biking to and in public gathering areas and retail development.”
 - Sub-recommendation “o.: Consider roadside rest areas which offer views, including of the river and mountains (historic markers, view descriptions, etc.)” was

renumbered sub-recommendation l. and revised to “Analyze the viability of pull-offs for views as well as safety.”

- Sub-recommendation “p.: Designate local, state and national ‘Scenic’ Roads/Create Scenic Roads Program, where appropriate as roads are more than just transportation networks being part of the character and history of the Town” was renumbered sub-recommendation m. and revised to “Create a Scenic Roads Program and seek ‘Scenic Road’ designations where possible.”
- Sub-recommendation “q.: Highlight Historic Districts through signage, lighting, and other visual cues” was renumbered sub-recommendation n. and revised to “Highlight Historic Districts including the incorporation of village visual cues.”
- Sub-recommendation “r.: Develop Design Criteria linked to safety, zoning and other regulations that support the village scale and uses and rural character, such as wooden guardrails made from locally grown hemlock, oak, etc.” was integrated into Master Plan sub-recommendation p.
- Sub-recommendation “s.: Consider adopting the Project Integration Procedure (featured in Smarter Land Use by Karl Kende) to collaboratively design all land-use projects, including the Trail Network.” was renumbered sub-recommendation o. and revised to “Consider adopting ‘Project Integration Procedures’.”
- Sub-recommendation “t.: Adopt design parameters which promote...” was renumbered sub-recommendation p. and revised to “Develop and adopt design parameters.”
- Sub-recommendation “u.: Consider an Easy Reference Design Guide to give to property owners/developers” was renumbered sub-recommendation q. and revised to “Consider developing an easy reference design guide.”
- The Planning Board added sub-recommendation “r.: Evaluate roads in light of maintenance costs.”
- Recommendation 2:
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Identify and implement cost-saving measures” was revised to “Identify and implement cost-saving measures for all aspects of the Highway Department.”
- Recommendation 3: “Develop and promote alternatives to single-person automobile travel, both as stand-alone efforts, and as part of a circulation network” was revised to “Promote integrated alternatives to single-person automobile travel.”

- Sub-recommendation a.: “Consider creating a pedestrian and bicycle trail network to important sites, such as schools, Town Park, Town Hall, Senior Center, etc.” was revised to “Consider creating a pedestrian and bicycle trail network.”
- Sub-recommendation b.: “Over each capital facilities planning period, consider dedicating a set percentage of local funds expended for transportation-related capital improvements to non-auto improvements such as sidewalks, bike racks & lockers, kiosks, van/bus shelters, trails, pedestrian crossing improvements, or other means of enhancing the ability of Sheffield’s citizens to move around Sheffield and its environs without cars” was revised to “Consider dedicating a percentage of the town’s funds for non-automobile improvements, such as sidewalks, bike paths and bike racks.”
- Sub-recommendation c.: “Encourage design guidelines requiring new construction to actively promote universal, pedestrian, & bicycle access by locating buildings in front of, rather than in back of, parking areas, providing pedestrian connections between premises at or near the building line, and providing bicycle facilities” was revised to “Encourage that new construction actively promote universal, pedestrian and bicycle access.”
- Sub-recommendation d.: “Encourage businesses to promote alternatives to automobile usage including various incentives to do so. Consider amending zoning to enable new businesses to contribute funds for pedestrian & bicycle improvements, shared parking areas, multi-occupant transport, etc., in return for a reduction in the amount of on-site parking which is required (excluding ‘handicapped’ parking), and/or more floor space” was revised to “Encourage businesses to promote alternatives to automobile usage, including various incentives for doing so.”
- Sub-recommendation f.: “Encourage design guidelines which require pedestrian and bicycle easements and recreation easements within new subdivisions to create a circulation network within each neighborhood” was revised to “Encourage design guidelines which require pedestrian, bicycle and recreation easements within new subdivisions to create a circulation network within each neighborhood.”
- Sub-recommendation h.: “Encourage car/van pooling through ‘pooling’ sites, (e.g.; Sheffield Center & off Rte 7 near Ashley Falls)” was revised to “Encourage car/van pooling through ‘pooling’ sites.”
- The Planning Board added sub-recommendation “j.: “Explore bus, taxi and van sharing within Sheffield and neighboring towns.”
- The Planning Board added sub-recommendation “k.: “Research ways to meet the transportation needs of seniors and others.”

