

1996 Mason Master Plan Survey

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Our apologies for the poor quality of the tabulated responses. They were all we could find and appear to be poorly scanned copies of printouts from an unknown survey tabulating program. The numbers are only barely legible. If anyone has copies of the originals, we'd be delighted to scan them in!

Results of Mason Master Plan Survey

Goal of the survey:

To gather information from as large a cross-section of the town as possible regarding what we want to change, what we do not want to change, and how to accomplish these purposes.

Approach:

- Survey developed in a series of meetings throughout 1995/96, including many individuals from the town as well as SWRPC.
- Survey was distributed to 420 households in Mason with 03048 zip code, plus 14 households in Mason with Brookline and Wilton zip codes.
- In tabulating the results, tried to capture all comments, unedited.

Results:

- Out of 434 survey distributed, 111 returned (25%)
- Average length of residency in Mason was 13.8 years (less than 1 year to more than 60 years)
- Major areas of concern:
 - Preserve rural nature of town
 - Address our involvement with Mascenic school district
 - Protect water resources
 - Control taxes
- Other areas of particular concern:
 - specific problems noted in the comments
 - protecting individual rights

Next steps?

- Identify areas to focus on
- For each of those areas, small group to determine
 - what additional information is needed
 - what approaches could help address citizen's concerns
 - what if anything should be proposed to the town at large

Questions from the Master Plan Survey

1. What do you like most about Mason or do not want to see changed?
2. What aspects of Mason do you feel are the most in need of change?
3. What do you see as the most important goals in planning Mason's next 5-10 years?
4. Please rate the town boards and services.
5. Are there parts of town that should be preserved as they are, as much as possible?
6. Are there kinds of growth the town should encourage?
7. What types of residential development would you like to see in Mason?
8. Do you favor purchase of land by the town for any of these purposes?
9. Do you favor development of any of the following recreational facilities?
10. Which of the following strategies for managing growth do you favor?
11. Which approaches do you favor for protecting wells and other water resources?
12. Which approaches do you favor for providing education to town children?
13. How important are the following factors in your choosing to live in Mason?
14. How long have you been a resident in Mason?
15. Any additional comments you think would be useful to the Master Plan Committee in considering the future of Mason?

Answers to Survey Question #1
(What do you like most about Mason and do not want to see changed?)

Rural character

Slow growth building ordinance

A quiet town

I like the rural town atmosphere and woodland areas. I am glad we don't have apartment buildings or multifamily dwellings. I like the quaintness of the center of town. I am glad we have our own elementary school. I am glad all our roads have street signs.

Quiet rural setting.

Sense of community (2)

Rural lifestyle (2)

Natural beauty (1)

The quiet, the quaint.

Keeping its rural character

Rural charm

Low population

No trailer parks, apartments, etc.

Small town atmosphere

What we like most about Mason is its rural charm; the town's tranquillity; the low crime rate; friendly neighbors and minimal interference in everyday living.

Sense of community

Rural charm

The Mason School System

Nice quiet town

Rural atmosphere, small town feel, town meeting gov't, wooded areas, 5 acre lot min.

Rural, natural environment.

Pristine and rural nature

Rural character, low traffic volume, open/undeveloped land, absence of a commercial zone, low population, beautiful town center, clean water, peaceful and friendly atmosphere

Rural nature

Its beauty, peace, natural life.

The rural character. Recreation at our fingertips (outdoors).

Keep it rural.

Rural, quiet character. Lack of development. Natural environment and the old character of the center and many homes.

Rural character. Open space, recreational property (RR bed)

Owner built homes. Three acre min. lots with 250' frontage. Dirt roads. Lots of open land. Lots of room in the rules to be what we wish on our own property.

Its relatively undeveloped nature - trees, hills, streams, woodland.

The growth of the town.

Rural

The small-town, low-population-density nature.

The quietness and peacefulness.

I like the country feel of Mason: all the wildlife, tees, chirping at night and stars.

I like the small town charm and the traditions the town keeps alive.

Rural character. Do not want to see housing developments. Light industry or small business is okay.

We enjoy the rural feel of Mason, as well as the friendliness exhibited by its residents. We also enjoy its quietness and its numerous trails for hiking or cross country skiing. Perhaps these trails and the quarry could be properly maintained for Mason residents to enjoy. The Congregational Church is also very central in providing a wholesome community feeling. Mason has a very good Police and Fire/Ambulance squad.

We came here because Mason is small, quiet and peaceful. We would like to see it remain so.

Land areas undeveloped. Would like it to stay that way. Would like to see building moratorium set for x homes/year

Taxes go down, school costs go down. Property taxes during the 70's is now taxed 4-6 times of then; incomes/retirement has not increase at that rate.

Like the rural atmosphere

Quiet country living

The rural/country aspect. We don't want to live in a suburb of Nashua. We live in Mason because we want to live in the country and manage our property for wildlife and gardening.

Keeping Mason country

The rural atmosphere

I like the privacy

Let's get rid black flies!

Quiet, small. The church; the library; lack of industry; lack of crime; lack of a commercial district. Most of all I like the rural nature -- controlled tract building should be adhered to.

