



Initiating Committee Report
to the Lexington Board of Selectmen,
School Committee and Planning Board

March 24, 1999

Report from the Initiating Committee for the Strategic Goal Setting Process

Introduction

The Initiating Committee, a jointly appointed committee of the Board of Selectmen, in consultation with the School Committee and Planning Board, has successfully completed its charge. The Initiating Committee's work represents the first steps of Lexington's strategic goal-setting process which will ultimately yield a set of action plans and strategies intended to engage citizens in creating a vision for the direction of Lexington over the next twenty years.

The initiation of the Strategic Goal Setting Process in Lexington builds upon past efforts that laid the groundwork for strategic goal setting. Four or so years ago, the town conducted a series of focus groups, community conversations and a survey to involve residents in a dialogue about Lexington. While the town had not developed a mechanism to take strategic planning beyond these early stages at that time, those efforts represent critical building blocks in the Strategic Goal Setting Process.

Strategic goal-setting refers to a comprehensive community-wide long-range planning effort. The strategies and action plans produced from this process will be the result of engaging individuals who represent all segments of the community and gathering input from them on a variety of town-related issues such as financial policies, land use, school matters, capital investment, economic development, infrastructure investment, senior citizen program involvement, service delivery issues, and other issues. The process specifically targets inclusion of those individuals who are not regularly active in the governance of the town. Once these discussions have occurred, the opinions, dreams, goals and visions of Lexington's residents identified through the process will be transformed into plans, programs, and projects to be implemented by the professional staff and town boards and committees.

Charge to the Initiating Committee

The Initiating Committee's responsibility was to review past efforts and incorporate them, as necessary, to develop the foundation for the community-based strategic goal-setting process. There are four basic objectives to the Charge:

1. to develop a work plan and present public progress reports;
2. to frame and provide context to the strategic planning effort, including the preliminary identification of the key planning components and issues to be explored and analyzed;
3. to develop criteria and process for selecting members of the Steering Committee and Stakeholders Group; and
4. to develop the methodology for the strategic planning process, and a detailed step by step description of the process for approval by the Board of Selectmen.

Committee procedure and principal decisions.

The Initiating Committee consisted of a combination of eleven community leaders and individuals from the community who add value to the strategic planning process (*Attachment A*). They met an average of two times per month during the period between October 16, 1998 to March 5, 1999. The Initiating Committee split into two subcommittees: the Citizen Participation Subcommittee and the Process Design Subcommittee. Each of these Subcommittees met outside of normal committee meeting times, in the early morning, evenings, and weekends. A third subcommittee was later formed to oversee a Request for Proposal process for the recruitment of qualified consultant candidates. On one occasion, the Director of Planning for Lexington, Robert Bowyer, presented the Initiating Committee with an overview of informational resources available through the planning office.

The principal decisions made by the committee during that period are reported below:

Name of the effort. The Initiating Committee decided to name the strategic goal-setting effort “Lexington 20/20 Vision”.

Community participation. The goal of the Citizen Participation Subcommittee was to inform and invite participation from a broad group of residents who adequately reflect the community's interests and perspectives. The Initiating Committee agreed that the primary form of citizen recruitment would be via letter and survey, newspaper advertisements and the direct solicitation of volunteers. This Subcommittee’s letter and survey was distributed to every household in Lexington (*Attachment E*). The response to this town-wide mailing was extremely positive. Members of this Subcommittee also met to study and analyze over 200 responses received (*Attachment F*). The Initiating Committee continued its community participation recruitment with two successive announcements in the Lexington Minuteman newspaper inviting all interested persons.

Process design. The Initiating Committee agreed that the goal-setting process would follow a determined sequence of activities based on a specific process. The Process Design Subcommittee was charged with the task of designing a process of concrete steps that will reach the desired outcome of the community effort. The Initiating Committee approved the process design flow chart included in the attachments to this report (*Attachment C*). It provides a recommended schedule that specifically details each phase of the process. The Initiating Committee expects that the process will be complete within the period of 12 – 18 months (*Attachment D*).

