



 UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## Hillsborough County Design Charrette

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April 29, 2010

Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners  
329 Mast Road  
Goffstown NH 03045

**RE: Design Charrette Report**

Dear Commissioners:

It is with distinct pleasure that we, the members of the Charrette Steering Committee submit the following report of the proceedings of the Hillsborough County Design Charrette, held October 2-3, 2009 for your review and consideration.

We would like to draw your attention to the Recommendations section of the report, pages 4 through 9, which include a Site Analysis Plan and a Land Use Plan. Following these plans you will find recommended next steps for you to consider. The County is quite fortunate to have such a significant piece of property to steward for the public good. As you know, with assets that include state roadways, rivers, a municipal rail trail, historic structures, fields and forests, the opportunities are many. We encourage you to continue your proactive approach to the stewardship of this property.

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this project. We look forward to witnessing the benefits that our efforts may provide the County, the local community, and the region as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Anagnost  
Regional Business and Industry

Stephen Griffin  
Local Land Use

Hon. Carol Holden  
County Commissioner

Hon. Shawn Jasper  
County Delegation, Towns Representative

Hon. Pat Long  
County Delegation, Manchester Representative

Eric Masterson  
Regional River and Watershed

Hon. Michael O'Brien  
County Delegation, Nashua Representative

David Pierce  
Goffstown Rail Trail

Jack Munn  
Southern NH Planning

Bill Ray  
NH Housing Finance Authority

Jason Sachs  
Local Land and Wildlife Protection

Gregory J. Wenger  
Hillsborough County Administrator (Ex-Officio)

# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## *Charrette Steering Committee*

Dick Anagnost	Anagnost Companies	Manchester	NH
Stephen Griffin	Planning, Economic Development Director	Goffstown	NH
Carol Holden	Hillsborough County, Commissioner	Goffstown	NH
Shawn Jasper	County Delegation, Towns Representative	Hudson	NH
Pat Long	NH State Legislator, County Delegation, Manchester Representative	Manchester	NH
Eric Masterson	Piscataquog Land Conservancy	New Boston	NH
Michael O'Brien	NH State Legislator, County Delegation, Nashua Representative	Nashua	NH
David Pierce	Goffstown Rail Trail	Goffstown	NH
Jack Munn	Southern NH Planning Commission	Manchester	NH
Bill Ray	New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority	Bedford	NH
Jason Sachs	Goffstown Open Space Committee	Goffstown	NH
Gregory J. Wenger	Administrator, Hillsborough County, Ex-Officio	Goffstown	NH
Dan Reidy	Facilitator, UNH Cooperative Extension	Goffstown	NH



# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

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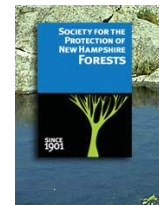


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# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## *Charrette Recommendations*

Following the Saturday morning session with local and regional stakeholders, the Charrette Design Team and members of the Charrette Steering Committee gathered in the Hillsborough County Commissioners Meeting Room for lunch and an afternoon of work in preparation for presenting the committee's thoughts at that evening's public presentation.

The group poured over stacks of flip chart notes and information gathered over the prior two sessions where facilitators asked and scribes recorded answers to the following questions:

1. *What are the important assets to protect, maintain, enhance or interpret?*
2. *Thinking as a community member, brainstorm future uses for county lands and buildings.*
3. *Thinking county-wide or regionally, brainstorm future uses for lands and buildings.*
4. *What opportunities might there be to integrate county, community and regional needs?*

Broad consensus became evident with respect to the following design principles:

- The county land should be kept in county ownership for the public good, even if non-county uses are developed.
- To the extent possible, county government should be consolidated on the county land.
  - Full use of existing structures and increased energy independence should be sought.
  - The existing county buildings are valued for their historic and visual character, and should be made more inviting.
  - Additionally, expansion of the four components of the continuum of care, including independent living and assisted living could be achieved, as well as co-locating ancillary medical services/offices for the general public. Partnerships with local colleges and universities could be explored.
- Traffic safety and improvements at ingress and egress points of the property are important.
- The view and aesthetic of the fields along Mast Road are an important gateway for community members and visitors.
- Lands north of the Town of Goffstown Rail Trail could be used for recreation and conservation purposes. The land offers many educational opportunities for demonstration projects and best practices in forest management, agriculture, alternative energy and community gardens. Distance learning and increased public access television were also mentioned.
- Opportunity exists for mixed use development including small stores and dining supported by local and regional users, and commercial development south of the lights at Route 114/114A.

# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## *Charrette Recommendations*

### *Charrette Recommendations continued..*

In considering the above design principles, the Design Team crafted a concept plan for the property, exploring and highlighting the following important areas and locations:

- **Civic Buildings and Lands** that generally include the built environment on the north side of Mast Road, from the NH State Prison for Women east to the former piggery. Currently, the primary occupants include the Offices of the County Commissioners, the Business Office, Human Resources, Human Services, Computer Information Systems, Hillsborough County Sheriff, County Legal Counsel, County Delegation Office, University of NH Cooperative Extension and the Goffstown Court located in the Bouchard Building and the New Hampshire State Prison for Women. It also includes the Hillsborough County Nursing Home, on the south side of Route 114, and some land east and west of the existing facility that may currently be unsuitable for occupancy.
  
- **Business Opportunities**
  - o on the north side of Mast Road, at the easterly end of the property;
  - o on both sides of Mast Road, at the intersection of Henry Bridge Road, and extending along Henry Bridge Road for a distance beyond the Town of Goffstown Rail Trail;
  - o a portion of the lands west of the nursing home and east of the private commercial parcel presently operated as a car dealership.
  - o at the south easterly end of the property on the west side of Route 114, discussion included a scenario for a multi-modal park and ride facility, that provided parking for auto, bus and bicycle commuters, recreation users, and shoppers at adjacent retail and/or recreation centers.



*Bob Baskerville*



*Bruce Hyman*



*Anne Cruess*

# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## Charrette Recommendations

### Charrette Recommendations continued..

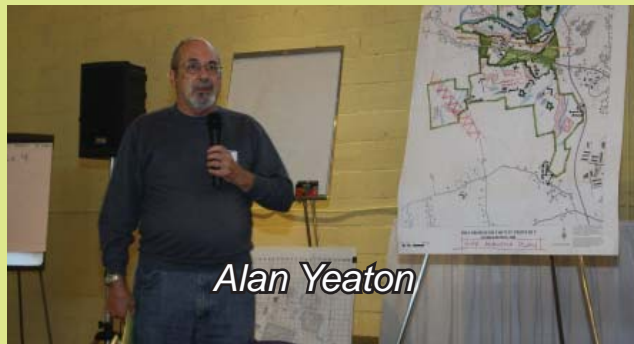
- **Conservation/Recreation Opportunities** that included all the lands from the Rail Trail north to the Piscataquog River, i.e. the embankment and flood plain, as well as the lands on the north side of the river. This area is rich in natural resources and wildlife. Opportunities appear to exist to improve some areas for rectangular and diamond shaped fields. Exception is made for the aforementioned portion of the high lands north of the Town of Goffstown Rail Trail and along Henry Bridge Road, where the Business Opportunity District extends. This area may be particularly suitable for small retail business in support of recreation users.
- **Office-Campus & High-Density Housing Opportunities** along Route 114, the most southerly portion of the county lands. This area generally abuts the south side of the nursing home, and therefore, would be well suited to related uses. The area represents a favorable location for additional access to Route 114. Additional access should be sought.
- **Land Bank Opportunities:** These are the remaining lands south and west of the nursing home and beyond the fields on the south side of Mast Road including frontage on both sides of Kennedy Hill Road, a class VI road. Limiting factors such as steep slopes and infrastructure costs make higher use in the short term unlikely, and beyond the scope of this report.