- Sub-recommendation j.: “Explore the increased use of the Housatonic Railroad for freight to help slow the influx of large trucks and cars passing through Sheffield” was renumbered sub-recommendation l.
- Sub-recommendation k.: “Explore possible use of the Berkshire Scenic Railroad bed for recreation and or transportation needs” was renumbered sub-recommendation m. was revised to “Investigate expansion of Berkshire Scenic Railroad routes to town.”

Section 7. Community Facilities & Services Action Plan

1. Overall Goal for Community Facilities & Services

- “Sheffield carefully invests in the facilities and services that support the goals and objectives of this Master Plan” was revised to “Carefully invests in the facilities and services that support the goals and objectives of Sheffield’s Master Plan.”

2. Community Facilities & Services Objectives

- Objective 1.: “Invest in infrastructure & improvements required to support vibrant Village Centers & Neighborhoods” was revised to “Assess infrastructure & improvements required for vibrant Village Centers & neighborhoods.”
- Objective 2.: “Maintain rural roadway character in outlying areas” was revised to “Strive to maintain rural roadway character in outlying areas.”
- Objective 3.: “Design and locate community facilities in a manner appropriate to their operations and services was revised to “Explore appropriate designs and locations for community facilities and services.”
- Objective 4.: “Increase services as necessary for the growing population” was revised to “Anticipate and assess services needed for a growing population.”

3. Community Facilities & Services Recommendations

Recommendation 1: “Assess and plan for needs in Village Centers & Neighborhoods.

- In conjunction with the Village Center & Neighborhood Enhancement Plans process, contract for engineering services to:
 - Estimate how much more infill and expansion in Sheffield Center can be supported by the septic filtering capacity of the soils.
 - Estimate the costs and benefits of establishing a village deep well and distribution system to provide water to Ashley Falls to support desired infill and expansion of a Village Center, and enhancement of the Clayton Neighborhood.
 - If deemed necessary, over time investigate alternative sewage treatment technologies that might be appropriate for one or both of the Village Centers, and nearby neighborhoods.

- Consider Creation of an Artisan and Craft center to promote and market locally produced goods, combining workspace with public space.
- Assess the needs of the Farmers’ Market and consider a permanent or semi-permanent site.
- Work with the Postmaster, the Postal Service, and property owners to keep the Post Offices on the Village Greens in Sheffield Center and Ashley Falls.
- Agree on and acquire a suitable location for the Senior Center.”

Were revised to

“Recommendation 1: Assess and plan for needs in Village Centers and neighborhoods.

- a. In conjunction with the Village Center Plan process, consider contracting for engineering services to:
 - i. Estimate how much more infill and expansion can be supported by the septic filtering capacity of the soils in Sheffield Center.
 - ii. Estimate the costs and benefits of establishing a village deep well and distribution system to support desired infill and enhancement in the Ashley Falls Village Center and ‘Clayton Area’.
 - iii. If deemed necessary, investigate alternative sewage treatment technologies that might be appropriate for one or both of the Village Centers and nearby neighborhoods.
- b. Consider creating an Artisan and Craft Center to promote and market locally produced goods, combining workspace with public space.
- c. Assess the needs of the Farmers’ Market and locate appropriate site.
- d. Work to keep the Post Office on the Village Green.
- e. Evaluate and decide on a suitable location for the Senior Center.’

“Recommendation 2. “Assess the relationship with and impact of School District

- Address expiration of Regional School District assessment formula contract in 2008.
- Assess the impact of services (fire, police, etc.) provided to the school due to its location on Sheffield’s fiscal budget and town services.
- Assess future infrastructure needs of the school as it ages.
- Explore additional ways campus and facilities might be utilized by the community.
- Explore opportunities for mentoring and training with local businesses.”