Its rural nature, its small-town feel.

Small, participatory town government. Accommodation of mobile homes and alternative housing. Quiet, peaceful. secure. relaxed. Low traffic. Low population. Natural landscape.

Rural character, small town feel. However, we realize it may be necessary for there to be more commercial businesses (for taxes, employment). It would be best to locate these in a commercial zone.

Things like this survey! This is great! We really appreciate being able to voice our views in this manner!

Rural character. Lack of traffic. Open space. Quiet.

Rural setting, community spirit, open spaces.

We like the rural aspects of this town. We do not want Mason to turn into an over-developed town with over-crowding.

Prefer rural character, wetlands, natural habitats. Like community-minded folk. Prefer diverse population.

Rural character.

Close community atmosphere -- town common -- eccentric individuals.

Quiet rural community -- a real sense of family caring neighbor for neighbor.

Everything

Large house lots with country atmosphere.

The 3-acre minimum for building. Small class sizes. We like dirt roads, they are graded well. The police dept. is friendly and does an excellent job.

Friendliness. Forests.

Rural aspects -- low traffic, woods, etc.

Limited number of houses built per year, keeping the population and the growth down.

Quiet, rural quality

The rural, quiet environment is why we are here and this should be maintained.

Rural setting

Country atmosphere. Low taxes.

Can't get there from here.

Less people, more woods than many towns. Good balance of privacy vs. community spirit. Low population density. Low traffic density. No potential/historical sources of chemical pollution. Good natural water supply. Form of government (local control).

I like that it is a small town.

Rural atmosphere, low population, volunteer services.

Rural nature, quiet community.

Mason's rural setting and the required lot size so to deter developers from creating a town like Brookline NH or Townsend MA or Hollis NH.

Small town atmosphere.

Its small town, rural character

Quiet rural setting.

Woods and brooks and pond and swamps and wildlife. The people who work for the town and town volunteers who help out in so many ways --we need more.

The rural atmosphere and concern for our environment.

The amount of woodland and that the town is so rural and quiet.

The woods and nature surrounding the homes. The quiet, clean air, the wildlife.

Large lot size requirements (5 acre min.). Also availability of use of land for recreational vehicles such as snowmobiles at railroad bed, etc.

The fact that the town remains rural, and growth is well maintained.

Rural character

Love the New England style quaintness of the town center. Love to be able to bike or horseback ride on the trails without the fear of being run over. More trails would be good.

I like the close sense of community and rural character. I admire the way Mason pulls together when faced with problems.

Continue to be a bedroom community with little change in the population.

Nice quiet town to live in. Stop defacing our public signs -- this degrades the image of Mason.

Size of population, undeveloped land, clean air, unclouded N. England village feeling, sense of community.

Its quiet and friendly.

The rural character with lots of woods and large fields not overrun by houses.

Rural atmosphere -- natural beauty.

Dirt roads and trails through woods. We like the fact that there are no subdivisions and the homes are varied and interesting.

My property.

I like the quiet and peaceful place Mason is, and not crowded.

Its' the best place in the country and the safest.

Rural character, zoning.

Peace and quiet and country air.

Small town character and culture. Low or non-existent crime rate. Housing prices at the time of home purchase.

A small community.

The rural atmosphere -- woods, trees, brooks, wildlife. The uncommercial atmosphere of Mason makes it truly special: no pizza parlors, no rows of stores, not even a gas station! No main street, no loitering, no noisy traffic. No honky-tonkish! That is what I like most and do not want to see changed.

Very quiet people are very caring. Have good neighbors.

Rural character of town. Living here has been a truly wonderful experience.

Its rural character and undeveloped wild land.

Rural character.

The people that founded this town and tried to bring us forward.

For the most part, Mason is a nice quiet and friendly place. Most of the residences are kept in good manner. It's like an inhabited nature walk, that should remain the same for our children.

Answers to Question 2
(What aspects of Mason do you feel are most in need of change?)

Better education. Restriction of growth. Growth should be slowed, currently too many building permits are issued. We would like to see bigger lot sizes as the minimum to build.

Better road conditions. Also feel a need for kids (especially teen-agers) to hang out: ie., basketball, tennis, rec. hall, etc.

Mason needs a more active recreation department to develop activities for our young people for all seasons of the year. Mason needs to encourage more local businesses to come to the town. Mason needs to continue to make a stand for better education in the area, possibly providing alternative methods.

Roads

Leave Mascenic school district (2)

Black flies (2)

The school system

Taxes

Restructuring of governing bodies

School district in need of major changes

Lowering taxes

The school system

Voucher system for high school students attending prep school, (note) no home schooling

The people of Mason need to get a grip and stop thinking that they are better than New Ipswich or Greenville. Try joining the district instead of trying to go solo. Who else would want this town with the attitudes that are here.

Upgrade roads to hot top.

Tighter control on taxes, more encouragement of volunteer groups, encouragement of more small business to build a greater tax base.

None!