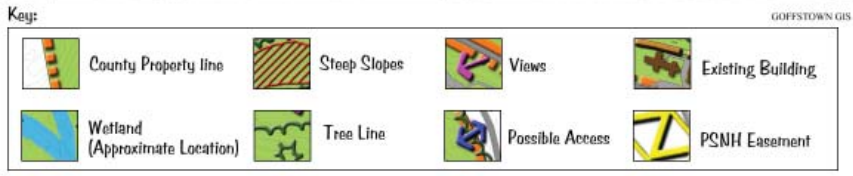
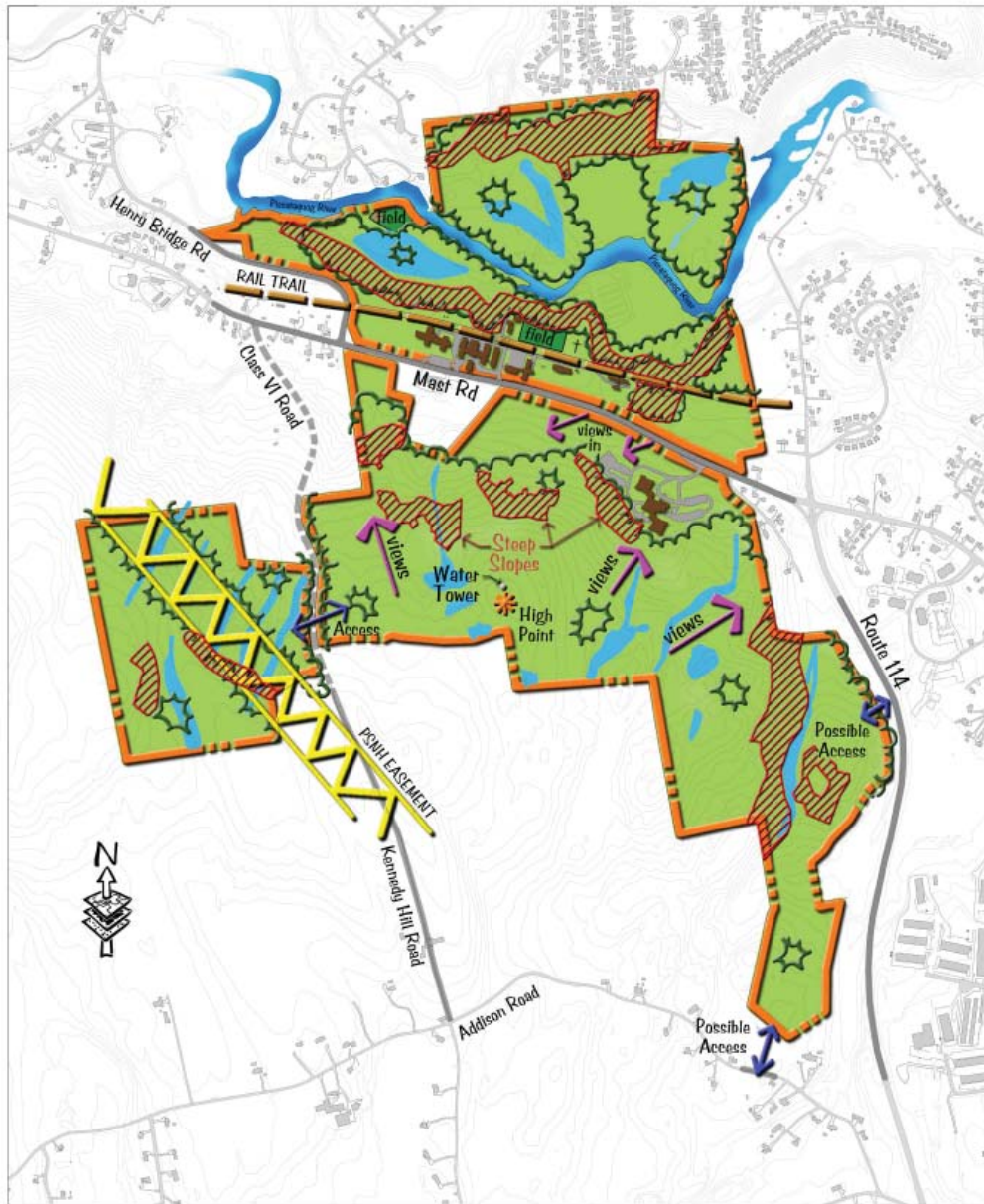
*Brenda Lind*



