

2008



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN RESIDENT SURVEY



Southeastern Regional Planning Economic Development District

Fairhaven Planning Survey 2008

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TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN

2008 Town Planning Survey



I. Community Summary

The Town of Fairhaven is located in the southeastern portion of the state, 55 miles from Boston and 35 miles from Providence. Bordered by the City of New Bedford and New Bedford Harbor to the west, Acushnet to the north, Mattapoissett border the Town to the east and Buzzards Bay to the south.

Fairhaven is a suburban, fishing and resort community. Until the middle of the 18th century, the economy was reliant on agriculture. Then there was a shift toward maritime activities such as shipbuilding, whaling and trade; by the late 1800s Fairhaven was the second busiest port.

A prominent Fairhaven resident Henry Huttleston Rogers returned from Pennsylvania after making himself an oil tycoon. Rogers had a significant impact on the community with the donation of the Town hall, library, church, schools and water system. The buildings make up the state's finest collection of public architectural buildings designed by Charles Brigham.

II. Introduction

The Resident Planning Survey was an endeavor of the Fairhaven Planning Board. The survey was conducted in order to get a better sense of what the residents of Fairhaven would like to see happen in their community and to plan for the future. The results of the survey will assist the Planning Board in their work to develop, review and update the Town's planning and zoning, which will guide future protection and development in Town. In addition the survey will aid other boards and commissions in efforts to plan for the future.

The survey was funded through a Town Meeting Article and the Planning Board's annual budget.



III. Procedure

SRPEDD provided the Town of Fairhaven Planning Board with samples of survey questions of varying subject matter pertaining to planning, zoning, transportation, demographics, open space and natural resource. The Planning Board then reviewed the sample survey questions of which they then reworded and restructured to best describe the cause and effect they were trying to portray and achieve. The finalized version was sent to SRPEDD to create an on-line survey that was equal in all ways.

IV. Distribution and Development of Survey

The survey was distributed through various means in order to reach out to all residents. Surveys were mailed with the annual Town Census on January 23, 2008. Six thousand thirty one (6,031) surveys were mailed out to Fairhaven households and 800 were returned as non-deliverable; therefore, 5,231 households received the survey. The survey was available on-line from January 23, 2008 to February 15, 2008 by going to the Town's web site. In addition, surveys were also available at the Fairhaven Town Hall and Recreation Center. Completed surveys were dropped off at the previously mentioned locations or mailed to the Planning Board at the Town Hall. The deadline for completing the survey was February 14, 2008. The Planning Board received 1,788 completed surveys for a response rate of 34.2 percent (34.2%) of the total households, which received a survey. This response rate is far in excess than what is typical for such surveys. Below are the total number of surveys collected, locations, and the total number of surveys collected at each location:

Development of Survey

The completed survey consisted of 25 questions: seven questions were relevant to growth and development, four questions assessed planning and zoning guidelines and techniques, three were related to open space, recreation and natural resources, three also assessed Town services and facilities, four questions pertained to the quality of life, while three were directed toward the demographics within the community.

Two separate types of survey forms were developed, a printed survey and an on-line survey. The on-line survey was made available to residents through the Town of Fairhaven web-site: <http://fairhaven-ma.gov/Pages/Index>. The on-line survey was created through fairly new Internet survey software called SurveyMonkey. This software makes it easier to access a distinct portion of the community than was ever possible before. SurveyMonkey was utilized for this survey to develop, distribute, conduct and tabulate both the on-line survey results and the printed version. SRPEDD staff entered and tabulated all printed versions of the survey directly into SurveyMonkey for consistent results.

Public participation is one of the key requirements for a community survey to be successful. The Fairhaven Residents Survey was distributed through various means in order to reach out to all residents. Surveys were made available or distributed to Town residents as illustrated below:



1. Mailed to residents in conjunction with the Annual Town Census:
2. On-line via the Town of Fairhaven web-site from January 23, 2008 to February 15, 2008.
3. Residents could also obtain surveys at the Town Hall and the Recreation Center

All methods combined offered the best possible outcome for the overall results.

The final deadline for completing the survey was February 15, 2008. The surveyors were instructed to drop off completed surveys off at the previously mentioned locations or mailed to the Planning Board at the Town Hall.

V. Survey Results

The following tables and figures represent the survey results by percentage and in some cases count. Each survey question is followed by the results presented in tabular, chart and graphic form and a short narrative written for each. The survey contained 25 questions that range from such topics as zoning & land use, open space, recreation, quality of life issues, and demographic data. (See original survey in Appendix A)

Table 1: Total Responses

Total Responses:	
Location	Number of Surveys Collected
<i>Town Hall and Recreation Center</i>	1,600
<i>On-line</i>	188
Total	1,788

Key Conclusions from the survey included:

- Preserve character of our seaside community
- Respondents feel that Development is the biggest threat to the quality of life and limiting development, such as a building cap, should be pursued.
- Encourage renewable energy resources, tourism, marine industry and local businesses.
- Respondents are concerned with water quality issues, such as, groundwater, coastal waters, rivers, potable water supply and the health of Little Bay.
- Respondents felt the Town should acquire, protect and preserve open space
- Respondents are concerned with commercial development and associated traffic congestion.
- Respondents felt that they are well served by the existing public services.



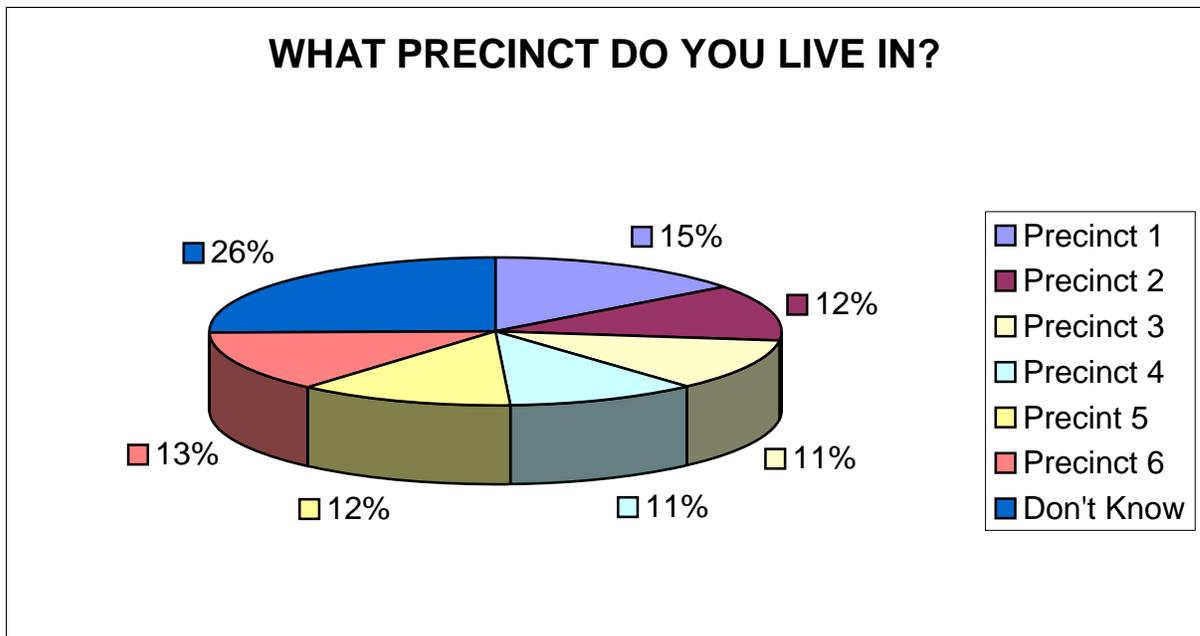
- Respondents felt the Town should encourage, with restrictions, Accessory Apartments.
- Respondents felt that there was currently sufficient land zoned for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- Respondents did not support development of smaller lot commonly known as cluster development.

VI. Results of Questions 1 ~ 26

Q1: What Precinct do you live in?

Question one was offered as an open-ended question. One thousand two hundred ten (1,210) voting residents responded to what precinct they resided. However the responses showed a number of the respondents were unaware of their individual voting precincts (26%). Overall of those that knew which precinct they resided the survey was evenly spread throughout the Town. The greatest number of responses came from Precinct 1 with 15.0% percent of the responses and the least from Precinct 3 and 4 with 11.0% percent. An overwhelming number of respondents wrote in “don’t know” (26.0%) to this question and five hundred seventy eight respondents (578) skipped the question all together. (See Graph: Q1 for more details)

Graph: Q1

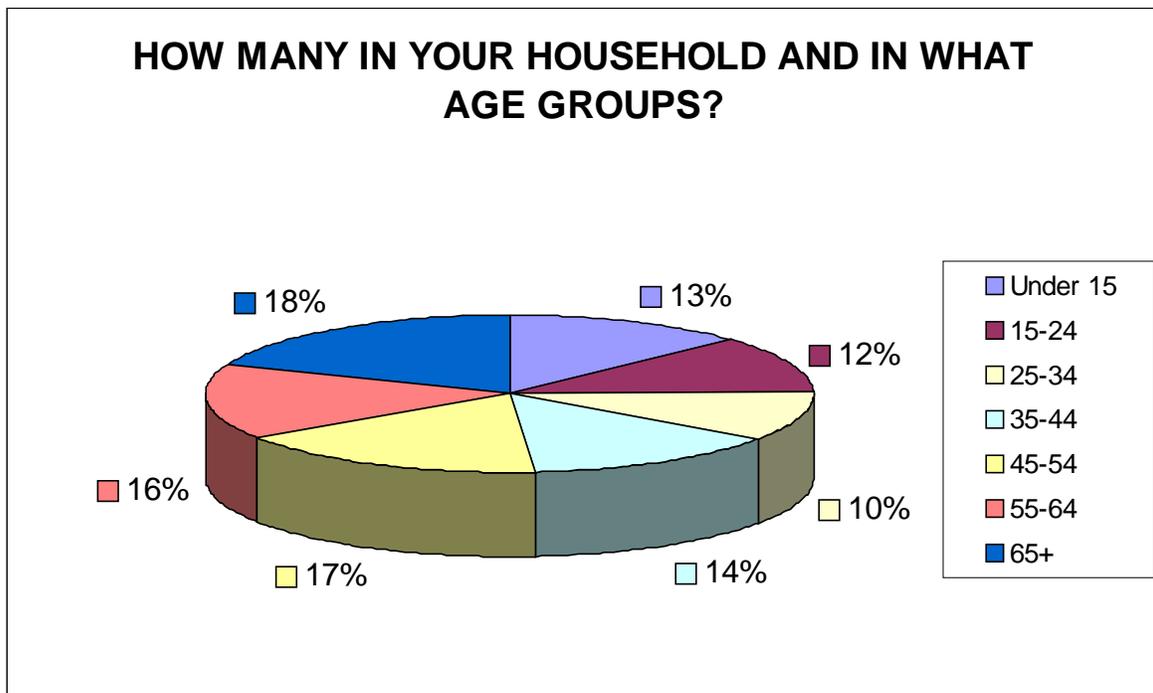


Q2: How many in your household? And in what age groups?

The survey asked respondents how many household members and in what age group did they represent. The question broke the ages into various groupings and offered seven choices: Under 15, 15-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+. The way with which this question was created prevents the survey from being correlated and analyzed by respondent's age. Thus one must keep in mind when reviewing the results that responses represent respondents and their family members as well. This is because the survey was mailed to the household not the individual.

The respondent's age groups seem fairly balance percentage wise, but keep in mind this is an aggregate of entire households. With that said, one can conclude that with 1,788 households represents 4300 Town residents, base on 2.4 persons per household. This represents 26.6% of the Town's population. The 65+ group (18.0%) representing the largest interest. The 45-54 age group representing (17.0%) of the total residents representing the results of this survey. The age group least represented would be 25-34 age group (10.0%), followed closely by the 15-24 age group (12.0%). Potentially these two age groupings generally feel less connected to their community until they reach a certain age or responsibility begins to factor in.

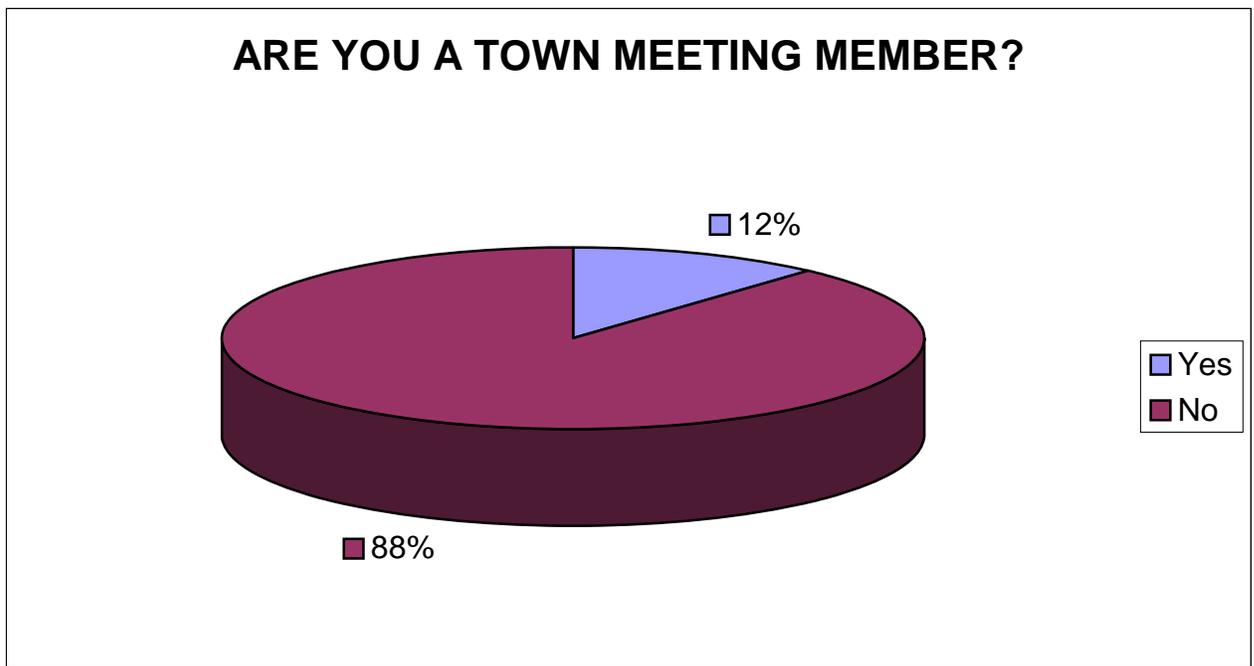
Graph: Q2



Q3a: Are you a Town Meeting Member?

Question three was divided into two parts; the first part asked respondents if they were a Town Meeting Member and the second part questioned how often did they attend if they were indeed a member. Eighty-eight percent (88.0%) of those that responded to this survey were not Town Meeting Members, while twelve percent (12.0%) claimed to be. Only two hundred twenty-one respondents skipped this question. The Town has representative Town Meeting with a total of 423 Town Meeting Members. Twelve percent represents one hundred eighty eight (188) Town Meeting Members participated in this survey, which is 44.4% of Town Meeting Members. Their participation is 10% higher than the overall survey response rate, which is an indication that Town meeting Members are more engaged with the community.