Taxes: current school district affiliation

Education of children in grades 5-12

Board of Selectmen need leadership/new energy/is it time for a town manager?

The roads are needing more work.

A way of getting news of what the Town Boards are doing so we could be more informed. Now, all news is not put in all the newspapers that people in the town subscribe to. the area you live in makes the difference as to what newspaper you would subscribe to!

Repair the paved roads and do not pave the gravel roads.

1. The main roads are in terrible shape. They need to be taken care of. We don't need new roads, just take care of the existing ones.
2. Water quality/conservation: The continuous salting is ruining our water system. We need to do something about this.

To have some “cluster” - type residential areas is ok or a business zone plus scattered home business - ok.

School system with three towns is ok. I find the tug of war with them very unsettling.

Education - primary and secondary especially.

Improved and stronger (e.g., informed, committed, active, credible) Board of Selectmen.

Developed sense of community.

The roads! All the man hours, it would be cheaper to pave a road a year and still not change the town at all.

Limit number of trailer homes and liquor stores.

Protection from unfair taxation burden from other towns in a school district (legal representation if necessary).
Reevaluation of property at fair market value.

Separation from the Mascenic School District.

We need cable TV

Roads need fixing.

A bigger library with air quality controller.

Air conditioning in the Mann house.

Repaving the roads that are torn up.

The center of Mason is important to the identity of its people, so perhaps the vacant yellow house could be repaired or torn down in order that the property could be put to better use. Another aspect which could be looked at is the quality of education Mason provides to those in school (includes the Mascenic district as well as all of New Hampshire.)

residents should not be permitted to allow their property to resemble a junk yard or town dump. Have folks remove junk autos etc. from their property! Heavy equipment should be housed when not in use.

No access to cable TV.

To keep growth at a reasonable minimum and to keep taxes flat. Can't afford an increase, may cause us to move.

Schools.

Rubbish-collection. Get out of Wilton: too far for us.

Taxes/School. The ability for families to be able to plan on staying here after retirement when the retirement income is relatively fixed, rather than knowing the taxes will make it impossible. Someone retiring with 30,000 dollars and paying 3,000 of those dollars now in town taxes would never be able to afford 6,000 in twenty years. It is said that normally taxes double each 20 years, but even that does not cover Mason's increases for 20 years. It is a shame no older or person with future retirement can plan on staying here.

Schools and roads!

Communication regarding board activities or how to be involved with boards.

We need to grade the dirt roads more often, spring and fall!

Need three new selectmen. Need a real police chief.

People who move here because they love the town, and then decide they are going to change it!
Tax situation driving many people out of town. Taxes regressive place. Taxes go up and up, sky's the limit!

Get out of Mascenic School district and give education vouchers. Give the library more funding. Resurface the dirt roads more often.

I don't have the big picture and don't know what falls under the auspices of a master plan.

Library is too small and cramped. More places for our children (room in library attractive to teens, beach at Pratt Pond; marked trails and booklet/pamphlet explaining/advertising them; basketball court at ball field; trips organized by Recreation Committee). More room, information and services to support parenting ("mothers group" room). Services for the elderly (transportation, grocery, check on). More affordable housing.

Public commitment to home schooling. A school budget that is more directly controlled by the citizens of Mason, alone. Civic events and their advertisement.

The aspects which are in dire need change are:

- 1) The Selectmen need to represent all of their constituencies rather than a select few groups.
- 2) The town annual budget should be made available to the town citizens one month prior to the town's annual meeting to promote informed voting.
- 3) Communication between elected officials and their constituencies needs to be improved!
- 4) Selectmen need to become proactive in communicating with New Ipswich and Greenville selectmen. School Board and the School District representatives in planning and developing effective educational alternatives, i. e., library construction, programs which will alleviate tax increases on all three towns.
- 5) The Selectmen's administrative assistant should not be compensated for health insurance and retirement insurance, this is a part-time position!
- 6) Improved recreational programs for the town's children, i.e., multi-purpose court (basketball, tennis, ice hockey/skating rink). lighted baseball field to include the multi-purpose court; storage shed at the ball field to be shared by all teams -- this should be a joint effort between the town and volunteers and donation/fund raising to keep taxes down.
- 7) Property reassessment for Mason; keeping in mind the possibility of tri-town reassessment looking toward the future of school taxes if we choose to stay within the Mascenic district.

We need leash laws for dogs. Restrict railroad usage to non-motorized stuff. Make Mason a no-hunting town. Increase options for providing education: i.e., program for partial home-schooling -- allow the schools to be used, attend for part of the week, parents work in conjunction with schools for home-schooling a couple of days per week. Or get out of Mascenic. Avoid Milford; joining ConVal is a good option.

Some roads could use work. Library could be bigger. Try to attract some tax-paying business to area over by Rt. 31 perhaps?

Remove the yellow house "eyesore" in the center of town along with oil tanks. Priority of education -- need to belong to a district which places a strong emphasis on the quality of education.

I believe that zoning should be changed. An increase in road frontage for building lots would be a start. Also, an increase in acreage per lot.