Consultant services. The Initiating Committee agreed that the hiring of a consultant would be essential to the success of the strategic goal setting effort. The consultant will provide expert insights and guidance to the process and time frame. A Request for Proposals was sent to fourteen consultants, five of whom submitted proposals on or before the March 12, 1999 deadline. The Initiating Committee expects to conduct interviews on Saturday, March 27 and initiate consultant services in early April.

Project Manager. The Initiating Committee agreed that there would be a Project Manager to facilitate the ongoing operations of the effort. The Town Manager has assigned Ms. Candy McLaughlin to serve as the manager of this process. Among other responsibilities, Ms. McLaughlin will provide administrative management and resource referral, act as point person for information, work directly with the Steering Committee and the consultant, and oversee project finances.

Steering Committee. The Initiating Committee recommends that the Steering Committee be composed of the existing members of the Initiating Committee who indicated a willingness to continue to serve and 3-5 additional persons who represent Lexington's business and other interests (*Attachment G*). The basic charge of the Steering Committee is to make the process work (*Attachment H*).

The Initiating Committee agreed to create two layers of visioning groups: the Stakeholders Group and a series of "Expert" Subcommittees. The Steering Committee, with the assistance of both the Consultant and the Project Manager, will provide guidance for both of these visioning groups (*Attachment K*).

Stakeholder Group. The Initiating Committee agreed that the Stakeholder Group would work throughout the life of the process. The size and formation of the group will not occur until after the consultant has been hired. Participation will primarily be drawn from those who filled out response forms to the town-wide mailing. Additional candidates may be recruited from existing community groups with identifiable interests. This Committee will exist throughout the life of the project and is responsible for providing feedback on the issue-based task force "green papers" (an environmental scan, profile and vision statement for a particular issue), and for formulating these papers into the final vision report or "white paper". This Committee is responsible for analyzing the issue-based task force "green papers" and for formulating the papers into the final vision report.

"Expert" Subcommittees. The Initiating Committee agreed that these expert subcommittees or issue-based task forces would meet for short periods to discuss a specific topic. Each group will produce a "Green Paper" which the Stakeholder Committee must approve for use in the final visioning document. The papers will focus on Lexington's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges as they pertain to each subcommittee's respective issue. After the group's complete discussion of an issue, the Steering Committee will have the opportunity to re-categorize the groups to reflect new or changing issues.

Attachments

- Attachment A, List of Initiating Committee members
- Attachment B, Short-term timeline of next steps
- Attachment C, Process Design Flow Chart
- Attachment D, Task diagrams
- Attachment E, Original letter and questionnaire used for town-wide mailing
- Attachment F, Analysis of survey results
- Attachment G, Recommended list of Steering Committee membership
- Attachment H, Steering Committee Job Description
- Attachment I, Lexington Planning Resources
- Attachment J, Organizational Chart

The complete list of respondents for the town-wide mailing is available for review in the Town Manager's Office, along with the minutes of Initiating Committee meetings.