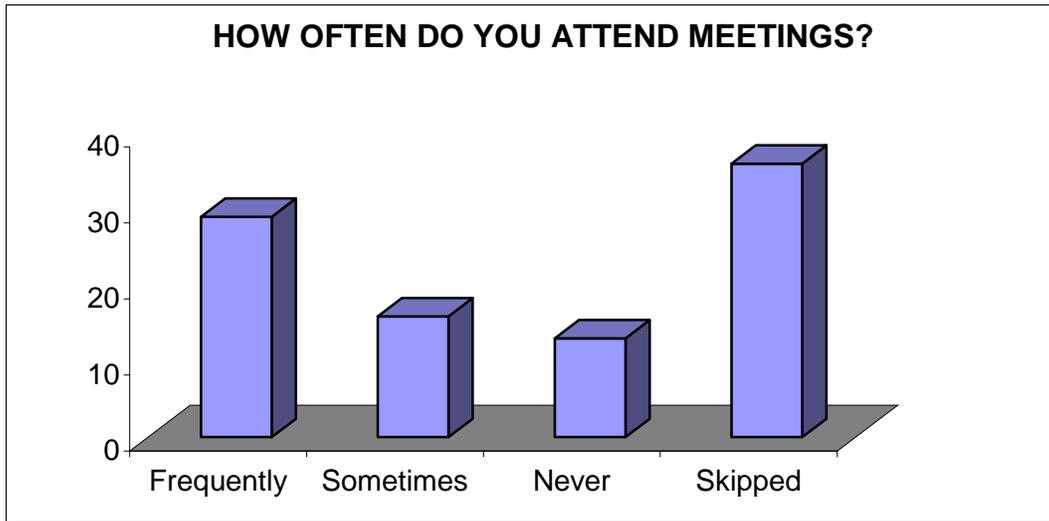
Graph: Q3a



Q3b: *If so, how often do you attend?*

Part b of question three then asked how often then do you attend if you are a member. The answers offered to respondents were: *frequently, sometimes or never*. Of the four hundred twenty-three responses; thirty-six percent (36.0%) skipped the question while twenty-nine percent (29.0%) frequently attended Town Member Meetings.

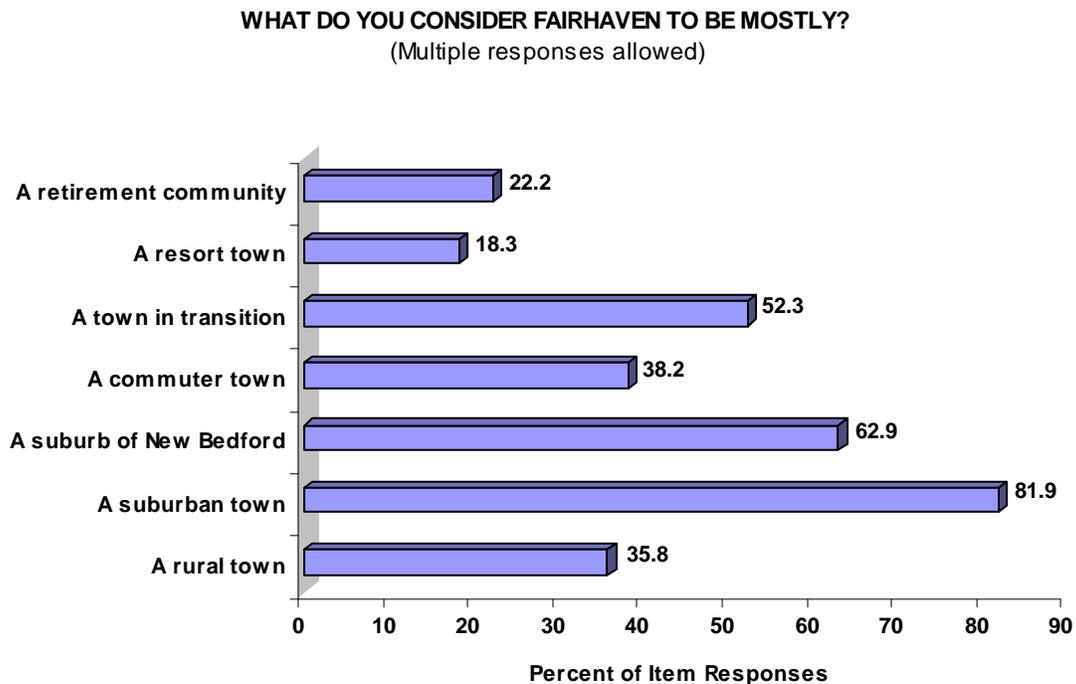
Graph: Q3b



Q4: Do you consider Fairhaven to be mostly?

Survey question number four listed seven categories that described the character of Fairhaven and respondents were asked to indicate which categories properly describe their viewpoint of the Town. The categories consisted of: *a retirement community, a resort town, a town in transition, a commuter town, a suburb of New Bedford, a suburban town and/or a rural town.* Graph: Q4 shows that the community views itself as a suburban town with 81.9% of the responses. Many respondents also see themselves as a suburb of New Bedford at 62.9%. Most of the respondents do not view the community as a resort town with the least amount of responses, 18.3%. And even though the largest group of respondents fell within the over 65+ category only twenty-two percent (22%) of the over all respondents felt that Fairhaven was a retirement community. More than half of the responses viewed Fairhaven as community in transition. Overall only one hundred thirteen (113) respondents skipped this question out of a possible 1,788 responses.

Graph: Q4



Selected Comments about Quality of Life:

- *Small seaside Town*
- *A unique historic community*
- *Beautiful coastal family community*
- *Not a retirement community*
- *Working fishing village*
- *Turning into Dartmouth*
- *Piece of Heaven*
- *Charming*
- *Just right*
- *Overdeveloped*
- *Was a nice quiet Town*
- *Summer vacations*

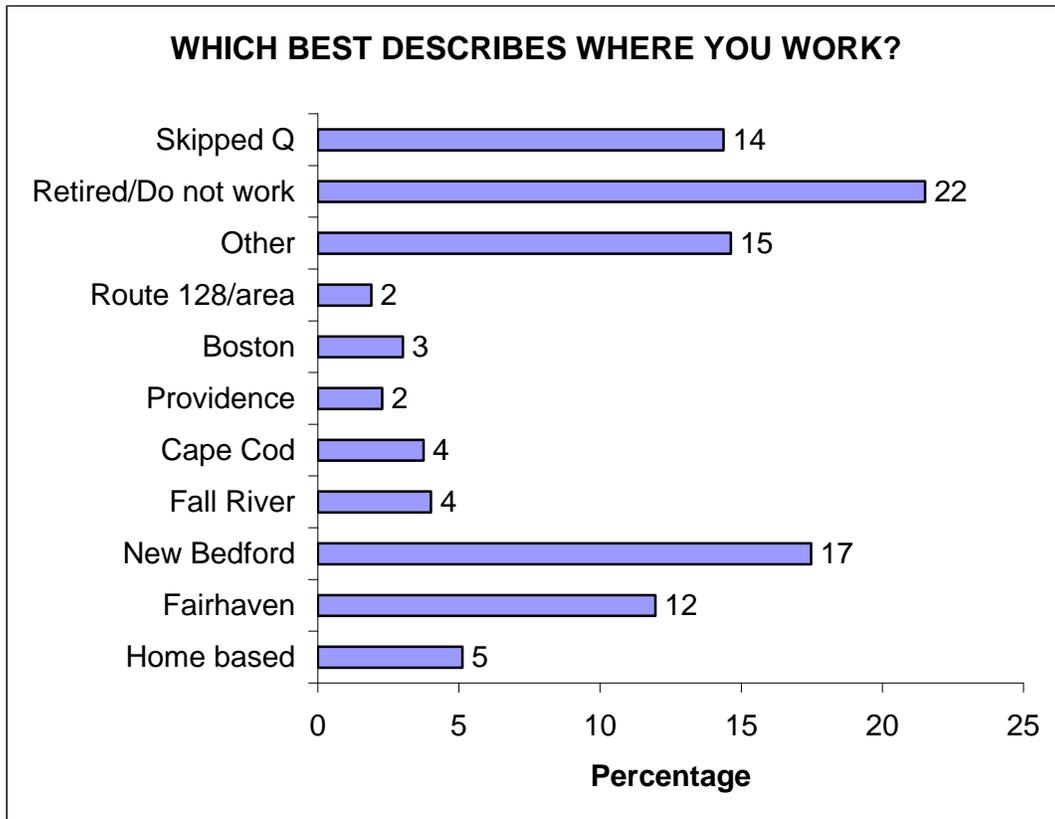
***For full listing of comments please see Appendix B**



Q5: Which best describes where you work?

Question five asked respondents to best describe where they work. The ten choices given for this question were: *Home based, in Fairhaven, New Bedford, Fall River, Cape Cod, Providence, Boston, Route 128, Retired/Do not work or other*. The data shows the majority of respondents are retired or do not work, (34.4%). Of those working, their workplaces are located in New Bedford (27.9%), Other (16.0%), Fairhaven (19.1%) or elsewhere in the region. The results reveal that the majority of respondents work within close proximity to their homes. (See Graph: Q5)

Graph: Q5



While “Other comments” revealed locations not made available to respondents within the original survey questionnaire:

- Dartmouth
- Acushnet
- Route 24
- Route 140 area
- Lakeville
- Bridgewater
- Brockton
- Halifax
- Marion/Mattapoisett
- Construction sites

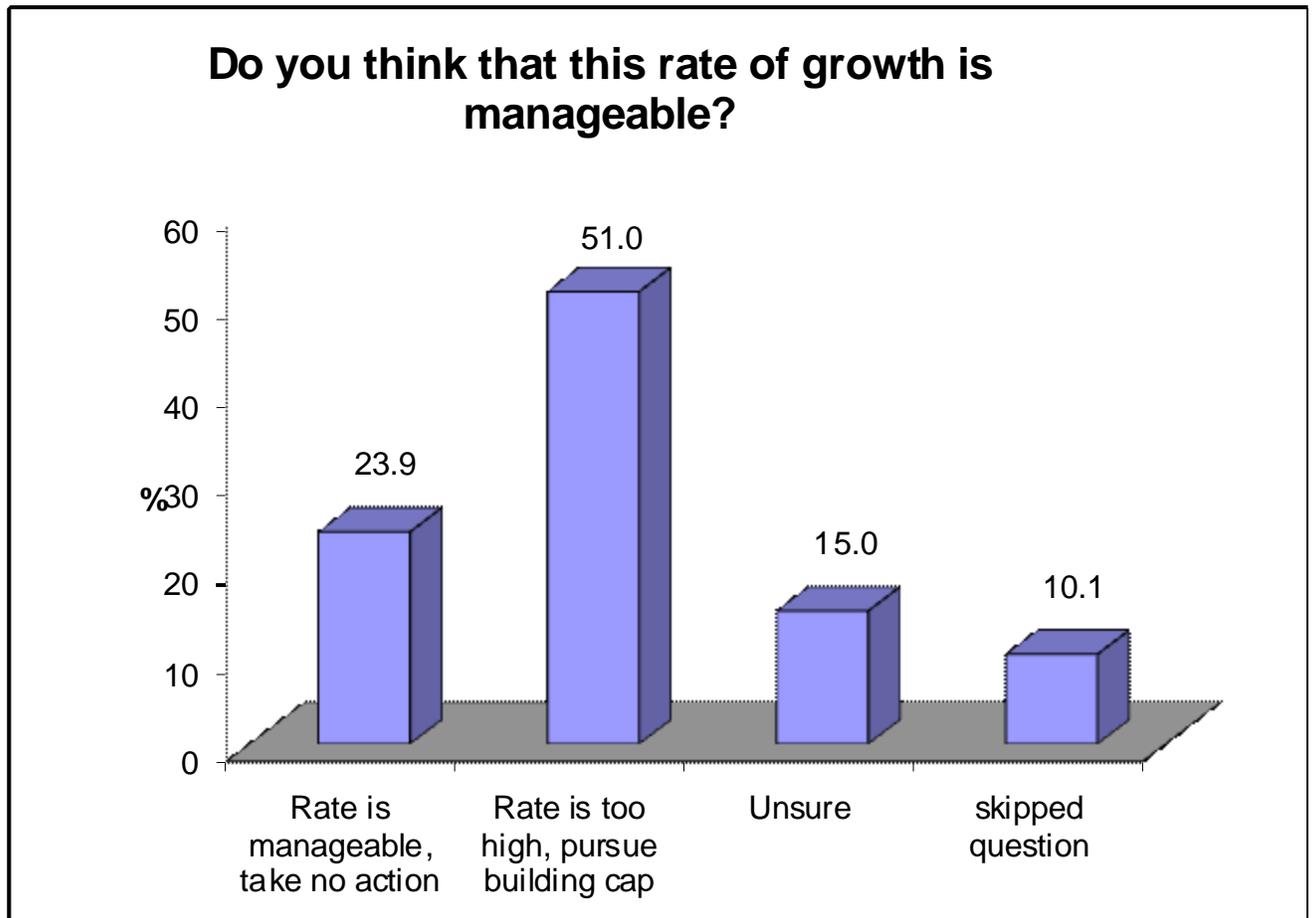
The responses from “other comments” continue to reveal that the respondents that took the Town of Fairhaven Survey work close to home. (See Appendix B)



Q6. In the past five years, approximately 233 new homes have been built in Town. Do you think that this rate of residential development is manageable? Or should the rate of development be slowed through an annual cap on the number of homes?

Southeastern Massachusetts is growing rapidly. As a region we are developing nearly 8 acres each and every day. In the past five years Fairhaven has seen over 200 new homes developed. The question proposed whether or not the rate of development is manageable or should the rate be slowed through an annual cap on a specific number of homes. The respondents had three choices: *Rate is manageable, take no action*; *Rate is too high, pursue building cap*; *Unsure or they could skip the question all together*. A majority of respondents felt the rate of development is too high (56.8%), and thus encouraging the Town to pursue a building cap. Only 16.7% of the respondents were unsure as how to answer this question, but combined with those that skipped the question would equate to 28%. While 26.6% felt the rate of growth is manageable, suggesting the Town take no action.

