

# starksboro town plan

## community workshop

september 20, 2008



### agenda

- |            |                            |
|------------|----------------------------|
| 9:00 a.m.  | welcome                    |
| 9:15 a.m.  | mapping starksboro in 2020 |
| 10:45 a.m. | brainstorming session      |
| 11:15 a.m. | discussion                 |
| 11:55 a.m. | wrap-up                    |

### next steps

We are looking for volunteers willing to work more directly on the town plan in October and November. We want to form a number of “working groups” to review the town plan in light of the survey results and information gathered today. The more people that look at the plan and offer their opinions, the more the final draft will reflect our shared vision for Starksboro’s future.

Work groups will be asked to complete three tasks:

1. Draft a vision statement by imagining Starksboro 20 years from now and at its very best. Describe that mental picture.
2. Review and develop a written report on currently adopted plan. Groups may be asked to focus their review on one or more plan topics to ensure that all sections of the plan are covered.
3. Develop a land use plan and map.

The first work group meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 2. Groups will be organized at that meeting and the tasks will be reviewed in detail. We are aiming for the groups to present their reports to the Planning Commission on November 20.

## survey results

Part 1 of the survey was distributed in July's Gazette and 86 were returned.

How did you describe Starksboro? The following words were the most common:

- community (46 instances)
- rural (34 instances)
- small (28 instances)
- quiet (18 instances)
- farms (14 instances)

You thought that the rate of residential development was about right or maybe a bit too fast, while the rate of economic development was about right or maybe a bit too slow.

You agreed that Starksboro should be a community where many residents actively manage their farm and forest lands for productive use and most of you thought it should also be a self-sufficient community with more job opportunities in town.

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Part 2 of the survey was distributed in August's Gazette and 108 were returned.

Your top priorities were:

1. Support the agricultural economy encouraging future generations to continue farming and forestry in town.
2. Promote the use and development of local renewable energy sources (wind wood solar water geothermal) as a replacement for nonrenewable resources.
3. Support the ability of people to work from their homes.
4. Encourage housing that will allow elderly residents to continue to live in the community.
5. Maintain Starksboro's existing areas of unbroken forest.

Part 3 of the survey was distributed in September's Gazette and 71 were returned.

This survey asked a series of questions about development of a hypothetical piece of property. While no consensus emerged around a single plan, out of the eight presented, some trends were evident:

- Plans that included open space were preferred over those that resulted in the entire 120 acres or entire frontage being subdivided into lots.
- Plans that resulted in land remaining available for agriculture had more support than plans that included open space for recreational use only.
- There was greater support for approving more homes than would be allowed under the zoning (i.e. a density bonus) in order to provide affordable housing than to acquire a public recreation area. The support for density bonuses, even for affordable housing, was not especially strong.
- There were concerns over small lot sizes, especially those less than one acre. Many of you felt that no lots should be smaller than two or three acres in area.
- Nearly everyone would prefer that the property not be developed at all, but many of you would not be willing to pay additional taxes in order to buy the property or its development rights. A slight majority might be willing to pay an additional \$50 for 10 years, but less than a majority would be willing to pay \$100 annually.

You supported the town taking the following actions:

1. Further protecting water resources.
2. Further protecting agricultural land.
3. Further protecting wildlife resources.
4. Further protecting large blocks of forest.

You are satisfied with the current cap on the number of new homes that can be built in town each year (set at 15) and don't want it raised, lowered or abolished.

**stay tuned**

More information about the update of the town plan is available on the town website, [www.starksboro.org](http://www.starksboro.org), by following the link to the town plan update. Meeting summaries, survey results, draft documents, future meeting dates, etc. will be posted online.

