

Planning History in Pittsfield

In the 1960's the Pittsfield Board of Selectmen and the town's Planning Board, conscious of the fact that the future of Pittsfield depended on bringing about a positive change in direction of the existing situation, determined that a plan should be established to guide Pittsfield's growth. As a result, the town obtained a federal planning grant (commonly referred to as a 701 grant available through section of the Housing Act of 1954), and with assistance from Hans Klunder Associates, Planning Consultants of Hanover, New Hampshire, a two-year study of the town was completed and adopted by the Planning Board in 1964.

The 1964 Master Plan was a twenty-year plan with recommendations dealing with land use and zoning, economic activity, community facilities, streets and traffic, and schools. The possibility of change and expansion was pointed out with the notation that the degree of improvement would depend on how well the town was prepared for the anticipated growth, whatever form that development would take. The plan referred to Pittsfield as primarily a residential community with relatively few manufacturing opportunities. It observed, also, an ebb in the retail business. The plan indicated a hope that the then-pending improvement of the route 28 access combined with a recommendation future expansion of Pittsfield's retail center, among other factors, would revitalize Pittsfield's sagging economic base.

In the late seventies, the town again took a look at it's future and began a revision of the Master Plan in preparation for an effort to enact a zoning ordinance. The revision was not a comprehensive one, focusing only on land use and zoning district categories. It was not until 1988 that the voters of Pittsfield successfully enacted a zoning ordinance.

Again in 1994, the Planning Board recognized the need to revise it's planning documents and it began a revision of the Master Plan. Goals and objectives were prepared and adopted in 1994 by the Board as the first step in this process. However, because of the Board's increasing workload, it was not able to continue the process. As a result in early 1997, the Board formed a Master Plan Committee composed of Board members and interested citizens who began the process anew.