Limit of 4-wheel uses -- RR erosion -- reduce speed. Educate community on animal control. Encourage energy-efficient

alternatives in building through less restrictive planning -- plan for diversity.

Schools

To withdraw from the Mascenic School District

Attitudes towards our historic areas. It's really sad to hear townspeople want to use historic buildings for Fire Department training. We need to preserve our historic buildings better than we are -- roof on Mann House has been leaking for 3 years and nothing but "make do" patching has been done.

Zoning

Public kindergarten is needed. Campbell Mill Road needs proper drainage to preserve the grading. A town (pond) swimming area -- Potanipo is off limits. A town newsletter would help communication and resident participation.

The roads are generally in poor shape. The dirt roads need more frequent maintenance to avoid the "washboard" effect and both the dirt and paved roads seem prone to wash-out. Also, I have not been impressed with the quality of the schools in terms of preparing our children for a technologically advanced world.

Association with Mascenic School District

The roads should all be paved with real asphalt, not rocks and dirt thrown on the road and crushed in by traffic. If they remain dirt, they should be graded more often.

Better roads

Simplify

I've heard the school system is bad, but we have no kids so this isn't an issue with me.

Reduced taxes. Road conditions that do not destroy our cars.

Taxes, school system, roads.

We need a school that gives higher than 4th grade in order to keep our children in town longer. "Permanent road repairs. Not just "fill-ins" which waste time and energy.

Schools.

Regulation to protect water supply.

Communications about town events and meetings (i.e., spring clean up, historical society, etc.)

Resolve angst over school funding.

Mason needs to have some commercial area such as Rt. 31 to reduce the tax burden on the homeowner.

They should keep checks on possible environmental damage due to junkyard operations on Hurricane Hill Road.

We need to allow small businesses in to help with our property tax relief. Right now my family is a single income family and we pay nearly \$400 a month to live here -- that doesn't leave much money for "frills". Also, the Mascenic School District could use some change in the upper school levels to offer more advanced courses.

Schooling

More people to come forth and be active on local boards and commissions.

We need to find ways of reducing the property tax.

None.

Town hall hours and voting hours. The quality of the school -- for my standards it is especially poor.

Would like to have cable TV and street lights.

School system (beyond grade 4),

More paved roads.

Less intrusion by the town in peoples lives. Elimination of the grossly inadequate highway department. Complete openness and publication of all committee meetings and business conducted.

I like Mason the way it is! Keep the taxes low and stick with existing services; we're a small town, not a big city.

I feel the school system really needs to be examined closely. I think our children deserve and need better schooling in the upper grades. Also, I would like to see more recreation and activities for teens and other residents. Lastly, acquisition and refurbishing of the old Post Office (yellow building in center).

1. Better schools 2. Better roads 3. Good town government.

It's a pleasure to live in Mason. All public officials and people seem to always look out for the benefit of the townspeople and children. I am sure that there will be changes as they are needed. I cannot predict the future. take it year by year and put it to vote by the people in town.

A wider tax base. Someday we're not going to be able to pay the bills.

Condition of roads. Growth and improvement of library. Community social outreach.

More money for the school.

Roads. School.

Not much of a change.

School!!! time to get out, for our children's future!!

School system!!! We are leaving town because the schools have utterly failed our son. We'll be back in 6 years. we have to attract educated people to town who tend to be intellectually more charitable.

There are too may rules and regulations.

Increased development, including single family homes and commercial businesses. Lower taxes. Better school system (specifically Mascenic). Paved or repaved roads, especially dirt roads in the town forest.

Free rubbish pick up.

High taxes are a detriment -- people are moving away because of that. Couldn't there be other ways of raising funds?!

The roads were not bad but in the pst 3 years they have been terrible.

More thorough enforcement of existing zoning laws, i.e., junk cars, trucks, etc.

More interesting cultural activities (or environmental) for people of all ages in the town to come together who aren't involved in the church or fire dept. Great stuff like the family Fun Festival or the contra dance.

Don't know, haven't lived in Mason long enough.

Attract industry or small business to bring people to Mason and keep the people we have here.

Need to patrol Rt. 123 during school mornings for those who think they are on the Indy 500. Maybe a few more signs for bus stops. Everybody loves their kids but need to respect other families' kids.

Comments on Question 3

(What do you see as the most important goals in planning Mason's next 5-10 years?)

Control population: But growth is not a problem now; other factors have adjusted this.

Roads: keep them maintained to current level

Local business and home business: must have controls

Other: activism to support essential issues

Other: alternative school system

Control population: you must decrease lot size so land can be sold to live.

Education: too much money is being and has been in that hole

Preserve rural character: not important for those who must leave

Town services: library (very important)

Town services: (very important) library is too small

Other: fiscal responsibility (very important)

Other: provide emergency services very important)

Other: separate from New Ipswich and Greenville (very important/important)

Other: improve tax base (very important)

Other: get out of school district (important)

Town services: (important) but only if cheap

Home business: none of your business

Other: improve services for your teens (very important)

Woodland and open space: (very important) we have plenty now

Population: no control

Other: to live free (essential)

Comments on Question 4
(Please rate the town boards and services)

Other: Town clerk (excellent)

Fire: needs more members

Given the volunteer nature of many of the positions and decrease of volunteerism overall, Mason has been fortunate for dedicated volunteers. We need more.