Were revised to:

Recommendation 2. Assess and plan for Sheffield’s participation in the school district.

- a. Assess the impact of the Regional School District on Sheffield.
- b. Address the expiration of Regional School District assessment formula contract in 2008.
- c. Assess the impact of town provided services to the school on Sheffield’s fiscal budget and town services.
- d. Assess the future infrastructure needs of the schools.
- e. Explore additional ways the grounds and facilities might be utilized by the community.

- f. Explore opportunities for student mentoring and training with local businesses and other schools.

Recommendation 3: “Enhance protective services and facilities as necessary for a growing population base.

Police Department

The Sheffield Police Vision Statement identifies the use of problem solving techniques and communication with the community to enhance the quality of life. The department values open communication, high standards, training and education, and input from the community.

1. Maintain a high level of quality of all department equipment and replace equipment and vehicles as necessary.
2. Improve wireless communication systems.
3. Rehabilitate the Police Station to provide for a new prisoner holding cell over the next 5 years.
4. Install security fencing around the Police parking lot to protect department equipment and vehicles.
5. Continue to seek grants to expand police staffing and community-oriented programs such as the COPS and DARE programs.

Fire Department

The Fire Department is anticipating significant expansion or relocation needs in the near future and over the next 10 years a number of additional facility and service needs can be anticipated. The Department is evaluating possible facilities expansion needs which may include an addition to the existing station or a new station in or close to Sheffield Center.

Another long-term consideration anticipated by the Department is the possible need for regional fire services. As more communities in the South Berkshire Region find it difficult in keeping volunteer membership this may become more necessary to adequately protect smaller communities.

1. Carefully consider the costs and benefits of purchasing a new pumper/tanker truck which the department has identified as a needed capital expense in 2008.
2. Purchase a Jaws of Life cutting tool with ram over the next 5 years and determine if there are other purchases needed.
3. Plan for the long-term facilities need of the Sheffield Fire Station - Expanding the existing station over the next several years may require increasing the number of bays by up to 4, or renovating the existing facility to increase bay height to accommodate larger apparatus. There are land constraints in the vicinity of the station that must be addressed by the department and town including septic systems and property owners that may have other plans for the land. Another possibility would be to relocate the station to another location if these long-term issues cannot be sufficiently addressed.
4. Meet with public officials from surrounding communities in the next 2 years to evaluate the costs and benefits of establishing regional fire services.
5. Assess long-term staffing needs.”

Were revised to:

“Recommendation 3: Evaluate protective services and facilities as necessary for a growing population.

- a. Police Department:
 - i. Continue to evaluate the quality of all department equipment and consider replacement of equipment and vehicles as necessary.
 - ii. Assess wireless communication systems.
 - iii. Consider providing an improved prisoner holding cell.
 - iv. Consider fencing around the police parking lot.
 - v. Consider seeking additional grants to expand police staffing and community-oriented programs such as KOPS for KIDS and DARE programs.

The Sheffield Police Vision Statement identifies the use of problem solving techniques and communication with the community to enhance the quality of life. The department values open communication, high standards, training and education, and input from the community.

- b. Fire Department:
 - i. Review the costs and benefits of a new pumper / tanker truck by 2008.
 - ii. Consider a Jaws of Life cutting tool with ram.
 - iii. Identify and plan for the long-term needs of the Sheffield Fire Station.
 - iv. Evaluate the costs and benefits of establishing regional fire services.
 - v. Asses long-term staffing needs.

The Fire Department is anticipating significant expansion or relocation needs in the near future and over the next 10 years a number of additional facility and service needs can be anticipated. The Department is evaluating possible facilities expansion needs which may include an addition to the existing station or a new station in or close to Sheffield Center.

Another long-term consideration anticipated by the Department is the possible need for regional fire services. As more communities in the South Berkshire Region find it difficult in keeping volunteer membership this may become more necessary to adequately protect smaller communities.”

(Note: the next recommendation and subsequent recommendations were incorrectly numbered in the draft Master Plan; they were renumbered during the review process.)

“Recommendation 4: Expand and improve municipal services and facilities as necessary.