ATTACHMENT A

Initiating Committee Membership

Charles Benson

Helen Cohen

Clark Cowen

Robin DiGiammarino

Peter Enrich

Alan Lazarus

Peter Lee

Fred Merrill

Peggy Perry

Marjorie Platt

Fernando Quezada, Chair

ATTACHMENT B
STRATEGIC PLANNING SHORT-TERM
TENTATIVE TIMELINE

WRITTEN REPORT/PRESENTATION TO SELECTMEN

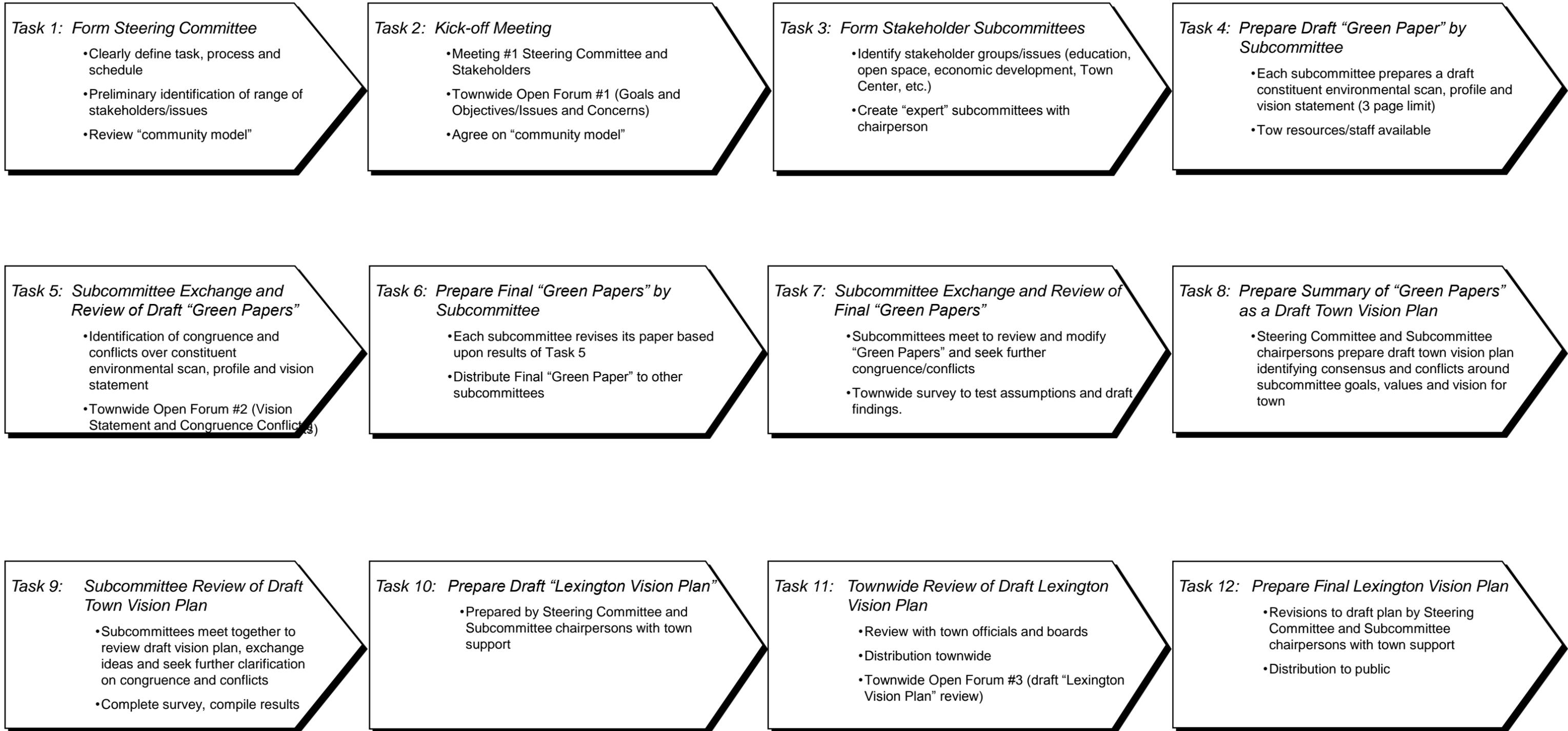
- Formulation of Outline for Initiating Committee (IC) Report March 5
- Development of first draft of written report March 8 – March 17
- Review of draft by IC Members March 17 – March 19
- Development/distribution of final draft of written report March 19 – March 24
- Multi-Board meeting for presentation of report by IC members March 24, 7:00 p.m.

CONSULTANT SELECTION

- Deadline for submission of proposals March 12
- Transitional SC review of proposals March 13 – March 18
- Transitional SC narrowing of field of consultants – select for presentation March 19
- Transitional Steering Committee (SC) hears presentations/interviews and narrows field of consultants March 27
- SC evaluates and selects a consultant March 27
- Negotiation process with SC and selected consultant March 29 – April
- Consultant officially hired April 1