All are excellent, considering the resources we give them and what these people do with them is outstanding.

Other: if it works do not spend money on it.

Fire: (excellent) and ambulance

Library: (good) Librarian is outstanding but she needs more resources and a larger building.

Other: volunteer (poor). Volunteering doesn't seem high on people's list of priorities. It is a valuable service which affects Mason financially, but more importantly, it creates close-knit community, which I think is crucial to the town being healthy -- emotionally, physically and mentally (and certainly socially!)

Other: coordination of town boards (poor)

Other: schools stink

Other: first responders, ambulance (excellent)

Conservation: (excellent) best

Police: (excellent) Police chief is very good.

Selectmen: autocratic chairman (poor)

Library: (good) needs more support

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: excellent

Comments on Question 5

(Are there parts of town that should be preserved as they are, as much as possible?)

Other: RR Bed. Highway department should be encouraged to use and upgrade the portion of the RR bed between Sandpit rd and Depot Rd. Recreation Dept. or other should organize an annual "trail maintenance" day or the like to assist to preserve RR area.

Pratt Pond area: with improvements

Other: Starch Mill

Other: private forest lands (very important)

Other: Cascade

Other: Starch Mill (important)

Quarry: what quarry?

Town Common: (very important) finish Tom Rhodes house

Pratt Pond: (very important) make a beach!

Pratt Pond: (very important) not as it is now!

Town Common area: (important) improve

Quarry area (not important) isn't it private?

Other: roads (important)

Other: town forests (very important)

Other: Lost Valley

Other: Briggs Pond area

Other: all land along brooks and ponds and in wetlands (very important)

Other: railroad bed (very important)

Other: railroad track area (very important)

preserved or upgraded

Other: Mason brook and cascade (very important)

Other: Walker Brook (very important)

Other: ball field (very important)

Other historical markers, "pound", etc. (very important)

Other: various historic sites marked (very important)

I feel that the quarry area should belong to the town -- a park perhaps?

Other: any wild area that is currently that way (very important)

Comments on Question 6
(Are there kinds of growth the town should encourage?)

Light industrial: on Rt. 31

Residential: very important, so land can be sold with smaller lots

Light industrial: (important) on Rt. 31

Commercial: (important) service based

Other: restaurant (important)

Other: small retail (Pickety Place)

Other: snowmobiling and rv use (very important)

Town should neither encourage nor impede growth; it should evolve naturally

Other: socio-economic diversity (important)

Residential: (not important) no need to encourage it!

let's not turn Mason into another suburbia

Comments on Question 7
(What types of residential development would you like to see in Mason?)

Multi-family houses and townhouses: these are really businesses; need some controls

Retirement homes for elderly: would be nice but we lack the other components: transport system and markets. A nursing home that provides transport of residents on outings etc., may work well if financially possible for the investor/owner.

Multi-family houses, townhouses, cluster: nice ideas. I wouldn't want to live in them.

Retirement homes are cool. These people need lots of service, though. Low impact. Take good care of properties.

Other: mobile homes (do not want)

Retirement homes: ok as long as it is not condos. It should be in a historical, tasteful style.

Townhouses: (very important) less children

Retirement homes: (very important), great, no kids for school

Retirement homes: (important) longterm residents of Mason only.

Retirement homes: (not important) Don't want because there is no close services for elderly people. Otherwise, a good idea.

Other: should provide a controlled amount of alternative housing.

Let's use the houses that are for sale rather than build new ones.

Other: (important) Lukas type group home, i.e. not for profit

Other: (do not want) trailer parks

Other: (very important) none!!

Other: accessory apartments (important)

It is not my choice; time and circumstances will decide.

Other: I should like to see improvement of sore spots

Comments on Question 8

(Do you favor purchase of land by the town for any of these purposes?)

All purposes: important, for the future only

Elderly or low-income: (do not want) difficult for the elderly to access services without significant transportation costs.

Elderly housing: do not want

Elderly: yes

Low-income: do not want

Elderly (not low income): important

Town offices: (important) when shown the need -- library now!

Elderly: important

Other: (very important) elderly

Recreation: (important) park/pond

Depends on situation

Other: elderly (not important)

Other: low-income housing (do not want)

Other: future schools when out of Mascenic district (very important)

Recreation: (important) trails

Town offices: library (very important)

No tax money should be spent

Open space: not needed now

Wetland protection: not needed now

Town offices: do we need?

Elderly/low-income: can't afford

Business: can't afford

Wetland: (not important) protected by law

Elderly/low-income are not likely to come due to lack of services.

Comments on Question 9
(Do you favor development of any of the following recreational facilities?)

Other: ATV trails (very important)

Other: Arts and crafts and cultural activities (very important)

Swimming, fishing, boating: development of Pratt Pond would be nice but hard to manage. It is isolated and vulnerable to abuse.