Highway Department

This Highway Garage was built in the mid-1960s and is approximately 16,000 square feet. It includes a 2-bay garage holding up to 6 vehicles, an administrative office, and storage facilities. The complex is located in a Zone I recharge area for the Sheffield Water Company Turnpike Well, and is a likely threat of contamination, so the Town anticipates the need to relocate this facility within the next 10 years.

1. Plan for the relocation of the Highway Garage in the next 10 years.

2. Develop and carry out a 5-year road maintenance and improvement program in conjunction with the recommendations in the Transportation report (i.e. safety, scenic roads, etc.). This program should be kept up-to-date and potential funding sources identified on a yearly basis. The program should identify targeted roads including priority, type of repair or improvement (with associated amenities such as landscaping, sidewalks, and signage), funding sources, and projected year for completion, and equipment needed.
3. Consider an advisory committee as noted in the Transportation section to leverage the resources available to the Department.
4. Work with the Board of Selectmen and local interest groups to expand the tree planting program along the Route 7 corridor, public lands and facilities, and neighborhoods to beautify the town.
5. Consider protective sheds for equipment (i.e. plows).

Transfer Station

The Transfer Station is currently open portions of 4 days a week and is an enterprise operation with funding provided by annual resident and business user fees. The facility is expected to accommodate Sheffield's needs over the next several years, but additional capacity is likely to be needed in the ten year period covered by the plan.

1. Assess equipment and safety needs of existing facility
2. Assess carrying capacity of current facility and expansion of hours to meet growing needs of the community.
3. Explore alternatives to address future and changing needs

Town Hall and Departments

1. Develop a comprehensive capital improvement program. A capital improvement program and service strategy should identify all anticipated large improvements over the next 10 years, with associated costs, funding sources and potential timeframe.
2. Upgrade the municipal computer system. Much of the equipment is outdated and not networked between departments. A plan should be made to implement needed hardware and software upgrades and changes to provide inter and intra-office efficiency and network security, including e-mail and the town web site.
3. Establish a central purchasing system for all departments for common supplies and materials.
4. Make ADA improvements to municipal facilities. Some municipal facilities have not been brought into compliance with the handicapped accessibility code due to budget constraints. The town should survey these facilities to determine the extent of renovations necessary and potential costs and funding sources.
5. Install a Geographic Information System (GIS) and provide needed staffing and training. The Assessors Office is considering the need for computerized assessors maps and the possible acquisition of hardware and software for a GIS which would enable the Town to electronically inventory and analyze various land ownership, uses, natural resources, and other regulatory boundaries (i.e. zoning districts). GIS can also be a valuable tool for the Police and Fire Departments and all three should be coordinated. The following steps would be taken over the next 2 years:
 - Coordinate needs with Police and Fire Departments

- Select hardware and software that is compatible with all departmental needs and the industry standard, ensuring its ability for expansion, networking and upgrades to meet projected needs over the next 10 years.
 - Acquire equipment and train staff
 - Enter all existing data into a common database
6. Consider renovating the Grand Army of the Republic space on the 4th floor in Town Hall. This space could be utilized as public meeting space as needed in the future. Handicapped accessibility is currently an issue to be resolved.
 7. Consider expanding the Board of Selectmen to 5 members to provide for the increase in work associated with growing towns and Sheffield's continued growth.

Senior Center

The Senior Center administrative offices are currently operating out of Dewey Hall. This space has become inadequate for a growing senior population and with the increasing variety of activities sponsored by the organization. The Council on Aging has developed preliminary plans for a new Senior Center.

1. Build or locate a new Senior Center in the next 2 years which will meet projected need for at least the next ten years. Town administration should work closely with COA to identify an appropriate location, finalize plans and permitting, and obtain state and other funding sources to construct this needed public facility.
2. Select a location in Sheffield Center. Sheffield Center provides convenience to many senior citizens in the community. The new facility should accommodate a nurse's office, a meeting room, a lounge, an office for the director and assistant director, and a large meeting hall to allow space for active and passive recreation (i.e. fitness classes, potlucks, dances, lectures, etc.).