SC/CONSULTANT NEXT STEPS

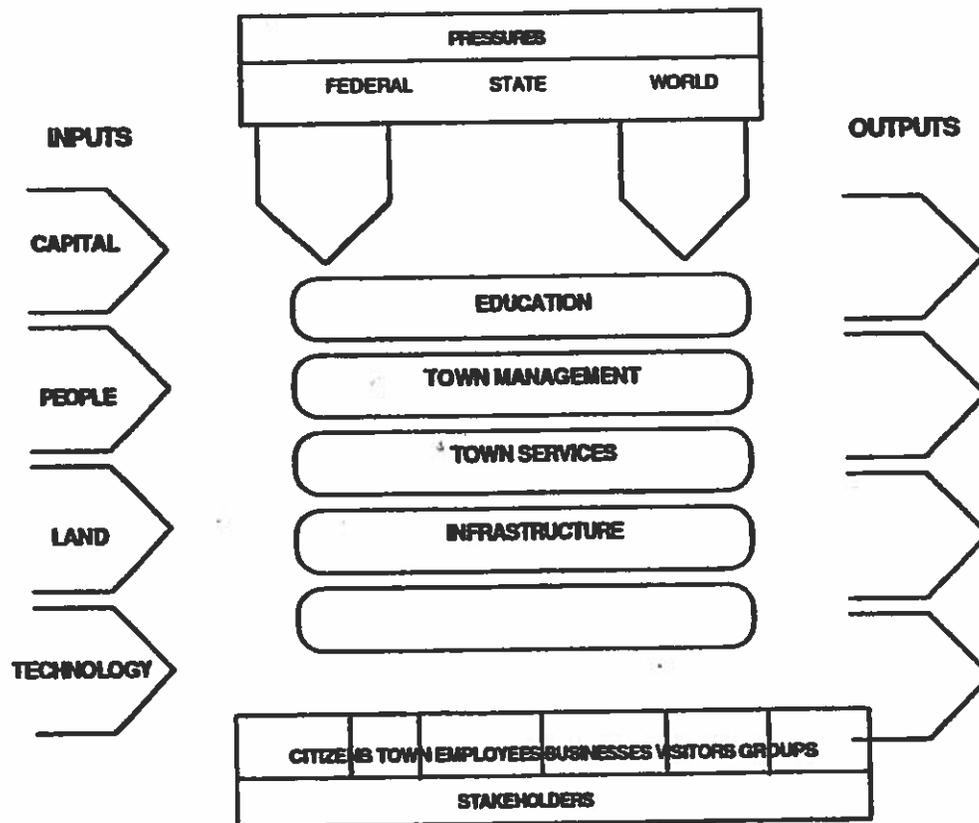
- Formal structuring of process and events of Summer 1999 Early/Mid April
- Kickoff meeting with Stakeholder's Group (SHG)/all participants Beginning of May
- SHG meeting to formalize Working Groups End of May
- Commencement of Working Group meetings June/July



NOTES:

