

Chapter 12

REGIONAL PLANNING

As stated in the Introduction to the Plan, Canterbury does not exist in a vacuum. Despite the philosophy of local control, which many feel is the "right" of any town in New Hampshire, the reality is far from that. Not only must we consider the impact of our planning on neighboring towns, but we must be aware of the influence that both state planning activity and planning activity in other towns will have on Canterbury.

Two examples of such activity are the New Hampshire International Speedway in Loudon and the Wheelabrator Refuse-to-Energy Plant in Penacook. Both developments are relatively large by Canterbury standards. Each of these major facilities is on or near the Canterbury Town line.

At the time of the last Plan for Tomorrow (1989) the approved and anticipated seating capacity of the Speedway was 55,000. The Speedway presently has a capacity of approximately 80,000, the largest sports venue in the northeast. The Speedway has plans to increase its seating capacity to approximately 105,000 within the next few years. The major tangible impacts of the Speedway are increased noise and traffic. The more intangible, but perhaps more significant impact of the Speedway, relates to its (in)compatibility with other land uses such as Canterbury Shaker Village, and the potential adverse impact on property values in Canterbury as well as Loudon. The noise occurs not just on major race weekends but on practice days and smaller races from April through October. Eastern portions of Canterbury, including Shaker Village, are more affected by the Speedway noise than western portions of Town. Major Canterbury roads, such as Route 132, Morrill Pond Road, Baptist Road, Center Road, and Shaker Road, have become increasingly used by Speedway related traffic.

The Refuse-to-Energy Plant is open 24 hours, and processes refuse from Canterbury and 28 other towns. In addition, the Plant accepts loads from private refuse haulers. The large number of vehicles using Exit 17 to get to the Plant create noise and air pollution.

Canterbury was not consulted by either the Concord or Loudon Planning Boards when the current facilities were planned, approved or constructed.

The recent Planning Board Survey shows that the two characteristics most valued by the townspeople are the quiet atmosphere of the Town and the tranquil and inspiring ambiance of Shaker Village. Both of these characteristics are at risk.

The Speedway and the Plant have a significant impact on the local economy because they create jobs and generate substantial revenue. However, they also create traffic, noise and air quality problems that must be studied and addressed. Taking an active role in planning future "regional" projects such as these is important in order to maximize the benefit and minimize the harmful impact any new development may have on Canterbury and its neighbors.

Long-Range Goal

Work with neighboring towns to address issues as they arise and participate in regional planning in a cooperative and constructive manner under RSA 36:54.

Objectives

1. Ensure that the Planning Board continues to comply with the regional development impact statute (RSA 36:54-57) and assure that the Town is afforded notice and opportunity for input from other towns in the region as required by that statute.
2. Exchange with neighboring towns planning information that will have an impact on development trends and conservation efforts.
3. Continue to participate actively in the Regional Planning Commission to assure that Canterbury's goals, objectives, and policies are considered in regional plans.

Recommended Actions

1. Review the master plans and zoning ordinances of neighboring towns as they are readopted or rewritten to determine their potential impact on Canterbury's future.

Planning Board

2. Review State agency planning documents and actions that might affect Canterbury.

Planning Board, and Conservation Commission