Bushnell-Sage Public Library

1. Support staff efforts to improve computer networking with other library systems to improve access to publications and materials to all Sheffield residents.
2. Support expansion of public events and exhibits
3. Consider the costs and benefits of expanding the facilities to accommodate library needs and larger public events, meeting and other gatherings.

Business Park

Update and revise the criteria used to consider and accept tenants for the Business Park, to bring in jobs and tax revenues.. Changes in the business and economic climate since the Business Park was created nearly 10 years ago (recognizing the local constraints to attracting light industry and clean manufacturing, in addition to the national trend of such jobs moving overseas), create a need to up-date some of the criteria to recognize the full potential of this resource.

- Review Business Park criteria
- Consider developing the Business Park around agriculture-related activities to promote locally produced farm products and tie into regional initiatives.
- Consider broadening the scope of businesses sought

- Consider allowing a developer to own, build and manage appropriate spaces and rent to smaller businesses and cottage industries.
- Explore alternative uses for the Business Park.”

Were revised to:

“Recommendation 4: Expand and improve municipal services and facilities as necessary.

a. Highway Department:

- i. Evaluate relocating the Highway Garage.
- ii. Consider developing a short and long-range road maintenance and improvement program in conjunction with the recommendations in the Transportation & Circulation section of the Master Plan.
- iii. Consider an advisory committee as noted in the Transportation & Circulation section of the Master Plan.
- iv. Encourage working with the Board of Selectmen and local interest groups to expand the tree planning program to beautify the town..
- v. Consider protective sheds for equipment.

This Highway Garage was built in the mid-1960s and is approximately 16,000 square feet. It includes a 2-bay garage holding up to 6 vehicles, an administrative office, and storage facilities. The complex is located in a Zone I recharge area for the Sheffield Water Company Turnpike Well, and is a likely threat of contamination, so the Town anticipates the need to relocate this facility within the next 10 years.

b. Transfer Station:

- i. Assess equipment and safety needs of the existing facility.
- ii. Assess the carrying capacity of the current facility and extending hours to meet community needs.
- iii. Explore alternatives to address future and changing needs.

The Transfer Station is currently open portions of 4 days a week and is an enterprise operation with funding provided by annual resident and business user fees. The facility is expected to accommodate Sheffield’s needs over the next several years, but additional capacity is likely to be needed in the ten-year period covered by the plan.

c. Town Hall and Departments:

- i. Evaluate a comprehensive 10-year capital improvement program and service strategy.
- ii. Assess the municipal computer system.
- iii. Evaluate a centralized purchasing system.
- iv. Evaluate municipal facilities for ADA compliance.
- v. Consider options for a Geographic Information System (GIA) for use by various town departments.
- vi. Consider renovating the Grand Army of the Republic space in Town Hall as a public meeting space and provide handicapped accessibility.
- vii. Consider providing additional office and file space for town boards.
- viii. Consider expanding the Board of Selectmen to five members.
- ix. Consider establishing a stabilization fund for the capital and equipment

recommendations for all Town departments.

d. Senior Center:

- i. Evaluate, decide on and secure a suitable location for the Senior Center to meet projected needs.

The Senior Center administrative offices are currently operating out of Dewey Hall. This space has become inadequate for a growing senior population and with the increasing variety of activities sponsored by the organization. The Council on Aging has developed preliminary plans for a new Senior Center.

e. Bushnell-Sage Public Library:

- i. Support staff efforts to improve computer networking with other library systems to improve access to publications and materials to all Sheffield residents.
- ii. Support expansion of public events and exhibits.
- iii. Consider the costs and benefits of expanding the facilities to accommodate library needs and larger public events, meetings and other gatherings.

f. Business Park:

- i. Review Business park criteria and ways to streamline the approval process.
- ii. Consider developing the Business Park around agriculture-related activities.
- iii. Consider broadening the scope of businesses sought.
- iv. Consider allowing a developer to own, build and manage appropriate spaces and rent to smaller businesses and cottage industries.
- v. Explore alternative uses for the Business Park.