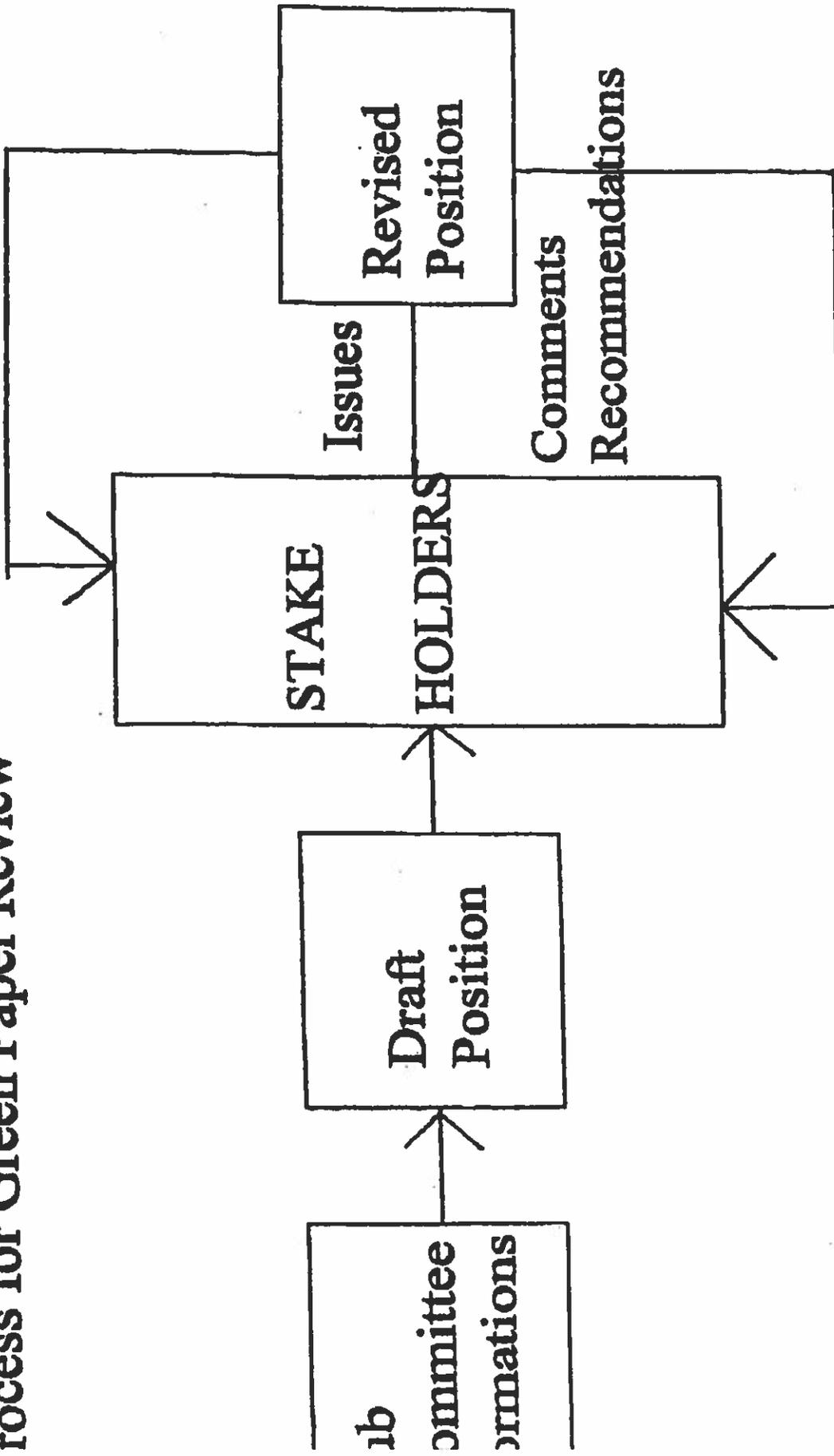
1. Subcommittees will be provided with a specific agenda and schedule with discrete and manageable tasks.
2. Subcommittees are comprised of "experts" in their area of concern and should be broadly representative.
3. Subcommittee chairperson will recruit membership for their subcommittee and interact with Steering Committee.
4. A tangible product results from each Task in concise written form.

**LEXINGTON 2020 VISION
COMMUNITY MODEL**



**Definitions Needed:
Key Measures
Key Characteristics**

Process for Green Paper Review



LEXINGTON 20/20 VISION

ATTACHMENT E

January 5, 1999

Dear Lexington Citizen,

How's your vision?

Would you like to help shape the future of Lexington as it confronts the changes and challenges of the new century? This is your invitation to join other residents and play an important role in a new town undertaking - a process of visioning and long range planning. Our committee was appointed by the Board of Selectmen to initiate this process.

We need your help in this vital undertaking, whether or not you have been a regular participant in town affairs. Similar efforts in other communities suggest that successful goal setting comes from citizens of the town, rather than town officials. The opinions, goals, and visions of the whole community, representing different age groups, backgrounds and perspectives, must be reflected in future plans and projects, both to express our diversity and to build our shared future.

The first steps in this process have already been taken. A series of focus groups, community conversations, and finally a survey identified shared values in the community, among them quality of education, public safety, preservation of open space, and affordability. The next step is to identify the key challenges facing the town over the next 20 years, and to suggest strategies, based on the shared values, for facing those challenges.

We are presently recruiting individuals to play a variety of roles in this process over the next 12-18 months. We expect to establish a number of working groups to explore such topics as land use and development, the future direction of education, the needs of an aging population, and town finances. In addition, there will be a diverse, representative stakeholders group which will meet periodically throughout the process to generate ideas, monitor progress, and serve as a sounding board. There will be opportunities for full term or short term participation in the process for everyone who responds.