*Town of Goffstown  
Fire Chief, Richard O'Brien  
makes a point*

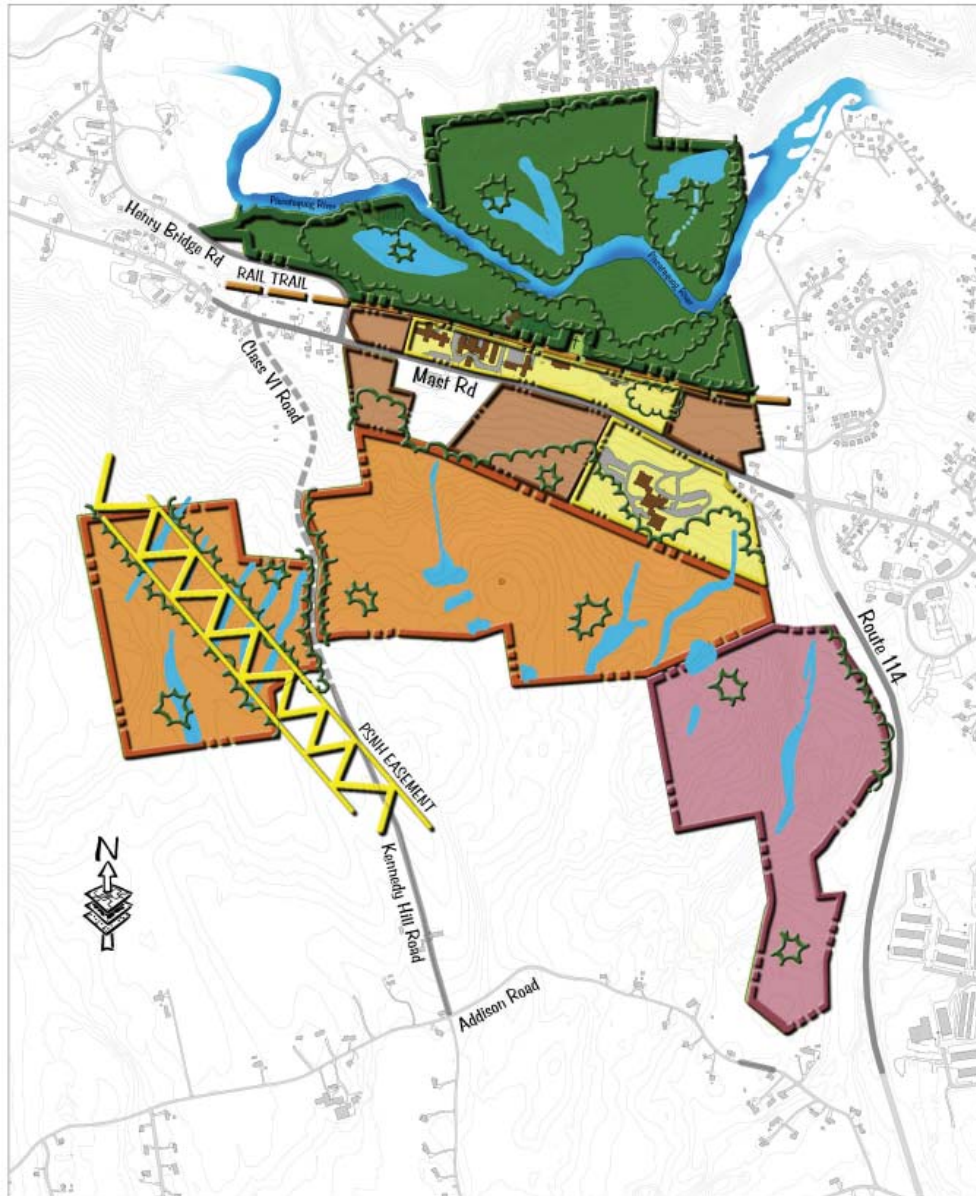


*Alan Yeaton*



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Key:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|  Conservation/Recreation Opportunities |  Civic Buildings & Lands |  Office Campus/High Density Housing |
|  Business Opportunities                |  Land Bank Opportunities |  |

GOFFSTOWN GIS

This data does not constitute a guarantee of accuracy, completeness, or reliability of the information contained herein. The user assumes all liability for any errors or omissions in this data. This data has been compiled, arranged and formatted by the Town of Goffstown for the design team's use in the design of the Land Use Plan. The Town of Goffstown is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this data.

# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## *Charrette Recommendations continued..*

### ***Where Do We Go From Here: Next Steps***

In considering the overall charrette results and recommendations, members of the Design Team and the Charrette Steering Committee met on February 3, 2010 to offer the following advice and suggestions for the County to consider. The Board of Commissioners may choose to pursue these action recommendations at any time, individually or in combination with each other as the needs of the County evolve.

- Seek Hillsborough County Board of Commissioner support for the Charrette Report Recommendations.
- Seek Hillsborough County Executive Committee and Delegation support for and acceptance of this Charrette Report.
- Identify the specific Hillsborough County staff/department to lead further planning and implementation of the Charrette Report's recommendations.
- Continue to collaborate and work with the Town of Goffstown in overall planning and future development considerations.
- Identify and pursue an initial recreational use project, such as a trail, for the Conservation/Recreation Opportunities lands. Such a project might include picnic areas, river access and/or boat access to the river and seek to capitalize on the proximity of the Town of Goffstown Rail Trail. Such a project could be planned and implemented working together with County departments, the Town of Goffstown, State agencies such as New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, or local/regional non-profit planning organizations.
- Pursue comprehensive efforts to promote and market the use and lease of existing underutilized buildings and facilities which are currently vacant and offer opportunities for significant economic returns to Hillsborough County.
- Identify specific land parcels that provide significant opportunities for economic returns to Hillsborough County in the near term and initiate marketing and planning for development in accordance with this Charrette Report.