Update and revise the criteria used to consider and accept tenants for the Business Park, to bring in jobs and tax revenues. Changes in the business and economic climate since the Business Park was created nearly 10 years ago (recognizing the local constraints to attracting light industry and clean manufacturing, in addition to the national trend of such jobs moving overseas), create a need to update some of the criteria to recognize the full potential of this resource.

“Recommendation 5: Develop active and passive recreational programs and facilities to serve various groups within the community.

Detailed recommendations have been developed for passive and active recreational facilities in the Open Space and Recreation section of the Community Action Plan and Implementation Schedule.

1. Upgrade or replace existing playgrounds and picnic sites as needed, including a completely fenced in area where children can play without parents having to worry about their wandering off (like that at the Family Center in Gt. Barrington). A potential source of funding is the Small Town Program administered by the State Division of Conservation Services (DCS). A Self-Help Grant may also be possible.
2. Identify potential new locations for small public parks and playgrounds in growing residential areas. Consider using surplus public parcels for such purposes as picnic areas and playgrounds, athletic fields and community gardens.
3. Promote awareness of and increase the ‘user-friendliness’ of the Town Park and other existing or future parks and playground sites with safe and accessible off-street parking,

informational kiosks, bicycle racks, maintained trash receptacles, and other common accessories. Publicize and promote the process for scheduling community and individual events at these facilities.

4. Continue to promote volunteer stewardship and sustainable management of Town Park and land by local service organizations and clubs.
5. Seek connections between the Town Park and surrounding neighborhoods, Sheffield Center and other areas through green corridors and trails.
6. Investigate the opportunity to cooperate with the Southern Berkshire Regional School District and Berkshire School in expanding joint recreational programs for youths and adults.
7. Seek potential locations for a town beach. The town could create a Swimming Area Committee to evaluate natural beach swimming opportunities. The Committee could explore available locations, costs, funding programs and liability issues. Possible sites could include Three Mile Pond (owned by the State) and Mill and Trout Ponds (privately owned) as well as others.”

Were revised to:

“Recommendation 5: Evaluate active and passive recreational programs and facilities to serve the community.

- a. Assess existing playgrounds and picnic sites, including the need for a secure area for children.
- b. Evaluate new locations for small public parks and playgrounds in growing residential areas.
- c. Evaluate improvements to the Town Park.
- d. Promote use of the Town Park.
- e. Facilitate the scheduling of events at town recreational facilities.
- f. Continue to promote volunteer stewardship and sustainable management of Town Park and land by local service organizations and clubs.
- g. Evaluate connecting the Town park and surrounding neighborhoods, Sheffield Center and other areas through green corridors and trails.
- h. Investigate the opportunity to cooperate with the Southern Berkshire Regional School District and Berkshire School in expanding joint recreational programs for youths and adults.
- i. Seek potential locations for a town beach.”

“Recommendation 6: Foster inter-local cooperation where opportunities exist to improve services and reduce costs

Neighboring communities can benefit greatly by inter-local cooperative agreements. Funds can be pooled for roadway improvement and maintenance, utility expansion, resource protection, and many other municipal services (i.e. emergency, schools, recreation, and cultural activities). For small communities like Sheffield facing rapid growth, decisions regarding the location of public facilities, infrastructure expansion, and transportation are likely to have direct or indirect impacts on neighboring communities.

Some potential areas of cooperation include:

1. Participating in joint community planning efforts
2. Creating greenways and open space projects across boundaries
3. Sharing services, equipment, and/or personnel
4. Shared recreational programs and facilities
5. Participating in regional affordable housing development and economic development activities
6. Purchase joint material and equipment in bulk (i.e. fuel, school furniture, road salt, etc.)”

Were revised to:

“Recommendation 6: Foster inter-town cooperation where opportunities exist to improve services and reduce costs. Potential areas of cooperation include:

- a. Participate in joint community planning efforts.
- b. Create greenways and open space projects across town borders.
- c. Sharing services, equipment and/or personnel.
- d. Shared recreational programs and facilities.
- e. Participation in regional affordable housing development and economic development activities.
- f. Purchase of materials and equipment in bulk.