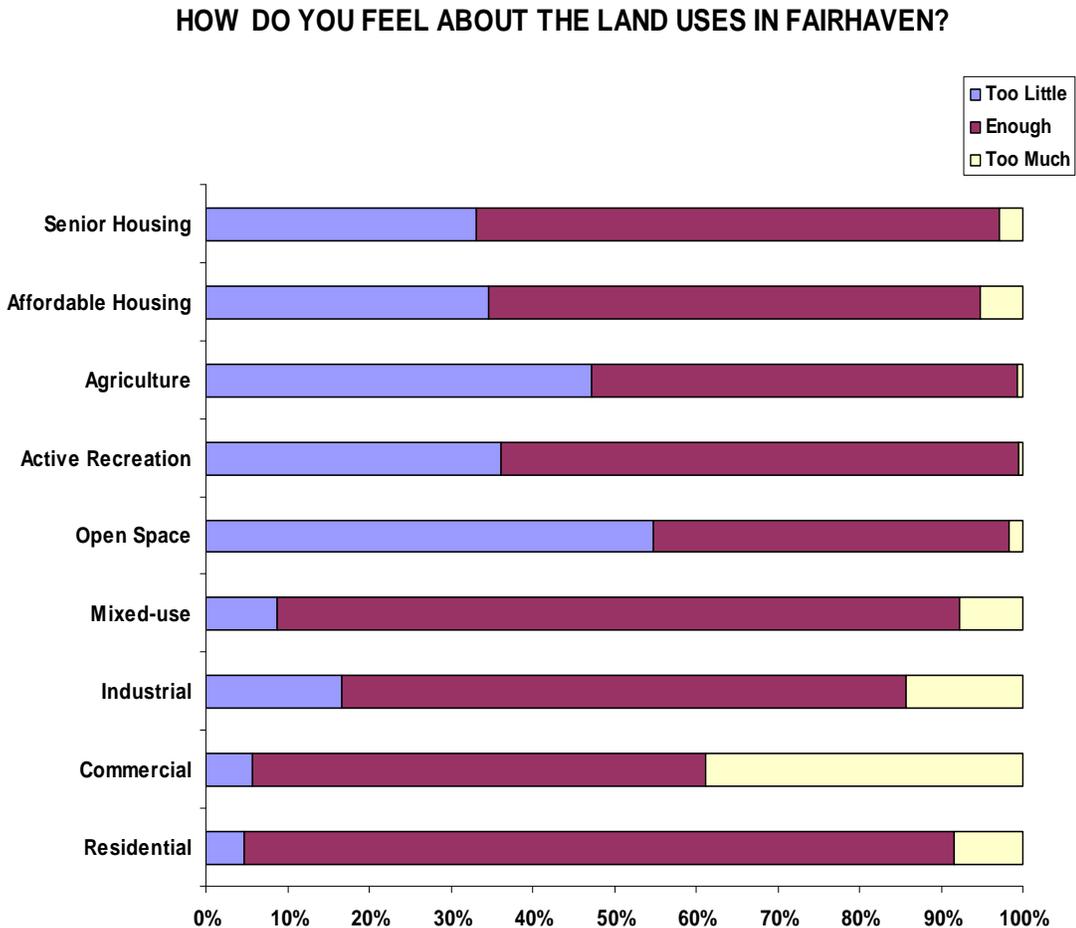
Graph: Q6



Q7.a. How do you feel about the percentage of the following land uses in the Town of Fairhaven?

Question seven was a two part question, the first part asked, “how you feel about the percentage of various land uses in the Town of Fairhaven” and the second part asked, “if too little or too much, where”, which is addressed below in Q7.b. The various types of land use options available for the first half of the question were: *Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Mixed-Use, Open Space, Active Recreation, Agriculture, Affordable Housing and Senior Housing*. The overwhelming response to this question was “enough” residential (86.9%) and mixed-use (83.8%) in Fairhaven. Respondents also felt that there was “too little” open space (54.8%). Whereas a total of thirty-nine percent (39.0%) responded “too much” commercial has been developed in Fairhaven or 55.5% responded “enough” totaling ninety-five percent (95.0%) together. Other responses of interest include “Enough” Industrial (69.4%), Active Recreation (63.6%), Agriculture (52.3%), Affordable Housing (60.2%), Senior housing (64.2%). Only one hundred seventy one (171) respondents skipped this question altogether.

Graph: Q7a



Q7b. If Too Little or Too Much, Where?

The second part of question seven asked respondents if you feel either there is “too little or too much” or “enough” development, then where in Fairhaven should the various types of land use be located. This was left as an open-ended question and some of the major responses are listed below in Table 2:

Table: 2
If Too Little or Too Much, Where?

***Bold type reveals overwhelming responses.**

Type	Too Little	Enough	Too Much
Senior Housing	All over Town, East Fairhaven, Route 240, Center		North Fairhaven
Affordable Housing	Center, All over Town, Prices to high for rent, Cushman Park, center, East Fairhaven, Atlas Tack, North Fairhaven		
Agriculture	North Fairhaven, Old farmlands, East Fairhaven toward Acushnet, West Island, New Boston Road, Scoticut Neck		
Active Recreation	More activities for kids , Scoticut Neck, dog park, beaches, throughout Town, Keep soccer fields, North Fairhaven, Hacker Street	It’s great!	
Open Space	All over Town, North Fairhaven , East area of Town, West Island, Mill Road, Water works, downtown, coastal areas		East, Northeast
Mixed-Use	Center, East Fairhaven, Park Motors, Atlas Tack		
Industrial	Foot Joy, AT&T, High tech green industries, Waterfront, Shipyard (need parking), Atlas Tack, Town wide, Aqua and Biotech, Route 240, Alden Road, Old Mills area, Route 6 (sides roads)		Alden Road, Bridge Street
Commercial	Redevelopment top of Scoticut Neck Road, AT&T, Empty stores, near center, Waterfront	Route 6, Alden Road	Route 6 and Alden Road, Big Box , All over Town, Bridge Street, East Fairhaven, Wal-Mart, Banks
Residential	Everywhere, North, Northeast, West Island, East Fairhaven	All over Town	All over Town, East Fairhaven, Scoticut Neck

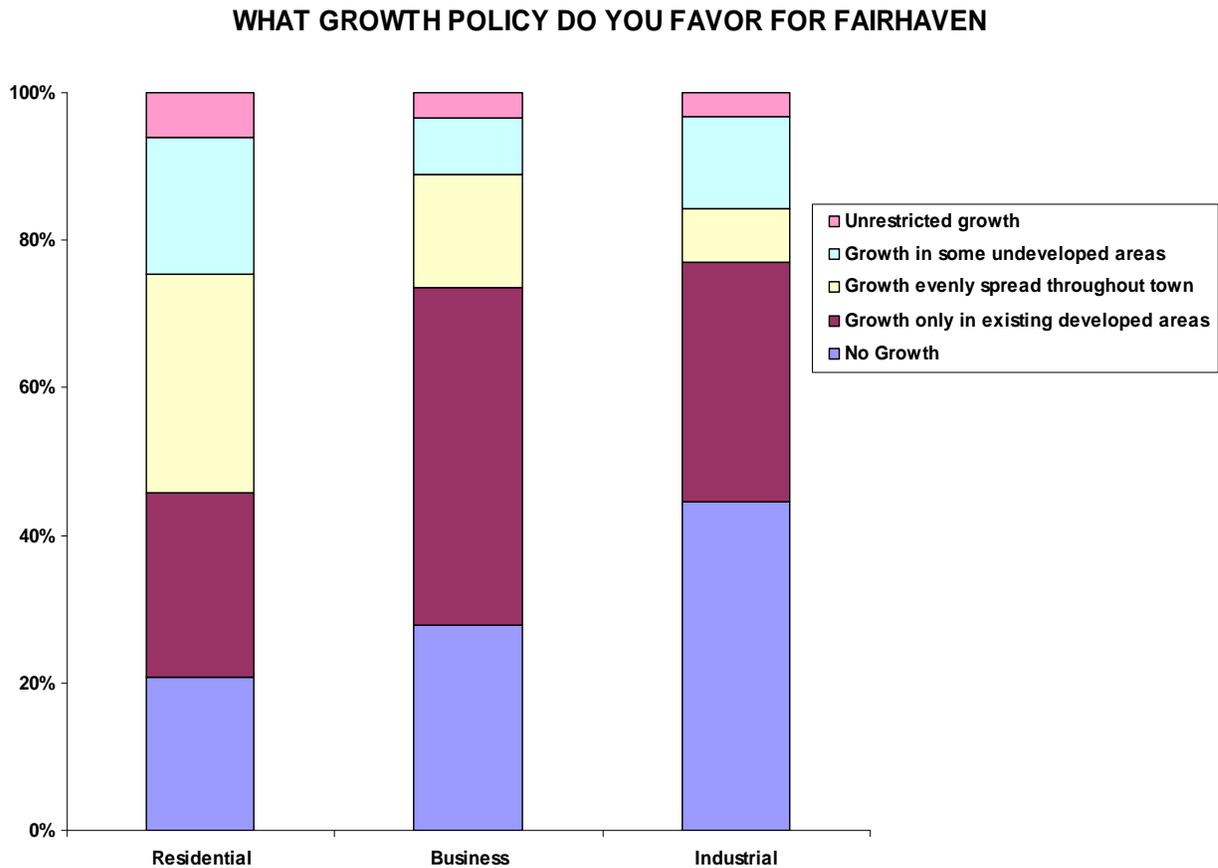
For full listing of comments see Appendix B.



Q8. What policy for RESIDENTIAL, BUSINESS, and INDUSTRIAL growth do you favor for Fairhaven?

Residents of Fairhaven were asked which policy for residential, business and industrial growth they would favor. The question provided five choices: *No Growth*, *Growth only in existing developed areas*, *Growth evenly spread throughout Town*, *Growth in some undeveloped areas*, and *Unrestricted Growth*. The survey responses reveal that respondents were split as to which policy they would favor for RESIDENTIAL growth: Growth only in existing developed areas (25.0%) and Growth evenly spread throughout Town (29.7%). Nearly half of the respondents view BUSINESS growth occurring only in existing developed areas by a forty-six percent (45.9%) margin. While INDUSTRIAL growth is not encouraged by the respondents (44.6%) or in the very least only in existing developed areas (32.4%). Unrestricted growth remains a low priority across the boards as a policy the respondents would favor (Residential growth (6.1%), Business (3.3%), Industrial (3.2%)). Of the one thousand seven hundred eighty-eight (1,788) responses one thousand five hundred ninety-eight (1,598) responded to Question nine an (89.0%) percent response rate.

Graph: Q8

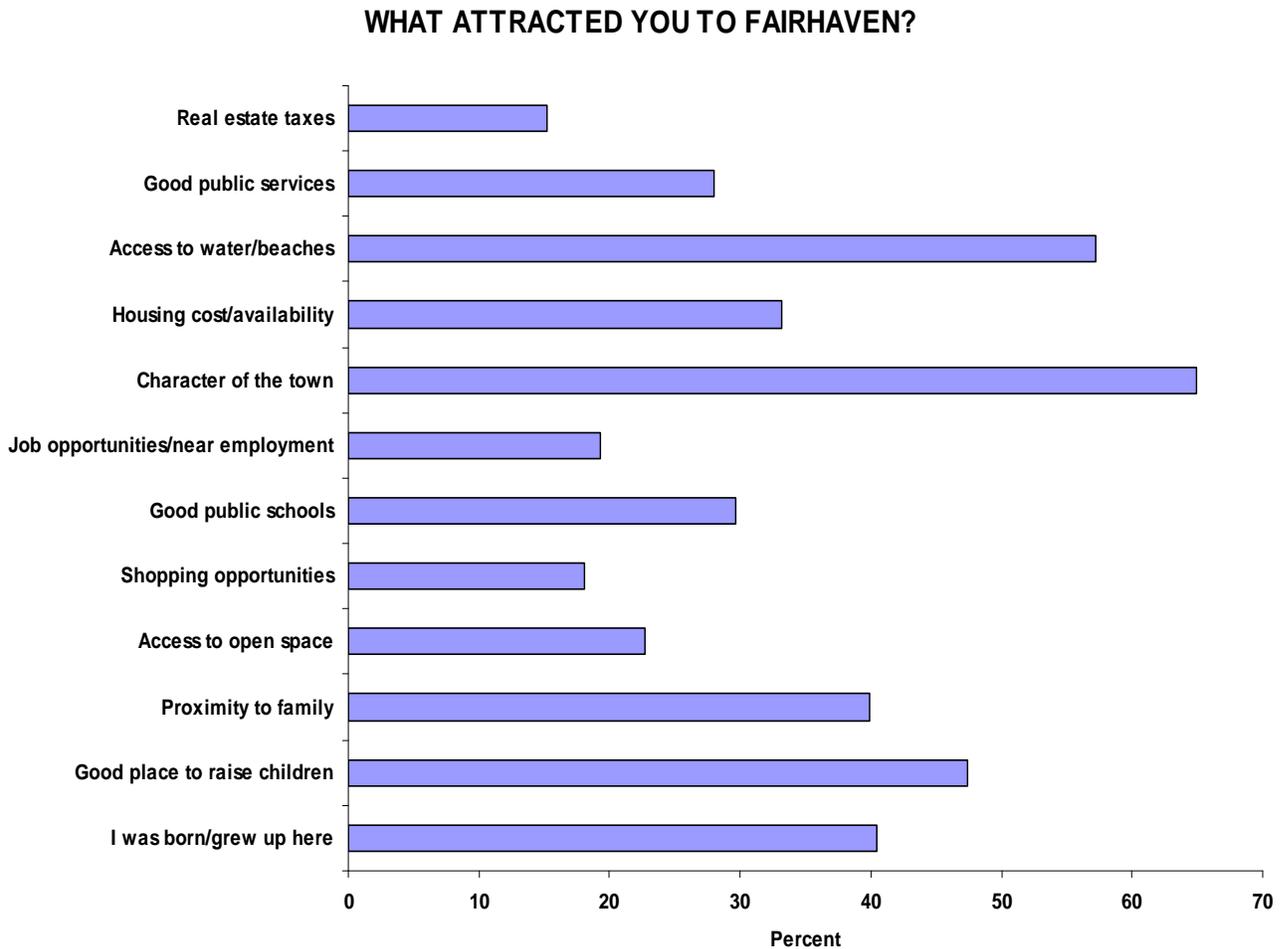


Q9. What attracted you to Fairhaven?

The questionnaire asked respondents to identify what attracted them to the Town of Fairhaven. It is clear from the residents that responded that most value the atmosphere of the area. More than half of all households said that the character of the Town (64.9%) and access to water and or beaches (57.2%) were leading factors in their decision to live in Fairhaven.

Respondents also identified the next five items as important in their choice of where to live: Good place to raise children (47.4 %), I was born/grew up here (40.4%), proximity to family (39.9%), Good schools and public services (30.0%). Somewhat surprising, the quality of schools and public services were of relatively low importance to this set of respondents. Of least importance was for choosing to live in Fairhaven was the real estate taxes (15.2%), shopping opportunities (18.1%) and job opportunities/near employment (19.3%). There could be a correlation between the development of certain types of commercial development attracting residents interested in what this offers their life style.

Graph: Q9



Selected Comments about Quality of Life

“Small town feel”

“Access to boating, fishing, ocean, highways, activities...”

“Historic value and its upkeep make this the best kept secret...”

“It used to be a country setting. It’s being developed now. It’s losing its appeal.”

“Character of people and history”

“A girl”

For full list of comments see Appendix B (Please note that a copy of Appendix B (146 pages) is located at the Planning Board office.)

Q10. How should Fairhaven handle growth and development?