We anticipate that this will be an exciting and enriching endeavor. If you would like to participate, please return the enclosed form by January 22. We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Fernando Quezada, Chair
On behalf of the Initiating Committee

Initiating Committee

Conley Benson

Helen Cohen

Geri Cowen

Robin DiGiamacco

Peter Enrich

Alan Lazarus

Peter Lee

Fred Merrill

Peggy Perry

Marjorie Reed

Fernando Quezada

ATTACHMENT F

RESIDENT RESPONSES

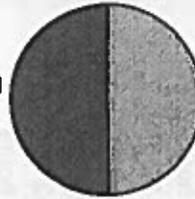
ZIP CODE

as of 1/28/98

ZIP CODE

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02421	96

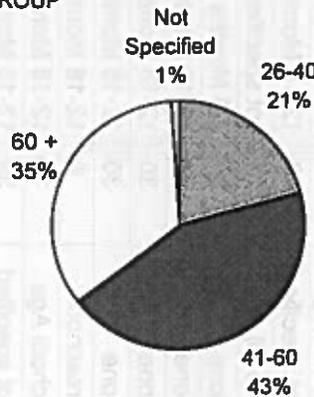
02421 50% 02420 50%



AGE GROUP

26-40	40
41-60	83
60 +	66
Not Specified	2

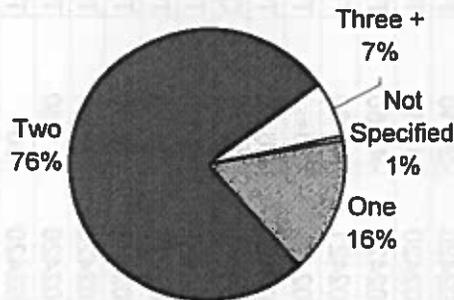
AGE GROUP



HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP (ADULTS)

One	31
Two	146
Three +	13
Not Specified	1

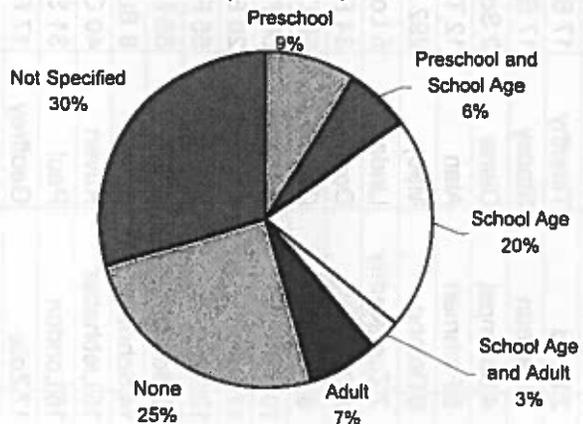
HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP (ADULTS)



HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP (CHILDREN)

Preschool	17
Preschool and Sch	12
School Age	39
School Age and Ad	6
Adult	13
None	48
Not Specified	56

HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP (CHILDREN)



LENGTH OF RESIDENCE

Median Length of Residence	20
Mean Length of Residence	20.21

ATTACHMENT F

AREAS OF INTEREST BY TOPIC

Based on 210 Response Submissions

Youth Issues

- 89 Education/School Development
- 4 Youth Issues
- 2 Activities for Kids

Land Use Issues

- 49 Environmental Conservation/Green Space
- 27 Land Use/Development
- 10 Recreation/Parks/Playgrounds
- 1 Sprawl

Town Government Issues

- 23 Town Finances/Fiscal Management
- 5 Economics and Finance
- 4 Infrastructure
- 3 Tax Base Preservation
- 1 Public Works

Housing Issues

- 18 Affordable Housing
- 4 Neighborhood Development/Cluster Housing
- 3 Mansionization
- 2 Condominium Affairs
- 1 Real Estate