Neighboring communities can benefit greatly by inter-local cooperative agreements. Funds can be pooled for roadway improvement and maintenance, utility expansion, resource protection, and many other municipal services (i.e. emergency, schools, recreation, and cultural activities). For small communities like Sheffield facing rapid growth, decisions regarding the location of public facilities, infrastructure expansion, and transportation are likely to have direct or indirect impacts on neighboring communities.”

“Recommendation 6: Work with the Sheffield Water Company to improve public water service to the community.

There are approximately 467 homes and businesses that rely on the Sheffield Water Company for safe drinking water. The SWC’s Wellhead Protection Plan can provide many community benefits including reducing risk to human health, potential cost savings with respect to long-term monitoring and treatment, support for local bylaws making them less likely to be challenged, assurance of clean drinking water supply for future generations, enhancing real estate values, and protecting valuable conservation lands from development.

1. Establish a Wellhead Protection Committee and adopt the Wellhead Protection Plan and Emergency Response Plan. The Town and Sheffield Water Company should work together to adopt the Wellhead Protection Plan to the benefit of the entire community. The main steps involved in implementing the plan are as follows:
 - Funding for Zone I and Zone II property acquisitions
 - Revise the Water Supply Overlay Protection District (WSPD) to apply to the updated Zone II designations and meet current state requirements.
 - Develop and implement a floor drain inspection program
 - Conduct a drainage study in the area tributary to the springs
 - Prepare an educational brochure specific to the Sheffield public water supply system

- Increase storage capacity and hydrant flows.
2. Assess carrying capacity and current infrastructure and continue to expand the water distribution system, improve water quality, and install water volume and quality monitoring equipment as needed.
 3. Develop new water sources as need.
 4. The Town should consider the long-term costs and benefits of acquiring the SWC in the future to ensure that adequate funding is provided to maintain and expand the water system as necessary.”

Were revised to:

“Recommendation 7: Work with the Sheffield Water Company (SWC) to improve public water service to the community.

- a. Establish a Wellhead Protection Committee and adopt and implement the Wellhead Protection Plan and Emergency Response Plan.

The main steps involved in implementing the plan are as follows:

- Funding for Zone I and Zone II property acquisitions
 - Revise the Water Supply Overlay Protection District (WSPD) to apply to the updated Zone II designations and meet current state requirements.
 - Develop and implement a floor drain inspection program
 - Conduct a drainage study in the area tributary to the springs
 - Prepare an educational brochure specific to the Sheffield public water supply system
 - Increase storage capacity and hydrant flows.
- b. Assess carrying capacity and current infrastructure and continue to expand the water distribution system, improve water quality and install water volume and quality monitoring equipment as needed.
 - c. Develop new water sources as needed.
 - d. Consider the long-terms costs and benefits of acquiring the SWC to ensure that adequate funding is provided to maintain and expand the water system as necessary.

There are approximately 467 homes and businesses that rely on the Sheffield Water Company for safe drinking water. The SWC’s Wellhead Protection Plan can provide many community benefits including reducing risk to human health, potential cost savings with respect to long-term monitoring and treatment, support for local bylaws making them less likely to be challenged, assurance of clean drinking water supply for future generations, enhancing real estate values, and protecting valuable conservation lands from development.”

“Recommendation 7: Address other community development issues and needs.

1. Establish a Town Visitor Center. The town should consider creating a visitor center or renting a portion of current space such as at the Old Stone Store (owned by the Sheffield Historical Society) or Dewey Hall (owned by the Sheffield Friendly Union) for that purpose.

2. Work with electric and cellular service providers to identify discrete locations for future cell towers (i.e. church steeples), bury overhead power lines in targeted locations (such as Sheffield Center and Ashley Falls village), and create high speed internet infrastructure.
3. Update, maintain and expand the Town's website to include a description of departments and facilities, contacts (including e-mail with links directly from the site), local businesses, plans and regulations, maps, and upcoming community events.
4. Evaluate the costs and benefits of extending the small sewage treatment facility located at Mt. Everett Regional School on Berkshire School Road to its surrounding neighborhood.
5. Investigate and provide for the use of package treatment plants and other alternative technologies for septic and sewage needs. Develop guidelines for package treatment plants and any other alternative technologies to ensure compliance with state standards and to address long-term maintenance responsibilities.
6. Continue to seek state and federal funding for important community development projects and programs such as infrastructure improvements, new or rehabilitated public facilities, active and passive recreational projects, cultural programs and general government services. While funding programs are becoming more competitive, Sheffield should seek public and private funding sources to achieve specific community development goals.”