Bicycle and bridle paths, walking and skiing trails: have many in need of maintenance

Snowmobiling trails: allow but not encourage

Playgrounds or playing fields: have to maintain them

Other: OHRV areas (very important)

Other: basketball court (very important)

Boating: (very important) non-motor

I support any effort and money used to encourage people to use (carefully) the out of doors

Other: (important) Bird and wildlife sanctuaries

Other: skating rink (outdoor) (important)

I'm too old for these.

Yes, but not by the town. Seek outside funding.

Other: open land

Snowmobiling trails: (not important) we have the RR

Fishing/boating: (important) fishing access, other than Pratt Pond, Mason doesn't have any reliably canoeable water bodies.

Playgrounds: (not important) we have one

Other: camping areas (very important)

Fishing/boating: fishing (very important)

Tax dollars should not be spent on recreation

Other: basketball court (very important)

Fishing, boating: (do not want) motor boats?

Fishing, boating: where?

Other: I favor the elimination of

Fishing/boating: (very important) not motorboats

Comments on Question 10
(Which of the following strategies for managing growth do you favor?)

Establish a commercial zone: very important, if we decided to encourage commercial entities.

Increased lot size: seems unfair

Evaluate impact on environment: so hard to say

Other: eliminate opportunities for anyone to build a house on 2 acres or less. This includes any land that might have 'grandfather clauses.'

These questions are loaded with a pointed bias.

Impact on environment: (not important) live for us

Other: reserve "greenbelts" in major subdivisions of more than 6 lots (important)

Increased lot size: (very important) in fragile areas

The town should neither encourage nor impede growth.

Other: revise zoning regs as needed (important)

Comments on Question 11
(Which approaches do you favor for protecting wells and other water resources?)

Acquire wetlands: uphold state regulations

Other: keep current approach

Septic regulation: already

Would I hate to buy swamps!

Other: exclude polluting business activities or private activities (very important)

Septic regulation: (not important) look what it did in Mass

Need education this area

I feel that the property on the beginning of Hurricane Hill Road should be checked. What is going into the pond? Or wells? Who will pay to replace or repair?

Other: maintain current lot sizes and setbacks (very important)

Other: wetlands buffers (very important)

Other: septic system maintenance (very important)

Other: aquifer protection bylaw

Fuel storage: (very important) and education

Wetlands: (very important/important) for some

Other: education (very important)

Other: educational blitz (important)

Fuel tanks: can't afford

Other: evaluation of water ways, stream, rivers (very important)

Comments on Question 12
(Which approaches do you favor for providing education to town children?)

Other: must look at other alternatives again

Mascenic: not important, if we resolve differences.

Another school district: not important, would like to see.

Other: I hope.

Other: in-town elementary school (very important)

Other: please find some alternative. The current system is far too expensive. The state should fund more education.
(Very important)

Home schooling: (not important) look at the little girl/plane

For Mason, I'd like to see in-town education through 8th grade, then perhaps provide vouchers for secondary schools. Also, I want support for home-schooling.

Other: (very important) equalized state funding instead of property tax

Other: N/A

Other: form own system and voucher high school

Mascenic District: needs improving

Home schooling: doesn't work

Other: educational community activities -- nature study -- historical walks, etc.

Create a norm with the school district, particularly school in Mason, of people using the school as a learning resource center, but not necessarily having their children signed up for the full 5-day program. The current options of choosing a public school education as it is, going out of town for private education or home-schooling 7 days a week don't have a lot of appeal. Creative options combining part-time (3 days a week) for socializing and academics could be interesting. I've enclosed an article which discusses the idea. Having the option to adopt something like this in Mason is one form of education which would appeal to our family.

Comments on Question 13
(How important are the following factors in your choosing to live in Mason?)

Low taxes: they aren't
Good schools: dream on

Proximity to work: 30-min limit

Services: not important, excludes road/police/fire-emt

Family: my family

Low taxes: ?

Proximity to work: long commute

Low taxes: this must be some kind of joke!

Good schools: another liberal, biased question

Good community services: what? if it costs we do not need it

Family: (not important) at the time of choice, very important now

Other:(very important) proximity to Pine Hill Waldorf School

Low taxes: what?

Low taxes: what? wishful thinking!

Good schools: needs work

Good community services: ha! (very important)

Outdoor recreation: ha! (very important)

Good schools: (important) elementary

Good schools: not applicable

Good schools: huh??!!

Church: (essential) no longer a drawing power

Church: used to be essential

Low taxes: since when?

Good schools: would move if possible

Other: gardening (essential)

Proximity to work: retired

Other: taxes too much

Is the question regarding if these factors currently exist and is the reason we have chosen to live in Mason OR are you asking if these factors are important to our decision to continuing to remain in Mason by our choice. They are all “essential” for improvement to remain here. (family, friends, church, community, gov’t taxes, proximity to work, school, services)

Other: snowmobiling (very important)

Other: no street lights (very important)

Taxes: they’re low?

Good schools: (not important) but as a citizen, good schools are important

Other: peace and quiet (very important)

Comments on Question 14
(How long have you been a resident in Mason?)