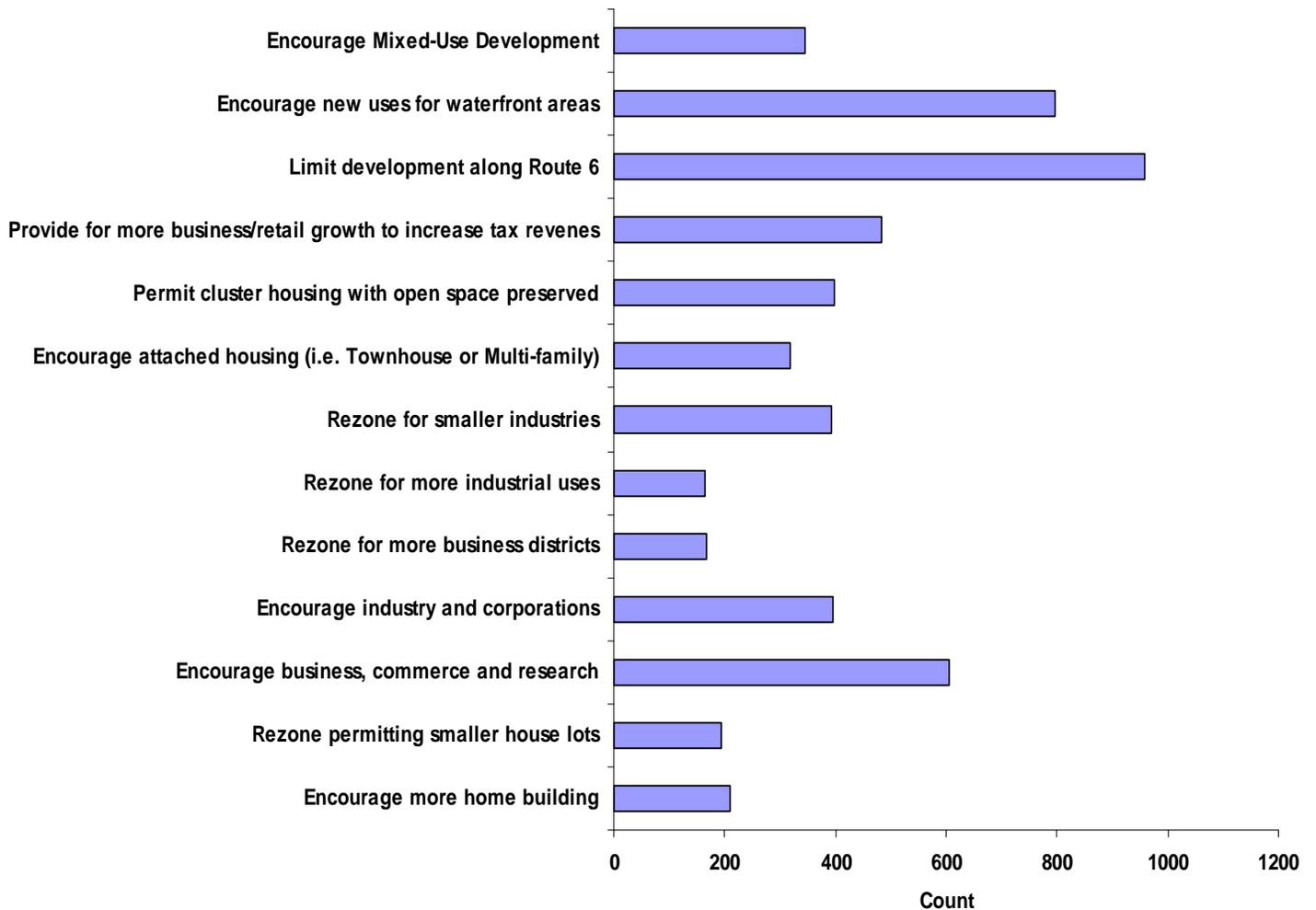
The survey provided residents with a list of suggestions for handling growth and development. The question proposed eight choices: *Encourage Mixed-Use development, Encourage new uses for waterfront areas, Limit development along Route 6, Provide for more business/retail growth to increase tax revenue, Permit cluster housing with open space preserved, Encourage attached housing, Rezone for smaller industries, Rezone for more industrial uses, Rezone for more business districts, Encourage industry and corporations, Encourage business, commerce and research, Rezone permitting smaller house lots, Encourage more home building* all of which required a yes or no response. Nearly all of the responses to all of the methods for encouraging growth or rezoning were overwhelming “No”. This is especially true in the areas of rezoning for more industrial uses (87.4%), more business districts (86.8%), and/or permitting smaller house lots (85.5%). Respondents would also not encourage more home building (83.8%), industry and corporations (69.5%) and/or rezone for smaller industries (68.6%). Those that responded favorably would like to see the Town limit development along Route 6 (67.6%) and/or encourage new uses for waterfront areas (60.4%). (For more information see Graph: Q10)

This was one of the more difficult questions for respondents to answer, reworking the wording of questions or providing visual examples or explanations may have helped in some instances, since many of the options were potentially unfamiliar concepts. There would be a need to offer educational opportunities prior to trying to adopt any of these strategies for growth and development within the community.



Graph: Q10

HOW SHOULD FAIRHAVEN HANDLE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT?



Selected Comments concerning Growth and Development:

- “Cluster housing – Scoticut Neck and East Fairhaven”
- “Encourage business and research – the old drive-in, Alden Road...”
- “Encourage new uses for waterfront areas – waterfront restaurant, Fort Phoenix, West Island, Scoticut Neck, windmills, Hoppys Landing....”
- “Encourage research – Water, beaches, environment, small businesses.....”
- “Encourage more home building – East and North Fairhaven, near center using smart growth, attached housing”

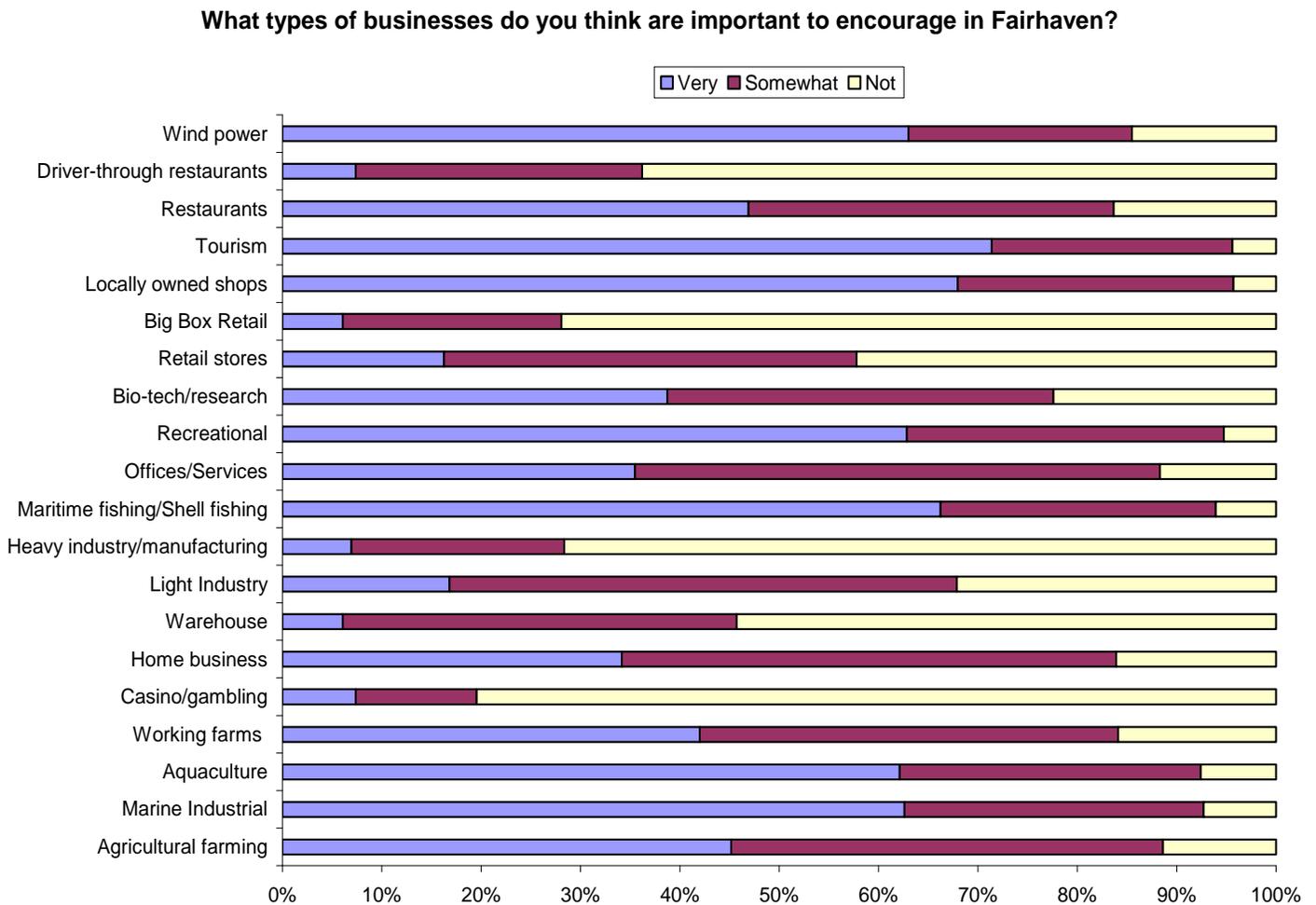
(For full list of comments see Appendix B)



Q11. What types of businesses do you think are important to encourage in Fairhaven?

Question eleven offered area residents the opportunity to express their interest in the types of businesses that the Town of Fairhaven should encourage in the future. The survey presented twenty choices of various types of businesses and respondents were asked to rate each choice: *very, somewhat important and not important*. Respondents overwhelmingly discourage the development of casino/gambling in Fairhaven (80.7%). Respondents equally oppose heavy industry/manufacturing (72.2%) and Big Box retail (72.2%). Tourism rated the highest in the *very important* category at seventy-two percent (71.6%) and is reflective throughout the survey. Also locally owned shops (68.3%) and wind power (63.0%) should be encouraged. Respondents would prefer to continue their historic heritage within the marine industry, fishing and shell fishing by an average of sixty-five percent (65.0%) overall. In the somewhat important category respondents are interested in the office/service industry (53.0%), light industry (51.3%) and home businesses (50.1%). Of the one thousand seven hundred eighty-eight (1,788) respondents only one hundred eighteen (118) respondents did not answer this question.

Graph: Q11

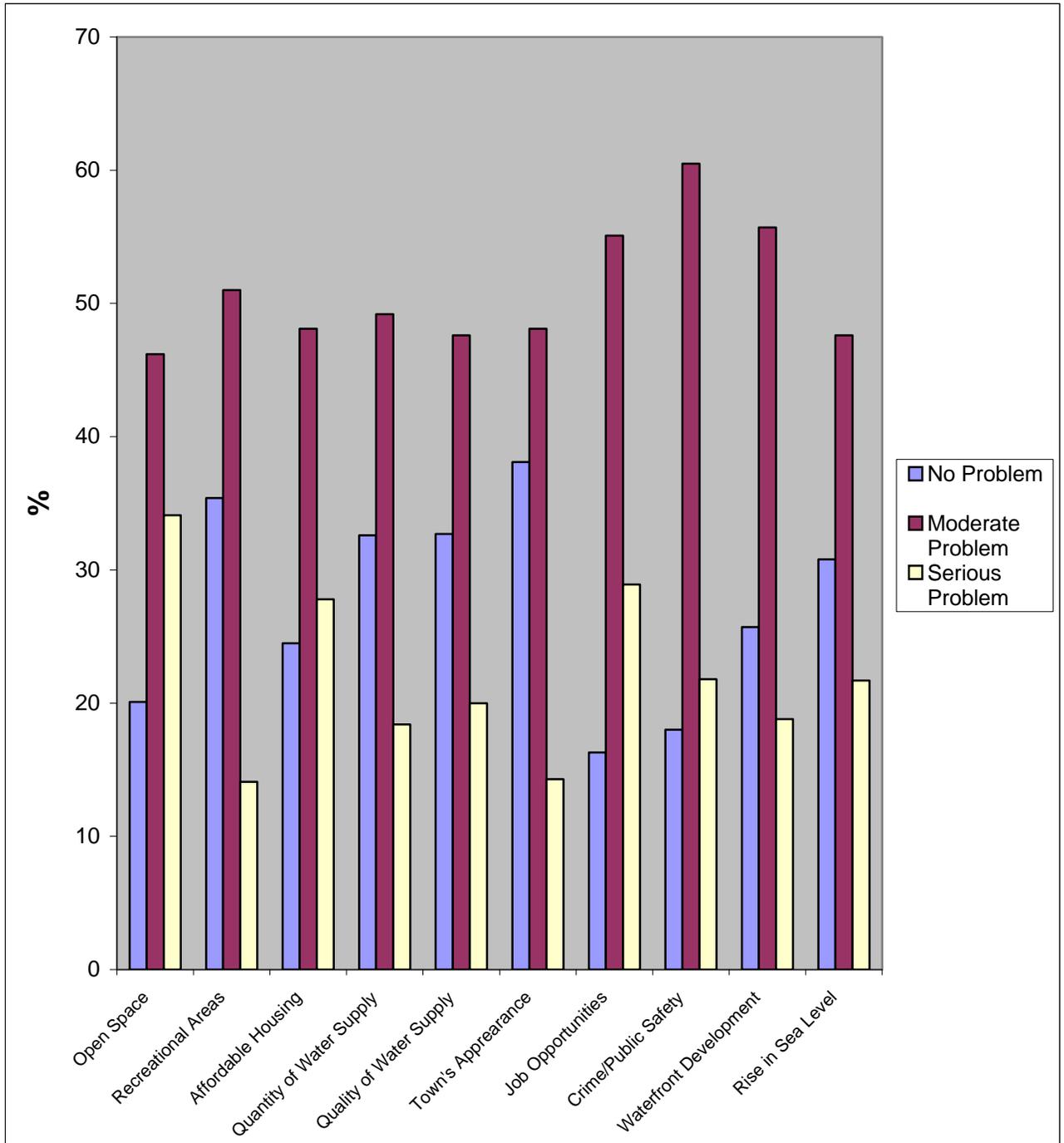


Q12. Imagine Fairhaven in the next 5-10 years. How would you assess the following?

The respondents were asked to assess eleven various topics or problems for the Town of Fairhaven to consider in the future, while rating them: *no problem, moderate problem or a serious problem*. The topics include: road safety, open space, recreational areas, affordable housing, and quantity of water, quality of water supply, Town's appearance, job opportunities, crime/public safety, waterfront development and rise in sea level. Amazingly the majority of respondents imagine only moderate problems in the future. Of all the issues presently mentioned respondents view crime/public safety (60.5%), waterfront development (55.7%) and road safety (54.3%) as their top three issues to contend with. Though open space, job opportunities and affordable housing were rated as a serious problem for the future. The Town's appearance, recreational areas and the quantity and quality of water supply were assessed as no problem. This does not resonate with the answers found throughout this survey. There is a slight potential that respondents did not understand the question and in the future should be redesigned to ensure accurate findings. (See Graph: Q12 on the following page)



Graph: Q12
Imagine Fairhaven in the next 5 to 10 years... How would you assess the following issues?