Were revised to:

“Recommendation 8: Address other community development issues and needs.

- a. Establish a Town Visitor Center.
- b. Identify discrete locations for future cell towers, bury overhead power line in appropriate locations and create high speed Internet infrastructure.
- c. Update, maintain and expand the town's website and promote town information sources such as the Sheffield Times.
- d. Evaluate the costs and benefits of extending Mt. Everett Regional Schools' sewage treatment facility to its surrounding neighborhood.
- e. Investigate, develop guidelines and provide for the use of package treatment plants and other alternative technologies for septic and sewage needs.
- f. Continue to seek state, federal and private funding for community development projects and goals.”

Section 8. Land Use Action Plan

1. Overall Goal for Community Facilities & Services:

No revisions made.

2. Land Use Objectives

- Objective 1.: “Foster vibrant village centers and neighborhoods with careful infill and clearly contained expansion.” was revised to “Foster vibrant village centers and neighborhoods with careful infill and contained expansion.”

- Objective 2.: “Absorb development in agriculture and natural resource areas in ways that are least intrusive and avoid the most sensitive and valuable resources” was revised to “Ensure that when development occurs in agriculture and natural resource areas it is in ways that are least intrusive and avoid the most sensitive and valuable resources.”

3. Land Use Recommendations

- Recommendation 1:
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Invest in water, sewer, other improvements as needed to support desired village character and density” was revised to “Evaluates water, sewer other improvements needed to support desired village character and density.”
- Recommendation 2:
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Invests in water, sewer, other improvements as needed to support desired neighborhood character and density” was revised to “Evaluates water, sewer other improvements needed to support desired neighborhood character and density.”
- Recommendation 3:
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Help maintain the viability of farms and farming” and sub-recommendation b.: “Protect water resources” were combined into sub-recommendation a. and revised to “Protect all natural resources.”
 - Sub-recommendation c.: “Minimize loss of farmlands & orchards” was renumbered sub-recommendation b. and revised to “Minimize loss of farmland and orchards and encourage family farming.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Minimize fragmentation of wildlife habitat” was renumbered sub-recommendation c.”
 - Sub-recommendation e.: “Absorb new homes in ways that are least visible” was renumbered sub-recommendation d. and revised to “Absorb new homes in ways that have minimal impacts.”
 - Sub-recommendation f.: “Continue tradition of home-based businesses with little impact on neighbors & natural resources” was renumbered sub-recommendation e.
 - Sub-recommendation g.: “Encourage preservation/reuse of historic structures” was renumbered sub-recommendation f.
- Recommendation 4:
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Minimize clearing of vegetation on upper slopes” was revised to “Minimize clearing of trees and vegetation on upper slopes.”

- Recommendation 5:
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Apply site plan standards for attractive development with minimized curb cuts” was revised to “Apply site plan standards for attractive development and minimize curb cuts.”
 - Sub-recommendation d.: “Welcome and encourage motorists to stop and visit business & cultural offerings” was revised to “Encourage motorists to stop and visit business & cultural offerings.”

- Recommendation 6:
 - Sub-recommendation a.: “Maintain roadside character was revised to “Maintain rural and roadside character.”
 - Sub-recommendation b.: “Site new development so as to keep scenic views open” was revised to “Minimize impact of development on natural and scenic resources.”

The text of Section 9 in the draft Master Plan, which had listed all the recommendations previously discussed in the sections, was replaced with the *Town Master Plan, Summary of Recommendations* document, previously published by the Planning Board. This document is located at the front of the Master Plan. “Next Steps to Maintain Momentum” in the draft Master Plan was replaced by Section 9. Community Action Plan in the Master Plan.