In pursuing these suggestions, it will be important to consider:

- Determining desirable, versus undesirable, uses for existing buildings;
- Defining the highest and best economic, environmental, aesthetic and quality of life uses for the county land and buildings over the next ten years;
- Prioritizing the highest and best uses considering the physical assets and constraints of the land within the potential development areas;
- Streamlining methods for the development process, so that the County might seek specific development proposals and base awards on factors other than short-term initial lease rates;
- Developing specific site and overall design guidelines and specifications; and
- Identifying site access, traffic safety, connectivity, and Route 114 access to the Office-Campus & High-Density Housing and Land Bank areas at the south side of the county lands.

# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## *Charette Planning History*

The Hillsborough County Commissioners in 2006 appointed a Master Plan Committee. In 2008, upon the recommendation of that Committee, the County Commissioners proposed, and the County Delegation, in the FY 2009 budget provided funding to conduct a planning charrette, to, in part, accomplish the following:

- identify geographic, zoning and wildlife characteristics of the approximately 485 acres of county lands located in Goffstown,
- determine usable and reusable lands,
- consider revenue generating possibilities, and
- create a plan that survives changes in political leadership.

The Committee and the Commissioners had, by that time accomplished/produced the following:

- Environmental Wetlands Inventory by Gove Environmental
- Forest inventory by County Forester, Jon Nute
- Developed an extensive list of stakeholders to participate in such an event.

The charrette process has been used many times in numerous communities across the state of New Hampshire. Frequently it has been led by Plan NH, a non-profit association of architects and other planning professionals, who, gather together with stakeholders to collaboratively develop a working plan and drawings for the future use of a piece of under utilized real estate. One example might be the re-use of a former mill or manufacturing site. Private organizations and UNH Cooperative Extension have also facilitated such events.

Generally, this workshop/exercise begins on a Friday afternoon with a site visit, and concludes late in the afternoon on the second day. The term “charrette” (French for cart) comes from the practice of late 19th century professors at the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris. Architectural students completing an assignment for juried critique would rush their drawings to the professor and his charrette, while making last minute changes. Over time, the term evolved to refer to the intense design & visual brainstorming exercise itself.

The Committee’s goals for a charrette would include:

- To provide stakeholder consensus,
- Identify under-utilized land,
- Be the start of a plan for re-use, and
- Identify possible alternative funding sources.



*Hillsborough County Complex*

# Hillsborough County Design Charrette

## *Charrette Planning History Continued...*

While significant planning is necessary in advance, the benefits are many and perhaps obvious. The effort to bring a broad group of stakeholders together at one time, with the collective knowledge they bring as well as the skill sets brought by land use design professionals, means that the result is one that has broad support and momentum.

To plan the charrette a committee of local and regional planning professionals and county & community leaders was formed. The Charrette Steering Committee included:

- A local land use professional: Stephen Griffin, Director, Goffstown Planning & Economic Development
- A local land & wildlife protection representative: Jason Sachs, Goffstown Open Space Committee
- Goffstown Rail Trail representative: David Pierce
- Regional River & Watershed representative: Eric Masterson, Piscataquog Land Conservancy
- Regional Utility Enhancements representative:
- Southern NH Planning Commission representative: John Munn, Senior Planner
- Regional Business & Industry representative: Dick Anagnost, Anagnost Companies
- State Transportation & Road Infrastructure representative: Department of Transportation
- Revenue Generation/Economic Development representative: Business & Industry Association
- Housing representative: Bill Ray, NH Housing Finance Authority
- Hillsborough County Commissioner: Carol Holden
- Hillsborough County Delegation towns representative: Shawn Jasper
- Hillsborough County Delegation Manchester representative: Pat Long
- Hillsborough County Delegation Nashua representative: Michael O'Brien

The committee began meeting on April 17, 2009 and were responsible for securing a date, location, invite list, refreshment, mailing and marketing plan, and insuring participation by professional architects, design professionals and community planners as appropriate. Minutes of their meetings can be found in the Attachments to the Charrette Report.

Resources available to inform the Charrette included:

- Environmental Wetlands Inventory (November 2007), by Gove Environmental
- Forest Inventory (April 2006), by Jon Nute, UNH Cooperative Extension
- Route 114/114A Corridor Management Plan (2003), Wilbur Smith Associates
- Goffstown Master Plan (2006 update), Wilbur Smith Associates
- Rail Trial Charrette (September 2004), Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee
- Town of Goffstown, Open Space Conservation Plan (June, 2005)
- Town of Goffstown, Prime Wetlands Study (December 2004), Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
- Draft list of stakeholders as developed by the Master Plan Committee