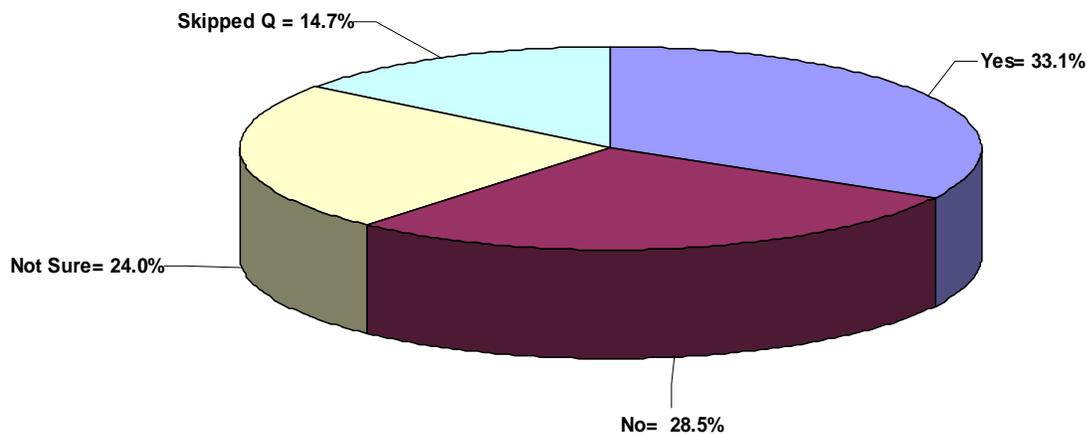


Q13: Do you favor the Town reaching the state mandate of 10% affordable housing, with a new bylaw requiring developers to apportion 10% of all future housing units toward that goal?

Respondents were asked whether or not they would favor the Town reaching the state mandate of 10% affordable housing, with a new bylaw requiring developers to apportion 10% of all future housing units toward that goal. The responses of yes, no or unsure were provided within the survey questionnaire. Unfortunately survey responses reveal that respondents were split as to whether or not they would favor the Town reaching the state mandate of 10% aimed at a new bylaw. Thirty-three percent (33.0%) of the respondents felt this could be a goal they would support while twenty-nine percent (29.0%) would not support this form of bylaw. If the Town of Fairhaven should proceed with a bylaw requiring developers to set aside a portion of their development towards the state affordable housing mandate they should consider a rigorous outreach program. Fourteen percent (14%) of the respondents skipped this question.

Graph: Q13

Do you favor the Town reaching the state mandate of 10% Affordable Housing, with a new bylaw requiring developers to apportion 10% of all future housing units towards that goal?



Q14. Please indicate to what extent you think the issues below are a problem in Fairhaven.

Question fourteen is a two-part question regarding a variety of issues currently surrounding the Town of Fairhaven. In the following question they were also asked to rate them in order of importance. The results were quite revealing in many areas: the highest response rate overall revealed that residents in Fairhaven overwhelmingly



determined that the lack of shopping opportunities is a non-issue (81.8%). In addition the Town need not be concerned with lack of insufficient parking and access at the area beaches or of the availability of day care facilities. Respondents are concerned with water pollution to either groundwater (61.1%, important) or rivers and coastal (49.7%,

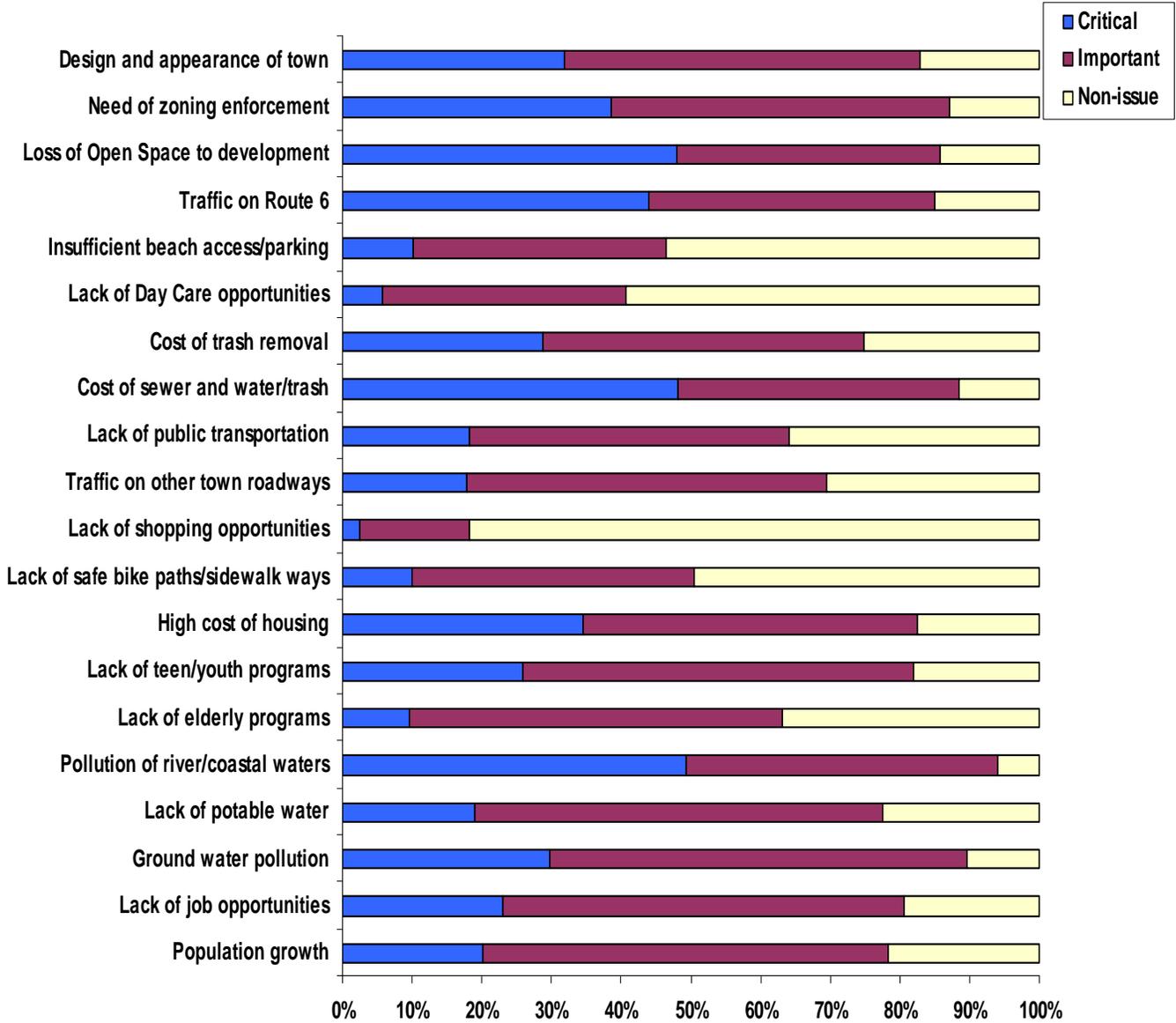
critical) areas. This also resonates with their concern for lack of potable water supply (58.7%) and the cost associated with this valuable resource (sees cost of sewer and water below). Other responses convey the concerns of population growth (58.1%) such as: loss of open space (48.2% critical), design and appearance of Town (51.2%, important) traffic on other Town roads (51.8%, important), traffic on Route 6 (44.0%, critical).

Other areas of critical and important concerns were in associated with the lack of job opportunities (57.6% important), cost of sewer, water and trash (48.4% critical), lack of teen/youth programs (56.3, important), lack of programs of elderly (53.5% important), and the high cost of housing (48.3%). (See following page for Graph: Q14)



Graph: Q14

To What Extent are These Issues a Problem to Fairhaven

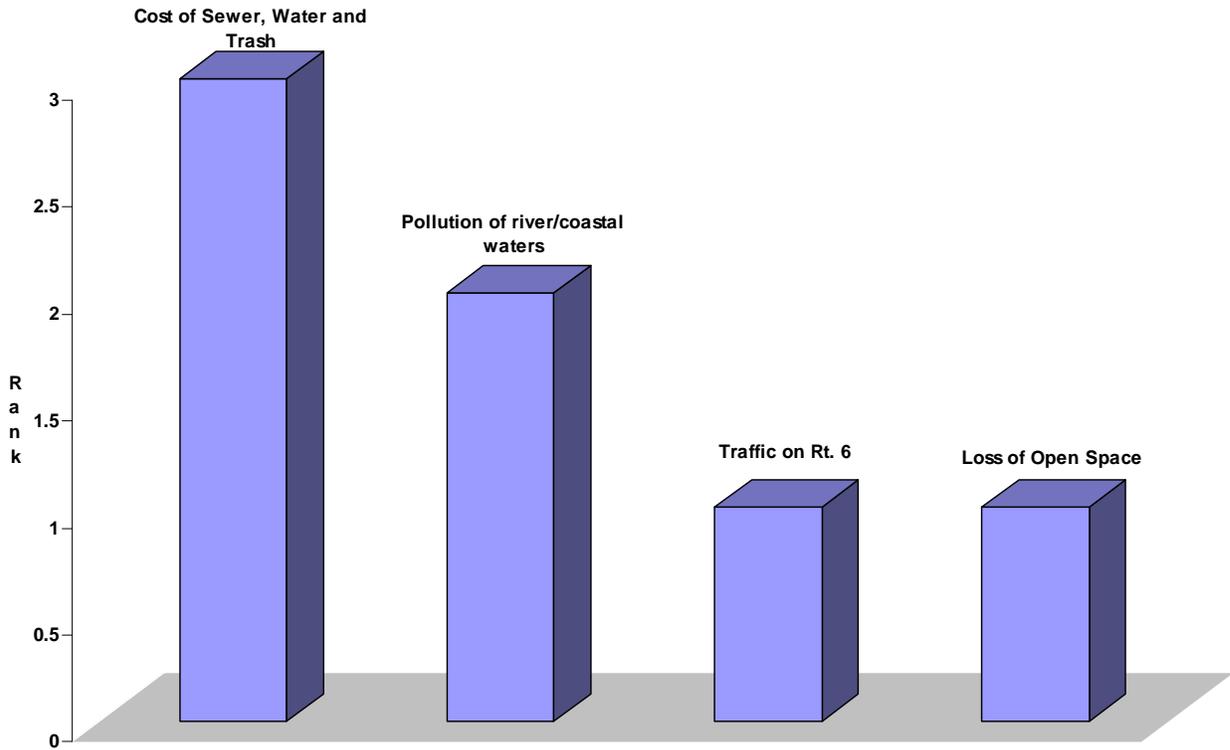


Q15. From the list above, list the 3 most important issues to you:

The respondents rated the top three most important concerns presently facing the Town of Fairhaven would be the cost of sewer, water and trash, pollution of river/coastal waters and traffic on Route 6. The pollution of river/coastal waters is the second concern revealed from the survey results. This resonates with the results found in question sixteen. Where as traffic on Route 6 and the loss of open space due to development shared equal concern by the respondents. The need for expensive infrastructure such as a clean water resource is reliant on our ability to keep our rivers, streams and surface water free of pollutants.

Graph: Q15

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES TO YOU

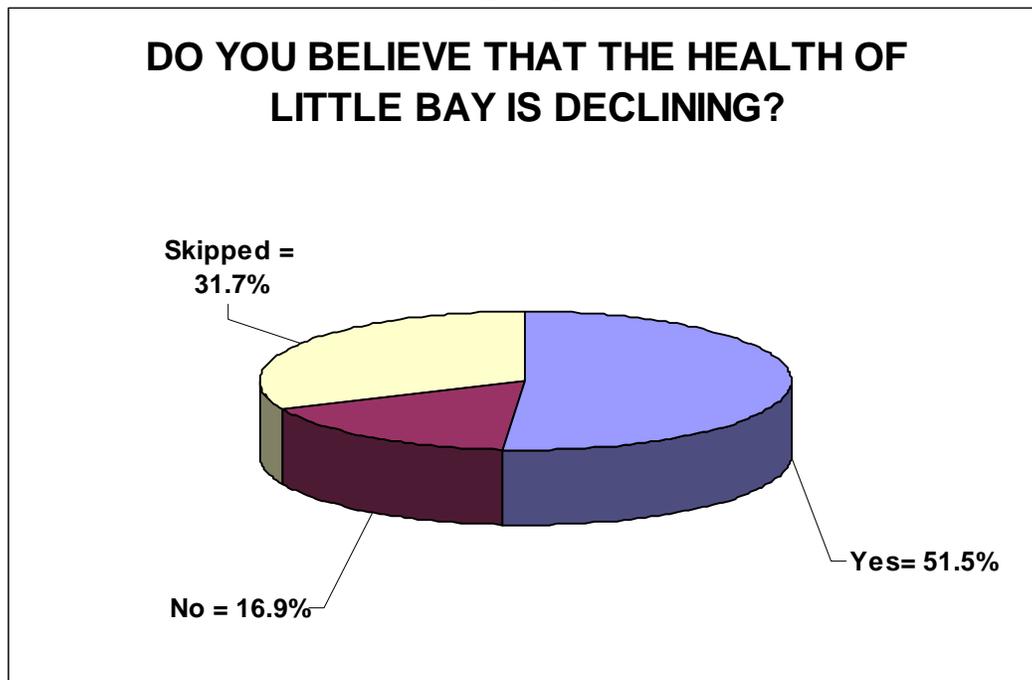


Q16a. Do you believe the health of Little Bay is declining? If so, is nitrogen loading a concern? Indicate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the greatest concern?

Overall responses to question sixteen demonstrate that only a small portion of respondents have knowledge relating to the impact nitrogen is having on the health of Little Bay with 51.5% responding accordingly. Only 16.9% percent of the respondents consider that the bay is declining is not due to nitrogen loading, where as 31.7% skipped this question entirely.

The large segment of the population that skipped the question most likely did not respond due to lack of knowledge on the subject matter. The Town of Fairhaven should encourage and make educational information on the effects of nitrogen loading and stormwater runoff available through school curriculum, brochures, handouts and programs. This opportunity will have a positive effect on the cleanliness of Little Bay for shell fishing, fishing, swimming and recreational uses since humans are the major contributor of nitrogen loading. Responses from question fifteen, of this survey resonate well with the respondents concern with the pollution entering rivers and coastal bodies.