60+. all my life

Comments on Question 15

(Any additional comment you think would be useful to the Master Plan Committee in considering the future of Mason?)

Develop a different plan that the surrounding towns (i.e. no trailer parks, condo units or large apartment complexes)

Special attention to water and activities, parks and lands; schools being BIG issue. Let's get out of Mascenic District.

Where would there be fishing and boating?

Quarry area is not public, should not be included in Question 5.

Playgrounds are adequate (question 9)

Getting out of Mascenic School District is the main step to take to improve the quality of life in Mason.

Thank you very much for your efforts on behalf of the future of our town.

Eventually replace dirt roads.

We would like to see two-family homes allowed. There are many in town right now, but are illegal; the code does not allow them. That way they could be taxed as such.

This is a great first step; keep up the good work! Key to our success: inform, inform, and participation.

We need housing for the elderly that want to continue to live in Mason after they have sold their property.

Keeping growth under control.

New blood in the offices.

Town pool. Town post office.

Mason is a beautiful town in a wonderful environment. I think one of the main responsibilities of the Committee is to represent that which cannot vote: the environment, the air, the water, the flora and fauna.

Thank you for letting me have a part and organizing this so clearly.

Continue to encourage residents to participate in town government despite lethargy and overworked townfolk. Emphasize non-monetary human values of helping and caring.

Think "smaller is better".

We need cable TV.

Remember where Mason's roots are. I'd like to see the library move to a larger building.

Maintain the rural atmosphere. Don't grow. If we want city living we will move.

Very glad to see this questionnaire!! It's very good.

None of this is what you probably want to know.

Keep out industry, encourage wise land use for timber and agriculture.

Keep new residents from changing things and then moving out of town.

Deal with the school problem. Get out and vote.

Mason is lovely and QUIET. If I want a commercial atmosphere, I can go to another town, but I want to LIVE in a quiet place. I don't believe there is a need for any commercial build-up. An exception is small, home-based businesses that can employ people locally, but are not more impact on the environment than a family.

Please keep the health of the Earth uppermost in your minds, because what affects it will ultimately affect us all.

We need our own zip code (and maybe a post office too!)

Any development requiring new roads should be required to have hot top roads to cut further expense for the town.

The character of Mason is and will continue to change. We need to be preparing for and embracing these changes before they happen. I believe that we will see new residents who will expect more of the town in terms of technology, conveniences, and education than has previously been the case.

Keep it rural! Improve the schools so that the children are not ignorant.

Consider conditions of our cars, please!

No junkyards! If its a business they should be taxed as one! What about taxes being lowered for depreciation of all neighbours properties, what will happen when someone wants to sell? Please check it out!

Establish commercial zone on Rt. 31

At the beginning of Hurricane Hill Road (from Townsend Rd) I would like to see the illegal dump cleared up!

We love Mason as it is -- anything that can help the future to be similar to the past/present would be great!

The school needs to be improved. Children graduating from Mason are not fully prepared for the demands of the competitive university setting. Year after year we are appalled at the lack of learning tools the school has available: lack of supplies, quality books, etc. For those reasons we will not send our children to Mascenic unless significant changes are made in the quality of education.

Restrictions on hunting would be helpful--also please investigate a sewage problem on a multifamily dwelling on Valley Road.

Sorry this is so late! Hope that it may be of some use anyway!

There should be a limit on terms elected officials can serve. There seems to be little interest in new people running for office (especially selectmen) and the people in office now are aware of this and perversely enjoy it.

Clean up junk cars.

Take better care of open spaces and town buildings.

Keep the town small, growth means growth in all areas.

Try to widen the tax base with an industrial park, since we are not well-located for retail.

Provide incentives for agriculture (farms) to return (must be more than 60% of income earned) and keep any more single family homes out of town.

RR bed should be open to all quiet vehicles and foot traffic, since it goes through many back yards. Large-wheeled

vehicles loosen soil, subjecting it to erosion. Snowmobiles would be ok since they don't tear up the trail and people are mostly inside in winter.

Make it more affordable. Create jobs and income.

The monies that are spent on the Mascenic school district we could probably have private teachers for our children.

As NH motto says: "allow to live free". "Master planning," denies too many freedoms.

Mason's uniqueness in being an uncommercialized town should be basic to all plans for its future (who knows? It may some day remain the only one). Its beauty--its historical significance should always be taken into consideration. Remember: Mason is rare! Mason is precious!

Phase out mobile homes--grandfather existing one.

I think one of the most important things for the town to develop are some type of Human Services. There seem to be very few resources of any kind for mothers and children from infancy to 3 years or for the elderly. In fact, if anyone is in need, where in Mason do they turn for help if they don't belong to the church? Also, I think there need to be more low-commitment ways to feel a part of the town for those who don't have time to serve on a committee or hold public office, and for those of whom the church isn't the correct vehicle. Family-centered ways -- i.e., that's why I like the idea of expanding on the contradance and Family Fun Festival idea. Perhaps quarterly festival with really neat themes?

Preservation of the land and its environment.