Business Issues

- 15 Town Center Issues
- 8 Business Growth

Needs of an Aging Population

- 23 Needs of an Aging Population

Resident Needs Issues

- 12 Issues of Community
- 12 Issues of Diversity
- 3 Inclusivity

Technology/Communication

- 9 Technology
- 2 Communications

Transportation

- 9 Transportation
- 5 Bike Path Issues

Cultural Issues

- 7 Arts
- 3 Cultural Events
- 4 Library Services
- 2 Religion

Aesthetic Issues

- 9 Town Beautification/Trees
- 6 Design Issues

Planning Issues

- 4 Strategic Planning

Regional Issues

- 3 Hanscom AFB Issues
- 2 East Lexington Issues

History/Tourism

- 11 Historic Preservation
- 2 Tourism in Lexington

Health and Safety

- 5 Health Issues
- 2 Safety
- 1 Air Quality in Buildings

Public Service

- 1 Charities
- 1 Volunteerism

Other Issues

- 2 Wildlife
- 1 Cable Services
- 1 Energy Usage
- 1 Human Services
- 1 Immigrant Settlement
- 1 Intergenerational Understanding
- 1 Time Banking Program (154)
- 1 Town Newspaper

AREAS OF INTEREST BY PREDOMINANT CATEGORY

Based on 210 Response Submissions

89	Education/School Development	3	Cultural Events
49	Environmental Conservation/Green Space	3	Hanscom AFB Issues
27	Land Use/Development	3	Inclusivity
23	Needs of an Aging Population	3	Mansionization
23	Town Finances/Fiscal Management	3	Tax Base Preservation
18	Affordable Housing	2	Activities for Kids
15	Town Center Issues	2	Communications
12	Issues of Community	2	Condominium Affairs
12	Issues of Diversity	2	East Lexington Issues
11	Historic Preservation	2	Handicapped Accessibility
10	Recreation/Parks/Playgrounds	2	Religion
9	Technology	2	Safety
9	Town Beautification/Trees	2	Tourism in Lexington
9	Transportation	2	Wildlife
8	Business Growth	1	Air Quality in Buildings
7	Arts	1	Cable Services
6	Design Issues	1	Charities
5	Bike Path Issues	1	Energy Usage
5	Economics and Finance	1	Human Services
5	Health Issues	1	Immigrant Settlement
4	Infrastructure	1	Intergenerational Understanding
4	Library Services	1	Long Range Plan
4	Neighborhood Development/Cluster Housing	1	Public Works
4	Strategic Planning	1	Real Estate
4	Youth Issues	1	Sprawl
		1	Time Banking Program (154)
		1	Town Newspaper
		1	Volunteerism

ATTACHMENT G

Initiating Committee Recommendation for Steering Committee Membership

Charles Benson

Todd Burger

Helen Cohen

Clark Cowen

Robin DiGiammarino

Peter Enrich

Alan Lazarus

Peter Lee

Paul Mammola

Fred Merrill

Peggy Perry

Marjorie Platt

Fernando Quezada

Gerrie Weathers

Additional members may be added following the formation of the Steering Committee.

ATTACHMENT H

Steering Committee Job Description

Role

The role of the Steering Committee is to guide and manage the visioning and goal setting process.

Duties and responsibilities

Guide the plan and schedule and generally keep the effort on track

Be aware of the wants of committees, staff and consultants

Ensure completion of tasks between meetings

“Own” the process on behalf of the community

Identify consistencies and conflicts (arbitrate disagreements)

Administer communication with the process participants and local residents

Make key decisions

Initial tasks and activities

Interview and selection of a consultant

Select members of stakeholders group

Plan a kickoff

Lead the goal setting process

Hold planning/debriefing meetings for each stakeholder session

Staff

Project Director, Assistants

Structure

Chair, Vice-Chair or Co-Chair

Individual members serve as liaisons to sub-committee

Internal sub-committees will be formed as needed

Meeting frequency

Monthly and as needed

Term

Begins service at the kickoff and continues through implementation

Selection criteria

Interest

Willingness to work as a team member

Representativeness

Size and composition

Fifteen members, the core of which may carry over from the Initiating Committee



**PLANNING BOARD
Town of Lexington, Massachusetts**

ATTACHMENT I

Frederick L. Merrill, Jr., Chairman
John L. Davico, Vice Chairman
Steven L. Colman, Clerk
Anthony G. Galitsis
Stacey P. Bridge-Denzak