Graph: Q16a

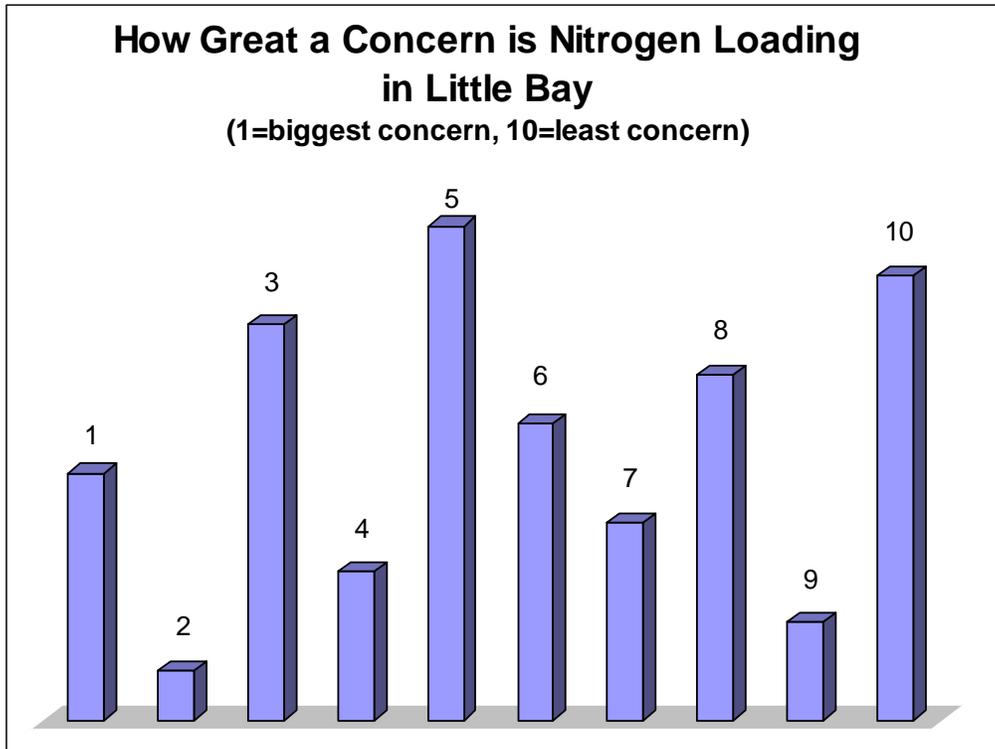


Q16b. Part 2: If so (1 being the greatest concern -10 least concerned)

Respondents were then asked if they answered yes and agreed the health of Little Bay is declining then rate on a scale of from 1 to 10, with 1 being the greatest concern. Of those that responded most thought there was only an intermediate reason to be concerned with the health of the bay. Those that believe though there may be a concern it wasn't a great concern, while many have knowledge that the health of the bay is declining and nutrient loading is the major offender closely followed this sentiment. Overall answers to this particular portion of the question reveal the further need for education surrounding the actual health of Little Bay and the surrounding water resources.



Graph: Q16b

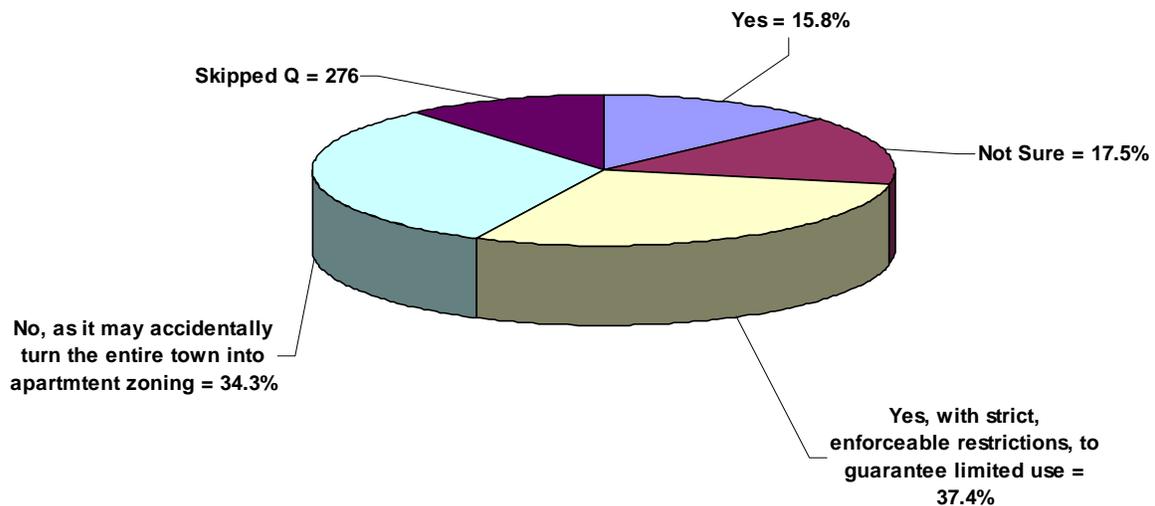


Q17. Would you support a new Town bylaw, which would permit apartments to be allowed in existing homes?

Question seventeen asked respondents if they would support a Town bylaw that would permit apartments (for example: accessory dwellings, in-law apartments) in existing homes. The question offered four separate choices: Yes, Not sure, Yes (with strict enforceable restrictions), No (as it may turn the entire Town into apartment zoning). The overall response was no as it may turn the entire Town into apartment zoning (37.4%). This was followed closely by yes, with strict enforceable restrictions (34.3%). Add that percentage to those that answered yes (15.8%) providing over 50.0% of the respondents supporting accessory apartments to be allowed with restrictions. Of the one thousand seven hundred and eighty eight responses (1,788), one thousand five hundred and twenty-one (1,521) responded to this question giving an overall response rate of eighty-five percent (85.0%).

Graph: Q17

Would You Support a New Town Bylaw Allowing Apartments in Existing Homes?



Q18. How do you feel about the quality of Town services/facilities available to you?

Question eighteen asked respondents to rate how they feel about Town services and facilities available. The choices of Town services and facilities included: trash collection, recycling, snow removal, access to commercial uses, drinking water quality, boat access, beaches, open space, recreation facilities, recreation programs, road maintenance, Town Hall services, ambulance, fire, police, library and school system. There was four different rates available for respondents to choose from they include: excellent, good, poor and no opinion.

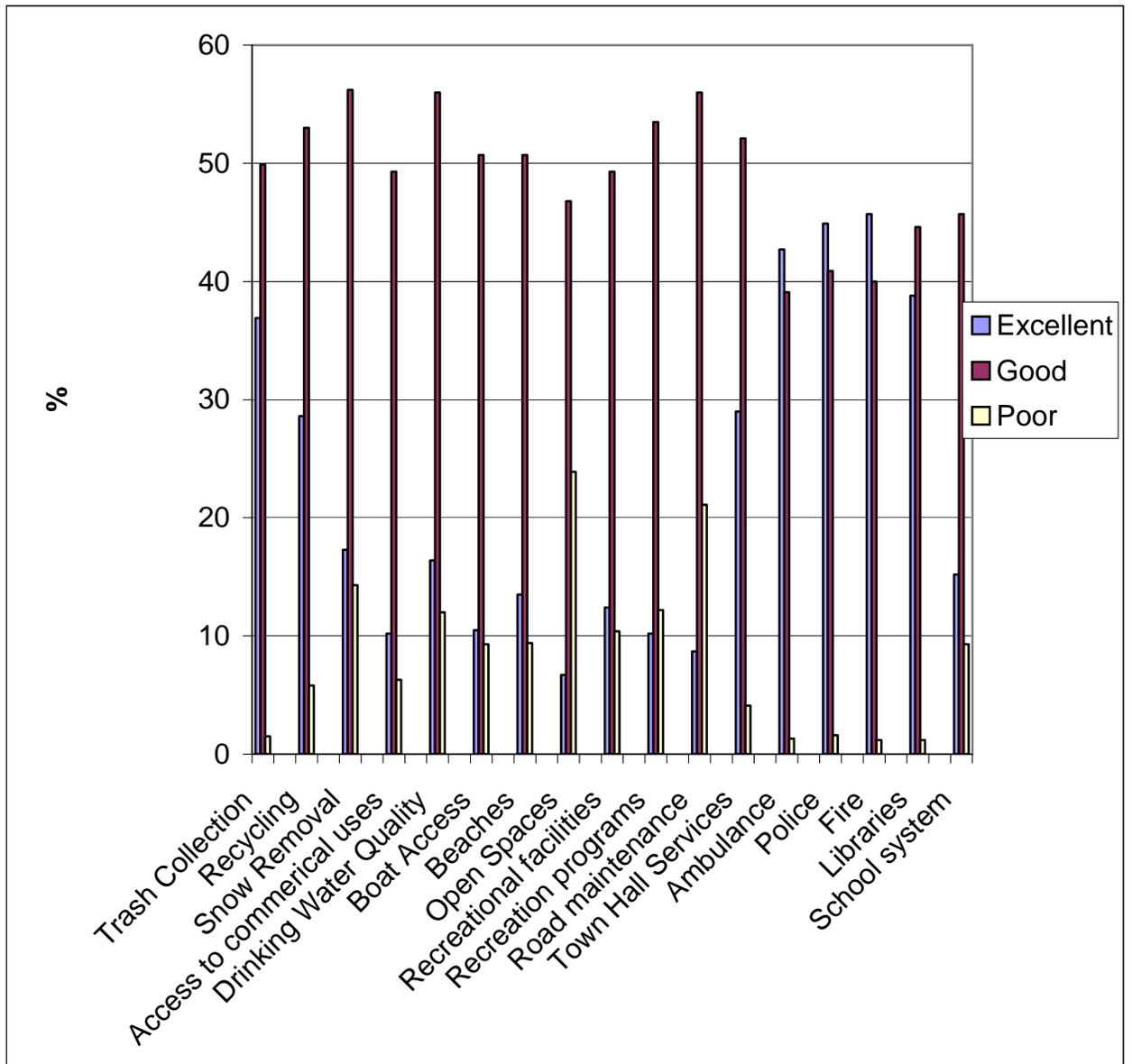


Respondents felt the fire (51.3%), police (50.0%) and ambulance (48.3%) services currently

provided by the Town is excellent. All other services such as trash collection (56.1%), recycling (59.8%), snow removal (63.4%), access to commercial uses (61.2%), drinking water quality (64.4%), boat access (60.5%), beaches (66.2%), open space (56.5%), recreation facilities (62.5%), recreation programs (62.9%), road maintenance (63.9%), Town Hall services (59.1%), library (50.3%) and school services (54.1%) respondents rated good. The Town of Fairhaven employees should be proud that they offer the community good services and the respondents recognized their efforts.



Graph: Q18
How do you feel about the quality of available town services?



Q19. Please indicate your opinion about each of the following statements related to growth and development issues in Fairhaven.

Question nineteen's graphs were broken down into two manageable sections due to the length and breathe of the various options of growth and development issues the respondents were required to offer their opinions on. Part I includes the first ten (10) options and Part II has the last nine (9). Below is a summary of each of the options responses for Part I:

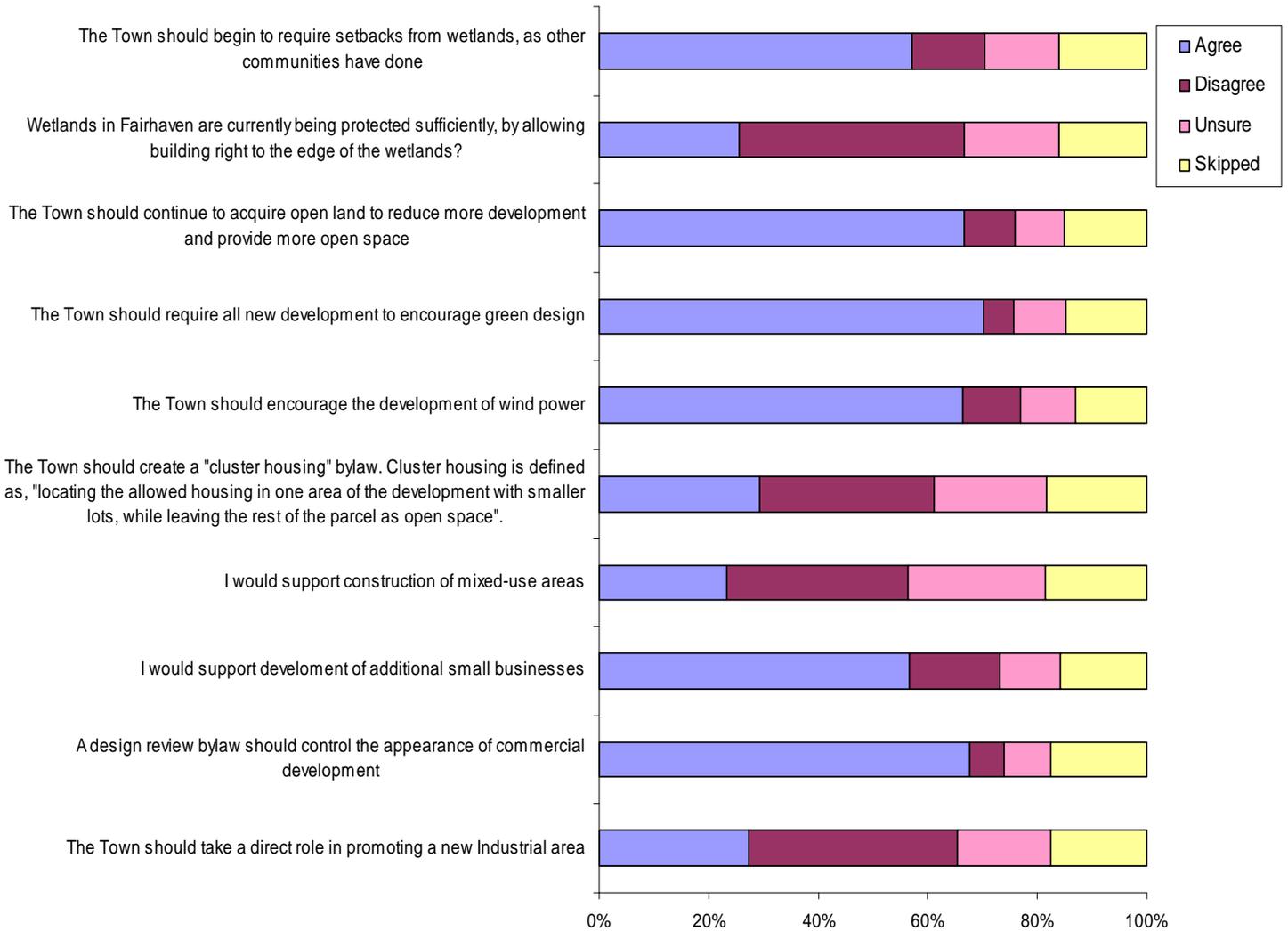
PART I

- ☞ The respondents were somewhat split on the option concerning adequate housing for low-income residents finding that the majority agreed the town indeed have adequate affordable housing by forty-two percent (41.5%). Nearly half of the respondents skipped the question or were unsure as to how to answer the question.
- ☞ Most respondents were split on the subject of senior housing adequacy by (40.1%). Nearly half of the respondents skipped the question or were unsure as to how to answer the question.
- ☞ Overwhelmingly sixty-two percent (62.4%) of the respondents agreed that the town should continue to allow for mixed uses of small businesses in residential areas.
- ☞ Eighty-two percent (82.1%) felt the Town of Fairhaven should create a right to farm bylaw. Only six percent (6.0%) were opposed to at this type of protection for farming activity, while eleven (11.0%) were unsure.
- ☞ A majority of seventy-three percent (72.6%) agreed that they were adequately served with the current road network in its present state. Only eighteen percent (18.8%) disagreed with this statement and nine percent (9.0%) skipped the question all together.
- ☞ Only fifty-six percent (56.0%) felt that the Town should adopt a bylaw that would give preference to development of Senior Housing. The earlier option concerning the Town having adequate Senior Housing resonates with this response. Twenty percent of the respondents were unsure if the Town should create a bylaw to create more Senior Housing. This does not resound with other responses throughout this survey. This may need further investigation and education prior to any efforts to adopt this type of bylaw.
- ☞ The respondents disagree with the idea of offering less restriction on signage requirements by sixty percent (60.3%). This clearly echoes the sentiment from the following two options as well.
- ☞ Whether to Town should require smaller signs for commercial development was well received fifty-five percent (54.8%). Twenty two percent (22.0%) were opposed to smaller sign restrictions.
- ☞ Signage for new commercial development is not acceptable to those that responded to this survey. Nearly forty one percent (41.0%) disagreed with the statement "signage on new commercial development is acceptable. Thirty percent (30.0%) agreed with the current trend in signage and the approximately the same number of respondents skipped the question.