Let us advance into the 20th century to be on a par with our neighbouring towns.

Keep everything about the same, if people want more they can head east, south or move to CA.

Form1

Results of Master Plan Survey June 6, 1996

Total surveys returned **113** Average years as resident **13.8**
 Total respondents **174**

3. What do you see as the most important goals in planning Mason's next 10-15 years?

	Essential	Very important	Important	Not important	Don't know	Average
Control town expenses	79	43	49	0	3	4.1
Control population	58	51	38	18	2	3.9
Improve roads	34	30	53	54	2	3.2
Improve services	8	17	53	63	14	2.7
Education	104	33	27	7	0	4.3
Local business	33	28	43	66	1	3.1
Home business	25	42	57	38	1	3.3
Rural character	106	35	25	2	0	4.4
Water resources	120	29	18	3	5	4.5
Woodland	123	39	18	5	2	4.5

Form2

4. Please rate the town boards and services.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Average
Police	82	69	7	1	16	4.4
Fire	55	76	8	0	33	4.3
Roads	37	69	39	27	1	3.6
Selectmen	15	62	48	15	33	3.5
Planning Board	18	64	20	7	59	3.8
Board of Adjustment	8	42	24	8	10	3.6
Conservation	16	60	23	8	57	3.7
Historic District Comm	10	35	30	9	93	3.5
Library	31	85	32	5	0	3.9
Recreation	0	52	38	16	49	3.3

Form3

5. Are there parts of town that should be preserved as they are, as much as possible?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Don't Want	Don't Know	Average
Town common	92	61	14	2	3	4.4
Quarry	56	48	32	3	32	4.1
Pratt pond	76	55	18	3	20	4.3

Form4

6. Are there kinds of growth the town should encourage?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Don't Want	Don't Know	Average
Residential	22	28	62	44	2	3.1
Agriculture	33	85	41	2	4	3.9
Home business	38	84	40	3	4	3.9
Commercial	20	31	52	59	1	3.0
Light industrial	19	47	39	57	6	3.1

Form5

7. What types of residential development would you like to see in Mason?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Don't Want	Don't Know	Average
Single-family	64	70	18	14	3	4.1
Multi-family	5	11	32	113	5	2.4
Townhouse	6	8	20	125	4	2.3
Cluster	10	13	19	120	1	2.4
Retirement	19	39	27	53	21	3.1

Form6

8. Do you favor the purchase of land by the town for any of these purposes?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Don't Want	Don't Know	Average
Open space	69	61	18	13	6	4.1
Wetland	77	57	18	11	5	4.2
Recreation	48	76	26	12	4	3.9
Town offices, library	33	51	52	19	7	3.6
Business park	11	19	41	85	6	2.7
Elderly or low-inc	16	27	34	60	15	2.9

Form7

9. Do you favor development of any of the following recreational facilities?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Don't Want	Don't Know	Average
Bicycle and bridle	42	86	27	11	2	3.9
Walking and skiing	42	91	27	8	0	3.9
Snowmobiling	13	33	57	55	5	3.0
Swimming	43	49	54	15	0	3.7
Fishing, boating	32	60	53	10	3	3.7
Playgrounds	37	76	41	7	2	3.8
Tennis	15	26	75	36	10	3.1

Form8

10. Which of the following strategies for managing growth do you favor?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Oppose	Don't Know	Average
Current zoning	37	76	7	7	35	4.1
Increased lot size	34	52	32	44	9	3.4
Existing roads	64	45	23	25	7	3.9
Commercial zone	38	42	22	50	13	3.4
Resource impact	81	74	8	0	5	4.4
Environment imp	83	68	10	1	5	4.4
Land acquisition	92	61	9	1	2	4.4

Form9

11. Which approaches do you favor for protecting wells and other water

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Oppose	Don't Know	Average
Current use	42	42	12	5	55	4.1
Acquire wetland	42	64	11	14	29	4.0
Regulate fuel tanks	111	48	9	4	12	4.5
Regulate septic	74	56	15	5	10	4.3

Form10

12. Which approaches do you favor for providing education to town children?

	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Oppose	Don't Know	Average
Mascenic	11	30	15	72	35	2.8
Another public school	37	35	16	35	34	3.6
Vouchers	59	38	12	34	24	3.8
Home schooling	21	34	31	49	19	3.2

Form11

13. How important are the following factors in your choosing to live in Mason?

	Essential	Very Imp	Imp	Not Imp	Don't Know	Average
Family	24	22	33	76	0	2.9
Friends	14	29	49	65	0	2.9
Church	11	10	41	94	1	2.6
Community	30	30	66	33	2	3.3
Town gov't	13	38	43	58	2	3.0
Low taxes	34	18	47	31	5	3.4
Proximity to work	18	28	50	62	0	3.0
Low crime rate	75	52	36	7	0	4.1
Good schools	33	40	28	32	4	3.5
Community srvs	16	42	48	49	4	3.1
Recreation	35	39	49	33	2	3.4
Rural character	98	50	18	3	0	4.4
Clean air, water	109	44	11	0	0	4.5