

# Fracestovrn Town Hall/Academy Survey Summary Report



**December 2010**

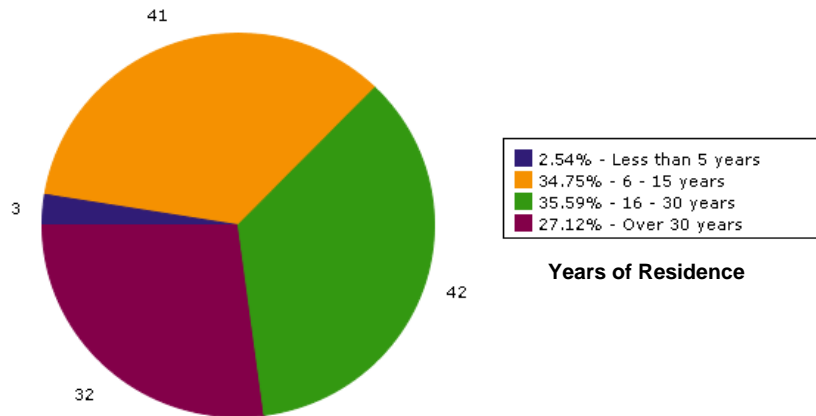
*This survey was conducted by the Fracestovrn Heritage Commission and the Town Hall/Academy Study Group with funding from the NH Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) & the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Hart Family Fund for Small Towns. Technical support was provided by UNH Cooperative Extension.*



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### Demographic Overview:

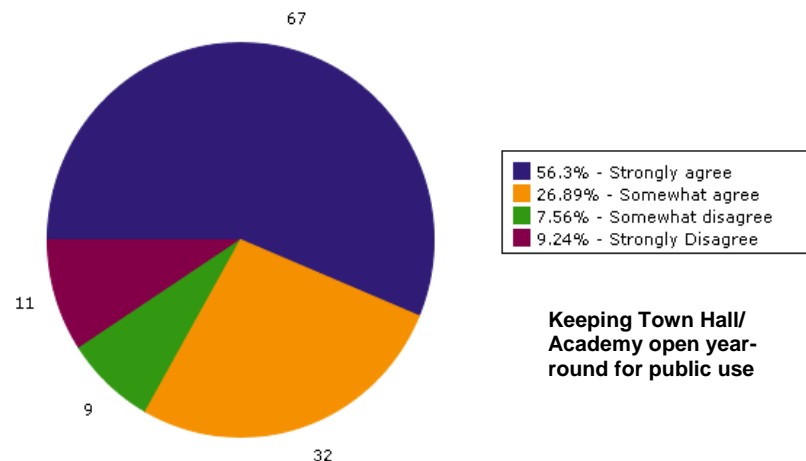
- 126 surveys were completed, accounting for over a 17% household response rate.
- 93% of survey respondents reside in Francestown year-round, 7% are seasonal.
- Approximately 63% of survey respondents have lived in Francestown for over 15 years while only 2.54% have lived there for less than 5 years.



- 47% of the households surveyed have individuals over the age of 65, while 42% have individuals under the age of 18.

### Major Findings:

- 83% of respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that there is a need to keep the Francestown Town Hall/Academy open year-round for public use.



- 83% of survey respondents said they, or their family, would likely use the Town Hall/Academy if renovated for public use.
- *If* the Town Hall/Academy were made publicly available, the majority of respondents indicated that they would support its use for:
  - Municipal uses (95%)
  - Community functions (92%)
  - Arts and Theater (91%)
  - Meeting space for local orgs (91%)
  - Hall rental for private events (91%)
  - Physical fitness activities (86%)
  - Activities for families (82%)
  - Activities for seniors (82%)
  - Activities for teens (80%) and children (75%)
  - Activities for adults 25-plus (70%)