Graph: Q19 (Part I)

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE FOLLOWING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES? (Part 1)



PART II

- ☞ The first question in Part II addresses whether the Town is currently protecting the wetlands sufficiently, by allowing building to the edge of wetlands. Approximately fifty percent (50.0%) of the respondents disagreed with this statement, thirty percent (30.0%) agreed and twenty one percent skipped the question.



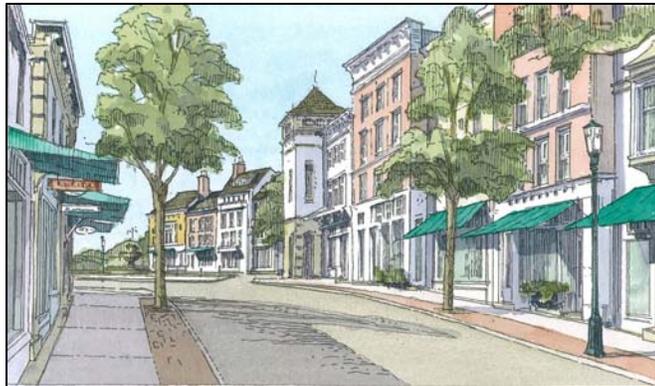
- ☞ Overwhelmingly seventy-nine percent (79.0%) of respondents felt the Town should continue to acquire open land to reduce more development. This sentiment resonates throughout the survey in many of the other questions of this nature. Only ten percent (10.0%) disagreed with this statement and ten percent (10.0%) skipped the question.
- ☞ Given the present environmental and economic climate and our public awareness of our limited resources respondents overwhelmingly agreed all new development should encourage green design by eighty two percent (82.4%). Only seven percent (7.0%) disagreed with this assertion.
- ☞ The same holds true for encouraging wind power as encouraging green design and open space preservation. Seventy six percent (70.0%) of the respondents felt the Town should encourage the development of wind power.

- ☞ Respondent's reaction to the statement concerning "cluster housing" bylaw resounded with a similar question, by disagreeing with this smart growth concept by thirty nine percent (39.1%). Followed closely by thirty six percent (36.0%) of those that agreed with this method of development and twenty-five percent (25.0%) were unsure. There is potential with more education of the concept that those that were either unsure or skipped the question could be persuaded to use this as a means to conserve land in Fairhaven.



- ☞ Forty one percent (40.6%) disagreed with supporting the construction of mixed-use areas within the Town of Fairhaven even though similar questions responses conflict with this reaction. Over thirty percent (30.0%) were unsure as to this smart growth tool as a way to cut back on the amount of vehicle miles traveled. With any rising cost to gas this maybe a solution.

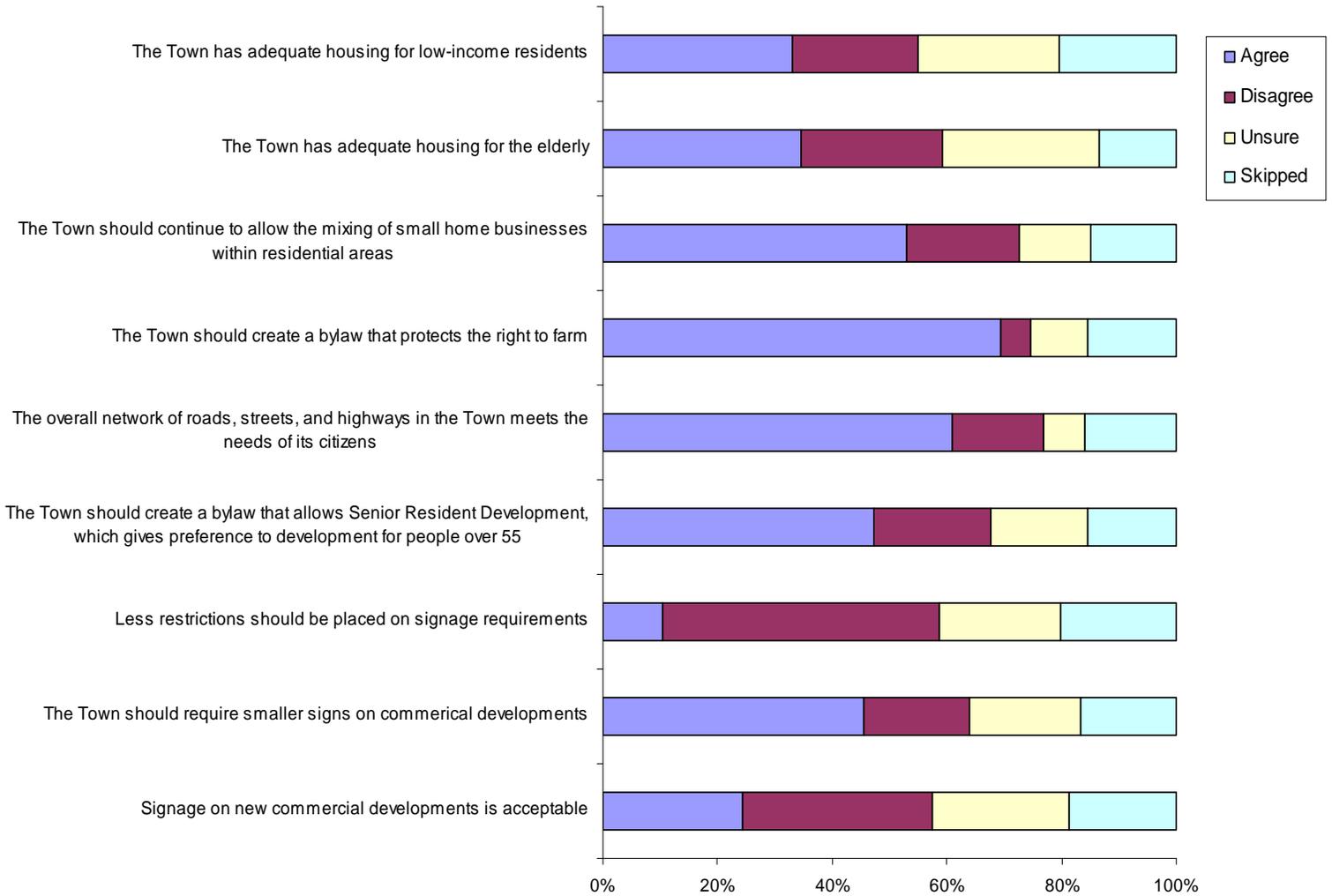
- ☞ The respondents would support development of small businesses by sixty eight percent (67.5%). Nineteen percent (19.0%) disagreed with this statement and thirteen percent (13.0%) was unsure.



- ☞ Responses suggest strong support for the Town developing design review bylaw to control the appearance of commercial development by eighty two percent (82.0%). Only eight percent (7.6%) disagreed with measures to control the appearance of commercial development.
- ☞ Forty six percent (46.0%) of the respondents disagree with the Town taking a direct role in the promoting of a new Industrial area, while thirty three percent (33.3%) agreed and twenty one percent (20.8%) was unsure.

Graph: Q19 (Part II)

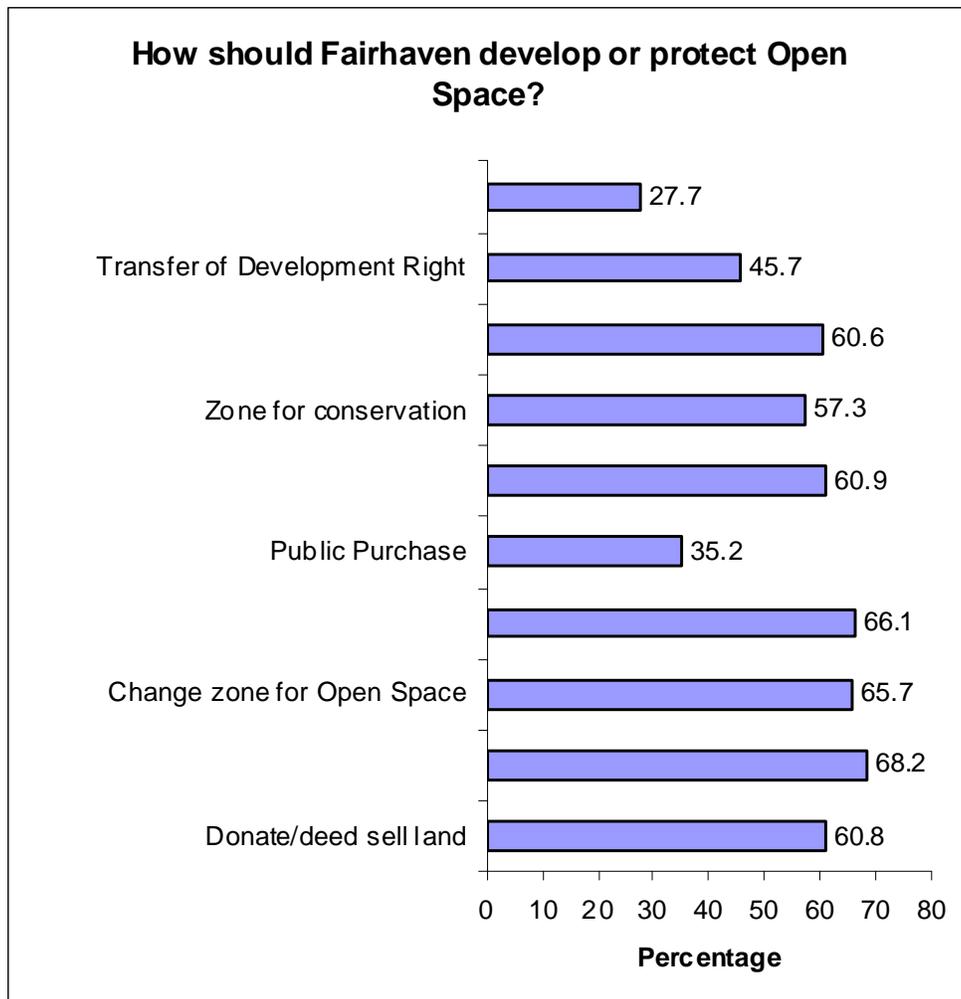
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE FOLLOWING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES? (Part 2)



Q20. How should Fairhaven develop or protect Open Space?

Question twenty asked respondents, how should the Town develop or protect Open Space and were instructed to check all that apply. There were ten choices available, including: Donate/deed/sell land for protection, support Town acquisition, support zoning changes, tax incentive to landowners, public purchase, restrictive cap, zone for open space, reduce property tax, transfer of development rights, use CPA funds to purchase land. The majority of respondents would support Town acquisition of land for conservation (68.2%). Though it is not clear how they would acquire the funds to purchase land. The least desirable means of protecting open space in Fairhaven is the use of CPA funds to purchase land (27.7%) public purchase of private lands (35.2%). This is an indication the education on the purposes and uses of the CPA are needed. Other favorable methods that the respondents would support consist of zoning changes (65.7%), give landowners a tax incentive to put their land under a conservation easement (66.1%), donate/deed/sell land for purpose of conservation protection (60.8%), put a restrictive cap on building (60.9%) and reduce property tax on farm, forest, recreation and conservation land (60.6%).

Graph: Q20



Q21. What four Town assets and/or resources should Fairhaven preserve for the future?

Question twenty-one was left as an open-ended question asking respondents what were their four top choices for the preservation of the Town of Fairhaven’s assets and/or resources for the future.

Table: 3 covers the top four topics and the prospective counts with which respondents selected as assets and resources. The top



choices across the boards would be: Coastline/beach access, open space, historic buildings, and character of the Town, education, drinking water, library, agricultural, Little Bay and the bike path. These responses resonate with a number of other questions throughout the survey.

Table: 3

ASSET # 1		ASSET # 2		ASSET # 3		ASSET # 4	
Coastline access	172	Open Space	112	Open Space	122	Historic Buildings	82
Beaches/access	170	Beach access	111	Beach access	104	Waterfront/coast	50
Open Space	144	Historic Buildings	104	Waterfront/ coast	89	Parks	48
Historic Buildings	134	Coast/ water access	91	Historic Buildings	74	Education of youth	45
Town Character	61	Education of youth	60	Character of Town	64	Beach access	25
Education/schools	57	Character of Town	57	Education of youth	53	Character of Town	25
Fort Phoenix	43	Parks	53	Parks	41	Bike Path	23
Drinking water	42	Drinking water	37	Drinking water	29	Agriculture	22
West Island	24	Fort Phoenix	37	Fort Phoenix	26	Drinking water	19
Library	23	Library	33	Agriculture	23	Library	14
Parks	23	Agriculture	27	Library	22	Fort Phoenix	13
Bay	16	Marine Industry	25	Marine Industry	22	Marine Industry	11
Marine	15	Little Bay	16	Bike Path	15	Little Bay	11
Agriculture	13	Bike Path	15	Little Bay	10		
Bike paths	9	Public safety	11				
		Housing	8				

(See Appendix B for complete list of assets)

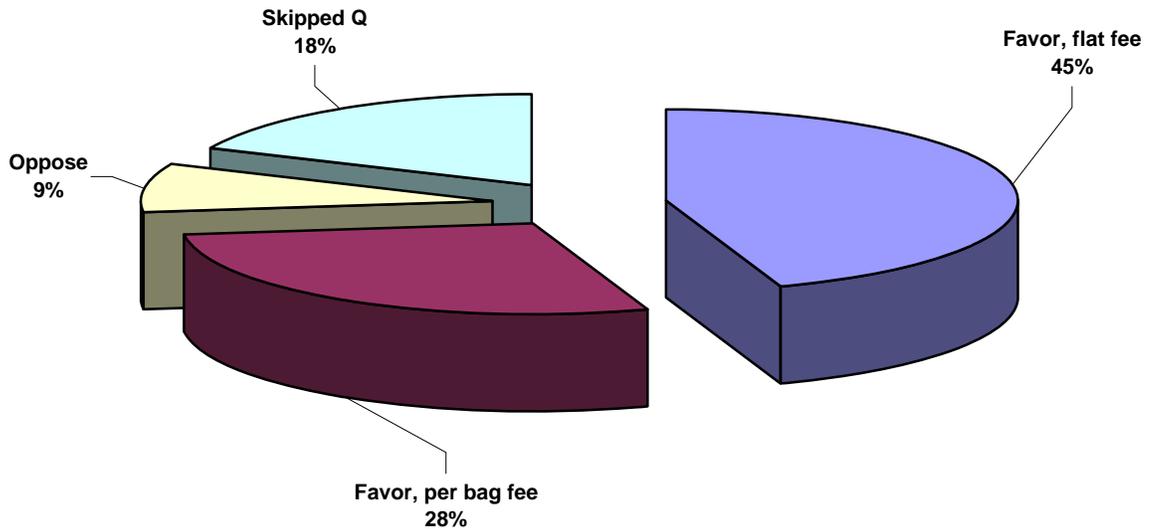


Q22. If a trash fee were implemented in the Town, which would you favor?