1625 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington, MA 02420
(781) 862-0500 x 245
Facsimile: (781) 861-2748

**INDEX* TO DATA, REPORTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS
October, 1998**

Location of reports and other documents:

- **Disk*** – on this diskette under file name indicated
 - **Town Web Page** – see <http://www.lexingtonma.org> under Town Government and Political Organizations and 1998 Town Meeting
 - **Cary Library** – printed copies at the Town's library – Cary Memorial Library
- * *This index and all reports and documents on the diskette are in WORD97 for Windows.*

REPORT/ DOCUMENT	LOCATION File Name
STATISTICAL INFORMATION	
Data Bases Maintained By Planning Department <i>This is a list of databases that the Planning Department maintains with the principal data series identified. Most of this data is drawn from Town departments.</i>	Disk – A-Data Base Files
US Census Data Maintained by Planning Department <i>This is a list of data series from the 1990 US Census of Population and Housing. There are less complete data series from earlier US Censuses 1980 back to 1920. This is data the Planning Department has converted to electronic files for its analyses. The data includes the characteristics of Lexington residents – basic population and housing statistics and sample data on employment, transportation and more detailed population information.</i>	Disk – B-US Census Files
Data from US Census – CD ROM <i>The complete data series from the 1990 US Census of Population and Housing. This includes data that the Planning Department did not convert to files for its own use. The Census Bureau maintains regional library/resource centers for data from previous Censuses. The nearest is at Brandeis.</i>	Cary Library – in disk form
Assessors' Real Estate Data Base <i>The Assessors have extensive information about each of the 11,000 plus parcels of real estate in town. Some of the fields dealing with financial information are protected.</i>	On line access from terminals within Town computer network.

REPORT/ DOCUMENT	LOCATION File Name
PLANNING POLICIES, REPORTS	
HOUSING	
<p>Inclusionary Housing Policy <i>This is the Planning Board policy originally adopted in the 1970s that requires that affordable housing units be included in a multi-family housing development.</i></p>	<p>Disk – D- Inclusionary Housing Policy</p>
<p>New Larger Houses in Existing Neighborhoods (July 1997) <i>This provides analysis of the "tear down" of single family houses and their replacement by larger houses. It outlines choices to the Town to deal with the issue.</i></p>	<p>Town Web Page</p>
<p>Housing Element, Comprehensive Plan <i>The State Planning Law requires that towns have a "master plan" [called comprehensive plan in Lexington] consisting of seven sections called elements. The Housing Element, adopted in 1985 is the only element that the Lexington Planning Board has completed.</i></p>	<p>Available in the Planning Department in printed form, it is undergoing conversion from WordPerfect</p>
<p>Affordable Housing in a Suburban Town (November 1987) <i>This is an analysis of the Town's policies, efforts, successes and failures to provide affordable housing from the 1960s through the mid 80s.</i></p>	<p>Cary Library</p>
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
<p>Commercial Development in the CRO, CM, and CD Zoning Districts (April 1997) <i>This describes the factors the Planning Board considers in making recommendations on rezoning of land for commercial development. It includes discussion of the relationship between land development and traffic demand.</i></p>	<p>Town Web Page</p>
<p>Data from Lexington Commercial Property Data Base, July 1990 <i>This 1990 report was an example of the type of information that can be obtained from an integrated Town data base. It has 1990 data on commercial assessed values, real estate taxes paid, gross floor area and development potential remaining - town wide, by zoning district and by geographic area. Some of this data will be updated in the Build Out Analysis [see above] and the rest in an update of this report.</i></p>	<p>Available as a printed report and on computer disk from the Planning Department. It is scheduled to be updated.</p>
TRANSPORTATION	
<p>Inclusionary Transportation Demand Management Policy <i>Like the Inclusionary Housing Policy this Policy requires that a proposed commercial development include measures to reduce the number of vehicular trips to a commercial site by single occupant automobiles.</i></p>	<p>Disk - F-Transportation Demand Management Policy</p>

Draft Organizational Chart