**Facility Considerations:**

- 91% of respondents want to see ample meeting space for meetings and receptions.
- 88% indicated that there is a need for improved bathroom facilities, which would require upgrades in order to meet ADA requirements.
- 83% of respondents indicated it would be important to make the facility physically accessible to people of all ages/abilities.
- 80% of survey respondents indicated that it would be important to incorporate kitchen facilities if the Town Hall/ Academy were renovated.
- Functions that the majority of respondents would support that were not mentioned in the major findings section include:
  - A warming center or emergency shelter (78%)
  - Activities for pre-schoolers (66%)
  - Rental occupancy by local organizations/businesses (55%)

**Renovation Considerations:**

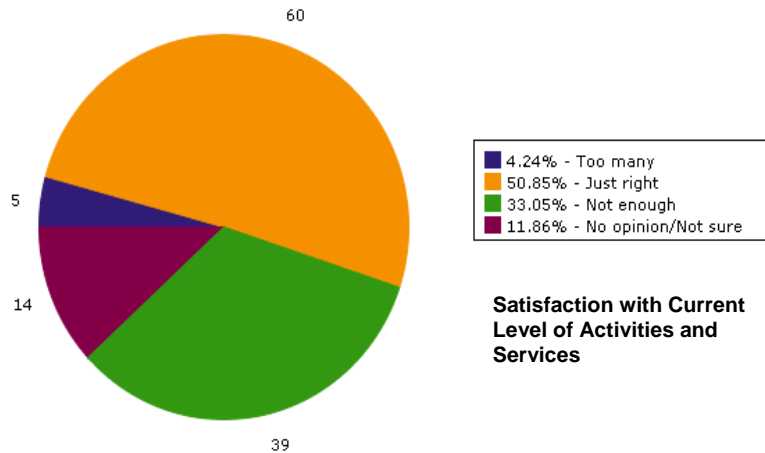
- 93% of survey respondents indicated that energy efficiency is a key consideration for the Town Hall/Academy renovation.
- 92% of survey respondents expressed the importance of preserving the building's architectural and historic integrity.
- 83% of survey respondents said that it would be important to renovate the second floor, which has been closed for 3 years.
- 83% of respondents said that accessibility of the facility to people of all ages and abilities would be important.

**Funding and Support:**

- 96% of respondents said that grants would be an important source of revenue to renovate and sustain the Town Hall/Academy.
- 91% of respondents said rental of facilities for receptions, meetings, and other functions would be an important source of revenue.
- 80% of respondents said that rental of space for studios, workshops, classes, etc., would be an important source of revenue.
- 56% of respondents said they might be willing to help renovate the Town Hall/ Academy
- 51% of respondents said they might be willing to help with fundraising efforts and 30% said they would be willing to help write grants.

### Other Key Considerations:

- 51% of respondents indicated that the current level of activities and services for Francestown is just right. Only one-third indicated a need for more.



- 10 respondents noted in their additional comments that it would be important to find alternatives to using taxpayer dollars to renovate and sustain the Francestown Town Hall/Academy.
- 7 respondents suggested in their additional comments that the town should explore alternative venues, including middle school, community church, library, and Town offices.

### Additional Comments:

*I can't imagine not having the Town Hall operating at least as it has in the past.*

*We have an obligation to restore this public building and doing so tells much about the civic integrity of Francestown.*

*We need a place where we can hold meetings and events.*

*It is important to protect and preserve this historic treasure that has been entrusted to us and pass it on to future generations.*

### Suggestions to Consider:

*The Hall should not be used in winter to conserve on energy costs.*

*This project should not cost taxpayers more money*

*Keep in mind the budget and Yankee flavor of our town!*

*Let us not forget that there are other buildings in town that are available for public use.*

### Survey Methodology:

In November of 2010, surveys were mailed to 628 households and property owners in Francestown. Hard copies of the survey were made available at the Town Library and Selectmen's office and the survey was made accessible on-line. Responses to both the web and hard-copy surveys were entered into Instant Survey™, a web-based survey tool, and analyzed by UNH Cooperative Extension. To learn more about the survey results, go to:

<http://www.FrancestownHeritage.com>