Respondents were asked if a trash fee were implemented would they favor a flat fee or per bag fee. Quite a number wrote in “No fee”, “Opposed”, or “No” in the border of this question even though it was not offered as an answer. The question was not designed to give the respondent a choice of YES or NO, but rather if a trash fee were necessary what type of fee would be preferred. With funding becoming increasingly limited, the Town will need to look at different revenue sources and charging a fee for trash pick will most certainly be discussed as an option, as has been done in several neighboring communities. The results from this question show that those who responded overwhelmingly would favor a flat fee (61.4%), rather than pay per bag (38.9%). While 18% or four hundred ninety five (495) respondents skipped this question.

Graph: Q22

WOULD YOU SUPPORT A TRASH FEE?



Total responses =

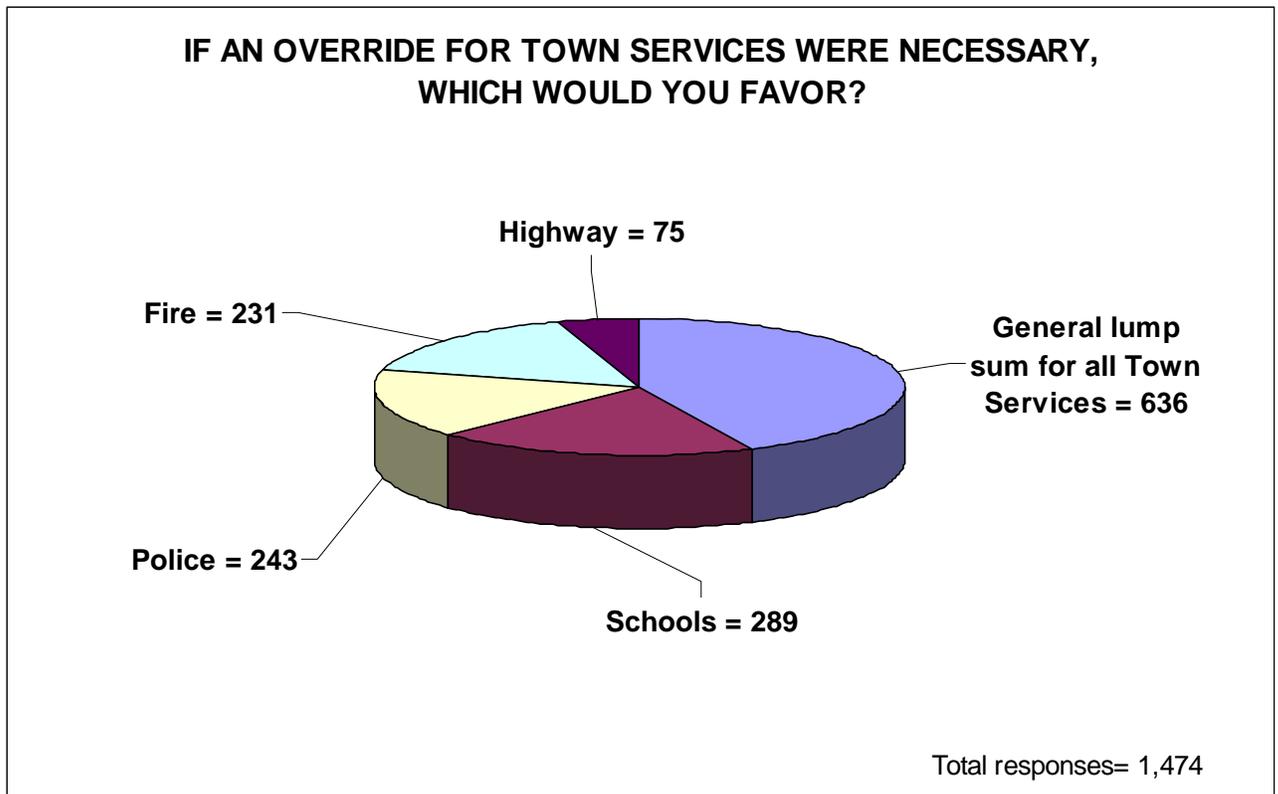
(See Appendix B for complete list of comments)



Q23. If an override for Town Services were necessary, which would you favor?

Question twenty-three was interested in discovering how the residents would respond to an override for Town Services if it were necessary. The question offered two sets of possible overrides approaches either as a general lump sum or for a specific department: schools, police, fire, highway or other. Overall responses suggest that the residents would be more in favor of an override as a general lump sum for all Town services (636) than specific services. Those that responded in favor of a specific department were fairly evenly spread across three major departments: fire (231), police (243) and schools (289).

Graph: Q23



Q24. What do you think is the biggest threat to your quality of life in Fairhaven?



The respondents of question twenty-four spoke loudly in that development was their biggest threat to the quality of life in Fairhaven. This was closely followed by high taxes and crime. Peculiar the threats that ranked the least were water and schools, which contradicts some of the responses from other questions throughout the survey. For instances question fifteen, sixteen and twenty-one found that protection of waters resources was a top priority. This may largely due to the fact that Fairhaven and the Southeastern Massachusetts region as a whole have experienced unprecedented growth in the past ten years.

Table: 4

RANKING OF THREATS	
Type	Count
DEVELOPMENT	272
HIGH TAXES	201
CRIME	156
COMMERCE	125
POPULATION	98
ECONOMY	87
TRAFFIC	81
ENVIRONMENT	72
TOWN GOVERNMENT	58
TOWN PLANNING	56
HOUSING	55
OTHER THREATS	45
BIG BOX BUSINESS	37
SCHOOLS	29
WATER	26

Q25. *What would you like the future development of your Town to be?*

The final question in the survey was an open-ended question regarding the future development of the Town. Below are lists of the most popular responses from the respondents:

- ☒ Less development
- ☒ Limited
- ☒ LIMITED BIG BOX STORES!
- ☒ Limited growth
- ☒ Minimal building
- ☒ Measured slow growth for residential, attract new business to existing sites; incentives for vacant business properties/industries must be given.
- ☒ More Eco-friendly
- ☒ Not so much development as restoration
- ☒ Not to much development (like Dartmouth has)
- ☒ Open Space
- ☒ Renovate/renew existing structures
- ☒ Slow and controlled
- ☒ Try to keep what's left of the small town character. Control development. Adjust the zoning by-laws to make it happen.
- ☒ WELL PLANNED

The preferred outlook for Fairhaven would include:

- ☒ A strong waterfront community
- ☒ Affordable for seniors and young families
- ☒ Beautiful and clean
- ☒ Energy efficient
- ☒ Higher education goals
- ☒ Green building, mixed use spaces, walkable spaces
- ☒ Involve younger generations on the decision making process while the support of the elder generations continues
- ☒ Improved schools, beautify commercial/retail areas
- ☒ Lower taxes
- ☒ More small business
- ☒ Peaceful community
- ☒ Quality not quantity
- ☒ Return to sense of community
- ☒ Village like



Appendix A

The Fairhaven Planning Board is conducting a resident survey to gauge what the residents of the Town would like to see happen in their community. We are urging all residents to fill out this survey, to have a voice in Fairhaven's future. Completed surveys may be dropped off at the Town Hall, Recreation Center or mailed to: Planning Board, Town Hall, 40 Center Street, Fairhaven, MA 02719. In addition, you may complete the survey on line by going to the Town Web site at: <http://www.fairhaven-ma.gov/> and selecting the link for the Fairhaven Residents Survey. **The deadline for completing and returning the survey is February 15, 2008.** Thank you for helping make Fairhaven a better place to live.

1. What Precinct do you live in? _____
2. How many in your household and in what age groups?
 Under 15 _____ 15-24 _____ 25-34 _____ 35-44 _____ 45-54 _____ 55-64 _____ 65+ _____
3. Are you a Town Meeting Member? If so, how often do you attend? (Check one)
 Yes No Frequently Sometimes Never
4. Do you consider Fairhaven to be mostly: (check yes or no for each answer that applies)

<i>Type</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
A rural town?			A town in transition?		
A suburban town?			A resort town?		
A suburb of New Bedford?			A retirement community?		
A commuter town?			Other:		

5. Which best describes where you work?
 Home based Fall River Boston Other
 In Fairhaven Cape Cod Route 128/area
 New Bedford Providence Retired/Do not work
6. In the past five years, approximately **233** new homes have been built in town. Do you think that this rate of residential development is manageable? Or should the rate of development be slowed through an annual cap on the number of new homes? (Check one)
 Rate is manageable, take no action Rate is too high, pursue building cap Unsure
7. How do you feel about the percentage of the following land uses in the Town of Fairhaven?

Land Use	Too Little	Enough	Too Much	If Too Little or Too Much, Where
Residential				
Commercial				
Industrial				
Mixed-Use				
Open Space				
Active Recreation				
Agriculture				
Affordable Housing				
Senior Housing				

8. What policy for RESIDENTIAL, BUSINESS and INDUSTRIAL growth do you favor for Fairhaven: (Check one)

	Residential	Business	Industrial
No growth			
Growth only in existing developed areas			
Growth evenly spread throughout town			
Growth in some undeveloped areas			
Unrestricted growth			

9. What attracted you to Fairhaven? (Check all that apply)



	I was born/grew up here		Character of the town
	Good place to raise children		Housing cost/availability
	Proximity to family		Access to water/beaches
	Job opportunities/near employment		Good public services
	Shopping opportunities		Real estate taxes
	Good public schools		Other:

10. How should Fairhaven handle growth and development?

Yes	No	Issue	If Yes, Where
		Encourage more home building	
		Rezone permitting smaller house lots	
		Encourage business, commerce and research	
		Encourage industry and corporations	
		Rezone for more business districts	
		Rezone for more Industrial uses	
		Rezone for smaller industries	
		Encourage attached housing (i.e. Townhouse or Multi-family)	
		Permit cluster housing with open space preserved	
		Provide for more business/retail growth to increase tax revenues	
		Limit development along Route 6	
		Encourage new uses for waterfront areas	
		Encourage Mixed-Use Development	
		Other:	

11. What types of businesses do you think are important to encourage in Fairhaven?

Business	Very	Somewhat	Not
Agricultural farming			
Marine Industrial			
Aquaculture			
Working farms (livestock)			
Casino/gambling			
Home business			
Warehouse			
Light industry			
Heavy industry/manufacturing			
Maritime Fishing/shell fishing			
Offices / Services			
Recreational			
Bio-tech/research			
Retail stores			
Big box retail			
Locally owned shops			
Tourism			
Restaurants			
Drive-through restaurants			
Wind Power			

12. Imagine Fairhaven in the next 5 to 10 years... How would you assess the following?

Issue	No Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem
Road Safety			
Open Space			
Recreational Areas			
Affordable Housing			
Quantity of Water Supply			
Quality of Water Supply			



Town's Appearance			
Job Opportunities			
Crime/Public Safety			
Waterfront Development			
Rise in Sea Level			

13. Do you favor the Town reaching the state mandate of 10% affordable housing, with a new bylaw requiring developers to apportion 10% of all future housing units towards that goal?
- Yes No Not Sure

14. Please indicate to what extent you think the issues below are a problem in Fairhaven:

Issues	Critical	Important	Non-issue
a. Population growth			
b. Lack of job opportunities			
c. Ground water pollution			
d. Lack of potable water			
e. Pollution of river/coastal waters			
f. Lack of elderly programs			
g. Lack of teen/youth programs			
h. High cost of housing			
i. Lack of safe bike paths/sidewalk ways			
j. Lack of shopping opportunities			
k. Traffic on other town roadways			
l. Lack of public transportation			
m. Cost of sewer and water/trash			
n. Cost of trash removal			
o. Lack of Day Care opportunities			
p. Insufficient beach access/parking			
q. Traffic on Route 6			
r. Loss of Open Space to development			
s. Need for zoning enforcement			
t. Design and appearance of town			

15. From the list above, please indicate the letters of the 3 most important issues to you:
 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

16. Do you believe the health of Little Bay is declining? If so, is nitrogen loading, a concern of yours? Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the greatest concern? _____ Yes _____ No If so (1-10): _____

17. Would you support a new Town bylaw, which would permit apartments to be allowed in existing homes?

Yes Yes, with strict, enforceable restrictions, to guarantee limited use.
 Not Sure No, as it may accidentally turn the entire town into apartment zoning.

18. How do you feel about the quality of town services/facilities available to you?

Issues	Excellent	Good	Poor	No Opinion	Comment
School system					
Libraries					
Fire					
Police					
Ambulance					
Town Hall Services					
Road maintenance					



Recreation programs					
Recreation facilities					
Open space					
Beaches					
Boat access					
Drinking Water Quality					
Access to commercial uses					
Snow removal					
Recycling					
Trash Collection					

19. Please indicate your opinion about each of the following statements related to growth and development issues in Fairhaven. (Check one for each question)

Issue	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
The Town should take a direct role in promoting a new Industrial area			
A design review bylaw should control the appearance of commercial development			
I would support development of additional small businesses			
I would support construction of mixed-use areas			
The Town should create a "cluster housing" bylaw. Cluster housing is defined as, "locating the allowed housing in one area of the development with smaller lots, while leaving the rest of the parcel as open space".			
The Town should encourage the development of wind power			
The Town should require all new development to encourage green design			
The Town should continue to acquire open land to reduce more development and provide more open space			
Wetlands in Fairhaven are currently being protected sufficiently, by allowing building right to the edge of the wetlands?			
The Town should begin to require setbacks from wetlands, as other communities have done			
Signage on new commercial developments is acceptable			
The Town should require smaller signs on commercial developments			
Less restrictions should be placed on signage requirements			
The Town should create a bylaw that allows Senior Resident Development, which gives preference to development for people over 55			
The overall network of roads, streets, and highways in the Town meets the needs of its citizens			
The Town should create a bylaw that protects the right to farm			
The Town should continue to allow the mixing of small home businesses within residential areas			
The Town has adequate housing for the elderly			
The Town has adequate housing for low-income residents			

20. How should Fairhaven develop or protect Open Space? (Check all that apply)

- Donate/deed/sell land for purposes of conservation protection
- Support town acquisition of land for conservation
- Support zoning changes as a means to protect open space
- Give landowners a tax incentive to put their land under a conservation easement
- Public purchase of private land
- Put a restrictive cap on building
- Zone for open space conservation
- Reduce property tax on farm, forest, recreation and conservation land
- Participate with Commonwealth of Massachusetts for purchase of development rights on conservation lands.
- Use of CPA funds to purchase land

21. What four Town **assets** and/or **resources** should Fairhaven preserve for the future?



1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

22. If a trash fee were implemented in the Town, which would you favor? _____ Flat Fee _____ Per Bag Fee

23. If an override for Town Services were necessary, which would you favor?

- General lump sum for all Town Services For specific Dept:
 Schools Police Highway
 Fire Other: _____

24. What do you think is the biggest threat to your quality of life in Fairhaven? _____

25. What would you like the future development of your Town to be? _____

Appendix B

Please note that Appendix B is a 146 page document and is available at the:

Planning and Economic Development Department
40 Center Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

(508) 979-4082

